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Second Edition

Full-Color Edition



NEW KING JAMES VERSION®

Earl D. Radmacher, Th.D.
General Editor

Ronald B. Allen, Th.D.
Old Testament Editor

H. Wayne House, Th.D., J.D.
New Testament Editor



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**The NKJV Study Bible
Second Edition
Full-Color Edition**

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FOREWORD

Welcome to the second edition of *The NKJV Study Bible*, now in a full-color edition with photos and revised maps and diagrams. Years in the making, this publication combines a thorough exposition of the Bible with an accessible and spiritually sensitive style that makes it the best available all-purpose Bible study resource between two covers. To get the greatest benefit from your *The NKJV Study Bible*, please take a moment to acquaint yourself with the many helpful features contained in its pages.

New King James Version. This study Bible is based on an outstanding translation for study purposes, the NKJV. The paragraph-style text, now in an attractive new typesetting, includes in-text subheadings with parallel passage references. The complete NKJV translators' footnotes are included in the center column.

Cross-References. In addition to the references under many of the text subheadings, an extensive set of cross-references is included in the center column. These references are greatly expanded from those contained in the first edition and include helpful translation notes. Cross-references that are enclosed in square brackets identify passages similar in concept to the referenced passage in the text. The center column references and notes are indicated in the text by raised letters and numbers.

Prophetic Stars. Many cross-references include stars that designate messianic prophecies. An open star refers to a prediction, while a solid star points out a fulfillment of a prophecy related to the coming of the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Annotations. The basic feature of this study Bible is its annotations. There are over 15,000 of them, providing a warm yet scholarly exposition of the biblical text. The annotations offer helpful explanations, theological insights, and suggestions for other places to direct your study. The style of the annotations is meant to heighten clarity through effective communication, using direct, natural language.

Book Introductions and Outlines. Each book of the Bible begins with an introduction that offers helpful information concerning the background of the book, including authorship and other circumstances surrounding the book's composition, and information concerning the teaching about Christ in each book. A detailed outline lists the key features and shows the structure of the book.

Time Lines. Most book introductions are accompanied by a time line showing the estimated dates of key occurrences before, during, and after the period of the book. The time line helps you to establish the book's historical context and its place in the unfolding of biblical events.

Articles. Over 100 long-format articles provide even more extensive coverage of key doctrinal topics than would be possible in an annotation. The articles enable closer study of important Christian doctrines and are useful as discussion starters. (A contents list in the front section gives page numbers for all articles. These articles have been expanded from the first edition.)

Bible Times and Culture Notes. Included in the text are 150 notes focusing on various features of Bible times and culture, including such topics as Tents, Farming, Rainfall Patterns, Correspondence in Bible Times, and more. (A contents list in the front section gives page numbers for all Bible Times and Culture Notes.)

Charts and Diagrams. Sometimes the best way to present information is in the form of a chart or diagram. More than 80 charts are distributed throughout the Bible, making such information available quickly and attractively. (See contents list.)

Word Studies. To provide access to important terms from the original biblical languages, we have included 350 word studies (and their corresponding Strong's numbers). Key Hebrew and Greek words are discussed with regard to the context in which they are used, and their meaning and biblical usage are explained. These studies have been revised from the first edition to make them even more useful and pertinent. (See contents list.)

In-Text Maps. Geographical understanding is aided by 69 strategically placed full-color maps. Journeys and regional activities are shown with clarity and cartographical accuracy, in proximity to the passages that mention them. (See contents list.)

General Maps. For general use we have also included full-color Bible maps and a map index in the back of the Bible. When used in conjunction with the in-text maps, the general maps maximize your familiarity with the locations of the places named in Scripture.

How to Understand What the Bible Means by What It Says. A helpful how-to article in the front section furnishes a methodology for Bible study. This article will prove useful to you time and again as you explore the word of God.

Teachings and Illustrations of Christ. This topical chart of Jesus' teachings and illustrations supplies references for easy location in the Gospels.

Prophecies of the Messiah Fulfilled in Jesus Christ. This easy-to-use chart quotes the Old Testament prophecy and the New Testament fulfillment. A center column offers a key reference point.

The Parables of Jesus Christ. This chart provides a complete list of Jesus' parables and their Bible references in the Synoptic Gospels.

The Miracles of Jesus Christ. This chart presents a list of Jesus' miracles and their Bible references in all four Gospels.

Prayers of the Bible. This chart is organized alphabetically by the name of the person or group praying, the focus of the prayer, and the location of that prayer in Scripture.

Subject Index to Annotations and Features. This is a thorough alphabetical subject index that details the contents of the features that supplement the biblical text.

Concordance. The subject index is followed by an extensive concordance, the biggest one Nelson has ever published in the back of an NKJV Bible. Its 195 pages list all of the important words, phrases, and proper names in the text of the NKJV.

The features described above combine to provide an unparalleled opportunity for Bible study. Our prayer is that you will be blessed and encouraged as you grow in your knowledge of God's Word through your use of *The NKJV Study Bible*.

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EDITORS AND CONTRIBUTORS

(FIRST EDITION)

Editors

General Editor

Earl D. Radmacher, Th.D.
Western Conservative Baptist Seminary

Old Testament Editor

Ronald B. Allen, Th.D.
Dallas Theological Seminary

New Testament Editor

H. Wayne House, Th.D., J.D.
Michigan Theological Seminary

Contributors

Ronald B. Allen, Th.D.
Dallas Theological Seminary

Barry J. Beitzel, Ph.D.
Trinity Evangelical Divinity School

Darrell Lane Bock, Ph.D.
Dallas Theological Seminary

James Borland, Th.D.
Liberty University

Robert B. Chisholm Jr., Th.D.
Dallas Theological Seminary

Michael G. Cocoris, D.D.
The Lindley Church (Santa Monica, CA)

Ronald Dennis Cole, Th.D.
New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary

Joseph Edward Coleson, Ph.D.
Nazarene Theological Seminary

W. Robert Cook, Th.D.
Western Conservative Baptist Seminary

Barry C. Davis, Ph.D.
Multnomah Bible College

Darryl DelHoussaye, D.Min.
Phoenix Seminary

Gary Wayne Derickson, Ph.D.
Western Baptist College

Joseph C. Dillow, Th.D.
BEE World

Duane Arthur Dunham, Th.D.
Molalla (OR) Conservative Baptist Church

David J. Eckman, Ph.D.
Western Conservative Baptist Seminary

Stanley A. Ellisen, Th.D.
Western Conservative Baptist Seminary

Arthur L. Farstad, Th.D.
Journal of the Conservative Evangelical
Society

H. Wayne House, Th.D., J.D.
Michigan Theological Seminary

David M. Howard Jr., Ph.D.
Trinity Evangelical Divinity School

Thomas Ice, Ph.D.
Pre-Trib Research Center

S. Lewis Johnson Jr., Th.D.
Believers Chapel (Dallas, TX)

Walter C. Kaiser Jr., Ph.D.
Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary

Deborah Jane Kappas, Th.M.
Western Conservative Baptist Seminary

J. Carl Laney, Th.D.
Western Conservative Baptist Seminary

Donald H. Launstein, Th.D.
Heritage Theological Seminary

Asa Boyd Luter Jr., Ph.D.
Golden Gate Baptist Seminary

Walter Creighton Marlowe, Ph.D.
Tyndale Theological Seminary

Eugene H. Merrill, Ph.D.
Dallas Theological Seminary

Bruce M. Metzger, Ph.D.
Princeton Theological Seminary

Thomas Kem Oberholtzer, Th.D.
Phoenix Seminary

Gregory W. Parsons, Th.D.
Baptist Missionary Association Theological
Seminary

Dorothy Kelley Patterson, D.Min., Th.D. cand.
Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary

Richard D. Patterson, Ph.D.
Liberty University

Susan Perlman
Jews for Jesus

Earl D. Radmacher, Th.D.
Western Conservative Baptist Seminary

Moishe Rosen
Jews for Jesus

Ray C. Stedman, D.D. (deceased)
Peninsula Bible Church (Palo Alto, CA)

Stanley D. Toussaint, Th.D.
Dallas Theological Seminary

Willem VanGemenen, Ph.D.
Trinity Evangelical Divinity School

Bruce K. Waltke, Ph.D., Th.D.
Regent College

John F. Walvoord, Th.D., D.D., Litt.D.
Dallas Theological Seminary

Ralph Winter, Th.D.
Fuller Theological Seminary

Naomi Taylor Wright
Bethany Bible Church (Phoenix, AZ)

Contributing Editors

(First and Second Editions)

(for The Livingstone Corporation)

Bruce B. Barton, D.Min.
Dana Niesluchowski
Linda Chaffee Taylor
Jonathan Ziman
Andy Culbertson
Will Reaves
Ashley Taylor
Barry J. Beitzel, Ph.D.
Donald Brown, M.A.
Aaron Burke
Lamont Cannon
Philip W. Comfort, Ph.D.

Jonathan Farrar, M.A.
James C. Galvin, Ed.D.
Steven Hawkins, M.A.
Nathanael Heller, M.A.
Andrew Hill, Ph.D.
Christopher Hudson
Daryl Lucas
James D. Scott, M.A.
Randy Southern
David R. Veerman, M.Div.
Neil S. Wilson, M.A.R.
Len Woods, Th.M.

SPECIAL ABBREVIATIONS

Arab.	Arabic	MT	Masoretic Text—the traditional Hebrew Old Testament (see Preface to the NKJV, “The Old Testament Text”)
Aram.	Aramaic	NU	the modern eclectic, or “critical,” text of the Greek New Testament, published in the twenty-seventh edition of the Nestle-Aland Greek New Testament (N) and in the fourth edition of the United Bible Societies’ Greek New Testament (U)
Bg.	the 1524–25 edition of the Hebrew Old Testament published by Daniel Bomberg (see Preface to the NKJV, “The Old Testament Text”)	pl.	plural
c.	<i>circa</i> , about, approximately	Qr.	Qere (literally, in Aramaic, “read”)—certain words read aloud, differing from the written words, in the Masoretic tradition of the Hebrew Old Testament (see “Kt.” above)
cf.	compare	Sam.	Samaritan Pentateuch—a variant Hebrew edition of the books of Moses, used by the Samaritan community
ch., chs.	chapter, chapters	sing.	singular
DSS	Dead Sea Scrolls	Syr.	Syriac
fem.	feminine	Tg.	Targum—an Aramaic paraphrase of the Old Testament
f., ff.	following verse, following verses	TR	Textus Receptus or Received Text (see Preface to the NKJV, “The New Testament Text”)
Gk.	Greek	v., vv.	verse, verses
Heb.	Hebrew	vss.	versions—ancient translations of the Bible
i.e.	that is	Vg.	Vulgate—an ancient translation of the Bible into Latin, translated and edited by Jerome
Kt.	Kethib (literally, in Aramaic, “written”)—the written words of the Hebrew Old Testament preserved by the Masoretes (see “Qr.” below)		
Lat.	Latin		
Lit.	Literally		
LXX	Septuagint—an ancient translation of the Old Testament into Greek		
M	Majority Text (see Preface to the NKJV, “The New Testament Text”)		
ms., mss.	manuscript, manuscripts		
masc.	masculine		

PREFACE TO THE NEW KING JAMES VERSION

Purpose

In the preface to the 1611 edition, the translators of the Authorized Version, known popularly as the King James Bible, state that it was not their purpose “to make a new translation . . . but to make a good one better.” Indebted to the earlier work of William Tyndale and others, they saw their best contribution to consist in revising and enhancing the excellence of the English versions which had sprung from the Reformation of the sixteenth century. In harmony with the purpose of the King James scholars, the translators and editors of the present work have not pursued a goal of innovation. They have perceived the Holy Bible, New King James Version, as a continuation of the labors of the earlier translators, thus unlocking for today’s readers the spiritual treasures found especially in the Authorized Version of the Holy Scriptures.

A Living Legacy

For nearly four hundred years, and throughout several revisions of its English form, the King James Bible has been deeply revered among the English-speaking peoples of the world. The precision of translation for which it is historically renowned, and its majesty of style, have enabled that monumental version of the word of God to become the mainspring of the religion, language, and legal foundations of our civilization.

Although the Elizabethan period and our own era share in zeal for technical advance, the former period was more aggressively devoted to classical learning. Along with this awakened concern for the classics came a flourishing companion interest in the Scriptures, an interest that was enlivened by the conviction that the manuscripts were providentially handed down and were a trustworthy record of the inspired Word of God. The King James translators were committed to producing an English Bible that would be a precise translation, and by no means a paraphrase or a broadly approximate rendering. On the one hand, the scholars were almost as familiar with the original languages of the Bible as with their native English. On the other hand, their reverence for the divine Author and His Word assured a translation of the Scriptures in which only a principle of utmost accuracy could be accepted.

In 1786 Catholic scholar Alexander Geddes said of the King James Bible, “If accuracy and strictest attention to the letter of the text be supposed to constitute an excellent version, this is of all versions the most excellent.” George Bernard Shaw became a literary legend in the twentieth century because of his severe and often humorous criticisms of our most cherished values. Surprisingly, however, Shaw pays the following tribute to the scholars commissioned by King James: “The translation was extraordinarily well done because to the translators what they were translating was not merely a curious collection of ancient books written by different authors in different stages of culture, but the Word of God divinely revealed through His chosen and expressly inspired scribes. In this conviction they carried out their work with boundless reverence and care and achieved a beautifully artistic result.” History agrees with these estimates. Therefore, while seeking to unveil the excellent *form* of the traditional English Bible, special care has also been taken in the present edition to preserve the work of *precision* which is the legacy of the 1611 translators.

Complete Equivalence in Translation

Where new translation has been necessary in the New King James Version, the most complete representation of the original has been rendered by considering the history of usage and etymology of words in their contexts. This principle of complete equivalence seeks to preserve *all* of the information in the text, while presenting it in good literary form. Dynamic equivalence, a recent procedure in Bible translation, commonly results in paraphrasing where a more literal rendering

is needed to reflect a specific and vital sense. For example, complete equivalence truly renders the original text in expressions such as “lifted her voice and wept” (Gen. 21:16); “I gave you cleanness of teeth” (Amos 4:6); “Jesus met them, saying, ‘Rejoice!’” (Matt. 28:9); and “Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me?” (John 2:4). Complete equivalence translates fully, in order to provide an English text that is both accurate and readable.

In keeping with the principle of complete equivalence, it is the policy to translate interjections which are commonly omitted in modern language renderings of the Bible. As an example, the interjection *behold*, in the older King James editions, continues to have a place in English usage, especially in dramatically calling attention to a spectacular scene, or an event of profound importance such as the Immanuel prophecy of Isaiah 7:14. Consequently, *behold* is retained for these occasions in the present edition. However, the Hebrew and Greek originals for this word can be translated variously, depending on the circumstances in the passage. Therefore, in addition to *behold*, words such as *indeed*, *look*, *see*, and *surely* are also rendered to convey the appropriate sense suggested by the context in each case.

In faithfulness to God and to our readers, it was deemed appropriate that all participating scholars sign a statement affirming their belief in the verbal and plenary inspiration of Scripture, and in the inerrancy of the original autographs.

Devotional Quality

The King James scholars readily appreciated the intrinsic beauty of divine revelation. They accordingly disciplined their talents to render well-chosen English words of their time, as well as a graceful, often musical arrangement of language, which has stirred the hearts of Bible readers through the years. The translators, the committees, and the editors of the present edition, while sensitive to the late-twentieth-century English idiom, and while adhering faithfully to the Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek texts, have sought to maintain those lyrical and devotional qualities that are so highly regarded in the Authorized Version. This devotional quality is especially apparent in the poetic and prophetic books, although even the relatively plain style of the Gospels and Epistles cannot strictly be likened, as sometimes suggested, to modern newspaper style. The Koine Greek of the New Testament is influenced by the Hebrew background of the writers, for whom even the gospel narratives were not merely flat utterance, but often song in various degrees of rhythm.

The Style

Students of the Bible applaud the timeless devotional character of our historic Bible. Yet it is also universally understood that our language, like all living languages, has undergone profound change since 1611. Subsequent revisions of the King James Bible have sought to keep abreast of changes in English speech. The present work is a further step toward this objective. Where obsolescence and other reading difficulties exist, present-day vocabulary, punctuation, and grammar have been carefully integrated. Words representing ancient objects, such as *chariot* and *phylactery*, have no modern substitutes and are therefore retained.

A special feature of the New King James Version is its conformity to the thought flow of the 1611 Bible. The reader discovers that the sequence and selection of words, phrases, and clauses of the new edition, while much clearer, are so close to the traditional that there is remarkable ease in listening to the reading of either edition while following with the other.

In the discipline of translating biblical and other ancient languages, a standard method of transliteration, that is, the English spelling of untranslated words, such as names of persons and places, has never been commonly adopted. In keeping with the design of the present work, the King James spelling of untranslated words is retained, although made uniform throughout. For example, instead of the spellings *Isaiah* and *Elijah* in the Old Testament, and *Esaias* and *Elias* in the New Testament, *Isaiah* and *Elijah* now appear in both Testaments.

King James doctrinal and theological terms, for example, *propitiation*, *justification*, and *sanctification*, are generally familiar to English-speaking peoples. Such terms have been retained except where the original language indicates need for a more precise translation.

Readers of the Authorized Version will immediately be struck by the absence of several pronouns: *thee*, *thou*, and *ye* are replaced by the simple *you*, while *your* and *yours* are substituted for *thy* and *thine* as applicable. *Thee*, *thou*, *thy*, and *thine* were once forms of address to express a special relationship to human as well as divine persons. These pronouns are no longer part of our language. However, reverence for God in the present work is preserved by capitalizing pronouns, including *You*, *Your*, and *Yours*, which refer to Him. Additionally, capitalization of these pronouns

benefits the reader by clearly distinguishing divine and human persons referred to in a passage. Without such capitalization the distinction is often obscure, because the antecedent of a pronoun is not always clear in the English translation.

In addition to the pronoun usages of the seventeenth century, the *-eth* and *-est* verb endings, so familiar in the earlier King James editions, are now obsolete. Unless a speaker is schooled in these verb endings, there is common difficulty in selecting the correct form to be used with a given subject of the verb in vocal prayer. That is, should we use *love*, *loveth*, or *lovest*? *do*, *doeth*, *doest*, or *dost*? *have*, *hath*, or *hast*? Because these forms are obsolete, contemporary English usage has been substituted for the previous verb endings.

In older editions of the King James Version, the frequency of the connective *and* far exceeded the limits of present English usage. Also, biblical linguists agree that the Hebrew and Greek original words for this conjunction may commonly be translated otherwise, depending on the immediate context. Therefore, instead of *and*, alternatives such as *also*, *but*, *however*, *now*, *so*, *then*, and *thus* are accordingly rendered in the present edition, when the original language permits.

The real character of the Authorized Version does not reside in its archaic pronouns or verbs or other grammatical forms of the seventeenth century, but rather in the care taken by its scholars to impart the letter and spirit of the original text in a majestic and reverent style.

The Format

The format of the New King James Version is designed to enhance the vividness and devotional quality of the Holy Scriptures:

- Subject headings assist the reader to identify topics and transitions in the biblical content.
- Words or phrases in *italics* indicate expressions in the original language which require clarification by additional English words, as also done throughout the history of the King James Bible.
- Oblique type in the New Testament indicates a quotation from the Old Testament.
- Prose is divided into paragraphs to indicate the structure of thought.
- Poetry is structured as contemporary verse to reflect the poetic form and beauty of the passage in the original language.
- The covenant name of God was usually translated from the Hebrew as LORD or GOD (using capital letters as shown) in the King James Old Testament. This tradition is maintained. In the present edition the name is so capitalized whenever the covenant name is quoted in the New Testament from a passage in the Old Testament.

The Old Testament Text

The Hebrew Bible has come down to us through the scrupulous care of ancient scribes who copied the original text in successive generations. By the sixth century A.D. the scribes were succeeded by a group known as the Masoretes, who continued to preserve the sacred Scriptures for another five hundred years in a form known as the Masoretic Text. Babylonia, Palestine, and Tiberias were the main centers of Masoretic activity; but by the tenth century A.D. the Masoretes of Tiberias, led by the family of ben Asher, gained the ascendancy. Through subsequent editions, the ben Asher text became in the twelfth century the only recognized form of the Hebrew Scriptures.

Daniel Bomberg printed the first Rabbinic Bible in 1516–17; that work was followed in 1524–25 by a second edition prepared by Jacob ben Chayyim and also published by Bomberg. The text of ben Chayyim was adopted in most subsequent Hebrew Bibles, including those used by the King James translators. The ben Chayyim text was also used for the first two editions of Rudolph Kittel's *Biblia Hebraica* of 1906 and 1912. In 1937 Paul Kahle published a third edition of *Biblia Hebraica*. This edition was based on the oldest dated manuscript of the ben Asher text, the Leningrad Manuscript B19a (A.D. 1008), which Kahle regarded as superior to that used by ben Chayyim.

For the New King James Version the text used was the 1967/1977 Stuttgart edition of the *Biblia Hebraica*, with frequent comparisons being made with the Bomberg edition of 1524–25. The Septuagint (Greek) Version of the Old Testament and the Latin Vulgate also were consulted. In addition to referring to a variety of ancient versions of the Hebrew Scriptures, the New King James Version draws on the resources of relevant manuscripts from the Dead Sea caves. In the few places where the Hebrew was so obscure that the 1611 King James was compelled to follow

one of the versions, but where information is now available to resolve the problems, the New King James Version follows the Hebrew text. Significant variations are recorded in the center reference column.

The New Testament Text

There is more manuscript support for the New Testament than for any other body of ancient literature. Over five thousand Greek, eight thousand Latin, and many more manuscripts in other languages attest the integrity of the New Testament. There is only one basic New Testament used by Protestants, Roman Catholics, and Orthodox, by conservatives and liberals. Minor variations in hand copying have appeared through the centuries, before mechanical printing began about A.D. 1450.

Some variations exist in the spelling of Greek words, in word order, and in similar details. These ordinarily do not show up in translation and do not affect the sense of the text in any way.

Other manuscript differences such as omission or inclusion of a word or a clause, and two paragraphs in the Gospels, should not overshadow the overwhelming degree of *agreement* which exists among the ancient records. Bible readers may be assured that the most important differences in English New Testaments of today are due, not to manuscript divergence, but to the way in which translators view the task of translation: How literally should the text be rendered? How does the translator view the matter of biblical inspiration? Does the translator adopt a paraphrase when a literal rendering would be quite clear and more to the point? The New King James Version follows the historic precedent of the Authorized Version in maintaining a literal approach to translation, except where the idiom of the original language cannot be translated directly into our tongue.

The King James New Testament was based on the traditional text of the Greek-speaking churches, first published in 1516, and later called the *Textus Receptus* or *Received Text*. Although based on the relatively few available manuscripts, these were representative of many more which existed at the time but only became known later. In the late nineteenth century, B. Westcott and F. Hort taught that this text had been officially edited by the fourth-century church, but a total lack of historical evidence for this event has forced a revision of the theory. It is now widely held that the Byzantine Text that largely supports the *Textus Receptus* has as much right as the Alexandrian or any other tradition to be weighed in determining the text of the New Testament.

Since the 1880s most contemporary translations of the New Testament have relied upon a relatively few manuscripts discovered chiefly in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Such translations depend primarily on two manuscripts, *Codex Vaticanus* and *Codex Sinaiticus*, because of their greater age. The Greek text obtained by using these sources and the related papyri (our most ancient manuscripts) is known as the Alexandrian Text. However, some scholars have grounds for doubting the faithfulness of *Vaticanus* and *Sinaiticus*, since they often disagree with one another, and *Sinaiticus* exhibits excessive omission.

A third viewpoint of New Testament scholarship holds that the best text is based on the consensus of the majority of existing Greek manuscripts. This text is called the *Majority Text*. Most of these manuscripts are in substantial agreement. Even though many are late, and none is earlier than the fifth century, usually their readings are verified by papyri, ancient versions, quotations from the early church fathers, or a combination of these. The *Majority Text* is similar to the *Textus Receptus*, but it corrects those readings which have little or no support in the Greek manuscript tradition.

Today, scholars agree that the science of New Testament textual criticism is in a state of flux. Very few scholars still favor the *Textus Receptus* as such, and then often for its historical prestige as the text of Luther, Calvin, Tyndale, and the King James Version. For about a century most have followed a *Critical Text* (so called because it is edited according to specific principles of textual criticism) which depends heavily upon the Alexandrian type of text. More recently many have abandoned this *Critical Text* (which is quite similar to the one edited by Westcott and Hort) for one that is more eclectic. Finally, a small but growing number of scholars prefer the *Majority Text*, which is close to the traditional text except in the Revelation.

In light of these facts, and also because the New King James Version is the fifth revision of a historic document translated from specific Greek texts, the editors decided to retain the traditional text in the body of the New Testament and to indicate major *Critical* and *Majority Text* variant readings in the center reference column. Although these variations are duly indicated in the center-column notes of the present edition, it is most important to emphasize that fully eighty-five percent of the New Testament text is the same in the *Textus Receptus*, the Alexandrian Text, and the *Majority Text*.

Center-Column Notes

Significant explanatory notes, alternate translations, and cross-references, as well as New Testament citations of Old Testament passages, are supplied in the center reference column.

Important textual variants in the Old Testament are identified in a standard form.

The textual notes in the present edition of the New Testament make no evaluation of readings, but do clearly indicate the manuscript sources of readings. They objectively present the facts without such tendentious remarks as “the best manuscripts omit” or “the most reliable manuscripts read.” Such notes are value judgments that differ according to varying viewpoints on the text. By giving a clearly defined set of variants the New King James Version benefits readers of all textual persuasions.

Where significant variations occur in the New Testament Greek manuscripts, textual notes are classified as follows:

NU-Text

These variations from the traditional text generally represent the Alexandrian or Egyptian type of text described previously in “The New Testament Text.” They are found in the Critical Text published in the twenty-seventh edition of the Nestle-Aland Greek New Testament (N) and in the United Bible Societies’ fourth edition (U), hence the acronym, “NU-Text.”

M-Text

This symbol indicates points of variation in the Majority Text from the traditional text, as also previously discussed in “The New Testament Text.” It should be noted that M stands for whatever reading is printed in the published *Greek New Testament According to the Majority Text*, whether supported by overwhelming, strong, or only a divided majority textual tradition.

The textual notes reflect the scholarship of the past 150 years and will assist the reader to observe the variations between the different manuscript traditions of the New Testament. Such information is generally not available in English translations of the New Testament.

HOW TO UNDERSTAND WHAT THE BIBLE MEANS BY WHAT IT SAYS

BY EARL D. RADMACHER

After the apostle Paul had given some significant teaching to his younger son in the faith, Timothy, he gave him the key to understanding (2 Tim. 2:15):

“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

If the reader is going to understand what he or she is reading, then the rules of communication must be diligently followed. These are the same rules that are followed in everyday conversation when understanding takes place. In other words, there is not a special or secret set of rules for understanding God’s Word.

The Basic Principle

Central to everything else in this process is the recognition that meaning is singular, not plural. For example, the popular response often heard, “there are many different interpretations of that,” is clearly false. There may be ten *suggested* interpretations, but at least nine of them are false. The interpretation is what the writer intended with the vocabulary he used. But this does not limit application, because although the interpretation is single, application may be multiple. It is the work of the Holy Spirit to illumine hearts to see a variety of applications to life. But the applications, to be valid, must be true to the author’s intended interpretation as expressed in the written text.

A Four-Step Process

If there is only one valid interpretation of a biblical passage, how then is it to be understood? Paul’s challenge to “rightly divide the word of truth” may be fulfilled by using the following four-step process:

First step: Word Focus

Second step: Word Relations

Third step: Context

Fourth step: Culture

Now let’s put the process to work on an often-quoted verse of Scripture (Matt. 18:20) where Jesus is speaking to His disciples:

“For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them.”

Word Focus

A key word is “gathered.” A complete concordance lists various forms of *gather* in the New Testament about 75 times. These occurrences translate some ten different Greek words, but over half of them translate just one Greek verb (the one used in our passage) made up of two parts meaning “with, together with,” and “to lead, bring”; thus the expression means “to lead or bring together.” This discovery of the etymology of a word is a good starting point for study. One could go on to look at the word comparatively by studying its synonyms and antonyms. Most important in word study, however, is to note the usage of the word historically in Scripture.

The use of “gathered” in this verse may be puzzling to the reader because the group is so small. Just “two or three.” Yet it is a very important gathering because Jesus Christ is “in the midst of them” when the condition is fulfilled that the gathering be in His name. Such a significant gathering with Christ drives us to look very carefully at this verse, so we need to move to the second step in the process of finding the meaning, namely word relations.

Before we do that, however, it may be worthwhile to suggest two tools that will be helpful to the student of Scripture in the first step: (1) *The Majority Text Greek New Testament Interlinear*. This work interweaves the English translation and the Greek text so that the student can see what Greek words translate into the English rendering. (2) *An Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*. This handy tool for the English reader by W. E. Vine gives precise meanings of Greek words. It serves as somewhat of a combination dictionary and concordance.

Word Relations

Word studies are enlightening and fun, but words do not stand alone. Rather, they are related to the words around them. We call these relationships grammar or syntax (“to place together”) and studying them is crucial to learning the meaning of Matthew 18:20. For example, the very first word (“for”) expresses a relationship. It is small and usually ignored, but it is an important conjunction. It lets you know that this verse does not stand alone but is directly related to what has just been stated. It establishes the reason or cause for the preceding instructions.

Two other words that show grammatical relations are the adverbs “where” and “there.” The “where” pertains to the dependent clause and the “there” to the independent clause. The independent clause contains the main idea of the sentence (“I am”) which identifies the actions. Thus the personal, powerful presence and ministry of Jesus Christ will be experienced (main clause) where the gathering is functioning according to His directives, in His name. This being the case, we are motivated in our search for meaning to take the third step in the process.

Context

It has sometimes been said (with tongue in cheek, perhaps) that there are three rules for understanding the meaning of the text. The first is context. The second is context. The third is context. This overstatement makes the point—so let’s do it!

There are basically three areas of context to study.

1. The immediate context.
2. The book context.
3. The Bible context.

Taking your cue from the causal conjunction (“for”) of verse 20, begin moving back in the immediately preceding context. Notice the reference to the “two” in verse 19 and the “again” which precedes it. Keep moving back and find the original reference to “two or three” in verse 16. At this point, the words of Jesus take you back to the Old Testament context (Deut. 19:15) for a principle of settling disputes. Now you are gaining awareness of what the “gathered” is referring to in verse 20. But note the contrastive conjunction (“But”) that begins verse 16. This sends you back to verse 15 and the topic sentence which begins the paragraph and starts the immediately preceding context of verse 20. Now you have the subject matter of this whole section, namely a breach of relationship between brothers in Christ: “. . . if your brother sins against you.” Thus this passage is telling how members of Christ’s family settle disputes.

Now let’s look at the context following our text of verse 20. Peter’s question in response to Jesus shows that he understood exactly what Jesus was talking about and he applied it to himself:

“Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?”

Thus in the context of verse 20, Jesus is presenting the process for dealing with sin and maintaining unity in the church (verse 17), which was yet to be established. It starts with private confronting in verse 15 (one on one), moves to group adjudication in verse 16 (two or three), and is finalized by the church in verse 17, the highest court of appeal on earth for spiritual accountability. In verses 18 and 19, Jesus strongly reinforces the legitimacy of this process of discipline in the family of believers by stating that, when it is done properly, they will be accomplishing on earth that which has already been determined as the will of God in heaven.

Thus in verse 20, Jesus summarizes this whole process of discipline by affirming that when it is carried out according to His directives, it has the power and authority of His almighty presence.

If you now move from the immediate context to the context of the whole book of Matthew, you will find that Christ spoke of the future church (Matt. 18:17) only one other time in the Gospels, namely in Matthew 16:18. In that passage, He spoke of its nature:

“ . . . I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.”

The church was to be a future (“will”), personal (“My”), permanent (“Hades . . . not prevail”) project of Jesus Christ Himself (“I”). By way of comparison, in Matthew 18:15–20, Jesus presents

the procedure of governing and maintaining the unity of that church, His body, which was yet to be established at Pentecost.

There is yet a further area of context, namely, the remainder of the Bible. In pursuing that, one might continue this study by comparing the parallel passage in Luke 17:3, 4. One could also move on to the letters to the churches for further instruction and development of a total doctrine of church discipline (see 1 Cor. 5:1—6:20; 1 Tim. 5:19–22; Titus 3:1–11; Heb. 13:17).

Culture

The final step in our four-step process is the cultural study. This seeks to recreate the setting. Actually this may be done at the beginning as well as throughout the study process. There are three major areas of culture, which may be designated as follows:

1. Social—the customs of the times.
2. Temporal—the period in history.
3. Geographical—the place on earth.

Many helpful books are available for this area of study, especially Bible dictionaries and encyclopedias.

Two words in the immediate context that have social and cultural implications are “heathen” and “tax collector.” Why are those words chosen as picturing the status of the brother who refuses the discipline of the church?

With respect to timing in history, this passage of the teaching of Jesus occurred early in His fourth year of public ministry. It follows His prediction of His coming death and resurrection (Matt. 16:21; 17:22, 23). Although He lived under the Mosaic law and kept it perfectly (Matt. 5:17), He predicted this current dispensation of grace (John 1:17) and the birth of the church (Matt. 16:18; cf. Eph. 3:1–21). Thus Jesus was preparing His disciples who were going to be the foundation stones in the church (Eph. 2:19–22) that would be established at Pentecost (Acts 1:4, 5; cf. 1 Cor. 12:13).

Concerning geographical setting, Jesus was teaching at Capernaum on the northwestern shore of the Sea of Galilee. He had recently been at Caesarea Philippi (today known as Banias) at the foot of Mount Hermon, one of three sources of the Jordan River. In that beautiful setting, after He was transfigured in their midst, the voice of God from heaven declared, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!”

Perhaps this is the appropriate word for all of us as we now approach God’s Word. “Hear Him!”

BOOKS OF THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS

The Old Testament

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Exodus	Ex.	90	Song of Solomon	Song	1040
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Numbers	Num.	210	Jeremiah	Jer.	1157
Deuteronomy	Deut.	272	Lamentations	Lam.	1254
Joshua	Josh.	331	Ezekiel	Ezek.	1266
Judges	Judg.	373	Daniel	Dan.	1346
Ruth	Ruth	416	Hosea	Hos.	1376
1 Samuel	1 Sam.	425	Joel	Joel	1394
2 Samuel	2 Sam.	479	Amos	Amos	1402
1 Kings	1 Kin.	526	Obadiah	Obad.	1418
2 Kings	2 Kin.	576	Jonah	Jon.	1423
1 Chronicles	1 Chr.	629	Micah	Mic.	1431
2 Chronicles	2 Chr.	675	Nahum	Nah.	1443
Ezra	Ezra	727	Habakkuk	Hab.	1449
Nehemiah	Neh.	746	Zephaniah	Zeph.	1456
Esther	Esth.	771	Haggai	Hag.	1463
Job	Job	785	Zechariah	Zech.	1468
Psalms	Ps.	833	Malachi	Mal.	1486
Proverbs	Prov.	976			

The New Testament

	Abbrev.	Page		Abbrev.	Page
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Mark	Mark	1568	2 Timothy	2 Tim.	1957
Luke	Luke	1613	Titus	Titus	1967
John	John	1680	Philemon	Philem.	1975
Acts	Acts	1733	Hebrews	Heb.	1981
Romans	Rom.	1793	James	James	2007
1 Corinthians	1 Cor.	1824	1 Peter	1 Pet.	2017
2 Corinthians	2 Cor.	1852	2 Peter	2 Pet.	2031
Galatians	Gal.	1872	1 John	1 John	2041
Ephesians	Eph.	1886	2 John	2 John	2053
Philippians	Phil.	1900	3 John	3 John	2057
Colossians	Col.	1913	Jude	Jude	2061
1 Thessalonians	1 Thess.	1924	Revelation	Rev.	2066
2 Thessalonians	2 Thess.	1936			

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the Alpha and the Omega (Gk. *to*
A kai to Ō, 1; 2532; 5598)

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The OLD TESTAMENT

THE FIRST BOOK OF MOSES CALLED GENESIS



THE WORDS, “In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth,” have evoked considerable debate; but without apology, that is how this book begins. In the words of one of the historic creeds: “I believe in God the Father almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.” These words are only the beginning of this book of beginnings—a prologue to a prologue. Genesis gives more than an account of creation. It also describes other beginnings—humanity’s Fall into sin and the start of God’s elaborate rescue mission for all peoples. It tells what happened *first* in many important respects (creation, sin, judgment, languages, races, marriage); but at the center of Genesis lies God’s sovereign call to Abram and Sarai, a couple of idol worshipers in the Middle East.

Author and Background The Book of Genesis was written and compiled by Moses in the Wilderness of Sinai. Biblical and extrabiblical evidence points to this fact. Jesus clearly assumes Mosaic authorship of Genesis in the statement, “Moses therefore gave you circumcision” (compare also Acts 15:1). Since the reason for circumcision is mentioned only in Genesis 17, Jesus had to be referring to Moses’ compilation of the story. Second, both Jewish and Christian tradition unanimously agree with this biblical testimony: Moses compiled and wrote the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Bible, in the Wilderness of Sinai. This would place his authorship of Genesis around the fifteenth century B.C.

Many scholars since the nineteenth century have denied Moses’ authorship of Genesis. Instead, some of these scholars have suggested that the Pentateuch, including Genesis, was compiled at a later date, perhaps in the sixth century B.C. According to this analysis, anonymous editors used at least four documents to piece together the Pentateuch. These four documents were identified by tracing the divine names, such as Elohim and Yahweh, through the Pentateuch, and by tracing certain variations in phraseology and word choice. The four documents are called: the J document, which uses *Yahweh* for God; the E document, which uses *Elohim* for God; the P or Priestly document; and the D or Deuteronomic document. More recently, this dissection of the Pentateuch has been challenged, and no real consensus has emerged from the ensuing scholarly debate.

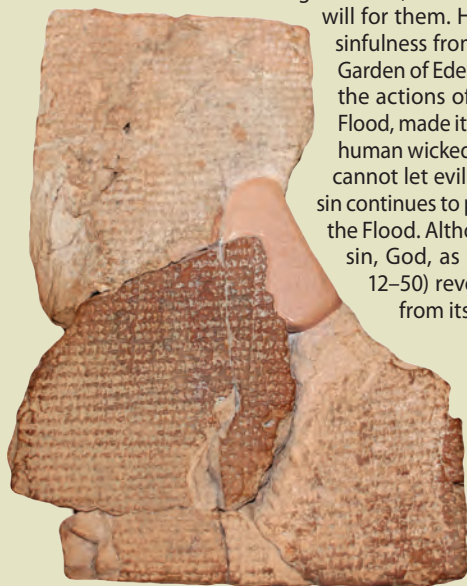
By appreciating the unified structure of Genesis, Moses’ guiding hand in the compilation and authorship of Genesis can be discerned. Certainly, Moses used other literary sources to piece together his narrative. Sometimes these sources are identified (see Gen. 5:1). Moses presumably edited these older documents to make them understandable to his readers—the second Israelite generation after the Exodus. And later prophets updated the language for the ensuing generations of Israelite readers.

But after all the analysis, it is clear that Moses wrote and compiled Genesis to encourage the early Israelites while they were preparing to enter the land of Canaan, the Promised Land. The content of Genesis would have been especially significant to them. It explains why their ancestors went to Egypt in the first place, why their nation was destined for another Promised Land, and why God had revealed Himself so dramatically to them in the wilderness.

2 GENESIS INTRODUCTION

Principal Message Genesis, the book of beginnings, has two parts. The first part (chs. 1–11) serves as a prologue to the second part (chs. 12–50), the book’s main event—God’s sovereign work in Abraham’s family to accomplish His good will for all nations. This prologue (chs. 1–11) provides keys that unlock the rest of the book and the rest of the Bible as well.

Four key concepts presented in Genesis 1–11 are crucial for comprehending the rest of the Bible. First, the God who entered the lives of Abram and Sarai is the same God who created the entire universe. He is the only true and living God—Yahweh, the Creator and the Savior of the world. Second, all people have rebelled against God, their benevolent Creator, and His good will for them. Humanity has inherited a state of sinfulness from Adam and Eve’s rebellion in the Garden of Eden. Third, God judges and will judge the actions of all people. God, by sending the Flood, made it clear to Noah and to everyone that human wickedness is entirely unacceptable. God cannot let evil reign free in His creation. Fourth, sin continues to plague all of humanity—even after the Flood. Although the Flood did not wash away sin, God, as the second half of Genesis (chs. 12–50) reveals, has a plan to save humanity from its own evil deeds.



The Atrahasis Epic, c. seventeenth century B.C., contains an account of creation and early human history, including the Flood.

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The first part of Genesis provides the setting for the story of Abram and Sarai (chs. 12–50). Their world is populated by a broad spectrum of people groups, each with its own language, customs, values, and beliefs, and all have adopted their own imaginary gods.

The main story of Genesis—God’s plan to bless all nations through Abraham’s descendants—starts in chapter 12. It begins with God’s call to Abram and Sarai (Abraham and

Sarah) to become the parents of a new people—a new nation. This new nation would become God’s tool for blessing all peoples. Even though Abram and Sarai were merely an elderly couple with the means to travel, God chose to begin His plan of redemption for the entire world with them. The description of their experiences demonstrates the *irruption* (the breaking into from without) of God’s blessing into their lives. Central to God’s blessing was His covenant with Abraham—the *Abrahamic covenant* (see 12:1–3; 15:1–21). God, the awesome Creator of the entire universe, freely chose to make everlasting promises to Abraham and his descendants. These promises in the Abrahamic covenant were the foundation for all of God’s subsequent promises and covenants in the Bible. Genesis is not merely a beginning; it provides the foundation for the rest of the biblical narrative.

CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

According to the New Testament, Adam is “a type of Him who was to come” (Rom. 5:14). In other words, Adam’s life in some ways points vividly to Jesus. Consider that both individuals entered the world through a special act of God, as sinless men. But while Adam is the head of the old creation, Christ is the head of a new creation.

Melchizedek (whose name literally means “king of righteousness”) is a strange and shadowy figure who suddenly appears in Genesis 14. He is the king of Salem (which means “peace”); the Bible calls him “the priest of God Most High.” Some

undatable

Creation, the Flood, the Tower of Babel

c. 2167 B.C.

Abraham is born in Ur of the Chaldeans

c. 2091 B.C.

Abraham is called to set out for Canaan

c. 2066 B.C.

Isaac is born to Abraham and Sarah

c. 2006 B.C.

Jacob is born to Isaac and Rebekah

c. 1991 B.C.

Abraham dies in Canaan

c. 1915 B.C.

Joseph is born to Jacob and Rachel

c. 1886 B.C.

Isaac dies in Canaan

c. 1876 B.C.

Jacob and his family move to Egypt

c. 1859 B.C.

Jacob dies in Egypt

c. 1805 B.C.

Joseph dies in Egypt

scholars believe that this one who was, in the words of Hebrews 7:3, “made like the Son of God,” was in fact Christ Himself. Christ, after all, is known as the Prince of Peace (Is. 9:6).

Joseph’s character and experiences (chs. 39–50) foreshadow the coming of the Messiah in that both Joseph and Christ are objects of special love by their fathers, hated by their brothers, rejected as rulers over their brothers, conspired against and sold for silver, condemned though innocent, and raised from humiliation to glory by the power of God.

GENESIS OUTLINE

Prologue

- I. The stories of Creation and the Fall 1:1—3:24
 - A. Creation: the seven days 1:1—2:3
 - B. Creation: the making of man and woman 2:4–25
 - C. The fall of humankind and God’s judgment on Adam and Eve 3:1–24
- II. The family of Adam and Eve 4:1—5:32
 - A. Cain and Abel 4:1–26
 - B. The family history of Adam and Eve 5:1–32
- III. The Flood 6:1—9:29
 - A. The sons of God and the daughters of men 6:1–4
 - B. The choosing of Noah 6:5–22
 - C. The arrival of the Flood 7:1–24
 - D. The abating of the waters 8:1–22
 - E. The aftermath 9:1–29
- IV. The early nations and the Tower of Babel 10:1—11:32



The early Israelites had a nomadic lifestyle. They lived in tents, which allowed them to easily move and travel to a new location.

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Main Section

- I. Abram and Sarai (Abraham and Sarah) 12:1—25:34
 - A. Abram and Sarai and their early experiences in the land of Canaan 12:1—15:21
 - B. Abram and Sarai's search for a son 16:1—22:24
 - C. Abraham and Sarah's last days 23:1—25:34
- II. Isaac and Rebekah 26:1—27:45
 - A. Isaac and Abimelech 26:1—33
 - B. Isaac's blessing on his two sons Jacob and Esau 27:1—45
- III. Jacob and Esau 27:46—36:43
 - A. The sending of Jacob to Laban 27:46—28:5
 - B. Esau's marriage to a daughter of Ishmael 28:6—9
 - C. God's self-revelation to Jacob at Bethel 28:10—22
 - D. Jacob's family 29:1—30:24
 - E. Jacob's dealings with Laban in Padan Aram 30:25—31:55
 - F. The reconciliation of Jacob and Esau 32:1—33:20
 - G. Dinah and her brothers 34:1—31
 - H. The last days of Isaac 35:1—29
 - I. The family records of Esau 36:1—43
- IV. Joseph (with two interludes) 37:1—50:26
 - A. Joseph's dreams and a family nightmare 37:1—36
 - B. Interlude 1: Judah and Tamar 38:1—30
 - C. Joseph's humiliation in Egypt 39:1—40:23
 - D. Joseph's exaltation in Egypt 41:1—57
 - E. Joseph's reunion with his family 42:1—47:31
 - F. Interlude 2: Jacob's last days 48:1—50:14
 - G. Joseph's last days 50:15—26

The History of Creation

In the ^abeginning ^bGod created the heavens and the earth. ²The earth was ^cwithout form, and void; and darkness ¹was on the face of the deep. ^dAnd the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

³Then God said, ^f“Let there be ^glight”; and there was light. ⁴And God saw the light, that *it was* good; and God divided the light from the darkness. ⁵God called the light Day, and the ^hdarkness He called Night. ²So the evening and the morning were the first day.

⁶Then God said, ⁱ“Let there be a ³firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.”

⁷Thus God made the firmament, ^jand divided the waters which *were* under the firmament from the waters which *were* ^kabove the firmament; and it was so.

⁸And God called the firmament Heaven. So the evening and the morning were the second day.

⁹Then God said, ^l“Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together

CHAPTER 1

¹ ^a Ps. 102:25; Is. 40:21; [John 1:1-3; Heb. 1:10] ^b Gen. 2:4; [Ps. 8:3; 89:11; 90:2]; Is. 44:24; Acts 17:24; Rom. 1:20; [Heb. 1:2; 11:3]; Rev. 4:11
² ^c Jer. 4:23 ^d [Gen. 6:3]; Job 26:13; Ps. 33:6; 104:30; Is. 40:13, 14 ^e Words in italic type have been added for clarity. They are not found in the original Hebrew or Aramaic.
³ ^f Ps. 33:6, 9 ^g 2 Cor. 4:6 ^h [Heb. 11:3]
⁴ ⁱ Job 37:18; Ps. 19:2; 33:6; 74:16; 104:20; 136:5; Jer. 10:12 ^j Lit. *And evening was, and morning was, a day, one.*
⁵ ^k Job 37:18; Jer. 10:12; 2 Pet. 3:5
⁶ ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^{aa} ^{ab} ^{ac} ^{ad} ^{ae} ^{af} ^{ag} ^{ah} ^{ai} ^{aj} ^{ak} ^{al} ^{am} ^{an} ^{ao} ^{ap} ^{aq} ^{ar} ^{as} ^{at} ^{au} ^{av} ^{aw} ^{ax} ^{ay} ^{az} ^{ba} ^{bb} ^{bc} ^{bd} ^{be} ^{bf} ^{bg} ^{bh} ^{bi} ^{bj} ^{bk} ^{bl} ^{bm} ^{bn} ^{bo} ^{bp} ^{bq} ^{br} ^{bs} ^{bt} ^{bu} ^{bv} ^{bw} ^{bx} ^{by} ^{bz} ^{ca} ^{cb} ^{cc} ^{cd} ^{ce} ^{cf} ^{cg} ^{ch} ^{ci} ^{cj} ^{ck} ^{cl} ^{cm} ^{cn} ^{co} ^{cp} ^{cq} ^{cr} ^{cs} ^{ct} ^{cu} ^{cv} ^{cw} ^{cx} ^{cy} ^{cz} ^{da} ^{db} ^{dc} ^{dd} ^{de} ^{df} ^{dg} ^{dh} ^{di} ^{dj} ^{dk} ^{dl} ^{dm} ^{dn} ^{do} ^{dp} ^{dq} ^{dr} ^{ds} ^{dt} ^{du} ^{dv} ^{dw} ^{dx} ^{dy} ^{dz} ^{ea} ^{eb} ^{ec} ^{ed} ^{ee} ^{ef} ^{eg} ^{eh} ^{ei} ^{ej} ^{ek} ^{el} ^{em} ^{en} ^{eo} ^{ep} ^{eq} ^{er} ^{es} ^{et} ^{eu} ^{ev} ^{ew} ^{ex} ^{ey} ^{ez} ^{fa} ^{fb} ^{fc} ^{fd} ^{fe} ^{ff} ^{fg} ^{fh} ^{fi} ^{fj} ^{fk} ^{fl} ^{fm} ^{fn} ^{fo} ^{fp} ^{fq} ^{fr} ^{fs} ^{ft} ^{fu} ^{fv} ^{fw} ^{fx} ^{fy} ^{fz} ^{ga} ^{gb} ^{gc} ^{gd} ^{ge} ^{gf} ^{gg} ^{gh} ^{gi} ^{gj} ^{gk} ^{gl} ^{gm} ^{gn} ^{go} ^{gp} ^{gq} ^{gr} ^{gs} ^{gt} ^{gu} ^{gv} ^{gw} ^{gx} ^{gy} ^{gz} ^{ha} ^{hb} ^{hc} ^{hd} ^{he} ^{hf} ^{hg} ^{hh} ^{hi} ^{hj} ^{hk} ^{hl} ^{hm} ^{hn} ^{ho} ^{hp} ^{hq} ^{hr} ^{hs} ^{ht} ^{hu} ^{hv} ^{hw} ^{hx} ^{hy} ^{hz} ^{ia} ^{ib} ^{ic} ^{id} ^{ie} ^{if} ^{ig} ^{ih} ⁱⁱ ^{ij} ^{ik} ^{il} ^{im} ⁱⁿ ^{io} ^{ip} ^{iq} ^{ir} ^{is} ^{it} ^{iu} ^{iv} ^{iw} ^{ix} ^{iy} ^{iz} ^{ja} ^{jb} ^{jc} ^{jd} ^{je} ^{jf} ^{jj} ^{jk} ^{jl} ^{jm} ^{jn} ^{jo} ^{jp} ^{jq} ^{jr} ^{js} ^{jt} ^{ju} ^{jv} ^{jw} ^{jx} ^{jy} ^{jz} ^{ka} ^{kb} ^{kc} ^{kd} ^{ke} ^{kf} ^{kg} ^{kh} ^{ki} ^{kj} ^{kl} ^{km} ^{kn} ^{ko} ^{kp} ^{kq} ^{kr} ^{ks} ^{kt} ^{ku} ^{kv} ^{kw} ^{kx} ^{ky} ^{kz} ^{la} ^{lb} ^{lc} ^{ld} ^{le} ^{lf} ^{lg} ^{lh} ^{li} ^{lj} ^{lk} ^{ll} ^{lm} ^{ln} ^{lo} ^{lp} ^{lq} ^{lr} ^{ls} ^{lt} ^{lu} ^{lv} ^{lw} ^{lx} ^{ly} ^{lz} ^{ma} ^{mb} ^{mc} ^{md} ^{me} ^{mf} ^{mg} ^{mh} ^{mi} ^{mj} ^{mk} ^{ml} ^{mm} ^{mn} ^{mo} ^{mp} ^{mq} ^{mr} ^{ms} ^{mt} ^{mu} ^{mv} ^{mw} ^{mx} ^{my} ^{mz} ^{na} ^{nb} ^{nc} nd ^{ne} ^{nf} ^{ng} ^{nh} ⁿⁱ ^{nj} ^{nk} ^{nl} ^{nm} ⁿⁿ ^{no} ^{np} ^{nq} ^{nr} ^{ns} ^{nt} ^{nu} ^{nv} ^{nw} ^{nx} ^{ny} ^{nz} ^{oa} ^{ob} ^{oc} ^{od} ^{oe} ^{of} ^{og} ^{oh} ^{oi} ^{oj} ^{ok} ^{ol} ^{om} ^{on} ^{oo} ^{op} ^{oq} ^{or} ^{os} ^{ot} ^{ou} ^{ov} ^{ow} ^{ox} ^{oy} ^{oz} ^{pa} ^{pb} ^{pc} ^{pd} ^{pe} ^{pf} ^{pg} ^{ph} ^{pi} ^{pj} ^{pk} ^{pl} ^{pm} ^{pn} ^{po} ^{pp} ^{pq} ^{pr} ^{ps} ^{pt} ^{pu} ^{pv} ^{pw} ^{px} ^{py} ^{pz} ^{qa} ^{qb} ^{qc} ^{qd} ^{qe} ^{qf} ^{qg} ^{qh} ^{qi} ^{qj} ^{qk} ^{ql} ^{qm} ^{qn} ^{qo} ^{qp} ^{qq} ^{qr} ^{qs} ^{qt} ^{qu} ^{qv} ^{qw} ^{qx} ^{qy} ^{qz} ^{ra} ^{rb} ^{rc} rd ^{re} ^{rf} ^{rg} ^{rh} ^{ri} ^{rj} ^{rk} ^{rl} ^{rm} ^{rn} ^{ro} ^{rp} ^{rq} ^{rr} ^{rs} ^{rt} ^{ru} ^{rv} ^{rw} ^{rx} ^{ry} ^{rz} ^{sa} ^{sb} ^{sc} ^{sd} ^{se} ^{sf} ^{sg} ^{sh} ^{si} ^{sj} ^{sk} ^{sl} sm ^{sn} ^{so} ^{sp} ^{sq} ^{sr} ^{ss} st ^{su} ^{sv} ^{sw} ^{sx} ^{sy} ^{sz} ^{ta} ^{tb} ^{tc} ^{td} ^{te} ^{tf} ^{tg} th ^{ti} ^{tj} ^{tk} ^{tl} tm ^{tn} ^{to} ^{tp} ^{tq} ^{tr} ^{ts} ^{tu} ^{tv} ^{tw} ^{tx} ^{ty} ^{tz} ^{ua} ^{ub} ^{uc} ^{ud} ^{ue} ^{uf} ^{ug} ^{uh} ^{ui} ^{uj} ^{uk} ^{ul} ^{um} ^{un} ^{uo} ^{up} ^{uq} ^{ur} ^{us} ^{ut} ^{uu} ^{uv} ^{uw} ^{ux} ^{uy} ^{uz} ^{va} ^{vb} ^{vc} ^{vd} ^{ve} ^{vf} ^{vg} ^{vh} ^{vi} ^{vj} ^{vk} ^{vl} ^{vm} ^{vn} ^{vo} ^{vp} ^{vq} ^{vr} ^{vs} ^{vt} ^{vu} ^{vv} ^{vw} ^{vx} ^{vy} ^{vz} ^{wa} ^{wb} ^{wc} ^{wd} ^{we} ^{wf} ^{wg} ^{wh} ^{wi} ^{wj} ^{wk} ^{wl} ^{wm} ^{wn} ^{wo} ^{wp} ^{wq} ^{wr} ^{ws} ^{wt} ^{wu} ^{wv} ^{ww} ^{wx} ^{wy} ^{wz} ^{xa} ^{xb} ^{xc} ^{xd} ^{xe} ^{xf} ^{yg} ^{yh} ^{yi} ^{yj} ^{yk} ^{yl} ^{ym} ^{yn} ^{yo} ^{yp} ^{yq} ^{yr} ^{ys} ^{yt} ^{yu} ^{yv} ^{yw} ^{yx} ^{yy} ^{yz} ^{za} ^{zb} ^{zc} ^{zd} ^{ze} ^{zf} ^{zg} ^{zh} ^{zi} ^{zj} ^{zk} ^{zl} ^{zm} ^{zn} ^{zo} ^{zp} ^{zq} ^{zr} ^{zs} ^{zt} ^{zu} ^{zv} ^{zw} ^{zx} ^{zy} ^{zz}

into one place, and ^mlet the dry *land* appear”; and it was so. ¹⁰And God called the dry *land* Earth, and the gathering together of the waters He called Seas. And God saw that *it was* good.

¹¹Then God said, “Let the earth ⁿbring forth grass, the herb *that* yields seed, and the ^ofruit tree *that* yields fruit according to its kind, whose seed *is* in itself, on the earth”; and it was so. ¹²And the earth brought forth grass, the herb *that* yields seed according to its kind, and the tree *that* yields fruit, whose seed *is* in itself according to its kind. And God saw that *it was* good. ¹³So the evening and the morning were the third day.

¹⁴Then God said, “Let there be ^plights in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs and ^qseasons, and for days and years; ¹⁵and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heavens to give light on

⁹ ⁱ Job 26:10; Ps. 104:6-9; Prov. 8:29; Jer. 5:22; 2 Pet. 3:5 ^m Ps. 24:1, 2; 33:7; 95:5 ⁿ ^o Ps. 65:9-13; 104:14; Heb. 6:7 ^p 2 Sam. 16:1; Luke 6:44 ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^{aa} ^{ab} ^{ac} ^{ad} ^{ae} ^{af} ^{ag} ^{ah} ^{ai} ^{aj} ^{ak} ^{al} ^{am} ^{an} ^{ao} ^{ap} ^{aq} ^{ar} ^{as} ^{at} ^{au} ^{av} ^{aw} ^{ax} ^{ay} ^{az} ^{ba} ^{bb} ^{bc} ^{bd} ^{be} ^{bf} ^{bg} ^{bh} ^{bi} ^{bj} ^{bk} ^{bl} ^{bm} ^{bn} ^{bo} ^{bp} ^{bq} ^{br} ^{bs} ^{bt} ^{bu} ^{bv} ^{bw} ^{bx} ^{by} ^{bz} ^{ca} ^{cb} ^{cc} ^{cd} ^{ce} ^{cf} ^{cg} ^{ch} ^{ci} ^{cj} ^{ck} ^{cl} ^{cm} ^{cn} ^{co} ^{cp} ^{cq} ^{cr} ^{cs} ^{ct} ^{cu} ^{cv} ^{cw} ^{cx} ^{cy} ^{cz} ^{da} ^{db} ^{dc} ^{dd} ^{de} ^{df} ^{dg} ^{dh} ^{di} ^{dj} ^{dk} ^{dl} ^{dm} ^{dn} ^{do} ^{dp} ^{dq} ^{dr} ^{ds} ^{dt} ^{du} ^{dv} ^{dw} ^{dx} ^{dy} ^{dz} ^{ea} ^{eb} ^{ec} ^{ed} ^{ee} ^{ef} ^{eg} ^{eh} ^{ei} ^{ej} ^{ek} ^{el} ^{em} ^{en} ^{eo} ^{ep} ^{eq} ^{er} ^{es} ^{et} ^{eu} ^{ev} ^{ew} ^{ex} ^{ey} ^{ez} ^{fa} ^{fb} ^{fc} ^{fd} ^{fe} ^{ff} ^{fg} ^{fh} ^{fi} ^{fj} ^{fk} ^{fl} ^{fm} ^{fn} ^{fo} ^{fp} ^{fq} ^{fr} ^{fs} ^{ft} ^{fu} ^{fv} ^{fw} ^{fx} ^{fy} ^{fz} ^{ga} ^{gb} ^{gc} ^{gd} ^{ge} ^{gf} ^{gg} ^{gh} ^{gi} ^{gj} ^{gk} ^{gl} ^{gm} ^{gn} ^{go} ^{gp} ^{gq} ^{gr} ^{gs} ^{gt} ^{gu} ^{gv} ^{gw} ^{gx} ^{gy} ^{gz} ^{ha} ^{hb} ^{hc} ^{hd} ^{he} ^{hf} ^{hg} ^{hh} ^{hi} ^{hj} ^{hk} ^{hl} ^{hm} ^{hn} ^{ho} ^{hp} ^{hq} ^{hr} ^{hs} ^{ht} ^{hu} ^{hv} ^{hw} ^{hx} ^{hy} ^{hz} ^{ia} ^{ib} ^{ic} ^{id} ^{ie} ^{if} ^{ig} ^{ih} ⁱⁱ ^{ij} ^{ik} ^{il} ^{im} ⁱⁿ ^{io} ^{ip} ^{iq} ^{ir} ^{is} ^{it} ^{iu} ^{iv} ^{iw} ^{ix} ^{iy} ^{iz} ^{ja} ^{jb} ^{jc} ^{jd} ^{je} ^{jf} ^{jj} ^{jk} ^{jl} ^{jm} ^{jn} ^{jo} ^{jp} ^{jq} ^{jr} ^{js} ^{jt} ^{ju} ^{jv} ^{jw} ^{jx} ^{jy} ^{jz} ^{ka} ^{kb} ^{kc} ^{kd} ^{ke} ^{kf} ^{kg} ^{kh} ^{ki} ^{kj} ^{kl} ^{km} ^{kn} ^{ko} ^{kp} ^{kq} ^{kr} ^{ks} ^{kt} ^{ku} ^{kv} ^{kw} ^{kx} ^{ky} ^{kz} ^{la} ^{lb} ^{lc} ^{ld} ^{le} ^{lf} ^{lg} ^{lh} ^{li} ^{lj} ^{lk} ^{ll} ^{lm} ^{ln} ^{lo} ^{lp} ^{lq} ^{lr} ^{ls} ^{lt} ^{lu} ^{lv} ^{lw} ^{lx} ^{ly} ^{lz} ^{ma} ^{mb} ^{mc} ^{md} ^{me} ^{mf} ^{mg} ^{mh} ^{mi} ^{mj} ^{mk} ^{ml} ^{mm} ^{mn} ^{mo} ^{mp} ^{mq} ^{mr} ^{ms} ^{mt} ^{mu} ^{mv} ^{mw} ^{mx} ^{my} ^{mz} ^{na} ^{nb} ^{nc} nd ^{ne} ^{nf} ^{ng} ^{nh} ⁿⁱ ^{nj} ^{nk} ^{nl} ^{nm} ⁿⁿ ^{no} ^{np} ^{nq} ^{nr} ^{ns} ^{nt} ^{nu} ^{nv} ^{nw} ^{nx} ^{ny} ^{nz} ^{oa} ^{ob} ^{oc} ^{od} ^{oe} ^{of} ^{og} ^{oh} ^{oi} ^{oj} ^{ok} ^{ol} ^{om} ^{on} ^{oo} ^{op} ^{oq} ^{or} ^{os} ^{ot} ^{ou} ^{ov} ^{ow} ^{ox} ^{oy} ^{oz} ^{pa} ^{pb} ^{pc} ^{pd} ^{pe} ^{pf} ^{pg} ^{ph} ^{pi} ^{pj} ^{pk} ^{pl} ^{pm} ^{pn} ^{po} ^{pp} ^{pq} ^{pr} ^{ps} ^{pt} ^{pu} ^{pv} ^{pw} ^{px} ^{py} ^{pz} ^{qa} ^{qb} ^{qc} ^{qd} ^{qe} ^{qf} ^{qg} ^{qh} ^{qi} ^{qj} ^{qk} ^{ql} ^{qm} ^{qn} ^{qo} ^{qp} ^{qq} ^{qr} ^{qs} ^{qt} ^{qu} ^{qv} ^{qw} ^{qx} ^{qy} ^{qz} ^{ra} ^{rb} ^{rc} rd ^{re} ^{rf} ^{rg} ^{rh} ^{ri} ^{rj} ^{rk} ^{rl} ^{rm} ^{rn} ^{ro} ^{rp} ^{rq} ^{rr} ^{rs} ^{rt} ^{ru} ^{rv} ^{rw} ^{rx} ^{ry} ^{rz} ^{sa} ^{sb} ^{sc} ^{sd} ^{se} ^{sf} ^{sg} ^{sh} ^{si} ^{sj} ^{sk} ^{sl} sm ^{sn} ^{so} ^{sp} ^{sq} ^{sr} ^{ss} st ^{su} ^{sv} ^{sw} ^{sx} ^{sy} ^{sz} ^{ta} ^{tb} ^{tc} ^{td} ^{te} ^{tf} ^{tg} th ^{ti} ^{tj} ^{tk} ^{tl} tm ^{tn} ^{to} ^{tp} ^{tq} ^{tr} ^{ts} ^{tu} ^{tv} ^{tw} ^{tx} ^{ty} ^{tz} ^{ua} ^{ub} ^{uc} ^{ud} ^{ue} ^{uf} ^{ug} ^{uh} ^{ui} ^{uj} ^{uk} ^{ul} ^{um} ^{un} ^{uo} ^{up} ^{uq} ^{ur} ^{us} ^{ut} ^{uu} ^{uv} ^{uw} ^{ux} ^{uy} ^{uz} ^{va} ^{vb} ^{vc} ^{vd} ^{ve} ^{vf} ^{vg} ^{vh} ^{vi} ^{vj} ^{vk} ^{vl} ^{vm} ^{vn} ^{vo} ^{vp} ^{vq} ^{vr} ^{vs} ^{vt} ^{vu} ^{vv} ^{vw} ^{vx} ^{vy} ^{vz} ^{wa} ^{wb} ^{wc} ^{wd} ^{we} ^{wf} ^{wg} ^{wh} ^{wi} ^{wj} ^{wk} ^{wl} ^{wm} ^{wn} ^{wo} ^{wp} ^{wq} ^{wr} ^{ws} ^{wt} ^{wu} ^{wv} ^{ww} ^{wx} ^{wy} ^{wz} ^{xa} ^{xb} ^{xc} ^{xd} ^{xe} ^{xf} ^{yg} ^{yh} ^{yi} ^{yj} ^{yk} ^{yl} ^{ym} ^{yn} ^{yo} ^{yp} ^{yq} ^{yr} ^{ys} ^{yt} ^{yu} ^{yv} ^{yw} ^{yx} ^{yy} ^{yz} ^{za} ^{zb} ^{zc} ^{zd} ^{ze} ^{zf} ^{zg} ^{zh} ^{zi} ^{zj} ^{zk} ^{zl} ^{zm} ^{zn} ^{zo} ^{zp} ^{zq} ^{zr} ^{zs} ^{zt} ^{zu} ^{zv} ^{zw} ^{zx} ^{zy} ^{zz}

1:1 In the **beginning** is a thesis statement, which can be paraphrased, “Here is the story of God’s creation of the heavens and the earth.” The focus is on the creation of the material world—the heavens and the earth. **God:** This standard Hebrew term for deity, *Elohim*, is in the form called the plural of majesty or the plural of intensity. In contrast to the ordinary plural (gods), this plural means “the fullness of deity” or “God—very God.” Even though the word for God is plural, the verb for **created** is singular. It means “to fashion anew.” This oft-used word in the Bible always has God as its subject. Here, it means that God renewed what was in a chaotic state. God changed chaos into cosmos, disorder into order, emptiness into fullness. **The heavens and the earth** mean “all of creation” or “the cosmos.”

1:2 The two words **without form . . . void** express one concept—chaos. The earth had been reduced to this state (Jer. 4:23); it was not the way God had first created it (Is. 45:18). **Darkness** is a potent biblical symbol of evil and wrong (Job 3:5; Ps. 143:3; Is. 8:22; John 3:19). The **deep** is a term for the secret places of the waters (see also 7:11); this term sounds enough like the name of the Babylonian goddess Tiamat to remind the ancient reader of the Babylonian story of creation to which this story stands in dramatic contrast. All these images together portray chaos, disaster, and devastation. From this portrait of utter ruin, God brought an orderly creation. **The Spirit of God was hovering** like a mother stork might hover over her nest—a portent of life to come from the dark, murky depths of the chaos below (the Spirit is described as a dove in Matt. 3:16).

1:3 **Let there be light:** These words express a principal theme of the Bible: God bringing light into the darkness (see Is. 9:1, 2). Here, God produced physical light. The NT records God sending His Son to be the light of the world (John 8:12). In the end, there will no longer be any darkness at all (Rev. 21:23). God **said** it, and it was done: **there was light**. His command caused reality.

1:4 Having examined the light, God declared it to be **good**—a powerful term of God’s blessing.

1:5 **Day . . . Night:** The naming of these elements of creation is a mark of God’s sovereignty. In the thinking of the peoples of the ancient Middle East, naming something was a mark of power or lordship. For them, names were not merely labels, but descriptions with some force to them. Since the sun was not yet created (vv. 14–19), the **first day** (lit., a day, one) is ambiguous. Some say that the “seven days” is a literary frame on which the story of creation is draped. Others argue for a strict pattern of seven 24-hour days.

1:6 In biblical usage, the term **firmament** means “heavens.” Literally, it means “something stretched out, like hammered metal.”

1:7 **divided the waters:** The notion of upper and lower waters is somewhat mysterious. The language may simply refer to waters gathered in a liquid state and to moisture in the atmosphere. The division of the waters is another of God’s acts in bringing order out of disorder.

1:9 The gathering of the waters and the separation of the **dry land** are further actions of God in establishing control over the chaos described in v. 2. Each act of separation and distinction brings order out of disorder, form out of formlessness, cosmos out of chaos. Each act also demonstrates the Lord’s power and wisdom (Prov. 8:22–31).

1:10 Again, naming the creation marks God’s lordship (see v. 5). The naming of the **earth** in this verse suggests that the term was used in anticipation in v. 2.

the earth”; and it was so. ¹⁶Then God made two great ⁴lights: the ^rgreater light to rule the day, and the ^slesser light to rule the night. *He made* ^tthe stars also. ¹⁷God set them in the firmament of the ^uheavens to give light on the earth, ¹⁸and to ^vrule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness. And God saw that *it was* good. ¹⁹So the evening and the morning were the fourth day.

²⁰Then God said, “Let the waters abound with an abundance of living ⁵creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the face of the ⁶firmament of the heavens.” ²¹So ^wGod created great sea creatures and every living thing that moves, with which the waters abounded, according to their kind, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that *it was* good. ²²And God blessed them, saying, ^x“Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.” ²³So

16 ^r Ps. 136:8
3 Deut. 17:3; Ps.
8:3 ^r Deut. 4:19;
Job 38:7; Is. 40:26
4 ^{luminaries}
17 ^u Gen. 15:5; Jer.
33:20, 25
18 ^v Jer. 31:35
20 ^s ⁵ souls ⁶ expanse
21 ^w Ps. 104:25-28
22 ^x Gen. 8:17

26 ^y Gen. 9:6; Ps.
100:3; Eccl. 7:29;
[Eph. 4:24]; James
3:9 ^z Gen. 9:2; Ps.
8:6-8 ⁷ Syr. *all the
wild animals of*
27 ^a Gen. 5:2; 1 Cor.
11:7 ⁸ Matt. 19:4;
[Mark 10:6-8]
28 ^c Gen. 9:1, 7; Lev.
26:9 ^d 1 Cor. 9:27

the evening and the morning were the fifth day.

²⁴Then God said, “Let the earth bring forth the living creature according to its kind: cattle and creeping thing and beast of the earth, *each* according to its kind”; and it was so. ²⁵And God made the beast of the earth according to its kind, cattle according to its kind, and everything that creeps on the earth according to its kind. And God saw that *it was* good.

²⁶Then God said, ^y“Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; ^zlet them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over ⁷all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” ²⁷So God created man ^ain His *own* image; in the image of God He created him; ^bmale and female He created them. ²⁸Then God blessed them, and God said to them, ^c“Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and ^dsubdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over

have mistakenly viewed these words as a biblical basis for astrology. The signs in this case relate to phases of the moon and the relative positions of stars that mark the passage of time from the vantage point of earth. The two words form a pair that may be translated *seasonal signs*.

1:16 As in vv. 14, 15, the term for **lights** can mean “luminaries.” The word can either designate the sun, which emits light, or the moon, which reflects light. **He made the stars also:** This is a remarkable statement. In the ancient Middle East, other religions worshiped, deified, and mystified the stars. Israel’s neighbors revered the stars and looked to them for guidance. In contrast, the biblical creation story gives the stars only the barest mention, as though the writer shrugged and said, “And, oh, yes. He also made the stars.” Such a statement showed great contempt for ancient Babylonian astrology (see Ps. 29:93).

1:17 **God set them:** Interestingly, the sun and moon are not named here, though they are clearly intended. The principal issue throughout these verses is that God alone is in control.

1:21 The verb for **created** is the same one used in v. 1 (see v. 27, the creation of man). **According to its kind** suggests the capability to reproduce themselves (see v. 12). God not only made the living creatures, but He gave them the power to propagate and to proliferate, to fill the air and the seas in great numbers and in wonderful variety.

1:22 **God blessed them:** The first use of this important phrasing in the Bible (see 1:28; 2:3; 12:2, 3), and it is used of fish and birds!

1:24 The expression **living creature** contains the word sometimes used for the soul, but the word can also mean “life,” “being,” “living thing,” or “person,” depending on the context. The same phrase is used for man in 2:7. **cattle and creeping thing and beast of the**

earth: Three sweeping categories, like those of vv. 11, 20, make the point that God created all living things.

1:25 **God saw that it was good:** The sixth time that this phrasing is used (see 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21). Everything that God had made so far was good.

1:26 **Let Us make** emphasizes the majesty of the speaker and allows for the later revelation of the Trinity (see 11:7; Matt. 28:19). The *Us* cannot refer to the angels that are present with God because man is made in the image of God, not of the angels. **In Our image:** What is the image of God in man? The traditional view is that God’s image includes certain moral, ethical, and intellectual abilities. A more recent view, based on Hebrew grammar and the knowledge of the ancient Middle East, interprets the phrase as meaning “Let Us make man *as* our image” (the Hebrew preposition in this phrase can be translated *as*). God placed humankind as living symbols of Himself on earth to represent His reign. This interpretation fits well with the command that follows—to reign over all that God has made. **according to Our likeness:** This phrase draws attention to the preceding figure of speech. Since God is Spirit (John 4:24), there can be no “image” or “likeness” of Him in the normal sense of these words. Indeed, image-making was later strongly prohibited because of the clear ties it had with idolatry (see Ex. 20:4–6). We may not make images of God for He has already done so! *We are His images; it is we who are in His likeness.* This is the reason God values people so much: We are made to reflect His majesty on earth. **have dominion:** Rule as God’s regent. That is, people are to rule as God would—wisely and prudently.

1:27 **So God created man:** The third time the verb for *create* is used in ch. 1 (see vv. 1, 21); here it is used three times. The language of vv. 26, 28 is elevated prose; this verse is pure poetry. The 12 words of the original Hebrew are arranged in three lines that have their own poetic repetition and cadence. The term for man is likely associated with the term for the red earth. Here the word is generic, including **male and female.** These words are sexual. Some have thought that the “discovery” of human sexuality was the forbidden fruit of ch. 3. However, these words indicate that human sexuality was a part of the original creation (5:2). Although the misuse of human sexuality is soundly condemned in Scripture (Lev. 18), its proper use is celebrated (2:24, 25; Song). Verses 26–28 include the woman no less than the man in the story of creation.

1:28 **God blessed them:** God’s smile; the warmth of His pleasure (1:22; 2:3; 9:1; 12:2, 3). God delighted in what He had made (Prov. 8:30, 31). The word translated **subdue** means “bring into bondage.” This harsh term is used elsewhere of military conquest (Zech. 9:15)

heavens

(Heb. *shamayim*) (1:1, 8, 9; 2:1; Ps. 2:4) Strong’s #8064

The Hebrew word for *heavens* may refer to either the physical heavens, the sky or the atmosphere of earth (2:1, 4, 19), or to the dwelling place of God (Ps. 14:2), the spiritual heaven. The expression is probably derived from a word meaning “to be high, lofty.” To describe God as living in the heavens is to describe His exalted position over all people. The physical heavens testify to God’s glorious position and also to His creative genius (Ps. 19:1, 6).

the birds of the air, and over every living thing that ⁸moves on the earth.”

²⁹ And God said, “See, I have given you every herb *that* yields seed which is on the face of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed; ^cto you it shall be for food. ³⁰ Also, to ^fevery beast of the earth, to every ^gbird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, in which *there is* ^hlife, *I have given* every green herb for food”; and it was so. ³¹ Then ^hGod saw everything that He had made, and indeed *it was* very good.

²⁸ ^a *moves about on*
²⁹ ^e Gen. 9:3; Ps.
104:14, 15
³⁰ ^f Ps. 145:15 ^g Job
38:41 ^h *a living soul*
³¹ ^h [Ps. 104:24;
1 Tim. 4:4]

CHAPTER 2

¹ ^a Ps. 33:6
² ^b Ex. 20:9–11;
31:17; Heb. 4:4, 10
³ ^c [Is. 58:13]
⁴ ^d Gen. 1:1; Ps. 90:1,
2 ^e Heb. *toledoth*,
lit. *generations*

So the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

² ^a Thus the heavens and the earth, and ^aall the host of them, were finished. ^{2b} And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. ³ Then God ^cblessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.

^{4d} This is the ¹history of the heavens and the earth when they were created,

and of God subduing our iniquities (Mic. 7:19). As a king sets off to war to conquer a territory, so humans are told by the Great King to subdue the earth and rule it. Why this need to subjugate the earth? There are at least four possibilities: (1) Sin would ruin the earth, and people would have to expend great effort to live there (see 3:17–19). (2) Satan would defy the will of God and make all good efforts difficult. (3) The earth left to itself would not remain good. Instead, God planned that people would need to manage and control it. (4) The beauty of the earth was only in the garden that God planted (see 2:8); the rest of the earth would be hostile. Whatever the case, subdue does not mean “destroy” or “ruin.” It does mean to “act as managers who have the authority to run everything as God planned.” This command applies equally to male and female. ^{1:29} Many suggest that Adam and Eve were vegetarians because God gave them **every herb** and **every tree**.

^{1:31} This is the seventh use of the term **good** in the creation story (1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25). It is only one of several key terms that are used in multiples of seven in this text.

^{2:1} While mention is made of the heavens, the focus in the first chapter has been on the earth. Although the earth is not the phys-

ical center of the universe, it is the center of God’s great creative work.

^{2:2} God did not rest because of fatigue, but because of His accomplishment. God is never weary (Is. 40:28, 29). The verb translated as **rested** is related to the word for Sabbath, which means “rest.” Many assume that the basic meaning of the Sabbath is worship, but this is not the case (Ex. 20:9–11; Deut. 5:12–14). By God’s blessed inactivity on this seventh day, He showed that He was satisfied with the work He had done.

^{2:3} God blessed the birds and fish (1:22), humans (1:28), and now **the seventh day** (Saturday). He **sanctified** it; He made it holy. Thus, from the beginning of time, God placed special value on a certain day of the week.

^{2:4} The term translated as **history** is found in ten significant passages in Genesis (here and 5:1; 6:9; 10:1; 11:10, 27; 25:12, 19; 36:1, 9; 37:2). The term may be translated *family histories* and is a major marker of the different sections of the Book of Genesis. **In the day** means “when.” **The Lord God** is a significant new term for God. The word translated as *God* is the same word as in 1:1. The word translated as “**LORD**” is the proper name for God, Yahweh (or

God as Creator

“God created the heavens and the earth” (1:1). These words form one of the Bible’s principal assertions about the material world—that God created it all.

The first two chapters of Genesis present two complementary accounts of creation (Ps. 104 and Prov. 8 present two additional accounts). Genesis 1 pictures God in sublime terms—grand and awesome. The Hebrew term used for deity in this section (*Elohim*) speaks of God’s majesty, sovereignty, and awesome power. With a mere word, God spoke the entire universe into existence. When He finished, He called every part of His creation “very good” (1:31).

Genesis 2, on the other hand, presents a more personal picture of creation. It focuses on the creation of man and woman—the only beings in creation who reflect the very image of God. In this section, God’s personal name (*Yahweh*, or **LORD**) is used rather than His title, “God.” This is because God personally shaped Adam from the dust of the earth, breathing life into him, and forming Eve from Adam’s flesh and bone. Moreover, the section depicts God placing Adam and Eve in a beautiful garden and interacting with them.



These first chapters of Genesis reveal God’s identity as Creator of the material world.

The Garden of Eden, Kessel, Jan van, the Elder (1626–79)/Johnny van Haften Gallery, London, UK/The Bridgeman Art Library

Of course, these two chapters are not written in terms of modern science. But neither are they written in what would have passed for science in ancient times. If the Bible had been written in the “scientific” language of its day, it would be little more than a relic today. Had it been written in the scientific language of the Middle Ages, it would have been a mystery to its first readers and nonsense to us. Had it been written in the scientific language of our own day, it would have been unintelligible to prior generations—and to be sure, a relic in future years.

These first chapters of Genesis reveal God’s identity as Creator in language that makes sense to every sort of audience. The chapters spoke first to a people on the move, at the dawn of Hebrew history. Over the ages, they have spoken to ancient and medieval peoples. And today, they speak to people from all backgrounds. The modern person sometimes wonders why the language is not more precise. Yet these chapters do not aim at precision—their aim is clarity concerning one certain truth: *God created the heavens and the earth.*

in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens, ⁵before any ^eplant of the field was in the earth and before any herb of the field had grown. For the LORD God had not ^fcaused it to rain on the earth, and *there was* no man ^gto till the ground; ⁶but a mist went up from the earth and watered the whole face of the ground.

⁷And the LORD God formed man *of* the ^hdust of the ground, and ⁱbreathed into his ^jnostrils the breath of life; and ^kman became a living being.

Life in God's Garden

⁸The LORD God planted ^la garden ^meastward in ⁿEden, and there He put the man whom He had formed. ⁹And out of the ground the LORD God made ^oevery tree grow that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. ^pThe tree of life *was* also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and ^qevil.

¹⁰Now a river went out of Eden to water the garden, and from there it parted and became four riverheads. ¹¹The name of the first *is* Pishon; *it is* the one

5 ^e Gen. 1:11, 12
7 ^f Gen. 7:4; Job 5:10;
38:26-28 ^g Gen.
3:23
7 ^h Gen. 3:19, 23; Ps.
103:14 ⁱ Job 33:4
1 ^j Gen. 7:22 ^k 1 Cor.
15:45
8 ^l Is. 51:3 ^m Gen.
3:23, 24 ⁿ Gen. 4:16
9 ^o Ezek. 31:8
1 ^p Gen. 3:22; Rev.
2:7; 22:2, 14
9 ^q [Deut. 1:39]

11 ^r Gen. 25:18
12 ^s Num. 11:7
14 ^t Dan. 10:4
2 ^u Or *Tigris* ^v Heb.
Ashshur
15 ^w Or *Adam*
15 ^x *Cultivate*
17 ^y Gen. 3:1, 3, 11,
17 ^z Gen. 3:3, 19;
[Rom. 6:23] ^{aa} Rom.
5:12; 1 Cor. 15:21,
22 ^{ab} Lit. *dying you*
shall die
18 ^{ac} 1 Cor. 11:8, 9;
1 Tim. 2:13
19 ^{ad} Gen. 1:20, 24
2 ^{ae} Ps. 8:6 ^{af} Or *the*
man

which skirts ^rthe whole land of Havilah, where *there is* gold. ¹²And the gold of that land *is* good. ^sBdellium and the onyx stone *are* there. ¹³The name of the second river *is* Gihon; *it is* the one which goes around the whole land of Cush. ¹⁴The name of the third river *is* ^tHiddekel; ² *it is* the one which goes toward the east of ³ Assyria. The fourth river *is* the Euphrates.

¹⁵Then the LORD God took ⁴the man and put him in the garden of Eden to ⁵tend and keep it. ¹⁶And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, “Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; ¹⁷but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil ^uyou shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it ^vyou ⁶shall surely ^wdie.”

¹⁸And the LORD God said, “*It is* not good that man should be alone; ^xI will make him a helper comparable to him.” ¹⁹Out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and ^zbrought *them* to ⁷Adam to see what he would call them. And whatever Adam called each living creature, that *was* its name. ²⁰So Adam

Jehovah; see Ex. 3:14, 15). The God of ch. 1 and the LORD God of ch. 2 are the same.

2:5 The order of events in the second creation story is somewhat different from the first account (1:1—2:3). Conditions were radically different from those we now know and understand. The phrase **not caused it to rain** anticipates the story of the Flood (see chs. 6–9). Here was an element of creation that was still in process. **man to till the ground:** The Hebrew term for man sounds similar to the term for ground (1:26; 2:7).

2:6 The precise meaning of the term translated as **mist** is unknown. Obviously it refers to some manner of irrigation before the Lord brought the cycles of rain into being.

2:7 The word **formed** is the term for a potter's shaping of pots. Since man is made from the **dust of the ground**, that is where he returns when he dies (see 3:19). Although God created light with a mere word (1:3), He created man by fashioning a body out of mud and clay, transforming the clay into something new, and then breathing life into it. This **breath** may be the narrator's way of describing the infusion of the human spirit, with its moral, intellectual, relational, and spiritual capacities. God showed tender care and intimate concern in the way He shaped man. **living being:** This is the same term that was used of animal life in 1:24. In this phrase we see how humans and animal life are similar, but the breath of life makes humans distinct from all other creatures.

2:8 The term **Eden** is not explained except that it is **eastward**. The exact location is not known. The planting of a garden is a touch of God's meticulous, personal care. This picture of a caring and loving God complements the picture of the strong and transcendent Creator in ch. 1.

2:9 As created, man was able to enjoy **pleasant** sights—something that would later become corrupted by sin and give rise to lust (1 John 2:16). Eden was an extraordinarily appointed garden, with choice specimens of the finest trees and plants. Two trees of very special importance were also there, **the tree of life** and **the tree of the knowledge of good and evil** (2:17; 3:24).

2:10–14 God provided a grand **river** in order to water the garden. With great care, He prepared the habitation of His people. The names Pishon, Gihon, Hiddekel, and Euphrates relate to later rivers that were known to the first readers of the text. But these later rivers likely would only approximate the location of the original ones.

The Flood obliterated earlier river courses. The New Jerusalem, the habitation of God's people in the future, will have a river as well as a new tree of life (see Rev. 22:1, 2).

2:15 The **garden** was perfectly prepared. It was man's home and he had **to tend and keep it**. Even the biblical paradise required work (1:26–28)!

2:16 In His great grace, God gave permission before He gave restriction. And the permission was broad (**of every tree**), while the restriction was narrow (v. 17). Man could do almost anything he wanted. It appears that man limited his diet to vegetation at first; only after the Flood is there mention of God's gift of meat as well (see 9:3).

2:17 the tree of the knowledge of good and evil: The phrase suggests “full knowledge” by tying together two contrasting words (as in 1:1, “heavens and earth”). We know little about this tree. Presumably, God wanted man to learn wisdom, but wisdom tied to his relationship with his Creator. **shall surely die:** These emphatic words are made of two forms of the verb meaning “to die.” The point is not that the guilty person would drop dead right then, but that it would certainly happen—there is no escape (Heb. 9:27).

2:18 It is not good: The first time a negative assessment appears in Genesis (see 1:31). God did not want Adam to be lonely, so He fashioned a **helper comparable to him**. This phrase indicates that this helper (or partner) would be truly fitting and fully adequate—just right. Some have thought that the term is demeaning, but it simply means “one who helps,” and in fact is used to describe God when He comes to our aid (see Ps. 33:20; 115:9, 10, 11). It does not refer to someone who is secondary or inferior.

2:19 The same verb for **formed** used here for God's creation of animals is also used for His creation of man (in v. 7). Again, the verb suggests a potter at work casting his pots. But now, the pots are a lion and a raccoon, a raven and a stork. It appears that God created each animal (or group of animals) for the man to observe, study, and classify, **to see what he would call them**. In giving each animal its **name**, Adam demonstrated his right as God's regent (see 1:26–28). He was lord over all created order. Furthermore, Adam's names “stuck.” That is, he demonstrated perfect insight in the names he used for the animals. They were more than titles; they were terms that described the animals accurately.

2:20 In his close study of the living things that God paraded before

gave names to all cattle, to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper comparable to him.

²¹ And the LORD God caused a ^a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place. ²² Then the rib which the LORD God had taken from man He ⁸ made into a woman, ^b and He ^c brought her to the man.

²³ And Adam said:

“This is now ^d bone of my bones
And flesh of my flesh;
She shall be called ⁹ Woman,
Because she was ^e taken out of
¹ Man.”

²⁴ ^f Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and ^g be ² joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

²⁵ ^h And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ⁱ ashamed.

²¹ ^a Gen. 15:12;
1 Sam. 26:12;
²² ^b Gen. 3:20;
1 Tim. 2:13 ^c Heb.
13:4 ⁸ Lit. *built*
²³ ^d Gen. 29:14;
Eph. 5:28-30
^e 1 Cor. 11:8, 9
⁹ Heb. *Ishshah*
¹ Heb. *Ish*
²⁴ ^f Matt. 19:5; Eph.
5:31 ^g Mark 10:6-8;
1 Cor. 6:16 ² Lit.
clinging
²⁵ ^h Gen. 3:7, 10
ⁱ Is. 47:3

CHAPTER 3

¹ ^a 1 Chr. 21:1;
[Rev. 12:9; 20:2, 10]
² 2 Cor. 11:3
² ^c Gen. 2:16, 17
³ ^d Ex. 19:12, 13; Rev.
22:14
⁴ ^e John 8:44; [2 Cor.
11:3; 1 Tim. 2:14]
⁶ ^f 1 John 2:16
⁹ 1 Tim. 2:14 ¹ Lit. *a*
desirable thing
⁷ ^h Gen. 2:25

The Temptation and Fall of Man

3 Now ^a the serpent was ^b more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, “Has God indeed said, ‘You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?’”

² And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat the ^c fruit of the trees of the garden; ³ but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, ‘You shall not eat it, nor shall you ^d touch it, lest you die.’”

⁴ ^e Then the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die. ⁵ For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”

⁶ So when the woman ^f saw that the tree was good for food, that it was ¹ pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make *one* wise, she took of its fruit ^g and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate. ⁷ Then the eyes of both of them were opened, ^h and they knew that they were

him, Adam did not find a **helper comparable to him**. He needed a companion just like him, not a servant or an aide (see v. 18); but another life like himself—with intelligence, personality, ethical and moral sensitivity, and spirituality. Yet the only living things that Adam found were some fascinating animals!

2:21 This is the first surgery, and God was the Surgeon. In His kindness, God used an unusually **deep sleep** as an anesthetic for the task. God’s use of a **rib** was fitting. He might have started over with dust and clay. But by using a part of Adam himself, the identification of Adam with his partner would be ensured. As Luther observed, God might have taken a bone from a toe and thus signified that Adam was to rule over her; or He might have taken a bone from his head to indicate her rule over him. But by taking a bone from his side, God implied equality and mutual respect.

2:22 The verb **made** means “to build.” The expansion of one small part into a complete body makes sense in today’s understanding of molecular structure and DNA.

2:23 **This is now** means “At last!” **bone of my bones**: Adam’s wording is poetic and exalted—seeing Eve was a shocking and exhilarating experience because the match was perfect. Here was a mirror of himself, someone just like him, and yet different! **She shall be called Woman**: In giving the woman her name, Adam was functioning as he had in naming the animals (v. 19). Yet the name that he gave her matched his own. She was woman, and he was man—perfectly suited for each other.

2:24 In marriage, a man is to **leave** his family, join his wife, and unite with her. Though this process establishes a new home distinct from the parents’, it does not sever all ties with the extended family (the clan). In the biblical period, extended families were quite close and interdependent. The words **be joined** speak of both a physical embrace and more general aspects of marital bonding. In marriage, man and woman are a “we,” not just a “me and you.” **One flesh** suggests both a physical, sexual bonding and a lifelong relationship. There are still two persons, but together they are as one (see Eph. 5:31). In the NT, Jesus refers to this text as the foundation of the biblical view of marriage (Matt. 19:5; 1 Cor. 6:16).

2:25 Because the man and the woman knew only good, they **were not ashamed** even though **they were both naked**. They were comfortable in their physical bodies, in their sexuality, in their relationship, and in their work—with no wrongdoing. The wording of vv. 24, 25 suggests the couple experienced sexual relations in the garden as a part of their God-intended experience. At 4:1 we first read of procreation, not necessarily the couple’s first sexual experience together.

3:1 With no introduction, **the serpent** appeared in Paradise. This is the first clue in Scripture of creation outside the one Adam and Eve experienced. The serpent symbolizes something both fascinating and loathsome. Yet neither Adam nor Eve saw the danger embodied in the serpent. The Hebrew word for **cunning** sounds like the Hebrew word for **naked** in 2:25. Adam and Eve were naked in innocence; the serpent was crafty and sneaky. In Eve’s innocence and naiveté, she showed no surprise on hearing a strange voice from the snake. **Has God indeed said**: Note that the serpent did not use the divine name Yahweh.

3:2 **We may eat**: Eve repeated the positive words of God (see 2:16).

3:3 There was one tree Eve knew to be off limits. This tree was in the middle of the garden. **nor shall you touch it**: Some interpreters suggest that the woman was already sinning by adding to the word of God, for these words were not part of God’s instructions in 2:17. Yet the first sin was not lying, it was eating the fruit that God had forbidden. Her words reflected the original command well enough and indeed they would have ensured that the command would be kept.

3:4 For the first time (here), Satan lied: **You will not surely die**. Lying was Satan’s craft right from the beginning (John 8:44). The serpent boldly denied the truth of what God had said. In essence, the serpent called God a liar.

3:5 By arguing that God had an ulterior motive, the serpent appealed to Eve’s sense of fair play. **you will be like God**: God’s fullness of knowledge was only one of the superiorities that set Him apart from the woman. But the serpent combined all of God’s superiority over the woman into this one audacious appeal to her pride.

3:6 Notice the parallel to 2:9; this tree was like the other trees. It was **good for food**. These words imply that this was the first time Eve considered disobeying God’s command. After all, there was nothing in the tree that was poisonous or harmful, and it was **desirable**. The issue was one of obedience and disobedience to the Word of God. **She took**: The first step. **She ate**: The final step. Once she disobeyed God, all the world changed. (Note, however, that Rom. 5:12 speaks of the sin of Adam rather than the sin of Eve.) Because she did not die, she **gave it to her husband**. **And he ate**: Adam sinned with his eyes wide open. He did not even ask a question. He knew as well as she that the fruit was forbidden. Adam and Eve had now broken faith with the Lord, and the world was forever changed.

3:7 The serpent was right—they knew good and evil (v. 5). This is the awful truth about a skilled liar—the deception comes mixed with truth. Their eyes **were opened**. They discovered that **they were naked**. All of a sudden with no one around but the two of them, they were ashamed (see 2:25). Their lovely naiveté was now

naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves ²coverings.

⁸And they heard ¹the ³sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the ⁴cool of the day, and Adam and his wife ⁵hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.

⁹Then the LORD God called to Adam and said to him, “Where *are* you?”

¹⁰So he said, “I heard Your voice in the garden, ⁶and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself.”

¹¹And He said, “Who told you that you *were* naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?”

¹²Then the man said, ¹⁴“The woman whom You gave to *be* with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate.”

¹³And the LORD God said to the woman, “What *is* this you have done?”

The woman said, ¹⁵“The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”

¹⁴So the LORD God said to the serpent:

“Because you have done this,
You *are* cursed more than all cattle,
And more than every beast of the
field;

On your belly you shall go,

⁷ ²girding
coverings

⁸ ¹ Job 38:1 ¹ Job
31:33; Jer. 23:24

³ Or voice ⁴ Or
wind, breeze

¹⁰ ⁶ Gen. 2:25; Ex.
3:6; Deut. 9:19;

¹ John 3:20

¹² ¹ (Prov. 28:13)

¹³ ¹⁵ Gen. 3:4; 2 Cor.

11:3; 1 Tim. 2:14

¹⁴ ¹⁵ Deut. 28:15-20;

Is. 65:25; Mic. 7:17

¹⁵ ⁶ John 8:44;

Acts 13:10; 1 John

3:8 ¹⁵ Is. 7:14; Luke

1:31, 34, 35; Gal.

4:4 ⁶ Rom. 16:20 ¹⁵;

[Rev. 12:7, 17]

¹⁶ ¹⁵ Is. 13:8; John

16:21 ¹⁵ Gen. 4:7

¹ 1 Cor. 11:3; Eph.

5:22; 1 Tim. 2:12, 15

² Lit. toward

¹⁷ ¹⁵ 1 Sam. 15:23

¹⁵ Gen. 2:17 ¹⁵ Gen.

5:29; Rom. 8:20-22;

Heb. 6:8 ¹⁵ Job 5:7;

14:1; Eccl. 2:23

¹⁸ ⁶ cause to grow

And ¹⁵you shall eat dust
All the days of your life.

And I will put enmity
Between you and the woman,
And between ⁹your seed and ¹⁰her
Seed;

⁹He shall bruise your head,
And you shall bruise His heel.”

¹⁶To the woman He said:

“I will greatly multiply your sorrow
and your conception;

⁷In pain you shall bring forth
children;

⁵Your desire *shall be* ⁵for your
husband,
And he shall ¹rule over you.”

¹⁷Then to Adam He said, ““Because
you have heeded the voice of your wife,
and have eaten from the tree ¹⁰of which I
commanded you, saying, ‘You shall not
eat of it’:

¹⁰“Cursed *is* the ground for your sake;

¹⁵In toil you shall eat of it
All the days of your life.

¹⁸Both thorns and thistles it shall
⁶bring forth for you,

replaced by evil thoughts, and they covered themselves with **fig leaves**.

3:8 The scene is pathetic and sad. Here comes the Lord for an evening walk and a cozy chat. But Adam and Eve, who have “become wise,” cower in the trees to avoid being seen by the Creator of the universe. What had been a perfect, shameless fellowship has turned into dreadful fear of God—not fear in the sense of true piety, as with Abraham, Moses, David, and Solomon—but the raw terror of being discovered in the wrong.

3:9 God, in His mercy, did not destroy both of them immediately. He even called out to them and interacted with them (see vv. 10–12). God’s mercy reaches further than we usually believe—or else we would all be destroyed.

3:11 The Lord carried the interrogation to its sad ending by posing one question after another.

3:12 A guilty man’s first line of defense is blame. Adam blamed **the woman**, and then he blamed God for having given her to him (for David’s contrasting response to Nathan, see 2 Sam. 12:13).

3:13 **the serpent deceived me, and I ate:** A simple statement of fact.

3:14 to the serpent: The Lord turned first to the serpent and brought His judgment upon him. God did not excuse the woman because she was deceived, but He did bring the harsher judgment on the one who deceived her. The language in these verses is poetry, something that adds solemnity to them. The word translated as **cursed** in this verse is used only of the curse on the serpent and on the ground (v. 17). The woman and the man faced harsh new realities, but they were not cursed (God had already blessed them; 1:28). The text suggests that the serpent became a creature that slithers on the ground and appears to eat dust. This implies that before this the serpent had some other bodily form.

3:15 **enmity between you and the woman:** This is not just about snakes; it is about the enemy of our souls, Satan. **your seed and her Seed:** The language is ambiguous, but still contains the promise of a child. The term *seed* may be translated *offspring* (as in 15:3) or *descendants* (as in 15:5, 13, 18). The term may refer to an individual (Gal. 3:16) or a group of people. This means, among other things,

that Eve would live—at least for a while. The Seed of the woman is the Promised One, the coming Messiah of Israel. *Seed* continues to be used throughout the Bible as a messianic term (see Num. 24:7; Is. 6:13). The meaning of the phrase **your seed** as it applies to the serpent is uncertain (but see John 8:37–47). The reference is ultimately to Satan. **your head:** This is sometimes called the “first gospel” because these words, as indirect as they are, promise the Coming One whom we know to be the Lord Jesus, the Messiah. The Lord was showing mercy even as He judged (see also 4:15). **Bruise His heel** speaks of a serious injury, but it is contrasted with the bruising of the **head**—the defeat—of the serpent’s seed. When Jesus went to the cross, He was bruised in His heel. That is, He suffered a terrible but temporary injury (John 12:31; Col. 2:15). In His resurrection, He defeated His enemy.

3:16 **your sorrow and your conception:** These two words mean “your sorrowful conception” (see 1:2; 4:12; 9:2; Ps. 9:2). That is, the woman’s joy in conceiving and bearing children will be saddened by the pain of it. The word **desire** can also mean “an attempt to usurp or control” as in 4:7. We can paraphrase the last two lines of this verse this way: “You will now have a tendency to dominate your husband, and he will have the tendency to act as a tyrant over you.” The battle of the sexes has begun. Each strives for control and neither lives in the best interest of the other (see Phil. 2:3, 4). The antidote is in the restoration of mutual respect and dignity through Jesus Christ (see Eph. 5:21–33).

3:17–19 Adam got his share of blame, even though he tried to escape it (v. 12). **Cursed is the ground:** Though the curse was not directed at the man, it is trouble for the man. Now his life will be marked by **toil, thorns and thistles, sweat**, and finally death. These words imply that before the Fall the ground was not filled with noxious weeds and work would have been more pleasant (2:15). **to dust you shall return:** Death will now come to human-kind, whereas there had been the possibility of living forever (see Rom. 5:12–14). The word of God was sure: God had stated that they would certainly die (2:17). Now they were served notice concerning the process of aging and decay that was already at work (see 5:5; 6:3).

And ^uyou shall eat the herb of the field.

^{19 z}In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread

Till you return to the ground,
For out of it you were taken;

^aFor dust you *are*,
And ^bto dust you shall return.”

²⁰ And Adam called his wife's name ^cEve,⁷ because she was the mother of all living.

²¹ Also for Adam and his wife the LORD God made tunics of skin, and clothed them.

²² Then the LORD God said, “Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil. And now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever”—

²³ therefore the LORD God sent him out of the garden of Eden ^dto till the ground from which he was taken. ²⁴ So ^eHe drove out the man; and He placed ^fcherubim ^gat the east of the garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of ^hlife.

18 ^y Ps. 104:14
19 ^z 2 Thess. 3:10
^a Gen. 2:7; 5:5 ^b Job 21:26; Eccl. 3:20
20 ^c 2 Cor. 11:3;
1 Tim. 2:13 ¹ Lit. *Life or Living*
23 ^d Gen. 4:2; 9:20
24 ^e Ezek. 31:3, 11
^f Ex. 25:18–22; Ps. 104:4; Ezek. 10:1–20;
Heb. 1:7 ^g Gen. 2:8
^h Gen. 2:9; (Rev. 22:2)

CHAPTER 4

1 ¹ Lit. *Acquire*
2 ^a Luke 11:50;
51 ² Lit. *Breath or Nothing*
3 ^b Num. 18:12 ³ Lit. *at the end of days*
4 ^c Num. 18:17
^d Lev. 3:16 ^e Heb. 11:4
7 ⁴ Lit. *toward*
8 ^f Matt. 23:35;
Luke 11:51; (1 John 3:12–15); Jude 11
⁵ Lit. *said to* ⁶ Sam., LXX, Syr., Vg. add *“Let us go out to the field.”*

Cain Murders Abel

4 Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore ¹Cain, and said, “I have acquired a man from the LORD.” ² Then she bore again, this time his brother ²Abel. Now ^aAbel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. ³ And ³in the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought an offering of the fruit ^bof the ground to the LORD. ⁴ Abel also brought of ^cthe firstborn of his flock and of ^dtheir fat. And the LORD ^erespected Abel and his offering, ⁵but He did not respect Cain and his offering. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell.

⁶ So the LORD said to Cain, “Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? ⁷If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire is ⁴for you, but you should rule over it.”

⁸ Now Cain ⁵talked with Abel his ⁶brother; and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and ⁷killed him.

⁹ Then the LORD said to Cain, “Where is Abel your brother?”

3:20 The name **Eve** is related to the verb meaning “to live.” Eve is our common mother, just as Adam is our common father. This is Adam's second name for her. The first was *woman*, the feminine complement to his own masculinity (2:23).

3:21 This is the first place the Bible mentions the killing of animals for human use—this time for **tunics**.

3:22 become like one of Us: By means of their rebellious act, the man and woman now shared something with God. But they were also at enmity with Him because of their sin. Adam and Eve's knowledge of good and evil had made them not wise but foolish. The fruit of the **tree of life** stopped aging. To eat of this tree was to **live forever**. One day this tree will be planted anew and its fruit will be for the healing of the nations (Rev. 22:2).

3:23 The man had been formed by God outside the **garden** (2:5–8, 15) and had been given the task of tending and keeping it. Now he was removed from the garden and sent back to till the soil **from which he was taken** (see 2:5; 3:17–19).

3:24 Even though Eve sinned first, this section (vv. 22–24) focuses on the **man**, Adam. This is the first reference to holy angels or the **cherubim** in the Book of Genesis. The creation of the angels (including those who rebelled against God; see 6:1–4) preceded the creation activities described in chs. 1; 2. A cherub (pl., cherubim) is an angel who takes on a particular form (see Ex. 25:18–22; cf. Ezek. 1:5–28). Cherubim, like all angels, are spirit beings, but they can take on physical bodies. Adam and Eve were barred from the garden that God had planted for their enjoyment with a **flaming sword**. There was no way back in. The fact that the **tree of life** remained, even though guarded by angels and a sword, was a ray of hope. Is it not possible that the very fact He guarded it, but did not uproot it, signifies that one day its fruit may be eaten again? Indeed, one day we will see it again (Rev. 22:2). Adam and Eve were no longer welcome in God's presence, but they had the hope that one day Paradise would be regained.

4:1 The verb **knew** is a splendid euphemism for sexual intercourse. It describes an intimate relationship that includes ardor and passion, but also mutuality and oneness. This was an act of procreation, but most likely not the first sexual union between Adam and Eve. The name **Cain** is related to a word meaning “craftsman” or “metal-worker,” but it also sounds like the Hebrew word translated **I have acquired**. At times in Genesis, the meaning for a name is taken

directly from it (for example, Ishmael in 16:11); at other times the meaning is based on a pun—a word that sounds similar to the name itself.

4:2 We have no explanation of the name **Abel** as we have with Cain (v. 1). Perhaps after Abel was murdered (v. 8), the parents looked back with sadness on the brevity of his life and called him Abel (meaning “vapor”) because his life was over so quickly. Keeping **sheep** and tilling the **ground** were equally valid occupations. They reflected merely different interests of the two brothers, not their character. The story of Cain and Abel begins a motif in Genesis of competing sons (like Esau and Jacob, 25:26).

4:3 Genesis does not explain how the practice of sacrificial worship began. The first readers of the book understood it well, because they had been instructed in full by God through Moses (see Leviticus). Some people assume that Cain's sacrifice of **fruit** was deficient because it did not involve the shedding of blood, which God required for forgiveness of sins (see Heb. 9:22). But nothing in ch. 4 indicates that Cain and Abel came to God for forgiveness; their sacrifices were acts of worship. In the later sacrificial system of Israel, God blessed the presentation of grain offerings alongside the sacrifices of animals (see Lev. 6:14–23). A farmer presented a portion of his produce just as a herdsman presented a sample of his flock. Cain's sacrifice was deficient because Cain did not “do well” (v. 7), not because the sacrifice was the “fruit of the ground.”

4:4 Abel's sacrifice was the best that he had to offer—the **firstborn** and **their fat**. There are no similar descriptive words for Cain's sacrifice. That is, Cain brought a token gift of his produce to the Lord, but Abel brought the very best. God **respected** or looked with favor first upon the person, *then* on his sacrifice (see Ps. 40:6–8). Abel's offering was “more excellent” than Cain's because of Abel's faith in the Lord (Heb. 11:4).

4:5 Something deficient in Cain's attitude was reflected in his offering. Instead of repenting of his wrongdoing, Cain became angry and, we discover, filled with jealousy (v. 8).

4:7 The gracious words of the Lord were that Cain could get it right! He did not have to go on being angry and morose, he could **do well**. Sin was lying at the **door**, about to pounce on him as a lion.

4:8 The murder was stunning in its lack of precedent, its suddenness, and its finality. Jesus spoke of this ghastly event as a historical fact (Matt. 23:35).

He said, ^a“I do not know. Am I ^bmy brother’s keeper?”

¹⁰ And He said, “What have you done? The voice of your brother’s blood ^ccries out to Me from the ground. ¹¹ So now ^dyou are cursed from the earth, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother’s blood from your hand. ¹² When you till the ground, it shall no longer yield its strength to you. A fugitive and a vagabond you shall be on the earth.”

¹³ And Cain said to the LORD, “My ^epunishment is greater than I can bear! ¹⁴ Surely You have driven me out this day from the face of the ground; ^fI shall be ^ghidden from Your face; I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond on the earth, and it will happen ^hthat ⁱanyone who finds me will kill me.”

¹⁵ And the LORD said to him, ^j“Therefore, whoever kills Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him ^ksevenfold.” And the LORD set a ^lmark on Cain, lest anyone finding him should kill him.

The Family of Cain

¹⁶ Then Cain ^mwent out from the ⁿpresence of the LORD and dwelt in the land of ^oNod on the east of Eden. ¹⁷ And Cain knew his wife, and she conceived and bore Enoch. And he built a city, ^pand called the name of the city after the name of his son—Enoch. ¹⁸ To Enoch was born

⁹ ^g John 8:44
^h 1 Cor. 8:11-13
¹⁰ ^h Num. 35:33; Deut. 21:1-9; Heb. 12:24; Rev. 6:9, 10
¹¹ / Gen. 3:14; Deut. 11:28; 28:15-20; Gal. 3:10
¹³ ⁱ iniquity
¹⁴ ^k Ps. 51:11
¹ Deut. 31:18; Is. 1:15
^m Gen. 9:6; Num. 35:19, 21, 27
¹⁵ ⁿ Gen. 4:24; Ps. 79:12 ^o Gen. 9:6; Ezek. 9:4, 6 ^p So with MT, Tg., LXX, Syr., Vg. Not so;
¹⁶ ^q 2 Kin. 13:23; 24:20; Jer. 23:39; 52:3 ^r Jon. 1:3 ^s Lit. Wandering
¹⁷ ^t Ps. 49:11

¹⁹ ^u Gen. 2:24; 16:3; 1 Tim. 3:2
²¹ ^v pipe
²³ ^w slain a man for my wound ^x for my hurt
²⁴ ^y Gen. 4:15
²⁵ ^z Gen. 5:3 ⁴ Lit. Appointed
²⁶ ^{aa} Gen. 5:6
^w Gen. 12:8; 26:25; 1 Kin. 18:24; Ps. 116:17; Joel 2:32; Zeph. 3:9; 1 Cor. 1:2 ⁵ Gr. Enos, Luke 3:38

Irak; and Irak begot Mehujael, and Mehujael begot Methushael, and Methushael begot Lamech.

¹⁹ Then Lamech took for himself ^stwo wives: the name of one was Adah, and the name of the second was Zillah. ²⁰ And Adah bore Jabal. He was the father of those who dwell in tents and have livestock. ²¹ His brother’s name was Jubal. He was the father of all those who play the harp and ^tflute. ²² And as for Zillah, she also bore Tubal-Cain, an instructor of every craftsman in bronze and iron. And the sister of Tubal-Cain was Naamah.

²³ Then Lamech said to his wives:

“Adah and Zillah, hear my voice;
Wives of Lamech, listen to my
speech!

For I have ²killed a man for
wounding me,

Even a young man ³for hurting me.

²⁴ ^t If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold,
Then Lamech seventy-sevenfold.”

A New Son

²⁵ And Adam knew his wife again, and she bore a son and ^unamed him ^vSeth, “For God has appointed another seed for me instead of Abel, whom Cain killed.” ²⁶ And as for Seth, ^wto him also a son was born; and he named him ^xEnosh. Then ^ymen began ^zto call on the name of the LORD.

4:10 That **blood** of Abel **cries** out until the blood of One even more innocent than Abel is shed as well (Heb. 12:24). In the manner of his death, Abel depicts the Savior Jesus.

4:11 Cain was the third to be **cursed** of God; first was the serpent (3:14) and second was the ground (3:17).

4:13 **My punishment:** Usually rendered “iniquity” (as in Ex. 20:5), here the term speaks of the result of iniquity.

4:14 Sadly, Cain expressed his distress only at the punishment he received, not at the crime he had done. Nor was there any note of repentance concerning his dreadful action. **anyone who finds me:** Most have assumed that the others whom Cain feared were sisters and brothers already born but not mentioned or those yet to be born. This idea is based on the wording of 5:4, “and he [Adam] had sons and daughters.” Some have proposed that God created others outside the Garden of Eden, but the Scriptures give no indication of this. It makes sense to conclude that Cain was afraid of his siblings.

4:16 **The land of Nod** is a wordplay on the term for *vagabond* (vv. 12, 14). The point is more theological than geographical; to be apart from the presence of the Lord is to be a vagabond in a “vagabond-land.”

4:17 Cain most likely acquired a **wife** from among his other siblings (see v. 14). The name **Enoch** means “Dedicated One”—the same name as the godly descendant of Seth who “walked with God” (5:21–24). The fact that Cain built a **city** named after his son speaks of a dramatic, rapid increase in population.

4:18 In quick succession, six generations from Cain to Lamech are mentioned. The verse indicates a rapidly expanding population, for the listing of each of these sons includes corresponding wives.

4:19–21 Here, the story of **Lamech’s** most celebrated descendants is given. Lamech represents skill and strength, as well as arrogance and vengeance. This Lamech is not the same as Lamech, the son of Methuselah (5:28–31). **two wives:** This notable act suggests a deliberate attempt by Lamech to subvert the original pattern of

God of one man and one woman (2:24; see also the words of Jesus on the subject, Matt. 19:4–6). **Adah . . . Zillah:** Only rarely in these accounts are the names of women mentioned.

4:22 Some suggest that **iron** was not known during the time of **Tubal-Cain**, and this verse means that later metal workers who did work with iron could look back to Tubal-Cain as the “father” of metallurgy in general. **Naamah:** Even more rare than the names of mothers in these accounts (v. 19) is the listing of the names of daughters and sisters.

4:23, 24 What follows is a boastful taunt song that captures the violent spirit of **Lamech**. The words of Lamech are poetic, making the passage memorable and powerful (see 12:1). **I have killed a man:** In this boast, Lamech indicates that he has followed in the worst pattern of his ancestor Cain. In his wicked braggadocio, he taunted God by his words **seventy-sevenfold**. Whereas the Lord would bring vengeance on the slayer of Cain “sevenfold” (v. 15), Lamech boasted that by himself he would greatly magnify the vengeance on anyone who attacked him. This is another example (although in wickedness) of the inflation of numbers for effect (see Num. 1:46).

4:25 and Adam knew his wife again: These words recall the opening words of the section (v. 1) and bring the section to its conclusion. After the long, sad digression about Cain and his descendants, we return to Adam and Eve and their new progeny. With the death of Abel (v. 8) and the expulsion of Cain (vv. 11, 12), Adam and Eve had no son to carry on their line for good and for the promise of the Messiah. Hence the importance of the birth of **Seth**. His name is related to a Hebrew verb meaning “to place” or “to set” for he was **appointed** to take the *place* of the murdered son in the plan of God.

4:26 The birth of **Enosh** meant that the line of Seth would continue; the promise of the Lord (see 3:15) would not be forgotten. **began to call on the name of the Lord:** These words can hardly mean that only now did people begin to pray to God. Rather, the verb *call* means “to make proclamation.” That is, this is the beginning of preaching, of witnessing, and testifying in the name of the Lord (12:8).

The Family of Adam

5 This is the book of the ^agenealogy of Adam. In the day that God created man, He made him in ^bthe likeness of God. ²He created them ^cmale and female, and ^dblessed them and called them Mankind in the day they were created. ³And Adam lived one hundred and thirty years, and begot ^ea son ^fin his own likeness, after his image, and ^gnamed him Seth. ⁴After he begot Seth, ^hthe days of Adam were eight hundred years; ⁱand he had sons and daughters. ⁵So all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years; ^jand he died.

⁶Seth lived one hundred and five years, and begot ^kEnosh. ⁷After he begot Enosh, Seth lived eight hundred and seven years, and had sons and daughters. ⁸So all the days of Seth were nine hundred and twelve years; and he died.

⁹Enosh lived ninety years, and begot ^lCainan. ¹⁰After he begot Cainan, Enosh lived eight hundred and fifteen years, and had sons and daughters. ¹¹So all the days of Enosh were nine hundred and five years; and he died.

CHAPTER 5

¹ ^a Gen. 2:4; 6:9;
1 Chr. 1:1; Matt.
1:1 ^b Gen. 1:26;
9:6; [Eph. 4:24; Col.
3:10]
² ^c Gen. 1:27; Deut.
4:32; Matt. 19:4;
Mark 10:6 ^d Gen.
1:28; 9:1
³ ^e 1 Cor. 15:48, 49
^f Gen. 4:25
⁴ ^g 1 Chr. 1:1-4;
Luke 3:36-38
^h Gen. 1:28; 4:25
⁵ ⁱ Gen. 2:17; 3:19;
6:17; [Heb. 9:27]
⁶ ^j Gen. 4:26
⁹ ^k Heb. *Qenan*

¹⁸ ^k Jude 14, 15
²² ^l Gen. 6:9; 17:1;
24:40; 48:15; 2 Kin.
20:3; Ps. 16:8;
[Mic. 6:8]; Mal. 2:6;
1 Thess. 2:12; [Heb.
11:39]
²⁴ ^m 2 Kin. 2:11;
Jude 14 ⁿ 2 Kin.
2:10; Ps. 49:15;
73:24; Heb. 11:5

¹²Cainan lived seventy years, and begot Mahalalel. ¹³After he begot Mahalalel, Cainan lived eight hundred and forty years, and had sons and daughters. ¹⁴So all the days of Cainan were nine hundred and ten years; and he died.

¹⁵Mahalalel lived sixty-five years, and begot Jared. ¹⁶After he begot Jared, Mahalalel lived eight hundred and thirty years, and had sons and daughters. ¹⁷So all the days of Mahalalel were eight hundred and ninety-five years; and he died.

¹⁸Jared lived one hundred and sixty-two years, and begot ^kEnoch. ¹⁹After he begot Enoch, Jared lived eight hundred years, and had sons and daughters. ²⁰So all the days of Jared were nine hundred and sixty-two years; and he died.

²¹Enoch lived sixty-five years, and begot Methuselah. ²²After he begot Methuselah, Enoch ^lwalked with God three hundred years, and had sons and daughters. ²³So all the days of Enoch were three hundred and sixty-five years. ²⁴And ^mEnoch walked with God; and he *was* not, for God ⁿtook him.

5:1–32 This chapter abbreviates the family history that connects Adam to Noah. We do not know how much time the chapter represents; its purpose is *connection* rather than chronology.

5:1 The word **genealogy** (or “family histories”) is found in ten significant passages in the Book of Genesis and is a major building block of the book (see the list at 2:4). **In the day** means “when.” **likeness of God**: What God made humankind to be (1:26–28) continues after the Fall (ch. 3; cf. 9:6, after the Flood).

5:2 The original creation of humanity is in two complementary genders, **male and female**, as 1:26–28 clearly states (see 1:27).

5:3 one hundred and thirty years: The long lives of the people of the early chapters of Genesis have led to considerable speculation. One suggestion is that these ages were possible because of tremendously different climate and environmental conditions that were in effect before the Flood (chs. 6–9). A second suggestion is that these ages are ways of expressing the relative importance of the figures; that is, that these are hyperbolic figures that use exaggeration to indicate significance in the ancient world. **likeness . . . image**: These are the same terms (but in reverse order) that are used of humankind in God’s creation (1:26).

5:4 sons and daughters: There may have been a very large number of children born from our first parents. We may presume intermarriage among them, of course. The problems associated with incest, addressed in Lev. 18, would not have occurred when the genetic pool was pure and unpolluted.

5:5 When God made Adam and Eve, the expectation was that they would live forever. There is a profound sadness in Adam’s death, for it reminds us of Adam’s mortality—and hence our own. **and he died**: This refrain is given at the conclusion of each of the ten names in this chapter except one (Enoch; v. 24). The judgment of God on fallen man was fulfilled in the death of Adam and each of his successors (3:19; 6:3). Death entered the world through this one man, and through him passed to all people (see Rom. 5:12; 1 Cor. 15:22).

5:6–20 The pattern of the genealogies is as follows: (1) name “A” lived “x” years; (2) name “A” begot name “B”; (3) name “A” then lived “y” years; (4) name “A” lived “z” (“x”+ “y”) years in all; (5) and he died. See also the pattern in the line of Shem (11:10–26). These lists are incomplete (cf. Matt. 1:1–17); they serve merely to indicate major figures over an extended period of time. As in many such genealogical listings, which were originally oral, these were designed to be recited by memory to mark certain key figures through time

for purposes of *connection*, for tying two great periods or names together. In this case, the point is to tie the line of continuity between Adam and Noah through the line of Seth. Thus when the text says that name “A” begot name “B” at a certain age, the name given for “B” may not be the immediate child but a remote descendant. This conforms to biblical patterns elsewhere as well as to patterns in the ancient Middle East and in many tribal societies even in our own day.

5:21–24 The most fascinating name in this listing is that of **Enoch** (not the son of Cain of the same name, 4:17). The phrase, **Enoch walked with God** (vv. 22, 24), expresses a life of fellowship with and obedience to the Lord (as was true of Noah, 6:8). It also recalls the experience of Adam and Eve, who had lived in even closer proximity to the Lord before the Fall (3:8). **he was not**: This phrase does not mean that Enoch ceased to exist, instead it means that he was taken into God’s presence, **for God took him**. Only Enoch and Elijah (see 2 Kin. 2:11) ever had this experience. Enoch’s remarkable experience was both a testimony of his deep faith in God (see Heb. 11:5, 6) and a strong reminder at the beginning of biblical history that there is life in God’s presence after death for the people of God. What Enoch experienced in a remarkable, dramatic fashion is what each person who “walks with God” will experience—everlasting life with the Savior.

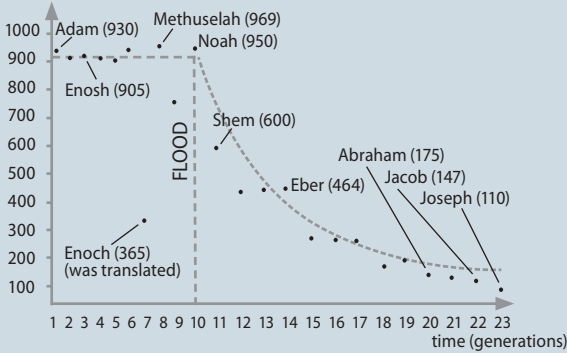
walked

(Heb. *halak*) (5:24; 6:9; Deut. 13:4; Ps. 128:1; Mic. 6:8) Strong’s #1980

The basic meaning of the Hebrew verb translated here as *walk* is “to go” or “to travel.” The word is used often in the OT to signify merely a simple act of motion (13:17; 2 Sam. 11:2). In 6:9 and other passages, the word possesses connotations of a habitual manner of life or a constant relationship with God. Thus the word describes Noah, Enoch, and other people of faith as living in a close relationship with their God and in obedience to His commands. Throughout Scripture, believers are called to *walk* with God daily, abiding in Him completely (Gal. 5:16; 1 John 2:6).

Ages of the Patriarchs

In the genealogy of Gen. 5, the patriarchs who lived before the Flood had an average life span of about 900 years. This contrasts with the genealogy of Gen. 11:10–26 where the ages of the post-Flood patriarchs dropped rapidly and gradually leveled off.



²⁵ Methuselah lived one hundred and eighty-seven years, and begot Lamech. ²⁶ After he begot Lamech, Methuselah lived seven hundred and eighty-two years, and had sons and daughters. ²⁷ So all the days of Methuselah were nine hundred and sixty-nine years; and he died.

²⁸ Lamech lived one hundred and eighty-two years, and had a son. ²⁹ And he called his name ^oNoah, ²saying, “This one will comfort us concerning our work and the toil of our hands, because of the ground ^pwhich the LORD has cursed.” ³⁰ After he begot Noah, Lamech lived

²⁹ ^o Luke 3:36; Heb. 11:7; 1 Pet. 3:20
^p Gen. 3:17-19; 4:11
² Lit. Rest

³² ^o Gen. 6:10; 7:13
^r Gen. 10:21

CHAPTER 6

¹ ^o Gen. 1:28
² ^b Deut. 7:3, 4
³ ^c Gen. 41:38; [Gal. 5:16, 17]; 1 Pet. 3:19, 20
^d 2 Thess. 2:7
^e Ps. 78:39 ¹ LXX, Syr., Tg., Vg. *abide*
⁴ ^f Num. 13:32, 33; Luke 17:27

five hundred and ninety-five years, and had sons and daughters. ³¹ So all the days of Lamech were seven hundred and seventy-seven years; and he died.

³² And Noah was five hundred years old, and Noah begot ^qShem, Ham, ^rand Japheth.

The Wickedness and Judgment of Man

6 Now it came to pass, ^awhen men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born to them, ²that the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they *were* beautiful; and they ^btook wives for themselves of all whom they chose.

³ And the LORD said, ^c“My Spirit shall not ^dstrive ¹with man forever, ^efor he is indeed flesh; yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years.” ⁴ There were ²giants on the earth in those ^fdays, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men and they bore *children* to them. Those *were* the mighty men who *were* of old, men of renown.

⁵ Then ³the LORD saw that the wickedness of man *was* great in the earth, and *that* every ^gintent ⁴of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil ⁵continually. ⁶ And ^hthe LORD was sorry that He had made

² Heb. *nephilim*, fallen or mighty ones ⁵ ^g Gen. 8:21; Ps. 14:1-3; Prov. 6:18; Matt. 15:19; Rom. 1:28-32 ³ So with MT, Tg.; Vg. God; LXX *LORD God* ⁴ *thought* ⁵ *all the day* ⁶ ^h Gen. 6:7; 1 Sam. 15:11, 29; 2 Sam. 24:16; Jer. 18:7-10; Zech. 8:14

5:25 Methuselah is said to have lived longer than any other figure mentioned in Genesis—969 years.

5:28, 29 The most important thing **Lamech** is remembered for is his descendant Noah. The name **Noah** is the only one that is commented upon by the narrator in this chapter. It is a form of the word meaning “to rest” and is associated with **comfort**. Noah’s name refers to a reversal of the curse.

5:32 These sons of Noah, **Shem, Ham, and Japheth**, figure in the ensuing story of the Flood (chs. 6–9).

6:1–4 This passage is one of the most debated in the OT. Three principal interpretations are: (1) The **sons of God** represent the godly line of Seth, and the **daughters of men** represent the ungodly line of Cain; their intermarriage led to apostasy, compromise, and sin. (2) The sons of God are powerful kings who practiced an enforced polygamy by taking wives of **all whom they chose** leading to other wicked practices. (3) The sons of God are fallen angels who cohabited with human women (the daughters of men), producing offspring that were tyrants. The most likely interpretation is that the sons of God were fallen angels. This is the view of Jewish scholars and best explains the text. The principal objections to the fallen angel view are two. (1) Angels do not marry (Matt. 22:30), so the whole notion is impossible. (2) This idea is so abhorrent to biblical thought that it breaks all analogy. Yet it is possible that these were angels who left “their proper domain” (Jude 6) and whose sin led to a special divine judgment (2 Pet. 2:4). It may be that in this isolated case, fallen angels *did* assume human form and marry human women; this was a breach of God’s order of such monumental proportion that it indeed provoked God’s judgment on the world through the Flood.

6:1 The term **daughters** clearly means female children of human parents. The daughters were simply women.

6:2 The sons of God refer to a different group from either the **men** or their **daughters**. The phrase occurs elsewhere in the Bible and clearly means “angels.” Job 1:6 presents Satan and his angels coming into the presence of the Lord for an audience with His Majesty. Satan’s angels are there called “the sons of God,” with the suggestion that these angelic beings were once holy men who served the Lord, but were now allied with the evil one. Genesis *assumes* the existence of the good angels of the Lord (see 3:24) and of Satan and his angels. It also *assumes* that the latter are already fallen and under God’s judgment (see 1:2). In 3:1, the serpent (Satan) was already at work as the father of lies (John 8:44). Here it appears that some of Satan’s angels, spirit beings, took on human form (see 3:24) and, out of a perverted lust, seduced women. In response, God reserved these angels for special judgment (2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6) and cleansed the earth itself (with the Flood).

6:3 My Spirit: This is the second reference to the Holy Spirit in Genesis. The first is in anticipation of order and wonder (1:2); this second is in anticipation of destruction. Scholars are not sure what the Hebrew term **strive** means; it is found only here. **Flesh** speaks of the mortality of humankind (see 3:19; 5:5). **his days:** Some interpret this phrase as suggesting that the human life span will be reduced to 120 years. However, the reduction of the human life span to modern levels does not occur well into the stories of the Patriarchs. More likely, this phrase means that God will extend a “grace period” of 120 years before expending His wrath (in the Flood).

6:4 The Hebrew word for **giants** means “fallen ones” (from the verb meaning “to fall”). Many ancient cultures have legends of titans and demigods. This verse appears to be explaining this common memory of humankind.

6:6 was sorry: This language is what theologians call anthropo-

man on the earth, and ⁱHe was grieved in His ^jheart. ⁷So the LORD said, “I will ^kdestroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, creeping thing and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them.” ⁸But Noah ^lfound grace in the eyes of the LORD.

Noah Pleases God

⁹This is the genealogy of Noah. ^mNoah was a just man, ⁶perfect in his generations. Noah ⁿwalked with God. ¹⁰And Noah begot three sons: ^oShem, Ham, and Japheth.

¹¹The earth also was corrupt ^pbefore God, and the earth was ^qfilled with violence. ¹²So God ^rlooked upon the earth, and indeed it was corrupt; for ^sall flesh had corrupted their way on the earth.

The Ark Prepared

¹³And God said to Noah, ^t“The end of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth is filled with violence through them; ^uand behold, ^vI will destroy them with the earth. ¹⁴Make yourself an ark of gopherwood; make ⁷rooms in the ark, and cover it inside and outside with pitch. ¹⁵And this is how you shall make it: The length of the ark *shall be* three hundred ⁸cubits, its width fifty cubits, and its height thirty cubits. ¹⁶You shall make a window for the ark, and you

⁶ / Ps. 78:40; Is. 63:10; Eph. 4:30 / Mark 3:5
⁷ ^k Gen. 7:4, 23; Deut. 28:63; 29:20; Ps. 7:11
⁸ / Gen. 19:19; Ex. 33:12, 17; Luke 1:30; Acts 7:46
⁹ ^m Gen. 7:1; Ezek. 14:14, 20; Heb. 11:7; 2 Pet. 2:5 ⁿ Gen. 5:22, 24; 2 Kin. 23:3 ^o blameless or having integrity
¹⁰ ^o Gen. 5:32; 7:13
¹¹ ^p Deut. 31:29; Judg. 2:19; Rom. 2:13 ^q Ezek. 8:17
¹² ^r Ps. 14:2; 53:2, 3 ^s Ps. 141:3; Is. 28:8
¹³ ^t Is. 34:1-4; Jer. 51:13; Ezek. 7:2, 3; Amos 8:2; 1 Pet. 4:7
¹⁴ ^u Gen. 6:17 ^v 2 Pet. 2:4-10
¹⁵ ⁷ Lit. compartments or nests
¹⁶ ⁸ A cubit is about 18 inches.

¹⁷ ^w Gen. 7:4, 21-23; 2 Pet. 2:5 ^x 2 Pet. 3:6 ^y Luke 16:22
¹⁸ ^z Gen. 8:20-9:17; 17:7 ^a Gen. 7:1, 7, 13; 1 Pet. 3:20; 2 Pet. 2:5
¹⁹ ^b Gen. 7:2, 8, 9, 14-16
²⁰ ^c Gen. 7:9, 15
²¹ ^d Gen. 7:5; 12:4, 5; Heb. 11:7 ^e Gen. 7:5, 9, 16 / [1 John 5:3]

shall finish it to a cubit from above; and set the door of the ark in its side. You shall make it *with* lower, second, and third *decks*. ¹⁷^wAnd behold, I Myself am bringing ^xfloodwaters on the earth, to destroy from under heaven all flesh in which *is* the breath of life; everything that *is* on the earth shall ^ydie. ¹⁸But I will establish My ^zcovenant with you; and ^ayou shall go into the ark—you, your sons, your wife, and your sons’ wives with you. ¹⁹And of every living thing of all flesh you shall bring ^btwo of every sort into the ark, to keep *them* alive with you; they shall be male and female. ²⁰Of the birds after their kind, of animals after their kind, and of every creeping thing of the earth after its kind, two of every *kind* ^cwill come to you to keep *them* alive. ²¹And you shall take for yourself of all food that is eaten, and you shall gather *it* to yourself; and it shall be food for you and for them.”

²²^dThus Noah did; ^eaccording to all that ^fGod commanded him, so he did.

The Great Flood

⁷Then the ^aLORD said to Noah, ^b“Come into the ark, you and all your household, because I have seen *that* ^cyou are righteous before Me in this generation.

CHAPTER 7 ¹ ^a Matt. 11:28 ^b Matt. 24:38; Luke 17:26; Heb. 11:7; 1 Pet. 3:20; 2 Pet. 2:5 ^c Gen. 6:9; Ps. 33:18; Prov. 10:9; 2 Pet. 2:9

pathic (see 1:31); that is, the Lord is described as having human emotions (see Num. 23:19). In these words we sense the passion of the Lord. He had desired so much from humanity—and was overwhelmingly disappointed.

6:7 I will destroy: Humanity’s ruin extends to all living things that God had made on the earth.

6:8 But Noah: In this contrast lies the hope of all of subsequent human history! Were there not a man and a family who by God’s grace stood out from the wickedness of their day, there would have been a new beginning on the part of God that would have omitted all of us!

6:9 Genealogy (or family histories) is found in ten significant passages in Genesis (see the list at 2:4). **just . . . perfect:** These words together mean “genuine righteousness” (in contrast to the others of Noah’s time). The phrase **walked with God** is also used of Enoch in 5:22, 24. It indicates a continual pattern of life—a marked contrast with the pattern of life of the rest of the peoples of the world at the time!

6:10 These **three sons**, first mentioned in 5:32, will form the family tree of the nations following the Flood.

6:11 The verb translated **corrupt** has the idea of being ruined, spoiled, or destroyed. Sinful people were bringing ruin to the world that belonged to the living God (Ps. 24:1).

6:12 all flesh: The language is similar to that of Ps. 14:2, 3.

6:13 God’s message to Noah was graphic and severe. But the faithful reader of the Bible is also impressed with God’s grace. The Creator of the universe, who owes man nothing, took one man into His confidence! **end of all flesh:** It would appear that God’s “grace period” of 120 years (v. 3) was now complete.

6:14 The word **ark** means “a box.” An Egyptian word from which

this term may be drawn means “chest” or “coffin”; the same term is used of the box in which the baby Moses was placed in the Nile (Ex. 2:3). We usually picture a boat or a ship with bow and stern. But a ship is designed to move through the water as a conveyance; the ark was built merely to float on the water. The Hebrew word for **gopherwood** is merely transliterated because that type of wood is not known today. Noah made **rooms** in the ark and used **pitch** to seal the ark against leaks. It is not certain what this sealing agent was. What a comical thing this must have been! We do not know where Noah lived in the pre-Flood earth, but there is nothing that indicates he was near an ocean. Yet he was building the largest floating box that had ever been seen.

6:15 The **cubit** is about 18 inches. Hence, the ark was about 450 feet long, 75 feet wide, and 45 feet high.

6:16 The **window** was an “opening.” The need for circulation of air, yet protection from the torrents of water, demanded a good deal of engineering and crafting. This opening could be covered (8:6).

6:17 I Myself: The Hebrew text places significant emphasis on the personal role of God in the ensuing storm.

6:18, 19 In strongest contrast to God’s punishment in the preceding verse, God in His mercy established His **covenant** with Noah. This is the first time the word *covenant* is used in the Bible; some believe the concept of covenant is found in 3:15, but the word doesn’t occur until here. The details of this covenant were given after the Flood (9:9). Here, in the midst of judgment, the Lord stooped down to meet the needs of His servant (Ps. 40:1; 113:6) and to enter into a binding oath with him. In order to perpetuate the human family, God promised to preserve Noah’s family and **two of every sort** of animal.

6:22 Noah’s complete obedience is similar to Abram’s (12:4; 22:3).

7:1 The initiative is **the LORD’s** (8:15), just as in the call of Abram (12:1).

²You shall take with you seven each of every ^dclean animal, a male and his female; ^etwo each of animals that *are* unclean, a male and his female; ³also seven each of birds of the air, male and female, to keep ¹the species alive on the face of all the earth. ⁴For after ^fseven more days I will cause it to rain on the earth ^gforty days and forty nights, and I will ²destroy from the face of the earth all living things that I have made.” ^{5h}And Noah did according to all that the LORD commanded him. ⁶Noah *was* ⁱsix hundred years old when the floodwaters were on the earth.

^{7j}So Noah, with his sons, his wife, and his sons’ wives, went into the ark because of the waters of the flood. ⁸Of clean animals, of animals that *are* unclean, of birds, and of everything that creeps on the earth, ⁹two by two they went into the ark to Noah, male and female, as God had commanded Noah. ¹⁰And it came to pass after seven days that the waters of the flood were on the earth. ¹¹In the six hundredth year of Noah’s life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, on ^kthat day all ^lthe fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the ^mwindows of heaven were opened. ¹²ⁿAnd the rain was on the earth forty days and forty nights.

¹³On the very same day Noah and Noah’s sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, and Noah’s wife and the three wives of his sons with them, entered the ark—^{14o}they and every beast after its kind, all cattle after their kind, every creeping thing that creeps on the earth after its kind, and every bird after its kind, every bird of every ^psort. ¹⁵And they ^qwent into the ark to Noah, two by two, of all flesh in which *is* the breath of life. ¹⁶So

² ^d Lev. 11; Deut. 14:3–20 ^e Lev. 10:10; Ezek. 44:23
³ ¹ Lit. *seed*
⁴ ^f Gen. 7:10; Ex. 7:25 ^g Gen. 7:12, 17
² ² Lit. *blot out*
⁵ ^h Gen. 6:22
⁶ ⁶ Gen. 5:4, 32
⁷ ⁷ Gen. 6:18; 7:1, 13; Matt. 24:38; Luke 17:27
¹¹ ⁴ Matt. 24:39; Luke 17:27; 2 Pet. 2:5; 3:6 ¹ Gen. 8:2; Prov. 8:28; Is. 51:10; Ezek. 26:19 ^m Gen. 8:2; Ps. 78:23
¹² ⁿ Gen. 7:4, 17; 1 Sam. 12:18
¹⁴ ^o Gen. 6:19
^p Gen. 1:21
¹⁵ ^q Gen. 6:19, 20; 7:9

¹⁶ ¹ Gen. 7:2, 3
¹⁷ ^s Gen. 7:4, 12; 8:6
¹⁸ ^t Ps. 104:26
²¹ ^u Gen. 6:7, 13, 17; 7:4 ³ the land
²² ^v Gen. 2:7 ⁴ LXX, Vg. omit of the spirit
²³ ^w Matt. 24:38, 39; Luke 17:26, 27; Heb. 11:7; 1 Pet. 3:20; 2 Pet. 2:5
²⁴ ^x Gen. 8:3, 4

CHAPTER 8

¹ ^a Gen. 19:29; Ex. 2:24; 1 Sam. 1:19; Ps. 105:42; 106:4
² ^b Ex. 14:21; 15:10; Job 12:15; Ps. 29:10; Is. 44:27; Nah. 1:4
² ^c Gen. 7:11
^d Deut. 11:17 ^e Gen. 7:4, 12; Job 38:37
³ ^f Gen. 7:24

those that entered, male and female of all flesh, went in ^ras God had commanded him; and the LORD shut him in.

^{17s}Now the flood was on the earth forty days. The waters increased and lifted up the ark, and it rose high above the earth. ¹⁸The waters prevailed and greatly increased on the earth, ^tand the ark moved about on the surface of the waters. ¹⁹And the waters prevailed exceedingly on the earth, and all the high hills under the whole heaven were covered. ²⁰The waters prevailed fifteen cubits upward, and the mountains were covered. ^{21u}And all flesh died that moved on ³the earth: birds and cattle and beasts and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth, and every man. ²²All in ^vwhose nostrils *was* the breath ⁴of the spirit of life, all that *was* on the dry land, died. ²³So He destroyed all living things which were on the face of the ground: both man and cattle, creeping thing and bird of the air. They were destroyed from the earth. Only ^wNoah and those who *were* with him in the ark remained *alive*. ^{24x}And the waters prevailed on the earth one hundred and fifty days.

Noah’s Deliverance

8 Then God ^aremembered Noah, and every living thing, and all the animals that *were* with him in the ark. ^bAnd God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters subsided. ^{2c}The fountains of the deep and the windows of heaven were also ^dstopped, and ^ethe rain from heaven was restrained. ³And the waters receded continually from the earth. At the end ^fof the hundred and fifty days the waters decreased. ⁴Then the ark rested in

7:2 The command to take **seven each of every clean animal** is a new detail (6:19). The additional clean animals could be used for food and for sacrifice once the waters subsided (8:20–22).

7:4 The number **forty** is a significant number, representing a special fullness of time (see v. 12; Num. 32:13; 1 Kin. 19:8; Matt. 4:2).

7:5 Again, **Noah** obeyed the Lord fully.

7:6 **six hundred years old**: This is the second notice of the age of Noah; he was 500 years old when he became a father (5:32).

7:7 The time had now come for the family and the animals to enter **the ark**. The events of these few verses summarize an immense labor; yet the gathering of the animals must have been largely the work of the Lord and their management the work of Noah and his sons.

7:10 The number **seven** follows the pattern of symbolic numbers begun in 2:3 (see also 4:24).

7:11, 12 **seventeenth day**: The detail is remarkable; but then, so was the day! **fountains of the great deep . . . windows of heaven**: The waters of the ocean were raised, and the waters of the heavens fell, both converging in a super-inundation of **rain** for the 40 days (v. 4).

7:15 The animals seem to have been drawn to the ark and **to Noah** by the compelling force of the Lord.

7:16 **shut him in**: The Lord who had drawn them now closed the

door on them. That shut door was a symbol of closure, safety, and God’s deliverance.

7:18 Four times in this passage the phrase **the waters prevailed** is used (vv. 18–20, 24). The verb means “to be strong” or “to be mighty.” From this word, numerous words are derived for strength, might, and powerful people.

7:19 **the high hills under the whole heaven were covered**: The question of hyperbolic language is naturally raised here; yet these words do suggest a flood that covers the whole of the earth.

7:21 Without exception, death extended to every creature—all **flesh**—whose home was on the land.

7:23 **man**: People died—old people and young; beautiful and brave along with the grisly and gray. **Only Noah** and those with him escaped the terrible, universal death of the wicked. Jesus affirmed the historicity of the “days of Noah” when he compared them to the end days (Matt. 24:37, 38; Luke 17:26, 27). Peter similarly used the story of Noah and the Flood as a pattern for the final judgment (1 Pet. 3:20; 2 Pet. 2:5; 3:5, 6).

8:1 God, in His great mercy, **remembered** Noah. God faithfully loved the people with whom He had covenanted.

8:3 **hundred and fifty days**: Note the symmetry of time: it took the same amount of time for the waters to recede as it took for them to rage over the earth (7:24).

A New Beginning

By saving Noah and his family, God gave humanity a second chance—a fresh start. Note the similarities between the Creation story and Noah's story.

	The First Beginning: Adam and Eve	The Second Beginning: Noah and His Family
God's Action	God created Adam and Eve from the dust (2:7).	God saved Noah and his family from destruction (7:23).
God's Provision	God planted the Garden and gave Adam and Eve plants to eat (1:29–31; 2:8).	God saved animal species along with Noah and gave Noah and his family animals for food (6:17–22).
God's Blessing	Be fruitful and multiply; have dominion over all living things (1:28).	Be fruitful and multiply; all living things will be filled with fear and dread of you (9:1, 2).
God's Covenant		Never again will God destroy the earth with a flood; He will always provide the annual seasons (8:21, 22; 9:11).
God's Prohibition	Do not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (2:16).	Do not shed the blood of any person (9:5, 6).
God's Warning	Those who eat of it will die (2:17).	Of those who shed blood God will demand a reckoning (9:5).
God's Evaluation	It is very good (1:31).	Humanity's heart is evil (8:21).

the seventh month, the seventeenth day of the month, on the mountains of Ararat. ⁵And the waters decreased continually until the tenth month. In the tenth *month*, on the first *day* of the month, the tops of the mountains were seen.

⁶So it came to pass, at the end of forty days, that Noah opened ^athe window of the ark which he had made. ⁷Then he sent out a raven, which kept going to and fro until the waters had dried up from the earth. ⁸He also sent out from himself a dove, to see if the waters had receded from the face of the ground. ⁹But the dove found no resting place for the sole of her foot, and she returned into the ark to him, for the waters *were* on the face of the whole earth. So he put out his hand and took her, and drew her into the ark to himself. ¹⁰And he waited yet another seven days, and again he sent the dove out from the ark. ¹¹Then the dove came to him in the evening, and behold, a freshly plucked olive leaf *was* in her mouth; and Noah knew that the waters had receded from the earth. ¹²So he waited yet another seven days and sent out the dove, which did not return again to him anymore.

6–9 Gen. 6:16

16 ^hGen. 7:13
17 ⁱGen. 1:22, 28; 9:1, 7
20 ^jGen. 12:7; Ex. 29:18, 25 ^kGen. 7:2; Lev. 11 ^lGen. 22:2; Ex. 10:25

¹³And it came to pass in the six hundred and first year, in the first *month*, the first *day* of the month, that the waters were dried up from the earth; and Noah removed the covering of the ark and looked, and indeed the surface of the ground was dry. ¹⁴And in the second month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, the earth was dried.

¹⁵Then God spoke to Noah, saying, ¹⁶“Go out of the ark, ^hyou and your wife, and your sons and your sons’ wives with you. ¹⁷Bring out with you every living thing of all flesh that *is* with you: birds and cattle and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth, so that they may abound on the earth, and ⁱbe fruitful and multiply on the earth.” ¹⁸So Noah went out, and his sons and his wife and his sons’ wives with him. ¹⁹Every animal, every creeping thing, every bird, *and* whatever creeps on the earth, according to their families, went out of the ark.

God's Covenant with Creation

²⁰Then Noah built an ^aaltar to the Lord, and took of ^kevery clean animal and of every clean bird, and offered ^lburnt

8:5 tops of the mountains: The surging of the waters had been so great that the mountains had been submerged (see 7:19, 20).

8:6 Again, observe the symmetry of the numbers in this account. The rains had come for 40 days (7:12); now the ark was subsiding for **forty days**.

8:7 The flight of the **raven** was observed from the ark; this hardy bird kept flying until it was able to locate land.

8:8, 9 The more gentle bird, the **dove**, sought land; finding none this bird returned to the ark.

8:11 The **olive leaf** is a potent symbol of peace and restoration.

8:14 After over a full year, the waters had returned to their place (7:11). As in the beginning (1:9–13), God had again brought the waters of the earth into their place, and He had **dried** the earth. The

Flood began in Noah's year 600, month 2, day 17 (7:11) and ended in Noah's year 601, month 2, day 27 (8:14).

8:15 The fact that **God spoke to Noah** is another mark of God's great grace to Noah and of how much He valued him (7:1; for God's words to Abram, see 12:1).

8:16 As God called Noah and his family to enter the ark (7:1), so now with all danger past He graciously invited them to **go out of the ark**.

8:20 an altar: This is the first mention of sacrificial worship since the days of Cain and Abel (4:3–5); yet we may assume that the principle of sacrificial worship was perpetuated through the line of faithful people (ch. 5). In joyful and magnificent devotion to the Lord, Noah sacrificed animals and birds from all the clean animals and birds he had preserved on the ark (7:2).

offerings on the altar. ²¹And the LORD smelled ^ma soothing aroma. Then the LORD said in His heart, “I will never again ⁿcurse the ground for man’s sake, although the ^oimagination¹ of man’s heart is evil from his youth; ^pnor will I again destroy every living thing as I have done.

²²“While the earth ^qremains,
Seedtime and harvest,
Cold and heat,
Winter and summer,
And ^rday and night
Shall not cease.”

9 So God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them: ^a“Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth. ^{2b}And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be on every beast of the earth, on every bird of the air, on all that move *on* the earth, and on all the fish of the sea. They are given into your hand. ^{3c}Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. I have given you ^dall things, even as the ^egreen herbs. ^{4f}But you shall not eat flesh with its life, *that is*, its blood. ⁵Surely for your lifeblood I will demand *a reckoning*; ^gfrom the hand of every beast I will require it, and ^hfrom the hand of man. From the hand of every ⁱman’s brother I will require the life of man.

⁶ “Whoever ^jsheds man’s blood,
By man his blood shall be shed;
^hFor in the image of God
He made man.

²¹ ^m Ex. 29:18, 25; Lev. 1:9; Ezek. 20:41;
² Cor. 2:15; Eph. 5:2
ⁿ Gen. 3:17; 6:7, 13,
17; Is. 54:9 ^o Gen.
6:5; 11:6; Job 14:4;
Ps. 51:5; Jer. 17:9;
Rom. 1:21; 3:23;
Eph. 2:1-3 ^p Gen.
9:11, 15 ¹ *intent or
thought*
²² ^q Is. 54:9 ^r Ps.
74:16; Jer. 33:20, 25

CHAPTER 9

¹ ^a Gen. 1:28, 29;
8:17; 9:7, 19; 10:32
² ^b Gen. 1:26, 28;
Ps. 8:6
³ ^c Deut. 12:15; 14:3,
9, 11; Acts 10:12, 13
^d Rom. 14:14, 20;
¹ Cor. 10:23, 26; Col.
2:16; [1 Tim. 4:3, 4]
^e Gen. 1:29
⁴ ^f Lev. 7:26; 17:10-
16; 19:26; Deut.
12:16, 23; 15:23;
1 Sam. 14:33, 34;
Acts 15:20, 29
⁵ ^g Ex. 21:28 ^h Gen.
4:9, 10; Ps. 9:12
ⁱ Acts 17:26
⁶ ^j Ex. 21:12-14; Lev.
24:17; Num. 35:33;
Matt. 26:52 ^k Gen.
1:26, 27

⁷ ^l Gen. 9:1, 19
⁹ ^m Gen. 6:18 ⁿ Is.
54:9 ¹ *Lit. seed*
¹⁰ ^o Ps. 145:9
¹¹ ^p Gen. 8:21;
Is. 54:9
¹² ^q Gen. 9:13, 17;
17:11
¹³ ^r Ezek. 1:28;
Rev. 4:3

⁷ And as for you, ^lbe fruitful and multiply;
Bring forth abundantly in the earth
And multiply in it.”

⁸Then God spoke to Noah and to his sons with him, saying: ⁹“And as for Me, ^mbehold, I establish ⁿMy covenant with you and with your ¹descendants after you, ^{10o}and with every living creature that *is* with you: the birds, the cattle, and every beast of the earth with you, of all that go out of the ark, every beast of the earth. ¹¹Thus ^pI establish My covenant with you: Never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood; never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.”

¹²And God said: ^q“This *is* the sign of the covenant which I make between Me and you, and every living creature that *is* with you, for perpetual generations: ¹³I set ^rMy rainbow in the cloud, and it shall be for the sign of the covenant between Me and the earth. ¹⁴It shall be, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the rainbow shall be seen in the cloud; ¹⁵and ^sI will remember My covenant which *is* between Me and you and every living creature of all flesh; the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. ¹⁶The rainbow shall be in the cloud, and I will look on it to remember ^tthe everlasting covenant between God and every

¹⁵ ^s Lev. 26:42, 45; Deut. 7:9; Ezek. 16:60

¹⁶ ^t Gen. 17:13, 19; 2 Sam. 23:5; Is. 55:3; Jer. 32:40; Heb. 13:20

8:21 a soothing aroma: By these words we understand that the sacrifices were acceptable and pleasing to God (4:3; Lev. 1:9). The Lord received Noah’s offering as an act of devotion to Him (see Num. 15:3). **I will never again curse the ground:** The awful devastation of the earth and its fullness that the Flood caused will never be repeated. It is also possible that this is a reference back to 3:17. This is the good news. The bad news is that God knew that the conditions of humankind had not changed. **the imagination of man’s heart is evil from his youth:** This is the same charge against man with which the Flood story began (6:5). Nonetheless, the promise of God is that overwhelming judgment will not be repeated—not until the final judgment (2 Pet. 2:5).

8:22 while the earth remains: The words of this verse are in a poem of powerful effect (12:1–3). These words might easily have become a song of faith, the response of the people of God to the promise He made (v. 21). Later in Israel’s history, the prophets recalled God’s great promise to Noah (Is. 54:9, 10).

9:1 The blessing of God on the family of Noah provided a new beginning for humankind. The word **blessed** expresses the idea of God’s smile, the warmth of His pleasure (see 1:22, 28; 2:3; 12:2, 3). In a way, the promises that God had given to the first people were now restated for Noah, a “new Adam” (1:26–28). Among other things, the new populating of the earth by Noah’s family means that human society began again with a shared understanding of earliest human history, including the creation and Flood stories. **Be fruitful and multiply** was God’s command in the beginning (1:28).

9:2 the fear of you and the dread of you: The two phrases express

the same idea. The language of God’s blessing here is far stronger than the language of the first (see 1:28, 29); now the animals and birds will have an innate fear of humans, and they are placed under human control.

9:3–5 you: Three new realities mark the post-Flood world: (1) meat may be eaten along with plants; (2) blood is not to be eaten with meat; and (3) the taking of a person’s life is now punishable by death.

9:3 From this verse it may be argued that up to this point men and women ate only vegetation (see 2:16).

9:4 blood: This restriction gets more attention in Leviticus (see Lev. 17:11, 12). Blood represents the animal’s life. It may be used in sacrifice, for all life belongs to the Lord.

9:5 lifeblood: More sacred than the life of an animal is the life of a person. Animals may be slain for food, but no wanton slaying of humans is allowed.

9:6 These verses are poetry for impact and memorability. **The image of God** (see 1:26, 27; 5:1) is still in man (or *is* man); sin did not destroy it. God values humans more highly than animal life because only humankind possesses God’s image.

9:9 This is the second occurrence of this enormously important concept, the **covenant**, in Genesis (6:18). God promised that He would establish His covenant with Noah and here He accomplished this great work (see 15:18; contrast 3:15). This covenant extends to animals of every sort (v. 10).

9:11 There will **never again** be another Flood like that described in chs. 6–8.

9:12, 13 The **rainbow** is a memorial to God’s promise never to flood the earth again and a constant reminder of His oath.

living creature of all flesh that *is* on the earth.”¹⁷ And God said to Noah, “This *is* the sign of the covenant which I have established between Me and all flesh that *is* on the earth.”

Noah and His Sons

¹⁸Now the sons of Noah who went out of the ark were Shem, Ham, and Japheth. ¹⁹And Ham *was* the father of Canaan. ¹⁹^vThese three *were* the sons of Noah, ¹⁹and from these the whole earth was populated.

²⁰And Noah began *to be* ^xa farmer, and he planted a vineyard. ²¹Then he drank of the wine ^yand was drunk, and became uncovered in his tent. ²²And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brothers outside. ²³^zBut Shem and Japheth took a garment, laid *it* on both their shoulders, and went backward and covered the nakedness of their father. Their faces *were* ²turned away, and they did not see their father’s nakedness.

²⁴So Noah awoke from his wine, and

¹⁸ ^uGen. 9:25-27; 10:6
¹⁹ ^vGen. 5:32
^wGen. 9:1, 7; 10:32;
1 Chr. 1:4
²⁰ ^xGen. 3:19, 23;
4:2; Prov. 12:11; Jer.
31:24
²¹ ^yProv. 20:1;
Eph. 5:18
²³ ^zEx. 20:12; Gal.
6:1 ²Lit. *backwards*

²⁵ ^aDeut. 27:16;
Josh. 9:23, 27
^bJosh. 9:23; 1 Kin.
9:20, 21
²⁶ ^cGen. 14:20;
24:27; Ps. 144:15;
Heb. 11:16
²⁷ ^dGen. 10:2-5;
39:3; Is. 66:19
^eLuke 3:36; John
1:14; Eph. 2:13,
14; 3:6

CHAPTER 10

1 ^aGen. 9:1, 7, 19

knew what his younger son had done to him. ²⁵Then he said:

^a“Cursed *be* Canaan;
A ^bservant of servants
He shall be to his brethren.”

²⁶And he said:

^c“Blessed *be* the LORD,
The God of Shem,
And may Canaan be his servant.
²⁷ May God ^denlarge Japheth,
^eAnd may he dwell in the tents of Shem;
And may Canaan be his servant.”

²⁸And Noah lived after the flood three hundred and fifty years. ²⁹So all the days of Noah were nine hundred and fifty years; and he died.

Nations Descended from Noah

10 Now this *is* the genealogy of the sons of Noah: Shem, Ham, and Japheth. ^aAnd sons were born to them after the flood.

9:18 The sons of Noah have been mentioned earlier (5:32; 6:10; 7:13); their mention here assures us of their survival through the Flood and sets the stage for what happens next. **the father of Canaan:** This identification was particularly important to the first readers of Genesis, the people of Israel, who were about to enter the land of Canaan (see Deut. 1:1). But this notice also prepares the reader for the shameful story that is about to be recalled (vv. 20–23).

9:20 The vineyard was a standard feature in the agricultural setting of ancient Israel. Here it is noted because of Noah’s drunkenness (v. 21).

9:22 It is not clear whether seeing his father’s nakedness was Ham’s chief offense. The following verses (especially v. 23) imply that Ham made fun of his father, and that this news reached Noah after he awoke.

9:23 Shem and Japheth took great pains to honor their father, not wanting even to glance at his nakedness.

9:25 The three sons had been blessed with their father (see v. 1). Thus Noah cursed Ham indirectly by cursing his son Canaan (see 10:6). Some once believed that this verse justified the slavery of African peoples (who, it was alleged, were descended from Canaan),

but those people misinterpreted the verse. Canaan was under the curse of his father. As the Hebrews stood on the banks of the Jordan River about to enter the land of Canaan (see Deut. 1:1), they would have been encouraged by this verse because it promised victory over the Canaanites.

9:26, 27 Shem is given precedence over his brothers. Eber and Abram were descended from Shem (11:10–30) so Shem’s blessing is ultimately a blessing on Israel. Again, the poetic cast of these words (vv. 25–27) adds power and memorability to them (see 12:1–3). Just as Noah blessed (and cursed) his sons before his death, so Jacob was later to bless his sons before his death (ch. 49).

9:29 Noah’s death was the end of an era. Only he and his family spanned two worlds, that of the earth before and after the Flood. His long life (950 years) gave him opportunity to transmit to his many descendants the dramatic story that he had lived out with his family. Peoples in places and cultures the world over have memories and stories of a great Flood in antiquity. The details differ, but the stories remain.

10:1–11:32 From these chapters, we learn that the peoples of the earth are all descended from the family of Noah, but there remain

The Noahic Covenant

The faint rainbow that appears after a summer thunderstorm symbolizes God’s mercy, His compassion on all. Moreover, it is a sign of God’s covenant, His binding agreement with all humanity to never destroy the earth with a flood.

God initiated this covenant under the worst circumstances: “The earth was filled with violence” (6:11, 13). Even though humanity’s decline into evil greatly troubled God, He favored one man, Noah. He determined to save Noah and his family from His coming judgment and establish His covenant with them.

Although Noah was surrounded by violence and all kinds of evil, Noah walked with God (6:9) by seeking to obey Him. Noah’s simple obedience is recorded five times in this story (6:22; 7:5, 9, 16; 8:17, 18). God called this obedient man to build an ark. With this large boat, God saved Noah from the cleansing waters of the Flood. With the past evils and sins washed away from the earth, Noah and his family could start anew (see 1 Pet. 3:21 for Peter’s analogy comparing baptism with the Flood). God not only gave them a fresh start; He also gave them an unconditional promise or covenant. He promised not to destroy the earth with a flood no matter how evil Noah’s descendants got. Indeed, He promised that until the end of the earth, there would be the seasons of planting and harvest and day and night. God unilaterally promised to uphold the rhythms of the earth in order to sustain human life—even though humans had rebelled against Him, their Creator.

Today all of us—Noah’s children—should remember God’s mercy to us when we see the beauty of the rainbow.



^{2b}The sons of Japheth were Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tiras. ³The sons of Gomer were Ashkenaz, ¹Riphat, and Togarmah. ⁴The sons of Javan were Elishah, Tarshish, Kittim, and ²Dodanim. ⁵From these ^cthe coastland peoples of the Gentiles were separated into their lands, everyone according to his language, according to their families, into their nations. ^{6d}The sons of Ham were Cush, Mizraim, Put, and Canaan. ⁷The sons of Cush

^{2b} 1 Chr. 1:5-7
³ ¹ Diphath, 1 Chr. 1:6
⁴ ² Sam. Rodanim and 1 Chr. 1:7
⁵ ^c Gen. 11:8; Ps. 72:10; Jer. 2:10; 25:22
^{6d} 1 Chr. 1:8-16
³ Or Phut
⁸ ^e Mic. 5:6
⁹ ^f Jer. 16:16; Mic. 7:2
⁹ Gen. 21:20
¹⁰ ^h Mic. 5:6 / Gen. 11:9
¹¹ / Gen. 25:18;
2 Kin. 19:36; Mic. 5:6

were Seba, Havilah, Sabtah, Raamah, and Sabtechah; and the sons of Raamah were Sheba and Dedan. ⁸Cush begot ^eNimrod; he began to be a mighty one on the earth. ⁹He was a mighty ^fhunter ^gbefore the LORD; therefore it is said, “Like Nimrod the mighty hunter before the LORD.” ¹⁰^hAnd the beginning of his kingdom was ¹Babel, Erech, Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. ¹¹From that land he went ^jto Assyria and built Nineveh, Rehoboth Ir,

a few mysteries. For one thing, the mention of names moves from individuals to peoples to cities. Second, the point of view is from a later date, when the people of Israel had as their geographical center the land of Canaan. While the words imply universal humanity, they omit a global perspective. Finally, the chapters give no clear sense of time: they span many thousands of years. **10:1 Genealogy** (or family histories) is found in ten significant passages in Genesis (see the list at 2:4). The names of the **sons of Noah** were first given in 5:32 (see 6:10; 7:13; 9:18). **10:2** The listing of **the sons of Japheth** is more brief than the others. Among the persons and peoples mentioned is **Javan** (vv. 2, 4), an ancient name for the Greek people. It may be that many of Japheth's descendants migrated to Europe. **10:5** The migrations of the peoples to different **lands** would have come after the events of 11:1–9 (the Tower of Babel).

10:6 **Ham's** family included more than just his son Canaan (see 9:25). **Cush, Mizraim, Put, and Canaan** are Ham's four sons. Cush is the ancient name for Ethiopia; Mizraim is a name for Egypt. The sons of Cush are given in vv. 7–12, the sons of Mizraim in vv. 13, 14, and the sons of Canaan in vv. 15–19. This section does not list the sons of Put. **10:7–11** **The sons of Cush** include the infamous **Nimrod** (vv. 9–12). The description of him as a **mighty hunter before the LORD** suggests great arrogance. Like Lamech the descendant of Cain (4:19–24), his infamy was proverbial. His territory was in the lands of the east, the fabled ancient cities of Mesopotamia; these include **Babel, Erech, Accad, and Calneh** (v. 10). The term Accad (or Akkad) supplies the name of the language of ancient Babylon and Assyria, Akkadian. The prophet Micah would later use the name Nimrod to describe the region of Assyria, which would come under God's judgment (see Mic. 5:5, 6).



Calah, ¹²and Resen between Nineveh and Calah (that is the principal city).

¹³Mizraim begot Ludim, Anamim, Lehabim, Naphtuhim, ¹⁴Pathrusim, and Casluhim ^k(from whom came the Philistines and Caphtorim).

¹⁵Canaan begot Sidon his firstborn, and ^lHeth; ^{16m}the Jebusite, the Amorite, and the Girgashite; ¹⁷the Hivite, the Arkite, and the Sinite; ¹⁸the Arvadite, the Zemarite, and the Hamathite. Afterward the families of the Canaanites were dispersed. ¹⁹ⁿAnd the border of the Canaanites was from Sidon as you go toward Gerar, as far as Gaza; then as you go toward Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim, as far as Lasha. ²⁰These were the sons of Ham, according to their families, according to their languages, in their lands and in their nations.

²¹And children were born also to Shem, the father of all the children of Eber, ⁴the brother of Japheth the elder. ²²The ^osons of Shem were Elam, Asshur, ^pArphaxad, Lud, and Aram. ²³The sons of Aram were Uz, Hul, Gether, and ⁵Mash. ²⁴⁶Arphaxad begot ^qSalah, and Salah begot Eber. ^{25r}To Eber were born two sons: the name of one was ⁷Peleg, for in his days the earth was divided; and his brother's name was Joktan. ²⁶Joktan begot Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmaveth, Jerah, ²⁷Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah, ^{28s}Obal, Abimael, Sheba, ²⁹Ophir, Havilah, and Jobab. All these were the sons of Joktan. ³⁰And their dwelling place was from Mesha as

^{14k} 1 Chr. 1:12
^{15l} Gen. 23:3
^{16m} Gen. 14:7;
 15:19-21; Deut. 7:1;
 Neh. 9:8
¹⁹ⁿ Gen. 13:12,
 14, 15, 17; 15:18-21;
 Num. 34:2-12
^{21a} Or the older
 brother of Japheth
^{22o} Gen. 11:10-
 26; 1 Chr. 1:17-28
^p Gen. 10:24; 11:10;
 Luke 3:36
^{23s} LXX Meshech
 and 1 Chr. 1:17
^{24q} Gen. 11:12;
 Luke 3:35 ⁶ So with
 MT, Vg., Tg.; LXX
 Arphaxad begot
 Cainan, and Cainan
 begot Salah (cf.
 Luke 3:35, 36)
^{25r} 1 Chr. 1:19 ⁷ Lit.
 Division
^{28s} Ebal, 1 Chr.
 1:22
^{32s} Gen. 10:1
^r Gen. 9:19; 11:8

CHAPTER 11

^{1l} Lit. lip
^{2o} Gen. 10:10; 14:1;
 Dan. 1:2
^{3r} Lit. burn
^{4p} Deut. 1:28; 9:1;
 Ps. 107:26 ^c Gen.
 6:4; 2 Sam. 8:13
^d Deut. 4:27
^{5e} Gen. 18:21; Ex.
 3:8; 19:11, 18, 20
^{6f} Gen. 9:19; Acts
 17:26 ^g Gen. 11:1
^h Deut. 31:21;
 Ps. 2:1
⁷ⁱ Gen. 1:26 / Gen.
 42:23; Ex. 4:11;
 Deut. 28:49;

you go toward Sephar, the mountain of the east. ³¹These were the sons of Shem, according to their families, according to their languages, in their lands, according to their nations.

^{32s}These were the families of the sons of Noah, according to their generations, in their nations; ^tand from these the nations were divided on the earth after the flood.

The Tower of Babel

11 Now the whole earth had one language and one ¹speech. ²And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land ^aof Shinar, and they dwelt there. ³Then they said to one another, “Come, let us make bricks and ²bake them thoroughly.” They had brick for stone, and they had asphalt for mortar. ⁴And they said, “Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower ^bwhose top is in the heavens; let us make a ^cname for ourselves, lest we ^dbe scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth.”

^{5e}But the LORD came down to see the city and the tower which the sons of men had built. ⁶And the LORD said, “Indeed ^fthe people are one and they all have ^gone language, and this is what they begin to do; now nothing that they ^hpropose to do will be withheld from them. ⁷Come, ⁱlet Us go down and there ^jconfuse their

Is. 33:19; Jer. 5:15

10:15 The names associated with Canaan (see 9:22) are peoples who settled in the region of greater Canaan. Some of these names were still associated with the land at the time of Abraham. The sites of Sodom and its allied cities were later destroyed in the firestorm of ch. 19.

10:20 This summary verse speaks of families . . . languages . . . lands . . . nations as in v. 5. This reference shows that the story of the Tower of Babel (11:1-9) overlaps the listing of the nations in ch. 10.

10:21-24 Eber is the name that gives rise to the term Hebrew, which is first used of Abraham in 14:13. Such a name is patronymic (a father name). Eber is mentioned at the head of the list because of his importance to the Hebrew people. He is directly the son of Salah (v. 24). His placement at the head of the list is from the vantage of the Hebrew people. Abraham is the father of the Hebrew nation specifically (12:1-3); but Abraham descends from Eber, and Eber from Shem. The other names associated with Shem include Elam, Asshur, and Aram, major people groups in the OT. These and other peoples, including Israel, have become known as Semitic, a word derived from the name Shem.

10:32 the families of the sons of Noah: Although not every ancient people group is listed in this “Table of the Nations,” its clear teaching is that all the varied peoples of the earth, no matter of what land or language, are descended from Noah. The divisions among them are merely the results of the later incidents.

11:1-9 The confusion of languages at Babel marks the beginnings of racial, ethnic, cultural, and familial diversity. Yet in the Promised One, of whom 12:3 (see also 22:15-18) speaks, there will one day be an end to all divisiveness. The peoples of the earth will become the people of God. All the languages will speak together in praise of the Lamb (Rev. 5:8-14).

11:1 one language: This account speaks of a time soon after the Flood, a time before the family had begun to disperse (contrast 10:5, 20, 31, 32).

11:2 The land of Shinar is the region of ancient Babylon in Mesopotamia (see 10:10), part of modern Iraq. This is one region traditionally suggested as the location of the Garden of Eden. The peoples of the earth came there from the east.

11:3 The use of bricks for building a large structure was common in this early period. Use of huge quarried stones weighing many tons came later. The immense building blocks of later times were dressed so well that they could be fitted together without mortar.


11:4 These people wanted to become famous as the Nephilim (giants) were before the Flood. Motivated by pride and arrogance, they wanted to make a name for themselves. lest we be scattered: They feared that they might be dispersed—by implication, by the Lord—and not achieve the greatness they sought.

11:5 the LORD came down to see: A figurative way of speaking that indicates the omniscience (the all-embracing knowledge) of the Lord (see 18:21).

11:6 nothing that they propose: The potential is that humankind will become as willfully sinful as they were before the Flood. God will not allow this to happen.

11:7 The Us in this passage is similar to the language of 1:26-28. The plural pronoun emphasizes the majesty of the speaker. Variation in language, culture, values, and clans all started at this point. Were it not for human arrogance, this division would not have been necessary. One day peoples of all languages and cultures will unite to celebrate the grace of God's risen Son, lifting their voices together in praise of the Lamb (Rev. 5:8-14).

BIBLE TIMES & CULTURE NOTES



Ur

Abraham's native city in southern Mesopotamia; an important metropolis of the ancient world situated on the Euphrates River. The city came to be known as "Ur of the Chaldeans" after the Chaldeans entered southern Babylonia after 1000 B.C.

Abraham lived in the city (11:28, 31) at the height of its splendor. The city was a prosperous center of religion and industry. The Babylonians worshiped many gods, but the moon god Sin was supreme. Accordingly, the city of Ur was a kind of theocracy centered in the moon deity. It is a miracle of God's providence that Abraham resisted Ur's polluted atmosphere and set out on a journey of faith to Canaan that would bless all mankind.

Ur's glory was suddenly destroyed about 1900 B.C. So complete was the destruction that the city was buried in oblivion until it was excavated centuries later by archaeologists.

8 ^k Gen. 11:4; Deut. 32:8; Ps. 92:9; [Luke 1:51] ^l Gen. 10:25, 32
9 ^m 1 Cor. 14:23
3 Lit. *Confusion*, Babylon
10 ⁿ Gen. 10:22-25; 1 Chr. 1:17

five hundred years, and begot sons and daughters.

¹² Arphaxad lived thirty-five years, ^oand begot Salah. ¹³ After he begot Salah, Arphaxad lived four hundred and three years, and begot sons and daughters.

¹⁴ Salah lived thirty years, and begot Eber. ¹⁵ After he begot Eber, Salah lived four hundred and three years, and begot sons and daughters.

¹⁶ Eber lived thirty-four years, and begot ^pPeleg. ¹⁷ After he begot Peleg, Eber lived four hundred and thirty years, and begot sons and daughters.

¹⁸ Peleg lived thirty years, and begot Reu. ¹⁹ After he begot Reu, Peleg lived two hundred and nine years, and begot sons and daughters.

²⁰ Reu lived thirty-two years, and begot ^rSerug. ²¹ After he begot Serug, Reu lived two hundred and seven years, and begot sons and daughters.

²² Serug lived thirty years, and begot Nahor. ²³ After he begot Nahor, Serug lived two hundred years, and begot sons and daughters.

²⁴ Nahor lived twenty-nine years, and begot ^sTerah. ²⁵ After he begot Terah, Nahor lived one hundred and nineteen years, and begot sons and daughters.

²⁶ Now Terah lived seventy years, and ^tbegot ⁴Abram, Nahor, and Haran.

Terah's Descendants

²⁷ This is the genealogy of Terah: Terah begot ^uAbram, Nahor, and Haran. Haran begot Lot. ²⁸ And Haran died before his father Terah in his native land, in Ur of the Chaldeans. ²⁹ Then Abram and Nahor took wives: the name of Abram's wife

12 ^o Luke 3:35
16 ^p 1 Chr. 1:19
12 ^o Luke 3:35
20 ^r Luke 3:35
24 ^s Gen. 11:31; Josh. 24:2; Luke 3:34
26 ^t Josh. 24:2; 1 Chr. 1:26
4 Abraham, Gen. 17:5
27 ^u Gen. 11:31; 17:5

language, that they may not understand one another's speech." ⁸ So ^k the LORD scattered them abroad from there ^l over the face of all the earth, and they ceased building the city. ⁹ Therefore its name is called ³ Babel, ^m because there the LORD confused the language of all the earth; and from there the LORD scattered them abroad over the face of all the earth.

Shem's Descendants

¹⁰ ⁿ This is the genealogy of Shem: Shem was one hundred years old, and begot Arphaxad two years after the flood. ¹¹ After he begot Arphaxad, Shem lived

11:8 the LORD scattered them: There are three great judgments on sinful humanity in the first section of Genesis (chs. 1–11). The first is the expulsion from Eden (ch. 3); the second is the Flood (chs. 6–9), and the third is the scattering of the people from Babel (see Luke 1:51).

11:9 There is a pun in the name **Babel** that no Hebrew reader would miss. The verb for *confuse* sounds similar to the name of the city. The principal city of ancient paganism (Babylon) is merely a site of confusion because **there the LORD confused the language**. Babel (and Babylon) serves as a name and symbol in the Bible for activities directed against God by the nations of the earth (see Rev. 17).

11:10 Genealogy (or family histories) is found in ten significant passages in the Book of Genesis (see the list at 2:4). The Jewish nation came from **Shem**. Hence, the accounts that follow make much of him and his family.

11:10–25 The pattern in this **genealogy** is similar to that in ch. 5; but here only the first three elements are given: (1) name "A" lived "x" years; (2) name "A" begot name "B"; (3) name "A" then lived "y" years. As does ch. 5, the list leaves out some names, focusing on major figures in the line from Noah to Abraham. "B" may be a remote descendant rather than the immediate child of "A" (5:20). Thus the genealogy shows that Abraham was a descendant of Noah through Shem, just as Noah was a descendant of Adam through Seth. Note also that while the people listed in ch. 11 lived very long lives, they lived progressively *shorter* lives, from the 600 years of Shem (vv. 10,

11) to the 148 years of Nahor (vv. 24, 25). Note also the absence of a total for the time from Shem to Abram (vv. 26–30); it must have been at least several thousand years, but we do not know exactly how long.

11:26 Terah: At long last we come to the family of Terah and the births of **Abram, Nahor, and Haran**. Years later, Abram would be renamed Abraham (see 17:5), and would become the father of Isaac (21:1–5). He was the progenitor of the Hebrew people from which the Promised Deliverer, Jesus, comes.

11:27 The term **genealogy** (or family histories) is found in ten significant passages in Genesis (see the list at 2:4). **Abram, Nahor, and Haran:** These three sons of Terah would be expected to carry on his name (but see 11:31). **Haran begot Lot:** Lot is a nephew of Abram; he figures prominently in the upcoming account (see 12:4, 5; 13:1–13).

11:28 The untimely death of Haran leaves his son Lot to carry on his name and to establish his destiny. For generations, scholars have believed **Ur of the Chaldeans** to be the famous Ur located near the ancient delta in the Persian Gulf where the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers flow together. More recently, some scholars have noted the tablets at Ebla that speak of an Ur in the region of north Syria and suggest that this is the city of Haran's death.

11:29 Sarai means "Princess," implying a person of noble birth. Sarah (as she is later called; see 17:15) has the same meaning. The name Milcah is related to the verb that would be translated "to reign" and means "Queen." **daughter of Haran:** Evidently, Nahor married his niece. We learn later that Sarai was Abram's half sister.

was ^vSarai,⁵ and the name of Nahor's wife, ^wMilcah, the daughter of Haran the father of Milcah and the father of Iscah.³⁰ But ^xSarai was barren; she had no child.

³¹And Terah ^ytook his son Abram and his grandson Lot, the son of Haran, and his daughter-in-law Sarai, his son Abram's wife, and they went out with them from ^zUr of the Chaldeans to go to ^athe land of Canaan; and they came to Haran and dwelt there.³² So the days of Terah were two hundred and five years, and Terah died in Haran.

29 ^v Gen. 17:15; 20:12 ^w Gen. 22:20, 23; 24:15 ^z Sarah, Gen. 17:15
30 ^x Gen. 16:1, 2; Luke 1:36
31 ^y Gen. 12:1
^z Gen. 15:7; Neh. 9:7; Acts 7:4 ^a Gen. 10:19

CHAPTER 12

1 ^a Gen. 15:7; Acts 7:2, 3; [Heb. 11:8]
^b Gen. 13:9
2 ^c [Gen. 17:4-6]; 18:18; 46:3; Deut.

Promises to Abram

12 Now the ^aLORD had said to Abram:

“Get ^bout of your country,
From your family
And from your father's house,
To a land that I will show you.
² ^cI will make you a great nation;
^dI will bless you
And make your name great;
^eAnd you shall be a blessing.

26:5; 1 Kin. 3:8 ^d Gen. 22:17; 24:35 ^e Gen. 28:4; Zech. 8:13; Gal. 3:14

11:30 The sad fact that **Sarai was barren** marred her life and yet led to an opportunity for God to accomplish a miracle on her behalf (see 21:1–5).

11:31, 32 Abram's epic move to Canaan begins in ch. 12 with Abram receiving a command from the Lord to leave his land to go to a new land. Did the journey begin with **Terah** or with Abram? It appears that Terah, for his own reasons, decided to move from Ur to Canaan. He began the journey with several members of his family. However, they went to Haran, where **Terah died**. This was the first step of the journey of Abram and Sarai to the land of promise.

12:1—15:21 This section of the Bible begins with God's call of Abram and Sarai (later named Abraham and Sarah) to become the parents of a new people through whom God would reach all the families of the earth.

12:1 The name Yahweh, translated as **LORD**, is not explained until Ex. 3:14, 15. But the readers of Genesis needed to know that the one who spoke to Abram is the same Yahweh who later would form the nation of Israel and who had created all things (2:4). To a world that believed in many gods, the name of the true and living God was significant. **had said**: God had spoken the promise to Abram in Ur (see 11:31). Now that Abram's father had died and been buried in Haran, Abram recalled Yahweh's words and acted upon them.

Abram means “Exalted Father.” Later it will be changed to Abraham, meaning “Father of Many.” **Get out**: Verses 1–3 are poetry, aiding memorability and a sense of solemnity and gravity (see 14:19, 20; 16:11, 12; 25:23). **country . . . family . . . father's house**: Here are three levels of ever-increasing demands on the life of Abram and Sarai. The country was the region of his dwelling, the family was his clan, and his father's house was where he had responsibility and leadership. Upon the death of Terah, Abram would have become the leader of the family group. God's commands to Abram were

intensely demanding because they caused him to leave his place, his clan, and his family in a world where such actions were simply not done. Only the landless and the fugitive would move about and leave their ancestral homes. But Abram was to leave everything.

12:2, 3 There are seven elements in God's promise to Abram in these two verses. The number seven suggests fullness and completeness, as in 2:2, 3. This celebrated passage is a prologue to the set of passages that together form the *Abrahamic covenant* (see the list at 15:1–21), the irrevocable promise of God. (1) God commanded Abram to leave his home and family, promising to create **a great nation** through him—the people of God (18:18). This people would be the Hebrew nation. This first element and the seventh element are the

land

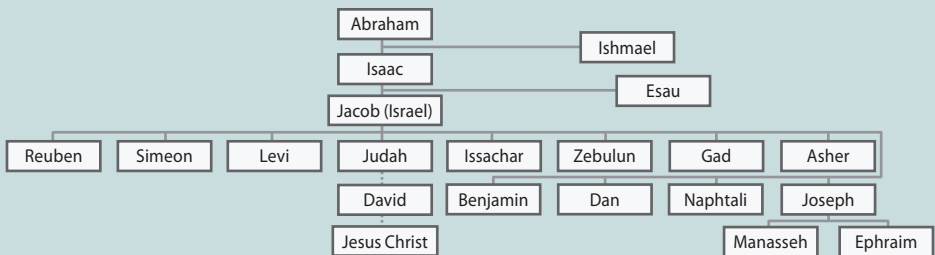
(Heb. *'erets*) (1:1, 10; 4:16; 12:1; 13:10; Deut. 34:2; Ps. 98:3) Strong's #776

The common OT word *land* possesses several nuances of meaning, including: earth in contrast to the heavens (1:1); land in contrast to the sea (1:10); ground as a plot of real estate or a geographical location (4:16); the land of a sovereign nation (13:10, 12); or even the people who live upon the earth (Ps. 98:3; 100:1). In essence, all land belongs to God as its Creator (Ps. 24:1). Thus when God promised the Israelites the “land” of Canaan, it was His to give. Because the land of Canaan was an important element in God's covenant with the Israelites (12:1), it became one of their identifying characteristics—the “people of the land” (13:15; 15:7).

God's Promise to Abram Fulfilled

God promised to make Abram's (Abraham's) descendants into a great nation (12:2). God fulfilled this promise in the birth of Isaac and then later Jacob, through whom the twelve tribes of Israel were born (Joseph's sons Ephraim and Manasseh became two of the tribes). Abraham's descendants did indeed become great nations.

More importantly, however, God promised Abraham that “in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed” (12:3). Through the birth of Christ—direct descendant of Abraham through Isaac, Jacob and Judah—God fulfilled this promise as well. In this way Abraham's “seed” has indeed blessed all the nations of the earth.



³ *I* will bless those who bless you,
And I will curse him who curses
you;
And in *you* all the families of the
earth shall be *h* blessed.”

⁴ So Abram departed as the LORD had
spoken to him, and Lot went with him.
And Abram *was* seventy-five years old
when he departed from Haran. ⁵ Then
Abram took Sarai his wife and Lot his
brother’s son, and all their possessions

³ ^f Gen. 24:35;
27:29; Ex. 23:22;
Num. 24:9 ^g Gen.
18:18; 22:18; 26:4;
28:14; Ps. 72:17;
Matt. 1:1; Luke 3:34;
Acts 3:25 ☆; [Gal.
3:8] ^h Is. 41:27
⁵ ⁱ Gen. 14:14 / Gen.
11:31 ^k Gen. 13:18
¹ Lit. *souls*
⁶ ^j Heb. 11:9
^m Deut. 11:30; Judg.
7:1 ⁿ Gen. 10:18, 19
² Heb. *Alon Moreh*
⁷ ^o Gen. 17:1; 18:1

that they had gathered, and ⁱ the ^l people
whom they had acquired ^j in Haran,
and they ^k departed to go to the land of
Canaan. So they came to the land of
Canaan. ⁶ Abram ^l passed through the
land to the place of Shechem, ^m as far as
² the terebinth tree of Moreh. ⁿ And the
Canaanites *were* then in the land.
⁷ ^o Then the LORD appeared to Abram
and said, ^p “To your ³ descendants I will

^p Gen. 13:15; 15:18; 17:8; Deut. 34:4; Ps. 105:9-12; Acts 7:5; Gal.
3:16 ³ Lit. *seed*

most significant in the set. (2) God promised to **bless** Abram. The blessing of God is His smile, the warmth of His pleasure (see 1:22, 28; 2:3; 9:1). The Lord’s promise of His personal blessing to Abram and Sarai included the benefits of a long and healthy life (see 15:15; especially 24:1), plus wealth and importance (see 13:2). (3) That one’s **name** would live on long after one’s lifetime was a supreme honor (6:4). Those who brought shame on themselves would be forgotten (11:4). The name Abraham, by which we remember Abram (17:5), is one of the most honored of all names in history. (4) **be a blessing**: The phrase is a command. That is, Abram was under divine orders to be a blessing to others. This he did whenever he told about the living God before other nations and peoples (see v. 8). (5) **those who bless**: Elements five and six form a poetic couplet. (6) **him who curses**: Whereas God would bless the peoples who blessed Abram or his descendants, His curse came upon the individual who cursed Abram or his descendants. (7) **all the families of the earth** would be blessed through them, the Jewish people who are descended from Abram.

12:4 With the magnificent promise of the Lord as his sole motivation, Abram obeyed (see 17:23; 22:3). **Lot went with him**: Some have imagined that Abram disobeyed God by taking Lot with him. However, the verse suggests that Lot made the decision. **seventy-five**

years old: The Bible rarely indicates a person’s age when events occur, but it does so several times for Abram. As we will see, this testifies to God’s mighty works in Abram’s life at his advanced age.

12:5 This is the first mention in the Bible of **Canaan**, the geographical stage for God’s acts of salvation. Canaan was populated with peoples involved in gross idolatry (15:16). God promised this land to Abram and Sarai.

12:6 passed through: This verb resembles the name Hebrew (14:13). Here the Hebrew Abram was “passing through” the land, crossing over to his destination. **Shechem**: This ancient site was in the center of the land; later under Joshua’s leadership the people would commemorate the Lord’s covenant there (Josh. 24:1). **tree of Moreh**: A terebinth or ancient oak tree would serve as a lasting marker for future generations to observe (see also 13:18; 18:1; 23:17). The term Moreh means “The Teacher.” It is related to the term Torah, which means “Instruction.” Here Abram began symbolically taking possession of the land that would one day be the territory of the Great Teacher and His instruction. The land was already occupied by **the Canaanites** (see 13:7), but by God’s promise it would belong to Abraham’s descendants.

12:7 the LORD appeared: This was the first time God appeared to Abram in the land of Canaan, but certainly not the last (see 13:14–17).



give this land.” And there he built an ^aaltar to the LORD, who had appeared to him. ⁸And he moved from there to the mountain east of Bethel, and he pitched his tent *with* Bethel on the west and Ai on the east; there he built an altar to the LORD and ^rcalled on the name of the LORD. ⁹So Abram journeyed, ^sgoing on still toward the ⁴South.

Abram in Egypt

¹⁰Now there was ^ta famine in the land, and Abram ^uwent down to Egypt to dwell there, for the famine *was* ^vsevere in the land. ¹¹And it came to pass, when he was close to entering Egypt, that he said to Sarai his wife, “Indeed I know that you *are* ^wa woman of beautiful countenance. ¹²Therefore it will happen, when the Egyptians see you, that they will say, ‘This *is* his wife’; and they ^xwill kill me, but they will let you live. ^{13y}Please say you *are* my ^zsister, that it may be well with me for your sake, and that ⁵I may live because of you.”

¹⁴So it was, when Abram came into Egypt, that the Egyptians saw the woman, that she *was* very beautiful. ¹⁵The princes of Pharaoh also saw her and commended her to Pharaoh. And the woman was taken to Pharaoh’s house. ¹⁶He ^atreated Abram well for her sake. He ^bhad sheep, oxen, male donkeys, male and female servants, female donkeys, and camels.

⁷ ^a Gen. 13:4, 18; 22:9
⁸ ^r Gen. 4:26; 13:4; 21:33
⁹ ^s Gen. 13:1, 3; 20:1; 24:62 ⁴ Heb. Negev
¹⁰ ^t Gen. 26:1 ^u Ps. 105:13 ^v Gen. 43:1
¹¹ ^w Gen. 12:14; 26:7; 29:17
¹² ^x Gen. 20:11; 26:7
¹³ ^y Gen. 20:1-18; 26:6-11 ^z Gen. 20:12
⁵ Lit. *my soul*
¹⁶ ^a Gen. 20:14
^b Gen. 13:2

¹⁷ ^c Gen. 20:18; 1 Chr. 16:21; [Ps. 105:14]
¹⁸ ^d Gen. 20:9, 10; 26:10
²⁰ ^e [Prov. 21:1]

CHAPTER 13

¹ ^a Gen. 12:4; 14:12, 16 ^b Gen. 12:9
¹ Heb. *Negev*
² ^c Gen. 24:35; 26:14; Ps. 112:3; Prov. 10:22
³ ^d Gen. 12:8, 9
⁴ ^e Gen. 12:7, 8; 21:33 ^f Ps. 116:17
⁶ ^g Gen. 36:7 ² Lit. *bear*
⁷ ^h Gen. 26:20
¹ Gen. 12:6; 15:20, 21

¹⁷But the LORD ^cplagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Sarai, Abram’s wife. ¹⁸And Pharaoh called Abram and said, ^d“What *is* this you have done to me? Why did you not tell me that she *was* your wife? ¹⁹Why did you say, ‘She *is* my sister’? I might have taken her as my wife. Now therefore, here is your wife; take *her* and go your way.” ^{20e}So Pharaoh commanded *his* men concerning him; and they sent him away, with his wife and all that he had.

Abram Inherits Canaan

13 Then Abram went up from Egypt, he and his wife and all that he had, and ^aLot with him, ^bto the ¹South. ^{2c}Abram *was* very rich in livestock, in silver, and in gold. ³And he went on his journey ^dfrom the South as far as Bethel, to the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Ai, ⁴to the ^eplace of the altar which he had made there at first. And there Abram ^fcalled on the name of the LORD.

⁵Lot also, who went with Abram, had flocks and herds and tents. ⁶Now ^gthe land was not able to ²support them, that they might dwell together, for their possessions were so great that they could not dwell together. ⁷And there was ^hstrife between the herdsmen of Abram’s livestock and the herdsmen of Lot’s livestock. ⁱThe Canaanites and the Perizzites then dwelt in the land.

To your descendants: The land of Canaan was a gift to the descendants of Abram. God owned the land (Ps. 24:1); it was His to do with as He pleased. The people of Canaan had lost their right to occupy the land due to their awful depravity (see 15:16). Thus God declared that **this land** would become the land of Israel (see also 15:18–21; 17:6–8). This verse forms a part of the Abrahamic covenant (see the references at 15:1–21), and Abraham quoted it many years later to his servant (24:7).

12:8 Later, in the time of Jacob, the site of **Bethel** would play an important role (see 28:10–22). **Ai** means “Ruin.” The name suggests that the site was a ruin of an ancient city. Abram responded to God’s appearance by building **an altar** and worshiping the Lord. **called on the name of the Lord:** Not a private prayer, but a public proclamation. Abram was evangelizing—telling others about the Lord. God had commanded him to be a blessing to the nations (v. 2) and he was doing it. The meaning “to proclaim” or “to preach” for this Hebrew verb is found also in 4:26; 21:33; 26:25.

12:9 South: This Hebrew word is often transliterated as the *Negev* (see 13:1; 24:62). The population of Canaan, along with their flocks and herds, kept Abram from finding a location for his own herds and flocks. He kept wandering further south, into the Negev, until he had room for them.

12:10 Sometime after Abram’s arrival in Canaan, **famine** forced him to leave. Famine can arise either from forces of nature or from war and its disruption of farming (see 26:1; Ruth 1:1). **to Egypt:** The Scripture does not say whether Abram wanted to go.

12:11 beautiful countenance: Only rarely does the Bible refer to a person’s appearance (other examples are Joseph at 39:6 and David at 1 Sam. 16:12). The comment on Sarai’s beauty compares to ones on Rebekah (24:16) and Rachel (29:17). Sarai’s physical beauty was remarkable given her advanced age—she was ten years younger than Abram, or about 65 (12:4; 17:17).

12:12 The point is that Abram and his entourage would not be able to slip into Egypt secretly. They were many, with plenty of possessions, herds, and flocks. The Egyptians would **see** them, and Abram knew that Sarai’s beauty would be noticed too.

12:13 my sister: Sarai was Abram’s half sister, the daughter of his father but not of his mother (20:12).

12:15 commended her: A form of praise (much like that in Ps. 113:1). **to Pharaoh’s house:** Abram’s play backfired!

12:16 treated Abram well: Abram was enriched by Pharaoh’s actions, but at the possible loss of his wife. Some critical scholars used to think that **camels** were not domesticated nearly so early as this; they viewed the term *camels* as an error. It is now known that camels had been domesticated, although rarely. They represented great wealth; to have a camel in this period was like having an expensive limousine.

12:17 the Lord plagued Pharaoh: The first example of the cursing and blessing element of God’s promise (see vv. 2, 3).

12:18 Despite his indignation, Pharaoh dismissed the couple. The Lord protected Abram and Sarai for their role in salvation history.

13:1, 2 Abram and Sarai returned from Egypt **to the South** or to the Negev (see 12:9; 24:62), a region where they could live with their considerable wealth in **livestock, silver, and gold**. From there they journeyed back to **Bethel**, the site where God had appeared to him. Again Abram **called on the name of the Lord** (see 12:8).

13:7 Lot shared in his uncle Abram’s prosperity to some degree. The crowding of range lands led to disputes and **strife** between their herdsmen. **The Canaanites and the Perizzites:** As in 12:6, the point of this phrase is that the land was already populated; Abram and Lot did not come into a region that was empty. They had to compete for available land for their rapidly growing herds and flocks.



Cuneiform

A system of writing developed before 3000 B.C. in Mesopotamia (the lower Tigris and Euphrates Valley) probably by the Sumerians and then adopted and modified by the Accadians, Hurrians, Hittites, Elamites, Persians, and Canaanites from Ugarit. The wedge-shaped signs of cuneiform writing were carved on stone and metal or inscribed with a stylus on clay tablets. These clay tablets received the wedge marks while soft and moist, but they became as hard as stone after they were dried in the sun or baked in a kiln. Thousands of such tablets were discovered by archaeologists at the site of Ras Shamra (ancient Ugarit, a Canaanite settlement). Cuneiform was originally a pictographic form of writing, but it soon was used to signify syllables and consonants. Variations of cuneiform scripts were developed for Ugaritic and Old Persian writing.



Mesopotamian cuneiform tablet, c. 2052 B.C.
Wikimedia Commons

8 / 1 Cor. 6:7; [Phil. 2:14, 15]

9 ^a Gen. 20:15; 34:10

ⁱ Gen. 13:11, 14

^m [Rom. 12:18]

10 ⁿ Gen. 19:17-29;

Deut. 34:3 ^o Gen.

19:24 ^p Gen. 2:8, 10;

Is. 51:3 ^q Gen. 14:2,

8; 19:22; Deut. 34:3

12 ^r Gen. 19:24, 25,

29 ^s Gen. 14:12; 19:1

13 ^t Gen. 18:20, 21;

Ezek. 16:49; 2 Pet.

2:7, 8 ^u Gen. 6:11;

39:9; Num. 32:23

14 ^v Gen. 13:11

^w Gen. 28:14

15 ^x Gen. 12:7;

13:17; 15:7, 18; 17:8;

Deut. 34:4; Acts

7:5 ^y 2 Chr. 20:7; Ps.

37:22 ^z Lit. seed

16 ^a Gen. 22:17; Ex.

32:13; Num. 23:10

18 ^a Gen. 26:17

^b Gen. 14:13 ^c Gen.

23:2; 35:27 ^d Gen.

8:20; 22:8, 9 ^e Heb.

Alon Mamre

CHAPTER 14

1 ^a Gen. 10:10; 11:2

^b Is. 11:11; 21:2; Dan.

8:2 ^c Heb. *goyim*

⁸ So Abram said to Lot, ^j “Please let there be no strife between you and me, and between my herdsmen and your herdsmen; for we *are* brethren. ⁹ *Is* not the whole land before you? Please ⁱ separate from me. ^m If *you take* the left, then I will go to the right; or, if *you go* to the right, then I will go to the left.”

¹⁰ And Lot lifted his eyes and saw all ⁿ the plain of Jordan, that it *was* well watered everywhere (before the LORD ^o destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah) ^p like the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt as you go toward ^q Zoar. ¹¹ Then Lot chose for himself all the plain of Jordan, and Lot journeyed east. And they separated from each other. ¹² Abram dwelt in the land of Canaan, and Lot ^r dwelt in the cities of the plain and ^s pitched his tent even as far as Sodom. ¹³ But the men of Sodom ^t were exceedingly wicked and ^u sinful against the LORD.

¹⁴ And the LORD said to Abram, after Lot ^v had separated from him: “Lift your eyes now and look from the place where you are—^w northward, southward, eastward, and westward; ¹⁵ for all the land which you see ^x I give to you and ^y your ^z descendants forever. ¹⁶ And ^z I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth; so that if a man could number the dust of the earth, ^{then} your descendants also could be numbered. ¹⁷ Arise, walk in the land through its length and its width, for I give it to you.”

¹⁸ ^a Then Abram moved his tent, and went and ^b dwelt by ^c the terebinth trees of Mamre, ^d which *are* in Hebron, and built an ^e altar there to the LORD.

Lot's Captivity and Rescue

14 And it came to pass in the days of Amraphel king ^a of Shinar, Arioch king of Ellasar, Chedorloamer king of ^b Elam, and Tidal king of ^c nations, ² that they made war with Bera king of Sodom,

13:8, 9 *we are brethren*: Abram acted with kindness, not wanting to fight his nephew's family and herdsmen. Abram gave Lot his choice. In doing this, Abram not only showed a lack of self-interest, but also confidence in God's continuing provision for him.

13:10 Lot was greedier than Abram; he wanted the well-watered region in **the plain of Jordan**, near the Dead Sea. **Sodom and Gomorrah**: In light of the fate of these infamous cities (chs. 18; 19); the first readers would be amazed to learn of the abundant water the region had once enjoyed. **like the garden of the LORD**: This exuberant comparison recalls the conditions of Eden (2:10). In an arid region, abundance of water would evoke images of Paradise. The “little” town of **Zoar** later figured in Lot's life (19:22).

13:13 Lot's choice of the more favorable land led him into territory that was populated by the worst of the Canaanites, the infamous evil people of **Sodom** (see chs. 18; 19). The rest of the peoples of Canaan were given 400 years before their idolatry and wickedness demanded judgment (15:16).

13:14–17 This section forms part of the set of texts that set the stage

for the Abrahamic covenant (see the list at 15:1–21). This section builds on 12:1–3, 7, the passage in which God first gave His great promise to Abram.

13:14 **The LORD** reaffirmed the promise to Abram after his lack of faith in Egypt (12:10–20) and his separation from Lot.

13:15–17 **all the land**: None of the land was outside the promise. **Your descendants** translates the Hebrew word for seed. At times this term refers to many descendants and at other times to a unique individual, the Coming One (22:18; see also Gal. 3:16). **as the dust of the earth**: A hyperbole or overstatement (15:5; 22:17). Abram's **walk in the land** is a symbolic act of taking possession. Abraham himself would not take possession of the land (see Heb. 11:13–16); his descendants would (see 12:7; 15:17–21).

13:18 **Hebron** became one of the principal centers for Abram's stay in the land (23:2). Abram was still living in a tent, not in the cities. Abram continued to build **altars** to worship the living God (see 12:7, 8; 13:4).

14:1 Most scholars no longer think it is likely that **Amraphel king of Shinar** was the famous Hammurabi of Babylon.

Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of ^cAdmah, Shemeber king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (that is, ^dZoar). ³All these joined together in the Valley of Siddim ^e(that is, the Salt Sea). ⁴Twelve years ^fthey served Chedorlaomer, and in the thirteenth year they rebelled.

⁵In the fourteenth year Chedorlaomer and the kings that *were* with him came and attacked ^gthe Rephaim in Ashteroth Karnaim, ^hthe Zuzim in Ham, ⁱthe Emim in Shaveh Kiriathaim, ^jand the Horites in their mountain of Seir, as far as El Paran, which *is* by the wilderness. ⁷Then they turned back and came to En Mishpat (that *is*, Kadesh), and attacked all the country of the Amalekites, and also the Amorites who dwelt ^kin Hazezon Tamar.

⁸And the king of Sodom, the king of Gomorrah, the king of Admah, the king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (that *is*, Zoar) went out and joined together in battle in the Valley of Siddim ⁹against Chedorlaomer king of Elam, Tidal king of ²nations, Amraphel king of Shinar, and Arioch king of Ellasar—four kings against ¹⁰five. ¹⁰Now the Valley of Siddim *was full of* ^lasphalt pits; and the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled; *some* fell there, and the remainder fled ^mto the mountains. ¹¹Then they took ⁿall the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all their provisions, and went their way. ¹²They also took Lot, Abram's ^obrother's son ^pwho dwelt in Sodom, and his goods, and departed.

¹³Then one who had escaped came and

² ^c Gen. 10:19; Deut. 29:23 ^d Gen. 13:10; 19:22
³ ^e Num. 34:12; Deut. 3:17; Josh. 3:16
⁴ ^f Gen. 9:26
⁵ ^g Gen. 15:20
^h Deut. 2:20 ⁱ Num. 32:37; Deut. 2:10
⁶ ^j Gen. 36:20; Deut. 2:12, 22
⁷ ^k 2 Chr. 20:2
⁸ ^l Heb. *goyim*
⁹ ^m Gen. 11:3
¹⁰ ⁿ Gen. 19:17, 30
¹¹ ^o Gen. 14:16, 21
¹² ^p Gen. 11:27; 12:5
¹³ ^q Gen. 13:12
¹⁴ ^r Gen. 39:14; 40:15 ^s Gen. 13:18
¹⁵ ^t Gen. 14:24; 21:27, 32
¹⁶ ^u Heb. *Alon Mamre*
¹⁷ ^v Gen. 19:29
¹⁸ ^w Gen. 13:8; 14:12
¹⁹ ^x Gen. 12:5; 15:3; 17:27; Eccl. 2:7
²⁰ ^y Deut. 34:1; Judg. 18:29; 1 Kin. 15:20
²¹ ^z Is. 41:2, 3 ^{aa} Lit. *on the left hand of*
²² ^{ab} Gen. 31:18; 1 Sam. 30:8, 18, 19
²³ ^{ac} 1 Sam. 18:6
²⁴ ^{ad} 2 Sam. 18:18 ^{ae} Heb. 7:1
²⁵ ^{af} Lit. *striking*
²⁶ ^{ag} Ps. 110:4; Heb. 7:1-10 ^{ah} Gen. 18:5; Ex. 29:40; Ps. 104:15
²⁷ ^{ai} Ps. 110:4; Heb. 5:6
²⁸ ^{aj} Acts 16:17
²⁹ ^{ak} Ruth 3:10
³⁰ ^{al} Gen. 14:22; Matt. 11:25
³¹ ^{am} Gen. 24:27
³² ^{an} Gen. 28:22; Heb. 7:4 ^{ao} one-tenth

told Abram the ^qHebrew, for ^rhe dwelt by ³the terebinth trees of Mamre the Amorite, brother of Eshcol and brother of Aner; ^sand they *were* allies with Abram. ¹⁴Now ^twhen Abram heard that ^uhis brother was taken captive, he armed his three hundred and eighteen trained *servants* who were ^vborn in his own house, and went in pursuit ^was far as Dan. ¹⁵He divided his forces against them by night, and he and his servants ^xattacked them and pursued them as far as Hobah, which *is* ⁴north of Damascus. ¹⁶So he ^ybrought back all the goods, and also brought back his brother Lot and his goods, as well as the women and the people.

¹⁷And the king of Sodom ^zwent out to meet him at the Valley of Shaveh (that *is*, the ^aKing's Valley), ^bafter his return from ⁵the defeat of Chedorlaomer and the kings who *were* with him.

Abram and Melchizedek

¹⁸Then ^cMelchizedek king of Salem brought out ^dbread and wine; he *was* ^ethe priest of ^fGod Most High. ¹⁹And he blessed him and said:

^g“Blessed be Abram of God Most High,
^hPossessor of heaven and earth;
²⁰ And ⁱblessed be God Most High,
Who has delivered your enemies into
your hand.”

And he ^jgave him ⁶a tithe of all.

²¹Now the king of Sodom said to Abram,

14:3 The Valley of Siddim is most likely submerged under the waters of the Dead Sea.

14:4 they served: That is, the kings from Mesopotamia forced the kings of the cities in the Valley of Siddim to pay tribute.

14:5 The punitive raid of the foreign alliance took at least a year to organize. The raid must have been formidable, given the list of cities they **attacked** as they made their way to the encounter with the rebellious kings.

14:10 asphalt pits: The Hebrew term for pits is written twice (“pits pits”), meaning that bitumen pits were everywhere.

14:11, 12 all the goods . . . Lot: Lot was not only captured, but he was also now living in the city of Sodom, an “exceedingly wicked and sinful” city (see 13:11–13). This sets the stage for the events of chs. 18; 19.

14:13 Here is this first use of the word **Hebrew** in the Bible. It comes from the name Eber, first mentioned in the table of the nations in ch. 10. The word is related to a verb meaning “cross over” or “pass through,” perhaps reminding us that Abram “passed through” or “crossed over” from another place in order to obey the Lord’s command. Abram had moved to Hebron at the terebinth trees of **Mamre** (13:18; see also v. 24).

14:14 The fact that Abram could field 318 fighting men from among his own **servants** is an indication of the great wealth and honor that the Lord had given him (see 12:2, 3).

14:16 Abram’s raid was a complete success. He regained **all the goods** stolen by the raiding party from Mesopotamia and rescued his nephew Lot.

14:17 When Abram returned from his successful attack on the raiding party from Mesopotamia, he was met by two kings, one from **Sodom** and one from Salem. Abram turns at first to the king of Salem.

14:18 Melchizedek means “My King Is Righteous.” Melchizedek was a contemporary of Abram who worshiped the living God. **king of Salem:** Salem is an older, shorter name for Jerusalem. The word is based on the root from which we get the word *shalom*, “peace.” **bread and wine:** While these were staples of everyday life in ancient times, their use here had a different purpose—to celebrate God’s deliverance of Abram and his troops. **the priest of God Most High:** The term for God used here expresses God’s power over the nations. The great surprise about Melchizedek is that he appears from nowhere, without mention of parents or background, without any introduction of ties to the Lord. This mysterious quality of Melchizedek allows the writer of Hebrews to compare him with another priest, the Lord Jesus Christ (see Heb. 5–9; see also Ps. 110:4).

14:19 And he blessed him: Melchizedek is the first to bless Abram; thus he comes under the special provision of God’s promise of blessing (see 12:3). **Blessed be Abram:** The words of the blessing are in two lines of poetry, making them more memorable as well as adding a sense of power and effectiveness. The phrase **God Most High** is used in both lines of the blessing, for special emphasis. **Possessor** may also mean “Creator” (see Prov. 8:22).

14:20 blessed be God Most High: When we bless God, we acknowledge Him as the source of all our blessings (see Ps. 103:1, 2). Melchizedek declared the true nature of Abram’s victory—God **delivered** him. Here is the first mention of the **tithe** in the Bible (see Deut. 14:22). Abram’s gift indicates that he considered Melchizedek a true priest of the living God; in giving this gift Abram was giving to the Lord.

14:21 Abram seems to have ignored the **king of Sodom** (see v. 17) until he had worshiped with the king of Salem. Now he hears the demands of this king, who asked for his people but not for his goods.

“Give me the ⁷persons, and take the goods for yourself.”

²² But Abram ^k said to the king of Sodom, “I ^l have raised my hand to the LORD, God Most High, ^m the Possessor of heaven and earth, ²³ that ⁿ I will take nothing, from a thread to a sandal strap, and that I will not take anything that is yours, lest you should say, ‘I have made Abram rich’— ²⁴ except only what the young men have eaten, and the portion of the men who went with me: Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre; let them take their portion.”

God’s Covenant with Abram

15 After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram ^a in a vision, saying, ^b “Do not be afraid, Abram. I *am* your ^c shield, ¹ your exceedingly ^d great reward.”

^{2e} But Abram said, “Lord God, what

²¹ ⁷ Lit. *souls*
²² ^k Gen. 14:2, 8, 10
¹ Dan. 12:7 ^m Gen. 14:19
²³ ⁿ 2 Kin. 5:16; Esth. 9:15, 16

CHAPTER 15

¹ ^a Gen. 15:4; 46:2; 1 Sam. 15:10; Dan. 10:1 ^b Gen. 21:17; 26:24; Is. 41:10; Dan. 10:12 ^c Deut. 33:29; Ps. 3:3; 84:11; 91:4 ^d Num. 18:20; Ps. 58:11; Prov. 11:18
¹ Or your reward shall be very great
² ^e Gen. 17:18
¹ Acts 7:5 ² *am* childless
³ ^g Gen. 14:14 ³ *a* servant
⁴ ^h 2 Sam. 7:12; Gal. 4:28
⁵ ⁱ Gen. 22:17; 26:4;

will You give me, ^f seeing I ² go childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?” ³ Then Abram said, “Look, You have given me no offspring; indeed ^g one ³ born in my house is my heir!”

⁴ And behold, the word of the LORD came to him, saying, “This one shall not be your heir, but one who ^h will come from your own body shall be your heir.” ⁵ Then He brought him outside and said, “Look now toward heaven, and ⁱ count the ^j stars if you are able to number them.” And He said to him, ^k “So shall your ^l descendants be.”

⁶ And he ^m believed in the LORD, and He ⁿ accounted it to him for righteousness.

⁷ Then He said to him, “I *am* the LORD,

Deut. 1:10; Ps. 147:4 / Jer. 33:22 ^k Ex. 32:13; Rom. 4:18; Heb. 11:12 ¹ Gen. 17:19 ⁶ ^m Gen. 21:1; Rom. 4:3, 9, 22; Gal. 3:6; James 2:23 ⁿ Ps. 32:2; 106:31

14:22 Abram raised his hand as a symbol of a strong oath. In other passages it is a sign of defiance. Abram identified Yahweh, translated here as **the LORD**, with the **God Most High**. This is a clear statement that he and Melchizedek both worshiped the true, living God.

14:23 I will take nothing: In these words, Abram strongly rebuked Sodom and its king (see 13:12, 13). Abram stood in strong contrast to his nephew Lot who had moved into the wicked city (see 14:12).

14:24 Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre: Abram’s allies (v. 13) were not bound by his own resolution. The term Mamre is also a place name associated with Hebron (see 18:1; 23:17).

15:1–21 This section is one of the texts that present the Abrahamic covenant (see 17:1–22; 18:1–15; 22:15–18; 26:23, 24; 35:9–15; cf. 12:1–3, 7; 13:14–17).

15:1 After these things is a transition phrase—what follows is a new incident in Abram’s life (22:1). **the word of the LORD ... in a vision:** The writer of Hebrews reminds us that God spoke “at various times and in various ways.” The use of a vision is only one of the means by which God interacts with His servants. This was the third appearance of the Lord to Abram since his arrival in the land of Canaan (the first at 12:7; the second at 13:14–17; see also ch. 17). **your exceedingly great reward:** The greatest thing in all of life is relationship to God.

15:2 Lord God translates the Hebrew word for Lord (*Adonai*) and the name Yahweh. Abram and Sarai were **childless** (see 11:29, 30). Later we learn that Abram had six sons by a concubine named Keturah (see 25:1–6). That relationship with Keturah must have occurred after the events of this chapter. **heir of my house:** According to long-standing custom, a man who was childless would adopt someone, perhaps a slave, to be his principal heir. If the man later had a child, then the natural child would replace the adopted son

as the principal heir. Similar laws were part of the legal codes of the Middle East, including the famed Code of Hammurabi of Babylon. We read of **Eliezer of Damascus** only here, but he had the honor of being Abram’s heir because Abram and Sarai had no child of their own. Some have wondered if Eliezer is also the unnamed servant of Abraham who went on the quest for a wife for Isaac (see 22:5; 24:2).

15:3 Offspring represents a word that is also translated *seed* and *descendants* (see 3:15; 15:5, 13, 18).

15:4 from your own body: Eliezer was not a physical son of Abram; God promised that Abram himself would father a child, even in his advanced age.

15:5 Only God can count the stars (see Ps. 147:4; Is. 40:26). The saying means that the descendants of Abram would be innumerable (see 22:17; cf. 13:16). **Your descendants** translates the Hebrew word for *seed*. This word is used to refer to the coming Messiah (Num. 24:7; Is. 6:13).

15:6 When God made a promise, Abram **believed in the LORD**. When God commanded Abram, he obeyed (see 12:4; 22:3). Nothing so marks the lives of Abram and Sarai as their *belief in God* (see Heb. 11:8–19). It is this belief, faith in the only living God, that saves the sinner from sin (see John 12:11). **He accounted it to him for righteousness:** Some have thought that in OT times people were saved by their good deeds rather than by faith, but this idea is mistaken. Abram was not saved because of righteous living or obedience, but by believing in God and so being declared righteous by Him. The only valid work is the work of faith (John 6:28, 29).

15:7 I am the LORD, who brought you out: This is the self-authenticating declaration of the Lord. His grace enables a person to believe. **Ur:** See 11:28, 31.

believe

(Heb. *aman*) (15:6; Ex. 4:31; 2 Chr. 20:20; Ps. 116:10) Strong’s #539

The Hebrew word translated *believe* is from a root meaning “establish” or “confirm.” The English word *amen*, which is used to express approval, comes from the same root (Neh. 5:13; Ps. 41:13). Belief is one of the most important ideas in all the Bible, because a person must *believe* God in order to be saved from sin. For this very reason, the NT makes much of the fact that Abraham *believed* God (Heb. 11:8–12). Whenever the Scriptures, whether the OT or NT, state that a person “believed in the LORD,” it signals that the person has made a decision to treat God’s word as certain and has made a commitment to do what God wants (15:6; John 1:12).

accounted

(Heb. *chashab*) (15:6; Ex. 26:1; Is. 33:8) Strong’s #2803

This complex verb has two distinct ranges of meaning. The first is associated with calculations of some sort: “count” (Lev. 25:27; Prov. 17:28), “esteem” (Is. 53:3), “impute” (2 Sam. 19:19), “reckon” (Lev. 27:18, 23). The second includes the element of planning. Thus the word has the meaning of “think” (1 Sam. 1:13), “devise” (Esth. 8:3), “artistic design” (Ex. 26:1; 35:35), or “regard” (Is. 33:8). As used in 15:6, the word has commercial connotations. Abram’s faith was “accounted” to him for righteousness—that is, computed or tallied as a credit or deposit in Abram’s favor. Paul also appeals to this credit and debit language of the accounting ledger in his explanation of justification by faith (see Rom. 4:3).

who ^abrought you out of ^pUr of the Chaldeans, ^ato give you this land to inherit it.”

⁸ And he said, “Lord God, ^rhow shall I know that I will inherit it?”

⁹ So He said to him, “Bring Me a three-year-old heifer, a three-year-old female goat, a three-year-old ram, a turtledove, and a young pigeon.” ¹⁰ Then he brought all these to Him and ^scut them in two, down the middle, and placed each piece opposite the other; but he did not cut ^tthe birds in two. ¹¹ And when the vultures came down on the carcasses, Abram drove them away.

¹² Now when the sun was going down, ^aa deep sleep fell upon Abram; and behold, horror and great darkness fell upon him. ¹³ Then He said to Abram: “Know certainly ^vthat your descendants will be strangers in a land *that is* not theirs, and will serve them, and ^wthey will afflict them four hundred years. ¹⁴ And also the nation whom they serve ^xI will judge; afterward ^ythey shall come out with great

⁷ ^o Gen. 12:1 ^p Gen. 11:28, 31 ^q Gen. 13:15, 17; Ps. 105:42, 44

⁸ ^r Gen. 24:13, 14; Judg. 6:36–40; 1 Sam. 14:9, 10; Luke 1:18

¹⁰ ^s Gen. 15:17; Jer. 34:18 ^t Lev. 1:17

¹² ^u Gen. 2:21; 28:11; Job 33:15

¹³ ^v Ex. 1:11; Acts 7:6 ^w Ex. 12:40

¹⁴ ^x Ex. 6:6 ^y Ex. 12:36

¹⁵ ^z Job 5:26 ^a Gen. 25:8; 47:30 ^b Gen. 25:8 ^c Die and join your ancestors

¹⁶ ^c Gen. 15:13; Ex. 12:41 ^d Gen. 48:22; Lev. 18:24–28; 1 Kin. 21:26 ^e 1 Kin. 11:12; Matt. 23:32

¹⁷ ^f Jer. 34:18, 19 ^g Gen. 24:7

possessions. ¹⁵ Now as for you, ^zyou shall ⁴go ^ato your fathers in peace; ^byou shall be buried at a good old age. ¹⁶ But ^cin the fourth generation they shall return here, for the iniquity ^dof the Amorites ^eis not yet complete.”

¹⁷ And it came to pass, when the sun went down and it was dark, that behold, there appeared a smoking oven and a burning torch that ^fpassed between those pieces. ¹⁸ On the same day the Lord ^gmade a covenant with Abram, saying:

^h “To your descendants I have given this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the River Euphrates—¹⁹ the Kenites, the Kenezites, the Kadmonites, ²⁰ the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaim, ²¹ the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites, and the Jebusites.”

^h Gen. 12:7; 17:8; Ex. 23:31; Num. 34:3; Deut. 11:24; Josh. 1:4; 21:43; Acts 7:5

15:8 how shall I know: The text suggests that Abram was asking the Lord for a commemorative sign of His promise, not that he was troubled by unbelief.

15:9 Abram had only to prepare the sacrifice and **bring** it to God; the Lord would enact the sign (see v. 17). This emphasizes the unilateral, unconditional nature of the covenant.

15:11 Abram had come not to feed the **vultures**, but to see a great sign from the Lord. For the rest of the day he kept the vultures away from the animals while waiting for God’s sign.

15:12 Abram fell into the same sort of **deep sleep** that God placed on Adam (see 2:21). Abram was still aware of events around him. His trance-like state allowed him to remember these events for the rest of his life. **horror . . . darkness:** These two words give great emphasis to the meaning: “an overwhelmingly dark horror.” This kind of reaction to the indescribable holiness of the Lord (see Ps. 113:4–6; Is. 6:3; 40:25) is natural—Abram was about to experience the presence of the Almighty. This was a moment of profound dread and holy awe.

15:13 Your descendants translates the Hebrew word for *seed* (vv. 3, 5, 18). **Strangers** are those who dwell temporarily in a foreign place. Abram was a *stranger* in the land of Canaan; his descendants would become strangers in another land (Egypt). **four hundred years:** No doubt this would impress Abram, but consider how it would impress the first readers of the book. They were the generation who came to fulfill God’s promise! (See Ex. 12:40–42.)

15:14 I will judge: God fulfilled this prophecy in the ten plagues (Ex. 7–11). The Israelites of the Exodus acquired **great possessions** when they plundered the Egyptians (see Ex. 12:31–36).

15:15 to your fathers: A way of speaking about death; the phrase may include the promise of life after death as well (see 25:8; 35:29; 49:33; see also 1 Sam. 12:23).

15:16 in the fourth generation: This expression reflects the longer life spans of people in Abram’s day (cf. 400 years in v. 13). **iniquity of the Amorites:** In a sense, the Lord was granting a stay of execution for the peoples of Canaan (see 12:5). He would allow their sin to reach a critical level. The command of God to take the land from the Canaanite peoples (see Deut. 20) would come only when their iniquity was **complete**.

15:17 The deep sleep came on Abram when the **sun** was setting (v. 12). Now in heavy darkness, he saw supernatural light. **a smoking oven and a burning torch:** These symbols represented the glory of the Lord to Abram. Smoke and fire, with clouds and darkness, often precede God’s acts of judgment (see Ex. 19:16–20; Ps. 97:2–6; Is. 6:1–5; Joel 2:2, 3; Zeph. 1:14–16). This oven and torch imagery

may indicate the impending judgment on Canaan—the promise that God’s word to Abram will be kept. **between those pieces:** This last element has profound implications. In solemn agreements between equals (parity treaties), both parties would pass between the bloody pieces of slain animals and birds. The symbol would be evident to all: “May I become like this if I do not keep my part of the deal.” But Abram was not to walk this grisly pathway. Only God made that journey in the symbols of smoke and fire. The fulfillment of the promise of God to Abram, the Abrahamic covenant, is as sure as is the ongoing life of the Lord! (See also 22:15–18.)

15:18 The **same day** that Abram believed in the Lord (v. 6) and God counted it to him for righteousness, God made a covenant with him. **covenant:** The first time this very significant word is used of God’s promise to Abram. In this case the agreement is between a superior and an inferior. Compare 21:27, where the word is used in a parity treaty between Abraham and Abimelech. See also 26:28 for a parity treaty between Isaac and Abimelech. **Descendants** translates the Hebrew word for *seed*, which may refer to a populace or to an individual. The Jews who would descend from Abram would fulfill this promise as the seed (collectively); so also the Christ who is the Seed (singular) would ultimately fulfill this promise (see Gal. 3:16). One day, both the Savior and His people will fulfill this promise to the uttermost (Mic. 5:2–5). **This land** is the key term for this section. As already noted, God’s promise to Abram included his descendants and the Promised One, the Seed of Gen. 3:15 (see Is. 6:13). But the promise also included the land of Canaan (which was to become the land of Israel). We first see this in 12:7. **The river of Egypt** may be the Nile, or it may be what is called today the Wadi el’Arish, a smaller watercourse at the natural boundary of Egypt and the land of Israel. **the River Euphrates:** The northern arm of the Euphrates in Syria.

15:19–21 the Kenites . . . Jebusites: This list of nations served two purposes: (1) It defined the borders of the land. (2) It impressed—no fewer than ten nations would be supplanted by the nation of Israel. The Israelites who heard these words must have been greatly encouraged.

15:20 Most **Hittites** lived in Asia Minor (modern Turkey), but there were some Hittites in Canaan (see ch. 23). **the Rephaim:** A people of unusually tall stature; they are called giants in 2 Sam. 21:15–22 (see Num. 13:33; Deut. 2:11; 3:11, 13).

15:21 The term **Canaanite** could be used broadly to include all the people groups in Canaan (see 12:6), or more narrowly, as here, to indicate a particular people group (see 10:15–20).

Hagar and Ishmael

16 Now Sarai, Abram's wife, ^ahad borne him no *children*. And she had ^ban Egyptian maidservant whose name was ^cHagar. ^{2d}So Sarai said to Abram, "See now, the LORD ^ehas restrained me from bearing *children*. Please, ^fgo in to my maid; perhaps I shall ¹obtain children by her." And Abram ^gheeded the voice of Sarai. ³Then Sarai, Abram's wife, took Hagar her maid, the Egyptian, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife, after Abram ^hhad dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan. ⁴So he went in to Hagar, and she conceived. And when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress became ⁱdespised in her ²eyes.

⁵Then Sarai said to Abram, ³"My wrong ^{be} upon you! I gave my maid into your embrace; and when she saw that she had conceived, I became despised in her eyes. ⁷The LORD judge between you and me."

^{6k}So Abram said to Sarai, "Indeed your maid ^{is} in your hand; do to her as you please." And when Sarai dealt harshly with her, ¹she fled from her presence.

⁷Now the ^mAngel of the LORD found her by a spring of water in the wilderness, ⁿby the spring on the way to ^oShur. ⁸And He said, "Hagar, Sarai's maid, where have you come from, and where are you going?"

CHAPTER 16

¹ ^a Gen. 11:30; 15:2;
³ ^b Gen. 12:16; 21:9
^c Gal. 4:24
^{2d} ^d Gen. 30:3 ^e Gen.
20:18 ^f Gen. 30:3, 9
^g Gen. 3:17 ¹ Lit. *be
built up from*
³ ^h Gen. 12:4, 5
⁴ ⁱ 1 Sam. 1:6, 7;
[Prov. 30:21, 23]
² ^{sight}
⁵ ^j Gen. 31:53; Ex.
5:21 ³ *The wrong
done to me be*
^{6k} ^k 1 Pet. 3:7 ¹ Gen.
16:9; Ex. 2:15
^{7m} ^m Gen. 21:17, 18;
22:11, 15; 31:11
ⁿ Gen. 20:1; 25:18
^o Ex. 15:22

^{9p} [Titus 2:9]
¹⁰ ^q Gen. 17:20
¹¹ ^r Luke 1:13, 31
⁴ Lit. *God Hears*
¹² ^s Gen. 21:20; Job
24:5; 39:5-8 ¹ Gen.
25:18
¹³ ^t Gen. 31:42
⁵ Heb. *El Roi* ⁶ *Seen
the back of*
¹⁴ ^v Gen. 24:62
^w Gen. 14:7; Num.
13:26 ⁷ Lit. *Well of
the One Who Lives
and Sees Me*
¹⁵ ^x Gal. 4:22

She said, "I am fleeing from the presence of my mistress Sarai."

⁹The Angel of the LORD said to her, "Return to your mistress, and ^psubmit yourself under her hand." ¹⁰Then the Angel of the LORD said to her, ^q"I will multiply your descendants exceedingly, so that they shall not be counted for multitude." ¹¹And the Angel of the LORD said to her:

"Behold, you ^{are} with child,

^r And you shall bear a son.

You shall call his name ⁴Ishmael,
Because the LORD has heard your
affliction.

^{12s} He shall be a wild man;
His hand ^{shall be} against every
man,

And every man's hand against him.

^t And he shall dwell in the presence of
all his brethren."

¹³Then she called the name of the LORD who spoke to her, You-Are-⁵the-God-Who-Sees; for she said, "Have I also here ⁶seen Him ^uwho sees me?" ¹⁴Therefore the well was called ^vBeer Lahai Roi; ⁷observe, ^{it is} ^wbetween Kadesh and Bered.

¹⁵So ^xHagar bore Abram a son; and Abram named his son, whom Hagar bore, Ishmael. ¹⁶Abram ^{was} eighty-six years old when Hagar bore Ishmael to Abram.

16:1 had borne him no children: One of the principal themes in Genesis is the quest for children, especially sons. This appears in 4:1 with the birth of Cain. In Abram and Sarai's lives the theme gets a lot of attention (11:29, 30; 12:1-3; 15:1-4; also chs. 17; 18; 21). In the world of the OT, infertility caused great distress (see 25:21). At that time, the woman was always blamed. When a woman was not able to conceive a child, her husband might divorce her. Sarai's desperate ploy to have a child through **Hagar** was fully in accord with the practices of those days.

16:2 Sarai knew that conception was from the Lord (see 4:1); her words, **the LORD has restrained me**, expressed her grief. Earlier her husband had complained to the Lord that he was childless (see 15:2). **go in to my maid:** In the culture of the ancient Middle East this would have been expected. Abram's peers would not have regarded it as immoral. **obtain children by her:** Hagar would become a surrogate mother for Sarai. At the time of birth, the mother would undress herself and stay near the birth mother. As the child was born it might be placed on the wife's body, a ritual indicating that it was born on behalf of the woman who was unable to have children herself.

16:3 Sarai and Abram enlisted Hagar's aid only after **ten years** of waiting for God's promise to be fulfilled. At this point, Abram would have been 85 years old and Sarai 75 (12:4; 17:17).

16:4 despised: Sarai paid an emotional price for doing what the culture accepted. Using a surrogate mother may have been expedient and acceptable to the culture, but the hatred and belittling by the arrogant young servant woman was excruciating for Sarai. Now that she saw the pride of her servant, Sarai was humiliated.

16:5 The LORD judge: This is as close as we come to the use of cursing among God's people in the Bible; such words arose out of Sarai's utter desperation.

16:6 Sarai's frustration led her to treat Hagar **harshly**. Neither she nor Abram behaved well during this stressful time. The Bible often shows its best characters at their worst moments.

16:7 the Angel of the LORD: This wonderful phrase is used to speak of God as He relates Himself directly to His people. Angel means "messenger." **by a spring of water in the wilderness:** The detail is appropriate for Hagar's experience. There she was, alive with a child within her, and yet she had no place to go and no future. Hagar was like that spring in the wilderness.

16:8 and He said: On several occasions this passage states that the Angel of the Lord spoke directly to Hagar (vv. 9, 10, 11).

16:10 God's promise to Hagar to **multiply** her descendants is similar to the one given to Abram and Sarai (see 15:5; 17:20; 22:15-18).

Descendants translates the Hebrew word for *seed* (for its use elsewhere, see 3:15; 15:3; 5, 13, 18).

16:11 The name **Ishmael** uses the divine name *El* and means "God hears."

16:12 This is something of a mixed blessing as is Isaac's to Esau (see 27:39, 40). **Wild man** suggests that Ishmael and his descendants would be unsettled, ever on the move. **His hand . . . against** suggests that his descendants would often be at war. Still this people would endure. They would **dwell in the presence of all his brethren**. This has indeed been the case, for Ishmael's descendants are the Arab peoples who populate most of the Middle East today. Very few of the peoples of the OT world have survived to our own day. For example, all ten nations of 15:19-21 have ceased to exist. But two peoples survive: Israel, the Jewish people, descended from Isaac; and the Arabs, descended from Ishmael (see 17:19-22).

16:13 Though Hagar was Egyptian, she had evidently come to faith in **the LORD** of Abram and Sarai. As a recipient of God's blessing, she gave Him a commemorative name, **You-Are-the-God-Who-Sees**. Her words, **Have I also here seen Him**, suggest amazement at God's grace and humility in His presence. After the death of Abraham, his son Isaac lived at **Beer Lahai Roi** (25:11).

The Sign of the Covenant

17 When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD ^aappeared to Abram and said to him, ^b“I am ¹Almighty God; ^cwalk before Me and be ^dblameless. ²And I will make My ^ecovenant between Me and you, and ^fwill multiply you exceedingly.” ³Then Abram fell on his face, and God talked with him, saying: ⁴“As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you, and you shall be ^ga father of ²many nations. ⁵No longer shall ^hyour name be called ³Abram, but your name shall be ⁴Abraham; ⁱfor I have

CHAPTER 17

¹ ^a Gen. 12:7; 18:1
^b Gen. 28:3; 35:11; Ex. 6:3; Job 42:2
^c 2 Kin. 20:3 ^d Gen. 6:9; Deut. 18:13
^e Heb. *El Shaddai*
² ^e Gen. 15:18; Ex. 6:4; [Gal. 3:19] ^f Gen. 12:2; 13:16; 15:5; 18:18
⁴ ^g [Rom. 4:11, 12, 16] ² Lit. *multitude of nations*
⁵ ^h Neh. 9:7 ⁱ Rom. 4:17 ³ Lit. *Exalted Father*

made you a father of ⁵many nations. ⁶I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make ^jnations of you, and ^kkings shall come from you. ⁷And I will ^lestablish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, ^mto be God to you and ⁿyour descendants after you. ⁸Also ^oI give to you and your descendants after you the land ^pin ⁶

⁴ Lit. *Father of a Multitude* ⁵ *a multitude of* ⁶ ^j Gen. 17:16; 35:11 ^k Matt. 1:6 ⁷ ^l [Gal. 3:17] [☆] ^m Gen. 26:24; 28:13; Lev. 11:45; 26:12, 45; Heb. 11:16 ⁿ Rom. 9:8; Gal. 3:16 ⁸ ^o Gen. 12:7; 13:15, 17; Acts 7:5 ^p Gen. 23:4; 28:4 ⁶ Lit. *of your sojournings*

17:1–22 This text is a part of the complex of passages that form the Abrahamic covenant (see the list at 15:1–21), the irrevocable promise of God.
17:1 ninety-nine years old: From Abram’s perspective, God waited a long time to fulfill his promise. Abram was 75 years old when he came to the land of Canaan (12:4). At 86 he became the father of Ishmael (see 16:16). Then 13 more years passed without a son being born to Sarah (12:1–3; 15:3, 5, 13, 18). For the fourth time, **the LORD** appeared to Abram after he came to the land of Canaan (the first is in 12:7; the second in 13:14–17; the third in ch. 15; the next in ch. 18). **I am Almighty God:** God used the name *El Shaddai* for Himself for the first time (28:3; Ex. 3:14, 15; 6:2, 3). This word is similar to a word for *mountain*, to which God’s strength and endurance can be compared. **walk before Me:** As Enoch had walked with God (5:21–24), so now Abram was commanded to walk *before* God. He was to conduct his life as an open display of faithfulness to the Lord. **Be blameless** means to have integrity.
17:4 a father of many nations: Abram’s principal descendants are the Israelites, who are the centerpiece of biblical history and are the

line from which the Savior Jesus comes. But Abram is also the father of other nations. He is the father of Ishmael and the Arab peoples (see ch. 16), as well as a number of other people groups descended from Keturah, a concubine (see 25:1–6).
17:5 Abram . . . Abraham: This name change is significant. Abram means “Exalted Father.” Abraham means “Father of Many”—a direct reflection of his new role.
17:7 The Abrahamic **covenant** (see 12:1–3) is the foundation upon which all later divine covenants with God’s people are based. **Everlasting** means the covenant would last through all time. **to be God to you:** With these remarkable words, God pledged His ongoing relationship with the people of Abraham (see 2 Sam. 7: 14; Is. 52:11; Ezek. 37:26, 27; 2 Cor. 6:14—7:1). This was later celebrated in the creed of Israel, the great *Shema* (see Deut. 6:4; Ps. 100:3). **Descendants** is from the Hebrew word for *seed*; it may mean an individual person as well as a people (see 3:15; 15:3, 5, 13, 18).
17:8 The promise clearly included the Israelite people **and the land** (Canaan). The two are linked in the language of the covenant in ch. 15. Even though God removed Israel more than once from the

The Abrahamic Covenant			
	God’s Promise	God’s Command	Reaction
Gen. 12:1–3	God promises to make Abram into a great nation and bless all others through him.	Leave your country. Be a blessing.	Abram leaves Ur and goes to Canaan.
Gen. 13:14–18	God promises to multiply Abram’s descendants and give Canaan to them forever.		Abram worships God by building an altar.
	God’s Covenant	God’s Command	Reaction
Gen. 15:1–21	God makes a formal covenant by passing through sacrificial animals. He promises to multiply Abram’s descendants and give them the land.	Do not be afraid.	Abram believes.
Gen. 17:1–27	God promises to establish an everlasting covenant with Abram’s descendants and promises to give the land as an everlasting possession.	Walk before Me and be blameless. Keep the covenant and circumcise all males as a sign of the covenant.	Abraham circumcises all males in his household.
Gen. 18:1–18	God promises to give Sarah a son.		Sarah laughs.
Gen. 22:1–19	God promises to make Abraham’s descendants numerous and to bless all nations through them.	Sacrifice your son, Isaac. (Then God provided a ram to sacrifice instead.)	Abraham obeys.
Gen. 26:23–25	God promises to increase Isaac’s descendants.	Do not be afraid, for I am with you.	Isaac builds an altar and calls on God.
Gen. 35:9–15	God promises to multiply Jacob’s descendants and give them the land.		Jacob sets up a stone pillar and pours oil on it.

which you are a stranger, all the land of Canaan, as an everlasting possession; and ^qI will be their God.”

⁹And God said to Abraham: “As for you, ^ryou shall keep My covenant, you and your descendants after you throughout their generations. ¹⁰This is My covenant which you shall keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you: ^sEvery male child among you shall be circumcised; ¹¹and you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be ^ta sign of the covenant between Me and you. ¹²He who is eight days old among you ^ushall be circumcised, every male child in your generations, he who is born in your house or bought with money from any foreigner who is not your descendant. ¹³He who is born in your house and he who is bought with your money must be circumcised, and My covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. ¹⁴And the uncircumcised male child, who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin, that person ^vshall be cut off from his people; he has broken My covenant.”

⁸ ^q Ex. 6:7; 29:45; Lev. 26:12; Deut. 29:13; Rev. 21:7
⁹ ^r Ex. 19:5
¹⁰ ^s John 7:22; Acts 7:8
¹¹ ^t Ex. 12:13, 48; [Rom. 4:11]
¹² ^u Lev. 12:3
¹⁴ ^v Ex. 4:24-26

¹⁵ ⁷ Lit. *Princess*
¹⁶ ^w Gen. 18:10
^x Gen. 35:11; Gal. 4:31; 1 Pet. 3:6
^y Gen. 17:6; 36:31; 1 Sam. 8:22
¹⁷ ^z Gen. 17:3; 18:12; 21:6
¹⁸ ^a Gen. 18:23
¹⁹ ^b Gen. 18:10; 21:2; [Gal. 4:28] ☆
^c Gen. 22:16; Matt. 1:2; Luke 3:34
²⁰ ^d Gen. 16:10
^e Gen. 25:12-16
^f Gen. 21:13, 18
²¹ ^g Gen. 26:2-5
^h Gen. 21:2
ⁱ Gen. 18:14

¹⁵Then God said to Abraham, “As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but ⁷Sarah *shall be* her name. ¹⁶And I will bless her ^wand also give you a son by her; then I will bless her, and she shall be *a mother* ^xof nations; ^y kings of peoples shall be from her.”

¹⁷Then Abraham fell on his face ^zand laughed, and said in his heart, “Shall *a child* be born to a man who is one hundred years old? And shall Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear *a child*?” ¹⁸And Abraham ^asaid to God, “Oh, that Ishmael might live before You!”

¹⁹Then God said: “No, ^bSarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac; I will establish My ^ccovenant with him for an everlasting covenant, *and* with his descendants after him. ²⁰And as for Ishmael, I have heard you. Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and ^dwill multiply him exceedingly. He shall beget ^etwelve princes, ^fand I will make him a great nation. ²¹But My ^gcovenant I will establish with Isaac, ^hwhom Sarah shall bear to you at this ⁱset time next year.” ²²Then

land, He promised them ultimate possession of Canaan. It is **an everlasting possession**. The same word used of God’s covenant (v. 7) is used of the land.

17:10 Circumcision means “cutting around,” a minor operation that removes the foreskin from the male organ.

17:12 An **eight**-day-old boy and his immune system would be strong enough for the operation, but he would be too young to remember the pain.

17:14 There is something of a pun in the expression, **cut off**. Any man who did not accept circumcision would be cut off from the community. Some have thought that this section of Scripture concerns only the external act of circumcision, but we know God’s concern to be greater (Deut. 10:12–20). Circumcision—an outward sign—stood for a thorough commitment to God—an inward reality. Hence the apostle Paul demands that the heart be circumcised to God (Rom. 2:25–29).

17:15 Sarai . . . Sarah: Both names mean “Princess.” Like the name change from Abram to Abraham (vv. 4, 5), the new name accompanied a new relationship with God.

17:16 bless her: The Lord’s blessing was for Sarah as well as Abraham (see 12:1–3). A summary of the language used for Abraham in vv. 6–8 is used of her in these verses. The writer to the Hebrews also celebrated Sarah’s faithfulness to the Lord (see Heb. 11:11).

17:17 Fell on his face recalls the words of v. 3. Abraham’s laugh is unexpected and shocking—but completely understandable! For

24 years Abraham had heard—and believed—the same promise: One day he would become the father of a son who would found the nation of promise. He had tried to force the birth of a legitimate heir (see chs. 15–16), but God had assured him that the true heir would not be an adopted slave (15:4) nor the child of a surrogate mother (16:11, 12). But now, after nearly a quarter of a century and at the age of 99 (17:1), Abraham had reached his limit. Even if Sarah were to conceive now, she would be 90 when the baby was born and he would be 100! At this point it seemed as though the whole thing might be a joke. And so at last he **laughed**.

17:18 Abraham’s plea shows his love for his son **Ishmael** and his desire that in some tangible way the covenant promise of God would finally come to pass.

17:19 Isaac means “Laughter” (see 21:1–6).

17:20 God had **blessed** Ishmael before he was born (see 16:11, 12) and here He renewed and amplified the blessing. As the Hebrew people would have twelve tribes, so Ishmael’s people would also have **twelve** families (25:12–18).

17:21 Isaac whom Sarah shall bear: The promise was plain. The father and mother were named, the child was named, and the time was named.

17:22 God went up: We sometimes read of the Lord coming down from heaven; here we read of Him returning there. Such language is expressive of God’s holiness, transcendence, and wonder (see Ps. 113:4–6).

The Abrahamic Covenant

God burst into the lives of an older, childless couple, Abram and Sarai, with words of strong determination: “I will make you a great nation; I will bless you” (12:2). This gracious promise was unconditional. God would multiply Abram’s descendants and give them the land of Canaan (13:14–17). He formalized His promise to Abram as a formal agreement between a superior king and an inferior servant (15:1–21). Finally, He swore by Himself that He would do it (22:15–18). His word was irrevocable.

Yet within His unconditional promises, God made demands. He commanded Abram and Sarai to leave their home and their extended family to go to a new land (12:1). He commanded them to be a blessing to others (12:2), to walk before Him and be blameless (17:1), and to circumcise the males in their household as a sign of the covenant (17:10). Although God’s promises were unconditional, Abram’s temporal participation in God’s blessing was conditioned on his faithfulness and his obedience to God’s commands. Abram withstood the test—he believed and obeyed (15:6; 22:1–18).





Tents

Temporary shelters made of cloth, supported usually by poles and ropes. In biblical times tents were frequently made of a cloth woven out of black goat's hair. The cloth was woven on a loom in long strips, which were then sewn together until the desired length was reached. While tents came in a variety of sizes and shapes, the traditional shape has been



a rectangle. The side and end walls were made of reed mats, which were removable to catch the breeze. The interior of a tent was quite plain. The floor was covered with mats or a rug upon which the people sat. A chest or two and a low table might be the only furniture. Since a family's belongings had to be packed and moved frequently, even the wealthy did not accumulate numerous pieces of furniture.

A modern Bedouin tent. The tents Bedouins use today are still very similar to the ones used during the biblical era.

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He finished talking with him, and God went up from Abraham.

²³ So Abraham took Ishmael his son, all who were born in his house and all who were bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham's house, and circumcised the flesh of their foreskins that very same day, as God had said to him. ²⁴ Abraham was ninety-nine years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. ²⁵ And Ishmael his son was thirteen years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. ²⁶ That very same day Abraham was circumcised, and his son Ishmael; ²⁷ and all the men of his house, born in the

27 / Gen. 18:19

CHAPTER 18

1 ^a Gen. 13:18; 14:13

¹ Heb. *Alon Mamre*

2 ^b Gen. 18:16, 22;

32:24; Josh. 5:13;

Judg. 13:6-11; Heb.

13:2 ^c Gen. 19:1;

1 Pet. 4:9

4 ^d Gen. 19:2; 24:32;

43:24

house or bought with money from a foreigner, were circumcised with him.

The Son of Promise

18 Then the LORD appeared to him by ¹ the ^a terebinth trees of Mamre, as he was sitting in the tent door in the heat of the day. ^{2b} So he lifted his eyes and looked, and behold, three men were standing by him; ^c and when he saw *them*, he ran from the tent door to meet them, and bowed himself to the ground, ³ and said, "My Lord, if I have now found favor in Your sight, do not pass on by Your servant. ⁴ Please let ^d a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest

17:23–25 Abraham took Ishmael: Again we see Abraham completely obey the command of the Lord (see 12:4; 22:3). On the very day he received the command from God, he did just as the Lord commanded. All the males in his household from little boys to aged men were treated alike.

18:1–15 God reaffirmed His covenant with Abraham, reconfirming His promise to Sarah. This section is also a part of the complex of texts that make up the Abrahamic covenant (see the list at 15:1–21).

18:1 This is the fifth time **the LORD appeared** to Abraham since he had come into the land of Canaan. (1) The first was the appearance at the altar Abram built in Shechem when he first entered the land (12:7). (2) The second was after Lot had separated from Abram when they came back to Canaan from Egypt (13:14–17). (3) The third followed Abram's heroic rescue of Lot from the league of invading kings and the subsequent encounter with Melchizedek (15:1–21). (4) The fourth came 13 years after the birth of Ishmael, when the Lord renewed His covenant with Abraham and instituted the rite of

circumcision (17:1–22). **Mamre** was one of Abram's allies in his battle against the invading kings from Mesopotamia (see 14:13). The place name Mamre was probably associated with a personal name. This region came to be known as Hebron (see 13:18; 23:17). **in the heat of the day:** The southern desert or the Negev (see 12:9) can become very hot in the summer, reaching above 110° F. People usually did hard, physical work early in the morning or late in the afternoon.

18:2, 3 Verse 1 states that it was the Lord who appeared to Abraham; v. 2 speaks of **three men**; v. 3 suggests that one of these men was the Lord. Who were the other two? Probably attending angels; each of the three visitors looked like men, but one was even greater than angels (see 19:1). The writer of Hebrews used this account to encourage hospitality to strangers, "for by so doing some have unwittingly entertained angels" (Heb. 13:2). Abraham's words **My Lord** suggests that he suspected the identity of the visitors, but perhaps he was not sure until later of the full significance of the event.

yourselves under the tree. ⁵And ^eI will bring a morsel of bread, that ^fyou may refresh your hearts. After that you may pass by, ^ginasmuch as you have come to your servant.”

They said, “Do as you have said.”

⁶So Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah and said, “Quickly, make ready three measures of fine meal; knead *it* and make cakes.” ⁷And Abraham ran to the herd, took a tender and good calf, gave *it* to a young man, and he hastened to prepare *it*. ⁸So ^hhe took butter and milk and the calf which he had prepared, and set *it* before them; and he stood by them under the tree as they ate.

⁹Then they said to him, “Where is Sarah your wife?”

So he said, “Here, ⁱin the tent.”

¹⁰And He said, “I will certainly return to you ^jaccording to the time of life, and behold, ^kSarah your wife shall have a son.”

(Sarah was listening in the tent door which *was* behind him.) ¹¹Now ^lAbraham and Sarah were old, well advanced in age; and ²Sarah ^mhad passed the age of childbearing. ¹²Therefore Sarah ⁿlaughed within herself, saying, ^o“After I have grown old, shall I have pleasure, my ^plord being old also?”

¹³And the LORD said to Abraham, “Why did Sarah laugh, saying, ‘Shall I surely bear *a child*, since I am old?’ ^{14q}Is anything too hard for the LORD? ^rAt the appointed time I will return to you, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son.”

⁵ ^e Judg. 6:18, 19; 13:15, 16 ^f Judg. 19:5; Ps. 104:15
^g Gen. 19:8; 33:10
⁸ ^h Gen. 19:3
⁹ ⁱ Gen. 24:67
¹⁰ ^j 2 Kin. 4:16
^k Gen. 17:19, 21; 21:2; Rom. 9:9
¹¹ ^l Gen. 17:17; Luke 1:18; Rom. 4:19; Heb. 11:11, 12, 19 ^m Gen. 31:35
¹² ⁿ Lit. *the manner of women had ceased to be with Sarah*
¹² ^o Gen. 17:17
¹³ ^p Luke 1:18 ^q 1 Pet. 3:6
¹⁴ ^r Num. 11:23; Jer. 32:17; Zech. 8:6; Matt. 3:9; 19:26; Luke 1:37; Rom. 4:21 ^s Gen. 17:21; 18:10; 2 Kin. 4:16
¹⁶ ^t Acts 15:3; Rom. 15:24
¹⁷ ^u Gen. 18:22, 26, 33; Ps. 25:14; Amos 3:7; [John 15:15]
¹⁸ ^v [Gen. 12:3; 22:18]; Matt. 1:1; Luke 3:34; [Acts 3:25, 26; Gal. 3:8]
¹⁹ ^w [Deut. 4:9, 10; 6:6, 7]
²⁰ ^x Gen. 4:10; 19:13; Ezek. 16:49, 50 ^x Gen. 13:13
²¹ ^y Gen. 11:5; Ex. 3:8; Ps. 14:2 ^z Deut. 8:2; 13:3; Josh. 22:22; Luke 16:15; 2 Cor. 11:11
²² ^{aa} Gen. 18:16; 19:1
²³ ^b [Heb. 10:22]
^c Ex. 23:7; Num. 16:22; 2 Sam. 24:17; Ps. 114:7

¹⁵But Sarah denied *it*, saying, “I did not laugh,” for she was afraid.

And He said, “No, but you did laugh!”

Abraham Intercedes for Sodom

¹⁶Then the men rose from there and looked toward Sodom, and Abraham went with them ^sto send them on the way. ¹⁷And the LORD said, ^t“Shall I hide from Abraham what I am doing, ¹⁸since Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be ^u“blessed in him? ¹⁹For I have known him, in order ^vthat he may command his children and his household after him, that they keep the way of the LORD, to do righteousness and justice, that the LORD may bring to Abraham what He has spoken to him.” ²⁰And the LORD said, “Because ^wthe outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their ^xsin is very grave, ^{21y}I will go down now and see whether they have done altogether according to the outcry against it that has come to Me; and if not, ^zI will know.”

²²Then the men turned away from there ^aand went toward Sodom, but Abraham still stood before the LORD. ²³And Abraham ^bcame near and said, ^c“Would You also ^ddestroy the ^erighteous with the wicked? ²⁴Suppose there were fifty righteous within the city; would You also destroy the place and not spare *it* for the fifty righteous that were in it? ²⁵Far be it from You to do such a thing as this,

^d Job 9:22 ^e Gen. 20:4

18:9 Where is Sarah: Although the focus of God’s promise in ch. 17 was on Abraham, the focus here is on Sarah.

18:10 Sarah your wife shall have: The wording was important because the couple had tried in the past to achieve the fulfillment of God’s promise (see chs. 15; 16).

18:11 had passed the age of childbearing: The text uses three phrases to describe the advanced age of Abraham and Sarah, with a special focus on the fact that Sarah had ceased to menstruate.

18:12 therefore Sarah laughed: She acted like Abraham had on an earlier occasion (17:17). She knew the facts of life, but she would soon be greatly surprised by the One who determined them.

18:13 the LORD said: Here the text makes it plain that the Lord Himself was one of the three guests. **Why did Sarah laugh:** This is one of the most wonderfully human passages in the Bible. The woman of faith, like her husband, had believed for years in God’s promise. But now she found her faith stretched to the limit. God knew she had laughed.

18:14 Is anything too hard for the LORD: That is, there is no wonder that God cannot do. One of the names for the Coming One is “Wonder-Working Counselor” (Is. 9:6). **At the appointed time:** This section makes much of the fact that God chose the timing (17:21; Eccl. 3:9–11). **time of life:** A reference to the length of pregnancy.

18:15 Afraid of being found out, Sarah denied that she had laughed. In His mercy God did not punish her, as He had not punished Abraham who also laughed. (17:17). But neither did He allow her embarrassed denial to stand. She *had* laughed. Sarah would laugh again, but that time it would be in joy rather than disbelief (21:1–7).

18:16 In 19:1 we find that two of these **men** are called angels. **looked toward Sodom:** This verse begins the account of God’s judgment on the sinful cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. **and Abraham went with them:** Abraham’s hospitality enabled him to talk further with the living God.

18:17 the LORD said: When this phrase is compared with vv. 1, 2, 13, 16 and 19:1, we come to the conclusion that two of the guests of Abraham and Sarah were angels and the third was none other than the living God! **Shall I hide:** The language of God in this section lets us “hear his thoughts,” as if He were a man reflecting on the fact that Abraham had a vested interest in the city of Sodom because Lot lived there (see 14:12; 19:1).

18:19 for I have known him: The language here speaks of the intimate relationship, which motivates the Lord to accomplish His purpose in Abraham (see 22:12). **to do righteousness and justice:** One idea in two words—“genuine righteousness” (see Mic. 3:1; 4:8).

18:20 The outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah suggests a moral center in the universe; the outrageous sins of these cities are an affront to the righteousness of God (19:4–8).

18:21 I will go down now: This picturesque way of speaking of the omniscience of the Lord (His all-embracing knowledge) heightens the sense of wonder (11:5). There is nothing that God does not know, although we may say that He “comes down” to see “what is going on” in His earth (see also Ps. 113:4–6).

18:23 The exchange between Abraham and God serves as a dramatic *theodicy*, a justification of the Lord’s ways. Abraham’s great concern, of course, was for his nephew Lot and his family (see 14:12; 19:1).

to slay the righteous with the wicked, so ^fthat the righteous should be as the wicked; far be it from You! ^gShall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"

²⁶So the LORD said, ^h"If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes."

²⁷Then Abraham answered and said, "Indeed now, I who *am* ⁱbut dust and ashes have taken it upon myself to speak to the Lord: ²⁸Suppose there were five less than the fifty righteous; would You destroy all of the city for *lack* of five?"

So He said, "If I find there forty-five, I will not destroy *it*."

²⁹And he spoke to Him yet again and said, "Suppose there should be forty found there?"

So He said, "I will not do *it* for the sake of forty."

³⁰Then he said, "Let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak: Suppose thirty should be found there?"

So He said, "I will not do *it* if I find thirty there."

³¹And he said, "Indeed now, I have taken it upon myself to speak to the Lord: Suppose twenty should be found there?"

So He said, "I will not destroy *it* for the sake of twenty."

³²Then he said, ^j"Let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak but once more: Suppose ten should be found there?"

^kAnd He said, "I will not destroy *it* for the sake of ten." ³³So the LORD went His way as soon as He had finished speaking with Abraham; and Abraham returned to his place.

Sodom's Depravity

19 Now ^athe two angels came to Sodom in the evening, and ^bLot was sitting in the gate of Sodom. When

²⁵ ^f Job 8:20; Is. 3:10, 11 ^g Deut. 1:16, 17; 32:4; Job 8:3, 20; 34:17; Ps. 58:11; 94:2; Is. 3:10, 11; Rom. 3:5, 6
²⁶ ^h Jer. 5:1; Ezek. 22:30
²⁷ ⁱ [Gen. 3:19]; Job 4:19; 30:19; 42:6; [1 Cor. 15:47, 48]
³² ^j Judg. 6:39
^k James 5:16

CHAPTER 19

¹ ^a Gen. 18:2, 16, 22
^b Gen. 18:1-5

² ^c Gen. 24:31; [Heb. 13:2] ^d Gen. 18:4; 24:32 ^e Luke 24:28
³ ^f Gen. 18:6-8; Ex. 23:15; Num. 9:11; 28:17 ^g Ex. 12:8
⁵ ^h Is. 3:9 ⁱ Judg. 19:22 ^j Gen. 4:1; Rom. 1:24, 27; Jude 7
⁶ ^k Judg. 19:23
⁸ ^l Judg. 19:24
^m Gen. 18:5
⁹ ⁿ 2 Pet. 2:7, 8 ^o Ex. 2:14 ^p As a resident alien
¹¹ ^p Gen. 20:17, 18

Lot saw *them*, he rose to meet them, and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground. ² And he said, "Here now, my lords, please ^cturn in to your servant's house and spend the night, and ^dwash your feet; then you may rise early and go on your way."

And they said, ^e"No, but we will spend the night in the open square."

³But he insisted strongly; so they turned in to him and entered his house. ^fThen he made them a feast, and baked ^gunleavened bread, and they ate.

⁴Now before they lay down, the men of the city, the men of Sodom, both old and young, all the people from every quarter, surrounded the house. ⁵ ^hAnd they called to Lot and said to him, "Where are the men who came to you tonight? ⁱBring them out to us that we ^jmay know them carnally."

⁶So ^kLot went out to them through the doorway, shut the door behind him, ⁷and said, "Please, my brethren, do not do so wickedly! ⁸ ^lSee now, I have two daughters who have not known a man; please, let me bring them out to you, and you may do to them as you wish; only do nothing to these men, ^msince this is the reason they have come under the shadow of my roof."

⁹And they said, "Stand back!" Then they said, "This one ⁿcame in to ¹stay here, ^oand he keeps acting as a judge; now we will deal worse with you than with them." So they pressed hard against the man Lot, and came near to break down the door. ¹⁰But the men reached out their hands and pulled Lot into the house with them, and shut the door. ¹¹And they ^pstruck the men who *were* at the doorway of the house with blindness, both small and great, so that they became weary *trying* to find the door.

18:27–32 Abraham was determined to go on bargaining, but he knew that he was arguing with God. So he went one step at a time, pleading the case for the **righteous** in smaller and smaller numbers: from **forty-five** down to **ten**. Perhaps Abraham thought there were at least ten righteous persons in the city; but alas, there were not (as the report of ch. 19 shows).

19:1 Lot's fortunes had gone very well. The **gate** of a city was the place where the town elders met (Ruth 4:1). Lot had become so enmeshed in the life of the city that he had become a ruling elder. **bowed himself**: A term commonly used for the worship of God (22:5; 24:26); here it describes Lot's act of reverence to special guests. The angels appeared as men (cf. 18:2), and Lot greeted them as such.

19:2 **My lords** is a greeting of respect for special visitors. **your servant's house**: Lot's generous offer of hospitality may have been motivated out of kindness toward them as well as his sense of the dangers his city might hold for them.

19:4 **The men of Sodom** were aggressive homosexuals, bent on raping innocent travelers. Under the circumstances, Lot showed great courage by inviting his guests to stay at his house under his protection.

19:5 The Hebrew verb for **know** is ordinarily used of normal sexual relations between a male and female (4:1). Here it is used to describe the perversion of homosexual sex between men. See Rom. 1:18–32, especially vv. 26, 27. The term sodomite comes from this passage.

19:6–8 Lot's plight was severe; he had invited guests into his home for protection and was now in danger of seeing them abused by an unruly mob. Lot's desperation led him to risk the lives of his own **two daughters** to protect the lives of strangers from the mob. We can see why an outcry from the city had gone up to the Lord (18:20, 21).

19:9 **Stand back**: The crazed crowd was now about to attack Lot, whom they resented as an outsider even though he had risen to a position of prominence in the city.

19:11 Those who were morally blind were now stricken with physical **blindness** by the angelic guests (see a similar angelic blight in 2 Kin. 6:18). Only the confusion and panic of these wicked men spared Lot and his family from vicious assault.

Sodom and Gomorrah Destroyed

¹²Then the men said to Lot, “Have you anyone else here? Son-in-law, your sons, your daughters, and whomever you have in the city—^atake *them* out of this place! ¹³For we will destroy this place, because the ^r outcry against them has grown great before the face of the LORD, and ^sthe LORD has sent us to destroy it.”

¹⁴So Lot went out and spoke to his sons-in-law, ^twho had married his daughters, and said, ^u“Get up, get out of this place; for the LORD will destroy this city!” ^vBut to his sons-in-law he seemed to be joking.

¹⁵When the morning dawned, the angels urged Lot to hurry, saying, ^w“Arise, take your wife and your two daughters who are here, lest you be consumed in the punishment of the city.” ¹⁶And while he lingered, the men ^xtook hold of his hand, his wife’s hand, and the hands of his two daughters, the ^yLORD being merciful to him, ^zand they brought him out and set him outside the city. ¹⁷So it came to pass, when they had brought them outside, that ²he said, ^a“Escape for your life! ^bDo not look behind you nor stay anywhere in the plain. Escape ^cto the mountains, lest you be ³destroyed.”

¹⁸Then Lot said to them, “Please, ^dno, my lords! ¹⁹Indeed now, your servant has found favor in your sight, and you have increased your mercy which you have shown me by saving my life; but I cannot escape to the mountains, lest some evil overtake me and I die. ²⁰See now, this city is near *enough* to flee to, and it is a little one; please let me escape there (*is it not a little one?*) and my soul shall live.”

²¹And he said to him, “See, ^eI have

12 ^a Gen. 7:1; 2 Pet. 2:7, 9
13 ^r Lev. 18:20
^s Lev. 26:30–33; Deut. 4:26; 28:45; 1 Chr. 21:15
14 ^t Matt. 1:18
^u Num. 16:21, 24, 26, 45; Rev. 18:4
^v Ex. 9:21; Jer. 43:1, 2; Luke 17:28; 24:11
15 ^w Ps. 37:2; Rev. 18:4
16 ^x Deut. 5:15; 6:21; 7:8; 2 Pet. 2:7
^y Ex. 34:7; Ps. 32:10; 33:18, 19; Luke 18:13 ^z Ps. 34:22
17 ^a 1 Kin. 19:3; Jer. 48:6 ^b Gen. 19:26; Matt. 24:16–18; Luke 9:62; Phil. 3:13, 14 ^c Gen. 14:10
² LXX, Syr., Vg. they
³ Lit. *swept away*
18 ^d Acts 10:14
21 ^e Job 42:8, 9; Ps. 145:19
22 ^f Ex. 32:10; Deut. 9:14 ^g Gen. 13:10; 14:2 ⁴ Lit. *little or insignificant*
24 ^h Deut. 29:23; Ps. 11:6; Is. 13:19; Jer. 20:16; 23:14; 49:18; 50:40; Ezek. 16:49; 50: Hos. 11:8; Amos 4:11; Zeph. 2:9; Matt. 10:15; Mark 6:11; Luke 17:29; Rom. 9:29; 2 Pet. 2:6; Jude 7; Rev. 11:8 ⁱ Lev. 10:2
25 ^j Ps. 107:34
⁵ devastated
26 ^k Gen. 19:17; Luke 17:32
27 ^l Gen. 18:22
28 ^m Rev. 9:2; 18:9
29 ⁿ Gen. 8:1; 18:23; Deut. 7:8; 9:5, 27
30 ^o Gen. 19:17, 19
31 ^p Gen. 16:2, 4; 38:8, 9; Deut. 25:5

favored you concerning this thing also, in that I will not overthrow this city for which you have spoken. ²²Hurry, escape there. For ⁱI cannot do anything until you arrive there.”

Therefore ^gthe name of the city was called ⁴Zoar.

²³The sun had risen upon the earth when Lot entered Zoar. ²⁴Then the LORD rained ^hbrimstone and ⁱfire on Sodom and Gomorrah, from the LORD out of the heavens. ²⁵So He ⁵overthrew those cities, all the plain, all the inhabitants of the cities, and ^jwhat grew on the ground.

²⁶But his wife looked back behind him, and she became ^ka pillar of salt.

²⁷And Abraham went early in the morning to the place where ^lhe had stood before the LORD. ²⁸Then he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain; and he saw, and behold, ^mthe smoke of the land which went up like the smoke of a furnace. ²⁹And it came to pass, when God destroyed the cities of the plain, that God ⁿremembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow, when He overthrew the cities in which Lot had dwelt.

The Descendants of Lot

³⁰Then Lot went up out of Zoar and ^odwelt in the mountains, and his two daughters were with him; for he was afraid to dwell in Zoar. And he and his two daughters dwelt in a cave. ³¹Now the firstborn said to the younger, “Our father is old, and *there is no man on the earth* ^pto come in to us as is the custom of all the earth. ³²Come, let us make our father drink wine, and we will lie with him, that

19:12 The angelic guests had completed their search and were about to bring down the judgment of God on the city. In mercy, they offered an escape to Lot’s immediate family. There simply were not sufficient righteous persons in the city for it to be spared (v. 13; 18:24–33).

19:15 *Arise* can mean “make haste.”

19:16 *he lingered*: Lot had mixed feelings about the destruction that was to come. Lot and his family needed to be propelled from their home by physical force. The verb for *took hold* means “to seize.” **the LORD being merciful**: This is the whole point of the story. God could have destroyed the city of Sodom with no word to Lot or Abraham (18:17). But because of God’s mercy, His angels grabbed Lot and his family and brought them forcefully to safety.

19:22 *Zoar*: “Insignificant in Size.”

19:23–26 The rain of **brimstone and fire** may be explained in a couple of ways. It is possible that God used a volcanic eruption or some similar kind of natural disaster. Then, the miracle would be in the Lord’s timing and in the narrow escape of Lot and his family. See Ex. 14 for a similar possibility. It is also possible that the destruction of these cities was an act of judgment outside the normal range of natural occurrences.

19:26 The command was clear, not to look back or linger (v. 17). Lot’s wife disobeyed and **looked back**. By implication, she was reluctant to leave. **pillar of salt**: Her destruction was sudden. Nothing was left

of her but a mineral heap. Jesus referred to her in His teaching on the sudden destruction that will come in the last days. “Remember Lot’s wife,” Jesus warned (Luke 17:32).

19:27, 28 On the very **morning** that the cities were destroyed, Abraham looked on from a distance and saw the destruction. When he saw the **smoke**, he must have known the truth: There were not even ten righteous in the city (18:32).

19:29 Part of the reason for God’s grace to Lot was that **God remembered Abraham**. Lot could barely tolerate the wickedness in the city (see 2 Pet. 2:7, 8), but only he felt that way. If it were not for Abraham, Lot would have died with the other inhabitants.

19:30 Lot had begged the angels to give him a safe haven in the little city of **Zoar** (vv. 18–22), a request they granted. But following the devastation of the cities of the plain, Lot did not even feel safe in this city. So he lived in a **cave**.

19:32 Lot’s daughters now conspired together to make their father drunk so that he would have sexual relations with them. **the lineage of our father**: We can hardly approve of their action, yet their desperation was real. Their husbands had died and they were not likely to remarry. Their mother was also dead and they judged their father unlikely to remarry and have more children. Should they die childless, there would be no one to carry on their family name. For the peoples of biblical cultures, this was an overwhelming loss (see ch. 38).

we ^amay preserve the ⁶lineage of our father.” ³³So they made their father drink wine that night. And the firstborn went in and lay with her father, and he did not know when she lay down or when she arose.

³⁴It happened on the next day that the firstborn said to the younger, “Indeed I lay with my father last night; let us make him drink wine tonight also, and you go in and lie with him, that we may preserve the ⁷lineage of our father.” ³⁵Then they made their father drink wine that night also. And the younger arose and lay with him, and he did not know when she lay down or when she arose.

³⁶Thus both the daughters of Lot were with child by their father. ³⁷The firstborn bore a son and called his name Moab; ^ahe is the father of the Moabites to this day. ³⁸And the younger, she also bore a son and called his name Ben-Ammi; ^bhe is the father of the people of Ammon to this day.

Abraham and Abimelech

20 And Abraham journeyed from ^athere to the South, and dwelt between ^bKadesh and Shur, and ^cstayed in Gerar. ²Now Abraham said of Sarah his wife, ^d“She is my sister.” And Abimelech king of Gerar sent and ^etook Sarah.

³But ^fGod came to Abimelech ^gin a dream by night, and said to him, ^h“Indeed you *are* a dead man because of the woman whom you have taken, for she is ⁱa man’s wife.”

⁴But Abimelech had not come near her; and he said, “Lord, ⁱwill You slay a righteous nation also? ⁵Did he not say to

32 ^a[Mark 12:19]
^bLit. seed
34 ⁷Lit. seed
37 ^cNum. 25:1;
Deut. 2:9
38 ^dNum. 21:24;
Deut. 21:9

CHAPTER 20

1 ^aGen. 18:1 ^bGen. 12:9; 16:7, 14 ^cGen. 26:1, 6
2 ^dGen. 12:11-13;
26:7 ^eGen. 12:15
3 ^fPs. 105:14 ^gJob 33:15 ^hGen. 20:7
ⁱLit. married to a husband
4 ⁱGen. 18:23-25;
Num. 16:22

5 ¹1 Kin. 9:4; 2 Kin. 20:3; Ps. 78:26; 26:6
²innocence
6 ⁴Gen. 31:7; 35:5;
Ex. 34:24; 1 Sam. 25:26, 34 ⁱGen. 39:9; 2 Sam. 12:13
7 ^m1 Sam. 7:5;
2 Kin. 5:11; Job 42:8; James 5:14, 15
^aGen. 2:17 ^aNum. 16:32, 33
⁹^pGen. 26:10; 39:9;
Ex. 32:21; Josh. 7:25
^qGen. 34:7 ³sinned against
11 ^rGen. 42:18;
Neh. 5:15; Ps. 36:1;
Prov. 16:6 ^sGen. 12:12; 26:7
12 ^tGen. 11:29
13 ^uGen. 12:1-9, 11;
[Heb. 11:8] ^vGen. 12:13; 20:5
14 ^wGen. 12:16

me, ‘She is my sister’? And she, even she herself said, ‘He is my brother.’ ^jIn the ²integrity of my heart and innocence of my hands I have done this.”

⁶And God said to him in a dream, “Yes, I know that you did this in the integrity of your heart. For ^kI also withheld you from sinning ^lagainst Me; therefore I did not let you touch her. ⁷Now therefore, restore the man’s wife; ^mfor he is a prophet, and he will pray for you and you shall live. But if you do not restore *her*, ⁿknow that you shall surely die, you ^aand all who *are* yours.”

⁸So Abimelech rose early in the morning, called all his servants, and told all these things in their hearing; and the men were very much afraid. ⁹And Abimelech called Abraham and said to him, “What have you done to us? How have I ³offended you, ^pthat you have brought on me and on my kingdom a great sin? You have done deeds to me ^qthat ought not to be done.” ¹⁰Then Abimelech said to Abraham, “What did you have in view, that you have done this thing?”

¹¹And Abraham said, “Because I thought, surely ^rthe fear of God is not in this place; and ^sthey will kill me on account of my wife. ¹²But indeed ^tshe is truly my sister. She is the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother; and she became my wife. ¹³And it came to pass, when ^uGod caused me to wander from my father’s house, that I said to her, ‘This is your kindness that you should do for me: in every place, wherever we go, ^vsay of me, ‘He is my brother.’”

¹⁴Then Abimelech ^wtook sheep, oxen, and male and female servants, and gave

19:33 and he did not know: The narrator inserts this phrase twice (also in v. 35) to protect Lot. This was not deliberate incest on his part; the daughters alone were responsible for what happened.

19:36–38 The shameful act of incest led to the births of two sons who would later greatly trouble Israel, **Moab** and **Ben-Ammi**.

20:1 Abraham’s deception about Sarah in the city of **Gerar** was later to be repeated by his son Isaac (see ch. 26). This is an example of a son taking after his father. The present story is also a replay of Abraham’s earlier mistakes in Egypt (12:10–20).

20:2 Sarah was the half **sister** of Abraham (v. 12). **Abimelech . . . took Sarah:** This action put Sarah in the king’s harem, but not in his bed. Because of her advanced age, it is probable that Sarah was more desirable to Abimelech for her wealth than for her physical appearance.

20:3 Presumably, Abimelech was a pagan king. Yet God warned him of the wrong that he was about to commit. This is another instance of the protective care that the Lord gives His people (see also 31:24; cf. Num. 22:12, 20). **a man’s wife:** The Hebrew words speak of Sarah and Abraham on a level of equality and dignity. Both are spoken of as lords or nobles, literally “a noble wife of a noble man.”

20:4, 5 **Lord, will You slay a righteous nation also:** Abimelech had not even touched Sarah; he did not want to die for a sin he had not committed. He argued that his actions so far were innocent. They were based on what Abraham and Sarah had told him.

20:6 This passage emphasizes the **dream** state Abimelech was in. The Lord’s response to him was one of grace; God had kept the king from touching Sarah.

20:7 This is the first use of the term **prophet** in the Bible. The term indicates more a relationship to God than an ability to speak for Him. Abraham’s relationship to God was the basis for God’s command that Sarah be restored to her husband.

20:8–10 The gravity of the situation must have touched the king so strongly that his fear quickly spread to his family and servants. Abimelech’s questions of Abraham are especially touching: **What have you done to us?** is followed by the reverse **How have I offended you?**

20:11–13 Abraham gave two reasons for his actions. The first was based on his assumption that he was in hostile territory. That is, with no **fear of God**, there would be no justice among the people. A king set on doing whatever he wanted might seize Sarah as a first step toward subjugating Abraham and taking over his property. Second, Sarah was **truly my sister**. The marriages of the family of Terah were very close. In this patrician society, the marriages of close relatives was regarded as a sign of rank. Abraham and Sarah apparently agreed that she would invoke the plea that she was his sister wherever they might happen to be. Later, the Law would prohibit the marriage of people so closely related.

them to Abraham; and he restored Sarah his wife to him. ¹⁵And Abimelech said, “See, ^xmy land is before you; dwell where it pleases you.” ¹⁶Then to Sarah he said, “Behold, I have given your brother a thousand *pieces* of silver; ^yindeed this ^zvindicates you ^abefore all who *are* with you and before everybody.” Thus she was ⁵rebuked.

¹⁷So Abraham ^aprayed to God; and God ^bhealed Abimelech, his wife, and his female servants. Then they bore *children*; ¹⁸for the LORD ^chad closed up all the wombs of the house of Abimelech because of Sarah, Abraham’s wife.

Isaac Is Born

21 And the LORD ^avisited Sarah as He had said, and the LORD did for Sarah ^bas He had spoken. ²For Sarah ^cconceived and bore Abraham a son in his old age, ^dat the set time of which God had spoken to him. ³And Abraham called the name of his son who was born to him—whom Sarah bore to him—^eIsaac. ⁴Then Abraham ^fcircumcised his son Isaac when he was eight days old, ^gas

15 ^x Gen. 13:9; 34:10; 47:6
16 ^y Gen. 26:11
^z Mal. 2:9 ^a Lit. *is a covering of the eyes for you to all* ⁵ Or *justified*
17 ^b Num. 12:13; 21:7; Job 42:9; [James 5:16] ^b Gen. 21:2
18 ^c Gen. 12:17

CHAPTER 21

1 ^a 1 Sam. 2:21
^b Gen. 17:16, 19, 21; 18:10, 14; [Gal. 4:23, 28]
2 ^c Acts 7:8; Gal. 4:22; Heb. 11:11, 12
^d Gen. 17:21; 18:10, 14; Gal. 4:4
3 ^e Gen. 17:19, 21
^f Lit. *laughter*
4 ^g Acts 7:8 ^g Gen. 17:10, 12; Lev. 12:3
5 ^h Gen. 17:1, 17
6 ⁱ Gen. 18:13; Ps. 126:2; Is. 54:1 / Luke 1:58 ² Lit. *made laughter for me*
7 ^k Gen. 18:11, 12
9 ^l Gen. 16:1, 4, 15
^m [Gal. 4:29] ³ Lit. *laughing*

God had commanded him. ⁵Now ^hAbraham was one hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him. ⁶And Sarah said, ⁱ“God has ²made me laugh, and all who hear ^jwill laugh with me.” ⁷She also said, “Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? ^kFor I have borne *him* a son in his old age.”

Hagar and Ishmael Depart

⁸So the child grew and was weaned. And Abraham made a great feast on the same day that Isaac was weaned.

⁹And Sarah saw the son of Hagar ^lthe Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, ^mscoffing. ³ ¹⁰Therefore she said to Abraham, ⁿ“Cast out this bondwoman and her son; for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, *namely* with Isaac.” ¹¹And the matter was very ⁴displeasing in Abraham’s sight ^obecause of his son.

¹²But God said to Abraham, “Do not let it be displeasing to your sight because

10 ^a Gen. 25:6; 36:6, 7; Gal. 3:18; 4:30
11 ^a Gen. 17:18 ⁴ *distressing*

20:16 Abimelech made a significant payment to Abraham in silver in order to compensate Sarah’s hardship. His words **your brother** may have been sarcastic. The Hebrew verb translated as **rebuked** can merely mean “vindicated.” This verb is used in legal terminology to describe the settlement of a dispute.

20:17 **So Abraham prayed to God:** However the situation began, it ended in mercy with Abraham acting as a priest for Abimelech before the true and living God. In this way, the people of Gerar learned about the Lord, as had happened in Egypt years earlier (12:10–20).

20:18 **the LORD had closed up all the wombs:** Three things are indicated by these words. First, the stay of Abraham and Sarah had been prolonged in Gerar before Sarah’s identity became known. Some months would have had to pass before the people realized that they were no longer conceiving at normal rates. This means that Sarah had lived in the harem of the king for several months. Second, the Lord reached out to these people in a way they would find difficult to resist; the wish to procreate was relentless in the ancient world, as these accounts consistently emphasize. Third, God graciously protected Sarah—and Abraham. The chapter ends with irony. Because of God’s desire to protect Sarah, He had closed the wombs of the women of Abimelech’s house. Soon the Lord would open Sarah’s womb to give her a child, long after she was too old to conceive naturally (21:1, 2).

21:1 **And the LORD visited Sarah:** The Bible stresses that the Lord causes conception; that children are a gift of the Lord (Ps. 127:3). The verb *visit* is an extraordinary choice here, because it means that the Lord entered directly into the affairs of His people. This was what He did for Sarah **as He had said . . . as He had spoken:** These two phrases speak of the exact fulfillment of His promise to Abraham (17:21) and Sarah (18:14).

21:2 It appears that **Sarah conceived** while she and Abraham were living in Gerar (20:1; 21:22). The contrast is wonderful—God had closed the wombs of the family of Abimelech (20:18), and now He opened Sarah’s womb. **bore Abraham a son:** A great fact that the Bible elsewhere celebrates (see 25:19; Heb. 11:11). **in his old age:** The writer of Hebrews says Abraham was “as good as dead” (Heb. 11:12). What a miracle this was! To both Abraham (17:21) and Sarah (18:14), God had emphasized the concept of His **set time**.

21:3 **Isaac** means “He (God) Is Laughing (Now).” At one time Abraham had laughed at the improbability of having a son in his old

age (17:17); Sarah had laughed too (see 18:12). But now, with the birth of the child, laughter took on its happier meaning. Sarah got the joke (vv. 5, 6)!

21:4 **circumcised his son:** Abraham’s pattern of obedience to the Lord continued unchanged (12:4; 17:23; 22:3). The sign of the covenant was most important for the son of promise (17:9–14).

21:5 **one hundred years old:** Compare 12:4; 16:16; 17:1. Amusingly, Abraham was precisely the age that caused him to laugh aloud (17:17).

21:6 Among the many name jokes in the Bible, few are as wonderful as this one; the words for **laugh** in this verse are related to the name Isaac (see v. 3).

21:7 **nurse children:** Wondrously, this woman of 90 (17:17) now had breasts filled with milk and her arms full with a child!

21:8 **weaned:** In biblical times children were nursed through the toddler period. The life of Isaac was to be marked by celebration, a **great feast**. As glad parents, Abraham and Sarah rejoiced in each major step of his life. This makes the story of Isaac’s near death (ch. 22) all the more suspenseful.

21:9 The Hebrew verb for **scoffing** is related to the name for Isaac (vv. 3, 5). Here is a bad turn on a wonderful joke. Young Ishmael, now perhaps 17, was mocking the joy of Sarah and Abraham in their young son.

21:10 Sarah’s greatest moment came at the birth of her child; this moment was one of her worst. It is understandable, of course, that she would find Ishmael’s derision hurtful even as she had Hagar’s (16:5). But even in that culture it was reprehensible to send Ishmael away. When a surrogate wife had borne a son to one’s husband, that mother and child could not be dismissed even if the first wife subsequently gave birth to a son. This partly explains Abraham’s reluctance to do what Sarah demanded (v. 11). What is more, he still loved **his son** Ishmael (16:15; 17:18).

21:12 **but God said:** This is the sixth time Abraham received a direct word from the Lord since coming to the land of Canaan. **listen to her voice:** Abraham needed to hear God give him permission to send Hagar and Ishmael from his home. **In Isaac** alone would the principal covenant be fulfilled. Ishmael had his own promise (v. 13; cf. 16:10–12), but nothing God promised to Ishmael would replace His promise to Isaac.



Wells

References in English versions of the Bible sometimes confuse wells, natural springs, and cisterns. The Bible mentions different types of wells including a cistern dug in the ground (Gen. 16:14; 2 Sam. 17:18); a spring (Ps. 84:6); a fountain (Neh. 2:13); and a pit (John 4:11, 12). Wells in Palestine were dug from solid limestone rock, sometimes with descending steps (Gen. 24:16). The brims of still other wells had a curb or low wall of stone. There is no information on how biblical wells were dug, but the process must have been very difficult because only crude tools were available. Many ancient wells descended to a great depth. Jacob's Well is still 75 feet deep and at one time it may have been twice as deep. These deep wells were necessary because of the problem of shallow wells running dry in the summer.

A very large cistern at the southwest corner of Masada (note the steps). A cistern is one of the types of wells mentioned in the Bible.

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of the lad or because of your bondwoman. Whatever Sarah has said to you, listen to her voice; for ^p in Isaac your seed shall be called. ¹³ Yet I will also make ^q a nation of the son of the bondwoman, because he is your ^s seed."

¹⁴ So Abraham rose early in the morning, and took bread and ⁶ a skin of water; and putting ^{it} on her shoulder, he gave ^{it} and the boy to Hagar, and ^r sent her away. Then she departed and wandered in the Wilderness of Beersheba. ¹⁵ And the water in the skin was used up, and she placed the boy under one of the shrubs. ¹⁶ Then she went and sat down across from ^{him} at a distance of about a bow-shot; for she said to herself, "Let me not

¹² ^p Matt. 1:2; Luke 3:34; [Rom. 9:7, 8] [☆]; Heb. 11:18
¹³ ^q Gen. 16:10; 17:20; 21:18; 25:12-18 ^s descendant
¹⁴ ^r John 8:35 ⁶ A water bottle made of skins

¹⁷ ^s Ex. 3:7; Deut. 26:7; Ps. 6:8 ^r Gen. 22:11
¹⁸ ^u Gen. 16:10; 21:13; 25:12-16
¹⁹ ^v Gen. 3:7; Num. 22:31; 2 Kin. 6:17; Luke 24:31
²⁰ ^w Gen. 28:15; 39:2, 3, 21 ^x Gen. 16:12

see the death of the boy." So she sat opposite ^{him}, and lifted her voice and wept.

¹⁷ And ^s God heard the voice of the lad. Then the ^r angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven, and said to her, "What ails you, Hagar? Fear not, for God has heard the voice of the lad where he ^{is}. ¹⁸ Arise, lift up the lad and hold him with your hand, for ^u I will make him a great nation."

¹⁹ Then ^v God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water. And she went and filled the skin with water, and gave the lad a drink. ²⁰ So God ^w was with the lad; and he grew and dwelt in the wilderness, ^x and became an archer. ²¹ He dwelt in the Wilderness of Paran; and his mother

21:14 This scene must have been exceedingly difficult for Abraham. He had no idea that another **morning** in his life would be even worse (see 22:3). **Bread and a skin of water** are meager provisions. The skin refers to a water bag made of animal skin. **sent her away:** Years before, Hagar had had to leave the same household while pregnant with Ishmael (16:6). **Wilderness of Beersheba** (see also v. 31): Later there would be a city built in this place; in this early period it was merely a region for herding sheep and goats. Isaac was later to rediscover water in this region (26:33).

21:15 water . . . used up: It would not take long for the two refugees to use up their meager provisions.

21:16 Let me not see: Despite her sometimes mean spirit against Sarah, Hagar loved her son. The thought that she was about to lose her son to the desert heat was unbearable for her.

21:17 God heard: What wonderful words these are! There is no pain

of His people that He does not see or hear about (see Is. 40:27, 28; Heb. 2:10, 18; 4:15). God was near to deliver; the child would not die.

21:18 God renewed his promise to Hagar and Ishmael; Ishmael would become a **great nation** (see 16:10–12).

21:19 Hagar was so overcome with grief that she was unaware of the provision of water right before her. God showed **a well of water**. How fitting that the promise of God would again be beside a provision of water (see 16:7, 14). Often in the pages of the OT, a spring or well of water is a symbol of spiritual salvation as well as physical deliverance (see Is. 12:3; Jer. 2:13).

21:20 God's promise was realized in Ishmael's life. He became **an archer**; that is, he learned to hunt.

21:21 wife: Hagar made sure that Ishmael married an Egyptian, one of her own people, much as Abraham's servant searched for a wife for Isaac from among his parents' people (24:4).

^ytook a wife for him from the land of Egypt.

A Covenant with Abimelech

²² And it came to pass at that time that ^zAbimelech and Phichol, the commander of his army, spoke to Abraham, saying, ^a“God is with you in all that you do.” ²³ Now therefore, ^bswear ⁷ to me by God that you will not deal falsely with me, with my offspring, or with my posterity; but that according to the kindness that I have done to you, you will do to me and to the land in which you have dwelt.”

²⁴ And Abraham said, “I will swear.”

²⁵ Then Abraham rebuked Abimelech because of a well of water which Abimelech’s servants ^chad seized. ²⁶ And Abimelech said, “I do not know who has done this thing; you did not tell me, nor had I heard of it until today.” ²⁷ So Abraham took sheep and oxen and gave them to Abimelech, and the two of them ^dmade a ⁸covenant. ²⁸ And Abraham set seven ewe lambs of the flock by themselves.

²⁹ Then Abimelech asked Abraham, ^e“What is the meaning of these seven ewe lambs which you have set by themselves?”

³⁰ And he said, “You will take *these* seven ewe lambs from my hand, that

²¹ ^y Gen. 24:4
²² ^z Gen. 20:2, 14;
26:26 ^a Gen. 26:28;
Is. 8:10
²³ ^b Josh. 2:12;
1 Sam. 24:21 ⁷ take
an oath
²⁵ ^c Gen. 26:15, 18,
20–22
²⁷ ^d Gen. 26:31;
31:44; 1 Sam. 18:3
⁸ treaty
²⁹ ^e Gen. 33:8

³⁰ ^f Gen. 31:48, 52
³¹ ^g Gen. 21:14;
26:33 ⁹ Lit. Well of
the Oath or Well of
the Seven
³³ ^h Gen. 4:26; 12:8;
13:4; 26:25 ⁱ Gen.
35:11; Ex. 15:18;
Deut. 32:40; 33:27;
Ps. 90:2; 93:2; Is.
40:28; Jer. 10:10;
Hab. 1:12; Heb. 13:8

CHAPTER 22

¹ ^a Deut. 8:2, 16;
1 Cor. 10:13; Heb.
11:17; [James 1:12–
14; 1 Pet. 1:7]
² ^b Gen. 22:12, 16;
John 3:16; Heb.
11:17; 1 John 4:9
^c John 5:20 ^d 2 Chr.
3:1 ^e Gen. 8:20;
31:54

^fthey may be my witness that I have dug this well.” ³¹ Therefore he ^gcalled that place ⁹Beersheba, because the two of them swore an oath there.

³² Thus they made a covenant at Beersheba. So Abimelech rose with Phichol, the commander of his army, and they returned to the land of the Philistines. ³³ Then Abraham planted a tamarisk tree in Beersheba, and ^hthere called on the name of the LORD, ⁱthe Everlasting God. ³⁴ And Abraham stayed in the land of the Philistines many days.

Abraham's Faith Confirmed

22 Now it came to pass after these things that ^aGod tested Abraham, and said to him, “Abraham!” And he said, “Here I am.”

² Then He said, “Take now your son, ^byour only *son* Isaac, whom you ^clove, and go ^dto the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a ^eburnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you.”

³ So Abraham rose early in the morning and saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son; and he split the wood for the burnt offering, and arose and went to the place of which God had told him. ⁴ Then on

21:22 Abimelech: It appears from this verse that Abraham and Sarah were still living in the region of Gerar (20:15). **Phichol:** This commander of the army is also mentioned in the later encounter with Isaac (see 26:26), unless the name is a hereditary term, as perhaps was that of Abimelech (see 26:8). **God is with you:** With these words, Abimelech and Phichol introduced their desire to form a treaty with Abraham.

21:23 swear to me by God: This kind of oath was a complete, binding obligation (see 22:16). God would be witness to the act and a witness against anyone who might break it. **kindness:** This exceedingly important term sometimes translated *loyal love* is often used in the Psalms to describe God’s character (for example, Ps. 100:5). Here we see its proper context in a binding relationship. The term basically describes covenant loyalty (see 24:12).

21:25 It turned out that there was a dispute between the two concerning a **well**. For those who tended sheep and goats, water rights and wells mattered a great deal. **Abimelech** agreed to settle the issue promptly.

21:27 This is the first use of the word **covenant** for a parity treaty (15:18). A parity treaty is a binding agreement between two equals, similar to today’s business contract. At 26:28 there is a parity treaty between Abimelech and Isaac, and at 31:43–55 there is a covenant between Jacob and Laban.

21:28–31 Abraham made the occasion all the more memorable by his presentation of **seven ewe lambs** to Abimelech. The Hebrew number **seven** is similar in sound to the verb meaning “to swear” (see v. 24). Thus **Beersheba** would be the well where they swore and the well of the seven ewe lambs. In the next generation the ritual would be repeated with a similar meaning given to the site (see 26:33).

21:33 The hope was that the **tamarisk tree** would long mark the spot of this major treaty. **called on the name:** As in 12:8, Abraham did more than just pray to the Lord; he made proclamation in the Lord’s name, telling everyone about **the Lord, the Everlasting God**, the Master of eternity. Not only does He live forever, but He meets the needs of His people for all eternity.

21:34 Although Abraham had been promised the whole of the land for his posterity (see 12:7; 15:18–21), in his own life he lived under

agreements with others in their **land** (Heb. 11:13–16). The name Palestine comes from the word for Philistine.

22:1–19 Without question, this narrative is one of the most shocking and memorable in the whole Bible. And yet in its outcome it is one of the finest texts describing the loyalty of the Lord to His covenant and to His servant Abraham. It also reveals remarkable faith on the part of Abraham, Sarah, and Isaac and points to the future sacrifice of God’s only Son, Jesus.

22:1 after these things: A new story is about to begin (15:1). The term **God** includes the definite article (“the God”; see 6:2; 27:28; 31:11; 46:3; 48:15). This is a way of indicating that the “Genuine Deity” or the “True God” is making these demands, not a false god or a demon. Note that the same use of the definite article occurs in 41:32 twice. This is the seventh time that God revealed Himself to Abraham since Abraham came to the land of Canaan. God **tested Abraham** in order to give Abraham an opportunity to show his true character.

22:2 only son: Abraham had one son by Hagar (ch. 16), and as we learn later he had six sons by Keturah (ch. 25). But only Isaac was *uniquely born* (the same idea is in the description of Jesus as the “only begotten,” John 1:18). Indeed, the Greek term for “only begotten” is used to describe Isaac in Heb. 11:17. The point is not that Abraham had no other children, but that this was the unique child in whom all the promises of God resided. But that wasn’t the only reason God’s command would test Abraham’s faith—this was Isaac, the son who had brought God’s “laughter” to Abraham and Sarah (21:12). **Moriah:** “Where the Lord Provides” or “Where the Lord Appears.” **burnt offering:** Abraham was not simply to strike his son and wound him, and then nurse him back to health. He was commanded to go through the steps of offering a sacrifice that burned an animal or person entirely. The toll of this command on Abraham and Sarah must have been enormous. What a poignant picture of what our God did to His unique Son for us!

22:3 Nothing is said of Abraham’s thoughts, or the thoughts of the boy’s mother. All we read is the account of the father’s complete obedience to God (see 12:4; 17:23; cf. Noah’s complete obedience, 6:22; 7:5). Difficult, heavy tasks were usually done in the early **morning** because of the heat of the midday in this part of the world (18:1).

the third day Abraham lifted his eyes and saw the place afar off. ⁵And Abraham said to his young men, “Stay here with the donkey; the ¹lad and I will go yonder and worship, and we will ^fcome back to you.”

⁶So Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and ^glaid it on Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife, and the two of them went together. ⁷But Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, “My father!”

And he said, “Here I am, my son.”

Then he said, “Look, the fire and the wood, but where is the ²lamb for a burnt offering?”

⁸And Abraham said, “My son, God will provide for Himself the ^hlamb for a ⁱburnt offering.” So the two of them went together.

⁹Then they came to the place of which God had told him. And Abraham built an altar there and placed the wood in order; and he bound Isaac his son and ^jlaid him on the altar, upon the wood. ¹⁰And Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slay his son.

¹¹But the ^kAngel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, “Abraham, Abraham!”

So he said, “Here I am.”

⁵ ^f[Heb. 11:19] ¹ Or young man
⁶ ^g John 19:17
⁷ ² Or goat
⁸ ^h John 1:29, 36
ⁱ Ex. 12:3-6
⁹ ^j [Heb. 11:17-19; James 2:21]
¹¹ ^k Gen. 16:7-11; 21:17, 18; 31:11

¹² ¹ Sam. 15:22
^m Gen. 26:5; James 2:21, 22 ⁿ Gen. 22:2, 16; John 3:16
¹⁴ ³ Heb. YHWH
^{Yireh}
¹⁶ ^o Ps. 105:9; Luke 1:73; [Heb. 6:13, 14]
¹⁷ ^p Gen. 17:16;
26:3, 24 ^q Gen. 15:5;
26:4; Deut. 1:10; Jer. 33:22; Heb. 11:12
^r Gen. 13:16; 32:12;
1 Kin. 4:20 ^s Gen. 24:60
¹⁸ ^t Gen. 12:3;
18:18; 26:4; Matt. 1:1; Luke 3:34; [Acts 3:25, 26]; Gal. 3:8, 9, 16, 18 ^u Gen. 18:19; 22:3, 10; 26:5
¹⁹ ^v Gen. 21:31

¹² And He said, ^l“Do not lay your hand on the lad, or do anything to him; for ^mnow I know that you fear God, since you have not ⁿwithheld your son, your only son, from Me.”

¹³ Then Abraham lifted his eyes and looked, and there behind *him* was a ram caught in a thicket by its horns. So Abraham went and took the ram, and offered it up for a burnt offering instead of his son. ¹⁴ And Abraham called the name of the place, ³The-Lord-Will-Provide; as it is said to this day, “In the Mount of the LORD it shall be provided.”

¹⁵ Then the Angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time out of heaven, ¹⁶ and said: ^o“By Myself I have sworn, says the LORD, because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son— ¹⁷ blessing I will ^p bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants ^q as the stars of the heaven ^r and as the sand which is on the seashore; and ^s your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies. ¹⁸ ^t“In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, ^u because you have obeyed My voice.” ¹⁹ So Abraham returned to his young men, and they rose and went together to ^v Beersheba; and Abraham dwelt at Beersheba.

22:5 If the servants had accompanied Abraham and his son to the sacrificial site, they might have tried to restrain him from his awful deed. He told them to **stay** with the donkey, he and his son were on their way to **worship** the Lord. **we will come back**: In the Hebrew text, these words are even more arresting than in a translation. The three verbs all show a strong determination on the part of the speaker (see also 12:2): “We are determined to go, we are determined to worship, we are determined to return.” There are three possibilities for Abraham’s speech: (1) he was lying to the servants to buy time; (2) he was suffering from delusion, and no longer speaking rationally; or (3) he believed that he *and the boy* would return. He had heard, many times, God’s promise to create a nation through Isaac (12:1–3, 7; 13:14–17; 15:1–21; 17:1–22; 18:1–15). He still believed it. He had concluded that even if he had to destroy his son, God would bring him back from death (see Heb. 11:17–19). Only in this way could Abraham have gone ahead with the task before him.

22:6 The **fire** would be live coals in a clay pot of some kind. A special **knife** was used in sacrificial worship.

22:7 My father . . . where is the lamb: Isaac still did not know what Abraham planned to do.

22:8 for Himself: The wording is stronger in this order: “God Himself will provide.” **went together**: These words appear again in v. 19.

22:9 the place: The site of Moriah is significant (see vv. 2–4, 14). **bound Isaac**: Jewish scholars call this text “the binding of Isaac.” At this point, Isaac knew that he was the sacrificial victim. Surely he could have run away from his aged father! Yet, like the Savior on an even darker day (John 10:17, 18), he was willing to do his father’s will (Mark 14:36).

22:11, 12 the Angel of the Lord: An appearance of God (16:7; cf. 24:7; 48:16). At the last moment, God spoke to **Abraham** from heaven; twice He called out his name. **Do not lay your hand**: The words used demanded an instant response. Abraham was just about to strike his son, then God stopped his hand (see 15:1). **now I know**: Certainly God knew ahead of time how this event would end. But in these words, God stood beside his servant Abraham, experiencing

each moment with him and applauding his complete trust (18:19). The term for **fear** means to hold God in awe; this is the central idea of piety in the Bible (Ex. 20:20; Prov. 1:7).

22:13 With his attention solely on the awful task at hand, Abraham had not seen the **ram** until he looked for it. In an amazing manner, his earlier words of God’s provision came to pass (v. 8).

22:14 The wonderful name **The-Lord-Will-Provide** is developed from the faith statement of Abraham to Isaac in v. 8. Compare the name of faith that Hagar gave to the Lord, “The-God-Who-Sees” (16:13). As God provided a ram instead of Abraham’s son, so one day He would provide His own Son! Moriah is where Jerusalem and later the temple were built. And it was at Jerusalem that the Savior would die.

22:15–18 This is one of the texts that contain the Abrahamic covenant (see the list at 15:1–21)—God’s unbreakable promise to create a nation through Isaac.

22:16 By Myself I have sworn means “By Myself I swear” or “I bring Myself under complete obligation.” When a man took an oath, it was considered unchangeable (see 25:33). When God took an oath, His eternity guaranteed the fulfillment of His word.

22:17 blessing I will bless you: The doubling of these verbs and the ones that follow (**multiplying I will multiply**) is a Hebrew idiom that powerfully emphasizes the certainty of the action. **as the stars . . . as the sand**: This use of hyperbole or exaggeration on God’s part (15:5; also 13:16) must have overwhelmed Abraham. In ancient walled cities, the structure protecting the **gate** was the most important; to control the gate was to control the city. Later, the blessing of her family on Rebekah would contain the same prayer for her (24:60).

22:18 At times the term **seed** refers to a large number of descendants (as in 13:16); at other times it refers to one unique descendant, the Coming One (as here, also Gal. 3:16). Here it is a grand play on words: The seed was Isaac; and by extension the Jewish nation; and the Seed was also Jesus.

22:19 As he had said (v. 5), Abraham **returned** with his son, and they all **went together** (v. 8) back to **Beersheba**.

The Family of Nahor

²⁰Now it came to pass after these things that it was told Abraham, saying, “Indeed ^wMilcah also has borne children to your brother Nahor: ²¹^xHuz his first-born, Buz his brother, Kemuel the father ^yof Aram, ²²Chesed, Hazo, Pildash, Jidlaph, and Bethuel.” ²³And ^zBethuel begot ⁴Rebekah. These eight Milcah bore to Nahor, Abraham’s brother. ²⁴His concubine, whose name was Reumah, also bore Tebah, Gaham, Thahash, and Maachah.

Sarah’s Death and Burial

23 Sarah lived one hundred and twenty-seven years; *these were the years of the life of Sarah.* ²So Sarah died in ^aKirjath Arba (that is, ^bHebron) in the land of Canaan, and Abraham came to mourn for Sarah and to weep for her.

³Then Abraham stood up from before his dead, and spoke to the sons of ^cHeth, saying, ⁴^d“I *am* a foreigner and a visitor among you. ^eGive me property for a burial place among you, that I may bury my dead out of my sight.”

⁵And the sons of Heth answered Abraham, saying to him, ⁶“Hear us, my lord: You *are* ^fa ¹mighty prince among us; bury your dead in the choicest of our burial places. None of us will withhold from you his burial place, that you may bury your dead.”

20 ^w Gen. 11:29; 24:15
21 ^x Job 1:1 ^y Job 32:2
23 ^z Gen. 24:15
⁴ Rebecca, Rom. 9:10

CHAPTER 23

2 ^a Gen. 35:27; Josh. 14:15; 15:13; 21:11
25 ^b Gen. 13:18; 23:19
3 ^c Gen. 10:15; 15:20; 2 Kin. 7:6
4 ^d [Gen. 17:8]; Lev. 25:23; 1 Chr. 29:15; Ps. 39:12; 105:12; 119:19; [Heb. 11:9, 13] ^e Acts 7:5, 16
6 ^f Gen. 13:2; 14:14; 24:35 ¹ Lit. prince of God

8 ² *entreat*
9 ⁹ Gen. 25:9
10 ^h Gen. 23:18; 34:20, 24; Ruth 4:1, 4, 11
11 ² Sam. 24:21-24
15 ¹ Ex. 30:13; Ezek. 45:12
16 ² Sam. 14:26; Jer. 32:9, 10; Zech. 11:12

⁷Then Abraham stood up and bowed himself to the people of the land, the sons of Heth. ⁸And he spoke with them, saying, “If it is your wish that I bury my dead out of my sight, hear me, and ²meet with Ephron the son of Zohar for me, ⁹that he may give me the cave of ^gMachpelah which he has, which is at the end of his field. Let him give it to me at the full price, as property for a burial place among you.”

¹⁰Now Ephron dwelt among the sons of Heth; and Ephron the Hittite answered Abraham in the presence of the sons of Heth, all who ^hentered at the gate of his city, saying, ¹¹ⁱ“No, my lord, hear me: I give you the field and the cave that is in it; I give it to you in the presence of the sons of my people. I give it to you. Bury your dead!”

¹²Then Abraham bowed himself down before the people of the land; ¹³and he spoke to Ephron in the hearing of the people of the land, saying, “If you *will give it*, please hear me. I will give you money for the field; take it from me and I will bury my dead there.”

¹⁴And Ephron answered Abraham, saying to him, ¹⁵“My lord, listen to me; the land *is worth* four hundred ^jshekels of silver. What *is* that between you and me? So bury your dead.” ¹⁶And Abraham listened to Ephron; and Abraham ^kweighed out the silver for Ephron which he had

22:20–24 Milcah: The family of Nahor had first been noted at 11:29. It is touching to observe that there was correspondence between the families; but this genealogical notice also leads to the birth of **Rebekah**, who would figure significantly in the story to follow. This little piece is one of the family histories that help tie the Bible together.

23:1 Sarah’s 127 years allowed her to see her son Isaac reach adulthood.

23:2 Kirjath Arba means the “Village of Arba” or the “Village of Four” (see Josh. 14:15). Abraham had lived for a while near **Hebron** at the location of some ancient terebinth trees (13:18; 18:1; 23:17). At this point the name **Canaan** would be particularly bitter to Abraham. None of the land was his. He had negotiated for water rights and herding privileges (21:22–34), but the land was not his; it still belonged to the Canaanites (12:6).

23:3 The Hittites had their principal center in Anatolia (modern Turkey). But there were some enclaves of Hittites (**sons of Heth**) in Canaan (see 15:20), and the region of Hebron was apparently one of them. It was with Hittites that Abraham negotiated to buy a burial spot for his beloved wife Sarah.

23:4 I am a foreigner and a visitor: Abraham was a “resident alien” in the land. His words were self-deprecating, to help him establish a bargaining position.

23:6 The sons of Heth (Hittites) responded with complimentary words. The adjective **mighty** is the term for deity (*elohim* as in 1:1). As an act of kindness, the Hittites let Abraham use one of their places for the **burial** of his dead family members.

23:7–11 Abraham stood up and bowed: Abraham’s posture followed the customs of the time (see also v. 12). Abraham was not willing to bury Sarah in a borrowed tomb; he wanted to have a place that would belong to his family long after his death. His words **meet with Ephron** indicated that he wanted to purchase some property, **the cave of Machpelah**. Ephron the Hittite responded to Abraham’s request by generously offering to give him what he sought, plus the nearby field as well.

23:13 I will give you money: He was not interested in the field, and he offered again to buy the cave. (Perhaps he believed a gift so easily given might as easily be withdrawn at a later time.) In any case, by money Abraham did not mean coins as we might think today. Coins were not invented until at least 650 B.C. Abraham was offering a generous weight of silver.

23:15 The dialogue of the chapter is wonderful; it presents a step-by-step description of the bargaining process. Ephron gave the purchase price, then seemed to dismiss it (**What is that between you and me?**).

23:16 Abraham weighed out the silver: He could have received the property without cost, but since he paid the agreed upon amount there could be no question at a later date.

seed

(Heb. *zera'*) (3:15; 13:15; 15:3; 22:18; 28:13; Ps. 89:4) Strong’s #2233

The Hebrew word translated *seed* can literally mean a seed sown in the ground (1:11, 12) or figuratively one’s offspring or descendants (13:15). The word can refer to a large group of people, such as the descendants of Abraham or the nation of Israel, or to an individual. In some parts of Genesis it refers specifically to the coming Messiah, as in God’s promise that the woman’s “Seed” would defeat the serpent (3:15; see Num. 24:7; Is. 6:13; Gal. 3:16). As such, the term takes on great importance in the Bible: It is through Abraham’s *seed*, both collectively in Israel and singularly in Christ, that God would reach out to save all people (15:3).

named in the hearing of the sons of Heth, four hundred shekels of silver, currency of the merchants.

¹⁷So ¹the field of Ephron which *was* in Machpelah, which *was* before Mamre, the field and the cave which *was* in it, and all the trees that *were* in the field, which *were* within all the surrounding borders, were deeded ¹⁸to Abraham as a possession in the presence of the sons of Heth, before all who went in at the gate of his city.

¹⁹And after this, Abraham buried Sarah his wife in the cave of the field of Machpelah, before Mamre (that is, Hebron) in the land of Canaan. ²⁰So the field and the cave that *is* in it ^mwere deeded to Abraham by the sons of Heth as property for a burial place.

A Bride for Isaac

24 Now Abraham ^awas old, well advanced in age; and the LORD ^bhad blessed Abraham in all things. ²So Abraham said ^cto the oldest servant of his house, who ^druled over all that he had, “Please, ^eput your hand under my thigh, ³and I will make you ^fswear¹ by the LORD, the God of heaven and the God of the earth, that ^gyou will not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell; ^{4h}but you shall go ⁱto my country and to my family, and take a wife for my son Isaac.”

⁵And the servant said to him, “Perhaps the woman will not be willing to follow me to this land. Must I take your son back to the land from which you came?”

⁶But Abraham said to him, “Beware that you do not take my son back there. ⁷The LORD God of heaven, who ^jtook me from my father’s house and from the land of my family, and who spoke to me

¹⁷ ¹ Gen. 25:9; 49:29–32; 50:13; Acts 7:16
²⁰ ^m Jer. 32:10, 11

CHAPTER 24

¹ ^a Gen. 18:11; 21:5 ^b Gen. 12:2; 13:2; 24:35; Ps. 112:3; Prov. 10:22; [Gal. 3:9]
² ^c Gen. 15:2 ^d Gen. 24:10; 39:4–6 ^e Gen. 47:29; 1 Chr. 29:24
³ ^f Gen. 14:19, 22
^{4h} Gen. 26:35; 28:2; Ex. 34:16; Deut. 7:3; 2 Cor. 6:14–17 ¹ take an oath
^{4h} Gen. 28:2 ⁱ Gen. 12:1; Heb. 11:15
⁷ ^j Gen. 12:1; 24:3

^k Gen. 12:7; 13:15; 15:18; 17:8; Ex. 32:13; Deut. 1:8; 34:4; Acts 7:5 ¹ Gen. 16:7; 21:17; 22:11; Ex. 23:20; 23:33; Heb. 1:4, 14 ² Lit. seed
⁸ ^m Josh. 2:17–20
¹⁰ ⁿ Gen. 24:2, 22
¹¹ Gen. 11:31, 32; 22:20; 27:43; 29:5
¹¹ ^p Ex. 2:16; 1 Sam. 9:11
¹² ^q Gen. 24:27, 42, 48; 26:24; 32:9; Ex. 3:6, 15 ^r Gen. 27:20; Neh. 1:11; Ps. 37:5
¹³ ^s Gen. 24:43
¹⁴ ^t Ex. 2:16
¹⁴ ^u Judg. 6:17, 37; 1 Sam. 14:10; 16:7; 20:7; 2 Kin. 20:9; Prov. 16:33; Acts 1:26
¹⁵ ^v Is. 65:24 ^w Gen. 24:45; 25:20 ^x Gen. 22:20, 23 ³ Rebecca, Rom. 9:10
¹⁶ ^y Gen. 12:11; 26:7; 29:17

and swore to me, saying, ^k“To your ²descendants I give this land,” ¹He will send His angel before you, and you shall take a wife for my son from there. ⁸And if the woman is not willing to follow you, then ^myou will be released from this oath; only do not take my son back there.” ⁹So the servant put his hand under the thigh of Abraham his master, and swore to him concerning this matter.

¹⁰Then the servant took ten of his master’s camels and departed, ⁿfor all his master’s goods *were* in his hand. And he arose and went to Mesopotamia, to ^othe city of Nahor. ¹¹And he made his camels kneel down outside the city by a well of water at evening time, the time ^pwhen women go out to draw water. ¹²Then he ^qsaid, “O LORD God of my master Abraham, please ^rgive me success this day, and show kindness to my master Abraham. ¹³Behold, *here* ^sI stand by the well of water, and ^tthe daughters of the men of the city are coming out to draw water. ¹⁴Now let it be that the young woman to whom I say, ‘Please let down your pitcher that I may drink,’ and she says, ‘Drink, and I will also give your camels a drink’—*let her be the one* You have appointed for Your servant Isaac. And ^uby this I will know that You have shown kindness to my master.”

¹⁵And it happened, ^vbefore he had finished speaking, that behold, ^wRebekah, ³who was born to Bethuel, son of ^xMilcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham’s brother, came out with her pitcher on her shoulder. ¹⁶Now the young woman ^ywas very beautiful to behold, a virgin; no man had known her. And she went down to the well, filled her pitcher, and came up. ¹⁷And the servant ran to meet her and

23:17 Abraham had to purchase not only the **field** and the **cave**, but also the **trees**. This meant that he was responsible for the maintenance of these trees as well. All was done in the formal, legal manner of the time. The record is fascinating to read, but also noteworthy for this: the only land Abraham ever really possessed was a burial spot for his wife.

23:19 **Abraham buried Sarah**. Years later, Abraham would be buried in the same cave (25:10).

24:1–67 The passage tells how an unnamed servant of Abraham found a suitable wife for Isaac. The account is marked by a lingering style, with the loving details and repetition so treasured by the storytellers in Hebrew tradition. Above all it records the kind providence of the Lord toward His people.

24:2 Some have thought **the oldest servant** to be Eliezer of 15:2 because of his high position over all that Abraham had.

24:3 **swear by the LORD**: Such an oath indicated how exceedingly important the matter was to Abraham. **from the daughters of the Canaanites**: This was not an issue of racism, as is sometimes thought—it was theological. The Canaanite peoples worshiped the false gods Baal and Asherah (see 15:16; cf. Deut. 7:3).

24:7 Abraham repeated a major theme of God’s covenant to him. His **descendants** would inherit the land (see list at 15:1–21). **His angel**: This phrase is grammatically equivalent to the expression

“the Angel of the LORD.” It is a way of referring to God’s presence (see 16:7; 22:11; 48:16).

24:10 The possession of **camels** in this ancient period was regarded as a mark of extraordinary wealth. **Mesopotamia** means “Aram of the Two Rivers.” The location is northern Syria beyond the Euphrates (cf. the location of Balaam’s homeland, Num. 22:5; 23:7). The **city of Nahor** is known as Haran (11:31).

24:12 **O LORD God of my master Abraham**: This language does not mean that the servant himself did not believe in the living God; rather, it was *because* of his faith that he prayed in this manner. The Lord had made His covenant with Abraham. The servant was making his appeal on the basis of God’s covenant loyalty to Abraham, as is seen in his appeal to God’s **kindness** (His covenant loyalty, 21:23). In the Psalms, this is the principal word used to describe God’s “loyal love” (Ps. 100:5).

24:15 **Rebekah**’s name may mean “Ensnaring Beauty.” She was of the family circle of Abraham (22:20–23).

24:16 Such commentary on a woman’s **beautiful** appearance is rare in the Bible (see the description of Sarai in 12:11; Rachel in 29:17; Joseph in 39:6; cf. 1 Sam. 16:12). Her chastity is noted: **a virgin; no man had known her**. The word translated *virgin* is not a precise term; hence the clarification, “no man had known her.”

said, “Please let me drink a little water from your pitcher.”

^{18z}So she said, “Drink, my lord.” Then she quickly let her pitcher down to her hand, and gave him a drink. ¹⁹And when she had finished giving him a drink, she said, “I will draw *water* for your camels also, until they have finished drinking.” ²⁰Then she quickly emptied her pitcher into the trough, ran back to the well to draw *water*, and drew for all his camels. ²¹And the man, wondering at her, remained silent so as to know whether *a* the LORD had made his journey prosperous or not.

²²So it was, when the camels had finished drinking, that the man took a golden *b* nose ring weighing half a shekel, and two bracelets for her wrists weighing

18 ^z Gen. 24:14, 46; [1 Pet. 3:8, 9]
21 ^a Gen. 24:12-14, 27, 52
22 ^b Gen. 24:47; Ex. 32:2, 3; Is. 3:19-21

23 ⁴ to spend the night
24 ^c Gen. 22:23;
24:15
26 ^d Gen. 24:48, 52; Ex. 4:31
27 ^e Gen. 24:12, 42, 48; Ex. 18:10; Ruth 4:14; 1 Sam. 25:32, 39; 2 Sam. 18:28; Luke 1:68 ^f Gen. 32:10; Ps. 98:3
9 Gen. 24:21, 48

ten *shekels* of gold, ²³and said, “Whose daughter *are* you? Tell me, please, is there room *in* your father’s house for us ⁴to lodge?”

²⁴So she said to him, ^c“*I am* the daughter of Bethuel, Milcah’s son, whom she bore to Nahor.” ²⁵Moreover she said to him, “We have both straw and feed enough, and room to lodge.”

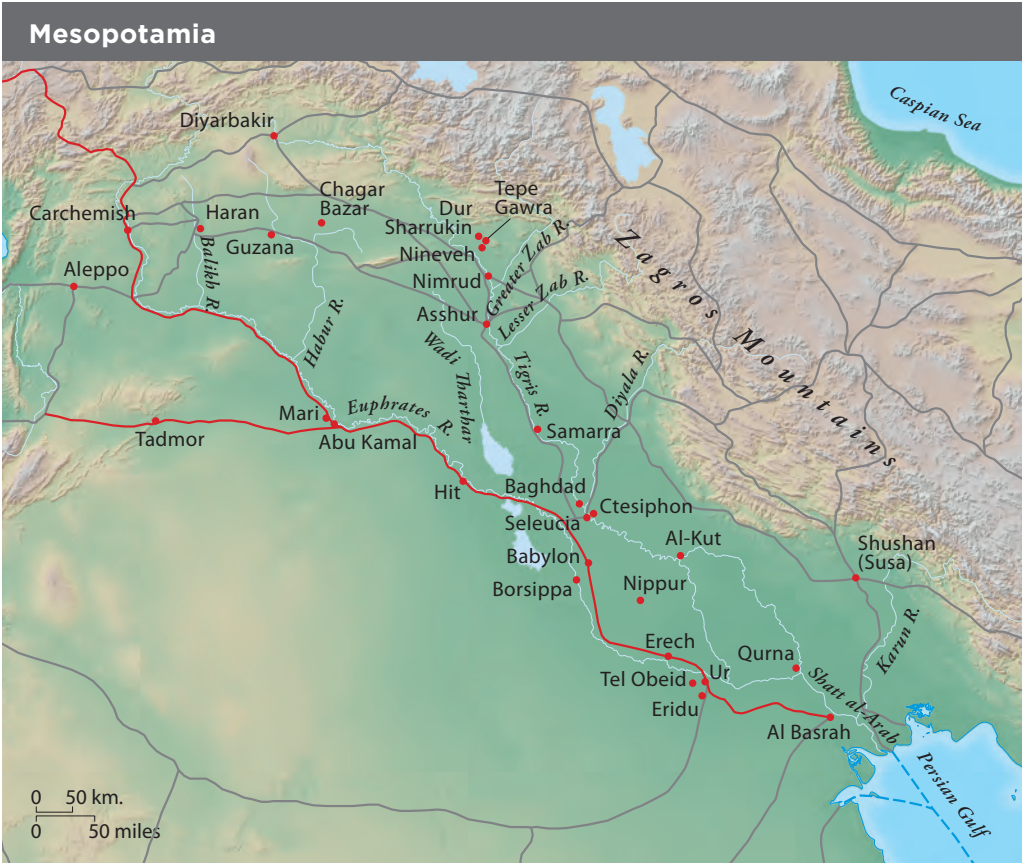
²⁶Then the man ^dbowed down his head and worshiped the LORD. ²⁷And he said, ^e“Blessed *be* the LORD God of my master Abraham, who has not forsaken ^fHis mercy and His truth toward my master. As for me, being on the way, the LORD ^gled me to the house of my master’s brethren.” ²⁸So the young woman ran and told her mother’s household these things.

24:19 I will draw water for your camels: This gesture went far beyond her social duties. This was precisely the proof that the servant had requested from the Lord.

24:23 Whose daughter are you: In biblical times, a young woman’s identity was closely tied to her father’s (see Ruth 2:5), and a married woman’s to her husband’s. After stating her family ties (v. 24; see 22:20–23), Rebekah responded that there was plenty of room for him to lodge with them (v. 25).

24:26 Abraham’s servant was overwhelmed by God’s grace, so he worshiped the LORD. He prostrated himself to the ground (the meaning of worshiped; see 19:1; 22:5). No wonder Abraham had so greatly trusted him (vv. 1–9).

24:27 Blessed be the LORD: In these and the following words, Abraham’s servant gave God true, public praise, as is later to be found in the Book of Psalms (for example, Ps. 105:1, 2). **Mercy** and **truth** together mean something like “the Lord’s utterly unswerving loyalty.”



²⁹Now Rebekah had a brother whose name was ^hLaban, and Laban ran out to the man by the well. ³⁰So it came to pass, when he saw the nose ring, and the bracelets on his sister's wrists, and when he heard the words of his sister Rebekah, saying, "Thus the man spoke to me," that he went to the man. And there he stood by the camels at the well. ³¹And he said, "Come in, ⁱO blessed of the LORD! Why do you stand outside? For I have prepared the house, and a place for the camels."

³²Then the man came to the house. And he unloaded the camels, and ^jprovided straw and feed for the camels, and water to ^kwash his feet and the feet of the men who ^lwere with him. ³³*Food* was set before him to eat, but he said, "I will not eat until I have told about my errand."

And he said, "Speak on."

³⁴So he said, "I *am* Abraham's servant. ³⁵The LORD ^mhas blessed my master greatly, and he has become great; and He has given him flocks and herds, silver and gold, male and female servants, and camels and donkeys. ³⁶And Sarah my master's wife ⁿbore a son to my master when she was old; and ^oto him he has given all that he has. ³⁷Now my master ^pmade me swear, saying, 'You shall not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, in whose land I dwell; ³⁸^qbut you shall go to my father's house and to my family, and take a wife for my son.' ³⁹'And I said to my master, 'Perhaps the woman will not follow me.' ⁴⁰'But he said to me, 'The LORD, ^rbefore whom I walk, will send His angel with you and ^sprosper your way; and you shall take a wife for my son from my family and from my father's house. ⁴¹'^uYou will be clear from this oath when you arrive among my family; for if they will not give ^{her} to you, then you will be released from my oath."

⁴²"And this day I came to the well and said, ^v"O LORD God of my master Abraham, if You will now prosper the way in which I go, ⁴³^wbehold, I stand by the well of water; and it shall come to pass that when the virgin comes out to draw *water*, and I say to her, "Please give me a little water from your pitcher to drink,"

²⁹ ^h Gen. 29:5, 13
³¹ ⁱ Gen. 26:29; Judg. 17:2; Ruth 3:10; Ps. 115:15
³² ^j Gen. 43:24; Judg. 19:21 ^k Gen. 19:2; John 13:5, 13-15
³³ ^l Job 23:12; John 4:34; Eph. 6:5-7
³⁵ ^m Gen. 13:2; 24:1
³⁶ ⁿ Gen. 21:1-7
³⁷ ^o Gen. 21:10; 25:5
³⁸ ^p Gen. 24:2-4
³⁹ ^q Gen. 24:4
⁴⁰ ^r Gen. 24:5
⁴¹ ^s Gen. 24:7
⁴² ^t Gen. 5:22, 24; 17:1; 1 Kin. 8:23 ^u *make your way successful*
⁴³ ^v Gen. 24:8
⁴⁴ ^w Gen. 24:12
⁴⁵ ^x Gen. 24:13

⁴⁵ ^x Gen. 24:15
⁴⁶ ^y 1 Sam. 1:13
⁴⁸ ^z Gen. 24:26, 52
⁴⁹ ^a Gen. 22:23; 24:27; Ps. 32:8; 48:14; Is. 48:17
⁴⁹ ^b Gen. 47:29; Josh. 2:14
⁵⁰ ^c Ps. 118:23; Matt. 21:42; Mark 12:11 ^d Gen. 31:24, 29
⁵¹ ^e Gen. 20:15
⁵² ^f Gen. 24:26, 48
⁵³ ^g Gen. 24:10, 22; Ex. 3:22; 11:2; 12:35 ^h 2 Chr. 21:3; Ezra 1:6
⁵⁴ ⁱ Gen. 24:56, 59; 30:25
⁵⁶ ^j *delay*

⁴⁴and she says to me, "Drink, and I will draw for your camels also,"—*let her be the woman whom the LORD has appointed for my master's son.*

⁴⁵^x"But before I had finished ^yspeaking in my heart, there was Rebekah, coming out with her pitcher on her shoulder; and she went down to the well and drew *water*. And I said to her, 'Please let me drink.' ⁴⁶And she made haste and let her pitcher down from her *shoulder*, and said, 'Drink, and I will give you camels a drink also.' So I drank, and she gave the camels a drink also. ⁴⁷Then I asked her, and said, 'Whose daughter *are* you?' And she said, 'The daughter of Bethuel, Nahor's son, whom Milcah bore to him.' So I put the nose ring on her nose and the bracelets on her wrists. ⁴⁸^zAnd I bowed my head and worshiped the LORD, and blessed the LORD God of my master Abraham, who had led me in the way of truth to ^atake the daughter of my master's brother for his son. ⁴⁹Now if you will ^bdeal kindly and truly with my master, tell me. And if not, tell me, that I may turn to the right hand or to the left."

⁵⁰Then Laban and Bethuel answered and said, ^c"The thing comes from the LORD; we cannot ^dspeak to you either bad or good. ⁵¹^eHere *is* Rebekah before you; take *her* and go, and let her be your master's son's wife, as the LORD has spoken."

⁵²And it came to pass, when Abraham's servant heard their words, that ^fhe worshiped the LORD, *bowing himself* to the earth. ⁵³Then the servant brought out ^gjewelry of silver, jewelry of gold, and clothing, and gave *them* to Rebekah. He also gave ^hprecious things to her brother and to her mother.

⁵⁴And he and the men who *were* with him ate and drank and stayed all night. Then they arose in the morning, and he said, ⁱ"Send me away to my master."

⁵⁵But her brother and her mother said, "Let the young woman stay with us ^a*few* days, at least ten; after that she may go."

⁵⁶And he said to them, "Do not ^bhinder me, since the LORD has prospered my way; send me away so that I may go to my master."

⁵⁷So they said, "We will call the young

24:29 We tend to remember **Laban** from his subsequent dealings with Jacob (chs. 29–31). Here he appears to be a gentle servant of God, recognizing Abraham's servant with gracious hospitality (v. 31). **24:50, 51** It is surprising that **Bethuel** the father was not more active in these proceedings (vv. 29–31). Perhaps he was aged or infirm; in any event, Laban, Rebekah's brother, seems to be the one making decisions. **The thing comes from the LORD:** In these words and in Laban's first responses to the servant of Abraham (v. 31), it appears that the family of Bethuel and Laban also worshiped the living God (see 11:27—12:4; Josh. 24:2). **Here is Rebekah:** Brother and father

recognized the work of God and they responded graciously and immediately.

24:52 Before doing anything else, Abraham's servant **worshiped the LORD** by prostrating himself before God and by giving public acknowledgment of His provision (v. 26).

24:53 In the manner of the East and with the abundance that belonged to Abraham, the servant gave lovely and costly gifts of **jewelry**, first to Rebekah and then to her family. Again the father is not mentioned.

woman and ask her personally.”⁵⁸ Then they called Rebekah and said to her, “Will you go with this man?”

And she said, “I will go.”

⁵⁹ So they sent away Rebekah their sister^j and her nurse, and Abraham’s servant and his men.⁶⁰ And they blessed Rebekah and said to her:

“Our sister, *may you become*

^k *The mother of thousands of ten thousands;*

^l *And may your descendants possess The gates of those who hate them.”*

⁶¹ Then Rebekah and her maids arose, and they rode on the camels and followed the man. So the servant took Rebekah and departed.

⁶² Now Isaac came from the way of ^m Beer Lahai Roi, for he dwelt in the South.⁶³ And Isaac went out ⁿ to meditate in the field in the evening; and he lifted his eyes and looked, and there, the camels *were* coming.⁶⁴ Then Rebekah lifted her eyes, and when she saw Isaac ^o she dismounted from her camel; ⁶⁵ for she had said to the servant, “Who is this man walking in the field to meet us?”

The servant said, “It is my master.” So she took a veil and covered herself.

⁶⁶ And the servant told Isaac all the things that he had done.⁶⁷ Then Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah’s tent; and he ^p took Rebekah and she became his wife, and he loved her. So Isaac ^q was comforted after his mother’s *death*.

⁵⁹ / Gen. 35:8

⁶⁰ ^k Gen. 17:16

^l Gen. 22:17; 28:14

⁶² ^m Gen. 16:14;

25:11

⁶³ ⁿ Josh. 1:8; Ps.

1:2; 77:12; 119:15, 27,

48; 143:5; 145:5

⁶⁴ ^o Josh. 15:18

⁶⁷ ^p Gen. 25:20;

29:20; Prov. 18:22

^q Gen. 23:1, 2; 38:12

CHAPTER 25

1 ^a 1 Chr. 1:32, 33

2 ^b 1 Chr. 1:32, 33

5 ^c Gen. 24:35, 36

6 ^d Gen. 21:14

^e Judg. 6:3

8 ^f Gen. 15:15; 47:8,

9 ^g Gen. 25:17;

35:29; 49:29, 33

9 ^h Gen. 35:29;

50:13 ⁱ Gen. 23:9,

17; 49:30

10 ^j Gen. 23:3-16

^k Gen. 49:31

11 ^l Gen. 16:14

Abraham and Keturah

25 Abraham again took a wife, and her name *was* ^a Keturah.² And ^b she bore him Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah.³ Jokshan begot Sheba and Dedan. And the sons of Dedan were Asshurim, Letushim, and Leummim.⁴ And the sons of Midian *were* Ephah, Ephher, Hanoah, Abidah, and Eldaah. All these *were* the children of Keturah.

⁵ And ^c Abraham gave all that he had to Isaac.⁶ But Abraham gave gifts to the sons of the concubines which Abraham had; and while he was still living he ^d sent them eastward, away from Isaac his son, to ^e the country of the east.

Abraham’s Death and Burial

⁷ This is the sum of the years of Abraham’s life which he lived: one hundred and seventy-five years.⁸ Then Abraham breathed his last and ^f died in a good old age, an old man and full of *years*, and ^g was gathered to his people.⁹ And ^h his sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of ⁱ Machpelah, which is before Mamre, in the field of Ephron the son of Zohar the Hittite,¹⁰ the field which Abraham purchased from the sons of Heth.^k There Abraham was buried, and Sarah his wife.¹¹ And it came to pass, after the death of Abraham, that God blessed his son Isaac. And Isaac dwelt at ^l Beer Lahai Roi.

24:58 Until now nothing had been said about Rebekah’s desires, but her words **I will go** showed her willingness.

24:59 It was no easier for this family to **send away** their beloved daughter and sister **Rebekah** than it would be for us. This was an act of courage and faith in the Lord for all concerned.

24:60 they blessed Rebekah: In the customs of the ancient Middle East, the family gave a formal blessing on her wedded life (see Ruth 4:11, 12). These words were not mere sentiment nor were they a magical charm, but a prayer for God’s blessing on her life. **The mother of thousands of ten thousands:** The two poetic lines echo the promise of God to Abraham and Sarah (17:15, 16). The term translated *ten thousands* means “myriads,” “uncountable.” It may be a play on the name Rebekah because in Hebrew the words sound similar. As in God’s promise to Abraham (22:17), the possession of the **gates** of one’s enemies meant power over them.

24:61–63 Rebekah and her maids must have made quite an entourage as they took off that day from Haran. Meanwhile, **Isaac** was also on the move (v. 62). **Beer Lahai Roi** was named in the story of Hagar’s first expulsion from Abraham and Sarah’s household (16:13, 14).

24:62 The South is the Negev (see 12:9; 13:1).

24:63 The precise meaning of the term translated **to meditate** is in dispute; perhaps it means “to walk about in thought.”

24:65 In the manner of the East, wearing a **veil** would have been appropriate behavior for a young, unmarried woman who was about to come into the company of a man.

24:66 From the earlier recital to Laban (vv. 32–49), we can imagine the enthusiasm of the **servant** speaking to Isaac.

24:67 Isaac brought Rebekah to his mother’s **tent**, a public act. **his wife, and he loved her:** Only rarely in the Bible do we read

of romantic love (see the Book of Ruth). But the Song of Solomon rhapsodizes on it. Isaac’s sense of grief at the death of his mother was now replaced by joy in the newness of married love. The story is lovely as it stands—a dramatic portrayal of God’s kind providence toward His people.

25:1 The Hebrew phrase **again took** can be interpreted as “had taken.” **Keturah:** She was not Abraham’s second official wife. Instead she was a concubine (see v. 6; 1 Chr. 1:32). As an unofficial wife, Keturah was probably with Abraham for life. Her sons had a status similar to that of Ishmael, Abraham’s son by Hagar (ch. 16), but without Ishmael’s particular blessing (see 16:10–16).

25:2 Midian was the father of the Midianites, some of whom later bought Joseph from his brothers (see 36:35; 37:28, 36).

25:5 As the legal firstborn, **Isaac** received the grand share of his father’s fortune; beyond that, he received the blessing of God (v. 11; 26:2–5).

25:6 The **concubines** were Hagar and Keturah. To protect Isaac’s inheritance after his death, Abraham gave appropriate gifts to his lesser sons and sent them away.

25:7 God gave Abraham a long **life** as He had promised (see 12:2; 15:15).

25:8 gathered to his people: A burial. The phrase also indicates that there is an afterlife (see 15:15; 35:29; 49:33).

25:9, 10 Abraham purchased **the cave of Machpelah** for the burial of his wife **Sarah** (ch. 23).

25:11 **God blessed** Isaac because He had already established “an everlasting covenant” with him (see 17:19; Heb. 11:17). Later God renewed the covenant with Isaac (26:2–5). **Beer Lahai Roi** means “The Well of the One Who Lives and Who Sees Me.” At this well, an Angel of the Lord had appeared to Hagar (see 16:7–14).

The Families of Ishmael and Isaac

¹²Now this is the ^mgenealogy of Ishmael, Abraham's son, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah's maidservant, bore to Abraham. ¹³And ⁿthese were the names of the sons of Ishmael, by their names, according to their generations: The firstborn of Ishmael, Nebajoth; then Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, ¹⁴Mishma, Dumah, Massa, ¹⁵Hadar, Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah. ¹⁶These were the sons of Ishmael and these were their names, by their towns and their ²settlements, ^otwelve princes according to their nations. ¹⁷These were the years of the life of Ishmael: one hundred and thirty-seven years; and ^phe breathed his last and died, and was gathered to his people. ¹⁸^q(They dwelt from Havilah as far as Shur, which is east of Egypt as you go toward Assyria.) He ³died ^rin the presence of all his brethren.

¹⁹This is the ^sgenealogy of Isaac, Abraham's son. ^tAbraham begot Isaac. ²⁰Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah as wife, ^uthe daughter of Bethuel the Syrian of Padan Aram, ^vthe sister of Laban the Syrian. ²¹Now Isaac pleaded with the LORD for his wife, because she was barren; ^wand the LORD granted his plea, ^xand Rebekah his wife conceived. ²²But the children struggled together within her; and she said, "If all is well, why ^{am} I like this?" ^ySo she went to inquire of the LORD.

²³And the LORD said to her:

^z"Two nations are in your womb,
Two peoples shall be separated from
your body;

¹² ^m Gen. 11:10, 27; 16:15
¹³ ⁿ 1 Chr. 1:29-31
¹⁵ ¹ MT *Hadad*
¹⁶ ^o Gen. 17:20
² camps
¹⁷ ^p Gen. 25:8; 49:33
¹⁸ ^q Gen. 20:1;
1 Sam. 15:7 ^r Gen.
16:12 ³ fell
¹⁹ ^s Gen. 36:1, 9
^t Matt. 1:2
²⁰ ^u Gen. 22:23;
24:15, 29, 67 ^v Gen.
24:29
²¹ ^w 1 Sam. 1:17;
1 Chr. 5:20; 2 Chr.
33:13; Ezra 8:23;
Ps. 127:3 ^x Rom.
9:10-13
²² ^y 1 Sam. 1:15;
9:9; 10:22
²³ ^z Gen. 17:4-6,
16; 24:60; Num.
20:14; Deut. 2:4-8
^a 2 Sam. 8:14 ^b Gen.
27:29, 40; Mal. 1:2,
3; Rom. 9:12
²⁵ ^c Gen. 27:11, 16,
23 ⁴ Lit. *Hairy*
²⁶ ^d Hos. 12:3
^e Gen. 27:36
⁵ *Supplanter or Deceitful*, lit. *One Who Takes the Heel*
²⁷ ^f Gen. 27:3, 5
^g Job 1:1, 8 ^h Heb.
11:9 ⁶ Lit. *complete*
²⁸ ⁱ Gen. 27:4,
19, 25, 31 ^j Gen.
27:6-10
³⁰ ⁷ Lit. *Red*
³² ^k Matt. 16:26;
Mark 8:36, 37
³³ ^l Heb. 12:16
⁸ *Take an oath*
³⁴ ^m Eccl. 8:15; Is.
22:13; 1 Cor. 15:32
ⁿ Heb. 12:16, 17

One people shall be stronger than
^athe other,
^bAnd the older shall serve the
younger."

²⁴So when her days were fulfilled for her to give birth, indeed there were twins in her womb. ²⁵And the first came out red. He was ^clike a hairy garment all over; so they called his name ⁴Esau. ²⁶Afterward his brother came out, and ^dhis hand took hold of Esau's heel; so ^ehis name was called ⁵Jacob. Isaac was sixty years old when she bore them.

²⁷So the boys grew. And Esau was ^fa skillful hunter, a man of the field; but Jacob was ^ga ⁶mild man, ^hdwelling in tents. ²⁸And Isaac loved Esau because he ⁱate of his game, ^jbut Rebekah loved Jacob.

Esau Sells His Birthright

²⁹Now Jacob cooked a stew; and Esau came in from the field, and he was weary. ³⁰And Esau said to Jacob, "Please feed me with that same red stew, for I am weary." Therefore his name was called ⁷Edom.

³¹But Jacob said, "Sell me your birthright as of this day."

³²And Esau said, "Look, I am about to die; so ^kwhat is this birthright to me?"

³³Then Jacob said, ⁸"Swear to me as of this day."

So he swore to him, and ^lsold his birthright to Jacob. ³⁴And Jacob gave Esau bread and stew of lentils; then ^mhe ate and drank, arose, and went his way. Thus Esau ⁿdespised his birthright.

25:12–18 genealogy of Ishmael: This passage distinguishes Ishmael's line, the line of the lesser promise (16:10–15), from Isaac's line (starting at v. 19), the line of the greater promise (for other genealogies in Genesis see the list at 2:4).

25:16 God fulfilled his promise to Abraham (17:20). The descendants of Ishmael had **twelve princes** to govern them, just as the Israelites were divided into twelve tribes (ch. 49).

25:18 They dwelt: The descendants of Ishmael lived in a large area, including the Arabian peninsula and the desert land between Canaan and Mesopotamia.

25:19 genealogy of Isaac: There are ten significant genealogies in Genesis (see the list at 2:4).

25:20 The story of the marriage of **Rebekah** and Isaac is recorded in ch. 24.

25:21 The Hebrew verb for **pleaded** indicates that Isaac prayed passionately for his wife. For examples of passionate prayer, see Ex. 8:30; 2 Sam. 21:14; 24:25. Isaac waited 20 years for God to grant his prayer (vv. 20, 26). **barren:** Rebekah experienced a period of infertility just like Sarah, Rachel, and Leah (see 16:1; 29:31; 30:9). After a period of barrenness, the **LORD** specifically gave each child in the line of promise.

25:22 struggled: Rebekah's pregnancy was difficult. It seemed as though the two children were competing in her womb. **inquire:** In the context of sacrificial worship, Rebekah prayed to the Lord.

25:23 The **LORD** spoke directly to Rebekah (16:8–11). **Two nations:** A theme of two sons recurs in Genesis: the sons of Eve (ch. 4), the sons of Tamar and Judah (38:27–30), and the sons of Joseph (ch. 48).

In the ancient Middle East, the firstborn would have preeminence. But this time God chose to bless the **younger**.

25:24 The birth of **twins** was regarded as a special blessing.

25:25 The name **Esau** sounds like the Hebrew word that means "hairy."

25:26 The younger brother grasped for his older brother's **heel** from birth. The Hebrew word that means "heel" sounds similar to the name **Jacob**. The name may mean either "He Who Grasps at the Heel (of Another)" or "He (the Lord) Is at His Heels (Is His Protector)." Later, Esau would taunt Jacob with the negative connotations of his name (see 27:36). Eventually God gave Jacob a new name, Israel (32:28).

25:27 hunter . . . mild man: The contrasting temperaments and interests of the two sons is similar to the contrast between Cain and Abel (4:2).

25:28 Isaac loved Esau: The following story illustrates the folly of parental favoritism.

25:30 The ruddy color of his complexion (v. 25) was tied to his strong desire for the red food and later to the red land he inherited (36:8). Now Esau was known as "Red"—that is, **Edom**.

25:31 Esau, as the firstborn, had a **birthright** to a double portion of the family estate. Moreover, he inherited from Isaac the privilege of an everlasting covenant with God (12:1–3).

25:33 Swear to me: The formal oath, even though unwitnessed, would have been regarded as binding by both parties.

25:34 The Hebrew verb for **despised** implies utter contempt (Num. 15:31; 2 Sam. 12:9; Mal. 1:6). Esau scorned God's promises given to the heirs of Isaac.

Isaac and Abimelech

26 There was a famine in the land, besides ^athe first famine that was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went to ^bAbimelech king of the Philistines, in Gerar.

²Then the LORD appeared to him and said: ^c“Do not go down to Egypt; live in ^dthe land of which I shall tell you. ^{3e}Dwell in this land, and ^fI will be with you and ^gbless you; for to you and your descendants ^hI give all these lands, and I will perform ⁱthe oath which I swore to Abraham your father. ⁴And ^jI will make your descendants multiply as the stars of heaven; I will give to your descendants all these lands; ^kand in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed; ^{5l}because Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws.”

⁶So Isaac dwelt in Gerar. ⁷And the men of the place asked about his wife. And ^mhe said, “She is my sister”; for ⁿhe was afraid to say, “*She is my wife,*” because he thought, “lest the men of the place kill me for Rebekah, because she is ^obeautiful to behold.” ⁸Now it came to pass, when he had been there a long time, that Abimelech king of the Philistines looked through a window, and saw, and there was Isaac, ¹showing endearment to Rebekah his wife. ⁹Then Abimelech called Isaac and said, “Quite obviously she is your wife; so how could you say, ‘She is my sister?’”

Isaac said to him, “Because I said, ‘Lest I die on account of her.’”

¹⁰And Abimelech said, “What is this you have done to us? One of the people might soon have lain with your wife, and ^pyou would have brought guilt on us.”

¹¹So Abimelech charged all his people,

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¹ ^a Gen. 12:10
^b Gen. 20:1, 2
² ^c Gen. 12:7; 17:1; 18:1; 35:9 ^d Gen. 12:1
³ ^e Gen. 20:1; Ps. 39:12; Heb. 11:9
^f Gen. 28:13, 15
^g Gen. 12:2 ^h Gen. 12:7; 13:15; 15:18
ⁱ Gen. 22:16; Ps. 105:9
⁴ ^j Gen. 15:5; 22:17; Ex. 32:13 ^k Gen. 12:3; 22:18; Gal. 3:8 ☆
⁵ ^l Gen. 22:16, 18
⁷ ^m Gen. 12:13; 20:2, 12, 13 ⁿ Prov. 29:25
⁹ ^o Gen. 12:11; 24:16; 29:17
⁸ ^p ¹ ^{caressing}
¹⁰ ^p Gen. 20:9

¹¹ ^q Ps. 105:15
¹² ^r Matt. 13:8, 23; Mark 4:8 ^s Gen. 24:1; 25:8, 11; 26:3; Job 42:12; Prov. 10:22
¹³ ^t Gen. 24:35; [Prov. 10:22]
¹⁴ ^u Gen. 37:11; Eccl. 4:4
¹⁵ ^v Gen. 21:25, 30
¹⁶ ^w Ex. 1:9
¹⁷ ^x ² ^{camped}
¹⁸ ^y Gen. 21:31
²⁰ ^y Gen. 21:25
³ ^z ^{Lit. Quarrel}
²¹ ⁴ ^{Lit. Enmity}
²² ^z Gen. 17:6; 28:3; 41:52; Ex. 1:7 ⁵ ^{Lit. Spaciousness}

saying, “He who ^qtouches this man or his wife shall surely be put to death.”

¹²Then Isaac sowed in that land, and reaped in the same year ^ra hundredfold; and the LORD ^sblessed him. ¹³The man ^tbegan to prosper, and continued prospering until he became very prosperous; ¹⁴for he had possessions of flocks and possessions of herds and a great number of servants. So the Philistines ^uenvied him. ¹⁵Now the Philistines had stopped up all the wells ^vwhich his father’s servants had dug in the days of Abraham his father, and they had filled them with earth. ¹⁶And Abimelech said to Isaac, “Go away from us, for ^wyou are much mightier than we.”

¹⁷Then Isaac departed from there and ²pitched his tent in the Valley of Gerar, and dwelt there. ¹⁸And Isaac dug again the wells of water which they had dug in the days of Abraham his father, for the Philistines had stopped them up after the death of Abraham. ³He called them by the names which his father had called them.

¹⁹Also Isaac’s servants dug in the valley, and found a well of running water there. ²⁰But the herdsmen of Gerar ^yquarreled with Isaac’s herdsmen, saying, “The water is ours.” So he called the name of the well ³Esek, because they quarreled with him. ²¹Then they dug another well, and they quarreled over that ^{one} also. So he called its name ⁴Sitnah. ²²And he moved from there and dug another well, and they did not quarrel over it. So he called its name ⁵Rehoboth, because he said, “For now the LORD has made room for us, and we shall ²be fruitful in the land.”

²³Then he went up from there to Beer-

26:1 An earlier famine occurred during the **days of Abraham** and led to Abraham going to Egypt (12:10–20). Abraham later had a similar misadventure in Gerar (ch. 20), a story that amazingly was repeated in some ways in the life of his son in the present narrative. The **Philistines** came to the coastland of Canaan following their defeat by the Egyptians around 1200 B.C. The Egyptians called them the “Sea Peoples.” The Philistines were apparently Greek peoples who migrated eastward (see 1 Sam. 4:1; 2 Sam. 5:17).

26:2 The LORD appeared to Isaac for the first time on record. Interestingly, God had already spoken to Rebekah (see 25:22, 23). Even though Egypt’s conditions may have been hospitable, the Lord prohibited Isaac from going to Egypt as his father had during the earlier famine (12:10).

26:3 **bless you:** The Lord fulfilled His promise to Abraham concerning Isaac (17:19). He established His everlasting covenant with Isaac, just as He had with Abraham.

26:4 God promised to make Isaac’s descendants innumerable as the stars because of His covenant with Abraham (22:17). God promised to bless the entire world, **all the nations**, through Abraham’s descendants (12:3; 22:18; 28:14).

26:6 **Gerar** was better for farming than the arid regions of the Negev.

26:7 Rebekah was a close relative, 22:20–23 but not Isaac’s **sister**. Isaac was even more deceitful than his father Abraham was (see 20:2, 12).

26:8 **showing endearment:** This Hebrew wordplay on the name Isaac literally means “He Who Laughs was laughing with Rebekah his wife.”

26:9, 10 **how could you:** A sense of moral outrage from the Philistine king. Ironically, Abimelech became the protector of Isaac and his wife.

26:12, 13 God’s special work for Abraham was extended to the son. The LORD **blessed** him so much that he became **very prosperous** and the envy of his neighbors.

26:15 Abraham had made a covenant with Abimelech concerning the rights to wells (see 21:22–34). But enmity had led to acts of sabotage against these old wells.

26:17 Although Isaac moved from Gerar, he did not leave the area.

26:18 On the basis of Isaac’s rights to the water in the area, his men **dug** new wells, giving these wells the same names as the old ones.

26:21 **Sitnah** is related to the Hebrew term for Satan.

26:23 Isaac moved out of Gerar as the famine ended and water became more available. He returned to **Beersheba**, the land of his youth (22:19).

sheba. ²⁴And the LORD ^aappeared to him the same night and said, ^b*“I am the God of your father Abraham; c do not fear, for d I am with you. I will bless you and multiply your descendants for My servant Abraham’s sake.”* ²⁵So he ^ebuilt an altar there and ^fcalled on the name of the LORD, and he pitched his tent there; and there Isaac’s servants dug a well.

²⁶Then Abimelech came to him from Gerar with Ahuzzath, one of his friends, ^gand Phichol the commander of his army.

²⁷And Isaac said to them, “Why have you come to me, ^hsince you hate me and have ⁱsent me away from you?”

²⁸But they said, “We have certainly seen that the LORD ^jis with you. So we said, ‘Let there now be an oath between us, between you and us; and let us make a ^kcovenant with you, ²⁹that you will do us no harm, since we have not touched you, and since we have done nothing to you but good and have sent you away in peace. ³⁰You *are* now the blessed of the LORD.’”

³¹So he made them a feast, and they ate and drank. ³¹Then they arose early in the morning and ^mswore an oath with one another; and Isaac sent them away, and they departed from him in peace.

³²It came to pass the same day that Isaac’s servants came and told him about the well which they had dug, and said to him, “We have found water.” ³³So he called it ⁿShebah. ³³Therefore the name of the city is ⁸Beersheba to this day.

³⁴When Esau was forty years old, he took as wives Judith the daughter of Beeri

the Hittite, and Basemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite. ³⁵And ^pthey were a grief of mind to Isaac and Rebekah.

Isaac Blesses Jacob

27 Now it came to pass, when Isaac was ^aold and ^bhis eyes were so dim that he could not see, that he called Esau his older son and said to him, “My son.”

And he answered him, “Here I am.”

²Then he said, “Behold now, I am old. I ^cdo not know the day of my death. ³^dNow therefore, please take your weapons, your quiver and your bow, and go out to the field and hunt game for me. ⁴And make me ¹savory food, such as I love, and bring *it* to me that I may eat, that my soul ^e‘may bless you before I die.’”

⁵Now Rebekah was listening when Isaac spoke to Esau his son. And Esau went to the field to hunt game and to bring *it*. ⁶So Rebekah spoke to Jacob her son, saying, “Indeed I heard your father speak to Esau your brother, saying, ⁷‘Bring me game and make ²savory food for me, that I may eat it and bless you in the presence of the LORD before my death.’ ⁸Now therefore, my son, ^fobey my voice according to what I command you. ⁹Go now to the flock and bring me from there two choice kids of the goats, and I will make ^gsavory food from them for your father, such as he loves. ¹⁰Then you shall take *it* to your father, that he may eat *it*, and that he ^hmay bless you before his death.”

¹¹And Jacob said to Rebekah his mother,

²⁴ ^a Gen. 26:2
^b Gen. 17:7, 8; 24:12;
Ex. 3:6; Acts 7:32
^c Gen. 15:1 ^d Gen.
26:3, 4
²⁵ ^e Gen. 12:7, 8;
13:4, 18; 22:9; 33:20
^f Gen. 21:33; Ps.
116:17
²⁶ ^g Gen. 21:22
²⁷ ^h Judg. 11:7
ⁱ Gen. 26:16
²⁸ ^j Gen. 21:22, 23
^k ⁶ treaty
²⁹ ^k Gen. 24:31; Ps.
115:15
³⁰ ^l Gen. 19:3
³¹ ^m Gen. 21:31
³³ ⁿ Gen. 21:31;
28:10 ⁷ Lit. *Oath or*
Seven ⁸ Lit. *Well of*
the Oath or Well of
the Seven
³⁴ ^o Gen. 28:8; 36:2

³⁵ ^p Gen. 27:46;
28:1, 8

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¹ ^a Gen. 35:28
^b Gen. 48:10; 1 Sam.
3:2
² ^c [Prov. 27:1;
James 4:14]
³ ^d Gen. 25:27, 28
⁴ ^e Gen. 27:19, 25,
27, 31; 48:9, 15, 16;
49:28; Deut. 33:1;
Heb. 11:20 ¹ *tasty*
⁷ ² *tasty*
⁸ ^f Gen. 27:13, 43
⁹ ^g Gen. 27:4
¹⁰ ^h Gen. 27:4;
48:16

26:24 God of your father Abraham: God was faithful. He promised to the son what He had already promised to the father. This passage repeats the Abrahamic covenant (see the references at 15:1–21).

26:25 Isaac followed the practice of his father (see 12:8). He made an altar and called on the name of the LORD: At this altar Isaac not only prayed to the Lord, he also affirmed the reality of the living God in this special land (12:8; 21:33).

26:26 Abimelech came to end the animosity between his people and Isaac’s family because he recognized God’s blessing on Isaac (vv. 28, 29). Ahuzzath . . . and Phichol: These associates of Abimelech would witness the agreement.

26:28 the LORD is with you: This was God’s design. He wanted to bless Abraham’s family because Abraham and his family followed Him. Then, God’s extraordinary blessing on His people would attract others to Himself (12:2, 3). The **covenant** formally bound both parties. The covenant here was as between two equals (for similar covenants, see Abraham and Abimelech in 21:2–34; Laban and Jacob in 31:43–55). The covenant between God and Abraham was of a different type—a covenant between a king and a servant (15:18).

26:30 ate and drank: This ceremonial meal expressed the new relationship and memorialized the alliance (27:3, 4; 31:46, 54).

26:31 peace: The Hebrew term *shalom* suggests that things were as they ought to be between the two contracting parties.

26:32 Either a brand-new **well** or a redigging of Abraham’s well at that location (21:30, 31). The discovery of **water** was regarded as a blessing from God on their actions.

26:33 Shebah: The name is a wordplay on the Hebrew words that

mean “swear” (v. 31) and “seven.” The name **Beersheba** may mean either “Well of the Oath” or “Well of the Seven.”

26:34 Esau married Hittite women, who believed in many different gods. His parents wanted him to marry a woman who worshiped the living God (27:46; 28:8; 36:1–8). The name Judith is related to the word that means “praise.” She is not mentioned among the wives of Esau in ch. 36. Perhaps, the marriage did not last. The name Basemath means “Fragrant.”

27:1 Isaac was old: Isaac actually did not die for many years (35:27–29). His actions were precautionary. **his eyes:** Isaac’s failed vision allowed Jacob and his mother to trick him (vv. 11–29). For other blessings affected by Isaac’s vision, see 48:8–22. Ordinarily, a father would give the primary blessing to the firstborn, in this case **Esau** (25:29–34). Yet God worked contrary to cultural expectations and Isaac’s favoritism (37:4). God had already blessed the younger (25:23).

27:4 Isaac wanted to memorialize his blessing on Esau with a ceremonial meal of savory food (see v. 30). my soul: This phrase is simply a substitute for the personal pronoun, “I.”

27:8 obey my voice: Rebekah wanted to circumvent the blessing that her husband planned to give to Esau. Here Rebekah appears to be calculating and devious. Yet God had told her that her younger son would have precedence over the older (25:23).

27:11, 12 Jacob wanted to know how he could pass as his brother. Esau had been hairy from birth (25:25). deceiver: Jacob feared that he would be discovered, not that he was doing wrong.



Clothing

The warmth of Canaan's climate led the people to prefer loose-fitting clothes, while the drab landscape may have contributed to their preference for bright colors in their garments. Clothing styles remained essentially the same throughout the period covered by the Old and New Testaments. Clothing was made from simple material, such as leather or goat's hair. In the early period of their history, the Hebrews were a people who tended flocks and herds. Thus they wove most of their clothes from plentiful wool. The flax plant provided linen for the more formal clothing of the priests or the wealthier classes. Many Hebrew homes had looms for weaving cloth. Colorful embroidery enlivened the fancier clothes. Purple dye was taken from a Mediterranean shellfish. Red came from insects taken from oak trees. Pomegranate and other plants provided blue dye.



Semites depicted on Beni-Hassan tomb painting. Note the brightly-colored, loose-fitting clothing.
Baker Photo Archive

“Look, ⁱEsau my brother is a hairy man, and I *am* a smooth-skinned man. ¹² Perhaps my father will ^jfeel me, and I shall seem to be a deceiver to him; and I shall bring ^ka curse on myself and not a blessing.”

¹³ But his mother said to him, ^l“Let your curse *be* on me, my son; only obey my voice, and go, get *them* for me.” ¹⁴ And he went and got *them* and brought *them* to his mother, and his mother ^mmade ³savory food, such as his father loved. ¹⁵ Then Rebekah took ⁿthe choice clothes of her elder son Esau, which *were* with her in the house, and put them on Jacob her younger son. ¹⁶ And she put the skins of the kids of the goats on his hands and on the smooth part of his neck. ¹⁷ Then she gave the savory food and the bread, which she had prepared, into the hand of her son Jacob.

¹⁸ So he went to his father and said, “My father.”

11 ⁱ Gen. 25:25
12 ^j Gen. 27:21, 22
^k Gen. 9:25; Deut. 27:18
13 ^l Gen. 43:9;
1 Sam. 25:24;
2 Sam. 14:9; Matt. 27:25
14 ^m Prov. 23:3;
Luke 21:34 ³ tasty
15 ⁿ Gen. 27:27

19 ^o Gen. 27:4
21 ^p Gen. 27:12
23 ^q Gen. 27:16

And he said, “Here I am. Who *are* you, my son?”

¹⁹ Jacob said to his father, “I *am* Esau your firstborn; I have done just as you told me; please arise, sit and eat of my game, ^o that your soul may bless me.”

²⁰ But Isaac said to his son, “How *is it* that you have found *it* so quickly, my son?”

And he said, “Because the LORD your God brought *it* to me.”

²¹ Isaac said to Jacob, “Please come near, that I ^p may feel you, my son, whether you *are* really my son Esau or not.” ²² So Jacob went near to Isaac his father, and he felt him and said, “The voice *is* Jacob’s voice, but the hands *are* the hands of Esau.”

²³ And he did not recognize him, because ^q his hands were hairy like his brother Esau’s hands; so he blessed him.

²⁴ Then he said, “*Are* you really my son Esau?”

27:18–20 I am Esau: Jacob lied, then his lies led him to blasphemy. **27:21–27 come near:** Isaac had to **feel** Jacob (vv. 21, 22), hear him (v. 22), question him (v. 24), **kiss** and **smell** him (vv. 26, 27) before

he finally believed Jacob’s repeated lies. Each one of Jacob’s lies needed another lie.

He said, “*I am.*”

²⁵ He said, “Bring *it* near to me, and I will eat of my son’s game, so ^r that my soul may bless you.” So he brought *it* near to him, and he ate; and he brought him wine, and he drank. ²⁶ Then his father Isaac said to him, “Come near now and kiss me, my son.” ²⁷ And he came near and ^s kissed him; and he smelled the smell of his clothing, and blessed him and said:

“Surely, ^t the smell of my son
Is like the smell of a field
Which the LORD has blessed.

²⁸ Therefore may ^u God give you
Of ^v the dew of heaven,
Of ^w the fatness of the earth,
And ^x plenty of grain and wine.

²⁹ Let peoples serve you,
And nations bow down to you.
Be master over your brethren,
And ^z let your mother’s sons bow
down to you.

“Cursed *be* everyone who curses you,
And blessed *be* those who bless you!”

Esau’s Lost Hope

³⁰ Now it happened, as soon as Isaac had finished blessing Jacob, and Jacob had scarcely gone out from the presence of Isaac his father, that Esau his brother came in from his hunting. ³¹ He also had made ⁴ savory food, and brought it to his father, and said to his father, “Let my father arise and ^b eat of his son’s game, that your soul may bless me.”

³² And his father Isaac said to him, “Who are you?”

So he said, “*I am* your son, your first-born, Esau.”

³³ Then Isaac trembled exceedingly, and said, “Who? Where is the one who hunted game and brought *it* to me? I ate all *of it* before you came, and I have blessed him—*c* and indeed he shall be blessed.”

²⁵ ^r Gen. 27:4, 10, 19, 31

²⁷ ^s Gen. 29:13
^t Song 4:11; Hos. 14:6

²⁸ ^u Heb. 11:20
^v Gen. 27:39; Deut. 33:13, 28; 2 Sam. 1:21; Ps. 133:3; Prov. 3:20; Mic. 5:7; Zech. 8:12 ^w Gen. 45:18; Num. 18:12 ^x Deut. 7:13; 33:28

²⁹ ^y Gen. 9:25; 25:23; Is. 45:14; 49:7; 60:12, 14 ^z Gen. 37:7, 10; 49:8 ^a Gen. 12:2, 3; Zeph. 2:8, 9

³¹ ^b Gen. 27:4
^c ^{tasty}
³³ ^c Gen. 25:23; 28:3, 4; Num. 23:20; Rom. 11:29

³⁴ When Esau heard the words of his father, ^d he cried with an exceedingly great and bitter cry, and said to his father, “Bless me—me also, O my father!”

³⁵ But he said, “Your brother came with deceit and has taken away your blessing.”

³⁶ And Esau said, ^e “Is he not rightly named ⁵ Jacob? For he has supplanted me these two times. He took away my birthright, and now look, he has taken away my blessing!” And he said, “Have you not reserved a blessing for me?”

³⁷ Then Isaac answered and said to Esau, ^f “Indeed I have made him your master, and all his brethren I have given to him as servants; with ^g grain and wine I have ⁶ sustained him. What shall I do now for you, my son?”

³⁸ And Esau said to his father, “Have you only one blessing, my father? Bless me—me also, O my father!” And Esau lifted up his voice ^h and wept.

³⁹ Then Isaac his father answered and said to him:

“Behold, ⁱ your dwelling shall be of the
⁷ fatness of the earth,
And of the dew of heaven from
above.

⁴⁰ By your sword you shall live,
And ^j you shall serve your
brother;
And ^k it shall come to pass, when you
become restless,
That you shall break his yoke from
your neck.”

Jacob Escapes from Esau

⁴¹ So Esau ^l hated Jacob because of the blessing with which his father blessed him, and Esau said in his heart, ^m “The days of mourning for my father ⁸ are at hand; ⁿ then I will kill my brother Jacob.”

⁴² And the words of Esau her older son were told to Rebekah. So she sent and

³⁴ ^d [Heb. 12:17]

³⁶ ^e Gen. 25:26,
32–34 ^f *Supplanter*
or *Deceitful*, lit. *One*
Who Takes the Heel

³⁷ ¹ 2 Sam. 8:14
^g Gen. 27:28, 29

³⁸ ^h *provided support*
for
³⁸ ^h Heb. 12:17

³⁹ ⁱ Gen. 27:28;
Heb. 11:20 ^j fertility

⁴⁰ ^j Gen. 25:23;
27:29; 2 Sam. 8:14;
[Obad. 18–20]

⁴¹ ^k 2 Kin. 8:20–22
^l ¹ Gen. 26:27;
32:3–11; 37:4, 5, 8

^m Gen. 50:2–4, 10
ⁿ Obad. 10 ⁸ *are*
soon here

27:27–29 Ironically, Isaac began his blessing by describing the rustic **smell** of his son’s clothing. **peoples serve you:** Isaac predicted that Jacob’s descendants would obtain supremacy over other peoples. Jesus, as the King of kings and a descendant of Jacob, ultimately fulfilled this prediction (1 Tim. 6:14–16). **master:** This Hebrew word, related to a word meaning “hero,” describes one who is valiant and powerful. **mother’s sons:** Isaac intended that Jacob would bow to Esau. Yet because of Jacob’s deception, Isaac blessed Jacob instead. **Cursed . . . blessed:** Unwittingly, Isaac blessed Jacob with the words originally spoken by the Lord to Abram (12:3). Jacob became the heir to the everlasting covenant between Abraham’s descendants and the Lord. **27:32 Who are you:** Surely Isaac recognized his older son’s voice. **27:33 Isaac, in despair, realized he had been duped by his own son. he shall be blessed:** In this ancient culture, words could not be easily withdrawn as they often are today. Isaac’s words of blessing had power—indeed, they were backed by the power of the Lord (vv. 27–29). They could not be withdrawn. **27:34 he cried:** Esau’s anguish was unbearable. **Bless me:** Surely Isaac had reserved some blessing for Esau.

27:35 Jacob had stolen the blessing Isaac had intended for Esau. **deceit:** Later, Jacob would be deceived by his uncle Laban (29:25). **27:36–38 rightly named:** One meaning of the name Jacob is “He Who Grasps at the Heel (of Another).” Jacob lived up to the meaning of his name by trying to steal Esau’s right as the firstborn. Actually, the **blessing** was one of the birthrights of the firstborn son. Esau, as the firstborn, probably hoped to overcome the loss of his **birthright** (25:29–34) with Isaac’s powerful blessing. As it turned out, Jacob achieved both through underhanded means. The blessing was irrevocable (v. 37). **Have you only one blessing:** Esau repeated his pleas (v. 34). This repetition suggests a prolonged period of grieving. **27:39 Behold:** The blessing for Esau was much weaker than the blessing for Jacob (for the “reserve blessing” for Ishmael, see 16:11, 12). **27:40** The blessing affirmed that Esau’s descendants would **serve his brother**. Yet eventually they would free themselves from domination. **27:42–45** Apparently Esau revealed his evil decision to someone. Again, **Rebekah** intervened to help her favorite son. **Laban** was Rebekah’s brother and **Haran** was her homeland (ch. 24). Earlier,

called Jacob her younger son, and said to him, “Surely your brother Esau ^o comforts himself concerning you *by intending* to kill you. ⁴³ Now therefore, my son, obey my voice: arise, flee to my brother Laban ^p in Haran. ⁴⁴ And stay with him a ^q few days, until your brother’s fury turns away, ⁴⁵ until your brother’s anger turns away from you, and he forgets what you have done to him; then I will send and bring you from there. Why should I be bereaved also of you both in one day?”

⁴⁶ And Rebekah said to Isaac, ^r “I am weary of my life because of the daughters of Heth; ^s if Jacob takes a wife of the daughters of Heth, like these *who are* the daughters of the land, what good will my life be to me?”

28 Then Isaac called Jacob and ^a blessed him, and ^t charged him, and said to him: ^b “You shall not take a wife from the daughters of Canaan. ^{2c} Arise, go to ^d Padan Aram, to the house of ^e Bethuel your mother’s father; and take yourself a wife from there of the daughters of ^f Laban your mother’s brother.

³ “May ^g God Almighty bless you,
And make you ^h fruitful and multiply
you,
That you may be an assembly of
peoples;
⁴ And give you ⁱ the blessing of
Abraham,
To you and your descendants with
you,
That you may inherit the land
^j In ² which you are a stranger,
Which God gave to Abraham.”

⁵ So Isaac sent Jacob away, and he went to Padan Aram, to Laban the son of Bethuel the Syrian, the brother of Rebekah, the mother of Jacob and Esau.

⁴² ^o Ps. 64:5
⁴³ ^p Gen. 11:31;
25:20; 28:2, 5
⁴⁴ ^q Gen. 31:41
⁴⁶ ^r Gen. 26:34, 35;
28:8 ^s Gen. 24:3

CHAPTER 28

¹ ^a Gen. 27:33
^b Gen. 24:3
^t commanded
² ^c Hos. 12:12
^d Gen. 25:20 ^e Gen.
22:23 ^f Gen. 24:29;
27:43; 29:5
³ ^g Gen. 17:16;
35:11; 48:3 ^h Gen.
26:4, 24
⁴ ⁱ Gen. 12:2, 3;
22:17; Gal. 3:8
^j Gen. 17:8; 23:4;
36:7; 1 Chr. 29:15;
Ps. 39:12 ² Lit. *Of
your sojournings*

⁸ ^k Gen. 24:3; 26:34,
35; 27:46
⁹ ^l Gen. 26:34,
35 ^m Gen. 36:2, 3
ⁿ Gen. 25:13
¹⁰ ^o Gen. 26:23;
46:1; Hos. 12:12
^p Gen. 12:4, 5; 27:43;
29:4; 2 Kin. 19:12;
Acts 7:2
¹² ^q Gen. 31:10;
41:1; Num. 12:6
^r John 1:51; Heb.
1:4, 14
¹³ ^s Gen. 35:1; 48:3;
Amos 7:7 ^t Gen.
26:24 ^u Gen. 13:15,
17; 26:3; 35:12
¹⁴ ^v Gen. 13:16;
22:17 ^w Gen. 13:14,
15; Deut. 12:20
^x Gen. 12:3; 18:18;
22:18; 26:4; Matt.
1:2; Luke 3:34;
Gal. 3:8
¹⁵ ^y Gen. 26:3, 24;
31:3 ^z Gen. 48:16;
Num. 6:24; Ps.
121:5, 7, 8 ^a Gen.
35:6; 48:21; Deut.
30:3 ^b Lev. 26:44;
Deut. 7:9; 31:6, 8;

Esau Marries Mahalath

⁶ Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob and sent him away to Padan Aram to take himself a wife from there, *and that* as he blessed him he gave him a charge, saying, “You shall not take a wife from the daughters of Canaan,” ⁷ and that Jacob had obeyed his father and his mother and had gone to Padan Aram. ⁸ Also Esau saw ^k that the daughters of Canaan did not please his father Isaac. ⁹ So Esau went to Ishmael and ^l took ^m Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael, Abraham’s son, ⁿ the sister of Nebajoth, to be his wife in addition to the wives he had.

Jacob’s Vow at Bethel

¹⁰ Now Jacob ^o went out from Beer-sheba and went toward ^p Haran. ¹¹ So he came to a certain place and stayed there all night, because the sun had set. And he took one of the stones of that place and put it at his head, and he lay down in that place to sleep. ¹² Then he ^q dreamed, and behold, a ladder *was* set up on the earth, and its top reached to heaven; and there ^r the angels of God were ascending and descending on it.

¹³ ^s And behold, the LORD stood above it and said: ^t “*I am* the LORD God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; ^u the land on which you lie I will give to you and your descendants. ¹⁴ Also your ^v descendants shall be as the dust of the earth; you shall spread abroad ^w to the west and the east, to the north and the south; and in you and ^x in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed. ¹⁵ Behold, ^y *I am* with you and will ^z keep ³ you wherever you go, and will ^a bring you back to this land; for ^b I

Josh. 1:5; 1 Kin. 8:57; Heb. 13:5 ³ protect

Laban had welcomed Abraham’s servant (24:29). **bereaved:** Rebekah would lose both her sons if Esau killed Jacob—the one to death and the other, like Cain, to exile. Sadly, she died before Jacob returned (31:18; 35:27–29).

27:46 daughters of Heth: Rebekah spoke to Isaac about Jacob’s future wife because they had already regretted Esau’s marrying Hittite women (26:34, 35). Furthermore, Isaac had found Rebekah in Haran.

28:1 Isaac agreed with Rebekah that intermarriage with the pagan women of **Canaan** was dangerous. These women would bring their own false gods into the household.

28:2 Padan Aram is a region of Haran in northern Aram (Syria) near the Euphrates River.

28:3 God Almighty: This Hebrew name, El Shaddai, is used by or in the hearing of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (35:11). This is the second time it is used in Genesis. God later identified Himself to Moses with this same name (Ex. 6:3).

28:4 Isaac formally passed on to his son Jacob the **blessing** that God had first given to his father Abraham (12:1–3). **descendants:** The Hebrew term *seed* may refer to a single individual (3:15) or to a number of people. This same term is used in prophecy to designate the coming Messiah, Jesus Christ (see Num. 24:7; Is. 6:13).

28:6–9 Esau attempted to find favor in Isaac’s eyes by doing what Isaac wished. By marrying **Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael**, Esau believed he had met the standard Isaac had given Jacob (v. 1). Sadly, Esau could not regain his lost blessing. Mahalath is the same woman as Basemath, the daughter of Ishmael, in 36:2. Her name probably means “Dance.”

28:13 I am the LORD: God identified Himself as the God whom both Abraham and Isaac believed. Later, He becomes known as the God of Jacob (Ex. 3:15). Isaac, in his blessing, predicted Jacob would inherit this **land** (vv. 3, 4). Now God promised it!

28:14 The Lord ratified Isaac’s blessing on Jacob’s **descendants** (vv. 3, 4). **all the families:** Every time the covenant was renewed, God repeated His promise to show mercy to all people through Abraham’s descendants (12:3; 22:18; 26:4). **Seed** refers to Jacob’s sons; Jacob’s descendants, the nation of Israel; and the Promised One (as in 3:15; Is. 6:13).

28:15 I am with you: Right when Jacob was running away from the consequences of his lies, God mercifully chose to reaffirm His promises. Jacob was in no position to earn God’s favor. Yet God promised to be with him.

will not leave you ^cuntil I have done what I have spoken to you.”

¹⁶Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, “Surely the Lord is in ^dthis place, and I did not know *it*.” ¹⁷And he was afraid and said, “How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven!”

¹⁸Then Jacob rose early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put at his head, ^eset it up as a pillar, ^fand poured oil on top of it. ¹⁹And he called the name of ^gthat place ⁴Bethel; but the name of that city had been Luz previously. ²⁰^hThen Jacob made a vow, saying, “If ⁱGod will be with me, and keep me in this way that I am going, and give me ^jbread to eat and clothing to put on, ²¹so that ^kI come back to my father’s house in peace, ^lthen the Lord shall be my God. ²²And this stone which I have set as a pillar ^mshall be God’s house, ⁿand of all that You give me I will surely give a ⁵tenth to You.”

Jacob Meets Rachel

29 So Jacob went on his journey ^aand came to the land of the people of the East. ²And he looked, and saw a ^bwell in the field; and behold, there were three flocks of sheep lying by it; for out of that well they watered the flocks. A large stone was on the well’s mouth. ³Now all the flocks would be gathered there; and they would roll the stone from the well’s mouth, water the sheep, and put the stone back in its place on the well’s mouth.

⁴And Jacob said to them, “My brethren, where are you from?”

And they said, “We are from ^cHaran.”

⁵Then he said to them, “Do you know ^dLaban the son of Nahor?”

And they said, “We know him.”

15 ^cNum. 23:19
16 ^dEx. 3:5; Josh. 5:15; Ps. 139:7-12
18 ^eGen. 31:13, 45
^fLev. 8:10-12
19 ^gJudg. 1:23, 26
⁴Lit. House of God
20 ^hGen. 31:13;
Judg. 11:30; 2 Sam. 15:8
ⁱGen. 28:15
^j1 Tim. 6:8
21 ^kJudg. 11:31;
2 Sam. 19:24, 30
^lDeut. 26:17; 2 Sam. 15:8
22 ^mGen. 35:7, 14
ⁿGen. 14:20; [Lev. 27:30]; Deut. 14:22
⁵tithe

CHAPTER 29

1 ^aGen. 25:6; Num. 23:7; Judg. 6:3, 33; Hos. 12:12
2 ^bGen. 24:10, 11; Ex. 2:15, 16
4 ^cGen. 11:31; 28:10
5 ^dGen. 24:24, 29; 28:2

6 ^eGen. 43:27
^fGen. 24:11; Ex. 2:16, 17
7 ^gearly in the day
9 ^gEx. 2:16
10 ^hEx. 2:17
11 ⁱGen. 33:4; 45:14, 15
12 ^jGen. 13:8; 14:14, 16; 28:5
^kGen. 24:28
13 ^jGen. 24:29-31; Luke 15:20
14 ^mGen. 2:23; 37:27; Judg. 9:2; 2 Sam. 5:1; 19:12, 13
15 ⁿGen. 30:28; 31:41
17 ²Or weak

⁶So he said to them, ^e“Is he well?”

And they said, “*He is well*. And look, his daughter Rachel ^fis coming with the sheep.”

⁷Then he said, “Look, *it is still* ¹high day; *it is* not time for the cattle to be gathered together. Water the sheep, and go and feed *them*.”

⁸But they said, “We cannot until all the flocks are gathered together, and they have rolled the stone from the well’s mouth; then we water the sheep.”

⁹Now while he was still speaking with them, ^gRachel came with her father’s sheep, for she was a shepherdess. ¹⁰And it came to pass, when Jacob saw Rachel the daughter of Laban his mother’s brother, and the sheep of Laban his mother’s brother, that Jacob went near and ^hrolled the stone from the well’s mouth, and watered the flock of Laban his mother’s brother. ¹¹Then Jacob ⁱkissed Rachel, and lifted up his voice and wept. ¹²And Jacob told Rachel that he was ^jher father’s relative and that he was Rebekah’s son. ^kSo she ran and told her father.

¹³Then it came to pass, when Laban heard the report about Jacob his sister’s son, that ^lhe ran to meet him, and embraced him and kissed him, and brought him to his house. So he told Laban all these things. ¹⁴And Laban said to him, ^m“Surely you are my bone and my flesh.” And he stayed with him for a month.

Jacob Marries Leah and Rachel

¹⁵Then Laban said to Jacob, “Because you are my relative, should you therefore serve me for nothing? Tell me, ⁿwhat should your wages be?” ¹⁶Now Laban had two daughters: the name of the elder was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel. ¹⁷Leah’s eyes were ²delicate,

28:17 Afraid indicates a fear of God similar to terror. **Awesome** indicates a fear of God similar to wonder and worship (22:12; Ex. 20:20; Prov. 1:7). In Jacob’s case, these twin emotions were mixed together. **house of God . . . gate of heaven:** God and heaven had come down to the very place where Jacob was sleeping!

28:18 stone . . . as a pillar: To commemorate the great event, Jacob set a stone on end and **poured oil on top** to consecrate it to God. Later he would refer to the Lord as “The Stone of Israel” (49:24). For Moses’ use of oil to consecrate the tabernacle, see Lev. 8:10–12.

28:19 Bethel means “House of God.” God had also appeared to Abraham near Bethel (12:7–8).

28:20 vow: Although Jacob made a conditional promise to be faithful to God, he based it on God’s promises to him (v. 15).

28:22 Jacob promised to give a **tenth** of his possessions to God. His grandfather Abraham had given the same proportion to Melchizedek, the priest of God Most High (14:20). Later, the Mosaic Law required giving a tenth to God (Deut. 14:22).

29:1 The **people of the East** were not Canaanites.

29:2 Shepherds would naturally gather at a **well**. As in the case of Abraham’s servant (24:10, 11), Jacob met Rachel at a well, perhaps

even at the same well. Because God allowed a number of significant events to occur at wells, they become a symbol of God’s blessing and care (see 16:14; 21:19, 30; 26:32; Is. 12:3; John 4:1–26).

29:5 The term **son** is being used in a loose sense. **Nahor** was actually the grandfather of **Laban** (22:20–23). Laban’s father was Bethuel (24:15, 50).

29:6 Rachel is a term of endearment, meaning “Ewe Lamb.” As the daughter of his mother’s brother, Rachel was a cousin of Jacob.

29:9 still speaking: Rachel’s arrival at that moment is a mirror of Rebekah’s action to Abraham’s servant so long ago (24:15–20). Again, God’s timing is perfect (for Boaz and Ruth, see Ruth 2:3).

29:11 kissed Rachel: Doubtless Jacob had heard the story of his mother’s encounter with the servant of Abraham many times. He knew their meeting was from God.

29:16 Leah was Rachel’s older sister. Her name may be a term of endearment meaning “Wild Cow.”

29:17 Delicate signifies a special loveliness in her eyes, or perhaps a weakness. **beautiful of form:** Rachel’s description is similar to the descriptions of Sarai (12:11) and of Rebekah (24:16).

but Rachel was ^obeautiful of form and appearance.

¹⁸Now Jacob loved Rachel; so he said, ^p“I will serve you seven years for Rachel your younger daughter.”

¹⁹And Laban said, “*It is better that I give her to you than that I should give her to another man. Stay with me.*”

²⁰So Jacob ^qserved seven years for Rachel, and they seemed *only* a few days to him because of the love he had for her.

²¹Then Jacob said to Laban, “Give me my wife, for my days are fulfilled, that I may ^rgo in to her.” ²²And Laban gathered together all the men of the place and ^smade a feast. ²³Now it came to pass in the evening, that he took Leah his daughter and brought her to Jacob; and he went in to her. ²⁴And Laban gave his maid ^tZilpah to his daughter Leah as a maid. ²⁵So it came to pass in the morning, that behold, it *was* Leah. And he said to Laban, “What is this you have done to me? Was it not for Rachel that I served you? Why then have you *“deceived me?”*”

²⁶And Laban said, “It must not be done so in our ³country, to give the younger before the firstborn. ²⁷^vFulfill her week, and we will give you this one also for the service which you will serve with me still another seven years.”

²⁸Then Jacob did so and fulfilled her week. So he gave him his daughter Rachel as wife also. ²⁹And Laban gave his maid ^wBilhah to his daughter Rachel as a maid. ³⁰Then *Jacob* also went in to Rachel, and he also ^xloved Rachel more than Leah. And he served with Laban ^ystill another seven years.

17 ^o Gen. 12:11, 14; 26:7
18 ^p Gen. 31:41; 2 Sam. 3:14; Hos. 12:12
20 ^q Gen. 30:26; Hos. 12:12
21 ^r Judg. 15:1
22 ^s Judg. 14:10; John 2:1, 2
24 ^t Gen. 30:9, 10
25 ^u Gen. 27:35; 31:7; 1 Sam. 28:12
26 ³ Lit. *place*
27 ^v Gen. 31:41; Judg. 14:2
29 ^w Gen. 30:3-5
30 ^x Gen. 29:17-20; Deut. 21:15-17
^y Gen. 30:26; 31:41; Hos. 12:12

31 ^z Ps. 127:3 ^a Gen. 30:1 ⁴ Lit. *hated*
32 ^b Gen. 16:11; 31:42; Ex. 3:7; 4:31; Deut. 26:7; Ps. 25:18
⁵ Lit. *See, a Son*
33 ⁶ Lit. *hated* ⁷ Lit. *Heard*
34 ⁸ Lit. *Attached*
35 ^c Gen. 49:8; Matt. 1:2 ⁹ Lit. *Praise*

CHAPTER 30

1 ^a Gen. 16:1, 2; 29:31 ^b Gen. 37:11
^c 1 Sam. 1:5, 6; [Job 5:2]
2 ^d Gen. 16:2; 1 Sam. 1:5
3 ^e Gen. 16:2 ^f Gen. 50:23; Job 3:12
^g Gen. 16:2, 3 ¹ Lit. *be built up by her*
4 ^h Gen. 16:3, 4
6 ⁱ Gen. 18:25; Ps. 35:24; 43:1; Lam. 3:59 ² Lit. *Judge*

The Children of Jacob

³¹When the LORD ^zsaw that Leah *was* ⁴unloved, He ^aopened her womb; but Rachel *was* barren. ³²So Leah conceived and bore a son, and she called his name ⁵Reuben; for she said, “The LORD has surely ^blooked on my affliction. Now therefore, my husband will love me.” ³³Then she conceived again and bore a son, and said, “Because the LORD has heard that I *am* ⁶unloved, He has therefore given me this *son* also.” And she called his name ⁷Simeon. ³⁴She conceived again and bore a son, and said, “Now this time my husband will become attached to me, because I have borne him three sons.” Therefore his name was called ⁸Levi. ³⁵And she conceived again and bore a son, and said, “Now I will praise the LORD.” Therefore she called his name ^cJudah. ⁹Then she stopped bearing.

30 Now when Rachel saw that ^ashe bore Jacob no children, Rachel ^benvied her sister, and said to Jacob, “Give me children, ^cor else I die!”

²And Jacob’s anger was aroused against Rachel, and he said, ^d“*Am* I in the place of God, who has withheld from you the fruit of the womb?”

³So she said, “Here is ^emy maid Bilhah; go in to her, ^fand she will bear *a child* on my knees, ^gthat I also may ¹have children by her.” ⁴Then she gave him Bilhah her maid ^has wife, and Jacob went in to her. ⁵And Bilhah conceived and bore Jacob a son. ⁶Then Rachel said, “God has ⁱjudged my case; and He has also heard my voice and given me a son.” Therefore she called his name ²Dan. ⁷And Rachel’s maid Bilhah conceived again and bore Jacob a second son. ⁸Then Rachel said,

29:18 loved Rachel: A rare biblical example of “love at first sight” (for his father’s similar response to Rebekah, see 24:67). The long **seven years** of service provides a stunning demonstration of the value Jacob placed on Rachel.

29:20 seemed only a few days: A rare statement in the Bible on romantic love.

29:22 The Hebrew term **feast** indicates that there was drinking.

29:23 A public feast in recognition of the union made the marriage between Jacob and Leah official—even though Leah was the wrong woman.

29:25 The Hebrew name **deceived** means “to act treacherously with” or “to betray” (1 Sam. 19:17). Jacob the deceiver had been deceived by Laban (27:35).

29:26 must not be done: The cultural necessity of Laban’s actions is doubtful.

29:27 Laban deceived Jacob in order to get **another seven years’** work from him (for more of Laban’s sharp deals, see 31:7, 41). Jacob loved Rachel so much that he was willing to work another seven years (v. 28).

29:29 As did Zilpah (v. 24), **Bilhah** later served as a surrogate mother when Rachel was barren (30:3–8).

29:31 Unloved actually means “hated.” The Lord graciously enabled Leah to conceive a child because she was unloved. The culture of the ancient Middle East placed value on a woman who could bear a

child, especially a son. Although she was the beloved wife of Jacob, **Rachel** could not conceive. She desired Leah’s ability to conceive, and Leah desired the love that Jacob showered on Rachel.

29:32 Leah praised God for giving her a son. Perhaps Leah joyfully shouted “Behold a Son!” at **Reuben**’s birth.

29:33 The name **Simeon** celebrates the fact that the Lord hears. He had heard Leah’s prayers and He knew about her tragic relationship with Jacob.

29:34 Later, God chose the tribe of Levi to become priests and caretakers of the tabernacle. Then, the name **Levi** implied “Attached to the Lord.”

30:1 The Hebrew verb for **envied** describes a strong inner feeling of rage (see also 37:11). Rachel’s envy mirrored Sarai’s envy of Hagar (see ch. 16).

30:3 Rachel’s desperation led her to bring her maid **Bilhah** to Jacob as a surrogate wife (for Sarah doing the same thing with Hagar, see ch. 16). This was accepted practice in the ancient Middle East to protect an infertile wife. A woman could be divorced if she failed to conceive.

30:6 Dan: In giving a name related to the Hebrew word that means “judge,” Rachel thanked the Lord for hearing and answering her pleas.

30:8 With the name **Naphtali**, Rachel expressed the vehemence of her struggle with her sister.

“With ³great wrestlings I have wrestled with my sister, *and* indeed I have prevailed.” So she called his name ⁴Naphtali.

⁹When Leah saw that she had stopped bearing, she took Zilpah her maid and ¹gave her to Jacob as wife. ¹⁰And Leah’s maid Zilpah bore Jacob a son. ¹¹Then Leah said, ⁵“A troop comes!” So she called his name ⁶Gad. ¹²And Leah’s maid Zilpah bore Jacob a second son. ¹³Then Leah said, “I am happy, for the daughters ¹⁴will call me blessed.” So she called his name ⁷Asher.

¹⁴Now Reuben went in the days of wheat harvest and found mandrakes in the field, and brought them to his mother Leah. Then Rachel said to Leah, ¹“Please give me *some* of your son’s mandrakes.”

¹⁵But she said to her, ¹“*Is* it a small matter that you have taken away my husband? Would you take away my son’s mandrakes also?”

And Rachel said, “Therefore he will lie with you tonight for your son’s mandrakes.”

¹⁶When Jacob came out of the field in the evening, Leah went out to meet him and said, “You must come in to me, for I have surely hired you with my son’s mandrakes.” And he lay with her that night.

¹⁷And God listened to Leah, and she conceived and bore Jacob a fifth son.

¹⁸Leah said, “God has given me my wages, because I have given my maid to my husband.” So she called his name ⁸Issachar. ¹⁹Then Leah conceived again and bore Jacob a sixth son. ²⁰And Leah said, “God has endowed me *with* a good endowment; now my husband will dwell with me, because I have borne him six sons.” So she called his name ⁹Zebulun. ²¹Afterward she bore a ¹⁰daughter, and called her name ¹Dinah.

⁸ ³ Lit. *wrestlings of God* ⁴ Lit. *My Wrestling*
⁹ Gen. 30:4
¹¹ ⁵ So with Qr., Syr., Tg.; Kt., LXX, Vg. in *fortune* ⁶ Lit. *Troop or Fortune*
¹³ ¹⁴ Prov. 31:28; Luke 1:48 ⁷ Lit. *Happy*
¹⁴ ¹ Gen. 25:30
¹⁵ ¹⁶ [Num. 16:9, 13]
¹⁸ ⁸ Lit. *Wages*
²⁰ ⁹ Lit. *Dwelling*
²¹ ¹⁰ Gen. 34:1 ¹ Lit. *Judgment*

²² ¹⁰ Gen. 19:29; 1 Sam. 1:19, 20
¹ Gen. 29:31
²³ ¹¹ 1 Sam. 1:6; Is. 4:1; Luke 1:25
²⁴ ¹ Gen. 35:16-18
² Lit. *He Will Add*
²⁵ ¹² Gen. 24:54, 56
¹ Gen. 18:33
²⁶ ¹³ Gen. 29:18-20, 27, 30; Hos. 12:12
²⁷ ¹⁴ Gen. 26:24; 39:3; Is. 61:9
²⁸ ¹⁵ Gen. 29:15; 31:7, 41
²⁹ ¹⁶ Gen. 31:6, 38-40; Matt. 24:45; Titus 2:10
³⁰ ¹⁷ [1 Tim. 5:8]
³ Lit. *at my foot*
³² ¹⁸ Gen. 31:8
³³ ¹⁹ Ps. 37:6

²²Then God ¹⁰remembered Rachel, and God listened to her and ¹¹opened her womb. ²³And she conceived and bore a son, and said, “God has taken away ¹²my reproach.” ²⁴So she called his name ²Joseph, and said, ¹³“The LORD shall add to me another son.”

Jacob's Agreement with Laban

²⁵And it came to pass, when Rachel had borne Joseph, that Jacob said to Laban, ¹⁴“Send me away, that I may go to ¹⁵my own place and to my country. ²⁶Give *me* my wives and my children ¹⁶for whom I have served you, and let me go; for you know my service which I have done for you.”

²⁷And Laban said to him, “Please *stay*, if I have found favor in your eyes, for ¹⁷I have learned by experience that the LORD has blessed me for your sake.” ²⁸Then he said, ¹⁸“Name me your wages, and I will give *it*.”

²⁹So *Jacob* said to him, ¹⁹“You know how I have served you and how your livestock has been with me. ³⁰For what you had before I *came* was little, and it has increased to a great amount; the LORD has blessed you ²⁰since my coming. And now, when shall I also ¹⁸provide for my own house?”

³¹So he said, “What shall I give you?”

And Jacob said, “You shall not give me anything. If you will do this thing for me, I will again feed and keep your flocks: ³²Let me pass through all your flock today, removing from there all the speckled and spotted sheep, and all the brown ones among the lambs, and the spotted and speckled among the goats; and ²¹*these* shall be my wages. ³³So my ²²*righteousness* will answer for me in time to come, when the subject of my wages comes before you: every one that *is* not speckled

30:9 The now infertile Leah used her maid **Zilpah** to acquire more sons.

30:13 Leah was **happy** because of her numerous sons, so she named her son **Asher**.

30:14 Mandrakes are a special type of herb that the peoples of the ancient Middle East regarded as an aid to conception. Their aroma was associated with lovemaking (Song 7:13). Reuben’s discovery of the mandrakes led to another squabble between Leah and Rachel. In the end, Leah **hired** Jacob for a night with her.

30:21 The name **Dinah** is related to the word that means “judgment.”

30:22 Finally, God enabled Rachel to have a child. The three verbs, **remembered**, **listened**, and **opened**, emphasize that conception is a gift from God.

30:23 my reproach: In Rachel’s culture a married woman without children was scorned.

30:24 By giving Rachel a son, God had removed her shame and brought joy to her life.

30:25 With the birth of **Joseph** by his beloved wife, Jacob was ready to go to his **own place**. Jacob had always wanted to return to Ca-

naan (27:43, 44). Indeed, God had promised to bring him back to his homeland (28:4, 15).

30:26 Since Genesis speaks only of Laban’s daughters during Jacob’s visit, Laban probably did not have a son at the time (29:16). Therefore he adopted Jacob as his son and principal heir. The Code of Hammurabi attests that this was a common practice in the ancient Middle East. As the principal heir, Jacob and his family were regarded as a part of Laban’s household (v. 43). But in the intervening years, Laban had fathered sons who would threaten Jacob’s status in the family (31:1). Hence he asked Laban to **let him go**.

30:27 God had promised to bless others through Abraham’s descendants (12:2, 3). Now, God **blessed** Laban through Jacob, and later He would bless an Egyptian household through Joseph (39:5).

30:28 Name me your wages: These words must have sounded hollow to Jacob, given his earlier experience in striking a deal with Laban (29:15–30; 31:7).

30:32 Presumably, the **speckled and spotted sheep** would be the smaller part of the flock. The deal was to Laban’s advantage.

30:33 my righteousness: Jacob asserted his trustworthiness.

and spotted among the goats, and brown among the lambs, will be considered stolen, if *it is* with me.”

³⁴And Laban said, “Oh, that it were according to your word!” ³⁵So he removed that day the male goats that were ^bspeckled and spotted, all the female goats that were speckled and spotted, every one that had *some* white in it, and all the brown ones among the lambs, and gave *them* into the hand of his sons. ³⁶Then he put three days’ journey between himself and Jacob, and Jacob fed the rest of Laban’s flocks.

³⁷Now ^cJacob took for himself rods of green poplar and of the almond and chestnut trees, peeled white strips in them, and exposed the white which

³⁵ ^b Gen. 31:9-12
³⁷ ^c Gen. 31:9-12

was in the rods. ³⁸And the rods which he had peeled, he set before the flocks in the gutters, in the watering troughs where the flocks came to drink, so that they should conceive when they came to drink. ³⁹So the flocks conceived before the rods, and the flocks brought forth streaked, speckled, and spotted. ⁴⁰Then Jacob separated the lambs, and made the flocks face toward the streaked and all the brown in the flock of Laban; but he put his own flocks by themselves and did not put them with Laban’s flock.

⁴¹And it came to pass, whenever the stronger livestock conceived, that Jacob placed the rods before the eyes of the livestock in the gutters, that they might conceive among the rods. ⁴²But when the

30:36 three days’ journey: A distance of about 60 miles separated Jacob’s and Laban’s herds so the animals would not mix. Jacob still tended **Laban’s flocks**.

30:37 rods of green poplar: Jacob placed sticks of various colors in the watering troughs to symbolize his belief that God would bless him with more speckled and spotted lambs (see v. 27; cf. 31:5, 9, 10).

Indeed, God blessed Jacob as He had promised (28:13–15). Jacob added all the speckled and spotted animals to his own herd.

30:41 With the symbolic multicolored rods, Jacob asked God to bless him with speckled and spotted animals from the **stronger livestock** in Laban’s herd. Indeed, God promised to do just that in a dream (31:10), and Jacob became wealthy (v. 43).



flocks were feeble, he did not put *them* in; so the feebleness was Laban's and the stronger Jacob's. ⁴³ Thus the man ^a became exceedingly prosperous, and ^e had large flocks, female and male servants, and camels and donkeys.

Jacob Flees from Laban

31 Now Jacob heard the words of Laban's sons, saying, "Jacob has taken away all that was our father's, and from what was our father's he has acquired all this ^a wealth." ² And Jacob saw the ^b countenance of Laban, and indeed it was not ^c favorable toward him as before. ³ Then the LORD said to Jacob, ^d "Return to the land of your fathers and to your family, and I will ^e be with you."

⁴ So Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah to the field, to his flock, ⁵ and said to them, ^f "I see your father's ¹ countenance, that it is not ^{favorable} toward me as before; but the God of my father ^g has been with me. ⁶ And ^h you know that with all my might I have served your father. ⁷ Yet your father has deceived me and ⁱ changed my wages ⁷ ten times, but God ^k did not allow him to hurt me. ⁸ If he said thus: ^l 'The speckled shall be your wages,' then all the flocks bore speckled. And if he said thus: 'The streaked shall be your wages,' then all the flocks bore streaked. ⁹ So God has ^m taken away the livestock of your father and given *them* to me.

¹⁰ "And it happened, at the time when the flocks conceived, that I lifted my eyes and saw in a dream, and behold, the rams which leaped upon the flocks *were* streaked, speckled, and gray-spotted. ¹¹ Then ⁿ the Angel of God spoke to me in a dream, saying, 'Jacob.' And I said, 'Here I am.' ¹² And He said, 'Lift your eyes now and see, all the rams which

⁴³ ^d Gen. 12:16; 30:30 ^e Gen. 13:2; 24:35; 26:13, 14

CHAPTER 31

¹ ^e Ps. 49:16;
² ^b Gen. 4:5 ^c Deut. 28:54
³ ^d Gen. 28:15, 20, 21; 32:9 ^e Gen. 46:4
⁵ ^f Gen. 31:2, 3
⁹ Gen. 21:22; 28:13, 15; 31:29, 42, 53; Is. 41:10; Heb. 13:5
¹ Lit. *face*
⁶ ^b Gen. 30:29; 31:38-41
⁷ ^f Gen. 29:25; 31:41 ^g Num. 14:22; Neh. 4:12; Job 19:3; Zech. 8:23 ^h Gen. 15:1; 20:6; 31:29; Job 1:10; Ps. 37:28; 105:14
⁸ ^g Gen. 30:32
⁹ ^m Gen. 31:1, 16
¹¹ ⁿ Gen. 16:7-11; 22:11, 15; 31:13; 48:16

¹² ^o Gen. 31:42; Ex. 3:7; Ps. 139:3; Eccl. 5:8
¹³ ^p Gen. 28:16-22; 35:1, 6, 15 ^q Gen. 31:3; 32:9
¹⁴ ^r Gen. 2:24
¹⁵ ^s Gen. 29:15, 20, 23, 27; Neh. 5:8
¹⁸ ^t Gen. 17:8; 33:18; 35:27
¹⁹ ^u Gen. 31:30, 34; 35:2; Judg. 17:5; 1 Sam. 19:13; Hos. 3:4 ² Heb. *teraphim*
²¹ ^v Gen. 46:28; 2 Kin. 12:17; Luke 9:51, 53 ³ Lit. *set his face toward*
²³ ^w Gen. 13:8
²⁴ ^x Gen. 20:3; 31:29; 46:2-4; Job 33:15; Matt. 1:20 ^y Gen. 24:50; 31:7, 29

leap on the flocks *are* streaked, speckled, and gray-spotted; for ^o I have seen all that Laban is doing to you. ¹³ I *am* the God of Bethel, ^p where you anointed the pillar *and* where you made a vow to Me. Now ^q arise, get out of this land, and return to the land of your family."

¹⁴ Then Rachel and Leah answered and said to him, ^r "Is there still any portion or inheritance for us in our father's house?"

¹⁵ Are we not considered strangers by him? For ^s he has sold us, and also completely consumed our money. ¹⁶ For all these riches which God has taken from our father are *really* ours and our children's; now then, whatever God has said to you, do it."

¹⁷ Then Jacob rose and set his sons and his wives on camels. ¹⁸ And he carried away all his livestock and all his possessions which he had gained, his acquired livestock which he had gained in Padan Aram, to go to his father Isaac in the land of ^t Canaan. ¹⁹ Now Laban had gone to shear his sheep, and Rachel had stolen the ^u household ² idols that were her father's. ²⁰ And Jacob stole away, unknown to Laban the Syrian, in that he did not tell him that he intended to flee. ²¹ So he fled with all that he had. He arose and crossed the river, and ^v headed ³ toward the mountains of Gilead.

Laban Pursues Jacob

²² And Laban was told on the third day that Jacob had fled. ²³ Then he took ^w his brethren with him and pursued him for seven days' journey, and he overtook him in the mountains of Gilead. ²⁴ But God ^x had come to Laban the Syrian in a dream by night, and said to him, "Be careful that you ^y speak to Jacob neither good nor bad."

31:1 These sons probably were born to **Laban** after Jacob had arrived in Haran (30:26). Concerned about their welfare, the sons accused Jacob of being a thief.

31:3 God repeated the promises He gave Jacob at Bethel. He promised to be with Jacob as he returned to his homeland. This promise, **I will be with you**, is in fact related to the very name of God, Yahweh (see Ex. 3:12, 14). Verses 11–13 describe more of this revelation.

31:8 speckled . . . streaked: Apparently, Laban kept on switching the deal as he watched the births of a variety of colored animals. But with every new deal, God always increased Jacob's herd.

31:11 The Angel of God may be translated *The Angel of Genuine Deity*. God revealed Himself in Jacob's **dream** (see 28:13–17; 32:22–30). **Jacob:** Here, God used the positive meaning of the name Jacob "He (the Lord) Supplants." For the negative sense, see 25:26; 27:36. In the past, Jacob ("He Who Supplants") had achieved what he wanted by deceit and trickery. Now he had achieved great wealth because of God's blessing. The Lord is the Great Supplanter! Although Jacob's name was later changed to Israel (32:28), the name Jacob continued to be a term indicating God's work in Jacob's life (46:2; Ps. 114:7).

31:13 The Lord identified Himself as the same God who had revealed Himself to Jacob at **Bethel** (see 28:10–19).

31:14 Rachel and Leah agreed that it was proper to leave their father's home, despite the cultural ties that ordinarily would have kept them there (30:26). The births of sons to their father may have displaced their **inheritance**.

31:15 Both daughters resented the way their father had **sold** them (29:15). Furthermore, they argued that whatever God had taken from their father belonged to them anyway.

31:19 household idols: Laban's family was either polytheistic—believing in many gods—or henotheistic—believing in Yahweh as one god above all other gods (for Joshua's recollection of the polytheism of Abraham's relatives, see Josh. 24:1–3). In this culture, possession of the household idols was the right of the principal heir. Rachel probably did not steal the idols in order to worship them, but to retain the rights of the principal heir for Jacob. Ultimately, the Lord's blessing on Jacob was more important for him than any rights derived from being Laban's principal heir.

31:24 in a dream: From time to time, God warned others not to harm His people (for Abimelech's dreams, see 20:3, 6; for God's encounter with Balaam, see Num. 22:12, 20).

²⁵ So Laban overtook Jacob. Now Jacob had pitched his tent in the mountains, and Laban with his brethren pitched in the mountains of Gilead.

²⁶ And Laban said to Jacob: “What have you done, that you have stolen away unknown to me, and ²⁷carried away my daughters like captives *taken* with the sword? ²⁷ Why did you flee away secretly, and steal away from me, and not tell me; for I might have sent you away with joy and songs, with timbrel and harp? ²⁸ And you did not allow me ^a to kiss my sons and my daughters. Now ^b you have done foolishly in *so* doing. ²⁹ It is in my power to do you harm, but the ^c God of your father spoke to me ^d last night, saying, ‘Be careful that you speak to Jacob neither good nor bad.’ ³⁰ And now you have surely gone because you greatly long for your father’s house, *but* why did you ^e steal my gods?”

³¹ Then Jacob answered and said to Laban, “Because I was ^f afraid, for I said, ‘Perhaps you would take your daughters from me by force.’ ³² With whomever you find your gods, ^g do not let him live. In the presence of our brethren, identify what I have of yours and take *it* with you.” For Jacob did not know that Rachel had stolen them.

³³ And Laban went into Jacob’s tent, into Leah’s tent, and into the two maids’ tents, but he did not find *them*. Then he went out of Leah’s tent and entered Rachel’s tent. ³⁴ Now Rachel had taken the ⁴ household idols, put them in the camel’s saddle, and sat on them. And Laban ⁵ searched all about the tent but did not find *them*. ³⁵ And she said to her father, “Let it not displease my lord that I cannot ^h rise before you, for the manner of women *is* with me.” And he searched but did not find the ⁶ household idols.

²⁶ ^a 1 Sam. 30:2
²⁸ ^a Gen. 31:55;
Ruth 1:9, 14; 1 Kin.
19:20; Acts 20:37
^b 1 Sam. 13:13
²⁹ ^c Gen. 28:13;
31:5, 24, 42, 53
^d Gen. 31:24
³⁰ ^e Gen. 31:19;
Josh. 24:2; Judg.
17:5; 18:24
³¹ ^f Gen. 26:7;
32:7, 11
³² ^g Gen. 44:9
³⁴ ⁴ Heb. *teraphim*
⁵ Lit. *felt*
³⁵ ^h Ex. 20:12;
Lev. 19:32 ⁶ Heb.
teraphim

³⁶ ⁷ *transgression*
³⁹ ⁱ Ex. 22:10 / Ex.
22:10-13
⁴¹ ^k Gen. 29:20,
27-30 / Gen. 31:7
⁴² ^m Gen. 31:5,
29, 53; Ps. 124:1, 2
ⁿ Gen. 31:53; Is. 8:13
^o Gen. 29:32; Ex.
3:7 / Gen. 31:24, 29;
1 Chr. 12:17
⁴⁴ ^q Gen. 21:27, 32;
26:28 / Josh. 24:27
⁸ *treaty*
⁴⁵ ^r Gen. 28:18;
35:14; Josh. 24:26,
27

³⁶ Then Jacob was angry and rebuked Laban, and Jacob answered and said to Laban: “What *is* my ⁷ trespass? What *is* my sin, that you have so hotly pursued me? ³⁷ Although you have searched all my things, what part of your household things have you found? Set *it* here before my brethren and your brethren, that they may judge between us both! ³⁸ These twenty years I *have been* with you; your ewes and your female goats have not miscarried their young, and I have not eaten the rams of your flock. ³⁹ That which was torn *by beasts* I did not bring to you; I bore the loss of it. ^j You required it from my hand, *whether* stolen by day or stolen by night. ⁴⁰ *There* I was! In the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night, and my sleep departed from my eyes. ⁴¹ Thus I have been in your house twenty years; I ^k served you fourteen years for your two daughters, and six years for your flock, and ^l you have changed my wages ten times. ⁴² *Unless* the God of my father, the God of Abraham and ⁿ the Fear of Isaac, had been with me, surely now you would have sent me away empty-handed. ^o God has seen my affliction and the labor of my hands, and ^p rebuked *you* last night.”

Laban’s Covenant with Jacob

⁴³ And Laban answered and said to Jacob, “*These daughters are* my daughters, and *these children are* my children, and *this flock is* my flock; all that you see *is* mine. But what can I do this day to these my daughters or to their children whom they have borne? ⁴⁴ Now therefore, come, ^q let us make a ⁸ covenant, ^r you and I, and let it be a witness between you and me.”

⁴⁵ So Jacob ^s took a stone and set it up *as* a pillar. ⁴⁶ Then Jacob said to his brethren, “Gather stones.” And they

31:26 The sudden departure, Laban charges, was similar to a raiding party that took **captives**.

31:29 God of your father: Only God’s warning in v. 24 stilled Laban’s rage.

31:31, 32 Jacob explained that he left in secret because of a genuine fear that he would not be permitted to leave with his family. Furthermore, he declared his household innocent of the alleged theft and cursed the thief of the idols with death.

31:33 Laban, certain that Jacob had stolen the idols, began his search in **Jacob’s tent**. Last, he entered **Rachel’s tent**. The fact that each wife had her own tent indicates that Jacob was rich.

31:34, 35 Rachel hid the idols in her saddlebags and sat on them while she made her excuses. Laban did not ask Rachel to move because of a male taboo respecting a woman who was experiencing her monthly period.

31:36 Jacob, in his anger, recited the woes of working for Laban. **Trespass** means to “overstep a boundary.” **Sin** means “to miss a target” (as an archer might do). These words are used more often of actions against God than man, of course.

31:37 they may judge: Jacob had some leverage. Laban had been

humiliated before his own men. His resolve to stop Jacob necessarily had to weaken.

31:38 Jacob had served 14 years for his two wives (29:15–30). After that, he worked another six years for his flocks (see v. 41). **not mis-carried:** Here, Jacob affirmed his superior skills in managing the herds and God’s blessing.

31:39 Jacob never charged Laban for any **loss** so that he could never charge Jacob for mismanagement. Furthermore, Jacob described the seasonal extremes that he suffered.

31:42 the Fear of Isaac: This name for God means that Isaac feared God with a reverential awe (Ps. 119:120). **rebuked you last night:** Perhaps Jacob knew that God had appeared to Laban.

31:43 Laban considered Jacob’s **children** part of his extended family because he had adopted Jacob as a son and principal heir.

31:44 Covenant in this situation refers to a parity covenant—an agreement between equals. The word **witness** refers to a lasting reminder of a significant agreement or to a testimony that can be used in a court.

31:45, 46 Jacob, for a second time, set up a **stone** as a memorial. On the way to Haran at Bethel, he had already set up a pillar to mark the

took stones and made a heap, and they ate there on the heap. ⁴⁷Laban called it ⁹Jegar Sahadutha, but Jacob called it ¹Galeed. ⁴⁸And Laban said, “This heap is a witness between you and me this day.” Therefore its name was called Galeed, ⁴⁹also “Mizpah,”² because he said, “May the LORD watch between you and me when we are absent one from another. ⁵⁰If you afflict my daughters, or if you take *other* wives besides my daughters, *although* no man is with us—see, God is witness between you and me!”

⁵¹Then Laban said to Jacob, “Here is this heap and here is *this* pillar, which I have placed between you and me. ⁵²This heap is a witness, and *this* pillar is a witness, that I will not pass beyond this heap to you, and you will not pass beyond this heap and this pillar to me, for harm. ⁵³The God of Abraham, the God of Nahor, and the God of their father ^vjudge between us.” And Jacob ^wswore by ^xthe ³Fear of his father Isaac. ⁵⁴Then Jacob offered a sacrifice on the mountain, and called his brethren to eat bread. And they ate bread and stayed all night on the mountain. ⁵⁵And early in the morning Laban arose, and ^ykissed his sons and daughters and ^zblessed them. Then Laban departed and ^areturned to his place.

⁴⁷ ⁹ Lit., in Aram., *Heap of Witness*
¹ Lit., in Heb., *Heap of Witness*
⁴⁸ ¹ Josh. 24:27
⁴⁹ ^u Judg. 10:17; 11:29; ¹ Sam. 7:5, 6
² Lit. *Watch*
⁵³ ^v Gen. 16:5
^w Gen. 21:23 ^x Gen. 31:42 ³ A reference to God
⁵⁵ ^y Gen. 29:11, 13; 31:28, 43 ^z Gen. 28:1 ^a Gen. 18:33; 30:25; Num. 24:25

CHAPTER 32

¹ ^a Num. 22:31;
² Kin. 6:16, 17; [Ps. 34:7; 91:1; Heb. 1:14]
² ^b Josh. 5:14; Ps. 103:21; 148:2; Luke 2:13 ¹ Lit. *Double Camp*
³ ^c Gen. 14:6; 33:14, 16 ^d Gen. 25:30; 36:6-9; Deut. 2:5; Josh. 24:4 ² Lit. *field*
⁴ ^e Prov. 15:1
⁵ ^f Gen. 30:43
⁹ Gen. 33:8, 15
⁶ ^h Gen. 33:1
⁷ ⁱ Gen. 32:11; 35:3
⁸ ^j Lit. *strikes*
⁹ [Ps. 50:15] ^k Gen. 28:13; 31:42 ¹ Gen. 31:3, 13

Esau Comes to Meet Jacob

32 ^athe angels of God met him. ²When Jacob saw them, he said, “This is God’s ^bcamp.” And he called the name of that place ¹Mahanaim.

³Then Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau his brother ^cin the land of Seir, ^dthe ²country of Edom. ⁴And he commanded them, saying, ^e“Speak thus to my lord Esau, ‘Thus your servant Jacob says: “I have dwelt with Laban and stayed there until now. ⁵I have oxen, donkeys, flocks, and male and female servants; and I have sent to tell my lord, that ^fI may find favor in your sight.”’”

⁶Then the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, “We came to your brother Esau, and ^hhe also is coming to meet you, and four hundred men *are* with him.” ⁷So Jacob was greatly afraid and ⁱdistressed; and he divided the people that *were* with him, and the flocks and herds and camels, into two companies. ⁸And he said, “If Esau comes to the one company and ³attacks it, then the other company which is left will escape.”

⁹^jThen Jacob said, ^k“O God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac, the LORD ^lwho said to me, ‘Return

place where God spoke to him (28:18). Later he would erect another pillar at Bethel (35:14). In addition to the stone pillar, they also made a stone **heap** (v. 51). A ceremonial meal memorialized the agreement (see 26:30). At this meal, Jacob and Laban **ate** some of the animals that had been sacrificed while making the covenant.

31:49 Mizpah means “Outlook Point” and is related to the Hebrew word that means “to watch.” God above had His eyes on both men to make them keep their covenant!

31:51, 52 The **heap** and the **pillar** were a double **witness** between the two men. Neither was to cross these symbols in order to **harm** the other.

31:53 The wording in Laban’s oath suggests that Abraham, Nahor, and their father Terah all worshiped the same God, **the God of Abraham**. Possibly, the family believed in the Lord as the one God above many other gods—henotheism (for an indication of Terah’s polytheism, cf. Josh. 24:1–3).

31:54 Jacob offered a sacrifice: This is the only time Genesis records Jacob engaging in sacrificial worship (cf. 12:7, 8; 22:13). **ate bread:** As in other cases, the act of eating together further solemnized the agreement (see 26:30).

32:1 the angels of God: In a magnificent display of His care for him, God allowed Jacob to see that he was not traveling alone.

32:2 Jacob discovered that God’s armies were encamped around his family’s camp.

32:3–5 Jacob sent **messengers** to Esau with a report of his life over the last 20 years and with a request for **favor**, that is, grace.

32:6 Jacob viewed his brother’s coming as a threat to his family, particularly when he learned that **four hundred men** were with him!

32:7 Here, the Hebrew term for **afraid** refers to fright or terror (see 31:42). Jacob divided his family into two groups in order to save one from the rage of his brother.

32:9–11 Jacob prayed to God that he might be delivered from Esau’s

Payback

Sometimes good happens to us when we least expect it. Sometimes we receive far more good than we deserve.

When Jacob learned that Esau was approaching (32:6), he was terrified. Here was his older twin brother—the brother that he and his mother had cheated out of his rightful portion of the family inheritance (27:1–29)—coming toward him with four hundred men. Jacob assumed the worst. He cried out to God for mercy and deliverance (32:9–12) and sent his own extended family and his possessions to his brother’s “welcoming committee” (32:13–23).

Yet to Jacob’s surprise, Esau ran to him, embraced him, kissed him, and wept (33:4). This kind of grace was completely unexpected. It proved disarming to Jacob, and he could only respond by pressing his gifts on Esau, perhaps as a small remuneration for the lost inheritance (33:8–11).

Like Jacob, we, too, were extended grace and forgiveness when we least expected it—or deserved it. In providing salvation through Christ, God offers unmerited favor to people who actually deserve judgment (Rom. 3:23–25; 5:15–17; James 4:1–6).

Jacob insisted on paying back his brother, and Esau finally accepted. But we can never pay back God for what He has done for us. However, we can respond to His gift of love by showing that same kind of love to others, especially as God teaches us how (1 John 3:11–17).



to your country and to your family, and I will deal well with you': ¹⁰I am not worthy of the least of all the ^mmercies and of all the truth which You have shown Your servant; for I crossed over this Jordan with ⁿmy staff, and now I have become two companies. ¹¹^oDeliver me, I pray, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau; for I fear him, lest he come and ⁴attack me and ^pthe mother with the children. ¹²For ^qYou said, 'I will surely treat you well, and make your descendants as the ^rsand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.'

¹³So he lodged there that same night, and took what ⁵came to his hand as ^sa present for Esau his brother: ¹⁴two hundred female goats and twenty male goats, two hundred ewes and twenty rams, ¹⁵thirty milk camels with their colts, forty cows and ten bulls, twenty female donkeys and ten foals. ¹⁶Then he delivered *them* to the hand of his servants, every drove by itself, and said to his servants, "Pass over before me, and put some distance between successive droves." ¹⁷And he commanded the first one, saying, "When Esau my brother meets you and asks you, saying, 'To whom do you belong, and where are you going? Whose *are* these in front of you?' ¹⁸Then you shall say, 'They *are* your servant Jacob's. It is a present sent to my lord Esau; and behold, he also *is* behind us.'" ¹⁹So he commanded the second, the third, and all who followed the droves, saying, "In this manner you shall speak to Esau when you find him; ²⁰and also say, 'Behold, your servant Jacob *is* behind us.'" For he said, "I will ^tappease him with the present that goes before me, and afterward I will see his face; perhaps

¹⁰ ^m Gen. 24:27
ⁿ Job 8:7
¹¹ ^o Ps. 59:1, 2
^p Hos. 10:14 ⁴ Lit. strike
¹² ^q Gen. 28:13-15
^r Gen. 22:17
¹³ ^s Gen. 43:11 ⁵ he had received
²⁰ ^t [Prov. 21:14]

²² ^u Num. 21:24; Deut. 3:16; Josh. 12:2
²³ ⁶ across
²⁴ ^v Josh. 5:13-15; Hos. 12:2-4 ⁷ dawn
²⁵ ^w Matt. 26:41;
² Cor. 12:7 ⁸ struck
²⁶ ^x Luke 24:28
^y Hos. 12:4
²⁸ ^z Gen. 35:10;
¹ Kin. 18:31; 2 Kin. 17:34 ^a Hos. 12:3,
⁴ ^b Gen. 25:31;
²⁷⁻³³ ⁹ Lit. Prince with God
²⁹ ^c Judg. 13:17, 18
^d Gen. 35:9
³⁰ ^e Gen. 16:13; Ex. 24:10, 11; 33:20; Num. 12:8; Deut. 5:24; Judg. 6:22; Is. 6:5; [Matt. 5:8; 1 Cor. 13:12] ¹ Lit. Face of God
³¹ ² Lit. Face of God;
same as Peniel, v. 30
³² ³ struck

he will accept me." ²¹So the present went on over before him, but he himself lodged that night in the camp.

Wrestling with God

²²And he arose that night and took his two wives, his two female servants, and his eleven sons, ^uand crossed over the ford of Jabbok. ²³He took them, sent them ⁶over the brook, and sent over what he had. ²⁴Then Jacob was left alone; and ^va Man wrestled with him until the ⁷breaking of day. ²⁵Now when He saw that He did not prevail against him, He ⁸touched the socket of his hip; and ^wthe socket of Jacob's hip was out of joint as He wrestled with him. ²⁶And ^xHe said, "Let Me go, for the day breaks."

But he said, ^y"I will not let You go unless You bless me!"

²⁷So He said to him, "What *is* your name?"

He said, "Jacob."

²⁸And He said, ^z"Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but ⁹Israel; for you have ^astruggled with God and ^bwith men, and have prevailed."

²⁹Then Jacob asked, saying, "Tell *me* Your name, I pray."

And He said, ^c"Why *is it that* you ask about My name?" And He ^dblessed him there.

³⁰So Jacob called the name of the place ¹Peniel: "For ^eI have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved." ³¹Just as he crossed over ²Penuel the sun rose on him, and he limped on his hip. ³²Therefore to this day the children of Israel do not eat the muscle that shrank, which *is* on the hip socket, because He ³touched the socket of Jacob's hip in the muscle that shrank.

rage. The Hebrew term for **father** indicates either the immediate father or a more remote male ancestor. By mentioning both **Isaac** and **Abraham**, Jacob appealed to the God who had spoken to his fathers. Jacob reminded **the LORD** of His promises to him. Then Jacob confessed his humility before God's mercy in the words **I am not worthy**. Next, Jacob asked God to **deliver** him. He did not pray in generalities. Instead, he named his concern: Esau! Finally, he concluded with another appeal to God's promises. Christians today can likewise base their prayers on God's proven character and His promises in the Bible.

32:13–21 a present for Esau: Jacob had prayed in faith; now he acted in faith. He gave Esau an overabundance of gifts. By giving the gifts at three different times, Jacob hoped to appease Esau gradually.

32:24 Jacob had been struggling all his life; even at the moment of his birth he was struggling with Esau (see 25:26). Later he struggled with Laban (ch. 31). Yet right before meeting Esau, Jacob had the struggle of his life! He who had once grasped his brother's heel now clung to the bodily form of the living God. Some believe that the **Man** who **wrestled** Jacob was the preincarnate Jesus Christ. Others believe the **Man** was the Angel of God (21:17; 31:11). In any case, Jacob wrestled with a manifestation of God (vv. 28–30), and because of God's mercy he survived.

32:25, 26 He did not prevail: The Man could not turn Jacob away from the struggle—even though He could have easily defeated Jacob. This Hebrew verb translated **touched** refers to God's special touch—as when God touches the earth (Amos 9:5) or the human heart (1 Sam. 10:26). Here, God's touch caused pain (see Josh. 9:19; 2 Sam. 14:10). Yet Jacob would not give up. He would not release the Man until he received a blessing.

32:28 God had burst into Jacob's life, had given him the sure promises that were given to Abraham (28:13–15), and now—following a night-long struggle with him—He gave him a new name. The name **Israel** can mean "Prince with God," or perhaps it carries the idea of struggling or persisting, as the wordplay in this passage implies.

32:29 Jacob asked for the Man's **name** because Jacob had given his name. The Man did not answer. But Jacob might have developed his own name for the Man who had wrestled with him: "The Mighty God of Jacob" (see 49:24). God would one day reveal His name more fully to Moses (see Ex. 3:14, 15).

32:31 Jacob's experience with God physically changed him—he **limped**. The experience also had a spiritual impact on his life.

32:32 to this day: As always in Genesis, this phrase means the day of the first readers of the book. The Jewish rule against eating this muscle continues into modern times within Judaism.

Jacob and Esau Meet

33 Now Jacob lifted his eyes and looked, and there, ^aEsau was coming, and with him were four hundred men. So he divided the children among Leah, Rachel, and the two maidservants. ²And he put the maidservants and their children in front, Leah and her children behind, and Rachel and Joseph last. ³Then he crossed over before them and ^bbowed himself to the ground seven times, until he came near to his brother.

^{4c}But Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, ^dand fell on his neck and kissed him, and they wept. ⁵And he lifted his eyes and saw the women and children, and said, “Who *are* these with you?”

So he said, “The children ^ewhom God has graciously given your servant.” ⁶Then the maidservants came near, they and their children, and bowed down. ⁷And Leah also came near with her children, and they bowed down. Afterward Joseph and Rachel came near, and they bowed down.

⁸Then Esau said, “What *do* you mean by ^fall this company which I met?”

And he said, “*These are* ^gto find favor in the sight of my lord.”

⁹But Esau said, “I have enough, my brother; keep what you have for yourself.”

¹⁰And Jacob said, “No, please, if I have now found favor in your sight, then receive my present from my hand, inasmuch as I ^hhave seen your face as though I had seen the face of God, and you were pleased with me. ¹¹Please, take ⁱmy blessing that is brought to you, because God has dealt ^jgraciously with me, and because I have ¹enough.” ^kSo he urged him, and he took *it*.

CHAPTER 33

¹ ^a Gen. 32:6
³ ^b Gen. 18:2; 42:6
⁴ ^c Gen. 32:28
^d Gen. 45:14, 15
⁵ ^e Gen. 48:9; [Ps. 127:3]; Is. 8:18
⁸ ^f Gen. 32:13-16
⁹ Gen. 32:5
¹⁰ ^h Gen. 43:3;
² Sam. 3:13; 14:24, 28, 32
¹¹ ⁱ Judg. 1:15;
¹ Sam. 25:27; 30:26
^j Gen. 30:43; Ex. 33:19 ^k 2 Kin. 5:23
¹ Lit. *all*

¹⁴ ¹ Gen. 32:3; 36:8
² *can stand*
¹⁵ ^m Gen. 34:11;
^{47:25}; Ruth 2:13
¹⁷ ⁿ Josh. 13:27;
^{Judg. 8:5}; Ps. 60:6
³ *shelters* ⁴ Lit.
Booths
¹⁸ ^o John 3:23
^p Gen. 12:6; 35:4;
^{Josh. 24:1}; ^{Judg.}
^{9:1}; Ps. 60:6 ³ Or to
Shalem, a city of
¹⁹ ^q Josh. 24:32;
^{John 4:5} ⁶ Lit. *the*
^{field}
²⁰ ^r Gen. 35:7 ⁷ Lit.
God, the God of
Israel

CHAPTER 34

¹ ^a Gen. 30:21
² ^b Gen. 20:2
³ ¹ Lit. *clung to*

¹²Then Esau said, “Let us take our journey; let us go, and I will go before you.”

¹³But Jacob said to him, “My lord knows that the children *are* weak, and the flocks and herds which are nursing *are* with me. And if the men should drive them hard one day, all the flock will die. ¹⁴Please let my lord go on ahead before his servant. I will lead on slowly at a pace which the livestock that go before me, and the children, ²are able to endure, until I come to my lord ¹in Seir.”

¹⁵And Esau said, “Now let me leave with you *some* of the people who *are* with me.”

But he said, “What need is there? ^mLet me find favor in the sight of my lord.”

¹⁶So Esau returned that day on his way to Seir. ¹⁷And Jacob journeyed to ⁿSuccoth, built himself a house, and made ³booths for his livestock. Therefore the name of the place is called ⁴Succoth.

Jacob Comes to Canaan

¹⁸Then Jacob came ⁵safely to ^othe city of ^pShechem, which *is* in the land of Canaan, when he came from Padan Aram; and he pitched his tent before the city. ¹⁹And ^qhe bought the parcel of ⁶land, where he had pitched his tent, from the children of Hamor, Shechem’s father, for one hundred pieces of money. ²⁰Then he erected an altar there and called it ^rEl ⁷Elohe Israel.

The Dinah Incident

34 Now ^aDinah the daughter of Leah, whom she had borne to Jacob, went out to see the daughters of the land. ²And when Shechem the son of Hamor the Hivite, prince of the country, saw her, he ^btook her and lay with her, and violated her. ³His soul ¹was strongly attracted to Dinah the daughter

33:1 For all Jacob knew, **Esau was coming** with 400 men to destroy his family.

33:2 maidservants and their children in front: Jacob aligned his family in a pattern that would protect them. He placed his favorite wife, Rachel, in the rear.

33:3 bowed himself: With this gesture, Jacob expressed his sorrow for the way he had wronged Esau.

33:4 Instead of taking his revenge, **Esau** welcomed Jacob with joy. The event turned into a grand family reunion (for Joseph’s family reunion, see 45:15).

33:10 your face as . . . face of God: Jacob presented his gifts to his brother as if they were gifts to God. In this manner, he reenacted Abraham’s gifts to Melchizedek (14:20) and indeed, he fulfilled his vow to the Lord (28:22).

33:11 take my blessing: Before, Jacob had done all he could to take Esau’s blessing (25:29–34; 27:1–45). Now a wiser man, Jacob wanted to bless his brother with what God had given him. He wanted to restore the broken relationship with his brother.

33:17 Jacob stopped his journey and built temporary shelters east of the Jordan, perhaps at Deir ‘Alla, one mile north of the Jabbok River.

33:18 Jacob retraced his grandparents’ route into Canaan through **Shechem** (12:6). Jacob did not live in the city, because it was devoted to pagan gods. Instead, he lived outside the city in a **tent**.

33:19 As his grandfather had purchased land for a burial place for Sarah (ch. 23), so Jacob bought a **parcel of land**. Even though God promised the entire land to Abraham’s family (see 12:7), they had to buy it one little piece at a time.

33:20 Jacob, now named Israel, built an **altar** for the worship of the Lord, just as his grandfather had (see 12:7). The name he gave the altar reflected his mature faith in “God, the God of Israel.” The God of Jacob’s fathers was now Jacob’s personal God, for He had fulfilled His promises and protected him (28:13–15).

34:1 Apparently **Dinah** was Leah’s only daughter (30:21). It was natural for her to seek the companionship of other women.

34:2, 3 **Shechem** noticed Dinah and forced her to have intercourse. The term **violated** translates the same word used for Amnon’s rape of Tamar (2 Sam. 13:12, 14). Despite what he did, Shechem **loved** Dinah. The expression **spoke kindly** literally means, “spoke to her heart.”

of Jacob, and he loved the young woman and spoke ²kindly to the young woman. ⁴So Shechem ^cspoke to his father Hamor, saying, “Get me this young woman as a wife.”

⁵And Jacob heard that he had defiled Dinah his daughter. Now his sons were with his livestock in the field; so Jacob ^dheld ³his peace until they came. ⁶Then Hamor the father of Shechem went out to Jacob to speak with him. ⁷And the sons of Jacob came in from the field when they heard *it*; and the men were grieved and very angry, because he ^ehad done a disgraceful thing in Israel by lying with Jacob’s daughter, ^fa thing which ought not to be done. ⁸But Hamor spoke with them, saying, “The soul of my son Shechem longs for your daughter. Please give her to him as a wife. ⁹And make marriages with us; give your daughters to us, and take our daughters to yourselves. ¹⁰So you shall dwell with us, and the land shall be before you. Dwell and trade in it, and acquire possessions for yourselves in it.”

¹¹Then Shechem said to her father and her brothers, “Let me find favor in your eyes, and whatever you say to me I will give. ¹²Ask me ever so much ^gdowry ⁴and gift, and I will give according to what you say to me; but give me the young woman as a wife.”

¹³But the sons of Jacob answered Shechem and Hamor his father, and spoke ^hdeceitfully, because he had defiled Dinah their sister. ¹⁴And they said to them, “We cannot do this thing, to give our sister to one who is ⁱuncircumcised, for ^jthat *would be* a reproach to us. ¹⁵But on this *condition* we will consent to you: If you will become as we *are*, if every male of you is circumcised, ¹⁶then we will give our daughters to you, and we will take your daughters to us; and we will dwell with you, and we will become one people. ¹⁷But if you will not heed us and be circumcised, then we will take our daughter and be gone.”

¹⁸And their words pleased Hamor and Shechem, Hamor’s son. ¹⁹So the young man did not delay to do the thing, because he delighted in Jacob’s daughter.

³ ² tenderly
⁴ ^c Judg. 14:2
⁵ ^d 2 Sam. 13:22
³ kept silent
⁷ ^e Deut. 22:20–30; Josh. 7:15; Judg. 20:6 ^f Deut. 23:17; 2 Sam. 13:12
¹² ^g Ex. 22:16, 17; Deut. 22:29 ⁴ bride-price
¹³ ^h Gen. 31:7; Ex. 8:29
¹⁴ ⁱ Ex. 12:48 / Josh. 5:2–9

19 ^k 1 Chr. 4:9
²⁰ ^j Gen. 19:1; 23:10; Ruth 4:1, 11; 2 Sam. 15:2
²⁴ ^m Gen. 23:10, 18
²⁵ ⁿ Gen. 29:33, 34; 42:24; 49:5–7
²⁶ ^o Gen. 49:5, 6
³⁰ ^p Gen. 49:6
^q Josh. 7:25 ^r Ex. 5:21; 1 Sam. 13:4; 2 Sam. 10:6 ^s Gen. 46:26, 27; Deut. 4:27; 1 Chr. 16:19; Ps. 105:12

CHAPTER 35

1 ^a Gen. 28:19; 31:13

He *was* ^kmore honorable than all the household of his father.

²⁰And Hamor and Shechem his son came to the ^lgate of their city, and spoke with the men of their city, saying: ²¹“These men *are* at peace with us. Therefore let them dwell in the land and trade in it. For indeed the land is large enough for them. Let us take their daughters to us as wives, and let us give them our daughters. ²²Only on this *condition* will the men consent to dwell with us, to be one people: if every male among us is circumcised as they *are* circumcised. ²³Will not their livestock, their property, and every animal of theirs *be* ours? Only let us consent to them, and they will dwell with us.” ²⁴And all who went out of the gate of his city heeded Hamor and Shechem his son; every male was circumcised, all who ^mwent out of the gate of his city.

²⁵Now it came to pass on the third day, when they were in pain, that two of the sons of Jacob, ⁿSimeon and Levi, Dinah’s brothers, each took his sword and came boldly upon the city and killed all the males. ²⁶And they ^okilled Hamor and Shechem his son with the edge of the sword, and took Dinah from Shechem’s house, and went out. ²⁷The sons of Jacob came upon the slain, and plundered the city, because their sister had been defiled. ²⁸They took their sheep, their oxen, and their donkeys, what *was* in the city and what *was* in the field, ²⁹and all their wealth. All their little ones and their wives they took captive; and they plundered even all that *was* in the houses.

³⁰Then Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, ^p“You have ^qtroubled me ^rby making me obnoxious among the inhabitants of the land, among the Canaanites and the Perizzites; ^sand since I *am* few in number, they will gather themselves together against me and kill me. I shall be destroyed, my household and I.”

³¹But they said, “Should he treat our sister like a harlot?”

Jacob’s Return to Bethel

35 Then God said to Jacob, “Arise, go up to ^aBethel and dwell there;

34:4 Shechem’s appeal to his father suggests that marriages were commonly arranged by parents.

34:5 When Jacob heard, he must have been enraged. The verb translated **defiled** means “to make unclean.”

34:14 uncircumcised: Here, Jacob’s sons took the symbol of their holy faith (see 17:9–14) and used it as a weapon against their foes.

34:18 Shechem proved his love for Dinah by his willingness to undergo circumcision as an adult.

34:27 Most likely, Jacob’s other **sons** joined Simeon and Levi in plundering the city. Jacob’s sons let righteous anger over sin turn into unrighteous, unforgiving vengeance (see Eph. 4:26).

34:30, 31 Jacob rebuked his sons for their terrible behavior (done in the name of the Lord). Instead of making the family a blessing to other nations (12:3), they were making the family **obnoxious** to its neighbors. The Hebrew word means “to stink.” Jacob’s family had become an embarrassing odor to their neighbors, something that at best needed to be ignored and at worst to be scorned. Sadly, Jacob’s sons did not repent. Instead, they protested their father’s rebuke.

35:1 God, for a fifth time, visited Jacob (see 28:10–16; 31:3, 11–13; 32:1, 22–30; see also vv. 9–15). After the debacle at Shechem (ch. 34), God told Jacob to continue **to Bethel**, the place where God had first appeared to him (28:10–19). Again, Jacob retraced his grandfather

and make an altar there to God, ^bwho appeared to you ^cwhen you fled from the face of Esau your brother.”

²And Jacob said to his ^dhousehold and to all who *were* with him, “Put away ^ethe foreign gods that *are* among you, ^fpurify yourselves, and change your garments. ³Then let us arise and go up to Bethel; and I will make an altar there to God, ^gwho answered me in the day of my distress ^hand has been with me in the way which I have gone.” ⁴So they gave Jacob all the foreign ⁱgods which *were* in their hands, and the ^jearrings which *were* in their ears; and Jacob hid them under ^jthe terebinth tree which *was* by Shechem.

⁵And they journeyed, and ^kthe terror of God was upon the cities that *were* all around them, and they did not pursue the sons of Jacob. ⁶So Jacob came to ^lLuz (that *is*, Bethel), which *is* in the land of Canaan, he and all the people who *were* with him. ⁷And he ^mbuilt an altar there and called the place ²El Bethel, because ⁿthere God appeared to him when he fled from the face of his brother.

⁸Now ^oDeborah, Rebekah’s nurse, died, and she was buried below Bethel under the terebinth tree. So the name of it was called ³Allon Bachuth.

⁹Then ^pGod appeared to Jacob again, when he came from Padan Aram, and ^qblessed him. ¹⁰And God said to him, “Your name *is* Jacob; ^ryour name shall

1 ^b Gen. 28:13
^c Gen. 27:43
² ^d Gen. 18:19; Josh. 24:15 ^e Gen. 31:19, 30, 34; Josh. 24:2, 14, 23 ^f Ex. 19:10, 14; Lev. 13:6
³ ^g Gen. 32:7, 24; Ps. 107:6 ^h Gen. 28:15, 20; 31:3, 42
⁴ ⁱ Hos. 2:13 / Josh. 24:26; Judg. 9:6
^j ⁱ idols
⁵ ^k Ex. 15:16; 23:27; [Deut. 2:25; 11:25]; Josh. 2:9; 1 Sam. 14:15
⁶ ^l Gen. 28:19, 22; 48:3
⁷ ^m Gen. 33:20; 35:3; Eccl. 5:4
ⁿ Gen. 28:13 ² Lit. God of the House of God
⁸ ^o Gen. 24:59
³ Lit. Terebinth of Weeping
⁹ ^p Josh. 5:13; Dan. 10:5 ^q Gen. 32:29; Hos. 12:4
¹⁰ ^r Gen. 17:5
^s Gen. 32:28
¹¹ ^t Gen. 17:1; 28:3; 48:3, 4; Ex. 6:3 ^u Gen. 9:1, 7 ^v Gen. 17:5, 6, 16; 28:3; 48:4
¹² ^w Gen. 12:7; 13:15; 26:3, 4; 28:13; 48:4; Ex. 32:13
¹³ ^x Gen. 17:22; 18:33 ⁴ departed
¹⁴ ^y Gen. 28:18, 19; 31:45
¹⁵ ^z Gen. 28:19
¹⁷ ^a Gen. 30:24;

not be called Jacob anymore, ^sbut Israel shall be your name.” So He called his name Israel. ¹¹Also God said to him: “I *am* God Almighty. ^uBe fruitful and multiply; ^va nation and a company of nations shall proceed from you, and kings shall come from your body. ¹²The ^wland which I gave Abraham and Isaac I give to you; and to your descendants after you I give this land.” ¹³Then God ^xwent ⁴up from him in the place where He talked with him. ¹⁴So Jacob ^yset up a pillar in the place where He talked with him, a pillar of stone; and he poured a drink offering on it, and he poured oil on it. ¹⁵And Jacob called the name of the place where God spoke with him, ^zBethel.

Death of Rachel

¹⁶Then they journeyed from Bethel. And when there was but a little distance to go to Ephrath, Rachel labored in *child-birth*, and she had hard labor. ¹⁷Now it came to pass, when she was in hard labor, that the midwife said to her, “Do not fear; ^ayou will have this son also.” ¹⁸And so it was, as her soul was departing (for she died), that she called his name ⁵Ben-Oni; but his father called him ⁶Benjamin. ¹⁹So ^bRachel died and was buried on the way to ^cEphrath (that *is*,

1 Sam. 4:20 ¹⁸ ⁵ Lit. Son of My Sorrow ⁶ Lit. Son of the Right Hand ¹⁹ ^b Gen. 48:7 ^c Ruth 1:2; 4:11; Mic. 5:2; Matt. 2:6

Abraham’s route (12:8). This is the first time in the Bible that God commanded **an altar** to be made for Him. Abraham constructed an altar, but no divine command was recorded (12:7, 8).

35:2 Jacob’s command included the household idols that Rachel had stolen (31:22–35) as well as any idols among his servants. These **foreign gods** were gods of other people, not of Jacob. Indeed, the only true and living God is Jacob’s God. **purify yourselves, and change your garments:** Jacob’s household prepared for an encounter with the living and holy God. They cleaned themselves. Later, the Israelites would clean themselves in similar ways at the foot of Mt. Sinai (Ex. 19).

35:3 I will make an altar: Jacob declared his intention to obey God’s command (v. 1). **who answered me . . . has been with me:** Jacob recalled God’s constant protection (ch. 32) and His fulfillment of His promises (28:13–15) as a reason to obey and worship God.

35:4 As suggested by the nearby phrase **foreign gods**, these **earrings** probably represented some form of idolatry. In two other passages, earrings are mentioned in connection with idolatry (Judg. 8:22–28; Hos. 2:13). In many other passages, earrings are simply items of jewelry (Ex. 32:2, 3; 35:22; Prov. 25:12). The **terebinth tree** is a long-living deciduous tree, such as an oak. The tree has red berries and leaves shaped like feathers. Because the tree lived a long time, ancient people often used the terebinth tree to commemorate important events or to mark places of worship (see Hos. 4:13).

35:5 God protected Jacob’s family as they traveled. The Hebrew term for **terror** is related to the verb meaning “to be shattered” or “to be dismayed” (for examples of the use of this verb for divine judgment, see Is. 7:8; 30:31).

35:6 Luz . . . Bethel: The change of name is explained at 28:19 (see also Josh. 18:13; Judg. 1:23).

35:7 El Bethel: Naming **an altar** added to the solemnity of the worship conducted there (see 22:14).

35:8 Deborah was a nurse of Rebekah (see 24:59). The Hebrew verb

translated as **died** means “had died.” Deborah had already died, but at this point the family commemorated her death and buried her at Bethel.

35:9 God renewed His everlasting covenant with Jacob. This is the eighth passage dealing with the Abrahamic covenant (see the list at 15:1–21).

35:10 God validated Jacob’s change of **name** and reaffirmed His promises to him. Now Jacob would be called Israel (32:28). Note that Genesis uses the names Jacob and Israel interchangeably (see vv. 14, 20–22; 46:2).

35:11 This is the third use of the name, El Shaddai, **God Almighty** (see 17:1; 28:3; cf. Ex. 6:3). God used His great name to attest His strong relationship with Jacob.

35:13 God went up: The living God had made His will known and now returned to His abode. This is one of the rare expressions in the Bible of God ascending (see also Acts 1:9).

35:14 This is the second **pillar** Jacob set up to commemorate God’s revelation at Bethel (28:18). Later, Jacob referred to God as “The Stone of Israel” (49:24). **drink offering:** Jacob consecrated the pillar by pouring wine and oil over it.

35:16 Ephrath is an alternative name for the region around Bethlehem (v. 19; 48:7; cf. Ruth 1:3; Mic. 5:2). The King of Glory would one day be born near the birthplace of Benjamin (Matt. 2:1).

35:17, 18 fear: Rachel’s sorrow and fear that her second son might be stillborn became a symbol for all mothers who fear for their child’s life (for Rachel’s weeping, see Jer. 31:15; Matt. 2:18). Jacob’s name for his new son **Benjamin** indicates his youngest son’s special place in the family—at Jacob’s right hand. Benjamin would commemorate his beloved wife.

35:19 Rachel was the only one of the principal characters in Abraham’s family of promise who was not **buried** at the cave of Machpelah (23:19, 20).

Bethlehem). ²⁰ And Jacob set a pillar on her grave, which is the pillar of Rachel's grave ^d to this day.

²¹ Then Israel journeyed and pitched his tent beyond ^e the tower of Eder. ²² And it happened, when Israel dwelt in that land, that Reuben went and lay with Bilhah his father's concubine; and Israel heard *about it*.

Jacob's Twelve Sons

Now the sons of Jacob were twelve: ²³ the sons of Leah were ^g Reuben, Jacob's firstborn, and Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun; ²⁴ the sons of Rachel were Joseph and Benjamin; ²⁵ the sons of Bilhah, Rachel's maidservant, were Dan and Naphtali; ²⁶ and the sons of Zilpah, Leah's maidservant, were Gad and Asher. These were the sons of Jacob who were born to him in Padan Aram.

Death of Isaac

²⁷ Then Jacob came to his father Isaac at ^h Mamre, or ⁱ Kirjath Arba ⁷ (that is, Hebron), where Abraham and Isaac had dwelt. ²⁸ Now the days of Isaac were one hundred and eighty years. ²⁹ So Isaac breathed his last and died, and ^j was ⁸ gathered to his people, *being* old and full of days. And ^k his sons Esau and Jacob buried him.

The Family of Esau

36 Now this is the genealogy of Esau, ^a who is Edom. ^{2b} Esau took his wives from the daughters of Canaan: Adah the daughter of Elon the ^c Hittite; ^d Aholibamah ¹ the daughter of Anah, the daughter of Zibeon the Hivite; ³ and ^e Basemath, Ishmael's daughter, sister of Nebajoth. ⁴ Now ^f Adah bore Eliphaz to Esau, and Basemath bore Reuel. ⁵ And

²⁰ ^d 1 Sam. 10:2
²¹ ^e Mic. 4:8
²² ^f Gen. 49:4;
 1 Chr. 5:1
²³ ^g Gen. 29:31-35;
 30:18-20; 46:8; Ex.
 1:1-4
²⁷ ^h Gen. 13:18;
 18:1; 23:19 ⁱ Josh.
 14:15 ⁷ Lit. *Town or
 City of Arba*
²⁹ ^j Gen. 15:15;
 25:8; 49:33 ^k Gen.
 25:9; 49:31 ⁸ Joined
 his ancestors

CHAPTER 36

¹ ^a Gen. 25:30
² ^b Gen. 26:34;
 28:9 ^c 2 Kin. 7:6
^d Gen. 36:25 ¹ Or
Aholibamah
³ ^e Gen. 28:9
⁴ ^f 1 Chr. 1:35

⁵ ² Or *Aholibamah*
⁷ ^g Gen. 13:6, 11
^h Gen. 17:8; 28:4;
 Heb. 11:9
⁸ ^j Gen. 32:3; Deut.
 2:5; Josh. 24:4
^j Gen. 36:1, 19
¹⁰ ^k 1 Chr. 1:35
¹¹ ³ *Zephi*, 1 Chr.
 1:36
¹² ⁱ Ex. 17:8-16;
 Num. 24:20; Deut.
 25:17-19; 1 Sam.
 15:2, 3
¹⁴ ⁴ Or *Aholibamah*
¹⁶ ⁵ Sam. omits
Chief Korah

² Aholibamah bore Jeush, Jaalam, and Korah. These were the sons of Esau who were born to him in the land of Canaan.

⁶ Then Esau took his wives, his sons, his daughters, and all the persons of his household, his cattle and all his animals, and all his goods which he had gained in the land of Canaan, and went to a country away from the presence of his brother Jacob. ^{7g} For their possessions were too great for them to dwell together, and ^h the land where they were strangers could not support them because of their livestock. ⁸ So Esau dwelt in ⁱ Mount Seir. ^j Esau is Edom.

⁹ And this is the genealogy of Esau the father of the Edomites in Mount Seir. ¹⁰ These were the names of Esau's sons: ^k Eliphaz the son of Adah the wife of Esau, and Reuel the son of Basemath the wife of Esau. ¹¹ And the sons of Eliphaz were Teman, Omar, ³ Zepho, Gatam, and Kenaz.

¹² Now Timna was the concubine of Eliphaz, Esau's son, and she bore ^l Amalek to Eliphaz. These were the sons of Adah, Esau's wife.

¹³ These were the sons of Reuel: Nahath, Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah. These were the sons of Basemath, Esau's wife.

¹⁴ These were the sons of ⁴ Aholibamah, Esau's wife, the daughter of Anah, the daughter of Zibeon. And she bore to Esau: Jeush, Jaalam, and Korah.

The Chiefs of Edom

¹⁵ These were the chiefs of the sons of Esau. The sons of Eliphaz, the firstborn son of Esau, were Chief Teman, Chief Omar, Chief Zepho, Chief Kenaz, ¹⁶ Chief Korah, Chief Gatam, and Chief Amalek. These were the chiefs of Eliphaz in the land of Edom. They were the sons of Adah.

35:20 Jacob had set up pillars to mark the Lord's great works in his life (28:18; 35:14) and to commemorate his agreement with Laban (31:45). Here he erected a **pillar** to mark his sorrow.

35:21 Eder means "flock." This flock tower is mentioned only here and perhaps in Mic. 4:8.

35:22 Reuben, Jacob's firstborn son, may have been asserting his right to be the principal heir. Maybe he felt slighted by Jacob's implication that the youngest son Benjamin was the son of his right hand. By sleeping with his father's concubine, he was asserting that he would succeed his father. Ironically, this very action caused him to lose the blessing he desired (see 49:3, 4).

35:27 After more than 20 years of absence, Jacob finally visited his father. Sadly, his mother Rebekah was probably dead since she is not mentioned. Mamre is identified as Hebron, where Isaac passed his youth with his father Abraham (13:18).

35:29 The expression gathered to his people may also suggest a belief in the afterlife (see 15:15; 25:8; 49:33; 2 Sam. 12:23). Isaac's formerly feuding sons, Esau and Jacob, joined together to bury Isaac with his father and mother in the cave at Machpelah (see 49:31). Leah and Jacob would be buried there also (49:29-33; 50:12, 13).

36:1 The Hebrew term for **genealogy** means "family history" (see the list at 2:4). At birth, Esau was notably ruddy in color (25:25) and he was called **Edom**, meaning "Red" (v. 8).

36:2, 3 Because Esau took his wives from the daughters of Canaan, his family would be no different from other families of Canaan. Rebekah and Isaac worried about Esau's wives (26:34, 35; 28:6-9). Would they tempt Esau's family to abandon the Lord, the holy and living God? **Adah** means "Ornament." Her father's name **Elon** means "Terebinth." **Aholibamah** means "My Tent Is a High Place." **Anah** may mean "Sing!" and **Basemath** means "Fragrant."

36:4-8 Genesis describes the growth of Esau's family and possessions. He moved to **Mount Seir**. Eventually, the region would be named after Esau—Edom, the "Red" land (v. 43). Esau's separation from Jacob was similar to the separation of Lot from Abraham (13:6-13).

36:9-19 These verses parallel and expand on the genealogical list of Esau's family in vv. 1-8. Verses 15-19 expand further on this same list. More care is given to the genealogy of Jacob.

36:12 Timna's son, Amalek, founded a people that later would trouble the Israelites (see Num. 14:39-45).

¹⁷These *were* the sons of Reuel, Esau's son: Chief Nahath, Chief Zerah, Chief Shammah, and Chief Mizzah. These *were* the chiefs of Reuel in the land of Edom. These *were* the sons of Basemath, Esau's wife.

¹⁸And these *were* the sons of ⁶Aholibamah, Esau's wife: Chief Jeush, Chief Jaalam, and Chief Korah. These *were* the chiefs *who descended* from Aholibamah, Esau's wife, the daughter of Anah. ¹⁹These *were* the sons of Esau, who is Edom, and these *were* their chiefs.

The Sons of Seir

²⁰^mThese *were* the sons of Seir ⁿthe Horite who inhabited the land: Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah, ²¹Dishon, Ezer, and Dishan. These *were* the chiefs of the Horites, the sons of Seir, in the land of Edom.

²²And the sons of Lotan were Hori and ⁷Hemam. Lotan's sister *was* Timna.

²³These *were* the sons of Shobal: ⁸Alvan, Manahath, Ebal, ⁹Shepho, and Onam.

²⁴These *were* the sons of Zibeon: both Ajah and Anah. This *was* the Anah who found the ¹water in the wilderness as he pastured ^othe donkeys of his father Zibeon. ²⁵These *were* the children of Anah: Dishon and ²Aholibamah the daughter of Anah.

²⁶These *were* the sons of ³Dishon: ⁴Hemdan, Eshban, Ithran, and Cheran.

²⁷These *were* the sons of Ezer: Bilhan, Zaavan, and ⁵Akan. ²⁸These *were* the sons of Dishan: ⁷Uz and Aran.

²⁹These *were* the chiefs of the Horites: Chief Lotan, Chief Shobal, Chief Zibeon, Chief Anah, ³⁰Chief Dishon, Chief Ezer, and Chief Dishan. These *were* the chiefs of the Horites, according to their chiefs in the land of Seir.

The Kings of Edom

³¹^qNow these *were* the kings who reigned in the land of Edom before any

18 ⁶ Or *Oholibamah*
20 ^m 1 Chr. 1:38-42
ⁿ Gen. 14:6; Deut. 2:12, 22
22 ⁷ *Homam*, 1 Chr. 1:39
23 ⁸ *Alian*, 1 Chr. 1:40
24 ⁹ *Shephi*, 1 Chr. 1:40
24 ^o Lev. 19:19 ¹ So with MT, Vg. (*hot springs*); LXX *Jamin*; Tg. *mighty men*; Talmud *mules*
25 ² Or *Oholibamah*
26 ³ Heb. *Dishan*
26 ⁴ *Hamran*, 1 Chr. 1:41
27 ⁵ *Jaakan*, 1 Chr. 1:42
28 ^p Job 1:1
31 ^q Gen. 17:6, 16; 35:11; 1 Chr. 1:43

king reigned over the children of Israel: ³²Bela the son of Beor reigned in Edom, and the name of his city *was* Dinhabah. ³³And when Bela died, Jobab the son of Zerah of Bozrah reigned in his place. ³⁴When Jobab died, Husham of the land of the Temanites reigned in his place. ³⁵And when Husham died, Hadad the son of Bedad, who attacked Midian in the field of Moab, reigned in his place. And the name of his city *was* Avith. ³⁶When Hadad died, Samlah of Masrekah reigned in his place. ³⁷And when Samlah died, Saul of ⁷Rehoboth-*by-the-River* reigned in his place. ³⁸When Saul died, Baal-Hanan the son of Achbor reigned in his place. ³⁹And when Baal-Hanan the son of Achbor died, ⁶Hadar reigned in his place; and the name of his city *was* ⁷Pau. His wife's name *was* Mehetabel, the daughter of Matred, the daughter of Mezahab.

The Chiefs of Esau

⁴⁰And these *were* the names of the chiefs of Esau, according to their families and their places, by their names: Chief Timnah, Chief ⁸Alvah, Chief Jetheth, ⁴¹Chief ⁹Aholibamah, Chief Elah, Chief Pinon, ⁴²Chief Kenaz, Chief Teman, Chief Mibzar, ⁴³Chief Magdiel, and Chief Iram. These *were* the chiefs of Edom, according to their dwelling places in the land of their possession. Esau *was* the father of ¹the Edomites.

Joseph Dreams of Greatness

37 Now Jacob dwelt in the land ^awhere his father *was* a ¹stranger, in the land of Canaan. ²This *is* the history of Jacob.

Joseph, *being* seventeen years old, *was* feeding the flock with his brothers. And the lad *was* with the sons of Bilhah and the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives; and Joseph brought ^ba bad report of them to his father.

CHAPTER 37
1 ^a Gen. 17:8; 23:4; 28:4; 36:7; Heb. 11:9 ¹ *sojourner*, temporary resident
2 ^b Gen. 35:25, 26; 1 Sam. 2:22-24

36:20-30 The people of **Seir**, the Horites, had close interrelationships with Esau's family. These family histories are repeated in 1 Chr. 1:38-42.

36:31-39 This list follows the list of the chiefs of **Edom** (vv. 15-19). The eight names in this list are unrelated to each other. This indicates that they were chosen for reasons other than royal descent.

36:40-43 These chiefs probably followed the kings listed in vv. 31-39. They bear some of the names of their forebears (vv. 1-14).

Esau was the father of the Edomites: Although Esau is not the heir of God's everlasting covenant with the family of Abraham, God still blessed his family. They too became a nation.

37:1 in the land: When he left Laban, Jacob at first settled near Shechem (33:18-20). Then at the Lord's bidding he went to Bethel (35:1-15), where the divine covenant was renewed. Jacob traveled south again to Ephrath (later Bethlehem, see 35:16-20), where Rachel died while giving birth to Benjamin. Finally, Jacob went to Hebron (Kirjath Arba), where he buried his father (35:27-29). Chapter

37 continues Jacob's story at Hebron (v. 14). The word for **stranger** can also mean "sojourner" or "alien." The Lord had promised that this land would become a permanent possession of Abraham's family (12:7). To the third generation that promise was still not realized. Jacob and his family were still aliens in the land.

37:2 history of Jacob: This is the tenth time this Hebrew phrasing is used in Genesis (see the list at 2:4). **Joseph** was the first son of Jacob's favorite wife, Rachel (30:22-24). **seventeen years old:** This is one of the few places the Bible gives the age of a person at a certain event (see also 12:4). Usually, it records only the length of a person's whole life. **Bilhah** is the maid of Rachel, who gave birth to Dan and Naphtali (30:4-8); **Zilpah** is the maid of Leah, who gave birth to Gad and Asher (30:9-11). **a bad report:** Since Joseph in general demonstrated his integrity (see ch. 39), he was probably not slandering his brothers, but accurately reporting some negligence on their part. Whatever his intentions, his brothers naturally would have resented him.

³Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he *was* ^cthe son of his old age. Also he ^dmade him a tunic of *many* colors. ⁴But when his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, they ^ehated him and could not speak peaceably to him.

⁵Now Joseph had a dream, and he told *it* to his brothers; and they hated him even more. ⁶So he said to them, “Please hear this dream which I have dreamed: ^{7f}There we were, binding sheaves in the field. Then behold, my sheaf arose and also stood upright; and indeed your sheaves stood all around and bowed down to my sheaf.”

⁸And his brothers said to him, “Shall you indeed reign over us? Or shall you indeed have dominion over us?” So they hated him even more for his dreams and for his words.

⁹Then he dreamed still another dream and told it to his brothers, and said, “Look, I have dreamed another dream. And this time, ^gthe sun, the moon, and the eleven stars bowed down to me.”

¹⁰So he told *it* to his father and his brothers; and his father rebuked him and said to him, “What *is* this dream that you have dreamed? Shall your mother and I and ^hyour brothers indeed come to bow down to the earth before you?” ¹¹And ⁱhis brothers envied him, but his father ^jkept the matter *in mind*.

Joseph Sold by His Brothers

¹²Then his brothers went to feed their father’s flock in ^kShechem. ¹³And Israel said to Joseph, “Are not your brothers

3 ^c Gen. 44:20
^d Judg. 37:23, 32;
 2:19
 4 ^e Gen. 27:41;
 49:23; 1 Sam. 17:28;
 John 15:18-20
 7 ^f Gen. 42:6, 9;
 43:26; 44:14
 9 ^g Gen. 46:29;
 47:25
 10 ^h Gen. 27:29
 11 ⁱ Matt. 27:17, 18;
 Acts 7:9 / Dan. 7:28;
 Luke 2:19, 51
 12 ^j Gen. 33:18-20

14 ^k Gen. 13:18;
 23:2, 19; 35:27;
 Josh. 14:14, 15;
 Judg. 1:10
 16 ^m Song 1:7
 17 ⁿ 2 Kin. 6:13
 18 ^o 1 Sam. 19:1;
 Ps. 31:13; 37:12, 32;
 Matt. 21:38; 26:3,
 4; 27:1; Mark 14:1;
 John 11:53; Acts
 23:12
 19 ² Lit. master of
 dreams
 20 ^p Gen. 37:22;
 Prov. 1:11
 21 ^q Gen. 42:22

feeding *the flock* in Shechem? Come, I will send you to them.”

So he said to him, “Here I am.”

¹⁴Then he said to him, “Please go and see if it is well with your brothers and well with the flocks, and bring back word to me.” So he sent him out of the Valley of ^lHebron, and he went to Shechem.

¹⁵Now a certain man found him, and there he was, wandering in the field. And the man asked him, saying, “What are you seeking?”

¹⁶So he said, “I am seeking my brothers. ^mPlease tell me where they are feeding *their flocks*.”

¹⁷And the man said, “They have departed from here, for I heard them say, ‘Let us go to Dothan.’” So Joseph went after his brothers and found them in ⁿDothan.

¹⁸Now when they saw him afar off, even before he came near them, ^othey conspired against him to kill him. ¹⁹Then they said to one another, “Look, this ²dreamer is coming! ^{20p}Come therefore, let us now kill him and cast him into some pit; and we shall say, ‘Some wild beast has devoured him.’ We shall see what will become of his dreams!”

²¹But ^qReuben heard *it*, and he delivered him out of their hands, and said, “Let us not kill him.” ²²And Reuben said to them, “Shed no blood, *but* cast him into this pit which *is* in the wilderness, and do not lay a hand on him”—that he might deliver him out of their hands, and bring him back to his father.

²³So it came to pass, when Joseph had

37:3 The name **Israel** was given to Jacob following his wrestling with the Lord (32:22–32). It is used interchangeably with Jacob (35:21, 22; 43:6). **son of his old age**: Jacob’s favoritism for his son Joseph may be explained as well by the special love he had for the boy’s mother (29:30). **a tunic of many colors**: This is a traditional translation. The Hebrew phrase may simply mean a garment with long sleeves. The robe was distinctive in color or design and was probably costly.

37:4 they hated him: Unwittingly, Jacob’s discriminatory actions made Joseph unpopular in the family.

37:5 In his youthful enthusiasm, Joseph told his family about his **dream**. Although the dream was prophetic, it alienated his brothers **even more**.

37:7 my sheaf arose: Joseph’s dream pictured the prominence that he would eventually have in the family. In the culture of his day, the firstborn was the prominent one (see 35:23). Joseph’s dream not only insulted his older brothers, it also violated custom.

37:8 Shall you indeed reign: The brothers understood immediately the meaning of Joseph’s dream. Of course what they and he could not have known was that this dream would be fulfilled literally.

37:9 Joseph could have been more sensitive to his family’s response to his **dreams**. His second dream was even more alarming. According to this dream, even the sun and moon, presumably his father and mother (though his mother was already deceased; see 35:16–20), would bow to Joseph. The 11 stars were his brothers.

37:10, 11 Now, even **his father** was insulted by Joseph’s behavior.

The son could have talked about his dreams with more tact. **kept the matter**: Although he was insulted, Jacob pondered Joseph’s dreams for they were clearly from God.

37:12 The brothers journeyed north from Hebron (see 35:27–29), presumably in order to find better pastures for their flocks. **Shechem** plays a continuing role in the Genesis narrative. Abram had built his first altar to God there (see 12:6; 33:18).

37:14 well: The Hebrew word *shalom* means “well, whole, sound.”

bring back word: Because Joseph had earlier brought back a bad report, he would not be welcomed by his brothers.

37:17 Dothan is about ten miles north of Shechem, near Mt. Gilboa.

37:18 saw him afar off: His distinctive tunic allowed the brothers to recognize Joseph at a distance (vv. 3, 23, 31). **to kill him**: His brothers’ hatred and envy led them to discuss murder (see vv. 4, 5, 8, 11).

37:19, 20 this dreamer: The Hebrew phrase expresses contempt and literally means “master of dreams.” The brothers feared that Joseph’s **dreams** may actually come true. By killing him, they could prevent this.

37:21 Reuben, as the firstborn son and principal heir, had the most to lose if Joseph’s dreams came true (see 35:23). Yet Reuben intervened to spare Joseph’s life. This was something of a contrast with his earlier wicked actions (35:22).

37:22 Shed no blood: Reuben attempted to save Joseph’s life by getting his brothers to leave Joseph in a pit. Without water in the pit, Joseph could only survive a few days. Reuben planned to rescue him in time. Reuben may have been motivated by a love for his

come to his brothers, that they ^rstripped Joseph of his tunic, the tunic of *many* colors that *was* on him. ²⁴Then they took him and cast him into a pit. And the pit *was* empty; *there was* no water in it.

²⁵*s* And they sat down to eat a meal. Then they lifted their eyes and looked, and there was a company of ^tIshmaelites, coming from Gilead with their camels, bearing spices, ^ubalm, and myrrh, on their way to carry *them* down to Egypt. ²⁶So Judah said to his brothers, “What profit *is there* if we kill our brother and ^vconceal his blood? ²⁷Come and let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and ^wlet not our hand be upon him, for he *is* ^xour brother and ^your flesh.” And his brothers listened. ²⁸Then ^zMidianite traders passed by; so *the brothers* pulled Joseph up and lifted him out of the pit, ^aand sold him to the Ishmaelites for ^btwenty *shekels* of silver. And they took Joseph to Egypt.

²⁹Then Reuben returned to the pit, and indeed Joseph *was* not in the pit; and he ^ctore his clothes. ³⁰And he returned to his brothers and said, “The lad ^dis no more; and I, where shall I go?”

³¹So they took ^eJoseph’s tunic, killed a kid of the goats, and dipped the tunic in the blood. ³²Then they sent the tunic of *many* colors, and they brought *it* to their

²³ ^r Matt. 27:28
²⁵ ^s Prov. 30:20
^t Gen. 16:11, 12;
 37:28, 36; 39:1 ^u Jer.
 8:22
²⁶ ^v Gen. 37:20
²⁷ ^w 1 Sam. 18:17
^x Gen. 42:21 ^y Gen.
 29:14
²⁸ ^z Gen. 37:25;
 Judg. 6:1-3; 8:22;
 24 ^a Gen. 45:4, 5;
 Ps. 105:17; Acts 7:9
^b Matt. 27:9
²⁹ ^c Gen. 37:34;
 44:13; Job 1:20
³⁰ ^d Gen. 42:13, 36
³¹ ^e Gen. 37:3, 23

³³ ^f Gen. 37:20
³⁴ ^g Gen. 37:29;
 2 Sam. 3:31 ^h Gen.
 50:10
³⁵ ⁱ 2 Sam. 12:17
^j Gen. 25:8; 35:29;
 42:38; 44:29, 31
³⁶ ^k Gen. 39:1 ^l MT
 Medanites

CHAPTER 38

1 ^a 2 Kin. 4:8
 2 ^b Gen. 34:2
 3 ^c 1 Chr. 2:3
 3 ^d Gen. 46:12;
 Num. 26:19
 4 ^e Gen. 46:12;
 Num. 26:19

father and said, “We have found this. Do you know whether it *is* your son’s tunic or not?”

³³And he recognized it and said, “*It is my son’s tunic*. A ^fwild beast has devoured him. Without doubt Joseph is torn to pieces.” ³⁴Then Jacob ^gtore his clothes, put sackcloth on his waist, and ^hmourned for his son many days. ³⁵And all his sons and all his daughters ⁱarose to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted, and he said, “For ^jI shall go down into the grave to my son in mourning.” Thus his father wept for him.

³⁶Now ^kthe ^lMidianites had sold him in Egypt to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh and captain of the guard.

Judah and Tamar

38 It came to pass at that time that Judah departed from his brothers, and ^avisited a certain Adullamite whose name *was* Hirah. ²And Judah ^bsaw there a daughter of a certain Canaanite whose name *was* ^cShua, and he married her and went in to her. ³So she conceived and bore a son, and he called his name ^dEr. ⁴She conceived again and bore a son, and she called his name ^eOnan. ⁵And she conceived yet again and bore a son,

father and a desire to ease the strained relationship with him that had resulted from his abuse of Bilhah (35:22; cf. 49:4). Once Reuben convinced his brothers not to kill Joseph, he left (v. 29).

37:25 The **Ishmaelites** were wandering traders. The name (referring to descendants of Ishmael, the son of Abraham; see 16:11–16; 17:18–27; 25:12–18; 28:9; 36:3) is loosely equivalent to the name Midianite (v. 28). **Gilead** is a mountainous region east of the Jordan River (see 31:21), famed for aromatic spices (Jer. 8:22; 46:11). Only the rich owned the few **camels** that were domesticated at this time.

37:26 **What profit**: The brothers not only considered killing Joseph, but started discussing how they could make the crime profitable.

37:28 Midian was a son of Abraham by his concubine Keturah (25:2, 4; 36:35). The name **Midianites** is used interchangeably with the name Ishmaelites (see v. 25), most likely indicating an alliance between the two peoples. Both terms refer to wandering Arab traders. **Twenty shekels of silver** may have been the going rate for a slave at the time. On the other hand, the Midianites may have paid a little less because they knew something was amiss (the standard price for a slave in later Israelite law was 30 shekels, see Ex. 21:32). According to 42:21, Joseph begged his brothers not to sell him. The brothers considered Joseph as good as dead; he would never return from Egyptian slavery.

37:29 **Reuben returned**, failed to find Joseph, and tore his clothes to express his grief. Tearing one’s clothes was a common expression of profound dismay. Reuben’s grief was genuine feeling for his younger brother mixed with the fear that he, the oldest brother, would be blamed.

37:31, 32 The brothers used **Joseph’s tunic**, the symbol of his favored position, as a grisly symbol of his supposed death. The tunic was distinctive because of its colors or its long sleeves (see v. 3).

37:33 **torn to pieces**: The Hebrew expression means “utterly torn apart.” The fact that only the tunic was found suggested the destruction of Joseph’s body.

37:34 Jacob **tore his clothes** just like Reuben did to express his sorrow.

37:35 **and all his daughters**: Genesis names only one of the daughters,

Dinah (ch. 34). **I shall go down into the grave**: Joseph’s apparent fate only made Jacob love him more and withdraw from the rest of the family. The brothers did not gain their father’s favor by getting rid of Joseph.

37:36 **Potiphar**: An Egyptian name. **an officer**: The Hebrew term is used occasionally for a eunuch or a harem official (39:1; Esth. 2:3). **captain of the guard**: This phrase may mean the palace guard, or perhaps, the harem guard. In either case, Potiphar was an important official in the Egyptian royal court.

38:1–30 Although some consider the story of Judah and Tamar an intrusion into the Joseph story, it does fit into the flow of the narrative. First, the story provides a stunning contrast between the morals of Judah and Joseph. Second, Judah’s story illustrates the further disintegration of Jacob’s family. Jacob’s sons had sold Joseph, and now Judah married a Canaanite woman and solicited a Canaanite prostitute (who happened to be his daughter-in-law, vv. 11–16). If this process continued, Jacob’s family, the family of promise, would become like the people of Canaan. The fact that the Messiah’s lineage would be eventually traced through Judah’s line is a clear sign of God’s grace and mercy (49:10; Matt. 1:2, 3).

38:1 **Judah departed from his brothers**: Jacob’s family was slowly falling apart. First, Simeon and Levi had taken revenge on Shechem (ch. 34). Second, Reuben, the firstborn, had abused Bilhah (35:22). Third, the brothers had sold Joseph into slavery (ch. 37). Now Judah, the fourth son of Leah, left the family circle and sought Canaanite friends. **Adullamite**: A person from Adullam. This place was in the hill country northwest of Hebron, later associated with David’s flight from Saul (1 Sam. 22:1). During his period of disenchantment with his family, Judah embraced the Canaanite **Hirah** as friend and confidant (vv. 12, 20).

38:2 **daughter of a certain Canaanite**: Not only did Judah take a Canaanite as his friend, he took a Canaanite woman, the daughter of **Shua**, as his wife.

38:3–5 In quick succession, three sons were born to Judah and the daughter of Shua. **Chezib** is probably three miles southwest of Adullam.

and called his name ^fShelah. He was at Chezib when she bore him.

⁶Then Judah ^gtook a wife for Er his firstborn, and her name *was* ^hTamar. ⁷But ⁱEr, Judah's firstborn, was wicked in the sight of the LORD, ^jand the LORD killed him. ⁸And Judah said to Onan, "Go in to ^kyour brother's wife and marry her, and raise up an heir to your brother." ⁹But Onan knew that the heir would not be ^lhis; and it came to pass, when he went in to his brother's wife, that he emitted on the ground, lest he should give an heir to his brother. ¹⁰And the thing which he did ^ldispleased the LORD; therefore He killed ^mhim also.

¹¹Then Judah said to Tamar his daughter-in-law, ⁿ"Remain a widow in your father's house till my son Shelah is grown." For he said, "Lest he also die like his brothers." And Tamar went and dwelt ^oin her father's house.

¹²Now in the process of time the daughter of Shua, Judah's wife, died; and Judah ^pwas comforted, and went up to his sheepshearers at Timnah, he and his friend Hirah the Adullamite. ¹³And it was told Tamar, saying, "Look, your father-in-law is going up ^qto Timnah to shear his sheep." ¹⁴So she took off her widow's garments, covered *herself* with a veil and wrapped herself, and ^rsat in an open place which *was* on the way to Timnah; for she saw ^sthat Shelah was grown, and she was not given to him as a

⁵ ^fNum. 26:20
⁶ ^gGen. 21:21
^h Ruth 4:12
⁷ ⁱGen. 46:12; Num. 26:19 / ¹ Chr. 2:3
⁸ ^kDeut. 25:5, 6; Matt. 22:24
⁹ ^jDeut. 25:6
¹⁰ ^mGen. 46:12; Num. 26:19 ^l Lit. *was evil in the eyes of*
¹¹ ⁿ Ruth 1:12, 13
^o Lev. 22:13
¹² ^p 2 Sam. 13:39
¹³ ^q Josh. 15:10, 57; Judg. 14:1
¹⁴ ^r Prov. 7:12
^s Gen. 38:11, 26

¹⁷ ^r Judg. 15:1; Ezek. 16:33 ^u Gen. 38:20
¹⁸ ^v Gen. 38:25; 41:42
¹⁹ ^w Gen. 38:14
²¹ ² in full view

wife. ¹⁵When Judah saw her, he thought she *was* a harlot, because she had covered her face. ¹⁶Then he turned to her by the way, and said, "Please let me come in to you"; for he did not know that she *was* his daughter-in-law.

So she said, "What will you give me, that you may come in to me?"

¹⁷And he said, ^t"I will send a young goat from the flock."

So she said, ^u"Will you give *me* a pledge till you send *it*?"

¹⁸Then he said, "What pledge shall I give you?"

So she said, ^v"Your signet and cord, and your staff that *is* in your hand." Then he gave *them* to her, and went in to her, and she conceived by him. ¹⁹So she arose and went away, and ^wlaid aside her veil and put on the garments of her widowhood.

²⁰And Judah sent the young goat by the hand of his friend the Adullamite, to receive *his* pledge from the woman's hand, but he did not find her. ²¹Then he asked the men of that place, saying, "Where is the harlot who *was* ²openly by the roadside?"

And they said, "There was no harlot in this place."

²²So he returned to Judah and said, "I cannot find her. Also, the men of the place said there was no harlot in this place."

²³Then Judah said, "Let her take *them* for herself, lest we be shamed; for I sent

38:6 Just as Judah had married a Canaanite woman, so now he found a Canaanite wife, Tamar, for his firstborn son, **Er**. In this way, Judah intermingled his family with the Canaanites. **Tamar** means "Palm," indicating endearing beauty. Surprisingly, Tamar becomes a heroine in the Bible (see Ruth 4:12; Matt. 1:3).

38:7 The Lord did not judge the Canaanite woman, Tamar. Instead, he judged Er, the **wicked** firstborn son of Judah.

38:8 to your brother's wife: In the ancient Middle East, for a man to die without leaving a son was regarded as an incalculable loss. A person's memory was preserved in his descendants. In order to maintain the family line and the name of the deceased, a brother or another near relative would marry the man's widow and father a child that would carry on the man's family. This is called *levirate* marriage, from a Latin word meaning "husband's brother." The custom became part of the Mosaic Law (Deut. 25:5–10; Ruth 4:1–12).

38:9 emitted on the ground: Because of his own selfishness and wicked attitude toward his deceased brother, Onan would not allow his brother's widow to conceive a child. He feared the child would perpetuate the name of his brother Er and not his own.

38:10 The LORD judged Onan, just as He judged Er (v. 7).

38:11 Remain a widow: Instead of blaming his first two sons' deaths on their own wickedness, Judah blamed the innocent Tamar. He feared that he would lose his last son to her as well. So Judah stalled her by insincerely promising to marry her to his last son when he was of age. Presumably, Judah hoped she would eventually remarry outside the family.

38:12 The death of **Judah's wife** means that Judah had only one surviving son. Unless Judah remarried, his posterity was dependent on Shelah. **sheepshearers:** The time of sheepshearing was not only

a time of work, it also was a time for celebration (2 Sam. 13:23, 24). **Timnah** is in the hill country of Judah (Josh. 15:10, 57). **Hirah:** Judah and Hirah's friendship lasted a long time.

38:14, 15 The period for mourning was long past. Tamar's continuing use of a **widow's** clothing shows her desire to marry the surviving brother of her husbands—something she finally realized would not be allowed. She wore **a veil** to avoid Judah's detection and to pose as a prostitute. Her desperate act was driven by a sense of injustice. On the one hand, Judah had broken his promise to marry her to Shelah. On the other hand, she had not done anything to deserve becoming a forgotten widow—her husbands' deaths were not her fault.

38:17 Judah's promise to give her a goat would ordinarily have been sufficient. However, Tamar insisted on **a pledge**.

38:18 The **signet** seal was an ancient means of identification. The seal was distinctively etched in stone, metal, or ivory and would hang on a person's neck. To confirm an agreement or transaction, the ancients would press the seal in soft clay (see 41:42). Basically, Judah gave Tamar the equivalent of a modern credit card. Presumably, Judah's **staff** was also marked in a distinctive manner.

38:19 garments of her widowhood: Tamar resumed wearing the clothing of a widow—clothing that broadcast Judah's broken promises to the community.

38:20 the young goat: By the time Hirah (see vv. 1, 12) came to pay what Judah had promised (see v. 17), Tamar had already left.

38:21 Harlot translates a Hebrew term that literally means "holy woman" and refers to sacred or cultic prostitutes. Such prostitutes would have practiced their profession as part of the pagan local religions.

this young goat and you have not found her.”

²⁴ And it came to pass, about three months after, that Judah was told, saying, “Tamar your daughter-in-law has ^xplayed the harlot; furthermore she is ³with child by harlotry.”

So Judah said, “Bring her out ^yand let her be burned!”

²⁵ When she was brought out, she sent to her father-in-law, saying, “By the man to whom these belong, I am with child.” And she said, ^z“Please determine whose these are—the signet and cord, and staff.”

²⁶ So Judah ^aacknowledged them and said, ^b“She has been more righteous than I, because ^cI did not give her to Shelah my son.” And he ^dnever knew her again.

²⁷ Now it came to pass, at the time for giving birth, that behold, twins were in her womb. ²⁸ And so it was, when she was giving birth, that the one put out his hand; and the midwife took a scarlet thread and bound it on his hand, saying, “This one came out first.” ²⁹ Then it happened, as he drew back his hand, that his brother came out unexpectedly; and she said, “How did you break through? This breach be upon you!” Therefore his name was called ^ePerez. ⁴ ³⁰ Afterward his brother came out who had the scarlet thread on his hand. And his name was called ^fZerah.

²⁴ ^x Judg. 19:2
^y Lev. 20:14; 21:9;
Deut. 22:21
³ pregnant
²⁵ ^z Gen. 37:32;
38:18
²⁶ ^a Gen. 37:33
^b 1 Sam. 24:17
^c Gen. 38:14 ^d Job
34:31, 32
²⁹ ^e Gen. 46:12;
Num. 26:20;
Ruth 4:12; 1 Chr.
2:4; Matt. 1:3
⁴ Lit. *Breach or
Breakthrough*
³⁰ ^f Gen. 46:12;
1 Chr. 2:4; Matt. 1:3

CHAPTER 39

1 ^a Gen. 12:10;
43:15 ^b Gen. 37:36;
Ps. 105:17 ^c Gen.
37:28; 45:4
2 ^d Gen. 26:24, 28;
28:15; 35:3; 39:3, 21,
23; 1 Sam. 16:18;
18:14, 28; Acts 7:9
3 ^e Ps. 1:3 ¹ to be a
success
4 ^f Gen. 18:3; 19:19;
39:21 ^g Gen. 24:2,
10; 39:8, 22; 41:40
² Lit. *in his hand*
5 ^h Gen. 18:26;
30:27; 2 Sam. 6:11
6 ⁱ Gen. 29:17;
1 Sam. 16:12 ³ Care
Food
7 / 2 Sam. 13:11
⁵ Lit. *lifted up her
eyes toward*

Joseph a Slave in Egypt

39 Now Joseph had been taken ^adown to Egypt. And ^bPotiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian, ^cbought him from the Ishmaelites who had taken him down there. ^{2d} The LORD was with Joseph, and he was a successful man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian. ³ And his master saw that the LORD was with him and that the LORD ^cmade all he did ¹to prosper in his hand. ⁴ So Joseph ^ffound favor in his sight, and served him. Then he made him ^goverseer of his house, and all that he had he put ²under his authority. ⁵ So it was, from the time that he had made him overseer of his house and all that he had, that ^hthe LORD blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; and the blessing of the LORD was on all that he had in the house and in the field. ⁶ Thus he left all that he had in Joseph's ³hand, and he did not know what he had except for the ⁴bread which he ate.

Now Joseph ⁱwas handsome in form and appearance.

⁷ And it came to pass after these things that his master's wife ⁵cast longing eyes on Joseph, and she said, ^j“Lie with me.”

⁸ But he refused and said to his master's wife, “Look, my master does not know what is with me in the house, and he has committed all that he has to my hand. ⁹ There is no one greater in this house than

38:24 played the harlot: After about three months, Tamar's pregnancy was showing. Judah seized the opportunity to get rid of Tamar, demanding that she be burned. The Law of Moses mentions burning as the punishment for certain prostitutes (Lev. 21:9). But on this occasion Judah was not considering God's righteousness. He merely wanted to get rid of the woman he believed had been destroying his family.

38:26 She has been more righteous: Judah, one of the heirs of the everlasting covenant with the living God, was put to shame by a Canaanite woman. To his credit, Judah confessed his sins.

38:27 The birth of twins was a special blessing from the Lord. This section continues a biblical theme of competing sons (see chs. 4; 25–28).

38:28 his hand: There could be no mistakes in identifying the firstborn. The midwife used a scarlet thread to make sure everyone knew which baby had been born first.

38:29 breach: The other baby burst forth after his brother's hand had been withdrawn. Despite the brother's hand, Perez was the firstborn. He became the one who is in the lineage of David—and ultimately Jesus (Ruth 4:18; Matt. 1:3).

38:30 Both Perez and Zerah established families in the house of Judah (1 Chr. 2:3–8); even Shelah established a family (see Num. 26:19–22). Tamar became a member of the family of promise, even though she was a Canaanite (see Ruth 4:12). Matthew mentions Tamar—a woman—in the lineage of the Messiah. She had become a heroine of the faith—despite her origins and the nature of her actions (Matt. 1:3).

39:1 Joseph had been taken down to Egypt: This verse repeats the sense of 37:36 and resumes the Joseph story that was interrupted by the story of Judah and Tamar (ch. 38). The first readers of Genesis were the second generation that had come out of Egypt under Moses. This narrative explained to them why their parents were Egyptian slaves. **Potiphar:** Joseph's brothers probably expected

that he would be sold as a common laborer in a heavy construction project. Such heavy physical labor under harsh conditions could make a young man's life short. Yet because of God's mercy, Joseph was sold to a rich and important royal official.

39:2 The LORD was with Joseph: This key phrase of this section is repeated (vv. 21, 23). This phrase indicates that God cared for, protected, and blessed Joseph. Joseph occupied a very high station for a slave. He lived and worked in his master's house.

39:3 Potiphar recognized that Joseph was successful because the LORD was with him. Perhaps Joseph had had some effect on his master's spiritual condition.

39:4 found favor: Joseph exemplified the faithful steward and illustrated the principle that one who is faithful in a little will be given charge over much (Matt. 25:21; 1 Cor. 4:2).

39:5 the LORD blessed the Egyptian's house: God commanded Abraham and his descendants to be a blessing to everyone (see 12:2, 3). Here Joseph, thrust into a foreign country by the anger of his brothers, brought God's blessing to an Egyptian official's home. What is more, the Egyptian knew that the blessing was from God.

39:6 all that he had: Potiphar's trust in Joseph was so complete that Potiphar had no care except for his menu (v. 23). **handsome:** Seldom does the Bible mention a character's physical traits. This description is similar to the description of David (1 Sam. 16:12).

39:7 Potiphar's wife began to flirt with Joseph. Perhaps she was bored. On the other hand, the Hebrew term translated as officer in v. 1 ordinarily means “eunuch.” If Potiphar was literally a eunuch, this might help to explain his wife's actions.

39:8 But he refused: Joseph exemplified the highest standard of personal behavior. The recurring phrase, “the LORD was with him” (vv. 2, 21, 23) helps to explain Joseph's goodness. The empowering presence of God in his life helped Joseph to resist temptation.

39:9 sin against God: Here Joseph not only stood up for his ethical



I, nor has he kept back anything from me but you, because you *are* his wife. ^kHow then can I do this great wickedness, and ^lsin against God?"

¹⁰So it was, as she spoke to Joseph day by day, that he ^mdid not heed her, to lie with her *or* to be with her.

¹¹But it happened about this time, when Joseph went into the house to do his work, and none of the men of the house *was* inside, ¹²that she ⁿcaught him by his garment, saying, "Lie with me." But he left his garment in her hand, and fled and ran outside. ¹³And so it was, when she saw that he had left his garment in her hand and fled outside, ¹⁴that she called to the men of her house and spoke to them, saying, "See, he has brought in to us a ^oHebrew to ⁶mock us. He came in to me to lie with me, and I cried out with a loud voice. ¹⁵And it happened, when he heard that I lifted my voice and cried out, that he left his garment with me, and fled and went outside."

¹⁶So she kept his garment with her until his master came home. ¹⁷Then she ^pspoke to him with words like these, saying, "The Hebrew servant whom you brought to us came in to me to mock me; ¹⁸so it happened, as I lifted my voice and cried out, that he left his garment with me and fled outside."

¹⁹So it was, when his master heard

⁹ ^k Lev. 20:10; Prov. 6:29, 32 ^l Gen. 20:6; 42:18; 2 Sam. 12:13; Ps. 51:4
¹⁰ ^m Prov. 1:10
¹² ⁿ Prov. 7:13
¹⁴ ^o Gen. 14:13; 41:12 ⁶ laugh at
¹⁷ ^p Ex. 23:1; Ps. 120:3; Prov. 26:28

¹⁹ ^q Prov. 6:34, 35
²⁰ ^r Ps. 105:18; [1 Pet. 2:19] ^s Gen. 40:3, 15; 41:14
²¹ ^t Gen. 39:2; Ex. 3:21; Ps. 105:19; [Prov. 16:7]; Dan. 1:9; Acts 7:9, 10
⁷ Caused him to be viewed with favor by
²² ^u Gen. 39:4; 40:3, 4
²³ ^v Gen. 39:2, 3
⁸ Lit. *his hand*

CHAPTER 40

¹ ^a Gen. 40:11, 13; Neh. 1:11
² ^b Prov. 16:14
³ ^c Gen. 39:1, 20, 23; 41:10

the words which his wife spoke to him, saying, "Your servant did to me after this manner," that his ^qanger was aroused. ²⁰Then Joseph's master took him and ^rput him into the ^sprison, a place where the king's prisoners *were* confined. And he was there in the prison. ²¹But the LORD was with Joseph and showed him mercy, and He ^tgave ⁷ him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison. ²²And the keeper of the prison ^ucommitted to Joseph's hand all the prisoners who *were* in the prison; whatever they did there, it was his doing. ²³The keeper of the prison did not look into anything *that was* under ⁸Joseph's authority, because ^vthe LORD was with him; and whatever he did, the LORD made *it* prosper.

The Prisoners' Dreams

40 It came to pass after these things *that* the ^abutler and the baker of the king of Egypt offended their lord, the king of Egypt. ²And Pharaoh was ^bangry with his two officers, the chief butler and the chief baker. ³^cSo he put them in custody in the house of the captain of the guard, in the prison, the place where Joseph *was* confined. ⁴And the captain of the guard charged Joseph with them, and he served them; so they were in custody for a while.

⁵Then the butler and the baker of the

beliefs, but he also told a woman who probably believed in many gods about the righteousness of the only true God!

39:11 none of the men: This time, the master's wife caught Joseph alone.

39:12 The clothing of a slave in the hot climate of Egypt probably did not consist of much. She grabbed Joseph. In the ensuing struggle, she wound up holding **his garment**. Joseph fled.

39:14 he has brought: She insulted her husband in front of other slaves. The term **Hebrew** is used only four times in the Book of Genesis (see 14:13; 39:17; 41:12). Here it is a racial slur. **to mock:** The verb suggests racial hatred. The Hamitic Egyptians scorned the Semitic peoples of Canaan (see 43:32). The Egyptian slaves must have envied Joseph's success. Potiphar's wife must have found ready ears among these men to believe her lies. She had not **cried out**, of course. But the charge of rape was as serious then as it is in our day. The attempted rape of a master's wife by a foreign slave would have been an exceptional outrage.

39:19 The **anger** of Potiphar is understandable and expected.

39:20 into the prison: Surprisingly, Potiphar did not simply kill Joseph outright. Is it possible that Joseph had so impressed Potiphar during the considerable time he had been in his service that Potiphar found himself not fully believing the story his wife told him? Is it possible that Potiphar determined to throw Joseph into the royal prison, over which he had command (v. 1; 40:3; 41:9–11) in order to spare Joseph's life? In any case, Joseph wound up in prison for something he had steadfastly refused to do.

39:21 The **LORD** continued to be **with Joseph**—even in prison (see Ps. 139:7–12). **Mercy** can be translated *loyal love* (see Ps. 13:5). Here in an Egyptian prison, Joseph experienced God's loyal love. God faithfully kept His promises by staying with His people—even in rough circumstances (for God's promises to be with Abraham's descendants, see 12:1–3; 50:24). **the keeper of the prison:** This was the warden who was under the "captain of the guard" (40:3), namely Potiphar (39:1).

39:23 the LORD made it prosper: Because of God's blessing, everything Joseph did prospered (see Ps. 1:1–3).

40:1 The butler and the baker of the king were important officers in the royal court. **Offended** stands for the word ordinarily translated as *sinned*. Its principal meaning is "to miss the mark." The nature of their offenses is not explained.

40:3 The reference to **the house** implies that there were two holding areas for prisoners in this situation. One was the prison proper, the other was a type of house arrest associated with, but not in, the prison itself.

40:4 As a trustee of the prison, Joseph also **served** the high officials who were under house arrest awaiting the disposition of the charges against them.

40:5 Each . . . dream had its own interpretation; these were not ordinary dreams. They contained symbols that demanded explanation.

dream

(Heb. *chalom*) (37:5; 40:5; 41:7; Joel 2:28) Strong's #2472

The word simply means "to dream." The ancients understood a dream or a vision as "watching during sleep," suggesting a special state of consciousness. Often dreams were recognized as revelations from the gods, or from the Lord God Himself in the case of the Hebrews. Many times these dreams and visions were encoded in symbolic language that needed interpretation. Those who could interpret dreams possessed power in the ancient world (41:37–40; Dan. 2:46–48). Joseph both received and interpreted such messages but was able to interpret the figures and symbols of dream-events only as God enabled him (40:8; 41:16).

king of Egypt, who *were* confined in the prison, ^dhad a dream, both of them, each man's dream in one night *and* each man's dream with its *own* interpretation. ^eAnd Joseph came in to them in the morning and looked at them, and saw that they *were* ^fsad. ^gSo he asked Pharaoh's officers who *were* with him in the custody of his lord's house, saying, ^h"Why do you look so sad today?"

ⁱAnd they said to him, ^j"We each have had a dream, and *there is* no interpreter of it."

So Joseph said to them, ^k"Do not interpretations belong to God? Tell *them* to me, please."

^lThen the chief butler told his dream to Joseph, and said to him, "Behold, in my dream a vine *was* before me, ^mand in the vine *were* three branches; it *was* as though it budded, its blossoms shot forth, and its clusters brought forth ripe grapes. ⁿThen Pharaoh's cup *was* in my hand; and I took the grapes and pressed them into Pharaoh's cup, and placed the cup in Pharaoh's hand."

^oAnd Joseph said to him, ^p"This *is* the interpretation of it: The three branches *are* three days. ^qNow within three days Pharaoh will ^rlift up your head and restore you to your ^splace, and you will put Pharaoh's cup in his hand according to the former manner, when you were his butler. ^tBut ^uremember me when it is well with you, and ^vplease show kindness to me; make mention of me to Pharaoh,

⁵ ^d Gen. 37:5; 41:1
⁶ ^e *dejected*
⁷ ^e Neh. 2:2
⁸ ^f Gen. 41:15
⁹ [Gen. 41:16; Dan. 2:11, 20-22, 27, 28, 47]
¹² ^h Gen. 40:18; 41:12, 25; Judg. 7:14; Dan. 2:36; 4:18, 19
¹ Gen. 40:18; 42:17
¹³ ⁱ 2 Kin. 25:27; Ps. 3:3; Jer. 52:31
² *position*
¹⁴ ^k 1 Sam. 25:31; Luke 23:42
¹ Gen. 24:49; 47:29; Josh. 2:12; 1 Sam. 20:14, 15; 2 Sam. 9:1; 1 Kin. 2:7

¹⁵ ^m Gen. 37:26-28
ⁿ Gen. 39:20
¹⁶ ³ Or *baskets of white bread*
¹⁸ ^o Gen. 40:12
¹⁹ ^p Gen. 40:13
^q Deut. 21:22
⁴ *Lit. up*
²⁰ ^r Matt. 14:6-10
³ Mark 6:21
¹ Gen. 40:13, 19; 2 Kin. 25:27; Jer. 52:31; Matt. 25:19
²¹ ^u Gen. 40:13
^v Neh. 2:1
²² ^w Gen. 40:19; Deut. 21:23; Esth. 7:10
²³ ^x Job 19:14; Ps. 31:12; Eccl. 9:15, 16; Is. 49:15; Amos 6:6

CHAPTER 41

¹ ^a Gen. 40:5; Judg. 7:13

and get me out of this house. ¹⁵For indeed I was ^mstolen away from the land of the Hebrews; ⁿand also I have done nothing here that they should put me into the dungeon."

¹⁶When the chief baker saw that the interpretation was good, he said to Joseph, "I also *was* in my dream, and there *were* three ³white baskets on my head. ¹⁷In the uppermost basket *were* all kinds of baked goods for Pharaoh, and the birds ate them out of the basket on my head."

¹⁸So Joseph answered and said, ^o"This *is* the interpretation of it: The three baskets *are* three days. ¹⁹^pWithin three days Pharaoh will lift ⁴off your head from you and ^qhang you on a tree; and the birds will eat your flesh from you."

²⁰Now it came to pass on the third day, *which was* Pharaoh's ^rbirthday, that he ^smade a feast for all his servants; and he ^tlifted up the head of the chief butler and of the chief baker among his servants. ²¹Then he ^urestored the chief butler to his butlership again, and ^vhe placed the cup in Pharaoh's hand. ²²But he ^whanged the chief baker, as Joseph had interpreted to them. ²³Yet the chief butler did not remember Joseph, but ^xforgot him.

Pharaoh's Dreams

41 Then it came to pass, at the end of two full years, that ^aPharaoh had a dream; and behold, he stood by the river. ²Suddenly there came up out of the river

40:6 Joseph came to see the butler and baker because it was part of his duties as the prison trustee.

40:8 Joseph's statement that **interpretations belong to God** was a bold testimony. But Joseph not only announced his faith, he then quickly acted upon it. Joseph had received such dreams as a younger man and had understood their meaning (37:5-11).

40:12 Joseph's words to the butler, **lift up your head**, form a grisly pun in the passage. Here they speak of the restoration of the butler to his former honor; in v. 19 they speak of death.

40:14 Joseph asked the butler to **remember me** so that his case might be reviewed and he might be delivered from a false imprisonment. **Kindness** represents a word that also means "loyal love." Joseph spoke of a binding obligation that his interpretation of the dream had placed upon the butler.

40:15 Joseph had two good reasons for seeking his release: being sold by his brothers into slavery and being framed by Potiphar's wife. In both cases he was an innocent victim. Presumably the butler would recognize the unfairness of Joseph's condition, since he himself had been unfairly charged and badly treated as well.

40:16 Perhaps **the chief baker's** sense of guilt had held him back, but now he sensed that the time was right to announce his own dream. Both of these men respected Joseph's interpretations as true. Like the butler's, the baker's dream used the number three.

40:18 **The interpretation** of the baker's dream was bad news indeed: In three days the baker would be executed.

40:19 The pun in **lift off your head** is more evident in the Hebrew text (v. 13). More literally, the words read, "Pharaoh will lift your head . . . from you." That is, the line begins exactly as in v. 13, but with a deadly zinger at the end! It is not simply baked goods **the birds** will eat (v. 17), but the flesh of the baker. That is, he will not be allowed even a proper burial; he will instead be hanged and then his body

will be left for the vultures. Clearly there was no point for Joseph to ask to be remembered by the baker (vv. 14, 15).

40:20 Only here do we learn that **the third day** was Pharaoh's birthday. The play on words of vv. 13, 19 comes to its culmination here in **he lifted up the head**. Pharaoh brought both of the prisoners from their house arrest for all the other servants to see. The one he restored (v. 21), and the other he hanged (v. 22). It could be that there had been a threat against Pharaoh's life that involved the poisoning of food. Presumably the investigation led to two possible culprits, the butler who would serve Pharaoh his wine and the baker who would prepare bread for Pharaoh. The guilty party was executed; the other was given back his prestigious position. Pharaoh did this in the presence of **all his servants** in order to both warn and encourage the servant household. Pharaoh would reward those who served him well, but would destroy any who meant him harm.

40:23 The butler **did not remember** his promise made to Joseph. The euphoria of his release and restoration took his mind away from his distressing days under arrest. Soon the sheer business of his life precluded any action on behalf of Joseph. So Joseph stayed in prison. And God was still with him.

41:1-57 This chapter describes the turning point in Joseph's life. He rose from a dungeon to the Egyptian throne room. God engineered the circumstances so that through Joseph He could meet the needs of a nation during the coming famine and reunite Jacob's family.

41:1 As in the case of his servants (see 40:5), **Pharaoh** had an unusual **dream** to which he attached great significance. **The river** is the Nile, the life stream of Egypt.

41:2 In ancient Semitic thought, the number **seven** had special significance. This significance probably had its roots in the seven days of creation (ch. 1).

seven cows, fine looking and fat; and they fed in the meadow. ³Then behold, seven other cows came up after them out of the river, ugly and gaunt, and stood by the *other* cows on the bank of the river. ⁴And the ugly and gaunt cows ate up the seven fine looking and fat cows. So Pharaoh awoke. ⁵He slept and dreamed a second time; and suddenly seven heads of grain came up on one stalk, plump and good. ⁶Then behold, seven thin heads, blighted by the ^beast wind, sprang up after them. ⁷And the seven thin heads devoured the seven plump and full heads. So Pharaoh awoke, and indeed, *it was* a dream. ⁸Now it came to pass in the morning ^cthat his spirit was troubled, and he sent and called for all ^dthe magicians of Egypt and all its ^ewise men. And Pharaoh told them his dreams, but *there was* no one who could interpret them for Pharaoh.

⁹Then the ^fchief butler spoke to Pharaoh, saying: “I remember my faults this day. ¹⁰When Pharaoh was ^gangry with his servants, ^hand put me in custody in the house of the captain of the guard, *both* me and the chief baker, ¹¹*we* each had a dream in one night, he and I. Each of us dreamed according to the interpretation of his *own* dream. ¹²Now there *was* a young ^jHebrew man with us there, a ^kservant of the captain of the guard. And we told him, and he ^linterpreted our dreams for us; to each man he interpreted according to his *own* dream. ¹³And it came to pass, just ^mas he interpreted for us, so it happened. He restored me to my office, and he hanged him.”

¹⁴ⁿThen Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they ^obrought him quickly ^pout of the dungeon; and he shaved, ^qchanged his clothing, and came to Pharaoh. ¹⁵And Pharaoh said to Joseph, “I have had a dream, and *there is* no one who can interpret it. ^rBut I have heard it said of you

Pharaoh

The title of the kings of Egypt until 323 B.C. The pharaoh was probably the most important person in Egyptian society. The Egyptians believed he was a god and the key to the nation's relationship to the cosmic gods of the universe. While the pharaoh ruled, he was the Son of Ra, the sun god, and the incarnation of the god Horus. He came from the gods with the divine responsibility to rule the land for them. His word was law, and he owned everything. The pharaoh was the head of the army as well as a central figure in the nation's religious life. As an intermediary between gods and people, the pharaoh functioned as a high priest in the many temples in Egypt. Because the Egyptian people believed their fate was dependent on that of the pharaoh, they seldom attempted to overthrow the government, although some pharaohs were very cruel.



Statue of Thutmose III, believed by some to be the pharaoh of the Exodus
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⁶ ^b Ex. 10:13; Ezek. 17:10
⁸ ^c Dan. 2:1, 3; 4:5, 19 ^d Ex. 7:11, 22; Is. 29:14; Dan. 1:20; 2:2; 4:7 ^e Matt. 2:1
⁹ ^f Gen. 40:1, 14, 23
¹⁰ ^g Gen. 40:2, 3
¹¹ ^h Gen. 39:20
¹² ⁱ Gen. 40:5; Judg. 7:15
¹³ ^j Gen. 39:14; 43:32 ^k Gen. 37:36
¹⁴ ^l Gen. 40:12
¹⁵ ^m Gen. 40:21, 22
¹⁶ ⁿ Ps. 105:20
¹⁷ ^o Dan. 2:25

that you can understand a dream, to interpret it.”

¹⁶So Joseph answered Pharaoh, saying, ^s“It is not in me; ^tGod will give Pharaoh an answer of peace.”

¹⁷Then Pharaoh said to Joseph: “Behold, ^uin my dream I stood on the bank of the river. ¹⁸Suddenly seven cows came up out of the river, fine looking and fat;

^p [1 Sam. 2:8] ^q 2 Kin. 25:27-29 ^r 15 ^s Gen. 41:8, 12; Dan. 5:16
^t 16 ^u Dan. 2:30; Acts 3:12; [2 Cor. 3:5] ^v Gen. 40:8; 41:25, 28, 32; Deut. 29:29; Dan. 2:22, 28, 47 ^w 17 ^x Gen. 41:1

41:3, 4 ugly and gaunt: The second group of seven cows contrasts strongly with the first. **ate up:** The bucolic scene quickly turns into a nightmare as the scrawny cows devour the healthy ones.

41:5-7 The second dream was very much like the first, only this time it presented heads of grain rather than cows. The numeral **seven** again was prominent.

41:8 magicians: The Hebrew term is related to the word for *stylus*, a writing instrument. Thus the magicians were associated in some manner with writing and knowledge, no doubt of the occult. Yet here, as on a later occasion (Ex. 8:18, 19), the power of the magicians was shown to be limited. The **wise men** were a class of scholars associated with the courts of the ancient Middle East. They were either functionaries of pagan religions as here, or merely observers and interpreters of life.

41:9 faults: The Hebrew word is usually translated *sins*. At long last the butler remembered his experience with the young Hebrew prisoner who interpreted his dream (40:9-15).

41:10, 12 captain of the guard: In vv. 10, 12, this phrase refers to Potiphar (see 39:1, 19, 20).

41:14 out of the dungeon: Joseph was manager of the prison (39:22, 23). Egyptian men not only **shaved** their face, but their entire body. They generally wore wigs. Egyptian officials scorned the “hairy” Canaanites, including the Hebrews (43:32). While in the service of Potiphar, Joseph probably adopted the manner and dress of the Egyptians. But in prison, Joseph could not keep up his appearance.

41:15 you can understand a dream: Pharaoh was desperate. He wanted a correct interpretation of his dream.

41:16 There is a strong emphasis on the word **God**. Joseph praised the power of the living God in the pagan court of Pharaoh. He would not take credit for his ability to interpret dreams or use his innocence to plead for his freedom. **an answer of peace:** His answer suggests that Joseph already knew the dream contained some good news for the Pharaoh.

41:17-24 in my dream: Pharaoh repeated the information he had given earlier to his own magicians and wise men (vv. 1-8). One new detail is recorded here (v. 21): the seven ugly cows do not look better after eating the good cows (v. 30).

and they fed in the meadow. ¹⁹Then behold, seven other cows came up after them, poor and very ugly and gaunt, such ugliness as I have never seen in all the land of Egypt. ²⁰And the gaunt and ugly cows ate up the first seven, the fat cows. ²¹When they had eaten them up, no one would have known that they had eaten them, for they *were* just as ugly as at the beginning. So I awoke. ²²Also I saw in my dream, and suddenly seven ¹heads came up on one stalk, full and good. ²³Then behold, seven heads, withered, thin, and blighted by the east wind, sprang up after them. ²⁴And the thin heads devoured the seven good heads. So ^vI told *this* to the magicians, but *there was* no one who could explain *it* to me.”

²⁵Then Joseph said to Pharaoh, “The dreams of Pharaoh *are* one; ^wGod has shown Pharaoh what He *is* about to do: ²⁶The seven good cows *are* seven years, and the seven good ²heads *are* seven years; the dreams *are* one. ²⁷And the seven thin and ugly cows which came up after them *are* seven years, and the seven empty heads blighted by the east wind *are* ^xseven years of famine. ^{28y}This is the thing which I have spoken to Pharaoh. God has shown Pharaoh what He *is* about to do. ²⁹Indeed ^zseven years of great plenty will come throughout all the land of Egypt; ³⁰but after them seven years of famine will ^aarise, and all the plenty will be forgotten in the land of Egypt; and the famine ^bwill deplete the land. ³¹So the plenty will not be known

22 ¹ Heads of grain
24 ^v Gen. 41:8;
Ex. 7:11; Is. 8:19;
Dan. 4:7
25 ^w Gen. 41:28, 32;
Dan. 2:28, 29, 45;
Rev. 4:1
26 ² Heads of grain
27 ^x 2 Kin. 8:1
28 ^y [Gen. 41:25, 32;
Dan. 2:28]
29 ^z Gen. 41:47
30 ^a Gen. 41:54,
56 ^b Gen. 47:13; Ps.
105:16

32 ^c Gen. 41:25,
28; Num. 23:19; Is.
46:10, 11
34 ^d [Prov. 6:6-8]
³ overseers
35 ^e Gen. 41:48
⁴ Lit. *hand*
36 ^f Gen. 47:15, 19
⁵ Lit. *supply* ^g *be*
cut off
37 ^g Ps. 105:19;
Acts 7:10
38 ^h Num. 27:18;
[Job 32:8; Prov. 2:6];
Dan. 4:8, 9, 18; 5:11,
14; 6:3
40 ⁱ Ps. 105:21; Acts
7:10 ⁷ In charge of
41 ^j Gen. 42:6; Ps.
105:21; Dan. 6:3;
Acts 7:10
42 ^k Esth. 3:10

in the land because of the famine following, for it *will be* very severe. ³²And the dream was repeated to Pharaoh twice because the ^ething *is* established by God, and God will shortly bring it to pass.

³³“Now therefore, let Pharaoh select a discerning and wise man, and set him over the land of Egypt. ³⁴Let Pharaoh do *this*, and let him appoint ³officers over the land, ^dto collect one-fifth of the *produce* of the land of Egypt in the seven plentiful years. ³⁵And ^elet them gather all the food of those good years that are coming, and store up grain under the ⁴authority of Pharaoh, and let them keep food in the cities. ³⁶Then that food shall be as a ⁵reserve for the land for the seven years of famine which shall be in the land of Egypt, that the land ^fmay not ⁶perish during the famine.”

Joseph's Rise to Power

³⁷So ^gthe advice was good in the eyes of Pharaoh and in the eyes of all his servants. ³⁸And Pharaoh said to his servants, “Can we find *such a one* as this, a man ^hin whom *is* the Spirit of God?”

³⁹Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, “Inasmuch as God has shown you all this, *there is* no one as discerning and wise as you. ⁴⁰ⁱYou shall be ⁷over my house, and all my people shall be ruled according to your word; only in regard to the throne will I be greater than you.” ⁴¹And Pharaoh said to Joseph, “See, I have ^jset you over all the land of Egypt.”

⁴²Then Pharaoh ^ktook his signet ring

41:25 Led by the Spirit of God, Joseph revealed that the **dreams** have the same meaning (22:15). **God has shown Pharaoh:** Again Joseph testified to the living God in a pagan court (39:3). God sent the dreams; God enabled Joseph to understand them; and ultimately God controlled and will control all things.

41:28 God has shown Pharaoh: The repetition of this phrase (v. 25) is for emphasis (v. 32). God put Joseph in Egypt during this critical time so that He could bless Egypt through a Hebrew. Then the true

and living God's blessing would become known throughout the ancient world, for God had promised to bless all nations through the people of Israel (12:2).

41:30 the plenty will be forgotten: The famine would be so severe that everyone would forget the year of plenty.

41:32 God, and God: Joseph emphasized his reference to the true God as he witnessed to the reality of the only true God. He made it clear that he was speaking about the one God, not the numerous false gods that filled the Egyptian court, or even Pharaoh himself who was believed to be a god (see 22:1; 42:18).

41:33 a discerning and wise man: An exceedingly wise man.

41:34 One-fifth may seem large. However, the large amount would allow for spoilage, for extra grain for trade, and for extra grain to plant after the seven years of famine.

41:35 Pharaoh would view this large tax as an expansion of his own **authority**.

41:38 in whom is the Spirit of God: At least, Pharaoh acknowledged that Joseph was extraordinarily wise. Or more likely, he testified to the reality of God's power in Joseph's life.

41:40 You shall be over my house: Since Joseph was so wise, naturally he was the first choice for administering the collection of grain.

in regard to the throne: Joseph was given enormous power. Only Pharaoh was above him.

41:42 With the signet ring, Joseph's orders would have the same authority as the word of Pharaoh (Esth. 3:10; 8:2). The ring had the signature of the Pharaoh in Egyptian hieroglyphics (38:18). Joseph would use the ring to mark clay or wax to authenticate royal documents and laws.

Pharaoh

(Heb. *Par'oh*) (41:1; Ex. 1:11) Strong's #6547

The name Pharaoh comes from the Egyptian word *pr'-o*, which means “the great house.” Originally the word Pharaoh was not a designation for the king of Egypt, but a reference to his palace. The ancient Egyptians believed that Pharaoh was the living representation of the god Horus in Egyptian religion, identified with the cult of the sun god and symbolized by the falcon. The plagues against the Egyptians prior to the Israelite exodus from Egypt were cosmic in nature, a kind of spiritual warfare between the living God and the false gods of Egypt (Ex. 12:12; 15:11). The tenth plague, resulting in the death of the firstborn among the Egyptians (including Pharaoh's), was divine judgment upon Pharaoh's claim to deity (Ex. 12:29, 30; 18:11, 12).

off his hand and put it on Joseph's hand; and he ^lclothed him in garments of fine linen ^m and put a gold chain around his neck. ⁴³ And he had him ride in the second ⁿ chariot which he had; ^o and they cried out before him, "Bow the knee!" So he set him ^p over all the land of Egypt. ⁴⁴ Pharaoh also said to Joseph, "I am Pharaoh, and without your consent no man may lift his hand or foot in all the land of Egypt." ⁴⁵ And Pharaoh called Joseph's name ⁸ Zaphnath-Paaneah. And he gave him as a wife ^q Asenath, the daughter of Poti-Pherah priest of On. So Joseph went out over *all* the land of Egypt.

⁴⁶ Joseph was thirty years old when he ^r stood before Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh, and went throughout all the land of Egypt. ⁴⁷ Now in the seven plentiful years the ground brought forth ⁹ abundantly. ⁴⁸ So he gathered up all the food of the seven years which were in the land of Egypt, and laid up the food in the cities; he laid up in every city the food of the fields which surrounded them. ⁴⁹ Joseph gathered very much grain, ^s as the sand of the sea, until he stopped counting, for *it was* immeasurable.

⁵⁰ And to Joseph were born two sons before the years of famine came, whom Asenath, the daughter of Poti-Pherah priest of On, bore to him. ⁵¹ Joseph called the name of the firstborn ¹ Manasseh: "For God has made me forget all my toil and all my ^t father's house." ⁵² And the name of the second he called ² Ephraim: "For God has caused me to be ^u fruitful in the land of my affliction."

⁵³ Then the seven years of plenty

⁴² ^l Esth. 8:2, 15
^m Dan. 5:7, 16, 29
⁴³ ⁿ Gen. 46:29
^o Esth. 6:9 ^p Gen. 42:6
⁴⁵ ^q Gen. 46:20
⁸ Probably Egyptian for *God Speaks and He Lives*
⁴⁶ ^r 1 Sam. 16:21; 1 Kin. 12:6, 8; Dan. 1:19
⁴⁷ ⁹ Lit. *by handfuls*
⁴⁹ ^s Gen. 22:17; Judg. 7:12; 1 Sam. 13:5
⁵⁰ ^t Gen. 46:20; 48:5
⁵¹ ^u Ps. 45:10 ¹ Lit. *Making Forgetful*
⁵² ^v Gen. 17:6; 28:3; 49:22 ² Lit. *Fruitfulness*

⁵⁴ ^w Ps. 105:16; Acts 7:11 ³ Gen. 41:30
⁵⁵ ^x John 2:5
⁵⁶ ^z Gen. 42:6 ³ Lit. *all that was in them*
⁵⁷ ^a Ezek. 29:12
^b Gen. 27:28, 37; 42:3

CHAPTER 42

¹ ^a Acts 7:12
² ^b Gen. 43:8; Ps. 33:18, 19; Is. 38:1
⁴ ^c Gen. 42:38
⁵ ^d Gen. 12:10; 26:1; 41:57; Acts 7:11
⁶ ^e Gen. 41:41, 55
^f Gen. 37:7-10; 41:43; Is. 60:14
⁷ ^g Gen. 45:1, 2

which were in the land of Egypt ended, ⁵⁴ and the seven years of famine began to come, ^x as Joseph had said. The famine was in all lands, but in all the land of Egypt there was bread. ⁵⁵ So when all the land of Egypt was famished, the people cried to Pharaoh for bread. Then Pharaoh said to all the Egyptians, "Go to Joseph; ^y whatever he says to you, do." ⁵⁶ The famine was over all the face of the earth, and Joseph opened ³ all the storehouses and ^z sold to the Egyptians. And the famine became severe in the land of Egypt. ⁵⁷ ^a So all countries came to Joseph in Egypt to ^b buy *grain*, because the famine was severe in all lands.

Joseph's Brothers Go to Egypt

42 When ^a Jacob saw that there was grain in Egypt, Jacob said to his sons, "Why do you look at one another?" ² And he said, "Indeed I have heard that there is grain in Egypt; go down to that place and buy for us there, that we may ^b live and not die."

³ So Joseph's ten brothers went down to buy grain in Egypt. ⁴ But Jacob did not send Joseph's brother Benjamin with his brothers, for he said, ^c "Lest some calamity befall him." ⁵ And the sons of Israel went to buy *grain* among those who journeyed, for the famine was ^d in the land of Canaan.

⁶ Now Joseph was governor ^e over the land; and it was he who sold to all the people of the land. And Joseph's brothers came and ^f bowed down before him with *their* faces to the earth. ⁷ Joseph saw his brothers and recognized them, but he acted as ^g a stranger to them and spoke

41:43 Bow the knee: The Egyptian people bowed as a sign of respect and homage to Joseph's position—not a sign of worship.

41:45 Zaphnath-Paaneah: Pharaoh honors Joseph by giving him an Egyptian name that probably means "The God Speaks and Lives." While in some contexts, this would refer to an Egyptian god, in this case it refers to the true God of Joseph. Wherever Joseph went in Egypt, his name would point to the reality of his God. **Asenath:** An Egyptian name meaning "Belonging to (the Goddess) Neith." **Poti-Pherah** means "He Whom Ra (the sun god) Gave." **On** is a city in northern Egypt that was noted for its worship of Ra. But Joseph and Asenath's sons were worshipers of the Lord, not Ra. Although Joseph married a pagan priest's daughter, he trained his sons to worship the living God. Probably Asenath also became a worshiper of the Lord.

41:46 thirty years old: Thirteen years had passed since Joseph was sold by his brothers (37:2).

41:47 seven plentiful years: Just as God had revealed, the years of plenty came.

41:49 The task was enormous for there was **much grain**. Joseph had to be a wise administrator. The skills he learned in Potiphar's household and in the royal prison must have been helpful during this busy time. But in the end, God made Joseph succeed (v. 52; 39:23).

41:50 Asenath's two sons carry on the two-son motif in Genesis (Ishmael and Isaac, chs. 16; 21; Esau and Jacob, 25:19–28; Perez and Zerah, 38:27–30).

41:54, 55 the seven years of famine: As Joseph had warned (v. 30), bad years followed the seven years of plenty. Pharaoh allowed Joseph to handle the crisis. He trusted completely Joseph's leadership.

41:56, 57 Joseph enriched the treasury of Pharaoh by selling grain to the Egyptians. **all countries:** The whole known world came to Egypt to buy grain. Just as Joseph had testified to Egypt concerning the reality of the true God, so now he was able to testify to all nations.

42:1 Jacob said to his sons: By this time, Judah had returned to Jacob (see ch. 38).

42:4 Benjamin: Jacob still played favorites (see 37:3). However, there is no mention of jealousy among the other brothers as there had been before (37:8).

42:6 bowed down before him: God fulfilled the dreams He gave to Joseph at the age of 17 (see 37:5–11).

42:7 acted as a stranger: These men standing before Joseph had sold him as a slave 20 years before—yet they were his brothers! Now suddenly here they were, bowing before him, just as he had dreamed! Joseph's life was now thoroughly Egyptian. In fact, he had named his first son "Forgetfulness," as a sign of his estrangement from the painful memories of his family (41:51). What went through Joseph's mind as he recognized his brothers? No doubt shock, confusion, and anger. Joseph may have spoken **roughly** in order to control his emotions.

⁷roughly to them. Then he said to them, “Where do you come from?”

And they said, “From the land of Canaan to buy food.”

⁸So Joseph recognized his brothers, but they did not recognize him. ⁹Then Joseph ^hremembered the dreams which he had dreamed about them, and said to them, “You *are* spies! You have come to see the ²nakedness of the land!”

¹⁰And they said to him, “No, my lord, but your servants have come to buy food.

¹¹We *are* all one man’s sons; we *are* honest *men*; your servants are not spies.”

¹²But he said to them, “No, but you have come to see the nakedness of the land.”

¹³And they said, “Your servants *are* twelve brothers, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan; and in fact, the youngest *is* with our father today, and one *is* no more.”

¹⁴But Joseph said to them, “It *is* as I spoke to you, saying, ‘You *are* spies!’”

¹⁵In this *manner* you shall be tested: ^jBy the life of Pharaoh, you shall not leave this place unless your youngest brother comes here. ¹⁶Send one of you, and let him bring your brother; and you shall be ³kept in prison, that your words may be tested to see whether *there is* any truth in you; or else, by the life of Pharaoh, surely you *are* spies!” ¹⁷So he ⁴put them all together in prison ^kthree days.

¹⁸Then Joseph said to them the third day, “Do this and live, ^lfor I fear God: ¹⁹If you *are* honest *men*, let one of your brothers be confined to your prison house; but you, go and carry grain for the famine of your houses. ²⁰And ^mbring your youngest brother to me; so your words will be verified, and you shall not die.”

⁷ ¹harshly
⁹ ^h Gen. 37:5-9
² Exposed parts
¹³ ¹ Gen. 37:30;
 42:32; 44:20;
 Lam. 5:7
¹⁵ ¹ 1 Sam. 1:26;
 17:55
¹⁶ ³ Lit. bound
¹⁷ ^k Gen. 40:4, 7, 12
⁴ Lit. gathered
¹⁸ ¹ Gen. 22:12;
 39:9; Ex. 1:17; Lev.
 25:43; Neh. 5:15;
 Prov. 1:7; 9:10
²⁰ ^m Gen. 42:34;
 43:5; 44:23

²¹ ⁿ Gen. 37:26-
 28; 44:16; 45:3;
 Job 36:8, 9; Hos.
 5:15 ^o Prov. 21:13;
 Matt. 7:2
²² ^p Gen. 37:21, 22,
 29 ^q Gen. 9:5, 6;
 1 Kin. 2:32; 2 Chr.
 24:22; Ps. 9:12; Luke
 11:50, 51
²⁴ ^r Gen. 43:30;
 45:14, 15 ^s Gen.
 34:25, 30; 43:14, 23
²⁵ ^t Gen. 44:1
^u Gen. 43:12
^v [Matt. 5:44; Rom.
 12:17, 20, 21; 1 Pet.
 3:9]
²⁷ ^w Gen. 43:21, 22
²⁸ ^s sank
³⁰ ^x Gen. 42:7
⁶ harshly

And they did so. ²¹Then they said to one another, ⁿ“We *are* truly guilty concerning our brother, for we saw the anguish of his soul when he pleaded with us, and we would not hear; ^otherefore this distress has come upon us.”

²²And Reuben answered them, saying, ^p“Did I not speak to you, saying, ‘Do not sin against the boy’; and you would not listen? Therefore behold, his blood is now ^qrequired of us.” ²³But they did not know that Joseph understood *them*, for he spoke to them through an interpreter. ²⁴And he turned himself away from them and ^rwept. Then he returned to them again, and talked with them. And he took ^sSimeon from them and bound him before their eyes.

The Brothers Return to Canaan

²⁵Then Joseph ^tgave a command to fill their sacks with grain, to ^urestore every man’s money to his sack, and to give them provisions for the journey. ^vThus he did for them. ²⁶So they loaded their donkeys with the grain and departed from there. ²⁷But as ^wone of *them* opened his sack to give his donkey feed at the encampment, he saw his money; and there it was, in the mouth of his sack. ²⁸So he said to his brothers, “My money has been restored, and there it is, in my sack!” Then their hearts ⁵failed *them* and they were afraid, saying to one another, “What *is* this *that* God has done to us?”

²⁹Then they went to Jacob their father in the land of Canaan and told him all that had happened to them, saying: ³⁰“The man *who is* lord of the land ^xspoke ⁶roughly to us, and took us for spies of the country. ³¹But we said to him, ‘We *are* honest *men*; we *are* not spies. ³²We *are* twelve broth-

42:9 Joseph remembered the dreams and released his pent-up feelings. He accused his brothers of something he knew they did not do. In this way, Joseph set out to learn whether his brothers had changed for the better. Would they betray each other when under pressure?

42:13 the youngest: At the mention of his younger brother Benjamin, Joseph must have had great difficulty hiding his feelings. **and one is no more:** These words must have been unbearable to Joseph. Although his brothers supposed he was dead, he was right before their eyes!

42:14 Twice, Joseph accused them of being spies. The brothers must have been overcome with fear. They were standing before a man who had absolute, autocratic power. At his word they could be executed.

42:16 Joseph demanded that Benjamin, his full brother, be brought to him. At the time, Benjamin was with Jacob (v. 4).

42:18 Here, Joseph gave his brothers a clue about who he was. In effect, Joseph told them, “I fear the one God” (see 41:32).

42:21 truly guilty: The brothers realized that they were being punished for what they had done to Joseph so many years ago. **when he pleaded with us:** The first account (37:18–28) does not include this detail.

42:22 Only Reuben had tried to save Joseph on that awful day (37:22). His plan to rescue Joseph was thwarted when the brothers decided to sell him to the Midianite traders instead of abandoning him in a pit to die. **his blood:** According to Reuben, the brothers would be punished for killing Joseph.

42:23 Joseph had been speaking in Egyptian and an interpreter was translating to the brothers. The brothers did not suspect that this Egyptian official understood what they said in their own language.

42:24 wept: At last Joseph’s emotions went beyond his control. **he took Simeon:** Since Reuben, the firstborn son, had been Joseph’s principal defender years ago, Joseph took Simeon, the next son, hostage (35:23–26).

42:25 fill their sacks: The returned money would enable the brothers to come another time for another purchase. On the other hand, they might be accused of stealing it. **money:** This word refers to a certain weight of silver. Coinage had not yet been invented.

42:28 The discovery of some of their money frightened the brothers (but see v. 35). They accused God for their troubles.

42:29–34 The brothers truthfully reported to their father Jacob all that had transpired.

ers, sons of our father; one *is* no *more*, and the youngest *is* with our father this day in the land of Canaan.³³ Then the man, the lord of the country, said to us, ^y“By this I will know that you *are* honest *men*: Leave one of your brothers *here* with me, take *food* for the famine of your households, and be gone.³⁴ And bring your ^zyoungest brother to me; so I shall know that you *are* not spies, but *that* you *are* honest *men*. I will grant your brother to you, and you may ^atrade in the land.”

³⁵ Then it happened as they emptied their sacks, that surprisingly ^beach man’s bundle of money *was* in his sack; and when they and their father saw the bundles of money, they were afraid.³⁶ And Jacob their father said to them, “You have ^cbereaved me: Joseph is no *more*, Simeon is no *more*, and you want to take ^dBenjamin. All these things are against me.”

³⁷ Then Reuben spoke to his father, saying, “Kill my two sons if I do not bring him *back* to you; put him in my hands, and I will bring him back to you.”

³⁸ But he said, “My son shall not go down with you, for ^ehis brother is dead, and he is left alone. ^fIf any calamity should befall him along the way in which you go, then you would ^gbring down my gray hair with sorrow to the grave.”

Joseph’s Brothers Return with Benjamin

43 Now the famine *was* ^asevere in the land. ²And it came to pass, when they had eaten up the grain which they had brought from Egypt, that their father said to them, “Go ^bback, buy us a little food.”

³ But Judah spoke to him, saying, “The man solemnly warned us, saying, ‘You shall not see my face unless your ^cbrother *is* with you.’ ⁴If you send our brother with us, we will go down and buy you food. ⁵But if you will not send *him*, we will not go down; for the man said to us, ‘You shall not see my face unless your brother *is* with you.’”

³³ ^y Gen. 42:15, 19, 20
³⁴ ^z Gen. 42:20; 43:3, 5 ^a Gen. 34:10
³⁵ ^b Gen. 43:12, 15, 21
³⁶ ^c Gen. 43:14
^d Gen. 35:18; [Rom. 8:28, 31]
³⁸ ^e Gen. 37:22; 42:13; 44:20, 28
^f Gen. 42:4; 44:29
^g Gen. 37:35; 44:31

CHAPTER 43

¹ ^a Gen. 41:54, 57; 42:5; 45:6, 11
² ^b Gen. 42:2; 44:25
³ ^c Gen. 42:20; 43:5; 44:23

⁶ ⁱ Lit. *wickedly*
⁸ ^d Gen. 42:2; 47:19
⁹ ^e Gen. 42:37; 44:32; Philem. 18, 19
¹¹ ^f Gen. 32:20; 33:10; 43:25, 26; [Prov. 18:16] ^g Gen. 37:25; Jer. 8:22; Ezek. 27:17
¹² ^h Gen. 42:25, 35; 43:21, 22
¹⁴ ⁱ Gen. 17:1; 28:3; 35:11; 48:3 ^j Gen. 39:21; Ps. 106:46
^k Gen. 42:36; Esth. 4:16
¹⁵ ^j Gen. 39:1; 46:3, 6
¹⁶ ^m Gen. 24:2; 39:4; 44:1 ² Lit. *a slaughter*

⁶ And Israel said, “Why did you deal *so* ¹wrongfully with me *as* to tell the man whether you had still *another* brother?”

⁷ But they said, “The man asked us pointedly about ourselves and our family, saying, ‘Is your father still alive? Have you *another* brother?’ And we told him according to these words. Could we possibly have known that he would say, ‘Bring your brother down?’”

⁸ Then Judah said to Israel his father, “Send the lad with me, and we will arise and go, that we may ^dlive and not die, both we and you and also our little ones. ⁹I myself will be surety for him; from my hand you shall require him. ^eIf I do not bring him *back* to you and set him before you, then let me bear the blame forever. ¹⁰For if we had not lingered, surely by now we would have returned this second time.”

¹¹ And their father Israel said to them, “If *it must be* so, then do this: Take some of the best fruits of the land in your vessels and ^fcarry down a present for the man—a little ^gbalm and a little honey, spices and myrrh, pistachio nuts and almonds. ¹²Take double money in your hand, and take back in your hand the money ^hthat was returned in the mouth of your sacks; perhaps it was an oversight. ¹³Take your brother also, and arise, go back to the man. ¹⁴And may God ⁱAlmighty ^jgive you mercy before the man, that he may release your other brother and Benjamin. ^kIf I am bereaved, I am bereaved!”

¹⁵ So the men took that present and Benjamin, and they took double money in their hand, and arose and went ^ldown to Egypt; and they stood before Joseph. ¹⁶When Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to the ^msteward of his house, “Take *these* men to my home, and slaughter ²an animal and make ready; for *these* men will dine with me at noon.” ¹⁷Then the man did as Joseph ordered, and the man brought the men into Joseph’s house.

42:35 The discovery of the **money** in the sack of one of the brothers (vv. 27, 28) could have been explained as a mistake. But now they learned that each man’s money was in his sack!

42:36 **You have bereaved me:** Jacob’s grief increased. One son was dead; another was in prison; and now a third was threatened by an Egyptian official.

42:37 **Kill my two sons:** Reuben took the lead. He tried to comfort his father, just as he had tried to stop his brothers from hurting Joseph (37:22).

42:38 **My son shall not go:** Jacob was resolute. He had lost enough sons; he didn’t want to risk Benjamin, his favorite. **with sorrow:** He assured his sons that risking the loss of Benjamin in addition to having already lost Joseph would lead him into depression and cause his premature death.

43:6 **deal so wrongfully:** Jacob blamed his sons for telling the Egyptian there was still another brother. His sons replied that they had simply answered the questions they were asked (v. 7).

43:8 **Send the lad with me:** Judah promised that he would keep Benjamin safe. Judah had changed tremendously (contrast 38:1). Instead of leaving the family, he protected his brother and was concerned about his father’s welfare.

43:9 **Blame** is from the Hebrew verb often translated as *sin* (see 40:1; 41:9).

43:14 This is the fourth time in Genesis that **God** is called El Shaddai (see 17:1; 28:3; 35:11). **If I am bereaved:** Jacob finally realized there was no other option.

¹⁸Now the men were ^aafraid because they were brought into Joseph's house; and they said, "*It is* because of the money, which was returned in our sacks the first time, that we are brought in, so that he may ³make a case against us and seize us, to take us as slaves with our donkeys."

¹⁹When they drew near to the steward of Joseph's house, they talked with him at the door of the house, ²⁰and said, "O sir, ^awe indeed came down the first time to buy food; ²¹but ^pit happened, when we came to the encampment, that we opened our sacks, and there, *each* man's money *was* in the mouth of his sack, our money in full weight; so we have brought it back in our hand. ²²And we have brought down other money in our hands to buy food. We do not know who put our money in our sacks."

²³But he said, "Peace *be* with you, do not be afraid. Your God and the God of your father has given you treasure in your sacks; I had your money." Then he brought ^aSimeon out to them.

²⁴So the man brought the men into Joseph's house and ^rgave *them* water, and they washed their feet; and he gave their donkeys feed. ²⁵Then they made the present ready for Joseph's coming at noon, for they heard that they would eat bread there.

²⁶And when Joseph came home, they brought him the present which *was* in their hand into the house, and ^sbowed down before him to the earth. ²⁷Then he asked them about *their* well-being, and said, "Is your father well, the old man ^tof whom you spoke? Is he still alive?"

²⁸And they answered, "Your servant our father *is* in good health; he *is* still alive." ^uAnd they bowed their heads down and prostrated themselves.

²⁹Then he lifted his eyes and saw his brother Benjamin, ^vhis mother's son, and said, "Is this your younger brother ^wof whom you spoke to me?" And he said, "God be gracious to you, my son." ³⁰Now

¹⁸ ^a Gen. 42:28

³ Lit. *roll himself upon us*

²⁰ ^a Gen. 42:3, 10

²¹ ^p Gen. 42:27, 35

²³ ^a Gen. 42:24

²⁴ ^r Gen. 18:4; 19:2;

^{24:32}

²⁶ ^s Gen. 37:7, 10;

^{42:6}; 44:14

²⁷ ^t Gen. 29:6;

^{42:11}, 13; ^{43:7}; ^{45:3};

² Kin. 4:26

²⁸ ^u Gen. 37:7, 10

²⁹ ^v Gen. 35:17, 18

^w Gen. 42:13

³⁰ ^x 1 Kin. 3:26

^y Gen. 42:24; ^{45:2},

¹⁴, ¹⁵; ^{46:29}

³¹ ^z Gen. 43:25

³² ^a Gen. 41:12; Ex.

^{1:15} ^a Gen. 46:34;

Ex. 8:26

³³ ^c Gen. 27:36;

^{42:7}; Deut. 21:16, 17

³⁴ ^d Gen. 35:24;

^{45:22}

CHAPTER 44

¹ ^a Gen. 43:16

^b Gen. 42:25 ¹ Lit.

the one over

⁴ ^c 1 Sam. 25:21

⁸ ^d Gen. 43:21

^x his heart yearned for his brother; so Joseph made haste and sought *somewhere* to weep. And he went into *his* chamber and ^ywept there. ³¹Then he washed his face and came out; and he restrained himself, and said, "Serve the ^zbread."

³²So they set him a place by himself, and them by themselves, and the Egyptians who ate with him by themselves; because the Egyptians could not eat food with the ^aHebrews, for that *is* ^ban abomination to the Egyptians. ³³And they sat before him, the firstborn according to his ^cbirthright and the youngest according to his youth; and the men looked in astonishment at one another. ³⁴Then he took servings to them from before him, but Benjamin's serving was ^dfive times as much as any of theirs. So they drank and were merry with him.

Joseph's Cup

44 And he commanded ¹the ^asteward of his house, saying, ^b"Fill the men's sacks with food, as much as they can carry, and put each man's money in the mouth of his sack. ²Also put my cup, the silver cup, in the mouth of the sack of the youngest, and his grain money." So he did according to the word that Joseph had spoken. ³As soon as the morning dawned, the men were sent away, they and their donkeys. ⁴When they had gone out of the city, *and* were not *yet* far off, Joseph said to his steward, "Get up, follow the men; and when you overtake them, say to them, 'Why have you ^crepaid evil for good? ⁵Is not this *the one* from which my lord drinks, and with which he indeed practices divination? You have done evil in so doing?'"

⁶So he overtook them, and he spoke to them these same words. ⁷And they said to him, "Why does my lord say these words? Far be it from us that your servants should do such a thing. ⁸Look, we brought back to you from the land of Canaan ^dthe money which we found

43:18 The brothers must have been surprised. The last time, they were treated as spies and criminals (42:9–14). Now Joseph invited them into his house to dine with him.

43:23 The steward responded in an unexpected manner. He did not accuse them of anything; instead, he invited them into the house with a blessing of **peace. Your God and the God of your father:** Surprisingly, the steward expressed his own faith in the God of Joseph and Jacob. **I had your money:** Of course, this is not the whole truth.

43:26 For the second time (42:6) the brothers of Joseph **bowed** down to him, just as his revelatory dreams had predicted (37:5–11).

43:29 Benjamin had not been a part of the earlier conspiracy against Joseph. The relationship between Joseph and his younger brother must have been particularly close, since Joseph was overwhelmed when he saw Benjamin (v. 30).

43:32 place by himself: Joseph maintained his disguise, so he followed the Egyptian custom of eating at a table separate from the Hebrews. **abomination:** This word can indicate the strongest revulsion, something that might cause physical illness (see 46:34). The Egyptians might have been repulsed by bodily hair.

43:33 according to his birthright: The brothers might have been surprised and unsettled that they had been seated according to their ages.

44:1–5 Joseph continued to test the character of his brothers by commanding his servants to place his brothers' **money** in their sacks and a **silver cup** in Benjamin's sack.

44:6–12 In response to the servant's accusations, Joseph's brothers insisted on their innocence and promised to give up whoever had Joseph's silver cup. After searching all the brothers' sacks, the servant found the cup with Benjamin.

in the mouth of our sacks. How then could we steal silver or gold from your lord's house? ⁹With whomever of your servants it is found, ^elet him die, and we also will be my lord's slaves."

¹⁰And he said, "Now also *let it be* according to your words; he with whom it is found shall be my slave, and you shall be blameless." ¹¹Then each man speedily let down his sack to the ground, and each opened his sack. ¹²So he searched. He began with the oldest and ²left off with the youngest; and the cup was found in Benjamin's sack. ¹³Then they ^ftore their clothes, and each man loaded his donkey and returned to the city.

¹⁴So Judah and his brothers came to Joseph's house, and he *was* still there; and they ^gfell before him on the ground. ¹⁵And Joseph said to them, "What deed is this you have done? Did you not know that such a man as I can certainly practice divination?"

¹⁶Then Judah said, "What shall we say to my lord? What shall we speak? Or how shall we clear ourselves? God has ^hfound out the iniquity of your servants; here ⁱwe are, my lord's slaves, both we and *he* also with whom the cup was found."

¹⁷But he said, ^j"Far be it from me that I should do so; the man in whose hand the cup was found, he shall be my slave. And as for you, go up in peace to your father."

Judah Intercedes for Benjamin

¹⁸Then Judah came near to him and said: "O my lord, please let your servant speak a word in my lord's hearing, and ^kdo not let your anger burn against your servant; for you *are* even like Pharaoh. ¹⁹My lord asked his servants, saying, 'Have you a father or a brother?' ²⁰And we said to my lord, 'We have a father, an old man, and ^la child of *his* old age, *who* is young; his brother is ^mdead, and he ⁿalone is left of his mother's children, and his ^ofather loves him.' ²¹Then you said to your servants, ^p"Bring him down to me, that I may set my eyes on him."

9 ^e Gen. 31:32
12 ² finished with
13 ^f Gen. 37:29, 34;
Num. 14:6; 2 Sam.
1:11
14 ^g Gen. 37:7, 10
16 ^h [Num. 32:23]
ⁱ Gen. 44:9
17 ^j Prov. 17:15
18 ^k Gen. 18:30, 32;
Ex. 32:22
20 ^l Gen. 37:3; 43:8;
44:30 ^m Gen. 42:38
ⁿ Gen. 46:19 ^o Gen.
42:4
21 ^p Gen. 42:15, 20

23 ^q Gen. 43:3, 5
25 ^r Gen. 43:2
27 ^s Gen. 30:22-24;
35:16-18; 46:19
28 ^t Gen. 37:31-35
29 ^u Gen. 42:36, 38;
44:31
30 ^v [1 Sam. 18:1;
25:29]
32 ^w Gen. 43:9
33 ^x Ex. 32:32
34 ³ Lit. find

CHAPTER 45

1 ^a Acts 7:13
2 ^b Gen. 43:30;
46:29

²²And we said to my lord, 'The lad cannot leave his father, for *if* he should leave his father, *his father* would die.' ²³But you said to your servants, ^q"Unless your youngest brother comes down with you, you shall see my face no more.'

²⁴"So it was, when we went up to your servant my father, that we told him the words of my lord. ²⁵And ^rour father said, 'Go back *and* buy us a little food.' ²⁶But we said, 'We cannot go down; if our youngest brother is with us, then we will go down; for we may not see the man's face unless our youngest brother *is* with us.' ²⁷Then your servant my father said to us, 'You know that ^smy wife bore me two sons; ²⁸and the one went out from me, and I said, ^t"Surely he is torn to pieces"; and I have not seen him since. ²⁹But if you ^utake this one also from me, and calamity befalls him, you shall bring down my gray hair with sorrow to the grave.'

³⁰"Now therefore, when I come to your servant my father, and the lad is not with us, since ^vhis life is bound up in the lad's life, ³¹it will happen, when he sees that the lad *is* not *with* us, that he will die. So your servants will bring down the gray hair of your servant our father with sorrow to the grave. ³²For your servant became surety for the lad to my father, saying, ^w"If I do not bring him *back* to you, then I shall bear the blame before my father forever.' ³³Now therefore, please ^xlet your servant remain instead of the lad as a slave to my lord, and let the lad go up with his brothers. ³⁴For how shall I go up to my father if the lad is not with me, lest perhaps I see the evil that would ³come upon my father?"

Joseph Revealed to His Brothers

45 Then Joseph could not restrain himself before all those who stood by him, and he cried out, "Make everyone go out from me!" So no one stood with him ^awhile Joseph made himself known to his brothers. ²And he ^bwept

44:13 In genuine despair for Benjamin's predicament, the brothers **to**re their clothes. They could not let Benjamin die! Ironically a few years earlier, the same brothers had been debating whether to kill Joseph. Instead of tearing their own clothes in grief, they had torn Joseph's robe in order to cover up what they had done.

44:14 Although Reuben was the oldest, **Judah** took the leadership role in this section (46:28).

44:15 Here, **divination** is the practice of consulting the will of the gods by observing the liquid in a special cup. Allegedly Benjamin had stolen not only a silver cup from an Egyptian ruler, but a significant one. His action could have had grave consequences.

44:16 **Judah's** contrition was complete. He offered no excuse; what had happened was the will of **God**. He presented himself and all his brothers as slaves to Joseph.

44:17 Joseph demanded that the youngest son, the presumably guilty one, become his slave. Joseph's parting words, **go up in peace to your father**, were a test. Would the brothers leave Benjamin as a slave in Egypt as they had left Joseph? For the brothers, Joseph's words must have been especially bitter. There would be no peace in their father's household if Benjamin became an Egyptian slave.

44:30-34 Judah explained to Joseph the deep despair his father would experience if he lost Benjamin. Then he offered himself as a slave in Benjamin's place. Instead of showing indifference to his family as he had in the past (see ch. 38), Judah offered his own life to save Benjamin's.

45:2 Joseph **wept** so loudly that his voice was heard throughout the whole palace (46:29)!

Joseph's Story



The remarkable story of Joseph's rise to power in Egypt is not just another rags-to-riches story. Fundamentally, the story is about how the Lord created a nation out of a troubled family.

Jacob's family was plagued by jealousy. Rachel envied Leah, and Leah envied Rachel (30:1). Leah's sons inherited this pattern of jealousy. They envied Joseph so much that they sold him as a slave (37:28). It may even be that Reuben abused Bilhah because of jealousy toward Benjamin (35:18–22). Also, the family was separating. After Joseph was sold into slavery, Judah left the family, associated with the Canaanites, and married a Canaanite woman (38:1–3). Simeon followed Judah's lead by also taking a Canaanite wife (46:10). With these jealousies and divisions, Jacob's family, the family of God's eternal promises (12:1–3), was becoming more and more like the pagan Canaanite community around them.

But the Lord did not let the troubles of this family thwart His good purposes. He had promised to shape a great nation from it—a nation that would spread His blessings to the whole earth (12:1–3). Jacob's family was divided, but God worked the events so that the family was reunited. Through a remarkable series of circumstances, God elevated Joseph from the position of slave and prisoner to administrator of Egypt, Pharaoh's right-hand man. God transformed the evil plans of Joseph's brothers into something good (37:19–28; 50:20). As the administrator of the Egyptians' plan to survive the coming famine, Joseph could save the lives of many people in the world. With his new name, Zaphnath-Paaneah (“The

God Speaks and Lives”), and his remarkable story, Joseph could witness to these people about the power and goodness of the living God (41:45).

But God's good plan did not end there. God used the physical hardship of famine to reunite Israel's family. When Joseph's brothers saw him, not only did they express sorrow for their former evil actions (42:21; 45:5), but they demonstrated a new loyalty to their other half brother, Benjamin. Judah, who had left the family before (38:1), begged for Benjamin's life, even at the cost of his own freedom (44:18–34). The reunion of the family and the pressures of famine prompted Jacob to move closer to Egypt, to the land of Goshen. God used the evil attitudes of the Egyptians—their hatred of shepherds—to isolate the family there (43:32; 46:34). In this isolation, God could develop a nation dedicated to worshiping and obeying Him.

In all the exceptional events of Joseph's story, God remained faithful to His promises to Abraham (12:1–3). He created a great nation out of Jacob's family through a maze of human jealousy, family divisions, and racial hatred (50:20).



Joseph's rise to power in Egypt is ultimately about God's faithfulness to His promises (12:1–3).

Joseph Recognised by His Brothers, Gerard, Francois Pascal Simon, Baron/Musee des Beaux-Arts, Angers, France/Giraudon/The Bridgeman Art Library

aloud, and the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard it.

³Then Joseph said to his brothers, “*I am Joseph*; does my father still live?” But his brothers could not answer him, for they were dismayed in his presence.

⁴And Joseph said to his brothers, “Please come near to me.” So they came near. Then he said: “*I am Joseph* your brother, ^dwhom you sold into Egypt. ⁵But now,

³ *c* Gen. 43:27;

Acts 7:13

⁴ *d* Gen. 37:28; 39:1;

Ps. 105:17

⁵ *e* Gen. 45:7, 8;

50:20; Ps. 105:16, 17

⁶ *f* Gen. 43:1;

47:4, 13

⁷ *g* Gen. 45:5; 50:20

¹ *remnant*

do not therefore be grieved or angry with yourselves because you sold me here; ^efor God sent me before you to preserve life.

⁶For these two years the ^ffamine *has been* in the land, and *there are* still five years in which *there will be* neither plowing nor harvesting. ⁷And God ^gsent me before you to preserve a ¹posterity for you in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. ⁸So now *it was* not you

45:3 I am Joseph: Joseph must have said this in Hebrew and not in Egyptian (42:23). Still, the brothers could not believe their ears. They had sold Joseph as a slave. He would certainly be dead. Could it be true? The Egyptian lord who held their lives in his hands was their brother!

45:4 Joseph realized that his physical appearance, his Egyptian manner, his high position, and his total power over them all conspired to make his words unbelievable. He told them to **come** closer so that they could recognize his face and voice. Joseph identified himself as the brother whom they had **sold**. Fear overcame Joseph's brothers again. Would Joseph take revenge?

45:5 Joseph used kindness to calm his brothers' fears. **God sent me before you to preserve life:** God had worked through the brothers' evil actions and hateful attitudes to preserve not only Jacob's family, but also the lives of many in the ancient world.

45:8 Joseph repeated that **God** had accomplished His good purpose through the evil actions of his brothers. **a father to Pharaoh:** Joseph was an advisor to Pharaoh much as a father might be an advisor to his son.

who sent me here, but ^hGod; and He has made me ⁱa father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ^jruler throughout all the land of Egypt.

⁹“Hurry and go up to my father, and say to him, ‘Thus says your son Joseph: “God has made me lord of all Egypt; come down to me, do not ²tarry. ¹⁰^k You shall dwell in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near to me, you and your children, your children’s children, your flocks and your herds, and all that you have. ¹¹There I will ^lprovide for you, lest you and your household, and all that you have, come to poverty; for *there are* still five years of famine.”’”

¹²“And behold, your eyes and the eyes of my brother Benjamin see that *it is* ^mmy mouth that speaks to you. ¹³So you shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt, and of all that you have seen; and you shall hurry and ⁿbring my father down here.”

¹⁴Then he fell on his brother Benjamin’s neck and wept, and Benjamin wept on his neck. ¹⁵Moreover he ^okissed all his brothers and wept over them, and after that his brothers talked with him.

¹⁶Now the report of it was heard in Pharaoh’s house, saying, “Joseph’s brothers have come.” So it pleased Pharaoh and his servants well. ¹⁷And Pharaoh said to Joseph, “Say to your brothers, ‘Do this: Load your animals and depart; go to the land of Canaan. ¹⁸Bring your father and your households and come to me; I will give you the best of the land of Egypt, and you will eat ^pthe ³fat of the land. ¹⁹Now you are commanded—do this: Take carts out of the land of Egypt for your little ones and your wives; bring your father and come. ²⁰Also do not be concerned about your goods, for the best of all the land of Egypt is yours.”’”

⁸ ^h [Rom. 8:28]
/ Judg. 17:10; Is.
22:21 / Gen. 41:43;
42:6
⁹ ² delay
¹⁰ ^k Gen. 46:28, 34;
47:1, 6; Ex. 9:26
¹¹ ^l Gen. 47:12
¹² ^m Gen. 42:23
¹³ ⁿ Gen. 46:6-28;
Acts 7:14
¹⁵ ^o Gen. 48:10
¹⁸ ^p Gen. 27:28;
47:6; Deut. 32:9-
14 ³ The choicest
produce

²¹ ^q Gen. 45:19;
46:5 ⁴ wagons
²² ^r 2 Kin. 5:5
²³ ^s Gen. 43:34
²⁶ ^t Job 29:24; Ps.
126:1; Luke 24:11, 41
²⁷ ^u Judg. 15:19; Is.
40:29

CHAPTER 46

¹ ^a Gen. 21:31, 33;
26:32, 33; 28:10
^b Gen. 26:24, 25;
28:13; 31:42; 32:9
² ^c Gen. 15:1; 22:11;
31:11; Num. 12:6;
Job 33:14, 15
³ ^d Gen. 17:1; 28:13
^e Gen. 12:2; Ex. 1:9;
12:37; Deut. 26:5
⁴ ^f Gen. 28:15;
31:3; 48:21; Ex.
3:12 ^g Gen. 15:16;
50:12, 24, 25; Ex. 3:8
^h Gen. 50:1 ¹ Will
close your eyes
when you die

²¹ Then the sons of Israel did so; and Joseph gave them ^qcarts, ⁴ according to the command of Pharaoh, and he gave them provisions for the journey. ²² He gave to all of them, to each man, ^rchanges of garments; but to Benjamin he gave three hundred *pieces* of silver and ^sfive changes of garments. ²³ And he sent to his father these *things*: ten donkeys loaded with the good things of Egypt, and ten female donkeys loaded with grain, bread, and food for his father for the journey. ²⁴ So he sent his brothers away, and they departed; and he said to them, “See that you do not become troubled along the way.”

²⁵ Then they went up out of Egypt, and came to the land of Canaan to Jacob their father. ²⁶ And they told him, saying, “Joseph is still alive, and he is governor over all the land of Egypt.” ^t And Jacob’s heart stood still, because he did not believe them. ²⁷ But when they told him all the words which Joseph had said to them, and when he saw the carts which Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit ^uof Jacob their father revived. ²⁸ Then Israel said, “*It is enough. Joseph my son is still alive. I will go and see him before I die.*”

Jacob’s Journey to Egypt

46 So Israel took his journey with all that he had, and came to “Beersheba, and offered sacrifices ^bto the God of his father Isaac. ² Then God spoke to Israel ^cin the visions of the night, and said, “Jacob, Jacob!”

And he said, “Here I am.”

³ So He said, “*I am God, ^dthe God of your father; do not fear to go down to Egypt, for I will ^emake of you a great nation there. ⁴I will go down with you to Egypt, and I will also surely ^fbring you up *again*; and ^hJoseph ¹will put his hand on your eyes.*”

45:9, 10 Joseph told his brothers that they must live in Egypt during the famine. This was God’s plan, for He had told Abram that his descendants would live in a foreign land (see 15:13–16).

45:11 I will provide for you: With his family close by, Joseph could make sure his family had enough during the famine.

45:12 my mouth: Joseph still had to convince his brothers that he was really their brother.

45:14 Benjamin was Joseph’s only full brother. Finally they were reunited.

45:18 Because Joseph was preserving the nation from destruction, Pharaoh was providing the **best** for Joseph.

45:21 Joseph sent his brothers back to his father with the Pharaoh’s blessing and many gifts.

45:22 Benjamin, the brother who was at the greatest risk (ch. 44) now received the greatest blessing.

45:26–28 When the brothers told their father the great news concerning Joseph, Jacob was stunned. But he revived, saw the gifts, and believed his sons. **before I die:** These words are triumphant. Jacob could see his favorite son, whom he had believed to be dead.

46:1 Jacob’s journey to Egypt began a 400-year sojourn away from the Promised Land of Canaan. Jacob entered Egypt with his 12 sons,

including Joseph; 400 years later Jacob’s descendants would leave Egypt as a small nation. Jacob went to the site that was so important to both his grandfather Abram (21:22–34) and his father Isaac (26:26–33). At **Beersheba**, Jacob (or Israel) had left his family to go to Haran (28:10). **offered sacrifices:** Jacob worshiped God at Beersheba. He consecrated his family to the Lord before he left the Promised Land. **46:2 God** appeared to **Israel** for the seventh time (35:1, 9). The fact that the names **Israel** and **Jacob** are used interchangeably indicates that the earlier negative connotations of the name Jacob have faded (31:11; 32:28; 35:10). Instead of meaning that Jacob “Supplants,” the name Jacob now means that God “Supplants.”

46:3 God had forbidden Isaac at a previous time to go **to Egypt** (26:2), and Isaac’s father Abram had had an unpleasant experience in Egypt (12:10–20). Despite Joseph’s gifts and words, Jacob feared what would happen in Egypt. Jacob’s family numbered 70 (v. 27). Out of this family, God would bring a **great nation** (Ex. 1:1–7). Again, God renewed His promises to Jacob (35:11).

46:4 go down with you: God promised to be with His people—even in a foreign land. **Joseph will put:** Jacob’s life was nearing its end. But God promised Jacob that his beloved Joseph, who he had thought was dead, would be with him at his deathbed.

⁵Then ⁱJacob arose from Beersheba; and the sons of Israel carried their father Jacob, their little ones, and their wives, in the ²carts ^jwhich Pharaoh had sent to carry him. ⁶So they took their livestock and their goods, which they had acquired in the land of Canaan, and went to Egypt, ^kJacob and all his descendants with him. ⁷His sons and his sons' sons, his daughters and his sons' daughters, and all his descendants he brought with him to Egypt.

⁸Now ^lthese were the names of the children of Israel, Jacob and his sons, who went to Egypt: ^mReuben was Jacob's firstborn. ⁹The ⁿsons of Reuben were Hanoah, Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi. ¹⁰^oThe sons of Simeon were ³Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, ⁴Jachin, ⁵Zohar, and Shaul, the son of a Canaanite woman. ¹¹The sons of ^pLevi were Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. ¹²The sons of ^qJudah were ^rEr, Onan, Shelah, Perez, and Zerah (but Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan). ^sThe sons of Perez were Hezron and Hamul. ¹³The sons of Issachar were Tola, ⁶Puvah, ⁷Job, and Shimron. ¹⁴The ^tsons of Zebulun were Sered, Elon, and Jahleel. ¹⁵These were the ^usons of Leah, whom she bore to Jacob in Padan Aram, with his daughter Dinah. All the persons, his sons and his daughters, were thirty-three.

¹⁶The sons of Gad were ⁸Ziphion, Haggi, Shuni, ⁹Ezbon, Eri, ¹Arodi, and Areli. ¹⁷^vThe sons of Asher were Jimnah, Ishuah, Isui, Beriah, and Serah, their sister. And the sons of Beriah were Heber and Malchiel. ¹⁸^wThese were the sons of Zilpah, ^xwhom Laban gave to Leah his daughter; and these she bore to Jacob: sixteen persons.

¹⁹The ^ysons of Rachel, ^zJacob's wife,

⁵ Gen. 47:9; Acts 7:15 / Gen. 45:19-21
² wagons
⁶ k Deut. 26:5; Josh. 24:4; Ps. 105:23; Is. 52:4; Acts 7:15
⁸ l Ex. 1:1-4 ^m Num. 26:4, 5; 1 Chr. 2:1
⁹ n Ex. 6:14
¹⁰ o Ex. 6:15; Num. 26:12 ³ Nemuel, 1 Chr. 4:24 ⁴ Jarib, 1 Chr. 4:24 ⁵ Zerah, 1 Chr. 4:24
¹¹ p Ex. 6:16, 17; 1 Chr. 6:1, 16
¹² q Num. 26:19, 20; 1 Chr. 2:3; 4:21
^r Gen. 38:3, 7, 10
^s Gen. 38:29
¹³ t Puah, Num. 26:23; 1 Chr. 7:1
⁶ Jashub, Num. 26:24; 1 Chr. 7:1
¹⁴ u Num. 26:26
¹⁵ v Gen. 35:23; 49:31
¹⁶ w Sam., LXX Zephon and Num. 26:15 ⁹ Ozni, Num. 26:16 ¹ Arod, Num. 26:17
¹⁷ x Num. 26:44-47; 1 Chr. 7:30
¹⁸ y Gen. 30:10; 37:2 ^x Gen. 29:24
¹⁹ z Gen. 35:24
² Gen. 44:27
²⁰ a Gen. 41:45, 50-52; 48:1
²¹ b 1 Chr. 7:6; 8:1 ^c Num. 26:38
^d Num. 26:39; 1 Chr. 7:12 ² Hupham, Num. 26:39
²³ e Shuham, Num. 26:42
²⁴ f Num. 26:48
⁴ Jahziel, 1 Chr. 7:13
⁵ Shallum, 1 Chr. 7:13
²⁵ g Gen. 30:5, 7
⁹ Gen. 29:29
²⁶ h Ex. 1:5 ¹ Gen. 35:11

were Joseph and Benjamin. ²⁰^aAnd to Joseph in the land of Egypt were born Manasseh and Ephraim, whom Asenath, the daughter of Poti-Pherah priest of On, bore to him. ²¹^bThe sons of Benjamin were Belah, Becher, Ashbel, Gera, Naaman, ^cEhi, Rosh, ^dMuphim, ²Huphim, and Ard. ²²These were the sons of Rachel, who were born to Jacob: fourteen persons in all.

²³The son of Dan was ³Hushim. ²⁴^eThe sons of Naphtali were ⁴Jahzeel, Guni, Jezer, and ⁵Shillem. ²⁵^fThese were the sons of Bilhah, ^gwhom Laban gave to Rachel his daughter, and she bore these to Jacob: seven persons in all.

²⁶^hAll the persons who went with Jacob to Egypt, who came from his body, ⁱbesides Jacob's sons' wives, were sixty-six persons in all. ²⁷And the sons of Joseph who were born to him in Egypt were two persons. ^jAll the persons of the house of Jacob who went to Egypt were seventy.

Jacob Settles in Goshen

²⁸Then he sent Judah before him to Joseph, ^kto point out before him the way to Goshen. And they came ^lto the land of Goshen. ²⁹So Joseph made ready his ^mchariot and went up to Goshen to meet his father Israel; and he presented himself to him, and ⁿfell on his neck and wept on his neck a good while.

³⁰And Israel said to Joseph, ^o“Now let me die, since I have seen your face, because you are still alive.”

³¹Then Joseph said to his brothers and

²⁷ / Ex. 1:5; Deut. 10:22; Acts 7:14 ²⁸ k Gen. 31:21
¹ Gen. 47:1 ²⁹ m Gen. 41:43 ⁿ Gen. 45:14, 15
³⁰ o Luke 2:29, 30

46:8–27 these were the names: The listing of the family of Jacob is not only a remarkable historical document, but also a source of pride. From this family would come the whole nation of Israel—God's people who would enter the Promised Land according to His promise (15:13–21). The order of the sons of Jacob is given according to their birth mothers (as in 35:23–26; their birth order is given in 29:31—30:24; 35:16–22).

46:8–15 First are the sons of Leah: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun, along with their sons.

46:8 Reuben: The identifying phrase, **Jacob's firstborn**, which should have been a mark of great pride, became a mark of sadness. Reuben lost the right of the firstborn because of his sin with Bilhah (35:22; 49:3, 4).

46:10 Shaul, the son of a Canaanite woman: This phrase indicates that marrying a Canaanite was unusual in Jacob's family. Only Simeon and Judah married Canaanite women (Joseph's wife was Egyptian).

46:11 The sons of **Levi, Gershon, Kohath, and Merari** became the founders of the Levitical families (Ex. 6:16–19). The sons of Kohath in particular became the founders of the priestly family, from which Aaron and Moses descended (Ex. 6:20–25).

46:12 The story of **Judah's** family, including the untimely deaths of **Er and Onan**, is found in ch. 38. **Shelah** was the only surviving son

of Judah by his Canaanite wife Shua. The other two sons, **Perez** and **Zerah**, were born to Tamar, his daughter-in-law.

46:15 Dinah's sad story is reported in ch. 34.

46:26 The total is **sixty-six**, and when Jacob, Joseph, and Joseph's two sons are added, the grand total is **seventy**. Ancient Israelites regarded the number 70 as a token of God's special blessing on them.

46:28 Jacob treated **Judah** as the leader among the brothers (44:18). Normally the firstborn, Reuben, would have been expected to lead (46:8).

46:29 Joseph, the great leader of Egypt, went to meet his family in **Goshen**, where they would settle.

46:30 Now let me die: Jacob's reunion with his son Joseph was the crowning event of his long life. Jacob lived for 17 more years (47:28).

46:31–34 These verses show Joseph's leadership ability. He accomplished his goals by maintaining a genuinely deferential attitude to those in authority, by skill in making suggestions, and by a knowledge of the customs of the people. The Egyptians scorned **shepherds** (43:32). **Abomination** is a term referring to the strongest revulsion and distaste. God used the racial and ethnic prejudice of the Egyptians as a way of preserving the ethnic and spiritual identity of His own people. Jacob's family was already intermarrying with Canaanites (ch. 38) and was in danger of losing its identity as the people of God.

to his father's household, ¹"I will go up and tell Pharaoh, and say to him, 'My brothers and those of my father's house, who *were* in the land of Canaan, have come to me. ³²And the men *are* ^qshepherds, for their occupation has been to feed livestock; and they have brought their flocks, their herds, and all that they have.' ³³So it shall be, when Pharaoh calls you and says, ^r"What is your occupation?" ³⁴that you shall say, 'Your servants' ^soccupation has been with livestock ^tfrom our youth even till now, both we *and* also our fathers,' that you may dwell in the land of Goshen; for every shepherd is ^uan ⁶abomination to the Egyptians."

47 Then Joseph ^awent and told Pharaoh, and said, "My father and my brothers, their flocks and their herds and all that they possess, have come from the land of Canaan; and indeed they *are* in ^bthe land of Goshen." ²And he took five men from among his brothers and ^cpresented them to Pharaoh. ³Then Pharaoh said to his brothers, ^d"What is your occupation?"

And they said to Pharaoh, ^e"Your servants *are* shepherds, both we *and* also our fathers." ⁴And they said to Pharaoh, ^f"We have come to dwell in the land, because your servants have no pasture for their flocks, ^gfor the famine *is* severe in the land of Canaan. Now therefore, please let your servants ^hdwell in the land of Goshen."

⁵Then Pharaoh spoke to Joseph, saying, "Your father and your brothers have come to you. ⁶ⁱThe land of Egypt *is* before you. Have your father and brothers dwell in the best of the land; let them dwell ^jin the land of Goshen. And if you know *any* competent men among them, then make them chief herdsmen over my livestock."

⁷Then Joseph brought in his father

31 ^p Gen. 47:1
32 ^q Gen. 47:3
33 ^r Gen. 47:2, 3
34 ^s Gen. 47:3
^t Gen. 30:35;
34:5; 37:17 ^u Gen.
43:32; Ex. 8:26
⁶ loathsome

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1 ^a Gen. 46:31
^b Gen. 45:10; 46:28;
50:8
2 ^c Acts 7:13
3 ^d Gen. 46:33; Jon.
1:8 ^e Gen. 46:32, 34;
Ex. 2:17, 19
4 ^f Gen. 15:13; Deut.
26:5; Ps. 105:23
^g Gen. 43:1; Acts
7:11 ^h Gen. 46:34
6 ⁱ Gen. 20:15; 45:10,
18; 47:11 ^j Gen. 47:4

7 ^k Gen. 47:10;
48:15, 20; 2 Sam.
14:22; 1 Kin. 8:66;
Heb. 7:7
9 ^l Ps. 39:12; [Heb.
11:9, 13] ^m Gen.
47:28 ⁿ [Job 14:1]
^o Gen. 5:5; 11:10, 11;
25:7, 8; 35:28 ¹ Lit.
sojourning
10 ^p Gen. 47:7
11 ^q Ex. 1:11; 12:37
^r Gen. 47:6, 27
12 ^s Gen. 45:11;
50:21
13 ^t Gen. 41:30;
Acts 7:11
14 ^u Gen. 41:56;
42:6
15 ^v Gen. 47:19
17 ² supplied

Jacob and set him before Pharaoh; and Jacob ^kblessed Pharaoh. ⁸Pharaoh said to Jacob, "How old *are* you?"

⁹And Jacob said to Pharaoh, ^l"The days of the years of my ¹pilgrimage *are* ^mone hundred and thirty years; ⁿfew and evil have been the days of the years of my life, and ^othey have not attained to the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage." ¹⁰So Jacob ^pblessed Pharaoh, and went out from before Pharaoh.

¹¹And Joseph situated his father and his brothers, and gave them a possession in the land of Egypt, in the best of the land, in the land of ^qRameses, ^ras Pharaoh had commanded. ¹²Then Joseph provided ^shis father, his brothers, and all his father's household with bread, according to the number in *their* families.

Joseph Deals with the Famine

¹³Now *there was* no bread in all the land; for the famine *was* very severe, ^tso that the land of Egypt and the land of Canaan languished because of the famine. ¹⁴^uAnd Joseph gathered up all the money that was found in the land of Egypt and in the land of Canaan, for the grain which they bought; and Joseph brought the money into Pharaoh's house.

¹⁵So when the money failed in the land of Egypt and in the land of Canaan, all the Egyptians came to Joseph and said, "Give us bread, for ^vwhy should we die in your presence? For the money has failed."

¹⁶Then Joseph said, "Give your livestock, and I will give you *bread* for your livestock, if the money is gone." ¹⁷So they brought their livestock to Joseph, and Joseph gave them bread *in exchange* for the horses, the flocks, the cattle of the herds, and for the donkeys. Thus he ²fed them with bread *in exchange* for all their livestock that year.

47:1–6 Joseph's plan worked. Pharaoh let Jacob's family live in Goshen (see 46:31) because the Egyptians detested **shepherds** (see 46:31–34).

47:6 Goshen is an area in the Nile delta that is well watered and ideally suited for the shepherding family of Jacob.

47:7–10 The presentation of Joseph's father **before Pharaoh** must have been a grand occasion. But surprisingly, **Jacob blessed Pharaoh** (vv. 7, 10). Pharaoh as the host might have thought of pronouncing a blessing on Jacob because of his great admiration for Joseph. But instead the visitor blessed the host in the name of the living God! Literally Jacob obeyed God's command to Abram's descendants to "be a blessing" (see 12:2).

47:8 How old: Pharaoh's question suggests that the long ages of the patriarchal family were truly exceptional, even for this period. Jacob responded in humility and honesty. Jacob had experienced sadness or **evil**. Years of rivalry with his brother Esau and struggle with Laban had marked the early part of his life. For long years he grieved the supposed death of his son Joseph. His 130 years were fewer than the 175 years of Abraham (25:7) and the 180 years of Isaac

(35:28). But his life was not over. He would live to the age of 147 and would die in Egypt (47:28).

47:11 With the Pharaoh's blessing, Joseph arranged the perfect place for his family members to live.

47:12 provided . . . bread: As the one in charge of the distribution of food during the famine, Joseph made sure that his family was well supplied.

47:13 Now there was no bread: The famine was severe even in Egypt.

47:14 The money was quantities of silver. Because the stored foods belonged to the Egyptian state, the state's power and wealth grew immensely. The Egyptians gave up their silver, their cattle, and their property in the process of buying food to keep themselves alive. **Canaan** also continued to suffer from the famine.

47:15–19 When they ran out of **money** (silver), the people brought their **livestock** (v. 17) to purchase grain. When they no longer had livestock they sold their **land**. In this way the collective wealth of Canaan and Egypt went into Pharaoh's treasury.

¹⁸When that year had ended, they came to him the next year and said to him, “We will not hide from my lord that our money is gone; my lord also has our herds of livestock. There is nothing left in the sight of my lord but our bodies and our lands. ¹⁹Why should we die before your eyes, both we and our land? Buy us and our land for bread, and we and our land will be servants of Pharaoh; give us seed, that we may ¹⁰live and not die, that the land may not be desolate.”

²⁰Then Joseph ¹¹bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh; for every man of the Egyptians sold his field, because the famine was severe upon them. So the land became Pharaoh’s. ²¹And as for the people, he ³moved them into the cities, from one end of the borders of Egypt to the other end. ²²“Only the land of the ²priests he did not buy; for the priests had rations *allotted to them* by Pharaoh, and they ate their rations which Pharaoh gave them; therefore they did not sell their lands.

²³Then Joseph said to the people, “Indeed I have bought you and your land this day for Pharaoh. Look, *here is seed* for you, and you shall sow the land. ²⁴And it shall come to pass in the harvest that you shall give one-fifth to Pharaoh. Four-fifths shall be your own, as seed for the field and for your food, for those of your households and as food for your little ones.”

²⁵So they said, “You have saved ⁴our lives; let us find favor in the sight of my lord, and we will be Pharaoh’s servants.” ²⁶And Joseph made it a law over the land of Egypt to this day, *that* Pharaoh should have one-fifth, ⁵except for the land of the priests only, *which* did not become Pharaoh’s.

¹⁹ ^w Gen. 43:8
²⁰ ^x Jer. 32:43
²¹ ³ So with MT, Tg.; Sam., LXX, Vg. *made the people virtual slaves*
²² ^y Lev. 25:34; Ezra 7:24 ^z Gen. 41:45
²⁵ ^a Gen. 33:15
²⁶ ^b Gen. 47:22

²⁷ ^c Gen. 47:11
^d Gen. 17:6; 26:4; 35:11; 46:3; Ex. 1:7; Deut. 26:5; Acts 7:17
²⁹ ^e Deut. 31:14; 1 Kin. 2:1 ^f Gen. 24:2-4 ^g Gen. 24:49; Josh. 2:14 ^h Gen. 50:25
³⁰ ⁱ 2 Sam. 19:37
^j Gen. 49:29; 50:5-13; Heb. 11:21
³¹ ^k Gen. 48:2; 1 Kin. 1:47; Heb. 11:21

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¹ ^a Gen. 41:51, 56; 46:20; 50:23; Josh. 14:4
² ⁱ Collected his strength
³ ^b Gen. 43:14; 49:25 ^c Gen. 28:13, 19; 35:6, 9
⁴ ^d Gen. 46:3 ^e Gen. 35:12; Ex. 6:8 ^f Gen. 17:8
⁵ ^g Gen. 41:50; 46:20; 48:8; Josh. 13:7; 14:4

Joseph's Vow to Jacob

²⁷So Israel ^cdwelt in the land of Egypt, in the country of Goshen; and they had possessions there and ^dgrew and multiplied exceedingly. ²⁸And Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years. So the length of Jacob’s life was one hundred and forty-seven years. ²⁹When the time ^edrew near that Israel must die, he called his son Joseph and said to him, “Now if I have found favor in your sight, please ^fput your hand under my thigh, and ^gdeal kindly and truly with me. ^hPlease do not bury me in Egypt, ³⁰but ⁱlet me lie with my fathers; you shall carry me out of Egypt and ^jbury me in their burial place.” And he said, “I will do as you have said.”

³¹Then he said, “Swear to me.” And he swore to him. So ^kIsrael bowed himself on the head of the bed.

Jacob Blesses Joseph's Sons

48 Now it came to pass after these things that Joseph was told, “Indeed your father is sick”; and he took with him his two sons, ^aManasseh and Ephraim. ²And Jacob was told, “Look, your son Joseph is coming to you”; and Israel ¹strengthened himself and sat up on the bed. ³Then Jacob said to Joseph: “God ^bAlmighty appeared to me at ^cLuz in the land of Canaan and blessed me, ⁴and said to me, ‘Behold, I will ^dmake you fruitful and multiply you, and I will make of you a multitude of people, and ^egive this land to your descendants after you ^fas an everlasting possession.’ ⁵And now your ^gtwo sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, who were born to you in the land of Egypt before I came to you in Egypt, *are* mine; as Reuben and Simeon, they shall

47:20 The Pharaoh’s ownership of **the land** would eventually lead to gross abuses of power. For the abuse of the Israelites, see the Book of Exodus.

47:23–26 With the land now in the possession of the state, Joseph imposed a system of taxation on the people. The state supplied the seed for planting, but one-fifth of the proceeds became the property of Pharaoh. This became standard practice in Egypt (v. 26). The people responded with gratitude (v. 25) because Joseph had saved their lives.

47:27 Jacob’s family did not have to sell their **possessions** in order to acquire food. Since Joseph controlled all the supplies, he gave his family what they needed.

47:28 seventeen years: Even though Jacob had been willing to die when he rejoined his son Joseph (see 45:28; 46:30), God gave him a good number of years to enjoy his family.

47:29–31 Jacob wanted to do a few more things before his death. First, he wanted Joseph to promise to bury him in Canaan. Second, he wanted to bless each of Joseph’s sons (see chs. 48; 49).

47:29 your hand under my thigh: The action suggests a most solemn and binding promise (for the same sign between Abraham and his servant, see 24:2). **deal kindly and truly with me:** The expression means “demonstrate to me the utmost covenant loyalty.” In other words be faithful, just as God has been faithful to His promises.

do not bury me in Egypt: Jacob asked to be buried in Canaan. He demonstrated his vigorous faith in God’s promises by asking to be buried in the land promised to his descendants.

48:1 Joseph knew the end of Jacob’s life was approaching (47:29), but the news came that he was **sick**. This chapter continues a theme in Genesis of **two** competing sons. For Cain and Abel, see ch. 4; for Jacob and Esau, see chs. 25–28; for Perez and Zerah, see 38:27–30. Often the younger supplants the older. God works in ways different from the ordinary and expected course of events.

48:3 God Almighty: This is the fifth time the name El Shaddai is found in Genesis (17:1; 28:3; 35:11; 43:14; 49:25). **Luz** is the older name for Bethel. Jacob recalled God’s appearances to him (28:10–15, 19; 35:6–13) and God’s promises to his family.

48:5–7 The **two sons** of Joseph were Manasseh and Ephraim (41:50–52). Jacob reversed their birth order. He also said that they were as much his sons as were **Reuben and Simeon**, his first and second sons (29:32, 33). Because of the outrageous acts of Reuben (35:22) and Simeon (34:25), both of them had fallen from favor. Levi was also implicated in the outrage of Simeon (34:25). Therefore the rights and privileges of the firstborn son were passed down to two other sons, Judah (49:8–12) and Joseph (49:22–26). Reuben as the firstborn could have received a double portion of the father’s inheritance. But Jacob gave the double share to Joseph (v. 22).

be mine. ⁶Your ²offspring ³whom you beget after them shall be yours; they will be called by the name of their brothers in their inheritance. ⁷But as for me, when I came from Padan, ^hRachel died beside me in the land of Canaan on the way, when *there was* but a little distance to go to Ephrath; and I buried her there on the way to Ephrath (that is, Bethlehem)."

⁸Then Israel saw Joseph's sons, and said, "Who *are* these?"

⁹Joseph said to his father, "They *are* my sons, whom God has given me in this place."

And he said, "Please bring them to me, and ⁱI will bless them." ¹⁰Now ^jthe eyes of Israel were dim with age, *so that* he could not see. Then Joseph brought them near him, and he ^kkissed them and embraced them. ¹¹And Israel said to Joseph, ^l"I had not thought to see your face; but in fact, God has also shown me your offspring!"

¹²So Joseph brought them from beside his knees, and he bowed down with his face to the earth. ¹³And Joseph took them both, Ephraim with his right hand toward Israel's left hand, and Manasseh with his left hand toward Israel's right hand, and brought *them* near him. ¹⁴Then Israel stretched out his right hand and ^mlaid *it* on Ephraim's head, who *was* the younger, and his left hand on Manasseh's head, ⁿguiding his hands knowingly, for Manasseh *was* the ^ofirstborn. ¹⁵And ^phe blessed Joseph, and said:

"God, ^qbefore whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked,
The God who has fed me all my life
long to this day,

¹⁶ The Angel ^rwho has redeemed me
from all evil,
Bless the lads;

⁶ ² children ³ Who are born to you
⁷ ^h Gen. 35:9, 16, 19, 20
⁹ ⁱ Gen. 27:4; 47:15
¹⁰ ^j Gen. 27:1;
1 Sam. 3:2 ^k Gen. 27:27; 45:15; 50:1
¹¹ ^l Gen. 45:26
¹⁴ ^m Matt. 19:15;
Mark 10:16 ⁿ Gen. 48:19 ^o Gen. 41:51, 52; Josh. 17:1
¹⁵ ^p Gen. 47:7, 10; 49:24; [Heb. 11:21]
^q Gen. 17:3; 24:40;
2 Kin. 20:3
¹⁶ ^r Gen. 22:11, 15-18; 28:13-15; 31:11; [Ps. 34:22; 121:7]

^s Amos 9:12; Acts 15:17 ^t Num. 26:34, 37
¹⁷ ^u Gen. 48:14
¹⁹ ^v Gen. 48:14
^w Num. 1:33, 35; Deut. 33:17
²⁰ ^x Ruth 4:11, 12
²¹ ^y Gen. 28:15; 46:4; 50:24
²² ^z Gen. 14:7; Josh. 24:32; John 4:5
^a Gen. 34:28 ⁴ Lit. shoulder

CHAPTER 49

¹ ^a Deut. 33:1, 6-25; [Amos 3:7] ^b Num. 24:14; [Deut. 4:30]; Is. 2:2; 39:6; Jer. 23:20; Heb. 1:2

Let ^smy name be named upon them,
And the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac;
And let them ^tgrow into a multitude in the midst of the earth."

¹⁷Now when Joseph saw that his father ^ulaid his right hand on the head of Ephraim, it displeased him; so he took hold of his father's hand to remove it from Ephraim's head to Manasseh's head. ¹⁸And Joseph said to his father, "Not so, my father, for this *one is* the firstborn; put your right hand on his head."

¹⁹But his father refused and said, ^v"I know, my son, I know. He also shall become a people, and he also shall be great; but truly ^whis younger brother shall be greater than he, and his descendants shall become a multitude of nations."

²⁰So he blessed them that day, saying, ^x"By you Israel will bless, saying, 'May God make you as Ephraim and as Manasseh!'" And thus he set Ephraim before Manasseh.

²¹Then Israel said to Joseph, "Behold, I am dying, but ^yGod will be with you and bring you back to the land of your fathers. ²²Moreover ^zI have given to you one ⁴portion above your brothers, which I took from the hand ^aof the Amorite with my sword and my bow."

Jacob's Last Words to His Sons

49 And Jacob called his sons and said, "Gather together, that I may ^atell you what shall befall you ^bin the last days:

² "Gather together and hear, you sons of Jacob,
And listen to Israel your father.

Joseph's two sons are then counted with their uncles as founders of the tribes of Israel.

48:7 Rachel died beside me: The aged Jacob remembered the great love of his life, Rachel, who died giving birth to Benjamin.

48:11 I had not thought to see: Jacob recalled again his grief at the thought of Joseph's death and his joy at being able to see him again in this life (46:29). Now he could see Joseph's sons as well!

48:12-14 Joseph presented his sons to his father in an act of humility and respect. He placed his sons so that his father's right hand would rest on the head of the older son and the left hand on the younger. But Jacob deliberately reversed his hands, putting Ephraim first.

48:15 In his blessing, Jacob reaffirmed his great faith in the living God. Despite the self-serving acts of his youth, Jacob's faith had matured. Jacob used the definite article with the word **God** to emphasize "the Genuine Deity" (as in 6:2; 22:1; 27:28; 31:11; 46:3). He identified God as the One whom Abraham and Isaac served.

48:16 The Angel is an abbreviated way of referring to the Angel of the Lord (16:7; 22:11; 24:7). **my name:** Jacob wanted Joseph's two sons to inherit the blessing God gave to Abraham, Isaac, and himself.

48:17 Joseph realized that his father's right hand was on the head of the younger boy, and he attempted to rearrange his father's hands. But despite his dimmed eyesight, Jacob knew completely what he was doing. Once again in Genesis, God overturned the expected order of things. The older would serve the younger—just as Jacob himself had been elevated over his older brother so long ago (27:1—28:9).

48:20 as Ephraim and as Manasseh: Jacob recited the names of Joseph's sons with the youngest first. From then on, Joseph's two sons were known in that order.

48:21 Jacob promised Joseph that he would return to the land of Canaan. The promise was fulfilled after Joseph's death (see 50:24–26).

48:22 one portion above: By blessing the two sons of Joseph on the same level as his own sons, Jacob gave to Joseph the double share. **from the hand of the Amorite:** This promise would be fulfilled when the Israelites returned to Canaan to possess the land God had given them (see 15:12–21).

49:1 in the last days: Jacob described the future for his descendants.

- 3 “Reuben, you are ^cmy firstborn,
My might and the beginning of my
strength,
The excellency of dignity and the
excellency of power.
- 4 Unstable as water, you shall not
excel,
Because you ^dwent up to your
father’s bed;
Then you defiled it—
He went up to my couch.
- 5 “Simeon and Levi *are* brothers;
Instruments of ¹cruelty *are in* their
dwelling place.
- 6 ^eLet not my soul enter their council;
Let not my honor be united ^fto their
assembly;
^gFor in their anger they slew a man,
And in their self-will they
²hamstrung an ox.
- 7 Cursed *be* their anger, for *it is* fierce;
And their wrath, for it is cruel!
^hI will divide them in Jacob
And scatter them in Israel.
- 8 “Judah, ⁱyou *are he* whom your
brothers shall praise;
^jYour hand *shall be* on the neck of
your enemies;
^kYour father’s children shall bow
down before you.
- 9 Judah *is* ^la lion’s whelp;
From the prey, my son, you have
gone up.
^mHe ³bows down, he lies down as a
lion;
And as a lion, who shall rouse
him?
- 10 ⁿThe ⁴scepter shall not depart from
Judah,

3 ^c Gen. 29:32
4 ^d Gen. 35:22;
Deut. 27:20; 1 Chr.
5:1
5 ¹ violence
6 ^e Ps. 64:2; Prov.
1:15, 16 ^f Ps. 26:9;
Eph. 5:11 ^g Gen.
34:26 ² lamed
7 ^h Num. 18:24;
Josh. 19:1, 9; 21:1-
42; 1 Chr. 4:24-27
8 ⁱ Deut. 33:7; Rev.
5:5 / Ps. 18:40
^k Gen. 27:29; 1 Chr.
5:2
9 / Deut. 33:22;
Ezek. 19:5-7; Mic.
5:8; [Rev. 5:5]
^m Num. 23:24; 24:9
³ couches
10 ⁿ Num. 24:17;
Jer. 30:21; Matt. 1:3;
2:6; Luke 3:33; Rev.
5:5 ☆

^o Ps. 60:7 ^p Is. 11:1;
[Matt. 21:9] ^q Deut.
18:15; Ps. 2:6-9;
72:8-11; Is. 42:1,
4; 49:6; 60:1-5;
[Luke 2:30-32] ⁴ A
symbol of kingship
13 ^r Deut. 33:18,
19; Josh. 19:10, 11
^s Gen. 10:19; Josh.
11:8
14 ^t 1 Chr. 12:32
15 ^u 1 Sam. 10:9
16 ^v Gen. 30:6;
Deut. 33:22; Judg.
18:26, 27
17 ^w Judg. 18:27
18 ^x Ex. 15:2;
Ps. 25:5; 40:1-3;
119:166, 174; Is.
25:9; Mic. 7:7
19 ^y Gen. 30:11;
Deut. 33:20; 1 Chr.
5:18 ⁵ Lit. Troop
⁶ Lit. raid

- Nor ^oa lawgiver from between his
feet,
^pUntil Shiloh comes;
^qAnd to Him *shall be* the obedience of
the people.
- 11 Binding his donkey to the vine,
And his donkey’s colt to the choice
vine,
He washed his garments in wine,
And his clothes in the blood of
grapes.
- 12 His eyes *are* darker than wine,
And his teeth whiter than milk.
- 13“Zebulun ^r shall dwell by the haven of
the sea;
He *shall become* a haven for ships,
And his border shall ^sadjoin
Sidon.
- 14“Issachar ^t is a strong donkey,
Lying down between two
burdens;
- 15 He saw that rest *was* good,
And that the land *was* pleasant;
He bowed ^uhis shoulder to bear *a*
burden,
And became a band of slaves.
- 16“Dan ^v shall judge his people
As one of the tribes of Israel.
- 17^wDan shall be a serpent by the way,
A viper by the path,
That bites the horse’s heels
So that its rider shall fall backward.
- 18^xI have waited for your salvation,
O LORD!
- 19“Gad, ^y⁵ a troop shall ⁶tramp upon
him,
But he shall ⁶triumph at last.

49:3, 4 Jacob began with warm words of praise to **Reuben**, his **firstborn** son (for his birth, see 29:31, 32). But he ended with a rebuke of Reuben’s presumptuous actions with Bilhah (35:22). By going to his **father’s bed**, Reuben was attempting to solidify his claims as the firstborn son. In fact, he doomed his cause.

49:5–7 **Simeon and Levi** are linked because of the fierce and cruel revenge they took against Shechem and his people (see ch. 34). Even though Shechem had raped their sister, their vengeance was excessive, and an outrage against the sacred rite of circumcision. Because of what they did, Jacob described them as **instruments of cruelty**. Their anger was fierce and cruel, not righteous or zealous for God’s honor (vv. 6, 7). Because of their actions, they would be scattered in Israel. Later, Simeon’s allotment was scattered within the larger sphere of the tribe of Judah (Josh. 19:1–9), and Levi’s allotment was scattered in cities throughout the land (Josh. 21).

49:8 **Judah . . . shall praise**: This verse is a wordplay on the meaning of Judah’s name, “Let God Be Praised” (for the birth of Judah, see 29:35). Jacob’s praise for Judah was surpassed only by his praise for Joseph (vv. 22–26; see ch. 48). Judah rose to the leadership of the 12 sons as Jacob passed over Reuben, Simeon, and Levi. Judah’s selfless actions to save his brother Benjamin were exemplary (44:18–34), especially after the sorry episodes described in ch. 38.

49:9 The **lion** is an ancient royal symbol. It appears in Balaam’s oracle (Num. 23; 24).

49:10 The **scepter** is an ornate staff or rod that is a symbol of royal authority. A **lawgiver** is the one who issues statutes. With these words, Jacob predicted that a royal line would rise from Judah’s descendants. **Shiloh** is an obscure word, probably meaning the one “To Whom It Belongs.” That is, until the One to whom all royal authority belongs comes, the tribe of Judah will always have a lawgiver in its ranks (Is. 9:1–6). Shiloh, like Seed (3:15), is a name for the coming Messiah.

49:11, 12 The imagery in this verse describes the warfare that the Messiah will wage to establish His reign (Ps. 2; 110; Rev. 19:11–21). **Wine** recalls the color of **blood**. The colors of his **eyes** and **teeth** speak of vitality and victory. The language of this passage expresses the mystery and wonder surrounding this Coming One, Shiloh.

49:13 **Zebulun** is given precedence over his brother Issachar (vv. 14, 15; for Zebulun’s birth, see 30:19, 20). His blessing will be the northern coastlands bordering Phoenicia (cf. Josh. 18:10–16).

49:14 Jacob’s words to **Issachar** portend a heavy enslavement following a time of plenty (see Is. 9:1). For the birth of Issachar, see 30:14–18. For Issachar’s allotment, compare Josh. 19:17–23.

49:16 **Dan shall judge**: Dan’s name is related to the word meaning “judge” (for his birth, see 30:1–6).

49:17, 18 **A viper by the path**: This possibly means that some of Dan’s descendants would abandon their faith in the Lord. Yet the godly can still expect **salvation** from the Lord.

49:19 **Gad, a troop shall tramp upon him**: Although the tribe of

20^a Bread from ^z Asher *shall be* rich,
And he shall yield royal dainties.

21^a Naphtali ^a is a deer let loose;
He uses beautiful words.

22^a Joseph *is* a fruitful bough,
A fruitful bough by a well;
His branches run over the wall.

23 The archers have ^b bitterly grieved
him,

Shot *at him* and hated him.

24 But his ^c bow remained in strength,
And the arms of his hands were
⁷made strong

By the hands of ^d the Mighty God of
Jacob

^e (From there ^f is the Shepherd, ^g the
Stone of Israel),

25^h By the God of your father who will
help you,

ⁱ And by the Almighty ^j who will bless
you

With blessings of heaven above,
Blessings of the deep that lies
beneath,

Blessings of the breasts and of the
womb.

20 ^z Deut. 33:24;
Josh. 19:24-31
21 ^a Deut. 33:23
23 ^b Gen. 37:4, 24;
Ps. 118:13
24 ^c Job 29:20; Ps.
37:15 ^d Ps. 132:2,
5; Is. 1:24; 49:26
^e Gen. 45:11; 47:12
^f [Ps. 23:1; 80:1]
^g [Ps. 118:22]; Is.
28:16; [1 Pet. 2:6-8]
⁷ Or *supple*
25 ^h Gen. 28:13;
32:9; 35:3; 43:23;
50:17 ⁱ Gen. 17:1;
35:11 ^j Deut. 33:13

26 ^k Deut. 33:15;
Hab. 3:6 ^l Deut.
33:16
27 ^m Judg. 20:21, 25
ⁿ Num. 23:24; Esth.
8:11; Ezek. 39:10;
Zech. 14:1
29 ^o Gen. 15:15;
25:8; 35:29 ^p Gen.
47:30; 2 Sam. 19:37
^q Gen. 23:16-20;
50:13

26 The blessings of your father
Have excelled the blessings of my
ancestors,

^k Up to the utmost bound of the
everlasting hills.

^l They shall be on the head of Joseph,
And on the crown of the head of
him who was separate from his
brothers.

27^a Benjamin is a ^m ravenous wolf;
In the morning he shall devour the
prey,

ⁿ And at night he shall divide the
spoil.”

28 All these *are* the twelve tribes of Is-
rael, and this *is* what their father spoke
to them. And he blessed them; he blessed
each one according to his own blessing.

Jacob's Death and Burial

29 Then he charged them and said to
them: “I ^o am to be gathered to my people;
^p bury me with my fathers ^q in the cave
that *is* in the field of Ephron the Hittite,
³⁰ in the cave that *is* in the field of Mach-
pelah, which *is* before Mamre in the land

Gad will endure hardship, ultimate victory is promised. For Gad's birth, see 30:9-11.

49:20 The brief words to **Asher** were happy and hopeful. For Asher's birth, see 30:12, 13.

49:21 Naphtali: Again, the brief words promised hope and joy. For Naphtali's birth to Rachel's maid Bilhah, see 30:7, 8.

49:22 Joseph: Only the promises given to Judah (vv. 8-12) can rival the praise Jacob gave to Joseph. For Joseph's birth to Rachel, see 30:22-24; for the exaltation of Joseph's family, see ch. 48.

49:23 The imagery of **archers who shot at him** represents Joseph's personal experience at the hands of his brothers and then the Egyptians (chs. 37; 39; 40).

49:24 Jacob described Joseph's eventual triumph. Not only did Joseph have great strength of character represented by the strong **bow**, he was protected by **the Mighty God of Jacob**. This is the first of five titles that Jacob used to describe God as he blessed Joseph (vv. 24, 25). The word translated as **Mighty** is found also at Ps. 132:2, 5; Is. 1:24; 49:26; 60:16. In all of these places it serves as a name for God. Using this special term for God in his blessing shows what great affection he had for his son Joseph. Second, Jacob called the Lord the great **Shepherd**. This term also would have great significance for a family of shepherds. God is the one Good Shepherd, who truly cares for the flock (Ps. 23; John 10). Even the Egyptian Pharaoh, who despised shepherds (46:28-47:6), appeared in statues with a shepherd's crook to represent his benevolent care for the nation. Third, Jacob praised God as **the Stone of Israel**. On the occasions when God spoke to him, Jacob (or Israel) erected stone pillars to commemorate the event (28:18). God had become for him the “Stone of Israel,” the Rock that typifies stability and trustworthiness.

49:25 The fourth term Jacob used for God in the blessing of Joseph is **the God of your father**. Earlier, Jacob had described the Lord as the God of Abraham and Isaac (48:15). Here he expressed his faith in the God who had blessed him. Finally, Jacob called God **the Almighty**. This is the sixth and final time El Shaddai is used in Genesis. This name of God is found in association with Abraham (17:1), Isaac (28:3), Jacob (28:3; 35:11; 43:14; 48:3), and Joseph (here). In Exodus, God identified Himself to Moses with this name (see Ex. 6:3). In this way, with five titles for God, Jacob prayed manifold **blessings** on Joseph.

49:26 Jacob's blessing on Joseph concluded with the most enthusiastic words. **Separate** is the word also used for the Nazirites (Num. 6:1-21). Both Joseph and later Nazirites were separated from others in order to serve God's holy purposes.

49:27 Benjamin: The image of a **wolf** is ominous (Judg. 20:21-25). For Benjamin's birth and the death of his mother Rachel, see 35:16-20.

49:28 the twelve tribes of Israel: Jacob's blessings are prophecies about the destiny of each tribe. Some of the blessings are obscure. But the blessings on Judah (vv. 8-12) and Joseph (vv. 22-26) are clear prophecies from God about their destinies (cf. Moses' blessing of the tribes of Israel, Deut. 33).

49:29 bury me with my fathers: Jacob challenged his sons not to bury him in Egypt. Certainly Jacob knew that many thousands of his descendants would be buried in Egypt during the 400 years of their prophesied sojourn (15:13-16). But God had promised him that he would return to the Promised Land (46:4). His son Joseph had sworn a solemn oath to bury him in Canaan (47:29-31). Now at the moment of death, Jacob wanted more assurance that this oath would be kept.

49:30-33 Jacob identified the place as **the cave . . . Machpelah**, where Jacob's father, mother, grandfather, and grandmother were buried. Abraham had purchased this land as a burial place for Sarah (ch. 23). **gathered to his people:** This phrase refers to death (15:15; 25:8; 35:29), but it also may refer to immortality (2 Sam. 12:23).

Almighty

(Heb. *shadday*) (17:1; 28:3; 35:11; 43:14; 48:3; 49:25; Job 37:23) Strong's #7706

This divine name in Hebrew is *El Shadday*. *El* means God, and *Shadday* is probably related to the Akkadian word for “mountain,” or to a Hebrew verb meaning “mighty.” God is “mountainlike.” He is powerful, majestic, awe-inspiring, and enduring. Just like a mountain, He provides a shelter from the elements and from evil (Ps. 91:1, 2). Therefore, *El Shadday* can mean “Majestic Deity” or “the God Who Provides My Refuge.”

of Canaan, ^rwhich Abraham bought with the field of Ephron the Hittite as a possession for a burial place. ³¹There they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife, ^tthere they buried Isaac and Rebekah his wife, and there I buried Leah. ³²The field and the cave that is there were purchased from the sons of Heth.” ³³And when Jacob had finished commanding his sons, he drew his feet up into the bed and breathed his last, and was gathered to his people.

50 Then Joseph ^afell on his father’s face and ^bwept over him, and kissed him. ²And Joseph commanded his servants the physicians to ^cembalm his father. So the physicians embalmed Israel. ³Forty days were required for him, for such are the days required for those who are embalmed; and the Egyptians ^dmourned ¹for him seventy days.

⁴Now when the days of his mourning were past, Joseph spoke to ^ethe household of Pharaoh, saying, “If now I have found favor in your eyes, please speak in the hearing of Pharaoh, saying, ⁵“My father made me swear, saying, “Behold, I am dying; in my grave ^fwhich I dug for myself in the land of Canaan, there you shall bury me.” Now therefore, please let me go up and bury my father, and I will come back.”

⁶And Pharaoh said, “Go up and bury your father, as he made you swear.”

⁷So Joseph went up to bury his father; and with him went up all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his house, and all the elders of the land of Egypt, ⁸as well as all the house of Joseph, his brothers, and his father’s house. Only their little ones, their flocks, and their herds they left in the land of Goshen. ⁹And there went up with him both chariots and horsemen, and it was a very great gathering.

¹⁰Then they came to the threshing floor of Atad, which is beyond the Jordan, and they ^hmourned there with a great and very solemn lamentation. ⁱHe

30 ^r Gen. 23:3-20
31 ^s Gen. 23:19, 20;
25:9 ^t Gen. 35:29;
50:13

CHAPTER 50

1 ^a Gen. 46:4, 29
2 ^b Kin. 13:14
3 ^c Gen. 50:26;
2 Chr. 16:14; Matt.
26:12; Mark 16:1;
Luke 24:1; John
19:39, 40
3 ^d Gen. 37:34;
Num. 20:29; Deut.
34:8 ¹ Lit. *wept*
4 ^e Esth. 4:2
5 ^f Gen. 47:29-31
9 ² Chr. 16:14; Is.
22:16; Matt. 27:60
10 ^h Acts 8:2
ⁱ 1 Sam. 31:13; Job
2:13

observed seven days of mourning for his father. ¹¹And when the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, saw the mourning at the threshing floor of Atad, they said, “This is a deep mourning of the Egyptians.” Therefore its name was called ²Abel Mizraim, which is beyond the Jordan.

¹²So his sons did for him just as he had commanded them. ¹³For ^jhis sons carried him to the land of Canaan, and buried him in the cave of the field of Machpelah, before Mamre, which Abraham ^kbought with the field from Ephron the Hittite as property for a burial place. ¹⁴And after he had buried his father, Joseph returned to Egypt, he and his brothers and all who went up with him to bury his father.

Joseph Reassures His Brothers

¹⁵When Joseph’s brothers saw that their father was dead, ^lthey said, “Perhaps Joseph will hate us, and may ³actually repay us for all the evil which we did to him.” ¹⁶So they sent *messengers* to Joseph, saying, “Before your father died he commanded, saying, ¹⁷“Thus you shall say to Joseph: “I beg you, please forgive the trespass of your brothers and their sin; ^mfor they did evil to you.”” Now, please, forgive the trespass of the servants of ⁿthe God of your father.” And Joseph wept when they spoke to him.

¹⁸Then his brothers also went and ^ofell down before his face, and they said, “Behold, we are your servants.”

¹⁹Joseph said to them, ^p“Do not be afraid, ^qfor *am* I in the place of God? ²⁰^rBut as for you, you meant evil against me; ^sbut ^sGod meant it for good, in order to bring it about as *it is* this day, to save many people alive. ²¹Now therefore, do not be afraid; ^tI will provide for you and your little ones.” And he comforted them and spoke ⁴kindly to them.

Death of Joseph

²²So Joseph dwelt in Egypt, he and his

11 ² Lit. *Mourning of Egypt*
13 ^j Gen. 49:29-31;
Acts 7:16 ^k Gen.
23:16-20
15 ^l [Job 15:21]
3 ³ *fully*
17 ^m [Prov. 28:13]
ⁿ Gen. 49:25
18 ^o Gen. 37:7-10;
41:43; 44:14
19 ^p Gen. 45:5
^q Gen. 30:2; 2 Kin.
5:7
20 ^r Gen. 45:5, 7;
Ps. 56:5 ^s [Acts
3:13-15]
21 ^t [Matt. 5:44]
⁴ Lit. *to their hearts*

50:1 wept: Joseph expressed his strong, genuine love for his father (see 45:1-3; 46:29).

50:2 embalm: Joseph directed that his father be embalmed so that he could be buried in Canaan. One day Joseph would also be embalmed (v. 26).

50:4 Joseph made his request to leave Egypt to bury his father’s remains in Canaan. The expression **to the household of Pharaoh** indicates that even Joseph did not always have immediate access to Pharaoh’s presence.

50:10, 11 At Atad, east of the Jordan River, the delegation mourned another seven days. This is the entrance to the Promised Land. The Canaanites were so impressed with the party of mourners that they named the place for them.

50:15 Joseph’s brothers had a new fear. What if Joseph’s kindness to them were something Joseph showed merely to please his father? With Jacob dead, would Joseph take revenge?

50:16, 17 The message may have been truthful or it might have been an invention of the brothers reacting to their fear. **trespass . . . sin:** The evil the brothers had done to Joseph (for Jacob’s use of the same words to Laban, see 31:36). **Joseph wept:** Joseph accepted the confession in the message as a sincere confession from his brothers.

50:20, 21 you meant evil: Joseph spoke clearly about how he viewed the events of his life (45:4-8). **God meant it for good:** God transformed the evil of a group of men into an exceedingly great work. Joseph not only saved the lives of numerous people in the ancient world, he also testified to the power and goodness of the living God. God works His good plan even through the evil plans of evil people.

50:22 one hundred and ten years: God blessed Joseph with a long life. This age may be compared to the 175 years of Abraham (25:7), 180 years of Isaac (35:28), and 147 years of Jacob (47:28).

father's household. And Joseph lived one hundred and ten years. ²³Joseph saw Ephraim's children ^uto the third generation. ^vThe children of Machir, the son of Manasseh, ^wwere also brought up on Joseph's knees.

²⁴And Joseph said to his brethren, "I am dying; but ^xGod will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land to the land ^yof which He swore to Abraham, to

²³ ^u Gen. 48:1; Job 42:16 ^v Num. 26:29; 32:39 ^w Gen. 30:3 ²⁴ ^x Gen. 15:14; 46:4; 48:21; Ex. 3:16, 17; Josh. 3:17; Heb. 11:22 ^y Gen. 26:3; 35:12; 46:4; Ex. 6:8 ²⁵ ^z Gen. 47:29, 30; Ex. 13:19; Josh. 24:32; Acts 7:15, 16; Heb. 11:22

Isaac, and to Jacob." ²⁵Then ^zJoseph took an oath from the children of Israel, saying, "God will surely ⁵visit you, and ^ayou shall carry up my ^bbones from here." ²⁶So Joseph died, *being* one hundred and ten years old; and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt.

^a Gen. 17:8; 28:13; 35:12; Deut. 1:8; 30:1-8 ^b Ex. 13:19 ⁵ give attention to

50:23 children of Machir: The listing of the children of Ephraim before the children of Manasseh is a step in the fulfillment of Jacob's blessing. The younger son of Joseph was elevated over his older brother (see 48:8–22).

50:24 God will surely visit you: On his deathbed, Joseph expressed continuing faith in the promises of God. He reassured his relatives that God would continue to work in the family. In His time (see 15:12–16), God would keep His promise to give Canaan to Abraham's descendants (see 12:7; 26:3; 35:12; 46:4). **to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob:** This phrase is the standard way of referring to God's covenant to Abraham's family (see 48:15; 49:25; Ex. 2:24; 3:16). The recital of the three names reaffirms the certainty of the promise and God's commitment to fulfill it.

50:25 an oath: Joseph had buried his father Jacob in Canaan (vv. 7–14). Now he had the Israelites swear that they would take his bones to the Promised Land when the entire nation of Israel returned to Canaan. In this oath Joseph expressed his complete belief that God would keep His promise to give the land of Canaan to the Israelites (Heb. 11:22). Hundreds of years later, Moses would keep the Israelites' oath by taking Joseph's bones with the people into the wilderness (Ex. 13:19). Finally, Joshua would bury the bones of Joseph at Shechem after the conquest of Canaan (Josh. 24:32).

50:26 Joseph was embalmed, like Jacob (vv. 1–3) and all members of the Egyptian ruling class.

THE SECOND BOOK OF MOSES CALLED

EXODUS

THE BOOK OF EXODUS describes the central historical event for the Israelites—their salvation from slavery in Egypt. In addition to being the Creator of the entire universe and the One who had covenanted with Abraham's family, God emerges in Exodus as the Savior of the Israelites. He saved them from Egyptian slavery and in the process molded them into a nation, as He promised Abram in Genesis 12:1–3. Similar to a child, Israel was “born” as a nation in the Exodus, grew and developed in the wilderness, and reached adulthood in the Promised Land. The Book of Exodus records the origin of this nation and can be considered the foundational charter for Israel.

Moses, the main character in this book, participated in an epic drama that featured unforgettable confrontations with a stubborn pharaoh, a last-minute escape, and a joyful celebration. Throughout this entire drama, God demonstrated His power and holiness through miraculous signs and wonders. Finally, through Moses at Mount Sinai, God taught His people how to become a kingdom of priests and a holy nation dedicated to serving and worshipping Him (19:6).

Author Traditionally, Jewish and Christian scholars have agreed that Moses compiled and wrote Exodus, along with the other books of the Pentateuch (Genesis through Deuteronomy). With the exception of the historical summary in the first chapter and the genealogical section in the sixth chapter, Moses participated in or observed all the events described in the book. Furthermore, unlike Genesis, Exodus mentions Moses' writing (see 17:14; 24:4; 34:27). Moses' training in the Pharaoh's court (2:10; Acts 7:22) would have prepared him wonderfully for the task of the writing. However, Moses may not have written every word in Exodus. For example, the genealogical section in 6:14–27 appears to be a later scribal addition to the book. Yet, it is still reasonable to identify Moses as the architect and principal author of Exodus.

Some have observed that it would be unlikely for an author to use the third person (“he” or “Moses”) rather than the first person (“I”) in a narrative in which the author was so intimately involved. Yet in ancient cultures, the use of the third person for the narrator was customary.

Moses probably wrote his memoirs—which became the Pentateuch—while he was wandering in the wilderness with the Israelites. He wrote the early portions of the Exodus, we suspect, with the full assurance that he would be a participant in Israel's blessing in the Land of Promise. Only much later (Num. 20:1–13) did Moses lose his opportunity to enter the land.

Principal Themes Exodus has two principal sections. The first section, written as a story of epic prose (chs. 1–18), portrays God as the Savior and Provider for His people.

God first saved the infant Moses from a watery death and then provided him with the best education in the



The Giza Pyramids

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ancient world—Pharaoh’s court. In this royal court and later in the Midianite wilderness, God shaped Moses into an instrument for saving His people, the Israelites, from slavery. Then at the chosen time, God sent Moses and Aaron to confront Pharaoh, the Israelites’ oppressor. The miraculous signs and plagues displayed in this dramatic encounter demonstrated God’s power over the supposed gods of Egypt—especially Pharaoh, who claimed he was an incarnate deity. Since Pharaoh had attempted to destroy God’s firstborn son (the people of Israel; see 4:22, 23), the Lord, in the tenth plague, destroyed the Egyptians’ firstborn sons. But the Lord passed over or saved the firstborn sons of the Israelites because they were His people and had obeyed His instructions concerning the Passover Feast (ch. 12). With this tenth plague, the Lord saved His people from slavery. At the Red Sea, God saved them again—this time from the power of the Egyptian army (see 12:31–42; 13:17–15:21). The enslaved people were free! God was their Savior!

Not only did God save these slaves, He provided for them. When the Israelites left Egypt, God prompted the Egyptians to give them all kinds of goods (12:36). Then in the wilderness He turned bitter waters sweet (15:22–27), gave manna from heaven (ch. 16), and brought water from a rock (17:1–7). Yet even with these miraculous provisions, the Israelites murmured and complained. They had barely finished singing the praises of the Lord (15:1–21) when they begin to murmur against His goodness (15:24). When would they trust in God their Provider?

The second section of the Book of Exodus is a series of detailed laws and instructions (chs. 19–40). However, these laws are no ordinary laws. They reveal the very character of God. They reveal God as a Lawgiver and as the Holy One.

This second section of Exodus records God’s benevolent laws given in the context of a treaty with the Israelites. The Hebrew word translated *law* always has a positive meaning—“instruction.” The law is like an outstretched finger, pointing out the direction a person should take in life. In the Ten Commandments (20:1–17), God mercifully pointed out His way to His people—the way to life. But benevolent instruction was only part of God’s plan for the Israelites. His larger plan was to establish a relationship with them based on a formal treaty (ch. 20).

Exodus concludes with instructions about the tabernacle—its construction, furnishing, and services. Many of these instructions point to the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. These instructions and their encounter with God at Mount Sinai taught the Israelites that God is perfect and holy. He can be approached only in the way He prescribes.

At the close of Exodus, we read how the Israelites completed the construction of the tabernacle (39:33) and the glory of the Lord came to fill it (40:34). God had saved His people, provided for them, made a treaty with them, and taught them how to live. Finally He lived with them (Ex. 25:8; 29:45). All was ready, it seemed, for the journey to the Land of Promise.

CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

In numerous ways, Moses is a type of Christ (Deut. 18:15). Both Moses and Christ functioned as prophet, priest, and king. (Although Moses was never officially made king, he functioned as the ruler of Israel.) Both were endangered in infancy and hidden by their parents in order to escape death. Both acted as redeemers, saving the people whom they loved. Both voluntarily renounced power and wealth in order to associate with those they sought to save. Both were deliverers, lawgivers, and mediators. Further, Christ is clearly seen in the celebration of the Jewish Passover—that historic event (described in chs. 12; 13) that required the blood of a pure, sacrificial lamb to be painted over the doorposts of the Hebrews' homes to spare them from God's judgment and then usher them to freedom from slavery in Egypt. John 1:29, 36 and 1 Corinthians 5:7 make it clear that Christ is our Passover Lamb. It is His death—His blood applied, as it were, over the doorposts of our lives—that rescues us from divine condemnation.

EXODUS OUTLINE

- I. Preparation of Israel for deliverance 1:1—12:36
 - A. Preparation of Moses for Israel's deliverance 1:1—4:31
 - B. Moses' confrontation with Pharaoh 5:1—7:7
 - C. God's empowerment of Moses to confront Pharaoh 7:8—12:36
- II. Israel's journey to Mount Sinai 12:37—18:27
 - A. The initial stages of the journey 12:37—51
 - B. Foundational institutions for Israel and an unexpected direction 13:1—22
 - C. The great event: crossing the Red Sea 14:1—15:21
 - D. The journey from the Red Sea to Mount Sinai 15:22—18:27
- III. The Lord's revelation at His holy mountain, Mount Sinai 19:1—40:38
 - A. The Ten Commandments at Mount Sinai 19:1—20:21
 - B. Various laws for the people of God 20:22—23:33
 - C. The establishment of the Lord's covenant with His people 24:1—18
 - D. The design for the tabernacle of the Lord 25:1—31:18
 - E. Israel's sin of worshipping a golden calf 32:1—35
 - F. The renewal of the covenant between the Lord and His people 33:1—34:35
 - G. The construction of the tabernacle and the indwelling of God's glory 35:1—40:38

c. 1915 B.C.

Joseph is born to Jacob and Rachel

c. 1898 B.C.

Joseph is sold into slavery

c. 1876 B.C.

Jacob and his family move to Egypt

c. 1730 B.C.

The Israelites are enslaved in Egypt

c. 1527 B.C.

Moses is born

c. 1446 B.C.

Moses leads the Israelites out of Egypt

c. 1445 B.C.

The Law is given on Mount Sinai

c. 1406 B.C.

Forty years of wilderness wandering end



A boat along the Nile River. Exodus 2:5 tells of Pharaoh's daughter finding Moses in a basket among the reeds of the Nile.

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Israel's Suffering in Egypt

Now ^athese *are* the names of the children of Israel who came to Egypt; each man and his household came with Jacob: ²Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah; ³Issachar, Zebulun, and Benjamin; ⁴Dan, Naphtali, Gad, and Asher. ⁵All those ¹who were descendants of Jacob were ^bseventy² persons (for Joseph was in Egypt *already*). ⁶And ^cJoseph died, all his brothers, and all that generation. ^{7d}But the children of Israel were fruitful and increased abundantly, multiplied and ³grew exceedingly mighty; and the land was filled with them.

⁸Now there arose a new king over Egypt, ^ewho did not know Joseph. ⁹And he said to his people, “Look, the people

CHAPTER 1

¹ ^a Gen. 46:8-27; Ex. 6:14-16
⁵ ^b Gen. 46:26, 27; [Deut. 10:22] ¹ Lit. *who came from the loins of* ² DSS, LXX *seventy-five*; cf. Acts 7:14
⁶ ^c Gen. 50:26; Acts 7:15
⁷ ^d Gen. 12:2; 28:3; 35:11; 46:3; 47:27; 48:4; Num. 22:3; Deut. 1:10, 11; 26:5; Ps. 105:24; Acts 7:17 ³ *became very numerous*
⁸ ^e Acts 7:18, 19
⁹ ^f Gen. 26:16
¹⁰ ^g Ps. 83:3, 4
^h Ps. 105:25; [Prov. 16:25]; Acts 7:19
¹¹ ⁱ Gen. 15:13;

of the children of Israel *are* more and ^fmightier than we; ^{10g}come, let us ^hdeal shrewdly with them, lest they multiply, and it happen, in the event of war, that they also join our enemies and fight against us, and *so* go up out of the land.” ¹¹Therefore they set taskmasters over them ⁱto afflict them with their ^jburdens. And they built for Pharaoh ^ksupply cities, Pithom ^land Raamses. ¹²But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew. And they were in dread of the children of Israel. ¹³So the Egyptians made the children of Israel ^mserve with ⁴rigor. ¹⁴And they ⁿmade their lives

Ex. 3:7; 5:6 / Ex. 1:14; 2:11; 5:4-9; 6:6 ^k 1 Kin. 9:19; 2 Chr. 8:4
^l Gen. 47:11 ¹³ ^m Gen. 15:13; Ex. 5:7-19 ⁴ *harshness*
¹⁴ ⁿ Ex. 2:23; 6:9; Num. 20:15; [Acts 7:19, 34]

1:1 **Israel** is also called Jacob. His twelve sons became the founders of the twelve tribes of the nation Israel.

1:2 The sons are listed according to their mothers and their ages. **Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar and Zebulun** are all sons of Leah. **Benjamin** is the son of Rachel. **Dan and Naphtali** are sons of Bilhah, the maid of Rachel. **Gad and Asher** are sons of Zilpah, the maid of Leah (for each son's birth, see Gen. 29:31–35; 35:16–20, 23–26).

1:5, 6 **seventy persons**: See Gen. 46:1–27. **Joseph** was not included among the 70 (for Joseph's death, see Gen. 50).

1:7 The extraordinary growth of the family of promise in Egypt is a great miracle—evidence of God's blessing. God **multiplied** a small family of 12 sons and one daughter into a nation that would conquer Canaan. This verse piles one descriptive phrase upon another to emphasize the incredible growth of Israel's family and God's hand in this miracle.

1:8–10 The **new king** did not remember Joseph—his privileged position in the older pharaoh's administration, his administrative skill that saved the Egyptians from starvation, and his enrichment of the pharaoh's treasury. This new pharaoh probably did not reign immediately after the death of the pharaoh of Joseph's day. More

likely, this pharaoh was one of the Hyksos kings who descended from foreign invaders. Ethnically they were a minority in Egypt. These kings may have perceived the growing numbers of Hebrews as a challenge to themselves—and to their control over Egypt.

1:11 By God's mercy, the Israelites were left to themselves for most of the four hundred years they were in Egypt. They increased dramatically during this period. But the time finally came when Pharaoh put **taskmasters**, meaning “chiefs of slave gangs,” over them. **Pithom and Raamses**: These store cities are mentioned according to the names by which they were known in later times. The Pharaoh Ramses (whose name presumably relates to the name of one of these cities) was not yet in power.

1:12 God **multiplied** His people in times of distress. The fear of the Egyptians toward the people of Israel was based on misjudgment and hatred. The term **dread** means “to feel a sickening dread” (as in Num. 21:4).

1:13, 14 The harsher the Egyptians made the lives of the Hebrews, the more they flourished. **made their lives bitter**: Later God commanded the Israelites to eat something bitter with the Passover meal so that they might remember the bitterness of their time in Egypt (see ch. 12). **rigor**: This term means “harshness” or “severity.”

The Pharaohs and the Exodus Story

Events in the Exodus Story	Date	Time Period of the Egyptians
Jacob and his family settle in Egypt (Gen. 46).	c. 1876 B.C.	The XII Dynasty: The Middle Kingdom (c. 2000–1780 B.C.)
The “new king,” who did not know Joseph, enslaved the Israelites (Ex. 1:8).	c. 1730–1570 B.C.	The Hyksos Period (c. 1730–1570 B.C.)
		XVIII Dynasty (c. 1539–1447 B.C.)
Moses was born (Ex. 2:2).	c. 1527 B.C.	Thutmose I (c. 1539–1514 B.C.)
		Thutmose II (c. 1514–1501 B.C.)
		Queen Hatshepsut (c. 1501–1482 B.C.) (possibly the woman who adopted Moses, see Ex. 2:1–10)
Moses fled to Midian (Ex. 2:15).	c. 1482–1447 B.C.	Thutmose III (c. 1482–1447 B.C.)
The Exodus (Ex. 12:29–51).	c. 1446 B.C.	Amenhotep II (c. 1447–1421 B.C.)
Israel wandered in the wilderness (Num. 14:20–35).	c. 1446–1406 B.C.	Thutmose IV (c. 1421–1410 B.C.)
Joshua conquered Jericho (Josh. 6).	c. 1406 B.C.	Amenhotep III (c. 1410–1376 B.C.)

Note: Dates conform to the “early” system of dating the Exodus. Another system places the Exodus during the thirteenth century B.C.

bitter with hard bondage—^oin mortar, in brick, and in all manner of service in the field. All their service in which they made them serve *was* with rigor.

¹⁵Then the king of Egypt spoke to the ^pHebrew midwives, of whom the name of one *was* Shiphrah and the name of the other Puah; ¹⁶and he said, “When you do the duties of a midwife for the Hebrew women, and see *them* on the birthstools, if it is a ^qson, then you shall kill him; but if it is a daughter, then she shall live.” ¹⁷But the midwives ^rfeared God, and did not do ^sas the king of Egypt commanded them, but saved the male children alive. ¹⁸So the king of Egypt called for the midwives and said to them, “Why have you done this thing, and saved the male children alive?”

¹⁹And ^tthe midwives said to Pharaoh, “Because the Hebrew women *are* not like the Egyptian women; for they ⁵*are* lively and give birth before the midwives come to them.”

²⁰^uTherefore God dealt well with the midwives, and the people multiplied and ⁶grew very mighty. ²¹And so it was, because the midwives feared God, ^vthat He ⁷provided households for them.

²²So Pharaoh commanded all his people, saying, ^w“Every son who is ⁸born you shall cast into the river, and every daughter you shall save alive.”

14 ^o Ps. 81:6
15 ^p Ex. 2:6
16 ^q Matt. 2:16;
Acts 7:19
17 ^r Ex. 1:21; Prov.
16:6 ^s Dan. 3:16, 18;
Acts 4:18-20; 5:29
19 ^t Josh. 2:4;
2 Sam. 17:19, 20
⁵ *have vigor of life,*
bear quickly, easily
20 ^u Gen. 15:1; Ruth
2:12; [Prov. 11:18];
Eccl. 8:12; [Is. 3:10];
Heb. 6:10 ⁶ *became*
very numerous
21 ^v 1 Sam. 2:35;
2 Sam. 7:11, 13,
27, 29; 1 Kin. 2:24;
11:38; [Ps. 127:1]
⁷ *gave them families*
22 ^w Acts 7:19
⁸ Sam., LXX, Tg. add
to the Hebrews

CHAPTER 2

1 ^a Ex. 6:16-20;
Num. 26:59; 1 Chr.
23:14
2 ^b Acts 7:20; Heb.
11:23
3 ^c Is. 18:2 ^d Gen.
14:10 ^e Gen. 6:14; Is.
34:9 ^f Is. 19:6
4 ^g Ex. 15:20; Num.
26:59
5 ^h Ex. 7:15; Acts
7:21

Moses Is Born

2 And ^aa man of the house of Levi went and took *as wife* a daughter of Levi. ²So the woman conceived and bore a son. And ^bwhen she saw that he *was* a beautiful *child*, she hid him three months. ³But when she could no longer hide him, she took an ark of ^cbulrushes for him, daubed it with ^dasphalt and ^epitch, put the child in it, and laid *it* in the reeds ^fby the river's bank. ^{4g}And his sister stood afar off, to know what would be done to him.

⁵Then the ^hdaughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river. And her maidens walked along the riverside; and when she saw the ark among the reeds, she sent her maid to get it. ⁶And when she opened *it*, she saw the child, and behold, the baby wept. So she had compassion on him, and said, “This is one of the Hebrews' children.”

⁷Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, “Shall I go and call a nurse for you from the Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for you?”

⁸And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, “Go.” So the maiden went and called the child's mother. ⁹Then Pharaoh's daughter said to her, “Take this child away and nurse him for me, and I will give *you* your wages.” So the woman took the child and nursed him. ¹⁰And the child grew, and

With every task the Egyptians gave to the Hebrews, they made them increasingly difficult for them. They hoped to break the Israelites' spirit with abusive slavery.

1:15 This chapter summarizes nearly four centuries of history. The **king of Egypt** mentioned here is probably not the Hyksos king alluded to in vv. 8–14. This king, perhaps Thutmose I (c. 1539–1514 B.C.), ruled Egypt when Moses was born (2:1–10). **Hebrew midwives:** Probably Hebrews themselves, or perhaps Egyptians who were given Hebrew names of honor. Most likely, these two women headed a guild of midwives. One thing is certain: they knew the living God (see vv. 17, 21). Their names, **Shiphrah** (“Beautiful One”) and **Puah** (“Splendid One”), are preserved in this account because they were godly women with a courageous faith. At the same time, the names of the pharaohs—the “important” people of the day—are omitted.

1:16 The custom was to support the mother on a **birthstool** during delivery. **sons:** Pharaoh ordered the midwives to kill the baby boys because he feared the increasing numbers of male Hebrews as a military threat.

1:17 The Hebrew term for **fear** is the word regularly used for piety, obedience, and the true worship of God (see Gen. 22:12; Ex. 20:20). The midwives would not obey the evil commands of a human ruler, even when their own lives were at risk, because they wanted to please the God of heaven.

1:20, 21 God blessed the midwives because they **feared God**. The phrase of v. 17 is repeated for emphasis. **He provided households for them:** Ordinarily households were established for men. God established the families of these two midwives (see Gen. 18:19) because they were faithful to Him.

1:22 Because he could not count on the midwives, Pharaoh commanded the Egyptians to kill the Hebrew male babies by drowning them in **the river**—the Nile.

2:1 Both of Moses' parents were from **the house of Levi**. Later, God chose this family to be the priestly family for Israel.

2:2–4 bore a son: As v. 4 shows, this is not their first child. The older sister was Miriam; Aaron was three years older than this son (see 7:7). The mother hid her baby from the authorities, who wanted to kill him. But after **three months**, she found it impossible (see 1:22). Just as the ark of Noah had been the means by which a family was saved from a watery death (Gen. 7:1), so this **ark** in which she placed her baby would be the means of saving him. She hoped that someone would find the ark and adopt the boy. She sent his **sister**, Miriam, to see what would happen.

2:5 This daughter of Pharaoh was probably one of many daughters. Even though the Egyptians were accustomed to **bathe** frequently, bathing in the Nile was a ritual dipping in the waters the Egyptians believed to be sacred.

2:6 The baby was **one of the Hebrews' children**. A Hebrew baby would have been circumcised on the eighth day. Although circumcision was practiced in Egypt, it was not done to infants. Upon unwrapping the infant's clothing, the women would have seen his “special mark.”

2:7 The daughter of Pharaoh was not prepared to care for the baby. Since it was a Hebrew child, who would be better than a Hebrew woman to **nurse** it?

2:8 the maiden: The Hebrew term means a young woman of marriageable age; this is the word translated *virgin* in Is. 7:14. Miriam would have been in her mid- to late teens.

2:9 Not only did God, through Pharaoh's daughter, protect the child from the river death that Pharaoh had commanded (see 1:22), but through Pharaoh's treasury He provided **wages** to the mother for caring for her own son!

2:10 After what was likely a prolonged period of nursing the child, the mother brought **her son** to Pharaoh's daughter, who then adopted the boy. The name **Moses** is probably related to the Egyptian word meaning “born.” Pharaoh's daughter explains the meaning of the name: “**Because I drew him out of water.**” In Hebrew, Moses means “He Who Draws Out.” In this manner, Moses'

she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and he became ⁱher son. So she called his name ¹Moses, saying, "Because I drew him out of the water."

Moses Flees to Midian

¹¹ Now it came to pass in those days, ^jwhen Moses was grown, that he went out to his brethren and looked at their burdens. And he saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his brethren. ¹² So he looked this way and that way, and when he saw no one, he ^kkilled the Egyptian and hid him in the sand. ¹³ And ^lwhen he went out the second day, behold, two Hebrew men ^mwere fighting, and he said to the one who did the wrong, "Why are you striking your companion?"

¹⁴ Then he said, "Who made you a prince and a judge over us? Do you intend to kill me as you killed the Egyptian?"

So Moses ^ofeared and said, "Surely this thing is known!" ¹⁵ When Pharaoh heard of this matter, he sought to kill Moses. But ^pMoses fled from ²the face of Pharaoh and dwelt in the land of ^qMidian; and he sat down by ^ra well.

¹⁶ Now the priest of Midian had seven daughters. ¹ And they came and drew water, and they filled the ^utroughs to water their father's flock. ¹⁷ Then the ^vshepherds came and ^wdrove them away; but Moses stood up and helped them, and ^xwatered their flock.

¹⁸ When they came to ^yReuel³ their father, ²he said, "How *is it that* you have come so soon today?"

¹⁹ And they said, "An Egyptian delivered us from the hand of the shepherds, and he also drew enough water for us and watered the flock."

Egypt

Egypt's territory covered the northeast shoulder of Africa, bordered by the Sahara Desert to the west, the tropical forests of Nubia to the south, the Red Sea to the east, and the Mediterranean to the north. The Nile River was like the bloodstream of ancient Egypt. The waters of the Nile brought life to the parched plains that the Egyptian people cultivated in Bible times. The Nile flooded each year in mid-July, providing water for the irrigation systems built to benefit from this inundation. But while the timing of the flooding was predictable, its extent was not. Too small or too large a rise in the Nile each year signaled disaster, for farmers in the first case, for whole settlements in the second. The river was both a blessing and a curse to the Egyptian farmers (*fellahin*).



A view of the Nile River from space. The Nile brought life to the parched plains of Egypt.
NASA

¹⁰ ⁱ Acts 7:21
¹ Heb. *Mosheh*, lit. *Drawn Out*

¹¹ ^j Acts 7:23, 24; Heb. 11:24-26

¹² ^k Acts 7:24, 25

¹³ ^l Acts 7:26-28
^m Prov. 25:8

¹⁴ ⁿ Gen. 19:9; Acts 7:27, 28 ^o Judg. 6:27; Heb. 11:27

¹⁵ ^p Acts 7:29; Heb. 11:27 ^q Ex. 3:1

²⁰ So he said to his daughters, "And where *is* he? Why *is it that* you have left the man? Call him, that he may ^aeat bread."

²¹ Then Moses was content to live with the man, and he gave ^bZipporah his

ⁱ Gen. 24:11; 29:2; Ex. 15:27 ² *the presence of Pharaoh* ¹⁶ ^s Ex. 3:1; 4:18; 18:12 ¹ Gen. 24:11, 13, 19; 29:6-10; 1 Sam. 9:11 ^u Gen. 30:38 ¹⁷ ^v Gen. 47:3; 1 Sam. 25:7 ^w Gen. 26:19-21 ^x Gen. 29:3, 10 ¹⁸ ^y Num. 10:29 ² Ex. 3:1; 4:18 ³ *Jethro*, Ex. 3:1 ²⁰ ^a Gen. 31:54; 43:25 ²¹ ^b Ex. 4:25; 18:2

name can refer the reader to the living God, who is the true Deliverer, and also to Moses, who would deliver the Israelites from the Red Sea (see chs. 14; 15).

2:11 The years of Moses' experience in the pharaoh's court are not detailed. Yet Stephen, the NT martyr, reports a long-held and surely accurate tradition: "Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians and was mighty in words and deeds" (Acts 7:22). The training of Moses was the best education in the world at that time. He would have learned three languages: Egyptian, Akkadian, and Hebrew. When Moses came into the presence of a later pharaoh to demand the freedom of the Israelites (chs. 7-14), he was no stranger to the royal family. **his brethren:** At about the age of 40, Moses saw the mistreatment of his own people by his adopted people. While he had been living a life of disciplined luxury, his people were being abused. **2:12** Despite his privilege and position, Moses realized that there was no legal procedure for him to stop the abuses of the Egyptian taskmasters. Moved by a sense of injustice, he rashly **killed** the taskmaster.

2:15 Pharaoh **sought to kill** Moses because he had committed a capital crime. **The land of Midian** is the region of the Sinai Peninsula and Arabian deserts where the semi-nomadic Midianites lived (for the Abrahamic origin of the Midianites, see Gen. 25:1, 2). **by a well:** As in the stories of the fathers and mothers of Israel in Genesis

(Gen. 16:7-13; 21:22-34; 24:10-14; 29:4-12; 30:37-43), a well played a significant role in the story of Moses.

2:16 Like Melchizedek, the priest-king of Salem or Jerusalem (see Gen. 14:18-20), **the priest of Midian** appears to be a foreigner who had come to worship the true and living God. His **daughters** came to the well since, in the ancient world, typically the women **drew water** (see Gen. 24).

2:17 **The shepherds** had probably acted churlishly toward these women before. Unmarried women with no brothers had little protection in the ancient East. **Moses stood up** and came to the aid of the women. Once again, Moses demonstrated his sensitivity to injustice (vv. 11-13).

2:18, 19 **Reuel** is also called Jethro (4:18). His daughters reported to him that they had been delivered by **an Egyptian**. The dress, appearance, and language of Moses would have given this impression.

2:20 Reuel's invitation to **eat bread** was about more than a casual bite to eat. He was recruiting Moses to marry one of his seven daughters.

2:21 **Moses was content:** For a fugitive from the powerful hand of the Egyptian pharaoh, the offer of a home, protection, and a new life would be appealing. Moses had come as an alien. He had nothing to offer but himself, and thus he would have become part of Reuel's household in the deal (see 4:18). **Zipporah** means "Bird."

daughter to Moses. ²² And she bore *him* a son. He called his name ^cGershom, ⁴ for he said, “I have been ^da ⁵stranger in a foreign land.”

²³ Now it happened ^ein the process of time that the king of Egypt died. Then the children of Israel ^fgroaned because of the bondage, and they cried out; and ^gtheir cry came up to God because of the bondage. ²⁴ So God ^hheard their groaning, and God ⁱremembered His ^jcovenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. ²⁵ And God ^klooked upon the children of Israel, and God ^lacknowledged *them*.

Moses at the Burning Bush

3 Now Moses was tending the flock of ^aJethro his father-in-law, ^bthe priest of Midian. And he led the flock to the back of the desert, and came to ^cHoreb, ^dthe mountain of God. ² And ^ethe Angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire from the midst of a bush. So he looked, and behold, the bush was burning with fire, but the bush *was not consumed*. ³ Then Moses said, “I will now turn aside and see this ^fgreat sight, why the bush does not burn.”

⁴ So when the LORD saw that he turned aside to look, God called ^gto him from the midst of the bush and said, “Moses, Moses!”

And he said, “Here I am.”

⁵ Then He said, “Do not draw near

²² ^c Ex. 4:20; 18:3, 4 ^d Gen. 23:4; Lev. 25:23; Acts 7:29; Heb. 11:13, 14 ^e Lit. *Stranger There* ⁵ *sojourner, temporary resident* ²³ ^e Acts 7:34 ^f Deut. 26:7 ^g Ex. 3:7, 9; James 5:4 ²⁴ ^h Ex. 6:5; Acts 7:34 ⁱ Gen. 15:13; 22:16-18; 26:2-5; 28:13-15; Ps. 105:8, 42 ^j Gen. 12:1-3; 15:14; 17:1-14 ²⁵ ^k Ex. 4:31; Luke 1:25; Acts 7:34 ^l Ex. 3:7

CHAPTER 3

1 ^a Ex. 4:18 ^b Ex. 2:16 ^c Ex. 17:6; 1 Kin. 19:8 ^d Ex. 18:5 ² ^e Deut. 33:16; Mark 12:26; Luke 20:37; Acts 7:30 ³ ^f Acts 7:31 ⁴ ^g Ex. 4:5; Deut. 33:16 ⁵ ^h Josh. 5:15; Acts 7:33 ⁶ ⁱ Gen. 28:13; Ex. 3:16; 4:5; [Matt. 22:32; Mark 12:26, 27; Luke 20:37, 38]; Acts 7:32 ^j 1 Kin. 19:13 ⁷ ^k Ex. 2:23-25; Neh. 9:9; Ps. 106:44 ^l Ex. 1:11 ^m Gen. 18:21; Ex. 2:25 ^l ⁿ *pain* ⁸ ⁿ Gen. 15:13-16; 46:4; 50:24,

this place. ^hTake your sandals off your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground.” ⁶ Moreover He said, ⁱ“I *am* the God of your father—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” And Moses hid his face, for ^jhe was afraid to look upon God.

⁷ And the LORD said: ^k“I have surely seen the oppression of My people who *are* in Egypt, and have heard their cry ^lbecause of their taskmasters, ^mfor I know their ^lsorrows. ⁸ So ⁿ“I have come down to ^odeliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up from that land ^pto a good and large land, to a land ^qflowing with milk and honey, to the place of ^rthe Canaanites and the Hittites and the Amorites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites. ⁹ Now therefore, behold, ^sthe cry of the children of Israel has come to Me, and I have also seen the ^toppression with which the Egyptians oppress them. ¹⁰ ^u“Come now, therefore, and I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring My people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt.”

¹¹ But Moses said to God, ^v“Who *am* I that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should bring the children of Israel out of Egypt?”

²⁵ ^o Ex. 6:6-8; 12:51 ^p Num. 13:27; Deut. 1:25; 8:7-9; Josh. 3:17 ^q Ex. 3:17; 13:5; Jer. 11:5; Ezek. 20:6 ^r Gen. 15:19-21; Josh. 24:11 ^s ^t Ex. 2:23 ^u Ex. 1:11, 13, 14 ¹⁰ ^v Gen. 15:13, 14; Ex. 12:40, 41; [Mic. 6:4]; Acts 7:6, 7 ¹¹ ^v Ex. 4:10; 6:12; 1 Sam. 18:18

2:22 Gershom means “A Stranger There.” Moses was doubly removed from his land. He and his people, the Israelites, were strangers in Egypt (Gen. 15:13). Now he was cast off from them and was estranged in yet another waiting place. For all he knew, he would be a stranger for the rest of his days.

2:23–25 the king of Egypt died: The death of Pharaoh (likely Thutmose III, who died about 1447 B.C.) meant that Moses could return to Egypt. At the death of a pharaoh, Egyptian authorities dropped all pending charges, even in capital cases (see 4:19). The plight of the Israelite people had reached fever pitch during the time of Moses’ absence. Four different Hebrew words—translated

groaned, cried out, cry, and groaning—are used to describe the Israelites’ complaint (see 6:5). Corresponding to the four terms for the people’s distress, four wonderful verbs are used to describe the Lord’s response to His people: **heard, remembered, looked, and acknowledged**.

3:1 Horeb, another name for Mt. Sinai, means “Desolate Place.” Yet because of God’s appearance on the mountain (here and in chs. 19; 20), this desolate place would become holy, **the mountain of God** (see 4:27). Usually this site is identified as Jebel el-Musa, a mountain in the southern Sinai Peninsula.

3:2 the Angel of the LORD: An appearance of God. This is the first occurrence in Exodus of this frequently used phrase (14:19; 23:20, 22; 32:34; 33:2; compare Gen. 22:11, 15). The **flame of fire** was an extraordinary sight, particularly since the bush **was not consumed**. **3:3–5** The ground had become **holy**; it was set apart by the divine presence. For Moses’ vivid memory of this experience with God at the end of his life, see Deut. 33:16.

3:6 God identified Himself as **the God of your father**—the God worshiped by Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (v. 15). In announcing these names, the Lord was assuring Moses that His covenant with the fathers of Israel was still in effect.

3:8 The words **come down** speak of God’s gracious intervention on the earth (Ps. 40:1). Not only was God intimately aware of the troubles of His people, but now He would act on their behalf. The **good and large land** of Canaan was God’s great pledge to His people (Gen. 12:7; 15:12–21; see also Ex. 6:8). **flowing with milk and honey**: The land of Canaan would sustain God’s people well—with some sections given to agriculture and others for herds and flocks. Under God’s blessing, milk and honey would seem to flow.

delivered

(Heb. *natsal*) (3:8; Judg. 6:9; 1 Sam. 10:18) Strong’s #5337

This verb may mean either “to strip, to plunder” or “to snatch away, to deliver.” The word is often used to describe God’s work in delivering (3:8), or rescuing (6:6), the Israelites from slavery. Sometimes it signifies deliverance of God’s people from sin and guilt (Ps. 51:14). But in 18:8, the word is a statement of God’s supremacy over the Egyptian pantheon of deities. The Lord was so powerful that He could “snatch” the entire nation of Israel from Pharaoh’s grasp (18:10). This was only the beginning, for God repeatedly delivered the Israelites from their enemies (Josh. 11:6; Judg. 3:9). The Lord was their Deliverer, and the psalmists proclaimed this fact with joy (Ps. 18:12; 144:2).

¹²So He said, ^w“I will certainly be with you. And this *shall* be a ^xsign to you that I have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain.”

¹³Then Moses said to God, “Indeed, *when* I come to the children of Israel and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they say to me, ‘What is His name?’ what shall I say to them?”

¹⁴And God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM.” And He said, “Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, ^y‘I AM has sent me to you.’” ¹⁵Moreover God said to Moses, “Thus you shall say to the children of Israel: ‘The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. This *is* ^zMy name forever, and this *is* My memorial to all generations.’” ¹⁶Go and ^agather the elders of Israel together, and say to them, ‘The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, appeared to me, saying, ^b“I have surely visited you and *seen* what is done to you in Egypt; ¹⁷and I have said ‘I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt to the land of the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Amorites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites, to a land flowing with milk and honey.’”’ ¹⁸Then ^dthey will heed your voice; and ^eyou shall come, you and the elders of Israel, to the king of Egypt; and you shall say to him, ‘The LORD God of the Hebrews has ^fmet with us; and now, please, let us go three days’ journey into the wilderness, that we

¹² ^w Gen. 31:3; Ex. 4:12, 15; 33:14-16; Deut. 31:23; Josh. 1:5; Is. 43:2; Rom. 8:31 ^x Ex. 4:8; 19:3 ¹⁴ ^y [Ex. 6:3; John 8:24, 28, 58; Heb. 13:8; Rev. 1:8; 4:8] ¹⁵ ^z Ps. 30:4; 97:12; 102:12; 135:13; [Hos. 12:5] ¹⁶ ^a Ex. 4:29 ^b Gen. 50:24; Ex. 2:25; 4:31; Ps. 33:18; Luke 1:68 ¹⁷ ^c Gen. 15:13-21; 46:4; 50:24, 25 ¹⁸ ^d Ex. 4:31 ^e Ex. 5:1, 3 ^f Num. 23:3, 4, 15, 16

¹⁹ ^g Ex. 5:2 ²⁰ ^h Ex. 6:6; 9:15 ⁱ Deut. 6:22; Neh. 9:10; Ps. 105:27; 135:9; Jer. 32:20; Acts 7:36 ^j Ex. 11:1; 12:31-37 ²¹ ^k Ex. 11:3; 12:36; 1 Kin. 8:50; Ps. 105:37; 106:46; [Prov. 16:7] ²² ^l Ex. 11:2 ^m Ex. 33:6 ⁿ Job 27:17; Prov. 13:22; [Ezek. 39:10]

CHAPTER 4

⁵ ^a Ex. 4:31; 19:9 ^b Gen. 28:13; 48:15; Ex. 3:6, 15

may sacrifice to the LORD our God.’” ¹⁹But I am sure that the king of Egypt ^gwill not let you go, no, not even by a mighty hand. ²⁰So I will ^hstretch out My hand and strike Egypt with ⁱall My wonders which I will do in its midst; and ^jafter that he will let you go. ²¹And ^kI will give this people favor in the sight of the Egyptians; and it shall be, when you go, that you shall not go empty-handed. ²²But every woman shall ask of her neighbor, namely, of her who dwells near her house, ^marticles of silver, articles of gold, and clothing; and you shall put *them* on your sons and on your daughters. So ⁿyou shall plunder the Egyptians.”

Miraculous Signs for Pharaoh

4 Then Moses answered and said, “But suppose they will not believe me or listen to my voice; suppose they say, ‘The LORD has not appeared to you.’”

²So the LORD said to him, “What is that in your hand?”

He said, “A rod.”

³And He said, “Cast it on the ground.” So he cast it on the ground, and it became a serpent; and Moses fled from it. ⁴Then the LORD said to Moses, “Reach out your hand and take *it* by the tail” (and he reached out his hand and caught it, and it became a rod in his hand), ⁵“that they may ^abelieve that the ^bLORD God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has appeared to you.”

⁶Furthermore the LORD said to him, “Now put your hand in your bosom.”

3:12 God promised to **be with** Moses. Not only had God come down to deliver (v. 8), but now He promised to be present. This prefigures the Incarnation: Jesus would come down to deliver us from our sins and be with us. God gave Moses **a sign**, a final proof that this experience was a divine manifestation and not a dream. Here the sign is a reminder, memorial, or symbol (see also 8:23; 12:13). But the word can also mean a miracle of God—a wonder that demonstrates His power and presence (as in 7:3).

3:14 I AM WHO I AM: The One who spoke to Moses declared Himself to be the Eternal One—uncaused and independent. Only the Creator of all things can call Himself the **I AM** in the absolute sense; all other creatures are in debt to Him for their existence. But in addition, God the Creator declares His relationship with the people of Israel. The future tense of the Hebrew verb related to God’s name is used in v. 12: The **I Am** *will be* with His people. Thus God declares His covenantal relationship with Israel with His name. Many refer to the “**I Am**” as the covenantal name of God.

3:15 The LORD: This represents the Hebrew name Yahweh. The Hebrew word meaning “**I Am**” used in v. 14 is very similar. Translations into English often use **LORD** in small capitals to represent God’s name, Yahweh. Here, God does not merely declare His absolute existence, He declares His relationship to His people. He is the God who made an eternal covenant with **Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob** (see v. 6). As in other significant passages in the OT (see Gen. 22:11–18), repetition and restatement are used for emphasis. Here they indicate the paramount importance of the divine Name.

3:18 The fact that Israelites had to **go** somewhere else to **sacrifice to the LORD** may have been an implied slur on the land of Egypt. The wickedness of the Egyptians polluted the land and made it unsuitable for worshiping their God. The Israelites needed neutral soil to worship God in purity (see 7:16).

3:19 The **mighty hand** is the Lord’s hand. God was the One who forced the Pharaoh to free the Israelites (v. 20; see also 6:1).

3:20 The Lord’s extended **hand** of mercy to the Israelites and of rage against the Egyptians is a constant theme in Exodus (for God’s outstretched arm, see 6:6; for God’s right hand, see 15:6, 12). **My wonders** are the ten plagues of chs. 7–12. The word refers to things only God can do, and which are designed to inspire reverence in His worshipers and fear in His enemies.

3:21, 22 God would so humiliate their leader Pharaoh that the common people of Egypt would become favorably disposed toward Israel. The Israelites, who had been slaves in Egypt, would not leave **empty-handed**. They would **plunder the Egyptians** by merely asking for precious goods (for the fulfillment of this prophecy, see 11:2; 12:35, 36). Later, the Israelites gave these very same precious goods to God as offerings for the tabernacle (ch. 35). Thus God enriched a slave populace so that they in turn were able to give their riches back to Him with thanksgiving.

4:2–5 God turned Moses’ **rod**—probably a long wooden pole with the familiar shepherd’s crook at one end—into a snake to demonstrate the reality of His power and presence during Moses’ coming mission.

4:6, 7 Again God demonstrated His power to Moses by making **his**

And he put his hand in his bosom, and when he took it out, behold, his hand was leprous, ⁷like snow. ⁷And He said, “Put your hand in your bosom again.” So he put his hand in his bosom again, and drew it out of his bosom, and behold, ⁸it was restored like his *other* flesh. ⁸“Then it will be, if they do not believe you, nor heed the message of the ⁹first sign, that they may believe the message of the latter sign. ⁹And it shall be, if they do not believe even these two signs, or listen to your voice, that you shall take water from ¹the river and pour *it* on the dry *land*. ¹The water which you take from the river will become blood on the dry *land*.”

¹⁰Then Moses said to the LORD, “O my Lord, I *am* not eloquent, neither before nor since You have spoken to Your servant; but ⁹I *am* slow of speech and ²slow of tongue.”

¹¹So the LORD said to him, ^h“Who has made man’s mouth? Or who makes the mute, the deaf, the seeing, or the blind? Have not I, the LORD? ¹²Now therefore, go, and I will be ⁱwith your mouth and teach you what you shall say.”

¹³But he said, “O my Lord, ^jplease send by the hand of whomever *else* You may send.”

¹⁴So ^kthe anger of the LORD was kindled against Moses, and He said: “Is not Aaron the Levite your ^lbrother? I know that he can speak well. And look, ^mhe is also coming out to meet you. When he sees you, he will be glad in his heart. ¹⁵Now ⁿyou shall speak to him and ^oput the words in his mouth. And I will be with your mouth and with his mouth, and ^pI will teach you what you shall

6 ^c Num. 12:10; 2 Kin. 5:27
7 ^d Num. 12:13-15; Deut. 32:39
8 ^e Ex. 7:6-13
9 ^f Ex. 7:19, 20 ¹ The Nile
10 ^g Ex. 3:11; 4:1; 6:12; Jer. 1:6
² heavy or dull of tongue; cannot talk very well
11 ^h Ps. 94:9; 146:8; Matt. 11:5; Luke 1:20, 64
12 ⁱ Ex. 4:15, 16; Deut. 18:18; Is. 50:4; Jer. 1:9; [Matt. 10:19; Mark 13:11; Luke 12:11, 12; 21:14, 15]
13 ^j Jon. 1:3
14 ^k Num. 11:1, 33 ^l Num. 26:59
^m Ex. 4:27; 1 Sam. 10:2, 3, 5
15 ⁿ Ex. 4:12, 30; 7:1, 2 ^o Num. 23:5, 12; Deut. 18:18; 2 Sam. 14:3, 19; Is. 51:16; 59:21; Jer. 1:9
^p Deut. 5:31
16 ^q Ex. 7:1, 2
17 ^r Ex. 2:21; 3:1; 4:18 ^s Gen. 43:23; Judg. 18:6
18 ^t Ex. 3:1; 18:1
^u Gen. 46:3, 6 ^v Ex. 2:15, 23; Matt. 2:20
19 ^w Ex. 18:2-5; Acts 7:29 ^x Ex. 4:17; 17:9; Num. 20:8, 9, 11
20 ^y Ex. 3:20; 11:9, 21 ^z Ex. 7:3, 13; 9:12, 35; 10:1, 20, 27; 14:4, 8; Deut. 2:30; Josh. 11:20; 1 Sam. 6:6; Is. 63:17; John 12:40; Rom. 9:18
22 ^a Ex. 5:1 ^b Is. 63:16; 64:8; Hos. 11:1; [Rom. 9:4; 2 Cor. 6:16, 18]

do. ¹⁶So he shall be your spokesman to the people. And he himself shall be as a mouth for you, and ^qyou shall be to him as God. ¹⁷And you shall take this rod in your hand, with which you shall do the signs.”

Moses Goes to Egypt

¹⁸So Moses went and returned to ^rJethro his father-in-law, and said to him, “Please let me go and return to my brethren who *are* in Egypt, and see whether they are still alive.”

And Jethro said to Moses, ^s“Go in peace.”

¹⁹Now the LORD said to Moses in ^tMidian, “Go, return to ^uEgypt; for ^vall the men who sought your life are dead.”

²⁰Then Moses ^wtook his wife and his sons and set them on a donkey, and he returned to the land of Egypt. And Moses took ^xthe rod of God in his hand.

²¹And the LORD said to Moses, “When you go back to Egypt, see that you do all those ^ywonders before Pharaoh which I have put in your hand. But ^zI will harden his heart, so that he will not let the people go. ²²Then you shall ^asay to Pharaoh, “Thus says the LORD: ^b“Israel is My son, ^cMy firstborn. ²³So I say to you, let My son go that he may serve Me. But if you refuse to let him go, indeed ^dI will kill your son, your firstborn.””

²⁴And it came to pass on the way, at the ^eencampment, that the LORD ^fmet him and sought to ^gkill him.

^c Jer. 31:9; [James 1:18] ²³ ^d Ex. 11:5; 12:29; Ps. 105:36; 135:8; 136:10 ²⁴ ^e Gen. 42:27 ^f Ex. 3:18; 5:3; Num. 22:22 ^g Gen. 17:14

hand leprous and then healing it. Leprosy in the Bible included a wide variety of skin diseases.

4:9 The third sign would be the transformation of the water from the Nile into **blood**. In fact, this occurred in the first plague (7:14–25).

4:11, 12 In great patience, God reminded Moses that it was He who had made Moses’ **mouth**, even as it is He who has fashioned each individual according to His wisdom. Then He promised to instruct Moses as to precisely what to **say**.

4:14 At this point, Moses saw a flash of God’s **anger** (see his words in Ps. 90:11). Although Moses did not know it, God was already arranging some assistance for Moses. He was sending **Aaron** to him (for their meeting, see v. 27).

4:15, 16 words in his mouth: As Moses was a prophet of God, so Aaron was to be a prophet of Moses (7:1). The prophet had one job: to represent accurately the message of the one who sent him or her. Moses would be **as God** to Aaron because he would tell him what to say, just as God would tell Moses what to say.

4:18 Moses needed to gain permission from his father-in-law to leave (for a similar predicament involving Jacob, see Gen. 31). Moses had become an official part of Jethro’s family (2:16–22; 3:1).

4:20 Moses took **his sons**. Gershom, Moses’ firstborn, is mentioned in 2:22. The name of the second son is not given until 18:4, after Israel’s deliverance. This is Eliezer, whose name means “My God Is Help.” Moses also took **the rod of God**, that is, the rod that God had used to demonstrate His power (vv. 2–5, 17).

4:21 Pharaoh, most likely Amenhotep II (c. 1447–1421 B.C.), is not simply the king of Egypt, but a symbol for all who resist God—for all of God’s enemies. **I will harden his heart:** Some interpret these words as meaning that God would confirm what Pharaoh had stubbornly determined to do. In the first five plagues, the hardening is attributed to Pharaoh (see 7:13, 22; 8:15, 19, 32; 9:7). Then for the sixth plague, God hardened a heart that Pharaoh had already hardened (9:12). Others insist that God had determined Pharaoh’s negative response to Moses long before Pharaoh could harden his heart. These interpreters point to this verse and to 9:16, in which God says that He raised up Pharaoh for the purpose of demonstrating His power. **4:22, 23** The nation Israel is God’s **son** and naturally God is his Father. In the course of time, others—all those who would believe in God’s Son—would become God’s children (see John 1:12). But the nation Israel is His **firstborn**. Eventually God would claim all of the Israelites’ firstborn as His own because He saved them from the tenth plague—the destruction of the firstborn sons of all the Egyptians (see Num. 3:12, 13).

4:24 The **encampment** might have been a primitive inn on Moses’ route back to Egypt. **the LORD met him and sought to kill him:** The precise meaning of this passage is unclear. Clearly someone in Moses’ family was not circumcised, despite what God had commanded. Most likely, Moses had kept one of his sons uncircumcised in order to please his Midianite family. (The Midianites practiced circumcision on a groom right before his marriage instead of



Bricks

Bricks were common building materials in the ancient world. They were usually rectangular in shape and composed of clay or mud, along with other ingredients such as straw (5:7–9) or sand. Bricks were usually baked by the sun, but they could also be fired in a kiln to produce greater strength and hardness.

The earliest bricks were shaped by hand; later, they were formed with wooden molds. Brickmaking involved several stages. A good clay source was absolutely necessary; then the clay was sifted and mixed to the desired consistency by adding water. Generally, a temper, often straw, was added; this temper acted as a binder for poor clays and prevented warping and cracking during the drying process. Following this, the bricks were shaped and then dried. Bricks were often inscribed with an official's name, the name of a building, or a dedicatory inscription.



An Egyptian man makes mud bricks as the ancient Israelites would have done. Note the brick mold at the man's feet.

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²⁵Then ^hZipporah took ⁱa sharp stone and cut off the foreskin of her son and ³cast it at ⁴Moses' feet, and said, "Surely you *are* a husband of blood to me!" ²⁶So He let him go. Then she said, "*You are a ⁵husband of blood!*"—because of the circumcision.

²⁷And the LORD said to Aaron, "Go into the wilderness ^jto meet Moses." So he went and met him on ^kthe mountain of God, and kissed him. ²⁸So Moses ^ltold Aaron all the words of the LORD who had sent him, and all the ^msigns which He had commanded him. ²⁹Then Moses and Aaron ⁿwent and gathered together all the elders of the children of Israel. ³⁰^oAnd Aaron spoke all the words which the LORD had spoken to Moses. Then he

²⁵ ^h Ex. 2:21; 18:2
¹ Gen. 17:14; Josh. 5:2, 3 ³ Lit. *made it touch* ⁴ Lit. *his*
²⁶ ⁵ *bridegroom*
²⁷ ^l Ex. 4:14 ^k Ex. 3:1; 18:5; 24:13
²⁸ ^l Ex. 4:15, 16
^m Ex. 4:8, 9
²⁹ ⁿ Ex. 3:16; 12:21
³⁰ ^o Ex. 4:15, 16
³¹ ^p Ex. 3:18; 4:8, 9;
¹⁹:9 ^q Gen. 50:24;
^{Ex.} 3:16 ^r Ex. 2:25;
^{3:7} ^s Gen. 24:26; Ex. 12:27; 1 Chr. 29:20

CHAPTER 5

¹ ^o Ex. 3:18; 7:16;
¹⁰:9 ¹ *keep a pilgrim-feast*
² ^b 2 Kin. 18:35;

did the signs in the sight of the people. ³¹So the people ⁿbelieved; and when they heard that the LORD had ^qvisited the children of Israel and that He ^rhad looked on their affliction, then ^sthey bowed their heads and worshipped.

First Encounter with Pharaoh

5 Afterward Moses and Aaron went in and told Pharaoh, "Thus says the LORD God of Israel: 'Let My people go, that they may ¹hold ^aa feast to Me in the wilderness.'"

²And Pharaoh said, ^b"Who is the LORD, that I should obey His voice to let

2 Chr. 32:14; Job 21:15

circumcising male infants.) Moses' neglect was a crime deserving of death, especially for the future leader of God's people. For this reason God **met** or "seized" Moses (for another use of this same Hebrew verb, see v. 27).

4:25, 26 At this time, circumcision was practiced with **stone** knives rather than bronze because of associations with ancient traditions that may even have predated Israelite circumcision (see Gen. 17). Many of Israel's neighboring peoples practiced circumcision, but none except Israel circumcised infants. **husband of blood**: Zipporah may have been angry that she could not follow the Midianite custom and leave her son uncircumcised.

4:26 The Lord who had met or "seized" Moses (v. 24), now **let him go**.

4:27, 28 The meeting of these two brothers after 40 years must have been a very emotional moment. The Hebrew verb translated **met** encompasses the idea of a forceful, direct encounter—a bear hug (this same Hebrew verb is used in v. 24). How fitting that the two would meet **on the mountain of God** (3:1). Later at this mountain they would both minister together.

4:29–31 When they arrived in Egypt, they gathered the elders together. Aaron acted as Moses' prophet (vv. 14–16). It is not clear whether it was Aaron or Moses who did the **signs**. But the people's response was appropriate. They **believed** and **worshipped** the God who had sent these signs and messengers. God **had visited** them! Here God's visitation is for deliverance (as in Ruth 1:6). In other places the word refers to a visitation in wrath (as in Is. 10:12).

5:1 God emboldened Moses and Aaron to approach the powerful tyrant of Egypt with strong, daring words in the name of their God: "**Let My people go.**" Yet the Lord told them what to expect (3:19; 4:21–23). It was God's plan that Pharaoh would not agree to their demand.

5:2 Who is the LORD: Later these arrogant words would haunt Pharaoh (12:31, 32). Indeed he would ascribe greatness to God and shamefulness to himself and his people (9:27). Meanwhile, Pharaoh believed himself to be a god. He certainly felt no need to cave in to the demands of some other, unknown god. Sadly for him, he had never encountered the true and living God, hence his response, **nor will I let Israel go**, just as God had predicted (3:19; 4:21–23). Note

Israel go? I do not know the LORD, ^cnor will I let Israel go.”

³So they said, ^d“The God of the Hebrews has ^emet with us. Please, let us go three days’ journey into the desert and sacrifice to the LORD our God, lest He fall upon us with ^fpestilence or with the sword.”

⁴Then the king of Egypt said to them, “Moses and Aaron, why do you take the people from their work? Get *back* to your ^glabor.” ⁵And Pharaoh said, “Look, the people of the land *are* ^hmany now, and you make them rest from their labor!”

⁶So the same day Pharaoh commanded the ⁱtaskmasters of the people and their officers, saying, ⁷“You shall no longer give the people straw to make ^jbrick as before. Let them go and gather straw for themselves. ⁸And you shall lay on them the quota of bricks which they made before. You shall not reduce it. For they are idle; therefore they cry out, saying, ‘Let us go *and* sacrifice to our God.’ ⁹Let more work be laid on the men, that they may labor in it, and let them not regard false words.”

¹⁰And the taskmasters of the people and their officers went out and spoke to the people, saying, “Thus says Pharaoh: ‘I will not give you straw. ¹¹Go, get yourselves straw where you can find it; yet none of your work will be reduced.’” ¹²So the people were scattered abroad throughout all the land of Egypt to gather stubble instead of straw. ¹³And the taskmasters forced *them* to hurry, saying, “Fulfill your work, *your* daily quota, as when there was straw.” ¹⁴Also the ^kofficers of the children of Israel, whom Pharaoh’s taskmasters had set over them, were ^lbeaten *and* were asked, “Why have you not fulfilled your task in mak-

2 ^c Ex. 3:19; 7:14
3 ^d Ex. 3:18; 7:16
4 ^e Ex. 4:24; Num. 23:3 ^f Ex. 9:15
4 ^g Ex. 1:11; 2:11; 6:6
5 ^h Ex. 1:7, 9
6 ⁱ Ex. 1:11; 3:7; 5:10, 13, 14
7 ^j Ex. 1:14
14 ^k Ex. 5:6 ^l Is. 10:24

ing brick both yesterday and today, as before?”

¹⁵Then the officers of the children of Israel came and cried out to Pharaoh, saying, “Why are you dealing thus with your servants? ¹⁶There is no straw given to your servants, and they say to us, ‘Make brick!’ And indeed your servants *are* beaten, but the fault *is* in your *own* people.”

¹⁷But he said, “You *are* idle! Idle! Therefore you say, ‘Let us go *and* sacrifice to the LORD.’ ¹⁸Therefore go now *and* work; for no straw shall be given you, yet you shall deliver the quota of bricks.” ¹⁹And the officers of the children of Israel saw *that* they *were* in trouble after it was said, “You shall not reduce *any* bricks from your daily quota.”

²⁰Then, as they came out from Pharaoh, they met Moses and Aaron who stood there to meet them. ²¹^m And they said to them, “Let the LORD look on you and judge, because you have made ²us abhorrent in the sight of Pharaoh and in the sight of his servants, to put a sword in their hand to kill us.”

Israel’s Deliverance Assured

²²So Moses returned to the LORD and said, “Lord, why have You brought trouble on this people? Why *is* it You have sent me? ²³For since I came to Pharaoh to speak in Your name, he has done evil to this people; neither have You delivered Your people at all.”

6 Then the LORD said to Moses, “Now you shall see what I will do to Pharaoh. For ^awith a strong hand he will let them go, and with a strong hand ^bhe will drive them out of his land.”

²And God spoke to Moses and said to him: “I *am* ¹the LORD. ³^cI appeared to

21 ^m Ex. 6:9; 14:11; 15:24; 16:2 ² Lit. *our scent to stink before*

CHAPTER 6

1 ^a Ex. 3:19 ^b Ex. 12:31, 33, 39
2 ¹ Heb. *YHWH*
3 ^c Gen. 17:1; 35:9; 48:3

that Pharaoh had not yet hardened his heart (something not stated until 7:13). In the next encounter (ch. 7), Pharaoh would harden his heart resolutely.

5:3 The boldness of Moses and Aaron’s first words (v. 1) is replaced with panic. The Israelites had to obey their God.

5:6–9 To punish Moses and Aaron for insolence, Pharaoh imposed severe measures on the Hebrew workers, who needed **straw** to strengthen the sun-dried bricks they were making. With no reduction in their daily quota, the people would have to gather the straw during their off-hours. Until now the Egyptians had provided it for them. Pharaoh invented a suitable excuse: The Hebrews had too much free time.

5:15–19 The Hebrew leaders of the work gangs, the **officers** or subordinate officials, understandably complained about the new work rules. Pharaoh repeated his excuse that the people were **idle** (v. 8) and ordered them to continue. The Hebrew crew chiefs were in a more precarious position than ever.

5:20, 21 The Hebrew crew chiefs turned their anger on Moses and Aaron. Indeed their words, **Let the LORD look on you and judge**, are a harsh curse. They felt that Moses and Aaron’s words to Pharaoh were futile and only made him hate them more. The word translated **abhorrent** means “to cause to stink.”

5:22 The Hebrew crew chiefs’ harsh charge against Moses greatly troubled him. His complaint to God, **Why is it You have sent me?** alludes to his initial reluctance to be the Lord’s agent of deliverance (4:10–17).

5:23 speak in Your name: It seems that Moses expected Pharaoh to cave in as soon as he heard the use of the Lord’s name Yahweh (3:14, 15; 5:1). Yet God had warned Moses that Pharaoh would do the opposite (3:19; 4:21). Moses had forgotten this clear revelation.

6:1 The Lord’s response to Moses, **Now you shall see**, was designed to encourage him. Nothing had happened yet because God had not yet begun to act. **strong hand:** The reference seems to be to Pharaoh, although consistently the “strong hand” of Exodus is the Lord’s (3:19, 20; 6:6; 15:6, 12). Thus the sense of the verse is, “Because of My strong hand Pharaoh will let them go, and because of My strong hand Pharaoh will drive them out of his land.”

6:2 By explaining His purpose for Israel, God encouraged Moses after his disheartening experience with Pharaoh (see 5:1–9). This passage builds strongly on the revelation of God to Moses at the burning bush (see 2:23–3:22). The words **I am the LORD** begin and conclude this section (vv. 2, 8). **LORD** stands for God’s name, “Yahweh.”

6:3 The patriarchs had known **God Almighty**. It is not that they

Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, as ^dGod Almighty, but *by* My name ^eLORD² I was not known to them. ⁴I have also ³established My covenant with them, ^gto give them the land of Canaan, the land of their ⁴pilgrimage, ^hin which they were ⁵strangers. ⁵And ⁱI have also heard the groaning of the children of Israel whom the Egyptians keep in bondage, and I have remembered My covenant. ⁶Therefore say to the children of Israel: ^j*I am* the LORD; ^kI will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, I will ^lrescue you from their bondage, and I will redeem you with ⁶an outstretched arm and with great judgments. ⁷I will ^mtake you as My people, and ⁿI will be your God. Then you shall know that *I am* the LORD your God who brings you out ^ofrom under the burdens of the Egyptians. ⁸And I will bring you into the land which I ^pswore⁷ to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and I will give it to you as a heritage: *I am* the LORD.” ⁹So Moses spoke thus to the children of Israel; ^qbut they did not heed Moses, because of ^ranguish⁸ of spirit and cruel bondage.

¹⁰And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ¹¹“Go in, tell Pharaoh king of Egypt to let the children of Israel go out of his land.”

¹²And Moses spoke before the LORD, saying, “The children of Israel have not heeded me. How then shall Pharaoh heed me, for ^s*I am* ⁹of uncircumcised lips?”

¹³Then the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, and gave them a ^tcommand¹ for the children of Israel and for Pharaoh king of Egypt, to bring the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt.

The Family of Moses and Aaron

¹⁴These *are* the heads of their fathers' houses: ^uThe sons of Reuben, the first-

³ ^d Gen. 28:3; 35:11
^e Ex. 3:14, 15; 15:3;
 Ps. 68:4; 83:18; Is.
 52:6; Jer. 16:21;
 Ezek. 37:6, 13;
 John 8:58 ² Heb.
 YHWH, traditionally
 Jehovah
⁴ ^f Gen. 12:7; 15:18;
 17:4, 7, 8; 26:3; 28:4,
 13 ^g Gen. 47:9; Lev.
 25:23 ^h Gen. 28:4
⁵ ^{made or ratified}
⁴ ^{sojournings}
⁵ ^{sojourners,}
 temporary
 residents
⁵ ⁱ Ex. 2:24; [Job
 34:28]; Acts 7:34
⁶ ^j Ex. 13:3, 14; 20:2;
 Deut. 6:12 ^k Ex.
 3:17; 7:4; 12:51; 16:6;
 18:1; Deut. 26:8; Ps.
 136:11 ^l Ex. 15:13;
 Deut. 7:8; 1 Chr.
 17:21; Neh. 1:10
⁶ ^{Mighty power}
⁷ ^m Ex. 19:5; Deut.
 4:20; 7:6; 2 Sam.
 7:24 ⁿ Gen. 17:7;
 Ex. 29:45, 46; Lev.
 26:12, 13, 45; Deut.
 29:13; Rev. 21:7
⁸ ^{Ex. 5:4, 5}
⁸ ^p Gen. 15:18; 26:3;
 Num. 14:30; Neh.
 9:15; Ezek. 20:5, 6
⁷ ^{promised, lit. lifted}
⁹ ^{up My hand}
⁹ ^q Ex. 5:21 ^r Ex.
 2:23; Num. 21:4
⁸ ^{Lit. shortness}
¹² ^s Ex. 4:10; 6:30;
 Jer. 1:6 ⁹ One who
 does not speak
 well
¹³ ^t Num. 27:19,
 23; Deut. 31:14
¹ ^{charge}
¹⁴ ^u Gen. 46:9;
 Num. 26:5-11;
 1 Chr. 5:3
¹⁵ ^v Gen. 46:10;
 Num. 26:12-
 14; 1 Chr. 4:24
² ^{Nemuel, Num.}
 26:12

born of Israel, *were* Hanoch, Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi. These are the families of Reuben. ¹⁵^v And the sons of Simeon *were* ²Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, Jachin, Zohar, and Shaul the son of a Canaanite woman. These *are* the families of Simeon. ¹⁶These *are* the names of ^wthe sons of Levi according to their generations: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. And the years of the life of Levi *were* one hundred and thirty-seven. ¹⁷^x The sons of Gershon *were* Libni and Shimi according to their families. ¹⁸And ^ythe sons of Kohath *were* Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel. And the years of the life of Kohath *were* one hundred and thirty-three. ¹⁹^z The sons of Merari *were* Mahli and Mushi. These *are* the families of Levi according to their generations.

²⁰Now ^aAmram took for himself ^bJochebed, his father's sister, as wife; and she bore him ^cAaron and Moses. And the years of the life of Amram *were* one hundred and thirty-seven. ²¹^d The sons of Izhar *were* Korah, Nepheg, and Zichri. ²²And ^ethe sons of Uzziel *were* Mishael, Elzaphan, and Zithri. ²³Aaron took to himself Elisheba, daughter of ^fAmminadab, sister of Nahshon, as wife; and she bore him ^gNadab, Abihu, ^hEleazar, and Ithamar. ²⁴And ⁱthe sons of Korah *were* Assir, Elkanah, and Abiasaph. These are the families of the Korahites. ²⁵Eleazar, Aaron's son, took for himself one of the daughters of Putiel as wife; and ^jshe bore him Phinehas. These *are* the heads of the fathers' houses of the Levites according to their families.

¹⁶ ^w Gen. 46:11; Num. 3:17; 1 Chr. 6:16-30 ¹⁷ ^x 1 Chr. 6:17 ¹⁸ ^y 1 Chr. 6:2, 18 ¹⁹ ^z 1 Chr. 6:19; 23:21 ²⁰ ^a Ex. 2:1, 2; Num. 3:19 ^b Num. 26:59 ^c Num. 26:59 ²¹ ^d Num. 16:1; 1 Chr. 6:37, 38 ²² ^e Lev. 10:4 ²³ ^f Ruth 4:19, 20; 1 Chr. 2:10; Matt. 1:4 ^g Lev. 10:1; Num. 3:2; 26:60 ^h Ex. 28:1 ²⁴ ⁱ Num. 26:11 ²⁵ ^j Num. 25:7, 11; Josh. 24:33

had never heard the name Yahweh, but they had not **known** God in an intimate way. The patriarchs knew a great deal about God and had experienced His goodness in many ways. But they had not had the revelation that was granted to Moses and the people of his day.

6:4 My covenant: The Abrahamic covenant celebrated in Genesis (Gen. 12:1-3, 7; 15:12-21; 17; 22:15-18). **pilgrimage:** The fathers and mothers of Israel had wandered about in the land of Canaan without ever owning more than grazing rights, well treaties, and a burial ground for Sarah (Gen. 23; see Heb. 11:8-10). They were **strangers** in Egypt, resident aliens, without citizenship in their own country.

6:5 groaning: This verse recalls the Israelites' cry in 2:23-25. With this wonderful introduction of Himself, the Lord was now ready to state His plan for Israel (vv. 6-8).

6:6-8 These verses express four aspects of God's plan for Israel. (1) He would deliver them from Egypt. This was more than freedom from slavery; it was a picture of their national salvation, for in the process the nation was redeemed from their sin (see 14:31). (2) He would make them His people, a fellowship of believers. (3) He would be their God, a description of a one-on-one relationship. (4)

He would bring them to Canaan, the Promised Land.

6:9 Despite God's powerful words to Moses, the people were still unwilling to believe. Their cruel suffering overwhelmed them. But they would eventually believe! They needed to experience the reality of the living God (see 14:31).

6:10, 11 The Lord renewed His command to Moses (4:22, 23). Pharaoh's arrogant rejection was not the end of the story, just the beginning.

6:12 Moses complained that his own people would not listen to him. How then would **Pharaoh?** Moses was still convinced that his **uncircumcised lips** (he was a poor speaker) would ruin everything (see 4:10).

6:13 The Lord's response was to repeat the initial **command**. This was not something to be negotiated, but something to be done. Following the parenthesis of vv. 14-27, the story continues in v. 28. There we learn that there was more to the interaction between Moses and the Lord than these verses suggest.

6:14-27 The family history of Moses, Aaron, and Miriam briefly interrupts the narrative. But this was not just a matter of public record, it was something to celebrate! All of Israel's priests would eventually come from this line.

²⁶These *are the same* Aaron and Moses to whom the LORD said, “Bring out the children of Israel from the land of Egypt according to their ^karmies.”³ ²⁷These *are* the ones who spoke to Pharaoh king of Egypt, ^lto bring out the children of Israel from Egypt. These *are the same* Moses and Aaron.

Aaron Is Moses’ Spokesman

²⁸And it came to pass, on the day the LORD spoke to Moses in the land of Egypt, ²⁹that the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, “*I am* the LORD. ^mSpeak to Pharaoh king of Egypt all that I say to you.”

³⁰But Moses said before the LORD, “Behold, ⁿ*I am* ⁴of uncircumcised lips, and how shall Pharaoh heed me?”

7 So the LORD said to Moses: “See, I have made you ^a*as* God to Pharaoh, and Aaron your brother shall be ^byour prophet. ²You ^cshall speak all that I command you. And Aaron your brother shall tell Pharaoh to send the children of Israel out of his land. ³And ^dI will harden Pharaoh’s heart, and ^emultiply My ^fsigns and My wonders in the land of Egypt. ⁴But ^gPharaoh will not heed you, so ^hthat I may lay My hand on Egypt and bring My ¹armies *and* My people, the children of Israel, out of the land of Egypt ⁱby great judgments. ⁵And the Egyptians ^jshall know that *I am* the LORD, when I ^kstretch

²⁶ ^k Ex. 7:4; 12:17; 51; Num. 33:1
³ ^{hosts}
²⁷ ^l Ex. 6:13; 32:7; 33:1; Ps. 77:20
²⁹ ^m Ex. 6:11; 7:2
³⁰ ⁿ Ex. 4:10; 6:12; Jer. 1:6 ⁴ One who does not speak well

CHAPTER 7

¹ ^a Ex. 4:16; Jer. 1:10
^b Ex. 4:15; 16
² ^c Ex. 4:15; Deut. 18:18
³ ^d Ex. 4:21; 9:12
^e Ex. 11:9; Acts 7:36
^f Ex. 4:7; Deut. 4:34
⁴ ^g Ex. 3:19; 20; 10:1; 11:9 ^h Ex. 9:14 ⁱ Ex. 6:6; 12:12 ¹ ^{hosts}
⁵ ^j Ex. 7:17; 8:22; 14:4, 18; Ps. 9:16
^k Ex. 9:15 ^{Ex.} 3:20; 6:6; 12:51
⁶ ^m Ex. 7:2
⁷ ⁿ Deut. 29:5; 31:2; 34:7; Acts 7:23, 30
⁸ ^o Num. 33:39
⁹ ^p Ex. 10:1; Is. 7:11; John 2:18; 6:30
¹⁰ ^q Ex. 4:2, 3, 17
¹¹ ^r Ex. 7:9 ^s Ex. 4:3
¹² ^t Gen. 41:8
¹³ ^u Dan. 2:2; 2 Tim. 3:8 ^v Ex. 7:22; 8:7, 18; 2 Tim. 3:9; Rev. 13:13, 14 ^w ^s ^{smoothsayers}
¹⁴ ^x ^{secret arts}
¹⁵ ^y Ex. 8:15; 10:1, 20, 27

out My hand on Egypt and ^lbring out the children of Israel from among them.”

⁶Then Moses and Aaron ^mdid *so*; just as the LORD commanded them, so they did. ⁷And Moses *was* ⁿeighty years old and ^oAaron eighty-three years old when they spoke to Pharaoh.

Aaron’s Miraculous Rod

⁸Then the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying, ⁹“When Pharaoh speaks to you, saying, ^p“Show a miracle for yourselves,” then you shall say to Aaron, ^q“Take your rod and cast *it* before Pharaoh, *and* let it become a serpent.”¹⁰ So Moses and Aaron went in to Pharaoh, and they did so, just ^ras the LORD commanded. And Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh and before his servants, and it ^sbecame a serpent.

¹¹But Pharaoh also ^tcalled the wise men and ^uthe ²sorcerers; so the magicians of Egypt, they also ^vdid in like manner with their ³enchantments. ¹²For every man threw down his rod, and they became serpents. But Aaron’s rod swallowed up their rods. ¹³And Pharaoh’s heart grew hard, and he did not heed them, as the LORD had said.

The First Plague: Waters Become Blood

¹⁴So the LORD said to Moses: ^w“Pharaoh’s heart *is* hard; he refuses to let the

7:1, 2 These verses repeat the issues of 4:10–17. Repetition with variation is a part of Hebrew prose style to show emphasis. **you as God:** As Moses was the prophet of the Lord, so Aaron became Moses’ **prophet**. Aaron would speak for Moses, for a prophet was the “mouth” of the one who sent him (or her).

7:3 I will harden Pharaoh’s heart: It was in God’s plan that Pharaoh would be inflexibly stubborn, thus setting the scene for God to deliver His people by powerful **signs and . . . wonders**. The word *sign* (see also 4:8, 9; 8:23) may be used to describe a reminder, a memorial, or a symbol, as in 3:12 (see also 12:13), but here it speaks of a pledge or attestation of God’s presence. The term *wonder* similarly describes a special display of God’s power. These two words paired together mean “irrefutable works.” God would demonstrate His power and authenticate His agents, Moses and Aaron, with such works. The doubling of the personal pronoun, **My . . . My**, makes this assertion even more forceful.

7:5 God also planned from the beginning that **the Egyptians** would **know** that He and He alone was the living God. In the first nine plagues, God used forces of creation in a supernatural way to bring judgment on the Egyptians. In the tenth plague, the destruction of the firstborn of Egypt, God would **stretch out His hand** and bring judgment Himself (see 12:12, 13, 29, 30).

7:6 did so . . . so they did: The obedience of Moses and Aaron is a recurring theme in the Pentateuch (see 12:28; Num. 8:20–22). But even these men of God did not always obey Him.

7:7 eighty . . . eighty-three: In a sense, these men had already lived a lifetime (see Ps. 90:10) before their principal life work had begun! Moses was to lead the nation of Israel for another 40 years before he died (see Deut. 29:5; 31:2; 34:5). Aaron died in the same year as his younger brother, at the age of 123 (Num. 20:22–29; 33:38, 39).

7:8 Then the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron: This is the first time Moses and Aaron are referred to as receiving a message from God together.

7:9 In the first confrontation with Pharaoh there was no talk of miracles (5:1–9). This time they would perform a **miracle**, a special display of God’s power. Aaron’s **rod** would figure prominently in several of the plagues (7:20; 8:5, 16; 9:23; 10:13, 22; see also 14:16; 17:5, 9).

7:10 The sign that God had done before Moses, turning his rod into a **serpent** (4:1–5), was now repeated before Pharaoh and his courtiers.

7:11 Pharaoh was not about to be outdone. **Wise men** refers to his counselors, men of learning and insight. **Sorcerers** refers to those who practiced divination. They were prominent in the courts of ancient kings (see Deut. 18:10; Dan. 2:2; Mal. 3:5). The **magicians** of Egypt were believed to possess occult knowledge (see Gen. 41:8, 24; Ex. 8:7, 18, 19; 9:11; see also Dan. 1:20; 2:2). The power of these persons may have been in trickery and slight-of-hand illusions, or demonic power. The word **enchancements** speaks of “secret things” or “mysteries” (see 7:22)—to paraphrase, “their bag of tricks.” But in their encounter with Moses and Aaron, these men were no match for the power of God (8:19; 9:11)! Later, the royal courts of Israel had wise men (1 Kin. 4:34; Prov. 25:1), but the black arts of sorcery, divination, and astrology were forbidden (Deut. 18:9–14).

7:12 his rod . . . serpents: The text does not say whether this was a genuine transformation or a trick of Pharaoh’s evil sorcerers. It is possible that they knew what the first sign would be and had dragged or stunned serpents in some manner so that they might appear to be rods. In any event, their serpents were no match for Aaron’s serpent; his swallowed theirs!

7:13 Many times **Pharaoh’s heart grew hard**, meaning he became insensitive and dull to the demonstration of God’s power (vv. 14, 22, 23; 8:15, 19, 32; 9:7, 12, 34, 35; 10:1, 20, 27; 11:10; 14:4, 5, 8). This was **as the LORD had said**—as God had planned from the beginning (3:19; 4:21; 7:3, 4). Pharaoh was willful (see 5:1–9). But he was captive to the dulling work of God’s Spirit (see Is. 6:10, concerning the people of Judah).

people go. ¹⁵Go to Pharaoh in the morning, when he goes out to the ^xwater, and you shall stand by the river's bank to meet him; and ^ythe rod which was turned to a serpent you shall take in your hand. ¹⁶And you shall say to him, ^z"The LORD God of the Hebrews has sent me to you, saying, "Let My people go, ^athat they may ⁴serve Me in the wilderness"; but indeed, until now you would not hear! ¹⁷Thus says the LORD: "By this ^byou shall know that I *am* the LORD. Behold, I will strike the waters which *are* in the river with the rod that *is* in my hand, and ^cthey shall be turned ^dto blood. ¹⁸And the fish that *are* in the river shall die, the river shall stink, and the Egyptians will ^eloathe⁵ to drink the water of the river."'"

¹⁹Then the LORD spoke to Moses, "Say to Aaron, 'Take your rod and ^fstretch out your hand over the waters of Egypt, over their streams, over their rivers, over their ponds, and over all their pools of water, that they may become blood. And there shall be blood throughout all the land of Egypt, both in *buckets of wood and pitchers of stone.*'" ²⁰And Moses and Aaron did so, just as the LORD commanded. So he ^glifted up the rod and struck the waters that *were* in the river, in the sight of Pharaoh and in the sight of his servants. And all the ^hwaters that *were* in the river were turned to blood. ²¹The fish that *were* in the river died, the river stank, and the Egyptians ⁱcould not drink the water of the river. So there was blood throughout all the land of Egypt.

^{22j}The waters of the magicians of Egypt did ^kso with their ⁶enchantments; and Pharaoh's heart grew hard, and he did not

¹⁵ ^x Ex. 2:5; 8:20
^y Ex. 4:2, 3; 7:10
¹⁶ ^z Ex. 3:13, 18;
4:22 ^a Ex. 3:12;
18; 4:23; 5:1, 3; 8:1
⁴ worship
¹⁷ ^b Ex. 5:2; 7:5;
10:2; Ps. 9:16; Ezek.
25:17 ^c Ex. 4:9; 7:20
^d Rev. 11:6; 16:4, 6
¹⁸ ^e Ex. 7:24 ⁵ be
weary of drinking
¹⁹ ^f Ex. 8:5, 6, 16;
9:22; 10:12, 21;
14:21, 26
²⁰ ^g Ex. 17:5 ^h Ps.
78:44; 105:29, 30
²¹ ⁱ Ex. 7:18
²² ^j Ex. 7:11 ^k Ex. 8:7
⁶ secret arts

¹ Ex. 3:19; 7:3

CHAPTER 8

¹ ^a Ex. 3:12, 18; 4:23;
5:1, 3
² ^b Ex. 7:14; 9:2
^c Rev. 16:13

BIBLE TIMES & CULTURE NOTES



Hard of Heart

One Hebrew word describing the hardening of Pharaoh's heart has the connotation of making the heart "heavy" (9:34; 10:1). This would be a major disadvantage within Egyptian religion, in which a person needed a "light" heart (rather than a heavy, sinful one) after death to weigh favorably on the gods' balance scale. In Egyptian thought, to be "hard of heart" (but not "heavy") was a positive trait. The idiom was used of strength and of self-restraint shown while serving at court. To ensure that a person's heart would declare innocence to the gods, a heart-shaped scarab made of a precious stone was placed on the chest of the mummified body. In Exodus, however, to have a hard heart is a negative trait, and when the Lord God hardens Pharaoh's heart, his sinfulness is displayed.

heed them, ¹as the LORD had said. ²³And Pharaoh turned and went into his house. Neither was his heart moved by this. ²⁴So all the Egyptians dug all around the river for water to drink, because they could not drink the water of the river. ²⁵And seven days passed after the LORD had struck the river.

The Second Plague: Frogs

8 And the LORD spoke to Moses, "Go to Pharaoh and say to him, 'Thus says the LORD: "Let My people go, ^athat they may serve Me. ²But if you ^brefuse to let *them* go, behold, I will smite all your territory with ^cfrogs. ³So the river shall bring forth frogs abundantly, which shall

7:15 Some of the plagues were announced to Pharaoh beforehand; others came without warning. Those that were announced were the first (7:14–18), second (8:1–4), fourth (8:20–23), fifth (9:1–5), seventh (9:13–19), eighth (10:1–6), and tenth (11:4–8). Those not announced were the third (8:16, 17), sixth (9:8–10), and ninth (10:21–23). Note the pattern: two are announced, then a third comes without warning. This pattern occurs three times, culminating in the last, worst plague. **to the water . . . the river's bank:** Pharaoh went to the waters of the Nile not to bathe, but to be empowered. Pharaoh's bath in the Nile was a sacred Egyptian rite connected to Pharaoh's claim of divinity. **rod:** This rod is called the rod of God (4:20) and the rod of Aaron (7:9). **7:16 The LORD God of the Hebrews:** A similar identification of the Lord was used in the initial, disastrous encounter of Moses before Pharaoh (see 5:1, 3). This time, Pharaoh would see a display of God's power, not just hear God's name (2:23—3:15; 6:2–8; 9:1). The statement **serve Me in the wilderness** conveys the idea of sacred worship (8:20; 9:1, 13). There is an implied criticism of Egypt as unfit for such worship because of its idolatry (see 3:18; 8:26, 27).

7:17 The waters of the Nile may have chemically changed to blood. However, elements of the account suggest another possibility: (1) The first nine plagues form a set. Each of these is a natural event that occurs in a miraculous way, in quantity or timing. The change of the waters into blood would not be a natural event. (2) The plagues grow in severity with each successive one, coming to a climax with the tenth. A change of the water to actual blood would be out of

step with this pattern. (3) The Hebrew word translated *blood* can refer to a red color, as in Joel 2:31. An appropriate miracle of natural timing might be that God caused torrential rains to flood and pollute the sources of the Nile to create this plague at the time it was needed. Red soil and algae would make the waters of the Nile red, unfit for drinking and deficient in oxygen for the fish.

7:19 The waters of Egypt came from the Nile and its annual flooding. The plague affected the entire water system of the nation, even the wooden and stone reservoirs that held additional supplies of drinking water.

7:20 Moses and Aaron obeyed God's command and invoked the plague with **the rod** (see 4:1–8, 20; 7:9; 8:5, 16; 9:23; 10:13, 22; 14:16; 17:5, 9). Later believers in Israel would celebrate this great event in a song (see Ps. 78:44; 105:29, 30).

7:22 magicians . . . with their enchantments: Perhaps the tricksters of Pharaoh were able secretly to color containers of water in an attempt to duplicate the sign of the Lord in the Nile River (7:11). Their attempts were feeble by comparison. Even with this demonstration of God's power, the heart of Pharaoh **grew hard . . . as the LORD had said** (3:19; 4:21; 7:3, 13, 14).

7:23 Pharaoh showed his utter disdain for the revelation of God's power over the Nile when he **turned and went into his house**. He also seemed oblivious to the suffering of his people.

8:2 Frogs, which in moderate numbers were regarded as signs of life, renewal, and happiness, would now become pests.

go up and come into your house, into your ^dbedroom, on your bed, into the houses of your servants, on your people, into your ovens, and into your kneading bowls. ⁴And the frogs shall come up on you, on your people, and on all your servants.””

⁵Then the LORD spoke to Moses, “Say to Aaron, ‘Stretch out your hand with your rod over the streams, over the rivers, and over the ponds, and cause frogs to come up on the land of Egypt.’” ⁶So Aaron stretched out his hand over the waters of Egypt, and ^fthe frogs came up and covered the land of Egypt. ^{7g}And the magicians did so with their ¹enchancements, and brought up frogs on the land of Egypt.

⁸Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron, and said, ^h“Entreat² the LORD that He may take away the frogs from me and from my people; and I will let the people ⁱgo, that they may sacrifice to the LORD.”

⁹And Moses said to Pharaoh, “Accept the honor of saying when I shall intercede for you, for your servants, and for your people, to destroy the frogs from you and your houses, *that* they may remain in the river only.”

¹⁰So he said, “Tomorrow.” And he said, “*Let it be* according to your word, that you may know that ^j*there is no one*

3 ^d Ps. 105:30
5 ^e Ex. 7:19
6 ^f Ps. 78:45; 105:30
7 ^g Ex. 7:11, 22
¹ secret arts
8 ^h Ex. 8:28; 9:28;
10:17; Num. 21:7;
1 Kin. 13:6 ¹ Ex.
10:8, 24 ² Pray to,
Make supplication
to
10 ⁱ Ex. 9:14; 15:11;
Deut. 4:35, 39;
33:26; 2 Sam. 7:22;
1 Chr. 17:20; Ps.
86:8; Is. 46:9; [Jer.
10:6, 7]

12 ^k Ex. 8:30; 9:33;
10:18; 32:11; [James
5:16-18]
15 ^l Eccl. 8:11 ^m Ex.
7:14, 22; 9:34;
1 Sam. 6:6
16 ³ gnats
17 ⁿ Ps. 105:31
18 ^o Ex. 7:11, 12; 8:7
^p Dan. 5:8; 2 Tim.
3:8, 9 ⁴ secret arts
19 ^q Ex. 7:5; 10:7;
1 Sam. 6:3, 9; Ps.
8:3; Luke 11:20 ⁵ An
act of God

like the LORD our God. ¹¹And the frogs shall depart from you, from your houses, from your servants, and from your people. They shall remain in the river only.”

¹²Then Moses and Aaron went out from Pharaoh. And Moses ^kcried out to the LORD concerning the frogs which He had brought against Pharaoh. ¹³So the LORD did according to the word of Moses. And the frogs died out of the houses, out of the courtyards, and out of the fields. ¹⁴They gathered them together in heaps, and the land stank. ¹⁵But when Pharaoh saw that there was ^lrelief, ^mhe hardened his heart and did not heed them, as the LORD had said.

The Third Plague: Lice

¹⁶So the LORD said to Moses, “Say to Aaron, ‘Stretch out your rod, and strike the dust of the land, so that it may become ³lice throughout all the land of Egypt.’” ¹⁷And they did so. For Aaron stretched out his hand with his rod and struck the dust of the earth, and ⁿit became lice on man and beast. All the dust of the land became lice throughout all the land of Egypt.

¹⁸Now ^othe magicians so worked with their ⁴enchancements to bring forth lice, but they ^pcould not. So there were lice on man and beast. ¹⁹Then the magicians said to Pharaoh, “This ^qis ⁵the⁵ finger of

8:5 The **rod** of Aaron (7:19) was not a magician’s wand; it was a powerful symbol of God’s power in the hand of His servant (4:1–8, 20; 7:9, 20; 8:16; 9:23; 10:13, 22; 14:16; 17:5, 9). It is not clear in this passage, but it is likely, based on the words in 8:22; 9:4, 26; 10:23; 11:7, that the Hebrews were spared the effects of this plague **on the land of Egypt**. Only the polluting of the Nile (7:14–25) would have affected the Hebrew people directly.

8:7 the magicians . . . with their enchantments: We do not know how or in what quantity the magicians produced frogs; but doing so hardly helped the situation!

8:8 Note that Pharaoh did not turn to his magicians to relieve the land of the frogs; he **called for Moses and Aaron to entreat the LORD** (translated “intercede” in v. 9) on his behalf.

8:9 Accept the honor: Moses rises to Pharaoh’s challenge and

even invites him to set the time for Moses’ prayer for relief from the frogs. In this way, Pharaoh would not be able to say that it was just a coincidence that the frogs began to abate at a certain time.

8:10 The Bible, especially the prophetic books, asserts again and again that **there is no one like the LORD our God**. Here the living God was being compared with the false gods of Egypt (9:14; 15:11; Is. 40:25).

8:12 cried out to the LORD: The Hebrew verb translated *cry* places emphasis on the need at hand and suggests God’s willingness to stoop down to answer that need (see 22:27; Ps. 40:1). This same sort of prayer provoked the LORD to rescue His people (see 2:23; 14:10, 15; 15:25; 17:4; 22:23, 27).

8:14 There were so many dead frogs **the land stank**. The miraculous nature of this plague lay in the timing and magnitude of the invasion. God did not create new frogs from nothing; He caused frogs to come up in unnaturally large numbers at exactly the right time, and then to die at exactly the right time (see also vv. 30, 31; 9:33; 10:18, 19).

8:15 Pharaoh’s behavior exhibits a pattern. During the time of stress, Pharaoh was willing to promise anything. But as soon as the stress ended, he **hardened his heart** and became unwilling to do what he had promised (3:19; 4:21; 5:2; 7:3, 13, 14).

8:16, 17 The plague of **lice** was the first not to be announced to Pharaoh beforehand. **all the land of Egypt:** It is not clear in this passage, but it is likely, based on the wording in 8:22; 9:4, 26; 10:23; 11:7, that the Hebrews were spared the effects of this plague. **All the dust of the land became lice:** A hyperbole that suggests unprecedented trouble with insects in countless numbers.

8:18 The magicians . . . with their enchantments (see 7:11) failed this time. Perhaps the lack of announcement meant they had no time to prepare.

8:19 It is remarkable that Pharaoh’s magicians attributed the plague to **the finger of God**. But what choice did they have? Their own

entreat

(Heb. *atar*) (8:8, 9, 29, 30; 9:28; 10:17, 18) Strong’s #6279

This Hebrew word translated *entreat* (8:8) or *intercede* (8:9) is one of the biblical words for prayer. The word depicts a person earnestly beseeching God and basically means “to ask” (see Gen. 25:21; Is. 19:22). In the OT, spreading out one’s hands before the Lord was a common gesture associated with prayer (see 9:29). This gesture expressed the petitioner’s receptiveness to God, and his or her need. Empty-handed, with nothing to offer but oneself, petitioners were asking God to fill their hands with His blessings. For this reason, God warned worshipers to petition Him with hands that were not soiled by unclean and halfhearted offerings (Mal. 1:9).

God.” But Pharaoh’s heart grew hard, and he did not heed them, just as the LORD had said.

The Fourth Plague: Flies

²⁰ And the LORD said to Moses, ^s “Rise early in the morning and stand before Pharaoh as he comes out to the water. Then say to him, ‘Thus says the LORD: ^t “Let My people go, that they may serve Me. ²¹ Or else, if you will not let My people go, behold, I will send swarms of flies on you and your servants, on your people and into your houses. The houses of the Egyptians shall be full of swarms of flies, and also the ground on which they stand. ²² And in that day ^u I will set apart the land of ^v Goshen, in which My people dwell, that no swarms of flies shall be there, in order that you may ^w know that I am the LORD in the midst of the ^x land. ²³ I will ⁶ make a difference between My people and your people. Tomorrow this ^y sign shall be.”’” ²⁴ And the LORD did so. ^z Thick swarms of flies came into the house of Pharaoh, into his servants’ houses, and into all the land of Egypt. The land was corrupted because of the swarms of flies.

²⁵ Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron, and said, “Go, sacrifice to your God in the land.”

²⁶ And Moses said, “It is not right to do so, for we would be sacrificing ^a the abomination of the Egyptians to the LORD our God. If we sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians before their eyes, then will they not ⁷ stone us? ²⁷ We will go ^b three days’ journey into the wilderness and sacrifice to the LORD our God as ^c He will command us.”

²⁸ So Pharaoh said, “I will let you go, that you may sacrifice to the LORD your

¹⁹ ^t Ex. 8:15
²⁰ ^s Ex. 7:15; 9:13
¹ Ex. 3:18; 4:23; 5:1, 3; 8:1
²² ^u Ex. 9:4, 6, 26; 10:23; 11:6, 7; 12:13
^v Gen. 50:8 ^w Ex. 7:5, 17; 10:2; 14:4
^x Ex. 9:29
²³ ^y Ex. 4:8 ⁶ Lit. set a ransom, Ex. 9:4; 11:7
²⁴ ^z Ps. 78:45; 105:31
²⁶ ^a Gen. 43:32; 46:34; [Deut. 7:25, 26; 12:31] ⁷ Put us to death by stoning
²⁷ ^b Ex. 3:18; 5:3
^c Ex. 3:12

²⁸ ^d Ex. 8:8, 15, 29, 32; 9:28; 1 Kin. 13:6
²⁹ ^e Ex. 8:8, 15
³⁰ ^f Ex. 8:12
³² ^g Ex. 4:21; 8:8, 15; Ps. 52:2

CHAPTER 9

¹ ^a Ex. 4:23; 8:1
^b Ex. 7:16
² ^c Ex. 8:2
³ ^d Ex. 7:4; 1 Sam. 5:6; Ps. 39:10; Acts 13:11
⁴ ^e Ex. 8:22
⁶ ^f Ex. 9:19, 20, 25; Ps. 78:48, 50
⁷ ^g Ex. 7:14; 8:32

God in the wilderness; only you shall not go very far away. ^d Intercede for me.”

²⁹ Then Moses said, “Indeed I am going out from you, and I will entreat the LORD, that the swarms of flies may depart tomorrow from Pharaoh, from his servants, and from his people. But let Pharaoh not ^e deal deceitfully anymore in not letting the people go to sacrifice to the LORD.”

³⁰ So Moses went out from Pharaoh and ^f entreated the LORD. ³¹ And the LORD did according to the word of Moses; He removed the swarms of flies from Pharaoh, from his servants, and from his people. Not one remained. ³² But Pharaoh ^g hardened his heart at this time also; neither would he let the people go.

The Fifth Plague: Livestock Diseased

⁹ Then the LORD said to Moses, ^a “Go in to Pharaoh and tell him, ‘Thus says the LORD God of the Hebrews: “Let My people go, that they may ^b serve Me. ² For if you ^c refuse to let them go, and still hold them, ³ behold, the ^d hand of the LORD will be on your cattle in the field, on the horses, on the donkeys, on the camels, on the oxen, and on the sheep—a very severe pestilence. ⁴ And ^e the LORD will make a difference between the livestock of Israel and the livestock of Egypt. So nothing shall die of all ^f that belongs to the children of Israel.”’” ⁵ Then the LORD appointed a set time, saying, “Tomorrow the LORD will do this thing in the land.”

⁶ So the LORD did this thing on the next day, and ^f all the livestock of Egypt died; but of the livestock of the children of Israel, not one died. ⁷ Then Pharaoh sent, and indeed, not even one of the livestock of the Israelites was dead. But the ^g heart of Pharaoh became hard, and he did not let the people go.

competence was on the line. Still their words had no impact on Pharaoh (3:19; 4:21; 5:2; 7:3, 13, 14).

8:22 The pressure on Pharaoh intensified with this plague. For the first time (but see also 9:4, 26; 10:23; 11:7), God vowed to **set apart the land of Goshen** for the protection of His people. Swarms of flies would be everywhere except near the Hebrews. By this means God would make Himself known among all in Egypt. In some ways this exclusion is the most remarkable aspect of the plagues, especially in the last one (see 11:7; ch. 12).

8:26 By using the strong terminology **the abomination of the Egyptians** (see Deut. 17:1; 18:12; 22:5), Moses employed the ethnic and cultural sensibilities of the Egyptians to free the Israelites (see Gen. 43:32; 46:34). The sacrificial animals of Israel would include sheep, something the Egyptians regarded as detestable. The Egyptians’ anger against the Hebrews might lead them to stone the Hebrews to death.

8:29 Moses promised to pray for relief from the plague of flies, but he also warned Pharaoh to keep his promise (see 7:22; 8:15, 19).

8:32 As soon as the Lord removed the swarms of flies, Pharaoh reverted to his earlier stubbornness against Moses, Israel, and God—and **hardened his heart** (3:19; 4:21; 5:2; 7:3, 13, 14).

9:1 the LORD God of the Hebrews: God forcefully identified Himself as the God of the Hebrews just as He said He would (3:18). The first time Moses spoke to Pharaoh in God’s name, he was rebuffed (5:1–9). On subsequent occasions, God demonstrated to Pharaoh the power of His name (6:2–8; 7:16).

9:3 A very severe pestilence on the livestock of Egypt would destroy much of the economy of Egypt as well as its military preparedness.

9:4 make a difference: The same verb is used in 8:22 (see 11:7). Among the Hebrews, nothing would die. The miracles of the Lord in the first nine plagues lay in their timing, their intensity, and as here, whom they affected. As the Egyptians’ animals would fall all about them, the animals of the Hebrews would continue to flourish.

9:5 Just as it had been announced, the plague began at a **set time**. The timing was a significant part of these plagues as was the subsequent relief (see 9:18).

9:6, 7 As with the fourth plague (see 8:24), **the LORD did this thing**. There is no mention of the rod of Moses (7:20). Even though **Pharaoh sent** his agents and confirmed that the animals of the Hebrews had been spared this calamity, **the heart of Pharaoh became hard** (3:19; 4:21; 5:2; 7:3, 13, 14).

The Sixth Plague: Boils

⁸So the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, “Take for yourselves handfuls of ashes from a furnace, and let Moses scatter it toward the heavens in the sight of Pharaoh. ⁹And it will become fine dust in all the land of Egypt, and it will cause ^hboils that break out in sores on man and beast throughout all the land of Egypt.” ¹⁰Then they took ashes from the furnace and stood before Pharaoh, and Moses scattered *them* toward heaven. And *they* caused ⁱboils that break out in sores on man and beast. ¹¹And the ^jmagicians could not stand before Moses because of the ^kboils, for the boils were on the magicians and on all the Egyptians. ¹²But the LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh; and he ^ldid not heed them, just ^mas the LORD had spoken to Moses.

The Seventh Plague: Hail

¹³Then the LORD said to Moses, ⁿ“Rise early in the morning and stand before Pharaoh, and say to him, ‘Thus says the LORD God of the Hebrews: “Let My people go, that they may ^oserve Me, ¹⁴for at this time I will send all My plagues to your very heart, and on your servants and on your people, ^pthat you may know that *there is none like Me in all the earth.* ¹⁵Now if I had ^qstretched out My hand and struck you and your people with ^rpestilence, then you would have been cut off from the earth. ¹⁶But indeed for ^sthis *purpose* I have raised you up, that I may ^tshow My power *in* you, and that My ^uname may be declared in all the earth. ¹⁷As yet you exalt yourself against

⁹ ^h Deut. 28:27; Rev. 16:2
¹⁰ ⁱ Deut. 28:27
¹¹ / [Ex. 8:18, 19; 2 Tim. 3:9] ^k Deut. 28:27; Job 2:7; Rev. 16:1, 2
¹² ^j Ex. 7:13 ^m Ex. 4:21
¹³ ⁿ Ex. 8:20 ^o Ex. 9:1
¹⁴ ^p Ex. 8:10; Deut. 3:24; 2 Sam. 7:22; 1 Chr. 17:20; Ps. 86:8; Is. 45:5-8; 46:9; Jer. 10:6, 7
¹⁵ ^q Ex. 3:20; 7:5
^r Ex. 5:3
¹⁶ ^s Ex. 14:17; Prov. 16:4; [Rom. 9:17, 18; 1 Pet. 2:8, 9] ^t Ex. 7:4, 5; 10:1; 11:9; 14:17 ^u 1 Kin. 8:43

²⁰ ^v Ex. 1:17; 14:31; [Prov. 13:13] ^w Ex. 8:19; 10:7
²² ^x Rev. 16:21
²³ ^y Gen. 19:24; Josh. 10:11; Ps. 18:13; 78:47; 105:32; 148:8; Is. 30:30; Ezek. 38:22; Rev. 8:7
²⁵ ^z Ex. 9:19; Ps. 78:47, 48; 105:32, 33
²⁶ ^a Ex. 8:22, 23; 9:4, 6; 10:23; 11:7; 12:13; Is. 32:18, 19
²⁷ ^b Ex. 8:8 ^c Ex. 9:34; 10:16, 17
^d 2 Chr. 12:6; Ps. 129:4; 145:17; Lam. 1:18

My people in that you will not let them go. ¹⁸Behold, tomorrow about this time I will cause very heavy hail to rain down, such as has not been in Egypt since its founding until now. ¹⁹Therefore send now *and* gather your livestock and all that you have in the field, for the hail shall come down on every man and every animal which is found in the field and is not brought home; and they shall die.”’”

²⁰He who ^vfeared the word of the LORD among the ^wservants of Pharaoh made his servants and his livestock flee to the houses. ²¹But he who did not regard the word of the LORD left his servants and his livestock in the field.

²²Then the LORD said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand toward heaven, that there may be ^xhail in all the land of Egypt—on man, on beast, and on every herb of the field, throughout the land of Egypt.” ²³And Moses stretched out his rod toward heaven; and ^ythe LORD sent thunder and hail, and fire darted to the ground. And the LORD rained hail on the land of Egypt. ²⁴So there was hail, and fire mingled with the hail, so very heavy that there was none like it in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation. ²⁵And the ^zhail struck throughout the whole land of Egypt, all that *was* in the field, both man and beast; and the hail struck every herb of the field and broke every tree of the field. ²⁶^aOnly in the land of Goshen, where the children of Israel *were*, there was no hail.

²⁷And Pharaoh sent and ^bcalled for Moses and Aaron, and said to them, ^c“I have sinned this time. ^dThe LORD is righ-

9:8 to Moses and Aaron: This is the second plague to arrive with no warning (see 7:15). **ashes:** Moses’ use of a symbolic act **in the sight of Pharaoh** indicated that the outbreak of disease was not a coincidence. This disease was from the Lord.

9:9, 10 It is not clear from the text whether the Hebrews were spared the plague of **boils** as they were spared the others, but it seems reasonable to think so (see 8:22; 9:4, 26; 10:23; 11:7). As in the case of the fourth (8:24) and fifth (9:6) plagues, there is no mention of the rod of Moses in connection with the plague of boils (see 7:20).

9:11 The reference to the hapless **magicians** (7:11) is almost humorous. Not only were they powerless, but they also suffered from the plague.

9:12 hardened the heart of Pharaoh: See 3:19; 4:21; 5:2; 7:3, 13, 14. **9:14** The words **to your very heart** suggest a growing intensity in the plagues (see chs. 11; 12). **none like Me:** God is beyond comparison (see 8:10). He is distinct from all the supposed gods of Egypt, who were now under His direct attack.

9:15 if I had: The Lord points out that He could have destroyed the stubborn Pharaoh right at the beginning.

9:16 for this . . . I have raised you up: God used Pharaoh’s stubbornness (see 4:21): (1) to demonstrate His **power**; and (2) to make known His **name** (see 10:2; Rom. 9:17, 18). Pharaoh was not only an evil ruler in a powerful state; he was an evil man, ungodly, unrighteous, and anti-God. Pharaoh set himself up as a god who maintained the stability of his kingdom. The Lord’s judgment on him was an appropriate response to this fraud.

9:17 The term **you exalt yourself** has the idea of self-aggrandizement. In this Pharaoh is behaving in a manner similar to that of the Prince of Tyre (Ezek. 28:1–10) and Satan, whom the Prince of Tyre emulated (see Ezek. 28:11–19).

9:18 tomorrow: One theme in the plagues is the certainty of their timing (see 7:20; 9:5).

9:19–21 The fact that God was judging Pharaoh does not mean He was unmerciful. The Lord could have destroyed Pharaoh and his people in a moment (v. 15), but He did not. He could have brought each plague without warning, but in most cases He served notice (see 7:16). In anticipation of this plague, He warned the Egyptians to **gather their livestock** so they might be spared the hailstorm. Even some members of Pharaoh’s court now took the **word of the LORD** seriously.

9:22–25 The wording of this paragraph is detailed, repetitious, and altogether frightening. We hear from time to time of terrible hailstorms with hail as large as “baseballs.” The wording of this text suggests that no hailstorm had ever been as terrible as this. The **rod** used here is the same one that was first described in 4:1–8 (see also 4:20; 7:9; 8:5, 16; 10:13, 22; 14:16; 17:5, 9). The reference to **fire** probably means lightning (as in Lev. 10:2; 1 Kin. 18:38; Ps. 78:48).

9:26 The exclusion of **the land of Goshen** from the Lord’s plagues was part of the miracle (see 8:22; 11:7).

9:27 Pharaoh’s response was more yielding than ever in the aftermath of this terrible blow. For such a proud man to say **I have sinned** was a stunning admission, as was his confession, **the LORD**

teous, and my people and I *are* wicked. ^{28e}Entreat¹ the LORD, that there may be no *more* ²mighty thundering and hail, for *it is* enough. I will let you ^fgo, and you shall stay no longer.”

²⁹So Moses said to him, “As soon as I have gone out of the city, I will ^gspread out my hands to the LORD; the thunder will cease, and there will be no more hail, that you may know that the ^hearth is the LORD’s. ³⁰But as for you and your servants, ⁱI know that you will not yet fear the LORD God.”

³¹Now the flax and the barley were struck, ^jfor the barley *was* in the head and the flax *was* in bud. ³²But the wheat and the spelt were not struck, for they *are* ³late crops.

³³So Moses went out of the city from Pharaoh and ^kspread out his hands to the LORD; then the thunder and the hail ceased, and the rain was not poured on the earth. ³⁴And when Pharaoh saw that the rain, the hail, and the thunder had ceased, he sinned yet more; and he hardened his heart, he and his servants. ³⁵So ^lthe heart of Pharaoh was hard; neither would he let the children of Israel go, as the LORD had spoken by Moses.

The Eighth Plague: Locusts

10 Now the LORD said to Moses, “Go in to Pharaoh; ^afor I have hardened his heart and the hearts of his servants, ^bthat I may show these signs of Mine before him, ²and that ‘you may tell in the hearing of your son and your son’s son the mighty things I have done in Egypt, and My signs which I have done among them, that you may ^dknow that I *am* the LORD.”

²⁸ ^e Ex. 8:8, 28; 10:17; Acts 8:24
^f Ex. 8:25; 10:8, 24
¹ *Pray to, Make supplication to*
² *Lit. voices of God or sounds of God*
²⁹ ^g 1 Kin. 8:22, 38; Ps. 143:6; Is. 1:15
^h Ex. 8:22; 19:5; 20:11; Ps. 24:1; 1 Cor. 10:26, 28
³⁰ ⁱ Ex. 8:29; [Is. 26:10]
³¹ ^j Ruth 1:22; 2:23
³² ³ *Lit. darkened*
³³ ^k Ex. 8:12; 9:29
³⁵ ^l Ex. 4:21

CHAPTER 10

¹ ^a Ex. 4:21; 7:14; 9:12; 10:27; 11:10; 14:4; Josh. 11:20; John 12:40; Rom. 9:18
^b Ex. 7:4; 9:16
² ^c Ex. 12:26; 13:8, 14; Deut. 4:9; 6:7; 11:19; Ps. 44:1; 78:5; Joel 1:3
^d Ex. 7:5, 17; 8:22

³ ^e [1 Kin. 21:29; 2 Chr. 34:27]; Job 42:6; [James 4:10; 1 Pet. 5:6]
^f Ex. 4:23; 8:1; 9:1
⁴ ^g Prov. 30:27; Rev. 9:3
⁵ ^h Ex. 9:32; Joel 1:4; 2:25
⁶ ⁱ Ex. 8:3, 21
⁷ ^j Ex. 7:5; 8:19; 9:20; 12:33
^k Ex. 23:33; Josh. 23:13; 1 Sam. 18:21; Eccl. 7:26; 1 Cor. 7:35
⁹ ^l Ex. 5:1; 7:16
¹¹ ^m Ex. 10:28

³So Moses and Aaron came in to Pharaoh and said to him, “Thus says the LORD God of the Hebrews: ‘How long will you refuse to ^ehumble yourself before Me? Let My people go, that they may ^fserve Me. ⁴Or else, if you refuse to let My people go, behold, tomorrow I will bring ^glocusts into your territory. ⁵And they shall cover the face of the earth, so that no one will be able to see the earth; and ^hthey shall eat the residue of what is left, which remains to you from the hail, and they shall eat every tree which grows up for you out of the field. ⁶They shall ⁱfill your houses, the houses of all your servants, and the houses of all the Egyptians—which neither your fathers nor your fathers’ fathers have seen, since the day that they were on the earth to this day.’” And he turned and went out from Pharaoh.

⁷Then Pharaoh’s ^jservants said to him, “How long shall this man be ^ka snare to us? Let the men go, that they may serve the LORD their God. Do you not yet know that Egypt is destroyed?”

⁸So Moses and Aaron were brought again to Pharaoh, and he said to them, “Go, serve the LORD your God. Who *are* the ones that are going?”

⁹And Moses said, “We will go with our young and our old; with our sons and our daughters, with our flocks and our herds we will go, for ^lwe must hold a feast to the LORD.”

¹⁰Then he said to them, “The LORD had better be with you when I let you and your little ones go! Beware, for evil is ahead of you. ¹¹Not so! Go now, you *who are* men, and serve the LORD, for that is what you desired.” And they were driven ^mout from Pharaoh’s presence.

is righteous. What a change from his initial arrogance (see 5:2)! But sadly, these words of contrition would not hold. Pharaoh would repeat them later (see 10:16, 17), only to take them back in the end. **9:29 I will spread out my hands:** This is a gesture of prayer (see Ps. 134:2) tied here to a request (v. 28; see 8:8). Pharaoh finally admitted that **the earth is the LORD’s** (see Ps. 24:1).

9:31, 32 As in Canaan (see Ruth 1:22; 2:23), **barley** was the first of the crops to be harvested in the late spring; **wheat** would be harvested in the summer. From this verse the timing of the year-long series of plagues can be estimated (see 7:19).

9:33, 34 It took a miracle to stop the plague as well as to start it (see 8:10–14, 30, 31; 10:18, 19). Sadly, Pharaoh’s remorse (see v. 27) was short-lived; **he hardened his heart** (v. 34; 3:19; 4:21; 5:2; 7:3, 13, 14).

10:1 The coming plague of locusts would be preceded by a warning, so God commanded Moses to **go in to Pharaoh** (see 7:15). **I have hardened his heart:** Three verbs are used in Exodus to describe God’s hardening of Pharaoh’s heart. Usually the verb meaning “to make hard” is used (see 4:21). In 7:3, the Hebrew verb meaning “to make stiff” is used. Here the Hebrew verb that means “to make heavy” or “to make insensitive” is used.

10:2 your son and your son’s son: The story of God’s deliverance of Israel from Egypt was to be told by one generation to the next. **the mighty things I have done:** This whole phrase translates an unusual Hebrew verb that literally means “to make sport of” or “to

toy with.” The Lord was saying, “I have just been playing games with Pharaoh.” The word **signs** refers to God’s power, His revelation of Himself (v. 1; 7:9; 9:16).

10:3 refuse to humble yourself: Pharaoh’s pride was his undoing. He believed himself to be a god, and paraded himself as one. God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble (Ps. 18:27; 147:6; Is. 57:15–21; 1 Pet. 5:5).

10:4 As in each of the first nine plagues, the Lord used a part of His own creation, **locusts**—well known as a recurring cause of destruction—to bring unparalleled devastation to Egypt.

10:7 The term **snare** can be used to describe a trap for birds (as in Amos 3:5). Here it speaks of Moses as a symbol of destruction for the Egyptians. **Egypt is destroyed:** This admission by Pharaoh’s counselors fulfilled God’s prediction that the Egyptians would acknowledge God’s supremacy over Pharaoh (7:5; 8:19; 9:20; 12:33).

10:8, 9 Pharaoh’s questions implied that he was not serious about releasing the Israelites. For example, **Who are the ones that are going?** was a preposterous question. From the beginning, Moses had demanded the release of the entire population of Hebrews, and he stated this again.

10:11 Pharaoh grudgingly gave permission for the **men** to leave. Keeping wives, families, flocks, and possessions under his control would assure that the men would return.

¹²Then the LORD said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand over the land of Egypt for the locusts, that they may come upon the land of Egypt, and ^eeat every herb of the land—all that the hail has left.” ¹³So Moses stretched out his rod over the land of Egypt, and the LORD brought an east wind on the land all that day and all *that* night. When it was morning, the east wind brought the locusts. ¹⁴And ^pthe locusts went up over all the land of Egypt and rested on all the territory of Egypt. *They were very severe*; ^qpreviously there had been no such locusts as they, nor shall there be such after them. ¹⁵For they ^rcovered the face of the whole earth, so that the land was darkened; and they ^sate every herb of the land and all the fruit of the trees which the hail had left. So there remained nothing green on the trees or on the plants of the field throughout all the land of Egypt. ¹⁶Then Pharaoh called ^tfor Moses and Aaron in haste, and said, ^u“I have sinned against the LORD your God and against you. ¹⁷Now therefore, please forgive my sin only this once, and ^ventreat ¹the LORD your God, that He may take away from me this death only.” ¹⁸So he ^wwent out from Pharaoh and entreated the LORD. ¹⁹And the LORD turned a very strong west wind, which took the locusts away and blew them ^xinto the Red Sea. There remained not one locust in all the territory of Egypt. ²⁰But the LORD ^yhardened Pharaoh’s heart, and he did not let the children of Israel go.

The Ninth Plague: Darkness

²¹Then the LORD said to Moses, ^z“Stretch out your hand toward heaven, that there may be darkness over the land

¹² ^a Ex. 7:19 ^o Ex. 10:5, 15
¹⁴ ^p Deut. 28:38; Ps. 78:46; 105:34
^q Joel 1:4, 7; 2:1-11; Rev. 9:3
¹⁵ ^r Ex. 10:5 ^s Ps. 105:35
¹⁶ ^t Ex. 8:8 ^u Ex. 9:27
¹⁷ ^v Ex. 8:8, 28; 9:28; 1 Kin. 13:6
¹ *make supplication to*
¹⁸ ^w Ex. 8:30
¹⁹ ^x Joel 2:20
²⁰ ^y Ex. 4:21; 10:1; 11:10
²¹ ^z Ex. 9:22

² *Lit. that one may feel the darkness*
²² ^a Ps. 105:28; Rev. 16:10 ^b Ex. 3:18
²³ ^c Ex. 8:22, 23
²⁴ ^d Ex. 8:8, 25; 10:8
^e Ex. 10:10
²⁵ ³ *Lit. into our hands*
²⁶ ^f Ex. 10:9
²⁷ ^g Ex. 4:21; 10:1, 20; 14:4, 8
²⁸ ^h Ex. 10:11
²⁹ ⁱ Ex. 11:8; Heb. 11:27

CHAPTER 11

¹ ^a Ex. 12:31, 33, 39
^b Ex. 6:1; 12:39
² ^c Ex. 3:22; 12:35, 36
³ ^d Ex. 3:21; 12:36; Ps. 106:46

of Egypt, ²darkness *which* may even be felt.” ²²So Moses stretched out his hand toward heaven, and there was ^athick darkness in all the land of Egypt ^bthree days. ²³They did not see one another; nor did anyone rise from his place for three days. ^cBut all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings.

²⁴Then Pharaoh called to Moses and ^dsaid, “Go, serve the LORD; only let your flocks and your herds be kept back. Let your ^elittle ones also go with you.”

²⁵But Moses said, “You must also give ³us sacrifices and burnt offerings, that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God. ²⁶Our ^flivestock also shall go with us; not a hoof shall be left behind. For we must take some of them to serve the LORD our God, and even we do not know with what we must serve the LORD until we arrive there.”

²⁷But the LORD ^ghardened Pharaoh’s heart, and he would not let them go. ²⁸Then Pharaoh said to him, ^h“Get away from me! Take heed to yourself and see my face no more! For in the day you see my face you shall die!”

²⁹So Moses said, “You have spoken well. ⁱI will never see your face again.”

Death of the Firstborn Announced

11 And the LORD said to Moses, “I will bring one more plague on Pharaoh and on Egypt. ^aAfterward he will let you go from here. ^bWhen he lets you go, he will surely drive you out of here altogether. ²Speak now in the hearing of the people, and let every man ask from his neighbor and every woman from her neighbor, ‘articles of silver and articles of gold.’” ^{3d}And the LORD gave the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians.

10:12–15 Since Pharaoh was still obstinate, the Lord brought on the locusts and they covered the face of the whole earth. This is a hyperbolic way of expressing that this was an unprecedented disaster in all the land of Egypt. It is not clear in this passage, but it is likely (based on the words in 8:22; 9:4, 26; 10:23; 11:7) that the Hebrews were spared the effects of this plague.

10:16–18 Pharaoh confessed I have sinned, and Moses entreated the Lord on his behalf because Pharaoh could not stop the plague himself, nor could his magicians. The text is careful to attribute the relief to God and not to Moses. God was winning.

10:19 a very strong west wind: As in the case of the frogs (8:10–14) and the hail (9:33), Pharaoh saw God’s power over the forces of nature. Truly the earth was the Lord’s (see 9:29; Ps. 24:1).

10:20 But the Lord hardened Pharaoh’s heart: See 3:19; 4:21; 5:2; 7:3, 13, 14.

10:22, 23 A comparison with other passages (see 10:12, 13) suggests that when Moses stretched out his hand he was holding the rod of God (see 4:1–8, 20; 7:9, 20; 8:5, 16; 9:23; 14:16; 17:5, 9), an indication to Pharaoh that he was opposing the living God. The Hebrew expression thick darkness comes from a pair of words. The first is the common word for darkness. The second is used less often and describes deep gloom (see Job 3:6, 10:21, 22; Ps. 91:6; Is. 29:18). This

calamity would have affected the Egyptians the most. They worshiped many gods, but none so much as the sun. Even a normal solar eclipse would have had an impact, but an enshrouding darkness that lasted for three days was a frontal attack on their gods (see 12:12), on their Pharaoh and his supposed control of nature, and on all Pharaoh’s counselors who were as helpless as he was. see . . . nor . . . rise: The people must have been terrified.

10:27 But the Lord hardened Pharaoh’s heart: See 3:19; 4:21; 5:2; 7:3, 13, 14.

10:28, 29 There can be no mistaking the intent of Pharaoh’s threat, you shall die, or of Moses’ reply, I will never see your face again. It is likely that Moses spoke the words of 11:4–8 as a part of this same conversation, interrupted only by the prophecy that begins in 11:1. This would explain Moses’ “great anger” toward Pharaoh (see 11:8). **11:1, 2** one more plague: At this point, the series of plagues had come to its climax. lets you go . . . drive you out: Pharaoh would be glad to be rid of the Israelites. ask from his neighbor: God had announced this from the beginning (3:21, 22; see 12:35, 36 for the result).

11:3 Another remarkable component of the Exodus was the Egyptians’ favor (or grace) toward the Hebrews and admiration for their leader. After all that had happened, we might expect the opposite.

Moreover the man ^cMoses *was* very great in the land of Egypt, in the sight of Pharaoh's servants and in the sight of the people.

⁴Then Moses said, "Thus says the LORD: ^f'About midnight I will go out into the midst of Egypt; ⁵and ^gall the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sits on his throne, even to the firstborn of the female servant who *is* behind the handmill, and all the firstborn of the animals. ^{6h}Then there shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, ⁱsuch as was not like it *before*, nor shall be like it again. ^{7j}But against none of the children of Israel ^kshall a dog ^lmove its tongue, against man or beast, that you may know that the LORD does make a difference between the Egyptians and Israel.' ⁸And ^lall these your servants shall come down to me and bow down to me, saying, 'Get out, and all

³ ^c Deut. 34:10-12;
2 Sam. 7:9; Esth. 9:4
⁴ ^f Ex. 12:12, 23, 29
⁵ ^g Ex. 4:23; 12:12,
29; Ps. 78:51;
105:36; 135:8;
136:10; Amos 4:10
⁶ ^h Ex. 12:30; Amos
5:17 ⁱ Ex. 10:14
⁷ ^j Ex. 8:22 ^k Josh.
10:21 ^l *sharpen*
⁸ ^l Ex. 12:31-33

^m Ex. 10:29; Heb.
11:27

⁹ ⁿ Ex. 3:19; 7:4; 10:1
^o Ex. 7:3; 9:16
¹⁰ ^p Ex. 7:23; 9:12;
10:1, 20, 27; Josh.
11:20; Is. 63:17; John
12:40; Rom. 2:5

CHAPTER 12

² ^c Ex. 13:4; 23:15;
34:18; Deut. 16:1
³ ^b Josh. 4:19

the people who follow you!' After that I will go out." ^mThen he went out from Pharaoh in great anger.

⁹But the LORD said to Moses, ⁿ"Pharaoh will not heed you, so that ^oMy wonders may be multiplied in the land of Egypt." ¹⁰So Moses and Aaron did all these wonders before Pharaoh; ^pand the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he did not let the children of Israel go out of his land.

The Passover Instituted

12 Now the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, ^{2a}"This month *shall be* your beginning of months; it *shall be* the first month of the year to you. ³Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying: 'On the ^btenth of this month every man shall take for himself a lamb, according to the house of *his* father, a lamb for a household.

But the positive feelings for Moses were shared, amazingly enough, even by **Pharaoh's servants**. This, too, is a part of the wit and irony of this great victory the Lord had won over His enemy Pharaoh (who represents evil, sin, ungodliness, and even Satan; see 15:3).

11:4 About midnight I will go out: The Lord was the power behind all ten plagues. But in none of the earlier ones did He become personally involved as He did here.

11:5 firstborn of Pharaoh . . . of the female servant: The use of these social opposites indicates totality (another use of social opposites is in 12:29). None of the Egyptians would escape this plague.

11:6 Prediction of the **great cry** to come (see 12:30) only intensified the tragedy. Pharaoh had been warned of this (see 4:22, 23).

11:7 In some of the other nine plagues, the text specifically says that God protected His people from the effects (see 8:22; 9:4, 26; 10:23). Here too it states emphatically that **none of the children of Israel** would suffer in this last, most ghastly plague. God served notice that He did recognize **a difference between the Egyptians and Israel** (see 8:22; 9:4). The institution of the Passover (ch. 12) accentuated this great distinction. The Lord in His mercy protected His people even as He executed judgment on those who opposed Him.

11:8 Moses repeated God's prophecy: Pharaoh's **servants** would honor Moses and beg him for mercy. This was certainly an affront to Pharaoh, along with the fact that Moses left **in great anger** (most likely soon after the words of 10:28, 29).

11:9 As in each of the other plagues, it was part of God's plan that Pharaoh would **not heed** God's commands or warnings. Only in the face of Pharaoh's stubbornness might the power of God be displayed.

12:2 This month, called Abib in 13:4, corresponds to April–May and is also called Nisan. **first month:** As the Christian world dated time with respect to the birth of Christ, so Hebrew people began to mark time relative to the month of their departure from Egypt. In later Judaism an alternate dating system developed, with the new year celebrated in the fall (September–October).

12:3 Each family took a lamb on the **tenth of the month** but waited until the fourteenth day to kill it (see v. 6), perhaps allowing time to notice any problems that might make the animal unfit for this holy sacrifice. The word for **lamb** can refer to either a young sheep or a young goat (see v. 5). The Passover feast involved the whole family, the **household**.

The Passover

The Passover commemorated God's deliverance of the Israelites from slavery in Egypt, but it also pointed to the coming Deliverer and Savior of all people—Jesus Christ.

More specifically, the New Testament identifies the Passover lamb, the young lamb sacrificed in place of the family's firstborn, as a type of the person and work of Jesus. (A type is a divinely ordained correspondence between a person, event, or institution and its *antitype* or fulfillment. Most biblical types are fulfilled in the person and work of Jesus.) Right at the beginning of Jesus' ministry, John the Baptist prophetically announced that Jesus was "the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). Furthermore, Paul wrote that "Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us" (1 Cor. 5:7). Finally, Peter identified Jesus as the "lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Pet. 1:19). All these New Testament references allude to the Passover lamb.

The Passover lamb had to be (1) without blemish, (2) male, and (3) young. (4) It had to be examined (four days from the selection to the sacrifice) and (5) it had to be slain in public. (6) None of its bones was to be broken. Finally, (7) its blood on the Israelites' doorposts was a sign that God should pass over and not destroy that family's firstborn (see 12:3–13, 46; Num. 9:12). In each particular, Jesus was the fulfillment of this divinely ordained type. Jesus was (1) sinless and perfect. In His humanity, He was both (2) a male and (3) somewhat young when He was slain. (4) He lived a meticulously examined life. (5) He died publicly, and despite the brutality of His death, (6) not one of His bones was broken (John 19:36). Finally, (7) Jesus' blood is the sign of Jesus' death. Through Jesus' death, we are saved from the coming judgment (Rom. 5:9; Eph. 2:13; Col. 1:14; Heb. 9:22; 10:19; 1 Pet. 1:2; 1 John 1:7; Rev. 1:5; 7:14). Thus in all respects, Jesus fulfilled the divinely ordained prophetic picture. He is our Passover Lamb.



⁴And if the household is too small for the lamb, let him and his neighbor next to his house take *it* according to the number of the persons; according to each man's need you shall make your count for the lamb. ⁵Your lamb shall be ^cwithout¹ blemish, a male ²of the first year. You may take *it* from the sheep or from the goats. ⁶Now you shall keep it until the ^dfourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight. ⁷And they shall take *some* of the blood and put *it* on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses where they eat it. ⁸Then they shall eat the flesh on that ^enight; ^froasted in fire, with ^gunleavened bread and with bitter *herbs* they shall eat it. ⁹Do not eat it raw, nor boiled at all with water, but ^hroasted in fire—its head with its legs and its entrails. ¹⁰ⁱYou shall let none of it remain until morning, and what remains of it until morning you shall burn with fire. ¹¹And thus you shall eat it: ³*with* a belt on your waist, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand. So you shall eat it in haste. ^jIt is the LORD's Passover.

¹²For I ^kwill pass through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and ^lagainst all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: ^m*I am the LORD*. ¹³Now the blood shall be a sign for

⁵ ^c Lev. 22:18-21; 23:12; Mal. 1:8, 14; [Heb. 9:14; 1 Pet. 1:19] ¹ perfect or sound ² a year old
⁶ ^d Ex. 12:14, 17; Lev. 23:5; Num. 9:1-3, 11; 28:16; Deut. 16:1, 4, 6
⁸ ^e Ex. 34:25; Num. 9:12 ^f Deut. 16:7
⁹ Deut. 16:3, 4; 1 Cor. 5:8
⁹ ^h Deut. 16:7
¹⁰ ⁱ Ex. 16:19; 23:18; 34:25
¹¹ ^j Ex. 12:13, 21, 27, 43 ³ Made ready to travel
¹² ^k Ex. 11:4, 5
¹ Num. 33:4 ^m Ex. 6:2

¹⁴ ⁿ Ex. 13:9 ^o Lev. 23:4, 5; 2 Kin. 23:21
^p Ex. 12:17, 24; 13:10
¹⁵ ^q Ex. 13:6, 7; 23:15; 34:18; Lev. 23:6; Num. 28:17; Deut. 16:3, 8 ^r Gen. 17:14; Ex. 12:19; Num. 9:13 ⁴ soul
⁵ Put to death
¹⁶ ^s Lev. 23:2, 7, 8; Num. 28:18, 25
¹⁷ ^t Ex. 12:14; 13:3, 10 ^u Num. 33:1
⁶ hosts
¹⁸ ^v Ex. 12:2; Lev. 23:5-8; Num. 28:16-25
¹⁹ ^w Ex. 12:15; 23:15; 34:18

you on the houses where you *are*. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you; and the plague shall not be on you to destroy *you* when I strike the land of Egypt.

¹⁴So this day shall be to you ^aa memorial; and you shall keep it as a ^ofeast to the LORD throughout your generations. You shall keep it as a feast ^pby an everlasting ordinance. ¹⁵^qSeven days you shall eat unleavened bread. On the first day you shall remove leaven from your houses. For whoever eats leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, ^rthat ⁴person shall be ⁵cut off from Israel. ¹⁶On the first day *there shall be* ^sa holy convocation, and on the seventh day there shall be a holy convocation for you. No manner of work shall be done on them; but *that* which everyone must eat—that only may be prepared by you.

¹⁷So you shall observe *the Feast of Unleavened Bread*, for ^ton this same day I will have brought your ⁶armies ^uout of the land of Egypt. Therefore you shall observe this day throughout your generations as an everlasting ordinance. ¹⁸^vIn the first *month*, on the fourteenth day of the month at evening, you shall eat unleavened bread, until the twenty-first day of the month at evening. ¹⁹For ^wseven days no leaven shall be found in your houses, since whoever eats what is leavened, that same person shall be cut off

12:4 Any household **too small** to eat a lamb in one meal was to join with another. No one was to be excluded.

12:5 Sacrifice was not a way to get rid of unwanted animals. Only the best lambs **without blemish** were suitable. **a male of the first year**: God meant the Passover lamb sacrificed for the Israelites to be a picture (a type or model) of the coming death of the Savior, Jesus Christ (see 1 Cor. 5:7). **sheep . . . goats**: We usually speak of the Passover lamb, but it could be a young goat as well.

12:6, 7 Each family took a lamb on the tenth of the month but waited until the **fourteenth day** to kill it (see v. 3). The **blood** of the Passover lamb on the **doorposts** and . . . **lintel** was the Lord's provision for salvation from physical death, just as the blood of Christ is the Lord's provision for our salvation from spiritual death.

12:8 Verses 15–20 expand on the instructions for **unleavened bread**. See 1 Cor. 5:8 for Paul's comparison of sincerity and truth with unleavened bread. **Bitter herbs** reminded the people of the unpleasantness of slavery.

12:11 The people were to dress for travel, in readiness to march at the Lord's bidding. Ordinarily they would not wear **sandals** (or shoes) in the house. One's **staff** would be propped near the door, but not on this night. They were to **eat . . . in haste**, ready to leave. **It is the LORD's Passover**: (See v. 13 for the meaning of Passover). The commands for this night were not for the people's comfort. They readied the people for God's quick and miraculous deliverance. By the time of Jesus, the Jews ate this meal in a very leisurely manner, reclining on cushions around a three-winged table, the Roman *triclinium* (see John 13:23). The first Passover meal was eaten in haste, but subsequent Passover meals could be less hurried, because the deliverance from Egypt had already been accomplished.

12:12 **Pass through** (also in v. 23) refers to linear motion, as in crossing over a stream (Gen. 31:21), crossing a border (Num. 20:17), or going across a territory (Num. 21:23). Abram used this word to

describe his journey to Canaan (Gen. 12:6). This word is related to the name Hebrew (as in Ex. 1:15, 16; 2:6), perhaps meaning, "one who has come from the other side." Here it is used ominously of the anticipated journey of the Lord to destroy the **firstborn in the land of Egypt** as threatened at the beginning (see 4:21–23) and told to Pharaoh's face (11:4–8). **I will pass through . . . I will strike . . . I will execute . . . I am the LORD**: The repetition of the pronoun *I* emphasizes that God did this, not an angel or some other agent.

12:13 The term **sign** can mean a reminder, memorial, or symbol, as it does here (see also 3:12), or a miracle that points to the power of God (as in 7:3). The verb translated **pass over** (from which the Hebrew name for Passover comes; see vv. 11, 12) means "to spare" or "skip" (see vv. 23, 27); it is used only in these three verses and in Is. 31:5. This judgment was carried out personally by the living God. **I see . . . I will pass over you . . . I strike the land**: As in v. 12, *I* is repeated for emphasis (see the report in v. 29).

12:14 Henceforth the day would be a **memorial** (similar to the word describing God's name in 3:15). **feast to the LORD**: Some of the religious duties are somber and require fasting. The Passover, however, was a feast of celebration. (The name of the prophet Haggai was based on the Hebrew word for *feast*.) The same term translated **everlasting** here was also used to describe God's name (3:15). The word means "in perpetuity," for time without end (see Ps. 90:2).

12:15, 16 **seven days**: The Passover was tied directly to the Feast of Unleavened Bread, so named in v. 17 (see 23:15; Lev. 23:4–8). **Shall be cut off** means "shall be executed" (see Gen. 17:14). The term **convocation** means "gathering." On the days of holy convocation the only work permitted was the preparation of food.

12:17–24 As vv. 17–20 repeat and expand on the ideas of vv. 15, 16, so vv. 21–24 take up the main ideas of the Passover (vv. 1–14) and expand on them.

from the congregation of Israel, whether *he* is a stranger or a native of the land. ²⁰You shall eat nothing leavened; in all your dwellings you shall eat unleavened bread.”

²¹Then ^xMoses called for all the ^yelders of Israel and said to them, ^z“Pick out and take lambs for yourselves according to your families, and kill the Passover *lamb*. ^{22a}And you shall take a bunch of hyssop, dip *it* in the blood that *is* in the basin, and ^bstrike the lintel and the two doorposts with the blood that *is* in the basin. And none of you shall go out of the door of his house until morning. ^{23c}For the LORD will pass through to strike the Egyptians; and when He sees the ^dblood on the ^elintel and on the two doorposts, the LORD will pass over the door and ^fnot allow ^gthe destroyer to come into your houses to strike *you*. ²⁴And you shall ^hobserve this thing as an ordinance for you and your sons forever. ²⁵It will come to pass when you come to the land which the LORD will give you, ⁱjust as He promised, that you shall keep this service. ^{26j}And it shall be, when your children say to you, ‘What do you mean by this service?’ ²⁷that you shall say, ^j‘It is the Passover sacrifice of the LORD, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt when He struck the Egyptians and delivered our households.’” So the people ^kbowed their heads and worshiped. ²⁸Then the children of Israel went away and ^ldid so; just as the LORD had commanded Moses and Aaron, so they did.

21 ^x [Heb. 11:28]
^y Ex. 3:16 ^z Ex. 12:3;
 Num. 9:4; Josh.
 5:10; 2 Kin. 23:21;
 Ezra 6:20; Mark
 14:12-16
 22 ^a Heb. 11:28
^b Ex. 12:7
 23 ^c Ex. 11:4; 12:12,
 13 ^d Ex. 24:8 ^e Ezek.
 9:6; Rev. 7:3; 9:4
^f 1 Cor. 10:10; Heb.
 11:28 ^g Crosspiece
 at top of door
 24 ^h Ex. 12:14, 17;
 13:5, 10
 25 ⁱ Ex. 3:8, 17
 26 ^j Ex. 10:2; 13:8,
 14, 15; Deut. 32:7;
 Josh. 4:6; Ps. 78:6
 27 / Ex. 12:11 ^k Ex.
 4:31
 28 ^l [Heb. 11:28]

29 ^m Ex. 11:4, 5
ⁿ Num. 8:17; 33:4;
 Ps. 135:8; 136:10
^o Ex. 9:6 ^p in prison
 31 ^p Ex. 10:28, 29
^q Ex. 8:25; 11:1 ^r Ex.
 10:9
 32 ^s Ex. 10:9, 26
 33 ^t Ex. 10:7 ^u Ex.
 11:8; Ps. 105:38
 35 ^v Ex. 3:21, 22;
 11:2, 3; Ps. 105:37
 36 ^w Ex. 3:21 ^x Gen.
 15:14

The Tenth Plague: Death of the Firstborn

^{29m}And it came to pass at midnight that “the LORD struck all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sat on his throne to the firstborn of the captive who *was* ⁸in the dungeon, and all the firstborn of ^olivestock. ³⁰So Pharaoh rose in the night, he, all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt, for *there was* not a house where *there was* not one dead.

The Exodus

³¹Then he ^pcalled for Moses and Aaron by night, and said, “Rise, go out from among my people, ^qboth you and the children of Israel. And go, serve the LORD as you have ^rsaid. ^{32s}Also take your flocks and your herds, as you have said, and be gone; and bless me also.”

^{33t}And the Egyptians ^uurged the people, that they might send them out of the land in haste. For they said, “We *shall* all *be* dead.” ³⁴So the people took their dough before it was leavened, having their kneading bowls bound up in their clothes on their shoulders. ³⁵Now the children of Israel had done according to the word of Moses, and they had asked from the Egyptians ^varticles of silver, articles of gold, and clothing. ^{36w}And the LORD had given the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they granted them *what they requested*. Thus ^xthey plundered the Egyptians.

12:25–28 To ensure against forgetting this festival, these verses include instructions on how one generation should teach the next concerning its importance. **to the land:** The hope for entry into the Promised Land was an essential part of the salvation story. **when your children say:** These words are implemented in a significant part of the Passover Haggadah (liturgy): Questions are provided for children to ask, and the answers are prepared as well. **He struck:** The language of this verse is consistent with that of vv. 12, 13. The Lord Himself passed over the homes of the faithful in Israel, and the Lord Himself struck the homes of the Egyptians (see v. 29). **bowed their heads and worshiped:** This is the second time that such words are used of the Israelites in the Exodus. **so they did:** The Israelites not only worshiped God, but they believed His words and obeyed Him.

12:29 Moses, at the very beginning of his commission, was told about the death of the Egyptians’ **firstborn** (4:22, 23). Furthermore, he announced it directly to Pharaoh (see 11:4–8). God regarded the nation of Israel as His firstborn. In exchange for the attacks on His firstborn son, the Lord attacked the firstborn son of Pharaoh (vv. 12, 13, 23, 27). **the firstborn of Pharaoh . . . to the firstborn of the captive:** This use of opposites indicates totality—everyone in Egypt. **and all the firstborn of livestock:** Though not nearly as awful as the death of firstborn children, the death of the livestock was a blow to the Egyptians economically. These deaths were also attacks on their gods (see v. 12).

12:30 The **great cry in Egypt** gives us only a glimpse of how Pharaoh’s people paid for his choices. **Not a house** escaped. Wherever there was a family there was a death.

12:31 called for Moses and Aaron: Based on the words of Moses reported in 10:29, it is likely that this message was delivered by an intermediary. Pharaoh was grief-stricken at the death of his firstborn son.

12:32 your flocks and your herds: At last Pharaoh capitulated (see 10:9, 26). His words **and bless me also** show a softening of his heart. The death of his son—and the deaths of firstborn sons everywhere—must have shattered him to the core of his being.

12:33 The Egyptians urged the people to leave because they feared they might all die if the Israelites did not leave soon. A Psalm written later celebrated this miraculous deliverance from slavery: “Egypt was glad when they departed, for the fear of them had fallen upon them” (Ps. 105:38).

12:34 The dough before it was leavened explains the “unleavened bread” of vv. 15–20. The Israelites did not have enough time to let the leaven (yeast) work in their dough. They left Egypt with unleavened dough. From that day on, unleavened bread would remind them of the haste of that night of flight from slavery.

12:35 asked from the Egyptians: This was God’s plan from the beginning (see 3:21, 22; 11:2, 3). The slaves were now being paid for their years of servitude. Pharaoh was no longer respected by his people. The ones who suffered through all ten plagues respected the nation of the God who had humiliated the Pharaoh.

12:36 plundered the Egyptians: Newly freed slaves do not usually make their escape with their masters pushing the family silver into their hands. But this is what happened when Israel left Egypt.

³⁷Then ^uthe children of Israel journeyed from ^zRameses to Succoth, about ^asix hundred thousand men on foot, besides children. ³⁸A ^bmixed multitude went up with them also, and flocks and herds—a great deal of ^clivestock. ³⁹And they baked unleavened cakes of the dough which they had brought out of Egypt; for it was not leavened, because ^dthey were driven out of Egypt and could not wait, nor had they prepared provisions for themselves.

⁴⁰Now the ⁹sojourn of the children of Israel who lived in ¹Egypt was ^efour hundred and thirty years. ⁴¹And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years—on that very same day—it came to pass that ^fall the armies of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt. ⁴²It is ^ga ²night of solemn observance to the LORD for bringing them out of the land of Egypt. This is that night of the LORD, a solemn observance for all the children of Israel throughout their generations.

Passover Regulations

⁴³And the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, “This is ^hthe ordinance of the Passover: No foreigner shall eat it. ⁴⁴But every man’s servant who is bought for

³⁷ ^v Num. 33:3, 5
^z Gen. 47:11; Ex. 1:11;
 Num. 33:3, 4 ^a Gen.
 12:2; Ex. 38:26;
 Num. 1:46; 2:32;
 11:21; 26:51
³⁸ ^b Num. 11:4 ^c Ex.
 17:3; Num. 20:19;
 32:1; Deut. 3:19
³⁹ ^d Ex. 6:1; 11:1;
 12:31–33
⁴⁰ ^e Gen. 15:13, 16;
 Acts 7:6; Gal. 3:17
^g Length of the stay
¹ Sam., LXX *Egypt*
 and *Canaan*
⁴¹ ^f Ex. 3:8, 10;
 6:6; 7:4
⁴² ^g Ex. 13:10; 34:18;
 Deut. 16:1, 6 ² *night*
 of *vigil*
⁴³ ^h Ex. 12:11; Num.
 9:14
⁴⁴ ⁱ Gen. 17:12, 13;
 Lev. 22:11
⁴⁵ ^j Lev. 22:10
⁴⁶ ^k Num. 9:12;
 Ps. 34:20; [John
 19:33, 36]
⁴⁷ ^l Ex. 12:6; Num.
 9:13, 14
⁴⁸ ^m Num. 9:14 ³ As
 a resident alien
⁴⁹ ⁿ Lev. 24:22;
 Num. 15:15, 16;
 [Gal. 3:28]
⁵¹ ^o Ex. 12:41; 20:2
^p Ex. 6:26

money, when you have ⁱcircumcised him, then he may eat it. ^{45j}A sojourner and a hired servant shall not eat it. ⁴⁶In one house it shall be eaten; you shall not carry any of the flesh outside the house, ^knor shall you break one of its bones. ^{47l}All the congregation of Israel shall keep it. ⁴⁸And ^mwhen a stranger ³dwells with you *and wants* to keep the Passover to the LORD, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it; and he shall be as a native of the land. For no uncircumcised person shall eat it. ⁴⁹ⁿOne law shall be for the native-born and for the stranger who dwells among you.”

⁵⁰Thus all the children of Israel did; as the LORD commanded Moses and Aaron, so they did. ^{51o}And it came to pass, on that very same day, that the LORD brought the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt ^paccording to their armies.

The Firstborn Consecrated

13 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ^{2a}“Consecrate ¹ to Me all the firstborn, whatever opens the womb

CHAPTER 13 ² ^a Ex. 13:12, 13, 15; 22:29; Lev. 27:26; Num. 3:13; 8:16; 18:15; Deut. 15:19; Luke 2:23 ☆ ¹ *Set apart*

12:37 The familiar phrase **the children of Israel** refers to the heirs of God’s promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The Lord gave the name Israel to Jacob (see Gen. 32:22–32). The reference to **Rameses** most likely relates to the store city Raameses mentioned in 1:11, perhaps Tell el-Daba in the Eastern Delta region. **Succoth** is possibly Tell el-Maskhuta further to the east. The number **six hundred thousand men** indicates a total population of some three million people. The actual numbering of the people did not take place until later (Num. 1). Thus this verse should not be regarded as an independent witness to the number of fighting men in Israel at the time of the Exodus from Egypt, since it is derived from the later census (see Num. 1:46).

12:38 The **mixed multitude** included Egyptians and perhaps other ethnic groups who had their own reasons for leaving. Some of these people later caused trouble when things did not go smoothly or as anticipated (see Num. 11:4). The movement of this vast population was further complicated by their **flocks and herds**, which they needed to provide milk, meat, and hides, as well as sacrifices to the Lord.

12:39 The people baked **unleavened cakes** (bread without leaven) in obedience to God’s command (vv. 1–20). **and could not wait**: The symbolism in this has to do with the haste of their departure, not (as some have supposed) something evil in leaven itself. If leaven were intrinsically evil, Israel would have been forbidden to eat leavened bread at any time.

12:40, 41 four hundred and thirty years: If the Exodus took place around 1446 B.C., Jacob’s arrival in Egypt would have been around 1876 B.C.

12:42 The departure of Israel from Egypt was to be a **night of solemn observance**. The Passover has been carefully observed by Jews since that time. In a sense, Christians also celebrate the Passover when they celebrate the Lord’s Supper, Jesus’ last supper with his disciples which took place at the time of the Passover. When at the Lord’s Supper Christians recall Jesus’ saving acts for them, they can also thank God for His saving acts for the Israelites at the time of the Exodus.

12:43–51 The regulations concerning Passover may have been

given at another time, but are included here because of the description of the first Passover earlier in the chapter.

12:43 no foreigner: The holy feast was designed for those who had come to faith in the living God. To invite others to share in the meal would cause people to lose their understanding of its sacred nature. However, this exclusion was certainly not designed to keep foreigners away from God (see the next verses).

12:44 A servant who had faith in God and was circumcised could partake of the holy feast (Gen. 17:12). But persons who did not share in Israel’s faith were excluded (v. 45).

12:46 in one house: The first Passover was celebrated in each home (see vv. 1–13), for each house was marked by the blood of the Passover lamb. **nor . . . break one of its bones**: Not breaking the bones of the lamb foreshadowed Jesus’ death: None of the Savior’s bones were broken even though He suffered a horrible death (see Ps. 34:20; John 19:33, 36).

12:47 All the congregation of Israel: This limited participation by outsiders and demanded participation from all of those who were part of the community.

12:48 The term **stranger** is different from that in v. 43. Both may speak of foreigners, but the term in v. 43 sometimes has negative overtones as well (see, for example, the word used for *foreign gods* in Gen. 35:2, 3; Josh. 24:20, 23). It would not be a light decision for a male sojourner to come to the Passover meal—he would have to be **circumcised**! This rite would demand faith in the Lord and a determination to share in the responsibilities and promises of Israel.

13:1–22 Before the dramatic story of the crossing of the Red Sea there is a record of foundational institutions that the Lord gave to Israel. These are: (1) the consecration of the firstborn (vv. 1, 2); (2) the Feast of Unleavened Bread (vv. 3–10); and (3) the law concerning the firstborn (vv. 11–16). This is followed by the Lord’s command to the Israelites to travel in an unexpected direction (vv. 17–22).

13:1 The Lord spoke to Moses often, but Moses’ close relationship with God was special (see 33:11; Num. 12:8).

13:2 The term translated **consecrate** means “to make holy.” **it is Mine**: The explanation of the rite of consecration of the firstborn males to the Lord is developed further in vv. 11–16.

among the children of Israel, *both* of man and beast; it is Mine.”

The Feast of Unleavened Bread

³ And Moses said to the people: ^b“Remember this day in which you went out of Egypt, out of the house of ²bondage; for ^cby strength of hand the LORD brought you out of this *place*. ^dNo leavened bread shall be eaten. ^{4e}On this day you are going out, in the month Abib. ⁵And it shall be, when the LORD ^fbrings you into the ^gland of the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Amorites and the Hivites and the Jebusites, which He ^hswore to your fathers to give you, a land flowing with milk and honey, ⁱthat you shall keep this service in this month. ^{6j}Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day *there shall be* a feast to the LORD. ⁷Unleavened bread shall be eaten seven days. And ^kno leavened bread shall be seen among you, nor shall leaven be seen among you in all your quarters. ⁸And you shall ^ltell your son in that day, saying, ‘*This is done* because of what the Lord did for me when I came up from Egypt.’ ⁹It shall be as ^ma sign to you on your hand and as a memorial between your eyes, that the LORD’s law may be in your mouth; for with a strong hand the LORD has brought you out of Egypt. ^{10 n}You shall therefore keep this ³ordinance in its season from year to year.

The Law of the Firstborn

¹¹ “And it shall be, when the LORD ^obrings you into the land of the ^pCanaanites, as He swore to you and your fathers, and gives it to you, ^{12 q}that you shall ⁴set

³ ^o Ex. 12:42; Deut. 16:3 ^c Ex. 3:20; 6:1
^d Ex. 12:8, 19 ² Lit. *slaves*
⁴ ^e Ex. 12:2; 23:15; 34:18; Deut. 16:1
⁵ ^f Ex. 3:8, 17; Josh. 24:11 ^g Gen. 17:8; Deut. 30:5 ^h Ex. 6:8
⁶ ^j Ex. 12:25, 26
⁷ ^k Ex. 12:15-20
⁸ ^l Ex. 12:19
⁹ ^m Ex. 10:2; 12:26; 13:14; Ps. 44:1
¹⁰ ⁿ Ex. 12:14; 13:16; 31:13; Deut. 6:8; 11:18; Matt. 23:5
¹¹ ^o Ex. 12:14, 24
¹² ^p *regulation*
¹³ ^q Ex. 13:5 ^r Num. 21:3
¹⁴ ^r Ex. 13:1, 2; 22:29; 34:19; Lev. 27:26; Num. 18:15; Ezek. 44:30; Luke 2:23 ⁴ Lit. *cause to pass over*

¹³ ^r Ex. 34:20; Num. 18:15 ^s Num. 3:46, 47; 18:15, 16
¹⁴ ^t Ex. 10:2; 12:26; 27; 13:8; Deut. 6:20; Josh. 4:6, 21 ^u Ex. 13:3, 9
¹⁵ ^v Ex. 12:29
¹⁶ ^w Ex. 13:9; Deut. 6:8
¹⁷ ^x Ex. 14:11; Num. 14:1-4 ^y Deut. 17:16
¹⁸ ^z Ex. 14:2; Num. 33:6
¹⁹ ^a Gen. 50:24, 25; Josh. 24:32 ^b Ex. 1:6; Deut. 33:13-17

apart to the LORD all that open the womb, that is, every firstborn that comes from an animal which you have; the males *shall be* the LORD’s. ¹³ But ^revery firstborn of a donkey you shall redeem with a lamb; and if you will not redeem *it*, then you shall break its neck. And all the firstborn of man among your sons ^syou shall redeem. ^{14 t} So it shall be, when your son asks you in time to come, saying, ‘What is this?’ that you shall say to him, “By strength of hand the LORD brought us out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. ¹⁵ And it came to pass, when Pharaoh was stubborn about letting us go, that ^vthe LORD killed all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both the firstborn of man and the firstborn of beast. Therefore I sacrifice to the LORD all males that open the womb, but all the firstborn of my sons I redeem.’ ¹⁶ It shall be as ^wa sign on your hand and as frontlets between your eyes, for by strength of hand the LORD brought us out of Egypt.”

The Wilderness Way

¹⁷ Then it came to pass, when Pharaoh had let the people go, that God did not lead them *by* way of the land of the Philistines, although that *was* near; for God said, “Lest perhaps the people ^xchange their minds when they see war, and ^yreturn to Egypt.” ¹⁸ So God ^zled the people around *by* way of the wilderness of the Red Sea. And the children of Israel went up in orderly ranks out of the land of Egypt.

¹⁹ And Moses took the ^abones of ^bJoseph with him, for he had placed the children of Israel under solemn oath,

13:3 Remember this day: See 12:41, 42, 51.

13:4 in the month Abib: This verse defines the month of 12:2.

13:8 Even later generations of Israelites who had not been part of the Exodus were to say, “This is what **the LORD did for me.**” They all shared in God’s deliverance because of its lasting effects and God’s promise of its permanence.

13:9 Sign: A similar commandment is found in Deut. 6:8. Jews would fasten a small box containing passages of Scripture to their hand and forehead during prayer to serve as a memorial. With or without such a physical sign, the symbol represented an internal reality: God’s instructions were to become a rule for one’s life.

13:12 Set apart helps explain the meaning of *consecrate* in v. 2. The idea is “to treat as distinct,” “to mark out as special.” The term **males** qualifies the term **every firstborn**.

13:13 A firstborn male **donkey** was redeemed with a lamb; a donkey was not allowed as a sacrifice to the Lord. Similarly, the Israelites were to **redeem** their firstborn sons; they were never to slay them in human sacrifice. In this way the people were dramatically reminded of the extent to which the Lord had gone to free them from slavery. He had spared their firstborn even as He slew the firstborn of Egypt, human and animal, to buy their freedom. Later the Lord claimed the Levites for Himself in exchange for the firstborn sons of the people (see Num. 3:40–51).

13:16 A sign was a reminder, memorial, or symbol; see v. 9 (compare Deut. 6:8).

13:17 If the people of Israel had traveled directly to Canaan, it would have been in a northerly direction along the coastal plain. Later this plain would be known as **the land of the Philistines**. There were some Philistine people in Canaan from an early period, but their main invasion and settlement of the land did not come before the mid-twelfth century **B.C.** The use of this name is similar to the use of later names for the store cities Israel had worked on in Egypt (see 1:11). **change their minds:** The Egyptians had heavily fortified this coastal route for their own defensive purposes. The people might have been forced into battle with the Egyptians before they were prepared.

13:18 by way of the wilderness: The fact of the journey of Israel from Egypt is not in dispute. The route is another matter. The text is clear that the people did not go directly toward Canaan. Hence many alternative routes have been proposed to explain the direction they did take. The traditional route has the people moving in a southerly direction along the western shore of the Sinai Peninsula until they reached Mt. Sinai in the far south-central region of the peninsula. The rendering **the Red Sea** comes from the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the OT completed about 150 **B.C.**; the Hebrew phrase means “Sea of Reeds.” This phrase may refer to the ancient northern extension of the Red Sea. Many believe it was one of the marshy lakes in the region.

13:19 the bones of Joseph: The story of the last wish of Joseph and his death is found in Gen. 50:22–26. How wonderful that more

saying, ^c“God will surely ⁵visit you, and you shall carry up my bones from here with you.”

²⁰So ^dthey took their journey from ^eSuccoth and camped in Etham at the edge of the wilderness. ²¹And ^fthe LORD went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so as to go by day and night. ²²He did not take away the pillar of cloud by day or the pillar of fire by night *from* before the people.

The Red Sea Crossing

14 Now the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: ²“Speak to the children of Israel, ^athat they turn and camp before ^bPi Hahiroth, between ^cMigdol and the sea, opposite Baal Zephon; you shall camp before it by the sea. ³For Pharaoh will say of the children of Israel, ^d“They are bewildered by the land; the wilderness has closed them in.” ⁴Then ^eI will harden Pharaoh’s heart, so that he will pursue them; and I ^fwill gain honor over Pharaoh and over all his army, ^gthat the Egyptians may know that I *am* the LORD.” And they did so.

⁵Now it was told the king of Egypt that the people had fled, and ^hthe heart of Pharaoh and his servants was turned against the people; and they said, “Why have we done this, that we have let Israel go from serving us?” ⁶So he ⁱmade ready his chariot and took his people with him. ⁷Also, he took ^jsix hundred choice chari-

19 ^c Ex. 4:31 ⁵ give attention to
20 ^d Num. 33:6-8
^e Ex. 12:37
21 ^f Ex. 14:19, 24;
33:9, 10; Num. 9:15;
14:14; Deut. 1:33;
Neh. 9:12; Ps. 78:14;
99:7; 105:39; [Is.
4:5]; 1 Cor. 10:1

CHAPTER 14

2 ^a Ex. 13:18 ^b Num.
33:7 ^c Jer. 44:1
3 ^d Ps. 71:11
4 ^e Ex. 4:21; 7:3;
14:17 ^f Ex. 9:16;
14:17, 18, 23; Rom.
9:17, 22, 23 ^g Ex.
7:5; 14:25
5 ^h Ps. 105:25
6 ⁱ harnessed
7 ^j Ex. 15:4
8 ^j Ex. 14:4 ^k Ex. 6:1;
13:9; Num. 33:3;
Acts 13:17
9 ^j Ex. 15:9; Josh.
24:6
10 ^m Josh. 24:7;
Neh. 9:9; Ps. 34:17;
107:6
11 ⁿ Ex. 5:21; 15:24;
16:2; 17:3; Num.
14:2, 3; 20:3; Ps.
106:7, 8
12 ^o Ex. 5:21; 6:9
13 ^p Gen. 15:1; 46:3;
Ex. 20:20; 2 Chr.
20:15, 17; Is. 41:10,
13, 14 ^q Ps. 46:10,
11 ^r Ex. 14:30;
15:2 ^s Deut. 28:68
² deliverance
14 ^t Ex. 14:25; 15:3;
Deut. 1:30; 3:22;
Josh. 10:14, 42;
23:2; 2 Chr. 20:29;

ots, and all the chariots of Egypt with captains over every one of them. ⁸And the LORD ^jhardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and he pursued the children of Israel; and ^kthe children of Israel went out with boldness. ⁹So the ^lEgyptians pursued them, all the horses and chariots of Pharaoh, his horsemen and his army, and overtook them camping by the sea beside Pi Hahiroth, before Baal Zephon.

¹⁰And when Pharaoh drew near, the children of Israel lifted their eyes, and behold, the Egyptians marched after them. So they were very afraid, and the children of Israel ^mcried out to the LORD. ¹¹ⁿThen they said to Moses, “Because *there were* no graves in Egypt, have you taken us away to die in the wilderness? Why have you so dealt with us, to bring us up out of Egypt?” ¹²^oIs this not the word that we told you in Egypt, saying, ‘Let us alone that we may serve the Egyptians’? For *it would have been* better for us to serve the Egyptians than that we should die in the wilderness.”

¹³And Moses said to the people, ^p“Do not be afraid. ^qStand still, and see the ^rsalvation ² of the LORD, which He will accomplish for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall ^ssee again no more forever. ¹⁴^tThe LORD will fight for you, and you shall ^uhold ³ your peace.”

¹⁵And the LORD said to Moses, “Why

Neh. 4:20; Is. 31:4 ^u [Is. 30:15] ³ Lit. *be quiet*

than four hundred years later this dying wish, which required great faith in the living God, was accomplished!

13:20 We do not know the location of **Succoth, Etham**, and certain other early encampments of Israel (for Succoth, see 12:37).

13:21, 22 God’s presence with His people was made dramatically apparent in a **pillar of cloud** and a **pillar of fire** (14:19, 20, 24; 40:38; Num. 9:21). God stayed with His people throughout the Exodus experience. By these and other wonderful signs He made Himself unforgettable! Because God is Spirit (John 4:24), it is a mark of His gracious character that He made His presence seen and felt among His people. If the people focused on the fact of His presence, they would not need to fear.

14:1—15:21 The crossing of the Red Sea (or Sea of Reeds), the climactic part of the Exodus from Egypt, is given both in a prose account (ch. 14) and in poetry, a psalm of praise to God (ch. 15).

14:2 The locations of **Pi Hahiroth**, **Migdol**, and **Baal Zephon** are not known today. Pi Hahiroth may be a translation of an Egyptian name, perhaps “Dwelling of Hathor” or something similar. Migdol means “Tower” and might refer to some topographical feature. Baal Zephon means “Baal of the North,” a name suggesting that Canaanite religious ideas had extended to this region. God told the Israelites to camp **by the sea** so that later He could deliver them miraculously. **14:3** The Egyptians would note Israel’s route of escape, note the change in direction (v. 2), and conclude that **they were bewildered**. This was a ruse, of course, orchestrated by God Himself.

14:4 then I will harden Pharaoh’s heart: (See 3:19; 4:21; 5:2; 7:3, 13, 14; see also 14:8.) One more blow against Pharaoh was determined. The meaning of the verb **gain honor** is significant. When Moses and Aaron had first approached Pharaoh (see 5:1–9), he had

treated the men and their God with contempt. With Pharaoh’s final defeat, the name **the LORD** (that is, Yahweh) and its association with the people of Israel would be known and honored abroad.

14:6, 7 he made ready his chariot: At Pharaoh’s command, the commander of the chariots pursued the Israelites. **Six hundred choice chariots** was a most formidable force. Chariots in the wars of the ancient world provided a decisive advantage over foot soldiers.

14:8 the LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh: As He promised in 14:4.

14:10, 11 We cannot fault the people for being **very afraid**; fear itself is not a sin. However, the sarcastic remark to Moses (and hence to the Lord) that there were **no graves in Egypt** showed a lack of faith. This is just the first of a series of complaints that they leveled against Moses. With each one their grumbling grew into open hostility (see 16:2, 3; 17:2, 3).

14:12 The statement **let us alone** refers to Israel’s response to Moses and Aaron after their first, disastrous approach to Pharaoh (5:21).

14:13, 14 Despite their harsh words, Moses did not lash out against the complaining people. Instead he sought to encourage them with a promise that they would see **the salvation of the LORD**. The Hebrew word for *salvation* comes from a term that has to do with room or space. The people were under great pressure, squeezed between the waters before them and the armies of Pharaoh behind them. Salvation would relieve the pressure in a most dramatic way. This salvation was to come from God, for He was pleased to provide it (see v. 30; compare also 15:2).

14:15 The people were to **go forward**—not go back and not give up.

The Exodus

The exodus and conquest narratives form the classic historical and spiritual drama of OT times. Subsequent ages looked back to this period as one of obedient and victorious living under divine guidance. Close examination of the environment and circumstances also reveals the strenuous exertions, human sin, and bloody conflicts of the era.



1 It was necessary for Moses to take refuge in Midian, where the Egyptian authorities could not reach him. The decades spent in the desert wilderness (Ex. 3:1) were an important formative part of his life.

2 The exact crossing place through the biblical “Sea of Reeds” (Heb. *Yam Suph*) is unknown.

3 The Israelite tribes fled past the Egyptian system of border posts, through the “Red Sea” and into the wilderness, where they avoided the main military and trade routes leading across northern Sinai. Their route possibly took them past the remote turquoise and copper mining regions northwest of Mount Sinai.

In historical terms, the exodus from Egypt was ignored by Egyptian scribes and recorders. No definitive monuments mention the event itself, but a stela of Merneptah (c. 1209 B.C.) claims that a people called Israel were encountered by Egyptian troops somewhere in northern Canaan.

Finding precise geographic and chronological details of the period is problematic, but new information has emerged from vast amounts of fragmentary archaeological and inscriptional evidence. Hittite cuneiform documents parallel the ancient covenant formula governing Israel’s national contract with God at Mount Sinai.

The Late Bronze Age (c. 1550–1200 B.C.) was a time of major social migrations. Egyptian control over the Semites in the eastern Nile delta was harsh, with a system of brickmaking quotas imposed on the labor force, often the landless, low-class “Apiru.” Numerous Canaanite towns were violently destroyed. New populations, including the “Sea Peoples,” made their presence felt in Anatolia, Egypt, Canaan, Transjordan, and elsewhere in the eastern Mediterranean.

Correspondence from Canaanite town rulers to the Egyptian court in the time of Akhenaten (c. 1350 B.C.) reveals a weak structure of alliances, with an intermittent Egyptian military presence and an ominous fear of people called “Apiru” (= “Hapiru”).

do you cry to Me? Tell the children of Israel to go forward. ¹⁶But ^vlift up your rod, and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it. And the children of Israel shall go on dry *ground* through the midst of the sea. ¹⁷And I indeed will ^wharden the hearts of the Egyptians, and they shall follow them. So I will ^xgain honor over Pharaoh and over all his army, his chariots, and his horsemen. ¹⁸Then the Egyptians shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I have gained honor for Myself over Pharaoh, his chariots, and his horsemen.”

¹⁹And the Angel of God, ^ywho went before the camp of Israel, moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud went from before them and stood behind them. ²⁰So it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel. Thus it was a cloud and darkness *to the one*, and it gave light by night *to the other*, so that the one did not come near the other all that night.

²¹Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD caused the sea to go *back* by a strong east wind all that night, and ^zmade the sea into dry *land*, and the waters were ^adivided. ²²So ^bthe children of Israel went into the midst of the sea on the dry *ground*, and the waters were ^ca wall to them on their right hand and on their left. ²³And the Egyptians pursued and went after them into the midst of the sea, all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen.

¹⁶ ^v Ex. 4:17, 20; 7:19; 14:21, 26; 17:5, 6, 9; Num. 20:8, 9, 11; Is. 10:26
¹⁷ ^w Ex. 14:8 ^x Ex. 14:4
¹⁹ ^y Ex. 13:21, 22; [Is. 63:9]
²¹ ^z Ps. 66:6; 106:9; 136:13, 14 ^a Ex. 15:8; Josh. 3:16; 4:23; Neh. 9:11; Ps. 74:13; 78:13; 114:3, 5; Is. 63:12, 13
²² ^b Ex. 15:19; Josh. 3:17; 4:22; Neh. 9:11; Ps. 66:6; 78:13; Is. 63:13; 1 Cor. 10:1; Heb. 11:29 ^c Ex. 14:29; 15:8; Hab. 3:10

²⁴ ^d Judg. 7:19 ^e Ex. 13:21 ^f *confused*
²⁵ ^f Ex. 7:5; 14:4, 14, 18 ^g Sam., LXX, Syr. *bound*
²⁷ ^g Josh. 4:18 ^h Ex. 15:1, 7; Deut. 11:4; Neh. 9:11; Ps. 78:53; Heb. 11:29 ⁱ Lit. *shook off*
²⁸ ^h Ps. 78:53; 106:11
²⁹ ⁱ Ex. 14:22; Ps. 66:6; 78:52, 53; Is. 11:15
³⁰ ^k Ex. 14:13; Ps. 106:8, 10; Is. 63:8, 11 ^j Ps. 58:10; 59:10
³¹ ^m Ex. 4:31; 19:9; Ps. 106:12; John 2:11; 11:45 ^l Lit. *hand with which the LORD worked*

²⁴Now it came to pass, in the morning ^dwatch, that ^ethe LORD looked down upon the army of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and cloud, and He ^ftroubled the army of the Egyptians. ²⁵And He ^gtook off their chariot wheels, so that they drove them with difficulty; and the Egyptians said, “Let us flee from the face of Israel, for the LORD ^h fights for them against the Egyptians.”

²⁶Then the LORD said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand over the sea, that the waters may come back upon the Egyptians, on their chariots, and on their horsemen.” ²⁷And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and when the morning appeared, the sea ^greturned to its full depth, while the Egyptians were fleeing into it. So the LORD ^hoverthrew ⁶the Egyptians in the midst of the sea. ²⁸Then ⁱthe waters returned and covered the chariots, the horsemen, *and* all the army of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them. Not so much as one of them remained. ²⁹But ^jthe children of Israel had walked on dry *land* in the midst of the sea, and the waters were a wall to them on their right hand and on their left.

³⁰So the LORD ^ksaved ⁷Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians, and Israel ^lsaw the Egyptians dead on the sea-shore. ³¹Thus Israel saw the great ⁸work which the LORD had done in Egypt; so the people feared the LORD, and ^mbelieved the LORD and His servant Moses.

14:16 Moses' **rod** is the same celebrated rod of God (see 4:20) that Moses and Aaron had used in bringing forth many of the plagues against the Egyptians (see 4:1–8; 7:9, 20; 8:5, 16; 9:23; 10:13, 22; 17:5, 9). **stretch out your hand:** The power of God was going to be demonstrated in a most formidable manner. The Israelites, like the Canaanites, thought of **the sea** as an uncontrollable enemy. The parting of the Red Sea was an unforgettable demonstration that every force in all creation was completely under God's control (see Ps. 93).

14:19 Here, the **Angel of God** and the **pillar of cloud** cooperated to protect and lead the Israelites (see 23:20, 23; 33:9–11). The name Angel of God is an alternative expression for the Angel of the Lord. The pillar is later strongly associated with the Lord Himself (see 33:9–11).

14:20 The pillar became two different realities—a curse to the pursuing Egyptians and a blessing to the entrapped Israelites. **all that night:** At night, God confused the Egyptians and let the Israelites pass through the sea.

14:21 **Moses stretched . . . and the LORD caused:** God commanded Moses to stretch out the rod of God (see v. 16). This was not a magical wand. The power was from God Himself; it was not in the stick. One of the forces the Lord used to part the waters was a **strong east wind**. We may picture an exceedingly strong wind with a narrow focus, driving a wedge between the two walls of water that were formed.

14:22 The effects of the wind on the waters was so strong that the ground of the watercourse had become dry! It was an act of faith on Israel's part to cross over on this **dry ground**. They might have refused to go and would then not have been delivered from the Egyptian army.

14:23 **Egyptians pursued:** The startled and confused Egyptians pursued the Israelites even into the Red Sea.

14:24 The Lord waited until the time was just right. Then He caused confusion to fall among the Egyptians **in the morning watch**, while it was still dark.

14:25 Without their **wheels**, the chariots were more liability than threat. **the LORD fights for them:** This was the confession the Lord demanded; word spread widely. The Lord fought for the Israelites (see vv. 4, 17, 18).

14:28 Of all the Egyptian men, horses, and equipment that entered the dry bed of the sea, **not so much as one** survived. The defeat was total. No doubt some Egyptian warriors had not actually entered the water and had survived. It was they who would spread the word about the Lord, the Warrior of Israel.

14:31 **The great work** literally means “the great hand.” That is, God did it; Moses was just the visible executor (see 15:6). This great, climactic verse speaks of the genuine faith of the people of Israel at the end of their experience of God's saving works and at the beginning of their journey of faith. When we read **so the people feared the LORD** and the words that follow, we are meant to understand that the community had come to saving faith and so were a reborn people. They **believed the LORD** (the same wording used of Abraham's saving faith in Gen. 15:6; see Paul's comments, Rom. 4). It was also significant that the people believed **His servant Moses**. At the beginning of this miraculous ordeal, they had not believed him at all (see 6:9). The people were transformed spiritually even as they were delivered physically. It is no wonder that they broke out in song (ch. 15).

The Song of Moses

15 Then ^aMoses and the children of Israel sang this song to the LORD, and spoke, saying:

- “I will ^bsing to the LORD,
For He has triumphed gloriously!
The horse and its rider
He has thrown into the sea!
² The LORD *is* my strength and ^csong,
And He has become my salvation;
He *is* my God, and ^dI will praise Him;
My ^efather’s God, and I ^fwill exalt Him.
³ The LORD *is* a man of ^gwar;
The LORD *is* His ^hname.
⁴ ⁱPharaoh’s chariots and his army He has cast into the sea;
^jHis chosen captains also are drowned in the Red Sea.
⁵ The depths have covered them;
^kThey sank to the bottom like a stone.
⁶ “Your ^lright hand, O LORD, has become glorious in power;
Your right hand, O LORD, has dashed the enemy in pieces.
⁷ And in the greatness of Your ^mexcellence
You have overthrown those who rose against You;
You sent forth ⁿYour wrath;
It ^oconsumed them ^plike stubble.

CHAPTER 15

¹ ^a Ps. 106:12; Rev. 15:3 ^b Is. 12:1-6
² ^c Ps. 18:1, 2; Is. 12:2; Hab. 3:18, 19 ^d Gen. 28:21, 22 ^e Ex. 3:6, 15, 16
^f 2 Sam. 22:47; Ps. 99:5; Is. 25:1
³ ^g Ex. 14:14; Rev. 19:11 ^h Ex. 3:15; 6:2, 3, 7, 8; Ps. 24:8; 83:18
⁴ ⁱ Ex. 14:28 / Ex. 14:7
⁵ ^k Ex. 15:10; Neh. 9:11
⁶ ^f Ex. 3:20; Ps. 17:7; 118:15
⁷ ^m Deut. 33:26
ⁿ Ps. 78:49, 50 ^p Ps. 59:13 ^p Deut. 4:24; Is. 5:24; Heb. 12:29

⁸ ^a Ex. 14:21, 22, 29
^r Ps. 78:13 ¹ *became firm*
⁹ ^r Judg. 5:30 ^t Is. 53:12
¹¹ ^u Ex. 8:10; 9:14; Deut. 3:24; 2 Sam. 7:22; 1 Kin. 8:23; Ps. 71:19; 86:8; Mic. 7:18 ^v Ps. 68:35; Is. 6:3; Rev. 4:8
^w 1 Chr. 16:25 ^x Ex. 3:20; Ps. 77:11, 14
² *mighty ones*
¹³ ^v Neh. 9:12; [Ps. 77:20] ^z Ex. 15:17; Deut. 12:5; Ps. 78:54
¹⁴ ^a Josh. 2:9 ^b Ps. 48:6 ³ *Anguish*

- ⁸ And ^qwith the blast of Your nostrils
The waters were gathered together;
^rThe floods stood upright like a heap;
The depths ¹congealed in the heart of the sea.
⁹ ^sThe enemy said, ‘I will pursue,
I will overtake,
I will ^tdivide the spoil;
My desire shall be satisfied on them.
I will draw my sword,
My hand shall destroy them.’
¹⁰ You blew with Your wind,
The sea covered them;
They sank like lead in the mighty waters.
¹¹ “Who ^u *is* like You, O LORD, among the ²gods?
Who *is* like You, ^vglorious in holiness,
Fearful in ^wpraises, ^xdoing wonders?
¹² You stretched out Your right hand;
The earth swallowed them.
¹³ You in Your mercy have ^yled forth
The people whom You have redeemed;
You have guided *them* in Your strength
To ^zYour holy habitation.
¹⁴ “The ^apeople will hear *and* be afraid;
^bSorrow ³will take hold of the inhabitants of Philistia.

15:1–19 This section contains the first psalm (or song) of any length in the Bible. Other poetic sections in Genesis (for example, Gen. 1:27; 3:14–16, 17–19; 4:23, 24) are too brief to be called psalms. Moses composed this psalm, and its grammar, structure, and vocabulary testify to its ancient origin (see Deut. 32; Ps. 90 for two other psalms by Moses).

15:1 **Moses and the children of Israel sang** in worship together, as a community of believers, not just as a nation. And they sang **to the LORD**; the living God was their main audience. The term **triumphed gloriously** is an emphatic construction, expressing exuberant joy over God’s great victory (see also 18:8). **Horse and . . . rider** can also be rendered “horse and chariot.” The Hebrew verb for **thrown** is a rare and pictorial expression. It describes God as reaching down and tossing members of the Egyptian army into the water one by one.

15:2 Because **my strength and song** is such an unusual pairing of words, some have thought that the word translated *song* must mean “power,” “fortress,” or something similar. However, the idea as it is expressed is wonderful: God is my *strong song*. That is, a person of faith may regard the living, omnipotent God as the reason for singing! **my salvation**: The word *save* and its related nouns have to do with room or space (see 14:13). With the terrifying sea before them and the pursuing Egyptians behind them, they were trapped. Yet God surprised them with His deliverance! **I will praise Him**: There are numerous words for praise in the Bible. But the Hebrew verb here is unique; it means “to bring God beauty.” By the sacrifices of one’s lips (see Heb. 13:15), people of all ages can bring beauty to the One who created all that is beautiful. **my father’s God**: The Israelites worshiped the same God that Abraham, their father, had worshiped.

15:3 To call God **a man of war** is most appropriate in this context. The battle has been won, and the praise belongs to the Victor. **the**

LORD is His name: It is difficult to exaggerate the importance of God’s name Yahweh in the Bible (3:14, 15). Other supposed gods had secret names that only guilds of priests knew. By knowing a god’s secret name, a priest supposedly had special access to that god. But the living God has made His name known to all, and salvation is found in His name alone.

15:6 The Exodus narrative has emphasized the extended, powerful **right hand** of God throughout (see vv. 12, 16). This was a way of describing God’s active and powerful presence among His people. God did not deliver Israel “from afar”; He “came down” to act among them (3:8).

15:7, 8 Moses used more figures of speech to convey the great feeling of the moment. The powerful wind that made the waters pile up on either side of the people (see 14:21) is described in poetry as **a blast of Your nostrils**.

15:9–11 The arrogance of the pursuing armies trying to fight the living God is described in v. 9. **Who is like You**: Many times, the Bible uses this language of incomparability to describe the true God. In a world in which there were many supposed gods, the Lord was unique. He alone is God. He is not just better than other gods; there *are* no other gods. No person, god, or thing can be compared to the one true God (see Ps. 96:4, 5; Is. 40:25, 26; Mic. 7:18). **Fearful** means that God inspired wonder, worship, and obedience from the Israelites.

15:13 **mercy**: Best rendered as “loyal love,” God’s faithful love for His people (see Ps. 13:5). **Redeemed** is from a word that has to do with protecting family rights. God had protected His family, the Israelites. **Holy habitation** refers to the land of Israel in general, the land that God was giving to His people for their enjoyment (v. 17).

15:14, 15 The news of Israel’s deliverance from Egypt spread abroad (see Josh. 2:9). God’s powerful deliverance was not to be kept a secret. The nations of the world were to be put on alert: God fought

15 ^cThen ^dthe chiefs of Edom will be dismayed;
^eThe mighty men of Moab,
Trembling will take hold of them;
^fAll the inhabitants of Canaan will
^gmelt away.
16 ^hFear and dread will fall on them;
By the greatness of Your arm
They will be ⁱas still as a stone,
Till Your people pass over, O LORD,
Till the people pass over
^jWhom You have purchased.
17 You will bring them in and ^kplant them
In the ^lmountain of Your inheritance,
In the place, O LORD, *which* You have made
For Your own dwelling,
The ^msanctuary, O Lord, *which* Your hands have established.
18 ⁿ“The LORD shall reign forever and ever.”

19 For the ^ohorses of Pharaoh went with his chariots and his horsemen into the sea, and ^pthe LORD brought back the waters of the sea upon them. But the children of Israel went on dry *land* in the midst of the sea.

The Song of Miriam

20 Then Miriam ^qthe prophetess, ^rthe sister of Aaron, ^stook the timbrel in her

15 ^c Gen. 36:15, 40
^d Deut. 2:4 ^e Num. 22:3, 4 ^f Josh. 5:1
^g Josh. 2:9-11, 24
^h Ex. 23:27;
Deut. 2:25; Josh. 2:9 ⁱ 1 Sam. 25:37
^j Ex. 15:13; Ps. 74:2; Is. 43:1; Jer. 31:11; [Titus 2:14]; 2 Pet. 2:1
^k Ps. 44:2; 80:8, 15 ^l Ps. 2:6; 78:54, 68 ^m Ps. 68:16; 76:2; 132:13, 14
ⁿ 2 Sam. 7:16; Ps. 10:16; 29:10; Is. 57:15
^o Ex. 14:23 ^p Ex. 14:28
^q Judg. 4:4 ^r Ex. 2:4; Num. 26:59; 1 Chr. 6:3; Mic. 6:4 ^s 1 Sam. 18:6; 1 Chr. 15:16; Ps. 68:25; 81:2; 149:3; Jer. 31:4
^t Judg. 11:34; 21:21; 2 Sam. 6:16; Ps. 30:11; 150:4
^u 1 Sam. 18:7
^v Ex. 15:1
^w Gen. 16:7; 20:1; 25:18; Num. 33:8
^x Ex. 17:1; Num. 20:2
^y Num. 33:8; Ruth 1:20 ^z Lit. *Bitter*
^{aa} Ex. 14:11; 16:2; Ps. 106:13
^{ab} 2 Kin. 2:21
^{ac} Josh. 24:25 ^{ad} Ex. 16:4; Deut. 8:2; 16; Judg. 2:22; 3:1, 4; Ps. 66:10

hand; and all the women went out after her ^twith timbrels and with dances.
21 And Miriam ^uanswered them:

^v“Sing to the LORD,
For He has triumphed gloriously!
The horse and its rider
He has thrown into the sea!”

Bitter Waters Made Sweet

22 So Moses brought Israel from the Red Sea; then they went out into the Wilderness of ^wShur. And they went three days in the wilderness and found no ^xwater.
23 Now when they came to ^yMarah, they could not drink the waters of Marah, for they *were* bitter. Therefore the name of it was called ^zMarah. 24 And the people ^{aa}complained against Moses, saying, “What shall we drink?” 25 So he cried out to the LORD, and the LORD showed him a tree. ^{ab}When he cast *it* into the waters, the waters were made sweet.

There He ^{ac}made a statute and an ^{ad}ordinance for them, and there ^{ae}He tested them, ^{af}and said, ^{ag}“If you diligently heed the voice of the LORD your God and do what is right in His sight, give ear to His commandments and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the ^{ah}diseases on you

^{ai} regulation 26 ^d Ex. 19:5, 6; Deut. 7:12, 15 ^e Deut. 28:27, 58, 60

for Israel, and Israel was on the march! These words should have encouraged the Israelites to have courage. Instead, the subsequent story illustrates the cowardice of the Israelites. They struggled to trust in their powerful God (see Num. 13; 14).

15:16 fear and dread: A pairing of two words to express one emphatic thought, “overwhelming dread.” The expression **Your arm** is interchangeable with *right hand* (see vv. 6, 12). The verb for **purchased** (“to acquire,” “to possess”) can also mean “to create” (see Gen. 14:19).

15:17 bring them in: The verse speaks of the hope for the near

future, the conquest of the land of Canaan (soon to be the land of Israel), as well as the hope for the more distant future, the building of the temple.

15:18 the LORD shall reign forever and ever: Ultimately the salvation of Israel from Egypt points to the coming reign of the living God on earth over His redeemed people.

15:20 Miriam, Moses’ sister, is mentioned here by name for the first time. Most likely she is the one intended in the story of Moses’ birth in ch. 2. She is called a **prophetess**. Although there is no record of women serving as priests in ancient Israel, women did serve as prophetesses (Deborah, Judg. 4:4; the wife of Isaiah, Is. 8:3; Huldah, 2 Kin. 22:14). As a prophetess (see Mic. 6:4), Miriam spoke authoritatively from God. However neither she nor her brother **Aaron** was ever Moses’ equal in intimacy with God (see Num. 12). This passage also describes the Israelites’ first worship service following their deliverance from the Red Sea. Women led this worship **with timbrels and with dances**, something later celebrated in the Psalms (Ps. 68:25).

15:22 Hagar had been found by the Angel of the Lord by a spring on the way to **Shur** (Gen. 16:7; see 20:1; 25:18). The lack of **water** in this area would prove a constant test of Israel’s faith in the God who had so miraculously rescued them (see ch. 17).

15:24 The verb **complained** is not so harsh as the verb in 17:2, but it expresses dissatisfaction. It is sometimes rendered “to murmur” (16:2, 7; Num. 14:2; 16:11; 17:5). The people’s recent deliverance from the Egyptian armies makes this complaint seem fickle and a true test of God’s mercy. We are often like the Israelites, turning from praise to complaint far too easily.

15:25 The use of the **tree** made the miracle of cleansing easier to perceive.

15:26 none of the diseases: As God had transformed the bitterness of the waters of Marah, so He promised to preserve His people from illness (see 23:25). The descriptive phrase **I am the**

redeemed
(Heb. *ga'al*) (15:13; Ruth 4:4; Is. 43:14) Strong’s #1350

The basic meaning of the Hebrew verb translated *redeem* is “to protect family rights” or “to deliver.” The word refers to the responsibility of a close relative to buy back family land that had been sold because of debt (Lev. 25:25). The same Hebrew word is used to describe Boaz’s kindness to Ruth. Boaz not only bought back the family’s land, but he also saved Ruth from poverty (Ruth 4:3–10). Boaz’s kindness and willingness to save Ruth is a picture of the kindness of God. The Israelites had become the “family of God” (see 4:22; 13:2). God had freely taken on the responsibility to buy them back, to pay the price to free them from slavery. The Lord was Israel’s Redeemer as Isaiah proclaimed (Is. 43:14), but He was also the personal Redeemer of both Job and David (Job 19:25; Ps. 19:14). We too have a Redeemer, Jesus, who was willing to pay the price—His own death on the Cross—to free us from our sins (Gal. 4:5; Titus 2:14).

which I have brought on the Egyptians. For I *am* the LORD ^fwho heals you.”

^{27g}Then they came to Elim, where there *were* twelve wells of water and seventy palm trees; so they camped there by the waters.

Bread from Heaven

16 And they ^ajourneyed from Elim, and all the congregation of the children of Israel came to the Wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and ^bSinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after they departed from the land of Egypt. ²Then the whole congregation of the children of Israel ^ccomplained against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. ³And the children of Israel said to them, ^d“Oh, that we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, ^ewhen we sat by the pots of meat *and* when we ate bread to the full! For you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger.”

⁴Then the LORD said to Moses, “Behold, I will rain ^fbread from heaven for you. And the people shall go out and gather ¹a certain quota every day, that I may ^gtest them, whether they will ^hwalk in My law or not. ⁵And it shall be on the sixth day that they shall prepare what they bring in, and ⁱit shall be twice as much as they gather daily.”

⁶Then Moses and Aaron said to all the children of Israel, ^j“At evening you shall know that the LORD has brought

²⁶ ^fEx. 23:25; Deut. 32:39; Ps. 41:3, 4; 103:3; 147:3
²⁷ ^gNum. 33:9

CHAPTER 16

¹ ^aNum. 33:10, 11; Ezek. 30:15 ^bEx. 12:6, 51; 19:1
² ^cEx. 14:11; 15:24; Ps. 106:25; 1 Cor. 10:10
³ ^dEx. 17:3; Num. 14:2, 3; 20:3; Lam. 4:9 ^eNum. 11:4, 5
⁴ ^fNeh. 9:15; Ps. 78:23–25; 105:40; [John 6:31–35]; 1 Cor. 10:3 ^gEx. 15:25; Deut. 8:2, 16
^hJudg. 2:22 ⁱLit. *the portion of a day in its day*
⁵ ¹Ex. 16:22, 29; Lev. 25:21
⁶ ^jEx. 6:7
⁷ ^kEx. 16:10, 12; Is. 35:2; 40:5; John 11:4, 40 ^lNum. 14:27; 17:5 ^mNum. 16:11
⁸ ⁿ1 Sam. 8:7; Luke 10:16; [Rom. 13:2]; 1 Thess. 4:8
⁹ ^oNum. 16:16
¹⁰ ^pEx. 13:21; 16:7; Num. 16:19; 1 Kin. 8:10
¹² ^qEx. 16:8; Num. 14:27 ^rEx. 16:6
⁵ ^sEx. 16:7; 1 Kin. 20:28; Joel 3:17
¹³ ^tNum. 11:31; Ps. 78:27–29; 105:40
^uNum. 11:9
¹⁴ ^vEx. 16:31; Num. 11:7, 8; Deut. 8:3; Neh. 9:15; Ps. 78:24;

you out of the land of Egypt. ⁷And in the morning you shall see ^kthe glory of the LORD; for He ^lhears your complaints against the LORD. But ^mwhat *are* we, that you complain against us?” ⁸Also Moses said, “*This shall be seen* when the LORD gives you meat to eat in the evening, and in the morning bread to the full; for the LORD hears your complaints which you make against Him. And what *are* we? Your complaints *are* not against us but ⁿagainst the LORD.”

⁹Then Moses spoke to Aaron, “Say to all the congregation of the children of Israel, ^o‘Come near before the LORD, for He has heard your complaints.’” ¹⁰Now it came to pass, as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the children of Israel, that they looked toward the wilderness, and behold, the glory of the LORD ^pappeared in the cloud.

¹¹And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ^{12q}“I have heard the complaints of the children of Israel. Speak to them, saying, ^r‘At twilight you shall eat meat, and ^sin the morning you shall be filled with bread. And you shall know that I *am* the LORD your God.’”

¹³So it was that ^tquails came up at evening and covered the camp, and in the morning ^uthe dew lay all around the camp. ¹⁴And when the layer of dew lifted, there, on the surface of the wilderness, was ^va small round ^wsubstance, *as*

105:40 ^wPs. 147:16

LORD who heals you testifies to the mercy and power of God. It is still true: all healing comes from the Lord.

15:27 Elim means “Place of Trees.” The **wells** and **palm trees** of Elim were a welcome relief from the barrenness of the wasteland. Many times the Bible compares wells and springs to salvation and palm trees to blessing (see Ps. 1). **Elim** is probably Wadi Gharandal, near the traditional (southerly) site of Mt. Sinai.

16:1 The location of the wasteland called **the Wilderness of Sin** is uncertain; its position between **Elim** and **Sinai** depends on the location of Mt. Sinai. (The name Sin has nothing to do with the English word *sin*.) The term **second month** means one month from the time of their departure from Egypt (compare 12:2, 18, 40).

16:2 the whole congregation: This phrase indicates a general dissent, not that there were no exceptions.

16:3 died by the hand of the LORD: How could the Israelites voice this outrageous complaint? All that God had done for Israel by His great right hand was in mercy and deliverance. This complaint centered on food (for a similar complaint concerning water, see 15:22–26). After God’s great deliverance of the Israelites from the Egyptians and His provision of water, couldn’t they see that providing sufficient food for them would be a small thing for their great God?

16:4 The Lord’s response to the people’s complaint was a promise of **bread from heaven** (manna, see v. 15). God Himself would supply their food. But the Israelites’ reception of this wonderful blessing from God was already tarnished by their attitude. What could have been a joyful discovery became a bittersweet one. **A certain quota** meant a daily amount (see v. 5). The verb translated **test** (with God as subject) does not mean “to tempt one to fail,” but “to prove what one really is” (see also 15:25; 20:20).

16:5 The gathering of **twice as much** on the sixth day would allow for the Sabbath rest (see v. 25).

16:6, 7 you shall know: The people would experience God’s power in a new way (see also v. 12). **see the glory:** They would have a renewed sense of God’s presence and further evidence of God’s mercy.

16:10 Because God is Spirit (John 4:24), He has varied the ways in which He has shown Himself. **The glory of the LORD** is one of the grand *theophanies* (appearances of God) recorded in Exodus. God first appeared to Moses in the burning bush (ch. 3). We do not know exactly what the people saw **in the cloud**, but the sight certainly made them aware of God’s majestic and somewhat ominous presence (see Ps. 97:2–5).

16:12 God promised ample provision for His people in **meat and bread**. **And you shall know:** God supplied the heavenly food so that the Israelites would know beyond a doubt that God was with them and was providing for them.

16:13 God provided meat through a natural event, the migration of **quails** through the region. It still was God’s benevolent provision; the quails came at just the right time and in large numbers. On a later occasion, the gift of quails would come with judgment (see Num. 11:31–35).

16:14, 15 a small round substance: There have been many attempts to explain manna as a naturally occurring substance that still might be found in the desert. Some have identified it as insect or plant secretions. The wording of these verses belies every one of these approaches. The description of the manna in these two verses (see also v. 31) is necessary precisely because it was *not* a naturally occurring substance (see the description in Num. 11:1–15). The

fine as frost on the ground. ¹⁵So when the children of Israel saw *it*, they said to one another, “What is it?” For they did not know what it *was*.

And Moses said to them, ^x“This is the bread which the LORD has given you to eat. ¹⁶This is the thing which the LORD has commanded: ‘Let every man gather it ^y according to each one’s need, one ^z omer for each person, *according to the* number of persons; let every man take for *those* who *are* in his tent.’”

¹⁷Then the children of Israel did so and gathered, some more, some less. ¹⁸So when they measured *it* by omers, ^ahe who gathered much had nothing left over, and he who gathered little had no lack. Every man had gathered according to each one’s need. ¹⁹And Moses said, “Let no one ^bleave any of it till morning.” ²⁰Notwithstanding they did not ²heed Moses. But some of them left part of it until morning, and it bred worms and stank. And Moses was angry with them. ²¹So they gathered it every morning, every man according to his need. And when the sun became hot, it melted.

²²And so it was, on the sixth day, *that* they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for each one. And all the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses. ²³Then he said to them, “This is *what* the LORD has said: ‘Tomorrow is ^ca Sabbath rest, a holy Sabbath to the LORD. Bake what you will bake *today*, and boil what you will boil; and lay up for yourselves all that remains, to be kept until morning.’” ²⁴So they laid it up till morning, as Moses commanded; and it did not ^dstink, nor were there any worms in it. ²⁵Then Moses said, “Eat that today, for today is a Sabbath to the LORD; today you will not

¹⁵ ^x Ex. 16:4; Neh. 9:15; Ps. 78:24; [John 6:31, 49, 58]; 1 Cor. 10:3

¹⁶ ^y Ex. 12:4 ^z Ex. 16:32, 36

¹⁸ ^a 2 Cor. 8:15

¹⁹ ^b Ex. 12:10; 16:23; 23:18

²⁰ ² listen to

²³ ^c Gen. 2:3; Ex.

20:8-11; 23:12; 31:15;

35:2; Lev. 23:3; Neh.

9:13, 14

²⁴ ^d Ex. 16:20

²⁶ ^e Ex. 20:9, 10

²⁸ ^f 2 Kin. 17:14; Ps.

78:10; 106:13

³¹ ^g Num. 11:7-9;

Deut. 8:3, 16 ³ Lit.

What? Ex. 16:15

³³ ^h Heb. 9:4; Rev.

2:17

³⁴ ⁱ Ex. 25:16, 21;

27:21; 40:20; Num.

17:10

³⁵ / Deut. 8:3, 16

^k Num. 33:38; John

6:31, 49 / Josh. 5:12;

Neh. 9:20, 21

CHAPTER 17

¹ ^a Ex. 16:1 ^b Num.

33:11-15

find it in the field. ^{26e}Six days you shall gather it, but on the seventh day, the Sabbath, there will be none.”

²⁷Now it happened *that some* of the people went out on the seventh day to gather, but they found none. ²⁸And the LORD said to Moses, “How long ^fdo you refuse to keep My commandments and My laws? ²⁹See! For the LORD has given you the Sabbath; therefore He gives you on the sixth day bread for two days. Let every man remain in his place; let no man go out of his place on the seventh day.” ³⁰So the people rested on the seventh day.

³¹And the house of Israel called its name ³Manna. And ^git *was* like white coriander seed, and the taste of it *was* like wafers *made* with honey.

³²Then Moses said, “This is the thing which the LORD has commanded: ‘Fill an omer with it, to be kept for your generations, that they may see the bread with which I fed you in the wilderness, when I brought you out of the land of Egypt.’”

³³And Moses said to Aaron, ^h“Take a pot and put an omer of manna in it, and lay it up before the LORD, to be kept for your generations.” ³⁴As the LORD commanded Moses, so Aaron laid it up ⁱbefore the Testimony, to be kept. ³⁵And the children of Israel ^jate manna ^kforty years, ^luntil they came to an inhabited land; they ate manna until they came to the border of the land of Canaan. ³⁶Now an omer is one-tenth of an ephah.

Water from the Rock

17 Then ^aall the congregation of the children of Israel set out on their journey from the Wilderness of ^bSin,

Israelites’ question **What is it?** named the mystery bread: manna (see v. 31). **This is the bread:** The manna could be made into bread. **the LORD has given:** The bread was a specific gift from God.

16:16 There would be sufficient manna for **each person**. Thus no one was to take more than he or she needed. The Hebrew measure **one omer** is used only in this chapter in the Bible. It was about two quarts; v. 36 explains that it was one tenth of an ephah.

16:19 The Israelites’ daily dependence on manna was an act of faith, hence the instruction **let no one leave any**. No one needed to gather more than one day’s worth because there would be more manna on the next day. To do otherwise would only show doubt in God’s provision.

16:20 The Hebrew word translated **stank** is the same Hebrew word used by the crew chiefs to describe how the Hebrew people fared when Moses and Aaron first approached Pharaoh: “you have made us abhorrent (stink) in the sight of Pharaoh” (see 5:21). **Moses was angry:** Concerning one of many occasions on which the people would not follow the Lord’s directions!

16:21 it melted: The ungathered manna would disappear during the day.

16:22-26 Perhaps the most amazing feature of the manna concerned the Sabbath. On the sixth day of the week, the people were to gather a two-day supply for each person. On any other day,

manna that was kept from the day before would spoil and fill with worms. But on the Sabbath, the manna from the previous day would be as fresh as when first gathered. This is the most convincing argument that this “bread” was not a naturally occurring substance. **six days . . . the Sabbath** (v. 26): The characteristics of manna were a built-in reminder of the importance of the Sabbath day in the life of the people of Israel (see 20:8-11).

16:27-31 Some of the Israelites missed the point and went out on the Sabbath to gather manna. **How long:** The Lord’s command had been clear, and yet the people simply ignored it.

16:31 coriander seed . . . honey: Apparently the manna was very tasty. It was also quite nutritious, and it was the staple of the Israelites for a full generation!

16:32, 33 The memorial pot of manna kept for later **generations** would serve as a reminder of this miraculous work of the Lord during Israel’s wilderness period. Indeed, this pot of manna was a continuing miracle, for the manna would quickly rot and become wormy if a person tried to take more than a daily share (see v. 20). Yet apparently the pot of manna **before the LORD** was kept for centuries without turning bad!

16:35 forty years: The completion of the story is anticipated before the intervening steps are recorded.

17:1 Rephidim may be located at Wadi Refayid in southwest Sinai

according to the commandment of the LORD, and camped in Rephidim; but *there was* no water for the people to ^cdrink. ^{2d}Therefore the people contended with Moses, and said, “Give us water, that we may drink.”

So Moses said to them, “Why do you contend with me? Why do you ^etempt the LORD?”

³And the people thirsted there for water, and the people ^fcomplained against Moses, and said, “Why *is* it you have brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our ^glivestock with thirst?”

⁴So Moses ^hcried out to the LORD, saying, “What shall I do with this people? They are almost ready to ⁱstone¹ me!”

⁵And the LORD said to Moses, ^j“Go on before the people, and take with you some of the elders of Israel. Also take in your hand your rod with which ^kyou struck the river, and go. ^{6l}Behold, I will stand before you there on the rock in Horeb; and you shall strike the rock, and water will come out of it, that the people may drink.”

And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel. ⁷So he called the name of the place ^mMassah² and ³Meribah, be-

¹ ^c Ex. 15:22; Num. 20:2

² ^d Ex. 14:11; Num. 20:2, 3, 13 ^e [Deut. 6:16]; Ps. 78:18, 41; [Matt. 4:7]; 1 Cor. 10:9

³ ^f Ex. 16:2, 3 ^g Ex. 12:38

⁴ ^h Ex. 14:15 ⁱ John 8:59; 10:31 ^j Put me to death by stoning

⁵ ^k Ezek. 2:6 ^l Num. 20:8

⁶ ^m Num. 20:10, 11; Deut. 8:15; Neh. 9:15; Ps. 78:15;

105:41; 114:8; [1 Cor. 10:4]

⁷ ⁿ Num. 20:13, 24; 27:14; Ps. 81:7

⁸ ^o Lit. Tempted ¹ Lit. Contention

⁹ ^p tested

¹⁰ ^q Gen. 36:12; Num. 24:20; Deut. 25:17-19; 1 Sam. 15:2

¹¹ ^r Ex. 4:20

¹² ^s [James 5:16]

¹³ ^t Weary of being held up

¹⁴ ^u Ex. 24:4; 34:27; Num. 33:2 ^v Deut. 25:19; 1 Sam. 15:3;

2 Sam. 1:1; 1 Chr. 4:43

cause of the contention of the children of Israel, and because they ⁴tempted the LORD, saying, “Is the LORD among us or not?”

Victory over the Amalekites

⁸ ⁿ Now Amalek came and fought with Israel in Rephidim. ⁹ And Moses said to Joshua, “Choose us some men and go out, fight with Amalek. Tomorrow I will stand on the top of the hill with ^othe rod of God in my hand.” ¹⁰ So Joshua did as Moses said to him, and fought with Amalek. And Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. ¹¹ And so it was, when Moses ^pheld up his hand, that Israel prevailed; and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. ¹² But Moses’ hands *became* ⁵heavy; so they took a stone and put *it* under him, and he sat on it. And Aaron and Hur supported his hands, one on one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun. ¹³ So Joshua defeated Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword.

¹⁴ Then the LORD said to Moses, ^q“Write this *for* a memorial in the book and recount *it* in the hearing of Joshua, that ^rI will utterly blot out the remembrance

(also mentioned in v. 8; 19:2; Num. 33:14, 15). **no water:** The need for water for the people and for their flocks must have been an immense problem, regardless of how we interpret the large number of 12:37.

17:2 There would have been no sin in asking for water. But the Israelites **contended** with Moses. This verb is often used in the prophets to describe a judicial dispute (Mic. 6:2). Here it means a grumpy complaining. Moses judged this to be a challenge to God’s faithful mercy, and evidence of unbelief in His provision. This was not the first time that the people had rallied against Moses (14:11, 12; 16:2, 3); sadly, it would not be the last.

17:3 **Why . . . to kill us?** Their genuine concern for water led the people to accuse Moses of having an outrageous motivation. Ultimately their attacks pointed at God.

17:5 The participation of **some of the elders** shows that not all the people were making the strong, malicious accusations that are described in vv. 2 and 3. Moses’ **rod** here is the same rod of God (see v. 9; 4:20) that Moses and Aaron had used during the plagues of Egypt (see 7:9, 20; 8:5, 16; 9:23; 10:13, 22) and with which Moses had signaled the parting of the waters (14:16).

17:6 The enveloping presence of God came down **on the rock** in a unique way. Once before, Moses had been commanded to hold his rod over a body of water, and it became dry (see 14:21); here he was to **strike a rock** in a dry desert so that water would come from it. The striking of the rock pictured the coming death of the Savior. Water to satisfy the people’s thirst came from the rock that was struck. One day, living water to satisfy spiritual thirst would come from the death of Jesus, our Rock. **Moses did so:** The text does not say so, but the implication seems to be that the water came rushing out and the people had plenty to drink and to water their flocks. Indeed, it is likely that the water from the rock became a steady source.

17:7 **Massah . . . Meribah:** Had the people not behaved so horribly, God would have provided the water in a context of blessing, and the names for the place would have been positive. Sadly, the names referred to the temptation and contention that occurred there (see Num. 20:13, 24 for the use of these names again). From our point of view, we wonder how the question **Is the LORD among**

us? could even be asked! The people had seen God’s power in the plagues, the Exodus, the crossing of the Red Sea, and the provision of manna. Every day they saw the pillar of His presence. Yet had we been part of this crowd, we would likely have been as impatient and questioning as they were.

17:8 The people of **Amalek** were descendants of Esau, the Edomites (see Gen. 36:1, 12). Their attack on Israel was unprovoked. The Israelites—and the Lord—regarded this attack as particularly heinous (see vv. 14–16).

17:9 This is the first mention of **Joshua**, the man who would later succeed Moses. He had chosen Joshua to be his close aide (24:13; 32:17; 33:11). **the rod of God:** The second time this wonderful phrase is used (4:20) and the last mention of the rod in Exodus (see Num. 20:8, 9).

17:10 **Joshua** led the battle; this field training would serve him well later in Canaan. God had trained Moses for his work; He was now training Joshua to succeed him. **Hur:** The first mention of this close associate of Moses and Aaron (see 24:14). He should not be confused with the grandfather of Bezalel (31:2; 35:30; 38:22).

17:11 Moses **held up his hand** (holding the rod of God, see v. 9) not as a form of magic, but as a visible sign that Israel’s victory was in God’s hands.

17:12 Moses was not a young man, and even a youth would grow weary sooner or later, so his aides **supported his hands**. Only in this way would Israel prevail; only in the power of God would they win their battle.

17:13 **Joshua defeated:** The armies of Israel would fight, as all armies might fight, with normal combat techniques. But the victory was assured because of God’s power on His people’s behalf.

17:14 **Write this:** Some people allege that the first five books of the OT, the Pentateuch, were not actually written down until centuries after Moses’ death. Others concede that Moses may have written certain small sections, such as the one to which this verse seems to refer (see 24:4). Yet it is reasonable to assert that Moses wrote some passages of the first five books at the clear command of God, as this verse indicates, and then the rest later to record the full story of God’s dealing with the Israelites during his lifetime (see also 34:27,

of Amalek from under heaven.”¹⁵ And Moses built an altar and called its name, ¹⁶The-Lord-Is-My-Banner; ¹⁶for he said, “Because ⁷the LORD has ⁸sworn: the LORD will have war with Amalek from generation to generation.”

Jethro's Advice

18 And ^aJethro, the priest of Midian, Moses' father-in-law, heard of all that ^bGod had done for Moses and for Israel His people—that the LORD had brought Israel out of Egypt. ²Then Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, took ^cZipporah, Moses' wife, after he had sent her back, ³with her ^dtwo sons, of whom the name of one was ¹Gershom (for he said, ^e“I have been a ²stranger in a foreign land”) ⁴and the name of the other was ³Eliezer (for he said, “The God of my father was my ^fhelp, and delivered me from the sword of Pharaoh”); ⁵and Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, came with his sons and his wife to Moses in the wilderness, where he was encamped at ^gthe mountain of God. ⁶Now he had said to Moses, “I, your father-in-law Jethro, am coming to you with your wife and her two sons with her.”

⁷So Moses ^hwent out to meet his father-

¹⁵ ⁶Heb. YHWH Nissi
¹⁶ ³Ex. 22:14-16 ⁷Lit. a hand is upon the throne of the LORD

CHAPTER 18

¹ ^aEx. 2:16, 18; 3:1
^b[Ps. 106:2, 8]
² ^cEx. 2:21; 4:20-26
³ ^dEx. 2:20; 4:20; Acts 7:29 ^eEx. 2:22 ¹Lit. Stranger
^{There} ²sojourner, temporary resident
⁴ ^fGen. 49:25 ³Lit. My God Is Help
⁵ ^gEx. 3:1, 12; 4:27; 24:13
⁷ ^hGen. 18:2 ¹Gen. 29:13; Ex. 4:27
⁸ ⁱEx. 15:6, 16; Ps. 81:7
⁹ ^k[Is. 63:7-14]
¹⁰ ¹Gen. 14:20; 2 Sam. 18:28; 1 Kin. 8:56; Ps. 68:19, 20
¹¹ ^mEx. 12:12; 15:11; 2 Chr. 2:5; Ps. 95:3; 97:9; 135:5 ⁿEx. 1:10, 16, 22; 5:2, 7
^o Luke 1:51 ⁴acted presumptuously
¹² ^pEx. 24:5 ^qGen. 31:54; Deut. 12:7
⁵ ^rSo with MT, LXX; Syr., Tg., Vg. offered
¹³ ^rDeut. 33:4, 5; Matt. 23:2

in-law, bowed down, and ⁱkissed him. And they asked each other about *their* well-being, and they went into the tent. ⁸And Moses told his father-in-law all that the LORD had done to Pharaoh and to the Egyptians for Israel's sake, all the hardship that had come upon them on the way, and *how* the LORD had ^jdelivered them. ⁹Then Jethro rejoiced for all the ^kgood which the LORD had done for Israel, whom He had delivered out of the hand of the Egyptians. ¹⁰And Jethro said, ^l“Blessed *be* the LORD, who has delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians and out of the hand of Pharaoh, *and* who has delivered the people from under the hand of the Egyptians. ¹¹Now I know that the LORD *is* ^mgreater than all the gods; ⁿfor in the very thing in which they ⁴behaved ^oproudly, *He was* above them.” ¹²Then Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, ⁵took a burnt ^poffering and *other* sacrifices *to offer* to God. And Aaron came with all the elders of Israel ^qto eat bread with Moses' father-in-law before God.

¹³And so it was, on the next day, that Moses ^rsat to judge the people; and the people stood before Moses from morning until evening. ¹⁴So when Moses' father-in-law saw all that he did for the people, he said, “What *is* this thing that you are

28). The word **memorial** is used of the Passover in 12:14. **The book** refers to a scroll; bound books were not developed until many centuries after the time of Moses. **recount it:** The public announcement of an oracle of the Lord gave the sense that it was that much more certain. **Joshua's** later role as Moses' successor would make him an important witness to this oracle of the Lord. **utterly blot out:** Moses reiterated God's command to the second generation (see Deut. 25:19).

17:15 Moses built and named an **altar**, just as Abraham and Isaac had (see Gen. 8:20; 12:7; 26:25; 33:20; 35:1). Naming an altar gave it special significance by marking out a characteristic of God that was associated with worship there; the name memorialized the idea. **The-Lord-Is-My-Banner** is the name of the altar, not a name for God.

17:16 The Hebrew translated as **the LORD has sworn** is somewhat obscure, but appears to mean “Surely there is a hand on the throne of the LORD.” In this phraseology, the Creator of the universe is pictured as seated on His throne while raising His hand in a solemn oath. It is a fearful thing for the wicked to fall into the hands of the just and righteous Judge of the universe.

18:1 God wanted the salvation of **Israel out of Egypt** to be **heard** throughout the world (see 15:14, 15). Word of God's deliverance of the Israelites had reached the remote dwelling place of **Jethro, the priest of Midian** (for more on Jethro, see 2:18; 3:1; 4:18).

18:2 Zipporah: After the shocking story of the circumcision of Zipporah's son, the narrative of Exodus does not mention her again until this verse (see 2:16–21; 4:24–26). Most likely, Zipporah had returned to her father after that traumatic event. Now she visited Moses with her father. But after this passage, she is not mentioned again in the Bible. Later, it appears that Moses married another woman (Num. 12:1).

18:3 Now Zipporah's **two sons** stayed with Moses and became part of the families of Israel. However, the subsequent history of the family of **Gershom** involved a terrible scandal (see Judg. 18:30).

18:4 Eliezer means “My God Is Help” or perhaps “My God Is Power.” Although the birth and naming of Gershom (v. 3) was mentioned

early in the narrative (see 2:22), it is only at this relatively late point in the second son's life—after the Exodus—that his name is mentioned. Furthermore, his name is tied directly to the Exodus: **and delivered me from the sword of Pharaoh**.

18:5, 6 The language in these verses suggests formality. Moses had been adopted into the family of **Jethro** when he had been a man adrift; his marriage brought certain lasting obligations. He had asked Jethro's permission to return to his own people in obedience to God's call (4:18). The heavy-handed repetition of the term **father-in-law** in this passage (vv. 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 12, 14, 15, 17, 24, 27) suggests that this is more than a courtesy title. Jethro had true authority over Moses.

18:7 bowed down, and kissed him: The ancient Middle Eastern acts of bowing and kissing were not acts of worship, but signs of respect and reminders of obligations between two people. It is strange that the narrative does not mention Moses' meeting with his wife. **Well-being** is a translation of the familiar Hebrew word *shalom*, meaning “peace.”

18:9, 10 When Jethro **rejoiced**, he did more than express personal happiness. His joy came from his acknowledgment of the true and living God. The priest who may have known something about the true God now gave praise to God in the words and manner of a true believer.

18:11 Jethro's words **now I know that the LORD is greater** imply that he had once regarded the Lord as one among many gods or perhaps as the principal among them. Here he declares full faith in God as the supreme Deity.

18:12 The **burnt offering** was totally consumed. However the **other sacrifices** were fellowship offerings. The priests of the Lord and the priest of Midian ate their part of the sacrifices together in common faith in the one true God. The scene is reminiscent of the one in which Abram celebrated the Lord together with Melchizedek (Gen. 14:18–20).

18:13 Judge here means “to render decisions.”

18:14, 15 The lively interchange between Moses and Jethro shows a very human side of Moses. He was driven by a desire to do every-

doing for the people? Why do you alone ⁶sit, and all the people stand before you from morning until evening?”

¹⁵And Moses said to his father-in-law, “Because ^sthe people come to me to inquire of God. ¹⁶When they have ^aa ⁷difficulty, they come to me, and I judge between one and another; and I make known the statutes of God and His laws.”

¹⁷So Moses’ father-in-law said to him, “The thing that you do *is* not good. ¹⁸Both you and these people who *are* with you will surely wear yourselves out. For this thing *is* too much for you; ^uyou are not able to perform it by yourself. ¹⁹Listen now to my voice; I will give you ⁸counsel, and God will be with you: Stand ^vbefore God for the people, so that you may ^wbring the difficulties to God. ²⁰And you shall ^xteach them the statutes and the laws, and show them the way in which they must walk and ^ythe work they must do. ²¹Moreover you shall select from all the people ^zable men, such as ^afear God, ^bmen of truth, ^chating covetousness; and place *such* over them to *be* rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens. ²²And let them judge the people at all times. ^dThen it will be *that* every great matter they shall bring to you, but every small matter they themselves shall judge. So it will be easier for you, for ^ethey will bear *the burden* with you. ²³If you do this thing, and God *so* commands you, then you will be able

¹⁴ ⁶ Sit as judge
¹⁵ ^s Lev. 24:12;
Num. 9:6, 8; 27:5;
Deut. 17:8-13
¹⁶ ^f Ex. 24:14; Deut.
19:17 ⁷ dispute
¹⁸ ^u Num. 11:14, 17;
Deut. 1:12
¹⁹ ^v Ex. 4:16; 20:19
^w Num. 9:8; 27:5
⁸ advice
²⁰ ^x Deut. 5:1
^y Deut. 1:18
²¹ ^z Ex. 18:24, 25;
Deut. 1:13, 15; 2 Chr.
19:5-10; Ps. 15:1-5;
Acts 6:3 ^a Gen.
42:18; 2 Sam. 23:3
^b Ezek. 18:8 ^c Deut.
16:19
²² ^d Lev. 24:11;
Deut. 1:17 ^e Num.
11:17
²³ ^f Ex. 16:29
²⁵ ^g Ex. 18:21; Deut.
1:15
²⁶ ^h Job 29:16
⁹ difficult matters
²⁷ ⁱ Num. 10:29, 30

CHAPTER 19

¹ ^a Num. 33:15
² ^b Ex. 17:1 ^c Ex. 3:1,
12; 18:5
³ ^d Acts 7:38
^e Ex. 3:4
⁴ ^f Deut. 29:2
^g Deut. 32:11; Is.
63:9; Rev. 12:14
¹ sustained
⁵ ^h Ex. 15:26; 23:22
ⁱ Deut. 5:2; Ps. 78:10
^j Deut. 4:20; 7:6;
14:2; 26:18; 1 Kin.
8:53; Ps. 135:4; Titus
2:14; 1 Pet. 2:9

to endure, and all this people will also go to their ^jplace in peace.”

²⁴So Moses heeded the voice of his father-in-law and did all that he had said. ²⁵And ^gMoses chose able men out of all Israel, and made them heads over the people: rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens. ²⁶So they judged the people at all times; the ^hhard ⁹cases they brought to Moses, but they judged every small case themselves.

²⁷Then Moses let his father-in-law depart, and ⁱhe went his way to his own land.

Israel at Mount Sinai

19 In the third month after the children of Israel had gone out of the land of Egypt, on the same day, ^athey came to the Wilderness of Sinai. ²For they had departed from ^bRephidim, had come to the Wilderness of Sinai, and camped in the wilderness. So Israel camped there before ^cthe mountain.

³And ^dMoses went up to God, and the LORD ^ecalled to him from the mountain, saying, “Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel: ^{4f}You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and *how* ^gI ¹bore you on eagles’ wings and brought you to Myself. ⁵Now ^htherefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and ⁱkeep My covenant, then ^jyou shall be a special treasure to Me above all

thing perfectly, but his activities were far too time consuming for one man to bear alone. Jethro observed this (see vv. 17, 18).

18:16 This fascinating verse suggests that God’s laws were general when they were first given, then applied on a case-by-case basis. Doubtless, many of the specific laws in the Book of Exodus are the result of this process, the application of general principles to specific cases (see 21:1).

18:19 Jethro gave his **counsel** in the context of his new faith in God, but it was rooted in experience and wisdom he had gained throughout his life.

18:20–22 Moses would teach the broad areas of God’s instruction, and others would deal with more mundane cases. Major matters would still be brought to Moses. Jethro listed only five qualifications for the men who would aid Moses. His list has some similarities to the qualifications for church offices in the NT (1 Tim. 3:1–13). (1) They were to be **able men** having strength, efficiency, and wealth (see Gen. 47:6; Ruth 3:11; Prov. 12:4; 31:10). (2) They were to **fear God**, showing piety, reverence, godly humility, and ready obedience (see Gen. 22:12). (3) They were to be **men of truth**, conforming to God’s character (see 34:6). (4) They were to be haters of (turners from) **covetousness**, so they could not be bribed. (5) They were to be ranked, with **rulers** over them. In other words, each man was to be accountable to someone else.

18:23 and God so commands: Any arrangement must be in keeping with God’s will if it is to be blessed by Him. **in peace:** That is, this would be for the general welfare of all concerned (see v. 7).

18:24–27 heeded: We see Moses’ character in this interaction. He was willing to listen to others and to improve the way he was doing things. This was also a mark of his leadership ability and his lack of self-absorbing pride (see Num. 12). The report that Jethro **went**

his way was not a moral judgment, merely a statement about his travels. By going back to his land, Jethro was able to extend the knowledge of the true God at a time when the Israelites mostly kept to themselves. Jethro the priest of Midian had become Jethro the minister of the Lord.

19:1, 2 The arrival of the community of Israel at Mt. Sinai was a momentous event that would shape their subsequent history. The narrator (Moses) was tremendously impressed with the Lord’s timing (see 12:41, 51). Likely, **the same day** means exactly two months after the Exodus, the fourteenth day of **the third month** (see 12:2, 18; 13:4; 16:1). When the Lord first confronted Moses, it was **before the mountain**. At that time, the Lord had promised that the Israelites would worship God at this place (see 3:12). This promise of God was about to be fulfilled.

19:3 Moses went up to God because God had made His presence known on the mountain, and Moses was the only one who had access to the Lord (see 33:9–11; Num. 12). Moses was the intermediary between the Lord and the people.

19:4 The poetic expression **on eagles’ wings** is a lovely way of describing the people’s deliverance from Egypt. The Lord had whisked the Israelites away from slavery and brought them to Himself. This type of language not only describes Israel’s salvation from slavery, but it can also describe our salvation from sin.

19:5 For the first time in Exodus, the term **covenant** is used to refer to the Lord’s solemn arrangement with the Israelites at Mt. Sinai, sometimes called the Mosaic covenant (see also 24:1–8; 31:12–18; 34:27, 28). In previous passages in Exodus, this term has been used of the Abrahamic covenant (see 2:24; 6:3–5). This same word is also used for binding treaties between Israel and other nations (see 23:32; 34:12, 15).

people; for all the earth is ^kMine. ⁶And you shall be to Me a ^lkingdom of priests and a ^mholy nation: These *are* the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel.”

⁷So Moses came and called for the ⁿelders of the people, and ²laid before them all these words which the LORD commanded him. ⁸Then ^oall the people answered together and said, “All that the LORD has spoken we will do.” So Moses brought back the words of the people to the LORD. ⁹And the LORD said to Moses, “Behold, I come to you ^pin the thick cloud, ^qthat the people may hear when I speak with you, and believe you forever.”

So Moses told the words of the people to the LORD.

¹⁰Then the LORD said to Moses, “Go to the people and ^rconsecrate them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their clothes. ¹¹And let them be ready for the third day. For on the third day the LORD will come down upon Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people. ¹²You shall set bounds for the people all around, saying, “Take heed to yourselves *that you do not* go up to the mountain or touch its base. ^sWhoever touches the mountain shall surely be put to death. ¹³Not a hand shall touch him, but he shall surely be stoned or shot *with an arrow*; whether man or beast, he shall not live.” When the trumpet sounds long, they shall come near the mountain.”

5 ^k Ex. 9:29; Deut. 10:14; Job 41:11; Ps. 50:12; 1 Cor. 10:26
6 ^l Deut. 33:2-4;
[1 Pet. 2:5, 9; Rev. 1:6; 5:10] ^m Deut. 7:6; 14:21; 26:19; Is. 62:12; [1 Cor. 3:17]
7 ⁿ Ex. 4:29, 30 ² set
8 ^o Ex. 4:31; 24:3, 7; Deut. 5:27; 26:17
9 ^p Ex. 19:16; 20:21; 24:15; Deut. 4:11; Ps. 99:7; Matt. 17:5
10 ^q Deut. 4:12, 36; John 12:29, 30
11 ^r Lev. 11:44, 45; [Heb. 10:22]
12 ^s Ex. 34:3; Heb. 12:20

15 ^t [1 Cor. 7:5]
16 ^u Heb. 12:18, 19
17 ^v Heb. 12:21
18 ^w Deut. 4:10
19 ^x Deut. 4:11; Judg. 5:5; Ps. 104:32; 144:5 ^y Ex. 3:2; 24:17; Deut. 5:4; 2 Chr. 7:1-3; Heb. 12:18 ^z Gen. 15:17; 19:28; Rev. 15:8
^a Ps. 68:8; 1 Kin. 19:12; Jer. 4:24; [Heb. 12:26] ³ LXX all the people
19 ^b Heb. 12:21
^c Neh. 9:13; Ps. 81:7
21 ^d 1 Sam. 6:19
22 ^e Ex. 19:24; 24:5
^f Lev. 10:3; 21:6-8
9 2 Sam. 6:7, 8

¹⁴So Moses went down from the mountain to the people and sanctified the people, and they washed their clothes. ¹⁵And he said to the people, “Be ready for the third day; ⁴do not come near *your* wives.”

¹⁶Then it came to pass on the third day, in the morning, that there were ^uthunderings and lightnings, and a thick cloud on the mountain; and the sound of the trumpet was very loud, so that all the people who *were* in the camp ^vtrembled.

¹⁷And ^wMoses brought the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain. ¹⁸Now ^xMount Sinai *was* completely in smoke, because the LORD descended upon ^yit in fire. ²Its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and ³the ^awhole mountain quaked greatly. ¹⁹And when the blast of the trumpet sounded long and became louder and louder, ^bMoses spoke, and ^cGod answered him by voice. ²⁰Then the LORD came down upon Mount Sinai, on the top of the mountain. And the LORD called Moses to the top of the mountain, and Moses went up.

²¹And the LORD said to Moses, “Go down and warn the people, lest they break through ^dto gaze at the LORD, and many of them perish. ²²Also let the ^epriests who come near the LORD ^fconsecrate themselves, lest the LORD ^gbreak out against them.”

²³But Moses said to the LORD, “The people cannot come up to Mount Sinai;

19:9 God was able to reveal only so much of His splendor to a people who were unprepared for a full revelation. Hence, He appeared to them **in the thick cloud**.

19:10 The people were instructed as to how they might prepare for the visitation of the living God. They were to **consecrate** themselves, that is, go through purifying rites to be ceremonially prepared for the meeting.

19:12 God commanded Moses to **set bounds** for the people. None could come near the mountain; they were all to keep their distance. When Moses first approached God at the burning bush, he was commanded to remove his sandals (3:5). The people were not even to get that close.

consecrate

(Heb. *qadash*) (13:2; 19:10; 29:44) Strong's #6942

This Hebrew verb means “to make holy,” “to declare distinct,” or “to set apart.” The word describes dedicating an object or person to God. By delivering the Israelites from slavery in Egypt, God made the nation of Israel distinct. Through His mighty acts of deliverance, God demonstrated that the Israelites were His people, and He was their God (6:7). By having the people wash themselves at Mt. Sinai, the Lord made it clear that they as a people were being set apart for Him (19:10). Just like the Israelites, Christians also have been delivered, from slavery to sin. This deliverance has set us apart: we have been dedicated to our Savior and His purposes. We have been called to be His holy people (1 Pet. 1:15, 16; 2:9).

19:13 not live: The threat of death demonstrated the seriousness of what was about to happen. What must it have been like, we wonder, to anticipate with terror and wonder a close encounter with the living God? The **trumpet** was a ram's horn (as in Josh. 6:4; the word in v. 16 is different).

19:14, 15 Sexual relations were also forbidden during the three days, for they would make the people ritually unclean.

19:16 The epiphany of the Lord was a spectacular event of **thunderings and lightnings, and a thick cloud**. The Canaanite god Baal was associated with these elements in the mythology of the day. His adherents believed him to be a god of storm, so clouds, thunder, and lightning would often be associated with him. But Israel learned that their God alone was the living God. He alone surrounded Himself in thick clouds, sent forth thunder and lightning, illuminated the earth, and filled the heavens with His wonders. Amazingly, one of the heavenly visitors played the **trumpet** rather than someone in the camp of Israel (compare Is. 27:13; 1 Cor. 15:52; 1 Thess. 4:16). None of the Israelites had ever heard such a blast! No wonder they **trembled** (20:18, 19).

19:18 Even though we know God is everywhere, language such as **the Lord descended** gives us a greater appreciation of His merciful grace. The omnipotent Creator came down to meet the Israelites. His presence evoked an overwhelming sense of awe. The **smoke** was an enveloping cover for God's glory, even as the associated **fire** reminded the Israelites of that great glory.

19:19, 20 The **blast of the trumpet** (see v. 16) was not simply a distraction. It was a part of the physical assault on the senses—a sound and sight overload. Despite the ever grander display of God's glory, Moses drew closer to God even as the people were shrinking back from Him.

for You warned us, saying, ^h“Set bounds around the mountain and consecrate it.”

²⁴Then the LORD said to him, “Away! Get down and then come up, you and Aaron with you. But do not let the priests and the people break through to come up to the LORD, lest He break out against them.” ²⁵So Moses went down to the people and spoke to them.

23 ^h Ex. 19:12

CHAPTER 20

1 ^a Deut. 5:22

2 ^b Hos. 13:4 ^c Ex.

13:3; Deut. 7:8

¹ slaves

3 ^d Deut. 6:14; 2 Kin.

17:35; Jer. 25:6; 35:15

4 ^e Lev. 19:4; 26:1;

Deut. 4:15-19; 27:15

The Ten Commandments

20 And God spoke ^aall these words, saying:

^{2 b}“I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, ^cout of the house of ¹bondage.

^{3 d}“You shall have no other gods before Me.

^{4 e}“You shall not make for yourself a carved image—any likeness of

20:1–17 This passage conforms to the pattern of ancient Middle Eastern treaties between a king and his vassals or servants. The Great King presented to His servants, the Israelites, the duties and obligations of the covenant He made with them.

20:1 And God spoke: The following words of God are known as the Law of Moses. However, Moses was merely a reluctant prophet, a mouthpiece for God’s words. This law is really the Law of God.

20:2 I am the LORD your God: First, the Great King identified Himself by speaking His name (see 3:14, 15). **who brought you out:** Then, God reminded the Israelites of His gracious actions on their

behalf (see chs. 12–15). In ancient treaties, a king would describe the history of relations between his kingdom and the one being contracted. In this treaty between the Lord and the Israelites, God described His gracious deliverance of Israelites from cruel slavery.

20:3 no other gods: God was not to be viewed by Israel as one God among many nor as the best of the gods. He was and is the only living God. He and He alone was to be worshiped, obeyed, and adored by the Israelites.

20:4 not make . . . a carved image: Peoples in the ancient world produced many kinds of idols, images, and other substitutes for

The Mosaic Covenant

Encamped before Mount Sinai, the Israelites encountered their God, who had recently delivered them from Egyptian slavery (Gen. 12:1–3; Ex. 12; 13). At this mountain for the first time, God made a covenant with the entire nation of Israel (chs. 19–24), usually referred to as the Mosaic covenant, the covenant with the people as given to Moses. God formalized His relationship with the Israelites with a suzerain-vassal (ruler-subject) treaty. That is, God came to the Israelites as the Great King and presented to them a binding treaty in which He would make certain promises to them and they would have certain obligations as His servants. This was not a treaty between equals; it was a treaty between the superior King and His inferior servants.



As part of the Mosaic covenant, God instructed the Israelites on how they should live.

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certain obligations as His servants. This was not a treaty between equals; it was a treaty between the superior King and His inferior servants.

In this treaty, God first reminded the Israelites of who He was and how He had acted in their behalf. He was their Savior—the One who had snatched them from their oppressors (19:4). If they covenanted with Him, God promised to make the Israelites His “special treasure” (19:5). He would lavish special attention on them and make them “a kingdom of priests and a holy nation” (19:6). On the one hand, Israel would become holy—or distinct and separate from all other nations—because of its special relationship with God. But on the other hand, Israel, in its separation, was to be the means by which the other nations would learn of the living God. This nation of priests would lead others to a correct worship of the true God (Ps. 117).

As part of this treaty, God graciously instructed the Israelites on how they should live (ch. 20). As a people who had a relationship with the living God, the Israelites had to act a certain way—God’s way. The Law was benevolent instruction from God Himself. It was God’s direction, like an outstretched hand pointing out the way one should take on the road of life. The Israelites were in a most enviable position. God had demonstrated His love for them by saving them. He had shown His faithfulness to His promises to their parents, Abraham and Sarah. He had formalized His relationship with them in a treaty and promised to make them His special people. Finally He even gave them instructions for how to live. They were at peace with their Creator.

anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; ^{5f}you shall not bow down to them nor ²serve them. ^gFor I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, ^hvisiting³ the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, ⁶but ⁱshowing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.

^{7 j}“You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD ^kwill not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain.

^{8 l}“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. ^{9m}Six days you shall labor and do all your work, ¹⁰but the ⁿseventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, ^onor your stranger who is within your gates. ¹¹For ^pin six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh

^{5 f}Is. 44:15, 19 ^gEx. 34:14; Deut. 4:24; Josh. 24:19; Nah. 1:2
^hNum. 14:18, 33; Deut. 5:9, 10; 1 Kin. 21:29; Ps. 79:8; Jer. 32:18 ^{2 worship}
^{3 punishing}
^{6 i}Deut. 7:9; Rom. 11:28
^{7 j}Lev. 19:12; Deut. 6:13; 10:20; [Matt. 5:33-37] ^kMic. 6:11
^{8 l}Ex. 23:12; 31:13-16; Lev. 26:2; Deut. 5:12
^{9 m}Ex. 34:21; 35:2, 3; Lev. 23:3; Deut. 5:13; Luke 13:14
^{10 n}Gen. 2:2, 3
^oNeh. 13:16-19
^{11 p}Gen. 2:2, 3; Ex. 31:17
^{12 q}Lev. 19:3; Deut. 27:16; Matt. 15:4; 19:19; Mark 7:10; 10:19; Luke 18:20; Eph. 6:2 ^rDeut. 5:16, 33; 6:2; 11:8, 9
^{13 s}[Matt. 5:21, 22]; 19:18; Mark 10:19; Luke 18:20; Rom. 13:9; [1 John 3:15]
^{14 t}Matt. 5:27; Mark 10:19; Luke 18:20; Rom. 13:9; James 2:11 ^uLev. 20:10; Deut. 5:18
^{15 v}Ex. 21:16;

day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.

^{12q} “Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be ^rlong upon the land which the LORD your God is giving you.

^{13s} “You shall not murder.

^{14t} “You shall not commit ^uadultery.

^{15v} “You shall not steal.

^{16w} “You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

^{17x} “You shall not covet your neighbor’s house; ^yyou shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor’s.”

The People Afraid of God’s Presence

¹⁸Now ^zall the people ^awitnessed the thunderings, the lightning flashes, the sound of the trumpet, and the mountain ^bsmoking; and when the people saw it, they trembled and stood afar off. ¹⁹Then they said to Moses, ^c“You speak with us,

Lev. 19:11, 13; Matt. 19:18; Rom. 13:9 ^{16 w}Ex. 23:1, 7; Deut. 5:20; Matt. 19:18 ^{17 x}[Luke 12:15]; Rom. 7:7; 13:9; [Eph. 5:3, 5]; Heb. 13:5 ^y2 Sam. 11:2; [Matt. 5:28] ^{18 z}Heb. 12:18, 19
^aRev. 1:10, 12 ^bEx. 19:16, 18 ^{19 c}Gal. 3:19; Heb. 12:19

God. Israel was forbidden to do this from the beginning. They could not make anything that would detract from the exclusive worship of the living God. However, the prohibition of fashioning images was not an injunction against every kind of art.

20:5 The phrase **bow down . . . nor serve** form a pair of Hebrew words that describes one idea: any form of worship to another god. God is a **jealous God**: In other words, He has a *zeal* for the truth that He alone is God, and He is *jealous* of any rivals. The Hebrew verb translated **visiting** can mean coming in an act of mercy (as in Ruth 1:6) or coming in divine judgment (as here). **third and fourth**: Idolatry would bring judgment that would affect the idolaters’ descendants.

20:6 The Lord’s **mercy** would extend even more to the descendants of righteous people. The contrasting of the phrases “third and fourth” (v. 5) with **thousands** demonstrates that God’s mercy is greater than His wrath. The lingering effects of righteousness will last far longer than the lingering effects of wickedness.

20:7 The third commandment concerns the sanctity of God’s name (see 3:14, 15). The revelation of God’s name, Yahweh, entailed some risk. If it was broadcast among the people there was more likelihood that people would not hold it in reverence. Use of God’s name **in vain** involved: (1) trivializing His name by regarding it as insignificant; (2) trying to use it to advance evil purposes by coaxing God to violate His character and purposes (one of the ways priests of false religions often used the names of their false gods); and even (3) using it in worship thoughtlessly.

20:8–11 The fourth commandment, **remember the Sabbath day**, was the special sign of the covenant with Israel at Mt. Sinai (see 31:12–18). With this command, God set Israel apart from its neighbors. Other peoples had their own various patterns of work and rest, but Israel was to set aside one day in seven for rest. The word *Sabbath* means “rest.” The day was kept **holy** by ceasing all labor on that day. The Sabbath was specifically the **seventh day**, Saturday. It was patterned after the seventh day of rest for God following the six days of creation. During the Sabbath, the Israelites worshiped God and recalled His deliverance of them from slavery (see Deut. 5:15). The observance of the Sabbath included even foreign guests.

20:12 Honor your father and your mother: The term *honor* means “to treat with significance.” It is the opposite of **in vain** (v. 7). Care of one’s elderly parents was a basic element of social responsibility and godly piety in Israel. Here it is tied directly to how a person would fare in **the land**. People who were faithless to God in disregarding their parents would not last long in the new Promised Land.

20:13 The sixth to ninth commandments were designed to build a cohesive society in ancient Israel. Each was based on the value that God placed on people. Each of these commands was reaffirmed in the NT. The sixth commandment, **you shall not murder**, did not forbid all taking of life, for the Law itself included provisions for capital punishment (21:15–17, 23) as well as warfare (17:8–16). The deliberate murder of another person (outside the legitimate provisions of capital punishment or war) flagrantly violated the sanctity of life. This included murder committed by officers of the state (see the story of Naboth, 1 Kin. 21).

20:14 The seventh commandment concerned **adultery**. God regarded the sanctity of marriage as a sacred trust similar to the sanctity of life (v. 13). The marriage relationship was a symbol of faithfulness.

20:15 The eighth commandment protected the sanctity of property by prohibiting theft.

20:16 The ninth commandment prohibited bearing **false witness**. First, this command protected the reputation of people from libel by others. Second, this command established the ancient Israelite system of justice on a firm foundation. In ancient Israelite law, the judging of a person’s guilt or innocence was based on testimony by faithful witnesses (see Deut. 17:6). False witnesses would undermine justice.

20:17 Covet means “to have a strong desire for.” Coveting was not merely an appreciation of something from a distance, but an uncontrolled, inordinate, selfish desire. This tenth command governed an internal matter: the sin of coveting occurred in the mind. This demonstrated that God intended the Israelites not only to avoid the actions named in the previous commands, but also to turn away from the evil thoughts that led to those actions.

and we will hear; but ^dlet not God speak with us, lest we die.”

²⁰And Moses said to the people, “Do not fear; ^ffor God has come to test you, and ^gthat His fear may be before you, so that you may not sin.” ²¹So the people stood afar off, but Moses drew near ^hthe thick darkness where God was.

The Law of the Altar

²²Then the LORD said to Moses, “Thus you shall say to the children of Israel: ‘You have seen that I have talked with you ⁱfrom heaven. ²³You shall not make *anything* to be ^jwith Me—gods of silver or gods of gold you shall not make for yourselves. ²⁴An altar of ^kearth you shall make for Me, and you shall sacrifice on it your burnt offerings and your peace offerings, ^lyour sheep and your oxen. In every ^mplace where I ⁴record My name I will come to you, and I will ⁿbless you. ²⁵And ^oif you make Me an altar of stone, you shall not build it of hewn stone; for if you ^puse your tool on it, you have profaned it. ²⁶Nor shall you go up by steps to My altar, that your ^qnakedness may not be exposed on it.’

The Law Concerning Servants

21 “Now these are the ¹judgments which you shall ^aset before them: ^{2b}If you buy a Hebrew servant, he shall serve six years; and in the seventh he shall go out free and pay nothing. ³If he comes in by himself, he shall go out by himself; if he *comes in* married, then his wife shall go out with him. ⁴If his master

The Code of Hammurabi

An ancient law code named after a king who ruled Babylonia from about 1792 to 1750 B.C. These laws are similar to the Law as revealed to Moses in the first five books of the OT. The Code of Hammurabi was discovered in 1901–1902 by the archaeologist V. Scheil at Susa, an early city of the ancient Babylonians. It was written on a seven-foot-high stone monument (called a *stèle*) with the upper part picturing Hammurabi receiving a scepter and a ring, symbols of justice and order, from Shamash, the Babylonian sun-god and divine lawgiver. The rest of the monument contains the code. Hammurabi’s law dates from about 300 years after Abraham and some 300 years before the events described in the Books of Exodus, Leviticus, and Deuteronomy. This law code was written for a complex urban culture, in contrast to the simple agricultural culture of Palestine.



The Code of Hammurabi

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¹⁹ ^d Deut. 5:5, 23–27
²⁰ ^e Ex. 14:13; [Is. 41:10, 13] ^f Ex. 15:25; [Deut. 13:3] ^g Deut. 4:10; 6:24; Prov. 3:7; 16:6; Is. 8:13
²¹ ^h Ex. 19:16; Deut. 5:22
²² ⁱ Deut. 4:36; 5:24, 26; Neh. 9:13
²³ / Ex. 32:1, 2, 4; Deut. 29:17
²⁴ ^k Ex. 20:25; 27:1–8
²⁵ / Ex. 24:5; Lev. 1:2
²⁶ / Deut. 12:5; 16:6, 11; 1 Kin. 9:3; 2 Chr. 6:6
^a Gen. 12:2

has given him a wife, and she has borne him sons or daughters, the wife and her children shall be her master’s, and he shall go out by himself. ^{5c}But if the servant plainly says, ‘I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free,’ ⁶then his master shall bring him to the ^djudges. He shall also bring him to the door, or to the doorpost, and his

⁴ *cause My name to be remembered* ²⁵ ^o Deut. 27:5 ^p Josh. 8:30, 31 ²⁶ ^q Ex. 28:42, 43

CHAPTER 21 ¹ ^a Ex. 24:3, 4; Deut. 4:14; 6:1 ¹ *ordinances*
² ^b Lev. 25:39–43; Deut. 15:12–18; Jer. 34:14 ⁵ ^c Deut. 15:16, 17
⁶ ^d Ex. 12:12; 22:8, 9

20:20 The response of Moses in this verse forms one of the most significant concepts in the first five books of the Bible. Note the interchange between the words **do not fear** and **His fear**. Moses told the people to stop being afraid; God was not going to hurt them. Yet they were very much afraid of the Lord (see 19:16; compare also 20:18, 19). God did not want His people to live in terror of Him, as though He were an irrational, uncontrolled, violent force ready to be unleashed on innocent people without provocation. Rather, God wanted His people to respect the obvious hazards of wanton sin. Appropriate fear of God in this sense would make them circumspect, reverent, obedient, and worshipful, so that they might **not sin**.

20:21 God remained in **thick darkness**—a symbol of His elusive presence (see Ps. 97:2). Only Moses could come near.

20:24 Israel was forbidden to make any altar more elaborate than **an altar of earth**. These individual altars would be used only until the selection of the central place for the worship of God (later in Jerusalem, see Deut. 12). See Ex. 24:4 for an example of an altar built by Moses at Mt. Sinai. See also 1 Kin. 18:31, 32 for an altar built by Elijah on Mt. Carmel. **Where I record My name** can mean “where I cause My name to be remembered.”

20:26 **your nakedness**: The worship of the gods of Canaan involved sexually perverse acts. Nothing obscene or unseemly was permitted in the pure worship of the living God.

21:1 The word translated here **the judgments** is one of several Hebrew words that describe the Law (the Torah). This word describes God’s response to a specific action, something like an umpire’s call.

Laws that appear in this section are responses to specific cases among the Israelites. Often the people would present critical or difficult disputes to Moses (see ch. 18). When Moses had to render a decision on an issue that he was not sure about, he would ask the Lord. The decisions that he gave became known as *case law* or *casuistic law*. Such laws differed from the Ten Commandments (20:1–17), known as *apodictic law*. The Ten Commandments were general laws not based on specific cases. It is believed by some that among the nations of the ancient world, only Israel had both casuistic and apodictic law.

21:2 **if you buy a Hebrew servant**: Indebtedness or other crises might force a person to be sold into slavery. But what was to be done if that slave were a member of the Hebrew community? Moses ruled that the period of enslavement was not to exceed six years, and **in the seventh he shall go out free**. Perpetual slavery of Hebrew men and women was prohibited.

21:2–5 Other rulings followed: (1) A slave who was married at the time of his enslavement would keep his wife. (2) If the marriage took place during the period of slavery, the wife and children belonged to the master.

21:6 If the slave being freed did not wish to leave his family behind, he was allowed to make a commitment of lifelong servitude. The slave would be taken before **judges**, where he would be given the opportunity to declare his intentions. **pierce his ear**: A sign of voluntary, lifelong servitude.

master shall pierce his ear with an awl; and he shall serve him forever.

⁷“And if a man ^csells his daughter to be a female slave, she shall not go out as the male slaves do. ⁸If she ²does not please her master, who has betrothed her to himself, then he shall let her be redeemed. He shall have no right to sell her to a foreign people, since he has dealt deceitfully with her. ⁹And if he has betrothed her to his son, he shall deal with her according to the custom of daughters. ¹⁰If he takes another *wife*, he shall not diminish her food, her clothing, ^fand her marriage rights. ¹¹And if he does not do these three for her, then she shall go out free, without *paying* money.

The Law Concerning Violence

^{12g}“He who strikes a man so that he dies shall surely be put to death. ¹³However, ^hif he did not lie in wait, but God ⁱdelivered *him* into his hand, then ^jI will appoint for you a place where he may flee.

¹⁴“But if a man acts with ^kpremeditation against his neighbor, to kill him by treachery, ^lyou shall take him from My altar, that he may die.

¹⁵“And he who strikes his father or his mother shall surely be put to death.

^{16m}“He who kidnaps a man and ⁿsells him, or if he is ^ofound in his hand, shall surely be put to death.

¹⁷“And ^phe who curses his father or his mother shall surely be put to death.

¹⁸“If men contend with each other,

⁷ ^e Neh. 5:5
⁸ ² Lit. *is evil in the eyes of*
¹⁰ ^f [1 Cor. 7:3, 5]
¹² ^g Gen. 9:6; Lev. 24:17; Num. 35:30; [Matt. 26:52]
¹³ ^h Deut. 19:4, 5
ⁱ 1 Sam. 24:4, 10, 18
^j Num. 35:11; Deut. 19:3; Josh. 20:2
¹⁴ ^k Deut. 19:11, 12; [Heb. 10:26] ^l 1 Kin. 2:28-34
¹⁶ ^m Deut. 24:7
ⁿ Gen. 37:28 ^o Ex. 22:4
¹⁷ ^p Lev. 20:9; Prov. 20:20; Matt. 15:4; Mark 7:10

¹⁹ ^q 2 Sam. 3:29
³ ^r exempt from punishment
²¹ ^s Lev. 25:44-46
²² ^t Ex. 18:21, 22; 21:30; Deut. 22:18
⁴ ^u struggle ⁵ Lit. *her children come out*
²⁴ ^v Lev. 24:20; Deut. 19:21; [Matt. 5:38-44; 1 Pet. 2:19-21]
²⁸ ^w Gen. 9:5
⁶ ^x exempt from punishment

and one strikes the other with a stone or with *his* fist, and he does not die but is confined to *his* bed, ¹⁹if he rises again and walks about outside ^qwith his staff, then he who struck *him* shall be ³acquitted. He shall only pay *for* the loss of his time, and shall provide *for him* to be thoroughly healed.

²⁰“And if a man beats his male or female servant with a rod, so that he dies under his hand, he shall surely be punished. ²¹Notwithstanding, if he remains alive a day or two, he shall not be punished; for he *is* his ^rproperty.

²²“If men ⁴fight, and hurt a woman with child, so that ⁵she gives birth prematurely, yet no harm follows, he shall surely be punished accordingly as the woman’s husband imposes on him; and he shall ^spay as the judges *determine*. ²³But if *any* harm follows, then you shall give life for life, ²⁴^teye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, ²⁵burn for burn, wound for wound, stripe for stripe.

²⁶“If a man strikes the eye of his male or female servant, and destroys it, he shall let him go free for the sake of his eye. ²⁷And if he knocks out the tooth of his male or female servant, he shall let him go free for the sake of his tooth.

Animal Control Laws

²⁸“If an ox gores a man or a woman to death, then ^uthe ox shall surely be stoned, and its flesh shall not be eaten; but the owner of the ox *shall be* ⁶acquitted.

21:7–11 Women also endured the hardship of slavery. In ancient times, a family might be reduced to such a desperate state that they would **sell a daughter** into bondage. The law in this section served to protect the purchased bride. If she were not acceptable to her new master, he would **let her be redeemed**, that is, her freedom might be purchased by another. In no case was she to be sold to a **foreign people**. If she were purchased as a bride for a man’s son, she was to be treated as one would treat a daughter. If the man took another wife later, he was to continue to treat the purchased bride with respect. **Her food, her clothing, and her marriage rights** would continue. A husband who refused these necessities was to let the woman **go out free**.

21:12 This verse lays out the basic circumstances for capital punishment. In ancient Israel, as in our own day, cases often had mitigating circumstances that might weigh against a death penalty. Complicating the matter was the common practice of family retribution. A family who had suffered death or injury believed they had just cause to exact a penalty from the offender. These laws were meant to place limits on the penalties that might be carried out.

21:13 A person who accidentally murdered another could escape punishment by fleeing to a city of refuge (see Num. 35:9–34). **God delivered him:** A phrase indicating that the death was accidental. **21:14, 15 acts with premeditation:** The Hebrew word means “to boil up” or “to act with presumption.” See 18:11 for the only other use of this verb in Exodus. Deliberate acts of murder, including the particularly heinous act of killing one’s parents, were punishable by death.

21:17 curses: Breaking the fifth commandment (see 20:12) in this harsh manner was also a capital offense.

21:18, 19 This ruling allowed the victim of a fight to be compensated for lost time and treatment of injury. Like other such laws, it is likely that a particular case resulted in this judgment.

21:20, 21 These provisions guarded somewhat against the abuse of slaves. They did not endorse the practice of slavery.

21:22, 23 Defenders of abortion have sometimes cited this verse to support the idea that life in the womb is something less than a person. No matter how it is translated, this verse contains nothing that would support the modern practice of abortion on demand. **She gives birth prematurely** is one possible translation of the Hebrew. If this is a correct rendering, the subsequent “harm” would be harm to the baby (or perhaps to the mother and to the baby). More probably the Hebrew means that the woman suffers a miscarriage. **no harm follows:** If the woman did not die from the blow, then the offender would be fined for the loss of her child. If, however, she were to die, then the penalty was **life for life**.

21:23–25 Here we encounter the best-known statement of *lex talionis* (“law of retaliation”). Many ancient cultures allowed punishments greatly out of proportion to the offense. In Israel, a judgment corresponded to the nature of the injury. The idea is *no more than eye for eye*, etc.

21:26, 27 In this instance, the verb **strike** means to cause injury. A master who inflicted harm on his slaves could be compelled to set them free.

21:28–32 The judgments concerning the **ox** have a modern ring to them. An ox that caused human death was to be destroyed, but the owner suffered no further punishment. If, however, the ox had a history of injuring others and subsequently killed a free person, the owner could be put to death as well. In other cases, a heavy

²⁹But if the ox ⁷tended to thrust with its horn in times past, and it has been made known to his owner, and he has not kept it confined, so that it has killed a man or a woman, the ox shall be stoned and its owner also shall be put to death. ³⁰If there is imposed on him a sum of money, then he shall pay ⁷ to redeem his life, whatever is imposed on him. ³¹Whether it has gored a son or gored a daughter, according to this judgment it shall be done to him. ³²If the ox gores a male or female servant, he shall give to their master ¹⁰thirty shekels of silver, and the ^xox shall be stoned.

³³“And if a man opens a pit, or if a man digs a pit and does not cover it, and an ox or a donkey falls in it, ³⁴the owner of the pit shall make it good; he shall give money to their owner, but the dead *animal* shall be his.

³⁵“If one man’s ox hurts another’s, so that it dies, then they shall sell the live ox and divide the money from it; and the dead ox they shall also divide. ³⁶Or if it was known that the ox tended to thrust in time past, and its owner has not kept it confined, he shall surely pay ox for ox, and the dead animal shall be his own.

Responsibility for Property

22 “If a man steals an ox or a sheep, and slaughters it or sells it, he shall ^arestore five oxen for an ox and four sheep for a sheep. ²If the thief is found ^bbreaking in, and he is struck so that he dies, *there shall be* ^cno guilt for his bloodshed. ³If the sun has risen on him, *there shall be* guilt for his bloodshed. He should make full restitution; if he has nothing, then he shall be ^dsold¹ for his theft. ⁴If the theft is certainly ^efound alive in his hand, whether it is an ox or donkey or sheep, he shall ^frestore double.

⁵“If a man causes a field or vineyard to be grazed, and lets loose his animal, and it feeds in another man’s field, he shall make restitution from the best of his own field and the best of his own vineyard.

⁶“If fire breaks out and catches in thorns, so that stacked grain, stand-

²⁹ ⁷was inclined
³⁰ ^v Ex. 21:22; Num. 35:31
³² ^w Zech. 11:12, 13; Matt. 26:15; 27:3, 9
^x Ex. 21:28

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¹ ^a 2 Sam. 12:6; Prov. 6:31; Luke 19:8
² ^b Job 24:16; Matt. 6:19; 24:43; 1 Pet. 4:15
^c Num. 35:27
³ ^d Ex. 21:2; Matt. 18:25
¹ Sold as a slave
⁴ ^e Ex. 21:16
^f Prov. 6:31

⁷ ^g Lev. 6:1-7
^h Ex. 22:4
⁸ ⁱ Ex. 21:6, 22; 22:28; Deut. 17:8, 9; 19:17
⁹ ^j Deut. 25:1; 2 Chr. 19:10
¹¹ ^k Heb. 6:16
¹² ^l Gen. 31:39
¹³ ^m Gen. 31:39
¹⁶ ⁿ Deut. 22:28, 29
¹⁷ ^o Gen. 34:12; 1 Sam. 18:25
¹⁸ ^p Lev. 19:31; 20:6, 27; Deut. 18:10, 11; 1 Sam. 28:3-10; Jer. 27:9, 10
¹⁹ ^q Lev. 18:23; 20:15, 16; Deut. 27:21
²⁰ ^r Ex. 32:8; 34:15; Lev. 17:7; Num. 25:2; Deut. 17:2, 3, 5; 1 Kin. 18:40; 2 Kin. 10:25

ing grain, or the field is consumed, he who kindled the fire shall surely make restitution.

⁷“If a man ^gdelivers to his neighbor money or articles to keep, and it is stolen out of the man’s house, ^hif the thief is found, he shall pay double. ⁸If the thief is not found, then the master of the house shall be brought to the ⁱjudges to see whether he has put his hand into his neighbor’s goods.

⁹“For any kind of trespass, *whether it concerns* an ox, a donkey, a sheep, or clothing, or for any kind of lost thing which *another* claims to be his, the ^jcause of both parties shall come before the judges; and whomever the judges condemn shall pay double to his neighbor. ¹⁰If a man delivers to his neighbor a donkey, an ox, a sheep, or any animal to keep, and it dies, is hurt, or driven away, no one seeing it, ¹¹then an ^koath of the LORD shall be between them both, that he has not put his hand into his neighbor’s goods; and the owner of it shall accept *that*, and he shall not make it good. ¹²But ^lif, in fact, it is stolen from him, he shall make restitution to the owner of it. ¹³If it is ^mtorn to pieces *by a beast*, then he shall bring it as evidence, and he shall not make good what was torn.

¹⁴“And if a man borrows *anything* from his neighbor, and it becomes injured or dies, the owner of it not *being* with it, he shall surely make it good. ¹⁵If its owner *was* with it, he shall not make it good; if it *was* hired, it came for its hire.

Moral and Ceremonial Principles

¹⁶ⁿ“If a man entices a virgin who is not betrothed, and lies with her, he shall surely pay the bride-price for her *to be* his wife. ¹⁷If her father utterly refuses to give her to him, he shall pay money according to the ^obride-price of virgins.

¹⁸^p“You shall not permit a sorceress to live.

¹⁹^q“Whoever lies with an animal shall surely be put to death.

²⁰^r“He who sacrifices to *any* god,

fine might be imposed but the owner’s life spared. A shekel was about two-fifths of an ounce. **Thirty shekels of silver** was likely a sizable sum at that time.

21:33, 34 An unattended **pit** that caused the death of an animal would require restitution to the animal’s owner because animals were the livelihood of their owners.

22:1-4 Just as stealing a horse in the days of the American frontier was sometimes punished by hanging (because of the great loss suffered by the person affected by that theft), so the stealing of **an ox or a sheep** carried heavy penalties. The restitution was usually greater than the value of the stolen animal. **the sun has risen on him:** To strike the thief after the act would be considered inappropriate use of force. The thief who could not offer restitution was to **be sold** into slavery.

22:10-13 In some cases of suspected mismanagement, an **oath of the LORD** would be an acceptable testimony of innocence. In other cases, restitution was demanded, unless it might be proven that the loss was due to circumstances beyond one’s reasonable control.

22:16, 17 The violation of a young woman was regarded as a serious affront. The payment of the **bride price** also meant that the one who had enticed her had to marry her (with the father’s permission). The steep fine was meant to discourage young men from reckless behavior.

22:18, 20 The Bible does not record any executions of sorcerers or sorceresses, but it does recount the deadly consequences of false worship (see ch. 32; Num. 25).

except to the LORD only, he shall be utterly destroyed.

^{21 s}“You shall neither mistreat a ²stranger nor oppress him, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.

^{22 r}“You shall not afflict any widow or fatherless child. ²³If you afflict them in any way, *and* they ^ucry at all to Me, I will surely ^vhear their cry; ²⁴and My ^wwrath will become hot, and I will kill you with the sword; ^xyour wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless.

^{25 y}“If you lend money to *any* of My people *who are* poor among you, you shall not be like a moneylender to him; you shall not charge him ^zinterest. ^{26 a}If you ever take your neighbor’s garment as a pledge, you shall return it to him before the sun goes down. ²⁷For that *is* his only covering, it *is* his garment for his skin. What will he sleep in? And it will be that when he cries to Me, I will hear, for I *am* ^bgracious.

^{28 c}“You shall not revile God, nor curse a ^druler of your people.

²⁹“You shall not delay to *offer* ^ethe first of your ripe produce and your juices. ^fThe firstborn of your sons you shall give to Me. ^{30 g}Likewise you shall do with your oxen *and* your sheep. It shall be with its mother ^hseven days; on the eighth day you shall give it to Me.

³¹“And you shall be ⁱholy men to Me: ^jyou shall not eat meat torn *by beasts* in the field; you shall throw it to the dogs.

Justice for All

23 “You ^ashall not circulate a false report. Do not put your hand with the wicked to be an ^bunrighteous witness. ^{2 c}You shall not follow a crowd to do evil; ^dnor shall you testify in a dispute so as to turn aside after many to pervert *justice*. ³You shall not show partiality to a ^epoor man in his dispute.

^{4 f}“If you meet your enemy’s ox or his

^{21 s} Ex. 23:9; Deut. 10:19; Zech. 7:10
² *sojourner*

^{22 r} Deut. 24:17, 18; Prov. 23:10, 11; Jer. 7:6, 7, [James 1:27]

^{23 u} [Luke 18:7]
^v Deut. 10:17, 18; Ps. 18:6

^{24 w} Ps. 69:24 • Ps. 109:9

^{25 v} Lev. 25:35-37
^z Deut. 23:19, 20; Neh. 5:1-13; Ps. 15:5; Ezek. 18:8

^{26 a} Deut. 24:6, 10-13; Job 24:3; Prov. 20:16; Amos 2:8

^{27 b} Ex. 34:6, 7
^{28 c} Eccl. 10:20
^d Acts 23:5

^{29 e} Ex. 23:16, 19; Deut. 26:2-11; Prov. 3:9
^f Ex. 13:2, 12, 15

^{30 g} Deut. 15:19
^h Lev. 22:27

^{31 i} Ex. 19:6; Lev. 11:44; 19:2 / Lev. 7:24; 17:15; Ezek. 4:14

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^{1 o} Ex. 20:16; Lev. 19:11; Deut. 5:20; Ps. 101:5; [Prov. 10:18]

^b Deut. 19:16-21; Ps. 35:11; [Prov. 19:5]; Acts 6:11

^{2 c} Gen. 7:1 ^d Lev. 19:15

^{3 e} Ex. 23:6; Lev. 19:15; Deut. 1:17; 16:19

^{4 f} [Rom. 12:20]
^{5 g} Deut. 22:4
^{6 h} Eccl. 5:8

^{7 i} Ex. 20:16; Ps. 119:29; Eph. 4:25
/ Matt. 27:4 ^k Ex. 34:7; Deut. 25:1; Rom. 1:18

^{8 j} Deut. 10:17; 16:19; Prov. 15:27; 17:8, 23; Is. 5:22, 23

^{9 m} Ex. 22:21; Lev. 19:33; Deut. 24:17; 27:19 ^l *sojourner*

^{10 n} Lev. 25:1-7
^{11 o} *olive yards*

donkey going astray, you shall surely bring it back to him again. ^{5 g}If you see the donkey of one who hates you lying under its burden, and you would refrain from helping it, you shall surely help him with it.

^{6 h}“You shall not pervert the judgment of your poor in his dispute. ^{7 i}Keep yourself far from a false matter; ^jdo not kill the innocent and righteous. For ^{k i}I will not justify the wicked. ⁸And ^lyou shall take no bribe, for a bribe blinds the discerning and perverts the words of the righteous.

⁹“Also ^myou shall not oppress a ¹stranger, for you know the heart of a stranger, because you were strangers in the land of Egypt.

The Law of Sabbaths

^{10 n}“Six years you shall sow your land and gather in its produce, ¹¹but the seventh *year* you shall let it rest and lie fallow, that the poor of your people may eat; and what they leave, the beasts of the field may eat. In like manner you shall do with your vineyard *and* your ²olive grove. ^{12 o}Six days you shall do your work, and on the seventh day you shall rest, that your ox and your donkey may rest, and the son of your female servant and the stranger may be refreshed.

¹³“And in all that I have said to you, ^pbe circumspect and ^qmake no mention of the name of other gods, nor let it be heard from your mouth.

Three Annual Feasts

^{14 r}“Three times you shall keep a feast to Me in the year: ^{15 s}You shall keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread (you shall eat unleavened bread seven days, as I

^{12 o} Luke 13:14 ^{13 p} Deut. 4:9, 23; 1 Tim. 4:16 • Josh. 23:7; Ps. 16:4; Hos. 2:17 ^{14 r} Ex. 23:17; 34:22-24; Deut. 16:16
^{15 s} Ex. 12:14-20; Lev. 23:6-8; Num. 28:16-25

22:25–27 God also had a special concern for the **poor** in Israel. They were not to be subject to the abusive practices of moneylenders nor have goods they needed for survival taken as collateral. **When he cries to Me:** At the conclusion of this verse, the Lord declares why it is right and fitting for one in distress to call out to Him. He says I **am gracious**, an anticipation of the great revelation of His compassionate character to Moses in 34:6, 7.

22:28 revile God, nor curse a ruler: Since God is the ultimate sovereign, to curse a lesser ruler might encourage disrespect for God’s authority.

22:29, 30 Promptness was commanded both in offering the firstfruits of the field and in the presentation of one’s sons to the Lord. The sons were to be redeemed (see 13:11–16) **on the eighth day**. This verse reminded the Israelites that all they had was a gift from the Lord.

22:31 holy: Israel was to be set apart from other nations (see 19:5, 6). **Meat torn by beasts** was not to be eaten, presumably because the blood had not been drained from it.

23:1 false report: Malicious talk is everywhere condemned in Scripture (see James 3:1–12).

23:3 partiality to a poor man: God’s support of the poor (see 22:25–27) did not overrule His justice. Here God anticipated that some would use poverty as an excuse for greedy, even criminal activity.

23:4, 5 The **enemy** in this context would be another member of the Hebrew community.

23:10–12 In addition to the weekly Sabbath (see 20:8–11; 31:12–18), Israel was also to practice a Sabbath year after arriving in the land (see also Lev. 25:1–7). **let it rest and lie fallow:** Letting the land rest allowed the poor to glean any produce that might grow during the fallow year. It also gave the land time to rejuvenate for greater productivity in subsequent years. Of course, the **vineyard** and **olive grove** would continue to produce, but the owners were not to harvest the fruit. The year of rest was also an act of faith, for the Israelites would have to trust God to meet their needs.

commanded you, at the time appointed in the month of Abib, for in it you came out of Egypt; ¹none shall appear before Me empty; ¹⁶and the Feast of Harvest, the firstfruits of your labors which you have sown in the field; and ¹⁷the Feast of Ingathering at the end of the year, when you have gathered in *the fruit of* your labors from the field.

¹⁷ ^w“Three times in the year all your males shall appear before the Lord ³God.

¹⁸ ^x“You shall not offer the blood of My sacrifice with leavened ^ybread; nor shall the fat of My ⁴sacrifice remain until morning. ¹⁹ ^zThe first of the firstfruits of your land you shall bring into the house of the LORD your God. ^aYou shall not boil a young goat in its mother’s milk.

The Angel and the Promises

²⁰ ^b“Behold, I send an Angel before you to keep you in the way and to bring you into the place which I have prepared.

²¹ Beware of Him and obey His voice; ^cdo not provoke Him, for He will ^dnot pardon your transgressions; for ^eMy name is in Him. ²² But if you indeed obey His voice and do all that I speak, then ^fI will be an enemy to your enemies and an adversary to your adversaries. ²³ ^gFor My Angel will go before you and ^hbring you in to the Amorites and the Hittites and the Perizzites and the Canaanites and the Hivites and the Jebusites; and I will ⁵cut them off. ²⁴ You shall not ⁱbow down to their gods, nor serve them, ^jnor do according to their works; ^kbut you shall

¹⁵ ^t Ex. 22:29; 34:20
¹⁶ ^u Ex. 34:22; Lev. 23:10; Num. 28:26
¹⁷ ^v Deut. 16:13
¹⁷ ^w Ex. 23:14; 34:23; Deut. 16:16
³ Heb. *YHWH*, usually translated **LORD**
¹⁸ ^x Ex. 34:25; Lev. 2:11 ^y Ex. 12:10; Lev. 7:15; Deut. 16:4
⁴ *feast*
¹⁹ ^z Ex. 22:29; 34:26; Deut. 26:2, 10; Neh. 10:35; Prov. 3:9 ^a Deut. 14:21
²⁰ ^b Ex. 3:2; 13:15; 14:19; Josh. 5:14
²¹ ^c Num. 14:11; Deut. 9:7; Ps. 78:40, 56 ^d Deut. 18:19; 1 John 5:16 ^e Is. 9:6; Jer. 23:6
²² ^f Gen. 12:3; Num. 24:9; Deut. 30:7; Jer. 30:20
²³ ^g Ex. 23:20
^h Josh. 24:8, 11
⁵ *annihilate them*
²⁴ ⁱ Ex. 20:5; 23:13, 33 ^j Deut. 12:30, 31
^k Ex. 34:13; Num. 33:52; Deut. 7:5; 12:3; 2 Kin. 18:4
²⁵ ^l Deut. 6:13; [Matt. 4:10] ^m Deut. 28:5 ⁿ Ex. 15:26; Deut. 7:15
²⁶ ^o Deut. 7:14; 28:4; Mal. 3:11
^p 1 Chr. 23:1
²⁷ ^q Gen. 35:5; Ex. 15:16; Deut. 2:25; Josh. 2:9 ^r Deut. 7:23
²⁸ ^s Deut. 7:20; Josh. 24:12

utterly overthrow them and completely break down their *sacred pillars*.

²⁵ “So you shall ¹serve the LORD your God, and ^mHe will bless your bread and your water. And ⁿI will take sickness away from the midst of you. ²⁶ ^oNo one shall suffer miscarriage or be barren in your land; I will ^pfulfill the number of your days.

²⁷ “I will send ^qMy fear before you, I will ^rcause confusion among all the people to whom you come, and will make all your enemies turn *their backs* to you. ²⁸ And ^sI will send hornets before you, which shall drive out the Hivite, the Canaanite, and the Hittite from before you. ²⁹ ^tI will not drive them out from before you in one year, lest the land become desolate and the beasts of the field become too numerous for you. ³⁰ Little by little I will drive them out from before you, until you have increased, and you inherit the land. ³¹ And ^uI will set your ⁶bounds from the Red Sea to the sea, Philistia, and from the desert to the ⁷River. For I will ^vdeliver the inhabitants of the land into your hand, and you shall drive them out before you. ³² ^wYou shall make no ⁸covenant with them, nor with their gods. ³³ They shall not dwell in your land, lest they make you sin against Me. For *if* you serve their gods, ^xit will surely be a snare to you.”

²⁹ ^t Deut. 7:22 ³¹ ^u Gen. 15:18; Deut. 1:7, 8; 11:24; 1 Kin. 4:21, 24 ^v Josh. 21:44 ⁶ *boundaries* ⁷ Heb. *Nahar*, the Euphrates
³² ^w Ex. 34:12, 15; Deut. 7:2 ⁸ *treaty* ³³ ^x Ex. 34:12; Deut. 12:30; Josh. 23:13; Judg. 2:3; 1 Sam. 18:21; Ps. 106:36

23:16 The Feast of Harvest is also called the Feast of Weeks (34:22). **The Feast of Ingathering** is also called the Feast of Tabernacles or Sukkoth (34:22; Lev. 23).

23:17 Lord God: Here two names for God, Adonai, translated as *Lord*, and Yahweh, translated as **GOD**, are used together. This expression emphasizes God’s sovereignty.

23:19 You shall not boil a young goat in its mother’s milk is a command that forbade the Israelites to imitate the cruel sacrifices of their pagan neighbors.

23:20–22 an Angel: In v. 23, this being is described as “My Angel,” an equivalent to the expression “the Angel of the LORD.” The Hebrew word translated *angel* can mean a supernatural angel or a human messenger (the prophet Malachi’s name means “My Messenger”). **to keep you . . . to bring you:** The Angel led and protected the Israelites just as the pillar of cloud did (see 13:21, 22; 14:19, 20, 24; 16:10; 19:9, 16; 24:15–18; 33:9–11; 34:5; 40:34–38). **My name is in Him:** This is perhaps the strongest identification of the Angel with God. **His voice . . . I speak:** The interplay of these words also identifies the Angel with God.

23:24 The Canaanite gods, including Baal and his consorts, Anat and Asherah, were to be utterly destroyed. The **sacred pillars**, symbols of the overt sexuality of the Canaanite cult, were also to be destroyed.

23:26 miscarriage . . . be barren: God’s promises to make the Israelites fertile reminded the Israelites that there was no need to turn to the fertility cult that was so pervasive in Canaan.

23:29–31 not drive . . . in one year: This is the first description

of God’s plan for the gradual conquest of Canaan. **your bounds:** These boundaries concur with the original promise given to Abraham (Gen. 15:18–21). In biblical times these boundaries were never quite achieved.

23:32, 33 The word **covenant** here describes a binding agreement that recognizes the rights of each party. Israel was forbidden to make such treaties lest they be corrupted by the perverse customs of their neighbors. **their gods:** Principally, Baal and other fertility gods.

Lord God

(Heb. *’adonay YHWH*) (23:17; Gen. 24:7) Strong’s #113; #3068

This rare description of God links the title *’adonay*, meaning “Lord” or “Master,” with God’s personal name Yahweh. The title Lord speaks of God’s unlimited power and authority, just as a master had unlimited power over a slave. On the other hand, God’s personal name Yahweh invokes His merciful and righteous character. Yahweh is spelled with four consonants in Hebrew. The Jews do not pronounce this sacred name and instead read *’adonay* wherever the name occurs in the Scriptures. Its precise meaning and pronunciation is unknown. Most probably the name Yahweh is derived from the Hebrew verb for “to be,” and means “I AM WHO I AM” (3:14).

Israel Affirms the Covenant

24 Now He said to Moses, “Come up to the LORD, you and Aaron, ^aNadab and Abihu, ^band seventy of the elders of Israel, and worship from afar. ²And Moses alone shall come near the LORD, but they shall not come near; nor shall the people go up with him.”

³So Moses came and told the people all the words of the LORD and all the ¹judgments. And all the people answered with one voice and said, ^c“All the words which the LORD has said we will do.” ⁴And Moses ^dwrote all the words of the LORD. And he rose early in the morning, and built an altar at the foot of the mountain, and twelve ^epillars according to the twelve tribes of Israel. ⁵Then he sent young men of the children of Israel, who offered ^fburnt offerings and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen to the LORD. ⁶And Moses ^gtook half the blood and put *it* in basins, and half the blood he sprinkled on the altar. ⁷Then he ^htook the Book of the Covenant and read in the hearing of the people. And they said, “All that the LORD has said we will do, and be obedient.”

CHAPTER 24

1 ^a Ex. 6:23; 28:1; Lev. 10:1, 2 ^b Ex. 1:5; Num. 11:16
3 ^c Ex. 19:8; 24:7; Deut. 5:27; [Gal. 3:19] ¹ ordinances
4 ^d Ex. 17:14; 34:27; Deut. 31:9 ^e Gen. 28:18
5 ^e Ex. 18:12; 20:24
6 ^g Ex. 29:16, 20; Heb. 9:18
7 ^h Ex. 24:4; Heb. 9:19
8 ⁱ Zech. 9:11; [Matt. 26:28; Mark 14:24; Luke 22:20; 1 Cor. 11:25; Heb. 9:19, 20; 13:20; 1 Pet. 1:2]
10 ^j Ex. 24:11; Num. 12:8; Is. 6:5; [John 1:18; 6:46]; 1 John 4:12 ^k Ezek. 1:26; Rev. 4:3 ^l Matt. 17:2
² Lit. *substance of heaven*
11 ^m Ex. 19:21
ⁿ Gen. 32:30; Judg. 13:22 ^o 1 Cor. 10:18
³ *stretch out His*
12 ^p Ex. 24:2, 15
^q Ex. 31:18; 32:15; Deut. 5:22
13 ^r Ex. 32:17
14 ^s Ex. 17:10, 12

⁸And Moses took the blood, sprinkled *it* on the people, and said, “This is ⁱthe blood of the covenant which the LORD has made with you according to all these words.”

On the Mountain with God

⁹Then Moses went up, also Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, ¹⁰and they ^jsaw the God of Israel. And *there was* under His feet as it were a paved work of ^ksapphire stone, and it was like the ^lvery ²heavens in *its* clarity. ¹¹But on the nobles of the children of Israel He ^mdid not ³lay His hand. So ⁿthey saw God, and they ^oate and drank.

¹²Then the LORD said to Moses, ^p“Come up to Me on the mountain and be there; and I will give you ^qtablets of stone, and the law and commandments which I have written, that you may teach them.”

¹³So Moses arose with ^rhis assistant Joshua, and Moses went up to the mountain of God. ¹⁴And he said to the elders, “Wait here for us until we come back to you. Indeed, Aaron and ^sHur *are* with

24:1 Come up to the LORD speaks of God’s grace and His holiness. God could be approached only on His terms. That any were invited to come near was because of His marvelous grace. **Aaron** and his sons **Nadab and Abihu** were allowed to join Moses, along with **seventy of the elders**. The later demise of Nadab and Abihu (see Lev. 10:1, 2) was tragic, given their esteemed privilege before the Lord. The number 70 is applied for the first time to the number of elders Moses had appointed following his discussion with Jethro (18:24–27; 24:9; Num. 11:16, 24, 25). **Worship from afar** was the command given to all except Moses. Here, *worship* meant literally “to bow down to the earth.”

24:4 Moses wrote: Some scholars of the Pentateuch believe that Israel’s leaders invented or exaggerated the life of Moses to heroic proportions to unify the nation, and that the laws and stories found in Exodus were not written until centuries after his death. Yet Scripture attests that Moses wrote down everything that he had heard from the Lord (see also 17:14; 34:27, 28; Num. 33:2). The **pillars** here should not be confused with the sacred pillars of the Canaanite gods (see 23:24). **Twelve tribes:** The whole nation was to be represented in worship.

24:5 Burnt offerings were incinerated in their entirety on the altar (see Lev. 1). **Peace offerings** were the prelude to a great, celebratory meal before the Lord (see Lev. 3).

24:6 The sprinkling of **blood** on the altar must have been an awe-inspiring ceremony. The blood of the OT sacrifice anticipated, of course, the death of the Lord Jesus Christ. The sacrifice of bulls and goats was an imperfect system that would be superseded by Christ’s work (see 12:7; Rom. 3:23–26; Heb. 10:4, 10).

24:7 The Book of the Covenant was likely the instructions and judgments of 20:22–23:33 that had been recorded by Moses (see 24:3, 4). Although the book (more precisely, the scroll) existed in written form, it was **read** to the people. Written documents were not widely available, and literacy was restricted to a few. Thus the Law was communicated orally. **we will do:** For the second time (see v. 3), the people made a solemn oath of obedience to the Lord.

24:8 The sprinkling of **blood** on the people brought them into a covenant with the Lord. As their houses had been “under the blood” at the time of the Passover in Egypt (ch. 12), now the people themselves were under **the blood of the covenant** of the Lord. This

resembles our own relationship to God, made possible by the blood of the Lamb of God (1 Pet. 1:2).

24:9–11 The people mentioned in v. 1 **saw the God of Israel**. The mention of **His feet** and **His hand** indicates that they saw a manifestation of God in some human form. Perhaps this was an appearance of Jesus before His Incarnation (see 23:20). The lack of details reminds us that any attempt to describe the glory of God is always inadequate. **Nobles** are the elders of vv. 1, 9. This passage could imply that the Lord did indeed **lay His hand** on Moses (see vv. 12–18). **So they saw God:** The repetition of this indescribable reality is for emphasis. **and they ate and drank:** The festive covenant meal, likely including meat from the peace offerings as well as bread and wine, was a grand celebration of the presence of the living God. It was also a prophetic glimpse of the supper of the Lord Jesus and His disciples, in which He transformed the ancient symbols of deliverance from Egypt (bread and wine) into the new symbols of His impending death and resurrection (see Matt. 26:17–30).

24:12 Come up to me: Only Moses could draw near to God at that time. Here also is the first mention of the **tablets of stone** on which the Lord had **written His law and commandments**. These are sometimes pictured with the first four commandments (concerning one’s relationship to God) written on one tablet and the last six (concerning one’s responsibility before others) written on the other tablet. It is more likely, however, that all ten commandments appeared on each tablet. Middle Eastern treaties were typically written in duplicate. One copy was placed in the temple of the god of each of the contracting parties. Therefore the gods of both peoples witnessed the agreement. But in this case, both copies were placed before the only living God.

24:13, 14 Joshua was first mentioned during Israel’s battle with Amalek (17:9–14; see also 32:17; 33:11). **for us:** The plural wording of these verses suggests that Joshua accompanied Moses at least partway up Mt. Sinai. Perhaps Joshua aided Moses during the strenuous ascent up the mountain but was not allowed to come into the presence of the Lord with Moses (see vv. 15, 18). Joshua was not with the people during this time, but he was able to hear their boisterous, debased worship of the golden calf and report that startling news to Moses. **Hur:** See 17:10.

you. If any man has a difficulty, let him go to them.” ¹⁵Then Moses went up into the mountain, and ^aa cloud covered the mountain.

¹⁶Now ^uthe glory of the LORD rested on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days. And on the seventh day He called to Moses out of the midst of the cloud. ¹⁷The sight of the glory of the LORD was like ^va consuming fire on the top of the mountain in the eyes of the children of Israel. ¹⁸So Moses went into the midst of the cloud and went up into the mountain. And ^wMoses was on the mountain forty days and forty nights.

Offerings for the Sanctuary

25 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: ²“Speak to the children of Israel, that they bring Me an ¹offering. ^aFrom everyone who gives it willingly with his heart you shall take My offering. ³And this *is* the offering which you shall take from them: gold, silver, and bronze; ⁴blue, purple, and scarlet *thread*, fine linen, and goats’ *hair*; ⁵ram skins dyed red, ²badger skins, and acacia wood; ⁶*oil* for the light, and ^cspices for the anointing oil and for the sweet incense; ⁷onyx stones, and stones to be set in the ^dephod and in the breastplate. ⁸And let

¹⁵ ^tEx. 19:9; Matt. 17:5
¹⁶ ^uEx. 16:10; 33:18; Num. 14:10
¹⁷ ^vEx. 3:2; Deut. 4:26, 36; 9:3; Heb. 12:18, 29
¹⁸ ^wEx. 34:28; Deut. 9:9; 10:10

CHAPTER 25

² ^aEx. 35:4–9, 21; 1 Chr. 29:3, 5, 9; Ezra 2:68; Neh. 11:2; [2 Cor. 8:11–13; 9:7]
¹ ^{heave offering}
⁵ ² Or *dolphin*
⁶ ^bEx. 27:20 ^cEx. 30:23
⁷ ^dEx. 28:4, 6–14

⁸ ^eEx. 36:1, 3, 4; Lev. 4:6; 10:4; 21:12; Heb. 9:1, 2
^fEx. 29:45; 1 Kin. 6:13; [2 Cor. 6:16; Heb. 3:6; Rev. 2:13]
³ ^{sacred place}
¹⁰ ^gEx. 37:1–9; Deut. 10:3; Heb. 9:4
¹¹ ^hEx. 37:2; Heb. 9:4
¹⁵ ⁱNum. 4:6; 1 Kin. 8:8
¹⁶ ^jEx. 16:34; 31:18; Deut. 10:2; 31:26; 1 Kin. 8:9; Heb. 9:4
¹⁷ ^kEx. 37:6; Heb. 9:5

them make Me a ^esanctuary,³ that ^fI may dwell among them. ⁹According to all that I show you, *that is*, the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of all its furnishings, just so you shall make *it*.

The Ark of the Testimony

¹⁰^g“And they shall make an ark of acacia wood; two and a half cubits *shall be* its length, a cubit and a half its width, and a cubit and a half its height. ¹¹And you shall overlay it with pure gold, inside and out you shall overlay it, and shall make on it a molding of ^hgold all around. ¹²You shall cast four rings of gold for it, and put *them* in its four corners; two rings *shall be* on one side, and two rings on the other side. ¹³And you shall make poles of acacia wood, and overlay them with gold. ¹⁴You shall put the poles into the rings on the sides of the ark, that the ark may be carried by them. ¹⁵ⁱThe poles shall be in the rings of the ark; they shall not be taken from it. ¹⁶And you shall put into the ark ^jthe Testimony which I will give you.

¹⁷^k“You shall make a mercy seat of pure gold; two and a half cubits *shall be* its length and a cubit and a half its width. ¹⁸And you shall make two cherubim of gold; of hammered work you

24:15, 16 Moses then witnessed the appearance of the Lord in the midst of a **cloud** (see 19:9). **The glory of the LORD** is closely associated with the cloud, as in 33:9. It is possible that the **seventh day** of waiting was also the seventh day of the week, the Sabbath. **24:17, 18** **The sight of the glory of the LORD** again is not described for us. All that the people could see was something like **a consuming fire**. Moses had seen such a fire in the burning bush (see 3:2). The significance of the **forty days and forty nights** is not specified in Scripture. However, based on the response of the people (see 32:1), it was considered to be a very long period of time. **25:2 bring Me . . . willingly**: God does not need the gifts of His people, but He receives their gifts as a part of their true worship of Him. Yet in this passage God asks His people for specific, voluntary gifts. This is because He wanted gifts that were given freely and gladly, not under compulsion. Also, he specified the gifts so that Moses could accomplish the plan that God was about to present to him.

25:3–7 Bronze was commonly used in this period. Widespread use of iron was still centuries away. The list contains items and materials of significant value. The people gave these valuables to the Lord to express their desire to worship Him in spirit and in truth.

25:8 Sanctuary means “holy place.” As the ground had become holy because of the presence of God in the burning bush (see 3:5) so the sanctuary would be holy because of the presence of God that overshadowed the structure and dwelled in its symbols. God, whose true dwelling place is beyond the heavens, desired a structure that would represent His holy presence among His people. **That I may dwell** is related to the Hebrew verb from which we derive the word *Shekinah*, which designates the radiance, glory, and presence of God dwelling among His people.

25:9 **The pattern** suggests that there is a heavenly reality that the earthly tabernacle was designed to resemble (see also v. 40; 26:30; 27:8; Acts 7:44; Heb. 8:5).

25:10 The most important religious symbol associated with the tabernacle was the holy **ark** or box. In contrast to the idolatry of

Israel’s neighbors, the shrine of the living God had no likeness or idol of any sort (see Ex. 20:2–6). The highly decorated, beautifully fashioned ark kept the charter of the nation’s relationship with God—the two stone tablets of the Ten Commandments—along with other symbols of God’s mercy to them. **Acacia** wood was durable and resistant to disease and insects, making it the most suitable material for constructing the ark. The **cubit** was a measurement taken from the length of a man’s arm from elbow to extended middle finger. The measurement could vary, but the commonly accepted estimate for the cubit is 18 inches. Therefore, the ark was about four feet long and two and one quarter feet wide and high.

25:11–15 The **gold** would have made the box resplendent and costly. In addition to the gold used to **overlay** the ark, within and without, a decorative **molding of gold** adorned the box. The **rings of gold** allowed the ark to be carried on poles. It was not to be picked up by hand or carted about (see 2 Sam. 6).

25:16 **The Testimony** was the two tablets of the Ten Commandments.

25:17 **Mercy seat** is a familiar English translation of a Hebrew noun derived from the verb meaning “atone for,” “to cover over,” or “to make propitiation.” The noun means “the place of propitiation.” The mercy seat was the lid for the ark as well as the base on which the cherubim were to be placed. In the old covenant, the mercy seat was a place of propitiation for sin, resulting in peace with God. For ancient Israelites, the mercy seat had a meaning similar to that of the Cross for Christians.

25:18–20 **two cherubim**: The only likenesses permitted in the holy worship of the Lord were these beautiful artistic representations of mysterious, angelic beings. The cherub was likely a composite creature with the body of a lion, a human-like face, and the wings of a great bird. Other ancient cultures had similar devices. Embroidered patterns of cherubim were also woven into the tapestry of the curtains of the tabernacle (see 26:1). The only cherubim’s **wings** stretched out and faced inward, shading the mercy seat. Their **faces** gazed on the mercy seat itself.

shall make them at the two ends of the mercy seat. ¹⁹Make one cherub at one end, and the other cherub at the other end; you shall make the cherubim at the two ends of it *of one piece* with the mercy seat. ²⁰And ^lthe cherubim shall stretch out *their* wings above, covering the mercy seat with their wings, and they shall face one another; the faces of the cherubim *shall be* toward the mercy seat. ²¹^m You shall put the mercy seat on top of the ark, and ⁿin the ark you shall put the Testimony that I will give you. ²²And ^othere I will meet with you, and I will speak with you from above the mercy seat, from ^pbetween the two cherubim which *are* on the ark of the Testimony, about everything which I will give you in commandment to the children of Israel.

²⁰ ^l 1 Kin. 8:7; 1 Chr. 28:18; Heb. 9:5
²¹ ^m Ex. 26:34;
 40:20 ⁿ Ex. 25:16
²² ^o Ex. 29:42, 43;
 30:6, 36; Lev. 16:2;
 Num. 17:4 ^p Num.
 7:89; 1 Sam. 4:4;
 2 Sam. 6:2; 2 Kin.
 19:15; Ps. 80:1; Is.
 37:16

²³ ^q Ex. 37:10-16;
 1 Kin. 7:48; 2 Chr.
 4:8; Heb. 9:2
²⁹ ^r Ex. 37:16;
 Num. 4:7

The Table for the Showbread

²³ ^q “You shall also make a table of acacia wood; two cubits *shall be* its length, a cubit its width, and a cubit and a half its height. ²⁴And you shall overlay it with pure gold, and make a molding of gold all around. ²⁵You shall make for it a frame of a handbreadth all around, and you shall make a gold molding for the frame all around. ²⁶And you shall make for it four rings of gold, and put the rings on the four corners that *are* at its four legs. ²⁷The rings shall be close to the frame, as holders for the poles to bear the table. ²⁸And you shall make the poles of acacia wood, and overlay them with gold, that the table may be carried with them. ²⁹You shall make ^rits dishes, its pans, its pitchers, and its bowls for pouring. You shall make them of pure gold. ³⁰And you

25:22 The Lord promised Moses that He would **meet** with him at the mercy seat. The verb carries a specific meaning, “to meet at an appointed place.” The Lord would also meet with Moses at the tent of meeting (see Ex. 29:42, 43; 30:36). Some have thought that the mercy seat and the cherubim were something of a throne for the Lord, with the extended wings of the cherubs forming an exquisite seat for Him, or perhaps a footstool (1 Chr. 28:2).

25:23 The **table** was used to display 12 loaves of bread in the presence of the Lord. It was approximately three feet long, 18 inches wide, and 27 inches high.

25:24, 25 Like the ark, the table was to be overlaid with **gold** and

was to have a decorative **molding of gold** (see v. 11). The **frame** was a decorative element that kept objects on the table from being disturbed.

25:26–28 The table was to have **rings** and **poles** so that it could be transported properly. The poles protected the holy object from being touched by human hands.

25:29 pure gold: All of the implements for making bread were also to be costly and wonderfully designed to physically represent their holiness. They were “set apart” to God.

25:30 The **showbread** itself is described more fully in Lev. 24:5–9. Twelve loaves representing the twelve tribes were placed in two

The Tabernacle

The new religious observances taught by Moses in the wilderness centered on rituals connected with the tabernacle and amplified Israel's sense of separateness, purity, and oneness under the lordship of Yahweh.



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A few desert shrines have been found in Sinai (notably at Serabit el-Khadem) and at Timnah in the Negev. They show marked Egyptian influence.

Specific cultural antecedents to portable shrines carried on poles and covered with thin sheets of gold can be found in ancient Egypt as early as the Old Kingdom (2800–2250 B.C.), but they were especially prominent in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Dynasties (1570–1180).

The best examples come from the fabulous tomb of Tutankhamun, c. 1300 B.C.

Comparisons of construction details in the text of Ex. 25–40 with the frames, shrines, poles, sheathing, draped fabric covers, gilt rosettes, and winged protective figures from the shrine of Tutankhamun are instructive. The period, the Late Bronze Age, is equivalent in all dating systems to the era of Moses and the Exodus.

shall set the ^sshowbread on the table before Me always.

The Gold Lampstand

³¹†“You shall also make a lampstand of pure gold; the lampstand shall be of hammered work. Its shaft, its branches, its bowls, its *ornamental* knobs, and flowers shall be of *one piece*. ³²And six branches shall come out of its sides: three branches of the lampstand out of one side, and three branches of the lampstand out of the other side. ³³“Three bowls *shall be* made like almond blossoms on one branch, with an *ornamental* knob and a flower, and three bowls made like

³⁰ ^s Ex. 39:36; 40:23; Lev. 24:5-9
³¹ ^r Ex. 37:17-24; 1 Kin. 7:49; Zech. 4:2; Heb. 9:2; Rev. 1:12
³³ ^u Ex. 37:19

³⁴ ^v Ex. 37:20-22

almond blossoms on the other branch, with an *ornamental* knob and a flower—and so for the six branches that come out of the lampstand. ³⁴“On the lampstand itself four bowls *shall be* made like almond blossoms, each with its *ornamental* knob and flower. ³⁵And *there shall be* a knob under the *first* two branches of the same, a knob under the *second* two branches of the same, and a knob under the *third* two branches of the same, according to the six branches that extend from the lampstand. ³⁶Their knobs and their branches *shall be of one piece*; all of it *shall be* one hammered piece of pure gold. ³⁷You shall make seven lamps for it,

rows with six loaves in each row. It was called showbread because it was placed symbolically before the “face” of God.

25:31 Perhaps the loveliest ornament in the tabernacle was the menorah, the golden **lampstand**. Lamps in biblical times were ordinarily oven-baked clay bowls that contained olive oil. A pinched edge or groove held the wick. These seven lamps, fashioned with much greater care and precision, were to be placed on a magnificent lampstand. Chapter 37 describes how the artisans made the lampstand (37:17–24). **of one piece:** All of the elements of the lampstand were to be hammered out of one solid piece of gold, requiring skill, knowledge of metalworking, and great artistry.

25:32 One of the seven lamps was to be placed in the center, flanked by three **branches** on either side. This became the basic design for the menorah of later Judaism. The symbolism of the number seven goes back to the creation account of Gen. 1 and represents completion.

25:33–36 The **bowls**, **branches**, and **knobs** were highly decorative. The lamp illuminated the interior of the Holy Place, but it also was a work of art in its own right, showing God’s pleasure in artistry.

25:37 light in front: The wicks would all be on the same side of the lampstand so that the light would be shed principally in one direction. The lights would burn even when no priest was present.

Tabernacle Furnishings

The symbolism of God’s redemptive covenant was preserved in the tabernacle, making each element an object lesson for the worshiper. Likely reconstructions of the furnishings are based on the detailed descriptions and precise measurements recorded in Exodus 25–40. (The bronze basin is not shown here.)

1 ARK OF THE COVENANT (TESTIMONY)

The ark of the covenant compares with the roughly contemporary shrine and funerary furniture of Tutankhamun (c. 1300 B.C.), which, along with the Nimrud and Samaria ivories from a later period, have been used to guide the graphic interpretation of the text. Both sources show the conventional way of depicting extreme reverence, with facing winged guardians shielding a sacred place.

2 INCENSE ALTAR

3 LAMPSTAND

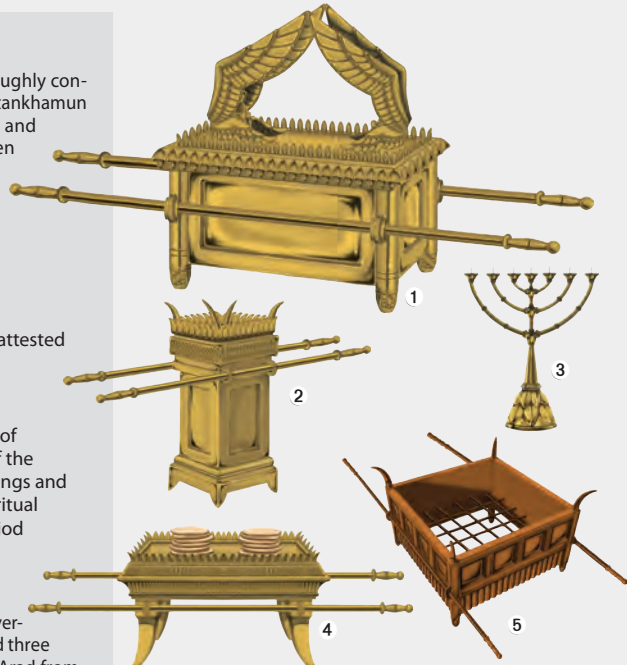
The traditional form of the lampstand is not attested archaeologically until much later.

4 TABLE OF SHOWBREAD

The table holding the showbread was made of wood overlaid with thin sheets of gold. All of the objects were portable and were fitted with rings and carrying poles, practices typical of Egyptian ritual processions as early as the Old Kingdom period (c. 2715–2640 B.C.).

5 BRONZE ALTAR

The altar of burnt offering was made of wood overlaid with bronze. The size, five cubits square and three cubits high, matches that of an altar found at Arad from the time of Solomon.



and ^wthey shall arrange its lamps so that they ^xgive light in front of it. ³⁸And its wick-trimmers and their trays *shall be* of pure gold. ³⁹It shall be made of a talent of pure gold, with all these utensils. ⁴⁰And ^ysee to it that you make *them* according to the pattern which was shown you on the mountain.

The Tabernacle

26 “Moreover ^ayou shall make the tabernacle *with* ten curtains of fine woven linen and blue, purple, and scarlet *thread*; with artistic designs of cherubim you shall weave them. ²The length of each curtain *shall be* twenty-eight cubits, and the width of each curtain four cubits. And every one of the curtains shall have ¹the same measurements. ³Five curtains shall be coupled to one another, and *the other* five curtains *shall be* coupled to one another. ⁴And you shall make loops of blue *yarn* on the edge of the curtain on the selvedge of *one* set, and likewise you shall do on the outer edge of *the other* curtain of the second set. ⁵Fifty loops you shall make in the one curtain, and fifty loops you shall make on the edge of the curtain that *is* on the end of the second set, that the loops may be clasped to one another. ⁶And you shall make fifty clasps of gold, and couple the curtains together with the clasps, so that it may be one tabernacle.

^{7b}“You shall also make curtains of goats’ *hair*, to be a tent over the tabernacle. You shall make eleven curtains. ⁸The length of each curtain *shall be* thirty cubits, and the width of each curtain four cubits; and the eleven curtains shall all have the same measurements. ⁹And you

³⁷ ^w Ex. 27:21; 30:8; Lev. 24:3, 4; 2 Chr. 13:11 ^x Num. 8:2
⁴⁰ ^y Ex. 25:9; 26:30; Num. 8:4; 1 Chr. 28:11, 19; Acts 7:44; [Heb. 8:5]

CHAPTER 26

¹ ^a Ex. 36:8-19
² ¹ Lit. *one measure*
⁷ ^b Ex. 36:14

shall couple five curtains by themselves and six curtains by themselves, and you shall double over the sixth curtain at the forefront of the tent. ¹⁰You shall make fifty loops on the edge of the curtain that is outermost in *one* set, and fifty loops on the edge of the curtain of the second set. ¹¹And you shall make fifty bronze clasps, put the clasps into the loops, and couple the tent together, that it may be one. ¹²The remnant that remains of the curtains of the tent, the half curtain that remains, shall hang over the back of the tabernacle. ¹³And a cubit on one side and a cubit on the other side, of what remains of the length of the curtains of the tent, shall hang over the sides of the tabernacle, on this side and on that side, to cover it.

^{14c}“You shall also make a covering of ram skins dyed red for the tent, and a covering of badger skins above that.

¹⁵“And for the tabernacle you shall ^dmake the boards of acacia wood, standing upright. ¹⁶Ten cubits *shall be* the length of a board, and a cubit and a half *shall be* the width of each board. ¹⁷Two ²tenons *shall be* in each board for binding one to another. Thus you shall make for all the boards of the tabernacle. ¹⁸And you shall make the boards for the tabernacle, twenty boards for the south side. ¹⁹You shall make forty sockets of silver under the twenty boards: two sockets under each of the boards for its two tenons. ²⁰And for the second side of the tabernacle, the north side, *there shall be* twenty boards ²¹and their forty sockets of silver: two sockets under each of the boards. ²²For the far side of the tabernacle, westward, you shall make six boards.

¹⁴ ^c Ex. 35:7, 23; 36:19
¹⁵ ^d Ex. 36:20-34
¹⁷ ² Projections for joining, lit. *hands*

25:38 The implements used in servicing the lamps were also to be made of **pure gold**.

25:39 A **talent** weighed about 75 pounds. It is very difficult to estimate the monetary value of the lampstand, since there were no coins or currency at this time. We can assume it was enormously valuable and exquisitely beautiful.

25:40 the **pattern**: Moses was not only told how to make the implements. He actually “saw” in some manner on Sinai a heavenly pattern for them (see v. 9; see also 26:30; 27:8; Acts 7:44; Heb. 8:5).

26:1 The English word **tabernacle** comes from the Latin *tabernaculum*, meaning “tent.” The Hebrew word means literally “dwelling place.” Sometimes it refers only to the tent. In other places, it means the tent with the surrounding courtyard. The same Hebrew word is used for the later shrine in Shiloh (Ps. 78:60) and for the worship shrines in Jerusalem before and after the building of the temple (see, for instance, Ps. 26:8; 46:4; 74:7). In Exodus, the description of the tabernacle begins with the inside, according to “God’s view,” so to speak, and moves to the outside. Thus the **ten curtains** are described first. These ten curtains were divided into two sets. The inner curtains were made of delicate fabric with brilliant colors and exquisite design. All of this was hidden from public view.

26:2, 3 Each curtain was about 42 feet long and six feet wide. The curtains were grouped in ten sections so they could be moved more easily.

26:4–6 Every detail of the curtains was specified, including directions for making the **loops** and **clasps**. With these the curtains were linked together to form the tent.

26:7 **curtains of goats’ hair**: The coarse fabric of the outer curtains protected the delicate fabrics within from the elements. Goats’ hair was a rich, black fabric highly prized in the ancient world. **Eleven curtains**: The outer curtains had to be larger than the inner curtains to assure complete coverage (see vv. 1, 2). The extra outer curtain was used over the front of the tent (see v. 9).

26:15–25 Some have pictured the boards described in this section as made of solid wood. But this would have obscured completely the fabrics, particularly the inner fabric of fine linen that was designed for the “pleasure of the Lord.” For this reason a second view seems preferable: that the sections were open frames, through which the fabric of the inner covering would be clearly visible.

26:16–19 The boards were designed to be put together and taken apart easily, as befits a portable tent. As in the case of the design for the fabric, precise directions were given for making of the **boards**, their **tenons** (or tabs), and their **sockets**. Each **board** was about 15 feet long and two and a half feet wide. **Twenty boards** were on the north side, 20 on the south, and six on the west. Corner posts stabilized the structure. The **sockets of silver** were costly and beautiful but functional. They were made from silver that was donated as redemption money by males over the age of 20 (see 38:25–28).

²³ And you shall also make two boards for the two back corners of the tabernacle. ²⁴ They shall be ³coupled together at the bottom and they shall be coupled together at the top by one ring. Thus it shall be for both of them. They shall be for the two corners. ²⁵ So there shall be eight boards with their sockets of silver—sixteen sockets—two sockets under each of the boards.

²⁶ “And you shall make bars of acacia wood: five for the boards on one side of the tabernacle, ²⁷ five bars for the boards on the other side of the tabernacle, and five bars for the boards of the side of the tabernacle, for the far side westward. ²⁸ The ^emiddle bar shall pass through the midst of the boards from end to end. ²⁹ You shall overlay the boards with gold, make their rings of gold *as* holders for the bars, and overlay the bars with gold. ³⁰ And you shall raise up the tabernacle ^faccording to its pattern which you were shown on the mountain.

^{31g} “You shall make a veil woven of blue, purple, and scarlet *thread*, and fine woven linen. It shall be woven with an artistic design of cherubim. ³² You shall hang it upon the four pillars of acacia *wood* overlaid with gold. Their hooks *shall be* gold, upon four sockets of silver. ³³ And you shall hang the veil from the clasps. Then you shall bring ^hthe ark of the Testimony in there, behind the veil. The veil shall be a divider for you between ⁱthe holy *place* and the Most Holy. ^{34j} You shall put the mercy seat upon the

²⁴ ³ Lit. *doubled*
²⁸ ^e Ex. 36:33
³⁰ ^f Ex. 25:9, 40; 27:8; 39:32; Num. 8:4; Acts 7:44; [Heb. 8:2, 5]
³¹ ^g Ex. 27:21; 36:35–38; Lev. 16:2; 2 Chr. 3:14; Matt. 27:51; Heb. 9:3; 10:20
³³ ^h Ex. 25:10–16; 40:21 ⁱ Lev. 16:2; Heb. 9:2, 3
³⁴ ^j Ex. 25:17–22; 40:20; Heb. 9:5

³⁵ ^k Ex. 40:22; Heb. 9:2 ⁱ Ex. 40:24
³⁶ ^m Ex. 36:37
³⁷ ⁿ Ex. 36:38

CHAPTER 27

¹ ^a Ex. 38:1; Ezek. 43:13

ark of the Testimony in the Most Holy. ^{35k} You shall set the table outside the veil, and ^lthe lampstand across from the table on the side of the tabernacle toward the south; and you shall put the table on the north side.

^{36m} “You shall make a screen for the door of the tabernacle, *woven of* blue, purple, and scarlet *thread*, and fine woven linen, made by a weaver. ³⁷ And you shall make for the screen ⁿfive pillars of acacia *wood*, and overlay them with gold; their hooks *shall be* gold, and you shall cast five sockets of bronze for them.

The Altar of Burnt Offering

27 “You shall make ^aan altar of acacia wood, five cubits long and five cubits wide—the altar shall be square—and its height *shall be* three cubits. ² You shall make its horns on its four corners; its horns shall be of one piece with it. And you shall overlay it with bronze. ³ Also you shall make its pans to receive its ashes, and its shovels and its basins and its forks and its firepans; you shall make all its utensils of bronze. ⁴ You shall make a grate for it, a network of bronze; and on the network you shall make four bronze rings at its four corners. ⁵ You shall put it under the rim of the altar beneath, that the network may be midway up the altar. ⁶ And you shall make poles for the altar, poles of acacia wood, and overlay them with bronze. ⁷ The poles shall be put in the rings, and the poles shall be on the two sides of the altar to bear it.

26:26–30 The **bars** (or crossbars) were placed at right angles to the upright **boards** (vv. 15–25) to stabilize the lattice-work structure. **Five bars . . . the middle bar:** On each of the three paneled sides of the tabernacle (north, south, and west), five bars were added to make the frame strong and rigid. The considerable weight of the fabrics and the prospect of inclement weather necessitated additional supports.

26:29 The fine acacia wood used to form the **boards** and **bars** also was overlaid with **gold**. This step added considerable weight to the structure, yet increased its beauty and intrinsic worth.

26:30 according to its pattern: Again, Moses was reminded of the pattern he had seen (see 25:9, 40; 27:8; Acts 7:44; Heb. 8:5).

26:31–35 The veil separated the holy place from the Most Holy Place. (See the record of the completion of this veil in 36:35, 36.) Only the ark would stay in the Most Holy Place.

26:31–33 Perhaps the most beautiful and intricate of all the fabrics in the tabernacle, the **veil** was to hang from **pillars** by **clasps**, dividing the chamber into two separate rooms. The larger room would be called **the holy place** and the smaller room **the Most Holy Place**. The Hebrew expression can also be translated “the Holiest Place” or “the Holy of Holies” (compare Heb. 9:2, 3 for “the Holiest of All”).

26:34, 35 The **ark** with its **mercy seat** was the only object that would stay in the **Most Holy Place**. The **lampstand** and the **table** were to be in the holy place. Each object was purposely placed to reflect the pattern, order, and design given to Moses (v. 30).

27:1 The **altar** was about seven and a half feet square, with a height of four and a half feet. The **cubit** was approximately 18 inches.

27:2 The **horns** were projections on each corner of the square altar. They could have been used to secure the sacrificial animal to the altar. They were also sprinkled with blood from the sacrifices (see 29:12).

27:3–5 Various implements were made of **bronze**, including the **grate**, which was to be suspended above the altar. The grate would allow the ashes to drop below.

altar

(Heb. *mizbeach*) (27:1; 30:1) Strong’s #4196

This word depicts a “place of slaughtering” and is derived from the verb meaning “to slaughter for sacrifice” (20:24; Deut. 16:2). Altars were the site of sacrificial worship (Gen. 8:20) and were made of earth (20:24), stones (Josh 8:31; Judg 13:19), or even bronze (38:1–7). The ritual slaughtering of animals to the Lord was central to Hebrew worship at the temple (Lev. 1:5). But throughout Scripture, the Lord warned that righteousness, justice, and a humble heart submitted to Him were more important than bringing sacrificial gifts to the altar (Ps. 51:17; Prov. 21:3; Matt. 5:23, 24). The sacrifices on the altar in the temple were a sign that God had forgiven the Israelites’ sins. That sign pointed to the ultimate sacrifice: the sacrifice of His Son on the Cross for the sins of humanity (Heb. 9:11–15; 13:10–13).

⁸You shall make it hollow with boards; ^bas it was shown you on the mountain, so shall they make it.

The Court of the Tabernacle

^{9c}“You shall also make the court of the tabernacle. For the south side *there shall be* hangings for the court *made of* fine woven linen, one hundred cubits long for one side. ¹⁰And its twenty pillars and their twenty sockets *shall be* bronze. The hooks of the pillars and their bands *shall be* silver. ¹¹Likewise along the length of the north side *there shall be* hangings one hundred *cubits* long, with its twenty pillars and their twenty sockets of bronze, and the hooks of the pillars and their bands of silver.

¹²“And along the width of the court on the west side *shall be* hangings of fifty cubits, with their ten pillars and their ten sockets. ¹³The width of the court on the east side *shall be* fifty cubits. ¹⁴The hangings on *one side of the gate shall be* fifteen cubits, *with* their three pillars and their three sockets. ¹⁵And on the other side *shall be* hangings of fifteen *cubits*, *with* their three pillars and their three sockets.

¹⁶“For the gate of the court *there shall be* a screen twenty cubits long, *woven of* blue, purple, and scarlet *thread*, and fine woven linen, made by a weaver. It *shall have* four pillars and four sockets. ¹⁷All the pillars around the court shall have bands of silver; their ^dhooks *shall be* of silver and their sockets of bronze. ¹⁸The length of the court *shall be* one hundred cubits, the width fifty throughout, and the height five cubits, *made of* fine woven linen, and its sockets of bronze. ¹⁹All the utensils of the tabernacle for all its ser-

⁸ ^b Ex. 25:40; 26:30; Acts 7:44; [Heb. 8:5]
⁹ ^c Ex. 38:9-20
¹⁷ ^d Ex. 38:19

²⁰ ^e Ex. 35:8, 28; Lev. 24:1-4 ¹ Lit. ascend
²¹ ^f Ex. 26:31, 33
⁹ ^g Ex. 30:8; 1 Sam. 3:3; 2 Chr. 13:11
^h Ex. 28:43; 29:9; Lev. 3:17; 16:34; Num. 18:23; 19:21; 1 Sam. 30:25

CHAPTER 28

¹ ^a Num. 3:10; 18:7
^b Ps. 99:6; Heb. 5:4
^c Ex. 24:1, 9; Lev. 10:1 ^d Ex. 6:23; Lev. 10:6, 16
² ^e Ex. 29:5, 29; 31:10; 39:1-31; Lev. 8:7-9, 30 ¹ sacred
³ ^f Ex. 31:6; 36:1
⁹ ^g Ex. 31:3; 35:30, 31; Is. 11:2; Eph. 1:17
⁴ ^h Ex. 28:15 ¹ Ex. 28:6 / Ex. 28:31
^k Ex. 28:39 ¹ Lev. 8:7
² Ornamented vest
⁶ ^m Ex. 39:2-7; Lev. 8:7

vice, all its pegs, and all the pegs of the court, *shall be* of bronze.

The Care of the Lampstand

²⁰“And ^eyou shall command the children of Israel that they bring you pure oil of pressed olives for the light, to cause the lamp to ¹burn continually. ²¹In the tabernacle of meeting, ^foutside the veil which *is* before the Testimony, ^gAaron and his sons shall tend it from evening until morning before the LORD. ^h*It shall be* a statute forever to their generations on behalf of the children of Israel.

Garments for the Priesthood

28 “Now take ^aAaron your brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel, that he may minister to Me as ^bpriest, Aaron and Aaron’s sons: ^cNadab, Abihu, ^dEleazar, and Ithamar. ²And ^eyou shall make ¹holy garments for Aaron your brother, for glory and for beauty. ³So ^fyou shall speak to all *who are* gifted artisans, ^gwhom I have filled with the spirit of wisdom, that they may make Aaron’s garments, to consecrate him, that he may minister to Me as priest. ⁴And these *are* the garments which they shall make: ^ha breastplate, ⁱan ²ephod, ^ja robe, ^ka skillfully woven tunic, a turban, and ^la sash. So they shall make holy garments for Aaron your brother and his sons, that he may minister to Me as priest.

The Ephod

⁵“They shall take the gold, blue, purple, and scarlet *thread*, and the fine linen, ⁶*m* and they shall make the ephod of gold, blue, purple, and scarlet *thread*, and fine

27:8 A hollow altar would allow the ashes to fall down through its center. It is possible that the altar was partially filled with dirt to protect it from the intense heat of the sacrificial fires.

27:9-18 The courtyard of the tabernacle separated the ceremonies of worship from common areas. It was arranged to keep people and stray animals from wandering into the tabernacle. Entering the tent could only be a deliberate act. The construction of the court is described in 38:9-20.

27:19 utensils: These numerous tools and utensils were used only for the tabernacle. “Common” tools could not be used for holy tasks. The **pegs** made of bronze were used for ropes to hold the supporting pillars of the courtyard. Everything was designed for portability.

27:20 The fuel for the lamps, **pure oil of pressed olives** (see also Lev. 24:1-4), burned with little smoke. The purity of the oil was indicative of the standard God demanded for all sacrifices offered to Him.

27:21 shall tend it: The lamp was never to go out. This command was a perpetual **statute** throughout the period of the Aaronic priesthood. The priests were also to burn the sweet incense on the altar of incense (see 30:7, 8).

28:1 Aaron and Aaron’s sons: Aaron is first mentioned when he is reunited with his brother Moses after Moses’ 40-year exile in Midian (4:14, 27-31). Their family history and early experience is given in 6:14—7:7. **minister to Me as priest:** The ministry of the priests

was for the sake of the people, but its principal focus was toward the Lord. As the holy angels are God’s attending spirits, so the holy priests are His attending priests.

28:2 The **holy garments** were made holy by their consecration to God’s service, as the materials of the tabernacle had been. **for glory and for beauty:** It is likely that the magnificent clothing of the priests represented the concept of imputed righteousness before the Lord (see Zech. 3:1-5).

28:3 gifted artisans: This is the first description of the craftsmen who would fashion the items for tabernacle worship. The expression literally means those “who are wise at heart” (in 35:25, the same expression is used of skillful women who did the weaving). These people possessed divinely given skills of craftsmanship. **the spirit of wisdom:** God added to this skill a special endowment of the Spirit to aid their work. The study of the “gifts of the Spirit” (see Rom. 12:3-8; 1 Cor. 12:1-11) can begin with this record of the spiritually guided artisans.

28:4 The garments of the priest are specified: **ephod** (vv. 5-14), **breastplate** (vv. 15-30), **robe** (vv. 31-35), **tunic** (v. 39), **turban** (vv. 36-38), **sash** (v. 39). Other garments were prepared for Aaron’s **sons** (vv. 40-43).

28:5-14 The **ephod** has been described variously as a cape or a vest made of fine linen with brilliant colors. Its two main sections



Pomegranate

The Hebrew word for pomegranate is *rimmon*. Known in Palestine since earliest times (cf. Num. 13:23), the pomegranate grew wild in western Asia and northern Africa and was cultivated in Palestine. This beautiful rose-red fruit with its many seeds was a favorite among the Israelites. The abundance of seeds was symbolic of fertility and it was grown both for its tasty fruit and for its beauty in the garden. The juice of the pomegranate was highly prized (Song 8:2) and it was one of the fruits that grew in the Promised Land (Num. 13:23). This sweet-tasting fruit was used in many ways. Its juice was enjoyed as a cooling drink and as wine. Symbols of the fruit were embroidered as decorations around the bottom of the high priest's robe (Ex. 28:33, 34) and carved on the pillars of Solomon's Porch at the temple (1 Kin. 7:20).



The beautiful pomegranate was a favorite among the Israelites, and is still a common fruit grown in the Middle East.

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woven linen, artistically worked. ⁷It shall have two shoulder straps joined at its two edges, and so it shall be joined together. ⁸And the ³intricately woven band of the ephod, which is on it, shall be of the same workmanship, made of gold, blue, purple, and scarlet thread, and fine woven linen.

⁹“Then you shall take two onyx stones and engrave on them the names of the sons of Israel: ¹⁰six of their names on one stone and six names on the other stone, in order of their birth. ¹¹With the work of an engraver in stone, like the engravings of a signet, you shall engrave the two stones with the names of the sons of Israel. You shall set them in settings of gold. ¹²And you shall put the two stones on the shoulders of the ephod as memorial stones for the sons of Israel. So Aaron shall bear their names before the LORD on his two shoulders as a memorial. ¹³You shall also make settings of gold, ¹⁴and you shall make two chains of pure gold like braided cords, and fasten the braided chains to the settings.

The Breastplate

¹⁵“You shall make the breastplate of judgment. Artistically woven according

⁸ ³ingenious work of

⁹ ^aEx. 35:27

¹⁰ ^aGen. 29:31–30:24; 35:16–18

¹¹ ^pEx. 35:35

¹² ^aEx. 28:29, 30;

^{39:6}, ⁷ ^rLev. 24:7;

Num. 31:54; Josh.

4:7; Zech. 6:14;

1 Cor. 11:24

¹⁵ ^sEx. 39:8–21

to the workmanship of the ephod you shall make it: of gold, blue, purple, and scarlet thread, and fine woven linen, you shall make it. ¹⁶It shall be doubled into a square: a span shall be its length, and a span shall be its width. ¹⁷And you shall put settings of stones in it, four rows of stones: The first row shall be a ⁴sardius, a topaz, and an emerald; this shall be the first row; ¹⁸the second row shall be a turquoise, a sapphire, and a diamond; ¹⁹the third row, a ⁵jacinth, an agate, and an amethyst; ²⁰and the fourth row, a ⁶beryl, an ⁷onyx, and a jasper. They shall be set in gold settings. ²¹And the stones shall have the names of the sons of Israel, twelve according to their names, like the engravings of a signet, each one with its own name; they shall be according to the twelve tribes.

²²“You shall make chains for the breastplate at the end, like braided cords of pure gold. ²³And you shall make two rings of gold for the breastplate, and put the two rings on the two ends of the breastplate. ²⁴Then you shall put the two braided chains of gold in the two rings which are on the ends of the breastplate; ²⁵and the other two ends of the two braided chains you shall fasten to the two

¹⁷ ^rEx. 39:10 ⁴Or

ruby

¹⁹ ^sOr amber

²⁰ ⁶Or yellow

jasper ⁷Or

carnelian

covered the chest and back, with seams at the shoulders and a band at the waist. The shoulders were emblazoned with beautiful memorial stones.

28:9–12 The two onyx stones, engraved with the names of the tribes of Israel, were set in gold. They symbolized the intercessory work of the priest. He was to represent the people before the Lord. The names of the tribes were literally written on his shoulders, so that the priest would bear their names before the LORD on his two shoulders as a memorial.

28:15 The breastplate was a small pouch that hung from the neck of the priest. It was decorated with twelve stones, one for each of the tribes of Israel. Within the pouch were the Urim and Thummim

(see 28:30). The breastplate of judgment was used by the priest in seeking judgment—that is, a decision from the Lord on an issue presented for divine discernment. The breastplate was made of the same fabric as the ephod, to which it would be securely tied.

28:16 a square: It measured nine inches on each side. The span was determined as the length from the tip of the thumb to the tip of the small finger on an outstretched hand.

28:17–21 Four rows of precious and semiprecious stones were fastened to the breastplate. These twelve stones bore the names of the twelve tribes. This was another symbol of the priest's representation of the people before the Lord. Not all of the stones can be identified precisely today.

settings, and put them on the shoulder straps of the ephod in the front.

²⁶“You shall make two rings of gold, and put them on the two ends of the breastplate, on the edge of it, which is on the inner side of the ephod. ²⁷And two *other* rings of gold you shall make, and put them on the two shoulder straps, underneath the ephod toward its front, right at the seam above the ⁸intricately woven band of the ephod. ²⁸They shall bind the breastplate by means of its rings to the rings of the ephod, using a blue cord, so that it is above the intricately woven band of the ephod, and so that the breastplate does not come loose from the ephod.

²⁹“So Aaron shall ^ubear the names of the sons of Israel on the breastplate of judgment over his heart, when he goes into the holy *place*, as a memorial before the LORD continually. ³⁰And ^vyou shall put in the breastplate of judgment the ⁹Urim and the Thummim, and they shall be over Aaron’s heart when he goes in before the LORD. So Aaron shall bear the judgment of the children of Israel over his heart before the LORD continually.

Other Priestly Garments

³¹^w“You shall make the robe of the ephod all of blue. ³²There shall be an opening for his head in the middle of it; it shall have a woven binding all around its opening, like the opening in a coat of mail, so that it does not tear. ³³And upon its hem you shall make pomegranates of blue, purple, and scarlet, all around its hem, and bells of gold between them all around: ³⁴a golden bell and a pomegranate, a golden bell and a pomegranate, upon the hem of the robe all around.

²⁷ ⁸ingenious work of

²⁹ ^uEx. 28:12
³⁰ ^vLev. 8:8; Num. 27:21; Deut. 33:8; 1 Sam. 28:6; Ezra 2:63; Neh. 7:65
⁹ Lit. *Lights and the Perfections*
³¹ ^wEx. 39:22-26

³⁶ ^xEx. 39:30, 31; Lev. 8:9; Zech. 14:20
³⁸ ^yEx. 28:43; Lev. 10:17; 22:9, 16; Num. 18:1; [Is. 53:11]; Ezek. 4:4-6; [John 1:29; Heb. 9:28; 1 Pet. 2:24] ^zLev. 1:4; 22:27; 23:11; Is. 56:7
¹ *sacred*
³⁹ ^aEx. 35:35; 39:27-29
⁴⁰ ^bEx. 28:4; 39:27-29, 41; Ezek. 44:17, 18 ^cEx. 28:2
² *headpieces or turbans*
⁴¹ ^dEx. 29:7-9; 30:30; 40:15; Lev. 10:7 ^eEx. 29:9; Lev. 8; Heb. 7:28 ³ *set them apart*
⁴² ^fEx. 39:28; Lev. 6:10; 16:4; Ezek. 44:18 ⁴ *bare flesh*
⁵ Lit. *be*
⁴³ ^gEx. 20:26 ^hLev. 5:1, 17; 20:19, 20; 22:9; Num. 9:13; 18:22 ⁱEx. 27:21; Lev. 17:7 ⁶ *guilt*

³⁵And it shall be upon Aaron when he ministers, and its sound will be heard when he goes into the holy *place* before the LORD and when he comes out, that he may not die.

³⁶^x“You shall also make a plate of pure gold and engrave on it, *like* the engraving of a signet:

HOLINESS TO THE LORD.

³⁷And you shall put it on a blue cord, that it may be on the turban; it shall be on the front of the turban. ³⁸So it shall be on Aaron’s forehead, that Aaron may ⁹bear the iniquity of the holy things which the children of Israel hallow in all their ¹holy gifts; and it shall always be on his forehead, that they may be ^zaccepted before the LORD.

³⁹“You shall ^askillfully weave the tunic of fine linen *thread*, you shall make the turban of fine linen, and you shall make the sash of woven work.

⁴⁰^b“For Aaron’s sons you shall make tunics, and you shall make sashes for them. And you shall make ²hats for them, for glory and ^cbeauty. ⁴¹So you shall put them on Aaron your brother and on his sons with him. You shall ^danoint them, ^econsecrate them, and ³sanctify them, that they may minister to Me as priests. ⁴²And you shall make ^ffor them linen trousers to cover their ⁴nakedness; they shall ⁵reach from the waist to the thighs. ⁴³They shall be on Aaron and on his sons when they come into the tabernacle of meeting, or when they come near ⁹the altar to minister in the holy *place*, that they ^hdo not incur ⁶iniquity and die. ⁱ*It shall be* a statute forever to him and his descendants after him.

28:29 Over his heart was a touching phrase that reminded the priest of his solemn responsibility. He represented the nation before the living God. Any lesser devotion merited divine judgment (see the sad fate of Aaron’s sons, Nadab and Abihu, at Lev. 10:1, 2).

28:30 The breastplate held the mysterious stones called the **Urim and the Thummim**. These transliterated Hebrew words mean “Lights” and “Perfections” (both superlative plurals). Together their names may mean “perfect knowledge” or a similar idea. It is not known how Aaron and his successors used these stones (if indeed they were stones). We do know that God instructed his priests in many ways. It is possible that these stones were meant to assure the priest that God would reveal His true judgment to him. Hence, the expression “to consult with the Urim and the Thummim” might mean presenting a matter before the Lord with Urim and Thummim in the breastplate, a sign that the priest confidently expected the Lord to resolve the issue.

28:31, 32 The robe was a long, flowing garment made of blue. It may have been a seamless garment.

28:33–35 The pomegranates on the hem were decorative. The bells would tinkle as the priest moved about within the sacred places. This sound would assure those outside that the priest was interceding on their behalf.

28:36–38 The turban of the high priest was made of white linen

on which was secured a gold plate engraved with the words **HOLINESS TO THE LORD**. The plate rested on the forehead of the priest. The meaning of the phrase **bear the iniquity** seems to indicate that the holy gifts of the people would be acceptable only when presented through mediations of a holy priest. These words anticipate the work of the Savior, who bore our iniquities in His own body (see 1 Pet. 2:24).

28:39 The record of the completion of these items is given in 39:27–29.

28:41 put them on . . . anoint . . . consecrate . . . sanctify: The rites of consecrating the priests for their holy work are detailed more fully in ch. 29, in 40:13–15, and in Lev. 8–10.

28:42 This command to wear trousers protected the modesty of the priests. Given the sexually preoccupied worship of Israel’s neighbors, this provision was decidedly countercultural.

28:43 that they do not incur iniquity and die: It is difficult for us to grasp the gravity of the priests’ responsibility as they ministered before the living God. They had to serve God with a pure heart, to represent the people without guile, and to worship without deviating from the commands of God. To fail would invite judgment—even death. Sadly, priests did die because they failed to show respect for the holiness of God (Lev. 10:1, 2; 1 Sam. 4:17; 2 Sam. 6:7).

Aaron and His Sons Consecrated

29 “And this is what you shall do to them to hallow them for ministering to Me as priests: ^aTake one young bull and two rams without blemish, ²and ^bunleavened bread, unleavened cakes mixed with oil, and unleavened wafers anointed with oil (you shall make them of wheat flour). ³You shall put them in one basket and bring them in the basket, with the bull and the two rams.

⁴“And Aaron and his sons you shall bring to the door of the tabernacle of meeting, ^cand you shall wash them with water. ^{5d}Then you shall take the garments, put the tunic on Aaron, and the robe of the ephod, the ephod, and the breastplate, and gird him with ^ethe intricately woven band of the ephod. ^{6f}You shall put the turban on his head, and put the holy crown on the turban. ⁷And you shall take the anointing ^goil, pour *it* on his head, and anoint him. ⁸Then ^hyou shall bring his sons and put tunics on them. ⁹And you shall gird them with sashes, Aaron and his sons, and put the hats on them. ⁱThe priesthood shall be theirs for a perpetual statute. So you shall ^jconsecrate Aaron and his sons.

¹⁰“You shall also have the bull brought before the tabernacle of meeting, and ^kAaron and his sons shall put their hands on the head of the bull. ¹¹Then you shall kill the bull before the LORD, ^{by} the door of the tabernacle of meeting. ¹²You shall take *some* of the blood of the bull and put

CHAPTER 29

¹ ^a Lev. 8; [Heb. 7:26–28]
² ^b Lev. 2:4; 6:19–23
⁴ ^c Ex. 40:12; Lev. 8:6; [Heb. 10:22]
⁵ ^d Ex. 28:2; Lev. 8:7
⁶ ^e Ex. 28:8
⁶ ^f Ex. 28:36, 37; Lev. 8:9
⁷ ^g Ex. 25:6; 30:25–31; Lev. 8:12; 10:7; 21:10; Num. 35:25; Ps. 133:2
⁸ ^h Ex. 28:39, 40; Lev. 8:13
⁹ ⁱ Ex. 40:15; Num. 3:10; 18:7; 25:13; Deut. 18:5 / Ex. 28:41; Lev. 8:28:41; Lev. 8
¹⁰ ^j Lev. 1:4; 8:14

¹² ^k Lev. 8:15 ^m Ex. 27:2; 30:2; Lev. 4:7
¹³ ⁿ Lev. 1:8; 3:3, 4
¹⁴ ^o Lev. 4:11, 12, 21; Heb. 13:11
¹⁵ ^p Lev. 8:18 ^q Lev. 1:4–9
¹⁶ ^r Ex. 24:6; Lev. 1:5, 11
¹⁸ ^s Ex. 20:24
¹⁹ ^t Lev. 8:22
²¹ ^u Ex. 30:25, 31; Lev. 8:30

it on ^lthe horns of the altar with your finger, and ^mpour all the blood beside the base of the altar. ¹³And ⁿyou shall take all the fat that covers the entrails, the fatty lobe *attached* to the liver, and the two kidneys and the fat that *is* on them, and burn *them* on the altar. ¹⁴But ^othe flesh of the bull, with its skin and its offal, you shall burn with fire outside the camp. It *is* a sin offering.

^{15p}“You shall also take one ram, and Aaron and his sons shall ^qput their hands on the head of the ram; ¹⁶and you shall kill the ram, and you shall take its blood and ^rsprinkle *it* all around on the altar. ¹⁷Then you shall cut the ram in pieces, wash its entrails and its legs, and put *them* with its pieces and with its head. ¹⁸And you shall burn the whole ram on the altar. It *is* a ^sburnt offering to the LORD; it *is* a sweet aroma, an offering made by fire to the LORD.

^{19t}“You shall also take the other ram, and Aaron and his sons shall put their hands on the head of the ram. ²⁰Then you shall kill the ram, and take some of its blood and put *it* on the tip of the right ear of Aaron and on the tip of the right ear of his sons, on the thumb of their right hand and on the big toe of their right foot, and sprinkle the blood all around on the altar. ²¹And you shall take some of the blood that is on the altar, and some of ^uthe anointing oil, and sprinkle *it* on Aaron and on his garments, on his sons and on the garments of his sons

29:1 The Hebrew word translated **hallow** describes actions that would mark the priests as distinct, holy, or set aside for God's purposes—as people who would approach Him in His service. The instruction to present animals **without blemish** reminds us that sacrifice was not an occasion to rid oneself of sick or defective livestock. Offering the best animals was an act of faith that expressed thanksgiving and confidence in God's provision. Blameless too was the death of the Savior Jesus, who was without fault in every particular.

29:2 unleavened bread: As it was at Passover (12:8), the use of leaven was prohibited in this rite also. Leaven was allowed for everyday baking.

29:4 wash them: The bathing of the priests symbolized the necessity of cleanness before the Lord. Bathing was a rare luxury in the desert of Sinai.

29:7 The directions for mixing **the anointing oil** are given in 30:22–33. To **pour it on his head** was a lavish gesture, later celebrated by a psalmist (Ps. 133:2). **and anoint him:** As the priests of old were anointed for holy service, so would the Messiah (meaning “Anointed One”) be anointed for His great service of sacrifice to the living God.

29:8, 9 The **sons** were to be dressed after their father was. The verb translated **consecrate** literally means “to fill one's hand.” A king was handed a rod as the symbol of his political power; so the hand of the priest was filled with spiritual power.

29:10, 11 The slaying of the **bull** would happen only after the priests had **put their hands on its head**. This gesture showed that the animal had been designated as their substitute. To **kill the bull**, the priests cut an artery in the bull's neck to cause a quick death.

29:12 blood: The application of the blood to **the horns of the altar** may have been to make the display of blood more prominent

(see 12:7). The operation was not a tidy one. The sacrifice of a large animal, in the open air with a hot sun overhead and flies buzzing around, was a formidable task. The rest of the blood was poured at **the base of the altar**.

29:13, 14 sin offering: The burning of the **fat** and the **kidneys** on the altar would have produced an acrid odor. Yet because sin was consumed, these sacrifices are described at times as “a sweet aroma” to the Lord (see 29:18). The rest of the animal was burned **outside the camp**, for it was unsuitable before the Lord (for more on the sin offering, see Lev. 4).

29:15–18 Burnt offering is a translation of a Hebrew term that can be rendered “that which goes up (in smoke).” Aaron and his sons needed to offer sacrifices for themselves as much as for their fellow Israelites (see Heb. 5:1–4). However, no sacrifices were needed for the Savior, Jesus; He alone came as the sinless priest.

29:19–28 One of the most obscure rites in the Book of Exodus is the use of the **ram of consecration**. The Hebrew expression can mean “the ram of the filling”; that is, the ram that results in the filling of the hands of the priests with their divine service (see v. 9). Much of this section remains somewhat mysterious to us, but we can sense the priests carefully preparing for the worship of the Holy God with this sacrifice.

29:19 the other ram: That is, the second of the two rams mentioned in v. 1 (compare the first ram, vv. 15–18).

29:20, 21 The **blood** that was daubed on the priests signified that they were entirely “under the blood” that atoned for sin (see 12:7). It is possible that the anointing of the **ear** represented the hearing of the Word of God, that the anointing of the **thumb** represented the accomplishment of the will of God, and that the anointing of the **toe** represented the journey of the walk with God. Not only were the

with him; and ^vhe and his garments shall be hallowed, and his sons and his sons' garments with him.

²²“Also you shall take the fat of the ram, the fat tail, the fat that covers the entrails, the fatty lobe *attached to* the liver, the two kidneys and the fat on them, the right thigh (for it is a ram of consecration), ²³^wone loaf of bread, one cake *made with* oil, and one wafer from the basket of the unleavened bread that *is* before the LORD; ²⁴and you shall put all these in the hands of Aaron and in the hands of his sons, and you shall ^xwave them *as a* wave offering before the LORD. ²⁵^yYou shall receive them back from their hands and burn *them* on the altar as a burnt offering, as a sweet aroma before the LORD. It is an offering made by fire to the LORD.

²⁶“Then you shall take ^zthe breast of the ram of Aaron's consecration and wave it *as a* wave offering before the LORD; and it shall be your portion. ²⁷And from the ram of the consecration you shall consecrate ^athe breast of the wave offering which is waved, and the thigh of the heave offering which is raised, of *that* which *is* for Aaron and of *that* which is for his sons. ²⁸It shall be from the children of Israel *for* Aaron and his sons ^bby a statute forever. For it is a heave offering; ^cit shall be a heave offering from the children of Israel from the sacrifices of their peace offerings, *that is*, their heave offering to the LORD.

²⁹“And the ^dholy garments of Aaron ^eshall be his sons' after him, ^fto be anointed in them and to be consecrated in them. ³⁰^gThat son who becomes priest in his place shall put them on for ^hseven days, when he enters the tabernacle of meeting to minister in the ⁱholy place.

³¹“And you shall take the ram of the consecration and ⁱboil its flesh in the holy place. ³²Then Aaron and his sons shall eat the flesh of the ram, and the ^jbread

²¹ ^v Ex. 28:41; 29:1; [Heb. 9:22]
²³ ^w Lev. 8:26
²⁴ ^x Lev. 7:30; 10:14
²⁵ ^y Lev. 8:28
²⁶ ^z Lev. 7:31, 34; 8:29
²⁷ ^a Lev. 7:31, 34; Num. 18:11, 18; Deut. 18:3
²⁸ ^b Lev. 10:15
²⁹ ^c Lev. 3:1; 7:34
²⁹ ^d Ex. 28:2
²⁹ ^e Num. 20:26, 28
²⁹ ^f Ex. 28:41; 30:30; Num. 18:8
³⁰ ^g Num. 20:28 ^h Lev. 8:35
³¹ ⁱ sanctuary
³¹ ^j Lev. 8:31
³² / Matt. 12:4

³³ ^k Lev. 10:14, 15, 17 ^l Ex. 12:43; Lev. 22:10

³⁴ ^m Ex. 12:10; 23:18; 34:25; Lev. 7:18; 8:32

³⁵ ⁿ Lev. 8:33-35

³⁶ ^o Heb. 10:11

³⁶ ^p Ex. 30:26-29;

40:10, 11

³⁷ ^q Num. 4:15;

Hag. 2:11-13; Matt.

23:19

³⁸ ^r Num. 28:3-31;

29:6-38; 1 Chr.

16:40; Ezra 3:3

³⁹ ^s Dan. 12:11

³⁹ ^t Ezek. 46:13-15

³⁹ ^u Lit. between the

two evenings

⁴¹ ^v 1 Kin. 18:29;

36; 2 Kin. 16:15;

Ezra 9:4; 5 Ps. 141:2

⁴² ^v Ex. 30:8 ^w Ex.

25:22; 37:9; Num.

17:4

⁴³ ^x Ex. 40:34;

1 Kin. 8:11; 2 Chr.

5:14; Ezek. 43:5;

Hag. 2:7, 9

that is in the basket, *by* the door of the tabernacle of meeting. ³³^kThey shall eat those things with which the atonement was made, to consecrate *and* to sanctify them; ^lbut an outsider shall not eat *them*, because they *are* holy. ³⁴And if any of the flesh of the consecration offerings, or of the bread, remains until the morning, then ^myou shall burn the remainder with fire. It shall not be eaten, because it *is* holy.

³⁵“Thus you shall do to Aaron and his sons, according to all that I have commanded you. ⁿSeven days you shall consecrate them. ³⁶And you ^oshall offer a bull every day *as a* sin offering for atonement. ^pYou shall cleanse the altar when you make atonement for it, and you shall anoint it to sanctify it. ³⁷Seven days you shall make atonement for the altar and sanctify it. And the altar shall be most holy. ^qWhatever touches the altar must be holy.

The Daily Offerings

³⁸“Now this *is* what you shall offer on the altar: ^rtwo lambs of the first year, ^sday by day continually. ³⁹One lamb you shall offer ^tin the morning, and the other lamb you shall offer ^uat twilight. ⁴⁰With the one lamb shall be one-tenth of an *ephah* of flour mixed with one-fourth of a hin of pressed oil, and one-fourth of a hin of wine *as a* drink offering. ⁴¹And the other lamb you shall ^voffer ³at twilight; and you shall offer with it the grain offering and the drink offering, as in the morning, for a sweet aroma, an offering made by fire to the LORD. ⁴²*This shall be* ^va continual burnt offering throughout your generations *at* the door of the tabernacle of meeting before the LORD, ^wwhere I will meet you to speak with you. ⁴³And there I will meet with the children of Israel, and *the tabernacle* ^xshall be sanctified by My glory. ⁴⁴So I will consecrate

persons of the priests to be sprinkled with blood and anointed with oil, but so were their garments. In this way, the beautiful clothing of the priests would be made holy or hallowed.

29:22–24 A wave offering was to be made of the fat of the ram and the unleavened bread (described first in v. 2). The elements would be held high and then waved back and forth before the altar. The offering made clear that everything was owed to God, but some was received back as God's gift. For more on the wave offering, see Lev. 7:30; 10:14.

29:25 After this symbolic act (vv. 22–24), the fat and the unleavened breads were burned as a burnt offering (for the same word, see v. 18). This is also called an offering made by fire.

29:26 The breast of the ram was waved as a symbol of giving and receiving, and was then kept by the priests as their portion to eat as a gift from the Lord.

29:27, 28 The word translated heave offering means “something held up (before the Lord).” Another translation of this word is “contribution.”

29:31–34 The priests were to eat the meat of the ram of the consecration (see vv. 19–28) in a meal of celebration, along with the bread (vv. 2, 23) that had not been burned. An outsider was not to eat this food, nor were any leftovers permitted. Anything not eaten as a part of the sacred feast had to be burned.

29:35–37 The rites of consecration lasted seven days. The repetition of these actions, day after day, dramatically emphasized the need for holiness and faithfulness in worship.

29:40, 41 One-tenth of an ephah was about two quarts; one-fourth of a hin was about one quart. The same offering was presented at twilight.

29:42, 43 The purpose of the tabernacle and its offering are reiterated. It was here that the Lord would meet with His people, speak with them, and display His glory.

29:44 consecrate: The same idea, to set apart for God's service, is expressed in v. 9 with the Hebrew idiom “to fill the hand.”

the tabernacle of meeting and the altar. I will also ^aconsecrate both Aaron and his sons to minister to Me as priests. ⁴⁵ I will dwell among the children of Israel and will ^abe their God. ⁴⁶ And they shall know that ^bI *am* the LORD their God, who ^cbrought them up out of the land of Egypt, that I may dwell among them. I *am* the LORD their God.

The Altar of Incense

30 “You shall make ^aan altar to burn incense on; you shall make it of acacia wood. ² A cubit *shall be* its length and a cubit its width—it shall be square—and two cubits *shall be* its height. Its horns *shall be* of one piece with it. ³ And you shall overlay its top, its sides all around, and its horns with pure gold; and you shall make for it a ¹ molding of gold all around. ⁴ Two gold rings you shall make for it, under the molding on both its sides. You shall place *them* on its two sides, and they will be holders for the poles with which to bear it. ⁵ You shall make the poles of acacia wood, and overlay them with gold. ⁶ And you shall put it before the ^bveil that *is* before the ark of the Testimony, before the ^cmercy seat that *is* over the Testimony, where I will meet with you.

⁷ “Aaron shall burn on it ^dsweet incense every morning; when ^ehe tends the lamps, he shall burn incense on it. ⁸ And when Aaron lights the lamps ² at twilight, he shall burn incense on it, a perpetual incense before the LORD throughout your generations. ⁹ You shall not offer ^fstrange incense on it, or a burnt offering, or a grain offering; nor shall you pour a drink offering on it. ¹⁰ And ^gAaron shall

Acacia

Two species of the acacia are found in Palestine: the Acacia nilotica and the Acacia seyal. These are quite similar. They grow 15–20 feet high, with large thorns and hard wood suitable for building. Both have yellow flowers and produce long pods with beans inside. God instructed the Israelites to build a tabernacle of acacia wood. The tree was probably growing in the region of the Sinai Peninsula, so it was familiar to the Israelites at that time. The Hebrews used acacia wood for boards, altars, pillars, tables, staves, and bars for the tabernacle (Ex. 25:5, 10, 13; 26:15, 26; 27:1; 30:1). Acacia trees grew along the Jordan Valley from the Sea of Galilee to the Dead Sea (Is. 41:19).



An Acacia tree near Eilat, Israel
© slavapolo/Shutterstock

⁴⁴ ^v Lev. 21:15
⁴⁵ ² Ex. 25:8; Lev. 26:12; Num. 5:3; Deut. 12:11; Zech. 2:10; [John 14:17, 23; Rev. 21:3] ^a Gen. 17:8; Lev. 11:45
⁴⁶ ^b Ex. 16:12; 20:2; Deut. 4:35 ^c Lev. 11:45

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¹ ^a Ex. 37:25–29
³ ¹ border
⁶ ^b Ex. 26:31–35
^c Ex. 25:21, 22
⁷ ^d Ex. 30:34; 1 Sam. 2:28; 1 Chr. 23:13; Luke 1:9 ^e Ex. 27:20, 21
⁸ ² Lit. *between the two evenings*
⁹ ^f Lev. 10:1

make atonement upon its horns once a year with the blood of the sin offering of atonement; once a year he shall make atonement upon it throughout your generations. It *is* most holy to the LORD.”

The Ransom Money

¹¹ Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: ¹² ^h “When you take the census of the children of Israel for their number, then every man shall give ⁱa ³ ransom for himself to the LORD, when you number them, that there may be no ^jplague among them when *you* number them. ¹³ ^k This is what everyone among those who are

¹⁰ ^g Lev. 16:3–34 ¹² ^b Ex. 38:25, 26; Num. 1:2; 26:2; 2 Sam. 24:2 ¹ Num. 31:50; [Matt. 20:28; 1 Pet. 1:18, 19] ² 2 Sam. 24:15
³ the price of a life ¹³ ^k Matt. 17:24

29:46 I am the LORD their God: Using His personal name, God declared to the Israelites that He was *their* God. He had redeemed them and delivered them in order that they might become His people and He in turn *their* God (see 15:2).

30:1, 2 This smaller **altar** was a stand used for burning the sweet-smelling incense. As with the ark of the covenant (25:10), the table of the showbread (25:23), and the altar of burnt offering (27:1), this altar was made of **acacia wood** (25:10). It was 18 inches square and three feet high.

30:3 Like the larger altar, the smaller was overlaid with **gold**. The **horns** were a decorative copy of those on the altar of burnt offering (see 27:2).

30:4, 5 Rings and poles were used to carry the altar, signaling again the great respect that was demanded in the transportation of these holy furnishings.

30:6 The altar was situated within the holy place near the **veil** that divided it from the Most Holy Place. The mention of the **ark of the Testimony** reminds us of the most significant furnishing in the tabernacle.

30:7, 8 Aaron was directed to burn **sweet incense** each morning and at twilight, along with his tending of the **lamps** (27:20, 21). Why, we might ask, was the high priest charged with carrying out such a simple act? Burning incense actually was a privilege, for it

was restricted to those who were allowed to approach God. The Hebrew expression for **twilight** may be rendered “between the two evenings.” Later rabbis sometimes defined twilight as the point when natural light was no longer enough to easily distinguish a black thread from a white thread.

30:9 Strange may mean “foreign” or perhaps “common” (that is, unsanctified) **incense**. No other kinds of offerings were to be made on this altar.

30:10 once a year: This Day of Atonement was later specified in Lev. 16. The “atoning” of objects such as this was a ritual cleansing to make these objects **holy** before the Lord. Since man was sinful, the things he came in contact with were associated with his sinfulness. Once a year, everything in the tabernacle that man touched had to be ceremonially cleansed. The phrase translated **it is most holy** is literally “holy of holies,” the same Hebrew construction used in 26:34. Here the phrase describes not the Most Holy Place, but the supreme holiness of the articles of worship before the Lord (see v. 29).

30:12, 13 The term **ransom** is related to the words for atonement and propitiation (see v. 10 and 29:36, 37). The idea is to pay a price for one’s life. The Israelites had to acknowledge that their lives were from God and governed by Him by giving Him an offering of money. A **half-shekel** was about one-fifth of an ounce (see 21:32; 38:26).

numbered shall give: half a shekel according to the shekel of the sanctuary ^l(a shekel is twenty gerahs). ^mThe half-shekel shall be an offering to the LORD. ¹⁴Everyone included among those who are numbered, from twenty years old and above, shall give an ⁴offering to the LORD. ¹⁵The ⁿrich shall not give more and the poor shall not give less than half a shekel, when *you* give an offering to the LORD, to make atonement for yourselves. ¹⁶And you shall take the atonement money of the children of Israel, and ^oshall ⁵appoint it for the service of the tabernacle of meeting, that it may be ^pa memorial for the children of Israel before the LORD, to make atonement for yourselves.”

The Bronze Laver

¹⁷Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: ^{18q}“You shall also make a ⁶laver of bronze, with its base also of bronze, for washing. You shall ^rput it between the tabernacle of meeting and the altar. And you shall put water in it, ¹⁹for Aaron and his sons ^sshall wash their hands and their feet in water from it. ²⁰When they go into the tabernacle of meeting, or when they come near the altar to minister, to burn an offering made by fire to the LORD, they shall wash with water, lest they die. ²¹So they shall wash their hands and their feet, lest they die. And ^tit shall be a ⁷statute forever to them—to him and his descendants throughout their generations.”

The Holy Anointing Oil

²²Moreover the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: ²³“Also take for yourself ^uqual-

13 ^l Lev. 27:25; Num. 3:47; Ezek. 45:12 ^m Ex. 38:26
14 ⁴ contribution
15 ⁿ Job 34:19; Prov. 22:2; [Eph. 6:9]
16 ^o Ex. 38:25-31
^p Num. 16:40 ⁵ give
18 ^q Ex. 38:8; 1 Kin. 7:38 ^r Ex. 40:30
⁶ basin
19 ^s Ex. 40:31, 32; Ps. 26:6; Is. 52:11; John 13:8, 10; Heb. 10:22
21 ^t Ex. 28:43
⁷ requirement
23 ^u Song 4:14; Ezek. 27:22

^v Ps. 45:8; Prov. 7:17 ^w Song 4:14; Jer. 6:20
24 ^x Ps. 45:8 ^y Ex. 29:40
25 ^z Ex. 37:29; 40:9; Lev. 8:10; Num. 35:25; Ps. 89:20; 133:2
26 ^a Ex. 40:9; Lev. 8:10; Num. 7:1
29 ^b Ex. 29:37; Num. 4:15; Hag. 2:11-13
30 ^c Ex. 29:7; Lev. 8:12
32 ^d Ex. 30:25, 37
33 ^e Ex. 30:38
^f Gen. 17:14; Ex. 12:15; Lev. 7:20, 21 ⁸ mixes ⁹ Put to death
34 ^g Ex. 25:6; 37:29

ity spices—five hundred *shekels* of liquid ^vmyrrh, half as much sweet-smelling cinnamon (two hundred and fifty *shekels*), two hundred and fifty *shekels* of sweet-smelling ^wcane, ²⁴five hundred *shekels* of ^xcassia, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, and a ^yhin of olive oil. ²⁵And you shall make from these a holy anointing oil, an ointment compounded according to the art of the perfumer. It shall be ^za holy anointing oil. ^{26a}With it you shall anoint the tabernacle of meeting and the ark of the Testimony; ²⁷the table and all its utensils, the lampstand and its utensils, and the altar of incense; ²⁸the altar of burnt offering with all its utensils, and the laver and its base. ²⁹You shall consecrate them, that they may be most holy; ^bwhatever touches them must be holy. ^{30c}And you shall anoint Aaron and his sons, and consecrate them, that *they* may minister to Me as priests.

³¹“And you shall speak to the children of Israel, saying: ‘This shall be a holy anointing oil to Me throughout your generations. ³²It shall not be poured on man’s flesh; nor shall you make *any other* like it, according to its composition. ^dIt is holy, *and* it shall be holy to you. ^{33e}Whoever ⁸compounds *any* like it, or whoever puts *any* of it on an outsider, ^fshall be ⁹cut off from his people.’”

The Incense

³⁴And the LORD said to Moses: ^g“Take sweet spices, stacte and onycha and galbanum, and pure frankincense with *these* sweet spices; there shall be equal amounts

30:14–16 Every male was to provide a half-shekel ransom. The sum was not based on the worth or wealth of the person. The collection supported the Levites who cared for the tabernacle.

30:18 laver of bronze . . . its base: The shape of the laver is not specified, but it clearly had two parts, the laver itself and its base. Women provided the bronze mirrors that became the building materials for the laver (see 38:8).

washing

(Heb. *rachats*) (2:5; 30:18; Prov. 30:12) Strong’s #7364

In the Bible, washing or bathing has important cultural and religious associations. The ancient custom of washing a guest’s feet was an act of hospitality that lasted into the NT period (Gen. 18:4; John 13:5). Ritual washing was an important step in the purification of the priests for service in the tabernacle (40:12). Washing with water symbolized spiritual cleansing, the preparation necessary for entering God’s presence (Ps. 26:6; 73:13). The OT prophets continued to use this imagery of washing and applied it symbolically to the act of repentance (Is. 1:16; Ezek. 16:4). In the NT, Paul describes redemption in Christ as “the washing of regeneration” (Titus 3:5).

30:19–21 wash their hands and their feet: The constant need for cleansing the priests’ hands is understandable. But the feet of the priests would also be readily soiled because they wore sandals. The continual washing was symbolic of the need to be cleansed from sin regularly. **Lest they die** emphasizes the seriousness of maintaining the priests’ holiness before God (see also 28:43).

30:22–25 The priests used the holy oil in rites of anointing (see 29:7). This costly and treasured mixture must have had an unforgettable, wonderful aroma. The **holy anointing oil** was declared holy because it was set aside for use only in religious rites specified by the law (vv. 32, 33). The **perfumer**, like his counterparts who worked with wood, fabric, and metal, was a highly skilled craftsman (v. 35).

30:26–29 Everything connected with divine worship had to be anointed with the special oils. In this way, the creations of the workmen became holy, set aside for special use in the worship of God.

30:30 Anointing initiated the **priests** into the privilege of God’s service.

30:31–33 The oil was reserved exclusively for the consecration of the tabernacle and all its furnishings. Any other use would result in divine judgment. **Cut off** means put to death (see Gen. 17:14).

30:34–38 As in the case of the anointing oil (see vv. 22–25), the directions for making the incense are precise. The resulting mixture was a lavish, expensive, precious commodity.

of each. ³⁵ You shall make of these an incense, a compound ^h according to the art of the perfumer, salted, pure, *and* holy. ³⁶ And you shall beat *some* of it very fine, and put some of it before the Testimony in the tabernacle of meeting ⁱ where I will meet with you. ^j It shall be most holy to you. ³⁷ But *as for* the incense which you shall make, ^k you shall not make any for yourselves, according to its ^l composition. It shall be to you holy for the LORD. ³⁸ ^l Whoever makes *any* like it, to smell it, he shall be cut off from his people.”

Artisans for Building the Tabernacle

31 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: ^{2a} “See, I have called by name Bezalel the ^b son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah. ³ And I have ^c filled him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding, in knowledge, and in all *manner of* workmanship, ⁴ to design artistic works, to work in gold, in silver, in bronze, ⁵ in cutting jewels for setting, in carving wood, and to work in all *manner of* workmanship.

⁶ “And I, indeed I, have appointed with him ^d Aholiab the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan; and I have put wisdom in the hearts of all the ^e gifted artisans, that they may make all that I have commanded you: ⁷ ^f the tabernacle of meeting, ^g the ark of the Testimony and ^h the mercy seat that is on it, and all the furniture of the tabernacle— ⁸ ⁱ the table and its utensils, ^j the pure *gold* lampstand with all its utensils, the altar of incense, ⁹ ^k the altar of burnt offering with all its utensils, and

³⁵ ^h Ex. 30:25
³⁶ ⁱ Ex. 29:42; Lev. 16:2 / [Ex. 29:37; 30:32]; Lev. 2:3
³⁷ ^k Ex. 30:32 / Lit. proportion
³⁸ ^l Ex. 30:33

CHAPTER 31

² ^a Ex. 35:30–36:1
^b 1 Chr. 2:20
³ ^c Ex. 28:3; 35:31;
1 Kin. 7:14; Eph. 1:17
⁴ ^d Ex. 35:34 ^e Ex. 28:3; 35:10, 35; 36:1
⁷ ^f Ex. 36:8 ^g Ex. 37:1–5 ^h Ex. 37:6–9
⁸ ⁱ Ex. 37:10–16 / Ex. 37:17–24; Lev. 24:4
⁹ ^k Ex. 38:1–7

/ Ex. 38:8
¹⁰ ^m Ex. 39:1,
41 ^l Or woven garments
¹¹ ⁿ Ex. 30:23–33
^o Ex. 30:34–38
¹³ ^p Ex. 31:17; Lev. 19:3, 30; 26:2; Ezek. 20:12, 20 ^q Lev. 20:8
² consecrates
¹⁴ ^r Ex. 20:8;
Deut. 5:12 ^s Ex. 31:15; 35:2; Num. 15:32–36; John 7:23
³ defiles
¹⁵ ^t Ex. 20:9–11; Lev. 23:3; Deut. 5:12–14
^u Gen. 2:2; Ex. 16:23;
20:8; 35:2
¹⁷ ^v Ex. 31:13; Ezek. 20:12 ^w Gen. 1:31;
2:2, 3; Ex. 20:11
¹⁸ ^x [Ex. 24:12; 32:15, 16; Deut. 4:13; 5:22; 2 Cor. 3:3]

^l the laver and its base— ¹⁰ ^m the ^l garments of ministry, the holy garments for Aaron the priest and the garments of his sons, to minister as priests, ¹¹ ⁿ and the anointing oil and ^o sweet incense for the holy *place*. According to all that I have commanded you they shall do.”

The Sabbath Law

¹² And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ¹³ “Speak also to the children of Israel, saying: ^p “Surely My Sabbaths you shall keep, for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations, that *you* may know that I *am* the LORD who ^q sanctifies² you. ¹⁴ ^r You shall keep the Sabbath, therefore, for *it is* holy to you. Everyone who ³ profanes it shall surely be put to death; for ^s whoever does *any* work on it, that person shall be cut off from among his people. ¹⁵ Work shall be done for ^t six days, but the ^u seventh is the Sabbath of rest, holy to the LORD. Whoever does *any* work on the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death. ¹⁶ Therefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations *as* a perpetual covenant. ¹⁷ *It is* ^v a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever; for ^w *in* six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed.”

¹⁸ And when He had made an end of speaking with him on Mount Sinai, He gave Moses ^x two tablets of the Testimony, tablets of stone, written with the finger of God.

30:36 before the Testimony: A portion of the fragrant incense were to be taken into the Most Holy Place as a holy symbol for the people before the Lord.

30:37, 38 No incense was to be made for personal use nor was it to be used for any other purpose than that which God commanded. **It shall be to you holy for the Lord** was a succinct reminder of the importance of reserving holy things for worshiping God.

31:2 called by name: The Lord now designated specifically the man who would be the principal artisan for the tabernacle. The name **Bezalel** means “in the shadow of God.” **Hur**, the grandfather of Bezalel, should not be confused with the more famous associate of Aaron and Moses (17:10; 24:14).

31:3 filled him with the Spirit of God: This wonderful phrase is indicative of the work of the Holy Spirit during OT times. We are familiar with the “filling of the Spirit” that came upon the disciples at Pentecost (Acts 2) and brought into being the new community of faith, the church. But we often neglect the work of the Spirit among the Israelites. Passages such as this one help us to see the continuity of God’s work among His people through the ages. In this case, the Spirit empowered uniquely gifted people to design and build a tabernacle befitting a holy and magnificent God.

31:6 The name **Aholiab**, given to the principal assistant to Bezalel, means “Tent of the Father.” It describes one who lives closely with God, the Father of His people (see 35:34; 36:1, 2; 38:23). The **wisdom in the hearts** was “the spirit of wisdom” spoken of in 28:3, or “the Spirit of God, in wisdom” of 31:3. Such wisdom was a divine gift that allowed these craftsmen to complete their holy work.

31:13, 14 My Sabbaths reminds us that keeping the Sabbath is the Lord’s idea, not a human invention. Such days of rest must be kept in righteousness before Him (Is. 1:10–15). **a sign:** a reminder, memorial, or symbol. The Sabbath distinguished Israel from its pagan neighbors, an idea reinforced by the last phrase, **the Lord who sanctifies you, put to death:** The Sabbath was not for casual recreation, but for worshiping God. Those who observed the Sabbath carelessly invited their own destruction.

31:16, 17 Here the **Sabbath** is declared to be **a sign** between the Lord and Israel forever. The idea of Sabbath can be found in the pattern of **six days** of creation, followed by a seventh day of rest.

31:18 an end of speaking: When Moses returned to the people, the Spirit of God directed him to recall the amazing complex of details, ideas, and concepts of holy worship. **The two tablets of the Testimony**, similar to ancient treaties, bore the Ten Commandments on each tablet. Both tablets were kept together before God in His holy tabernacle. **The stone** emphasized the permanence of the Word of God. **The finger of God** is a bold anthropomorphism (a quality of God expressed as a human characteristic) that underscores the divine origin of the Law. Scholars of religion have long spoken of Israel’s religious ideas as its unique contribution to civilization, much as the Greeks developed philosophy and the Romans displayed a genius for organization and empire-building. Yet such a comparison misses the point of Scripture. The Ten Commandments were not the product of man, but the revelation of the Lord.

The Gold Calf

32 Now when the people saw that Moses ^adelayed coming down from the mountain, the people ^bgathered together to Aaron, and said to him, ^c“Come, make us ^dgods that shall ^ego before us; for *as for* this Moses, the man who ^fbrought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.”

²And Aaron said to them, “Break off the ^fgolden earrings which *are* in the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters, and bring *them* to me.” ³So all the people broke off the golden earrings which *were* in their ears, and brought *them* to Aaron. ^{4a}And he received the *gold* from their hand, and he fashioned it with an engraving tool, and made a molded calf.

Then they said, “This *is* your god, O Israel, that ^bbrought you out of the land of Egypt!”

⁵So when Aaron saw *it*, he built an altar before it. And Aaron made a ⁱproclamation and said, “Tomorrow *is* a feast to the LORD.” ⁶Then they rose early on the next day, offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people ^jsat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.

⁷And the LORD said to Moses, ^k“Go, get down! For your people whom you brought out of the land of Egypt ^lhave

CHAPTER 32

¹ ^aEx. 24:18; Deut. 9:9-12 ^bEx. 17:1-3
^cActs 7:40 ^dEx. 13:21 ^eEx. 32:8 ^fOr *a god*
² ^fEx. 11:2; 35:22; Judg. 8:24-27
⁴ ^gEx. 20:3, 4, 23; Deut. 9:16; Judg. 17:3, 4; 1 Kin. 12:28; Neh. 9:18; Ps. 106:19; Acts 7:41
^hEx. 29:45, 46
⁵ ⁱLev. 23:2, 4, 21, 37; 2 Kin. 10:20; 2 Chr. 30:5
⁶ ^jEx. 32:17-19; Num. 25:2; 1 Cor. 10:7
⁷ ^kDeut. 9:8-21; Dan. 9:14 ^lGen. 6:11, 12
⁸ ^mEx. 20:3, 4, 23; Deut. 32:17 ⁿ1 Kin. 12:28
⁹ ^oEx. 33:3, 5; 34:9; Deut. 9:6; 2 Chr. 30:8; Is. 48:4; [Acts 7:51] ^pstubborn
¹⁰ ^qDeut. 9:14, 19
¹¹ ^rEx. 22:24 ^sNum. 14:12 ^tdestroy
¹² ^uDeut. 9:18, 26-29 ^vLit. *the face of the LORD*
¹³ ^vNum. 14:13-19; Deut. 9:28; Josh. 7:9
¹⁴ ^wEx. 32:14
¹⁵ ^xGen. 22:16-18; [Heb. 6:13] ^yGen. 12:7; 13:15; 15:7, 18; 22:17; 26:4; 35:11; 12: Ex. 13:5, 11; 33:14 ^x2 Sam. 24:16

corrupted *themselves*. ⁸They have turned aside quickly out of the way which ^mI commanded them. They have made themselves a molded calf, and worshiped it and sacrificed to it, and said, ⁿ“This *is* your god, O Israel, that brought you out of the land of Egypt!” ⁹And the LORD said to Moses, ^o“I have seen this people, and indeed *it is* a ²stiff-necked people! ¹⁰Now therefore, ^plet Me alone, that ^qMy wrath may burn hot against them and I may ³consume them. And ^rI will make of you a great nation.”

¹¹^sThen Moses pleaded with ⁴the LORD his God, and said: “LORD, why does Your wrath burn hot against Your people whom You have brought out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand? ¹²^tWhy should the Egyptians speak, and say, ‘He brought them out to harm them, to kill them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth?’ Turn from Your fierce wrath, and ^urelent from this harm to Your people. ¹³Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, Your servants, to whom You ^vswore by Your own self, and said to them, ^w“I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven; and all this land that I have spoken of I give to your descendants, and they shall inherit *it* forever.” ¹⁴So the LORD ^xrelented from the harm which He said He would do to His people.

32:1-35 The story of the Israelites’ worship of the gold calf reveals both the unfaithfulness of the Israelites and God’s great mercy. Even though the people had broken their promise to obey Him in such a short time, God forgives their sin and begins again with them.

32:1 This infamous story begins on a very human level. **The people saw that Moses delayed coming down from the mountain:** The extended absence of Moses (24:18) and the terrifying setting into which he had disappeared (24:9-17) led the people to think that he might never return. The people were the redeemed of Israel (ch. 12; 14:31), but in their discouragement they wandered to other gods. It is most shocking to discover the role that **Aaron** played in this debacle. It appears as though he also had given up hope for his brother’s return. Moses was gone for 40 days, yet we may conclude that the people ran out of patience before then. The preparation of the idol would have taken some time. **make us gods that shall go before us:** The people were asking not for the true God, but for other gods. **This Moses** is spoken of in scathing and demeaning tones. Is it possible that the entire community turned against Moses? We may consider the possibility of spiritual warfare—that unseen and unrecognized forces worked to encourage evil among God’s people. Stephen alluded to this event when he said that the fathers “turned back to Egypt” (Acts 7:39, 40).

32:2, 3 The golden earrings were part of the treasure from Egypt that should have been used for building the tabernacle (see 35:20-29).

32:4 A molded calf was an ominous worship symbol. Not only were the cow and the bull worshiped in Egypt, but the bull was a familiar embodiment of Baal seen in Canaan. **This is your god** can be rendered “these are your gods,” suggesting that the worship of the Lord had been blended with the symbols of Baal and other fertility gods. Aaron thus had led the people in breaking the first three commandments: they had bowed to another god besides

the Lord; they had made a graven image; and they used the Lord’s name in false worship (see v. 5). God had said repeatedly that it was He and only He who had brought the Israelites out of Egypt (20:1, 2; 29:45, 46), an event they had all witnessed.

32:6 The worship expressed here involved sacrifices combined with possibly sexual acts of profane worship. The words **and rose up to play** suggest the latter idea. See 34:12-16 for an elaboration of such Canaanite practices that Israel was forbidden to follow.

32:7, 8 The Lord alerted Moses to the fact of Israel’s sin. **Have corrupted themselves:** The Hebrew means “to pervert,” “to ruin.” It is used also to describe the ruin of humankind that provoked the Flood (see Gen. 6:12).

32:9 a stiff-necked people: This is the first occasion of this doleful phrase, which describes the stubbornness of the people who refused to follow the ways of God (see 33:3, 5; 34:9; Deut. 9:6, 13; 10:16).

32:10 The words of God then turned very ominous. He threatened to destroy the nation entirely and begin anew with Moses (see Num. 14:11, 12). This declaration prompted Moses to intercede on behalf of the people for God’s mercy (see vv. 11-13).

32:11-13 Moses used three principal arguments in this great prayer to assuage the anger of the Lord. (1) The deliverance of Israel from Egypt was the work of the Lord. How could He abandon them now? (2) The Egyptians would hear of this judgment and would believe that they had triumphed after all. How could He destroy them now? (3) The covenant had been established long before by divine oath. How could He revoke this promise now? We see clearly Moses’ own humility, his compassion for the Israelites, and his zeal for God’s glory and honor.

32:14 So the Lord relented: Here is a wonderful example of the interaction of faithful intercessory prayer and the purpose of the Lord. God intended to spare Israel. But He drew Moses into the process by causing him to pray for the right outcome. He uses our prayer combined with His own determination to make His will come to pass.

¹⁵ And ^gMoses turned and went down from the mountain, and the two tablets of the Testimony *were* in his hand. The tablets *were* written on both sides; on the one *side* and on the other they were written. ¹⁶ Now the ²tablets *were* the work of God, and the writing *was* the writing of God engraved on the tablets.

¹⁷ And when Joshua heard the noise of the people as they shouted, he said to Moses, “*There is a noise of war in the camp.*”

¹⁸ But he said:

“*It is not the noise of the shout of victory,
Nor the noise of the cry of defeat,
But the sound of singing I hear.*”

¹⁹ So it was, as soon as he came near the camp, that *he* saw the calf *and* the dancing. So Moses’ anger became hot, and he cast the tablets out of his hands and broke them at the foot of the mountain. ²⁰ ^hThen he took the calf which they had made, burned *it* in the fire, and ground *it* to powder; and he scattered *it* on the water and made the children of Israel drink *it*. ²¹ And Moses said to Aaron, “What did this people do to you that you have brought *so* great a sin upon them?”

²² So Aaron said, “Do not let the anger of my lord become hot. ^aYou know the people, that they *are set* on evil. ²³ For they said to me, ‘Make us gods that shall go before us; *as for* this Moses, the man who brought us out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.’ ²⁴ And I said to them, ‘Whoever has any gold, let them break *it* off.’ So they gave *it* to me, and I cast *it* into the fire, and this calf came out.”

²⁵ Now when Moses saw that the peo-

15 ^g Deut. 9:15
16 ² Ex. 31:18
19 ^a Deut. 9:16, 17
20 ^h Num. 5:17, 24;
Deut. 9:21
21 ^c Gen. 26:10
22 ^d Ex. 14:11; Deut.
9:24

25 ^e Ex. 33:4, 5
^f 2 Chr. 28:19
27 ^g Num. 25:5-13
29 ^h Ex. 28:41;
1 Sam. 15:18, 22;
Prov. 21:3; Zech.
13:3 ⁱ Lit. *Fill your
hand*
30 ⁱ 1 Sam. 12:20,
23 ^j 2 Sam. 16:12
^k Num. 25:13
31 ^j Deut. 9:18 ^m Ex.
20:23
32 ⁿ Ps. 69:28; Is.
4:3; Mal. 3:16; Rom.
9:3 ^o Dan. 12:1; Phil.
4:3; Rev. 3:5; 21:27
33 ^p Lev. 23:30;
[Ezek. 18:4; 33:2,
14, 15] ^q Ex. 17:14;
Deut. 29:20; Ps. 9:5;
Rev. 3:5; 21:27
34 ^r Ex. 3:17 ^s Ex.
23:20; Josh. 5:14
^t Deut. 32:35; Rom.
2:5, 6 ^u Ps. 89:32

ple *were* ^eunrestrained (for Aaron ^fhad not restrained them, to *their* shame among their enemies), ²⁶ then Moses stood in the entrance of the camp, and said, “Whoever *is* on the LORD’s side—*come* to me!” And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together to him. ²⁷ And he said to them, “Thus says the LORD God of Israel: ‘Let every man put his sword on his side, and go in and out from entrance to entrance throughout the camp, and ^glet every man kill his brother, every man his companion, and every man his neighbor.’” ²⁸ So the sons of Levi did according to the word of Moses. And about three thousand men of the people fell that day. ²⁹ ^hThen Moses said, ⁵ “Consecrate yourselves today to the LORD, that He may bestow on you a blessing this day, for every man has opposed his son and his brother.”

³⁰ Now it came to pass on the next day that Moses said to the people, ⁱ “You have committed a great sin. So now I will go up to the LORD; ^j perhaps I can ^k make atonement for your sin.” ³¹ Then Moses ^l returned to the LORD and said, “Oh, these people have committed a great sin, and have ^m made for themselves a god of gold! ³² Yet now, if You will forgive their sin—but if not, I pray, ⁿ blot me ^o out of Your book which You have written.”

³³ And the LORD said to Moses, ^p “Whoever has sinned against Me, I will ^q blot him out of My book. ³⁴ Now therefore, go, lead the people to the *place* of which I have ^r spoken to you. ^s Behold, My Angel shall go before you. Nevertheless, ^t in the day when I ^u visit for punishment, I will visit punishment upon them for their sin.”

³⁵ So the LORD plagued the people

32:15, 16 The two tablets of the Testimony are the tablets of the Ten Commandments (see 31:18).

32:17 It appears that Joshua had accompanied Moses on at least a part of the journey to Mt. Sinai (see 24:13, 14). While Moses was alone with God, Joshua seems to have remained nearby. From his base, he was the first to hear the raucous worship of the golden calf and report that startling news to Moses.

32:19, 20 In great rage, Moses destroyed the tablets. This gesture, highly symbolic, suggested that the law had been “broken” by the actions of the people. Then Moses destroyed the calf, finally making the people drink its residue mixed with water.

32:21–24 Moses then turned on Aaron, demanding to know how such wickedness had happened. Aaron’s feeble response reminds us of Adam’s weak reply to God in Gen. 3:12. Aaron passed the blame onto the people rather than admit his own complicity in this terrible sin.

32:25 Despite the return of Moses, some of the people were unrestrained, perhaps still conducting themselves in the unseemly behavior of worshippers of Baal (see Num. 25).

32:26 Whoever is on the LORD’s side: The first to respond to Moses were men from the tribe of Levi, an act that drew them more fully into the Lord’s service.

32:27, 28 Moses sent the Levites to kill the people engaged in evil

(most likely sexual degeneracy, see Num. 25). It was painful for a Levite to slay his brother . . . his companion . . . his neighbor. But the wicked, even if they were relatives, had to be destroyed lest the whole camp perish under God’s judgment.

32:29 Consecrate yourselves: The people needed to turn completely back to the living God in the hope that He would receive them in blessing again.

32:30, 31 The terrible sin of the people needed to be removed. Moses hoped to make atonement for the people.

32:32, 33 blot me out of Your book: This is the most touching moment in Moses’ leadership of the Israelites. Like Paul many centuries later, he could almost wish himself to be cursed, if by being so he could secure the salvation of his people (see Rom. 9:3). Moses’ offer could not be accepted. But his selfless gesture also resembles the self-sacrifice of Jesus, which God accepted as the atonement for the sins of every generation of humanity (Mark 10:45). My book is the Book of Life (Ps. 87:6; Rev. 3:5).

32:34 God promises that His Angel (23:20–23) will still lead the people, but coupled with that promise is a solemn threat of punishment. The expression in the day may refer to the Day of the Lord, proclaimed by later prophets (see Joel 2; Zeph. 1).

32:35 It is not clear whether the LORD plagued the people after Moses’ prayer or if this passage refers to the judgment God had

because of ^vwhat they did with the calf which Aaron made.

The Command to Leave Sinai

33 Then the LORD said to Moses, “Depart and go up from here, you ^aand the people whom you have brought out of the land of Egypt, to the land of which I swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, saying, ^b“To your descendants I will give it.” ^{2c}And I will send *My* Angel before you, ^dand I will drive out the Canaanite and the Amorite and the Hittite and the Perizzite and the Hivite and the Jebusite. ³Go up ^eto a land flowing with milk and honey; for I will not go up in your midst, lest ^fI ¹consume you on the way, for you are ^ga stiff-necked ²people.”

⁴And when the people heard this bad news, ^hthey mourned, ⁱand no one put on his ornaments. ⁵For the LORD had said to Moses, “Say to the children of Israel, ‘You are a stiff-necked people. I could come up into your midst in one moment and consume you. Now therefore, take off your ³ornaments, that I may ^jknow

35 ^v Neh. 9:18

CHAPTER 33

1 ^a Ex. 32:1, 7, 13; Josh. 3:17 ^b Gen. 12:7
2 ^c Ex. 32:34; Josh. 5:14 ^d Ex. 23:27-31; Josh. 24:11
3 ^e Ex. 3:8 ^f Num. 16:21, 45 ^g Ex. 32:9; 33:5 ¹ destroy ² stubborn
4 ^h Num. 14:1, 39
ⁱ Ezra 9:3; Esth. 4:1, 4; Ezek. 24:17, 23
5 ^j [Ps. 139:23]
³ jewelry

7 ^k Ex. 29:42, 43
¹ Deut. 4:29
8 ^m Num. 16:27
9 ⁿ Ex. 25:22; 31:18; Ps. 99:7
10 ^o Ex. 4:31
11 ^p Num. 12:8; Deut. 34:10

what to do to you.” ⁶So the children of Israel stripped themselves of their ornaments by Mount Horeb.

Moses Meets with the LORD

⁷Moses took his tent and pitched it outside the camp, far from the camp, and ^kcalled it the tabernacle of meeting. And it came to pass *that* everyone who ^lsought the LORD went out to the tabernacle of meeting which *was* outside the camp. ⁸So it was, whenever Moses went out to the tabernacle, *that* all the people rose, and each man stood ^mat his tent door and watched Moses until he had gone into the tabernacle. ⁹And it came to pass, when Moses entered the tabernacle, that the pillar of cloud descended and stood at the door of the tabernacle, and *the LORD* ⁿtalked with Moses. ¹⁰All the people saw the pillar of cloud standing *at* the tabernacle door, and all the people rose and ^oworshiped, each man *in* his tent door. ¹¹So ^pthe LORD spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend. And he would return to the

already sent upon the people (see vv. 26–28). It is possible that this refers both to the punishment of the Lord for this particular sin and to later plagues (punishments) that would befall the Israelites in the wilderness as they continued to disobey the Lord.

33:1 Depart . . . go up: The time had come for the march into Canaan. **which I swore:** For God’s covenant with Abraham and Isaac, see Gen. 12:7; 15:13–21; 22:15–18.

33:3, 4 God announced that He would **not go up** among his people because they were **stiff-necked**. Thus the hope of reaching the Promised Land was darkened by God’s withdrawal from their presence. **This bad news**, the command to move on without the presence of the Lord, was hardly a message that they wanted to hear.

33:5, 6 I could come suggested that the threat of judgment was still very real (see 32:35). The **ornaments** were associated with the idolatrous worship of the golden calf (32:2, 3). Their removal was a mark of genuine repentance and renewal.

33:7 his tent . . . the tabernacle of meeting: Moses moved his own tent **outside the camp** to symbolize the Lord’s departure from

His people. Moses called his tent **the tabernacle of meeting**, for here he met with the living God. The people **who sought the LORD**, that is, who needed a divine decision, would consult Moses at his tent far from the center of the camp.

33:8 all the people rose . . . stood: In contrast to their earlier wickedness, the people now responded reverently to the living God. Only Moses could approach God, but those who were nearby could respond from a distance in awe and worship.

33:9 This pillar of cloud is the same one that guided the Israelites out of Egypt (13:21, 22; 24:15, 16).

33:10 saw . . . worshiped: The people could not approach the Lord as Moses did. Moses saw and spoke with the Lord as one would to a friend. From a distance, the people saw the pillar and recognized the presence of God, and they worshiped by bowing low to the ground. The text is careful to say that the people stayed off at some distance. Only Moses could come near the pillar, God’s Presence.

33:11 the LORD: The identification of the pillar with the Lord is now unmistakable. **his servant Joshua:** Here we glimpse again (see

The Merciful God Versus a False God



God had chosen the Israelites to be His treasure—to be His holy people (19:5, 6). He had entered into a treaty with them and had established a relationship with them. He had given them the Ten Commandments (20:1–17). Finally He had called Moses up to the top of Mount Sinai in order to give him detailed instructions as to how the Israelites should live as God’s holy people. Now the Israelites had to wait. For forty days, they had to wait.

But the Israelites did not wait on God. That is, they did not continue their hope in God (Ps. 40:1; Is. 40:31). Instead, they grew impatient, choosing to make a false image to worship. At the same time as God was reaching out to the Israelites by giving Moses instructions for how to live, the Israelites were breaking their covenant—their treaty—with God by disregarding His uniqueness. They created an image similar to the gods of their neighbors—a calf. (Not only did the Egyptians worship the cow and the bull, but the bull was also a well-known symbol for the worship of Baal in Canaan.) The Israelites worshiped this new false image along with their worship of the living God (see 20:5, 6). They were guilty of *syncretism*—blending the worship of false gods with the worship of the true God. Tragically, they abandoned the living God for a false god at the very time that God was reaching out to them.

Although the Israelites had blatantly disobeyed Him, God demonstrated His mercy. Instead of completely destroying these disobedient people, He spared them. He disciplined them so they would learn from their sin, and then He gave them a second chance. He forgave them and finally blessed them with His presence (33:14). In this tragic story is the central message of the Bible: Despite the repeated sinfulness of His people, God is merciful. He forgives those who repent (Acts 2:38).

camp, but ^qhis servant Joshua the son of Nun, a young man, did not depart from the tabernacle.

The Promise of God's Presence

¹²Then Moses said to the LORD, “See, ^rYou say to me, ‘Bring up this people.’ But You have not let me know whom You will send with me. Yet You have said, ^s‘I know you by name, and you have also found grace in My sight.’ ¹³Now therefore, I pray, ^t‘if I have found grace in Your sight, ^ushow me now Your way, that I may know You and that I may find grace in Your sight. And consider that this nation is ^vYour people.”

¹⁴And He said, ^w“My Presence will go with you, and I will give you ^xrest.”

¹⁵Then he said to Him, ^y“If Your Presence does not go with us, do not bring us up from here. ¹⁶For how then will it be known that Your people and I have found grace in Your sight, ^zexcept You go with us? So we ^ashall be separate, Your people and I, from all the people who are upon the face of the earth.”

¹⁷So the LORD said to Moses, ^b“I will also do this thing that you have spoken; for you have found grace in My sight, and I know you by name.”

¹⁸And he said, “Please, show me ^cYour glory.”

¹⁹Then He said, “I will make all My ^dgoodness pass before you, and I will

¹¹ ^qEx. 24:13
¹² ^rEx. 3:10; 32:34
^sEx. 33:17; John 10:14, 15; 2 Tim. 2:19
¹³ ^tEx. 34:9 ^uPs. 25:4; 27:11; 86:11; 119:33 ^vEx. 3:7, 10; 5:1; 32:12, 14; Deut. 9:26, 29
¹⁴ ^wEx. 3:12; Deut. 4:37; Is. 63:9 ^xDeut. 12:10; 25:19; Josh. 21:44; 22:4
¹⁵ ^yEx. 33:3
¹⁶ ^zNum. 14:14
^aEx. 34:10; Deut. 4:7, 34
¹⁷ ^bJames 5:16
¹⁸ ^cEx. 24:16, 17; [1 Tim. 6:16]
¹⁹ ^dEx. 34:6, 7

^e[Rom. 9:15, 16, 18]
^f[Rom. 4:4, 16]
²⁰ ^g[Gen. 32:30]
²² ^hSong 2:14; Is. 2:21 ⁱPs. 91:1, 4; Is. 49:2; 51:16
²³ ^jEx. 33:20; [John 1:18]

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¹ ^q[Ex. 24:12; 31:18; 32:15, 16, 19; Deut. 4:13] ^bDeut. 10:2, 4
² ^cEx. 19:11, 18, 20
³ ^dEx. 19:12, 13;
 24:9-11
⁵ ^eEx. 19:9

proclaim the name of the LORD before you. ^fI will be gracious to whom I will be ^ggracious, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.” ²⁰But He said, “You cannot see My face; for ^gno man shall see Me, and live.” ²¹And the LORD said, “Here is a place by Me, and you shall stand on the rock. ²²So it shall be, while My glory passes by, that I will put you ^hin the cleft of the rock, and will ⁱcover you with My hand while I pass by. ²³Then I will take away My hand, and you shall see My back; but My face shall ^jnot be seen.”

Moses Makes New Tablets

34 And the LORD said to Moses, ^a“Cut two tablets of stone like the first ones, and ^bI will write on these tablets the words that were on the first tablets which you broke. ²So be ready in the morning, and come up in the morning to Mount Sinai, and present yourself to Me there ^con the top of the mountain. ³And no man shall ^dcome up with you, and let no man be seen throughout all the mountain; let neither flocks nor herds feed before that mountain.”

⁴So he cut two tablets of stone like the first ones. Then Moses rose early in the morning and went up Mount Sinai, as the LORD had commanded him; and he took in his hand the two tablets of stone.

⁵Now the LORD descended in the ^ecloud

17:9; 24:13; 32:17) the bold man of God who would become Moses' successor. The word translated “servant” here does not mean slave, but rather a minister, one who does spiritual service.

33:12 The message the Lord had given to Moses and the people, recorded at the beginning of the chapter (vv. 1–3), troubled Moses. Thus he pressed the Lord to grant His presence in the adventure of faith that the people were to undertake. **Whom You will send with me** was Moses' indirect way of seeking assurance that the Lord Himself would accompany the people.

33:13 The words **Your way** refer in this context to the divine Presence among His people. **Your people** was Moses' reminder of God's promise that He would make the Israelites His people (see 6:1–8).

33:14–16 My Presence means literally in Hebrew “My Face.” This extraordinary promise of God's Presence with His people was ultimately fulfilled in Jesus, God made man. **Rest** refers to the land of Canaan, when the conquest would be over and the land could be enjoyed by the Israelites. Moses even dared to say that the **Presence** of the Lord in the midst of His people was the only acceptable condition for further advance. Only the Lord's Presence would demonstrate to surrounding nations that Israel's deliverance was really the work of the true and merciful God.

33:17 God's **grace** was accompanied by his intimate knowledge of and care for Moses, represented in the expression **I know you by name**.

33:18 The word **glory** conveys the idea of weight, significance, and importance (see 16:7, 10; 24:16, 17; 40:34, 35). Here, astoundingly, Moses requested an even greater sense of God's Presence than up to then had been experienced by any person.

33:19 Amazingly, the Lord responded positively. **My goodness** speaks of the sense of the wonder of God, of His divine attributes, of His essential worth and majesty. **Proclaim the name of the LORD:**

The name of God is the expression of His person, who He is. **be gracious . . . have compassion:** The Lord's sovereignty is paramount in His dealings with people. God can do anything He wants. Yet, in His mercy, He responded to Moses' plea. What a great gift this is: The Creator of the universe tenderly granting the audacious request of His servant (see Ps. 40:1).

33:20 cannot see My face: We cannot begin to describe what Moses experienced in this dramatic encounter. God is Spirit (John 4:24). Any experience of the living God requires Him to enter our finite sphere of space and time. Whatever Moses experienced was only a glimpse of what is still to be experienced! Human language is simply too limited to express the mysteries these verses describe.

33:21 The place is generally assumed to be a cleft in the rock of Mt. Sinai. How fitting that Moses would experience the Lord who is His Rock (see Deut. 32:4) while standing **on the rock**.

33:22, 23 The use of words such as **hand, back, and face** is anthropomorphic, a way of describing God, who is Spirit, in terms familiar to humankind. The point of these verses is clear enough. Moses would see something wonderful, but not so much as would take his life. This great revelation is described in 34:5–9.

34:1 The command to **cut two tablets of stone** is one of the great demonstrations of God's mercy. Despite the failure of the people at the very time that the Lord was instructing Moses on how they should worship, He was willing to begin again with them. Once more He would instruct them concerning His righteous ways.

34:3 As in the preparation of the people in ch. 19, the warning that **no man shall come up with you** was meant to protect the careless or the curious who would die if they trespassed on holy ground.

34:5 Like ch. 19, these verses describe an epiphany, the appearance of the Lord in His grand descent to encounter humans. As at other times (see 33:9–11) the people saw the **cloud**, which Moses knew

and stood with him there, and ^fproclaimed the name of the LORD. ⁶And the LORD passed before him and proclaimed, “The LORD, the LORD ^gGod, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in ^hgoodness and ⁱtruth, ⁷keeping mercy for thousands, ^kforgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, ^lby no means clearing *the guilty*, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children’s children to the third and the fourth generation.”

⁸So Moses made haste and ^mbowed his head toward the earth, and worshiped. ⁹Then he said, “If now I have found grace in Your sight, O Lord, ⁿlet my Lord, I pray, go among us, even though we *are* a ^ostiff-necked ¹people; and pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us as ^pYour inheritance.”

The Covenant Renewed

¹⁰And He said: “Behold, ^qI make a covenant. Before all your people I will ^rdo ²marvels such as have not been done in all the earth, nor in any nation; and all the people among whom you *are* shall see the work of the LORD. For it is ^san awesome thing that I will do with you. ¹¹Observe what I command you this day. Behold, ^uI am driving out from before you the Amo-

5 ^f Ex. 33:19
6 ^g Num. 14:18;
Deut. 4:31; Neh.
9:17; Joel 2:13
^h Rom. 2:4 ⁱ Ps.
108:4
7 ^j Ex. 20:6 ^k Ps.
103:3, 4; Dan. 9:9;
Eph. 4:32; 1 John
1:9 ^l Josh. 24:19;
Job 10:14; Mic. 6:11;
Nah. 1:3
8 ^m Ex. 4:31
9 ⁿ Ex. 33:12-16
^o Ex. 33:3 ^p Ps.
33:12; 94:14
¹ stubborn
10 ^q Ex. 34:27, 28;
Deut. 5:2 ^r Deut.
4:32; Ps. 77:14 ^s Ps.
145:6 ² wonderful
acts
11 ^t Deut. 6:25 ^u Ex.
23:20-33; 33:2;
Josh. 11:23
12 ^v Ex. 23:32, 33
13 ^w Ex. 23:24;
Deut. 12:3 ^x Deut.
16:21; Judg. 6:25,
26; 2 Kin. 18:4;
2 Chr. 34:3, 4
14 ^y [Ex. 20:3-5]
^z [Is. 9:6; 57:15]
^a [Ex. 20:5; Deut.
4:24]
15 ^b Judg. 2:17
^c Num. 25:1, 2;
Deut. 32:37, 38
^d 1 Cor. 8:4, 7, 10
16 ^e Gen. 28:1;

rite and the Canaanite and the Hittite and the Perizzite and the Hivite and the Jebusite. ¹²Take heed to yourself, lest you make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land where you are going, lest it be a snare in your midst. ¹³But you shall ^wdestroy their altars, break their *sacred* pillars, and ^xcut down their wooden images ¹⁴(for you shall worship ^uno other god, for the LORD, whose ^zname is Jealous, is a ^ajealous God), ¹⁵lest you make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, and they ^bplay the harlot with their gods and make sacrifice to their gods, and *one of them* ^cinvites you and you ^deat of his sacrifice, ¹⁶and you take of ^ehis daughters for your sons, and his daughters ^fplay the harlot with their gods and make your sons play the harlot with their gods.

¹⁷^g“You shall make no molded gods for yourselves.

¹⁸“The Feast of ^hUnleavened Bread you shall keep. Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, as I commanded you, in the appointed time of the month of Abib; for in the ⁱmonth of Abib you came out from Egypt.

Deut. 7:3; Josh. 23:12, 13; 1 Kin. 11:2; Ezra 9:2; Neh. 13:25
^f Num. 25:1, 2; 1 Kin. 11:4 ¹⁷ ^g Ex. 20:4, 23; 32:8; Lev. 19:4;
Deut. 5:8 ¹⁸ ^h Ex. 12:15, 16 ⁱ Ex. 12:2; 13:4

as the visible symbol of the living God before him. The living God **proclaimed** His name to Moses by expressing His character, His awesome wonder, and His mercy.

34:6 The Hebrew verb translated **passed** is the same verb that describes Abram’s journey through the land of Canaan (see Gen. 12:6). The name Hebrew is probably derived from this verb. Here the word speaks of the “movement” of the Lord before Moses. As the Lord moved by Moses, He proclaimed the meaning of His name Yahweh (see 3:14, 15), revealing His gracious character in an unforgettable manner. Indeed, this verse is the foundation for understanding the character of the Lord. The words **merciful** and **gracious** convey the idea of “overwhelmingly gracious.” **longsuffering**: The idea of the Hebrew idiom is that God is very slow to anger. In our idiom, we would say He has “a very long fuse.” The Hebrew word for **goodness** means “loyal love”; the word for **truth** means “faithfulness,” “truth,” and “constancy.”

goodness

(Heb. *chesed*) (15:13; 20:6; 34:6) Strong’s #2617

When God revealed Himself to Moses on Mt. Sinai, He described Himself as overflowing with *goodness*. This is one of the most significant words that describes God’s character (see Ps. 13:5). It is often translated as *mercy* (20:6; Ps. 6:4) and sometimes as *lovingkindness* (Ps. 17:7). The basic meaning of the word is “loyal love” or “steadfast love.” It refers to God’s loyalty and faithfulness to His covenant. This love is very similar to marital love, a love that is obligatory because of the marriage contract, but still intimate and voluntary. Hosea’s actions toward his unfaithful wife are a striking picture of God’s “faithful love” for the people of Israel (Hos. 1:1–3; 2:19; 3:1–5). In the NT, this characteristic of God is described as His grace (Gk. *charis*; John 1:17).

34:7 thousands . . . the third and the fourth: This phrase resembles the words of 20:5, 6, but the order is changed for emphasis here. The point is that God is more willing to show his **mercy** than His wrath. Yet His wrath is also very real (see 32:34, 35; Ps. 90:11).

34:9 Go among us indicates that Moses was still praying for a reversal of God’s judgment announced in 33:1–3. The Lord responded to these pleasing words by restoring the covenant (see vv. 10–28).

34:10 I make a covenant: This verse introduces the renewal of covenant; the message is completed in vv. 27, 28. Concurrent with the announcement of the covenant is the promise that the people will experience **an awesome thing**, namely the conquest of Canaan. The enormity of Israel’s refusal to obey God’s command and conquer the land (see Num. 13; 14) is to be seen in the light of this extraordinary promise (see also Deut. 4:32–40).

34:12 covenant: Israel was forbidden to make treaties with nearby peoples. Instead, they were to destroy those nations, lest they be ruined by their perverted ideas and false religious affections. The next verses (vv. 13–26) repeat some of the salient features of the Lord’s covenant with Israel. We read these words with sadness in retrospect. They are the very commands Israel abandoned so quickly.

34:15 Unfortunately, the phrase to **play the harlot** was probably not just a figure of speech. Unfaithfulness to the Lord was often manifested in sexual rites with temple prostitutes (male and female), an act of supposed union with Baal, Asherah, and other pagan deities. To **eat of his sacrifice** alludes to the love feast that preceded the orgy, reminiscent of the episode with the golden calf (see 32:5, 6, 19, 25).

34:16 take of his daughters for your sons: God’s prohibition against intermarriage was not a matter of prejudice. The influence of immoral religious practices was subtle, pervasive, and unrelenting. Intermarriage would be the quickest route to compromise with false religion and immoral behavior.

34:17 Israel had, in fact, already paid the price for fashioning **molded gods**.

19^j “All ³ that open the womb *are* Mine, and every male firstborn among your livestock, *whether* ox or sheep. ²⁰ But ^k the firstborn of a donkey you shall redeem with a lamb. And if you will not redeem *him*, then you shall break his neck. All the firstborn of your sons you shall redeem.

“And none shall appear before Me ^lempty-handed.

21^m “Six days you shall work, but on the seventh day you shall rest; in plowing time and in harvest you shall rest.

22 “And you shall observe the Feast of Weeks, of the firstfruits of wheat harvest, and the Feast of Ingathering at the year’s end.

23ⁿ “Three times in the year all your men shall appear before the Lord, the LORD God of Israel. ²⁴ For I will ^o cast out the nations before you and enlarge your borders; neither will any man covet your land when you go up to appear before the LORD your God three times in the year.

25 “You shall not offer the blood of My sacrifice with leaven, ^p nor shall the sacrifice of the Feast of the Passover be left until morning.

26^q “The first of the firstfruits of your land you shall bring to the house of the LORD your God. You shall not boil a young goat in its mother’s milk.”

27 Then the LORD said to Moses, “Write ^r these words, for according to the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with you and with Israel.” ²⁸ So he was there with the LORD forty days and forty nights; he neither ate bread nor drank water. And ^t He wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant, the ⁴ Ten Commandments.

The Shining Face of Moses

29 Now it was so, when Moses came down from Mount Sinai (and the ^u two tablets of the Testimony *were* in Mo-

19 / Ex. 13:2; 22:29
³ the firstborn
 20 ^k Ex. 13:13 / Ex. 22:29; 23:15; Deut. 16:16
 21 ^m Ex. 20:9; 23:12; 31:15; 35:2; Lev. 23:3; Deut. 5:13
 23 ⁿ Ex. 23:14-17
 24 ^o [Ex. 33:2]; Josh. 11:23; 1 Kin. 4:21; 2 Chr. 36:14-16; Ps. 78:55
 25 ^p Ex. 12:10
 26 ^q Ex. 23:19; Deut. 26:2
 27 ^r Ex. 17:14; 24:4; Deut. 31:9
 28 ^s Ex. 24:18 ^t Ex. 34:1, 4; Deut. 4:31; 10:2, 4 ⁴ Lit. *Ten Words*
 29 ^u Ex. 32:15

^v Matt. 17:2; 2 Cor. 3:7
 32 ^w Ex. 24:3
 33 ^x [2 Cor. 3:13, 14]
 34 ^y [2 Cor. 3:13-16]

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1 ^a Ex. 34:32
 2 ^b Ex. 20:9, 10; Lev. 23:3; Deut. 5:13
 3 ^c Num. 15:32-36
 3 ^d Ex. 12:16; 16:23
 4 ^e Ex. 25:1, 2

ses’ hand when he came down from the mountain), that Moses did not know that ^v the skin of his face shone while he talked with Him. ³⁰ So when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone, and they were afraid to come near him. ³¹ Then Moses called to them, and Aaron and all the rulers of the congregation returned to him; and Moses talked with them. ³² Afterward all the children of Israel came near, ^w and he gave them as commandments all that the LORD had spoken with him on Mount Sinai. ³³ And when Moses had finished speaking with them, he put ^x a veil on his face. ³⁴ But ^y whenever Moses went in before the LORD to speak with Him, he would take the veil off until he came out; and he would come out and speak to the children of Israel whatever he had been commanded. ³⁵ And whenever the children of Israel saw the face of Moses, that the skin of Moses’ face shone, then Moses would put the veil on his face again, until he went in to speak with Him.

Sabbath Regulations

35 Then Moses gathered all the congregation of the children of Israel together, and said to them, ^a “These *are* the words which the LORD has commanded *you* to do: ² Work shall be done for ^b six days, but the seventh day shall be a holy day for you, a Sabbath of rest to the LORD. Whoever does any work on it shall be put to ^c death. ³ ^d You shall kindle no fire throughout your dwellings on the Sabbath day.”

Offerings for the Tabernacle

⁴ And Moses spoke to all the congregation of the children of Israel, saying, ^e “This *is* the thing which the LORD commanded, saying: ⁵ “Take from among you

34:19, 20 The law of the **firstborn** is also found in 13:2; 22:29, 30.
34:21 The law of the Sabbath is repeated from 20:8–11; 31:12–18.
34:22–24 The commands of the three annual **feasts** are repeated from 23:14–17. Faithful participation in these feasts was linked to God’s promise in v. 24 to preserve the people in the land.
34:28 The period of **forty days and forty nights** matched Moses’ earlier pilgrimage to Sinai (see 24:18). **bread . . . water:** A person can survive without food for weeks. But no one can go without water for more than three or four days. If Moses drank no water for 40 days, then we must view his continued existence as a miracle of the Lord. Is it possible that he was removed into a heavenly sphere for this long period of time? We simply do not know. We are confident that God was able to sustain His servant in any way He pleased! The Lord then **wrote . . . the Ten Commandments**, equated once again with the words of the covenant. The Writer was the Lord Himself (see 31:18; 32:15, 16; 34:1, 4).
34:29–35 skin of his face shone: One of the Bible’s most wonderful descriptions is that of Moses’ shining face. His proximity to the

Presence of God transformed his very appearance (2 Cor. 3:7–18).
34:30 The people were **afraid to come near**. With all they had seen and heard, they had reason to be cautious.
34:31, 32 Moses sought to allay their fear and to teach them the **commandments** the Lord had sent him to proclaim.
34:33–35 The **veil** Moses wore concealed the glow of his face. This supernatural glow was enhanced on each subsequent encounter with the Lord. Paul taught that Moses wore the veil because the glow faded, a sign of imperfect glory (see 2 Cor. 3:7, 13).
35:1–3 The principal teaching concerning the **Sabbath** is the fourth commandment (20:8–11), and this teaching is expanded in 31:12–18. Here is another repetition of the command for emphasis (see 34:21). To **kindle . . . fire** was considered a breach of the command. To some Jews today, turning on a light switch on the Sabbath is the equivalent of kindling a fire.
35:4–9 This section is based on the instructions of 25:1–8. Here we observe Moses doing as God commanded him when he was on the mountain of the Lord.

an offering to the LORD. ^fWhoever is of a willing heart, let him bring it as an offering to the LORD: ^ggold, silver, and bronze; ^hblue, purple, and scarlet *thread*, fine linen, and ⁱgoats' hair; ^jram skins dyed red, badger skins, and acacia wood; ^koil for the light, and spices for the anointing oil and for the sweet incense; ^lonyx stones, and stones to be set in the ephod and in the breastplate.

Articles of the Tabernacle

¹⁰^k“All who are gifted artisans among you shall come and make all that the LORD has commanded: ¹¹the tabernacle, its tent, its covering, its clasps, its boards, its bars, its pillars, and its sockets; ¹²^mthe ark and its poles, *with* the mercy seat, and the veil of the covering; ¹³the ⁿtable and its poles, all its utensils, ^oand the showbread; ¹⁴also ^pthe lampstand for the light, its utensils, its lamps, and the oil for the light; ¹⁵^qthe incense altar, its poles, ^rthe anointing oil, ^sthe sweet incense, and the screen for the door at the entrance of the tabernacle; ¹⁶^tthe altar of burnt offering with its bronze grating, its poles, all its utensils, *and* the laver and its base; ¹⁷^uthe hangings of the court, its pillars, their sockets, and the screen for the gate of the court; ¹⁸the pegs of the tabernacle, the pegs of the court, and their cords; ¹⁹^vthe ^wgarments of ministry, for ministering in the holy *place*—the holy garments for Aaron the priest and the garments of his sons, to minister as priests.”

The Tabernacle Offerings Presented

²⁰And all the congregation of the children of Israel departed from the presence of Moses. ²¹Then everyone came ^wwhose heart ²was stirred, and everyone whose spirit was willing, *and* they ^xbrought the LORD's offering for the work of the tabernacle of meeting, for all its service, and for the holy garments. ²²They came, both men and women, as many as had a willing heart, and brought ^yearrings and nose rings, rings and necklaces, all ^zjewelry of gold, that is, every man who *made* an offering of gold to the LORD. ²³And ^aevery

5 ^f Ex. 25:2; 1 Chr. 29:14; Mark 12:41-44; 2 Cor. 8:10-12; 9:7 ^g Ex. 38:24
6 ^h Ex. 36:8 ⁱ Ex. 36:14
8 ^j Ex. 25:6; 30:23-25
10 ^k Ex. 31:2-6; 36:1, 2
11 ^l Ex. 26:1, 2; 36:14
12 ^m Ex. 25:10-22
13 ⁿ Ex. 25:23 ^o Ex. 25:30; Lev. 24:5, 6
14 ^p Ex. 25:31
15 ^q Ex. 30:1 ^r Ex. 30:25 ^s Ex. 30:34-38
16 ^t Ex. 27:1-8
17 ^u Ex. 27:9-18
19 ^v Ex. 31:10; 39:1, 41 ^w Or woven garments
21 ^x Ex. 25:2; 35:5, 22, 26, 29; 36:2 ^y Ex. 35:24 ^z Lit. *lifted him up*
22 ^y Ex. 32:2, 3
23 ^a Ex. 11:2
23 ^a 1 Chr. 29:8

³ Or dolphin
25 ^b Ex. 28:3; 31:6; 36:1
26 ^c Lit. *lifted them up*
27 ^c 1 Chr. 29:6; Ezra 2:68
28 ^d Ex. 30:23
29 ^e Ex. 35:5, 21; 36:3; 1 Chr. 29:9
30 ^f Ex. 31:1-6
34 ^g Ex. 31:6
35 ^h Ex. 31:3, 6; 35:31; 1 Kin. 7:14; 2 Chr. 2:14; Is. 28:26

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1 ^a Ex. 28:3; 31:6; 35:10, 35

man, with whom was found blue, purple, and scarlet *thread*, fine linen, goats' hair, red skins of rams, and ³badger skins, brought *them*. ²⁴Everyone who offered an offering of silver or bronze brought the LORD's offering. And everyone with whom was found acacia wood for any work of the service, brought *it*. ²⁵All the women *who were* ^bgifted artisans spun yarn with their hands, and brought what they had spun, of blue, purple, and scarlet, and fine linen. ²⁶And all the women whose hearts ⁴stirred with wisdom spun yarn of goats' hair. ²⁷^cThe rulers brought onyx stones, and the stones to be set in the ephod and in the breastplate, ²⁸and ^dspices and oil for the light, for the anointing oil, and for the sweet incense. ²⁹The children of Israel brought a ^efree-will offering to the LORD, all the men and women whose hearts were willing to bring *material* for all kinds of work which the LORD, by the hand of Moses, had commanded to be done.

The Artisans Called by God

³⁰And Moses said to the children of Israel, “See, ^fthe LORD has called by name Bezalel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah; ³¹and He has filled him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom and understanding, in knowledge and all manner of workmanship, ³²to design artistic works, to work in gold and silver and bronze, ³³in cutting jewels for setting, in carving wood, and to work in all manner of artistic workmanship.

³⁴“And He has put in his heart the ability to teach, *in* him and ^gAholiab the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan. ³⁵He has ^hfilled them with skill to do all manner of work of the engraver and the designer and the tapestry maker, in blue, purple, and scarlet *thread*, and fine linen, and of the weaver—those who do every work and those who design artistic works.

³⁶“And Bezalel and Aholiab, and every ^agifted artisan in whom the LORD has put wisdom and understanding, to know how to do all manner of work

35:10–19 gifted artisans: The call now went out for artisans who would create the tabernacle furnishings and the garments for the priests, the details of which appeared in chs. 25–31.

35:20–29 The offerings for the tabernacle are perhaps the most impressive offering ever taken from God's people for any endeavor! The key was the stirring of the **heart** and the willingness of the **spirit** of those who gave. **Both men and women** gave. Even in this patriarchal time, women participated actively in God's work. All people came with gifts that were sumptuous, varied, and abundant. At last they had to be told to stop giving (see 36:2–7!)

35:25 women . . . gifted artisans: Here the *artisans*, usually referred to in the masculine (28:3), are distinctly identified as women.

35:31 filled him with the Spirit of God: See the parallel passage at 31:3. Compare also the comments at 28:3. The special endowment of the Spirit of God in this artisan and in those who worked with him attested to the importance the Lord attached to the aesthetic beauty of the tabernacle. The preparations for building the tabernacle and later the temple foreshadowed the incarnation of the Savior. For it was both in the tabernacle and temple and in the Incarnation that “heaven came down,” that God drew near to His people in saving wonder and divine fellowship.

35:34 The ability to teach is similar to the gift of teaching mentioned by Paul (Rom. 12:7). The same Spirit was at work among His people in the OT period as in the New.

for the service of the ^bsanctuary,¹ shall do according to all that the LORD has commanded.”

The People Give More than Enough

²Then Moses called Bezalel and Aholiab, and every gifted artisan in whose heart the LORD had put wisdom, everyone ^cwhose heart ²was stirred, to come and do the work. ³And they received from Moses all the ^doffering which the children of Israel ^ehad brought for the work of the service of making the sanctuary. So they continued bringing to him freewill offerings every morning. ⁴Then all the craftsmen who were doing all the work of the sanctuary came, each from the work he was doing, ⁵and they spoke to Moses, saying, ^f“The people bring much more than enough for the service of the work which the LORD commanded *us* to do.”

⁶So Moses gave a commandment, and they caused it to be proclaimed throughout the camp, saying, “Let neither man nor woman do any more work for the offering of the sanctuary.” And the people were restrained from bringing, ⁷for the material they had was sufficient for all the work to be done—indeed too ^gmuch.

Building the Tabernacle

^{8h}Then all the gifted artisans among them who worked on the tabernacle made ten curtains woven of fine linen, and of blue, purple, and scarlet thread; *with* artistic designs of cherubim they made them. ⁹The length of each curtain *was* twenty-eight cubits, and the width of each curtain four cubits; the curtains *were* all the same size. ¹⁰And he coupled five curtains to one another, and *the other* five curtains he coupled to one another. ¹¹He made loops of blue *yarn* on the edge of the curtain on the selvedge of one set; likewise he did on the outer edge of *the other* curtain of the second set. ¹²ⁱFifty loops he made on one curtain, and fifty loops he made on the edge of the curtain on the end of the second set; the loops held one *curtain* to another. ¹³And he made fifty clasps of gold, and coupled the curtains to one another with the clasps, that it might be one tabernacle.

^{14j}He made curtains of goats’ *hair* for

¹ ^o Ex. 25:8 ¹ *holy place*
² ^c Ex. 35:21, 26;
¹ Chr. 29:5, 9, 17
² *lifted him up*
³ ^d Ex. 35:5 ^e Ex. 35:27
⁵ ^f 2 Chr. 24:14;
³¹:6-10; [2 Cor. 8:2, 3]
⁷ ^g 1 Kin. 8:64
⁸ ^h Ex. 26:1-14
¹² ⁱ Ex. 26:5
¹⁴ ^j Ex. 26:7

the tent over the tabernacle; he made eleven curtains. ¹⁵The length of each curtain *was* thirty cubits, and the width of each curtain four cubits; the eleven curtains *were* the same size. ¹⁶He coupled five curtains by themselves and six curtains by themselves. ¹⁷And he made fifty loops on the edge of the curtain that is outermost in one set, and fifty loops he made on the edge of the curtain of the second set. ¹⁸He also made fifty bronze clasps to couple the tent together, that it might be one. ^{19k}Then he made a covering for the tent of ram skins dyed red, and a covering of ³badger skins above *that*.

²⁰For the tabernacle ^lhe made boards of acacia wood, standing upright. ²¹The length of each board *was* ten cubits, and the width of each board a cubit and a half. ²²Each board had two ⁴tenons ^mfor binding one to another. Thus he made for all the boards of the tabernacle. ²³And he made boards for the tabernacle, twenty boards for the south side. ²⁴Forty sockets of silver he made to go under the twenty boards: two sockets under each of the boards for its two tenons. ²⁵And for the other side of the tabernacle, the north side, he made twenty boards ²⁶and their forty sockets of silver: two sockets under each of the boards. ²⁷For the west side of the tabernacle he made six boards. ²⁸He also made two boards for the two back corners of the tabernacle. ²⁹And they were coupled at the bottom and ⁵coupled together at the top by one ring. Thus he made both of them for the two corners. ³⁰So there were eight boards and their sockets—sixteen sockets of silver—two sockets under each of the boards.

³¹And he made ⁿbars of acacia wood: five for the boards on one side of the tabernacle, ³²five bars for the boards on the other side of the tabernacle, and five bars for the boards of the tabernacle on the far side westward. ³³And he made the middle bar to pass through the boards from one end to the other. ³⁴He overlaid the boards with gold, made their rings of gold *to be* holders for the bars, and overlaid the bars with gold.

³⁵And he made ^oa veil of blue, purple, and scarlet *thread*, and fine woven linen; it was worked *with* an artistic design of

¹⁹ ^k Ex. 26:14 ³ *Or dolphin*
²⁰ ^l Ex. 26:15-29
²² ^m Ex. 26:17
⁴ *Projections for joining, lit. hands*
²⁹ ⁵ *Lit. doubled*
³¹ ⁿ Ex. 26:26-29
³⁵ ^o Ex. 26:31-37

36:8 **gifted artisans:** This is a wonderful comment carried through from 35:30–36:4 (see 28:3; 31:6; 35:10, 25). The demands of God’s design (ch. 26) called for careful, detailed, and artistic work. The skillful work was of high quality.

36:14–19 Here we read about the fashioning of the outer **curtains** (v. 14). See 26:7–14 for God’s command concerning their design.

36:20–30 A discussion of the tabernacle frame. See 26:15–25 for its design.

36:31–34 The construction of the crossbars for the outer structure of the tabernacle. See 26:26–30 for the earlier instructions for their design.

36:35, 36 The description of the **veil** that divided the holy place and the Most Holy Place. See 26:31–35 for God’s command concerning its design.

cherubim. ³⁶He made for it four pillars of acacia wood, and overlaid them with gold, with their hooks of gold; and he cast four sockets of silver for them.

³⁷He also made a ^pscreen for the tabernacle door, of blue, purple, and scarlet thread, and fine woven linen, made by a ⁶weaver, ³⁸and its five pillars with their hooks. And he overlaid their capitals and their rings with gold, but their five sockets were bronze.

Making the Ark of the Testimony

37 Then ^aBezalel made ^bthe ark of acacia wood; two and a half cubits was its length, a cubit and a half its width, and a cubit and a half its height. ²He overlaid it with pure gold inside and outside, and made a molding of gold all around it. ³And he cast for it four rings of gold to be set in its four corners: two rings on one side, and two rings on the other side of it. ⁴He made poles of acacia wood, and overlaid them with gold. ⁵And he put the poles into the rings at the sides of the ark, to bear the ark. ⁶He also made the ^cmercy seat of pure gold; two and a half cubits was its length and a cubit and a half its width. ⁷He made two cherubim of beaten gold; he made them of one piece at the two ends of the mercy seat: ⁸one cherub at one end on this side, and the other cherub at the other end on that side. He made the cherubim at the two ends of one piece with the mercy seat. ⁹The cherubim spread out their wings above, and covered the ^dmercy seat with their wings. They faced one another; the faces of the cherubim were toward the mercy seat.

Making the Table for the Showbread

¹⁰He made ^ethe table of acacia wood; two cubits was its length, a cubit its width, and a cubit and a half its height. ¹¹And he overlaid it with pure gold, and made a molding of gold all around it. ¹²Also he made a frame of a handbreadth all around it, and made a molding of gold for the frame all around it. ¹³And he cast for it four rings of gold, and put the rings on the four corners that were at its four legs. ¹⁴The rings were close to the frame, as holders for the poles to bear the table.

37 ^p Ex. 26:36
⁶ Lit. variegator, a weaver in colors

CHAPTER 37

1 ^a Ex. 35:30; 36:1
^b Ex. 25:10-20
⁶ Ex. 25:17
⁹ Ex. 25:20
10 ^e Ex. 25:23-29

¹⁵And he made the poles of acacia wood to bear the table, and overlaid them with gold. ¹⁶He made of pure gold the utensils which were on the table: its ^fdishes, its cups, its bowls, and its pitchers for pouring.

Making the Gold Lampstand

¹⁷He also made the ^glampstand of pure gold; of hammered work he made the lampstand. Its shaft, its branches, its bowls, its ornamental knobs, and its flowers were of the same piece. ¹⁸And six branches came out of its sides: three branches of the lampstand out of one side, and three branches of the lampstand out of the other side. ¹⁹There were three bowls made like almond blossoms on one branch, with an ornamental knob and a flower, and three bowls made like almond blossoms on the other branch, with an ornamental knob and a flower—and so for the six branches coming out of the lampstand. ²⁰And on the lampstand itself were four bowls made like almond blossoms, each with its ornamental knob and flower. ²¹There was a knob under the first two branches of the same, a knob under the second two branches of the same, and a knob under the third two branches of the same, according to the six branches extending from it. ²²Their knobs and their branches were of one piece; all of it was one hammered piece of pure gold. ²³And he made its seven lamps, its ^hwick-trimmers, and its trays of pure gold. ²⁴Of a talent of pure gold he made it, with all its utensils.

Making the Altar of Incense

²⁵ⁱHe made the incense altar of acacia wood. Its length was a cubit and its width a cubit—it was square—and two cubits was its height. Its horns were of one piece with it. ²⁶And he overlaid it with pure gold: its top, its sides all around, and its horns. He also made for it a molding of gold all around it. ²⁷He made two rings of gold for it under its molding, by its two corners on both sides, as holders for the poles with which to bear it. ²⁸And he ^jmade the poles of acacia wood, and overlaid them with gold.

16 ^f Ex. 25:29
17 ^g Ex. 25:31-39
23 ^h Num. 4:9
25 ⁱ Ex. 30:1-5
28 ^j Ex. 30:5

36:37, 38 The description of the screen for the door of the tabernacle. See 26:36, 37 for its design.

37:1-9 This section describes how Bezalel (see 31:2) constructed the holy ark, including the mercy seat and the cherubs, following the pattern that the Lord gave to Moses on the mountain (see 25:10-22). This text follows the earlier passage in every particular concerning its actual construction. The only detail not repeated here is the instruction to put the Testimony in the ark and the mercy seat on top (25:21). This is found again in 40:20.

37:10-16 The construction of the table for the showbread. This section corresponds in every detail to the instructions given to Moses by the Lord in 25:23-30. The only aspect not repeated here from the earlier text is the instruction to place the showbread on the table (see 40:4, 22, 23).

37:17-24 The creation of the golden lampstand. Again, this section corresponds in every detail to the instructions given to Moses in 25:31-40. The earlier text contains instruction for lighting the lamps, which Moses did when everything was completed (see 40:4, 25).

Making the Anointing Oil and the Incense

²⁹He also made ^kthe holy anointing oil and the pure incense of sweet spices, according to the work of the perfumer.

Making the Altar of Burnt Offering

38 He made ^athe altar of burnt offering of acacia wood; five cubits was its length and five cubits its width—it was square—and its height was three cubits. ²He made its horns on its four corners; the horns were of *one piece* with it. And he overlaid it with bronze. ³He made all the utensils for the altar: the pans, the shovels, the basins, the forks, and the firepans; all its utensils he made of bronze. ⁴And he made a grate of bronze network for the altar, under its rim, midway from the bottom. ⁵He cast four rings for the four corners of the bronze grating, as holders for the poles. ⁶And he made the poles of acacia wood, and overlaid them with bronze. ⁷Then he put the poles into the rings on the sides of the altar, with which to bear it. He made the altar hollow with boards.

Making the Bronze Laver

⁸He made ^bthe laver of bronze and its base of bronze, from the bronze mirrors of the serving women who assembled at the door of the tabernacle of meeting.

Making the Court of the Tabernacle

⁹Then he made ^cthe court on the south side; the hangings of the court were of fine woven linen, one hundred cubits long. ¹⁰There were twenty pillars for them, with twenty bronze sockets. The hooks of the pillars and their bands were silver. ¹¹On the north side the hangings were one hundred cubits long, with twenty pillars and their twenty bronze sockets. The hooks of the pillars and their bands were silver. ¹²And on the west side there were hangings of fifty cubits, with ten pillars and their ten sockets. The hooks of the pillars and their bands were silver. ¹³For the east side the hangings were fifty cubits. ¹⁴The hangings of one side of the gate were

29 ^k Ex. 30:23-25

CHAPTER 38

1 ^a Ex. 27:1-8

8 ^b Ex. 30:18

9 ^c Ex. 27:9-19

20 ^d Ex. 27:19

21 ^e Num. 1:50,

53; 9:15; 10:11;

17:7, 8; 2 Chr. 24:6;

Acts 7:44 ^f Num.

4:28, 33 ^g Ex. 28:1;

Lev. 10:6, 16 ^h Lit.

These are the things

appointed for

22 ^h Ex. 31:2, 6;

1 Chr. 2:18-20

23 ⁱ Ex. 31:6; 36:1

² skillful workman

24 ^j Ex. 35:5, 22

^k Ex. 30:13, 24; Lev.

5:15; 27:3, 25; Num.

3:47; 18:16

25 ⁱ Ex. 30:11-16;

Num. 1:2

26 ^m Ex. 30:13, 15

³ Lit. a head

fifteen cubits long, with their three pillars and their three sockets, ¹⁵and the same for the other side of the court gate; on this side and that were hangings of fifteen cubits, with their three pillars and their three sockets. ¹⁶All the hangings of the court all around were of fine woven linen. ¹⁷The sockets for the pillars were bronze, the hooks of the pillars and their bands were silver, and the overlay of their capitals was silver; and all the pillars of the court had bands of silver. ¹⁸The screen for the gate of the court was woven of blue, purple, and scarlet thread, and of fine woven linen. The length was twenty cubits, and the height along its width was five cubits, corresponding to the hangings of the court. ¹⁹And there were four pillars with their four sockets of bronze; their hooks were silver, and the overlay of their capitals and their bands was silver. ²⁰All the ^dpegs of the tabernacle, and of the court all around, were bronze.

Materials of the Tabernacle

²¹¹This is the inventory of the tabernacle, ^ethe tabernacle of the Testimony, which was counted according to the commandment of Moses, for the service of the Levites, ^fby the hand of ^gIthamar, son of Aaron the priest.

²²^hBezalel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, made all that the LORD had commanded Moses. ²³And with him was ⁱAholiab the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan, an engraver and ²designer, a weaver of blue, purple, and scarlet thread, and of fine linen.

²⁴All the gold that was used in all the work of the holy place, that is, the gold of the ^joffering, was twenty-nine talents and seven hundred and thirty shekels, according to ^kthe shekel of the sanctuary. ²⁵And the silver from those who were ^lnumbered of the congregation was one hundred talents and one thousand seven hundred and seventy-five shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary: ²⁶^ma bekah for ³each man (that is, half a shekel, according to the shekel of the sanctuary), for everyone included in the

38:1-7 The construction of the altar of burnt offering. The corresponding instructions are found in 27:1-19. The details from the preceding section are presented again to demonstrate that all was done as the Lord had commanded. Throughout these sections, the pronoun **he** (see v. 1) refers to Bezalel (see 37:1; compare 35:30-34), who was working according to the commands that the Lord had given Moses. Bezalel was the overseer. He would have had many artisans working under his leadership (see 36:8).

38:8 The crafting of the bronze laver. For the corresponding instructions, see 30:17-21.

38:9-20 The building of the court of the tabernacle. For the corresponding instructions, see 27:9-19.

38:24 The weight of **all the gold** used in the work may have been about a ton. The **talent** weighed about 70 pounds and equaled 3,000 **shekels**.

38:25 the silver: The quantity of silver was simply enormous, about 7,000 pounds.

38:26 A bekah (half-shekel) of silver, required of each man over the age of 20, came from 603,550 people, which corresponds with other estimates of the Exodus community (see Num. 1). The number may be literal, but some contend that it is far too large for the time and the events of the Exodus.

numbering from twenty years old and above, for ⁿsix hundred and three thousand, five hundred and fifty *men*. ²⁷And from the hundred talents of silver were cast ^othe sockets of the sanctuary and the bases of the veil: one hundred sockets from the hundred talents, one talent for each socket. ²⁸Then from the one thousand seven hundred and seventy-five *shekels* he made hooks for the pillars, overlaid their capitals, and ^pmade bands for them.

²⁹The offering of bronze *was* seventy talents and two thousand four hundred shekels. ³⁰And with it he made the sockets for the door of the tabernacle of meeting, the bronze altar, the bronze grating for it, and all the utensils for the altar, ³¹the sockets for the court all around, the bases for the court gate, all the pegs for the tabernacle, and all the pegs for the court all around.

Making the Garments of the Priesthood

39 Of the ^ablue, purple, and scarlet thread they made ^bgarments¹ of ministry, for ministering in the ²holy place, and made the holy garments for Aaron, ^cas the LORD had commanded Moses.

Making the Ephod

^{2d}He made the ^eephod of gold, blue, purple, and scarlet thread, and of fine woven linen. ³And they beat the gold into thin sheets and cut *it into* threads, to work *it in with* the blue, purple, and scarlet thread, and the fine linen, *into* artistic designs. ⁴They made shoulder straps for it to couple *it* together; it was coupled together at its two edges. ⁵And the intricately woven band of his ephod that *was on it was* of the same workmanship, *woven of* gold, blue, purple, and scarlet thread, and of fine woven linen, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

^{6f}And they set onyx stones, enclosed in ³settings of gold; they were engraved, as signets are engraved, with the names of the sons of Israel. ⁷He put them on the shoulders of the ephod *as* ^gmemorial stones for the sons of Israel, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

²⁶ ^a Ex. 12:37; Num. 1:46; 26:51
²⁷ ^o Ex. 26:19, 21, 25, 32
²⁸ ^p Ex. 27:17

CHAPTER 39

¹ ^a Ex. 25:4; 35:23
^b Ex. 31:10; 35:19
^c Ex. 28:4 ¹ Or woven garments
² sanctuary
^{2d} Ex. 28:6-14
^e Lev. 8:7
^{6f} Ex. 28:9-11
³ plaited work
^{7g} Ex. 28:12, 29; Josh. 4:7

Making the Breastplate

^{8h}And he made the breastplate, artistically woven like the workmanship of the ephod, of gold, blue, purple, and scarlet thread, and of fine woven linen. ⁹They made the breastplate square by doubling it; a span *was* its length and a span its width when doubled. ¹⁰ⁱAnd they set in it four rows of stones: a row with a sardius, a topaz, and an emerald was the first row; ¹¹the second row, a turquoise, a sapphire, and a diamond; ¹²the third row, a jacinth, an agate, and an amethyst; ¹³the fourth row, a beryl, an onyx, and a jasper. *They were* enclosed in settings of gold in their mountings. ¹⁴*There were* ^jtwelve stones according to the names of the sons of Israel: according to their names, *engraved like* a signet, each one with its own name according to the twelve tribes. ¹⁵And they made chains for the breastplate at the ends, like braided cords of pure gold. ¹⁶They also made two settings of gold and two gold rings, and put the two rings on the two ends of the breastplate. ¹⁷And they put the two braided chains of gold in the two rings on the ends of the breastplate. ¹⁸The two ends of the two braided chains they fastened in the two settings, and put them on the shoulder straps of the ephod in the front. ¹⁹And they made two rings of gold and put *them* on the two ends of the breastplate, on the edge of it, which *was* on the inward side of the ephod. ²⁰They made two *other* gold rings and put them on the two shoulder straps, underneath the ephod toward its front, right at the seam above the intricately woven band of the ephod. ²¹And they bound the breastplate by means of its rings to the rings of the ephod with a blue cord, so that it would be above the intricately woven band of the ephod, and that the breastplate would not come loose from the ephod, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

Making the Other Priestly Garments

^{22k}He made the ^lrobe of the ephod of woven work, all of blue. ²³And *there was* an opening in the middle of the robe, like the opening in a coat of mail, *with* a woven binding all around the opening, so that it would not tear. ²⁴They made

^{8h} Ex. 28:15-30
¹⁰ⁱ Ex. 28:17
^{14j} Rev. 21:12
^{22k} Ex. 28:31-35
^l Ex. 29:5; Lev. 8:7

38:27, 28 Enormous amounts of **silver** appeared in the most mundane elements of the tabernacle and its furnishings. Although the tabernacle was a tent, it was not a makeshift dwelling. It was a glorious shrine that symbolized the presence of the living God in the midst of His people.

38:29 The weight of the **bronze** was about 5,000 pounds.

39:1 This verse is a summary statement that confirms the completion of the priests' garments first described in 28:1-4.

39:2-7 This section details the crafting of Aaron's **ephod**, according to the explicit instructions given to Moses in 28:5-14.

39:8-21 Here we read about the **breastplate**, made according to the directions spelled out in 28:15-30. The only detail not repeated is the placement of the Urim and the Thummim within the breastplate (see 28:30). This is reported in Lev. 8:8.

39:22-26 The fashioning of the **robe** is described, following the divine commands given to Moses in 28:31-35.

on the hem of the robe pomegranates of blue, purple, and scarlet, and of fine woven *linen*.²⁵ And they made ^mbells of pure gold, and put the bells between the pomegranates on the hem of the robe all around between the pomegranates:²⁶ a bell and a pomegranate, a bell and a pomegranate, all around the hem of the robe to ⁴minister in, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

²⁷ⁿ They made tunics, artistically woven of fine linen, for Aaron and his sons, ^{28o} a turban of fine linen, exquisite hats of fine linen, ^pshort trousers of fine woven linen, ^{29q} and a sash of fine woven linen with blue, purple, and scarlet *thread*, made by a weaver, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

^{30r} Then they made the plate of the holy crown of pure gold, and wrote on it an inscription *like* the engraving of a signet:

^sHOLINESS TO THE LORD.

³¹ And they tied to it a blue cord, to fasten *it* above on the turban, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

The Work Completed

³² Thus all the work of the tabernacle of the tent of meeting was ^tfinished. And the children of Israel did ^uaccording to all that the LORD had commanded Moses; so they did.³³ And they brought the tabernacle to Moses, the tent and all its furnishings: its clasps, its boards, its bars, its pillars, and its sockets;³⁴ the covering of ram skins dyed red, the covering of badger skins, and the veil of the covering;³⁵ the ark of the Testimony with its poles, and the mercy seat;³⁶ the table, all its

²⁵ ^m Ex. 28:33
²⁶ ⁴ *serve*
²⁷ ⁿ Ex. 28:39, 40
²⁸ ^o Ex. 28:4, 39;
Lev. 8:9; Ezek.
44:18 ^p Ex. 28:42;
Lev. 6:10
²⁹ ^q Ex. 28:39
³⁰ ^r Ex. 28:36, 37
^s Zech. 14:20
³² ^t Ex. 40:17 ^u Ex.
25:40; 39:42, 43

³⁶ ^v Ex. 25:23-30
⁴¹ ⁵ Or woven
garments ⁶ *serve*
⁴² ^w Ex. 35:10
⁴³ ^x Lev. 9:22, 23;
Num. 6:23-26; Josh.
22:6; 2 Sam. 6:18;
1 Kin. 8:14; 2 Chr.
30:27

CHAPTER 40

¹ ^a Ex. 25:1-31:18
² ^b Ex. 12:2; 13:4
^c Ex. 26:1, 30; 40:17
³ ^d Ex. 26:33; 40:21;
Lev. 16:2; Num. 4:5
¹ *screen*
⁴ ^e Ex. 26:35; 40:22
^f Ex. 25:30; 40:23
^g Ex. 40:24, 25
² *set up*
⁵ ^h Ex. 40:26
⁶ ⁱ Ex. 39:39

utensils, and the ^vshowbread;³⁷ the pure *gold* lampstand with its lamps (the lamps set in order), all its utensils, and the oil for light;³⁸ the gold altar, the anointing oil, and the sweet incense; the screen for the tabernacle door;³⁹ the bronze altar, its grate of bronze, its poles, and all its utensils; the laver with its base;⁴⁰ the hangings of the court, its pillars and its sockets, the screen for the court gate, its cords, and its pegs; all the utensils for the service of the tabernacle, for the tent of meeting;⁴¹ and the ⁵garments of ministry, to ⁶minister in the holy *place*: the holy garments for Aaron the priest, and his sons' garments, to minister as priests.

⁴² According to all that the LORD had commanded Moses, so the children of Israel ^wdid all the work.⁴³ Then Moses looked over all the work, and indeed they had done it; as the LORD had commanded, just so they had done it. And Moses ^xblessed them.

The Tabernacle Erected and Arranged

40 Then the LORD ^aspoke to Moses, saying: ² "On the first day of the ^bfirst month you shall set up ^cthe tabernacle of the tent of meeting. ^{3d} You shall put in it the ark of the Testimony, and ¹partition off the ark with the veil. ^{4e} You shall bring in the table and ^farrange the things that are to be set in order on it; ^gand you shall bring in the lampstand and ²light its lamps. ^{5h} You shall also set the altar of gold for the incense before the ark of the Testimony, and put up the screen for the door of the tabernacle. ⁶ Then you shall set the ⁱaltar of the burnt offering before the door of the tabernacle of the tent of

39:27-29 The fashioning of the **tunics**, the **turban**, and the **sash** follow the commands given in 28:39. **short trousers**: These were provided for the priests for modesty as they ascended the steps (see the command in 28:42).

39:30, 31 The fashioning of the **plate** that was attached to the **turban** of the high priest followed precisely the commands that the Lord had given to Moses (28:36-38).

39:32-43 These verses list **all the work** that God had commanded through Moses. It was now completed. A mood of celebration pervades these verses. One can sense the pride of accomplishment coupled with the reverence for all of these holy objects.

39:43 The words **Moses looked** suggest that Moses conducted a final inspection. He was satisfied that everything was finished according to the pattern he had seen on the mountain. Then **Moses blessed them**, a magnanimous gesture of approval for the work accomplished.

40:2 This **first month** was the month Abib, also called Nisan (see 12:2; 13:4). The tabernacle was completed nine months after the arrival of the people at Mt. Sinai (see 19:1) and two weeks before the second celebration of the Passover (see v. 17).

40:3-8 Moses now directed the placement of furnishings in the tabernacle, including the **ark**, the **table** of showbread, the **altar ... for the incense**, the **altar of the burnt offering**, the

laver, and the **court** along with appropriate **screens**. The lamps were to be lit and **water** was to be placed in the laver. See ch. 25 for a list of the furnishings.

tabernacle

(Heb. *mishkan*) (25:9; 26:1; 40:2) Strong's #4908

The word *tabernacle* signifies "a dwelling place" and is related to the verb meaning "to dwell," "to settle down," and "to live among" (29:45; Gen. 14:13). In Exodus, the tabernacle is a temporary place to live—a tent (see also Song 1:8). God's tent, the tabernacle, functioned as an object lesson in God's holiness and a symbol of His divine presence among His people (33:7-11). It was a sign that God wanted to live among His people and establish an intimate relationship with them (5:8, 9). The ultimate outworking of that desire was that Jesus Christ, who was Himself God, became a man. As the Son of God, Jesus lived among us, walked with us, and revealed God the Father to us (John 1:14-18). This is why His name is Immanuel, meaning "God with us" (Matt. 1:23).

meeting. ⁷ And ^jyou shall set the laver between the tabernacle of meeting and the altar, and put water in it. ⁸ You shall set up the court all around, and hang up the screen at the court gate.

⁹ “And you shall take the anointing oil, and ^kanoint the tabernacle and all that is in it; and you shall hallow it and all its utensils, and it shall be holy. ¹⁰ You shall ^lanoint the altar of the burnt offering and all its utensils, and consecrate the altar. ^m The altar shall be most holy. ¹¹ And you shall anoint the laver and its base, and consecrate it.

^{12 n} “Then you shall bring Aaron and his sons to the door of the tabernacle of meeting and wash them with water. ¹³ You shall put the holy ^ogarments on Aaron, ^pand anoint him and consecrate him, that he may minister to Me as priest. ¹⁴ And you shall bring his sons and clothe them with tunics. ¹⁵ You shall anoint them, as you anointed their father, that they may minister to Me as priests; for their anointing shall surely be ^qan everlasting priesthood throughout their generations.”

¹⁶ Thus Moses did; according to all that the LORD had commanded him, so he did.

¹⁷ And it came to pass in the first month of the second year, on the first *day* of the month, *that* the ^rtabernacle was ³raised up. ¹⁸ So Moses raised up the tabernacle, fastened its sockets, set up its boards, put in its bars, and raised up its pillars. ¹⁹ And he spread out the tent over the tabernacle and put the covering of the tent on top of it, as the LORD had commanded Moses. ²⁰ He took ^sthe Testimony and put *it* into the ark, inserted the poles through the rings of the ark, and put the mercy seat on top of the ark. ²¹ And he brought

7 ^t Ex. 30:18; 40:30
9 ^k Ex. 30:26; Lev. 8:10
10 ^l Ex. 30:26-30
^m Ex. 29:36, 37
12 ⁿ Ex. 29:4-9; Lev. 8:1-13
13 ^o Ex. 29:5; 39:1, 41 ^p [Ex. 28:41]; Lev. 8:12
15 ^q Ex. 29:9; Num. 25:13
17 ^r Ex. 40:2; Num. 7:1 ³ erected
20 ^s Ex. 25:16; Deut. 10:5; 1 Kin. 8:9;
2 Chr. 5:10; Heb. 9:4

21 ^t Ex. 26:33
22 ^u Ex. 26:35
23 ^v Ex. 40:4; Lev. 24:5, 6
24 ^w Ex. 26:35
25 ^x Ex. 25:37; 30:7, 8; 40:4; Lev. 24:3, 4
26 ^y Ex. 30:1, 6; 40:5
27 ^z Ex. 30:7
28 ^a Ex. 26:36; 40:5
29 ^b Ex. 40:6 ^c Ex. 29:38-42
30 ^d Ex. 30:18; 40:7
31 ^e Ex. 30:19, 20; John 13:8
32 ^f Ex. 30:19
33 ^g Ex. 27:9-18; 40:8 ^h [Heb. 3:2-5]
34 ⁱ Ex. 29:43; Lev. 16:2; Num. 9:15;
2 Chr. 5:13; Is. 6:4
1 Kin. 8:10, 11
^k Lev. 6:9, 23

the ark into the tabernacle, ⁱhung up the veil of the covering, and partitioned off the ark of the Testimony, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

^{22 u} He put the table in the tabernacle of meeting, on the north side of the tabernacle, outside the veil; ^{23 v} and he set the bread in order upon it before the LORD, as the LORD had commanded Moses. ^{24 w} He put the lampstand in the tabernacle of meeting, across from the table, on the south side of the tabernacle; ^{25 x} and ^yhe lit the lamps before the LORD, as the LORD had commanded Moses. ^{26 y} He put the gold altar in the tabernacle of meeting in front of the veil; ^{27 z} and he burned sweet incense on it, as the LORD had commanded Moses. ^{28 a} He hung up the screen *at* the door of the tabernacle. ^{29 b} And he put the altar of burnt offering *before* the door of the tabernacle of the tent of meeting, and ^coffered upon it the burnt offering and the grain offering, as the LORD had commanded Moses. ^{30 d} He set the laver between the tabernacle of meeting and the altar, and put water there for washing; ^{31 e} and Moses, Aaron, and his sons would ^fwash their hands and their feet *with water* from it. ³² Whenever they went into the tabernacle of meeting, and when they came near the altar, they washed, ^fas the LORD had commanded Moses. ^{33 g} And he raised up the court all around the tabernacle and the altar, and hung up the screen of the court gate. So Moses ^hfinished the work.

The Cloud and the Glory

^{34 i} Then the ^jcloud covered the tabernacle of meeting, and the ^kglory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. ³⁵ And Moses

40:9-11 Following the placement of the furnishings, the Lord instructed Moses to **anoint** everything in the tabernacle so that it would be **holy** (separated to the Lord). For the anointing, Moses would have used the special olive oil that was mixed with spices (see 30:22-33). **The altar shall be most holy**, in Hebrew, is a superlative literally meaning “holy of holies.”

40:12-15 The Lord’s next command to Moses was to prepare the priests for their holy service. These verses recall the extensive commands in ch. 29. **wash them**: The priests had to be clean before they were dressed in their **holy garments** (see the description at 28:1-4). Moses, acting as God’s representative, was then to **anoint** them as he had anointed the furnishings. The family of Aaron was to have an **everlasting priesthood**. The same declaration also appears in ch. 29 (see 28:1).

40:16 Moses scrupulously obeyed every detail of God’s commands (see 7:10). Since Israel’s welfare depended on the obedience of its leaders, Moses’ faithfulness allowed untold blessings to follow God’s wandering people. **did . . . all that the LORD had commanded him**: The repetition of this phrase emphasizes that Moses precisely obeyed God.

40:20, 21 **The Testimony** is the stone tablets of the Ten Commandments (see 25:16). **the mercy seat on top of the ark**: See the description in 25:17-22.

40:22, 23 **the table . . . the bread**: See the description in 25:23-30.

40:24, 25 **the lampstand . . . lamps**: See the description in 25:31-40; 27:20, 21.

40:26, 27 **the gold altar**: See the description in 30:1-10. **incense**: See the description in 30:34-38.

40:28 **the screen**: See the description in 26:36, 37.

40:29 **the altar of burnt offering**: See the description in 27:1-8.

40:30-32 **the laver** (v. 30): See the description in 30:17-21.

40:33 **the court**: See the description in 27:9-19.

40:34 **cloud . . . glory**: When everything the Lord had commanded had been completed, He came near in an epiphany, a dramatic descent that manifested His glory among His people (see 19:20; 34:5). When the Lord came near in the event described at 19:20, the people were terrified. But in His coming near the tabernacle described here, the people were overjoyed. This was not a descent in judgment, but in mercy. The **glory of the LORD** filling the tabernacle demonstrated His Presence with the Israelites, His significance to them, and His awe-inspiring wonder. The words of John 1:1-18 are appropriate to recall here. In the Incarnation, the glory of God was manifest not in a tent, but in His Son.

40:35 Although Moses had been intimately involved in preparing the tabernacle, its completion meant that the glory of the Lord was present and that even Moses could not enter it. **The cloud rested**

^lwas not able to enter the tabernacle of meeting, because the cloud rested above it, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. ^{36 m}Whenever the cloud was taken up from above the tabernacle, the children of Israel would ⁴go onward in all their journeys. ³⁷But ⁿif the cloud was not taken up, then they did not journey

³⁵ ^l[Lev. 16:2];
1 Kin. 8:11; 2 Chr.
5:13, 14
³⁶ ^mEx. 13:21, 22;
Num. 9:17; Neh.
9:19 ⁴journey
³⁷ ⁿNum. 9:19-22
³⁸ ^oEx. 13:21;
Num. 9:15;

till the day that it was taken up. ³⁸For ^othe cloud of the LORD *was* above the tabernacle by day, and fire was over it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel, throughout all their journeys.

Ps. 78:14; Is. 4:5

speaks of God living among His people (see John 1:14). Throughout this section we encounter two attributes of God. One is His great grace and tender mercy. The King of glory was in the midst of His people! The second is His indescribable holiness. The Lord filled the tent and no one could draw near!

40:36, 37 the cloud: The glory of the Lord, which now was among His people also directed the Israelites' movement (see 13:21, 22; Num. 9:15-23). The appearance of His glory is sometimes called the Shekinah or the Shekinah glory, from the Hebrew for "to dwell."

40:38 the cloud of the Lord: How wonderful that the Book of Exodus concludes with this image of the gracious God, hovering protectively over His people. Christians today emphasize the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit in their lives (see Acts 2). But God was also present with His people before Jesus came. A faithful Israelite follower of God could see the tabernacle and realize that God was there in His splendor and power. And with Him the people advanced to Canaan, the land He had promised to them.

THE THIRD BOOK OF MOSES CALLED

LEVITICUS



GOD'S CONCERN FOR HIS PEOPLE and His desire for fellowship with them becomes more and more clear to anyone who reads carefully through the Book of Leviticus. Every detailed regulation recorded in Leviticus is a revelation *from God through Moses for His people*. With these laws, God personally instructed the Israelites how to live before Him. Christian readers sometimes get lost in all the regulations governing various types of sacrifices, what was clean or unclean, who was eligible to be a priest, and so on. However, when these details are placed within the context of God's desire to have fellowship with the Israelites and live with them, the seemingly "dead" Law takes on a new life.

Name The name of the book is derived from the name of the tribe of Levi, the tribe that supplied the priests for Israel. Leviticus addresses many of the activities of the priests. It gives extensive instructions for the sacrificial system that atoned for both ceremonial and moral impurity. Yet Leviticus is not merely a manual for priests. It was intended for the entire Israelite community, with at least two purposes: (1) that people would know and value their privileges and responsibilities before God; and (2) that priests could not gain oppressive power over the people with any monopoly on the knowledge of how to approach God.

Author and Date Jewish and Christian tradition has regarded Moses as the author of Leviticus. After delivering Israel out of Egypt, God revealed His covenant to Moses at Mount Sinai. When God entered into a covenant with the Israelites, He transformed them from a band of refugee slaves into a nation. Leviticus records a large part of that covenant. If Moses or a scribe acting as his secretary wrote down the revelation as God gave it, Leviticus was composed shortly after 1440 B.C. or shortly after 1290 B.C., depending on the date assigned to the Exodus.

Critical biblical scholarship of the late nineteenth century challenged the traditional dating and authorship of Leviticus. According to that scholarship, which is still influential today, Leviticus was written much later, during the postexilic period. This would be a date after 530 B.C. During the past century, however, our understanding of the history, languages, cultures, and religions of the ancient Middle East including Israel has advanced greatly. Many of the premises on which the late dating of Leviticus was based have been shown to be unreliable.

Although Leviticus does not itself claim to be written by Moses, twenty of the twenty-seven chapters begin, "And the LORD spoke to Moses," or a variation of that statement. The phrase occurs 14 other places in the book as well. The intent is that this is the word of God given through Moses at Mount Sinai. As with the rest of the Pentateuch, later editorial activity may have occurred. The material could have been arranged by someone other than Moses, though Moses certainly was as capable of its arrangement as anyone. The important point is that Leviticus is what it says it is, a series of revelations from God about how God's people may approach Him through sacrifice and honor Him in holy living.

Purpose The purpose of Leviticus was to show the Israelites how they could live in ritual and moral purity. When they maintained their purity, God could live among them and they could approach Him in worship. Many

of the required sacrifices described in Leviticus were for the atonement of sins. On the other hand, the voluntary sacrifices brought the people to fellowship and feast with God, their family, and others.

The instructions in Leviticus were not given to the Israelites in order to help them achieve their own salvation. Salvation can never be earned. It is always a gift of God's grace appropriated by faith. These instructions were given to a redeemed nation so that its members would know how to maintain their fellowship with God.

The distinctions between clean and unclean and the various laws for holy living promoted the Israelites' own welfare and marked them out as a people separated to God. Israel's witness to God's holiness and their visible well-being as a result of holy living before Him would vividly demonstrate to their neighbors God's power and His care for His people. The directive found first in 11:44 and many times afterward clearly expresses this purpose for the laws: "You shall be holy; for I am holy."

Modern Christians can learn much from Leviticus. The holiness of God, the necessity of holy living, the great cost of atonement and forgiveness, the privilege and responsibility of presenting only our best to God, the generosity of God that enables His people to be generous—these are only some of the lessons. Leviticus reveals the holiness of God and His love for His people in ways found nowhere else in the Bible. Ultimately, Leviticus calls God's people of all ages to the great adventure of patterning life after God's holy purposes.

CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

Leviticus is replete with types and allusions to the person and work of Jesus Christ. The five offerings described in chapters 1–7 all point to Christ. The burnt offering typifies Christ's total offering in submission to His Father's will. The grain offering typifies Christ's sinless service. The peace offering alludes to the fellowship that believers have with God through the work of the Cross. The sin offering typifies Christ as our guilt-bearer. The trespass offering pictures Christ's payment for the damage of sin.

Leviticus points vividly to Jesus. He alone is the spotless Lamb who can make an eternal and final payment for sin. He alone is the perfect High Priest who can represent human rebels before the holy Judge of the universe.

c. 1730 B.C.

The Israelites are enslaved in Egypt

c. 1527 B.C.

Moses is born

c. 1446 B.C.

The Israelites escape from Egypt

c. 1445 B.C.

God gives the laws of Leviticus

c. 1406 B.C.

40 years of wilderness wandering end

c. 1405 B.C.

The conquest of Canaan begins



Standing stones on the summit of Gezer represent the type of sacred stones that Israelite law prohibited (Lev. 26:1).

LEVITICUS OUTLINE

- I. The system of sacrifices 1:1—7:38
 - A. The burnt offering 1:1–17
 - B. The grain offering 2:1–16
 - C. The peace offering 3:1–17
 - D. The sin offering 4:1—5:13
 - E. The trespass or reparation offering 5:14—6:7
 - F. Instructions about offerings 6:8—7:38
- II. Ordination of priests 8:1—10:20
 - A. Ordination of Aaron as high priest and his sons as priests 8:1–36
 - B. First sacrifices of the newly ordained priests 9:1–24
 - C. The sin of Nadab and Abihu and consequent regulations for the priests 10:1–20
- III. Laws concerning what is clean or unclean 11:1—15:33
 - A. Clean and unclean animals 11:1–47
 - B. Purification following childbirth 12:1–8
 - C. Uncleaness from skin diseases and uncleaness in garments 13:1–59
 - D. Purification following skin diseases and purification of dwellings 14:1–57
 - E. Uncleaness from bodily discharges 15:1–33
- IV. The Day of Atonement: purification from moral uncleaness 16:1–34
- V. The Holiness Code: laws for holy living 17:1—26:46
 - A. Killing animals for food 17:1–16
 - B. Purity in sexual relations and various life situations 18:1—19:37
 - C. Penalties for violations 20:1–27
 - D. Purity and wholeness in the lives of the priests and in sacrificial animals 21:1—22:33
 - E. The seven holy convocations 23:1–44
 - F. Pure oil and holy bread 24:1–9
 - G. Punishment for blasphemy 24:10–23
 - H. The Sabbath year, the Year of Jubilee, and redemption 25:1–55
 - I. Blessings for obedience and curses for disobedience 26:1–46
- VI. Appendix: The redemption of gifts and tithes 27:1–34



Model of the tabernacle and courtyard

The Burnt Offering

Now the LORD ^acalled to Moses, and spoke to him ^bfrom the tabernacle of meeting, saying, ²“Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: ^c“When any one of you brings an offering to the LORD, you shall bring your offering of the livestock—of the herd and of the flock.

³“If his offering *is* a burnt sacrifice of the herd, let him offer a male ^dwithout blemish; he shall offer it of his own free will at the door of the tabernacle of meeting before the LORD. ^{4e}Then he shall put his hand on the head of the burnt offering, and it will be ^faccepted on his behalf ^gto make atonement for him. ⁵He shall kill the ^hbull before the LORD; ⁱand the priests, Aaron’s sons, shall bring the blood ^jand sprinkle the blood all around on the altar that *is by* the door of the tabernacle of meeting. ⁶And he shall ^kskin the burnt offering and cut it into its pieces. ⁷The sons of Aaron the priest shall put ^lfire on the altar, and ^mlay the wood in order on the fire. ⁸Then the priests, Aaron’s sons, shall lay the parts,

CHAPTER 1

1 ^a Ex. 19:3; 25:22; Num. 7:89 ^b Ex. 40:34
2 ^c Lev. 22:18, 19
3 ^d Ex. 12:5; Lev. 22:20–24; Deut. 15:21; Eph. 5:27; Heb. 9:14; 1 Pet. 1:19
4 ^e Ex. 29:10, 15, 19; Lev. 3:2, 8, 13; 4:15 ^f [Rom. 12:1]; Phil. 4:18 ^g Lev. 4:20, 26, 31; 2 Chr. 29:23, 24
5 ^h Mic. 6:6 ⁱ 2 Chr. 35:11 ^j Lev. 1:11; 3:2, 8, 13; [Heb. 12:24; 1 Pet. 1:2]
6 ^k Lev. 7:8
7 ^l Lev. 6:8–13; Mal. 1:10 ^m Gen. 22:9
9 ⁿ Gen. 8:21; [Ezek. 20:28, 41; 2 Cor. 2:15] ^o soothing or pleasing aroma
10 ^p Ex. 12:5; Lev. 1:3; Ezek. 43:22; [1 Pet. 1:19]
11 ^q Ex. 24:6; 40:22; Lev. 1:5; Ezek. 8:5
13 ^r Num. 15:4–7; 28:12–14
14 ^s Gen. 15:9; Lev. 5:7, 11; 12:8;

the head, and the fat in order on the wood that *is* on the fire upon the altar; ⁹but he shall wash its entrails and its legs with water. And the priest shall burn all on the altar as a burnt sacrifice, an offering made by fire, a ^usweet ^varoma to the LORD.

¹⁰“If his offering *is* of the flocks—of the sheep or of the goats—as a burnt sacrifice, he shall bring a male ^wwithout blemish. ¹¹^pHe shall kill it on the north side of the altar before the LORD; and the priests, Aaron’s sons, shall sprinkle its blood all around on the altar. ¹²And he shall cut it into its pieces, with its head and its fat; and the priest shall lay them in order on the wood that *is* on the fire upon the altar; ¹³but he shall wash the entrails and the legs with water. Then the priest shall bring *it* all and burn *it* on the altar; *it is* a burnt sacrifice, an ^qoffering made by fire, a sweet aroma to the LORD.

¹⁴“And if the burnt sacrifice of his offering to the LORD *is* of birds, then he shall bring his offering of ^rturtledoves or

Luke 2:24

1:1 Now connects Leviticus with Exodus. The last sections of Exodus describe the building of the tabernacle, the design of the priests’ garments, and the coming of God’s glory to dwell in the tabernacle. God was now ready to instruct Moses on *how* the Israelites should approach Him in the earthly dwelling they had built for Him. **the LORD called to Moses, and spoke:** Moses had not created these instructions. They came *from* God, *through* Moses, God’s prophet (see Deut. 34:10). **The tabernacle of meeting** was the center of Israel’s public worship until Solomon’s temple was built in Jerusalem centuries later. The tabernacle’s plan is revealed in Ex. 25–30 and its construction is described in Ex. 36–39.

1:2 The children of Israel means “the people of Israel.” Now that God had entered into covenant with them, Israel was a people and no longer just a band of refugees (Ex. 6:2–8). **any one:** This is a general term and specifically includes women. The term can refer to those who are not descendants of Abraham. Any person may come to faith in God and worship with God’s people (Num. 15:14, 16, 29).

1:3 The burnt sacrifice was the only sacrifice that was entirely consumed on the altar. It foreshadows the total sacrifice of Christ on the Cross. It also symbolizes the fact that the worshiper must hold nothing in reserve when coming to God; everything is consumed in the relationship between God and the sincere worshiper. **male without blemish:** A male without blemish would have been prime breeding stock and was a potential source of wool and meat—or of money if sold. To offer it on the altar was a real sacrifice. The principle still holds: God’s people are to offer their best as a symbol that they are offering all that is theirs. A person should offer **of his own free will**. True sacrifice to the Lord is to be done with an attitude of joy—not half-hearted obedience. **door of the tabernacle:** A person’s sins had to be atoned for before he or she could come before God. **before the LORD:** God was present everywhere, but His presence was felt in an unusual manner at the site of His holy worship.

1:4 Each worshiper brought his or her own offering and then placed his or her own **hand** on the animal’s **head**. No one could send another person to offer sacrifices for his or her own sins. By the same token, no one today can send someone else to accept the atonement that Jesus Christ purchased with His sacrifice on Calvary.

1:5 the priests, Aaron’s sons: Aaron was Moses’ older brother and the one whom God had designated to be high priest of Israel (Ex. 28:1). Aaron’s sons were Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar. They

and their descendants would be priests in the tabernacle. For details concerning Nadab and Abihu’s untimely end, see ch. 10. **sprinkle the blood:** The blood, the bearer of life, was the most important part of the sacrifice. The lifeblood of the sacrificial animal on the altar substituted for the life of the guilty worshiper.

1:9 sweet aroma to the LORD: Never, in this image or elsewhere, does Scripture represent God as eating the offerings brought to Him, as the pagan gods were thought to do. When sacrifice was done in faith and with a free will (v. 3), it was accepted by the Lord as desirable or “sweet.” The same is true of the death of His Son. Because the death of Jesus provided our salvation, Isaiah said, “It pleased the LORD to bruise Him” (Is. 53:10, italics added).

1:10–13 The procedure for the burnt offering was the same when the animal was a sheep or a goat (Ex. 12:5).

1:14–17 While the richest Israelites offered bulls, most of the people offered sheep or goats. The poorest were allowed to bring **turtledoves or young pigeons**. All sacrifices required the active participation of the worshiper. The Israelite who brought a pair of birds was required to help prepare them for the altar. The different offerings were accepted by God without prejudice or favoritism. Economic standing is not a measure of acceptability before God (James 2:1–9).

offering

(Heb. *qorban*) (1:2; 2:1; Ezek. 20:28) Strong’s #7133

This Hebrew word is derived from the verb “to bring near,” and it literally means “that which one brings near to God.” The fact that the Israelites had such an opportunity to present their gifts to God reveals His mercy. Even though they were sinful and rebellious, God instituted a sacrificial system in which they could reconcile themselves to Him. Jesus’ death on the Cross was the ultimate offering, the offering that ended the need for any others. For through the sacrifice of His sinless life, we have once for all been reconciled to God (Heb. 10:10–18). An appropriate response to Jesus’ death for us is to offer our lives as living sacrifices to God (Rom. 12:1).

BIBLE TIMES & CULTURE NOTES



Olives

The olive touched nearly every phase of Jewish life. Olive wood was used in carpentry, the fruit served as food, and the oil found its way into a variety of medicines and ointments, as well as being fuel for light. The cultivation of olive trees was routinely simple, requiring only occasional loosening of the soil. Olive trees flourish in the shallow, rocky soil of Palestine and require little water. However, the trees cannot withstand severe cold, so they find southern Palestine more hospitable than the north. Olives ripen slowly and the farmer picks them as time permits. Olives can be eaten after being pickled, but they are valued most for their oil, which is used as a substitute for scarcer animal fats. In ancient times, farmers extracted the oil in stone presses by rolling a thick stone wheel over the olives on another flat, circular stone which was grooved to carry the oil into a basin (Mic. 6:15).



An olive press. Ancient farmers would put olives on the horizontal rock and roll the thick stone wheel over them to extract the oil.

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young pigeons. ¹⁵The priest shall bring it to the altar, ²wring off its head, and burn it on the altar; its blood shall be drained out at the side of the altar. ¹⁶And he shall remove its crop with its feathers and cast it ^abeside the altar on the east side, into

¹⁵ ² Lit. *nip or chop off*
¹⁶ ³ Lev. 6:10

the place for ashes. ¹⁷Then he shall split it at its wings, *but* ⁴shall not divide it completely; and the priest shall burn it on the altar, on the wood that is on the fire. ⁴It is a burnt sacrifice, an offering made by fire, a ³sweet aroma to the LORD.

The Grain Offering

2 ¹When anyone offers ^aa grain offering to the LORD, his offering shall be of fine flour. And he shall pour oil on it, and put ^bfrankincense on it. ²He shall bring it to Aaron's sons, the priests, one of whom shall take from it his handful of fine flour and oil with all the frankincense. And the priest shall burn ^cit as a memorial on the altar, an offering made by fire, a sweet aroma to the LORD. ^{3d}The rest of the grain offering shall be Aaron's and his ^esons'. ^fIt is most holy of the offerings to the LORD made by fire.

⁴And if you bring as an offering a grain offering baked in the oven, it shall be unleavened cakes of fine flour mixed with oil, or unleavened wafers ^ganointed ¹ with oil. ⁵But if your offering is a grain offering baked in a ²pan, it shall be of fine flour, unleavened, mixed with oil. ⁶You shall break it in pieces and pour oil on it; it is a grain offering.

⁷If your offering is a grain offering baked in a ^hcovered pan, it shall be made of fine flour with oil. ⁸You shall bring the grain offering that is made of these things to the LORD. And when it is presented to the priest, he shall bring it to the altar. ⁹Then the priest shall take from the grain offering ⁱa memorial portion, and burn it on the altar. It is an ^joffering made by fire, a sweet aroma to the LORD. ¹⁰And ^kwhat is left of the grain offering shall be Aaron's and his sons'. It is most holy of the offerings to the LORD made by fire.

¹¹No grain offering which you bring to the LORD shall be made with ^lleaven, for you shall burn no leaven nor any

¹⁷ ¹ Gen. 15:10;
Lev. 5:8 ⁴ Lev. 1:9,
13 ³ soothing or
pleasing aroma

CHAPTER 2

¹ ^a Lev. 6:14; 9:17;
Num. 15:4 ^b Lev.
5:11
² ^c Lev. 2:9; 5:12;
6:15; 24:7; Acts 10:4
³ ^d Lev. 7:9 ^e Lev.
6:6; 10:12, 13 ^f Ex.
29:37; Num. 18:9
⁴ ^g Ex. 29:2 ¹ spread
⁵ ² flat plate or
griddle
⁷ ^h Lev. 7:9
⁹ ⁱ Lev. 2:2, 16; 5:12;
6:15 / Ex. 29:18
¹⁰ ^k Lev. 2:3; 6:16
¹¹ ^j Ex. 23:18; 34:25;
Lev. 6:16, 17; [Matt.
16:12; Mark 8:15;
Luke 12:1; 1 Cor. 5:8;
Gal. 5:9]

2:1 Anyone translates an inclusive term, emphasizing that male or female, native Israelite or convert, could come to God with an offering (see 1:2). **Fine flour** was from the best grain and was free from impurities. This flour was fit for the king's table (1 Kin. 4:22; Ezek. 16:13) and was served to honored guests (Gen. 18:6). As with animal sacrifices, the offering was to be from the best the worshiper had. Olive **oil**, an important product of the Promised Land, was a primary part of the diet and a prominent symbol of blessing and prosperity. **Frankincense** was a costly incense from South Arabia and East Africa. Both its fragrance and value enhanced the grain offering. As an imported luxury, frankincense had to be bought with money. By including frankincense in this offering, every aspect of an Israelite's wealth was made a part of what he or she offered to God. **2:2** The handful of the offering burned on the altar included **all the frankincense**. This helped to make the offering a **sweet aroma to the LORD**.

2:3 **Aaron's and his sons'**: A significant portion of the priests' daily food came from this part of the grain offering. **most holy**: Only

the consecrated priests were allowed to eat the offerings, and only within the tabernacle (6:16). What is holy must be used in a holy place, by holy people, in a holy manner.

2:4-7 These verses list three types of **cooked grain offerings**: (1) bread **baked in the oven**; (2) cakes **baked or fried in a pan**—that is, on a flat plate or griddle; and (3) cakes **baked in a covered pan**. All were made of **fine flour mixed with oil**. Since most of these offerings were eaten by the priests, frankincense was left out of them. Frankincense would have permeated a cake if baked into it. **2:8-10** The priests' presentation of these cooked grain offerings on the **altar** was essentially the same as for the uncooked grain offerings.

2:11 Prohibiting **leaven** in grain offerings that were burned on the altar might have been based on the same principle that prohibited eating the blood of animals. As blood is the life force of animals, leaven represents the life force of the vegetable kingdom. It is also possible that leaven and honey were both prohibited because they cause fermentation, which represents corruption.

honey in any offering to the LORD made by fire. ^{12m} As for the offering of the firstfruits, you shall offer them to the LORD, but they shall not be burned on the altar for a sweet aroma. ¹³ And every offering of your grain offering ⁿ you shall season with salt; you shall not allow ^o the salt of the covenant of your God to be lacking from your grain offering. ^p With all your offerings you shall offer salt.

¹⁴ If you offer a grain offering of your firstfruits to the LORD, ^q you shall offer for the grain offering of your firstfruits green heads of grain roasted on the fire, grain beaten from ^r full heads. ¹⁵ And ^s you shall put oil on it, and lay frankincense on it. It is a grain offering. ¹⁶ Then the priest shall burn ^t the memorial portion: *part* of its beaten grain and *part* of its oil, with all the frankincense, as an offering made by fire to the LORD.

The Peace Offering

3 When his offering is a ^a sacrifice of a peace offering, if he offers *it* of the herd, whether male or female, he shall offer it ^b without ¹ blemish before the LORD. ² And ^c he shall lay his hand on the head of his offering, and kill it *at* the door of the tabernacle of meeting; and Aaron's sons, the priests, shall ^d sprinkle the

^{12 m} Ex. 22:29; 34:22; Lev. 23:10, 11, 17, 18
^{13 n} [Mark 9:49, 50; Col. 4:6] ^o Num. 18:19; 2 Chr. 13:5
^p Ezek. 43:24
^{14 q} Lev. 23:10, 14
^r 2 Kin. 4:42
^{15 s} Lev. 2:1
^{16 t} Lev. 2:2

CHAPTER 3

^{1 a} Lev. 7:11, 29
^b Lev. 1:3; 22:20-24
¹ imperfection or defect
^{2 c} Ex. 29:10, 11, 16, 20; Lev. 1:4, 5; 16:21
^d Lev. 1:5

^{3 c} Ex. 29:13, 22; Lev. 1:8; 3:16; 4:8, 9
^{5 f} Ex. 29:13; Lev. 6:12; 7:28-34
^g 2 Chr. 35:14
^h Num. 28:3-10
ⁱ Num. 15:8-10
^{6 j} Lev. 3:1; 22:20-24
^{7 k} Num. 15:4, 5
^l 1 Kin. 8:62 ^m Lev. 17:8, 9

blood all around on the altar. ³ Then he shall offer from the sacrifice of the peace offering an offering made by fire to the LORD. ^e The fat that covers the entrails and all the fat that *is* on the entrails, ⁴ the two kidneys and the fat that *is* on them by the flanks, and the fatty lobe *attached* to the liver above the kidneys, he shall remove; ⁵ and Aaron's sons ^f shall burn it on the altar upon the ^g burnt sacrifice, which *is* on the wood that *is* on the fire, as an ^h offering made by fire, a ⁱ sweet aroma to the LORD.

⁶ If his offering as a sacrifice of a peace offering to the LORD *is* of the flock, *whether* male or female, ^j he shall offer it without blemish. ⁷ If he offers a ^k lamb as his offering, then he shall ^l offer it ^m before the LORD. ⁸ And he shall lay his hand on the head of his offering, and kill it before the tabernacle of meeting; and Aaron's sons shall sprinkle its blood all around on the altar.

⁹ Then he shall offer from the sacrifice of the peace offering, as an offering made by fire to the LORD, its fat *and* the whole fat tail which he shall remove close to the backbone. And the fat that covers the entrails and all the fat that *is* on the entrails, ¹⁰ the two kidneys and the fat that *is* on them by the flanks, and the fatty lobe *attached* to the liver above the kidneys, he

2:12 A separate offering of the **firstfruits** of the harvest is described later (23:9-21).

2:13 **The salt of the covenant of your God** was to be used in every grain offering. Every such offering was a reminder of the covenant God had made with Israel at Sinai and of the worshiper's obligation and privilege to remain faithful to God and God's covenant. Jesus may have had covenant faithfulness in mind when He told His followers, "You are the salt of the earth" (Matt. 5:13).

2:14-16 This **grain offering** was prepared and presented at the altar in the same way as those already described. As they had to be prepared from fine flour, so this one had to be prepared from the first of the year's grain harvest. The principle was reaffirmed: only the best of a person's resources is good enough to offer to God.

3:1 **peace offering:** The Hebrew word for *peace* means "wholeness, completeness, soundness, health." When a person has this, in all its dimensions, that person is at peace. The peace offerings were times of feasting, drinking, talking, singing, and enjoying salvation as a great gift from God (see 7:11-21). Paul describes Jesus Christ as our perfect peace offering (see Col. 1:20). Unlike the burnt sacrifice, the peace offering could be either **male or female**. Like the burnt sacrifice, it had to be **without blemish** because it was offered **before the LORD**.

3:2 As with the burnt sacrifice, the presenter was an active participant in the peace offering (see vv. 8, 13). He brought the animal, laid **his hand** on its **head**, and killed it. Then the priests sprinkled **the blood all around on the altar**. The blood, representing life, was the first sacrifice to God.

3:3, 4 **The fat**, the **two kidneys**, and the fatty lobe attached to the **liver** (vv. 9, 10, 14, 15) specifically belonged to God. The fat was the most prized portion of the meat. The kidneys were viewed as the seat of the emotions. The liver was the essential organ for telling the future in the pagan cultures surrounding Israel (see Ezek. 21:21); such fortunetelling was strictly forbidden in Israel (Deut. 18:10). These portions, burned on the altar, were given to God as the best of the sacrificial animal. In addition, the offering of the fatty lobe

attached to the liver demonstrated reliance on God for the future rather than on pagan gods. Burning the liver, or even a portion of it, meant that it could not be used for fortunetelling.

3:5 **Upon the burnt sacrifice** indicates that the peace offering normally followed the burnt offering, which was entirely consumed on the altar. Being reconciled to God through the burnt offering, the worshiper was in a position to fellowship with God and with his or her family by sharing in the feast of the peace offering. Repentance and reconciliation must come before genuine fellowship.

3:7 **before the LORD:** Not a redundancy, but a reminder of the Lamb of God and that all offerings are offered before God (1:3).

3:9 **the whole fat tail:** The tail of the Palestinian broad-tailed sheep is almost entirely fat and can weigh more than 16 pounds. This explains its special mention in the regulations for offering the fat of the sheep.

blood

(Heb. *dam*) (3:2; 4:5; Ex. 12:13; Is. 1:11) Strong's #1818

This word is related to the Hebrew word *'adam*, which means "red" (Gen. 25:30), and refers to the blood of animals (Ex. 23:18) or human beings (Gen. 4:10). In the Scriptures, blood may be a synonym for death (Judg. 9:24) or even murder (Jer. 19:4). The word *blood* may also represent a person's guilt, as in the phrase "his blood shall be upon him"—that is, he is responsible for his own guilt (20:9). The OT equates *life* with *blood* (Gen. 9:4; Deut. 12:23), which vividly illustrates the sanctity of human life (Gen. 9:6). According to the NT, "without shedding of blood there is no remission" of sin (Heb. 9:22). Thus the emphasis on blood in the OT sacrifices pointed to the blood Christ would shed on our behalf (Rom. 5:9; 1 Cor. 11:25, 26).

shall remove; ¹¹and the priest shall burn *them* on the altar *as* ⁿfood, an offering made by fire to the LORD.

¹²‘And if his ^ooffering is a goat, then ^phe shall offer it before the LORD. ¹³He shall lay his hand on its head and kill it before the tabernacle of meeting; and the sons of Aaron shall sprinkle its blood all around on the altar. ¹⁴Then he shall offer from it his offering, as an offering made by fire to the LORD. The fat that covers the entrails and all the fat that is on the entrails, ¹⁵the two kidneys and the fat that is on them by the flanks, and the fatty lobe *attached* to the liver above the kidneys, he shall remove; ¹⁶and the priest shall burn them on the altar *as* food, an offering made by fire for a sweet aroma; ^qall the fat is the LORD’s.

¹⁷‘*This shall be* a ^rperpetual² statute throughout your generations in all your dwellings: you shall eat neither fat nor ^sblood.’”

The Sin Offering

4 Now the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ²“Speak to the children of Israel, saying: ^a‘If a person sins ¹unintentionally against any of the commandments of the LORD *in anything* which ought not to be done, and does any of them, ^{3b}if the anointed priest sins, bringing guilt on the people, then let him offer to the LORD for his sin which he has sinned ^ca young bull without blemish as a ^dsin offering. ⁴He shall bring the bull ^eto the door of the tabernacle of meeting

11 ⁿ Lev. 21:6, 8, 17, 21, 22; 22:25; Num. 28:2; [Ezek. 44:7; Mal. 1:7, 12]
12 ^o Num. 15:6-11
^p Lev. 3:1, 7
16 ^q Lev. 7:23-25; 1 Sam. 2:15; 2 Chr. 7:7
17 ^r Lev. 6:18; 7:36; 17:7; 23:14 ^s Gen. 9:4; Lev. 7:23, 26; 17:10, 14; 1 Sam. 14:33 ² *everlasting or never-ending*

CHAPTER 4

2 ^a Lev. 5:15-18; Num. 15:22-30; 1 Sam. 14:27; Acts 3:17 ¹ *through error*
3 ^b Ex. 40:15; Lev. 8:12 ^c Lev. 3:1; 9:2
^d Lev. 9:7
4 ^e Lev. 1:3, 4; 4:15; Num. 8:12

5 ^f Lev. 16:14; Num. 19:4
6 ^g Ex. 40:21, 26
7 ^h Lev. 4:18, 25, 30, 34; 8:15; 9:9; 16:18 ⁱ Ex. 40:5, 6; Lev. 5:9
10 ^j Lev. 3:3-5
11 ^k Ex. 29:14; Lev. 9:11; Num. 19:5
12 ^l Lev. 4:21; 6:10, 11; 16:27 ^m [Heb. 13:11, 12]
13 ⁿ Num. 15:24-26; Josh. 7:11 ^o Lev. 5:2-4, 17

before the LORD, lay his hand on the bull’s head, and kill the bull before the LORD. ⁵Then the anointed priest ^fshall take some of the bull’s blood and bring it to the tabernacle of meeting. ⁶The priest shall dip his finger in the blood and sprinkle some of the blood seven times before the LORD, in front of the ^gveil of the sanctuary. ⁷And the priest shall ^hput some of the blood on the horns of the altar of sweet incense before the LORD, which is in the tabernacle of meeting; and he shall pour ⁱthe remaining blood of the bull at the base of the altar of the burnt offering, which is at the door of the tabernacle of meeting. ⁸He shall take from it all the fat of the bull as the sin offering. The fat that covers the entrails and all the fat which is on the entrails, ⁹the two kidneys and the fat that is on them by the flanks, and the fatty lobe *attached* to the liver above the kidneys, he shall remove, ^{10j}as it was taken from the bull of the sacrifice of the peace offering; and the priest shall burn them on the altar of the burnt offering. ^{11k}But the bull’s hide and all its flesh, with its head and legs, its entrails and offal— ¹²the whole bull he shall carry outside the camp to a clean place, ^lwhere the ashes are poured out, and ^mburn it on wood with fire; where the ashes are poured out it shall be burned.

¹³Now ⁿif the whole congregation of Israel sins unintentionally, ^oand the thing is hidden from the eyes of the assembly, and they have done *something against*

3:11 The mention of **food** does not mean that God desired, needed, or ate the sacrifice, as the pagan gods were thought to do.

3:12 In the regulations for offering a **goat**, the animal’s sex is not mentioned as it is in the regulations for cattle and sheep. Otherwise, the regulations for the sacrifice of a goat are the same as those for the sacrifice of a sheep.

3:16 All the fat is the LORD’s is a reminder that our gifts to God must be from the best that we have.

3:17 perpetual . . . dwellings: Some regulations in the Law of Moses could be observed only in the land that God was giving the Israelites. However, this prohibition of eating fat or blood applied wherever an Israelite might live. There were no exceptions. These sacrificial regulations consistently emphasize the theme of *only the best for God*. As it was in ancient Israel, so it is today: only our best is good enough to give to God.

4:2 sins unintentionally: Sin that occurred without the sinner realizing it still offended the holiness of God and polluted His earthly dwelling place, just as clothing may be soiled without the wearer knowing it. To be used again, both the clothing and the tabernacle required cleansing.

4:3 anointed priest: Since the high priest represented the people before God, his sin brought **guilt on the people**. Until the sin was atoned for, the priest could not come before God, and the people’s most important intermediary with God was set aside. **A young bull** was the most expensive sacrifice required for the purification offering, reflecting the importance of the high priest’s office.

4:4, 5 The steps in offering different animals were similar, with small but important variations (see vv. 14, 15, 22–24, 27–29, 32, 33).

Whether it was the **bull** for the **anointed priest** or the whole congregation, the male kid for the ruler, or the female kid or lamb for the common person, the worshiper brought the animal, laid a hand on its head, and killed it. These actions emphasized that the offering was to atone for the worshiper’s sin.

4:6 Seven symbolizes completeness in the Bible, based on the seven days of creation in Gen. 1; 2. The **veil** was a heavy linen curtain that separated the Most Holy Place from the rest of the tabernacle (Ex. 26:31). Sprinkling the **blood** before, or on, the **veil** purified the Most Holy Place.

4:7 The altar of sweet incense was in the holy place (Ex. 30:1–6). Incense, not an animal sacrifice, was burned on this altar. Still, this part of the tabernacle also needed purification—through the application of blood—from the pollution of the priest’s sin.

4:8–10 The instructions concerning the **fat** were the same as for the fat of the peace offering.

4:11, 12 Burning the whole bull ensured that the priest did not profit in any way from his own sin or from the atonement for his sin. Carrying it **outside the camp** was another way of symbolizing the seriousness of the pollution of the tabernacle caused by the high priest’s sin. The part of the bull not burned on the altar could not be used for any other purpose. It needed to be disposed of entirely.

4:12 Even the **ashes** from the altar symbolized the atonement necessary for sin. Therefore, the ground **outside the camp** where they were **poured out** was considered **clean**.

4:13 whole congregation: All the people of Israel. **hidden:** A sin committed without anyone being aware of it, or without the one responsible knowing that it was sin.

any of the commandments of the LORD *in anything* which should not be done, and are guilty; ¹⁴when the sin which they have committed becomes known, then the assembly shall offer a young bull for the sin, and bring it before the tabernacle of meeting. ¹⁵And the elders of the congregation ¹⁶shall lay their hands on the head of the bull before the LORD. Then the bull shall be killed before the LORD. ^{16a}The anointed priest shall bring some of the bull's blood to the tabernacle of meeting. ¹⁷Then the priest shall dip his finger in the blood and sprinkle *it* seven times before the LORD, in front of the veil. ¹⁸And he shall put *some* of the blood on the horns of the altar which is before the LORD, which is in the tabernacle of meeting; and he shall pour the remaining blood at the base of the altar of burnt offering, which is at the door of the tabernacle of meeting. ¹⁹He shall take all the fat from it and burn *it* on the altar. ²⁰And he shall do ²¹with the bull as he did with the bull as a sin offering; thus he shall do with it. ²²So the priest shall make ²³atonement for them, and it shall be forgiven them. ²⁴Then he shall carry the bull outside the camp, and burn it as he burned the first bull. It is a sin offering for the assembly.

²²When a ²³ruler has sinned, and ²⁴done something unintentionally *against* any of the commandments of the LORD his God *in anything* which should not be done, and is guilty, ²⁵or ²⁶if his sin which he has committed ²⁷comes to his knowledge, he shall bring as his offering a kid of the goats, a male without blemish. ²⁸And ²⁹he shall lay his hand on the head of the goat, and kill it at the place where they kill the burnt offering before the LORD. It is a sin offering. ³⁰The priest shall take some of the blood of the sin offering with his finger, put *it* on the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and pour its blood at the base of the altar of burnt offering. ³¹And he shall burn all its fat on the altar, like ³²the fat of the sacrifice of the peace offering. ³³So the priest shall make ³⁴atonement

15 ¹ Lev. 1:3, 4
16 ^a Lev. 4:5; [Heb. 9:12-14]
20 ^r Lev. 4:3 ^s Lev. 1:4; Num. 15:25
2 ^{lit.} covering
22 ^t Lev. 4:2, 13, 27
3 ^{leader}
23 ^u Lev. 4:14; 5:4
4 ^{is made known to him}
24 ^v Lev. 4:4; [Is. 53:6]
25 ^w Lev. 4:7, 18, 30, 34
26 ^x Lev. 3:3-5
7 ^{Lev.} 4:20; Num. 15:28 ⁵ ^{lit.} covering

27 ^z Lev. 4:2; Num. 15:27 ⁶ ^{lit.} any soul ⁷ ^{lit.} people of the land
28 ^a Lev. 4:23
29 ^b Lev. 1:4; 4:4, 24
31 ^c Lev. 3:14 ^d Lev. 3:3, 4 ^e Gen. 8:21; Ex. 29:18; Lev. 1:9, 13; 2:2, 9, 12 ^f Lev. 4:26
32 ^g Lev. 4:28
33 ^h Lev. 1:4; Num. 8:12
35 ⁱ Lev. 3:5 ^j Lev. 4:26, 31

CHAPTER 5

1 ^a Prov. 29:24; [Jer. 23:10] ^b Lev. 5:17; 7:18; 17:16; 19:8; 20:17; Num. 9:13
1 ^{his iniquity}
2 ^c Lev. 11:24, 28, 31, 39; Num. 19:11-16; Deut. 14:8

for him concerning his sin, and it shall be forgiven him.

^{27z}If ⁶anyone of the ⁷common people sins unintentionally by doing *something against* any of the commandments of the LORD *in anything* which ought not to be done, and is guilty, ²⁸or ^aif his sin which he has committed comes to his knowledge, then he shall bring as his offering a kid of the goats, a female without blemish, for his sin which he has committed. ^{29b}And he shall lay his hand on the head of the sin offering, and kill the sin offering at the place of the burnt offering. ³⁰Then the priest shall take *some* of its blood with his finger, put *it* on the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and pour all *the remaining* blood at the base of the altar. ^{31c}He shall remove all its fat, ^das fat is removed from the sacrifice of the peace offering; and the priest shall burn it on the altar for a ^esweet aroma to the LORD. ^fSo the priest shall make atonement for him, and it shall be forgiven him.

³²If he brings a lamb as his sin offering, ^ghe shall bring a female without blemish. ³³Then he shall ^hlay his hand on the head of the sin offering, and kill it as a sin offering at the place where they kill the burnt offering. ³⁴The priest shall take *some* of the blood of the sin offering with his finger, put *it* on the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and pour all *the remaining* blood at the base of the altar. ³⁵He shall remove all its fat, as the fat of the lamb is removed from the sacrifice of the peace offering. Then the priest shall burn it on the altar, ⁱaccording to the offerings made by fire to the LORD. ^jSo the priest shall make atonement for his sin that he has committed, and it shall be forgiven him.

The Trespass Offering

5 If a person sins in ^ahearing the utterance of an oath, and *is* a witness, whether he has seen or known *of the matter*—if he does not tell it, he ^bbears ¹guilt.

²Or ^cif a person touches any unclean thing, whether *it is* the carcass of an

4:15 The elders represented the whole congregation as they laid their hands on the head of the bull.

4:22 Ruler: Literally, "one lifted up," a leader or chief of the people. The leader of the whole nation (judge or king) or a group (such as the chiefs and representatives of all the tribes) could be called by this name.

4:23 A kid of the goats was designated for a ruler of the people. Since he was a civil and not a religious leader, his sin polluted the sanctuary less seriously than did the sin of the high priest or the sin of the whole congregation.

4:25 The altar of burnt offering stood in the outer court of the tabernacle. The pollution of a ruler's sin did not penetrate to the holy place or to the Most Holy Place (where the ark of the covenant

stood), as did the pollution due to the sin of the high priest or the congregation.

4:26 The priest was not guilty of sin in this case, so he was entitled to the meat from the sacrificial animal brought by the ruler.

4:27 common people: Literally, "the people of the land," those who held no religious, civil, or military office.

5:1 utterance of an oath: Anyone with information regarding the oath was obligated to come forward and give testimony. Regardless of whether the person's information was firsthand or secondhand, if he did not testify, he became guilty and had to bring a purification offering. It was not *having* the information, but *withholding* it that made the person guilty.

5:2 unclean: The difference between clean and unclean animals is

unclean beast, or the carcass of unclean livestock, or the carcass of unclean creeping things, and he is unaware of it, he also shall be unclean and ^dguilty. ³Or if he touches ^ehuman uncleanness—whatever uncleanness with which a man may be defiled, and he is unaware of it—when he realizes *it*, then he shall be guilty.

⁴Or if a person ²swears, speaking thoughtlessly with *his* lips ^fto do evil or ^gto do good, whatever *it is* that a man may pronounce by an oath, and he is unaware of it—when he realizes *it*, then he shall be guilty in any of these *matters*.

⁵And it shall be, when he is guilty in

² ^d Lev. 5:17
³ ^e Lev. 5:12, 13, 15
⁴ ^f 1 Sam. 25:22;
 Acts 23:12 ^g [Matt.
 5:33–37]; Mark 6:23;
 [James 5:12] ² vows

⁵ ^h Lev. 16:21;
 26:40; Num. 5:7;
 Ezra 10:11, 12; Ps.
 32:5; Prov. 28:13
⁷ ⁱ Lev. 12:6, 8; 14:21
 / Lev. 1:14

any of these *matters*, that he shall ^hconfess that he has sinned in that *thing*; ⁶and he shall bring his trespass offering to the LORD for his sin which he has committed, a female from the flock, a lamb or a kid of the goats as a sin offering. So the priest shall make atonement for him concerning his sin.

⁷ⁱ If he is not able to bring a lamb, then he shall bring to the LORD, for his trespass which he has committed, two ^jturtledoves or two young pigeons: one as a sin offering and the other as a burnt offering. ⁸And he shall bring them to the priest, who shall offer *that* which is for

carefully spelled out in ch. 11. **beast:** Larger wild animals. **livestock:** Domesticated animals. **creeping things:** Smaller wild animals, including reptiles, small mammals, and insects. **unaware of it:** Either by not noticing that he had touched the carcass or by forgetting before bringing the purification offering.

5:3 human uncleanness: Primarily the body fluids that caused a person to become unclean (see ch. 15). Contact with a corpse would also be included, as would contact with another person's waste. The ancient Israelites knew nothing about microbiology. But God, who knows everything, gave the Israelites certain laws that prevented disease and made them distinct from their neighbors.

5:4 thoughtlessly: Rashly, in the grip of strong emotion or without thinking the matter through. **to do evil or to do good:** A rash vow is rash, whether the intention is good or evil. In any case, the guilt brought on by a rash vow needed to be atoned for. **unaware of it:** Certainly a person would know when he was making a vow, but he

might not realize its full implications. He could also forget a vow to do good and fail to fulfill it. **when he realizes it:** At that point, the person's guilt had to be atoned for by the purification offering.

5:5 in any of these matters: Any of the situations described in vv. 1–4. This was a reminder that these sins were to be taken seriously; they required atonement. **confess:** The rituals of sacrifice were not automatic in their effect. The worshiper had to recognize, acknowledge, and repent of the sin.

5:6 trespass offering: This offering is not the same as the trespass offering prescribed in the next section. This section still deals with purification offerings for inadvertent guilt.

5:7 If he is not able: If he cannot afford it. **two turtledoves:** Part of the purification offering was burned on the altar and part was not burned. To accomplish this when offering birds, the worshiper brought two.

5:8–10 The first bird for the sin offering was sacrificed for its blood.

The Holiness Code

Most of the religions of the ancient world made a distinction between the sacred and the profane. However, the gods of these pagan religions were usually seen as behaving little better than human beings, and often quite a bit worse. Furthermore, the religious rituals of many of these religions were often cruel, degrading, and dehumanizing.

God did not want His people Israel to practice those things. He was not a God to be worshiped in that way. So when the Israelites left Egypt, He gave them careful instructions for how they were to worship Him. Most of these religious laws are contained in the Book of Leviticus, which means “the book of the Levites.” The Levites were the descendants of Levi who were called to be priests and religious leaders. Thus Leviticus could be said to be Israel’s manual for worship and religious life.

Another term by which Leviticus is often known is the Holiness Code. It spells out what it means to worship and serve a holy God. Categories of instruction include:

- Worship through offerings and sacrifices (chs. 1–7).
- The relationship between physical and biological matters and religious life (chs. 11–15).
- The Day of Atonement, the annual occasion on which the nation’s sin was dealt with (ch. 16).
- The spiritual implications of day-to-day life (chs. 17–24).
- The Year of Jubilee, involving the return of property and lands to their owners, and servants to their families (ch. 25).
- The implications of obeying or disobeying the Law (ch. 26).
- Vows (ch. 27).

The letter of these laws applied only to ancient Israel, but the spirit of them continues to apply to God’s people today. Like the Hebrews, we are called to holiness in every area of life (1 Pet. 1:14–16). In fact, Jesus said that the commandment of Leviticus to “love your neighbor as yourself” (Lev. 19:18) was second only to loving God with all of one’s being (Matt. 22:37–39).

As you read Leviticus, you may find the strict and repetitive laws concerning blood sacrifices and other religious rituals to seem far removed from modern life. But they remind us—just as they reminded the Israelites—of the heavy penalty that sin exacts and of the necessity for the atoning death of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the Lamb of God whose blood made atonement for our sins. In fact, His death was anticipated by the sacrifices made on the Day of Atonement (Lev. 16:11–34; Heb. 9:6–28).

Recognizing this connection, we have great cause to praise and thank the Lord as we read Leviticus. Here we have a picture of what it cost Jesus to make us right with God. We also have a picture of what our response should be—lives of holiness.



the sin offering first, and ^kwring off its head from its neck, but shall not divide it ³completely. ⁹Then he shall sprinkle *some* of the blood of the sin offering on the side of the altar, and the ^lrest of the blood shall be drained out at the base of the altar. It is a sin offering. ¹⁰And he shall offer the second as a burnt offering according to the ^mprescribed manner. So ⁿthe priest shall make atonement on his behalf for his sin which he has committed, and it shall be forgiven him.

¹¹But if he is ^onot able to bring two turtledoves or two young pigeons, then he who sinned shall bring for his offering one-tenth of an ephah of fine flour as a sin offering. ^pHe shall put no oil on it, nor shall he put frankincense on it, for it is a sin offering. ¹²Then he shall bring it to the priest, and the priest shall take his handful of it ^qas a memorial portion, and burn it on the altar ^raccording to the offerings made by fire to the LORD. It is a sin offering. ¹³^sThe priest shall make atonement for him, ^tfor his sin that he has committed in any of these matters; and it shall be forgiven him. ^u*The rest* shall be the priest's as a grain offering.^v

Offerings with Restitution

¹⁴Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: ¹⁵^w“If a person commits a trespass, and sins unintentionally in regard to the holy things of the LORD, then ^vhe shall bring to the LORD as his trespass offering a ram without blemish from the flocks,

⁸ ^k Lev. 1:15-17 ³ Lit. apart
⁹ ^l Lev. 4:7, 18, 30, 34
¹⁰ ^m Lev. 1:14-17
ⁿ Lev. 4:20, 26; 5:13, 16
¹¹ ^o Lev. 14:21-32
^p Lev. 21:2, 6; 15; Num. 5:15
¹² ^q Lev. 2:2 ^r Lev. 4:35
¹³ ^s Lev. 4:26
^t Lev. 2:3; 6:17, 26
^u ^v concerning his sin
¹⁵ ^w Lev. 4:2; 22:14; Num. 5:5-8 ^x Ezra 10:19

^w Ex. 30:13; Lev. 27:25
¹⁶ ^x Lev. 6:5; 22:14; 27:13, 15, 27, 31; Num. 5:7 ^y Lev. 4:26
¹⁷ ^z Lev. 4:2, 13, 22, 27 ^a Lev. 5:1, 2
¹⁸ ^b Lev. 5:15
¹⁹ ^c Ezra 10:2

CHAPTER 6

² ^d Num. 5:6
^b Lev. 19:11; Acts 5:4; Col. 3:9 ^e Ex. 22:7, 10 ^d Prov. 24:28 ¹ *deceiving his associate* ² *an entrusted security*
³ ^e Ex. 23:4; Deut. 22:1-4 ^f Ex. 22:11; Lev. 19:12; Jer. 7:9; Zech. 5:4
⁴ ^g Lev. 24:18, 21
³ *return*

with your valuation in shekels of silver according to ^wthe shekel of the sanctuary, as a trespass offering. ¹⁶And he shall make restitution for the harm that he has done in regard to the holy thing, ^xand shall add one-fifth to it and give it to the priest. ^ySo the priest shall make atonement for him with the ram of the trespass offering, and it shall be forgiven him.

¹⁷“If a person sins, and commits any of these things which are forbidden to be done by the commandments of the LORD, ^zthough he does not know it, yet he is ^aguilty and shall bear his ⁵iniquity. ¹⁸^bAnd he shall bring to the priest a ram without blemish from the flock, with your valuation, as a trespass offering. So the priest shall make atonement for him regarding his ignorance in which he erred and did not know it, and it shall be forgiven him. ¹⁹It is a trespass offering; ^che has certainly trespassed against the LORD.”

6 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: ²“If a person sins and ^acommits a trespass against the LORD by ^blying ¹to his neighbor about ^cwhat was delivered to him for safekeeping, or about ²a pledge, or about a robbery, or if he has ^dextorted from his neighbor, ³or if he ^ehas found what was lost and lies concerning it, and ^fswears falsely—in any one of these things that a man may do in which he sins: ⁴then it shall be, because he has sinned and is guilty, that he shall ³restore ^gwhat he has stolen, or the thing

The second was burned, like the fat and vital organs of the larger animals.

5:11 one-tenth of an ephah: Approximately two quarts. **Oil and frankincense** were not added as they were to the grain offering. This was a purification offering; it had to be pure flour.

5:12, 13 Part of the offering was burned **on the altar**, as was part of the animal sacrifices. The rest belonged to the priests, as did the remainder of the animal sacrifices (except the burnt offerings) brought by ordinary citizens.

5:15 commits a trespass: This phrase refers both to the objective responsibility of a sinner for his or her actions and the subjective feeling of guilt experienced by the offender. The offering righted the wrong of the offense and cleared the conscience of the sinner. **the holy things of the LORD:** Anything separated from common use and dedicated to the sacred use of the LORD—the tabernacle, its furnishings and utensils, the sacrificial food reserved for the priests, the tithes, and any other gifts given to the sanctuary. **the shekel of the sanctuary:** Slightly heavier than the shekel used in ordinary transactions in the marketplace. The common shekel was about eleven and a half grams, or four-tenths of an ounce; the sanctuary shekel was about twelve and a half grams.

5:16 make restitution: A guiding principle of biblical law and ethics is that when a person has caused harm to another, whether to God or to another human being, the one offending is responsible to make good the loss. **add one-fifth to it:** As a fine, in addition to the ram and the full **restitution**. The restitution and fine were paid first, as evidence of the offender's genuine repentance. Then the priest sacrificed the ram as atonement.

5:17 he does not know: Ignorance did not make an offense harmless. The offender was still **guilty** and bore responsibility for his

iniquity. He might also be troubled in his conscience, though he might never learn the exact nature of his offense. People often experienced dread that they had committed unwitting offense against God, His sanctuary, or His holy things.

5:18 In such a situation, the offering of a ram (without restitution or fine, since the value of what had been taken or harmed could not be determined) brought atonement for the unknown offense. **his ignorance in which he erred and did not know it:** This was not a sin of rebellion, but one for which the offender earnestly desired to atone, though he did not know what it was.

5:19 he has certainly trespassed against the LORD: This could also be phrased as “He has certainly made reparation to the LORD.” The emphasis on the worshiper's ignorance of his sin and his uneasy conscience was matched here by the statement that his offering had been accepted. He was forgiven, and his conscience could rest.

6:2, 3 a trespass against the LORD: The offenses listed were against people. However, they also wronged God because the offender used God's name in vain in the oath he used to swear his innocence in court. **lying to his neighbor:** Saying the property was lost, stolen, or destroyed, when he had kept it for himself. **delivered to him for safekeeping:** In the absence of banks, people would leave valuables with trusted neighbors or business associates when they went on a long journey. **a pledge:** A security deposit or collateral on a loan. **any one of these things:** In all these cases, a person betrayed his neighbor's trust, taking or keeping property illegally and then lying about it under oath. Since in court it was one person's sworn word against another's, the wronged person had little recourse.

6:4 is guilty: Objectively, he had done wrong. Subjectively, he became conscience-stricken. Since his oath in court had placed

which he has extorted, or what was delivered to him for safekeeping, or the lost thing which he found, ⁵or all that about which he has sworn falsely. He shall ^hrestore its full value, add one-fifth more to it, *and* give it to whomever it belongs, on the day of his trespass offering. ⁶And he shall bring his trespass offering to the LORD, ⁱa ram without blemish from the flock, with your ⁴valuation, as a trespass offering, to the priest. ⁷So the priest shall make atonement for him before the LORD, and he shall be forgiven for any one of these things that he may have done in which he trespasses.”

The Law of the Burnt Offering

⁸Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ⁹“Command Aaron and his sons, saying, ‘This is the ^klaw of the burnt offering: The burnt offering *shall be* on the hearth upon the altar all night until morning, and the fire of the altar shall be kept burning on it. ¹⁰^lAnd the priest shall put on his linen garment, and his linen trousers he shall put on his body, and take up the ashes of the burnt offering which the fire has consumed on the altar, and he shall put them ^mbeside the altar. ¹¹Then ⁿhe shall take off his garments, put on other garments, and carry the ashes outside the camp ^oto a clean place. ¹²And the fire on the altar shall

⁵ ^h Lev. 5:16; Num. 5:7, 8; 2 Sam. 12:6
⁶ ⁱ Lev. 1:3; 5:15
⁴ ^{appraisal}
⁷ ^j Lev. 4:26
⁹ ^k Ex. 29:38–42; Num. 28:3–10
¹⁰ ^l Ex. 28:39–43; Lev. 16:4; Ezek. 44:17, 18 ^m Lev. 1:16
¹¹ ⁿ Ezek. 44:19
^o Lev. 4:12

¹² ^p Lev. 3:3, 5, 9, 14
¹³ ^q Lev. 17
¹⁷ ^r Lev. 7:7 ^s ^{share}
¹⁸ ^s Lev. 6:29; 7:6; Num. 18:10; 1 Cor. 9:13 ^t Lev. 3:17 ^u Ex. 29:37; Lev. 22:3–7; Num. 4:15; Hag. 2:11–13
²⁰ ^v Ex. 29:2

be kept burning on it; it shall not be put out. And the priest shall burn wood on it every morning, and lay the burnt offering in order on it; and he shall burn on it ⁷the fat of the peace offerings. ¹³A fire shall always be burning on the ^qaltar; it shall never go out.

The Law of the Grain Offering

¹⁴“This is the law of the grain offering: The sons of Aaron shall offer it on the altar before the LORD. ¹⁵He shall take from it his handful of the fine flour of the grain offering, with its oil, and all the frankincense which is on the grain offering, and shall burn it on the altar for a sweet aroma, as a memorial to the LORD. ¹⁶And the remainder of it Aaron and his sons shall eat; with unleavened bread it shall be eaten in a holy place; in the court of the tabernacle of meeting they shall eat it. ¹⁷It shall not be baked with leaven. I have given it as their ⁵portion of My offerings made by fire; it is most holy, like the sin offering and the ^rtrespass offering. ¹⁸^sAll the males among the children of Aaron may eat it. *‘It shall be a statute forever in your generations concerning the offerings made by fire to the LORD. ‘Everyone who touches them must be holy.’”*

¹⁹And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ²⁰^v“This is the offering of Aaron and

him beyond the reach of punishment, only the offender’s guilty conscience could bring him to justice. **shall restore:** Restitution was necessary before anything else when someone had wronged another by taking what was rightfully his. Zacchaeus recognized the principle of restitution when he encountered Jesus (Luke 19:8). **6:5, 6** As with sin concerning the holy things (5:16), restitution and a **one-fifth** fine were evidence of genuine repentance. Then the offender could bring the ram for the trespass offering and be forgiven for the sin against God of swearing falsely in God’s name. Jesus preserved this order for the person who remembered at the altar that he had offended his brother (Matt. 5:23, 24).

6:9 Aaron and his sons, the priests, were responsible for the correct preparation and presentation of all offerings. **shall be kept**

burning: The fire on the altar was never to go out. This was accomplished at night with a burnt offering that was not extinguished. It could have been stoked with wood through the night to keep it burning. After being renewed in the morning (see v. 12), the fire was kept going throughout the day for the succession of offerings from various individuals.

6:10 linen garment . . . linen trousers: The sacred clothing of the priests, worn only in the tabernacle (see 16:4; Ex. 28:40–43). The trousers were a linen undergarment that prevented immodest exposure as the priest ascended and descended the altar ramp. This modesty communicated to the Israelites that human sexuality could not influence God. That idea was a central feature of Baal worship, which continually tempted the Israelites. The priests of Baal would use obscene gestures and actions in the pagan worship of their depraved god.

6:11 The linen **garments** were worn only within the tabernacle. They were not worn when carrying the ashes **outside the camp**.

6:12, 13 the fire . . . shall not be put out: Five times in this paragraph the priests are instructed to keep the fire burning. There are at least three reasons for this: (1) The original fire on the altar came from God (9:24). (2) Perpetual fire symbolized the perpetual worship of God. (3) Perpetual fire symbolized the continual need for atonement and reconciliation with God, which was the purpose of the offerings. If the ashes were cleaned off the altar every morning, the fire would have been at its lowest at that point. It was renewed with **wood**. Then the morning **burnt offering** was sacrificed, followed by other offerings through the day.

6:18 all the males . . . Aaron: This included all the priests, as well as descendants of Aaron who were disqualified from the priesthood for some reason (see 21:16–23). **statute forever:** “For all the age,” or for as long as sacrifices are offered. **must be holy:** Only those who had been made holy or had been consecrated to God could touch or use the reserved sacrificial portions.

6:20 beginning . . . anointed: The high priest personally was to

priest

(Heb. *kohen*) (1:5; 6:6; 27:21; 2 Chr. 35:2) Strong’s #3548

Priesthood was not unique to the Israelites. From the Egyptians to the Philistines, all the ancient Middle Eastern nations had a class of priests. At Mt. Sinai, God consecrated Aaron and his descendants as priests (Ex. 28:1). They were to be representatives of the people before God, offering sacrifices and prayers on their behalf. Furthermore, they instructed the people about their religious duties and the character of God (Deut. 33:8–10). The NT describes Jesus Christ as our High Priest (Heb. 5:10). Through His death on the Cross, the formal priesthood was abolished (Heb. 10:11, 12). In its stead, all believers become priests—not to offer sacrifices but to pray, worship God, and witness to others about Jesus (Heb. 13:15, 16; 1 Pet. 2:5, 9; Rev. 1:5, 6).

his sons, which they shall offer to the LORD, *beginning* on the day when he is anointed: one-tenth of an ^wephah of fine flour as a daily grain offering, half of it in the morning and half of it at night. ²¹It shall be made in a ^xpan with oil. *When it is mixed*, you shall bring it in. The baked pieces of the grain offering you shall offer for a ⁶sweet aroma to the LORD. ²²The priest from among his sons, ^ywho is anointed in his place, shall offer it. *It is a statute forever to the LORD.* ²³It shall be ⁷wholly burned. ²³For every grain offering for the priest shall be wholly burned. It shall not be eaten.”

The Law of the Sin Offering

²⁴Also the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ²⁵“Speak to Aaron and to his sons, saying, ‘This is the law of the sin offering: ^aIn the place where the burnt offering is killed, the sin offering shall be killed before the LORD. *It is most holy.* ²⁶^bThe priest who offers it for sin shall eat it. In a holy place it shall be eaten, in the court of the tabernacle of meeting. ²⁷^cEvery-one who touches its flesh ⁸must be holy. And when its blood is sprinkled on any garment, you shall wash that on which it was sprinkled, in a holy place. ²⁸But the earthen vessel in which it is boiled ^dshall be broken. And if it is boiled in a bronze pot, it shall be both scoured and rinsed in water. ²⁹All the males among the priests

²⁰ ^w Ex. 16:36
²¹ ^x Lev. 2:5; 7:9
⁶ *pleasing*
²² ^y Lev. 4:3 ^z Ex. 29:25 ⁷ *completely*
²⁵ ^a Lev. 1:1, 3, 5, 11
²⁶ ^b [Lev. 10:17, 18]; Num. 18:9, 10; [Ezek. 44:28, 29]
²⁷ ^c Ex. 29:37; Num. 4:15; Hag. 2:11-13
⁸ *Lit. shall*
²⁸ ^d Lev. 11:33; 15:12

³⁰ ^e Lev. 4:7, 11, 12, 18, 21; 10:18; 16:27; [Heb. 13:11, 12]
^f Ex. 26:33 ^g Lev. 6:16, 23, 26 ^h Lev. 16:27 ⁹ The Most Holy Place when capitalized

CHAPTER 7

¹ ^a Lev. 5:14-6:7
⁶ ^b Lev. 6:16-18, 29; Num. 18:9 ^c Lev. 2:3
⁷ ^d Lev. 6:24-30; 14:13
⁹ ^e Lev. 2:3, 10; Num. 18:9; Ezek. 44:29 ¹ *on a griddle*

may eat it. It is most holy. ³⁰^eBut no sin offering from which *any* of the blood is brought into the tabernacle of meeting, to make atonement in ⁹the holy ^fplace, shall be ^geaten. It shall be ^hburned in the fire.

The Law of the Trespass Offering

⁷‘Likewise ^athis is the law of the trespass offering (it is most holy): ²In the place where they kill the burnt offering they shall kill the trespass offering. And its blood he shall sprinkle all around on the altar. ³And he shall offer from it all its fat. The fat tail and the fat that covers the entrails, ⁴the two kidneys and the fat that is on them by the flanks, and the fatty lobe *attached* to the liver above the kidneys, he shall remove; ⁵and the priest shall burn them on the altar *as* an offering made by fire to the LORD. *It is a trespass offering.* ⁶^bEvery male among the priests may eat it. It shall be eaten in a holy place. ^c*It is most holy.* ⁷^dThe trespass offering is like the sin offering; *there is one law for them both*: the priest who makes atonement with it shall have it. ⁸And the priest who offers anyone’s burnt offering, that priest shall have for himself the skin of the burnt offering which he has offered. ⁹Also ^eevery grain offering that is baked in the oven and all that is prepared in the covered pan, or ¹in a pan, shall be the priest’s who offers it. ¹⁰Every grain offering, *whether mixed*

offer this sacrifice twice daily for as long as he was in office. **one-tenth of an ephah:** About two quarts. **half of it . . . at night:** The idea of a morning and an evening appointment with God is ancient. It is a precious privilege, open to every believer through the high priestly work of Christ. **at night:** More precisely, “in the evening”—at the time of the evening sacrifice.

6:22 The priest . . . in his place: Aaron’s successors as high priest, beginning with his son Eleazar (see Num. 20:25–28). **statute forever:** This grain offering and the burnt offering were sacrificed daily—with some interruptions, most notably during the Exile—until the destruction of the temple in A.D. 70. Even in the periods of Judah’s worst apostasy, the evidence suggests that the daily offerings continued, though often for incorrect or inadequate reasons (see Is. 1:10–17; Jer. 7:8–15; Mic. 6:6–8).

6:23 It shall not be eaten: The priests could eat most of the grain offerings brought by the people (2:3, 10). The principle here was that no one should profit from an offering which he himself had given. **6:24–30** Instructions for the priests about the sin, or purification, offering (see 4:1—5:13).

6:27 The blood of the sin offering was for the atonement of the one bringing the offering; as such, the blood was holy, intended for a specific, holy purpose. The blood could be washed from a **garment only in a holy place.**

6:28 It here refers to the flesh of the sin offering. The breaking of the **earthen vessel**, a clay cooking pot, is a striking contrast to the scouring of the **bronze pot**. No reason is given for the different treatment. However, the answer may be that a clay vessel is permeable and the residue of cooking could never be removed completely from it, even by a thorough scrubbing. The ancients knew nothing about microbiology; but God knows all things! Broth would not permeate a bronze pot and could be removed completely from it. That which is holy must not be profaned. Sacrificing the clay vessel,

as it were, prevented profaning even the smallest part of the flesh of the sin offering, which was most holy (vv. 25, 29).

6:30 The blood of the sin offering for the priest and of that for the entire congregation was brought into the tabernacle of meeting (4:5–7, 16–18). Because no one should profit from an offering given to atone for his own sin, the priests were forbidden to eat the flesh of these offerings.

7:2 In the place: At the door of the tabernacle of meeting before the Lord (1:3).

7:3, 4 The burning of the **fat** was commanded as it was for the peace offering (3:9–11). The fat was considered the best part of the meat. As such, it was not to be eaten by the worshiper or the priest. Instead, it was offered to God. Our best is still the measure of what we should offer to God.

7:7 the priest who makes atonement: That is, the individual officiating priest. Since many individual Israelites would have brought both trespass and sin offerings, the priests would take turns officiating for them and would receive equal proportions of the sacrifices.

7:8 The skin was the only part of the burnt offering that was not burned (1:6). The officiating priest received it as part of his wages.

7:9 Each Israelite’s baked **grain offering** belonged to the individual priest who offered it, as did the flesh of an animal offered as a sin or a trespass offering (v. 7).

7:10 By contrast, an offering of unbaked grain belonged to **all the sons of Aaron, to one as much as the other**. No priest was to be deprived of his rightful share in the sacrifices brought by the congregation. The priests were consecrated to the service of God, and their welfare and that of their families depended on the provisions from the sacrifices. The principle remains valid: No one called to serve the people of God as a vocation may be deprived of a fair living.

with oil or dry, shall belong to all the sons of Aaron, to one *as much* as the other.

The Law of Peace Offerings

^{11f}“This is the law of the sacrifice of peace offerings which he shall offer to the LORD: ¹²If he offers it for a thanksgiving, then he shall offer, with the sacrifice of thanksgiving, unleavened cakes mixed with oil, unleavened wafers ^ganointed with oil, or cakes of blended flour mixed with oil. ¹³Besides the cakes, as his offering he shall offer ^hleavened bread with the sacrifice of thanksgiving of his peace offering. ¹⁴And from it he shall offer one cake from each offering as a heave offering to the LORD. ⁱIt shall belong to the priest who sprinkles the blood of the peace offering.

^{15j}“The flesh of the sacrifice of his peace offering for thanksgiving shall be eaten the same day it is offered. He shall not leave any of it until morning. ¹⁶But ^kif the sacrifice of his offering is a vow or a voluntary offering, it shall be eaten the same day that he offers his sacrifice; but on the next day the remainder of it also may be eaten; ¹⁷the remainder of the flesh of the sacrifice on the third day must be burned with fire. ¹⁸And if *any* of the flesh of the sacrifice of his peace offering is eaten at all on the third day, it shall not be accepted, nor shall it be ^limputed to him; it shall be an ^mabomination to him who offers it, and the person who eats of it shall bear ²guilt.

¹⁹“The flesh that touches any unclean thing shall not be eaten. It shall be burned with fire. And as for the *clean* flesh, all

¹¹ ^f Lev. 3:1; 22:18, 21; Ezek. 45:15
¹² ^g Lev. 2:4; Num. 6:15
¹³ ^h Lev. 2:12; 23:17, 18; Amos 4:5
¹⁴ ⁱ Num. 18:8, 11, 19
¹⁵ ^j Lev. 22:29, 30
¹⁶ ^k Lev. 19:5-8
¹⁸ ^l Num. 18:27
^m Lev. 11:10, 11, 41; 19:7; [Prov. 15:8]
² *his iniquity*

who are ³clean may eat of it. ²⁰But the person who eats the flesh of the sacrifice of the peace offering that *belongs* to the ⁿLORD, ^owhile he is unclean, that person ^pshall be cut off from his people. ²¹Moreover the person who touches any unclean thing, *such as* ^qhuman uncleanness, *an* ^runclean animal, or any ^sabominable ⁴unclean thing, and who eats the flesh of the sacrifice of the peace offering that *belongs* to the LORD, that person ^tshall be cut off from his people.”

Fat and Blood May Not Be Eaten

²² And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ²³“Speak to the children of Israel, saying: ^u“You shall not eat any fat, of ox or sheep or goat. ²⁴And the fat of an animal that dies *naturally*, and the fat of what is torn by wild beasts, may be used in any other way; but you shall by no means eat it. ²⁵For whoever eats the fat of the animal of which men offer an offering made by fire to the LORD, the person who *eats* it shall be cut off from his people. ^{26v}Moreover you shall not eat any blood in any of your dwellings, *whether* of bird or beast. ²⁷Whoever eats any blood, that person shall be cut off from his people.”

The Portion of Aaron and His Sons

²⁸ Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ²⁹“Speak to the children of Israel, saying: ^w“He who offers the sacrifice of his peace offering to the LORD shall bring his offering to the LORD from the sacrifice of his peace offering. ^{30x}His own hands shall bring the offerings

7:12, 13 The sacrifice of **thanksgiving** was a public proclamation of who God is and what He does. A thanksgiving offering required three kinds of **unleavened cakes** and **leavened bread**.

7:14 The **heave offering** was a “present” or contribution to the officiating priest as his portion of the thanksgiving offering (Ex. 29:26–28; Lev. 7:29–34). The offering was waved before the Lord as an acknowledgment that He is the giver of all gifts.

7:15 the **same day it is offered**: The festive worshiper bringing his peace offering for a family feast at the tabernacle demonstrated trust in God for the next day’s provision. He did not worry about saving food for the next day. When feasting and rejoicing in the presence of God, generosity is entirely appropriate.

7:16 the **next day . . . may be eaten**: The **vow** and the **voluntary** peace offering were slightly less solemn than the thanksgiving (or confession) peace offering. Therefore, any leftovers from them could be eaten on the second day without jeopardizing the purity of the tabernacle.

7:18 it **shall not be . . . imputed**: The sacrifice would lose all its benefit to the worshiper. This was so even if the one eating the meat was not the one who had brought the offering. **It shall be an abomination** may be rephrased, “It shall be rotten or spoiled.” This would be true first in the physical sense: Unrefrigerated two-day-old meat would spoil. But it also would be rotten in the sense of an unclean thing that contaminated the holy precincts.

7:19 **touches any unclean thing**: An unclean object pollutes a clean object. A similar principle applies to sterile objects in medi-

cine. Touching a sterile object with a dirty object makes the sterile object unsterile.

7:20, 21 **unclean**: Chapters 11–15; 22 detail various kinds of uncleanness in persons and things. **shall be cut off**: The person will be removed from membership in the covenant community. This meant either execution, banishment, or denial of citizenship privileges (worship, inheritance, and so on; see Gen. 17:14). This concern for approaching God’s presence in a state of ritual purity is reflected in Paul’s instructions about the reverence and self-examination the Christian should use in approaching the Lord’s Supper (1 Cor. 11:27–29).

7:23 The **fat** was considered the best portion of the sacrificial animal; as such, it belonged to God.

7:24 **used in any other way**: That is, for softening leather, for fuel, or in any other way but eating it.

7:29 The portions of the peace **offering** that belonged to the Lord included the fat, which was burned on the altar (v. 31), and the breast and thigh, which were the priests’ portions (vv. 30–34).

7:30 **His own hands**: A worshiper could not delegate his worship, thanksgiving, or praise. Worship by proxy was impossible. **The breast** was one of the finer portions of the meat that was allowed to be eaten. The breast of the sacrificial animal was brought to the priest as a **wave offering** or an elevated offering—raised by the worshiper in the presence of God and the priest—symbolizing that the entire sacrifice was dedicated to God.

¹⁹ ³ *pure*
²⁰ ⁿ [Heb. 2:17]
^o Lev. 5:3; 15:3; 22:3-7; Num. 19:13; [1 Cor. 11:28] ^p Gen. 17:14; Ex. 31:14
²¹ ^q Lev. 5:2, 3, 5 ^r Lev. 11:24, 28
^s Ezek. 4:14 ^t Lev. 7:20 ⁴ So with MT, LXX, Vg.; Sam., Syr., Tg. *swarming thing* (cf. 5:2)
²³ ^u Lev. 3:17; 17:10-15; Deut. 14:21; Ezek. 4:14; 44:31
²⁶ ^v Gen. 9:4; Lev. 3:17; 17:10-16; 19:26; Deut. 12:23; 1 Sam. 14:33; Ezek. 33:25; Acts 15:20, 29
²⁹ ^w Lev. 3:1; 22:21; Ezek. 45:15
³⁰ ^x Lev. 3:3, 4, 9, 14

made by fire to the LORD. The fat with the breast he shall bring, that the ^gbreast may be waved as a wave offering before the LORD. ^{31z} And the priest shall burn the fat on the altar, but the ^abreast shall be Aaron's and his sons'. ^{32b} Also the right thigh you shall give to the priest as a heave offering from the sacrifices of your peace offerings. ³³ He among the sons of Aaron, who offers the blood of the peace offering and the fat, shall have the right thigh for *his* part. ³⁴ For ^cthe breast of the wave offering and the thigh of the heave offering I have taken from the children of Israel, from the sacrifices of their peace offerings, and I have given them to Aaron the priest and to his sons from the children of Israel by a statute forever."

³⁵ This is the consecrated portion for Aaron and his sons, from the offerings made by fire to the LORD, on the day when Moses presented them to ⁵minister to the LORD as priests. ³⁶ The LORD commanded this to be given to them by the children of Israel, ^don the day that He anointed them, *by* a statute forever throughout their generations.

³⁷ This is the law ^eof the burnt offering, ^fthe grain offering, ^gthe sin offering, ^hthe trespass offering, ⁱthe consecrations, and ^jthe sacrifice of the peace offering, ³⁸ which the LORD commanded Moses on Mount Sinai, on the day when He commanded the children of Israel ^kto offer their offerings to the LORD in the Wilderness of Sinai.

30 ^y Ex. 29:24, 27; Lev. 8:27; 9:21; Num. 6:20
31 ^z Lev. 3:5, 11, 16
^a Num. 18:11; Deut. 18:3
32 ^b Ex. 29:27; Lev. 7:34; 9:21; Num. 6:20
33 ^c Ex. 29:28; Lev. 10:14, 15; Num. 18:18, 19; Deut. 18:3
34 ^d Ex. 29:28; Lev. 10:14, 15; Num. 18:18, 19; Deut. 18:3
35 ^e serve
36 ^d Ex. 40:13-15; Lev. 8:12, 30
37 ^e Lev. 6:9 ^f Lev. 6:14 ^g Lev. 6:25
^h Lev. 7:1 ⁱ Ex. 29:1; Lev. 6:20 ^j Lev. 7:11
38 ^k Lev. 1:1, 2; Deut. 4:5

CHAPTER 8

2 ^a Ex. 29:1-3 ^b Ex. 28:2, 4 ^c Ex. 30:24, 25 ^d Ex. 29:10 ^e Ex. 29:15, 19
6 ^f Ex. 30:20; Heb. 10:22
7 ^g Ex. 39:1-31
8 ^h Ex. 28:30; Num. 27:21; Deut. 33:8; 1 Sam. 28:6; Ezra 2:63; Neh. 7:65
ⁱ Lit. Lights and the Perfections, Ex. 28:30
9 ^j Ex. 28:36, 37; 29:6
10 ^j Ex. 30:26-29; 40:10, 11; Lev. 8:2
11 ² set them apart for the LORD
12 ^k Ex. 29:7; 30:30; Lev. 21:10, 12; Ps. 133:2

Aaron and His Sons Consecrated

8 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: ^{2a} "Take Aaron and his sons with him, and ^bthe garments, ^cthe anointing oil, a ^dbull as the sin offering, two ^erams, and a basket of unleavened bread; ³and gather all the congregation together at the door of the tabernacle of meeting."

⁴ So Moses did as the LORD commanded him. And the congregation was gathered together at the door of the tabernacle of meeting. ⁵ And Moses said to the congregation, "This is what the LORD commanded to be done."

⁶ Then Moses brought Aaron and his sons and ^fwashed them with water. ⁷ And he ^gput the tunic on him, girded him with the sash, clothed him with the robe, and put the ephod on him; and he girded him with the intricately woven band of the ephod, and with it tied *the ephod* on him. ⁸ Then he put the breastplate on him, and he ^hput the ⁱUrim and the Thummim in the breastplate. ⁹ⁱ And he put the turban on his head. Also on the turban, on its front, he put the golden plate, the holy crown, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

^{10j} Also Moses took the anointing oil, and anointed the tabernacle and all that *was* in it, and consecrated them. ¹¹ He sprinkled some of it on the altar seven times, anointed the altar and all its utensils, and the laver and its base, to ²consecrate them. ¹² And he ^kpoured some of the anointing oil on Aaron's head and anointed him, to consecrate him.

7:31 The **breast** (the elevated offering) was **Aaron's and his sons'**—it belonged to all the priests.

7:32, 33 **heave offering:** The **right** (front) **thigh** of the sacrificial animal belonged to the priest who performed the sacrifice. Thus the officiating priest received his individual portion, the thigh (heave offering), and all the priests received a further portion, the breast (wave offering).

7:37, 38 A summary listing of the offerings of chs. 1–7, with the reminder that these sacrifices were prescribed by God Himself on Mt. Sinai. What God **commanded** He made possible, by giving careful instruction (**the law of the . . . offering**) regarding the proper way to bring the offerings before Him. God does not leave His people to wonder how they may approach Him and please Him. All these offerings foreshadow, in one way or another, the perfect sacrifice of Christ upon Calvary.

8:2 **Aaron** had presided over Israel's idolatry with the golden calf. Now God gave him a second chance by allowing him to be ordained as God's own high priest. His ministry would affect all Israelites by atoning for their sins and bringing them into fellowship with God. **the garments:** The high priestly clothing that Aaron wore, prescribed by God to Moses in Ex. 28:1–39. **anointing oil:** Made from myrrh, cinnamon, cane, cassia, and olive oil (Ex. 30:23–25).

8:3 **the congregation:** The ordination of the priests was so important that all the people needed to witness it.

8:5 **This is what the LORD commanded**, or similar words, is noted nine times in this chapter (vv. 4, 5, 9, 13, 17, 21, 29, 34, 36). It was important that God's instructions for worship be carried out meticulously. Sloppy, careless, or thoughtless worship did not honor God.

8:6 **Moses brought Aaron:** As the prophet of God and the leader of God's people (Deut. 18:15–18; 34:1–12), Moses was the only person qualified to ordain Aaron and his sons as Israel's priests. Until Moses ordained them, they were not priests and could not lead Israel's worship. Moses' prophetic ministry took precedence over Aaron's priestly ministry. **washed them with water:** This symbolized moral purity.

8:7 **The ephod** was the magnificent outer garment of the high priest, made of gold thread; violet, purple, and scarlet woolen thread; and fine linen thread (Ex. 28:5, 6).

8:8 **the Urim and the Thummim:** Sacred lots used to determine the will of God. What they looked like and how they were used is not known. Apparently, the high priest phrased questions so the answers would be "yes" or "no," depending on how the lots came up.

8:9 **The golden plate** was also known as **the holy crown** of the high priest. On it was engraved HOLINESS TO THE LORD (Ex. 28:36).

8:11 Since **the altar** was the central furnishing of the tabernacle for the atonement for sin, sprinkling it **seven times** represented the complete consecration of the tabernacle and all its furnishings and utensils to God's service.

8:12 **anointed:** The high priests of Israel, beginning here with Aaron, were anointed, as were the kings of Israel (1 Sam. 10:1; 16:13) and at least some of the prophets (1 Kin. 19:16). Jesus combines in His person the offices of High Priest, King, and Prophet, so He is *the Anointed One*, which is the meaning of the names Messiah and Christ.

¹³Then Moses brought Aaron's sons and put tunics on them, girded them with sashes, and put ³hats on them, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

¹⁴And he brought the bull for the sin offering. Then Aaron and his sons ⁿlaid their hands on the head of the bull for the sin offering, ¹⁵and Moses killed it. ^oThen he took the blood, and put *some* on the horns of the altar all around with his finger, and purified the altar. And he poured the blood at the base of the altar, and consecrated it, to make ⁴atonement for it. ¹⁶Then he took all the fat that *was* on the entrails, the fatty lobe *attached to the liver*, and the two kidneys with their fat, and Moses burned *them* on the altar. ¹⁷But the bull, its hide, its flesh, and its offal, he burned with fire outside the camp, as the LORD ^qhad commanded Moses.

¹⁸Then he brought the ram as the burnt offering. And Aaron and his sons laid their hands on the head of the ram, ¹⁹and Moses killed it. Then he sprinkled the blood all around on the altar. ²⁰And he cut the ram into pieces; and Moses ^sburned the head, the pieces, and the fat. ²¹Then he washed the entrails and the legs in water. And Moses burned the whole ram on the altar. It *was* a burnt sacrifice for a ⁵sweet aroma, an offering made by fire to the LORD, ^tas the LORD had commanded Moses.

²²And ^uhe brought the second ram, the ram of consecration. Then Aaron and his sons laid their hands on the head of the ram, ²³and Moses killed it. Also he took *some* of ^vits blood and put it on the tip of Aaron's right ear, on the thumb of his right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot. ²⁴Then he brought Aaron's sons. And Moses put *some* of the ^wblood on the tips of their right ears, on the thumbs of their right hands, and on the big toes of their right feet. And Moses sprinkled the blood all around on the altar. ²⁵Then he

¹³ Ex. 29:8, 9

³ headpieces

¹⁴ m Ex. 29:10; Ps. 66:15; Ezek. 43:19

ⁿ Lev. 4:4

¹⁵ o Ex. 29:12, 36; Lev. 4:7; Ezek. 43:20, 26; [Heb. 9:22]

⁴ Lit. covering

¹⁶ p Ex. 29:13;

Lev. 4:8

¹⁷ q Ex. 29:14; Lev. 4:11, 12

¹⁸ r Ex. 29:15

²⁰ s Lev. 1:8

²¹ t Ex. 29:18

⁵ pleasing

²² u Ex. 29:19, 31;

Lev. 8:2

²³ v Ex. 29:20, 21;

Lev. 14:14

²⁴ w [Heb. 9:13, 14, 18–23]

²⁵ x Ex. 29:22

²⁶ y Ex. 29:23

²⁷ z Ex. 29:24; Lev. 7:30, 34

²⁸ a Ex. 29:25

²⁹ b Ps. 99:6 c Ex. 29:27 d Ex. 29:26

³⁰ e Ex. 29:21;

30:30; Num. 3:3

³¹ f Ex. 29:31, 32

³² g Ex. 29:34

³³ h Ex. 29:30, 35;

Lev. 10:7; Ezek. 43:25, 26

³⁴ i [Heb. 7:16]

³⁵ j Num. 1:53; 3:7;

9:19; Deut. 11:1;

1 Kin. 2:3; Ezek. 48:11

⁶ office

took the fat and the fat tail, all the fat that *was* on the entrails, the fatty lobe *attached to the liver*, the two kidneys and their fat, and the right thigh; ²⁶*y* and from the basket of unleavened bread that was before the LORD he took one unleavened cake, a cake of bread *anointed with oil*, and one wafer, and put *them* on the fat and on the right thigh; ²⁷and he put all *these* ^zin Aaron's hands and in his sons' hands, and waved them *as a wave offering* before the LORD. ²⁸*a* Then Moses took them from their hands and burned *them* on the altar, on the burnt offering. They *were* consecration offerings for a sweet aroma. That *was* an offering made by fire to the LORD. ²⁹And ^bMoses took the ^cbreast and waved it *as a wave offering* before the LORD. It was Moses' ^dpart of the ram of consecration, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

³⁰Then ^eMoses took some of the anointing oil and some of the blood which *was* on the altar, and sprinkled *it* on Aaron, on his garments, on his sons, and on the garments of his sons with him; and he consecrated Aaron, his garments, his sons, and the garments of his sons with him.

³¹And Moses said to Aaron and his sons, ^f“Boil the flesh *at* the door of the tabernacle of meeting, and eat it there with the bread that *is* in the basket of consecration offerings, as I commanded, saying, ‘Aaron and his sons shall eat it.’ ³²*g* What remains of the flesh and of the bread you shall burn with fire. ³³And you shall not go outside the door of the tabernacle of meeting *for* seven days, until the days of your consecration are ended. For ^hseven days he shall consecrate you. ³⁴*i* As he has done this day, ^{so} the LORD has commanded to do, to make atonement for you. ³⁵Therefore you shall stay *at* the door of the tabernacle of meeting day and night for seven days, and ^jkeep the ⁶charge of the LORD, so that you may

8:13 While **Aaron's sons** were set apart or ordained as priests, they were not anointed. Only the high priest was anointed.

8:15 Moses' actions here were slightly different from the normal sin offering prescribed in ch. 4. The purpose is clear from the statement that he **purified the altar . . . and consecrated it**. The priests, the altar, and everything associated with the sacrificial system had to be pure and consecrated to God. Otherwise the sacrifices would not atone for the sins of Israel.

8:23 The reason for applying the blood of the sacrifice to Aaron's **ear, thumb, and big toe** is unclear. They were his extremities, top to bottom, possibly to represent the total covering of his sins by the sacrificial blood. Blood offering had also been applied to the horns of the altar (v. 15), signaling the close connection between the altar and the priests who ministered before it.

8:25 The **right thigh** normally was the individual officiating priest's portion of the peace offering (7:32). In this case, it was a consecration offering for all the priests, so it was burned on the altar.

8:29 **Moses' part:** Moses, acting as priest in this first sacrifice, received the breast, which from that time on would go to Aaron and his sons.

8:30 Moses' act of consecration here, though it used anointing oil together with blood from the altar, was different from his anointing of Aaron alone in v. 12.

8:33 **seven days:** Becoming intercessors between God and the people was an extremely important step for Aaron and his sons—and for Israel. This period of confinement to the tabernacle emphasized the significance of the event. **consecrate you:** Literally, “fill your hand.” In the physical sense, this referred to the fact that the priests' hands often would be filled with sacrifices as they served God in the tabernacle. In a greater sense, their consecration meant that their hands always would be filled with God's service to the exclusion of everything else.

8:35 **That you may not die** was a reminder that it is dangerous to approach God carelessly, without reverence, ignoring His instruc-

not die; for so I have been commanded.”³⁶ So Aaron and his sons did all the things that the LORD had commanded by the hand of Moses.

The Priestly Ministry Begins

9 It came to pass on the “eighth day that Moses called Aaron and his sons and the elders of Israel.”² And he said to Aaron, “Take for yourself a young ^bbull as a sin offering and a ram as a burnt offering, without blemish, and offer *them* before the LORD.”³ And to the children of Israel you shall speak, saying, “Take a kid of the goats as a sin offering, and a calf and a lamb, *both* of the first year, without blemish, as a burnt offering, ⁴also a bull and a ram as peace offerings, to sacrifice before the LORD, and ^da grain offering mixed with oil; for ^etoday the LORD will appear to you.”

⁵So they brought what Moses commanded before the tabernacle of meeting. And all the congregation drew near and stood ^jbefore the LORD. ⁶Then Moses said, “This is the thing which the LORD commanded you to do, and the glory of the LORD will appear to you.” ⁷And Moses said to Aaron, “Go to the altar, ^foffer

CHAPTER 9

¹ ^a Ezek. 43:27
² ^b Ex. 29:21; Lev. 4:1-12
³ ^c Lev. 4:23, 28; Ezra 6:17; 10:19
⁴ ^d Lev. 2:4 ^e Ex. 29:43; Lev. 9:6, 23
⁵ ^e ⁱ in the presence of
⁷ ^f Lev. 4:3; 1 Sam. 3:14; [Heb. 5:3-5; 7:27]

⁹ Lev. 4:16, 20; Heb. 5:1
¹⁰ ^h Ex. 23:18; Lev. 8:16
¹¹ ⁱ Lev. 4:11, 12; 8:17
¹² / Lev. 1:5; 8:19
¹³ ^k Lev. 8:20
¹⁴ ^j Lev. 8:21
¹⁵ ^m [Is. 53:10; Heb. 2:17; 5:3]

your sin offering and your burnt offering, and make atonement for yourself and for the people. ⁹ Offer the offering of the people, and make atonement for them, as the LORD commanded.”

⁸ Aaron therefore went to the altar and killed the calf of the sin offering, which *was* for himself. ⁹ Then the sons of Aaron brought the blood to him. And he dipped his finger in the blood, put *it* on the horns of the altar, and poured the blood at the base of the altar. ¹⁰^h But the fat, the kidneys, and the fatty lobe from the liver of the sin offering he burned on the altar, as the LORD had commanded Moses. ¹¹ⁱ The flesh and the hide he burned with fire outside the camp.

¹² And he killed the burnt offering; and Aaron’s sons presented to him the blood, ^jwhich he sprinkled all around on the altar. ¹³^k Then they presented the burnt offering to him, with its pieces and head, and he burned *them* on the altar. ¹⁴^l And he washed the entrails and the legs, and burned *them* with the burnt offering on the altar.

¹⁵^m Then he brought the people’s offering, and took the goat, which *was* the sin offering for the people, and killed it

tions. Two of Aaron’s sons failed to heed this warning and died (ch. 10).

8:36 For now, all those involved obeyed all **the LORD had commanded**. Their ordination was complete; their priesthood was valid. God would accept their service and their intercession for the people.

9:1 the eighth day: After the seven days of Aaron and his sons’ consecration (8:33–36) were completed.

9:2 A young bull was the prescribed **sin offering** for the high priest (4:3). Before he could offer the sacrifices of others, his own sin needed atonement. The bull of the sin offering and the **ram of the burnt offering** (1:4, 10) accomplished this.

9:3 you shall speak: To this point Moses had given all the directions. Now that Aaron had been anointed high priest, it was fitting that he begin to instruct Israel on how to bring sacrifices. **A kid of the goats** was prescribed as the **sin offering** for individuals—a male goat for leaders (4:22, 23) and a female for ordinary citizens (4:27, 28).

9:4 All four of the regular public offerings—burnt, sin, **peace**, and **grain**—were performed on this first day of Israel’s sacrificial worship in the tabernacle. The first two were specifically to atone for sin; the second two were for a feast of fellowship with God. Only the trespass, or reparation, offering was missing because it was a private offering (5:14–6:7). **the LORD will appear to you:** The purpose of all worship is to fellowship with God. The sacrifices were not an end in themselves; they allowed the worshiper to meet with God without being destroyed. The Israelites looked forward; we look back to Christ’s atonement, by which we are ushered into God’s presence.

9:5 So they brought . . . and . . . drew near: The immediate and total obedience of the people is emphasized, in contrast with the complaining and rebellion that marked their response to Moses and to God (Ex. 32; Num. 14).

9:7 Before Aaron could **make atonement** for the people, he had to make atonement for himself.

9:8 The high priest had to kill **the calf of the sin offering** himself, since the sacrifice was for him. In Aaron’s first attempt at being a priest for Israel, he had made a golden calf for the people to worship (Ex. 32). His first sacrifice as God’s anointed high priest was a calf for his own sin offering. Aaron undoubtedly recognized the irony and

praised God for His mercy. God had given Aaron a second chance. Truly, God is the God of the second chance for any who will respond to Him in faith!

9:9–11 Aaron did not sprinkle the **blood** before the veil (4:6). Also, the **altar** here is the altar of burnt offering, not the altar of incense (4:7). This variation from the normal pattern of the sin offering for the high priest was probably due to the fact that Aaron had not yet committed any sin that polluted the inner sanctuary. Therefore, its cleansing was not necessary. For regulations concerning the fat, flesh, and hide, see 4:8–12.

9:12–14 Because there was no variation from the general procedure for the **burnt offering**, the record of Aaron’s performing this sacrifice is less detailed than the regulations for it (1:10–13). Aaron killed the ram himself (9:2), since it was a burnt offering for him and not for all the people.

9:15 The **goat** as the **sin offering** looked forward to the Day of Atonement (16:5, 9), rather than back to the normal sin offering for all the people, which required a bull (4:14).

make atonement

(Heb. *kaphar*) (1:4; 9:7; 14:18; 2 Sam. 21:3) Strong’s #3722

In its various uses this word can mean “to cover,” “to appease,” or “to ransom.” It can refer to monetary transaction, but in the Scriptures it more commonly speaks of payment for sin. All of the various offerings in the Jewish sacrificial system are described as effecting *atonement*. The key idea is that these offerings gained the favor of God, and God removed the worshiper’s guilt. The sacrifice was presented as a substitute for the life of the offender. The sacrifice of an animal atoned for the offender’s sin and turned aside God’s wrath. Like the lambs offered to atone for the sins of the Israelites, Jesus’ life was offered as a substitute for ours. His death turned away God’s wrath and atoned for our sin (Rom. 3:25).

and offered it for sin, like the first one. ¹⁶And he brought the burnt offering and offered it ^aaccording to the ²prescribed manner. ¹⁷Then he brought the grain offering, took a handful of it, and burned it on the altar, ^bbesides the burnt sacrifice of the morning.

¹⁸He also killed the bull and the ram as ^psacrifices of peace offerings, which were for the people. And Aaron's sons presented to him the blood, which he sprinkled all around on the altar, ¹⁹and the fat from the bull and the ram—the fatty tail, what covers the entrails and the kidneys, and the fatty lobe attached to the liver; ²⁰and they put the fat on the breasts. ^qThen he burned the fat on the altar; ²¹but the breasts and the right thigh Aaron waved ^ras a wave offering before the LORD, as Moses had commanded.

²²Then Aaron lifted his hand toward the people, ^sblessed them, and came down from offering the sin offering,

16 ^a Lev. 1:1-13
² ordinance
17 ^a Ex. 29:38, 39
18 ^p Lev. 3:1-11
20 ^q Lev. 3:5, 16
21 ^r Ex. 29:24, 26,
27; Lev. 7:30-34
22 ^s Num. 6:22-26;
Deut. 21:5; Luke
24:50

24 ^t Gen. 4:4; Judg.
6:21; 2 Chr. 7:1; Ps.
20:3 ^u Ezra 3:11
^v 1 Kin. 18:38, 39

CHAPTER 10

1 ^a Ex. 24:1, 9; Num.
3:2-4; 1 Chr. 24:2
^b Lev. 16:12 ^c Ex.
30:9; 1 Sam. 2:17
2 ^d Gen. 19:24;
Num. 11:1; 16:35;
Rev. 20:9
3 ^e Ex. 19:22; Lev.
21:6; Is. 52:11; Ezek.
20:41

the burnt offering, and peace offerings. ²³And Moses and Aaron went into the tabernacle of meeting, and came out and blessed the people. Then the glory of the LORD appeared to all the people, ²⁴and ^tfire came out from before the LORD and consumed the burnt offering and the fat on the altar. When all the people saw it, they ^ushouted and fell on their ^vfaces.

The Profane Fire of Nadab and Abihu

10 Then Nadab ^a and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, ^beach took his censer and put fire in it, put incense on it, and offered ^cprofane fire before the LORD, which He had not commanded them. ²So ^dfire went out from the LORD and devoured them, and they died before the LORD. ³And Moses said to Aaron, “This is what the LORD spoke, saying:

‘By those ^ewho come near Me I must be regarded as holy;

9:18 The peace offerings for the people concluded the four offerings. Aaron had sacrificed a bull, a calf, and a ram for himself; and a kid, a calf, a lamb, a bull, a ram, and a grain offering for the people. On Aaron's first day as high priest, he offered all but one of the various sacrifices. The fact that God sent fire to consume these offerings signaled His future acceptance of all the sacrifices He had commanded the Israelites to bring—if they would bring them with a repentant and trusting spirit, as He had instructed.

9:22 Aaron . . . blessed them: The ultimate function of the priests was to bless the people. When God gave the priestly blessing, He said that the priests would put His name on the children of Israel, and He would bless them (Num. 6:27). The purpose of the priests' sacrifices was to cleanse the priests so they could bless the people (Deut. 10:8). The purpose of the people's sacrifices was to cleanse the people so they could receive God's blessing, and in turn be a blessing to all other peoples (Gen. 12:3; 22:18). **came down:** The altar of burnt offering was five by five by three cubits (about seven and a half feet square and four and a half feet high). The priest climbed a ramp to offer on it.

9:23 the tabernacle of meeting: Moses, Aaron, and Aaron's sons were in the courtyard in front of the altar of burnt offering. Moses and Aaron went into the tent itself where the altar of incense, the table of showbread, and the golden lampstand (the menorah) stood. **blessed the people:** This was the second time that day that the people had been blessed. The fact that Moses and Aaron could bless

the people after they met with God signaled that God was pleased with the inaugural sacrifices Aaron had offered on behalf of himself and the people. **glory of the LORD appeared:** as God had promised through Moses (vv. 4, 6).

9:24 fire came out: The sacrifices were consumed, not by fire ignited by Aaron, but by fire from before the LORD. This is the first of only five times that the OT records fire from God as a sign that a sacrifice was accepted (Judg. 6:21; 1 Kin. 18:38; 1 Chr. 21:26; 2 Chr. 7:1). Since the fire on this altar was never to go out, all Israel's sacrifices from this time forward would be consumed by fire that originated from God. **fell on their faces:** This response to the glory of God's presence was called fear by previous generations. Today we call it reverence. The pattern of the Israelites' sacrifice established a valid pattern for approaching God today. Sin must be confessed, repented, and atoned for. When God accepted the sacrifice, He accepted the one who offered it into His presence.

10:1 Nadab and Abihu were Aaron's eldest sons. With Aaron and 70 elders of Israel, they had accompanied Moses partway up Mt. Sinai and had seen God (see Ex. 24:1, 9–11). They had participated with their father in the inaugural sacrifices recorded in ch. 9. They had obeyed, and God had accepted all that had been done on that day. **profane fire:** Nadab and Abihu violated God's holiness in some way the author does not spell out. **Profane** is literally “strange.” **Which He had not commanded them** is in striking contrast with the careful obedience to God's commands recorded in chs. 8; 9. Whatever the details, their act was clearly disobedient, and they knew it.

10:2 Fire went out from the LORD in punishment. Two verses earlier (9:24), fire had come from the Lord in acceptance of Israel and its worship. What is a blessing when it comes as a result of faithfulness can be deadly when provoked by disobedience. **devoured them:** killed them. Their cousins picked them up in their priestly tunics and carried them outside the camp for burial (v. 5). **they died:** Their deaths were a result of their own rebellious action.

10:3 those who come near Me: In this context, God referred to the priests, Aaron and his sons. Those who are closest to God—those who minister before Him and teach the people—have a greater responsibility to be careful about God's holiness. James stresses this principle in his letter (James 3:1). **I must be glorified** is still a good principle by which to measure our worship. Anything that does not glorify God is not truly worship and should not be allowed in our worship gatherings. **Aaron held his peace:** Though he certainly was grieving the sudden loss of his sons, Aaron recognized that their action was rebellion against God. If it had not been dealt with promptly, it would have spread and disrupted Israel's holy worship.

fire

(Heb. *esh*) (10:2; 16:13; Ex. 3:2; 13:21) Strong's #784

In the OT, fire and flame were closely associated with Israel's worship and religious life. The consumption of offerings by flame assured the priests that God had accepted the people's sacrifices (Judg. 6:21; 1 Kin. 18:38). Numerous references to fire in the Bible emphasize God's judgment on wickedness and unbelief. God is represented as a “consuming fire” (Ex. 24:17; Deut. 4:24; Amos 5:6; Heb. 12:29). As a source of heat and light, fire is often pictured in the Bible as God's agent to purify and illuminate. The coming Messenger of the Lord is portrayed as a “refiner's fire” (Mal. 3:2). The tongues “as of fire” that came with the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost underscored the purging and illuminating quality of God's truth (Acts 2:3).

And before all the people
I must be glorified.”

So Aaron held his peace.

⁴Then Moses called Mishael and Elzaphan, the sons of Uzziel the uncle of Aaron, and said to them, “Come near, ⁵carry your brethren from ¹before the sanctuary out of the camp.” ⁵So they went near and carried them by their tunics out of the camp, as Moses had said.

⁶And Moses said to Aaron, and to Eleazar and Ithamar, his sons, “Do not ²uncover your heads nor tear your clothes, lest you die, and ⁸wrath come upon all the people. But let your brethren, the whole house of Israel, ³bewail the burning which the LORD has kindled. ⁷h You shall not go out from the door of the tabernacle of meeting, lest you die, ⁱfor the anointing oil of the LORD is upon you.” And they did according to the word of Moses.

Conduct Prescribed for Priests

⁸Then the LORD spoke to Aaron, saying: ⁹j “Do not drink wine or intoxicating drink, you, nor your sons with you, when you go into the tabernacle of meeting, lest you die. *It shall be* a statute forever throughout your generations, ¹⁰that you may ^kdistinguish between holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean, ¹¹l and that you may teach the children of Israel all the statutes which the LORD has spoken to them by the hand of Moses.”

¹²And Moses spoke to Aaron, and to

⁴ ¹ Acts 5:6, 10 ¹ in front of

⁶ ⁹ Num. 1:53; 16:22, 46; 18:5; Josh. 7:1; 22:18, 20; 2 Sam. 24:1 ² An act of mourning ³ weep bitterly ⁷ ^h Lev. 8:33; 21:12 ¹ Lev. 8:30

⁹ ¹ Gen. 9:21; [Prov. 20:1; 31:5]; Is. 28:7; Ezek. 44:21; Hos. 4:11; Luke 1:15; [Eph. 5:18]; 1 Tim. 3:3; Titus 1:7

¹⁰ ^k Lev. 11:47; 20:25; Ezek. 22:26; 44:23

¹¹ ^l Deut. 24:8; Neh. 8:2, 8; Jer. 18:18; Mal. 2:7

¹² ^m Num. 18:9

^a Lev. 21:22

¹³ ^o Num. 18:10

^p Lev. 2:3; 6:16

⁴ portion

¹⁴ ^q Ex. 29:24, 26,

27; Lev. 7:30–34;

Num. 18:11 ^r Lev.

22:13 ^s Num. 18:10

¹⁵ ^t Lev. 7:29, 30, 34

¹⁶ ^u Lev. 9:3, 15

¹⁷ ^v Lev. 6:24–30

^w Ex. 28:38; Lev.

22:16; Num. 18:1

¹⁸ ^x Lev. 6:30 ^y Lev.

6:26, 30 ^z The Most

Holy Place when

capitalized

¹⁹ ^z Lev. 9:8, 12

Eleazar and Ithamar, his sons who were left: ^m “Take the grain offering that remains of the offerings made by fire to the LORD, and eat it without leaven beside the altar; ⁿ for it is most holy. ¹³ You shall eat it in a ^o holy place, because it is your ⁴ due and your sons’ due, of the sacrifices made by fire to the LORD; for ^p so I have been commanded. ¹⁴ ^q The breast of the wave offering and the thigh of the heave offering you shall eat in a clean place, you, your sons, and your ^r daughters with you; for *they are* your due and your sons’ ^s due, *which are* given from the sacrifices of peace offerings of the children of Israel. ¹⁵ ^t The thigh of the heave offering and the breast of the wave offering they shall bring with the offerings of fat made by fire, to offer *as* a wave offering before the LORD. And it shall be yours and your sons’ with you, by a statute forever, as the LORD has commanded.”

¹⁶ Then Moses made careful inquiry about ^u the goat of the sin offering, and there it was—burned up. And he was angry with Eleazar and Ithamar, the sons of Aaron *who were* left, saying, ¹⁷ ^v “Why have you not eaten the sin offering in a holy place, since it is most holy, and *God* has given it to you to bear ^w the guilt of the congregation, to make atonement for them before the LORD? ¹⁸ See! ^x Its blood was not brought inside ⁵ the holy place; indeed you should have eaten it in a holy place, ^y as I commanded.”

¹⁹ And Aaron said to Moses, “Look, ^z this day they have offered their sin

10:4 carry: Though priests were forbidden to come into contact with the dead, a brother’s corpse normally was an exception to this rule (21:1–4). However, Moses called Aaron’s cousins to carry the bodies of Nadab and Abihu **out of the camp** because their rebellion had been the cause of their deaths, and because their father and brothers had only just begun their priestly duties. **your brethren:** The Hebrew word for *brother* can include cousins, as it does here.

10:5 as Moses had said: The pattern of obedience interrupted by Nadab and Abihu’s sin was reestablished.

10:6 uncover your heads nor tear your clothes: These were conventional signs of mourning (see Ezek. 24:16, 17).

10:8 the LORD spoke to Aaron: This is the only place in Leviticus where God speaks to Aaron alone.

10:10 Holy and unholy had been the subject of the preceding instructions about sacrifices and their first implementation (chs. 1–9). **Unclean and clean** would be the subject of the following instructions about animals, diseases, bodily discharges, and so on (chs. 11–15).

10:11–13 you may teach . . . the statutes: In the OT era, the priests were primarily responsible for teaching the people of Israel the Law of God. Parents, in turn, were to teach their children (Deut. 6:6–9, 20–25). **a holy place:** within the tabernacle. For instructions about the **grain offering**, see 2:10.

10:14 a clean place: a place that had not been defiled by (or had been ritually cleansed from) the kinds of uncleanness described in chs. 11–15. This place was not specifically near the tabernacle, where some of the priests’ portions had to be eaten, but presumably in the priests’ dwellings or any other clean place within the

camp (before they reached the Promised Land) or within the land (after they reached it). **your daughters:** The right of the women in the priests’ families to share in their portions of the offerings is described more fully in 22:10–13. For instructions on the **wave** and **heave offerings**, see 7:32, 33.

10:15 Moses reassured his brother that God would allow him to remain as high priest, in spite of the sin and death of two of his sons.

10:16 careful inquiry: Moses was responsible to see that Nadab and Abihu’s sin did not cause further punishment to fall on Israel. **burned up:** The flesh of the sin offering, if it was not for the priest or the whole congregation, was not to be burned completely. Only its fat should have been burned (4:26, 31, 35). This sin offering was not for Aaron and his sons, even though it was for all the people, since Aaron was to offer a separate sin offering for himself (and presumably for his sons, too). Moses **was angry**. Much had gone wrong already. The worship rituals had been carried out improperly. What more might God do because of this further breach?

10:17, 18 The priests were to eat the flesh (except for the fat) of any sin offering whose **blood was not brought inside the holy place**—that is, of any sin offering that was not intended to atone for them (4:5–7, 16–18). Eleazar and Ithamar had not done this, but had burned up all the goat of the sin offering.

10:19 Aaron said: Moses had spoken to Eleazar and Ithamar, perhaps out of respect for his older brother, since Aaron should have eaten the meat of the sin offering also. But Aaron replied, taking responsibility for his family, as was proper in Israel’s patriarchal society. **such things:** Aaron was referring to the deaths of his two eldest sons. **would it have been accepted:** Aaron did not eat the

offering and their burnt offering before the LORD, and such things have befallen me! If I had eaten the sin offering today, ^awould it have been accepted in the sight of the LORD?" ²⁰So when Moses heard that, he was content.

Foods Permitted and Forbidden

11 Now the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying to them, ²"Speak to the children of Israel, saying, ^a"These are the animals which you may eat among all the animals that are on the earth: ³Among the animals, whatever divides the hoof, having cloven hooves and chewing the cud—that you may eat. ⁴Nevertheless these you shall ^bnot eat among those that chew the cud or those that have cloven hooves: the camel, because it chews the cud but does not have cloven hooves, is ¹unclean to you; ⁵the ²rock hyrax, because it chews the cud but does not have cloven hooves, is ³unclean to you; ⁶the hare, because it chews the cud but does not have cloven hooves, is unclean to you; ⁷and the swine, though it divides the hoof, having cloven hooves, yet does not chew the cud, ^cis unclean to you. ⁸Their flesh you shall not eat,

¹⁹ ^a[Is. 1:11–15]; Jer. 6:20; 14:12; Hos. 9:4; [Mal. 1:10, 13; 3:1–4]

CHAPTER 11

² ^aDeut. 14:4; Ezek. 4:14; Dan. 1:8; [Matt. 15:11]; Acts 10:12, 14; [Rom. 14:14; Heb. 9:10; 13:9]
⁴ ^bActs 10:14
¹ ^{impure}
⁵ ²rock badger
³ ^{impure}
⁷ ^cIs. 65:4; 66:3, 17; Mark 5:1–17

⁸ ^dIs. 52:11; [Mark 7:2, 15, 18]; Acts 10:14, 15; 15:29
⁹ ^eDeut. 14:9
¹⁰ ^fLev. 7:18, 21; Deut. 14:3
⁴ ^{detestable}
¹³ ^gDeut. 14:12–19; Is. 66:17

and their carcasses you shall not touch.

^dThey are unclean to you.

⁹^eThese you may eat of all that are in the water: whatever in the water has fins and scales, whether in the seas or in the rivers—that you may eat. ¹⁰But all in the seas or in the rivers that do not have fins and scales, all that move in the water or any living thing which is in the water, they are ⁴an ^fabomination to you. ¹¹They shall be an abomination to you; you shall not eat their flesh, but you shall regard their carcasses as an abomination. ¹²Whatever in the water does not have fins or scales—that shall be an abomination to you.

¹³^gAnd these you shall regard as an abomination among the birds; they shall not be eaten, they are an abomination: the eagle, the vulture, the buzzard, ¹⁴the kite, and the falcon after its kind; ¹⁵every raven after its kind, ¹⁶the ostrich, the short-eared owl, the sea gull, and the hawk after its kind; ¹⁷the little owl, the fisher owl, and the screech owl; ¹⁸the white owl, the jackdaw, and the carrion vulture; ¹⁹the stork, the heron after its kind, the hoopoe, and the bat.

²⁰All flying insects that creep on all fours shall be an abomination to you.

sacrificial meat because he was afraid of what more God might do. He was not being rebellious, as his dead sons had been in burning the incense. Aaron was arguing that in circumstances such as the one he faced that day, God would prefer the priest to err on the side of caution rather than presumption. Aaron's reply to Moses illustrates that the interpretation of the Law was not static.

10:20 Moses . . . was content: Rebellion arises from a heart that is not right toward God. Moses recognized that Aaron's failure was not rebellion, that his argument had merit, and that Aaron could be forgiven. The first great crisis in establishing Israel's worship of God had passed.

11:1 the LORD spoke: Now that Aaron was high priest, he was responsible for teaching and administering the law. So God spoke to Moses and Aaron together when He gave these further instructions (10:10, 11).

11:2 on the earth: As distinct from the sea and the air. A similar grouping of animal life is found in the creation account (Gen. 1:20–31).

11:3 chewing the cud: That is, the ruminants, like cows, sheep, goats, deer, and antelope. The ruminants eat only plants, mainly grasses and grains. No meat-eating animal chews the cud. The animals allowed for food are not mentioned by name (as they are in Deut. 14:4, 5). Cattle, sheep, and goats provided most of the meat for the ancient Israelites. They ate meat much less often than we do, usually only on special occasions such as the sacrificial feasts or to honor guests in the home.

11:4 The camel was eaten by some of Israel's neighbors, who considered it a delicacy. But the camel would not have been an important source of meat for Israel even if it had been permitted, for it never was as numerous in Israel or as important to Israel's economy as it was to their neighbors. The camel does have a split hoof, but its sole or pad is so thick that its imprint is like a single pad.

11:5 The rock hyrax lives in colonies among the rocks (see Prov. 30:26). Though it is sometimes called a rock badger, it is not a badger. The rock hyrax is about the same size as a rabbit. Hyraxes appear to chew constantly while sitting outside their dens sunning themselves.

11:6 The hare is not a ruminant, although it does appear to chew constantly. It does not have a hoof.

11:7 The swine is the best known of the unclean animals and continues to be avoided by both Jews and Muslims. The swine was most commonly eaten by Israel's neighbors in both the OT and NT periods. All the reasons for labeling an animal as unclean fit the swine: (1) Inadequately cooked pork could transmit disease to humans; (2) pigs were sacrificed to pagan deities; (3) because pork tasted good, refusing it would be a suitable test of faithfulness and obedience.

11:8 In the case of these **unclean** animals, eating their meat or touching their dead carcasses caused an Israelite to be unclean or ritually impure. However, touching a live animal did not make a person unclean, and an Israelite could raise and use a donkey or camel as a beast of burden without becoming unclean.

11:9 A water creature had to possess both **fins and scales** in order to be eaten. Only true fish—and not all of them—fit this description. Oysters, clams, crabs, lobsters, and eels were unclean. **Whether in the seas or in the rivers** applied this command to both saltwater and freshwater species.

11:10–12 The phrasing is careful, deliberate, and repetitive to remove any possibility of finding any exception anywhere. **Abomination** is a stronger word than *unclean*. It implies not just avoidance, but active, fierce repulsion. Fins and scales are "appropriate" for water creatures. Fish that have them are clean. Water creatures that appear to mix categories—suggesting disorder—are not merely unclean; they are an abomination. There are good health reasons for being cautious in eating some of these creatures, but this was not the main reason for classifying them as unclean.

11:19 The hoopoe is a migratory bird. It spends its winters in tropical Africa and its summers in Israel and farther north. **The bat** of course is not a bird. But in the pre-scientific age it was grouped with birds because it has wings and flies.

11:20 Creep on all fours is an idiom for crawling on the ground, as insects do on their six legs. Many insects move about in filth and eat refuse. Their association with death, impurity, and disorder made them unclean.

²¹Yet these you may eat of every flying insect that creeps on *all* fours: those which have jointed legs above their feet with which to leap on the earth. ²²These you may eat: ^hthe locust after its kind, the destroying locust after its kind, the cricket after its kind, and the grasshopper after its kind. ²³But all *other* flying insects which have four feet *shall be* an abomination to you.

Unclean Animals

²⁴By these you shall become ⁵unclean; whoever touches the carcass of any of them shall be unclean until evening; ²⁵whoever carries part of the carcass of any of them ⁱshall wash his clothes and be unclean until evening; ²⁶*The carcass of any animal which divides the foot, but is not cloven-hoofed or does not chew the cud, is unclean to you. Everyone who touches it shall be unclean.* ²⁷And whatever goes on its paws, among all kinds of animals that go on *all* fours, those *are* unclean to you. Whoever touches any such carcass shall be unclean until evening. ²⁸Whoever carries *any such* carcass shall wash his clothes and be unclean until evening. It *is* unclean to you.

²⁹‘These also *shall be* unclean to you among the creeping things that creep on the earth: the mole, ^jthe mouse, and the large lizard after its kind; ³⁰the gecko, the monitor lizard, the sand reptile, the sand lizard, and the chameleon.

²² ^h Matt. 3:4; Mark 1:6
²⁴ ⁵ *impure*
²⁵ ⁱ Lev. 14:8; 15:5; Num. 19:10, 21, 22; 31:24; Zech. 13:1; [Heb. 9:10; 10:22; Rev. 7:14]
²⁹ ^j Is. 66:17

³¹ ^k Hag. 2:13
³² ^l Lev. 15:12
⁶ *impure*
³³ ^m Lev. 6:28
ⁿ Lev. 15:12; Ps. 2:9; Jer. 48:38; [2 Tim. 2:21]; Rev. 2:27
³⁸ ⁷ *impure*
³⁹ ^o Hag. 2:11-13
⁴⁰ ^p Ex. 22:31; Lev. 17:15; 22:8; Deut. 14:21; Ezek. 4:14; 44:31

³¹These *are* unclean to you among all that creep. Whoever ^ktouches them when they are dead shall be unclean until evening. ³²Anything on which *any* of them falls, when they are dead shall be ⁶unclean, whether *it is* any item of wood or clothing or skin or sack, whatever item *it is*, in which *any* work is done, ^lit must be put in water. And it shall be unclean until evening; then it shall be clean. ³³Any ^mearthen vessel into which *any* of them falls ⁿyou shall break; and whatever *is* in it shall be unclean: ³⁴in such a vessel, any edible food upon which water falls becomes unclean, and any drink that may be drunk from it becomes unclean. ³⁵And everything on which *a part of any such* carcass falls shall be unclean; *whether it is* an oven or cooking stove, it shall be broken down; *for they are* unclean, and shall be unclean to you. ³⁶Nevertheless a spring or a cistern, *in which there is* plenty of water, shall be clean, but whatever touches any such carcass becomes unclean. ³⁷And if a part of *any such* carcass falls on any planting seed which is to be sown, it *remains* clean. ³⁸But if water is put on the seed, and if *a part of any such* carcass falls on it, it *becomes* ⁷unclean to you.

³⁹‘And if any animal which you may eat dies, he who touches its carcass shall be ^ounclean until evening. ⁴⁰^pHe who eats of its carcass shall wash his clothes and be unclean until evening.

11:21 Insects with jointed legs . . . with which to leap were permitted to be eaten. The joints are the enlarged third legs of locusts and grasshoppers that enable them to leap. Locusts and grasshoppers do not live in filth or eat dung. They eat only plants.

11:24 **These** refers to just the flying insects of the previous paragraph or possibly to all the unclean animals discussed so far. Merely to touch an unclean carcass caused a person to be **unclean until evening**, when the new day began for the Israelites.

11:25 If a person carried or picked up a **carcass**, or part of a carcass, that person’s uncleanness was greater. Therefore, the remedy had to be more thorough.

11:26 The word **carcass** is not in the Hebrew text, but clearly that is what is meant here. A live unclean animal, such as a donkey or camel, could not make a person unclean simply by touching it. Otherwise, many people would have been unclean all the time.

11:27, 28 **Whatever goes on its paws is unclean** because it does not have a cloven hoof. As with the previous group, to touch a **carcass** was to be **unclean** and to carry a carcass was to be even more unclean, requiring a more thorough cleansing.

11:29, 30 Another group of animals is introduced here. Many of these animals could be found in or around human dwellings. Since these animals were unclean, it was important to know how to deal with them and with objects and utensils they touched. These are small creatures **that creep on the earth**. This refers not only to their great numbers, but also to their quickness of movement. The group includes small rodents in general, such as mice, voles, shrews, and hamsters, as well as some kinds of lizard.

11:31 **when they are dead**: Literally, “in their death” or “in their dying.” The Israelite farmer was more likely to kill a small rodent in

the course of the day than any other creature named in this chapter. It was important to remember as they killed these pests that they themselves would be **unclean until evening** if they touched them.

11:32 Expensive vessels of wood, fabric, leather, or fiber were to **be put in water**. Whether they were only to be washed, or soaked **until evening**, is unclear. But at evening, the start of the new Jewish day, they would be **clean**.

11:33 **Any earthen vessel . . . you shall break**: Pottery was plentiful, cheap, and easily replaced. Vessels made of pottery were also used for food preparation and eating. Again, hygiene was an important result of avoiding the unclean.

11:34 The contents of any vessel made **unclean** in this way became unclean also.

11:35 These ovens were made of clay and so had to be **broken** also.

11:36 **A spring or a cistern** could hardly be emptied. Only the person removing the **carcass** became unclean—probably until evening.

11:37, 38 **Dry planting seed** did not become unclean.

11:39, 40 **if any animal . . . dies**: This refers to animals that died of natural causes, and not those killed for food. The **carcass** caused the person who touched it to be **unclean** because its blood had not been drained. Eating from or carrying the carcass involved more than merely touching it and required a greater remedy—washing one’s clothes as well as waiting until evening. Eating meat without draining its blood apparently was not as serious an offense as eating and drinking blood by itself (7:26, 27). Carrying the carcass would have been unavoidable in many situations—removing the animal for burial, for example. Uncleanness often was not a moral issue—at least in the way a person became unclean.

He also who carries its carcass shall wash his clothes and be unclean until evening.

⁴¹And every creeping thing that creeps on the earth *shall be* ⁸an abomination. It shall not be eaten. ⁴²Whatever crawls on its belly, whatever goes on *all* fours, or whatever has many feet among all creeping things that creep on the earth—these you shall not eat, for they *are* an abomination. ⁴³*q* You shall not make ⁹yourselves ¹abominable with any creeping thing that creeps; nor shall you make yourselves unclean with them, lest you be defiled by them. ⁴⁴For I *am* the LORD your ^rGod. You shall therefore consecrate yourselves, and ^syou shall be holy; for I *am* holy. Neither shall you defile yourselves with any creeping thing that creeps on the earth. ⁴⁵For I *am* the LORD who brings you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God. ^uYou shall therefore be holy, for I *am* holy.

⁴⁶This *is* the law ²of the animals and the birds and every living creature that moves in the waters, and of every creature that creeps on the earth, ⁴⁷*v* to distinguish between the unclean and the clean, and between the animal that may be eaten and the animal that may not be eaten.”

⁴¹ ⁸detestable
⁴³ ^a Lev. 20:25 ⁹ Lit. your souls ¹ impure
⁴⁴ ^r Ex. 6:7; Lev. 22:33; 25:38; 26:45
⁵ Ex. 19:6; Lev. 19:2; 20:7, 26; [Amos 3:3]; Matt. 5:48; 1 Thess. 4:7; 1 Pet. 1:15, 16; [Rev. 22:11, 14]
⁴⁵ ^r Ex. 6:7; 20:2; Lev. 22:33; 25:38; 26:45; Ps. 105:43-45; Hos. 11:1 ^u Lev. 11:44
⁴⁶ ² concerning
⁴⁷ ^v Lev. 10:10; Ezek. 44:23; Mal. 3:18

CHAPTER 12

² ^a Lev. 15:19; [Job 14:4; Ps. 51:5]
⁹ Ex. 22:30; Lev. 8:33; 13:4; Luke 2:22 ^c Lev. 18:19
¹ impure
³ ^d Gen. 17:12; Luke 1:59; 2:21; John 7:22, 23; Gal. 5:3
⁴ ² consecrated
⁶ ^e Luke 2:22
^f [John 1:29; 1 Pet. 1:18, 19] ⁹ Lev. 5:7 ³ Lit. a son of his year
⁷ ⁴ Lit. covering
⁸ ^h Lev. 5:7; Luke 2:22-24

The Ritual After Childbirth

12 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ²“Speak to the children of Israel, saying: ‘If a ^awoman has conceived, and borne a male child, then ^bshe shall be ¹unclean seven days; ^cas in the days of her customary impurity she shall be unclean. ³And on the ^deighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised. ⁴She shall then continue in the blood of her purification thirty-three days. She shall not touch any ²hallowed thing, nor come into the sanctuary until the days of her purification are fulfilled.

⁵‘But if she bears a female child, then she shall be unclean two weeks, as in her customary impurity, and she shall continue in the blood of her purification sixty-six days.

⁶^e‘When the days of her purification are fulfilled, whether for a son or a daughter, she shall bring to the priest a ^flamb ³of the first year as a burnt offering, and a young pigeon or a turtledove as a ^gsin offering, to the door of the tabernacle of meeting. ⁷Then he shall offer it before the LORD, and make ⁴atonement for her. And she shall be clean from the flow of her blood. This *is* the law for her who has borne a male or a female.

⁸^h‘And if she is not able to bring a

11:41–43 Crawls on its belly and has many feet are new descriptions. They were not mentioned in the previous ban on eating **creeping things**.

11:44 I am the LORD your God: The word for LORD is Yahweh, the name by which God had revealed Himself to Moses (Ex. 3:14, 15; 6:2, 3). **Consecrate yourselves** means “make yourselves holy.” **You shall be holy; for I am holy:** This is the foundation of the so-called Holiness Code of chs. 17–26. To be holy means to “be separate.” God is holy as the transcendent Creator, above and apart from nature. To be separate to God is much more important than to be separate from other things. As God’s people are separated to Him, we become more and more conformed to His image, to be the persons God intended us to be when He created the first man and the first woman in His image (Gen. 1:26, 27). Holiness in God’s people involves grace, righteousness, integrity, peace, and mercy, because these are characteristics of the God who has redeemed us and whom we serve.

11:45 For emphasis, God reaffirmed His identity. Then He added an astounding commitment to Israel. His purpose in bringing them **up out of the land of Egypt** was to be their **God**. Because of God’s holy nature, they too had to **be holy**.

11:46, 47 This statement summarizes the content and purpose of the chapter by listing again the four broad groupings of animals. **To distinguish** reminds the reader that these were instructions for the people as well as the priests. The priests were responsible for teaching the Israelites.

12:2 The child did not cause the mother to be **unclean**. God had ordained and blessed childbirth from the beginning, even before the sin in the Garden (Gen. 1:28). Rather, it was the blood and other fluids in childbirth that made the mother ritually unclean for a period of time, just as other bodily fluids caused people to be unclean (ch. 15). This uncleanness was not necessarily a moral judgment on the mother. **Seven days** of uncleanness for a male child was the same length of time as the uncleanness for the woman’s menstrual period or **customary impurity** (15:19–24).

12:3 Recent medical science has concluded that **the eighth day**

is the best time for circumcision. Before the eighth day, blood does not clot as well, and after it, sensitivity to pain becomes greater. Circumcision was also practiced by groups such as the Ammonites, Moabites, and Edomites. However, in Israel it was the outward symbol of God’s covenant with Abraham (Gen. 17:9–14). The fact that the symbol involved the male reproductive organ was a reminder that God had promised Abraham many descendants.

12:4 The eighth day also marked the end of the mother’s uncleanness with regard to everyday objects and activities; she no longer would make them unclean by touching them. But her personal uncleanness would continue for another **thirty-three days**. This corresponds with the medical characteristics of childbirth. After seven days, most discharges have ceased, but slight signs may continue for as long as six weeks. The phrase **blood of her purification** reminds us of this. Blood is the carrier of life in the body and the agent of purification from sin, both in the OT sacrificial system and Christ’s sacrifice. At the same time, blood may become a source of pollution and death if it is taken lightly or not handled appropriately.

12:5 The birth of a **female child** doubled the period of ritual impurity. No reason is given.

12:6 The sacrifices required were the same **for a son or a daughter**, showing that God places equal value upon both sexes and that He intends His people to do the same. The **burnt offering** (ch. 1) and the **sin offering** (ch. 4) were two of the five regular offerings Israel had been instructed to bring before God. Following the birth of a child, these sacrifices were a woman’s responsibility, though her husband normally would accompany her (Luke 2:22–24). The fact that the mother was to offer the sacrifices for herself reminds us that women were to be active participants in Israel’s worship. **A young pigeon or a turtledove** was the least expensive offering. The poor could bring these birds when they could not afford a lamb (5:7).

12:7 The repetition here of the phrase **a male or a female** reemphasizes the equal worth of a girl and a boy.

12:8 **If she is not able to bring a lamb** is, literally, “If she cannot find in her hand enough for a lamb.” Buying an animal for sacrifice was perhaps as common as raising one. Mary, following the

lamb, then she may bring two turtledoves or two young pigeons—one as a burnt offering and the other as a sin offering.ⁱ So the priest shall make atonement for her, and she will be ⁵clean.”

The Law Concerning Leprosy

13 And the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying: ²“When a man has on the skin of his body a swelling, ^aa scab, or a bright spot, and it becomes on the skin of his body like a ¹leprous sore, ^bthen he shall be brought to Aaron the priest or to one of his sons the priests. ³The priest shall examine the sore on the skin of the body; and if the hair on the sore has turned white, and the sore appears to be deeper than the skin of his body, it is a leprous sore. Then the priest shall examine him, and pronounce him ²unclean. ⁴But if the bright spot is white on the skin of his body, and does not appear to be deeper than the skin, and its hair has not turned white, then the priest shall isolate the one who has the sore ^cseven days. ⁵And the priest shall examine him on the seventh day; and indeed if the sore appears to be as it was, and the sore has not spread on the skin, then the priest shall isolate him another seven days. ⁶Then the priest shall examine him again on the seventh day; and indeed if the sore has faded, and the sore has not spread on the skin, then the priest shall pronounce him clean; it is ^donly a scab, and he ^dshall wash his clothes and be clean. ⁷But if the scab should at all spread over the skin, after he has been seen by the priest for his cleansing, he shall be seen by the priest again. ⁸And if the priest sees that the scab has indeed spread on the skin, then the priest shall pronounce him ³unclean. It is leprosy.

⁹“When the leprous sore is on a person, then he shall be brought to the priest. ¹⁰“And the priest shall examine him; and indeed if the swelling on the skin is white, and it has turned the hair white, and there is a spot of raw flesh in

Leprosy

Leprosy is caused by a bacillus and is characterized by the formation of nodules that spread, causing loss of sensation and deformity. Now treated with sulfone drugs, leprosy is perhaps the least infectious of all known contagious diseases. Hansen’s Disease, as it is more properly known, was often misdiagnosed in biblical times. People believed then that it was highly contagious and hereditary. On the basis of a hair in a scab, a pimple, or a spot on the skin that had turned white, the priest would declare a person to be a leper and would quarantine him or her for seven days. If healed of leprosy, the person was expected to offer certain sacrifices and engage in rites of purification (14:1–32).



A group of lepers

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⁸ ⁱ Lev. 4:26
⁵ pure

CHAPTER 13

² ^c Deut. 28:27; Is. 3:17 ^b Deut. 17:8, 9; 24:8; Mal. 2:7; Luke 17:14 ¹ Heb. saraath, disfiguring skin diseases, including leprosy, and so in vv. 2–46 and 14:2–32
³ ² defiled

the swelling, ¹¹ it is an old leprosy on the skin of his body. The priest shall pronounce him ⁴unclean, and shall not isolate him, for he is unclean.

¹²“And if leprosy breaks out all over the skin, and the leprosy covers all the skin of the one who has the sore, from his head to his foot, wherever the priest

⁴ ^c Lev. 14:8 ⁶ ^d Lev. 11:25; 14:8; [John 13:8, 10]

⁸ ³ defiled ¹⁰ ^e Num. 12:10, 12; 2 Kin. 5:27; 2 Chr. 26:19, 20

¹¹ ⁴ defiled

birth of Jesus and the days of her purification, went to the temple in Jerusalem in accordance with this regulation (Luke 2:22–24). Her offering was a pair of birds. Joseph and Mary obviously were poor; the Magi had not yet visited them with their expensive gifts for the newborn King.

13:2 The Hebrew word for a man means a “human being”—that is, anyone. **A swelling, a scab, or a bright spot** would often be a minor ailment that healed within a few days and caused no further concern. **he shall be brought:** The most serious result of the priest’s examination was to be declared unclean and banished from the camp. The natural tendency would be to put off seeing the priest about a condition. However, ritual uncleanness was a serious matter for all the people. It was important to diagnose skin problems immediately so that the whole camp did not become unclean. If the

afflicted person did not come on his own initiative, his family and clan leaders were responsible for bringing him.

13:3 The priest shall examine: The priest made the diagnosis. However, nothing is said about how to treat the ailments. The subject of the passage is not medical treatment but ritual impurity, and making sure that the community of Israel, and particularly the tabernacle, would not become unclean.

13:6 he shall wash his clothes: Personal hygiene was an important factor in identifying and preventing the spread of infectious diseases, even those that did not cause a person to be unclean.

13:11 shall not isolate him: Isolation, or quarantine, was for the purpose of protecting the community until a diagnosis was reached. In this case, the patient was already diagnosed as **unclean**, which meant he had to live outside the camp (v. 46).

looks, ¹³ then the priest shall consider; and indeed *if* the leprosy has covered all his body, he shall pronounce *him* clean *who has* the sore. It has all turned ^f white. He *is* clean. ¹⁴ But when raw flesh appears on him, he shall be unclean. ¹⁵ And the priest shall examine the raw flesh and pronounce him to be unclean; *for* the raw flesh *is* unclean. It *is* leprosy. ¹⁶ Or if the raw flesh changes and turns white again, he shall come to the priest. ¹⁷ And the priest shall examine him; and indeed *if* the sore has turned white, then the priest shall pronounce *him* clean *who has* the sore. He *is* clean.

¹⁸ “If the body develops a ^g boil in the skin, and it is healed, ¹⁹ and in the place of the boil there comes a white swelling or a bright spot, reddish-white, then it shall be shown to the priest; ²⁰ and *if*, when the priest sees it, it indeed appears deeper than the skin, and its hair has turned white, the priest shall pronounce him unclean. It *is* a leprous sore which has broken out of the boil. ²¹ But if the priest examines it, and indeed *there are* no white hairs in it, and it *is* not deeper than the skin, but has faded, then the priest shall isolate him seven days; ²² and if it should at all spread over the skin, then the priest shall pronounce him unclean. It *is* a ⁵ leprous sore. ²³ But if the bright spot stays in one place, *and* has not spread, it *is* the scar of the boil; and the priest shall pronounce him clean.

²⁴ “Or if the body receives a ^h burn on its skin by fire, and the raw *flesh* of the burn becomes a bright spot, reddish-white or white, ²⁵ then the priest shall examine it; and indeed *if* the hair of the bright spot has turned white, and it appears deeper than the skin, it *is* leprosy broken out in the burn. Therefore the priest shall pronounce him unclean. It *is* a leprous sore. ²⁶ But if the priest examines it, and indeed *there are* no white hairs in the bright spot, and it *is* not deeper than the skin, but has faded, then the priest shall isolate him seven days. ²⁷ And the priest shall examine him on the seventh day. If it has at all spread over the skin, then the priest shall pronounce him unclean. It *is* a leprous sore. ²⁸ But if the bright spot stays in one place, *and* has not spread on the skin, but has faded, it *is* a swelling from the burn. The priest shall pronounce him clean, for it *is* the scar from the burn.

¹³ ^f Ex. 4:6
¹⁸ ^g Ex. 9:9; 15:26
²² ⁵ infection
²⁴ ^h Is. 3:24

²⁹ “If a man or woman has a sore on the head or the beard, ³⁰ then the priest shall examine the sore; and indeed if it appears deeper than the skin, *and there is* in it thin yellow hair, then the priest shall pronounce him unclean. It *is* a scaly leprosy of the head or beard. ³¹ But if the priest examines the scaly sore, and indeed it does not appear deeper than the skin, *and there is* no black hair in it, then the priest shall isolate *the one who has* the scale seven days. ³² And on the seventh day the priest shall examine the sore; and indeed *if* the scale has not spread, and there is no yellow hair in it, and the scale does not appear deeper than the skin, ³³ he shall shave himself, but the scale he shall not shave. And the priest shall isolate *the one who has* the scale another seven days. ³⁴ On the seventh day the priest shall examine the scale; and indeed *if* the scale has not spread over the skin, and does not appear deeper than the skin, then the priest shall pronounce him clean. He shall wash his clothes and be clean. ³⁵ But if the scale should at all spread over the skin after his cleansing, ³⁶ then the priest shall examine him; and indeed *if* the scale has spread over the skin, the priest need not seek for yellow hair. He *is* unclean. ³⁷ But if the scale appears to be at a standstill, and there is black hair grown up in it, the scale has healed. He *is* clean, and the priest shall pronounce him clean.

³⁸ “If a man or a woman has bright spots on the skin of the body, *specifically* white bright spots, ³⁹ then the priest shall look; and indeed *if* the bright spots on the skin of the body *are* dull white, it *is* a white spot *that* grows on the skin. He *is* clean.

⁴⁰ “As for the man whose hair has fallen from his head, he *is* bald, *but* he *is* clean. ⁴¹ He whose hair has fallen from his forehead, he *is* bald on the forehead, *but* he *is* clean. ⁴² And if there is on the bald head or bald ⁱ forehead a reddish-white sore, it *is* leprosy breaking out on his bald head or his bald forehead. ⁴³ Then the priest shall examine it; and indeed *if* the swelling of the sore *is* reddish-white on his bald head or on his bald forehead, as the appearance of leprosy on the skin of the body, ⁴⁴ he *is* a leprous man. He *is* unclean. The priest shall surely pronounce him ⁶ unclean; his sore *is* on his ^j head.

⁴⁵ “Now the leper on whom the sore *is*, his clothes shall be torn and his head

⁴² ⁱ 2 Chr. 26:19
⁴⁴ ^j Is. 1:5
⁶ altogether defiled

13:16, 17 Some of these diseases were healed, either spontaneously or with treatment. After another examination, **the priest** would then **pronounce** the patient **clean**.

13:45, 46 his clothes . . . his mustache: These actions were signs

of mourning because the afflictions were symbolic of death and decay. The afflicted person might as well have been dead as far as contact with the community or opportunity to worship in the sanctuary was concerned. **‘Unclean! Unclean!’**: The afflicted person

^kbare; and he shall ^lcover his mustache, and cry, ^m“Unclean! Unclean!” ⁴⁶He shall be unclean. All the days he has the sore he shall be unclean. He *is* unclean, and he shall ⁷dwell alone; his dwelling *shall be* ⁿoutside the camp.

The Law Concerning Leprous Garments

⁴⁷“Also, if a garment has a ⁸leprous plague in it, *whether it is* a woolen garment or a linen garment, ⁴⁸whether *it is* in the warp or woof of linen or wool, whether in leather or in anything made of leather, ⁴⁹and if the plague is greenish or reddish in the garment or in the leather, whether in the warp or in the woof, or in anything made of leather, it is a leprous ⁹plague and shall be shown to the priest. ⁵⁰The priest shall examine the plague and isolate *that which* has the plague seven days. ⁵¹And he shall examine the plague on the seventh day. If the plague has spread in the garment, either in the warp or in the woof, in the leather or in anything made of leather, the plague is ^oan active leprosy. It is unclean. ⁵²He shall therefore burn that garment in which is the plague, whether warp or woof, in wool or in linen, or anything of leather, for it is an active leprosy; *the garment* shall be burned in the fire.

⁵³“But if the priest examines *it*, and indeed the plague has not spread in the garment, either in the warp or in the woof, or in anything made of leather, ⁵⁴then the priest shall command that they wash *the thing* in which is the plague; and he shall isolate it another seven days. ⁵⁵Then the priest shall examine the plague after

⁴⁵ ^k Lev. 10:6; 21:10
^l Ezek. 24:17, 22;
 Mic. 3:7 ^m Is. 6:5;
 64:6; Lam. 4:15;
 Luke 5:8
⁴⁶ ⁿ Num. 5:1-4;
 12:14; 2 Kin. 7:3;
 15:5; 2 Chr. 26:21;
 Ps. 38:11; Luke 17:12
⁷ live alone
⁴⁷ ⁸ A mold,
 fungus, or similar
 infestation, and so
 in vv. 47-59
⁴⁹ ⁹ mark
⁵¹ ^o Lev. 14:44

CHAPTER 14

² ^a Matt. 8:2, 4;
 Mark 1:40, 44; Luke
 5:12, 14; 17:14 ¹ See
 note at 13:2
³ ² Heb. *saraath*,
 disfiguring skin
 diseases, including
 leprosy, and so in
 vv. 2-32
⁴ ^b Lev. 14:6, 49, 51,
 52; Num. 19:6; Heb.
 9:19 ^c Ex. 25:4 ^d Ex.
 12:22; Ps. 51:7

it has been washed; and indeed *if* the plague has not changed its color, though the plague has not spread, it *is* unclean, and you shall burn it in the fire; it continues eating away, *whether* the damage is outside or inside. ⁵⁶If the priest examines *it*, and indeed the plague has faded after washing it, then he shall tear it out of the garment, whether out of the warp or out of the woof, or out of the leather. ⁵⁷But if it appears again in the garment, either in the warp or in the woof, or in anything made of leather, it is a spreading *plague*; you shall burn with fire that in which is the plague. ⁵⁸And if you wash the garment, either warp or woof, or whatever is made of leather, if the plague has disappeared from it, then it shall be washed a second time, and shall be clean.

⁵⁹“This is the law of the leprous plague in a garment of wool or linen, either in the warp or woof, or in anything made of leather, to pronounce it clean or to pronounce it unclean.”

The Ritual for Cleansing Healed Lepers

14 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ²“This shall be the law of the ¹leper for the day of his cleansing: He ^ashall be brought to the priest. ³And the priest shall go out of the camp, and the priest shall examine *him*; and indeed, *if* the ²leprosy is healed in the leper, ⁴then the priest shall command to take for him who is to be cleansed two living *and* clean birds, ^bcedar wood, ^cscarlet, and ^dhyssop. ⁵And the priest shall command that one of the birds be killed in an earthen vessel over running water. ⁶As for the living

had to warn people away. Others would become unclean by coming into contact with him. **All the days:** Not every disease was incurable. Some people recovered and upon examination by the priest were allowed back into society and worship in the sanctuary. **He shall dwell alone . . . outside the camp:** This ensured that the rest of the community and the sanctuary did not become ritually impure. The community was also protected from the unchecked spread of the disease. The serious skin diseases became a metaphor for sin. Like them, sin is dangerous and ultimately fatal, often difficult to diagnose, and incurable without God’s intervention.

13:47 Leprous plague would include any mold, mildew, or other fungus growths on clothing.

13:50–58 The procedures for diagnosing a problem with a garment were similar to those for diagnosing human skin ailments. A seven-day period of quarantine and a second examination were required. Infected garments had to be burned. If the **plague** had not spread, a garment could be salvaged.

13:56 The fact that a **garment** was considered worth saving even after a piece had been torn out of it indicates how valuable cloth was in the ancient world. Cloth was the product of many hours of hard work and was not lightly thrown away.

14:1–32 This passage details the ritual for cleansing a healed leper.

14:2 He shall be brought to the priest: The priest was responsible for diagnosing the uncleanness, so it was necessary for him to

administer the sacrifices and other rituals that marked and celebrated the return of the person to the community of Israel.

14:3 the priest shall go out of the camp: Even if the person was healed, he still was unclean and could not come into the camp until the proper rituals had been carried out (v. 8). This does not contradict the instructions to bring the person to the priest; the priest came outside the camp and the person was brought to him there. **if the leprosy is healed:** These rites were not for healing. They were to confirm and celebrate the healing that already had occurred, to cleanse the recovered patient, and to readmit him or her into the community and its worship.

14:4 Cedar wood was used perhaps because of its durability and resistance to decay, symbolizing the patient’s recovery from the decay that had threatened his life. **Scarlet** was probably a scarlet thread or cord. Scarlet symbolized blood, the agent in the sacrificial system that brought victory over sin and death. **Hyssop** was an aromatic herb used for food flavoring, fragrance, and medicine.

14:5 Running water is literally “living water.” This is water from a spring or stream, as opposed to water from a cistern, vessel, or pool. Stagnant water symbolized potential death; living water symbolized life. The blood of the bird ran into the water in the **earthen vessel**.

14:6, 7 It is likely that the sprigs of **hyssop** were tied to the **cedar wood** with the **scarlet** thread. With that in one hand and the **living bird** in the other hand, the priest would **dip** them all in the **blood**

bird, he shall take it, the cedar wood and the scarlet and the hyssop, and dip them and the living bird in the blood of the bird *that was* killed over the running water. ⁷And he shall ^esprinkle it ^fseven times on him who is to be cleansed from the leprosy, and shall pronounce him clean, and shall let the living bird loose in the open field. ⁸He who is to be cleansed ^gshall wash his clothes, shave off all his hair, and ^hwash himself in water, that he may be clean. After that he shall come into the camp, and ⁱshall stay outside his tent seven days. ⁹But on the ^jseventh day

⁷ ^e Num. 19:18, 19; [Heb. 9:13, 21; 12:24] ^f 2 Kin. 5:10, 14; Ps. 51:2
⁸ ^g Lev. 11:25; 13:6; Num. 8:7 ^h Lev. 11:25; [Eph. 5:26; Heb. 10:22; Rev. 1:5, 6] ⁱ Lev. 13:5; Num. 5:2, 3; 12:14, 15; 2 Chr. 26:21
⁹ ^j Num. 19:19

¹⁰ ^k Matt. 8:4; Mark 1:44; Luke 5:14
^l Lev. 2:1; Num. 15:4

he shall shave all the hair off his head and his beard and his eyebrows—all his hair he shall shave off. He shall wash his clothes and wash his body in water, and he shall be clean.
¹⁰“And on the eighth day ^khe shall take two male lambs without blemish, one ewe lamb of the first year without blemish, three-tenths *of an ephah* of fine flour mixed with oil as ^la grain offering, and one log of oil. ¹¹Then the priest who makes *him* clean shall present the man who is to be made clean, and those things, before the LORD, *at the door of the*

and water mixture in the pottery bowl and then shake them over the head of the one **to be cleansed**. This procedure was performed **seven times**. The dead bird represented the death the patient had escaped; the sprinkling began the process of ritual cleansing that allowed the person to reenter the community and its worship. After being dipped in the blood of the dead bird, **the living bird** was let **loose in the open field**. It symbolically took away from the camp and the tabernacle the uncleanness of the person who was returning to the camp.

14:8, 9 Two washings of clothes and body and two head shavings, seven days apart, completed the ritual cleansing. These certainly served a hygienic purpose, removing residual scales and flakes that might have passed on contagious diseases to others.
14:10 **The eighth day** was the day of circumcision for a newborn male. The symbolism of starting again, almost of being born again into the community of faith, was continued. **three-tenths of an ephah:** About nine pounds. **one log of oil:** About two-thirds of a pint.

The Offerings		
Offering	Purpose	What Was Offered
Burnt Offering (Lev. 1:3–17; 6:8–13)	The burnt offering signified: (1) Atonement for sin (1:4). (2) Complete dedication to God. (Hence it is called the whole burnt offering.)	According to wealth: (1) Unblemished bull (1:3–9). (2) Unblemished male sheep or goat (1:10–13). (3) Turtledoves or young pigeons (1:14–17).
Grain Offering (Lev. 2:1–16; 6:14–18; 7:12, 13)	The grain offering accompanied all burnt offerings. It signified thanksgiving to God.	Three types: (1) Fine flour mixed with oil and frankincense (2:1–3). (2) Cakes made of fine flour mixed with oil and baked in an oven (2:4), in a pan (2:5), or in a covered pan (2:7). (3) Green heads of roasted grain mixed with oil and frankincense (2:14, 15).
Peace Offering (Lev. 3:1–17; 7:11–21, 28–34)	The peace offering expressed fellowship between the worshiper and God. There were three types: (1) Thank offering: expressed gratitude for an unexpected blessing. (2) Votive offering: expressed gratitude for a blessing granted when a vow had been made while asking for the blessing. (3) Free will offering: expressed gratitude to God without regard to any specific blessing.	According to wealth: (1) From the herd, an unblemished male or female (3:1–5). (2) From the flock, an unblemished male or female (3:6–11). (3) From the goats (3:12–17). Minor imperfections were permitted when the peace offering was a freewill offering of a bull or a lamb (22:23).
Sin Offering (Lev. 4:1–5:13; 6:24–30)	The sin offering was for atonement of sins committed unknowingly, especially where no restitution was possible. (In Num. 15:30, 31, the sin offering was of no avail in cases of defiant rebellion against God.)	(1) For the high priest, an unblemished bull (4:3–12). (2) For the congregation, an unblemished bull (4:13–21). (3) For a ruler, an unblemished male goat (4:22–26). (4) For a common citizen, an unblemished female goat or lamb (4:27–35). (5) In cases of poverty, two turtledoves or two young pigeons (one for a sin offering, the other for a burnt offering) could be substituted (5:7–10). (6) In cases of extreme poverty, fine flour could be substituted (5:11–13).
Trespass Offering (Lev. 5:14–6:7; 7:1–7)	The trespass offering atoned for sins committed unknowingly, especially where restitution was possible.	(1) If the offense was against the Lord, an unblemished lamb was to be brought for sacrifice. Restitution was calculated according to the priest's estimate of the value of the offense plus one-fifth (5:15, 16). (2) If the offense was against a person, an unblemished ram was brought. Restitution was calculated according to the value plus one-fifth (6:4–6).

tabernacle of meeting. ¹² And the priest shall take one male lamb and ^m offer it as a trespass offering, and the log of oil, and ⁿ wave them as a wave offering before the LORD. ¹³ Then he shall kill the lamb ^o in the place where he kills the sin offering and the burnt offering, in a holy place; for ^p as the sin offering is the priest's, so is the trespass offering. ^q It is most holy. ¹⁴ The priest shall take *some* of the blood of the trespass offering, and the priest shall put *it* ^r on the tip of the right ear of him who is to be cleansed, on the thumb of his right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot. ¹⁵ And the priest shall take *some* of the log of oil, and pour *it* into the palm of his own left hand. ¹⁶ Then the priest shall dip his right finger in the oil that *is* in his left hand, and shall ^s sprinkle some of the oil with his finger seven times before the LORD. ¹⁷ And of the rest of the oil in his hand, the priest shall put *some* on the tip of the right ear of him who is to be cleansed, on the thumb of his right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot, on the blood of the trespass offering. ¹⁸ The rest of the oil that *is* in the priest's hand he shall put on the head of him who is to be cleansed. ^t So the priest shall make ³ atonement for him before the LORD.

¹⁹ "Then the priest shall offer ^u the sin offering, and make atonement for him who is to be cleansed from his uncleanness. Afterward he shall kill the burnt offering. ²⁰ And the priest shall offer the burnt offering and the grain offering on the altar. So the priest shall make atonement for him, and he shall be ^v clean.

²¹ "But ^w if he *is* poor and cannot afford it, then he shall take one male lamb as a trespass offering to be waved, to make atonement for him, ⁴ one-tenth of an *ephah* of fine flour mixed with oil as a grain offering, a log of oil, ^{22x} and two turtledoves or two young pigeons, such as he is able to afford: one shall be a sin offering and the other a burnt offering. ^{23y} He shall bring them to the priest on

^{12 m} Lev. 5:6, 18; 6:6; 14:19 ⁿ Ex. 29:22-24, 26
^{13 o} Ex. 29:11; Lev. 1:5, 11; 4:4, 24 ^p Lev. 6:24-30; 7:7 ^q Lev. 2:3; 7:6; 21:22
^{14 r} Ex. 29:20; Lev. 8:23, 24
^{16 s} Lev. 4:6
^{18 t} Lev. 4:26; 5:6; Num. 15:28; [Heb. 2:17] ³ Lit. covering
^{19 u} Lev. 5:1, 6; 12:7; [2 Cor. 5:21]
^{20 v} Lev. 14:8, 9
^{21 w} Lev. 5:7, 11; 12:8; 27:8
⁴ Approximately two dry quarts
^{22 x} Lev. 12:8; 15:14, 15
^{23 y} Lev. 14:10, 11

^{24 z} Lev. 14:12
^{25 a} Lev. 14:14, 17
^{30 b} Lev. 14:22; 15:14, 15
^{32 c} Lev. 14:10
^{34 d} Gen. 12:7; 13:17; 17:8; Num. 32:22; Deut. 7:1; 32:49 ^e [Prov. 3:33]
⁵ Decomposition by mildew, mold, dry rot, etc., and so in vv. 34-53
^{35 f} [Ps. 91:9, 10; Prov. 3:33; Zech. 5:4]

the eighth day for his cleansing, to the door of the tabernacle of meeting, before the LORD. ^{24z} And the priest shall take the lamb of the trespass offering and the log of oil, and the priest shall wave them as a wave offering before the LORD. ²⁵ Then he shall kill the lamb of the trespass offering, ^a and the priest shall take *some* of the blood of the trespass offering and put *it* on the tip of the right ear of him who is to be cleansed, on the thumb of his right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot. ²⁶ And the priest shall pour some of the oil into the palm of his own left hand. ²⁷ Then the priest shall sprinkle with his right finger *some* of the oil that *is* in his left hand seven times before the LORD. ²⁸ And the priest shall put *some* of the oil that *is* in his hand on the tip of the right ear of him who is to be cleansed, on the thumb of the right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot, on the place of the blood of the trespass offering. ²⁹ The rest of the oil that *is* in the priest's hand he shall put on the head of him who is to be cleansed, to make atonement for him before the LORD. ³⁰ And he shall offer one of ^b the turtledoves or young pigeons, such as he can afford— ³¹ such as he is able to afford, the one as a sin offering and the other as a burnt offering, with the grain offering. So the priest shall make atonement for him who is to be cleansed before the LORD. ³² This *is* the law for one who had a leprous sore, who cannot afford ^c the usual cleansing."

The Law Concerning Leprous Houses

³³ And the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying: ^{34d} "When you have come into the land of Canaan, which I give you as a possession, and ^e I put the ⁵ leprous plague in a house in the land of your possession, ³⁵ and he who owns the house comes and tells the priest, saying, 'It seems to me that *there is* ^f some plague in the house,' ³⁶ then the priest shall command that they empty the house, before the priest goes *into it* to examine the

14:13 in the place . . . holy place: These offerings were brought to the door of the tabernacle (1:3; 4:4, 14). The place where the lamb was killed is referred to as the *holy place*. Therefore, it must have been inside the door, in the court of the tabernacle, rather than outside.

14:14-18 These rites are similar to Moses' actions in consecrating Aaron and his sons as priests (8:23). They encompassed the entire body, symbolizing a reversal in the person's status before God, from unclean and outside the community to a full member of the community once again.

14:19, 20 With these three offerings and the trespass offering (v. 12), the formerly unclean person had brought all the mandatory sacrifices that it was impossible to bring during the time of uncleanness.

14:21-32 God's legislation for Israel showed special concern for

the **poor**. In these sacrifices, the poor Israelite still had to bring a lamb for the **trespass offering**. But for the **sin offering** and the **burnt offering**, he was allowed to bring **turtledoves** or **pigeons**. In addition, the **grain offering** was reduced from three-tenths to **one-tenth of an ephah of fine flour**. The ritual for restoring a poor person to the community was essentially the same as it was for other Israelites.

14:34 The land of Canaan, which I give you refers to the land God had promised Abraham He would give to his descendants (Gen. 15:18-21; Deut. 6:10, 11; 8:7-9). **Leprous plague** is the same Hebrew term used in 13:2 to indicate serious skin diseases that could come upon humans. All of these were harmful growths, whether on human skin, clothing, or the wall of a house.

plague, that all that *is* in the house may not be made unclean; and afterward the priest shall go in to examine the house. ³⁷And he shall examine the plague; and indeed *if* the plague *is* on the walls of the house with ingrained streaks, greenish or reddish, which appear to be ⁶deep in the wall, ³⁸then the priest shall go out of the house, to the door of the house, and ⁷shut up the house seven days. ³⁹And the priest shall come again on the seventh day and look; and indeed *if* the plague has spread on the walls of the house, ⁴⁰then the priest shall command that they take away the stones in which *is* the plague, and they shall cast them into an unclean place outside the city. ⁴¹And he shall cause the house to be scraped inside, all around, and the dust that they scrape off they shall pour out in an unclean place outside the city. ⁴²Then they shall take other stones and put *them* in the place of *those* stones, and he shall take other mortar and plaster the house.

⁴³“Now if the plague comes back and breaks out in the house, after he has taken away the stones, after he has scraped the house, and after it is plastered, ⁴⁴then the priest shall come and look; and indeed *if* the plague has spread in the house, it *is* ⁹an active leprosy in the house. It *is* unclean. ⁴⁵And he shall break down the house, its stones, its timber, and all the plaster of the house, and he shall carry *them* outside the city to an unclean place. ⁴⁶Moreover he who goes into the house at all while it is shut up shall be ⁸unclean ^huntil evening. ⁴⁷And he who lies down in the house shall ⁱwash his clothes, and he who eats in the house shall wash his clothes.

⁴⁸“But if the priest comes in and examines *it*, and indeed the plague has not spread in the house after the house was plastered, then the priest shall pronounce the house clean, because the plague is healed. ⁴⁹And ^jhe shall take, to cleanse the house, two birds, cedar wood, scarlet, and hyssop. ⁵⁰Then he shall kill one of the birds in an earthen vessel over running water; ⁵¹and he shall take the cedar wood, the hyssop, the scarlet, and the liv-

³⁷ ⁶ Lit. *lower than the wall*
³⁸ ⁷ *quarantine*
⁴⁴ ⁹ Lev. 13:51; [Zech. 5:4]
⁴⁶ ^h Lev. 11:24; 15:5
⁸ *defiled*
⁴⁷ ⁱ Lev. 14:8
⁴⁹ ^j Lev. 14:4

ing bird, and dip them in the blood of the slain bird and in the running water, and sprinkle the house seven times. ⁵²And he shall ⁹cleanse the house with the blood of the bird and the running water and the living bird, with the cedar wood, the hyssop, and the scarlet. ⁵³Then he shall let the living bird loose outside the city in the open field, and ^kmake atonement for the house, and it shall be clean.

⁵⁴“This *is* the law for any ^lleprous sore and scale, ⁵⁵for the ^mleprosy of a garment ⁿand of a house, ⁵⁶^ofor a swelling and a scab and a bright spot, ⁵⁷to ^pteach when *it is* unclean and when *it is* clean. This *is* the law of leprosy.”

The Law Concerning Bodily Discharges

15 And the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying, ²“Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: ^a“When any man has a discharge from his body, his discharge *is* unclean. ³And this shall be his uncleanness in regard to his discharge—whether his body runs with his discharge, or his body is stopped up by his discharge, it *is* his uncleanness. ⁴Every bed is ¹unclean on which he who has the discharge lies, and everything on which he sits shall be unclean. ⁵And whoever ^btouches his bed shall ^cwash his clothes and ^dbathe in water, and be unclean until evening. ⁶He who sits on anything on which he who has the ^edischarge sat shall wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until evening. ⁷And he who touches the body of him who has the discharge shall wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until evening. ⁸If he who has the discharge ^fspits on him who is clean, then he shall wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until evening. ⁹Any saddle on which he who has the discharge rides shall be unclean. ¹⁰Whoever touches anything that was under him shall be unclean until evening. He who carries *any* of those things shall wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until evening. ¹¹And whomever the one who

⁵² ⁹ ceremonially cleanse
⁵³ ^k Lev. 14:20
⁵⁴ ^l Lev. 13:30; 26:21
⁵⁵ ^m Lev. 13:47-52
ⁿ Lev. 14:34
⁵⁶ ^o Lev. 13:2
⁵⁷ ^p Lev. 11:47; 20:25; Deut. 24:8; Ezek. 44:23

CHAPTER 15

² ^a Lev. 22:4; Num. 5:2; 2 Sam. 3:29
⁴ ¹ *defiled*
⁵ ^b Lev. 5:2; 14:46
^c Lev. 14:8, 47 ^d Lev. 11:25; 17:15
⁶ ^e Lev. 15:10; Deut. 23:10
⁸ ^f Num. 12:14

14:45 If every effort to save the house failed, it was destroyed and removed so the rest of the houses of the town would not become infected with the problem.

14:47 *Lies down* probably means to sleep overnight in the house. **14:49–53** The rite for cleansing a house of its uncleanness was the same as for cleansing a person.

14:54–57 This statement concludes the section 13:1–14:57. Again, the common characteristic of these problems, whether on persons, garments, or the walls of houses, was that they were harmful surface growths. Their uncleanness required action. If it could not be removed, the thing that carried the uncleanness had to be removed

from among God's people. Uncleanness today still requires action. But God has provided an infinitely stronger remedy for human uncleanness—the blood of Christ, which cleanses initially and then continues to cleanse the believer moment by moment.

15:2 any man: Regulations about female discharges begin in v. 19. **Discharge** refers to any abnormal flow. **Body**, literally “flesh,” is used here as a euphemism for the sexual organ.

15:4–12 A man with a discharge was unclean, as was anyone who came into contact with him, his spit, or any object that he touched. The other person made unclean was required to wash his clothes and himself and would be unclean **until evening**.

has the discharge touches, and has not rinsed his hands in water, he shall wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until evening. ¹²The ^gvessel of earth that he who has the discharge touches shall be broken, and every vessel of wood shall be rinsed in water.

¹³And when he who has a discharge is cleansed of his discharge, then ^hhe shall count for himself seven days for his cleansing, wash his clothes, and bathe his body in running water; then he shall be clean. ¹⁴On the eighth day he shall take for himself ⁱtwo turtledoves or two young pigeons, and come before the LORD, to the door of the tabernacle of meeting, and give them to the priest. ¹⁵Then the priest shall offer them, ^jthe one as a sin offering and the other as a burnt offering. ^kSo the priest shall make ²atonement for him before the LORD because of his discharge.

¹⁶^lIf any man has an emission of semen, then he shall wash all his body in water, and be unclean until evening. ¹⁷And any garment and any leather on which there is semen, it shall be washed with water, and be unclean until evening. ¹⁸Also, when a woman lies with a man, and *there is* an emission of semen, they shall bathe in water, and ^mbe unclean until evening.

¹⁹ⁿIf a woman has a discharge, and the discharge from her body is blood, she shall be ³set apart seven days; and whoever touches her shall be unclean until evening. ²⁰Everything that she lies on during her impurity shall be unclean; also everything that she sits on shall be unclean. ²¹Whoever touches her bed shall wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until evening. ²²And whoever touches anything that she sat on shall wash his clothes and bathe in

¹² ^g Lev. 6:28; 11:32, 33
¹³ ^h Lev. 14:8; 15:28; Num. 19:11, 12
¹⁴ ⁱ Lev. 14:22, 23, 30, 31
¹⁵ ^j Lev. 14:30, 31
¹⁶ ^k Lev. 14:19, 31 ² Lit. covering
¹⁶ ^l Lev. 22:4; Deut. 23:10, 11
¹⁸ ^m [Ex. 19:15; 1 Sam. 21:4; 1 Cor. 6:18]
¹⁹ ⁿ Lev. 12:2 ³ Lit. in her impurity

²⁴ ^o Lev. 18:19; 20:18 ⁴ defiled
²⁵ ^p Matt. 9:20; Mark 5:25; Luke 8:43
²⁸ ^q Lev. 15:13-15
³⁰ ^r Lev. 5:7
³¹ ^s Lev. 11:47; 14:57; 22:2; Deut. 24:8; Ezek. 44:23; [Heb. 12:15] ^t Lev. 20:3; Num. 5:3; 19:13, 20; Ezek. 5:11; 23:38; 36:17
³² ^u Lev. 15:2 ^v Lev. 15:16
³³ ^w Lev. 15:19

water, and be unclean until evening. ²³If *anything* is on *her* bed or on anything on which she sits, when he touches it, he shall be unclean until evening. ²⁴And ^oif any man lies with her at all, so that her impurity is on him, he shall be ⁴unclean seven days; and every bed on which he lies shall be unclean.

²⁵^pIf a woman has a discharge of blood for many days, other than at the time of her *customary* impurity, or if it runs beyond her *usual time* of impurity, all the days of her unclean discharge shall be as the days of her *customary* impurity. She *shall be* unclean. ²⁶Every bed on which she lies all the days of her discharge shall be to her as the bed of her impurity; and whatever she sits on shall be unclean, as the uncleanness of her impurity. ²⁷Whoever touches those things shall be unclean; he shall wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until evening.

²⁸^qIf she is cleansed of her discharge, then she shall count for herself seven days, and after that she shall be clean. ²⁹And on the eighth day she shall take for herself two turtledoves or two young pigeons, and bring them to the priest, to the door of the tabernacle of meeting. ³⁰Then the priest shall offer the one as a sin offering and the other as a ^rburnt offering, and the priest shall make atonement for her before the LORD for the discharge of her uncleanness.

³¹Thus you shall ^sseparate the children of Israel from their uncleanness, lest they die in their uncleanness when they ^tdefile *My* tabernacle that *is* among them. ³²^uThis *is* the law for one who has a discharge, ^vand *for him* who emits semen and is unclean thereby, ³³^wand for her who is indisposed because of her *customary* impurity, and for one who has a discharge,

15:12 The vessel of earth . . . of wood: Here the purpose was to prevent the spread of the disease through food and food utensils.

15:13 Seven days was enough time to be sure the discharge really had ceased.

15:14 Two turtledoves or two young pigeons was the smallest, least expensive sacrifice allowed. The degree of uncleanness caused by genital discharges was less than that caused by skin diseases. These sacrifices would have atoned for any sins he had committed while he was unclean and barred from the tabernacle.

15:16, 17 This passage concerns emissions of semen apart from sexual intercourse, which is the subject of v. 18.

15:18 Both the male and the female are involved in sexual intercourse. Both had to wash afterward, and both were ritually **unclean** until evening. Gen. 1; 2 portray sexual intercourse as God's plan from the beginning. Therefore, this uncleanness and requirement of washing does not mean that sexual intercourse is sinful.

15:19-24 This passage provides regulations concerning a woman's menstrual period. Her ritual uncleanness lasted seven days. As was the case with a man's discharge, any person or object she touched became **unclean**.

15:24 This regulation did not forbid intercourse during menstrua-

tion; see, however, 18:19; 20:18. The man became ritually unclean for seven days, the same length of time as for the woman. No sacrifice was required; menstruation was not regarded as sinful.

15:25-27 If a woman had a flow of blood at any time other than her normal monthly period, or if her period lasted longer than usual, her uncleanness continued the whole time and passed to all she touched. Such was the case with the woman who touched Jesus secretly (Luke 8:43-48).

15:28-30 At the end of her abnormal discharge, a woman's obligation was the same as a man's. This is another indication of her standing before God, of her right and duty to offer sacrifice on her own behalf in the tabernacle. She was to bring the smallest allowable sacrifice for the atonement of sins she may have committed during the period of her uncleanness, when she was barred from the tabernacle.

15:31-33 Hygiene and health were important byproducts, but the *focus* of these regulations concerning **uncleanness** was on keeping God's **tabernacle** undefiled so that Israel would have a place to come for the atonement of sin and the privilege of meeting with God.



Goats

Although goats did not need good pasture, they were terribly hard on vegetation; they ate everything within reach, including fledgling trees and shrubs. Their excessive numbers and indiscriminate grazing have been blamed for some of the barren hills of present-day Israel.¹ But to the Israelites goats had great value. They supplied milk and milk products. The meat tasted like venison; the young kids were especially tender. Goat hair was not shorn, but combed from the animals and woven into coarse cloth. Goatskin made good leather and water bottles. Even the horns of rams were used for drinking vessels and musical instruments. A man with a large flock of goats was indeed well off. Goats had their drawbacks—they stank, and they were lively, strong-willed creatures, unlike their docile cousins the sheep. In Jesus’ parable, when the sheep and goats were separated, the goats wound up in the position of disfavor (Matt. 25:31–34).

¹ Walter Ferguson, *Living Animals of the Bible* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, n.d.), p. 37



A goat in Israel
© leospek/Shutterstock

either man ^x or woman, ^y and for him who lies with her who is unclean.’”

The Day of Atonement

16 Now the LORD spoke to Moses ^a after the death of the two sons of Aaron, when they offered *profane fire* before the LORD, and died; ² and the LORD said to Moses: “Tell Aaron your brother ^b not to come at *just* any time into the Holy Place inside the veil, before the mercy seat which *is* on the ark, lest he die; for ^c I will appear in the cloud above the mercy seat.

³ ¹ “Thus Aaron shall ^d come into the Holy Place: ^e with the blood of a young bull as a sin offering, and of a ram as a burnt offering. ⁴ He shall put the ^f holy linen tunic and the linen trousers on his body; he shall be girded with a linen sash, and with the linen turban he shall be attired. These *are* holy garments. Therefore ^g he shall wash his body in water, and put them on. ⁵ And he shall take from ^h the congregation of the children of Israel two kids of the goats as a sin offering, and one ram as a burnt offering.

33 ^x Lev. 15:25
^y Lev. 15:24

CHAPTER 16

¹ ^a Lev. 10:1, 2;
2 Sam. 6:6–8
² ^b Ex. 30:10; Lev.
16:34; 23:27; [Heb.
6:19; 9:7, 8, 12;
10:19] ^c Ex. 25:21,
22; 40:34; 1 Kin.
8:10–12
³ ^d Lev. 4:1–12; 16:6;
[Heb. 9:7, 12, 24,
25] ^e Lev. 4:3 ¹ Lit.
With this
⁴ ^f Ex. 28:39, 42,
43; Lev. 6:10; Ezek.
44:17, 18 ^g Ex.
30:20; Lev. 8:6, 7
⁵ ^h Lev. 4:14; Num.
29:11; 2 Chr. 29:21;
Ezra 6:17; Ezek.
45:22, 23
⁶ ⁱ Lev. 9:7; [Heb.
5:3; 7:27, 28; 9:7]
¹⁰ / [Is. 53:5, 6; Rom.
3:25; Heb. 7:27;
9:23, 24; 1 John 2:2]
¹¹ ^j [Heb. 7:27; 9:7]
¹² ^k Lev. 10:1; Num.
16:7, 18; Is. 6:6,
7; Rev. 8:5 ^m Ex.
30:34–38
¹³ ⁿ Ex. 30:7, 8;

⁶ “Aaron shall offer the bull as a sin offering, which *is* for himself, and ⁱ make atonement for himself and for his house. ⁷ He shall take the two goats and present them before the LORD *at* the door of the tabernacle of meeting. ⁸ Then Aaron shall cast lots for the two goats: one lot for the LORD and the other lot for the scapegoat. ⁹ And Aaron shall bring the goat on which the LORD’s lot fell, and offer it *as* a sin offering. ¹⁰ But the goat on which the lot fell to be the scapegoat shall be presented alive before the LORD, to make ^j atonement upon it, *and* to let it go as the scapegoat into the wilderness.

¹¹ “And Aaron shall bring the bull of the sin offering, which *is* for ^k himself, and make atonement for himself and for his house, and shall kill the bull as the sin offering which *is* for himself. ¹² Then he shall take ^l a censer full of burning coals of fire from the altar before the LORD, with his hands full of ^m sweet incense beaten fine, and bring *it* inside the veil. ¹³ ⁿ And he shall put the incense on the fire be-

Num. 16:7, 18, 46

16:1 The two sons of Aaron died because of how they offered **profane fire**, literally, “drew near,” before the LORD. If Aaron was to draw near to the Lord and be Israel’s intermediary, he had to know how to do it properly to avoid the fate his sons had suffered. **16:2** God’s command **not to come at just any time** refers to the arrogant attitude with which Aaron’s sons had approached to offer unauthorized sacrifice (10:1). **the Holy Place inside the veil:** The Most Holy Place, the inner sanctuary of the tabernacle, was separated from the larger room (the Holy Place) by a veil of fine blue, purple, and scarlet linen (Ex. 26:31). **lest he die:** Carelessly approaching the presence of God was dangerous.

16:4 **Holy garments** are not the elaborate robe and accessories described in Ex. 28, but the simple linen garments the priests wore when on duty at the altar. On this day, the high priest went in simplicity and humility; he offered atonement for himself first, then for his family, and finally for all of Israel.

16:6 After atoning for himself, the high priest could offer the sacrifice to atone for the people. The author of Hebrews places great emphasis on this point in discussing the superior priesthood of Jesus (Heb. 7:26–28; 9:11–28; 10:19–22).

16:12 **beaten fine:** That is, of the highest quality.

fore the LORD, that the cloud of incense may cover the ^omercy seat that *is* on the Testimony, lest he ^pdie. ^{14q}He shall take some of the blood of the bull and ^rsprinkle *it* with his finger on the mercy seat on the east *side*; and before the mercy seat he shall sprinkle some of the blood with his finger seven times.

^{15s}“Then he shall kill the goat of the sin offering, which *is* for the people, bring its blood ^tinside the veil, do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bull, and sprinkle it on the mercy seat and before the mercy seat. ¹⁶So he shall ^umake atonement for the Holy Place, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions, for all their sins; and so he shall do for the tabernacle of meeting which remains among them in the midst of their uncleanness. ¹⁷There shall be ^vno man in the tabernacle of meeting when he goes in to make atonement in the Holy Place, until he comes out, that he may make atonement for himself, for his household, and for all the assembly of Israel. ¹⁸And he shall go out to the altar that *is* before the LORD, and make atonement for ^wit, and shall take some of the blood of the bull and some of the blood of the goat, and put it on the horns of the altar all around. ¹⁹Then he shall sprinkle some of the blood on it with his finger seven times, cleanse it, and ^xconsecrate² it from the ³uncleanness of the children of Israel.

²⁰“And when he has made an end of atoning for the Holy Place, the tabernacle of meeting, and the altar, he shall bring the live goat. ²¹Aaron shall lay both his hands on the head of the live goat,

¹³ ^o Ex. 25:21 ^p Ex. 28:43; Lev. 22:9; Num. 4:15, 20
¹⁴ ^q Lev. 4:5; [Heb. 9:25; 10:4] ^r Lev. 4:6, 17
¹⁵ ^s [Heb. 2:17]
^t [Heb. 6:19; 7:27; 9:3, 7, 12]
¹⁶ ^u Ex. 29:36; 30:10; Ezek. 45:18; [Heb. 9:22-24]
¹⁷ ^v Ex. 34:3; Luke 1:10
¹⁸ ^w Ex. 29:36
¹⁹ ^x Lev. 16:14; Ezek. 43:20 ² *set it apart* ³ *impurity*

²¹ ^y Lev. 5:5; 26:40
²² ^z [Is. 53:6]
²³ ^a Lev. 8:14; [Is. 53:6, 11, 12; John 1:29; Heb. 9:28; 1 Pet. 2:24] ^b Lev. 14:7 ⁴ *shall carry* ⁵ *solitary land*
²³ ^c Lev. 6:11; 16:4; Ezek. 42:14; 44:19
²⁴ ^d *Lit. covering*
²⁵ ^d Lev. 1:8; 4:10
²⁶ ^e Lev. 15:5
²⁷ ^f Lev. 4:12, 21; 6:30; Heb. 13:11
²⁹ ^g Ex. 30:10; Lev. 23:27-32; Num. 29:7
⁷ *humble yourselves*
⁸ *As a resident alien*
³⁰ ^h Ps. 51:2; Jer. 33:8; [Eph. 5:26; Heb. 9:13, 14; 1 John 1:7, 9] ⁱ *Lit. covering*

^yconfess over it all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions, concerning all their sins, ^zputting them on the head of the goat, and shall send *it* away into the wilderness by the hand of a suitable man. ²²The goat ⁴shall ^abear on itself all their iniquities to an ⁵uninhabited land; and he shall ^brelease the goat in the wilderness.

²³“Then Aaron shall come into the tabernacle of meeting, ^cshall take off the linen garments which he put on when he went into the Holy Place, and shall leave them there. ²⁴And he shall wash his body with water in a holy place, put on his garments, come out and offer his burnt offering and the burnt offering of the people, and make ⁶atonement for himself and for the people. ^{25d}The fat of the sin offering he shall burn on the altar. ²⁶And he who released the goat as the scapegoat shall wash his clothes ^eand bathe his body in water, and afterward he may come into the camp. ^{27f}The bull for the sin offering and the goat for the sin offering, whose blood was brought in to make atonement in the Holy Place, shall be carried outside the camp. And they shall burn in the fire their skins, their flesh, and their offal. ²⁸Then he who burns them shall wash his clothes and bathe his body in water, and afterward he may come into the camp.

²⁹“*This* shall be a statute forever for you: ^gIn the seventh month, on the tenth *day* of the month, you shall ⁷afflict your souls, and do no work at all, *whether* a native of your own country or a stranger who ⁸dwells among you. ³⁰For on that day *the priest* shall make ⁹atonement for you, to ^hcleanse you, *that* you may be

16:15–19 Aaron offered the goat . . . for the people. The further actions involved in this sacrifice made it clear that the sins of the people had a defiling effect on the tabernacle. If not removed, the sins would have caused the ministry to be ineffective in atoning for the people.

16:20 Aaron performed these actions out of the sight of the people.

16:21 Sending the goat into the wilderness was a public ceremony. Everyone could see Aaron symbolically place the sins of the people on the goat's head. **Iniquities . . . transgressions . . . sins** cover all of the ways in which people could offend God. All of these offenses were placed on the head of the goat, which took them away from the camp, away from the people, and away from God. A **suitable man** was a man who was ready and waiting to perform this task.

16:22 shall bear on itself all their iniquities: This is the origin of the common expression “scapegoat.” This goat was not guilty of the sins he bore, but he bore them anyway, allowing the guilty to escape the consequences of their sins. In Jesus' bearing the sins of the human race, and in His death outside the city (outside the camp), He fulfilled this annual ritual of the Day of Atonement. Not only was Jesus the perfect High Priest; He was the perfect sacrifice.

16:25 Aaron burned the fat of the sin offering as instructed in 4:8–10.

16:27 The bull and goat of the two sin offerings were burned according to the instructions in 4:11, 12.

16:29 In the seventh month: The Day of Atonement fell between mid-September and mid-October. **afflict your souls:** Examine yourselves, repent of wrong actions and attitudes, and seek God's forgiveness. The mere actions of the sacrifices, without genuine repentance, were useless.

transgressions

(Heb. *pasha'*) (16:16, 21; Ps. 32:1, 5) Strong's #6588

This Hebrew word is derived from the verb *pasha'*, which can mean “to revolt” (2 Kin. 8:20), “to offend” (Prov. 18:19), or “to transgress” in the sense of crossing a boundary (Jer. 3:13). It refers to violations of God's law as revealed to Moses—in other words, someone crossing the limits that God had established. Although rebelling against God was a grave mistake, the Lord made provision for Israel's “transgressions” in the Day of Atonement (16:15–19). The priest could make atonement for Israel's sin, and the nation could be reconciled to God. Like ancient Israel, we are in rebellion against God. In fact, it was “our transgressions” that wounded Jesus (Is. 53:5, 8; 1 Pet. 2:24).

clean from all your sins before the LORD. ³¹ⁱ It is a sabbath of solemn rest for you, and you shall afflict your souls. *It is* a statute forever. ^{32j} And the priest, who is anointed and ^k consecrated to minister as priest in his father's place, shall make atonement, and put on the linen clothes, the holy garments; ³³ then he shall make ^l atonement for ² the Holy Sanctuary, and he shall make atonement for the tabernacle of meeting and for the altar, and he shall make atonement for the priests and for all the people of the assembly. ^{34l} This shall be an everlasting statute for you, to make atonement for the children of Israel, for all their sins, ^m once a year." And he did as the LORD commanded Moses.

The Sanctity of Blood

17 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ² "Speak to Aaron, to his sons, and to all the children of Israel, and say to them, 'This *is* the thing which the LORD has commanded, saying: ³ "Whatever man of the house of Israel who ^a kills an ox or lamb or goat in the camp, or who kills *it* outside the camp, ⁴ and does not bring it to the door of the tabernacle of meeting to offer an offering to the LORD before the tabernacle of the LORD, the guilt of bloodshed shall be ^b imputed to that man. He has shed blood; and that man shall be ^l cut off from among his people, ⁵ to the end that the children of Israel may bring their sacrifices ^c which they offer in the open field, that they may bring them to the LORD at the door of the tabernacle of meeting, to the priest, and offer them *as* peace offerings to the LORD. ⁶ And the priest ^d shall sprinkle the blood

³¹ ⁱ Lev. 23:27, 32; Ezra 8:21; Is. 58:3, 5; Dan. 10:12
³² ^j Lev. 4:3, 5, 16; 21:10 ^k Ex. 29:29, 30; Num. 20:26, 28
³³ ^l Lit. *covering*
² *The Most Holy Place*
³⁴ ⁱ Lev. 23:31; Num. 29:7 ^m Ex. 30:10; [Heb. 9:7, 25, 28]

CHAPTER 17

³ ^a Deut. 12:5, 15, 21
⁴ ^b Rom. 5:13 ^l Put to death
⁵ ^c Gen. 21:33; 22:2; 31:54; Deut. 12:1-27; Ezek. 20:28
⁶ ^d Lev. 3:2 ^e Ex. 29:13, 18; Num. 18:17
⁷ ^f Ex. 22:20; 32:8; 34:15; Deut. 32:17; 2 Chr. 11:15; Ps. 106:37; 1 Cor. 10:20
⁹ ^g Ex. 34:15; Deut. 31:16; Ezek. 23:8
² Having the form of a goat or satyr
⁸ ^h Lev. 1:2, 3; 18:26
⁹ ⁱ Lev. 14:23 ³ Put to death
¹⁰ ^j Gen. 9:4; Lev. 3:17; 7:26, 27; Deut. 12:16, 23-25; 15:23; 1 Sam. 14:33 ^k Lev. 20:3, 5, 6
¹¹ ^g Gen. 9:4; Lev. 17:14 ^m [Matt. 26:28; Rom. 3:25; Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14, 20; 1 Pet. 1:2; 1 John 1:7] ⁿ [Heb. 9:22]
¹³ ^o Lev. 7:26
^p Deut. 12:16, 24
^q Ezek. 24:7

on the altar of the LORD *at* the door of the tabernacle of meeting, and ^e burn the fat for a sweet aroma to the LORD. ⁷ They shall no more offer their sacrifices ^f to ² demons, after whom they ^g have played the harlot. This shall be a statute forever for them throughout their generations."

⁸ "Also you shall say to them: 'Whatever man of the house of Israel, or of the strangers who dwell among you, ^h who offers a burnt offering or sacrifice, ⁹ and does not ⁱ bring it to the door of the tabernacle of meeting, to offer it to the LORD, that man shall be ³ cut off from among his people.

^{10j} 'And whatever man of the house of Israel, or of the strangers who dwell among you, who eats any blood, ^k I will set My face against that person who eats blood, and will cut him off from among his people. ¹¹ For the ^l life of the flesh *is* in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar ^m to make atonement for your souls; for ⁿ *it is* the blood *that* makes atonement for the soul.' ¹² Therefore I said to the children of Israel, 'No one among you shall eat blood, nor shall any stranger who dwells among you eat blood.'

¹³ "Whatever man of the children of Israel, or of the strangers who dwell among you, who ^o hunts and catches any animal or bird that may be eaten, he shall ^p pour out its blood and ^q cover it with dust; ^{14r} for *it is* the life of all flesh. Its blood sustains its life. Therefore I said to the children of Israel, 'You shall not eat the blood of any flesh, for the life of all flesh is its blood. Whoever eats it shall be cut off'

14 ^r Gen. 9:4; Lev. 17:11; Deut. 12:23

16:31 A sabbath of solemn rest was more sacred and more strictly observed than the normal weekly Sabbath.

16:32 In his father's place emphasizes that this day was to be observed throughout Israel's generations.

16:34 And he did as the LORD commanded Moses indicates that Aaron, as high priest, carried out everything God had commanded for this all-important day.

17:3 Whatever man: There were to be no exceptions. **Kills** probably indicates a sacrifice, for only the sacrificial animals the **ox**, **lamb**, and **goat** are listed. Animals with defects that did not threaten human health were slaughtered for their meat, but were not acceptable for sacrifice.

17:4 The guilt of bloodshed usually refers to killing a human being. However, the blood of the sacrifice was the only means of atonement for sin; to desecrate this provision from God was not a light offense.

17:5 Which they offer means "which they might offer." Sacrifice in an open field was prohibited.

17:7 Demons were pagan deities in the form of goats, like satyrs, who were thought to inhabit the wilderness. Israel probably came in contact with satyr worship when they settled in Goshen (Gen. 47:1-6). **They have played the harlot** indicates (1) Israel's worship of other gods and (2) God's attitude to this worship. Adultery was a serious sin; forsaking one's faith in God was an even more serious

sin. **A statute forever** is another clue that this regulation was not about slaughtering animals for meat but about animals offered in sacrifice. When Israel's worship was centralized in Jerusalem, some families lived more than a hundred miles from the temple. It would have been impossible for them to travel to Jerusalem each time they killed an animal for meat. However, they could travel to Jerusalem every time they offered a sacrifice.

17:8, 9 This regulation specifically extends the command to **strangers who dwell among you**.

17:10 Eating blood was forbidden in the strongest possible terms. **Any blood** means blood in any form, including blood not drained from the animal when it was slaughtered.

17:11 This verse explains the basis of blood atonement. The **life** of animals and of humans **is in the blood**. If a creature loses its blood, it loses its life. **I have given** emphasizes that blood has no *intrinsic* power to atone for sin. God appointed blood to have this power because it represents the life of the creature. A life may receive atonement only by the sacrifice of a life. The author of Hebrews emphasized the temporary nature of animal blood sacrifices. They required constant renewal. However, Jesus' one-time sacrifice of Himself is effective eternally (Heb. 9:12-14, 25-28).

17:13 That may be eaten refers to animals that are clean according to the regulations in ch. 11. **Cover it with dust** is a token of burial.

¹⁵“And every person who eats what died *naturally* or what was torn *by beasts*, *whether he is* a native of your own country or a stranger, ¹⁶he shall both wash his clothes and ¹⁷bathe in water, and be unclean until evening. Then he shall be clean. ¹⁸But if he does not wash *them* or bathe his body, then ¹⁹he shall bear his ²⁰guilt.”

Laws of Sexual Morality

18 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ²“Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: ³*a* ‘I am the LORD your God. ⁴*b* According to ⁵*1* the doings of the land of Egypt, where you dwelt, you shall not do; and ⁶*c* according to the doings of the land of Canaan, where I am bringing you, you shall not do; nor shall you walk in their ⁷*2* ordinances. ⁸*d* You shall observe My judgments and keep My ordinances, to walk in them: I *am* the LORD your God. ⁹You shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments, which if a man does, he shall live by them: I *am* the LORD.

⁶None of you shall approach anyone who is near of kin to him, to uncover his nakedness: I *am* the LORD. ⁷The nakedness of your father or the nakedness of your mother you shall not uncover. She *is* your mother; you shall not uncover her nakedness. ⁸The nakedness of your ⁹*e* father’s wife you shall not uncover; it *is* your father’s nakedness. ⁹^fThe nakedness of your sister, the daughter of your father, or the daughter of your mother,

¹⁵ ^gEx. 22:31; Lev. 7:24; 22:8; Deut. 14:21; Ezek. 4:14; 44:31 ¹⁶ Lev. 11:25
¹⁷ Lev. 15:5
¹⁸ Lev. 5:1
¹⁹ iniquity

CHAPTER 18

² ^hEx. 6:7; Lev. 11:44, 45; 19:3; Ezek. 20:5, 7, 19, 20
³ ⁱJosh. 24:14; Ezek. 20:7, 8 ^cEx. 23:24; Lev. 18:24–30; 20:23; Deut. 12:30, 31 ¹ *what is done in* ² *statutes*
⁴ ^jEzek. 20:19
⁸ ^kGen. 35:22
⁹ ^lLev. 18:11; 20:17; Deut. 27:22

¹² ^mLev. 20:19
¹⁴ ⁿLev. 20:20
¹⁷ ^oLev. 20:14
¹⁸ ^p1 Sam. 1:6, 8
¹⁹ ^qEzek. 18:6
¹Lev. 15:24; 20:18
²⁰ ^r[Prov. 6:25–33]
²Ex. 20:14; Lev. 20:10; [Matt. 5:27, 28; 1 Cor. 6:9; Heb. 13:4]
²¹ ^sLev. 20:2–5; Deut. 12:31 ^t2 Kin. 16:3

whether born at home or elsewhere, their nakedness you shall not uncover. ¹⁰The nakedness of your son’s daughter or your daughter’s daughter, their nakedness you shall not uncover; for theirs *is* your own nakedness. ¹¹The nakedness of your father’s wife’s daughter, begotten by your father—she *is* your sister—you shall not uncover her nakedness. ¹²^gYou shall not uncover the nakedness of your father’s sister; she *is* near of kin to your father. ¹³You shall not uncover the nakedness of your mother’s sister, for she *is* near of kin to your mother. ¹⁴^hYou shall not uncover the nakedness of your father’s brother. You shall not approach his wife; she *is* your aunt. ¹⁵You shall not uncover the nakedness of your daughter-in-law—she *is* your son’s wife—you shall not uncover her nakedness. ¹⁶You shall not uncover the nakedness of your brother’s wife; it *is* your brother’s nakedness. ¹⁷You shall not uncover the nakedness of a woman and her ¹⁸*i* daughter, nor shall you take her son’s daughter or her daughter’s daughter, to uncover her nakedness. They *are* near of kin to her. It *is* wickedness. ¹⁸Nor shall you take a woman ¹⁹*j* as a rival to her sister, to uncover her nakedness while the other is alive.

¹⁹Also you shall not approach a woman to uncover her nakedness as ²⁰*k* long as she is in her ²¹*l* customary impurity. ²⁰^mMoreover you shall not lie carnally with your ²¹*n* neighbor’s wife, to defile yourself with her. ²¹And you shall not let any of your descendants ²²*o* pass through ²³*p* the fire to

17:15 The reason for uncleanness in this context was contact with a carcass in which there was still blood that had not been drained. The Law forbade eating any animal that had died a natural death (Deut. 14:21). In such cases, a person became ritually **unclean** until evening, the mildest degree of uncleanness.

17:16 guilt: The mild degree of ritual uncleanness became a serious sin if the required cleansing was not done.

18:2 The LORD here translates the divine name Yahweh, the name by which God revealed Himself to Moses in Ex. 6:2, 3. In using this name, God was basing His claim to the Israelites’ devotion on His willingness to reveal Himself to them, to redeem them, and to be their God.

18:3 Israel had lived in **Egypt** for generations and had been dominated by the Egyptians. **Canaan** is the land God was going to give Israel. The Israelites would be tempted to imitate the Canaanites physically, culturally, and religiously.

18:4, 5 ordinances . . . statutes: These are decrees, laws, and acts of a permanent nature. **Judgments** refers to judicial decisions involving situations that might not be addressed in the statutes. Through the ordinances and the judgments of God, Israel would know how to live. **he shall live by them:** God gave the law as a means of life on all levels—physical, moral, spiritual, and relational. However, as Paul observed, when the law was violated, it became a cause of death (see Rom. 7:10–12). At that point, a greater remedy than the law was needed. This remedy is in Christ.

18:6 Anyone who is near of kin covers cases such as incest between father and daughter and between brother and full sister, even though they are absent from the following list. All the cases that appear in the list are based on blood relationship or marriage.

To **uncover** someone’s **nakedness** is to have sexual intercourse with that person.

18:7 The nakedness of your father does not imply a homosexual act. Rather, it emphasizes that to commit incest with the wife of one’s father is symbolically to uncover the father’s nakedness also, because the two are one flesh through marriage.

18:8 Father’s wife may refer to a father’s marriage partner after the death or divorce of one’s mother, or it may refer to a wife or concubine who is not one’s mother.

18:9 Your sister refers to a half sister, since she is defined either as **the daughter of your father or the daughter of your mother**. **Elsewhere** refers to cases in which a father maintained multiple households of wives or concubines. It may also refer to illegitimate half sisters.

18:11 Here, **begotten by your father** is a legal and not a biological term to indicate adoption. Legally she would be a full sister.

18:17 a woman and her daughter: This might involve a widow who lived with her daughter and son-in-law.

18:18 as a rival to her sister: An example of the problems this situation can cause is the family life of Jacob, who married the sisters Leah and Rachel. Jacob, of course, did not violate this restriction, since it had not yet been given.

18:19 Her customary impurity refers to a woman’s menstrual period. Sexual intercourse during this time was forbidden because the woman was ritually impure, and intercourse would make the man ritually impure as well.

18:20 Adultery is forbidden in Ex. 20:14; its penalty is given in Lev. 20:10.

^qMolech, nor shall you profane the name of your God: I *am* the LORD. ²²You shall not lie with ^ra male as with a woman. It is an abomination. ²³Nor shall you mate with any ^sanimal, to defile yourself with it. Nor shall any woman stand before an animal to mate with it. It is perversion.

²⁴“Do not defile yourselves with any of these things; ^ufor by all these the nations are defiled, which I am casting out before you. ²⁵For ^vthe land is defiled; therefore I ^wvisit³ the punishment of its iniquity upon it, and the land ^xvomits out its inhabitants. ²⁶^yYou shall therefore ⁴keep My statutes and My judgments, and shall not commit *any* of these abominations, *either* any of your own nation or any stranger who dwells among you ²⁷(for all these abominations the men of the land have done, who *were* before you, and thus the land is defiled), ²⁸lest ^zthe land vomit you out also when you defile it, as it vomited out the nations that *were* before you. ²⁹For whoever commits any of these abominations, the persons who commit *them* shall be ⁵cut off from among their people.

³⁰“Therefore you shall keep My ⁶ordinance, so ^athat *you* do not commit *any* of these abominable customs which were committed before you, and that you do not defile yourselves by them: *I am the LORD your God.*”

Moral and Ceremonial Laws

19 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ²“Speak to all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say to them: ^a“You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God *am* holy.

^{3b}“Every one of you shall revere his mother and his father, and ^ckeep My Sabbaths: I *am* the LORD your God.

²¹ ^q 1 Kin. 11:7, 33; Acts 7:43
²² ^r Lev. 20:13; Rom. 1:27
²³ ^s Ex. 22:19; Lev. 20:15, 16; Deut. 27:21
²⁴ ^t Matt. 15:18-20; 1 Cor. 3:17 ^u Lev. 18:3; 20:23; Deut. 18:12
²⁵ ^v Num. 35:33, 34; Ezek. 36:17 ^w Is. 26:21; Jer. 5:9 ^x Lev. 18:28; 20:22 ³ bring judgment for
²⁶ ^y Lev. 18:5, 30
⁴ obey
²⁸ ^z Jer. 9:19
²⁹ ^z Put to death
³⁰ ^a Lev. 18:3; 22:9
^b Lev. 18:2 ^c charge

CHAPTER 19

² ^a Ex. 19:6; Lev. 11:44; 20:7, 26; [Eph. 1:4]; 1 Pet. 1:16
³ ^b Ex. 20:12; Deut. 5:16; Matt. 15:4;
Eph. 6:2 ^c Ex. 16:23; 20:8; 31:13
⁴ ^d Ex. 20:4; Ps. 96:5; 115:4-7; 1 Cor. 10:14; [Col. 3:5] ^e Ex. 34:17
⁵ ^f molten
⁵ ^f Lev. 7:16
⁹ ^g Lev. 23:22; Deut. 24:19-22
¹¹ ^h Ex. 20:15, 16
¹¹ ^h Jer. 9:3-5; Eph. 4:25
¹² ⁱ Ex. 20:7; Deut. 5:11; [Matt. 5:33-37; James 5:12] ^k Lev. 18:21
¹³ ^j Ex. 22:7-15, 21-27; Mark 10:19
^m Deut. 24:15; Mal. 3:5; James 5:4
¹⁴ ⁿ Deut. 27:18
¹⁵ ^o Deut. 16:19
^p Ex. 23:3, 6; Deut. 1:17; 10:17; Ps. 82:2
¹⁶ ^q Prov. 11:13; 18:8; 20:19 ^r Ex. 23:7; Deut. 27:25;
1 Kin. 21:7-19
¹⁷ ^s [1 John 2:9, 11; 3:15]

^{4d}“Do not turn to idols, ^enor make for yourselves ¹molded gods: I *am* the LORD your God.

⁵“And ^fif you offer a sacrifice of a peace offering to the LORD, you shall offer it of your own free will. ⁶It shall be eaten the same day you offer *it*, and on the next day. And if any remains until the third day, it shall be burned in the fire. ⁷And if it is eaten at all on the third day, it is an abomination. It shall not be accepted. ⁸Therefore *everyone* who eats it shall bear his iniquity, because he has profaned the hallowed *offering* of the LORD; and that person shall be cut off from his people.

^{9g}“When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not wholly reap the corners of your field, nor shall you gather the gleanings of your harvest. ¹⁰And you shall not glean your vineyard, nor shall you gather *every* grape of your vineyard; you shall leave them for the poor and the stranger: I *am* the LORD your God.

^{11h}“You shall not steal, nor deal falsely, ⁱnor lie to one another. ¹²And you shall not ^jswear by My name falsely, ^knor shall you profane the name of your God: I *am* the LORD.

^{13l}“You shall not cheat your neighbor, nor rob *him*. ^mThe wages of him who is hired shall not remain with you all night until morning. ¹⁴You shall not curse the deaf, ⁿnor put a stumbling block before the blind, but shall fear your God: I *am* the LORD.

¹⁵“You shall do no injustice in ^ojudgment. You shall not ^pbe partial to the poor, nor honor the person of the mighty. In righteousness you shall judge your neighbor. ¹⁶You shall not go about *as a* ^qtalebearer among your people; nor shall you ^rtake a stand against the life of your neighbor: I *am* the LORD.

^{17s}“You shall not hate your brother

18:22 Homosexuality here is labeled an **abomination**, something detestable to God both ritually and morally. Ritually, it was detestable partly because it was practiced in Canaanite religion, which God had commanded Israel not to follow.

18:23 Bestiality is labeled **perversion**, something out of the natural order. It, too, was a feature of some of the religions of Israel's neighbors.

18:24-30 The land had become so **defiled** by the perverted practices of the Canaanites that it was vomiting them out. For that reason, the land would be available to Israel to settle. The Israelites, however, needed to be careful to live as God's holy people in the land or it would vomit them out as well.

19:3 **Revere** means to respect and to obey. Under normal circumstances, young children are to obey their parents. Adult children are to respect their parents and concern themselves with their parents' welfare. **keep My Sabbaths:** The weekly Sabbath was an acknowledgment that not everything depended on the Israelites' efforts. It was an acknowledgment of God's lordship and His grace. It was valuable for worship, for rest and healing, for building relationships with family, and for regaining or strengthening an eternal perspective (see also Mark 2:23-3:5).

19:5 The **peace offering** was a **free will** offering. Just like the Israelites, when we have peace, or wholeness, in God through the peace offering of Christ (see Col. 1:19, 20), we can offer freely everything we are, everything we have, and everything we do.

19:9, 10 Providing for the **poor and the stranger** (the alien who could not own land) was a priority in ancient Israelite society. Reserving the **gleanings** of a harvest for the poor is a very effective way of providing food for them. **I am the LORD your God:** The generosity of God's people was rooted in God's generosity toward the Israelites.

19:13 wages . . . until morning: A day laborer needed his pay daily to provide food for himself and his family. To withhold it for one's own gain or convenience created a hardship for him and was forbidden (see Deut. 24:14, 15; James 5:4).

19:15 In court, neither the **poor**, nor the **mighty**, nor even a person's **neighbor** were to be given any special treatment.

19:16 A **talebearer** is not just a gossip, but a slanderer, actively seeking to destroy another's reputation.

19:17 hate your brother in your heart: Jesus addressed this principle in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5:21-24). **rebuke your neighbor:** The way to avoid letting hatred build up was to confront

in your heart. ¹⁷You shall surely ²rebuke your neighbor, and not bear sin because of him. ¹⁸^uYou shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, ^vbut you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I *am* the LORD.

¹⁹You shall keep My statutes. You shall not let your livestock breed with another kind. You shall not sow your field with mixed seed. Nor shall a garment of mixed linen and wool come upon you.

²⁰Whoever lies carnally with a woman who is ^wbetrothed to a man as a concubine, and who has not at all been redeemed nor given her freedom, for this there shall be ³scourging; *but* they shall not be put to death, because she was not free. ²¹And he shall bring his trespass offering to the LORD, to the door of the tabernacle of meeting, a ram as a trespass offering. ²²The priest shall make ⁴atonement for him with the ram of the trespass offering before the LORD for his sin which he has committed. And the sin which he has committed shall be forgiven him.

²³When you come into the land, and have planted all kinds of trees for food, then you shall count their fruit as ⁵uncircumcised. Three years it shall be

¹⁷ ^u Matt. 18:15; [Luke 17:3]; Eph. 5:11 ² *reprove*
¹⁸ ^u [Deut. 32:35; 1 Sam. 24:12; Rom. 12:19; Heb. 10:30]
^v Matt. 5:43; 19:19; Mark 12:31; Luke 10:27; [Rom. 13:9; Gal. 5:14]; James 2:8
²⁰ ^w Deut. 22:23-27
³ *punishment*
²² ⁴ Lit. *covering*
²³ ⁵ *unclean*

²⁸ ^x 1 Kin. 18:28; Jer. 16:6
²⁹ ^y Lev. 21:9; Deut. 22:21; 23:17, 18
³⁰ ^z Lev. 26:2; Eccl. 5:1 ⁶ *observe*
³¹ ^a Lev. 20:6, 27; Deut. 18:11; 1 Sam. 28:3; Is. 8:19
³² ^b Prov. 23:22; Lam. 5:12; 1 Tim. 5:1
^c Lev. 19:14 ⁷ *rise to give honor*
³³ ^d Ex. 22:21; Deut. 24:17, 18

as uncircumcised to you. *It* shall not be eaten. ²⁴But in the fourth year all its fruit shall be holy, a praise to the LORD. ²⁵And in the fifth year you may eat its fruit, that it may yield to you its increase: I *am* the LORD your God.

²⁶You shall not eat *anything* with the blood, nor shall you practice divination or soothsaying. ²⁷You shall not shave around the sides of your head, nor shall you disfigure the edges of your beard. ²⁸You shall not ^xmake any cuttings in your flesh for the dead, nor tattoo any marks on you: I *am* the LORD.

²⁹^yDo not prostitute your daughter, to cause her to be a harlot, lest the land fall into harlotry, and the land become full of wickedness.

³⁰You shall ⁶keep My Sabbaths and ^zreverence My sanctuary: I *am* the LORD.

³¹Give no regard to mediums and familiar spirits; do not seek after ^athem, to be defiled by them: I *am* the LORD your God.

³²^bYou shall ⁷rise before the gray headed and honor the presence of an old man, and ^cfear your God: I *am* the LORD.

³³And ^dif a stranger dwells with you in your land, you shall not mistreat him.

the person. Ideally this would involve resolving the issue face to face. However, it also could involve taking the issue to court to settle it legally rather than taking it into one's own hands or allowing it to fester in one's heart.

19:18 Vengeance belongs to God (see Deut. 32:35), partly because human vengeance often is carried out too zealously. God's vengeance is entirely just. **Bear any grudge** means actively keeping a grudge alive with an eye toward vengeance. **You shall love your neighbor as yourself:** Jesus identified this as one of only two commandments that, if kept, would fulfill all of the Law (Matt. 22:37–40).

19:19 Holiness means purity, in three important areas: (1) animal husbandry, (2) agriculture, and (3) domestic life. This principle also reflects reverence for creation as God made it.

19:20 The concubine, a woman of low social standing and few rights, may not have had the freedom to cry out when approached sexually. Therefore, she remained guiltless. Because the woman was a slave, the man escaped death but remained guilty before God. Atonement was necessary for him to receive forgiveness. **There shall be scourging** may be rephrased as “damages must be paid.” The woman's owner probably received the compensation, since the passage emphasizes that no money had yet been paid for her.

19:23–25 The most common reason suggested for this regulation is that young trees need to preserve their strength for themselves rather than putting it into fruit. In that case, the owner probably would have clipped off the blossoms in the first three years. The harvest of the fourth year was a kind of firstfruits (2:14). From the fifth year, the harvest belonged to the owner—after the firstfruits of each year's harvest had been given to God. **that it may yield to you its increase:** Faithfulness in observing this regulation was rewarded by increase in the production of fruit from the fifth year on.

19:26 Divination and **soothsaying** reveal a lack of trust in God to bring the best possible future. God, and not some demon or impersonal force, is all-powerful and directs the future.

19:27 Beards were standard among Israelite men. Shaving one's hair or beard often was a sign of mourning.

19:28 The human body was designed by God, who intended it to be whole and beautiful. Disfiguring the body dishonored God, in whose image the person was created. Cutting one's flesh **for the**

dead and tattooing (or perhaps painting) one's body had religious significance among Israel's pagan neighbors. In Israel, such practices were signs of rebellion against God.

19:29 Fathers exercised total control over their daughters in Israel's patriarchal society. For a man in debt, facing the loss of his land, hiring out his daughter as a prostitute might have seemed like an attractive alternative. However, sexual relations are sacred. Forcing a daughter to violate that sanctity defiled her against her will.

19:31 Mediums and familiar spirits are different from what is mentioned in v. 26. Both of these may involve consulting the spirits of the dead. All contact with these or other spirits was strictly forbidden in Israel. It demonstrated lack of faith in and rebellion against God.

19:32 To **rise** when an elder entered one's presence was another way of showing reverence for God and submission to Him.

19:33, 34 Generous treatment of a **stranger**, or a resident alien, in the land was based on God's generous treatment of the Israelites when they were **strangers in the land of Egypt**. What God had

hate

(Heb. *sane'*) (19:17; Ps. 5:5; 97:10; Prov. 6:16; Amos 5:15; Mal. 1:3) Strong's #8130

Various degrees and types of hatred are described in the Bible. The people of God are to hate what God Himself hates with an absolute hatred—sin (Deut. 12:31; Is. 61:8; Heb. 1:9). But God is also said to hate human beings, as when He declared, “Jacob I have loved; but Esau I have hated” (Mal. 1:2, 3; Rom. 9:13). This is a relative hatred. It is not the opposite of love but a diminished love. To hate our relatives for the sake of Christ (Luke 14:26) means to love them less than we love Christ (Matt. 10:37); it does not mean to hate them absolutely. Believers ought to love their enemies (Matt. 5:43, 44) but hate their enemies' sins (Eph. 5:3–14; Rev. 2:6).

^{34e}The stranger who dwells among you shall be to you as ⁸one born among you, and ^fyou shall love him as yourself; for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I *am* the LORD your God.

³⁵You shall do no injustice in judgment, in measurement of length, weight, or volume. ³⁶You shall have ^ghonest scales, honest weights, an honest ephah, and an honest hin: I *am* the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt.

^{37h}“Therefore you shall observe all My statutes and all My judgments, and perform them: I *am* the LORD.”

Penalties for Breaking the Law

20 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ^{2a}“Again, you shall say to the children of Israel: ^b‘Whoever of the children of Israel, or of the strangers who ¹dwell in Israel, who gives *any* of his descendants to Molech, he shall surely be put to death. The people of the land shall ^cstone him with stones. ^{3d}I will set My face against that man, and will ²cut him off from his people, because he has given *some* of his descendants to Molech, to defile My sanctuary and profane My holy name. ⁴And if the people of the land should in any way ³hide their eyes from the man, when he gives *some* of his descendants to Molech, and they do not kill him, ⁵then I will set My face against that man and against his family; and I will cut him off from his people, and all who prostitute themselves with him to commit harlotry with Molech.

^{34 e} Ex. 12:48
^f Deut. 10:19
⁸ *native among you*
^{36 g} Deut. 25:13-15;
Prov. 20:10
^{37 h} Lev. 18:4, 5;
Deut. 4:5, 6; 5:1;
6:25

CHAPTER 20

^{2 a} Lev. 18:2 ^b Lev. 18:21; 2 Kin. 23:10;
2 Chr. 33:6; Jer. 7:31
^c Deut. 17:2-5 ¹ As
resident aliens
^{3 d} Lev. 17:10 ² Put
him to death
^{4 3} *disregard*

^{6 e} Lev. 19:31;
1 Sam. 28:7-25
^{7 f} Lev. 19:2;
Heb. 12:14 ⁴ *Set
yourselves apart for
the LORD*
^{8 g} Lev. 19:19, 37
^h Ex. 31:13; Deut.
14:2; Ezek. 37:28
⁵ *sets you apart*
^{9 i} Ex. 21:17; Deut.
27:16; Prov. 20:20;
Matt. 15:4 ² Sam.
1:16
^{10 k} Ex. 20:14; Lev.
18:20; Deut. 5:18;
22:22; John 8:4, 5

BIBLE TIMES & CULTURE NOTES



Molech

The fire-god Molech was the principle god of the Ammonites, and essentially identical with the Moabite god Chemosh. Fire-gods appear to have been common to all the Canaanite, Syrian, and Arab tribes who worshiped fire with the most inhuman rites. According to Jewish tradition, the image of Molech was made of brass, hollow within, and was situated outside Jerusalem. “His face was [that] of a calf, and his hands stretched forth like a man who opens his hands to receive [something] of his neighbor. And they kindled it with fire, and the priests took the babe and put it into the hands of Molech, and the babe gave up the ghost.” Many instances of human sacrifices are found in ancient writings, which may be compared with the description in the OT of the manner in which Molech was worshiped.

⁶And ^ethe person who turns to mediums and familiar spirits, to prostitute himself with them, I will set My face against that person and cut him off from his people. ^{7f}Consecrate⁴ yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I *am* the LORD your God. ⁸And you shall keep ^gMy statutes, and perform them: ^hI *am* the LORD who ⁵sanctifies you.

⁹For ⁱeveryone who curses his father or his mother shall surely be put to death. He has cursed his father or his mother. ^jHis blood *shall be* upon him.

^{10k}“The man who commits adultery

done for them they were to pass along to others. This is still a good principle for God’s people to follow. In v. 18, the Israelites were instructed, “Love your neighbor as yourself.” Verse 34 expands that standard to include strangers. Jesus gave the definitive illustration of this principle in His story of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:30–36). **19:35, 36 Injustice in judgment** is injustice in legal transactions (vv. 11, 12, 15–18). **Injustice . . . in measurement** is one kind of injustice in business transactions. **ephah:** About five gallons. **hin:** A little less than a gallon. Once again, the fact that God had brought

the Israelites **out of the land of Egypt** is cited as reason to believe He would provide for all of their needs. God had treated the Israelites generously. They could afford to treat each other fairly in their business dealings.

20:2–5 strangers: All of the people dwelling in the land, whether citizens or not, were required to abstain from religious practices that defiled God’s **sanctuary** and profaned His **holy name**. **I will . . . cut him off:** Execution by stoning seems to have been the way God set His face against the offender. However, if those responsible did not carry out the sentence on a guilty person, God executed judgment Himself. **prostitute themselves:** God “wed” Israel to Himself at Sinai. The Israelites’ betrayal of that sacred bond by going after other gods was often portrayed as prostitution.

20:8 Who sanctifies you means “who sets you apart (to Myself).” There is an aspect of the worshiper’s being set apart to God for which the worshiper was responsible, and an aspect God took upon Himself. The worshiper accepted God’s gifts and agreed to forsake all other allegiances. God gave the Law to show the worshiper how to live set apart to God and from all other allegiances.

20:9 One who curses his father or his mother was very far from honoring them (see 19:3; Ex. 20:12). **His blood shall be upon him** signifies that capital punishment was deserved. This statement also reassured the executioners that they were not guilty of shedding the offenders’ blood. This was important, since there was no professional justice system at this time in ancient Israel. Nearly all functions of the law were performed by private citizens.

20:10 The adulterer and the adulteress both entered freely into the affair. Both were punished.

sanctuary

(Heb. *miqdash*) (19:30; Ex. 15:17; 25:8) Strong’s #4720

This noun means “holy place,” a place separated and dedicated to God. It was the place where God had chosen to meet the Israelites. There priests would atone for the people’s sin; in turn, the people would offer their worship and praise. Because it was God’s dwelling place, the priests were prohibited from defiling it by entering while they were ceremonially unclean (21:12). But most important, the Israelites had to respect the sanctuary by approaching it with a contrite heart and a determination to praise their Creator. Just as Moses had to respect the ground where God made His presence known (see Ex. 3:5), so now the Israelites had to respect the place where God had chosen to meet them.

with *another* man's wife, *he* who commits adultery with his neighbor's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress, shall surely be put to death. ¹¹The man who lies with his ¹father's wife has uncovered his father's nakedness; both of them shall surely be put to death. Their blood *shall be* upon them. ¹²If a man lies with his ^mdaughter-in-law, both of them shall surely be put to death. They have committed perversion. Their blood *shall be* upon them. ¹³ⁿIf a man lies with a male as he lies with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination. They shall surely be put to death. Their blood *shall be* upon them. ¹⁴If a man marries a woman and her ^omother, it is wickedness. They shall be burned with fire, both he and they, that there may be no wickedness among you. ¹⁵If a man mates with an ^panimal, he shall surely be put to death, and you shall kill the animal. ¹⁶If a woman approaches any animal and mates with it, you shall kill the woman and the animal. They shall surely be put to death. Their blood *is* upon them.

¹⁷If a man takes his ^qsister, his father's daughter or his mother's daughter, and sees her nakedness and she sees his nakedness, it is a wicked thing. And they shall be ⁶cut off in the sight of their people. He has uncovered his sister's nakedness. He shall bear his ⁷guilt. ¹⁸^rIf a man lies with a woman during her ^ssickness and uncovers her nakedness, he has ⁹exposed her flow, and she has uncovered the flow of her blood. Both of them shall be ¹cut off from their people.

¹⁹'You shall not uncover the nakedness of your ^smother's sister nor of your ^tfather's sister, for that would uncover his near of kin. They shall bear their guilt.

¹¹ ⁱ Lev. 18:7, 8; Deut. 27:20
¹² ^m Lev. 18:15
¹³ ⁿ Lev. 18:22; Deut. 23:17; Judg. 19:22
¹⁴ ^o Lev. 18:17
¹⁵ ^p Lev. 18:23; Deut. 27:21
¹⁷ ^q Lev. 18:9; Deut. 27:22
⁶ Put to death ⁷ iniquity
¹⁸ ^r Lev. 15:24; 18:19
⁸ Or customary impurity
⁹ Lit. made bare
¹ Put to death
¹⁹ ^s Lev. 18:13 ^t Lev. 18:12

²⁰ ^u Lev. 18:14
²¹ ^v Lev. 18:16; Matt. 14:3, 4
² Indecent, impure
²² ^w Lev. 18:26; 19:37
^x Lev. 18:25, 28; 2 Chr. 36:14-16
²³ ^y Lev. 18:3, 24
^z Deut. 9:5
²⁴ ^a Ex. 3:17; 6:8; 13:5; 33:1-3
^b Ex. 19:5; 33:16; Lev. 20:26; Deut. 7:6; 14:2; 1 Kin. 8:53
²⁵ ^c Lev. 10:10; 11:1-47; Deut. 14:3-21
^d Lev. 11:43
³ Detestable or loathsome
⁴ Defiled
²⁶ ^e Lev. 19:2; 1 Pet. 1:16
²⁷ ^f Lev. 19:31; 1 Sam. 28:9

CHAPTER 21

¹ ^a Lev. 19:28; Ezek. 44:25

²⁰If a man lies with his ^uuncle's wife, he has uncovered his uncle's nakedness. They shall bear their sin; they shall die childless. ²¹If a man takes his ^vbrother's wife, it is an ²unclean thing. He has uncovered his brother's nakedness. They shall be childless.

²²'You shall therefore keep all My ^wstatutes and all My judgments, and perform them, that the land where I am bringing you to dwell ^xmay not vomit you out. ²³^yAnd you shall not walk in the statutes of the nation which I am casting out before you; for they commit all these things, and ^ztherefore I abhor them. ²⁴But ^aI have said to you, "You shall inherit their land, and I will give it to you to possess, a land flowing with milk and honey." I am the LORD your God, ^bwho has separated you from the peoples. ²⁵^cYou shall therefore distinguish between clean animals and unclean, between unclean birds and clean, ^dand you shall not make yourselves ³abominable by beast or by bird, or by any kind of living thing that creeps on the ground, which I have separated from you as ⁴unclean. ²⁶And you shall be holy to Me, ^efor I the LORD am holy, and have separated you from the peoples, that you should be Mine.

²⁷^f'A man or a woman who is a medium, or who has familiar spirits, shall surely be put to death; they shall stone them with stones. Their blood *shall be* upon them.'

Regulations for Conduct of Priests

21 And the LORD said to Moses, "Speak to the priests, the sons of Aaron, and say to them: ^a'None shall defile himself for the dead among his people, ²except for his relatives who are

20:12 Perversion literally means "mixing, confusion"—in this case, of the natural order.

20:14 Marries (literally *takes*) probably means to have as a common-law wife. **burned . . . he and they:** Perhaps this was done after the stoning to prevent burial, which was very important to the ancients. Not to be buried was thought to make a peaceful afterlife impossible.

20:18 her sickness: That is, her menstrual flow (15:19–24; 18:19). **exposed . . . her blood:** In menstruation, the mysterious powers of blood and sex are drawn together. Casual disregard shows disrespect for God as the Creator as well as for the human role in procreation.

20:20 They shall die childless may not seem to be a severe penalty, but it was greatly dreaded in the ancient world, where continuation of the family line was extremely important. If this situation were an extramarital affair, as implied by the verb **lies with**, the childlessness would affect two families. The man would have no heirs, and the woman would lose her status as a faithful wife.

20:21 takes: If a man died childless before his father's death and the division of the family property, his brother was to marry the widow. Their firstborn would be considered the dead brother's heir. Otherwise it was forbidden for a surviving brother to marry his dead

brother's widow. It might seem that he was trying to gain the dead man's estate for himself. **They shall be childless:** The Hebrew implies that if the man already had heirs, none would survive him, and that this marriage would not produce others.

20:23 I am casting out: God took full responsibility for His judgment on the wickedness of the people of Canaan, for which He would use Israel as His instrument.

20:24 Flowing with milk and honey conveys the agricultural potential of the land. Abundant wildflowers were the source of the honey and point to the excellent grazing for flocks and herds that would provide the milk. **Has separated you** emphasizes that the people of Israel were distinct from the people of Canaan whom they would displace. Israel's God was different from the gods of Canaan. Israel needed to operate on a different, higher standard of morality to demonstrate that to the world.

21:1 defile himself: Contact with a dead body made a person unclean. Since the priests ministered before the altar of the Lord, the occasions on which they were allowed to be unclean were restricted. While they were unclean they could not perform their priestly duties.

21:2, 3 The only exceptions for the priest were his closest relatives. For them he could attend mourning rites. The wife is probably

nearest to him: his mother, his father, his son, his daughter, and his brother; ³also his virgin sister who is near to him, who has had no husband, for her he may defile himself. ⁴*Otherwise* he shall not defile himself, *being* a ¹chief man among his people, to profane himself.

^{5b}They shall not make any bald *place* on their heads, nor shall they shave the edges of their beards nor make any cuttings in their flesh. ⁶They shall be ^choly to their God and not profane the name of their God, for they offer the offerings of the LORD made by fire, *and* the ^dbread of their God; ^etherefore they shall be holy. ⁷They shall not take a wife *who* is a harlot or a defiled woman, nor shall they take a woman ^gdivorced from her husband; for ²*the priest* is holy to his God. ⁸Therefore you shall ³consecrate him, for he offers the bread of your God. He shall be holy to you, for ^hI the LORD, who ⁱsanctify you, *am* holy. ⁹The daughter of any priest, if she profanes herself by playing the harlot, she profanes her father. She shall be ^jburned with fire.

¹⁰*He who* is the high priest among his brethren, on whose head the anointing oil was ^kpoured and who is consecrated to wear the garments, shall not ^luncover ⁴his head nor tear his clothes; ¹¹nor shall he go ^mnear any dead body, nor defile himself for his father or his mother; ¹²ⁿnor shall he go out of the sanctuary, nor profane the sanctuary of his God; for the ^oconsecration of the anointing oil of his God *is* upon him: *I am* the LORD.

⁴ ¹ Lit. *master or husband*
⁵ ^b Lev. 19:27; Deut. 14:1; Ezek. 44:20
⁶ ^c Ex. 22:31 ^d Lev. 3:11 ^e Is. 52:11
⁷ ^f Ezek. 44:22
⁸ ^g Deut. 24:1, 2
² ^h Lit. *he*
⁸ ^h Lev. 11:44, 45
ⁱ ⁱ Lev. 8:12, 30 ³ ^{set} *him apart*
⁹ ^j Deut. 22:21
¹⁰ ^k ^k Lev. 8:12
¹ ^l Lev. 10:6, 7 ⁴ ^{In} *mourning*
¹¹ ^m Num. 19:14
¹² ⁿ ⁿ Lev. 10:7 ^o ^{Ex.} 29:6, 7

¹⁸ ^p Lev. 22:19-25
^q ^q Lev. 22:23
²³ ^r Lev. 16:2 ^s ^{Lev.} 21:12

CHAPTER 22

² ^a ^a Num. 6:3
^b ^b Lev. 18:21 ^c ^c Ex. 28:38; Lev. 16:19; 25:10; Num. 18:32; Deut. 15:19 ¹ ^{keep} *themselves apart from*

¹³And he shall take a wife in her virginity. ¹⁴A widow or a divorced woman or a defiled woman *or* a harlot—these he shall not marry; but he shall take a virgin of his own people as wife. ¹⁵Nor shall he profane his posterity among his people, for I the LORD sanctify him.”

¹⁶And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ¹⁷“Speak to Aaron, saying: ‘No man of your descendants in *succeeding* generations, who has *any* defect, may approach to offer the bread of his God. ¹⁸For any man who has a ^pdefect shall not approach: a man blind or lame, who has a marred *face* or any *limb* ^qtoo long, ¹⁹a man who has a broken foot or broken hand, ²⁰or is a hunchback or a dwarf, or *a man* who has a defect in his eye, or eczema or scab, or is a eunuch. ²¹No man of the descendants of Aaron the priest, who has a defect, shall come near to offer the offerings made by fire to the LORD. He has a defect; he shall not come near to offer the bread of his God. ²²He may eat the bread of his God, *both* the most holy and the holy; ²³only he shall not go near the ^rveil or approach the altar, because he has a defect, lest ^she profane My sanctuaries; for I the LORD sanctify them.’”

²⁴And Moses told *it* to Aaron and his sons, and to all the children of Israel.

22 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ²“Speak to Aaron and his sons, that they ^aseparate ¹themselves from the holy things of the children of Israel, and that they ^bdo not profane My holy name *by* what they ^cdedicate to Me:

included in the term **relatives who are nearest to him**. The **virgin sister** still belonged to the priest’s father’s family. A married sister belonged to her husband’s family; the priest could not attend mourning rites for her.

21:5 These were pagan mourning customs. All Israel was forbidden to observe them (19:27, 28). Naturally, that prohibition began with the priests.

21:6 The **bread** belonged to God because it was sacrificed on His altar. There is no suggestion that God needed or ate this food, only that it belonged to Him. The priests received portions of it as one part of God’s provision for them and their families (6:14–7:36).

21:7 A priest could marry a widow, but other women who had been with a man in any sexual relationship were forbidden to him. A priest’s marriage symbolized his special, holy relationship to God.

21:9 Prostitution, the ultimate promiscuity, was the opposite of holiness, the ultimate faithfulness. The priest’s daughter was to reflect her father’s holiness to God, especially in an age when everything one did reflected on one’s family.

21:10–12 The high priest was not allowed to become ritually unclean, even at the death of his father or mother. Nor could he display any signs of mourning. His duties in the sanctuary could not be interrupted. For his exalted position before God, the high priest sometimes paid a high personal price.

21:13–15 The standard for the high priest’s wife was higher than for the wife of an ordinary priest. The high priest could marry only a **virgin**. **Of his own people** could mean either another priest’s daughter or an Israelite woman. **His posterity** had to be pure.

21:18–20 Most of these physical conditions were permanent; a

person afflicted by them could never serve as a priest. But some, like a broken limb or a skin condition, would heal with time. The priest suffering from them was barred from serving as a priest only so long as he was afflicted.

21:20 Neither **eczema** nor **scab** is included in the list of things that made an ordinary Israelite unclean (13:1–46). As with mourning rites and marriage partners, the priests were held to a higher standard than the people because the priests had a more public role in modeling holiness to God.

21:22 **He may eat**: Physical defect did not imply a moral defect. The person afflicted still had access to the food of the altar by which the priests lived. He was not denied his provision, nor was he forced to leave the sanctuary.

21:23 **My sanctuaries** probably refers to the two divisions of the tabernacle: (1) the holy place, where the altar of incense stood; and (2) the Most Holy Place, where the ark of the covenant rested. This implies that the person with a physical defect had access to the outer court around the tabernacle as long as he did not come too close to the **altar** of burnt offering, which stood in the outer court.

21:24 These instructions were not given secretly to the priests, but publicly. Each Israelite was to know what God expected of him or her, and what God expected of the priests.

22:2 **separate . . . holy things**: When the priests were ritually impure, they were not to come near the offerings the Israelites had brought to the tabernacle for dedication to God. **profane My holy name by what they dedicate**: If a ritually unclean priest officiated at a sacrifice, the value of sacrifice would be nullified.

I *am* the LORD. ³Say to them: ‘Whoever of all your descendants throughout your generations, who goes near the holy things which the children of Israel dedicate to the LORD, ^dwhile he has ²uncleanness upon him, that person shall be cut off from My presence: I *am* the LORD.

⁴‘Whatever man of the descendants of Aaron, who is ^aa leper or has ^fa discharge, shall not eat the holy offerings ^guntil he is clean. And ^hwhoever touches anything made unclean *by* a corpse, or ⁱa man who has had an emission of semen, ⁵or ^jwhoever touches any creeping thing by which he would be made unclean, or ^kany person by whom he would become unclean, whatever his uncleanness may be— ⁶the person who has touched any such thing shall be unclean until evening, and shall not eat the holy offerings unless he ^lwashes his body with water. ⁷And when the sun goes down he shall be clean; and afterward he may eat the holy offerings, because ^mit is his food. ⁸ⁿWhatever dies *naturally* or is torn *by beasts* he shall not eat, to defile himself with it: I *am* the LORD.

⁹‘They shall therefore keep ^oMy ³ordinance, ^plest they bear sin for it and die thereby, if they profane it: I the LORD sanctify them.

^{10q}‘No outsider shall eat the holy offering; one who ^ddwells with the priest, or a hired servant, shall not eat the holy thing. ¹¹But if the priest ^rbuys a person with his money, he may eat it; and one who is born in his house may eat his food. ¹²If the priest’s daughter is married to an outsider, she may not eat of the holy offerings. ¹³But if the priest’s daughter is a widow or divorced, and has no child, and has returned to her father’s house as in her youth, she may eat her father’s food; but no outsider shall eat it.

³ ^d Lev. 7:20, 21; Num. 19:13
² *defilement*
⁴ ^e Num. 5:2 ^f Lev. 15:2 ^g Lev. 14:2; 15:13 ^h Lev. 11:24–28, 39, 40; Num. 19:11 ⁱ Lev. 15:16, 17 ⁵ Lev. 11:23–28
^k Lev. 15:7, 19
⁶ ^l Lev. 15:5
⁷ ^m Lev. 21:22; Num. 18:11, 13
⁸ ⁿ Ex. 22:31; Lev. 7:24; 11:39, 40; 17:15; Ezek. 44:31
⁹ ^o Lev. 18:30
^p Ex. 28:43; Lev. 22:16; Num. 18:22
³ *charge*
¹⁰ ^q Ex. 29:33; Lev. 22:13; Num. 3:10
⁴ As a visitor
¹¹ ^r Ex. 12:44

¹⁵ ^s Num. 18:32
¹⁸ ^t Lev. 1:2, 3, 10
³ *brings his offering*
¹⁹ ^u Lev. 1:3; Deut. 15:21
²⁰ ^v Deut. 15:21; 17:1; Mal. 1:8, 14; [Eph. 5:27; Heb. 9:14; 1 Pet. 1:19]
²¹ ^w Lev. 3:1, 6
^x Num. 15:3, 8; Ps. 61:8; 65:1; Eccl. 5:4, 5
²² ^y Lev. 22:20; Mal. 1:8 ^z Lev. 1:9, 13; 3:3, 5 ⁶ *running sore*
²³ ^a Lev. 21:18
²⁵ ^b Num. 15:15, 16
^c Lev. 21:6, 17

¹⁴‘And if a man eats the holy offering unintentionally, then he shall restore a holy offering to the priest, and add one-fifth to it. ¹⁵They shall not profane the ^sholy offerings of the children of Israel, which they offer to the LORD, ¹⁶or allow them to bear the guilt of trespass when they eat their holy offerings; for I the LORD sanctify them.’”

Offerings Accepted and Not Accepted

¹⁷And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ¹⁸“Speak to Aaron and his sons, and to all the children of Israel, and say to them: ‘“Whatever man of the house of Israel, or of the strangers in Israel, who ⁵offers his sacrifice for any of his vows or for any of his freewill offerings, which they offer to the LORD as a burnt offering— ¹⁹*“you shall offer* of your own free will a male without blemish from the cattle, from the sheep, or from the goats. ²⁰“Whatever has a defect, you shall not offer, for it shall not be acceptable on your behalf. ²¹And ^wwhoever offers a sacrifice of a peace offering to the LORD, ^xto fulfill *his* vow, or a freewill offering from the cattle or the sheep, it must be perfect to be accepted; there shall be no defect in it. ²²“Those *that are* blind or broken or maimed, or have an ⁶ulcer or eczema or scabs, you shall not offer to the LORD, nor make ^zan offering by fire of them on the altar to the LORD. ²³Either a bull or a lamb that has any limb ^atoo long or too short you may offer *as* a freewill offering, but for a vow it shall not be accepted.

²⁴“You shall not offer to the LORD what is bruised or crushed, or torn or cut; nor shall you make *any offering of them* in your land. ²⁵Nor ^bfrom a foreigner’s hand shall you offer any of these as ^cthe bread

22:3 All . . . your generations made the restriction as broad as possible in any one generation, and as broad as possible through all time. **Cut off from My presence** does not mean executed or banished from the community, but permanently denied the privilege of ministering as a priest.

22:4 leper: Regulations concerning leprosy are given in 13:1–46; 14:1–32. Regulations about **discharge** are found in 15:1–18.

22:5, 6 creeping thing . . . until evening: Clean and unclean animals are listed in ch. 11.

22:7 it is his food: The sacrifices brought by the Israelites were a major part of the daily provisions for the priests.

22:8 Ordinary Israelites could eat this meat (17:15, 16). The priests were held to a higher standard.

22:10 Three groups of persons were denied access to the meat of the offerings: (1) the **outsider** (literally *any stranger*), whether a foreigner or an Israelite not of Aaron’s family line; (2) the **one who dwells** as a guest **with the priest**; and (3) a **hired servant**, who was not a member of the priest’s household but worked in it on a daily basis.

22:11 Slaves, whether bought or born in the household, were allowed to eat of the priest’s share of the consecrated food. They were part of his household.

22:12 A priest’s daughter became a member of her husband’s family when she married. If her husband was not a priest, she lost her right to eat consecrated food.

22:14–16 Restitution plus one-fifth was the penalty here for an ineligible person who ate of the **holy offering**. In 5:14–16, the penalty was the sacrifice of a ram and restitution plus one-fifth.

22:18 strangers: Resident aliens in Israel were permitted to worship God with the Israelites. If a resident alien accepted the Israelites’ God as his God, he was accepted at God’s sanctuary under the same conditions as any Israelite was.

22:19–21 without blemish . . . no defect in it: This standard was addressed later by the prophet Malachi when some in his day were bringing defective animals to sacrifice on God’s altar (Mal. 1:7–14). We are not to offer God less than our best.

22:23 An exception was made for a **freewill offering**, since it was not required and was not made in fulfillment of a **vow**.

22:24, 25 cut: Castrated animals were not acceptable for sacrifice. **from a foreigner’s hand:** Israel’s sacrificial animals were to be raised by Israelites who worshiped God, not by foreigners who worshipped a multitude of pagan gods.

of your God, because their ^dcorruption is in them, and defects are in them. They shall not be accepted on your behalf.”

²⁶ And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: ^{27c} “When a bull or a sheep or a goat is born, it shall be seven days with its mother; and from the eighth day and thereafter it shall be accepted as an offering made by fire to the LORD. ²⁸ *Whether it is a cow or ewe, do not kill both her ^f and her young on the same day.* ²⁹ And when you ^g offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving to the LORD, offer *it* of your own free will. ³⁰ On the same day it shall be eaten; you shall leave ^h none of it until morning: I am the LORD.

³¹ⁱ “Therefore you shall keep My commandments, and perform them: I am the LORD. ^{32j} You shall not profane My holy name, but ^k I will be ⁷hallowed among the children of Israel. I am the LORD who ^l sanctifies you, ^{33m} who brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: I am the LORD.”

Feasts of the LORD

23 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ² “Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: ‘The feasts of the LORD, which you shall proclaim to be ^a holy convocations, these are My feasts.

The Sabbath

^{3b} “Six days shall work be done, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of solemn rest,

²⁵ ^d Mal. 1:14
²⁷ ^e Ex. 22:30
²⁸ ^f Deut. 22:6, 7
²⁹ ^g Lev. 7:12; Ps. 107:22; 116:17; Amos 4:5
³⁰ ^h Lev. 7:15
³¹ ⁱ Lev. 19:37; Num. 15:40; Deut. 4:40
³² ^j Lev. 18:21
^k Lev. 10:3; Matt. 6:9; Luke 11:2
³³ ^m Lev. 19:36, 37; Num. 15:40; Deut. 4:40

CHAPTER 23

² ^a Ex. 12:16
³ ^b Ex. 20:9; 23:12; 31:15; Lev. 19:3; Deut. 5:13, 14; Luke 13:14

⁴ ^c Ex. 23:14-16; Lev. 23:2, 37
⁵ ^d Ex. 12:1-28; Num. 9:1-5; 28:16-25; Deut. 16:1-8; Josh. 5:10
⁷ ^e Ex. 12:16; Num. 28:18, 25
¹⁰ ^f Ex. 23:19; 34:26
⁹ [Rom. 11:16]; James 1:18; Rev. 14:4
¹¹ ^h Ex. 29:24

a holy convocation. You shall do no work on it; it is the Sabbath of the LORD in all your dwellings.

The Passover and Unleavened Bread

^{4c} “These are the feasts of the LORD, holy convocations which you shall proclaim at their appointed times. ^{5d} On the fourteenth day of the first month at twilight is the LORD’s Passover. ⁶ And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the Feast of Unleavened Bread to the LORD; seven days you must eat unleavened bread. ^{7e} On the first day you shall have a holy convocation; you shall do no ¹ customary work on it. ⁸ But you shall offer an offering made by fire to the LORD for seven days. The seventh day shall be a holy convocation; you shall do no customary work on it.”

The Feast of Firstfruits

⁹ And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ¹⁰ “Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: ^f “When you come into the land which I give to you, and reap its harvest, then you shall bring a sheaf of ^g the firstfruits of your harvest to the priest. ¹¹ He shall ^h wave the sheaf before the LORD, to be accepted on your behalf; on the day after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it. ¹² And you shall offer on that day, when you wave the sheaf, a male lamb of the first year, without blemish, as a burnt offering to the LORD. ¹³ Its grain offering

22:27 The eighth day parallels the time of circumcision for the human male baby. This regulation probably was chiefly kindhearted. The mother, though an animal, was not to be deprived of her newborn in the first days after its birth, when both her maternal instincts and her milk supply were at their highest.

22:31-33 All of these elements had been expressed before, but not all together. God’s person, His name, His present action in sanctifying His people, and His past action in rescuing them from slavery in Egypt all were given as the basis of Israel’s worship.

23:1 the LORD spoke to Moses: The instructions about each convocation are marked off in this chapter by the normal introduction for a speech in Leviticus. The instructions for each could be read separately, while still reminding the people that each had been ordained by God.

23:2 Speak to the children of Israel: These instructions were for all of the people, and not just for the priests. **The feasts of the LORD** literally means “appointed times of the Lord.” This phrase emphasizes that these were specifically appointed holy days. Here of means both “ordained by” and “consecrated to” or “honoring” the Lord. **Holy convocations** were sacred assemblies of all the people called together at the appointed times by the priests. The Feast of Unleavened Bread and the Feast of Tabernacles lasted seven and eight days, respectively. The first and the last day of each were holy meetings. The days between were part of the holiday, though there were no special meetings on them.

23:3 Six days shall work be done: Perhaps as important to human well-being as the day of rest are the six days of work. Work was given to the human race in the Garden. Work is one of the ways humans bear the image of God. Work itself is not a curse on the race. Instead, it remains, even after the Fall, God’s good gift. The regular

seventh day of rest and other holidays from work are ordained for our refreshment and the chance to commune more closely with God and His people. **A Sabbath of solemn rest** may be restated as “a Sabbath that is all a Sabbath should be”—a day of rest and of solemn, joyful worship. **In all your dwellings** emphasized the universal nature of the Sabbath. It was not to be observed only in the sanctuary; it was to be celebrated in every household.

23:5 fourteenth day of the first month: This would fall between mid-March and mid-April. The **Passover** celebrated Israel’s exodus from Egypt (Ex. 12:1-28).

23:6-8 The Feast of Unleavened Bread immediately followed Passover, beginning the **fifteenth day** of Nisan. Later in Israel’s history, this and other festivals involved pilgrimages to the central sanctuary, first in Shiloh and later in Jerusalem. This feast marked the beginning of the barley harvest, the first important grain harvest of the year. In practice, the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread were observed together as an eight-day festival. In the instructions of Ex. 12:1-28 they are treated as one. **Unleavened** means without yeast. **Customary work** was work that could be left a day or two without problems. Essential or emergency tasks could be done. For example, animals could be milked. **an offering:** Instructions for this offering are given in Num. 28:16-25.

23:10 a sheaf of the firstfruits: This bundle of the first harvested barley belonged to God as a special offering, acknowledging God’s provision of the harvest. Paul called Christ “the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep”—the first of the dead to be resurrected (1 Cor. 15:20).

23:11 To wave the sheaf was to elevate the offering before God.

23:13 Two-tenths of an ephah was twice the grain offering for the regular morning and evening burnt offerings (see Exodus 29:40).

shall be two-tenths of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil, an offering made by fire to the LORD, for a ²sweet aroma; and its drink offering shall be of wine, one-fourth of a hin. ¹⁴You shall eat neither bread nor parched grain nor fresh grain until the same day that you have brought an offering to your God; *it shall be* a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings.

The Feast of Weeks

¹⁵And you shall count for yourselves from the day after the Sabbath, from

13 ²pleasing

16 ¹Acts 2:1 / Num. 28:26
17 ⁴Ex. 23:16, 19; Num. 15:17-21

the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering: seven Sabbaths shall be completed. ¹⁶Count ⁱfifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath; then you shall offer ^ja new grain offering to the LORD. ¹⁷You shall bring from your dwellings two wave loaves of two-tenths of an ephah. They shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven. *They are* ^kthe firstfruits to the LORD. ¹⁸And you shall offer with the bread seven lambs of the first year, without blemish, one young bull, and two rams. They shall be as a burnt offering to the LORD, with their

Ex. 29:38–42 specifies a **drink offering** to accompany the regular morning and evening offerings. **Wine** was the third major agricultural product of the land, along with grain and oil.

23:14 An Israelite could not eat the grain of a new harvest until he had brought the offering of the firstfruits to the sanctuary. **Parched grain** was a favorite food of those working in the harvest. Newly harvested heads of grain were roasted in a fire and eaten when cool (Ruth 2:14).

23:17 Firstfruits refers to the firstfruits of wheat. The Feast of Weeks comes near the end of the wheat harvest in Palestine. Either the grain for baking these firstfruit loaves was set aside at the beginning of the harvest or the first grain used from the new harvest qualified as its firstfruits.

23:18–20 for the priest: Grain and meat from the sacrificial offerings were a large part of God's provision for the priests and their families (7:1–14, 31–36).

The Feasts and Sacred Times of Ancient Israel

Event	Commemoration
The Sabbath (Ex. 20:8–11; 31:12–17; Lev. 23; Deut. 5:12–15)	Every seventh day was a solemn rest from all work.
The New Moon (Num. 28:11–15; Ps. 81:3)	The first day of each month was a day of rest, special sacrifices, and the blowing of trumpets.
Passover (Ex. 12:1–14; Lev. 23:5; Num. 9:1–14; 28:16; Deut. 16:1–7)	On the fourteenth day of the first month (Nisan), this festival commemorated God's deliverance of Israel from bondage in Egypt.
The Feast of Unleavened Bread (Ex. 12:15–20; 13:3–10; Lev. 23:6–8; Num. 28:17–25; Deut. 16:3, 4, 8)	This feast, which marked the beginning of the barley harvest, immediately followed Passover and lasted until the twenty-first day of the month.
The Feast of Firstfruits (Lev. 23:9–14; Num. 28:26)	This feast, which marked the beginning of the barley harvest, immediately followed Passover and lasted until the twenty-first day of the month.
The Feast of Weeks (Harvest of Pentecost) (Ex. 23:16; 34:22; Lev. 23:15–21; Nu. 28:26–31; Deut. 16:9–12)	This festival took place fifty days after the barley harvest, and involved new grain offerings to the Lord.
The Feast of Trumpets (Rosh Hashanah) (Lev. 23:23–25; Num. 29:1–6)	The first day of the seventh month (Tishri) marked the occasion, which involved a Sabbath rest, the blowing of trumpets, and a holy convocation.
The Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur) (Lev. 16; 23:26–32; Num. 29:7–11)	Observed on the tenth day of the seventh month (Tishri), this was a day of fasting (on which no work was done) for the purpose of atoning for the sins of the past year.
The Feast of Tabernacles (Booths or Ingathering) (Ex. 23:16; 34:22; Lev. 23:33–36, 39–43; Num. 29:12–38; Deut. 16:13–15)	This eight-day celebration lasted from the fifteenth to the twenty-second day of the seventh month (Tishri).
The Feast of Dedication (Lights or Hanukkah) (John 10:22)	Celebrated in the ninth month (Chislel), this eight-day feast commemorated the cleansing and rededication of the temple after its defilement by Syria.
The Feast of Purim (Lots) (Esth. 9:18–32)	This feast was celebrated on the fourteenth and fifteenth days of the twelfth month (Adar).
The Sabbath Year (Ex. 23:10, 11; Lev. 25:1–7)	Every seventh year was designated as a “year of release” to allow the land to lie fallow.
The Year of Jubilee (Lev. 25:8–55; 27:17–24; Ezek. 46:17)	The fiftieth year, which followed seven Sabbath years, proclaimed liberty to those who were servants because of debt, and returned lands to their former owners.

grain offering and their drink offerings, an offering made by fire for a sweet aroma to the LORD. ¹⁹Then you shall sacrifice ¹one kid of the goats as a sin offering, and two male lambs of the first year as a sacrifice of a ^mpeace offering. ²⁰The priest shall wave them with the bread of the firstfruits as a wave offering before the LORD, with the two lambs. ⁿThey shall be holy to the LORD for the priest. ²¹And you shall proclaim on the same day *that* it is a holy convocation to you. You shall do no customary work *on it*. *It shall be* a statute forever in all your dwellings throughout your generations.

²²“When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not wholly reap the corners of your field when you reap, nor shall you gather any gleanings from your harvest. You shall leave them for the poor and for the stranger: I *am* the LORD your God.”

The Feast of Trumpets

²³Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ²⁴“Speak to the children of Israel, saying: ‘In the ^pseventh month, on the first *day* of the month, you shall have a sabbath-rest, ^qa memorial of blowing of trumpets, a holy convocation. ²⁵You shall do no customary work *on it*; and you shall offer an offering made by fire to the LORD.’”

The Day of Atonement

²⁶And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: ²⁷“Also the tenth *day* of this seventh month *shall be* the Day of Atonement. It shall be a holy convocation for you; you shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire to the LORD. ²⁸And you shall do no work on that same day, for it is the Day of Atonement, ^sto make atonement for you before the LORD your God. ²⁹For any person who is not ^tafflicted in *soul* on that same day ^ushall be cut off

¹⁹ ¹ Lev. 4:23, 28; Num. 28:30; [2 Cor. 5:21] ^m Lev. 3:1
²⁰ ⁿ Lev. 14:13; Num. 18:12; Deut. 18:4
²² ^o Lev. 19:9, 10; Deut. 24:19-22; Ruth 2:2, 15
²⁴ ^p Num. 29:1
^q Lev. 25:9
²⁷ ^r Lev. 16:1-34; 25:9; Num. 29:7
²⁸ ^s Lev. 16:34
²⁹ ^t Is. 22:12; Jer. 31:9; Ezek. 7:16
^u Gen. 17:14; Lev. 13:46; Num. 5:2

³⁰ ^v Lev. 20:3-6
³² ³ *humble yourselves*
⁴ *observe your sabbath*
³⁴ ^w Ex. 23:16; Num. 29:12; Deut. 16:13-16; Ezra 3:4; Neh. 8:14; Zech. 14:16-19; John 7:2
³⁶ ^x Num. 29:12-34
^y Num. 29:35-38; Neh. 8:18; John 7:37
² Deut. 16:8; 2 Chr. 7:8
⁵ *solemn*
³⁷ ^a Lev. 23:2, 4
³⁸ ^b Num. 29:39
³⁹ ^c Ex. 23:16; Deut. 16:13
⁴⁰ ^d Neh. 8:15
⁶ *foliage*

from his people. ³⁰And any person who does any work on that same day, ^vthat person I will destroy from among his people. ³¹You shall do no manner of work; *it shall be* a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings. ³²*It shall be* to you a sabbath of *solemn* rest, and you shall ³afflict your souls; on the ninth *day* of the month at evening, from evening to evening, you shall ⁴celebrate your sabbath.”

The Feast of Tabernacles

³³Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ³⁴“Speak to the children of Israel, saying: ^w“The fifteenth day of this seventh month *shall be* the Feast of Tabernacles for seven days to the LORD. ³⁵On the first *day there shall be* a holy convocation. You shall do no customary work *on it*. ³⁶For seven days you shall offer an ^xoffering made by fire to the LORD. ^yOn the eighth day you shall have a holy convocation, and you shall offer an offering made by fire to the LORD. *It is* a ^zsacred⁵ assembly, *and* you shall do no customary work *on it*.

³⁷ ^a“These *are* the feasts of the LORD which you shall proclaim *to be* holy convocations, to offer an offering made by fire to the LORD, a burnt offering and a grain offering, a sacrifice and drink offerings, everything on its day— ³⁸^bbesides the Sabbaths of the LORD, besides your gifts, besides all your vows, and besides all your freewill offerings which you give to the LORD.

³⁹“Also on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have ^cgathered in the fruit of the land, you shall keep the feast of the LORD *for seven days*; on the first *day there shall be* a sabbath-rest, and on the eighth day a sabbath-rest. ⁴⁰And ^dyou shall take for yourselves on the first day the ⁶fruit of beautiful trees, branches of palm trees, the boughs of leafy trees,

23:22 The Israelites were to be generous when they reaped a plentiful harvest because God gave the harvest to them (19:9, 10). Grapes are not mentioned here because the Feast of Weeks came well before the grape harvest.

23:24 The seventh month . . . first day falls in mid-September. **a memorial:** Israel remembered God’s goodness, which was expressed in the covenant, and asked God to continue to remember that covenant. **Blowing of trumpets** marked solemn, joyful, and urgent occasions in ancient Israel.

23:25 an offering made by fire: The animals and amounts of grain for this offering are listed in Num. 29:2–5.

23:27 Day of Atonement: The day was not given this name in ch. 16. Literally, it is the “Day of Atonements”—that is, the day above all days, when complete atonement was made for all Israel.

23:28 do no work: On the Day of Atonement, the most important work of all was done by the high priest in the Most Holy Place. To do any lesser work would have been sacrilegious.

23:30 I will destroy: God Himself would see to it that the transgressor of this most holy day would be called to account.

23:32 This is the third time in this passage that the Israelites were commanded to **afflict their souls**, indicating the importance of this duty for this day. **from evening to evening:** This is the only place in the regulations of Leviticus where the beginning time of a day of observance is noted.

23:36 A sacred assembly indicates the last day of a joyous eight-day celebration.

23:38 Besides . . . which you give was a gentle warning not to bring an offering for a special festival day and then attempt to use it again for one of the regular offerings commanded in chs. 1–7. God is generous beyond measure with His people. God’s people should be generous with their offerings to Him.

23:40 the fruit of beautiful trees: In celebrating the Feast of Tabernacles today, people use the citron, a fruit like the lemon, but larger. **Leafy trees** are thought to be the myrtle.

and willows of the brook; ^eand you shall rejoice before the LORD your God for seven days. ⁴¹^fYou shall keep it as a feast to the LORD for seven days in the year. *It shall be* a statute forever in your generations. You shall celebrate it in the seventh month. ⁴²^gYou shall dwell in ⁷booths for seven days. ^hAll who are native Israelites shall dwell in booths, ⁴³ⁱthat your generations may ^jknow that I made the children of Israel dwell in booths when ^kI brought them out of the land of Egypt: *I am the LORD your God.*"

⁴⁴So Moses ^ldeclared to the children of Israel the feasts of the LORD.

Care of the Tabernacle Lamps

24 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: ^{2a}"Command the children of Israel that they bring to you pure oil of pressed olives for the light, to make the lamps burn continually. ³Outside the veil of the Testimony, in the tabernacle of meeting, Aaron shall be in charge of it from evening until morning before the LORD continually; *it shall be* a statute forever in your generations. ⁴He shall ¹be in charge of the lamps on ^bthe pure gold lampstand before the LORD continually.

The Bread of the Tabernacle

⁵"And you shall take fine flour and bake twelve ^ccakes with it. Two-tenths of an *ephah* shall be in each cake. ⁶You shall set them in two rows, six in a row, ^don the pure gold table before the LORD.

⁴⁰ ^eDeut. 12:7; 16:14, 15
⁴¹ ^fNum. 29:12; Neh. 8:18
⁴² ^g[Is. 4:6]
^hNeh. 8:14-16
⁷ *tabernacles*; shelters made of boughs
⁴³ ⁱEx. 13:14; Deut. 31:13; Ps. 78:5 / Ex. 10:2 ^kLev. 22:33
⁴⁴ ^lLev. 23:2

CHAPTER 24

² ^aEx. 27:20, 21
⁴ ^bEx. 25:31; 31:8; 37:17 ¹ *arrange or set in order*
⁵ ^cEx. 25:30; 39:36; 40:23
⁶ ^dEx. 25:23, 24; 1 Kin. 7:48; 2 Chr. 4:19; 13:11; Heb. 9:2
⁷ ^eLev. 2:2, 9, 16
⁸ ^fNum. 4:7; 1 Chr. 9:32; 2 Chr. 2:4; Matt. 12:4, 5
⁹ ^g1 Sam. 21:6; Matt. 12:4; Mark 2:26; Luke 6:4 ^hEx. 29:33; Lev. 8:31
¹¹ ⁱEx. 22:28 / Job 1:5, 11, 22; Is. 8:21
^kEx. 18:22, 26
¹² ^jNum. 15:34
^mNum. 27:5
² ^{under guard} ³ ^{Lit.} *it might be declared to them from the mouth of the LORD*
¹⁴ ⁿDeut. 13:9; 17:7
¹⁵ ^oLev. 20:17; Num. 9:13 ⁴ ^{be responsible for}
¹⁶ ^pEx. 20:7; 1 Kin. 21:10, 13; [Matt. 12:31; Mark 3:28, 29]

⁷And you shall put pure frankincense on *each* row, that it may be on the bread for a memorial, an offering made by fire to the LORD. ⁸Every Sabbath he shall set it in order before the LORD continually, *being taken* from the children of Israel by an everlasting covenant. ⁹And ^git shall be for Aaron and his sons, ^hand they shall eat it in a holy place; for it is most holy to him from the offerings of the LORD made by fire, by a perpetual statute."

The Penalty for Blasphemy

¹⁰Now the son of an Israelite woman, whose father *was* an Egyptian, went out among the children of Israel; and this Israelite woman's son and a man of Israel fought each other in the camp. ¹¹And the Israelite woman's son ⁱblasphemed the name of the LORD and ^jcursed; and so they ^kbrought him to Moses. (His mother's name *was* Shelomith the daughter of Dibri, of the tribe of Dan.) ¹²Then they ^lput him ²in custody, ^mthat ³the mind of the LORD might be shown to them.

¹³And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ¹⁴"Take outside the camp him who has cursed; then let all who heard *him* ⁿlay their hands on his head, and let all the congregation stone him.

¹⁵"Then you shall speak to the children of Israel, saying: 'Whoever curses his God ^oshall ⁴bear his sin. ¹⁶And whoever ^pblasphemes the name of the LORD shall surely be put to death. All the congregation shall certainly stone him, the

23:42 The implication is that the **booths** were made of the tree branches.

23:43 Dwelling in booths for seven days would remind the Israelites of God's goodness in preserving them through the hardships in the wilderness. The Feast of Tabernacles was both a celebration of harvest and a thanksgiving for God's protection of His people.

24:2-4 Pure oil was needed for the lampstand because it stood within the tabernacle. **pressed olives:** Oil for the sacred lampstand was extracted by pounding olives in a mortar by hand, a process that produced the finest, lightest olive oil. **The veil of the Testimony** separated the holy place from the Most Holy Place. **Aaron:** Aaron and his sons (Ex. 27:21). **From evening until morning** indicates tending the lamps twice a day, not tending them throughout the night.

24:5-9 twelve cakes: One for each of the tribes of Israel. The **frankincense on each row** was not poured on the loaves because the priests had to eat them. When the loaves were replaced, the frankincense was burned as a **memorial, an offering made by fire to the LORD**. **Every Sabbath**, new loaves replaced the ones that had been there for a week. **eat it in a holy place:** See 7:1-14, 31-36 for regulations concerning the priests' food. Jesus referred to the light of the menorah and the showbread when He called Himself the "light of the world" (see John 8:12) and "the bread of life" (see John 6:35). The showbread eaten by the priests foreshadowed the bread of the Lord's Supper eaten by Christians. David, even though he was not a priest, ate the showbread when he fled from Saul (see 1 Sam. 21:1-6). In a conversation with His opponents, Jesus approved of David's action (see Luke 6:1-5). The law could be set aside to meet genuine human needs.

24:10-12 Blaspheming the name of the LORD was forbidden (Ex. 22:28). The question in this case was whether Israel's law applied to those who were not full-blooded Israelites. Note the care in recording that the offender's father was an Egyptian, as well as his mother's name, her father's name, and their tribe.

24:13, 14 The offender was taken **outside the camp** as a sign that he had been cut off from the people of Israel, and so that his death would not defile the camp. To **lay their hands on his head** was a witness that they had heard the words of blasphemy and a sign that his sin was his own responsibility.

24:15 His God can refer to either the Creator or any pagan deities the person worshiped. Anyone who cursed the Creator bore the responsibility for the **sin** and was executed. If an Israelite worshiped a pagan deity, he was liable for the death penalty on those grounds. Foreigners were allowed to worship Israel's God, but if they did not, they were not to worship their own gods while living among the people of Israel (17:8, 9). For such a person to curse his own god in Israel's presence was of no concern to Israel. In that case, he **shall bear his sin** meant, "If his god desires to punish him, let him." Of course, faithful Israelites would have understood that other gods do not exist, and could not punish anyone who curses them.

24:16 To blaspheme the name of the LORD was a different matter. God had rescued the Israelites from Egypt and bound them to Himself in covenant at Sinai. To blaspheme His name was rebellion. Rebellion, even against human governments, carried the death penalty. **Stranger as well as him who is born in the land** literally means "like stranger, like native." The laws of Israel applied to resident aliens as well as to citizens.

stranger as well as him who is born in the land. When he blasphemes the name of the LORD, he shall be put to death.

¹⁷“Whoever kills any man shall surely be put to death. ¹⁸“Whoever kills an animal shall make it good, animal for animal.

¹⁹“If a man causes disfigurement of his neighbor, as ^she has done, so shall it be done to him— ²⁰fracture for ^tfracture, ^ueye for eye, tooth for tooth; as he has caused disfigurement of a man, so shall it be done to him. ²¹ And whoever kills an animal shall restore it; but whoever kills a man shall be put to death. ²² You shall have ^vthe ⁵ same law for the stranger and for one from your own country; for I am the LORD your God.”

²³ Then Moses spoke to the children of Israel; and they took outside the camp him who had cursed, and stoned him with stones. So the children of Israel did as the LORD commanded Moses.

The Sabbath of the Seventh Year

25 And the LORD spoke to Moses on Mount ^a Sinai, saying, ² “Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: ‘When you come into the land which I give you, then the land shall ^b keep a sabbath to the LORD. ³ Six years you shall sow your field, and six years you shall prune your vineyard, and gather its fruit; ⁴ but in the ^c seventh year there shall be a sabbath of solemn ^d rest for the land, a sabbath to the LORD. You shall neither sow your field nor prune your vineyard. ⁵ ^e What grows of its own accord of your harvest you shall not reap, nor gather the grapes of your untended vine, ^f for it is a year of rest for the land. ⁶ And the sabbath ^g produce of the land

¹⁷ ^a Gen. 9:6; Ex. 21:12; Num. 35:30, 31; Deut. 19:11, 12; 27:24
¹⁸ ^r Lev. 24:21
¹⁹ ^s Ex. 21:24
²⁰ ^t Ex. 21:23; Deut. 19:21 ^u [Matt. 5:38, 39]
²² ^v Ex. 12:49; Lev. 19:33-37; Num. 9:14; 15:15, 16, 29
⁵ ^w one standard of judgment

CHAPTER 25

¹ ^a Lev. 26:46
² ^b Lev. 26:34; 35
⁴ ^c Deut. 15:1; Neh. 10:31 ^d [Heb. 4:9]
⁵ ^e 2 K. 19:29

⁹ ^f Lev. 23:24, 27
¹⁰ ^g Is. 61:2; 63:4; Jer. 34:8, 15, 17; [Luke 4:19] ^h Lev. 25:13, 28, 54; Num. 36:4
¹¹ ⁱ Lev. 25:5
¹² ^j Lev. 25:6, 7
¹³ ^k Lev. 25:10; 27:24; Num. 36:4
¹⁴ ^l Lev. 19:13
¹⁵ ^m Lev. 27:18, 23

shall be food for you: for you, your male and female servants, your hired man, and the stranger who dwells with you, ⁷ for your livestock and the beasts that are in your land—all its produce shall be for food.

The Year of Jubilee

⁸ “And you shall count seven sabbaths of years for yourself, seven times seven years; and the time of the seven sabbaths of years shall be to you forty-nine years. ⁹ Then you shall cause the trumpet of the Jubilee to sound on the tenth ^{day} of the seventh month; ^f on the Day of Atonement you shall make the trumpet to sound throughout all your land. ¹⁰ And you shall consecrate the fiftieth year, and ^g proclaim liberty throughout ^{all} the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a Jubilee for you; ^h and each of you shall return to his possession, and each of you shall return to his family. ¹¹ That fiftieth year shall be a Jubilee to you; in it ⁱ you shall neither sow nor reap what grows of its own accord, nor gather ^{the grapes} of your untended vine. ¹² For it is the Jubilee; it shall be holy to you; ^j you shall eat its produce from the field.

¹³ ^k “In this Year of Jubilee, each of you shall return to his possession. ¹⁴ And if you sell anything to your neighbor or buy from your neighbor’s hand, you shall not ^l oppress one another. ¹⁵ ^m According to the number of years after the Jubilee you shall buy from your neighbor, and according to the number of years of crops he shall sell to you. ¹⁶ According to the multitude of years you shall increase its price, and according to the fewer number of years you shall diminish its price; for he sells to you ^{according} to the number of

24:19, 20 eye for eye: This law is also found in Ex. 21:23–25. Its purpose was not to *require* the injured party to inflict *equal* bodily harm on the one who had injured him, but to *forbid* him from inflicting *greater* bodily harm.

24:22 One reason for these seemingly unrelated laws at this place in Leviticus was to anticipate the question of whether other laws would also apply to non-Israelites. The answer was yes, they would apply to the **stranger**.

25:1 Mount Sinai was where God gave the covenant. Thus the following was part of the covenant and should be observed in order to keep faith with God.

25:2 The land which I give you is a reminder that the land belongs to God. The Israelites lived in it by His grace and under His direction. All of the laws of the Sabbath year and of the Jubilee were based on this premise. If Israel would follow God’s direction while occupying the land, He would bless them abundantly. To that end, these instructions were aimed at restoring the social order that had become unbalanced as time passed. Unchecked, the rich would continue to get richer, and the poor would never have a chance to escape their poverty. **A sabbath to the Lord** is the same phrase used for the weekly Sabbath (23:3). The people rested weekly from their work; the land was to rest every seventh year from its work. The principle

of the land needing rest has been rediscovered in recent years and is practiced in various ways by farmers of many nations.

25:5–7 shall not reap: Reaping and gathering for storage and selling were not permitted in the Sabbath year. However, harvesting for daily needs was permitted. Since the purpose of these laws was to promote social equality in Israel, anyone, regardless of social standing, was permitted to use anything that grew, wherever it grew. Even the wild **beasts** of the field are mentioned here, to emphasize that God would provide for every creature. Of course, Israel’s main provision during this time was the bumper crop produced the year before the Sabbath year (vv. 21, 22).

25:10 To proclaim liberty meant specifically that all debts were canceled, all Israelites who had had to sell themselves into slavery were freed, and all land reverted to its original owner. The same phrase occurs in Is. 61:1, the passage Jesus read in the synagogue in Nazareth at the beginning of His earthly ministry. Jesus’ mission on this earth was to proclaim liberty to all who have lost their inheritance and become servants of the Evil One.

25:11, 12 The fiftieth or Jubilee year was itself a Sabbath year (vv. 2–7). Observing the Jubilee year would have meant two years of rest in a row for the land.

the years of the crops. ¹⁷Therefore ⁿyou shall not ¹oppress one another, ^obut you shall fear your God; for I *am* the LORD your God.

Provisions for the Seventh Year

¹⁸^pSo you shall observe My statutes and keep My judgments, and perform them; ^qand you will dwell in the land in safety. ¹⁹Then the land will yield its fruit, and ^ryou will eat your fill, and dwell there in safety.

²⁰And if you say, “What shall we eat in the seventh year, since ^twe shall not sow nor gather in our produce?” ²¹Then I will ^ucommand My blessing on you in the ^vsixth year, and it will bring forth produce enough for three years. ²²^wAnd you shall sow in the eighth year, and eat ^xold produce until the ninth year; until its produce comes in, you shall eat *of* the old *harvest*.

Redemption of Property

²³“The land shall not be sold permanently, for ^ythe land is Mine; for you are ^zstrangers and sojourners with Me. ²⁴And in all the land of your possession you shall grant redemption of the land.

¹⁷ ^a Lev. 25:14; Prov. 14:31; 22:22; Jer. 7:5, 6; 1 Thess. 4:6 ^b Lev. 19:14, 32; 25:43 ^c *mistreat*
¹⁸ ^p Lev. 19:37
^q Lev. 26:5; Deut. 12:10; Ps. 4:8; Jer. 23:6
¹⁹ ^r Lev. 26:5; Ezek. 34:25
²⁰ ^s Matt. 6:25, 31
^t Lev. 25:4, 5
²¹ ^u Deut. 28:8
^v Ex. 16:29
²² ^w 2 Kin. 19:29
^x Lev. 26:10; Josh. 5:11
²³ ^y Ex. 19:5; 2 Chr. 7:20 ^z Gen. 23:4; Ex. 6:4; 1 Chr. 29:15; Ps. 39:12; Heb. 11:13; 1 Pet. 2:11

²⁵ ^a Ruth 2:20; 4:4, 6 ^b Num. 5:8; Ruth 3:2, 9, 12; [Job 19:25]; Jer. 32:7, 8
²⁷ ^c Lev. 25:50-52
²⁸ ^d Lev. 25:10, 13

²⁵^a“If one of your brethren becomes poor, and has sold *some* of his possession, and if ^bhis redeeming relative comes to redeem it, then he may redeem what his brother sold. ²⁶Or if the man has no one to redeem it, but he himself becomes able to redeem it, ²⁷then ^clet him count the years since its sale, and restore the remainder to the man to whom he sold it, that he may return to his possession. ²⁸But if he is not able to have *it* restored to himself, then what was sold shall remain in the hand of him who bought it until the Year of Jubilee; ^dand in the Jubilee it shall be released, and he shall return to his possession.

²⁹“If a man sells a house in a walled city, then he may redeem it within a whole year after it is sold; *within* a full year he may redeem it. ³⁰But if it is not redeemed within the space of a full year, then the house in the walled city shall belong permanently to him who bought it, throughout his generations. It shall not be released in the Jubilee. ³¹However the houses of villages which have no wall around them shall be counted as the fields of the country. They may be redeemed,

25:17 To refrain from oppressing a fellow citizen is one way of showing **fear**, or reverence and respect, for God.

25:18, 19 If those who live in God’s land follow His instructions, they will **dwell there in safety**, free from want and external threats.

25:21, 22 I will command My blessing on you: If the Israelites would obey God’s command to let the land rest, they could be sure that the land would provide for their needs. Parts of **three years** were involved. In the seventh year, no planting or harvesting for storage would be allowed. Some of the crops of the eighth year would not be harvested and ready for use until the ninth year had begun.

25:23, 24 The principle governing all of these laws was that the land did not belong to Israel; it belonged to God. **you are strangers and**

sojourners with Me: God emphasized that the Israelites would live in a land that was not their own. Likewise, the Christian believer lives on this earth as a stranger and a sojourner, looking for a city “whose builder and maker is God” (Heb. 11:10).

25:29, 30 A walled city indicates one of the larger cities of the land. These provided more economic diversity than unwalled villages. A person’s survival did not depend on owning a city house. Therefore, the time limit to redeem these houses was one year. They were bought and sold without regard to the Jubilee year.

25:31 An unwalled village in ancient Israel was tiny by today’s standards. Many had only a handful of families. The basic economic activity was farming the land within a walking radius of the village. For people living in these villages, losing the family home

Redeeming the Land

An ancient Israelite was in desperate straits if he had to sell his family’s land. Both food and income came from the proceeds of the land. Dispossessed family members would quickly become someone else’s servants. Most people would work hard to avoid such a situation. However, illness, crop failure, or other misfortunes could force a person into debt to the point that his only alternative was to sell his land.

Even in this distressing situation there was hope. A dispossessed family could be saved from poverty and hardship:

First, a redeeming relative could redeem (or buy) the land (25:25). From the proceeds, the man could pay off his creditors. The land stayed in the extended family; the poor family stayed on their land; and eventually the redeemer was repaid. The redeemer was the nearest male relative. If he could not fulfill this privilege and obligation, it passed down the kinship line until someone could. This is the scenario of Ruth 4: Boaz acted as a kinsman-redeemer and bought Naomi’s field.

If a man did not have any relative who would redeem his land, he could save enough to buy it back himself. The purchase price would be prorated according to the number of years left until the next Jubilee year, the fiftieth year (25:26, 27). A man might have to wait until the Jubilee year to reclaim the land of his inheritance (25:28). Even in this most desperate situation, there was the hope and promise that at the Jubilee year, the family would be able to return debt free to their land and make a fresh start.

The law of redemption and the law of the Jubilee year are vivid symbols of what Jesus Christ did on the Cross for every person. What our first father and mother lost in the Garden, we cannot retrieve by any means. We cannot go back to Eden. Yet Jesus Christ, our elder Brother, redeemed it for us. We have been evicted from our inheritance, but in the Year of Jubilee, we will be allowed to return. We will live with Jesus in Paradise.



and they shall be released in the Jubilee.³² Nevertheless ^ethe cities of the Levites, and the houses in the cities of their possession, the Levites may redeem at any time.³³ And if a man purchases a house from the Levites, then the house that was sold in the city of his possession shall be released in the Jubilee; for the houses in the cities of the Levites *are* their possession among the children of Israel.³⁴ But ^fthe field of the common-land of their cities may not be ^gsold, for it *is* their perpetual possession.

Lending to the Poor

³⁵‘If one of your brethren becomes poor, and ²falls into poverty among you, then you shall ^hhelp him, like a stranger or a sojourner, that he may live with you.³⁶ ⁱTake no usury or interest from him; but ^jfear your God, that your brother may live with you.³⁷ You shall not lend him your money for usury, nor lend him your food at a profit.³⁸ ^kI *am* the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, to give you the land of Canaan *and* to be your God.

The Law Concerning Slavery

³⁹‘And if *one* of your brethren *who dwells* by you becomes poor, and sells himself to you, you shall not compel him to serve as a slave.⁴⁰ As a hired servant *and* a sojourner he shall be with you, *and* shall serve you until the Year of Jubilee.⁴¹ And *then* he shall depart from you—he and his children ^lwith him—and shall return to his own family. He shall return to the possession of his fathers.⁴² For they *are* ^mMy servants, whom I brought out of the land of Egypt; they shall not be sold as slaves.⁴³ ⁿYou shall not rule over him ^owith ³rigor, but you ^pshall fear your God.⁴⁴ And as for your male and female slaves whom you may have—from the nations that are around you, from them you may buy

³² ^e Num. 35:1-8; Josh. 21:2
³⁴ ^f Num. 35:2-5
^g Acts 4:36, 37
³⁵ ^h Deut. 15:7-11; 24:14, 15; Luke 6:35; 1 John 3:17 ² Lit. *his hand fails*
³⁶ ⁱ Ex. 22:25; Deut. 23:19, 20 / Neh. 5:9
³⁸ ^k Lev. 11:45; 22:32, 33
⁴¹ ^l Ex. 21:3
⁴² ^m Lev. 25:55; [Rom. 6:22; 1 Cor. 7:22, 23]
⁴³ ⁿ Eph. 6:9; Col. 4:1 ^o Ex. 1:13, 14; Lev. 25:46, 53; Ezek. 34:4 ^p Ex. 1:17; Deut. 25:18; Mal. 3:5 ³ severity

⁴⁵ ^q [Is. 56:3, 6, 7]

⁴⁶ ^r Is. 14:2

⁵⁰ ^s Job 7:1; Is. 16:14

male and female slaves.⁴⁵ Moreover you may buy ^qthe children of the strangers who dwell among you, and their families who are with you, which they beget in your land; and they shall become your property.⁴⁶ And ^ryou may take them as an inheritance for your children after you, to inherit *them* as a possession; they shall be your permanent slaves. But regarding your brethren, the children of Israel, you shall not rule over one another with rigor.

⁴⁷‘Now if a sojourner or stranger close to you becomes rich, and *one* of your brethren *who dwells* by him becomes poor, and sells himself to the stranger or sojourner close to you, or to a member of the stranger’s family,⁴⁸ after he is sold he may be redeemed again. One of his brothers may redeem him;⁴⁹ or his uncle or his uncle’s son may redeem him; or *anyone* who is near of kin to him in his family may redeem him; or if he is able he may redeem himself.⁵⁰ Thus he shall reckon with him who bought him: The price of his release shall be according to the number of years, from the year that he was sold to him until the Year of Jubilee; *it shall be* ^saccording to the time of a hired servant for him.⁵¹ If *there* are still many years *remaining*, according to them he shall repay the price of his redemption from the money with which he was bought.⁵² And if there remain but a few years until the Year of Jubilee, then he shall reckon with him, *and* according to his years he shall repay him the price of his redemption.⁵³ He shall be with him as a yearly hired servant, and he shall not rule with rigor over him in your sight.⁵⁴ And if he is not redeemed in these *years*, then he shall be released in the Year of Jubilee—he and his children with him.⁵⁵ For the children of Israel *are* servants to Me; they *are* My servants whom I brought out of the land of Egypt: I *am* the LORD your God.

would be nearly as great a disaster as the loss of their farmland. Therefore, village **houses** were included in the laws of redemption and Jubilee.

25:32–34 The Levites’ **houses**, too, were protected under the basic law of redemption and Jubilee (vv. 25–28) because their homes were their only substantial assets.

25:35–38 Charging interest on a loan to a poor Israelite—**your brother**—would only hinder his financial progress. This law probably did not prohibit interest on commercial loans, which was another level of economic activity, one that did not threaten anyone’s survival. Some might have been tempted to refuse to lend money to a poor fellow citizen, preferring to lend to non-Israelites in order to collect interest. This explains the command **then you shall help him, like a stranger or a sojourner**. Mercy and generosity were to be stronger motivations than financial gain. That remains a valid principle today.

25:37 Perhaps seed for planting, as well as **food** for eating, is meant here.

25:38 The motivation to be generous to the poor should have come from a person’s gratitude to God for His generosity in bringing Israel out of **Egypt**, giving them **the land of Canaan**, and making a covenant **to be their God**. Serving a generous God, God’s people can afford to be generous, too.

25:44–46 Foreign **slaves** could be bought, sold, and inherited like other property. This does not mean God approves of slavery. He made laws to ameliorate the practices of that time.

25:48, 49 Though this order of kinship in redeeming is not mandatory, it was the natural progression from close relative to more distant relative. A brother, if he could, would be the one to **redeem**. If no brother could or if the man had no brother, an uncle would be next, and then a cousin.

Promise of Blessing and Retribution

- 26** ^aYou shall ^anot make idols for yourselves;
neither a carved image nor a *sacred* pillar shall you rear up for yourselves;
nor shall you set up an engraved stone in your land, to bow down to it; for I *am* the LORD your God.
- ² ^bYou shall ¹keep My Sabbaths and reverence My sanctuary:
I *am* the LORD.
- ³ ^c‘If you walk in My statutes and keep My commandments, and perform them,
- ⁴ ^dthen I will give you rain in its season, ^ethe land shall yield its produce, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit.
- ⁵ ^fYour threshing shall last till the time of vintage, and the vintage shall last till the time of sowing;
you shall eat your bread to the full, and ^gdwell in your land safely.
- ⁶ ^hI will give peace in the land, and ⁱyou shall lie down, and none will make *you* afraid;
I will rid the land of ^jevil ²beasts, and ^kthe sword will not go through your land.
- ⁷ You will chase your enemies, and they shall fall by the sword before you.
- ⁸ ^lFive of you shall chase a hundred, and a hundred of you shall put ten thousand to flight;
your enemies shall fall by the sword before you.
- ⁹ ‘For I will ^mlook on you favorably and ⁿmake you fruitful, multiply you

CHAPTER 26

¹ ^a Ex. 20:4, 5; Deut. 4:15-18; 5:8
² ^b Lev. 19:30
³ ^c Deut. 28:1-14
⁴ ^d Is. 30:23 ^e Ps. 67:6
⁵ ^f Deut. 11:15; Joel 2:19, 26; Amos 9:13
⁶ ^g Lev. 25:18, 19; Ezek. 34:25
⁷ ^h Is. 45:7 ⁱ Job 11:19; Ps. 4:8; Zeph. 3:13 / ² Kin. 17:25; Hos. 2:18 ^k Ezek. 14:17 ² *wild beasts*
⁸ ^j Deut. 32:30; Judg. 7:7-12
⁹ ^m Ex. 2:25; 2 Kin. 13:23 ⁿ Gen. 17:6, 7; Ps. 107:38

^a Gen. 17:1-7
¹⁰ ^p Lev. 25:22
¹¹ ^q Ex. 25:8; 29:45, 46; Josh. 22:19; Ps. 76:2; Ezek. 37:26; Rev. 21:3 ³ *dwelling place*
¹² ^r Deut. 23:14; [2 Cor. 6:16]
¹³ ^s Gen. 27:40
⁴ *erect*
¹⁶ ^t Deut. 28:22
^u 1 Sam. 2:33
^v Ezek. 24:23; 33:10
^w Judg. 6:3-6; Job 31:8; Mic. 6:15
⁵ *without profit*
¹⁷ ^x Ps. 34:16
^y Deut. 28:25;
1 Sam. 4:10; 31:1
^z Ps. 106:41 ^a Prov. 28:1 ⁶ *oppose you*
¹⁸ ^b 1 Sam. 2:5
¹⁹ ^c Is. 25:11

and confirm My ^ocovenant with you.

- ¹⁰ You shall eat the ^pold harvest, and clear out the old because of the new.
- ¹¹ ^qI will set My ³tabernacle among you, and My soul shall not abhor you.
- ¹² ^rI will walk among you and be your God, and you shall be My people.
- ¹³ I *am* the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, that *you* should not be their slaves;
I have broken the bands of your ^syoke and made you walk ⁴upright.
- ¹⁴ ‘But if you do not obey Me, and do not observe all these commandments,
- ¹⁵ and if you despise My statutes, or if your soul abhors My judgments, so that you do not perform all My commandments, *but* break My covenant,
- ¹⁶ I also will do this to you:
I will even appoint terror over you, ^twasting disease and fever which shall ^uconsume the eyes and ^vcause sorrow of heart.
And ^wyou shall sow your seed ⁵in vain, for your enemies shall eat it.
- ¹⁷ I will ⁶set ^xMy face against you, and ^yyou shall be defeated by your enemies.
- ^zThose who hate you shall reign over you, and you shall ^aflee when no one pursues you.
- ¹⁸ ‘And after all this, if you do not obey Me, then I will punish you ^bseven times more for your sins.
- ¹⁹ I will ^cbreak the pride of your power;

26:1 A **sacred pillar** was a stone or wooden column erected to represent a pagan god or goddess. It was not a likeness, but a symbol. Together, the four terms used in this verse cover all the possibilities for pagan images. **I am the LORD your God** confronts the Israelites with a choice of allegiances. Would they love the living God or idols?

26:3-13 This section uses an *if-then* format. Verse 3 is the *if* section, the conditions under which God's blessings would be poured out on the land and the people.

26:4, 5 The blessings were in three areas of Israel's life. First, God promised the resources for abundant supplies of food, including rain whenever it would be needed. **threshing . . . sowing**: The grain harvest was finished by early- to mid-June. The grape harvest began about two months later. Having two months to thresh the grain indicated a large harvest. Sowing could not occur until after the first rains softened the ground enough to plow, usually from mid-October on. A two-month grape harvest also would be a bumper crop. **Dwell in your land safely** hints at the next area of God's blessing on Israel.

26:6-10 Second, God promised security or **peace** in the land. Neither animal nor human adversaries would be successful against Israel. The bears and lions, which were dangerous to humans, would be neutralized. Any human enemy daring to attack Israel would be routed easily, even at odds of a hundred to one.

26:10 **clear out the old**: Israel would not finish eating the old harvest before the new one was brought in.

26:11-13 Third, God promised His presence in Israel's midst. He would **set His tabernacle among** them. Furthermore, He would actively **walk among** them, looking out for their welfare, helping and protecting them. **I will be your God, and you shall be My people** is the covenant by which God bound Himself to Israel and Israel to Him. Later prophets often reminded Israel of this when they called the nation back to faithfulness to God.

26:14, 15 As with the blessings, the curses are presented in an *if-then* format. These two verses are the *if* section, the conditions under which God would bring disaster on His people in an effort to turn their hearts back to Him. **Commandments . . . statutes . . . judgments . . . covenant** cover all of the legislation God had given at Sinai and the agreement Israel had entered into with God there.

26:16, 17 Terror, various diseases, and famine caused by military defeat would be God's first attempts to call Israel back to Himself.

26:18-20 This second series of curses would be fulfilled if the first failed to get Israel's attention. This was characterized as **seven times more punishment**. **your heavens like iron and your earth like bronze**: Rainfall was essential to the agriculture of ancient Israel. The summer heat baked the land. If the early rains of winter did not fall and soften the soil, the primitive plows of ancient agriculture could not break it up for planting. Of course, without rainfall, planting was futile anyway; the seeds would not grow.

The Dream Lives On



Imagine a world without sin. No problem is too great to be solved. No one goes without food. Everyone's needs are met. People live in peace and prosperity. Justice reigns. There is no crime. Death is unknown.

Down through history, various groups have grasped at that utopian ideal. None has succeeded. Yet the dream lives on, and for good reason: That was God's original intention for His creation. He made a perfect world and placed humankind in it with a mandate to "be fruitful and multiply" (Gen. 1:28). Likewise, He has promised to someday restore His creation to its original purpose and perfection (Rev. 21:1–4).

In the meantime, humanity must live with the memory of what Eden was and the hope of what the new creation will be. God helps people keep alive that vision of life with Him—which sometimes seems more like a dream—by offering occasional glimpses of it:

1. Genesis describes what Eden was like (Gen. 1:1—2:25). The account tells of a world that was "very good" as God determines "good" (1:31).

2. In the Law, God promised to bless His people Israel with a land of peace and prosperity if they upheld His commandments (Lev. 26:3). Life in the Promised Land would not be a return to Eden, but it would have much of the same character. For example, God promised to make the people "fruitful" and help them "multiply" (26:9). (Note that this was a covenant agreement.)

3. In the Psalms, the world as it is, even in its fallen condition, is full of the "possessions" of the Lord. He has not left it to fend for itself. He maintains the earth and its creatures and rejoices in His works (Ps. 104:24–30).

4. Isaiah foresaw new heavens and a new earth. There will be no more weeping or, by implication, sin or death. God's people will build houses in a renewed Jerusalem and will do meaningful, satisfying work (Is. 65:17–23).

5. Paul also looks forward to the day when creation will be set free from its "futility," a day when God's people will finally be "delivered from the bondage of corruption" (Rom. 8:19–25).

God's people live in hope. They base their lives on the promise that God's original design and purpose will not be crushed under the terrible load of sin, rebellion, and condemnation. Instead, because of Christ, they look forward to the day when they will enter a new world to live with God forever.



God's people live in hope that His creation will one day be restored to perfection, as it was in the Garden of Eden.

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I ^dwill make your heavens like iron and your earth like bronze.

²⁰ And your ^estrength shall be spent in vain;

for your ^fland shall not yield its produce, nor shall the trees of the land yield their fruit.

²¹ ^gThen, if you walk contrary to Me, and are not willing to obey Me, I will bring on you seven times more plagues, according to your sins.

²² ^hI will also send wild beasts among you, which shall rob you of your

¹⁹ ^d Deut. 28:23

²⁰ ^e Ps. 127:1; Is.

17:10, 11; 49:4; Jer.

12:13 ^f Gen. 4:12;

Deut. 11:17

²² ^g Deut. 32:24;

Ezek. 14:21

^h Judg. 5:6; 2 Chr.

15:5; Zech. 7:14

²³ ⁱ Jer. 2:30; Amos

4:6–12

²⁴ ^j Lev. 26:28, 41;

Ps. 18:26

²⁵ ^k Ezek. 5:17

children, destroy your livestock, and make you few in number; and ^hyour highways shall be desolate.

²³ ^gAnd if ⁱby these things you are not reformed by Me, but walk contrary to Me,

²⁴ ^jthen I also will walk contrary to you, and I will punish you yet seven times for your sins.

²⁵ And ^kI will bring a sword against you that will execute the vengeance of the covenant; when you are gathered together with-

26:21, 22 If drought did not bring the Israelites to their senses, God would visit them with **seven times more plagues**—this time **wild beasts**. When the human population was far below today's levels, a sharp increase in the number of large predators would have been a serious threat to the people and their domestic animals.

26:23–26 If Israel did not repent after the wild beasts, God would multiply their punishment another **seven times** with war, resulting in epidemics and famine. **when you are gathered:** When

enemies invaded a land in the ancient world, the people living in unvalled villages fled to the walled cities for refuge, causing great overcrowding. If a city then was besieged for a long time, unsanitary conditions led to **pestilence**, epidemics of deadly communicable diseases. Another result of a long siege was famine. The flour ration allotted to **ten women** would be so small that they would bake it all together in **one oven**. The bread itself would be weighed to ensure equal distribution.

in your cities ¹I will send pestilence among you;
and you shall be delivered into the hand of the enemy.

^{26m}When I have cut off your supply of bread, ten women shall bake your bread in one oven, and they shall bring back your bread by weight, ²⁷and you shall eat and not be satisfied.

²⁷ ‘And after all this, if you do not obey Me, but walk contrary to Me,
²⁸ then I also will walk contrary to you in fury;
and I, even I, will chastise you seven times for your sins.

²⁹ ^aYou ⁷shall eat the flesh of your sons, and you shall eat the flesh of your daughters.

³⁰ ^pI will destroy your high places, cut down your incense altars, and cast your carcasses on the lifeless forms of your idols;
and My soul shall abhor you.

³¹ I will lay your ^qcities waste and ^rbring your sanctuaries to desolation, and I will not ^ssmell the fragrance of your ⁸sweet aromas.

³² ^tI will bring the land to desolation, and your enemies who dwell in it shall be astonished at it.

³³ ^uI will scatter you among the nations and draw out a sword after you; your land shall be desolate and your cities waste.

³⁴ ^vThen the land shall enjoy its sabbaths as long as it lies desolate and you ^{are} in your enemies’ land;
then the land shall rest and enjoy its sabbaths.

³⁵ As long as ^{it} lies desolate it shall rest—for the time it did not rest on your ^wsabbaths when you dwelt in it.

³⁶ ‘And as for those of you who are left, I will send ^xfaintness⁹ into their hearts in the lands of their enemies; the sound of a shaken leaf shall cause them to flee;

²⁵ ¹Num. 16:49; Deut. 28:21; 2 Sam. 24:15
²⁶ ^mPs. 105:16; Is. 3:1; Ezek. 4:16, 17; 5:16 ⁿMic. 6:14; Hag. 1:6
²⁹ ^oDeut. 28:53; 2 Kin. 6:28, 29 ⁷In time of famine
³⁰ ^p1 Kin. 13:2; 2 Chr. 34:3; Is. 27:9; Ezek. 6:3–6, 13
³¹ ^q2 Kin. 25:4, 10 ^r2 Chr. 36:19; Ps. 74:7 ^sIs. 1:11–15
⁸pleasing
³² ^tJer. 9:11; 18:16
³³ ^uDeut. 4:27; Ps. 44:11; Ezek. 12:15; 20:23; 22:15; Zech. 7:14
³⁴ ^vLev. 26:43; 2 Chr. 36:21
³⁵ ^wLev. 25:2
³⁶ ^xIs. 30:17; Lam. 1:3, 6; 4:19; Ezek. 21:7, 12, 15 ⁹fear

³⁷ ^yJudg. 7:22; 1 Sam. 14:15, 16; Is. 10:4 ^zJosh. 7:12, 13; Judg. 2:14
³⁸ ^aDeut. 4:26
³⁹ ^bDeut. 28:65; Ezek. 4:17; 33:10; Zech. 10:9 ^cEx. 34:7 ¹rot away
⁴⁰ ^dNum. 5:7; 1 Kin. 8:33, 34; Neh. 9:2; Luke 15:18; [1 John 1:9]
⁴¹ ^eActs 7:51; Rom. 2:29 ^f2 Chr. 12:6, 7, 12; 1 Pet. 5:5, 6
⁴² ^hEx. 2:24; 6:5; Ps. 106:45; Ezek. 16:60
⁴³ ^jLev. 26:34, 35
⁴⁴ ⁱLev. 26:15
⁴⁴ ^fDeut. 4:31; 2 Kin. 13:23; Jer. 30:11; [Rom. 11:1–36]
⁴⁵ ^m[Rom. 11:28]

they shall flee as though fleeing from a sword, and they shall fall when no one pursues.

³⁷ ^yThey shall stumble over one another, as it were before a sword, when no one pursues;
and ^zyou shall have no *power* to stand before your enemies.

³⁸ You shall ^aperish among the nations, and the land of your enemies shall eat you up.

³⁹ And those of you who are left ^bshall ¹waste away in their iniquity in your enemies’ lands;
also in their ^cfathers’ iniquities, which are with them, they shall waste away.

⁴⁰ ‘But ^dif they confess their iniquity and the iniquity of their fathers, with their unfaithfulness in which they were unfaithful to Me, and that they also have walked contrary to Me,
⁴¹ and *that* I also have walked contrary to them and have brought them into the land of their enemies;
if their ^euncircumcised hearts are ^fhumbled, and they ^gaccept their guilt—

⁴² then I will ^hremember My covenant with Jacob, and My covenant with Isaac and My covenant with Abraham I will remember;
I will ⁱremember the land.

⁴³ ^jThe land also shall be left empty by them, and will enjoy its sabbaths while it lies desolate without them; they will accept their guilt, because they ^kdespised My judgments and because their soul abhorred My statutes.

⁴⁴ Yet for all that, when they are in the land of their enemies, ^lI will not cast them away, nor shall I abhor them, to utterly destroy them and break My covenant with them;
for *I am* the LORD their God.

⁴⁵ But ^mfor their sake I will remember the covenant of their ancestors,

26:29 Further disobedience would result in cannibalism. This occurred centuries later during a siege of Samaria, and later still during the Babylonian siege of Jerusalem (2 Kin. 6:28, 29; Lam. 2:20; 4:10).

26:30 **High places** and **incense altars** were dedicated to the worship of pagan gods. To defile them with human **carcasses** would make them permanently unfit for worship. There is mocking irony in this threat of human carcasses being tossed upon the carcasses (the **lifeless forms**) of pagan deities.

26:33 scatter: This threat was fulfilled in the Babylonian exile of 587–536 B.C.

26:36, 37 those of you who are left: Survivors would not enjoy relief or peace of mind after escaping the disasters. They would still be timid, even when no one pursued them.

26:38, 39 Having been exiled to foreign lands, the people were not to think they were beyond God’s punitive reach. They would **waste away**, perhaps wishing they had not escaped the quick death that had overtaken so many others.

26:42 God’s **covenant** with the patriarchs took precedence over the covenant at Sinai (see Gal. 3:15–18). Even when Israel violated the Sinai covenant, God honored the patriarchal covenant.

26:44, 45 Ultimately, God’s character is grace, mercy, love, and redemption. On that basis, God would **remember the covenant**. He would not **utterly destroy them**. God remembers and redeems because God is God.

ⁿwhom I brought out of the land of Egypt ^oin the sight of the nations, that I might be their God: *I am the LORD.*"

^{46p}These *are* the statutes and judgments and laws which the LORD made between Himself and the children of Israel ^qon Mount Sinai by the hand of Moses.

Redeeming Persons and Property Dedicated to God

27 Now the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ²"Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: ^a'When a man ¹consecrates by a vow certain persons to the LORD, according to your ²valuation, ³if your valuation is of a male from twenty years old up to sixty years old, then your valuation shall be fifty shekels of silver, ^baccording to the shekel of the sanctuary. ⁴If it is a female, then your valuation shall be thirty shekels; ⁵and if from five years old up to twenty years old, then your valuation for a male shall be twenty shekels, and for a female ten shekels; ⁶and if from a month old up to five years old, then your valuation for a male shall be five shekels of silver, and for a female your valuation shall be three shekels of silver; ⁷and if from sixty years old and above, if *it is* a male, then your valuation shall be fifteen shekels, and for a female ten shekels.

⁸'But if he is too poor to pay your valuation, then he shall present himself before the priest, and the priest shall set a value for ^chim; according to the ability of him who vowed, the priest shall value him.

⁹'If *it is* an animal that men may bring as an offering to the LORD, all that *any-one* gives to the LORD shall be holy. ¹⁰He shall not substitute it or exchange it, good

45 ^a Lev. 22:33; 25:38 ^o Ps. 98:2; Ezek. 20:9, 14, 22
46 ^p Lev. 27:34; Deut. 6:1; 12:1; [John 1:17] ^q Lev. 25:1

CHAPTER 27

2 ^a Lev. 7:16; Num. 6:2; Deut. 23:21-23; Judg. 11:30, 31, 39 ¹ Or makes a difficult or extraordinary vow
2 appraisal
3 ^b Ex. 30:13; Lev. 27:25; Num. 3:47; 18:16
8 ^c Lev. 5:11; 14:21-24

10 ^d Lev. 27:33
13 ^e Lev. 6:5; 22:14; 27:15, 19
14 ³ sets apart
15 ⁴ buy back
16 ⁵ sets apart
18 ^f Lev. 25:15, 16, 28
21 ^g Lev. 25:10, 28, 31 ^h Lev. 27:28
ⁱ Num. 18:14; Ezek. 44:29

for bad or bad for good; and if he at all exchanges animal for animal, then both it and the one exchanged for it shall be ^dholy. ¹¹If *it is* an unclean animal which they do not offer as a sacrifice to the LORD, then he shall present the animal before the priest; ¹²and the priest shall set a value for it, whether it is good or bad; as you, the priest, value it, so it shall be. ^{13e}But if he *wants* at all *to* redeem it, then he must add one-fifth to your valuation.

¹⁴'And when a man ³dedicates his house *to be* holy to the LORD, then the priest shall set a value for it, whether it is good or bad; as the priest values it, so it shall stand. ¹⁵If he who dedicated it *wants to* ⁴redeem his house, then he must add one-fifth of the money of your valuation to it, and it shall be his.

¹⁶'If a man ⁵dedicates to the LORD *part* of a field of his possession, then your valuation shall be according to the seed for it. A homer of barley seed *shall be valued* at fifty shekels of silver. ¹⁷If he dedicates his field from the Year of Jubilee, according to your valuation it shall stand. ¹⁸But if he dedicates his field after the Jubilee, then the priest shall ^freckon to him the money due according to the years that remain till the Year of Jubilee, and it shall be deducted from your valuation. ¹⁹And if he who dedicates the field ever wishes to redeem it, then he must add one-fifth of the money of your valuation to it, and it shall belong to him. ²⁰But if he does not want to redeem the field, or if he has sold the field to another man, it shall not be redeemed anymore; ²¹but the field, ^gwhen it is released in the Jubilee, shall be holy to the LORD, as a ^hdevoted field; it shall be ⁱthe possession of the priest.

²²'And if a man dedicates to the LORD

26:46 This summary statement confirms the authority of Leviticus because its source is **the LORD**.

27:2-8 While people could dedicate themselves or their children (see 1 Sam. 1:11, 22) to God, only the Levites were allowed to serve God as priests. Therefore, those vowed in service to God had to be redeemed. The chief factor in determining value was relative physical strength. A man brought a higher price than a woman because he could do heavier work. Age also was a factor. By redeeming at a certain price the person dedicated to the sanctuary, the Israelite gave the value of the gift he had vowed.

27:8 A person might dedicate himself as God's possession and go redeem the vow—since he could not personally serve in the sanctuary—only to have the priest discover he was **too poor to pay** that value. At this time, 50 shekels (v. 3) might have represented about four years' earnings. In that case, the priest set a redemption value **according to the ability** to pay.

27:9, 10 Rash vows and afterthoughts about vows were discouraged. If one vowed or brought a clean animal for sacrifice, then regretted the decision, the animal could not be exchanged.

27:11-13 Unclean animals could not be sacrificed. Therefore, the

priest set a value on any such animal brought as a gift so that the sanctuary would receive the monetary value of the gift.

27:14, 15 The priest also set the value of a house given to fulfill a vow. Obviously, the priests had to be knowledgeable in many kinds of commercial enterprises. A house in a walled city could be dedicated to God if it was not part of the inheritance that was to stay in the family perpetually (25:29, 30).

27:16-25 A field could be dedicated to the Lord. If it was part of a family's inheritance, it could be redeemed before the Jubilee. The price for a parcel requiring a **homer of barley seed** to sow it was **fifty shekels**. A **homer** was a donkey-load. Over the full 49-year inter-Jubilee period, the price to redeem the parcel was about a shekel a year, the cost of its seed each year. A person was encouraged to redeem the land as soon as he could so that his family would not be deprived of its support.

27:22-24 A dedicated field not part of the family inheritance but bought from another was redeemable before the Jubilee under the same terms as a field belonging to the family inheritance. However, if it was not redeemed, it reverted to the original owner in the Year of Jubilee.

a field which he has bought, which is not the field of *j*his possession, ²³then the priest shall reckon to him the worth of your valuation, up to the Year of Jubilee, and he shall give your valuation on that day *as a holy offering* to the LORD. ²⁴*k*In the Year of Jubilee the field shall return to him from whom it was bought, to the one who *owned* the land as a possession. ²⁵And all your valuations shall be according to the shekel of the sanctuary: ^ltwenty gerahs to the shekel.

²⁶But the *m*firstborn of the animals, which should be the LORD's firstborn, no man shall dedicate; whether *it is* an ox or sheep, *it is* the LORD's. ²⁷And if *it is* an unclean animal, then he shall redeem *it* according to your valuation, and ⁿshall add one-fifth to it; or if it is not redeemed, then it shall be sold according to your valuation.

²⁸*o*“Nevertheless no ⁶devoted offering that a man may devote to the LORD

²² / Lev. 25:10, 25
²⁴ ^k Lev. 25:10-13, 28
²⁵ ⁱ Ex. 30:13; Lev. 27:3; Num. 3:47; 18:16; Ezek. 45:12
²⁶ ^m Ex. 13:2, 12; 22:30
²⁷ ⁿ Lev. 27:11, 12
²⁸ ^o Lev. 27:21; Num. 18:14; Josh. 6:17-19 ⁶ Given exclusively and irrevocably

²⁹ ^p Num. 21:2
³⁰ ^q Gen. 28:22; Num. 18:21, 24; 2 Chr. 31:5, 6, 12; Neh. 13:12; Mal. 3:8
³¹ ^r Lev. 27:13
³² ^s Jer. 33:13; Ezek. 20:37; Mic. 7:14
³³ ^t Lev. 27:10
³⁴ ^u Lev. 26:46; Deut. 4:5; Mal. 4:4
^v Ex. 19:1-6, 25; [Heb. 12:18-29]

of all that he has, *both* man and beast, or the field of his possession, shall be sold or redeemed; every devoted *offering* is most holy to the LORD. ²⁹*p*No person under the ban, who may become doomed to destruction among men, shall be redeemed, *but* shall surely be put to death. ³⁰And ^qall the tithe of the land, *whether* of the seed of the land *or* of the fruit of the tree, *is* the LORD's. It is holy to the LORD. ³¹^rIf a man wants at all to redeem *any* of his tithes, he shall add one-fifth to it. ³²And concerning the tithe of the herd or the flock, of whatever ^spasses under the rod, the tenth one shall be holy to the LORD. ³³He shall not inquire whether it is good or bad, ^tnor shall he exchange it; and if he exchanges it at all, then both it and the one exchanged for it shall be holy; it shall not be redeemed.”

³⁴^uThese *are* the commandments which the LORD commanded Moses for the children of Israel on Mount ^vSinai.

27:26, 27 Animal firstborns could not be dedicated to God, since they belonged to Him already (see Ex. 13:2). One could not pay a vow with a firstborn animal, expecting to gain double credit with God from a single sacrifice. Clean animals could not be redeemed; they would have been sacrificed. Unclean animals could not be sacrificed, and they could be redeemed with money.

27:28, 29 Devoting a possession was a stronger act than dedication. Nothing devoted could be redeemed. Persons devoted (**under the ban**) were to **be put to death**. No private citizen would have had the power to put himself or anyone else under the ban.

27:30, 31 For a person living a distance from the sanctuary, it may have been easier to redeem the tithes of his crops than to bring the crops to the sanctuary.

27:32, 33 Sheep and goats were counted and inspected when they passed **under the rod**, which the shepherd placed across the entrance to the fold. Each year, the newborn animals were counted this way. Every tenth animal was part of the tithe that belonged to God. The owner was not allowed to adjust this procedure so that the animal for the tithe was small, weak, or sickly, nor could he substitute a poor animal for a better one.

27:34 Though it was given to an ancient people of another culture and is not binding on the modern believer in most of its details,

the Book of Leviticus still has much to teach the follower of Christ. Holy living still should be our goal because we have been redeemed through the blood of Christ, which is infinitely more precious than the blood of any sacrificial animal.

Jubilee

(Heb. *yobel*) (25:10; 27:17; Ex. 19:13) Strong's #3104

This word literally means “ram” or “ram’s horn” (Josh. 6:5), and in one instance is rendered “trumpet” (Ex. 19:13). The term is associated with the Year of Jubilee in Leviticus (25:10) and Numbers (Num. 36:4). The fiftieth year was a “jubilee” year for the Hebrews, marked by the blowing of a trumpet (25:9). During this year, the Israelites experienced freedom and liberty: Slaves were freed; debts were canceled; the land was left fallow; family property was redeemed (25:10–17). The fact that Jesus quoted Is. 48:8, 9 seems to indicate that Jesus equated His earthly ministry with the principles of the Year of Jubilee (Luke 4:18, 19).

THE FOURTH BOOK OF MOSES CALLED

NUMBERS



THE BOOK OF NUMBERS describes the events right before the Israelites entered the Promised Land. Similar to the tension-filled days before a great battle or election day, these events reveal the Israelites' restlessness and impatience, but also the anticipation of what God would do. The Israelites made grave mistakes during this crucial period, and God disciplined them. But through His discipline and instruction God trained the Israelites not only to worship Him, but to trust in Him for the ultimate victory.

The long lists of numbers and names in Numbers discourage many readers. However, these must be viewed as the ancient Israelites viewed them. The lists were the final roll call before the battle. They prompted praise to God for His faithfulness to the Israelites. He had protected them and multiplied their numbers even in the middle of a barren wilderness.

Name and Author The Book of Numbers is the fourth of the first five books of the Old Testament, the Pentateuch. The English name Numbers comes from the title that the translators of the Septuagint (a Greek translation of the Old Testament completed around 150 B.C.) gave the book, a name that refers to the two prominent census lists contained within.

Until the nineteenth century, Jewish and Christian scholars had unanimously agreed that Moses wrote the entire Pentateuch. Educated by the Egyptians, he certainly had the credentials to compose the five books, and he was a primary character in Exodus through Deuteronomy.

However, many nineteenth- and twentieth-century scholars have doubted that the historical Moses composed the first five books of the Old Testament. Instead, they have suggested that these books, including Genesis, were compiled at a later date. According to this analysis, anonymous editors used at least four documents to piece together the Pentateuch. These four documents were identified by tracing the divine names, such as Elohim and Yahweh, through the Pentateuch, and by tracing certain variations in subject matter, phrasing, and word choice. The four documents are called: the J document, which uses the name Yahweh for God; the E document, which uses the name Elohim for God; the P or Priestly document; and the D or Deuteronomic document. More recently, this dissection of the Pentateuch has been challenged, and no real consensus has emerged from the ensuing scholarly debate.

On the other hand, most evangelical writers have insisted on Moses' authorship and compilation of the Pentateuch. Given the long sojourn of the Israelites in the wilderness, Moses would certainly have had the time to compile the materials and write most of the books. However, he may have overseen some additions to the books, and certain later editors under the leading of the Spirit may have added other materials. For example, the remarkable story of Balaam (chs. 22–24) may have been written by someone other than Moses, for Moses was neither a participant in nor an observer of these events.

At the same time, there are many positive indications in Numbers that Moses did write the principal narrative. For example, 33:2 speaks specifically of Moses writing the itinerary. Also, 3:40 certainly implies that Moses wrote

down the number and names of Israel's firstborn. Moreover, the constant refrain "then the LORD spoke to Moses," found at the beginning of nearly every major section of the book, testifies not only to its divine origin but also to Moses' significant role in communicating these divine instructions to the Israelites.

Structure Numbers has two basic sections. Each of them begins with a census. The first census (chs. 1–4) numbered the men of war of the first generation of those who had left Egypt. This census and the triumphal march into the Promised Land quickly turned into disaster. The first generation of Israelites did not trust God and did not thank Him for His provision. Instead, they doubted God, accused Him, and rebelled against His gracious instructions. This demanded discipline: The first generation would not inherit the land because they had been faithless.

But while the Lord would not let them enter the land, He still had not abandoned His people. He allowed these rebellious people to live out their lives in the wilderness. Further, He graciously continued to instruct them in His ways and how they could prepare their sons and daughters to enter the land. The faithless first generation had not altered God's purposes or discouraged God from fulfilling His promises. One day, the Israelites would obey God and would conquer the Promised Land.

After 40 years of wandering in the wilderness, the second census (ch. 26) numbered the men of war of the second generation. Finally, they were prepared to do what their parents had failed to do. But underlying the narrative of chapters 26–36 is the nagging question: "Will the second generation be successful, or will they repeat the errors of their fathers?" The book ends with a positive expectation. The second generation would succeed; the people of God would inherit the promise of the land of Canaan—at last!

c. 1527 B.C.
Moses is born

c. 1487 B.C.
Moses flees Egypt
for Midian

c. 1446 B.C.
The Israelites cross
the Red Sea

c. 1445 B.C.
The Law is given at
Mt. Sinai

c. 1445–1405 B.C.
Events in Numbers

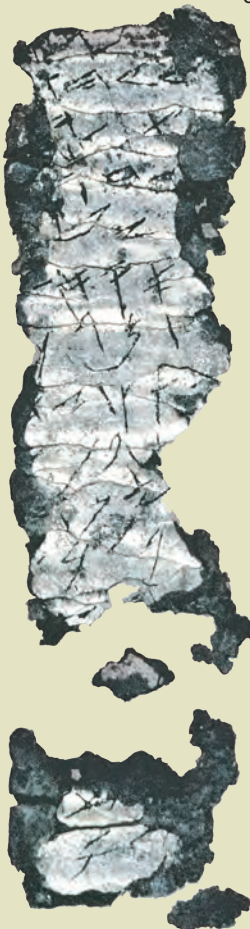
c. 1405 B.C.
Israel enters the
Promised Land

CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

Perhaps the clearest portrait of Christ in the Book of Numbers is the incident of the bronze serpent on a pole. Numbers 21 records that a number of Israelites were bitten by serpents in the desert. God instructed Moses to fashion a bronze serpent on a pole and lift it high. All who looked at the serpent in faith recovered (Num. 21:4–9). Here we have a stunning picture of the Crucifixion. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up" (John 3:14).

Another type of Christ in Numbers was the rock that miraculously poured out water to quench the thirst of the multitudes (Num. 20:8–10). "They drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ" (1 Cor. 10:4). The miracle of the manna (Num. 11:7–9) also pictures Jesus, the self-described "bread of life," who came down from heaven centuries later (John 6:35).

At one point in Numbers, the ungodly prophet Balaam exclaims, "I see Him, but not now; I behold Him, but not near; a Star shall come out of Jacob; a Scepter shall rise out of Israel, and batter the brow of Moab, and destroy all the sons of tumult" (Num. 24:17). Balaam was foreseeing the coming kingdom of God's Messiah.



Fragments of a silver amulet from c. 600 B.C. found in a burial cave just outside Jerusalem containing the Aaronic benediction from Numbers 6:24–26

Z. Radovan/www.BibleLandPictures.com

NUMBERS OUTLINE

- I. The first generation in the wilderness 1:1—25:18
 - A. The triumphal march 1:1—10:36
 - B. The rebellion and judgment of the people 11:1—25:18
- II. The second generation's march to the Promised Land 26:1—36:13
 - A. The census of the second generation 26:1—65
 - B. The inheritance of women in the land 27:1—11
 - C. The successor to Moses 27:12—23
 - D. Offerings, festivals, and vows for the new generation 28:1—30:16
 - E. The war against the Midianites 31:1—54
 - F. The settlement of the tribes east of the Jordan 32:1—42
 - G. Words of warning and encouragement 33:1—56
 - H. An anticipation of the Promised Land 34:1—36:13

A view of a reconstruction of the tabernacle

Becky Weolongo Booto/www.BiblePlaces.com



The First Census of Israel

Now the LORD spoke to Moses ^ain the Wilderness of Sinai, ^bin the tabernacle of meeting, on the ^cfirst *day* of the second month, in the second year after they had come out of the land of Egypt, saying: ^{2d}“Take a census of all the congregation of the children of Israel, by their families, by their fathers’ houses, according to the number of names, every male ^eindividually, ³from ^ftwenty years old and above—all who *are able* to go to war in Israel. You and Aaron shall number them by their armies. ⁴And with you there shall be a man from every tribe, each one the head of his father’s house.

⁵“These are the names of the men who shall stand with you: from Reuben, Elizur the son of Shedeur; ⁶from Simeon, Shelumiel the son of Zurishaddai; ⁷from Judah, Nahshon the son of Amminadab; ⁸from Issachar, Nethanel the son of Zuar; ⁹from Zebulun, Eliab the son of Helon; ¹⁰from the sons of Joseph: from Ephraim, Elishama the son of Ammihud; from Manasseh, Gamaliel the son of Pedahzur; ¹¹from Benjamin, Abidan the son of Gideon; ¹²from Dan, Ahiezer the son of Ammishaddai; ¹³from Asher, Pagiel the son of Ocran; ¹⁴from Gad, Eliasaph the son of ^gDeuel; ¹⁵from Naphtali, Ahira the son of Enan.” ^{16h}These *were* ⁱchosen ²from the congregation, leaders of their fathers’ tribes, ^jheads of the divisions in Israel.

¹⁷Then Moses and Aaron took these men who had been ³mentioned ^kby name, ¹⁸and they assembled all the congregation together on the first *day* of the second month; and they recited their ^lancestry by families, by their fathers’ houses, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and above, each one

CHAPTER 1

¹ ^a Ex. 19:1; Num. 10:11, 12 ^b Ex. 25:22
^c Ex. 40:2, 17; Num. 9:1; 10:11
² ^d Ex. 30:12; Num. 26:2, 63, 64; 2 Sam. 24:2; 1 Chr. 21:2
^e Ex. 30:12, 13; 38:26
³ ^f Ex. 30:14; 38:26
¹⁴ ^g Num. 7:42
¹ ^h Reuel, Num. 2:14
¹⁶ ⁱ Ex. 18:21; Num. 7:2; 1 Chr. 27:16–22
^j Num. 16:2 ^k Ex. 18:21, 25; Jer. 5:5; Mic. 3:1, 9; 5:2
² ^l called
¹⁷ ^m Is. 43:1
³ ⁿ designated
¹⁸ ^o Ezra 2:59; Heb. 7:3

²⁰ ^m Num. 2:10, 11; 26:5–11; 32:6, 15, 21, 29

BIBLE TIMES & CULTURE NOTES



Sinai

Shaped like a triangle, the peninsula of Sinai is an area of great contrasts. It appears to hang from the southeast corner of the Mediterranean Sea with its base serving as the land bridge between Egypt and Israel. The peninsula is bounded on the west by the Gulf of Suez and on the east by the Gulf of Aqaba.

The Sinai peninsula is about 150 miles wide at the northern end and about 250 miles long. Its land area is desert and a tableland rising to about 2,500 feet. On the north the Sinai plateau slopes away to the Mediterranean Sea. Near the south end of the peninsula, a series of granite mountains rise 4,000–9,000 feet high, in striking contrast to the surrounding wastelands.



The Sinai Peninsula from space
NASA

individually. ¹⁹As the LORD commanded Moses, so he numbered them in the Wilderness of Sinai.

²⁰Now the ^mchildren of Reuben, Israel’s oldest son, their genealogies by

1:1 The phrase **now the LORD spoke to Moses** sets the tone for the book. God’s act of revelation to His servant Moses is mentioned over 150 times in Numbers. **Wilderness of Sinai:** The geographical setting of Numbers is the wilderness and serves as a powerful spiritual metaphor. Not only did the Israelites live in the wilderness, but they as a nation were in a spiritual wasteland. God had already delivered them from slavery, but He hadn’t yet brought them to the Promised Land. They had to endure physical hardships and other experiences that tested their faith (see 21:4–9). The place of revelation was **the tabernacle of meeting**, also called “the tabernacle of the Testimony” (vv. 50, 53). The time reference, **on the first day of the second month, in the second year**, is dated from the pivotal event in Israel’s history, the deliverance of the people from slavery in Egypt. The Exodus constituted the birth of the nation of Israel. The second month corresponds roughly to April, a time that would be known later in Canaan as the month of the general harvest between First-fruits and Pentecost. The census of Numbers is, in a sense, “God’s harvest” of His people. The events of Numbers cover a period of 38 years, most likely in the second half of the fifteenth century B.C. **1:2, 3** The stated purpose of this **census** was to be a military roster.

It was not a census for social, political, or taxation purposes. Instead, the census would help Israel to prepare its **armies** for the war of conquest against the peoples of Canaan. Therefore, those who were numbered were able-bodied males over the age of **twenty**. Just as He promised Abraham long ago (see Gen. 15:16–21), God was preparing the Israelites to occupy Canaan. Furthermore, the census demonstrated to the Israelites God’s faithfulness in fulfilling another promise to Abraham, the multiplication of his descendants (see Gen. 12:2; 15:5; 17:4–6; 22:17). See ch. 26 for the second census.

1:4 A man from every tribe would aid Moses and Aaron in the immense task of numbering the nation. The participation of one person from each tribe would ensure that the numbering was done fairly and that each tribe was represented accurately.

1:16 leaders: The leaders were “lifted up” or “selected” for their positions of leadership.

1:19 As the LORD commanded: The tone in chs. 1–10 is one of compliance on the part of Moses and the people to the revealed will of God. When God commanded, Moses and his agents responded.

1:20, 21 Now the children of Reuben: Each of the 12 mini-paragraphs in vv. 20–43 follows the same pattern, giving the name

their families, by their fathers' house, according to the number of names, every male individually, from twenty years old and above, all who *were able* to go to war: ²¹those who were numbered of the tribe of Reuben *were* forty-six thousand five hundred.

²²From the ⁿchildren of Simeon, their genealogies by their families, by their fathers' house, of those who were numbered, according to the number of names, every male individually, from twenty years old and above, all who *were able* to go to war: ²³those who were numbered of the tribe of Simeon *were* fifty-nine thousand three hundred.

²⁴From the ^ochildren of Gad, their genealogies by their families, by their fathers' house, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and above, all who *were able* to go to war: ²⁵those who were numbered of the tribe of Gad *were* forty-five thousand six hundred and fifty.

²⁶From the ^pchildren of Judah, their genealogies by their families, by their fathers' house, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and above, all who *were able* to go to war: ²⁷those who were numbered of the tribe of Judah *were* ^qseventy-four thousand six hundred.

²⁸From the ^rchildren of Issachar, their genealogies by their families, by their fathers' house, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and above, all who *were able* to go to war: ²⁹those who were numbered of the tribe of Issachar *were* fifty-four thousand four hundred.

³⁰From the ^schildren of Zebulun, their genealogies by their families, by their fathers' house, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and above, all who *were able* to go to war: ³¹those who were numbered of the tribe of Zebulun *were* fifty-seven thousand four hundred.

³²From the sons of Joseph, the ^tchildren of Ephraim, their genealogies by their families, by their fathers' house, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and above, all who *were*

²² ⁿ Num. 2:12, 13; 26:12-14
²⁴ ^o Gen. 30:11; Num. 26:15-18; Josh. 4:12; Jer. 49:1
²⁶ ^p Gen. 29:35; Num. 26:19-22; 2 Sam. 24:9; Ps. 78:68; Matt. 1:2
²⁷ ^q 2 Chr. 17:14
²⁸ ^r Num. 2:5, 6
³⁰ ^s Num. 2:7, 8; 26:26, 27
³² ^t Gen. 48:1-22; Num. 26:28-37; Deut. 33:13-17; Jer. 7:15; Obad. 19

able to go to war: ³³those who were numbered of the tribe of Ephraim *were* forty thousand five hundred.

³⁴From the ^uchildren of Manasseh, their genealogies by their families, by their fathers' house, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and above, all who *were able* to go to war: ³⁵those who were numbered of the tribe of Manasseh *were* thirty-two thousand two hundred.

³⁶From the ^vchildren of Benjamin, their genealogies by their families, by their fathers' house, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and above, all who *were able* to go to war: ³⁷those who were numbered of the tribe of Benjamin *were* thirty-five thousand four hundred.

³⁸From the ^wchildren of Dan, their genealogies by their families, by their fathers' house, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and above, all who *were able* to go to war: ³⁹those who were numbered of the tribe of Dan *were* sixty-two thousand seven hundred.

⁴⁰From the ^xchildren of Asher, their genealogies by their families, by their fathers' house, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and above, all who *were able* to go to war: ⁴¹those who were numbered of the tribe of Asher *were* forty-one thousand five hundred.

⁴²From the children of Naphtali, their genealogies by their families, by their fathers' house, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and above, all who *were able* to go to war: ⁴³those who were numbered of the tribe of Naphtali *were* fifty-three thousand four hundred.

⁴⁴^yThese are the ones who were numbered, whom Moses and Aaron numbered, with the leaders of Israel, twelve men, each one representing his father's house. ⁴⁵So all who were numbered of the children of Israel, by their fathers' houses, from twenty years old and above, all who *were able* to go to war in Israel—⁴⁶all who were numbered were ^zsix hundred and three thousand five hundred and fifty.

⁴⁷But ^athe Levites were not numbered

³⁴ ^u Num. 2:20, 21; 26:28-34
³⁶ ^v Gen. 49:27; Num. 26:38-41; 2 Chr. 17:17; Rev. 7:8
³⁸ ^w Gen. 30:6; 46:23; Num. 2:25, 26; 26:42, 43
⁴⁰ ^x Num. 2:27, 28; 26:44-47
⁴⁴ ^y Num. 26:64
⁴⁶ ^z Ex. 12:37; 38:26; Num. 2:32; 26:51, 63; Heb. 11:12; Rev. 7:4-8
⁴⁷ ^a Num. 2:33; 3:14-22; 26:57-62; 1 Chr. 6:1-47; 21:6

of the tribe, the particulars of the family houses, the stipulation that the ones numbered were able-bodied males over the age of 20, the name of the tribe again, and then the number in that tribe. The only variation is in vv. 32-35, where it is explained that Ephraim and Manasseh are sons of Joseph (as in v. 10). This notice reminds the reader that Joseph received a double share among the tribes of Israel. His two sons had equal shares with their uncles in Israel's posterity. See vv. 47-50 regarding the tribe of Levi. The details may appear repetitive and tedious to us, but they would stir the passions of the respective tribal units: "This is our family! Here are our numbers among the thousands of Israel."

1:44-46 These are the ones who were numbered: The total number of able-bodied men (who were at least 20 years old) was 603,550. The likely number of women, children, and older or infirm men not counted in this census would indicate a total population between two and five million.

1:47, 48 The Levites were not to be included among the "lay" tribes. The tribe of Levi was sacred. It belonged to the Lord alone. (Chapter 3 records the families, numbers, and duties of the Levites.) In order to maintain the twelve separate tribes even though the Levites were not counted as a tribe, the tribe of Joseph was given two portions—one to each of Joseph's sons, Ephraim and Manasseh

among them by their fathers' tribe;⁴⁸ for the LORD had spoken to Moses, saying:^{49b} "Only the tribe of Levi you shall not number, nor take a census of them among the children of Israel;^{50c} but you shall appoint the Levites over the tabernacle of the Testimony, over all its furnishings, and over all things that belong to it; they shall carry the tabernacle and all its furnishings; they shall attend to it^d and camp around the tabernacle."^{51e} And when the tabernacle is to go forward, the Levites shall take it down; and when the tabernacle is to be set up, the Levites shall set it^f up.^g The outsider who comes near shall be put to death.⁵² The children of Israel shall pitch their tents,^h everyone by his own camp, everyone by his own standard, according to their armies;⁵³ⁱ but the Levites shall camp around the tabernacle of the Testimony, that there may be no^j wrath on the congregation of the children of Israel; and the Levites shall^k keep⁴ charge of the tabernacle of the Testimony."

⁵⁴ Thus the children of Israel did; according to all that the LORD commanded Moses, so they did.

The Tribes and Leaders by Armies

2 And the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying:^{2a} "Everyone of the children of Israel shall camp by his own¹ standard, beside the emblems of his father's house; they shall camp^b some distance from the tabernacle of meeting.³ On the^c east side, toward the rising of the sun, those of the standard of the forces with Judah shall camp according to their armies; and^d Nahshon the son of Amminadab shall be the leader of the

^{49b} Num. 2:33; 26:62
^{50c} Ex. 38:21; Num. 3:7, 8; 4:15, 25-27, 33
^d Num. 3:23, 29, 35, 38
^{51e} Num. 4:5-15; 10:17, 21
^f Num. 10:21
^g Num. 3:10, 38; 4:15, 19, 20; 18:22
⁵² Num. 2:2, 34; 24:2
⁵³ⁱ Num. 1:50
^j Lev. 10:6; Num. 8:19; 16:46; 18:5; 1 Sam. 6:19
^k Num. 8:24; 18:2-4; 1 Chr. 23:32
⁴ have in their care

CHAPTER 2

^{2a} Num. 1:52; 24:2
^b Josh. 3:4
¹ banner
^{3c} Num. 10:5
^d Num. 1:7; 7:12; 10:14; Ruth 4:20; 1 Chr. 2:10; Matt. 1:4; Luke 3:32, 33

^{9e} Num. 10:14
² Lit. set forth
^{10f} Num. 10:6
^{14g} Deuel, Num. 1:14; 7:42
^{16g} Num. 10:18
⁴ Lit. set forth
^{second}
^{17h} Num. 10:17, 21
⁵ company

children of Judah."⁴ And his army was numbered at seventy-four thousand six hundred.

⁵ "Those who camp next to him shall be the tribe of Issachar, and Nethanel the son of Zuar shall be the leader of the children of Issachar."⁶ And his army was numbered at fifty-four thousand four hundred.

⁷ "Then comes the tribe of Zebulun, and Eliab the son of Helon shall be the leader of the children of Zebulun."

⁸ And his army was numbered at fifty-seven thousand four hundred.⁹ "All who were numbered according to their armies of the forces with Judah, one hundred and eighty-six thousand four hundred—^c these shall² break camp first.

¹⁰ "On the^f south side shall be the standard of the forces with Reuben according to their armies, and the leader of the children of Reuben shall be Elizur the son of Shedeur."¹¹ And his army was numbered at forty-six thousand five hundred.

¹² "Those who camp next to him shall be the tribe of Simeon, and the leader of the children of Simeon shall be Shelumiel the son of Zurishaddai."¹³ And his army was numbered at fifty-nine thousand three hundred.

¹⁴ "Then comes the tribe of Gad, and the leader of the children of Gad shall be Eliasaph the son of³ Reuel."¹⁵ And his army was numbered at forty-five thousand six hundred and fifty.¹⁶ "All who were numbered according to their armies of the forces with Reuben, one hundred and fifty-one thousand four hundred and fifty—^g they shall⁴ be the second to break camp.

^{17h} "And the tabernacle of meeting shall move out with the⁵ camp of the

(1:10, 32-35). In this way, the tribe of Joseph received a double share (see Gen. 49:22-26).

1:50 The tabernacle of the Testimony is called "the tabernacle of meeting" in v. 1 and "the tabernacle" in v. 51. The term *tabernacle* by itself points to the temporary and portable nature of the tent; it was a movable shrine, specially designed for the worship of God by a people on the march. *Testimony* suggests the covenantal significance of the tent. Within that tent were the symbols of the presence of God among His people, His signs of a continuing relationship with the Israelites.

1:51-53 The outsider refers not to a person of foreign birth, but to a non-Levite (see Ex. 12:43). The punishment of death is reiterated in 3:10, 38; 18:7 and was imposed in 16:31-33 (see also 1 Sam. 6:19). God's presence was both a blessing and a curse in the camp—a blessing for those who had a proper sense of awe and respect and a curse for those who did not.

1:54 So they did sets the tone of obedience for the first part of the Book of Numbers. The later rebellion (ch. 11) surprises the reader after phrases such as this.

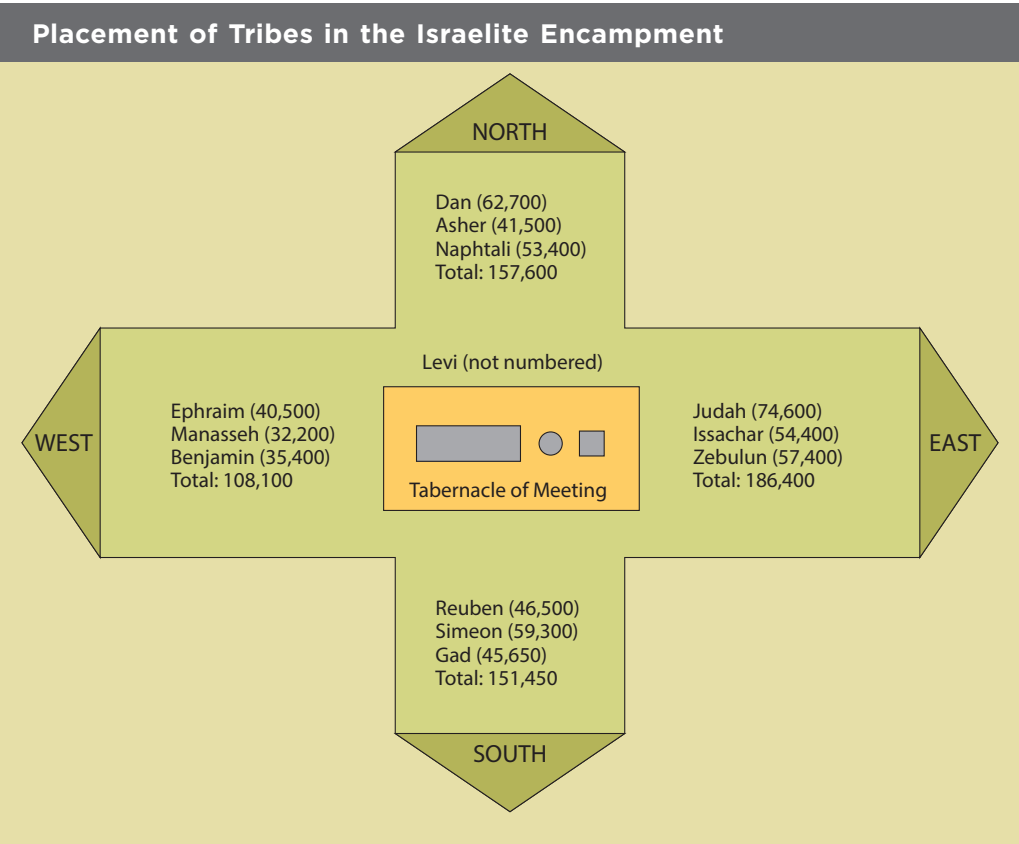
2:1, 2 The chapter begins, as do most of the chapters in Numbers, with the notice of revelation from God to Moses. **by his own standard:** This chapter is one of consummate design and order; it speaks of the joy of knowing one's place in relation to the living and holy God. God Himself placed each tribe in a specific place around His

tabernacle. A person's identity was not only derived from his or her tribe, but also from his or her place in relation to the tabernacle. This is an OT portrait of God's dwelling among His people. The beauty and order of this chapter points ultimately to the beauty of being in the presence of the risen King. **some distance:** None dared draw too close to the tabernacle, so that God's holiness might be maintained (see Is. 6:1-5). In contrast, a person may come very close to Jesus. This is not because Jesus as God is any less holy, but because He has come so very near to us in order to save us.

2:3-9 The three tribes **on the east side** had pride of place. The ancient people of Israel were not seafaring; in effect they turned their backs to the sea, so the word for *back* could mean "west" or "the sea." The west was the place of the setting sun. On the other hand, the east faced the rising sun, a picture of promise and power (see Ps. 19:4-6). In the line of march, **Judah**, with its allied tribes **Issachar** and **Zebulun**, set out first. The names of the worthies of each tribe and the numbers of the men of war are the same as in ch. 1.

2:10-16 Positioned **on the south side** were the tribe of **Reuben** and its allied tribes **Simeon** and **Gad**. The subtotal of the men of war in these three tribes was 151,450. They set out second, after the tribes allied with Judah.

2:17 Levites in the middle: Only the consecrated people were allowed to move with the **tabernacle of meeting**. In the line of march, the tabernacle was in the central position—a symbol of not



Levites ⁱ in the middle of the ⁶ camps; as they camp, so they shall move out, everyone in his place, by their ⁷ standards.

¹⁸“On the west side *shall be* the standard of the forces with Ephraim according to their armies, and the leader of the children of Ephraim *shall be* Elishama the son of Ammihud.” ¹⁹And his army was numbered at forty thousand five hundred.

²⁰“Next to him *comes* the tribe of Manasseh, and the leader of the children of Manasseh *shall be* Gamaliel the son of Pedahzur.” ²¹And his army was numbered at thirty-two thousand two hundred.

²²“Then *comes* the tribe of Benjamin, and the leader of the children of Benjamin *shall be* Abidan the son of Gideoni.” ²³And his army was numbered at thirty-five thousand four hundred. ²⁴“All who were numbered according to their armies

¹⁷ / Num. 1:53
⁶ whole company
⁷ banners

²⁴ / Num. 10:22
⁸ Lit. set forth third
²⁵ ⁹ banner

of the forces with Ephraim, one hundred and eight thousand one hundred—^j they shall ⁸ be the third to break camp.

²⁵“The ⁹ standard of the forces with Dan *shall be* on the north side according to their armies, and the leader of the children of Dan *shall be* Ahiezer the son of Ammishaddai.” ²⁶And his army was numbered at sixty-two thousand seven hundred.

²⁷“Those who camp next to him *shall be* the tribe of Asher, and the leader of the children of Asher *shall be* Pagiel the son of Ocran.” ²⁸And his army was numbered at forty-one thousand five hundred.

²⁹“Then *comes* the tribe of Naphtali, and the leader of the children of Naphtali *shall be* Ahira the son of Enan.” ³⁰And his army was numbered at fifty-three thousand four hundred. ³¹“All who were numbered of the forces with Dan, one

only Israel’s protection of the holy objects, but also of the presence of God among His people.

2:18–24 Positioned **on the west side** were the tribe of **Ephraim** and its allied tribes **Manasseh** and **Benjamin**. The subtotal of the men of war in these three tribes was 108,100. In the line of march, they were the third group to move out from their encampments.

2:25–31 The tribe of **Dan** and its allied tribes **Asher** and **Naphtali** were positioned **on the north side**. The subtotal of the men of war in these three tribes was 157,600. In the line of march, they were the last group to move out of the camp.

hundred and fifty-seven thousand six hundred—^kthey shall ^lbreak camp last, with their ²standards.”

³²These *are* the ones who were numbered of the children of Israel by their fathers’ houses. ^lAll who were numbered according to their armies of the forces *were* six hundred and three thousand five hundred and fifty. ³³But ^mthe Levites were not numbered among the children of Israel, just as the LORD commanded Moses.

³⁴Thus the children of Israel ⁿdid according to all that the LORD commanded Moses; ^oso they camped by their ³standards and so they broke camp, each one by his family, according to their fathers’ houses.

The Sons of Aaron

3 Now these *are* the ^arecords ¹of Aaron and Moses when the LORD spoke with Moses on Mount Sinai. ²And these *are* the names of the sons of Aaron: Nadab, the ^bfirstborn, and ^cAbihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar. ³These *are* the names of the sons of Aaron, ^dthe anointed priests, ²whom he consecrated to minister as priests. ^{4e}Nadab and Abihu had died before the LORD when they offered profane fire before the LORD in the Wilderness of Sinai; and they had no children. So Eleazar and Ithamar ministered as priests in the presence of Aaron their father.

The Levites Serve in the Tabernacle

⁵And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: ^{6f}“Bring the tribe of Levi near, and

31 ^kNum. 10:25
^lLit. *set forth last*
²banners
32 ⁱEx. 38:26; Num. 1:46; 11:21
33 ^mNum. 1:47; 26:57-62
34 ⁿNum. 1:54
^oNum. 24:2, 5, 6
³banners

CHAPTER 3

¹ ^aEx. 6:16-27 ¹Lit. *generations*
² ^bEx. 6:23 ^cLev. 10:1, 2; Num. 26:60, 61; 1 Chr. 24:2
³ ^dEx. 28:41; Lev. 8
²Lit. *whose hands he filled*
⁴ ^eLev. 10:1, 2; Num. 26:61; 1 Chr. 24:2
⁶ ^fNum. 8:6-22; 18:1-7; Deut. 10:8; 33:8-11

⁷ ^gNum. 1:50; 8:11, 15, 24, 26
⁹ ^hNum. 8:19; 18:6, 7 ³Sam., LXX *Me*
¹⁰ ⁱEx. 29:9; Num. 18:7 ^jNum. 1:51; 3:38; 16:40
¹² ^kNum. 3:41; 8:16; 18:6 ^lEx. 13:2; Num. 3:45; 8:14
¹³ ^mEx. 13:2; Lev. 27:26; Num. 8:16, 17; Neh. 10:36; Luke 2:23 ⁿEx. 13:12, 15; Num. 8:17
¹⁵ ^oNum. 3:39; 26:62
¹⁶ ^fLit. *mouth*

present them before Aaron the priest, that they may serve him. ⁷And they shall attend to his needs and the needs of the whole congregation before the tabernacle of meeting, to do ^gthe work of the tabernacle. ⁸Also they shall attend to all the furnishings of the tabernacle of meeting, and to the needs of the children of Israel, to do the work of the tabernacle. ⁹And ^hyou shall give the Levites to Aaron and his sons; they *are* given entirely to ³him from among the children of Israel. ¹⁰So you shall appoint Aaron and his sons, ⁱand they shall attend to their priesthood; ^jbut the outsider who comes near shall be put to death.”

¹¹Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: ¹²“Now behold, ^kI Myself have taken the Levites from among the children of Israel instead of every firstborn who opens the womb among the children of Israel. Therefore the Levites shall be ^lMine, ¹³because ^mall the firstborn *are* Mine. ⁿOn the day that I struck all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, I sanctified to Myself all the firstborn in Israel, both man and beast. They shall be Mine: *I am* the LORD.”

Census of the Levites Commanded

¹⁴Then the LORD spoke to Moses in the Wilderness of Sinai, saying: ¹⁵“Number the children of Levi by their fathers’ houses, by their families; you shall number ^oevery male from a month old and above.”

¹⁶So Moses numbered them according to the ⁴word of the LORD, as he was

2:32–34 These verses summarize this stately chapter. The four sets of triads yielded the same total as the sum of the 12 individual units: 603,550 (see 1:46). There is a studied consistency in the use of these numbers. Chapter 2 presents an almost idealized picture of the tribes of Israel as they are prepared for their triumphal march toward the land of promise. The greater sorrow of their subsequent rebellion is a warning to us all.

3:1 the records of Aaron: The focus of ch. 3 is on the priests and the families of the tribes of Levi.

3:2–4 the sons of Aaron: When we read Nadab, the firstborn, it must be with a sense of parental grief. Aaron’s expected heir would prove to be such a disappointment. With his brother Abihu, Nadab offered **profane fire** before God, an offense that cost them their lives (Lev. 10:1, 2). Two of Aaron’s other sons were still living. Eleazar and Ithamar continued to minister as priests before God. However, the supervision of their father was even more necessary, given the errors of their older, deceased brothers. The words of 2:2, “some distance,” become more poignant in the context of the punishment of Nadab and Abihu. If priests who were given permission to draw near the holiest places were subject to violent judgment because of an improper approach, what would be the fate of the intrusive layperson?

3:5–10 Twice the narrator distinguished the **tribe of Levi** from the “lay” tribes (1:47–50; 2:33). Here the Levites were given their sphere of work in the care of the tabernacle. The Levites, however, were not the priests; only Aaron and his sons could be priests. The Levites, who assisted in the care of the holy things, drew near to the Divine

Presence. Yet the priests, who ministered in the tabernacle, drew even nearer. But only the high priest, on whose ministry the hope of the community was based, entered the Most Holy Place where the Divine Presence resided. Only the high priest, separated from the community for this holy purpose, could approach a holy God in order to intercede for the people before Him.

3:11–13 I Myself points to God’s direct involvement in redemption. When God redeemed and saved His people, it was by His own person (see Ex. 12:29; 13:3, 17, 21; 14:19, 30, 31). Similarly, when God selected the Levites to be a special tribe in the ministry of His presence, it was His personal work, not something He delegated to a created being. Likewise, God would later select Jesus to be a perfect High Priest for all those who would believe in Him (see Ps. 110:4; Heb. 6:20—8:6). **The firstborn are Mine:** When God passed over the homes of the Hebrew families who had obeyed His commands in the Passover (see Ex. 12:29–51), He declared the surviving firstborn Hebrew children—and also the firstborn of animals—to be His own (Ex. 13:1, 2). Now the firstborn children needed to be redeemed. An exchange was made. God took the entire tribe of Levi as His special possession, instead of the firstborn child of each family (3:40–51). **I am the LORD** emphasizes the authority of the speaker and the importance of His words.

3:14–20 the children of Levi: The three families of the Levites were Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. The Levites were distinguished from the other, non-priestly tribes in several ways: (1) They were numbered separately from those numbered for war; (2) they were appointed as ministers in the worship of God, rather than as soldiers

commanded. ^{17p}These were the sons of Levi by their names: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. ¹⁸And these *are* the names of the sons of ^qGershon by their families: ^rLibni and Shimei. ¹⁹And the sons of ^sKohath by their families: ^tAmram, Izehar, Hebron, and Uzziel. ^{20u}And the sons of Merari by their families: Mahli and Mushi. These *are* the families of the Levites by their fathers' houses.

²¹From Gershon *came* the family of the Libnites and the family of the Shimites; these *were* the families of the Gershonites. ²²Those who were numbered, according to the number of all the males from a month old and above—of those who were numbered *there were* seven thousand five hundred. ^{23v}The families of the Gershonites were to camp behind the tabernacle westward. ²⁴And the leader of the father's house of the Gershonites *was* Eliasaph the son of Lael. ^{25w}The duties of the children of Gershon in the tabernacle of meeting *included* ^xthe tabernacle, ^ythe tent with ^zits covering, ^athe screen for the door of the tabernacle of meeting, ^{26b}the screen for the door of the court, ^cthe hangings of the court which *are* around the tabernacle and the altar, and ^dtheir cords, according to all the work relating to them.

^{27e}From Kohath *came* the family of the Amramites, the family of the Izharites, the family of the Hebronites, and the family of the Uzzielites; these *were* the families of the Kohathites. ²⁸According to the number of all the males, from a month old and above, *there were* eight thousand ⁵six hundred ⁶keeping charge of the sanctuary. ^{29f}The families of the children of Kohath were to camp on the south side of the tabernacle. ³⁰And the leader of the fathers' house of the families of the Kohathites *was* Elizaphan the

^{17 p} Gen. 46:11; Ex. 6:16-22; Num. 26:57; 1 Chr. 6:1, 16; 23:6
^{18 q} Num. 4:38-41
^r Ex. 6:17
^{19 s} Num. 4:34-37
^t Ex. 6:18
^{20 u} Ex. 6:19; Num. 4:42-45
^{23 v} Num. 1:53
^{25 w} Num. 4:24-26
^x Ex. 25:9 ^y Ex. 26:1
^z Ex. 26:7, 14 ^a Ex. 26:36
^{26 b} Ex. 27:9, 12, 14, 15 ^c Ex. 27:16 ^d Ex. 35:18
^{27 e} 1 Chr. 26:23
^{28 s} Some LXX mss. *three* ⁶ *taking care of*
^{29 f} Ex. 6:18; Num. 1:53

^{30 g} Lev. 10:4
^{31 h} Num. 4:15 ⁱ Ex. 25:10 / Ex. 25:23
^k Ex. 25:31 ^j Ex. 27:1; 30:1 ^m Ex. 26:31-33
^{35 n} Num. 1:53; 2:25
^{36 o} Num. 4:31, 32
^{38 p} Num. 1:53
^q Num. 18:5 ^r Num. 3:7, 8 ^s Num. 3:10
^{39 t} Num. 3:43; 4:48; 26:62
^{40 u} Num. 3:15
^v *Take a census of*

son of ^gUzziel. ^{31h}Their duty *included* ⁱthe ark, ^jthe table, ^kthe lampstand, ^lthe altars, the utensils of the sanctuary with which they ministered, ^mthe screen, and all the work relating to them.

³²And Eleazar the son of Aaron the priest *was to be* chief over the leaders of the Levites, *with* oversight of those who kept charge of the sanctuary.

³³From Merari *came* the family of the Mahlites and the family of the Mushites; these *were* the families of Merari. ³⁴And those who were numbered, according to the number of all the males from a month old and above, *were* six thousand two hundred. ³⁵The leader of the fathers' house of the families of Merari *was* Zurriel the son of Abihail. ⁿThese *were* to camp on the north side of the tabernacle. ³⁶And ^othe appointed duty of the children of Merari *included* the boards of the tabernacle, its bars, its pillars, its sockets, its utensils, all the work relating to them, ³⁷and the pillars of the court all around, with their sockets, their pegs, and their cords.

^{38p}Moreover those who were to camp before the tabernacle on the east, before the tabernacle of meeting, *were* Moses, Aaron, and his sons, ^qkeeping charge of the sanctuary, ^rto meet the needs of the children of Israel; but ^sthe outsider who came near *was to be* put to death. ^{39t}All who were numbered of the Levites, whom Moses and Aaron numbered at the commandment of the LORD, by their families, all the males from a month old and above, *were* twenty-two thousand.

Levites Dedicated Instead of the Firstborn

⁴⁰Then the LORD said to Moses: ^u“Number ^vall the firstborn males of the children of Israel from a month old

in His army; (3) they were given certain restrictions for the conduct of their life; (4) they represented the gift of the firstborn of each family to the Lord (3:40–51); and (5) they would live in cities amidst the various tribes instead of living together in a single region (35:1–8).

3:21–37 In the listing of the tribes' placement around the central sanctuary, there is a movement from the most favored tribe, Judah, to the lesser tribes (2:3–31). In the listing of the placement of the Levitical families, there is a different movement, from west to east. The Levitical families that were assigned the most important tasks were the families of Kohath in the south. The families of Gershon and Merari were assigned subsidiary tasks. The priests in the east were in leadership positions. The order was: **Gershon** to the west; **Kohath** to the south; **Merari** to the north; Moses, Aaron, and Aaron's sons to the east.

3:22–26 The family of **Gershon** cared for and handled the elements of the **tabernacle**. Males over the age of one month in this family numbered 7,500. **screen**: There were three curtains, coverings, or screens for the tabernacle: one at the gate of the court (4:26), a second at the entrance of the tent (v. 31; 4:25), and a third separating the Most Holy Place within the tent (4:5).

3:27–32 The work of the family of **Kohath** concerned the sacred implements and furnishings within the tabernacle. Aaron's son **Eleazar** supervised their work as the **chief over the leaders**, likely because the holy furnishings could only be carried in certain prescribed ways. The **Amramites** were the family of Moses, Aaron, and Miriam (see Ex. 6:20). Males over the age of one month in Kohath's family numbered 8,600.

3:33–37 The work of the family of **Merari** concerned the structural elements of the tabernacle along with its utensils. In this family, males over the age of one month numbered 6,200.

3:38, 39 The placement of Moses, Aaron, and Aaron's sons **on the east** indicated a most-favored status. Their responsibility was to guard against improper approach to God's holy tabernacle. The total of the families of the Levites is given as 22,000.

3:40–42 Number all the firstborn: The firstborn of the families of the Exodus belonged to the Lord because He saved them. The firstborn of the Israelites' animals were to be offered as a sacrifice to the Lord. But the firstborn sons of the Israelites were *not* to be killed (as were the firstborn sons of the Egyptians, see Ex. 13). The Israelites' firstborn sons were redeemed by the dedication of

and above, and take the number of their names. ⁴¹v And you shall take the Levites for Me—I *am* the LORD—instead of all the firstborn among the children of Israel, and the livestock of the Levites instead of all the firstborn among the livestock of the children of Israel.”

⁴²So Moses numbered all the firstborn among the children of Israel, as the LORD commanded him. ⁴³And all the firstborn males, according to the number of names from a month old and above, of those who were numbered of them, were twenty-two thousand two hundred and seventy-three.

⁴⁴Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: ⁴⁵w “Take the Levites instead of all the firstborn among the children of Israel, and the livestock of the Levites instead of their livestock. The Levites shall be Mine: I *am* the LORD. ⁴⁶And for ^xthe redemption of the two hundred and seventy-three of the firstborn of the children of Israel, ^ywho are more than the number of the Levites, ⁴⁷you shall take ^zfive shekels for each one ^aindividually; you shall take *them* in the currency of the shekel of the sanctuary, ^bthe shekel of twenty gerahs. ⁴⁸And you shall give the money, with which the excess number of them is redeemed, to Aaron and his sons.”

⁴⁹So Moses took the redemption money from those who were over and above those who were redeemed by the Levites. ⁵⁰From the firstborn of the children of Israel he took the money, ^cone

⁴¹ v Num. 3:12, 45
⁴⁵ w Num. 3:12, 41
⁴⁶ x Ex. 13:13, 15; Num. 18:15, 16
^y Num. 3:39, 43
⁴⁷ z Lev. 27:6; Num. 18:16
^a Num. 1:2, 18, 20
^b Ex. 30:13
⁵⁰ c Num. 3:46, 47

⁵¹ d Num. 3:48

CHAPTER 4

² e Num. 3:27-32
³ f Num. 4:23, 30, 35; 8:24; 1 Chr. 23:3, 24, 27; Ezra 3:8
⁴ g Num. 4:15
^d Num. 4:19
⁵ e Ex. 26:31; Heb. 9:3
^f Ex. 25:10, 16
⁶ g Ex. 39:1
^h Ex. 25:13; 1 Kin. 8:7, 8
⁷ i Ex. 25:23, 29, 30
^j Lev. 24:5-9
¹ jars for the drink offering
² Lit. continual bread

thousand three hundred and sixty-five *shekels*, according to the shekel of the sanctuary. ⁵¹And Moses ^dgave their redemption money to Aaron and his sons, according to the word of the LORD, as the LORD commanded Moses.

Duties of the Sons of Kohath

4 Then the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying: ²“Take a census of the sons of ^aKohath from among the children of Levi, by their families, by their fathers’ house, ³^bfrom thirty years old and above, even to fifty years old, all who enter the service to do the work in the tabernacle of meeting.

⁴c “This is the service of the sons of Kohath in the tabernacle of meeting, *relating to* ^dthe most holy things: ⁵When the camp prepares to journey, Aaron and his sons shall come, and they shall take down ^ethe covering veil and cover the ^fark of the Testimony with it. ⁶Then they shall put on it a covering of badger skins, and spread over *that* a cloth entirely of ^gblue; and they shall insert ^hits poles.

⁷“On the ⁱtable of showbread they shall spread a blue cloth, and put on it the dishes, the pans, the bowls, and the ^jpitchers for pouring; and the ^jshowbread ²shall be on it. ⁸They shall spread over them a scarlet cloth, and cover the same with a covering of badger skins; and they shall insert its poles. ⁹And they shall take a blue cloth and cover the

the Levites to the Lord’s service. Now, in the wilderness in the second year of their deliverance, the actual exchange of the Levites for the firstborn was made. The phrase **instead of** strongly emphasizes the substitution of the Levites for the firstborn. This ancient substitution reminds us of the substitution of Jesus for sinners. We all deserved death because of our sins; but He died on the Cross in our place.

3:43–48 The number of the firstborn, 22,273, seems small for a population of two million. Some argue that this figure suggests that the strength of the Israelites was a quarter of a million people. Others suggest that the number reflects the number of Israelite firstborn at the time of the first Passover. The payment of **five shekels** was as much a lesson to the Israelites on the importance of the individual as it was an act of substitution for those involved. Each individual’s redemption had to be covered. The payment of the shekels **to Aaron and his sons** was appropriate. Just as the Levites were given to the Lord in order to assist Aaron in his duties at the holy tabernacle, the redemption money was also given to Aaron to further this same holy work.

3:49–51 The weight of the collected **money** (1,365 shekels) indicates the impressive nature of the transaction. The number is 5 times 273, since there was one Levite for each firstborn and five shekels for each firstborn beyond the number of Levites. In this way, each of the firstborn was accounted for in God’s plan of redemption.

4:1, 2 The Book of Numbers moves in an orderly, planned manner, following the pattern of Hebrew thought which moves from the general to the specific, from the whole to the parts. The numbering of the tribes in ch. 1 is followed by the order of the camps in ch. 2. The general explanation of the duties of the priests and the Levitical families, and the issue of the redemption of the firstborn are the subjects of ch. 3. Now ch. 4 deals more specifically with the functions

of the Levitical families. The fact that **Kohath** took precedence over Gershon, who was probably his older brother (see the order in 3:17), was one of the recurring marks of God’s sovereignty in elevating younger brothers over their seniors (see Cain and Abel, Ishmael and Isaac, Esau and Jacob, Joseph among his brothers, David among his brothers, and so on). This **census** was distinct from the one in ch. 3. This census numbered those between the ages of 30 and 50, those who were specifically able to work in the service of the Lord in the holy things of worship.

4:3 According to 8:24, the Levites were to be 25 years old, which seems to contradict the **thirty years** here. The work of the Levites and that of the priests whom they served was complex and demanding. It is possible that the extra five years of 8:24 includes a period of apprenticeship to prepare these servants of the Lord for the tasks that lay before them.

4:4 The care and preservation of the **most holy things** were given to the Kohathites (3:29–31). The details are spelled out in vv. 4–20. The Kohathites were not to touch the holy items nor even look casually on them, lest they die. **Holy** means “separate,” “removed,” or “distinct.” **Holy things** are items and utensils that have been taken out of common use and given over to the service of the Lord. At the same time, describing God as holy draws attention to His transcendence, the fact that He is altogether separate from His creation, not bound to it, and never to be confused with it.

4:6 The various materials used in the tabernacle and its furnishings may have had symbolic meanings to the ancients which have not been preserved for us. We do get a sense that the materials were costly and dear.

4:7–13 Colors—including **blue**, **scarlet**, and **purple**—played a significant role in Israel’s worship.

^klampstand of the light, ^lwith its lamps, its wick-trimmers, its trays, and all its oil vessels, with which they service it. ¹⁰Then they shall put it with all its utensils in a covering of badger skins, and put it on a carrying beam.

¹¹“Over ^mthe golden altar they shall spread a blue cloth, and cover it with a covering of badger skins; and they shall insert its poles. ¹²Then they shall take all the ⁿutensils of service with which they minister in the sanctuary, put *them* in a blue cloth, cover them with a covering of badger skins, and put *them* on a carrying beam. ¹³Also they shall take away the ashes from the altar, and spread a purple cloth over it. ¹⁴They shall put on it all its implements with which they minister there—the firepans, the forks, the shovels, the ³basins, and all the utensils of the altar—and they shall spread on it a covering of badger skins, and insert its poles. ¹⁵And when Aaron and his sons have finished covering the sanctuary and all the furnishings of the sanctuary, when the camp is set to go, then ^othe sons of Kohath shall come to carry *them*; ^pbut they shall not touch any holy thing, lest they die.

^q“These *are* the things in the tabernacle of meeting which the sons of Kohath are to carry.

¹⁶“The appointed duty of Eleazar the son of Aaron the priest is ^rthe oil for the light, the ^ssweet incense, ^tthe daily grain offering, the ^uanointing oil, the oversight of all the tabernacle, of all that is in it, with the sanctuary and its furnishings.”

¹⁷Then the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying: ¹⁸“Do not cut off the tribe of the families of the Kohathites from among the Levites; ¹⁹but do this in regard to them, that they may live and not die when they approach ^vthe most holy things: Aaron and his sons shall go in and ^dappoint each of them to his service and his task. ^{20w}But they shall not go in to watch while the holy things are being covered, lest they die.”

9 ^k Ex. 25:31 ^l Ex. 25:37, 38
11 ^m Ex. 30:1-5
12 ⁿ Ex. 25:9; 1 Chr. 9:29
14 ³ bowls
15 ^o Num. 7:9;
10:21; Deut. 31:9;
Josh. 4:10; 2 Sam. 6:13; 1 Chr. 15:2,
15 ^p 2 Sam. 6:6,
7; 1 Chr. 13:9, 10
^q Num. 3:31
16 ^r Ex. 25:6; Lev. 24:2 ^s Ex. 30:34
^t Ex. 29:38 ^u Ex. 30:23-25
19 ^v Num. 4:4
^d assign
20 ^w Ex. 19:21;
1 Sam. 6:19

22 ^x Num. 3:22
23 ^y Num. 4:3;
1 Chr. 23:3, 24, 27
24 ^z Num. 7:7
25 ^a Num. 3:25,
26 ^b Ex. 36:8 ^c Ex. 26:14
27 ³ command
⁶ assign
28 ^d Num. 4:33
⁷ Lit. *hand*
29 ^e Num. 3:33-37
30 ^f Num. 4:3;
8:24-26
31 ^g Num. 3:36,
37 ^h Num. 7:8 ⁱ Ex. 26:15
32 ^j Ex. 25:9; 38:21

Duties of the Sons of Gershon

²¹Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: ²²“Also take a census of the sons of ^xGershon, by their fathers’ house, by their families. ^{23y}From thirty years old and above, even to fifty years old, you shall number them, all who enter to perform the service, to do the work in the tabernacle of meeting. ²⁴This is the ^zservice of the families of the Gershonites, in serving and carrying: ^{25a}They shall carry the ^bcurtains of the tabernacle and the tabernacle of meeting *with* its covering, the covering of ^cbadger skins that is on it, the screen for the door of the tabernacle of meeting, ²⁶the screen for the door of the gate of the court, the hangings of the court which *are* around the tabernacle and altar, and their cords, all the furnishings for their service and all that is made for these things: so shall they serve.

²⁷“Aaron and his sons shall ⁵assign all the service of the sons of the Gershonites, all their tasks and all their service. And you shall ⁶appoint to them all their tasks as their duty. ²⁸This *is* the service of the families of the sons of Gershon in the tabernacle of meeting. And their duties *shall be* ^dunder the ⁱauthority of Ithamar the son of Aaron the priest.

Duties of the Sons of Merari

²⁹“As for the sons of ^eMerari, you shall number them by their families and by their fathers’ house. ^{30f}From thirty years old and above, even to fifty years old, you shall number them, everyone who enters the service to do the work of the tabernacle of meeting. ³¹And ^gthis *is* ^hwhat they must carry as all their service for the tabernacle of meeting: ⁱthe boards of the tabernacle, its bars, its pillars, its sockets, ³²and the pillars around the court with their sockets, pegs, and cords, with all their furnishings and all their service; and you shall ^jassign to *each man* by name the items he must carry. ³³This *is* the service of the families of the sons of Merari, as all their service for the tab-

4:15 The means of transporting the holy things of the tabernacle was to **carry them** by poles on foot. The sad story of Uzzah, who attempted to steady the ark as it was being carried on a cart (see 2 Sam. 6:6, 7), is a vivid reminder of the seriousness of obeying God’s commands.

4:16 duty of Eleazar: The priest had functions that were reserved only for him. Any other approach to God would result in death. This was both a gracious gift and a warning. On one hand, God mercifully granted that a priest could serve Him and approach Him. On the other hand, if the priest were faithless, no person could substitute for him. The Israelites had to approach God in the way He prescribed.

4:21–28 In wording that is similar to the description of the Kohathites’ responsibilities (vv. 4–15), the men of **Gershon** were given their

responsibilities in more detail than the instructions found in 3:21–26. The men of Gershon were responsible for the **curtains** and for numerous parts of the tabernacle worship system. These men were allowed to touch the holy things they dealt with, but they could not be casual in their work. **Ithamar**, the other surviving son of Aaron, was made their chief.

4:29–33 The tasks of **Merari** first mentioned in 3:33–37 are reiterated here. The men of Merari cared for tabernacle posts and pegs, boards and sockets, and so on. There was no unimportant work in the care and maintenance of the tabernacle. Each individual son of Merari was given **by name** the items he had to carry. **Ithamar** was given the responsibility to oversee the work of Merari as well as the work of Gershon.

ernacle of meeting, under the ⁸authority of Ithamar the son of Aaron the priest.”

Census of the Levites

^{34k} And Moses, Aaron, and the leaders of the congregation numbered the sons of the Kohathites by their families and by their fathers’ house, ³⁵ from thirty ¹years old and above, even to fifty years old, everyone who entered the service for work in the tabernacle of meeting; ³⁶ and those who were numbered by their families were two thousand seven hundred and fifty. ³⁷ These *were* the ones who were numbered of the families of the Kohathites, all who might serve in the tabernacle of meeting, whom Moses and Aaron numbered according to the commandment of the LORD by the hand of Moses.

³⁸ And those who were numbered of the sons of Gershon, by their families and by their fathers’ house, ³⁹ from thirty years old and above, even to fifty years old, everyone who entered the service for work in the tabernacle of meeting— ⁴⁰ those who were numbered by their families, by their fathers’ house, were two thousand six hundred and thirty. ^{41m} These *are* the ones who were numbered of the families of the sons of Gershon, of all who might serve in the tabernacle of meeting, whom Moses and Aaron numbered according to the commandment of the LORD.

⁴² Those of the families of the sons of Merari who were numbered, by their families, by their fathers’ ⁹house, ⁴³ from thirty years old and above, even to fifty years old, everyone who entered the service for work in the tabernacle of meeting— ⁴⁴ those who were numbered by their families were three thousand two hundred. ⁴⁵ These *are* the ones who were numbered of the families of the sons of Merari, whom Moses and Aaron numbered ⁿ according to the word of the LORD by the hand of Moses.

⁴⁶ All who were ^o numbered of the Levites, whom Moses, Aaron, and the leaders of Israel numbered, by their families

³³ ^a Lit. *hand*
³⁴ ^k Num. 4:2
³⁵ ¹ Num. 4:47
⁴¹ ^m Num. 4:22
⁴² ⁹ *household*
⁴⁵ ^a Num. 4:29
⁴⁶ ^o Num. 3:39;
 26:57–62; 1 Chr.
 23:3–23

⁴⁷ ^p Num. 4:3,
 23, 30
⁴⁹ ^q Num. 4:15, 24,
 31 ^r Num. 4:1, 21

CHAPTER 5

² ^a Lev. 13:3, 8, 46;
 Num. 12:10, 14, 15
^b Lev. 15:2 ^c Lev.
 21:1; Num. 9:6, 10;
 19:11, 13, 31:19 ¹ *by*
contact with
³ ^d Lev. 26:11, 12;
 Num. 35:34; [2 Cor.
 6:16]
⁶ ^e Lev. 5:14–6:7
⁷ ^f Lev. 5:5; 26:40,
 41; Josh. 7:19; Ps.
 32:5; 1 John 1:9
⁹ Lev. 6:4, 5
⁸ ^h Lev. 5:15; 6:6,
 7; 7:7 ² *redeemer*,
 Heb. *goel*
⁹ ⁱ Ex. 29:28; Lev.
 6:17, 18, 26; 7:6–14
^j Lev. 7:32–34; 10:14,
 15 ³ *heave offering*

and by their fathers’ houses, ^{47p} from thirty years old and above, even to fifty years old, everyone who came to do the work of service and the work of bearing burdens in the tabernacle of meeting— ⁴⁸ those who were numbered were eight thousand five hundred and eighty.

⁴⁹ According to the commandment of the LORD they were numbered by the hand of Moses, ^q each according to his service and according to his task; thus were they numbered by him, ^r as the LORD commanded Moses.

Ceremonially Unclean Persons Isolated

5 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: ² “Command the children of Israel that they put out of the camp every ^a leper, everyone who has a ^b discharge, and whoever becomes ^c defiled ¹ by a corpse. ³ You shall put out both male and female; you shall put them outside the camp, that they may not defile their camps ^d in the midst of which I dwell.” ⁴ And the children of Israel did so, and put them outside the camp; as the LORD spoke to Moses, so the children of Israel did.

Confession and Restitution

⁵ Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ⁶ “Speak to the children of Israel: ^e “When a man or woman commits any sin that men commit in unfaithfulness against the LORD, and that person is guilty, ^{7f} then he shall confess the sin which he has committed. He shall make restitution for his trespass ^g in full, plus one-fifth of it, and give *it* to the one he has wronged. ⁸ But if the man has no ² relative to whom restitution may be made for the wrong, the restitution for the wrong *must go* to the LORD for the priest, in addition to ^h the ram of the atonement with which atonement is made for him. ⁹ Every ⁱ offering ³ of all the holy things of the children of Israel, which they bring to the priest, shall be ^j his. ¹⁰ And every

43:34–49 According to the commandment of the LORD: According to Hebrew prose style, a summary of Moses’ compliance with God’s commands is given.

5:1–10:10 The principal issue in this section is the development of purity within the camp and preparations for the triumphal entry of the Israelites into the land of Canaan.

5:3 *defile*: Ritual purity was an outward sign of an inward reality. God’s principal concern was the purity of the heart of an individual (Deut. 10:12–20) and not just skin problems (Lev. 15:2, 25). The observable signs of disease and decay were opportunities to implement rules of purity within the camp. With these rules, the Israelites could maintain a camp free from disease and learn about the importance of purity—moral as well as physical. Contact with a dead body was included because of the clearly visible process of

decomposition (6:6). However, the central issue in these restrictions was not disease; it was the fact of God’s presence in the camp. God was holy, and hence the people had to maintain their purity and holiness.

5:5–10 This section moves from the physical signs of uncleanness (vv. 1–4) to those that are no less severe but harder to detect. To keep the camp pure and holy, no one could mistreat another.

5:7, 8 *restitution*: As in Lev. 6:1–7, it was not sufficient merely to confess a wrongdoing. One had to repay in full and add a penalty of one-fifth of the value to the one wronged (Lev. 22:14; 27:11–13, 31). Such rules emphasize the seriousness with which God held the people of the camp responsible to one another. If the one who was defrauded was no longer alive and had no relative surviving either, then the debt had to be paid to the priest.

man's ⁴holy things shall be his; whatever any man gives the priest shall be ^hhis.'"

Concerning Unfaithful Wives

¹¹And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ¹²"Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: 'If any man's wife goes astray and behaves unfaithfully toward him, ¹³and a man ^llies with her carnally, and it is hidden from the eyes of her husband, and it is concealed that she has defiled herself, and *there was* no witness against her, nor was she ^mcaught— ¹⁴if the spirit of jealousy comes upon him and he becomes ⁿjealous of his wife, who has defiled herself; or if the spirit of jealousy comes upon him and he becomes jealous of his wife, although she has not defiled herself— ¹⁵then the man shall bring his wife to the priest. He shall ^obring the offering required for her, one-tenth of an ephah of barley meal; he shall pour no oil on it and put no frankincense on it, because it *is* a grain offering of jealousy, an offering for remembering, for ^pbringing iniquity to remembrance.

¹⁶'And the priest shall bring her near, and set her before the LORD. ¹⁷The priest shall take holy water in an earthen vessel, and take some of the dust that is on the floor of the tabernacle and put *it* into the water. ¹⁸Then the priest shall stand the woman before the ^qLORD, uncover the woman's head, and put the offering for remembering in her hands, which *is* the grain offering of jealousy. And the priest shall have in his hand the bitter water that brings a curse. ¹⁹And the priest shall put her under oath, and say to the woman, "If no man has lain with you, and if you have not gone astray to uncleanness *while* under your husband's *authority*, be free from this bitter water that brings a curse. ²⁰But if you have gone astray *while* under your husband's *authority*, and if

10 ^k Lev. 10:13
⁴ consecrated
13 ^l Lev. 18:20;
20:10 ^m John 8:4
14 ⁿ Prov. 6:34;
Song 8:6
15 ^o Lev. 5:11
^p 1 Kin. 17:18; Ezek.
29:16; Heb. 10:3
18 ^q Heb. 13:4

you have defiled yourself and some man other than your husband has lain with you"— ²¹then the priest shall ^rput the woman under the oath of the curse, and he shall say to the woman—^s"the LORD make you a curse and an oath among your people, when the LORD makes your thigh ⁵rot and your belly swell; ²²and may this water that causes the curse ^tgo into your stomach, and make *your* belly swell and *your* thigh rot."

^u"Then the woman shall say, "Amen, so be it."

²³'Then the priest shall write these curses in a book, and he shall scrape *them* off into the bitter water. ²⁴And he shall make the woman drink the bitter water that brings a curse, and the water that brings the curse shall enter her *to become* bitter. ²⁵'Then the priest shall take the grain offering of jealousy from the woman's hand, shall ^wwave the offering before the LORD, and bring it to the altar; ²⁶and the priest shall take a handful of the offering, ^xas its memorial portion, burn *it* on the altar, and afterward make the woman drink the water. ²⁷When he has made her drink the water, then it shall be, if she has defiled herself and behaved unfaithfully toward her husband, that the water that brings a ^ycurse will enter her *and become* bitter, and her belly will swell, her thigh will rot, and the woman ^zwill become a curse among her people. ²⁸But if the woman has not defiled herself, and is clean, then she shall be free and may conceive children.

²⁹'This *is* the law of jealousy, when a wife, *while* under her husband's *authority*, ^agoes astray and defiles herself, ³⁰or when the spirit of jealousy comes upon a man, and he becomes jealous of his wife; then he shall stand the woman before the LORD, and the priest shall execute all this law upon her. ³¹Then the man shall

21 ^r Josh. 6:26;
1 Sam. 14:24; Neh.
10:29 ^s Jer. 29:22
⁵ Lit. *fall away*
22 ^t Ps. 109:18
^u Deut. 27:15-26
25 ^v Lev. 8:27 ^w Lev.
2:2, 9
26 ^x Lev. 2:2, 9
27 ^y Deut. 28:37;
Is. 65:15; Jer. 24:9;
29:18, 22; 42:18
^z Num. 5:21
29 ^a Num. 5:19

5:11–31 Infidelity is a third class of actions that brought defilement to the camp. Two considerations factor in the focus of this text on the woman: (1) A wife was regarded as a possession of her husband. Therefore, her infidelity was an offense against her husband. (2) Paternity is harder to establish than maternity. Hence, there was a somewhat greater burden on the woman to be faithful to her husband so that reliable family lines would be maintained. This text can be read as an exceptionally harsh judgment on an unfaithful wife. But there is a sense in which this law ameliorated the harsh realities for a woman in this time period. A woman could be divorced in the ancient world on the mere suspicion of unfaithfulness. Without the limitation of laws such as this, a woman might even have been murdered by a jealous husband just on the suspicion of unfaithfulness. Here at least there was an opportunity for the woman to prove her innocence before an enraged husband.

5:15 Determining impurity in marital relations (when not detected "in the act") was more difficult than noting skin disorders—but the issue was similar. God was in the camp (v. 3). Therefore, the issue had to be resolved by **the priest** in the presence of God.

5:18 Bitter water that brings a curse was not a "magic potion," nor was there some hidden ingredient in the water. The addition of dust from the floor of the tabernacle to a vessel of holy water and the scrapings from the bill of indictment (v. 23) were signs of a spiritual reality. Holy water and dust from the holy place symbolized that God was the One who determined the innocence or guilt of the woman who had come before the priest.

5:21 Your thigh rot and your belly swell symbolically speaks of a miscarriage (of an illicit child) if the woman was pregnant, and an inability to conceive subsequently (v. 28). In the biblical world, a woman who was unable to bear children was regarded as being under a curse; in this case it would have been true.

5:22 Amen is the woman's strong agreement to the terms of the ritual. If she were innocent, this ritual was the means of her protection. If she were guilty, she would be bringing judgment upon herself.

5:31 her guilt: The gravity of the ritual demonstrates that marital infidelity was regarded as a serious matter in Israel. However, the burden was largely on the woman, probably due to the possible conception of an illegitimate child. Yet the very provision of this

be free from ⁶iniquity, but that woman ^bshall bear her ⁷guilt.”

The Law of the Nazirite

6 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ²“Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: ‘When either a man or woman ¹consecrates an offering to take the vow of a Nazirite, ^ato separate himself to the LORD, ^{3b}he shall separate himself from wine and *similar* drink; he shall drink neither vinegar made from wine nor vinegar made from *similar* drink; neither shall he drink any grape juice, nor eat fresh grapes or raisins. ⁴All the days of his ²separation he shall eat nothing that is produced by the grapevine, from seed to skin.

⁵‘All the days of the vow of his separation no ^crazor shall come upon his head; until the days are fulfilled for which he separated himself to the LORD, he shall be holy. Then he shall let the locks of the hair of his head grow. ⁶All the days that he separates himself to the LORD ^dhe shall not go near a dead body. ^{7e}He shall not ³make himself unclean even for his father or his mother, for his brother or his sister, when they die, because his separation to God *is* on his head. ^{8f}All the days of his separation he shall be holy to the LORD.

⁹‘And if anyone dies very suddenly beside him, and he defiles his consecrated head, then he shall ^gshave his head on the day of his cleansing; on the seventh day he shall shave it. ¹⁰Then ^hon the eighth day he shall bring two turtledoves or two young pigeons to the priest, to the door of the tabernacle of meeting; ¹¹and the priest shall offer one as a sin offering and *the other* as a burnt offering, and make

31 ^b Lev. 20:17, 19, 20 ⁶ guilt ⁷ iniquity

CHAPTER 6

2 ^a Lev. 27:2; Judg. 13:5; [Lam. 4:7; Amos 2:11, 12]; Acts 21:23; Rom. 1:1 ¹ Or *makes a difficult vow*
3 ^b Lev. 10:9; Amos 2:12; Luke 1:15
4 ² Separation as a Nazirite
5 ^c Judg. 13:5; 16:17; 1 Sam. 1:11
6 ^d Lev. 21:1-3, 11; Num. 19:11-22
7 ^e Lev. 21:1, 2, 11; Num. 9:6 ³ By touching a dead body
8 ^f [2 Cor. 6:17, 18]
9 ^g Lev. 14:8, 9; Acts 18:18; 21:24
10 ^h Lev. 5:7; 14:22; 15:14, 29

12 ⁱ Lev. 5:6 ⁴ void
13 ^j Acts 21:26
14 ^k Lev. 4:2, 27, 32
^l Lev. 3:6
15 ^m Lev. 2:4 ⁿ Ex. 29:2 ^o Num. 15:5, 7, 10
18 ^p Num. 6:9; Acts 21:23, 24
19 ^q 1 Sam. 2:15
^r Ex. 29:23, 24 ¹ Lev. 7:30

atonement for him, because he sinned in regard to the corpse; and he shall sanctify his head that same day. ¹²He shall consecrate to the LORD the days of his separation, and bring a male lamb in its first year ^las a trespass offering; but the former days shall be ⁴lost, because his separation was defiled.

¹³‘Now this *is* the law of the Nazirite: ^jWhen the days of his separation are fulfilled, he shall be brought to the door of the tabernacle of meeting. ¹⁴And he shall present his offering to the LORD: one male lamb in its first year without blemish as a burnt offering, one ewe lamb in its first year without blemish ^kas a sin offering, one ram without blemish ^las a peace offering, ¹⁵a basket of unleavened bread, ^mcakes of fine flour mixed with oil, unleavened wafers ⁿanointed with oil, and their grain offering with their ^odrink offerings.

¹⁶‘Then the priest shall bring *them* before the LORD and offer his sin offering and his burnt offering; ¹⁷and he shall offer the ram as a sacrifice of a peace offering to the LORD, with the basket of unleavened bread; the priest shall also offer its grain offering and its drink offering. ^{18p}Then the Nazirite shall shave his consecrated head *at* the door of the tabernacle of meeting, and shall take the hair from his consecrated head and put *it* on the fire which is under the sacrifice of the peace offering.

¹⁹‘And the priest shall take the ^qboiled shoulder of the ram, one ^runleavened cake from the basket, and one unleavened wafer, and ^sput *them* upon the hands of the Nazirite after he has shaved his consecrated *hair*; ²⁰and the priest shall wave them as a wave offering before the LORD;

law was a means of limiting unjust accusations made against a faithful wife.

6:2-8 Not to be confused with Nazarene (one from Nazareth, see Matt. 2:23), the **Nazirite** was one who made a special vow to the Lord for a time of unusual devotion to God. Ordinarily this public vow was for a limited time (v. 13). There were three prohibitions: (1) total abstinence from everything associated with wine; (2) no trimming of the hair; and (3) no contact with a dead body. In all of this, the Nazirite was to regard himself or herself as **holy to the LORD**. After the vow was complete, the Nazirite would return to normal daily life (v. 20).

6:3, 4 wine and similar drink: The term translated *drink* is now understood to be “beer” (see Prov. 31:6). Wine is made from fermented fruit, usually grapes; beer is produced from fermented grains. The Nazirite, for the period of the vow, renounced this part of ordinary life as a mark of his or her special devotion to God.

6:5 no razor: The male Nazirite over a period of time would have had unusually long hair, a sign of his special vow of devotion to the Lord (see Judg. 16:17). It is more difficult to understand how this provision might have applied to a female Nazirite, who—presumably—would have been expected to have longer hair than her male counterpart. Perhaps in the case of a female Nazirite, as well as not

cutting her hair she would not take ordinary care of it—a visible sign of her special vow of devotion to the Lord.

6:7 The extent of the prohibition concerning contact with a dead body is profoundly moving when it extends to the unexpected death of a **father, mother, brother, or sister**. In such a case, the Nazirite could not even fulfill the normal obligations that would be expected of a grieving relative. Such was the nature of the Nazirite vow of **separation to God**.

6:9 So important was the concept of separation from contact with a dead body that the law included a provision for unexpected contact with the body of a person who **dies very suddenly** in one’s proximity. In this case, the hair of the Nazirite was to be shaved, certain offerings presented, and the provisions of the vow continued, with allowance for the time inadvertently lost.

6:13 days of his separation are fulfilled: A vow as serious as the Nazirite’s needed to have not only a process for initiation, but a solemn ritual for its culmination. The focus is on the hair, a visible symbol of the temporary vow. Therefore, in addition to presenting the required sacrifices (vv. 14-17), the man or woman who completed a Nazirite vow had to shave his or her head and burn the hair along with the peace offering (v. 18).

¹they *are* holy for the priest, together with the breast of the wave offering and the thigh of the heave offering. After that the Nazirite may drink wine.

²¹“This is the law of the Nazirite who vows to the LORD the offering for his separation, and besides that, whatever else his hand is able to provide; according to the vow which he takes, so he must do according to the law of his separation.”

The Priestly Blessing

²²And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: ²³“Speak to Aaron and his sons, saying, ‘This is the way you shall bless the children of Israel. Say to them:

²⁴“The LORD ^abless you and ^vkeep you;
²⁵ The LORD ^wmake His face shine upon you,
And ^xbe gracious to you;
²⁶^yThe LORD ^zlift up His countenance upon you,
And ^zgive you peace.””

²⁷^a“So they shall ⁶put My name on the children of Israel, and ^bI will bless them.”

Offerings of the Leaders

⁷Now it came to pass, when Moses had finished ^asetting up the tabernacle, that he ^banointed it and consecrated it and all its furnishings, and the altar and

²⁰ ¹Ex. 29:27, 28
²⁴ ^aDeut. 28:3-6
^vPs. 121:7; John 7:11
²⁵ ^wPs. 31:16; 67:1;
80:3, 7, 19; 119:135;
Dan. 9:17 ¹Gen.
43:29; Ex. 33:19;
Mal. 1:9
²⁶ ^yPs. 4:6; 89:15
²Lev. 26:6; Is. 26:3,
12; John 14:27; Phil.
4:7 ⁵Look upon
you with favor
²⁷ ^aDeut. 28:10;
2 Sam. 7:23; 2 Chr.
7:14; Is. 43:7; Dan.
9:18, 19 ^bEx. 20:24;
Num. 23:20; Ps.
5:12; 67:7; 115:12, 13;
Eph. 1:3 ⁶invoke

CHAPTER 7

¹ ^aEx. 40:17-33
^bLev. 8:10, 11

² ^cNum. 1:4 ¹Lit.
who stood over
⁷ ^dNum. 4:24-28
⁸ ^eNum. 4:29-33
² Lit. hand
⁹ ^fNum. 4:15
⁹ Num. 4:6-14
¹⁰ ^hNum. 7:1; Deut.
20:5; 1 Kin. 8:63;
2 Chr. 7:5, 9; Ezra
6:16; Neh. 12:27

all its utensils; so he anointed them and consecrated them. ²Then ^cthe leaders of Israel, the heads of their fathers’ houses, who *were* the leaders of the tribes ¹and over those who were numbered, made an offering. ³And they brought their offering before the LORD, six covered carts and twelve oxen, a cart for *every* two of the leaders, and for each one an ox; and they presented them before the tabernacle.

⁴Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ⁵“Accept *these* from them, that they may be used in doing the work of the tabernacle of meeting; and you shall give them to the Levites, *to every man according to his service.*” ⁶So Moses took the carts and the oxen, and gave them to the Levites. ⁷Two carts and four oxen ^dhe gave to the sons of Gershon, according to their service; ⁸^eand four carts and eight oxen he gave to the sons of Merari, according to their service, under the ²authority of Ithamar the son of Aaron the priest. ⁹But to the sons of Kohath he gave none, because theirs *was* ^fthe service of the holy things, ^g*which* they carried on their shoulders.

¹⁰Now the leaders offered ^hthe dedication *offering* for the altar when it was anointed; so the leaders offered their offering before the altar. ¹¹For the LORD said to Moses, “They shall offer their of-

6:21 law of the Nazirite: The summary in this verse not only adds detail, but also serves to solemnize the nature of the Nazirite vow. There is no indication in the NT that Jesus took the vow of a Nazirite. Yet it is likely that John the Baptist, who presumably did practice abstinence, was a Nazirite from birth.

6:23 you shall bless: This famous Aaronic benediction is a blessing on all of the people. This blessing follows the section describing the special blessing that would result in the life of the man or woman who took on the Nazirite vow. God’s blessing on the people was not gained by outstanding acts of devotion on their part. Rather, God freely blessed His people as a mark of His outstanding grace and mercy.

6:25 The idea of the phrase **make His face shine** is that of pleasure in the presence of God, of an intimate experience that is not unlike

that experienced by Moses when he talked with God on Mt. Sinai (see Ex. 34:29–35). The people as a whole would have some sense of God’s glorious presence in their lives.

6:26 The idea of the phrase **lift up His countenance** is that of sensing God’s smile. When a person was given an audience in an ancient Middle Eastern court, the monarch might not even look in that person’s direction. The monarch might look at the claimant, but with an expression of wrath. How pleasant it was, however, when the monarch looked with pleasure on the one who had come before his throne. How wondrous when that smiling monarch is the King of kings and Lord of lords, and when He grants His peace!

6:27 Perhaps the most impressive element of the passage is this conclusion. God intended to place His **name** on the people. They would bear the benediction of His name as a spiritual brand, a mark of identification that they were a people peculiarly related to God Himself.

7:1 when Moses had finished: This phrasing places the events of this chapter before the taking of the census in chs. 1–4. The tabernacle was completed on the first day of the first month of the second year (see Ex. 40:2). The census began on the first day of the second month of that year (1:1). Moses **anointed** and **consecrated** the tabernacle, its furnishings, the altar, and its utensils.

7:3–9 Covered carts would have been especially appropriate for the transportation of the elements of the tabernacle. The carts were distributed according to their use: two to the sons of Gershon for the transportation of the curtains (4:24–28) and four to the sons of Merari for the transportation of the heavier frames and support elements (4:29–33). None of the carts went to the Kohathites, for they had to carry the most holy things on poles on their shoulders (4:1–20).

7:10 Each of the leaders of the twelve tribes brought a special gift from his tribe to the Lord **for the altar**.

anointed

(Heb. *mashach*) (7:1; Ex. 30:26) Strong’s #4886

This verb means to wet or daub a person with olive oil. This ritual designated a person or object as set apart for God’s special purposes. Kings, priests, and prophets were anointed at the beginning of their service (Lev. 8:12; 16:32; 2 Sam. 2:4; 5:3; 1 Kin. 19:15, 16). During the Exodus, many holy things were anointed—including the tabernacle itself. In 7:1, the olive oil is an exquisite and expensive blend of oil and spices. This special oil symbolized the significance of the consecration of the tabernacle and its furnishings to God. In the NT, all who are Christ’s disciples are said to be anointed; they are God’s very own, set apart and commissioned for service (2 Cor. 1:21).



Silver

In ancient times silver was valued next to gold. Silver was harder than gold, but not as hard as copper. It was usually extracted from lead ore, although it was also found in its native state. Silver never tarnishes when exposed to air, unless sulfur is present.

The main sources of silver were Asia Minor, Arabia, Mesopotamia, Armenia, and Persia. Palestine imported most of its silver from these countries, especially during Solomon's time (about 970–931 B.C.), when "the king made silver as common in Jerusalem as stones" (1 Kin. 10:27). Silver was refined and then cast into molds by silversmiths.

Abraham's wealth included silver, which he used as a medium of exchange. Other uses for silver were cups, idols, various kinds of jewelry, and containers. Many articles for the tabernacle were made of silver, including trumpets, lampstands, and sockets.



A silver cup depicting a lion hunt, from Amlash, Iran, 1100–1000 B.C.

Wikimedia Commons

fering, one leader each day, for the dedication of the altar."

¹²And the one who offered his offering on the first day was ⁱNahshon the son of Amminadab, from the tribe of Judah. ¹³His offering was one silver platter, the weight of which was one hundred and thirty *shekels*, and one silver bowl of seventy shekels, according to ^jthe shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil as a ^kgrain offering; ¹⁴one gold pan of ten *shekels*, full of ^lincense; ^{15m}one young bull, one ram, and one male lamb ⁿin its first year, as a burnt offering; ¹⁶one kid of the goats as a ^osin offering; ¹⁷and for ^pthe sacrifice of peace offerings: two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs in their first year. This was the offering of Nahshon the son of Amminadab.

¹⁸On the second day Nethanel the son of Zuar, leader of Issachar, presented an offering. ¹⁹For his offering he offered one silver platter, the weight of which was one hundred and thirty *shekels*, and one silver bowl of seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil as a grain offering; ²⁰one gold pan of ten *shekels*, full of incense; ²¹one young bull, one ram, and one male lamb in its first year, as a burnt offering; ²²one kid of the goats as a sin offering; ²³and as the sacrifice of peace offerings: two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs in their first year. This was the offering of Nethanel the son of Zuar.

²⁴On the third day Eliab the son of Helon, leader of the children of Zebulun, presented an offering. ²⁵His offering was one silver platter, the weight of which was one hundred and thirty *shekels*, and one silver bowl of seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary,

¹² ⁱNum. 2:3
¹³ ^jEx. 30:13
^k Lev. 2:1
¹⁴ ^lEx. 30:34, 35
¹⁵ ^m Lev. 1:2 ⁿ Ex. 12:5
¹⁶ ^o Lev. 4:23
¹⁷ ^p Lev. 3:1

³⁰ ^q Num. 1:5; 2:10

both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil as a grain offering; ²⁶one gold pan of ten *shekels*, full of incense; ²⁷one young bull, one ram, and one male lamb in its first year, as a burnt offering; ²⁸one kid of the goats as a sin offering; ²⁹and for the sacrifice of peace offerings: two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs in their first year. This was the offering of Eliab the son of Helon.

³⁰On the fourth day ^qEliuzur the son of Shedeur, leader of the children of Reuben, presented an offering. ³¹His offering was one silver platter, the weight of which was one hundred and thirty *shekels*, and one silver bowl of seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil as a grain offering; ³²one gold pan of

7:11–83 The paragraph for each tribe is almost exactly the same as for the other tribes, with the exception of the day of the presentation, the name of the leader, and the name of the tribe. The passage was designed to be read aloud in a slow and stately manner. As each tribal leader and his tribe was mentioned, members of that tribe would take special pleasure. Each would sense, "These were our gifts. This was our moment to give to the Lord." Chapter 7 presents a scene of pageantry, pomp, ceremony, and ritual.

sacrifice

(Heb. *zebach*) (7:17; Ex. 10:25; Zeph. 1:7) Strong's #2077

The Hebrew word comes from a verb meaning "to slaughter for an offering." In accordance with the Law of Moses, a priest would offer sacrifices on behalf of a worshiper by burning them on the altar (Ex. 20:24). Sacrifices could either be grain offerings (the firstfruits of the harvest) or animal sacrifices. Which animals could be sacrificed at the tabernacle (and later the temple) was clearly stipulated by the Law; they had to be the best one had—with "no defect" (Lev. 22:21). Animal sacrifices under the Law served one primary function, to cover or atone for sin (Heb. 9:22). The sin of an individual was symbolically transferred to the animal to be sacrificed, thereby providing a substitutionary atonement. The sacrifices had to be repeated each year because they only partially dealt with sin (Heb. 10:4). Ultimately, all sacrifices in the OT point forward to and are types of the final, all-sufficient sacrifice made by Christ (Is. 53; 1 Cor. 5:7; Heb. 9:10).

ten *shekels*, full of incense; ³³one young bull, one ram, and one male lamb in its first year, as a burnt offering; ³⁴one kid of the goats as a sin offering; ³⁵and as the sacrifice of peace offerings: two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs in their first year. This *was* the offering of Elizur the son of Shedeur.

³⁶On the fifth day ^rShelumiel the son of Zurishaddai, leader of the children of Simeon, *presented an offering*. ³⁷His offering *was* one silver platter, the weight of which *was* one hundred and thirty *shekels*, and one silver bowl of seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil as a grain offering; ³⁸one gold pan of ten *shekels*, full of incense; ³⁹one young bull, one ram, and one male lamb in its first year, as a burnt offering; ⁴⁰one kid of the goats as a sin offering; ⁴¹and as the sacrifice of peace offerings: two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs in their first year. This *was* the offering of Shelumiel the son of Zurishaddai.

⁴²On the sixth day ^sEliasaph the son of ³Deuel, leader of the children of Gad, *presented an offering*. ⁴³His offering *was* one silver platter, the weight of which *was* one hundred and thirty *shekels*, and one silver bowl of seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil as a grain offering; ⁴⁴one gold pan of ten *shekels*, full of incense; ⁴⁵one young bull, one ram, and one male lamb in its first year, as ^ta burnt offering; ⁴⁶one kid of the goats as a sin offering; ⁴⁷and as the sacrifice of peace offerings: two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs in their first year. This *was* the offering of Eliasaph the son of Deuel.

⁴⁸On the seventh day ^uElishama the son of Ammihud, leader of the children of Ephraim, *presented an offering*. ⁴⁹His offering *was* one silver platter, the weight of which *was* one hundred and thirty *shekels*, and one silver bowl of seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil as a grain offering; ⁵⁰one gold pan of ten *shekels*, full of incense; ⁵¹one young bull, one ram, and one male lamb in its first year, as a burnt offering; ⁵²one kid of the goats as a sin offering; ⁵³and as the sacrifice of peace offerings: two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs in their first year. This *was* the offering of Elishama the son of Ammihud.

⁵⁴On the eighth day ^vGamaliel the son of Pedahzur, leader of the children

36 ^r Num. 1:6; 2:12; 7:41
42 ^s Num. 1:14; 2:14; 10:20 ³ Reuel, Num. 2:14
45 ^t Ps. 40:6
48 ^u Num. 1:10; 2:18; 1 Chr. 7:26
54 ^v Num. 1:10; 2:20

of Manasseh, *presented an offering*. ⁵⁵His offering *was* one silver platter, the weight of which *was* one hundred and thirty *shekels*, and one silver bowl of seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil as a grain offering; ⁵⁶one gold pan of ten *shekels*, full of incense; ⁵⁷one young bull, one ram, and one male lamb in its first year, as a burnt offering; ⁵⁸one kid of the goats as a sin offering; ⁵⁹and as the sacrifice of peace offerings: two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs in their first year. This *was* the offering of Gamaliel the son of Pedahzur.

⁶⁰On the ninth day ^wAbidan the son of Gideon, leader of the children of Benjamin, *presented an offering*. ⁶¹His offering *was* one silver platter, the weight of which *was* one hundred and thirty *shekels*, and one silver bowl of seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil as a grain offering; ⁶²one gold pan of ten *shekels*, full of incense; ⁶³one young bull, one ram, and one male lamb in its first year, as a burnt offering; ⁶⁴one kid of the goats as a sin offering; ⁶⁵and as the sacrifice of peace offerings: two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs in their first year. This *was* the offering of Abidan the son of Gideon.

⁶⁶On the tenth day ^xAhiezer the son of Ammishaddai, leader of the children of Dan, *presented an offering*. ⁶⁷His offering *was* one silver platter, the weight of which *was* one hundred and thirty *shekels*, and one silver bowl of seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil as a grain offering; ⁶⁸one gold pan of ten *shekels*, full of incense; ⁶⁹one young bull, one ram, and one male lamb in its first year, as a burnt offering; ⁷⁰one kid of the goats as a sin offering; ⁷¹and as the sacrifice of peace offerings: two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs in their first year. This *was* the offering of Ahiezer the son of Ammishaddai.

⁷²On the eleventh day ^yPagiel the son of Ocran, leader of the children of Asher, *presented an offering*. ⁷³His offering *was* one silver platter, the weight of which *was* one hundred and thirty *shekels*, and one silver bowl of seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil as a grain offering; ⁷⁴one gold pan of ten *shekels*, full of incense; ⁷⁵one young bull, one ram, and one male lamb in its first year, as a burnt offering; ⁷⁶one kid

60 ^w Num. 1:11; 2:22
66 ^x Num. 1:12; 2:25
72 ^y Num. 1:13; 2:27

of the goats as a sin offering; ⁷⁷ and as the sacrifice of peace offerings: two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs in their first year. This *was* the offering of Pagiel the son of Ocran.

⁷⁸ On the twelfth day ^a Ahira the son of Enan, leader of the children of Naphtali, *presented an offering*. ⁷⁹ His offering *was* one silver platter, the weight of which *was* one hundred and thirty *shekels*, and one silver bowl of seventy *shekels*, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil as a grain offering; ⁸⁰ one gold pan of ten *shekels*, full of incense; ⁸¹ one young bull, one ram, and one male lamb in its first year, as a burnt offering; ⁸² one kid of the goats as a sin offering; ⁸³ and as the sacrifice of peace offerings: two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs in their first year. This *was* the offering of Ahira the son of Enan.

⁸⁴ This *was* ^a the dedication offering for the altar from the leaders of Israel, when it was anointed: twelve silver platters, twelve silver bowls, and twelve gold pans. ⁸⁵ Each silver platter *weighed* one hundred and thirty *shekels* and each bowl seventy *shekels*. All the silver of the vessels *weighed* two thousand four hundred *shekels*, according to the shekel of the sanctuary. ⁸⁶ The twelve gold pans full of incense *weighed* ten *shekels* apiece, according to the shekel of the sanctuary; all the gold of the pans *weighed* one hundred and twenty *shekels*. ⁸⁷ All the oxen for the burnt offering *were* twelve young bulls, the rams twelve, the male lambs in their first year twelve, with their grain offering, and the kids of the goats as a sin offering twelve. ⁸⁸ And all the oxen for the sacrifice of peace offerings *were* twenty-four bulls, the rams sixty, the male goats sixty, and the lambs in their first year sixty.

⁷⁸ ^a Num. 1:15; 2:29
⁸⁴ ^a Num. 7:10

This *was* the dedication offering for the altar after it *was* ^b anointed.

⁸⁹ Now when Moses went into the tabernacle of meeting ^c to speak with Him, he heard ^d the voice of One speaking to him from above the mercy seat that *was* on the ark of the Testimony, from ^e between the two cherubim; thus He spoke to him.

Arrangement of the Lamps

8 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: ² “Speak to Aaron, and say to him, ‘When you ^a arrange the lamps, the seven ^b lamps shall give light in front of the lampstand.’” ³ And Aaron did so; he arranged the lamps to face toward the front of the lampstand, as the LORD commanded Moses. ⁴ ^c Now this workmanship of the lampstand *was* hammered gold; from its shaft to its flowers it *was* ^d hammered work. ^e According to the pattern which the LORD had shown Moses, so he made the lampstand.

Cleansing and Dedication of the Levites

⁵ Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: ⁶ “Take the Levites from among the children of Israel and cleanse them *ceremonially*. ⁷ Thus you shall do to them to cleanse them: Sprinkle ^f water of purification on them, and ^g let ^h them shave all their body, and let them wash their clothes, and *so* make themselves clean. ⁸ Then let them take a young bull with ⁱ its grain offering of fine flour mixed with oil, and you shall take another young bull as a sin offering. ⁹ ⁱ And you shall bring the Levites before the tabernacle of meeting, ^j and you shall gather together the whole congregation of the children of Israel. ¹⁰ So you shall bring the Levites before the LORD, and the

⁸⁸ ^b Num. 7:1, 10
⁸⁹ ^c [Ex. 33:9, 11];
Num. 12:8 ^d Ex.
25:21, 22 ^e Ps. 80:1;
99:1

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² ^a Lev. 24:2-4 ^b Ex.
25:37; 40:25
⁴ ^c Ex. 25:31 ^d Ex.
25:18 ^e Ex. 25:40;
Acts 7:44
⁷ ^f Num. 19:9, 13, 17,
20; Ps. 51:2, 7; [Heb.
9:13, 14] ^g Lev. 14:8,
9 ^h Heb. *let them
cause a razor to
pass over*
⁸ ⁱ Lev. 2:1; Num.
15:8-10
⁹ ^j Ex. 29:4; 40:12
^k Lev. 8:3

7:84 This was the dedication offering: The totals of the 12 gifts are enumerated, demonstrating again the sense of order and control in the Book of Numbers.

7:89 More stunning than the gifts and their totals is this last verse of the chapter. When all was done, Moses **heard the voice** of God speaking from the innermost sanctuary. This was a mark of God's approval. The Israelites' gifts had been received with pleasure.

8:2 The seven lamps must have been exquisite, the finest work possible by artisans of the day. But the placement of these oil lamps was as important as their craftsmanship.

8:5-19 This section concerns the cleansing of the **Levites** in order to make them fit for their special service of the Lord in His holy worship. The Levites belonged to the Lord in exchange for the firstborn of Israel whom He spared during the tenth plague in Egypt (3:40, 41; 8:16-19).

8:7 To **shave** the entire **body** of the Levites was, in a sense, a physical symbol of a return to innocence. This act of devotion initiated the Levites into the service of the Lord. In addition to shaving their bodies, the Levites were also sprinkled with the water of purification and their clothing was washed.

8:10-12 lay their hands on: This ancient symbol of dedication (1) specified with a physical gesture the ones being dedicated,

dedication

(Heb. *chanukkah*) (7:10, 11, 84, 88; Neh. 12:27; Ps. 30:1) Strong's #2598

Dedication is a religious ceremony in which a person or a thing is set aside or consecrated to God's service. In Bible times, many different things were included in such services: the temple (2 Chr. 2:4), a field (Lev. 27:16), a house (Lev. 27:14), articles of precious metal (2 Sam. 8:10), even spoils won in battle (1 Chr. 26:27). In one of the most beautiful passages in the Bible, Hannah presented her young son Samuel to God in an act of child dedication (1 Sam. 1:19-28). Hannah's prayer of thanksgiving to God (1 Sam. 2:1-10) is a model of praise and dedication for all who seek to honor God through their lives.

children of Israel ^kshall lay their hands on the Levites; ¹¹and Aaron shall ²offer the Levites before the LORD *like* a ¹wave offering from the children of Israel, that they may perform the work of the LORD. ^{12m}Then the Levites shall lay their hands on the heads of the young bulls, and you shall offer one as a sin offering and the other as a burnt offering to the LORD, to make atonement for the Levites.

¹³“And you shall stand the Levites before Aaron and his sons, and then offer them *like* a wave offering to the LORD. ¹⁴Thus you shall ⁿseparate the Levites from among the children of Israel, and the Levites shall be ^oMine. ¹⁵After that the Levites shall go in to service the tabernacle of meeting. So you shall cleanse them and ^poffer them *like* a wave offering. ¹⁶For they *are* ^qwholly given to Me from among the children of Israel; I have taken them for Myself ^rinstead of all who open the womb, the firstborn of all the children of Israel. ^{17s}For all the firstborn among the children of Israel *are* Mine, *both* man and beast; on the day that I struck all the firstborn in the land of Egypt I ³sanctified them to Myself. ¹⁸I have taken the Levites instead of all the firstborn of the children of Israel. ¹⁹And ^tI have given the Levites as a gift to Aaron and his sons from among the children of Israel, to do the work for the children of Israel in the tabernacle of meeting, and to make atonement for the children of Israel, ^uthat there be no plague among the children of Israel when the children of Israel come near the sanctuary.”

²⁰Thus Moses and Aaron and all the congregation of the children of Israel did to the Levites; according to all that the LORD commanded Moses concerning the

10 ^k Lev. 1:4
11 ¹ Num. 18:6
² present
12 ^m Ex. 29:10
14 ⁿ Num. 16:9
^o Num. 3:12, 45; 16:9
15 ^p Num. 8:11, 13
16 ^q Num. 3:9 ^r Ex. 13:2; Num. 3:12, 45
17 ^s Ex. 12:2, 12, 13, 15; Num. 3:13; Luke 2:23 ³ set them apart
19 ^t Num. 3:9
^u Num. 1:53; 16:46; 18:5; 2 Chr. 26:16

21 ^v Num. 8:7
22 ^w Num. 8:15
^x Num. 8:5
24 ^y Num. 4:3;
1 Chr. 23:3, 24, 27
26 ^z Num. 1:53

CHAPTER 9

2 ^a Ex. 12:1-16; Lev. 23:5; Num. 28:16; Deut. 16:1,
2 ^b 2 Chr. 30:1-15; Luke 22:7; [1 Cor. 5:7, 8]
3 ¹ Lit. *between the evenings* ² observe
³ statutes
5 ^c Josh. 5:10

Levites, so the children of Israel did to them. ^{21v}And the Levites purified themselves and washed their clothes; then Aaron presented them *like* a wave offering before the LORD, and Aaron made atonement for them to cleanse them. ^{22w}After that the Levites went in to do their work in the tabernacle of meeting before Aaron and his sons; ^xas the LORD commanded Moses concerning the Levites, so they did to them.

²³Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ²⁴“This is what *pertains* to the Levites: ^yFrom twenty-five years old and above one may enter to perform service in the work of the tabernacle of meeting; ²⁵and at the age of fifty years they must cease performing this work, and shall work no more. ²⁶They may minister with their brethren in the tabernacle of meeting, ^zto attend to needs, but they *themselves* shall do no work. Thus you shall do to the Levites regarding their duties.”

The Second Passover

9 Now the LORD spoke to Moses in the Wilderness of Sinai, in the first month of the second year after they had come out of the land of Egypt, saying: ²“Let the children of Israel keep ^athe Passover at its appointed ^btime. ³On the fourteenth day of this month, ¹at twilight, you shall ²keep it at its appointed time. According to all its ³rites and ceremonies you shall keep it.” ⁴So Moses told the children of Israel that they should keep the Passover. ⁵And ^cthey kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the first month, at twilight, in the Wilderness of Sinai; according to all that the LORD commanded Moses, so the children of Israel did.

(2) expressed identification with the ones on whom the hands were placed, and (3) called for a divine sanction of this public and physical act. Aaron then presented the Levites to the Lord, perhaps with his hands swaying back and forth as though they were being waved before the Lord. Then those on whom hands had been placed reached out their own hands to the sacrificial bulls as a mark of identification. **8:16** The Hebrew words for **wholly given to Me** are an emphatic doubling: “given, given.” The story of the Exodus—in this case, the Passover—was always just under the surface of the theology of the OT, for this saving event shaped the nation of Israel. **8:19 no plague:** With their service in the tabernacle, the Levites functioned as a protective hedge between the people and the symbols of the Divine Presence. Here God’s mercy complements His holiness. His holiness would not bear an improper approach. But in His mercy, He provided a protective hedge in the Levites. They both warned others not to draw too close and instructed them on how to approach the living God appropriately. **8:20–26** This concluding paragraph serves to summarize the material of the chapter as well as to report on the actions of the priests and the people in obedience to the word of the Lord. Throughout the first ten chapters, there is a regular pattern: (1) an announcement of the coming of the word of the Lord, (2) the details of that word,

and (3) a report of compliance. With this pattern, we are conditioned to expect that obedience will regularly follow God’s commands as the people make their way in triumphal procession to the Promised Land. **8:24 From twenty-five years old** seems to disagree with the lower limit of 30 years given in 4:3. The difference is not easily resolved, but there is the possibility that the five years in dispute may have served as some sort of apprenticeship. Later in Israel’s history, David reduced the lower age for the Levites to 20 (see 1 Chr. 23:24, 27). **9:1 The first month of the second year** indicates that the material of this chapter precedes the command to take a census in 1:1. With the tabernacle completed, the camp ritually purified, the religious functionaries cleansed and in place, the hovering symbols of God being experienced in the camp, and the Passover celebrated anew—all was ready for the triumphal march of God’s citizen army to the Promised Land. **9:2** When the first **Passover** was celebrated in Egypt, the command was given to commemorate it throughout Israel’s generations (see Ex. 12:14). It was time now at the base of Mt. Sinai to celebrate the Passover anew before the people began their march to Canaan.

⁶Now there were *certain* men who were ^ddefiled by a human corpse, so that they could not keep the Passover on that day; ^eand they came before Moses and Aaron that day. ⁷And those men said to him, “We *became* defiled by a human corpse. Why are we kept from presenting the offering of the LORD at its appointed time among the children of Israel?”

⁸And Moses said to them, “Stand still, that ^fI may hear what the LORD will command concerning you.”

⁹Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ¹⁰“Speak to the children of Israel, saying: ‘If anyone of you or your ⁴posterity is unclean because of a corpse, or *is* far away on a journey, he may still keep the LORD’s Passover. ¹¹On ^gthe fourteenth day of the second month, at twilight, they may keep it. They shall ^heat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. ¹²ⁱThey shall leave none of it until morning, ^jnor break one of its bones. ^kAccording to all the ⁵ordinances of the Passover they shall keep it. ¹³But the man who *is* clean and is not on a journey, and ceases to keep the Passover, that same person ^lshall be cut off from among his people, because he ^mdid not bring the offering of the LORD at its appointed time; that man shall ⁿbear his sin.

¹⁴‘And if a stranger ^odwells among you, and would keep the LORD’s Passover, he must do so according to the rite of the Passover and according to its ceremony; ^oyou shall have one ⁷ordinance, both for the stranger and the native of the land.’”

The Cloud and the Fire

¹⁵Now ^pon the day that the tabernacle was raised up, the cloud ^qcovered the tabernacle, the tent of the Testimony; ^rfrom evening until morning it was above the

⁶ ^d Num. 5:2; 19:11-22; John 18:28 ^e Ex. 18:15, 19, 26; Num. 27:2
⁸ ^f Ex. 18:22; Num. 27:5
¹⁰ ⁴ *descendants*
¹¹ ^g 2 Chr. 30:2, 15
^h Ex. 12:8
¹² ⁱ Ex. 12:10
^j Ex. 12:46; [John 19:36] ^k ⁵ Ex. 12:43
¹³ ^l Gen. 17:14; Ex. 12:15, 47 ^m Num. 9:7 ⁿ Num. 5:31
¹⁴ ^o Ex. 12:49; Lev. 24:22; Num. 15:15, 16, 29 ⁶ As a resident alien
⁷ *statute*
¹⁵ ^p Ex. 40:33, 34; Neh. 9:12, 19; Ps. 78:14 ^q Is. 4:5 ^r Ex. 13:21, 22; 40:38

¹⁷ ^s Ex. 40:36-38; Num. 10:11, 12, 33, 34; Ps. 80:1
¹⁸ ^t *lifted up*
¹⁸ ¹ 1 Cor. 10:1 ⁹ Lit. *mouth*
¹⁹ ^u Num. 1:53; 3:8
²² ^v Ex. 40:36, 37
²³ ^w Num. 9:19

tabernacle like the appearance of fire. ¹⁶So it was always: the cloud covered it *by day*, and the appearance of fire by night. ¹⁷Whenever the cloud ^swas ⁸taken up from above the tabernacle, after that the children of Israel would journey; and in the place where the cloud settled, there the children of Israel would pitch their tents. ¹⁸At the ⁹command of the LORD the children of Israel would journey, and at the command of the LORD they would camp; ^tas long as the cloud stayed above the tabernacle they remained encamped. ¹⁹Even when the cloud continued long, many days above the tabernacle, the children of Israel ^ukept the charge of the LORD and did not journey. ²⁰So it was, when the cloud was above the tabernacle a few days: according to the command of the LORD they would remain encamped, and according to the command of the LORD they would journey. ²¹So it was, when the cloud remained only from evening until morning: when the cloud was taken up in the morning, then they would journey; whether by day or by night, whenever the cloud was taken up, they would journey. ²²*Whether it was* two days, a month, or a year that the cloud remained above the tabernacle, the children of Israel ^vwould remain encamped and not journey; but when it was taken up, they would journey. ²³At the command of the LORD they remained encamped, and at the command of the LORD they journeyed; they ^wkept the charge of the LORD, at the command of the LORD by the hand of Moses.

Two Silver Trumpets

10 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: ²“Make two silver trumpets for yourself; you shall make them

9:6 Because of their defilement from touching the body of a dead person (5:2), there were some who **could not keep the Passover** at its appointed time. These people came willingly to ask Moses what they might do. God’s intent was that the Passover would be celebrated by all of His people. Reasons of ritual impurity should not prevent a person from enjoying the night. Neither should one think that the celebration was unnecessary. Thus the ritually impure would celebrate the Passover a month later.

9:11 The specification of **bitter herbs** indicates that those who celebrated the Passover a month later would celebrate the exact details of it. They were not to rush through the ceremony, but were to take part in it fully, eating the lamb, the unleavened bread, and the bitter herbs.

9:12 nor break one of its bones: The Passover was not an ordinary meal. The food commemorated the great saving event of God in Israel’s history. The meal was to be eaten with extraordinary attention to the lamb itself. It is fitting to remember that when the Savior was crucified as our “Passover Lamb,” none of His bones was broken (John 19:36)—a fulfillment of the typology of this verse (see Ex. 12:46; Ps. 34:20).

9:13 ceases to keep the Passover: Some people would simply refuse to celebrate the Passover, not for legitimate reasons, but because

of ingratitude and insolence. Such persons would be **cut off from among** the people and would bear the responsibility for their sins.

9:14 Those who lived with the Hebrew people could be included in the celebration of Passover, but they first had to be circumcised (see Ex. 12:48). This was a rite that applied to the citizen as well as to the alien. As a **stranger** heard the story of God’s gracious, powerful actions in the salvation of His people, that person would naturally question the Israelites on how he or she could participate in Israel’s blessing.

9:15–23 The cloud (see Ex. 13:21) was a dramatic symbol of the active presence of God with His people, hovering over them in protection, moving ahead of them for direction, coming near at night as **fire** for comfort in the darkness. The rest of this paragraph serves as a summary of the activities of the cloud and the fire throughout Israel’s experience in the wilderness.

9:23 at the command of the LORD: The cloud and the fire were manifestations of God’s will. When the cloud rose, the people were to set out. When the cloud settled, the people were to encamp. There was nothing predictable in the movement or settling of the cloud; all was dependent on God’s sovereignty. The people saw the glory and the will of God in the cloud’s actions.

10:2 The two silver trumpets were different from the curved ram’s horn trumpets (see Lev. 25:9; Ps. 81:3). Made of hammered silver,

A Chronology of the Second Year of the Exodus		
Numbers reverses the chronology of the very eventful first two months of the second year of the Exodus in order to emphasize the census.		
Date	Event	Reference
First month, Day 1	Tabernacle completed.	Ex. 40:2
	Laws for the offerings given.	Lev. 1:1
	Offerings for the dedication of the altar begun.	Num. 7:3
	The ordination of priests begun.	Lev. 8:1
First month, Day 8	The ordination of priests completed.	Lev. 9:1
First month, Day 12	Offerings for the dedication of the altar completed.	Num. 7:78
	The Levites appointed.	Num. 8:5
First month, Day 14	Passover celebrated.	Num. 9:2
Second month, Day 1	Census taken.	Num. 1:1
Second month, Day 14	Passover celebrated for those who were unclean.	Num. 9:11
Second month, Day 20	The cloud moved and the Israelite camp followed.	Num. 10:11

of hammered work; you shall use them for ^acalling the congregation and for directing the movement of the camps. ³When ^bthey blow both of them, all the congregation shall gather before you at the door of the tabernacle of meeting. ⁴But if they blow *only* one, then the leaders, the ^cheads of the divisions of Israel, shall gather to you. ⁵When you sound the ^dadvance, ^ethe camps that lie on the east side shall then begin their journey.

CHAPTER 10
2 ^a Is. 1:13
3 ^b Jer. 4:5; Joel 2:15
4 ^c Ex. 18:21; Num. 1:16; 7:2
5 ^d Joel 2:1 ^e Num. 2:3
6 ^f Num. 2:10
7 ^g Num. 10:3
8 ^h Joel 2:1
8 ⁱ Num. 31:6;
Josh. 6:4; 1 Chr. 15:24; 2 Chr. 13:12

⁶When you sound the advance the second time, then the camps that lie ^fon the south side shall begin their journey; they shall sound the call for them to begin their journeys. ⁷And when the assembly is to be gathered together, ^gyou shall blow, but not ^hsound the advance. ⁸ⁱThe sons of Aaron, the priests, shall blow the trumpets; and these shall be to you as an ¹ordinance forever throughout your generations. ⁹^j“When you go to war in your land against the enemy who ^koppresses you, then you shall sound an alarm with the trumpets, and you will be ^lremembered before the LORD your God, and you will be saved from your enemies. ¹⁰Also ^min the day of your gladness, in your appointed feasts, and at the beginning of your months, you shall blow the trumpets over your burnt offerings and over the sacrifices of your peace offerings; and they shall be ⁿa memorial for you before your God: I *am* the LORD your God.”

Departure from Sinai

¹¹Now it came to pass on the twentieth day of the second month, in the second year, that the cloud ^owas taken up from above the tabernacle of the Testimony. ¹²And the children of Israel set out from the ^pWilderness of Sinai on ^qtheir jour-

¹ statute 9 / Num. 31:6; Josh. 6:5; 2 Chr. 13:14 ^k Judg. 2:18; 4:3; 6:9; 10:8, 12 ^l Gen. 8:1; Ps. 106:4 10 ^m Lev. 23:24; Num. 29:1; 1 Chr. 15:24; 2 Chr. 5:12; Ps. 81:3 ⁿ Lev. 23:24; Num. 10:9 11 ^o Num. 9:17 12 ^p Ex. 19:1; Num. 1:1; 9:5 ^q Ex. 40:36

these instruments were straight with a flaring bell, like the post horns of medieval Europe. Since they did not have valves, they were played like a bugle. The pattern was as follows: The cloud would begin to move, the trumpets would sound, and the people would begin to break camp and move out within their ordered ranks. When the ark, the symbol of the Divine Presence, was moved, Moses recited the words of the song of triumph (v. 35). **10:4 But if they blow only one:** The number of trumpets that sounded and the notes they played were signals for various groups within the encampments as well as for the people as a whole. **10:5 begin their journey:** Even when the trumpets sounded, there was never to be a pell-mell rush of the people. The tone throughout this section is one of discipline and order. God is a God of order, and this would be reflected in the conduct of the Israelites’ camp (see 1 Cor. 14:40; Eph. 4). **10:9** The trumpets were not signals for the movement of the camp in the wilderness; later they functioned as signals for the army in Canaan. The sounding of the trumpets would be a part of Israel’s **war** against the inhabitants of the **land**. In addition to functioning as signals at certain occasions, trumpet-blowing also became a symbol of calling on the Lord and a reminder that God was at work among the Israelites. **10:10 day of your gladness:** The trumpets were also played in the context of worship, particularly on days of feasting and the celebrations of the beginning of the month. **I am the LORD your God** indicates that the preceding was a divine revelation of the will of God. Furthermore, these words serve as a benediction on the people at the beginning of their march. **10:11** At long last, the time had come for the people to set out on the triumphal journey for which God had been preparing them.

When the **cloud was taken up** by the Lord Himself, the Israelites packed up their camp and left. The cloud was a symbol of God’s presence, His protection, and His guidance. The people could fearlessly march into the unknown. **10:12** This verse is a summary statement of the initial march. **The Wilderness of Paran** was not actually reached until 12:16. The Wilderness of Paran is in the northeastern Sinai peninsula, south of the Negev, the desert area below Judah. Paran was a good staging area for the conquest of the land, away from the more fortified cities toward Egypt in the west.

enemies

(Heb. *tsarim*) (10:9; Gen. 14:20; Ezra 4:1; Ps. 44:5, 7) Strong’s #6862

Before Israel could serve as the channel of God’s grace to the world, its existence as a nation had to be securely established. The enemies of the Hebrew people were thus regarded as God’s enemies, and the reverse was also true (Ps. 139:20–22). In the NT, by contrast, the enemies to be overcome are primarily spiritual in nature. While the OT refers to charity toward one’s enemy (Ex. 23:4, 5; Prov. 24:17), the NT goes further by commanding love for one’s enemy (Matt. 5:44; Rom. 12:20). The NT looks toward a day when all enemies of good and righteousness will be overcome because of the redemptive work of Christ (1 Cor. 15:25).

neys; then the cloud settled down in the wilderness of Paran. ¹³So they started out for the first time ^saccording to the command of the LORD by the hand of Moses.

¹⁴The ²standard of the camp of the children of Judah ^tset out first according to their armies; over their army was ^uNahshon the son of Amminadab. ¹⁵Over the army of the tribe of the children of Issachar was Nethanel the son of Zuar. ¹⁶And over the army of the tribe of the children of Zebulun was Eliab the son of Helon.

¹⁷Then ^vthe tabernacle was taken down; and the sons of Gershon and the sons of Merari set out, ^wcarrying the tabernacle.

¹⁸And ^xthe standard of the camp of Reuben set out according to their armies; over their army was Elizur the son of Shedeur. ¹⁹Over the army of the tribe of the children of Simeon was Shelumiel the son of Zurishaddai. ²⁰And over the army of the tribe of the children of Gad was Eliasaph the son of Deuel.

²¹Then the Kohathites set out, carrying the ^yholy things. (The tabernacle would be ³prepared for their arrival.)

²²And ^zthe standard of the camp of the children of Ephraim set out according to their armies; over their army was Elishama the son of Ammihud. ²³Over the army of the tribe of the children of Manasseh was Gamaliel the son of Pedahzur. ²⁴And over the army of the tribe of the children of Benjamin was Abidan the son of Gideon.

²⁵Then ^athe standard of the camp of the children of Dan (the rear guard of all the camps) set out according to their armies; over their army was Ahiezer the son of Ammishaddai. ²⁶Over the army of the tribe of the children of Asher was Pagiel the son of Ocran. ²⁷And over the army of the tribe of the children of Naphtali was Ahira the son of Enan.

²⁸^bThus was the order of march of

¹² ^r Gen. 21:21; Num. 12:16; Deut. 1:1
¹³ ^s Num. 10:5, 6
¹⁴ ^t Num. 2:3-9
^u Num. 1:7 ² banner
¹⁷ ^v Num. 1:51
^w Num. 4:21-32; 7:7-9
¹⁸ ^x Num. 2:10-16
²¹ ^y Num. 4:4-20; 7:9 ³ Prepared by the Gershonites and the Merarites
²² ^z Num. 2:18-24
²⁵ ^a Num. 2:25-31; Josh. 6:9
²⁸ ^b Num. 2:34

²⁹ ^c Judg. 4:11
^d Ex. 2:18; 3:1; 18:12
^e Gen. 12:7; Ex. 6:4-8 ^f Judg. 1:16
^g Gen. 32:12; Ex. 3:8
^h Jethro, Ex. 3:1; LXX Raguel
³¹ ^h Job 29:15 ⁵ Act as our guide
³² ⁱ Ex. 18:9; Lev. 19:34; Judg. 1:16
³³ / Ex. 3:1; Deut. 1:6 ^k Deut. 1:33; Josh. 3:3-6; Ezek. 20:6
³⁴ / Ex. 13:21; Neh. 9:12, 19
³⁵ ^m Ps. 68:1, 2; 132:8; Is. 17:12-14

CHAPTER 11

¹ ^a Num. 14:2; 16:11; 17:5; Deut. 9:22
^b Ps. 78:21 ^c Lev. 10:2; 2 Kin. 1:12

the children of Israel, according to their armies, when they began their journey.

²⁹Now Moses said to ^cHobab the son of ^dReuel⁴ the Midianite, Moses' father-in-law, "We are setting out for the place of which the LORD said, ^e'I will give it to you.' Come with us, and ^fwe will treat you well; for ^gthe LORD has promised good things to Israel."

³⁰And he said to him, "I will not go, but I will depart to my *own* land and to my relatives."

³¹So Moses said, "Please do not leave, inasmuch as you know how we are to camp in the wilderness, and you can ⁵be our ^heyes. ³²And it shall be, if you go with us—indeed it shall be—that ⁱwhat-ever good the LORD will do to us, the same we will do to you."

³³So they departed from ^jthe mountain of the LORD on a journey of three days; and the ark of the covenant of the LORD ^kwent before them for the three days' journey, to search out a resting place for them. ³⁴And ^lthe cloud of the LORD was above them by day when they went out from the camp.

³⁵So it was, whenever the ark set out, that Moses said:

^m"Rise up, O LORD!

Let Your enemies be scattered,
And let those who hate You flee
before You."

³⁶And when it rested, he said:

"Return, O LORD,
To the many thousands of Israel."

The People Complain

11 Now ^awhen the people complained, it displeased the LORD; ^bfor the LORD heard *it*, and His anger was aroused. So the ^cfire of the LORD burned among them, and consumed *some* in the outskirts of

10:14–28 This section, like so many others in Numbers, conveys a sense of pageantry, drama, and ordered design. The section was designed to be read aloud as a narrative of God's faithfulness to all of His people and of their proper response to His guidance. The repetition of the names from each tribe (see chs. 1; 7) must have been an eloquent statement at the time. One would expect these names to be memorialized as the leaders of the first generation who led their tribes into Canaan. Because of the events that follow (chs. 11–14), however, these names take on a certain sadness. These people did not achieve their destiny in the land. Rather, they were buried in the desert.

10:29–32 Reuel (perhaps to be identified with Jethro) is mentioned in Ex. 2:18–21 as the priest of Midian who befriended Moses and gave his daughter Zipporah to him as his wife. Moses invited **Hobab the son of Reuel** to join Israel on their triumphal journey. At first Hobab declined. But at Moses' insistence, Hobab continued with the Israelites (see Judg. 1:16), serving as the **eyes** of the people in the

wilderness. In this example of OT evangelism, Hobab joined in the destiny of Israel just as Ruth the Moabitess would later (see Ruth 2). Joining Israel was not just a change of location; it involved a radical transformation of one's life and purpose so that it was centered around the living God.

10:35, 36 Rise up, O LORD and Return, O LORD are words of a triumphant song. These are not magical incantations, but poetic affirmations of God's presence among His people and prayers that His presence would have its effect in the lives and destiny of the people. The expression **many thousands** means the same as "untold thousands" or "teeming millions."

11:1–3 Now when the people complained: After the Israelites had traveled just three days following their deliverance from Egypt, they murmured against the Lord because of a lack of water (see Ex. 15:22–24). Here again, after a journey of only three days, they murmured against the Lord for unspecified reasons. Murmuring demonstrated unfaithfulness and was an act of rebellion that demanded

the camp. ²Then the people ^dcried out to Moses, and when Moses ^eprayed to the LORD, the fire was ^fquenched. ³So he called the name of the place ^gTaberah, because the fire of the LORD had burned among them.

⁴Now the ^fmixed multitude who were among them ³yielded to ^gintense craving; so the children of Israel also wept again and said: ^h“Who will give us meat to eat? ⁵ⁱWe remember the fish which we ate freely in Egypt, the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlic; ⁶but now ^jour whole being *is* dried up; *there is* nothing at all except this manna before our eyes!”

⁷Now ^kthe manna was like coriander seed, and its color like the color of bdellium. ⁸The people went about and gathered *it*, ground *it* on millstones or beat *it* in the mortar, cooked *it* in pans, and made cakes of it; and ^lits taste was

² ^d Num. 12:11, 13; 21:7 ^e [James 5:16] ^f *extinguished*
³ ^g *Lit. Burning*
⁴ ^f Ex. 12:38 ^g 1 Cor. 10:6 ^h [Ps. 78:18]
⁵ ⁱ *Lit. lusted intensely*
⁶ ^j Ex. 16:3
⁷ ^k Num. 21:5
⁸ ^l Ex. 16:14, 31
⁸ ^f Ex. 16:31

⁹ ^m Ex. 16:13, 14
¹⁰ ⁿ Ps. 78:21
¹¹ ^o Ex. 5:22; Deut. 1:12 ⁴ *responsibility*
¹² ^p Is. 40:11 ^q Is. 49:23; 1 Thess. 2:7 ^r Gen. 26:3
⁵ ^s *solemnly promised*
¹³ ^t Matt. 15:33; Mark 8:4
¹⁴ ^u Ex. 18:18; Deut. 1:12

like the taste of pastry prepared with oil. ⁹And ^mwhen the dew fell on the camp in the night, the manna fell on it.

¹⁰Then Moses heard the people weeping throughout their families, everyone at the door of his tent; and ⁿthe anger of the LORD was greatly aroused; Moses also was displeased. ¹¹^oSo Moses said to the LORD, “Why have You afflicted Your servant? And why have I not found favor in Your sight, that You have laid the ⁴burden of all these people on me? ¹²Did I conceive all these people? Did I beget them, that You should say to me, ^p“Carry them in your bosom, as a ^qguardian carries a nursing child,” to the land which You ^rswore⁵ to their fathers? ¹³^sWhere am I to get meat to give to all these people? For they weep all over me, saying, ‘Give us meat, that we may eat.’ ¹⁴^tI am not able to bear all these people alone, because the burden *is* too heavy for me. ¹⁵If You treat me like this,

God’s judgment. The **fire of the LORD** seems to have come both as a warning and as a purifying agent, since it hit only the outskirts of the camps. In the midst of wrath, the Lord remained merciful. He had long-standing patience with a people who continuously rebelled.

11:4 The mixed multitude indicates the presence of others who had escaped from slavery or poverty in Egypt, but were not Israelites (Ex. 12:38). These people were an encouragement to the continual murmuring that characterized the Israelites in the wilderness. It was understandable that those who did not share Israel’s faith in God would make every discomfort an excuse to agitate rebellion against Him and His appointed leadership in Moses.

11:5, 6 The tone of the words **this manna** is one of contempt (an attitude that would peak years later; see 21:5). The foods of Egypt were plentiful and varied, even for slaves and the poor. The provision of manna was regarded by the Israelites as monotonous, something that caused the inner being to be dried up.

11:7–9 The clear implication of these verses is that the provision of **manna** was something that later generations would not know

about or understand without an explanation. Its daily appearance, with a double measure on the day before the Sabbath and none at all on the Sabbath, is clearly miraculous. One pot of manna was kept in the ark of the covenant for generations (Ex. 16:33). God provided manna throughout the 40-year experience in the wilderness. Then it ceased to appear as mysteriously as it had begun (Ex. 16:35). Jesus described Himself as the bread of life, better than the manna in the wilderness (John 6:48–58).

11:10 In this instance, the fact that **Moses also was displeased** caused him to pray for help in dealing with the complaints of the people and their many needs (vv. 12–15). On another occasion, Moses’ displeasure would lead to his own sin and would cost him the opportunity to enter the land of Canaan (20:1–13).

11:12–15 Did I conceive all these people? God was the “mother” of the Israelites; Moses was their “wet nurse.” The people were like whining children who cannot be satisfied. In a flourish of rhetoric, Moses asked the Lord to kill him (see 1 Kin. 19:4) rather than force him to continue in this sorry situation.

The Prayers of Moses in Numbers		
Passage	Context	Request
10:35	Whenever the ark set out	For God’s enemies to be scattered
10:36	Whenever the ark would rest	For God’s presence in the camp
11:1, 2	When the people complained	For mercy and an end to the consuming fire God sent as punishment
11:4–15	When the people grumbled about food	For personal relief and help
12:13	When Miriam was afflicted with leprosy	For her healing
14:13–19	When the children of Israel rebelled against God’s command to go into the Promised Land	For God to forgive them
16:15	When Korah and 250 other leaders rebelled against Moses’ leadership	For God to reject their offerings
16:22	When God was about to destroy all of Korah’s followers	For God to spare all but Korah
21:7	When the Lord sent venomous snakes among the people because of their ungratefulness	For God to take the snakes away
27:5	When Zelophehad’s daughters sought an inheritance	For wisdom and guidance to know what to do
27:15–17	When Moses was about to die	For God to appoint a new leader

please kill me here and now—if I have found favor in Your sight—and “do not let me see my wretchedness!”

The Seventy Elders

¹⁶So the LORD said to Moses: “Gather to Me ^vseventy men of the elders of Israel, whom you know to be the elders of the people and ^wofficers over them; bring them to the tabernacle of meeting, that they may stand there with you. ¹⁷Then I will come down and talk with you there. ^xI will take of the Spirit that is upon you and will put *the same* upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with you, that you may not bear *it* yourself alone. ¹⁸Then you shall say to the people, ⁶“Consecrate yourselves for tomorrow, and you shall eat meat; for you have wept ^yin the hearing of the LORD, saying, “Who will give us meat to eat? For *it was* well with us in Egypt.” Therefore the LORD will give you meat, and you shall eat. ¹⁹You shall eat, not one day, nor two days, nor five days, nor ten days, nor twenty days, ^{20z}but *for* a whole month, until it comes out of your nostrils and becomes loathsome to you, because you have ^adespised the LORD who is among you, and have wept before Him, saying, ^b“Why did we ever come up out of Egypt?””

²¹And Moses said, ^c“The people whom I *am* among *are* six hundred thousand men on foot; yet You have said, ‘I will give them meat, that they may eat *for* a whole month.’ ^{22d}Shall flocks and herds be slaughtered for them, to provide enough for them? Or shall all the fish of the sea be gathered together for them, to provide enough for them?”

²³And the LORD said to Moses, ^e“Has ⁷the LORD’s arm been shortened? Now you shall see whether ^fwhat I say will happen to you or not.”

¹⁵ ^uRev. 3:17
¹⁶ ^vEx. 18:25; 24:1,
⁹ ^wDeut. 16:18
¹⁷ ^x1 Sam. 10:6;
² Kin. 2:15; [Joel
^{2:28]}
¹⁸ ^yEx. 16:7 ⁶Set
yourselves apart
²⁰ ^zPs. 78:29;
^{106:15} ^a1 Sam.
^{10:19} ^bNum. 21:5
²¹ ^cGen. 12:2; Ex.
^{12:37}; Num. 1:46;
^{2:32}
²² ^d2 Kin. 7:2
²³ ^eIs. 50:2; 59:1
^fNum. 23:19 ⁷Is
the LORD’s power
limited?

²⁴ ^gNum. 11:16
²⁵ ^h2 Kin. 2:15
ⁱ1 Sam. 10:5, 6, 10;
^{Joel 2:28}; Acts 2:17,
¹⁸; 1 Cor. 14:1 ⁸Tg.,
Vg. and they did not
cease
²⁶ ^jJer. 36:5
²⁸ ^k[Mark 9:38–40;
^{Luke 9:49]}
²⁹ ^l1 Cor. 14:5
⁹jealous
³¹ ^mEx. 16:13; Ps.
^{78:26–28}; 105:40
³² ⁿEx. 16:36; Ezek.
^{45:11}
³³ ^oPs. 78:29–31;
^{106:15}

²⁴So Moses went out and told the people the words of the LORD, and he ^ggathered the seventy men of the elders of the people and placed them around the tabernacle. ²⁵Then the LORD came down in the cloud, and spoke to him, and took of the Spirit that *was* upon him, and placed *the same* upon the seventy elders; and it happened, ^hwhen the Spirit rested upon them, that ⁱthey prophesied, ⁸although they never did *so* again.

²⁶But two men had remained in the camp: the name of one *was* Eldad, and the name of the other Medad. And the Spirit rested upon them. Now they *were* among those listed, but who ^jhad not gone out to the tabernacle; yet they prophesied in the camp. ²⁷And a young man ran and told Moses, and said, “Eldad and Medad are prophesying in the camp.”

²⁸So Joshua the son of Nun, Moses’ assistant, ^{one} of his choice men, answered and said, “Moses my lord, ^kforbid them!”

²⁹Then Moses said to him, “Are you ⁹zealous for my sake? ^lOh, that all the LORD’s people were prophets *and* that the LORD would put His Spirit upon them!”

³⁰And Moses returned to the camp, he and the elders of Israel.

The LORD Sends Quail

³¹Now a ^mwind went out from the LORD, and it brought quail from the sea and left *them* fluttering near the camp, about a day’s journey on this side and about a day’s journey on the other side, all around the camp, and about two cubits above the surface of the ground.

³²And the people stayed up all that day, all night, and all the next day, and gathered the quail (he who gathered least gathered ten ⁿhomers); and they spread *them* out for themselves all around the camp. ³³But while the ^omeat *was* still between their teeth, before it was chewed,

11:16, 17 Moses’ provocation led to the appointment of **seventy men** to assist him in the administration of the camp. These men would have been in addition to the leaders of each tribe. Presumably they formed a body of administrative assistants for Moses to reduce the burden he felt in attempting to meet the needs of the vast population by himself. These elders were Spirit-empowered (v. 25). **11:18–20 you shall eat meat:** The complaint of the people had so angered the Lord that He determined to cause them to have an overabundance of meat. The Israelites had rejected the manna, describing it as something that dried their being (v. 6). God was going to give them so much meat that it would become sickening to them, causing them to realize what a great gift manna really was. The issue here was not really meat and manna, but whether the people would serve God as their God. To reject the provision was, in essence, to reject the Provider.

11:21–23 The idea of such plentiful meat in the wilderness was something even Moses balked at, wondering how even God could provide food for a company so large. God’s response to Moses, **has the LORD’s arm been shortened?** is a challenge to all people of

faith. There is simply no limiting the power of God. Jesus’ feedings of the multitudes are NT examples of God’s continuing ability to provide food for thousands (Matt. 14:13–21; 15:32–39).

11:25 The Spirit rested upon them (see Acts 2) is a divine empowerment of the 70 elders who would aid Moses in the administration of the camp.

11:25–30 For reasons that were not recorded, **Eldad and Medad** did not join the other elders at the tabernacle of meeting (v. 16). Nonetheless, the Spirit of God came upon them and empowered them in their own camp. When the word came to Moses that these men were prophesying even though they were not where they were supposed to be, Joshua was afraid that their possible influence in the community would detract from the authority of Moses. Here Joshua showed his loyalty to Moses by deferring to Moses’ leadership and authority. Moses responded by wishing that all of God’s people were Spirit-empowered. (This is the first time Joshua is mentioned.)

11:31–33 True to His promise (vv. 18–20), the Lord provided meat in the form of **quail from the sea**. He sent a strong wind that brought vast numbers of quail fluttering about three feet off the ground.



Quail

In Israel, the quail is a migrating bird that arrives in droves along the shores of the Mediterranean Sea. With their strong flying muscles, these birds can fly rapidly for a short time. When migrating, however, they stretch their wings and allow the wind to bear them along. Sometimes they reach land so exhausted after their long flight that they can be caught by hand. Most of the time quail remain on the ground, scratching for food and helping farmers by eating insects. Their brown-speckled bodies are inconspicuous, but they often give away their presence by a shrill whistle.

The Hebrew people probably ate dried, salted quail while they were enslaved by the Egyptians. When they longed for meat in the Wilderness of Sinai, God promised He would provide enough meat for a month. Then He directed thousands of quail to their camp, where the birds dropped in exhaustion.



A portion of an Egyptian tomb painting from the tomb chapel of Nebamun showing men catching quail, 1350 B.C., near Thebes
Baker Photo Archive. The British Museum.

the wrath of the LORD was aroused against the people, and the LORD struck the people with a very great plague. ³⁴So he called the name of that place ¹Kibroth Hattaavah, because there they buried the people who had yielded to craving. ³⁵^pFrom Kibroth Hattaavah the people moved to Hazeroth, and camped at Hazeroth.

Dissension of Aaron and Miriam

12 Then ^aMiriam and Aaron ¹spoke ^bagainst Moses because of the ²Ethiopian woman whom he had married;

34 ¹ Lit. *Graves of Craving*
35 ^p Num. 33:17

CHAPTER 12
1 ^a Ex. 15:20, 21; Num. 20:1 ^b Num. 11:1 ^c Ex. 2:21
¹ criticized
² Cushite
2 ^d Num. 16:3 ^e Ex. 15:20; Mic. 6:4
^f Gen. 29:33; Num. 11:1; 2 Kin. 19:4; Is. 37:4; Ezek. 35:12, 13
4 ^g [Ps. 76:9]
5 ^h Ex. 19:9; 34:5; Num. 11:25; 16:19

for ^che had married an Ethiopian woman. ²So they said, “Has the LORD indeed spoken only through ^dMoses? ^eHas He not spoken through us also?” And the LORD ^fheard it. ³(Now the man Moses was very humble, more than all men who *were* on the face of the earth.)
⁴^gSuddenly the LORD said to Moses, Aaron, and Miriam, “Come out, you three, to the tabernacle of meeting!” So the three came out. ⁵^hThen the LORD came down in the pillar of cloud and stood *in* the door of the tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam. And they both went forward. ⁶Then He said,

The people fell into a frenzy, killing the birds and gathering them all through the night and on into the next day.
11:34 Kibroth Hattaavah (“Graves of Craving”) was a vast graveyard of needlessly craving, ungrateful people.
11:35 Hazeroth (“Enclosures”) allowed the people a respite from the journey and its judgments.
12:1 The order of the names **Miriam and Aaron** suggests that Miriam was the instigator of the attack against Moses. Note also that the principal punishment falls on Miriam (v. 10). Pointing at the **Ethiopian woman** whom Moses married seems to have been merely a pretext for attacking Moses. Miriam and Aaron might have had a disagreement with Zipporah, Moses’ wife (see Ex. 2:21), or they might have been referring to a second wife who Moses married without their approval. In any event, the real issue dividing Miriam and Aaron from their brother was the special relationship Moses had with God.
12:2 only through Moses: The prophetess Miriam (see Ex. 15:20) had very high status in the camp. Certainly Aaron, through whom God also spoke and who ministered before God as the high priest (2:1; 3:1; 4:1), was also in a most privileged position. Nonetheless,

neither Miriam nor Aaron had the same proximity to God that Moses had. This must have galled Miriam and her brother. The verse ends ominously with the words **And the LORD heard it**. God was going to act on what He had heard.
12:3 Some people argue that a **very humble** man would hardly write about his unparalleled humility. Others contend that a humble man who was writing through God’s inspiration might speak of his own humility. Still others have suggested that the verse comes from a later period and is a comment inserted to place the challenge against Moses in perspective. Another possibility is that the Hebrew word translated as *humble* may mean “miserable” in this context. The events described in ch. 11 may have taken an enormous toll on Moses. This verse may be a description of Moses’ utter sense of brokenness as he experienced his brother and sister’s betrayal.
12:5 Then the LORD came down: Suddenly God spoke to Moses, Aaron, and Miriam, and then descended dramatically in the midst of the cloud. This theophany (appearance of God) was ominous. The language of this verse is more directly physical than usual. God came down, stood, and then called Aaron and Miriam forward.
12:6–8 The framework of this section is poetry, making the

"Hear now My words:
If there is a prophet among you,
I, the LORD, make Myself known to
him ⁱin a vision;
I speak to him ^jin a dream.
7 Not so with ^kMy servant Moses;
^lHe is faithful in all ^mMy house.
8 I speak with him ⁿface to face,
Even ^oplainly,³ and not in ⁴dark
sayings;
And he sees ^pthe form of the
LORD.
Why then ^qwere you not afraid
To speak against My servant
Moses?"

⁹So the anger of the LORD was aroused against them, and He departed. ¹⁰And when the cloud departed from above the tabernacle, ^rsuddenly Miriam *became* ^sleprous, as *white as snow*. Then Aaron turned toward Miriam, and there she was, a leper. ¹¹So Aaron said to Moses, "Oh, my lord! Please ^tdo not lay ⁵*this* sin on us, in which we have done foolishly and in which we have sinned. ¹²Please ^udo not let her be as one dead, whose flesh is half consumed when he comes out of his mother's womb!"

¹³So Moses cried out to the LORD, saying, "Please ^vheal her, O God, I pray!"

¹⁴Then the LORD said to Moses, "If her father had but ^wspit in her face, would she not be shamed seven days? Let her be ^xshut⁶ out of the camp seven days, and afterward she may be received *again*."

¹⁵So Miriam was shut out of the camp seven days, and the people did not journey till Miriam was brought in *again*.

¹⁶And afterward the people moved from

6 ⁱGen. 46:2; 1 Sam. 3:15; Job 33:15; Ezek. 1:1; Dan. 8:2; Luke 1:11; Acts 10:11, 17; 22:17, 18
7 ^jGen. 31:10; 1 Kin. 3:5, 15; Matt. 1:20
8 ^kJosh. 1:1; Ps. 105:26 ^lHeb. 3:2, 5
9 ^m1 Tim. 1:12
10 ⁿEx. 33:11; Deut. 34:10; Hos. 12:13
11 ^o[1 Cor. 13:12]
12 ^pEx. 33:19-23
13 ^q2 Pet. 2:10; Jude 8
14 ^rappearing
15 ^sriddles
16 ^tDeut. 24:9 ^uEx. 4:6; 2 Kin. 5:27; 15:5; 2 Chr. 26:19, 20
17 ^v2 Sam. 19:19; 24:10
18 ^wthe penalty for this
19 ^xPs. 88:4
20 ^yPs. 103:3
21 ^zDeut. 25:9; Job 30:10; Is. 50:6
22 ^{aa}Lev. 13:46; Num. 5:1-4
23 ^{ab}exiled
24 ^{ac}Deut. 24:9; 2 Chr. 26:20, 21

16 ^zNum. 11:35; 33:17, 18

CHAPTER 13

2 ^aNum. 32:8; Deut. 1:22; 9:23
3 ^bNum. 12:16; 32:8; Deut. 1:19; 9:23
4 ^cNum. 34:19
5 ^dNum. 14:6, 30; Josh. 14:6, 7; Judg. 1:12; 1 Chr. 4:15
6 ^eLXX, Vg. *Oshea*
7 ^fEx. 17:9; Deut. 32:44
8 ^gsecretly search ^hLXX, Vg. *Oshea*
9 ⁱJudg. 1:9

^zHazerOTH and camped in the Wilderness of Paran.

Spies Sent into Canaan

13 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ^{2a}"Send men to spy out the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the children of Israel; from each tribe of their fathers you shall send a man, every one a leader among them."

³So Moses sent them ^bfrom the Wilderness of Paran according to the command of the LORD, all of them men who *were* heads of the children of Israel. ⁴Now these *were* their names: from the tribe of Reuben, Shammua the son of Zaccur; ⁵from the tribe of Simeon, Shaphat the son of Hori; ^{6c}from the tribe of Judah, ^dCaleb the son of Jephunneh; ⁷from the tribe of Issachar, Igal the son of Joseph; ⁸from the tribe of Ephraim, ⁱHoshea the son of Nun; ⁹from the tribe of Benjamin, Palti the son of Raphu; ¹⁰from the tribe of Zebulun, Gaddiel the son of Sodi; ¹¹from the tribe of Joseph, *that is*, from the tribe of Manasseh, Gaddi the son of Susi; ¹²from the tribe of Dan, Ammiel the son of Gemalli; ¹³from the tribe of Asher, Sethur the son of Michael; ¹⁴from the tribe of Naphtali, Nahbi the son of Vophsi; ¹⁵from the tribe of Gad, Geuel the son of Machi.

¹⁶These *are* the names of the men whom Moses sent to ²spy out the land. And Moses called ^eHoshea³ the son of Nun, Joshua.

¹⁷Then Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan, and said to them, "Go up *this way* into the South, and go up to ^fthe mountains, ¹⁸and see what the land

pronouncement of the Lord more vivid and memorable. The language conveys that God was in control. He spoke to whomever He wished and in the manner of His choosing. God is Spirit (John 4:24). Language about His "face" is a concession to our way of thinking of a person. Hence, **face to face** speaks of the most intimate relationship that God had with Moses.

12:10 The singling out of **Miriam** suggests that she was the instigator in this challenge to Moses (v. 1). **Leprous** refers to a serious skin disorder that made her unclean (5:1-4).

12:11 Aaron's words of confession—"we have done foolishly"—on behalf of his sister and himself are touching, and a sure sign of his deference to the leadership of his brother.

12:14 Moses' appeal to God on behalf of his sister was met with stern words from God that speak of a public humiliation. We are not told what might provoke a father to **spit** in the **face** of his daughter, but it would have had to be something quite shameful. The incident at hand was not trivial, but God's grace was abundant.

12:15 The delay in moving the camp for the seven days of Miriam's isolation indicates the high regard that Moses and the people held for Miriam. It is sad that, as in the case of Eve, the thing that Miriam is most noted for is her sin. Nevertheless, biblical writers continued to hold her in high esteem (see Mic. 6:4).

12:16 The Wilderness of Paran had been the destination of the people since they set out from Mt. Sinai (10:12). Sadly, the character of the people had changed en route. The people had

murmured and rebelled against God and Moses, God's anointed.

13:2 According to Deut. 1:21-23, the sending of **men to spy** was the idea of the people. They might have urged Moses to send spies to the land to discover the best approach for conquest. Moses was then instructed by the Lord to proceed with the plan. The staging position in the Wilderness of Paran (12:16), southeast of the land of Canaan, was ideal for a northward sweep of the spies and then of the armies of Israel.

13:4-15 The list of **names** of the men from each of the twelve tribes was not a mere duplicate of earlier lists (ch. 1). Presumably, these men were regarded not only as leaders in their tribal units, but also as men who were physically and spiritually capable of great exploits.

13:16 Changing **Hoshea's** name to **Joshua** probably indicated great esteem on Moses' part. As God often changed the names of people who had a special relationship with Him, so Moses changed the name of the one who would eventually become his spiritual heir. This was an act of ritual adoption. Hoshea means "Salvation"; Joshua means "the Lord Saves." Joshua and Jesus are two forms of the same name.

13:17-20 Moses' commands to the spies were broad but definite. They were to spy out the land, determine what they could about the people and their cities, and observe the produce and forests. Then they were to bring back **some of the fruit of the land**, because it was the season of the first grape harvest.

is like: whether the people who dwell in it *are* strong or weak, few or many; ¹⁹whether the land they dwell in *is* good or bad; whether the cities they inhabit *are* like camps or strongholds; ²⁰whether the land *is* ⁴rich or poor; and whether there are forests there or not. ⁹Be of good courage. And bring some of the fruit of the land." Now the time *was* the season of the first ripe grapes.

²¹So they went up and spied out the land ^hfrom the Wilderness of Zin as far as ⁱRehob, near the entrance of ^jHamath. ²²And they went up through the South and came to ^kHebron; Ahiman, Sheshai, and Talmi, the descendants of ^lAnak, *were* there. (Now Hebron was built seven years before Zoan in Egypt.) ^{23m}Then they came to the ⁵Valley of Eshcol, and there cut down a branch with one cluster of grapes; they carried it between two of them on a pole. *They also brought* some of the pomegranates and figs. ²⁴The place was called the Valley of ⁶Eshcol, because of the cluster which the men of Israel cut down there. ²⁵And they returned from spying out the land after forty days.

²⁶Now they departed and came back to Moses and Aaron and all the congregation of the children of Israel in the Wilderness of Paran, at ⁿKadesh; they brought back word to them and to all the congregation, and showed them the fruit of the land. ²⁷Then they told him, and said: "We went to the land where you sent us. It truly ⁷flows with ^omilk and honey, ^pand this *is* its fruit. ²⁸Nevertheless the ^qpeople who dwell in the land *are* strong; the cities *are* fortified and very

²⁰ ⁹Deut. 31:6, 7;
²³ ⁴fertile or barren
²¹ ^hNum. 20:1;
27:14; 33:36; Josh.
15:1 ⁱJosh. 19:28
^jNum. 34:8; Josh.
13:5
²² ^kJosh. 15:13, 14;
Judg. 1:10 ^jJosh.
11:21, 22
^{23m} ^mGen. 14:13;
Num. 13:24; 32:9;
Deut. 1:24, 25
⁵Wadi
²⁴ ⁶Lit. Cluster
²⁶ ⁿNum. 20:1, 16;
32:8; 33:36; Deut.
1:19; Josh. 14:6
²⁷ ^oEx. 3:8, 17;
13:5; 33:3 ^pDeut.
1:25 ⁷Has an
abundance of food
²⁸ ^qDeut. 1:28;
9:1, 2

ⁱJosh. 11:21, 22
²⁹ ^rEx. 17:8; Judg.
6:3
³⁰ ^rNum. 14:6, 24
³¹ ^rNum. 32:9;
Deut. 1:28; 9:1-3;
Josh. 14:8
³² ^rNum. 14:36, 37;
Ps. 106:24 ^wAmos
2:9
³³ ^rDeut. 1:28;
9:2; Josh. 11:21
^yIs. 40:22 ^z1 Sam.
17:42 ⁸Heb.
nephilim ⁹As mere
insects

CHAPTER 14

¹ ^aNum. 11:4; Deut.
1:45
² ^bEx. 16:2; 17:3;
Num. 16:41; Ps.
106:25; 1 Cor. 10:10
³ ^cNum. 14:31;
Deut. 1:39 ¹be
killed in battle

large; moreover we saw the descendants of ^rAnak there. ^{29s}The Amalekites dwell in the land of the South; the Hittites, the Jebusites, and the Amorites dwell in the mountains; and the Canaanites dwell by the sea and along the banks of the Jordan."

³⁰Then ^tCaleb quieted the people before Moses, and said, "Let us go up at once and take possession, for we are well able to overcome it."

^{31u}But the men who had gone up with him said, "We are not able to go up against the people, for they *are* stronger than we." ³²And they ^vgave the children of Israel a bad report of the land which they had spied out, saying, "The land through which we have gone as spies *is* a land that devours its inhabitants, and ^wall the people whom we saw in it *are* men of *great* stature. ³³There we saw the ⁸giants (^xthe descendants of Anak came from the giants); and we were ^ylike ⁹grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were ^zin their sight."

Israel Refuses to Enter Canaan

14 So all the congregation lifted up their voices and cried, and the people ^awept that night. ^{2b}And all the children of Israel complained against Moses and Aaron, and the whole congregation said to them, "If only we had died in the land of Egypt! Or if only we had died in this wilderness! ³Why has the LORD brought us to this land to ¹fall by the sword, that our wives and ^cchildren should become victims? Would it not be better for us to return to Egypt?" ⁴So

13:21–25 Although the spies went all the way north to the region of Syria—near the entrance of Hamath—few details are recorded of their journey. Emphasis is given to **Hebron**, where **descendants of Anak** were found (v. 28), and to the **Valley of Eshcol**, where an enormous cluster of grapes was discovered.

13:26 The report of the spies came as a grievous surprise. The spies went to the people at **Kadesh** in the **Wilderness of Paran**. The name Kadesh is associated with the Hebrew word that means "holy." Had the story turned out differently, this name would have been associated with positive memories. It would have been here that they would have sanctified themselves for their campaign of conquest of the land.

13:27 The phrase **flows with milk and honey** is a slogan of redemption, a slogan expressing God's goodness in His promise of the land of Canaan (see 14:8; 16:13, 14; Ex. 3:8, 17; 13:5; 33:3; Lev. 20:24; Deut. 6:3; 11:9; 26:9, 15; 27:3; 31:20). *Milk* probably refers to goats' milk; *honey* refers to bees, which were especially associated with the propagation of fruitful pastures and fields in Canaan. The phrase evoked visions of pleasure and plenty for the Israelites. Canaan was a good land, and enjoyment of the land would follow faithfulness to God.

13:28 The spies quickly focused on the troubles of the land—the strength of its inhabitants, the fortification of its cities, and the immense size of **the descendants of Anak** in Hebron (v. 22). Apparently, this was a family whose hereditary stature was legendary in the ancient Middle East (v. 33).

13:29 The spies listed **the Amalekites** and the other peoples to support their claim that the land was not empty, that people had settled throughout its borders (see Gen. 15:18–21). God did not promise Israel virgin territory, but a place that was inhabited by those whom God wished to displace because of their iniquity.

13:30 Only **Caleb** spoke out against the flow of negative reports. He urged immediate attack based on his confidence in the armies of Israel, and, we may presume, on his underlying faith in God, who would fight for His people (10:35, 36).

13:31–33 The other spies were steadfast in their **bad report**, which included their exaggerations. They described the land as evil and its inhabitants as giants. Their contentious description was ultimately an attack on God, the giver of the land. Such scandalous language could not be tolerated (14:36, 37).

14:1 Following the scandalous report of the spies, **the people wept that night**. They wept not because of the sinful attitude of the spies, but because of their own loss of dream, their own sense that they had made a mistake in leaving Egypt.

14:2–4 Following the night of weeping, the people conspired together in despair. They **complained against Moses and Aaron**. They speculated that they would have been better off dying in Egypt or in the desert. They plotted to select a leader to take them back to Egypt. But they did a worse thing by slandering God, in saying that He would bring them to a place where they would die along with their **wives and children**.

they said to one another, ^d“Let us select a leader and ^ereturn to Egypt.”

⁵Then Moses and Aaron ²fell on their faces before all the assembly of the congregation of the children of Israel.

⁶But Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, *who were* among those who had spied out the land, tore their clothes; ⁷and they spoke to all the congregation of the children of Israel, saying: ^f“The land we passed through to spy out is an exceedingly good land. ⁸If the LORD ^gdelights in us, then He will bring us into this land and give it to us, ^h‘a land which flows with milk and honey.’ ⁹Only ⁱdo not rebel against the LORD, ^jnor fear the people of the land, for ^kthey³ *are* our bread; their protection has departed from them, ^land the LORD *is* with us. Do not fear them.”

^{10m}And all the congregation said to stone them with stones. Now ⁿthe glory of the LORD appeared in the tabernacle of meeting before all the children of Israel.

Moses Intercedes for the People

¹¹Then the LORD said to Moses: “How long will these people ^oreject ^aMe? And how long will they not ^pbelieve Me, with all the ⁵signs which I have performed among them? ¹²I will strike them with the pestilence and disinherit them, and I will ^qmake of you a nation greater and mightier than they.”

4 ^d Neh. 9:17
^e Deut. 17:16; Acts 7:39
⁵ ² *prostrated themselves*
⁷ ¹ Num. 13:27; Deut. 1:25
⁸ ^g Deut. 10:15; 2 Sam. 15:25, 26; 1 Kin. 10:9; Ps. 147:11 ^h Ex. 3:8; Num. 13:27
⁹ ¹ Deut. 1:26; 9:7, 23, 24; 1 Sam. 15:23
^j Deut. 7:18 ^k Num. 24:8 ¹ Gen. 48:21; Ex. 33:16; Deut. 20:1, 3, 4; 31:6-8; Josh. 1:5; Judg. 1:22; 2 Chr. 13:12; Ps. 46:7, 11; Zech. 8:23; Matt. 28:20; Heb. 13:5 ³ They shall be as food for our consumption.
¹⁰ ^m Ex. 17:4 ⁿ Ex. 16:10; Lev. 9:23
¹¹ ^o Ps. 95:8; Heb. 3:8 ^p Deut. 9:23; [John 12:37] ⁴ *despise*
⁵ *miraculous signs*
¹² ^q Ex. 32:10
¹³ ^r Ps. 106:23 ^s Ex. 32:12; Deut. 9:26-28; 32:27
¹⁴ ^t Deut. 2:25
¹⁶ ^u Deut. 9:28
¹⁸ ^v Ex. 34:6, 7; Deut. 5:10; 7:9; Ps. 103:8; 145:8; Jon. 4:2 ^w Ex. 20:5; Deut. 5:9
¹⁹ ^x Ex. 32:32; 34:9
^y Ps. 51:1; 106:45

¹³And ^rMoses said to the LORD: ^s“Then the Egyptians will hear *it*, for by Your might You brought these people up from among them, ¹⁴and they will tell *it* to the inhabitants of this land. They have ^theard that You, LORD, *are* among these people; that You, LORD, are seen face to face and Your cloud stands above them, and You go before them in a pillar of cloud by day and in a pillar of fire by night. ¹⁵Now *if* You kill these people as one man, then the nations which have heard of Your fame will speak, saying, ¹⁶‘Because the LORD was not ^uable to bring this people to the land which He swore to give them, therefore He killed them in the wilderness.’ ¹⁷And now, I pray, let the power of my Lord be great, just as You have spoken, saying, ¹⁸^v“The LORD is longsuffering and abundant in mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression; but He by no means clears *the guilty*, ^wvisiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth *generation*.” ¹⁹^xPardon the iniquity of this people, I pray, ^yaccording to the greatness of Your mercy, just ^zas You have forgiven this people, from Egypt even until now.”

²⁰Then the LORD said: “I have pardoned, ^aaccording to your word; ²¹but truly, as I live, ^ball the earth shall be filled

^z Ps. 78:38 ²⁰ ² Sam. 12:13; Mic. 7:18-20; [1 John 5:14-16]
²¹ ^b Ps. 72:19; Is. 6:3; 66:18, 19; Hab. 2:14

14:5-10 The response of Moses, Aaron, Joshua, and Caleb contrasted remarkably with the foolish terror of the people. They also wept, but for the sins of the people against the Lord and His mercy. The two faithful spies, Caleb and Joshua, gave a good report of the land in the context of robust faith in God. They knew that the living and faithful God would give it to His people. They repeated the slogan of redemption concerning the land: **a land which flows with milk and honey** (13:27). They reasoned, **if the Lord delights in us, then He will bring us into this land**. These words of encouragement were followed by words of strong warning. To speak as the people had done was an act of rebellion and cowardice. The people were not trusting God. **They are our bread** was a boastful manner of speaking of the victory envisioned by the good spies, approximating the exaggerated language of the rebellious spies (13:33).

14:10 The bold words of the good spies elicited two responses: rejection by the congregation, who attempted to stone them, and the sudden appearance of the glory of God to save the lives of His faithful servants.

14:11, 12 Not unlike the leaders of Israel in Jesus' day, the people rejected God's miraculous signs. God's preliminary judgment was to utterly reject the nation. They clearly had rejected Him, dismissing the signs that He had done among them. In response, God again offered to use Moses to begin a new people.

14:13-19 As Gen. 22 records the divine testing of Abraham, this chapter records the divine testing of Moses. Moses might have accepted the Lord's offer and stood aside while the Lord swept the desert clean of this rebellious people. Instead, Moses protested that this drastic act of judgment would taint the reputation of God among the nations. Moses argued that **the Egyptians would hear it**, and that the great victory of God over their gods would be dismissed by their reinterpretation of events, if God were not able to bring His people into their new home. Then Moses quoted the

Lord concerning His great mercy (v. 18 cites Ex. 34:6, 7) and begged Him to pardon the iniquity of the people.

14:20-25 Moses' dramatic recitation led to God's pardon of the rebels. The passion of God was seen in the exclamation of the words **as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord**. God scolded the people who had ignored the many evidences of His glory in their midst, and who had put Him to the test **now these ten times**. God's judgment was that the people who rejected Him would not see the land. Everyone was included except Caleb, whom God called **My servant**, and Joshua (v. 38). God then warned the people to bypass the region of the Amalekites. This was no longer a time for war, but for retreating into the wilderness.

rebel

(Heb. *marad*) (14:9; Josh. 22:18, 19; Dan. 9:5) Strong's #4775

The word translated *rebel* means to “revolt” or “flagrantly disobey a recognized authority.” God regards rebellion as a serious matter. He does not take it lightly when His people, whom He loves, reject His words. The OT compares rebellion with the terrible sins of witchcraft and sorcery (1 Sam. 15:23). Israel, who had seen the Lord deliver them from bondage in Egypt, often rebelled despite God's frequent warnings against doing so (Deut. 1:26, 43; 9:23, 24). The one who rebels against God departs from His precepts and refuses to heed His warnings (Dan. 9:5, 6). Scripture gives many examples of rebellion that illustrate its consequences—divine chastisement (Is. 1:20). These should serve as warnings to the believer (1 Cor. 10:1-12).

with the glory of the LORD— ^{22c}because all these men who have seen My glory and the signs which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and have put Me to the test now ^dthese ten times, and have not heeded My voice, ²³they certainly shall not ^esee the land of which I ⁶swore to their fathers, nor shall any of those who rejected Me see it. ²⁴But My servant ^fCaleb, because he has a different spirit in him and ^ghas followed Me fully, I will bring into the land where he went, and his descendants shall inherit it. ²⁵Now the Amalekites and the Canaanites dwell in the valley; tomorrow turn and ^hmove out into the wilderness by the Way of the Red Sea.”

Death Sentence on the Rebels

²⁶And the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying, ²⁷ⁱ“How long shall I bear with this evil congregation who complain against Me? ^jI have heard the complaints which the children of Israel make against Me. ²⁸Say to them, ^k‘As I live,’ says the LORD, ‘just as you have spoken in My hearing, so I will do to you: ²⁹The carcasses of you who have complained against Me shall fall in this wilderness, ^lall of you who were numbered, according to your entire number, from twenty years old and above. ^{30m}Except for Caleb the son of Jephunneh and Joshua the son of Nun, you shall by no means enter the land which I ⁷swore I would make you dwell in. ³¹ⁿBut your little ones, whom you said would be victims, I will bring in, and they shall ⁸know the land which ^oyou have despised. ³²But as for you, ^pyour ⁹carcasses shall fall in this wilderness. ³³And your sons shall ^qbe ¹shepherds in the wilderness ^rforty years, and ^sbear the brunt of your infidelity, until your carcasses are consumed in the wilderness. ^{34t}According to the number of the days in which you spied out the land, ^uforty days, for each day you shall bear your ²guilt one year, namely forty years,

^{22c} Deut. 1:35; 1 Cor. 10:5; Heb. 3:17 ^d Gen. 31:7 ²³ e Num. 26:65; 32:11; Heb. 3:18 ⁶ solemnly promised ²⁴ f Josh. 14:6, 8, 9 ⁹ Num. 32:12 ²⁵ h Num. 21:4; Deut. 1:40 ²⁷ i Ex. 16:28 / Ex. 16:12 ²⁸ k Deut. 1:35; 2:14, 15; Heb. 3:16-19 ²⁹ j Num. 1:45, 46; 26:64; Josh. 5:6 ³⁰ m Num. 26:65; 32:12; Deut. 1:36-38; Josh. 14:6-15 ⁷ solemnly promised ³¹ n Num. 14:3; Deut. 1:39 ^o Ps. 106:24 ⁸ be acquainted with ³² p Num. 26:64, 65; 32:13; 1 Cor. 10:5 ⁹ You shall die. ³³ q Num. 32:13; Ps. 107:40 ¹ Deut. 2:14 ¹ Ezek. 23:35 ¹ Vg. wanderers ³⁴ t Num. 13:25 ^u Ps. 95:10; Ezek. 4:6 ² iniquity

v 1 Kin. 8:56; [Heb. 4:1] ³ opposition ³⁵ w Num. 23:19 x 1 Cor. 10:5 ³⁷ y Num. 16:49; [1 Cor. 10:10]; Heb. 3:17, 18 ³⁸ z Josh. 14:6, 10 ³⁹ a Ex. 33:4 ⁴⁰ b Deut. 1:41-44 ⁴¹ c overstep ⁴² c Deut. 1:42; 31:17 ⁴³ d 2 Chr. 15:2 ⁴⁴ e Deut. 1:43 ⁴⁵ f Num. 21:3

CHAPTER 15

² a Lev. 23:10; Num. 15:18; Deut. 7:1

^vand you shall know My ³rejection. ^{35w}I the LORD have spoken this. I will surely do so to all ^xthis evil congregation who are gathered together against Me. In this wilderness they shall be consumed, and there they shall die.”

³⁶Now the men whom Moses sent to spy out the land, who returned and made all the congregation complain against him by bringing a bad report of the land, ³⁷those very men who brought the evil report about the land, ^ydied by the plague before the LORD. ^{38z}But Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh remained alive, of the men who went to spy out the land.

A Futile Invasion Attempt

³⁹Then Moses told these words to all the children of Israel, ^aand the people mourned greatly. ⁴⁰And they rose early in the morning and went up to the top of the mountain, saying, ^b“Here we are, and we will go up to the place which the LORD has promised, for we have sinned!”

⁴¹And Moses said, “Now why do you ⁴transgress the command of the LORD? For this will not succeed. ^{42c}Do not go up, lest you be defeated by your enemies, for the LORD is not among you. ⁴³For the Amalekites and the Canaanites are there before you, and you shall fall by the sword; ^dbecause you have turned away from the LORD, the LORD will not be with you.”

^{44e}But they presumed to go up to the mountaintop. Nevertheless, neither the ark of the covenant of the LORD nor Moses departed from the camp. ⁴⁵Then the Amalekites and the Canaanites who dwelt in that mountain came down and attacked them, and drove them back as far as ^fHormah.

Laws of Grain and Drink Offerings

15 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ^{2a}“Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: ‘When you

14:26–38 This section forms what seems to be God’s second response to the prayer of Moses (vv. 13–19). This second response contains some new elements. First, the **little ones** would be the only survivors of the wilderness wanderings. All over the age of 20 would die in the wilderness over the period of the next **forty years**. The 40 days of the spies’ journey would correspond to 40 years of aimless wandering in the wilderness. For 40 days the people had the opportunity to move with purpose; now for 40 years there would be no purpose in their wandering. Finally, a distinction was made between the cowardly spies and the two faithful ones. Only Joshua and Caleb lived. The others died immediately by a plague from the Lord. In the preservation of Joshua and Caleb from the fate of the others, we sense again the justice of the Lord.

14:39–45 An abortive attempt at an invasion of the land by a still-rebellious people concludes this sad narrative. The people shouted

their acknowledgment that they had sinned, but they had not taken to heart the seriousness of God’s judgment on them. Heedless of Moses’ warning that **the LORD was not among them**, the people went into battle. The result was disastrous. The name **Hormah** means “Utter Destruction.” At this point, the focus of the Book of Numbers shifts to the younger generation, who would enter the land.

15:2 The words **when you have come into the land** may seem inappropriate following the events of chs. 13; 14. Yet God had not rejected the Israelites entirely. Their children would enter the land that their parents had rejected. Chapter 15, which concentrates on offerings and sacrifices, not only instructs the people about the worship of God, it is also a sign of God’s continuing promise: the people would eventually enter the land.

have come into the land you are to inhabit, which I am giving to you, ³and you ^bmake an offering by fire to the LORD, a burnt offering or a sacrifice, ^cto fulfill a vow or as a freewill offering or ^din your appointed feasts, to make a ^esweet aroma to the LORD, from the herd or the flock, ⁴then ^fhe who presents his offering to the LORD shall bring ^ga grain offering of one-tenth of an *ephah* of fine flour mixed ^hwith one-fourth of a hin of oil; ⁵ⁱand one-fourth of a hin of wine as a drink offering you shall prepare with the burnt offering or the sacrifice, for each ^jlamb. ^{6k}Or for a ram you shall prepare as a grain offering two-tenths of an *ephah* of fine flour mixed with one-third of a hin of oil; ⁷and as a drink offering you shall offer one-third of a hin of wine as a sweet aroma to the LORD. ⁸And when you prepare a young bull as a burnt offering, or as a sacrifice to fulfill a vow, or as a ^lpeace offering to the LORD, ⁹then shall be offered ^mwith the young bull a grain offering of three-tenths of an *ephah* of fine flour mixed with half a hin of oil; ¹⁰and you shall bring as the drink offering half a hin of wine as an offering made by fire, a sweet aroma to the LORD.

¹¹ⁿ“Thus it shall be done for each young bull, for each ram, or for each lamb or young goat. ¹²According to the number that you prepare, so you shall do with everyone according to their number. ¹³All who are native-born shall do these things in this manner, in presenting an offering made by fire, a sweet aroma to the LORD. ¹⁴And if a stranger ²dwells with you, or whoever *is* among you throughout your generations, and would present an offering made by fire, a sweet aroma to the LORD, just as you do, so shall he do. ^{15o}One ³ordinance *shall be* for you of the assembly and for the stranger who dwells *with you*, an ordinance forever throughout your generations; as you are, so shall the stranger be before the LORD. ¹⁶One law and one custom shall be for you and for the stranger who dwells with you.”

³ ^p Lev. 1:2, 3 ^c Lev. 7:16; 22:18, 21 ^d Lev. 23:2, 8, 12, 38; Num. 28:18, 19, 27; Deut. 16:10 ^e Gen. 8:21; Ex. 29:18; Lev. 1:9
⁴ ^f Lev. 2:1; 6:14
^g Ex. 29:40; Lev. 23:13 ^h Lev. 14:10; Num. 28:5
⁵ ⁱ Num. 28:7, 14
⁶ ^j Lev. 1:10; 3:6; Num. 15:11; 28:4, 5
⁷ ^k Num. 28:12, 14
⁸ ^l Lev. 7:11
⁹ ^m Num. 28:12, 14
¹⁰ ⁿ Num. 28
¹¹ ^o As a resident alien
¹⁵ ^p Ex. 12:49; Num. 9:14; 15:29 ³ statute

¹⁸ ^p Num. 15:2; Deut. 26:1
¹⁹ ^q Josh. 5:11, 12
²⁰ ^r Ex. 34:26; Lev. 23:10, 14, 17; Deut. 26:2, 10; Prov. 3:9, 10 ^s Lev. 2:14; 23:10, 16
²² ^t Lev. 4:2
²⁴ ^u Lev. 4:13
^v Num. 15:8-10
^w Lev. 4:23 ⁴ Lit. *away from the eyes*
²⁵ ^x Lev. 4:20; [Heb. 2:17]
²⁷ ^y Lev. 4:27-31
²⁸ ^z Lev. 4:35
²⁹ ^a Num. 15:15

¹⁷ Again the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ^{18p}“Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: ‘When you come into the land to which I bring you, ¹⁹then it will be, when you eat of ^qthe bread of the land, that you shall offer up a heave offering to the LORD. ^{20r}You shall offer up a cake of the first of your ground meal as a heave offering; as ^sa heave offering of the threshing floor, so shall you offer it up. ²¹Of the first of your ground meal you shall give to the LORD a heave offering throughout your generations.

Laws Concerning Unintentional Sin

^{22t}“If you sin unintentionally, and do not observe all these commandments which the LORD has spoken to Moses—²³all that the LORD has commanded you by the hand of Moses, from the day the LORD gave commandment and onward throughout your generations—²⁴then it will be, ^uif it is unintentionally committed, ^vwithout the knowledge of the congregation, that the whole congregation shall offer one young bull as a burnt offering, as a sweet aroma to the LORD, ^wwith its grain offering and its drink offering, according to the ordinance, and ^xone kid of the goats as a sin offering. ^{25y}So the priest shall make atonement for the whole congregation of the children of Israel, and it shall be forgiven them, for it was unintentional; they shall bring their offering, an offering made by fire to the LORD, and their sin offering before the LORD, for their unintended sin. ²⁶It shall be forgiven the whole congregation of the children of Israel and the stranger who dwells among them, because all the people *did it* unintentionally.

^{27z}“And ^aif a person sins unintentionally, then he shall bring a female goat in its first year as a sin offering. ^{28z}So the priest shall make atonement for the person who sins unintentionally, when he sins unintentionally before the LORD, to make atonement for him; and it shall be forgiven him. ^{29a}You shall

15:4 a grain offering: The use of grain was as important in the sacrificial system of ancient Israel as was the offering of animals. **Fine flour** was luxurious, rather than ordinary. The mixing of certain proportions of fine flour with olive oil indicated that only the very best could be used in the celebratory worship of God.

15:5 a drink offering: Wine was used in drink offerings (vv. 7, 10) as an accompaniment to the burnt offerings of the goat, lamb, ram, and bull. In the pouring out of this wine on the altar, the worshiper poured out something of great value. As was the case with most of the other offerings, this represented the self-deprivation of the worshipers before God.

15:13, 14 The words **all who are native-born** seem to point to a time after the wilderness experience—when the Israelites had already entered the land. As in the celebration of the Passover, the

presentation of these offerings was to be done in the same way, whether the worshiper was born in the land or a **stranger**.

15:17–21 The **heave offering** is also known as the wave offering. Right at the beginning of the harvest, the harvester had to acknowledge that his produce was a gift from God. By holding up the very first produce from a harvest or of the first cake made from the first grain of the season, the worshiper thanked God as the giver of all good gifts.

15:22 If you sin unintentionally: Some sacrifices were offered on behalf of the nation as a whole, for there was always the possibility of an unintentional or unknown sin in the life of the people. Such sins may have been committed by the people as a whole (vv. 24–26) or by an individual (vv. 27, 28).

have one law for him who sins unintentionally, *for* him who is native-born among the children of Israel and for the stranger who dwells among them.

Law Concerning Presumptuous Sin

^{30 b} But the person who does *anything* ⁵presumptuously, *whether he is* native-born or a stranger, that one ⁶brings reproach on the LORD, and he shall be ⁷cut off from among his people. ³¹ Because he has ^cdespised the word of the LORD, and has broken His commandment, that person shall be completely cut off; his ⁸guilt *shall be* upon him.”

Penalty for Violating the Sabbath

³² Now while the children of Israel were in the wilderness, ^dthey found a man gathering sticks on the Sabbath day. ³³ And those who found him gathering sticks brought him to Moses and Aaron, and to all the congregation. ³⁴ They put him ^eunder guard, because it had not been explained what should be done to him.

³⁵ Then the LORD said to Moses, ^f“The man must surely be put to death; all the congregation shall ^gstone him with stones outside the camp.” ³⁶ So, as the LORD commanded Moses, all the congregation brought him outside the camp and stoned him with stones, and he died.

Tassels on Garments

³⁷ Again the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ³⁸ “Speak to the children of Israel: Tell ^hthem to make tassels on the corners of their garments throughout their generations, and to put a blue thread in the tassels of the corners. ³⁹ And you shall have the tassel, that you may look upon it and ⁱremember all the commandments

³⁰ ^b Num. 14:40-44; Deut. 1:43; 17:12; Ps. 19:13; Heb. 10:26 ⁵ *defiantly*, lit. *with a high hand* ⁶ *blasphemes* ⁷ Put to death ³¹ ^c 2 Sam. 12:9; Prov. 13:13 ⁸ *iniquity* ³² ^d Ex. 31:14, 15; 35:2, 3 ³⁴ ^e Lev. 24:12 ³⁵ ^f Ex. 31:14, 15 ^g Lev. 24:14; Deut. 21:21; 1 Kin. 21:13; Acts 7:58 ³⁸ ^h Deut. 22:12; Matt. 23:5 ³⁹ ⁱ Ps. 103:18

^j Deut. 29:19 ^k Ps. 73:27; 106:39; James 4:4 ⁴⁰ ^j [Lev. 11:44, 45; Rom. 12:1; Col. 1:22; 1 Pet. 1:15, 16]

CHAPTER 16

¹ ^a Ex. 6:21 ^b Num. 26:9; Deut. 11:6 ² ^c Num. 1:16; 26:9 ³ ^d Num. 12:2; 14:2; Ps. 106:16 ^e Ex. 19:6 ^f Ex. 29:45 ¹ *assume too much for* ⁴ ^g Num. 14:5; 20:6 ⁵ ^h [2 Tim. 2:19] ⁱ Lev. 21:6-8, 12 ^j Ezek. 40:46; 44:15, 16 ² *set aside for His use only* ⁹ ^k 1 Sam. 18:23; Is. 7:13

of the LORD and do them, and that you ^jmay not ^kfollow the harlotry to which your own heart and your own eyes are inclined, ⁴⁰ and that you may remember and do all My commandments, and be ^lholy for your God. ⁴¹ *I am* the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: *I am* the LORD your God.”

Rebellion Against Moses and Aaron

16 Now ^aKorah the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, with ^bDathan and Abiram the sons of Eliab, and On the son of Peleth, sons of Reuben, took *men*; ² and they rose up before Moses with some of the children of Israel, two hundred and fifty leaders of the congregation, ^crepresentatives of the congregation, men of renown. ^{3 d} They gathered together against Moses and Aaron, and said to them, “*You* ¹take too much upon yourselves, for ^eall the congregation is holy, every one of them, ^fand the LORD is among them. Why then do you exalt yourselves above the assembly of the LORD?”

⁴ So when Moses heard *it*, he ^gfell on his face; ⁵ and he spoke to Korah and all his company, saying, “Tomorrow morning the LORD will show who is ^hHis and who is ⁱholy, ² and will cause *him* to come near to Him. That one whom He chooses He will cause to ^jcome near to Him. ⁶ Do this: Take censers, Korah and all your company; ⁷ put fire in them and put incense in them before the LORD tomorrow, and it shall be *that* the man whom the LORD chooses is the holy one. *You take* too much upon yourselves, you sons of Levi!”

⁸ Then Moses said to Korah, “Hear now, you sons of Levi: ⁹ *Is it* ^ka small

15:30, 31 The Hebrew phrase translated **presumptuously** means “with a high hand,” with open disdain for the will and work of God. This is a sin that is done, as it were, while looking God in the eye and shaking one’s fist at Him.

15:32–36 It is quite possible that **gathering sticks on the Sabbath day** is a specific example of the kind of thing mentioned in vv. 30, 31. One who flagrantly went out gathering sticks on the Sabbath was clearly in breach of the command to honor the Sabbath day (see Ex. 20:8–11). This individual was caught and then brought to Moses for judgment.

15:37–41 The wearing of **tassels** on the corners of garments was a beautiful sign of great significance. The tassels were memory devices to keep the wearer focused on the commandments of God. **To which your own heart and your own eyes are inclined** speaks vividly of the believer’s old sin nature. The tendency to sin is always present, as the psalmist observes (Ps. 119:11). **Harlotry of the heart** is unfaithfulness to God. Each of us needs to have reminders to keep us thinking rightly about God and ourselves.

15:41 **I am the LORD your God:** God identified Himself as the One who gave these commands. He declared that He had a relationship with the Israelites. He was their God, and He had saved them from

slavery. The Israelites had every reason to obey His directives, for He was their Lord and their Savior.

16:1 Yet another rebellion against Moses was led by **Korah**, a Kohathite (see 1 Chr. 6:22, 23). Korah and his allies challenged Aaron and Moses in much the same way that Miriam and Aaron had challenged Moses earlier (ch. 12). Korah and his allies were not satisfied with the role God had given them in the service of the tabernacle, so they decided to press for the priesthood (v. 10). This rebellion, then, was against Aaron as well as Moses (v. 11).

16:2, 3 Korah and the 250 leaders argued that the entire nation was **holy** to the Lord (see Ex. 6:7) and that Moses and Aaron had presumptuously taken leadership positions. The root of their complaint was that God had not elevated them sufficiently.

16:4–7 Moses’ response was complex. First, he submitted to the will of God, as seen in his action of falling on his face. Then he issued a challenge based on an expectation of an overt display of the will of God. He instructed each of the dissenters to take a **censer**, a metal holder for incense used in worship, and place incense on it as a sign of approach to God. Then each would await God’s decision.

16:9–11 The men who were seeking a higher position were in fact being contemptuous of the place to which God had appointed

thing to you that the God of Israel has ¹separated you from the congregation of Israel, to bring you near to Himself, to do the work of the tabernacle of the LORD, and to stand before the congregation to serve them; ¹⁰and that He has brought you near to *Himself*, you and all your brethren, the sons of Levi, with you? And are you seeking the priesthood also? ¹¹Therefore you and all your company are gathered together against the LORD. ¹²And what is Aaron that you complain against him?"

¹²And Moses sent to call Dathan and Abiram the sons of Eliab, but they said, "We will not come up! ¹³*Is it a small thing that you have brought us up out of a land flowing with milk and honey, to kill us in the wilderness, that you should ^okeep acting like a prince over us? ¹⁴Moreover ^pyou have not brought us into a land flowing with milk and honey, nor given us inheritance of fields and vineyards. Will you put out the eyes of these men? We will not come up!*"

¹⁵Then Moses was very angry, and said to the LORD, ¹⁶"Do not ³respect their offering. ¹⁷I have not taken one donkey from them, nor have I hurt one of them."

¹⁶And Moses said to Korah, "Tomorrow, you and all your company be present ¹before the LORD—you and they, as well as Aaron. ¹⁷Let each take his censer and put incense in it, and each of you bring his censer before the LORD, two hundred and fifty censers; both you and Aaron, each *with* his censer." ¹⁸So every man took his censer, put fire in it, laid incense on it, and stood at the door of the tabernacle of meeting with Moses and Aaron. ¹⁹And Korah gathered all the congregation against them at the door of the taber-

⁹ ¹Num. 3:41, 45; 8:13-16; Deut. 10:8
¹¹ ^m Ex. 16:7, 8
¹³ ⁿ Ex. 16:3; Num. 11:4-6 ^o Ex. 2:14; Acts 7:27, 35
¹⁴ ^p Num. 14:1-4
¹⁵ ^q Ex. 3:8; Lev. 20:24
¹⁶ ^r Gen. 4:4, 5
¹⁷ ^s 1 Sam. 12:3; Acts 20:33 ³ *graciously regard*
¹⁶ ^t 1 Sam. 12:3, 7

¹⁹ ^u Ex. 16:7, 10; Lev. 9:6, 23; Num. 14:10
²¹ ^v Gen. 19:17; Jer. 51:6 ^w Ex. 32:10; 33:5
²² ^x Num. 14:5
²³ ^y Num. 27:16; Job 12:10; Eccl. 12:7; Heb. 12:9
²⁴ ^z Gen. 18:23-32; 20:4 ⁴ *prostrated themselves*
²⁶ ^a Gen. 19:12, 14, 15, 17
²⁷ ^b Ex. 20:5; Num. 26:11
²⁸ ^c Ex. 3:12; John 5:36 ^d Num. 24:13; John 5:30
²⁹ ^e Ex. 20:5; Job 35:15; Is. 10:3
³⁰ ^f Job 31:3; Is. 28:21 ^g [Ps. 55:15]
³¹ ^h Num. 26:10; Ps. 106:17

nacle of meeting. Then ^uthe glory of the LORD appeared to all the congregation.

²⁰And the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying, ²¹^v"Separate yourselves from among this congregation, that I may ^wconsume them in a moment."

²²Then they ^xfell ⁴ on their faces, and said, "O God, ^ythe God of the spirits of all flesh, shall one man sin, and You be angry with all the ^zcongregation?"

²³So the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ²⁴"Speak to the congregation, saying, 'Get away from the tents of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram.'"

²⁵Then Moses rose and went to Dathan and Abiram, and the elders of Israel followed him. ²⁶And he spoke to the congregation, saying, ^a"Depart now from the tents of these wicked men! Touch nothing of theirs, lest you be consumed in all their sins." ²⁷So they got away from around the tents of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram; and Dathan and Abiram came out and stood at the door of their tents, with their wives, their sons, and their little ^bchildren.

²⁸And Moses said: ^c"By this you shall know that the LORD has sent me to do all these works, for *I have not done them ^dof my own will.* ²⁹If these men die naturally like all men, or if they are ^evisited by the common fate of all men, *then* the LORD has not sent me. ³⁰But if the LORD creates ^fa new thing, and the earth opens its mouth and swallows them up with all that belongs to them, and they ^ggo down alive into the pit, then you will understand that these men have rejected the LORD."

³¹^hNow it came to pass, as he finished speaking all these words, that the ground split apart under them, ³²and the earth

them. Moses' response was condescending and scathing: **Is it a small thing to you?** The dissenters should have realized how gracious God had been in giving them the life work He had provided. They were not unlike people who complain about the gifts God has given them.

16:12-14 Dathan and Abiram, two allies of Korah, were so arrogant that they would not even come to stand before Moses. They attacked Moses, claiming he acted like a prince. These two approached absurdity when they charged Moses with leading them away from the land that flows with **milk and honey**. Possibly they were blaming Moses for the fact that the people had to turn away from the land after the rebellion at Kadesh (chs. 13; 14). In addition, they charged Moses with brutality: **Will you put out the eyes of these men?** Nothing in the story of the Exodus leads us to think that Moses might have done such a thing.

16:15 Moses was very angry: He prayed that the men's offering would be rejected, and he asserted that he had done nothing to deserve their hatred.

16:18, 19 The next day, each man lit incense in his censer. Korah brought the people near because he wanted witnesses to the events. **Then the glory of the LORD appeared** is a somber reminder of the words of 12:5, a similar setting of impending judgment.

16:20-22 The announcement of judgment begins with God's

warning to Moses and Aaron that they should back away so that He might destroy the entire congregation. The very leaders who were under assault intervened for the people, asking God to spare them even if He had to judge the guilty. The expression **the God of the spirits of all flesh** suggests the comprehensive rule of God. He is sovereign over all.

16:23-27 God demanded that the people back away from the tents of the rebels, and the people withdrew. Korah, Dathan, and Abiram were isolated at their tents with their families. It appears that Korah had left the 250 other rebels and was now standing beside Dathan and Abiram in wicked solidarity.

16:28-30 Moses called for a sign from God because he did not want anyone to think that what was about to happen was merely coincidence.

16:31-35 In answer to Moses' prayer, God's judgment was sudden, dramatic, and memorable. He caused the earth to swallow the rebels alive. The words **the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up** suggest a sudden action, like that of a sinkhole that opens with great speed. The families of Dathan and Abiram died with those two men. But the family of Korah was spared (26:11). In fact, Korah's descendants contributed a considerable number of psalms for temple worship (see Ps. 42)—yet another example of God displaying His mercy even as He justly punished rebels. The judgment was so

opened its mouth and swallowed them up, with their households and ⁱall the men with Korah, with all *their* goods. ³³So they and all those with them went down alive into the pit; the earth closed over them, and they perished from among the assembly. ³⁴Then all Israel who *were* around them fled at their cry, for they said, “Lest the earth swallow us up *also*!”

³⁵And *a* fire came out from the LORD and consumed the two hundred and fifty men who were offering incense.

³⁶Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: ³⁷“Tell Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, to pick up the censers out of the blaze, for ^kthey are holy, and scatter the fire some distance away. ³⁸The censers of ^lthese men who sinned ⁵against their own souls, let them be made into hammered plates as a covering for the altar. Because they presented them before the LORD, therefore they are holy; ^mand they shall be a sign to the children of Israel.” ³⁹So Eleazar the priest took the bronze censers, which those who were burned up had presented, and they were hammered out as a covering on the altar, ⁴⁰to be a ⁶memorial to the children of Israel ⁿthat no outsider, who *is* not a descendant of Aaron, should come near to offer incense before the LORD, that he might not become like Korah and his companions, just as the LORD had said to him through Moses.

Complaints of the People

⁴¹On the next day ^aall the congregation of the children of Israel complained against Moses and Aaron, saying, “You have killed the people of the LORD.”

⁴²Now it happened, when the congregation had gathered against Moses and Aaron, that they turned toward the tabernacle of meeting; and suddenly ^pthe cloud covered it, and the glory of the

³² ⁱNum. 26:11; 1 Chr. 6:22, 37
³⁵ ^jLev. 10:2; Num. 11:1-3; 26:10; Ps. 106:18
³⁷ ^kLev. 27:28
³⁸ ^lProv. 20:2; Hab. 2:10 ^mNum. 17:10; Ezek. 14:8 ⁵Or at the cost of their own lives
⁴⁰ ⁿNum. 3:10; 2 Chr. 26:18
⁶reminder
⁴¹ ^aNum. 14:2; Ps. 106:25
⁴² ^pEx. 40:34

⁴⁶ ^qLev. 10:6; Num. 18:5 ⁷Lit. covering
⁴⁸ ^rNum. 25:8; Ps. 106:30

CHAPTER 17

⁴ ^oEx. 25:16 ^bEx. 25:22; 29:42, 43; 30:36; Num. 17:7
⁵ ^cNum. 16:5
^dNum. 16:11

LORD appeared. ⁴³Then Moses and Aaron came before the tabernacle of meeting.

⁴⁴And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ⁴⁵“Get away from among this congregation, that I may consume them in a moment.”

And they fell on their faces.

⁴⁶So Moses said to Aaron, “Take a censer and put fire in it from the altar, put incense *on it*, and take it quickly to the congregation and make ⁷atonement for them; ^qfor wrath has gone out from the LORD. The plague has begun.” ⁴⁷Then Aaron took *it* as Moses commanded, and ran into the midst of the assembly; and already the plague had begun among the people. So he put in the incense and made atonement for the people. ⁴⁸And he stood between the dead and the living; so ^rthe plague was stopped. ⁴⁹Now those who died in the plague were fourteen thousand seven hundred, besides those who died in the Korah incident. ⁵⁰So Aaron returned to Moses at the door of the tabernacle of meeting, for the plague had stopped.

The Budding of Aaron's Rod

17 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: ²“Speak to the children of Israel, and get from them a rod from each father's house, all their leaders according to their fathers' houses—twelve rods. Write each man's name on his rod. ³And you shall write Aaron's name on the rod of Levi. For there shall be one rod for the head of *each* father's house. ⁴Then you shall place them in the tabernacle of meeting before ^athe Testimony, ^bwhere I meet with you. ⁵And it shall be *that* the rod of the man ^cwhom I choose will blossom; thus I will rid Myself of the complaints of the children of Israel, ^dwhich they make against you.”

sudden and severe that the people rushed back in fear, thinking that they might suffer the same fate. The 250 would-be priests were destroyed by fire **from the LORD**.

16:36–40 the censers . . . are holy: An amazing thing about this chapter is the LORD's concern that the censers be reused. Since these elements had been presented to Him, they were holy—despite the wickedness of those who presented them to God. The censers were gathered and hammered together for a covering for the altar. Henceforth, anyone who saw the altar would see its covering. This would be a warning not to wander too near for any reason. Only the true priests of the line of Aaron had that privilege.

16:41–45 Israel complained: Unbelievably, the people attacked Moses and Aaron as being the ones who caused the deaths of the popular leaders, **the people of the LORD**. In calling them this, the people asserted that they recognized Korah and the rest as spiritual leaders. Their affection for Korah and his associates had caused them to miss the greater reality, the leadership roles God had given to Moses and Aaron and God's judgment on those rebellious men. Again, there was a sudden appearance of the **glory of the LORD**—a symbol of further judgment. Again the LORD threatened to destroy

the congregation, and again Moses and Aaron fell on their faces, interceding for the people's wickedness.

16:46–50 Moses' command to Aaron to **take a censer** is a fitting end to this chapter. Aaron and his sons were the divinely appointed priests. Only they could minister at the altar of God. Aaron rushed to the sacred tasks to make **atonement** for the sinning congregation because a **plague** had fallen on them. The picture of this aged priest running to save the people who had spoken against him is quite remarkable. The words of v. 48 are quite dramatic. Aaron stood between the living and the dead to stop the plague—a symbol of the Savior, who takes a similar stand in the gap between life and death.

17:2–5 The rebellion of Korah and its aftermath (ch. 16) left a level of uncertainty among the people concerning the divine appointment of Aaron and his sons as the true priests of God. The point of Aaron's rod budding was to eliminate the continuing complaint of the people against Moses and Aaron by another divine sign. One rod was presented from each tribe with the name of the tribal leader inscribed on it. Then the **twelve rods** were placed in the Most Holy Place. God would signal His choice of priestly leadership by causing the rod of one tribe and its leader to **blossom**—life from a dead stick.

⁶So Moses spoke to the children of Israel, and each of their leaders gave him a rod apiece, for each leader according to their fathers' houses, twelve rods; and the rod of Aaron *was* among their rods. ⁷And Moses placed the rods before the LORD *is* the tabernacle of witness.

⁸Now it came to pass on the next day that Moses went into the tabernacle of witness, and behold, the ^frod of Aaron, of the house of Levi, had sprouted and put forth buds, had produced blossoms and yielded ripe almonds. ⁹Then Moses brought out all the rods from before the LORD to all the children of Israel; and they looked, and each man took his rod.

¹⁰And the LORD said to Moses, "Bring ^gAaron's rod back before the Testimony, to be kept ^has a sign against the rebels, ⁱthat you may put their complaints away from Me, lest they die." ¹¹Thus did Moses; just as the LORD had commanded him, so he did.

¹²So the children of Israel spoke to Moses, saying, "Surely we die, we perish, we all perish! ^{13j}Whoever even comes near the tabernacle of the LORD must die. Shall we all utterly die?"

Duties of Priests and Levites

18 Then the LORD said to Aaron: ^a"You and your sons and your father's house with you shall ^bbear the ¹iniquity *related* to the sanctuary, and you and your sons with you shall bear

⁷ ^c Ex. 38:21; Num. 1:50, 51; 9:15; 18:2; Acts 7:44
⁸ ^d [Ezek. 17:24]; Heb. 9:4
¹⁰ ^e Heb. 9:4
^h Num. 16:38; Deut. 9:7, 24 ⁱ Num. 17:5
¹³ ^f Num. 1:51, 53; 18:4, 7

CHAPTER 18

¹ ^g Num. 17:13 ^b Ex. 28:38; Lev. 10:17; 22:16 ¹ ^{guilt}

² ^c Gen. 29:34; Num. 1:47 ^d Num. 3:5-10 ² ^{testimony}
³ ^e Num. 3:25, 31, 36 ^f Num. 16:40 ^g Num. 4:15
³ ^{service}
⁴ ^h Num. 3:10
⁵ ⁱ Ex. 27:21; 30:7; Lev. 24:3 / Num. 8:19; 16:46
⁶ ^k Num. 3:12, 45 / Num. 3:9
⁷ ^m Num. 3:10; 18:5
ⁿ Heb. 9:3, 6 ^o Matt. 10:8; 1 Pet. 5:2, 3
⁸ ^p Lev. 6:16, 18; 7:28-34; Num. 5:9
⁴ ^{custody}

the iniquity *associated with* your priesthood. ²Also bring with you your brethren of the ^etribe of Levi, the tribe of your father, that they may be ^djoined with you and serve you while you and your sons *are* with you before the tabernacle of ²witness. ³They shall attend to your ³needs and ^eall the needs of the tabernacle; ^fbut they shall not come near the articles of the sanctuary and the altar, ^glest they die—they and you also. ⁴They shall be joined with you and attend to the needs of the tabernacle of meeting, for all the work of the tabernacle; ^hbut an outsider shall not come near you. ⁵And you shall attend to ⁱthe duties of the sanctuary and the duties of the altar, ^jthat there *may* be no more wrath on the children of Israel. ⁶Behold, I Myself have ^ktaken your brethren the Levites from among the children of Israel; ^l*they are* a gift to you, given by the LORD, to do the work of the tabernacle of meeting. ⁷Therefore ^myou and your sons with you shall attend to your priesthood for everything at the altar and ⁿbehind the veil; and you shall serve. I give your priesthood *to you* as a ^ogift for service, but the outsider who comes near shall be put to death."

Offerings for Support of the Priests

⁸And the LORD spoke to Aaron: "Here, ^pI Myself have also given you ⁴charge of My heave offerings, all the holy gifts of

17:6, 7 The text focuses on **the rod of Aaron** among the twelve. Aaron was near the end of his life. He and his wife, Elisheba, had four sons. Two, Nadab and Abihu, had died because of their own improper approach to God (3:2-4). Two, Eleazar and Ithamar, lived. On the impending death of Aaron, there had to be no question as to which family was divinely ordered to continue in the priestly office.

17:8, 9 When the rods were examined the next day, not only had the rod of Aaron sprouted, it had even **yielded ripe almonds**. This was a complete vindication of Aaron as the true priest of God. Each of the other rods was still a dead stick. But the rod of Aaron had sent forth such a sprout of life that the entire process of almond production had occurred in a single evening—and all from a dead stick! Moses made each of the other tribal representatives take his own rod back—a physical symbol of agreement to the divine will.

17:10, 11 as a sign: Just as the stone tablets of the law (Ex. 25:16) and a pot of manna were placed in the ark as signs of the enduring testimony of God's mercy to His people (Ex. 16:34), so now the rod of Aaron that budded and produced ripe almonds was placed there as well. Since the ark was in the Most Holy Place, only God would ordinarily look at this rod. Hence, Aaron's rod was a sign to God of His mercy. He had chosen the Levites to minister before Him. There would be one other besides God who would see these sacred items—the high priest of God's own choosing.

17:12, 13 Surely we die: Finally, the people realized that God had revealed His will through His miraculous actions among them. None of them except the one whom God had designated could approach God in His Holy Place. Any person who approached without heeding God's clear instructions could only expect death. The fact that God allowed anyone to approach Him demonstrated His mercy. Indeed, He not only allowed the high priest to approach, but He instructed him how he could atone for the sins of the people. Today, the same

merciful God provides a more perfect way to find His forgiveness—through Jesus' death. With Jesus acting as our High Priest, we can boldly approach the Holy One and not fear death (see Heb. 4:14-16).

18:1 Chapters 18 and 19 deal with the duties of priests and Levites, matters that flow quite naturally from the vindication of the true priesthood in ch. 17 and the crisis concerning the priesthood in ch. 16. The expression **bear the iniquity** speaks of the formidable work that was demanded of the priests of God. The word *iniquity* relates to the whole sphere of sin, guilt, and responsibility for an offense. If the people had no advocate before the Lord, they would die in their offenses. The priests stood as the intermediaries between God and man. Ultimately, all such priestly work points forward to the work of Jesus, our High Priest.

18:2, 3 The Levites were the servants of the priests, but were limited in what they were able to do. This was what had bothered Korah (ch. 16); he was a Levite who wanted to function as a priest.

18:5-7 Only the priests were allowed to attend to the duties of the sanctuary and the altar. The **outsider** was not a foreigner, but a non-authorized Israelite. When one who was not authorized approached the holy places, that person was inviting punishment.

18:8-20 The priests earned their livelihood in their work of the ministry of God (see Lev. 6:14-7:36). Offerings that were not burned on the altars, although made to the Lord, became the food for the priests. **I am your portion:** The priests had no inheritance in the land itself. They lived off the produce of the land as God provided for them through the gifts of His people. Hence, the priests had a special relationship with God. He was their inheritance. Like the priests, believers today have no promise of an inheritance in this world. Nevertheless, believers are promised an inheritance in the future kingdom (see Rom. 8:17).

the children of Israel; I have given them ^aas a portion to you and your sons, as an ordinance forever. ⁹This shall be yours of the most holy things *reserved* from the fire: every offering of theirs, every ^rgrain offering and every ^ssin offering and every ^ttrespass offering which they render to Me, *shall be* most holy for you and your sons. ¹⁰^uIn a most holy *place* you shall eat it; every male shall eat it. It shall be holy to you.

¹¹“This also *is* yours: ^vthe heave offering of their gift, with all the wave offerings of the children of Israel; I have given them to you, and your sons and daughters with you, as an ordinance forever. ^wEveryone who is ⁵clean in your house may eat it.

¹²^x“All the ⁶best of the oil, all the best of the new wine and the grain, ^ytheir firstfruits which they offer to the LORD, I have given them to you. ¹³Whatever first ripe fruit is in their land, ^zwhich they bring to the LORD, shall be yours. Everyone who is clean in your house may eat it.

¹⁴^a“Every ⁷devoted thing in Israel shall be yours.

¹⁵“Everything that first opens ^bthe womb of all flesh, which they bring to the LORD, whether man or beast, shall be yours; nevertheless ^cthe firstborn of man you shall surely redeem, and the firstborn of unclean animals you shall redeem. ¹⁶And those redeemed of the devoted things you shall redeem when one month old, ^daccording to your valuation, for five shekels of silver, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, which *is* ^etwenty gerahs. ¹⁷^fBut the firstborn of a cow, the firstborn of a sheep, or the firstborn of a goat you shall not redeem; they *are* holy. ^gYou shall sprinkle their blood on the altar, and burn their fat *as* an offering made by fire for a sweet aroma to the LORD. ¹⁸And their flesh shall be yours, just as the ^hwave⁸ breast and the right thigh are yours.

¹⁹“All the heave offerings of the holy things, which the children of Israel offer to the LORD, I have given to you and your sons and daughters with you as an ordinance forever; ⁱit is a covenant of salt forever before the LORD with you and your descendants with you.”

²⁰Then the LORD said to Aaron: “You shall have ^jno inheritance in their land, nor shall you have any portion among

⁸ ^qEx. 29:29; 40:13, 15
⁹ ^rLev. 2:2, 3; 10:12, 13 ^sLev. 6:25, 26
^tLev. 7:7; Num. 5:8-10
¹⁰ ^uLev. 6:16, 26
¹¹ ^vEx. 29:27, 28; Deut. 18:3-5 ^wLev. 22:1-16 ^xpurified
¹² ^xEx. 23:19; Neh. 10:35, 36 ^yEx. 22:29; Lev. 23:20
¹³ ^zLit. *fat*
¹⁴ ^aEx. 22:29; 23:19; 34:26
¹⁵ ^bLev. 27:1-33
¹⁶ ^cconsecrated
¹⁷ ^dEx. 13:2 ^eEx. 13:12-15; Num. 3:46; Luke 2:22-24
¹⁸ ^eLev. 27:6 ^fEx. 30:13
¹⁹ ^fDeut. 15:19
²⁰ ^gLev. 3:2, 5
²¹ ^hEx. 29:26-28; Lev. 7:31-36
²² ^hbreast of the wave offering
²³ ⁱLev. 2:13; 2 Chr. 13:5; [Mark 9:49, 50]
²⁴ ^jDeut. 10:8, 9; 12:12; 14:27-29; 18:1, 2; Josh. 13:14, 33

them; ^kI *am* your portion and your inheritance among the children of Israel.

Tithes for Support of the Levites

²¹“Behold, ^lI have given the children of Levi all the tithes in Israel as ⁹an inheritance in return for the work which they perform, ^mthe work of the tabernacle of meeting. ²²ⁿHereafter the children of Israel shall not come near the tabernacle of meeting, ^olest they bear sin and die. ²³But the Levites shall perform the work of the tabernacle of meeting, and they shall bear their iniquity; *it shall be* a statute forever, throughout your generations, that among the children of Israel they shall have no inheritance. ²⁴For the tithes of the children of Israel, which they offer up *as* a heave offering to the LORD, I have given to the Levites ¹as an inheritance; therefore I have said to them, ‘Among the children of Israel they shall have no inheritance.’”

The Tithe of the Levites

²⁵Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ²⁶“Speak thus to the Levites, and say to them: ‘When you take from the children of Israel the tithes which I have given you from them as your inheritance, then you shall offer up a heave offering of it to the LORD, ^pa tenth of the tithe. ²⁷And your heave offering shall be reckoned to you as though *it were* the grain of the ^qthreshing floor and as the fullness of the winepress. ²⁸Thus you shall also offer a heave offering to the LORD from all your tithes which you receive from the children of Israel, and you shall give the LORD’s heave offering from it to Aaron the priest. ²⁹Of all your gifts you shall offer up every heave offering due to the LORD, from all the ²best of them, the consecrated part of them.’ ³⁰Therefore you shall say to them: ‘When you have lifted up the best of it, then *the rest* shall be accounted to the Levites as the produce of the threshing floor and as the produce of the winepress. ³¹You may eat it in any place, you and your households, for it *is* ^ryour ³reward for your work in the tabernacle of meeting. ³²And you shall ^sbear no sin because of it, when you have lifted up the best of it. But you shall not ^tprofane the holy gifts of the children of Israel, lest you die.’”

^k Ps. 16:5; Ezek. 44:28
^l ^lLev. 27:30-33; Deut. 14:22-29; Neh. 10:37; 12:44; Mal. 3:8-10; [Heb. 7:4-10] ^mNum. 3:7, 8 ⁹a possession
²² ⁿNum. 1:51
²³ ^oLev. 22:9
²⁴ ¹for a possession
²⁶ ^pNeh. 10:38
²⁷ ^qNum. 15:20; [2 Cor. 8:12]
²⁹ ²Lit. *fat*
³¹ ^r[Matt. 10:10; Luke 10:7]; 1 Cor. 9:13; [1 Tim. 5:18]
³ wages
³² ^sLev. 19:8; 22:16; Ezek. 22:26 ^tLev. 22:2, 15

18:21–24 all the tithes in Israel: The Levites also were the beneficiaries of the Lord’s service. Like the priests, the Levites would not inherit land inheritances, but would be provided for in a manner suitable for their service to God.

18:25–32 The Levites who lived from the tithes of the people were themselves under obligation to make offerings to the Lord, **a tenth of the tithe**. Those who lived from the tithes were to give tithes so that they also might thank God for what He had given them.

Laws of Purification

19 Now the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying, ²“This is the ¹ordinance of the law which the LORD has commanded, saying: ‘Speak to the children of Israel, that they bring you a red heifer without ²blemish, in which there is no ^adefect ^band on which a yoke has never come. ³You shall give it to Eleazar the priest, that he may take it ^coutside the camp, and it shall be slaughtered before him; ⁴and Eleazar the priest shall take some of its blood with his finger, and ^dsprinkle some of its blood seven times directly in front of the tabernacle of meeting. ⁵Then the heifer shall be burned in his sight: ^eits hide, its flesh, its blood, and its offal shall be burned. ⁶And the priest shall take ^fcedar wood and ^ghyssop and scarlet, and cast *them* into the midst of the fire burning the heifer. ^{7h}Then the priest shall wash his clothes, he shall bathe in water, and afterward he shall come into the camp; the priest shall be unclean until evening. ⁸And the one who burns it shall wash his clothes in water, bathe in water, and shall be unclean until evening. ⁹Then a man *who is clean* shall gather up ⁱthe ashes of the heifer, and store *them* outside the camp in a clean place; and they shall be kept for the congregation of the children of Israel ^jfor the water of ³purification; *it is* for purifying from sin. ¹⁰And the one who gathers the ashes of the heifer shall wash his clothes, and be unclean until evening. It shall be a statute forever to the children of Israel and to the stranger who dwells among them.

CHAPTER 19

² ^a Lev. 22:20-25; ^b Deut. 21:3;
¹ Sam. 6:7 ¹ statute
² defect
³ ^c Lev. 4:12, 21;
 Num. 19:9; Heb. 13:11
⁴ ^d Lev. 4:6; Heb. 9:13
⁵ ^e Ex. 29:14; Lev. 4:11, 12; 9:11
⁶ ^f Lev. 14:4, 6, 49
⁹ Ex. 12:22; 1 Kin. 4:33
⁷ ^h Lev. 11:25; 15:5; 16:26, 28
⁹ ⁱ [Heb. 19:13, 14]
^j Num. 19:13, 20, 21
³ Lit. impurity

¹¹ ^k Lev. 21:1, 11;
 Num. 5:2; 6:6; 9:6, 10; 31:19; Lam. 4:14;
 Hag. 2:13 ⁴ Lit. soul of man
¹² ^l Num. 19:19; 31:19
¹³ ^m Lev. 22:3-7
ⁿ Lev. 15:31 ^o Num. 8:7; 19:9 ^p Lev. 7:20; 22:3
¹⁵ ^q Lev. 11:32; Num. 31:20
¹⁶ ^r Num. 19:11; 31:19
¹⁷ ^s Num. 19:9 ⁵ Lit. living
¹⁸ ^t Ps. 51:7
¹⁹ ^u Lev. 14:9

^{11k}“He who touches the dead ⁴body of anyone shall be unclean seven days. ^{12l}He shall purify himself with the water on the third day and on the seventh day; *then* he will be clean. But if he does not purify himself on the third day and on the seventh day, he will not be clean. ¹³Whoever touches the body of anyone who has died, and ^mdoes not purify himself, ⁿdefiles the tabernacle of the LORD. That person shall be cut off from Israel. He shall be unclean, because ^othe water of purification was not sprinkled on him; ^phis uncleanness *is* still on him.

¹⁴“This is the law when a man dies in a tent: All who come into the tent and all who *are* in the tent shall be unclean seven days; ¹⁵and every ^qopen vessel, which has no cover fastened on it, *is* unclean. ^{16r}Whoever in the open field touches one who is slain by a sword or who has died, or a bone of a man, or a grave, shall be unclean seven days.

¹⁷“And for an unclean *person* they shall take some of the ^sashes of the heifer burnt for purification from sin, and ⁵running water shall be put on them in a vessel. ¹⁸A clean person shall take ^thyssop and dip *it* in the water, sprinkle *it* on the tent, on all the vessels, on the persons who were there, or on the one who touched a bone, the slain, the dead, or a grave. ¹⁹The clean *person* shall sprinkle the unclean on the third day and on the seventh day; ^uand on the seventh day he shall purify himself, wash his clothes, and bathe in water; and at evening he shall be clean.

19:2 The **red heifer** was to be sacrificed in a special ritual outside the camp. Everything about this sacrifice was unusual. Ordinarily, the sacrificial animal was male; this one was female. The mention of the color of the animal is also unusual; in no other animal sacrifice was the color of the animal specified.

19:3 The naming of **Eleazar the priest** was a logical sequel to the test of the true priestly family in ch. 17. Before his father Aaron died, Eleazar had to start functioning in a prominent position before the congregation to ensure a smooth transition to his leadership. Ordinarily animals were sacrificed on or near the altar; in this case the animal was slaughtered **outside the camp**.

19:4-8 The total burning of the animal was also unusual, particularly since this animal was burned away from the altar. Symbolic items associated with cleansing—**cedar wood and hyssop and scarlet** (see Lev. 14:4)—were then added to the fire. All were burned to ashes. The ritual made both the priest and those who helped him unclean.

19:9, 10 The **ashes of the heifer** were used in sacrificial rituals. The ashes were added to water, and the resultant mixture was used in certain rites of purification. **for purifying from sin**: What might be regarded as magical in a pagan context is here a visible symbol of God’s inner work of purifying a person or object from sin.

19:11-13 The ashes and water had particular meaning for a person who had touched a **dead body**. Again, the sprinkling of **the water of purification** was more than a physical cleansing; it signified a submission to spiritual cleansing as well.

19:14-19 Various instances of death and uncleanness are listed in

these verses. This passage may have been a response to practical questions posed by the people. For example, if a man died in a tent, the people would certainly want to know what was required of them and how far the uncleanness extended. And what would happen if a person touched the body of a dead man in the field or in a grave?

wash

(Heb. *rachats*) (19:7, 8, 19; Gen. 18:4; Lev. 16:4, 24, 26, 28; Is. 1:16; 4:4) Strong’s #7364

Water was scarce, but laws of ritual demanded much washing. The Israelites washed their hands after returning from the market, before meals, and at many other times; and they immersed their bodies before entering the synagogue or temple courts. Bathing for the purpose of physical cleansing or hygiene is seldom mentioned in the Bible (Ex. 2:5; 2 Sam. 11:2), but foot washing was a normal part of hospitality. A servant met visitors at the entry, removed their sandals, and washed their feet. Jesus taught the lesson of becoming a servant by washing the disciples’ feet (John 13:3-17). Jesus’ sacrificial death brought about the spiritual purification for believers that the ritual washing of the law was unable to achieve (Eph. 5:25-27; Titus 3:5; Heb. 9:9-14).

²⁰“But the man who is unclean and does not purify himself, that person shall be cut off from among the assembly, because he has ^vdefiled the sanctuary of the LORD. The water of purification has not been sprinkled on him; he *is* unclean. ²¹It shall be a perpetual statute for them. He who sprinkles the water of purification shall wash his clothes; and he who touches the water of purification shall be unclean until evening. ²²^w Whatever the unclean *person* touches shall be unclean; and ^xthe person who touches *it* shall be unclean until evening.”

Moses' Error at Kadesh

20 Then^a the children of Israel, the whole congregation, came into the Wilderness of Zin in the first month, and the people stayed in ^bKadesh; and ^cMiriam died there and was buried there.

^{2d}Now there was no water for the congregation; ^eso they gathered together against Moses and Aaron. ³And the people ^fcontended with Moses and spoke, saying: “If only we had died ^gwhen our brethren died before the LORD! ⁴^h Why have you brought up the assembly of the LORD into this wilderness, that we and our animals should die here? ⁵And why have you made us come up out of Egypt, to bring us to this evil place? It is not a place of grain or figs or vines or pomegranates; nor *is* there any water to drink.” ⁶So Moses and Aaron went from the presence of the assembly to the door of the tabernacle of meeting, and ⁱthey ¹fell on their faces. And ^jthe glory of the LORD appeared to them.

²⁰ ^v Num. 19:13
²² ^w Hag. 2:11-13
^x Lev. 15:5

CHAPTER 20

¹ ^a Num. 13:21;
33:36 ^b Num. 13:26
^c Ex. 15:20; Num.
26:59
² ^d Ex. 17:1 ^e Num.
16:19, 42
³ ^f Ex. 17:2; Num.
14:2 ^g Num. 11:1,
33; 14:37; 16:31-
35, 49
⁴ ^h Ex. 17:3
⁶ ⁱ Num. 14:5;
16:4, 22, 45 / Num.
14:10 ^j *prostrated*
themselves

⁸ ^k Ex. 4:17, 20; 17:5,
6 / Neh. 9:15; Ps.
78:15, 16; 105:41; Is.
43:20; 48:21; [1 Cor.
10:4]

⁹ ^m Num. 17:10
¹⁰ ⁿ Ps. 106:33
¹¹ ^o Ex. 17:6; Deut.
8:15; Ps. 78:16; Is.
48:21; [1 Cor. 10:4]
¹² ^p Num. 20:28;
27:14; Deut. 1:37;
3:26, 27; 34:5 ^q Lev.
10:3; Ezek. 20:41;
36:23; 1 Pet. 3:15

¹³ ^r Deut. 33:8;
Ps. 106:32 ² Lit.
Contention

¹⁴ ^s Judg. 11:16,
17 ^t Gen. 36:31-39
^u Deut. 2:4; Obad.
10-12

¹⁵ ^v Gen. 46:6; Acts
7:15 ^w Ex. 12:40
^x Ex. 1:11; Deut.
26:6; Acts 7:19 ³ *did*
evil to

¹⁶ ^y Ex. 2:23; 3:7
² Ex. 3:2; 14:19

⁷Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ⁸^k“Take the rod; you and your brother Aaron gather the congregation together. Speak to the rock before their eyes, and it will yield its water; thus ^lyou shall bring water for them out of the rock, and give drink to the congregation and their animals.” ⁹So Moses took the rod ^mfrom before the LORD as He commanded him.

¹⁰And Moses and Aaron gathered the assembly together before the rock; and he said to them, ⁿ“Hear now, you rebels! Must we bring water for you out of this rock?” ¹¹Then Moses lifted his hand and struck the rock twice with his rod; ^oand water came out abundantly, and the congregation and their animals drank.

¹²Then the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, “Because ^pyou did not believe Me, to ^qhallow Me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them.”

¹³^rThis *was* the water of ²Meribah, because the children of Israel contended with the LORD, and He was hallowed among them.

Passage Through Edom Refused

¹⁴^sNow Moses sent messengers from Kadesh to the king of ^tEdom. ^u“Thus says your brother Israel: ‘You know all the hardship that has befallen us, ¹⁵^vhow our fathers went down to Egypt, ^wand we dwelt in Egypt a long time, ^xand the Egyptians ³afflicted us and our fathers. ¹⁶^yWhen we cried out to the LORD, He heard our voice and ^zsent the Angel and brought us up out of Egypt; now here we

19:20–22 One who did not **purify himself** rejected God’s grace and consequently incurred His wrath. The issues were so serious that the one who applied the waters of purification to another became unclean also. These rituals were not given to make the lives of the people difficult. They were given to graciously instruct the people about the nature of true holiness.

20:1 The expression **the first month** lacks the notice of a year. Most likely, this was the fortieth year, the end of the sojourn in the wilderness.

20:2 The words **no water** convey a sense of *déjà vu*. Having no water was the subject of the first crisis that the Israelites had in their journey out of Egypt (Ex. 17). Here, in the fortieth year since the Exodus, the same problem arose, provoking the same ingratitude and anger from the people.

20:8 Moses was to take his rod, but was only to **speak to the rock**. A generation earlier, God’s words were equally specific. At that time, Moses was told to take his rod and “strike the rock” (Ex. 17:6). On the first occasion, Moses did exactly what God had commanded; on the second occasion, he did not.

20:10 The words of Moses are shocking: **Hear now, you rebels!** These words are understandable to be sure. But they are the words of one who had crossed the line, whose patience had been tried to the breaking point.

20:11 In his rage, Moses did not speak to the rock as God had commanded. Instead he raised his rod and **struck the rock twice**. When he disobeyed, Moses violated all that he had stood for over

the last 40 years! God was not displaying anger, but Moses fell into deliberate, unrighteous anger. And in his anger, Moses lost his own stake in the Promised Land. What a huge loss for just a moment of disobedience!

20:12 God’s judgment comes in expected severity, given the nature of Moses’ offense. Moses is charged with the double sin of not believing in God and not hallowing Him before the people. **Hallow** means to “treat as holy.” God saw Moses’ action as a lack of respect and awe for His holiness. God’s instructions were not honored. Moses, who for so long had been concerned with the reputation of God (14:13–19), slighted the Lord by not following His clear instructions in the presence of the congregation. Aaron also was indicted and sentenced by the Lord. For both brothers, the sentence was to join the death march of the older generation. Neither of them would enter Canaan.

20:13 **Meribah**, or “Contention,” is the name given to the place of Moses’ sin. This is the same name that was given 40 years earlier to the location of the first water crisis (Ex. 17:7).

20:14–21 Moses used diplomacy in his appeal to **the king of Edom**, testifying to the saving work of the Lord in delivering the people of Israel from Egypt. He also made what appears to be a most reasonable request: **let us pass through your country**. When Edom refused passage, Moses countered with an even more gentle request and reassured the Edomites that the Israelites had not come to conquer. This request was refused with a show of force.

are in Kadesh, a city on the edge of your border. ¹⁷Please ^alet us pass through your country. We will not pass through fields or vineyards, nor will we drink water from wells; we will go along the King's Highway; we will not turn aside to the right hand or to the left until we have passed through your territory."

¹⁸Then ^bEdom said to him, "You shall not pass through my *land*, lest I come out against you with the sword."

¹⁹So the children of Israel said to him, "We will go by the Highway, and if I or my livestock drink any of your water, ^cthen I will pay for it; let me only pass through on foot, nothing *more*."

²⁰Then he said, ^d"You shall not pass through." So Edom came out against them with many men and with a strong hand. ²¹Thus Edom ^erefused to give Israel passage through his territory; so Israel ^fturned away from him.

Death of Aaron

²²Now the children of Israel, the whole congregation, journeyed from ^gKadesh ^hand came to Mount Hor. ²³And the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron in Mount Hor by the border of the land of Edom, saying: ²⁴"Aaron shall ⁱbe gathered to his people, for he shall not enter the land which I have given to the children of Israel, because you rebelled against My word at the water of Meribah. ²⁵^jTake Aaron and Eleazar his son, and bring them up to Mount Hor; ²⁶and strip Aaron of his garments and put them on Eleazar his son; for Aaron shall be gathered to his people and die there." ²⁷So Moses did just as the LORD commanded, and they went up to Mount Hor in the sight of all the congregation. ²⁸^kMoses stripped Aaron of his garments and put them on Eleazar his son; and ^lAaron died there on the top of the mountain. Then Moses and Eleazar came down from the mountain. ²⁹Now when all the congregation saw that Aaron was dead, all the house of Israel mourned for Aaron ^mthirty days.

¹⁷ ^a Num. 21:22
¹⁸ ^b Num. 24:18; Ps. 137:7; Ezek. 25:12, 13; Obad. 10-15
¹⁹ ^c Deut. 2:6, 28
²⁰ ^d Judg. 11:17
²¹ ^e Deut. 2:27, 30
^f Deut. 2:8; Judg. 11:18
²² ^g Num. 33:37
²³ ^h Num. 21:4
²⁴ ⁱ Gen. 25:8; Deut. 32:50 ^a Die and join his ancestors
²⁵ ^j Num. 33:38; Deut. 32:50
²⁶ ^k Ex. 29:29, 30; Deut. 10:6 ^l Num. 33:38
²⁹ ^m Gen. 50:3, 10; Deut. 34:8

CHAPTER 21

¹ ^a Num. 33:40; Josh. 12:14; Judg. 1:16
² ^b Gen. 28:20; Judg. 11:30 ^c Deut. 2:34
³ ^l Lit. Utter Destruction
⁴ ^d Judg. 11:18
⁵ ^e impatient
⁵ ^e Num. 20:4, 5

BIBLE TIMES & CULTURE NOTES



The King's Highway

The King's Highway was a major north-south road of Palestine. A mountainous road between Saudi Arabia and Damascus, it ran close to the desert east of the Jordan River. The King's Highway crossed lands that were controlled by Edomites, Moabites, Ammonites, and Israelites. In places it was not at all a "king's highway," for it followed wadis (Zered, Arnon, and Jabbok) that were too steep and rough for armies or caravans to travel.

Another road ran part of the way alongside the King's Highway. This road connected Edom to Rabbath-bene-ammon across flat wilderness land. Although this road helped travelers escape the steep wadis, the lack of water along the way often caused problems.

The northern part of the land on the eastern side of the Jordan River enjoyed many contacts with Palestine; several roads ran down the mountains into the Jordan valley. At shallow places—fords—travelers could cross the Jordan and then continue on the road to the cities of Beth Shean, Shechem, and Jericho.

Canaanites Defeated at Hormah

²¹ The ^aking of Arad, the Canaanite, who dwelt in the South, heard that Israel was coming on the road to Atharim. Then he fought against Israel and took *some* of them prisoners. ^{2b} So Israel made a vow to the LORD, and said, "If You will indeed deliver this people into my hand, then ^cI will utterly destroy their cities." ³ And the LORD listened to the voice of Israel and delivered up the Canaanites, and they utterly destroyed them and their cities. So the name of that place was called ¹Hormah.

The Bronze Serpent

⁴ Then they journeyed from Mount Hor by the Way of the Red Sea, to ^dgo around the land of Edom; and the soul of the people became very ²discouraged on the way. ⁵ And the people ^espoke against God and against Moses: "Why have you brought us

20:22–29 Mount Hor is possibly Jebel Madurah, a mountain about 15 miles northeast of Kadesh, on the northwest border of Edom. The mountain is on the direct route from Kadesh to Moab. It was here that the sad news came that Aaron was going to die. **Eleazar** received the duties of Aaron's priesthood. Soon the body of Moses would be left on another mountain, and Joshua would join Eleazar as a spiritual leader of the new generation. The **thirty days** of mourning for Aaron indicates the high esteem in which he was held by his brother and the people.

21:1–3 The first of Israel's military victories against the Canaanites came as the result of an attack by **the king of Arad**. The text emphasizes that the attackers were Canaanites and that the attack was unprovoked. The Israelites fought valiantly and God fought for them. The Israelites triumphed over the army of Arad and destroyed

its cities. This victory was the beginning of Israel's triumphant march into the Promised Land.

21:4, 5 The long journey **around the land of Edom** was necessary because the king of Edom refused to grant Moses' request for passage through his territory (20:14–21). After the first flush of victory (21:1–3), this circuitous route was particularly unpleasant to the people of Israel. Once again, they started complaining against Moses and God. The people again (see 11:6) protested God's provision of manna, calling it **this worthless bread**. As the psalmist later observed: "How often they provoked Him in the wilderness, and grieved Him in the desert!" (Ps. 78:40). In their contempt of the "bread of heaven" (see Ps. 78:23, 24), the people were actually spurning God, who had given them this miraculous food.

up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For *there* is no food and no water, and our soul ³loathes this worthless bread.” ⁶So *f*the LORD sent ^gfiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and many of the people of Israel died.

^{7h}Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, “We have ⁱsinned, for we have spoken against the LORD and against you; ^jpray to the LORD that He take away the serpents from us.” So Moses prayed for the people.

⁸Then the LORD said to Moses, ^k“Make a ^lfiery serpent, and set it on a pole; and it shall be that everyone who is bitten, when he looks at it, shall live.” ⁹So ^mMoses made a bronze serpent, and put it on a pole; and so it was, if a serpent had bit-

⁵ ³ detests
⁶ ¹ 1 Cor. 10:9
⁹ Deut. 8:15
⁷ ^h Num. 11:2; Ps. 78:34; Is. 26:16; Hos. 5:15
¹ Lev. 26:40
/ Ex. 8:8; 1 Sam. 12:19; 1 Kin. 13:6; Acts 8:24
⁸ ^k [John 3:14, 15]
¹ Is. 14:29; 30:6
⁹ ^m 2 Kin. 18:4; John 3:14, 15

¹⁰ ⁿ Num. 33:43, 44
¹¹ ⁴ Lit. *The Heaps of Abarim*
¹² ^o Deut. 2:13
¹³ ^p Num. 22:36; Judg. 11:18

ten anyone, when he looked at the bronze serpent, he lived.

From Mount Hor to Moab

¹⁰Now the children of Israel moved on and ⁿcamped in Obboth. ¹¹And they journeyed from Obboth and camped at ⁴Ije Abarim, in the wilderness which is east of Moab, toward the sunrise. ¹²^oFrom there they moved and camped in the Valley of Zered. ¹³From there they moved and camped on the other side of the Arnon, which is in the wilderness that extends from the border of the Amorites; for ^pthe Arnon is the border of Moab, between Moab and the Amorites. ¹⁴Therefore it is said in the Book of the Wars of the LORD:

21:6 God’s discipline came upon the people in the form of **fiery serpents**. Snakes with poisonous venom for which there was no antidote caused raging fevers and agonizing deaths.
21:7–9 The pain of the venomous bites drove the people to repent, and they begged Moses to intervene on their behalf. God instructed Moses to make an image of one of the serpents and to **set it on a pole**. Anyone who had been bitten and looked at the image **lived**. The raising of such a contemptible symbol on a pole ordinarily would have caused the people to shrink away in revulsion. But in this case the Israelites had to look at the serpent’s image in order

to live. Jesus pointed to this stunning image in His dialogue with Nicodemus (see John 3:14, 15) as an analogy to His own execution. To the Jews, crucifixion was a sign of a curse. Therefore, just as the Israelites had to look on the repugnant, uplifted image of a serpent to be saved, we today have to look at the uplifted image of Jesus on a cross in order to be saved from our sins.
21:10–13 The Israelites went around the region of Edom and entered the territory of Moab, which was just east of Jericho. It became the new staging area for the conquest of the land.
21:14, 15 **The Book of the Wars of the LORD** refers to an early



⁵⁴ Waheb in Suphah,
The brooks of the Arnon,
¹⁵ And the slope of the brooks
That reaches to the dwelling of ^qAr,
And lies on the border of Moab.”

¹⁶ From there *they went* ^r to Beer, which
is the well where the LORD said to Moses,
“Gather the people together, and I will
give them water.” ^{17s} Then Israel sang
this song:

“Spring up, O well!
All of you sing to it—
¹⁸ The well the leaders sank,
Dug by the nation’s nobles,
By the ^tlawgiver, with their staves.”

And from the wilderness *they went* to
Mattanah, ¹⁹ from Mattanah to Nahaliel,
from Nahaliel to Bamoth, ²⁰ and from Ba-
moth, *in* the valley that *is* in the ⁶country
of Moab, to the top of Pisgah which looks
^u down on the ⁷wasteland.

King Sihon Defeated

²¹ Then ^v Israel sent messengers to
Sihon king of the Amorites, saying,
^{22w} “Let me pass through your land. We
will not turn aside into fields or vine-
yards; we will not drink water from wells.
We will go by the King’s Highway until
we have passed through your territory.”
^{23x} But Sihon would not allow Israel to
pass through his territory. So Sihon gath-
ered all his people together and ⁸ went
out against Israel in the wilderness, ^y and
he came to Jahaz and fought against Is-
rael. ²⁴ Then ^z Israel defeated him with
the edge of the sword, and took posses-
sion of his land from the Arnon to the
Jabbok, as far as the people of Ammon;
for the border of the people of Ammon

¹⁴ ^s Ancient
unknown places;
Vg. *What He did in
the Red Sea*
¹⁵ ^q Num. 21:28;
Deut. 2:9, 18, 29
¹⁶ ^r Judg. 9:21
¹⁷ ^s Ex. 15:1
¹⁸ ^t Is. 33:22
²⁰ ^u Num. 23:28
⁶ Lit. *field* ⁷ Heb.
Jeshimon
²¹ ^v Num. 32:33;
Deut. 2:26–37;
Judg. 11:19
²² ^w Num. 20:16, 17
²³ ^x Deut. 29:7
^y Deut. 2:32; Judg.
11:20 ⁸ *attacked*
²⁴ ^z Deut. 2:33;
Josh. 12:1; Neh.
9:22; Ps. 135:10;
136:19; Amos 2:9

²⁵ ^a Amos 2:10
²⁷ ^y *parables*
²⁸ ^b Jer. 48:45, 46
^c Deut. 2:9, 18; Is.
15:1 ^d Num. 22:41;
33:52
²⁹ ^e Jer. 48:46
^f Judg. 11:24; 1 Kin.
11:33; 2 Kin. 23:13
^g Is. 15:2, 5 ^h Is. 16:2
³⁰ ⁱ Num. 32:3,
34; Jer. 48:18, 22
^j Is. 15:2
³² ^k Num. 32:1,
3, 35; Jer. 48:32
^l *secretly search*
³³ ^l Deut. 29:7
^m Deut. 3:1 ⁿ Josh.
13:12
³⁴ ^o Deut. 3:2

was fortified. ²⁵ So Israel took all these
cities, and Israel ^a dwelt in all the cities
of the Amorites, in Heshbon and in all
its villages. ²⁶ For Heshbon *was* the city
of Sihon king of the Amorites, who had
fought against the former king of Moab,
and had taken all his land from his hand
as far as the Arnon. ²⁷ Therefore those
who speak in ⁹ proverbs say:

“Come to Heshbon, let it be built;
Let the city of Sihon be repaired.

²⁸ For ^b fire went out from Heshbon,
A flame from the city of Sihon;
It consumed ^c Ar of Moab,
The lords of the ^d heights of the
Arnon.

²⁹ Woe to you, ^e Moab!
You have perished, O people of
^f Chemosh!
He has given his ^g sons as fugitives,
And his ^h daughters into captivity,
To Sihon king of the Amorites.

³⁰ “But we have shot at them;
Heshbon has perished ⁱ as far as
Dibon.
Then we laid waste as far as
Nophah,
Which *reaches* to ^j Medeba.”

³¹ Thus Israel dwelt in the land of the
Amorites. ³² Then Moses sent to ^l spy
out ^k Jazer; and they took its villages and
drove out the Amorites who *were* there.

King Og Defeated

^{33l} And they turned and went up by the
way to ^m Bashan. So Og king of Bashan
went out against them, he and all his peo-
ple, to battle ⁿ at Edrei. ³⁴ Then the LORD
said to Moses, ^o “Do not fear him, for I

collection of songs and writings known today only from this citation. The fact that Numbers draws upon other early Hebrew writings shows that the ancient Hebrew peoples had other literature in addition to Scripture. The song is difficult to translate today.

21:16–20 Beer means “Well.” At last the people had come to a place where they could dig a well and find adequate water. God had graciously provided for them and had given them a taste of the Promised Land that they would soon occupy. The song of vv. 17, 18 may be called “The Song of the Well.” **Mattanah, Nahaliel, Bamoth**, and the tableland of **Pisgah** are not known to us today; they were merely stopping places of the nation along the route to the land of promise.

21:21–26 The defeat of **Sihon king of the Amorites** began with his rejection of a request for safe passage, not unlike a similar rejection from the king of Edom (20:14–21). In the case of Edom, Israel was not permitted by God to engage in a war of conquest. The territory of Edom was protected by the Lord in an ancient covenant (see Gen. 36; Deut. 2:4, 5). No such protection was given to the Amorites, however; they were among the peoples whom Israel was commissioned to destroy (see Ex. 33:2; 34:11). Sihon not only rejected the request of Israel, but gathered for war against Israel at **Jahaz**. Israel completely

defeated Sihon. This was the first of her victories east of the Jordan River. Israel conquered all of the cities that had belonged to the Amorites. This was part of the plan of God: Israel would live in the cities of her vanquished foes (Deut. 2:26–37).

21:27–32 Those who speak in proverbs refers not to wisdom sayings as in the Book of Proverbs, but to taunt songs as seen elsewhere in this chapter. The song begins with a recital of the earlier victory of the Amorites over the people of Moab and their god **Chemosh**. After defeating Sihon and the Amorites, Israel became a formidable threat to Moab (22:3). Verses 31, 32 refer to further encroachments of Israel in the land of the Amorites.

21:33–35 The defeat of **Og king of Bashan** immediately followed the defeat of the Amorites. The people of Israel had gained the control of all the land east of the Jordan River and north of the Arnon River. These early victories were part of the holy war of God and were celebrated by Israel as a part of her worship tradition (see Deut. 3:1–11; Ps. 135:8–12; 136:17–22). God righteously and faithfully fulfilled His promise to Abraham (Gen. 15:7–21) that one day the sins of the Amorites would be judged and the people of promise would inherit their land.

have ²delivered him into your hand, with all his people and his land; and ^pyou shall do to him as you did to Sihon king of the Amorites, who dwelt at Heshbon.” ^{35 q}So they defeated him, his sons, and all his people, until there was no survivor left him; and they took possession of his land.

Balak Sends for Balaam

22 Then ^athe children of Israel moved, and camped in the plains of Moab on the side of the Jordan *across from* Jericho.

²Now ^bBalak the son of Zippor saw all that Israel had done to the Amorites. ³And ^cMoab was exceedingly afraid of the people because they *were* many, and Moab was sick with dread because of the children of Israel. ⁴So Moab said to ^dthe elders of Midian, “Now this company will ¹lick up everything around us, as an ox licks up the grass of the field.” And Balak the son of Zippor *was* king of the Moabites at that time. ⁵Then ^ehe sent messengers to Balaam the son of Beor at ^fPethor, which *is* near ²the River in the land of ³the sons of his people, to call him, saying: “Look, a people has come from Egypt. See, they cover the face of the earth, and are settling next to me! ^{6g}Therefore please come at once, ^hcurse this people for me, for they *are* too mighty for me. Perhaps I shall be able to defeat

34 ^pNum. 21:24; Ps. 135:10; 136:20
² *given you victory over him*
35 ^q Deut. 3:3, 4; 29:7; Josh. 13:12

CHAPTER 22

1 ^a Num. 33:48, 49
2 ^b Josh. 24:9; Judg. 11:25; Mic. 6:5;
Rev. 2:14
3 ^c Ex. 15:15
4 ^d Num. 25:15-18; 31:1-3; Josh. 13:21
¹ *consume*
5 ^e Num. 31:8, 16; Deut. 23:4; Josh. 13:22; 24:9; Neh. 13:1, 2; Mic. 6:5; 2 Pet. 2:15; Jude 11; Rev. 2:14
^f Deut. 23:4 ² *The Euphrates* ³ *Or the people of Amau*
6 ^g Num. 22:17; 23:7;
8 ^h Num. 22:12; 24:9

7 ¹ Sam. 9:7, 8
8 ⁱ Num. 22:19
9 ^k Gen. 20:3
12 ^j Num. 23:20; [Rom. 11:28]
15 ^d *distinguished*

them and drive them out of the land, for I know that he whom you bless *is* blessed, and he whom you curse *is* cursed.”

⁷So the elders of Moab and the elders of Midian departed with ⁱthe diviner’s fee in their hand, and they came to Balaam and spoke to him the words of Balak. ⁸And he said to them, ^j“Lodge here tonight, and I will bring back word to you, as the LORD speaks to me.” So the princes of Moab stayed with Balaam.

⁹^kThen God came to Balaam and said, “Who *are* these men with you?”

¹⁰So Balaam said to God, “Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, has sent to me, *saying*, ¹¹‘Look, a people has come out of Egypt, and they cover the face of the earth. Come now, curse them for me; perhaps I shall be able to overpower them and drive them out.’”

¹²And God said to Balaam, “You shall not go with them; you shall not curse the people, for ^lthey *are* blessed.”

¹³So Balaam rose in the morning and said to the princes of Balak, “Go back to your land, for the LORD has refused to give me permission to go with you.”

¹⁴And the princes of Moab rose and went to Balak, and said, “Balaam refuses to come with us.”

¹⁵Then Balak again sent princes, more numerous and more ⁴honorable than they. ¹⁶And they came to Balaam and

22:1 the plains of Moab: With these words we come to the end of the travels of Israel described in the Book of Numbers. Not until the Book of Joshua does the story line of travel and conquest resume. **On the side of the Jordan across from Jericho** refers to the area they had conquered so far, territory that would be settled by two and a half tribes (ch. 32). However, the heart of the land was west of the Jordan River. The first city there that the Israelites would need to conquer was the oldest walled city in the world, ancient Jericho. **22:2–5** Chapters 22–24 focus on **Balak**, the king of Moab, and **Balaam**, whom Balak hired to destroy Israel by spiritual means. Moab was not yet facing Israel’s threatening armies. But Balak knew that his enemy Sihon of Heshbon had been defeated by Israel (21:21–32), and he had reason to fear that he and his kingdom would be next. He and the people of Moab were **exceedingly afraid and sick with dread**. Balak believed that he could not fight Israel on the field of battle and win. So he decided to fight them on another level—that of spiritual warfare. **The elders of Midian** with whom Balak consulted were the leaders of a mobile people with whom Balak may have had a mutual agreement of protection. **22:5** Balak sought out a pagan prophet who might engage Israel in spiritual warfare by causing her “gods,” as they thought, to cease protecting them. Only then would Balak and Moab be safe from this formidable foe. The Moabites believed that blessings and cursings from the gods could be manipulated by skilled agents, who presumed to be able to traffic with the gods. At the time, the most famous of these agents was **Balaam** of Mesopotamia. In 1967, a discovery was made in Jordan of an eighth-century B.C. inscription of prophecies of Balaam. This discovery in what was ancient Moab is stunning evidence of the renown of this prophet even hundreds of years after his death. Yet the Balaam of Scripture is thoroughly reprehensible. In Scripture he becomes a paradigm of evil, a nearly satanic figure (see 31:8, 16; Deut. 23:4, 5; Josh. 13:22; 24:9, 10; Neh. 13:2; Mic. 6:5; 2 Pet. 2:15; Jude 11; Rev. 2:14). Balaam was a prophet-

et who specialized in animal divination. It was thought that such prophets could in some mysterious manner influence the gods by various rites. Yet Balaam became an unwilling agent of some of the most sublime prophecies of the glorious future of Israel (chs. 23; 24). **22:6–8** The strong reputation of Balaam, who was believed to be able to influence the gods, is indicated in the phrasing **he whom you bless is blessed, and he whom you curse is cursed**. Behind all of this, of course, is the reality of God’s irrevocable blessing on Israel and His standing curse on all who attempted to curse them (see Gen. 12:2, 3). In v. 8, Balaam speaks of **the LORD** as though he were intimate with Him. Because he was an internationally known soothsayer, it’s likely that he had heard enough about Israel from emissaries of Moab and Midian to have learned the name of the God of Israel. Indeed, the story of God’s deliverance of Israel from Egypt would have been widely known throughout the Middle East (see Deut. 2:25). **22:9–14** The first encounter of the servants of Moab and Midian with Balaam ended in failure. God mercifully instructed Balaam, in what may have been a night vision, that he was not to go with the men to curse Israel, because they were **blessed**. Since Israel was under the blessing of God, any attempt to curse that nation would have been an attack on the word of God that would have brought the one who cursed Israel under God’s curse (see Gen. 12:3). **22:15–21** The second encounter of the emissaries of Moab and Midian with Balaam seemed to reverse things. The emissaries came with more noble persons and with grander gifts, bribes, and promises. Again, Balaam spoke of God in a familiar manner: **the word of the LORD my God**. This was not a confession of faith in God. Rather, it was a sly manipulation on the part of Balaam, a bold and false claim to be a medium of Israel’s “god” just as he was the agent for many other gods. The duplicity of Balaam is seen in the way that God came to him the second time, reversing the clear orders He had given before (v. 12). Had Balaam been a true prophet, the words of God in

said to him, “Thus says Balak the son of Zippor: ‘Please let nothing hinder you from coming to me; ¹⁷for I will certainly ^mhonor you greatly, and I will do whatever you say to me. ⁿTherefore please come, curse this people for me.’”

¹⁸Then Balaam answered and said to the servants of Balak, ^o“Though Balak were to give me his house full of silver and gold, ^pI could not go beyond the word of the LORD my God, to do less or more. ¹⁹Now therefore, please, you also ^qstay here tonight, that I may know what more the LORD will say to me.”

²⁰^rAnd God came to Balaam at night and said to him, “If the men come to call you, rise *and* go with them; but ^sonly the word which I speak to you—that you shall do.” ²¹So Balaam rose in the morning, saddled his donkey, and went with the princes of Moab.

Balaam, the Donkey, and the Angel

²²Then God’s anger was aroused because he went, ^tand the Angel of the LORD took His stand in the way as an adversary against him. And he was riding on his donkey, and his two servants *were* with him. ²³Now ^uthe donkey saw the Angel of the LORD standing in the way with His drawn sword in His hand, and the donkey turned aside out of the way and went into the field. So Balaam struck the donkey to turn her back onto the road. ²⁴Then the Angel of the LORD stood in a narrow path between the vineyards, *with* a wall on this side and a wall on that side. ²⁵And when the donkey saw the Angel of the LORD, she pushed herself against the wall and crushed Balaam’s foot against the wall; so he struck her again. ²⁶Then the Angel of the LORD went further, and stood in a narrow place where there *was* no way to turn either to the right hand or to the left. ²⁷And when the donkey saw the Angel of the LORD, she lay down under Balaam; so Balaam’s anger was aroused, and he struck the donkey with his staff.

²⁸Then the LORD ^vopened the mouth

¹⁷ ^m Num. 24:11
ⁿ Num. 22:6
¹⁸ ^o Num. 22:38;
 24:13 ^p 1 Kin. 22:14;
 2 Chr. 18:13
¹⁹ ^q Num. 22:8
²⁰ ^r Num. 22:9
^s Num. 22:35; 23:5,
 12, 16, 26; 24:13
²¹ ^t Ex. 4:24
²² ^u Josh. 5:13;
 2 Kin. 6:17; Dan.
 10:7; Acts 2:29
²⁸ ^v 2 Pet. 2:16

²⁹ ^w [Prov. 12:10;
 Matt. 15:19]
^x mocked
³⁰ ^x 2 Pet. 2:16
^y accustomed
³¹ ^y Gen. 21:19;
 2 Kin. 6:17; Luke
 24:16, 31
³² ^z [2 Pet. 2:14, 15]
³³ ^z as an adversary
³⁴ ^a contrary
³⁴ ^a 1 Sam. 15:24,
 30; 26:21; 2 Sam.
 12:13 ⁹ Lit. *Is evil in
 your eyes*
³⁵ ^b Num. 22:20
³⁶ ^c Gen. 14:17
^d Num. 21:13
³⁷ ^e Num. 22:17;
 24:11
³⁸ ^f Num. 23:26;
 24:13; 1 Kin. 22:14;
 2 Chr. 18:13

of the donkey, and she said to Balaam, “What have I done to you, that you have struck me these three times?”

²⁹And Balaam said to the donkey, “Because you have ⁵abused me. I wish there were a sword in my hand, ^wfor now I would kill you!”

³⁰^xSo the donkey said to Balaam, “Am I not your donkey on which you have ridden, ever since *I became* yours, to this day? Was I ever ⁶disposed to do this to you?”

And he said, “No.”

³¹Then the LORD ^yopened Balaam’s eyes, and he saw the Angel of the LORD standing in the way with His drawn sword in His hand; and he bowed his head and fell flat on his face. ³²And the Angel of the LORD said to him, “Why have you struck your donkey these three times? Behold, I have come out ⁷to stand against you, because *your* way is ^zperverse⁸ before Me. ³³The donkey saw Me and turned aside from Me these three times. If she had not turned aside from Me, surely I would also have killed you by now, and let her live.”

³⁴And Balaam said to the Angel of the LORD, ^a“I have sinned, for I did not know You stood in the way against me. Now therefore, if it ⁹displeases You, I will turn back.”

³⁵Then the Angel of the LORD said to Balaam, “Go with the men, ^bbut only the word that I speak to you, that you shall speak.” So Balaam went with the princes of Balak.

³⁶Now when Balak heard that Balaam was coming, ^che went out to meet him at the city of Moab, ^dwhich *is* on the border at the Arnon, the boundary of the territory. ³⁷Then Balak said to Balaam, “Did I not earnestly send to you, calling for you? Why did you not come to me? Am I not able ^eto honor you?”

³⁸And Balaam said to Balak, “Look, I have come to you! Now, have I any power at all to say anything?^f The word that God puts in my mouth, that I must speak.”

³⁹So Balaam went with Balak, and they

v. 12 would have been definitive. But motivated by greed (2 Pet. 2:15; Jude 11), Balaam went to get a “new” word from God.

22:22–30 God’s anger was aroused against Balaam, apparently because Balaam intended to do what Balak had hired him to do, to curse Israel. God could not have been angry at his going, for He had given Balaam permission (v. 20). But He had also given Balaam orders to speak “only the word which I speak to you” (v. 20). Apparently, Balaam planned to say whatever brought the highest amount of money. **The Angel of the LORD** refers to the presence of God (see Gen. 22:11, 15). God was **an adversary** to Balaam. **The donkey saw the Angel of the LORD**: Balaam was supposed to have been able to communicate with the gods through animals. However, in this situation, the “seer” was blind to the presence of the true God.

It was the animal who was the seer, perceiving the true will of God in the angel that blocked the path.

22:31–35 Then the LORD opened Balaam’s eyes: The spiritually blind seer finally saw the majesty of the One whom the donkey saw all along. Now the pagan prophet was brought to his knees. His sin was the sin of willfulness: he had wanted to curse those whom God had blessed. In the strongest manner, the Angel of the Lord instructed Balaam to speak only what God spoke to him.

22:36–40 Balaam’s statement, the word that God puts in my mouth, that I must speak, must have been puzzling to Balak (see 23:11, 25; 24:10, 25). The sacrifices of v. 40 were not to God, of course. These were pagan sacrifices to idols. That which Balak sent **to Balaam** included the livers, which Balaam used in divination (24:1).

came to Kirjath Huzoth. ⁴⁰Then Balak offered oxen and sheep, and he sent *some* to Balaam and to the princes who *were* with him.

Balaam's First Prophecy

⁴¹So it was, the next day, that Balak took Balaam and brought him up to the *high* places of Baal, that from there he might observe ¹the extent of the people.

23 ^a“Build seven altars for me here, and prepare for me here seven bulls and seven rams.”

²And Balak did just as Balaam had spoken, and Balak and Balaam ^boffered a bull and a ram on *each* altar. ³Then Balaam said to Balak, ^c“Stand by your burnt offering, and I will go; perhaps the LORD will come ^dto meet me, and whatever He shows me I will tell you.” So he went to a desolate height. ^{4e}And God met Balaam, and he said to Him, “I have prepared the seven altars, and I have offered on *each* altar a bull and a ram.”

⁵Then the LORD ^fput a word in Balaam's mouth, and said, “Return to Balak, and thus you shall speak.” ⁶So he returned to him, and there he was, standing by his burnt offering, he and all the princes of Moab.

⁷And he ^gtook up his ¹oracle and said:

- “Balak the king of Moab has brought me from Aram,
From the mountains of the east.
^h“Come, curse Jacob for me,
And come, ⁱdenounce Israel!”
- ⁸ “How^j shall I curse whom God has not cursed?
And how shall I denounce *whom* the LORD has not denounced?
- ⁹ For from the top of the rocks I see him,
And from the hills I behold him;

41 ^g Num. 21:28;
Deut. 12:2 ¹ the
farthest extent

CHAPTER 23

1 ^a Num. 23:29
2 ^b Num. 23:14, 30
3 ^c Num. 23:15
^d Num. 23:4, 16
4 ^e Num. 23:16
5 ^f Num. 22:20, 35,
38; 23:16; Deut.
18:18; Jer. 1:9
7 ^g Deut. 23:4;
Job 27:1; 29:1; Ps.
78:2 ^h Num. 22:6,
11, 17 ⁱ 1 Sam.
17:10 ¹ prophetic
discourse
8 ^j Num. 22:12

9 ^k Deut. 32:8;
33:28; Josh. 11:23
^l Ex. 33:16; Ezra 9:2;
[Eph. 2:14]
10 ^m Gen. 13:16;
22:17; 28:14; 2 Chr.
1:9 ⁿ Ps. 116:15 ² Or
dust cloud
11 ^o Num. 22:11
12 ^p Num. 22:38
14 ^q Num. 23:1, 2
15 ³ So with MT,
Tg., Vg.; Syr. call;
LXX go and ask God
16 ^r Num. 22:35;
23:5
18 ^s Judg. 3:20
19 ^t 1 Sam. 15:29;
Mal. 3:6; James 1:17

There! ^kA people dwelling alone,
^lNot reckoning itself among the
nations.

¹⁰“Who^m can count the ²dust of Jacob,
Or number one-fourth of Israel?
Let me die ⁿthe death of the
righteous,
And let my end be like his!”

¹¹Then Balak said to Balaam, “What
have you done to me? ^oI took you to
curse my enemies, and look, you have
blessed *them* bountifully!”

¹²So he answered and said, ^p“Must I
not take heed to speak what the LORD has
put in my mouth?”

Balaam's Second Prophecy

¹³Then Balak said to him, “Please
come with me to another place from
which you may see them; you shall see
only the outer part of them, and shall
not see them all; curse them for me from
there.” ¹⁴So he brought him to the field of
Zophim, to the top of Pisgah, ^qand built
seven altars, and offered a bull and a ram
on *each* altar.

¹⁵And he said to Balak, “Stand here
by your burnt offering while I ³meet *the*
LORD over there.”

¹⁶Then the LORD met Balaam, and ^rput
a word in his mouth, and said, “Go back
to Balak, and thus you shall speak.” ¹⁷So
he came to him, and there he was, stand-
ing by his burnt offering, and the princes
of Moab were with him. And Balak said
to him, “What has the LORD spoken?”

¹⁸Then he took up his oracle and said:

- “Rise up, Balak, and hear!
Listen to me, son of Zippor!”
- ¹⁹“God^t is not a man, that He should lie,
Nor a son of man, that He should
repret.

22:41 The high places of Baal were selected not only because of the view they afforded. They were places of pagan worship.

23:1–6 The use of seven altars and the offering of a bull and a ram on each one was a part of Balaam's pagan ritual. Afterward, God in His mercy gave Balaam a true message to speak. The expression **the LORD put a word in Balaam's mouth** is the same type of language used of true prophets (see Jer. 1:9). God used this pagan to bless His people.

23:7–10 The first oracle of Balaam set the pace for the rest. There were seven oracles in all. Each is introduced with the words **he took up his oracle and said** (23:7, 18; 24:3, 15, 20, 21, 23). The word translated *oracle* is the word usually translated *proverb*. In this case, it means “prophetic speeches.” In the first oracle, Balaam described the purpose for which he was called, to curse Israel. However, he was unable to curse Israel because God would not allow it. From the worship site of pagan idolatry (see 22:41), he viewed Israel from a distance and saw that they were a people distinct from all other nations. **Who can count the dust of Jacob** suggests his attempt

at ascertaining their number by divination. The numbers were vast, and he had no handle on them. **my end:** This is a reference to Balaam's destiny. He would not share Israel's glorious life in heaven.

23:11, 12 The response of Balak was one of stunned horror. He had brought Balaam to curse Israel, but Balaam had **blessed them bountifully!**

23:13–17 Balak foolishly thought that going to another place would influence God to allow a curse to be placed on His people. **Then the LORD met Balaam:** The language implies that Balaam was still attempting to be the channel for a curse. Perhaps he was looking for a stronger force that would override the power of God that had made him bless Israel. But it was not to be. Again Balaam's words came from the only living God.

23:18–24 The second oracle was addressed to Balak, an unwilling listener. Balaam confessed a wondrous truth about the God of Israel: He is unable to change; He cannot lie. Because God had blessed Israel, Balaam was powerless to change this to a curse. God had seen many examples of evil in His people during the wilderness years.

Has He ^asaid, and will He not do?
Or has He spoken, and will He not
make it good?

²⁰ Behold, I have received *a command*
to bless;
^v He has blessed, and I cannot
reverse it.

²¹ “He ^w has not observed iniquity in
Jacob,
Nor has He seen ^d wickedness in
Israel.

The LORD his God *is* with him,
^x And the shout of a King *is* among
them.

²² ^y God brings them out of Egypt;
He has ^z strength like a wild ox.

²³ “For *there* is no ⁵ sorcery against Jacob,
Nor any ⁶ divination against Israel.
It now must be said of Jacob
And of Israel, ‘Oh, ^a what God has
done!’

²⁴ Look, a people rises ^b like a lioness,
And lifts itself up like a lion;
^c It shall not lie down until it devours
the prey,
And drinks the blood of the slain.”

²⁵ Then Balak said to Balaam, “Neither
curse them at all, nor bless them at all!”

²⁶ So Balaam answered and said to
Balak, “Did I not tell you, saying, ^d ‘All
that the LORD speaks, that I must do?’”

Balaam's Third Prophecy

²⁷ Then Balak said to Balaam, “Please
come, I will take you to another place;
perhaps it will please God that you may
curse them for me from there.” ²⁸ So
Balak took Balaam to the top of Peor,
that ^e overlooks ⁷ the wasteland. ²⁹ Then
Balaam said to Balak, “Build for me here
seven altars, and prepare for me here
seven bulls and seven rams.” ³⁰ And
Balak did as Balaam had said, and offered
a bull and a ram on *every* altar.

24 Now when Balaam saw that it
pleased the LORD to bless Israel,
he did not go as at ^a other times, to seek
to use ¹ sorcery, but he set his face toward

¹⁹ ^u Num. 11:23;
1 Kin. 8:56
²⁰ ^v Gen. 12:2;
22:17; Num. 22:12
²¹ ^w Ps. 32:2; [Rom.
4:7, 8] ^x Ps. 89:15-18
⁴ trouble
²² ^y Num. 24:8
^z Deut. 33:17; Job
39:10
²³ ^a Ps. 31:19; 44:1
⁵ enchantment
⁶ fortune-telling
²⁴ ^b Gen. 49:9
^c Gen. 49:27; Josh.
11:23
²⁶ ^d Num. 22:38
²⁸ ^e Num. 21:20
⁷ Heb. *Jeshimon*

CHAPTER 24

¹ ^a Num. 23:3, 15
¹ enchantments

² ^b Num. 2:2,
34 ^c Num. 11:25;
1 Sam. 10:10; 19:20,
23; 2 Chr. 15:1
³ ^d Num. 23:7, 18
⁴ ^e Ezek. 1:28
⁶ ^f Ps. 1:3; Jer. 17:8
⁹ Ps. 104:16
⁷ ^h Jer. 51:13; Rev.
17:1, 15 ¹ ⁱ 1 Sam.
15:8, 9 ² 2 Sam. 5:12;
1 Chr. 14:2
⁸ ^j Num. 23:22
¹ Num. 14:9; 23:24
^m Ps. 2:9; Jer. 50:17
ⁿ Ps. 45:5
⁹ ^o Gen. 49:9; Num.
23:24 ^p Gen. 12:3;
27:29
¹⁰ ^q Ezek. 21:14,
17 ^r Num. 23:11;
Neh. 13:2
¹¹ ^s Num. 22:17, 37

the wilderness. ² And Balaam raised his
eyes, and saw Israel ^b encamped accord-
ing to their tribes; and ^c the Spirit of God
came upon him.

³ ^d Then he took up his oracle and said:

“The utterance of Balaam the son of
Beor,
The utterance of the man whose eyes
are opened,

⁴ The utterance of him who hears the
words of God,
Who sees the vision of the Almighty,
Who ^e falls down, with eyes wide
open:

⁵ “How lovely are your tents, O Jacob!
Your dwellings, O Israel!

⁶ Like valleys that stretch out,
Like gardens by the riverside,
^f Like aloes ^g planted by the LORD,
Like cedars beside the waters.

⁷ He shall pour water from his buckets,
And his seed *shall be* ^h in many
waters.

“His king shall be higher than ⁱ Agag,
And his ^j kingdom shall be exalted.

⁸ “God ^k brings him out of Egypt;
He has strength like a wild ox;
He shall ^l consume the nations, his
enemies;
He shall ^m break their bones
And ⁿ pierce *them* with his arrows.

⁹ ‘He ^o bows down, he lies down as a
lion;
And as a lion, who shall rouse him?’

^p “Blessed *is* he who blesses you,
And cursed *is* he who curses you.”

¹⁰ Then Balak's anger was aroused
against Balaam, and he ^q struck his hands
together; and Balak said to Balaam, ^r “I
called you to curse my enemies, and look,
you have bountifully blessed *them* these
three times! ¹¹ Now therefore, flee to your
place. ^s I said I would greatly honor you,
but in fact, the LORD has kept you back
from honor.”

Nevertheless, there simply was no means of sorcery or divination that Balaam could use to destroy their blessing. We who live in Christ can be encouraged by these words today. God cannot lie, nor can He renege on His promise of life for His people (see Rom. 8:31–39).

23:25–28 Neither curse them at all, nor bless them at all! Balak nearly said, “I will pay you just to be quiet!” But again he thought all that was needed was a better location.

24:1, 2 it pleased the LORD to bless Israel: God was determined to bless His own people. The words **the Spirit of God came upon him** refer to the empowerment that gave Balaam his message and its direction. Dramatically, God controlled Balaam and spoke clearly through a person who was His enemy.

24:3–9 The third **oracle** is marked by a lengthy introduction that speaks of the powerful things that had taken place within Balaam. The heart of the third oracle is a blessing on the tribes of Israel as they were about to enter the land of Canaan. Their **tents** were beautiful in their placement, but soon they would fill the land in great prosperity. Their king would be prodigious, for God would empower them to destroy all enemies. Israel is pictured as a **lion**, not to be trifled with. Finally in v. 9, Balaam quoted Gen. 12:3. Those who bless Israel will be blessed. Those who curse Israel will be cursed.

24:10–14 In the aftermath of the third oracle, Balak wanted to dismiss Balaam entirely. But Balaam was not to be stopped.

¹²So Balaam said to Balak, “Did I not also speak to your messengers whom you sent to me, saying, ¹³‘If Balak were to give me his house full of silver and gold, I could not go beyond the word of the LORD, to do good or bad of my own will. What the LORD says, that I must speak?’ ¹⁴And now, indeed, I am going to my people. Come, ¹⁵I will advise you what this people will do to your people in the “latter days.”

Balaam's Fourth Prophecy

¹⁵So he took up his oracle and said:

“The utterance of Balaam the son of Beor,
And the utterance of the man whose eyes are opened;
¹⁶ The utterance of him who hears the words of God,
And has the knowledge of the Most High,
Who sees the vision of the Almighty,
Who falls down, with eyes wide open:

¹⁷“I ^v see Him, but not now;
I behold Him, but not near;
^w A Star shall come out of Jacob;
^x A Scepter shall rise out of Israel,
And ²batter the brow of Moab,
And destroy all the sons of ³tumult.

¹⁸“And ^yEdom shall be a possession;
Seir also, his enemies, shall be a possession,
While Israel does ⁴valiantly.

¹⁴ ^t [Mic. 6:5]
^u Gen. 49:1; Deut. 4:30; Dan. 2:28
¹⁷ ^v Rev. 1:7; Matt. 1:2; Luke 3:34
^w Matt. 2:2 ☆ ^x Gen. 49:10 ² *shatter the forehead* ³ Heb. *Sheth*, Jer. 48:45
¹⁸ ^y 2 Sam. 8:14
⁴ *mightily*

¹⁹ ^z Gen. 49:10; Amos 9:11, 12
⁵ *shall rule*
²⁴ ^a Gen. 10:4; Ezek. 27:6; Dan. 11:30 ^b Gen. 10:21,
25 ^c Heb. *Kittim*
⁷ *Lit. he or that one*
25 ^c Num. 22:5; 31:8

CHAPTER 25
¹ a Num. 33:49;
Josh. 2:1 ^b Rev. 2:14
¹ Heb. *Shittim*

¹⁹ ^z Out of Jacob One ⁵ shall have dominion,
And destroy the remains of the city.”

²⁰ Then he looked on Amalek, and he took up his oracle and said:

“Amalek *was* first among the nations,
But *shall be* last until he perishes.”

²¹ Then he looked on the Kenites, and he took up his oracle and said:

“Firm is your dwelling place,
And your nest is set in the rock;
²² Nevertheless Kain shall be burned.
How long until Asshur carries you away captive?”

²³ Then he took up his oracle and said:

“Alas! Who shall live when God does this?
²⁴ But ships *shall come* from the coasts of ^a Cyprus,⁶
And they shall afflict Asshur and afflict ^bEber,
And so shall ⁷Amalek, until he perishes.”

²⁵ So Balaam rose and departed and ^creturned to his place; Balak also went his way.

Israel's Harlotry in Moab

25 Now Israel remained in ^aAcacia Grove,¹ and the ^bpeople began to commit harlotry with the women of

24:15–19 The fourth oracle has the longest introduction, which builds on the introduction to the third oracle (vv. 3, 4). **I see Him, but not now . . . A Star shall come out of Jacob:** This poetic language clearly refers to the Messiah. The pagan Balaam had a vision of the coming of the Hebrew Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ! He was visible from afar. He was like a Star, radiant and beautiful. He was like a **Scepter**, majestic and powerful. And He is the victor over His enemies, including Moab—the nation that hired Balaam to curse Israel! All nations who resisted Israel and God’s work would

come under the curse they unwittingly embraced. Among them was **Edom**, who rejected the request of Moses for safe passage (20:14–21). The One **out of Jacob**, the Messiah, will be victor over all His foes (see Ps. 2; 110; Rev. 19:11–21).

24:20 The fifth oracle is brief, coming without a pause. It is a curse on **Amalek**, the first people to fight with Israel in their wilderness experience, and the first to bring defeat upon themselves (see Ex. 17:8–16). A requital was coming.

24:21, 22 The Kenites were a Midianite tribe (see 10:29; Judg. 1:16). This oracle makes a wordplay between the word *Kenite* and the similar Hebrew word for *nest*. **Asshur** is Assyria.

24:23, 24 In this last oracle the identification of the nations is difficult, but the general sense is clear enough: One nation would rise against another, only to face its own doom. The Hebrew word translated **Cyprus** was used later in reference to Rome (Dan. 11:30).

25:1 Acacia Grove is another name for the staging area of Israel across the Jordan from Jericho. With these words, the focus of Numbers returns to the camp of Israel. At the end of their long wilderness wanderings, the Israelites had their first encounter with the false religion of Canaan. The phrase **the women of Moab** is the connecting link between this chapter and chs. 22–24. What the men of Moab could not do, the women were able to accomplish. They trapped the Israelite men in sexual immorality and false worship. For this God punished them. In 31:16, we learn that the principal instigator of this sorry affair was none other than Balaam.

Scepter
(Heb. *shebet*) (24:17; Gen. 49:28; Lev. 27:32) Strong's #7626

The word can vary in meaning depending upon its context. Potential meanings include “tribe” (Gen. 49:28), “staff” (1 Chr. 11:23), and “rod” (Ps. 23:4). Because a king would often hold a scepter, it became a symbol of a king, especially the kingship of the Messiah: He would rule God’s people (24:17; Gen. 49:10; 1 Cor. 15:24–28). Yet when this Hebrew word is translated *staff*, it symbolizes the concern and care of a shepherd for his sheep, the kind of care the Lord has for His people (Mic. 7:14). When the word is translated *rod* it symbolizes judgment (Ps 2:9).

Moab. ^{2c}They invited the people to ^dthe sacrifices of their gods, and the people ate and ^ebowed down to their gods. ³So Israel was joined to Baal of Peor, and ^fthe anger of the LORD was aroused against Israel.

⁴Then the LORD said to Moses, ^g“Take all the leaders of the people and hang the offenders before the LORD, out in the sun, ^hthat the fierce anger of the LORD may turn away from Israel.”

⁵So Moses said to ⁱthe judges of Israel, ^j“Every one of you kill his men who were joined to Baal of Peor.”

⁶And indeed, one of the children of Israel came and presented to his brethren a Midianite woman in the sight of Moses and in the sight of all the congregation of the children of Israel, ^kwho were weeping at the door of the tabernacle of meeting. ⁷Now ^lwhen Phinehas ^mthe son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, saw ⁿit, he rose from among the congregation and took a javelin in his hand; ⁸and he went after the man of Israel into the tent and thrust both of them through, the man of Israel, and the woman through her body. So ^othe plague was ^pstopped among the children of Israel. ⁹And ^qthose who died in the plague were twenty-four thousand.

¹⁰Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: ^{11q}“Phinehas the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, has turned back My wrath from the children of Israel, because he was zealous with My zeal among them, so that I did not consume the children of Israel in ^rMy zeal. ¹²Therefore say, ^s“Behold, I give to him My ^tcovenant of peace; ¹³and it shall be to him and ^uhis descendants after him a covenant of ^van everlasting priesthood, because he was ^wzealous for his God, and ^xmade ²atonement for the children of Israel.”

² c Josh. 22:17; Hos. 9:10 ^d Ex. 34:15; Deut. 32:38; 1 Cor. 10:20 ^e Ex. 20:5 ³ f Ps. 106:28, 29 ⁴ g Deut. 4:3 ^h Num. 25:11; Deut. 13:17 ⁵ i Ex. 18:21 / Deut. 13:6, 9 ⁶ k Joel 2:17 ⁷ l Ps. 106:30 ^m Ex. 6:25 ⁸ n Ps. 106:30 ^o Num. 16:46-48 ⁹ p Deut. 4:3 ¹⁰ q Ps. 106:30 ^r [Ex. 20:5]; Deut. 32:16, 21; 1 Kin. 14:22; Ps. 78:58; Ezek. 16:38 ¹¹ s [Mal. 2:4, 5; 3:1] ^t Is. 54:10; Ezek. 34:25; 37:26; Mal. 2:5 ¹² u 1 Chr. 6:4-15 ^v Ex. 40:15 ^w Acts 22:3; Rom. 10:2 ^x [Heb. 2:17] ² Lit. covering

¹⁵ y Num. 31:8; Josh. 13:21 ¹⁷ z Num. 31:1-3 ³ be hostile toward ¹⁸ a Num. 31:16; Rev. 2:14 ⁴ tricks

CHAPTER 26

¹ a Num. 25:9 ² b Ex. 30:12; 38:25, 26; Num. 1:2; 14:29 ^c Num. 1:3 ³ d Num. 22:1; 31:12; 33:48; 35:1 ⁴ e Num. 1:1 ⁵ f Gen. 46:8; Ex. 6:14; 1 Chr. 5:1-3

¹⁴Now the name of the Israelite who was killed, who was killed with the Midianite woman, *was* Zimri the son of Salu, a leader of a father's house among the Simeonites. ¹⁵And the name of the Midianite woman who was killed *was* Cozbi the daughter of ^yZur; he *was* head of the people of a father's house in Midian.

¹⁶Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: ^{17z}“Harass the Midianites, and ³attack them; ¹⁸for they harassed you with their ^aschemes⁴ by which they seduced you in the matter of Peor and in the matter of Cozbi, the daughter of a leader of Midian, their sister, who was killed in the day of the plague because of Peor.”

The Second Census of Israel

26 And it came to pass, after the ^aplague, that the LORD spoke to Moses and Eleazar the son of Aaron the priest, saying: ^{2b}“Take a census of all the congregation of the children of Israel ^cfrom twenty years old and above, by their fathers' houses, all who are able to go to war in Israel.” ³So Moses and Eleazar the priest spoke with them ^din the plains of Moab by the Jordan, *across from* Jericho, saying: ⁴“Take a census of the people from twenty years old and above, just as the LORD ^ecommanded Moses and the children of Israel who came out of the land of Egypt.”

⁵Reuben *was* the firstborn of Israel. The children of Reuben *were*: of Hanoch, the family of the Hanochites; of Pallu, the family of the Palluites; ⁶of Hezron, the family of the Hezronites; of Carmi, the family of the Carmites. ⁷These *are* the families of the Reubenites: those who were numbered of them were forty-three

25:3 Baal of Peor: Balaam had taken his stance at this high place for pagan worship (23:28) in preparation for his last set of oracles. It is grimly fitting that the near destruction of the people of Israel should be associated with the debased sexual and idolatrous practices of this site.

25:4, 5 God's **anger** flashed yet again toward His errant people. But this was not just another time of trouble; this was the most serious challenge yet. The people had been seduced into joining the worship of Baal. And it was Baal worship that they had been sent to Canaan to eliminate!

25:6-9 Zimri (v. 14), a Hebrew man, became involved with a Midianite woman named Cozbi (v. 15), who may have been a priestess of Baal. Although the nature of the offense isn't made clear in the text, it could be that their sinful actions were performed **at the door of the tabernacle**, in full view of the congregation. Phinehas the son of Eleazar, zealous for God's honor, killed both Zimri and Cozbi with a javelin, thus ending the plague that resulted from this offense.

25:10-15 zealous with My zeal: God's response is one of praise for Phinehas. The Hebrew word translated *zealous* can also be translated *jealous*. Phinehas did not want the Israelite camp to be defiled with immorality connected to Baal worship. God honored Phinehas for his zeal with what He called **My covenant of peace**.

25:16-18 Harass the Midianites: God commanded Moses to institute a holy war against Midian in retaliation for the unholy and immoral war waged against Israel by that nation. The war was engaged in shortly, but this is not reported until ch. 31. The repetition of the names and the place of the debacle in v. 18 serves to memorialize the event.

26:1 after the plague: These words are a turning point in Numbers. The plague was the end of the first generation. Under God's grace, their sons and daughters were ready to begin anew. They would inherit the Promised Land.

26:2 The words **take a census** remind us of the beginning of the Book of Numbers (1:2). This is a new beginning and a new census. The numbers compare favorably with the numbers of the first generation. Despite all the people who had died in the wilderness, the total population was not markedly different. Again, this was a sign of God's blessing on the Israelites.

26:5 The children of Reuben: This chapter focuses specifically on the tribal units, with considerable attention paid to the family groupings and the notable persons. It is fitting that this census is considerably more complete than the one in ch. 1: These were the people who would actually enter and inherit the Promised Land.

thousand seven hundred and thirty.⁸ And the son of Pallu was Eliab.⁹ The sons of Eliab were Nemuel, Dathan, and Abiram. These are the Dathan and Abiram, representatives of the congregation, who contended against Moses and Aaron in the company of Korah, when they contended against the LORD;¹⁰ and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up together with Korah when that company died, when the fire devoured two hundred and fifty men; and they became a sign.¹¹ Nevertheless the children of Korah did not die.

¹² The sons of Simeon according to their families were: of ¹ Nemuel, the family of the Nemuelites; of Jamin, the family of the Jaminites; of ² Jachin, the family of the Jachinites; of ³ Zerah, the family of the Zarhites; of Shaul, the family of the Shaulites.¹⁴ These are the families of the Simeonites: twenty-two thousand two hundred.

¹⁵ The sons of Gad according to their families were: of ⁴ Zephon, the family of the Zephonites; of Haggi, the family of the Haggites; of Shuni, the family of the Shunites; of ⁵ Ozni, the family of the Oznites; of Eri, the family of the Erites; of ⁶ Arod, the family of the Arodites; of Areli, the family of the Arelites.¹⁸ These are the families of the sons of Gad according to those who were numbered of them: forty thousand five hundred.

¹⁹ The sons of Judah were Er and Onan; and Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan.²⁰ And the sons of Judah according to their families were: of Shelah, the family of the Shelanites; of Perez, the family of the Parzites; of Zerah, the family of the Zarhites.²¹ And the sons of Perez were: of Hezron, the family of the Hezronites; of Hamul, the family of the Hamulites.²² These are the families of Judah according to those who were numbered of them: seventy-six thousand five hundred.

²³ The sons of Issachar according to their families were: of Tola, the family of the Tolaites; of Puah, the family of the Punites; of ⁹ Jashub, the family of the Jashubites; of Shimron, the family of the Shimronites.²⁵ These are the families of Issachar according to those who were numbered of them: sixty-four thousand three hundred.

²⁶ The sons of Zebulun according to their families were: of Sereb, the family of the Sardites; of Elon, the family of the Elonites; of Jahleel, the family of the Jahleelites.²⁷ These are the families of the Zebulunites according to those who were numbered of them: sixty thousand five hundred.

⁹ Num. 1:16; 16:1, 2
¹⁰ Num. 16:32-35
¹¹ Num. 16:38-40;
1 Cor. 10:6; 2 Pet. 2:6

¹¹ Ex. 6:24; 1 Chr. 6:22, 23

¹² 1 Jemuel, Gen.

46:10; Ex. 6:15

² Jarib, 1 Chr. 4:24

¹³ Zohar, Gen.

46:10

¹⁵ Ziphion, Gen.

46:16

¹⁶ Ezbon, Gen.

46:16

¹⁷ Sam., Syr. Arodi

and Gen. 46:16

¹⁹ Gen. 38:2;

46:12

²⁰ 1 Chr. 2:3

²³ So with Sam.,

LXX, Syr., Vg.; Heb.

Puvah, Gen. 46:13;

1 Chr. 7:1

⁸ Sam.,

LXX, Syr., Vg.

Puaites

²⁴ Job, Gen. 46:13

²⁶ Gen. 46:14

²⁸ The sons of Joseph according to their families, by Manasseh and Ephraim, were: ²⁹ The sons of ⁹ Manasseh: of ¹⁰ Machir, the family of the Machirites; and Machir begot Gilead; of Gilead, the family of the Gileadites.³⁰ These are the sons of Gilead: of ¹ Jeezer, the family of the Jeezerites; of Helek, the family of the Helekites; of Asriel, the family of the Asrielites; of Shechem, the family of the Shechemites; ³² of Shemida, the family of the Shemidaites; of Hephher, the family of the Hephherites.³³ Now ⁴ Zelophehad the son of Hephher had no sons, but daughters; and the names of the daughters of Zelophehad were Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah.³⁴ These are the families of Manasseh; and those who were numbered of them were fifty-two thousand seven hundred.

³⁵ These are the sons of Ephraim according to their families: of Shuthelah, the family of the Shuthalhites; of ² Becher, the family of the Bachrites; of Tahan, the family of the Tahanites.³⁶ And these are the sons of Shuthelah: of Eran, the family of the Eranites.³⁷ These are the families of the sons of Ephraim according to those who were numbered of them: thirty-two thousand five hundred.

These are the sons of Joseph according to their families.

³⁸ The sons of Benjamin according to their families were: of Bela, the family of the Belaïtes; of Ashbel, the family of the Ashbelites; of ³ Ahiram, the family of the Ahiramites; ³⁹ of ¹ Shupham, the family of the Shuphamites; of ⁴ Hupham, the family of the Huphamites.⁴⁰ And the sons of Bela were ⁵ Ard and Naaman: ⁴¹ of Ard, the family of the Ardites; of Naaman, the family of the Naamites.⁴¹ These are the sons of Benjamin according to their families; and those who were numbered of them were forty-five thousand six hundred.

⁴² These are the sons of Dan according to their families: of ⁶ Shuham, the family of the Shuhamites. These are the families of Dan according to their families.⁴³ All the families of the Shuhamites, according to those who were numbered of them, were sixty-four thousand four hundred.

⁴⁴ The sons of Asher according to their families were: of Jimna, the family of the Jimnites; of Jesui, the family of the Jesuites; of Beriah, the family of the Beriites.⁴⁵ Of the sons of Beriah: of Heber, the family of the Heberites; of Malchiel, the family of the Malchielites.⁴⁶ And the name of the daughter of Asher was Serah.⁴⁷ These are the families of the sons of Asher according to those who

²⁸ Gen. 46:20;

Deut. 33:16

²⁹ Josh. 17:1

¹ 1 Chr. 7:14, 15

³⁰ Abiezer, Josh.

17:2

³³ Num. 27:1;

36:11

³⁵ 2 Bered, 1 Chr.

7:20

³⁸ Gen. 46:21;

1 Chr. 7:6

³⁹ 1 Chr. 8:1, 2

⁴⁰ 1 Chr. 7:12

³ MT Shephupham;

Shephuphan, 1 Chr.

8:5

⁴ Huppim, Gen.

46:21

⁴⁰ 1 Chr. 8:3

⁵ Addar, 1 Chr. 8:3

⁴² Hushim, Gen.

46:23

⁴⁴ Gen. 46:17;

1 Chr. 7:30

were numbered of them: fifty-three thousand four hundred.

^{48w}The sons of Naphtali according to their families *were*: of ⁷Jahzeel, the family of the Jahzeelites; of Guni, the family of the Gunites; ⁴⁹of Jezer, the family of the Jezerites; of ^xShillem, the family of the Shillemites. ⁵⁰These *are* the families of Naphtali according to their families; and those who were numbered of them *were* forty-five thousand four hundred.

^{51y}These *are* those who were numbered of the children of Israel: six hundred and one thousand seven hundred and thirty.

⁵²Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: ^{53z}“To these the land shall be *a* divided as an inheritance, according to the number of names. ^{54b}To a large *tribe* you shall give a larger inheritance, and to a small *tribe* you shall give a smaller inheritance. Each shall be given its inheritance according to those who were numbered of them. ⁵⁵But the land shall be *c* divided by lot; they shall inherit according to the names of the tribes of their fathers. ⁵⁶According to the lot their inheritance shall be divided between the larger and the smaller.”

^{57d}And these *are* those who were numbered of the Levites according to their families: of Gershon, the family of the Gershonites; of Kohath, the family of the Kohathites; of Merari, the family of the Merarites. ⁵⁸These *are* the families of the Levites: the family of the Libnites, the family of the Hebronites, the family of the Mahlites, the family of the Mushites, and the family of the Korathites. And Kohath begot Amram. ⁵⁹The name of Amram’s wife *was* ^eJochebed the daughter of Levi, who was born to Levi in Egypt; and to Amram she bore Aaron and Moses and their sister Miriam. ^{60f}To Aaron were born Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar. ⁶¹And ^gNadab and

⁴⁸ ^w Gen. 46:24; 1 Chr. 7:13 ⁷ Jahziel, 1 Chr. 7:13
⁴⁹ ^x 1 Chr. 7:13
⁵¹ ^y Ex. 12:37; 38:26; Num. 1:46; 11:21
⁵³ ^z Josh. 11:23; 14:1 ^a Num. 33:54
⁵⁴ ^b Num. 33:54
⁵⁵ ^c Num. 33:54; 34:13; Josh. 11:23; 14:2
⁵⁷ ^d Gen. 46:11; Ex. 6:16-19; Num. 3:15; 1 Chr. 6:1, 16
⁵⁹ ^e Ex. 2:1, 2; 6:20
⁶⁰ ^f Num. 3:2
⁶¹ ^g Lev. 10:1, 2; Num. 3:3, 4; 1 Chr. 24:2

Abihu died when they offered profane fire before the LORD.

^{62h}Now those who were numbered of them were twenty-three thousand, every male from a month old and above; ⁱfor they were not numbered among the other children of Israel, because there was ^jno inheritance given to them among the children of Israel.

⁶³These *are* those who were numbered by Moses and Eleazar the priest, who numbered the children of Israel ^kin the plains of Moab by the Jordan, *across from* Jericho. ^{64l}But among these there was not a man of those who were numbered by Moses and Aaron the priest when they numbered the children of Israel in the ^mWilderness of Sinai. ⁶⁵For the LORD had said of them, “They ⁿshall surely die in the wilderness.” So there was not left a man of them, ^oexcept Caleb the son of Jephunneh and Joshua the son of Nun.

Inheritance Laws

27 Then came the daughters of ^aZelophehad the son of Hephher, the son of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh, from the families of Manasseh the son of Joseph; and these *were* the names of his daughters: Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah. ²And they stood before Moses, before Eleazar the priest, and before the leaders and all the congregation, *by* the doorway of the tabernacle of meeting, saying: ³“Our father ^bdied in the wilderness; but he was not in the company of those who gathered together against the LORD, ^cin company with Korah, but he died in his own sin; and he had no sons. ⁴Why should the name of our father be ^dremoved ¹from among his family because he had no son? ^eGive us a ²possession among our father’s brothers.”

⁵So Moses ^fbrought their case before the LORD.

⁶² ^h Num. 3:39
ⁱ Num. 1:49 / Num. 18:20, 23, 24
⁶³ ^k Num. 26:3
⁶⁴ ^l Num. 14:29-35; Deut. 2:14-16; Heb. 3:17 ^m Num. 1:1-46
⁶⁵ ⁿ Num. 14:26-35; [1 Cor. 10:5, 6]
^o Num. 14:30

CHAPTER 27

¹ ^a Num. 26:33; 36:1, 11; Josh. 17:3
³ ^b Num. 14:35; 26:64, 65 ^c Num. 16:1, 2
⁴ ^d Deut. 25:6
^e Josh. 17:4
^f ¹ withdrawn
² ^{inheritance}
⁵ ^f Ex. 18:13-26

26:51 who were numbered: The totals of the twelve tribes are very similar in the two census listings. Reuben decreased from 46,500 to 43,730; Simeon decreased from 59,300 to 22,200; Gad decreased from 45,650 to 40,500; Judah increased from 74,600 to 76,500; Issachar increased from 54,400 to 64,300; Zebulun increased from 57,400 to 60,500; Manasseh increased from 32,200 to 52,700; Ephraim decreased from 40,500 to 32,500; Benjamin increased from 35,400 to 45,600; Dan increased from 62,700 to 64,400; Asher increased from 41,500 to 53,400; Naphtali decreased from 53,400 to 45,400. The total decreased slightly, from 603,550 to 601,730.

26:52-56 The land of Canaan was the **inheritance** of the people from the LORD. It was His gift to them, prompted by His love. Two principles were to be used in dividing the land: large tribes were to get large portions, but the determinations were to be made by lot.

26:57-62 The numbering of the **Levites** follows that of the other tribes, just as in the first census. In this case more names and families are given, for this was the list that would be used once the people were in the land. The total number of Levite males had increased

to 23,000, which was quite close to the earlier total of 22,000 (3:39).

26:63-65 not a man of those: The persons numbered in the second census did not include any who were numbered in the first census. Of the survivors, only Caleb and Joshua had been over the age of 20 at the time of the debacle at Kadesh (chs. 13; 14).

27:1-5 Five sisters—the daughters of Zelophehad—approached Moses and Eleazar to make a claim for their inheritance in the land. Their father had died in the wilderness, as had his entire generation. Since he had no sons, there was no inheritance for him. On the basis of their father’s memory, the daughters asked Moses for **a possession among our father’s brothers**. In doing this, they were cutting across the social mores of the day. In ancient Israel, women did not inherit land. Yet because their case made sense, Moses took the issue to the LORD. This situation gives us some insight as to how the law worked in Israel. Decisions were made on the basis of need and request. If a decision was difficult, the leaders would go to the LORD for direction.

⁶ And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: ⁷ “The daughters of Zelophehad speak *what is* right; ⁸ you shall surely give them a possession of inheritance among their father’s brothers, and cause the inheritance of their father to pass to them. ⁹ And you shall speak to the children of Israel, saying: ‘If a man dies and has no son, then you shall cause his inheritance to pass to his daughter. ¹⁰ If he has no daughter, then you shall give his inheritance to his brothers. ¹¹ If he has no brothers, then you shall give his inheritance to his father’s brothers. ¹² And if his father has no brothers, then you shall give his inheritance to the relative closest to him in his family, and he shall possess it.’” And it shall be to the children of Israel ^a a statute of judgment, just as the LORD commanded Moses.

Joshua the Next Leader of Israel

¹²Now the LORD said to Moses: ¹⁴"Go up into this Mount Abarim, and see the land which I have given to the children of Israel. ¹³And when you have seen it, you also ^jshall ³be gathered to your people, as Aaron your brother was gathered. ¹⁴For in the Wilderness of Zin, during the strife

7 ^g Num. 36:2; Josh. 17:4
11 ^h Num. 35:29
12 ⁱ Num. 33:47; Deut. 3:23-27; 32:48-52; 34:1-4
13 ^j Num. 20:12, 24, 28; 31:2; Deut. 10:6; 34:5, 6 ³ Die and join your ancestors

14 ^k Num. 20:12, 24;
Deut. 1:37; 32:51; Ps.
106:32; 133 ^l Ex. 17:7
16 ^m Num. 16:22;
Heb. 12:9
17 ⁿ Deut. 31:2;
1 Sam. 8:20; 18:13;
2 Chr. 1:10 ^o 1 Kin.
22:17; Zech. 10:2;
Matt. 9:36; Mark
6:34
18 ^p Gen. 41:38;
Judg. 3:10; 1 Sam.
16:13, 18 ^q Deut.
34:9
19 ^r Deut. 3:28;
3:1, 7, 8, 23
^s *commission*
20 ^s Num. 11:17
^t Josh. 1:16-18
21 ^u Judg. 20:18,
23 ^v; 2 Sam. 23:9;
30:7 ^v Ex. 28:30;
1 Sam. 28:6 ^w Josh.
9:14; 1 Sam. 22:10

of the congregation, you ^krebelled against My command to hallow Me at the waters before their eyes.” (These *are* the ^lwaters of Meribah, at Kadesh in the Wilderness of Zin.)

¹⁵Then Moses spoke to the LORD, saying: ¹⁶“Let the LORD, ^mthe God of the spirits of all flesh, set a man over the congregation, ¹⁷ⁿwho may go out before them and go in before them, who may lead them out and bring them in, that the congregation of the LORD may not be ^olike sheep which have no shepherd.”

¹⁸And the LORD said to Moses: “Take Joshua the son of Nun with you, a man ^pin whom *is* the Spirit, and ^qlay your hand on him; ¹⁹set him before Eleazar the priest and before all the congregation, and ^rinaugurate ⁴him in their sight. ²⁰And ^syou shall give *some* of your authority to him, that all the congregation of the children of Israel ^tmay be obedient. ²¹“He shall stand before Eleazar the priest, who shall inquire before the LORD for him ^vby the judgment of the Urim. ^wAt his word they shall go out, and at his word they shall come in, he and all the children of Israel with him—all the congregation.”

27:6–11 speak what is right: God’s decision was that the daughters of Zelophehad had presented a just cause. They would inherit land in the name of their father. The case would become a precedent for other families in which there were no sons, only daughters. If there were no daughters, the inheritance would go to the nearest surviving relative. This was a significant departure from the custom of the day. See ch. 36 for complications that arose from this issue.

27:12–14 The time for the beginning of the conquest was near, which meant that the end of Moses' life was also near. Although God would not allow Moses to enter the land, He would, by His grace, allow Moses to **see the land** from afar.

27:15–17 set a man over the congregation: Moses' concern was

for the well-being of the community, not for himself. Who would lead Israel after his death?

27:18–23 It appears that there were two candidates to succeed Moses: Caleb and Joshua, the two spies who had honored the Lord when the entire nation would not (ch. 14). God's choice was Joshua. One of the qualifications for the job was the presence of the Holy Spirit, a mark not unlike the qualification for spiritual leadership in the NT (see Acts 6:3). The Lord instructed Moses to present Joshua to the congregation so that there would not be a power struggle after his death. Further, Moses began to delegate work to Joshua so that the transition would begin while Moses was still alive. Moses **laid his hands** on Joshua, a symbol of the transfer of power. He invested Joshua with the authority to lead Israel (see Acts 13:1–3).

Learning to Pray like Moses

Prayer is a scary, awkward proposition for many people. It's the kind of activity that they would just as soon leave to the religious "professionals." But Scripture encourages us with numerous examples of people who demonstrate that prayer is an everyday activity for everyday people. Moses, who asked God for a successor (27:15–17), is a case in point.

Moses was a hard-working man. He went through at least three different careers—privileged ruler in Egypt, forgotten shepherd in Midian, and national liberator and leader of the Israelites. Throughout these pursuits, Moses regularly turned to God in prayer. Consider the following conversations that he had with God:

- He debated with God about his fitness to lead Israel out of Egypt (Ex. 3:11—4:17; 6:28—7:7).
- He interceded on behalf of the Egyptians (Ex. 8:9–13).
- He asked for water for his thirsty nation of refugee people (Ex. 15:24, 25).
- He pleaded with God about the sinful Hebrews and what God would do to them (Ex. 32:11–13, 31–34).
- He interceded with God concerning his sister's leprosy, after she exhibited prejudice against Moses' foreign-born spouse (Num. 12:4–15).
- He prayed for the transition of leadership to Joshua (Num. 27:15–17).
- He appealed to God to allow him to join his people in their entrance to the Promised Land (Deut. 3:23–25; 34:1–4).

Moses demonstrated the often forgotten truth that God is more than ready to hear our complaints, appeals, and frustrations. Are you willing to approach God in prayer about the problems that vex you? Why not pause to do so right now?



²²So Moses did as the LORD commanded him. He took Joshua and set him before Eleazar the priest and before all the congregation. ²³And he laid his hands on him ^xand ⁵inaugurated him, just as the LORD commanded by the hand of Moses.

Daily Offerings

28 Now the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ²“Command the children of Israel, and say to them, ‘My offering, ^aMy food for My offerings made by fire as a sweet aroma to Me, you shall be careful to offer to Me at their appointed time.’

³“And you shall say to them, ^b“This is the offering made by fire which you shall offer to the LORD: two male lambs in their first year without blemish, day by day, as a regular burnt offering. ⁴The one lamb you shall offer in the morning, the other lamb you shall offer in the evening, ⁵and ^cone-tenth of an ephah of fine flour as a ^dgrain offering mixed with one-fourth of a hin of pressed oil. ⁶*It is ^ea regular burnt offering which was ordained at Mount Sinai for a sweet aroma, an offering made by fire to the LORD.* ⁷And its drink offering *shall be one-fourth of a hin for each lamb; ^fin a holy place you shall pour out the drink to the LORD as an offering.* ⁸The other lamb you shall offer in the evening; as the morning grain offering and its drink offering, you shall offer *it* as an offering made by fire, a ¹sweet aroma to the LORD.

Sabbath Offerings

⁹“And on the Sabbath day two lambs in their first year, without blemish, and two-tenths of an ephah of fine flour as a grain offering, mixed with oil, with its drink offering— ¹⁰*this is ^gthe burnt offering for every Sabbath, besides the regular burnt offering with its drink offering.*

²³ ^x Deut. 3:28; 31:7;
⁸ ⁵ commissioned

CHAPTER 28

² ^a Lev. 3:11; 21:6, 8;
[Mal. 1:7, 12]

³ ^b Ex. 29:38–42

⁵ ^c Ex. 16:36; Num.
15:4 ^d Lev. 2:1

⁶ ^e Ex. 29:42; Amos
5:25

⁷ ^f Ex. 29:42

⁸ ¹ pleasing

¹⁰ ^g Ezek. 46:4

¹¹ ^h Num. 10:10;

1 Sam. 20:5; 1 Chr.

23:31; 2 Chr. 2:4;

Ezra 3:5; Neh. 10:33;

Is. 1:13, 14; Ezek.

45:17; 46:6, 7; Hos.

2:11; Col. 2:16

¹² ⁱ Num. 15:4–12

¹⁵ ^j Num. 15:24;

28:3, 22

¹⁶ ^k Ex. 12:1–20; Lev.

23:5–8; Num. 9:2–5;

Deut. 16:1–8; Ezek.

45:21

¹⁷ ^l Lev. 23:6

¹⁸ ^m Ex. 12:16; Lev.

23:7 ² assembly

or gathering

³ occupational

¹⁹ ⁿ Lev. 22:20;

Num. 28:31; 29:8;

Deut. 15:21

²² ^o Num. 28:15

⁴ Lit. covering

Monthly Offerings

¹¹ ^h“At the beginnings of your months you shall present a burnt offering to the LORD: two young bulls, one ram, and seven lambs in their first year, without blemish; ¹²ⁱ three-tenths of an ephah of fine flour as a grain offering, mixed with oil, for each bull; two-tenths of an ephah of fine flour as a grain offering, mixed with oil, for the one ram; ¹³and one-tenth of an ephah of fine flour, mixed with oil, as a grain offering for each lamb, as a burnt offering of sweet aroma, an offering made by fire to the LORD. ¹⁴Their drink offering shall be half a hin of wine for a bull, one-third of a hin for a ram, and one-fourth of a hin for a lamb; this is the burnt offering for each month throughout the months of the year. ¹⁵Also ^jone kid of the goats as a sin offering to the LORD shall be offered, besides the regular burnt offering and its drink offering.

Offerings at Passover

¹⁶ ^k“On the fourteenth day of the first month is the Passover of the LORD. ¹⁷^lAnd on the fifteenth day of this month is the feast; unleavened bread shall be eaten for seven days. ¹⁸On the ^mfirst day you shall have a holy ²convocation. You shall do no ³customary work. ¹⁹And you shall present an offering made by fire as a burnt offering to the LORD: two young bulls, one ram, and seven lambs in their first year. ⁿBe sure they are without blemish. ²⁰Their grain offering shall be of fine flour mixed with oil: three-tenths of an ephah you shall offer for a bull, and two-tenths for a ram; ²¹you shall offer one-tenth of an ephah for each of the seven lambs; ²²also ^oone goat as a sin offering, to make ⁴atonement for you. ²³You shall offer these besides the burnt offering of

28:2 My offerings made by fire: The Book of Numbers frequently inserts various materials into the flow of the narrative. Among such materials are the sections on sacrifice in chs. 28; 29. The following chapters focus on the nature of the offerings God required on a seasonal and festival basis.

28:7 In this case, the **drink offering** was beer; usually it was wine. Beer is made from fermented grains; wine is made from fruit, usually grapes. Both were used in the worship of God, to be poured on the altar in required measure.

28:9, 10 The offerings on the **Sabbath day** were in addition to the offerings made every day.

28:11–15 The offerings at the **beginnings of your months** were in addition to daily and weekly offerings.

28:16–25 The celebration of **Passover** (9:1–14) included special sacrifices at the altar. On the first and seventh day of the period, no work was done. The entire period was marked by the eating of unleavened bread.

Sabbath

(Heb. *shabbath*) (28:9; Ex. 20:8; Lev. 19:3; 23:3; Deut. 5:12; Jer. 17:22) Strong's #7676

The word derives from the verb meaning “to cease” or “to rest” (Gen. 2:3; Ex. 31:17). The Sabbath is the seventh day in the Hebrew calendar, or Saturday (Ex. 16:26; 20:10). God established this day as a time to rest because He had created all things in six days and had rested on the seventh day (Ex. 20:11). The Sabbath not only mirrored His own actions at creation, but it also was designed as a day to remember God, specifically His covenant with Israel (Ex. 31:12–18). In addition to this special day, the principle of a sabbath rest was also applied to the land every seventh year (Lev. 25:1–7). Sabbath rest holds promise of the ultimate salvation that God will accomplish for His people. As certainly as He delivered them from Egypt through Moses, so will He deliver His people from sin at the end of the age through the Great Redeemer (Gen. 3:15; Heb. 4).

the morning, which *is* for a regular burnt offering. ²⁴In this manner you shall offer the food of the offering made by fire daily for seven days, as a sweet aroma to the LORD; it shall be offered besides the regular burnt offering and its drink offering. ²⁵And ^pon the seventh day you shall have a holy convocation. You shall do no customary work.

Offerings at the Feast of Weeks

²⁶Also ^qon the day of the firstfruits, when you bring a new grain offering to the LORD at your *Feast of Weeks*, you shall have a holy convocation. You shall do no customary work. ²⁷You shall present a burnt offering as a sweet aroma to the LORD: ^rtwo young bulls, one ram, and seven lambs in their first year, ²⁸with their grain offering of fine flour mixed with oil: three-tenths of an *ephah* for each bull, two-tenths for the one ram, ²⁹and one-tenth for each of the seven lambs; ³⁰also one kid of the goats, to make ^satonement for you. ³¹Be sure they are without ^bblemish. You shall present *them* with their drink offerings, besides the regular burnt offering with its grain offering.

Offerings at the Feast of Trumpets

29 And in the seventh month, on the first *day* of the month, you shall have a holy convocation. You shall do no customary work. For you ^ait is a day of blowing the trumpets. ²You shall offer a burnt offering as a sweet aroma to the LORD: one young bull, one ram, and seven lambs in their first year, without blemish. ³Their grain offering *shall be* fine flour mixed with oil: three-tenths of an *ephah* for the bull, two-tenths for the ram, ⁴and one-tenth for each of the seven lambs; ⁵also one kid of the goats *as* a sin offering, to make atonement for you; ⁶besides ^bthe burnt offering with its grain offering for the New Moon, ^cthe regular burnt offering with its grain offering, and their drink offerings, ^daccording to their ordinance, as a sweet aroma, an offering made by fire to the LORD.

Offerings on the Day of Atonement

^{7e}On the tenth *day* of this seventh month you shall have a holy convocation.

²⁵ ^p Ex. 12:16; 13:6; Lev. 23:8
²⁶ ^q Ex. 23:16; 34:22; Lev. 23:10-21; Deut. 16:9-12; Acts 2:1
²⁷ ^r Lev. 23:18, 19
³⁰ ^s Lit. covering
³¹ ^s Num. 28:3, 19
^e defect

CHAPTER 29

¹ ^a Ex. 23:16; 34:22; Lev. 23:23-25
⁶ ^b Num. 28:11-15
^c Num. 28:3 ^d Num. 15:11, 12
⁷ ^e Lev. 16:29-34; 23:26-32

^f Ps. 35:13; Is. 58:5
⁸ ^g Num. 28:19
¹¹ ^h Lev. 16:3, 5
¹² ⁱ Lev. 23:33-35; Deut. 16:13-15; Ezek. 45:25
¹³ ^j Ezra 3:4
¹⁷ ^k Lev. 23:36
¹⁸ ^l Num. 15:12; 28:7, 14; 29:3, 4, 9, 10
²¹ ^m Num. 29:18

You shall ^fafflict your souls; you shall not do any work. ⁸You shall present a burnt offering to the LORD *as* a sweet aroma: one young bull, one ram, and seven lambs in their first year. ⁹Be sure they are without blemish. ⁹Their grain offering *shall be* of fine flour mixed with oil: three-tenths of an *ephah* for the bull, two-tenths for the one ram, ¹⁰and one-tenth for each of the seven lambs; ¹¹also one kid of the goats *as* a sin offering, besides ^hthe sin offering for atonement, the regular burnt offering with its grain offering, and their drink offerings.

Offerings at the Feast of Tabernacles

¹²ⁱOn the fifteenth day of the seventh month you shall have a holy convocation. You shall do no customary work, and you shall keep a feast to the LORD seven days. ^{13j}You shall present a burnt offering, an offering made by fire as a sweet aroma to the LORD: thirteen young bulls, two rams, and fourteen lambs in their first year. They shall be without blemish. ¹⁴Their grain offering *shall be* of fine flour mixed with oil: three-tenths of an *ephah* for each of the thirteen bulls, two-tenths for each of the two rams, ¹⁵and one-tenth for each of the fourteen lambs; ¹⁶also one kid of the goats *as* a sin offering, besides the regular burnt offering, its grain offering, and its drink offering.

¹⁷On the ^ksecond day *present* twelve young bulls, two rams, fourteen lambs in their first year without blemish, ¹⁸and their grain offering and their drink offerings for the bulls, for the rams, and for the lambs, by their number, ^laccording to the ordinance; ¹⁹also one kid of the goats *as* a sin offering, besides the regular burnt offering with its grain offering, and their drink offerings.

²⁰On the third day *present* eleven bulls, two rams, fourteen lambs in their first year without blemish, ²¹and their grain offering and their drink offerings for the bulls, for the rams, and for the lambs, by their number, ^maccording to the ordinance; ²²also one goat *as* a sin offering, besides the regular burnt offering, its grain offering, and its drink offering.

²³On the fourth day *present* ten bulls, two rams, and fourteen lambs in their

28:26–31 The **Feast of Weeks** occurred 50 days after Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

29:1–6 The celebration of the Feast of **Trumpets** involved blowing ram’s horns (contrast the silver trumpets in 10:2). Later, this festival became identified with the new year festival.

29:7–11 The Day of Atonement, or Yom Kippur, was regarded as the most holy day of all. Lev. 16 describes this as a day of fasting rather than feasting, of solemnity rather than rejoicing.

29:12–38 The celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles or Succoth was complex. There was an order to be followed over a period of eight days, and the eighth day had its own distinct ceremony. As in ch. 7, the mini-paragraphs for the days of the festival make use of deliberate repetition in order to evoke the pageantry and solemn ritual of these occasions.

first year, without blemish, ²⁴and their grain offering and their drink offerings for the bulls, for the rams, and for the lambs, by their number, according to the ordinance; ²⁵also one kid of the goats as a sin offering, besides the regular burnt offering, its grain offering, and its drink offering.

²⁶“On the fifth day *present* nine bulls, two rams, *and* fourteen lambs in their first year without blemish, ²⁷and their grain offering and their drink offerings for the bulls, for the rams, and for the lambs, by their number, according to the ordinance; ²⁸also one goat as a sin offering, besides the regular burnt offering, its grain offering, and its drink offering.

²⁹“On the sixth day *present* eight bulls, two rams, *and* fourteen lambs in their first year without blemish, ³⁰and their grain offering and their drink offerings for the bulls, for the rams, and for the lambs, by their number, according to the ordinance; ³¹also one goat as a sin offering, besides the regular burnt offering, its grain offering, and its drink offering.

³²“On the seventh day *present* seven bulls, two rams, *and* fourteen lambs in their first year without blemish, ³³and their grain offering and their drink offerings for the bulls, for the rams, and for the lambs, by their number, according to the ordinance; ³⁴also one goat as a sin offering, besides the regular burnt offering, its grain offering, and its drink offering.

³⁵“On the eighth day you shall have a ^asacred ¹assembly. You shall do no customary work. ³⁶You shall present a burnt offering, an offering made by fire as a sweet aroma to the LORD: one bull, one ram, seven lambs in their first year without blemish, ³⁷and their grain offering and their drink offerings for the bull, for the ram, and for the lambs, by their number, according to the ordinance; ³⁸also one goat as a sin offering, besides the regular burnt offering, its grain offering, and its drink offering.

³⁹“These you shall present to the LORD at your ^aappointed feasts (besides your

³⁵ ^a Lev. 23:36

¹ solemn

³⁹ ^a Lev. 23:1-44;

1 Chr. 23:31; 2 Chr.

31:3; Ezra 3:5; Neh.

10:33; Is. 1:14

^pvowed offerings and your freewill offerings) as your burnt offerings and your grain offerings, as your drink offerings and your peace offerings.’”

⁴⁰So Moses told the children of Israel everything, just as the LORD commanded Moses.

The Law Concerning Vows

30 Then Moses spoke to ^athe heads of the tribes concerning the children of Israel, saying, “This is the thing which the LORD has commanded: ^{2b}If a man makes a vow to the LORD, or ^cswears an oath to bind himself by some agreement, he shall not break his word; he shall ^ddo according to all that proceeds out of his mouth.

³“Or if a woman makes a vow to the LORD, and binds *herself* by some agreement while in her father’s house in her youth, ⁴and her father hears her vow and the agreement by which she has bound herself, and her father ¹holds his peace, then all her vows shall stand, and every agreement with which she has bound herself shall stand. ⁵But if her father overrules her on the day that he hears, then none of her vows nor her agreements by which she has bound herself shall stand; and the LORD will release her, because her father overruled her.

⁶“If indeed she takes a husband, while bound by her vows or by a rash utterance from her lips by which she bound herself, ⁷and her husband hears *it*, and makes no response to her on the day that he hears, then her vows shall stand, and her agreements by which she bound herself shall stand. ⁸But if her husband ^eoverrules her on the day that he hears *it*, he shall make void her vow which she took and what she uttered with her lips, by which she bound herself, and the LORD will release her.

⁹“Also any vow of a widow or a divorced woman, by which she has bound herself, shall stand against her.

¹⁰“If she vowed in her husband’s house, or bound herself by an agreement

^p Lev. 7:16; 22:18, 21, 23; 23:38

CHAPTER 30

1 ^a Num. 1:4, 16; 7:2

2 ^b Lev. 27:2; Deut.

23:21-23; Judg.

11:30, 31, 35; Eccl.

5:4 ^c Lev. 5:4; Matt.

14:9; Acts 23:14

^d Job 22:27; Ps.

22:25; 50:14; 66:13,

14; Nah. 1:15

4 ^e says nothing to

interfere

8 ^e Gen. 3:16]

29:39, 40 These verses conclude the summary of sacrifices of chs. 28; 29. The sacrifices and offerings listed in these two chapters are the bare minimum the people had to present to the Lord throughout the year.

30:1, 2 The key issue is clear: one who makes a vow **shall not break his word**. Vows that are made to the Lord must be carried out (see Deut. 23:21-23; Eccl. 5:1-7).

30:3-5 **If a woman makes a vow to the Lord:** In Israelite culture, an unmarried young woman was under the protection of her father. If she entered into a vow, that vow might have brought her father into an obligation he did not want to fulfill or could not fulfill. For that reason, the father could overrule the vow. If he did not, **then all her vows** would **stand**, including any complications that they might bring.

30:6-8 The preexisting **vows** of a newly married woman could have brought her husband under some obligation. Therefore, the husband had the opportunity to overrule vows his wife may have made before she came under his protection. In such a case, God would release the woman from her vow. If the husband heard the vow but did not overrule it, then the vow with all its possible complications would stand.

30:9 The **vow of a widow or a divorced woman** would stand, because it did not complicate the obligations of either father or husband.

30:10-15 In the case of a woman who entered into a vow to the Lord after marriage, the husband could overrule the vow. His silence would allow it to remain in force. Many of these situations may have

with an oath, ¹¹and her husband heard *it*, and made no response to her *and* did not overrule her, then all her vows shall stand, and every agreement by which she bound herself shall stand. ¹²But if her husband truly made them void on the day he heard *them*, then whatever proceeded from her lips concerning her vows or concerning the agreement binding her, it shall not stand; her husband has made them ²void, and the LORD will release her. ¹³Every vow and every binding oath to afflict her soul, her husband may confirm it, or her husband may make it void. ¹⁴Now if her husband makes no response whatever to her from day to day, then he confirms all her vows or all the agreements that bind her; he confirms them, because he made no response to her on the day that he heard *them*. ¹⁵But if he

12 ² annulled or invalidated

CHAPTER 31

2 ^a Num. 25:17
b Num. 27:12, 13
3 ^c Josh. 13:21

does make them void after he has heard *them*, then he shall bear her guilt.”

¹⁶These *are* the statutes which the LORD commanded Moses, between a man and his wife, and between a father and his daughter in her youth in her father’s house.

Vengeance on the Midianites

31 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: ^{2a}“Take vengeance on the Midianites for the children of Israel. Afterward you shall ^bbe gathered to your people.”

³So Moses spoke to the people, saying, “Arm some of yourselves for war, and let them go against the Midianites to take vengeance for the LORD on ^cMidian. ⁴A thousand from each tribe of all the tribes of Israel you shall send to the war.”

been decided in much the same manner as the case of the daughters of Zelophehad (ch. 27)—that is, on the basis of particular cases that were brought before God for a decision.

31:2 Chapter 31 refers back to ch. 25, the debacle of Israel’s sin at Baal Peor and the role that the Midianites played in orchestrating the event.

31:3–6 The preparations for battle included setting apart a thou-

sand from each tribe, a way of ensuring the sense of participation of the whole people in the war. **Phinehas**, the heroic figure who stemmed a plague with his bold action (25:7, 8), was commander in the field. As a priest, he led the armies of Israel with **holy articles and the signal trumpets**. This was not an ordinary conflict; it was a holy war, done in the name and power of God.

Sacrifices of Joy

God’s commands concerning sacrifices and offerings were given to people who were already in relationship with Him, who were already part of the covenant community, and who were already His people. Sacrifices and offerings to God were never to be understood as a means of salvation. Instead, God designed the sacrificial system in order to cultivate a consciousness of Himself among His people. First of all, the sacrifices provided a catalyst, an occasion for dealing with a person’s sin and for restoring a person before God. Furthermore, these sacrifices cultivated the person’s sense of perspective. The cleansing rituals of the priests who sacrificed the offerings pointed to God’s holiness. God was infinitely greater than any one person, and He certainly deserved everyone’s gratitude and praise. A worshiper could physically express that praise to God through a fellowship offering. Of course, this sacrificial system was by no means cheap; all of the offerings were costly. But this fact impressed on the worshiper that only one’s best could be given to God.



Ancient Hebrews offering a sacrificial lamb
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Sacrifices were not ends in themselves. God was primarily interested in the person. The mandatory sacrifices served to remind a worshiper of his or her relationship to God. A person who brought the right sacrifices, but whose heart was far from God, would never please Him. The Old Testament writers stated again and again that God is more concerned with a person’s heart (Gen. 4:1–8; Ps. 40:6–8; Is. 1:10–18; Mic. 6:6–8). Hosea recorded God’s statement, “I desire mercy and not sacrifice” (Hos. 6:6; see Matt. 9:13; 12:7). The animals and the grain, the oil and the wine, the incense and the ash—all were ultimately accompaniments to the presentation of oneself as a living sacrifice to God (Rom. 12:1, 2).

The sacrifices and offerings in the Old Testament pointed forward to the death of the Savior, Jesus (Heb. 9:26). The blood of bulls and goats, the outpouring of wine, and the burning of oil had no power to overcome sin. Yet because Jesus is perfect and is God’s only Son, His death atones for sin (Heb. 10:1–10). Because of His death, we can approach the holy God. The complex sacrificial system shows how all of life, with its different spheres and rhythms, belongs to God and can be lived with a sense of restoration and gratitude toward Him.

⁵So there were recruited from the divisions of Israel one thousand from *each* tribe, twelve thousand armed for war. ⁶Then Moses sent them to the war, one thousand from *each* tribe; he sent them to the war with Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest, with the holy articles and ^dthe signal trumpets in his hand. ⁷And they warred against the Midianites, just as the LORD commanded Moses, and ^ethey killed all the ^fmales. ⁸They killed the kings of Midian with *the rest* of those who were killed—^gEvi, Rekem, ^hZur, Hur, and Reba, the five kings of Midian. ⁱBalaam the son of Beor they also killed with the sword.

⁹And the children of Israel took the women of Midian captive, with their little ones, and took as spoil all their cattle, all their flocks, and all their goods. ¹⁰They also burned with fire all the cities where they dwelt, and all their forts. ¹¹And ^jthey took all the spoil and all the booty—of man and beast.

Return from the War

¹²Then they brought the captives, the booty, and the spoil to Moses, to Eleazar the priest, and to the congregation of the children of Israel, to the camp in the plains of Moab by the Jordan, *across from* Jericho. ¹³And Moses, Eleazar the priest, and all the leaders of the congregation, went to meet them outside the camp. ¹⁴But Moses was angry with the officers of the army, *with* the captains over thousands and captains over hundreds, who had come from the battle.

¹⁵And Moses said to them: “Have you kept ^kall the women alive? ¹⁶Look, ^lthese *women* caused the children of Israel, through the ^mcounsel of Balaam, to trespass against the LORD in the incident of Peor, and ⁿthere was a plague among the congregation of the LORD. ¹⁷Now therefore, ^okill every male among the

⁶ ^d Num. 10:9
⁷ ^e Deut. 20:13;
 Judg. 21:11; 1 Sam.
 27:9; 1 Kin. 11:15, 16
^f Gen. 34:25
⁸ ^g Josh. 13:21
^h Num. 25:15 ⁱ Num.
 31:16; Josh. 13:22
¹¹ ^j Deut. 20:14
¹⁵ ^k Deut. 20:14
¹⁶ ^m Num. 25:2
ⁿ Num. 24:14; 2 Pet.
 2:15; Rev. 2:14
ⁿ Num. 25:9
¹⁷ ^o Deut. 7:2;
 20:16–18; Judg.
 21:11

little ones, and kill every woman who has known a man intimately. ¹⁸But keep alive ^pfor yourselves all the young girls who have not known a man intimately. ¹⁹And as for you, ^qremain outside the camp seven days; whoever has killed any person, and ^rwhoever has touched any slain, purify yourselves and your captives on the third day and on the seventh day. ²⁰Purify every garment, everything made of leather, everything woven of goats’ hair, and everything made of wood.”

²¹Then Eleazar the priest said to the men of war who had gone to the battle, “This is the ¹ordinance of the law which the LORD commanded Moses: ²²Only the gold, the silver, the bronze, the iron, the tin, and the lead, ²³everything that can endure fire, you shall put through the fire, and it shall be clean; and it shall be purified ^swith the water of purification. But all that cannot endure fire you shall put through water. ²⁴^tAnd you shall wash your clothes on the seventh day and be clean, and afterward you may come into the camp.”

Division of the Plunder

²⁵Now the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: ²⁶“Count up the plunder that was ²taken—of man and beast—you and Eleazar the priest and the chief fathers of the congregation; ²⁷and ^udivide the plunder into two parts, between those who took part in the war, who went out to battle, and all the congregation. ²⁸And levy a ³tribute for the LORD on the men of war who went out to battle: ^vone of every five hundred of the persons, the cattle, the donkeys, and the sheep; ²⁹take *it* from their half, and ^wgive *it* to Eleazar the priest as a heave offering to the LORD. ³⁰And from the children of Israel’s half you shall take ^xone of every fifty, drawn from the persons, the cattle, the donkeys, and the sheep, from all the livestock,

¹⁸ ^p Deut. 21:10–14
¹⁹ ^q Num. 5:2
²¹ ^r Num. 19:11–22
²¹ ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^{aa} ^{ab} ^{ac} ^{ad} ^{ae} ^{af} ^{ag} ^{ah} ^{ai} ^{aj} ^{ak} ^{al} ^{am} ^{an} ^{ao} ^{ap} ^{aq} ^{ar} ^{as} ^{at} ^{au} ^{av} ^{aw} ^{ax} ^{ay} ^{az} ^{ba} ^{bb} ^{bc} ^{bd} ^{be} ^{bf} ^{bg} ^{bh} ^{bi} ^{bj} ^{bk} ^{bl} ^{bm} ^{bn} ^{bo} ^{bp} ^{bq} ^{br} ^{bs} ^{bt} ^{bu} ^{bv} ^{bw} ^{bx} ^{by} ^{bz} ^{ca} ^{cb} ^{cc} ^{cd} ^{ce} ^{cf} ^{cg} ^{ch} ^{ci} ^{cj} ^{ck} ^{cl} ^{cm} ^{cn} ^{co} ^{cp} ^{cq} ^{cr} ^{cs} ^{ct} ^{cu} ^{cv} ^{cw} ^{cx} ^{cy} ^{cz} ^{da} ^{db} ^{dc} ^{dd} ^{de} ^{df} ^{dg} ^{dh} ^{di} ^{dj} ^{dk} ^{dl} ^{dm} ^{dn} ^{do} ^{dp} ^{dq} ^{dr} ^{ds} ^{dt} ^{du} ^{dv} ^{dw} ^{dx} ^{dy} ^{dz} ^{ea} ^{eb} ^{ec} ^{ed} ^{ee} ^{ef} ^{eg} ^{eh} ^{ei} ^{ej} ^{ek} ^{el} ^{em} ^{en} ^{eo} ^{ep} ^{eq} ^{er} ^{es} ^{et} ^{eu} ^{ev} ^{ew} ^{ex} ^{ey} ^{ez} ^{fa} ^{fb} ^{fc} ^{fd} ^{fe} ^{ff} ^{fg} ^{fh} ^{fi} ^{fj} ^{fk} ^{fl} ^{fm} ^{fn} ^{fo} ^{fp} ^{fq} ^{fr} ^{fs} ^{ft} ^{fu} ^{fv} ^{fw} ^{fx} ^{fy} ^{fz} ^{ga} ^{gb} ^{gc} ^{gd} ^{ge} ^{gf} ^{gg} ^{gh} ^{gi} ^{gj} ^{gk} ^{gl} ^{gm} ^{gn} ^{go} ^{gp} ^{gq} ^{gr} ^{gs} ^{gt} ^{gu} ^{gv} ^{gw} ^{gx} ^{gy} ^{gz} ^{ha} ^{hb} ^{hc} ^{hd} ^{he} ^{hf} ^{hg} ^{hh} ^{hi} ^{hj} ^{hk} ^{hl} ^{hm} ^{hn} ^{ho} ^{hp} ^{hq} ^{hr} ^{hs} ^{ht} ^{hu} ^{hv} ^{hw} ^{hx} ^{hy} ^{hz} ^{ia} ^{ib} ^{ic} ^{id} ^{ie} ^{if} ^{ig} ^{ih} ⁱⁱ ^{ij} ^{ik} ^{il} ^{im} ⁱⁿ ^{io} ^{ip} ^{iq} ^{ir} ^{is} ^{it} ^{iu} ^{iv} ^{iw} ^{ix} ^{iy} ^{iz} ^{ja} ^{jb} ^{jc} ^{jd} ^{je} ^{jf} ^{jj} ^{jk} ^{jl} ^{jm} ^{jn} ^{jo} ^{jp} ^{jq} ^{jr} ^{js} ^{jt} ^{ju} ^{jv} ^{jw} ^{jx} ^{ky} ^{kz} ^{la} ^{lb} ^{lc} ^{ld} ^{le} ^{lf} ^{lg} ^{lh} ^{li} ^{lj} ^{lk} ^{ll} ^{lm} ^{ln} ^{lo} ^{lp} ^{lq} ^{lr} ^{ls} ^{lt} ^{lu} ^{lv} ^{lw} ^{lx} ^{ly} ^{lz} ^{ma} ^{mb} ^{mc} ^{md} ^{me} ^{mf} ^{mg} ^{mh} ^{mi} ^{mj} ^{mk} ^{ml} ^{mn} ^{mo} ^{mp} ^{mq} ^{mr} ^{ms} ^{mt} ^{mu} ^{mv} ^{mw} ^{mx} ^{my} ^{mz} ^{na} ^{nb} ^{nc} nd ^{ne} ^{nf} ^{ng} ^{nh} ⁿⁱ ^{nj} ^{nk} ^{nl} ^{nm} ⁿⁿ ^{no} ^{np} ^{nq} ^{nr} ^{ns} ^{nt} ^{nu} ^{nv} ^{nw} ^{nx} ^{ny} ^{nz} ^{oa} ^{ob} ^{oc} ^{od} ^{oe} ^{of} ^{og} ^{oh} ^{oi} ^{oj} ^{ok} ^{ol} ^{om} ^{on} ^{oo} ^{op} ^{oq} ^{or} ^{os} ^{ot} ^{ou} ^{ov} ^{ow} ^{ox} ^{oy} ^{oz} ^{pa} ^{pb} ^{pc} ^{pd} ^{pe} ^{pf} ^{pg} ^{ph} ^{pi} ^{pj} ^{pk} ^{pl} ^{pm} ^{pn} ^{po} ^{pp} ^{pq} ^{pr} ^{ps} ^{pt} ^{pu} ^{pv} ^{pw} ^{px} ^{py} ^{pz} ^{qa} ^{qb} ^{qc} ^{qd} ^{qe} ^{qf} ^{qg} ^{qh} ^{qi} ^{qj} ^{qk} ^{ql} ^{qm} ^{qn} ^{qo} ^{qp} ^{qq} ^{qr} ^{qs} ^{qt} ^{qu} ^{qv} ^{qw} ^{qx} ^{qy} ^{qz} ^{ra} ^{rb} ^{rc} rd ^{re} ^{rf} ^{rg} ^{rh} ^{ri} ^{rj} ^{rk} ^{rl} ^{rm} ^{rn} ^{ro} ^{rp} ^{rq} ^{rr} ^{rs} ^{rt} ^{ru} ^{rv} ^{rw} ^{rx} ^{ry} ^{rz} ^{sa} ^{sb} ^{sc} ^{sd} ^{se} ^{sf} ^{sg} ^{sh} ^{si} ^{sj} ^{sk} ^{sl} sm ^{sn} ^{so} ^{sp} ^{sq} ^{sr} ^{ss} st ^{su} ^{sv} ^{sw} ^{sx} ^{sy} ^{sz} ^{ta} ^{tb} ^{tc} ^{td} ^{te} ^{tf} ^{tg} th ^{ti} ^{tj} ^{tk} ^{tl} tm ^{tn} ^{to} ^{tp} ^{tq} ^{tr} ^{ts} ^{tu} ^{tv} ^{tw} ^{tx} ^{ty} ^{tz} ^{ua} ^{ub} ^{uc} ^{ud} ^{ue} ^{uf} ^{ug} ^{uh} ^{ui} ^{uj} ^{uk} ^{ul} ^{um} ^{un} ^{uo} ^{up} ^{uq} ^{ur} ^{us} ^{ut} ^{uu} ^{uv} ^{uw} ^{ux} ^{uy} ^{uz} ^{va} ^{vb} ^{vc} ^{vd} ^{ve} ^{vf} ^{vg} ^{vh} ^{vi} ^{vj} ^{vk} ^{vl} ^{vm} ^{vn} ^{vo} ^{vp} ^{vq} ^{vr} ^{vs} ^{vt} ^{vu} ^{vv} ^{vw} ^{vx} ^{vy} ^{vz} ^{wa} ^{wb} ^{wc} ^{wd} ^{we} ^{wf} ^{wg} ^{wh} ^{wi} ^{wj} ^{wk} ^{wl} ^{wm} ^{wn} ^{wo} ^{wp} ^{wq} ^{wr} ^{ws} ^{wt} ^{wu} ^{wv} ^{ww} ^{wx} ^{wy} ^{wz} ^{xa} ^{xb} ^{xc} ^{xd} ^{xe} ^{xf} ^{yg} ^{yh} ^{yi} ^{yj} ^{yk} ^{yl} ^{ym} ^{yn} ^{yo} ^{yp} ^{yq} ^{yr} ^{ys} ^{yt} ^{yu} ^{yv} ^{yw} ^{yx} ^{yz} ^{za} ^{zb} ^{zc} ^{zd} ^{ze} ^{zf} ^{zg} ^{zh} ^{zi} ^{zj} ^{zk} ^{zl} ^{zm} ^{zn} ^{zo} ^{zp} ^{zq} ^{zr} ^{zs} ^{zt} ^{zu} ^{zv} ^{zw} ^{zx} ^{zy} ^{zz}

31:7–11 Victory was assured, given the blessing of God on the armies of Israel. The Israelites killed **all the males** and the **kings**, and took the **women** and **their little ones** as captives.

31:12–24 When the victors made their way back to the encampments of Israel, they found not praise but anger. **Have you kept all the women alive:** The key to Moses’ anger is the sinfulness of the women. **These women** had caused Israel to sin, as they had been counseled by **Balaam**. Balaam had been slain, along with the kings and notables of the people (v. 8). Now the women and their male children needed to be killed as well. Only the young girls who were still virgins were to be kept alive, for only they were provably innocent of the sexual sins of their mothers. Since this was a holy war, the soldiers and their possessions needed to go through extraordinary purification rites. This purification demanded both cleansing fire and water.

31:25–47 The balance of the chapter details the division of the plunder. The numbers are huge, suggesting a great victory. The division among those who had gone to war and those who had not set a

standard for future battles. The portion that was to be regarded as the Lord’s also became a standard.

vengeance

(Heb. *naqam*) (31:2; 1 Sam. 24:12; Is. 1:24) Strong’s #5358

The Hebrew verb translated *take vengeance* can have a negative or a positive connotation. On the one hand, the Israelites were forbidden to take revenge because such actions were ultimately self-serving (Lev. 19:18). On the other hand, the Scriptures speak of a righteous vengeance that involves the pursuit of justice, virtue, and the defense of God’s majesty. God declared that only He can seek this type of vengeance: “Vengeance is Mine” (Deut. 32:35). But He often uses people, as in 31:2, to carry out His revenge.

and give them to the Levites ³⁰who ⁴keep charge of the tabernacle of the LORD.” ³¹So Moses and Eleazar the priest did as the LORD commanded Moses.

³²The booty remaining from the plunder, which the men of war had taken, was six hundred and seventy-five thousand sheep, ³³seventy-two thousand cattle, ³⁴sixty-one thousand donkeys, ³⁵and thirty-two thousand persons in all, of women who had not known a man intimately. ³⁶And the half, the portion for those who had gone out to war, was in number three hundred and thirty-seven thousand five hundred sheep; ³⁷and the LORD’s ⁵tribute of the sheep was six hundred and seventy-five. ³⁸The cattle *were* thirty-six thousand, of which the LORD’s tribute *was* seventy-two. ³⁹The donkeys *were* thirty thousand five hundred, of which the LORD’s tribute *was* sixty-one. ⁴⁰The persons *were* sixteen thousand, of which the LORD’s tribute *was* thirty-two persons. ⁴¹So Moses gave the tribute *which was* the LORD’s heave offering to Eleazar the priest, ²as the LORD commanded Moses.

⁴²And from the children of Israel’s half, which Moses separated from the men who fought— ⁴³now the half belonging to the congregation was three hundred

30 ⁷ Num. 3:7, 8, 25, 31, 36; 18:3;
4 ⁴ perform the service
37 ⁵ tax
41 ² Num. 5:9, 10; 18:8, 19

47 ^a Num. 31:30
50 ^b Ex. 30:12-16
6 Lit. covering
53 ^c Num. 31:32; Deut. 20:14

and thirty-seven thousand five hundred sheep, ⁴⁴thirty-six thousand cattle, ⁴⁵thirty thousand five hundred donkeys, ⁴⁶and sixteen thousand persons— ⁴⁷and ^afrom the children of Israel’s half Moses took one of every fifty, drawn from man and beast, and gave them to the Levites, who kept charge of the tabernacle of the LORD, as the LORD commanded Moses.

⁴⁸Then the officers who *were* over thousands of the army, the captains of thousands and captains of hundreds, came near to Moses; ⁴⁹and they said to Moses, “Your servants have taken a count of the men of war who *are* under our command, and not a man of us is missing. ⁵⁰Therefore we have brought an offering for the LORD, what every man found of ornaments of gold: armlets and bracelets and signet rings and earrings and necklaces, ^bto make ⁶atonement for ourselves before the LORD.” ⁵¹So Moses and Eleazar the priest received the gold from them, all the fashioned ornaments. ⁵²And all the gold of the offering that they offered to the LORD, from the captains of thousands and captains of hundreds, was sixteen thousand seven hundred and fifty shekels. ⁵³^c(The men of war had taken spoil, every man for himself.) ⁵⁴And Moses and Eleazar the priest received the

31:48–54 While the record of the destruction of the people of Midian is distressing, the report from the officers of Israel that **not a man of us is missing** is awe-inspiring. None of their soldiers was lost in the battle. In praise and gratitude to God, the officers made

a special offering, which Moses brought into the tabernacle as a memorial. The size of the officers’ gift was extraordinary: a total of over 400 pounds of gold!

Cities of Refuge

The idea of providing cities of refuge (see also Josh. 20:1–9) for capital offenses is rooted in the tension between customary tribal law (retaliation or revenge, in which the blood relative is obligated to execute vengeance) and civil law (carried out less personally by an assembly according to a standard code of justice).

Blood feuds are usually associated with nomadic groups; legal procedures, with villages and towns. Israel, a society in the process of settling down, found it necessary to adopt an intermediate step regulating manslaughter, so that an innocent person would not be killed before standing trial. Absolution was possible only by being cleared by the assembly and by the eventual death of the high priest (when there would be general amnesty).

gold from the captains of thousands and of hundreds, and brought it into the tabernacle of meeting ^d as a memorial for the children of Israel before the LORD.

The Tribes Settling East of the Jordan

32 Now the children of Reuben and the children of Gad had a very great multitude of livestock; and when they saw the land of ^aJazer and the land of ^bGilead, that indeed the region *was* a place for livestock, ²the children of Gad and the children of Reuben came and spoke to Moses, to Eleazar the priest, and to the leaders of the congregation, saying, ³“Ataroth, Dibon, Jazer, ^cNimrah, ^dHeshbon, Elealeh, ^eShebam, Nebo, and ^fBeon, ⁴the country ^gwhich the LORD defeated before the congregation of Israel, is a land for livestock, and your servants have livestock.” ⁵Therefore they said, “If we have found favor in your sight, let this land be given to your servants as a possession. Do not take us over the Jordan.”

⁶And Moses said to the children of Gad and to the children of Reuben: “Shall your brethren go to war while you sit here? ⁷Now why will you ^hdiscourage the heart of the children of Israel from going over into the land which the LORD has given them? ⁸Thus your fathers did ⁱwhen I sent them away from Kadesh Barnea ^jto see the land. ⁹For ^kwhen they went up to the Valley of Eshcol and saw the land, they discouraged the heart of the children of Israel, so that they did not go into the land which the LORD had given them. ¹⁰^lSo the LORD’s anger was aroused on that day, and He swore an oath, saying, ¹¹“Surely none of the men who came up from Egypt, ^mfrom twenty years old and above, shall see the land of which I swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, because ⁿthey have not wholly followed Me, ¹²except Caleb the son of Jephunneh, the Kenizzite, and Joshua the son of Nun, ^ofor they have wholly followed the LORD.” ¹³So the LORD’s anger was aroused against Israel, and He made them ^pwander in the wilderness forty years, until ^qall the generation that had

BIBLE TIMES & CULTURE NOTES



Gold

Gold was the heaviest metal known to the Israelites, and the easiest to shape into intricate artistic designs. The Bible says the Israelites bought gold from Ophir and Parvaim (which may have been in India—1 Chr. 29:4; 2 Chr. 3:6), as well as from Sheba and Raamah, which were probably on the southern coast of Arabia (Ezek. 27:22). Despite being scarce, gold was widely used in building Solomon’s temple, in decorating the homes of the kings, and in making jewelry. Gold displayed its owner’s prestige or royal power.

Gold ore usually has impurities of other metals, which lend their characteristic color (e.g., copper impurities make yellow gold). Metalworkers in biblical times did not know how to remove these impurities, so they tested gold by rubbing it across a black stone called a touchstone and observing the color of its mark. Zechariah suggests this when he describes how God will test His people (Zech. 13:9).



Gold armlet from the Oxus Treasure, 6th–4th centuries B.C.

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54 ^d Ex. 30:16

CHAPTER 32

1 ^a Num. 21:32; Josh. 13:25; 2 Sam. 24:5 ^b Deut. 3:13
3 ^c Num. 32:36 ^d Josh. 13:17, 26 ^e Num. 32:38 ^f Num. 32:38
4 ^g Num. 21:24, 34, 35
7 ^h Num. 13:27–14:4
8 ⁱ Num. 13:3, 26 / Deut. 1:19–25
9 ^j Num. 13:24, 31; Deut. 1:24, 28
10 ^k Num. 14:11; Deut. 1:34–36
11 ^l Num. 14:28, 29; 26:63–65; Deut. 1:35 ^m Num. 14:24, 30
12 ⁿ Num. 14:6–9, 24, 30; Deut. 1:36; Josh. 14:8, 9
13 ^p Num. 14:33–35

done evil in the sight of the LORD was gone. ¹⁴And look! You have risen in your fathers’ place, a brood of sinful men, to increase still more the ^rfierce anger of the LORD against Israel. ¹⁵For if you ^sturn away from following Him, He will once again leave them in the wilderness, and you will destroy all these people.”

¹⁶Then they came near to him and said: “We will build sheepfolds here for our livestock, and cities for our little ones, ¹⁷but ^twe ourselves will be armed, ready to go before the children of Israel until we have brought them to their place; and our little ones will dwell in the fortified cities because of the inhabitants of the land. ¹⁸^uWe will not return to our homes

^q Num. 26:64, 65 ¹⁴ ^r Num. 11:1; Deut. 1:34 ¹⁵ ^s Deut. 30:17, 18; Josh. 22:16–18; 2 Chr. 7:19; 15:2 ¹⁷ ^t Josh. 4:12, 13
¹⁸ ^u Josh. 22:1–4

32:1–5 The tribes of **Reuben** and **Gad** wanted the land east of the Jordan which Israel had taken from Sihon and Og (ch. 21). The flocks and herds of Reuben and Gad were large, and the people of these tribes believed that the conquered area east of the Jordan would be good for them. Therefore, they came to Moses to request this land as their tribal inheritance.

32:6–15 And Moses said: Moses’ initial response was one of outrage and dismay. It appears that he was concerned that these tribes were going to shirk their duty to help the other tribes conquer the territory west of the Jordan. Moses was afraid they were going to drop out of the battle before it was fully joined. The encounter with

these men gave Moses an opportunity to rehearse the story of God’s redemption of Israel and Israel’s subsequent history and to use that story as a warning for these people.

32:16–19 The men of Reuben and Gad attempted to reassure Moses that they were not opting out of the battle at all. They simply wanted to build some provision for their wives and families while they were gone, and then they would join Israel’s army until the entire Promised Land was secured. **We will not return:** Their promise of faithfulness to the Israelite army is couched in strong words. They would return to their wives only when every tribe had received its inheritance.

until every one of the children of Israel has ¹received his inheritance. ¹⁹For we will not inherit with them on the other side of the Jordan and beyond, ²⁰because our inheritance has fallen to us on this eastern side of the Jordan.”

²⁰Then ²¹Moses said to them: “If you do this thing, if you arm yourselves before the LORD for the war, ²¹and all your armed men cross over the Jordan before the LORD until He has driven out His enemies from before Him, ²²and ²³the land is subdued before the LORD, then afterward ²⁴you may return and be blameless before the LORD and before Israel; and ²⁵this land shall be your possession before the LORD. ²⁶But if you do not do so, then take note, you have sinned against the LORD; and be sure ²⁷your sin will find you out. ²⁸^aBuild cities for your little ones and folds for your sheep, and do ²⁹what has proceeded out of your mouth.”

²⁹And the children of Gad and the children of Reuben spoke to Moses, saying: “Your servants will do as my lord commands. ³⁰Our little ones, our wives, our flocks, and all our livestock will be there in the cities of Gilead; ³¹but your servants will cross over, every man armed for war, before the LORD to battle, just as my lord says.”

³²So Moses gave command ³³concerning them to Eleazar the priest, to Joshua the son of Nun, and to the chief fathers of the tribes of the children of Israel. ³⁴And Moses said to them: “If the children of Gad and the children of Reuben cross over the Jordan with you, every man armed for battle before the LORD, and the land is subdued before you, then you shall give them the land of Gilead as a possession. ³⁵But if they do not cross over armed with you, they shall have possessions among you in the land of Canaan.”

³⁶Then the children of Gad and the children of Reuben answered, saying:

18 ¹ possessed
19 ² J Josh. 12:1; 13:8
20 ³ Deut. 3:18;
J Josh. 1:14
21 ⁴ Deut. 3:20;
J Josh. 11:23 ⁵ J Josh.
22:4 ⁶ Deut. 3:12,
15, 16, 18; J Josh.
1:15; 13:8, 32; 22:4, 9
23 ⁷ Gen. 4:7; 44:16;
J Josh. 7:1-26; Is.
59:12; [Gal. 6:7]
24 ⁸ Num. 32:16
² what you said you
would do
26 ⁹ J Josh. 1:14
27 ¹⁰ J Josh. 4:12
28 ¹¹ J Josh. 1:13

33 ¹² Deut. 3:8-17;
29:8; J Josh. 12:1-
6; 13:8-31; 22:4
34 ¹³ Num. 21:24, 33, 35
35 ¹⁴ Num. 33:45, 46
¹ Deut. 2:36
36 ¹⁵ Num. 32:1, 3
37 ¹⁶ Num. 32:3
¹ Num. 32:24
37 ¹⁷ Num. 21:27
38 ¹⁸ Is. 46:1 ¹⁹ Ezek.
25:9 ²⁰ Ex. 23:13;
J Josh. 23:7
39 ²¹ Gen. 50:23;
Num. 27:1; 36:1
³ drove out
40 ²² Deut. 3:12, 13,
15; J Josh. 13:31
41 ²³ Deut. 3:14;
J Josh. 13:30 ²⁴ Judg.
10:4; 1 Kin. 4:13
⁴ Lit. Towns of Jair

CHAPTER 33

1 ^a Ps. 77:20
3 ^b Ex. 12:37 ^c Ex.
12:2; 13:4

“As the LORD has said to your servants, so we will do. ³²We will cross over armed before the LORD into the land of Canaan, but the possession of our inheritance *shall remain* with us on this side of the Jordan.”

³³So ³⁴Moses gave to the children of Gad, to the children of Reuben, and to half the tribe of Manasseh the son of Joseph, ³⁵the kingdom of Sihon king of the Amorites and the kingdom of Og king of Bashan, the land with its cities within the borders, the cities of the surrounding country. ³⁶And the children of Gad built ³⁷Dibon and Ataroth and ³⁸Aroer, ³⁹Atroth and Shophan and ⁴⁰Jazer and Jogbehah, ⁴¹Beth Nimrah and Beth Haran, ⁴²fortified cities, and folds for sheep. ⁴³And the children of Reuben built ⁴⁴Heshbon and Elealeh and Kirjathaim, ⁴⁵Nebo and ⁴⁶Baal Meon ⁴⁷(their names being changed) and Shibmah; and they gave *other* names to the cities which they built.

⁴⁸And the children of ⁴⁹Machir the son of Manasseh went to Gilead and took it, and ⁵⁰dispossessed the Amorites who *were* in it. ⁵¹So Moses ⁵²gave Gilead to Machir the son of Manasseh, and he dwelt in it. ⁵³Also ⁵⁴Jair the son of Manasseh went and took its small towns, and called them ⁵⁵Havoth Jair. ⁵⁶Then Nobah went and took Kenath and its villages, and he called it Nobah, after his own name.

Israel's Journey from Egypt Reviewed

33 These are the journeys of the children of Israel, who went out of the land of Egypt by their armies under the ^ahand of Moses and Aaron. ²Now Moses wrote down the starting points of their journeys at the command of the LORD. And these *are* their journeys according to their starting points:

³They ^bdeparted from Rameses in ^cthe first month, on the fifteenth day of the first month; on the day after the Passover

32:20–27 Moses and the men of Reuben and Gad negotiated. Plans were made for the fighting men of these tribes to join the armies of Israel for the period of the conquest.

32:28–32 Finally the deal is struck between Moses and the leaders of Reuben and Gad. If the people would do as they had promised, if they would fight alongside the others until the conquest was complete, they could certainly live in the land they chose—the land east of the Jordan. If not, they would lose all choice in the land at all.

32:33–42 It is not until the end of the narrative that we learn that one half of the tribe of Manasseh had joined Reuben and Gad in their proposal. Moses agreed to their plan and led them in the distribution of the land east of the Jordan. The villages and cities are listed, praising God for victory over them. Naming them shows how God had led His people to the Promised Land and enabled them to build cities and villages.

33:1 These are the journeys: Chapter 33 records the journey of the people of Israel from Rameses in Egypt (v. 3) to the plains

of Moab (v. 49). The chapter is marked by significant difficulties. Most of the places cited are not known today. This is because for the most part they were not cities but merely encampments in the Wilderness of Sinai.

33:2 Moses wrote down: These remarkable words indicate that Moses himself wrote down the following passage.

33:3 Rameses is usually identified with Tanis (see Gen. 47:11; Ex. 1:11). There is a certain structural symmetry to the listing of these place names in this chapter. In essence, this list of place names is a song of praise to God's faithfulness. With every step and with every encampment, God led them triumphantly to the Promised Land. Significantly, there are 40 places mentioned between Rameses and the plains of Moab. Some of the sites recorded here (including many of the ones in vv. 5–18) are mentioned elsewhere in Exodus and Numbers; some are recorded only here (including most of those listed in vv. 19–29). In addition, some of the places mentioned in Exodus and Numbers are not recorded here (including Taberah, in 11:3).

the children of Israel went out ^dwith boldness in the sight of all the Egyptians. ⁴For the Egyptians were burying all *their* firstborn, ^ewhom the LORD had killed among them. Also ^fon their gods the LORD had executed judgments.

⁵Then the children of Israel moved from Rameses and camped at Succoth. ⁶They departed from ^hSuccoth and camped at Etham, which *is* on the edge of the wilderness. ⁷ⁱThey moved from Etham and turned back to Pi Hahiroth, which *is* east of Baal Zephon; and they camped near Migdol. ⁸They departed ^jfrom before Hahiroth and ^kpassed through the midst of the sea into the wilderness, went three days' journey in the Wilderness of Etham, and camped at Marah. ⁹They moved from Marah and ^kcame to Elim. At Elim *were* twelve springs of water and seventy palm trees; so they camped there.

¹⁰They moved from Elim and camped by the Red Sea. ¹¹They moved from the Red Sea and camped in the ^lWilderness of Sin. ¹²They journeyed from the Wilderness of Sin and camped at Dophkah. ¹³They departed from Dophkah and camped at Alush. ¹⁴They moved from Alush and camped at ^mRephidim, where there was no water for the people to drink.

¹⁵They departed from Rephidim and camped in the ⁿWilderness of Sinai. ¹⁶They moved from the Wilderness of Sinai and camped ^oat ²Kibroth Hattaavah. ¹⁷They departed from Kibroth Hattaavah and ^pcamped at Hazeroth. ¹⁸They departed from Hazeroth and camped at ^qRithmah. ¹⁹They departed from Rithmah and camped at Rimmon Perez. ²⁰They departed from Rimmon Perez and camped at Libnah. ²¹They moved from Libnah and camped at Rissah. ²²They journeyed from Rissah and camped at Kehelathah. ²³They went from Kehelathah and camped at Mount Shepher. ²⁴They moved from Mount Shepher and camped at Haradah. ²⁵They moved from Haradah and camped at Makheloth. ²⁶They moved from Makheloth and camped at Tahath. ²⁷They departed from Tahath and camped at

3 ^d Ex. 14:8
4 ^e Ex. 12:29 ^f [Ex. 12:12; 18:11]; Is. 19:1
5 ^f Ex. 12:37
6 ^h Ex. 13:20
7 ⁱ Ex. 14:1, 2, 9
8 ^j Ex. 14:22; 15:22, 23 ^j Many Heb. mss., Sam., Syr., Tg., Vg. from *Pi Hahiroth*; cf. Num. 33:7
9 ^k Ex. 15:27
11 ⁱ Ex. 16:1
14 ^m Ex. 17:1; 19:2
15 ⁿ Ex. 16:1; 19:1, 2
16 ^o Num. 11:34
2 ^l Lit. *Graves of Craving*
17 ^p Num. 11:35
18 ^q Num. 12:16

Terah. ²⁸They moved from Terah and camped at Mithkah. ²⁹They went from Mithkah and camped at Hashmonah. ³⁰They departed from Hashmonah and ^rcamped at Moseroth. ³¹They departed from Moseroth and camped at Bene Jaakan. ³²They moved from ^sBene Jaakan and ^tcamped at Hor Hagidgad. ³³They went from Hor Hagidgad and camped at Jotbathah. ³⁴They moved from Jotbathah and camped at Abronah. ³⁵They departed from Abronah ^uand camped at Ezion Geber. ³⁶They moved from Ezion Geber and camped in the ^vWilderness of Zin, which *is* Kadesh. ³⁷They moved from ^wKadesh and camped at Mount Hor, on the boundary of the land of Edom.

³⁸Then ^xAaron the priest went up to Mount Hor at the command of the LORD, and died there in the fortieth year after the children of Israel had come out of the land of Egypt, on the first *day* of the fifth month. ³⁹Aaron *was* one hundred and twenty-three years old when he died on Mount Hor.

⁴⁰Now ^ythe king of Arad, the Canaanite, who dwelt in the South in the land of Canaan, heard of the coming of the children of Israel.

⁴¹So they departed from Mount Hor and camped at Zalmonah. ⁴²They departed from Zalmonah and camped at Punon. ⁴³They departed from Punon and ^zcamped at Oboth. ⁴⁴^aThey departed from Oboth and camped at Ije Abarim, at the border of Moab. ⁴⁵They departed from ³Ijim and camped ^bat Dibon Gad. ⁴⁶They moved from Dibon Gad and camped at ^cAlmon Diblathaim. ⁴⁷They moved from Almon Diblathaim ^dand camped in the mountains of Abarim, before Nebo. ⁴⁸They departed from the mountains of Abarim and ^ecamped in the plains of Moab by the Jordan, *across from* Jericho. ⁴⁹They camped by the Jordan, from Beth Jesimoth as far as the ^fAbel Acacia Grove ⁴in the plains of Moab.

Instructions for the Conquest of Canaan

⁵⁰Now the LORD spoke to Moses in the plains of Moab by the Jordan, *across from* Jericho, saying, ⁵¹“Speak to the children

30 ^r Deut. 10:6
32 ^s Deut. 10:6
^t Deut. 10:7
35 ^u Deut. 2:8;
1 Kin. 9:26; 22:48
36 ^v Num. 20:1;
27:14
37 ^w Num. 20:22,
23; 21:4
38 ^x Num. 20:25, 28;
Deut. 10:6; 32:50
40 ^y Num. 21:1
43 ^z Num. 21:10
44 ^a Num. 21:11
45 ^b Num. 32:34
³ Same as *Ije Abarim*, v. 44
46 ^c Jer. 48:22;
Ezek. 6:14
47 ^d Num. 21:20;
Deut. 32:49
48 ^e Num. 22:1;
31:12; 35:1
49 ^f Num. 25:1;
Josh. 2:1 ⁴ Heb.
Abel Shittim

33:6–8 Succoth, Etham, and Pi Hahiroth were west of the Red Sea. The rest of the sites were in the Wilderness of Sinai.

33:38 Mount Hor: With the mention of this place, a quick memorial is given of **Aaron**, the high priest. **fortieth year:** The journey from Rameses to Mt. Hor completed the 40-year cycle. Aaron died on the last year of the Israelites' wanderings in the wilderness.

33:50–56 On the staging area for the invasion of the Promised Land, God gave Moses instructions for the people about the conquest of Canaan. Israel was to exterminate the Canaanites and take full

possession of their land. For over 400 years, from the time of God's covenant with Abram in Gen. 15:17–21, God had warned that a time would come when He would punish the sinfulness of the Canaanites. The Canaanites, by their continual wicked acts, had no right to live in the land of Canaan. God, whose land it really was, transferred the right of possession to Israel. Therefore, the words come as a legal transfer: **for I have given you the land to possess**. It was to be divided by lot, with the larger tracts going to the larger tribes, as already described in 26:52–56.

of Israel, and say to them: ^g‘When you have crossed the Jordan into the land of Canaan, ^{52h}then you shall drive out all the inhabitants of the land from before you, destroy all their engraved stones, destroy all their molded images, and demolish all their ⁵high places; ⁵³you shall dispossess *the inhabitants of the land* and dwell in it, for I have given you the land to ⁱpossess. ⁵⁴And ^jyou shall divide the land by lot as an inheritance among your families; to the larger you shall give a larger inheritance, and to the smaller you shall give a smaller inheritance; there everyone’s *inheritance* shall be whatever falls to him by lot. You shall inherit according to the tribes of your fathers. ⁵⁵But if you do not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you, then it shall be that those whom you let remain *shall be* ^kirritants in your eyes and thorns in your sides, and they shall harass you in the land where you dwell. ⁵⁶Moreover it shall be *that* I will do to you as I thought to do to them.’”

The Appointed Boundaries of Canaan

34 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ²“Command the children of Israel, and say to them: ‘When you come into ^athe land of Canaan, this *is* the land that shall fall to you as an inheritance—the land of Canaan to its boundaries. ^{3b}Your southern border shall be from the Wilderness of Zin along the border of Edom; then your southern border shall extend eastward to the end of ^cthe Salt Sea; ⁴your border shall turn from the southern side of ^dthe Ascent of Akrabbim, continue to Zin, and be on the south of ^eKadesh Barnea; then it shall go on to ^fHazar Addar, and continue to Azmon; ⁵the border shall turn from Azmon ^gto the Brook of Egypt, and it shall end at the Sea.

⁶‘As for the ^hwestern border, you shall have the Great Sea for a border; this shall be your western border.

⁷‘And this shall be your northern border: From the Great Sea you shall mark out your *border* line to ⁱMount Hor; ⁸from

51 ^g Deut. 7:1, 2; 9:1; Josh. 3:17
52 ^h Ex. 23:24, 33; 34:13; Deut. 7:2, 5; 12:3; Judg. 2:2; Ps. 106:34-36 ⁵ Places for pagan worship
53 ⁱ Deut. 11:31; Josh. 21:43
54 ^j Num. 26:53-56
55 ^k Josh. 23:13; Judg. 2:3

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2 ^a Gen. 17:8; Deut. 1:7, 8; Ps. 78:54, 55; 105:11
3 ^b Josh. 15:1-3; Ezek. 47:13, 19
^c Gen. 14:3; Josh. 15:2
4 ^d Josh. 15:3
^e Num. 13:26; 32:8
^f Josh. 15:3, 4
5 ^g Gen. 15:18; Josh. 15:4, 47; 1 Kin. 8:65; Is. 27:12
6 ^h Ex. 23:31; Josh. 15:12; Ezek. 47:20
7 ⁱ Num. 33:37

8 ^j Num. 13:21; Josh. 13:5; 2 Kin. 14:25 ^k Ezek. 47:15
9 ^l Ezek. 47:17
11 ^m 2 Kin. 23:33; Jer. 39:5, 6 ⁿ Deut. 3:17; Josh. 11:2; 12:3; 13:27; 19:35; Matt. 14:34; Luke 5:1 ¹ Lit. *shoulder*
12 ^o Num. 34:3
13 ^p Gen. 15:18; Num. 26:52-56; Deut. 11:24; Josh. 14:1-5
14 ^q Num. 32:33
17 ^r Josh. 14:1, 2; 19:51
18 ^s Num. 1:4, 16

Mount Hor you shall mark out *your border* ^jto the entrance of Hamath; then the direction of the border shall be toward ^kZedad; ⁹the border shall proceed to Ziphron, and it shall end at ^lHazar Enan. This shall be your northern border.

¹⁰‘You shall mark out your eastern border from Hazar Enan to Shepham; ¹¹the border shall go down from Shepham ^mto Riblah on the east side of Ain; the border shall go down and reach to the eastern ¹side of the Sea ⁿof Chinnereth; ¹²the border shall go down along the Jordan, and it shall end at ^othe Salt Sea. This shall be your land with its surrounding boundaries.’”

¹³Then Moses commanded the children of Israel, saying: ^p“This *is* the land which you shall inherit by lot, which the LORD has commanded to give to the nine tribes and to the half-tribe. ^{14q}For the tribe of the children of Reuben according to the house of their fathers, and the tribe of the children of Gad according to the house of their fathers, have received *their inheritance*; and the half-tribe of Manasseh has received its inheritance. ¹⁵The two tribes and the half-tribe have received their inheritance on this side of the Jordan, *across from* Jericho eastward, toward the sunrise.”

The Leaders Appointed to Divide the Land

¹⁶And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ¹⁷“These *are* the names of the men who shall divide the land among you as an inheritance: ^rEleazar the priest and Joshua the son of Nun. ¹⁸And you shall take one ^sleader of every tribe to divide the land for the inheritance. ¹⁹These *are* the names of the men: from the tribe of Judah, Caleb the son of Jephunneh; ²⁰from the tribe of the children of Simeon, Shemuel the son of Ammihud; ²¹from the tribe of Benjamin, Elidad the son of Chislon; ²²a leader from the tribe of the children of Dan, Bukki the son of Jogli; ²³from the sons of Joseph: a leader from the tribe of the children of Manasseh, Hanniel the son of Ephod, ²⁴and a leader

33:55, 56 if you do not drive out the inhabitants of the land: God’s commands to Israel to eradicate the Canaanites from the land were ultimately expressions of His mercy to Israel. If the idolatrous Canaanites were allowed to live among God’s people, they would have been a constant source of trouble for the Israelites. Sadly, the experience of Israel in the land led to this very result. This chapter serves as the emotional and logical conclusion of Numbers. The recital of places and the commission for conquest provide the reader a sense of closure for this phase of Israel’s life, as well as an anticipation of the future. The last three chapters serve as appendices.
34:1-12 the land of Canaan to its boundaries: Chapter 34 serves

as a detailed display of the grandeur of the land that God was about to give to His people (33:53).
34:13-15 To the nine tribes and to the half-tribe is a reminder that Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh would have their settlements east of the Jordan (32:33). The land of Canaan proper would be inhabited by the remaining nine tribes and the other half-tribe of Manasseh.
34:16-29 The listing of the names of the men serves several purposes: (1) to give authenticity to the record; (2) to memorialize these individuals in the history of Israel; (3) to serve as a legal arrangement so that the transfer of the land to the tribes would be done in order.



Cities of Refuge

In the ancient Middle East, custom dictated that the taking of a life, even by accident, had to be avenged by a member of the victim's family. In response to this ancient practice, God ordered six Levitical cities to be stationed in the land as cities of refuge. A person guilty of unintentional manslaughter could escape blood revenge by fleeing to one of these cities (Josh. 20). No matter where a person lived, there would be a city of refuge within a reasonable distance, because these cities were strategically spread all over the land—three to the east of the Jordan River and three to the west. The Hebrew term translated “refuge” or “asylum” designates a place of escape from the avenger, who was the protector of the family's rights, the one who made things right.



The Cave of the Patriarchs in Hebron, one of the cities of refuge

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from the tribe of the children of Ephraim, Kemuel the son of Shiphtan; ²⁵a leader from the tribe of the children of Zebulun, Elizaphan the son of Parnach; ²⁶a leader from the tribe of the children of Issachar, Paltiel the son of Azzan; ²⁷a leader from the tribe of the children of Asher, Ahihud the son of Shelomi; ²⁸and a leader from the tribe of the children of Naphtali, Pedahel the son of Ammihud.”

²⁹These *are* the ones the LORD commanded to ²divide the inheritance among the children of Israel in the land of Canaan.

Cities for the Levites

35 ^aAnd the LORD spoke to Moses in the plains of Moab by the Jordan across from Jericho, saying: ^{2b}“Command the children of Israel that they give the Levites cities to dwell in from the inheritance of their possession, and you shall *also* give the Levites ^ccommon-land around the cities. ³They shall have the cities to dwell in; and their common-land shall be for their cattle, for their herds, and for all their animals. ⁴The common-land of the cities which you will give the Levites *shall extend* from the wall of the city outward a thousand cubits all around. ⁵And you shall measure outside the city

²⁹ ²apportion

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¹ ^a Num. 33:50
² ^a Josh. 14:3, 4; 21:2, 3; Ezek. 45:1; 48:10-20 ^c Lev. 25:32-34

⁶ ^d Deut. 4:41; Josh. 20:2, 7, 8; 21:3, 13
⁷ ^e Josh. 21:41
⁸ ^f Josh. 21:3
⁹ Num. 26:54; 33:54
¹⁰ ^h Deut. 19:2; Josh. 20:1-9
¹¹ ⁱ Ex. 21:13; Num. 35:22-25; Deut. 19:1-13
¹² ^j Deut. 19:6; Josh. 20:3, 5, 6

on the east side two thousand cubits, on the south side two thousand cubits, on the west side two thousand cubits, and on the north side two thousand cubits. The city *shall be* in the middle. This shall belong to them as common-land for the cities.

⁶“Now among the cities which you will give to the Levites *you shall appoint* ^dsix cities of refuge, to which a manslayer may flee. And to these you shall add forty-two cities. ⁷So all the cities you will give to the Levites *shall be* ^eforty-eight; these *you shall give* with their common-land. ⁸And the cities which you will give *shall be* ^ffrom the possession of the children of Israel; ⁹from the larger *tribe* you shall give many, from the smaller you shall give few. Each shall give some of its cities to the Levites, in proportion to the inheritance that each receives.”

Cities of Refuge

⁹Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ¹⁰“Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: ^h“When you cross the Jordan into the land of Canaan, ¹¹then ⁱyou shall appoint cities to be cities of refuge for you, that the manslayer who kills any person accidentally may flee there. ^{12j}They shall be cities of refuge for you from the avenger,

34:29 There is a sense in the words **these are the ones** that the second generation was now the fully accredited substitute for the rebellious first generation.

35:2 give the Levites cities: The Levites were separated from the rest of the population for the holy service of God (1:47–53). They were not to have an allotment of land along with the other tribes

(18:24). Nonetheless, the Levites needed places to live and to manage their herds and flocks. The decision of the Lord was that they would be distributed throughout the land in 48 cities. In this way, the Levites were distributed among the people as a symbol of the holy service of God. (see Josh. 20; 21).

that the manslayer may not die until he stands before the congregation in judgment.¹³ And of the cities which you give, you shall have ^ksix cities of refuge.¹⁴ You shall appoint three cities on this side of the Jordan, and three cities you shall appoint in the land of Canaan, *which* will be cities of refuge.¹⁵ These six cities shall be for refuge for the children of Israel, ^mfor the stranger, and for the sojourner among them, that anyone who kills a person accidentally may flee there.

¹⁶ⁿ“But if he strikes him with an iron implement, so that he dies, he is a murderer; the murderer shall surely be put to death.¹⁷ And if he strikes him with a stone in the hand, by which one could die, and he does die, he is a murderer; the murderer shall surely be put to death.¹⁸ Or if he strikes him with a wooden hand weapon, by which one could die, and he does die, he is a murderer; the murderer shall surely be put to death.^{19o} The ¹avenger of blood himself shall put the murderer to death; when he meets him, he shall put him to death.^{20p} If he pushes him out of hatred or, ^qwhile lying in wait, hurls something at him so that he dies, ²¹or in enmity he strikes him with his hand so that he dies, the one who struck him shall surely be put to death. He is a murderer. The avenger of blood shall put the murderer to death when he meets him.

²²“However, if he pushes him suddenly ^rwithout enmity, or throws anything at him without lying in wait, ²³or uses a stone, by which a man could die, throwing it at him without seeing him, so that he dies, while he was not his enemy or seeking his harm, ²⁴then ^sthe congregation shall judge between the manslayer and the avenger of blood according to these judgments.²⁵ So the congregation shall deliver the manslayer from the hand of the avenger of blood, and the congregation shall return him to the city of refuge where he had fled, and ^the shall remain there until the death of the high priest ^uwho was anointed with the holy oil.²⁶ But if the manslayer at any time goes outside the limits of the city of refuge where he fled, ²⁷and the avenger of blood finds him outside the limits of his city of refuge, and the avenger of blood kills the manslayer, he shall not be guilty

13 ^k Num. 35:6
14 ^j Deut. 4:41;
Josh. 20:8
15 ^m Num. 15:16
16 ⁿ Ex. 21:12, 14;
Lev. 24:17; Deut.
19:11, 12
19 ^o Num. 35:21, 24,
27; Deut. 19:6, 12
¹ A family member
who is to avenge
the victim
20 ^p Gen. 4:8;
2 Sam. 3:27; 20:10;
1 Kin. 2:31, 32
^q Ex. 21:14; Deut.
19:11, 12
22 ^r Ex. 21:13
24 ^s Num. 35:12;
Josh. 20:6
25 ^t Josh. 20:6 ^u Ex.
29:7; Lev. 4:3; 21:10

27 ² Murder
29 ^v Num. 27:11
30 ^w Deut. 17:6;
19:15; Matt. 18:16;
John 7:51; 8:17, 18;
2 Cor. 13:1; Heb.
10:28
33 ^x Deut. 21:7, 8;
Ps. 106:38 ^y Gen.
9:6 ³ Lit. covering
34 ^z Lev. 18:24, 25;
Deut. 21:23 ⁴ Ex.
29:45, 46

CHAPTER 36

1 ^a Num. 26:29
^b Num. 27:1-11
2 ^c Num. 26:55;
33:54; Josh. 17:4
^d Num. 27:1, 5-7
3 ^e Num. 27:4
4 ^f Lev. 25:10

of ²blood, ²⁸because he should have remained in his city of refuge until the death of the high priest. But after the death of the high priest the manslayer may return to the land of his possession.

²⁹“And these *things* shall be ^va statute of judgment to you throughout your generations in all your dwellings.³⁰ Whoever kills a person, the murderer shall be put to death on the ^wtestimony of witnesses; but one witness is not *sufficient* testimony against a person for the death *penalty*.³¹ Moreover you shall take no ransom for the life of a murderer who is guilty of death, but he shall surely be put to death.³² And you shall take no ransom for him who has fled to his city of refuge, that he may return to dwell in the land before the death of the priest.³³ So you shall not pollute the land where you *are*; for blood ^xdefiles the land, and no ³atonement can be made for the land, for the blood that is shed on it, except ^yby the blood of him who shed it.³⁴ Therefore ^zdo not defile the land which you inhabit, in the midst of which I dwell; for ^aI the LORD dwell among the children of Israel.”

Marriage of Female Heirs

36 Now the chief fathers of the families of the ^achildren of Gilead the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh, of the families of the sons of Joseph, came near and ^bspoke before Moses and before the leaders, the chief fathers of the children of Israel. ² And they said: “The LORD commanded my lord *Moses* to give the land as an inheritance by lot to the children of Israel, and ^dmy lord was commanded by the LORD to give the inheritance of our brother Zelophehad to his daughters. ³ Now if they are married to any of the sons of the *other* tribes of the children of Israel, then their inheritance will be ^etaken from the inheritance of our fathers, and it will be added to the inheritance of the tribe into which they marry; so it will be taken from the lot of our inheritance. ⁴ And when ^fthe Jubilee of the children of Israel comes, then their inheritance will be added to the inheritance of the tribe into which they marry; so their inheritance will be taken away from the inheritance of the tribe of our fathers.”

⁵ Then Moses commanded the chil-

35:30–34 Whoever kills a person: The people were not to confuse accidental manslaughter with premeditated murder. One who had committed homicide was not permitted to flee to a city of refuge. His crime was to be punished by death.

36:1–4 Chapter 36 presents the interest of the relatives of Zelophehad, who were worried about possible complications of the

decision to allow Zelophehad's daughters to inherit their father's possession in the land (ch. 27). If the daughters were to marry outside their tribe and family, then the tribal allowances would be hopelessly confused and perhaps even lost.

36:5–13 they may marry only within the family: Moses decided that the family's concern was legitimate. He did not overrule the

dren of Israel according to the word of the LORD, saying: ^a“What the tribe of the sons of Joseph speaks is right. ⁶This *is* what the LORD commands concerning the daughters of Zelophehad, saying, ‘Let them ¹marry whom they think best, ^hbut they may marry only within the family of their father’s tribe.’ ⁷So the inheritance of the children of Israel shall not change hands from tribe to tribe, for every one of the children of Israel shall ⁱkeep the inheritance of the tribe of his fathers. ⁸And ^jevery daughter who possesses an inheritance in any tribe of the children of Israel shall be the wife of one of the family of her father’s tribe, so that the children of Israel each may possess the inheritance of his fathers. ⁹Thus no inheritance shall

⁵ ^g Num. 27:7
⁶ ^h Num. 36:11, 12
¹ Lit. *be wives to*
⁷ ⁱ 1 Kin. 21:3
⁸ ^j 1 Chr. 23:22

¹¹ ^k Num. 26:33;
 27:1
¹³ ^l Num. 26:3;
 33:50

change hands from *one* tribe to another, but every tribe of the children of Israel shall keep its own inheritance.”

¹⁰Just as the LORD commanded Moses, so did the daughters of Zelophehad; ¹¹^kfor Mahlah, Tirzah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Noah, the daughters of Zelophehad, were married to the sons of their father’s brothers. ¹²They were married into the families of the children of Manasseh the son of Joseph, and their inheritance remained in the tribe of their father’s family.

¹³These *are* the commandments and the judgments which the LORD commanded the children of Israel by the hand of Moses ^lin the plains of Moab by the Jordan, *across from* Jericho.

earlier decision to allow the women to inherit the portion that would have gone to their father, but he regulated their marriage choices to maintain the integrity of the tribal allotments. In this account, we see the way case law worked in ancient Israel. Specific instances that

were not covered clearly in the general legislation would be brought to Moses for disposition. He would seek the word of the Lord on that specific issue and then would pronounce the decision.

THE FIFTH BOOK OF MOSES CALLED

DEUTERONOMY



WITH THE NATION OF ISRAEL poised at the entrance of Canaan, Moses seized one last opportunity to prepare the people for their new life in the land of their inheritance. Since Moses would not be entering the land with the people, he wanted to make sure that the nation did not forget its covenant with God. Moses' careful review of the laws of God is recorded in the Book of Deuteronomy.

Author and Title The English title of the fifth book of the Pentateuch is derived from the Septuagint, the ancient Greek translation of the Old Testament, which interprets the words in 17:18, "a copy of this law," as "the second law." The name Deuteronomy means "the second law." The name is somewhat of a misnomer because Deuteronomy does not contain a second law. However, it does explain God's law revealed at Mount Sinai to a second generation of Israelites.

Throughout the centuries, Jews and Christians have believed that Moses wrote Deuteronomy. But during the last two hundred years, some have challenged this position. They have argued that the theology of the book is too advanced for the primitive Israelites at this early stage in their history. But others have maintained that Moses compiled Deuteronomy and wrote most of it. They argue that Mosaic authorship is supported by the book's consistent covenantal theology, its claims of Mosaic authorship, and the witness of New Testament writers.

Deuteronomy is basically the last will of Moses. In this will, he challenged Israel to remain faithful to the covenant, reminded them of their past history, and pointed to their future of blessings or cursings in the land of Canaan, depending upon their belief and behavior. Moses' speeches (31:24), the recitation of the Song of Moses (31:30—32:43), and Moses' blessing on the tribes (33:1–29) largely constitute the Book of Deuteronomy. To this, another author was led by the Spirit of God to add the account of the death of Moses and the tribute to his legacy (34:1–12). Some have argued that Moses himself might have written the account of his death and succession, having foreseen them by divine inspiration. This is certainly possible, but it is not a necessary conclusion for those who hold to Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch as a whole.

Historical Background The speeches in this book are set against the historical background of all the events of Israel's history until the time they were spoken, including the Exodus from Egypt, the revelation of God at Mount Sinai, the rebellious responses of Israel to the Lord's goodness, and God's constant protection of them. Yet there are a few pivotal events that the book particularly addresses.

The idolatry at Baal Peor was one of those significant moments in Israel's history (Num. 25). It was there that Israel first experienced the attraction of Baal worship, a factor that would plague its existence for centuries. The people whom Moses addressed in Deuteronomy were those who had survived the plague that the Lord brought in punishment for the sins of the people (4:3). In light of this experience, Moses pleaded with this new generation to be faithful to God's laws. He frequently used the word *today* in order to emphasize that this new generation could start anew (for example, 1:10, 39; 4:4, 40; 5:1, 3; 6:6; 7:11); they did not have to focus on their rebellious past.

Moses concluded his exhortations to the Israelites with a description of the covenant renewal ceremony that would take place between Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim. He instructed the Levites to recite on the

barren mountaintop of Ebal the curses for those who rejected God's Law. On the lush slopes of Gerizim, the rich blessings for those who obeyed God's law would be recited. With these instructions, Moses anticipated the renewal of the covenant on the other side of the Jordan River. There, the people would gather for the grand moment when they would renew the covenant once again, but this time as inhabitants of the Promised Land (11:29, 30; 27:1–8, 12, 13; Josh. 8:30–35). After describing this future covenantal renewal, Moses himself challenged the people to renew their commitment to God (30:11–20).

Finally, the expectation of Moses' imminent death explains why he gave the book as a testimony to God's law. The Lord had commanded him to leave the words of the law as a testimony to Israel. In response, Moses wrote the words down, gave them to the priests for safekeeping, and commanded the priests to read the word of God every seven years. In this way, Moses not only prepared the new generation for the coming conquest of the land, but also insured that every generation after that would hear God's laws (31:9–13).

Theme and Structure Moses' emphasis on the covenant throughout Deuteronomy is remarkable. He testified to its importance by repeatedly calling the new generation of Israelites to follow its provisions (30:11–20).

In fact, Deuteronomy as a whole reflects the pattern of an ancient Middle Eastern treaty between a lord and a servant. The typical pattern of such a treaty with its approximate corresponding sections in Deuteronomy is as follows:

- (1) A preamble or introduction (1:1–5)
- (2) A review of the past relationship between the parties (1:6—4:49)
- (3) Basic stipulations that ensured fidelity to the treaty (5:1—26:19)
- (4) Sanctions in the form of blessings and curses (27:1—30:20)
- (5) Witnesses to the treaty (32:1)
- (6) A provision for the storage and reading of the treaty (31:1—34:12)

While these similarities exist, the Book of Deuteronomy does not slavishly follow the typical treaty structure, but we can conclude that it was written with a

c. 1446 B.C.
The Red Sea crossing

c. 1445 B.C.
God delivers the Law at Mt. Sinai

c. 1446–1406 B.C.
40 years of wilderness wandering

c. 1406 B.C.
Moses presents the Deuteronomic Law

c. 1405 B.C.
Moses dies; the conquest of Canaan begins

c. 1405–1380 B.C.
Joshua leads the Israelites

Mount Nebo can be seen in the distance in this view looking southwest toward the Dead Sea. Moses viewed the Promised Land from Mount Nebo (Deut. 32:49).

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basic treaty pattern in mind. Moses impressed on his readers the importance of the covenant not only with his repeated exhortations but also with the structure of the book itself. With Moses’ warnings and their renewed commitment to God’s covenant, the people were finally ready to enter the Promised Land.

CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

The most obvious reference to Christ in Deuteronomy is found in 18:15: “The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear.” (See also 18:16–19; Acts 7:37.) Moses spoke these words in his final address to the children of Israel.

How was Moses a type of Christ? Again, he was the only biblical figure other than Christ to fill the three offices of prophet (34:10–12), priest (Ex. 32:31–35), and king (as ruler; see 33:4, 5). Both Moses and Christ were in danger of death during childhood. Both were saviors and intercessors. Both were rejected by their brethren.

Statue of Moses by Michelangelo in the Church of San Pietro in Vincoli (Saint Peter in Chains) in Rome
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DEUTERONOMY OUTLINE

- I. Prologue 1:1–5
- II. A review of Israel's history 1:6—4:43
 - A. God's promises and the need for leadership 1:6–18
 - B. Israel's rebellion at Kadesh Barnea 1:19–46
 - C. Israel's journey east of the Jordan 2:1–25
 - D. Israel's victory over Sihon and Og 2:26—3:11
 - E. The division of the conquered territory east of the Jordan 3:12–22
 - F. Joshua's selection to lead Israel into the land 3:23–29
 - G. An invitation to live as a wise people 4:1–43
- III. The law, the promises, and the covenant community 4:44—11:32
 - A. Historical prologue 4:44–49
 - B. The Lord's covenant 5:1–5
 - C. The Ten Commandments 5:6–22
 - D. Moses, the mediator of the covenant 5:23–31
 - E. A challenge to love God 5:32—6:25
 - F. Instructions concerning the conquest of the land 7:1–26
 - G. God, the only source of blessing 8:1–20
 - H. Israel's history and future 9:1—10:11
 - I. A challenge to seek God 10:12—11:32
- IV. The development of the covenant fellowship 12:1—26:19
 - A. The worship of God 12:1—16:17
 - B. The administration of justice and the purity of worship 16:18—17:13
 - C. The leadership of the people and the revelation of God 17:14—18:22
 - D. The administration of justice and the rules of war 19:1—21:14
 - E. The individual and the community 21:15—25:19
 - F. The anticipation of life in Canaan 26:1–15
 - G. The final exhortation of Moses 26:16–19
- V. The covenant renewal 27:1—30:20
 - A. The renewal of the covenant in Canaan under Joshua 27:1–26
 - B. Moses' address to Israel 28:1—29:1
 - C. Review and application 29:2–29
 - D. A choice of life or death, blessing or curse 30:1–20
- VI. The last acts of Moses 31:1—33:29
 - A. The transition of authority to Joshua 31:1–8
 - B. The reading of the law by the priests 31:9–13
 - C. God's appearance to Moses and Joshua 31:14–23
 - D. The placement of the law by the ark of the covenant 31:24–29
 - E. The Song of Moses 31:30—32:47
 - F. Moses' blessing on the tribes 32:48—33:29
- VII. The epilogue: Moses' death, Joshua's succession, and Moses' legacy 34:1–12

The Previous Command to Enter Canaan

These are the words which Moses spoke to all Israel ^a on this side of the Jordan in the wilderness, in the ¹plain opposite ²Suph, between Paran, Tophel, Laban, Hazeroth, and Dizahab. ²It is eleven days' journey from Horeb by way of Mount Seir ^b to Kadesh Barnea. ³Now it came to pass ^c in the fortieth year, in the eleventh month, on the first *day* of the month, *that* Moses

CHAPTER 1

1 ^a Deut. 4:44-46;
Josh. 9:1, 10
¹ Heb. *arabah*
² One LXX ms., Tg.,
Vg. *Red Sea*
² b Num. 13:26;
32:8; Deut. 9:23
³ c Num. 33:38
⁴ d Num. 21:23, 24,
33-35; Deut. 2:26-
35; Josh. 13:10; Neh.
9:22 ^e Josh. 13:12
³ LXX, Syr., Vg. and;
cf. Josh. 12:4

spoke to the children of Israel according to all that the LORD had given him as commandments to them, ^{4d} after he had killed Sihon king of the Amorites, who dwelt in Heshbon, and Og king of Bashan, who dwelt at Ashtaroth ^e in ³ Edrei.
⁵ On this side of the Jordan in the land of Moab, Moses began to explain this law, saying, ⁶“The LORD our God spoke to us ^f in Horeb, saying: ‘You have dwelt long

6 ^f Ex. 3:1, 12

1:1-5 These preliminary verses connect Deuteronomy with Numbers (Num. 36:13) and give the setting.
1:1 words which Moses spoke: Most of Deuteronomy consists of Moses' explanation of God's law and His exhortation to follow it. The reference to Moses and to **all Israel** is repeated in the final verse (34:12). **This side of the Jordan** is literally “across the Jordan.” This is the land east of the Jordan, or across it from the perspective of the land of Canaan (3:8, 20, 25; 4:41; 11:30). The **plain** is probably the region north of Moab.
1:2 eleven days: A journey that might have taken Israel less than two weeks to complete lasted 40 years because of unbelief and disobedience (Num. 13; 14). **Horeb** is a name for Mt. Sinai (4:10, 15; Ex. 3:1), where the Lord revealed His glory, gave His law, and made a covenant with Israel. **Kadesh Barnea**, an oasis in the Negev, 50 miles southwest of Beersheba, figured prominently in the story of the wilderness wandering (Num. 13; 14).
1:3 fortieth year: In early Israel, dates were given with reference to the Exodus from Egypt. Hence, this is 40 years after the Exodus. It had taken Israel about a year to arrive at Kadesh Barnea from Mt. Horeb and another year to reach the place where Moses was ad-

ressing them in this passage. The 38 years between had been spent wandering in the desert—God's punishment for their disobedience.
The eleventh month would correspond to January–February.
Moses spoke . . . commandments: The Law (Torah) of God was mediated through His servant Moses.
1:4 These victories under Moses' leadership (2:26–37; Num. 21:21–35) opened up the conquest of the land from the east. They were a foretaste of the victories God would give the Israelites under Joshua's leadership. The Israelites celebrated these initial victories as having great significance in the history of redemption (see 2:26–36; 3:1–11; 4:46–49; Josh. 2:10; 9:10; 12:2–6; 13:10–12; Ps. 135:11; 136:19, 20).
1:5 The Hebrew word translated **law** basically means “instruction.” It is God's gracious teaching to the Israelites on the right way for them to live (see 6:1–3; Ps. 19). Deuteronomy is the exposition and application of the Law of God revealed at Mt. Sinai.
1:6 The LORD our God is an emphatic reference to the divine revelation at Mt. Sinai. Moses reminded Israel that God had revealed His glory, made His covenant with them, and assured them of His presence.



enough at this mountain. ⁷Turn and take your journey, and go to the mountains of the Amorites, to all the neighboring *places* in the ⁴plain, in the mountains and in the lowland, in the South and on the seacoast, to the land of the Canaanites and to Lebanon, as far as the great river, the River Euphrates. ⁸See, I have set the land before you; go in and possess the land which the LORD ⁵swore to your fathers—to ^hAbraham, Isaac, and Jacob—to give to them and their descendants after them.’

Tribal Leaders Appointed

⁹“And ⁱI spoke to you at that time, saying: ‘I ⁶alone am not able to bear you. ¹⁰The LORD your God has multiplied you, ^jand here you *are* today, as the stars of heaven in multitude. ¹¹^kMay the LORD God of your fathers make you a thousand times more numerous than you are, and bless you ^las He has promised you! ¹²^mHow can I alone bear your problems and your burdens and your complaints? ¹³Choose wise, understanding, and knowledgeable men from among your tribes, and I will make them ⁷heads over you.’ ¹⁴And you answered me and said, ‘The thing which you have told *us* to do *is* good.’ ¹⁵So I took ⁿthe heads of your tribes, wise and knowledgeable men, and ⁸made them heads over you, leaders of

⁶ ^o Ex. 19:1, 2
⁷ ^p Heb. *arabab*
⁸ ^q Gen. 12:7; 15:5; 22:17; 26:3; 28:13; Ex. 33:1; Num. 14:23; 32:11
⁹ ^r promised
¹⁰ ^s Ex. 18:18, 24; Num. 11:14, 24 ^t am not able to bear you by myself
¹¹ ^u Gen. 15:5; 22:17; Ex. 32:13; Deut. 7:7; 10:22; 26:5; 28:62
¹² ^v 2 Sam. 24:3
¹³ ^w Gen. 15:5
¹⁴ ^x 1 Kin. 3:8, 9
¹⁵ ^y rulers
¹⁶ ^z Ex. 18:25
¹⁷ ^{aa} appointed

¹⁶ ^{ab} Deut. 16:18; John 7:24 ^{ac} Lev. 24:22
¹⁷ ^{ad} Lev. 19:15; Deut. 10:17; 16:19; 24:17; 1 Sam. 16:7; Prov. 24:23-26; Acts 10:34; James 2:1, 9 ^{ae} 2 Chr. 19:6 ^{af} Ex. 18:22, 26
¹⁹ ^{ag} Num. 10:12; Deut. 2:7; 8:15; 32:10; Jer. 2:6
²⁰ ^{ah} Num. 13:26
²¹ ^{ai} Josh. 1:6, 9

thousands, leaders of hundreds, leaders of fifties, leaders of tens, and officers for your tribes.

¹⁶“Then I commanded your judges at that time, saying, ‘Hear *the cases* between your brethren, and ^ojudge righteously between a man and his ^pbrother or the stranger who is with him. ¹⁷^qYou shall not show partiality in judgment; you shall hear the small as well as the great; you shall not be afraid in any man’s presence, for ^rthe judgment *is* God’s. The case that is too hard for you, ^sbring to me, and I will hear it.’ ¹⁸And I commanded you at that time all the things which you should do.

Israel’s Refusal to Enter the Land

¹⁹“So we departed from Horeb, ^tand went through all that great and terrible wilderness which you saw on the way to the mountains of the Amorites, as the LORD our God had commanded us. Then ^uwe came to Kadesh Barnea. ²⁰And I said to you, ‘You have come to the mountains of the Amorites, which the LORD our God is giving us. ²¹Look, the LORD your God has set the land before you; go up *and* possess *it*, as the LORD God of your fathers has spoken to you; ^vdo not fear or be discouraged.’

²²“And every one of you came near to me and said, ‘Let us send men before us,

1:7, 8 Turn . . . and go refers to the departure for the Promised Land. The extent of God’s gift was enormous, even as the people were numerous. Moses emphasized God’s faithfulness to His promises. The Promised Land extended from the Negev, **the South** (Gen. 12:9) to **the River Euphrates** (Gen. 15:18–21). **swore to your fathers:** God had promised this land to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob long ago (Gen. 15:18–21; 26:2–4; 35:10–12).

1:9 I alone: Moses felt inadequate to take care of all aspects of leadership himself because the people were so numerous (Ex. 18:13–26).

1:10, 11 multiplied . . . stars of heaven Moses’ rhetoric celebrates God’s faithfulness in fulfilling His word to Abraham (Gen. 15:5; 22:17). **your God . . . the LORD God of your fathers:** God is the God of the patriarchs, but also the God of their descendants. This language indicates that the patriarchs still live; it is not that He was their God, but that He *is* their God! **bless you:** Moses prayed that God’s promises would be even more dramatically fulfilled. **a thousand times:** The Lord had greatly blessed Israel in numbers (Ex. 1:1–7); His blessing in their past was to be a measure of His blessing in their future.

1:13 wise . . . knowledgeable: The qualities of the leaders reflect attributes of God. Wisdom refers to the ability to bring harmony even when great differences exist. Understanding refers to the ability to penetrate the realities of life from God’s perspective and to deal fairly with all parties in a dispute. Knowledge is the broad experience gained by living life, by watching people, and by making correct choices based on God’s word.

1:14–16 Agreement with the counsel of the Lord is truly a **good thing!** **heads:** A number of men were charged with the administrative, judicial, and military tasks of creating unity among the people. Some of them were also called **judges**.

1:17, 18 not show partiality: God demanded absolute fairness regardless of age or social status. **all the things:** God’s instruction was comprehensive. It covered all aspects of life.

1:19 Great and terrible wilderness describes the Israelites’ journey by using two words for one idea, that of “a truly horrible wilderness.”

1:20 The Amorites were one of the groups Israel encountered in their approach to the Promised Land. The term is often a general designation for the Canaanites, particularly those who lived in mountainous regions (Num. 13:29).

1:21 do not fear or be discouraged: Even though the future seemed uncertain, Moses exhorted the Israelites to have faith that God would take care of their needs (1:29; 3:22; 20:1, 3; 31:6, 8).

1:22 every one of you: The initiative for sending the spies out came from the people, but it was something the Lord agreed to as well (Num. 13:2).

swore

(Heb. *shaba'*) (1:8; Gen. 24:7; Ex. 13:5; 1 Sam. 20:3; Ps. 95:11) Strong’s #7650

In Hebrew, the verb translated *swore* is related to the word used for the number seven. In effect, the verb means “to bind oneself fully,”—that is, “seven times.” In ancient times, oaths were considered sacred. People who made oaths to God or to others were accepting the greatest accountability. They were promising to be faithful to their word no matter what the personal cost. The OT describes God as taking an oath (Gen. 24:7; Ex. 13:5). He was not forced to do this; He did not have to swear in order to insure His own compliance with His word. Instead, He made an oath so that His people would be assured that His promises were completely trustworthy.

and let them search out the land for us, and bring back word to us of the way by which we should go up, and of the cities into which we shall come.’

²³“The plan pleased me well; so ¹I took twelve of your men, one man from each tribe. ²⁴^x And they departed and went up into the mountains, and came to the Valley of Eshcol, and spied it out. ²⁵They also took *some* of the fruit of the land in their hands and brought *it* down to us; and they brought back word to us, saying, ‘*It is a ^ygood land which the LORD our God is giving us.*’

²⁶“Nevertheless you would not go up, but rebelled against the command of the LORD your God; ²⁷and you ^acomplained in your tents, and said, ‘Because the LORD ^bhates us, He has brought us out of the land of Egypt to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us. ²⁸Where can we go up? Our brethren have ^ddiscouraged our hearts, saying, ^c“The people *are* greater and taller than we; the cities *are* great and fortified up to heaven; moreover we have seen the sons of the ^dAnakim there.”’

²⁹“Then I said to you, ‘Do not be terrified, ^eor afraid of them. ³⁰^fThe LORD your God, who goes before you, He will fight for you, according to all He did for you in Egypt before your eyes, ³¹and in the wilderness where you saw how the LORD your God carried you, as a ^gman carries his son, in all the way that you went until you came to this place.’ ³²Yet, for all that,

²³ ^w Num. 13:2, 3
²⁴ ^x Num. 13:21-25
²⁵ ^y Num. 13:27
²⁶ ^z Num. 14:1-4;
Ps. 106:24
²⁷ ^a Ps. 106:25
^b Deut. 9:28
²⁸ ^c Num. 13:28,
31-33; Deut. 9:1, 2
^d Num. 13:28 ⁹ Lit.
melded
²⁹ ^e Num. 14:9;
Deut. 7:18
³⁰ ^f Ex. 14:14; Num.
3:22; 20:4; Neh.
4:20
³¹ ^g Deut. 32:10-12;
Is. 46:3, 4; 63:9;
Hos. 11:3
³² ^h Num. 14:11;
20:12; Ps. 106:24;
Heb. 3:9, 10, 16-19;
4:1, 2; Jude 5
³³ ⁱ Ex. 13:21; Num.
9:15-23; Neh. 9:12;
Ps. 78:14 / Num.
10:33; Ezek. 20:6
³⁴ ^k Deut. 2:14, 15
³⁵ ^j Num. 14:22,
23; Ps. 95:10, 11
¹ *promised*
³⁶ ^m Num. 14:24;
[Josh. 14:9] ⁿ Num.
32:11, 12 ² *fully*
³⁷ ^o Num. 20:12;
27:14; Deut. 3:26;
4:21; 34:4; Ps.
106:32
³⁸ ^p Num. 14:30
^q Ex. 24:13; 33:11;
1 Sam. 16:22
^r Num. 27:18, 19;
Deut. 31:7, 23; Josh.
11:23
³⁹ ^s Num. 14:31
^t Num. 14:3 ^u Is.
7:15, 16

^hyou did not believe the LORD your God, ³³ⁱwho went in the way before you ^jto search out a place for you to pitch your tents, to show you the way you should go, in the fire by night and in the cloud by day.

The Penalty for Israel's Rebellion

³⁴“And the LORD heard the sound of your words, and was angry, ^kand took an oath, saying, ³⁵^l‘Surely not one of these men of this evil generation shall see that good land of which I ¹swore to give to your fathers, ³⁶^mexcept Caleb the son of Jephunneh; he shall see it, and to him and his children I am giving the land on which he walked, because ⁿhe ²wholly followed the LORD.’ ³⁷^oThe LORD was also angry with me for your sakes, saying, ‘Even you shall not go in there. ³⁸^pJoshua the son of Nun, ^qwho stands before you, he shall go in there. ^rEncourage him, for he shall cause Israel to inherit it.

³⁹^s“Moreover your little ones and your children, who ^tyou say will be victims, who today ^uhave no knowledge of good and evil, they shall go in there; to them I will give it, and they shall possess it. ⁴⁰^vBut *as for* you, turn and take your journey into the wilderness by the Way of the Red Sea.’

⁴¹“Then you answered and said to me, ^w‘We have sinned against the LORD; we

⁴⁰ ^v Num. 14:25 ⁴¹ ^w Num. 14:40

1:24, 25 The Valley of Eshcol was a region near Hebron (Num. 13:23); it is remembered for the huge clusters of grapes the spies found there.

1:26 you would not go up, but rebelled: The present generation was not directly involved in this rebellion, but as the descendants of the rebellious generation they shared in the guilt of the disobedience of their forebears (see Ps. 78:5–8). On the other hand, they were also the inheritors of God’s promises to those who had gone before.

1:27 hates us . . . to destroy us: The rebels refused to acknowledge God’s clear expressions of saving love to them. They did not trust the God who had saved them from slavery and provided for their needs on numerous occasions. Instead, they charged Him with hating them.

1:28 The Anakim were an ancient people known for their great size (Num. 13:28).

1:30 goes before you . . . fight for you: The Lord would fight for His people and give them victory. **in Egypt:** Moses especially seems to have had the victory over the Egyptians at the Red Sea in mind (Ex. 14:1–15:19).

1:31 carried: God cared for His people and loved them as an adoring parent cares for a child (Ex. 19:4). **his son:** The Israelites were God’s children by covenant (Is. 63:16; 64:8, 9). This image was well known in the OT period, but only rarely was God actually called “Father.”

1:32 you did not believe: The people did not walk by faith, despite all that God had done in their lives. The language indicates that God could hardly believe the ingratitude and lack of obedience on the part of those to whom He had demonstrated such lavish love.

1:33 to search out: The Lord had always explored the next step for the Israelites, since He was leading them Himself. **The cloud**

over the Most Holy Place symbolized God’s presence. Whenever the cloud moved, Israel had followed the Lord (Num. 10:33–36).

1:34, 35 one . . . of this evil generation: Because of their rebellion, God excluded adults age 20 and older at that time from the blessing of the land (Num. 14:29).

1:36 Caleb was faithful (Num. 13:30–14:28). God permitted him to enter the land and receive the area of Hebron as his family estate (Josh. 15:13). **He wholly followed the LORD** by not wavering in his faith.

1:37 also angry with me: Even Moses, the leader of the people, was the object of God’s wrath. He could not enter the land because he disobeyed God by striking the rock at Meribah (see Num. 20:10–13).

1:38 God allowed **Joshua** to lead the Israelites into the land because of his trust in God (Num. 13:30–14:28). Before his death, Moses exhorted Joshua, encouraged him, and transferred to him the authority to lead the people into the Promised Land (3:28; 31:1–29; 34:9).

1:39 your little ones and your children: The most outrageous of Israel’s complaints against God was that He had wanted their children to die (Num. 14:31). But the Lord demonstrated His love and faithfulness to His people by protecting those younger than 20 so that they could inherit the land. **you say will be victims:** This phrase reminds the people of the false accusations of the previous generation. **no knowledge of good and evil:** At that time, children less than a few years old were considered to be not yet fully responsible (Is. 7:15). By extending the age limit to 20, the Lord again showed His compassion (see Num. 14:18).

1:40 The Way of the Red Sea probably means the way toward Elath by the Red Sea (the Gulf of Aqaba).

1:41 In their statement, **we have sinned**, the Israelites showed

will go up and fight, just as the LORD our God commanded us.' And when everyone of you had girded on his weapons of war, you were ready to go up into the mountain.

⁴²“And the LORD said to me, ‘Tell them, ^x“Do not go up nor fight, for I am not among you; lest you be defeated before your enemies.”’ ⁴³So I spoke to you; yet you would not listen, but ^yrebelled against the command of the LORD, and ^zpresumptuously³ went up into the mountain. ⁴⁴And the Amorites who dwelt in that mountain came out against you and chased you ^aas bees do, and drove you back from Seir to Hormah. ⁴⁵Then you returned and wept before the LORD, but the LORD would not listen to your voice nor give ear to you.

^{46b}“So you remained in Kadesh many days, according to the days that you spent there.

The Desert Years

2“Then we turned and ^ajourneyed into the wilderness of the Way of the Red Sea, ^bas the LORD spoke to me, and we ¹skirted Mount Seir for many days.

²“And the LORD spoke to me, saying: ³‘You have skirted this mountain ^clong enough; turn northward. ⁴And command the people, saying, ^d“You are about to pass through the territory of ^eyour brethren, the descendants of Esau, who live in Seir; and they will be afraid of you. Therefore watch yourselves carefully. ⁵Do not meddle with them, for I will not give you ^{any} of their land, no, not so much as one footstep, ^fbecause I have given Mount Seir to Esau ^{as} a possession. ⁶You shall buy food from them with money, that you may eat; and you shall also buy water from them with money, that you may drink.

⁴² ^x Num. 14:41–43
⁴³ ^y Num. 14:44
^z Deut. 17:12, 13
³ willfully
⁴⁴ ^a Num. 14:45; Ps. 118:12
⁴⁶ ^b Num. 13:25; 20:1, 22; Deut. 2:7, 14

CHAPTER 2

¹ ^a Deut. 1:40
^b Num. 14:25
¹ circled around
³ ^c Deut. 2:7, 14
⁴ ^d Num. 20:14–21
^e Deut. 23:7
⁵ ^f Gen. 36:8; Josh. 24:4

⁷ ^g Deut. 8:2–4; [Matt. 6:8, 32] ² Lit. goings
⁸ ^h Judg. 11:18;
¹ Kin. 9:26 ⁱ Num. 21:4
⁹ ^j Num. 21:15, 28; Deut. 2:18, 29
^k Gen. 19:36–38
¹⁰ ^l Gen. 14:5
^m Num. 13:22, 33; Deut. 9:2
¹¹ ³ Heb. *rephaim*
¹² ⁿ Gen. 14:6; 36:20; Deut. 2:22
⁴ ^{stead}
¹³ ^o Num. 21:12
⁵ ^{Wadi or Brook}
¹⁴ ^p Num. 13:26
^q Num. 14:33; 26:64; Deut. 1:34, 35
^r Num. 14:35; Ezek. 20:15 ⁶ *perished*
¹⁵ ⁷ *perished*

⁷“For the LORD your God has blessed you in all the work of your hand. He knows your ²trudging through this great wilderness. ⁸These forty years the LORD your God *has been* with you; you have lacked nothing.”

⁸“And when we passed beyond our brethren, the descendants of Esau who dwell in Seir, away from the road of the plain, away from ^hElath and Ezion Geber, we ⁱturned and passed by way of the Wilderness of Moab. ⁹Then the LORD said to me, ‘Do not harass Moab, nor contend with them in battle, for I will not give you ^{any} of their land ^{as} a possession, because I have given ^jAr to ^kthe descendants of Lot ^{as} a possession.’”

^{10l}(The Emim had dwelt there in times past, a people as great and numerous and tall as ^mthe Anakim. ¹¹They were also regarded as ³giants, like the Anakim, but the Moabites call them Emim. ¹²ⁿThe Horites formerly dwelt in Seir, but the descendants of Esau dispossessed them and destroyed them from before them, and dwelt in their ⁴place, just as Israel did to the land of their possession which the LORD gave them.)

¹³“Now rise and cross over ^othe ⁵Valley of the Zered.’ So we crossed over the Valley of the Zered. ¹⁴And the time we took to come ^pfrom Kadesh Barnea until we crossed over the Valley of the Zered was thirty-eight years, ^quntil all the generation of the men of war ⁶was consumed from the midst of the camp, ^rjust as the LORD had sworn to them. ¹⁵For indeed the hand of the LORD was against them, to destroy them from the midst of the camp until they ⁷were consumed.

¹⁶“So it was, when all the men of war had finally perished from among the people, ¹⁷that the LORD spoke to me, saying: ¹⁸‘This day you are to cross over at Ar,

regret but not true repentance. **we will go up and fight:** Their confidence was in themselves. They still would not follow God’s commands.

1:42, 43 I am not among you: The Lord would not protect them. Therefore, victory was out of the question. **presumptuously:** The people were arrogant. They did not submit to the Lord.

1:44, 45 As bees do is an expression that signifies alarming pursuit by a swarm of menacing enemies (Ex. 23:28; Ps. 118:12; Is. 7:18).

Hormah, a name meaning “Destruction,” probably refers to a site south of the Amorite hill country by Kadesh Barnea that came to be called subsequently by that name. **wept:** The tears were of regret, not repentance.

2:2 the LORD spoke to me: We see regularly in Genesis through Deuteronomy that Moses reported God’s very words to him.

2:4 The descendants of Esau are the Edomites (Gen. 36:1–8).

2:5 I have given . . . to Esau: God had extended His blessing to the Edomites by giving them land, just as He was about to give Israel the Promised Land. All lands are His to give and to take (Ex. 19:5; Ps. 50:12).

2:6 The Israelites could not take **food** or **water** by force, beg for it, or

steal it. God demanded that they pay the expenses of their journey through Edom. The term **money** indicates not coinage but silver that was weighed out.

2:8 Away from Elath and Ezion Geber refers to turning away from the way of the Red Sea, on which these cities were located. **The Wilderness of Moab** was the area east of Moab (Num. 33:44).

2:9 The Moabites were related to the Israelites through **Lot** (see Gen. 19:37). **Ar** is a synonym for the region of Moab. The Lord had given land to both Edom and Moab. However, His principal gift of land was to Israel. (God had also made provision for the people of Ammon, v. 19.)

2:13 The Valley of the Zered was east of the Dead Sea at the border between Edom and Moab.

2:15 When God saved His people, it was by His **hand** (Ex. 15:6). Sadly, it was by His hand that He brought judgment on them as well. The term *hand* suggests God’s personal involvement in both acts of deliverance and chastening. **until they were consumed:** The Lord is a consuming fire (Heb. 12:29), by whom the generation perished (Jude 5).

the boundary of Moab. ¹⁹And *when* you come near the people of Ammon, do not harass them or meddle with them, for I will not give you *any* of the land of the people of Ammon *as* a possession, because I have given it to ^sthe descendants of Lot *as* a possession.’”

²⁰(That was also regarded as a land of ^ggiants; giants formerly dwelt there. But the Ammonites call them ^tZamzummim, ²¹*“a people as great and numerous and tall as the Anakim. But the LORD destroyed them before them, and they dispossessed them and dwelt in their place, ²²just as He had done for the descendants of Esau, ^vwho dwelt in Seir, when He destroyed ^wthe Horites from before them. They dispossessed them and dwelt in their place, even to this day. ²³And ^xthe Avim, who dwelt in villages as far as Gaza—^ythe Caphtorim, who came from Caphtor, destroyed them and dwelt in their place.)*

²⁴“Rise, take your journey, and ^zcross over the River Arnon. Look, I have given into your hand ^aSihon the Amorite, king of Heshbon, and his land. Begin ⁹to possess *it*, and engage him in battle. ²⁵*^bThis day I will begin to put the dread and fear of you upon the nations ¹under the whole heaven, who shall hear the report of you, and shall ^ctremble and be in anguish because of you.*”

King Sihon Defeated

²⁶“And I ^dsent messengers from the Wilderness of Kedemoth to Sihon king of Heshbon, ^ewith words of peace, saying, ²⁷*^fLet me pass through your land; I will keep strictly to the road, and I will turn neither to the right nor to the left. ²⁸You shall sell me food for money, that I may eat, and give me water for money, that I*

¹⁹ ^s Gen. 19:38; Num. 21:24
²⁰ ^t Gen. 14:5
⁸ Heb. *rephaim*
²¹ ^w Deut. 2:10
²² ^v Gen. 36:8; Deut. 2:5 ^w Gen. 14:6; 36:20–30
²³ ^x Josh. 13:3

^y Gen. 10:14; 1 Chr. 1:12; Jer. 47:4; Amos 9:7
²⁴ ^a Num. 21:13, 14; Judg. 11:18
^a Deut. 1:4 ⁹ to take possession
²⁵ ^b Ex. 23:27; Deut. 11:25; Josh. 2:9 ^c Ex. 15:14–16
¹ everywhere under the heavens
²⁶ ^d Num. 21:21–32; Deut. 1:4; Judg. 11:19–21 ^e Deut. 20:10
²⁷ ^f Num. 21:21, 22; Judg. 11:19

²⁸ ^g Num. 20:19
²⁹ ^h Num. 20:18; Deut. 23:3, 4; Judg. 11:17
³⁰ ⁱ Num. 21:23
^j Josh. 11:20 ^k Ex. 4:21
³¹ ^j Deut. 1:3, 8
³² ^m Num. 21:23
³³ ⁿ Ex. 23:31; Deut. 7:2 ^o Num. 21:24
² Lit. *before us*
³⁴ ^p Lev. 27:28
³⁶ ^q Deut. 3:12; 4:48; Josh. 13:9
^r Josh. 13:9, 16 ^s Ps. 44:3
³⁷ ^t Gen. 32:22; Num. 21:24; Deut. 3:16 ^u Deut. 2:5, 9, 19

CHAPTER 3

¹ ^o Num. 21:33–35; Deut. 29:7 ^b Deut. 1:4

may drink; ⁹only let me pass through on foot, ²⁹*^hjust as the descendants of Esau who dwell in Seir and the Moabites who dwell in Ar did for me, until I cross the Jordan to the land which the LORD our God is giving us.*

³⁰*ⁱ“But Sihon king of Heshbon would not let us pass through, for ^jthe LORD your God ^khardened his spirit and made his heart obstinate, that He might deliver him into your hand, as *it is* this day.*

³¹“And the LORD said to me, ‘See, I have begun to ^lgive Sihon and his land over to you. Begin to possess *it*, that you may inherit his land.’ ³²*^mThen Sihon and all his people came out against us to fight at Jahaz. ³³And ⁿthe LORD our God delivered him ²over to us; so ^owe defeated him, his sons, and all his people. ³⁴We took all his cities at that time, and we ^putterly destroyed the men, women, and little ones of every city; we left none remaining. ³⁵We took only the livestock as plunder for ourselves, with the spoil of the cities which we took. ³⁶^qFrom Aroer, which *is* on the bank of the River Arnon, and *from* ^rthe city that *is* in the ravine, as far as Gilead, there was not one city too strong for us; ^sthe LORD our God delivered all to us. ³⁷Only you did not go near the land of the people of Ammon—anywhere along the River ^tJabbok, or to the cities of the mountains, or ^uwherever the LORD our God had forbidden us.*

King Og Defeated

³“Then we turned and went up the road to Bashan; and ^aOg king of Bashan came out against us, he and all his people, to battle ^bat Edrei. ²And the LORD said to me, ‘Do not fear him, for I have delivered him and all his people and his land into your hand; you shall do

2:20 The **Zamzummim** were a people who lived in the Ammonite territory, possibly the Zuzim (Gen. 14:5).

2:23 The **Avim** lived in villages between the Jordan and the Mediterranean coast. **Gaza** was a Philistine city on the Mediterranean coast. The **Caphtorim** were a group of the tribes that came by sea to the coasts of Canaan and Egypt. **Caphtor** is possibly the same as Crete (see Gen. 10:14).

2:24 The **River Arnon** was the traditional border between Moab and Ammon. **Heshbon** refers both to the city and the territory ruled by Sihon.

2:25 The mighty acts of God through Israel would fill the nations with **dread and fear** (Ex. 15:14–16; Josh. 2:9). The deliverance of Israel from Egypt and God’s subsequent acts of protection were known abroad. The fear of the nations would soften them for the time of conquest. But the dissemination of knowledge about God’s works would glorify Him (4:6).

2:26 The **Wilderness of Kedemoth** was a desert within the territory of Sihon, located on its eastern border, east of the Dead Sea. **words of peace**: Israel made an offer of peaceful passage (vv. 27–29).

2:31, 32 **Jahaz** was located north of Kedemoth (Is. 15:4).

2:33 **our God delivered . . . we defeated him**: God gave Israel the victory, but the Israelites still had to fight courageously.

2:34, 35 By the law of the ban, every living thing, human and animal, was to be **utterly destroyed**—that is, put to death (7:1, 2; 20:17). Exceptions could be made, but only when permitted by the Lord. In this case, the Israelites took livestock and property as spoil. The ban included fighting men and civilians, males and females, adults and children. God used the people of Israel to punish the Canaanites for their continual wickedness through the generations. Further, the destruction of the Canaanites was designed to protect Israel from following the Canaanites’ evil practices. Israel’s failure to destroy all of the Canaanites in the subsequent conquests led finally to their own undoing.

2:36, 37 **Aroer** was a city on the northern bank of the River Arnon at the border between Sihon’s territory and the Moabite kingdom. **Gilead** was the northern boundary of Sihon’s kingdom. **Jabbok** was the river Jacob crossed on his way back to Canaan (Gen. 32:22).

3:1–3 **Bashan** was the region east of the Sea of Galilee. **Og**: The territory of Og may have extended south of the River Yarmuk into Gilead. The account of the victory over Og is similar to that of Sihon (2:26–37), but significantly shorter.

to him as you did to ‘Sihon king of the Amorites, who dwelt at Heshbon.’

³“So the LORD our God also delivered into our hands Og king of Bashan, with all his people, and we ¹attacked him until he had no survivors remaining. ⁴And we took all his cities at that time; there was not a city which we did not take from them: sixty cities, ^dall the region of Argob, the kingdom of Og in Bashan. ⁵All these cities were fortified with high walls, gates, and bars, besides a great many rural towns. ⁶And we utterly destroyed them, as we did to Sihon king ^eof Heshbon, utterly destroying the men, women, and children of every city. ⁷But all the livestock and the spoil of the cities we took as booty for ourselves.

⁸“And at that time we took the ^fland from the hand of the two kings of the Amorites who were on this side of the Jordan, from the River Arnon to Mount ^gHermion ^h(the Sidonians call ^hHermion Sirion, and the Amorites call it Senir), ¹⁰ⁱall the cities of the plain, all Gilead, and ^jall Bashan, as far as Salcah and Edrei, cities of the kingdom of Og in Bashan.

^{11k}“For only Og king of Bashan remained of the remnant of ^lthe ²giants. Indeed his bedstead was an iron bedstead. (Is it not in ^mRabbah of the people of Ammon?) Nine cubits is its length and four cubits its width, according to the standard cubit.

The Land East of the Jordan Divided

¹²“And this ⁿland, which we possessed at that time, ^ofrom Aroer, which is by the River Arnon, and half the mountains of Gilead and ^pits cities, I gave to the Reubenites and the Gadites. ^{13q}The rest of Gilead, and all Bashan, the kingdom of Og, I gave to half the tribe of Manasseh. (All the region of Argob, with all Bashan,

² ^c Num. 21:34; Josh. 13:21
³ ¹ struck
⁴ ^d Deut. 3:13, 14
⁶ ^e Deut. 2:24, 34, 35
⁸ ^f Num. 32:33; Josh. 12:6; 13:8-12
⁹ ^g Deut. 4:48; 1 Chr. 5:23
⁹ ^h 1 Chr. 5:23
¹⁰ ⁱ Deut. 4:49 / Josh. 12:5; 13:11
¹¹ ^k Amos 2:9
¹ ^j Gen. 14:5; Deut. 2:11, 20 ^m 2 Sam. 12:26; Jer. 49:2; Ezek. 21:20 ² Heb. *rephaim*
¹² ⁿ Num. 32:33; Josh. 12:6; 13:8-12
^o Deut. 2:36; Josh. 12:2 ^p Num. 34:14
¹³ ^q Josh. 13:29-31; 17:1

³ Heb. *rephaim*
¹⁴ ^r 1 Chr. 2:22
⁵ Josh. 13:13; 2 Sam. 3:3; 10:6 ¹ Num. 32:41 ⁴ Lit. *Towns of Jair*
¹⁵ ^u Num. 32:39, 40
¹⁶ ^v 2 Sam. 24:5
^w Num. 21:24; Deut. 2:37; Josh. 12:2
¹⁷ ^x Num. 34:11, 12; Deut. 4:49; Josh. 12:3 ^y Gen. 14:3; Josh. 3:16
¹⁸ ^z Num. 32:20; Josh. 4:12, 13
²⁰ ^a Deut. 12:9, 10
^b Josh. 22:4
²¹ ^c [Num. 27:22, 23]; Josh. 11:23
²² ^d Ex. 14:14; Deut. 1:30; 20:4; Neh. 4:20
²³ ^e [2 Cor. 12:8, 9]
²⁴ ^f Deut. 5:24; 11:2
⁵ strong

was called the land of the ³giants. ^{14r}Jair the son of Manasseh took all the region of Argob, ^sas far as the border of the Geshurites and the Maachathites, and ^tcalled Bashan after his own name, ⁴Havoth Jair, to this day.)

¹⁵“Also I gave ^uGilead to Machir.

¹⁶And to the Reubenites ^vand the Gadites I gave from Gilead as far as the River Arnon, the middle of the river as ^{the} border, as far as the River Jabbok, ^wthe border of the people of Ammon; ¹⁷the plain also, with the Jordan as ^{the} border, from Chinnereth ^xas far as the east side of the Sea of the Arabah ^y(the Salt Sea), below the slopes of Pisgah.

¹⁸“Then I commanded you at that time, saying: ‘The LORD your God has given you this land to possess. ^zAll you men of valor shall cross over armed before your brethren, the children of Israel. ¹⁹But your wives, your little ones, and your livestock (I know that you have much livestock) shall stay in your cities which I have given you, ²⁰until the LORD has given ^arest to your brethren as to you, and they also possess the land which the LORD your God is giving them beyond the Jordan. Then each of you may ^breturn to his possession which I have given you.’

²¹“And ^cI commanded Joshua at that time, saying, ‘Your eyes have seen all that the LORD your God has done to these two kings; so will the LORD do to all the kingdoms through which you pass. ²²You must not fear them, for ^dthe LORD your God Himself fights for you.’

Moses Forbidden to Enter the Land

²³“Then ^eI pleaded with the LORD at that time, saying: ²⁴‘O Lord God, You have begun to show Your servant ^fYour greatness and Your ⁵mighty hand, for ^gwhat god is there in heaven or on earth

3:8 The territory of Sihon and Og extended from the River Arnon to Mount Hermon (2:24—3:7). Mount Hermon is the mountain range in the north between Canaan and Lebanon.

3:9–11 The Sidonians were the Phoenicians. Salcah was a city located at the eastern border of Bashan. Bedstead could also be translated “sarcophagus,” that is, stone coffin. Rabbah was on the site of the capital of modern Jordan, Amman. Nine cubits is about 13 feet, and four cubits is about 6 feet, according to the standard cubit (about 18 inches).

3:14 Jair had captured these settlements (Num. 32:41). The Geshurites lived east of the Sea of Galilee and south of Mt. Hermon. The Maachathites were descended from Abraham’s brother Nahor (Gen. 22:24) and lived north of the Geshurites.

3:15–17 The northernmost section of Gilead was given to Machir (Num. 32:39), son of Manasseh (Gen. 50:23). The southern section was given to Reuben and Gad. Chinnereth is another name for the Sea of Galilee.

3:18, 19 The LORD . . . has given: The text regularly emphasizes that the land was God’s gift (1:39). men of valor: Women, children, and animals were not to be put in danger during the conquest. The

battle would be fought by armed men under the command of God (Ex. 15:3).

3:21 Joshua, as one of the original spies (Num. 13; 14), had a great advantage. Along with Caleb, he had seen the land, had spied it out, and would be able to use his knowledge to prepare his military strategy. Joshua also had witnessed the victories the Lord had given east of the Jordan. Those experiences encouraged him when he led the Israelites across the river.

3:22 your God Himself fights: The Lord is the Divine Warrior who delivers and fights for His faithful people (Ex. 15:3).

3:23 Moses pleaded with God. But God refused to answer Moses’ prayer, not because Moses lacked faith, but because Moses had disobeyed God and had not treated Him as holy (Num. 20:12).

3:24 O Lord God: The Hebrew has the word for “Lord” or “Master” followed by the personal name of God, Yahweh. This phrase indicates the depth of Moses’ relationship with the Lord (9:26). what god is there . . . mighty deeds: Moses began his prayer with praise for God’s holiness and power (Ex. 15:11). God is incomparable; there is none like Him (Is. 40:25, 26).

who can do *anything* like Your works and Your mighty *deeds*? ²⁵I pray, let me cross over and see ^hthe good land beyond the Jordan, those pleasant mountains, and Lebanon.’

²⁶“But the LORD ⁱwas angry with me on your account, and would not listen to me. So the LORD said to me: ‘Enough of that! Speak no more to Me of this matter. ²⁷^jGo up to the top of Pisgah, and lift your eyes toward the west, the north, the south, and the east; behold *it* with your eyes, for you shall not cross over this Jordan. ²⁸But ^kcommand ^lJoshua, and encourage him and strengthen him; for he shall go over before this people, and he shall cause them to inherit the land which you will see.’

²⁹“So we stayed in ^lthe valley opposite Beth Peor.

Moses Commands Obedience

4 “Now, O Israel, listen to ^athe statutes and the judgments which I teach you to observe, that you may live, and go in and ^lpossess the land which the LORD

24 ^g Ex. 8:10; 15:11; 2 Sam. 7:22; Ps. 71:19; 86:8
25 ^h Ex. 3:8; Deut. 4:22
26 ⁱ Num. 20:12; 27:14; Deut. 1:37; 31:2; 32:51, 52; 34:4
27 ^j Num. 23:14; 27:12
28 ^k Num. 27:18, 23; Deut. 31:3, 7, 8, 23
^l charge
29 ^l Deut. 4:46; 34:6

CHAPTER 4

1 ^a Lev. 19:37; 20:8; 22:31; Deut. 5:1; 8:1; Ezek. 20:11; [Rom. 10:5] ^l take possession of
2 ^b Deut. 12:32; [Josh. 1:7]; Prov. 30:6; [Rev. 22:18, 19]
3 ^c Num. 25:1-9; Josh. 22:17; Ps. 106:28
6 ^d Deut. 30:19, 20; 32:46, 47; Job 28:28; Ps. 19:7; 111:10; Prov. 1:7; [2 Tim. 3:15]
7 ^e [Deut. 4:32-34;

God of your fathers is giving you. ^{2b}You shall not add to the word which I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you. ³Your eyes have seen what the LORD did at ^cBaal Peor; for the LORD your God has destroyed from among you all the men who followed Baal of Peor. ⁴But you who held fast to the LORD your God *are* alive today, every one of you.

⁵“Surely I have taught you statutes and judgments, just as the LORD my God commanded me, that you should act according *to them* in the land which you go to possess. ⁶Therefore be careful to observe *them*; for this *is* ^dyour wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples who will hear all these statutes, and say, ‘Surely this great nation *is* a wise and understanding people.’

⁷“For ^ewhat great nation *is there* that has ^fGod ²so near to it, as the LORD our

2 Sam. 7:23]

3:25 let me cross over: The verb is charged with energy expressing Moses’ deep emotion. Moses did not ask that Joshua be removed as leader of the nation. He merely requested to **see** the land that God had promised. **The good land** is a lovely expression for the land that God had promised His people (4:21).

3:26–28 Enough: God ordered Moses not to ask Him about it again. But God showed His mercy to Moses by showing him the land from a distance (34:1–3). Moses was not to wallow in self-pity, but was to **encourage** Joshua as his replacement in leading the Israelites.

3:29 Beth Peor was a pagan site dedicated to Baal of Peor (Num. 25:3, 5) and was the scene of Israel’s first disastrous encounter with the sexually-centered worship of Baal (4:3).

4:1 The exhortation to **listen** includes an encouragement to obey (5:1; 6:3, 4; 9:1; 20:3; 27:9). **you may live:** In contrast, Moses could

not enter the land (v. 22). But for the people, God’s gift of His Law was designed for their good. By obeying the Law, the people could experience a fruitful life (6:1–3).

4:2 not add . . . nor take from it: The Israelites had to learn to live by God’s word without trying to justify their disobedience or explaining away God’s clear commands (Rev. 22:18, 19).

4:3 Baal Peor: See 3:29. Twenty-four thousand were executed there by plague (Num. 25:9). That name reminded the Israelites of the terror of God’s judgment.

4:5 Moses was the mediator of God’s word, not its originator (compare 2 Pet. 1:20, 21). **my God commanded me:** Throughout Deuteronomy, Moses always deferred to the Lord as the source of his message.

4:6–8 in the sight of the peoples: By living in obedience to God,

Important Commands in Deuteronomy			
The Book of Deuteronomy actually consists of three sermons preached by Moses to the Israelites on the plains of Moab just prior to their conquest of Canaan. The chart that follows examines some of the important commands in Moses’ sermons.			
Hebrew Verb	Meaning	Number of Occurrences	Key Verse
<i>ra’ ah</i>	See; observe; consider; give attention to; behold	10	“Behold, I set before you today a blessing and a curse” (11:26)
<i>zakar</i>	Remember; recall; keep in mind; think of; call to mind	15	“Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations” (32:7)
<i>shamar</i>	Diligently keep; be on one’s guard; be careful	15	“Only take heed to yourself, and diligently keep yourself, lest you forget the things your eyes have seen” (4:9)
<i>dabaq</i>	Hold fast; cling; cleave to; remain with or close to; stay near	7	“You shall fear the LORD your God; you shall serve Him, and to Him you shall hold fast, and take oaths in His name” (10:20)
<i>ahab’</i>	Love; be devoted; be committed	10	“You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength” (6:5)
<i>yare’</i>	Fear; treat with reverence or honor; stand in awe of	18	“Oh, that they had such a heart in them that they would fear Me and always keep all My commandments” (5:29)
<i>abad</i>	Serve; work for; perform acts for as a subject	7	“You shall fear the LORD your God and serve Him, and shall take oaths in His name” (6:13)

God is to us, for whatever *reason* we may call upon Him? ⁸ And what great nation is *there* that has *such* statutes and righteous judgments as are in all this law which I set before you this day? ⁹ Only take heed to yourself, and diligently ^g keep yourself, lest you ^h forget the things your eyes have seen, and lest they depart from your heart all the days of your life. And ⁱ teach them to your children and your grandchildren, ¹⁰ *especially concerning* ^j the day you stood before the LORD your God in Horeb, when the LORD said to me, ‘Gather the people to Me, and I will let them hear My words, that they may learn to fear Me all the days they live on the earth, and *that* they may teach their children.’

¹¹ “Then you came near and stood at the foot of the mountain, and the mountain burned with fire to the midst of heaven, with darkness, cloud, and thick darkness. ¹² *k* And the LORD spoke to you out of the midst of the fire. You heard the sound of the words, but saw no ³ form; ^l *you only heard* a voice. ¹³ *m* So He declared to you His covenant which He commanded you to perform, ⁿ the Ten Commandments; and ^o He wrote them on two tablets of stone. ¹⁴ And ^p the LORD commanded me at that time to teach you statutes and judgments, that you might ⁴ observe them in the land which you cross over to possess.

Beware of Idolatry

¹⁵ *q* “Take careful heed to yourselves, for you saw no ^r form when the LORD

⁷ ⁱ [Ps. 46:1; Is. 55:6]
² ^r Or *a god*
⁹ ^g Prov. 4:23
^h Deut. 29:2-8
ⁱ Gen. 18:19; Deut. 4:10; 6:7, 20-25; Ps. 78:5, 6; Prov. 22:6; Eph. 6:4
¹⁰ ^j Ex. 19:9, 16, 17
¹² ^k Deut. 5:4, 22
¹ Ex. 19:17-19; 20:22;
¹ Kin. 19:11-18
³ *similitude*
¹³ ^m Deut. 9:9, 11
ⁿ Ex. 34:28; Deut. 10:4
^o Ex. 24:12
¹⁴ ^p Ex. 21:1 ⁴ *do or perform*
¹⁵ ^q Josh. 23:11

^r Is. 40:18
¹⁶ ^s Ex. 32:7; Deut. 9:12; 31:29
¹ Ex. 20:4, 5
^u Rom. 1:23
³ *similitude*
¹⁹ ^v Deut. 17:3; Job 31:26-28
^w 2 Kin. 21:3
^x [Rom. 1:25]
⁶ *divided*
²⁰ ^y 1 Kin. 8:51; Jer. 11:4
^z Deut. 7:6; 27:9; [Titus 2:14]
²¹ ^a Num. 20:12; Deut. 1:37; 3:26
^b Num. 27:13, 14
²² ^c 2 Pet. 1:13-15
^d Deut. 3:27
^e Deut. 3:25 ⁷ *take possession of*
²³ ^f Ex. 20:4, 5; Deut. 4:16
²⁴ ^g Ex. 24:17; Deut. 9:3; Is. 33:14; Heb. 12:29
^h Ex. 20:5; 34:14

spoke to you at Horeb out of the midst of the fire, ¹⁶ lest you ^s act corruptly and ^t make for yourselves a carved image in the ⁵ form of any figure: ^u the likeness of male or female, ¹⁷ the likeness of any animal that is on the earth or the likeness of any winged bird that flies in the air, ¹⁸ the likeness of anything that creeps on the ground or the likeness of any fish that is in the water beneath the earth. ¹⁹ And *take heed*, lest you ^v lift your eyes to heaven, and *when* you see the sun, the moon, and the stars, ^w all the host of heaven, you feel driven to ^x worship them and serve them, which the LORD your God has ⁶ given to all the peoples under the whole heaven as a heritage. ²⁰ But the LORD has taken you and ^y brought you out of the iron furnace, out of Egypt, to be ^z His people, an inheritance, as you are this day. ²¹ Furthermore ^a the LORD was angry with me for your sakes, and swore that ^b I would not cross over the Jordan, and that I would not enter the good land which the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance. ²² But ^c I must die in this land, ^d I must not cross over the Jordan; but you shall cross over and ⁷ possess ^e that good land. ²³ Take heed to yourselves, lest you forget the covenant of the LORD your God which He made with you, ^f and make for yourselves a carved image in the form of anything which the LORD your God has forbidden you. ²⁴ For ^g the LORD your God is a consuming fire, ^h a jealous God.

²⁵ “When you beget children and

Israel would become a countercultural force by its manner of life, government, and society (see Rom. 12:2). God’s blessings on Israel would cause the nations to seek to learn about Him. Since God was so **near** and had promised to respond to their prayers, the Israelites could approach the Lord with all kinds of requests. **statutes . . . judgments:** Living so close to God meant that the Israelites were especially obligated to live for Him, in the way revealed in His covenant with them.

4:9 Moses warned against the sin of presumption. **your eyes have seen:** The people had witnessed God’s redemption, His revelation, and the giving of His gracious covenant. Now, they had to adhere to the covenantal regulations and **teach their children** the story of God’s saving acts and His promises to Israel. **Heart** refers to the center of one’s being, the source of direction for one’s thoughts, actions, and speech (Matt. 12:34; 15:18, 19).

4:10 My words are the Ten Commandments (v. 13).

4:11 The appearance of God is often described as accompanied by **darkness and fire** (Ex. 19:18). The fire speaks of His holiness, majesty, and transcendence, but also of His judgment against evil (v. 24). The darkness speaks of His unapproachable nature, of our sin, and of the possibility of impending judgment.

4:12 heard . . . but saw no form: The Lord revealed His glory to the Israelites, but they saw no visual image other than darkness and fire. They did hear God’s voice, however (v. 15). This verse reminds us that God is Spirit (John 4:24).

4:13 Obedience to God’s commandments was an expression of loyalty to and love for the Lord who had initiated a **covenant** with Israel. **The Ten Commandments** were given in the form of **two**

tablets of stone (Ex. 31:18), each containing a full and complete copy of the commandments.

4:14 teach: Moses mediated God’s revelation to the people. As their teacher, he applied the Law (Ex. 20:19).

4:15, 16 There was no way of describing or of giving shape with any image to the experience of God’s presence at Sinai (Ex. 20:18). Since Israel had not seen the **form** of God, they could not represent Him in any way. **likeness of male or female:** Although people were created in the likeness of God, no image created in human likeness could represent God (Gen. 1:26, 27).

4:17-19 likeness of any animal: Animals were created by God (Gen. 1:20-25). They cannot serve as a medium for spiritual awareness or as a representation for God. **sun . . . host of heaven:** Furthermore, heavenly bodies were created by God. They could not serve as representation of the Creator (Gen. 1:14-19; Ps. 19:1).

4:20 This verse forms a “slogan of redemption.” **taken you and brought you:** God chose Israel to be His people and to have a covenant with Him. **Iron furnace** refers to the period of affliction in Egypt (Is. 48:10; Jer. 11:4). **inheritance:** The people redeemed by the Lord belonged to Him and had a glorious future with Him.

4:21, 22 I must die: How hard these words must have been for Moses! He had to encourage the people to enter the same land which he himself would not enter.

4:24 God is a **consuming fire**. He is free to destroy disobedient and rebellious people. Israel had witnessed His righteous anger during the wilderness journey as well as in Canaan (Heb. 12:29). **Jealous** may also be translated as “zealous.” God is zealous for His holiness. Both in His wrath and in His love, the Lord remains holy.

grandchildren and have grown old in the land, and act corruptly and make a carved image in the form of anything, and ⁱdo evil in the sight of the LORD your God to provoke Him to anger, ²⁶I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that you will soon utterly perish from the land which you cross over the Jordan to possess; you will not ⁸prolong *your* days in it, but will be utterly destroyed. ²⁷And the LORD ^kwill scatter you among the peoples, and you will be left few in number among the nations where the LORD will drive you. ²⁸And ^lthere you will serve gods, the work of men's hands, wood and stone, ^mwhich neither see nor hear nor eat nor smell. ²⁹ⁿBut from there you will seek the LORD your God, and you will find *Him* if you seek Him with all your heart and with all your soul. ³⁰When you are in ⁹distress, and all these things come upon you in the ^olatter days, when you ^pturn to the LORD your God and obey His voice ³¹(for the LORD your God is a merciful God), He will not forsake you nor ^qdestroy you, nor forget the covenant of your fathers which He swore to them.

³²“For ^rask now concerning the days that are past, which were before you, since the day that God created man on the earth, and *ask* ^sfrom one end of heav-

25 ⁱ 2 Kin. 17:17
26 ^j Deut. 30:18, 19;
2 Chr. 36:14-20; Is.
1:2; Mic. 6:2 ⁸ *live
long on it*
27 ^k Lev. 26:33;
Deut. 28:62; Neh.
1:8
28 ^l Deut. 28:64;
1 Sam. 26:19; Jer.
16:13 ^m Ps. 115:4-7;
135:15-17; Is. 44:9;
46:7
29 ⁿ [Lev. 26:39-45;
Deut. 30:1-3; 2 Chr.
15:4; Neh. 1:9]
30 ^o Gen. 49:1;
Deut. 31:29; Jer.
23:20; Hos. 3:5
^p Joel 2:12; Heb. 1:2
⁹ *tribulation*
31 ^q Lev. 26:44; Jer.
30:11
32 ^r Deut. 32:7;
Job 8:8
^s Deut. 28:64; Matt.
24:31
33 ^t Ex. 20:22; 24:11;
Deut. 5:24-26
34 ^u Deut. 7:19 ^v Ex.
7:3 ^w Ex. 13:3 ^x Ex.
6:6 ^y Deut. 26:8
¹ *calamities*
35 ^z Ex. 8:10; 9:14;
[Deut. 4:39; 32:12;
39; 1 Sam. 2:2; Is.
43:10-12; 44:6-8;
45:5-7]; Mark 12:32
36 ^a Ex. 19:9, 19;
20:18, 22; Deut.
4:33; Neh. 9:13;

en to the other, whether *any* great *thing* like this has happened, or *anything* like it has been heard. ³³^tDid *any* people *ever* hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as you have heard, and live? ³⁴Or did God *ever* try to go *and* take for Himself a nation from the midst of *another* nation, ^uby trials, ^vby signs, by wonders, by war, ^wby a mighty hand and ^xan outstretched arm, ^yand by great ¹terrors, according to all that the LORD your God did for you in Egypt before your eyes? ³⁵To you it was shown, that you might know that the LORD Himself is God; ^z*there is* none other besides Him. ³⁶^aOut of heaven He let you hear His voice, that He might instruct you; on earth He showed you His great fire, and you heard His words out of the midst of the fire. ³⁷And because ^bHe loved your fathers, therefore He chose their ²descendants after them; and ^cHe brought you out of Egypt with His Presence, with His mighty power, ³⁸^ddriving out from before you nations greater and mightier than you, to bring you in, to give you their land *as* an inheritance, *as it is* this day. ³⁹Therefore know this day, and consider *it* in your heart, that ^ethe LORD Himself

Heb. 12:19, 25 ³⁷ ^b Deut. 7:7, 8; 10:15; 33:3 ^c Ex. 13:3, 9, 14
² Lit. *seed* ³⁸ ^d Deut. 7:1

4:25 Children and grandchildren is a reference to a future rebellion, when a generation would disobey the Lord.

4:26 Heaven and earth signifies all creation. **witness against you:** Creation would act as God's witness against a rebellious and obstinate people (30:19; Is. 1:2). **utterly perish . . . be utterly destroyed:** The curses of the covenant would overtake the Israelites (Ps. 1:6). The Lord would discipline them and exile them from the land.

4:27 Scatter you among the peoples is a prophetic warning of the exiles that would take place in 722 and 586 B.C.

4:28, 29 Moses warned against the folly of idolatry. **Neither see . . . nor smell** declares the impotence of idols (see Ps. 115:6; Is. 40:19, 20; 41:7, 22-24). These "gods" were not merely lesser gods. They did not exist at all; they were dead. Hence turning from the living God

to false, nonexistent "gods" was in effect moving from life to death (1 Thess. 1:9, 10). But seeking the living God and Him alone brought life.

4:30 All these things refers to the curses of the covenant. **The latter days** simply means "in the future." But the prophets developed this phrase into a more technical designation for a new era characterized by God's blessings, the age of Messiah. **turn to the LORD:** God would bless the nation when they returned to Him.

4:31 merciful God: The future of God's people depends on God's love. The emphasis on God's mercy in this verse is a necessary balance to the emphasis that Moses placed on God's refining wrath (v. 24). **not forsake . . . nor forget:** The Lord was free to scatter His people. But after His discipline, He would regather them and show them His favor. God was and is faithful to His promises. **The covenant of your fathers** is God's solemn commitment to fulfill the promises He made to the patriarchs (Gen. 17:6-8; 22:16, 17; Ex. 3:15-17).

4:32-34 The Creator of all the earth is the same God who spoke to the Israelites at Mt. Sinai. **By trials . . . and by great terrors,** the Creator had demonstrated His power in Egypt and had used it to save the Israelites.

4:35 there is none other besides Him: Moses emphasizes the theme that the living God is the only one there is (see 4:39; 5:7; 6:4; 32:39).

4:36 God's revelation to the Israelites was intended to graciously **instruct,** guide, and discipline the Israelites in the way of righteousness (compare 2 Tim. 3:16, 17).

4:38 nations greater and mightier: The Scriptures have two different ways of regarding the size of the nation of Israel at the time of the Exodus. God is praised for the miraculous growth of Israel's family during their sojourn in Egypt (Ex. 1:7, 9, 10). On the other hand, the nation of Israel is described as small in number compared to the other nations around her. Hence, God deserves the glory for Israel's victories.

4:39 God in heaven . . . there is no other: Since no other God was

evil

(Heb. *ra'*) (4:25; Gen. 2:9; Job 1:1; Ps. 141:4; Jer. 3:5; 4:14) Strong's #7451

Evil is primarily a force that opposes God and His work of righteousness in the world (Rom. 7:8-19). The word is also used for any disturbance to the harmonious order of the universe, such as disease (Ps. 41:8). But the Bible makes it plain that even these so-called "physical evils" are the result of a far more serious moral and spiritual evil that began with the Fall of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden (Gen. 3). Evil comes from the hearts of people (Mark 7:20-23), but the ultimate source of evil in the world is Satan (Matt. 13:19; Luke 8:12). The Christian believer can rest assured that Jesus will triumph at the end of time, when Satan will be cast into a lake of fire and brimstone and evil will be overcome (Rev. 20:10).

is God in heaven above and on the earth beneath; *there is no other.* ^{40f} You shall therefore keep His statutes and His commandments which I command you today, that ³ it may go well with you and with your children after you, and that you may ⁴ prolong *your* days in the land which the LORD your God is giving you for all time.”

Cities of Refuge East of the Jordan

⁴¹ Then Moses ^g set apart three cities on this side of the Jordan, toward the rising of the sun, ^{42h} that the manslayer might flee there, who kills his neighbor unintentionally, without having hated him in time past, and that by fleeing to one of these cities he might live: ⁴³ⁱ Bezer in the wilderness on the plateau for the Reubenites, Ramoth in Gilead for the Gadites, and Golan in Bashan for the Manassites.

Introduction to God's Law

⁴⁴ Now this *is* the law which Moses set before the children of Israel. ⁴⁵ These *are* the testimonies, the statutes, and the judgments which Moses spoke to the children of Israel after they came out of Egypt, ⁴⁶ on this side of the Jordan, *in* the valley opposite Beth Peor, in the land of Sihon king of the Amorites, who dwelt at Heshbon, whom Moses and the children of Israel ^k defeated ⁵ after they came out of Egypt. ⁴⁷ And they took possession of his land and the land ^l of Og king of Bashan, two kings of the Amorites, who *were* on this side of the Jordan, toward

³⁹ ^e Deut. 4:35; Josh. 2:11
⁴⁰ ^f Lev. 22:31; Deut. 5:16; 32:46, 47
³ you may prosper
⁴ live long
⁴¹ ^g Num. 35:6; Deut. 19:2-13; Josh. 20:7-9
⁴² ^h Deut. 19:4
⁴³ ⁱ Josh. 20:8
⁴⁶ / Deut. 3:29
^k Num. 21:24; Deut. 1:4
⁵ struck
⁴⁷ ^l Num. 21:33-35

⁶ east
⁴⁸ ^m Deut. 2:36; 3:12
ⁿ Deut. 3:9; Ps. 133:3
⁷ Syr. *Sirion*
⁴⁹ ^o Deut. 3:17

CHAPTER 5

² ^a Ex. 19:5; Deut. 4:23; Mal. 4:4
³ ^b Jer. 31:32; Matt. 13:17; Heb. 8:9
⁴ ^c Ex. 19:9
⁵ ^d Ex. 20:21; Gal. 3:19
^e Ex. 19:16
⁶ ^f Ex. 20:2-17; Lev. 26:1; Deut. 6:4; Ps. 81:10
¹ slavery
⁷ ^g Ex. 20:2, 3; 23:13; Hos. 13:4
² besides
⁸ ^h Ex. 20:4
⁹ ⁱ Ex. 34:7, 14-16; Num. 14:18; Deut. 7:10
³ worship them

the ⁶ rising of the sun, ^{48m} from Aroer, which *is* on the bank of the River Arnon, even to Mount ⁷ Sion (that is, ⁿ Hermon), ⁴⁹ and all the plain on the east side of the Jordan as far as the Sea of the Arabah, below the ^o slopes of Pisgah.

The Ten Commandments Reviewed

5 And Moses called all Israel, and said to them: “Hear, O Israel, the statutes and judgments which I speak in your hearing today, that you may learn them and be careful to observe them. ^{2a} The LORD our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. ³ The LORD ^b did not make this covenant with our fathers, but with us, those who *are* here today, all of us who *are* alive. ^{4c} The LORD talked with you face to face on the mountain from the midst of the fire. ^{5d} I stood between the LORD and you at that time, to declare to you the word of the LORD; for ^e you were afraid because of the fire, and you did not go up the mountain. *He* said:

⁶ ^f *I am* the LORD your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of ¹ bondage.

⁷ ^g You shall have no other gods ² before Me.

⁸ ^h You shall not make for yourself a carved image—any likeness of *anything* that *is* in heaven above, or that *is* in the earth beneath, or that *is* in the water under the earth; ⁹ you shall not ⁱ bow ³ down to them nor serve them. For I, the

Creator, Lord of history, Teacher, and the Lover of His people, Israel had to respond to God alone.

4:40 The promise of blessing in the land was conditional—it required obedience (5:29; 6:24; 14:23; 19:9; 28:29, 33).

4:41–43 The regulations concerning the cities to which a person guilty of manslaughter could flee are further developed in 19:1–13. The narrative concerning the division of the land (3:12–20) resumes with the appointment of the **three cities** of refuge east of the Jordan (Num. 35:9–28; Josh. 20). **Ramoth** was located between the Yarmuk and the Jabbok in Gilead. The locations of **Bezer** and **Golan** are uncertain.

4:44 The law refers to the commandments detailed in chs. 5–26. Law basically means “instruction.” God points out the path of righteousness for His covenant people.

4:45 These are . . . the judgments: This law is the same as that given to the previous generation at Mt. Sinai. Deuteronomy is a second delivery of the Law to those who would occupy the land.

4:46–49 in the land of Sihon . . . of Og: Israel had recently acquired this land east of the Jordan and was now preparing to cross the river and enter Canaan.

5:3, 4 Did not make this covenant with our fathers, but with us emphasizes the privileged position of the present generation as they were preparing to enter Canaan. **Face to face** indicates intimacy. Moses stressed the special relationship the people had with the living God.

5:5 I stood between the LORD and you reflects Moses’ role as mediator of the covenant (Ex. 20:18–21).

5:7 no other gods: Many ancient Middle Eastern cultures absorbed

other gods into their own belief systems, modifying and using these new gods for their own purposes. But the Israelites were unique: They served only one God, who would not allow any rivals.

5:8–10 Even when an **image** functioned as a symbol for deity, it led worshipers away from the true worship of the living God. **visiting the iniquity:** God would discipline the sinner. **to the third and fourth generations:** Even as God would bless generation upon

statutes

(Heb. *choq*) (5:1; Ex. 18:16) Strong’s #2706

The word conveys a variety of meanings in the OT, including: a “portion” or “ration” of food (Gen. 47:22); the “boundary” or “limit” of the sea (Prov. 8:29); and an “allotment” of the sacrifices for the priests (Lev. 10:13). This term is derived from a verb that means “to decree,” or “to inscribe” (Prov. 8:15; Is. 10:1; 49:16). The term often refers to commands, civil enactments, legal prescriptions, and ritual laws decreed by someone in authority—whether by humans (Mic. 6:16) or by God Himself (6:1). The Law of Moses includes commandments (*miswah*), judgments (*mispat*), and statutes (*choq*) (4:1, 2). Israel was charged to obey God’s statutes, and they had pledged to do so (26:16, 17). Accordingly, God’s judgment was meted out against the Israelites when they disobeyed them (Amos 2:4; Ezek. 11:12; Mal. 3:7).

LORD your God, *am* a jealous God, ⁴visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth *generations* of those who hate Me, ¹⁰but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and ⁵keep My commandments.

¹¹*k* You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold *him* ⁶guiltless who takes His name in vain.

¹²*l* Observe the Sabbath day, to ⁷keep it holy, as the LORD your God commanded you. ¹³*m* Six days you shall labor and do all your work, ¹⁴but the seventh day *is* the ⁿSabbath of the LORD your God. *In it* you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant,

⁹ *4* punishing
10 / Num. 14:18;
Deut. 7:9; Jer. 32:18;
Dan. 9:4 ⁵ observe
11 *k* Ex. 20:7; Lev.
19:12; Deut. 6:13;
10:20; Matt. 5:33
⁶ innocent
12 *l* Ex. 20:8; Ezek.
20:12; Mark 2:27
⁷ sanctify it
13 *m* Ex. 23:12; 35:2
14 *n* [Gen. 2:2]; Ex.
16:29; [Heb. 4:4]

15 *o* Deut. 15:15
^p Deut. 4:34, 37
16 *q* Ex. 20:12; Lev.
19:3; Matt. 15:4;
Eph. 6:2, 3; Col. 3:20
^r Deut. 6:2 ^s Deut.
4:40

nor your ox, nor your donkey, nor any of your cattle, nor your stranger who *is* within your gates, that your male servant and your female servant may rest as well as you. ¹⁵*o* And remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the LORD your God brought you out from there ^pby a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm; therefore the LORD your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day.

¹⁶*q* Honor your father and your mother, as the LORD your God has commanded you, ^rthat your days may be long, and that it may be well with ^syou in the land which the LORD your God is giving you.

¹⁷*t* You shall not murder.

generation for their true worship of Him, He would also punish generation upon generation for faithlessness to Him. **Mercy to thousands** refers to thousands of generations in contrast to the three and four generations that would be punished. The comparison between four and thousands is a proportional measurement of God's mercy. His grace is far more expansive than His wrath.

5:11 Take . . . in vain refers to the abuse, misuse, blasphemy, cursing, or manipulation of the Lord's name. No wonder the ancient Israelites developed the practice of not pronouncing the sacred name aloud. Yet God delights in those who love and respect His name.

5:12–15 These verses contain the positive command to regard the Sabbath as **holy**—separated for God's purposes. **as . . . commanded you:** The Lord did so at Mt. Sinai (Ex. 20:8–11). **The Sabbath of the Lord:** The primary significance of the Sabbath was that

it belonged to the Lord. **you shall do no work . . . rest:** On this Lord's day, the Israelites were to rest from work and celebrate God's good gifts. **remember that you were a slave:** The Israelites were to remember Israel's past oppression and celebrate their current freedom. Christians differ as to how this commandment relates to believers in Jesus Christ. The Sabbath was Saturday, the seventh day of the week. Christians generally worship God on Sunday, the first day of the week, because it was on a Sunday that the Lord rose from the dead. Even so, Christians follow the principle of this command.

5:16 Honor your father and your mother: Respect for parents would build strong families. Strong, godly families, in turn, would teach children the ways of God, and the covenant community dedicated to serving and worshiping God would remain intact. The benefits of respecting one's parents would be **long** life and success.

A Day of Rest

When God "rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done" (Gen. 2:2), He was modeling for humanity His intention for a weekly day of rest. Clearly He did this for the sake of Adam and Eve (and for us), because God Himself does not tire or need to "rest," as people do. In what sense, then, did He "rest" from His labors, and in what sense should we "rest" from ours?

The term *Sabbath* has the root meaning of "cessation." On the seventh day God ceased His work of creating the world (Ex. 20:8–11). However, He did not cease His work of sustaining and maintaining the world (Ps. 145:15, 16; Col. 1:17). This distinction helps to clarify the significance of the Sabbath, a day which God set aside (or sanctified) and blessed. His clear intention was that people would emulate Him by pausing from their labors—the exercise of their dominion over the creation (Gen. 1:28–31)—for one day out of seven.

Was this day of "rest" given merely as a day off? No, one of the most important purposes of the Sabbath was to provide a day for believers to worship and focus on God, as individuals and communities (Is. 58:13, 14). It is not that we are free to ignore God on the other six days; every day belongs to Him. But by designating one day as a special opportunity to come before the Lord, we demonstrate our dependence on Him as Creator and our obedience to Him as Lord.

This means that the Sabbath—or in NT times, the Lord's Day—was not intended simply as a "day off" to catch up on chores or pursue leisure activities. Not that these are wrong, but the point of the day is to "stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another" (Heb. 10:24, 25).

There is an obvious tension here regarding how we should treat the Lord's Day as a Christian Sabbath. In deciding the issue, it is worth remembering that Jesus pointed out that God established a day of rest for the sake of people, not the other way around (Mark 2:27). Sabbath observance is not to become a legalistic obligation. In fact, conditions occasionally require work on the Sabbath: an ox can get stuck in a ditch, and must be gotten out (Luke 14:5). Likewise, human beings have basic needs even on Sundays. Of course, the spirit of Sabbath observance implies that we should take steps to prevent finding ourselves routinely stuck in the ditch with the ox on the Sabbath, and that we use our abilities on the other six days to meet the needs of people.

When God rested on the seventh day and set it aside, He did not intend to turn Sabbath-keeping into a strangling rule. The Sabbath was meant to provide true freedom—freedom from turning work into tyranny, and freedom to enjoy fellowship with God, our neighbors, and our loved ones.



18^u ‘You shall not commit adultery.
 19^v ‘You shall not steal.
 20^w ‘You shall not bear false witness
 against your neighbor.
 21^x ‘You shall not covet your neighbor’s
 wife; and you shall not desire your
 neighbor’s house, his field, his
 male servant, his female servant,
 his ox, his donkey, or anything
 that is your neighbor’s.’
 22 “These words the LORD spoke to all
 your assembly, in the mountain from
 the midst of the fire, the cloud, and the
 thick darkness, with a loud voice; and He
 added no more. And ^yHe wrote them on
 two tablets of stone and gave them to me.

The People Afraid of God’s Presence

23^z “So it was, when you heard the
 voice from the midst of the darkness,
 while the mountain was burning with
 fire, that you came near to me, all the
 heads of your tribes and your elders.
 24 And you said: ‘Surely the LORD our
 God has shown us His glory and His
 greatness, and ^awe have heard His voice
 from the midst of the fire. We have seen
 this day that God speaks with man; yet he
^bstill lives. ²⁵ Now therefore, why should
 we die? For this great fire will consume
 us; ^cif we hear the voice of the LORD our
 God anymore, then we shall die. ²⁶ ^dFor
 who is there of all flesh who has heard the
 voice of the living God speaking from the
 midst of the fire, as we *have*, and lived?
 27 You go near and hear all that the LORD
 our God may say, and ^etell us all that the

17 ^f Ex. 20:13; Matt.
 5:21
 18 ^g Ex. 20:14; Mark
 10:19; Luke 18:20;
 [Rom. 13:9]; James
 2:11
 19 ^h Ex. 20:15; Lev.
 19:11; [Rom. 13:9]
 20 ⁱ Ex. 20:16; 23:1;
 Matt. 19:18
 21 ^j Ex. 20:17; [Rom.
 7:7; 13:9]
 22 ^k Ex. 24:12; 31:18;
 Deut. 4:13
 23 ^l Ex. 20:18, 19
 24 ^m Ex. 19:19
ⁿ Deut. 4:33; Judg.
 13:22
 25 ^o Ex. 18:18, 19;
 Deut. 18:16
 26 ^p Deut. 4:33

27 ^q Ex. 20:19; Heb.
 12:19
 28 ^r Deut. 18:17
 29 ^s Deut. 32:29;
 Ps. 81:13; Is. 48:18
^t Deut. 11:1 / Deut.
 4:40
 31 ^u [Gal. 3:19]
 32 ^v Deut. 17:20;
 28:14; Josh. 1:7;
 23:6; Prov. 4:27
^w observe
 33 ^x Deut. 10:12;
 Ps. 119:3; Jer. 7:23;
 Luke 1:6 ^y Deut.
 4:40; Eph. 6:3

CHAPTER 6

1 ^a Deut. 12:1
 2 ^b Ex. 20:20; Deut.
 10:12, 13; [Ps. 111:10;
 128:1; Eccl. 12:13]

LORD our God says to you, and we will
 hear and do it.’

28 “Then the LORD heard the voice of
 your words when you spoke to me, and
 the LORD said to me: ‘I have heard the
 voice of the words of this people which
 they have spoken to you. ^fThey are right
 in all that they have spoken. ²⁹ Oh, that
 they had such a heart in them that they
 would fear Me and ^halways keep all My
 commandments, ⁱthat it might be well
 with them and with their children for-
 ever! ³⁰ Go and say to them, “Return to
 your tents.” ³¹ But as for you, stand here
 by Me, ^jand I will speak to you all the
 commandments, the statutes, and the
 judgments which you shall teach them,
 that they may observe *them* in the land
 which I am giving them to possess.’

32 “Therefore you shall ⁸be careful to
 do as the LORD your God has commanded
 you; ^kyou shall not turn aside to the right
 hand or to the left. ³³ You shall walk in
^lall the ways which the LORD your God
 has commanded you, that you may live
^mand *that it may be* well with you, and
that you may prolong your days in the
 land which you shall possess.

The Greatest Commandment

6 “Now this is ^athe commandment,
 and these are the statutes and judg-
 ments which the LORD your God has
 commanded to teach you, that you may
 observe *them* in the land which you are
 crossing over to possess, ²^bthat you may
 fear the LORD your God, to keep all His

5:17 Premeditated **murder** was the concern of this law. For com-
 mands concerning other forms of homicide, see chs. 19–21. The
 basis of respect for life lay in God’s act of creating humans in His
 image (Gen. 9:6).

5:18 **Adultery** was a betrayal not only of a commitment, but of a
 relationship. Anyone who treated marriage lightly would also treat
 his or her relationship with God lightly.

5:19 **not steal**: Stealing could take many forms: illegitimate removal
 of property, kidnapping, manipulation of a person and his property
 to one’s advantage, and so on.

5:20 **not bear false witness**: This included any testimony that
 falsely incriminated someone or negatively affected someone’s
 reputation, such as gossip and slander.

5:21 **You shall not covet**: The only command that specifically pro-
 hibited an attitude. Desiring what someone else possessed was
 self-interestedness. This attitude was the opposite of a concern for
 the other person’s welfare. The Law can be summed up in the last
 and first commandments: A person must truly love God and truly be
 concerned for his or her neighbor (compare Mark 12:28–31).

5:22 **He wrote them on two tablets**: The two tablets were two
 complete copies of the Law. Usually, two copies were made of
 ancient Middle Eastern treaties. One was retained by each of the two
 contracting parties as a witness to the agreement. But with the Ten
 Commandments, both copies were placed before God. Not only
 did the Lord covenant with the Israelites, He also witnessed the
 agreement.

5:23–31 Because of their rebellious and sinful nature, the Israel-
 ites feared God’s holy presence and were unprepared to face Him.

Subsequently, they asked Moses to serve as their spokesman before
 the Lord, and God approved their request. Moses became the me-
 diator of the covenant between God and His people. He not only
 communicated God’s ways to the people, but he begged God to
 show His mercy to them.

5:25, 26 **why should we die . . . living God**: The Israelites’ fear
 was necessary. The people needed to realize that the living God was
 powerful, great, and demanded perfection, so that they as sinners
 would recognize their need for His mercy.

5:27 **we will hear and do it**: God’s awe-inspiring revelation of Him-
 self prompted the people to express their willingness to comply
 with the Lord’s commands. However, their steadfastness to their
 promise would be tested.

5:29 The people were impressed with what they saw and heard, but
 their **heart** was unchanged.

5:32, 33 **in all the ways . . . God has commanded you**: Out of
 all the nations, God had chosen Israel to be instructed in His law.
 But the real test of the distinctiveness of these people was their
 response to God’s revelation. **and that it may be well with you,**
and that you may prolong your days: These promises, attached
 to the fifth commandment, were applicable to all of the command-
 ments.

6:1 **The commandment** refers to the instruction to love the Lord
 (v. 5). **commanded to teach you**: Moses was God’s instrument in
 giving His law to Israel (5:22, 23). It was not really “the Law of Moses”
 but the Law of God.

6:2 **The fear** of the Lord includes awe for His greatness and holiness,
 love for Him, and submission to His will. Initially, the fear of God may



The Mezuzah

The mezuzah is a small case containing a parchment which contains the text of 6:4–9 and 11:13–21. Even today each mezuzah parchment is carefully written by qualified scribes, using the same strict procedures they use in writing the laws. It is then tightly rolled and placed in its case so that the word *shaddai* (“Almighty”) appears through a small hole near the top. A special prayer is read when the mezuzah is attached near the top of the right-hand doorpost. Though the popularity of the mezuzah has diminished in recent years, many Jews still kiss the mezuzah by touching their lips with their fingers and raising the fingers to a mezuzah when entering or leaving the home. At the same time, they recite Ps. 121:8, “The LORD shall preserve your going out and your coming in from this time forth, and even forevermore.”



A mezuzah on a doorframe in Israel

Wikimedia Commons

LORD your God with all your heart,ⁱ with all your soul, and with all your strength.

⁶“And ^jthese words which I command you today shall be in your heart. ^{7k}You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. ^{8l}You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. ^{9m}You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

Caution Against Disobedience

¹⁰“So it shall be, when the LORD your God brings you into the land of which He ³swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give you large and beautiful cities ⁿwhich you did not build, ¹¹houses full of all good things, which you did not fill, hewn-out wells which you did not dig, vineyards and olive trees which you did not plant—^owhen you have eaten and are full—¹²then beware, lest you forget the ^pLORD who brought you out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage. ¹³You shall ^qfear the LORD your God and serve Him, and ^rshall take oaths in His name. ¹⁴You shall not go after other gods, ^sthe gods of the peoples who *are* all around you ¹⁵(for ^tthe LORD your God *is* a jealous God ^uamong you), lest the anger of the LORD your God

statutes and His commandments which I command you, you and your son and your grandson, all the days of your life, ^cand that your days may be prolonged. ³Therefore hear, O Israel, and ¹be careful to observe *it*, that it may be well with you, and that you may ^dmultiply greatly ^eas the LORD God of your fathers has promised you—^f*a* land flowing with milk and honey.”

^{4g}“Hear, O Israel: ²The LORD our God, the LORD *is* one! ^{5h}You shall love the

² ^c Deut. 4:40

³ ^d Deut. 7:13

^e Gen. 22:17 ^f Ex.

3:8, 17 ¹ Lit. *observe to do*

⁴ ^g Deut. 4:35; Mark

12:29; John 17:3;

[1 Cor. 8:4, 6] ² Or

The LORD is our God,

the LORD alone, i.e.,

the only one

⁵ ^h Matt. 22:37;

Mark 12:30; Luke

10:27 ¹ 2 Kin. 23:25

⁶ / Deut. 11:18–20;

Ps. 119:11, 98 ⁷ ^k Deut. 4:9; 11:19; [Eph. 6:4] ⁸ ^l Ex.

12:14; 13:9, 16; Deut. 11:18; Prov. 3:3; 6:21; 7:3 ⁹ ^m Deut.

11:20; Is. 57:8 ¹⁰ ⁿ Deut. 9:1; 19:1; Josh. 24:13; Ps. 105:44

³ *promised* ¹¹ ^o Deut. 8:10; 11:15; 14:29 ¹² ^p Deut. 8:11–18

¹³ ^q Deut. 13:4; Matt. 4:10; Luke 4:8 ^r Deut. 5:11; [Is. 45:23; Jer.

4:2] ¹⁴ ^s Deut. 13:7 ¹⁵ ^t Ex. 20:5; Deut. 4:24 ^u Ex. 33:3

involve fright. Yet it leads to a sense of wonder, a commitment to worship, and delight in knowing God. **you . . . and your grandson:** Since God promised to bless generation after generation (Gen. 17:7, 8), He expected His people to follow His ways from generation to generation as well.

6:3 that it may be well with you: God instructed His people so they might live good lives full of meaning and peace. They would live in His glorious presence. **A land flowing with milk and honey** indicates a fruitful and blessed land (11:9; 26:9, 15; 27:3; 31:20). The land promised to the Israelites was better than the land of Egypt to which they had wanted to return (Num. 16:12–14).

6:4 This verse is the celebrated Shema, the basic confession of faith in Judaism (see Matt. 22:37, 38; Mark 12:29, 30; Luke 10:27). **Hear:** The Hebrew word is *shemà*. The verse starts with a command for the people to respond properly to God. They must listen and obey. **The LORD our God** indicates the people’s relationship with the living God. He had come into the lives of His people; it was not that they had ascended to Him. He had saved them from slavery in Egypt, guided them through the wilderness, and given them His instructions. Further, He was about to give them His land. **The LORD is one** means “the Lord alone.” There is only one God.

6:5 Moses repeatedly exhorted the Israelites to respond to God’s love with devotion. In this context, the word translated as **love** may mean “to make one’s choice in.” God commanded His people to

choose Him with all their being, and in the process to deny all other supposed deities.

6:7 talk of them when you sit . . . and when you rise up: God’s revelation should be so central to a godly family that they should naturally talk about Him while they perform other activities.

6:8, 9 a sign . . . frontlets: In later years the Jews interpreted these instructions in a physical way. They instructed men to wear phylacteries, boxes containing passages of Scripture, when they prayed (Matt. 23:5). In any case the idea is that God’s laws should be close to the mind and hands of His people at all times (compare Ex. 13:9, 16; Prov. 3:3; 6:21). **write them on the doorposts:** Jewish custom is to attach a small vessel called a *mezuzah* to the doorpost. In it is placed a small scroll containing the text of Deut. 6:4–9; 11:13–21 and God’s name Shaddai.

6:10–12 Moses warned the people not to forget that their possessions were God’s gifts. God had not only saved their ancestors from slavery, but He had also given them a good land. The Israelites needed continually to praise and thank God for His mercy toward them.

6:13–15 serve: The Lord demanded absolute commitment to Himself. Out of gratitude, the people were to do this willingly. **oaths in His name:** The fact that God had revealed His name assures the people of God’s goodness to them. He wanted them to look to Him alone for refuge and sustenance. Jesus quoted this text when Satan was tempting Him (Matt. 4:10).

be aroused against you and destroy you from the face of the earth.

¹⁶“You shall not ⁴tempt the LORD your God ^was you ⁵tempted *Him* in Massah. ¹⁷You shall ^xdiligently keep the commandments of the LORD your God, His testimonies, and His statutes which He has commanded you. ¹⁸And you ^yshall do *what is right and good* in the sight of the LORD, that it may be well with you, and that you may go in and possess the good land of which the LORD swore to your fathers, ¹⁹^zto cast out all your enemies from before you, as the LORD has spoken.

²⁰^a“When your son asks you in time to come, saying, ‘What *is the meaning* of the testimonies, the statutes, and the judgments which the LORD our God has commanded you?’ ²¹then you shall say to your son: ‘We were slaves of Pharaoh in Egypt, and the LORD brought us out of Egypt ^bwith a mighty hand; ²²and the LORD showed signs and wonders before our eyes, great and severe, against Egypt, Pharaoh, and all his household. ²³Then He brought us out from there, that He might bring us in, to give us the land of which He ^cswore to our fathers. ²⁴And the LORD commanded us to ⁷observe all these ⁸statutes, ^cto fear the LORD our God, ^dfor our good always, that ^eHe might preserve us alive, as *it is* ⁹this day. ²⁵Then ^fit will be righteousness for us, if we are careful to observe all these commandments before the LORD our God, as He has commanded us.’

A Chosen People

7“When the LORD your God brings you into the land which you go to ^apossess, and has cast out many ^bnations be-

¹⁶ ^v Matt. 4:7; Luke 4:12 ^w [1 Cor. 10:9]
⁴ *test* ⁵ *tested*
¹⁷ ^x Deut. 11:22;
 Ps. 119:4
¹⁸ ^y Ex. 15:26; Deut. 8:7-10
¹⁹ ^z Num. 33:52, 53
²⁰ ^a Ex. 13:8, 14
²¹ ^b Ex. 13:3
²³ ^c *promised*
²⁴ ^c Deut. 6:2
^d Deut. 10:12, 13;
 Job 35:7, 8; Jer. 32:39 ^e Deut. 4:1
⁷ ^{do} ⁸ *ordinances*
⁹ *today*
²⁵ ^f Deut. 24:13;
 [Rom. 10:3, 5]

CHAPTER 7

¹ ^a Deut. 6:10
^b Gen. 15:19-21

^c Ex. 33:2
² ^d Num. 31:17;
 Deut. 20:16-18 ^e Ex. 23:32, 33; Josh. 2:14
³ ^f Ex. 34:15, 16;
 Josh. 23:12; 1 Kin. 11:2; Ezra 9:2
⁴ ^g Deut. 6:15
⁵ ^h Ex. 23:24; 34:13;
 Deut. 12:3 ⁱ Heb. *Asherim*, Canaanite deities
⁶ ⁱ Ex. 19:5, 6; Amos 3:2; 1 Pet. 2:9 ² *set-apart*
⁷ ^j Deut. 4:37
^k Deut. 10:22
⁸ ^k Deut. 10:15
^m Luke 1:55, 72,
 73 ⁿ Ex. 13:3, 14
³ *slavery*
⁹ ^o 1 Cor. 1:9;
 2 Thess. 3:3; 2 Tim. 2:13 ^p Ex. 20:6;
 Deut. 5:10; Neh. 1:5;
 Dan. 9:4

fore you, ^cthe Hittites and the Girgashites and the Amorites and the Canaanites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and mightier than you, ²and when the LORD your God delivers ^dthem over to you, you shall conquer them *and* utterly destroy them. ^eYou shall make no covenant with them nor show mercy to them. ³/Nor shall you make marriages with them. You shall not give your daughter to their son, nor take their daughter for your son. ⁴For they will turn your sons away from following Me, to serve other gods; ^gso the anger of the LORD will be aroused against you and destroy you suddenly. ⁵But thus you shall deal with them: you shall ^hdestroy their altars, and break down their *sacred* pillars, and cut down their ¹wooden images, and burn their carved images with fire.

⁶“For you *are* a ²holy people to the LORD your God; ⁱthe LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples on the face of the earth. ⁷The LORD did not set His ^jlove on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any other people, for you were ^kthe least of all peoples; ⁸but ^lbecause the LORD loves you, and because He would keep ^mthe oath which He swore to your fathers, ⁿthe LORD has brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you from the house of ³bondage, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

⁹“Therefore know that the LORD your God, He *is* God, ^othe faithful God ^pwho keeps covenant and mercy for a thousand generations with those who love Him and keep His commandments; ¹⁰and He

6:16-19 God may test His children, but they may never test or tempt Him by their rebelliousness or sin (see Matt. 4:7; Luke 4:12). For the incident at **Massah**, see Ex. 17:1-7. **keep . . . do what is right and good:** Moses applied a lesson from the past and exhorted the new generation to be faithful to God (4:1, 5; 5:29; 6:1). **to cast out all your enemies:** Canaan's false worship and its immorality could no longer influence the Israelites if the Canaanites were entirely thrown out of the land.

6:20-24 your son asks: Moses commanded the Israelites to teach their children the significance of their ritual. In the same way, Christians should make sure their children know the meaning of their practices. The answer to the Israelite child's question would include four components: (1) **We were slaves . . . in Egypt;** (2) **the LORD brought us out . . . with a mighty hand;** (3) **to give us the land;** and (4) we have a challenge to responsible action.

6:25 Moses did not offer the people a works righteousness by keeping the law. **Righteousness** is a right relationship with God. God initiates this relationship, and His children respond to it as an expression of love.

7:1 The Hittites came originally from Asia Minor (see Gen. 23:10). **The Girgashites** are an unknown people mentioned also in Gen. 10:16 and 1 Chr. 1:14. **The Amorites** were the native population of Canaan that had settled in the mountains. **The Canaanites** were the native population that had settled in the coastlands. **The**

Perizzites were the native population that had settled in the hill country. **The Hivites** were the native population settled south of the Lebanon mountains. **The Jebusites** (perhaps an offshoot of the Hittites) were the native population settled near what later became Jerusalem.

7:2 Covenant refers to any treaty with the Canaanite nations that might undermine God's covenant with Israel.

7:3 Inter-marriage with the Canaanite population would have tempted the Israelites to adopt Canaanite culture. This would have threatened Israel's ability to be a countercultural force. They were not to “blend in.” Similarly, the Christian church is called to demonstrate God's love to the world like sheep in the midst of wolves (Matt. 10:6; Rom. 12:2; Phil. 2:14-16; 1 Pet. 2:9).

7:5 destroy . . . break down: The destruction of idolatrous sites was meant to keep the Israelites from imitating and borrowing false pagan practices (12:2; 16:21, 22).

7:7 The Israelites had no reason for pride, for they were the **least of all peoples**. Whatever privileges or possessions they enjoyed were due to God's grace.

7:8 The biblical authors verbally paint a wonderful picture of God: the powerful God extending His **mighty hand** to save His people.

7:9, 10 faithful God . . . for a thousand generations: Throughout all time, God has remained true to His commitment made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He is a faithful God (Ex. 20:6; Heb. 13:5).

repays those who hate Him to their face, to destroy them. He will not ⁴be slack with him who hates Him; He will repay him to his face. ¹¹Therefore you shall keep the commandment, the statutes, and the judgments which I command you today, to observe them.

Blessings of Obedience

¹²“Then it shall come to pass, because you listen to these judgments, and keep and do them, that the LORD your God will keep with you the covenant and the mercy which He swore to your fathers. ¹³And He will ¹love you and bless you and ⁵multiply you; ⁶He will also bless the fruit of your womb and the fruit of your land, your grain and your new wine and your oil, the increase of your cattle and the offspring of your flock, in the land of which He ⁶swore to your fathers to give you. ¹⁴You shall be blessed above all peoples; there shall not be a male or female ¹barren among you or among your livestock. ¹⁵And the LORD will take away from you all sickness, and will afflict you with none of the ¹¹terrible diseases of Egypt which you have known, but will lay *them* on all those who hate you. ¹⁶Also you shall ⁷destroy all the peoples whom the LORD your God delivers over to you; your eye shall have no pity on them; nor shall you serve their gods, for that *will* ⁸be a snare to you.

¹⁷“If you should say in your heart, ‘These nations are greater than I; how can I dispossess them?’— ¹⁸you shall not be afraid of them, *but* you shall ⁹remember well what the LORD your God did to Pharaoh and to all Egypt: ¹⁹*x* the great trials which your eyes saw, the signs and the wonders, the mighty hand and the outstretched arm, by which the LORD your God brought you out. So shall the LORD your God do to all the peoples of whom you are afraid. ²⁰*y* Moreover

10 ^a [2 Pet. 3:9, 10]
⁴ delay
13 ^r Ps. 146:8; Prov. 15:9; John 14:21
^s Deut. 28:4 ⁵ cause you to increase
⁶ promised
14 ^t Ex. 23:26
15 ^u Ex. 9:14; 15:26; Deut. 28:27, 60
16 ^v Ex. 23:33; Judg. 8:27; Ps. 106:36
⁷ consume
18 ^w Ps. 105:5
19 ^x Deut. 4:34; 29:3
20 ^y Ex. 23:28; Josh. 24:12

22 ^z Ex. 23:29, 30
⁸ consume
24 ^a Josh. 10:24, 42; 12:1–24 ^b Josh. 23:9
⁹ before
25 ^c Prov. 23:6
¹ desire
26 ^d Deut. 13:17
² devoted or banned

CHAPTER 8

1 ^a Deut. 4:1; 6:24 ^b Deut. 30:16
¹ observe to do
² increase in number
³ promised
2 ^c Deut. 1:3; 2:7; 29:5; Ps. 136:16; Amos 2:10 ^d Ex. 16:4 ^e [John 2:25]
3 ^f Ex. 16:2, 3 ^g Ex. 16:12, 14, 35 ^h Matt. 4:4; Luke 4:4

the LORD your God will send the hornet among them until those who are left, who hide themselves from you, are destroyed. ²¹You shall not be terrified of them; for the LORD your God, the great and awesome God, *is* among you. ²²And the LORD your God will drive out those nations before you ²little by little; you will be unable to ⁸destroy them at once, lest the beasts of the field become *too* numerous for you. ²³But the LORD your God will deliver them over to you, and will inflict defeat upon them until they are destroyed. ²⁴And ^aHe will deliver their kings into your hand, and you will destroy their name from under heaven; ^bno one shall be able to stand ⁹against you until you have destroyed them. ²⁵You shall burn the carved images of their gods with fire; you shall not ^ccovet ¹the silver or gold *that is* on them, nor take *it* for yourselves, lest you be snared by it; for it *is* an abomination to the LORD your God. ²⁶Nor shall you bring an abomination into your house, lest you be doomed to destruction like it. You shall utterly detest it and utterly abhor it, ^dfor it *is* an ²accursed thing.

Remember the LORD Your God

8 “Every commandment which I command you today ^ayou must ¹be careful to observe, that you may live and ^bmultiply, ²and go in and possess the land of which the LORD ³swore to your fathers. ²And you shall remember that the LORD your God ^cled you all the way these forty years in the wilderness, to humble you *and* ^dtest you, ^eto know what *was* in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not. ³So He humbled you, ^fallowed you to hunger, and ^gfed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man shall ^hnot live by bread alone; but man lives by every

love Him and keep His commandments: Loving God always finds expression in doing His will. The Lord is a God of justice. He will **repay** those who rebel against Him.

7:13–16 bless the fruit . . . increase: God’s blessings extended to the quality of life, with the assurance of children, health, food, drink, and peace.

7:16 The people’s immediate responsibility was to **destroy** the Canaanites’ wicked presence and influence in the land (2:34).

7:17–19 you shall remember: The past saving acts of God demonstrated His nature and power. The people were to remember the details of His actions so that they could face the present moment in the light of eternity.

7:20, 21 The hornet (Ex. 23:28; Josh. 24:12) may refer to a dramatic act of God, such as a violent storm or a plague of insects. It may refer to campaigns by other armies that weakened the Canaanites before the Israelites arrived. Since **the great and awesome God** made the nations fear, why then should His own people be terrified (Ex. 15:14; Josh. 2:10, 11)? God was on their side and was even **among** them!

7:22 little by little: The conquest of the land was in two stages: (1) a rapid, broad conquest under Joshua; (2) a gradual, area-by-area, city-by-city conquest that followed. God’s plan was that not all of the Promised Land would fall to Israel at once. Indeed, much of the land remained to be conquered after Joshua (Josh. 13:1–6).

8:1 Live, in this context, has the same meaning as saving one’s soul in James 1:21; 5:20.

8:2 remember: Reflecting on the past acts of God encouraged loyalty and devotion to Him. **forty years . . . to humble you and test:** The Lord taught Israel to rely on Him alone during the wilderness journey. **know what was in your heart:** The response to God’s testings helped determine the people’s inner nature.

8:3 God supplied His people with food in the wilderness (see Ex. 16) so that they would learn that **man shall not live by bread alone**. Humans have a spiritual nature that can be satisfied only by the spiritual nutrients of God’s Word. **man lives by every word . . . from the mouth of the LORD:** Jesus affirmed this truth by using these words to resist Satan (Matt. 4:4; Luke 4:1–4).

word that proceeds from the mouth of the LORD. ⁴ⁱYour garments did not wear out on you, nor did your foot swell these forty years. ^{5j}You should ⁴know in your heart that as a man chastens his son, so the LORD your God chastens you.

⁶“Therefore you shall keep the commandments of the LORD your God, ^kto walk in His ways and to fear Him. ⁷For the LORD your God is bringing you into a good land, ^la land of brooks of water, of fountains and springs, that flow out of valleys and hills; ⁸a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive oil and honey; ⁹a land in which you will eat bread without scarcity, in which you will lack nothing; a land whose stones are iron and out of whose hills you can dig copper. ^{10m}When you have eaten and are full, then you shall bless the LORD your God for the good land which He has given you.

¹¹“Beware that you do not forget the LORD your God by not keeping His commandments, His judgments, and His statutes which I command you today, ¹²ⁿlest—when you have eaten and are ⁵full, and have built beautiful houses and dwell in them; ¹³and when your herds and your flocks multiply, and your silver and your gold are ⁶multiplied, and all that you have is multiplied; ^{14o}when your heart ⁷is lifted up, and you ^pforget the LORD your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage; ¹⁵who ^qled you through that great and terrible wilderness, ^rin which were fiery serpents and scorpions and thirsty land where there was no water; ^swho brought water for you out of the flinty rock; ¹⁶who fed you in the wilderness with ^tmanna, which your fathers did not know, that He might humble you and that He might test you, ^uto do you good in the end— ¹⁷then you say in your heart, ‘My power and the might of my hand have gained me this wealth.’

¹⁸“And you shall remember the LORD

Agriculture in the Holy Land



^{4 i} Deut. 29:5; Neh. 9:21
^{5 j} 2 Sam. 7:14; Ps. 89:30-33; Prov. 3:11, 12; Heb. 12:5-11;
 Rev. 3:19 ⁴ consider
^{6 k} [Deut. 5:33]
^{7 l} Deut. 11:9-12; Jer. 2:7
^{10 m} Deut. 6:11, 12
^{12 n} Deut. 28:47; Prov. 30:9; Hos. 13:6
⁵ satisfied
^{13 o} increased
^{14 o} 1 Cor. 4:7

your God, ^vfor it is He who gives you power to get wealth, ^wthat He may ⁸establish His covenant which He swore to your fathers, as it is this day. ¹⁹Then it shall be, if you by any means forget the LORD your God, and follow other gods, and serve them and worship them, ^xI

^p Deut. 8:11; Ps. 106:21 ⁷ becomes proud ^{15 q} Is. 63:12-14
^r Num. 21:6 ⁴ Ex. 17:6; Num. 20:11 ^{16 t} Ex. 16:15 ^u Jer. 24:5, 6; [Heb. 12:11] ^{18 v} Prov. 10:22; Hos. 2:8 ^w Deut. 7:8, 12
⁸ confirm ^{19 x} Deut. 4:26; 30:18

8:4 In addition to providing manna and water, the Lord made the clothing and shoes of the people last for 40 years!

8:7-9 The land had everything necessary to sustain life and develop an economy: water, crops, and metals for industry (11:8-12). The various water sources contrasted with the Nile, the only source of water the people knew in Egypt (11:10). The varied forms of plant life were surprising to the people who came from the wilderness.

8:10-14 bless the LORD: The proper response to plenty is thanksgiving and worship. It is Jewish custom to pray *after* certain festive meals because of the phrase **when you have eaten and are full**. In the absence of proper worship, people would **forget**, become complacent and greedy, and even deny that God provided for them (v. 17). **your heart is lifted up:** In the enjoyment of God's blessings, the people to their own detriment might think that they were self-sufficient.

8:14-16 God who brought . . . who led you . . . who brought water . . . who fed: These four historical allusions recall (1) the redemption from Egypt, (2) the presence of God in the wilderness, (3) the provision of water, and (4) the provision of manna. **humble . . . test:** Through the whole experience in Egypt and the wilderness, the Lord was leading His children into decisions that would bring out their true nature. **to do you good in the end:** Difficult as the tests were, the Lord was a good teacher because He had the future of His people in mind.

8:17 Moses warned the people that prosperity and **wealth** often leads to an exaltation of self and a rejection of God. **8:18** God's **power** is different from human manipulation, power politics, competition, and other ways of getting ahead. God gives grace. **8:19, 20** The threat was that the people would **perish** in the same manner as the nations whom they had come to drive out.

testify against you this day that you shall surely perish. ²⁰As the nations which the LORD destroys before you, [#]so you shall perish, because you would not be obedient to the voice of the LORD your God.

Israel's Rebellions Reviewed

9 “Hear, O Israel: You *are* to cross over the Jordan today, and go in to dispossess nations greater and mightier than yourself, cities great and fortified up to heaven, ²a people great and tall, the ^adescendants of the Anakim, whom you know, and of *whom* you heard *it said*, ‘Who can stand before the descendants of Anak?’ ³Therefore understand today that the LORD your God is He who ^bgoes over before you as a ^cconsuming fire. ^dHe will destroy them and bring them down before you; ^eso you shall drive them out and destroy them quickly, as the LORD has said to you.

^{4f}“Do not think in your heart, after the LORD your God has cast them out before you, saying, ‘Because of my righteousness the LORD has brought me in to possess this land’; but *it is* ^gbecause of the wickedness of these nations *that* the LORD is driving them out from before you. ^{5h}*It is* not because of your righteousness or the uprightness of your heart *that* you go in to possess their land, but because of the wickedness of these nations *that* the LORD your God drives them out from before you, and that He may ⁱfulfill the ^jword which the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. ⁶Therefore understand that the LORD your God is not giving you this good land to possess because of your righteousness, for you *are* a ^kstiff-necked ²people.

⁷“Remember! Do not forget how you ^kprovoked the LORD your God to wrath in the wilderness. ^lFrom the day that you departed from the land of Egypt until you came to this place, you have been rebellious against the LORD. ⁸Also ^min Horeb you provoked the LORD to wrath, so that the LORD was angry *enough* with you to have destroyed you. ⁹ⁿWhen I went up into the mountain to receive the tab-

20 ^y [Dan. 9:11, 12]

CHAPTER 9

2 ^a Num. 13:22, 28, 33; Josh. 11:21, 22
3 ^b Deut. 1:33; 31:3; Josh. 3:11; 5:14; John 10:4 ^c Deut. 4:24; Heb. 12:29
^d Deut. 7:24 ^e Ex. 23:31
4 ^f Deut. 8:17; [Rom. 11:6, 20; 1 Cor. 4:4, 7] ^g Gen. 15:16; Lev. 18:3, 24–30; Deut. 12:31; 18:9–14
5 ^h [Titus 3:5] ⁱ Gen. 50:24 ^j perform
6 ⁱ Ex. 34:9; Deut. 31:27 ^j stubborn or rebellious
7 ^k Num. 14:22 ^l Ex. 14:11
8 ^m Ex. 32:1–8; Ps. 106:19
9 ⁿ Ex. 24:12, 15; Deut. 5:2–22

^o Ex. 24:18
10 ^p Ex. 31:18; Deut. 4:13 ^q Ex. 19:17
³ *when you were all gathered together*
12 ^r Ex. 32:7, 8
⁵ Deut. 31:29
13 ^s Ex. 32:9 ^t Deut. 9:6 ^u stubborn or rebellious
14 ^v Ex. 32:10
^w Deut. 29:20
^x Num. 14:12
15 ^y Ex. 32:15–19
^z Ex. 19:18
16 ^a Ex. 32:19
17 ^b Ex. 32:19
18 ^c Ex. 34:28; Ps. 106:23 ^d prostrated myself
19 ^e Ex. 32:10, 11; Heb. 12:21 ^f Ex. 32:14

lets of stone, the tablets of the covenant which the LORD made with you, then I stayed on the mountain forty days and ^oforty nights. I neither ate bread nor drank water. ^{10p}Then the LORD delivered to me two tablets of stone written with the finger of God, and on them *were* all the words which the LORD had spoken to you on the mountain from the midst of the fire ^qin ³the day of the assembly. ¹¹And it came to pass, at the end of forty days and forty nights, *that* the LORD gave me the two tablets of stone, the tablets of the covenant.

¹²“Then the LORD said to me, ^r‘Arise, go down quickly from here, for your people whom you brought out of Egypt have acted corruptly; they have ^squickly turned aside from the way which I commanded them; they have made themselves a molded image.’

¹³“Furthermore ^tthe LORD spoke to me, saying, ‘I have seen this people, and indeed ^uthey are a ⁴stiff-necked people. ^{14v}Let Me alone, that I may destroy them and ^wblot out their name from under heaven; ^xand I will make of you a nation mightier and greater than they.’

^{15y}“So I turned and came down from the mountain, and ^zthe mountain burned with fire; and the two tablets of the covenant *were* in my two hands. ¹⁶And ^aI looked, and behold, you had sinned against the LORD your God—had made for yourselves a molded calf! You had turned aside quickly from the way which the LORD had commanded you. ¹⁷Then I took the two tablets and threw them out of my two hands and ^bbroke them before your eyes. ¹⁸And I ^cfell ⁵down before the LORD, as at the first, forty days and forty nights; I neither ate bread nor drank water, because of all your sin which you committed in doing wickedly in the sight of the LORD, to provoke Him to anger. ^{19d}For I was afraid of the anger and hot displeasure with which the LORD was angry with you, to destroy you. ^eBut the LORD listened to me at that time also. ²⁰And the LORD was very angry with Aaron *and* would have destroyed him; so

9:1–3 Hear, O Israel: Moses called on the people to see the future occupation of the land as a gift of divine grace, not the result of any righteousness of their own. The future was open to them if only they could learn from the past. **understand today:** wisdom from above begins with a confession of dependence on the Lord.

9:4–6 possess their land: The reasons for the conquest of the Promised Land were (1) the immorality of its inhabitants and (2) the promises God made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Gen. 15:18–21).

stiff-necked people: Israel’s history demonstrated how often the people grumbled, complained, and disobeyed. Moses hoped they would not forget their unworthiness before God, or think that they deserved His gracious gifts (vv. 7–14).

9:7 In addition to remembering the grace of God, the people also had to **remember** how vulnerable they were to apostasy (1:6–3:29). **rebellious:** The people were characteristically stubborn. They continued to test the Lord (v. 27).

9:9 A person cannot go more than about three days without **water** and survive. God supernaturally preserved Moses during the **forty days**.

9:10 the LORD delivered to me . . . finger of God: God initiated the covenant with His people and gave Moses His laws. With God’s approval, Moses taught the Law to the people.

9:19 the LORD listened to me: For Moses’ prayer, see vv. 26–29. Daniel’s prayer for the nation resembles Moses’ intercession (Dan. 9:3–23).

I prayed for Aaron also at the same time. ²¹Then I took your sin, the calf which you had made, and burned it with fire and crushed it *and* ground it very small, until it was as fine as dust; and I ^fthrew its dust into the brook that descended from the mountain.

²²“Also at ^gTaberah and ^hMassah and ⁱKibroth Hattaavah you ⁶provoked the LORD to wrath. ²³Likewise, ^jwhen the LORD sent you from Kadesh Barnea, saying, ‘Go up and possess the land which I have given you,’ then you rebelled against the commandment of the LORD your God, and ^kyou did not believe Him nor obey His voice. ²⁴!You have been rebellious against the LORD from the day that I knew you.

²⁵^m“Thus I ⁷prostrated myself before the LORD; forty days and forty nights I kept prostrating myself, because the LORD had said He would destroy you. ²⁶Therefore I prayed to the LORD, and said: ‘O Lord God, do not destroy Your people and ⁿYour inheritance whom You have redeemed through Your greatness, whom You have brought out of Egypt with a mighty hand. ²⁷Remember Your servants, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; do not look on the stubbornness of this people, or on their wickedness or their sin, ²⁸lest the land from which You brought us should say, “Because the LORD was not able to bring them to the land which He promised them, and because He hated them, He has brought them out to kill them in the wilderness.” ²⁹Yet they *are* Your people and Your inheritance, whom You brought out by Your mighty power and by Your outstretched arm.’

The Second Pair of Tablets

10 “At that time the LORD said to me, ¹‘Hew for yourself two tablets of stone like the first, and come up to Me on the mountain and make yourself an ^aark of wood. ²And I will write on the tablets the words that were on the first tablets, which you broke; and ^byou shall put them in the ark.’

³“So I made an ark of acacia wood,

²¹ ^fEx. 32:20
²² ^gNum. 11:1, 3
^hEx. 17:7 ⁱNum. 11:4, 34 ⁶caused the LORD to be angry
²³ ^jNum. 13:3 ^kPs. 106:24, 25
²⁴ ^lDeut. 9:7; 31:27
²⁵ ^mDeut. 9:18
⁷fell down
²⁶ ⁿDeut. 32:9

CHAPTER 10

¹ ^aEx. 25:10 ¹Cut out
² ^bEx. 25:16, 21

⁴ ^cEx. 20:1; 34:28
²Lit. Words
⁵ ^dEx. 34:29 ^eEx. 40:20 ^f1 Kin. 8:9
⁶ ^gNum. 20:25-28; 33:38 ³place
⁷ ^hNum. 33:32-34
⁴brooks
⁸ ⁱNum. 3:6 ^jNum. 4:5, 15; 10:21
^kDeut. 18:5 ^lNum. 6:23 ⁵set apart
⁹ ^mNum. 18:20, 24; Deut. 18:1, 2; Ezek. 44:28
¹⁰ ⁿEx. 34:28; Deut. 9:18 ^oEx. 32:14
¹¹ ^pEx. 33:1
¹² ^qMic. 6:8 ^rDeut. 6:5; Matt. 22:37; 1 Tim. 1:5
¹³ ^sDeut. 6:24
⁶benefit or welfare
¹⁴ ^t[Neh. 9:6; Ps. 68:33; 115:16]

hewed two tablets of stone like the first, and went up the mountain, having the two tablets in my hand. ⁴And He wrote on the tablets according to the first writing, the Ten ²Commandments, ^cwhich the LORD had spoken to you in the mountain from the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly; and the LORD gave them to me. ⁵Then I turned and ^dcame down from the mountain, and ^eput the tablets in the ark which I had made; ^fand there they are, just as the LORD commanded me.”

⁶(Now the children of Israel journeyed from the wells of Bene Jaakan to Moserah, where Aaron ^gdied, and where he was buried; and Eleazar his son ministered as priest in his ³stead. ⁷^hFrom there they journeyed to Gudgodah, and from Gudgodah to Jotbathah, a land of ⁴rivers of water. ⁸At that time ⁱthe LORD ⁵separated the tribe of Levi ^jto bear the ark of the covenant of the LORD, ^kto stand before the LORD to minister to Him and ^lto bless in His name, to this day. ⁹^mTherefore Levi has no portion nor inheritance with his brethren; the LORD is his inheritance, just as the LORD your God promised him.)

¹⁰“As at the first time, ⁿI stayed in the mountain forty days and forty nights; ^othe LORD also heard me at that time, and the LORD chose not to destroy you. ¹¹^pThen the LORD said to me, ‘Arise, begin *your* journey before the people, that they may go in and possess the land which I swore to their fathers to give them.’

The Essence of the Law

¹²“And now, Israel, ^qwhat does the LORD your God require of you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways and to ^rlove Him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, ¹³*and* to keep the commandments of the LORD and His statutes which I command you today ^sfor your ⁶good? ¹⁴Indeed heaven and the highest heavens belong to the ^tLORD your God, *also* the earth with all that is in it. ¹⁵The LORD delighted only in your fathers, to love them;

9:22, 23 See Num. 11; 13.

9:25-29 Moses took God’s judgment seriously. Nevertheless, he did not resign himself to God’s justice, but appealed to God’s faithfulness, mercy, and honor. He reminded God of (1) His redemption of the Israelites from slavery, (2) His promises, (3) His reputation among all the nations, and (4) His election of Israel.

10:2 I will write: The condescension of the Lord is almost beyond belief. He prepared the tablets a second time, even after the first set was broken.

10:3 The *acacia* tree is still found in the Sinai Peninsula, but in smaller numbers than when the Israelites passed through.

10:4 He wrote . . . according to the first writing: The Lord did not add to or take away from the commandments.

10:6-9 Levi: The responsibilities of the Levites included: (1) care for the ark (Num. 3); (2) service in offering, worship, teaching, and legal matters (18:1-8); and (3) blessing Israel (Num. 6:22-27). The phrase *to this day* suggests that this explanation was written after Moses’ death.

10:14, 15 heaven and the highest heavens: The sky and the whole universe belong to God. *love . . . chose:* The Creator sovereignly and graciously involved Himself with Abraham and his descendants.

and He chose their ⁷descendants after them, you above all peoples, as *it is* this day. ¹⁶Therefore circumcise the foreskin of your ^uheart, and be ^vstiff-necked ⁸ no longer. ¹⁷For the LORD your God *is* ^wGod of gods and ^xLord of lords, the great God, ^ymighty and awesome, who ^zshows no partiality nor takes a bribe. ¹⁸^aHe administers justice for the fatherless and the widow, and loves the stranger, giving him food and clothing. ¹⁹Therefore love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt. ²⁰^bYou shall fear the LORD your God; you shall serve Him, and to Him you shall hold fast, and take oaths in His name. ²¹He *is* your praise, and He *is* your God, who has done for you these great and awesome things which your eyes have seen. ²²Your fathers went down to Egypt with seventy persons, and now the LORD your God has made you as the stars of heaven in multitude.

Love and Obedience Rewarded

11 “Therefore you shall love the LORD your God, and keep His charge, His statutes, His judgments, and His commandments always. ²Know today that *I do not speak* with your children, who have not known and who have not seen the ¹chastening of the LORD your God, His greatness and His mighty hand and His outstretched arm— ³His signs and His acts which He did in the midst of Egypt, to Pharaoh king of Egypt, and to all his land; ⁴what He did to the army of Egypt, to their horses and their chariots: ^ahow He made the waters of the Red Sea overflow them as they pursued you, and *how* the LORD has destroyed them to this day; ⁵what He did for you in the wilderness until you came to this place; ⁶and ^bwhat He did to Dathan and Abiram the sons of Eliab, the son of Reuben: how the earth opened its mouth and swallowed

¹⁵ ⁷ Lit. *seed*
¹⁶ ^u Lev. 26:41;
 Deut. 30:6; Jer.
 4:4; Rom. 2:28,
 29 ^v Deut. 9:6, 13
⁸ *rebellious*
¹⁷ ^w Deut. 4:35, 39;
 Is. 44:8; 46:9; Dan.
 2:47; 1 Cor. 8:5, 6
^x Rev. 19:16 ^y Deut.
 7:21 ^z Acts 10:34
¹⁸ ^a Ex. 22:22-24;
 Ps. 68:5; 146:9
²⁰ ^b Matt. 4:10

CHAPTER 11

² ¹ *discipline*
⁴ ^a Ex. 14:28; Ps.
 106:11
⁶ ^b Num. 16:1-35;
 Ps. 106:16-18

² ^a *at their feet*
⁷ ^c Deut. 10:21; 29:2
³ *work*
⁸ ^d Deut. 31:6, 7, 23;
 Josh. 1:6, 7
⁹ ^e Deut. 4:40; 5:16,
 33; 6:2; Prov. 10:27
^f Deut. 9:5 ^g Ex. 3:8
⁴ *promised*
¹¹ ^h Deut. 8:7
¹² ⁱ 1 Kin. 9:3
¹³ ^j Lit. *listen to*
¹⁴ ^k Lev. 26:4; Deut.
 28:12 ^k Joel 2:23;
 James 5:7 ^l So with
 MT, Tg.; Sam., LXX,
 Vg. He
¹⁵ ^m Ps. 104:14
¹⁶ ⁿ Deut. 6:11; Joel
 2:19 ^o *satisfied*
¹⁶ ^p Deut. 29:18;
 Job 31:27 ^o Deut.
 8:19
¹⁷ ^p Deut. 6:15; 9:19
^q Deut. 28:24; 1 Kin.
 8:35; 2 Chr. 6:26;
 7:13 ^r Deut. 4:26;
 2 Chr. 36:14-20
¹⁸ ^s Deut. 6:6-9
^t Lit. *put*

them up, their households, their tents, and all the substance that *was* ²in their possession, in the midst of all Israel—⁷but your eyes have ^cseen every great ³act of the LORD which He did.

⁸“Therefore you shall keep every commandment which I command you today, that you may ^dbe strong, and go in and possess the land which you cross over to possess, ⁹and ^ethat you may prolong *your* days in the land ^fwhich the LORD ⁴swore to give your fathers, to them and their descendants, ^g‘a land flowing with milk and honey.’ ¹⁰For the land which you go to possess *is* not like the land of Egypt from which you have come, where you sowed your seed and watered *it* by foot, as a vegetable garden; ¹¹^hbut the land which you cross over to possess *is* a land of hills and valleys, which drinks water from the rain of heaven, ¹²a land for which the LORD your God cares; ⁱthe eyes of the LORD your God *are* always on it, from the beginning of the year to the very end of the year.

¹³“And it shall be that if you earnestly ⁵obey My commandments which I command you today, to love the LORD your God and serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul, ¹⁴then ^jI ⁶will give *you* the rain for your land in its season, ^kthe early rain and the latter rain, that you may gather in your grain, your new wine, and your oil. ¹⁵^lAnd I will send grass in your fields for your livestock, that you may ^meat and be ⁷filled.’ ¹⁶Take heed to yourselves, ⁿlest your heart be deceived, and you turn aside and ^oserve other gods and worship them, ¹⁷lest ^pthe LORD’s anger be aroused against you, and He ^qshut up the heavens so that there be no rain, and the land yield no produce, and ^ryou perish quickly from the good land which the LORD is giving you.

¹⁸“Therefore ^syou shall ⁸lay up these

10:16 circumcise the foreskin of your heart: Circumcision was a *physical* sign of the covenant; faith and repentance were *spiritual* signs. Since the Canaanite worship system involved sexual excess, the distinctive sign on the body of the male Hebrew would be a significant reminder not to participate in the rituals of the Canaanites. But circumcision was to be done within as well as without. Marking the body as a sign of dedication to the Lord is unimportant unless there is a change of heart. The covenant administered by Moses required a spiritual change (30:6).

10:17, 18 Moses proclaims that the God of Israel alone is **God**, the sovereign Lord, the just and great King of all. The proper response to this God is awe, love, and service. **fatherless . . . stranger:** God uses His power to uphold justice—especially for those have no powerful ally (1:16; 24:17–22). **food and clothing:** God freely gives to all who are needy—even as He did to Israel in the wilderness (8:3, 4).

10:19 God’s good provision for their own needs should have motivated the Israelites to **love the stranger** among them. To love and provide for the disadvantaged was in fact following God’s example.

10:21 He is your praise: Reflecting on the Creator-Redeemer—whose love, justice, and power extended beyond the covenant people—leads to worship, love, and obedience.

10:22 stars of heaven: God faithfully fulfilled His promise to Abraham (Gen. 15:5, 6).

11:2–7 Moses traced the mighty acts of God in order to encourage his hearers to respond to God’s revelation. Acts and words go together, as do obedience and love.

11:6 Dathan and Abiram rebelled against Aaron’s priesthood and lost their lives (Num. 16).

11:9–12 not like the land of Egypt: Agriculture in Egypt depended on irrigation, the annual flooding of the Nile (8:7–9). **land for which the LORD your God cares:** God would sovereignly control the seasons and rains to provide for His people (vv. 14, 15).

11:13–17 The early rain encouraged the sprouting of seed and new growth. **The latter rain** brought the crops to maturity. **LORD’S anger:** God is gracious and loving, but also just when provoked by arrogant people. To **shut up the heavens** means “to withhold rain,” as God did to Ahab (1 Kin. 17:1; 18:1).

words of mine in your heart and in your ^usoul, and ^ubind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. ^{19v} You shall teach them to your children, speaking of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. ^{20w} And you shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates, ²¹ that ^xyour days and the days of your children may be multiplied in the land of which the LORD swore to your fathers to give them, like ^ythe days of the heavens above the earth.

²² “For if ^zyou carefully keep all these commandments which I command you to do—to love the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways, and ^ato hold fast to Him—²³ then the LORD will ^bdrive out all these nations from before you, and you will ^cdispossess greater and mightier nations than yourselves. ^{24d} Every place on which the sole of your foot treads shall be yours: ^efrom the wilderness and Lebanon, from the river, the River Euphrates, even to the ⁹Western Sea, shall be your territory. ²⁵ No man shall be able to ^fstand ¹against you; the LORD your God will put the ^gdread of you and the fear of you upon all the land where you tread, just as He has said to you.

^{26h} “Behold, I set before you today a blessing and a curse: ²⁷ⁱ the blessing, if you obey the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you today; ²⁸ and the ^jcurse, if you do not obey the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn aside from the way which I command you today, to go after other gods which you have not known. ²⁹ Now it shall be, when the LORD your God has brought you into the land which you go to possess, that you shall put the ^kblessing on Mount Gerizim and the ^lcurse on Mount Ebal. ³⁰ Are they not on the other side of the Jordan, toward the setting sun, in the land of the Canaanites who dwell in the plain opposite Gilgal, ^mbeside the terebinth trees of Moreh? ³¹ For you will cross over the Jordan and go in to possess the land which the LORD your God is giving you, and you will possess it and dwell in it. ³² And you shall be careful to observe all the statutes and judgments which I set before you today.

11:26 The opposite of a blessing is a **curse**. As God’s blessing brings vitality, so His curse takes it away. People become sick, suffer, and die (1 Cor. 11:30; James 1:13–15).

11:29 Gerizim . . . Ebal: See Josh. 8:30–35.

12:1 giving you to possess: God was about to give the people the land. Yet He demanded their obedience as a condition for occupancy and enjoyment of it (chs. 28; 29).

12:2 mountains: The Canaanites built their temples on high places,

BIBLE TIMES & CULTURE NOTES



Rainfall Patterns

The pattern of rainfall dictated the way a season would develop. Steady rainfall, coming at critical times, produced better crops than heavy, intermittent rainfall. A farmer in Palestine had to contend with a five-month rainless summer (May–October); if the following autumn rains were sporadic, the results could be disastrous. Three months without rain during autumn would destroy most crops. The “early” rains were the first autumn showers and the “latter” rains were the last spring showers. Between these were the rains of January. The “early” rains prepared the soil for the seed and the “latter” rains filled out the crops for harvest. The amount of rain received in different locations varied greatly. For example, in modern Palestine, Jericho receives 5.5 inches of rainfall per year while areas in upper Galilee have gotten 47 inches per year.



The Judean desert east of Jerusalem. After a rainy season, the desert ground can become lush and grow grass and plants.

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A Prescribed Place of Worship

12 “These ^aare the statutes and judgments which you shall be careful to observe in the land which the LORD God of your fathers is giving you to possess, ^ball ¹the days that you live on the earth. ^{2c} You shall utterly destroy all the places where the nations which you shall dispossess served their gods, ^don the high mountains and on the hills and under every green tree. ³ And ^eyou shall destroy their altars, break their *sacred* pillars, and burn their ²wooden images with fire; you shall cut down the carved images of their

¹⁸ ^t Ps. 119:2,
³⁴ ^u Deut. 6:8
¹⁹ ^v Deut. 4:9, 10;
6:7; Prov. 22:6
²⁰ ^w Deut. 6:9
²¹ ^x Deut. 4:40 ^y Ps.
72:5; 89:29; Prov.
3:2; 4:10; 9:11
²² ^z Deut. 11:1
^a Deut. 10:20
²³ ^b Deut. 4:38
^c Deut. 9:1
²⁴ ^d Josh. 1:3; 14:9
^e Gen. 15:18; Ex.
23:31; Deut. 1:7, 8
⁹ Mediterranean
²⁵ ^f Deut. 7:24
^g Ex. 23:27; Deut.
2:25; Josh. 2:9–11
¹ before
²⁶ ^h Deut. 30:1, 15, 19
²⁷ ⁱ Deut. 28:1–14
²⁸ ^j Deut. 28:15–
68 ²⁹ ^k Deut.

27:12, 13; Josh. 8:33 ¹ Deut. 27:13–26 ³⁰ ^m Gen. 12:6
CHAPTER 12 ¹ ^a Deut. 6:1 ^b Deut. 4:9, 10; 1 Kin. 8:40
¹ As long as ² ^c Ex. 34:13 ^d 2 Kin. 16:4; 17:10, 11 ³ ^e Num.
33:52; Deut. 7:5; Judg. 2:2 ² Heb. *Asherim*

believing that their gods resided in palaces on the mountains. These mountaintop shrines were considered gateways between heaven and earth. The Canaanites would worship at a **green tree** because they believed this would bring them success and prosperity.

12:3, 4 Sacred pillars were monuments dedicated to one of the gods. They represented the power of fertility. Archaeologists have found such pillars in excavations at Gezer and Hazor. **Wooden images** refers to the poles or trees dedicated to the goddess Asherah.

gods and destroy their names from that place. ⁴You shall not ^fworship the LORD your God *with such things*.

⁵“But you shall seek the ^gplace where the LORD your God chooses, out of all your tribes, to put His name for His ^hdwelling³ place; and there you shall go. ⁶ⁱThere you shall take your burnt offerings, your sacrifices, your tithes, the heave offerings of your hand, your vowed offerings, your freewill offerings, and the ^jfirstborn of your herds and flocks. ⁷And ^kthere you shall eat before the LORD your God, and ^lyou shall rejoice in ⁴all to which you have put your hand, you and your households, in which the LORD your God has blessed you.

⁸“You shall not at all do as we are doing here today—^mevery man doing whatever *is* right in his own eyes—⁹for as yet you have not come to the ⁿrest⁵ and the inheritance which the LORD your God is giving you. ¹⁰But *when* you cross over the Jordan and dwell in the land which the LORD your God is giving you to inherit, and He gives you ^orest from all your enemies round about, so that you dwell in safety, ¹¹then there will be the place where the LORD your God chooses to make His name abide. There you shall bring all that I command you: your burnt offerings, your sacrifices, your tithes, the heave offerings of your hand, and all your choice offerings which you vow to the LORD. ¹²And ^pyou shall rejoice before the LORD your God, you and your sons and your daughters, your male and female

⁴ ^fDeut. 12:31
⁵ ^gEx. 20:24 ^hEx. 15:13; 1 Sam. 2:29
³ home
⁶ ⁱLev. 17:3, 4
^jDeut. 14:23
⁷ ^kDeut. 14:26
^lDeut. 12:12
¹⁸ ⁴ all that you undertake
⁸ ^mJudg. 17:6; 21:25
⁹ ⁿDeut. 3:20; 25:19; Ps. 95:11 ⁵ Or place of rest
¹⁰ ^oJosh. 11:23
¹² ^pDeut. 12:18; 26:11

^qDeut. 10:9; 14:29
¹⁵ ^rDeut. 12:21
^sDeut. 12:22
^tDeut. 14:5
¹⁶ ^uGen. 9:4; Lev. 7:26; 17:10-12; 1 Sam. 14:33; Acts 15:20, 29
¹⁷ ^v contribution
¹⁸ ^w all your undertakings
¹⁹ ^x Be careful
²⁰ ^yGen. 15:18; Ex. 34:24; Deut. 11:24; 19:8

servants, and the ^qLevite who *is* within your gates, since he has no portion nor inheritance with you. ¹³Take heed to yourself that you do not offer your burnt offerings in every place that you see; ¹⁴but in the place which the LORD chooses, in one of your tribes, there you shall offer your burnt offerings, and there you shall do all that I command you.

¹⁵“However, ^ryou may slaughter and eat meat within all your gates, whatever your heart desires, according to the blessing of the LORD your God which He has given you; ^sthe unclean and the clean may eat of it, ^tof the gazelle and the deer alike. ¹⁶“Only you shall not eat the blood; you shall pour it on the earth like water. ¹⁷You may not eat within your gates the tithe of your grain or your new wine or your oil, of the firstborn of your herd or your flock, of any of your offerings which you vow, of your freewill offerings, or of the ⁶heave offering of your hand. ¹⁸But you must eat them before the LORD your God in the place which the LORD your God chooses, you and your son and your daughter, your male servant and your female servant, and the Levite who *is* within your gates; and you shall rejoice before the LORD your God in ⁷all to which you put your hands. ¹⁹⁸Take heed to yourself that you do not forsake the Levite as long as you live in your land.

²⁰“When the LORD your God ^venlarges your border as He has promised you, and you say, ‘Let me eat meat,’ because you long to eat meat, you may eat as much

The **worship** of the true God with any pagan ritual or reminder of paganism violated the Ten Commandments (5:8–10).

12:5 seek: Whatever one seeks is the object of one’s desire and devotion (Ps. 122:9). **place where the LORD your God chooses:** The central place of worship was God’s to choose (Ps. 132:13, 14). God blessed His people with His presence in the tabernacle in the wilderness and later at Shiloh, in the temple in Jerusalem, and finally through Jesus Christ (John 2:18–22). **out of all your tribes:** The presence of God was for the benefit of all of the people without preference for any one tribe. God’s **name** signifies His ownership. **dwelling place:** The Lord graciously agreed to live among His people.

12:6 The Hebrew word for **sacrifices** always designates an offering of an animal. Often the word is used to describe a sacrifice offered to the Lord but eaten by the people. The **heave** offering was a communal offering, which the priest lifted up to signify that it was a gift to the Lord (Ex. 29:27, 28; Lev. 7:34). The priest took his due (Lev. 7:14, 32, 34), while the worshiper and his family ate the rest of the offering. A **vowed** offering was made in fulfillment of a vow (Lev. 7:16, 17; 22:21; Num. 6:21; 15:3–16; 30:11). A **freewill** offering was voluntary (23:23; Ex. 35:27–29; 36:3; Lev. 7:16; Ezek. 46:12).

12:7 eat . . . rejoice: The communal offerings were to be eaten and enjoyed by those who offered them. It was a time of celebration before the Lord. **blessed:** God favored His people by giving them children, flocks, and the crops of the land. His blessing brought vitality, enrichment of life, and happiness to His people.

12:8 every man . . . own eyes: In the wilderness, the people did not develop a common focus on the Lord and become a body of believers. Moses challenged the new generation to repent and return to the Lord.

12:9, 10 Moses envisioned a future state of **rest** for the people. Rest would mean that God’s people would enjoy His blessings and live together in unity, free from fear of assault (Ps. 133; Jer. 31:2; Heb. 4:8–11).

12:12 you . . . and the Levite includes all Israelites—women and men, slaves and free, Levites and tribes with land. The Hebrew word for **rejoice** describes a deep enjoyment by the entire community of God’s good gifts. God gave the Law to the people for their good—even for their enjoyment.

12:15 slaughter . . . meat: Butchering and eating meat was permitted wherever the Israelites settled. **gazelle . . . deer:** Many animals not suited for sacrifice to the Lord were still permitted for food.

12:16 The prohibition of eating or drinking **blood** in any form was an important restriction. Since blood represented life, the Israelites were to show respect for the vital fluids of animals (Gen. 9:4; Lev. 17:11).

12:17, 18 within your gates: Aspects of God’s worship that were designed for community celebration were not to be done in the privacy of the home. Instead, God would designate the place where He would be worshiped. In a similar way, the NT places a strong emphasis on the community of believers. **rejoice:** God’s prohibitions were designed for the mutual pleasure of God and the people.

12:19 The **Levite** received no tribal inheritance in the land and was dependent on the people for food.

12:20 enlarges your border: Moses emphasized the potential greatness of God’s blessings on the people. The land might become so large that for many people frequent journeys to the central sanctuary would be impossible. In this case, provisions were made for the enjoyment of meat at home.

meat as your heart desires. ²¹If the place where the LORD your God chooses to put His name is too far from ^wyou, then you may slaughter from your herd and from your flock which the LORD has given you, just as I have commanded you, and you may eat within your gates as much as your heart desires. ²²Just as the gazelle and the deer are eaten, so you may eat them; the unclean and the clean alike may eat them. ²³Only be sure that you do not eat the blood, ^xfor the blood is the life; you may not eat the life with the meat. ²⁴You shall not eat it; you shall pour it on the earth like water. ²⁵You shall not eat it, ^ythat it may go well with you and your children after you, ^zwhen you do *what is* right in the sight of the LORD. ²⁶Only the ^aholy things which you have, and your vowed offerings, you shall take and go to the place which the LORD chooses. ²⁷And ^byou shall offer your burnt offerings, the meat and the blood, on the altar of the LORD your God; and the blood of your sacrifices shall be poured out on the altar of the LORD your God, and you shall eat the meat. ²⁸Observe and obey all these words which I command you, ^cthat it may go well with you and your children

²¹ ^w Deut. 14:24
²³ ^x Gen. 9:4; Lev. 17:10-14; Deut. 12:16

²⁵ ^y Deut. 4:40; 6:18; Is. 3:10 ^z Ex. 15:26; 1 Kin. 11:38
²⁶ ^a Num. 5:9, 10; 18:19

²⁷ ^b Lev. 1:5, 9, 13, 17
²⁸ ^c Deut. 12:25

²⁹ ^d Ex. 23:23; Deut. 19:1; Josh. 23:4

³¹ ^e Lev. 18:3, 26, 30; 20:1, 2
^f Deut. 18:10; Ps. 106:37; Jer. 32:35
^g *detestable action*

³² ^g Deut. 4:2; 13:18; Josh. 1:7; Prov. 30:6; Rev. 22:18, 19

CHAPTER 13

¹ ^a Num. 12:6; Jer. 23:28; Zech. 10:2
^b Matt. 24:24; Mark 13:22; 2 Thess. 2:9
² ^c Deut. 18:22

after you forever, when you do *what is* good and right in the sight of the LORD your God.

Beware of False Gods

²⁹“When ^dthe LORD your God cuts off from before you the nations which you go to dispossess, and you displace them and dwell in their land, ³⁰take heed to yourself that you are not ensnared to follow them, after they are destroyed from before you, and that you do not inquire after their gods, saying, ‘How did these nations serve their gods? I also will do likewise.’ ³¹^eYou shall not worship the LORD your God in that way; for every ^gabomination to the LORD which He hates they have done to their gods; for ^fthey burn even their sons and daughters in the fire to their gods.

³²“Whatever I command you, be careful to observe it; ^gyou shall not add to it nor take away from it.

Punishment of Apostates

13 “If there arises among you a prophet or a ^adreamer of dreams, ^band he gives you a sign or a wonder, ²and ^cthe sign or the wonder comes to pass,

12:28 that it may go well: The Lord promised His blessing to all those who responded to His benevolent instructions. **and your children:** God’s blessing extended to the succeeding generations (Gen. 1:27, 28; 9:1, 7; 17:19). Yet the Israelites did not gain their salvation through obedience, instead they found favor with God because of His mercy. He had chosen them to be His people.

12:29–31 The Lord would remove the temptation of the Canaanite nations, but the Israelites were responsible for not imitating their practices (see Rom. 12:2; Phil. 2:14–16).

12:29, 30 God cuts off: The conquest was God’s, but the Israelites were His responsible agents (v. 2). **take heed:** Unfortunately, Israel did follow pagan religious ways.

12:31 God hated the Canaanite practices and was concerned that His children would be enticed by them (Lev. 18:21; 20:2–5). **Abomination** indicates the strongest form of revulsion and distaste. **burn . . . sons and daughters:** This is an example of one of the worst Canaanite practices, in which the Israelites later joined (2 Kin. 21:1–9; 2 Chr. 28:1–4).

12:32 not add to it nor take away from it: The Word of God is not subject to whim, taste, or passing fancy.

13:1, 2 a prophet or a dreamer: Both prophecy and dreams were legitimate forms of revelation. The fulfillment of a prophecy, **a sign**, or **a wonder** ordinarily validated the entire message of the prophet (18:22). **let us serve them:** Even if a wonder accompanied the

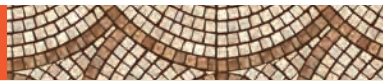
A New Culture

Israel was on the verge of a momentous occasion. Not only were they preparing to enter the Promised Land and conquer its inhabitants, they were also preparing to establish a brand new culture. The primary focus of this new culture would be on the living God. Every part of it would reflect His nature.

God’s commandments gave the Israelites a concrete expression of how God wanted the people to live. In short, He wanted a people that loved and worshiped Him alone. By keeping a number of purity laws, the Israelites were to demonstrate their commitment to Him by keeping ritually clean. Ideally, this outward purity would reflect inward purity. Since God was perfect, He wanted His people to resist the immoral practices of the neighboring nations. But He not only wanted them to resist evil, He also wanted them to reflect His loving and compassionate nature by helping strangers, widows, orphans, and the poor. By following God’s extensive instructions, the Israelites could establish their society on the just laws of the living God.

Many parts of the Israelite culture were distinctive in the ancient world—such as prohibitions against eating pork. These outward distinctives were a sign that the Israelites were set apart to God’s holy purposes. However, the most prominent distinctive was Israel’s absolute allegiance to one God. Israel’s entire society—its legal system, economic structure, family life, and individual and communal ethics—reflected this allegiance. While the nations that surrounded Israel worshiped a variety of gods at numerous shrines located all over the landscape, the Israelites (ideally) worshiped one God in one way at one place—the place He would choose.

In the Promised Land, God planned to bless the Israelites abundantly. In turn, He expected the Israelites to live responsibly, in a culture unlike any that had preceded it.



of which he spoke to you, saying, ‘Let us go after other gods’—which you have not known—‘and let us serve them;’³ you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams, for the LORD your God⁴ is testing you to know whether you love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.⁴ You shall^c walk¹ after the LORD your God and fear Him, and keep His commandments and obey His voice; you shall serve Him and^f hold fast to Him.⁵ But^g that prophet or that dreamer of dreams shall be put to death, because he has spoken in order to turn *you* away from the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt and redeemed you from the house of bondage, to entice you from the way in which the LORD your God commanded you to walk.^h So you shall² put away the evil from your midst.

⁶ⁱ“If your brother, the son of your mother, your son or your daughter,^j the wife³ of your bosom, or your friend^k who is as your own soul, secretly entices you, saying, ‘Let us go and serve other gods,’ which you have not known, neither you nor your fathers,⁷ of the gods of the people which *are* all around you, near to you or far off from you, from *one* end of the earth to the *other* end of the earth,⁸ you shall^l not⁴ consent to him or listen to him, nor shall you eye pity him, nor shall you spare him or conceal him; ⁹but you shall surely kill him; your hand shall be first against him to put him to^m death, and afterward the hand of all the people.¹⁰ And you shall stone him with stones until he dies, because he sought to entice you away from the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt,

³ ^d Ex. 20:20; Deut. 8:2, 16
⁴ ^e Deut. 10:12, 20; 2 Kin. 23:3 ^f Deut. 30:20 ¹ follow the LORD
⁵ ^g Deut. 18:20; Jer. 14:15 ^h Deut. 17:5, 7; 1 Cor. 5:13
² exterminate
⁶ ⁱ Deut. 17:2 / Gen. 16:5 ^k 1 Sam. 18:1, 3 ³ Whom you cherish
⁸ ^j Deut. 7:16; Prov. 1:10 ⁴ yield
⁹ ^m Lev. 24:14; Deut. 17:7

¹¹ ⁿ Deut. 17:13
¹² ^o Judg. 20:1–48
¹³ ³ Lit. Sons of Belial
¹⁴ ^e detestable action
¹⁶ ^p Josh. 6:24
^q Josh. 8:28; Is. 17:1; 25:2; Jer. 49:2 ⁷ Or as a whole-offering
⁸ Lit. mound or ruin
¹⁷ ^r Josh. 6:18
⁵ Josh. 7:26
⁸ increase
¹⁸ ^t Deut. 12:25, 28, 32

CHAPTER 14

¹ ^a [Rom. 8:16; Gal. 3:26] ^b Lev. 19:28; 21:1–5 ¹ make any baldness between your eyes
² ^c Lev. 20:26; Deut. 7:6; [Rom. 12:1]

from the house of bondage.¹¹ So all Israel shall hear andⁿ fear, and not again do such wickedness as this among you.

^{12o}“If you hear someone in one of your cities, which the LORD your God gives you to dwell in, saying,¹³ ⁵“Corrupt men have gone out from among you and enticed the inhabitants of their city, saying, “Let us go and serve other gods”—which you have not known—¹⁴ then you shall inquire, search out, and ask diligently. And *if it is indeed true and certain that* such an⁶ abomination was committed among you,¹⁵ you shall surely strike the inhabitants of that city with the edge of the sword, utterly destroying it, all that is in it and its livestock—with the edge of the sword.¹⁶ And you shall gather all its plunder into the middle of the street, and⁷ completely^p burn with fire the city and all its plunder, for the LORD your God. It shall be^q a⁸ heap forever; it shall not be built again.¹⁷ So none of the accursed things shall remain in your hand, that the LORD may^s turn from the fierceness of His anger and show you mercy, have compassion on you and⁹ multiply you, just as He swore to your fathers,¹⁸ because you have listened to the voice of the LORD your God,^t to keep all His commandments which I command you today, to do *what is right* in the eyes of the LORD your God.

Improper Mourning

14 “You *are*^a the children of the LORD your God;^b you shall not cut yourselves nor¹ shave the front of your head for the dead.^{2c} For you *are* a holy people to the LORD your God, and the LORD has

message, a prophet who led the people away from the living God was a false prophet. Just like the Israelites, Christians today need to discern false teaching (Acts 20:28–31; Gal. 1:8; 1 John 4:1).

13:3 The revelation of God through Moses was the test of any sign or message. When the message deviated from God’s prior revelation, Israel had to discern the false teaching. **testing:** Just as the Lord had tested the people in the wilderness, He would continue to see whether they believed Him (8:2). **love . . . heart and . . . soul:** True faith is a commitment of one’s whole being to the true God.

13:5 The offense was serious and so was the punishment, **death**. It was better for a false prophet to be executed than for one to escape judgment and mislead the people. **So you shall put away the evil from your midst:** Discipline, punishment, and testing were God’s means of keeping His people pure. Having withstood the test, they could more easily resist the temptations of other evildoers.

13:9, 10 your hand shall be first: The relative who brought the charge would lead in the capital punishment of the relative who suggested the idolatrous practices. **To entice you away:** With unforgettable words, Jesus emphasized the severity of this offense. Such a person should not have been born. He would be better off if he were thrown into the sea with a millstone around his neck (Matt. 18:6, 7).

13:13 The term translated **corrupt men** denotes wicked, depraved people who oppose the will and work of God.

13:14 inquire . . . ask diligently: Proper investigation before a public trial guaranteed justice for everyone.

13:15 strike the inhabitants: The people of the city, who were responsible for letting evil get out of hand, became subject to punishment. They were no better than the immoral Canaanites who were under God’s present judgment (7:2; 12:2, 3).

13:17, 18 compassion . . . to keep all His commandments: The seemingly harsh judgment of evil was an act of obedience. God required the harsh punishment of evildoers so that immoral practices would not spread throughout the land. Then the Israelites could be completely devoted to Him, and He could remain among them and bless them. Sin disrupted this relationship with the Holy God.

14:1 children of the Lord: The motivation for Israel’s distinct ethics and practices lay in the nation’s special relationship to the Lord (1:31; 8:5). **cut . . . nor shave:** Pagan mourning rituals encouraged physical abuse. These practices were a form of magic by which people sought to exercise control over their well-being and over the gods (1 Kin. 18:28).

14:2 As a **holy people**, the Israelites were set apart to the Lord, separated from the nations, and chosen to practice the will of God on earth. The Hebrew word translated *holy* means “to be separate” or “to be distinct.”

chosen you to be a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples who are on the face of the earth.

Clean and Unclean Meat

^{3d} “You shall not eat any ²detestable thing. ^{4e} These are the animals which you may eat: the ox, the sheep, the goat, ⁵ the deer, the gazelle, the roe deer, the wild goat, the ³mountain goat, the antelope, and the mountain sheep. ⁶ And you may eat every animal with cloven hooves, having the hoof split into two parts, and that chews the cud, among the animals. ⁷ Nevertheless, of those that chew the cud or have cloven hooves, you shall not eat, such as these: the camel, the hare, and the rock hyrax; for they chew the cud but do not have cloven hooves; they are unclean for you. ⁸ Also the swine is unclean for you, because it has cloven hooves, yet does not chew the cud; you shall not eat their flesh ^f or touch their dead carcasses.

^{9g} “These you may eat of all that are in the waters: you may eat all that have fins and scales. ¹⁰ And whatever does not have fins and scales you shall not eat; it is unclean for you.

¹¹ “All clean birds you may eat. ^{12h} But these you shall not eat: the eagle, the vulture, the buzzard, ¹³ the red kite, the falcon, and the kite after their kinds; ¹⁴ every raven after its kind; ¹⁵ the ostrich, the short-eared owl, the sea gull, and the hawk after their kinds; ¹⁶ the little owl, the screech owl, the white owl, ¹⁷ the jackdaw, the carrion vulture, the fisher owl, ¹⁸ the stork, the heron after its kind, and the hoopoe and the bat.

¹⁹ “Also ⁱevery ⁴creeping thing that

^{3d} Ezek. 4:14
² abominable
^{4e} Lev. 11:2-45
^{5f} Or addax
^{8f} Lev. 11:26, 27
^{9g} Lev. 11:9
^{12h} Lev. 11:13
¹⁹ⁱ Lev. 11:20
⁴ swarming

/ Lev. 11:23
^{21k} Lev. 17:15; 22:8;
 Ezek. 4:14; 44:31
^{1f} Deut. 14:2 ^m Ex.
 23:19; 34:26
²²ⁿ Lev. 27:30;
 Deut. 12:6, 17; Neh.
 10:37
^{23o} Deut. 12:5-7
^p Deut. 15:19, 20
^{24q} Deut. 12:5, 21
^{26r} Deut. 12:7
^{27s} Deut. 12:12
⁵ neglect
^{28t} Deut. 26:12;
 Amos 4:4 ^u Num.
 18:21-24

flies is unclean for you; ^j they shall not be eaten.

²⁰ “You may eat all clean birds.

^{21k} “You shall not eat anything that dies of itself; you may give it to the alien who is within your gates, that he may eat it, or you may sell it to a foreigner; ^l for you are a holy people to the LORD your God.

^m “You shall not boil a young goat in its mother’s milk.

Tithing Principles

²²ⁿ “You shall truly tithe all the increase of your grain that the field produces year by year. ^{23o} And you shall eat before the LORD your God, in the place where He chooses to make His name abide, the tithe of your grain and your new wine and your oil, of ^p the firstborn of your herds and your flocks, that you may learn to fear the LORD your God always. ²⁴ But if the journey is too long for you, so that you are not able to carry the tithe, or ^q if the place where the LORD your God chooses to put His name is too far from you, when the LORD your God has blessed you, ²⁵ then you shall exchange it for money, take the money in your hand, and go to the place which the LORD your God chooses. ²⁶ And you shall spend that money for whatever your heart desires: for oxen or sheep, for wine or similar drink, for whatever your heart desires; you shall eat there before the LORD your God, and you shall ^r rejoice, you and your household. ²⁷ You shall not ^s forsake the ^s Levite who is within your gates, for he has no part nor inheritance with you.

^{28t} “At the end of every third year you shall bring out the ^u tithe of your produce

14:3 not eat: The dietary regulations set Israel apart from the nations (Lev. 11). Most likely, God prohibited certain animals from being eaten in order to distinguish the practices of Israel from those of neighboring nations. With this physical sign, God symbolized Israel’s holiness. Israel was dedicated to His purposes, not the world’s. God usually referred to pagan practice as **detestable**, a word indicating strong repugnance.

14:4–8 Animals prohibited for food either did not have cloven hooves or did not chew the cud (Lev. 11).

14:12–18 These unclean birds were mainly birds of prey and scavengers. They were associated with dead flesh and were likely carriers of disease.

14:19 **Creeping thing that flies** refers to insects that could not be eaten.

14:20 may eat: Some of God’s laws prohibit, while others permit.

14:21 not boil . . . in its mother’s milk: Unlike the Canaanites who boiled young goats alive in the milk of their mothers as a sacrifice to fertility gods, Israel was to practice a more humane method of animal sacrifice. Israel was to be different from its neighbors—that is, *holy*.

14:22–29 The laws of the tithe covered all agricultural products. In giving a tithe (the gift of one tenth to the Lord), the Israelites acknowledged that the land was the Lord’s and that the benefits of the land were theirs only because of God’s blessing. The tithe was to be enjoyed in the presence of the Lord, unless the people

had come from a great distance. Then they could exchange it for silver and purchase food and drink with it in Jerusalem.

14:25 Money refers to uncoined silver. Coins were not struck until the Persian period.

14:28, 29 Every third year the tithe was given to the Levites and the poor.

chosen

(Heb. *bachar*) (7:6, 7; 14:2; Neh. 9:7; Is. 14:1; Hag. 2:23) Strong’s #977

The Hebrew word translated “chosen” implies a decision made after close inspection. Thus in the OT, the word is used to describe the careful action of “selecting” or “accepting.” Sometimes the word is used for the choice of an object (1 Sam. 17:40) or of doing good (Is. 7:15, 16). In the OT, it is often God who chooses. The Lord chose Abraham (Neh. 9:7), the nation of Israel (4:37), and finally David’s family (2 Sam. 6:21). He chose, or elected, these people so that He could accomplish His will, the salvation of the world, through them (Is. 49:6). This choice was founded on His own love (4:37).

of that year and store *it* up within your gates. ²⁹And the Levite, because he has no portion nor inheritance with you, and the stranger and the fatherless and the widow who *are* within your gates, may come and eat and be satisfied, that the LORD your God may bless you in all the work of your hand which you do.

Debts Canceled Every Seven Years

15 “At the end of ^aevery seven years you shall grant a ¹release of *debts*. ²And this is the form of the release: Every creditor who has lent *anything* to his neighbor shall ²release *it*; he shall not ³require *it* of his neighbor or his brother, because it is called the LORD’s release. ³Of a foreigner you may require *it*; but you shall give up your claim to what is owed by your brother, ⁴except when there may be no poor among you; for the LORD will greatly ^bbless you in the land which the LORD your God is giving you to possess as an inheritance— ⁵only if you carefully obey the voice of the LORD your God, to observe with care all these commandments which I command you today. ⁶For the LORD your God will bless you just as He promised you; ^cyou shall lend to many nations, but you shall not borrow; you shall reign over many nations, but they shall not reign over you.

Generosity to the Poor

⁷“If there is among you a poor man of your brethren, within any of the ⁴gates in your land which the LORD your God is giving you, ^dyou shall not harden your heart nor shut your hand from your poor brother, ⁸but ^eyou shall ⁵open your hand wide to him and willingly lend him sufficient for his need, whatever he needs. ⁹Beware lest there be a wicked thought in your heart, saying, ‘The seventh year,

CHAPTER 15

¹ ^a Ex. 21:2; 23:10, 11; Lev. 25:4; Jer. 34:14 ¹ remission
² ² cancel the debt
³ exact it
⁴ ^b Deut. 7:13
⁶ ^c Deut. 28:12, 44
⁷ ^d Ex. 23:6; Lev. 25:35-37; Deut. 24:12-14; [1 John 3:17] ⁴ towns
⁸ ^e Matt. 5:42; Gal. 2:10 ⁵ freely open

⁹ ^f Deut. 28:54, 56
⁹ Ex. 22:23; Deut. 24:15; Job 34:28; Ps. 12:5; James 5:4
^h [Matt. 25:41, 42]
¹⁰ ¹ 2 Cor. 9:5, 7
¹ Deut. 14:29; Ps. 41:1; Prov. 22:9
¹¹ ^k Matt. 26:11; Mark 14:7; John 12:8 ⁶ freely open
¹² ^l Ex. 21:2-6; Jer. 34:14 ^m Lev. 25:39-46
¹³ ⁷ set him free
¹⁴ ⁿ Prov. 10:22
¹⁵ ^o Deut. 5:15
¹⁶ ^p Ex. 21:5, 6
¹⁸ ^q Is. 16:14

the year of release, is at hand,’ and your ^feye be evil against your poor brother and you give him nothing, and ^ghe cry out to the LORD against you, and ^hit become sin among you. ¹⁰You shall surely give to him, and ⁱyour heart should not be grieved when you give to him, because ^jfor this thing the LORD your God will bless you in all your works and in all to which you put your hand. ¹¹For ^kthe poor will never cease from the land; therefore I command you, saying, ‘You shall ⁶open your hand wide to your brother, to your poor and your needy, in your land.’

The Law Concerning Bondservants

¹²“If your brother, a Hebrew man, or a Hebrew woman, is ^msold to you and serves you six years, then in the seventh year you shall let him go free from you. ¹³And when you ⁷send him away free from you, you shall not let him go away empty-handed; ¹⁴you shall supply him liberally from your flock, from your threshing floor, and from your winepress. *From what* the LORD your God has ⁿblessed you with, you shall give to him. ¹⁵^oYou shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the LORD your God redeemed you; therefore I command you this thing today. ¹⁶And ^pif it happens that he says to you, ‘I will not go away from you,’ because he loves you and your house, since he prospers with you, ¹⁷then you shall take an awl and thrust *it* through his ear to the door, and he shall be your servant forever. Also to your female servant you shall do likewise. ¹⁸It shall not seem hard to you when you send him away free from you; for he has been worth ^qa double hired servant in serving you six years. Then the LORD your God will bless you in all that you do.

15:1 every seven years: God taught His people to think in cycles of holy time: six days of work and the seventh of rest; six years of business and the seventh of giving freedom to the poor; six years of agricultural cultivation and the seventh of rest (Ex. 23:10, 11; Lev. 25:1-7). **Debts** were suspended as described in vv. 2-6.

15:2 creditor . . . release it: The debtor could not repay in the seventh year because the fields could not be cultivated (Lev. 25:1-7). If creditors demanded repayment, the poor would sink even further into debt. In this, God showed His care and concern for the poor.

15:4, 5 no poor among you: God promised to bless every individual among His people. **only:** This promise was conditional. The Israelites had to obey.

15:6 lend . . . not borrow: God’s blessing would bring a surplus. Israel’s wealth and prominence among the nations would grow. This occurred during the reign of Solomon. **reign over many nations:** Instead of being subject to other nations, Israel’s position would be that of leader among the nations (Is. 55:4, 5).

15:7 not harden: The people’s attitude toward the poor should have been a reflection of their gratitude for God’s gifts to them.

15:9 The creditor might have been wary of lending anything to the

poor because the seventh year was approaching, the year that all debts were erased. Even though the creditor would not benefit from the loan, he was encouraged to lend to those in need.

15:11 The poor will never cease is a realistic statement compared with the ideal expressed in v. 4 (see Matt. 26:11).

15:12 When a poor man lost all his property, he could sell himself for work for **six years**. **let him go free:** The year of release canceled debts and freed the debtor (Ex. 21:2).

15:14 supply him liberally: The debtor-slave had been an instrument by which God had blessed the master. Upon the slave’s departure, the slave would receive his or her due. In this way, the master acknowledged both the work of the slave and the sovereignty of the Lord.

15:15 remember that you were a slave: God’s grace to the Israelites in freeing them from Egyptian slavery was a model for all Israelites to follow in relation to the poor. Only when the Israelites remembered their former poverty, thanked God for their riches, and assisted the poor would they be able to enjoy God’s gifts to them.

The Law Concerning Firstborn Animals

¹⁹“All the firstborn males that come from your herd and your flock you shall ⁸sanctify to the LORD your God; you shall do no work with the firstborn of your herd, nor shear the firstborn of your flock. ²⁰^sYou and your household shall eat *it* before the LORD your God year by year in the place which the LORD chooses. ²¹“But if there is a defect in it, *if it is* lame or blind *or has* any serious defect, you shall not sacrifice it to the LORD your God. ²²You may eat it within your gates; *“the unclean and the clean person alike may eat it, as if it were a gazelle or a deer.* ²³Only you shall not eat its blood; you shall pour it on the ground like water.

The Passover Reviewed

16 “Observe the ^amonth of Abib, and keep the Passover to the LORD your God, for ^bin the month of Abib the LORD your God brought you out of Egypt by night. ²Therefore you shall sacrifice the Passover to the LORD your God, from the flock and ^cthe herd, in the ^dplace where the LORD chooses to put His name. ³You shall eat no leavened bread with it; ^eseven days you shall eat unleavened bread with it, *that is*, the bread of affliction (for you came out of the land of Egypt in haste), that you may ^fremember the day in which you came out of the land of Egypt all the days of your life. ⁴^gAnd no leaven shall be seen among you in all your territory for seven days, nor shall *any* of the meat which you sacrifice the first day at twilight remain overnight until ^hmorning.

⁵“You may not sacrifice the Passover within any of your gates which the LORD your God gives you; ⁶but at the place where the LORD your God chooses to make His name abide, there you shall sacrifice the Passover ⁱat twilight, at the going down of the sun, at the time you came out of Egypt. ⁷And you shall roast and eat *it* ^jin the place which the LORD your God chooses, and in the morning you shall turn and go to your tents. ⁸Six days you shall eat unleavened bread, and ^kon the seventh day there *shall be a* ^lsa-

The Jewish Calendar

The Jews used two kinds of calendars:

Civil Calendar—official calendar of kings, childbirth, and contracts.

Sacred Calendar—from which festivals were computed.

Names of Months	Corresponds with	No. of Days	Month of Civil Year	Month of Sacred Year
Tishri	Sept.–Oct.	30	1st	7th
Heshvan	Oct.–Nov.	29 or 30	2nd	8th
Chislev	Nov.–Dec.	29 or 30	3rd	9th
Tebeth	Dec.–Jan.	29	4th	10th
Shebat	Jan.–Feb.	30	5th	11th
Adar	Feb.–Mar.	29 or 30	6th	12th
Nisan (Abib)	Mar.–Apr.	30	7th	1st
Iyar	Apr.–May	29	8th	2nd
Sivan	May–June	30	9th	3rd
Tammuz	June–July	29	10th	4th
Ab	July–Aug.	30	11th	5th
*Elul	Aug.–Sept.	29	12th	6th

*Hebrew months were alternately 30 and 29 days long. Their year, shorter than ours, had 354 days. Therefore, about every 3 years (7 times in 19 years) an extra 29-day month, Veadar, was added between Adar and Nisan.

¹⁹ ^r Ex. 13:2; ¹² ⁸ set apart or consecrate
²⁰ ^s Lev. 7:15-18; Deut. 12:5; 14:23
²¹ ^t Lev. 22:19-25; Deut. 17:1
²² ^u Deut. 12:15, 16, 22

CHAPTER 16

¹ ^a Ex. 12:2 ^b Ex. 13:4
² ^c Num. 28:19 ^d Deut. 12:5, 26; 15:20
³ ^e Num. 29:12 ^f Ex. 13:3; Deut. 4:9
⁴ ^g Ex. 13:7 ^h Num. 9:12
⁶ ⁱ Ex. 12:7-10
⁷ ^j 2 Kin. 23:23
⁸ ^k Ex. 12:16; 13:6; Lev. 23:8, 36 ^l Lit. restraint
¹⁰ ^l Ex. 34:22; Lev. 23:15, 16; Num. 28:26 ^m 1 Cor. 16:2
¹¹ ⁿ Deut. 16:14
¹² ^o Deut. 15:15

cred assembly to the LORD your God. You shall do no work *on it*.

The Feast of Weeks Reviewed

⁹“You shall count seven weeks for yourself; begin to count the seven weeks from *the time* you begin to *put* the sickle to the grain. ¹⁰Then you shall keep the ^lFeast of Weeks to the LORD your God with the tribute of a freewill offering from your hand, which you shall give ^mas the LORD your God blesses you. ¹¹ⁿ You shall rejoice before the LORD your God, you and your son and your daughter, your male servant and your female servant, the Levite who *is* within your gates, the stranger and the fatherless and the widow who *are* among you, at the place where the LORD your God chooses to make His name abide. ¹²^o And you shall remember that you were a slave in Egypt, and you shall be careful to observe these statutes.

15:19 The owners of **firstborn males** could not profit from the firstborn because they belonged to the Lord and were to be presented as an offering to Him once a year (v. 20). The basis for this law was the death of the Egyptians' firstborn and the preservation of the firstborn of the Israelites (Ex. 12:12, 29; 13:2). God had saved the firstborn, so they belonged to Him.

15:21 if there is a defect in it: God expected the best from the Israelites. He was their King, their Father, and their God (Mal. 1:8). To sacrifice one's best to the Lord was a leap of faith. One had to believe

that God would bless one's flock despite the absence of its very best.

16:1 Passover was observed on the fourteenth day (Ex. 12:18) of **Abib** or Nisan, which corresponds to our March–April. See Ex. 12:1–28; 13:1–16; Lev. 23:5–8; Num. 28:16–25.

16:6 The **twilight** sacrifice was in commemoration of the Exodus, which had occurred at that time (Ex. 12:29).

16:8, 9 The last day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread was marked by a final **sacred assembly** of God's people. Putting **the sickle to the grain** took place on the second day of the Feast of Passover.

The Feast of Tabernacles Reviewed

^{13p}“You shall observe the Feast of Tabernacles seven days, when you have gathered from your threshing floor and from your winepress. ¹⁴And ^qyou shall rejoice in your feast, you and your son and your daughter, your male servant and your female servant and the Levite, the stranger and the fatherless and the widow, who *are* within your ²gates. ^{15r}Seven days you shall keep a sacred feast to the LORD your God in the place which the LORD chooses, because the LORD your God will bless you in all your produce and in all the work of your hands, so that you surely rejoice.

^{16s}“Three times a year all your males shall appear before the LORD your God in the place which He chooses: at the Feast of Unleavened Bread, at the Feast of Weeks, and at the Feast of Tabernacles; and ^tthey shall not appear before the LORD empty-handed. ¹⁷Every man *shall give* as he is able, ^uaccording to the blessing of the LORD your God which He has given you.

Justice Must Be Administered

¹⁸“You shall appoint ^vjudges and officers in all your ³gates, which the LORD your God gives you, according to your tribes, and they shall judge the people with just judgment. ^{19w}You shall not pervert justice; ^xyou shall not ⁴show partiality, ^ynor take a bribe, for a bribe blinds the eyes of the wise and ⁵twists the words of the righteous. ²⁰You shall follow what is altogether just, that you may ^zlive and inherit the land which the LORD your God is giving you.

^{13p} Ex. 23:16
^{14q} Neh. 8:9
² towns
^{15r} Lev. 23:39-41
^{16s} Ex. 23:14-17;
 34:22-24 ^t Ex. 23:15
^{17u} Lev. 14:30, 31;
 Deut. 16:10
^{18v} Ex. 23:1-8;
 Deut. 1:16, 17; John
 7:24 ³ towns
^{19w} Ex. 23:2, 6
^x Deut. 1:17 ^y Ex.
 23:8 ⁴ Lit. *regard*
faces ⁵ *perverts*
^{20z} Ezek. 18:5-9

^{21a} Ex. 34:13 ⁶ Or
Asherah
^{22b} Lev. 26:1

CHAPTER 17

^{1a} Deut. 15:21; Mal.
 1:8, 13 ¹ Lit. *evil*
thing ² *detestable*
thing
^{2b} Deut. 13:6
^c Josh. 7:11 ³ towns
^{3d} Deut. 4:19 ^e Jer.
 7:22
^{4f} Deut. 13:12, 14
⁴ *detestable thing*
^{5g} Lev. 24:14-16;
 Josh. 7:25 ^h Deut.
 13:6-18
⁶ⁱ Num. 35:30;
 Deut. 19:15; Matt.
 18:16; John 8:17;
 2 Cor. 13:1; 1 Tim.
 5:19; Heb. 10:28
^{7j} Deut. 13:5; 19:19;
 1 Cor. 5:13
^{8k} Deut. 1:17; 2 Chr.
 19:10

^{21a}“You shall not plant for yourself any tree, as a ⁶wooden image, near the altar which you build for yourself to the LORD your God. ^{22b}You shall not set up a *sacred* pillar, which the LORD your God hates.

17“You ^ashall not sacrifice to the LORD your God a bull or sheep which has any ¹blemish or defect, for that is an ²abomination to the LORD your God.

^{2b}“If there is found among you, within any of your ³gates which the LORD your God gives you, a man or a woman who has been wicked in the sight of the LORD your God, ^cin transgressing His covenant, ³who has gone and served other gods and worshiped them, either ^dthe sun or moon or any of the host of heaven, ^ewhich I have not commanded, ^{4f}and it is told you, and you hear *of it*, then you shall inquire diligently. And if *it* is indeed true *and* certain that such an ⁴abomination has been committed in Israel, ⁵then you shall bring out to your gates that man or woman who has committed that wicked thing, and ^gshall stone ^hto death that man or woman with stones. ⁶Whoever is deserving of death shall be put to death on the testimony of two or three ⁱwitnesses; he shall not be put to death on the testimony of one witness. ⁷The hands of the witnesses shall be the first against him to put him to death, and afterward the hands of all the people. So you shall put away the evil from among ^jyou.

^{8k}“If a matter arises which is too hard for you to judge, between degrees of guilt for bloodshed, between one judgment or

16:13-15 The Feast of Tabernacles was a harvest festival (Ex. 23:16; 34:22). During this pilgrimage, God’s people joined together to celebrate God’s goodness and to remember how they had once lived in tents (tabernacles or booths) during the wilderness wanderings. Today this festival is known as Succoth, from the Hebrew word translated *booths*. The feast lasted seven days, with a closing ceremony on the eighth (Lev. 23:36).

16:14 rejoice: Sometimes modern people perceive the Israelites’ worship as excessively burdened with details, ritual, and regulations, and imagine that the Israelites’ worship experience must have been unpleasant. But sincere worshipers rejoiced in God’s detailed instructions and enjoyed the symbols and ritual which reminded them of God’s delightful characteristics. Then as now, worshipping God was a celebration.

16:16, 17 These verses summarize the regulations for the three annual pilgrimages to the central place of worship (Ex. 23:17; 34:23).

16:18 in all your gates: The areas framed by the towers in the gateways of ancient cities were the centers of community life and the places where the judges of the city would sit. **just judgment:** The Lord loves justice and hates discrimination.

16:19 Justice is the quality of dealing with people fairly. Judges particularly were expected to reflect God’s just nature (32:4) by not dealing with the accused on the basis of discrimination, false witness, or hearsay. A **bribe** is any gift that might change the balance in favor of the giver, thus tipping the scales of justice (Ex. 23:8).

16:20 follow: Godliness is to imitate God in a love for what is just

and true. **live and inherit:** God’s intention in all His instructions was for the good of His people.

16:21, 22 The Canaanites used certain trees and wooden images as representations of fertility gods. The Hebrew word translated **wooden image** is the Hebrew name for the Canaanite goddess of fertility, Asherah.

17:1 Sacrifice in Israel was never to be regarded as a means of dumping the unwanted or the unneeded. It showed faith that as one gave one’s best to the Lord, He would make what remained suitable and plentiful for one’s needs.

17:2 The Hebrew verb for **transgressing** is used elsewhere to indicate the crossing of a border or a stream. Here the word is used to indicate “crossing over” the boundaries that God had set for His people. Someone who served other gods had crossed over the boundary set by the first commandment.

17:4-6 inquire diligently: An investigation, rather than gossip, determined the truth of any report of idolatry. The guilty was condemned to death only after guilt was established by **two or three witnesses** (compare Matt. 18:16; 2 Cor. 13:1; 1 Tim. 5:19; Heb. 10:28). The First Commandment was not limited by gender. Either a **man** or **woman** could be executed for this crime against God.

17:7 hands . . . first: The witnesses participated in the stoning of the guilty because they were responsible for the person’s condemnation. Jesus’ words about throwing the “first stone” referred to this practice (John 8:7).

17:8 The more complex cases were sent to a higher court. **Degrees**

another, or between one punishment or another, matters of controversy within your gates, then you shall arise and go up to the ^lplace which the LORD your God chooses. ⁹And ^myou shall come to the priests, the Levites, and ⁿto the judge *there* in those days, and inquire of *them*; ^othey shall pronounce upon you the sentence of judgment. ¹⁰You shall do according to the sentence which they pronounce upon you in that place which the LORD chooses. And you shall be careful to do according to all that they order you. ¹¹According to the sentence of the law in which they instruct you, according to the judgment which they tell you, you shall do; you shall not turn aside *to* the right hand or *to* the left from the sentence which they pronounce upon you. ¹²Now ^pthe man who acts presumptuously and will not heed the priest who stands to minister there before the LORD your God, or the judge, that man shall die. So you shall put away the evil from Israel. ^{13q}And all the people shall hear and fear, and no longer act presumptuously.

Principles Governing Kings

¹⁴“When you come to the land which the LORD your God is giving you, and possess it and dwell in it, and say, *“I will set a king over me like all the nations that are around me,”* ¹⁵you shall surely set a king over you ^swhom the LORD your God chooses; *one* ^tfrom among your brethren you shall set as king over you; you may not set a foreigner over you, who *is* not your brother. ¹⁶But he shall not multiply ^uhorses for himself, nor cause the people ^vto return to Egypt to multiply horses, for ^wthe LORD has said to you, *“You shall not return that way again.”* ¹⁷Neither shall he multiply wives for himself, lest his heart turn away; nor shall he greatly multiply silver and ^ygold for himself.

¹⁸“Also it shall be, when he sits on the

BIBLE TIMES & CULTURE NOTES



Horses

The most striking feature in the biblical notices of the horse is the exclusive application of it to warlike operations; in no instance was it employed for the purposes of ordinary locomotion or agriculture (except for Is. 28:28). The Hebrews in the patriarchal age, as a pastoral race, did not need horses, and for a long period after their settlement in Canaan they dispensed with it, partly in consequence of the hilly nature of the country, which only allowed chariots to be used in certain areas, and partly in consequence of the prohibition in 17:16. David first established a force of cavalry and chariots, but it was Solomon who established a very active trade in horses, which were brought by dealers out of Egypt and resold, at a profit, to the Hittites. Saddles were not used until a late period and there were no horseshoes.



Assyrian cavalry, 728 B.C.

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⁸ Deut. 12:5; 16:2

⁹ Jer. 18:18

¹⁰ Deut. 19:17-19

¹¹ Ezek. 44:24

¹² Num. 15:30; Deut. 1:43

¹³ Deut. 13:11

¹⁴ 1 Sam. 8:5, 19, 20; 10:19

¹⁵ 1 Sam. 9:15, 16; 10:24; 16:12, 13;

throne of his kingdom, that he shall write for himself a copy of this law in a book, from *the one* ^zbefore the priests, the Levites. ¹⁹And ^ait shall be with him, and he shall read it all the days of his life, that

1 Chr. 22:18-19; Hos. 8:4 ¹Jer. 30:21 ¹⁶ 1 Kin. 4:26; 10:26-29; Ps. 20:7 ^vIs. 31:1; Ezek. 17:15 ^wEx. 13:17, 18; Hos. 11:5

^xDeut. 28:68 ¹⁷ 1 Kin. 10:14 ¹⁸ Deut. 31:24-26 ¹⁹ Ps. 119:97, 98

of guilt refers to cases of manslaughter or murder—that is, accidental or intentional homicide.

17:9 The descendants of the family of Aaron were the **priests** of Israel. The **Levites** were the other descendants of Levi, who served in the tabernacle.

17:12 **The man who acts presumptuously** is one who knows, but turns away from priestly instructions.

17:13 **To hear** God is to acknowledge Him, to respond to Him, and to obey Him (6:4). **To fear** God is to reverence Him and to worship Him (6:2). The idea here is *responsible reverence* (13:11; 19:20; 21:21).

17:14 The regulations that follow anticipate the request that the Israelites would make for **a king**. At the time of Moses, Israel was privileged in being different from the **nations** because God was their King (Ex. 15:18; Num. 23:21). As problems arose during the period of the judges, some attempted to establish a kingship (Judg. 9:1-6). Gideon refused such an offer (Judg. 8:23). With Saul's kingship, God finally granted Israel's request for a national king (1 Sam. 8:4-9).

Although Saul's reign ended in disaster, the Lord chose to anoint David and promise him a lasting kingship (2 Sam. 7:16; Ps. 89:3, 4).

17:15-17 These regulations limited the power and splendor of the future king. He would not be dependent on military power and riches. He was exhorted not to entangle the nation in political alliances that would expose Israel to pagan worship. Instead, he was exhorted to guide the nation into obedience to God's law.

17:18 **a copy of this law**: The true king of Israel would be bound to God's instructions. He would not be a tyrant, but a king who ruled in accordance with God's revealed will.

17:19, 20 **fear**: Only if the king lived in proper reverence of God would the people follow suit. If the king were impious, the people's decline into evil practices would be accelerated. **heart may not be lifted**: By reading and obeying God's law, the king would be reminded that he was to be a man of the people. He was no different than anyone else—except that God had chosen him to guide the nation in righteousness.

he may learn to fear the LORD his God and be careful to observe all the words of this law and these statutes, ²⁰that his heart may not ⁵be lifted above his brethren, that he ^bmay not turn aside from the commandment *to* the right hand or *to* the left, and that he may ⁶prolong *his* days in his kingdom, he and his children in the midst of Israel.

The Portion of the Priests and Levites

18 “The priests, the Levites—all the tribe of Levi—shall have ¹no part nor ^ainheritance with Israel; they shall eat the offerings of the LORD made by fire, and His portion. ²Therefore they shall have no inheritance among their brethren; the LORD is their inheritance, as He said to them.

³“And this shall be the priest’s ^bdue² from the people, from those who offer a sacrifice, whether *it is* bull or sheep: they shall give to the priest the shoulder, the cheeks, and the stomach. ^{4c}The first-fruits of your grain and your new wine and your oil, and the first of the fleece of your sheep, you shall give him. ⁵For ^dthe LORD your God has chosen him out of all your tribes ^eto stand to minister in the name of the LORD, him and his sons forever.

⁶“So if a Levite comes from any of your ³gates, from where he ^fdwells among all Israel, and comes with all the desire of his mind ^gto the place which the LORD chooses, ⁷then he may serve in the name of the LORD his God ^has all his brethren the Levites *do*, who stand there before the

20 ^b Deut. 5:32; 1 Kin. 15:5
⁵ become proud
⁶ continue long in his kingdom

CHAPTER 18

1 ^a Deut. 10:9;
1 Cor. 9:13 ¹ no portion
3 ^b Lev. 7:32-34;
Num. 18:11, 12;
1 Sam. 2:13-16, 29
² right
4 ^c Ex. 22:29
5 ^d Ex. 28:1 ^e Deut. 10:8
6 ^f Num. 35:2
9 Deut. 12:5; 14:23
3 towns
7 ^h Num. 1:50;
2 Chr. 31:2

8 ⁱ Lev. 27:30-33;
Num. 18:21-24;
2 Chr. 31:4; Neh. 12:44
9 ^j Lev. 18:26, 27,
30; Deut. 12:29,
30; 20:16-18
⁴ detestable acts
10 ^k Lev. 18:21;
Deut. 12:31 ¹ Ex. 22:18; Lev. 19:26,
31; 20:6, 27; Is. 8:19
⁵ Be burned as an offering to an idol
11 ^m Lev. 20:27
ⁿ 1 Sam. 28:7
12 ^o Lev. 18:24;
Deut. 9:4
⁶ detestable
13 ⁷ Lit. perfect
14 ⁸ allowed you to do so
15 ^p Matt. 21:11;
Luke 1:76; 2:25-34;
7:16; 24:19; Acts 3:22 ☆

LORD. ⁸They shall have equal ⁱportions to eat, besides what comes from the sale of his inheritance.

Avoid Wicked Customs

⁹“When you come into the land which the LORD your God is giving you, ^jyou shall not learn to follow the ⁴abominations of those nations. ¹⁰There shall not be found among you *anyone* who makes his son or his daughter ^kpass⁵ through the fire, ^lor *one* who practices witchcraft, or a soothsayer, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, ^{11m}or one who conjures spells, or a medium, or a spiritist, or ⁿone who calls up the dead. ¹²For all who do these things *are* ⁶an abomination to the LORD, and ^obecause of these abominations the LORD your God drives them out from before you. ¹³You shall be ⁷blameless before the LORD your God. ¹⁴For these nations which you will dispossess listened to soothsayers and diviners; but as for you, the LORD your God has not ⁸appointed such for you.

A New Prophet Like Moses

^{15p}“The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear, ¹⁶according to all you desired of the LORD your God in Horeb ^qin the day of the assembly, saying, ^r“Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, nor let me see this great fire anymore, lest I die.”

16 ^q Deut. 5:23-27 ^r Ex. 20:18, 19; Heb. 12:19

18:1 A portion of the dedication **offerings** was taken by the priests for their sustenance.

18:2 Unlike the other tribes, the Levites did not have a land **inheritance** in Canaan. They were to regard God as their inheritance. In other words, they had a special relationship with God that would be better than any grant of property. (Obviously, the Levites enjoyed the benefits of the lands surrounding the Levitical villages, v. 8.)

kingdom

(Heb. *mamlakah*) (17:18–20; Ex. 19:6; 2 Sam. 5:12; 7:12, 13, 16) Strong’s #4467

The word denotes a region and people that were ruled over by a king. His office was usually hereditary and his authority derived from it. God had promised Abraham that kings would come from him (Gen. 17:6). The same promise was given to Jacob (Gen. 35:11). David was clearly God’s choice to be king (1 Sam. 16:7, 12, 13). The hereditary kingship, therefore, began with him; from him would descend Jesus Christ, “the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David” (Rev. 5:5). In the light of the Messiah’s descent from David, the meaning of God’s covenant with David becomes clear: “I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever” (2 Sam. 7:13; also Ps. 2; 110; Is. 11:1–4).

18:5 to minister: The priests were God’s servants mediating between Him and the people (10:8; 21:5).

18:6 All the desire of his mind indicates wholehearted devotion. The suggestion is that there might have been people from the tribe of Levi who were not worthy to minister before the Lord. Their ancestry alone could not qualify them.

18:8 equal portions: The priests and Levites, who served before the Lord, were honored for that noble work.

18:10, 11 Some ancient pagan customs demanded that a **son** or **daughter** be offered as a sacrifice in order to learn about the future or to seek favor from a supposed deity. **calls up the dead:** Apart from His revelation, God prohibited any attempts to know the future. Saul’s attempt to seek guidance apart from God’s Word resulted in God’s judgment of him (1 Sam. 28).

18:12 The pagan practices were **an abomination to the LORD** because they were based on an attempt to circumvent His revelation. The Lord is never a god among others; He alone is God!

18:13 Blameless indicates integrity and dependence on the Lord alone. Blamelessness characterized Abraham’s life (Gen. 17:1) and is still the standard for Christians today (Eph. 1:4; 5:27).

18:14 Israel was to be distinct among the **nations**. Israel constituted a holy people—not only in what they ate, but in their faith toward God.

18:15 All true prophets among the Hebrew people were raised up by **the LORD**. None could become a true prophet by self-will or desire.

17 “And the LORD said to me: ^s ‘What they have spoken is good. ^t I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and ^u will put My words in His mouth, ^v and He shall speak to them all that I command Him. ^w And it shall be *that* whoever will not hear My words, which He speaks in My name, I will require *it* of him. ^x But the prophet who presumes to speak a word in My name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or ^y who speaks in the name of other gods, that prophet shall die.’ ^z And if you say in your heart, ‘How shall we know the word which the LORD has not spoken?’— ²² ^z when a prophet speaks in the name of the LORD, ^a if the thing does not happen or come to pass, that *is* the thing which the LORD has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it ^b presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him.

Three Cities of Refuge

19 “When the LORD your God ^a has cut off the nations whose land the LORD your God is giving you, and you dispossess them and dwell in their cities and in their houses, ² ^b you shall separate three cities for yourself in the midst of your land which the LORD your God is giving you to possess. ³ You shall prepare roads for yourself, and divide into three parts the territory of your land which the LORD your God is giving you to inherit, that any manslayer may flee there.

⁴ “And ^c this is the case of the manslayer who flees there, that he may live: Whoever kills his neighbor ¹ unintentionally, not having hated him in time past— ⁵ as when a *man* goes to the woods with his neighbor to cut timber, and his hand swings a stroke with the ax to cut down the tree, and the head

17 ^s Deut. 5:28
18 ^t Deut. 34:10;
John 1:45; Acts
3:22 ^u Num. 23:5;
Is. 49:2; 51:16; John
17:8 ^v [John 4:25 ☆;
8:28]
19 ^w Acts 3:23 ☆;
[Heb. 12:25]
20 ^x Deut. 13:5; Jer.
14:14, 15; Zech. 13:2-
5 ^y Deut. 13:1-3;
Jer. 2:8
22 ^z Jer. 28:9
^a Deut. 13:2 ^b Deut.
18:20

CHAPTER 19

1 ^a Deut. 12:29
2 ^b Ex. 21:13; Num.
35:10-15; Deut. 4:41;
Josh. 20:2
4 ^c Num. 35:9-
34; Deut. 4:42
¹ ignorantly, lit.
without knowledge

6 ^d Num. 35:12
8 ^e Deut. 12:20
^f Gen. 15:18-21
9 ^g Josh. 20:7-9
10 ^h Num. 35:33;
Deut. 21:1-9
11 ⁱ Num. 35:16, 24;
Deut. 27:24; [1 John
3:15]
13 ^j Deut. 13:8
^k Num. 35:33, 34;
1 Kin. 2:31 ² purge
the blood of the
innocent
14 ^l Deut. 27:17; Job
24:2; Prov. 22:28;
Hos. 5:10

slips from the handle and strikes his neighbor so that he dies—he shall flee to one of these cities and live; ⁶ ^d lest the avenger of blood, while his anger is hot, pursue the manslayer and overtake him, because the way is long, and kill him, though he *was* not deserving of death, since he had not hated the victim in time past. ⁷ Therefore I command you, saying, ‘You shall separate three cities for yourself’

⁸ “Now if the LORD your God ^e enlarges your territory, as He swore to ^f your fathers, and gives you the land which He promised to give to your fathers, ⁹ and if you keep all these commandments and do them, which I command you today, to love the LORD your God and to walk always in His ways, ^g then you shall add three more cities for yourself besides these three, ¹⁰ ^h lest innocent blood be shed in the midst of your land which the LORD your God is giving you *as* an inheritance, and *thus* guilt of bloodshed be upon you.

¹¹ “But ⁱ if anyone hates his neighbor, lies in wait for him, rises against him and strikes him mortally, so that he dies, and he flees to one of these cities, ¹² then the elders of his city shall send and bring him from there, and deliver him over to the hand of the avenger of blood, that he may die. ¹³ ^j Your eye shall not pity him, ^k but you shall ² put away *the guilt of* innocent blood from Israel, that it may go well with you.

Property Boundaries

¹⁴ “You shall not remove your neighbor’s landmark, which the men of old have set, in your inheritance which you will inherit in the land that the LORD your God is giving you to possess.

18:22 does not happen: The test of a true prophet was the fulfillment of his words. However, there was one type of prophecy announced by a true prophet that might not occur. A prophecy of divine judgment might be averted because of the people’s repentance in response to the proclamation. Both Jonah and Micah experienced this.

19:1 Deuteronomy was written in anticipation of the conquest of Canaan, God’s gift to His people. The **cities** of the land would become the possession of the people of Israel. The Israelites were not to destroy the cities in conquest, but to destroy the people who lived in them by waging war on the battlefield. Only Jericho and Hazor were to be burned. The burning of Ai was a consequence of sin.

19:2 **Three cities** of refuge would be selected in Canaan, to be added to the three that were east of the Jordan.

19:3, 4 The cities of refuge were intertribal cities. Anyone from any tribe could flee to the city that was closest to him. **manslayer:** Use of these cities for refuge was restricted to cases of unintentional homicide.

19:5 **goes to the woods:** An example is given of a situation that might lead to unintentional homicide.

19:6 **The avenger of blood** was possibly a relative commissioned

by the elders of the city to execute justice. This Hebrew word sometimes translated *kinsman redeemer* and here translated *avenger* means “protector of family rights.” This was the individual who stood up for the family, either to redeem property and persons or to obtain vengeance. The glory of Israel was that its Avenger and Kinsman Redeemer was God Himself (Is. 41:14).

19:8 **enlarges your territory:** God placed before the people not only the immediate prospect of the conquest of Canaan, but also the expansion of territory beyond the initial borders (12:20).

19:10 The shedding of **innocent blood** brought the **guilt of bloodshed** on the land. As in the case of Abel, whose innocent blood cried out to the Lord from the ground (Gen. 4:10), a nation of murderers would come under the judgment of God.

19:11, 12 For a person guilty of premeditated murder, there was no provision for refuge in the cities. He would be delivered over to the **avenger of blood**.

19:13 **That it may go well with you** indicates that God’s concern was for the good of the community.

19:14 Removing a **landmark** was far more than moving a stone. It was changing a property line and in effect cheating some family out of the inheritance of land that God had given them.

The Law Concerning Witnesses

^{15m} “One witness shall not rise against a man concerning any iniquity or any sin that he commits; by the mouth of two or three witnesses the matter shall be established. ¹⁶ If a false witness ⁿ rises against any man to testify against him of wrongdoing, ¹⁷ then both men in the controversy shall stand before the LORD, ^o before the priests and the judges who serve in those days. ¹⁸ And the judges shall make careful inquiry, and indeed, *if* the witness is a false witness, who has testified falsely against his brother, ^{19p} then you shall do to him as he thought to have done to his brother; so ^q you shall put away the evil from among you. ^{20r} And those who remain shall hear and fear, and hereafter they shall not again commit such evil among you. ^{21s} Your eye shall not pity: *‘life shall be for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot.*

Principles Governing Warfare

20 “When you go out to battle against your enemies, and see ^a horses and chariots and people more numerous than you, do not be ^b afraid of them; for the LORD your God is ^c with you, who brought you up from the land of Egypt. ² So it shall be, when you are on the verge of battle, that the priest shall approach and speak to the people. ³ And he shall say to them, ‘Hear, O Israel: Today you are on the verge of battle with your enemies. Do not let your heart faint, do not be afraid, and do not tremble or be terrified because of them; ⁴ for the LORD your God is He who goes with you, ^d to fight for you against your enemies, to save you.’

^{15 m} Num. 35:30; Deut. 17:6; Matt. 18:16; John 8:17; 2 Cor. 13:1; 1 Tim. 5:19; Heb. 10:28
^{16 n} Ex. 23:1; Ps. 27:12; 35:11
^{17 o} Deut. 17:8-11; 21:5
^{19 p} Prov. 19:5; Dan. 6:24
^{20 r} Deut. 13:5; 17:7; 21:21; 22:21
^{21 s} Deut. 17:13; 21:21
^{21 s} Deut. 19:13
^t Ex. 21:23, 24; Lev. 24:20; Matt. 5:38, 39

CHAPTER 20

^{1 a} Ps. 20:7; Is. 31:1
^b Deut. 7:18
^c Num. 23:21; Deut. 5:6; 31:6, 8; 2 Chr. 13:12; 32:7, 8; Ps. 23:4; Is. 41:10
^{4 d} Deut. 1:30; 3:22; Josh. 23:10

^{5 e} Neh. 12:27
^{7 f} Deut. 24:5
^{8 g} Judg. 7:3
¹ So with MT, Tg., Sam., LXX, Syr., Vg. *lest he make his brother's heart faint*
^{10 h} 2 Sam. 10:19
^{13 i} Num. 31:7
^{14 j} Josh. 8:2
^k 1 Sam. 14:30

⁵ “Then the officers shall speak to the people, saying: ‘What man *is there* who has built a new house and has not ^e dedicated it? Let him go and return to his house, lest he die in the battle and another man dedicate it. ⁶ Also what man *is there* who has planted a vineyard and has not eaten of it? Let him go and return to his house, lest he die in the battle and another man eat of it. ^{7f} And what man *is there* who is betrothed to a woman and has not married her? Let him go and return to his house, lest he die in the battle and another man marry her.’

⁸ “The officers shall speak further to the people, and say, ^g ‘What man *is there who is* fearful and fainthearted? Let him go and return to his house, ¹ lest the heart of his brethren faint like his heart.’ ⁹ And so it shall be, when the officers have finished speaking to the people, that they shall make captains of the armies to lead the people.

¹⁰ “When you go near a city to fight against it, ^h then proclaim an offer of peace to it. ¹¹ And it shall be that if they accept your offer of peace, and open to you, then all the people *who are* found in it shall be placed under tribute to you, and serve you. ¹² Now if *the city* will not make peace with you, but war against you, then you shall besiege it. ¹³ And when the LORD your God delivers it into your hands, ⁱ you shall strike every male in it with the edge of the sword. ¹⁴ But the women, the little ones, ^j the livestock, and all that is in the city, all its spoil, you shall plunder for yourself; and ^k you shall eat the enemies’ plunder which the LORD your God gives you. ¹⁵ Thus you shall do to all the cities *which are* very far from

19:15 Requiring two or three witnesses was a safeguard against the dangerous lies of an individual.

19:16, 17 The prospect of a false witness was chilling, particularly if it was a matter of one person’s word against another’s. **before the LORD:** At the tabernacle, the place of the higher court, the God of all truth would reveal the liar (17:8–13).

19:21 life . . . for life . . . foot for foot: The law of retribution established the principle that the punishment should fit the crime (Ex. 21:23–25; Lev. 24:17–20). The greater the crime, the harsher the penalty.

20:1 The Lord’s presence is much greater than the enemy’s military advantage of horses and chariots (Ps. 20:7). God the Divine Warrior would fight for His people (Ex. 15:3).

20:5 The owner of a new house was exempt from battle duty. **dedicate it:** This was not a formal ceremony, but the act of occupying a house.

20:6 The vine dresser was exempt from battle. It took as many as five years for a vineyard to begin to produce. A man who had waited for several years for the first produce from his vines was allowed to oversee the vines until they produced grapes.

20:7 betrothed: Betrothal was a commitment to be married; it was more binding than an engagement today. The betrothed man was exempt from battle. This exemption also applied to the newly married (24:5).

20:8 fearful and fainthearted: The man who was nervous or who did not trust the Lord (v. 3) was exempt from battle. Since the battle was God’s, the number of warriors was not nearly as important as the army’s belief that God was fighting for them.

20:10, 11 This offer of peace specified that the people surrender, open up the city, and accept whatever conditions were laid down.

serve you: The people of the city would become second-class citizens, on whom the Israelites could impose taxes and labor requirements.

20:12 not make peace: Some cities would refuse the terms of the treaty and come out in battle, as Sihon did.

20:13, 14 The reprisals for refusal were severe. **strike every male:** The men of war of the city were to be killed, for they posed a threat as long as they were able to bear arms. **Women and little ones** were to be spared, though they would become the property of the victors.

20:15, 16 The rules of the spoil (vv. 13, 14) applied only to distant cities. Different rules applied to the cities of Canaan (vv. 17, 18). They were to destroy the people of Canaan as part of God’s judgment on those immoral peoples. **But of the cities of these peoples:** The people who lived in Canaan had practiced disgusting religious and social perversions for centuries. God had given them time to repent, but their judgment had come.

you, which *are* not of the cities of these nations.

¹⁶“But ¹of the cities of these peoples which the LORD your God gives you *as* an inheritance, you shall let nothing that breathes remain alive, ¹⁷but you shall utterly destroy them: the Hittite and the Amorite and the Canaanite and the Perizzite and the Hivite and the Jebusite, just as the LORD your God has commanded you, ¹⁸lest ^mthey teach you to do according to all their ²abominations which they have done for their gods, and you ⁿsin against the LORD your God.

¹⁹“When you besiege a city for a long time, while making war against it to take it, you shall not destroy its trees by wielding an ax against them; if you can eat of them, do not cut them down to use in the siege, for the tree of the field is man’s food. ²⁰Only the trees which you know *are* not trees for food you may destroy and cut down, to build siegeworks against the city that makes war with you, until it is subdued.

The Law Concerning Unsolved Murder

21 “If *anyone* is found slain, lying in the field in the land which the LORD your God is giving you to possess, *and* it is not known who killed him, ²then your elders and your judges shall go out and measure *the distance* from the slain man to the surrounding cities. ³And it shall be *that* the elders of the city nearest to the slain man will take a heifer which has not been worked *and* which has not pulled with a ^ayoke. ⁴The elders of that city shall bring the heifer down to a valley with flowing water, which is

¹⁶ ^f Ex. 23:31-33; Num. 21:2, 3; Deut. 7:1-5; Josh. 11:14
¹⁸ ^m Ex. 34:12-16; Deut. 7:4; 12:30; 18:9 ⁿ Ex. 23:33; 2 Kin. 21:3-15; Ps. 106:34-41
² detestable things

CHAPTER 21

³ ^a Num. 19:2

neither plowed nor sown, and they shall break the heifer’s neck there in the valley. ⁵Then the priests, the sons of Levi, shall come near, for ^bthe LORD your God has chosen them to minister to Him and to bless in the name of the LORD; ^cby their word every controversy and every ¹assault shall be *settled*. ⁶And all the elders of that city nearest to the slain *man* ^dshall wash their hands over the heifer whose neck was broken in the valley. ⁷Then they shall answer and say, ‘Our hands have not shed this blood, nor have our eyes seen *it*. ⁸Provide atonement, O LORD, for Your people Israel, whom You have redeemed, ^eand do not lay innocent blood to the charge of Your people Israel.’ And atonement shall be provided on their behalf for the blood. ⁹So ^fyou shall put away the *guilt* of innocent blood from among you when you do *what is right* in the sight of the LORD.

Female Captives

¹⁰“When you go out to war against your enemies, and the LORD your God delivers them into your hand, and you take them captive, ¹¹and you see among the captives a beautiful woman, and desire her and would take her for your ^gwife, ¹²then you shall bring her home to your house, and she shall ^hshave her head and trim her nails. ¹³She shall put off the clothes of her captivity, remain in your house, and ⁱmourn her father and her mother a full month; after that you may go in to her and be her husband, and she shall be your wife. ¹⁴And it shall be, if you have no delight in her, then you shall set her free, but you certainly shall not sell her for money; you shall not treat her brutally, because you have ^jhumbled her.

⁵ ^b Deut. 10:8; 1 Chr. 23:13 ^c Deut. 17:8, 9 ¹ Lit. stroke
⁶ ^d Ps. 19:12; 26:6; Matt. 27:24
⁸ ^e Deut. 19:10, 13; Jon. 1:14
⁹ ^f Deut. 19:13
¹¹ ^g Num. 31:18
¹² ^h Lev. 14:8, 9; Num. 6:9
¹³ ⁱ Ps. 45:10
¹⁴ ^j Gen. 34:2; Deut. 22:29; Judg. 19:24

20:17, 18 utterly destroy: The Hebrew text uses two forms of the same verb to emphasize complete destruction of the Canaanites. This was not just a symbolic war; the entire Canaanite population was to be destroyed.

20:18 lest they teach you: The principal concern of the Lord was for the welfare of His people. The Canaanite population in the land was like a deadly tumor that eats away at the body. If the tumor was cut out, the body could live. So it was with the Canaanites. If the Canaanites were cut out of the land, the Israelites could thrive in the land by obeying God. Otherwise, the immoral Canaanite practices might slowly spread throughout the land.

20:19, 20 Trees, a part of God’s creation, were useful for food, shade, and building material. In a long siege, the armies of Israel were not to cut down the trees and destroy the land. Only non-fruit bearing trees were to be used for making siege machines.

21:1, 2 killed: The death may have been due to accidental or intentional homicide. This is a case of unsolved murder. **measure the distance:** As in our own day, the question of jurisdiction was important in criminal cases.

21:3, 4 heifer: The people of the nearest city were responsible for initiating a rite that established the people’s innocence of the murder.

21:6, 7 the elders of the city bore the responsibility for the murder,

even though they were not personally guilty. It was up to them to seek atonement for the murder.

21:8 Breaking the heifer’s neck did not **provide atonement**. It was symbolic of the horrendous crime. God Himself graciously forgave.

21:9 Killing an **innocent** person was an extremely serious offense in ancient Israel. Unless the crime was solved or the rite was performed, there would be no real rest for the community.

21:10 Presumably the **enemies** were from distant cities (20:13–15), since the Israelites took **captives**. God had commanded the utter destruction of enemies within the Promised Land.

21:12 shave her head: This ritual was intended to give the woman time to adjust to the new culture and to mourn over the forceful separation from her family. It was also a symbol of cleansing. She was preparing to become part of a new community.

21:13 Since a foreign woman’s distinctive clothes might have associations with the idolatrous practices of her former family, these clothes were taken from her. The woman was about to become part of God’s covenant community. She was not allowed to keep anything that she might use to tempt the Israelites to worship false gods. **your wife:** After these precautions, the captive woman was given the status of any other married woman in Israel.

21:14 if you have no delight in her: The reason is not stated. The man might have experienced rejection in the marriage relationship.

Firstborn Inheritance Rights

¹⁵“If a man has two wives, one loved ^k and the other unloved, and they have borne him children, *both* the loved and the unloved, and *if* the firstborn son is of her who is unloved, ¹⁶then it shall be, ¹on the day he bequeaths his possessions to his sons, *that* he must not bestow firstborn status on the son of the loved wife in preference to the son of the unloved, the *true* firstborn. ¹⁷But he shall acknowledge the son of the unloved wife *as* the firstborn ^mby giving him a double portion of all that he has, for he ⁿis the beginning of his strength; ^othe right of the firstborn is his.

The Rebellious Son

¹⁸“If a man has a stubborn and rebellious son who will not obey the voice of his father or the voice of his mother, and *who*, when they have chastened him, will not heed them, ¹⁹then his father and his mother shall take hold of him and bring him out to the elders of his city, to the gate of his city. ²⁰And they shall say to the elders of his city, ‘This son of ours is stubborn and rebellious; he will not obey our voice; he is a glutton and a drunkard.’ ²¹Then all the men of his city shall stone him to death with stones; ^pso you shall put away the evil

15 ^k Gen. 29:33
16 ¹ 1 Chr. 5:2; 26:10
17 ^m 2 Kin. 2:9
ⁿ Gen. 49:3 ^o Gen.
25:31, 33
21 ^p Deut. 13:5;
19:19, 20; 22:21, 24

^q Deut. 13:11
22 ^r Deut. 22:26;
Matt. 26:66; Mark
14:64; Acts 23:29
23 ^s Josh. 8:29;
10:26, 27; John
19:31 ^t Lev. 18:25;
Num. 35:34 ^u Gal.
3:13

CHAPTER 22

1 ^a Ex. 23:4 ¹ ignore
them
3 ² may not avoid
responsibility
4 ^b Ex. 23:5

from among you, ^qand all Israel shall hear and fear.

Miscellaneous Laws

²²“If a man has committed a sin ^rdeserving of death, and he is put to death, and you hang him on a tree, ²³^shis body shall not remain overnight on the tree, but you shall surely bury him that day, so that ^tyou do not defile the land which the LORD your God is giving you *as* an inheritance; for ^uhe who is hanged *is* accursed of God.

22 “You ^ashall not see your brother’s ox or his sheep going astray, and ¹hide yourself from them; you shall certainly bring them back to your brother. ²And if your brother *is* not near you, or if you do not know him, then you shall bring it to your own house, and it shall remain with you until your brother seeks it; then you shall restore it to him. ³You shall do the same with his donkey, and so shall you do with his garment; with any lost thing of your brother’s, which he has lost and you have found, you shall do likewise; you ²must not hide yourself.

⁴^b“You shall not see your brother’s donkey or his ox fall down along the road, and hide yourself from them; you shall surely help him lift *them* up again.

Perhaps the woman would not convert to the true worship of the Lord. Perhaps she was unable to conceive a child. In any event, the man was given permission to divorce her or **set her free, you have humbled her**: The woman had been dishonored by removal from her country and compulsory marriage. She was to be treated with some dignity in the event of an incompatible marriage.

21:15 two wives: Polygamy was commonly practiced in the cultures of the ancient Middle East and was assumed in the Law of Moses. In some cases, polygamy may have been a necessity in ancient Israel (25:5–10).

21:16 A father was expected to show consideration for the **first-born** child, regardless of his attitude toward the child’s mother.

21:17 Ancient Middle Eastern custom approved preferential treat-

ment of the firstborn son. The **double portion** was a mark of the father’s blessing. Among the sons of Jacob, it was actually Joseph who received the double portion (Gen. 48:8–22; 49:22–26). Reuben had forfeited his right as the firstborn by his disreputable behavior (Gen. 49:3, 4).

21:18 The stubborn and rebellious son was not an “ordinary” rebellious youth, but one who had been immoral over a long period of time.

21:19 his father and his mother: The parents were responsible to the community for their children. The **elders** bore the responsibility for the actions of the community as a whole.

21:20 they shall say: The parents presented the charge, though the behavior of the child would undoubtedly have been widely known. **A glutton and a drunkard** is an expression for “a good-for-nothing.”

21:21 All the men of the community shared in the responsibility for executing the rebellious youth. Capital punishment seems harsh to the modern reader. Yet the community could not allow the rebellious youth to spread his immoral practices. They were God’s holy people.

21:22, 23 hang: The guilty person was not hanged by the neck; this form of execution was not practiced in ancient Israel. The hanging was actually an impaling of the corpse for public viewing after death by stoning. Everyone would know that individual had brought guilt on the community. The exposure of the corpse was limited to one day. For **that day**, it reminded people of God’s judgment on the sinner.

22:1 hide yourself from them: Israelites could not ignore problems or misfortunes of their neighbors. Every individual in the community bore a responsibility to uphold justice within that community (compare Gal. 6:2).

22:2, 3 it shall remain with you: Community responsibility included taking care of lost property, whether animals or objects. **Hide yourself** means to ignore the problem or turn away.

hang

(Heb. *talah*) (21:22, 23; Gen. 40:19, 22; Esth. 7:9, 10) Strong’s #8518

The usual method of capital punishment in Bible times, especially among the Hebrew people, was stoning, not hanging (Ex. 19:13). Occasionally the Hebrews hung the corpses of lawbreakers on trees, although they were to be removed before nightfall (21:22, 23). In Egypt, a beheaded corpse was occasionally left hanging for a longer period of time (Gen. 40:19). The Persians hanged persons by impaling them on a stake (Ezra 6:11; Esth. 6:4). In the Bible only Ahithophel (2 Sam. 17:23) and Judas Iscariot committed suicide by hanging, possibly by strangulation. Jesus’ apostles applied the phrase “hanging on a tree” and the curse connected with it (21:23) to Jesus’ death (Acts 5:30; Gal. 3:13). Jesus transformed this dishonorable and shameful fate into a picture of God’s sacrificial and redeeming love.

⁵“A woman shall not wear anything that pertains to a man, nor shall a man put on a woman’s garment, for all who do so *are* ³an abomination to the LORD your God.

⁶“If a bird’s nest happens to be before you along the way, in any tree or on the ground, with young ones or eggs, with the mother sitting on the young or on the eggs, ^cyou shall not take the mother with the young; ⁷you shall surely let the mother go, and take the young for yourself, ^dthat it may be well with you and *that* you may prolong your days.

⁸“When you build a new house, then you shall make a parapet for your roof, that you may not bring guilt of bloodshed on your household if anyone falls from it.

^{9e}“You shall not sow your vineyard with different kinds of seed, lest the yield of the seed which you have sown and the fruit of your vineyard be defiled.

^{10f}“You shall not plow with an ox and a donkey together.

^{11g}“You shall not wear a garment of different sorts, *such as* wool and linen mixed together.

¹²“You shall make ^htassels on the four corners of the clothing with which you cover *yourself*.

Laws of Sexual Morality

¹³“If any man takes a wife, and goes in to her, and ⁱdetests her, ¹⁴and charges her with shameful conduct, and brings a bad name on her, and says, ‘I took this woman, and when I came to her I found she *was not a virgin*,’ ¹⁵then the father and mother of the young woman shall take and bring out *the evidence of* the young woman’s virginity to the elders of the city at the gate. ¹⁶And the young woman’s father shall say to the elders, ‘I

⁵ ³ detestable

⁶ ^c Lev. 22:28

⁷ ^d Deut. 4:40

⁹ ^e Lev. 19:19

¹⁰ ^f [2 Cor. 6:14-16]

¹¹ ^g Lev. 19:19

¹² ^h Num. 15:37-41;

Matt. 23:5

¹³ ⁱ Deut. 21:15;

24:3

gave my daughter to this man as wife, and he detests her. ¹⁷Now he has charged her with shameful conduct, saying, ‘I found your daughter *was not a virgin*,’ and yet these *are the evidences of* my daughter’s virginity.’ And they shall spread the cloth before the elders of the city. ¹⁸Then the elders of that city shall take that man and punish him; ¹⁹and they shall fine him one hundred *shekels* of silver and give *them* to the father of the young woman, because he has brought a bad name on a virgin of Israel. And she shall be his wife; he cannot divorce her all his days.

²⁰“But if the thing is true, *and evidences of* virginity are not found for the young woman, ²¹then they shall bring out the young woman to the door of her father’s house, and the men of her city shall stone her to death with ^jstones, because she has ^kdone a disgraceful thing in Israel, to play the harlot in her father’s house. ^lSo you shall ⁴put away the evil from among you.

^{22m}“If a man is found lying with a woman married to a husband, then both of them shall die—the man that lay with the woman, and the woman; so you shall put away the evil from Israel.

²³“If a young woman *who is a virgin is* ⁿbetrothed to a husband, and a man finds her in the city and lies with her, ²⁴then you shall bring them both out to the gate of that city, and you shall stone them to death with stones, the young woman because she did not cry out in the city, and the man because he ^ohumbled his neighbor’s wife; ^pso you shall put away the evil from among you.

²⁵“But if a man finds a betrothed young woman in the countryside, and the man forces her and lies with her, then only the man who lay with her shall die. ²⁶But you shall do nothing to the young

²¹ ^j Deut. 21:21

^k Gen. 34:7; Judg.

20:5-10; 2 Sam.

13:12, 13 ^l Deut.

13:5 ⁴ *purge the evil*

person

²² ^m Lev. 20:10;

Num. 5:22-27; Ezek.

16:38; [Matt. 5:27,

28]; John 8:5; [1 Cor.

6:9; Heb. 13:4]

²³ ⁿ Lev. 19:20-22;

Matt. 1:18, 19

²⁴ ^o Deut. 21:14

^p Deut. 22:21, 22;

1 Cor. 5:2, 13

22:5 Cross-dressing was forbidden by God in ancient Israel. In the ancient Middle East, dressing in the clothing of the opposite sex was a magical practice intended to bring harm to people. For example, a transvestite male would predict that the soldiers of another army would be as weak as females.

22:6, 7 The **eggs** or young of a **nest** could be eaten for food. But the mother had to be freed because she perpetuated the species.

22:8 A **parapet** was a barrier erected on a roof to keep people from stepping or falling off. The **roof** of an ancient Israelite house was used like another room, particularly during warm weather.

22:9-11 Most likely, these regulations were based on the same principle as that of dietary restrictions. The Israelites were to be different from their neighbors in all aspects of life in order to show their separation to the living God.

22:13 **Detests** indicates a loathing following the consummation of the marriage because the husband found out that his new bride was not a virgin.

22:14 **Charges her** indicates a public accusation. In ancient times, virginity was highly regarded. The indisputable legitimacy of children was vital to ancient society and inheritance rights. Joseph’s actions when he learned of Mary’s pregnancy can be explained by

these laws (Matt. 1:18-25). Because of Joseph’s love for Mary, he did not want to make a public accusation. At the same time, he was not prepared to marry a woman who he thought had been immoral.

22:15 The **father and mother** would come to defend the girl and protect their name.

22:18, 19 A false accusation would be punished. A man was not permitted to bring a frivolous charge against his wife. Compare the penalty for a false accusation with the penalty recorded in v. 29.

22:20, 21 If the woman was not a virgin, she would be punished for her immorality. **the door of her father’s house:** The parents also shared in her punishment. They were publicly disgraced because they did not dissuade her from such actions.

22:22 Both the man and the woman had to **die** (Lev. 18:20; 20:10).

22:23, 24 **bring them both out:** Both parties were presumed guilty in this instance. In this situation, the woman could have screamed for help since she was in a city. **The gate of the city** was the place for legal proceedings and executions.

22:25-27 **no sin deserving of death:** The woman was presumed innocent by virtue of the isolated place where she could not receive help no matter how much she resisted.

woman; *there is* in the young woman no sin *deserving* of death, for just as when a man rises against his neighbor and kills him, even so *is* this matter. ²⁷For he found her in the countryside, *and* the betrothed young woman cried out, but *there was* no one to save her.

²⁸*q*“If a man finds a young woman *who* is a virgin, who is not betrothed, and he seizes her and lies with her, and they are found out, ²⁹then the man who lay with her shall give to the young woman’s father ^rfifty *shekels* of silver, and she shall be his wife ^sbecause he has humbled her; he shall not be permitted to divorce her all his days.

³⁰*t*“A man shall not take his father’s wife, nor ^uuncover his father’s bed.

Those Excluded from the Congregation

23 “He who is emasculated by crushing or mutilation shall ^anot enter the assembly of the LORD.

²“One of illegitimate birth shall not enter the assembly of the LORD; even to the tenth generation none of his *descendants* shall enter the assembly of the LORD.

³*b*“An Ammonite or Moabite shall not enter the assembly of the LORD; even to the tenth generation none of his *descendants* shall enter the assembly of the LORD forever, ⁴because they did not meet you with bread and water on the road when you came out of Egypt, and ^dbecause they hired against you Balaam the son of Beor from Pethor of ⁱMesopotamia, to curse you. ⁵Nevertheless the LORD your God would not listen to Ba-

²⁸ ^q Ex. 22:16, 17
²⁹ ^r Ex. 22:16, 17
³⁰ ^t Deut. 22:24
³¹ ^u Lev. 18:8; 20:11;
 Deut. 27:20; 1 Cor.
 5:1 ^u Ruth 3:9; Ezek.
 16:8

CHAPTER 23

¹ ^a Lev. 21:20; 22:24
³ ^b Neh. 13:1, 2
⁴ ^c Deut. 2:27-30
^d Num. 22:5, 6; 23:7;
 Josh. 24:9; 2 Pet.
 2:15; Jude 11 ⁱ Heb.
 Aram Naharaim

⁵ ^e Deut. 4:37
⁶ ^f Ezra 9:12
⁷ ^g Gen. 25:24-26;
 Deut. 2:4, 8; Amos
 1:11; Obad. 10, 12
^h Ex. 22:21; 23:9;
 Lev. 19:34; Deut.
 10:19
¹⁰ ⁱ Lev. 15:16
¹¹ ^j Lev. 15:5
¹⁴ ^k Lev. 26:12;
 Deut. 7:21
¹⁵ ^l 1 Sam. 30:15

laam, but the LORD your God turned the curse into a blessing for you, because the LORD your God ^eloves you. ⁶*f*You shall not seek their peace nor their prosperity all your days forever.

⁷“You shall not abhor an Edomite, ^gfor he is your brother. You shall not abhor an Egyptian, because ^hyou were an alien in his land. ⁸The children of the third generation born to them may enter the assembly of the LORD.

Cleanliness of the Camp Site

⁹“When the army goes out against your enemies, then keep yourself from every wicked thing. ¹⁰ⁱIf there is any man among you who becomes unclean by some occurrence in the night, then he shall go outside the camp; he shall not come inside the camp. ¹¹But it shall be, when evening comes, that ^jhe shall wash with water; and when the sun sets, he may come into the camp.

¹²“Also you shall have a place outside the camp, where you may go out; ¹³and you shall have an implement among your equipment, and when you sit down outside, you shall dig with it and turn and cover your refuse. ¹⁴For the LORD your God ^kwalks in the midst of your camp, to deliver you and give your enemies over to you; therefore your camp shall be holy, that He may see no unclean thing among you, and turn away from you.

Miscellaneous Laws

¹⁵^l“You shall not give back to his master the slave who has escaped from his mas-

22:28, 29 This law warned young men that they would be made responsible for their actions. A **young woman** was not freely available merely because she was not betrothed.

22:30 Uncover his father’s bed is a euphemism for sexual relations (Lev. 18:8). This was the sin of Reuben, who slept with the mother of his brothers (Gen. 35:22).

23:1 Emasculated means that all or part of the sexual organs had been removed. This was done to men who were put in charge of harems to prevent intercourse with the women. It was also a pagan religious practice. Genital mutilation was prohibited in Israel. **Assembly of the LORD** indicates the people on whom the Lord had bestowed His special grace, with whom He had made a covenant, and to whom He had given the promises. In Deuteronomy, the word often refers to those gathered before Sinai (5:22; 9:10; 18:16). Exclusion from the assembly means restriction from full participation in religious rites.

23:2 Illegitimate birth may refer to the offspring of an illicit cultic union, such as the child of a temple prostitute (vv. 17, 18). **The tenth generation** most likely means “forever.”

23:3–5 Since the Ammonites and Moabites showed hostility to the Israelites, they were not allowed to become citizens and participate in the worship of the Lord (see Num. 22–24). **curse you:** God’s loyalty to His people would not allow Him to listen to Balaam. Instead, the Lord turned Balaam’s curse into His own blessing on the Israelites. Here, the Lord excluded those who had sought to curse the Israelites from full participation in the community of faith.

23:6 You shall not seek their peace is a prohibition against making any treaty with these nations. Moab and Ammon were persistent enemies of Israel.

23:8 third generation: While the people of Moab and Ammon were excluded from the congregation, the people of Edom and Egypt had an opportunity to join the true worshipers of the living God. The provision for the Egyptians might have been due to their initial kindness to Jacob’s family in letting them move to Goshen (Gen. 47). The provision for the Edomites was based on the close ties they had with the Israelites. They were descendants of Jacob’s brother, Esau.

23:9–11 A wicked thing was a cause for individual and communal uncleanness. Soldiers had to maintain their purity, for the Holy One was in their camp. **Unclean by some occurrence in the night** possibly refers to an involuntary emission (Lev. 15:16) or urination. Even though God’s standards for purity were high, He provided a way for an unclean person to become clean. The person could go outside the camp until the next evening and wash.

23:12, 13 Digging latrines was a part of military life. Such attention to cleanliness not only promoted ritual purity, but also proper hygiene to prevent disease from spreading through the camp.

23:14 your God walks in the midst of your camp: The Holy One was present with Israel’s soldiers whenever they went to war. It would never do for His soldiers to tolerate unhealthy living conditions in camp.

23:15, 16 The **slave** presumably entered Israel’s territory from another country.

ter to you. ¹⁶He may dwell with you in your midst, in the place which he chooses within one of your gates, where it ²seems best to him; ^myou shall not oppress him.

¹⁷“There shall be no *ritual* ³harlot ⁿof the daughters of Israel, or a ^operverted ⁴one of the sons of Israel. ¹⁸You shall not bring the wages of a harlot or the price of a dog to the house of the LORD your God for any vowed offering, for both of these are ⁵an abomination to the LORD your God.

^{19p}“You shall not charge interest to your brother—interest on money or food or anything that is lent out at interest. ^{20q}To a foreigner you may charge interest, but to your brother you shall not charge interest, ^rthat the LORD your God may bless you in all to which you set your hand in the land which you are entering to possess.

^{21s}“When you make a vow to the LORD your God, you shall not delay to pay it; for the LORD your God will surely require it of you, and it would be sin to you. ²²But if you abstain from vowing, it shall not be sin to you. ^{23t}That which has gone from your lips you shall keep and perform, for you voluntarily vowed to the LORD your God what you have promised with your mouth.

²⁴“When you come into your neighbor’s vineyard, you may eat your fill of grapes at your pleasure, but you shall not put *any* in your container. ²⁵When you come into your neighbor’s standing grain, “you may pluck the heads with your hand, but you shall not use a sickle on your neighbor’s standing grain.

Law Concerning Divorce

24 “When a ^aman takes a wife and marries her, and it happens that she finds no favor in his eyes because he

^{16 m} Ex. 22:21; Prov. 22:22 ^{2 pleases him best}
^{17 n} Lev. 19:29; Deut. 22:21 ^o Gen. 19:5; 2 Kin. 23:7
³ Heb. *qedeshah*, fem. of *qadesh* (note 4) ⁴ Heb. *qadesh*, one practicing sodomy and prostitution in religious rituals
⁵ *detestable*
^{19 p} Ex. 22:25; Lev. 25:35; Neh. 5:2-7; Ps. 15:5
^{20 q} Deut. 15:3
^r Deut. 15:10
^{21 s} Num. 30:1, 2; Job 22:27; Ps. 61:8; Eccl. 5:4, 5; Matt. 5:33
^{23 t} Num. 30:2; Ps. 66:13, 14
^{25 u} Matt. 12:1; Mark 2:23; Luke 6:1

CHAPTER 24

^{1 o} [Matt. 5:31; 19:7; Mark 10:4]

^b [Jer. 3:8]
¹ *indecency, lit. nakedness of a thing*
^{4 c} [Jer. 3:1] ^{2 a} *detestable thing*
^{5 d} Deut. 20:7
^e Prov. 5:18
⁶ *life*
^{7 f} Ex. 21:16 ^g Deut. 19:19
^{4 lit.} *stealing*
^{8 h} Lev. 13:2; 14:2
^{9 i} [1 Cor. 10:6]
^j Num. 12:10
^{10 k} Matt. 5:42

has found some ¹uncleanness in her, and he writes her a ^bcertificate of divorce, puts *it* in her hand, and sends her out of his house, ²when she has departed from his house, and goes and becomes another man’s *wife*, ³if the latter husband detests her and writes her a certificate of divorce, puts *it* in her hand, and sends her out of his house, or if the latter husband dies who took her as his wife, ^{4c}then her former husband who divorced her must not take her back to be his wife after she has been defiled; for that is ²an abomination before the LORD, and you shall not bring sin on the land which the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance.

Miscellaneous Laws

^{5d} “When a man has taken a new wife, he shall not go out to war or be charged with any business; he shall be free at home one year, and ^ebring happiness to his wife whom he has taken.

⁶ “No man shall take the lower or the upper millstone in pledge, for he takes ³one’s living in pledge.

⁷ “If a man is ^ffound ⁴kidnapping any of his brethren of the children of Israel, and mistreats him or sells him, then that kidnapper shall die; ^gand you shall put away the evil from among you.

⁸ “Take heed in ^han outbreak of leprosy, that you carefully observe and do according to all that the priests, the Levites, shall teach you; just as I commanded them, ^{so} you shall be careful to do. ⁹ⁱRemember what the LORD your God did ^jto Miriam on the way when you came out of Egypt!

¹⁰ “When you ^klend your brother anything, you shall not go into his house to get his pledge. ¹¹ You shall stand outside,

23:17 The Hebrew word translated here as **ritual harlot** is a form of the word meaning “holy” or “separate.” The ritual harlot was regarded by the Canaanites as one “set apart” for the worship of gods and goddesses of fertility. In Canaanite religious fertility rites, men lay with cultic prostitutes. The Canaanites believed that this act would bring fertility to their families, fruitful fields, and growth of their herds. This debased system of worship was evidently one of the reasons God brought such strong judgment against the Canaanites. The **perverted one** was a male prostitute.

23:18 Harlot here describes a common prostitute.

23:19 Interest in the ancient Middle East was very high. Borrowing inevitably led to greater debt and sometimes to the enslavement of the debtor (Ex. 22:25–27; Lev. 25:36). **Your brother** refers to a fellow Israelite.

23:21, 22 A **vow** was a commitment to show one’s love for the Lord in a particular way. Though a vow was voluntary, one was obligated to fulfill it once it was made. God expected His people to keep their commitments (compare Matt. 5:37). A failure to fulfill a vow was regarded as **sin** (Eccl. 5:4–6). But **vowing** was purely voluntary and not necessary for the development of godliness.

23:24, 25 A traveler was permitted to eat **grapes** or **grain** while passing a field, but harvesting or storing the food for use at a later

time was clearly prohibited. When Jesus and His disciples picked grain in open fields, they were following the common practice allowed by this regulation. However, the Pharisees challenged Jesus because they did it on the Sabbath (Mark 2:23–28).

24:1, 2 **uncleanness**: The nature of the problem is not specified, though it would have been clear in the original context. It could have been a physical problem, such as the inability to bear children. The **certificate of divorce** was a legal document that provided rights to the divorcee (Lev. 21:7, 14; 22:13; Num. 30:9; Matt. 19:3–9). Such a certificate allowed the woman to remarry.

24:4 **defiled**: Returning to her first husband after an intervening marriage might have placed the woman in the same position as an unfaithful wife.

24:6 A **millstone** was a stone used for grinding grain into flour. The combination of the two stones constituted an essential household instrument for the daily provision of food. The principle is clear: A family was not to be deprived of the necessities of daily life.

24:8, 9 **Leprosy** refers to a variety of infectious skin diseases. The disease known today as leprosy, Hansen’s disease, is different from the diseases referred to here.

24:10–13 A **pledge** was a token that a debt would be repaid. Since this involved the poor within the covenant community, the



Farming

Practically every family in Israel owned a piece of land, and many families farmed a small area of their own. Outside the cities, most Israelites lived in villages rather than on farms. Cultivated land usually was outside the village, situated near the water supply or on western or northern slopes where rainfall was greatest. Crops included wheat, barley, grapes, olives, and figs. Farm animals lived in the houses with the families. All but the poorest owned at least one ox or donkey as a work animal. Cattle, sheep, and goats were common, providing milk products as well as skins for clothes. Richer families and royal estates employed farm managers and workers (1 Chr. 27:25–31) and hired laborers for special tasks, particularly at harvest time (Matt. 20:1–16). Frequent difficulties, such as hilly ground, stony soil, and unpredictable rainfall, did not make farming easy.



A bedouin woman using her donkey to plow a small plot of land

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and the man to whom you lend shall bring the pledge out to you. ¹² And if the man *is* poor, you shall not ⁵ keep his pledge overnight. ¹³ You shall in any case return the pledge to him again when the sun goes down, that he may sleep in his own garment and ^m bless you; and ⁿ it shall be righteousness to you before the LORD your God.

¹⁴ “You shall not ^o oppress a hired servant *who is* poor and needy, *whether* one of your brethren or one of the aliens who *is* in your land within your gates. ¹⁵ Each day ^p you shall give *him* his wages, and not let the sun go down on it, for he *is* poor and has set his heart on it; ^q lest he cry out against you to the LORD, and it be sin to you.

¹⁶ “Fathers shall not be put to death for *their* children, nor shall children be put to death for *their* fathers; a person shall be put to death for his own sin.

¹⁷ “You shall not pervert justice due the stranger or the fatherless, ^r nor take a widow’s garment as a pledge. ¹⁸ But ^s you shall remember that you were a slave in Egypt, and the LORD your God redeemed

¹² ^s Lit. *sleep with his pledge*

¹³ ^t Ex. 22:26; Ezek.

18:7 ^m Job 29:11;

2 Tim. 1:18 ⁿ Deut.

6:25; Ps. 106:31;

Dan. 4:27

¹⁴ ^o Lev. 19:13; Jer.

Deut. 15:7–18; [Prov.

14:31]; Amos 4:1;

[Mal. 3:5; 1 Tim.

5:18]

¹⁵ ^p Lev. 19:13; Jer.

22:13 ^q Ex. 22:23;

Deut. 15:9; Job

35:9; James 5:4

¹⁶ ^r 2 Kin. 14:6;

2 Chr. 25:4; Jer.

31:29, 30; Ezek.

18:20

¹⁷ ^s Ex. 23:6 ^t Ex.

22:26

¹⁸ ^u Deut. 24:22

¹⁹ ^v Lev. 19:9, 10

^w Deut. 15:10; Ps.

41:1; Prov. 19:17

CHAPTER 25

¹ ^a Deut. 17:8–13;

19:17; Ezek. 44:24

^b Prov. 17:15 ¹ Lit.

the judgment

² ^c Prov. 19:29; Luke

12:48 ^d Matt. 10:17

³ ^e 2 Cor. 11:24

you from there; therefore I command you to do this thing.

¹⁹ ^v “When you reap your harvest in your field, and forget a sheaf in the field, you shall not go back to get it; it shall be for the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, that the LORD your God may ^w bless you in all the work of your hands. ²⁰ When you beat your olive trees, you shall not go over the boughs again; it shall be for the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow. ²¹ When you gather the grapes of your vineyard, you shall not glean *it* afterward; it shall be for the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow. ²² And you shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt; therefore I command you to do this thing.

25 “If there is a ^a dispute between men, and they come to ¹ court, that *the judges* may judge them, and they ^b justify the righteous and condemn the wicked, ² then it shall be, if the wicked man ^c deserves to be beaten, that the judge will cause him to lie down ^d and be beaten in his presence, according to his guilt, with a certain number of blows. ³ ^e Forty blows he may give him *and* no more, lest

regulations protected the debtor’s privacy (vv. 10, 11) and ability to provide for his family (vv. 12, 13).

24:14, 15 The following laws allowed property owners and laborers to receive a due profit from their properties and their labor. At the same time, both the owners and the laborers were to resist any greedy actions that would prevent a reasonable provision for the disadvantaged people in their communities. For instance, the poor needed daily payment of wages for daily subsistence. To be able to pay their wages and not do so was a **sin** against the Lord.

24:18, 19 The passage exhorts the Israelites to **remember** their people’s own slavery in Egypt (v. 22). Just as God showed compassion on them when they were oppressed (15:15), they were to show compassion on those who were now disadvantaged. **God may bless:** Ultimately, it is in one’s own best interest to have a concern for the interest of others.

25:3 A rod was probably used for the beating (Ex. 21:20). **Forty blows:** Later Jewish law restricted the number to 40 minus one (2 Cor. 11:24) to make sure that the authorities remained within the

he should exceed this and beat him with many blows above these, and your brother ^fbe humiliated in your sight.

^{4g}“You shall not muzzle an ox while it ²treads out *the grain*.

Marriage Duty of the Surviving Brother

^{5h}“If brothers dwell together, and one of them dies and has no son, the widow of the dead man shall not be *married* to a stranger outside *the family*; her husband’s brother shall go in to her, take her as his wife, and perform the duty of a husband’s brother to her. ⁶And it shall be *that* the firstborn son which she bears ⁱwill succeed to the name of his dead brother, that ^jhis name may not be blotted out of Israel. ⁷But if the man does not want to take his brother’s wife, then let his brother’s wife go up to the ^kgate to the elders, and say, ‘My husband’s brother refuses to raise up a name to his brother in Israel; he will not perform the duty of my husband’s brother.’ ⁸Then the elders of his city shall call him and speak to him. But *if* he stands firm and says, ^l‘I do not want to take her,’ ⁹then his brother’s wife shall come to him in the presence of the elders, ^mremove his sandal from his foot, spit in his face, and answer and say, ‘So shall it be done to the man who will not ⁿbuild up his brother’s house.’ ¹⁰And his name shall be called in Israel, ‘The house of him who had his sandal removed.’

Miscellaneous Laws

¹¹“If *two* men fight together, and the wife of one draws near to rescue her husband from the hand of the one attacking

³ ^f Job 18:3
⁴ ^g [Prov. 12:10;
 1 Cor. 9:9; 1 Tim.
 5:18] ² *threshes*
⁵ ^h Matt. 22:24;
 Mark 12:19; Luke
 20:28
⁶ ⁱ Gen. 38:9 / Ruth
 4:5, 10
⁷ ^k Ruth 4:1, 2
⁸ ^j Ruth 4:6
⁹ ^m Ruth 4:7, 8
ⁿ Ruth 4:11

¹² ^o Deut. 7:2; 19:13
¹³ ^p Lev. 19:35–37;
 Prov. 11:1; 20:23;
 Ezek. 45:10; Mic.
 6:11
¹⁵ ^q Ex. 20:12
¹⁶ ^r Prov. 11:1;
 [1 Thess. 4:6]
³ *detestable*
¹⁷ ^s Ex. 17:8–16;
 1 Sam. 15:1–3
¹⁸ ^t [Ps. 36:1]; Rom.
 3:18
¹⁹ ^u 1 Sam. 15:3
^v Ex. 17:14

CHAPTER 26

² ^o Ex. 22:29; 23:16,
 19; Num. 18:13;
 Deut. 16:10; Prov.
 3:9 ^b Deut. 12:5

him, and puts out her hand and seizes him by the genitals, ¹²then you shall cut off her hand; ^oyour eye shall not pity *her*.

^{13p}“You shall not have in your bag differing weights, a heavy and a light. ¹⁴You shall not have in your house differing measures, a large and a small. ¹⁵You shall have a perfect and just weight, a perfect and just measure, ^qthat your days may be lengthened in the land which the LORD your God is giving you. ¹⁶For ^rall who do such things, all who behave unrighteously, *are* ³an abomination to the LORD your God.

Destroy the Amalekites

^{17s}“Remember what Amalek did to you on the way as you were coming out of Egypt, ¹⁸how he met you on the way and attacked your rear ranks, all the stragglers at your rear, when you *were* tired and weary; and he ^tdid not fear God. ¹⁹Therefore it shall be, ^uwhen the LORD your God has given you rest from your enemies all around, in the land which the LORD your God is giving you to possess *as* an inheritance, *that* you will ^vblot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven. You shall not forget.

Offerings of Firstfruits and Tithes

26“And it shall be, when you come into the land which the LORD your God is giving you *as* an inheritance, and you possess it and dwell in it, ^{2a}that you shall take some of the first of all the produce of the ground, which you shall bring from your land that the LORD your God is giving you, and put *it* in a basket and ^bgo to the place where the LORD your God

set limits. **brother be humiliated:** The offender was still a brother whose dignity in the community was to be preserved.

25:4 not muzzle an ox: Muzzling kept the animal from eating while it worked. This law encouraged kindness and consideration for animals. Later the apostle Paul used this law as an analogy to the principle of supporting ministers of the Gospel (1 Cor. 9:9, 10; 1 Tim. 5:17, 18).

25:5 The ancients greatly feared having no heirs to carry on the family’s name. Furthermore, a widow with no children to take care of her would quickly become a beggar. Taking a brother’s widow as a second **wife** protected her and preserved the name, memory, and interests of the deceased brother. The **dead brother** would be acknowledged as the legal father of the firstborn son of that marriage. This practice is called levirate marriage, from the Latin word for brother-in-law.

25:7–10 For his own reasons, a **man** might decide not to fulfill these obligations (see Gen. 38:8–10). **he will not perform:** Legally, the brother-in-law was bound to keep the family name alive. His refusal was not merely a private matter, but also a public issue. For his insistence on his rights over the widow’s rights he deserved to be publicly disgraced.

25:8 The accusation of the widow had to be validated by **the elders** of the city.

25:9, 10 To **remove** one’s **sandal** was a sign of the loss of one’s rights in the community; perhaps it was also a loss of the right to

walk on one’s own land (Ruth 4:7). To **spit** in someone’s **face** was an act of strong, public contempt. Such a public disgrace discouraged men from shrinking from their duty as a brother-in-law. Since the living brother refused to maintain the name of his deceased brother, he was in danger of losing the memory of **his own name** in the community.

25:13, 14 A merchant could defraud a customer by using different-sized **weights**, depending on whether he was selling or buying, to tilt the scales to his advantage (see Amos 8:5).

25:15 Perfect and just refers to weights that were exact.

25:17, 18 Israel was to tell the story of what **Amalek** had done and never to forget it (Ex. 17:8–16; Num. 14:39–45). **He did not fear God** is a way of saying that he had no regard for the special status of God’s people.

25:19 blot out the remembrance of Amalek: The Amalekites would in effect come under the ban which God had placed over the people of Canaan (Lev. 27:29; Josh. 6:17, 18).

26:1 into the land: The author of Deuteronomy is always anticipating God’s gift of Canaan to the Israelites (19:1).

26:2 The Israelites were to offer to God the fruit that ripened **first**, even though there was always a possibility that the rest of the crop would not ripen or be harvested because of some unforeseen circumstance. By offering the first of the produce to the Lord, the people expressed their trust in God’s provision and their gratitude for His good gifts.

chooses to make His name abide. ³And you shall go to the one who is priest in those days, and say to him, ‘I declare today to the LORD ¹your God that I have come to the country which the LORD swore to our fathers to give us.’

⁴“Then the priest shall take the basket out of your hand and set it down before the altar of the LORD your God. ⁵And you shall answer and say before the LORD your God: ‘My father *was* ^ca ²Syrian, ^dabout to perish, and ^ehe went down to Egypt and ³dwelt there, ^ffew in number; and there he became a nation, ^ggreat, mighty, and populous. ⁶But the ^hEgyptians mistreated us, afflicted us, and laid hard bondage on us. ⁷ⁱThen we cried out to the LORD God of our fathers, and the LORD heard our voice and looked on our affliction and our labor and our oppression. ⁸So ^jthe LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and with an outstretched arm, ^kwith great terror and with signs and wonders. ⁹He has brought us to this place and has given us this land, ^l“a land flowing with milk and honey”; ¹⁰and now, behold, I have brought the firstfruits of the land which you, O LORD, have given me.’

“Then you shall set it before the LORD your God, and worship before the LORD your God. ¹¹So ^myou shall rejoice in every good *thing* which the LORD your God has given to you and your house,

3 ¹ LXX *my*
5 ^c Gen. 25:20; Hos. 12:12 ^d Gen. 43:1, 2; 45:7, 11 ^e Gen. 46:1, 6; Acts 7:15
7 ^f Gen. 46:27; Deut. 10:22 ^g Deut. 1:10
2 ^h Or Aramean ³ As a resident alien
6 ^h Ex. 1:8-11, 14
7 ⁱ Ex. 2:23-25; 3:9; 4:31
8 ^j Ex. 12:37, 51; 13:3, 14, 16; Deut. 5:15 ^k Deut. 4:34; 34:11, 12
9 ^l Ex. 3:8, 17
11 ^m Deut. 12:7; 16:11; Eccl. 3:12, 13; 5:18-20

12 ⁿ Lev. 27:30; Num. 18:24 ^o Deut. 14:28, 29
13 ^p Ps. 119:141, 153, 176 ⁴ *hallowed things*
14 ^q Lev. 7:20; Jer. 16:7; Hos. 9:4 ⁵ Lit. *in my mourning*
6 ^r Or *while I was unclean*
15 ^r Ps. 80:14; Is. 63:15; Zech. 2:13
5 ^s Ex. 3:8 ⁷ *home*
17 ^t Ex. 20:19

you and the Levite and the stranger who *is* among you.

¹²“When you have finished laying aside all the ⁿtithe of your increase in the third year—^othe year of tithing—and have given *it* to the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, so that they may eat within your gates and be filled, ¹³then you shall say before the LORD your God: ‘I have removed the ⁴holy *tithe* from *my* house, and also have given them to the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, according to all Your commandments which You have commanded me; I have not transgressed Your commandments, ^pnor have I forgotten *them*. ^{14q}I have not eaten any of it ⁵when in mourning, nor have I removed *any* of it ⁶for an unclean *use*, nor given *any* of it for the dead. I have obeyed the voice of the LORD my God, and have done according to all that You have commanded me. ^{15r}Look down from Your holy ⁷habitation, from heaven, and bless Your people Israel and the land which You have given us, just as You swore to our fathers, ^s“a land flowing with milk and honey.”’

A Special People of God

¹⁶“This day the LORD your God commands you to observe these statutes and judgments; therefore you shall be careful to observe them with all your heart and with all your soul. ¹⁷Today you have ^tpro-

26:3 I have come: During the years that the people were in Egypt, whatever they raised was on soil that did not belong to them. During the years that they were in the wilderness, they were away from fertile land on which to grow things. But in the land that God planned to give them, crops, orchards, and vineyards would be theirs to enjoy. God had exceedingly blessed them, and they were to express their thanks.

26:4 Even before the temple was built, there was always an altar for sacrifices.

26:5 My father was a Syrian (Aramean) is a reference to Jacob, whose parents’ ancestral home was in Aram (Gen. 24:1–10). **about to perish:** Jacob’s family suffered from the famine that struck Canaan, and they survived by fleeing to Egypt (Gen. 46:3–7). **few in**

number: Jacob’s family numbered 70 when they moved to Egypt (Gen. 46:8–27; Ex. 1:1–5). **A nation, great, mighty, and populous** is a reference to the great increase God gave His people while they were in Egypt (Ex. 1:5, 7).

26:7 the LORD heard: God’s response to His people was one of the great manifestations of His grace, mercy, and care (Ex. 2:23–25). He cared enough to answer their cries.

26:8 mighty hand . . . outstretched arm: This phrasing celebrates the direct involvement of the Lord in the salvation of the Israelites from slavery. **terror . . . signs and wonders:** This phrasing is regularly repeated to describe God’s miraculous works during the Exodus (4:34; 34:11, 12). God with his own hand demonstrated His power to the Egyptians and delivered the Israelites.

26:10 I have brought the firstfruits: The worshiper needed to say aloud what he was doing as he did it. Doing this added solemnity and dignity to the offering.

26:11 and the stranger: When people came to live with Israel in the land, they were instructed in the worship of God.

26:13, 14 you shall say: As in the case of the firstfruits (vv. 1–11), the spoken word accompanied the act to reinforce the significance and purpose of the offering. **I have not:** The worshiper was to acknowledge that nothing had been held back or used for selfish reasons.

26:15 Your holy habitation: People direct their prayers to heaven, acknowledging at the same time that God is everywhere (Is. 66:1, 2).

26:16 The demands of obedience are found throughout Deuteronomy. To **observe** or do the will of God was not meant to be the means by which a person would be made righteous before God. Instead it would be part of a loving response to God’s gracious covenant. **all your heart and . . . soul:** This is also a regular emphasis in Deuteronomy, a command to the whole person to respond fully to God.

26:17 The first generation had declared their loyalty to God at

worship

(Heb. *shachah*) (26:10; Gen. 23:7; 37:7, Lev. 26:1) Strong’s #7812

The most common Hebrew word for *worship* literally means “to cause oneself to lie prostrate.” In ancient times, a person would fall down before someone who possessed a higher status. People would bow before a king to express complete submission to his rule. Joseph’s brothers recognized the cultural significance of “bowing down” when they reacted so vehemently against Joseph’s dream (Gen. 37:5–8). Bowing down to Joseph meant they were submitting to his authority. Following the example of the ancient people of faith, true Christian worship must express more than love for God, it must also express submission to His will.

claimed the LORD to be your God, and that you will walk in His ways and keep His statutes, His commandments, and His judgments, and that you will ^uobey His voice. ¹⁸Also today ^vthe LORD has proclaimed you to be His special people, just as He promised you, that *you* should keep all His commandments, ¹⁹and that He will set you ^whigh above all nations which He has made, in praise, in name, and in honor, and that you may be ^xa ⁸holy people to the LORD your God, just as He has spoken.”

The Law Inscribed on Stones

27 Now Moses, with the elders of Israel, commanded the people, saying: “Keep all the commandments which I command you today. ²And it shall be, on the day ^awhen you cross over the Jordan to the land which the LORD your God is giving you, that ^byou shall set up for yourselves large stones, and whitewash them with lime. ³You shall write on them all the words of this law, when you have crossed over, that you may enter the land which the LORD your God is giving you, ^c“a land flowing with milk and honey;” just as the LORD God of your fathers promised you. ⁴Therefore it shall be, when you have crossed over the Jordan, *that* ^don

¹⁷ ^u Deut. 15:5
¹⁸ ^v Ex. 6:7; 19:5;
 Deut. 7:6; 14:2;
 28:9; [Titus 2:14;
 1 Pet. 2:9]
¹⁹ ^w Deut. 4:7, 8;
 28:1 ^x Ex. 19:6;
 Deut. 7:6; 28:9; Is.
 62:12; [1 Pet. 2:9]
⁸ *consecrated*

CHAPTER 27

² ^a Josh. 4:1 ^b Josh.
 8:32
³ ^c Ex. 3:8
⁴ ^d Deut. 11:29;
 Josh. 8:30, 31

⁵ ^e Ex. 20:25; Josh.
 8:31
⁶ ^f *uncut*
⁷ ^f Deut. 26:11
⁸ ^g Josh. 8:32
⁹ ^h Deut. 26:18
¹² ⁱ Deut. 11:29;
 Josh. 8:33; Judg. 9:7
¹³ ^j Deut. 11:29;
 Josh. 8:33

Mount Ebal you shall set up these stones, which I command you today, and you shall whitewash them with lime. ⁵And there you shall build an altar to the LORD your God, an altar of stones; ^eyou shall not use an iron *tool* on them. ⁶You shall build with ^lwhole stones the altar of the LORD your God, and offer burnt offerings on it to the LORD your God. ⁷You shall offer peace offerings, and shall eat there, and ^frejoice before the LORD your God. ⁸And you shall ^gwrite very plainly on the stones all the words of this law.”

⁹Then Moses and the priests, the Levites, spoke to all Israel, saying, “Take heed and listen, O Israel: ^hThis day you have become the people of the LORD your God. ¹⁰Therefore you shall obey the voice of the LORD your God, and observe His commandments and His statutes which I command you today.”

Curses Pronounced from Mount Ebal

¹¹And Moses commanded the people on the same day, saying, ¹²“These shall stand ⁱon Mount Gerizim to bless the people, when you have crossed over the Jordan: Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Joseph, and Benjamin; ¹³and ^jthese shall stand on Mount Ebal to curse: Reuben, Gad, Asher, Zebulun, Dan, and Naphtali.

Mt. Sinai (Ex. 24:7). In this covenant renewal ceremony, the new generation confirmed their commitment to God. To confess that the Lord was their God implied a commitment to live by His revelation.

26:18 The Hebrew word for **special people** speaks of God’s great delight and pleasure in His people. They are like a very special jewel, an adornment that He treasures. The word denotes an elect people, set apart by the Lord to Himself, committed to the Lord and His revelation, and exalted above the nations (Ex. 19:5; Mal. 3:17).

26:19 Closeness to the Lord meant separation from the **nations**. **in praise . . . in honor:** The future of God’s people was in His hands. He had promised to bestow honor on them (compare Gen. 12:2, 3; Is. 60; Rom. 8:18, 19). In a similar manner, the Lord has lifted up the people of His church, separating them from the nations and regarding them as a holy people (1 Pet. 2:9).

27:1 The **elders of Israel** joined Moses at this point. This joint declaration demonstrated the validity of God’s revelation through Moses, even after Moses’ death.

27:2 The **large stones** were memorial stones on which the law of God was to be written (v. 8). **whitewash them with lime:** These stones were coated with a plaster background so that the writing would be more visible.

27:4 **Mount Ebal** was north of Mount Gerizim (vv. 12, 13). Between the two mountains was the city of Shechem (Gen. 12:6, 7; 33:18–20). Shechem and its two mountains are roughly in the center of the land of Canaan.

27:5 **altar of stones:** The Lord gave the Israelites specific instructions on how they could approach Him. Forging **iron** was not a skill as characteristic of Israel as of some other Middle Eastern peoples. The Lord rejected an impressive altar for a humble altar of **whole stones**, that is, uncut stones. Perhaps an impressive altar would have diverted the worshippers’ attention from God (Ex. 20:25).

27:7 **Peace offerings** were occasions of great joy, celebrations of belonging to God, sensing His presence, and remembering and thanking Him for His good gifts. **rejoice:** The joy came from recognizing their special place in God’s gracious covenant (v. 9).

27:8 **write very plainly:** The words of God’s law had to be easily read. They were not to be obscured by ornamentation or trivialized by carelessness.

27:9, 10 The authority of the **priests** and **Levites** came from their close association with Moses. They were the guardians and interpreters of the law and stood together with Moses at this solemn moment. **I command you:** Since Moses was the mediator of the covenant, the commands he gave the people were actually God’s commandments.

27:11–14 During the covenant renewal ceremony with the second generation of Israel, the Lord used the topography of the land for dramatic, visual effect. **Mount Ebal**, because of topographical and climatic conditions, is normally a barren peak while **Mount Gerizim**

burnt offering

(Heb. ‘olah) (12:6; 27:6) Strong’s #5930

In Hebrew, this word means “holocaust,” an offering that is completely destroyed by fire. By burning the best of their offerings on God’s altar, the Israelites expressed their dedication and gratitude to God, who had supplied all their needs. Many different types of burnt offerings were offered: bulls (Lev. 1:3–5), sheep or goats (Lev. 1:10), and birds (Lev. 1:14). If the burnt offering was presented as a sin offering, the worshiper would place his hands on the animal’s head to show the transfer of sin to the animal. The animal was then killed by the priest. The priest collected the animal’s blood and presented it to the Lord by sprinkling it on the altar. Pieces of the sacrifice were then placed on the altar and completely burned. These sacrifices were necessary until Christ offered Himself as a sacrifice for the sins of all.

¹⁴“And ^kthe Levites shall speak with a loud voice and say to all the men of Israel: ¹⁵‘Cursed is the one who makes a carved or molded image, ²an abomination to the LORD, the work of the hands of the craftsman, and sets it up in secret.’

^m“And all the people shall answer and say, ‘Amen!’

¹⁶ⁿ“Cursed is the one who treats his father or his mother with contempt.’

“And all the people shall say, ‘Amen!’

¹⁷^o“Cursed is the one who moves his neighbor’s landmark.’

“And all the people shall say, ‘Amen!’

¹⁸^p“Cursed is the one who makes the blind to wander off the road.’

“And all the people shall say, ‘Amen!’

¹⁹^q“Cursed is the one who perverts the

¹⁴ ^k Deut. 33:10; Josh. 8:33; Dan. 9:11
¹⁵ ^r Ex. 20:4, 23; 34:17; Lev. 19:4; 26:1; Deut. 4:16, 23; Is. 44:9; Hos. 13:2
^m Num. 5:22; Jer. 11:5; 1 Cor. 14:16 ² ^a detestable thing
¹⁶ ⁿ Ex. 20:12; Lev. 19:3; 20:9; Deut. 5:16; 21:18–21; Ezek. 22:7
¹⁷ ^o Deut. 19:14; Prov. 22:28
¹⁸ ^p Lev. 19:14
¹⁹ ^q Ex. 22:21, 22; 23:9; Lev. 19:33; Deut. 10:18; 24:17
²⁰ ^r Lev. 18:8; 20:11; Deut. 22:30; 1 Cor. 5:1
²¹ ^s Ex. 22:19; Lev. 18:23; 20:15, 16

justice due the stranger, the fatherless, and widow.’

“And all the people shall say, ‘Amen!’

²⁰^r“Cursed is the one who lies with his father’s wife, because he has uncovered his father’s bed.’

“And all the people shall say, ‘Amen!’

²¹^s“Cursed is the one who lies with any kind of animal.’

“And all the people shall say, ‘Amen!’

²²^t“Cursed is the one who lies with his sister, the daughter of his father or the daughter of his mother.’

“And all the people shall say, ‘Amen!’

²³^u“Cursed is the one who lies with his mother-in-law.’

“And all the people shall say, ‘Amen!’

²² ^t Lev. 18:9 ²³ ^u Lev. 18:17; 20:14

is usually covered with vegetation. Consequently, Mt. Ebal was an ideal place for the curses to be recited, and Mt. Gerizim was suitable for the blessings. The association of the place and the word would have been unforgettable. Furthermore, the two mountains are quite close, so they would serve as a natural amphitheater for the recitation of the curses and blessings by the **Levites**.

27:15, 16 The first curse pertained to idolatry. A **carved or molded image** defied the first or second commandment or both (5:7–9). **Amen** was an expression of approval and submission to God’s Word. The second curse pertained to an infraction of the fifth commandment (5:16; 21:18–21).

27:17 The third curse pertained to justice and greed. **landmark**: Moving the stone with the intent of extending the boundary of

one’s land enhanced one’s own personal prosperity at the expense of someone else (19:14).

27:18 The fourth curse required the humane treatment of disabled people. **blind**: The underlying assumption is that only a person of great cruelty and no love for God would take advantage of a disabled person.

27:19 The fifth curse had to do with compassion to those who were defenseless. The **stranger, the fatherless, and widow** did not have the legal and social resources to defend themselves.

27:20–23 The sixth through the ninth curses covered sexual morality. Sexual relations with animals (bestiality) and incest were strictly prohibited (Ex. 22:19; Lev. 18:23; 20:15, 16).

Covenant Renewal

At Sinai, God for the first time announced His covenant to the entire nation of Israel (5:22–33). Although this generation of Israelites witnessed God’s awe-inspiring revelation of Himself, they still did not trust Him. Because of their rebellion, they were barred from entering the Promised Land. Now the second generation was preparing to enter the Promised Land, just as God had promised. Before they entered, Moses gathered the people together to renew their commitment to the covenant.

The covenant renewal involved two stages. The first stage was performed by Moses on the plains of Moab (chs. 27–30). In this ceremony, Moses presented the people two separate ways. One way led to God’s curses and ultimately to death. The other way led to God’s blessing and to life. Then Moses challenged the new generation to choose the way of life, and he exhorted them to follow God’s law and teach it to their children. That way would lead to God’s abundant blessings for Israel. On the other hand, worshipping dead idols would lead to destruction and death. Since Moses himself could not enter the Promised Land, he publicly recognized Joshua as his successor at this ceremony.

The second stage of the covenant renewal ceremony was performed by Joshua in the Promised Land itself (27:1–26; Josh. 8:30–35). After the conquest of Canaan, the Israelites gathered between the mountains of Ebal and Gerizim. For dramatic effect, the curses for abandoning God were announced on the barren mountaintop of Ebal, while the blessings for following God were announced on the green slopes of Gerizim. There, the Israelites renewed their commitment to the Lord, who had fulfilled His promises to Abraham by giving them the land.



Mounts Ebal and Gerizim
Baker Photo Archive

24^v “Cursed is the one who attacks his neighbor secretly.”

“And all the people shall say, ‘Amen!’

25^w “Cursed is the one who takes a bribe to slay an innocent person.”

“And all the people shall say, ‘Amen!’

26^x “Cursed is the one who does not confirm *all* the words of this law by observing them.”

“And all the people shall say, ‘Amen!’”

Blessings on Obedience

28 “Now it shall come to pass, ^aif you diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God, to observe carefully all His commandments which I command you today, that the LORD your God ^bwill set you high above all nations of the earth. ² And all these blessings shall come upon you and ^covertake you, because you obey the voice of the LORD your God:

3^d “Blessed *shall you be* in the city, and blessed *shall you be* ^ein the country.

4^f “Blessed *shall be* ^fthe ¹fruit of your body, the produce of your ground and the increase of your herds, the increase of your cattle and the offspring of your flocks.

5^g “Blessed *shall be* your basket and your kneading bowl.

6^g “Blessed *shall you be* when you come in, and blessed *shall you be* when you go out.

7^h “The LORD ^hwill cause your enemies who rise against you to be defeated before your face; they shall come out against you one way and flee before you seven ways.

8ⁱ “The LORD will ⁱcommand the blessing on you in your storehouses and in all to which you ^jset your hand, and He will bless you in the land which the LORD your God is giving you.

24^v Ex. 20:13; 21:12; Lev. 24:17; Num. 35:30, 31
25^w Ex. 23:7; Ps. 15:5; Ezek. 22:12
26^x Ps. 119:21; Jer. 11:3; Gal. 3:10

CHAPTER 28

1^a Ex. 15:26; Lev. 26:3-13; Deut. 7:12-26; 11:13^b Deut. 26:19; 1 Chr. 14:2
2^c Deut. 28:15
3^d Ps. 128:1, 4
4^e Gen. 39:5
4^f Gen. 22:17
5^g offspring
6^g Ps. 121:8
7^h Lev. 26:7, 8
8ⁱ Lev. 25:21
9^j Deut. 15:10

9^k Ex. 19:5, 6
10^l Num. 6:27;
2 Chr. 7:14; Is. 63:19; Dan. 9:18, 19
11^m Deut. 11:25
12ⁿ Deut. 30:9
13^o promised
14^p Lev. 26:4;
Deut. 11:14^q Deut. 14:29^r Deut. 15:6
15^s storehouse
16^t [Is. 9:14, 15]
17^u listen to
18^v Deut. 5:32;
Josh. 1:7
19^w Lev. 26:14-39;
Josh. 23:15; Dan. 9:10-14; Mal. 2:2
20^x offspring

9^k “The LORD will establish you as a holy people to Himself, just as He has sworn to you, if you keep the commandments of the LORD your God and walk in His ways. ¹⁰ Then all peoples of the earth shall see that you are ^lcalled by the name of the LORD, and they shall be ^mafraid of you. ¹¹ And ⁿthe LORD will grant you plenty of goods, in the fruit of your body, in the increase of your livestock, and in the produce of your ground, in the land of which the LORD ²swore to your fathers to give you. ¹² The LORD will open to you His good ³treasure, the heavens, ^oto give the rain to your land in its season, and ^pto bless all the work of your hand. ^q You shall lend to many nations, but you shall not borrow. ¹³ And the LORD will make ^ryou the head and not the tail; you shall be above only, and not be beneath, if you ⁴heed the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you today, and are careful to observe *them*. ¹⁴ So you shall not turn aside from any of the words which I command you this day, to the right or the left, to go after other gods to serve them.

Curses on Disobedience

15 “But it shall come to pass, ^tif you do not obey the voice of the LORD your God, to observe carefully all His commandments and His statutes which I command you today, that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you:

16 “Cursed *shall you be* in the city, and cursed *shall you be* in the country.

17 “Cursed *shall be* your basket and your kneading bowl.

18 “Cursed *shall be* the ⁵fruit of your body and the produce of your land, the increase of your cattle and the offspring of your flocks.

27:24, 25 The tenth and eleventh curses addressed justice when a homicide occurred. **secretly:** The murderer might have escaped detection, but God saw his vile act. **bribe . . . innocent person:** Both a hired assassin and the person who did the hiring would have been guilty.

27:26 The twelfth curse was an all-encompassing one. A curse was on anyone who broke any part of the **law**. The Lord expected not only full submission to the law, but also a love for Him. Paul quoted this verse to emphasize the impossibility of keeping the law (Gal. 3:10). The blessings that would have corresponded to these 12 curses are not recorded here.

28:1-9 This passage repeatedly emphasizes the Israelites’ responsibility to obey. **if you diligently obey:** Israel could never earn salvation through obedience. God had already chosen to save them from slavery and make them His people. He had already promised to be their God and give them the Promised Land. Yet God demanded diligent obedience from the Israelites in order for them to receive all of God’s rich blessings in the land (Is. 48:17-19). **overtake you:** The Lord’s blessings would be the source of the people’s joy (Ps. 23:6).

28:10 afraid: The nations would see God’s presence and His blessing on His people and would stand in awe of the greatness of the

Lord. **name of the Lord:** Here the name Yahweh is used for God. This indicates God’s unique relationship with the Israelites. He had revealed to them His glorious name.

28:12 God gave graciously to the Israelites from the **good treasure** that He had stored up for them. The people received God’s blessings solely because of His grace. **rain . . . season:** The Canaanites believed that Baal was the giver of dew and rain (1 Kin. 17:1). But God assured Israel that He controlled the heavens and would make their lands fruitful (Ps. 104:3, 13). **lend . . . borrow:** God’s blessing on Israel would be so great that Israel would become the leader of the nations.

28:13 The phrase **the head and not the tail** indicates that Israel will rise to a place of honor among the nations.

28:14 not turn . . . to the right or the left: Since the Lord alone was the source of blessing, the Israelites had to follow Him alone in the pursuit of their happiness. They could not look in any other direction for insight.

28:15 if you do not obey: God’s promises of the fullness of His blessing were dependent upon the obedience of His people. His curses were His reluctant—but certain—punishment for disobedience.

¹⁹“Cursed *shall* you *be* when you come in, and cursed *shall* you *be* when you go out.

²⁰“The LORD will send on you ^ucursing, ^vconfusion, and ^wrebuke in all that you set your hand to do, until you are destroyed and until you perish quickly, because of the wickedness of your doings in which you have forsaken Me. ²¹The LORD will make the ⁶plague cling to you until He has consumed you from the land which you are going to possess. ^{22.x}The LORD will strike you with consumption, with fever, with inflammation, with severe burning fever, with the sword, with ^yscorching, ⁷and with mildew; they shall pursue you until you perish. ²³And ^zyour heavens which *are* over your head shall be bronze, and the earth which is under you *shall be* iron. ²⁴The LORD will change the rain of your land to powder and dust; from the heaven it shall come down on you until you are destroyed.

^{25.a}“The LORD will cause you to be defeated before your enemies; you shall go out one way against them and flee seven ways before them; and you shall become ⁸troublesome to all the kingdoms of the earth. ^{26.b}Your carcasses shall be food for all the birds of the air and the beasts of the earth, and no one shall frighten *them* away. ²⁷The LORD will strike you with ^cthe boils of Egypt, with ^dtumors, with the scab, and with the itch, from which you cannot be healed. ²⁸The LORD will strike you with madness and blindness and ^econfusion of heart. ²⁹And you shall ^fgrope at noonday, as a blind man gropes in darkness; you shall not prosper in

²⁰ ^u Mal. 2:2 ^v Is. 65:14 ^w Ps. 80:16; Is. 30:17
²¹ ⁶ pestilence
²² ^x Lev. 26:16
^y Amos 4:9 ⁷ blight
²³ ^z Lev. 26:19
²⁵ ^a Deut. 32:30
⁸ a terror
²⁶ ^b 1 Sam. 17:44; Ps. 79:2
²⁷ ^c Ex. 15:26
^d 1 Sam. 5:6
²⁸ ^e Jer. 4:9
²⁹ ^f Job 5:14

³⁰ ^g 2 Sam. 12:11; Job 31:10; Jer. 8:10
^h Amos 5:11; Zeph. 1:13 ¹ Deut. 20:6; Job 31:8; Jer. 12:13; Mic. 6:15
³² ² Chr. 29:9
^k Ps. 119:82 ¹ Neh. 5:5 ⁹ nothing you can do
³³ ^m Lev. 26:16; Jer. 5:15, 17
³⁶ ⁿ 2 Kin. 17:4, 6; 24:12, 14; 25:7, 11; 2 Chr. 36:1-21; Jer. 39:1-9 ^o Deut. 4:28; Jer. 16:13
³⁷ ^p 1 Kin. 9:7, 8; Jer. 24:9; 25:9 ^q Ps. 44:14 ¹ a thing of horror
³⁸ ^r Mic. 6:15; Hag. 1:6 ^s Ex. 10:4; Joel 1:4 ² devour

your ways; you shall be only oppressed and plundered continually, and no one shall save *you*.

^{30.g}“You shall betroth a wife, but another man shall lie with her; ^hyou shall build a house, but you shall not dwell in it; ⁱyou shall plant a vineyard, but shall not gather its grapes. ³¹Your ox *shall be* slaughtered before your eyes, but you shall not eat of it; your donkey *shall be* violently taken away from before you, and shall not be restored to you; your sheep *shall be* given to your enemies, and you shall have no one to rescue *them*. ³²Your sons and your daughters *shall be* given to ^janother people, and your eyes shall look and ^kfail *with longing* for them all day long; and *there shall be* ⁹no strength in your ^lhand. ³³A nation whom you have not known shall eat ^mthe fruit of your land and the produce of your labor, and you shall be only oppressed and crushed continually. ³⁴So you shall be driven mad because of the sight which your eyes see. ³⁵The LORD will strike you in the knees and on the legs with severe boils which cannot be healed, and from the sole of your foot to the top of your head.

³⁶“The LORD will ⁿbring you and the king whom you set over you to a nation which neither you nor your fathers have known, and ^othere you shall serve other gods—wood and stone. ³⁷And you shall become ^pan ¹astonishment, a proverb, ^qand a byword among all nations where the LORD will drive you.

^{38.r}“You shall carry much seed out to the field but gather little in, for ^sthe locust shall ²consume it. ³⁹You shall plant

28:20 cursing, confusion, and rebuke: The coming of God’s curse would lead to despair. **hand:** The curse would affect all human activities so that they would come to nothing (Ps. 112:10). The fruitfulness that came with God’s overabundant blessings would disappear.

28:21, 22 Plague refers to devastations from pestilence and contagious diseases. **consumption . . . burning fever:** The diseases cannot easily be identified, but they have in common a fever or inflammation of body organs.

28:23, 24 Bronze and **iron** represent the harshness of God’s wrath in withholding rain from His people (Lev. 26:19).

28:26 carcasses: The idea of birds eating the flesh of the dead was particularly repugnant in ancient times. The lack of proper burial was a mark of terrible disregard for the person who had died (1 Sam. 31:11–13).

28:27, 28 boils of Egypt: The disease inflicted on the Egyptians (Ex. 9:10) would now be visited on the people of God for their disobedience. If the people obeyed God’s laws, He promised to deliver them from such diseases (Ex. 15:26). **Tumors** may refer to hemorrhoids (1 Sam. 5:6, 12). **scab:** These skin diseases not only brought great distress, but also rendered a person unclean, unfit for the worship of God (Num. 5:1–4). **madness . . . confusion of heart:** These symptoms may indicate an advanced case of syphilis.

28:30–32 betroth a wife . . . build a house . . . plant a vineyard: The momentous events of life could not be enjoyed because of disasters and wars. **Your ox . . . Your sons:** Property and children alike would be taken from the people, and there would be **no strength** to recover what was lost.

28:35 Severe boils refers to skin diseases, such as Job experienced (Job 2:7).

28:37–43 The curses on the Israelites for disobedience were the direct opposite of the blessings the Israelites would receive for obedience. **an astonishment, a proverb, and a byword:** Contrast this repugnance of the Israelites with the honor promised in v. 13. **lower and lower:** Contrast this with the promise of v. 13; where the people of Israel would once be exalted, they would now be debased.

cursed

(Heb. *arar*) (27:15; 28:16; Jer. 17:5) Strong’s #779

The word literally means “to bind with a curse.” A curse is the opposite of a blessing. It wishes or prays for ill or injury on a person or an object. God cursed the serpent and the ground after the sin of Adam and Eve (Gen. 3:14, 17). Jeremiah, in despair, cursed the man who brought news of his birth (Jer. 20:14, 15). The seriousness of God’s covenant with His people is illustrated by the threat of a curse on any who violate it (28:60, 61). In the NT, Paul taught that Jesus Christ became a “curse” for us, so that we might be freed from the curses of the Law (Gal. 3:13).

vineyards and tend *them*, but you shall neither drink of the wine nor gather the grapes; for the worms shall eat them.

⁴⁰You shall have olive trees throughout all your territory, but you shall not anoint *yourself* with the oil; for your olives shall drop off. ⁴¹You shall beget sons and daughters, but they shall not be yours; for *they* shall go into captivity.

⁴²Locusts shall ³consume all your trees and the produce of your land.

⁴³“The alien who *is* among you shall rise higher and higher above you, and you shall come down lower and lower.

⁴⁴He shall lend to you, but you shall not lend to him; he shall be the head, and you shall be the tail.

⁴⁵“Moreover all these curses shall come upon you and pursue and overtake you, until you are destroyed, because you ⁴did not obey the voice of the LORD your God, to keep His commandments and His statutes which He commanded you.

⁴⁶And they shall be upon ^vyou for a sign and a wonder, and on your descendants forever.

⁴⁷^w“Because you did not serve the LORD your God with joy and gladness of heart, ^xfor the abundance of everything,

⁴⁸therefore you shall serve your enemies, whom the LORD will send against you, in ^yhunger, in thirst, in nakedness, and in need of everything; and He ^zwill put a yoke of iron on your neck until He has destroyed you. ⁴⁹^aThe LORD will bring a nation against you from afar, from the end of the earth, ^bas swift as the eagle flies, a nation whose language you will not understand, ⁵⁰a nation of fierce countenance, ^cwhich does not respect the elderly nor show favor to the young.

⁵¹And they shall eat the increase of your livestock and the produce of your land, until you are destroyed; they shall not leave you grain or new wine or oil, *or* the increase of your cattle or the offspring of your flocks, until they have destroyed you.

⁵²“They shall ^dbesiege you at all your

³⁹ ⁱ Zeph. 1:13

⁴¹ ^v Lam. 1:5

⁴² ³ possess

⁴⁵ ⁴ did not listen to

⁴⁶ ^v Num. 26:10; Is.

8:18; Ezek. 14:8

⁴⁷ ^w Deut. 12:7;

Neh. 9:35-37

^x Deut. 32:15

⁴⁸ ^y Lam. 4:4-6

^z Jer. 28:13, 14

⁴⁹ ^a Is. 5:26-30;

7:18-20; Jer. 5:15

^b Jer. 48:40; 49:22;

Lam. 4:19; Hos. 8:1

⁵⁰ ^c 2 Chr. 36:17

⁵² ^d 2 Kin. 25:1, 2, 4

⁵³ ^e Lev. 26:29;

2 Kin. 6:28, 29; Jer.

19:9; Lam. 2:20; 4:10

⁵⁴ ^f offspring

⁵⁴ ^f Deut. 15:9

^g Deut. 13:6 ⁶ Lit.

tender ⁷ Lit. his eye

shall be evil toward

⁵⁶ ⁸ sensitive

⁹ refined ¹ Lit. her

eye shall be evil

toward

⁵⁷ ^h Gen. 49:10

² afterbirth

⁵⁸ ⁱ Ex. 6:3

⁵⁹ ^j Dan. 9:12

⁶⁰ ^k Deut. 7:15

⁶² ^l Deut. 4:27

^m Deut. 10:22; Neh.

9:23

gates until your high and fortified walls, in which you trust, come down throughout all your land; and they shall besiege you at all your gates throughout all your land which the LORD your God has given you. ⁵³^eYou shall eat the ⁵fruit of your own body, the flesh of your sons and your daughters whom the LORD your God has given you, in the siege and desperate straits in which your enemy shall distress you. ⁵⁴The ⁶sensitive and very refined man among you ^fwill ⁷be hostile toward his brother, toward ^gthe wife of his bosom, and toward the rest of his children whom he leaves behind, ⁵⁵so that he will not give any of them the flesh of his children whom he will eat, because he has nothing left in the siege and desperate straits in which your enemy shall distress you at all your gates. ⁵⁶The ⁸tender and ⁹delicate woman among you, who would not venture to set the sole of her foot on the ground because of her delicateness and sensitivity, ¹will refuse to the husband of her bosom, and to her son and her daughter, ⁵⁷her ²placenta which comes out ^hfrom between her feet and her children whom she bears; for she will eat them secretly for lack of everything in the siege and desperate straits in which your enemy shall distress you at all your gates.

⁵⁸“If you do not carefully observe all the words of this law that are written in this book, that you may fear ⁱthis glorious and awesome name, THE LORD YOUR GOD, ⁵⁹then the LORD will bring upon you and your descendants ^jextraordinary plagues—great and prolonged plagues—and serious and prolonged sicknesses. ⁶⁰Moreover He will bring back on you all ^kthe diseases of Egypt, of which you were afraid, and they shall cling to you. ⁶¹Also every sickness and every plague, which *is* not written in this Book of the Law, will the LORD bring upon you until you are destroyed. ⁶²You ^lshall be left few in number, whereas you were ^mas the stars of heaven in multitude, because you would

28:46, 47 The disasters would be a **sign** that would remind the people of their disobedience. **serve . . . with joy . . . for the abundance:** The expected response to God's goodness was joy and a heartfelt willingness to do His will. The absence of these responses incurred God's wrath.

28:48 Yoke of iron is an expression of servitude and enslavement.

28:49, 50 The enemy **nation** is compared to a soaring eagle that swoops down on its prey (Jer. 48:40; Hos. 8:1). The enemy would show no compassion on the people whether old or young.

28:52-57 besiege you: Moses forewarned the people of the terrible stresses of sieges (see 2 Kin. 6:24-31; Lam. 2:20; 4:10). The horrors of siege, hunger, and deprivation would lead people to behave in ways that they otherwise could never imagine. **she will eat them:** Nothing could compare to the horror of a mother eating her own children.

28:58 The Hebrew words translated **glorious and awesome** together mean “overwhelmingly awesome.” The **name** of the Lord inspired awe and fear because He had abundantly demonstrated His power in both Egypt and the wilderness. The phrase **THE LORD YOUR GOD** brought together God's awesome majesty and His personal care for His people.

28:59-68 The following verses are a summary of all the curses that would fall upon disobedient Israel. Many are reversals of the blessing list in vv. 1-14. Other curses are plagues that the Israelites had been spared from during the Exodus (v. 60, 61). **back to Egypt:** This would be a tragic reversal of God's redemptive plan for Israel. God had saved the Israelites from slavery, but now God would send them back into Egyptian servitude.

not obey the voice of the LORD your God.⁶³ And it shall be, *that* just as the LORD ⁿrejoiced over you to do you good and multiply you, so the LORD ^owill rejoice over you to destroy you and bring you to nothing; and you shall be ^pplucked³ from off the land which you go to possess.

⁶⁴ “Then the LORD ^qwill scatter you among all peoples, from one end of the earth to the other, and ^rthere you shall serve other gods, which neither you nor your fathers have known—wood and stone.⁶⁵ And ^samong those nations you shall find no rest, nor shall the sole of your foot have a resting place; ^tbut there the LORD will give you a ⁴trembling heart, failing eyes, and ^uanguish of soul.⁶⁶ Your life shall hang in doubt before you; you shall fear day and night, and have no assurance of life.⁶⁷ ^vIn the morning you shall say, ‘Oh, that it were evening!’ And at evening you shall say, ‘Oh, that it were morning!’ because of the fear which terrifies your heart, and ^wbecause of the sight which your eyes see.

⁶⁸ “And the LORD ^xwill take you back to Egypt in ships, by the way of which I said to you, ^y“You shall never see it again.” And there you shall be offered for sale to your enemies as male and female slaves, but no one will buy *you*.”

The Covenant Renewed in Moab

29 These *are* the words of the covenant which the LORD commanded Moses to make with the children of Israel in the land of Moab, besides the ^acovenant which He made with them in Horeb.

² Now Moses called all Israel and said to them: ^b “You have seen all that the LORD did before your eyes in the land of Egypt, to Pharaoh and to all his servants and to all his land—³ *the great trials which your eyes have seen, the signs, and those great wonders.* ⁴ Yet ^dthe LORD has not given you a heart to ¹perceive and eyes to see and ears to hear, to this *very day.*

⁶³ ⁿ Deut. 30:9; Jer. 32:41 ^o Prov. 1:26; [Is. 1:24] ^p Jer. 12:14; 45:4 ³ *torn*
⁶⁴ ^q Lev. 26:33; Deut. 4:27, 28; Neh. 1:8; Jer. 16:13; Amos 9:9 ^r Deut. 28:36
⁶⁵ ^s Lam. 1:3; Amos 9:4 ^t Lev. 26:36 ^u Lev. 26:16
⁶⁶ ⁴ *anxious*
⁶⁷ ^v Job 7:4 ^w Deut. 28:34
⁶⁸ ^x Jer. 43:7; Hos. 8:13 ^y Deut. 17:16

CHAPTER 29

¹ ^a Lev. 26:46; Deut. 5:2, 3
² ^b Ex. 19:4; Deut. 11:7
³ ^c Deut. 4:34; 7:19
⁴ ^d [Is. 6:9, 10; Ezek. 12:2]; Matt. 13:14; [Acts 28:26, 27]; Rom. 11:8; [Eph. 4:18] ¹ *understand or know*

⁵ ^e Deut. 1:3; 8:2 ^f Deut. 8:4
⁶ ^g Ex. 16:12; Deut. 8:3
⁷ ^h Num. 21:23, 24; Deut. 2:26–3:3
⁸ ⁱ Num. 32:33; Deut. 3:12, 13
⁹ ^j Deut. 4:6; 1 Kin. 2:3 ^k Josh. 1:7
¹¹ ^l Josh. 9:21, 23, 27
¹² ^m Neh. 10:29
¹³ ⁿ Deut. 28:9
^o Ex. 6:7 ^p Gen. 17:7, 8
¹⁴ ^q [Jer. 31:31; Heb. 8:7, 8]
¹⁵ ^r Acts 2:39
¹⁷ ² *detestable things*
¹⁸ ^s Deut. 11:16
^t Heb. 12:15 ^u Deut. 32:32; Acts 8:23

⁵ ^c And I have led you forty years in the wilderness.^f Your clothes have not worn out on you, and your sandals have not worn out on your feet.^{6g} You have not eaten bread, nor have you drunk wine or *similar* drink, that you may know that I *am* the LORD your God.⁷ And when you came to this place,^h Sihon king of Heshbon and Og king of Bashan came out against us to battle, and we conquered them.⁸ We took their land and ⁱgave it as an inheritance to the Reubenites, to the Gadites, and to half the tribe of Manasseh.⁹ Therefore ^jkeep the words of this covenant, and do them, that you may ^kprosper in all that you do.

¹⁰ “All of you stand today before the LORD your God: your leaders and your tribes and your elders and your officers, all the men of Israel,¹¹ your little ones and your wives—also the stranger who is in your camp, from ^lthe one who cuts your wood to the one who draws your water—¹² that you may enter into covenant with the LORD your God, and ^minto His oath, which the LORD your God makes with you today,¹³ that He may ⁿestablish you today as a people for Himself, and *that* He may be God to you,^o just as He has spoken to you, and ^pjust as He has sworn to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

¹⁴ “I make this covenant and this oath, ^qnot with you alone,¹⁵ but with *him* who stands here with us today before the LORD our God, ^ras well as with *him* who is not here with us today¹⁶ (for you know that we dwelt in the land of Egypt and that we came through the nations which you passed by,¹⁷ and you saw their ²abominations and their idols which *were* among them—wood and stone and silver and gold);¹⁸ so that there may not be among you man or woman or family or tribe,^s whose heart turns away today from the LORD our God, to go *and* serve the gods of these nations, ^tand that there may not be among you a root bearing ^ubitter-

29:1 The Hebrew phrase translated as **these are the words of the covenant** can be interpreted as a conclusion to the previous chapters or as an introduction to chs. 29–32. **In the land of Moab** is a reference to the beginning of Deuteronomy (1:1–5).

29:2–8 Once again, Moses reviewed the history of God’s merciful acts to the people of Israel. For a more complete history see 1:30; 2:32–3:6; 4:34; 5:1; 7:18, 19; 8:2–4; 11:2–7.

29:2–5 Great trials . . . great wonders refers to the miraculous acts of God in Egypt, the wilderness, and the land east of the Jordan. Moses pointed out that God had supported the Israelites even in less dramatic ways, such as seeing that their **clothes** and **sandals** were **not worn out**.

29:6 Although the people did not eat **bread** in the wilderness, God had supplied them with bread from heaven, manna.

29:7, 8 The winning of the area east of the Jordan (2:26—3:22) was

the glorious beginning of the conquest of the land. But there was still greater glory to come—the winning of the territory west of the river.

29:9–13 the words of this covenant: The members of the covenant community included all adults, children, and strangers who had joined the Israelites, as well as those yet to be born. **a people for Himself:** The central purpose of the covenant was to bind two parties, God and His people, together.

29:18 Every individual **man** and **woman** was responsible to the community as a whole for his or her relationship to God. Since the entire community was covenanted to God Himself, every individual had to follow Him. **bitterness or wormwood:** Tolerance for idolatry and pagan practices would always corrupt the community, and therefore the covenant relationship with God.

ness or wormwood;¹⁹ and so it may not happen, when he hears the words of this curse, that he blesses himself in his heart, saying, 'I shall have peace, even though I³ follow the^v dictates of my heart'—^w as though the drunkard could be included with the sober.

^{20x} "The LORD would not spare him; for then ^ythe anger of the LORD and ^zHis jealousy would burn against that man, and every curse that is written in this book would settle on him, and the LORD ^awould blot out his name from under heaven. ²¹ And the LORD ^bwould separate him from all the tribes of Israel for adversity, according to all the curses of the covenant that are written in this Book of the Law, ²² so that the coming generation of your children who rise up after you, and the foreigner who comes from a far land, would say, when they ^dsee the plagues of that land and the sicknesses which the LORD has laid on it:

²³ 'The whole land is brimstone, ^esalt, and burning; it is not sown, nor does it bear, nor does any grass grow there, ^flike the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim, which the LORD overthrew in His anger and His wrath.' ²⁴ All nations would say, ^g'Why has the LORD done so to this land? What does the heat of this great anger mean?' ²⁵ Then *people* would say: 'Because they have forsaken the covenant of the LORD God of their fathers, which He made with them when He brought them out of the land of Egypt; ²⁶ for they went and served other gods and worshiped them, gods that they did not know and that He had not given to them. ²⁷ Then the anger of the LORD was aroused against this land, ^h to bring

¹⁹ ^v Jer. 3:17; 7:24
^w Is. 30:1 ³ walk in the stubbornness or imagination
²⁰ ^x Ezek. 14:7 ^y Ps. 74:1 ^z Ps. 79:5; Ezek. 23:25 ^a Ex. 32:33; Deut. 9:14; 2 Kin. 14:27
²¹ ^b (Matt. 24:51)
^c Deut. 30:10
²² ^d Jer. 19:8; 49:17; 50:13
²³ ^e Jer. 17:6; Zeph. 2:9 ^f Gen. 19:24, 25; Is. 1:9; Jer. 20:16; Hos. 11:8
²⁴ ^g 1 Kin. 9:8; Jer. 22:8
²⁷ ^h Dan. 9:11

²⁸ ⁱ 1 Kin. 14:15; 2 Chr. 7:20; Ps. 52:5; Prov. 2:22

CHAPTER 30

¹ ^a Lev. 26:40
^b Deut. 28:2 ^c Deut. 28:15–45 ^d Deut. 4:29, 30 ¹ Lit. *cause them to return to your heart*
² ^e Deut. 4:29, 30; Neh. 1:9; Is. 55:7; Lam. 3:40; Joel 2:12
³ ^f Ps. 106:45; Jer. 29:14; Lam. 3:22, 32 ^g Ps. 147:2; Jer. 32:37; Ezek. 34:13
⁴ ^h Deut. 28:64; Neh. 1:9; Is. 62:11
⁶ ⁱ Deut. 10:16; Jer. 32:39; Ezek. 11:19
⁷ ^j Is. 54:15–17; Jer. 30:16, 20

on it every curse that is written in this book. ²⁸ And the LORD ⁱuprooted them from their land in anger, in wrath, and in great indignation, and cast them into another land, as *it is* this day.

²⁹ "The secret *things belong* to the LORD our God, but those *things which* are revealed *belong* to us and to our children forever, that *we* may do all the words of this law.

The Blessing of Returning to God

30 "Now ^a it shall come to pass, when ^b all these things come upon you, the blessing and the ^c curse which I have set before you, and ^d you ¹ call *them* to mind among all the nations where the LORD your God drives you, ² and you ^e return to the LORD your God and obey His voice, according to all that I command you today, you and your children, with all your heart and with all your soul, ^{3f} that the LORD your God will bring you back from captivity, and have compassion on you, and ^g gather you again from all the nations where the LORD your God has scattered you. ^{4h} If *any* of you are driven out to the farthest *parts* under heaven, from there the LORD your God will gather you, and from there He will bring you. ⁵ Then the LORD your God will bring you to the land which your fathers possessed, and you shall possess it. He will prosper you and multiply you more than your fathers. ⁶ And ⁱ the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live.

⁷ "Also the LORD your God will put all these ^j curses on your enemies and on

29:19 he blesses himself: The self-absorbed person would consider himself worthy of the blessings of God; the righteous person would live by God's grace and gratefully obey His commands.

29:20 For the memory of a person's **name** to be lost was considered a terrible fate in the ancient Middle Eastern culture. For God to record and remember their names was a glorious hope for the ancient Israelites (see Ps. 87).

29:22, 23 God's judgments on a disobedient Israel would be a sign of His holiness for the future **generation** and for other nations. **Brimstone, salt, and burning** are images reminiscent of God's judgment of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 19:24–29), with which **Admah and Zeboiim** were also destroyed (Gen. 10:19; 14:2, 8; Hos. 11:8).

29:24–26 The lesson of the faithless Israel would become known among the **nations**, even as the deliverance of Israel was to be known by them (2:25). The nations were supposed to learn about God's grace from Israel's example; what a shame if they were to learn of His wrath instead!

29:28 This day refers to the day of God's judgment on His people.

29:29 The secret things refers to the future, as well as the way in which the curses would come to pass. The will of God had been **revealed** in the Law. If these revelations were acted upon, the people would receive God's great blessing. To ignore the express commandments of God would be folly. Similarly, the Christian has

God's revealed will in the Bible. To ignore that while chasing after the things God has left secret is pure folly.

30:1 When all these things come upon you refers to the blessings and curses detailed in ch. 28, particularly the curses. God allowed Moses to foresee Israel's future apostasy and God's dispersal of the people among the nations. These words should have been terribly upsetting to the people because they were spoken on the eve of their conquest of the land.

30:2–6 Not only did Moses foresee the future apostasy and **captivity** of Israel, he also saw Israel's future repentance and **return** to the land (see the Book of Ezra). This passage could also await a future fulfillment.

30:6 circumcise your heart: God Himself would work in the hearts of His people so that they would love Him (10:16). God would extend the benefits of His work to the **descendants** of these people. He would create a community of faith that would worship Him from generation to generation. **all your heart and . . . soul:** God's intentions for His people have always been for the whole person to respond to Him. Outward symbols such as circumcision were always intended by God to be marks of inner realities.

30:7 God did not abandon His principle of reward and punishment for the nations (and for the individuals) based on their treatment of His covenant people (compare Gen. 12:3; 2 Thess. 1:5–10). He would repay Israel's **enemies**.

those who hate you, who persecuted you.⁸ And you will ^kagain obey the voice of the LORD and do all His commandments which I command you today.⁹ ¹The LORD your God will make you abound in all the work of your hand, in the ²fruit of your body, in the increase of your livestock, and in the produce of your land for good. For the LORD will again ^mrejoice over you for good as He rejoiced over your fathers,¹⁰ if you obey the voice of the LORD your God, to keep His commandments and His statutes which are written in this Book of the Law, *and* if you turn to the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.

The Choice of Life or Death

¹¹ “For this commandment which I command you today ⁿis ³not *too* mysterious for you, nor *is* it far off.¹² ^oIt is not in heaven, that you should say, ‘Who will ascend into heaven for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?’¹³ Nor *is* it beyond the sea, that you should say, ‘Who will go over the sea for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?’¹⁴ But the word is very near you, ^pin your mouth and in your heart, that you may do it.

¹⁵ “See, ^qI have set before you today life and good, death and evil,¹⁶ in that I command you today to love the LORD your God, to walk in His ways, and to keep His commandments, His statutes, and His judgments, that you may live and multiply; and the LORD your God will bless you in the land which you go to possess.¹⁷ But if your heart turns away so that you do not hear, and are drawn away, and worship other gods and serve

⁸ ^k Zeph. 3:20
⁹ ^l Deut. 28:11
^m Deut. 28:63; Jer. 32:41 ² *offspring*
¹¹ ⁿ ^l Is. 45:19 ³ *not hidden from*
¹² ^o Prov. 30:4;
Rom. 10:6-8
¹⁴ ^p Rom. 10:8
¹⁵ ^q Deut. 30:1, 19

¹⁸ ^r Deut. 4:26; 8:19
¹⁹ ^s Deut. 4:26
^t Deut. 30:15
²⁰ ^u Ps. 27:1; [John 11:25; 14:6; Col. 3:4]

CHAPTER 31

² ^a Ex. 7:7; Deut. 34:7 ^b Num. 27:17;
1 Kin. 3:7 ^c Num. 20:12
³ ^d Deut. 9:3; Josh. 11:23 ^e Num. 27:18
^f Num. 27:21
⁴ ^g Deut. 3:21
^h Num. 21:24, 33
⁵ ^h Deut. 7:2;
20:10-20
⁶ ⁱ Josh. 10:25;
1 Chr. 22:13 ^k Deut. 1:29 ^j Deut. 20:4
^m Josh. 1:5; Heb. 13:5

them,¹⁸ I announce to you today that you shall surely perish; you shall not prolong *your* days in the land which you cross over the Jordan to go in and possess.¹⁹ ^sI call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, *that* ^tI have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live;²⁰ that you may love the LORD your God, that you may obey His voice, and that you may cling to Him, for He *is* your ^ulife and the length of your days; and that you may dwell in the land which the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give them.”

Joshua the New Leader of Israel

31 Then Moses went and spoke these words to all Israel.² And he said to them: “^a*I am* one hundred and twenty years old today. I can no longer ^bgo out and come in. Also the LORD has said to me, “You shall not cross over this Jordan.”³ The LORD your God ^dHimself crosses over before you; He will destroy these nations from before you, and you shall dispossess them. ^eJoshua himself crosses over before you, just ^fas the LORD has said.⁴ ^gAnd the LORD will do to them ^has He did to Sihon and Og, the kings of the Amorites and their land, when He destroyed them.⁵ ⁱThe LORD will give them over to you, that you may do to them according to every commandment which I have commanded you.⁶ ^jBe strong and of good courage, ^kdo not fear nor be afraid of them; for the LORD your God, ^lHe *is* the One who goes with you. ^mHe will not leave you nor forsake you.”

30:8 The OT tends to focus on the disobedience of God’s people to His revelation. But there were periods of national faithfulness to God, and there were always individuals who were faithful.

30:10 This Book of the Law is the Book of Deuteronomy (31:24, 26). God’s blessing would come to those who obeyed the law.

30:11–14 Mysterious means “difficult.” Moses reminded the Israelites that obedience to God was not a complicated issue. **not in heaven . . . Nor is it beyond the sea:** Obedience to the law did not require a superhuman effort, because God had revealed the law to the Israelites (Rom. 10:6–10). **the word is very near you:** When God’s law was internalized by the working of the Holy Spirit, the believer loved God’s instructions and sought to carry them out (Ps. 119:97–104). The believer would obey God’s law in response to God’s love, not as a way of earning God’s love or of deserving His forgiveness.

30:15 Moses challenged the people to determine what path they would follow. One way led to **life** (Ps. 1:6; John 14:6) because God’s blessings rested on it (Ps. 23:6). The other way led to **death and evil** because God’s curses rested on it. Likewise, Jesus in His ministry challenged the people to determine what path they would take (Matt. 7:13, 14).

30:18 The emphasis on **today** is remarkable in this passage. Moses establishes here the best pattern for the preaching of the Word of God. Responses to God should not be delayed. Assuming that there will be a later day to respond to Him is dangerous thinking.

30:19 heaven and earth as witnesses: All of creation witnessed Moses’ instruction, his challenge to the Israelites to love and obey God, and the people’s response (32:1). **choose . . . that both you and your descendants may live:** The present generation’s choice would determine the direction of future generations.

30:20 If the people loved God they would find true **life**, because God is the source of all life. By rejecting God and His ways, the Israelites would by default choose the way of death. The people were on the verge of entering **the land** that had been promised them for so long. Before they made their way across the Jordan to begin their holy campaign of conquest, they needed to know what the stakes were and what was necessary not just to enter the land, but to remain in the land with God’s enduring blessing.

31:2, 3 Again Moses regretfully spoke of God’s refusal to permit him to enter the Promised Land (1:37, 38; 3:23–29). Yet he encouraged the people that **God Himself** would still protect them and fight for them. Instead of Moses, **Joshua** would lead the people into battle.

31:6 The Lord was the Divine Warrior, the commander-in-chief of Israel’s forces. **He will not leave you nor forsake you:** Moses reminded the people that God had promised to remain with them, to protect them, bless them, and fight for them (Josh. 1:5; 1 Kin. 8:57). Joshua used the same language to assure the people of the continuity of God’s Presence and of godly leadership (Josh. 1:6, 7, 9). Jesus made the same promise to His church (Matt. 28:20).

⁷Then Moses called Joshua and said to him in the sight of all Israel, ^a“Be strong and of good courage, for you must go with this people to the land which the LORD has sworn to their fathers to give them, and you shall cause them to inherit it. ⁸And the LORD, ^bHe is the One who goes before you. ^cHe will be with you; He will not leave you nor forsake you; do not fear nor be dismayed.”

The Law to Be Read Every Seven Years

⁹So Moses wrote this law ^dand delivered it to the priests, the sons of Levi, ^ewho bore the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and to all the elders of Israel. ¹⁰And Moses commanded them, saying: “At the end of *every* seven years, at the appointed time in the ^fyear of release, ^gat the Feast of Tabernacles, ^hwhen all Israel comes to ⁱappear before the LORD your God in the ^jplace which He chooses, ^kyou shall read this law before all Israel in their hearing. ^lGather the people together, men and women and little ones, and the stranger who is within your gates, that they may hear and that they may learn to fear the LORD your God and carefully observe all the words of this law, ^mand *that* their children, ⁿwho have not known it, ^omay hear and learn to fear the LORD your God as long as you live in the land which you cross the Jordan to possess.”

Prediction of Israel's Rebellion

¹⁴Then the LORD said to Moses, ^a“Behold, the days approach when you must die; call Joshua, and present yourselves

⁷ ^a Num. 27:19; Deut. 31:23; Josh. 1:6
⁸ ^b Ex. 13:21 ^p Deut. 31:6; Josh. 1:5; 1 Chr. 28:20; Heb. 13:5
⁹ ^c Deut. 17:18; 31:25, 26 ^r Num. 4:5, 6, 15; Deut. 10:8; 31:25, 26; Josh. 3:3
¹⁰ ^d Deut. 15:1, 2 ^r Lev. 23:34; Deut. 16:13
¹¹ ^e Deut. 16:16 ^r Deut. 12:5 ^w Josh. 8:34; 2 Kin. 23:2
¹² ^x Deut. 4:10
¹³ ^y Deut. 11:2 ^z Ps. 78:6, 7
¹⁴ ^a Num. 27:13

^b Num. 27:19; Deut. 3:28 ⁱ commission
¹⁵ ^c Ex. 33:9
¹⁶ ^d Deut. 29:22
^e Ex. 34:15; Deut. 4:25–28; Judg. 2:11, 12, 17 ^f Deut. 32:15 ^g Judg. 2:20
² Die and join your ancestors

BIBLE TIMES & CULTURE NOTES



Biblical Law—Public Law

Biblical law was public law, and this was an important difference from the pagan laws of the Middle East. In many nations of the ancient Middle East, the king carried the laws in his head, as they were his personal possession. He did not publish them until he was ready to give up his throne. Thus a person could be arrested for breaking a law he had never known. The laws were kept secret, even when a person was put on trial for breaking them. (There are few instances in which anyone cited the royal codes in a court case.) But in Israel, the leaders of government read God's Law to the people at regular times of the year (31:10–13). Thus every citizen could learn the laws he had to obey. Other peoples of the ancient Middle East obeyed laws because they were enforced by the royal establishment; disobedience meant punishment. But God's people were to obey His Law because they loved Him (cf. 6:5; 20–25).

in the tabernacle of meeting, that ^bI may ⁱinaugurate him.”

So Moses and Joshua went and presented themselves in the tabernacle of meeting. ¹⁵Now ^cthe LORD appeared at the tabernacle in a pillar of cloud, and the pillar of cloud stood above the door of the tabernacle.

¹⁶And the LORD said to Moses: “Behold, you will ²rest with your fathers; and this people will ^drise and ^eplay the harlot with the gods of the foreigners of the land, where they go *to be* among them, and they will ^fforsake Me and ^gbreak My covenant which I have made with them.

31:7, 8 With encouraging and challenging words, Moses publicly transferred his authority to **Joshua** (1:38; 31:14, 23; 32:44; 34:9). **He is the One who goes before you:** Moses applied the promise given to Israel (v. 6) to Joshua.

31:9 **Moses wrote this law and delivered it:** In accordance with ancient Middle Eastern practices concerning international treaties, Moses made provisions for the future reading of the law and instruction in it. The ark was called **the ark of the covenant** because it was the depository for the tablets of the Law.

31:11, 12 **you shall read this law:** Specifically, the priests were given the responsibility of reading the law and instructing the people (Neh. 8:1–6; Mal. 2:4–9). **men and women and little ones, and the stranger:** The Word of God was for all to hear.

31:14 The words **the days approach** must have brought a renewed heaviness to Moses. He was ready to die, but his heart yearned to see the Promised Land. **I may inaugurate him:** The Lord's words to Joshua are recorded in v. 23 (compare Num. 27:18–23).

31:15 **The pillar of cloud** was the symbol of the presence of God during the wilderness journey (Ex. 13:21, 22).

31:16 The phrase **rest with your fathers** suggests that the body of the person would be laid to rest in a tomb. After the flesh had decayed, the bones would be placed with the bones of one's ancestors. Thus the person's remains were “with his fathers.” But the phrase may also refer to the intermediate state of the soul between death and resurrection. The Lord predicted Israel's future rebelliousness,

apostasy, and breach of the **covenant**. The expression **play the harlot** speaks both of spiritual adultery and physical acts of sexual immorality that were performed in association with the worship of Baal and Asherah, the gods of Canaan (12:1–5).

feast

(Heb. *chag*) (16:10, 13; 31:10; Ex. 12:14) Strong's #2282

The word *feast*, or “festival-gathering,” is related to the verb that means “to make a pilgrimage” or “to keep a pilgrim feast” (Ps. 84:5). The Hebrews were commanded to observe three pilgrim feasts a year (16:16; Ex. 23:14). These sacred feasts were celebrated by all people and were joyous expressions of gratitude to God (2 Chr. 30:21). They included processions, dancing, and the enjoyment of food and drink (Lev. 23:40, 41; Judg. 21:19–21). God intended that Israel's religious feasts be worship events, a celebration of the joy God had given them (Lev. 23:7, 21, 24, 36). The OT prophets, however, condemned the feasts because the Hebrews were desecrating these holy convocations with sacrilegious behavior (Is. 1:12–15; Amos 5:21). Zechariah prophesied of a time in the future when all nations would keep the “pilgrim-feast” before the Lord (Zech. 14:16).

17 Then My anger shall be ^haroused against them in that day, and ⁱI will forsake them, and I will ^jhide My face from them, and they shall be ³devoured. And many evils and troubles shall befall them, so that they will say in that day, ^k“Have not these evils come upon us because our God is ^lnot among us?” 18 And ^mI will surely hide My face in that day because of all the evil which they have done, in that they have turned to other gods.

19 “Now therefore, write down this song for yourselves, and teach it to the children of Israel; put it in their mouths, that this song may be ⁿa witness for Me against the children of Israel. 20 When I have brought them to the land flowing with milk and honey, of which I swore to their fathers, and they have eaten and filled themselves ^oand grown fat, ^pthen they will turn to other gods and serve them; and they will provoke Me and break My covenant. 21 Then it shall be, ^qwhen many evils and troubles have come upon them, that this song will testify against them as a witness; for it will not be forgotten in the mouths of their descendants, for ^rI know the inclination ^sof their behavior today, even before I have brought them to the land of which I swore *to give them.*”

22 Therefore Moses wrote this song the same day, and taught it to the children of Israel. 23 ^tThen He inaugurated Joshua the son of Nun, and said, ^u“Be strong and of good courage; for you shall bring the children of Israel into the land of which I swore to them, and I will be with you.”

24 So it was, when Moses had completed writing the words of this law in a book, when they were finished, 25 that Moses commanded the Levites, who bore the ark of the covenant of the LORD, saying:

17 ^h Judg. 2:14; 6:13
ⁱ 2 Chr. 15:2 / Deut. 32:20 ^k Judg. 6:13 / Num. 14:42
³ consumed
18 ^m Deut. 31:17; [Is. 1:15, 16]
19 ⁿ Deut. 31:22, 26
20 ^o Deut. 32:15-17
^p Deut. 31:16
21 ^q Deut. 31:17
^r Hos. 5:3 ^s Amos 5:25, 26
23 ^t Num. 27:23; Deut. 31:14 ^u Deut. 31:7

26 ^v 2 Kin. 22:8
^w Deut. 31:19
27 ^x Deut. 9:7, 24
^y Ex. 32:9; Deut. 9:6, 13
28 ^z Deut. 30:19
29 ^a Deut. 32:5;
Judg. 2:19; [Acts 20:29, 30] ^b Deut. 28:15 ^c Gen. 49:1; Deut. 4:30

CHAPTER 32

1 ^a Deut. 4:26; Ps. 50:4; Is. 1:2 ^b Jer. 6:19
2 ^c Is. 55:10, 11 ^d Ps. 72:6 ^e doctrine
3 ^e Deut. 28:58
^f 1 Chr. 29:11
4 ^g Deut. 32:15, 18, 30; Ps. 18:2 ^h 2 Sam. 22:31 ⁱ Deut. 7:9; Is. 65:16; Jer. 10:10
^j Job 34:10
5 ^k Deut. 4:25; 31:29

26 “Take this Book of the Law, ^vand put it beside the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, that it may be there ^was a witness against you; ^xfor I know your rebellion and your ^ystiff neck. *If* today, while I am yet alive with you, you have been rebellious against the LORD, then how much more after my death? 28 Gather to me all the elders of your tribes, and your officers, that I may speak these words in their hearing ^zand call heaven and earth to witness against them. 29 For I know that after my death you will ^abecome utterly corrupt, and turn aside from the way which I have commanded you. And ^bevil will befall you ^cin the latter days, because you will do evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke Him to anger through the work of your hands.”

The Song of Moses

30 Then Moses spoke in the hearing of all the assembly of Israel the words of this song until they were ended:

- 32** “Give ^aear, O heavens, and I will speak;
And hear, O ^bearth, the words of my mouth.
2 Let ^cmy ⁱteaching drop as the rain,
My speech distill as the dew,
^dAs raindrops on the tender herb,
And as showers on the grass.
3 For I proclaim the ^ename of the LORD:
^fAscribe greatness to our God.
4 *He is* ^gthe Rock, ^hHis work is perfect;
For all His ways *are* justice,
ⁱA God of truth and ^jwithout injustice;
Righteous and upright *is* He.
5 “They^k have corrupted themselves;
They are not His children,

31:17, 18 **I will forsake them:** Should the worst occur, the anger of God would be aroused as was described in chs. 28; 29. **to other gods:** The principal reason for God’s judgment on His people was their continual idolatry. They abandoned His grace and willingly embraced the evil religious practices of the Canaanites.

31:19 **This song** is the Song of Moses recorded in 31:30—32:43. God commanded Moses and Joshua to **teach** this song to the Israelites.

31:22 **Moses wrote . . . and taught it:** These words create an anticipation of v. 30. Psalm 90 is attributed to Moses as well.

31:23 **Be strong and of good courage:** God encouraged Joshua with the same words that Moses used to encourage the people (v. 6). **I will be with you:** God assured Joshua of His presence during the conquest (Josh. 1:5; Hag. 2:4).

31:26 **This Book of the Law** is the Book of Deuteronomy. This book would be a witness against Israel when they turned from the living God to worship other gods. Then the book that originally had been a book of God’s loving instructions to His people would unfortunately become a charter of His wrath.

31:29 **For I know:** It is unclear whether Moses’ words here were based on his own experience with the people or on a revelation from the Lord. Perhaps both were at work.

32:1 **O heavens . . . O earth:** Isaiah similarly called on heaven and earth to witness (Is. 1:2).

32:2 **my teaching:** The song is an expression of wisdom (see Prov. 1:5; 4:2; 9:9). **rain . . . dew . . . raindrops . . . showers:** These four similes express the refreshing and invigorating nature of the instruction.

32:3 **Ascribe greatness to our God:** True wisdom and obedience always lead to the praise of God (Ps. 145:3; 150:2).

32:4 Unlike the powerless gods of the nations (v. 37), God gives life, stability, and happiness to His people (vv. 15, 18, 30, 31). The joyful life that He gives is based on His **perfect** works. Like a firm **Rock** that stands against the raging waters of a stormy sea, God and His works stand firm against the chaos produced by sinful lives. He is the sure foundation for all **truth** in a world of deception. Thus He will never let lies pervert justice (Zeph. 3:5). Instead, as a **righteous** Judge, He will protect those who have been oppressed. Right before the Israelites entered the land of Canaan in order to establish a new nation, Moses extolled the God who is the perfect foundation for any society.

32:5 **perverse and crooked generation:** Moses contrasted the Israelites with their faithful God. Compared to the perfect God of truth, they were corrupt, blemished, and deceptive (v. 20).

- Because of their blemish:
A ^lperverse and crooked generation.
6 Do you thus ^mdeal² with the LORD,
O foolish and unwise people?
Is He not ⁿyour Father, who ^obought you?
Has He not ^pmade you and
established you?
- 7 “Remember^q the days of old,
Consider the years of many
generations.
^rAsk your father, and he will show
you;
Your elders, and they will tell you:
8 When the Most High ^sdivided their
inheritance to the nations,
When He ^tseparated the sons of
Adam,
He set the boundaries of the peoples
According to the number of the
³children of Israel.
9 For ^uthe LORD’s portion *is* His
people;
Jacob *is* the place of His inheritance.
- 10⁴ “He found him ^vin a desert land
And in the wasteland, a howling
wilderness;
He encircled him, He instructed him,
He ^wkept him as the ⁴apple of His
eye.
11 ^xAs an eagle stirs up its nest,
Hovers over its young,
Spreading out its wings, taking
them up,
Carrying them on its wings,
12 So the LORD alone led him,

5 ^l Phil. 2:15
6 ^m Ps. 116:12
ⁿ Ex. 4:22; Deut.
1:31; Is. 63:16 ^o Ps.
74:2 ^p Deut. 32:15
² *repay the*
7 ^q Ps. 44:1 ^r Ex.
12:26; 13:14; Ps.
78:5-8
8 ^s Acts 17:26
^t Gen. 11:8 ³ LXX,
DSS *angels of God*;
Symmachus, Lat.
sons of God
9 ^u Ex. 19:5
10 ^v Jer. 2:6; Hos.
13:5 ^w Ps. 17:8;
Prov. 7:2; Zech. 2:8
⁴ *pupil*
11 ^x Is. 31:5

13 ^y Is. 58:14
14 ^z Ps. 81:16 ^a Gen.
49:11
15 ^b Deut. 31:20
^c Is. 1:4 ^d Is. 51:13
^e Ps. 95:1
16 ^f Ps. 78:58; 1 Cor.
10:22 ⁵ *detestable*
acts
17 ^g Rev. 9:20
18 ^h Is. 17:10 ⁱ Jer.
2:32

- And *there was* no foreign god with
him.
- 13⁴ “He ^ymade him ride in the heights of
the earth,
That he might eat the produce of the
fields;
He made him draw honey from the
rock,
And oil from the flinty rock;
14 Curds from the cattle, and milk of
the flock,
^zWith fat of lambs;
And rams of the breed of Bashan,
and goats,
With the choicest wheat;
And you drank wine, the ^ablood of
the grapes.
- 15⁴ “But Jeshurun grew fat and kicked;
^bYou grew fat, you grew thick,
You are obese!
Then he ^cforsook God *who ^dmade him,*
And scornfully esteemed the ^eRock
of his salvation.
16 ^fThey provoked Him to jealousy with
foreign *gods*;
With ⁵abominations they provoked
Him to anger.
17 ^gThey sacrificed to demons, not to God,
To gods they did not know,
To new gods, new arrivals
That your fathers did not fear.
18 ^hOf the Rock *who* begot you, you are
unmindful,
And have ⁱforgotten the God who
fathered you.

32:6 The ancient Israelites knew God was their **Father** (see Is. 63:16; 64:8), but they rarely confessed this great truth. Thus these words are unusually striking because they express the Israelites’ close relationship with God while at the same time castigating the people for abandoning their Father. God had chosen them, loved them, and cared for them. He had brought them out of Egypt and had even **established** them as a nation by giving them detailed instructions.

32:7 Remember . . . they will tell you: Here the song uses the language of wisdom literature to exhort the Israelites to search out God’s ways. The Scriptures repeatedly emphasize that wisdom is based on the God of all truth.

32:8, 9 Most High: This designation for God’s supremacy is unique to Deuteronomy. He is the sovereign God over all, even the **boundaries** of the nations. **the LORD’s portion:** While it is the Lord’s will for many nations to exist, He has favored Israel with His special grace, promises, and covenant.

32:10 In a desert land is a poetic reference to Egypt. **He instructed him:** God gave Israel His revelation and His laws in order to lead them in all truth. **Kept him as the apple** (or pupil) **of His eye** is a symbol of tender loving care for a precious object in need of protection.

32:11 The eagle is a bird of prey commonly found in desert regions. The song compares God’s actions towards Israel with the care a mother bird showers on her young. God not only protected His children, He provided for them, got them moving, watched over them, and guided them to the Promised Land (Ex. 19:4). In all these actions He proved Himself to be a loving Father to the Israelites (v. 6).

32:12 the LORD alone . . . no foreign god: Deuteronomy is an extended argument against idolatry and paganism. Clearly the Israelites had no reason to abandon the God of grace and love who had given them all they needed.

32:13, 14 He made him ride in the heights of the earth: The Lord had great plans for His people (Is. 48:17–19). **produce . . . honey . . . oil:** The Lord had promised to supply His people with crops, rich food, olive oil, and even dairy products in the Promised Land—all of which the people lacked in the wilderness. **wheat . . . the blood of the grapes:** Grain and wine were also promised, symbols of God’s mercy.

32:15, 16 Jeshurun, a pet name for Israel, means “Uprightness.” This part of the song contrasts what Israel should have been and what they became. Since the nation had received God’s revelation and His instruction, it should have become upright (v. 4). Instead, the nation would grow fat and rebel. **scornfully esteemed the Rock of his salvation:** Even though the Israelites would grow rich off God’s blessing, they would reject the source not only of those blessings, but also of their salvation. Instead, they would embrace **foreign gods** that had done nothing for Israel (v. 12).

32:17 Rarely in the OT (Ps. 106:37; see also Amos 2:1) are references made to **demons** and demonic powers. Although the Scriptures make it clear that the false gods do not exist as such, this passage identifies the power behind these gods: demons.

32:18 Fathered literally means “gave birth.” This is one of several places where God is portrayed in terms that liken His role to that of a nurturing, life-giving mother (compare Is. 66:13).

- 19^a And^j when the LORD saw *it*, He spurned *them*,
Because of the provocation of His sons and His daughters.
- 20 And He said: ‘I will hide My face from them,
I will see what their end *will be*,
For they *are* a perverse generation,
^kChildren in whom *is* no faith.
- 21 ^lThey have provoked Me to jealousy by *what* is not God;
They have moved Me to anger ^mby their ⁿfoolish idols.
But ⁿI will provoke them to jealousy by *those who are* not a nation;
I will move them to anger by a foolish nation.
- 22 For ^oa fire is kindled in My anger,
And shall burn to the ^plowest ^qhell;
It shall consume the earth with her increase,
And set on fire the foundations of the mountains.
- 23 ^rI will ^sheap disasters on them;
^tI will spend My arrows on them.
- 24 *They shall be* wasted with hunger,
Devoured by pestilence and bitter destruction;
I will also send against them the ^uteeth of beasts,
With the poison of serpents of the dust.
- 25 The sword shall destroy outside;
There shall be terror within
For the young man and virgin,
The nursing child with the man of gray hairs.
- 26 ^vI would have said, “I will dash them in pieces,
I will make the memory of them to cease from among men,”
- 27 Had I not feared the wrath of the enemy,
Lest their adversaries should misunderstand,

19 ^j Judg. 2:14
20 ^k Matt. 17:17
21 ^l Ps. 78:58 ^m Ps. 31:6 ⁿ Rom. 10:19
^o foolishness, lit.
vanities
22 ^p Num. 16:33-35; Ps. 18:7, 8; Lam. 4:11
^q lowest part of ^r Or Sheol
23 ^s Ex. 32:12; Deut. 29:21, 24 ^t Ps. 7:12, 13
24 ^u Lev. 26:22
26 ^v Ezek. 20:23

27 ^l Is. 10:12-15
29 ^u Ps. 81:13; [Luke 19:42] ^v Deut. 31:29
30 ^w Judg. 2:14; Ps. 44:12
31 ^x [1 Sam. 4:7, 8; Jer. 40:2, 3]
32 ^y Is. 1:8-10
33 ^z Ps. 58:4 ^a Rom. 3:13
34 ^b [Jer. 2:22]
35 ^c Ps. 94:1; Rom. 12:19; Heb. 10:30
^d 2 Pet. 2:3
36 ^e Ps. 135:14; Heb. 10:30 ^f Ps. 106:45; Jer. 31:20 ^g 2 Kin. 14:26
37 ^h Judg. 10:14; Jer. 2:28

Lest they should say, ⁱ“Our hand is high;
And it is not the LORD who has done all this.”’

- 28^a For *they are* a nation void of counsel,
Nor *is there any* understanding in them.
- 29^b Oh, that they were wise, *that* they understood this,
That they would consider their ^vlatter end!
- 30 How could one chase a thousand,
And two put ten thousand to flight,
Unless their Rock ^whad sold them,
And the LORD had surrendered them?
- 31 For their rock *is* not like our Rock,
^xEven our enemies themselves *being* judges.
- 32 For ^ytheir vine *is* of the vine of Sodom
And of the fields of Gomorrah;
Their grapes *are* grapes of gall,
Their clusters *are* bitter.
- 33 Their wine *is* ^zthe poison of serpents,
And the cruel ^avenom of cobras.
- 34 ⁱIs this not ^blaid up in store with Me,
Sealed up among My treasures?
- 35 ^cVengeance is Mine, and recompense;
Their foot shall slip in *due* time;
^dFor the day of their calamity *is* at hand,
And the things to come hasten upon them.’
- 36^a For ^ethe LORD will judge His people
^fAnd have compassion on His servants,
When He sees that *their* power is gone,
And ^gthere *is* no one remaining, bond or free.
- 37 He will say: ^h“Where *are* their gods,
The rock in which they sought refuge?

32:20 I will see what their end will be: Even though Israel would reject Him, God would be patient with His rebellious children.

32:24 hunger . . . pestilence . . . destruction: Instead of blessing His chosen people, God would send curses on them in order to discipline them. **teeth of beasts . . . poison of serpents:** Creation would also turn against the people.

32:25 young man . . . virgin: The pairings of opposites in this verse indicate that God’s judgment would be comprehensive. It would affect all of society. Similar pairings in Joel 2:28, 29 speak of the comprehensiveness of God’s blessing.

32:28 This verse anticipates God’s judgment of Israel and Judah in the days of Isaiah (Is. 1:3; 6:9, 10).

32:29, 30 Often the phrase **latter end** is understood as “glorious future”; here it speaks of “ruinous future” for the rebellious Israelites. **Unless their Rock had sold them:** God’s protection of His people was so certain that their conquest by enemies could occur only if it were He who gave them over.

32:32, 33 The enemy nations were like the people of **Sodom and Gomorrah**—cruel, immoral, and oppressive.

32:34-36 laid up in store . . . Sealed: God’s sure plan and purposes are hidden. **Vengeance is Mine . . . judge His people:** Only the God who is completely just can judge and make right all the wrongs committed. See Rom. 12:19; Heb. 10:30. There will be a time for God’s vindication. **compassion on His servants:** God would discern one day between the righteous and the wicked (Mal. 3:16). He would deal kindly with the remnant that loved and followed Him. This is the basis for all of the prophetic messages about the remnant of Israel.

32:37, 38 Where are their gods: The song mocks those who follow false gods. They abandoned the Rock of truth for a **rock** that was not even a pebble. When the **fat** was burned and the **wine** was poured out on the altars of the false gods, the gods were believed to eat and drink these offerings. Yet these gods did not even exist, so they neither **ate** nor **drank**.

- 38 Who ate the fat of their sacrifices,
And drank the wine of their drink
offering?
Let them rise and help you,
And be your refuge.
- 39 ‘Now see that ⁱI, *even I, am He*,
And ^jthere is no God besides Me;
^kI kill and I make alive;
I wound and I heal;
Nor *is there any* who can deliver
from My hand.
- 40 For I raise My hand to heaven,
And say, “As I live forever,
41 ^lIf I ⁹whet My glittering sword,
And My hand takes hold on
judgment,
I will render vengeance to My
enemies,
And repay those who hate Me.
- 42 I will make My arrows drunk with
blood,
And My sword shall devour flesh,
With the blood of the slain and the
captives,
From the heads of the leaders of the
enemy.”
- 43 “Rejoice, ^mO Gentiles, *with His*
¹people;
For He will ⁿavenge the blood of His
servants,
And render vengeance to His
adversaries;
He ^owill provide atonement for His
land *and His people*.”

44 So Moses came with ²Joshua the son of Nun and spoke all the words of this song in the hearing of the people. 45 Moses finished speaking all these words to all Israel, 46 and he said to them: ^p“Set your hearts on all the words which I testify among you today, which you shall command your ^qchildren to be careful to observe—all the words of this law. 47 For

39 ⁱIs. 41:4; 43:10
/ Deut. 32:12; Is.
45:5 ^k1 Sam. 2:6;
Ps. 68:20
41 ^lIs. 1:24; 66:16;
Jer. 50:28-32
⁹sharpen
43 ^mRom. 15:10
ⁿ2 Kin. 9:7; Rev.
6:10; 19:2 ^oPs. 65:3;
79:9; 85:1 ¹DSS
fragment adds
And let all the gods
(angels) worship
Him; cf. LXX and
Heb. 1:6
44 ²Heb. *Hoshea*,
Num. 13:8, 16
46 ^pEzek. 40:4;
44:5 ^qDeut. 11:19

47 ^rDeut. 8:3;
30:15-20 ³vain
49 ^sNum. 27:12-14;
Deut. 3:27
50 ^tNum. 20:25, 28;
33:38 ⁴Join your
ancestors
51 ^uNum. 20:11-13
^vLev. 10:3 ⁵Lit.
Contention at
Kadesh
52 ^wNum. 27:12;
Deut. 34:1-5

CHAPTER 33

1 ^aGen. 49:28
^bPs. 90
2 ^cEx. 19:18, 20;
Ps. 68:8, 17; Hab.
3:3 ^dDeut. 2:1, 4
^eNum. 10:12 ^fDan.
7:10; Acts 7:53;
Rev. 5:11
3 ^gPs. 47:4; Hos.
11:1 ^h1 Sam.
2:9 ⁱ[Luke 10:39]
/ Prov. 2:1
4 ^kDeut. 4:2; John
1:17; 7:19 ^lPs.
119:111 ¹charged
us with

it is not a ³futile thing for you, because it is your ^rlife, and by this word you shall prolong *your* days in the land which you cross over the Jordan to possess.”

Moses to Die on Mount Nebo

48 Then the LORD spoke to Moses that very same day, saying: 49 ^s“Go up this mountain of the Abarim, Mount Nebo, which is in the land of Moab, across from Jericho; view the land of Canaan, which I give to the children of Israel as a possession; 50 and die on the mountain which you ascend, and be ⁴gathered to your people, just as ^tAaron your brother died on Mount Hor and was gathered to his people; 51 because ^uyou trespassed against Me among the children of Israel at the waters of ⁵Meribah Kadesh, in the Wilderness of Zin, because you ^vdid not hallow Me in the midst of the children of Israel. 52 ^wYet you shall see the land before *you*, though you shall not go there, into the land which I am giving to the children of Israel.”

Moses' Final Blessing on Israel

33 Now this is ^athe blessing with which Moses ^bthe man of God blessed the children of Israel before his death. 2 And he said:

- “The LORD came from Sinai,
And dawned on them from ^dSeir;
He shone forth from ^eMount Paran,
And He came with ^ften thousands of
saints;
From His right hand
Came a fiery law for them.
- 3 Yes, ^gHe loves the people;
^hAll His saints *are* in Your hand;
They ⁱsit down at Your feet;
Everyone ^jreceives Your words.
- 4 ^kMoses ¹commanded a law for us,
^lA heritage of the congregation of
Jacob.

32:39 I, even I, am He is a glorious affirmation of the incomparability of God (Ps. 113:4–6). God alone controls human existence. Because He is totally free to do what He wants, only He can either curse or bless, wound or heal, kill or give life.

32:40 I raise My hand to heaven: God made an oath to Himself that He would avenge His people (Gen. 22:16; Heb. 6:13–18). He would make right all wrongs.

32:43 Rejoice, O Gentiles, with His people: God in this song given to Moses invited all nations to join in the worship of the living God, to praise Him for promising to restore justice.

32:46 Law here may signify the Song of Moses or Deuteronomy as a whole (compare 31:26).

32:47 prolong your days: The intention of God's instruction was to show the Israelites the path that leads to fullness of life and rich blessing.

32:48, 49 Mount Nebo is a mountain peak near Heshbon about ten miles east of the northern end of the Dead Sea.

32:50–52 you did not hallow Me: Moses did not completely obey

God's instructions at Kadesh. Because of this, Moses could not enter the Promised Land (1:37; 3:23–26; 4:21, 22; 31:2; Num. 20:10–13). Yet God would graciously allow Moses to **see the land** (34:1–8).

33:1 Moses is to be remembered for his faithfulness in spite of his failure (Heb. 3:1–6). Scriptures describe him as a servant of God (Num. 12:6–8), a friend of God (Ex. 33:11), and a **man of God**.

33:2 came from . . . dawned . . . shone forth: These verbs reminded the Israelites of the awe-inspiring revelation of God in all of His glory. God came down to Israel and revealed His covenant and law to them at Mt. Sinai. Poetically, Moses referred to **Seir** and **Paran** located northeast of Mt. Sinai. With these references, Moses implied that God's revelation took place throughout the whole wilderness journey (Judg. 5:4, 5). **ten thousands of saints:** Angelic beings attended the giving of the law (compare Acts 7:53; Gal. 3:19; Heb. 2:2).

33:4, 5 heritage: What made Israel unique was its reception of the law of God mediated through Moses. God had chosen Israel alone to receive His instructions. The Lord alone was the **King** over His people. At the same time, He as the Creator ruled over all He had made.

5 And He was ^mKing in ⁿJeshurun,
When the leaders of the people were
gathered,
All the tribes of Israel together.

6 “Let ^oReuben live, and not die,
Nor let his men be few.”

7 And this he said of ^pJudah:

“Hear, LORD, the voice of Judah,
And bring him to his people;
^qLet his hands be sufficient for him,
And may You be ^ra help against his
enemies.”

8 And of ^sLevi he said:

“^tLet Your ²Thummim and Your Urim
^{be} with Your holy one,
^uWhom You tested at Massah,
And with whom You contended at
the waters of Meribah,
9 ^vWho says of his father and mother,
‘I have not ^wseen them’;
^xNor did he acknowledge his brothers,
Or know his own children;
For ^ythey have observed Your word
And kept Your covenant.
10 ^zThey shall teach Jacob Your judgments,
And Israel Your law.
They shall put incense before You,
^aAnd a whole burnt sacrifice on Your
altar.

11 Bless his substance, LORD,
And ^baccept the work of his hands;
Strike the loins of those who rise
against him,
And of those who hate him, that
they rise not again.”

12 Of Benjamin he said:

“The beloved of the LORD shall dwell
in safety by Him,
Who shelters him all the day long;

5 ^m Ex. 15:18
ⁿ Deut. 32:15
6 ^o Gen. 49:3, 4
7 ^p Gen. 49:8-12
^q Gen. 49:8 ^r Ps.
146:5
8 ^s Gen. 49:5 ^t Ex.
28:30; Lev. 8:8
^u Num. 20:2-13;
Deut. 6:2, 3, 16;
Ps. 81:7 ² Lit.
*Perfections and
Your Lights*
9 ^v [Num. 25:5-8;
Matt. 10:37; 19:29]
^w [Gen. 29:32] ^x Ex.
32:26-28 ^y Mal.
2:5, 6
10 ^z Lev. 10:11;
Deut. 31:9-13; Mal.
2:7 ^a Lev. 1:9; Ps.
51:19
11 ^b 2 Sam. 24:23;
Ezek. 20:40

13 ^c Gen. 49:22-26
^d Gen. 27:28
15 ^e Gen. 49:26
^f Hab. 3:6
16 ^g Ex. 3:2-4; Acts
7:30-35 ^h Gen.
49:26
17 ⁱ 1 Chr. 5:1
^j Num. 22:32
^k 1 Kin. 22:11; Ps.
44:5 ^l Gen. 48:19
18 ^m Gen. 49:13-15
19 ⁿ Ex. 15:17; Ps.
2:6; Is. 2:3 ^o Ps. 4:5;
51:19

And he shall dwell between His
shoulders.”

13 And of Joseph he said:

^c“Blessed of the LORD is his land,
With the precious things of heaven,
with the ^ddew,
And the deep lying beneath,
14 With the precious fruits of the sun,
With the precious produce of the
months,
15 With the best things of ^ethe ancient
mountains,
With the precious things ^fof the
everlasting hills,
16 With the precious things of the earth
and its fullness,
And the favor of ^gHim who dwelt in
the bush.
Let the blessing come ^hon the head of
Joseph,
And on the crown of the head of
him ⁱwho was separate from his
brothers.
17 His glory is like a ⁱfirstborn bull,
And his horns like the ^jhorns of the
wild ox;
Together with them
^kHe shall push the peoples
To the ends of the earth;
^lThey are the ten thousands of
Ephraim,
And they are the thousands of
Manasseh.”

18 And of Zebulun he said:

^m“Rejoice, Zebulun, in your going out,
And Issachar in your tents!
19 They shall ⁿcall the peoples to the
mountain;
There ^othey shall offer sacrifices of
righteousness;
For they shall partake of the
abundance of the seas
And of treasures hidden in the sand.”

33:6 Let Reuben live . . . men be few: Moses predicted that the Reubenites would have a future, but not a glorious one. Settled east of the Dead Sea, the Reubenites would eventually isolate themselves from the other tribes (Judg. 5:15, 16).

33:7 Moses prayed that the LORD would be present with Judah in its military leadership and would give it success in battle. **hands be sufficient:** Moses prayed that God would give adequate strength to the tribe.

33:8, 9 Moses prayed for God's guidance to rest on the Levites, who were responsible for judging cases. The Urim and Thummim (Ex. 28:30) were God's appointed instruments for deciding innocence or guilt and for guiding His people. **holy one:** A term for the Levites who were separated from the other tribes to serve in the tabernacle. **Massah . . . Meribah:** The Levites passed the test when the other tribes failed to believe in the Lord's ability to provide and care for His people (6:16; 9:22). Moses commended the Levites for their loyalty to God's word and covenant.

33:10 teach: The Levites were charged with the responsibility of

instructing the Israelites. They had modeled loyalty (v. 9). Now they had to help Israel understand how to live by God's revelation. In this way, they continued the ministry of Moses. **incense:** The Levites were also responsible for the worship of God at the tabernacle (Ex. 30:7).

33:12 As the beloved son of Jacob, Benjamin was also the beloved of the LORD (Gen. 44:20). The Lord would give the tribe of Benjamin peace and safety. **shelters . . . dwell between His shoulders:** The Lord would provide Benjamin with His personal protection.

33:17 glory . . . horns: God would give Ephraim and Manasseh prowess in battle and victory in warfare. Like oxen, these two tribes would push their enemies away from them. **ten thousands of Ephraim . . . thousands of Manasseh:** In keeping with Jacob's blessing of Joseph's younger son Ephraim, Moses exalted him above Manasseh (Gen. 48:8-20).

33:19 The tribe of Zebulun would be located by the seas. The seas and their shores were God's appointed place for the tribe's prosperity.

²⁰ And of Gad he said:

“Blessed *is* he who ^penlarges Gad;
He dwells as a lion,
And tears the arm and the crown of
his head.

²¹ ^qHe provided the first *part* for
himself,
Because a lawgiver’s portion was
reserved there.
^rHe came *with* the heads of the people;
He administered the justice of the
LORD,
And His judgments with Israel.”

²² And of Dan he said:

“Dan *is* a lion’s whelp;
^sHe shall leap from Bashan.”

²³ And of Naphtali he said:

“O Naphtali, ^tsatisfied with favor,
And full of the blessing of the LORD,
“Possess the west and the south.”

²⁴ And of Asher he said:

^v“Asher *is* most blessed of sons;
Let him be favored by his brothers,
And let him ^wdip his foot in oil.

²⁵ Your sandals *shall be* ^xiron and
bronze;
As your days, *so shall* your
strength *be*.

²⁶ “*There is* ^yno one like the God of
^zJeshurun,

^aWho rides the heavens to help you,
And in His excellency on the clouds.

²⁰ ^p 1 Chr. 12:8
²¹ ^q Num. 32:16, 17
J Josh. 4:12
²² ^s Gen. 49:16, 17;
Josh. 19:47
²³ ^t Gen. 49:21
^u Josh. 19:32
²⁴ ^v Gen. 49:20
^w Job 29:6
²⁵ ^x Deut. 8:9
²⁶ ^y Ex. 15:11; Deut.
4:35; Ps. 86:8; Jer.
10:6 ^z Deut. 32:15
^a Deut. 10:14; Ps.
68:3, 33, 34; 104:3

²⁷ ^b [Ps. 90:1; 91:2,
9] ^c Deut. 9:3-5
²⁸ ^d Deut. 33:12;
Jer. 23:6; 33:16
^e Deut. 8:7, 8 ^f Num.
23:9 ^g Gen. 27:28
²⁹ ^h Ps. 144:15
ⁱ Deut. 4:32-34;
2 Sam. 7:23 ^j Gen.
15:1; Ps. 115:9 ^k Ps.
18:44; 66:3 ^l Num.
33:52 ^m Places for
pagan worship

CHAPTER 34

¹ ^a Num. 27:12;
Deut. 32:49
² ^b Mediterranean
³ ^c 2 Chr. 28:15
⁴ ^d Gen. 12:7
^e Deut. 3:27
⁵ ^e Num. 20:12;
Deut. 32:50; Josh.
1:1, 2

²⁷ The eternal God *is your* ^brefuge,
And underneath *are* the everlasting
arms;

^cHe will thrust out the enemy from
before you,
And will say, ‘Destroy!’

²⁸ Then ^dIsrael shall dwell in safety,
^eThe fountain of Jacob ^falone,
In a land of grain and new wine;
His ^gheavens shall also drop dew.

²⁹ ^hHappy *are* you, O Israel!

ⁱWho is like you, a people saved by
the LORD,

^jThe shield of your help
And the sword of your majesty!

Your enemies ^kshall submit to
you,

And ^lyou shall tread down their
³high places.”

Moses Dies on Mount Nebo

34 Then Moses went up from the
plains of Moab ^ato Mount Nebo,
to the top of Pisgah, which is across from
Jericho. And the LORD showed him all the
land of Gilead as far as Dan, ²all Naphtali
and the land of Ephraim and Manasseh,
all the land of Judah as far as the ¹West-
ern Sea, ³the South, and the plain of the
Valley of Jericho, ^bthe city of palm trees,
as far as Zoar. ⁴Then the LORD said to
him, ^c“This is the land of which I swore
to give Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, say-
ing, ‘I will give it to your descendants.’ ^dI
have caused you to see *it* with your eyes,
but you shall not cross over there.”

⁵So Moses the servant of the LORD
died there in the land of Moab, according
to the word of the LORD. ⁶And He bur-
ied him in a valley in the land of Moab,

33:20, 21 Moses compared Gad’s military role to the power of a
ravenous **lion** and predicted that this tribe would readily join the
others in the conquest of Canaan (Josh. 22:1–6).

33:22 **Lion’s whelp** may refer to the small size of the tribe of Dan.
Though Dan’s land inheritance was close to Judah by the coastal
plains, the tribe would not be able keep their inheritance because of
the hostility of the Philistines. Therefore, the Danites would one day
migrate to the region of the **Bashan**, south of Mt. Hermon (Judg. 18).

33:23 Moses’ **blessing** on Naphtali indicates that this tribe would
enjoy God’s blessings of abundance. The tribe would inherit the
land **west** and **south** of the Sea of Galilee.

33:24, 25 **Dip his foot in oil** is an image of God’s rich blessing to
Asher (Ps. 133:2).

33:26, 27 **There is no one like:** This negative phrase is a Hebraic
way of expressing a strong positive: “The God of Jeshurun alone will
help.” **rides the heavens . . . the clouds:** Like a soldier, the Lord
is constantly on the lookout for ways to defend His people from
attack. The Divine Warrior is always providing protection because
He is **eternal**. God is a **refuge** or fortress for the people to flee to
in times of distress (Ps. 90:1; 91:9). **everlasting arms:** The God who
redeemed Israel with His strong arm will always be with His people
in love and power.

33:28 **Then Israel will dwell in safety:** Moses affirmed the truth
of the promise God gave through the pagan prophet Balaam (Num.
23:9).

33:29 **Who is like you:** The question is actually a declaration:
“There is no people like you.” **shield . . . sword:** These military im-
ages point to God, the source of all human protection. He would
fight Israel’s battles. **tread down their high places:** God would
break down with His own feet the places of idolatrous worship, the
pagan sites that defiled the nations (Mic. 1:3).

34:1 **Moab** was where Moses had given Israel an explanation of the
law (1:5) and had led them in a covenant renewal ceremony (29:1–
28). **Jericho** was the first city in Canaan to be conquered. **And the
LORD showed him:** Though he was still in Moab, Moses was granted
by God a close-up view of the land. How sad that his feet were not
able to walk where his eyes danced! **Dan** was the territory below
Mt. Hermon that was later conquered by the tribe of Dan (Judg. 18).

34:2 **Judah** refers to the highlands west of Jericho and of the Dead
Sea. **The Western Sea** is the Mediterranean.

34:3, 4 **South** refers to the Negev, the dry county south of Judah.
The plain is the region around the Dead Sea, from the valley of Jer-
icho to **Zoar**, the city in the southern plain where Lot escaped with
his daughters (Gen. 19:22). **I swore:** God had promised this territory
to Abraham long ago (Gen. 15:18–21; 17:1–8; Ex. 33:1).

34:5 Moses remained God’s faithful **servant**. A servant of God is a
person who has a close and trusted relationship with God, such as
Abraham (Gen. 26:24) and David (2 Sam. 7:5).

34:6, 7 **No one knows his grave:** God took care of Moses’ funeral.
If his burial place had been known, some people most likely would

opposite Beth Peor; but ^fno one knows his grave to this day. ^{7g}Moses *was* one hundred and twenty years old when he died. ^hHis ²eyes were not dim nor his natural vigor ³diminished. ⁸And the children of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab ⁱthirty days. So the days of weeping *and* mourning for Moses ended.

⁹Now Joshua the son of Nun was full of the ^jspirit of wisdom, for ^kMoses had laid his hands on him; so the children of

6 ^f Jude 9
7 ^g Deut. 31:2
^h Gen. 27:1; 48:10
² eyesight was not weakened
³ reduced
8 ⁱ Gen. 50:3, 10
9 / Is. 11:2 ^k Num. 27:18, 23
10 ^j Deut. 18:15, 18
^m Ex. 33:11; Num. 12:8; Deut. 5:4
11 ⁿ Deut. 7:19

Israel heeded him, and did as the LORD had commanded Moses.

¹⁰But since then there ^lhas not arisen in Israel a prophet like Moses, ^mwhom the LORD knew face to face, ¹¹in all ⁿthe signs and wonders which the LORD sent him to do in the land of Egypt, before Pharaoh, before all his servants, and in all his land, ¹²and by all that mighty power and all the great terror which Moses performed in the sight of all Israel.

have made it a shrine and begun to worship there. God graciously concealed the burial site of Moses. **not dim . . . diminished:** Moses died because it was God's will and not because of normal physical deterioration associated with old age (31:2).

34:8 Thirty days was the customary period of mourning. Though Moses was buried alone, he was not forgotten by his people.

34:9 Joshua was recognized for his **wisdom** as he followed the call of the Lord in his life.

34:10–12 A prophet like Moses: As important as Joshua was, he should not be confused with the One who would fulfill God's

promise of a prophet who would have an even greater status than Moses (18:15). **Face to face** describes the unusual intimacy between Moses and the Lord (Ex. 33:11; Num. 12). Like Moses, Jesus of Nazareth performed **signs and wonders** when He began His ministry on earth (Matt. 4:23–25; John 5:46). **Moses performed:** The miraculous works accomplished by Moses were God's works through Moses' hand. In these engaging words of testimony to the significance of Moses as the servant of God, Deuteronomy comes to its grand conclusion.

THE BOOK OF JOSHUA



THE BOOK OF JOSHUA describes the Israelites' conquest of Canaan—from the initial invasion across the Jordan River to the final division of the land. Like most military histories, Joshua focuses on the commander. Yet for this unique war, the commander was God Himself (5:15). The book repeatedly emphasizes that the Israelites' victories were due to God's intervention (chs. 10; 11). The extraordinary victory over Jericho dramatically demonstrated this (ch. 6). Now God was decisively acting on the promises that He had made to Abraham: He was giving the land of Canaan to His people! The Book of Joshua describes a God who faithfully fulfills His promises.

Author and Title This book is named for the man who figures most prominently in it, Moses' successor and Israel's leader during the conquest of Canaan. Appropriately, Joshua's name in Hebrew means "The Lord Saves" or "May the Lord Save."

The Book of Joshua does not state who wrote it. Joshua himself undoubtedly wrote portions of the book, since 24:26 states, "Then Joshua wrote these words in the Book of the Law of God." But it is uncertain how much of the rest of the book he wrote. As for the date of composition, 6:25 reports that Rahab was living in Israel "to this day." This may indicate that portions of the book (if not all of it) were written shortly after the events recorded. But it could also mean that Rahab's descendants were still living in Israel at the time of writing.

Date of the Events The events in Joshua occurred within a time span of less than a decade, 40 years after the Exodus, probably around 1406 B.C. Caleb stated (14:7–10) that it had been 45 years since he had been sent out from Kadesh Barnea to spy out the land (Num. 13). Since the Israelites spent 38 years wandering in the wilderness (Deut. 2:14), the time from when they crossed the Jordan River till the time of Caleb's speech was seven years. Most of the events in the book probably occurred within that period.

Many scholars have suggested that the conquest of Canaan took place between 1250 and 1150 B.C. because there is archaeological evidence of the destruction of Canaanite cities around that time. However, there are problems with this view, the most significant of which is that the Israelites destroyed only three cities—Jericho, Ai, and Hazor—during their conquest. God had promised that they would live in cities they had not built, enjoy fields they had not planted, and harvest fruit they had not tended (Deut. 6:10, 11). Therefore, the Israelites fought most of their battles in the fields outside the cities. The widespread destruction of Canaanite cities found by archaeologists may date to the time of the judges. During this period, God allowed many foreign invasions to devastate the countryside and the cities in order to discipline His rebellious people.

Nature of the Events Brief summaries contained in Joshua often give the impression that the campaign of conquest was one in which the Israelites overwhelmed the Canaanites with a superior force, inflicting a series of total defeats. Chapter 10 is an example. But the Book of Joshua as a whole does not describe Israel as winning a frontal offensive attack by means of a superior force. Rather, under God's direction, Israel used various means such as ambushes and diversionary tactics to defeat its enemies. The Israelites are said to have destroyed only three cities: Jericho, Ai, and Hazor. Furthermore, Joshua 16:10 and Judges 1 suggest that Israel's victory over the Canaanites was incomplete. There were Canaanites still living in the land. Nevertheless, God did give the greater

part of the land of Canaan into the Israelites' hands through a series of dramatic battles in a relatively short period of time. God was faithful to His promises.

Themes The two most prominent themes in Joshua are the possession of the land and the covenant. God had repeatedly promised the land of Canaan to Abraham (Gen. 12:7; 13:14, 15, 17; 15:18–21; 17:8; 22:17), to Isaac (Gen. 26:3, 4), to Jacob (Gen. 28:4, 13; 35:12), and to the succeeding generations (Gen. 48:4–22; 50:24). The Book of Joshua emphasizes that the conquest of Canaan was a direct fulfillment of that promise. God was fighting for the Israelites and giving them the land in the process. Since God was demonstrating His faithfulness to Israel, He expected Israel to be faithful to His covenant with them. Possessing the land was based on their obedience to His law (23:9–13, 15, 16; Deut. 4:1, 25–27, 40; 6:17, 18). In fact, the Book of Joshua portrays the complete possession of the land as the result of Joshua's obedience to God's commands (10:40; 11:20, 23; 23:9–13).

Conquering the land enabled Israel to experience God's *rest*, which He had promised to the Israelites from the beginning (1:13, 15; 11:23; 14:15; 21:44; 22:4; 23:1). "The LORD gave them rest all around, according to all that He had sworn to their fathers" (21:44). The author of Hebrews equates this Old Testament concept of rest with entering into Christ's rest, that is, His kingdom (Heb. 3; 4).

In addition to emphasizing the importance of faithfulness to the covenant (1:7, 8; 22:5; 23:6, 16; 24:15), Joshua records two ceremonies dedicated to the renewal of the covenant. The first was at Mount Ebal. There Joshua built an altar to the Lord, offered sacrifices, and copied and read the law of Moses (8:30–35). The second was at Shechem (ch. 24), where Joshua wrote the words of Israel's covenant renewal in "the Book of the Law of God" and erected a large stone as a witness and memorial to the agreement (24:25–27). Both ceremonies impressed on the people's minds and hearts their responsibility to follow God alone and to keep His instructions. At the end of the conquest, the Israelites had a new challenge before them. The intensity of the battle was gone. Now the Israelites had to demonstrate their faithfulness to God in the ordinary activities of everyday life.

CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

Although there are no specific prophecies of Jesus in this book, Joshua himself is an obvious representation of the coming Savior. His name, which means "The Lord saves," is the Hebrew equivalent of "Jesus" (a Greek name). As Joshua leads the nation of Israel across the Jordan River into their promised inheritance, he foreshadows the One who will bring "many sons to glory" (Heb. 2:10). The apostle Paul recalls Joshua's role when he writes, "Now thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ" (2 Cor. 2:14).

When Joshua encounters the "Commander of the army of the LORD" outside the walls of Jericho (5:13–15), he is actually in the presence of a pre-incarnate appearance of Jesus. When Joshua sent two spies into Jericho prior to Israel's invasion, a prostitute named Rahab provided them secret shelter. To show their thanks, the spies promised her family would not be attacked if she displayed a scarlet cord in her window to set her home apart (2:17–20). The blood-colored cord that Rahab hung from her window to guarantee deliverance from the advancing troops is a sure sign of the salvation from future judgment that Jesus' blood provides.

Modern facsimile of a wineskin at Qatzrin in the Golan Heights. Wineskins were made from the skin of an animal and used to hold wine. Wineskins were among the items brought along when the Gibeonites went to meet Joshua at Gilgal (Josh. 9:4).

Baker Photo Archive



c. 1446–1406 B.C.
40 years of wilderness wandering

c. 1405 B.C.
Joshua succeeds Moses

c. 1405 B.C.
The Israelites cross the Jordan into Canaan

c. 1405–1400 B.C.
Jericho and other cities are taken

c. 1398 B.C.
Canaan is apportioned to the tribes

c. 1380 B.C.
Joshua dies

c. 1375–1075 B.C.
Judges rule in Israel

c. 1050 B.C.
Saul becomes king of Israel



Beersheba with remains of a pillared house and the wall behind it. Beersheba was one of the towns assigned to Judah (Josh. 15:28).
Kim Walton

JOSHUA OUTLINE

- I. The conquest of the land 1:1—12:24
 - A. Preparations for entering the land 1:1–18
 - B. Two spies in Jericho 2:1–24
 - C. Crossing of the Jordan 3:1—5:1
 - D. Ritual preparations 5:2–15
 - E. Conquest of Jericho 6:1–27
 - F. Covenant disobedience and conquest of Ai 7:1—8:29
 - G. Covenant affirmations 8:30–35
 - H. The Gibeonite treaty 9:1–27
 - I. The southern and northern campaigns 10:1—11:23
 - J. The list of conquered kings and lands 12:1–24
- II. Division of the land 13:1—21:45
 - A. The command to distribute the land 13:1–7
 - B. The land east of the Jordan 13:8–33
 - C. The distribution west of the Jordan 14:1—19:51
 - D. The cities of refuge and the cities of the Levites 20:1—21:45
- III. Farewells 22:1—24:33
 - A. Joshua's farewell to the tribes east of the Jordan 22:1–34
 - B. Joshua's first farewell to all Israel 23:1–16
 - C. Joshua's second farewell to all Israel 24:1–28
 - D. Conclusion: burial notices 24:29–33

God’s Commission to Joshua

After the death of Moses the servant of the LORD, it came to pass that the LORD spoke to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses’ assistant, saying: ^{2b}“Moses My servant is dead. Now therefore, arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people, to the land which I am giving to them—the children of Israel. ^{3c}Every place that the

CHAPTER 1

1 ^a Ex. 24:13; Num. 13:16; 14:6, 29, 30, 37, 38; Deut. 1:38; Acts 7:45
2 ^b Num. 12:7; Deut. 34:5
3 ^c Deut. 11:24; Josh. 11:23
4 ^d Gen. 15:18; Ex. 23:31; Num. 34:3-12

sole of your foot will tread upon I have given you, as I said to Moses. ^{4d}From the wilderness and this Lebanon as far as the great river, the River Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and to the Great Sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your territory. ^{5e}No man shall be able to stand before you all the days

5 ^e Deut. 7:24

1:1 Joshua begins where Deuteronomy ends, **after the death of Moses**. Moses is the central figure in the narrative spanning Exodus through Deuteronomy. He is called the **servant of the LORD**, a title that was first given to him at the end of his life (Deut. 34:5). In Joshua, Moses is called by this title 15 times. In the Hebrew Scriptures it is a special title given only to Moses, Joshua (24:29; Judg. 2:8), David (Ps. 18:1; 36:1), and the Messiah (Is. 42:19). **Joshua the son of Nun**: Identifying someone by adding the name of his father was the Hebrew equivalent of a last name. Joshua was **Moses’ assistant** (Ex. 24:13; Num. 11:28). The Hebrew word used for *assistant* usually refers to service in worship, but it can also mean service to an individual, as it does here (see 1 Kin. 19:21 for Elijah’s assistant). Joshua is not identified as the “servant of the LORD” here, probably to show that he had not yet “filled Moses’ shoes.” He needed to grow into the job. Yet Deut. 34:9 hints that Joshua would do just that: “Now Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands on him; so the children of Israel heeded him, and did as the LORD had commanded Moses.”
1:2-9 God’s speech encouraging Joshua is a warmhearted, tender speech, assuring Joshua of His care, protection, and presence, and urging him to obey His law. It is a model of God graciously encouraging His servants, and its exhortations are still of value today; true success in life cannot occur apart from knowing and doing the will of God.
1:2 the land which I am giving: The land of Canaan had first been

promised to Abraham hundreds of years before (Gen. 12:7; 13:14, 15, 17; 15:18–21; 17:8; 22:17). Even though God would allow Abraham’s descendants to be slaves in a foreign land (Gen. 15:13), He nevertheless promised to bring them back to their own land (Gen. 15:16). This promise was never rescinded. In fact, it was repeated many times (Ex. 6:4, 8; Deut. 1:6–8; 4:38, 40; 5:31; 7:13; 8:1–10; 9:4–6; 11:8–12, 17; 26:1, 9; 32:49, 52; 34:4).
1:3 You here is plural, referring to all Israel. Sometimes (as in v. 2), the land is pictured as in the process of being given to Israel (“I am giving to them”). In other places, as here, it is pictured as already having been given. This manner of speaking reflects the notion that Israel already had legal title to the land, even if the people had not yet actually taken possession of it. This is also the language of Gen. 15:18. **as I said to Moses**: God keeps His promises.
1:4 This description of the land gives its southern and northern extremities, and its western border; the eastern border is not mentioned, probably because it extended to where Joshua was standing on the plains of Moab, east of the Jordan River. The land of Canaan here is designated by one of its prominent ethnic groups, **the Hittites** (Deut. 7:1). A great Hittite kingdom in Asia Minor (modern Turkey), dating to around 1800–1200 B.C., has been identified. The relationship between the Hittites in Canaan and the ones in Asia Minor is unclear. **The Great Sea** is the Mediterranean Sea.
1:5 God’s great promise to Moses **I will be with you** (Ex. 3:12) is now given to Joshua (1:9; 3:7). Of special comfort to Joshua would

A Comparison of Moses and Joshua		
Joshua had the privilege and challenge of filling the shoes of Moses—the man whom the Lord knew face to face. As Moses’ assistant for many years, Joshua had watched Moses at work. With this preparation he led Israel in much the same way Moses did.		
	Moses	Joshua
Meaning of name	Possibly “To Draw Forth”	“Yahweh Saves”
Greatest achievement	Israel’s deliverer and lawgiver; first great prophet (Acts 7:37)	Israel’s leader during the conquest of Canaan
Family	Son of Amram and Jochebed of the tribe of Levi	Son of Nun of the tribe of Ephraim
Early life	Reared in Pharaoh’s household	Reared in Egyptian slavery
Vocations	Shepherd; judge	Military leader at Rephidim; personal aide of Moses (Ex. 24:13); one of the twelve spies sent to investigate the Promised Land (Num. 13)
Similarities	• Took sandals off in the presence of God (Ex. 3:1–6)	• Took sandals off in the presence of the Commander (Josh. 5:13–15)
	• Initially reluctant to lead	• Initially needed encouragement to lead
	• Became Israel’s leader at around age 80 (Acts 7:23, 30)	• Became Israel’s leader at around age 80
	• Led Israelites through the Red Sea	• Led Israelites through the Jordan River
	• Interceded for the Israelites before God (Ex. 32:30–34)	• Interceded for the Israelites before God (Josh. 7:6–9)
	• Exhorted Israel to obey God’s law (Deut. 30:15–20)	• Exhorted Israel to obey God’s law (Josh. 23:6–8)
	• Delivered a challenging farewell address (Deut.)	• Delivered a challenging farewell address (Josh. 23)
Length of life	• Called “the servant of the LORD” (Josh. 1:1)	• Called “the servant of the LORD” (Josh. 24:29)
	120 years	110 years

of your life; ^fas I was with Moses, so ^gI will be with you. ^hI will not leave you nor forsake you. ⁶ⁱBe strong and of good courage, for to this people you shall ¹divide as an inheritance the land which I swore to their fathers to give them. ⁷Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law ^jwhich Moses My servant commanded you; ^kdo not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may ²prosper wherever you go. ^{8l}This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but ^myou ³shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. ⁹ⁿHave I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; ^odo not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God *is* with you wherever you go.”

The Order to Cross the Jordan

¹⁰Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people, saying, ¹¹“Pass through the camp and command the people, saying, ‘Prepare provisions for yourselves, for ^pwithin three days you will cross over

⁵ Ex. 3:12 ^g Deut. 31:8, 23 ^h Deut. 31:6, 7; Heb. 13:5
⁶ Deut. 31:7, 23 ¹ give as a possession
⁷ Num. 27:23; Deut. 31:7; Josh. 11:15 ^k Deut. 5:32
² have success or act wisely
⁸ Deut. 17:18, 19; 31:24, 26; Josh. 8:34
^m Deut. 29:9; Ps. 1:1-3 ³ you shall be constantly in
⁹ Deut. 31:7 ^o Ps. 27:1
¹¹ P Deut. 9:1; Josh. 3:17

¹³ q Num. 32:20-28
¹⁴ ⁴ cross over ahead of
¹⁵ r Josh. 22:1-4
¹⁷ s 1 Sam. 20:13; 1 Kin. 1:37

this Jordan, to go in to possess the land which the LORD your God is giving you to possess.”

¹²And to the Reubenites, the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh Joshua spoke, saying, ¹³“Remember ^qthe word which Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, saying, ‘The LORD your God is giving you rest and is giving you this land.’ ¹⁴Your wives, your little ones, and your livestock shall remain in the land which Moses gave you on this side of the Jordan. But you shall ⁴pass before your brethren armed, all your mighty men of valor, and help them, ¹⁵until the LORD has given your brethren rest, as He *gave* you, and they also have taken possession of the land which the LORD your God is giving them. ¹⁷Then you shall return to the land of your possession and enjoy it, which Moses the LORD’s servant gave you on this side of the Jordan toward the sunrise.”

¹⁶So they answered Joshua, saying, “All that you command us we will do, and wherever you send us we will go. ¹⁷Just as we heeded Moses in all things, so we will heed you. Only the LORD your God ^sbe with you, as He was with Moses. ¹⁸Whoever rebels against your command

have been the fact that God would be with him in the same way He had been with Moses. Joshua had been present during the many demonstrations of God’s presence in Moses’ life and would have known how significant this promise was.

1:6 The command to **be strong and of good courage** was for Joshua’s encouragement, and God repeated these words three times (vv. 6, 7, 9). The people later affirmed Joshua using these precise words (v. 18). David would later encourage his son Solomon with these words (1 Chr. 22:13; 28:20). **you shall divide:** This is the first notation of what Joshua’s actual duties would be, that of giving the land to Israel on God’s behalf.

1:7 very courageous: The instructions to Joshua here do not address military matters at all. This might seem surprising given the battles ahead. But his success depended more on his spiritual state and his degree of obedience to God than on any military strategy. The spiritual demands preceded the martial ones. **the law which Moses . . . commanded you:** Some scholars have questioned whether Moses gave the law to Israel, arguing that the laws found in the Pentateuch come from a much later time. This passage, along with many others (8:31–35; Deut. 31:24–26), states that Moses did indeed give the law to Israel. The term translated **prosper** means much more than mere financial success. It includes spiritual well-being.

1:8 To **meditate** means much more than just contemplation. The idea here is that one should reflect upon God’s Word in a thoughtful way, appropriating its truths personally and applying them to life (Ps. 1:2, 3).

1:10 The **officers** were officials who helped in the organization of Israel’s affairs. The Egyptian pharaoh had appointed similar officials over Israel (Ex. 5:14, 15).

1:11 **Provisions** referred to the food needed for the next several days as the Israelites prepared themselves to cross the Jordan. **within three days:** During these three days, the Israelites prepared themselves to enter the land. These were the same three days that the spies hid in the hills outside of Jericho (mentioned in 2:16, 22). After the spies returned, the Israelites waited another three days before crossing the Jordan (3:2).

1:12–15 Joshua reminded the two and one-half tribes that were settling east of the Jordan that they had promised to fight with the rest of the Israelites for the land across the river. Here Joshua quotes Moses’ words to these tribes almost verbatim (compare vv. 13–15 with Deut. 3:18–20). These tribes were granted the right to settle east of the Jordan if they maintained covenant solidarity with their brethren by fighting beside them (Num. 32:1–42; Deut. 2:26–3:20). The account in Joshua indicates that they kept their promise. In fact, at the end of the book Joshua blesses them for their faithfulness in this matter (22:1–34).

1:13, 15 The promise of **rest** echoes Num. 32:20–22; Deut. 3:18–20. See also the promises of rest in Ex. 33:14; Deut. 12:9, 10. This rest was God’s gift to Israel. In Joshua, it primarily means rest from conflict with enemies. Other accounts in Joshua make mention of Israel or the land having rest (11:23; 14:15; 21:44; 22:4; 23:1).

1:14 The Hebrew word for **armed** is related to the numbers five and 50; it probably means “lined up in battle array in groups of 50.” **Mighty men of valor** were the elite of the military. Joshua chose thirty thousand of these men to lie in ambush against Ai (8:3) and also took them into battle at Gilgal (10:7).

1:16–18 The people affirmed Joshua warmly and enthusiastically, echoing elements of God’s charge to Joshua in vv. 1–9. Compare v. 5 with v. 17 and note the fourth occurrence of the exhortation to **be strong and of good courage** (vv. 6, 7, 9). The pledges of obedience and loyalty to Joshua certainly must have been encouraging to this new leader.

1:16 The text does not say clearly who **answered Joshua**, the officers of the people (v. 10) or the tribes from east of the Jordan (v. 12). From vv. 10, 12 it appears that Joshua’s words to the officers in v. 11 and to the tribes in vv. 13–15 are part of one event. The response in vv. 16–18 is therefore probably that of all Israel. In this way, the entire nation affirmed Joshua’s leadership at the beginning of his duties as leader.

1:17 **the LORD your God be with you:** The Israelites affirmed Joshua in the same terms that God Himself used in promising to be with him.



Jericho
Jericho is one of the oldest inhabited cities in the world. Situated in the wide plain of the Jordan valley at the foot of the ascent to the Judean mountains, Jericho lies about eight miles northwest of the site where the Jordan River flows into the Dead Sea, some five miles west of the Jordan. Since it is approximately 800 feet below sea level, Jericho has a tropical climate. Only a few inches of rainfall are recorded at Jericho each year, but the city is a wonderful oasis, known as “the city of palm trees” (Deut. 34:3) flourishing with date palms, banana trees, balsams, sycamores, and henna (Song 1:14; Luke 19:4).
There have been three different Jerichos throughout its long history, but by far the most imposing site of the three was OT Jericho, a pear-shaped mound about 400 yards long, north to south, 200 yards wide at the north end, and some 70 yards high.



Aerial view of the Old Testament Jericho tell
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and does not heed your words, in all that you command him, shall be put to death. Only be strong and of good courage.”

Rahab Hides the Spies

2 Now Joshua the son of Nun sent out two men ^afrom ¹Acacia Grove to spy secretly, saying, “Go, view the land, especially Jericho.”
So they went, and ^bcame to the house of a harlot named ^cRahab, and ²lodged there. ²And ^dit was told the king of Jericho, saying, “Behold, men have come here tonight from the children of Israel to search out the country.”
³So the king of Jericho sent to Rahab, saying, “Bring out the men who have come to you, who have entered your house, for they have come to search out all the country.”

CHAPTER 2
1 ^a Num. 25:1; Josh. 3:1 ^b Heb. 11:31; James 2:25 ^c Matt. 1:5 ¹ Heb. Shittim
2 Lit. lay down
2 ^d Josh. 2:22

4 ^e 2 Sam. 17:19, 20
6 ^f Ex. 1:17; 2 Sam. 17:19
9 ^g Deut. 1:8 ^h Gen. 35:5; Ex. 23:27; Deut. 2:25; 11:25; Josh. 9:9, 10

⁴^e Then the woman took the two men and hid them. So she said, “Yes, the men came to me, but I did not know where they *were* from. ⁵ And it happened as the gate was being shut, when it was dark, that the men went out. Where the men went I do not know; pursue them quickly, for you may overtake them.” ⁶ (But ^f she had brought them up to the roof and hidden them with the stalks of flax, which she had laid in order on the roof.) ⁷ Then the men pursued them by the road to the Jordan, to the fords. And as soon as those who pursued them had gone out, they shut the gate.
⁸ Now before they lay down, she came up to them on the roof, ⁹ and said to the men: ^g “I know that the LORD has given you the land, that ^h the terror of you has

2:1–7 Joshua sent out two spies to explore the land, especially Jericho. They went to a place where news would be easily available, a prostitute’s house (v. 1). News reached the local king, and he sent men to apprehend the spies (vv. 2, 3). Yet Rahab protected the spies by sending the king’s men on a futile chase (vv. 4–7).
2:1 The **Acacia Grove** was the place east of the Jordan River where the Israelites had been encamped for some time (Num. 25:1). In some translations of the Bible this place is called by its transliterated Hebrew name Shittim, which means “The Acacia Trees.” Acacia Grove was probably some distance from the Jordan because it took a few days to get there. **Rahab** was a Canaanite prostitute, and yet her story is one of the most inspiring stories in the Bible. Her actions in caring for the Israelite spies in enemy territory demonstrated a faith in Israel’s God that is praised in the NT (Heb. 11:31; James 2:25). The term translated **harlot** is the word for a common prostitute, not a cultic prostitute. It is possible that Rahab had been reduced to prostitution by the death of her husband and by the needs of her impoverished family (6:23 does not mention her husband). In any case, out of all the populace of Jericho, only she reached out to the living God, and He in turn saved her (6:25).
2:2 **it was told:** Despite the secrecy of the spies (v. 1), news of their arrival in Jericho traveled fast. The **king of Jericho** ruled over a small kingdom that included his city and the territory around it. As is often the case in the ancient world, his “kingdom” was actually

a city-state. Compare the reference to “Jabin king of Hazor” in 11:1.
2:4–6 Rahab lied to the men searching for the Israelite spies, but this does not constitute an endorsement for lying as such. The Scriptures clearly condemn lying (Lev. 19:11; Prov. 12:22). Rahab did the best she could to save the men sent by Joshua.
2:5 All major cities in Canaan were walled and had a large **gate** for protection. Excavations at Jericho have uncovered strong walls from different periods of the city’s existence.
2:6 Like most houses, Rahab’s had a **flat roof**. She hid the men there where she had laid out **stalks of flax** for drying. Flax is the oldest textile fiber known. It was used to make linen fabric for clothes.
2:7 The Jordan River was nearly a hundred feet wide near Jericho, and from five to 12 feet deep. There were no bridges, and shallow **fords** were used for crossing.
2:9 Rahab’s use of God’s personal name Yahweh, translated here as **LORD**, indicates that she had come to faith in the living God (v. 11). God had graciously opened the heart and mind of a foreign prostitute to accept Him as Lord. **the terror of you has fallen on us:** Israel’s reputation went before them. God already had dramatically delivered the Israelites in many ways, and the report had been spread throughout the nations. Rahab mentioned two miraculous deliverances: the crossing of the Red Sea and the victories over two kings east of the Jordan, Sihon and Og (v. 10; see Ex. 14; Num. 21:21–35).

fallen on us, and that all the inhabitants of the land ⁱare fainthearted because of you. ¹⁰For we have heard how the LORD ^jdried up the water of the Red Sea for you when you came out of Egypt, and ^kwhat you did to the two kings of the Amorites who *were* on the other side of the Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom you ^lutterly destroyed. ¹¹And as soon as we ^mheard *these things*, ⁿour hearts melted; neither did there remain any more courage in anyone because of you, for ^othe LORD your God, *He is God* in heaven above and on earth beneath. ¹²Now therefore, I beg you, ^pswear to me by the LORD, since I have shown you kindness, that you also will show kindness to ^qmy father's house, and ^rgive me ³a true token, ¹³and ^sspare my father, my mother, my brothers, my sisters, and all that they have, and deliver our lives from death."

¹⁴So the men answered her, "Our lives for yours, if none of you tell this business of ours. And it shall be, when the LORD has given us the land, that ^twe will deal kindly and truly with you."

¹⁵Then she ^ulet them down by a rope through the window, for her house *was* on the city wall; she dwelt on the wall. ¹⁶And she said to them, "Get to the mountain, lest the pursuers meet you. Hide there three days, until the pursuers have returned. Afterward you may go your way."

¹⁷So the men said to her: "We *will be* ^vblameless ⁴ of this oath of yours which you have made us swear, ¹⁸^wunless, *when* we come into the land, you bind this line

⁹ Ex. 15:15; Josh. 5:1
¹⁰ Ex. 14:21; Josh. 4:23 ^k Num. 21:21-35 ^l Deut. 20:17; Josh. 6:21
¹¹ Ex. 15:14, 15 ⁿ Josh. 5:1; 7:5; Ps. 22:14; Is. 13:7
^o Deut. 4:39
¹² ^p 1 Sam. 20:14, 15, 17 ^q 1 Tim. 5:8
^r Ex. 12:13; Josh. 2:18 ³ ^a *pledge of truth*
¹³ ^s Josh. 6:23-25
¹⁴ ^t Gen. 47:29; Judg. 1:24; [Matt. 5:7]
¹⁵ ^u Acts 9:25
¹⁷ ^v Ex. 20:7 ⁴ *free from obligation to this oath*
¹⁸ ^w Josh. 2:12

^x Josh. 6:23 ⁵ Lit. *gather*
¹⁹ ^y 1 Kin. 2:32; Matt. 27:25 ⁶ *free from obligation*
⁷ *guilt of bloodshed*
²⁰ ⁸ *free from obligation to*
²⁴ ^z Ex. 23:31; Josh. 6:2; 21:44

CHAPTER 3

¹ ^a Josh. 2:1 ¹ Heb. *Shittim*
² ^b Josh. 1:10, 11

of scarlet cord in the window through which you let us down, ^xand unless you ⁵bring your father, your mother, your brothers, and all your father's household to your own home. ¹⁹So it shall be *that* whoever goes outside the doors of your house into the street, his blood *shall be* on his own head, and we *will be* ⁶guiltless. And whoever is with you in the house, ^yhis ⁷blood *shall be* on our head if a hand is laid on him. ²⁰And if you tell this business of ours, then we will be ⁸free from your oath which you made us swear."

²¹Then she said, "According to your words, so *be* it." And she sent them away, and they departed. And she bound the scarlet cord in the window.

²²They departed and went to the mountain, and stayed there three days until the pursuers returned. The pursuers sought *them* all along the way, but did not find *them*. ²³So the two men returned, descended from the mountain, and crossed over; and they came to Joshua the son of Nun, and told him all that had befallen them. ²⁴And they said to Joshua, "Truly ^zthe LORD has delivered all the land into our hands, for indeed all the inhabitants of the country are fainthearted because of us."

Israel Crosses the Jordan

3 Then Joshua rose early in the morning; and they set out ^afrom ¹Acacia Grove and came to the Jordan, he and all the children of Israel, and lodged there before they crossed over. ²So it was, ^bafter three days, that the officers went through

2:11 Here Rahab made a dramatic statement of her faith in **the Lord. He is God in heaven:** She affirmed God's sovereignty over heaven and earth in language reminiscent of the Psalms (compare Ps. 113:5, 6) and not unlike the confession of Melchizedek to Abram (Gen. 14:19, 20). The fact that non-Israelites came to true faith indicates that God's great mercy reached other nations. **neither did there remain any more courage:** The phrase suggests their breath was taken away; the people of Jericho were left breathless, and their **hearts melted** from fear of the Israelites.

2:12 Rahab asked the spies to **swear** to her. Even though to swear in God's name was a serious matter, the spies agreed to Rahab's request (vv. 14, 17, 20).

2:15 The Hebrew phrase translated **her house was on the city wall** suggests that Rahab's house was *in* the city wall rather than *on top of* it. The phrase might be rendered "in the double walls." This refers to a kind of defensive wall found around many cities in biblical times. The walls were built double and connected by cross-walls between them. The resulting spaces could be used for storage or as living quarters. Rahab's family may have lived in one of these residences. A dwelling in the wall would be a humble dwelling, just the spot for a poor prostitute . . . and for God's grace.

2:16 Get to the mountain: The only hills near Jericho are to the west. This is the opposite direction from the route the pursuers had taken; they had gone east, down to the Jordan (v. 7).

2:18, 21 The spies gave Rahab a line of **scarlet cord** to hang out the window as a sign of the agreement they had made. This is probably not the same rope she used to let the spies down, since the

words are different. The cord's color is undoubtedly significant; it represents the color of the blood of atonement (Ex. 12:7, 13). It also alludes to the story of Tamar, since a scarlet thread was tied to the wrist of her first son (Gen. 38:28, 30). Both of these women were non-Israelite ancestors of Jesus (Matt. 1:3, 5).

2:22 A "day" for the ancient Israelites could mean any portion of a day. Thus **three days** would refer to parts of three days, as in "part of today, tomorrow, and part of the next day."

2:24 fainthearted: The spies reported to Joshua exactly what Rahab had said to them (v. 9).

3:1 The location of **Acacia Grove** is unknown today, but it was where Israel had been camped for some time after arriving at the plains of Moab, at the northern end of the Dead Sea (Num. 22:1; 25:1). It was where Israel was when Balaam came with the intent of cursing Israel (Num. 22-24), and where many Israelites had gone after prostitutes among the Moabite women (Num. 25:1-3). The day after the spies returned from Jericho, Joshua led the people from this place to the Jordan.

3:2 After three days, the officers went through the camp with instructions about the crossing itself. These instructions (v. 3) were different from the instructions given in 1:11, and this three-day period started on the day after the spies returned from Jericho. The previous three-day period in 1:11 (and 2:22) began when the spies went into Jericho to begin with. After these two three-day periods, the Israelites crossed the Jordan on the next day, the seventh day after the book's action begins (3:5). This seven-day period immediately precedes the dedication of Israelite males in

the camp;³ and they commanded the people, saying, “When you see the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God,⁴ and the priests, the Levites,² bearing it, then you shall set out from your place and go after it.^{4e} Yet there shall be a space between you and it, about two thousand cubits by measure. Do not come near it, that you may know the way by which you must go, for you have not passed *this* way before.”

⁵And Joshua said to the people, *f*“Sanctify³ yourselves, for tomorrow the LORD will do wonders among you.”

⁶Then Joshua spoke to the priests, saying, *g*“Take up the ark of the covenant and cross over before the people.”

So they took up the ark of the covenant and went before the people.

⁷And the LORD said to Joshua, “This day I will begin to *h*exalt⁴ you in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that, *i*as I was with Moses, *so* I will be with you. ⁸You shall command *j*the priests who bear the ark of the covenant, saying, ‘When you have come to the edge of the water of the Jordan, *k*you shall stand in the Jordan.’”

⁹So Joshua said to the children of Israel, “Come here, and hear the words of

³ c Num. 10:33
⁴ Deut. 31:9, 25
² carrying
^{4e} Ex. 19:12
⁵ f Ex. 19:10, 14, 15; Lev. 20:7; Num. 11:18; Josh. 7:13; 1 Sam. 16:5; Job 1:5; Joel 2:16
³ Consecrate
⁶ g Num. 4:15
⁷ h Josh. 4:14; 1 Chr. 29:25; 2 Chr. 1:1
ⁱ Josh. 1:5, 9 ⁴ make you great
⁸ j Josh. 3:3 ^k Josh. 3:17

¹⁰ l Deut. 5:26; Josh. 11:23; 1 Sam. 17:26; 2 Kin. 19:4; Hos. 1:10; Matt. 16:16; 1 Thess. 1:9
^m Ex. 33:2; Deut. 7:1; 18:12; Ps. 44:2
ⁿ Acts 13:19
¹¹ o Josh. 3:13; Job 41:11; Ps. 24:1; Mic. 4:13; Zech. 4:14; 6:5
¹² p Josh. 4:2, 4
¹³ q Josh. 3:15, 16
^r Josh. 3:11 ^s Ps. 78:13; 114:3
¹⁴ t Ps. 132:8; Acts 7:44, 45
¹⁵ u Josh. 3:13
^v 1 Chr. 12:15; Jer. 12:5; 49:19 ^w Josh. 4:18; 5:10, 12

the LORD your God.” ¹⁰And Joshua said, “By this you shall know that *l*the living God is among you, and *that* He will without fail *m*drive out from before you the *n*Canaanites and the Hittites and the Hivites and the Perizzites and the Girgashites and the Amorites and the Jebusites: ¹¹Behold, the ark of the covenant of *o*the Lord of all the earth is crossing over before you into the Jordan. ¹²Now therefore, *p*take for yourselves twelve men from the tribes of Israel, one man from every tribe. ¹³And it shall come to pass, *q*as soon as the soles of the feet of the priests who bear the ark of the LORD, *r*the Lord of all the earth, shall rest in the waters of the Jordan, *that* the waters of the Jordan shall be cut off, the waters that come down from upstream, and they *s*shall stand as a heap.”

¹⁴So it was, when the people set out from their camp to cross over the Jordan, with the priests bearing the *t*ark of the covenant before the people, ¹⁵and as those who bore the ark came to the Jordan, and *u*the feet of the priests who bore the ark dipped in the edge of the water (for the *v*Jordan overflows all its banks *w*during the whole time of harvest), ¹⁶that the waters which came down from

ch. 5. It is then followed by another seven-day period of marching around Jericho.

3:3 Chapter 3 emphasizes the significance of **the ark of the covenant**, mentioning it more than 11 times. The priests were responsible for carrying it (v. 3) in accordance with the rules given to Moses (Deut. 10:8; 31:9). They were to carry the ark with poles and not to touch it (Ex. 25:12, 13; 37:3–5; Num. 4:4–15). The ark symbolized God’s presence. Everyone had to be careful to keep a healthy distance from it (3:4). The priesthood was restricted to **Levites** in general, and more specifically to Aaron’s family (Num. 25:7–13; Deut. 18:1, 5). All **priests** were Levites, but not all Levites were priests. In later times Zadok, who was descended from Aaron through his third son, Eleazar (1 Chr. 6:1–8, 50–53), became a prominent priest. From that time on, Zadok’s descendants became responsible for the temple service (Ezek. 44:15–31).

3:4 The Hebrew word for **yet** is emphatic and might be translated “be very sure.” This emphasizes the importance of the command to keep one’s distance from the ark. **Two thousand cubits** was more than half a mile.

3:5 Sanctify yourselves: The Book of Joshua emphasizes the idea of holiness. The basic meaning of holiness is separation from things that are unclean or common. **Wonders** translates the Hebrew word for what today are called miracles. These mighty acts of God astonished people and prompted them to praise Him (Ps. 9:1; 96:3). In ch. 3, God performs the miracle of stopping the waters of the Jordan (vv. 14–17).

3:7 With the words **I will begin to exalt you**, God reaffirmed Joshua’s place as successor to Moses (1:5, 9), **that they may know:** God performed miracles not only to bring about certain events but to reveal Himself to His people.

3:9 Here, Joshua functions as a prophet of God, even though he is never specifically called a prophet, because he stood before the people as spokesman for God.

3:10 The miraculous events that follow not only brought the Israelites across the Jordan; they also attested to the fact that the living God was with them (4:24). **Canaanites . . . Jebusites:** This text mentions seven people groups. *Canaanites* sometimes denoted any-

one living in Canaan, regardless of their ethnic identity (Gen. 36:2, 3; Judg. 5:19). In this case the Canaanites were probably the peoples living near the sea (5:1) who were known later as the Phoenicians. Their largest cities were Tyre and Sidon. As for the **Perizzites**, we know little about them. They appear to have lived in the forested areas of central Palestine (Gen. 13:7). **Amorites** is sometimes a synonym for *Canaanites* in its broader usage (Gen. 15:16; Judg. 1:34, 35). Sometimes the name refers to the peoples living in the cities in the central hill country of Canaan (Num. 13:29; Deut. 1:7), or to kingdoms east of the Jordan (13:10, 21). Here the name probably refers to inhabitants of the central hill country. The **Jebusites** lived in Jerusalem (15:8; 18:28).

3:12 twelve men: One man from each tribe was selected. The Hebrew emphasizes that it was to be only one from each tribe; it literally states “one man, one man per tribe.”

3:13 The reference to **the ark** here parallels the phrase in v. 11. The reference to **the LORD, the Lord of all the earth** uses both His name and His title. Much as “Baal” was the name of the Canaanites’ most important god, “the LORD” (Yahweh) is God’s personal name. This was the name God revealed to Moses at the burning bush (Ex. 3:13–15; 6:2, 3). The term translated **LORD** means “master.” It refers to God’s status as sovereign of the universe.

3:15 The parenthetical statement **for the Jordan overflows** is significant because it makes the point that a great miracle was involved. God did not merely slow the Jordan to a trickle during a time of drought; rather, He stopped the waters when the river was high. **during the whole time of harvest:** This phrase refers to the early summer harvest. At this time, the river was still swollen from the spring melting and rains. The Israelites crossed on the tenth day of the first month (4:19), which corresponds to March–April.

3:16 Adam: A city about 18 miles north of Jericho, near where the Jordan and Jabbok Rivers converge. The Jordan flows between high limestone cliffs near Jericho. Sometimes parts of these cliffs collapse into the river causing the waters to back up. God could have miraculously caused such a slide to occur at precisely the moment when the Israelites needed to cross over. **The Sea of the Arabah** is the Dead Sea, into which the Jordan flows from the north. The

upstream stood *still*, and rose in a heap very far away ⁵at Adam, the city that is beside ⁶Zaretan. So the waters that went down ⁷into the Sea of the Arabah, ⁸the Salt Sea, failed, and were cut off; and the people crossed over opposite Jericho. ¹⁷Then the priests who bore the ark of the covenant of the LORD stood firm on dry ground in the midst of the Jordan; ¹⁸and all Israel crossed over on dry ground, until all the people had crossed completely over the Jordan.

The Memorial Stones

4 And it came to pass, when all the people had completely crossed ^aover the Jordan, that the LORD spoke to Joshua, saying: ^{2b}“Take for yourselves twelve men from the people, one man from every tribe, ³and command them, saying, ‘Take for yourselves twelve stones from here, out of the midst of the Jordan, from the place where ^cthe priests’ feet stood firm. You shall carry them over with you and leave them in ^dthe lodging place where you lodge tonight.”

⁴Then Joshua called the twelve men whom he had appointed from the children of Israel, one man from every tribe; ⁵and Joshua said to them: “Cross over before the ark of the LORD your God into the midst of the Jordan, and each one of you take up a stone on his shoulder, according to the number of the tribes of the children of Israel, ⁶that this may be ^ea sign among you ^fwhen your children ask in time to come, saying, ‘What do

16 ^x 1 Kin. 4:12; 7:46 ^y Deut. 3:17
² Gen. 14:3; Num. 34:3 ⁵ Qr., many mss. and vss. from Adam
¹⁷ ^a Gen. 50:24; Ex. 3:8; 6:1-8; 14:21, 22, 29; 33:1; Deut. 6:10; Heb. 11:29

CHAPTER 4

1 ^a Deut. 27:2; Josh. 3:17
² ^b Josh. 3:12
³ ^c Josh. 3:13
^d Josh. 4:19, 20
⁶ ^e Deut. 27:2; Ps. 103:2 ^f Ex. 12:26; 13:14; Deut. 6:20

7 ^a Josh. 3:13, 16
^h Ex. 12:14; Num. 16:40
¹¹ ⁱ Josh. 3:11; 6:11
¹² / Num. 32:17, 20, 27, 28; Josh. 1:14
¹³ ⁱ equipped

these stones *mean* to you?” ⁷Then you shall answer them that ^gthe waters of the Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the LORD; when it crossed over the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off. And these stones shall be for ^ha memorial to the children of Israel forever.”

⁸And the children of Israel did so, just as Joshua commanded, and took up twelve stones from the midst of the Jordan, as the LORD had spoken to Joshua, according to the number of the tribes of the children of Israel, and carried them over with them to the place where they lodged, and laid them down there. ⁹Then Joshua set up twelve stones in the midst of the Jordan, in the place where the feet of the priests who bore the ark of the covenant stood; and they are there to this day.

¹⁰So the priests who bore the ark stood in the midst of the Jordan until everything was finished that the LORD had commanded Joshua to speak to the people, according to all that Moses had commanded Joshua; and the people hurried and crossed over. ¹¹Then it came to pass, when all the people had completely crossed over, that the ⁱark of the LORD and the priests crossed over in the presence of the people. ¹²And ^jthe men of Reuben, the men of Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh crossed over armed before the children of Israel, as Moses had spoken to them. ¹³About forty thousand ¹prepared for war crossed over before the

Arabah itself is the region of the Jordan valley, running from the Sea of Galilee in the north to the Dead Sea in the south. The Dead Sea is the lowest place on earth, 1286 feet below sea level. The phrase **Salt Sea** is added to the name because the sea has no outlet; it loses its water by evaporation. The concentration of salt and other minerals is so high that nothing can live in it.

3:17 A synonym for the term translated **dry ground** is found in 4:22, as well as in Ex. 14:16, 22, 29 where it refers to the dry ground of the bottom of the Red Sea. This crossing of the Jordan was similar to the crossing of the Red Sea. The miracle was so effective in both cases that the Israelites crossed on dry ground, not mud or shallow water.

4:3 The **twelve stones** (one stone per tribe) would mark the spot where God performed His wonderful miracle in stopping the waters of the Jordan so the Israelites could cross. The stones would remind the people of the great event and serve as conversation starters with their children, who would ask what they symbolized (vv. 6, 21).

4:6 The Hebrew term for **sign** can mean “miracle” (Ex. 7:3), but here it means “memorial marker.” The same idea is found in Ex. 12:13, 14; 13:8, 9, where there are instructions for celebrating the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. These observances were **signs** to the Israelites and their children that God had miraculously delivered them out of Egypt. **when your children ask:** The stones would inevitably stimulate a child’s questions in the same way that the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread would. These questions would be opportunities for instruction (Ex. 12:26, 27; 13:8; compare Deut. 6:20–24).

4:8 the children of Israel did so: A standard feature of Hebrew narratives is repetition. This verse repeats almost verbatim the instructions given in v. 5. Far from being an unimaginative feature of

a primitive storytelling style, such repetitions are a sophisticated literary device. Often they show that instructions, usually God’s or those of His representatives, were carried out exactly, “to the letter.” The pattern is for a character in the story to give the instructions and then for the narrator to confirm, using the same words, that the instructions were carried out. The phrase **as the LORD had spoken to Joshua** confirms the obedience of the Israelites even further. This literary device is used to highlight the importance of obedience to the words of God.

4:10 the people hurried and crossed over: This paragraph represents something of a flashback, since 3:17 and 4:1 have already stated that the crossing was completed. The purpose is to look back and reflect upon the people’s obedience.

4:11 The priests who were standing on dry ground in the middle of the river (3:17) were finally able to cross over themselves with the ark. This foreshadows the more detailed account of the priests’ coming out of the water in v. 18.

4:12 The men of the tribes east of the Jordan acted exactly **as Moses had spoken**—that is, in direct obedience to the instructions Moses gave when Israel was still on the Plains of Moab (Num. 32:20–22; Deut. 3:18–20).

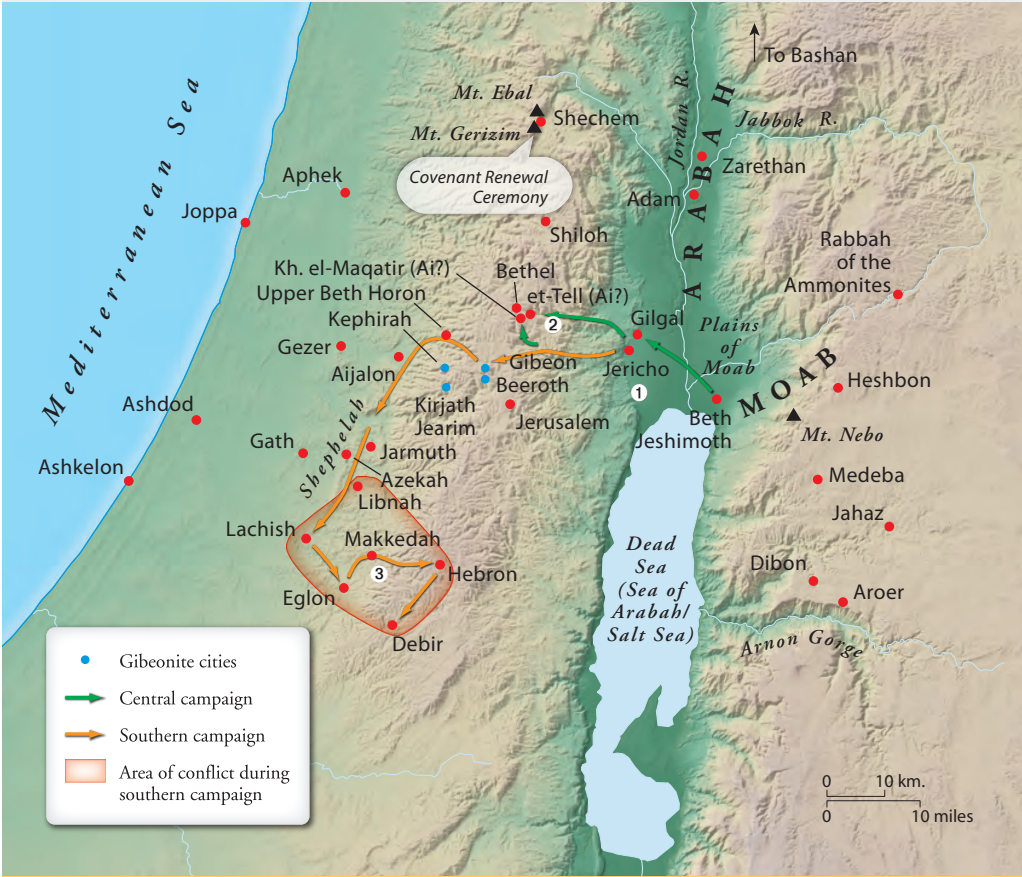
4:13 The number of warriors from Reuben, Gad, and half of Manasseh is **forty thousand**, much smaller than that listed in Num. 26. There the warriors from Reuben alone number 43,730 (Num. 26:7). The number here was most likely a portion of the warriors from the three tribes; the rest probably stayed with the women, children, and elderly to protect them. The reference to **Jericho** (the first in the book) foreshadows the dramatic events to follow in ch. 6. Jericho was six miles west of the Jordan, ten miles northwest of the

Conquest of Canaan

1 ENTRY INTO CANAAN

When the Israelite tribes approached Canaan after four decades of wilderness existence, they had to overcome two Amorite kingdoms on the Medeba plateau and in Bashan. Under Moses' leadership, they also subdued the Midianites in order to consolidate their control over the Transjordanian region.

The conquest of Canaan followed a course that in retrospect appears as though it had been planned by a brilliant military strategist. Taking Jericho gave Israel control of its strategic plains, fords, and roads as a base of operations. When Israel next gained control of the Bethel, Gibeon, and Upper Beth Horon regions, it dominated the center of the north-south Palestinian ridge. Subsequently, Israel was able to break the power of the allied urban centers in separate campaigns south and north (for the northern campaign, see map, p. 353).



2 THE CENTRAL CAMPAIGN

The destruction of both Jericho and Ai led to a major victory against the Canaanites in the Valley of Aijalon — the battle of the long day (see Josh. 10:12–14)—which then allowed Joshua to proceed against the cities of the western foothills.

Archaeological evidence for the conquest is mixed, in part because the chronological problems are unsolved. On the one hand, clay tablets containing cuneiform letters to the Egyptian court have been found at Tell el-Amarna in Egypt from c. 1375 B.C. These mention bands of Hapiru that threaten many of the cities of Canaan and create fear among the Canaanite inhabitants.

On the other hand, numerous towns were destroyed c. 1230 B.C. by unknown assailants, presumably the “Sea Peo-

ples,” but possibly including the Israelites as well. The biblical chronology based on 1 Kin. 6:1 seems to demand an even earlier dating, near the end of the fifteenth century.

3 THE SOUTHERN CAMPAIGN

Azekah, Libnah, Lachish, Eglon, and Debir were all captured by Joshua in his campaign against the southern coalition of Canaanite cities that was led by the king of Jerusalem.

Several of these towns, most notably Lachish, contain destruction evidence that might possibly be correlated with the Israelite conquest, but with Jericho and Ai the historical implications are not clear.

LORD for battle, to the plains of Jericho. ¹⁴On that day the LORD ^kexalted² Joshua in the sight of all Israel; and they feared him, as they had feared Moses, all the days of his life.

¹⁵Then the LORD spoke to Joshua, saying, ¹⁶“Command the priests who bear ^lthe ark of the Testimony to come up from the Jordan.” ¹⁷Joshua therefore commanded the priests, saying, “Come up from the Jordan.” ¹⁸And it came to pass, when the priests who bore the ark of the covenant of the LORD had come from the midst of the Jordan, *and* the soles of the priests’ feet touched the dry land, that the waters of the Jordan returned to their place ^mand overflowed all its banks as before.

¹⁹Now the people came up from the Jordan on the tenth *day* of the first month, and they camped ⁿin Gilgal on the east border of Jericho. ²⁰And ^othose twelve stones which they took out of the Jordan, Joshua set up in Gilgal. ²¹Then he spoke to the children of Israel, saying: ^p“When your children ask their fathers in time to come, saying, ‘What *are* these stones?’” ²²then you shall let your children know, saying, ^q“Israel crossed over this Jordan on ^rdry land”; ²³for the LORD your God dried up the waters of the Jordan before you until you had crossed over, as the LORD your God did to the Red Sea, ^swhich He dried up before us

¹⁴ ^k Josh. 3:7; 1 Chr. 29:25 ² *made Joshua great*
¹⁶ ^l Ex. 25:16, 22
¹⁸ ^m Josh. 3:15; 1 Chr. 12:15
¹⁹ ⁿ Josh. 5:9
²⁰ ^o Deut. 11:30; Josh. 4:3; 5:9, 10
²¹ ^p Josh. 4:6
²² ^q Ex. 12:26, 27; 13:8-14; Deut. 26:5-9
²³ ^r Josh. 3:17
^s Ex. 14:21

²⁴ ^t 1 Kin. 8:42; 2 Kin. 19:19; Ps. 106:8 ^u Ex. 15:16; 1 Chr. 29:12; Ps. 89:13 ^v Ex. 14:31; Deut. 6:2; Ps. 76:7; Jer. 10:7 ³ Lit. *all days*

CHAPTER 5

¹ ^a Num. 13:29 ^b Ex. 15:14, 15 ^c Josh. 2:10, 11; 9:9; 1 Kin. 10:5 ¹ So with Kt.; Qr., some Heb. mss. and editions, LXX, Syr., Tg., Vg. *they 2 their courage failed*
² ^d Ex. 4:25
³ ² Heb. *Gibeath Haaraloth*
⁴ ^e Num. 14:29; 26:64, 65; Deut. 2:14-16
⁶ ^f Num. 14:33; Deut. 1:3; 29:5

until we had crossed over, ²⁴*t* that all the peoples of the earth may know the hand of the LORD, that it is ^umighty, that you may ^vfear the LORD your God ³forever.”

The Second Generation Circumcised

5 So it was, when all the kings of the Amorites who *were* on the west side of the Jordan, and all the kings of the Canaanites ^awho *were* by the sea, ^bheard that the LORD had dried up the waters of the Jordan from before the children of Israel until ¹we had crossed over, that ²their heart melted; ^cand there was no spirit in them any longer because of the children of Israel.

²At that time the LORD said to Joshua, “Make ^dflint knives for yourself, and circumcise the sons of Israel again the second time.” ³So Joshua made flint knives for himself, and circumcised the sons of Israel at ³the hill of the foreskins. ⁴And this is the reason why Joshua circumcised them: ^eAll the people who came out of Egypt *who were* males, all the men of war, had died in the wilderness on the way, after they had come out of Egypt. ⁵For all the people who came out had been circumcised, but all the people born in the wilderness, on the way as they came out of Egypt, had not been circumcised. ⁶For the children of Israel walked ^fforty years in the wilderness, till all the people *who were* men of war, who came out of

northern end of the Dead Sea. It was near a large freshwater spring 825 feet below sea level.

4:14 the LORD exalted Joshua: Once again, God affirmed Joshua’s place as Moses’ successor (1:5, 17; 3:7). In this context, **they feared him** indicates respect, reverence, or awe, not terror. The Israelites obeyed Joshua in the same way they had obeyed Moses.

4:16 The Hebrew word for **Testimony** also means “reminder,” and it is used in Ex. 31:18 to refer to the tablets on which the Ten Commandments were written, “the two tablets of the Testimony.” “The tablets of the covenant” are mentioned in Deut. 9:11, which shows that “testimony” and “covenant” are closely related ideas. The ark is called “the ark of the Testimony” because it contained the two stone tablets on which were written the Ten Commandments (Ex. 40:20; Deut. 10:1-5).

4:18 This verse is a mirror image of 3:15. This neatly concludes the miraculous episode, showing the forces of nature resuming their natural course and reminding us of the marvelous nature of the miracle of God stopping the waters.

4:19 The crossing of the Jordan was on the **tenth day of the first month**, that is, the month of Nisan (Abib), corresponding to March–April. This was an important day because it coincides with the day that the Passover lamb was selected (Ex. 12:3). It foreshadows the keeping of the Passover in 5:10, on the fourteenth day of the month, when the lamb is actually killed (Ex. 12:6, 18). The location of **Gilgal** is uncertain; it was somewhere east of Jericho in the Jordan valley. At Gilgal, the Israelites celebrated several religious rituals, including circumcision and Passover (ch. 5). There also a sanctuary and an altar were built for God (9:23, 27).

4:20 The stones which the Israelites had brought up out of the Jordan River (v. 8) were now set up permanently at Gilgal.

4:21–24 The 12 stones were a memorial for them and their children, as had been stated earlier (vv. 6, 7). The crossing of the Jordan has

many similarities to the crossing of the Red Sea. The text makes this explicit in 4:23. **that all the peoples . . . may know:** The miracle was performed for a greater purpose than merely getting the Israelites across the Jordan River. It also was a sign to all peoples that God was powerful. Indeed the inhabitants of Jericho had heard about how great Israel’s God was (2:10, 11).

5:1 God’s drying up the waters of the Jordan caused the inhabitants of Canaan to fear Israel greatly. Such reactions of fear or opposition were common as Israel entered the land (see 9:1–4; 10:1–2; 11:1–5). The language here especially recalls the same thought expressed earlier by Rahab (2:10, 11). This verse forms a transition between the Jordan crossing in chs. 3; 4 and the adversaries to be encountered later in chs. 6–12.

5:2 Flint is a rock found in abundance in biblical lands, and its use is known from almost all periods of ancient history; many **flint knives** have been found in excavations. Flint was gradually replaced by metals, such as copper, bronze, and iron. Only in two places in the OT is the Hebrew word *flint* found, here and in Ex. 4:26, both in connection with circumcision. This they had to do **again the second time** (vv. 4, 5). The males of the generation that left Egypt in the Exodus had all been circumcised. However, that generation died in the wilderness and the practice had been neglected. Thus it was necessary to perform it again, especially before the important celebration of Passover. The original instructions for Passover had emphasized the importance of circumcising all participants before the ceremony (Ex. 12:44, 48).

5:6, 7 God would deny covenant benefits (Gen. 12:1–3; 15:18–21; 17:1–8) to individuals who did not obey Him. Anyone who was not circumcised was to be cut off from enjoying the blessings of God’s people (Gen. 17:14). God’s promises to Abraham’s descendants would be fulfilled to the nation as a whole, but not every individual would automatically participate: Faith and obedience were required.

Egypt, were ⁴consumed, because they did not obey the voice of the LORD—to whom the LORD swore that ⁸He would not show them the land which the LORD had sworn to their fathers that He would give us, ^h“a land flowing with milk and honey.” ⁷Then Joshua circumcised ⁱtheir sons whom He raised up in their place; for they were uncircumcised, because they had not been circumcised on the way.

⁸So it was, when they had finished circumcising all the people, that they stayed in their places in the camp ^jtill they were healed. ⁹Then the LORD said to Joshua, “This day I have rolled away ^kthe reproach of Egypt from you.” Therefore the name of the place is called ^lGilgal ⁵to this day.

¹⁰Now the children of Israel camped in Gilgal, and kept the Passover ^mon the fourteenth day of the month at twilight on the plains of Jericho. ¹¹And they ate of the produce of the land on the day after the Passover, unleavened bread and ⁶parched grain, on the very same day. ¹²Then ⁿthe manna ceased on the day after they had eaten the produce of the land; and the children of Israel no longer had manna, but they ate the food of the land of Canaan that year.

The Commander of the Army of the LORD

¹³And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted his eyes and looked, and behold, ^oa Man stood

⁶ ⁹ Num. 14:23, 29-35; 26:23-65; Heb. 3:11 ⁸ Ex. 3:8
⁴ *destroyed*
⁷ ¹ Num. 14:31; Deut. 1:39
⁸ ¹ Gen. 34:25
⁹ ⁸ Gen. 34:14
¹ Josh. 4:19 ⁵ Lit.
Rolling
¹⁰ ^m Ex. 12:6; Num. 9:5
¹¹ ⁶ *roasted*
¹² ⁿ Ex. 16:35
¹³ ^o Gen. 18:1, 2; 32:24, 30; Ex. 23:23; Num. 22:31; Zech. 1:8; Acts 1:10

^p Num. 22:23; 1 Chr. 21:16
¹⁴ ^q Gen. 17:3; Num. 20:6 ^r Ex. 34:8
¹⁵ ^s Ex. 3:5; Acts 7:33

CHAPTER 6

¹ ^o Josh. 2:1
² ^b Josh. 2:9, 24; 8:1
^c Deut. 7:24
⁴ ^d Lev. 25:9; Judg. 7:16, 22 ^e 1 Kin. 18:43; 2 Kin. 4:35; 5:10 ^f Num. 10:8

opposite him ^pwith His sword drawn in His hand. And Joshua went to Him and said to Him, “Are You for us or for our adversaries?”

¹⁴So He said, “No, but *as* Commander of the army of the LORD I have now come.”

And Joshua ^qfell on his face to the earth and ^rworshiped, and said to Him, “What does my Lord say to His servant?”

¹⁵Then the Commander of the LORD’s army said to Joshua, ^s“Take your sandal off your foot, for the place where you stand *is* holy.” And Joshua did so.

The Destruction of Jericho

6 Now ^aJericho was securely shut up because of the children of Israel; none went out, and none came in. ²And the LORD said to Joshua: “See! ^bI have given Jericho into your hand, its ^cking, and the mighty men of valor. ³You shall march around the city, all *you* men of war; you shall go all around the city once. This you shall do six days. ⁴And seven priests shall bear seven ^dtrumpets of rams’ horns before the ark. But the seventh day you shall march around the city ^eseven times, and ^fthe priests shall blow the trumpets. ⁵It shall come to pass, when they make a long *blast* with the ram’s horn, and when you hear the sound of the trumpet, that all the people shall shout with a great shout; then the wall of the city will fall down flat. And the people shall go up every man straight before him.”

This truth is emphasized in 5:7 with the statement that God **raised up** another generation to replace the one He had consigned to perish in the wilderness. The land God had promised to Israel was no wilderness, but **a land flowing with milk and honey**, a fertile land ready to supply all the Israelites’ needs. God had described the land this way to Moses decades before (Ex. 3:8); the phrase appears 15 times in the Pentateuch.

5:10 The Israelites celebrated the Passover on the **fourteenth day of the month**, four days after they crossed the Jordan River (4:19), **at twilight**. The Israelites scrupulously kept the instructions concerning the Passover (see Ex. 12:6).

5:11, 12 The celebration of the Passover marked a significant turning point in Israel’s life: right after this they began to live from the land they were about to possess. The miraculous provision of **manna** in the wilderness stopped.

5:14 The stranger did not respond to Joshua’s question, but instead identified Himself. He was the **Commander of the army of the LORD**. This elicited a response of humble worship from Joshua. Rather than any further questions about this Man’s loyalties, Joshua asked how he could serve this One greater than him: **What does my Lord say to His servant?** The Book of Job ends in a similar manner. God did not answer Job’s questions either. There as here it was the encounter with God that mattered most (Job 42:5, 6). Questions were silenced, and humble worship was evoked.

5:15 The command given to Joshua to **take your sandal off your foot** is virtually identical with the one given to Moses at the burning bush (Ex. 3:5). This reinforces the theme developed in the Book of Joshua about Joshua’s filling of Moses’ role as leader of Israel. Joshua was confronted with the living God, just as Moses had been (Ex.

33:9–11). John 1:18 strongly implies that appearances such as this were preincarnate appearances of the Savior Jesus, and not of God the Father, who cannot be seen (John 6:46).

6:2 The verb **have given** communicates that something has already happened, emphasizing the role of God in Israel’s victories (2:24).

6:3 The site of Jericho measured less than half a mile in circumference, only about seven acres, so the **march around the city** would have been completed quickly. The phrase **men of war** (also found in 5:4, 6; 10:24) is essentially synonymous with “mighty men of valor” (v. 2). It is used several times in the Pentateuch to refer to the adult males who came out of Egypt but who were not allowed to enter the Promised Land (Num. 31:28, 49; Deut. 2:14, 16). Now a new generation of warriors, ready to fight the Lord’s battles, was called by this phrase.

6:4 The number **seven** figures prominently in this passage: seven priests, seven trumpets, seven days, and seven trips around the city. Seven is a significant number in the Scriptures, beginning with the seven days of creation. It is a number that signifies completion. Its use here helps to demonstrate that the conquest of Jericho was part of a larger spiritual exercise that sanctified the people and the land for God. Another reminder of the spiritual significance of the event is the presence of **the ark** with the people. See ch. 3 for the importance of the ark in the crossing of the Jordan River.

6:5 The terms **ram’s horn** and **trumpet** refer to the same kind of instrument. These terms refer to a horn that could produce only a few notes; it was used mainly as a signal. Here it both signaled God’s presence and announced Jericho’s impending doom. It is the most commonly mentioned instrument in the OT.

⁶Then Joshua the son of Nun called the priests and said to them, “Take up the ark of the covenant, and let seven priests bear seven trumpets of rams’ horns before the ark of the LORD.” ⁷And he said to the people, “Proceed, and march around the city, and let him who is armed advance before the ark of the LORD.”

⁸So it was, when Joshua had spoken to the people, that the seven priests bearing the seven trumpets of rams’ horns before the LORD advanced and blew the trumpets, and the ark of the covenant of the LORD followed them. ⁹The armed men went before the priests who blew the trumpets, ^{9a}and the rear guard came after the ark, while the priests continued blowing the trumpets. ¹⁰Now Joshua had commanded the people, saying, “You shall not shout or make any noise with your voice, nor shall a word proceed out of your mouth, until the day I say to you, ‘Shout!’ Then you shall shout.” ¹¹So he had ^hthe ark of the LORD circle the city, going around it once. Then they came into the camp and ^llodged in the camp.

¹²And Joshua rose early in the morning, ⁱand the priests took up the ark of the LORD. ¹³Then seven priests bearing seven trumpets of rams’ horns before the ark of the LORD went on continually and blew with the trumpets. And the armed men went before them. But the rear guard came after the ark of the LORD, while the priests continued blowing the trumpets. ¹⁴And the second day they marched around the city once and returned to the camp. So they did six days.

¹⁵But it came to pass on the seventh day that they rose early, about the dawn-

9 ^g Num. 10:25
11 ^h Josh. 4:11
ⁱ spent the night
12 ^l Deut. 31:25

17 ^j Deut. 13:17;
Josh. 7:1 ^k Josh.
2:1; Matt. 1:5 ^l Josh.
2:4, 6
18 ^m Deut. 7:26
ⁿ Josh. 7:1, 12, 25;
1 Kin. 18:17, 18;
[Jon. 1:12]
19 ² set apart
³ shall go
20 ^o Heb. 11:30
21 ^p Deut. 7:2;
20:16, 17
22 ^q Josh. 2:12-19;
Heb. 11:31
23 ^r Josh. 2:13

ing of the day, and marched around the city seven times in the same manner. On that day only they marched around the city seven times. ¹⁶And the seventh time it happened, when the priests blew the trumpets, that Joshua said to the people: “Shout, for the LORD has given you the city! ¹⁷Now the city shall be ^jdoomed by the LORD to destruction, it and all who *are* in it. Only ^kRahab the harlot shall live, she and all who *are* with her in the house, because ^lshe hid the messengers that we sent. ¹⁸And you, ^mby all means abstain from the accursed things, lest you become accursed when you take of the accursed things, and make the camp of Israel a curse, ⁿand trouble it. ¹⁹But all the silver and gold, and vessels of bronze and iron, *are* ²consecrated to the LORD; they ³shall come into the treasury of the LORD.”

²⁰So the people shouted when the priests blew the trumpets. And it happened when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great shout, that ^othe wall fell down flat. Then the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city. ²¹And they ^putterly destroyed all that *was* in the city, both man and woman, young and old, ox and sheep and donkey, with the edge of the sword.

²²But Joshua had said to the two men who had spied out the country, “Go into the harlot’s house, and from there bring out the woman and all that she has, ^qas you swore to her.” ²³And the young men who had been spies went in and brought out Rahab, ^rher father, her

6:6, 7 Joshua’s instructions here repeat God’s instructions to him in vv. 2–5. The repetition highlights the importance of the solemn ceremony of marching around the city.

6:9 Armed men is another military term. It means “men equipped for war,” emphasizing their strength as they prepared for battle. The term **rear guard** is rare, found only in vv. 9, 13, in Num. 10:25, and figuratively of God in Is. 52:12. The contingent of warriors assigned to the ark is indeed impressive: first the armed men (vv. 7, 9), next the priests blowing horns, then the ark itself carried by priests (v. 8), and finally the rear guard (v. 9).

6:11 he had the ark . . . circle the city: The narrative continues placing the ark in a prominent position. The people circled the city as well, but the focus is on the ark.

6:12 The phrase **rose early in the morning** is found in 3:1; 6:15; 7:16; 8:10; 8:14, as well as several times in Judges. It indicates a good start to a day. In this case, the task at hand would not consume much time, but it was of such spiritual significance that Joshua in his eagerness made an early start.

6:15 On the seventh day the Israelites marched around the city **seven times**, symbolizing completion of the task.

6:17, 18 The important Hebrew word translated as **doomed . . . to destruction, accursed, or curse** occurs in these two verses five times. This word indicates that the city of Jericho, along with its inhabitants and everything in it, was to be completely destroyed as an offering to the Lord. The concept was related to warfare—things

would be offered to the Lord by being utterly destroyed. This was not limited to Jericho, however—it could happen anywhere, with respect to material wealth (7:1, 11), people (10:28, 35, 39, 40; 11:11, 20), or even entire cities (8:26; 10:1, 37; 11:12, 21). God wanted Israel to keep itself undefiled in order to reflect His holiness. In this particular circumstance, it was vitally important that the Israelites not be tempted by the pagan worship practices of the Canaanites. God’s command that they devote the city of Jericho to Him was similar to His command to give Him the firstfruits of the harvest. Whenever Israel disobeyed this command, the effects were disastrous (see ch. 7). The word **trouble** foreshadows the problems Achan would bring on the community (7:16–24).

6:19 The word translated **consecrated** means “holy.” The valuable metal objects were not to be destroyed, but rather to be set apart for the Lord.

6:20 With a great blast of the horns and a great shout from the people, God miraculously delivered Jericho into their hands: **the wall fell down flat** (“under itself”). The account of the taking of Jericho in vv. 8–20 is related in a slow, climax-building style. This first great obstacle to Israel’s possession of the land fell merely at a shout of the people. The fact that it was utterly destroyed in a moment illustrates God’s complete and effortless mastery over all His people’s opponents.

6:23 The two **spies** who had visited Rahab’s house went into her home and rescued her and her entire family. These two men

mother, her brothers, and all that she had. So they brought out all her relatives and left them outside the camp of Israel. ²⁴But they burned the city and all that *was* in it with fire. Only the silver and gold, and the vessels of bronze and iron, they put into the treasury of the house of the LORD. ²⁵And Joshua spared Rahab the harlot, her father's household, and all that she had. So ^sshe dwells in Israel to this day, because she hid the messengers whom Joshua sent to spy out Jericho.

²⁶Then Joshua ⁴charged *them* at that time, saying, "Cursed *be* the man before the LORD who rises up and builds this city Jericho; he shall lay its foundation with his firstborn, and with his youngest he shall set up its gates."

²⁷So the LORD was with Joshua, and his fame spread throughout all the country.

Defeat at Ai

⁷But the children of Israel ¹committed a ^atrespass regarding the ^baccursed² things, for ^cAchan the son of Carmi, the son of ³Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took of the accursed things; so the anger of the LORD burned against the children of Israel.

²Now Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai, which is beside Beth Aven, on the east side of Bethel, and spoke to them,

²⁵ ^s [Matt. 1:5]

²⁶ ¹ 1 Kin. 16:34

⁴ warned

CHAPTER 7

¹ ^a Josh. 7:20,

²¹ ^b Josh. 6:17-

¹⁹ ^c Josh. 22:20

¹ acted unfaithfully

² devoted ³ Zimri,

¹ Chr. 2:6

⁴ ^d Lev. 26:17; Deut.

^{28:25}

⁵ ^e Lev. 26:36;

^{Josh. 2:9, 11} ⁴ *the*

people's courage

failed

⁶ ^f Gen. 37:29, 34

⁹ ¹ Sam. 4:12

⁷ ^h Ex. 17:3; Num.

^{21:5} ⁵ Heb. YHWH,

LORD

⁸ ^g ⁱ Lit. neck

⁹ ⁱ Deut. 32:26 / Ex.

^{32:12}; Num. 14:13

saying, "Go up and spy out the country." So the men went up and spied out Ai. ³And they returned to Joshua and said to him, "Do not let all the people go up, but let about two or three thousand men go up and attack Ai. Do not weary all the people there, for *the people of Ai are few*." ⁴So about three thousand men went up there from the people, ^dbut they fled before the men of Ai. ⁵And the men of Ai struck down about thirty-six men, for they chased them *from* before the gate as far as Shebarim, and struck them down on the descent; therefore ^ethe ⁴ hearts of the people melted and became like water.

⁶Then Joshua ^ftore his clothes, and fell to the earth on his face before the ark of the LORD until evening, he and the elders of Israel; and they ^gput dust on their heads. ⁷And Joshua said, "Alas, Lord ⁵God, ^hwhy have You brought this people over the Jordan at all—to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us? Oh, that we had been content, and dwelt on the other side of the Jordan! ⁸O Lord, what shall I say when Israel turns its ⁶back before its enemies? ⁹For the Canaanites and all the inhabitants of the land will hear *it*, and surround us, and ⁱcut off our name from the earth. Then ^jwhat will You do for Your great name?"

rescued her so that there would be no mistake about whom they were to rescue. Remarkably, this prostitute, who was saved from utter destruction, became a member of the family line of Jesus (Ruth 4:18–22; Matt. 1:5).

6:25 she dwells in Israel to this day: This may indicate that this portion of the Book of Joshua, if not the entire book, was written within the lifetime of Rahab.

6:26 Joshua charged them: Literally "caused them to take an oath." The word **cursed** is one of the common Hebrew words for cursing; it is the opposite of **blessed**. Joshua cursed any attempts at rebuilding Jericho. The city was occupied sporadically after that (18:21; Judg. 3:13; 2 Sam. 10:5), but never to the previous extent. Joshua's curse found a dramatic fulfillment many centuries later when Hiel of Bethel laid its foundation and rebuilt its gates at great personal cost (1 Kin. 16:34). The language of the 1 Kings account consciously echoes that of this passage.

6:27 As a result of this first dramatic conquest in the land of Canaan, it was apparent that **the LORD was with Joshua**, and news of this spread far and wide.

7:1 This verse is a transition between the story of the conquest of Jericho and that of the defeat at Ai. It sets up the next chapter (especially vv. 20, 21). The phrase **committed a trespass** means "committed a treacherous violation." The names of **Achan** and his forebears in this verse are found again in 1 Chr. 2:6, 7. Usually whenever the **anger of the LORD burned** against Israel; He raised up an adversary against the nation to threaten and overpower it. Here God used the small army of Ai. The Lord's anger did not subside until Achan and his family had been punished (7:26).

7:2 Ai, which is beside Beth Aven, on the east side of Bethel: That is, Ai was a small city west of Jericho. **spy out:** The Hebrew word for *spies* (see 2:1) and *spying* is related to the word for "feet." The spies investigated the land by going through it on foot.

7:4 Israel's force of **three thousand men** was a very small contingent indeed compared to the totals that they had available.

According to 4:13, the number of warriors from east of the Jordan alone was 40,000.

7:5 Israel suffered **thirty-six** casualties before retreating. Although minor, this was Israel's first defeat in the land and a great surprise, especially after the inspiring events of the siege of Jericho. **the descent:** The topography west of Jericho rises sharply up out of the Jordan valley. It appears that the men of Ai chased the Israelites eastward, down the steep hills, toward Jericho, from where they had come. **the hearts of the people melted:** In an ironic twist, the very words that Rahab used to describe the inhabitants of Jericho's fears in the face of the Israelites (2:11) are now used of the Israelites' fears of the men of tiny Ai. The effects of sin are often very demoralizing.

7:6 tore his clothes, and fell to the earth . . . put dust on their heads: The actions of mourning here are much more dramatic than typical mourning customs in the modern world. However, these were common actions in Israel and the ancient Middle East. Other mourning customs in Israel included weeping (Ps. 6:6), beating the chest (Is. 32:12), lifting up of the hands (Ezra 9:5; Ps. 141:2), lying or sitting in silence (Judg. 20:26; 2 Sam. 12:16), bowing the head (Lam. 2:10), fasting (2 Sam. 3:35), wearing sackcloth (Gen. 37:34), and sprinkling ashes, dust, or dirt (2 Sam. 15:32). However, the Israelites were strictly prohibited from practicing some pagan mourning rites, such as cutting the body or shaving the beard (Lev. 19:28; Deut. 14:1; Jer. 16:6).

7:7 Joshua's bitter words echoed various complaints by the Israelites in the wilderness (Ex. 16:3; 17:3; Num. 11:4–6; 14:2, 3; 20:3–5). The certainty of the past was often preferable to the difficulties of the present and the uncertainty of the future. Joshua's desire to have remained **on the other (east) side of the Jordan** demonstrated his selective memory, since that spot had problems of its own. Indeed the Israelites had at times wanted to return to Egyptian slavery (Num. 11:4–6)!

7:9 Despite Joshua's shortsightedness in v. 7, here he showed that he was aware of the larger issue at stake: God's **great name**—His reputation.

The Sin of Achan

¹⁰ So the LORD said to Joshua: “Get up! Why do you lie thus on your face? ¹¹ Israel has sinned, and they have also transgressed My covenant which I commanded them. ¹² For they have even taken some of the ⁷ accursed things, and have both stolen and ¹ deceived; and they have also put it among their own stuff. ¹³ Therefore the children of Israel could not stand before their enemies, but turned their backs before their enemies, because ⁸ they have become doomed to destruction. Neither will I be with you anymore, unless you destroy the accursed from among you. ¹⁴ Get up, ⁹ sanctify ⁸ the people, and say, ¹⁵ “Sanctify yourselves for tomorrow, because thus says the LORD God of Israel: “There is an accursed thing in your midst, O Israel; you cannot stand before your enemies until you take away the accursed thing from among you.” ¹⁶ In the morning therefore you shall be brought according to your tribes. And it shall be that the tribe which ¹⁷ the LORD takes shall come according to families; and the family which the LORD takes shall come by households; and the household which the LORD takes shall come man by man. ¹⁸ Then it shall be that he who is taken with the accursed thing shall be burned with fire, he and all that he has, because he has ¹⁹ transgressed ⁹ the covenant of the LORD, and because he ²⁰ has done a disgraceful thing in Israel.”

¹⁶ So Joshua rose early in the morning

¹¹ ^k Josh. 6:17-19 ^l Acts 5:1, 2
⁷ devoted
¹² ^m Judg. 2:14
ⁿ Deut. 7:26; [Hag. 2:13, 14]
¹³ ^o Ex. 19:10
^p Josh. 3:5 ⁸ set apart
¹⁴ ^q [Prov. 16:33]
¹⁵ ^r 1 Sam. 14:38, 39 ^s Josh. 7:11
^t Gen. 34:7; Judg. 20:6 ⁹ overstepped

¹⁸ ^u 1 Sam. 14:42
¹⁹ ^v 1 Sam. 6:5; Jer. 13:16; John 9:24
^w Num. 5:6, 7; 2 Chr. 30:22; Ezra 10:10, 11; Ps. 32:5; Prov. 28:13; Jer. 3:12, 13; Dan. 9:4 ^x 1 Sam. 14:43
²⁰ ^y Num. 22:34; 1 Sam. 15:24
²¹ ¹ desired
²⁴ ^z Num. 16:32, 33; Dan. 6:24

and brought Israel by their tribes, and the tribe of Judah was taken. ¹⁷ He brought the clan of Judah, and he took the family of the Zarahites; and he brought the family of the Zarahites man by man, and Zabdi was taken. ¹⁸ Then he brought his household man by man, and Achan the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, ¹⁹ was taken.

¹⁹ Now Joshua said to Achan, “My son, I beg you, ²⁰ give glory to the LORD God of Israel, ²¹ and make confession to Him, and ²² tell me now what you have done; do not hide it from me.”

²⁰ And Achan answered Joshua and said, “Indeed ²¹ I have sinned against the LORD God of Israel, and this is what I have done: ²² When I saw among the spoils a beautiful Babylonian garment, two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold weighing fifty shekels, I ²³ coveted them and took them. And there they are, hidden in the earth in the midst of my tent, with the silver under it.”

²² So Joshua sent messengers, and they ran to the tent; and there it was, hidden in his tent, with the silver under it. ²³ And they took them from the midst of the tent, brought them to Joshua and to all the children of Israel, and laid them out before the LORD. ²⁴ Then Joshua, and all Israel with him, took Achan the son of Zerah, the silver, the garment, the wedge of gold, his sons, his daughters, his oxen, his donkeys, his sheep, his tent, and ²⁵ all that he had, and they brought them to

7:10–15 God’s response to Joshua and the elders’ mourning reinforced the importance of holiness. Israel—not just Achan—had sinned, and God would not tolerate it. This passage also shows that God had consistent standards for both Israel and the Canaanites. He had ordered Israel to exterminate the Canaanites because of their sin; He could not allow Israel to accommodate corruption, even that of one man, especially when the instructions concerning the infraction were so clear (v. 11; Deut. 7:26).

7:11 Hebrew has several words for sin. **Sinned** means “missing the mark” of a standard set by God; **transgressed** means “crossing a boundary” set by God. This verse highlights the seriousness of Achan’s offense, attributed here to the nation Israel, by referring to the sin in various ways: Israel had (1) **sinned**, (2) **transgressed** the Lord’s **covenant**, (3) **taken some of the accursed things**, (4) **stolen**, (5) **deceived**, and (6) put the things **among their own stuff**. The quick, staccato accumulation of these verbs accentuates the severity of the action, since it was essentially one act. **My covenant**: The word **covenant** refers to many different dealings of God with His people at different times. Here the specific reference appears to be to the portion of the covenant that referred to the annihilation of the Canaanites (Deut. 20:10–20).

7:12 That God would declare the people of Israel **doomed to destruction**, as Jericho had been, because of their sin was a serious statement. It meant God would no longer be with Israel until the sin was removed from the camp. God had specifically promised to be with His people (1:5, 9). This threat to withdraw His presence emphasizes once again God’s absolute standards and His demand for holiness.

7:13 The relationship between obedience and blessing and disobedience and cursing is well illustrated here: Israel would have no further successes until the sin had been uncovered.

7:15, 16 The Hebrew word translated **a disgraceful thing** denotes a blatant and senseless disregard for God’s will. The text does not say by what method God indicated that **the tribe of Judah was taken** and the guilty party found out.

7:19 give glory to the LORD . . . and make confession . . . and tell me: These three actions commanded by Joshua are aspects of one event. By telling Joshua his sin, Achan was confessing to God, and by his confession, he was indeed glorifying God. We too dishonor God when we hide our sins from Him, and we honor Him when we confess them.

7:21 a beautiful Babylonian garment: Literally, “one beautiful garment of Shinar.” The land of Shinar is mentioned in Gen. 11:2 as the place where men built the Tower of Babel. **two hundred shekels of silver**: The shekel was the basic unit of weight for silver, and it was slightly more than four-tenths of an ounce. The total weight of the silver was considerable—more than 80 ounces. The gold Achan took weighed **fifty shekels**, or about 20 ounces. **coveted**: Achan’s actions, besides violating God’s instructions, also were a violation of the tenth commandment (Ex. 20:17). Achan had made fruitless attempts to hide his sin from God, from whom nothing can be **hidden** (Ps. 139:7–12).

7:24 Achan was brought out to be stoned, not only with each of the items he had stolen, but also with **all that he had** and his entire household. This was a severe punishment, but it illustrated God’s firm insistence on holiness. Achan’s sin had infected all Israel (7:1), and ridding Israel of the stain of this sin required the annihilation of everything with which Achan had intimate contact. Ironically for Achan, God allowed the Israelites to take the spoil in the next victory, at the second battle of Ai (8:2)! Achan’s greed was his own downfall.

^athe Valley of Achor. ²⁵And Joshua said, ^b“Why have you troubled us? The LORD will trouble you this day.” ^cSo all Israel stoned him with stones; and they burned them with fire after they had stoned them with stones.

²⁶Then they ^draised over him a great heap of stones, still there to this day. So ^ethe LORD turned from the fierceness of His anger. Therefore the name of that place has been called ^fthe Valley of ²Achor to this day.

The Fall of Ai

8 Now the LORD said to Joshua: ^a“Do not be afraid, nor be dismayed; take all the people of war with you, and arise, go up to Ai. See, ^bI have given into your hand the king of Ai, his people, his city, and his land. ²And you shall do to Ai and its king as you did to ^cJericho and its king. Only ^dits spoil and its cattle you shall take as booty for yourselves. Lay an ambush for the city behind it.”

³So Joshua arose, and all the people of war, to go up against Ai; and Joshua chose thirty thousand mighty men of valor and sent them away by night. ⁴And he commanded them, saying: “Behold, ^eyou shall lie in ambush against the city, behind the city. Do not go very far from the city, but all of you be ready. ⁵Then I and all the people who *are* with me will approach the city; and it will come about, when they come out against us as at the first, that ^fwe shall flee before them. ⁶For they will come out after us till we have drawn them from the city, for they will say, ‘*They are fleeing before us as at the first.*’ Therefore we will flee before them. ⁷Then you shall rise from the ambush

²⁴ ^a Josh. 7:26; 15:7
²⁵ ^b Josh. 6:18;
1 Chr. 2:7; [Gal. 5:12]
^c Deut. 17:5
²⁶ ^d Josh. 8:29;
2 Sam. 18:17; Lam.
3:53 ^e Deut. 13:17
^f Josh. 7:24; Is.
65:10; Hos. 2:15
² Lit. Trouble

CHAPTER 8
¹ ^a Deut. 1:21; 7:18;
31:8; Josh. 1:9; 10:8
^b Josh. 6:2
² ^c Josh. 6:21
^d Deut. 20:14; Josh.
8:27
⁴ ^e Judg. 20:29
⁵ ^f Josh. 7:5; Judg.
20:32

⁸ ⁹ 2 Sam. 13:28
¹¹ ^b Josh. 8:5
¹² ^c Ai
¹⁴ ^d Judg. 20:34;
Eccl. 9:12
¹⁵ ^e Judg. 20:36

and seize the city, for the LORD your God will deliver it into your hand. ⁸And it will be, when you have taken the city, *that* you shall set the city on fire. According to the commandment of the LORD you shall do. ⁹See, I have commanded you.”

⁹Joshua therefore sent them out; and they went to lie in ambush, and stayed between Bethel and Ai, on the west side of Ai; but Joshua lodged that night among the people. ¹⁰Then Joshua rose up early in the morning and mustered the people, and went up, he and the elders of Israel, before the people to Ai. ¹¹^hAnd all the people of war who *were* with him went up and drew near; and they came before the city and camped on the north side of Ai. Now a valley *lay* between them and Ai. ¹²So he took about five thousand men and set them in ambush between Bethel and Ai, on the west side of ⁱthe city. ¹³And when they had set the people, all the army that *was* on the north of the city, and its rear guard on the west of the city, Joshua went that night into the midst of the valley.

¹⁴Now it happened, when the king of Ai saw *it*, that the men of the city hurried and rose early and went out against Israel to battle, he and all his people, at an appointed place before the plain. But he ^jdid not know that *there was* an ambush against him behind the city. ¹⁵And Joshua and all Israel ^kmade as if they were beaten before them, and fled by the way of the wilderness. ¹⁶So all the people who *were* in Ai were called together to pursue them. And they pursued Joshua and were drawn away from the city. ¹⁷There was not a man left in Ai or Bethel who did not go out after Israel. So they left the city open and pursued Israel.

8:1 The words **Do not be afraid, nor be dismayed** echo the words God used to encourage Joshua in 1:9. The sins of Achan had broken the special relationship God had established with His people, and so God reiterated His encouragement to Joshua. These words reinforce the statement of 7:26 that God had forgiven Israel, that He had “turned from the fierceness of His anger.” **people of war:** The usual term is “men of war” (5:4, 6). This phrase seems to emphasize the unity of the entire nation in doing battle, even though it was most likely only the men who actually engaged in the battles. **I have given:** The conquest of the city was certain because God had willed it.
8:2 booty for yourselves: In contrast to the instructions concerning Jericho (6:17–19), this time the Israelites were allowed to take and keep spoils of war for themselves. Had Achan been less greedy, he could have participated in this as well. However, the Israelites were still to kill the inhabitants of Ai.
8:4 A select group of men was to **lie in ambush . . . behind** the city, that is, to the west. The main group of people would then be stationed north of the city (vv. 12, 13).
8:7 the LORD your God will deliver it into your hand: Here as elsewhere in the historical books, military victories are attributed to God. Israel was to depend completely upon Him for its successes.
8:8 commandment: After the disobedience in ch. 7, strict

obedience was important here. Joshua urged obedience to God’s commands, and the people complied (vv. 2, 8, 27).
8:13 The phrase **its rear guard** refers to the ambush forces stationed to the west of the city (vv. 3, 12). The largest contingent of warriors was stationed to the north. It appears that Joshua spent the night with the people, across the valley from Ai (v. 11), but late in the night he got up and went into the valley in preparation for the day’s events (v. 13).
8:15 the way of the wilderness: This may indicate merely that the men of Ai fled in disarray into the wilderness. The same phrase is found again in a similar context, where a coalition of Israelites set an ambush for the Benjamites at Gibeah (Judg. 20:42). The phrase occurs one other place, at Ex. 13:18, referring to the route that Israel took from Egypt through the desert.
8:17 Bethel is an important city in the Bible. It has a fine pedigree that goes back to patriarchal times, when Abraham offered a sacrifice to God there (Gen. 13:3) and Jacob had a dream from God there (Gen. 28:10–22). Bethel was near Ai to the west (7:2), although its exact site is disputed. The inhabitants of Bethel came out of their city to help the men of Ai. Since the Israelite ambush was stationed between Bethel and Ai, they may have felt threatened by the Israelites. Or it may be that Ai was a small outpost for the larger city of Bethel (7:3) and an attack on Ai was understood to be an attack on

¹⁸Then the LORD said to Joshua, “Stretch out the spear that *is* in your hand toward Ai, for I will give it into your hand.” And Joshua stretched out the spear that *was* in his hand toward the city. ¹⁹So *those in* ambush arose quickly out of their place; they ran as soon as he had stretched out his hand, and they entered the city and took it, and hurried to set the city on fire. ²⁰And when the men of Ai looked behind them, they saw, and behold, the smoke of the city ascended to heaven. So they had no power to flee this way or that way, and the people who had fled to the wilderness turned back on the pursuers.

²¹Now when Joshua and all Israel saw that the ambush had taken the city and that the smoke of the city ascended, they turned back and struck down the men of Ai. ²²Then the others came out of the city against them; so they were *caught* in the midst of Israel, some on this side and some on that side. And they struck them down, so that they ^klet none of them remain or escape. ²³But the king of Ai they took alive, and brought him to Joshua.

²⁴And it came to pass when Israel had made an end of slaying all the inhabitants of Ai in the field, in the wilderness where they pursued them, and when they all

²² ^k Deut. 7:2

²⁶ ^j Josh. 6:21
²⁷ ^m Num. 31:22, 26
ⁿ Josh. 8:2
²⁸ ^o Deut. 13:16
²⁹ ^p Josh. 10:26
^q Deut. 21:22, 23;
 Josh. 10:27 ^r Josh.
 7:26; 10:27
³⁰ ^s Deut. 27:4-8
³¹ ^t Ex. 20:25; Deut.
 27:5, 6

had fallen by the edge of the sword until they were consumed, that all the Israelites returned to Ai and struck it with the edge of the sword. ²⁵So it was *that* all who fell that day, both men and women, *were* twelve thousand—all the people of Ai. ²⁶For Joshua did not draw back his hand, with which he stretched out the spear, until he had ^lutterly destroyed all the inhabitants of Ai. ²⁷^mOnly the livestock and the spoil of that city Israel took as booty for themselves, according to the word of the LORD which He had ⁿcommanded Joshua. ²⁸So Joshua burned Ai and made it ^oa heap forever, a desolation to this day. ²⁹^pAnd the king of Ai he hanged on a tree until evening. ^qAnd as soon as the sun was down, Joshua commanded that they should take his corpse down from the tree, cast it at the entrance of the gate of the city, and ^rraise over it a great heap of stones *that remains* to this day.

Joshua Renews the Covenant

³⁰Now Joshua built an altar to the LORD God of Israel ^sin Mount Ebal, ³¹as Moses the servant of the LORD had commanded the children of Israel, as it is written in the Book of the Law of Moses: ^t“an altar of

Bethel. The text does not record Bethel's defeat, although its king is listed among those conquered by Joshua (12:16). It may be that in the defeat of Ai, Bethel was also defeated and no further reference was needed.

8:18 God told Joshua to **stretch out the spear** toward the city to begin the attack. Evidently this signal was relayed in some way to those lying in ambush (v. 19).

8:19 **set the city on fire**: Among all the cities that the Israelites captured, only three are said to have been burned: Jericho (6:24), Ai (8:19), and Hazor (11:11). The people of Israel were to live in and enjoy the cities of the land. Most of Israel's battles were in the field; they generally did not have to destroy the cities.

8:23 The Israelites were to treat **the king of Ai** exactly as they had the king of Jericho (v. 2). Chapter 6 does not specify what they did to the king of Jericho, but we can infer from 8:29 that they killed him and exposed his body in a humiliating way.

8:26 **Joshua did not draw back his hand**: This verse shows Joshua maintaining his arm outstretched, with his spear in hand, until the defeat of Ai was completed. The upraised spear was more than a signal to start the battle; it was also a symbol of God's presence and help in the battle (v. 1). This episode closely parallels that in Ex. 17:8–16, where the Israelites battled the Amalekites, and Moses stretched out his hand with “the rod of God” in it (Ex. 17:9). In that account, Moses' outstretched arm stood for God's presence, because the battle went in Israel's favor when Moses' hands were up, and against Israel when he tired and dropped his hands. This episode in Joshua shows yet another way in which Joshua was the worthy successor to Moses (see 1:1, 5; 24:29). Note that Joshua was the military leader when Moses stretched out his hand, and now Joshua was in Moses' position while others carried on the battle.

8:27 **according to the word of the LORD**: God had specified that the Israelites could take the city's possessions and livestock, but nothing else (v. 2), and this verse indicates that they carried out His instructions. This undoubtedly includes their treatment of the king of Ai (v. 29).

8:28 The word **heap** refers to a mound of ruins. Ancient cities were

usually built on high points of land near water supplies, and when a city was destroyed a new city was built on the same site atop the packed and settled debris from the former city. Thus, over time, cities came to be on top of high mounds of compacted ruins. Ai was not rebuilt; therefore it remained a heap of ruins. The Hebrew word (*tel*) for *heap* is found in only a few places in the Bible (8:28; Deut. 13:16; 11:13; Jer. 30:18; 49:2), and in such place names in the Bible as Tel Melah and Tel Harsha (Ezra 2:59) or Tel Abib (Ezek. 3:15). The equivalent Arabic word *tell* is used today as part of the names of many sites in Israel. Ai's very name means “The Ruin,” so the judgment implicit in its name is now made explicit in this wordplay.

8:29 As God instructed (v. 27), Joshua executed the king of Ai and exposed his body **on a tree** (see the similar action in 10:26). But he took down the body at sundown in accordance with the injunction in Deuteronomy that a body could not remain exposed overnight (Deut. 21:22, 23). In these texts, **hanged** means exposing the dead body on a sharpened stake as a mark of shame and horror, not hanging by the neck. **a great heap of stones**: A different Hebrew word for “heap” is used here from the one in v. 28, but the connection is clear. The king's fate here is exactly the same as Achan's fate in 7:26. God would not favor His own people when they blatantly disobeyed, any more than He would favor wicked Canaanites; for his sin Achan was expelled from Israel and treated like a Canaanite. **8:30** **Mount Ebal** is mentioned only here and in Deut. 11:29; 27:4, 13. It and Mount Gerizim, directly south of it, were the sites to be used for proclaiming blessings and curses when the Israelites came into the land; specifically, Ebal was to be the site of the curses (Deut. 11:29). Here it was the site of an altar. Ebal and Gerizim are two important peaks in central Canaan flanking an east-west pass through the north-central hill country. Almost the entire Promised Land is visible from the top of Mount Ebal.

8:31 **Moses . . . had commanded** this in Deut. 27:2–10. This is another example of the explicit fulfillment of God's words; the Israelites had disobeyed enough that they wanted to make doubly sure they did it right this time. **An altar of whole stones** refers to unfinished stones (Deut. 27:4), which was in accord with God's

whole stones over which no man has wielded an iron *tool*.” And “they offered on it burnt offerings to the LORD, and sacrificed peace offerings.”³² And there, in the presence of the children of Israel, ^vhe wrote on the stones a copy of the law of Moses, which he had written.³³ Then all Israel, with their elders and officers and judges, stood on either side of the ark before the priests, the Levites, ^wwho bore the ark of the covenant of the LORD, ^xthe stranger as well as he who was born among them. Half of them *were* in front of Mount Gerizim and half of them in front of Mount Ebal, ^yas Moses the servant of the LORD had commanded before, that they should bless the people of Israel.³⁴ And afterward ^zhe read all the words of the law, ^athe blessings and the cursings, according to all that is written in the ^bBook of the Law.³⁵ There was not a word of all that Moses had commanded which Joshua did not read before all the assembly of Israel, ^cwith the women, the little ones, ^dand the strangers who were living among them.

The Treaty with the Gibeonites

9 And it came to pass when ^aall the kings who *were* on this side of the Jordan, in the hills and in the lowland and in all the coasts of ^bthe Great Sea toward Lebanon—^cthe Hittite, the Amorite, the Canaanite, the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite—heard *about it*, ²that they

31 ^uEx. 20:24
32 ^vDeut. 27:2, 3, 8
33 ^wDeut. 31:9, 25
^xDeut. 31:12 ^yDeut. 11:29; 27:12
34 ^zDeut. 31:11; Neh. 8:3 ^aDeut. 28:2, 15, 45; 29:20, 21; 30:19 ^bJosh. 1:8
35 ^cEx. 12:38; Deut. 31:12 ^dJosh. 8:33

CHAPTER 9

1 ^aNum. 13:29;
Josh. 3:10 ^bNum. 34:6 ^cEx. 3:17;
23:23

2 ^dJosh. 10:5; Ps. 83:3, 5 ^eLit. *mouth*
3 ^eJosh. 9:17, 22;
10:2; 21:17; 2 Sam. 21:1, 2 ^fJosh. 6:27
4 ² *acted as envoys*
3 ³ *Lit. tied up*
6 ^gJosh. 5:10
4 ⁴ *treaty*
7 ^hJosh. 9:1; 11:19
i Ex. 23:32; Deut. 7:2
8 ^jDeut. 20:11;
2 Kin. 10:5
9 ^kDeut. 20:15 ^lEx. 15:14; Josh. 2:9,
10; 5:1
10 ^mNum. 21:24, 33

^dgathered together to fight with Joshua and Israel with one ¹accord.

³But when the inhabitants of ^eGibeon ^fheard what Joshua had done to Jericho and Ai, ⁴they worked craftily, and went and ²pretended to be ambassadors. And they took old sacks on their donkeys, old wineskins torn and ³mended, ⁵old and patched sandals on their feet, and old garments on themselves; and all the bread of their provision was dry *and* moldy. ⁶And they went to Joshua, ^gto the camp at Gilgal, and said to him and to the men of Israel, “We have come from a far country; now therefore, make a ⁴covenant with us.”

⁷Then the men of Israel said to the ^hHivites, “Perhaps you dwell among us; so ⁱhow can we make a covenant with you?”

⁸But they said to Joshua, ^j“We are your servants.”

And Joshua said to them, “Who *are* you, and where do you come from?”

⁹So they said to him: ^k“From a very far country your servants have come, because of the name of the LORD your God; for we have ^lheard of His fame, and all that He did in Egypt, ¹⁰and ^mall that He did to the two kings of the Amorites who *were* beyond the Jordan—to Sihon king of Heshbon, and Og king of Bashan, who was at Ashtaroht. ¹¹Therefore our elders and all the inhabitants of our country spoke to us, saying, ‘Take provisions with you for the journey, and go to meet

earlier instructions about making altars (Ex. 20:25). The unfinished stones would have contrasted with the finished stones found in many Canaanite altars. This was a reminder that, even in such rituals as offering sacrifices, the Israelites were to be different or distinct from their neighbors. **Burnt offerings** were sacrifices in which the animals were entirely consumed (7:1–10; Ex. 29:18; Lev. 1:1–17). **Peace offerings** were offerings in which portions of the sacrificial animals were to be joyfully eaten by the ones presenting them (7:11–21; Lev. 3:1–17).

8:32 Joshua publicly wrote a **copy of the law** on stones, which echoed the instructions for a king in Deut. 17:18. While Joshua was not a king, several indications in the book show him in a kingly light, acting with the authority of a king and in ways in which kings were supposed to act (1:5–9; Deut. 17:14–20).

8:33 This Hebrew word for **stranger** could more precisely be translated “resident alien.” It refers to those foreigners who lived as permanent residents within Israel. These were different from foreigners or outsiders who had incidental contact with Israel, such as travelers or traders, who had few rights within Israel (Ex. 12:43; Lev. 22:10, 25). Resident aliens were allowed to take gleanings from the fields (Lev. 19:10; 23:22), and the Israelites were repeatedly instructed to give special care to them, along with the poor, the widow, and the orphan (Ex. 22:21; 23:9; Deut. 10:17–22). This special concern for aliens within Israel’s borders was rooted in Israel’s own alien status in Egypt, which God wanted them to remember (Ex. 22:21; 23:9; Deut. 10:17–22; 23:7). This is part of the missionary message of the OT: Israel was to treat aliens within its own borders in such a way that they would want a relationship with Israel’s God. In this passage we see aliens participating right along with the rest of the Israelites in the covenant affirmation ceremony.

8:34, 35 This was the first public reading of **the Book of the Law**, the entire body of the Law given by Moses, mentioned after Moses’ death.

9:1, 2 Though a coalition of Canaanite kings banded together to oppose Israel, the text does not say whether this coalition ever actually fought Israel. It disappears from the scene after v. 2. Six ethnic groups in Canaan, who often are mentioned together (3:10), are listed here. God told Israel to destroy these nations, and He did not want Israel to become allies with them under any circumstances (Ex. 23:28–33; Deut. 7:1–5; 20:16–18).

9:3 **Gibeon** was relatively close to Ai and about five miles northwest of Jerusalem. It is known mainly for the deceit of its inhabitants described in this chapter.

9:6 The Gibeonites went to great lengths to make it look as though they had **come from a far country**. Israel was allowed to make treaties with cities that were far from them (Ex. 34:11, 12; Deut. 20:10–18). Thus if the Gibeonites’ claim of v. 6 had been truthful, the treaty that the Israelites made with them would have been permissible. **A covenant** was a legal treaty. The literal wording in Hebrew is “cut a covenant,” which may have referred to the ancient custom of sacrificing an animal to ratify it (Gen. 15:10).

9:7 The people of Gibeon are called **Hivites**, and were among the groups slated for destruction (Ex. 34:11; Deut. 20:17). Israel should not have made a treaty with them. This verse shows that the Israelites were initially suspicious of the Gibeonites.

9:9, 10 The fame of the Israelites’ victories had preceded them among the Gibeonites, in the same way that it did among the inhabitants of Jericho earlier (2:9, 10).

them, and say to them, “We *are* your servants; now therefore, make a covenant with us.”¹² This bread of ours we took hot *for* our provision from our houses on the day we departed to come to you. But now look, it is dry and moldy.¹³ And these wineskins which we filled *were* new, and see, they are torn; and these our garments and our sandals have become old because of the very long journey.”

¹⁴Then the men of Israel took some of their provisions; ¹⁵but they ¹⁶did not ask counsel of the LORD. ¹⁷So Joshua ¹⁸made peace with them, and made a covenant with them to let them live; and the rulers of the congregation swore to them.

¹⁶And it happened at the end of three days, after they had made a covenant with them, that they heard that they *were* their neighbors who dwelt near them. ¹⁷Then the children of Israel journeyed and came to their cities on the third day. Now their cities *were* ¹⁸Gibeon, Chephirah, Beeroth, and Kirjath Jearim. ¹⁹But the children of Israel did not ²⁰attack them, ²¹because the rulers of the congregation had sworn to them by the LORD God of Israel. And all the congregation complained against the rulers.

¹⁹Then all the rulers said to all the congregation, “We have sworn to them by the LORD God of Israel; now therefore, we may not touch them. ²⁰This we will do to them: We will let them live, lest ²¹wrath be upon us because of the oath which we swore to them.” ²²And the rulers said to them, “Let them live, but let them be ²³woodcutters and water carriers for all the congregation, as the rulers had ²⁴promised them.”

14 ^a Num. 27:21; Is. 30:1 ² Lit. *did not inquire at the mouth of*
15 ^a 2 Sam. 21:2
17 ^a Josh. 18:25
18 ^a Ps. 15:4 ⁶ *strike*
20 ^a 2 Sam. 21:1, 2; Ezek. 17:13, 15
21 ^a Deut. 29:11
¹ Josh. 9:15

22 ^a Josh. 9:6, 9
¹ Josh. 9:16
23 ^a Gen. 9:25
24 ^a Ex. 23:31-33; Deut. 7:1, 2 ¹ Ex. 15:14
25 ^a Gen. 16:6
27 ^a Josh. 9:21, 23
¹ Deut. 12:5

CHAPTER 10

1 ^a Josh. 9:1 ¹ Josh. 8:1 ^c Josh. 6:21
^d Josh. 8:22, 26, 28
^e Josh. 9:15
2 ¹ Ex. 15:14-16; Deut. 11:25; 1 Chr. 14:17

²²Then Joshua called for them, and he spoke to them, saying, “Why have you deceived us, saying, ²³‘We are very far from you,’ when ²⁴you dwell near us? ²⁵Now therefore, you *are* ²⁶w cursed, and none of you shall be freed from being slaves—woodcutters and water carriers for the house of my God.”

²⁴So they answered Joshua and said, “Because your servants were clearly told that the LORD your God ²⁵commanded His servant Moses to give you all the land, and to destroy all the inhabitants of the land from before you; therefore ²⁶we were very much afraid for our lives because of you, and have done this thing. ²⁷And now, here we are, ²⁸in your hands; do with us as it seems good and right to do to us.” ²⁹So he did to them, and delivered them out of the hand of the children of Israel, so that they did not kill them. ³⁰And that day Joshua made them ³¹woodcutters and water carriers for the congregation and for the altar of the LORD, ³²in the place which He would choose, even to this day.

The Sun Stands Still

10 Now it came to pass when Adoniz-Zedek king of Jerusalem ¹heard how Joshua had taken ²Ai and had utterly destroyed it—³as he had done to Jericho and its king, so he had done to ⁴Ai and its king—and ⁵how the inhabitants of Gibeon had made peace with Israel and were among them, ⁶that they ⁷feared greatly, because Gibeon *was* a great city, like one of the royal cities, and because it *was* greater than Ai, and all its men *were* mighty. ⁸Therefore Adoni-Zedek king of Jerusalem sent to Hoham king of Hebron,

9:14 The Israelites **took some of** the Gibeonites’ provisions in order to inspect them, to confirm the Gibeonites’ words. Significantly, the Israelites **did not ask counsel of the LORD**, contrary to God’s explicit instructions to Joshua (Num. 27:21). The Israelites’ confirmation of the Gibeonites’ claim was purely in their own strength and on their own initiative. The mistake on Israel’s part was not so much that they were deceived, but that they did not ask for the Lord’s counsel. Similarly, many Christians have found themselves in difficult or disastrous circumstances because they rushed to a decision without properly consulting the Lord, His Scriptures, and His people for guidance.

9:15 **Joshua made peace with them:** The treaty made in this chapter has much in common with typical ancient Middle Eastern treaties of the times. A subordinate group makes the agreement with a more powerful party in order to receive protection. Its binding nature (v. 18) forms the basis for the actions taken in 10:1–27, where the Gibeonites found themselves threatened by a Canaanite coalition and appealed to the Israelites for help.

9:17 **Chephirah, Beeroth, and Kirjath Jearim** were all towns near Gibeon. The first two were in Benjaminite territory (18:25, 26), and the third was on its border (18:14, 15).

9:20 **the oath which we swore:** Oath taking and swearing were solemn affairs. To take an oath was to give a sacred and unbreakable word to follow through on what was promised. From time to time, even God swore by Himself or His holiness or His great name to take

certain actions (Gen. 22:16–18; Ps. 89:35; Jer. 44:26). Swearing falsely was a grave sin (Ezek. 17:16–21; Zech. 5:3, 4; Mal. 3:5). Because of the sacred, unbreakable nature of an oath, this covenant the Israelites made with the Gibeonites could not be revoked, even though it was obtained under false pretenses.

9:24 The report that reached the Gibeonites concerning the Israelites (v. 3) frightened them so much that they conjured up this deception. Their words **your servants were clearly told** bear witness to the great events of the Exodus that were not forgotten even 40 years after the event (Deut. 1–3).

9:27 The phrase **the place which He would choose** is particularly important in Deuteronomy. It indicates that the Gibeonites were to serve only at sanctioned Israelite worship centers and not Canaanite ones. Until the Jerusalem temple was built, these centers included Shiloh (18:1) and Gibeon itself (1 Chr. 16:39). That they did so **to this day** (a phrase also found in 4:9; 5:9; 7:26; 8:29) shows that the Gibeonites did indeed continue this service for some time, although it is not specifically mentioned again in the OT.

10:2 Political and military calculations led the five Canaanite kings to conclude that if such a **great city** as Gibeon had to make peace with the seemingly invincible Israelites, their only option was to band together and attack (v. 5). **Ai** was a strong city, a fact to which Israel closed their eyes when they became overconfident in themselves (7:3).

Piram king of Jarmuth, Japhia king of Lachish, and Debir king of Eglon, saying, ⁴“Come up to me and help me, that we may attack Gibeon, for ⁵it has made peace with Joshua and with the children of Israel.” ⁶Therefore the five kings of the ⁷Amorites, the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, and the king of Eglon, ⁸gathered together and went up, they and all their armies, and camped before Gibeon and made war against it.

⁹And the men of Gibeon sent to Joshua at the camp ¹⁰at Gilgal, saying, “Do not forsake your servants; come up to us quickly, save us and help us, for all the kings of the Amorites who dwell in the mountains have gathered together against us.”

¹¹So Joshua ascended from Gilgal, he and ¹²all the people of war with him, and all the mighty men of valor. ¹³And the LORD said to Joshua, ¹⁴“Do not fear them, for I have delivered them into your hand; ¹⁵not a man of them shall ¹⁶stand before you.” ¹⁷Joshua therefore came upon them suddenly, having marched all night from Gilgal. ¹⁸So the LORD ¹⁹routed them before Israel, killed them with a great slaughter at Gibeon, chased them along the road that goes ²⁰to Beth Horon, and struck them down as far as ²¹Azekah and Makkedah. ²²And it happened, as they fled before Israel and were on the descent of Beth Horon, ²³that the LORD cast down large hailstones from heaven on them as far as Azekah, and they died. ²⁴There were more who died from the hailstones than the children of Israel killed with the sword.

²⁵Then Joshua spoke to the LORD in

⁴ ^g Josh. 9:15; 10:1
⁵ ^h Num. 13:29
⁶ Josh. 9:2
⁷ Josh. 5:10; 9:6
⁸ Josh. 8:1
⁹ Josh. 11:6; Judg. 4:14
¹⁰ Josh. 1:5, 9
¹¹ Josh. 21:44
¹² Judg. 4:15;
1 Sam. 7:10, 12; Is. 28:21
¹³ Josh. 16:3, 5
¹⁴ Josh. 15:35
¹⁵ Is. 30:30; Rev. 16:21

¹² Is. 28:21; Hab. 3:11
¹³ 2 Sam. 1:18
¹⁴ Is. 38:7, 8
¹⁵ Ex. 14:14; Deut. 1:30; 20:4; Josh. 10:42; 23:3
¹⁵ Josh. 10:43

the day when the LORD delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel:

¹⁶“Sun, stand still over Gibeon;
And Moon, in the Valley of
‘Aijalon.”

¹⁷ So the sun stood still,
And the moon stopped,
Till the people had revenge
Upon their enemies.

¹⁸Is this not written in the Book of Jasher? So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and did not hasten to go down for about a whole day. ¹⁹And there has been ²⁰no day like that, before it or after it, that the LORD heeded the voice of a man; for ²¹the LORD fought for Israel.

²²Then Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, to the camp at Gilgal.

The Amorite Kings Executed

²³But these five kings had fled and hidden themselves in a cave at Makkedah. ²⁴And it was told Joshua, saying, “The five kings have been found hidden in the cave at Makkedah.”

²⁵So Joshua said, “Roll large stones against the mouth of the cave, and set men by it to guard them. ²⁶And do not stay there yourselves, but pursue your enemies, and attack their rear guard. Do not allow them to enter their cities, for the LORD your God has delivered them into your hand.” ²⁷Then it happened, while Joshua and the children of Israel made an end of slaying them with a very great slaughter, till they had finished, that those who escaped entered fortified cit-

10:5 The name **Amorites** probably refers to the inhabitants of the central mountain region of Palestine, although only **Jerusalem** and **Hebron** are really in the hill country. The king of Jerusalem was leader of a coalition of five kings against Gibeon. The events at Ai had struck fear into the kings’ hearts, especially now that Gibeon, a prominent city, had made a treaty with Israel (ch. 9). Gibeon’s treaty with Israel may have been a renunciation of one with Jerusalem. This could explain the special concern of the king of Jerusalem.

10:7 Joshua ascended from Gilgal because Gilgal and Jericho were in the deep Jordan valley; he would have had to go up into the hill country in the central portion of Canaan to help the Gibeonites.

10:9 For Joshua’s men to have **marched all night from Gilgal** and then attacked speaks well of their stamina. Their night march covered about 20 miles up steep terrain, with gear, under stress, in the middle of the night, and with a battle still before them.

10:10 This verse summarizes the victory; vv. 11–13 give the details. **the LORD routed them:** Despite Joshua’s presence with his warriors (v. 7), it was God who gave the victory and God who received the credit. **the road that goes to Beth Horon:** One escape route for the Canaanite kings went northwest, down from the hill country toward the coast. **Azekah** was a town over the hills to the southwest of Gibeon, some distance away. That some were fleeing in this direction while others were fleeing toward Beth Horon indicates the

completeness of the rout. The location of **Makkedah** is unknown, but presumably it was somewhere near Azekah.

10:12 In the sight of Israel, Joshua commanded the **Sun** and the **Moon** to stand still over Gibeon until the Israelites completed their task. The words of this verse form a two-part section of well-balanced poetry, and the words in v. 13 comment on them with a three-part echo.

10:13 The Book of Jasher (mentioned again in 2 Sam. 1:18) confirms what the Book of Joshua reports here. It is not part of the Bible, and no part of it has survived.

10:14 the LORD heeded: This is the climax of the section. The author of Joshua marvels (perhaps quoting from the Book of Jasher), not that a miracle happened, but that God listened to the voice of one man and fought on Israel’s behalf so grandly. This is plain proof that one person can gain God’s attention in prayer.

10:19 delivered them into your hand: Again Joshua gave God credit for the Israelites’ victory. **enter their cities:** The fortified cities of Canaan offered some protection to their people. That is why the ambush at Ai was designed to draw the people out of the city (8:17). In v. 20, we see that some people escaped into the fortified cities.

10:20, 21 The slaughter of the Canaanites was great, but some escaped. This explains why there were still people in these towns later (see especially vv. 31–37). **No one moved his tongue:** Literally, “sharpened his tongue.” It means “to criticize” or “to slander.”

ies. ²¹ And all the people returned to the camp, to Joshua at Makkedah, in peace.

²² No one ¹ moved his tongue against any of the children of Israel.

²² Then Joshua said, “Open the mouth of the cave, and bring out those five kings to me from the cave.” ²³ And they did so, and brought out those five kings to him from the cave: the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, and the king of Eglon.

²⁴ So it was, when they brought out those kings to Joshua, that Joshua called for all the men of Israel, and said to the captains of the men of war who went with him, “Come near, put your feet

²¹ ² Ex. 11:7
¹ criticized, lit.
sharpened his
tongue

²⁴ ² Ps. 107:40; Is.

26:5, 6; Mal. 4:3

²⁵ ² Deut. 31:6-8;

Josh. 1:9 ³ Deut.

3:21; 7:19 ² The

captains

²⁶ ² Josh. 8:29;

2 Sam. 21:9 ³ The

kings

²⁷ ² Deut. 21:22, 23;

Josh. 8:29

on the necks of these kings.” And they drew near and ² put their feet on their necks. ²⁵ Then Joshua said to ² them, ^a “Do not be afraid, nor be dismayed; be strong and of good courage, for ^b thus the LORD will do to all your enemies against whom you fight.” ²⁶ And afterward Joshua struck ³ them and killed them, and hanged them on five trees; and they ^c were hanging on the trees until evening. ²⁷ So it was at the time of the going down of the sun *that* Joshua commanded, and they ^d took them down from the trees, cast them into the cave where they had been hidden, and laid large stones against the cave’s mouth, *which remain* until this very day.

10:24 Joshua told the captains to put their **feet on the necks of these kings** as a clear declaration of victory. See Ps. 110:1: “I [will] make Your enemies Your footstool”; and 1 Cor. 15:25–27, where God places Jesus’ enemies “under His feet” (Ps. 8:6). Ancient sculptural reliefs show Assyrian kings doing this to their vanquished enemies. **10:25** **be strong and of good courage:** Joshua encouraged the people in the same terms God had used to encourage him (1:6, 9;

10:8). Now Joshua had the authority to give this exhortation to others.

10:26 **hanged them on five trees . . . until evening:** Joshua did to these five kings what he had earlier done to the king of Ai (8:29). As before, he took the bodies down before sundown in accordance with Mosaic legislation (8:29).

Miracles

Open the Bible wherever you like and you will soon find the mention of an event that only God could do. These stories of God’s intervention in nature occur without apology throughout the Bible. But the Bible usually gives the barest of details. Sometimes the reader is left wondering exactly what happened.

The account of Israel’s victory over the five kings of the Amorites is a perfect example. Joshua 10:13 says that in response to Joshua’s prayer, “the sun stood still, and the moon stopped.” This miraculous event played a key role in Israel’s victory that day. Even accepting this as a miracle, which the narrative surely bids us to do, leaves some questions unanswered. We know that the sun does not move around the earth, so it was not the sun that literally stopped, but what took place that day? And how did it help Israel?

Some take the text to mean that God stopped the earth’s rotation. “The sun stood still” means that the position of the sun in the sky remained constant. Since the sun’s position is determined by the earth’s rotation, the earth’s rotation must have stopped. This delay gave the Israelites the daylight they needed to finish routing their enemies rather than letting them escape.

Others suggest that God caused an unusual refraction of light in the earth’s atmosphere that caused the sun to remain visible for a very lengthy period of time. The sun *appeared* to stop, but without any change in the rate of the earth’s rotation. Again, this gave Israel time to finish their rout.

Others reinterpret the miracle. The verb translated “stand [stood] still” in verses 12, 13 can also be translated “cease, stop.” Some scholars therefore say that Joshua was asking that the sun stop *shining*, not that it stop moving. The long night’s march, largely uphill and with full battle gear, left his troops tired. Joshua asked God to stop the sun from beating down on his troops before exhaustion overcame them. Joshua was seeking a cooler day, not a longer one.

Of course, we do not know exactly what happened. What we know for sure is that God intervened in the normal course of nature at exactly the right moment to give the Israelites victory over their enemies. As the writer of Joshua points out, the greatest marvel lies not in the occurrence of the miracle itself but that “the LORD heeded the voice of a man” (Josh. 10:14).



Joshua prays for the sun to stand still.

Joshua Commanding the Sun to Stand Still upon Gibeon, 1816, Martin, John/
Private Collection/Photo © Agnew's, London, UK/The Bridgeman Art Library

Conquest of the Southland

²⁸On that day Joshua took Makkedah, and struck it and its king with the edge of the sword. He utterly ^edestroyed ⁴them—all the people who *were* in it. He let none remain. He also did to the king of Makkedah ^fas he had done to the king of Jericho.

²⁹Then Joshua passed from Makkedah, and all Israel with him, to ^gLibnah; and they fought against Libnah. ³⁰And the LORD also delivered it and its king into the hand of Israel; he struck it and all the people who *were* in it with the edge of the sword. He let none remain in it, but did to its king as he had done to the king of Jericho.

³¹Then Joshua passed from Libnah, and all Israel with him, to Lachish; and they encamped against it and fought against it. ³²And the LORD delivered Lachish into the hand of Israel, who took it on the second day, and struck it and all the people who *were* in it with the edge of the sword, according to all that he had done to Libnah. ³³Then Horam king of Gezer came up to help Lachish; and Joshua struck him and his people, until he left him none remaining.

³⁴From Lachish Joshua passed to Eglon, and all Israel with him; and they encamped against it and fought against it. ³⁵They took it on that day and struck it with the edge of the sword; all the people who *were* in it he utterly destroyed that day, according to all that he had done to Lachish.

³⁶So Joshua went up from Eglon, and all Israel with him, to ^hHebron; and they

²⁸ ^e Deut. 7:2, 16
^f Josh. 6:21 ⁴ So with MT and most authorities; many Heb. mss., some LXX mss., and some Tg. mss. *it*
²⁹ ^g Josh. 15:42; 21:13; 2 Kin. 8:22; 19:8
³⁶ ^h Num. 13:22; Josh. 14:13-15; 15:13; Judg. 1:10, 20; 2 Sam. 5:1, 3, 5, 13; 2 Chr. 11:10

³⁸ ⁱ Josh. 15:15; Judg. 1:11; 1 Chr. 6:58
⁴⁰ ^j Deut. 1:7
^k Deut. 7:24 ^l Deut. 20:16, 17 ⁵ Heb. *Negev*, and so throughout the book
⁴¹ ^m Num. 13:26; Deut. 9:23 ⁿ Gen. 10:19; Josh. 11:22
^o Josh. 11:16; 15:51
⁴² ^p Josh. 10:14

CHAPTER 11

¹ ^a Josh. 10:3
^b Josh. 19:15

fought against it. ³⁷And they took it and struck it with the edge of the sword—its king, all its cities, and all the people who *were* in it; he left none remaining, according to all that he had done to Eglon, but utterly destroyed it and all the people who *were* in it.

³⁸Then Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, to ⁱDebir; and they fought against it. ³⁹And he took it and its king and all its cities; they struck them with the edge of the sword and utterly destroyed all the people who *were* in it. He left none remaining; as he had done to Hebron, so he did to Debir and its king, as he had done also to Libnah and its king.

⁴⁰So Joshua conquered all the land: the ^jmountain country and the ⁵South and the lowland and the wilderness slopes, and ^kall their kings; he left none remaining, but ^lutterly destroyed all that breathed, as the LORD God of Israel had commanded. ⁴¹And Joshua conquered them from ^mKadesh Barnea as far as ⁿGaza, ^oand all the country of Goshen, even as far as Gibeon. ⁴²All these kings and their land Joshua took at one time, ^pbecause the LORD God of Israel fought for Israel. ⁴³Then Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, to the camp at Gilgal.

The Northern Conquest

11 And it came to pass, when Jabin king of Hazor heard *these things*, that he ^asent to Jobab king of Madon, to the king ^bof Shimron, to the king of Achshaph, ²and to the kings who *were* from the north, in the mountains, in the

10:28–43 After the in-depth account of the battle in 10:1–27, the narrative now moves quickly to summarize the Israelites’ southern campaign in Canaan. The kings and people of seven southern cities are mentioned in a series of similar accounts. The Israelites had entered Canaan in the middle, at Jericho. Subsequently their campaigns went through the middle first, turning south (ch. 10) and then north (ch. 11). The fact that exactly seven cities are listed suggests that this may be a summarizing account, describing the destruction of representative cities. Only bare details of their destructions are given, and the successive accounts contain many repeated phrases. Three of the cities (Lachish, Eglon, and Hebron) are ones whose kings had already opposed the Israelites (v. 3). The picture in this section is unequivocally one of complete and swift annihilation of the people throughout the entire region. However, the work was not complete. **10:28** The first city mentioned is the one toward which the Canaanite coalition had fled, **Makkedah** (vv. 10, 16). The five kings had fled and hidden themselves in a cave. **10:30** Here and in vv. 32, 42, we are reminded that **the LORD** was Israel’s warrior.

10:33 The account of the capture of **Gezer** is mentioned only incidentally to the account of the capture of Lachish. According to 16:10, Canaanites were still (or again) living in Gezer some time later. **10:40** This verse presents the first conclusion to the accounts that had begun in 9:1, 2. Here we see that Joshua was victorious over all who lived in **the mountain country** (the word is the same as “hills” in 9:1) **and the South and the lowland and the wilderness**

slopes. The word for *South* is “Negev,” which refers to the desert in the southern part of the land. The *wilderness slopes* are either the western slopes leading down to the *lowland* near the Mediterranean Sea or else the steep slopes going down to the Dead Sea to the east of the central mountainous area. This summary statement covers the central and southern portions of the land of Canaan, but it does not include the coastlands (13:2–6).

10:41 Neither **Kadesh Barnea** nor **Gaza** has been mentioned previously in Joshua; their inclusion here marks the southernmost limits of the land conquered. Gaza was a Philistine city, unconquered in 13:3. **Goshen, even as far as Gibeon** marks the southern and northern limits of this conquest. Goshen here is not the area in the northeastern Nile delta where the Israelites had lived before (Gen. 45:10; 46:28; Ex. 8:22; 9:26), but rather the city in the southern hill country of Canaan mentioned in 11:16; 15:51.

11:1–23 After conquering the southern coalition arrayed against them, Israel now faced a hostile coalition in the north as well, which it defeated (vv. 1–15).

11:1 **Hazor** was a large and strategic city in northern Israel; it is called “the head of all those kingdoms” in v. 10.

11:2 The geographical description here names areas rather than cities. **Chinnereth** is another name for the Sea of Galilee (see 12:3). There was also a town called Chinnereth on the northwest side of the sea (19:35). **the heights of Dor on the west**: Dor was a seaport on the Mediterranean, and no hills are nearby; some commentators understand this to mean “the dunes of Dor.”

The Northern Campaign

Late Bronze Age Hazor was burned by Joshua (Josh. 11:13). Excavations have revealed three clearly datable destruction layers, one of which may provide the strongest evidence yet for a historically verifiable date for the conquest.

The excavator thought Joshua burned the latest level (c. 1230 B.C.), but others argue that it must actually have been the earliest of the three levels, c. 1400 B.C.



plain south of ^cChinneroth, in the low-land, and in the heights ^dof Dor on the west, ³to the Canaanites in the east and in the west, the ^eAmorite, the Hittite,

2 ^c Num. 34:11
^d Josh. 17:11; Judg. 1:27; 1 Kin. 4:11
³ ^c Josh. 9:1

the Perizzite, the Jebusite in the mountains, ^fand the Hivite below ^gHermon ^hin the land of Mizpah. ⁴So they went out, they and all their armies with them, *as many people ⁱas the sand that is on the seashore in multitude*, with very many horses and chariots. ⁵And when all these kings had ¹met together, they came and camped together at the waters of Merom to fight against Israel.

⁶But the LORD said to Joshua, ^j“Do not be afraid because of them, for tomorrow about this time I will deliver all of them slain before Israel. You shall ^khamstring their horses and burn their chariots with fire.” ⁷So Joshua and all the people of war with him came against them suddenly by the waters of Merom, and they attacked them. ⁸And the LORD delivered them into the hand of Israel, who defeated them and chased them to ²Greater ¹Sidon, to the ³Brook ^mMisrephoth, and to the Valley of Mizpah eastward; they attacked them until they left none of them remaining. ⁹So Joshua did to them as the LORD had told him: he hamstringed their horses and burned their chariots with fire.

¹⁰Joshua turned back at that time and took Hazor, and struck its king with the sword; for Hazor was formerly the head of all those kingdoms. ¹¹And they struck all the people who *were* in it with the edge of the sword, ⁿutterly destroying *them*. There was none left ^obreathing. Then he burned Hazor with fire.

¹²So all the cities of those kings, and all their kings, Joshua took and struck with the edge of the sword. He utterly

^f Deut. 7:1; Judg. 3:3, 5; 1 Kin. 9:20 ^g Josh. 11:17; 13:5 ^h Gen. 31:49 ⁴ Gen. 22:17; 32:12; Judg. 7:12; 1 Sam. 13:5 ⁵ ⁱ Lit. assembled by appointment ⁶ Josh. 10:8 ² 2 Sam. 8:4 ⁸ Gen. 49:13 ^m Josh. 13:6 ² Heb. *Sidon Rabbah* ³ Heb. *Misrephoth Maim*, lit. *Burnings of Water* ¹¹ ⁿ Deut. 20:16 ^o Josh. 10:40

11:3 The inclusion of **the Jebusite**, that is, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, is striking because Jerusalem was south of Jericho. Evidently, the Canaanites so feared the Israelite threat that they sought help from far and wide. Mount **Hermon in the land of Mizpah** was in the far north, the highest point in northern Palestine. Mizpah was a name of several cities in Israel's history, including one near Lachish (15:38), one in Benjamin in the south (18:26), and another one in Gilead east of the Jordan (Judg. 10:17).

11:4 **Horses** at this time were for pulling **chariots**. These vehicles accompanied the infantry and carried a rider with a bow or a supply of spears. The Canaanite armies did not use mounted warriors. These armies came well-armed to fight the Israelites, but it did not matter. God still defeated them (vv. 6–9). Only in the battles of Jericho and Ai did the Israelites initiate the action. Here, as in the other battles described in Joshua, the enemy—usually well-armed and in great numbers—attacked the Israelites. God limited the size of the Israelite army so that the Israelites would not trust their military power. Similarly, the instructions for a king in Deut. 17:14–20 explicitly state that the king was not to “multiply horses for himself” (17:16); that is, not to depend on his military might, but rather on God.

11:6 God promised to deliver Israel's enemies into their hands by **tomorrow about this time**. This is especially significant in light of the impressive numbers arrayed against Israel. These are the same words used many years later by Elisha to predict the escape of Samaria from a siege imposed by the Syrians (2 Kin. 7:1). In both cases God's promise came true.

11:8 **Greater Sidon** was a Phoenician city on the Mediterranean coast, and the **Brook Misrephoth** was south of it. The defeat of the Canaanites described here shows them fleeing in all directions in a total rout.

11:9 **as the Lord had told him**: Joshua was careful to do exactly as instructed (see v. 6).

11:10 **Hazor was formerly the head**: This is probably why Joshua struck at Hazor first, and why the text details its destruction. Excavation of Hazor has shown several destructions in the Late Bronze Age, one from about 1400 B.C. that could easily be attributed to Joshua.

11:11 Jericho and Ai were the only other cities burned. Most of the cities of Canaan were taken without being destroyed; their armies were defeated on the battlefield. In this way, most of the cities could be inhabited by Israel without rebuilding.

destroyed them, ^pas Moses the servant of the LORD had commanded. ¹³But *as for* the cities that stood on their ⁴mounds, Israel burned none of them, except Hazor only, *which* Joshua burned. ¹⁴And all the ^qspoils of these cities and the livestock, the children of Israel took as booty for themselves; but they struck every man with the edge of the sword until they had destroyed them, and they left none breathing. ¹⁵^rAs the LORD had commanded Moses His servant, so ^sMoses commanded Joshua, and ^tso Joshua did. ⁵He left nothing undone of all that the LORD had commanded Moses.

¹² ^p Num. 33:50-56; Deut. 7:2; 20:16
¹³ ⁴ Heb. *tel*, a heap of successive city ruins
¹⁴ ^q Deut. 20:14-18
¹⁵ ^r Ex. 34:10-17
^s Deut. 31:7, 8
^t Josh. 1:7 ⁵ Lit. *He turned aside from nothing*
¹⁶ ^u Josh. 12:8

^v Josh. 10:40, 41
⁶ Heb. *arabah*
¹⁷ ^w Josh. 12:7
^x Deut. 7:24 ⁷ Lit. *The Smooth or Bald Mountain*
¹⁹ ^y Josh. 9:3-7
²⁰ ^z Deut. 2:30
⁸ Lit. *to make strong*

mountain country, all the South, ^vall the land of Goshen, the lowland, and the Jordan ⁶plain—the mountains of Israel and its lowlands, ¹⁷^wfrom ⁷Mount Halak and the ascent to Seir, even as far as Baal Gad in the Valley of Lebanon below Mount Hermon. He captured ^xall their kings, and struck them down and killed them. ¹⁸Joshua made war a long time with all those kings. ¹⁹There was not a city that made peace with the children of Israel, except ^ythe Hivites, the inhabitants of Gibeon. All the *others* they took in battle. ²⁰For ^zit was of the LORD ⁸to harden their hearts, that they should come against Israel in battle, that He might utterly destroy them, *and* that they might

Summary of Joshua's Conquests
¹⁶Thus Joshua took all this land: ^uthe

11:14 Here, as with Ai, the Israelites were allowed to take **all the spoil** for themselves (8:2, 27). Their treatment of the inhabitants was the pattern for all their Canaanite targets: **They left none breathing**, but killed everyone (6:21; 8:22; 10:28, 30, 32, 33, 35, 37, 39, 40; 11:8, 11, 12). This complete annihilation of a population group has posed a significant problem for some people, who have felt that Joshua showed unjustified bloodthirstiness. Yet God had told Moses why Israel was to carry out this destruction in Canaan (Deut. 7:2-11; 20:16-18): the Canaanites were being judged by God for their wickedness.

11:16, 17 These verses summarize both the northern campaign and this entire section of the book (chs. 9-11). Verse 16 mentions many of the same territories as does 10:40, 41. The southern limit of the conquest is given here; **Mount Halak** is near Kadesh Barnea (10:41), and **Seir** is the hill country of Edom, southeast of the Dead Sea. **Baal Gad . . . Mount Hermon**: This is the northern limit of the conquest. Baal Gad was in the Lebanon valley, northwest of Mount Hermon. **11:20 to harden their hearts**: The persons whose hearts God hardened were not good people, but were people already committed to doing evil (Ps. 14:1-3; Rom. 3:10-18). The marvel is that

God's Judgment



Stereotypes, fiction though they are, sometimes have one foot in reality. That is why many people believe them. Stereotypes arise from headlines that, to an extent, tell some of the story. But they fudge on the details. And in the final analysis, stereotypes fail to justly describe their subjects. Concerning the OT, nowhere has this been more of a problem than in the stereotyping of God's judgment on the Canaanites.

Of Israel's attacks on the northern part of Canaanite cities, the Bible states, "But they struck every man with the edge of the sword until they had destroyed them, and they left none breathing. As the LORD had commanded Moses His servant, so Moses commanded Joshua, and so Joshua did" (11:14, 15). God clearly commanded Israel to annihilate the Canaanites, and that is exactly what Joshua did.

Headlines such as this have caused many people to question God's basic justice. How can a holy, just, and loving God command such extreme violence? Indeed, many have thought of this issue as the OT's biggest challenge to modern readers. Some have gone so far as to allege that there is no connection between the "God of the Old Testament" and the "God of the New Testament revealed in Jesus."

However, this stereotype breaks down under examination. The Bible gives reasons for the Canaanites' destruction—and these reasons are in concert with the whole tenor of the Bible in both Testaments.

The primary reason for the Canaanites' destruction was that they were guilty of gross sin. Abraham got a preview of this when God promised him the land. God said fulfillment of the promise would be delayed in part because "the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete" (Gen. 15:16; the Amorites were the Canaanites). For many years, the Canaanites' sins would not justify annihilation. But that time would arrive, and it did arrive by the time of Joshua.

What were the sins of the Canaanites? The gruesome list in Lev. 18 gives some of the details, including incest, adultery, child sacrifice, homosexuality, and bestiality. Of course, every person has sinned in some fashion (Ps. 14:3). On this level, the Canaanites only received what all peoples deserved; others were spared only by God's grace. But Canaan was not a community of upstanding citizens. It was a thoroughly debased society, hostile to all God's ways (Deut. 9:4, 5).

To a lesser degree, God was merely protecting His people. God promised Abraham that He would curse anyone who cursed Israel (Gen. 12:3). The Canaanites sought to destroy Israel on at least two occasions (Josh. 9:1, 2; 11:1-5), and God would not allow that.

The stereotype also breaks down because it overlooks the highly localized nature of the judgment on Canaan. The Israelites did not have a license to kill. They had no right to do the same to whatever peoples they encountered, at any time or in any place. This destruction targeted the sinful Canaanites of that time only. As harsh as it may seem to us, the Canaanites brought God's judgment on themselves by their own sin.

The New Testament states that one day Jesus Christ will judge the wicked nations of the earth (Matt. 25:31-46). God once judged all the wicked with an overwhelming flood (Gen. 6-9), and the same God will one day again judge everyone who has ever lived (2 Pet. 3:10-13). The judgment against the Canaanites is merely one instance of His judgment on the wicked even as He extends forgiveness to others.

receive no mercy, but that He might destroy them, ^aas the LORD had commanded Moses.

²¹And at that time Joshua came and cut off ^bthe Anakim from the mountains: from Hebron, from Debir, from Anab, from all the mountains of Judah, and from all the mountains of Israel; Joshua utterly destroyed them with their cities. ²²None of the Anakim were left in the land of the children of Israel; they remained only ^cin Gaza, in Gath, ^dand in Ashdod.

²³So Joshua took the whole land, ^eaccording to all that the LORD had said to Moses; and Joshua gave it as an inheritance to Israel ^faccording to their divisions by their tribes. Then the land ^grested from war.

The Kings Conquered by Moses

12 These are the kings of the land whom the children of Israel defeated, and whose land they possessed on the other side of the Jordan toward the rising of the sun, ^afrom the River Arnon ^bto Mount Hermon, and all the eastern Jordan plain: ²*One king was* ^cSihon king of the Amorites, who dwelt in Heshbon and ruled half of Gilead, from Aroer, which is on the bank of the River Arnon, from the middle of that river, even as far as the River Jabbok, *which is* the border of the Ammonites, ³and ^dthe eastern Jordan plain from the ¹Sea of Chinneroth as far as the ²Sea of the Arabah (the Salt Sea), ^ethe road to Beth Jeshimoth, and ³southward below ^fthe ⁴slopes of Pisgah. ^{4g}*The other king was* Og king of Bashan and his territory, *who was of* ^hthe remnant of the giants, ⁱwho dwelt at Ashtaroth and at Edrei, ⁵and reigned over ^jMount Hermon, ^kover Salcah, over all Bashan, ^las far as the border of the Geshurites and the Maachathites, and over half of Gilead to the border of Sihon king of Heshbon.

^{6m}These Moses the servant of the LORD

BIBLE TIMES & CULTURE NOTES



Building a Fortress

Archaeologists have found that the Indo-Aryans (a group of non-Semitic people originally from the plateau of Iran) exerted a strong influence upon Palestine, introducing many new weapons and tools. They brought horse-drawn chariots, the composite bow, and new types of city fortifications. They outfitted nearly every major city from central Syria to the Nile Delta with a defensive wall called a *glacis*. The glacis contained alternating layers of pounded earth, clay, and gravel, covered with plaster. It sloped down from the rock city walls to a dry moat below. Perhaps it was designed to frustrate cavalymen and battering rams. The Indo-Aryan cities also had huge cyclopean walls—a row of boulders leaning against

a massive earthen fill. The city of Hazor provided a superb example of this.



A cyclopean wall on the northwest side of Shechem

www.HolyLandPhotos.org

and the children of Israel had conquered; and ⁿMoses the servant of the LORD had given it as a possession to the Reubenites, the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh.

The Kings Conquered by Joshua

⁷And these are the kings of the country ^owhich Joshua and the children of Israel conquered on this side of the Jordan, on the west, from Baal Gad in the Valley of Lebanon as far as ⁵Mount Halak and the ascent to ^pSeir, which Joshua ^qgave to the tribes of Israel as a possession according to their divisions, ^{8r}in the mountain country, in the lowlands, in the Jordan

CHAPTER 12

- ¹ ^a Num. 21:24
^b Deut. 3:8
² ^c Num. 21:24;
 Deut. 2:24-27
³ ^d Deut. 3:17
^e Josh. 13:20 ^f Deut. 3:17; 4:49 ¹ Sea of Galilee ² Lit. Sea of the Plain, the Dead Sea ³ Or Teman
⁴ Or Ashdod Pisgah
⁴ ^g Num. 21:33;
 Deut. 3:4, 10

- ^h Deut. 3:11; Josh. 13:12 ⁱ Deut. 1:4 ⁵ Deut. 3:8 ^k Deut. 3:10;
 Josh. 13:11; 1 Chr. 5:11 ^l Deut. 3:14; 1 Sam. 27:8 ⁶ ^m Num.
 21:24, 35 ^a Num. 32:29-33; Deut. 3:12; Josh. 13:8 ⁷ ⁿ Josh.
 11:17 ^p Gen. 14:6; 32:3; Deut. 2:1, 4 ^q Josh. 11:23 ⁵ Lit. The Bald
 Mountain ⁸ ^r Josh. 10:40; 11:16

God has reached out to so many in order to graciously make them His children. See Rom. 9:14–24 concerning God's hardening of Pharaoh's heart.

11:21, 22 The destruction of the **Anakim** from the hill country was especially significant. Their fearsome presence had caused the Israelites to rebel against God's command to enter Canaan many years before (Num. 13:22, 28, 32, 33). But as this generation learned, their size did not matter.

11:23 This verse ends this section (chs. 9–11). It is a transitional verse, looking back to summarize the conquests and looking forward to anticipate the inheritance of the land. The statement **the land rested from war** draws the first section of the book to a close. The next section before the distribution of Israel's inheritance is the list of defeated Canaanite kings (ch. 12). The idea of rest for the entire nation is found in such passages as Deut. 12:10; 25:19, and it is echoed in the summarizing passages of Joshua, 21:44; 23:1.

12:1–6 The Israelites' earlier conquests east of the Jordan are mentioned here, their victories over **Sihon**, king of Heshbon, and **Og**, king of Bashan. The Israelites defeated them under Moses' leadership and took possession of their land at that time (Num. 21:21–35). The detailed description of the territory they ruled makes more impressive the victory Israel had won. Verse 6 confirms that this indeed had been given as an inheritance to the two and one-half tribes who settled there.

12:6, 7 The language of these verses makes it plain that Joshua succeeded Moses in his various roles, first as conqueror and second as giver of the land. The two men are described in the same way: As conquerors, **Joshua and the children of Israel** (v. 7), follow **Moses ... and the children of Israel** (v. 6). As land-giver, **Joshua gave** (v. 7), as **Moses ... had given** (v. 6).

plain, in the slopes, in the wilderness, and in the South—^sthe Hittites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites: ⁹*t* the king of Jericho, one; ^uthe king of Ai, which is beside Bethel, one; ¹⁰*v* the king of Jerusalem, one; the king of Hebron, one; ¹¹the king of Jarmuth, one; the king of Lachish, one; ¹²the king of Eglon, one; ^wthe king of Gezer, one; ¹³*x* the king of Debir, one; the king of Geder, one; ¹⁴the king of Hormah, one; the king of Arad, one; ¹⁵*y* the king of Libnah, one; the king of Adullam, one; ¹⁶*z* the king of Makkedah, one; ^athe king of Bethel, one; ¹⁷the king of Tappuah, one; ^bthe king of Hepher, one; ¹⁸the king of Aphek, one; the king of ⁶Lasharon, one; ¹⁹the king of Madon, one; ^cthe king of Hazor, one; ²⁰the king of ^dShimron Meron, one; the king of Achshaph, one; ²¹the king of Taanach, one; the king of Megiddo, one; ²²*e* the king of Kedesh, one; the king of Jokneam in Carmel, one; ²³the king of Dor in the ^fheights of Dor, one; the king of ^gthe people of Gilgal, one; ²⁴the king of Tirzah, one—^hall the kings, thirty-one.

Remaining Land to Be Conquered

13 Now Joshua ^awas old, advanced in years. And the LORD said to him: “You are old, advanced in years, and there remains very much land yet to be possessed. ²*b* This is the land that yet remains: ^call the territory of the Philistines and all ^dthat of the Geshurites, ³*e* from Sihor, which is east of Egypt, as far as the border of Ekron northward (*which* is counted as Canaanite); the ^ffive lords of the Philistines—the Gazites, the Ashdodites, the Ashkelonites, the Gittites, and the Ekronites; also ^gthe Avites; ⁴from the south, all the land of the Canaanites, and Mearah that belongs to the Sidonians ^has far as Aphek, to the border of ⁱthe Amo-

8 ^s Ex. 3:8; 23:23; Josh. 9:1
9 ^t Josh. 6:2 ^u Josh. 8:29
10 ^v Josh. 10:23
12 ^w Josh. 10:33
13 ^x Josh. 10:38, 39
15 ^y Josh. 10:29, 30
16 ^z Josh. 10:28
^a Josh. 8:17; Judg. 1:22
17 ^b 1 Kin. 4:10
18 ^c Or *Sharon*
19 ^c Josh. 11:10
20 ^d Josh. 11:1; 19:15
22 ^e Josh. 19:37; 20:7; 21:32
23 ^f Josh. 11:2
^g Gen. 14:1, 2; Is. 9:1
24 ^h Deut. 7:24

CHAPTER 13

1 ^a Josh. 14:10; 23:1, 2
2 ^b Judg. 3:1-3
^c Joel 3:4 ^d Josh. 13:13; 2 Sam. 3:3
3 ^e 1 Chr. 13:5; Jer. 2:18 ^f Judg. 3:3
9 Deut. 2:23
4 ^h Josh. 12:18; 19:30; 1 Sam. 4:1; 1 Kin. 20:26, 30
ⁱ Judg. 1:34
5 ⁱ 1 Kin. 5:18; Ezek. 27:9 ^k Josh. 12:7
^j Or *Giblites*
6 ^j Josh. 11:8
^m Josh. 23:13; Judg. 2:21, 23 ⁿ Josh. 14:1, 2 ² Heb. *Misrephoth Maim*, lit. *Burnings of Water* ³ apportion
8 ^o Num. 32:33; Deut. 3:12, 13; Josh. 22:4 ^p Josh. 12:1-6
9 ^q Num. 21:30; Josh. 13:16
10 ^r Num. 21:24, 25
11 ^r Num. 32:1; Josh. 12:5
12 ^r Deut. 3:11; Josh. 12:4
^u Num. 21:24, 34, 35 ⁴ Lit. *struck*
⁵ *dispossessed*
13 ^v Josh. 13:11

rites; ⁵ the land of ^j the ¹ Gebalites, and all Lebanon, toward the sunrise, ^k from Baal Gad below Mount Hermon as far as the entrance to Hamath; ⁶ all the inhabitants of the mountains from Lebanon as far as ^l the ² Brook Misrephoth, *and* all the Sidonians—they ^m I will drive out from before the children of Israel; only ⁿ divide ³ it by lot to Israel as an inheritance, as I have commanded you. ⁷ Now therefore, divide this land as an inheritance to the nine tribes and half the tribe of Manasseh.”

The Land Divided East of the Jordan

⁸ With the other half-tribe the Reubenites and the Gadites received their inheritance, ^o which Moses had given them, ^p beyond the Jordan eastward, as Moses the servant of the LORD had given them: ⁹ from Aroer which is on the bank of the River Arnon, and the town that is in the midst of the ravine, ^q and all the plain of Medeba as far as Dibon; ¹⁰ *r* all the cities of Sihon king of the Amorites, who reigned in Heshbon, as far as the border of the children of Ammon; ¹¹ *s* Gilead, and the border of the Geshurites and Maachathites, all Mount Hermon, and all Bashan as far as Salcah; ¹² all the kingdom of Og in Bashan, who reigned in Ashtaroth and Edrei, who remained of ^t the remnant of the giants; ^u for Moses had ⁴ defeated and ⁵ cast out these.

¹³ Nevertheless the children of Israel ^v did not drive out the Geshurites or the Maachathites, but the Geshurites and the Maachathites dwell among the Israelites until this day.

¹⁴ *w* Only to the tribe of Levi he had given ⁶ no inheritance; the sacrifices of the LORD God of Israel made by fire *are* their inheritance, ^x as He said to them.

14 ^w Num. 18:20, 23, 24; Deut. 18:1; Josh. 14:3, 4 ^x Josh. 13:33
⁶ no land as a possession

inheritance

(Heb. *nachalah*) (13:7; Deut. 4:20; Ps. 16:5; 94:14) Strong's #5159

The word *inheritance*, meaning “possession” or “property,” is linked to the promises of God, particularly those involving the Promised Land (Gen. 13:14–17). When this word is used of the Promised Land, it does not merely refer to what a person wills to his children. Rather God, the Owner of the entire world, had granted His people a specific parcel of ground. He had fixed its boundaries and promised to deliver it to them. However, the concept of Israel’s inheritance transcends a simple association with the land. David and Jeremiah both affirm that God Himself is the real inheritance of His people (Ps. 16:5; Jer. 10:16). God’s people can find joy and fulfillment in their relationship with God. Nothing this world can offer as an inheritance compares with God Himself (1 Pet. 1:4).

13:1–7 Despite the picture of complete victory in chs. 10; 11, God told Joshua that **there remains very much land yet to be possessed**. This included territories of the Philistines and their neighbors to the south, the Phoenician coastland to the north, and the northern, mountainous territories of Lebanon. The famous five cities of the Philistines are mentioned (Gaza, Ashdod, Ashkelon, Gath, and Ekron). A hint that their territory remained to be taken appears already in 11:22, in the references to Gaza, Gath, and Ashdod. But Joshua was too old to command the remaining struggle for the land. God Himself would drive out the remaining inhabitants; Joshua merely had to apportion the land to the nine and one-half tribes west of the Jordan.

13:3 the five lords of the Philistines: The word *lords* here translates a Philistine word, not a Hebrew word; it is the only clearly Philistine word recorded in the Bible. It is related to the Greek word that means “tyrant.”

13:14 to the tribe of Levi He had given no inheritance: This is an important concept in the Book of Joshua. Here, previous directives about the Levites’ inheritance were obeyed (Num. 18:20–24;

The Land of Reuben

¹⁵ And Moses had given to the tribe of the children of Reuben *an inheritance* according to their families. ¹⁶ Their territory was ^zfrom Aroer, which *is* on the bank of the River Arnon, ^aand the city that *is* in the midst of the ravine, ^band all the plain by Medeba; ¹⁷ ^cHeshbon and all its cities that *are* in the plain: Dibon, Bamoth Baal, Beth Baal Meon, ¹⁸ ^dJahaza, Kedemoth, Mephaath, ¹⁹ ^eKirjathaim, ^fSibmah, Zereth Shahar on the mountain of the valley, ²⁰ Beth Peor, ^gthe slopes of Pisgah, and Beth Jeshimoth— ²¹ ^hall the cities of the plain and all the kingdom of Sihon king of the Amorites, who reigned in Heshbon, ⁱwhom Moses had struck ^jwith the princes of Midian: Evi, Rekem, Zur, Hur, and Reba, who *were* princes of Sihon dwelling in the country. ²² The children of Israel also killed with the sword ^kBalaam the son of Beor, the ⁷soothsayer, among those who were killed by them. ²³ And the border of the children of Reuben was the bank of the Jordan. This *was* the inheritance of the children of Reuben according to their families, the cities and their villages.

The Land of Gad

²⁴ Moses also had given *an inheritance* to the tribe of Gad, to the children of Gad according to their families. ²⁵ ^mTheir territory was Jazer, and all the cities of Gilead, ⁿand half the land of the Ammonites as far as Aroer, which *is* before ^oRabbah, ²⁶ and from Heshbon to Ramath Mizpah and Betonim, and from Mahanaim to the border of Debir, ²⁷ and in the valley ^pBeth Haram, Beth Nimrah, ^qSuccoth, and Zaphon, the rest of the kingdom of Sihon king of Heshbon, with the Jordan as *its* border, as far as the edge ^rof the ⁸Sea of Chinnereth, on the other side of the Jordan eastward. ²⁸ This *is* the inheritance of the children

¹⁵ ^y Num. 34:14; Josh. 13:15-23
¹⁶ ^z Josh. 12:2
^a Num. 21:28
^b Num. 21:30; Josh. 13:9
¹⁷ ^c Num. 21:28, 30
¹⁸ ^d Num. 21:23; Judg. 11:20; Is. 15:4; Jer. 48:34
¹⁹ ^e Num. 32:37; Jer. 48:1, 23; Ezek. 25:9
^f Num. 32:38
²⁰ ^g Deut. 3:17; Josh. 12:3
²¹ ^h Deut. 3:10
ⁱ Num. 21:24 / Num. 31:8
²² ^k Num. 22:5; 31:8
^j *diviner*
²⁴ ^l Num. 34:14; 1 Chr. 5:11
²⁵ ^m Num. 32:1, 35
ⁿ Judg. 11:13, 15
^o Deut. 3:11; 2 Sam. 11:1; 12:26
²⁷ ^p Num. 32:36
^q Gen. 33:17; 1 Kin. 7:46
^r Num. 34:11; Deut. 3:17
⁸ Sea of Galilee

²⁹ ^s Num. 34:14; 1 Chr. 5:23
³⁰ ^t Num. 32:41; 1 Chr. 2:23
³¹ ^u Josh. 9:10; 12:4; 13:12; 1 Chr. 6:71
^v Num. 32:39, 40; Josh. 17:1
³² ⁹ *apportioned*
³³ ^w Deut. 18:1; Josh. 13:14; 18:7
^x Num. 18:20; Deut. 10:9; 18:1, 2

CHAPTER 14

¹ ^a Num. 34:16-29
² ^b Num. 26:55; 33:54; 34:13; Ps. 16:5
³ ^c Num. 32:33; Josh. 13:8, 32, 33
⁴ ^d Gen. 41:51; 46:20; 48:1, 5; Num. 26:28; 2 Chr. 30:1
^e Num. 35:2-8; Josh. 21:1-42

of Gad according to their families, the cities and their villages.

Half the Tribe of Manasseh (East)

²⁹ Moses also had given *an inheritance* to half the tribe of Manasseh; it was for half the tribe of the children of Manasseh according to their families: ³⁰ Their territory was from Mahanaim, all Bashan, all the kingdom of Og king of Bashan, and ^tall the towns of Jair which are in Bashan, sixty cities; ³¹ half of Gilead, and ^uAshtaroth and Edrei, cities of the kingdom of Og in Bashan, *were* for the ^vchildren of Machir the son of Manasseh, for half of the children of Machir according to their families.

³² These *are the areas* which Moses had ⁹distributed as an inheritance in the plains of Moab on the other side of the Jordan, by Jericho eastward. ³³ ^wBut to the tribe of Levi Moses had given no inheritance; the LORD God of Israel *was* their inheritance, ^xas He had said to them.

The Land Divided West of the Jordan

14 These *are the areas* which the children of Israel inherited in the land of Canaan, ^awhich Eleazar the priest, Joshua the son of Nun, and the heads of the fathers of the tribes of the children of Israel distributed as an inheritance to them. ² Their inheritance *was* ^bby lot, as the LORD had commanded by the hand of Moses, for the nine tribes and the half-tribe. ³ ^cFor Moses had given the inheritance of the two tribes and the half-tribe on the other side of the Jordan; but to the Levites he had given no inheritance among them. ⁴ For ^dthe children of Joseph were two tribes: Manasseh and Ephraim. And they gave no part to the Levites in the land, except ^ecities to dwell *in*, with their common-lands for their livestock and

Deut. 10:8, 9; 18:1-5). Originally, the tribe of Levi was sentenced to be landless for its violent behavior (Gen. 49:5-7), but later the Levites redeemed themselves (Ex. 32:25-28) and were promised a blessing (Deut. 33:8-11). Of the original 12 sons of Jacob, Joseph's inheritance was divided between his 2 sons, Ephraim and Manasseh. This would make 13 tribes, but excluding Levi from land inheritance kept the number to 12 (14:3, 4). The Levites did have cities in the territories of each tribe (21:1-42). Instead of a land inheritance, the sacrifices of God would be their privileged inheritance.

13:22 Balaam was the pagan fortune-teller who had been hired by Balak, king of Moab, to curse the Israelites in the wilderness (Num. 22-24). He found that he could speak only what God told him to, yet he sinned by inciting the Moabite women to seduce the Israelite men (Num. 25:1-9; 31:16). Hence, **the children of Israel also killed ... Balaam**. This record of Balaam's death echoes the notice found at Num. 31:8. The story of how God turned Balaam's desire to curse Israel into a blessing instead is celebrated in several passages (24:9, 10; Deut. 23:4, 5; Neh. 13:2; Mic. 6:5).

13:23 Large Canaanite cities such as Jericho were typically protected by walls. But there were many smaller villages around the cities. Thus **the cities and their villages** made up the small city-states typical of Canaan at this time. The villages were permanent settlements without walls, outlying farming villages.

13:33 Levi ... as He had said to them: This verse reiterates the information about the Levites' landless inheritance (compare v. 14); here, however, the inheritance is said to be God Himself and not the sacrifices. Because of their unique position, the Levites' relationship with God would be special.

14:2 God's place as the giver of the land is also highlighted by mention of the lot. God had commanded the casting of lots to determine Israel's inheritance (Num. 26:55). Thus that **their inheritance was by lot** does not mean that it was by chance, but that God Himself determined who got what land (18:6, 8, 10; Prov. 16:33). The lot is also mentioned in 15:1; 16:1; 17:1.

their property. ^{5f}As the LORD had commanded Moses, so the children of Israel did; and they divided the land.

Caleb Inherits Hebron

⁶Then the children of Judah came to Joshua in Gilgal. And Caleb the son of Jephunneh the ^gKenizzite said to him: “You know ^hthe word which the LORD said to Moses the man of God concerning ⁱyou and me in Kadesh Barnea. ⁷I was forty years old when Moses the servant of the LORD ^jsent me from Kadesh Barnea to spy out the land, and I brought back word to him as *it was* in my heart. ⁸Nevertheless ^kmy brethren who went up with me made the ^lheart of the people melt, but I wholly ^lfollowed the LORD my God. ⁹So Moses swore on that day, saying, ^m“Surely the land ⁿwhere your foot has trodden shall be your inheritance and your children’s forever, because you have wholly followed the LORD my God.” ¹⁰And now, behold, the LORD has kept me ^oalive, ^pas He said, these forty-five years, ever since the LORD spoke this word to Moses while Israel ²wandered in the wilderness; and now, here I am this day, eighty-five years old. ^{11q}As yet I *am as strong* this day as on the day that Moses sent me; just as my strength *was* then, so now *is* my strength for war, both ^rfor going out and for coming in. ¹²Now therefore, give me

5 ^f Num. 35:2; Josh. 21:2
6 ^g Num. 32:11, 12
h Num. 14:24, 30
i Num. 13:26
7 ^j Num. 13:6, 17; 14:6
8 ^k Num. 13:31, 32; Deut. 1:28 ^l Num. 14:24; Deut. 1:36
i *courage of the people fail*
9 ^m Num. 14:23, 24 ⁿ Num. 13:22; Deut. 1:36
10 ^o Num. 14:24, 30, 38 ^p Josh. 5:6; Neh. 9:21 ² Lit. *walked*
11 ^q Deut. 34:7
^r Deut. 31:2

12 ^s Num. 13:28, 33
^t Rom. 8:31 ^u Josh. 15:14; Judg. 1:20
13 ^v Josh. 22:6
^w Josh. 10:37; 15:13
14 ^x Josh. 21:12
^y Josh. 14:8, 9
15 ^z Gen. 23:2; Josh. 15:13 ^a Josh. 11:23

CHAPTER 15

1 ^a Num. 34:3
^b Num. 33:36
ⁱ *allotment*
2 ^c Num. 34:3, 4
3 ^d Num. 34:4
4 ^e Num. 34:5

this mountain of which the LORD spoke in that day; for you heard in that day how ^sthe Anakim *were* there, and *that* the cities *were* great *and* fortified. ^tIt may be that the LORD *will be* with me, and ^uI shall be able to drive them out as the LORD said.”

¹³And Joshua ^vblessed him, ^wand gave Hebron to Caleb the son of Jephunneh as an inheritance. ^{14x}Hebron therefore became the inheritance of Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite to this day, because he ^ywholly followed the LORD God of Israel. ¹⁵And ^zthe name of Hebron formerly was Kirjath Arba (*Arba was* the greatest man among the Anakim).

^aThen the land had rest from war.

The Land of Judah

15 So *this was* the ¹lot of the tribe of the children of Judah according to their families:

^aThe border of Edom at the ^bWilderness of Zin southward *was* the extreme southern boundary. ²And their ^csouthern border began at the shore of the Salt Sea, from the bay that faces southward. ³Then it went out to the southern side of ^dthe Ascent of Akrabbim, passed along to Zin, ascended on the south side of Kadesh Barnea, passed along to Hebron, went up to Adar, and went around to Karkaa. ⁴*From there* it passed ^etoward

14:6 Caleb is described here and elsewhere as **the Kenizzite** (14:14; Num. 32:12). The Kenizzites were a non-Israelite group descended from Esau through Kenaz (Gen. 15:19; 36:11, 15, 42). Some of this group had apparently associated themselves with Judah at an early stage (Num. 13:6). It seems that Caleb, one of the most faithful to God of his time, was just a generation removed from a non-Israelite family.

14:7–9 These verses review events recorded in Num. 13; 14. The promise of Caleb’s inheritance mentioned in v. 9 refers to God’s words in Num. 14:24.

14:10 The span of **eighty-five years** indicates the period of time covered by most of the Book of Joshua. According to v. 7, Caleb was 40 when he was sent in to spy out the land. Now it was 45 years

later. Since 40 years were spent in the wilderness, the conquest occupied 5 years.

14:12 It was **the Anakim** who had frightened 10 of the Israelite spies 45 years before, triggering Israel’s rebellion against God (Num. 13). Caleb was no more afraid of them now than he had been then, even though he was now considerably older. As he says, **it may be that the LORD will be with me**—a use of understatement to express certainty.

14:13 Joshua blessed him: To bless others in the name of the Lord expresses the desire for them to experience God’s best (Gen. 27:27–29; 47:10; 49:1–28; Judg. 5:24; Neh. 11:2). It is more than wishful thinking, because blessing in the name of God taps into the power and resources of God. In the Bible, blessings include children (Gen. 1:28; 28:3), land (Gen. 26:3; 28:4), wealth (Gen. 28:12–14), and a good reputation among others (Gen. 12:3; 22:18). When people are said to bless God, it means they are worshiping Him, ascribing worth to Him and His name (Ps. 104:1), and identifying Him as the source of their good (Ps. 103:1, 2).

14:14 Caleb’s wholehearted devotion to God was never in question, even in the wilderness: **He wholly followed the LORD** (v. 8). As a result, he received the land that he requested. In the Bible, people are sometimes rewarded in this life for their faithfulness to God, but not always (Heb. 11:32–40). The believer’s ultimate blessing will come in eternity. Those who set their hope on that promise will lose nothing, no matter what they suffer in this life.

14:15 Kirjath Arba: This was the former name of the city of Hebron (Gen. 23:2); it means “city of Arba.” Arba was the founding ancestor of the Anakim and is mentioned only here and in 15:13; 21:11. **the land had rest from war:** This comment echoes 11:23, which concludes the account of the southern and northern campaigns.

15:1–12 The boundaries of Judah in southern Canaan are now described in detail. This reinforces the importance of the inheritance and the exact location that each tribe received.

rest

(Heb. *shaqat*) (11:23; 14:15) Strong’s #8252

This Hebrew word translated *rest* means “to be at peace.” It implies a freedom from anxiety and conflict. God had promised the Israelites *rest* in the Promised Land (Ex. 33:14; Deut. 3:1–20; 12:9, 10). For the nomadic Israelites, this meant freedom from wandering and fighting. In the Book of Joshua, the idea of *rest* is related specifically to the conflicts and hostilities Israel had with their neighbors. God promised His people a peaceful place to settle. Obtaining this *rest* depended on Israel’s complete obedience to God’s command to drive out the Canaanites (11:23; 14:15). The NT writers also speak of the concept of rest. Christians are told that heaven will bring them rest from death, pain, sin, and all other earthly struggles (Heb. 4:1; Rev. 21:4).

Azmon and went out to the Brook of Egypt; and the border ended at the sea. This shall be your southern border.

⁵The east border *was* the Salt Sea as far as the mouth of the Jordan.

And the ^fborder on the northern quarter *began* at the bay of the sea at the mouth of the Jordan. ⁶The border went up to ^gBeth Hoglah and passed north of Beth Arabah; and the border went up ^hto the stone of Bohan the son of Reuben. ⁷Then the border went up toward ⁱDebir from ^jthe Valley of Achor, and it turned northward toward Gilgal, which *is* before the Ascent of Adummim, which *is* on the south side of the valley. The border continued toward the waters of En Shemesh and ended at ^kEn Rogel. ⁸And the border went up ^lby the Valley of the Son of Hinnom to the southern slope of the ^mJebusite city (which *is* Jerusalem). The border went up to the top of the mountain that *lies* before the Valley of Hinnom westward, which *is* at the end of the Valley ⁿof ²Rephaim northward. ⁹Then the border went around from the top of the hill to ^othe fountain of the water of Nephtoah, and extended to the cities of Mount Ephron. And the border went around ^pto Baalah (which *is* ^qKirjath Jearim). ¹⁰Then the border ³turned westward from Baalah to Mount Seir, passed along to the side of Mount Jearim on the north (which *is* Chesalon), went down to Beth Shemesh, and passed on to ^rTimnah. ¹¹And the border went out to the side of ^sEkron northward. Then the border went around to Shicron, passed along to Mount Baalah, and extended to Jabneel; and the border ended at the sea.

¹²The west border *was* ^tthe coastline of the Great Sea. This *is* the boundary of the children of Judah all around according to their families.

Caleb Occupies Hebron and Debir

¹³^uNow to Caleb the son of Jephunneh he gave a share among the children of ^vJudah, according to the commandment of the LORD to Joshua, *namely*, ^wKirjath Arba, which *is* Hebron (*Arba was* the father of Anak). ¹⁴Caleb drove out ^xthe three sons of Anak from there: ^yShe-shai, Ahiman, and Talmi, the children of Anak. ¹⁵Then ^zhe went up from there

⁵ ^f Josh. 18:15-19
⁶ ^g Josh. 18:19, 21
^h Josh. 18:17
⁷ ⁱ Josh. 13:26
^j Josh. 7:26 ^k 2 Sam. 17:17; 1 Kin. 1:9
⁸ ^j Josh. 18:16;
 2 Kin. 23:10; Jer. 19:2, 6 ^m Josh. 15:63; 18:28; Judg. 1:21; 19:10 ⁿ Josh. 18:16 ² Lit. *Giants*
⁹ ^o Josh. 18:15
^p 1 Chr. 13:6 ^q Judg. 18:12
¹⁰ ^r Gen. 38:13;
 Judg. 14:1 ³ *turned around*
¹¹ ^s Josh. 19:43
¹² ^t Num. 34:6, 7;
 Josh. 15:47
¹³ ^u Josh. 14:13
^v Num. 13:6 ^w Josh. 14:15
¹⁴ ^x Judg. 1:10, 20
^v Num. 13:22
¹⁵ ^z Josh. 10:38;
 Judg. 1:11

¹⁶ ^a Judg. 1:12 ⁴ Lit. *strikes*
¹⁷ ^b Judg. 1:13; 3:9
^c Num. 32:12; Josh. 14:6 ^d Judg. 1:12
¹⁸ ^e Judg. 1:14
^f Gen. 24:64; 1 Sam. 25:23
¹⁹ ^g Gen. 33:11
²¹ ^h Gen. 35:21
²⁴ ⁱ 1 Sam. 23:14
²⁸ ^j Gen. 21:31;
 Josh. 19:2
³⁰ ^k Josh. 19:4
³¹ ^j Josh. 19:5;
 1 Sam. 27:6; 30:1
³² ^m Judg. 20:45, 47
³³ ⁿ Judg. 13:25;
 16:31
³⁵ ^o 1 Sam. 22:1
³⁸ ^p 2 Kin. 14:7
³⁹ ^q 2 Kin. 14:19
^r Josh. 10:3
⁴⁰ ^s Or *Lahmam*
⁴² ^s Josh. 21:13
⁴⁶ ^t Josh. 11:22
⁴⁷ ^u Josh. 15:4
^v Num. 34:6

to the inhabitants of Debir (formerly the name of Debir *was* Kirjath Sepher).

¹⁶^aAnd Caleb said, “He who ⁴attacks Kirjath Sepher and takes it, to him I will give Achsah my daughter as wife.” ¹⁷So ^bOthniel the ^cson of Kenaz, the brother of Caleb, took it; and he gave him ^dAchsah his daughter as wife. ¹⁸^eNow it was so, when she came *to him*, that she persuaded him to ask her father for a field. So ^fshe dismounted from *her* donkey, and Caleb said to her, “What do you wish?” ¹⁹She answered, “Give me a ^gblessing; since you have given me land in the South, give me also springs of water.” So he gave her the upper springs and the lower springs.

The Cities of Judah

²⁰This *was* the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Judah according to their families:

²¹The cities at the limits of the tribe of the children of Judah, toward the border of Edom in the South, were Kabzeel, ^hEder, Jagur, ²²Kinah, Dimonah, Adadah, ²³Kedesh, Hazor, Ithnan, ²⁴ⁱZiph, Telem, Bealoth, ²⁵Hazor, Hadattah, Kerioth, Hezron (which *is* Hazor), ²⁶Amam, Shema, Moladah, ²⁷Hazar Gaddah, Heshmon, Beth Pelet, ²⁸Hazar Shual, ^jBeer-sheba, Bizjothjah, ²⁹Baalath, Ijim, Ezem, ³⁰Eltolad, Chesil, ^kHormah, ³¹^lZiklag, Madmannah, Sansannah, ³²Lebaoth, Shilhim, Ain, and ^mRimmon: all the cities *are* twenty-nine, with their villages.

³³In the lowland: ⁿEshtaol, Zorah, Ashnah, ³⁴Zanoah, En Gannim, Tappuah, Enam, ³⁵Jarmuth, ^oAdullam, Socoh, Azekah, ³⁶Sharaim, Adithaim, Gederah, and Gederothaim: fourteen cities with their villages; ³⁷Zenan, Hadashah, Migdal Gad, ³⁸Dilean, Mizpah, ^pJokthe-el, ³⁹^qLachish, Bozkath, ^rEglon, ⁴⁰Cabbon, ⁵Lahmas, Kithlish, ⁴¹Gederath, Beth Dagon, Naamah, and Makkedah: sixteen cities with their villages; ⁴²^sLibnah, Ether, Ashan, ⁴³Jiphtah, Ashnah, Nezib, ⁴⁴Keilah, Achzib, and Mareshah: nine cities with their villages; ⁴⁵Ekron, with its towns and villages; ⁴⁶from Ekron to the sea, all that *lay* near ^tAshdod, with their villages; ⁴⁷Ashdod with its towns and villages, Gaza with its towns and villages—as far as ^uthe Brook of Egypt and ^vthe Great Sea with *its* coastline.

15:13–19 This second passage about Caleb’s inheritance (see 14:6–15 for the first one) explains how he also took Debir, another city that originally had been taken by Joshua (10:38, 39) but which had evidently fallen back into Canaanite hands. This section closely parallels Judg. 1:12–15.

15:20–63 The cities that Judah inherited number more than a hundred and include their surrounding villages. The list has four parts: (1) cities in the south (vv. 21–32); (2) cities in the lowland (vv. 33–47); (3) cities in the mountain country (vv. 48–60); and (4) cities in the wilderness near the Dead Sea (vv. 61, 62).

BIBLE TIMES & CULTURE NOTES



Jebusites

Ancient Jerusalem was once called Jebus, and its original inhabitants were called the Jebusites. When the Israelites invaded Palestine under the leadership of Joshua, the Jebusites were ruled by Adoni-Zedek, one of five Amorite kings who resisted the Hebrew conquest. These five kings were defeated and slain by Joshua, but the Jebusites were not driven out of Jebus (Jerusalem). After David was anointed king, he led his army against the Jebusites. His military commander, Joab, apparently entered the city through an underground water shaft and led the conquest (2 Sam. 5:6–9; 1 Chr. 11:4–8). The site on which Solomon's temple was built in Jerusalem was previously a threshing floor that belonged to a Jebusite by the name of Araunah (2 Sam. 24:16–24), or Ornan (1 Chr. 21:24, 25). David refused to accept this property as a gift from Araunah and paid him 50 shekels of silver for the land.

⁴⁸ And in the mountain country: Shammir, Jattir, Sochoh, ⁴⁹ Dannah, Kirjath Sannah (which is Debir), ⁵⁰ Anab, Eshtemoh, Anim, ⁵¹ Goshen, Holon, and Giloh: eleven cities with their villages; ⁵² Arab, Dumah, Eshean, ⁵³ Janum, Beth Tappuah, Aphekah, ⁵⁴ Humtah, ^x Kirjath Arba (which is Hebron), and Zior: nine cities with their villages; ⁵⁵ Maon, Carmel, Ziph, Juttah, ⁵⁶ Jezreel, Jokdeam, Zanoah, ⁵⁷ Kain, Gibeah, and Timnah: ten cities with their villages; ⁵⁸ Halhul, Beth Zur, Gedor, ⁵⁹ Maarath, Beth Anoth, and Eltekon: six cities with their villages; ⁶⁰ Kirjath Baal (which is Kirjath Jearam) and Rabbah: two cities with their villages.

⁶¹ In the wilderness: Beth Arabah, Middin, Secacah, ⁶² Nibshan, the City of Salt, and ^a En Gedi: six cities with their villages.

⁶³ As for the Jebusites, the inhabitants

⁵¹ ^w Josh. 10:41; 11:16
⁵⁴ ^x Josh. 14:15
⁵⁵ ^v 1 Sam. 23:24, 25
⁶⁰ ^z Josh. 18:14; 1 Sam. 7:1, 2
⁶² ^a 1 Sam. 23:29; Ezek. 47:10

⁶³ ^b Judg. 1:8, 21; 2 Sam. 5:6; 1 Chr. 11:4 ^c Judg. 1:21

CHAPTER 16

¹ ^a Josh. 8:15; 18:12
¹ Lit. *went out* ² LXX Bethel Luz
² ^b Josh. 18:13; Judg. 1:26 ³ LXX to Bethel,
³ ^c Josh. 18:13; 1 Kin. 9:17; 2 Chr. 8:5 ^d Josh. 21:21; 1 Kin. 9:15; 1 Chr. 7:28 ⁴ Lit. *the goings out of it were at the sea*
⁴ ^e Josh. 17:14
⁵ *possession*
⁵ ^f Judg. 1:29; 1 Chr. 7:28, 29 ^g Josh. 18:13 ^h 2 Chr. 8:5
⁶ ⁱ Josh. 17:7 ⁶ Naaran, 1 Chr. 7:28
⁸ ^j Josh. 17:8 ^k Josh. 17:9 ⁷ Lit. *the goings out of it were at the sea*
⁹ ^l Josh. 17:9
¹⁰ ^m Josh. 15:63; 17:12, 13; Judg. 1:29; 1 Kin. 9:16

of Jerusalem, ^b the children of Judah could not drive them out; ^c but the Jebusites dwell with the children of Judah at Jerusalem to this day.

Ephraim and West Manasseh

16 The lot ¹ fell to the children of Joseph from the Jordan, by Jericho, to the waters of Jericho on the east, to the ^a wilderness that goes up from Jericho through the mountains to ² Bethel, ² then went out ³ from ^b Bethel to Luz, passed along to the border of the Archites at Ataroth, ³ and went down westward to the boundary of the Japhletites, ^c as far as the boundary of Lower Beth Horon to ^d Gezer; and ⁴ it ended at the sea.

⁴ ^e So the children of Joseph, Manasseh and Ephraim, took their ⁵ inheritance.

The Land of Ephraim

⁵ ^f The border of the children of Ephraim, according to their families, was *thus*: The border of their inheritance on the east side was ^g Ataroth Addar ^h as far as Upper Beth Horon.

⁶ And the border went out toward the sea on the north side of ⁱ Michmethath; then the border went around eastward to Taanath Shiloh, and passed by it on the east of Janohah. ⁷ Then it went down from Janohah to Ataroth and ⁶ Naarah, reached to Jericho, and came out at the Jordan.

⁸ The border went out from ^j Tappuah westward to the ^k Brook Kanah, and ⁷ it ended at the sea. This *was* the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Ephraim according to their families. ⁹ ^l The separate cities for the children of Ephraim *were* among the inheritance of the children of Manasseh, all the cities with their villages.

¹⁰ ^m And they did not drive out the Canaanites who dwell in Gezer; but the Canaanites dwell among the Ephraimites to this day and have become forced laborers.

15:63 The Jebusites, who inhabited Jerusalem before the Israelites arrived, stubbornly held on to Jerusalem because the tribe of Judah did not destroy them completely. God did not want Israel to make peace with the inhabitants of the land, but instead to drive them out and utterly destroy them (Num. 33:52–55; Deut. 7:1–5; 20:16–18). Judg. 1:21 repeats this verse almost verbatim, except that it states that Benjamin (not Judah) failed to drive out the Jebusites. This is because Jerusalem sat astride the boundary between Benjamin and Judah. In the early period, Jerusalem did not strictly belong to either tribe. The tribe of Judah did capture Jerusalem later (Judg. 1:8), but Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites in their portion (Judg. 1:21). Apparently Judah took the unfortified southwestern hill, while the tribe of Benjamin failed to take the walled city on the eastern hill. The details are not entirely clear, but it is stated that Jebusites and Israelites lived together (15:63; Judg. 1:21). The city effectively

belonged to the Jebusites until the time of David (2 Sam. 5:5–10). **16:1–4** A single lot determined the inheritance of both of the tribes of Joseph—Ephraim and Manasseh. That these two tribes together received only one lot caused them later to complain (17:14–18).

16:9 The separate cities: Some of Ephraim's cities were actually part of Manasseh's inheritance (see also 17:9). The reason for this is not clear, but it may have its basis in the greater blessing extended to Ephraim by Jacob (Gen. 48). Manasseh also inherited towns from the territories of two other tribes, Issachar and Asher (17:11).

16:10 they did not drive out the Canaanites: This previews the many statements about incomplete conquests in Judg. 1. **forced laborers**: The status of the Canaanites in Gezer was somewhat similar to that of the Gibeonites (9:27), except that there was no treaty involved here, so the status of these Canaanites was somewhat lower.

The Other Half-Tribe of Manasseh (West)

17 There was also a lot for the tribe of Manasseh, for he *was* the ^afirst-born of Joseph: *namely* for ^bMachir the firstborn of Manasseh, the father of Gilead, because he was a man of war; therefore he was given ^cGilead and Bashan. ²And there was a lot for ^dthe rest of the children of Manasseh according to their families: ^efor the children of ^fAbiezer, the children of Helek, ^gthe children of Asriel, the children of Shechem, ^hthe children of Hephher, and the children of Shemida; these *were* the male children of Manasseh the son of Joseph according to their families.

³But ⁱZelophehad the son of Hephher, the son of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh, had no sons, but only daughters. And these *are* the names of his daughters: Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah. ⁴And they came near before ^jEleazar the priest, before Joshua the son of Nun, and before the rulers, saying, ^k“The Lord commanded Moses to give us an ^linheritance among our brothers.” Therefore, according to the commandment of the Lord, he gave them an inheritance among their father’s brothers. ⁵Ten shares fell to ^mManasseh, besides the land of Gilead and Bashan, which *were* on the other side of the Jordan, ⁶because the daughters of Manasseh received an inheritance among his sons; and the rest of Manasseh’s sons had the land of Gilead.

⁷And the territory of Manasseh was from Asher to ⁿMichmethath, that *lies* east of Shechem; and the border went along south to the inhabitants of En Tappuah. ⁸Manasseh had the land of Tappuah, but ^oTappuah on the border of Manasseh *belonged* to the children of Ephraim. ⁹And the ^pborder descended to the ^qBrook Kanah, southward to the brook. ^rThese cities of Ephraim *are* among the cities of Manasseh. The border of Manasseh *was* on the north side of the brook; and it ended at the sea.

¹⁰Southward *it was* Ephraim’s, northward *it was* Manasseh’s, and the sea was its border. Manasseh’s territory was

CHAPTER 17

¹ ^a Gen. 41:51; 46:20; 48:18 ^b Gen. 50:23; Judg. 5:14 ^c Deut. 3:15
² ^d Num. 26:29–33
^e ¹ Chr. 7:18 ^f Num. 26:31 ^g Num. 26:32
^h Jeezer, Num. 26:30
³ ^h Num. 26:33; 27:1; 36:2
⁴ ⁱ Josh. 14:1 ^j Num. 27:2–11 ^k possession
⁵ ^k Josh. 22:7
⁷ ^l Josh. 16:6
⁸ ^m Josh. 16:8
⁹ ⁿ Josh. 16:9
³ boundary ⁴ Wadi

¹¹ ^o ¹ Chr. 7:29
^p Judg. 1:27; 1 Sam. 31:10; 1 Kin. 4:12
¹² ^q Judg. 1:19, 27, 28
¹³ ^r Josh. 16:10
¹⁴ ^s Josh. 16:4
¹ Gen. 48:22 ^u Gen. 48:19; Num. 26:34, 37 ⁵ allotment
¹⁶ ^v Josh. 17:18; Judg. 1:19; 4:3
^w Josh. 19:18; 1 Kin. 4:12
¹⁷ ⁶ allotment
¹⁸ ^x Deut. 20:1 ⁷ Lit. goings out

CHAPTER 18

¹ ^a Josh. 19:51; 21:2; 22:9; Jer. 7:12 ^b Judg. 18:31; 1 Sam. 1:3, 24; 4:3, 4

adjoining Asher on the north and Issachar on the east. ¹¹And in Issachar and in Asher, ^oManasseh had ^pBeth Shean and its towns, Ibleam and its towns, the inhabitants of Dor and its towns, the inhabitants of En Dor and its towns, the inhabitants of Taanach and its towns, and the inhabitants of Megiddo and its towns—three hilly regions. ¹²Yet ^qthe children of Manasseh could not drive out *the inhabitants* of those cities, but the Canaanites were determined to dwell in that land. ¹³And it happened, when the children of Israel grew strong, that they put the Canaanites to ^rforced labor, but did not utterly drive them out.

More Land for Ephraim and Manasseh

¹⁴sThen the children of Joseph spoke to Joshua, saying, “Why have you given us *only* ^tone ⁵lot and one share to inherit, since we *are* ^ua great people, inasmuch as the Lord has blessed us until now?”

¹⁵So Joshua answered them, “If you *are* a great people, *then* go up to the forest country and clear a place for yourself there in the land of the Perizzites and the giants, since the mountains of Ephraim are too confined for you.”

¹⁶But the children of Joseph said, “The mountain country is not enough for us; and all the Canaanites who dwell in the land of the valley have ^vchariots of iron, *both those who are* of Beth Shean and its towns and *those who are* ^wof the Valley of Jezreel.”

¹⁷And Joshua spoke to the house of Joseph—to Ephraim and Manasseh—saying, “You *are* a great people and have great power; you shall not have *only* one ⁶lot, ¹⁸but the mountain country shall be yours. Although it *is* wooded, you shall cut it down, and its ⁷farthest extent shall be yours; for you shall drive out the Canaanites, ^xthough they have iron chariots *and are* strong.”

The Remainder of the Land Divided

18 Now the whole congregation of the children of Israel assembled together ^aat Shiloh, and ^bset up the tabernacle

17:1 Manasseh’s firstborn child **Machir** (Gen. 50:23; Num. 26:29) had already received a separate portion, Gilead and Bashan—that is, Manasseh’s portion east of the Jordan (13:29–31). The rest of Manasseh’s portion was west of the Jordan (vv. 2–13).

17:3–6 Here Joshua faithfully carried out the commands of God through Moses in the matter of the inheritance of Zelophehad, who had no sons (Num. 26:33; 27:1–11). Joshua made sure that the daughters received their inheritance as promised. This brief narrative emphasizes once again how God keeps His promises, a persistent theme throughout the Book of Joshua. The faith of the daughters

of Zelophehad in claiming the land recalls that of Caleb, who also claimed land on the basis of God’s promise (14:6–15).

17:14–18 The episode here revives the complaint of the two tribes of Joseph that they together had received only one lot. Joshua encouraged them to take land in the hill country despite their fears of the Canaanites there (vv. 15, 17, 18; Num. 13:28–33). The episode presents a sharp contrast to Caleb’s willingness to take the initiative in claiming his land (14:6–15). It also reminds us that plenty of land remained to be taken (see 13:1).

18:1 Up to this point, Israel’s central encampment in the land had

of meeting there. And the land was subdued before them. ²But there remained among the children of Israel seven tribes which had not yet received their inheritance.

³Then Joshua said to the children of Israel: ^c“How long will you neglect to go and possess the land which the LORD God of your fathers has given you? ⁴Pick out from among you three men for *each* tribe, and I will send them; they shall rise and go through the land, survey it according to their inheritance, and come *back* to me. ⁵And they shall divide it into seven parts. ^dJudah shall remain in their territory on the south, and the ^ehouse of Joseph shall remain in their territory on the north. ⁶You shall therefore ¹survey the land in seven parts and bring *the survey* here to me, ^fthat I may cast lots for you here before the LORD our God. ^{7g}But the Levites have no part among you, for the priesthood of the LORD *is* their inheritance. ^hAnd Gad, Reuben, and half the tribe of Manasseh have received their inheritance beyond the Jordan on the east, which Moses the servant of the LORD gave them.”

⁸Then the men arose to go away; and Joshua charged those who went to ²survey the land, saying, “Go, walk ⁱthrough the land, survey it, and come back to me, that I may cast lots for you here before the LORD in Shiloh.” ⁹So the men went, passed through the land, and ³wrote the survey in a book in seven parts by cities; and they came to Joshua at the camp in Shiloh. ¹⁰Then Joshua cast ^jlots for them in Shiloh before the LORD, and there ^kJoshua divided the land to the children of Israel according to their ⁴divisions.

The Land of Benjamin

¹¹Now the lot of the tribe of the children of Benjamin came up according to their families, and the territory of their lot came out between the children of Judah and the children of Joseph. ^{12m}Their border on the north side began at the Jordan, and the border went up to the side of Jericho on the north, and went

3 ^c Judg. 18:9
5 ^d Josh. 15:1
^e Josh. 16:1–17:18
6 ^f Josh. 14:2; 18:10
¹ describe in writing
7 ^g Num. 18:7, 20;
Josh. 13:33 ^h Josh.
13:8
8 ⁱ Gen. 13:17
² describe in writing
9 ³ described it in
writing
10 ^j Acts 13:19
^k Num. 34:16–
29; Josh. 19:51
⁴ portions
11 ¹ Judg. 1:21
12 ^m Josh. 16:1

up through the mountains westward; it ended at the Wilderness of Beth Aven. ¹³The border went over from there toward Luz, to the side of Luz ⁿ(which *is* Bethel) southward; and the border descended to Ataroth Addar, near the hill that *lies* on the south side ^oof Lower Beth Horon.

¹⁴Then the border extended around the west side to the south, from the hill that *lies* before Beth Horon southward; and ⁵it ended at ^pKirjath Baal (which *is* Kirjath Jearim), a city of the children of Judah. This *was* the west side.

¹⁵The south side *began* at the end of Kirjath Jearim, and the border extended on the west and went out to ^qthe spring of the waters of Nephtoah. ¹⁶Then the border came down to the end of the mountain that *lies* before ^rthe Valley of the Son of Hinnom, which *is* in the Valley of the ⁶Rephaim on the north, descended to the Valley of Hinnom, to the side of the Jebusite *city* on the south, and descended to ^sEn Rogel. ¹⁷And it went around from the north, went out to En Shemesh, and extended toward Gelliloth, which *is* before the Ascent of Adummim, and descended to ^tthe stone of Bohan the son of Reuben. ¹⁸Then it passed along toward the north side of ⁷Arabah, and went down to Arabah. ¹⁹And the border passed along to the north side of Beth Hoglah; then ⁸the border ended at the north bay at the ^uSalt Sea, at the south end of the Jordan. This *was* the southern boundary.

²⁰The Jordan was its border on the east side. This *was* the inheritance of the children of Benjamin, according to its boundaries all around, according to their families.

²¹Now the cities of the tribe of the children of Benjamin, according to their families, were Jericho, Beth Hoglah, Emek Keziz, ²²Beth Arabah, Zemaraim, Bethel, ²³Avim, Parah, Ophrah, ²⁴Chephar Hammoni, Ophni, and Gaba: twelve cities with their villages; ^{25v}Gibeon, ^wRamah, Beeroth, ²⁶Mizpah, Chephirah, Mozah, ²⁷Rekem, Irpeel, Taralah, ²⁸Zelah, Eleph, ^xJebus (which *is* Jerusalem), Gibeath,

13 ⁿ Gen. 28:19;
Josh. 16:2; Judg.
1:23 ^o Josh. 16:3
14 ^p Josh. 15:9 ⁵ Lit.
its goings out were
15 ^q Josh. 15:9
16 ^r Josh. 15:8
⁵ Josh. 15:7 ⁶ Lit.
Giant
17 ¹ Josh. 15:6
18 ⁷ Beth Arabah,
Josh. 15:6; 18:22
19 ^v Josh. 15:2, 5
⁸ Lit. the goings out
of the border were
25 ^v Josh. 11:19;
21:17; 1 Kin. 3:4, 5
^w Jer. 31:15
28 ^x Josh. 15:8, 63

been at Gilgal, near Jericho, where they had observed several religious ceremonies (4:19, 20; 5:2–12; 9:6). Now the entire congregation moved to **Shiloh**, about 15 miles northwest of Jericho, where they set up the tent of meeting. This would remain an important Israelite religious center for several hundred years (19:51; 21:2; Judg. 18:31; 21:12; 1 Sam. 1:9) until the taking of Jerusalem in David's day. The ark was kept there (1 Sam. 3:3), and it was brought into battle against the Philistines, who captured it when Samuel was judge (1 Sam. 4). Soon after this, Shiloh was destroyed (Ps. 78:60; Jer. 7:14). **tabernacle of meeting:** This is the first of two references to the tabernacle in this book; the other reference is in 19:51. The tabernacle was an

elaborate portable tent that served as God's "home" when the Israelites were in the wilderness. The name *tabernacle* or *tent of meeting* usually means this tabernacle.

18:3 How long will you neglect to go: Joshua's rebuke of the seven tribes shows that it was not enough to defeat the inhabitants of the land; they also had to take possession of it. The Israelites had easily defeated the Canaanites (chs. 9–11) but they did not diligently follow up on their victories and occupy all of the land. This laziness disobeyed God's instructions in 13:1 and showed a lack of faith in His promises.

18:9 wrote the survey in a book: See 18:11—19:51.

and Kirjath: fourteen cities with their villages. This was the inheritance of the children of Benjamin according to their families.

Simeon's Inheritance with Judah

19 The ^asecond lot came out for Simeon, for the tribe of the children of Simeon according to their families. ^bAnd their inheritance was within the inheritance of the children of Judah. ^{2c}They had in their inheritance Beersheba (Sheba), Moladah, ³Hazar Shual, Balah, Ezem, ⁴Eltolad, Bethul, Hormah, ⁵Ziklag, Beth Marcaboth, Hazar Susah, ⁶Beth Lebaoth, and Sharuhon: thirteen cities and their villages; ⁷Ain, Rimmon, Ether, and Ashan: four cities and their villages; ⁸and all the villages that *were* all around these cities as far as Baalath Beer, ^dRamah of the South. This *was* the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Simeon according to their families.

⁹The inheritance of the children of Simeon *was included* in the share of the children of Judah, for the share of the children of Judah was ¹too much for them. ^eTherefore the children of Simeon had *their* inheritance within the inheritance of ²that people.

The Land of Zebulun

¹⁰The third lot came out for the children of Zebulun according to their families, and the border of their inheritance was as far as Sarid. ^{11f}Their border went toward the west and to Maralah, went to Dabbasheth, and extended along the brook that is ^geast of Jokneam. ¹²Then from Sarid it went eastward toward the sunrise along the border of Chisloth Tabor, and went out toward ^hDaberath, bypassing Japhia. ¹³And from there it passed along on the east of ⁱGath Hephher, toward Eth Kazin, and extended to Rimmon, which borders on Neah. ¹⁴Then the border went around it on the north side of Hannathon, and ³it ended in the Valley of Jiphtah El. ¹⁵Included were Kattath, Nahallal, Shimron, Idalah, and Bethlehem: twelve cities with their villages. ¹⁶This *was* the inheritance of the children of Zebulun according to their families, these cities with their villages.

The Land of Issachar

¹⁷The fourth lot came out to Issachar, for the children of Issachar according to

CHAPTER 19

1 ^a Judg. 1:3 ^b Josh. 19:9
2 ^c 1 Chr. 4:28
8 ^d 1 Sam. 30:27
9 ^e Josh. 19:1 ¹ too large ² Lit. *them*
11 ^f Gen. 49:13
9 Josh. 12:22
12 ^h 1 Chr. 6:72
13 ¹ 2 Kin. 14:25
14 ³ Lit. *the goings out of it were*

22 ^j Josh. 15:10; Judg. 1:33
24 ^k Judg. 1:31, 32
26 ^l 1 Sam. 15:12; 1 Kin. 18:20; Is. 33:9; 35:2; Jer. 46:18
27 ^m 1 Kin. 9:13
28 ⁿ Gen. 10:19; Josh. 11:8; Judg. 1:31; Acts 27:3 ⁴ So with MT, Tg., Vg.; a few Heb. mss. *Abdon* (cf. 21:30 and 1 Chr. 6:74)
29 ^o Judg. 1:31
32 ^p Josh. 19:32-39; Judg. 1:33
33 ⁵ Lit. *its goings out were*
34 ^q Deut. 32:23
37 ^r Josh. 20:7

their families. ¹⁸And their territory went to Jezreel, and *included* Chesulloth, Shunem, ¹⁹Haphraim, Shion, Anaharath, ²⁰Rabbith, Kishion, Abez, ²¹Remeth, En Gannim, En Haddah, and Beth Pazzez. ²²And the border reached to Tabor, Shashimah, and ^jBeth Shemesh; their border ended at the Jordan: sixteen cities with their villages. ²³This *was* the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Issachar according to their families, the cities and their villages.

The Land of Asher

^{24k}The fifth lot came out for the tribe of the children of Asher according to their families. ²⁵And their territory included Helkath, Hali, Beten, Achshaph, ²⁶Alammelech, Amad, and Mishal; it reached to ^lMount Carmel westward, along *the Brook Shihor Libnath*. ²⁷It turned toward the sunrise to Beth Dagon; and it reached to Zebulun and to the Valley of Jiphtah El, then northward beyond Beth Emek and Neiel, bypassing ^mCabul *which was* on the left, ²⁸including ⁴Ebron, Rehob, Hammon, and Kanah, ⁿas far as Greater Sidon. ²⁹And the border turned to Ramah and to the fortified city of Tyre; then the border turned to Hosah, and ended at the sea by the region of ^oAchzib. ³⁰Also Ummah, Aphek, and Rehob *were included*: twenty-two cities with their villages. ³¹This *was* the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Asher according to their families, these cities with their villages.

The Land of Naphtali

^{32p}The sixth lot came out to the children of Naphtali, for the children of Naphtali according to their families. ³³And their border began at Heleph, enclosing the territory from the terebinth tree in Zaanannim, Adami Nekeb, and Jabneel, as far as Lakkum; ⁵it ended at the Jordan. ^{34q}From Heleph the border extended westward to Aznoth Tabor, and went out from there toward Hukkok; it adjoined Zebulun on the south side and Asher on the west side, and ended at Judah by the Jordan toward the sunrise. ³⁵And the fortified cities *are* Ziddim, Zer, Hammath, Rakkath, Chinnereth, ³⁶Adamah, Ramah, Hazor, ^{37r}Kedesh, Edrei, En Hazor, ³⁸Iron, Migdal El, Horem, Beth Anath, and Beth Shemesh: nineteen cities with their villages. ³⁹This *was* the inheritance of the tribe of the children of

19:1, 9 Simeon did not get an independent inheritance, but rather inherited scattered lands within Judah's allotment. Their father Jacob had predicted this (Gen. 49:5-7). Later Simeon and **Judah**

acted together (Judg. 1:3). In 1 Chr. 4:24-27 Simeon is described as a much smaller tribe than Judah.

Naphtali according to their families, the cities and their villages.

The Land of Dan

⁴⁰sThe seventh lot came out for the tribe of the children of Dan according to their families. ⁴¹And the territory of their inheritance was Zorah, ^tEshtaol, Ir Shemesh, ⁴²uShaalabbin, ^vAijalon, Jethlah, ⁴³Elon, Timnah, ^wEkron, ⁴⁴Eltekeh, Gibbethon, Baalath, ⁴⁵Jehud, Bene Berak, Gath Rimmon, ⁴⁶Me Jarkon, and Rakkon, with the region ⁶near ⁷Joppa. ⁴⁷And the ^xborder of the children of Dan went beyond these, because the children of Dan went up to fight against Leshem and took it; and they struck it with the edge of the sword, took possession of it, and dwelt in it. They called Leshem, ^yDan, after the name of Dan their father. ⁴⁸This *is* the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Dan according to their families, these cities with their villages.

Joshua's Inheritance

⁴⁹When they had ⁸made an end of dividing the land as an inheritance according to their borders, the children of Israel gave an inheritance among them to Joshua the son of Nun. ⁵⁰According to the word of the LORD they gave him the city which he asked for, ²Timnath ^aSerah in the mountains of Ephraim; and he built the city and dwelt in it. ⁵¹^bThese *were* the inheritances which Eleazar the priest, Joshua the son of Nun, and the heads of the fathers of the tribes of the children of Israel divided as an inheritance by lot ^cin Shiloh before the LORD, at the door of the tabernacle of meeting. So they made an end of dividing the country.

The Cities of Refuge

20 The LORD also spoke to Joshua, saying, ²“Speak to the children of Israel, saying: ^a“Appoint ¹ for yourselves

⁴⁰ ^s Josh. 19:40-48; Judg. 1:34-36
⁴¹ ^t Josh. 15:33
⁴² ^u Judg. 1:35;
1 Kin. 4:9 ^v Josh.
10:12; 21:24
⁴³ ^w Josh. 15:11;
Judg. 1:18
⁴⁶ ⁶ over against
⁷ Heb. *Japho*
⁴⁷ ^x Judg. 18
^y Judg. 18:29
⁴⁹ ⁸ finished
⁵⁰ ² Josh. 24:30
^a 1 Chr. 7:24
⁵¹ ^b Num. 34:17;
Josh. 14:1 ^c Josh.
18:1, 10

CHAPTER 20

² ^a Ex. 21:13; Num.
35:6-34; Deut. 19:2,
9 ¹ Designate

⁴ ² states
⁵ ^b Num. 35:12
⁶ ^c Num. 35:12,
24, 25
⁷ ^d Josh. 21:32;
1 Chr. 6:76 ^e Josh.
21:21; 2 Chr. 10:1
^f Josh. 14:15; 21:11,
13 ^g Luke 1:39
⁸ ^h Deut. 4:43; Josh.
21:36; 1 Chr. 6:78
ⁱ Josh. 21:38; 1 Kin.
22:3 ^j Josh. 21:27
⁹ ^k Num. 35:15
^j Josh. 20:6 ³ As a
resident alien

CHAPTER 21

¹ ^a Num. 35:1-8
^b Num. 34:16-29;
Josh. 14:1; 17:4

cities of refuge, of which I spoke to you through Moses, ³that the slayer who kills a person accidentally *or* unintentionally may flee there; and they shall be your refuge from the avenger of blood. ⁴And when he flees to one of those cities, and stands at the entrance of the gate of the city, and ²declares his case in the hearing of the elders of that city, they shall take him into the city as one of them, and give him a place, that he may dwell among them. ⁵^bThen if the avenger of blood pursues him, they shall not deliver the slayer into his hand, because he struck his neighbor unintentionally, but did not hate him beforehand. ⁶And he shall dwell in that city ^cuntil he stands before the congregation for judgment, *and* until the death of the one who is high priest in those days. Then the slayer may return and come to his own city and his own house, to the city from which he fled.”

⁷So they appointed ^dKedesh in Galilee, in the mountains of Naphtali, ^eShechem in the mountains of Ephraim, and ^fKirjath Arba (which *is* Hebron) in ^gthe mountains of Judah. ⁸And on the other side of the Jordan, by Jericho eastward, they assigned ^hBezer in the wilderness on the plain, from the tribe of Reuben, ⁱRamoth in Gilead, from the tribe of Gad, and ^jGolan in Bashan, from the tribe of Manasseh. ⁹^kThese were the cities appointed for all the children of Israel and for the stranger who ³dwelt among them, that whoever killed a person accidentally might flee there, and not die by the hand of the avenger of blood ¹until he stood before the congregation.

Cities of the Levites

21 Then the heads of the fathers’ ^ahouses of the ^aLevites came near to ^bEleazar the priest, to Joshua the son of Nun, and to the heads of the fathers’ ^ahouses of the tribes of the children

19:47 Dan’s capture of **Leshem** is recounted also in Judg. 18, which gives more detail (in that account the city is called Laish). The Danites were forced out of their territory in the south (Judg. 1:34) and migrated north (Judg. 18:27–31), where they captured Leshem and renamed it **Dan**.

19:49, 50 The section ends, appropriately enough, with **Joshua** receiving his **inheritance** in Ephraim. **According to the word of the LORD:** The Bible does not record the command granting Joshua this particular inheritance, though the promise to Caleb and Joshua in Num. 14:30 did guarantee both of these faithful spies an inheritance in the land.

19:51 This is a summary statement about the allotments for each tribe, echoing elements from 14:1; 17:4; 18:6, 10. It is a fitting summary to the entire section of chs. 13–19. The involvement of **Eleazar the priest, Joshua, . . . and the heads of the . . . tribes**, as well as the mention of the tabernacle at **Shiloh**, all lend an air of importance and solemnity. The entire distribution of the land had taken place under God’s watchful eye, decently and in order. The land was God’s to give, and He had now given it.

20:3 accidentally or unintentionally: Literally, “through error and without knowing.” God’s law made allowance for motives and intent just as modern criminal codes distinguish unintentional killing from murder. The word translated *avenger* in **avenger of blood** is translated *close relative* in Ruth 3:13; 4:1. The basic meaning of the word is “protector of family rights.” Num. 35 gives the demands and limitations on the avenger of blood, but it does not give license to take revenge—God clearly reserved that task for Himself alone (Deut. 32:35; Is. 34:8; Rom. 12:19). God’s provision of the cities of refuge put a limit on private acts of vengeance.

20:7, 8 The cities of refuge were evenly distributed so that none was more than a day’s journey from any part of Israel’s land. Golan, Ramoth Gilead, and Bezer were on the east side of the Jordan River, and Kedesh, Shechem, and Kirjath Arba (Hebron) were on the west. Despite their importance here and in the Pentateuch, cities of refuge as such are not mentioned again in the Bible.

21:1–3 The Levites came to Joshua to claim their rightful share of territory, which included **cities** throughout the territories God had

Dividing the Land



of Israel. ²And they spoke to them at ^cShiloh in the land of Canaan, saying, ^d“The LORD commanded through Moses to give us cities to dwell in, with their common-lands for our livestock.” ³So the children of Israel gave to the Levites from their inheritance, at the commandment of the LORD, these cities and their common-lands:

⁴Now the lot came out for the families of the Kohathites. And ^ethe children of Aaron the priest, *who were* of the Levites, ^fhad thirteen cities by lot from the tribe of Judah, from the tribe of Simeon, and from the tribe of Benjamin. ^{5g}The rest of the children of Kohath had ten cities by lot from the families of the tribe of Ephraim, from the tribe of Dan, and from the half-tribe of Manasseh.

⁶And ^hthe children of Gershon had thirteen cities by lot from the families of the tribe of Issachar, from the tribe of Asher, from the tribe of Naphtali, and from the half-tribe of Manasseh in Bashan.

⁷ⁱThe children of Merari according to their families had twelve cities from the tribe of Reuben, from the tribe of Gad, and from the tribe of Zebulun.

^{8j}And the children of Israel gave these cities with their common-lands by lot to the Levites, ^kas the LORD had commanded by the hand of Moses.

⁹So they gave from the tribe of the children of Judah and from the tribe of the children of Simeon these cities which are ^ldesignated by name, ¹⁰which were for the children of Aaron, one of the families of the Kohathites, *who were* of the children of Levi; for the lot was theirs first. ^{11l}And they gave them ²Kirjath Arba (*Arba was the father of ^mAnak*), ⁿwhich is Hebron, in the mountains of Judah, with the common-land surrounding it. ¹²But ^othe fields of the city and its villages they gave to Caleb the son of Jephunneh as his possession.

¹³Thus ^pto the children of Aaron the priest they gave ^qHebron with its common-land (a city of refuge for the slayer), ^rLibnah with its common-land, ^{14s}Jattir with its common-land, ^tEshtemoa with its common-land, ^{15u}Holon

² ^c Josh. 18:1
^d Num. 35:2
⁴ ^e Josh. 21:8, 19
^f Josh. 19:51
⁵ ^g Josh. 21:20
⁶ ^h Josh. 21:27
⁷ ⁱ Josh. 21:34
⁸ ^j Josh. 21:3
^k Num. 35:2
⁹ ^l Lit. *called*
¹¹ ⁱ Josh. 20:7;
1 Chr. 6:55 ^m Josh.
14:15; 15:13, 14
ⁿ Josh. 20:7; Luke
1:39 ² Lit. *City of*
Arba
¹² ^o Josh. 14:14;
1 Chr. 6:56
¹³ ^p 1 Chr. 6:57
^q Josh. 15:54; 20:2, 7
^r Josh. 15:42; 2 Kin.
8:22
¹⁴ ^s Josh. 15:48
^t Josh. 15:50
¹⁵ ^u 1 Chr. 6:58

with its common-land, ^vDebir with its common-land, ^{16w}Ain with its common-land, ^xJuttah with its common-land, and ^yBeth Shemesh with its common-land: nine cities from those two tribes; ¹⁷and from the tribe of Benjamin, ^zGibbeon with its common-land, ^aGeba with its common-land, ¹⁸Anathoth with its common-land, and ^bAlmon with its common-land: four cities. ¹⁹All the cities of the children of Aaron, the priests, *were* thirteen cities with their common-lands.

^{20c}And the families of the children of Kohath, the Levites, the rest of the children of Kohath, even they had the cities of their ³lot from the tribe of Ephraim. ²¹For they gave them ^dShechem with its common-land in the mountains of Ephraim (a city of refuge for the slayer), ^eGezer with its common-land, ²²Kibzaim with its common-land, and Beth Horon with its common-land: four cities; ²³and from the tribe of Dan, Eltekeh with its common-land, Gibbethon with its common-land, ^{24f}Aijalon with its common-land, and Gath Rimmon with its common-land: four cities; ²⁵and from the half-tribe of Manasseh, Tanach with its common-land and Gath Rimmon with its common-land: two cities. ²⁶All the ten cities with their common-lands were for the rest of the families of the children of Kohath.

^{27g}Also to the children of Gershon, of the families of the Levites, from the *other* half-tribe of Manasseh, *they gave* ^hGolan in Bashan with its common-land (a city of refuge for the slayer), and Be Eshterah with its common-land: two cities; ²⁸and from the tribe of Issachar, Kishion with its common-land, Daberath with its common-land, ²⁹Jarmuth with its common-land, and En Gannim with its common-land: four cities; ³⁰and from the tribe of Asher, Mishal with its common-land, Abdon with its common-land, ³¹Helkath with its common-land, and Rehob with its common-land: four cities; ³²and from the tribe of Naphtali, ⁱKedesh in Galilee with its common-land (a city of refuge for the slayer), Hammoth Dor with its common-land, and Kartan with its common-land: three cities. ³³All the

^v Josh. 15:49
¹⁶ ^w 1 Chr. 6:59
^x Josh. 15:55 ^y Josh.
15:10
¹⁷ ^z Josh. 18:25
^a Josh. 18:24
¹⁸ ^b 1 Chr. 6:60
²⁰ ^c 1 Chr. 6:66
³ *allotment*
²¹ ^d Josh. 20:7
^e Judg. 1:29
²⁴ ^f Josh. 10:12
²⁷ ^g Josh. 21:6;
1 Chr. 6:71 ^h Josh.
20:8
³² ⁱ Josh. 20:7

promised (Num. 35:1–8). The **common-lands** refers to land that surrounded each city.

21:4–8 Here the Levitical cities are determined by the **lot**. The word *lot* occurs five times in these five verses; in this case it was a God-directed method of choosing the cities. God was in control of every aspect of the inheritance process.

21:4, 9–42 The priestly branch of the **Kohathites**, descended through Aaron, received 13 cities from Judah, Simeon, and Benjamin. Thus the Aaronic priests were strategically located to serve

in the temple and in the territory that remained in the hands of descendants of Judah through the years before and following the Babylonian exile. Some of the cities were not actually in Israel's possession at this time (for example, Gezer, v. 21), and some appear never to have been in Israel's control for any length of time (for example, the Philistine cities of Eltekeh and Gibbethon, v. 23). These names may simply reflect the actual allotments in Joshua's day. Much land remained to be taken even after it had been allotted (13:1; 15:63; 16:10; 17:12, 13).

cities of the Gershonites according to their families *were* thirteen cities with their common-lands.

^{34j} And to the families of the children of Merari, the rest of the Levites, from the tribe of Zebulun, Jokneam with its common-land, Kartah with its common-land, ³⁵ Dimnah with its common-land, and Nahalal with its common-land: four cities; ^{36^d} and from the tribe of Reuben, ^k Bezer with its common-land, Jahaz with its common-land, ³⁷ Kedemoth with its common-land, and Mephaath with its common-land: four cities; ³⁸ and from the tribe of Gad, ^l Ramoth in Gilead with its common-land (a city of refuge for the slayer), Mahanaim with its common-land, ³⁹ Heshbon with its common-land, and Jazer with its common-land: four cities in all. ⁴⁰ So all the cities for the children of Merari according to their families, the rest of the families of the Levites, were *by* their lot twelve cities.

^{41^m} All the cities of the Levites within the possession of the children of Israel *were* forty-eight cities with their common-lands. ⁴² Every one of these cities had its common-land surrounding it; thus *were* all these cities.

The Promise Fulfilled

⁴³ So the LORD gave to Israel ⁿ all the land of which He had sworn to give to their fathers, and they ^o took possession of it and dwelt in it. ^{44^p} The LORD gave them ^q rest all around, according to all that He had sworn to their fathers. And ^r not a man of all their enemies stood against them; the LORD delivered all their enemies into their hand. ^{45^s} Not a word failed of any good thing which the LORD

^{34^j} Josh. 21:7; 1 Chr. 6:77-81
^{36^k} Deut. 4:43; Josh. 20:8 ⁴ So with LXX, Vg. (cf. 1 Chr. 6:78, 79); MT, Bg., Tg. omit vv. 36, 37
^{38^l} Josh. 20:8
^{41^m} Num. 35:7
^{43ⁿ} Gen. 12:7; 26:3, 4; 28:4, 13, 14 ^o Num. 33:53; Josh. 1:11
^{44^p} Deut. 7:23, 24; Josh. 11:23; 22:4
^{45^s} [Num. 23:19]; Josh. 23:14; 1 Kin. 8:56

CHAPTER 22

^{2^a} Num. 32:20-22; Deut. 3:18 ^b Josh. 1:12-18
^{3^l} forsaken
^{4^c} Josh. 21:44
^d Num. 32:33
^{5^e} Deut. 6:6, 17; 11:22; Jer. 12:16
^f Deut. 10:12; 11:13, 22 ² be very careful to do
^{6^g} Gen. 47:7; Ex. 39:43; Josh. 14:13; 2 Sam. 6:18; Luke 24:50
^{7^h} Josh. 17:1-13
^{8ⁱ} Num. 31:27;
¹ Sam. 30:24
³ plunder

had spoken to the house of Israel. All came to pass.

Eastern Tribes Return to Their Lands

22 Then Joshua called the Reubenites, the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh, ² and said to them: “You have kept ^a all that Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, ^b and have obeyed my voice in all that I commanded you. ³ You have not ¹ left your brethren these many days, up to this day, but have kept the charge of the commandment of the LORD your God. ⁴ And now the LORD your God has given ^c rest to your brethren, as He promised them; now therefore, return and go to your tents *and* to the land of your possession, ^d which Moses the servant of the LORD gave you on the other side of the Jordan. ⁵ But ^e take ² careful heed to do the commandment and the law which Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, ^f to love the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways, to keep His commandments, to hold fast to Him, and to serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul.” ⁶ So Joshua ^g blessed them and sent them away, and they went to their tents.

⁷ Now to half the tribe of Manasseh Moses had given a possession in Bashan, ^h but to the *other* half of it Joshua gave *a possession* among their brethren on this side of the Jordan, westward. And indeed, when Joshua sent them away to their tents, he blessed them, ⁸ and spoke to them, saying, “Return with much riches to your tents, with very much livestock, with silver, with gold, with bronze, with iron, and with very much clothing. ⁱ Divide the ³ spoil of your enemies with your brethren.”

21:43–45 This glorious conclusion to these two chapters and to the entire section (chs. 13–21) celebrates the fact that **all came to pass** exactly as God promised. What has been visible all along is now said plainly—the God of Israel is a promise-keeping God, who gave Israel the land in accordance with the promises He had made with its ancestors, including Moses and the patriarchs. And in addition to giving them the land, He also granted them **rest**.

22:2, 3 The obedience to **Moses** and Joshua of the tribes settled east of the Jordan is commended here. The issue of the unity of the nation had arisen at the beginning, and these tribes had proven faithful.

22:4 rest . . . as He promised: This idea of rest as a gift from God is part of the fabric of the Book of Joshua. It had been promised by God (1:13, 15), and once again God fulfilled His promises.

22:5 The passionate exhortation to **take careful heed** captures the heart of this chapter. The words echo the call to faithfulness in Deut. 4:29; 6:5; 10:12, 13; 11:13. The verbs in this verse give a comprehensive picture of what a proper relationship to God includes: to **love** God, to **walk** in His ways, to **hold fast** (or cling) to Him, and to **serve** Him. This is the essence of the “first and great commandment,” to love God wholeheartedly (Deut. 6:5; Matt. 22:37). Loving God is much more than an affirmation or a feeling; it is obedience, loyalty, and service to God above all else.

22:6 Joshua blessed them: The blessing here involves many riches from the spoils of the land (v. 7).

walk

(Heb. *halak*) (22:5; Gen. 17:1; Deut. 10:12; Ps. 119:3) Strong's #1980

Walk can mean, literally, to move at a pace slower than a run or, figuratively, one's conduct of life. The literal sense predominates in the OT, but the figurative meaning of the word does occur (Gen. 5:24; 6:9; Eccl. 11:9). In the NT the word usually is used literally in the Gospels, while it is usually used figuratively in Paul and John's letters. The figurative sense has decidedly spiritual overtones. One either walks (conducts his life) as a Christian or as a non-Christian (Rom. 8:4; Eph. 2:2, 10; 1 John 1:6, 7). The believer can walk “in darkness” or “in the light,” and constantly is urged to choose the latter; only such a path is “worthy of the calling with which you were called” (Eph. 4:1).

⁹So the children of Reuben, the children of Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh returned, and departed from the children of Israel at Shiloh, which is in the land of Canaan, to go to the country of Gilead, to the land of their possession, which they had obtained according to the word of the LORD by the hand of Moses.

An Altar by the Jordan

¹⁰And when they came to the region of the Jordan which is in the land of Canaan, the children of Reuben, the children of Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh built an altar there by the Jordan—a great, impressive altar. ¹¹Now the children of Israel ^kheard someone say, “Behold, the children of Reuben, the children of Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh have built an altar on the ⁴frontier of the land of Canaan, in the region of the Jordan—on the children of Israel’s side.” ¹²And when the children of Israel heard of it, ^lthe whole congregation of the children of Israel gathered together at Shiloh to go to war against them.

¹³Then the children of Israel ^msent Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest to the children of Reuben, to the children of Gad, and to half the tribe of Manasseh, into the land of Gilead, ¹⁴and with him ten rulers, one ruler each from the chief house of every tribe of Israel; and ^oeach one was the head of the house of his father among the ⁵divisions of Israel. ¹⁵Then they came to the children of Reuben, to the children of Gad, and to half the tribe of Manasseh, to the land of Gilead, and they spoke with them, saying, ¹⁶“Thus says the whole congregation of the LORD: ‘What ⁿtreachery ⁶is this that you have committed against the God of Israel, to turn away this day from following the LORD, in that you have built

⁹ Num. 32:1, 26, 29
¹¹ ^k Deut. 13:12-18; Judg. 20:12, 13
⁴ Lit. front
¹² ^l Josh. 18:1; Judg. 20:1
¹³ ^m Deut. 13:14; Judg. 20:12 ⁿ Ex. 6:25; Num. 25:7, 11-13
¹⁴ ^o Num. 1:4 ⁵ Lit. thousands
¹⁶ ^p Deut. 12:5-14
⁶ unfaithful act

⁹ Lev. 17:8, 9
¹⁷ ^r Num. 25:1-9; Deut. 4:3
¹⁸ ^s Num. 16:22
¹⁹ ^t Josh. 18:1
⁷ However
²⁰ ^u Josh. 7:1-26
⁸ act unfaithfully
⁹ devoted thing
²¹ ^t Lit. thousands
²² ^v Deut. 4:35; 10:17; Is. 44:8; 45:5; 46:9; [1 Cor. 8:5, 6]
^w [Job 10:7; 23:10; Jer. 12:3; 2 Cor. 11:11, 31]
²³ ^x Deut. 18:19; 1 Sam. 20:16
²⁴ ² Lit. from fear

for yourselves an altar, ^qthat you might rebel this day against the LORD? ¹⁷Is the iniquity ^rof Peor not enough for us, from which we are not cleansed till this day, although there was a plague in the congregation of the LORD, ¹⁸but that you must turn away this day from following the LORD? And it shall be, if you rebel today against the LORD, that tomorrow ^sHe will be angry with the whole congregation of Israel. ¹⁹⁷Nevertheless, if the land of your possession is unclean, ^{then} cross over to the land of the possession of the LORD, ^{where} the LORD’s tabernacle stands, and take possession among us; but do not rebel against the LORD, nor rebel against us, by building yourselves an altar besides the altar of the LORD our God. ²⁰^uDid not Achan the son of Zerah ⁸commit a trespass in the ⁹accursed thing, and wrath fell on all the congregation of Israel? And that man did not perish alone in his iniquity.”

²¹Then the children of Reuben, the children of Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh answered and said to the heads of the ¹divisions of Israel: ²²“The LORD ^vGod of gods, the LORD God of gods, He ^wknows, and let Israel itself know—if it is in rebellion, or if in treachery against the LORD, do not save us this day. ²³If we have built ourselves an altar to turn from following the LORD, or if to offer on it burnt offerings or grain offerings, or if to offer peace offerings on it, let the LORD Himself ^xrequire an account. ²⁴But in fact we have done it ²for fear, for a reason, saying, ‘In time to come your descendants may speak to our descendants, saying, “What have you to do with the LORD God of Israel? ²⁵For the LORD has made the Jordan a border between you and us, ^{you} children of Reuben and children of Gad. You have no part in the

22:11 have built an altar: The account does not reveal why this altar was built until after the events have developed into a full-blown crisis. See vv. 21–29.

22:12 God had commanded Israel not to offer burnt offerings or sacrifices at any location except the tabernacle (see Lev. 17:8, 9) and not to worship other gods (Deut. 13:12–15). The punishment for violating both laws was death, and this is why **Israel gathered ... to go to war** against their brethren.

22:13, 14 Everything was done “by the book.” First, the nine and a half tribes west of the Jordan acted in perfect unity, carefully choosing one representative each, the highest ranking ruler from each tribe. Second, they sent the priest **Phinehas** to head up the delegation, reflecting their concern that true worship and ritual be maintained. All present probably remembered the tragedy at Baal Peor (Num. 25), when drastic actions had to be taken to stop the plague (v. 17).

22:16 We know how serious Phinehas and his companions considered the offense—if it were indeed such an offense—from the term he used for it, **treachery**. This is the same Hebrew word used of Achan’s sin in v. 20 (see 7:1).

22:17 The iniquity of Peor included the fact that the Israelites worshiped the Moabite gods and committed immoral acts with the women of Moab. The tribes west of the Jordan feared that this could happen again. The phrase **not cleansed till this day** implies that Israel had never completely rid itself of this sin, that it always flirted with, and at times participated in, the idolatry and attractions of neighboring pagan religious systems.

22:18 He will be angry with the whole congregation: No one can sin alone. If the tribes east of the Jordan were indeed sinning, then the entire nation would feel the effects, as in the case of Achan’s sin (v. 20; 7:1).

22:22 The repetition of **the LORD God of gods** reveals the deep emotion in the response of the tribes east of the Jordan. In an agitated state of mind, their words came out somewhat awkward, yet completely sincere. They firmly maintained their innocence and tried to convince their fellow countrymen of it.

22:23–25 The tribes from east of the Jordan were afraid that geographical distance would isolate them and in time cause the Israelites west of the Jordan to reject them. Thus they built the **altar** to prevent the existing unity from being lost.

LORD.” So your descendants would make our descendants cease fearing the LORD.²⁶ Therefore we said, ‘Let us now prepare to build ourselves an altar, not for burnt offering nor for sacrifice,²⁷ but *that it may be* ^a a ³ witness between you and us and our generations after us, that we may ² perform the service of the LORD before Him with our burnt offerings, with our sacrifices, and with our peace offerings; that your descendants may not say to our descendants in time to come, “You have no part in the LORD.”’²⁸ Therefore we said that it will be, when they say *this* to us or to our generations in time to come, that we may say, ‘Here is the replica of the altar of the LORD which our fathers made, though not for burnt offerings nor for sacrifices; but it *is* a witness between you and us.’²⁹ Far be it from us that we should rebel against the LORD, and turn from following the LORD this day, ^a to build an altar for burnt offerings, for grain offerings, or for sacrifices, besides the altar of the LORD our God which *is* before His tabernacle.”

³⁰ Now when Phinehas the priest and the rulers of the congregation, the heads of the ^a divisions of Israel who *were* with him, heard the words that the children of Reuben, the children of Gad, and the children of Manasseh spoke, it pleased them.³¹ Then Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest said to the children of Reuben, the children of Gad, and the children of Manasseh, “This day we perceive that the LORD *is* ^b among us, because you have not committed this treachery against the LORD. Now you have delivered the children of Israel out of the hand of the LORD.”

³² And Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest, and the rulers, returned from the children of Reuben and the children of Gad, from the land of Gilead to the land of Canaan, to the children of Israel, and brought back word to them.³³ So the thing pleased the children of Israel, and

²⁷ ^a Gen. 31:48; Josh. 22:34; 24:27
² Deut. 12:5, 14
³ testimony
²⁹ ^a Deut. 12:13, 14
³⁰ ^a Lit. thousands
³¹ ^b Ex. 25:8; Lev. 26:11, 12; 2 Chr. 15:2; Zech. 8:23

³³ ^c 1 Chr. 29:20; Neh. 8:6; Dan. 2:19; Luke 2:28
³⁴ ^a LXX adds and half the tribe of Manasseh

CHAPTER 23

¹ ^a Josh. 21:44; 22:4
^b Josh. 13:1; 24:29
² ^c Deut. 31:28
³ ^d Ps. 44:3 ^e Ex. 14:14; Deut. 1:30; Josh. 10:14, 42
⁴ ^f Josh. 13:2, 6; 18:10
⁵ ^g Ex. 23:30; 33:2
^h Num. 33:53
⁶ ⁱ Josh. 1:7 / Deut. 5:32
⁷ ^k Ex. 23:33; Deut. 7:2, 3; [Prov. 4:14; Eph. 5:11] / Ex. 23:13; Ps. 16:4; Jer. 5:7; Hos. 2:17
⁸ ^m Deut. 6:13; 10:20
⁹ ⁿ Ex. 20:5
¹ associate with
⁸ ^o Deut. 10:20
⁹ ^p Deut. 7:24; 11:23; Josh. 1:5
² dispossessed
¹⁰ ^q Lev. 26:8; Deut. 28:7; Is. 30:17
^r Ex. 14:14

the children of Israel ^c blessed God; they spoke no more of going against them in battle, to destroy the land where the children of Reuben and Gad dwelt.

³⁴ The children of Reuben and the children of ⁵ Gad called the altar, *Witness*, “For *it* is a witness between us that the LORD *is* God.”

Joshua’s Farewell Address

23 Now it came to pass, a long time after the LORD ^a had given rest to Israel from all their enemies round about, that Joshua ^b was old, advanced in age.² And Joshua ^c called for all Israel, for their elders, for their heads, for their judges, and for their officers, and said to them:

“I am old, advanced in age.³ You have seen all that the ^d LORD your God has done to all these nations because of you, for the ^e LORD your God *is* He who has fought for you.⁴ See, ^f I have divided to you by lot these nations that remain, to be an inheritance for your tribes, from the Jordan, with all the nations that I have cut off, as far as the Great Sea westward.⁵ And the LORD your God ^g will expel them from before you and drive them out of your sight. So you shall possess their land, ^h as the LORD your God promised you.⁶ ⁱ Therefore be very courageous to keep and to do all that is written in the Book of the Law of Moses, ^j lest you turn aside from it to the right hand or to the left, ⁷ and lest you ^k go ¹ among these nations, these who remain among you. You shall not ^l make mention of the name of their gods, nor cause *anyone* to ^m swear *by them*; you shall not ⁿ serve them nor bow down to them, ⁸ but you shall ^o hold fast to the LORD your God, as you have done to this day.⁹ ^p For the LORD has ² driven out from before you great and strong nations; but *as for* you, no one has been able to stand against you to this day.¹⁰ ^q One man of you shall chase a thousand, for the LORD your God *is* He who fights for you, ^r as He

22:28 Here is the replica: The eastern tribes chose their words carefully; the word *replica* clearly shows that they never intended this altar to be a substitute for the true altar at the tabernacle. Rather, they intended it only to serve as a **witness**. The same Hebrew word is used elsewhere for the pattern for the tabernacle given to Moses (Ex. 25:9, 40) and the “plans” of the temple that David gave to Solomon (1 Chr. 28:11).

22:30–34 The eastern tribes’ impassioned defense quickly defused the crisis, satisfying the people’s representatives. The representatives’ response occupies only one verse, an abrupt ending to a crisis that is described in 20 preceding verses (vv. 10–29). The western tribes accepted the words of the tribes east of the Jordan on this matter, and the altar remained.

22:34 The climax of the chapter asserts that the altar was a **witness . . . that the LORD is God**. Previously, the chapter indicated only

that it was to be a witness (vv. 27, 28), without saying what it would be a witness of. In a similar vein, Jesus told His disciples that people would know they were His disciples by seeing their love for each other; that is, their love would point people to Christ (John 13:35).

23:3 He who has fought for you: A reminder that the land belonged to the Lord and that He gave it to Israel, even to the extent of fighting on their behalf (1:3; 8:7; 10:14, 19, 42).

23:6 be very courageous: Again, Joshua used the same words that God had spoken to him years earlier when He commissioned him (1:7–9). See also Joshua’s words to the eastern tribes in 22:5.

23:9 That no one has been able to stand against the tribes of Israel was a fulfillment of God’s promise in 1:5.

23:10 One man . . . shall chase a thousand: These words are similar to the promises in Lev. 26:7, 8. The power God’s people had over their enemies was so dramatic it had to be miraculous.

promised you. ^{11s}Therefore take careful heed to yourselves, that you love the LORD your God. ¹²Or else, if indeed you do ^tgo back, and cling to the remnant of these nations—these that remain among you—and ^umake marriages with them, and go in to them and they to you, ¹³know for certain that ^vthe LORD your God will no longer drive out these nations from before you. ^wBut they shall be snares and traps to you, and scourges on your sides and thorns in your eyes, until you perish from this good land which the LORD your God has given you.

¹⁴“Behold, this day ^xI ³ *am* going the way of all the earth. And you know in all your hearts and in all your souls that ^ynot one thing has failed of all the good things which the LORD your God spoke concerning you. All have come to pass for you; not one word of them has failed. ^{15z}Therefore it shall come to pass, that as all the good things have come upon you which the LORD your God promised you, so the LORD will bring upon you ^aall harmful things, until He has destroyed you from this good land which the LORD your God has given you. ¹⁶⁴When you have transgressed the covenant of the LORD your God, which He commanded you, and have gone and served other gods, and bowed down to them, then the ^banger of the LORD will burn against you, and you shall perish quickly from the good land which He has given you.”

The Covenant at Shechem

24 Then Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to ^aShechem and ^bcalled for the elders of Israel, for their heads, for their judges, and for their officers; and they ^cpresented themselves

¹¹ ^s Josh. 22:5
¹² ^t [2 Pet. 2:20, 21]
^u Deut. 7:3, 4; Ezra 9:2; Neh. 13:25
¹³ ^y Judg. 2:3 ^w Ex. 23:33; 34:12; Deut. 7:16
¹⁴ ^x 1 Kin. 2:2
^y Josh. 21:45; [Luke 21:33] ³ I am going to die.
¹⁵ ^z Deut. 28:63
^a Lev. 26:14–39; Deut. 28:15–68
¹⁶ ⁴ Deut. 4:24–28
⁴ Or *if ever*

CHAPTER 24

¹ ^a Gen. 35:4
^b Josh. 23:2
^c 1 Sam. 10:19

² ^d Gen. 11:7–32
^e Josh. 24:14 ^f The Euphrates
³ ^f Gen. 12:1; Acts 7:2, 3 ^g Gen. 21:1–8; [Ps. 127:3] ² The Euphrates ³ Lit. seed
⁴ ^h Gen. 25:24–26
ⁱ Gen. 36:8; Deut. 2:5 ^j Gen. 46:1, 3, 6
⁵ ^k Ex. 3:10 ⁱ Ex. 7–10
⁶ ^m Ex. 12:37, 51; 14:2–31
⁷ ⁿ Ex. 14:20
⁸ ^o Deut. 4:34 ^p Josh. 5:6
⁹ ^q Num. 21:21–35
⁹ ^r Judg. 11:25
¹⁰ ^s Num. 22:2–14
¹⁰ ^t Deut. 23:5
^u Num. 23:11, 20; 24:10
¹¹ ^v Josh. 3:14, 17
^w Josh. 6:1; 10:1

before God. ²And Joshua said to all the people, “Thus says the LORD God of Israel: ^d“Your fathers, *including* Terah, the father of Abraham and the father of Nahor, dwelt on the other side of ⁱthe River in old times; and ^ethey served other gods. ³^fThen I took your father Abraham from the other side of ²the River, led him throughout all the land of Canaan, and multiplied his ³descendants and ^ggave him Isaac. ⁴To Isaac I gave ^hJacob and Esau. To ⁱEsau I gave the mountains of Seir to possess, ^jbut Jacob and his children went down to Egypt. ⁵^kAlso I sent Moses and Aaron, and ^lI plagued Egypt, according to what I did among them. Afterward I brought you out.

⁶“Then I ^mbrought your fathers out of Egypt, and you came to the sea; and the Egyptians pursued your fathers with chariots and horsemen to the Red Sea. ⁷So they cried out to the LORD; and He put ⁿdarkness between you and the Egyptians, brought the sea upon them, and covered them. And ^oyour eyes saw what I did in Egypt. Then you dwelt in the wilderness ^pa long time. ⁸And I brought you into the land of the Amorites, who dwelt on the other side of the Jordan, ^qand they fought with you. But I gave them into your hand, that you might possess their land, and I destroyed them from before you. ⁹Then ^rBalak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, arose to make war against Israel, and ^ssent and called Balaam the son of Beor to curse you. ¹⁰^tBut I would not listen to Balaam; ^utherefore he continued to bless you. So I delivered you out of his hand. ¹¹Then ^vyou went over the Jordan and came to Jericho. And ^wthe men of Jericho fought against you—*also* the Amorites, the Perizzites, the

23:11 The exhortation to **love the LORD your God** comes from Deut. 6:5.

23:12 The word translated **cling** is the same word translated *hold fast* in v. 8, bringing the different instances of clinging into sharp contrast. God wanted His people to cling to Him, not to the Canaanites they were driving out. This required, among other things, that they not **make marriages** with unbelieving foreigners under any circumstances (Ex. 34:11–16; Deut. 7:1–4). Years later Solomon ignored this command and proved how destructive the sin of intermarriage could be (1 Kin. 3:1; 11:1–8; 2 Cor. 6:14).

23:13, 14 they shall be snares and traps: See Ex. 23:33; Num. 33:55; Deut. 7:16. **not one thing has failed:** A strong affirmation of God’s faithfulness, one of the book’s main themes.

23:16 you shall perish quickly from the good land: This indeed happened to Israel in its later history. This warning saw its most dramatic fulfillment when Judah was carried into Babylonian captivity because of its repeated rebellion against God (2 Kin. 25). But Israel’s rebellion began almost immediately, during the period of the judges, when Israel began to do precisely what was warned against here (Judg. 2:16–23; 3:1–6).

24:1 Shechem is a site with an ancient tradition of religious significance and covenant making in Israel, going back to Abraham’s

day (8:30–35; Gen. 12:6; 33:18–20; 34:1–31; 37:12–17; Deut. 11:26–32; 27:1–26; Judg. 9:31–57). Archaeological excavation has uncovered a series of temples, sanctuaries, and ceremonial standing stones from almost every period of its existence.

24:2 Israel’s ancestors did not worship the true God at first; until God called them, Abraham and his relatives had **served other gods** (Gen. 31:1–4, 19, 34, 35). The words of this verse are used in the Passover celebration of the Jews all over the world today. When they recite these words, those who celebrate confess that the Lord’s choice of their fathers was not because of an innate superiority in Abraham. Abraham and others were mere idolaters. But God chose Abraham and Sarah to be His special people for reasons known only to Him. Likewise in our case, it is not because of something wonderful in ourselves that God has reached out to us, but because of His loving, sovereign, gracious choice.

24:5 Afterward I brought you out: God’s review of His gracious actions on behalf of His people (vv. 2–5) included Joshua’s generation. God did not just make Himself known in ages past; He also worked mightily and graciously for the people of Joshua’s day. Christians today are part of a long lineage of the people of faith (Heb. 11).

24:10 I would not listen to Balaam: For the full story on Balaam, see Num. 22–24.

Canaanites, the Hittites, the Gergashites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. But I delivered them into your hand. ¹² I sent the hornet before you which drove them out from before you, *also* the two kings of the Amorites, *but* ¹³ not with your sword or with your bow. ¹³ I have given you a land for which you did not labor, and ¹⁴ cities which you did not build, and you dwell in them; you eat of the vineyards and olive groves which you did not plant.

^{14a} “Now therefore, fear the LORD, serve Him in ¹⁵ sincerity and in truth, and ¹⁶ put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of ¹⁷ the River and ¹⁸ in Egypt. Serve the LORD! ¹⁵ And if it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, ¹⁶ choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether ¹⁷ the gods which your fathers served that *were* on the other side of ¹⁸ the River, or ¹⁹ the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. ²⁰ But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.”

¹⁶ So the people answered and said: “Far be it from us that we should forsake the LORD to serve other gods; ¹⁷ for the LORD our God *is* He who brought us and our fathers up out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, who did those great signs in our sight, and preserved us in all the way that we went and among all the people through whom we passed. ¹⁸ And the LORD drove out from before us all the people, including the Amorites who dwelt in the land. ¹⁹ We also will serve the LORD, for He *is* our God.”

¹² ^x Ex. 23:28; Deut. 7:20 ^y Ps. 44:3
¹³ ^z Deut. 6:10, 11
¹⁴ ^a Deut. 10:12, 13; 1 Sam. 12:24
¹⁵ ^b 2 Cor. 1:12 ^c Josh. 24:2, 23; Ezek. 20:18
¹⁶ ^d Ezek. 20:7, 8 ^e The Euphrates
¹⁷ ^f Ruth 1:15; 1 Kin. 18:21 ^g Josh. 24:2; Ezek. 20:39
¹⁸ ^h Ex. 23:24, 32
¹⁹ ⁱ Gen. 18:19; Ps. 101:2; [1 Tim. 3:4, 5]
²⁰ ^j The Euphrates
¹⁸ ^k Ps. 116:16

¹⁹ / Matt. 6:24
^k Lev. 11:44, 45;
1 Sam. 6:20 ^l Ex. 20:5 ^m Ex. 23:21
²⁰ ⁿ 1 Chr. 28:9;
Ezra 8:22; Is. 1:28;
63:10; 65:11, 12; Jer. 17:13 ^o Deut. 4:24-26; Josh. 23:15
²² ^p Ps. 119:173
²³ ^q Gen. 35:2; Josh. 24:14; Judg. 10:15, 16; 1 Sam. 7:3
¹ 1 Kin. 8:57, 58; Ps. 119:36; 141:4
²⁴ ^r Ex. 19:8; 24:3, 7; Deut. 5:24-27
²⁵ ^s Ex. 15:25
^u Josh. 24:1 ^t Lit. cut a covenant
²⁶ ^v Deut. 31:24
^w Judg. 9:6 ^x Gen. 28:18 ^y Gen. 35:4
²⁷ ^z Gen. 31:48
^a Deut. 32:1
²⁸ ^b Judg. 2:6, 7

¹⁹ But Joshua said to the people, ^{19a} “You cannot serve the LORD, for He *is* a ^{19b} holy God. He *is* ^{19c} a jealous God; ^{19d} He will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins. ²⁰ If you forsake the LORD and serve foreign gods, ^{20a} then He will turn and do you harm and consume you, after He has done you good.”

²¹ And the people said to Joshua, “No, but we will serve the LORD!”

²² So Joshua said to the people, “You *are* witnesses against yourselves that ^{22a} you have chosen the LORD for yourselves, to serve Him.”

And they said, “We *are* witnesses!”

²³ “Now therefore,” *he said*, ^{23a} “put away the foreign gods which *are* among you, and ^{23b} incline your heart to the LORD God of Israel.”

²⁴ And the people ^{24a} said to Joshua, “The LORD our God we will serve, and His voice we will obey!”

²⁵ So Joshua ^{25a} made ^{25b} a covenant with the people that day, and made for them a statute and an ordinance ^{25c} in Shechem.

²⁶ Then Joshua ^{26a} wrote these words in the Book of the Law of God. And he took ^{26b} a large stone, and ^{26c} set it up there ^{26d} under the oak that *was* by the sanctuary of the LORD. ²⁷ And Joshua said to all the people, “Behold, this stone shall be ^{27a} a witness to us, for ^{27b} it has heard all the words of the LORD which He spoke to us. It shall therefore be a witness to you, lest you deny your God.” ²⁸ So ^{28a} Joshua let the people depart, each to his own inheritance.

24:12 God’s use of **the hornet** to aid Israel fulfilled the promise of Ex. 23:28. The hornet may be: (1) symbolic of the pharaoh of Egypt, whose symbols were a bee or hornet; (2) symbolic of God’s terror or panic among the Canaanites (2:9–11, 24; 5:1; 6:27; Ex. 15:14–16); or (3) actual hornets. Whatever the case, the point is that God fought for Israel. The phrase **two kings** refers to Sihon and Og, whom Israel had defeated in the wilderness (Num. 21:21–35). These victories were God’s, not dependent upon Israel’s military power. The **sword** and **bow** are mentioned in connection with the first Israelite capture of Shechem by Jacob (Gen. 48:22).

24:13 A land for which you did not labor fulfills the promises given by Moses in Deut. 6:10, 11. The land was God’s gracious gift to His people.

24:14, 15 Joshua’s words in these verses contain a rare appeal to Israel to choose between God and the many false substitutes. If Israel would not choose to serve the Lord, they would have to choose between the gods that their ancestors worshiped and **the gods of the Amorites** (that is, the Canaanites). Of course, the appeal is rhetorical; from God’s perspective there is only one option. With his famous words, Joshua clearly and unambiguously took his stand on the side of the living God. Joshua modeled a perfect leader’s actions. A leader must be willing to move ahead and commit himself to the truth regardless of the people’s inclinations. Joshua’s bold example undoubtedly encouraged many to follow with the affirmations of vv. 16–18.

24:16–18 In their response to Joshua’s challenge, the people acknowledged their debt to God for all their good fortune. This was a crucial point. As long as they remembered what God had done for them, they would be inclined to serve Him. Moses had said this many years before (Deut. 8:11–17).

24:19 Immediately after Joshua exhorted the Israelites to serve God (v. 14), he stated **you cannot serve the Lord!** This use of exaggeration emphasizes the gravity of the obligation to which the people committed themselves. Theirs was not to be a nominal, superficial faith. Subsequent history shows that Israel’s record was poor in this regard. Joshua’s challenge is also for Christians. Although salvation is God’s free gift through Jesus Christ to those who believe, truly following Christ is the difficult way of the cross (Matt. 16:24; John 1:12; 1 Cor. 15:1–5).

24:22–27 Joshua and the people sealed their covenant to serve the Lord by writing these words in **the Book of the Law of God** and by erecting a **large stone** under an oak tree, the same tree that Jacob had encountered when he came to Shechem. This tree was near the Lord’s **sanctuary**, which was probably not a formal building or temple but the “holy place” created at Shechem by the act of bringing the tabernacle there. The reference to the people presenting themselves “before God” (v. 1) may indicate that the tabernacle was there. The stone under the oak tree functioned as a legal reminder or witness of the covenant just entered into by the people. Now the stone and the people were both witnesses. This echoes the function of the altar built by the tribes that settled east of the Jordan, which also was a witness (22:34). A large standing stone that dates to the Late Bronze Age (that is, roughly the time represented in this story) has been found at Shechem, and is possibly the stone mentioned here.

24:28 When Joshua dismissed the people, it was **each to his own inheritance**, fittingly closing this section with a reminder of one of the book’s major themes.

Death of Joshua and Eleazar

²⁹*c*Now it came to pass after these things that Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died, *being* one hundred and ten years old. ³⁰And they buried him within the border of his inheritance at ^dTimnath Serah, which *is* in the mountains of Ephraim, on the north side of Mount Gaash.

³¹*e*Israel served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua, who had ^fknown all the works of the LORD which He had done for Israel.

²⁹ *c* Judg. 2:8
³⁰ *d* Josh. 19:50; Judg. 2:9
³¹ *e* Judg. 2:7
f Deut. 11:2

³² *g* Gen. 50:25; Ex. 13:19; Heb. 11:22
h Gen. 33:19; John 4:5 ⁷ Heb. *qesitah*, an unknown ancient measure of weight
³³ *i* Ex. 28:1;

³²*g*The bones of Joseph, which the children of Israel had brought up out of Egypt, they buried at Shechem, in the plot of ground ^hwhich Jacob had bought from the sons of Hamor the father of Shechem for one hundred ⁷pieces of silver, and which had become an inheritance of the children of Joseph.

³³And ⁱEleazar the son of Aaron died. They buried him in a hill *belonging to* ^jPhinehas his son, which was given to him in the mountains of Ephraim.

Num. 20:28; Josh. 14:1 / Ex. 6:25

24:29 This first reference to Joshua as the **servant of the LORD** shows clearly how Joshua had “grown into the job” that Moses had vacated. Now the book comes full circle, recalling the references in 1:1 to Moses as the servant of the Lord and to Joshua as merely Moses’ assistant.

24:30 Joshua was buried on his own land, in the city he had asked for and built, Timnath Serah (19:50).

24:32 The brief account of the transfer of Joseph’s body to Canaan from **Egypt** notes the fulfillment of Joseph’s prophecy given hundreds of years earlier (Gen. 50:24, 25).

24:33 **Eleazar** the high priest had figured significantly in the land distribution, and now he too received a decent burial in his own land.

THE BOOK OF JUDGES



THE BOOK OF JUDGES is a historical narrative that contrasts God’s faithfulness with Israel’s apostasy. Despite the repeated falling away of His people, God provided deliverers—namely, the judges—time and again. He did not do this unthinkingly or mechanically, nor was He manipulated by Israel’s cries for help (3:9, 15; 4:3; 6:6; 10:10). He did not spare Israel from the consequences of its actions, as its constant trouble with foreign oppressors indicates. Rather, God delivered Israel from oppression because of His promises to Abraham and his descendants. He remembered His vow to give the land of Canaan to Israel. Thus the preservation of God’s people was not due to their merit or goodness, nor even to their willingness to repent. Rather, God demonstrated His compassion and pity on a wayward people who grieved Him continually (2:16, 18) by providing bold leaders to rescue them. In fact, the real hero of Judges is God Himself, who alone remains faithful despite the failings of His people—and even of the judges.

Author and Date The author of this collection of historical writings about the judges who ruled Israel during a span of several centuries is never identified. Neither are there any clues elsewhere in Scripture. Late Jewish tradition ascribed its authorship to Samuel. This is certainly possible, but there is no way of knowing for sure.

Certainly the book was written after the last events recorded in it (about 1050 B.C.). The reference in 18:30 to “the day of the captivity of the land” refers most likely to the Babylonian exile (sixth century B.C.). This suggests that a later version of the book may have been compiled during the Exile or afterward. However, the reference to Jebusites living in Jerusalem “to this day” (1:21) suggests that a portion of the book may have been written prior to David’s capture of Jerusalem around 1000 B.C. It would seem likely that Jebusites who survived the battle would have left voluntarily or been expelled. Yet a few scriptural references suggest that some Jebusites remained in Jerusalem after David’s conquest (2 Sam. 24:16), so this is not a conclusive argument. If one believes that Judges was written sometime late in the eleventh century B.C., then it becomes more credible to suggest that Samuel wrote most or all of the book. Yet, like the question of authorship, the approximate date of the composition of Judges remains cloaked in uncertainty.

Purpose Judges was written to show the consequences of disobedience to God and the necessity of summoning a righteous king who would lead the people to God. In contrast to the serene way in which the Book of Joshua ends, with Israel in harmony with God’s commands, Judges reveals that Israel began to disobey God even in the time of Joshua, and that this disobedience grew more serious—and more debased—over time. Judges 2:16–23 establishes the cyclical pattern of sin, slavery, and salvation that would dominate the time of the judges. However, the book makes clear that the cycle had a downward spiral. Each new outbreak of disobedience and idolatry took Israel further away from God and deeper into sin and misery. By the end of the book, it is clear that Israel had violated its covenant with God in almost every imaginable way.

The purpose of the message is supported by the structure of the book itself. A close examination of chapters 17–21 leads to the conclusion that they are out of sequence with the events in the earlier chapters. Clues within the text support the theory that the events described in these latter chapters actually took place early in the period of the judges. For instance, we see the near unanimous action of Israel's tribal convocation, which successfully unites to take punitive action against Benjamin in chapter 20. This tribal league was clearly active during the time of Phinehas and in Joshua's day (Josh. 22:9–34). In these chapters, the Philistines are not mentioned as a military threat; the military campaigns described in chapters 20; 21 would have been unlikely in later times, when the Philistines dominated much of Israel's territory. Furthermore, Bethel and Mizpah are both named as sites of a major religious sanctuary (20:1, 18, 31; 21:1) rather than Shiloh, which was a more prominent religious center in the Philistine period (1 Sam. 1:3, 9; 3:21; 4:4).

This arrangement of the narrative, while not strictly chronological, reinforces the theme that the period of the judges was one of steep decline. The sordid events in these last chapters, while they may have occurred early in the period, are purposely placed at the end of the book as a fitting epitaph to a degenerate time.

CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

In stark contrast to the Book of Joshua, Judges does not offer a complimentary picture of God's people. Instead of obedient men and women conquering a land by trusting God's power, we see an idolatrous nation disobeying God and tasting continual defeat. But thankfully, this book also provides a glimpse of what Jesus would do for all of us who, like the ancient Jews, struggle with disobedience. Each one of the 17 judges is a kind of "savior." (Fourteen are listed in Judges and three more in 1 Samuel.) They rule with a hand on the gavel and an eye toward God. Thus, like Jesus, they provide spiritual direction and restore the guilty into fellowship with God. Also like Jesus they invite those for whom they came to follow them (Judg. 3:28; Mark 1:17).



Aerial view of Beth Shemesh and the Sorek Valley. Beth Shemesh is about 12 miles west of Jerusalem and is where the Philistines returned the ark of the covenant to the Israelites (1 Sam. 6). The Sorek Valley is where Samson fell in love with Delilah (Judg. 16:4).

JUDGES OUTLINE

- I. Prologue: the stalled conquest of Canaan 1:1—2:5
 - A. Advance and retreat in the south 1:1–21
 - B. Advance and retreat in the north 1:22–36
 - C. The Angel of the Lord's chastisement of Israel 2:1–5
- II. Israel under the judges 2:6—16:31
 - A. Introduction to the period 2:6—3:6
 - B. The first judges 3:7–31
 - C. Deborah and Barak's triumph over Canaan 4:1—5:31
 - D. Gideon's rout of the Midianites 6:1—8:32
 - E. Abimelech's violent reign 8:33—9:57
 - F. Minor judges: Tola and Jair 10:1–5
 - G. Jephthah's repulsion of the Ammonites 10:6—12:7
 - H. Other minor judges: Ibzan, Elon, Abdon 12:8–15
 - I. Samson and the Philistines 13:1—16:31
- III. Epilogue: discord among the tribes 17:1—21:25
 - A. Micah's idolatry and the Danite conquest of Laish 17:1—18:31
 - B. The Levite concubine and the war against Benjamin 19:1—21:25

c. 1405–1400 B.C.
The conquest of Canaan

c. 1398 B.C.
Canaan is apportioned to the tribes

c. 1380 B.C.
Joshua dies

c. 1370 B.C.
Othniel is judge over Israel

c. 1310 B.C.
Ehud is judge over Israel

c. 1230 B.C.
Deborah is victorious over Sisera

c. 1190 B.C.
Gideon leads the Israelites

c. 1100 B.C.
Samson fights the Philistines

c. 1050 B.C.
Saul is anointed king of Israel

The Judges of Israel



The Continuing Conquest of Canaan

Now after the ^adeath of Joshua it came to pass that the children of Israel ^basked the LORD, saying, “Who shall be first to go up for us against the ^cCanaanites to fight against them?”

²And the LORD said, ^d“Judah shall go up. Indeed I have delivered the land into his hand.”

³So Judah said to ^eSimeon his brother, “Come up with me to my allotted territory, that we may fight against the Canaanites; and ^fI will likewise go with you to your allotted territory.” And Simeon went with him. ⁴Then Judah went up, and the LORD delivered the Canaanites and the Perizzites into their hand; and they killed ten thousand men at ^gBezek. ⁵And they found Adoni-Bezek in Bezek, and fought against him; and they defeated the Canaanites and the Perizzites. ⁶Then Adoni-Bezek fled, and they pursued him and caught him and cut off his thumbs and big toes. ⁷And Adoni-Bezek said, “Seventy kings with their thumbs and big toes cut off used to gather *scraps* under my table; ^has I have done, so God has repaid me.” Then they brought him to Jerusalem, and there he died.

⁸Now ⁱthe children of Judah fought against Jerusalem and took it; they struck it with the edge of the sword and set the

CHAPTER 1

¹ ^a Josh. 24:29
^b Num. 27:21; Judg. 20:18 ^c Josh. 17:12, 13
² ^d Gen. 49:8, 9; Rev. 5:5
³ ^e Josh. 19:1
⁴ Judg. 1:17
⁴ ^f 1 Sam. 11:8
⁷ ^h Lev. 24:19; 1 Sam. 15:33; [James 2:13]
⁸ ⁱ Josh. 15:63; Judg. 1:21

⁹ ^j Josh. 10:36; 11:21; 15:13 ^k Heb. Negev, and so throughout the book
¹⁰ ^k Josh. 15:13-19
¹ Josh. 14:15
² attacked

BIBLE TIMES & CULTURE NOTES



Canaan

Canaan, the land bridge of the ancient world, linked Egypt and Mesopotamia. Thus this region became an incredible melting pot of peoples and religions. The Canaanites were culturally united but without any political identity. They lived mainly along the coastline. The Amorites occupied the hill country and had arrived in the land during the time of Abram, around 2090 B.C. The Hittites usually represented the non-Semitic elements in the population. The Perizzites and the Hivites (which also included the Girgashites and the Jebusites) were the descendants of an old Hurrian immigration which had arrived in Canaan between 1700 and 1500 B.C. The Sidonians were the forefathers of the Phoenicians and lived along the coastline. Finally, the Philistines were “the peoples of the sea” who arrived in Palestine following the dissolution of the Greek Mycenaean Empire after the Trojan War. They brought with them superior weapons and a more sophisticated culture.

city on fire. ^{9j}And afterward the children of Judah went down to fight against the Canaanites who dwelt in the mountains, in the ¹South, and in the lowland. ¹⁰Then Judah ²went against the Canaanites who dwelt in ^kHebron. (Now the name of Hebron was formerly ^lKirjath

1:1–2:5 The introductory passage of Judges shows continuing military activity (1:1–26), which indicates that all military conquests had not been completed during Joshua’s day. It then explicitly details the incomplete conquests of several tribes (1:27–36). That Israel had disobeyed God’s directions for conquest is evident in 2:1–5, where the Angel of the Lord makes such an accusation. In sharp contrast to the peaceful and unified picture of Israel at the end of the Book of Joshua, the breakdown of Israelite society is already evident.

1:1–21 Judges begins with a record of conquests in southern Palestine. The tribe of Judah assumed leadership and allied with Simeon in campaigns against the Canaanites who had not been driven out of their respective territories. They fought a series of successful campaigns, “going up” against Bezek and Jerusalem, “going down” against Hebron, Debir, and Zephath, and concluding with an invasion of Philistine territory. They had mixed success against the Canaanites, but their successes (vv. 4–18, 20) outweighed their failures (vv. 19, 21).

1:1 Now after the death of Joshua it came to pass that: Judges begins as the Book of Joshua does, with reference to the death of the previous leader—Moses in Josh. 1:1, Joshua here. Yet no new leader was commissioned to lead Israel after Joshua; rather, the tribe of Judah was designated to lead in the fight against the Canaanites (1:1–4). The choice of Judah was the first hint that Jacob’s prediction for Judah (Gen. 49:8–12) was coming to pass. The prophecy would come to fruition with the establishment of the monarchy under David and his descendants; David was from the tribe of Judah.

1:3 History bound the tribes of Judah and Simeon together. They were both descended from the same mother (Gen. 29:33, 35), and Simeon had inherited land in Judah’s territory (Josh. 19:1, 9). Theirs was a natural alliance.

1:4 the Canaanites and the Perizzites: See Josh. 3:10. The site of the battle of Bezek between Israelites and Canaanites is unknown. Many scholars believe that it took place near present-day

Khirbet Bezqa, about three miles northeast of Gezer, northwest of Jerusalem. However, 1 Sam. 11:8–11 mentions a town called Bezek northeast of Shechem in the territory of Manasseh, where Saul took a census of the people. Considering that Judah was leading a campaign on behalf of all Israel (vv. 1, 2), a battle in Manasseh’s territory is quite possible. Later, Judah spearheaded a campaign in its own territory (vv. 8–19).

1:6, 7 Adoni-Bezek: The name of this minor king means “Lord of Bezek.” To cut off his thumbs and big toes would prevent Adoni-Bezek from ever engaging in battle again, since a thumb was needed to hold a sword and the big toes were necessary for running. The practice of mutilating vanquished enemies is recorded in ancient sources found in Mesopotamia and Greece and was practiced by Adoni-Bezek himself. As a result of his wounds, however, Adoni-Bezek died.

1:8, 9 After the battle at Bezek, Judah pressed the campaign against the Canaanites elsewhere in Jerusalem and the mountains, the southland, and the lowland. Jerusalem was captured and burned, but not settled. Verse 21 states that Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites from the city. For more on this differing account, see Josh. 15:63. The complete conquest and settlement of Jerusalem was not accomplished until David’s day (2 Sam. 5:6–10).

1:10–15 The capture of Hebron and Debir appears as a new conquest, but these victories had already been recounted in Josh. 15. This passage is probably a reference to the earlier victory (or else the passage in Joshua is anticipating the victories to come). The account in vv. 11–15 is taken almost verbatim from Josh. 15:15–19, and it is the third account of Caleb’s inheritance (the other account is found in Josh. 14:6–15).

1:10 The name Hebron means “Confederacy.” This city’s name was formerly Kirjath Arba (literally “city of four”). Arba was also the name of a leader of the Anakim (Josh. 14:15). From the names it is conjectured that Hebron was originally a close-knit alliance of

Arba.) And they killed Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmi.

¹¹From there they went against the inhabitants of Debir. (The name of Debir was formerly Kirjath Sepher.)

¹²Then Caleb said, "Whoever attacks Kirjath Sepher and takes it, to him I will give my daughter Achsah as wife."

¹³And Othniel the son of Kenaz, ^oCaleb's younger brother, took it; so he gave him

¹¹ ^m Josh. 15:15
¹² ⁿ Josh. 15:16, 17
¹³ ^o Judg. 3:9

¹⁴ ^p Josh. 15:18,
¹⁹ ³ LXX, Vg. he
urged her
¹⁵ ^q Gen. 33:11

his daughter Achsah as wife. ¹⁴Now it happened, when she came to him, that ³she urged him to ask her father for a field. And she dismounted from her donkey, and Caleb said to her, "What do you wish?" ¹⁵So she said to him, ^q"Give me a blessing; since you have given me land in the South, give me also springs of water."

And Caleb gave her the upper springs and the lower springs.

four cities. Hebron, about 20 miles southwest of Jerusalem, was where Abraham settled and built an altar (Gen. 13:18). **they killed Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmi:** Caleb drove these three men out of Hebron (v. 20; Josh. 15:14).

1:11 Debir was the next city captured by the Israelites. Its former name Kirjath Sepher means "City of the Book"; it may have been an administrative center where records were kept. However, the

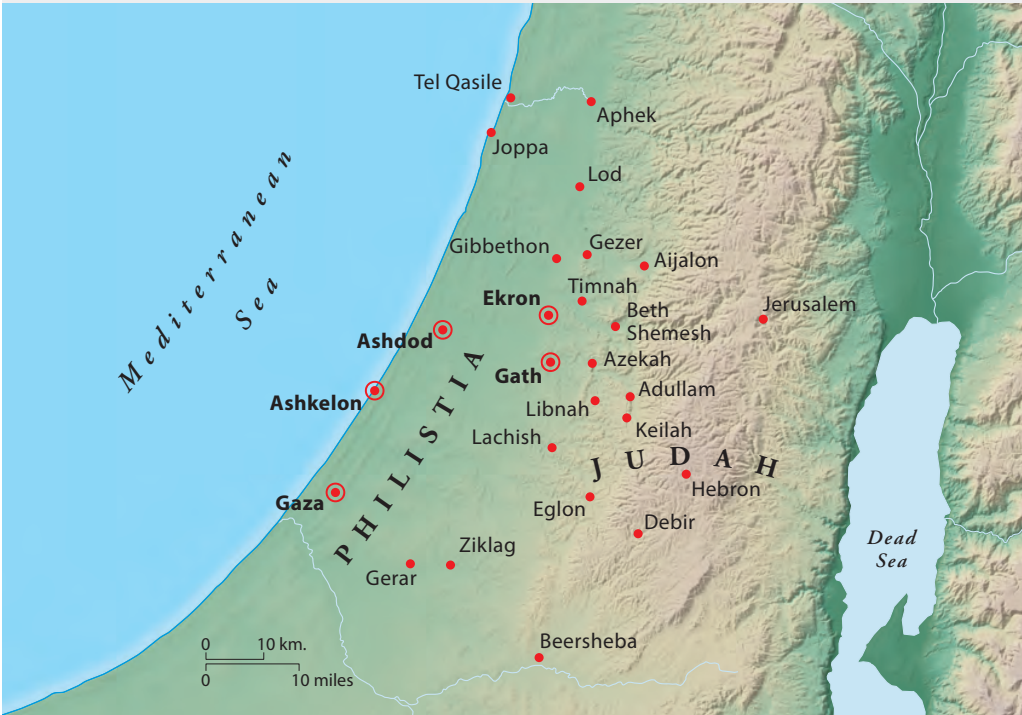
modern archaeological site, Tell Beit Mirsim, has not yielded any great library or records. Nevertheless, archaeologists have uncovered a strongly fortified city, which was destroyed close to 1200 B.C. **1:14, 15** As a dowry, Caleb's daughter asked for springs of water in addition to the land he had given her. Land without fresh water was almost worthless, so her request was an astute one.

Five Cities of the Philistines

Gaza, Ashkelon, Ashdod, Ekron, and Gath comprise a list of familiar biblical names. Each of these cities was a commercial emporium with important connections both north (as far as Mesopotamia) and south (as far as Egypt) by way of the coastal highway that served as one of the major highways of the ancient world. Also the ships of Phoenicia, Cyprus, Crete, and the Aegean called at Philistia's seaports. Among these seaports was a place today called Tel Qasile on the Yarkon River (the "Brook Kanah" of Josh. 16:8; 17:9) just north of modern Tel Aviv. A Philistine temple has been found at Tel Qasile.

The Philistine plain itself was an arid, loam-covered lowland between the Mediterranean Sea and the foothills of the Judahite plateau on the east. To the south lay a stretch of

undulating sand dunes adjacent to the sea. No area in biblical history was more frequently contested than the western foothills, lying on the border between Judah and Philistia. Originally a part of Judah's tribal allotment, the coastal area was never totally wrested away from the Philistines. Beth Shemesh, Timnah, Azekah, and Ziklag were among the towns coveted by both Israelites and Philistines, and they figure in the stories of Samson, Goliath, and David. The area to the north of Philistia, the plain of Sharon, was also contested at various periods. During Saul's reign the Philistines even held Beth Shean and the Valley of Jezreel. Later, from about the time of Baasha on, a long border war was conducted by the Israelites at Gibbethon.



^{16r}Now the children of the Kenite, Moses' father-in-law, went up ^sfrom the City of Palms with the children of Judah into the Wilderness of Judah, which *lies* in the South *near* ^tArad; ^uand they went and dwelt among the people. ^{17v}And Judah went with his brother Simeon, and they attacked the Canaanites who inhabited Zephath, and utterly destroyed it. So the name of the city was called ^wHormah. ¹⁸Also Judah took ^xGaza with its territory, Ashkelon with its territory, and Ekron with its territory. ¹⁹So the LORD was with Judah. And they drove out the mountaineers, but they could not drive out the inhabitants of the lowland, because they had ^ychariots of iron. ^{20z}And they gave Hebron to Caleb, as Moses had said. Then he ⁴expelled from there the ^athree sons of Anak. ^{21b}But the children of Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites who inhabited Jerusalem; so the

¹⁶ ^r Num. 10:29–32; Judg. 4:11, 17; 1 Sam. 15:6; 1 Chr. 2:55 ^s Deut. 34:3; Judg. 3:13 ^t Josh. 12:14 ^u 1 Sam. 15:6 ¹⁷ ^v Judg. 1:3 ^w Num. 21:3; Josh. 19:4 ¹⁸ ^x Josh. 11:22 ¹⁹ ^y Josh. 17:16, 18; Judg. 4:3, 13 ²⁰ ^z Num. 14:24; Josh. 14:9, 14 ^a Josh. 15:14; Judg. 1:10 ⁴ drove out from there ²¹ ^b Josh. 15:63; Judg. 1:8

²² ^c Judg. 1:19 ⁵ family ²³ ^d Josh. 2:1; 7:2 ^e Gen. 28:19 ⁶ family ²⁴ ^f Josh. 2:12, 14 ²⁷ ^g Josh. 17:11–13 ^h Josh. 21:25

Jebusites dwell with the children of Benjamin in Jerusalem to this day.

²² And the ⁵house of Joseph also went up against Bethel, ^eand the LORD *was* with them. ²³ So the ⁶house of Joseph ^dsent men to spy out Bethel. (The name of the city *was* formerly ^eLuz.) ²⁴ And when the spies saw a man coming out of the city, they said to him, “Please show us the entrance to the city, and ^fwe will show you mercy.” ²⁵ So he showed them the entrance to the city, and they struck the city with the edge of the sword; but they let the man and all his family go. ²⁶ And the man went to the land of the Hittites, built a city, and called its name Luz, which *is* its name to this day.

Incomplete Conquest of the Land

^{27g} However, Manasseh did not drive out the inhabitants of Beth Shean and its villages, or ^hTaanach and its villages, or

1:16 References to the **South** (that is, the Negev) in vv. 9, 15 included mention of the descendants of **the Kenite**, Moses' father-in-law, Jethro (Ex. 3:1). This family connection had led to friendly relations between the Israelites and the Kenites, who were Midianites, in the wilderness (Num. 10:29–32). Their harmonious settling with Judah fulfilled Moses' words of Num. 10:29. **City of Palms** is a reference to Jericho (Deut. 34:3; 2 Chr. 28:15), nestled deep in the Jordan valley, northeast of Jerusalem.

1:18 Gaza . . . Ashkelon . . . Ekron were three of five major cities in the Philistine kingdom (the other two were Ashdod and Gath; see Josh. 13:2, 3). Israel was not able to hold these cities for very long. By Samson's day, all three cities were in Philistine hands again (14:19; 16:1; 1 Sam. 5:10).

1:19 they could not drive out the inhabitants of the lowland: Since the three Philistine cities mentioned in v. 18 were in the lowlands, this verse must mean that the Israelites had no success beyond these three cities, and perhaps even means that they lost control of them very quickly. **Chariots of iron** were effective on the flat coastal plains but not in the hill country of Canaan. Thus the Israelites, who did not have chariots, were better matched against the **mountaineers**.

1:21 Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites: This verse duplicates Josh. 15:63 almost exactly, except that the tribe of Judah is held responsible there for not driving out the Jebusites from Jerusalem. Note also that, in 1:8, the account states that Judah did capture Jerusalem. See Josh. 15:63.

1:22–36 In contrast to their successes in the south (vv. 1–21), the Israelites suffered more failures in the north. They initially seized Bethel (formerly Luz), a major city in Ephraimite territory (vv. 22–26), but advanced little after that. Six tribes—Manasseh, Ephraim, Zebulun, Asher, Naphtali, and Dan—failed to drive the Canaanites from their territories.

1:22 The house of Joseph was Ephraim and Manasseh (Gen. 48:5, 6; Deut. 33:17), who had split the inheritance of their father. They are the next two tribes mentioned in this passage in Judges (vv. 27, 29). **Bethel** means “The House of God.” It was a site with an honored history, beginning with Abraham's first sacrifice to God (Gen. 13:3–4) and Jacob's revelation from God there (Gen. 31:13). Joshua had captured the city (Josh. 12:16), perhaps as part of the defeat of Ai (Josh. 8:17).

1:23 Luz means “Deceit” or “Perversion,” but Jacob had changed its name to Bethel many years earlier after his encounter with God there.

1:26 land of the Hittites: Archaeologists have unearthed a great Hittite kingdom in Asia Minor (present-day Turkey), dating from about 1800 to 1200 B.C. However, the relationship between the Hittites of Canaan and the Hittites of this discovery is unclear.

1:27 Manasseh did not drive out: Here begins a long record of disobedience that began when the Israelites failed to uproot the Canaanites (see Josh. 10:28–43). That failure resulted in much grief in the years following. Besides the tribe of Manasseh, Benjamin (v. 21), Ephraim (v. 29), Zebulun (v. 30), Asher (v. 31), Naphtali (v. 33), and

The Pattern of Bochim

God told the Israelites to dispossess the Canaanites by taking over their cities, destroying their idols and altars, and refusing to enter into agreements with them (2:2). The people had disobeyed, so the Angel of the Lord came with words of discipline (2:1).

The timing of the sermon was important. The days of Israel's conquest of Canaan were drawing to a close, yet many cities remained in the hands of, or at least were still influenced by, the Canaanites (1:27–35). Joshua's life was over (2:8), and a new generation was coming into power (2:10).

The people's spiritual failures were a serious matter, setting a dangerous precedent of idolatry that persisted from that day forward (2:3), as the Book of Judges shows. Apparently the people tearfully repented of their wrongs and, in the presence of Joshua, offered a sacrifice to atone for their sins (2:5, 6). But the pattern of spiritual adultery was established.

Unbelievers today are free to worship whatever “gods” they will. But God's people cannot adapt to their ways. Like Israel, believers may need to limit their neighborliness if necessary to preserve their own faith and godliness. They must allow nothing to distract them from unswerving allegiance to the Lord. Otherwise they invite a host of thorny issues and a legacy of tears.



the inhabitants of ⁱDor and its villages, or the inhabitants of Ibleam and its villages, or the inhabitants of Megiddo and its villages; for the Canaanites were determined to dwell in that land. ²⁸And it came to pass, when Israel was strong, that they put the Canaanites ⁷under tribute, but did not completely drive them out.

²⁹^jNor did Ephraim drive out the Canaanites who dwelt in Gezer; so the Canaanites dwelt in Gezer among them.

³⁰Nor did ^kZebulun drive out the inhabitants of Kitron or the inhabitants of Nahalol; so the Canaanites dwelt among them, and ⁸were put under tribute.

³¹^lNor did Asher drive out the inhabitants of Acco or the inhabitants of Sidon, or of Ahlab, Achzib, Helbah, Aphik, or Rehob. ³²So the Asherites ^mdwelt among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land; for they did not drive them out.

³³ⁿNor did Naphtali drive out the inhabitants of Beth Shemesh or the inhabitants of Beth Anath; but they dwelt among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land. Nevertheless the inhabitants of Beth Shemesh and Beth Anath were put under tribute to them.

³⁴And the Amorites forced the children of Dan into the mountains, for they would not allow them to come down to the valley; ³⁵and the Amorites were determined to dwell in Mount Heres, ^oin Aijalon, and in ⁹Shaalbim; yet when the strength of the house of Joseph became greater, they ¹were put under tribute.

³⁶Now the boundary of the Amorites was ^pfrom the Ascent of Akrabbim, from Sela, and upward.

²⁷ ⁱ Josh. 17:11
²⁸ ⁷ to forced labor
²⁹ ^j Josh. 16:10;
1 Kin. 9:16
³⁰ ^k Josh. 19:10-16
⁸ became forced
laborers
³¹ ^l Josh. 19:24-31
³² ^m Ps. 106:34, 35
³³ ⁿ Josh. 19:32-39
³⁵ ^o Josh. 19:42
⁹ Shaalabbin, Josh.
19:42 ¹ became
forced laborers
³⁶ ^p Num. 34:4;
Josh. 15:3

CHAPTER 2

¹ ^a Ex. 20:2; Judg.
6:8, 9 ^b Deut. 1:8
^c Gen. 17:7, 8; Lev.
26:42, 44; Deut. 7:9;
Ps. 89:34
² ^d Ex. 23:32; Deut.
7:2 ^e Ex. 34:12, 13;
Deut. 12:3 ^f Ps.
106:34 ¹ treaty
³ ^g Num. 33:55;
Josh. 23:13 ^h Judg.
3:6 ⁱ Ex. 23:33;
Deut. 7:16; Ps.
106:36 ² LXX, Tg.,
Vg. enemies to you
³ entrap you
⁵ ⁴ Lit. Weeping
⁶ ^j Josh. 22:6;
24:28-31
⁷ ^k Josh. 24:31
⁸ ^l Josh. 24:29
⁹ ^m Josh. 24:30
ⁿ Josh. 19:49, 50
¹⁰ ^o Ex. 5:2; 1 Sam.
2:12; Gal. 4:8;
[Titus 1:16] ⁵ Died
and joined their
ancestors

Israel's Disobedience

2 Then the Angel of the LORD came up from Gilgal to Bochim, and said: ^a“I led you up from Egypt and ^bbrought you to the land of which I swore to your fathers; and ^cI said, ‘I will never break My covenant with you. ²And ^dyou shall make no ¹covenant with the inhabitants of this land; ^eyou shall tear down their altars.’ ^fBut you have not obeyed My voice. Why have you done this? ³Therefore I also said, ‘I will not drive them out before you; but they shall be ^gthorns² in your side, and ^htheir gods shall ³be a ⁱsnare to you.’” ⁴So it was, when the Angel of the LORD spoke these words to all the children of Israel, that the people lifted up their voices and wept.

⁵Then they called the name of that place ⁴Bochim; and they sacrificed there to the LORD. ⁶And when ^jJoshua had dismissed the people, the children of Israel went each to his own inheritance to possess the land.

Death of Joshua

⁷^kSo the people served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the LORD which He had done for Israel. ⁸Now ¹Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died *when he was* one hundred and ten years old. ⁹^mAnd they buried him within the border of his inheritance at ⁿTimnath Heres, in the mountains of Ephraim, on the north side of Mount Gaash. ¹⁰When all that generation had ⁵been gathered to their fathers, another generation arose after them who ^odid not know the LORD

Dan (v. 34) also did not do as God had commanded. We then see in ch. 2—and indeed throughout the rest of the book—the effects this had on Israel’s life: The people turned to the gods of the Canaanites and abandoned the Lord. Moreover, **the Canaanites were determined to dwell in that land** and relied on their superior weaponry (v. 19) to intimidate the Israelites. Yet that difficulty could have been removed had the Israelites exercised their faith more completely.

1:28 They put the Canaanites under tribute means they forced their captives to work as involuntary, unpaid laborers. David, Solomon, and other kings continued this practice (2 Sam. 20:24). The Israelites enslaved the Canaanites in many areas (vv. 30, 33, 35; Josh. 16:10; 17:13).

1:34 Amorites were Canaanite peoples living in the central hill country of Canaan, and they blocked Dan’s entry into this region. Eventually, the Danites were forced to migrate northward (18:1; Josh. 19:47). For more on the Amorites, see Josh. 3:10.

2:1 The Angel of the LORD appears as God’s representative here, speaking authoritatively to the people about their covenant disobedience. **Gilgal** was the site where Israel had first encamped west of the Jordan (Josh. 4:19). **Bochim** was possibly near Bethel. **I led you up from Egypt:** See Ex. 23:20–23. The reference to **you** is plural, indicating that the Angel is addressing the entire nation.

2:2, 3 you shall make no covenant: God’s commands to make no covenants with pagan nations and to tear down their altars are found in Ex. 23:32; 34:13; Deut. 12:3. Verses 1, 2 here contain a string

of commands that God had given Israel under Moses, but Israel’s disobedience meant that these nations would become snares to them, just as God had warned (Ex. 23:33; Num. 33:55; Josh. 23:13). An example of a pagan ritual that ensnared Israel is given in Judg. 8:27.

2:6–3:6 This section constitutes a second introduction to the book after the prologue in 1:1–2:5. It depicts the political and spiritual conflicts of the period and elaborates on the moral breakdown presented in ch. 1. The recurring pattern presented in 2:16–23 owed much to the disobedience chronicled in ch. 1; each time the nation lapsed, it found itself oppressed by enemies. The final section (3:1–6) emphasizes God’s purposes in testing Israel (2:22; 3:1, 4).

2:6–10 The author identifies the death of Joshua as a starting point for the trouble to come. This passage closely follows Josh. 24:28–30, in some places word for word, which suggests that the proper paragraph break here should be between vv. 5 and 6. Joshua’s death is mentioned in v. 8, although according to 1:1 it has already occurred. The grammatical construction in 1:1 is a common one, and it is clear that the events of ch. 1 are events that *followed* Joshua’s death. Most likely the reference to Joshua’s death in 1:1 is correctly placed and this subsequent passage has been inserted by the author out of sequence. It is a “flashback” that leads into the second major section of the book (2:6–3:6). Its resemblance to Josh. 24:28–30 is meant to tie the events of Joshua’s era to those of the next generation.

2:10 Another generation arose . . . who did not know the LORD: The peaceful resolution that characterized the end of the

nor the work which He had done for Israel.

Israel's Unfaithfulness

¹¹ Then the children of Israel did ^pevil in the sight of the LORD, and served the Baals; ¹² and they ^qforsook the LORD God of their fathers, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt; and they followed ^rother gods from *among* the gods of the people who *were* all around them, and they ^sbowed down to them; and they provoked the LORD to anger. ¹³ They forsook the LORD ^tand served ⁶Baal and the ⁷Ashtoreths. ¹⁴ ^u And the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel. So He ^vdelivered them into the hands of plunderers who despoiled them; and ^wHe sold them into the hands of their enemies all around, so that they ^xcould no longer stand before their enemies. ¹⁵ Wherever they went out, the hand of the LORD was against them for calamity, as the LORD had said, and as the LORD had ^ysworn to them. And they were greatly distressed.

¹⁶ Nevertheless, ^zthe LORD raised up judges who delivered them out of the hand of those who plundered them. ¹⁷ Yet they would not listen to their judges, but they ^aplayed the harlot with other gods,

¹¹ ^p Judg. 3:7, 12; 4:1; 6:1
¹² ^q Deut. 31:16; Judg. 8:33; 10:6
^r Deut. 6:14 ^s Ex. 20:5
¹³ ^t Judg. 10:6; Ps. 106:36 ⁶ A Canaanite goddesses
¹⁴ ^u Deut. 31:17; Judg. 3:8; Ps. 106:40-42 ^v 2 Kin. 17:20 ^w Is. 50:1
^x Lev. 26:37; Josh. 7:12, 13
^y Lev. 26:14-26; Deut. 28:15-68
¹⁶ ^z Judg. 3:9, 10; 15; Ps. 106:43-45
¹⁷ ^a Ex. 34:15

¹⁸ ^b Josh. 1:5
^c Gen. 6:6
¹⁹ ^d Judg. 3:12
²⁰ ^e [Josh. 23:16]
²¹ ^f Josh. 23:4, 5, 13
²² ^g Judg. 3:1, 4
^h Deut. 8:2, 16; 13:3

and bowed down to them. They turned quickly from the way in which their fathers walked, in obeying the commandments of the LORD; they did not do so. ¹⁸ And when the LORD raised up judges for them, ^bthe LORD was with the judge and delivered them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge; ^cfor the LORD was moved to pity by their groaning because of those who oppressed them and harassed them. ¹⁹ And it came to pass, ^dwhen the judge was dead, that they reverted and behaved more corruptly than their fathers, by following other gods, to serve them and bow down to them. They did not cease from their own doings nor from their stubborn way.

²⁰ Then the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel; and He said, "Because this nation has ^etransgressed My covenant which I commanded their fathers, and has not heeded My voice, ²¹ I also will no longer drive out before them any of the nations which Joshua ^fleft when he died, ²² so ^gthat through them I may ^htest Israel, whether they will keep the ways of the LORD, to walk in them as their fathers kept *them*, or not." ²³ Therefore the LORD left those nations, without driving them out immediately; nor did He deliver them into the hand of Joshua.

Book of Joshua gave way to an ominous future. The meaning of *did not know* is that the people deliberately refused to acknowledge God's authority. It is not simply that they were ignorant, but that they were in unbelief.

2:11 The children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD is a statement also found in 3:7, 12; 4:1; 6:1; 10:6; 13:1 and in 1 and 2 Kings. Israel would stray frequently from the Lord. Only God's grace and the leadership of a few godly men and women spared the nation from complete corruption. **served the Baals:** See 3:7.

2:13 This verse is almost identical to the second half of 3:7. **the Ashtoreths:** Ashtoreth (Astarte) was a female fertility goddess and a goddess of love and war, closely associated with Baal (10:6; 1 Sam. 7:4; 12:10). She is not mentioned very often in Canaanite texts, but she appears by the name of Ishtar in Mesopotamian texts. The Ashtoreths mentioned here were local shrines of this far-flung cult (3:7).

2:15 As the LORD had sworn refers to God's promise to deliver Israel into their enemies' hands if they forsook Him (Deut. 28:25; Josh. 23:13).

2:16 The LORD raised up judges: The judges of Israel did not normally hold court, listen to complaints, or make legal decisions (except for Deborah, see 4:4, 5). Rather, they were political leaders who delivered Israel from foreign threat or oppression. Yet the message conveyed is that the Lord alone is the true Judge of His people (11:27), and He hands out blessing and punishment. Six of the judges (Shamgar, Tola, Jair, Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon) are known as "minor" judges because of the few details given about them in the narrative. The "major" judges—Othniel, Ehud, Deborah, Gideon, Jephthah, and Samson—were distinguished by their military prowess or heroic deeds. Many scholars have suggested that the major judges rescued Israel from enemies, while the minor judges worked in the court as magistrates. However, this judgment is misleading. For instance, the two minor judges Shamgar (3:31) and Tola (10:1, 2) clearly were military heroes. Deborah, a major judge, was a war leader but settled disputes between the Israelites as well.

2:17 Played the harlot is a powerful and familiar metaphor used to describe Israel's unfaithfulness to God. Ezekiel and Hosea, in

particular, would later use this comparison to describe Israel's unfaithfulness.

2:18 The Hebrew verb translated **moved to pity** is elsewhere translated *relent* (1 Sam. 15:29; Jon. 3:10). Here, the idea is that God changed His course (that is, relented) because of His compassion for the suffering Israelites (see 10:16).

2:19 Their fathers refers to those of the preceding generation, whereas in v. 17 *fathers* refers to those of Joshua's day.

2:20 this nation: Hebrew writers rarely used the word *nation* to refer to Israel. The phrase here has a contemptuous ring. Usually the word was used for Israel's neighbors, while Israel itself was called *the people*. The choice of the impersonal word *nation* reflects the distance between God and His people.

2:21 I also will no longer drive out . . . any of the nations: This fulfilled a promise that God had made to the Israelites through Joshua. See vv. 15, 23.

judge

(Heb. *shaphat*) (2:16; 15:20; 1 Sam. 7:15) Strong's #8199

The Hebrew word for *judge* means "to deliver" or "to rule." The judges of Israel had a wide range of responsibilities. Like their modern counterparts, OT judges could decide controversies and hand down verdicts (Ex. 18:16). These judges were also involved in the execution of their judgment in both vindicating the righteous (Ps. 26:1) and destroying the wicked (Ex. 7:3). Many judges were God's appointed military leaders who, empowered by God's Spirit (6:34; 15:14), fought Israel's oppressors and thereby delivered the people. Later, Israel's king functioned as the national judge (1 Sam. 8:5). Ultimately, Israel's perfect Judge is God. He alone is capable of perfectly judging the wicked and delivering the righteous (Is. 11:4).

The Nations Remaining in the Land

3 Now these are ^athe nations which the LORD left, that He might test Israel by them, *that is*, all who had not ¹known any of the wars in Canaan ²(*this was* only so that the generations of the children of Israel might be taught to know war, at least those who had not formerly known it), ³*namely*, ^bfive lords of the Philistines, all the Canaanites, the Sidonians, and the Hivites who dwelt in Mount Lebanon, from Mount Baal Hermon to the entrance of Hamath. ⁴And they were *left*, that He might test Israel by them, to ²know whether they would obey the commandments of the LORD, which He had commanded their fathers by the hand of Moses.

⁵Thus the children of Israel dwelt among the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. ⁶And ^dthey took their daughters to be their wives, and gave their daughters to their sons; and they served their gods.

Othniel

⁷So the children of Israel did ^eevil in the sight of the LORD. They ^fforgot the LORD their God, and served the Baals and ³Ashterahs. ⁸Therefore the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel, and He ^gsold them into the hand of ^hCushan-Rishathaim king of Mesopotamia; and the children of Israel served Cushan-Rishathaim eight years. ⁹When the children of Israel ⁱcried out to the LORD, the LORD ^jraised up a deliverer for the children of Israel, who delivered them: ^kOthniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother. ¹⁰^lThe Spirit of the LORD came upon him, and he

The Canaanite Gods

El was the chief god of the Canaanites. According to legend, he was the father of all gods and mortals. Although he was the first of the gods, his power was relatively weak and unimpressive. Asherah was El's wife, the mother of the gods and the goddess of the sea. Her name appears frequently in the OT, and so do the "wooden images" (in Hebrew literally "Ashterahs") associated with her cult. Baal was the Canaanite storm-god. He was the most powerful deity in Canaanite cosmology, probably because of his association with fertility. Ashtoreth was a female fertility goddess and a goddess of love and war, closely associated with Baal. She also appears to have had some association with the stars. Anath, Baal's sister and wife, was also a goddess of love and war. In the Canaanite texts about Baal, she exhibited a rather bloodthirsty personality.



The Canaanite high god, El

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CHAPTER 3

1 ^aJudg. 1:1; 2:21,

22 ¹experienced

3 ^bJosh. 13:3

4 ²find out

5 ^cPs. 106:35

6 ^dEx. 34:15, 16;

Deut. 7:3, 4; Josh.

23:12

7 ^eJudg. 2:11

^fDeut. 32:18

³Name or symbol

for Canaanite

goddesses

8 ^gDeut. 32:30;

judged Israel. He went out to war, and the LORD delivered Cushan-Rishathaim king of Mesopotamia into his hand; and his hand prevailed over Cushan-Rishathaim. ¹¹So the land had rest for forty years. Then Othniel the son of Kenaz died.

Ehud

¹²^m And the children of Israel again did evil in the sight of the LORD. So the

Judg. 2:14 ^hHab. 3:7 ⁹Judg. 3:15 / Judg. 2:16 ^kJudg. 1:13

10 ^lNum. 27:18; 1 Sam. 11:6; 2 Chr. 15:1 ¹²^mJudg. 2:19

3:1–6 This concluding passage demonstrates that God intended to test Israel (2:22; 3:1, 4). The ultimate result of being approved after testing (2 Tim. 2:15) is the reward of His kingdom (2 Tim. 2:12; James 1:12). The stage is now set for the accounts of the judges who would deliver Israel.

3:1 that He might test Israel: This trial was a testing by fire, so to speak. The idea of testing implies difficulty and adversity; elsewhere the same word refers to God's testing of Abraham (Gen. 22:1) and Hezekiah (2 Chr. 32:31). Here God was testing Israel to refine it.

3:3 five lords of the Philistines: See Josh. 13:3. **Sidonians:** Sidon was a port city northwest of Israel, in what today is Lebanon. These people were part of the broader Canaanite culture and worshiped the same gods. Little is known about the **Hivites**. From the geographical description in this verse, it appears that they lived in northern Palestine (Josh. 9:7). **Mount Lebanon** was beyond the northern borders of Israel. Evidently, hostile nations surrounded Israel on every side.

3:5 Canaanites: On the various peoples in this verse, see Josh. 3:10.

3:7–16:31 The main part of the Book of Judges concerns 12 people whom God appointed to deliver Israel from various crises.

3:7–11 The first judge was Othniel, who delivered Israel from Cushan-Rishathaim, king of Mesopotamia. Verses 7 and 8 repeat much of the material from 2:11–14. Because of the Israelites' sin, God allowed them to slip under foreign control for eight years.

3:7 the Baals and Ashterahs: The plural is used for both gods because each was worshiped in different forms in the different local communities. In Num. 25:5, the Baal of Peor is mentioned. Place names such as Mount Baal Hermon (3:3), Baal Gad (Josh. 11:17), Baal Hazor (2 Sam. 13:23), and Baal Hamon (Song 8:11) occur with some frequency. Baal-Berith (that is, "The Baal of the Covenant") was another Baal manifestation worshiped by the Israelites (8:33). On Ashtoreth, another Canaanite goddess, see 2:13.

3:8 Cushan-Rishathaim was from much farther away than Israel's other enemies. It is remarkable that Othniel, who was from Judah, a region far to the south, was chosen to lead in this campaign. Cushan-Rishathaim's name means "Cushan of Double Wickedness"; this may not have been his actual name, but instead a name pinned on him by the author of Judges for ridicule. Note that this name is found four times in two verses (vv. 8, 10), which may support the point that the author was mocking the king.

3:9 Othniel was the hero who captured the city of Kirjath Sepher (1:13; Josh. 15:17). He was from Judah and was Caleb's near kinsman and son-in-law. The Spirit of the Lord came upon him, and he prevailed against Cushan-Rishathaim.

3:11 The land had rest for forty years is the first of several references to 40-year or 80-year periods of peace in the Book of Judges (3:30; 5:31; 8:28).

3:12–30 The second judge was Ehud, who delivered Israel from

LORD strengthened ⁿEglon king of Moab against Israel, because they had done evil in the sight of the LORD. ¹³Then he gathered to himself the people of Ammon and ^oAmalek, went and ⁴defeated Israel, and took possession of ^pthe City of Palms. ¹⁴So the children of Israel ^qserved Eglon king of Moab eighteen years.

¹⁵But when the children of Israel ^rcried out to the LORD, the LORD raised up a deliverer for them: Ehud the son of Gera, the Benjamite, a ^sleft-handed man. By him the children of Israel sent tribute to Eglon king of Moab. ¹⁶Now Ehud made himself a dagger (it was double-edged and a cubit in length) and fastened it under his clothes on his right thigh. ¹⁷So he brought the tribute to Eglon king of Moab. (Now Eglon *was* a very fat man.) ¹⁸And when he had finished presenting the tribute, he sent away the people who had carried the tribute. ¹⁹But he himself turned back ^tfrom the ⁵stone images that *were* at Gilgal, and said, "I have a secret message for you, O king."

He said, "Keep silence!" And all who attended him went out from him.

²⁰So Ehud came to him (now he was sitting upstairs in his cool private chamber). Then Ehud said, "I have a message from God for you." So he arose from his seat. ²¹Then Ehud reached with his left hand, took the dagger from his right thigh, and thrust it into his belly. ²²Even the ⁶hilt went in after the blade, and the fat closed over the blade, for he did not draw the dagger out of his belly; and his entrails came out. ²³Then Ehud went out

¹² ⁿ 1 Sam. 12:9
¹³ ^o Judg. 5:14
^p Deut. 34:3; Judg. 1:16; 2 Chr. 28:15
⁴ *struck*
¹⁴ ^q Deut. 28:48
¹⁵ ^r Ps. 78:34
^s Judg. 20:16
¹⁹ ^t Josh. 4:20 ⁵ Tg. *quarries*
²² ⁶ *handle*

²⁴ ^u 1 Sam. 24:3
⁷ *Lit. his ⁸ Lit. covering his feet*
²⁵ ^v 2 Kin. 2:17; 8:11
²⁶ ⁹ Tg. *quarries*
²⁷ ^w Judg. 6:34;
¹ Sam. 13:3 ^x Josh. 17:15 ¹ *Lit. he went before them*
²⁸ ^y Judg. 7:9, 15;
¹ Sam. 17:47 ^z Josh. 2:7; Judg. 12:5
³⁰ ^a Judg. 3:11
³¹ ^b Judg. 5:6
^c 1 Sam. 17:47
^d Judg. 2:16
^e 1 Sam. 4:1

through the porch and shut the doors of the upper room behind him and locked them.

²⁴When he had gone out, ⁷Eglon's servants came to look, and *to their* surprise, the doors of the upper room were locked. So they said, "He is probably ^uattending⁸ to his needs in the cool chamber." ²⁵So they waited till they were ^vembarrassed, and still he had not opened the doors of the upper room. Therefore they took the key and opened *them*. And there was their master, fallen dead on the floor.

²⁶But Ehud had escaped while they delayed, and passed beyond the ⁹stone images and escaped to Seirah. ²⁷And it happened, when he arrived, that ^whe blew the trumpet in the ^xmountains of Ephraim, and the children of Israel went down with him from the mountains; and ¹he led them. ²⁸Then he said to them, "Follow *me*, for ^ythe LORD has delivered your enemies the Moabites into your hand." So they went down after him, seized the ^zfords of the Jordan leading to Moab, and did not allow anyone to cross over. ²⁹And at that time they killed about ten thousand men of Moab, all stout men of valor; not a man escaped. ³⁰So Moab was subdued that day under the hand of Israel. And ^athe land had rest for eighty years.

Shamgar

³¹After him was ^bShamgar the son of Anath, who killed six hundred men of the Philistines ^cwith an ox goad; ^dand he also delivered ^eIsrael.

Eglon king of Moab. Verses 12–14 give us the familiar background, beginning with Israel's apostasy and the resulting conquest by Eglon, lasting 18 years (v. 14 echoes v. 8). The story of Eglon's death is both graphic and hair-raising, reflecting the violence and chaos of this period in Israel's history. Yet it is also a literary masterpiece, skillfully weaving details together in a compelling narrative.

3:12 Moab was a plateau southeast of the Dead Sea. It was populated by nomadic herders and farmers in small agrarian settlements but had no large cities. It sat on either side of the King's Highway, an important north-south trade route. The ancestor of the Moabites was the offspring of Lot's incestuous relationship with his older daughter (Gen. 19:37), so the Moabites and Israelites were distantly related. The Bible frequently mentions conflict between the two peoples, except for the Book of Ruth, the events of which occurred during a time of stable relations between Moab and Israel. The Moabites worshiped Chemosh and his consort Ashtar, as well as Baal.

3:13 The City of Palms was Jericho (1:16). It is the only city on record that Eglon captured, although he ruled the Israelites 18 years (v. 14). The reference to Jericho is surprising since one might assume the city had been completely destroyed by Joshua. However, the Israelites may have rebuilt the site because of its plentiful water supply and strategic location, advantages that Eglon certainly would have noticed.

3:19 The Hebrew word for **images** is used many times to refer to idols made of wood, stone, or metal (Deut. 7:5, 25; Is. 10:10; Hos.

11:2). These images were clearly important in this passage—and prominent enough to be landmarks—since they appear again in v. 26, bracketing the account of Ehud's murder of Eglon. **Gilgal** had been the site of the Israelites' first encampment in Canaan and was an important religious center (Josh. 4:19).

3:20 upstairs in his cool private chamber: In ancient cities, the coolest place in the house was on the roof (compare the small upper room that a Shunammite woman and her husband made for the prophet Elisha, 2 Kin. 4:10).

3:26 Seirah is mentioned only here in the Bible, and its location is unknown.

3:27 The trumpet described here is the ram's horn, which could sound only a few notes. Ram's horns were used to signal others (Josh. 6:5).

3:31 Shamgar is mentioned only here and in 5:6. This short passage does not fit the pattern usually associated with the rise of the judges. Missing is the customary prelude of apostasy and sin. Chronologically this verse may be out of place. The next chapter begins with the death of Ehud, the previous judge. Moreover, Shamgar delivered Israel but did not *judge* it. Even the name Shamgar is not Hebrew. Yet he was the **son of Anath**—clearly a Semitic name. This may mean that he was from the town of Beth-Anath in Galilee; more probably, however, Anath is derived from the name of the Canaanite warrior goddess. If so, then it is ironic that God used a foreign warrior to deliver Israel.

Deborah

4 When Ehud was dead, ^athe children of Israel again did ^bevil in the sight of the LORD. ²So the LORD ^csold them into the hand of Jabin king of Canaan, who reigned in ^dHazor. The commander of his army was ^eSisera, who dwelt in ^fHarosheth Hagoyim. ³And the children of Israel cried out to the LORD; for Jabin had nine hundred ^gchariots of iron, and for twenty years ^hhe had harshly oppressed the children of Israel.

⁴Now Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lapidoth, was judging Israel at that time. ⁵ⁱAnd she would sit under the palm tree of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in the mountains of Ephraim. And the children of Israel came up to her for judgment. ⁶Then she sent and called for ^jBarak the son of Abinoam from ^kKedesh in Naphtali, and said to him, “Has not the LORD God of Israel commanded, ‘Go and ^ldeploy troops at Mount ^lTabor; take with you ten thousand men of the sons of Naphtali and of the sons of Zebulun; ⁷and against you ^mI will deploy Sisera, the commander of Jabin’s army, with his chariots and his multitude at the ⁿRiver Kishon; and I will ²deliver him into your hand?’”

⁸And Barak said to her, “If you will go with me, then I will go; but if you will not go with me, I will not go!”

⁹So she said, “I will surely go with you; nevertheless there will be no glory

CHAPTER 4

¹ ^aJudg. 2:19
^b Judg. 2:11
² ^c Judg. 2:14
^d Josh. 11:1, 10
^e 1 Sam. 12:9; Ps. 83:9
^f Judg. 4:13, 16
³ ^g Deut. 20:1; Judg. 1:19
^h Ps. 106:42
⁵ ⁱ Gen. 35:8
⁶ ^j Heb. 11:32
^k Josh. 19:37; 21:32
^l Judg. 8:18
^l ^m march
⁷ ^m Ex. 14:4
ⁿ Judg. 5:21; 1 Kin. 18:40; Ps. 83:9, 10
² Lit. draw

⁹ ^a Judg. 2:14
¹⁰ ^p Judg. 5:18
^q Ex. 11:8; 1 Kin. 20:10
³ Lit. at his feet
¹¹ ^r Judg. 1:16
^s Num. 10:29
^t Judg. 4:6
¹⁴ ^u Deut. 9:3; 31:3; 2 Sam. 5:24; Ps. 68:7; Is. 52:12
⁴ ^v Arise!
¹⁶ ^v Ex. 14:28; Ps. 83:9

for you in the journey you are taking, for the LORD will ^osell Sisera into the hand of a woman.” Then Deborah arose and went with Barak to Kedesh. ¹⁰And Barak called ^pZebulun and Naphtali to Kedesh; he went up with ten thousand men ^qunder ³his command, and Deborah went up with him.

¹¹Now Heber ^rthe Kenite, of the children of ^sHobab the father-in-law of Moses, had separated himself from the Kenites and pitched his tent near the terebinth tree at Zaanaïm, ^twhich is beside Kedesh.

¹²And they reported to Sisera that Barak the son of Abinoam had gone up to Mount Tabor. ¹³So Sisera gathered together all his chariots, nine hundred chariots of iron, and all the people who were with him, from Harosheth Hagoyim to the River Kishon.

¹⁴Then Deborah said to Barak, ⁴“Up! For this is the day in which the LORD has delivered Sisera into your hand. ^uHas not the LORD gone out before you?” So Barak went down from Mount Tabor with ten thousand men following him. ¹⁵And the LORD routed Sisera and all his chariots and all his army with the edge of the sword before Barak; and Sisera alighted from his chariot and fled away on foot. ¹⁶But Barak pursued the chariots and the army as far as Harosheth Hagoyim, and all the army of Sisera fell by the edge of the sword; not a man was ^vleft.

4:1—5:31 The fourth judge was Deborah, whose triumphs—along with Barak’s—make up the first extended account in the Book of Judges. Unique to this episode is the poetic victory hymn (ch. 5) that follows the narration of the Israelite victory.

4:1–3 This new chapter follows the pattern of the Book of Judges by echoing the events of ch. 3. Again the people sinned and suffered oppression, this time enduring 20 years of Canaanite rule.

4:2 Jabin king of Canaan, who reigned in Hazor: Years earlier Joshua had defeated a king of Hazor named Jabin (Josh. 11:1–15). Probably Jabin was a title rather than a proper name, resembling the use of the title Abimelech among the Philistines (Gen. 20:2; 26:1) or Ben-Hadad among the kings of Damascus. The name Jabin has been found in a text from Mari, an archaeological site on the Euphrates River. The system of small rival kingdoms prominent in Joshua’s day still prevailed during the period of the judges (Josh. 2:2), but Jabin was clearly more powerful than most. Hazor, having been destroyed earlier (Josh. 11:11), had now been rebuilt. The site of Sisera’s headquarters, **Harosheth Hagoyim**, is unknown, but the ensuing battle was played out in northern Israel around Mt. Tabor (v. 6) and the River Kishon (v. 7).

4:4–10 The campaign of the Israelite tribes began with the introduction of Deborah. This episode also demonstrated widespread cooperation between the tribes. In response to the threat in the north, Deborah, who lived in the south of Ephraim near the territory of Judah (v. 5), ordered the Israelites to send troops against Sisera. At least six tribes contributed soldiers: Naphtali, Zebulun, Ephraim, Benjamin, western Manasseh (Machir), and Issachar (v. 6; 5:14, 15).

4:4 Deborah is one of five women to be called a prophetess in the OT. The others are Miriam (Ex. 15:20), Huldah (2 Kin. 22:14; 2 Chr. 34:22), Isaiah’s wife (Is. 8:3), and Noadiah, a false prophetess (Neh. 6:14).

4:5 Ramah and Bethel were in the southern part of the land, near Judah. Ramah was in the territory of Benjamin (Josh. 18:25), and Bethel was near the border between Benjamin and Ephraim (Josh. 8:17; 18:13).

4:6, 7 Deborah summoned Barak from **Kedesh in Naphtali**, a settlement southwest of the Sea of Galilee. The soldiers were to gather at Mt. Tabor, where the territories of Issachar, Naphtali, and Zebulun met (v. 6). The battle would be fought along **the River Kishon**, which flows northwest into the Mediterranean, south of Mt. Tabor.

4:8, 9 Barak hesitated to lead the Israelites in battle. His lack of nerve forced Deborah to go with him, and subsequently the glory for the victory would go to a woman. We naturally assume that Deborah would be this woman, but we discover later that Jael, a Kenite woman, killed the notorious Sisera (vv. 17–22). Both women were heroines in a time when Israel’s leadership was mostly bankrupt. In fact, Deborah is shown in the best light of all the judges in the book. She is called a prophetess (v. 4), and many sought out her decisions (v. 5). For this reason, she is called “a mother in Israel” (5:7). She is probably included among the “leaders” in Israel (5:2), and she instructed Barak in the strategy of the battle (4:9, 14). She also was a prominent author of the victory song (5:1) and gave her name to a place in Israel, the palm tree of Deborah (v. 5).

4:11–16 The details of the victory are now recounted. Verse 11 anticipates the narrative in vv. 17–22 by introducing Heber, Jael’s husband, who lived near Kedesh and who was distantly related to the Israelites. The emphasis in vv. 12–16 is on God’s power and His work.

4:13 The centerpiece of Sisera’s impressive army was **nine hundred chariots of iron**; they were swift, maneuverable weapons of war. However, the chariots seem to have become mired in the waters of the River Kishon (5:19–22).

¹⁷ However, Sisera had fled away on foot to the tent of ^wJael, the wife of Heber the Kenite; for *there was* peace between Jabin king of Hazor and the house of Heber the Kenite. ¹⁸ And Jael went out to meet Sisera, and said to him, “Turn aside, my lord, turn aside to me; do not fear.” And when he had turned aside with her into the tent, she covered him with a ⁵blanket.

¹⁹ Then he said to her, “Please give me a little water to drink, for I am thirsty.” So she opened ^xa jug of milk, gave him a drink, and covered him. ²⁰ And he said to her, “Stand at the door of the tent, and if any man comes and inquires of you, and says, ‘Is there any man here?’ you shall say, ‘No.’”

²¹ Then Jael, Heber’s wife, ^ytook a tent peg and took a hammer in her hand, and went softly to him and drove the peg into his temple, and it went down into the ground; for he was fast asleep and weary. So he died. ²² And then, as Barak pursued Sisera, Jael came out to meet him, and said to him, “Come, I will show you the man whom you seek.” And when he went into her *tent*, there lay Sisera, dead with the peg in his temple.

²³ So on that day God subdued Jabin king of Canaan in the presence of the children of Israel. ²⁴ And the hand of the children of Israel grew stronger and stronger against Jabin king of Canaan, until they had destroyed Jabin king of Canaan.

The Song of Deborah

5 Then Deborah and Barak the son of Abinoam ^asang on that day, saying:

¹⁷ ^w Judg. 5:6
¹⁸ ⁵ *rug*
¹⁹ ^x Judg. 5:24-27
²¹ ^y Judg. 5:24-27

CHAPTER 5

¹ ^e Ex. 15:1; Judg. 4:4

² ^b Ps. 18:47 ^c 2 Chr. 17:16 ¹ Or *When locks are loosed*
² *volunteer*
³ ^d Deut. 32:1, 3
^e Ps. 27:6
⁴ ^f Deut. 33:2; Ps. 68:7 ^g Ps. 68:8
⁵ ^h Ps. 97:5 ⁱ Ex. 19:18 ³ *flowed*
⁶ ^j Judg. 3:31
^k Judg. 4:17 ^l Is. 33:8
⁸ ^m Deut. 32:17
¹⁰ ⁿ Judg. 10:4; 12:14

- ² “When ^l leaders ^blead in Israel,
^c When the people ²willingly offer themselves,
Bless the LORD!
- ³ “Hear, ^d O kings! Give ear, O princes!
I, *even* ^eI, will sing to the LORD;
I will sing praise to the LORD God of Israel.
- ⁴ “LORD, ^fwhen You went out from Seir,
When You marched from ^gthe field of Edom,
The earth trembled and the heavens poured,
The clouds also poured water;
⁵ ^h The mountains ³gushed before the LORD,
ⁱ This Sinai, before the LORD God of Israel.
- ⁶ “In the days of ^jShamgar, son of Anath,
In the days of ^kJael,
^l The highways were deserted,
And the travelers walked along the byways.
- ⁷ Village life ceased, it ceased in Israel,
Until I, Deborah, arose,
Arose a mother in Israel.
- ⁸ They chose ^mnew gods;
Then *there was* war in the gates;
Not a shield or spear was seen
among forty thousand in Israel.
- ⁹ My heart *is* with the rulers of Israel
Who offered themselves willingly with the people.
Bless the LORD!
- ¹⁰ “Speak, you who ride on white
ⁿdonkeys,

4:17–24 The details of Sisera’s death are told in the slow, suspenseful manner that characterized the story of Eglon’s death (3:12–30). The story’s conclusion is that God Himself subdued Jabin.

5:1–31 This chapter contains the victory song of Deborah and Barak. The hymn praises God for His triumph over the Canaanites and bears the hallmarks of very archaic Hebrew. Its vivid descriptions of the events seem as if they might have come from eyewitnesses to them, which Deborah and Barak were.

5:1 The verb **sang** here is in a feminine singular form, which supports the point made earlier about Deborah’s prominence over Barak (4:8, 9).

5:2–9 The introduction to the hymn is set off by calls to worship at the beginning and end—**Bless the LORD!** (vv. 2, 9). Verse 3 also contains a call to worship similar to that found in many psalms.

5:2 When leaders lead: The phrase literally means “the long-haired ones who let their hair hang loose.” The precise meaning of the phrase is obscure, but it may mean that loosed locks or flowing hair were signs of great strength or leadership. **People willingly offer themselves** tells of the glad cooperation of the Israelites. The Hebrew term is related to the noun for “voluntary offerings” (Lev. 7:16; 22:23).

5:4, 5 A brief historical review now follows the calls to worship in vv. 2, 3. These verses refer to the Lord’s marching from Seir and Edom, which likely refers to God’s transferring His “abode” from the wilderness (Mt. Sinai, v. 5) into Canaan, by way of the land of Edom. This corresponds to the movement of His people from Sinai (Kadesh) northward into Canaan (Num. 10:12; 20:22).

5:6–8 Another historical review now follows the first one, detailing the bleak state of affairs before the battle until Deborah arose as a deliverer (vv. 6, 7). Israel had even chosen new gods, resulting in divine judgment (v. 8; 10:14).

5:7 The phrase **a mother in Israel** occurs twice in the OT, here and 2 Sam. 20:19. The title is given to Deborah as one of honor, respect, and prominence.

5:10–18 This section begins again with calls to worship in vv. 10–12. Verse 13 describes the battle in very general terms. Verses 14, 15, 18 praise the tribes who heeded Deborah’s call. Ten of the twelve

sing praise

(Heb. *zamar*) (5:3; 2 Sam. 22:50; 1 Chr. 16:9; Ps. 47:6, 7; 147:1) Strong’s #2167

This Hebrew word usually refers to singing which exalts God, sometimes to singing accompanied with a musical instrument (Ps. 98:5; 149:3). In the Scripture, such singing is frequently addressed to the Lord and is an expression of gratitude for something He has done for the worshiper (Ps. 9:11; 105:2) or for His mercy and justice (Ps. 101:1). This word often is used as a summons for God’s people to praise Him (5:3; Is. 12:5). The English word *psalm* is derived from the Greek translation of this Hebrew word.

Who sit in judges' attire,
And who walk along the road.
11 Far from the noise of the archers,
among the watering places,
There they shall recount the
righteous acts of the LORD,
The righteous acts *for* His villagers
in Israel;
Then the people of the LORD shall go
down to the gates.

12^a Awake, ^o awake, Deborah!
Awake, awake, sing a song!
Arise, Barak, and lead your captives
away,
O son of Abinoam!

13^a Then the survivors came down, the
people against the nobles;
The LORD came down for me against
the mighty.

14 From Ephraim *were* those whose
roots were in ^pAmalek.
After you, Benjamin, with your
peoples,
From Machir rulers came down,
And from Zebulun those who bear
the recruiter's staff.

15 And ⁴the princes of Issachar *were*
with Deborah;
As Issachar, so *was* Barak
Sent into the valley ⁵under his
command;

Among the divisions of Reuben
There were great resolves of heart.

16 Why did you sit among the
sheepfolds,
To hear the pipings for the flocks?
The divisions of Reuben have great
searchings of heart.

17^q Gilead stayed beyond the Jordan,
And why did Dan remain ⁶on ships?
^rAsher continued at the seashore,
And stayed by his inlets.

12 ^o Ps. 57:8
14 ^p Judg. 3:13
15 ⁴ So with LXX,
Syr., Tg., Vg.; MT
And my princes in
Issachar ⁵ Lit. at
his feet
17 ^q Josh. 22:9
^r Josh. 19:29, 31
⁶ Or at ease

18 ^s Judg. 4:6, 10
19 ^t Judg. 1:27
21 ^u Judg. 4:7
23 ⁷ Or Angel
24 ^v [Luke 1:28]

18 ^s Zebulun *is* a people *who* jeopardized
their lives to the point of death,
Naphtali also, on the heights of the
battlefield.

19^a The kings came *and* fought,
Then the kings of Canaan fought
In ^tTaanach, by the waters of
Megiddo;

They took no spoils of silver.

20 They fought from the heavens;
The stars from their courses fought
against Sisera.

21^u The torrent of Kishon swept them
away,
That ancient torrent, the torrent of
Kishon.

O my soul, march on in strength!

22 Then the horses' hooves pounded,
The galloping, galloping of his
steeds.

23 ^cCurse Meroz,⁷ said the ⁷angel of the
LORD,

^cCurse its inhabitants bitterly,
Because they did not come to the
help of the LORD,
To the help of the LORD against the
mighty.⁷

24^a Most blessed among women is Jael,
The wife of Heber the Kenite;
^vBlessed is she among women in
tents.

25 He asked for water, she gave milk;
She brought out cream in a lordly
bowl.

26 She stretched her hand to the tent
peg,
Her right hand to the workmen's
hammer;
She pounded Sisera, she pierced his
head,
She split and struck through his
temple.

tribes are mentioned here, five and a half favorably, because they responded to Deborah and Barak's summons. Four and a half tribes are criticized because they did not join their countrymen: Reuben (vv. 15, 16), Gad and eastern Manasseh (Gilead), Dan, and Asher (v. 17). Judah and Simeon are not mentioned in the song or in ch. 4.

5:10 This verse calls all classes of society to bear witness to the mighty acts of God, from the ruling classes, those riding on **white donkeys**, to the lowest classes, those **who walk along the road**.

5:14 Machir is identified here with western Manasseh, in whose territory the battle took place. Elsewhere Machir is identified with eastern Manasseh (Josh. 13:30, 31). Machir was a noted warrior (Josh. 17:1).

5:17 The reference to Dan remaining **on ships** probably reflects the location of their original inheritance, which was along the south-central coastal plain where they would have had access to the sea (Josh. 19:40–46). Later they migrated northward, having been forced out of their territory (1:34; 18:1; Josh. 19:47). Some scholars connect this tribe with the Danunians, a sea people who invaded the eastern Mediterranean shortly after 1200 B.C. However, the Bible clearly establishes the existence of the tribe of Dan many years earlier (Gen. 30:6; 49:16–18).

5:19–23 The victory proper is now described in vivid terms, and a curse is pronounced on Meroz, a site otherwise unknown (v. 23). The **stars** themselves were fighting against Sisera (v. 20), a vivid metaphor of God's intervention. The prose account says, "And the LORD routed Sisera and all his chariots and all his army with the edge of the sword before Barak" (4:15). The frantic pounding of the horses' hooves, their **galloping, galloping**, suggests the chaos caused by the waters of the River Kishon (vv. 21, 22; see 4:7).

5:24–30 The poem now contrasts the two women who waited on Sisera: **Jael**, who killed him (vv. 24–27), and his mother, who longed for his return (vv. 28–30). Sisera's mother appears for the first time; in her futile waiting, she and her companions delude themselves as they dream up imagined glories that he was taking part in.

5:26 The poem speaks of **Sisera** sinking and falling at Jael's feet as she strikes his head, while the prose account tells us he was already lying down when she struck him (4:21). The poem is using graphic, emotive language, which it repeats several times to make the point. Sisera's death probably was a bloodier affair than the prose account indicates.

27 At her feet he sank, he fell, he lay still;
At her feet he sank, he fell;
Where he sank, there he fell ^wdead.

28 “The mother of Sisera looked through
the window,
And cried out through the lattice,
‘Why is his chariot *so* long in coming?
Why carries the clatter of his
chariots?’

29 Her wisest ⁸ladies answered her,
Yes, she ⁹answered herself,

30 ‘Are they not finding and dividing the
spoil:

To every man a girl *or* two;
For Sisera, plunder of dyed garments,
Plunder of garments embroidered
and dyed,
Two pieces of dyed embroidery for
the neck of the looter?’

31 “Thus let all Your enemies ^xperish,
O LORD!
But *let* those who love Him *be* ^ylike
the ^zsun
When it comes out in full ^astrength.”

So the land had rest for forty years.

Midianites Oppress Israel

6 Then the children of Israel did ^aevil
in the sight of the LORD. So the LORD
delivered them into the hand of ^bMidian
for seven years, ²and the hand of
Midian prevailed against Israel. Because
of the Midianites, the children of Israel
made for themselves the dens, ^cthe

27 ^w Judg. 4:18-21
29 ⁸ princesses ⁹ Lit.
repeats her words to
herself
31 ^x Ps. 92:9
^y 2 Sam. 23:4 ^z Ps.
37:6; 89:36, 37 ^a Ps.
19:5

CHAPTER 6

1 ^a Judg. 2:11
^b Num. 22:4; 31:1-3
2 ^c 1 Sam. 13:6;
Heb. 11:38

3 ^d Judg. 7:12
4 ^e Lev. 26:16
^f Deut. 28:31
5 ¹ innumerable
6 ^g Ps. 50:15; Hos.
5:15
8 ^h Josh. 24:17
² slavery
9 ⁱ Ps. 44:2, 3
10 ^j 2 Kin. 17:35, 37;
38; Jer. 10:2 ^k Judg.
2:1, 2

caves, and the strongholds which *are* in
the mountains. ³So it was, whenever Israel
had sown, Midianites would come
up; also Amalekites and the ^dpeople of
the East would come up against them.
⁴Then they would encamp against them
and ^edestroy the produce of the earth as
far as Gaza, and leave no sustenance for
Israel, neither sheep nor ox nor ^fdonkey.
⁵For they would come up with their live-
stock and their tents, coming in as nu-
merous as locusts; both they and their
camels were ¹without number; and they
would enter the land to destroy it. ⁶So Israel
was greatly impoverished because of
the Midianites, and the children of Israel
^gcried out to the LORD.

⁷And it came to pass, when the chil-
dren of Israel cried out to the LORD be-
cause of the Midianites, ⁸that the LORD
sent a prophet to the children of Israel,
who said to them, “Thus says the LORD
God of Israel: ‘I brought you up from
Egypt and brought you out of the ^hhouse
of ²bondage; ⁹and I delivered you out
of the hand of the Egyptians and out of
the hand of all who oppressed you, and
ⁱdrove them out before you and gave you
their land. ¹⁰Also I said to you, “*I am* the
LORD your God; ^jdo not fear the gods of
the Amorites, in whose land you dwell.”
But you have not obeyed My ^kvoice.’”

Gideon

¹¹Now the Angel of the LORD came
and sat under the terebinth tree which
was in Ophrah, which *belonged* to Joash

5:28-30 The point of this pathetic story of Sisera’s mother is not to elicit sympathy for her, but rather to remind us of Jael’s stunning accomplishment. Sisera’s mother expected her son to shower his people with great plunder; instead, Sisera lay dead at Jael’s feet. Three times in the OT we read of women who looked through the window: Sisera’s mother, Saul’s daughter Michal (2 Sam. 6:16), and Jezebel (2 Kin. 9:30). All three opposed God’s will and suffered accordingly. **5:31** The hymn concludes with praise to the Lord, as many psalms do. The prose account resumes with another period of 40 years of rest (3:11).

6:1-8, 32 The fifth judge was Gideon, who twice fought the Midianites, first under God’s instructions and later on his own initiative. Gideon’s story is the second major account in the Book of Judges. In this narrative—along with the subsequent tragedy of Abimelech that follows in ch. 9—we can see, in ways not evident previously, the continuing deterioration of Israel’s spiritual state. First, God now rebuked Israel when it called upon Him (6:7-10). Second, the judge himself contributed to the spiritual decline (8:24-27). Third, Israel’s tribes fought among themselves for the first time (8:16, 17; 9:23-54), prior to an even worse dissension later (12:1-6; 20:1-48). Despite God’s continued intervention and Gideon’s flashes of righteousness, Israel eroded spiritually and politically.

6:1 Midian was located in the Arabian peninsula, southeast of Israel and east of the Sinai peninsula. The Midianites were descendants of Abraham through his wife Keturah (Gen. 25:1, 2), so they were distantly related to the Israelites. Midianites bought Joseph from his brothers (Gen. 37:25-36), welcomed Moses in the wilderness (Ex. 2:15-21), and hired Balaam to curse Israel (Num. 22:7). Generally

speaking, Israel counted Midian among its foes. In this account, the Midianites were menacing Israel, burning, looting, and leaving many near starvation (6:4, 5).

6:2 the dens, the caves: Caves were not used for permanent dwellings in OT times. That the Israelites were forced to abandon their homes and live in caves indicates the desperate straits they were in.

6:3 The Amalekites were a nomadic people who lived in the Sinai desert and the Negev, the desert south of Israel. They were descendants of Esau (Gen. 36:12) and here joined the Midianites against Israel. **People of the East** were unspecified nomads who also plundered Israel. These easterners are also mentioned in several prophetic contexts (Is. 11:14; Jer. 49:28; Ezek. 25:4).

6:5 as numerous as locusts: Locust plagues were—and still are—a fairly common occurrence in the Middle East. In the prophet Joel’s day, such an attack would be prophesied as a punishment upon the land (Joel 1:4, 15-17; 2:1-11).

6:8 the LORD sent a prophet: Rather than sending a deliverer, God sent a prophet to condemn His people. This prophet reminded the Israelites of God’s faithfulness, and how the people had nevertheless rejected Him (vv. 8-10).

6:11-40 Gideon’s call is the centerpiece of ch. 6. It begins with the appearance of the Angel of the Lord to Gideon (vv. 11-24), followed by an account of Gideon’s destruction of an altar of Baal (vv. 25-35), after which we see Gideon’s wavering faith (vv. 36-40). Through it all, Gideon was ambivalent about being called to deliver Israel, much as Moses had been years earlier.

6:11 The Palestinian **terebinth tree** is a large tree with a thick trunk and heavy branches, sometimes confused with the oak. It can grow

^lthe Abiezrite, while his son ^mGideon threshed wheat in the winepress, in order to hide *it* from the Midianites. ¹² And the ⁿAngel of the LORD appeared to him, and said to him, “The LORD *is* ^owith you, you mighty man of valor!”

¹³ Gideon said to Him, “O ³my lord, if the LORD is with us, why then has all this happened to us? And ^pwhere *are* all His miracles ^qwhich our fathers told us about, saying, ‘Did not the LORD bring us up from Egypt?’ But now the LORD has ^rforsaken us and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites.”

¹⁴ Then the LORD turned to him and said, ^s“Go in this might of yours, and you shall save Israel from the hand of the Midianites. ‘Have I not sent you?’”

¹⁵ So he said to Him, “O ⁴my Lord, how can I save Israel? Indeed ^umy clan *is* the weakest in Manasseh, and I *am* the least in my father’s house.”

¹⁶ And the LORD said to him, ^v“Surely I will be with you, and you shall ⁵defeat the Midianites as one man.”

¹⁷ Then he said to Him, “If now I have found favor in Your sight, then ^wshow me a sign that it is You who talk with me. ^{18x}Do not depart from here, I pray, until I come to You and bring out my offering and set *it* before You.”

And He said, “I will wait until you come back.”

¹¹ ^lJosh. 17:2; Judg. 6:15 ^mJudg. 7:1; Heb. 11:32
¹² ⁿJudg. 13:3; Luke 1:11, 28
^oJosh. 1:5
¹³ ^p[Is. 59:1] ^qJosh. 4:6, 21; Ps. 44:1
^rDeut. 31:17; 2 Chr. 15:2; Ps. 44:9-16
³ Heb. *adoni*, used of man
¹⁴ ^s1 Sam. 12:11
^tJosh. 1:9
¹⁵ ^u1 Sam. 9:21
⁴ Heb. *Adonai*, used of God
¹⁶ ^vEx. 3:12; Josh. 1:5 ⁵ Lit. *strike*
¹⁷ ^wJudg. 6:36; 37; 2 Kin. 20:8; Ps. 86:17; Is. 7:11; 38:7, 8
¹⁸ ^xGen. 18:3, 5

¹⁹ ^yGen. 18:6-8
²⁰ ^zJudg. 13:19
^o1 Kin. 18:33, 34
²¹ ^bLev. 9:24
²² ^cGen. 32:30; Ex. 33:20; Judg. 13:21, 22
^dGen. 16:13
²³ ^eDan. 10:19
²⁴ ^fJudg. 8:32
⁶ Heb. *YHWH*
Shalom
²⁵ ^gJudg. 2:2
^hJudg. 3:7 ⁱEx. 34:13; Deut. 7:5
⁷ Heb. *Asherah*, a Canaanite goddess

^{19y} So Gideon went in and prepared a young goat, and unleavened bread from an ephah of flour. The meat he put in a basket, and he put the broth in a pot; and he brought *them* out to Him under the terebinth tree and presented *them*. ²⁰ The Angel of God said to him, “Take the meat and the unleavened bread and ^zlay *them* on this rock, and ^apour out the broth.” And he did so.

²¹ Then the Angel of the LORD put out the end of the staff that *was* in His hand, and touched the meat and the unleavened bread; and ^bfire rose out of the rock and consumed the meat and the unleavened bread. And the Angel of the LORD departed out of his sight.

²² Now Gideon ^cperceived that He *was* the Angel of the LORD. So Gideon said, “Alas, O Lord God! ^dFor I have seen the Angel of the LORD face to face.”

²³ Then the LORD said to him, ^e“Peace *be* with you; do not fear, you shall not die.” ²⁴ So Gideon built an altar there to the LORD, and called it ⁶The-LORD-Is-Peace. To this day it *is* still ^fin Ophrah of the Abiezrites.

²⁵ Now it came to pass the same night that the LORD said to him, “Take your father’s young bull, the second bull of seven years old, and ^gtear down the altar of ^hBaal that your father has, and ⁱcut down the ⁷wooden image that *is* beside

as high as 25 feet. The terebinth figures in the stories of Abraham, who pitched his tent near the terebinth trees of Mamre (Gen. 13:18; 18:1), and of Jacob, who hid a treasure beneath a terebinth tree (Gen. 35:4). The exact location of **Ophrah** is unknown, but it was a city somewhere in the territory of Manasseh. It is not the same as the Benjaminite city of the same name (Josh. 18:23; 1 Sam. 13:17). **Abiezrite**: See v. 24. A **winepress** was a square or circular pit carved into rock in which grapes were crushed (Is. 16:10; Jer. 48:33). Wheat was usually separated on open threshing floors so the wind could carry away the chaff in the winnowing process (2 Sam. 24:18). The fact that Gideon was forced to thresh wheat hidden inside a winepress—despite the fact that he had access to a threshing floor (v. 37)—shows again the desperate state the Israelites were in.

6:13 My lord was a polite form of address, but **the LORD** is the personal name of God (Yahweh), the full meaning of which was revealed to Moses at Mt. Sinai (Ex. 3:13–16). The Hebrew word for **miracles** means “wonderful things,” and it is translated elsewhere as *wonders* (Ex. 3:20; Josh. 3:5).

6:15 I am the least in my father’s house: Gideon’s objection is reminiscent of the words spoken by Moses (Ex. 3:11) and Jeremiah (Jer. 1:6).

6:16 I will be with you was God’s great promise of His presence that He had given to Moses and Joshua previously (Ex. 3:12; Josh. 1:5, 9). This should have greatly encouraged Gideon, but he still expressed doubts (vv. 17, 36–40). Often we are quick to judge those who doubt God even when they have firsthand evidence of His mighty works. But we all fail to trust God fully at times. God accomplished His will despite Gideon’s weakness, and He can do the same through us.

6:17 Gideon’s faith needed such bolstering that he asked God for **a sign**. Here as elsewhere, Gideon was slow to respond to God (vv. 39, 40).

6:19 An ephah of flour was two-thirds of a bushel, or about 20 pounds of flour.

6:22 Gideon perceived: When the Angel of the Lord vanished, then Gideon realized who it was and feared for his life. This reaction of fear appears to have been rooted in the knowledge that anyone who gazed upon God would die. In Ex. 33:20, God, speaking to Moses, says, “You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live.” The context of Ex. 33:18–23 suggests that it was the fullness of God’s glory that Moses could not see, since Moses did speak with God and know Him “face to face” (Ex. 33:11; Num. 12:8; Deut. 34:10), and he even beheld the form of God Himself (Num. 12:8). Yet Gideon’s fear was a proper response for those who found themselves in the presence of God’s Angel. This was also Manoah’s reaction when the Angel visited him (13:21, 22).

6:24 To this day: This expression, especially common in the Books of Joshua and Judges (1:21, 26; 15:19; Josh. 4:9; 5:9; 6:25; 7:26), lends authenticity to the account. It is the author’s way of declaring to later generations that they could verify the story by going and seeing this altar themselves. **Abiezrites** were descendants of Joseph through his son Manasseh. They were part of the tribe of Manasseh that settled west of the Jordan River (Num. 26:30 [Jeezer]; Josh. 17:1, 2).

6:25–35 Gideon’s first test was to topple the local shrines to Baal and Asherah, replacing them with an altar to the Lord. Gideon obeyed, but his fearfulness caused him to do this by night (v. 27). His forthcoming military tests are foreshadowed in the text (vv. 33–35). The battle he would lead would take place in the central highlands of northern Israel (Ophrah, Gideon’s hometown, was in the Jezreel Valley, southwest of the Sea of Galilee).

6:25 The Hebrew word for **wooden image** here is *Asherah*, the name of the Canaanite goddess. Sacred wooden poles were erected at places where she was worshipped. The widespread worship of this goddess is attested to in 3:7 and elsewhere (1 Kin. 15:13; 18:19). **The second bull** is not a second animal, but a phrase by which the Lord was specifying more clearly to Gideon which bull should

it; ²⁶and build an altar to the LORD your God on top of this ⁸rock in the proper arrangement, and take the second bull and offer a burnt sacrifice with the wood of the image which you shall cut down.” ²⁷So Gideon took ten men from among his servants and did as the LORD had said to him. But because he feared his father’s household and the men of the city too much to do *it* by day, he did *it* by night.

Gideon Destroys the Altar of Baal

²⁸And when the men of the city arose early in the morning, there was the altar of Baal, torn down; and the wooden image that *was* beside it was cut down, and the second bull was being offered on the altar *which had been* built. ²⁹So they said to one another, “Who has done this thing?” And when they had inquired and asked, they said, “Gideon the son of Joash has done this thing.” ³⁰Then the men of the city said to Joash, “Bring out your son, that he may die, because he has torn down the altar of Baal, and because he has cut down the wooden image that *was* beside it.”

³¹But Joash said to all who stood against him, “Would you ⁹plead for Baal? Would you save him? Let the one who would plead for him be put to death by morning! If he *is* a god, let him plead for himself, because his altar has been torn down!” ³²Therefore on that day he called him ¹Jerubbaal, ¹saying, “Let Baal plead against him, because he has torn down his altar.”

³³Then all ^kthe Midianites and Amalekites, the people of the East, gathered together; and they crossed over and

²⁶ ⁸stronghold
³¹ ⁹contend
³² / Judg. 7:1;
1 Sam. 12:11; 2 Sam.
11:21 ¹ Lit. Let Baal
Plead
³³ ^k Judg. 6:3

/ Josh. 17:16; Hos.
1:5

³⁴ ^m Judg. 3:10;
1 Chr. 12:18; 2 Chr.
24:20 ⁿ Num. 10:3;
Judg. 3:27
³⁵ ^o Judg. 5:17; 7:23
^p Judg. 4:6, 10; 5:18
³⁷ ^q [Ex. 4:3-7]
³⁹ ^r Gen. 18:32

CHAPTER 7

¹ ^a Judg. 6:32

encamped in ^lthe Valley of Jezreel. ³⁴But ^mthe Spirit of the LORD came upon Gideon; then he ⁿblew the trumpet, and the Abiezrites gathered behind him. ³⁵And he sent messengers throughout all Manasseh, who also gathered behind him. He also sent messengers to ^oAsher, ^pZebulun, and Naphtali; and they came up to meet them.

The Sign of the Fleece

³⁶So Gideon said to God, “If You will save Israel by my hand as You have said— ³⁷^qlook, I shall put a fleece of wool on the threshing floor; if there is dew on the fleece only, and *it is* dry on all the ground, then I shall know that You will save Israel by my hand, as You have said.” ³⁸And it was so. When he rose early the next morning and squeezed the fleece together, he wrung the dew out of the fleece, a bowlful of water. ³⁹Then Gideon said to God, ^r“Do not be angry with me, but let me speak just once more: Let me test, I pray, just once more with the fleece; let it now be dry only on the fleece, but on all the ground let there be dew.” ⁴⁰And God did so that night. It was dry on the fleece only, but there was dew on all the ground.

Gideon’s Valiant Three Hundred

⁷Then ^aJerubbaal (that *is*, Gideon) and all the people who *were* with him rose early and encamped beside the well of Harod, so that the camp of the Midianites was on the north side of them by the hill of Moreh in the valley.

²And the LORD said to Gideon, “The people who *are* with you *are* too many

be sacrificed. The need to specify the bull underscores Gideon’s continued reluctance (v. 17).

6:26 The wood of the image means literally “the wood of the Asherah” (vv. 28, 30). The proper sacrifice that Gideon was to offer would be burnt with the wood of the destroyed idol.

6:28 The phrase **early in the morning** occurs at 6:28, 38; 7:1; 9:33; 19:5, 8, 9; 21:4.

6:31 Would you plead for Baal: Joash’s questions are rhetorical. He refused to put his son to death, arguing that Baal should be able to take care of himself if he were indeed a god. Other examples of rhetorical questions are found at 9:2, 28; 11:25; 18:3; 20:28.

6:32 Gideon’s father **called him Jerubbaal** to deride those who would put their trust in Baal. The name means “Let Baal Plead,” and it echoes the question of v. 31. Thus Gideon became a living reminder of Baal’s impotence.

6:35 Gideon sent messengers through the territories of four northern tribes adjacent to each other: Manasseh, Asher, Zebulun, and Naphtali.

6:36–40 Before the fight itself, Gideon asked for signs to “test” God’s guidance once more.

6:39 Let me test: The word translated *test* is the same one used when God tested Israel (2:22; 3:1). Gideon’s desire to test God’s sign could have been a violation of the law which prohibited people from testing God (Deut. 6:16; the Hebrew word translated *tempt* is

the same word translated *test* here). Gideon himself was aware that he was doing something unwise, if not sinful, since he asked God not to be angry with him.

6:40 Despite Gideon’s lack of faith, **God did so that night**. That is, He accommodated both of his requests. Many people have relied on Gideon’s example as a way of seeking guidance from the Lord, “putting out a fleece” in some way. Occasionally God has chosen to answer such requests, even as He did for Gideon. Nevertheless, Gideon already knew God’s will for his life (vv. 14–16, 36). His requests only made evident his weak faith. Isaiah modeled a proper response to God’s clearly revealed will: he said “Here am I! Send me” (Is. 6:8). So too did the disciples, who dropped their nets immediately and followed Jesus (Mark 1:18–20).

7:1–8:3 God figures prominently in Gideon’s victory over the Midianites, especially in the amazing story of the 300 men who would subdue their numerically superior foes. The reassurances from God that Gideon had received before the encounter were now reinforced by a dream (7:9–15). The battle itself did not involve any significant combat, for God Himself provided the victory (7:16–25). The Israelites blew horns, broke jars, and shouted, causing the enemy to kill each other in their confusion. The survivors fled across the Jordan with the Israelites in pursuit.

7:2 lest Israel claim glory for itself: Right from the beginning, God made it clear that the glory for this victory was to be His. This

for Me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel ^bclaim glory for itself against Me, saying, ‘My own hand has saved me.’ ³Now therefore, proclaim in the hearing of the people, saying, ‘Whoever *is* fearful and afraid, let him turn and depart at once from Mount Gilead.’” And twenty-two thousand of the people returned, and ten thousand remained.

⁴But the LORD said to Gideon, “The

² ^b Deut. 8:17; Is. 10:13
³ ^c Deut. 20:8

people *are* still *too* many; bring them down to the water, and I will test them for you there. Then it will be, *that* of whom I say to you, ‘This one shall go with you,’ the same shall go with you; and of whomever I say to you, ‘This one shall not go with you,’ the same shall not go.” ⁵So he brought the people down to the water. And the LORD said to Gideon, “Everyone who laps from the water

makes even more incredible the Israelites’ request that Gideon rule over them because he had “delivered us from the hand of Midian” (8:22, 23).

7:3 When Gideon allowed those who were **fearful** to leave, more than two-thirds departed, leaving only ten thousand. Mosaic law allowed military exemptions for several classes of people, including those who had just built a home, those who had just planted a vineyard, those engaged to be married, and those who were fearful (Deut. 20:5–8).

7:4, 5 Gideon thinned his army even more by employing a strange distinction, namely, how his men drank water from a brook. Some

commentators have suggested that the men who did not get down on their knees were maintaining a higher degree of military readiness by drinking out of their hands. However, they may be reading too much into the account, for the text does not indicate any reason for Gideon’s preference. The reference to the way **a dog laps** might even be derogatory since dogs were despised creatures in the ancient world (1 Sam. 17:43; 2 Kin. 8:13; Matt. 7:6). If so, God’s role in the victory becomes even more apparent, since the three hundred who were left were the ones who did not even have the common sense to drink in a normal fashion. God’s comment in v. 7 seems to reinforce this suggestion.

Determining God’s Will

Christians believe that they should carefully obey God’s will. But how can we know what His will is? How should we go about making decisions that honor the Lord?

The example of Gideon is frequently cited as a model for godly decision-making. Before acting, Gideon carefully considered whether the Lord wanted him to rally an army and attack the Midianites. Twice he set out a fleece (a clump of wool) to make sure of God’s intentions (6:36–40). On this basis, some have argued that before Christians make major decisions with long-range consequences, they should “put out a fleece before the Lord,” seeking some tangible sign that indicates His will with certainty.

Is that an appropriate way to know God’s will? In considering the question, it is important to note that this is the only occasion in the Bible when God revealed His will through a fleece. It is also worth noting Gideon’s extreme hesitation, doubt, and fear. The Lord had already told him what to do through the Angel of the Lord (6:11–16). In fact, the Angel had already given Gideon a confirming sign (6:17–22).

In light of these facts, Gideon’s use of the fleece would appear to demonstrate a lack of faith more than any zeal to be certain of God’s will. Fortunately, God was very patient with him and granted his request for a confirming sign. But it seems that using a fleece to determine God’s will was the exception rather than the rule, and thus does not serve as the best pattern for how we can depend on God for guidance.

Is there a more reliable way? Yes, God has clearly and objectively told us what He wants throughout the Bible. For example, the Ten Commandments give straightforward instructions to guide our behavior in numerous areas of life. Likewise, one of the New Testament letters to the Thessalonians says plainly, “This is the will of God” (1 Thess. 4:3). The passage then goes on to outline some of God’s will in regard to sexuality.

Thus when it comes to making choices in life, God calls us to clear thinking—thinking that is based on our relationship with Him and our allegiance to His values, which are clearly spelled out in Scripture. God has made us to be thinking, discerning, analytical persons who assume responsibility for working our way through life in accordance with His general plans and purposes. He challenges us to learn all that we can about any situation, relationship, responsibility, or opportunity that we have, weigh it in light of His precepts and principles, and then act. As we act, we can take comfort from the fact that He is at work within us, “both to will and to do for His good pleasure” (Phil. 2:13).



Gideon seeking God’s will with a piece of fleece

Gideon and the Fleece, c.1490, French School/Musee du Petit Palais, Avignon, France/Giraudon/The Bridgeman Art Library

with his tongue, as a dog laps, you shall set apart by himself; likewise everyone who gets down on his knees to drink.”⁶ And the number of those who lapped, *putting* their hand to their mouth, was three hundred men; but all the rest of the people got down on their knees to drink water.⁷ Then the LORD said to Gideon,^d “By the three hundred men who lapped I will save you, and deliver the Midianites into your hand. Let all the *other* people go, every man to his ¹place.”⁸ So the people took provisions and their trumpets in their hands. And he sent away all *the rest of* Israel, every man to his tent, and retained those three hundred men. Now the camp of Midian was below him in the valley.

⁹It happened on the same ^enight that the LORD said to him, “Arise, go down against the camp, for I have delivered it

^{7 d} 1 Sam. 14:6
¹ home
^{9 e} Gen. 46:2, 3;
Judg. 6:25

^{11 f} Gen. 24:14;
1 Sam. 14:9, 10
² you shall be
encouraged
^{12 g} Judg. 6:3, 33;
8:10 ^h Judg. 6:5
³ innumerable

into your hand.¹⁰ But if you are afraid to go down, go down to the camp with Purah your servant,¹¹ and you shall ^fhear what they say; and afterward ²your hands shall be strengthened to go down against the camp.” Then he went down with Purah his servant to the outpost of the armed men who *were* in the camp.¹² Now the Midianites and Amalekites, ^gall the people of the East, were lying in the valley ^has numerous as locusts; and their camels *were* ³without number, as the sand by the seashore in multitude.

¹³ And when Gideon had come, there was a man telling a dream to his companion. He said, “I have had a dream: *To my* surprise, a loaf of barley bread tumbled into the camp of Midian; it came to a tent and struck it so that it fell and overturned, and the tent collapsed.”

¹⁴ Then his companion answered and

7:10 Ironically, Gideon himself was afraid, but he had not been dismissed to go home as had the other men (v. 3).

7:12 This verse notes again the strength of Israel’s enemies, including their intimidating numbers and their innumerable camels (6:3–5).

7:13 **Tumbled** in this context literally means “overturned.” The word is also used in Genesis to describe the sword “which turned every way” at the entrance to the Garden of Eden (Gen. 3:24) and

the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 19:25, 29). Here, the loaf “overturned” the Midianite camp.

7:14, 15 **The sword of Gideon** is the key to the interpretation of the dream. Coming from the mouth of one of Israel’s enemies, it provided the confirmation that Gideon needed, in light of his earlier fear (v. 10). As a result, **he worshiped** God for being so patient with his wavering faith (v. 15).

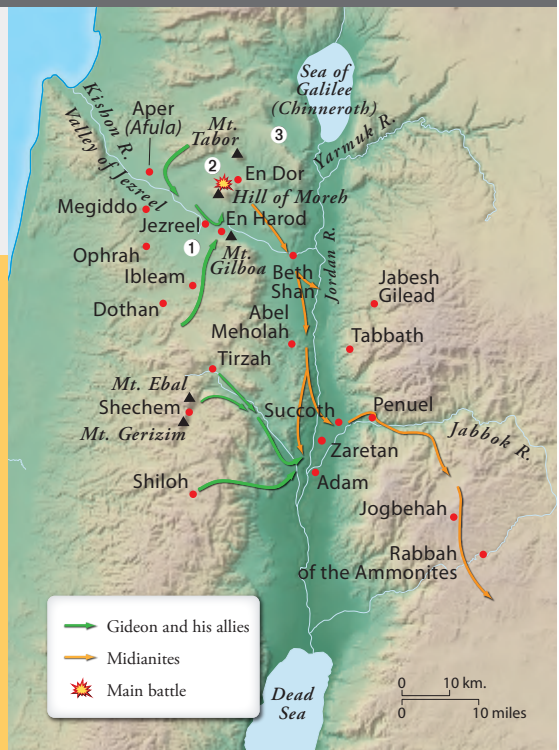
Gideon’s Battles

The story of Gideon begins with a graphic portrayal of one of the most striking facts of life in the Fertile Crescent: the periodic migration of nomadic peoples into the settled areas of Canaan. Each spring the tents of the bedouin herdsman appeared virtually overnight, scattered on the hills and fields of the farming districts. Conflict between these two ways of life (herdsmen and farmers) was inevitable.

1 In the biblical period, the vast numbers and warlike practice of the herdsmen reduced the village people to near vassalage. God’s answer was twofold: (1) religious reform, starting with Gideon’s own family; and (2) military action, based on a coalition of northern Israelite tribes. The location of Gideon’s hometown, “Ophrah of the Abiezrites” (6:24), is not known with certainty, but it probably was ancient Aper (modern Afula) in the Valley of Jezreel.

2 The battle at the well of Harod is justly celebrated for its strategic brilliance. Denied the use of the only local water source, the Midianites camped in the valley and fell victim to the small band of Israelites that attacked them from the heights of the hill of Moreh.

3 The main battle took place north of the hill near the village of En Dor at the foot of Mount Tabor. Fleeing by way of the Jordan valley, the Midianites were trapped when the Ephraimites seized the fords of the Jordan from below Beth Shean to Beth Barah near Adam.



said, “This *is* nothing else but the sword of Gideon the son of Joash, a man of Israel! Into his hand ⁱGod has delivered Midian and the whole camp.”

¹⁵And so it was, when Gideon heard the telling of the dream and its interpretation, that he worshiped. He returned to the camp of Israel, and said, “Arise, for the LORD has delivered the camp of Midian into your hand.” ¹⁶Then he divided the three hundred men *into* three companies, and he put a trumpet into every man’s hand, with empty pitchers, and torches inside the pitchers. ¹⁷And he said to them, “Look at me and do likewise; watch, and when I come to the edge of the camp you shall do as I do: ¹⁸When I blow the trumpet, I and all who *are* with me, then you also blow the trumpets on every side of the whole camp, and say, ‘*The sword of the LORD and of Gideon!*’”

¹⁹So Gideon and the hundred men who *were* with him came to the outpost of the camp at the beginning of the middle watch, just as they had posted the watch; and they blew the trumpets and broke the pitchers that *were* in their hands. ²⁰Then the three companies blew the trumpets and broke the pitchers—they held the torches in their left hands and the trumpets in their right hands for blowing—and they cried, “The sword of the LORD and of Gideon!” ²¹And ^jevery man stood in his place all around the camp; ^kand the whole army ran and cried out and fled. ²²When the three hundred ^lblew the trumpets, ^mthe LORD set ⁿevery man’s sword against his companion throughout the whole camp; and the army fled to ^qBeth Acacia, toward Zererah, as far as the border of ^oAbel Meholah, by Tabbath.

²³And the men of Israel gathered together from ^pNaphtali, Asher, and all Manasseh, and pursued the Midianites.

²⁴Then Gideon sent messengers throughout all the ^qmountains of Ephraim, saying, “Come down against the Midianites, and seize from them the watering

places as far as Beth Barah and the Jordan.” Then all the men of Ephraim gathered together and ^rseized the watering places as far as ^sBeth Barah and the Jordan. ²⁵And they captured ^ttwo princes of the Midianites, ^uOreb and Zeeb. They killed Oreb at the rock of Oreb, and Zeeb they killed at the winepress of Zeeb. They pursued Midian and brought the heads of Oreb and Zeeb to Gideon on the ^vother side of the Jordan.

Gideon Subdues the Midianites

8 Now ^athe men of Ephraim said to him, “Why have you done this to us by not calling us when you went to fight with the Midianites?” And they reprimanded him sharply.

²So he said to them, “What have I done now in comparison with you? *Is not the ¹gleaning of the grapes of Ephraim better than ²the vintage of ^bAbiezer?* ³*God has delivered into your hands the princes of Midian, Oreb and Zeeb. And what was I able to do in comparison with you?*” Then their ^danger toward him subsided when he said that.

⁴When Gideon came ^eto the Jordan, he and ^fthe three hundred men who *were* with him crossed over, exhausted but still in pursuit. ⁵Then he said to the men of ^gSuccoth, “Please give loaves of bread to the people who follow me, for they are exhausted, and I am pursuing Zebah and Zalmunna, kings of Midian.”

⁶And the leaders of Succoth said, ^h“*Are ³the hands of Zebah and Zalmunna now in your hand, that ⁱwe should give bread to your army?*”

⁷So Gideon said, “For this cause, when the LORD has delivered Zebah and Zalmunna into my hand, ^jthen I will tear your flesh with the thorns of the wilderness and with briers!” ⁸Then he went up from there ^kto Penuel and spoke to them in the same way. And the men of Penuel

14 ⁱ Judg. 6:14, 16
21 / Ex. 14:13, 14;
2 Chr. 20:17 ^k 2 Kin.
7:7
22 ^j Josh. 6:4, 16,
20 ^m Ps. 83:9; Is.
9:4 ⁿ 1 Sam. 14:20;
2 Chr. 20:23 ^o 1 Kin.
4:12 ^q Heb. *Beth*
Shittah
23 ^p Judg. 6:35
24 ^q Judg. 3:27

^r Judg. 3:28 ^s John
1:28
25 ^t Judg. 8:3 ^u Ps.
83:11; Is. 10:26
^v Judg. 8:4

CHAPTER 8

1 ^a Judg. 12:1;
2 Sam. 19:41
2 ^b Judg. 6:11 ¹ Few
grapes left after
the harvest ² The
whole harvest
3 ^c Judg. 7:24, 25
^d Prov. 15:1
4 ^e Judg. 7:25
^f Judg. 7:6
5 ^g Gen. 33:17; Ps.
60:6
6 ^h 1 Kin. 20:11;
Judg. 8:15 ⁱ 1 Sam.
25:11 ³ Lit. *Is the*
palm
7 ^j Judg. 8:16
8 ^k Gen. 32:30, 31;
1 Kin. 12:25

7:16 The ram’s-horn **trumpet** was used as a signal call. See 3:27 and Josh. 6:5.

7:19 middle watch: According to Jewish tradition the nighttime hours were divided into three watches, which would put the time of this attack at roughly 10:00 P.M.

7:20 The sword of the LORD and of Gideon: Here the full version of the war cry is given. A more literal rendering of the Hebrew is “A sword for the LORD and for Gideon!”

7:23 The same tribes mentioned in 6:35 now pursued the Midianites, with the exception of Zebulun, which is not mentioned. Ephraim also joined in the pursuit (v. 24).

7:24, 25 The watering places probably refer to small tributaries that flowed into the Jordan River. Seizing them would seal off the enemy’s escape routes. **The other side of the Jordan** is the east side of the Jordan, where the Israelites caught the enemy (Josh. 13:32; 18:7).

8:1–3 The men of Ephraim complained to Gideon that they had been called out late (v. 1). Gideon’s flattering response had a calming effect on these men.

8:4–28 Gideon followed up the victory with a second military campaign, one which contrasts dramatically with the first. He pursued the two Midianite kings until he caught and killed them, and he punished the towns of Succoth and Penuel. In this account, there is no indication of God’s involvement as there had been previously; rather, Gideon is merely settling a private score (vv. 18, 19).

8:5 Succoth was east of the Jordan, near the Jabbok River. **Zebah and Zalmunna** are unflattering names meaning “Victim” and “Protection Refused.” They may be wordplays on the real names of these kings, much like the name Cushan-Rishathaim (3:8). Yet the author may have had more sympathy for these two kings than for Cushan-Rishathaim, since Gideon is cast in a poor light in this chapter.

answered him as the men of Succoth had answered. ⁹So he also spoke to the men of Penuel, saying, “When I ^lcome back in peace, ^mI will tear down this tower!”

¹⁰Now Zebah and Zalmunna *were* at Karkor, and their armies with them, about fifteen thousand, all who were left of ⁿall the army of the people of the East; for ^oone hundred and twenty thousand men who drew the sword had fallen. ¹¹Then Gideon went up by the road of those who dwell in tents on the east of ^pNobah and Jogbehah; and he ^qattacked the army while the camp felt ^rsecure. ¹²When Zebah and Zalmunna fled, he pursued them; and he ^rtook the two kings of Midian, Zebah and Zalmunna, and routed the whole army.

¹³Then Gideon the son of Joash returned from battle, from the Ascent of Heres. ¹⁴And he caught a young man of the men of Succoth and interrogated him; and he wrote down for him the leaders of Succoth and its elders, seventy-seven men. ¹⁵Then he came to the men of Succoth and said, “Here are Zebah and Zalmunna, about whom you ^sridiculed me, saying, ‘*Are the hands of Zebah and Zalmunna now in your hand, that we should give bread to your weary men?*’” ¹⁶And he took the elders of the city, and thorns of the wilderness and briers, and with them he ⁵taught the men of Succoth. ¹⁷And he tore down the tower of ^vPenuel and killed the men of the city.

¹⁸And he said to Zebah and Zalmunna, “What kind of men *were they* whom you killed at ^wTabor?”

⁹ ¹ 1 Kin. 22:27
^m Judg. 8:17
¹⁰ ⁿ Judg. 7:12
^o Judg. 6:5
¹¹ ^p Num. 32:35;
^q Judg. 18:27;
¹ [1 Thess. 5:3] ⁴ Lit.
^{struck}
¹² ^r Ps. 83:11
¹⁵ ^s Judg. 8:6
¹⁶ ^t Judg. 8:7
⁵ ^{disciplined}
¹⁷ ^u Judg. 8:9
^v 1 Kin. 12:25
¹⁸ ^w Judg. 4:6; Ps.
89:12

²¹ ^x Ps. 83:11
²² ^y Judg. 9:8
^z Judg. 3:9; 9:17
²³ ^a 1 Sam. 8:7;
10:19; 12:12; Ps.
10:16
²⁴ ^b Gen. 37:25;
²⁸ ^c Lit. *request a request*

So they answered, “As you *are*, so *were* they; each one resembled the son of a king.”

¹⁹Then he said, “They *were* my brothers, the sons of my mother. As the LORD lives, if you had let them live, I would not kill you.” ²⁰And he said to Jether his firstborn, “Rise, kill them!” But the youth would not draw his sword; for he was afraid, because he *was* still a youth.

²¹So Zebah and Zalmunna said, “Rise yourself, and kill us; for as a man *is*, so *is* his strength.” So Gideon arose and ^xkilled Zebah and Zalmunna, and took the crescent ornaments that *were* on their camels’ necks.

Gideon’s Ephod

²²Then the men of Israel said to Gideon, ^y“Rule over us, both you and your son, and your grandson also; for you have ^zdelivered us from the hand of Midian.”

²³But Gideon said to them, “I will not rule over you, nor shall my son rule over you; ⁴the LORD shall rule over you.”

²⁴Then Gideon said to them, “I would like to ⁶make a request of you, that each of you would give me the earrings from his plunder.” For they had golden earrings, ^bbecause they *were* Ishmaelites.

²⁵So they answered, “We will gladly give *them*.” And they spread out a garment, and each man threw into it the earrings from his plunder. ²⁶Now the weight of the gold earrings that he requested was one thousand seven hundred *shekels* of gold, besides the crescent ornaments,

8:11, 12 Gideon’s aggression contrasts sharply with the caution and fear so evident in ch. 6.

8:14 he wrote down for him the leaders: Literacy in early civilizations was at first limited to an educated elite, as in Mesopotamia and Egypt. Their writing systems were complex and only a tiny portion of the population could read and write. However, the spread of alphabetic systems vastly simplified the task of reading and writing. Hundreds of potsherds from throughout Palestine have simple inscriptions on them, indicating that some degree of literacy had become widely accessible by Gideon’s day. Even a youth whom Gideon happened upon wrote down for Gideon the names of 77 men.

8:18 The killings to which Gideon refers do not appear anywhere else in the text. The answer from the two kings was flattering: **As you are, so were they;** they compared Gideon to the son of a king. Gideon, despite his refusal of a kingship, was not immune to the vanity that royalty encouraged. By naming one of his sons Abimelech, which means “My Father Is King” (v. 31), he may have succumbed to the temptation of exalting himself as a king over Israel.

8:21 As a man is, so is his strength was a challenge to Gideon’s manhood, and Gideon responded by killing the two kings himself.

Crescent ornaments have been found at many sites in Palestine, but they are mentioned again only one other time in the Bible (Is. 3:18).

8:22 Immediately following his execution of the two kings, Gideon’s men asked him to **rule over them**. This request, while understandable from a human perspective (v. 18), failed to acknowledge that it was God, not Gideon, who had delivered His people.

8:23 Gideon’s answer was theologically correct: **the LORD shall**

rule over you. The word order of the Hebrew makes it clear that God’s claim was exclusive; it might be paraphrased, “It is the LORD, and no one else, who shall rule over you.” This statement is widely assumed to indicate that God intended that Israel should never have a king, but that He would be their only King. However, God had promised Abraham and his descendants that they would count kings among their descendants (Gen. 17:6, 16; 35:11; 49:10). When the people of Israel asked Gideon to rule because of his military success, Gideon could only refuse, since their motivation was flawed and shortsighted.

8:24–27 Despite Gideon’s theologically correct answer in v. 23, these verses show that he was not careful to lead Israel in true worship of the Lord. By making the ephod, he encouraged idolatry. The total weight of the offerings brought for making the ephod—**one thousand seven hundred shekels**—was impressive. Assuming the unit of weight here to be the shekel (it is not specified in the Hebrew text), the total weight was more than 42 pounds of gold (a shekel was about two-fifths of an ounce). The original **ephod** was an ornate ceremonial garment worn by the high priest (Ex. 28; 39). Some scholars believe that the ephod made by Gideon resembled an idol, but there is no clear indication here that this was the case. By placing the ephod in his own city, Gideon might have been “playing” at being judge. Perhaps tellingly, nowhere are we told that he “judged” Israel, whereas we read this of several of the other judges. After Gideon another man also made an ephod, with equally dismal results (17:5). **It became a snare** recalls the narrator’s introductory comment in 2:3.

pendants, and purple robes which *were* on the kings of Midian, and besides the chains that *were* around their camels' necks. ²⁷Then Gideon ^cmade it into an ephod and set it up in his city, ^dOphrah. And all Israel ^eplayed the harlot with it there. It became ^fa snare to Gideon and to his house.

²⁸Thus Midian was subdued before the children of Israel, so that they lifted their heads no more. ^gAnd the country was quiet for forty years in the days of Gideon.

Death of Gideon

²⁹Then ^hJerubbaal the son of Joash went and dwelt in his own house. ³⁰Gideon had ⁱseventy sons who were his own offspring, for he had many wives. ^{31j}And his concubine who *was* in Shechem also bore him a son, whose name he called Abimelech. ³²Now Gideon the son of Joash died ^kat a good old age, and was buried in the tomb of Joash his father, ^lin Ophrah of the Abiezrites.

³³So it was, ^mas soon as Gideon was dead, that the children of Israel again ⁿplayed the harlot with the Baals, ^oand made Baal-Berith their god. ³⁴Thus the children of Israel ^pdid not remember the LORD their God, who had delivered them from the hands of all their enemies on every side; ^{35q}nor did they show kindness to the house of Jerubbaal (Gideon) in accordance with the good he had done for Israel.

Abimelech's Conspiracy

⁹Then Abimelech the son of Jerubbaal went to Shechem, to ^ahis mother's brothers, and spoke with them and with all the family of the house of his mother's father, saying, ²"Please speak in the hearing of all the men of Shechem: 'Which is better for you, that all ^bseventy of the sons of Jerubbaal reign over you, or that

²⁷ ^c Judg. 17:5
^d Judg. 6:11, 24
^e [Ps. 106:39]
^f Deut. 7:16
²⁸ ^g Judg. 5:31
²⁹ ^h Judg. 6:32; 7:1
³⁰ ⁱ Judg. 9:2, 5
³¹ ^j Judg. 9:1
³² ^k Gen. 25:8; Job 5:26
³³ ^l Judg. 6:24; 8:27
³⁴ ^m Judg. 2:19
ⁿ Judg. 2:17 ^o Judg. 9:4, 46
³⁵ ^p Deut. 4:9; Judg. 3:7; Ps. 78:11, 42; 106:13, 21
³⁵ ^q Judg. 9:16-18

CHAPTER 9

¹ ^a Judg. 8:31, 35
² ^b Judg. 8:30; 9:5, 18

^c Gen. 29:14
³ ^d Gen. 29:15
⁴ ^e Judg. 8:33
^f Judg. 11:3; 2 Chr. 13:7; Acts 17:5
⁵ ^g Judg. 6:24
^h Judg. 8:30; 9:2, 18; 2 Kin. 11:1, 2
⁷ ⁱ Deut. 11:29; 27:12; Josh. 8:33; John 4:20
⁸ ^j 2 Kin. 14:9
^k Judg. 8:22, 23
⁹ ^l [John 5:23]

one reign over you?' Remember that I *am* your own flesh and ^ebone."

³And his mother's brothers spoke all these words concerning him in the hearing of all the men of Shechem; and their heart was inclined to follow Abimelech, for they said, "He is our ^dbrother." ⁴So they gave him seventy *shekels* of silver from the temple of ^eBaal-Berith, with which Abimelech hired ^fworthless and reckless men; and they followed him. ⁵Then he went to his father's house ^gat Ophrah and ^hkilled his brothers, the seventy sons of Jerubbaal, on one stone. But Jotham the youngest son of Jerubbaal was left, because he hid himself. ⁶And all the men of Shechem gathered together, all of Beth Millo, and they went and made Abimelech king beside the terebinth tree at the pillar that *was* in Shechem.

The Parable of the Trees

⁷Now when they told Jotham, he went and stood on top of ⁱMount Gerizim, and lifted his voice and cried out. And he said to them:

"Listen to me, you men of Shechem,
That God may listen to you!

⁸ "The ^jtrees once went forth to anoint a king over them.

And they said to the olive tree,
^k"Reign over us!"

⁹ But the olive tree said to them,
"Should I cease giving my oil,
^lWith which they honor God and men,
And go to sway over trees?"

¹⁰ "Then the trees said to the fig tree,
" You come *and* reign over us!"

¹¹ But the fig tree said to them,
"Should I cease my sweetness and my good fruit,
And go to sway over trees?"

8:29–32 This transitional section tells of Gideon's death, but also introduces Gideon's fateful legacy: his son Abimelech, whose violent story is told in ch. 9.

8:31 Although Gideon had 70 sons (v. 30), only **Abimelech** is mentioned by name. The name means "My Father Is King." Some scholars argue that Gideon did, in fact, become king, at least in practice if not in name, for he gave his son a royal name and acted as the people's leader (vv. 24–27).

8:33 **Baal-Berith** means "Baal of the Covenant," an ironic contrast to the covenant God of Israel whom the Israelites should have been worshiping. This god is also called "El-Berith" (9:46).

9:1–57 Abimelech's violent grab for power is the theme of ch. 9. The seeds of his offense were sown in Israel's persistent infidelity to God, which led to another rejection of the Lord (8:22, 24–27, 33–35).

9:1–6 Abimelech killed his own brothers to strengthen his royal claims. He began by traveling to Shechem, where ironically, Israel had reaffirmed the covenant years earlier (Josh. 24). He earned the

trust of the Shechemites (v. 2) and hired men to kill all his brothers but one. Abimelech was then made king at Shechem (v. 6).

9:4 **The temple of Baal-Berith** was a pagan sanctuary, a vivid sign of Israel's continuing apostasy (8:33). **worthless and reckless men:** Abimelech's character can certainly be judged by the company that he kept. The same can be said of Jephthah (11:3).

9:6 Sadly, the coronation took place at the **terebinth tree** where Jacob had put away his foreign gods many years before (Gen. 35:4). Here too, Joshua had commemorated his covenant with God (Josh. 24:26).

9:7–21 Jotham, the only brother of Abimelech who escaped, condemned Abimelech's treachery publicly by telling a fable—a story in which creatures take on human characteristics. In this fable, the noble trees of the forest reject a call to kingship, which is finally conferred on the lowly bramble bush (vv. 8–15). The fable indicts the Shechemites for choosing the ignoble Abimelech as king. The story is not an indictment of kings in general (8:23).

- 12^a “Then the trees said to the vine,
 ‘You come *and* reign over us!’
 13 But the vine said to them,
 ‘Should I cease my new wine,
^mWhich cheers *both* God and men,
 And go to sway over trees?’
 14 “Then all the trees said to the
 bramble,
 ‘You come *and* reign over us!’
 15 And the bramble said to the trees,
 ‘If in truth you anoint me as king
 over you,
Then come and take shelter in my
ⁿshade;
 But if not, ^olet fire come out of the
 bramble
 And devour the ^pcedars of Lebanon!’

16 “Now therefore, if you have acted in truth and sincerity in making Abimelech king, and if you have dealt well with Jerubbaal and his house, and have done to him ^qas ¹he deserves— ¹⁷for my ^rfather fought for you, risked his life, and ^sdelivered you out of the hand of Midian; ¹⁸but you have risen up against my father’s house this day, and killed his seventy sons on one stone, and made Abimelech, the son of his ^ufemale servant, king over the men of Shechem, because he is your brother— ¹⁹if then you have acted in truth and sincerity with Jerubbaal and with his house this day, *then* ^vrejoice in Abimelech, and let him also rejoice in you. ²⁰But if not, ^wlet fire come from Abimelech and devour the men of Shechem and Beth Millo; and let fire come from the men of Shechem and from Beth Millo and devour Abimelech!’
 21 And Jotham ran away and fled; and he

13 ^m Ps. 104:15
 15 ⁿ Is. 30:2; Dan. 4:12; Hos. 14:7
^o Num. 21:28; Judg. 9:20; Ezek. 19:14
^p 2 Kin. 14:9; Is. 2:13; Ezek. 31:3
 16 ^q Judg. 8:35
¹ Lit. *according to the doing of his hands*
 17 ^r Judg. 7 ^s Judg. 8:22
 18 ^t Judg. 8:30, 35; 9:2, 5, 6 ^u Judg. 8:31
 19 ^v Is. 8:6; [Phil. 3:3]
 20 ^w Judg. 9:15, 45, 56, 57

21 ^x Num. 21:16
 23 ^y 1 Kin. 12:15; Is. 19:14 ^z 1 Sam. 16:14; 18:9, 10; 1 Kin. 22:22; 2 Chr. 18:22 ^a Is. 33:1
 24 ^b 1 Kin. 2:32; Esth. 9:25; Matt. 23:35, 36 ^c Num. 35:33
 25 ^d Lit. *liers-in-wait for*
 27 ^e Judg. 9:4
³ rejoiced
 28 ^f 1 Sam. 25:10; 1 Kin. 12:16 ^g Gen. 34:2, 6; Josh. 24:32
 29 ^h 2 Sam. 15:4
⁴ Lit. *hand* ⁵ So with MT, Tg.; DSS they; LXX I

went to ^xBeer and dwelt there, for fear of Abimelech his brother.

Downfall of Abimelech

²² After Abimelech had reigned over Israel three years, ²³^y God sent a ^zspirit of ill will between Abimelech and the men of Shechem; and the men of Shechem ^adealt treacherously with Abimelech, ²⁴^b that the crime *done* to the seventy sons of Jerubbaal might be settled and their ^cblood be laid on Abimelech their brother, who killed them, and on the men of Shechem, who aided him in the killing of his brothers. ²⁵ And the men of Shechem set ²men in ambush against him on the tops of the mountains, and they robbed all who passed by them along that way; and it was told Abimelech.

²⁶ Now Gaal the son of Ebed came with his brothers and went over to Shechem; and the men of Shechem put their confidence in him. ²⁷ So they went out into the fields, and gathered *grapes* from their vineyards and trod *them*, and ³made merry. And they went into ^dthe house of their god, and ate and drank, and cursed Abimelech. ²⁸ Then Gaal the son of Ebed said, ^e“Who is Abimelech, and who is Shechem, that we should serve him? *Is he* not the son of Jerubbaal, and *is not* Zebul his officer? Serve the men of ^fHamor the father of Shechem; but why should we serve him? ²⁹^g If only this people were under my ⁴authority! Then I would remove Abimelech.” So ⁵he said to Abimelech, “Increase your army and come out!”

³⁰ When Zebul, the ruler of the city, heard the words of Gaal the son of Ebed,

9:20 let fire come: Jotham issued a warning to the people of Shechem—fire would devour them and Abimelech too if they had not acted properly. The threat was fulfilled when fire devoured a large number of Shechemites and Abimelech was killed by a Shechemite woman (vv. 49, 54).

9:22–25 Very quickly the harmony between the Shechemites and Abimelech disintegrated. Abimelech, who relied on the Shechemites to rise to power, now became the target of their lawlessness (vv. 22–25). This discord spread into open revolt under Gaal son of Ebed (vv. 26–33). Abimelech quelled the revolt and leveled Shechem in the process (vv. 34–45). He also burned Shechem’s stronghold, its tower (vv. 46–49). Abimelech himself came to a violent end at nearby Thebez (vv. 50–55).

9:23 A spirit of ill will can be translated literally “an evil spirit.” The only other person in Scripture whose affliction is described with these words is Saul (1 Sam. 16:14, 15, 16, 23; 18:10; 19:9). Here, the spirit causes dissension between Abimelech and the Shechemites. Some scholars think God sent a demon to possess Saul and to afflict Abimelech and the Shechemites, but this goes against our understanding of God’s nature. The most probable explanation is that God was responsible for the estrangement between the two sides, because both parties had sinned (9:1–6) and merited judgment. Abimelech had made himself king through a treacherous act, and he exercised authority poorly when in power. Saul, too, came to

power because of the ill-advised wishes of the people of Israel, and he quickly demonstrated his unsuitability for the office despite his clear anointing. Significantly, it is the next king, David, who holds up the standard for Israel’s future rulers.

sincerity

(Heb. *tamim*) (9:16, 19; Gen. 6:9; Deut. 18:13) Strong’s #8549

This word means “unblemished,” “blameless,” or “perfect.” The Lord required that offerings dedicated to Him be unblemished (Lev. 22:21; Num. 6:14). The term can also be used to describe a people (2 Sam. 22:24; Ps. 119:80) or a course of action (Prov. 11:20; 28:18) that is blameless. The Bible describes Noah this way (Gen. 6:9), although he was not completely without fault (Gen. 9:21). In declaring His covenant to Abraham, the Lord commanded His servant to be blameless (Gen. 17:1). In his farewell discourse, Moses gave the charge to the children of Israel to be blameless (Deut. 18:13). Many years later Joshua did likewise, exhorting the people to serve the Lord in sincerity and in truth (Josh. 24:14).

his anger was aroused. ³¹And he sent messengers to Abimelech secretly, saying, “Take note! Gaal the son of Ebed and his brothers have come to Shechem; and here they are, fortifying the city against you. ³²Now therefore, get up by night, you and the people who *are* with you, and ⁶lie in wait in the field. ³³And it shall be, as soon as the sun is up in the morning, *that* you shall rise early and rush upon the city; and *when* he and the people who are with him come out against you, you may then do to them ⁷as you find opportunity.”

³⁴So Abimelech and all the people who *were* with him rose by night, and ⁸lay in wait against Shechem in four companies. ³⁵When Gaal the son of Ebed went out and stood in the entrance to the city gate, Abimelech and the people who *were* with him rose from lying in wait. ³⁶And when Gaal saw the people, he said to Zebul, “Look, people are coming down from the tops of the mountains!”

But Zebul said to him, “You see the shadows of the mountains as *if they were* men.”

³⁷So Gaal spoke again and said, “See, people are coming down from the center of the land, and another company is coming from the ⁹Diviners’ Terebinth Tree.”

³⁸Then Zebul said to him, “Where indeed is your mouth now, with which you ^hsaid, ‘Who is Abimelech, that we should serve him?’ *Are* not these the people whom you despised? Go out, if you will, and fight with them now.”

³⁹So Gaal went out, leading the men of Shechem, and fought with Abimelech. ⁴⁰And Abimelech chased him, and he fled from him; and many fell wounded, to the *very* entrance of the gate. ⁴¹Then Abimelech dwelt at Arumah, and Zebul ¹drove out Gaal and his brothers, so that they would not dwell in Shechem.

⁴²And it came about on the next day that the people went out into the field, and they told Abimelech. ⁴³So he took his people, divided them into three companies, and lay in wait in the field.

32 ⁶ Set up an ambush
33 ⁷ Lit. *as your hand can find*
34 ⁸ Set up an ambush
37 ⁹ Heb. *Meonenim*
38 ^h Judg. 9:28, 29
41 ¹ exiled

And he looked, and there were the people, coming out of the city; and he rose against them and ²attacked them. ⁴⁴Then Abimelech and the company that *was* with him rushed forward and stood at the entrance of the gate of the city; and the *other* two companies rushed upon all who *were* in the fields and killed them. ⁴⁵So Abimelech fought against the city all that day; ⁱhe took the city and killed the people who *were* in it; and he ^jdemolished the city and sowed it with salt.

⁴⁶Now when all the men of the tower of Shechem had heard *that*, they entered the ³stronghold of the temple ^kof the god Berith. ⁴⁷And it was told Abimelech that all the men of the tower of Shechem were gathered together. ⁴⁸Then Abimelech went up to Mount ^lZalmon, he and all the people who *were* with him. And Abimelech took an ax in his hand and cut down a bough from the trees, and took it and laid *it* on his shoulder; then he said to the people who were with him, “What you have seen me do, make haste *and* do as I *have done*.” ⁴⁹So each of the people likewise cut down his own bough and followed Abimelech, put *them* against the ⁴stronghold, and set the stronghold on fire above them, so that all the people of the tower of Shechem died, about a thousand men and women.

⁵⁰Then Abimelech went to Thebez, and he ⁵encamped against Thebez and took it. ⁵¹But there was a strong tower in the city, and all the men and women—all the people of the city—fled there and shut themselves in; then they went up to the top of the tower. ⁵²So Abimelech came as far as the tower and fought against it; and he drew near the door of the tower to burn it with fire. ⁵³But a certain woman ^mdropped an upper millstone on Abimelech’s head and crushed his skull. ⁵⁴Then ⁿhe called quickly to the young man, his armorbearer, and said to him, “Draw your sword and kill me, lest men say of me, ‘A woman killed him.’” So his young man thrust him through, and he died. ⁵⁵And when the men of Israel saw

43 ² Lit. *struck*
45 ⁱ Judg. 9:20
/ Deut. 29:23; 2 Kin. 3:25
46 ^k Judg. 8:33
³ fortified room
48 ^l Ps. 68:14
49 ⁴ fortified room
50 ⁵ besieged
53 ^m 2 Sam. 11:21
54 ⁿ 1 Sam. 31:4

9:37, 38 the Diviners’ Terebinth Tree: On trees as landmarks, see 6:11. **Where indeed is your mouth now** is Zebul’s challenge to Gaal, taunting him to back up the boastful words he had uttered earlier (v. 28).

9:43 Interestingly, Abimelech divided his forces into **three companies** to attack Shechem, perhaps in conscious imitation of his father’s success with three companies of men (7:16).

9:45 Sowing Shechem **with salt** turned it into a barren, uninhabitable desert. See the association of salt and barrenness in Jer. 17:6.

9:46 the temple of the god Berith: In Hebrew, the last phrase reads “El-Berith.” *El* can be translated “god,” but it was also the name of a well-known Canaanite god, the father of Baal. The “god Berith” means El-Berith, the Baal-Berith named in 8:33.

9:48 The location of **Mount Zalmon** is uncertain. Some scholars identify it with Mount Ebal, just northwest of Shechem. Others identify it with Mount Gerizim, also near Shechem. The snow-covered Mount Zalmon mentioned in Ps. 68:14 appears to be a different place.

9:53 an upper millstone: Mills used for grinding grain were typically made with two large stones. The upper one was moved back and forth or rotated on the lower one, and the grain was ground between them. An upper millstone would have easily crushed Abimelech’s skull, as this verse asserts.

9:54 kill me: Being killed by a woman was a disgrace to a warrior.

that Abimelech was dead, they departed, every man to his ⁶place.

⁵⁶Thus God repaid the wickedness of Abimelech, which he had done to his father by killing his seventy brothers. ⁵⁷And all the evil of the men of Shechem God returned on their own heads, and on them came ⁷the curse of Jotham the son of Jerubbaal.

Tola

10 After Abimelech there ^aarose to save Israel Tola the son of Puah, the son of Dodo, a man of Issachar; and he dwelt in Shamir in the mountains of Ephraim. ²He judged Israel twenty-three years; and he died and was buried in Shamir.

Jair

³After him arose Jair, a Gileadite; and he judged Israel twenty-two years. ⁴Now he had thirty sons who ^brode on thirty donkeys; they also had thirty towns, ^cwhich are called ¹“Havoth Jair” to this day, which ^{are} in the land of Gilead. ⁵And Jair died and was buried in Camon.

Israel Oppressed Again

⁶Then ^dthe children of Israel again did evil in the sight of the LORD, and ^eserved the Baals and the Ashtoreths, ^fthe gods of Syria, the gods of ^gSidon, the gods of

⁵⁵ ⁶home
⁵⁶ ^o Judg. 9:24; Job 31:3; Prov. 5:22
⁵⁷ ^p Judg. 9:20

CHAPTER 10

¹ ^a Judg. 2:16
⁴ ^b Judg. 5:10; 12:14
^c Deut. 3:14 ¹ Lit. Towns of Jair, Num. 32:41; Deut. 3:14
⁶ ^d Judg. 2:11; 3:7; 6:1; 13:1 ^e Judg. 2:13
^f Judg. 2:12 ⁹ 1 Kin. 11:33; Ps. 106:36

⁷ ^h Judg. 2:14; 4:2; 1 Sam. 12:9 ^j Judg. 13:1 ^j Judg. 3:13
⁸ ^k Num. 32:33
² Lit. shattered
¹⁰ ^j Judg. 6:6; 1 Sam. 12:10
^m Deut. 1:41
¹¹ ⁿ Ex. 14:30
^o Num. 21:21, 24, 25 ^p Judg. 3:12, 13
^q Judg. 3:31
¹² ^r Judg. 1:31; 5:19
^s Judg. 6:3; 7:12 ^t Ps. 106:42, 43 ³ LXX mss. Midianites
¹³ ^u [Deut. 32:15; Judg. 2:12; Jer. 2:13]
¹⁴ ^v Deut. 32:37, 38

Moab, the gods of the people of Ammon, and the gods of the Philistines; and they forsook the LORD and did not serve Him. ⁷So the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel; and He ^hsold them into the hands of the ⁱPhilistines and into the hands of the people of ^jAmmon. ⁸From that year they ²harassed and oppressed the children of Israel for eighteen years—all the children of Israel who ^{were} on the other side of the Jordan in the ^kland of the Amorites, in Gilead. ⁹Moreover the people of Ammon crossed over the Jordan to fight against Judah also, against Benjamin, and against the house of Ephraim, so that Israel was severely distressed.

¹⁰And the children of Israel cried out to the LORD, saying, “We have ^msinned against You, because we have both forsaken our God and served the Baals!”

¹¹So the LORD said to the children of Israel, “*Did I not deliver you* ⁿfrom the Egyptians and ^ofrom the Amorites and ^pfrom the people of Ammon and ^qfrom the Philistines? ¹²Also ^rthe Sidonians ^sand Amalekites and ³Maonites ^toppressed you; and you cried out to Me, and I delivered you from their hand. ¹³Yet you have forsaken Me and served other gods. Therefore I will deliver you no more. ¹⁴Go and ^vcry out to the gods which you have chosen; let them deliver you in your time of distress.”

¹⁵And the children of Israel said to the

9:56–57 The key to understanding Abimelech’s fate may be found in the comments in vv. 23, 24, 56, 57. He was not a true king; he had established his reign through murder. God actively intervened against Abimelech, repaying his evil act of murdering his brothers. Note that his sin was murder (v. 56), not declaring himself king. Jotham’s use of the fable proved to be prophetic: the fire that devoured the cedars (vv. 15, 20) would burn up both Shechem and Abimelech (vv. 49, 53).

10:1, 2 Tola was the sixth judge, the second of the minor judges (Shamgar was the first). He arose to **save** Israel, perhaps a necessary deed after the reign of Abimelech. This brief account echoes the time of Deborah in several ways (compare 4:4, 5; 5:7).

10:3–5 Jair was the seventh judge, the third minor judge, and he judged Israel for 22 years. He was rather well off (v. 4), and he lived in Gilead, east of the Jordan, as would the next judge, Jephthah (11:1). Jair’s abundance of children forms a sharp contrast with Jephthah’s childlessness in the next chapter. (See also 12:8–10.)

10:4 thirty donkeys . . . thirty towns: Literally, the Hebrew has “thirty donkeys . . . thirty donkeys.” However, the word used here for *donkeys* is an unusual one that resembles the Hebrew word for *towns*. A later scribe mistakenly repeated the word for donkey.

10:6–12:7 Jephthah was the eighth judge. Like those of Deborah and Gideon, his story is relatively detailed. Jephthah freed Israel from Ammonite oppression, but suffered a personal tragedy of his own making in the process.

10:6–18 A lengthy introduction precedes the story of Jephthah. These verses repeat the themes of apostasy and God’s unfailing mercy. A new theme here is the emphasis on Israel’s confession and repentance (vv. 10, 15, 16).

10:6 The gods of Syria . . . Sidon . . . Moab . . . Ammon . . . the Philistines demonstrate the extent of Israel’s idolatry. Not only did the people worship the major Canaanite gods (Baal, Asherah,

Ashtoreth), but they also absorbed the religions of other groups. The more extensive list here indicates the depths of Israel’s decline. The lists earlier in the book merely mention the Baals, Ashtoreths, and Asherahs (for example, at 2:13; 3:7). Seven gods are mentioned here, a symbolic number that forms a counterpoint to the seven nations mentioned in vv. 11, 12.

10:7 The Philistines and . . . the people of Ammon were the Israelites’ principal adversaries at this time. The next two major judges—Jephthah and Samson—were God’s instruments against these two groups, Jephthah against the Ammonites and Samson against the Philistines.

10:11, 12 In these two verses, we find seven peoples from whom God had already delivered the Israelites: **Egyptians:** God had dramatically saved Israel from Egyptian oppression (Ex. 14; 15); **Amorites:** God had rescued His people from Sihon and Og, kings of the Amorites (Josh. 2:10); **Ammon:** The Ammonites had been part of a coalition under Eglon, whom Ehud defeated (3:13); **Philistines:** Shamgar had already won a victory over the Philistines (3:31); **Sidonians:** There is no record of a previous triumph, but these people were among Israel’s oppressors (3:3), and they might well have been part of the Canaanite coalition mentioned in 4:2. **Amalekites:** They had already opposed the Israelites in the time of the judges (3:13; 6:3), and their enmity with Israel went back much further (Ex. 17:8–16). God had given relief in each case. The **Maonites** appear later in Israel’s history as adversaries (2 Chr. 20:1; 26:7 [Meunites]), but they are not mentioned earlier. Possibly what is meant is the Midianites, a people who had been defeated by Gideon (chs. 7; 8). The symbolic number seven, representing completeness, is probably the most important element here, especially when we note that seven groups of gods are mentioned in v. 6.

10:14 The gods which you have chosen is a response of confrontation. The Israelites “chose new gods” at the time of Deborah

LORD, “We have sinned! ¹⁰Do to us whatever seems best to You; only deliver us this day, we pray.” ^{16x}So they put away the foreign gods from among them and served the LORD. And ¹⁷His soul could no longer endure the misery of Israel.

¹⁷Then the people of Ammon gathered together and encamped in Gilead. And the children of Israel assembled together and encamped in ¹⁸Mizpah. ¹⁸And the people, the leaders of Gilead, said to one another, “Who is the man who will begin the fight against the people of Ammon? He shall ^abe head over all the inhabitants of Gilead.”

Jephthah

11 Now ^aJephthah the Gileadite was ^ba mighty man of valor, but he was the son of a harlot; and Gilead begot Jephthah. ²Gilead’s wife bore sons; and when his wife’s sons grew up, they drove Jephthah out, and said to him, “You shall have ^cno inheritance in our father’s house, for you *are* the son of another woman.” ³Then Jephthah fled from his brothers and dwelt in the land of ^dTob; and ^eworthless men banded together with Jephthah and went out *raiding* with him.

⁴It came to pass after a time that the *f*people of Ammon made war against Israel. ⁵And so it was, when the people of Ammon made war against Israel, that the elders of Gilead went to get Jephthah

15 ^w 1 Sam. 3:18;
2 Sam. 15:26
16 ^x 2 Chr. 7:14; Jer.
18:7, 8 ^y Ps. 106:44,
45; Is. 63:9
17 ^z Gen. 31:49;
Judg. 11:11, 29
18 ^a Judg. 11:8, 11

CHAPTER 11
1 ^a Heb. 11:32
^b Judg. 6:12; 2 Kin.
5:1
2 ^c Gen. 21:10;
Deut. 23:2
3 ^d 2 Sam. 10:6, 8
^e 1 Sam. 22:2
4 ^f Judg. 10:9, 17

7 ^g Gen. 26:27
¹ trouble
8 ^h Judg. 10:18
ⁱ [Luke 17:4] ^j Judg.
10:18 ² returned
10 ^k Gen. 31:49, 50;
Jer. 29:23; 42:5
11 ^l Judg. 11:8
^m Judg. 10:17; 20:1;
1 Sam. 10:17
12 ⁿ 2 Sam. 16:10

from the land of Tob. ⁶Then they said to Jephthah, “Come and be our commander, that we may fight against the people of Ammon.”

⁷So Jephthah said to the elders of Gilead, ⁸“Did you not hate me, and expel me from my father’s house? Why have you come to me now when you are in ¹distress?”

^{8h} And the elders of Gilead said to Jephthah, “That is why we have ¹turned ²again to you now, that you may go with us and fight against the people of Ammon, and be ^jour head over all the inhabitants of Gilead.”

⁹So Jephthah said to the elders of Gilead, “If you take me back home to fight against the people of Ammon, and the LORD delivers them to me, shall I be your head?”

¹⁰And the elders of Gilead said to Jephthah, ^k“The LORD will be a witness between us, if we do not do according to your words.” ¹¹Then Jephthah went with the elders of Gilead, and the people made him ^lhead and commander over them; and Jephthah spoke all his words ^mbefore the LORD in Mizpah.

¹²Now Jephthah sent messengers to the king of the people of Ammon, saying, ⁿ“What do you have against me, that you have come to fight against me in my land?”

¹³And the king of the people of Ammon answered the messengers of Jephthah,

(5:8). When Israel cried out to God, He reminded them again of their faithless ways. Other examples of confrontation include the Angel’s indictment (2:1–5) and the prophet’s message (6:7–10).

10:16 Not only is God a God of great justice; He is a God of great mercy, as the phrase **His soul could no longer endure the misery of Israel** reminds us. Despite their constant sinning and backsliding, God still loved the Israelites and shared their misery, much as parents are moved by their children’s suffering.

11:1–3 Jephthah, like Jair before him (10:3), was from Gilead. He was a “mighty man of valor,” but he was illegitimate, which caused his half brothers to expel him from his father’s house. Like Abimelech before him (9:4), he attracted “worthless men” (v. 3), which did not bode well for his future. The territory of **Gilead** was in the northern part of the territory east of the Jordan (Josh. 17:1, 3; 5:17). The **Gileadites** were descended from a man named Gilead (Num. 26:29, 30; 27:1; 36:1), as was Jephthah himself. In this passage and in Josh. 17:1, 3, the term refers both to a region and a person. **mighty man of valor**: See Josh. 1:14. **The land of Tob** is probably an area east of Gilead. Ironically, its name means “Good,” a quality that Jephthah certainly lacked.

11:4–6 After negotiations and consultation with God, Jephthah was commissioned as head and commander over Israel. **after a time**: We return to the narrative left off in 10:17, 18 (see 11:1–3). **Come and be our commander**: Here we see a leader for Israel being commissioned by the people. God is given little place in the proceedings other than to confirm the choice (v. 10), another sign of spiritual deterioration. A **commander** was someone who performed some of the functions of a judge, but it is perhaps significant that the word *judge* is not used here since God was the only One who raised up judges.

11:8 **That you may go with us and fight** is almost the same

phrase that the Israelites used when they asked Samuel for a king in 1 Sam. 8:20: “that our king may . . . go out before us and fight.” In both cases, even though God gave them the permission they sought, the request was improper.

11:10 The LORD will be a witness: Literally, “The LORD will be listening.” This is not the normal Hebrew word for “witness” used in covenant-making ceremonies (Deut. 30:19; Josh. 24:22), but the sense is the same. God is called to be a witness to the covenant agreement (1 Sam. 20:12).

11:11 The people made Jephthah **head and commander** because he had demanded somewhat opportunistically to be their “head” as the price for helping them as “commander,” so in the end he was made both. Jephthah’s **words before the LORD** are a strange mixture of faith and foolishness. While Jephthah did acknowledge God here and later (11:21, 23, 27, 30, 31; 12:3), his self-interest and foolishness often overruled his faith. The Book of Hebrews has a more positive view of Jephthah than does Judges: Gideon, Barak, Samson, and Jephthah, along with others, are listed as examples of those “who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions” (Heb. 11:32, 33). Undoubtedly they demonstrated faith that allowed God to “subdue kingdoms” through them, but just as clearly the Book of Judges reveals some of their less-than-admirable characteristics.

11:12–28 A lengthy account now covers diplomatic negotiations between Jephthah and the Ammonites, consisting largely of an impressive speech from Jephthah through messengers to the king of Ammon. Interestingly enough, Jephthah’s name means “He Opens.” **Israel took away my land**: The Ammonites claimed that Israel had taken their land. Jephthah responded with a careful rebuttal. He declared that **the LORD God of Israel** Himself had dispossessed these peoples (vv. 21, 23, 24) and that Israel was not an aggressor

^o“Because Israel took away my land when they came up out of Egypt, from ^pthe Arnon as far as ^qthe Jabbok, and to the Jordan. Now therefore, restore those *lands* peaceably.”

¹⁴So Jephthah again sent messengers to the king of the people of Ammon, ¹⁵and said to him, “Thus says Jephthah: ^r‘Israel did not take away the land of Moab, nor the land of the people of Ammon; ¹⁶for when Israel came up from Egypt, they walked through the wilderness as far as the Red Sea and ^scame to Kadesh. ¹⁷Then ^tIsrael sent messengers to the king of Edom, saying, ‘Please let me pass through your land.’ ^uBut the king of Edom would not heed. And in like manner they sent to the ^vking of Moab, but he would not *consent*. So Israel ^wremained in Kadesh. ¹⁸And they ^xwent along through the wilderness and ^ybypassed the land of Edom and the land of Moab, came to the east side of the land of Moab, and encamped on the other side of the Arnon. But they did not enter the border of Moab, for the Arnon *was* the border of Moab. ¹⁹Then ^zIsrael sent messengers to Sihon king of the Amorites, king of Heshbon; and Israel said to him, ‘Please ^alet us pass through your land into our place.’ ^{20b}But Sihon did not trust Israel to pass through his territory. So Sihon gathered all his people together, encamped in Jahaz, and fought against Israel. ²¹And the LORD God of Israel ^cdelivered Sihon and all his people into the hand of Israel, and they ^ddefeated³ them. Thus Israel gained possession of all the land of the Amorites, who inhabited that country. ²²They took possession of ^eall

¹³ ^o Num. 21:24–26
^p Josh. 13:9 ^q Gen. 32:22
¹⁵ ^r Deut. 2:9, 19
¹⁶ ^s Num. 13:26; 20:1
¹⁷ ^t Num. 20:14
¹⁸ ^u Num. 20:14–21
^v Josh. 24:9 ^w Num. 20:1
¹⁸ ^x Deut. 2:9, 18, 19
^y Num. 21:4
¹⁹ ^z Num. 21:21; Deut. 2:26–36
²⁰ ^a Num. 21:22; Deut. 2:27
²⁰ ^b Num. 21:23; Deut. 2:27
²¹ ^c Josh. 24:8
^d Num. 21:24, 25
³ ^e *Lit. struck*
²² ^e Deut. 2:36, 37

²³ ⁴ *driven out*
²⁴ ^f Num. 21:29;
¹ Kin. 11:7; Jer. 48:7
^g [Deut. 9:4, 5; Josh. 3:10]
²⁵ ^h Num. 22:2;
^{Josh. 24:9; Mic. 6:5}
²⁶ ⁱ Num. 21:25, 26
^j Deut. 2:36
²⁷ ^k Gen. 18:25
^l Gen. 16:5; 31:53;
¹ Sam. 24:12, 15]
²⁹ ^m Judg. 3:10
³⁰ ⁿ Gen. 28:20;
^{Num. 30:2; 1 Sam. 1:11}
³¹ ^o Lev. 27:2, 3, 28;
¹ Sam. 1:11

the territory of the Amorites, from the Arnon to the Jabbok and from the wilderness to the Jordan.

²³‘And now the LORD God of Israel has ⁴dispossessed the Amorites from before His people Israel; should you then possess it? ²⁴Will you not possess whatever ^fChemosh your god gives you to possess? So whatever ^gthe LORD our God takes possession of before us, we will possess. ²⁵And now, *are* you any better than ^hBalak the son of Zippor, king of Moab? Did he ever strive against Israel? Did he ever fight against them? ²⁶While Israel dwelt in ⁱHeshbon and its villages, in ^jAroer and its villages, and in all the cities along the banks of the Arnon, for three hundred years, why did you not recover *them* within that time? ²⁷Therefore I have not sinned against you, but you wronged me by fighting against me. May the LORD, ^kthe Judge, ^lrender judgment this day between the children of Israel and the people of Ammon.’” ²⁸However, the king of the people of Ammon did not heed the words which Jephthah sent him.

Jephthah's Vow and Victory

²⁹Then ^mthe Spirit of the LORD came upon Jephthah, and he passed through Gilead and Manasseh, and passed through Mizpah of Gilead; and from Mizpah of Gilead he advanced *toward* the people of Ammon. ³⁰And Jephthah ⁿmade a vow to the LORD, and said, “If You will indeed deliver the people of Ammon into my hands, ³¹then it will be that whatever comes out of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace from the people of Ammon, ^oshall

but merely a recipient of the Lord's generosity. The Ammonites had brought their misfortune upon themselves by hindering Israel's advance into the Promised Land. Israel would not have taken Ammonite land, since God had expressly commanded them not to (Deut. 2:19). Later, Sihon king of the Amorites had taken some Ammonite territory (Num. 21:26), and then Israel had taken Sihon's land (Num. 21:25). Thus the Ammonites were only indirectly affected by Israel's expansion. In addition, the Ammonites never really had true claim to the land to begin with; it was in fact the land of the Amorites (vv. 19–22; Num. 21:24 also rebuts the Ammonites' claim). Also, Israel had occupied the land in dispute for at least 300 years, long enough to make a legitimate claim on it (v. 26). Jephthah ended his speech with an appeal to God to judge the opposing claims (v. 27).

11:17 The review of the past in this and the following verses recalls the events in the wilderness described in Num. 20:14–21.

11:24 **Whatever Chemosh your god gives you** was a derisive jab at the Ammonites' deity. Jephthah's point was that Israel's God had given His people much territory, whereas Chemosh, the god of the Ammonites, had done very little for them. The reference to Chemosh as an Ammonite god is unexpected, since elsewhere the Ammonites' god is named Molech (1 Kin. 11:7) or Milcom (1 Kin. 11:5, 33; 2 Kin. 23:13). Chemosh is customarily associated with the Moabites (1 Kin. 11:7, 33). However, Ammon and Moab lived side by side and shared a common heritage, both nations having descended from Lot (Gen. 19:37, 38). The two are often mentioned together

(see 3:12, 13; Deut. 2:18, 19; 23:3–5), including in v. 15 in this chapter. It is likely that the two nations shared cultural and religious ideas, including the worship of Chemosh.

11:26 **Three hundred years** may be an approximation, but it still gives us an important clue for determining the date of the Exodus and understanding how long the period of the judges lasted.

11:27 **the Lord, the Judge:** This is the only place in the Book of Judges where a single individual is specifically called a judge. Significantly, it is a name of God. He ultimately was—and is—the source of all justice. He has the right to judge every man and woman. With His divine authority and power, God always judges with justice, while at the same time He is loving, compassionate, and perfect.

11:29–40 The conflict with the Ammonites escalated, ending with Jephthah's victory aided by the Spirit of the Lord (vv. 29, 32, 33). However, the narrative focuses on his rash vow (vv. 30, 31, 34–40). To induce God to help him, Jephthah promised to sacrifice to the Lord whatever came out of his house to meet him upon his victorious return. This misguided pledge demonstrated a clear lack of faith, since earlier Jephthah had indicated that he believed God would intervene on his behalf (vv. 9, 27). Note that the Spirit of the Lord had come upon him before he made his vow (v. 29). The tragic result of Jephthah's vow was the sacrifice of his only child—his daughter.

11:31 Some have interpreted Jephthah's vow **whatever comes out of the doors** as a clear intention to offer a human sacrifice. His surprise then is not that he had to sacrifice a human being, but that

surely be the LORD's, ²and I will offer it up as a burnt offering."

³²So Jephthah advanced toward the people of Ammon to fight against them, and the LORD delivered them into his hands. ³³And he ⁵defeated them from Aroer as far as ⁹Minnith—twenty cities—and to ⁶Abel Keramim, with a very great slaughter. Thus the people of Ammon were subdued before the children of Israel.

Jephthah's Daughter

³⁴When Jephthah came to his house at Mizpah, there was ³his daughter, coming out to meet him with timbrels and dancing; and she *was his* only child. Besides her he had neither son nor daughter. ³⁵And it came to pass, when he saw her, that he ¹tore his clothes, and said, "Alas, my daughter! You have brought me very low! You are among those who trouble me! For I ⁴have ⁷given my word to the LORD, and ²I cannot ⁸go back on it."

³⁶So she said to him, "My father, if you have given your word to the LORD, ¹⁰do to me according to what has gone out of your mouth, because ^xthe LORD has avenged you of your enemies, the people of Ammon." ³⁷Then she said to her father, "Let this thing be done for me: let me alone for two months, that I may go and wander on the mountains and ⁹bewail my virginity, my ¹friends and I."

³⁸So he said, "Go." And he sent her away for two months; and she went with her friends, and bewailed her virginity

³¹ ^p Ps. 66:13
³³ ^a Ezek. 27:17
⁵ Lit. struck ⁶ Lit. Plain of Vineyards
³⁴ ^r Judg. 10:17;
11:11 ^s Ex. 15:20;
1 Sam. 18:6; Ps.
68:25; Jer. 31:4
³⁵ ^t Gen. 37:29,
34 ^u Eccl. 5:2, 4, 5
^v Num. 30:2 ⁷ Lit.
opened my mouth
⁸ Lit. take it back
³⁶ ^w Num. 30:2
^x 2 Sam. 18:19, 31
³⁷ ⁹ lament
¹ companions

³⁹ ^y Judg. 11:31
² Remained a virgin
⁴⁰ ³ commemorate

CHAPTER 12

¹ ^a Judg. 8:1 ¹ were
summoned
³ ^b 1 Sam. 19:5;
28:21; Job 13:14
⁴ ^c 1 Sam. 25:10
⁵ Josh. 22:11

on the mountains. ³⁹And it was so at the end of two months that she returned to her father, and he ^ycarried out his vow with her which he had vowed. She ²knew no man.

And it became a custom in Israel ⁴⁰that the daughters of Israel went four days each year to ³lament the daughter of Jephthah the Gileadite.

Jephthah's Conflict with Ephraim

12 Then ^athe men of Ephraim ¹gathered together, crossed over toward Zaphon, and said to Jephthah, "Why did you cross over to fight against the people of Ammon, and did not call us to go with you? We will burn your house down on you with fire!"

²And Jephthah said to them, "My people and I were in a great struggle with the people of Ammon; and when I called you, you did not deliver me out of their hands. ³So when I saw that you would not deliver *me*, I ^btook my life in my hands and crossed over against the people of Ammon; and the LORD delivered them into my hand. Why then have you come up to me this day to fight against me?" ⁴Now Jephthah gathered together all the men of Gilead and fought against Ephraim. And the men of Gilead defeated Ephraim, because they said, "You Gileadites ^care fugitives of Ephraim among the Ephraimites *and* among the Manassites." ⁵The Gileadites seized the ^dfords of the Jordan before the Ephraimites *arrived*. And when *any* Ephraimite who escaped

the unfortunate person was his daughter. The phrase **to meet me** seems to refer more appropriately to a human than to an animal, and it is difficult to see why Jephthah would try to persuade God by offering a common animal sacrifice. Undoubtedly, Jephthah knew that human sacrifice was strictly forbidden in Israel (Lev. 18:21; 20:2; Deut. 12:31; 18:10; Jer. 19:5; Ezek. 20:30, 31; 23:37, 39), but his foolishness and lack of faith impelled him to make a reckless vow in order to try to manipulate God (11:39).

11:35 I have given my word is literally "I have opened my mouth." In light of his eloquent speech to the Ammonites (vv. 15–27), it is ironic that he "opened his mouth" once too often in making this vow. But did Jephthah have to follow through on his vow? Ordinarily the answer would be yes. Vows were made only to God, and they were solemn pledges that had to be kept. People were not forced to take them, but if they did, they had to be honored (Deut. 23:21–23; Ps. 15:4; Eccl. 5:4, 5). But Jephthah had vowed something sinful in itself if his intent was to make a human sacrifice in the literal sense.

11:39 Those who believe that Jephthah intended to sacrifice a human being must also ponder whether Jephthah carried out his vow. The text does not explicitly say that he killed his daughter, only that **he carried out his vow**. When the verse goes on to say that **she knew no man**, some take this to mean that she was "sacrificed" by being dedicated to a life of perpetual virginity. Several arguments can be made for this interpretation. First, human sacrifice was contrary to the law of Moses (Lev. 18:21; 20:2–5; Deut. 12:31; 18:10). Second, the great respect that Jephthah had for God surely would have prevented him from making such a perverse offering. Third, the fact that Jephthah permitted his daughter to bewail her

virginity (vv. 37, 38) for two months fits an explanation of perpetual virginity better than human sacrifice. Fourth, the indication that his daughter "knew no man" also seems to be a detail that would support the idea of celibacy. Fifth, the Bible provides evidence that such devoted service for women did exist at the central sanctuary (Ex. 38:8; 1 Sam. 2:22; Luke 2:36, 37). Sixth, the conjunction in Jephthah's pivotal statement in v. 31, that whatever or whoever came out of the door "shall be the LORD's, and I will offer it up as a burnt offering" could be translated *or*. Thus, if a person came out first, he would dedicate that person to the LORD, or if an animal came out first, he would offer the animal as a burnt sacrifice.

12:1–7 A final episode, in which the tribe of Ephraim sulks because they were left out of the battle, is similar to an incident when the same tribe challenged Gideon (8:1–3). However in the first incident, Gideon placated Ephraim, whereas in the second, Jephthah did not, and a civil war erupted. The Ephraimites were defeated, and that tribe does not play an important role in Israel's subsequent history.

12:4 You Gileadites are fugitives of Ephraim is the taunt that triggers the civil war. The insult may have its roots in the division of the nation into eastern and western groups (5:17; Josh. 1:12–15). Despite the emphasis in Joshua on the unity of all the tribes (Josh. 1:12–15; 22:1–34), the practical reality in the period of the judges was dramatically different. As in so many other ways, the life of the tribes deteriorated here also.

12:5 The fords of the Jordan were crossing points of strategic military value. Earlier on, the Israelites under Ehud had seized the fords and held them against the Moabites (3:28, 29). Under Gideon they had seized the "watering places," another name for the same place (7:24).

said, “Let me cross over,” the men of Gilead would say to him, “*Are you an Ephraimite?*” If he said, “No,” ⁶then they would say to him, “Then say, ‘*Shibboleth!*’” ² And he would say, “*Sibboleth,*” for he could not ³pronounce *it* right. Then they would take him and kill him at the fords of the Jordan. There fell at that time forty-two thousand Ephraimites.

⁷ And Jephthah judged Israel six years. Then Jephthah the Gileadite died and was buried among the cities of Gilead.

Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon

⁸ After him, Ibzan of Bethlehem judged Israel. ⁹ He had thirty sons. And he gave away thirty daughters in marriage, and brought in thirty daughters from elsewhere for his sons. He judged Israel seven years. ¹⁰ Then Ibzan died and was buried at Bethlehem.

¹¹ After him, Elon the Zebulunite judged Israel. He judged Israel ten years. ¹² And Elon the Zebulunite died and was buried at Aijalon in the country of Zebulun.

¹³ After him, Abdon the son of Hillel the Pirathonite judged Israel. ¹⁴ He had forty sons and thirty grandsons, who ¹rode on seventy young donkeys. He judged Israel eight years. ¹⁵ Then Abdon the son of Hillel the Pirathonite died and was buried in Pirathon in the land of Ephraim, ² in the mountains of the Amalekites.

The Birth of Samson

13 Again the children of Israel ^a did evil in the sight of the LORD, and the LORD delivered them ^b into the hand of the Philistines for forty years.

The Period of the Judges	
Events and Judges	Years*
Israel serves Cushan-Rishathaim (3:7, 8)	8
Peace following Othniel's deliverance (3:7–11)	40
Israel serves Moab (3:12)	18
Peace follows Ehud's deliverance (3:12–30)	80
Shamgar delivers Israel from Philistines (3:31)	1
Israel serves Canaan (4:1–3)	20
Peace following deliverance by Deborah and Barak (4:1—5:31)	40
Israel serves Midian (6:1–6)	7
Peace following Gideon's deliverance (6:1—8:35)	40
Abimelech, king of Israel (9:1–57)	3
Tola's career (10:1, 2)	23
Jair's career (10:3–5)	22
Israel serves Ammon and Philistia (10:6–10)	18
Jephthah's career (10:6—12:7)	6
Ibzan's career (12:8–10)	7
Elon's career (12:11, 12)	10
Abdon's career (12:13–15)	8
Israel serves Philistia (13:1)	40
Samson's career (13:1—16:31)	20
*It is uncertain how much these times overlapped.	

⁶ ^c Ps. 69:2, 15 ² Lit. *a flowing stream*; used as a test of dialect ³ Lit. *speaks so*
¹⁴ ^f Judg. 5:10; 10:4
¹⁵ ^g Judg. 3:13, 27; 5:14

CHAPTER 13
¹ ^a Judg. 2:11

² Now there was a certain man from ^c Zorah, of the family of the Danites, whose name *was* Manoah; and his wife *was* barren and had no children. ³ And the ^d Angel of the LORD appeared to the woman and said to her, “Indeed now, you

^b Judg. 10:7; 1 Sam. 12:9 ² ^c Josh. 19:41; Judg. 16:31
³ ^d Judg. 6:12

12:6 Shibboleth . . . Sibboleth: This test devised by the Gileadites to catch the Ephraimites is the most famous example in the Bible of linguistic differences between the tribes. Today the English word *shibboleth* means an otherwise minor difference that becomes a sticking point because it distinguishes one side from another. The Gileadites chose this word because the “s” sound at the beginning was pronounced “sh” by one side and “s” by the other.

12:8–10 Ibzan was Israel’s ninth judge. He allowed his 30 sons and 30 daughters to marry foreigners (v. 9). It is interesting to note that the judges who immediately preceded and followed the childless Jephthah both had 30 sons.

12:11, 12 Elon was the tenth judge.

12:13–15 Abdon was the eleventh judge, and like Jair and Ibzan had many children. He too possessed some wealth (vv. 13–15).

13:1–16:31 Samson, the last of the judges, lived at the beginning of the eleventh century B.C. He was unusual among the judges in many ways. He did not lead an army, but carried on his campaign against the Philistines single-handed. He is mentioned in Heb. 11:32 in the list of judges who accomplished great things through faith. The Book of Judges, in contrast, paints a darker picture of a man who violates a number of the Ten Commandments as well as his Nazirite vow (13:5). Samson’s story brings the accounts of the judges to an end. His checkered history of heroism and moral failure resembles

Israel’s troubles during the time of the judges. Although we can find instances of obedience and humility in his life (15:18; 16:28, 30), for the most part his life was a string of careless adventures, with no true concern for following the Lord.

13:1–25 The story of Samson opens typically with a statement about sinful conditions in Israel, but the rest of ch. 13 continues with a long introduction to the life of Samson. The chapter details the encounter between Samson’s parents and the Angel of the Lord, who announces Samson’s birth and mission. The Angel emphasizes the requirements of the Nazirite vow that Samson is to observe in his life. It is as if the narrator wants to make sure the reader understands that Samson’s life and accomplishments were under God’s protection, provision, and guidance.

13:2 Zorah was in the foothills west of Jerusalem, near Philistine territory, in the lowlands that separated the Philistine plain from the hill country of Judah. Manoah, Samson’s father, was from the tribe of Dan, in whose territory Zorah lay (Josh. 19:41). Zorah is also mentioned among the inheritance of Judah (Josh. 15:33), indicating that it was along the border between the two tribes.

13:3 The Angel of the Lord made a supernatural appearance, described here as “very awesome” (v. 6). Manoah’s wife recognized him as “a Man of God” (v. 6). However, His essential character, embodied in His Name, was not to be revealed to them (vv. 6, 17, 18).

are barren and have borne no children, but you shall conceive and bear a son. ⁴Now therefore, please be careful ^enot to drink wine or *similar* drink, and not to eat anything unclean. ⁵For behold, you shall conceive and bear a son. And no ^frazor shall come upon his head, for the child shall be ^ga Nazirite to God from the womb; and he shall ^hbegin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines.”

⁶So the woman came and told her husband, saying, ⁱ“A Man of God came to me, and His ^jcountenance ^lwas like the countenance of the Angel of God, very awesome; but I ^kdid not ask Him where He *was* from, and He did not tell me His name. ⁷And He said to me, ‘Behold, you shall conceive and bear a son. Now drink no wine or *similar* drink, nor eat anything unclean, for the child shall be a Nazirite to God from the womb to the day of his death.’”

⁸Then Manoah prayed to the LORD, and said, “O my Lord, please let the Man of God whom You sent come to us again and teach us what we shall do for the child who will be born.”

⁹And God listened to the voice of Manoah, and the Angel of God came to the woman again as she was sitting in the field; but Manoah her husband *was* not with her. ¹⁰Then the woman ran in haste and told her husband, and said to him, “Look, the Man who came to me *the other day* has just now appeared to me!”

¹¹So Manoah arose and followed his wife. When he came to the Man, he said to Him, “Are You the Man who spoke to this woman?”

And He said, “I *am*.”

¹²Manoah said, “Now let Your words come *to pass*! What will be the boy’s rule of life, and his work?”

⁴ ^e Num. 6:2, 3, 20; Judg. 13:4; Luke 1:15
⁵ ^f Num. 6:5;
1 Sam. 1:11 ^g Num. 6:2 ^h 1 Sam. 7:13; 2 Sam. 8:1; 1 Chr. 18:1
⁶ ⁱ Gen. 32:24-30
^j Matt. 28:3; Luke 9:29; Acts 6:15
^k Judg. 13:17, 18
^l *appearance*

¹⁴ ^l Num. 6:3, 4; Judg. 13:4
¹⁵ ^m Gen. 18:5; Judg. 6:18
¹⁸ ⁿ Gen. 32:29
¹⁹ ^o Judg. 6:19-21
²⁰ ^p Lev. 9:24; 1 Chr. 21:16; Ezek. 1:28; Matt. 17:6
²¹ ^q Judg. 6:22
²² ^r Gen. 32:30; Ex. 33:20; Deut. 5:26; Judg. 6:22, 23

¹³So the Angel of the LORD said to Manoah, “Of all that I said to the woman let her be careful. ¹⁴She may not eat anything that comes from the vine, ^lnor may she drink wine or *similar* drink, nor eat anything unclean. All that I commanded her let her observe.”

¹⁵Then Manoah said to the Angel of the LORD, “Please ^mlet us detain You, and we will prepare a young goat for You.”

¹⁶And the Angel of the LORD said to Manoah, “Though you detain Me, I will not eat your food. But if you offer a burnt offering, you must offer it to the LORD.” (For Manoah did not know He *was* the Angel of the LORD.)

¹⁷Then Manoah said to the Angel of the LORD, “What is Your name, that when Your words come *to pass* we may honor You?”

¹⁸And the Angel of the LORD said to him, ⁿ“Why do you ask My name, seeing it is wonderful?”

¹⁹So Manoah took the young goat with the grain offering, ^oand offered it upon the rock to the LORD. And He did a wondrous thing while Manoah and his wife looked on— ²⁰it happened as the flame went up toward heaven from the altar—the Angel of the LORD ascended in the flame of the altar! When Manoah and his wife saw *this*, they ^pfell on their faces to the ground. ²¹When the Angel of the LORD appeared no more to Manoah and his wife, ^qthen Manoah knew that He *was* the Angel of the LORD.

²²And Manoah said to his wife, ^r“We shall surely die, because we have seen God!”

²³But his wife said to him, “If the LORD had desired to kill us, He would not have accepted a burnt offering and a grain offering from our hands, nor would He

This could mean that the Angel was God Himself (Ex. 3:14, 15) or His divine representative (2:1).

13:5 The Angel declared that the woman’s son should be a **Nazirite** from birth and for the rest of his life. The regulations of the Nazirite vows are found in Num. 6:1–21. The vow was voluntary (Num. 6:2), had limited duration (Num. 6:5, 8, 13, 20), and included three provisions: (1) abstinence from wine, strong drink, and the fruit of the vine; (2) not cutting the hair; and (3) no contact with the dead (Num. 6:3–8). A Nazirite who became unclean went through elaborate cleansing rituals (Num. 6:9–21). Note that both Samson’s mother and Samson himself were to follow the regulations (13:4, 5, 7). Samson’s Nazirite service was remarkable in three ways. First, he did not take his vow voluntarily; it was his before birth (vv. 5, 7). Second, his service was to be lifelong, not temporary (vv. 5, 7). Third, he eventually broke every one of its stipulations: His head was sheared (16:17, 19); he associated with the dead (14:6–9; 15:15); and he drank at his wedding feast (14:10–20). (The Hebrew word for *feast* in 14:10 is related to the word that means “drink.”) The announcement that **he shall begin to deliver Israel** was welcome news. The Philistines had been a thorn in Israel’s side for many years. Yet Samson’s successes would prove to be temporary.

13:6 Man of God was a term used for prophets elsewhere in the OT, including Moses (Deut. 33:1; Josh. 14:6), an anonymous prophet who spoke to Eli about his sons (1 Sam. 2:27), Samuel (1 Sam. 9:6–10), Elijah (1 Kin. 17:18, 24), Elisha (about 35 times), and others. At first, Samson’s mother may have thought she was talking to a prophet, but His radiant appearance convinced her otherwise. Throughout this entire episode the Man of God **did not tell . . . His name** (vv. 16–18).

13:14 The requirements for Samson’s Nazirite vow were somewhat irregular (v. 5). Samson’s mother was also required to observe a strict ritual (v. 4).

13:18 it is wonderful: The word used here is related to the word for “wonders” (6:13). The Angel’s name is too wonderful to comprehend, and so He does not reveal it to Samson’s parents. Immediately afterward, the Angel did a “wondrous thing” by ascending into the heavens in a flame (vv. 19, 20).

13:21, 22 When Manoah discovered that it was **the Angel of the LORD**, he feared for their lives because he and his wife had **seen God**. Gideon expressed a similar fear when he recognized the Angel of the Lord (6:22).

have shown us all these *things*, nor would He have told us *such things* as these at this time.”

²⁴So the woman bore a son and called his name ^sSamson; and ^tthe child grew, and the LORD blessed him. ²⁵^uAnd the Spirit of the LORD began to move upon him at ²Mahaneh Dan ^vbetween Zorah and ^wEshtaol.

Samson's Philistine Wife

14 Now Samson went down ^ato Timnah, and ^bsaw a woman in Timnah of the daughters of the Philistines. ²So he went up and told his father and mother, saying, “I have seen a woman in Timnah of the daughters of the Philistines; now therefore, ^cget her for me as a wife.”

³Then his father and mother said to him, “*Is there* no woman among the daughters of ^dyour brethren, or among all my people, that you must go and get a wife from the ^euncircumcised Philistines?”

And Samson said to his father, “Get her for me, for ^fshe pleases me well.”

⁴But his father and mother did not know that it was ^fof the LORD—that He

²⁴ ^s Heb. 11:32
^t 1 Sam. 3:19; Luke 1:80
²⁵ ^u Judg. 3:10;
 1 Sam. 11:6; Matt.
 4:1 ^v Josh. 15:33;
 Judg. 18:11 ^w Judg.
 16:31 ² Lit. *Camp of Dan*, Judg. 18:12

CHAPTER 14

1 ^a Gen. 38:13; Josh. 15:10, 57 ^b Gen. 34:2
 2 ^c Gen. 21:21
 3 ^d Gen. 24:3, 4
^e Gen. 34:14; Ex. 34:16; Deut. 7:3
^f Lit. *she is right in my eyes*
 4 ^g Josh. 11:20;
 1 Kin. 12:15; 2 Kin. 6:33; 2 Chr. 10:15

^g Deut. 28:48; Judg. 13:1
 6 ^h Judg. 3:10
 9 ⁱ Lev. 11:27

was seeking an occasion to move against the Philistines. For at that time ^gthe Philistines had dominion over Israel.

⁵So Samson went down to Timnah with his father and mother, and came to the vineyards of Timnah.

Now ^hto his surprise, a young lion ^{came} roaring against him. ⁶And ^hthe Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon him, and he tore the lion apart as one would have torn apart a young goat, though ^{he had} nothing in his hand. But he did not tell his father or his mother what he had done.

⁷Then he went down and talked with the woman; and she pleased Samson well. ⁸After some time, when he returned to get her, he turned aside to see the carcass of the lion. And behold, a swarm of bees and honey ^{were} in the carcass of the lion. ⁹He took some of it in his hands and went along, eating. When he came to his father and mother, he gave ^{some} to them, and they also ate. But he did not tell them that he had taken the honey out of the ⁱcarcass of the lion.

¹⁰So his father went down to the woman. And Samson gave a feast there, for young men used to do so. ¹¹And it happened, when they saw him, that they

13:24 The name **Samson** is related to the Hebrew word for *sun*. The story makes no comment on the meaning of his name. The choice of name may have been influenced by the fact that there was a town named Beth-Shemesh near Samson's hometown of Zorah, or the name may be related to the name of a sun-god, Shamash. **The LORD blessed him** is one of the few editorial comments by the narrator of Samson's story (see also the comments at 14:4; 15:20; 16:20; 16:31). For the most part, the narrator is content to tell the story without comment, letting the details speak for themselves.

13:25 The Spirit of the LORD began to move upon him: The Hebrew verb translated *move* can also be translated *impel*. The Spirit of the LORD was pushing Samson toward doing the work that God wanted him to do (14:4). The verb here is different from the one in 14:6 that is translated *came mightily*.

14:1—16:31 The actual exploits of Samson fall into two parts (14:1—15:20 and 16:1—31), each climaxing with a mass destruction of Philistines. In the first part, the Spirit of the LORD comes “mightily upon him” three times. Significantly, this fails to happen in ch. 16, when Samson was acting more on his own and falling out of favor with God.

14:1—15:20 The episodes in this first section concern Samson's marriage to a Philistine woman and the cycle of offense and retaliation that surrounds it. Such marriages with foreigners were prohibited for Israelites (Ex. 34:16; Deut. 7:3). Samson's request for a wife defied the tradition that allowed the parents to arrange the marriage (14:2, 3). Despite Samson's disobedient and careless life, God intended to use him for His own purposes against the Philistines (v. 4), who were ruling over Israel at that time. It was the LORD (and no other) who ultimately was to rule over Israel.

14:1 Timnah was a town on the northwest border of Judah (Josh. 15:10) and was counted in the allotment of the tribe of Dan (Josh. 19:43). By Samson's day it was occupied by the Philistines. Samson's saga unfolds on the coastal plain where the Philistines lived, and in the lowlands and foothills near Jerusalem.

14:3 The Philistines were Israel's neighbors but were almost always at war with them. They did not practice the ceremony of circumcision. Being uncircumcised appears as a cause for disdain or derision

several times in Scripture (15:18; 1 Sam. 14:6; 17:26, 36; 18:25; 31:4; 2 Sam. 1:20; 1 Chr. 10:4). **She pleases me well** is literally “she is right in my eyes.” The phrase is usually used to describe a person or action that is right in the LORD's eyes (see Deut. 6:18; 12:25). Samson's words revealed his self-centered attitude. Instead of seeking to serve God, he was seeking to please himself. Samson's comment here foreshadows the author's summary of the entire period of the judges in 17:6; 18:1; 19:1; 21:25.

14:4 The narrator adds that Samson's parents **did not know that it was of the LORD**. God would use Samson's defiant wish as a way of defeating the Philistines and providing relief for His people. For the five major cities of the Philistines and their rulers, see Josh. 13:3.

14:5–20 At his wedding feast, Samson challenged his 30 companions with a riddle. The riddle was based upon his astounding feat of killing a lion with his bare hands. When the guests could not solve it, they enlisted the help of Samson's wife, and she extracted the answer. In a rage, Samson killed 30 Philistines in Ashkelon to obtain the garments he needed to pay his companions. But in his absence, his wife was given to his best man.

14:6 the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon him: In the OT as a whole, there are 39 references to “the Spirit of the LORD” or “the Spirit of God,” as well as various other references such as “His Spirit” or “Your Spirit” or “the Spirit.” The OT speaks numerous times of God's Spirit coming mightily upon individuals, usually to empower them physically for great feats of strength. Other judges received this power: Othniel (3:10), Gideon (6:34), and Jephthah (11:29). Yet the Spirit empowered others for the important task of speaking God's word (Gen. 41:38; Num. 24:2; 1 Sam. 10:6, 10; 19:20, 23; 2 Sam. 23:2). Probably the most important manifestation of the Spirit in the OT was the Spirit's ongoing presence. First Samuel 16:13 states that the Spirit lived with David from that day forward, and this is confirmed by David's statement in Ps. 51:11: “Do not cast me away from Your presence, and do not take Your Holy Spirit from me.” This type of ongoing presence of the Spirit is something the NT emphasizes.

14:8, 9 Touching the dead lion violated Samson's Nazirite vow (13:5).

14:10 The word translated **feast** denotes a banquet with considerable drinking, another violation of Samson's Nazirite vow (13:5).

brought thirty companions to be with him.

¹²Then Samson said to them, “Let me ^jpose a riddle to you. If you can correctly solve and explain it to me ^kwithin the seven days of the feast, then I will give you thirty linen garments and thirty ^lchanges of clothing. ¹³But if you cannot explain *it* to me, then you shall give me thirty linen garments and thirty changes of clothing.”

And they said to him, ^m“Pose your riddle, that we may hear it.”

¹⁴So he said to them:

“Out of the eater came something to eat,
And out of the strong came something sweet.”

Now for three days they could not explain the riddle.

¹⁵But it came to pass on the ²seventh day that they said to Samson’s wife, ⁿ“Entice your husband, that he may explain the riddle to us, ^oor else we will burn you and your father’s house with fire. Have you invited us in order to take what is ours? *Is that not so?*”

¹⁶Then Samson’s wife wept on him, and said, ^p“You only hate me! You do not love me! You have posed a riddle to the sons of my people, but you have not explained *it* to me.”

And he said to her, “Look, I have not explained *it* to my father or my mother; so should I explain *it* to you?” ¹⁷Now she

12 / 1 Kin. 10:1; Ezek. 17:2 ^k Gen. 29:27 ^l Gen. 45:22; 2 Kin. 5:22
13 ^m Ezek. 17:2
15 ⁿ Judg. 16:5
^o Judg. 15:6 ² So with MT, Tg., Vg.; LXX, Syr. ^{fourth}
16 ^p Judg. 16:15

had wept on him the seven days while their feast lasted. And it happened on the seventh day that he told her, because she pressed him so much. Then she explained the riddle to the sons of her people. ¹⁸So the men of the city said to him on the seventh day before the sun went down:

“What *is* sweeter than honey?
And what *is* stronger than a lion?”

And he said to them:

“If you had not plowed with my heifer,
You would not have solved my riddle!”

¹⁹Then ^qthe Spirit of the LORD came upon him mightily, and he went down to Ashkelon and killed thirty of their men, took their apparel, and gave the changes of clothing to those who had explained the riddle. So his anger was aroused, and he went back up to his father’s house. ²⁰And Samson’s wife ^rwas *given* to his companion, who had been ^shis best man.

Samson Defeats the Philistines

15 After a while, in the time of wheat harvest, it happened that Samson visited his wife with a ^ayoung goat. And he said, “Let me go in to my wife, into *her* room.” But her father would not permit him to go in.

19 ^q Judg. 3:10; 13:25
20 ^r Judg. 15:2
^s John 3:29

CHAPTER 15
1 ^a Gen. 38:17

14:12 The Hebrew phrase **let me pose a riddle to you** literally reads “let me riddle you a riddle,” using repetition to grab the reader’s attention. The Hebrew word for **linen garments** is not the usual word for clothes, but appears only three times in the Bible, here and in two others. In Prov. 31:24; Is. 3:23, it refers to fine linens worn or sold by women. Samson’s offer was extravagant given the value of such finery. The Hebrew for **changes** of clothing is used in Gen. 45:22; 2 Kin. 5:22 in reference to valuable gifts.

14:14 This is the best example of a riddle in the Scriptures. The He-

brew word for *riddle* occurs 21 times in the OT, 11 of them in ch. 14. The queen of Sheba posed riddles to Solomon (1 Kin. 10:1), and Daniel had skill in “interpreting dreams, solving riddles, and explaining enigmas” (Dan. 5:12).

14:17 Samson’s wife pleaded with him for **seven days** to get the secret of the riddle, knowing the threat she faced from the young men.

14:18 The Hebrew word for **sun** is not the one commonly used. Perhaps the unusual word was chosen in order to avoid confusion with Samson’s name, which resembles the common Hebrew word for *sun* (13:24). Samson’s statement expresses his outrage that the men had not played fairly with him but had consulted his wife.

14:19 **Ashkelon** was one of the five main cities of the Philistines.

14:20 **his companion . . . his best man**: The Hebrew words here are the same, meaning “friend.” The same man is referred to in 15:2.

15:1–20 When Samson could not gain access to his wife, he retaliated by burning the Philistines’ fields, using three hundred foxes (vv. 1–5). In response, the Philistines burned to death his wife and father-in-law. Then Samson killed more Philistines (vv. 6–8). The cycle of retaliation escalated, with the Philistines raiding Judah (vv. 9, 10). The men of Judah, not wanting to be involved in what they saw as a private dispute, delivered Samson to the Philistines (vv. 11–13). The first section ends with the Spirit of the Lord coming upon Samson, empowering him to break his bonds and kill a thousand Philistines (vv. 14–17). After this, Samson called upon the Lord for the first time, and the Lord answered his call, giving him water to drink (vv. 18, 19).

15:1 **The time of wheat harvest** was late May or early June. The wheat harvest was associated with the second of the three great festivals in Israel, the Feast of Weeks, also known as Pentecost (Lev. 23:15–22; Deut. 16:9–12). Samson came to visit his wife with a **young**

riddle

(Heb. *chidah*) (14:12, 19; Prov. 1:6; Hab. 2:6) Strong’s #2420

The core meaning of this word is “an enigmatic saying.” In Samson’s story, the riddle is used in a contest of wits. Proverbs attributes enigmatic sayings to the wise (1:6). When the queen of Sheba tested Solomon’s wisdom, her questions are described by this same Hebrew word (1 Kin. 10:1; 2 Chr. 9:1). In the Lord’s confrontation with Miriam and Aaron, God describes Himself as speaking in “dark sayings” (the same Hebrew word) to the prophets, but to Moses face-to-face (Num. 12:6–8). Perhaps Paul had this last concept in mind when he admonished the Corinthians that even someone with the ability to understand all mysteries would not amount to anything if that person did not possess the love of God (1 Cor. 13:2).

²Her father said, “I really thought that you thoroughly ^bhated her; therefore I gave her to your companion. Is not her younger sister better than she? Please, take her instead.”

³And Samson said to them, “This time I shall be blameless regarding the Philistines if I harm them!” ⁴Then Samson went and caught three hundred foxes; and he took torches, turned *the foxes* tail to tail, and put a torch between each pair of tails. ⁵When he had set the torches on fire, he let *the foxes* go into the standing grain of the Philistines, and burned up both the shocks and the standing grain, as well as the vineyards *and* olive groves.

⁶Then the Philistines said, “Who has done this?”

And they answered, “Samson, the son-in-law of the Timnite, because he has taken his wife and given her to his companion.” ^cSo the Philistines came up and burned her and her father with fire.

⁷Samson said to them, “Since you would do a thing like this, I will surely take revenge on you, and after that I will cease.” ⁸So he attacked them hip and thigh with a great slaughter; then he went down and dwelt in the cleft of the rock of ^dEtam.

⁹Now the Philistines went up, encamped in Judah, and deployed themselves ^eagainst Lehi. ¹⁰And the men of Judah said, “Why have you come up against us?”

So they answered, “We have come up to ^farrest Samson, to do to him as he has done to us.”

¹¹Then three thousand men of Judah went down to the cleft of the rock of Etam, and said to Samson, “Do you not know that the Philistines ^grule over us? What is this you have done to us?”

And he said to them, “As they did to me, so I have done to them.”

² ^h Judg. 14:20
⁶ ^c Judg. 14:15
⁸ ^d 2 Chr. 11:6
⁹ ^e Judg. 15:19
¹⁰ ^f Lit. *bind*
¹¹ ^g Lev. 26:25;
 Deut. 28:43; Judg.
 13:1; 14:4; Ps.
 106:40–42

¹³ ^h Judg. 16:11, 12
¹⁴ ⁱ Judg. 3:10; 14:6
² Lit. *were melted*
¹⁵ ^j Lev. 26:8; Josh.
 23:10; Judg. 3:31
¹⁷ ^k Lit. *Jawbone*
Height
¹⁸ / Ps. 3:7
¹⁹ ^k Gen. 45:27;
 Is. 40:29 ^l Lit.
Jawbone, Judg.
 15:14 ^m Lit. *Spring of*
the Caller
²⁰ ⁿ Judg. 10:2; 12:7–
 14 ^m Judg. 16:31
ⁿ Judg. 13:1

¹²But they said to him, “We have come down to arrest you, that we may deliver you into the hand of the Philistines.”

Then Samson said to them, “Swear to me that you will not kill me yourselves.”

¹³So they spoke to him, saying, “No, but we will tie you securely and deliver you into their hand; and we will surely not kill you.” And they bound him with two ^gnew ropes and brought him up from the rock.

¹⁴When he came to Lehi, the Philistines came shouting against him. Then ^hthe Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon him; and the ropes that *were* on his arms became like flax that is burned with fire, and his bonds ²broke loose from his hands. ¹⁵He found a fresh jawbone of a donkey, reached out his hand and took it, and ⁱkilled a thousand men with it.

¹⁶Then Samson said:

“With the jawbone of a donkey,
 Heaps upon heaps,
 With the jawbone of a donkey
 I have slain a thousand men!”

¹⁷And so it was, when he had finished speaking, that he threw the jawbone from his hand, and called that place ³Ramath Lehi.

¹⁸Then he became very thirsty; so he cried out to the LORD and said, ^j“You have given this great deliverance by the hand of Your servant; and now shall I die of thirst and fall into the hand of the uncircumcised?” ¹⁹So God split the hollow place that is in ⁴Lehi, and water came out, and he drank; and ^khis spirit returned, and he revived. Therefore he called its name ⁵En Hakkore, which is in Lehi to this day. ²⁰And ^lhe judged Israel ^mtwenty years ⁿin the days of the Philistines.

goat, meant as a gift. Tamar also received such a gift before she had sexual relations with Judah (Gen. 38:17).

15:4 The three hundred foxes were probably jackals. The two animals are similar, and the same Hebrew word is used for both. Foxes are solitary animals, but jackals travel in packs and large numbers of them could be caught more easily.

15:5 the shocks and the standing grain: Shocks are bundles of wheat stacked together in the fields. Samson's jackals burned whole crops of grain, grapes, and olives. This damage naturally outraged the Philistines. According to the law, anyone who burned someone else's fields had to pay restitution (Ex. 22:6). At another time, Absalom set fire to Joab's fields in order to attract his attention and gain an audience with the king; Joab reacted with anger (2 Sam. 14:28–32).

15:6 the Philistines . . . burned her: The Philistines held Samson's wife and father-in-law responsible for the deed and killed them both. Samson's wife had earlier escaped such a death by telling Samson's companions the answer to a riddle (14:15).

15:8 The exact meaning of the phrase **he attacked them hip and**

thigh is obscure. The following phrase—**with a great slaughter**—perhaps gets us closer to the meaning, suggesting that he not only killed but dismembered them. It may be that the expression *hip and thigh* originated in the art of wrestling, where brute strength like Samson's would have been a great help. **Etam** is otherwise unknown, but Samson obviously found a secure place to hide, perhaps a cave that was accessible only through a narrow fissure in the rocky crags near Zorah.

15:13 two new ropes: Ropes were made of leather, hair, or plant fibers; one common fiber was flax (Josh. 2:6). The reference in v. 14 to the ropes becoming like burned flax suggests that this was the fiber. Being new, these ropes were the strongest possible.

15:15 A fresh jawbone would have been tough, resilient, and virtually unbreakable.

15:16 Heaps upon heaps is a wordplay, since the Hebrew word for *heaps* resembles the word for *donkey*. A double expression similar to the one used here is found in Ex. 8:14, where the frogs of the second plague were piled in heaps.

Samson and Delilah

16 Now Samson went to ^aGaza and saw a harlot there, and went in to her. ²When the Gazites were told, “Samson has come here!” they ^bsurrounded the place and lay in wait for him all night at the gate of the city. They were quiet all night, saying, “In the morning, when it is daylight, we will kill him.” ³And Samson lay *low* till midnight; then he arose at midnight, took hold of the doors of the gate of the city and the two gateposts, pulled them up, bar and all, put them on his shoulders, and carried them to the top of the hill that faces Hebron.

⁴Afterward it happened that he loved a woman in the Valley of Sorek, whose name was Delilah. ⁵And the lords of the Philistines came up to her and said to her, ^d“Entice him, and find out where his great strength *lies*, and by what *means* we may overpower him, that we may bind him to afflict him; and every one of us will give you eleven hundred *pieces* of silver.”

⁶So Delilah said to Samson, “Please tell me where your great strength *lies*, and with what you may be bound to afflict you.”

⁷And Samson said to her, “If they bind me with seven fresh bowstrings, not yet dried, then I shall become weak, and be like any *other* man.”

CHAPTER 16

1 ^a Josh. 15:47
2 ^b 1 Sam. 23:26; Ps. 118:10-12
5 ^c Josh. 13:3
^d Judg. 14:15

11 ^e Judg. 15:13
^f Lit. *with which work has never been done*

⁸So the lords of the Philistines brought up to her seven fresh bowstrings, not yet dried, and she bound him with them. ⁹Now *men* were lying in wait, staying with her in the room. And she said to him, “The Philistines *are* upon you, Samson!” But he broke the bowstrings as a strand of yarn breaks when it touches fire. So the secret of his strength was not known.

¹⁰Then Delilah said to Samson, “Look, you have mocked me and told me lies. Now, please tell me what you may be bound with.”

¹¹So he said to her, “If they bind me securely with ^enew ropes ^fthat have never been used, then I shall become weak, and be like any *other* man.”

¹²Therefore Delilah took new ropes and bound him with them, and said to him, “The Philistines *are* upon you, Samson!” And *men* were lying in wait, staying in the room. But he broke them off his arms like a thread.

¹³Delilah said to Samson, “Until now you have mocked me and told me lies. Tell me what you may be bound with.”

And he said to her, “If you weave the seven locks of my head into the web of the loom”—

¹⁴So she wove *it* tightly with the batten of the loom, and said to him, “The Philistines *are* upon you, Samson!” But he

16:1–31 Chapter 16 presents the conclusion of the Samson stories. Samson’s involvement with two more Philistine women is detailed here. Verses 1–3 tell of a dalliance with a prostitute in Gaza, followed by another display of strength. Verses 4–22 chronicle his foolish affair with Delilah, which led to his downfall. Yet the story ends with Samson’s destruction of the Philistines in their pagan temple.

16:1 **Gaza** is one of the five major Philistine cities, three miles inland from the Mediterranean coast. **a harlot**: Two Hebrew words are commonly used for prostitutes. One refers to priests and priestesses who performed sexual acts in the service of pagan gods (1 Kin. 14:24; Hos. 4:14). The other word refers to a common prostitute, such as the one Samson was consorting with.

16:2 **At the gate** reads literally “in the gate.” The gates of the Early Iron Age were at least two stories high, with guard rooms on either side of a narrow opening. The Philistines waited in the recesses of

the gate, hoping to trap Samson. He evidently slipped through unnoticed while they waited in one of the rooms.

16:3 Given the large size of city gates, Samson’s feat was astounding. Hebron is 40 miles east of Gaza. Samson’s trip to the top of a hill that **faces Hebron** would have taken the better part of a day.

16:4–22 The account of Samson’s downfall shows Delilah acting in cooperation with the leaders of the Philistines who were seeking to capture him. After three unsuccessful efforts, she succeeded in persuading him to reveal the source of his strength: his uncut hair. When he broke the final stipulation of the Nazirite vow by allowing his hair to be cut, the Lord left him (v. 20), and he was captured.

16:4 **Delilah** was the third Philistine woman that Samson entangled himself with (14:1; 16:1).

16:5 **Eleven hundred pieces of silver** was a large sum of money; the same price would be paid to make two idols (17:2). This price was multiplied by five (each of the five lords offered the same amount). The total reward probably weighed more than a hundred pounds.

16:7 The first test of Samson’s strength was breaking **seven fresh bowstrings** of animal gut. Newer animal strings would be stronger than old ones. Samson was showing contempt for his adversaries, who wanted to capture him quickly.

16:11 In this second test, Samson toyed with the Philistines, suggesting they use the **new ropes** that had proven worthless on an earlier occasion (15:13).

16:13 The third test involving **the web of the loom** got closer to revealing Samson’s secret, since his hair was involved. The loom that held Samson’s hair was likely an upright one, supported by two posts that were firmly anchored in the ground. This was a more difficult test of strength for Samson, but he passed this one easily, too.

16:14 **she wove it tightly** Samson was about to be fastened with a household implement, just as Jael had earlier “fastened” Sisera with a tent peg (4:21). Samson was able to free himself in this case, but like Sisera he eventually would fall victim to a woman’s plot.

deliverance

(Heb. *teshu’ah*) (15:18; 1 Sam. 19:5; 2 Kin. 13:17; Prov. 21:31) Strong’s #8668

The basic meaning of this term is “victory” or “safety.” In the Scriptures, deliverance is almost always credited to God, who is frequently praised by the psalmists for His miraculous accomplishments (Ps. 51:14, 15; 71:14, 15). Elsewhere God’s people are reminded that deliverance is not found in horses (Ps. 33:17) or in the capabilities of people (Ps. 108:12; 146:3); salvation is found only in the Lord (Lam. 3:26; Jer. 3:23). A day is coming when the Lord will provide everlasting salvation for His people (Is. 45:17). Placing our hope in the Lord and in that final day of justice is never inappropriate, for He will provide deliverance for His people.

awoke from his sleep, and pulled out the batten and the web from the loom.

¹⁵ Then she said to him, ^f“How can you say, ‘I love you,’ when your heart is not with me? You have mocked me these three times, and have not told me where your great strength *lies*.” ¹⁶ And it came to pass, when she pestered him daily with her words and pressed him, *so* that his soul was ²vexed to death, ¹⁷ that he ^gtold her all his heart, and said to her, ^h“No razor has ever come upon my head, for I *have been* a Nazirite to God from my mother’s womb. If I am shaven, then my strength will leave me, and I shall become weak, and be like any *other* man.”

¹⁸ When Delilah saw that he had told her all his heart, she sent and called for the lords of the Philistines, saying, “Come up once more, for he has told me all his heart.” So the lords of the Philistines came up to her and brought the money in their hand. ¹⁹ ⁱ Then she lulled him to sleep on her knees, and called for a man and had him shave off the seven locks of his head. Then ³ she began to torment him, and his strength left him. ²⁰ And she said, “The Philistines *are* upon you, Samson!” So he awoke from his sleep, and said, “I will go out as before, at other times, and shake myself free!” But he did not know that the LORD ^j had departed from him.

²¹ Then the Philistines took him and ⁴ put out his ^k eyes, and brought him down to Gaza. They bound him with bronze fetters, and he became a grinder in the prison. ²² However, the hair of

¹⁵ ^f Judg. 14:16
¹⁶ ² Lit. *impatient to the point of*
¹⁷ ^g [Mic. 7:5]
^h Num. 6:5; Judg. 13:5
¹⁹ ⁱ Prov. 7:26, 27
³ So with MT, Tg., Vg.; LXX *he began to be weak*,
²⁰ / Num. 14:9, 42, 43; / Josh. 7:12;
¹ Sam. 16:14; 18:12; 28:15, 16; 2 Chr. 15:2
²¹ ^k 2 Kin. 25:7
⁴ Lit. *bored out*

²³ ¹ 1 Sam. 5:2
²⁴ ^m Dan. 5:4
²⁵ ⁿ Judg. 9:27
²⁷ ^o Deut. 22:8
²⁸ ^p Jer. 15:15

his head began to grow again after it had been shaven.

Samson Dies with the Philistines

²³ Now the lords of the Philistines gathered together to offer a great sacrifice to ¹ Dagon their god, and to rejoice. And they said:

“Our god has delivered into our hands
 Samson our enemy!”

²⁴ When the people saw him, they ^m praised their god; for they said:

“Our god has delivered into our hands
 our enemy,
 The destroyer of our land,
 And the one who multiplied our
 dead.”

²⁵ So it happened, when their hearts were ⁿ merry, that they said, “Call for Samson, that he may perform for us.” So they called for Samson from the prison, and he performed for them. And they stationed him between the pillars. ²⁶ Then Samson said to the lad who held him by the hand, “Let me feel the pillars which support the temple, so that I can lean on them.” ²⁷ Now the temple was full of men and women. All the lords of the Philistines *were* there—about three thousand men and women on the ^o roof watching while Samson performed.

²⁸ Then Samson called to the LORD, saying, “O Lord God, ^p remember me, I pray! Strengthen me, I pray, just this

16:16 Delilah **pestered him**, just as Samson’s wife had done earlier (14:17). Samson’s foolishness prevented him from learning the lesson of his earlier experience.

16:17, 18 A **razor** in Samson’s day would have been like a bronze knife with a handle of wood or bone. a **Nazirite to God**: See 13:5. **he had told her all his heart**: Delilah knew that Samson was finally telling the truth. This reference contrasts with the one in v. 15, where he withheld his heart from Delilah.

16:20, 21 **He did not know** is another editorial comment by the narrator. See similar comments in 13:16; 14:4. **the Lord had departed from him**: See 14:6. They shackled Samson’s hands or feet with a pair of **bronze fetters**. Samson became a **grinder**, forced to grind grain, most likely with a hand mill. Larger, animal-driven mills were not used until several centuries later. Grinding was typically a woman’s job (9:53), so this only added to Samson’s humiliation.

16:23–31 Samson’s story ends with a measure of vindication: the Philistines and their gods were toppled at the hands of God. Samson’s hair had begun to grow again (v. 22), and his second prayer to the Lord—his first was in 15:18—resulted in a great slaughter of his enemies, some three thousand people, more than he had killed during his entire life. His call to the Lord is somewhat ambiguous; it appears to be more earnest than his first, but his motive—revenge for his blindness—is less than exemplary. Samson was buried with his father, following his 20 years of judging Israel (15:20). Samson’s life is ultimately a story about God’s faithfulness in spite of human weakness. God’s hand can be seen throughout the story. When the Philistines captured Samson, they attributed this to their god and

celebrated his victory (16:23, 24). We know, however, that it was God who had allowed it (v. 20), and that it was God who gained the ultimate triumph against Dagon and the Philistine rulers (vv. 27, 30).

16:23 **Dagon** was the principal Philistine god. He is known as Dagan in Syrian and Mesopotamian inscriptions. Temples dedicated to him have been unearthed at Ugarit in northern Syria, dating to the centuries just before Samson, and at Mari on the Euphrates River in Syria, dating to the eighteenth century **B.C.** A Philistine temple for Dagon was at Beth Shan, in northern Israel, in the days of Saul (1 Sam. 31:9, 10; 1 Chr. 10:10), and it was in another such temple that the Philistines stored the ark of the covenant for a time (1 Sam. 5:1–7). Dagon was once commonly thought to be a fish god, but modern excavations have shown that he was a god of grain. In fact, one of the Hebrew words for grain is *dagan*. **Our god has delivered**: The Philistine hymn of triumph reminds us of the language found in the Psalms.

16:26, 27 **the pillars which support the temple**: Numerous temples from this era with the supporting pillars described here have been excavated. Many were built around a courtyard. The roof, supported by the pillars, was where the spectators gathered. A crowd straining to see the spectacle of Samson would put considerable pressure on the structure of the building.

16:28 Samson demonstrated faith in calling upon God and in believing that God would help him. This is consistent with the praise of Samson in Heb. 11:32. Yet Samson’s plea was basically a desire for revenge against the Philistines.



The Philistines

During the time of the judges, the Philistines emerged for the first time as a distinct people on the southwest coast of Canaan. The Philistines who are mentioned in the Pentateuch are not the same people, but an earlier group of Aegean settlers. The Philistines of Canaan migrated inland, manufacturing their own crude but distinctive pottery, carrying on a limited overseas trade, and eventually developing superior iron weapons, which they used to their advantage against the Israelites. The Bible pictures the Philistines as a coarse, “uncircumcised” people (14:3; 15:18). Recent archaeological discoveries have shown that initially the Philistines had their own highly developed culture. Yet they quickly followed the practices of the Canaanites and lost their true distinctives within a couple of centuries. Their major god was Dagon (known from Mesopotamian and Syrian sources as Dagan).



Philistines as prisoners of war, depicted on the Medinet Habu Temple in Luxor

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once, O God, that I may with one *blow* take vengeance on the Philistines for my two eyes!”²⁹ And Samson took hold of the two middle pillars which support-

³¹ ^a Judg. 13:25
^r Judg. 15:20

ed the temple, and he braced himself against them, one on his right and the other on his left.³⁰ Then Samson said, “Let me die with the Philistines!” And he pushed with *all his* might, and the temple fell on the lords and all the people who *were* in it. So the dead that he killed at his death were more than he had killed in his life.

³¹ And his brothers and all his father’s household came down and took him, and brought *him* up and ^aburied him between Zorah and Eshtaol in the tomb of his father Manoah. He had judged Israel ^rtwenty years.

Micah’s Idolatry

17 Now there was a man from the mountains of Ephraim, whose name *was* ^aMicah. ² And he said to his mother, “The eleven hundred *shekels* of silver that were taken from you, and on which you ^bput a curse, even saying it in my ears—here *is* the silver with me; I took it.”

And his mother said, ^c“*May you be blessed by the LORD, my son!*” ³ So when he had returned the eleven hundred *shekels* of silver to his mother, his mother said, “I had wholly dedicated the silver from my hand to the LORD for my son, to ^dmake a carved image and a molded image; now therefore, I will return it to you.” ⁴ Thus he returned the silver to his mother. Then his mother ^etook two hundred *shekels* of silver and gave them to the silversmith, and he made it into a carved image and a molded image; and they were in the house of Micah.

CHAPTER 17 ¹ ^a Judg. 18:2 ² ^b Lev. 5:1 ^c Gen. 14:19 ³ ^d Ex. 20:4, 23; 34:17; Lev. 19:4 ⁴ ^e Is. 46:6

16:31 The story of the judges concludes with final editorial comments. Samson, the last judge, had been empowered by God’s Spirit, just as the first had been. Despite the manifold failings of the judges themselves, God had delivered Israel and caused other nations to bow before Him.

17:1—21:25 The book closes with two appendixes, the first in chs. 17; 18 and the second in chs. 19–21. They seem to be unrelated to the material preceding them and to each other. For instance, these chapters do not describe the cyclical pattern of sin, servitude, and salvation seen in the earlier chapters. While chs. 2–16 describe foreign threats to Israel, these last chapters show an internal breakdown of Israel’s worship and unity. Furthermore, the events in these chapters appear to have taken place early in the period of the judges. Note that Phinehas, the grandson of Aaron who had figured in earlier events (Num. 25:6–15; 31:6; Josh. 22:30, 31), was still ministering before the ark at the time of the events of chs. 19–21 (20:28). The whole episode of the Danite migration (ch. 18) logically fits in the progression of events described in 1:34, during which the Amorites forced the Danites out of their allotted territory. Their migration in search of new land probably would have come soon after this, not some three centuries or more later. Thus these chapters may have been written independently of the book’s earlier chapters.

Yet there is a certain logic to placing them at the end of the book. For one, the structure highlights the theme of the disintegration of Israel. The many violations of Mosaic law receive only minimal comments. However, a muted note of disdain for Israel’s wanton behavior is evident in places.

17:1—18:31 The first of the appendixes concerns a man named Micah who created a private shrine. Migrating Danites seized Micah’s priest and the symbols of his shrine, triggering the destruction of Laish.

17:2, 3 These **eleven hundred shekels of silver** cannot help but remind us of the reward that the Philistine lords gave to Deliah. Micah, an Ephraimite, had stolen some silver from his mother, which he later returned to her. We learn that she had dedicated this silver to the Lord, but returned it to Micah so that he could make **a carved image and a molded image**. A carved image would be made of wood or rock. *Carved* is the same Hebrew word used in the Ten Commandments: “You shall not make for yourself a carved image.” A molded image was one cast from a mold (2 Kin. 17:16). Micah’s mother approved of his action, claiming that these images would be offered on the Lord’s behalf. Today the temptation to mix elements of true worship of God with practices unacceptable to Him remains with us, albeit in different ways.

⁵The man Micah had a ^fshrine, and made an ^gephod and ^hhousehold ⁱidols; and he consecrated one of his sons, who became his priest. ⁶ⁱIn those days *there* was no king in Israel; ^jeveryone did *what* was right in his own eyes.

⁷Now there was a young man from ^kBethlehem in Judah, of the family of Judah; he was a Levite, and ^lwas staying there. ⁸The man departed from the city of Bethlehem in Judah to stay wherever he could find a *place*. Then he came to the mountains of Ephraim, to the house of Micah, as he journeyed. ⁹And Micah said to him, “Where do you come from?”

So he said to him, “I am a Levite from Bethlehem in Judah, and I am on my way to find a *place* to stay.”

¹⁰Micah said to him, “Dwell with me, ^mand be a ⁿfather and a priest to me, and I will give you ten *shekels* of silver per year, a suit of clothes, and your sustenance.” So the Levite went in. ¹¹Then the Levite was content to dwell with the man; and the young man became like one of his sons to him. ¹²So Micah ^oconsecrated ²the Levite, and the young man ^pbecame his priest, and lived in the house of Micah. ¹³Then Micah said, “Now I know that the LORD will be good to me, since I have a Levite as ^qpriest!”

The Danites Adopt Micah's Idolatry

18 In ^athose days *there* was no king in Israel. And in those days ^bthe tribe of the Danites was seeking an inheritance for itself to dwell in; for until that day *their* inheritance among the tribes of Israel had not fallen to them. ²So the children of Dan sent five men of their family from their territory, men of

⁵ ^f Judg. 18:24
^g Judg. 8:27; 18:14
^h Gen. 31:19, 30;
 Hos. 3:4 ⁱ Heb.
 teraphim
⁶ ^j Judg. 18:1; 19:1
 / Deut. 12:8; Judg.
 21:25
⁷ ^k Josh. 19:15;
 Judg. 19:1; Ruth 1:1,
 2; Mic. 5:2; Matt.
 2:1, 5, 6 ^l Deut. 18:6
¹⁰ ^m Judg. 18:19
ⁿ Gen. 45:8; Job
 29:16
¹² ^o Judg. 17:5
^p Judg. 18:30 ² Lit.
 filled the hand of
¹³ ^q Judg. 18:4

CHAPTER 18

¹ ^a Judg. 17:6;
 19:1; 21:25 ^b Josh.
 19:40–48

² ^c Judg. 13:25
^d Num. 13:17; Josh.
 2:1 ^e Judg. 17:1
⁴ ^f Judg. 17:10, 12
⁵ ^g 1 Kin. 22:5; [Is.
 30:1]; Hos. 4:12
^h Judg. 1:1; 17:5;
 18:14
⁶ ⁱ 1 Kin. 22:6 ¹ Lit.
 The LORD is before
 the way in which
 you go
⁷ ^j Josh. 19:47
^k Judg. 18:27–29
^l Judg. 10:12 ² So
 with MT, Tg., Vg.;
 LXX with Syria
⁸ ^m Judg. 18:2
⁹ ⁿ Num. 13:30;
 Josh. 2:23, 24
^o 1 Kin. 22:3
¹⁰ ^p Judg. 18:7, 27
^q Deut. 8:9

valor from ^cZorah and Eshtaol, ^dto spy out the land and search it. They said to them, “Go, search the land.” So they went to the mountains of Ephraim, to the ^ehouse of Micah, and lodged there. ³While they *were* at the house of Micah, they recognized the voice of the young Levite. They turned aside and said to him, “Who brought you here? What are you doing in this *place*? What do you have here?”

⁴He said to them, “Thus and so Micah did for me. He has ^hhired me, and I have become his priest.”

⁵So they said to him, “Please ^ginquire ^hof God, that we may know whether the journey on which we go will be prosperous.”

⁶And the priest said to them, ⁱ“Go in peace. ¹The presence of the LORD *be* with you on your way.”

⁷So the five men departed and went to ^jLaish. They saw the people who *were* there, ^khow they dwelt safely, in the manner of the Sidonians, quiet and secure. *There were* no rulers in the land who might put *them* to shame for anything. *They were* far from the ^lSidonians, and they had no ties ²with anyone.

⁸Then *the spies* came back to their brethren at ^mZorah and Eshtaol, and their brethren said to them, “What *is* your report?”

⁹So they said, ⁿ“Arise, let us go up against them. For we have seen the land, and indeed it is very good. *Would you* ^odo nothing? Do not hesitate to go, and enter to possess the land. ¹⁰When you go, you will come to a ^psecure people and a large land. For God has given it into your hands, ^qa place where *there is* no lack of anything that *is* on the earth.”

17:5 a shrine: Literally “a house of God.” This was a perversion of the true sanctuary where all worship was to take place. At this time, “the house of God” was at Shiloh (18:31). Micah also made an **ephod** (8:27) and various household idols. The word for *idols* is the same one used in Gen. 31:19, the story of Rachel’s theft of Laban’s household gods. Such idols are condemned in 1 Sam. 15:23. Micah further violated the law by appointing his own son as his private priest. Micah sinned because his son had not descended from Aaron (as priests were supposed to be) nor was he even a Levite (Ex. 28:1; 40:12–15; Num. 16:39, 40; 17:8).

17:6 what was right in his own eyes: This editorial comment is echoed in the last verse of the book (21:25). The author suggests that times were so bad that people did whatever they wanted, not what was right in the Lord’s eyes (14:3). We may infer that a king who focused Israel’s attention on the Lord would have prevented the outbreaks of sin and oppression so prevalent during the time of the judges.

17:9 The Levite from Bethlehem in Judah had been living there as a resident alien. Levites did not have a permanent land inheritance, but they had been granted 48 cities, scattered throughout the other tribes’ territories (Josh. 21). However, Bethlehem was not one of these cities, and this Levite was seeking a place to settle down. He was only too happy to accept Micah’s offer (vv. 10, 11).

17:10 be a father and a priest to me: To be called a father was a title of honor (see the reference to Deborah as a “mother in Israel” in 5:7). Micah wanted the Levite to be his priest, since his priestly background would lend legitimacy to his service. Micah thought this would bring him God’s favor (v. 13). In later years, prophets were occasionally referred to as “fathers” (2 Kin. 6:21; 8:9; 13:14).

18:1 The Danites were looking for a place to settle because they had been unable to settle effectively in their allotted territory. Compare their allotment in Josh. 19:41–47 and their failure to capture it all in 1:34, 35.

18:2 The Danites decided **to spy out the land**, recalling the 12 spies who infiltrated Canaan in Moses’ day (Num. 13) and the two spies that Joshua sent into Jericho (Josh. 2). The Hebrew word for *spy* is related to the word for *foot*, the idea being that spies went quietly on foot, scouting what they could see.

18:3 The Danite spies asked rapid-fire questions. Other places in Judges feature similar quick questioning (see 6:31).

18:7 The Danite spies found the city of **Laish** an attractive place to live and decided to seize it (vv. 7–10). The city was later renamed Dan (Josh. 19:47). **the Sidonians, quiet and secure:** On the Sidonians, see 3:3. The word for *quiet* is the same one that describes the “rest” that covered the land periodically (3:11). However, the word can also be rendered “unsuspecting.”

¹¹ And six hundred men of the family of the Danites went from there, from Zorah and Eshtaol, armed with weapons of war. ¹² Then they went up and encamped in ^rKirjath Jearim in Judah. (Therefore they call that place ^sMahanah Dan³ to this day. There *it is*, west of Kirjath Jearim.) ¹³ And they passed from there to the mountains of Ephraim, and came to ^tthe house of Micah.

¹⁴ “Then the five men who had gone to spy out the country of Laish answered and said to their brethren, “Do you know that ^vthere are in these houses an ephod, household idols, a carved image, and a molded image? Now therefore, consider what you should do.” ¹⁵ So they turned aside there, and came to the house of the young Levite man—to the house of Micah—and greeted him. ¹⁶ The ^wsix hundred men armed with their weapons of war, who *were* of the children of Dan, stood by the entrance of the gate. ¹⁷ Then ^xthe five men who had gone to spy out the land went up. Entering there, they took ^ythe carved image, the ephod, the household idols, and the molded image. The priest stood at the entrance of the gate with the six hundred men *who were* armed with weapons of war.

¹⁸ When these went into Micah’s house and took the carved image, the ephod, the household idols, and the molded image, the priest said to them, “What are you doing?”

¹⁹ And they said to him, “Be quiet, ^zput your hand over your mouth, and come with us; ^abe a father and a priest to us. *Is it better for you to be a priest to the household of one man, or that you be a priest to a tribe and a family in Israel?*”

²⁰ So the priest’s heart was glad; and he took the ephod, the household idols, and the carved image, and took his place among the people.

²¹ Then they turned and departed, and put the little ones, the livestock, and the goods in front of them. ²² When they were a good way from the house of

¹² ^r Josh. 15:60
^s Judg. 13:25 ³ Lit.
Camp of Dan
¹³ ^t Judg. 18:2
¹⁴ ^w 1 Sam. 14:28
^v Judg. 17:5
¹⁶ ^w Judg. 18:11
¹⁷ ^x Judg. 18:2, 14
^y Judg. 17:4, 5
¹⁹ ^z Job 21:5; 29:9;
40:4; Mic. 7:16
^a Judg. 17:10

²³ ^b 2 Kin. 6:28
²⁴ ^c Gen. 31:30;
Judg. 17:5 ⁴ *idols*
²⁵ ⁵ Lit. *bitter of soul*
²⁷ ^d Josh. 19:47
²⁸ ^e Judg. 18:7
^f Num. 13:21; 2 Sam. 10:6
²⁹ ^g Josh. 19:47
^h Judg. 20:1; 1 Kin. 12:29, 30; 15:20
³⁰ ⁱ 2 Kin. 15:29
⁶ LXX, Vg. *Moses*
³¹ ^j Deut. 12:1–32;
Josh. 18:1, 8; Judg. 19:18; 21:12

CHAPTER 19

¹ ^a Judg. 17:6; 18:1;
21:25

Micah, the men who *were* in the houses near Micah’s house gathered together and overtook the children of Dan. ²³ And they called out to the children of Dan. So they turned around and said to Micah, ^b“What ails you, that you have gathered such a company?”

²⁴ So he said, “You have ^ctaken away my ^dgods which I made, and the priest, and you have gone away. Now what more do I have? How can you say to me, ‘What ails you?’”

²⁵ And the children of Dan said to him, “Do not let your voice be heard among us, lest ^eangry men fall upon you, and you lose your life, with the lives of your household!” ²⁶ Then the children of Dan went their way. And when Micah saw that they *were* too strong for him, he turned and went back to his house.

Danites Settle in Laish

²⁷ So they took *the things* Micah had made, and the priest who had belonged to him, and went to Laish, to a people quiet and secure; ^dand they struck them with the edge of the sword and burned the city with fire. ²⁸ *There was* no deliverer, because it *was* ^efar from Sidon, and they had no ties with anyone. It was in the valley that belongs ^fto Beth Rehob. So they rebuilt the city and dwelt there. ²⁹ And ^gthey called the name of the city ^hDan, after the name of Dan their father, who was born to Israel. However, the name of the city formerly *was* Laish.

³⁰ Then the children of Dan set up for themselves the carved image; and Jonathan the son of Gershom, the son of ⁶Manasseh, and his sons were priests to the tribe of Dan ⁱuntil the day of the captivity of the land. ³¹ So they set up for themselves Micah’s carved image which he made, ^jall the time that the house of God was in Shiloh.

The Levite’s Concubine

19 And it came to pass in those days, ^awhen *there was* no king in Israel, that there was a certain Levite staying

18:11 Six hundred men was either a small part of the Danite army or a remnant that had survived recent fighting. Compare this figure with the 62,700 Danite soldiers in Num. 1:38, 39 and the 64,400 in Num. 26:42, 43.

18:15–20 Rather than condemning Micah’s idolatry, the Danites took the gods for themselves. They then made Micah’s Levite their tribal priest.

18:19 The Danites’ offer to Micah’s Levite—**be a father and a priest to us**—was the same plea Micah had made earlier (17:10). Yet their offer was more attractive, for it allowed him to be priest over an entire tribe. The Levite’s cynical acceptance of this opportunity for greater prestige indicates further how debased conditions had become. Even Levites were selling false spiritual services to the highest bidder.

18:30 The Danites’ priest and his descendants served the tribe for

many years. This notice, written much later than the book’s events, is a subtle reminder of Dan’s later apostasy. Jeroboam I would establish idolatrous shrines in Dan and Bethel (1 Kin. 12).

18:31 Micah’s image remained while the house of God was at Shiloh. Therefore, these events took place sometime before about 1050 B.C. when Shiloh was destroyed (Ps. 78:60; Jer. 7:12, 14; 26:6).

19:1–21:25 The concluding section is apparently unrelated to any preceding story. It concerns the brutal rape and murder of a concubine and the bloody events that followed. The story resembles that of the assault on Lot’s home in Sodom (Gen. 19).

19:1 A concubine was a female servant regarded as part of the family, often chosen to bear children. Several of the patriarchs had children with concubines: Abraham with Hagar (Gen. 16); Jacob with Bilhah and Zilpah (Gen. 30:4–13).

in the remote mountains of Ephraim. He took for himself a concubine from ^bBethlehem in Judah. ²But his concubine played the harlot against him, and went away from him to her father's house at Bethlehem in Judah, and was there four whole months. ³Then her husband arose and went after her, to ^cspeak ¹kindly to her and bring her back, having his servant and a couple of donkeys with him. So she brought him into her father's house; and when the father of the young woman saw him, he was glad to meet him. ⁴Now his father-in-law, the young woman's father, detained him; and he stayed with him three days. So they ate and drank and lodged there.

⁵Then it came to pass on the fourth day that they arose early in the morning, and he stood to depart; but the young woman's father said to his son-in-law, ^d"Refresh your heart with a morsel of bread, and afterward go your way."

⁶So they sat down, and the two of them ate and drank together. Then the young woman's father said to the man, "Please be content to stay all night, and let your heart be merry." ⁷And when the man stood to depart, his father-in-law urged him; so he lodged there again. ⁸Then he arose early in the morning on the fifth day to depart, but the young woman's father said, "Please refresh your heart." So they delayed until afternoon; and both of them ate.

⁹And when the man stood to depart— he and his concubine and his servant— his father-in-law, the young woman's father, said to him, "Look, the day is now drawing toward evening; please spend the night. See, the day is coming to an end; lodge here, that your heart may be merry. Tomorrow go your way early, so that you may get ²home."

¹⁰However, the man was not willing to spend that night; so he rose and departed, and came opposite ^eJebus (that is, Jerusalem). With him were the two saddled donkeys; his concubine *was* also with him. ¹¹They *were* near Jebus, and the day

¹ ^g Judg. 17:7; Ruth 1:1
³ ^c Gen. 34:3; 50:21
¹ Lit. *to her heart*
⁵ ^d Gen. 18:5; Judg. 19:8; Ps. 104:15
⁹ ² Lit. *to your tent*
¹⁰ ^e Josh. 18:28;
¹ Chr. 11:4, 5

¹¹ ^f Josh. 15:8, 63; Judg. 1:21; 2 Sam. 5:6
¹² ^g Josh. 18:28
¹³ ^h Josh. 18:25
¹⁵ ⁱ Matt. 25:43
¹⁶ ^j Ps. 104:23
¹⁸ ^k Josh. 18:1; Judg. 18:31; 20:18; 1 Sam. 1:3, 7
²⁰ ^l Gen. 43:23; Judg. 6:23; 1 Sam. 25:6 ^m Gen. 19:2
²¹ ⁿ Gen. 24:32; 43:24 ^o Gen. 18:4; John 13:5
²² ^p Judg. 16:25; 19:6, 9 ^q Gen. 19:4, 5; Judg. 20:5; Hos. 9:9; 10:9 ^r Deut. 13:13; 1 Sam. 2:12; 1 Kin. 21:10; [2 Cor. 6:15] ³ Lit. *sons of Belial*

was far spent; and the servant said to his master, "Come, please, and let us turn aside into this city ^fof the Jebusites and lodge in it."

¹²But his master said to him, "We will not turn aside here into a city of foreigners, who *are* not of the children of Israel; we will go on ^gto Gibeah." ¹³So he said to his servant, "Come, let us draw near to one of these places, and spend the night in Gibeah or in ^hRamah." ¹⁴And they passed by and went their way; and the sun went down on them near Gibeah, which belongs to Benjamin. ¹⁵They turned aside there to go in to lodge in Gibeah. And when he went in, he sat down in the open square of the city, for no one would ⁱtake them into *his* house to spend the night.

¹⁶Just then an old man came in from ^jhis work in the field at evening, who also *was* from the mountains of Ephraim; he was staying in Gibeah, whereas the men of the place *were* Benjamites. ¹⁷And when he raised his eyes, he saw the traveler in the open square of the city; and the old man said, "Where are you going, and where do you come from?"

¹⁸So he said to him, "We *are* passing from Bethlehem in Judah toward the remote mountains of Ephraim; I *am* from there. I went to Bethlehem in Judah; *now* I am going to ^kthe house of the LORD. But there *is* no one who will take me into his house, ¹⁹although we have both straw and fodder for our donkeys, and bread and wine for myself, for your female servant, and for the young man *who is* with your servant; *there is* no lack of anything."

²⁰And the old man said, ^l"Peace *be* with you! However, *let* all your needs *be* my responsibility; ^monly do not spend the night in the open square." ²¹ⁿSo he brought him into his house, and gave fodder to the donkeys. ^oAnd they washed their feet, and ate and drank.

Gibeah's Crime

²²As they were ^penjoying themselves, suddenly ^qcertain men of the city, ^rperverted³ men, surrounded the house and

19:3–9 Obligated by custom, the Levite stayed in the home of his concubine's father for five days. Strict codes of hospitality still prevail in many Middle Eastern tribal cultures.

19:10 Jebus (that is, Jerusalem): The city of Jerusalem was at this time in the hands of the Jebusites, and it is called "a city of foreigners" in v. 12. For more on the city and its early history, see Josh. 15:63.

19:12 Gibeah was four miles west of Jerusalem. Because it was in Benjamin, the Levite thought it would be a safer place to spend the night—a fatal misjudgment.

19:15, 16 The open square of the city was a public area just inside the city gate. A traveler could expect an invitation to stay the night, but none was forthcoming from any inhabitant of Gibeah. **an old**

man: The Levite received kindness from an outsider, an old man who was passing through Gibeah. Like the Levite, he was from the hill country of Ephraim.

19:18, 19 The people of Gibeah were cold, even though the Levite had all that he needed with him, and even more than enough: He offered to take care of the old man and his servants, too.

19:22–26 The welcome offered by Gibeah was no hospitality at all; it was the hospitality of Sodom (see Gen. 19), an outrageous affront to the Levite and especially to his concubine. The men of Gibeah demanded to have sexual relations with the old man's guest. Offered the Levite's concubine instead, they assaulted her until she was half dead. This section closely resembles Gen. 19:4–9; indeed, the author may have written this story to make the comparison with

beat on the door. They spoke to the master of the house, the old man, saying, ^s“Bring out the man who came to your house, that we may know him *carnally!*”

²³ But ^tthe man, the master of the house, went out to them and said to them, “No, my brethren! I beg you, do not act so wickedly! Seeing this man has come into my house, ^udo not commit this outrage. ^{24 v}Look, *here is* my virgin daughter and ⁴the man’s concubine; let me bring them out now. ^wHumble them, and do with them as you please; but to this man do not do such a vile thing!” ²⁵ But the men would not heed him. So the man took his concubine and brought *her* out to them. And they ^xknew her and abused her all night until morning; and when the day began to break, they let her go.

²⁶ Then the woman came as the day was dawning, and fell down at the door of the man’s house where her master *was*, till it was light.

²⁷ When her master arose in the morning, and opened the doors of the house and went out to go his way, there was his concubine, fallen *at* the door of the house with her hands on the threshold. ²⁸ And he said to her, “Get up and let us be going.” But ^ythere was no answer. So the man lifted her onto the donkey; and the man got up and went to his place.

²⁹ When he entered his house he took a knife, laid hold of his concubine, and ^zdivided her into twelve pieces, ⁵limb by limb, and sent her throughout all the territory of Israel. ³⁰ And so it was that all who saw it said, “No such deed has been done or seen from the day that the children of Israel came up from the land of Egypt until this day. Consider it, ^aconfer, and speak up!”

Israel’s War with the Benjamites

20 So ^aall the children of Israel came out, from ^bDan to ^cBeersheba, as well as from the land of Gilead, and the

²² ^s Gen. 19:5; [Rom. 1:26, 27]
²³ ^t Gen. 19:6, 7
^u Gen. 34:7; Deut. 22:21; Judg. 20:6, 10; 2 Sam. 13:12
²⁴ ^v Gen. 19:8
^w Gen. 34:2; Deut. 21:14 ⁴ Lit. *his*
²⁵ ^x Gen. 4:1
²⁸ ^y Judg. 20:5
²⁹ ^z Judg. 20:6; 1 Sam. 11:7 ⁵ Lit. *with her bones*
³⁰ ^a Judg. 20:7; Prov. 13:10

CHAPTER 20

¹ ^a Josh. 22:12; Judg. 20:11; 21:5
^b Judg. 18:29;
1 Sam. 3:20; 2 Sam. 3:10; 24:2 ^c Josh. 19:2

^d Judg. 10:17;
1 Sam. 7:5
² ^e Judg. 8:10
⁴ ^f Judg. 19:15
⁵ ^g Judg. 19:22
^h Judg. 19:25, 26
⁶ ⁱ Judg. 19:29
^j Josh. 7:15
⁷ ^k Judg. 19:30
⁹ ^l Judg. 1:3
¹² ^m Deut. 13:14; Josh. 22:13, 16
¹³ ⁿ Deut. 13:13; Judg. 19:22 ¹ Lit. *sons of Belial*

congregation gathered together as one man before the LORD ^dat Mizpah. ² And the leaders of all the people, all the tribes of Israel, presented themselves in the assembly of the people of God, four hundred thousand foot soldiers ^ewho drew the sword. ³ (Now the children of Benjamin heard that the children of Israel had gone up to Mizpah.)

Then the children of Israel said, “Tell us, how did this wicked deed happen?”

⁴ So the Levite, the husband of the woman who was murdered, answered and said, “My concubine and ^fI went into Gibeah, which belongs to Benjamin, to spend the night. ^{5 g}And the men of Gibeah rose against me, and surrounded the house at night because of me. They intended to kill me, ^hbut instead they ravished my concubine so that she died. ⁶ So ⁱI took hold of my concubine, cut her in pieces, and sent her throughout all the territory of the inheritance of Israel, because they ^jcommitted lewdness and outrage in Israel. ⁷ Look! All of you *are* children of Israel; ^kgive your advice and counsel here and now!”

⁸ So all the people arose as one man, saying, “None *of us* will go to his tent, nor will any turn back to his house; ⁹but now this *is* the thing which we will do to Gibeah: *We will go up* ^lagainst it by lot. ¹⁰ We will take ten men out of *every* hundred throughout all the tribes of Israel, a hundred out of *every* thousand, and a thousand out of *every* ten thousand, to make provisions for the people, that when they come to Gibeah in Benjamin, they may repay all the vileness that they have done in Israel.” ¹¹ So all the men of Israel were gathered against the city, united together as one man.

^{12 m} Then the tribes of Israel sent men through all the tribe of Benjamin, saying, “What *is* this wickedness that has occurred among you? ¹³ Now therefore, deliver up the men, ⁿthe ¹perverted men

Sodom unmistakable, as if to say, “Things are as bad now as they were in the days of Sodom and Gomorrah!”

19:22 Perverted men is literally the “sons of Belial,” a phrase describing wicked or worthless people. The name Belial came to designate Satan, as it is used in 2 Cor. 6:15. **That we may know him** means that the men of Gibeah wanted to sodomize the Levite. The same expression is found in Gen. 19:5, where the men of Sodom wanted to force homosexual relations on Lot’s guests.

19:27–30 The Levite’s indifferent reaction to his concubine’s collapse is followed by a gruesome deed: after carrying her away, he cut her body into 12 pieces, sending a piece to each tribe. This gesture was practically a call to arms; Saul did the same with oxen (1 Sam. 11:7).

19:30 The phrase **no such deed has been done** is ambiguous; it is uncertain whether they were horrified by discovering the dismembered body or by learning about the cruel rape and murder.

20:1–48 An assembly of all Israel convened at Mizpah and decided

to unite against Benjamin (vv. 1–11). The Benjamites, who apparently were not at the assembly (v. 3), responded by joining the men of Gibeah for battle (vv. 12–17). After withstanding two assaults, Benjamin was routed and its cities obliterated. The spiritual decay of Israel had resulted in the destruction of its own people with a vengeance once reserved for pagan peoples.

20:1 From Dan to Beersheba is a common expression for the full extent of the land of Israel from north to south (1 Sam. 3:20; 2 Sam. 24:2; 1 Kin. 4:25).

20:2 The assembly usually means the congregation of Israel as assembled for a religious event (1 Chr. 28:8) or a military campaign (Num. 22:4; 1 Sam. 17:47).

20:9, 11 The tribes agreed to send a tenth of their men (v. 10), choosing them **by lot**. God’s role is not mentioned here. To their credit, the Israelite tribes were **united together as one man**, a quality notably absent up to this point in the Book of Judges.

who *are* in Gibeah, that we may put them to death and ^oremove the evil from Israel!" But the children of Benjamin would not listen to the voice of their brethren, the children of Israel. ¹⁴Instead, the children of Benjamin gathered together from their cities to Gibeah, to go to battle against the children of Israel. ¹⁵And from their cities at that time ^pthe children of Benjamin numbered twenty-six thousand men who drew the sword, besides the inhabitants of Gibeah, who numbered seven hundred select men. ¹⁶Among all this people *were* seven hundred select men *who were* ^qleft-handed; every one could sling a stone at a hair's *breadth* and not miss. ¹⁷Now besides Benjamin, the men of Israel numbered four hundred thousand men who drew the sword; all of these *were* men of war.

¹⁸Then the children of Israel arose and ^rwent up to ²the house of God to ^sinquire of God. They said, "Which of us shall go up first to battle against the children of Benjamin?"

The LORD said, "Judah first!"

¹⁹So the children of Israel rose in the morning and encamped against Gibeah. ²⁰And the men of Israel went out to battle against Benjamin, and the men of Israel put themselves in battle array to fight against them at Gibeah. ²¹Then ^uthe children of Benjamin came out of Gibeah, and on that day cut down to the ground twenty-two thousand men of the Israelites. ²²And the people, that is, the men of Israel, encouraged themselves and again formed the battle line at the place where they had put themselves in array on the first day. ²³^vThen the children of Israel went up and wept before the LORD until evening, and asked counsel of the LORD, saying, "Shall I again draw near for battle against the children of my brother Benjamin?"

And the LORD said, "Go up against him."

²⁴So the children of Israel approached the children of Benjamin on the second

¹³ ^o Deut. 17:12;
1 Cor. 5:13
¹⁵ ^p Num. 1:36, 37;
2:23; 26:41
¹⁶ ^q Judg. 3:15;
1 Chr. 12:2
¹⁸ ^r Judg. 20:23, 26
^s Num. 27:21 ^t Judg.
1:1, 2 ² Or Bethel
²¹ ^u [Gen. 49:27]
²³ ^v Judg. 20:26, 27

day. ²⁵And ^wBenjamin went out against them from Gibeah on the second day, and cut down to the ground eighteen thousand more of the children of Israel; all these drew the sword.

²⁶Then all the children of Israel, that is, all the people, ^xwent up and came to ³the house of God and wept. They sat there before the LORD and fasted that day until evening; and they offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the LORD. ²⁷So the children of Israel inquired of the LORD (^ythe ark of the covenant of God *was* there in those days, ²⁸^zand Phinehas the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, ^astood before it in those days), saying, "Shall I yet again go out to battle against the children of my brother Benjamin, or shall I cease?"

And the LORD said, "Go up, for tomorrow I will deliver them into your hand."

²⁹Then Israel ^bset men in ambush all around Gibeah. ³⁰And the children of Israel went up against the children of Benjamin on the third day, and put themselves in battle array against Gibeah as at the other times. ³¹So the children of Benjamin went out against the people, *and* were drawn away from the city. They began to strike down *and* kill some of the people, as at the other times, in the highways ^c(one of which goes up to Bethel and the other to Gibeah) and in the field, about thirty men of Israel. ³²And the children of Benjamin said, "They *are* defeated before us, as at first."

But the children of Israel said, "Let us flee and draw them away from the city to the highways." ³³So all the men of Israel rose from their place and put themselves in battle array at Baal Tamar. Then Israel's men in ambush burst forth from their position in the plain of Geba. ³⁴And ten thousand select men from all Israel came against Gibeah, and the battle was fierce. ^dBut ⁴the *Benjamites* did not know that disaster *was* upon them. ³⁵The LORD ⁵defeated Benjamin before Israel. And the children of Israel de-

²⁵ ^w Judg. 20:21
²⁶ ^x Judg. 20:18, 23;
21:2 ³ Or Bethel
²⁷ ^y Josh. 18:1;
1 Sam. 1:3; 3:3;
4:3, 4
²⁸ ^z Num. 25:7, 13;
Josh. 24:33 ^a Deut.
10:8; 18:5
²⁹ ^b Josh. 8:4
³¹ ^c Judg. 21:19
³⁴ ^d Josh. 8:14; Job
21:13; Is. 47:11 ⁴ Lit.
they
³⁵ ⁵ Lit. *struck*

20:15 The Benjamite force of **twenty-six thousand men** was considerably smaller than the Israelite army of four hundred thousand (v. 17).

20:16 The Benjamites counted on **seven hundred select men who were left-handed**, an advantage since their shots would come from unaccustomed angles. Ironically, the name Benjamin means "Son of the Right Hand."

20:18 **Judah first:** The book begins and ends with Judah in this prominent position (1:1, 2). This is no accident, since the end of the book points toward the monarchy, whose true expression would come out of Judah.

20:23 **Go up against him:** The Lord graciously answered the Israelites twice when they called upon Him (v. 18).

20:26 The Israelites suffered a second major defeat (v. 25). The result drove them to fasting and sacrificing at Bethel, something done

very rarely in this period. **The house of God** literally reads "Bethel," and probably the town is meant. Bethel was a Benjamite town that had been religiously prominent since Jacob met God there (Gen. 28:16–19).

20:28 **Phinehas** was the one who had stopped the plague at Peor (Num. 25:6–11). The fact that he was still alive shows that the organization of the Book of Judges is not strictly chronological. The author likely placed this account at the end of the book to make the point even more strongly about the spiritual deterioration of the nation.

20:31 **The highways** were probably made of stone or gravel. The Hebrew word means "something raised," that is, a roadway elevated above the normal ground level (Is. 49:11).

20:35 **The Lord defeated Benjamin** as punishment for the heinous crimes committed in Gibeah (ch. 19) and for disrupting Israel's unity, which He valued.

stroyed that day twenty-five thousand one hundred Benjamites; all these drew the sword.

³⁶So the children of Benjamin saw that they were defeated. ^eThe men of Israel had given ground to the Benjamites, because they relied on the men in ambush whom they had set against Gibeah. ^{37f}And the men in ambush quickly rushed upon Gibeah; the men in ambush spread out and struck the whole city with the edge of the sword. ³⁸Now the appointed signal between the men of Israel and the men in ambush was that they would make a great cloud of ^gsmoke rise up from the city, ³⁹whereupon the men of Israel would turn in battle. Now Benjamin had begun ⁶to strike *and* kill about thirty of the men of Israel. For they said, “Surely they are defeated before us, as *in* the first battle.” ⁴⁰But when the cloud began to rise from the city in a column of smoke, the Benjamites ^hlooked behind them, and there was the whole city going up *in smoke* to heaven. ⁴¹And when the men of Israel turned back, the men of Benjamin panicked, for they saw that disaster had come upon them. ⁴²Therefore they ⁷turned *their backs* before the men of Israel in the direction of the wilderness; but the battle overtook them, and whoever *came* out of the cities they destroyed in their midst. ⁴³They surrounded the Benjamites, chased them, *and* easily trampled them down as far as the front of Gibeah toward the east. ⁴⁴And eighteen thousand men of Benjamin fell; all these *were* men of valor. ⁴⁵Then ⁸they turned and fled toward the wilderness to the rock of ⁱRimmon; and they cut down five thousand of them on the highways. Then they pursued them relentlessly up to Gidom, and killed two thousand of them. ⁴⁶So all who fell of Benjamin that day were twenty-five thousand men who drew the sword; all these *were* ⁹men of valor.

^{47j}But six hundred men turned and fled toward the wilderness to the rock of Rimmon, and they stayed at the rock of Rimmon for four months. ⁴⁸And the

36 ^e Josh. 8:15
37 ^f Josh. 8:19
38 ^g Josh. 8:20
39 ^h Lit. *to strike the slain ones*
40 ^h Josh. 8:20
42 ⁷ fled
45 ⁱ Josh. 15:32;
1 Chr. 6:77; Zech.
14:10 ⁸ LXX *the rest*
46 ⁹ valiant warriors
47 ^j Judg. 21:13

men of Israel turned back against the children of Benjamin, and struck them down with the edge of the sword—from *every* city, men and beasts, all who were found. They also set fire to all the cities they came to.

Wives Provided for the Benjamites

21 Now ^athe men of Israel had sworn an oath at Mizpah, saying, “None of us shall give his daughter to Benjamin as a wife.” ²Then the people came ^bto ¹the house of God, and remained there before God till evening. They lifted up their voices and wept bitterly, ³and said, “O LORD God of Israel, why has this come to pass in Israel, that today there should be one tribe *missing* in Israel?”

⁴So it was, on the next morning, that the people rose early and ^cbuilt an altar there, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. ⁵The children of Israel said, “Who *is there* among all the tribes of Israel who did not come up with the assembly to the LORD?” ^dFor they had made a great oath concerning anyone who had not come up to the LORD at Mizpah, saying, “He shall surely be put to death.” ⁶And the children of Israel grieved for Benjamin their brother, and said, “One tribe is cut off from Israel today. ⁷What shall we do for wives for those who remain, seeing we have sworn by the LORD that we will not give them our daughters as wives?”

⁸And they said, “What one *is there* from the tribes of Israel who did not come up to Mizpah to the LORD?” And, in fact, no one had come to the camp from ^eJabesh Gilead to the assembly. ⁹For when the people were counted, indeed, not one of the inhabitants of Jabesh Gilead *was* there. ¹⁰So the congregation sent out there twelve thousand of their most valiant men, and commanded them, saying, ^f“Go and strike the inhabitants of Jabesh Gilead with the edge of the sword, including the women and children. ¹¹And this *is* the thing that you shall do: ^gYou shall utterly destroy every male, and every woman who has known a man in-

CHAPTER 21

1 ^a Judg. 20:1
2 ^b Judg. 20:18, 26
¹ Or *Bethel*
4 ^c Deut. 12:5;
2 Sam. 24:25
5 ^d Judg. 20:1-3
8 ^e 1 Sam. 11:1; 31:11
10 ^f Num. 31:17;
Judg. 5:23; 1 Sam.
11:7
11 ^g Num. 31:17;
Deut. 20:13, 14

20:38–42 The burning of Gibeah and the resulting rout of the Benjamites are almost an exact replay of the ambush of Ai (Josh. 8:17–22).
20:47 Six hundred men of Benjamin survived the rout. They would become the remnant that would carry on the tribe’s name (21:12–23).
21:1–25 After the devastating defeat of Benjamin, the remaining Israelites were struck with remorse because Benjamin faced almost certain extinction (vv. 1–7). Thus ch. 21 tells of the provisions they made for the tribe’s survival, though the means they chose were questionable or even brutal.
21:1 The details of an **oath at Mizpah** appear for the first time. It was presumably made when the people assembled at Mizpah before attacking Benjamin.

21:5 The **great oath** sworn by the Israelites provided the justification for punishing Jabesh Gilead and for providing wives for the Benjamites. Every tribe was expected to heed the Levite’s call, since he had sent the concubine’s corpse “throughout all the territory of Israel” (19:29).
21:8 **Jabesh Gilead** was a town east of the Jordan.
21:11 The phrase **utterly destroy** is found numerous times in the Book of Joshua in regard to the conquest of the Canaanites. However, there is no hint that God supported the bloodbath at Jabesh Gilead.

timately.”¹² So they found among the inhabitants of Jabesh Gilead four hundred young virgins who had not known a man intimately; and they brought them to the camp at ^hShiloh, which is in the land of Canaan.

¹³ Then the whole congregation sent word to the children of Benjamin ⁱwho were at the rock of Rimmon, and announced peace to them. ¹⁴ So Benjamin came back at that time, and they gave them the women whom they had saved alive of the women of Jabesh Gilead; and yet they had not found enough for them.

¹⁵ And the people ^jgrieved for Benjamin, because the Lord had made a void in the tribes of Israel.

¹⁶ Then the elders of the congregation said, “What shall we do for wives for those who remain, since the women of Benjamin have been destroyed?” ¹⁷ And they said, “*There must be* an inheritance for the survivors of Benjamin, that a tribe may not be destroyed from Israel. ¹⁸ However, we cannot give them wives from our daughters, ^kfor the children of Israel have sworn an oath, saying, ‘Cursed *be* the one who gives a wife to Benjamin.’” ¹⁹ Then they said, “In fact, *there is* a yearly ^lfeast of the Lord in ^mShiloh, which is north of Bethel, on the east side of the ⁿhighway

¹² ^h Josh. 18:1; Judg. 18:31

¹³ ⁱ Judg. 20:47

¹⁵ ^j Judg. 21:6

¹⁸ ^k Judg. 11:35;

21:1

¹⁹ ^l Lev. 23:2

^m Deut. 12:5; Josh.

18:1; Judg. 18:31;

1 Sam. 1:3 ⁿ Judg.

20:31

²¹ ^o Ex. 15:20; Judg.

11:34; 1 Sam. 18:6

²³ ^p Judg. 20:48

²⁵ ^q Judg. 17:6;

18:1; 19:1 ^r Deut.

12:8; Judg. 17:6

that goes up from Bethel to Shechem, and south of Lebonah.”

²⁰ Therefore they instructed the children of Benjamin, saying, “Go, lie in wait in the vineyards, ²¹ and watch; and just when the daughters of Shiloh come out ^o to perform their dances, then come out from the vineyards, and every man catch a wife for himself from the daughters of Shiloh; then go to the land of Benjamin. ²² Then it shall be, when their fathers or their brothers come to us to complain, that we will say to them, ‘Be kind to them for our sakes, because we did not take a wife for any of them in the war; for *it is* not *as though* you have given the *women* to them at this time, making yourselves guilty of your oath.’”

²³ And the children of Benjamin did so; they took enough wives for their number from those who danced, whom they caught. Then they went and returned to their inheritance, and they ^prebuilt the cities and dwelt in them. ²⁴ So the children of Israel departed from there at that time, every man to his tribe and family; they went out from there, every man to his inheritance.

²⁵ ^q In those days *there was* no king in Israel; ^r everyone did *what was* right in his own eyes.

21:12 Four hundred young virgins were captured to become wives for the six hundred survivors of Benjamin (20:47). Still, four hundred were not enough, and the Israelites contrived to take more from Shiloh (vv. 19–22).

21:19 Some scholars believe that the **yearly feast of the Lord in Shiloh** was the Passover, held in the spring because of the dancing associated with it (vv. 21, 23); they point to the dancing of Miriam and the Israelite women after they had crossed the Red Sea as evidence for this practice (Ex. 15:20). However, the celebration was more likely the Feast of Tabernacles, celebrated in the fall, since vineyards are mentioned (vv. 20, 21). The grape harvest came in the early fall. This may have been the same event that drew Samuel’s parents every year to Shiloh (1 Sam. 1:3).

21:20–23 The Benjamites were allowed to abduct enough women from Shiloh to supply every man with a wife. No justification is given except for the supposed needs of the Benjamites. To sidestep their oath, Israelites allowed the Benjamites to capture the young women. In this way, they could not be held responsible for giving brides to the six hundred, which they swore at Mizpah they would never do (v. 1).

21:24 every man to his inheritance: The Hebrew words here are the same as those found at the end of the Book of Joshua (24:28). However, the book’s final comment (v. 25) indicates that times were far worse than they had been in Joshua’s day.

THE BOOK OF RUTH

THE BOOK OF RUTH is a beautiful story of love, loyalty, and redemption. One of only two books in the Bible named after a woman, this narrative masterpiece tells the story of the salvation of Ruth, the Moabitess. Through her relationship with her mother-in-law Naomi, Ruth learned about the living God and became His devoted follower. Abandoning her family and homeland, she demonstrated both her love for her widowed mother-in-law and her faith in Israel's God. Her faith was well placed, for God not only provided for her; He also placed her in the messianic family line.

Author Traditionally, Samuel has been identified as the author of Ruth. However, some Jewish rabbis have ascribed the writing to Naomi. If the references to David in Ruth 4:17, 22 are an integral part of the original book and not a later appendix, then the book was not written by either since both died before David's birth.

Some evidence in Ruth points to the conclusion that the book was written during David or Solomon's reign. First, the genealogy of David in 4:18–22 indicates this. Second, the first verse of Ruth implies that the book was written after the time of the judges. Third, the fact that the narrator had to explain ancient customs to the intended readers in 4:7 indicates that the book was not written at the time of the events. All this evidence may point to the authorship of Ruth during Solomon's reign—a time regarded as the golden age of Hebrew writing.

Historical Setting The story of Ruth takes place during the time of the judges—a period characterized by extreme spiritual and moral decay in Israel (c. 1380–1050 B.C.). The beautiful love story of Ruth contrasts strongly with the pervasive depravity of the period, giving a rare glimmer of hope in an otherwise bleak era.

The story itself reflects ordinary small town and rural life in Israel—specifically around Bethlehem. Details of cultural elements, such as the description of the barley harvest (1:22), the mention of the threshing floor (3:6), and the events at the city gate (4:1), add plausibility to the story. It is possible that the story was first circulated in Bethlehem by Naomi and her circle of women friends. Later, the author of Ruth retained some of the lovely feminine touches that grace this story.

Themes The Book of Ruth underscores an overarching theme of the Bible: God desires all to believe in Him, even non-Israelites. This was God's plan from the beginning. He had covenanted with Abraham and his descendants in order to bless other nations through the Israelites and draw all nations to Himself (Gen. 12:1–3).

While demonstrating this one significant theme, the Book of Ruth makes some distinctive contributions of its own. First of all, the important idea of loyal love is evident in the book. The Hebrew word translated as *kindly* in 1:8 means “loyal love” or “covenantal love.” This was a genuine love that keeps promises. When the word is used of God, it refers to God's loving faithfulness to His promises. Even though Ruth was a foreigner and was not familiar with God's law, she displayed this type of love and loyalty to her mother-in-law Naomi. She left her homeland in order to be with Naomi in a time of need. Boaz also showed the same noble quality by protecting and providing for Ruth, a widow of one of his relatives. Yet the story of Ruth ultimately illustrates how God Himself demonstrated such love. He rewarded Ruth for her loyalty to Him by giving her an honored

place in the community of faith. He blessed her with a child who would become the ancestor of King David and later of the promised Messiah.

The second concept that the Book of Ruth emphasizes is redemption. God's providential hand in redeeming Ruth and Naomi from poverty is evident. He controlled circumstances so that Ruth and Boaz would meet, and He prompted Boaz to fulfill the responsibilities of the "close relative" or the kinsman-redeemer (3:9). The kinsman-redeemer was "the defender of family rights." This individual was a close relative who had the financial resources to rescue a poverty-stricken family member, stepping in to save that relative from slavery or from having to sell the family's ancestral land. In the story of Ruth, Boaz redeemed the land that Naomi was about to sell. He also took on another of the kinsman-redeemer's responsibilities—the obligation of providing an heir for Ruth's deceased husband, Mahlon. Dying without an heir was considered a tragedy in the ancient Middle East. To rectify this situation, the brother of a deceased man was expected to marry the widow in order to produce a child, who would be considered the heir of the deceased. This was called a levirate marriage. Boaz willingly took on this duty, even though he was not the nearest relative (3:12, 13). He bought the land from Naomi, married Ruth, and carried on the family name through the birth of their son. Through all these actions, Boaz exemplified the compassion and love of a redeemer. His life is an illustration for us of the compassion of Jesus, who is our Redeemer (Gal. 3:13).

CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

In this short book, the Hebrew word *goel* is used 13 times. It means "close relative" (3:9) and conveys the concept of kinsman-redeemer. That's exactly who Jesus turned out to be: the kinsman-redeemer for the human race, one who became part of our "family" and who also became our advocate. According to ancient Hebrew law, a person must fulfill certain requirements in order to qualify as a "kinsman-redeemer." And the requirements anticipate what Jesus Himself did for us.

For one thing, this kinsman-redeemer must be a relative of those he redeems (Deut. 25:5, 7–10; John 1:14; Rom. 1:3; Phil. 2:5–8; Heb. 2:14, 15). This family member must also be able to pay the price of redemption (Ruth 2:1; 1 Pet. 1:18, 19) and be willing to redeem the individual who is about to be claimed by another (Ruth 3:11; Matt. 20:28; John 10:15, 18; Heb. 10:7). One final requirement is that the kinsman-redeemer must himself be free and not in debt. Because Jesus was sinless, He was free from the curse of sin. The kinsman-redeemer is a clear picture of the role Jesus would play for us.



A wheat field being harvested in the hill country of Manasseh. Ruth met Boaz when he saw her gleaning leftover grain from his fields (Ruth 2).

RUTH OUTLINE

- I. Sojourn in the land of Moab 1:1–22
 - A. Tragedy in Moab 1:1–5
 - B. Friendship and faith in Moab 1:6–22
- II. Ruth's first encounter with Boaz 2:1–23
 - A. Boaz's introduction 2:1–3
 - B. Boaz's discovery of Ruth 2:4–13
 - C. Boaz's concern for Ruth 2:14–23
- III. Ruth and Boaz at the threshing floor 3:1–18
 - A. Ruth and Naomi's daring decision 3:1–7
 - B. Boaz's delightful duty 3:8–18
- IV. Redemption of Ruth by Boaz 4:1–22
 - A. The relative's refusal to redeem 4:1–6
 - B. Boaz's choice to redeem 4:7–12
 - C. The reward of redemption 4:13–22

c. 1446–1406 B.C.
The Israelites
wander in the
wilderness

c. 1405–1400 B.C.
The conquest of
Canaan

c. 1380–1050 B.C.
The time of the
Judges and the
events of Ruth

c. 1050 B.C.
Saul becomes king
of Israel

1010 B.C.
David begins to
reign at Hebron

1003 B.C.
David reigns over
all Israel

970 B.C.
David dies and
Solomon becomes
king



View of the hill country east of Bethlehem. Boaz met Ruth in the fields near Bethlehem.

Elimelech's Family Goes to Moab

Now it came to pass, in the days when ^athe judges ¹ruled, that there was ^ba famine in the land. And a certain man of ^cBethlehem, Judah, went to ²dwell in the country of ^dMoab, he and his wife and his two sons. ²The name of the man was Elimelech, the name of his wife was Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Chilion—^eEphrathites of Bethlehem, Judah. And they went ^fto the country of Moab and remained there. ³Then Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died; and she was left, and her two sons. ⁴Now they took wives of the women of Moab: the name of the one was Orpah, and the name of the other Ruth. And they ³dwelt there about ten years. ⁵Then both Mahlon and Chilion also died; so

CHAPTER 1

¹ ^a Judg. 2:16-18
^b Gen. 12:10; 26:1;
 2 Kin. 8:1 ^c Judg.
 17:8; Mic. 5:2 ^d Gen.
 19:37 ¹ Lit. *judged*
² ^e As a resident alien
² ^e Gen. 35:19;
 1 Sam. 1:1; 1 Kin.
 11:26 ^f Judg. 3:30
⁴ ³ *lived*

⁶ ^g Ex. 3:16; 4:31;
 Jer. 29:10; Zeph.
 2:7; Luke 1:68 ^h Ps.
 132:15; Matt. 6:11
⁴ *attended to*
⁸ ⁱ Josh. 24:15
² Tim. 1:16-18
^k Ruth 2:20
⁹ ⁱ Ruth 3:1

the woman survived her two sons and her husband.

Naomi Returns with Ruth

⁶Then she arose with her daughters-in-law that she might return from the country of Moab, for she had heard in the country of Moab that the LORD had ^gvisited ⁴His people by ^hgiving them bread. ⁷Therefore she went out from the place where she was, and her two daughters-in-law with her; and they went on the way to return to the land of Judah. ⁸And Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, ⁱ"Go, return each to her mother's house. ^jThe LORD deal kindly with you, as you have dealt ^kwith the dead and with me. ⁹The LORD grant that you may find ^lrest, each in the house of her husband."

So she kissed them, and they lifted up

1:1 when the judges ruled: The events of the Book of Ruth took place before the establishment of the monarchy in Israel. The judges were God's servants, who established the teachings of God's law and righteousness during a time of political, spiritual, and moral degeneracy. The story shines as a bright spot during a dark age in Israel's history. **Moab** is located east of the Dead Sea. The Moabites descended from Lot as a result of his incestuous relation with his older daughter (Gen. 19:30-37). The famine in Israel extended to **Bethlehem** even though its very name means "House of Bread."

1:2 Due to the famine, **Elimelech**, whose name means "God Is King," journeyed to Moab with his wife and two sons. The names of the two sons **Mahlon** and **Chilion** mean "Sickly" and "Failing." The early deaths of these two sons in Moab showed that their names were appropriate (v. 5). **Ephrathites:** Ephrathah was another name for the region of Bethlehem (Gen. 48:7; Mic. 5:2).

1:4 The Moabite name **Ruth** connotes "Friendship." While the Law

of Moses did not prohibit Israelite men from marrying Moabite women, it did exclude Moabites from the congregation of Israel for ten generations (Deut. 23:1-4).

1:6 the LORD: This is the first mention of God's name in the story. God Himself is at the center of the book. This verse illustrates the mercy of the Lord, who supported even His disobedient people with food. He **visited** His people both for blessing, as in this verse, and for discipline (Ex. 20:5).

1:8 The Hebrew word translated as **kindly** is often used to describe God, and means "loyal love." The word expresses both God's loyalty to His covenant and His love for His people. Here Naomi expressed the hope that the Lord's covenantal love would extend to her daughters-in-law, who were outside the land of Israel and were not Jewish.

1:9 The concept of **rest** referred to here is the security that is found in marriage.

The Book of Ruth

Set in the dark and bloody days of the judges, the story of Ruth is silent about the underlying hostility and suspicion the two peoples—Judahites and Moabites—felt for each other. The original onslaught of the invading Israelite tribes against towns that were once Moabite had never been forgotten or forgiven, while the Hebrew prophets denounced Moab's pride and arrogance for trying to bewitch, seduce, and oppress Israel from the time of Balaam on. The Mesha Stele (c. 830 B.C.) boasts of the massacre of entire Israelite towns.

Moab encompassed the expansive, grain-rich plateau between the Dead Sea and the eastern desert on both sides of the enormous rift of the Arnon River gorge. Much of eastern Moab was steppe land—semi-arid wastes not profitable for cultivation, but excellent for grazing flocks of sheep and goats. The tribute Moab paid to Israel in the days of Ahab was 100,000 lambs and the wool of 100,000 rams.



their voices and wept. ¹⁰ And they said to her, “Surely we will return with you to your people.”

¹¹ But Naomi said, “Turn back, my daughters; why will you go with me? *Are* there still sons in my womb, ^m that they may be your husbands? ¹² Turn back, my daughters, go—for I am too old to have a husband. If I should say I have hope, *if* I should have a husband tonight and should also bear sons, ¹³ would you wait for them till they were grown? Would you restrain yourselves from having husbands? No, my daughters; for it grieves me very much for your sakes that ⁿ the hand of the LORD has gone out against me!”

¹⁴ Then they lifted up their voices and wept again; and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth ^o clung to her.

¹⁵ And she said, “Look, your sister-in-law has gone back to ^p her people and to her gods; ^q return after your sister-in-law.”

¹⁶ But Ruth said:

^r “Entreat ⁵ me not to leave you,
Or to turn back from following after
you;
For wherever you go, I will go;
And wherever you lodge, I will lodge;
^s Your people *shall be* my people,
And your God, my God.

¹¹ ^m Gen. 38:11; Deut. 25:5
¹³ ⁿ Judg. 2:15; Job 19:21; Ps. 32:4; 38:2
¹⁴ ^o [Prov. 17:17]
¹⁵ ^p Judg. 11:24
^q Josh. 1:15
¹⁶ ^r 2 Kin. 2:2, 4, 6
^s Ruth 2:11, 12
⁵ *Urgeme not*

¹⁷ ^t 1 Sam. 3:17; 2 Sam. 19:13; 2 Kin. 6:31
¹⁸ ^u Acts 21:14
⁶ Lit. *made herself strong to go*
¹⁹ ^v Matt. 21:10
^w Is. 23:7; Lam. 2:15
²⁰ ⁷ Lit. *Pleasant*
⁸ Lit. *Bitter*
²¹ ^x Job 1:21
⁹ Heb. *Shaddai*
²² ^y Ruth 2:23; 2 Sam. 2:19

CHAPTER 2

¹ ^a Ruth 3:2, 12
^b Ruth 1:2

¹⁷ Where you die, I will die,
And there will I be buried.
^t The LORD do so to me, and more also,
If *anything* but death parts you
and me.”

¹⁸ ^u When she saw that she ⁶ was determined to go with her, she stopped speaking to her.

¹⁹ Now the two of them went until they came to Bethlehem. And it happened, when they had come to Bethlehem, that ^v all the city was excited because of them; and the women said, ^w “Is this Naomi?”

²⁰ But she said to them, “Do not call me ⁷ Naomi; call me ⁸ Mara, for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me. ²¹ I went out full, ^x and the LORD has brought me home again empty. Why do you call me Naomi, since the LORD has testified against me, and ⁹ the Almighty has afflicted me?”

²² So Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabitess her daughter-in-law with her, who returned from the country of Moab. Now they came to Bethlehem ^y at the beginning of barley harvest.

Ruth Meets Boaz

² There was a ^a relative of Naomi’s husband, a man of great wealth, of the family of ^b Elimelech. His name *was*

1:10–13 Naomi’s daughters-in-law insisted on returning with her. In response, Naomi pointed out that she could not provide husbands for them and expressed concern for their happiness. Her love for them is evidenced by the use of the personal words **my daughters** in vv. 11, 13.

1:13 grieves: Naomi was bitter that she was without husband and sons and attributed her circumstances to God’s discipline.

1:14 In this verse, the responses of **Orpah** and **Ruth** are contrasted. Orpah did the expected thing and returned home. Yet Ruth unexpectedly stayed with her impoverished mother-in-law. Though understandable, Orpah’s action meant that she had left the Israelites and their God. On the other hand, Ruth’s action brought her into the Messiah’s family line (4:18–22).

1:15 Naomi tried one last time to convince Ruth to return to Moab.

The word for **gods** refers to the deities of Moab. Here we are reminded that coming to Israel was also coming to the one Lord; remaining outside of Israel was remaining away from the covenant community.

1:16, 17 In a beautiful, emotionally charged poetic response, Ruth described her determination to remain with Naomi. Her assertion that Naomi’s God would be her God is especially striking. This is an affirmation of faith in the Lord, the God of Israel. Ruth’s use of the divine name Yahweh translated as **the LORD** in an oath indicates her commitment to the living God. She was choosing to cling not only to Naomi, her land, and her people, but also to her God. In effect, Ruth was forsaking all that she had ever known to follow the one true God. She was following in the footsteps of Abraham, who had forsaken his family and his homeland in response to God’s command (Gen. 12:1, 4).

1:20 Naomi temporarily forgot or ignored the courageous and loyal commitment of Ruth. She wanted her name to reflect her bitterness over her circumstances so she named herself **Mara**, meaning “Bitter.”

1:21 The concepts of fullness and emptiness appear here. Naomi left for Moab complete, with a husband and two sons. But now she returned to Bethlehem **empty**. She had no family except for Ruth.

1:22 The theme of *return* is prominent in this chapter. The word is even used of Ruth—an unusual word for the narrator to use since there is no indication that Ruth had ever been to Israel. **Ruth the Moabitess:** As the story explains, God extended His protection to Ruth even though she was a foreigner. Ruth and Naomi arrived **at the beginning of barley harvest**. Barley was the first crop to ripen, and this period would be the beginning of the harvest season. The fact that there was a harvest season indicates that the famine in Israel had ended (1:1, 6).

2:1 Boaz was related to Naomi’s husband, **Elimelech**. This notice suggests the possibility of a solution for the distressed situation in which Naomi and Ruth found themselves. The status of a widow in the ancient Middle East was difficult at best. In times of trouble, the

glean

(Heb. *laqat*) (2:2; Lev. 19:10; 23:22) Strong’s #3950

The Hebrew word used here means “to gather together” or “to pick up.” In the OT, people are described as gleaning a variety of objects: stones (Gen. 31:46), money (Gen. 47:14), manna (Ex. 16:4, 5, 26), and even worthless men (Judg. 11:3). The prophet Isaiah used this word to describe how the Lord would “gather up” His people from among all the nations and restore them to their own land (Is. 27:12). The verb occurs 34 times in the OT, with 12 instances here in ch. 2. In this passage, Ruth makes use of the stipulations the Lord gave to Moses. God had told the Israelites not to completely harvest their fields; instead they were to leave some unharvested so that the poor and strangers in the land could gather it up for their survival (Lev. 19:9, 10; 23:22).

^cBoaz. ²So Ruth the Moabitess said to Naomi, "Please let me go to the ^dfield, and glean heads of grain after *him* in whose sight I may find favor."

And she said to her, "Go, my daughter."

³Then she left, and went and gleaned in the field after the reapers. And she happened to come to the part of the field *belonging* to Boaz, who *was* of the family of Elimelech.

⁴Now behold, Boaz came from ^eBethlehem, and said to the reapers, ^f"The LORD be with you!"

And they answered him, "The LORD bless you!"

⁵Then Boaz said to his servant who was in charge of the reapers, "Whose young woman *is* this?"

⁶So the servant who was in charge of the reapers answered and said, "It *is* the young Moabite woman ^gwho came back with Naomi from the country of Moab. ⁷And she said, 'Please let me glean and gather after the reapers among the sheaves.' So she came and has continued from morning until now, though she rested a little in the house."

⁸Then Boaz said to Ruth, "You will listen, my daughter, will you not? Do not go to glean in another field, nor go from here, but stay close by my young women. ⁹Let your eyes *be* on the field which they reap, and go after them. Have I not commanded the young men not to touch you? And when you are thirsty, go to the vessels and drink from what the young men have drawn."

¹⁰So she ^hfell on her face, bowed down

1 ^c Ruth 4:21
2 ^d Lev. 19:9, 10;
23:22; Deut. 24:19
4 ^e Ruth 1:1 ^f Ps.
129:7, 8; Luke 1:28;
2 Thess. 3:16
6 ^g Ruth 1:22
10 ^h 1 Sam. 25:23

ⁱ 1 Sam. 1:18
11 ^j Ruth 1:14-18
12 ^k 1 Sam. 24:19;
Ps. 58:11 ^l Ruth
1:16; Ps. 17:8; 36:7;
57:1; 61:4; 63:7; 91:4
13 ^m Gen. 33:15;
1 Sam. 1:18
ⁿ 1 Sam. 25:41 ^l Lit.
to the heart of
14 ^o Ruth 2:18
15 ² Gather after
the reapers
³ rebuke
17 ^p Ruth 1:22

to the ground, and said to him, "Why have I found ⁱfavor in your eyes, that you should take notice of me, since I *am* a foreigner?"

¹¹And Boaz answered and said to her, "It has been fully reported to me, ^jall that you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband, and *how* you have left your father and your mother and the land of your birth, and have come to a people whom you did not know before. ¹²^kThe LORD repay your work, and a full reward be given you by the LORD God of Israel, ^lunder whose wings you have come for refuge."

¹³Then she said, ^m"Let me find favor in your sight, my lord; for you have comforted me, and have spoken ^lkindly to your maidservant, though I am not like one of your maidservants."

¹⁴Now Boaz said to her at mealtime, "Come here, and eat of the bread, and dip your piece of bread in the vinegar." So she sat beside the reapers, and he passed parched *grain* to her; and she ate and ^owas satisfied, and kept some back.

¹⁵And when she rose up to ²glean, Boaz commanded his young men, saying, "Let her glean even among the sheaves, and do not ³reproach her. ¹⁶Also let *grain* from the bundles fall purposely for her; leave *it* that she may glean, and do not rebuke her."

¹⁷So she gleaned in the field until evening, and beat out what she had gleaned, and it was about an ephah of ^pbarley.

¹⁸Then she took *it* up and went into the city, and her mother-in-law saw what she

widow's situation was intolerable. That was why God commanded His people to care for the widow and the orphan (Deut. 24:19–22). As a relative, Boaz could stand up for the rights of these two women. He was described as **a man of great wealth**, a person of noble character and of high standing in the community. The name Boaz probably means "Swift Strength."

2:2 The Law of Moses allowed the poor to **glean** in the farmers' fields (Lev. 23:22).

2:3 happened to come: Though Ruth did not intentionally go to the field of Boaz, the Lord providentially directed her steps.

2:7 The **sheaves** refer to bundles of grain. Ruth was not presumptuous here but in gentleness asked for a favor that she might have claimed as an entitlement. Yet as an alien, her opportunities for gleaning in the fields of Judea may have been severely limited.

2:8, 9 Boaz demonstrated extraordinary concern for Ruth's provision and protection. He even thought of Ruth's need for water in the heat of the day.

2:11, 12 Boaz explained that he favored Ruth because she had shown "loyal love" to her mother-in-law, Naomi. He then gave her a blessing, asking that God would abundantly **reward** Ruth for her remarkable loyalty. Boaz expressed the idea of God's protection by saying that Ruth had come **under** God's **wings**.

2:13 Now Ruth called herself the **maidservant** of Boaz. She no longer called herself a foreigner as she had in v. 10.

2:14–16 Boaz repeatedly demonstrated God's compassion toward the Moabite woman. Boaz went beyond the letter of the Law. He not only let Ruth **glean**; he also amply supplied her with food. Here

we see how the Law could function in the lives of godly people. It was a guide to righteous living.

2:17 The amount of **barley** that Ruth gleaned was more than half a bushel, more than would normally be expected for a day's work. The generosity of Boaz and the labor of Ruth produced this substantial supply. Boaz exhibited the highest form of charity by giving in secret so as not to shame the recipient.

foreigner

(Heb. *nokri*) (2:10; Gen. 31:15; Ex. 2:22; Deut. 17:15; Is. 28:21) Strong's #5237

A foreigner is a person whose citizenship and loyalty belong to a different country. Because Israel was to be a special nation, there was a great danger that the Israelites would be influenced by the ways of other nations and, in the process, lose something of their special identity. That is why foreigners or outsiders were not permitted to take part in Israel's worship (Ex. 12:43; Ezek. 44:9). On the other hand, among the prophecies of a glorious future for Israel are some in which foreigners who come to worship the Lord are given an honored place (Is. 56:3–8). In NT times, the apostle Paul insisted that the barriers between Jews and foreigners had been broken down in Jesus Christ (Eph. 2:11–3:6).

had gleaned. So she brought out and gave to her ^awhat she had kept back after she had been satisfied.

¹⁹ And her mother-in-law said to her, “Where have you gleaned today? And where did you work? Blessed be the one who ^rtook notice of you.”

So she told her mother-in-law with whom she had worked, and said, “The man’s name with whom I worked today is Boaz.”

²⁰ Then Naomi said to her daughter-in-law, ^s“Blessed be he of the LORD, who ^thas not forsaken His kindness to the living and the dead!” And Naomi said to her, “This man *is* a relation of ours, ^uone of ⁴our close relatives.”

²¹ Ruth the Moabitess said, “He also said to me, ‘You shall stay close by my young men until they have finished all my harvest.’”

²² And Naomi said to Ruth her daughter-in-law, “*It is* good, my daughter, that you go out with his young women, and that people do not ⁵meet you in any other field.” ²³ So she stayed close by the young women of Boaz, to glean until the end of barley harvest and wheat harvest; and she dwelt with her mother-in-law.

Ruth’s Redemption Assured

3 Then Naomi her mother-in-law said to her, “My daughter, ^ashall I not seek ^bsecurity¹ for you, that it may be well with you? ²Now Boaz, ^cwhose young women you were with, *is he* not our relative? In fact, he is winnowing barley to-night at the threshing floor. ³Therefore wash yourself and ^danoint yourself, put on your *best* garment and go down to the

18 ^a Ruth 2:14
19 ^a Ruth 2:10; [Ps. 41:1]
20 ^s Ruth 3:10;
2 Sam. 2:5 ^b Prov. 17:17 ^u Ruth 3:9; 4:4, 6 ^c *our* redeemers, Heb. goalenu
22 ⁵ encounter

CHAPTER 3
1 ^a 1 Cor. 7:36;
1 Tim. 5:8 ^b Ruth 1:9 ¹ Lit. rest
2 ^c Ruth 2:3, 8
3 ^d 2 Sam. 14:2

7 ^e Judg. 19:6, 9, 22; 2 Sam. 13:28; Esth. 1:10
9 ^f Ezek. 16:8 ^g Ruth 2:20; 3:12 ² Or Spread the corner of your garment over your maidservant
³ redeemer, Heb. goel
10 ^h Ruth 2:20
¹ Ruth 1:8
11 ⁱ Prov. 12:4; 31:10-31
12 ^k Ruth 3:9
¹ Ruth 4:1
13 ^m Deut. 25:5-10; Ruth 4:5, 10; Matt. 22:24

threshing floor; *but* do not make yourself known to the man until he has finished eating and drinking. ⁴Then it shall be, when he lies down, that you shall notice the place where he lies; and you shall go in, uncover his feet, and lie down; and he will tell you what you should do.”

⁵ And she said to her, “All that you say to me I will do.”

⁶ So she went down to the threshing floor and did according to all that her mother-in-law instructed her. ⁷ And after Boaz had eaten and drunk, and ^ehis heart was cheerful, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of grain; and she came softly, uncovered his feet, and lay down.

⁸ Now it happened at midnight that the man was startled, and turned himself; and there, a woman was lying at his feet.

⁹ And he said, “Who *are* you?”

So she answered, “I *am* Ruth, your maidservant. ^fTake² your maidservant under your wing, for you are ^ga ³close relative.”

¹⁰ Then he said, ^h“Blessed *are* you of the LORD, my daughter! For you have shown more kindness at the end than ⁱat the beginning, in that you did not go after young men, whether poor or rich. ¹¹ And now, my daughter, do not fear. I will do for you all that you request, for all the people of my town know that you *are* ^ja virtuous woman. ¹² Now it is true that I *am* a ^kclose relative; however, ^lthere is a relative closer than I. ¹³ Stay this night, and in the morning it shall be *that* if he will ^mperform the duty of a close relative for you—good; let him do it. But if he does not want to perform the duty for you, then I will perform the duty for

2:20 Naomi praised the Lord for His **kindness**, His “loyal love.” God had not abandoned Ruth and Naomi. Instead, He had faithfully provided for their needs. After utter despair, Naomi once again placed her hope in God.
3:1 Once again, Naomi returned to the subject of **security** or rest, which she addressed in 1:9. In the first instance, she had asked God to provide her daughters-in-law the “rest” of marriage. Now she was determined to seek this rest for Ruth.
3:2 The **threshing floor** was located in a public place. There animals would trample the husks in order to separate the grain. Then the mixture would be tossed in the air so the wind would blow away the chaff. Boaz had to stay the night to guard his grain from thieves.
3:3 best garment: This probably referred to an outer garment that Ruth wore to keep warm in the night. **eating and drinking:** Festivity accompanied the end of the harvest.
3:4 uncover his feet: Ruth would remove the edge of Boaz’s outer garment from his feet and lie down by his uncovered feet. Holding his feet was an act of submission. This was a daring and dramatic action that would call for a decision on his part to be her protector—and, likely, her husband.
3:7, 8 Ruth came **softly**, that is, secretly, so that no one would see her. That she came at night was also a means of protecting Boaz from embarrassment in case he decided not to exercise his duty as a close relative.
3:9 your wing: Ruth deliberately used the same word that Boaz

used in reference to God in 2:12. Though she spoke here of the edge of the garment of Boaz, she was clearly asking him for protection and security in the same way that Boaz spoke of Ruth seeking God’s protection. The final phrase, **for you are a close relative**, shows that she was seeking his refuge in the sense of requesting him as her marriage partner. Since her husband had died without giving her a child, it was the responsibility of a close relative to marry her in order to provide an heir for her deceased husband.
3:10, 11 Boaz understood that Ruth was making a marriage proposal and praised her for not seeking younger men to marry. He knew that Ruth’s initiative was in keeping with the Law. A levirate marriage would provide her deceased husband with an heir (Deut. 25:5–10). In the ancient Middle East, not having an heir was considered a tragedy for the family. The particular **kindness** that Boaz spoke of was Ruth’s loyal love toward Naomi in choosing to remain with her even though she faced poverty. **virtuous woman:** The high praise of Boaz shows that Ruth as a godly woman had not compromised herself.
3:12 The suspense in the narrative increases when Boaz announces that there is a **relative closer than he**. The nearest relative would have the opportunity to carry out that responsibility first.
3:13 Boaz wanted to take immediate responsibility for Ruth and Naomi, so he asked her to **stay** with him so she would not be exposed to any danger by returning to her home in the middle of the night. The statement **as the Lord lives** reinforces the resolve of Boaz to take responsibility for Ruth.

you, *as* the LORD lives! Lie down until morning.”

¹⁴So she lay at his feet until morning, and she arose before one could recognize another. Then he said, *“Do not let it be known that the woman came to the threshing floor.”* ¹⁵Also he said, “Bring the *shawl that is on you and hold it.*” And when she held it, he measured six *ephahs* of barley, and laid it on her. Then ⁵she went into the city.

¹⁶When she came to her mother-in-law, she said, *“Is that you, my daughter?”*

Then she told her all that the man had done for her. ¹⁷And she said, “These six *ephahs* of barley he gave me; for he said to me, ‘Do not go empty-handed to your mother-in-law.’”

¹⁸Then she said, *“Sit still, my daughter, until you know how the matter will turn out; for the man will not rest until he has concluded the matter this day.”*

Boaz Redeems Ruth

4 Now Boaz went up to the gate and sat down there; and behold, *the close relative of whom Boaz had spoken* came by. So Boaz said, “Come aside, *friend*, sit down here.” So he came aside and sat down. ²And he took ten men of *the elders of the city*, and said, “Sit down here.” So they sat down. ³Then he said to the close relative, “Naomi, who

¹³ *n* Judg. 8:19; Jer. 4:2; 12:16
¹⁴ *o* [Rom. 12:17; 14:16; 1 Cor. 10:32; 2 Cor. 8:21; 1 Thess. 5:22]
¹⁵ *d* cloak ⁵ Many Heb. mss., Syr., Vg. she; MT, LXX, Tg. he
¹⁶ *o* Or How are you,
¹⁸ *p* [Ps. 37:3, 5]

CHAPTER 4

¹ *o* Ruth 3:12 ¹ Heb. *peloni almoni*, lit. so and so
² *p* 1 Kin. 21:8; Prov. 31:23

³ *c* Lev. 25:25
⁴ *d* Jer. 32:7, 8
^e Gen. 23:18 ¹ Lev. 25:25 ² Lit. *uncover your ear* ³ So with many Heb. mss., LXX, Syr., Tg., Vg.; MT he
⁵ *o* Gen. 38:8; Deut. 25:5, 6; Ruth 3:13; Matt. 22:24 ⁴ Lit. *raise up*
⁶ *h* Ruth 3:12, 13; Job 19:14
⁷ *i* Deut. 25:7-10

has come back from the country of Moab, sold the piece of land *which belonged to our brother Elimelech.* ⁴And I thought to ²inform you, saying, *“Buy it back in the presence of the inhabitants and the elders of my people. If you will redeem it, redeem it; but if you will not redeem it, then tell me, that I may know; for there is no one but you to redeem it, and I am next after you.”*

And he said, “I will redeem it.”

⁵Then Boaz said, “On the day you buy the field from the hand of Naomi, you must also buy it from Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of the dead, *so that you may perpetuate the name of the dead through his inheritance.*”

⁶And the close relative said, “I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I ruin my own inheritance. You redeem my right of redemption for yourself, for I cannot redeem it.”

⁷Now this *was the custom* in former times in Israel concerning redeeming and exchanging, to confirm anything: one man took off his sandal and gave it to the other, and this *was a confirmation* in Israel.

⁸Therefore the close relative said to Boaz, “Buy it for yourself.” So he took off his sandal. ⁹And Boaz said to the elders and all the people, “You *are witnesses* this day that I have bought all that was Elimelech’s, and all that *was* Chilion’s

3:14 before one could recognize another: Ruth left at early dawn, in order to avoid anyone who might recognize her. Boaz probably did not want anyone to misconstrue what had taken place.

3:15 Again Boaz demonstrated loyal love or kindness by his gift of barley grain to Ruth and Naomi. **laid it on her:** Boaz probably helped raise the barley to Ruth’s head in order for Ruth to carry it home to Naomi.

3:16 Is that you: These words are possibly a comment on the radiance of the woman whose life was about to change so radically.

3:17 empty-handed: The theme of emptiness and fullness is repeated here (1:21).

3:18 Naomi was confident that Boaz would see the **matter** through to its conclusion the same day. Boaz had repeatedly demonstrated that he was an upright and compassionate man by his continuing provision for the two women.

4:1, 2 Official and legal business typically occurred at the **gate** of a city, so it was natural for Boaz to speak with the other **close relative** there in the presence of the elders of the community. During the time of the kings, a ruler might come to the city gate to proclaim a public judgment.

4:3 One of the duties of the **close relative** was to redeem land that had been sold by the family due to poverty. **sold:** This verb could be translated “about to sell.” Verse 5 indicates that the sale was still in the future, and v. 9 states that Boaz purchased the land from Naomi.

4:4 Boaz offered the land to the closer relative first; this man initially agreed to purchase it. The Law provided for land to stay within a family, even if it had to be sold temporarily due to poverty. The seller could redeem the land later, or a close relative could redeem it. If neither of these alternatives was possible, the land would be returned to the family in the Year of Jubilee, every fiftieth year. Land was not sold permanently because it ultimately belonged to God (Lev. 25:23).

4:5 To perpetuate the name of the dead makes it clear that the close relative was needed to buy the land but also to take Ruth as his wife. This was in accordance with the levirate law, which provided

for an heir for the deceased. Here the **dead** relative was Mahlon, Ruth’s husband (4:10). In carrying on the name of Mahlon, the line of Elimelech would continue.

4:6 When the close relative discovered that he was expected to marry Ruth, he declined his **right of redemption** because his **own inheritance** might be ruined. He apparently did not want the double responsibility of buying the field and supporting Naomi and Ruth. In addition, he did not want the field to be inherited by Ruth’s future son instead of members of his own family.

4:7, 8 The removal of a **sandal** was part of a legal transaction in ancient Israel (Deut. 25:8–10). It would parallel the modern custom of concluding a transaction by signing a document or handing over a set of keys. By handing over his shoe, the **close relative** was symbolically handing over his right to walk on the land that was being sold.

4:9 The **witnesses** at the gate played a significant role in validating

close relative

(Heb. *ga'al*) (2:20; 3:12; 4:1, 6; Is. 60:16) Strong’s #1350

The Hebrew word refers to a relative who acted as a protector or guarantor of the family rights. He could be called upon to perform a number of duties: (1) to buy back property that the family had sold; (2) to provide an heir for a deceased brother by marrying that brother’s wife and producing a child with her; (3) to buy back a family member who had been sold into slavery due to poverty; and (4) to avenge a relative who had been murdered by killing the murderer. The Scripture calls God the Redeemer or the “close relative” of Israel (Is. 60:16), and Jesus the Redeemer of all believers (1 Pet. 1:18, 19).

and Mahlon's, from the hand of Naomi. ¹⁰Moreover, Ruth the Moabitess, the widow of Mahlon, I have acquired as my wife, to perpetuate the name of the dead through his inheritance,^j that the name of the dead may not be cut off from among his brethren and from ⁵his position at the gate. You *are* witnesses this day."

¹¹And all the people who *were* at the gate, and the elders, said, "We *are* witnesses. ^kThe LORD make the woman who is coming to your house like Rachel and Leah, the two who ^lbuilt the house of Israel; and may you prosper in ^mEphrathah and be famous in ⁿBethlehem. ¹²May your house be like the house of ^oPerez, ^pwhom Tamar bore to Judah, because of ^qthe offspring which the LORD will give you from this young woman."

Descendants of Boaz and Ruth

¹³So Boaz ^rtook Ruth and she became his wife; and when he went in to her, ^sthe

10 / Deut. 25:6
⁵ Probably his civic office
11 ^k Ps. 127:3; 128:3
^l Gen. 29:25-30;
Deut. 25:9 ^m Gen. 35:16-18 ⁿ 1 Sam. 16:4-13; Mic. 5:2;
Matt. 2:1-8
12 ^o 1 Chr. 2:4; Matt. 1:3 ^p Gen. 38:6-29
^q 1 Sam. 2:20
13 ^r Ruth 3:11
^s Gen. 29:31; 33:5;
Matt. 1:5
14 ^t Luke 1:58;
[Rom. 12:15]
⁶ redeemer, Heb. *goel*
15 ⁷ sustainer
^u 1 Sam. 1:8
17 ^v Luke 1:58
18 ^w 1 Chr. 2:4, 5;
Matt. 1:1-7 ^x Num. 26:20, 21
20 ^y Num. 1:7
^z Matt. 1:4 ⁸ Heb. *Salmah*
22 ^o 1 Chr. 2:15;
Matt. 1:6

LORD gave her conception, and she bore a son. ¹⁴Then ^tthe women said to Naomi, "Blessed *be* the LORD, who has not left you this day without a ⁶close relative; and may his name be famous in Israel! ¹⁵And may he be to you a restorer of life and a ⁷nourisher of your old age; for your daughter-in-law, who loves you, who is ^ubetter to you than seven sons, has borne him." ¹⁶Then Naomi took the child and laid him on her bosom, and became a nurse to him. ¹⁷^v Also the neighbor women gave him a name, saying, "There is a son born to Naomi." And they called his name Obed. He *is* the father of Jesse, the father of David.

¹⁸^w Now this *is* the genealogy of Perez: ^xPerez begot Hezron; ¹⁹Hezron begot Ram, and Ram begot Amminadab; ²⁰Amminadab begot ^yNahshon, and Nahshon begot ^zSalmon; ⁸ ²¹Salmon begot Boaz, and Boaz begot Obed; ²²Obed begot Jesse, and Jesse begot ^aDavid.

the transaction. **Chilion and Mahlon:** Elimelech's sons would have been the heirs of their father's land. **from the hand of Naomi:** The land was bought from Elimelech's widow, Naomi.

4:10 acquired: In addition to redeeming the land, Boaz also redeemed Ruth by taking her as his wife. In contrast to the land, Ruth was not bought. She did not require a purchase price nor was Boaz required to redeem her. He willingly chose to be her redeemer. Boaz was a blood relative of Elimelech, and he was financially able to take on the responsibilities of redemption. **Mahlon:** This verse adds the detail that Ruth had been the wife of the brother named Mahlon, a detail omitted from ch. 1.

4:11 The people and the elders affirmed the legal proceeding with their response, **we are witnesses.** Then the crowd gave Ruth a remarkable blessing by asking that **the LORD** make her like **Rachel and Leah**, Israel's founding mothers (Gen. 35:23–26). Even though Ruth was a Moabite, she was fully and eagerly accepted by the Israelites. The Law of Moses demanded the exclusion of the Moabites from the congregation of Israel for ten generations (1:22). In this exceptional case we see a beautiful example of the spirit of the Law being maintained. Ruth loyally loved Naomi by leaving her homeland and serving her mother-in-law even in the worst of circumstances. In turn, God rewarded Ruth by extending His loyal love to her. He gave this foreigner a godly husband, accepted her as one of His people, and gave her a child who would be an ancestor of King David and ultimately of Jesus (vv. 13, 22).

4:12 The Book of Ruth is replete with allusions to the Pentateuch. Here the name of **Tamar** refers to another story about the spirit of the Law (Gen. 38). Certainly Tamar's behavior would not normally be commended. Yet she was desperate because her husband's brothers would not fulfill their responsibility to her, and in the end Judah

praised her as more righteous than himself (Gen. 38:26). Even in Tamar's deplorable situation, God mercifully blessed her with a son, and this son Perez was an ancestor to King David (v. 18). Like Ruth, Rahab was a Gentile woman. Yet God extended His loyal love to Rahab because of her faith in Him and included her in the messianic line.

4:13 the LORD gave her conception: Children are a gift from God. He fashions every person in the womb of the mother (Ps. 139:13).

4:14, 15 Here the **close relative** is not Boaz but his newborn son, the grandson of Naomi. **The women** praised God for His provision for Naomi. They offered a blessing for the child, asking that his fame be extended throughout **Israel** and that he would comfort Naomi and nourish her in her **old age**. Naomi's emptiness had been replaced with fullness through the birth of this boy. Sons were considered a great reward, so for the women to state that Ruth **is better** to Naomi than **seven sons** was considerable praise for Ruth.

4:17 The theme of Naomi's fullness continues to dominate as the **neighbor women** declared that a child was born to Naomi. His name was **Obed**, signifying "One Who Serves." The author at last reveals how Ruth, a Moabite woman, had become part of the royal Davidic line and, thus, the messianic line (see Matt. 1:5).

4:18–22 The story concludes with David's genealogy, beginning with **Perez**, the son of Judah and Tamar. This genealogy could have been added to the book long after the original writing was complete, but more probably the book as a whole was composed at a later date than the events described. The genealogy of David is not really an appendix, but an essential element demonstrating the author's purpose—and the purpose of the Lord in the building of the family line of King David and the Messiah. The story of Boaz's redemption of a foreign woman points to Jesus' great redemption of all those who believe in Him.



THE FIRST BOOK OF SAMUEL

FIRST SAMUEL RECOUNTS King Saul's extraordinary rise to power and influence and his subsequent tragic fall. In this sense, the book reads like a classic Greek tragedy or Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*. Saul's good looks, his physical size, and his success in war made him an obvious choice to be first king of Israel. But the author of 1 Samuel highlights Saul's tragic flaw—his disobedience of God's commands (13:7–12; 15:10–26). Because of his disobedience, God rejected him. Abandoned by God, Saul quickly lost his courage, became jealous of David's success, and eventually lost his mind. From the ashes of this tragedy, God raised up another king who would obey the directives of the one true King, the God of Israel.

Title First Samuel is appropriately named after Samuel, the principal character of the early narratives and the one who anointed Israel's first two kings, Saul and David.

First and Second Samuel were originally one book, "The Book of Samuel" in the Hebrew Scriptures. When these Scriptures were translated into Greek, around 150 B.C., Samuel and Kings were brought together into a complete history of the Hebrew monarchy. This unit of Scripture was divided into four sections: First, Second, Third, and Fourth Kingdoms. Samuel and Kings were later separated again, but the divisions of the Greek translation persisted. The result was a 1 and 2 Samuel and a 1 and 2 Kings.

Author and Date The Jewish tradition suggests that Samuel was the author of the first part of the book (chs. 1–24), and that the prophet Nathan and the seer Gad were the authors of the remainder, including 2 Samuel. Another editor at a later date could have taken the memoirs of Samuel, Nathan, Gad, and others and woven them under the guidance of the Holy Spirit into the wonderfully unified book we have today.

A number of critical scholars have dated the book around the middle of the sixth century—much later than the lives of Samuel and Nathan (c. 1100–1010 B.C.). It is obvious that at least some parts of the book were written after the death of Samuel (25:1; 28:3), and perhaps even after the division of the monarchy (27:6). However, there is no reference to the fall of Samaria to the Assyrians (722 B.C.), and it is reasonable to assume that the book was complete by the last quarter of the eighth century B.C. The eighth-century author used documents dating back to David's reign or shortly after (1025–900 B.C.). The author included eyewitness accounts, and the antiquity of some linguistic features indicate that parts of the book were written at an early period.

Historical Setting At the beginning of 1 Samuel, the nation of Israel was at a religious low point. Even the priesthood was corrupt (2:12–17). To make things worse, Samuel's sons who served as judges in Beersheba were also dishonest (8:2, 3). With such evil leaders as models, the people of Israel showed open disdain for the word of God and refused to listen to His prophet Samuel (8:19).

Yet in the midst of widespread corruption and apostasy, there was a righteous remnant of Israelites who faithfully worshiped God (1:3). The worship center of Israel at this time was located at Shiloh, where the tabernacle was set up (1:3; Josh. 18:1). However, even the contents of the tabernacle were not left undisturbed during these tumultuous and evil times. The ark of the covenant was captured by the Philistines (4:11). After a seven-month

sojourn among the Philistine cities (5:1—6:16), the ark was returned to Beth Shemesh (6:19) and then kept at Kirjath Jearim (7:1) until David brought it to Jerusalem (2 Sam. 6:1–17).

During this time, the Israelites became dissatisfied with the abusive rule of the judges (8:3). The people longed for the glories of a monarchy such as they saw in the surrounding nations. So the Lord allowed the Israelites to have their way. He gave them a king like the other nations: the handsome and tall King Saul (10:1). Although Saul appeared to be well suited for leading a nation, his reign ended in tragedy because he ignored the word of God. Much of the action of 1 Samuel is associated with the tumultuous life, reign, and decline of Saul, contrasted with the rapid rise of the young and faithful David.

During this early period of the Israelite monarchy (c. 1050–970 B.C.), the great empires of the ancient Middle East were in a state of weakness. The Hittites of Asia Minor had passed into insignificance. Assyria was in a state of decline, and Egypt was weakened by internal conflict. The Philistines constituted Israel's main threat during this period. Their skill in working iron had given them a decided military and economic advantage over Israel. Yet the threat of the Philistines had a positive impact on Israel's political situation. It caused the infant nation to unite under the leadership of its first kings, Saul and David.

Purpose and Literary Form The purpose of 1 Samuel is to provide an official account of the rise of the monarchy during the time of Samuel and the development of it under Saul and David. The book particularly focuses on the rise of David during this period.

In fact, the second half of the book and first half of 2 Samuel amount to an apology for David's rise to the throne. The similarities of this section to the *Apology of Hattusilis*, a thirteenth-century B.C. writing, are remarkable. In this ancient document, a Hittite king outlined the reasons for the legitimacy of his rule. Such an apology was particularly important in the case of a king—like David—who founded a new dynasty. Hattusilis's dynastic defense included the following elements:

1. A detailed description of the disqualifications of the preceding ruler (compare 1 Sam. 15:1–35).
2. An extended history of events leading up to the new king's accession (compare 1 Sam. 16:1 and 2 Sam. 5:17).
3. A defense of the new king's ability to rule, as evidenced by military achievements (compare 1 Sam. 17:1–58).
4. A record of the new king's leniency on political foes, in contrast to usurpers, who typically assassinated the former king (compare 24:1–10; 26:1–9).
5. A report of the new king's interest in religion (compare 2 Sam. 6:1–19; 7:1–29).
6. A conclusion that included a summary of the new king's reign, demonstrating the divine blessing on his rule as evidenced by the expansion of his kingdom and the establishment of peace with surrounding nations (compare 2 Sam. 8:1–18).

The similarities between the *Apology of Hattusilis* and 1 Samuel 15:1 through 2 Samuel 8:18 illustrate clearly how that part of 1 and 2 Samuel serves as an apology for David's reign. Part of the apology is the irrefutable



View of the Sorek Valley. The ark of the covenant was brought through the Sorek Valley on the return trip to the mountains of Judah.

evidence that God Himself had chosen David for the throne (16:1–13). Initially, David was a surprising choice—an undistinguished member of a rural family. Yet his remarkable faith in the Lord distinguished David from his fellow Israelites and from Saul (17:1–51). God shaped David’s character while he was on the run from Saul’s erratic wrath. In these distressing times, David learned to trust in God for deliverance. Although he made mistakes, he always turned back to God for mercy. For this reason, David was called the man after God’s own heart (13:14).

CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

First Samuel focuses on the life of David and reveals details that definitely point to the One who would be called by his name. Like Jesus, David is born in the sleepy little village of Bethlehem. His reputation as a shepherd is validated by his years with his father’s flocks. This lowly shepherd becomes the king of the Jews. He is the anointed king who becomes the forerunner of the messianic King. Through years of struggle and danger, David tastes the kind of rejection Jesus would fully digest. Many of his psalms reveal his firsthand experience of being forsaken (Ps. 22; Matt. 27:46).

David is the most famous of Jesus’ earthly ancestors in the long and distinguished messianic line. In addition to being referred to as the “Son of David” (Luke 18:38), Jesus is called “the seed of David according to the flesh” (Rom. 1:3) and “the Root and the Offspring of David” (Rev. 22:16).

1 SAMUEL OUTLINE

- I. The ministry of Samuel the prophet 1:1—7:17
 - A. The birth of Samuel 1:1—2:11
 - B. Samuel and the sons of Eli 2:12–36
 - C. The beginning of Samuel’s prophetic ministry 3:1–21
 - D. The Philistine war at Aphek and the loss of the ark of the Lord 4:1—7:2
 - E. Israel’s victory over the Philistines under Samuel’s ministry 7:3–17
- II. The reign of Saul as the first king of Israel 8:1—15:35
 - A. Israel’s demands for a king 8:1–22
 - B. Saul’s anointing and public presentation by Samuel 9:1—10:27
 - C. Israel’s victory over the Ammonites 11:1–15
 - D. Samuel’s farewell address 12:1–25
 - E. God’s rejection of Saul 13:1—15:35
- III. David chosen to succeed Saul as king 16:1—31:13
 - A. David’s anointing and entrance into royal service 16:1–23
 - B. David’s victory over Goliath 17:1–58
 - C. David’s relationships with members of the royal family 18:1—20:42
 - D. David as a fugitive 21:1—31:13

c. 1380–1050 B.C.

Judges rule in Israel

c. 1200 B.C.

Philistines occupy the Mediterranean coast

c. 1100–1010 B.C.

Samuel’s prophetic career

c. 1050 B.C.

Saul becomes king of Israel

c. 1018 B.C.

Samuel anoints David to be king

1010 B.C.

David begins to reign at Hebron

1003 B.C.

David’s reign is acknowledged throughout Israel

970 B.C.

David dies and Solomon becomes king

The Family of Elkanah

Now there was a certain man of Ramathaim Zophim, of the ^amountains of Ephraim, and his name was ^bElkanah the son of Jeroham, the son of ¹Elihu, the son of ²Tohu, the son of Zuph, ^can Ephraimite. ²And he had ^dtwo wives: the name of one was Hannah, and the name of the other Peninnah. Peninnah had children, but Hannah had no children. ³This man went up from his city ^eyearly ^fto worship and sacrifice to the LORD of hosts in ^gShiloh. Also the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, the priests of the LORD, were there. ⁴And whenever the time came for Elkanah to make an ^hoffering, he would give portions to Peninnah his wife and to all her sons and daughters. ⁵But to Hannah he would give a double portion, for he loved Hannah, ⁱalthough the LORD had closed her womb. ⁶And her rival also ^jprovoked her severely, to make her miserable, because the LORD had closed her womb. ⁷So it was, year by year, when she went up to the house of the LORD, that she provoked her; therefore she wept and did not eat.

Hannah's Vow

⁸Then Elkanah her husband said to her, "Hannah, why do you weep? Why do you not eat? And why is your heart grieved? Am I not ^kbetter to you than ten sons?"

⁹So Hannah arose after they had finished eating and drinking in Shiloh. Now Eli the priest was sitting on the seat by the doorpost of ^lthe ³tabernacle of the

CHAPTER 1

¹ ^a Josh. 17:17, 18; 24:33 ^b 1 Chr. 6:27, 33-38 ^c Ruth 1:2 ¹ ^{Elie}, 1 Chr. 6:34 ² ^{Toah}, 1 Chr. 6:34 ² ^d Deut. 21:15-17 ³ ^e Ex. 34:14, 23; Judg. 21:19; 1 Sam. 1:21; Luke 2:41 ⁴ ^{Deut.} 12:5-7; 16:16 ⁹ ^{Josh.} 18:1 ⁴ ^{Deut.} 12:17, 18 ⁵ ^{Gen.} 16:1; 30:1, 2 ⁶ ^{Job} 24:21 ⁸ ^{Ruth} 4:15 ⁹ ^{1 Sam.} 3:3 ³ ^{palace or temple}, Heb. *heykal*

¹⁰ ^m Job 7:11 ⁴ ^{Lit.} wept greatly ¹¹ ⁿ Gen. 28:20; Num. 30:6-11 ^o Ps. 25:18 ^p Gen. 8:1 ^q Num. 6:5; Judg. 13:5

BIBLE TIMES & CULTURE NOTES



Polygamy

Polygamy was an accepted social custom throughout the ancient Middle East. It was also a common practice among the ancient Israelites. In ancient Israel, failure to have children was regarded as a family tragedy, for several reasons. In an agrarian culture, children were needed to help with the work of everyday life. Without sons, the family name would not be preserved, and without an heir, the family would be unable to maintain its place in the tribal allotments. Finally, a woman without children would never be the mother—or an ancestor—of the promised Messiah (Gen. 3:15). Elkanah most likely took a second wife, Peninnah, for a reason that was legitimate in the ancient world: His first wife was barren. At that time, the blame for not having children was always assigned to the woman, and barrenness was often the cause of divorce. Even though polygamy was an accepted custom, God's law warned rulers against marrying many women (Deut. 17:17).

LORD. ¹⁰^m And she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed to the LORD and ⁴wept in anguish. ¹¹Then she ⁿmade a vow and said, "O LORD of hosts, if You will indeed ^olook on the affliction of Your maidservant and ^premember me, and not forget Your maidservant, but will give Your maidservant a male child, then I will give him to the LORD all the days of his life, and ^qno razor shall come upon his head."

¹²And it happened, as she continued praying before the LORD, that Eli watched

1:1 Ramathaim Zophim is another name for Ramah (v. 19), a village about five miles north of Jerusalem. **The mountains of Ephraim** refers to the hill country primarily occupied by the tribe of Ephraim. **Elkanah**, whose Hebrew name means "God Has Created," was a Levite (1 Chr. 6:26, 34). He is referred to as an **Ephraimite** since he lived in the territory of Ephraim.

1:3 yearly: God's law called for the Israelites to attend three annual pilgrim festivals in Jerusalem (Ex. 34:23; Deut. 16:16). **The LORD of hosts** is a military designation referring to God as the One who commands the angelic armies of heaven (1 Kin. 22:19; Luke 2:13; Rev. 19:14) and the armies of Israel (17:45). **Shiloh**, located about 20 miles north of Jerusalem, was the religious center for the nation at this time and the location of the tabernacle (Josh. 18:1). **Eli, Hophni, and Phinehas** served as priests at Shiloh, officiating at the sacrifices presented in the court of the tabernacle. Eli may mean "God Is High." Hophni means "Tadpole." Phinehas may come from an Egyptian word meaning "Black One."

1:4, 5 The double portion was designed to compensate Hannah for her lack of children and demonstrate Elkanah's love for her. **the LORD had closed her womb:** God is the One who provides the ability to conceive children (see Gen. 33:5; Ps. 127:3).

1:6 Her rival refers to Peninnah, Elkanah's other wife, who took every occasion to flaunt her children before Hannah.

1:7 she went up: God's law demanded that the men of Israel appear before Him on three festival occasions. Many brought their families with them, but it was not required that they do so. This verse shows

Hannah's devotion to the Lord in that she also made annual treks to Shiloh to worship God. **she wept and did not eat:** Peninnah's constant taunting drove Hannah to depression.

1:8 While Peninnah provoked Hannah, Elkanah sought to encourage her. He suggested that his love for Hannah was a greater blessing than having **ten sons**.

1:9 eating and drinking: The worship of God involved not only the sacrifice of animals, but also lavish banquets of meat and wine. **Eli**, Israel's high priest and judge (4:18), was from the family of Ithamar, Aaron's fourth son (1 Kin. 2:27; 1 Chr. 24:1, 3). The last high priest mentioned before him was Phinehas, the son of Eleazar (Judg. 20:28). It is not known why or how the office of high priest passed from the house of Eleazar to that of Ithamar. **The doorpost of the tabernacle** refers to the entrance of the place of worship, where people would approach Eli for judicial rulings.

1:11 Within the context of her prayer, Hannah **made a vow** to God. She promised that if God would give her a son, the child would be given back to God. Levites customarily served from age 25 to 50 (Num. 4:3; 8:24-26). Yet Hannah dedicated her son for lifelong service. The words **no razor shall come upon his head** refer to the law of the Nazirite (Num. 6:2-6). The Nazirite vow involved a designated period of time (usually no more than a few weeks or months) during which there was a commitment to refrain completely from wine, from cutting the hair, and touching any dead body. Hannah promised that her son would be a Nazirite for life.

1:12-14 Eli watched her mouth: From a distance, Eli was unable

her mouth. ¹³Now Hannah spoke in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard. Therefore Eli thought she was drunk. ¹⁴So Eli said to her, “How long will you be drunk? Put your wine away from you!”

¹⁵But Hannah answered and said, “No, my lord, I *am* a woman of sorrowful spirit. I have drunk neither wine nor intoxicating drink, but have ^rpoured out my soul before the LORD. ¹⁶Do not consider your maidservant a ^swicked⁵ woman, for out of the abundance of my complaint and grief I have spoken until now.”

¹⁷Then Eli answered and said, ^t“Go in peace, and ^uthe God of Israel grant your petition which you have asked of Him.”

¹⁸And she said, ^v“Let your maidservant find favor in your sight.” So the woman ^wwent her way and ate, and her face was no longer *sad*.

Samuel Is Born and Dedicated

¹⁹Then they rose early in the morning and worshiped before the LORD, and returned and came to their house at Ramah. And Elkanah ^xknew Hannah his wife, and the LORD ^yremembered her. ²⁰So it came to pass in the process of time that Hannah conceived and bore a son, and called his name ^zSamuel, *saying*, “Because I have asked for him from the LORD.”

²¹Now the man Elkanah and all his house ^zwent up to offer to the LORD the yearly sacrifice and his vow. ²²But Hannah did not go up, for she said to her husband, “*Not* until the child is weaned; then I will ^atake him, that he may appear before the LORD and ^bremain there *‘forever.’*”

¹⁵ ^r Job 30:16; Ps. 42:4; 62:8; Lam. 2:19
¹⁶ ^s Deut. 13:13
⁵ Lit. *daughter of Belial*
¹⁷ ^t Judg. 18:6; 1 Sam. 25:35; 2 Kin. 5:19; Mark 5:34; Luke 7:50 ^u Ps. 20:3-5
¹⁸ ^v Gen. 33:15; Ruth 2:13 ^w Prov. 15:13; Eccl. 9:7; Rom. 15:13
¹⁹ ^x Gen. 4:1 ^y Gen. 21:1; 30:22
²⁰ ^z Lit. *Heard by God*
²¹ ^z Deut. 12:11; 1 Sam. 1:3
²² ^a Luke 2:22
^b 1 Sam. 1:11, 28
^c Ex. 21:6
²³ ^d Num. 30:7, 10, 11 ^e confirm ⁸ So with MT, Tg., Vg.; DSS, LXX, Syr. *your*
²⁴ ^e Num. 15:9, 10; Deut. 12:5, 6 ^f Josh. 18:1; 1 Sam. 4:3, 4
⁹ DSS, LXX, Syr. *a three-year-old bull*
²⁵ ^g Luke 2:22
²⁶ ^h 2 Kin. 2:2, 4, 6; 4:30
²⁷ ⁱ [Matt. 7:7]
²⁸ ^j Gen. 24:26, 52
^k granted

CHAPTER 2

¹ ^a Phil. 4:6
^b 1 Sam. 2:1-10; Ps. 97:11, 12; Luke 1:46-55 ^c Ps. 75:10; 89:17, 24; 92:10; 112:9 ^d Ps. 9:14; 13:5; 35:9; Is. 12:2, 3 ^e Strength
² Lit. *My mouth is enlarged*
² ^e Ex. 15:11; Ps. 86:8; Rev. 15:4
^f Deut. 4:35 ^g Deut. 32:4, 30, 31;

²³So ^dElkanah her husband said to her, “Do what seems best to you; wait until you have weaned him. Only let the LORD ^eestablish ⁸His word.” Then the woman stayed and nursed her son until she had weaned him.

²⁴Now when she had weaned him, she ^etook him up with her, with ⁹three bulls, one ephah of flour, and a skin of wine, and brought him to ^fthe house of the LORD in Shiloh. And the child *was* young. ²⁵Then they slaughtered a bull, and ^gbrought the child to Eli. ²⁶And she said, “O my lord! ^hAs your soul lives, my lord, I *am* the woman who stood by you here, praying to the LORD. ²⁷ⁱFor this child I prayed, and the LORD has granted me my petition which I asked of Him. ²⁸Therefore I also have lent him to the LORD; as long as he lives he shall be ^jlent to the LORD.” So they ^jworshiped the LORD there.

Hannah's Prayer

2 And Hannah ^aprayed and said:

^b“My heart rejoices in the LORD;
^cMy ¹horn is exalted in the LORD.

² I smile at my enemies,
 Because I ^drejoice in Your salvation.

² “No ^eone is holy like the LORD,
 For *there is* ^fnone besides You,
 Nor *is there* any ^grock like our God.

³ “Talk no more so very proudly;
^hLet no arrogance come from your mouth,

2 Sam. 22:32; Ps. 18:2 3 ^h Ps. 94:4

to understand what Hannah was saying. Because of the long time she spent in prayer, Eli assumed that she had drunk too much wine.

1:15 Intoxicating drink is an older translation of the word meaning “beer.” **Poured out my soul before the LORD** is an excellent description of fervent prayer (see Ps. 62:8; Phil. 4:6, 7; 1 Pet. 5:7).

1:16 The Hebrew for **wicked woman**, literally “daughter of Belial,” means “without value.” Belial was later used as a proper name for Satan (see 2 Cor. 6:15).

1:17, 18 Go in peace: Hannah’s changed countenance seems to indicate that she experienced God’s peace (see Phil. 4:6, 7) as she waited for the answer to her prayer.

1:19 Elkanah knew Hannah means that he slept with her (see Gen. 4:1). The word **remembered** indicates that God began to intervene on Hannah’s behalf to answer her prayer.

1:20 The birth of Hannah’s son is part of a long history of godly women and men praying for a child as God’s gift (see Gen. 12:1–3). When Hannah gave birth, she named her son **Samuel**, which means “Name of God.”

1:22 until the child is weaned: Hebrew children were normally weaned when they were two or three years old.

1:23 According to the law, Elkanah might have declared Hannah’s vow a rash promise and prohibited her from fulfilling it (Num. 30:10–15). The fact that he did not do so shows his love and esteem for Hannah.

1:24, 25 three bulls: God’s law required that a burnt offering be

given at the completion of a special vow (Num. 15:3, 8). Two of the bulls likely served as a present for Eli and the third one was sacrificed. **One ephah** was roughly five gallons. **A skin of wine** was for the drink offering.

1:26, 27 Hannah offered a testimony of what God had accomplished on her behalf. By telling others, she exalted God and praised Him for His gracious acts toward her.

1:28 lent him to the LORD: The Hebrew word translated *lent* has the idea of a complete giving up of the child to God. **they worshiped:** The Hebrew word for *worship* means “bow down.” This is the humble response of grateful people who acknowledge the majesty of God.

2:1 Hannah began her prayer by rejoicing in the Lord for having been given a child. **My horn is exalted:** Used figuratively, a horn represents power and strength, like that of an ox (see Dan. 7:21; Zech. 1:18–21). With exalted horn means with head high, conscious of strength. Hannah’s sense of strength was in God, who had answered her prayer.

2:2 No one is holy like the LORD: That which is holy is marked off, separated, and withdrawn from ordinary use. *Holy* is the opposite of *profane* or *common*. The image of a **rock** when applied to God, speaks of His eternity, stability, and reliability (see Deut. 32:4; 2 Sam. 22:2, 3).

2:3 Hannah addressed all the proud, not only Peninnah, but all who

- For the LORD is the God of
ⁱknowledge;
And by Him actions are weighed.
- 4 “The^j bows of the mighty men *are*
broken,
And those who stumbled are girded
with strength.
- 5 Those who were full have hired
themselves out for bread,
And the hungry have ceased to
hunger.
Even ^kthe barren has borne seven,
And ^lshe who has many children has
become feeble.
- 6 “The^m LORD kills and makes alive;
He brings down to the grave and
brings up.
- 7 The LORD ⁿmakes poor and makes
rich;
^oHe brings low and lifts up.
- 8 ^pHe raises the poor from the dust
And lifts the beggar from the ash
heap,
^qTo set *them* among princes
And make them inherit the throne
of glory.
- ^r“For the pillars of the earth *are* the
LORD’s,
And He has set the world upon
them.
- 9 ^sHe will guard the feet of His saints,
But the ^twicked shall be silent in
darkness.

3 ¹ 1 Sam. 16:7
4 ¹ Ps. 37:15; 46:9
5 ^k Ps. 113:9 / Is.
54:1; Jer. 15:9
6 ^m Deut. 32:39;
2 Kin. 5:7; Job 5:18;
[Rev. 1:18]
7 ⁿ Deut. 8:17, 18;
Job 1:21 ^o Job 5:11;
Ps. 75:7; James 4:10
8 ^p Job 42:10-12;
Ps. 75:7; 113:7; Luke
1:52 ^q Job 36:7; Ps.
113:8 ^r Job 38:4-6;
Ps. 75:3; 104:5
9 ^s Ps. 37:23, 24;
91:11, 12; 94:18;
121:3; Prov. 3:26;
[1 Pet. 1:5] ^t [Rom.
3:19]

10 ^u Ex. 15:6; Ps.
2:9 ^v 1 Sam. 7:10;
2 Sam. 22:14, 15;
Ps. 18:13, 14 ^w Ps.
96:13; 98:9; [Matt.
25:31, 32] ^x [Matt.
28:18] ^y Ps. 21:1,
7 ^z Ps. 89:24
³ Strength
11 ^a served
12 ^a Deut. 13:13
^b Judg. 2:10; [Rom.
1:28] ^c Lit. sons of
Belial
14 ^c 1 Sam. 1:3
15 ^d Lev. 3:3-5, 16

- “For by strength no man shall prevail.
10 The adversaries of the LORD shall be
^ubroken in pieces;
^vFrom heaven He will thunder against
them.
^wThe LORD will judge the ends of the
earth.
^x“He will give ^ystrength to His king,
And ^zexalt the ³horn of His
anointed.”

11 Then Elkanah went to his house at
Ramah. But the child ⁴ministered to the
LORD before Eli the priest.

The Wicked Sons of Eli

12 Now the sons of Eli were ^acorrupt;⁵
^bthey did not know the LORD. 13 And the
priests’ custom with the people was that
when any man offered a sacrifice, the
priest’s servant would come with a three-
pronged fleshhook in his hand while
the meat was boiling. 14 Then he would
thrust *it* into the pan, or kettle, or cal-
dron, or pot; and the priest would take
for himself all that the fleshhook brought
up. So they did in ^cShiloh to all the Is-
raelites who came there. 15 Also, before
they ^dburned the fat, the priest’s servant
would come and say to the man who sac-
rificed, “Give meat for roasting to the
priest, for he will not take boiled meat
from you, but raw.”

16 And *if* the man said to him, “They
should really burn the fat first; *then* you

boast. Since **the God of knowledge** knows all things, He will ap-
praise our performance along with our words and our promises.

2:4, 5 Hannah mentioned three examples—military power, wealth,
and the birth of children—of how God reverses human circumstanc-
es, humbling the proud and exalting the lowly. Mary made the same
point in her song (Luke 1:46–55).

2:6 The word **grave** refers to the place of the dead for both the
righteous and the wicked (see Gen. 37:35). The sovereign God who

brings death also **brings up** from the grave. This verse may refer to
God’s power to resurrect the dead (see Ps. 16:10; Dan. 12:2).

2:7, 8 dust . . . ash heap: These parallel terms describe the fes-
tering compost piles outside the city walls where people dumped
their refuse, including the ash from ovens. It was there that beggars
and lepers would sit and solicit alms. Hannah used the image to
indicate the deepest degradation: God assists those in the worst
circumstances (see Ps. 113:7–9).

2:9, 10 In line with the pattern of ancient wisdom literature, Hannah
contrasted the righteous and the wicked. The Lord would keep **His
saints** from stumbling, but the **adversaries of the LORD** would
face certain calamity. The Hebrew word for **anointed** means
“Messiah.” This phrase points to the ultimate King, before whom
every knee shall bow (see Phil. 2:10). Hannah saw the work of God in
granting her a child as another step in the fulfillment of His promise
to the mothers of Israel, that He would one day provide through
them a Messiah.

2:12 Were corrupt is literally “were sons of Belial,” persons of no
value (30:22). **did not know the LORD:** They had no personal, inti-
mate knowledge. The priests were teachers of God’s law and offici-
ated at His sacrifices. How tragic for them to know so much about
the things of God and yet not know Him personally.

2:13–15 The priests’ rightful share of a sacrifice was the breast and
the right thigh of the animal (Lev. 7:34). Eli’s sons sinned by taking
any part they wanted and demanding the meat immediately, before
the part consecrated to God, **the fat**, had been burned on the altar
(Lev. 3:3, 5).

2:16 if the man said: In this instance, the layperson knew God’s
Word and the importance of obedience better than the priests.

darkness

(Heb. *choshek*) (2:9; Gen. 1:2; Job 10:21; Is. 5:30; 9:2; Joel 2:2,
31) Strong’s #2822

Darkness existed before the light of creation (Gen. 1:2).
Since darkness was associated with the chaos that existed
before the creation, it came to be associated with evil,
bad luck, or affliction (Job 17:12; 21:17). Darkness was also
equated with death. In Sheol, the land of the dead, there
is only darkness (Job 10:21, 22; 38:17). Darkness symbolizes
human ignorance of God’s will, and thus is associated with
sin (Job 24:13–17). Darkness also describes the condition
of those who have not yet seen the light concerning Jesus
(John 1:4, 5; 12:35; Eph. 5:14) and those who deliberately
turn away from the light (John 3:19, 20). Hating the light
will bring condemnation (Col. 1:13; 2 Pet. 2:17). Living in
extreme darkness describes those who at the end of time
have not repented (Rev. 16:10; 18:23).

may take *as much* as your heart desires,” he would then answer him, “No, but you must give it now; and if not, I will take it by force.”

¹⁷Therefore the sin of the young men was very great ^ebefore the LORD, for men ^fabhorred ⁶ the offering of the LORD.

Samuel's Childhood Ministry

^{18g}But Samuel ministered before the LORD, *even as a child*, ^hwearing a linen ephod. ¹⁹Moreover his mother used to make him a little robe, and bring it to him year by year when she ⁱcame up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice. ²⁰And Eli ^jwould bless Elkanah and his

¹⁷ ^eGen. 6:11
^f [Mal. 2:7-9]
⁶ despised
¹⁸ ^g 1 Sam. 2:11; 3:1
^h Ex. 28:4
¹⁹ ⁱ 1 Sam. 1:3, 21
²⁰ ^j Gen. 14:19

^k 1 Sam. 1:11, 27,
 28 ^g gift
²¹ ^l Gen. 21:1
^m Judg. 13:24;
 1 Sam. 2:26; 3:19-
 21; Luke 1:80; 2:40
⁸ attended to
²² ⁿ Ex. 38:8 ⁹ So
 with MT, Tg., Vg.;
 DSS, LXX omit rest
 of verse

wife, and say, “The LORD give you descendants from this woman for the ⁷loan that was ^kgiven to the LORD.” Then they would go to their own home.

²¹And the LORD ^lvisited ⁸ Hannah, so that she conceived and bore three sons and two daughters. Meanwhile the child Samuel ^mgrew before the LORD.

Prophecy Against Eli's Household

²²Now Eli was very old; and he heard everything his sons did to all Israel, ⁹and how they lay with ⁿthe women who assembled at the door of the tabernacle of meeting. ²³So he said to them, “Why do you do such things? For I hear of your

2:17 abhorred: Eli's sons dishonored God by doing their priestly duties with irreverence and disrespect. Those who regularly handle the things of God are sometimes in grave danger of carelessly and presumptuously performing the sacred duties entrusted to them.

2:18 The linen ephod was a sleeveless garment that was worn by priests, especially when officiating at the altar (see 2:28; 22:18; Ex. 28:6–14). Occasionally it was worn by others engaged in religious ceremonies, such as David (2 Sam. 6:14), and here by Samuel.

2:19 The little robe made by Hannah is different from the ephod mentioned in v. 18. It was probably a long outer garment like those worn by people of rank or special status. The fact that Hannah made

such a robe indicated her love for her son, whom she could visit only on rare occasions.

2:20 the loan that was given: The word loan here indicates a complete giving up of the child to God (1:28).

2:21 visited Hannah: God came to Hannah to grant her request, as He had to Sarah (Gen. 21:1). In His gracious condescension, He comes near to His people to meet their needs (see Ruth 1:8). In other circumstances, God's visit may be for the purpose of judgment (see Hos. 1:4).

2:23, 24 Eli's protests seem weak in view of the enormity of his sons' sins.

One Woman's Devotion

Out of the materialism and ruthlessness of Israel during the period of the judges, Hannah emerged as a woman of faith. From her home in the hills north of Jerusalem, she had traveled to Shiloh, the national place of worship. Her sadness of heart and persistence in prayer contrasted sharply with the prevalent corruption in worship led by Eli's sons (2:12–17).



Hannah bringing Samuel to Eli

Hannah bringing Samuel to Eli, Dudley, Robert Ambrose/
 Private Collection/© Look and Learn/The Bridgeman Art
 Library

Hannah's personal life was one of despair in her childlessness as she recoiled from Peninnah's pestered reproaches. Her prayer exhibited selflessness as she pled for a son whom she might present to God for His use (1:11). Clearly, Hannah was loved and valued for herself by her husband, Elkanah, but even the intensity of a devoted husband's love could not penetrate her inner disquiet nor overcome her yearning for a child (1:8). The throbbing emotions of her despair were so evident in Hannah's prayers that the aged Eli accused her of drunkenness. But beyond her prayers and tears, a vow erupted. Hannah, in effect, made a pact with God; she pledged to give back to Him the precious life He might give to her. God honored her bold and decisive act.

Hannah's faith was rewarded, and she named her son Samuel (in Hebrew, "Name of God") because she "asked for him from the LORD" (1:20). According to custom, she probably nursed him several years, giving time for her to convey to Samuel her own spirit of deep reverence and piety and also to knit her heart with his through maternal bonding. Nonetheless, she kept her word to the Lord. Into the defiled worship center she placed her very young, impressionable son. Although humanly it seemed to border on foolishness, this was an act of saintly sacrifice. Her commitment was to God; her gift had been pre-arranged with Him. With prophetic insight she planted the next generation just as promised.

Samuel grew up to become the last judge, an outstanding and gifted prophet, and the one who would anoint the first two kings of Israel. Samuel was the pivotal spiritual leader who turned the nation toward Yahweh. His mother Hannah played her part in this spiritual awakening as she trusted God, leaving for all posterity an example of determined devotion in her motherhood.

evil dealings from all the people. ²⁴No, my sons! For *it* is not a good report that I hear. You make the LORD's people transgress. ²⁵If one man sins against another, ^oGod ⁱ will judge him. But if a man ^psins against the LORD, who will intercede for him?" Nevertheless they did not heed the voice of their father, ^qbecause the LORD desired to kill them.

²⁶And the child Samuel ^rgrew in stature, and ^sin favor both with the LORD and men.

²⁷Then a ^tman of God came to Eli and said to him, "Thus says the LORD: ^u"Did I not clearly reveal Myself to the house of your father when they were in Egypt in Pharaoh's house? ²⁸Did I not ^vchoose him out of all the tribes of Israel *to be* My priest, to offer upon My altar, to burn incense, and to wear an ephod before Me? And ^wdid I not give to the house of your father all the offerings of the children of Israel made by fire? ²⁹Why do you ^xkick at My sacrifice and My offering which I have commanded *in My* ^ydwelling place, and honor your sons more than ^zMe, to make yourselves fat with the best of all the offerings of Israel My people?" ³⁰Therefore the LORD God of Israel says: ^a"I said indeed *that* your house and the house of your father would walk before Me forever.' But now the LORD says: ^b'Far be it from Me; for those who honor Me I will honor, and ^cthose who despise Me shall be lightly esteemed. ³¹Behold, ^dthe days are coming that I will cut off your ²arm and the arm of your father's house, so that there will not be an old man in your house. ³²And you will see an enemy *in My* dwelling place, *despite* all the good which God does for Israel. And there shall not be ^ean old man in

²⁵ ^o Deut. 1:17; 25:1, 2 ^p Num. 15:30
^q Josh. 11:20 ^r Tg. the Judge

²⁶ ^r 1 Sam. 2:21

^s Prov. 3:4

²⁷ ^t Deut. 33:1; Judg. 13:6; 1 Sam. 9:6; 1 Kin. 13:1 ^u Ex. 4:14-16; 12:1

²⁸ ^v Ex. 28:1, 4; Num. 16:5 ^w Lev. 2:3, 10; 6:16; 7:7, 8, 34, 35; Num. 5:9

²⁹ ^x Deut. 32:15 ^y Deut. 12:5; Ps. 26:8 ^z Matt. 10:37

³⁰ ^a Ex. 29:9; Num. 25:13 ^b Jer. 18:9, 10 ^c Ps. 91:14; Mal. 2:9-12

³¹ ^d 1 Sam. 4:11-18; 22:18, 19; 1 Kin. 2:27, 35 ² ^e strength ³² ^e Zech. 8:4

³⁴ ^f 1 Sam. 10:7-9; 1 Kin. 13:3 ^g 1 Sam. 4:11, 17

³⁵ ^h 1 Kin. 2:35; Ezek. 44:15; [Heb. 2:17; 7:26-28]

ⁱ 2 Sam. 7:11, 27; 1 Kin. 11:38 / Ps. 18:50

³⁶ ^k 1 Kin. 2:27 ³ assign

CHAPTER 3

¹ ^a 1 Sam. 2:11, 18 ^b Ps. 74:9; Ezek. 7:26; Amos 8:11, 12 ² ^c Gen. 27:1; 48:10; 1 Sam. 4:15
³ ^d Ex. 27:20, 21 ¹ palace or temple

your house forever. ³³But any of your men *whom* I do not cut off from My altar shall consume your eyes and grieve your heart. And all the descendants of your house shall die in the flower of their age. ³⁴Now this *shall be* ^fa sign to you that will come upon your two sons, on Hophni and Phinehas: ^gin one day they shall die, both of them. ³⁵Then ^hI will raise up for Myself a faithful priest *who* shall do according to what *is* in My heart and in My mind. ⁱI will build him a sure house, and he shall walk before ^jMy anointed forever. ³⁶^k And it shall come to pass that everyone who is left in your house will come *and* bow down to him for a piece of silver and a morsel of bread, and say, "Please, ³put me in one of the priestly positions, that I may eat a piece of bread."'"

Samuel's First Prophecy

3 Now ^athe boy Samuel ministered to the LORD before Eli. And ^bthe word of the LORD was rare in those days; *there was* no widespread revelation. ²And it came to pass at that time, while Eli *was* lying down in his place, and when his eyes had begun to grow ^cso dim that he could not see, ³and before ^dthe lamp of God went out in the ¹tabernacle of the LORD where the ark of God *was*, and while Samuel was lying down, ⁴that the LORD called Samuel. And he answered, "Here I am!" ⁵So he ran to Eli and said, "Here I am, for you called me."

And he said, "I did not call; lie down again." And he went and lay down.

⁶Then the LORD called yet again, "Samuel!"

So Samuel arose and went to Eli, and said, "Here I am, for you called me." He

2:26 Compare the description of Samuel's childhood with that of Jesus (Luke 2:52). The contrast between Samuel and Eli's sons is inescapable.

2:27 The **man of God** was an unidentified prophet or spokesman for the Lord. **Your father** is a reference to Aaron, the brother of Moses and Miriam and the divinely appointed founder of the priestly house in Israel (Ex. 4:14-16; Num. 3:1-4).

2:29 Eli had warned his sons of divine judgment (v. 25), but he had never really rebuked them for their sins (3:13). By neglecting his parental duty, he was in effect favoring his sons above God.

2:30 **I said:** As descendants of Aaron, Eli's family benefited from the promise God had given to Aaron and his sons that they would be a priesthood forever (Ex. 29:9).

2:31-34 The prophet predicted the destruction of the priestly family of Eli. The judgment was partially fulfilled in the massacre of the priests of Nob (22:11-19), and was ultimately fulfilled when the priesthood was transferred to the family of Zadok in the time of Solomon (1 Kin. 2:26, 27, 35).

2:34 The deaths of **Hophni and Phinehas** would validate the truth of the prophecy (4:17).

2:35 The **faithful priest** refers to Zadok, who was faithful to God and to the line of David and Solomon (1 Kin. 1:7, 8; 2:26, 27, 35). To

build him a sure house means to guarantee a long line of succession for this faithful priest.

2:36 The impoverishment predicted here was probably fulfilled when Abiathar, a descendant of Eli, was dismissed from the priesthood by Solomon (see 1 Kin. 2:27).

3:1 The word translated **boy** means "youth." It was used of David when he slew Goliath (17:33). **rare in those days:** Samuel was called at a time of extremely limited prophetic activity, probably because there were so few faithful Israelites who would listen (Judg. 21:25).

3:2 **lying down in his place:** Eli apparently was quartered in the court of the tabernacle, where cells were built for the priests who served the sanctuary.

3:3 **The lamp of God** is the gold lampstand that was located in the holy place of the tabernacle (see Ex. 27:20, 21; Lev. 24:2-4). The fact that it had not yet gone out indicates that Samuel's call took place just before dawn.

3:4-8 Three times Samuel mistook God's voice for the voice of Eli. Samuel had been assisting Eli in serving the tabernacle, but he did **not yet know the LORD** in an intimate and personal way. He had never heard God's voice. He had never received **the word of the LORD** by divine revelation.

answered, “I did not call, my son; lie down again.” ⁷ (Now Samuel ^e did not yet know the LORD, nor was the word of the LORD yet revealed to him.)

⁸ And the LORD called Samuel again the third time. So he arose and went to Eli, and said, “Here I am, for you did call me.”

Then Eli perceived that the LORD had called the boy. ⁹ Therefore Eli said to Samuel, “Go, lie down; and it shall be, if He calls you, that you must say, ^f ‘Speak, LORD, for Your servant hears.’” So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

¹⁰ Now the LORD came and stood and called as at other times, “Samuel! Samuel!”

And Samuel answered, “Speak, for Your servant hears.”

¹¹ Then the LORD said to Samuel: “Behold, I will do something in Israel ^g at which both ears of everyone who hears it will tingle. ¹² In that day I will perform against Eli ^h all that I have spoken concerning his house, from beginning to end. ¹³ For I have told him that I will ⁱ judge his house forever for the iniquity which he knows, because ^k his sons made themselves vile, and he ^l did not ² restrain them. ¹⁴ And therefore I have sworn to the house of Eli that the iniquity of Eli’s

⁷ ^e 1 Sam. 2:12; Acts 19:2; 1 Cor. 13:11
⁹ ^f 1 Kin. 2:17
¹¹ ^g 2 Kin. 21:12; Jer. 19:3
¹² ^h 1 Sam. 2:27-36; Ezek. 12:25; Luke 21:33
¹³ ⁱ 1 Sam. 2:29-31 / 1 Sam. 2:22; Ezek. 7:3; 18:30 ^k 1 Sam. 2:12, 17, 22 / 1 Sam. 2:23, 25 ² Lit. *rebuke*
¹⁴ ^m Num. 15:30, 31; Is. 22:14; Heb. 10:4, 26-31
¹⁵ ³ So with MT, Tg., Vg.; LXX adds and he arose in the morning
¹⁷ ⁿ Ruth 1:17
¹⁸ ^o Gen. 24:50; Ex. 34:5-7; Lev. 10:3; Is. 39:8; Acts 5:39
¹⁹ ^p 1 Sam. 2:21
^q Gen. 21:22; 28:15; 39:2, 21, 23 ^r 1 Sam. 9:6 ⁴ fail
²⁰ ^s Judg. 20:1
⁵ confirmed
²¹ ^t 1 Sam. 3:1, 4

CHAPTER 4

¹ ¹ So with MT, Tg.; LXX, Vg. add And it came to pass in those days that the Philistines gathered themselves together to fight; LXX adds further against Israel

house ^m shall not be atoned for by sacrifice or offering forever.”

¹⁵ So Samuel lay down until ³ morning, and opened the doors of the house of the LORD. And Samuel was afraid to tell Eli the vision. ¹⁶ Then Eli called Samuel and said, “Samuel, my son!”

He answered, “Here I am.”

¹⁷ And he said, “What is the word that the LORD spoke to you? Please do not hide it from me. ⁿ God do so to you, and more also, if you hide anything from me of all the things that He said to you.” ¹⁸ Then Samuel told him everything, and hid nothing from him. And he said, ^o “It is the LORD. Let Him do what seems good to Him.”

¹⁹ So Samuel ^p grew, and ^q the LORD was with him ^r and let none of his words ⁴ fall to the ground. ²⁰ And all Israel ^s from Dan to Beersheba knew that Samuel *had been* ⁵ established as a prophet of the LORD. ²¹ Then the LORD appeared again in Shiloh. For the LORD revealed Himself to Samuel in Shiloh by ^t the word of the LORD.

4 And the word of Samuel came to all ¹ Israel.

The Ark of God Captured

Now Israel went out to battle against the Philistines, and encamped beside

3:10 the LORD came and stood: These words reflect Samuel’s very real sense of God’s presence. This appears to have been a theophany, a visible appearance of God, as in Gen. 12:7.

3:12 from beginning to end: The judgment would extend from the death of Eli’s sons and continue until the whole prophecy given by the man of God (2:27–36) was fulfilled.

3:13 I have told him: The message was given through the anonymous “man of God” (2:27–36). **I will judge:** No descendants of Eli would serve as priest. **made themselves vile:** These were supposed to have been the esteemed priests of God, but they turned their privilege into disaster. **he did not restrain them:** Here we learn of Eli’s personal failure as a father. The word translated *restrain* occurs only here in the Hebrew Bible. It suggests a rebuke that sets things right.

3:14 shall not be atoned: Eli and his sons were guilty of presumptuous sin (see Num. 15:30, 31). For such a sin, there was no atoning sacrifice.

3:15 The doors of the house refers to the entrance of the court of the tabernacle. After the people settled in Canaan, the tabernacle was set up permanently at Shiloh, and a walled enclosure with doors replaced the curtains which once surrounded the sanctuary.

3:17 The phrase **God do so to you, and more also** is an oath. Eli was saying, “May God do something terrible, and worse, if you don’t tell me the truth.”

3:18 Let Him do: Eli submitted to God and accepted God’s judgment. Even with all his failures as a father, Eli remained faithful to God.

3:19 the LORD was with him: This was the key to Samuel’s success as a prophet (see Matt. 28:20). God remained with him. **let none of his words fall:** All the prophecies God delivered through Samuel were fulfilled.

3:20 The expression **Dan to Beersheba** denotes the whole territory of Israel, from its most northern to its most southern point (see Judg. 20:1). The term **prophet** means “spokesman” and refers to one who speaks for another (see Ex. 7:1, 2).

4:1 The Philistines, known in Egyptian texts as the “Sea Peoples,” were Indo-Europeans who migrated from the Aegean Islands and Asia Minor to the eastern Mediterranean coastal region in the twelfth century B.C. Migrations had occurred earlier, for Abraham and Isaac had contact with the Philistines as early as the twentieth century B.C. With their aggressive invasions and the fortress cities at Ashkelon, Ashdod, Ekron, Gath, and Gaza, the Philistines established strong political and military control of the southern coastal plain of Palestine. With their iron weapons, the Philistines became a significant threat to Israelite security. The **battle** mentioned here took place between **Ebenezer** and **Aphek**. The name Ebenezer means “Stone of Help,” and it commemorates Israel’s victory at the same site about 20 years later (7:12). Aphek, located 13 miles northeast of Joppa, was a strategic border city at the northern limit of Philistine territory (29:1).

hears

(Heb. *shama*) (3:10; 17:28; Gen. 3:10; Ex. 2:15; Is. 6:9) Strong’s #8085

The Hebrew word translated *hears* also means “to listen” or “to obey.” This important OT word appears over 1,100 times. It implies that the listener is giving his or her total attention to the one who is speaking. In some cases, the word connotes more than listening and indicates obedience to what has been said. Abraham was blessed not only for hearing, but for obeying God’s voice (see Gen. 22:18 where the word is translated *obeyed*). In the present passage Samuel is listening for God’s word and is determined to obey it. This young man is an example of the kind of person God delights to use—one who is always ready to receive His Word and follow it.



Dan to Beersheba

Dan was located further north than any other village in Israel during much of the OT period. Archaeologists excavating at Dan have uncovered remains that include an intact Middle Bronze Age mud-brick, triple-arch gateway as well as pagan altars dated to the period of Israel's divided monarchy. Beersheba was the chief city of the Negev, situated in the territory of Simeon. Midway between the Mediterranean Sea and the southern end of the Dead Sea, Beersheba was considered the southern extremity of the Promised Land, giving rise to the often-used expression, "all Israel from Dan to Beersheba" (1 Sam. 3:20).



The Middle Bronze Age mud-brick gate at Dan
Wikimedia Commons

^aEbenezer; and the Philistines encamped in Aphek. ²Then the ^bPhilistines put themselves in battle array against Israel. And when they joined battle, Israel was ²defeated by the Philistines, who killed about four thousand men of the army in the field. ³And when the people had come into the camp, the elders of Israel said, "Why has the LORD defeated us today before the Philistines? ^cLet us bring the ark of the covenant of the LORD from Shiloh to us, that when it comes among us it may save us from the hand of our enemies." ⁴So the people sent to

1 ^a 1 Sam. 7:12
2 ^b 1 Sam. 12:9 ² Lit. struck
3 ^c Num. 10:35; Josh. 6:6-21
4 ^d Ex. 25:18-21;
1 Sam. 6:2; Ps. 80:1 ^e Num. 7:89
^f 1 Sam. 2:12
7 ^g Ex. 15:14
9 ^h 1 Cor. 16:13
ⁱ Judg. 13:1; 1 Sam. 14:21 ³ Lit. Be men
10 / Lev. 26:17; Deut. 28:15, 25;
1 Sam. 4:2; 2 Sam. 18:17; 19:8;

Shiloh, that they might bring from there the ark of the covenant of the LORD of hosts, ^dwho dwells *between* ^ethe cherubim. And the ^ftwo sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, *were* there with the ark of the covenant of God.

⁵And when the ark of the covenant of the LORD came into the camp, all Israel shouted so loudly that the earth shook. ⁶Now when the Philistines heard the noise of the shout, they said, "What *does* the sound of this great shout in the camp of the Hebrews *mean*?" Then they understood that the ark of the LORD had come into the camp. ⁷So the Philistines were afraid, for they said, "God has come into the camp!" And they said, ⁸"Woe to us! For such a thing has never happened before. ⁸Woe to us! Who will deliver us from the hand of these mighty gods? These *are* the gods who struck the Egyptians with all the plagues in the wilderness. ⁹^hBe strong and conduct yourselves like men, you Philistines, that you do not become servants of the Hebrews, ⁱas they have been to you. ³Conduct yourselves like men, and fight!"

¹⁰So the Philistines fought, and ^jIsrael was ⁴defeated, and every man fled to his tent. There was a very great slaughter, and there fell of Israel thirty thousand foot soldiers. ¹¹Also ^kthe ark of God was captured; and ^lthe two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, died.

Death of Eli

¹²Then a man of Benjamin ran from the battle line the same day, and ^mcame to Shiloh with his clothes torn and ⁿdirt on his head. ¹³Now when he came, there

2 Kin. 14:12; 2 Chr. 25:22 ⁴ Lit. struck down ¹¹ ^k 1 Sam. 2:32; Ps. 78:60, 61 ^l 1 Sam. 2:34; Ps. 78:64 ¹² ^m 2 Sam. 1:2 ⁿ Josh. 7:6; 2 Sam. 13:19; 15:32; Neh. 9:1; Job 2:12

4:2 The field refers to the flat coastal plain where the Philistines were able to use their chariots to great advantage (13:5).

4:3 The term **people** refers to the fighting men of Israel before there was a standing Israelite army. **Elders** refers to the family heads who gave leadership in politics and war before the creation of the monarchy. In preparation for their next battle with the Philistines, the Israelites brought the **ark of the covenant** from the tabernacle in **Shiloh** to the battlefield. It was the custom of ancient warriors to take symbols of their gods into battle so that their gods would deliver them (see 2 Sam. 5:21; 1 Chr. 14:12). This apparently was Israel's plan. They failed to recognize that God would be with them even if the ark was in Shiloh! **it may save us**: It seems that the Israelites viewed the ark superstitiously, believing divine power to be in the ark itself rather than in God.

4:4 who dwells between the cherubim: Cherubim are angels generally regarded as guardians of God's holiness (see Gen. 3:24; Ex. 25:22; 2 Sam. 6:2; 2 Kin. 19:15; Ps. 80:1; 99:1; Is. 37:16; Ezek. 10:9). God revealed Himself to Moses from between the two cherubim mounted at opposite ends of the mercy seat of the **ark of the covenant** (Ex. 25:22; Num. 7:89).

4:5, 7 the earth shook: The presence of the ark gave the Israelites a false sense of victory. **God has come into the camp**: The shouting of the Israelites at the sight of the ark struck fear in the hearts of the Philistines. They clearly viewed the ark as some sort of idol.

4:8 these mighty gods: The Philistines were polytheists, and they assumed that the Israelites also had many gods. The Philistines had heard the report of what God had accomplished for His people at the time of the Exodus (see Deut. 2:25).

4:11 The loss of the **ark**, symbolic of God's presence among His people, was a great tragedy for Israel—even worse than the loss of life (v. 10). The ark probably never returned to Shiloh. The Lord destroyed Shiloh because of the wickedness of His people (Jer. 7:12), and archaeological excavations indicate that the city was destroyed around 1050 B.C., perhaps by the Philistines. The deaths of Eli's sons, **Hophni and Phinehas**, mark the first step in God's judgment on the house of Eli (2:34).

4:12 Torn clothes and dirt on the head were traditional signs of mourning (see Josh. 7:6).

4:13 by the wayside: Eli was sitting by the city gate (v. 18), anxiously awaiting news of the battle.

was Eli, sitting on ^a a seat ^b by the wayside watching, for his heart ^c trembled for the ark of God. And when the man came into the city and told *it*, all the city cried out. ¹⁴ When Eli heard the noise of the outcry, he said, “What *does* the sound of this tumult *mean*?” And the man came quickly and told Eli. ¹⁵ Eli was ninety-eight years old, and ^d his eyes were so ^e dim that he could not see.

¹⁶ Then the man said to Eli, “I *am* he who came from the battle. And I fled today from the battle line.”

And he said, ^f “What happened, my son?”

¹⁷ So the messenger answered and said, “Israel has fled before the Philistines, and there has been a great slaughter among the people. Also your two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, are dead; and the ark of God has been captured.”

¹⁸ Then it happened, when he made mention of the ark of God, that Eli fell off the seat backward by the side of the gate; and his neck was broken and he died, for the man was old and heavy. And he had judged Israel forty years.

Ichabod

¹⁹ Now his daughter-in-law, Phinehas’ wife, was with child, *due* to be delivered; and when she heard the news that the ark of God was captured, and that her father-in-law and her husband were dead, she bowed herself and gave birth, for her labor pains came upon her. ²⁰ And about the time of her death ^g the women who stood by her said to her, “Do not fear, for you have borne a son.” But she did not answer, nor did she ^h regard *it*. ²¹ Then she named the child ⁱ Ichabod, ^j saying, ^k “The glory has departed from Israel!” because the ark of God had been captured and because of her father-in-law and her husband. ²² And she said,

13 ^o 1 Sam. 1:9; 4:18
^p So with MT, Vg.;
 LXX beside the gate
 watching the road
^q trembled with
 anxiety
 15 ^r 1 Sam. 3:2;
 1 Kin. 14:4 ^s fixed
 16 ^t 2 Sam. 1:4
 20 ^u Gen. 35:16-19
^v pay any attention
 to
 21 ^w 1 Sam. 14:3
^x Ps. 26:8; 78:61;
 [Jer. 2:11] ^y Lit.
 inglorious

CHAPTER 5

1 ^o 1 Sam. 4:1; 7:12
 2 ^p Judg. 16:23-30;
 1 Chr. 10:8-10 ^q A
 Philistine idol
 3 ^r Is. 19:1; 46:1, 2
^s Is. 46:7
 4 ^t Jer. 50:2; Ezek.
 6:4, 6; Mic. 1:7 ^u So
 with LXX, Syr., Tg.,
 Vg.; MT Dagon
 5 ^v Zeph. 1:9
 6 ^w Ex. 9:3; Deut.
 2:15; 1 Sam. 5:7;
 7:13; Ps. 32:4;
 145:20; 147:6
^x 1 Sam. 6:5 ^y Deut.
 28:27; Ps. 78:66
^z Josh. 15:46, 47
^{aa} Probably bubonic
 plague, LXX, Vg.
 add And in the
 midst of their land
 rats sprang up, and
 there was a great
 death panic in
 the city.
 7 ^{ab} 1 Sam. 6:5
 8 ^{ac} 1 Sam. 6:4
^{ad} Josh. 11:22
 9 ^{ae} Deut. 2:15;
 1 Sam. 5:11; 7:13;
 12:15 ^{af} Vg. and they
 had tumors in their
 secret parts

“The glory has departed from Israel, for the ark of God has been captured.”

The Philistines and the Ark

⁵ Then the Philistines took the ark of God and brought it ^a from Ebenezer to Ashdod. ² When the Philistines took the ark of God, they brought it into the house of ^b Dagon¹ and set it by Dagon. ³ And when the people of Ashdod arose early in the morning, there was Dagon, ^c fallen on its face to the earth before the ark of the LORD. So they took Dagon and ^d set it in its place again. ⁴ And when they arose early the next morning, there was Dagon, fallen on its face to the ground before the ark of the LORD. ^e The head of Dagon and both the palms of its hands *were* broken off on the threshold; only ² Dagon’s *torso* was left of it. ⁵ Therefore neither the priests of Dagon nor any who come into Dagon’s house ^f tread on the threshold of Dagon in Ashdod to this day.

⁶ But the ^g hand of the LORD was heavy on the people of Ashdod, and He ^h ravaged them and struck them with ⁱ tumors, ³ both Ashdod and its ^j territory. ⁷ And when the men of Ashdod saw how *it was*, they said, “The ark of the ^k God of Israel must not remain with us, for His hand is harsh toward us and Dagon our god.” ⁸ Therefore they sent and gathered to themselves all the ^l lords of the Philistines, and said, “What shall we do with the ark of the God of Israel?”

And they answered, “Let the ark of the God of Israel be carried away to ^m Gath.” So they carried the ark of the God of Israel away. ⁹ So it was, after they had carried it away, that ⁿ the hand of the LORD was against the city with a very great destruction; and He struck the men of the city, both small and great, ⁴ and tumors broke out on them.

¹⁰ Therefore they sent the ark of God

4:18 The loss of the **ark** was a catastrophic blow. In response, Eli fell off his chair and died—another sign of God’s judgment on the house of Eli (2:33–36).

4:20 Like Rachel (Gen. 35:16–20), the wife of Phinehas died in childbirth. The words **you have borne a son** were spoken to comfort her as she was dying.

4:21 She possibly refers to the midwife attending the birth of Eli’s grandson. The name **Ichabod**, meaning “No Glory,” reflected Israel’s circumstances. The loss of the ark meant the absence of God’s glory in Israel.

5:1 **Ashdod**, one of the five chief Philistine cities, was about three miles inland from the Mediterranean Sea and about 22 miles south of Joppa.

5:2 **Dagon**, the chief god of the Philistines, was thought to control the weather and the fertility of the land. This god appears to be a Philistine adaptation of the Canaanite god Baal, who is sometimes referred to in ancient literature as the “Son of Dagon.” Philistia was an important grain-producing region; the worship of Dagon was thought to ensure a good crop.

5:3, 4 Twice the idol of Dagon fell prostrate before the ark—as if worshipping the Israelite God. The second time the head and hands were broken off. This was recorded in order to demonstrate the foolishness of worshipping an impotent god.

5:5 The destruction of Dagon’s idol resulted in the foolish Philistine custom of stepping over the **threshold** of Dagon’s temple (see Zeph. 1:9). Apparently the threshold came to be regarded as taboo because of its contact with Dagon’s hands and head (v. 4).

5:6 The Hebrew word translated **tumors** literally means “swellings” and may refer to any kind of tumor, swelling, or boil.

5:8 **Lords** refers to the rulers of the five cities of Philistia (6:4). To free themselves from the plague associated with the presence of the Israelite ark, they sent the ark to **Gath**, one of these cities.

5:10 The ark was sent next to **Ekrón**, about six miles north of Gath. **to kill us**: Having heard of the plague associated with the ark, the citizens of Ekrón were less than enthusiastic about receiving the Israelite war trophy into their city.

to Ekron. So it was, as the ark of God came to Ekron, that the Ekronites cried out, saying, “They have brought the ark of the God of Israel to us, to kill us and our people!” ¹¹ So they sent and gathered together all the lords of the Philistines, and said, “Send away the ark of the God of Israel, and let it go back to its own place, so that it does not kill us and our people.” For there was a deadly destruction throughout all the city; the hand of God was very heavy there. ¹² And the men who did not die were stricken with the tumors, and the ^ocry of the city went up to heaven.

The Ark Returned to Israel

6 Now the ark of the LORD was in the country of the Philistines seven months. ² And the Philistines ^acalled for the priests and the diviners, saying, “What shall we do with the ark of the LORD? Tell us how we should send it to its place.”

³ So they said, “If you send away the ark of the God of Israel, do not send it ^bempty; but by all means return *it* to Him *with* ^ca trespass offering. Then you will be healed, and it will be known to you why His hand is not removed from you.”

⁴ Then they said, “What *is* the trespass offering which we shall return to Him?”

They answered, ^d“Five golden tumors and five golden rats, *according to* the number of the lords of the Philistines. For the same plague *was* on all of ¹you and on your lords. ⁵ Therefore you shall make images of your tumors and images of your rats that ^eravage the land, and you shall ^fgive glory to the God of Israel; perhaps He will ^glighten² His hand from you, from ^hyour gods, and from your land. ⁶ Why then do you harden your hearts ⁱas the Egyptians and Pharaoh hardened their hearts? When He did mighty things among them, ^jdid they not

The Ark		
Names	the ark of the covenant the ark of God the ark of the Testimony	Num. 10:33 1 Sam. 3:3 Ex. 25:22
Importance	the place where God would meet His people symbolic of the Lord's presence with the people of Israel	Ex. 25:22 Num. 10:33; Josh. 3:11
Description	made of acacia wood overlaid with gold designed to be carried on poles topped with a “mercy seat” adorned with gold cherubim	Ex. 25:10 Ex. 25:11 Ex. 25:13, 14 Ex. 26:34 Ex. 25:18
Builder	the craftsman Bezalel	Ex. 37:1
Caretakers	the Kohathites of the tribe of Levi	Num. 3:30, 31
Contents	the Testimony (the Ten Commandments written on tablets of stone) the Pentateuch (Genesis–Deuteronomy) a jar of manna Aaron's rod that budded	Ex. 25:16 Deut. 31:26 Ex. 16:33, 34 Heb. 9:4
The Ark in 1 & 2 Sam.	Captured by the Philistines caused the god Dagon to topple caused a plague of tumors on the Philistines returned to Israel on an unmanned cart caused the death of the men at Beth Shemesh for looking inside remained at Kirjath Jearim 20 years brought to Jerusalem during David's reign	1 Sam. 4:11 1 Sam. 5:1–4 1 Sam. 5:6–12 1 Sam. 6:7–12 1 Sam. 6:19 1 Sam. 7:2 2 Sam. 6:1–19

12 ^o 1 Sam. 9:16;
Jer. 14:2

CHAPTER 6

2 ^a Gen. 41:8; Ex. 7:11; Is. 2:6; 47:13; Dan. 2:2; 5:7
3 ^b Ex. 23:15; Deut. 16:16 ^c Lev. 5:15, 16
4 ^d 1 Sam. 5:6, 9, 12; 6:17 ¹ Lit. *them*
5 ^e 1 Sam. 5:6
^f Josh. 7:19; 1 Chr. 16:28, 29; Is. 42:12; Jer. 13:16; Mal. 2:2; Rev. 14:7 ^g 1 Sam. 5:6, 11; Ps. 39:10
^h 1 Sam. 5:3, 4, 7
² ease

let the people go, that they might depart? ⁷ Now therefore, make ^ka new cart, take two milk cows ^lwhich have never been yoked, and hitch the cows to the cart; and take their calves home, away from them. ⁸ Then take the ark of the LORD and set it on the cart; and put ^mthe articles of gold which you are returning to Him *as* a trespass offering in a chest by its side. Then send it away, and let it go. ⁹ And watch: if it goes up the road to its own territory, to ⁿBeth Shemesh, *then* He has done ³us

6 ¹ Ex. 7:13; 8:15; 9:34; 14:17 / Ex. 12:31 7 ^k 2 Sam. 6:3 ¹ Num. 19:2; Deut. 21:3, 4 8 ^m 1 Sam. 6:4, 5 9 ⁿ Josh. 15:10; 21:16
³ this calamity to us

6:2 Diviners claimed to be able to predict the future and determine the will of their gods by observing such omens as the flight pattern of birds or the liver of a sacrificed animal (see Num. 22). **6:3** The priests and diviners advised the Philistine leaders to present an offering to appease the God of Israel in order to end the plague. In their understanding, the God of Israel was another deity among many, who had won some sort of contest with their god Dagon. **trespass offering:** The gift was to be a compensation for trespassing against God by capturing the ark. **6:4** The offering of gold was fashioned to resemble the tumors and rats that plagued the people. **the number of the lords of the Philistines:** The offering corresponded to the number of Philistine cities and their respective lords or kings. **6:5 give glory to the God of Israel:** By sending the gifts back with the ark, the Philistines acknowledged that it was God who had afflicted them with tumors. This recognition would add to His glorious reputation among the nations.

6:6 The Philistine priests and diviners recalled the experience of **the Egyptians and Pharaoh**, who **hardened their hearts** against God at the time of the Exodus. God's salvation of the Israelites was internationally known (see Deut. 4). **6:7** The use of a **new cart** and cows that had **never been yoked** was designed to show special reverence for God on the part of the Philistines. **take their calves home:** The natural inclination of cows would be to return home with their calves. This was a test as to whether God was behind the plagues. **6:8, 9 let it go:** Where the cows went was going to be left up to God. **if it goes up the road:** If the two cows left their calves this would be a clear sign to the Philistines that the plague of tumors had been the judgment of Israel's God. **Beth Shemesh**, a Levitical city (see Josh. 21:16), was close to the border of Philistia, about eight miles east of Ekron. The name Beth Shemesh means “House of the Sun.” It is likely that this ancient Canaanite city had been known for its temple to the sun god.

this great evil. But if not, then ^owe shall know that *it is* not His hand that struck us—it happened to us by chance.”

¹⁰Then the men did so; they took two milk cows and hitched them to the cart, and shut up their calves at home. ¹¹And they set the ark of the LORD on the cart, and the chest with the gold rats and the images of their tumors. ¹²Then the cows headed straight for the road to Beth Shemesh, and went along the ^phighway, lowing as they went, and did not turn aside to the right hand or the left. And the lords of the Philistines went after them to the border of Beth Shemesh.

¹³Now *the people of* Beth Shemesh were reaping their ^qwheat harvest in the valley; and they lifted their eyes and saw the ark, and rejoiced to see *it*. ¹⁴Then the cart came into the field of Joshua of Beth Shemesh, and stood there; a large stone *was* there. So they split the wood of the cart and offered the cows as a burnt offering to the LORD. ¹⁵The Levites took down the ark of the LORD and the chest that *was* with it, in which *were* the articles of gold, and put *them* on the large stone. Then the men of Beth Shemesh offered burnt offerings and made sacrifices the same day to the LORD. ¹⁶So when ^rthe five lords of the Philistines had seen *it*, they returned to Ekron the same day.

¹⁷*These are* the golden tumors which the Philistines returned *as* a trespass offering to the LORD: one for Ashdod, one for Gaza, one for Ashkelon, one for ^tGath, one for Ekron; ¹⁸and the golden

9 ^o 1 Sam. 6:3
12 ^p Num. 20:19
13 ^q 1 Sam. 12:17
16 ^r Josh. 13:3;
Judg. 3:3
17 ^s 1 Sam. 6:4
^t 1 Sam. 5:8

19 ^u Ex. 19:21;
Num. 4:5, 15, 16, 20
^v 2 Sam. 6:7 ^u Or *He struck seventy men of the people and fifty oxen of a man*
20 ^w Lev. 11:44, 45;
Ps. 24:3, 4; Mal. 3:2;
Rev. 6:17
21 ^x Josh. 9:17; 15:9,
60; 18:14; Judg.
18:12; 1 Chr. 13:5, 6

CHAPTER 7

1 ^a 1 Sam. 6:21; Ps.
132:6 ^b 2 Sam. 6:3,
4 ^c Lev. 21:8
3 ^d Deut. 30:2-10;
1 Kin. 8:48; Is.
55:7; Hos. 6:1; Joel
2:12-14

rats, *according to* the number of all the cities of the Philistines *belonging to* the five lords, *both* fortified cities and country villages, even as far as the large *stone of* Abel on which they set the ark of the LORD, *which stone remains to* this day in the field of Joshua of Beth Shemesh.

¹⁹Then ^uHe struck the men of Beth Shemesh, because they had looked into the ark of the LORD. ⁴He ^vstruck fifty thousand and seventy men of the people, and the people lamented because the LORD had struck the people with a great slaughter.

The Ark at Kirjath Jearim

²⁰And the men of Beth Shemesh said, ^w“Who is able to stand before this holy LORD God? And to whom shall it go up from us?” ²¹So they sent messengers to the inhabitants of ^xKirjath Jearim, saying, “The Philistines have brought back the ark of the LORD; come down *and* take it up with you.”

⁷Then the men of ^aKirjath Jearim came and took the ark of the LORD, and brought it into the house of ^bAbinadab on the hill, and ^cconsecrated Eleazar his son to keep the ark of the LORD.

Samuel Judges Israel

²So it was that the ark remained in Kirjath Jearim a long time; it was there twenty years. And all the house of Israel lamented after the LORD.

³Then Samuel spoke to all the house of Israel, saying, “If you ^dreturn to the LORD

6:12 along the highway: The Hebrew literally reads “along one highway,” indicating that the cows did not deviate onto any side roads. The **lowing** of the cattle was their plaintive crying for their calves. These cows were drawn by a strong power in the opposite direction from where their natural inclination would lead them. This would make an undeniable impression on the Philistine farmers, who knew the strong maternal instincts of cows.

6:13 wheat harvest: Wheat planted in the fall and harvested in the spring.

6:14 offered the cows as a burnt offering: Although Deut. 12:4–14 required that sacrifices be offered only at the central sanctuary, it seems that this law would not have been applied in view of the recent destruction of Shiloh. Since Beth Shemesh was a Levitical city (see Josh. 21:16), there would have been priests available to officiate at the sacrifice.

6:15 Mosaic law stipulated that only the Levites could handle the ark, and even they could not touch it directly (Num. 4:5, 15). offerings . . . sacrifices: These were in addition to those mentioned in v. 14.

6:16 The lords or kings of the Philistine cities had followed the ark at a distance to see what would become of it.

6:17 Although there is no indication in the text that the ark was ever in **Gaza** or **Ashkelon**, these cities apparently fell under the same plague as the other Philistine cities; therefore, they contributed to the **trespass offering** (v. 3).

6:18 Abel here is unrelated to the name of Adam and Eve’s son (see Gen. 4:2). This term may be a place or site name that more precisely locates the large stone.

6:19 The Lord brought judgment upon certain **men of Beth Shemesh** who were guilty of the presumptuous sin of gazing into the ark. They had shown a lack of reverence for the holy things of God and had directly violated Mosaic law (Num. 4:20).

6:20 Who is able to stand: Since God is holy, He requires those who minister or serve Him to be separated from all that is contrary to His holy character. The people responded in terror and frustration. They knew of the troubles that the ark had brought to the Philistines; now, they believed, they were next.

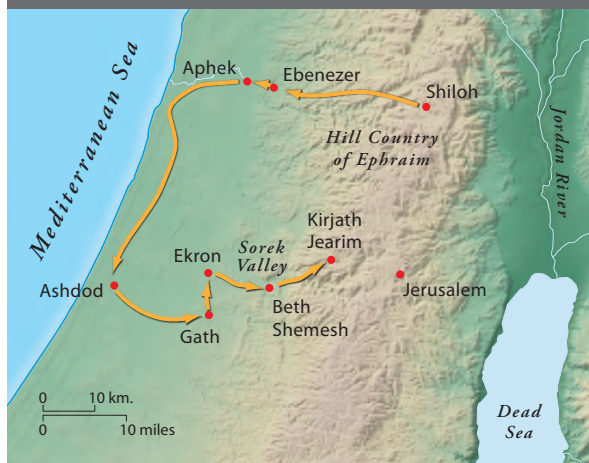
6:21 The people of Beth Shemesh were so disturbed by the tragedy that they requested the inhabitants of **Kirjath Jearim** to remove the ark from their city. Kirjath Jearim was about ten miles west of Jerusalem.

7:1 Eleazar, whose name means “God Is Help” or “God Is Power,” was **consecrated** (lit. “set apart”) to care for the ark. Eleazar was probably a member of the priestly family since there was no judgment on his ministry before the ark.

7:2 it was there twenty years: Most likely, it was 20 years before Samuel called the assembly at Mizpah (v. 5). The ark remained at Kirjath Jearim for about a hundred years. It was taken there just after the battle of Aphek around 1104 B.C. and remained there until David brought it to Jerusalem in his first year as king over all Israel, around 1003 B.C. (see 2 Sam. 5:5; 6:1–18).

7:3 If you return to the LORD: Repentance from sin and expressions of loyalty to God were prerequisites for the restoration of divine blessing (Deut. 30:1–10; 2 Chr. 7:14). The expression **foreign gods** is a general term for the idols of Canaan. **Ashtoreths** is the plural form of the name of the Canaanite goddess of fertility,

Capture and Return of the Ark



with all your hearts, *then* ^eput away the foreign gods and the ^fAshtoreths ¹ from among you, and ^gprepare your hearts for the LORD, and ^hserve Him only; and He will deliver you from the hand of the Philistines.” ⁴So the children of Israel put away the ⁱBaals and the ²Ashtoreths, and served the LORD only.

⁵And Samuel said, ^j“Gather all Israel to Mizpah, and ^kI will pray to the LORD for you.” ⁶So they gathered together at Mizpah, ^ldrew water, and poured *it* out before the LORD. And they ^mfasted that day, and said there, ⁿ“We have sinned against the LORD.” And Samuel judged the children of Israel at Mizpah.

⁷Now when the Philistines heard that the children of Israel had gathered together at Mizpah, the lords of the Philistines went up against Israel. And when the children of Israel heard *of it*, they were

afraid of the Philistines. ⁸So the children of Israel said to Samuel, ^o“Do not cease to cry out to the LORD our God for us, that He may save us from the hand of the Philistines.”

⁹And Samuel took a ^psuckling lamb and offered *it* as a whole burnt offering to the LORD. Then ^qSamuel cried out to the LORD for Israel, and the LORD answered him. ¹⁰Now as Samuel was offering up the burnt offering, the Philistines drew near to battle against Israel. ^rBut the LORD thundered with a loud thunder upon the Philistines that day, and so confused them that they were overcome before Israel. ¹¹And the men of Israel went out of Mizpah and pursued the Philistines, and ³drove them back as far as below Beth Car. ¹²Then Samuel ^stook a stone and set *it* up between Mizpah and Shen, and called its name ⁴Ebenezer, saying, “Thus far the LORD has helped us.”

¹³So the Philistines were subdued, and they ^udid not come anymore into the territory of Israel. And the hand of the LORD was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel. ¹⁴Then the cities which the Philistines had taken from Israel were restored to Israel, from Ekron to Gath; and Israel recovered its territory from the hands of the Philistines. Also there was peace between Israel and the Amorites.

¹⁵And Samuel ^vjudged Israel all the days of his life. ¹⁶He went from year to year on a circuit to Bethel, Gilgal, and Mizpah, and judged Israel in all those places. ¹⁷But ^whe always returned to

³ ^e Gen. 35:2; Josh. 24:14, 23; Judg. 10:16 ^f Judg. 2:13; 1 Sam. 31:10 ^g 2 Chr. 30:19; Job 11:13 ^h Deut. 6:13; 10:20; 13:4; Josh. 24:14; Matt. 4:10; Luke 4:8 ⁱ Images of Canaanite goddesses ⁴ Judg. 2:11; 10:16 ² Images of Canaanite goddesses ⁵ Judg. 10:17; 20:1; 1 Sam. 10:17 ^k 1 Sam. 12:17-19 ⁶ 2 Sam. 14:14 ^m Judg. 20:26; Neh. 9:1, 2; Dan. 9:3-5; Joel 2:12 ⁿ Judg. 10:10; 1 Sam. 12:10; 1 Kin. 8:47; Ps. 106:6 ⁸ ^o 1 Sam. 12:19-24; Is. 37:4 ⁹ ^p Lev. 22:27

^q 1 Sam. 12:18; Ps. 99:6; Jer. 15:1 ¹⁰ ^r Josh. 10:10; 2 Sam. 22:14, 15; Ps. 18:13, 14 ¹¹ ^s *struck them down* ¹² ^t Gen. 28:18; 35:14; Josh. 4:9; 24:26 ⁴ ^u *Stone of Help* ¹³ ^v Judg. 13:1 ¹ 1 Sam. 13:5 ¹⁵ ^v 1 Sam. 12:11 ¹⁷ ^w 1 Sam. 8:4

sexuality, and war. The rites connected with her worship usually involved sacred prostitution. Sexual rituals in the Canaanite temples were designed to prompt the gods to make the earth fertile.

7:4 the Baals: In ancient sculptures, Baal was depicted with a horned helmet. In one hand he grasped a club or mace and in the other a shaft of lightning or a spear with leaves. In some sculptures, he stood on the back of a bull. The plurals **Baals** and **Ashtoreths** refer either to the many images of these gods or to the various local forms under which these gods were worshiped.

7:5 Samuel gathered the people for a prayer meeting at **Mizpah**, about eight miles north of Jerusalem. The city was the capital of Judah after the fall of Jerusalem (see 2 Kin. 25:22–25). **I will pray:** Samuel, like his mother (1:10–16; 2:1–10), repeatedly exhibited a commitment to prayer (8:6; 12:19, 23; Ps. 99:6; Jer. 15:1).

7:6 poured it out: The pouring of water was symbolic of repentance (Ps. 62:8; Lam. 2:19). **Samuel judged:** Samuel acted as chief magistrate, rendering decisions and settling disputes.

7:7 The Israelite gathering at Mizpah alerted the Philistines of a potential uprising. They immediately organized an attack.

7:8 Do not cease to cry out to the LORD: The Israelites did not want to engage in battle unless Samuel was praying for victory. In contrast to the debacle at Aphek (ch. 4), the Israelites were no longer

depending on the ark as a magical talisman. They now wanted to depend solely on the power of God through prayer.

7:9 a suckling lamb: According to Lev. 22:27, no animal could be sacrificed until it was at least eight days old.

7:12, 13 To commemorate the victory and acknowledge the Lord’s intervention, Samuel set up a memorial stone on the battlefield and named it **Ebenezer**, meaning “Stone of Help.” Samuel followed Joshua’s practice of commemorating the victories of God for His people with stone markers (see Josh. 4). The victory at Ebenezer was so decisive that the Philistines made no more attacks against the Israelites during Samuel’s judgeship.

7:14 Ekron and Gath were Philistine cities near Israel (5:8, 10). The frontier settlements which the Israelites had been forced to evacuate could now be taken again. **Amorites** may refer to the original inhabitants of Canaan (see Gen. 15:16), or to the hill dwellers of southern Canaan (see Num. 13:29; Josh. 10:5).

7:16 In addition to his religious duties as prophet, Samuel served as a circuit judge. **Bethel**, the “House of God,” was where Jacob had his famous dream (Gen. 28:10–22). **Gilgal** was where the Israelites had first camped after crossing the Jordan River to conquer Canaan (Josh. 4:19, 20). It was about one mile from Jericho.

7:17 Ramah was about five miles north of Jerusalem.

Ramah, for his home *was* there. There he judged Israel, and there he ^xbuilt an altar to the LORD.

Israel Demands a King

8 Now it came to pass when Samuel was ^aold that he ^bmade his ^csons judges over Israel. ²The name of his firstborn was Joel, and the name of his second, Abijah; *they were* judges in Beersheba. ³But his sons ^ddid not walk in his ways; they turned aside ^eafter dishonest gain, ^ftook bribes, and perverted justice.

⁴Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah, ⁵and said to him, “Look, you are old, and

17 ^x Judg. 21:4

CHAPTER 8

1 ^a 1 Sam. 12:2

^b Deut. 16:18, 19;

2 Chr. 19:5 ^c Judg.

10:4

3 ^d Jer. 22:15-17

^e Ex. 18:21 ^f Ex.

23:6-8; Deut. 16:19;

1 Sam. 12:3

5 ^g Deut. 17:14, 15;

Hos. 13:10, 11; Acts

13:21

6 ^h 1 Sam. 12:17

ⁱ 1 Sam. 7:9

7 ^j Ex. 16:8 ^k 1 Sam.

10:19

your sons do not walk in your ways. Now ^gmake us a king to judge us like all the nations.”

⁶But the thing ^hdispleased Samuel when they said, “Give us a king to judge us.” So Samuel ⁱprayed to the LORD. ⁷And the LORD said to Samuel, “Heed the voice of the people in all that they say to you; for ^jthey have not rejected you, but ^kthey have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them. ⁸According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt, even to this day—with which they have forsaken Me and served other gods—so they are doing to you also. ⁹Now therefore, heed

8:1 made his sons judges: It was highly unusual for Samuel to appoint his sons to assist him in judging cases. Judges were individually appointed by God, not by their fathers.

8:2 Joel means “The Lord Is God.” **Abijah** means “My Father Is the Lord.” **Beersheba** was at the southern extremity of Israel (3:20), about 48 miles south of Jerusalem. It was here that Abraham and Isaac had dug wells and formed alliances with Abimelech, king of the Philistines (Gen. 21:22–34; 26:1–33).

8:5 make us a king: Two factors contributed to the elders’ request for a king: (1) the corruption of Samuel’s sons, and (2) their desire to follow the pattern of **all the nations**.

8:6 There is nothing wrong with the concept of a monarchy. God had made provisions in His law for the appointment of a king over

His people (Deut. 17:14, 15). Yet Samuel was **displeased** because he felt that the demand for a king indicated a rejection of his own leadership. Samuel took the matter to God in prayer.

8:7, 8 they have rejected Me: The error of the elders of Israel was their failure to recognize God as their true King (12:12). **to you also:** The Lord drew a parallel between the Israelites’ forgetfulness of His gracious acts and their lack of appreciation for Samuel.

8:9 forewarn them: Samuel was called to warn the Israelites that a king would not solve all of their problems. In fact, having a king would create many hardships. The word **behavior** refers to the “right” or “prerogative” that the king would claim. Israel’s king would rule with arbitrary and absolute power.

Who Is “Called”?

Are only certain people “called” by God to do important work for Him? Many people assume that occupations such as the pastorate or missionary work are true “callings” that have significance before God, while other jobs are just jobs.

Even though work is an important part of life, by itself it falls far short of describing the significance of an individual. There are many other aspects to being a person—personal growth and development, family, citizenship, friendships, and faith. So to define oneself by one’s occupation is inadequate. It tends to place more value on the self than on God, more on activity than on character, and more on success than on relationships. In short, it tends to equate employment with human worth.

From the Bible’s point of view, “calling” describes *all* of the responsibility of all believers to serve God with all of their lives:

Every believer is called to belong to God. Paul indicated to the Christians at Rome that both he and they had the same calling (Rom. 1:1, 6). Likewise, he wrote to the believers in Ephesus that just as there is one Spirit and one body (that is, the church), “you were called in one hope of your calling” (Eph. 4:4).

Every believer is called a child of God. In His love, God brings us into His family (1 John 3:1), through faith in Christ Jesus.

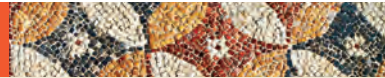
Every believer is called to accept the work of Christ on his or her behalf. Though we are sinners deserving of judgment, Christ’s death on the cross has “justified” us, made us able to stand before a holy God and receive His salvation and grace (Rom. 8:28–30; 2 Tim. 1:9). For this we have every reason to live lives of gratitude (1 Thess. 2:13).

Every believer is called to become like Christ. Living the life God calls us to involves change in which we take on the character of Christ. That means resisting the temptation to turn away from Him, even though others may encourage us to do so (Gal. 1:6–9). It involves fleeing evil and pursuing good, fighting to maintain our faithfulness (1 Tim. 6:11, 12). Just as Christ is holy, so we are to develop holiness in everything we do (1 Pet. 1:15; 3:9). As we pursue Christlikeness, we can do so with the certainty that the Lord is helping us, equipping us for every good work (Phil. 2:12, 13; 2 Pet. 1:3–10).

Every believer is called to serve God and other people. Christ has called us to Himself to live out our faith in a manner that is worthy of Him (Eph. 4:1–4). We have the privilege of declaring God’s work through everything we do and say (1 Pet. 2:9, 10, 21).

Every believer is called to become a citizen of the new heaven and new earth. The Christian life leads ultimately to the end of being “glorified,” raised up to stand with Christ in eternal glory, pure and holy at last (1 Pet. 5:10; 2 Pet. 3:10, 11). In that day, we will celebrate the final coming together of Christ and all His faithful ones (Rev. 19:9, 10). Our obedience to the Lord right now confirms this ultimate calling (Matt. 5:19).

If you are a believer in Christ, you have the same, significant calling as any other believer in Christ, no matter what your workday occupation may be. Calling is not just a matter of what job one has; it means living as a child of God. Is that the calling that you are pursuing?



their voice. However, you shall solemnly forewarn them, and ^lshow them the behavior of the king who will reign over them.”

¹⁰So Samuel told all the words of the LORD to the people who asked him for a king. ¹¹And he said, ^m“This will be the behavior of the king who will reign over you: He will take your ⁿsons and appoint *them* for his own ^ochariots and *to be* his horsemen, and *some* will run before his chariots. ¹²He will ^pappoint captains over his thousands and captains over his fifties, *will set some* to plow his ground and reap his harvest, and *some* to make his weapons of war and equipment for his chariots. ¹³He will take your daughters *to be* perfumers, cooks, and bakers. ¹⁴And ^qhe will take the best of your fields, your vineyards, and your olive groves, and give *them* to his servants. ¹⁵He will take a tenth of your grain and your vintage, and give it to his officers and servants. ¹⁶And he will take your male servants, your female servants, your finest ¹young men, and your donkeys, and put *them* to his work. ¹⁷He will take a tenth of your sheep. And you will be his servants. ¹⁸And you will cry out in that day because of your king whom you have chosen for yourselves, and the LORD ^rwill not hear you in that day.”

¹⁹Nevertheless the people ^srefused to obey the voice of Samuel; and they said, “No, but we will have a king over us, ²⁰that we also may be ^tlike all the nations, and that our king may judge us and go out before us and fight our battles.”

²¹And Samuel heard all the words of the people, and he repeated them in the hearing of the LORD. ²²So the LORD said to Samuel, ^u“Heed their voice, and make them a king.”

9 ¹ 1 Sam. 8:11-18
11 ^m Deut. 17:14-20 ⁿ 1 Sam. 14:52
12 ^p 1 Sam. 22:7
14 ^q 1 Kin. 21:7;
[Ezek. 46:18]
16 ¹ LXX *cattle*
18 ^r Prov. 1:25-28;
Is. 1:15; Mic. 3:4
19 ^s Is. 66:4; Jer. 44:16
20 ^t 1 Sam. 8:5
22 ^u 1 Sam. 8:7;
Hos. 13:11

CHAPTER 9

1 ^a 1 Sam. 14:51;
1 Chr. 8:33; 9:36-39
¹ *wealth*
2 ^b 1 Sam. 10:23
4 ^c 2 Kin. 4:42
5 ^d 1 Sam. 1:1
^e 1 Sam. 10:2
6 ^f Deut. 33:1; 1 Kin. 13:1; 2 Kin. 5:8
9 ¹ 1 Sam. 3:19
7 ^h Judg. 6:18; 13:17;
1 Kin. 14:3; 2 Kin. 4:42; 8:8

And Samuel said to the men of Israel, “Every man go to his city.”

Saul Chosen to Be King

9 There was a man of Benjamin whose name was ^aKish the son of Abiel, the son of Zeror, the son of Bechorath, the son of Aphiah, a Benjamite, a mighty man of ¹power. ²And he had a choice and handsome son whose name was Saul. *There was* not a more handsome person than he among the children of Israel. ^bFrom his shoulders upward *he was* taller than any of the people.

³Now the donkeys of Kish, Saul’s father, were lost. And Kish said to his son Saul, “Please take one of the servants with you, and arise, go and look for the donkeys.” ⁴So he passed through the mountains of Ephraim and through the land of ^cShalisha, but they did not find *them*. Then they passed through the land of Shaalim, and *they were* not *there*. Then he passed through the land of the Benjamites, but they did not find *them*.

⁵When they had come to the land of ^dZuph, Saul said to his servant who was with him, “Come, let ^eus return, lest my father cease *caring* about the donkeys and become worried about us.”

⁶And he said to him, “Look now, *there is* in this city ^fa man of God, and *he is* an honorable man; ^gall that he says surely comes to pass. So let us go there; perhaps he can show us the way that we should go.”

⁷Then Saul said to his servant, “But look, *if* we go, ^hwhat shall we bring the man? For the bread in our vessels is all gone, and *there is* no present to bring to the man of God. What do we have?”

⁸And the servant answered Saul again and said, “Look, I have here at hand one-fourth of a shekel of silver. I will give *that*

8:11-17 First, a king would draft young men to serve in the military, farm his fields, and prepare for war. **Run before his chariots** is a reference to the king’s state carriage. Runners would serve as messengers, announcing the king’s coming. Second, a king would draft young women to work in his palace and serve in his court. Third, a king would tax the people’s crops and flocks. He would take **the best** of their products. **take a tenth**: The proceeds of this tithe would be used to pay the salaries of the king’s officers and servants. Fourth, a king would appropriate the servants of the Israelites and their **finest young men and donkeys**. Citizens would be forced into the king’s service as well as slaves. Fifth, the king would take away the people’s personal freedom.

8:18 cry out . . . not hear: Since the Israelites were deliberately choosing their own path, they could not expect God to deliver them from the trouble that would inevitably result.

8:20 and fight our battles: The Israelites were looking for human leadership on the battlefield, instead of recognizing that God would lead them in battle—and win (see Ex. 15:3).

8:21 Samuel heard . . . and he repeated them: Samuel acted as mediator between the people and God.

9:1 Saul’s father, **Kish**, was from the tribe of **Benjamin**. The term

a **mighty man of power** suggests that he was something like a feudal lord—a wealthy landowner and a leader in time of war. The same term is used of Boaz (Ruth 2:1).

9:2 **Saul** means “Asked For.” **Choice** suggests that Saul was in the prime of manhood. Both his physical stature—**taller than any**—and personal appearance—**handsome**—were striking. Saul was endowed with what seemed to be great potential for leadership and service. In these respects, Saul was a king like those of “all the nations” (8:5).

9:4 The search for his father’s donkeys took Saul north from his home at Gibeath (10:26), through the **mountains of Ephraim**. Ephraim was the tribal inheritance of Joseph’s son (see Gen. 41:50–52), directly north of Benjamin (see Josh. 16).

9:6 **This city** refers to Ramah, Samuel’s home after the destruction of Shiloh (1:1; 8:4). The term **man of God** refers to someone who was recognized for his prophetic ministry (see 1 Kin. 12:22; 13:1; 2 Kin. 23:17).

9:8 Saul’s servant unexpectedly produced **one-fourth of a shekel of silver**, which would serve as adequate compensation for the prophet’s ministry. A shekel was about 11.4 grams.

to the man of God, to tell us our way.”⁹ (Formerly in Israel, when a man ⁱwent ²to inquire of God, he spoke thus: “Come, let us go to the seer”; for *he who is now called* a prophet was formerly called *a seer*.)

¹⁰Then Saul said to his servant, ³“Well said; come, let us go.” So they went to the city where the man of God *was*.

¹¹As they went up the hill to the city, ^kthey met some young women going out to draw water, and said to them, “Is the seer here?”

¹²And they answered them and said, “Yes, there he is, just ahead of you. Hurry now; for today he came to this city, because ^lthere is a sacrifice of the people today ^mon the high place.” ¹³As soon as you come into the city, you will surely find him before he goes up to the high place to eat. For the people will not eat until he comes, because he must bless the sacrifice; afterward those who are invited will eat. Now therefore, go up, for about this time you will find him.” ¹⁴So they went up to the city. As they were coming into the city, there was Samuel, coming out toward them on his way up to the high place.

¹⁵ⁿNow the LORD had told Samuel in his ear the day before Saul came, saying, ¹⁶“Tomorrow about this time ^oI will send you a man from the land of Benjamin, ^pand you shall anoint him ⁴commander over My people Israel, that he may save My people from the hand of the Philistines; for I have ^qlooked upon My people, because their cry has come to Me.”

¹⁷So when Samuel saw Saul, the LORD said to him, ^r“There he is, the man of whom I spoke to you. This one shall reign over My people.” ¹⁸Then Saul drew near to Samuel in the gate, and said, “Please tell me, where *is* the seer’s house?”

⁹ ⁱGen. 25:22 / ² Sam. 24:11; ² Kin. 17:13; ¹ Chr. 26:28; 29:29; ² Chr. 16:7; 10; Is. 30:10; Amos 7:12 ² Lit. to seek God
¹⁰ ³ Lit. Your word is good
¹¹ ^k Gen. 24:11, 15; 29:8, 9; Ex. 2:16
¹² ^l Gen. 31:54; ¹ Sam. 16:2
^m ¹ Sam. 7:17; 10:5; ¹ Kin. 3:2
¹⁵ ⁿ ¹ Sam. 15:1
¹⁶ ^o Deut. 17:15
^p ¹ Sam. 10:1 ^q Ex. 2:23-25; 3:7, 9
⁴ prince or ruler
¹⁷ ^r ¹ Sam. 16:12; Hos. 13:11

²⁰ ^s ¹ Sam. 9:3
¹ ¹ Sam. 8:5, 19; 12:13 ⁵ for whom
²¹ ^u ¹ Sam. 15:17
^v Judg. 20:46-48; Ps. 68:27 ^w Judg. 6:15 ⁶ Lit. tribes
²⁴ ^x Ex. 29:22, 27; Lev. 7:32, 33; Num. 18:18; Ezek. 24:4
²⁵ ^y Deut. 22:8; ² Sam. 11:2; Luke 5:19; Acts 10:9 ⁷ So with MT, Tg.; LXX omits He spoke with Saul on the top of the house; LXX, Vg. afterward add And he prepared a bed for Saul on the top of the house, and he slept.

¹⁹Samuel answered Saul and said, “I am the seer. Go up before me to the high place, for you shall eat with me today; and tomorrow I will let you go and will tell you all that *is* in your heart.” ²⁰But as for ^syour donkeys that were lost three days ago, do not be anxious about them, for they have been found. And ⁵on whom ^tis all the desire of Israel? *Is it* not on you and on all your father’s house?”

²¹And Saul answered and said, “Am I not a Benjamite, of the ^vsmallest of the tribes of Israel, and ^wmy family the least of all the families of the ⁶tribe of Benjamin? Why then do you speak like this to me?”

²²Now Samuel took Saul and his servant and brought them into the hall, and had them sit in the place of honor among those who were invited; there *were* about thirty persons. ²³And Samuel said to the cook, “Bring the portion which I gave you, of which I said to you, ‘Set it apart.’” ²⁴So the cook took up ^xthe thigh with its upper part and set *it* before Saul. And Samuel said, “Here it is, what was kept back. *It* was set apart for you. Eat; for until this time it has been kept for you, since I said I invited the people.” So Saul ate with Samuel that day.

²⁵When they had come down from the high place into the city, ⁷Samuel spoke with Saul on ^ythe top of the house. ²⁶They arose early; and it was about the dawning of the day that Samuel called to Saul on the top of the house, saying, “Get up, that I may send you on your way.” And Saul arose, and both of them went outside, he and Samuel.

Saul Anointed King

²⁷As they were going down to the outskirts of the city, Samuel said to Saul,

9:9 This verse is an explanatory note of an ancient custom to later Israelite readers. **Seer** refers to one who is able to see what is hidden from the eyes of ordinary people. **Prophet** refers to one who speaks for God (see Ex. 7:1).

9:12 A **high place** was an elevated site of worship located on a hill or on an artificial platform in a temple. The Canaanites were known for building their places of worship on hills (see Num. 33:52; Deut. 12:2–5). Nevertheless, pious Israelites appear to have used such facilities legitimately after the destruction of Shiloh and before the construction of Solomon’s temple (see 1 Kin. 3:2). Sadly, the misuse of such high places to worship false gods eventually undermined the worship of God and contributed to the rise of idolatry in Israel (see 1 Kin. 11:7; 12:26–33).

9:16 It seems significant that Saul is referred to here as **commander** (also translated as “prince,” “ruler,” or “leader”), rather than as king. The royal throne ultimately belonged to the line of Judah (see Gen. 49:9, 10).

9:18 Asking **Samuel** directions to the **seer’s house** at the entrance of the city was the final step in a remarkable sequence of events which God sovereignly superintended to bring about the anointing of Saul.

9:19 **All that is in your heart** does not seem to refer to the matter of the donkeys, for Samuel immediately assured Saul that the donkeys had been found. Perhaps Saul was brooding over the problem of the Philistines.

9:21 **smallest of the tribes:** Benjamin was the second smallest tribe at the first census following the Exodus (Num. 1:36, 37). The tribe was reduced to six hundred fighting men during the punishment of Benjamin for the atrocity at Gibeah (see Judg. 19; 20). **the least of all the families:** If Saul’s father was “a mighty man of power,” these words contain a certain amount of self-deprecation (v. 1).

9:22 **The hall** was where local dignitaries sat for sacrificial feasts at the high place.

9:24 Giving Saul **the thigh** was intended to honor him in the presence of the other guests (see Gen. 43:34).

9:25 A **house** in ancient Israel usually had a flat roof which could be used for drying flax or as a place to relax. It appears that Saul slept on the roof (v. 26).

9:27 **Tell the servant to go on:** The anointing of Saul was private. Later, he would be publicly installed as king before all Israel (10:17–27).



Roofs

The roof was an important part of a house in biblical times. A person could climb to the roof by a flight of stairs along the outside wall. In most cases the roof was flat, but sometimes the builders made domes over the more important rooms. Jewish law required each house to have a railing around the roof to keep anyone from falling off. Adjoining houses often shared the same roof, and low walls on the roof marked the borders of each house. The builders covered roofs with a type of cement that hardened under the sun. Some houses had tiles or flat bricks on the roof. The Israelites used their roofs as a place of retreat and meditation. They dried linen, flax, corn, figs, and other fruits on the rooftops and sometimes slept there at night. They also used their rooftops for private conferences and even worship.



Derbe mud-brick house with plaster
Todd Bolen/www.BiblePlaces.com

“Tell the servant to go on ahead of us.” And he went on. “But you stand here ⁸awhile, that I may announce to you the word of God.”

10 Then ^aSamuel took a flask of oil and poured *it* on his head, ^band kissed him and said: “*Is it* not because ^cthe LORD has anointed you commander over ^dHis ¹inheritance? ²When you have departed from me today, you will find two men by ^eRachel’s tomb in the territory of Benjamin ^fat Zelzah; and they will say to you, ‘The donkeys which you went to look for have been found. And now your father has ceased caring about the donkeys and is worrying about ^gyou, saying, ‘What shall I do about my son?’” ³Then you shall go on forward from there and come to the terebinth tree of Tabor. There three men going up ^hto God at Bethel will meet you, one carrying three young goats, another carrying three

27 ⁸ now

CHAPTER 10

1 ^a Ex. 30:23-33;
1 Sam. 9:16; 16:13;
2 Kin. 9:3, 6 ^b Ps.
2:12 ^c 2 Sam. 5:2;
Acts 13:21 ^d Ex.
34:9; Deut. 32:9; Ps.
78:71 ¹ So with MT,
Tg., Vg.; LXX *people
Israel; and you shall
rule the people of the
Lord; LXX, Vg. add
And you shall deliver
His people from
the hands of their
enemies all around
them. And this shall
be a sign to you, that
God has anointed
you to be a prince.*
2 ^e Gen. 35:16-20;
48:7 ^f Josh. 18:28
9 ¹ Sam. 9:3-5
3 ^h Gen. 28:22;
35:1, 3, 7

loaves of bread, and another carrying a skin of wine. ⁴And they will ²greet you and give you two *loaves* of bread, which you shall receive from their hands. ⁵After that you shall come to the hill of God ⁱwhere the Philistine garrison is. And it will happen, when you have come there to the city, that you will meet a group of prophets coming down ^jfrom the high place with a stringed instrument, a tambourine, a flute, and a harp before them; ^kand they will be prophesying. ⁶Then ^lthe Spirit of the LORD will come upon you, and ^myou will prophesy with them and be turned into another man. ⁷And let it be, when these ⁿsigns come to you, *that* you do as the occasion demands; for

4 ² ask you about your welfare 5 ¹ 1 Sam. 13:2, 3 ¹ 1 Sam. 19:12, 20; 2 Kin. 2:3, 5, 15 ^k Ex. 15:20, 21; 2 Kin. 3:15; 1 Chr. 25:1-6; 1 Cor. 14:1 6 ¹ Num. 11:25, 29; Judg. 14:6; 1 Sam. 16:13 ^m 1 Sam. 10:10; 19:23, 24 7 ⁿ Ex. 4:8; Luke 2:12

10:1 the LORD has anointed you: There were two kinds of anointings in the biblical period. A ceremonial anointing involved pouring olive oil on the head or body of the person to be honored (see Ps. 133:2). An official anointing used the same process but signified a consecration or setting apart for religious service (see Ex. 29:7; 30:25; Lev. 8:12). The anointing of a ruler was actually a religious act. That is why David had such high regard for Saul, refusing to lift a hand against “the LORD’s anointed” (24:6). **His inheritance:** The land of Israel was God’s gift to His people, but it would return to God’s direct control should the people prove unfit to manage it (see Deut. 27–30).

10:2 Rachel’s tomb: Rachel had died giving birth to Benjamin on a journey from Bethel to Bethlehem, and she was buried along the way (Gen. 35:16–20). **in the territory of Benjamin:** Rachel was buried near Bethlehem, which is in Judah (Gen. 35:16–20). Perhaps her burial site was very close to the border between Benjamin and Judah.

10:3 The terebinth, sometimes translated “oak” or “elm,” refers to a strong tree, native to the land of Israel, which grows to a height of

around 35 feet. **Tabor** is an apparent reference to Mt. Tabor, in the Valley of Jezreel, where these trees were prominent.

10:4 For strangers to offer Saul **two loaves of bread** would have been a remarkable sign. Their bread would have been for use in the worship of God. For them, giving the bread to Saul substituted for a sacred act.

10:5 The Hebrew word translated **hill** probably refers to Gibeah, Saul’s hometown (11:4). Gibeah **of God** was perhaps the full name of the city, due to its proximity to a significant **high place** (v. 13). **Philistine garrison:** The Philistines dominated the land and had set up a military outpost in Saul’s hometown. **A group of prophets** may refer to members of the “school of the prophets,” which was probably instituted by Samuel for the purpose of preparing young men for prophetic ministry.

10:6 The Spirit of the LORD refers to the same Holy Spirit who came upon Othniel, Gideon, Jephthah, and Samson (see Judg. 3:10; 6:34; 11:29; 13:25; 14:6, 19; 15:14). The expression **be turned into another man** may mean spiritual regeneration or a marked advance in spiritual growth.

⁹God is with you. ⁸You shall go down before me ⁹to Gilgal; and surely I will come down to you to offer burnt offerings and make sacrifices of peace offerings. ⁹Seven days you shall wait, till I come to you and show you what you should do.”

⁹So it was, when he had turned his back to go from Samuel, that God ³gave him another heart; and all those signs came to pass that day. ¹⁰When they came there to the hill, there was ^aa group of prophets to meet him; then the Spirit of God came upon him, and he prophesied among them. ¹¹And it happened, when all who knew him formerly saw that he indeed prophesied among the prophets, that the people said to one another, “What is this *that* has come upon the son of Kish? ¹Is Saul also among the prophets?” ¹²Then a man from there answered and said, “But ^uwho is their father?” Therefore it became a proverb: “Is Saul also among the prophets?” ¹³And when he had finished prophesying, he went to the high place.

¹⁴Then Saul’s ^vuncle said to him and his servant, “Where did you go?”

So he said, “To look for the donkeys. When we saw that *they were* nowhere to be found, we went to Samuel.”

¹⁵And Saul’s uncle said, “Tell me, please, what Samuel said to you.”

¹⁶So Saul said to his uncle, “He told us plainly that the donkeys had been ^wfound.” But about the matter of the kingdom, he did not tell him what Samuel had said.

⁷ ^o Josh. 1:5; Judg. 6:12; 1 Sam. 3:19; [Heb. 13:5]
⁸ ^p 1 Sam. 11:14, 15; 13:8 ^q 1 Sam. 13:8-10
⁹ ^z changed his heart
¹⁰ ^r 1 Sam. 10:5
¹¹ 1 Sam. 19:20
¹² ^t 1 Sam. 19:24; Amos 7:14, 15; Matt. 13:54-57; John 7:15; Acts 4:13
¹³ ^u John 5:30, 36
¹⁴ ^v 1 Sam. 14:50
¹⁶ ^w 1 Sam. 9:20

¹⁷ ^x Judg. 20:1
¹⁸ ^y 1 Sam. 7:5, 6
¹⁹ ^z Judg. 6:8, 9; 1 Sam. 8:8; 12:6, 8
¹⁹ ^a 1 Sam. 8:7, 19; 12:12 ⁴ Lit. thousands
²⁰ ^b Acts 1:24, 26
²² ^c 1 Sam. 23:2, 4, 10, 11
²³ ^d 1 Sam. 9:2
²⁴ ^e Deut. 17:15; 1 Sam. 9:16; 2 Sam. 21:6 ^f 1 Kin. 1:25, 39 ⁵ Lit. May the king live

Saul Proclaimed King

¹⁷Then Samuel called the people together ^xto the LORD ^yat Mizpah, ¹⁸and said to the children of Israel, ^z“Thus says the LORD God of Israel: ‘I brought up Israel out of Egypt, and delivered you from the hand of the Egyptians and from the hand of all kingdoms and from those who oppressed you.’ ¹⁹^aBut you have today rejected your God, who Himself saved you from all your adversities and your tribulations; and you have said to Him, ‘No, set a king over us!’ Now therefore, present yourselves before the LORD by your tribes and by your ⁴clans.”

²⁰And when Samuel had ^bcaused all the tribes of Israel to come near, the tribe of Benjamin was chosen. ²¹When he had caused the tribe of Benjamin to come near by their families, the family of Matri was chosen. And Saul the son of Kish was chosen. But when they sought him, he could not be found. ²²Therefore they ^cinquired of the LORD further, “Has the man come here yet?”

And the LORD answered, “There he is, hidden among the equipment.”

²³So they ran and brought him from there; and when he stood among the people, ^dhe was taller than any of the people from his shoulders upward. ²⁴And Samuel said to all the people, “Do you see him ^ewhom the LORD has chosen, that *there is* no one like him among all the people?”

So all the people shouted and said, ^f“Long ⁵live the king!”

10:9 God gave him another heart: In Hebrew this expression literally reads, “God changed him for another heart.” There is debate as to whether this refers to a work of God’s Spirit which prepared Saul for kingship or to the act of spiritual regeneration. It may seem that Saul’s subsequent attitudes and behavior do not reflect a genuine spiritual life. Yet Saul seems to have struggled with sin and desired to worship God (14:34, 35; 15:24–34).

10:10 God worked through His Spirit in Saul’s life so that he was able to exercise a prophetic gift. This was not a vocation for Saul but an opportunity.

10:11 As a result of the Spirit’s mighty working in Saul, the people asked, **Is Saul also among the prophets?** Some have taken this as an expression of contempt, but this implies a low view of prophets and prophecy. Rather, the question simply expresses surprise at Saul’s sudden change in character.

10:12 But who is their father: The implication of this question is that the fathers of the prophets were not important people. The prophets in any case did not obtain their gift by inheritance, but by God’s will.

10:17 Mizpah was where the Israelites had gathered for a time of spiritual revival before their victory over the Philistines (7:5).

10:19 rejected your God: Samuel reiterated his earlier admonition (8:10–18), warning the people of their attitude—which was actually a rejection of God’s kingship. **Clans** were a smaller family unit than tribes.

10:20, 21 The choice of Saul as Israel’s first monarch was made by casting lots, a means of determining God’s will in answer to “yes” and “no” questions. The lots were cast like dice. The principle un-

derlying the use of lots was an active confidence in God’s control of all events.

10:22 hidden among the equipment: This may reflect Saul’s modesty, or perhaps his hesitancy and self-doubt over assuming the position of national leader.

10:24 The phrase **him whom the LORD has chosen** reflects the sovereignty of God in the area of His permissive will. Although the Israelites decided to have a king, it was the Lord who selected Saul.

king

(Heb. *melek*) (10:24; Deut. 17:14) Strong’s #4428

The term *king* may describe a petty ruler of a small city (Josh. 10:3) or a monarch of a vast empire (Esth. 1:1–5). An ancient king’s jurisdiction included the military (8:20), the economy (1 Kin. 10:26–29), international diplomacy (1 Kin. 5:1–11), and the legal system (2 Sam. 8:15). He also functioned as a spiritual leader (2 Kin. 23:1–24), although Israel’s kings were prohibited from some priestly functions (13:9–14). The Bible presents David as an example of the righteous king who set his heart on faithfully serving God (Acts 13:22). God’s promise to give David an everlasting kingdom (2 Sam. 7:16) has been fulfilled in Jesus Christ, whose human ancestry is through the royal family of David (Luke 2:4).

²⁵Then Samuel explained to the people *the behavior of royalty*, and wrote *it* in a book and laid *it* up before the LORD. And Samuel sent all the people away, every man to his house. ²⁶And Saul also went home ^hto Gibeah; and valiant *men* went with him, whose hearts God had touched. ²⁷ⁱBut some ^jrebels said, “How can this man save us?” So they despised him, ^kand brought him no presents. But he ^lheld his peace.

Saul Saves Jabesh Gilead

11 Then ^aNahash the Ammonite came up and ^lencamped against ^bJabesh Gilead; and all the men of Jabesh said to Nahash, ^c“Make a covenant with us, and we will serve you.”

²And Nahash the Ammonite answered them, “On this *condition* I will make a *covenant* with you, that I may put out all your right eyes, and bring ^dreproach on all Israel.”

³Then the elders of Jabesh said to him, “Hold off for seven days, that we may send messengers to all the territory of Israel. And then, if *there is no one* to ²save us, we will come out to you.”

⁴So the messengers came ^eto Gibeah of Saul and told the news in the hearing of the people. And ^fall the people lifted up their voices and wept. ⁵Now there was Saul, coming behind the herd from the field; and Saul said, “What *troubles* the people, that they weep?” And they told him the words of the men of Jabesh. ⁶^gThen the Spirit of God came upon Saul when he heard this news, and his anger

²⁵ ^gDeut. 17:14-20;
1 Sam. 8:11-18
²⁶ ^hJudg. 20:14
²⁷ ⁱ1 Sam. 11:12
^jDeut. 13:13; 1 Sam.
25:17 ^k2 Sam. 8:2;
1 Kin. 4:21; 10:25;
2 Chr. 17:5; Matt.
2:11 ^lkept silent

CHAPTER 11

1 ^a 1 Sam. 12:12
^b Judg. 21:8; 1 Sam.
31:11 ^c Gen. 26:28;
1 Kin. 20:34; Job
41:4; Ezek. 17:13
ⁱ besieged
² ^d Gen. 34:14;
1 Sam. 17:26; Ps.
44:13
³ ² deliver
⁴ ^e 1 Sam. 10:26;
15:34; 2 Sam. 21:6
^f Gen. 27:38; Judg.
2:4; 20:23, 26; 21:2;
1 Sam. 30:4
⁶ ^g Judg. 3:10; 6:34;
11:29; 13:25; 14:6;
1 Sam. 10:10; 16:13

⁷ ^h Judg. 19:29
ⁱ Judg. 21:5, 8, 10
³ Lit. *as one man*
⁸ ^j Judg. 1:5
^k 2 Sam. 24:9
¹ ^l 1 Sam. 31:11
^m Judg. 7:16, 20
¹² ⁿ 1 Sam. 10:27
^o Luke 19:27
¹³ ^p 1 Sam. 10:27;
2 Sam. 19:22 ^q Ex.
14:13, 30; 1 Sam.
19:5

was greatly aroused. ⁷So he took a yoke of oxen and ^hcut them in pieces, and sent *them* throughout all the territory of Israel by the hands of messengers, saying, ⁱ“Whoever does not go out with Saul and Samuel to battle, so it shall be done to his oxen.”

And the fear of the LORD fell on the people, and they came out ³with one consent. ⁸When he numbered them in ^jBezek, the children ^kof Israel were three hundred thousand, and the men of Judah thirty thousand. ⁹And they said to the messengers who came, “Thus you shall say to the men of Jabesh Gilead: ‘Tomorrow, by *the time* the sun is hot, you shall have help.’” Then the messengers came and reported *it* to the men of Jabesh, and they were glad. ¹⁰Therefore the men of Jabesh said, “Tomorrow we will come out to you, and you may do with us whatever seems good to you.”

¹¹So it was, on the next day, that ^lSaul put the people ^min three companies; and they came into the midst of the camp in the morning watch, and killed Ammonites until the heat of the day. And it happened that those who survived were scattered, so that no two of them were left together.

¹²Then the people said to Samuel, ⁿ“Who *is* he who said, ‘Shall Saul reign over us?’ ^oBring the men, that we may put them to death.”

¹³But Saul said, ^p“Not a man shall be put to death this day, for today ^qthe LORD has accomplished salvation in Israel.”

¹⁴Then Samuel said to the people,

10:25 the behavior of royalty: Samuel taught the people what to expect from a king, possibly reviewing his instruction in 8:11–18 and God’s laws for kingship in Deut. 17:14–20.

10:26 Gibeah, located just three miles north of Jerusalem, served as the first capital of the Israelite monarchy.

10:27 Some rebels questioned Saul’s military leadership and refused to honor him with the gifts customarily given a king. But Saul held his peace in order not to provoke the situation.

11:1 Nahash, whose name means “Serpent,” was commander of the Ammonites, descendants of Lot who occupied the fringes of the desert east of the territories of Gad and Manasseh (see Gen. 19:38). **Jabesh Gilead** is the Israelite city of Jabesh, located in the region of Gilead east of the Jordan.

11:2 put out all your right eyes: The condition of surrender demanded by Nahash was not only cruel and humiliating but would have made the Israelite warriors unable to fight.

11:3 The elders of Jabesh Gilead asked for **seven days** in which to find help before conceding defeat. Nahash agreed to the proposal, since he apparently was not prepared to take the city by force and wanted to avoid a long and costly siege.

11:5 Saul, coming behind the herd: Although Saul had been appointed king, he did not assume governmental authority at once. Saul continued farming until he could answer Israel’s expectations of him as king by delivering the Israelites from their enemies (8:20).

11:6 the Spirit of God came upon Saul: The Holy Spirit empowered Saul to deliver the citizens of Jabesh.

11:7 Two **oxen** were customarily yoked together for work. Saul’s call

to arms was accompanied by a threat. His distribution of the pieces of the oxen throughout Israel is reminiscent of the grisly story of Judg. 19:27—20:1. **The fear of the LORD** begins with an awesome awareness of who God is (Prov. 2:5) and ends with a proper response to good and evil (Prov. 16:6).

11:8 Bezek was 13 miles northeast of Shechem, due west of Jabesh Gilead on the other side of the Jordan. The distinction made between **Israel** and **Judah** in the numbering of the warriors (15:4; 17:52) may indicate that the book was either written or edited after the division of the monarchy in 930 B.C.

11:10 The message to Nahash may have been designed to lull the Ammonites into a false sense of security.

11:11 Saul divided his forces into **three companies** so that he could attack at the same time from different directions (see Judg. 7:16). **the morning watch:** The Israelites divided the night into three watches—9 to 12, 12 to 3, and 3 to 6 in the morning (see Ex. 14:24–27; Judg. 7:19; Lam. 2:19). Saul’s attack probably took place at dawn, before the Ammonites had armed themselves for battle.

11:12 Saul’s victory over the Ammonites gave him the support and allegiance of the people of Israel. Some went so far as to suggest that those who had previously questioned his rule should be **put ... to death** (10:27).

11:13 the LORD has accomplished salvation in Israel: Saul recognized that the victory over the Ammonites could be attributed to God alone and refused to heed the suggestion of his overly zealous supporters.

11:14, 15 It was to **Gilgal**, the first Israelite camp west of the Jordan

"Come, let us go ^r to Gilgal and renew the kingdom there." ¹⁵ So all the people went to Gilgal, and there they made Saul king ^s before the LORD in Gilgal. ^t There they made sacrifices of peace offerings before the LORD, and there Saul and all the men of Israel rejoiced greatly.

Samuel's Address at Saul's Coronation

12 Now Samuel said to all Israel: "Indeed I have ¹ heeded ^a your voice in all that you said to me, and ^b have made a king over you. ² And now here is the king, ^c walking before you; ^d and I am old and grayheaded, and look, my sons *are* with you. I have walked before you from my childhood to this day. ³ Here I am. Witness against me before the LORD and before ^e His anointed: ^f Whose ox have I taken, or whose donkey have I taken, or whom have I cheated? Whom have I oppressed, or from whose hand have I received *any* ^g bribe with which to ^h blind my eyes? I will restore *it* to you."

⁴ And they said, ⁱ "You have not cheated us or oppressed us, nor have you taken anything from any man's hand."

⁵ Then he said to them, "The LORD *is* witness against you, and His anointed *is* witness this day, ^j that you have not found anything ^k in my hand."

And they answered, "He *is* witness."

⁶ Then Samuel said to the people, ^l "It *is* the LORD who raised up Moses and Aaron, and who brought your fathers up from the land of Egypt. ⁷ Now therefore, stand still, that I may ^m reason with you before the LORD concerning all the ⁿ righteous acts of the LORD which He did to you and your fathers: ⁸ ^o When Jacob had gone into ² Egypt, and your fathers ^p cried out to the LORD, then the LORD ^q sent Mo-

14 ^r 1 Sam. 7:16; 10:8
15 ^s 1 Sam. 10:17
^t Josh. 8:31; 1 Sam. 10:8

CHAPTER 12

1 ^a 1 Sam. 8:5, 7, 9, 20, 22 ^b 1 Sam. 10:24; 11:14, 15
¹ listened to
2 ^c Num. 27:17; 1 Sam. 8:20
^d 1 Sam. 8:1, 5
3 ^e 1 Sam. 10:1; 24:6; 2 Sam. 1:14, 16
^f Num. 16:15; Acts 20:33; 1 Thess. 2:5
^g Ex. 23:8 ^h Deut. 16:19
4 ⁱ Lev. 19:13
5 ^j John 18:38; Acts 23:9; 24:20 ^k Ex. 22:4
6 ^l Ex. 6:26; Mic. 6:4
7 ^m Is. 1:18; Ezek. 20:35; Mic. 6:1-5
ⁿ Judg. 5:11; Ps. 103:6
8 ^o Gen. 46:5, 6; Ps. 105:23 ^p Ex. 2:23-25
^q Ex. 3:10; 4:14-16
^r So with MT, Tg., Vg.; LXX adds *and the Egyptians afflicted them*
9 ^s Deut. 32:18; Judg. 3:7 ^t Judg. 4:2
^u Judg. 3:31; 10:7; 13:1 ^v Judg. 3:12-30
10 ^v Judg. 10:10
^w Judg. 2:13; 3:7 ^x Images of Canaanite goddesses
11 ^x Judg. 11:1
^y 1 Sam. 7:13
^z Gideon, cf. Judg. 6:25-32; Syr. *Deborah*; Tg. *Gideon*
³ LXX, Syr. *Barak*; Tg. *Simson* ⁶ Syr. *Simson*
12 ^z 1 Sam. 11:1, 2
^a 1 Sam. 8:5, 19, 20
^b Judg. 8:23;
1 Sam. 8:7; Ps. 59:13
13 ^c 1 Sam. 10:24
^d 1 Sam. 8:5;

ses and Aaron, who brought your fathers out of Egypt and made them dwell in this place. ⁹ And when they ^r forgot the LORD their God, He sold them into the hand of ^s Sisera, commander of the army of Hazor, into the hand of the ^t Philistines, and into the hand of the king of ^u Moab; and they fought against them. ¹⁰ Then they cried out to the LORD, and said, ^v "We have sinned, because we have forsaken the LORD ^w and served the Baals and ^x Ashtoreths; but now deliver us from the hand of our enemies, and we will serve You." ¹¹ And the LORD sent ^y Jerubbaal, ^z Bedan, ^x Jephthah, and ^y Samuel, ⁶ and delivered you out of the hand of your enemies on every side; and you dwelt in safety. ¹² And when you saw that ^z Nahash king of the Ammonites came against you, ^a you said to me, 'No, but a king shall reign over us,' when ^b the LORD your God *was* your king.

¹³ "Now therefore, ^c here is the king ^d whom you have chosen *and* whom you have desired. And take note, ^e the LORD has set a king over you. ¹⁴ If you ^f fear the LORD and serve Him and obey His voice, and do not rebel against the commandment of the LORD, then both you and the king who reigns over you will continue following the LORD your God. ¹⁵ However, if you do ^g not obey the voice of the LORD, but ^h rebel against the commandment of the LORD, then the hand of the LORD will be against you, as *it was* against your fathers.

¹⁶ "Now therefore, ⁱ stand and see this great thing which the LORD will do before your eyes: ¹⁷ *Is* today not the ^j wheat harvest? ^k I will call to the LORD, and He

12:17, 19 ^e Hos. 13:11 14 ^f Josh. 24:14 15 ^g Deut. 28:15 ^h Lev. 26:14, 15; Josh. 24:20; Is. 1:20 16 ⁱ Ex. 14:13, 31 17 ^j Gen. 30:14 ^k Josh. 10:12; 1 Sam. 7:9, 10; [James 5:16-18]

at the time of the conquest (Josh. 5:10), that Samuel called the tribes to **renew the kingdom**. Although the monarchy had been inaugurated at Mizpah, there had been some question there about Saul's qualifications and abilities to lead in battle (10:17-27). As a result of Saul's victory over the Ammonites, the Israelites enthusiastically endorsed his kingship.

12:2 walking before you: Saul was leading Israel and attending to the nation's needs. Samuel referred to the two reasons cited by the elders of Israel in their demand for a king: (1) Samuel's **old age** and (2) his **sons**, who had demonstrated their unworthiness for public office (8:5).

12:3-5 Samuel began his charge to Israel by establishing his own integrity. **before the LORD and before His anointed:** Samuel asked whether anyone wanted to accuse him before God and His anointed king. The Israelites cleared Samuel of any impropriety or injustice in the administration of his duties as judge. Samuel's past record was established to inspire confidence in his present exhortation.

12:7 Righteous acts refers to the benefits that God had bestowed on His people. These acts testified to the righteousness of God in blessing His people by fulfilling His covenant promises.

12:8 Samuel summarized the descent of Jacob's family into Egypt

(Gen. 46), the Egyptian oppression (Ex. 1:8-22), the Exodus from Egypt (Ex. 2-15), and the conquest of Canaan (Josh. 1-12).

12:9 Samuel recounted the nation's apostasy and subsequent divine discipline. **Sisera** was a Canaanite general (Judg. 4:2-22). **Moab:** The Moabites were descendants of the incestuous relationship of Lot and his eldest daughter (Gen. 19:30-37). The Moabite oppression is recorded in Judg. 3:12-30.

12:10 After a period of oppression, the Israelites repented and cried out to the Lord for deliverance. The **Baals** and **Ashtoreths** were Canaanite fertility deities (7:3, 4).

12:11 Jerubbaal, also known as Gideon, delivered Israel from the Midianites (see Judg. 6-8). **Jephthah** defeated the Ammonites (see Judg. 11).

12:12 The threat of **Nahash** was probably felt long before the threatened attack of Jabesh Gilead (11:1-3) and was probably a factor in Israel's request for a king (8:20).

12:14 The **fear of the LORD** is not merely a pious attitude but a serious and obedient response to the revelation of God's holy character. **12:15** The consequences for disobeying God's covenant are outlined in Deut. 28:15-68.

12:17, 18 The season for **wheat harvest** in Israel is the months of

will send thunder and ^lrain, that you may perceive and see that ^myour wickedness is great, which you have done in the sight of the LORD, in asking a king for yourselves.”

¹⁸ So Samuel called to the LORD, and the LORD sent thunder and rain that day; and ⁿall the people greatly feared the LORD and Samuel.

¹⁹ And all the people said to Samuel, ^o“Pray for your servants to the LORD your God, that we may not die; for we have added to all our sins the evil of asking a king for ourselves.”

²⁰ Then Samuel said to the people, “Do not fear. You have done all this wickedness; ^pyet do not turn aside from following the LORD, but serve the LORD with all your heart. ²¹ And ^qdo not turn aside; ^rfor *then you would go* after empty things which cannot profit or deliver, for they *are* nothing. ²² For ^sthe LORD will not forsake ^tHis people, ^ufor His great name’s sake, because ^vit has pleased the LORD to make you His people. ²³ Moreover, as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the LORD ^win ceasing to pray for you; but ^xI will teach you the ^ygood and the right way. ²⁴ ^zOnly fear the LORD, and serve Him in truth with all your heart; for ^aconsider what ^bgreat things He has done for you. ²⁵ But if you still do wickedly, ^cyou shall be swept away, ^dboth you and your king.”

Saul's Unlawful Sacrifice

13 Saul ¹reigned one year; and when he had reigned two years over Is-

¹⁷ ^l Ezra 10:9
^m 1 Sam. 8:7
¹⁸ ⁿ Ex. 14:31
¹⁹ ^o Ex. 9:28; 1 Sam. 7:8; [James 5:15; 1 John 5:16]
²⁰ ^p Deut. 11:16
²¹ ^q 2 Chr. 25:15
^r Is. 41:29; Jer. 16:19; Hab. 2:18; 1 Cor. 8:4
²² ^s Deut. 31:6; 1 Kin. 6:13 ^t Is. 43:21 ^u Ex. 32:12; Num. 14:13; Josh. 7:9; Ps. 106:8; Jer. 14:21 ^v Deut. 7:6-11; 1 Pet. 2:9
²³ ^w Acts 12:5; Rom. 1:9; Col. 1:9; 2 Tim. 1:3 ^x Ps. 34:11; Prov. 4:11
^y 1 Kin. 8:36
²⁴ ^z Eccl. 12:13 ^a Is. 5:12 ^b Deut. 10:21
²⁵ ^c Josh. 24:20
^d Deut. 28:36

CHAPTER 13

¹ ^l Heb. is difficult; cf. 2 Sam. 5:4; 2 Kin. 14:2; see also 2 Sam. 2:10; Acts 13:21
² ^a 1 Sam. 14:5; 31 ^b 1 Sam. 14:1
^c 1 Sam. 10:26
³ ^d 1 Sam. 10:5
^e 2 Sam. 5:25
⁴ ^z ^{odious}
⁵ ⁱ Judg. 7:12
⁹ Josh. 7:2; 1 Sam. 14:23 ³ So with MT, LXX, Tg., Vg.; Syr. and some mss. of LXX *three thousand*
⁶ ^h Judg. 6:2; 1 Sam. 14:11
⁷ ⁱ Num. 32:1-42

rael, ² Saul chose for himself three thousand ^{men} of Israel. Two thousand were with Saul in ^aMichmash and in the mountains of Bethel, and a thousand were with ^bJonathan in ^cGibeah of Benjamin. The rest of the people he sent away, every man to his tent.

³ And Jonathan attacked ^dthe garrison of the Philistines that *was* in ^eGeba, and the Philistines heard *of it*. Then Saul blew the trumpet throughout all the land, saying, “Let the Hebrews hear!” ⁴ Now all Israel heard it said *that* Saul had attacked a garrison of the Philistines, and *that* Israel had also become ²an abomination to the Philistines. And the people were called together to Saul at Gilgal.

⁵ Then the Philistines gathered together to fight with Israel, ³thirty thousand chariots and six thousand horsemen, and people ^fas the sand which *is* on the seashore in multitude. And they came up and encamped in Michmash, to the east of ^gBeth Aven. ⁶ When the men of Israel saw that they were in danger (for the people were distressed), then the people ^hhid in caves, in thickets, in rocks, in holes, and in pits. ⁷ And *some of* the Hebrews crossed over the Jordan to the ⁱland of Gad and Gilead.

As for Saul, he *was* still in Gilgal, and all the people followed him trembling. ⁸ Then he waited seven days, according to the time set by Samuel. But Samuel did not come to Gilgal; and the people were

8 / 1 Sam. 10:8

May and June. **send thunder and rain:** The land of Israel receives its rainfall during the winter season. For rain to fall during the wheat harvest would be most unusual. The miracle was intended to convince the people of their great **wickedness** in demanding a king. The miracle also served to enhance Israel’s respect for both **the LORD and Samuel**.

12:20 Do not fear: By this Samuel meant, “Do not fear the death penalty for disobedience.”

12:21 Empty things refers to false gods and idols (see Is. 44:9–20).

12:22 His great name’s sake: In ancient times, one’s name stood for one’s character. The name of God speaks of His reputation and attributes. For God to abandon His people would be inconsistent with His reputation for faithfulness (see Ex. 34:6; Deut. 31:6; Josh. 1:5; Heb. 13:5).

12:23 Samuel assured the people that he would not forget to **pray** for them. For Samuel, a lack of prayer was a moral compromise, a sin. In fact, his life illustrates the importance of prayer (7:5; see 1 Thess. 5:17; James 5:16).

12:25 The words **swept away** anticipate God’s ultimate judgment of captivity and exile from the land (Deut. 28:41, 63, 64).

13:1 one year . . . two years: This verse provides a chronological note recording the date of this encounter with the Philistines relative to Saul’s reign as king. Since Acts 13:21 reveals that Saul ruled over Israel 40 years, the two years must refer to the period of reign up to a particular event—likely Saul’s encounter with the Philistines described in this chapter.

13:2 Although Saul had raised a citizen militia to rescue Jabesh Gilead (11:7–9), here he selected and trained a regular, standing army. **Michmash** was seven miles north of Jerusalem. **Gibeah of Benjamin** was four miles southeast of Michmash.

13:3 While Saul was in Michmash, his son Jonathan attacked the Philistine garrison at **Geba**, about a mile southwest of Michmash. The two sites are separated by a deep ravine. The **trumpet** was a ram’s horn used to signal and summon the military. **Hebrews** refers to the Israelites. The name may be connected with the name Eber, the ancestor of Abraham (Gen. 10:24), or it may be related to the Hebrew verb meaning “to cross over,” since Abraham “crossed over” to the land of Canaan.

13:4 Saul had attacked: Either Jonathan had been acting under Saul’s orders or Saul took credit for his son’s victory. Saul withdrew his army to **Gilgal** in keeping with Samuel’s instructions to him at his anointing (10:8).

13:5 Beth Aven was about a half mile west of Michmash.

13:6 the people hid in caves: The limestone of the hill country region contains many natural caves which could be used as hideouts in time of attack.

13:7 The land of Gad and Gilead refers to the region south and north of the River Jabbok, which flows into the Jordan from the east. **Gilgal**, located northeast of Jericho in the Jordan valley, was the appointed place of Saul’s meeting with Samuel (v. 8).

13:8, 9 Waited seven days refers to the instruction given to Saul by Samuel after his anointing (10:8). Samuel had told Saul to wait seven days at **Gilgal** until Samuel came to offer sacrifices. Concerned that the people were losing courage and starting to scatter, Saul assumed priestly prerogatives and offered the **burnt offering** himself (see Lev. 1). With this action, Saul tragically disobeyed both the law of Moses and the instructions of God’s prophet.

scattered from him. ⁹ So Saul said, “Bring a burnt offering and peace offerings here to me.” And he offered the burnt offering. ¹⁰ Now it happened, as soon as he had finished presenting the burnt offering, that Samuel came; and Saul went out to meet him, that he might ⁴ greet him.

¹¹ And Samuel said, “What have you done?”

Saul said, “When I saw that the people were scattered from me, and *that* you did not come within the days appointed, and *that* the Philistines gathered together at Michmash, ¹² then I said, ‘The Philistines will now come down on me at Gilgal, and I have not made supplication to the LORD.’ Therefore I felt compelled, and offered a burnt offering.”

¹³ And Samuel said to Saul, ^k “You have done foolishly. ^l You have not kept the commandment of the LORD your God, which He commanded you. For now the LORD would have established your kingdom over Israel forever. ^{14 m} But now your kingdom shall not continue. ⁿ The LORD has sought for Himself a man ^o after His own heart, and the LORD has commanded him *to be* commander over His people, because you have ^p not kept what the LORD commanded you.”

¹⁵ Then Samuel arose and went up from Gilgal to Gibeah of ⁵ Benjamin. And Saul numbered the people present with him, ^q about six hundred men.

No Weapons for the Army

¹⁶ Saul, Jonathan his son, and the people present with them remained in ⁶ Gibeah of Benjamin. But the Philistines encamped in Michmash. ¹⁷ Then raiders came out of the camp of the Philistines

¹⁰ ⁴ Lit. *bless him*
¹³ ^k 2 Chr. 16:9
^l 1 Sam. 15:11, 22, 28
¹⁴ ^m 1 Sam. 15:28;
 31:6 ⁿ 1 Sam. 16:1
^o Ps. 89:20; Acts
 7:46; 13:22 ^p 1 Sam.
 15:11, 19
¹⁵ ^q 1 Sam. 13:2,
 6, 7; 14:2 ⁵ So with
 MT, Tg.; LXX, Vg.
 add *And the rest*
of the people went
up after Saul to
meet the people
who fought against
them, going from
Gilgal to Gibeah in
the hill of Benjamin.
¹⁶ ⁶ Heb. *Geba*

¹⁷ ^r Josh. 18:23
¹⁸ ^s Josh. 16:3;
 18:13, 14 ^t Gen.
 14:2; Neh. 11:34
¹⁹ ^u Judg. 5:8;
 2 Kin. 24:14; Jer.
 24:1; 29:2
²¹ ⁷ About two-
 thirds shekel
 weight
²² ^v Judg. 5:8
²³ ^w 1 Sam. 14:1, 4

CHAPTER 14

¹ ¹ *carried*
² ^a 1 Sam. 13:15, 16
³ ^b 1 Sam. 22:9, 11,
 20 ^c 1 Sam. 4:21
^d 1 Sam. 2:28

in three companies. One company turned onto the road to ^r Ophrah, to the land of Shual, ¹⁸ another company turned to the road to ^s Beth Horon, and another company turned to the road of the border that overlooks the Valley of ^t Zeboim toward the wilderness.

¹⁹ Now ^u there was no blacksmith to be found throughout all the land of Israel, for the Philistines said, “Lest the Hebrews make swords or spears.” ²⁰ But all the Israelites would go down to the Philistines to sharpen each man’s plowshare, his mattock, his ax, and his sickle; ²¹ and the charge for a sharpening was a ⁷ pim for the plowshares, the mattocks, the forks, and the axes, and to set the points of the goads. ²² So it came about, on the day of battle, that ^v there was neither sword nor spear found in the hand of any of the people who *were* with Saul and Jonathan. But they were found with Saul and Jonathan his son.

^{23 w} And the garrison of the Philistines went out to the pass of Michmash.

Jonathan Defeats the Philistines

¹⁴ Now it happened one day that Jonathan the son of Saul said to the young man who ¹ bore his armor, “Come, let us go over to the Philistines’ garrison that is on the other side.” But he did not tell his father. ² And Saul was sitting in the outskirts of ^a Gibeah under a pomegranate tree which is in Migron. The people who *were* with him *were* about six hundred men. ^{3 b} Ahijah the son of Ahitub, ^c Ichabod’s brother, the son of Phinehas, the son of Eli, the LORD’s priest in Shiloh, was ^d wearing an ephod. But the people did not know that Jonathan had gone.

13:10–12 as soon as he had finished: Samuel’s delay may have been intended as a test of Saul’s obedience. Saul cited four justifications for his disobedience: (1) the soldiers were scattering; (2) Samuel had not come as promised; (3) the Philistines were gathering their forces at Michmash; and (4) there was imminent danger of Philistine attack.

13:13 Saul’s principal sin was failing to keep **the commandment** God had given through Samuel (10:8).

13:14 your kingdom shall not continue: Although Saul would retain his throne, his descendants would not carry on his dynasty. **A man after His own heart** is God’s description of David, a man with many faults, but a man whose spirit was sensitive to God’s will.

13:15 Saul’s army had dwindled from three thousand (v. 2) to only **six hundred men**.

13:17 The Philistines sent their raiders to harass the Israelites in the hopes of weakening Israelite resolve or of forcing a decisive engagement. **Ophrah** was located about seven miles north of Michmash.

13:18 The twin towns of **Beth Horon** (Upper and Lower) were located west of Geba, about two miles apart on a ridge guarding the approach to the hill country from the coastal plain.

13:19 no blacksmith: The Canaanites and Philistines learned how to forge iron from the Hittites. Although they were not great in numerical strength, the Philistines were able to dominate Israel. By the

end of David’s reign, the Israelites also had acquired iron technology (see 1 Chr. 22:3).

13:20 Sharpen may also be translated “forge.” The **plowshare** is the metal part of the plow that penetrates and breaks up the soil. A **mattock** is like a pickaxe but has blades instead of points. It is used for digging and breaking up soil that cannot be reached by a plow.

13:21 The **pim** was approximately two-thirds of a shekel. Based on what is known of ancient Israel’s economy, the charge was exorbitant. **The points of the goads** refers to the sharp ends of prods used to direct cattle. The Israelites did not have the resources to forge iron implements for agriculture, much less for warfare.

13:22 The weapons available to the Israelite soldiers would have included slings, bows and arrows, and numerous instruments made of bronze.

13:23 The pass of Michmash is the deep gorge that separated Michmash and Geba.

14:1 he did not tell his father: Saul would have thought Jonathan’s plan was reckless.

14:2 Gibeah, Saul’s home, was about three miles southwest of Geba, where Jonathan was camped at the Philistine garrison he had captured (13:3, 16). **Migron** was located near Gibeah.

14:3 The genealogy of **Ahijah**, the high priest and descendant of **Eli**, is given in full. His name means “My Brother Is the LORD.”

⁴Between the passes, by which Jonathan sought to go over ^eto the Philistines' garrison, *there was a sharp rock* on one side and a sharp rock on the other side. And the name of one *was Bozez*, and the name of the other *Senah*. ⁵The front of one faced northward opposite Michmash, and the other southward opposite Gibeah.

⁶Then Jonathan said to the young man who bore his armor, "Come, let us go over to the garrison of these ^funcircumcised; it may be that the LORD will work for us. For nothing restrains the LORD ^gfrom saving by many or by few."

⁷So his armorbearer said to him, "Do all that is in your heart. Go then; here I am with you, according to your heart."

⁸Then Jonathan said, "Very well, let us cross over to *these men*, and we will show ourselves to them. ⁹If they say thus to us, 'Wait until we come to you,' then we will stand still in our place and not go up to them. ¹⁰But if they say thus, 'Come up to us,' then we will go up. For the LORD has delivered them into our hand, and ^hthis will be a sign to us."

¹¹So both of them showed themselves to the garrison of the Philistines. And the Philistines said, "Look, the Hebrews are coming out of the holes where they have ⁱhidden." ¹²Then the men of the garrison called to Jonathan and his armorbearer, and said, "Come up to us, and we will ²show you something."

Jonathan said to his armorbearer, "Come up after me, for the LORD has delivered them into the hand of Israel." ¹³And Jonathan climbed up on his hands and knees with his armorbearer after him; and they ^jfell before Jonathan. And as he came after him, his armorbearer killed them. ¹⁴That first slaughter which Jonathan and his armorbearer made was about twenty men within about ³half an acre of land.

⁴ ^e 1 Sam. 13:23
⁶ ^f 1 Sam. 17:26, 36;
Jer. 9:25, 26 ^g Judg.
7:4, 7; 1 Sam. 17:46,
47; 2 Chr. 14:11; [Ps.
115:3; 135:6; Zech.
4:6; Matt. 19:26;
Rom. 8:31]
¹⁰ ^h Gen. 24:14;
Judg. 6:36-40
¹¹ ⁱ 1 Sam. 13:6;
14:22
¹² ^j *teach*
¹³ ^k Lev. 26:8; Josh.
23:10
¹⁴ ³ Lit. *half the*
area plowed by a
yoke of oxen in
a day

¹⁵ ^k Deut. 28:7;
2 Kin. 7:6, 7; Job
18:11 ^l 1 Sam. 13:17
^m Gen. 35:5 ⁴ *terror*
¹⁶ ⁿ 1 Sam. 14:20
¹⁸ ⁵ So with MT,
Tg., Vg.; LXX *ephod*
¹⁹ ^o Num. 27:21
²⁰ ^p Judg. 7:22;
2 Chr. 20:23
²² ^q 1 Sam. 13:6
²³ ^r Ex. 14:30; 2 Chr.
32:22; Hos. 1:7
³¹ 1 Sam. 13:5
²⁴ ^t Josh. 6:26

¹⁵And ^kthere was ⁴trembling in the camp, in the field, and among all the people. The garrison and ^lthe raiders also trembled; and the earth quaked, so that it was ^ma very great trembling. ¹⁶Now the watchmen of Saul in Gibeah of Benjamin looked, and *there was the multitude*, melting away; and they ⁿwent here and there. ¹⁷Then Saul said to the people who *were* with him, "Now call the roll and see who has gone from us." And when they had called the roll, surprisingly, Jonathan and his armorbearer *were not there*. ¹⁸And Saul said to Ahijah, "Bring the ⁵ark of God here" (for at that time the ⁵ark of God was with the children of Israel). ¹⁹Now it happened, while Saul ^otalked to the priest, that the noise which *was* in the camp of the Philistines continued to increase; so Saul said to the priest, "Withdraw your hand." ²⁰Then Saul and all the people who *were* with him assembled, and they went to the battle; and indeed ^pevery man's sword was against his neighbor, and *there was very great confusion*. ²¹Moreover the Hebrews *who were* with the Philistines before that time, who went up with them into the camp *from the surrounding country*, they also joined the Israelites who *were* with Saul and Jonathan. ²²Likewise all the men of Israel who ^qhad hidden in the mountains of Ephraim, *when they heard* that the Philistines fled, they also followed hard after them in the battle. ²³So the LORD saved Israel that day, and the battle shifted ^sto Beth Aven.

Saul's Rash Oath

²⁴And the men of Israel were distressed that day, for Saul had ^tplaced the people under oath, saying, "Cursed *is* the man who eats *any* food until evening, before I have taken vengeance on my enemies." So none of the people tasted

14:6 The term **uncircumcised** was an Israelite designation for the Gentiles, who did not share the distinctive mark of God's people under the old covenant (see Gen. 17:10-14).

14:9-12 The assault of Jonathan and his armorbearer on Michmash was an act of faith, not a foolhardy adventure. The response of the Philistines, **come up to us**, was taken as a sign that God was leading and would grant them victory. The taunting words of the Philistines were turned into a challenge for the young men to display faith in God.

14:14 about half an acre: The Hebrew text reads "half a yoke of land." A yoke of land was the area a pair of oxen could plow in one day.

14:15 The defeat of the garrison at Michmash left the Philistines in a state of panic. **The earth quaked** may refer to an actual earthquake, which added to the panic and confusion of the Philistines, or it may be a way of saying that the Philistines were shaking from fear.

14:17 call the roll: Saul had to have the troops mustered before he realized that his own son was not present.

14:18, 19 Bring the ark of God here: According to 7:2, the ark

at this time was at Kirjath Jearim. There is no mention of its being moved before it was brought to Jerusalem by David. The ancient Greek translation of 1 Samuel reads "ephod," and this may be what is meant. The Urim and Thummim were kept in the breastplate of the ephod and were used to determine the will of God (see Ex. 28:30; Num. 27:21; 1 Sam. 23:9-12). Furthermore, Ahijah was present and wearing the ephod (v. 3). **Withdraw your hand:** A disturbance in the Philistine camp distracted Saul from his consultation with **the priest** (that is, Ahijah), and he canceled the inquiry.

14:20 against his neighbor: There was such confusion in the Philistine camp that it was hard to tell friend from foe.

14:21 The Hebrews who were with the Philistines were deserters or mercenaries.

14:22 The mountains of Ephraim refers to the mountainous region occupied by the tribe of Ephraim, just north of Benjaminite territory.

14:24 Cursed is the man: Saul foolishly ordered that none of his soldiers should eat until he had **taken vengeance** on his **enemies**. Unlike Jonathan, he did not view the battle as the Lord's (v. 12).

food. ²⁵ Now all *the people* of the land came to a forest; and there was ^vhoney on the ground. ²⁶ And when the people had come into the woods, there was the honey, dripping; but no one put his hand to his mouth, for the people feared the oath. ²⁷ But Jonathan had not heard his father charge the people with the oath; therefore he stretched out the end of the rod that *was* in his hand and dipped it in a honeycomb, and put his hand to his mouth; and his ⁶countenance brightened. ²⁸ Then one of the people said, “Your father strictly charged the people with an oath, saying, ‘Cursed *is* the man who eats food this day.’” And the people were faint.

²⁹ But Jonathan said, “My father has troubled the land. Look now, how my countenance has brightened because I tasted a little of this honey. ³⁰ How much better if the people had eaten freely today of the spoil of their enemies which they found! For now would there not have been a much greater slaughter among the Philistines?”

³¹ Now they had ⁷driven back the Philistines that day from Michmash to Ajialon. So the people were very faint. ³² And the people rushed on the ⁸spoil, and took sheep, oxen, and calves, and slaughtered *them* on the ground; and the people ate *them* ^wwith the blood. ³³ Then they told Saul, saying, “Look, the people are sinning against the LORD by eating with the blood!”

So he said, “You have dealt treacherously; roll a large stone to me this day.” ³⁴ Then Saul said, “Disperse yourselves among the people, and say to them, ‘Bring me here every man’s ox and every man’s sheep, slaughter *them* here, and eat; and do not sin against the LORD by eating with the blood.’” So every one of the people brought his ox with him that night, and slaughtered *it* there. ³⁵ Then Saul ^xbuilt an altar to the LORD. This was the first altar that he built to the LORD.

³⁶ Now Saul said, “Let us go down after the Philistines by night, and plunder

²⁵ ^v Deut. 9:28; Matt. 3:5 ^v Ex. 3:8; Num. 13:27; Matt. 3:4
²⁷ ⁶ Lit. eyes
³¹ ⁷ Lit. struck
³² ^w Gen. 9:4; Lev. 3:17; 17:10-14; 19:26; Deut. 12:16, 23, 24; Acts 15:20
⁸ plunder
³⁵ ^x 1 Sam. 7:12, 17; 2 Sam. 24:25

³⁷ ^v Judg. 20:18
^z 1 Sam. 28:6
³⁸ ^a Josh. 7:14; 1 Sam. 10:19
³⁹ ^b 1 Sam. 14:24, 44; 2 Sam. 12:5
⁴¹ ^c Prov. 16:33; Acts 1:24-26 ^d Josh. 7:16; 1 Sam. 10:20, 21 ^e So with MT, Tg.; LXX, Vg. *Why do You not answer Your servant today? If the injustice is with me or Jonathan my son, O LORD God of Israel, give proof; and if You say it is with Your people Israel, give holiness.*
⁴³ ^e Josh. 7:19
^f 1 Sam. 14:27
⁴⁴ ^g Ruth 1:17; 1 Sam. 25:22
^h 1 Sam. 14:39
⁴⁵ ⁱ 2 Sam. 14:11; 1 Kin. 1:52; Luke 21:18; Acts 27:34
^j [2 Cor. 6:1; Phil. 2:12, 13]

them until the morning light; and let us not leave a man of them.”

And they said, “Do whatever seems good to you.”

Then the priest said, “Let us draw near to God here.”

³⁷ So Saul ^yasked counsel of God, “Shall I go down after the Philistines? Will You deliver them into the hand of Israel?” But ^zHe did not answer him that day. ³⁸ And Saul said, ^a “Come over here, all you chiefs of the people, and know and see what this sin was today. ³⁹ For ^bas the LORD lives, who saves Israel, though it be in Jonathan my son, he shall surely die.” But not a man among all the people answered him. ⁴⁰ Then he said to all Israel, “You be on one side, and my son Jonathan and I will be on the other side.”

And the people said to Saul, “Do what seems good to you.”

⁴¹ Therefore Saul said to the LORD God of Israel, ^c “Give ^g a perfect *lot*.” ^d So Saul and Jonathan were taken, but the people escaped. ⁴² And Saul said, “Cast *lots* between my son Jonathan and me.” So Jonathan was taken. ⁴³ Then Saul said to Jonathan, ^e “Tell me what you have done.”

And Jonathan told him, and said, ^f “I only tasted a little honey with the end of the rod that *was* in my hand. So now I must die!”

⁴⁴ Saul answered, ^g “God do so and more also; ^h for you shall surely die, Jonathan.”

⁴⁵ But the people said to Saul, “Shall Jonathan die, who has accomplished this great deliverance in Israel? Certainly not! ⁱ As the LORD lives, not one hair of his head shall fall to the ground, for he has worked ^j with God this day.” So the people rescued Jonathan, and he did not die.

⁴⁶ Then Saul returned from pursuing the Philistines, and the Philistines went to their own place.

Saul's Continuing Wars

⁴⁷ So Saul established his sovereignty over Israel, and fought against all his enemies on every side, against Moab, against

14:25 The bees had produced so much **honey** that it had flowed from their combs in the trees to the **ground**.

14:27 Due to his absence (vv. 1–17), Jonathan had not heard his father’s oath. He did what any reasonable soldier would do and helped himself to some honey as he pursued the Philistines.

14:31 **Ajialon** was located at the edge of the Philistine coastal plain, about 18 miles west of Michmash.

14:32 **ate them with the blood**: The Israelite soldiers began to eat the captured Philistine livestock without first draining the blood, in violation of God’s law (Lev. 17:10–14).

14:33, 34 **roll a large stone**: Saul realized the serious nature of the offense and had a stone table set up to slaughter the animals and drain the blood properly.

14:35 **Saul built an altar** to thank God for his victory over the Philistines.

14:36–38 **Let us draw near to God**: Saul was anxious to finish off the Philistines but decided to ask for God’s counsel about it. God’s silence was taken by Saul as an evidence of sin in the camp.

14:39 **he shall surely die**: This was Saul’s second foolish oath (v. 24).

14:46 **their own place**: As a result of Israel’s victory, the Philistines left the hill country and returned to their settlements on the coastal plain.

14:47 **Moab** and **Ammon**, descendants of Lot (Gen. 19:30–38), occupied regions east of the Jordan and the Dead Sea. **Edom**, descendants of Esau (Gen. 36:8), occupied a region southeast of the

the people of ^kAmmon, against Edom, against the kings of ^lZobah, and against the Philistines. Wherever he turned, he ^lharassed them. ⁴⁸And he gathered an army and ^mattacked ² the Amalekites, and delivered Israel from the hands of those who plundered them.

⁴⁹ⁿThe sons of Saul were Jonathan, ³Jishui, and Malchishua. And the names of his two daughters were these: the name of the firstborn Merab, and the name of the younger ^oMichal. ⁵⁰The name of Saul's wife was Ahinoam the daughter of Ahimaaz. And the name of the commander of his army was Abner the son of Ner, Saul's ^puncle. ⁵¹^qKish was the father of Saul, and Ner the father of Abner was the son of Abiel.

⁵²Now there was fierce war with the Philistines all the days of Saul. And when Saul saw any strong man or any valiant man, ^rhe took him for himself.

Saul Spares King Agag

15 Samuel also said to Saul, ^a“The LORD sent me to anoint you king over His people, over Israel. Now therefore, heed the voice of the words of the LORD. ²Thus says the LORD of hosts: ‘I will punish Amalek for what he did to Israel, ^bhow he ambushed him on the way when he came up from Egypt. ³Now go and ^cattack ¹ Amalek, and ^dutterly destroy all that they have, and do not spare them. But kill both man and woman, infant and nursing child, ox and sheep, camel and donkey.’”

⁴⁷ ^k 1 Sam. 11:1-13
² 2 Sam. 10:6 ^l LXX,
 Vg. prospered
⁴⁸ ^m Ex. 17:16;
 1 Sam. 15:3-7 ² Lit.
 struck
⁴⁹ ⁿ 1 Sam. 31:2;
 1 Chr. 8:33 ^o 1 Sam.
 18:17-20, 27; 19:12
³ Abinadab, 1 Chr.
 8:33; 9:39
⁵⁰ ^p 1 Sam. 10:14
⁵¹ ^q 1 Sam. 9:1, 21
⁵² ^r 1 Sam. 8:11

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¹ ^a 1 Sam. 9:16; 10:1
² ^b Ex. 17:8, 14;
 Num. 24:20; Deut.
 25:17-19
³ ^c Deut. 25:19
^d Lev. 27:28, 29;
 Num. 24:20; Deut.
 20:16-18; Josh. 6:17-
 21 ¹ Lit. strike
⁶ ^e Num. 24:21;
 Judg. 1:16; 4:11-22;
 1 Chr. 2:55 ^f Gen.
 18:25; 19:12, 14;
 Rev. 18:4 ^g Ex.
 18:10, 19; Num.
 10:29, 32
⁷ ^h 1 Sam. 14:48
ⁱ Gen. 2:11; 25:17,
 18 ^j Gen. 16:7; Ex.
 15:22; 1 Sam. 27:8
⁸ ^k 1 Sam. 15:32, 33
¹ ^l 1 Sam. 27:8, 9
⁹ ^m 1 Sam. 15:3, 15, 19
¹¹ ⁿ Gen. 6:6,
 7; 1 Sam. 15:35;
 2 Sam. 24:16 ^o Josh.
 22:16; 1 Kin. 9:6
^p 1 Sam. 13:13; 15:3,
 9 ^q 1 Sam. 15:35; 16:1
¹² ^r Josh. 15:55;
 1 Sam. 25:2

⁴So Saul gathered the people together and numbered them in Telaim, two hundred thousand foot soldiers and ten thousand men of Judah. ⁵And Saul came to a city of Amalek, and lay in wait in the valley.

⁶Then Saul said to ^ethe Kenites, ^f“Go, depart, get down from among the Amalekites, lest I destroy you with them. For ^gyou showed kindness to all the children of Israel when they came up out of Egypt.” So the Kenites departed from among the Amalekites. ⁷^hAnd Saul attacked the Amalekites, from ⁱHavilah all the way to ^jShur, which is east of Egypt. ⁸^kHe also took Agag king of the Amalekites alive, and ^lutterly destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword. ⁹But Saul and the people ^mspared Agag and the best of the sheep, the oxen, the fatlings, the lambs, and all that was good, and were unwilling to utterly destroy them. But everything despised and worthless, that they utterly destroyed.

Saul Rejected as King

¹⁰Now the word of the LORD came to Samuel, saying, ¹¹ⁿ“I greatly regret that I have set up Saul as king, for he has ^oturned back from following Me, ^pand has not performed My commandments.” And it ^qgrieved Samuel, and he cried out to the LORD all night. ¹²So when Samuel rose early in the morning to meet Saul, it was told Samuel, saying, “Saul went to ^rCarmel, and indeed, he set up a mon-

Dead Sea. **Zobah** was the Aramean kingdom in the Bekah Valley. The **Philistines** occupied the coastal plain west of the hill country.

14:48 The victory over the **Amalekites**, nomadic desert tribesmen who lived south of the hill country, is recorded in 15:1-9.

14:49 In 1 Sam. 31:2 and 1 Chr. 8:33, the names of Saul's four sons are given as Jonathan, Abinadab, Malchishua, and Esh-Baal (Ishbosheth in 2 Sam. 2:8). **Jishui** is probably a second name for Abinadab.

14:50 **Ahinoam** means “My Brother Is Pleasant.”

15:1 **The LORD sent me:** Samuel referred to his part in Saul's appointment to add weight and authority to the command that he was about to give.

utterly destroyed

(Heb. *charam*) (15:9; Ex. 22:20; Deut. 13:15; Josh. 6:18) Strong's #2763

In the ancient world, anything sacred or defiled was considered inappropriate for common use. This Hebrew verb refers to the “setting apart” of inappropriate things, usually because of defilement associated with idol worship. According to Deut. 13:12-15, Israel was to destroy everyone and everything that was wicked enough to be considered defiled. Violation of this command cost Achan his life (Josh. 7) and Saul his throne (15:9-11). Paul reminds us that we are all wicked, and as a result are defiled and deserve destruction. Yet God in His mercy has chosen to save those who place their trust in Jesus (Rom. 3:10-26).

15:2 The Amalekites were a nomadic people who lived in the region of the Negev, the dry land south of Judah (see Num. 13:29).

15:3 The expression **utterly destroy** is literally “to put under a ban,” similar to the ban placed on Jericho at the time of the conquest (Josh. 6:17, 18). The fact that no spoil was to be taken reflects God's judgment on the sins of the Amalekites (Deut. 7:2-6; 12:2, 3; 20:16-18). While such judgment is severe, it came at the command of a holy and just God. A holy God cannot let sin go unpunished.

15:4 **men of Judah:** Early in the period of the united monarchy, the distinctions between the northern tribes of Israel and the southern tribe of Judah began to be noted (11:8).

15:6 **The Kenites**, who had been loosely associated with the Israelites since Moses' marriage to the daughter of Jethro, a Kenite (see Judg. 1:16; 4:11), were a nomadic offshoot of the Midianites (Num. 10:29).

15:7 **Havilah** refers to a district of northeast Arabia. **Shur** was the western part of the Sinai peninsula bordering Egypt. The campaign against the **Amalekites** covered extensive territory.

15:8 **took Agag king of the Amalekites alive:** This was a direct violation of the Lord's command (v. 3). Saul devoted the rest of the people to the ban but saved the life of the king.

15:9 By sparing **Agag** and the **best** of the spoil, Saul was following his own desires instead of serving as an agent of God's judgment. Perhaps he wanted to gain prestige by bringing home the spoil of the Amalekites.

15:12 **Carmel**, located seven miles south of Hebron, would have been on Saul's route home. The **monument** that Saul set up was probably intended to commemorate the victory over the Amalekites. Saul then returned to **Gilgal**, where the Israelites had convened before their war with the Philistines (13:8-15).

ument for himself; and he has gone on around, passed by, and gone down to Gilgal.”¹³ Then Samuel went to Saul, and Saul said to him, “*Blessed are you of the LORD! I have performed the commandment of the LORD.*”

¹⁴ But Samuel said, “What then is this bleating of the sheep in my ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?”

¹⁵ And Saul said, “They have brought them from the Amalekites; *for the people spared the best of the sheep and the oxen, to sacrifice to the LORD your God; and the rest we have utterly destroyed.*”

¹⁶ Then Samuel said to Saul, “Be quiet! And I will tell you what the LORD said to me last night.”

And he said to him, “Speak on.”

¹⁷ So Samuel said, “*When you were little in your own eyes, were you not head of the tribes of Israel? And did not the LORD anoint you king over Israel? Now the LORD sent you on a mission, and said, ‘Go, and utterly destroy the sinners, the Amalekites, and fight against them until they are ²consumed.’ Why then did you not obey the voice of the LORD? Why did you swoop down on the ³spoil, and do evil in the sight of the LORD?*”

²⁰ And Saul said to Samuel, “*But I have obeyed the voice of the LORD, and gone on the mission on which the LORD sent me, and brought back Agag king of Amalek; I have utterly destroyed the Amalekites. But the people took of the plunder, sheep and oxen, the best of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice to the LORD your God in Gilgal.*”

²² So Samuel said:

“Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices,

¹³ ^s Gen. 14:19; Judg. 17:2; Ruth 3:10; 2 Sam. 2:5
¹⁵ ^t [Gen. 3:12; 13; Ex. 32:22, 23]; 1 Sam. 15:9, 21; [Prov. 28:13]
¹⁷ ^u 1 Sam. 9:21; 10:22
¹⁸ ² exterminated
¹⁹ ³ plunder
²⁰ ^v 1 Sam. 15:13; [Prov. 28:13]
²¹ ^w 1 Sam. 15:15
²² ^x Ps. 50:8, 9; 51:16, 17; [Prov. 21:3; Is. 1:11-17; Jer. 7:22, 23; Mic. 6:6-8; Heb. 10:4-10]

^y [Eccl. 5:1; Hos. 6:6; Matt. 5:24; 9:13; 12:7; Mark 12:33]
²³ ^z 1 Sam. 13:14; 16:1
⁴ divination
²⁴ ^a Num. 22:34; Josh. 7:20; 1 Sam. 26:21; 2 Sam. 12:13; Ps. 51:4
^b [Ex. 23:2; Prov. 29:25; Is. 51:12, 13]
²⁶ ^c 1 Sam. 2:30
²⁷ ^d 1 Kin. 11:30, 31
²⁸ ^e 1 Sam. 28:17, 18; 1 Kin. 11:31
²⁹ ^f Num. 23:19; Ezek. 24:14; 2 Tim. 2:13; Titus 1:2
³⁰ ^g [John 5:44; 12:43]

As in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, *to obey is better than sacrifice,*

And to heed than the fat of rams.

²³ For rebellion *is as* the sin of *witchcraft,*

And stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry.

Because you have rejected the word of the LORD,

²He also has rejected you from being king.”

^{24a} Then Saul said to Samuel, “I have sinned, for I have transgressed the commandment of the LORD and your words, because I *feared* the people and obeyed their voice. ²⁵ Now therefore, please pardon my sin, and return with me, that I may worship the LORD.”

²⁶ But Samuel said to Saul, “I will not return with you, *for you have rejected the word of the LORD, and the LORD has rejected you from being king over Israel.*”

²⁷ And as Samuel turned around to go away, *^dSaul seized the edge of his robe, and it tore.* ²⁸ So Samuel said to him, *“The LORD has torn the kingdom of Israel from you today, and has given it to a neighbor of yours, who is better than you. ²⁹ And also the Strength of Israel will not lie nor relent. For He is not a man, that He should relent.”*

³⁰ Then he said, “I have sinned; *yet honor me now, please, before the elders of my people and before Israel, and return with me, that I may worship the LORD your God.*” ³¹ So Samuel turned back after Saul, and Saul worshiped the LORD.

³² Then Samuel said, “Bring Agag king of the Amalekites here to me.” So Agag came to him cautiously.

15:13 Blessed are you was a form of ancient greeting (see Gen. 24:31). Note that Saul’s words **I have performed the commandment of the LORD** are the exact opposite of God’s evaluation (v. 11).

15:15 When confronted by Samuel, Saul excused his disobedience by blaming **the people**. He also sought to justify sparing **the best of the sheep and the oxen** by suggesting that he intended them for sacrifice.

15:20 I have obeyed the voice of the LORD: Given another chance by Samuel to get things right with God, Saul persisted in affirming his innocence.

15:22 to obey is better than sacrifice: Samuel emphasized that sincerity and obedience were the prerequisites for worship that pleased God.

15:23 Saul’s independent, rebellious actions were as much a denial of God’s authority as the recognition of Satan’s supernatural power through **witchcraft**. Witchcraft was condemned by the law of Moses (Lev. 19:26, 31; Deut. 18:9–14) and was punishable by death (Ex. 22:18). Saul’s stubborn disobedience was essentially an act of **idolatry** because it elevated his will above God’s will. **He also has rejected you:** Saul failed to realize that he was not a sovereign and independent ruler like other monarchs. Instead, he was an agent

and representative of the divine King. Saul’s rejection of God’s word resulted in the rejection of Saul as God’s royal representative.

15:24 I have sinned: In response to Samuel’s rebuke, Saul confessed his sin and explained that because he **feared the people**, he **obeyed their voice**. Saul led the people by catering to their wishes.

15:26 How sad the words of Samuel must have been. Saul had disobeyed God one time too many; for him, there was no return.

15:28 The accidental tearing of Samuel’s robe (v. 27) served as a sign that God had **torn the kingdom** from Saul. For a similar incident, see 1 Kin. 11:30. The **neighbor** who would receive the kingdom was David (16:11–13).

15:29 the Strength of Israel: This designation of God occurs only here in the Bible. The phrase can also mean “the Glory of Israel.” **will not lie nor relent:** God’s decision to reject Saul was irrevocable.

15:30, 31 Saul’s requests for forgiveness and desire to worship God suggest that, despite his flaws, he was a sincere believer in God. Samuel may have discerned that Saul’s confession in v. 30 was more sincere than the one recorded earlier (v. 24).

15:32, 33 Bring Agag: Samuel determined to do what Saul had not done. He executed Agag in order to obey God’s clear command (v. 3). The verb translated **hacked . . . in pieces** may simply mean

And Agag said, “Surely the bitterness of death is past.”

³³ But Samuel said, ^h“As your sword has made women childless, so shall your mother be childless among women.” And Samuel hacked Agag in pieces before the LORD in Gilgal.

³⁴ Then Samuel went to ⁱRamah, and Saul went up to his house at ^jGibeah of Saul. ³⁵ And ^kSamuel went no more to see Saul until the day of his death. Nevertheless Samuel mourned for Saul, and the LORD regretted that He had made Saul king over Israel.

David Anointed King

16 Now the LORD said to Samuel, ^a“How long will you mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? ^bFill your horn with oil, and go; I am sending you to ^cJesse the Bethlehemite. For ^dI have ¹provided Myself a king among his sons.”

² And Samuel said, “How can I go? If Saul hears *it*, he will kill me.”

But the LORD said, “Take a heifer with you, and say, ^e‘I have come to sacrifice to the LORD.’ ³ Then invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do; you shall anoint for Me the one I name to you.”

⁴ So Samuel did what the LORD said, and went to Bethlehem. And the elders of the town ^ftrembled at his coming, and said, ^g“Do you come peaceably?”

⁵ And he said, “Peaceably; I have come to sacrifice to the LORD. ^hSanctify² yourselves, and come with me to the sacrifice.” Then he consecrated Jesse and his sons, and invited them to the sacrifice.

⁶ So it was, when they came, that he looked at ⁱEliab and ^jsaid, “Surely the LORD’s anointed is before Him!”

BIBLE TIMES & CULTURE NOTES



Anointing

Anointing with oil signified the act of installing a person into a special office or setting apart an object for sacred rites. Thus, the Lord told Samuel, “Fill your horn with oil, and go” when sending him to anoint Israel’s next king, the young boy David. While priests, prophets, and kings in Israel were all anointed to their offices, the OT phrase “the anointed one” or “the LORD’s anointed” is almost exclusively a reference to Israel’s king (24:6; Ps. 2:2). Some psalmists speak of an anointed Davidic ruler who will reign forever with righteousness and perfect peace (Ps. 2:45; 132). These passages prophetically foreshadow the coming divine King—Jesus, the Messiah (Heb. 1:5, 8, 9).



Third-century A.D. painting of Samuel anointing David, from the Dura-Europos synagogue

Z. Radovan/www.BibleLandPictures.com

³³ ^a [Gen. 9:6]; Num. 14:45; Judg. 1:7; [Matt. 7:2]
³⁴ ^b 1 Sam. 7:17
¹ 1 Sam. 11:4
³⁵ ^k 1 Sam. 19:24

CHAPTER 16

¹ ^a 1 Sam. 15:23, 35
² 1 Sam. 9:16; 10:1;
2 Kin. 9:1 ^c Ruth
4:18-22 ^d Ps. 78:70,
71; Acts 13:22 ¹ Lit.
seen
² ^e 1 Sam. 9:12
⁴ ¹ 1 Sam. 21:1
⁹ 1 Kin. 2:13; 2 Kin.
9:22
⁵ ^h Gen. 35:2; Ex.
19:10 ² Consecrate
⁶ ¹ 1 Sam. 17:13, 28
¹ 1 Kin. 12:26
⁷ ^k Ps. 147:10

⁷ But the LORD said to Samuel, ^k“Do not look at his appearance or at his physical stature, because I have ³refused him. ¹For ⁴the LORD does not see as man sees; for man ^mlooks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the ⁿheart.”

⁸ So Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel. And he said, “Neither has the LORD chosen this one.” ⁹ Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, “Neither has the LORD chosen this one.” ¹⁰ Thus Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel. And Samuel said to Jesse, “The LORD has not chosen

¹ Is. 55:8, 9 ² 2 Cor. 10:7 ³ 1 Kin. 8:39 ³ rejected ⁴ LXX For God does not see as man sees; Tg. It is not by the appearance of a man; Vg. Nor do I judge according to the looks of a man

“executed.” **before the LORD:** The execution was an expression of divine judgment.

15:35 See evidently means “to give attention” or “to regard with interest.” The point is that God was through with Saul as king, and so was Samuel.

16:1–31:13 The next section records David’s rise to the throne. David was known as a man after God’s heart (13:14). His faith was so exemplary that centuries later God was pleased to be called “the God of David” (2 Kin. 20:5; Is. 38:5). David contributed to the worship of the Lord by planning the building of the temple (2 Chr. 28:11–29:2) and by writing many psalms (2 Sam. 23:1).

16:1 Fill your horn: The ram’s horn served as a vessel for the anointing olive oil (10:1). **Jesse the Bethlehemite** was the son (or descendant) of Obed, the son of Ruth and Boaz (Ruth 4:21, 22). **I have provided Myself a king:** God made it clear to Samuel that this king would be of His choosing.

16:2 Samuel’s concern for his life was not unwarranted in light of Saul’s suspicious nature and spiritual degeneracy (18:11). **A heifer** is a young cow. **say, ‘I have come to sacrifice’:** God did not instruct Samuel to lie, but instead He provided a legitimate opportunity for Samuel to visit with Jesse and his family. By performing the anoint-

ing in Bethlehem while officiating at a sacrifice, Samuel would avoid arousing the suspicions of Saul.

16:4 Because Samuel’s visit was unexpected, **the elders of the town** wondered if he had come to execute judgment (7:15, 16).

16:5 The Hebrew word for **peaceably** means “things as they ought to be.” The word **sanctify** means “to set oneself apart” by means of ceremonial washings and purifications (Ex. 19:10, 14, 22). **he consecrated Jesse and his sons:** Apparently, Samuel personally supervised the purification of the father and his sons.

16:6, 7 Eliab means “My God Is Father.” **said:** Samuel was probably saying these things to himself. **The appearance and stature** of Jesse’s oldest son, Eliab, commended him to leadership. But these were the very things that had commended Saul (9:2). Instead of looking at appearances, God searched the **heart**. Thus God gave Samuel a new perspective. The state of a man’s heart was far more significant than natural ability and physical appearance.

16:8, 9 Abinadab means “My Father Is Noble.” **Shammah** may come from the word that means “He Hears.” The parade of sons began with the oldest, in a typical patriarchal manner. The assumption was that the firstborn would receive a higher rank than his brothers. Yet often God’s way surprisingly reversed this expectation.

these.”¹¹ And Samuel said to Jesse, “Are all the young men here?” Then he said, “There remains yet the youngest, and there he is, keeping the ^osheep.”

And Samuel said to Jesse, “Send and bring him. For we will not ⁵sit down till he comes here.”¹² So he sent and brought him in. Now he *was* ^rruddy, ^qwith ⁶bright eyes, and good-looking.” And the LORD said, “Arise, anoint him; for this is the one!”¹³ Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers; and ^sthe Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward. So Samuel arose and went to Ramah.

A Distressing Spirit Troubles Saul

¹⁴But the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul, and ^aa distressing spirit from the LORD troubled him.¹⁵ And Saul’s servants said to him, “Surely, a distressing spirit from God is troubling you.”¹⁶ Let our master now command your servants, *who* are before you, to seek out a man *who is* a skillful player on the harp. And it shall be that he will ^vplay it with his hand when the ⁷distressing spirit from God is upon you, and you shall be well.”

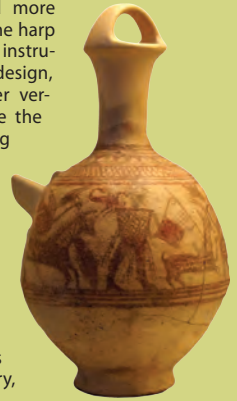
¹⁷So Saul said to his servants, ⁸“Provide me now a man who can play well, and bring *him* to me.”

¹⁸Then one of the servants answered and said, “Look, I have seen a son of Jesse the Bethlehemite, *who is* skillful in playing, a mighty man of valor, a man of war, prudent in speech, and a handsome person; and ^wthe LORD is with him.”

¹⁹Therefore Saul sent messengers to Jesse, and said, “Send me your son David, *who is* with the sheep.”²⁰ And Jesse ^xtook a donkey *loaded with* bread, a skin

Harps

The musical instrument mentioned more often than any other in the Bible is the harp or lyre. Scholars believe these two instruments were similar in function and design, but the harp was probably a larger version. David played a harp to soothe the “distressing spirit” that troubled King Saul. Although David apparently plucked the strings with his fingers, the harp was usually played by stroking the strings with a pick, much as a guitar is played. The harp had from 3 to 12 strings. Considered an aristocratic instrument, harps were often made of silver or ivory. Other words used for these two instruments by various translations of the Bible are psaltery, lute, and viol. The smaller lyre was used both for sacred and secular purposes. The lute was an even smaller version of the harp or lyre, consisting of only 3 strings.



Harpist on jug, eleventh century B.C., Megiddo
Kim Walton, courtesy of the Israel Museum, Jerusalem

11 ^o 2 Sam. 7:8; Ps. 78:70-72 ⁵ So with LXX, Vg.; MT *turn around*; Tg., Syr. *turn away*
12 ^p 1 Sam. 17:42
^q Gen. 39:6; Ex. 2:2; Acts 7:20 ^r 1 Sam. 9:17 ⁶ Lit. *beautiful*
13 ^s Num. 27:18; 1 Sam. 10:6, 9, 10
14 ^t Judg. 16:20; 1 Sam. 11:6; 18:12; 28:15 ^u Judg. 9:23; 1 Sam. 16:15, 16; 18:10; 19:9;

of wine, and a young goat, and sent *them* by his son David to Saul.²¹ So David came to Saul and ^vstood before him. And he loved him greatly, and he became his armorbearer.²² Then Saul sent to Jesse, saying, “Please let David stand before me, for he has found favor in my sight.”²³ And so it was, whenever the spirit from God was upon Saul, that David

1 Kin. 22:19-22 16 ^v 1 Sam. 18:10; 19:9; 2 Kin. 3:15 ⁷ Lit. *evil*
17 ⁸ Lit. *Look now for a man for me* 18 ^w 1 Sam. 3:19; 18:12, 14
20 ^x 1 Sam. 10:4, 27; Prov. 18:16 21 ^y Gen. 41:46; Prov. 22:29

16:11 Are all the young men here: After looking at Jesse’s seven sons, Samuel wondered if someone had been left out. In fact, **the youngest** was out in the field, caring for his father’s flock. **keeping the sheep:** In ancient times, both divine and human rulers were frequently compared to shepherds (see Ezek. 34). The famous Babylonian king Hammurabi described himself as a shepherd for his people. The fact that David was tending the sheep at this particular moment is something of a divine foreshadowing of his appointment as the king of Israel.

16:12 Ruddy means “reddish,” referring to complexion and perhaps hair color. **bright eyes:** The Hebrew words may also be rendered *beauty of eyes*. **good-looking:** God made it clear to Samuel that He did not choose David on the basis of his good looks (v. 7). This was a bonus to David’s inner worth. **the LORD said:** It is not clear whether anyone but Samuel heard these words of God. **anoint him:** David was anointed with olive oil. This religious ritual consecrated him to the kingship.

16:13 In Hebrew, **came upon** means “rushed upon.” David was empowered by God’s Holy Spirit for the work of ruling God’s people, just as Saul had been (10:10). **David** means “Beloved.”

16:14, 15 departed from Saul: After the Spirit of God came upon David, Saul was no longer empowered by the Spirit to serve as king. It appears that the ministry of the Holy Spirit was selective

and temporary in the lives of OT believers. **distressing spirit from the LORD:** This affliction has been understood in various ways: (1) demon possession as divine punishment; (2) demonic attack or influence; (3) an evil messenger, like the one sent to entice Ahab (1 Kin. 22:20–23); or (4) a spirit of discontent created by God in Saul’s heart (see Judg. 9:23). Whatever it was, it was immediately noticed by Saul’s servants (18:10).

16:16, 17 Whatever Saul’s problem was, it was temporarily relieved by music (v. 23). It was generally believed in ancient times that music had a beneficial influence on those with sullen or morbid natures.

16:18 a mighty man of valor, a man of war: David the shepherd boy had not yet demonstrated his military abilities. The glowing description given by the courtier may have been exaggerated but was included here by the author because it anticipated what David would become in light of his reputation (17:34, 35).

16:21 David’s appointment as Saul’s **armorbearer** may have taken place after his victory over Goliath (17:55–58). Perhaps it is mentioned here because it fits well with the theme of David’s early service in Saul’s court. Alternatively, it is possible that David was first in favor with Saul, then fell from favor only to be restored again.

16:22 Stand before me was an expression for entering the king’s service (see 1 Kin. 10:8).

16:23 Empowered by the Spirit of God, David was able to drive away

would take a harp and play *it* with his hand. Then Saul would become refreshed and well, and the distressing spirit would depart from him.

David and Goliath

17 Now the Philistines gathered their armies together to battle, and were gathered at ^aSochoh, which *belongs* to Judah; they encamped between Sochoh and Azekah, in Ephes Dammim. ²And Saul and the men of Israel were gathered together, and they encamped in the Valley of Elah, and drew up in battle array against the Philistines. ³The Philistines stood on a mountain on one side, and Israel stood on a mountain on the other side, with a valley between them.

⁴And a champion went out from the camp of the Philistines, named ^bGoliath, from ^cGath, whose height *was* six cubits and a span. ⁵*He had* a bronze helmet on his head, and he *was* ¹armed with a coat of mail, and the weight of the coat *was* five thousand shekels of bronze. ⁶And *he had* bronze armor on his legs and a bronze javelin between his shoulders. ⁷Now the staff of his spear *was* like a weaver's beam, and his iron spearhead *weighed* six hundred shekels; and a shield-bearer went before him. ⁸Then he stood and cried out to the armies of Israel, and said to them, "Why have you come out to line up for battle? *Am* I not a Philistine, and you the ^dservants of Saul? Choose a man for yourselves, and let him come down to me. ⁹If he is able to fight

CHAPTER 17

1 ^a Josh. 15:35;
2 Chr. 28:18
4 ^b 2 Sam. 21:19
^c Josh. 11:21, 22
5 ¹ clothed with
scaled body armor
8 ^d 1 Sam. 8:17

9 ^e 1 Sam. 11:1
10 ^f 1 Sam. 17:26,
36, 45; 2 Sam. 21:21
12 ^g Ruth 4:22;
1 Sam. 16:1, 18;
17:58 ^h Gen. 35:19
1 ⁱ Sam. 16:10, 11;
1 Chr. 2:13-15
13 ^j 1 Sam. 16:6, 8,
9; 1 Chr. 2:13
15 ^k 1 Sam. 16:11,
19; 2 Sam. 7:8
18 ^l Gen. 37:13, 14

with me and kill me, then we will be your servants. But if I prevail against him and kill him, then you shall be our servants and *serve* us." ¹⁰And the Philistine said, "I ^jdefy the armies of Israel this day; give me a man, that we may fight together." ¹¹When Saul and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine, they were dismayed and greatly afraid.

¹²Now David *was* ^gthe son of that ^hEphrathite of Bethlehem Judah, whose name *was* Jesse, and who had ⁱeight sons. And the man *was* old, advanced *in years*, in the days of Saul. ¹³The three oldest sons of Jesse had gone to follow Saul to the battle. The ^jnames of his three sons who went to the battle *were* Eliab the firstborn, next to him Abinadab, and the third Shammah. ¹⁴David *was* the youngest. And the three oldest followed Saul. ¹⁵But David occasionally went and returned from Saul ^kto feed his father's sheep at Bethlehem.

¹⁶And the Philistine drew near and presented himself forty days, morning and evening.

¹⁷Then Jesse said to his son David, "Take now for your brothers an ephah of this dried *grain* and these ten loaves, and run to your brothers at the camp. ¹⁸And carry these ten cheeses to the captain of *their* thousand, and ^lsee how your brothers fare, and bring back news of them." ¹⁹Now Saul and they and all the men of Israel *were* in the Valley of Elah, fighting with the Philistines.

²⁰So David rose early in the morning,

the **distressing spirit** (v. 14) with his soothing music (18:10). The verse suggests a lengthy period of time.

17:1 The Philistine and Israelite armies were gathered in the Elah Valley, about 15 miles west of David's hometown of Bethlehem. The **Philistines** were camped between **Azekah** and **Sochoh**, on a hill (v. 3) south of the valley. Azekah, strategically located on a hill, was one of a string of fortresses built along the western boundary of Judah to guard the major roads penetrating the region. Sochoh was one of the cities that would later be fortified by Rehoboam (see 2 Chr. 11:7). The description, **which belongs to Judah**, reminds us that the Philistines were encroaching on Judean lands.

17:2, 3 The **Valley of Elah** is an east-west valley leading from the hill country of Judah toward the lowlands of the Philistines. The **valley** would have been suitable for the Philistine chariots had it not been for a steep ravine that extended up the middle of the valley. The war chariot of the Philistines had iron fittings and was the most advanced weapon of the day. Probably the ravine prevented a full-scale assault by the Philistines, causing the long delay before engaging in battle (v. 16).

17:4 **champion**: The Hebrew expression is literally "a man who is a go-between," meaning a warrior who will fight in single combat as a stand-in for the entire army. His opponent needed to be as strong as he was. The most likely person to serve in this role was Saul. When he was chosen as king, it was noted that Saul stood head and shoulders over his countrymen (9:2). However, Saul made no move to oppose the braggart buffoon from Philistia. The **cubit** was about 18 inches and a **span** was 9 inches. Thus **Goliath** stood 9 feet, 9 inches tall.

17:5, 6 **bronze helmet**: Ordinary troops had leather helmets. Goliath's **coat of mail** was made of overlapping plates of bronze sewn on leather. This armor weighed **five thousand shekels** or about 125 pounds. **Bronze armor** refers to the greaves that protected Goliath's legs. **bronze javelin**: This oversized weapon was designed for hurling. **Between his shoulders** means strapped to his back.

17:7 The **spear** was a weapon designed for hand-to-hand combat, like a long sword. **six hundred shekels**: The head of Goliath's spear weighed about 17 pounds. **shield-bearer**: There are two different Hebrew words for "shield." One refers to a small round shield usually worn on the left arm. The other, used here, refers to a much larger, oblong shield, often carried by the shield-bearer as the soldier moved into battle. Goliath was a veritable war machine.

17:10 **Defy** is an unusually harsh word, meaning "to put under reproach" (vv. 25, 26). As the account later makes clear, the defiant taunts of Goliath were as much against the God of Israel as against the fighters (vv. 26, 36).

17:11 **they were dismayed and greatly afraid**: The army was sick with dread. Perhaps the Israelites had forgotten the victories God had given Israel in times past. Forgetfulness of God's past deliverance diminishes one's confidence in the face of present conflict.

17:12 **that Ephrathite**: Ephrathah was a family name in the tribe of Judah, the area where **Bethlehem** was located (see Mic. 5:2).

17:17-19 In ancient times, soldiers usually lived off the land they conquered or depended on personal supplies that they or someone else brought from home. Jesse sent David with provisions—**grain, loaves, and cheeses**—for his sons and their officers. An **ephah** was a measure of grain, about five gallons.

17:20-22 **rose early in the morning**: These are the same words

left the sheep with a keeper, and took *the things* and went as Jesse had commanded him. And he came to the camp as the army was going out to the fight and shouting for the battle. ²¹For Israel and the Philistines had drawn up in battle array, army against army. ²²And David left his supplies in the hand of the supply keeper, ran to the army, and came and greeted his brothers. ²³Then as he talked with them, there was the champion, the Philistine of Gath, Goliath by name, coming up from the armies of the Philistines; and he spoke ^maccording to the same words. So David heard *them*. ²⁴And all the men of Israel, when they saw the man, fled from him and were dreadfully afraid. ²⁵So the men of Israel said, “Have you seen this man who has come up? Surely he has come up to defy Israel; and it shall be *that* the man who kills him the king will enrich with great riches, ⁿwill give him his daughter, and give his father’s house exemption from *taxes* in Israel.”

²⁶Then David spoke to the men who stood by him, saying, “What shall be done for the man who kills this Philistine and takes away ^othe reproach from Israel? For who *is* this ^puncircumcised Philistine, that he should ^qdefy the armies of ^rthe living God?”

²⁷And the people answered him in this manner, saying, ^s“So shall it be done for the man who kills him.”

²⁸Now Eliab his oldest brother heard when he spoke to the men; and Eliab’s ^tanger was aroused against David, and he said, “Why did you come down here? And with whom have you left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know your pride and the insolence of your heart, for you have come down to see the battle.”

²⁹And David said, “What have I done

²³ ^m 1 Sam. 17:8-10

²⁵ ⁿ Josh. 15:16

²⁶ ^o 1 Sam. 11:2

^p 1 Sam. 14:6;

17:36; Jer. 9:25,

²⁶ ^q 1 Sam. 17:10

^r Deut. 5:26; 2 Kin.

19:4; Jer. 10:10

²⁷ ^s 1 Sam. 17:25

²⁸ ^t Gen. 37:4, 8-36;

[Prov. 18:19; Matt.

10:36]

²⁹ ^u 1 Sam. 17:17

² Lit. *Is it not a word? or matter?*

³⁰ ^v 1 Sam. 17:26,

27

³² ^w Deut. 20:1-4

^x 1 Sam. 16:18

³³ ^y Num. 13:31;

Deut. 9:2

³⁴ ^z Judg. 14:5

³⁷ ^a [2 Cor. 1:10;

2 Tim. 4:17, 18]

^b 1 Sam. 20:13;

¹ Chr. 22:11, 16

³⁸ ³ Lit. *clothes*

now? “*Is² there not a cause?*” ³⁰Then he turned from him toward another and ^vsaid the same thing; and these people answered him as the first ones *did*.

³¹Now when the words which David spoke were heard, they reported *them* to Saul; and he sent for him. ³²Then David said to Saul, ^w“Let no man’s heart fail because of him; ^xyour servant will go and fight with this Philistine.”

³³And Saul said to David, ^y“You are not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him; for you *are* a youth, and he a man of war from his youth.”

³⁴But David said to Saul, “Your servant used to keep his father’s sheep, and when a ^zlion or a bear came and took a lamb out of the flock, ³⁵I went out after it and struck it, and delivered *the lamb* from its mouth; and when it arose against me, I caught *it* by its beard, and struck and killed it. ³⁶Your servant has killed both lion and bear; and this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, seeing he has defied the armies of the living God.” ³⁷Moreover David said, ^a“The LORD, who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, He will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine.”

And Saul said to David, ^b“Go, and the LORD be with you!”

³⁸So Saul clothed David with his ³armor, and he put a bronze helmet on his head; he also clothed him with a coat of mail. ³⁹David fastened his sword to his armor and tried to walk, for he had not tested *them*. And David said to Saul, “I cannot walk with these, for I have not tested *them*.” So David took them off.

⁴⁰Then he took his staff in his hand; and he chose for himself five smooth stones from the brook, and put them in a shepherd’s bag, in a pouch which

that were used of Abraham when he set out on his fateful journey to Moriah (see Gen. 22:3). **going out to the fight:** The soldiers were going out to the battle line, but only to shout their taunts. **the supply keeper:** This wording suggests that what David did for his brothers was an ordinary service performed by families for their sons on the battlefield.

17:24 fled . . . afraid: The fear of the Israelite army was shameful. Perched on the fortified hillside, none of them was in immediate danger.

17:25 Saul promised riches, exemption from taxes and the duty of public service, and his daughter’s hand in marriage to the one who would defeat Goliath.

17:26 Uncircumcised is used as an expression of contempt for a pagan person.

17:28 David’s oldest brother, **Eliab**, was rather abrupt with David. **pride . . . insolence:** This language is similar to that used to describe the rage of Joseph’s brothers against him (Gen. 37).

17:29 Is there not a cause: David protested his innocence of the charges of pride (v. 28). There was reason to be agitated—not at David, but at the Philistine.

17:32 your servant will go: David weighed the difficulties from a divine perspective. Here was an opportunity for God to display His power.

17:34-37 David’s past victories over **a lion** and **a bear** gave him the faith to trust God for victory over Goliath. For David, the issue was more a theological crisis—the Israelites’ lack of faith—than a military one.

17:38, 39 Instead of putting on his own armor, trusting God, and going to the field of battle, Saul attempted to put the oversized armor on a young boy. Saul’s armor was designed for a large man. David could not even **walk** in it, much less fight in it.

17:40 his staff: Unprepared to face Goliath as an armed soldier, David prepared to face him as a shepherd. **five smooth stones:** David’s experience had taught him how important shape, size, and uniformity were to achieve accuracy with a sling. A **sling** was the typical equipment of a shepherd. It was a hollow pocket of leather attached to two cords. Putting a stone in the pouch, the slinger would whirl it around his head to build up momentum. Releasing one of the cords would hurl the stone at its target. Slingers were a regular part of armies in the ancient Middle East (see Judg. 20:16).

he had, and his sling was in his hand. And he drew near to the Philistine. ⁴¹So the Philistine came, and began drawing near to David, and the man who bore the shield *went* before him. ⁴²And when the Philistine looked about and saw David, he *disdained*⁴ him; for he was *only* a youth, ⁴³ruddy and good-looking. ⁴³So the Philistine *said* to David, “*Am* I a dog, that you come to me with sticks?” And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. ⁴⁴And the Philistine *said* to David, “Come to me, and I will give your flesh to the birds of the air and the beasts of the field!”

⁴⁵Then David said to the Philistine, “You come to me with a sword, with a spear, and with a javelin. ⁴⁶But I come to you in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have *defied*. ⁴⁶This day the LORD will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you and take your head from you. And this day I will give *the* carcasses of the camp of the Philistines to the birds of the air and the wild beasts of the earth, ⁴⁷that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel. ⁴⁷Then all this assembly shall know that the LORD *does* not save with sword and spear; for *the* battle is the LORD’s, and He will give you into our hands.”

⁴⁸So it was, when the Philistine arose and came and drew near to meet David, that David hurried and *ran* toward the army to meet the Philistine. ⁴⁹Then David put his hand in his bag and took out a stone; and he slung *it* and struck the Philistine in his forehead, so that the stone sank into his forehead, and he fell on his face to the earth. ⁵⁰So David prevailed over the Philistine with a *sling*

42 c [Ps. 123:4; Prov. 16:18; 1 Cor. 1:27, 28] d 1 Sam. 16:12
4 belittled
43 e 1 Sam. 24:14; 2 Sam. 3:8; 9:8; 16:9; 2 Kin. 8:13
44 f 1 Sam. 17:46; 1 Kin. 20:10, 11
45 g 2 Sam. 22:33, 35; 2 Chr. 32:8; Ps. 124:8; [2 Cor. 10:4]; Heb. 11:33, 34
46 h 1 Sam. 17:10
46 i Deut. 28:26; Josh. 4:24; 1 Kin. 8:43; 18:36; 2 Kin. 19:19; Is. 52:10
47 k 1 Sam. 14:6; 2 Chr. 14:11; 20:15; Ps. 44:6; Hos. 1:7; Zech. 4:6 l 2 Chr. 20:15
48 m Ps. 27:3
50 n Judg. 3:31; 15:15; 20:16

51 o 1 Sam. 21:9; 2 Sam. 23:21 p Heb. 11:34
52 q Josh. 15:36
53 So with MT, Syr., Tg., Vg.; LXX Gath
54 r 1 Sam. 14:50
55 s 1 Sam. 16:21, 22
57 t 1 Sam. 17:54
58 u 1 Sam. 17:12

CHAPTER 18

1 a Gen. 44:30
b Deut. 13:6; 1 Sam. 20:17; 2 Sam. 1:26
1 life of Jonathan was bound up with the life of

and a stone, and struck the Philistine and killed him. But *there* was no sword in the hand of David. ⁵¹Therefore David ran and stood over the Philistine, took his *sword* and drew it out of its sheath and killed him, and cut off his head with it.

And when the Philistines saw that their champion was dead, *they* fled. ⁵²Now the men of Israel and Judah arose and shouted, and pursued the Philistines as far as the entrance of *the* valley and to the gates of Ekron. And the wounded of the Philistines fell along the road to *Gath*, even as far as Gath and Ekron. ⁵³Then the children of Israel returned from chasing the Philistines, and they plundered their tents. ⁵⁴And David took the head of the Philistine and brought it to Jerusalem, but he put his armor in his tent.

⁵⁵When Saul saw David going out against the Philistine, he said to *Abner*, the commander of the army, “Abner, *whose* son is this youth?”

And Abner said, “As your soul lives, O king, I do not know.”

⁵⁶So the king said, “Inquire whose son this young man is.”

⁵⁷Then, as David returned from the slaughter of the Philistine, Abner took him and brought him before Saul *with* the head of the Philistine in his hand. ⁵⁸And Saul said to him, “Whose son *are* you, young man?”

So David answered, “*I am* the son of your servant Jesse the Bethlehemite.”

Saul Resents David

18 Now when he had finished speaking to Saul, *the* ¹soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, *and* Jon-

17:42 David lacked the signs of age and the scars that one would expect of a battle-seasoned champion. Unlike most soldiers of Israel, he had not yet grown a beard.

17:43 The appearance of a boy as his challenger offended the pride of Goliath. Further, Goliath saw the shepherd's staff (v. 40) and was angry because David appeared as if he were out to beat a **dog** instead of a giant. **cursed David:** Goliath treated David as contemptible. The word translated *cursed* is the same word used in Gen. 12:3. Since Goliath had cursed one of God's people, God was bound by His covenant to curse Goliath.

17:45 **Hosts** refers to the armies of heaven and of Israel, over whom God is Commander in Chief. **The name of the LORD** speaks of God's covenantal relationship with the Israelites. David was depending on the power of God as the Warrior and Defender of His people (see Ex. 15:3).

17:46, 47 David intended his victory to demonstrate to **all the earth** that (1) the God of Israel exists and (2) He delivers His own against overwhelming odds. David's words **the battle is the LORD's** put the contest into proper perspective.

17:48, 49 **hurried and ran:** Part of David's strategy was to rush the giant. Guided by the Lord, David skillfully hit the right spot on **his forehead** with a powerful blow.

17:51 **cut off his head:** This was an indignity to a fallen foe and the decisive sign that he was dead. It filled the Philistines with terror.

17:52 The Israelites pursued the Philistines north toward **Ekron** and east toward **Gath**. **Shaaraim**, meaning “Two Gates,” is mentioned in Josh. 15:36 next to Sochoh and Azekah.

17:54 At this time, a part of **Jerusalem** was occupied by Israelites, but the citadel of Jebus was still in the hands of the Jebusites (Josh. 15:63). Later, it was captured by David when he became king over all Israel (2 Sam. 5:6–9). David took Goliath's **head** to the part of the city that was under Israelite control. David kept Goliath's **armor**, but the giant's sword was later deposited in the sanctuary at Nob (21:9).

17:55 **Abner**, one of Saul's generals, was also Saul's cousin (14:50). He was another seasoned soldier who was silent and inactive in the face of Goliath's taunting words. **whose son is this youth:** How does this question fit with the fact that David had been serving as a musician in Saul's court (16:18–23)? Saul's unstable mental condition (16:14, 15) may have affected his memory. Saul may have recognized David as his court musician but forgotten the name of David's father. He would need to know it in order to reward David's family (v. 25). It is also possible that in his question, Saul's principal interest was not David's identity, but the possibility that David was a contender for the throne of Israel.

17:56–58 **your servant Jesse:** In identifying his father, David likely intended to emphasize that Jesse was no threat to the king, that he was a loyal *servant* of Saul.

athan loved him as his own soul. ²Saul took him that day, ^cand would not let him go home to his father's house anymore. ³Then Jonathan and David made a ^dcovenant, because he loved him as his own soul. ⁴And Jonathan took off the robe that *was* on him and gave it to David, with his armor, even to his sword and his bow and his belt.

⁵So David went out wherever Saul sent him, *and* ²behaved wisely. And Saul set him over the men of war, and he was accepted in the sight of all the people and also in the sight of Saul's servants. ⁶Now it had happened as they were coming *home*, when David was returning from the slaughter of the ³Philistine, that ^ethe women had come out of all the cities of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet King Saul, with tambourines, with joy, and with musical instruments. ⁷So the women ^fsang as they danced, and said:

g“Saul has slain his thousands,
And David his ten thousands.”

⁸Then Saul was very angry, and the saying ^hdispleased him; and he said, “They have ascribed to David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed *only* thousands. Now *what* more can he have but ⁱthe kingdom?” ⁹So Saul ⁴eyed David from that day forward.

² ^c 1 Sam. 17:15
³ ^d 1 Sam. 20:8-17
⁵ ² Or prospered
⁶ Ex. 15:20,
21; Judg. 11:34;
Ps. 68:25; 149:3
³ Philistines
⁷ Ex. 15:21
⁹ 1 Sam. 21:11; 29:5
⁸ ^h Eccl. 4:4 / 1 Sam.
15:28
⁹ ^e Viewed with
suspicion

¹⁰ / 1 Sam. 16:14
^k 1 Sam. 19:24;
1 Kin. 18:29; Acts
16:16 / 1 Sam. 16:23
^m 1 Sam. 19:9, 10
¹¹ ⁿ 1 Sam. 19:10;
20:33
¹² ^o 1 Sam. 18:15,
29 ^p 1 Sam. 16:13,
18 ^q 1 Sam. 16:14;
28:15
¹³ Num. 27:17;
1 Sam. 18:16; 29:6;
2 Sam. 5:2 ⁵ Lit.
himself
¹⁴ ^s Gen. 39:2, 3, 23;
Josh. 6:27; 1 Sam.
16:18
¹⁶ ^t Num. 27:16, 17;
1 Sam. 18:5; 2 Sam.
5:2; 1 Kin. 3:7
¹⁷ ^u 1 Sam. 14:49;
17:25 ^v Num. 32:20,
27, 29; 1 Sam. 25:28
^w 1 Sam. 18:21, 25;
2 Sam. 12:9
¹⁸ ^x 1 Sam. 9:21;
18:23; 2 Sam. 7:18

¹⁰And it happened on the next day that ^jthe distressing spirit from God came upon Saul, ^kand he prophesied inside the house. So David ^lplayed *music* with his hand, as at other times; ^mbut *there was* a spear in Saul's hand. ¹¹And Saul ⁿcast the spear, for he said, “I will pin David to the wall!” But David escaped his presence twice.

¹²Now Saul was ^oafraid of David, because ^pthe LORD was with him, but had ^qdeparted from Saul. ¹³Therefore Saul removed him from ⁵his presence, and made him his captain over a thousand; and ^rhe went out and came in before the people. ¹⁴And David behaved wisely in all his ways, and ^sthe LORD *was* with him. ¹⁵Therefore, when Saul saw that he behaved very wisely, he was afraid of him. ¹⁶But ^tall Israel and Judah loved David, because he went out and came in before them.

David Marries Michal

¹⁷Then Saul said to David, “Here is my older daughter Merab; ^uI will give her to you as a wife. Only be valiant for me, and fight ^vthe LORD's battles.” For Saul thought, ^w“Let my hand not be against him, but let the hand of the Philistines be against him.”

¹⁸So David said to Saul, ^x“Who *am* I,

18:2 Like his son Jonathan, Saul was captivated by David. He conscripted him anew to his court (16:19–23; 17:15).

18:3 This **covenant** was a mutual agreement in which David and Jonathan were bound to care for the needs and attend to the interests of each other. It was a treaty as between equals, yet these two men were not exactly equals. Such a relationship had to be initiated by Jonathan because he was a member of the royal household. **as his own soul:** These words, repeated for emphasis (v. 1), describe the unselfish nature of Jonathan's love for David.

18:4 sword . . . bow . . . belt: These were treasured items that would not have been casually surrendered. With these gifts Jonathan ratified his covenant with David. In retrospect, Jonathan's action was symbolic of a transfer of royal power from Saul's family to David.

18:5 behaved wisely: This description is a part of an ongoing subtle contrast between David and Saul. The phrase reveals that David was acting with skill and achieving success. It should be contrasted with the description of unwise actions of Saul (13:13). **set him over the men of war:** David did not replace Abner (17:55); he was simply acknowledged as a national military hero.

18:6 when David was returning: An event in the immediate aftermath of the famous battle of ch. 17 is mentioned here. **Women** came together from across the land to celebrate the national victory and their new national champion. **to meet King Saul:** The suggestion is that this was the usual pattern.

18:7 The popular song which celebrated David's military achievements became widely known, even among the Philistines (21:11). **thousands . . . ten thousands:** The poetic use of exaggeration is evident here. David had not yet slain even a dozen people, much less thousands. The women did not intend to offend the king; they were simply praising God for His ever-increasing benefits to the nation.

18:8 the saying displeased him: Saul saw David's abilities and achievements as undercutting his own prominence among the people. **the kingdom:** To Saul, there appeared to be no honor left

for David except for him to take the throne. Ironically, this is exactly what God had determined.

18:10 The expression **he prophesied** can be used of legitimate prophecy or the erratic prophetic ecstasy associated with the ravings of false prophets and pagan priests (1 Kin. 18:29; 22:12). Whatever the case here, God was judging Saul for his previous disobedience by allowing his mind to become troubled.

18:14 the LORD was with him: David's relationship with God was the key to his success.

18:16 he went out and came in before them: David's military activities elevated him to prominence before the people.

18:17 While Saul had previously promised to give his daughter to the man who killed Goliath (17:25), here he linked the marriage to future conquests, hoping that David would be killed by the Philistines.

dancing

(Heb. *mecholah*) (18:6; 21:11; 29:5) Strong's #4246

The verbal root of this Hebrew word means “to whirl” or “to move in a circle.” This is probably indicative of the type of dancing described here. When this word is used, there is regularly an association with joy, sometimes contrasted with mourning (Ps. 30:11; Jer. 31:4, 13; Lam. 5:15). Singing and playing instruments (especially the tambourine) are often mentioned in connection with dancing (Ex. 15:20; Judg. 11:34; Ps. 150:4). Although women usually do the dancing, men are also said to dance (Jer. 31:13). The ancient Israelites danced to celebrate the victories that God had given them (18:6; Ex. 15:20; Judg. 11:34). This was an exuberant expression of praise for their Creator and Deliverer (Ps. 149:3; 150:4; Jer. 31:4).

and what *is* my life *or* my father's family in Israel, that I should be son-in-law to the king?" ¹⁹ But it happened at the time when Merab, Saul's daughter, should have been given to David, that she was given to ¹⁸Adriel the ²Meholathite as a wife.

²⁰ ^aNow Michal, Saul's daughter, loved David. And they told Saul, and the thing pleased him. ²¹ So Saul said, "I will give her to him, that she may ^bbe a snare to him, and that ^bthe hand of the Philistines may be against him." Therefore Saul said to David a second time, ^c"You shall be my son-in-law today."

²² And Saul commanded his servants, "Communicate with David secretly, and say, 'Look, the king has delight in you, and all his servants love you. Now therefore, become the king's son-in-law.'"

²³ So Saul's servants spoke those words in the hearing of David. And David said, "Does it seem to you *a light thing* to be a king's son-in-law, seeing I *am* a poor and lightly esteemed man?" ²⁴ And the servants of Saul told him, saying, ⁷"In this manner David spoke."

²⁵ Then Saul said, "Thus you shall say to David: 'The king does not desire any ^ddowry but one hundred foreskins of the Philistines, to take ^evengeance on the king's enemies.'" But Saul ^fthought to make David fall by the hand of the Philistines. ²⁶ So when his servants told David these words, it pleased David well to become the king's son-in-law. Now ^gthe days had not expired; ²⁷ therefore David arose and went, he and ^hhis men, and killed two hundred men of the Philistines. And ⁱDavid brought their foreskins, and they gave them in full count to the king, that he might become the king's son-in-law. Then Saul gave him Michal his daughter as a wife.

²⁸ Thus Saul saw and knew that the LORD *was* with David, and *that* Michal,

¹⁹ ^v 2 Sam. 21:8
² Judg. 7:22; 2 Sam. 21:8; 1 Kin. 19:16
²⁰ ^a 1 Sam. 18:28
²¹ ^b 1 Sam. 18:17
^c 1 Sam. 18:26 ^b be bait for
²⁴ ⁷ Lit. According to these words
²⁵ ^d Gen. 34:12; Ex. 22:17 ^e 1 Sam. 14:24
^f 1 Sam. 18:17
²⁶ ^g 1 Sam. 18:21
²⁷ ^h 1 Sam. 18:13
ⁱ 2 Sam. 3:14

²⁹ ^g all the days
³⁰ / 2 Sam. 11:1
^k 1 Sam. 18:5

CHAPTER 19

¹ ^a 1 Sam. 8:8, 9
^b 1 Sam. 18:1
³ ^c 1 Sam. 20:8-13
⁴ ^d 1 Sam. 20:32; [Prov. 31:8, 9]
^e Gen. 42:22; [Prov. 17:13]; Jer. 18:20
⁵ ^f Judg. 9:17; 12:3
^g 1 Sam. 17:49,
⁵⁰ ^h 1 Sam. 11:13;
¹ Chr. 11:14 ⁱ 1 Sam. 20:32 ^j [Deut. 19:10-13]
⁷ ^k 1 Sam. 16:21;
^{18:2, 10, 13}
⁸ / 1 Sam. 18:27;
^{23:5}
⁹ ^m 1 Sam. 16:14;
^{18:10, 11}

Saul's daughter, loved him; ²⁹ and Saul was still more afraid of David. So Saul became David's enemy ⁸continually. ³⁰ Then the princes of the Philistines ^jwent out to war. And so it was, whenever they went out, *that* David ^kbehaved more wisely than all the servants of Saul, so that his name became highly esteemed.

Saul Persecutes David

19 Now Saul spoke to Jonathan his son and to all his servants, that they should kill ^aDavid; but Jonathan, Saul's son, ^bdelighted greatly in David. ² So Jonathan told David, saying, "My father Saul seeks to kill you. Therefore please be on your guard until morning, and stay in a secret *place* and hide. ³ And I will go out and stand beside my father in the field where you *are*, and I will speak with my father about you. Then what I observe, I will tell ^cyou."

⁴ Thus Jonathan ^dspoke well of David to Saul his father, and said to him, "Let not the king ^esin against his servant, against David, because he has not sinned against you, and because his works *have been* very good toward you. ⁵ For he took his ^flife in his hands and ^gkilled the Philistine, and ^hthe LORD brought about a great deliverance for all Israel. You saw *it* and rejoiced. ⁱWhy then will you ^jsin against innocent blood, to kill David without a cause?"

⁶ So Saul heeded the voice of Jonathan, and Saul swore, "As the LORD lives, he shall not be killed." ⁷ Then Jonathan called David, and Jonathan told him all these things. So Jonathan brought David to Saul, and he was in his presence ^kas in times past.

⁸ And there was war again; and David went out and fought with the Philistines, ^land struck them with a mighty blow, and they fled from him.

⁹ Now ^mthe distressing spirit from the

18:21, 23 that she may be a snare to him: Saul hoped that offering Michal in marriage would lead to David's death. **I am a poor . . . man:** David did not have the resources to bring a wedding dowry fit for a king (v. 25).

18:25 In many cultures of the ancient Middle East, a **dowry** was paid by the bridegroom to the father of the bride as economic compensation for the loss of a daughter who helped around the home. **one hundred foreskins:** The foreskins would be proof that David had killed that many Philistines.

18:26, 27 the days had not expired: Apparently there was a time limit during which David had to fulfill the conditions of the dowry. **two hundred men:** David provided twice the number that Saul required.

18:30 The war with the **Philistines** continued, as did David's brave exploits. **behaved more wisely:** This significant phrase meaning "to act with skill" is again contrasted with the phrase meaning "to play the fool," used of Saul in 13:13. David's successful military engagements gained him increasing honor and recognition.

19:1 When Saul's scheming efforts failed, he brought **Jonathan** and **all his servants** into the plot. Apparently, Saul did not know about the friendship of David and Jonathan.

19:2, 3 Loyal to his covenant of friendship, Jonathan pledged to intervene on David's behalf before his father (18:3).

19:4, 5 his servant: Jonathan's strongest argument was that David's actions demonstrated loyalty to Saul. **innocent blood:** Jonathan reminded his father of God's law. By having David killed, Saul would incur the guilt of bloodshed (see Deut. 19:10).

19:6, 7 Saul swore: Following the normal form for making such an oath, Saul says literally, "If he would die!" He means, "I will not allow him to die."

19:8 David's actions are contrasted with Saul's. Each time there was **war** with the Philistines, David had more opportunities for great exploits. Saul himself no longer went to war. He stayed at home sulking about David's victories.

LORD came upon Saul as he sat in his house with his spear in his hand. And David was playing *music* with *his* hand. ¹⁰Then Saul sought to pin David to the wall with the spear, but he slipped away from Saul's presence; and he drove the spear into the wall. So David fled and escaped that night.

¹¹ⁿ Saul also sent messengers to David's house to watch him and to kill him in the morning. And Michal, David's wife, told him, saying, "If you do not save your life tonight, tomorrow you will be killed." ¹²So Michal ^olet David down through a window. And he went and fled and escaped. ¹³And Michal took ⁱan image and laid it in the bed, put a cover of goats' hair for his head, and covered it with clothes. ¹⁴So when Saul sent messengers to take David, she said, "He is sick."

¹⁵Then Saul sent the messengers back to see David, saying, "Bring him up to me in the bed, that I may kill him." ¹⁶And when the messengers had come in, there was the image in the bed, with a cover of goats' hair for his head. ¹⁷Then Saul said to Michal, "Why have you deceived me like this, and sent my enemy away, so that he has escaped?"

And Michal answered Saul, "He said to me, 'Let me go! ^pWhy should I kill you?'"

¹⁸So David fled and escaped, and went to ^qSamuel at ^rRamah, and told him all that Saul had done to him. And he and Samuel went and stayed in Naioth. ¹⁹Now it was told Saul, saying, "Take note, David is at Naioth in Ramah!" ²⁰Then ^sSaul sent messengers to take David. ^tAnd when they saw the group of prophets prophesying, and Samuel standing as leader over them, the Spirit of God came upon the messengers of Saul, and

¹¹ ⁿ Judg. 16:2; Ps. 59:title
¹² ^o Josh. 2:15; Acts 9:25; 2 Cor. 11:33
¹³ ⁱ household idols, Heb. teraphim
¹⁷ ^p 2 Sam. 2:22
¹⁸ ^q 1 Sam. 16:13
^r 1 Sam. 7:17
²⁰ ^s 1 Sam. 19:11, 14; John 7:32
^t 1 Sam. 10:5, 6, 10; [1 Cor. 14:3, 24, 25]

they also "prophesied." ²¹And when Saul was told, he sent other messengers, and they prophesied likewise. Then Saul sent messengers again the third time, and they prophesied also. ²²Then he also went to Ramah, and came to the great well that is at Sechu. So he asked, and said, "Where are Samuel and David?"

And *someone* said, "Indeed *they are* at Naioth in Ramah." ²³So he went there to Naioth in Ramah. Then ^vthe Spirit of God was upon him also, and he went on and prophesied until he came to Naioth in Ramah. ²⁴^wAnd he also stripped off his clothes and prophesied before Samuel in like manner, and lay down ^xnaked all that day and all that night. Therefore they say, ^y"Is Saul also among the prophets?"

Jonathan's Loyalty to David

20 Then David fled from Naioth in Ramah, and went and said to Jonathan, "What have I done? What is my iniquity, and what is my sin before your father, that he seeks my life?"

²So Jonathan said to him, "By no means! You shall not die! Indeed, my father will do nothing either great or small without first telling me. And why should my father hide this thing from me? It is not so!"

³Then David took an oath again, and said, "Your father certainly knows that I have found favor in your eyes, and he has said, 'Do not let Jonathan know this, lest he be grieved.' But *truly, as the LORD lives and as your soul lives, there is* but a step between me and death."

⁴So Jonathan said to David, "Whatever you yourself desire, I will do it for you."

⁵And David said to Jonathan, "Indeed tomorrow is the ^bNew Moon, and I

^v Num. 11:25; Joel 2:28
²³ ^v 1 Sam. 10:10
²⁴ ^w Is. 20:2 ^x Mic. 1:8 ^y 1 Sam. 10:10-12

CHAPTER 20

³ ^p 1 Sam. 27:1; 2 Kin. 2:6
⁵ ^p Num. 10:10; 28:11-15

19:11 tomorrow you will be killed: Because of her great love for her husband, Michal told David about Saul's plot. The story of David's escape is alluded to in the title of Ps. 59.

19:13 The Hebrew word for **image** is used elsewhere in Scripture to indicate household idols (see Gen. 31:19, 30–35; Judg. 18:17–26; 2 Kin. 23:24; Ezek. 21:21; Zech. 10:2). Some have suggested that here the word means a life-sized object of a man. However, there is no evidence that ancient Israelites kept such objects in their homes. The **cover of goats' hair** and **clothes** was used to make it appear that David was still in bed.

19:14 He is sick: Michal loved her husband so much that she was willing to go against her father's wishes, to lie for David and even to die for him. The fact that she lied is a part of the drama of the story and does not endorse the practice of lying.

19:15 Saul's decaying mental and spiritual state is reflected in his words to his messengers. He feared and hated David so much that he was willing to murder a man lying sick in his bed.

19:18, 19 Facing a serious personal crisis, David **went to Samuel at Ramah** for help. Together David and Samuel went to **Naioth** ("Dwellings"), a community within the city of Ramah.

19:20, 21 The working of God's **Spirit** distracted Saul's messengers from their purpose and protected His servant David.

19:22 Sechu is not mentioned elsewhere in the Bible. It was probably north of Jerusalem in the region of Gibeah and Ramah.

19:24 lay down naked: Ancient Israelite culture looked with disdain on nudity in public. It is probable that Saul removed his royal robe but retained his inner tunic. Here Saul's plan to kill David was totally thwarted by God's protective hand.

20:2 You shall not die: Jonathan was certain that Saul would not kill David. It is possible that Jonathan was unaware of the events of 19:8–24 and was trusting in Saul's solemn oath not to kill David (19:6).

20:3 David impressed the seriousness of the situation on Jonathan with **an oath**. **Do not let Jonathan know this:** David suggested that Saul had kept his plans from Jonathan to avoid causing his son grief.

20:4 Jonathan's words reflected his covenant of friendship with David (18:3). He had vowed to help David.

20:5, 6 The first day of the month, **the New Moon**, was observed as a religious festival (Num. 10:10; 28:11–15). It was customarily celebrated with a sacrificial meal and rest from work (see 2 Kin. 4:23; Is. 1:13; Amos 8:5). **yearly sacrifice:** Apparently Jesse's family gathered for a special time of worship during the New Moon celebration (v. 5).

should not fail to sit with the king to eat. But let me go, that I may ^ehide in the field until the third *day* at evening. ⁶If your father misses me at all, then say, ‘David earnestly asked *permission* of me that he might run over ^dto Bethlehem, his city, for *there* is a yearly sacrifice there for all the family.’ ⁷^cIf he says thus: ‘*It is well*, your servant will be safe. But if he is very angry, be sure that ^fevil is determined by him.’ ⁸Therefore you shall ^gdeal kindly with your servant, for ^hyou have brought your servant into a covenant of the LORD with you. Nevertheless, ⁱif there is iniquity in me, kill me yourself, for why should you bring me to your father?”

⁹But Jonathan said, “Far be it from you! For if I knew certainly that evil was determined by my father to come upon you, then would I not tell you?”

¹⁰Then David said to Jonathan, “Who will tell me, or what *if* your father answers you roughly?”

¹¹And Jonathan said to David, “Come, let us go out into the field.” So both of them went out into the field. ¹²Then Jonathan said to David: “The LORD God of Israel is *witness*! When I have ¹sounded out my father sometime tomorrow, or the third *day*, and indeed *there is* good toward David, and I do not send to you and tell you, ¹³may ^jthe LORD do so and much more to Jonathan. But if it pleases my father to do you evil, then I will report it to you and send you away, that you may go in safety. And ^kthe LORD be with you as He has ^lbeen with my father. ¹⁴And you shall not only show me the kindness of the LORD while I still live, that I may not die; ¹⁵but ^myou shall not ²cut off your kindness from my ³house forever, no, not when the LORD has cut off every one of the enemies of David from the face of the earth.” ¹⁶So Jonathan made a *covenant* with the ⁴house of David, *saying*, ⁿ“Let the LORD require it at the hand of David’s enemies.”

5 ^c 1 Sam. 19:2, 3
6 ^d 1 Sam. 16:4;
17:12; John 7:42
7 ^e Deut. 1:23;
2 Sam. 17:4 / 1 Sam.
25:17; Esth. 7:7
8 ^g Josh. 2:14
9 ^h 1 Sam. 18:3; 20:16;
23:18 / 2 Sam. 14:32
12 ¹ *sounded out*
13 / Ruth 1:17;
1 Sam. 3:17 ^k Josh.
1:5; 1 Sam. 17:37;
18:12; 1 Chr. 22:11,
16 / 1 Sam. 10:7
15 ^m 1 Sam. 24:21;
2 Sam. 9:1, 3, 7; 21:7
2 ^{stop being kind}
3 ^{family}
16 ⁿ Deut. 23:21;
1 Sam. 25:22; 31:2;
2 Sam. 4:7; 21:8
4 ^{family}

17 ^o 1 Sam. 18:1
18 ^p 1 Sam. 20:5, 24
19 ^q 1 Sam. 19:2
21 ^r Jer. 4:2
23 ^s 1 Sam. 20:14,
15
25 ^s So with MT,
Syr., Tg., Vg.; LXX
he sat across from
Jonathan
26 ^t Lev. 7:20, 21;
15:5
28 ^u 1 Sam. 20:6

¹⁷Now Jonathan again caused David to vow, because he loved him; ^ofor he loved him as he loved his own soul. ¹⁸Then Jonathan said to David, ^p“Tomorrow is the New Moon; and you will be missed, because your seat will be empty. ¹⁹And *when* you have stayed three days, go down quickly and come to ^qthe place where you hid on the day of the deed; and remain by the stone Ezel. ²⁰Then I will shoot three arrows to the side, as though I shot at a target; ²¹and there I will send a lad, *saying*, ‘Go, find the arrows.’ If I expressly say to the lad, ‘Look, the arrows are on this side of you; get them and come’—then, ^ras the LORD lives, *there is* safety for you and no harm. ²²But if I say thus to the young man, ‘Look, the arrows are beyond you’—go your way, for the LORD has sent you away. ²³And as for ^sthe matter which you and I have spoken of, indeed the LORD *be* between you and me forever.”

²⁴Then David hid in the field. And when the New Moon had come, the king sat down to eat the feast. ²⁵Now the king sat on his seat, as at other times, on a seat by the wall. And ⁵Jonathan arose, and Abner sat by Saul’s side, but David’s place was empty. ²⁶Nevertheless Saul did not say anything that day, for he thought, “Something has happened to him; he is unclean, surely he is ^tunclean.” ²⁷And it happened the next day, the second *day* of the month, that David’s place was empty. And Saul said to Jonathan his son, “Why has the son of Jesse not come to eat, either yesterday or today?”

²⁸So Jonathan answered Saul, “David earnestly asked *permission* of me *to go* to Bethlehem. ²⁹And he said, ‘Please let me go, for our family has a sacrifice in the city, and my brother has commanded me *to be there*. And now, if I have found favor in your eyes, please let me get away and see my brothers.’ Therefore he has not come to the king’s table.”

20:8 The words **deal kindly** may also be rendered “show covenant loyalty.” In other words, David was asking Jonathan to be faithful to his word. He had initiated a **covenant** of friendship (18:3). **if there is iniquity**: Since David had done no wrong, he was certainly not worthy of death.

20:12, 13 If the news was **good toward David**, Jonathan would send a messenger to inform his friend. If the news was **evil**, then Jonathan would inform David personally. All of this was couched in a solemn oath.

20:14, 15 the kindness of the LORD: Jonathan used the same Hebrew word meaning “covenant loyalty” that David had used earlier (v. 8). Both Jonathan and David were appealing to their covenant of friendship as a basis for acts of kindness. Whatever the outcome of the rift between Saul and David, Jonathan appealed to David to protect his own life and the lives of his descendants. Jonathan knew that David might someday take the throne—and he was well aware of the ancient custom of a new king killing the offspring of his predecessor (see 1 Kin. 15:29; 16:11; 2 Kin. 10:7).

20:16, 17 Jonathan and David reaffirmed their covenant of friendship. **Jonathan made a covenant**: This refers to the agreement Jonathan sought from David in vv. 14, 15. **Let the LORD require it**: Jonathan prayed that the Lord would hold David accountable to the obligations of the covenant. Out of love for David, Jonathan again requested that David reaffirm his **vow** (18:1; 19:1). David and Jonathan were holding each other accountable.

20:19 The stone Ezel was likely a familiar landmark.

20:23 Jonathan declared that **the LORD** would be a witness to the covenant of protection which he had arranged with David (vv. 14–16).

20:25–27 he is unclean: Noticing that David’s seat was empty, Saul assumed that ritual uncleanness must have prevented his participation in the feast (see Lev. 7:20, 21; 15:16). Since ritual uncleanness was only temporary, Saul’s suspicions were aroused when David was absent on the second night of the feast. The reference to **Abner** suggests that David might have been threatening Abner’s position as the general of the army.

³⁰Then Saul's anger was aroused against Jonathan, and he said to him, "You son of a perverse, rebellious *woman*! Do I not know that you have chosen the son of Jesse to your own shame and to the shame of your mother's nakedness?" ³¹For as long as the son of Jesse lives on the earth, you shall not be established, nor your kingdom. Now therefore, send and bring him to me, for he ⁶shall surely die."

³²And Jonathan answered Saul his father, and said to him, ^v"Why should he be killed? What has he done?" ³³Then Saul ^wcast a spear at him to ⁷kill him, ^xby which Jonathan knew that it was determined by his father to kill David.

³⁴So Jonathan arose from the table in fierce anger, and ate no food the second day of the month, for he was grieved for David, because his father had treated him shamefully.

³⁵And so it was, in the morning, that Jonathan went out into the field at the time appointed with David, and a little lad *was* with him. ³⁶Then he said to his lad, "Now run, find the arrows which I shoot." As the lad ran, he shot an arrow beyond him. ³⁷When the lad had come to the place where the arrow was which

³¹ ⁶ Lit. *is a son of death*
³² ^v Gen. 31:36;
 1 Sam. 19:5; [Prov. 31:9]; Matt. 27:23;
 Luke 23:22
³³ ^w 1 Sam. 18:11;
 19:10 ^x 1 Sam. 20:7
⁷ strike him down

⁴⁰ ⁸ equipment
⁴² ^v 1 Sam. 1:17

CHAPTER 21

¹ ^a 1 Sam. 14:3;
 Mark 2:26 ^b 1 Sam.
 16:4

Jonathan had shot, Jonathan cried out after the lad and said, "*Is not the arrow beyond you?*" ³⁸And Jonathan cried out after the lad, "Make haste, hurry, do not delay!" So Jonathan's lad gathered up the arrows and came back to his master. ³⁹But the lad did not know anything. Only Jonathan and David knew of the matter. ⁴⁰Then Jonathan gave his ⁸weapons to his lad, and said to him, "Go, carry them to the city."

⁴¹As soon as the lad had gone, David arose from *a place* toward the south, fell on his face to the ground, and bowed down three times. And they kissed one another; and they wept together, but David more so. ⁴²Then Jonathan said to David, ^y"Go in peace, since we have both sworn in the name of the LORD, saying, 'May the LORD be between you and me, and between your descendants and my descendants, forever.'" So he arose and departed, and Jonathan went into the city.

David and the Holy Bread

21 Now David came to Nob, to Ahimelech the priest. And ^aAhimelech was ^bafraid when he met David, and said to him, "Why *are* you alone, and no one is with you?"

20:30, 31 **your mother's nakedness:** Saul suggested that Jonathan and his mother with him were shameful because of Jonathan's apparently despicable behavior. Aware of David's increasing popularity, Saul knew that David would likely displace Jonathan from the throne. Here, Saul demonstrated his selfish concern for his family's welfare over God's sovereign will. Compare Eli's appropriate response to God's judgment (3:18).

20:35–40 On the third day, Jonathan went to the field to signal to David that he should flee the court of Saul. However, Jonathan's love for David would not allow him to stop at a mere signal. He got

rid of his servant on a ruse and at great personal risk went to meet David one last time.

20:41, 42 Before parting, David and Jonathan **wept together**. Both were valiant warriors but also men of tender hearts. They were loyal friends and committed to each other even in difficult circumstances. At their parting, the two friends reiterated their covenant of friendship (18:3; 20:14–16).

21:1 **Nob** was a priestly community; the tabernacle was relocated there after the destruction of Shiloh. **Ahimelech**, the great-grandson of Eli (1:9), was serving as high priest. His name means "My

The Sinful and Sad Life of Saul

Passage	Saul's Sinful Choice	Sad Consequence
1 Sam. 13:5–23	He assumed a priestly role and offered sacrifices before battle.	The prophet Samuel announced God's choice of a new king.
14:1–52	He made a foolish oath.	The people turned against him.
15:1–9	He disobeyed God's instructions by not completely destroying Agag.	Samuel announced God's utter rejection of him as king.
18:10–16	He personally tried to kill David.	He was overcome by fear and an evil spirit.
19:1–7	He ordered the murder of David.	He became paranoid.
19:8–10	He again tried to kill David.	He was tormented by an evil spirit.
19:11–24	He continued his murderous campaign against David.	He became jealous and fearful of David.
20:1–42	He tried to get his son Jonathan to assist in killing David.	He became violent toward his own son Jonathan.
22:6–23	He ordered Doeg to kill the priests of Nob.	He slipped further into madness and depravity.
28:7–25	He visited a witch.	He became terrified of his future death.
31:4	He committed suicide.	A man with great potential died in great shame.

²So David said to Ahimelech the priest, “The king has ordered me on some business, and said to me, ‘Do not let anyone know anything about the business on which I send you, or what I have commanded you.’ And I have directed *my* young men to such and such a place.”
³Now therefore, what have you on hand? Give *me* five *loaves* of bread in my hand, or whatever can be found.”

⁴And the priest answered David and said, “*There is no* ¹common bread on hand; but there is ^eholy² bread, ^dif the young men have at least kept themselves from women.”

⁵Then David answered the priest, and said to him, “Truly, women *have been* kept from us about three days since I came out. And ³the ^evessels of the young men are holy, and *the bread is* in effect common, even though it was consecrated ^fin the vessel this day.”

⁶So the priest ^ggave him holy *bread*; for there was no bread there but the showbread ^hwhich had been taken from before the LORD, in order to put hot bread in *its place* on the day when it was taken away.

⁷Now a certain man of the servants of Saul *was* there that day, detained before the LORD. And his name *was* ⁱDoeg, an Edomite, the chief of the herdsmen who *belonged* to Saul.

⁸And David said to Ahimelech, “Is there not here on hand a spear or a sword? For I have brought neither my sword nor my weapons with me, because the king’s business required haste.”

4 ^c Ex. 25:30; Lev. 24:5–9; Matt. 12:4 ^d Ex. 19:15 ¹ ordinary ² consecrated
 5 ^e Ex. 19:14, 15; 1 Thess. 4:4
^f Lev. 8:26 ³ The young men are ceremonially undefiled
 6 ^g Matt. 12:3, 4; Mark 2:25, 26; Luke 6:3, 4 ^h Lev. 24:8, 9
 7 ⁱ 1 Sam. 14:47; 22:9; Ps. 52:title

9 / 1 Sam. 17:2, 50
^k 1 Sam. 31:10
 11 / Ps. 56:title
^m 1 Sam. 18:6–8; 29:5
 12 ⁿ Luke 2:19 ⁴ Lit. in his heart
 13 ^o Ps. 34:title
^p insanity
^q scribbled

CHAPTER 22

1 ^a Ps. 57:title;
 142:title ^b Josh. 12:15; 15:35; 2 Sam. 23:13

⁹So the priest said, “The sword of Goliath the Philistine, whom you killed in ^jthe Valley of Elah, ^kthere it is, wrapped in a cloth behind the ephod. If you will take that, take *it*. For *there is* no other except that one here.”

And David said, “*There is* none like it; give it to me.”

David Flees to Gath

¹⁰Then David arose and fled that day from before Saul, and went to Achish the king of Gath. ¹¹And ^lthe servants of Achish said to him, “Is this not David the king of the land? Did they not sing of him to one another in dances, saying:

^m‘Saul has slain his thousands,
 And David his ten thousands?’”

¹²Now David ⁿtook these words ⁴to heart, and was very much afraid of Achish the king of Gath. ¹³So ^ohe changed his behavior before them, pretended ⁵madness in their hands, ⁶scratched on the doors of the gate, and let his saliva fall down on his beard. ¹⁴Then Achish said to his servants, “Look, you see the man is insane. Why have you brought him to me? ¹⁵Have I need of madmen, that you have brought this *fellow* to play the madman in my presence? Shall this *fellow* come into my house?”

David's Four Hundred Men

22 David therefore departed from there and ^aescaped ^bto the cave of

Brother Is King.” **was afraid:** His fear may have been due to rumors of a breach between Saul and David. Since David was a respected soldier and a member of the royal court, it would be unusual for him to travel alone.

21:2 The king has ordered me: David deceived Ahimelech into believing that he was on a secret mission for the king. His lie unwittingly precipitated a tragedy for the priests of Nob (22:6–19).

I have directed my young men: David apparently had arranged a rendezvous with a small band of men (21:4, 5; 22:2; see Matt. 12:3, 4).

21:3–5 no common bread: In response to David’s request for provisions, Ahimelech explained that the only bread available was **holy bread**, sometimes called the “showbread,” which had been displayed before the Lord in the tabernacle (see Ex. 25:23–30; Lev. 24:5–9). According to God’s law, this bread could be eaten only by priests. David explained to Ahimelech that his men had avoided ritual impurity, having had no contact with **women for three days** (see Ex. 19:15; Lev. 15:16–18). **In effect common:** David argued that the bread was no longer sacred because new bread had replaced it before the Lord.

21:6 the priest gave him holy bread: The Talmud explains this apparent breach of the law on the basis that the preservation of life takes precedence over nearly all other commandments in the Law (see Lev. 24:9). Jesus referred to this incident in Matt. 12:2–4; Mark 2:25, 26, in His discussion with the Pharisees concerning the Sabbath. The spirit of the Law was kept by Ahimelech’s compassionate act.

21:7 Doeg, an Edomite, witnessed the encounter between David and Ahimelech and passed the word along to the king. Doeg was not at the tabernacle as a spy but as a man **detained before the LORD**—that is, under a spiritual vow.

21:9 Having fled Gibeah without weapons, David laid claim to **the sword of Goliath**, whom David had **killed in the Valley of Elah** (17:40–51). The sword was **wrapped in a cloth** to prevent the blade from rusting and had been placed **behind the ephod**, the high priest’s ceremonial robes.

21:10 Achish ruled the city of **Gath**, one of the five major cities of the Philistines (6:17). Various sites have been proposed for the location of Gath. The most widely accepted is about 12 miles southeast of Ashdod.

21:11 David the king: This remark is an exaggeration of a rumored takeover of the throne by David. His military exploits certainly commended him to kingship. The popular song sung in his honor after his victory over Goliath had reached the ears of the Philistines (18:7; 29:5).

21:12, 13 These verses provide the background for Ps. 34 and perhaps Ps. 56. In Ps. 34, **Achish** is referred to as Abimelech, which was apparently a dynastic title used by the Philistine rulers (Gen. 20:2; 26:1). **very much afraid:** David’s life was in jeopardy. If the superscription of Ps. 56 relates to this incident, David was seized by the Philistines. He had come for a place of refuge from Saul but found himself in the hands of the Philistines. **Madness** was associated in ancient times with being controlled by a powerful spirit. David changed his demeanor and behaved as though he were insane, writing graffiti on the doors of the gates and drooling.

21:14, 15 Achish had no interest in adding an insane soldier to his army. The title of Ps. 34 indicates the conclusion of this incident. The king “drove him away, and he departed.”

22:1 After David’s escape from Gath, he gathered his family and followers at a cave near the city of Adullam, about 10 miles southeast

Adullam. So when his brothers and all his father's house heard *it*, they went down there to him. ^{2c} And everyone *who was* in distress, everyone *who was* in debt, and everyone *who was* ¹discontented gathered to him. So he became captain over them. And there were about ^dfour hundred men with him.

³ Then David went from there to Mizpah of ^eMoab; and he said to the king of Moab, "Please let my father and mother come here with you, till I know what God will do for me." ⁴ So he brought them before the king of Moab, and they dwelt with him all the time that David was in the stronghold.

⁵ Now the prophet ^fGad said to David,

² ^c Judg. 11:3
^d 1 Sam. 25:13 ¹ Lit.
bitter of soul
³ ^c 2 Sam. 8:2
⁵ ^f 2 Sam. 24:11;
 1 Chr. 21:9; 29:29;
 2 Chr. 29:25

⁶ ^g 1 Sam. 15:34
⁷ ^h 1 Sam. 8:14

"Do not stay in the stronghold; depart, and go to the land of Judah." So David departed and went into the forest of Hereth.

Saul Murders the Priests

⁶ When Saul heard that David and the men who *were* with him had been discovered—now Saul was staying in ^gGibeah under a tamarisk tree in Ramah, with his spear in his hand, and all his servants standing about him—⁷ then Saul said to his servants who stood about him, "Hear now, you Benjamites! Will the son of Jesse ^hgive every one of you fields and vineyards, *and* make you all captains of thousands and captains of hundreds?

of Gath and 16 miles southwest of Jerusalem. **The cave of Adullam** was where David composed Ps. 142 and possibly Ps. 57.

22:2 David soon attracted a considerable following of those who were oppressed and discontented with Saul's rule. **Everyone who was in debt** apparently refers to those who were in danger of being sold into slavery by their creditors (2 Kin. 4:1). **Captain** is a general term for a political, military, or religious leader. The **four hundred men** soon grew to six hundred (23:13). They were a group of drifters and debtors, troublemakers and those who were troubled. David expressed his disappointment when he realized that none of the men were there to support him (Ps. 142:4).

22:3 The name **Mizpah** means "Watchtower"; this was probably a

fortress in **Moab**. The region of Moab was located east of the Dead Sea. David's family connection with the Moabites is related in the story of Ruth (Ruth 1:4–18; 4:21, 22).

22:5, 6 Following the advice of the **prophet Gad** (2 Sam. 24:11), David left the **stronghold** and hid in **the forest of Hereth**, the location of which is unknown. The **tamarisk tree** is well-suited for hot, dry places, growing well on sandy, desert soils (Gen. 21:33).

22:7 the son of Jesse: Saul perhaps was unwilling to refer to David by name (20:30, 31). Saul suggested that the Benjamites could not expect blessings under the rule of David, who was from the tribe of Judah.

David the Fugitive



⁸All of you have conspired against me, and *there is* no one who reveals to me that ⁱmy son has made a covenant with the son of Jesse; and *there is* not one of you who is sorry for me or reveals to me that my son has stirred up my servant against me, to lie in wait, as *it is* this day.”

⁹Then answered ^jDoeg the Edomite, who was set over the servants of Saul, and said, “I saw the son of Jesse going to Nob, to ^kAhimelech the son of ^lAhitub. ^{10m}And he inquired of the LORD for him, ⁿgave him provisions, and gave him the sword of Goliath the Philistine.”

¹¹So the king sent to call Ahimelech the priest, the son of Ahitub, and all his father’s house, the priests who *were* in Nob. And they all came to the king.

¹²And Saul said, “Hear now, son of Ahitub!”

He answered, “Here I am, my lord.”

¹³Then Saul said to him, “Why have you conspired against me, you and the son of Jesse, in that you have given him bread and a sword, and have inquired of God for him, that he should rise against me, to lie in wait, as it is this day?”

¹⁴So Ahimelech answered the king and said, “And who among all your servants *is as* ^ofaithful as David, who is the king’s son-in-law, who goes at your bidding, and is honorable in your house? ¹⁵Did I then begin to inquire of God for him? Far be it from me! Let not the king impute anything to his servant, *or* to any in the house of my father. For your servant knew nothing of all this, little or much.”

¹⁶And the king said, “You shall surely die, Ahimelech, you and all ^pyour father’s house!” ¹⁷Then the king said to the guards who stood about him, “Turn and kill the priests of the LORD, because

⁸ ¹ 1 Sam. 18:3; 20:16, 30
⁹ ¹ 1 Sam. 21:7; 22:22; Ps. 52:title
^k ¹ 1 Sam. 21:1
^l ¹ 1 Sam. 14:3
^{10m} Num. 27:21; 1 Sam. 10:22
ⁿ ¹ 1 Sam. 21:6, 9
¹⁴ ^o ¹ 1 Sam. 19:4, 5; 20:32; 24:11
¹⁶ ^p Deut. 24:16

¹⁷ ^q Ex. 1:17
¹⁸ ^r ¹ 1 Sam. 2:31
² ^s ¹ attacked
¹⁹ ^t Josh. 21:1-45;
¹ 1 Sam. 22:9, 11
²⁰ ^u ¹ 1 Sam. 23:6, 9;
 30:7; 1 Kin. 2:26, 27
^v ¹ 1 Sam. 2:33
²² ³ ¹ family
²³ ^v ¹ 1 Kin. 2:26

CHAPTER 23

¹ ^a Josh. 15:44;
 Neh. 3:17, 18
² ^b ¹ 1 Sam. 22:10;
 23:4, 6, 9; 28:6; 30:8;
 2 Sam. 5:19, 23
⁷ ¹ Lit. *strike*

their hand also *is* with David, and because they knew when he fled and did not tell it to me.” But the servants of the king ^qwould not lift their hands to strike the priests of the LORD. ¹⁸And the king said to Doeg, “You turn and kill the priests!” So Doeg the Edomite turned and ²struck the priests, and ^rkilled on that day eighty-five men who wore a linen ephod. ^{19s}Also Nob, the city of the priests, he struck with the edge of the sword, both men and women, children and nursing infants, oxen and donkeys and sheep—with the edge of the sword.

^{20t}Now one of the sons of Ahimelech the son of Ahitub, named Abiathar, ^uescaped and fled after David. ²¹And Abiathar told David that Saul had killed the LORD’s priests. ²²So David said to Abiathar, “I knew that day, when Doeg the Edomite *was* there, that he would surely tell Saul. I have caused the *death* of all the persons of your father’s ³house. ²³Stay with me; do not fear. ^vFor he who seeks my life seeks your life, but with me you *shall be* safe.”

David Saves the City of Keilah

23 Then they told David, saying, “Look, the Philistines are fighting against ^aKeilah, and they are robbing the threshing floors.”

²Therefore David ^binquired of the LORD, saying, “Shall I go and ¹attack these Philistines?”

And the LORD said to David, “Go and attack the Philistines, and save Keilah.”

³But David’s men said to him, “Look, we are afraid here in Judah. How much more then if we go to Keilah against the armies of the Philistines?” ⁴Then David inquired of the LORD once again.

22:9, 10 Doeg sought to ingratiate himself with Saul by betraying **Ahimelech**, the high priest who gave David provisions and a weapon (21:1–9). **he inquired of the LORD for him:** This is not mentioned in 21:1–9, although Ahimelech seems to admit it in v. 15. **22:14, 15 as faithful as David:** In answering the charges against himself, **Ahimelech** inadvertently defended David. To hear the loyalty and faithfulness of David defended must have annoyed Saul considerably. **knew nothing:** Ahimelech made a case for his innocence by declaring his ignorance of the breach that had occurred between Saul and David.

22:17, 18 would not lift their hands to strike the priests: The soldiers attending Saul knew better than to raise their weapons against the priests of the living God. They must have viewed the sentence as unjust or an act of sacrilege. Seeing a further opportunity to win Saul’s favor, **Doeg**, a Gentile, carried out the slaughter of the 85 priests (21:7).

22:20 Abiathar had not been among the 85 priests killed by Doeg at Gibeah. He escaped from Nob before the massacre. According to 23:6, he met up with David at Keilah.

22:22 I have caused the death of all the persons: David recognized that his deception led to the massacre of the priests and their families (21:1–9). In the sovereignty of God, the destruction of the

priests of Nob was a partial fulfillment of the prophesied judgment on Eli’s house (2:27–36). But the sovereignty of God never nullifies personal responsibility for one’s actions (Acts 2:23).

22:23 he who seeks my life seeks your life: David and Abiathar were both regarded as enemies by Saul. **safe:** David offered Abiathar protection. The priest remained with David and provided a valuable service (23:9). He brought the ephod with him and inquired of the LORD for David (23:2, 6).

23:1 Instead of turning to Saul, their king, the people of **Keilah** appealed to **David** for deliverance from the **Philistines**. Located in a region of low hills about 15 miles southwest of Jerusalem, Keilah belonged to the tribe of Judah (Josh. 15:44). **Threshing floors** were hard, flat surfaces where grain was trampled or crushed to separate it from the straw. Sometimes threshing floors served as storage areas. The Philistines raided the threshing floors after the Israelites had harvested and processed the grain.

23:2, 3 David inquired of the LORD: David sought the will of God concerning whether the LORD had called him to deliver Keilah. David recognized that need does not necessarily constitute a call to a particular ministry. **here in Judah:** The men had taken risks in associating themselves with David in Israelite territory, but they sensed that there would be increased risks if they left the hill country of Judah.

And the LORD answered him and said, “Arise, go down to Keilah. For I will deliver the Philistines into your hand.”

⁵ And David and his men went to Keilah and ^cfought with the Philistines, struck them with a mighty blow, and took away their livestock. So David saved the inhabitants of Keilah.

⁶ Now it happened, when Abiathar the son of Ahimelech ^dfled to David at Keilah, *that* he went down *with* an ephod in his hand.

⁷ And Saul was told that David had gone to Keilah. So Saul said, “God has delivered him into my hand, for he has shut himself in by entering a town that has gates and bars.” ⁸ Then Saul called all the people together for war, to go down to Keilah to besiege David and his men.

⁹ When David knew that Saul plotted evil against him, ^ehe said to Abiathar the priest, “Bring the ephod here.” ¹⁰ Then David said, “O LORD God of Israel, Your servant has certainly heard that Saul seeks to come to Keilah ^fto destroy the city for my sake. ¹¹ Will the men of Keilah deliver me into his hand? Will Saul come down, as Your servant has heard? O LORD God of Israel, I pray, tell Your servant.”

And the LORD said, “He will come down.”

¹² Then David said, “Will the men of Keilah ²deliver me and my men into the hand of Saul?”

And the LORD said, “They will deliver you.”

¹³ So David and his men, ^gabout six hundred, arose and departed from Keilah and went wherever they could go. Then it was told Saul that David had escaped from Keilah; so he halted the expedition.

5 ^c 1 Sam. 19:8;
2 Sam. 5:20
6 ^d 1 Sam. 22:20
9 ^e Num. 27:21;
1 Sam. 23:6; 30:7
10 ^f 1 Sam. 22:19
12 ² Lit. *shut up*
13 ^g 1 Sam. 22:2;
25:13

14 ^h Ps. 11:1 ⁱ Josh.
15:55; 2 Chr. 11:8
/ Ps. 32:7; 54:3, 4
15 ³ Or in *Horesh*
16 ⁴ encouraged
him
17 ^k [Ps. 27:1-3;
Heb. 13:6] ¹ 1 Sam.
20:31; 24:20
18 ^m 1 Sam. 18:3;
20:12-17, 42; 2 Sam.
9:1; 21:7
19 ⁿ 1 Sam. 26:1; Ps.
54:title
20 ^o Ps. 54:3
23 ⁵ Lit. *thousands*

David in Wilderness Strongholds

¹⁴ And David stayed in strongholds in the wilderness, and remained in ^hthe mountains in the Wilderness of ⁱZiph. Saul ^jsought him every day, but God did not deliver him into his hand. ¹⁵ So David saw that Saul had come out to seek his life. And David *was* in the Wilderness of Ziph ³ in a forest. ¹⁶ Then Jonathan, Saul's son, arose and went to David in the woods and ⁴strengthened his hand in God. ¹⁷ And he said to him, ^k“Do not fear, for the hand of Saul my father shall not find you. You shall be king over Israel, and I shall be next to you. ^lEven my father Saul knows that.” ¹⁸ So the two of them ^mmade a covenant before the LORD. And David stayed in the woods, and Jonathan went to his own house.

¹⁹ Then the Ziphites ⁿcame up to Saul at Gibeah, saying, “Is David not hiding with us in strongholds in the woods, in the hill of Hachilah, which *is* on the south of Jeshimon? ²⁰ Now therefore, O king, come down according to all the desire of your soul to come down; and ^oour part *shall be* to deliver him into the king's hand.”

²¹ And Saul said, “Blessed *are* you of the LORD, for you have compassion on me. ²² Please go and find out for sure, and see the place where his hideout is, *and* who has seen him there. For I am told he is very crafty. ²³ See therefore, and take knowledge of all the lurking places where he hides; and come back to me with certainty, and I will go with you. And it shall be, if he is in the land, that I will search for him throughout all the ⁵clans of Judah.”

²⁴ So they arose and went to Ziph before Saul. But David and his men *were*

23:6 Abiathar did not join up with David until he was at **Keilah**. The account of this meeting was apparently included earlier to complete the narrative of what happened to the priests of Nob (22:20–23). The **ephod** was the outer vest of the priest. Its value was probably due to the Urim and Thummim attached to the breastplate. By means of the Urim and Thummim, God could be consulted and His will determined (see Ex. 28:30; Num. 27:21).

23:7, 8 a town that has gates and bars: Saul assumed that it would be easier to capture David in a fortified city than to chase him all over the wilderness. Saul had not fought against the Philistines, the enemies of his people, for some time. But in an attempt to capture David, he was willing to destroy an entire Jewish town.

23:9–12 Bring the ephod here: David sought the will of God through the Urim and Thummim, which were attached to or inside the breastplate of the ephod (v. 6). David used the ephod to find out whether he was safe staying in Keilah. He asked two questions of the Lord: (1) Would Saul come to Keilah in pursuit of him? (2) Would the people of Keilah betray him to Saul? David received a “yes” answer to both questions.

23:13, 14 The number of David's followers had increased 50 percent, from four hundred (22:2) to **six hundred**. **Strongholds** refers to the various hideouts where David and his followers found refuge. The **Wilderness of Ziph** is the barren region about four miles

southeast of Hebron. This region had many ravines and caves in which David's men could hide.

23:16–18 Jonathan . . . went to David: This was the custom between the two; Jonathan initiated their friendship. To visit David, his father's archenemy, would have been risky for Jonathan. **his hand in God:** Both men had a fervent love for God, and Jonathan encouraged David to continue his obedient walk with the Lord. Jonathan recognized that David was destined to be Israel's next **king** and was content to take second place beside him because it was God's will. Finally, David and Jonathan renewed the **covenant** of friendship and protection which they had established earlier (18:3; 20:14–17).

23:19–29 While fleeing in the wilderness, David narrowly escaped being captured by Saul. This incident provides the historical background for Ps. 54.

23:19 Jeshimon may not be a proper name but a term meaning “waste” or “desert.” The term is used here of the barren wilderness of Judah, which is in the vicinity of Ziph.

23:22, 23 crafty: David's boyhood work as a shepherd gave him plenty of opportunity to learn the geography of the region and to become familiar with the hiding places of the wilderness.

23:24 By the time the Ziphites returned to **Ziph**, David and his men had moved to the **Wilderness of Maon**, a desert region to the

in the Wilderness ^p of Maon, in the plain on the south of Jeshimon. ²⁵ When Saul and his men went to seek *him*, they told David. Therefore he went down ⁶ to the rock, and stayed in the Wilderness of Maon. And when Saul heard *that*, he pursued David in the Wilderness of Maon. ²⁶ Then Saul went on one side of the mountain, and David and his men on the other side of the mountain. ^q So David made haste to get away from Saul, for Saul and his men ^r were encircling David and his men to take them.

^{27s} But a messenger came to Saul, saying, “Hurry and come, for the Philistines have invaded the land!” ²⁸ Therefore Saul returned from pursuing David, and went against the Philistines; so they called that place ⁷ the Rock of Escape. ²⁹ Then David went up from there and dwelt in strongholds at ^t En Gedi.

David Sparing Saul

24 Now it happened, ^a when Saul had returned from following the Philistines, that it was told him, saying, “Take note! David *is* in the Wilderness of En Gedi.” ² Then Saul took three thousand chosen men from all Israel, and ^b went to seek David and his men on the Rocks of the Wild Goats. ³ So he came to the sheepfolds by the road, where there *was* a cave; and ^c Saul went in to ^d attend to his needs. (^e David and his men were staying in the recesses of the cave.) ^{4f} Then the men of David said to him, “This is the day of which the LORD said to you, ‘Behold, I will deliver your enemy into your hand, that you may do

²⁴ ^p Josh. 15:55; 1 Sam. 25:2
²⁵ ⁶ Or from the rock
²⁶ ^q Ps. 31:22 ^r Ps. 17:9
²⁷ ^s 2 Kin. 19:9
²⁸ ⁷ Heb. *Sela Hammahlekoth*
²⁹ ^t Josh. 15:62; 2 Chr. 20:2

CHAPTER 24

¹ ^a 1 Sam. 23:19, 28, 29
² ^b 1 Sam. 26:2; Ps. 38:12
³ ^c 1 Sam. 24:10
⁴ Judg. 3:24 ^e Ps. 57:title; 142:title
⁴ ^f 1 Sam. 26:8-11

⁵ ^g 2 Sam. 24:10
⁶ ^h 1 Sam. 26:11
⁷ ⁱ Ps. 7:4; [Matt. 5:44; Rom. 12:17, 19]
⁹ ^j Ps. 141:6; [Prov. 16:28; 17:9]
¹¹ ^k Judg. 11:27; Ps. 7:3; 35:7 ^l 1 Sam. 26:20
¹² ^m Gen. 16:5; Judg. 11:27; 1 Sam. 26:10-23; Job 5:8
¹³ ⁿ [Matt. 7:16-20]

to him as it seems good to you.” And David arose and secretly cut off a corner of Saul’s robe. ⁵ Now it happened afterward that ^g David’s heart troubled him because he had cut Saul’s robe. ⁶ And he said to his men, ^h “The LORD forbid that I should do this thing to my master, the LORD’s anointed, to stretch out my hand against him, seeing he *is* the anointed of the LORD.” ⁷ So David ⁱ restrained his servants with *these* words, and did not allow them to rise against Saul. And Saul got up from the cave and went on *his* way.

⁸ David also arose afterward, went out of the cave, and called out to Saul, saying, “My lord the king!” And when Saul looked behind him, David stooped with his face to the earth, and bowed down. ⁹ And David said to Saul: ^j “Why do you listen to the words of men who say, ‘Indeed David seeks your harm’? ¹⁰ Look, this day your eyes have seen that the LORD delivered you today into my hand in the cave, and *someone* urged *me* to kill you. But *my eye* spared you, and I said, ‘I will not stretch out my hand against my lord, for he *is* the LORD’s anointed.’ ¹¹ Moreover, my father, see! Yes, see the corner of your robe in my hand! For in that I cut off the corner of your robe, and did not kill you, know and see that *there is* ^k neither evil nor rebellion in my hand, and I have not sinned against you. Yet you ^l hunt my life to take it. ¹² ^m Let the LORD judge between you and me, and let the LORD avenge me on you. But my hand shall not be against you. ¹³ As the proverb of the ancients says, ⁿ “Wicked-

south. Maon, a city of the Judean hill country (see Josh. 15:55), was located about five miles south of **Ziph**.

23:25–28 Although Saul and his men managed to surround David’s hideout, a report of a raid by the **Philistines** forced Saul to withdraw, allowing David to escape.

23:28 The place of David’s near capture was named **the Rock of Escape** to commemorate his deliverance.

23:29 En Gedi, meaning “Spring of the Kid,” was an oasis east of Hebron, very near the shore of the Dead Sea. The site was noted in biblical times for the fresh water spring and lush vineyards (see Song 1:14).

24:2 The Rocks of the Wild Goats is another name for the area of En Gedi.

24:3 sheepfolds: At night, shepherds in this wild area would gather their sheep into a protective rock enclosure. A low stone wall would keep the sheep from wandering. The shepherd would position himself at the entrance of the sheepfold to guard against animals of prey and thieves. Often a cave with a wall built across its mouth served as a sheepfold in the wilderness.

24:4 the LORD said to you: These words are not recorded elsewhere in Scripture. Perhaps they are given as the interpretation of the immediate events by David’s men. **corner of Saul’s robe:** Saul may have laid his robe aside, enabling David to cut off a piece unobserved. The piece of cloak would serve as proof that Saul had been completely at David’s mercy.

24:5 David’s heart troubled him: David was conscience-stricken.

He knew it was wrong to assault the Lord’s anointed king (vv. 6, 10). Even though David had not really done anything to hurt the king physically, the fact that he had reached out with his knife troubled him.

24:6 The LORD forbid: David had a high regard for the **LORD’s anointed** king. To cut off a portion of Saul’s robe constituted for David an act of disrespect for God’s representative, even though that man was seeking to take David’s life.

24:8, 9 My lord the king: These words of respect from the voice that Saul knew well must have been quite stunning to him. **and bowed down:** This was not religious worship but an act of respect for Saul’s position as king. **David seeks your harm:** Some people in Saul’s court were falsely accusing David of trying to overthrow Saul.

24:10 the LORD delivered you today into my hand: David recognized God’s sovereignty in bringing about the circumstances that gave him an opportunity to kill Saul.

24:11 My father is a warm term of affection and respect (see 2 Kin. 5:13; 6:21). It also reminded Saul that David was in fact his son-in-law.

your robe: There could be no clearer evidence that David was not out to harm the king.

24:12 David dedicated to **the LORD** the matter of his relationship with Saul. God alone could settle the matter and bring about perfect justice (see Deut. 32:35; Rom. 12:17–21).

24:13 Wickedness proceeds from the wicked: The meaning of the proverb is that only a wicked man would seek to do evil against another. Since David did not take advantage of the opportunity to kill Saul, he was most certainly a good man.

ness proceeds from the wicked.' But my hand shall not be against you. ¹⁴After whom has the king of Israel come out? Whom do you pursue? ¹⁵A dead dog? ¹⁶A flea? ¹⁷Therefore let the LORD be judge, and judge between you and me, and ¹⁸see and ¹⁹plead my case, and deliver me out of your hand."

¹⁶So it was, when David had finished speaking these words to Saul, that Saul said, ¹⁷"Is this your voice, my son David?" And Saul lifted up his voice and wept. ¹⁸Then he said to David: "You are ¹⁹more righteous than I; for ²⁰you have rewarded me with good, whereas I have rewarded you with evil. ²¹And you have shown this day how you have dealt well with me; for when ²²the LORD delivered me into your hand, you did not kill me. ²³For if a man finds his enemy, will he let him get away safely? Therefore may the LORD reward you with good for what you have done to me this day. ²⁴And now ²⁵I know indeed that you shall surely be king, and that the kingdom of Israel shall be established in your hand. ²⁶Therefore swear now to me by the LORD ²⁷that you will not cut off my descendants after me, and that you will not destroy my name from my father's house."

²⁸So David swore to Saul. And Saul went home, but David and his men went up to ²⁹the stronghold.

Death of Samuel

25 Then ¹Samuel died; and the Israelites gathered together and ²lamented for him, and buried him at his

¹⁴ ¹ 1 Sam. 17:43; 2 Sam. 9:8 ¹⁵ 1 Sam. 26:20
¹⁵ ¹ 1 Sam. 24:12
¹⁶ 2 Chr. 24:22 ¹⁷ Ps. 35:1; 43:1; 119:154; Mic. 7:9
¹⁸ ¹ 1 Sam. 26:17
¹⁹ ¹ 1 Sam. 26:21
²⁰ Gen. 38:26
²¹ [Matt. 5:44]
²² ¹ 1 Sam. 26:23
²³ ¹ 1 Sam. 23:17
²⁴ 2 Gen. 21:23; 1 Sam. 20:14-17
²⁵ 2 Sam. 21:6-8
²⁶ ¹ 1 Sam. 23:29

CHAPTER 25

¹ ¹ 1 Sam. 28:3
² Num. 20:29; Deut. 34:8

¹ Gen. 21:21; Num. 10:12; 13:3 ² So with MT, Syr., Tg., Vg.; LXX Maon
² ¹ 1 Sam. 23:24
³ Josh. 15:55
³ ¹ Josh. 15:13; 1 Sam. 30:14
⁴ ¹ Gen. 38:13; 2 Sam. 13:23
⁶ ¹ Judg. 19:20; 1 Chr. 12:18; Ps. 122:7; Luke 10:5
⁷ ¹ 1 Sam. 25:15, 21
⁸ ¹ Neh. 8:10-12; Esth. 8:17; 9:19, 22
² ¹ be gracious to the young men
¹⁰ ¹ Judg. 9:28

home in Ramah. And David arose and went down ¹to the Wilderness of ²Paran.

David and the Wife of Nabal

²Now *there was a man* ³in Maon whose business *was in* ⁴Carmel, and the man *was very rich*. He had three thousand sheep and a thousand goats. And he was shearing his sheep in Carmel. ⁵The name of the man *was Nabal*, and the name of his wife Abigail. And *she was a woman of good understanding and beautiful appearance*; but the man *was harsh and evil in his doings*. He *was of the house of* ⁶Caleb.

⁴When David heard in the wilderness that Nabal *was* ⁵shearing his sheep, ⁶David sent ten young men; and David said to the young men, "Go up to Carmel, go to Nabal, and greet him in my name. ⁷And thus you shall say to him who lives *in prosperity*: ⁸Peace *be* to you, peace to your house, and peace to all that you have! ⁹Now I have heard that you have shearers. Your shepherds were with us, and we did not hurt them, ¹⁰nor was there anything missing from them all the while they were in Carmel. ¹¹Ask your young men, and they will tell you. Therefore ¹²let *my* young men find favor in your eyes, for we come on ¹³a feast day. Please give whatever comes to your hand to your servants and to your son David."

⁹So when David's young men came, they spoke to Nabal according to all these words in the name of David, and waited.

¹⁰Then Nabal answered David's servants, and said, ¹¹"Who is David, and

24:14 David likened himself to a **dead dog** and a **flea** in contrast with the **king of Israel**. How could something as worthless as a dead dog or as insignificant as a flea be of any danger to Saul?

24:16, 17 The words **my son** serve here as an expression of endearment. **Saul lifted up his voice and wept**: Saul's tears reflect his remorse at seeking to do David harm. However, it was a short-lived remorse (26:2).

24:19 **may the LORD reward you with good**: Saul prayed for God's blessing on David.

24:21 **swear now to me by the LORD**: Saul asked David to commit himself by oath to (1) preserve Saul's family and (2) preserve Saul's name.

24:22 **David swore to Saul**: David agreed to Saul's requests and kept his promise (see 2 Sam. 9:1-13; 21:6-8). While Saul returned **home** to Gibeah (10:26), David remained in hiding. He apparently had no great confidence in the lasting value of Saul's expression of remorse.

25:1 **Then Samuel died**: Samuel's death may have taken place while David was in the Wilderness of En Gedi (24:1). His death (or at least the recording of it) came at a propitious time. David had just been acknowledged as the successor of Saul by the king himself, and there was a short-lived truce between the two parties. Samuel's popularity was evidenced by the fact that the nation of Israel assembled at **Ramah** to honor him at his burial. After Samuel's death, David journeyed south to **the Wilderness of Paran**, a desert area in the northeast region of the Sinai peninsula.

25:2 **Maon** was located in the Judean hill country (see Josh. 15:55),

about eight miles south of Hebron. **Carmel** was located on the edge of the Judean wilderness, about a mile north of Maon. Like the times of harvest, the **shearing** of the sheep was a festive occasion.

25:3 The personal conduct of **Nabal** suggests that his name, meaning "Fool," was appropriate (v. 25). It is not known whether he used this name himself or whether it was something other people called him. Nabal was a descendant of the **house of Caleb**, which had occupied the area at the time of the conquest (see Judg. 1:20). **Abigail**, a woman of wisdom and beauty, stood in stark contrast to the foolish nature of her husband. Her name may mean "My Father Is Rejoicing."

25:4-9 Nabal lived in a wilderness area and owned thousands of sheep and goats, and so was a prime target for thieves. David and his men had generously protected Nabal's flocks and possessions (vv. 15, 16, 21). Since it was the time of sheep shearing, Nabal would have had plenty of cash from the sale of wool to reward David and his men for their services.

25:7 **nor was there anything missing**: David and his men had provided protection and had not taken advantage of their position or authority.

25:8 David sent his men on a **feast day**, when most people display an extra measure of generosity. **Please give whatever comes to your hand**: Apparently, no price had been set for the services rendered.

25:10 **Who is David**: Nabal pretended not to know David. He added insult to injury by suggesting that David might be just another runaway servant.

who *is* the son of Jesse? There are many servants nowadays who break away each one from his master. ¹¹Shall I then take my bread and my water and my ³meat that I have killed for my shearers, and give *it* to men when I do not know where they *are* from?”

¹²So David’s young men turned on their heels and went back; and they came and told him all these words. ¹³Then David said to his men, “Every man gird on his sword.” So every man girded on his sword, and David also girded on his sword. And about four hundred men went with David, and two hundred ^mstayed with the supplies.

¹⁴Now one of the young men told Abigail, Nabal’s wife, saying, “Look, David sent messengers from the wilderness to greet our master; and he ⁴reviled them. ¹⁵But the men *were* very good to us, and ⁿwe were not hurt, nor did we miss anything as long as we accompanied them, when we were in the fields. ¹⁶They were ^oa wall to us both by night and day, all the time we were with them keeping the sheep. ¹⁷Now therefore, know and consider what you will do, for ^pharm is determined against our master and against all his household. For he *is such* a ^qscoundrel⁵ that *one* cannot speak to him.”

¹⁸Then Abigail made haste and ^rtook two hundred *loaves* of bread, two skins of wine, five sheep already dressed, five seahs of roasted *grain*, one hundred clusters of raisins, and two hundred cakes of figs, and loaded *them* on donkeys. ¹⁹And she said to her servants, ^s“Go on before

¹¹ ¹ Judg. 8:6, 15
³ Lit. *slaughter*
¹³ ^m 1 Sam. 30:24
¹⁴ ⁴ *scolded* or *scorned* at
¹⁵ ^a 1 Sam. 25:7, 21
¹⁶ ^o Ex. 14:22;
Job 1:10
¹⁷ ^p 1 Sam. 20:7
^q Deut. 13:13; Judg. 19:22 ⁵ Lit. *son of Belial*
¹⁸ ^r Gen. 32:13;
[Prov. 18:16; 21:14]
¹⁹ ^s Gen. 32:16, 20

²¹ ¹ 1 Sam. 24:17;
Ps. 109:5; [Prov. 17:13]
²² ^u Ruth 1:17;
1 Sam. 3:17; 20:13,
16 ^v 1 Sam. 25:34
^w 1 Kin. 14:10; 21:21;
2 Kin. 9:8
²³ ^x Josh. 15:18;
Judg. 1:14
²⁴ ⁶ *Speak to you*
²⁵ ⁷ *pay attention to* ⁸ Lit. *Fool*
²⁶ ^y 2 Kin. 2:2
^z Gen. 20:6; 1 Sam. 25:33 ^a [Rom. 12:19]
^b 2 Sam. 18:32 ⁹ Lit. *saving yourself*
²⁷ ^c Gen. 33:11;
1 Sam. 30:26; 2 Kin. 5:15
²⁸ ^d 2 Sam. 7:11-16,
27; 1 Kin. 9:5; 1 Chr. 17:10, 25

me; see, I am coming after you.” But she did not tell her husband Nabal.

²⁰So it was, *as* she rode on the donkey, that she went down under cover of the hill; and there were David and his men, coming down toward her, and she met them. ²¹Now David had said, “Surely in vain I have protected all that this *fellow* has in the wilderness, so that nothing was missed of all that *belongs* to him. And he has *repaid* me evil for good. ²²“May God do so, and more also, to the enemies of David, if I ^vleave ^wone male of all who *belong* to him by morning light.”

²³Now when Abigail saw David, she ^xdismounted quickly from the donkey, fell on her face before David, and bowed down to the ground. ²⁴So she fell at his feet and said: “On me, my lord, *on* me *let* this iniquity *be*! And please let your maidservant ⁶speak in your ears, and hear the words of your maidservant. ²⁵Please, let not my lord ⁷regard this scoundrel Nabal. For as his name *is*, so *is* he: ⁸Nabal *is* his name, and folly *is* with him! But I, your maidservant, did not see the young men of my lord whom you sent. ²⁶Now therefore, my lord, ⁹*as* the LORD lives and *as* your soul lives, since the LORD has ^zheld you back from coming to bloodshed and from ^aavenging⁹ yourself with your own hand, now then, ^blet your enemies and those who seek harm for my lord be as Nabal. ²⁷And now ^cthis present which your maidservant has brought to my lord, let it be given to the young men who follow my lord. ²⁸Please forgive the trespass of your maidservant. For ^dthe LORD will certainly make for

25:11 Nabal lived in a region where **water** was scarce (see Josh. 15:19).

25:15, 16 Nabal’s own men testified to the care and protection they received from David and his men.

25:17 **For he is such a scoundrel:** The servants were so angry at their master that they spoke this way of him to his wife! The He-

brew phrase translated *scoundrel* is literally “son of Belial” or “son of worthlessness.”

25:18 Taking matters into her own hands, Abigail gathered an abundance of goods to compensate David and his men. **skins of wine:** In ancient times, wine was carried in flexible containers made from animal skins. The Hebrew **seah** was a measure equivalent to one-third of an ephah or about one-fifth of a bushel.

25:19 **Go on before me:** Abigail wisely sent the provisions ahead to forestall any hostility caused by her husband’s insulting behavior. **25:22** **May God do so, and more also:** David made an oath calling down God’s judgment on his enemies should he fail to kill everyone who worked for Nabal.

25:23, 24 Abigail’s acts of humility were in strong contrast to the boorish behavior of her husband (vv. 10, 11). She did everything she could to show respect to David when he was angry and to obtain his forgiveness for the wrong Nabal had committed against him.

25:25 **For as his name is, so is he:** The name **Nabal** was quite fitting for a foolish man. Abigail’s humor at her husband’s expense was designed to save his life (vv. 21, 22).

25:26 **as the LORD lives:** Abigail showed herself to David to be a woman of truthfulness, piety, and faith.

25:27 **This present** means the provisions mentioned in v. 18. These gracious gifts expressed Abigail’s desire to make things right.

25:28 **an enduring house:** Abigail’s words indicate that she expected David to succeed Saul and enjoy a lengthy line of successors (v. 30).

forgive

(Heb. *nasa'*) (25:28; Gen. 4:13; Ps. 32:1, 5) Strong’s #5375

This Hebrew word means basically “to lift up,” “to bear,” or “to take away.” The word can apply to a person lifting up various objects including one’s hand in an oath (Ezek. 20:5, 6), one’s face to show favor (Num. 6:24–26), and one’s voice in sorrow or joy (Gen. 27:38; Is. 24:14). The sense of “bearing” is often used in reference to sin or its punishment. Thus this Hebrew word was used to describe how the scapegoat “bore” the sins of Israel (Lev. 16:22) and how the Suffering Servant would “bear” the sins of the world (Is. 53:12). The idea of “taking away” is also frequently associated with sin. This activity is usually identified as a characteristic of God (Num. 14:18; Mic. 7:18). The NT describes God’s forgiveness by stating that Jesus both bore our sins and took them away (1 Pet. 2:24; 1 John 3:5).

my lord an enduring house, because my lord ^e fights the battles of the LORD, ^f and evil is not found in you throughout your days. ²⁹ Yet a man has risen to pursue you and seek your life, but the life of my lord shall be ^g bound in the bundle of the living with the LORD your God; and the lives of your enemies He shall ^h sling out, as from the pocket of a sling. ³⁰ And it shall come to pass, when the LORD has done for my lord according to all the good that He has spoken concerning you, and has appointed you ⁱ ruler over Israel, ³¹ that this will be no grief to you, nor offense of heart to my lord, either that you have shed blood without cause, or that my lord has avenged himself. But when the LORD has dealt well with my lord, then remember your maidservant.”

³² Then David said to Abigail: *“Blessed is the LORD God of Israel, who sent you this day to meet me! ³³ And blessed is your advice and blessed are you, because you have ^k kept me this day from coming to bloodshed and from avenging myself with my own hand. ³⁴ For indeed, as the LORD God of Israel lives, who has ^l kept me back from hurting you, unless you had hurried and come to meet me, surely ^m by morning light no males would have been left to Nabal!”* ³⁵ So David received from her hand what she had brought him, and said to her, ⁿ “Go up in peace to your house. See, I have heeded your voice and ^o respected your person.”

³⁶ Now Abigail went to Nabal, and there he was, ^p holding a feast in his house, like the feast of a king. And Nabal’s heart *was* merry within him, for he *was* very drunk; therefore she told him nothing, little or much, until morning light. ³⁷ So it was, in the morning, when the wine had gone from Nabal, and his wife had told him these things, that his heart died within him, and he became

²⁸ ^e 1 Sam. 18:17; ^f 1 Sam. 24:11; Ps. 7:3
²⁹ ^g [Ps. 66:9; Col. 3:3] ^h Jer. 10:18
³⁰ ⁱ 1 Sam. 13:14; 15:28
³² ^j Gen. 24:27; Ex. 18:10; 1 Kin. 1:48; Ps. 41:13; 72:18; 106:48; Luke 1:68
³³ ^k 1 Sam. 25:26
³⁴ ^l 1 Sam. 25:26
^m 1 Sam. 25:22
³⁵ ⁿ 1 Sam. 20:42; 2 Sam. 15:9; 2 Kin. 5:19; Luke 7:50; 8:48
^o Gen. 19:21
³⁶ ^p 2 Sam. 13:28; Prov. 20:1; Is. 5:11; Dan. 5:1; [Hos. 4:11]

³⁸ ^q 1 Sam. 26:10; 2 Sam. 6:7; Ps. 104:29
³⁹ ^r 1 Sam. 25:32
^s 1 Sam. 24:15; Prov. 22:23
^t 1 Sam. 25:26, 34
^u 1 Kin. 2:44
⁴¹ ^v [Prov. 15:33]; Luke 7:38, 44
⁴² ^w Lit. with five of her maidens at her feet
⁴³ ^x Josh. 15:56
^y 1 Sam. 27:3; 30:5
⁴⁴ ^y 1 Sam. 18:20; 2 Sam. 3:14
^z Is. 10:30
² Paltiel, 2 Sam. 3:15

CHAPTER 26

¹ ^a 1 Sam. 23:19; Ps. 54: title
² ^b 1 Sam. 13:2; 24:2

like a stone. ³⁸ Then it happened, *after* about ten days, that the LORD ^a struck Nabal, and he died.

³⁹ So when David heard that Nabal was dead, he said, ^r “Blessed *be* the LORD, who has ^s pleaded the cause of my reproach from the hand of Nabal, and has ^t kept His servant from evil! For the LORD has *“returned the wickedness of Nabal on his own head.”*

And David sent and proposed to Abigail, to take her as his wife. ⁴⁰ When the servants of David had come to Abigail at Carmel, they spoke to her saying, “David sent us to you, to ask you to become his wife.”

⁴¹ Then she arose, bowed her face to the earth, and said, “Here is your maidservant, a servant to ^u wash the feet of the servants of my lord.” ⁴² So Abigail rose in haste and rode on a donkey, ^v attended by five of her maidens; and she followed the messengers of David, and became his wife. ⁴³ David also took Ahinoam ^w of Jezreel, ^x and so both of them were his wives.

⁴⁴ But Saul had given ^y Michal his daughter, David’s wife, to ^z Palti the son of Laish, who *was* from ² Gallim.

David Spares Saul a Second Time

26 Now the Ziphites came to Saul at Gibeah, saying, ^a “Is David not hiding in the hill of Hachilah, opposite Jeshimon?” ² Then Saul arose and went down to the Wilderness of Ziph, having ^b three thousand chosen men of Israel with him, to seek David in the Wilderness of Ziph. ³ And Saul encamped in the hill of Hachilah, which *is* opposite Jeshimon, by the road. But David stayed in the wilderness, and he saw that Saul came after him into the wilderness. ⁴ David therefore sent out spies, and understood that Saul had indeed come.

⁵ So David arose and came to the place

25:29, 31 bound in the bundle of the living: This metaphor reflects the custom of binding valuables in a bundle to protect them from injury. The point here is that God cares for His own as a man cares for his valuable treasure. **sling out:** This metaphor signifies God’s complete rejection of David’s enemies. **no grief to you:** Abigail sought to show David that the present slight was nothing compared to his future glory.

25:35 respected your person: A literal translation of this phrase would be “I lift up your face.” This is the opposite of Abigail’s bowing down before David when she first met him (vv. 23, 24).

25:37, 38 his heart died within him . . . like a stone: Nabal apparently suffered a stroke and became paralyzed. **the Lord struck Nabal:** Nabal’s death was the result of God’s judgment.

25:39 David gave praise to the Lord for it was God who had exacted justice and not David himself. This story is a splendid example of the biblical motif “Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,” says the Lord” (Rom. 12:19; cf. Deut. 32:35).

25:41 to wash the feet of the servants: Washing the feet of others was a servant’s task. Abigail expressed her willingness to do the most

menial jobs. This was a genuine expression of her gratitude to David. **25:43 Ahinoam** became the mother of David’s oldest son, Amnon (2 Sam. 3:2). **Jezreel** is not the city in the north, but a town in the hill country of Judah (Josh. 15:56).

25:44 David was without **Michal**, his first wife (18:27). Saul had given her to another man during David’s absence.

26:1 The Ziphites were from Ziph, four miles southeast of Hebron. They traveled about 25 miles north to report to Saul at **Gibeah**. **The hill of Hachilah** has been identified with a ridge about 6 miles southeast of Ziph (23:19). **Jeshimon** is probably not a proper name but a term meaning “waste” or “desert.” The term is most likely used here of the barren wilderness of Judah, which is in the vicinity of Ziph and extends east toward the Dead Sea.

26:2 Apparently forgetful of the events of 24:16–22, Saul led his men into the wilderness in pursuit of David. The similarities between the events of ch. 24 and the events here are striking. **The Wilderness of Ziph** refers to the desert region around Ziph and eastward.

26:5 Abner the son of Ner had served as a very successful commander of Saul’s army.

where Saul had encamped. And David saw the place where Saul lay, and ^eAbner the son of Ner, the commander of his army. Now Saul lay within the camp, with the people encamped all around him. ⁶Then David answered, and said to Ahimelech the Hittite and to Abishai ^dthe son of Zeruiah, brother of ^eJoab, saying, “Who will ^fgo down with me to Saul in the camp?”

And ^gAbishai said, “I will go down with you.”

⁷So David and Abishai came to the people by night; and there Saul lay sleeping within the camp, with his spear stuck in the ground by his head. And Abner and the people lay all around him. ⁸Then Abishai said to David, ^h“God has delivered your enemy into your hand this day. Now therefore, please, let me strike him ⁱat once with the spear, right to the earth; and I will not *have to strike* him a second time!”

⁹But David said to Abishai, “Do not destroy him; ⁱfor who can stretch out his hand against the LORD’s anointed, and be guiltless?” ¹⁰David said furthermore, “As the LORD lives, ^jthe LORD shall strike him, or ^khis day shall come to die, or he shall ^lgo out to battle and perish. ¹¹^mThe LORD forbid that I should stretch out my hand against the LORD’s anointed. But please, take now the spear and the jug of water that *are* by his head, and let us go.” ¹²So David took the spear and the jug of water *by* Saul’s head, and they got away; and no man saw or knew *it* or awoke. For they *were* all asleep, because ⁿa deep sleep from the LORD had fallen on them.

¹³Now David went over to the other side, and stood on the top of a hill afar off, a great distance *being* between them.

⁵ ^c 1 Sam. 14:50, 51; 17:55
⁶ ^d 1 Chr. 2:16
^e 2 Sam. 2:13 ^f Judg. 7:10, 11 ^g 2 Sam. 2:18, 24
⁸ ^h 1 Sam. 24:4 ⁱ Or *one time*
⁹ ⁱ 1 Sam. 24:6, 7; 2 Sam. 1:14, 16
¹⁰ ^j [Deut. 32:35]; 1 Sam. 25:26, 38; [Luke 18:7; Rom. 12:19; Heb. 10:30]
^k Gen. 47:29; Deut. 31:14; [Job 7:1; 14:5]; Ps. 37:13 ^l 1 Sam. 31:6
¹¹ ^m 1 Sam. 24:6-12; [Rom. 12:17, 19]
¹² ⁿ Gen. 2:21; 15:12; Is. 29:10

¹⁷ ^o 1 Sam. 24:16
¹⁸ ^p 1 Sam. 24:9, 11-14
¹⁹ ^q 2 Sam. 16:11; 24:1 ^r Deut. 4:27, 28 ^s 2 Sam. 14:16; 20:19
²⁰ ^t 1 Sam. 24:14
²¹ ^u Ex. 9:27; 1 Sam. 15:24, 30; 24:17; 2 Sam. 12:13
²³ ^v 1 Sam. 24:19; Ps. 7:8; 18:20; 62:12

¹⁴ And David called out to the people and to Abner the son of Ner, saying, “Do you not answer, Abner?”

Then Abner answered and said, “Who *are* you, calling out to the king?”

¹⁵ So David said to Abner, “*Are* you not a man? And who *is* like you in Israel? Why then have you not guarded your lord the king? For one of the people came in to destroy your lord the king. ¹⁶ This thing that you have done *is* not good. As the LORD lives, you deserve to die, because you have not guarded your master, the LORD’s anointed. And now see where the king’s spear *is*, and the jug of water that *was* by his head.”

¹⁷ Then Saul knew David’s voice, and said, ^o “*Is* that your voice, my son David?”

David said, “*It is* my voice, my lord, O king.” ¹⁸ And he said, ^p “Why does my lord thus pursue his servant? For what have I done, or what evil *is* in my hand? ¹⁹ Now therefore, please, let my lord the king hear the words of his servant: If the LORD has ^q stirred you up against me, let Him accept an offering. But if *it is* the children of men, *may* they *be* cursed before the LORD, ^r for they have driven me out this day from sharing in the ^s inheritance of the LORD, saying, ‘Go, serve other gods.’ ²⁰ So now, do not let my blood fall to the earth before the face of the LORD. For the king of Israel has come out to seek ^t a flea, as when one hunts a partridge in the mountains.”

²¹ Then Saul said, ^u “I have sinned. Return, my son David. For I will harm you no more, because my life was precious in your eyes this day. Indeed I have played the fool and erred exceedingly.”

²² And David answered and said, “Here is the king’s spear. Let one of the young men come over and get it. ²³^v May the

26:6 Ahimelech the Hittite was a non-Israelite who had joined David’s force, probably as a mercenary soldier. The Hittites were a powerful, military people who ruled central Asia Minor during the second millennium **B.C.** **Abishai**, David’s nephew (see 1 Chr. 2:15, 16), volunteered to go with David into Saul’s camp. Abishai became a leader among David’s men (2 Sam. 23:18).

26:7 Saul’s spear was a symbol of his authority (18:10; 19:9).

26:8 Abishai seems to have had a bloodthirsty nature (see 2 Sam. 16:9; 19:21). He promised not to strike **Saul a second time**—meaning that his first blow would be fatal.

26:9, 10 David once again refused to **stretch out his hand against the LORD’s anointed** (ch. 24). He would not assassinate Israel’s divinely appointed king (10:1). **the LORD shall strike him:** David knew that God would remove Saul from office according to His own perfect timing.

26:11, 12 take now the spear and the jug of water: These items would prove that David had been close enough to Saul to kill him but had refrained from doing so. David’s visit to Saul’s camp went undetected because the Lord had caused **a deep sleep** to fall upon the soldiers.

26:14 calling out to the king: David did not shout directly to Saul; instead, he taunted Abner, Saul’s general.

26:16 The spear and the jug of water served as evidence of Abner’s negligence and proof of David’s goodwill.

26:17 Is that your voice, my son David: Saul recognized the familiar voice, as he had near the cave at En Gedi (24:16).

26:19 If the LORD has stirred you up against me: David contemplated the possibility that God was using Saul as an agent of divine discipline. If this was the case, David expressed his willingness to offer an atoning sacrifice—an **offering**. On the other hand, he called for God’s judgment on any evil men who had stirred up Saul against David. **Go, serve other gods:** This phrase reflects David’s view that his exile was virtually equivalent to being forced to abandon the worship of God, since there were no sanctuaries to God outside Israelite territory.

26:20, 21 David likened Saul’s actions to pursuing **a flea** (24:14), hardly fitting for a royal figure. The **partridge** was known to flee for safety by running rather than flight. When fatigued, it could be captured with sticks or a net. Saul once again confessed his sin (24:17). He asked David to **return** home, promising not to make another attempt on his life.

26:23 Righteousness and faithfulness are characteristics of God Himself, which believers may share.

LORD ^w repay every man for his righteousness and his faithfulness; for the LORD delivered you into *my* hand today, but I would not stretch out *my* hand against the LORD's anointed. ²⁴And indeed, as your life was valued much this day in my eyes, so let my life be valued much in the eyes of the LORD, and let Him deliver me out of all tribulation."

²⁵Then Saul said to David, "*May you be blessed, my son David! You shall both do great things and also still ^xprevail.*"

So David went on his way, and Saul returned to his place.

23 ^w 2 Sam. 22:21
25 ^x Gen. 32:28;
1 Sam. 24:20

CHAPTER 27

1 ¹ despair of
searching for
2 ^a 1 Sam. 25:13
^b 1 Sam. 21:10;
1 Kin. 2:39

David Allied with the Philistines

27 And David said in his heart, "Now I shall perish someday by the hand of Saul. *There is* nothing better for me than that I should speedily escape to the land of the Philistines; and Saul will ¹despair of me, to seek me anymore in any part of Israel. So I shall escape out of his hand." ²Then David arose *and* went over with the six hundred men who *were* with him ^bto Achish the son of Maach, king of Gath. ³So David dwelt with Achish at Gath, he and his men, each man with his household, *and* David

26:24, 25 David requested that his **life be valued** as much as he valued Saul's life. As the two parted, Saul recognized that David would eventually **prevail** (24:20). This was the last meeting between Saul and David.

27:1 **Now I shall perish someday by the hand of Saul:** The evidence pointed to the contrary (13:14; 23:17; 24:20). Perhaps David was depressed. As he had done earlier in fleeing from Saul, David journeyed west toward the coastal plain and entered **the land of the Philistines**.

27:2 Various sites have been suggested for the location of **Gath**. The most widely accepted is about 12 miles east of Ashdod, or about

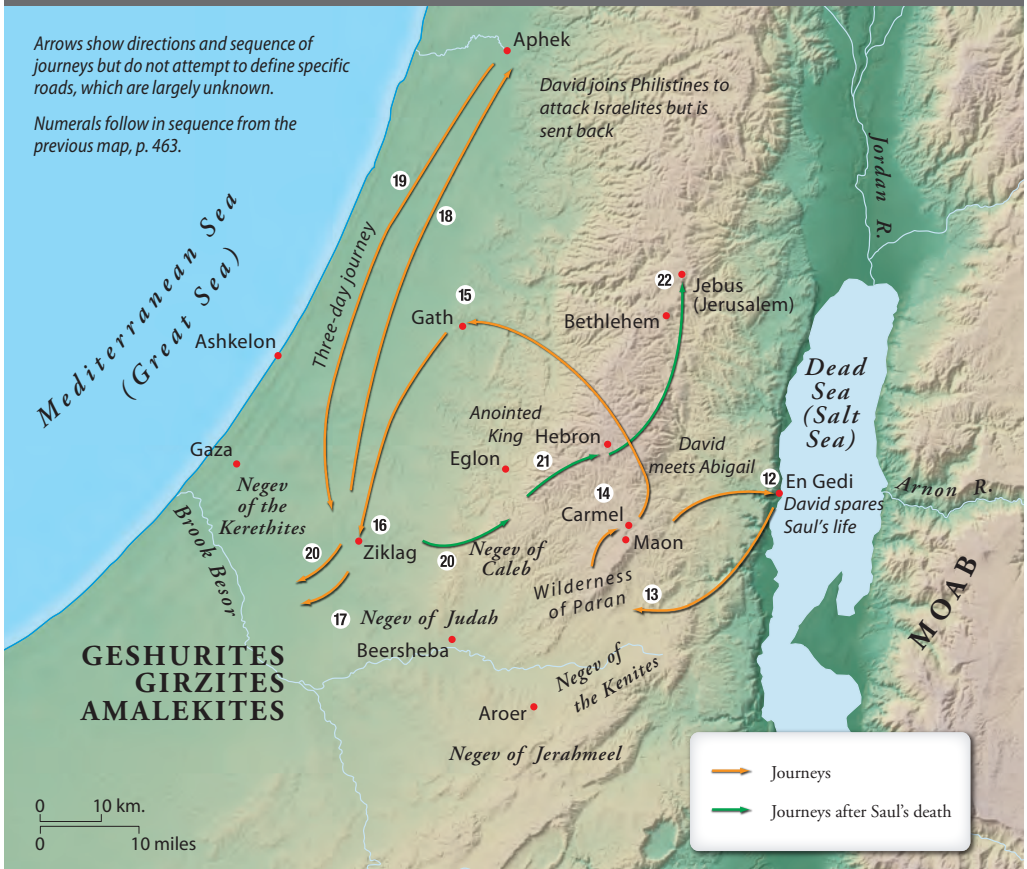
24 miles west of Jerusalem. Achish seems to have welcomed David. Perhaps he had heard of the split between David and Saul and was anxious to strengthen his own army with David's **six hundred** fighting men.

27:3, 4 **David dwelt with Achish at Gath:** David's move to Philistine territory delivered him from the immediate danger of Saul and provided him an opportunity to further develop his leadership and military skills (vv. 8–12). His time in Philistia also gave David knowledge of the geography of the region, which would serve him well during his later Philistine wars. As David had probably expected, his sojourn in Philistia put an end to Saul's pursuit of him.

Exploits of David

Arrows show directions and sequence of journeys but do not attempt to define specific roads, which are largely unknown.

Numerals follow in sequence from the previous map, p. 463.



^cwith his two wives, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail the Carmelitess, Nabal's widow. ⁴And it was told Saul that David had fled to Gath; so he sought him no more.

⁵Then David said to Achish, "If I have now found favor in your eyes, let them give me a place in some town in the country, that I may dwell there. For why should your servant dwell in the royal city with you?" ⁶So Achish gave him Ziklag that day. Therefore ^dZiklag has belonged to the kings of Judah to this day. ⁷Now ²the time that David ^edwelt in the country of the Philistines was one full year and four months.

⁸And David and his men went up and raided ^fthe Geshurites, ^gthe ³Girzites, and the ^hAmalekites. For those *nations* were the inhabitants of the land from ⁴of old, ⁱas you go to Shur, even as far as the land of Egypt. ⁹Whenever David ⁵attacked the land, he left neither man nor woman alive, but took away the sheep, the oxen, the donkeys, the camels, and the apparel, and returned and came to Achish. ¹⁰Then Achish would say, "Where have you made a raid today?" And David would say, "Against the southern *area* of Judah, or against the southern *area* of ^jthe Jerahmeelites, or against the southern *area* of ^kthe Kenites." ¹¹David

³ ^c 1 Sam. 25:42, 43
⁶ ^d Josh. 15:31; 19:5;
1 Chr. 12:1; Neh.
11:28
⁷ ^e 1 Sam. 29:3
² ^f Lit. the number
of days
⁸ ^f Josh. 13:2, 13
⁹ Josh. 16:10; Judg.
1:29 ^h Ex. 17:8, 16;
1 Sam. 15:7, 8 ⁱ Gen.
25:18; Ex. 15:22 ³ Or
Geszrites ⁴ ancient
times
⁹ ⁵ Lit. struck
¹⁰ ^j 1 Chr. 2:9, 25
^k Judg. 1:16

CHAPTER 28

¹ ^a 1 Sam. 29:1, 2
³ ^b 1 Sam. 25:1
^c 1 Sam. 1:19 ^d Ex.
22:18; Lev. 19:31;
20:27; Deut. 18:10,
11; 1 Sam. 15:23;
28:9
⁴ ^e Josh. 19:18;
1 Sam. 28:4; 1 Kin.
1:3; 2 Kin. 4:8
^f 1 Sam. 31:1

would save neither man nor woman alive, to bring *news* to Gath, saying, "Lest they should inform on us, saying, 'Thus David did.'" And thus *was* his behavior all the time he dwelt in the country of the Philistines. ¹²So Achish believed David, saying, "He has made his people Israel utterly abhor him; therefore he will be my servant forever."

28 Now ^ait happened in those days that the Philistines gathered their armies together for war, to fight with Israel. And Achish said to David, "You assuredly know that you will go out with me to battle, you and your men."

²So David said to Achish, "Surely you know what your servant can do."

And Achish said to David, "Therefore I will make you one of my chief guardians forever."

Saul Consults a Medium

³Now ^bSamuel had died, and all Israel had lamented for him and buried him in Ramah, in his own city. And Saul had put ^dthe mediums and the spiritists out of the land.

⁴Then the Philistines gathered together, and came and encamped at ^eShunem. So Saul gathered all Israel together, and they encamped at ^fGilboa. ⁵When Saul saw the army of the Philistines, he was

27:5 why should your servant dwell in the royal city: David suggested to Achish that it was too great an honor for him to continue to dwell in Gath, the city of the king. Perhaps David wanted to be free from constant surveillance by the Philistine authorities and from continued exposure to Philistine religious practices.

27:6 Achish established David as his vassal over **Ziklag**, one of the cities of the Israelite Negev. The city was originally assigned to Judah (see Josh. 15:31) and was located about 13 miles north of Beersheba. **Therefore Ziklag has belonged to the kings of Judah to this day:** This editorial note must have been added to the historical narrative after the division of the monarchy (930 B.C.). Before that time, there were "kings of Israel," but not of Judah.

27:7 Ziklag remained David's headquarters until Saul's death, when David moved to Hebron (2 Sam. 1:1–4).

27:8 During his sojourn in Philistia, David convinced Achish that he was serving the Philistines. Yet he used Ziklag as a base for raids on desert tribes in the northern Sinai. These peoples were enemies of the Israelites. **The Geshurites** lived to the southwest of Israel (see Josh. 13:2), between Philistia and Egypt. **The Girzites** are mentioned only here. **The Amalekites** were a nomadic people who lived in the dry land south of the hill country (see Num. 13:29). **Shur** was the border region separating Egypt from northern Sinai. The Israelites had wandered in this region after crossing the Red Sea (see Ex. 15:22).

27:10 Where have you made a raid today: Although David pretended to serve the interests of Achish, he was actually attacking the enemies of Israel. **The southern area of the Jerahmeelites** was the part of the Negev occupied by the family of Jerahmeel, one of the clans of Judah (1 Chr. 2:9). **The Kenites**, who were loosely associated with the Israelites since Moses' marriage into the family of Jethro, a Kenite (see Judg. 4:11), were a nomadic offshoot of the Midianites (Num. 10:29). In fact, David was on friendly terms with both the Jerahmeelites and Kenites (30:29).

27:11 The complete destruction of human life seems to be the

only way David was able to avoid discovery. David might also have reasoned that he was working to complete the destruction of the people of the land that had not been done fully during the time of the conquest (see Josh. 23:4, 5).

27:12 he will be my servant forever: David's deception was so effective that **Achish** concluded that his switch in allegiance was permanent.

28:1 in those days: The events of ch. 28 occurred during the time David was living at Ziklag as a vassal of the Philistine king. **gathered their armies:** All the time Saul was king, the Philistines were at war with Israel (14:52). **you will go out with me:** Since David was a vassal of **Achish**, the Philistines expected him to join them in their campaign against Saul. David faced a terrible dilemma.

28:2 Surely you know what your servant can do: The words of David were deliberately ambiguous. His life would have been at risk had he refused to join Achish so he was forced to wait for God's deliverance. **one of my chief guardians:** David found himself not only in the Philistine army but assigned as one of the king's chief bodyguards.

28:3 Samuel had died: He could no longer be counted on to bring forth a word from the Lord. The term **mediums** refers to necromancers, those who presume to communicate with the dead. **Spiritists** is a general term for those who have contact with spirits. In keeping with God's law, persons associated with necromancy and spiritism had been expelled from the land of Israel (Ex. 22:18; Lev. 19:31; Deut. 18:9–14). The medium at En Dor was one of the few such persons still known to live in the land (v. 7).

28:4 The village of **Shunem** was situated in the Valley of Jezreel, on the south slope of the Hill of Moreh. The Israelite forces were camped about five miles south of the Philistines on the mountain range of **Gilboa**.

28:5 Saul was so **afraid** of the forthcoming battle that his **heart trembled greatly**. Saul's persistent disobedience had left him completely without confidence in God's presence and protection.

^gafraid, and his heart trembled greatly.
^hAnd when Saul inquired of the LORD,
^hthe LORD did not answer him, either by
ⁱdreams or ^jby Urim or by the prophets.

⁷Then Saul said to his servants, “Find me a woman who is a medium, ^kthat I may go to her and inquire of her.”

And his servants said to him, “In fact, *there is a woman who is a medium at En Dor.*”

⁸So Saul disguised himself and put on other clothes, and he went, and two men with him; and they came to the woman by night. And ^lhe said, “Please conduct a séance for me, and bring up for me the one I shall name to you.”

⁹Then the woman said to him, “Look, you know what Saul has done, how he has ^mcut off the mediums and the spiritists from the land. Why then do you lay a snare for my life, to cause me to die?”

¹⁰And Saul swore to her by the LORD, saying, “As the LORD lives, no punishment shall come upon you for this thing.”

¹¹Then the woman said, “Whom shall I bring up for you?”

And he said, “Bring up Samuel for me.”

¹²When the woman saw Samuel, she cried out with a loud voice. And the

⁵ ^g Job 18:11; [Is. 57:20]
⁶ ^h 1 Sam. 14:37; Prov. 1:28; Lam. 2:9
ⁱ Num. 12:6; Joel 2:28 / Ex. 28:30; Num. 27:21; Deut. 33:8
⁷ ^k 1 Chr. 10:13
⁸ / Deut. 18:10, 11; 1 Chr. 10:13; Is. 8:19
⁹ ^m 1 Sam. 28:3

¹³ ⁿ Ex. 22:28; Ps. 138:1 / Heb. *elohim*
¹⁴ ^o 1 Sam. 15:27; 2 Kin. 2:8, 13
¹⁵ ^p Is. 14:9
^q 1 Sam. 16:14; 18:12
^r 1 Sam. 28:6
¹⁷ ^s 1 Sam. 15:28
² Or *him*, i.e., David
¹⁸ ^t 1 Sam. 13:9-13; 15:1-26; 1 Kin. 20:42; 1 Chr. 10:13; Jer. 48:10

woman spoke to Saul, saying, “Why have you deceived me? For you *are* Saul!”

¹³And the king said to her, “Do not be afraid. What did you see?”

And the woman said to Saul, “I saw ^a ¹ spirit ascending out of the earth.”

¹⁴So he said to her, “What is his form?”

And she said, “An old man is coming up, and he *is* covered with ^o a mantle.” And Saul perceived that it *was* Samuel, and he stooped with *his* face to the ground and bowed down.

¹⁵Now Samuel said to Saul, “Why have you ^p disturbed me by bringing me up?”

And Saul answered, “I am deeply distressed; for the Philistines make war against me, and ^q God has departed from me and ^r does not answer me anymore, neither by prophets nor by dreams. Therefore I have called you, that you may reveal to me what I should do.”

¹⁶Then Samuel said: “So why do you ask me, seeing the LORD has departed from you and has become your enemy?”

¹⁷And the LORD has done for ² Himself ^s as He spoke by me. For the LORD has torn the kingdom out of your hand and given it to your neighbor, David. ¹⁸ ^t Because you did not obey the voice of the LORD nor execute His fierce wrath upon

28:6 God did not answer Saul by dreams as He had Joseph (Gen. 37:5–10); nor by the Urim and Thummim as He had the high priest (Ex. 28:30; Num. 27:21); nor by prophetic revelation as He had Samuel (3:10–21).

28:7 Find me a woman who is a medium: Rather than repent of his sin and continue to seek God’s forgiveness, Saul turned to a forbidden source of counsel (Ex. 22:18; Lev. 19:31; Deut. 18:9–14). This tragic decision resulted in his death (1 Chr. 10:13). The law of the Lord called for the death penalty on mediums (Lev. 20:27). **En Dor** was located in the Jezreel Valley, about a mile northeast of the Hill of Moreh.

28:8 Saul disguised himself: In light of his purge of mediums and spiritists from the land, Saul could not expect much help should his identity be known. **Conduct a séance for me** literally means “bring up for me.”

28:9 Why then do you lay a snare for my life: The woman was aware of what Saul had done to those of her profession. She recognized the risk of being punished with death for practicing necromancy (see Ex. 22:18) and sought to make sure that her visitor was not laying a trap.

28:10 Saul swore to her by the Lord: While engaging in a practice that was practically a denial of God’s sovereign control of everything, Saul swore in God’s name that he would protect the woman.

28:11 Saul sought the help of Samuel because he had anointed him as king and had spoken God’s word to Saul before (10:1).

28:12 When the woman saw Samuel: When her séance really worked, the seer finally saw that her client was Saul. The appearance of Samuel has been interpreted in various ways. It has been suggested that the appearance took place in Saul’s mind, as part of his psychological breakdown. The church fathers believed that a demon impersonated Samuel and appeared to Saul. Others have thought that the medium was a fraud who tricked Saul into thinking that he saw Samuel. It seems best to follow the early view that this was a genuine appearance of Samuel which God Himself brought about. Several points favor this interpretation: (1) The medium was surprised (v. 12); (2) Saul identified the figure as Samuel (v. 14); (3) the message Samuel spoke was clearly from God (vv. 16–19); (4) the text says that

the figure was Samuel (vv. 12, 15, 16). There is no inherent difficulty with God bringing back the spirit of Samuel from heaven and allowing him to appear to Saul—in spite of the woman’s evil profession.

28:14 The mantle was a prophet’s robe, such as the one Samuel had worn when he was alive. It was this robe that Saul once had torn (15:27).

28:15 The words **bringing me up** may be understood as meaning simply “up from the grave.” This phrase indicates that the Israelites believed in life after death.

28:16 the Lord has departed from you: These startling words are merely a restatement of what Saul himself acknowledged in v. 15. Samuel was not so much making an affirmation as he was pointing out the contradiction between Saul’s words and actions. Even though Saul had said that God had departed from him, he was still seeking a word from the prophet of God.

28:18 Samuel traced Saul’s disobedience and judgment back to his failure to destroy the Amalekites, particularly Agag (15:2–9).

inquired

(Heb. *sa'al*) (17:56; 28:6; Judg. 18:5; Job 8:8) Strong’s #7592

The basic sense of this word is “to ask something of someone.” One can ask for an object (1:20; Ps. 137:3) or for information (Gen. 43:7; Job 38:3). The Hebrew phrase translated “inquired of the LORD” occurs eleven times in the OT, all in Judges and 1 and 2 Samuel (Judg. 20:23; 2 Sam. 2:1). The Hebrew verb itself occurs a total of 172 times in the OT. On three occasions the context indicates the meaning “to lend” (1:28 [twice]; 2:20), and in another three passages it means “to borrow” (Ex. 22:14; 2 Kin. 4:3; 6:5). Thus when the children of Israel left Egypt they probably *asked*, not *borrowed*, the goods they took with them (Ex. 3:22; 11:2; 12:35). This Hebrew word is broad enough to encompass the idea of prayer, as in the famous verse: “Pray [ask] for the peace of Jerusalem” (Ps. 122:6).

The Medium of En Dor: An Accomplice to Disobedience



Saul's desperate attempt to learn the future on the eve of battle introduces the medium of En Dor into Scripture. The medium, a mere prop on history's stage, set the scene for Saul's final disobedience to God, which ended in judgment (1 Chr. 10:13, 14). There was a tragic submissiveness in her repeated compliance to Saul's evil request.

The medium lived in eleventh-century B.C. En Dor, a Canaanite city three miles southwest of Mount Tabor and within the territory of Manasseh's tribe. She practiced divination. During Saul's time, the term "medium" meant one who consulted the dead on behalf of the living. Witchcraft had flourished in the nations Israel had been commanded to expel during the conquest of the Promised Land. Manasseh, however, had not driven the Canaanites from En Dor (Josh. 17:12, 13).

Though the medium likely was pagan, she knew her craft was forbidden. All forms of witchcraft had been condemned by God (Ex. 22:18; Lev. 19:31; 20:6, 27; Deut. 18:10–12, 14); Saul himself had exercised civil authority and driven mediums from the land (1 Sam. 28:3). Yet this medium was still in Israel, and her presence was known (1 Sam. 28:7).

The woman was cautious and suspicious of a trap when asked to bring up Samuel (1 Sam. 28:9), but she quickly complied to Saul's request after being assured of personal safety. Her fearful shock at the sight of Samuel implied that she had never experienced the appearance of such a figure. With sudden clairvoyance, she recognized Saul and boldly challenged the king with his own deception (28:12). Again Saul assured her safety, and she responded to his request.

When Saul fell to the ground in despair, the woman showed natural sympathy as she prepared food to try to revive his strength (28:22). As she coaxed Saul to respond, she twice referred to herself with the submissive phrase "your maid-servant" (28:21, 22). Then she put forth her best hospitality in preparing a royal meal.

The medium of En Dor stands, however, as an example of one who, while doing good in practicing human kindness, did evil in disobeying God. She will be remembered as one who chose to be an accomplice to King Saul in his personal disobedience to God.

"Amalek, therefore the LORD has done this thing to you this day. ¹⁹Moreover the LORD will also deliver Israel with you into the hand of the Philistines. And tomorrow you and your sons *will be with* ^v me. The LORD will also deliver the army of Israel into the hand of the Philistines."

²⁰Immediately Saul fell full length on the ground, and was dreadfully afraid because of the words of Samuel. And there was no strength in him, for he had eaten no food all day or all night.

²¹And the woman came to Saul and saw that he was severely troubled, and said to him, "Look, your maidservant has obeyed your voice, and I have ^w put my life in my hands and heeded the words which you spoke to me. ²²Now therefore, please, heed also the voice of your maidservant, and let me set a piece of bread before you; and eat, that you may have strength when you go on *your way*."

²³But he refused and said, "I will not eat."

So his servants, together with the woman, urged him; and he heeded their voice. Then he arose from the ground and

¹⁸ ^v 1 Sam. 15:3-9
¹⁹ ^v 1 Sam. 31:1-6;
Job 3:17-19
²¹ ^w Judg. 12:3;
1 Sam. 19:5; Job
13:14

CHAPTER 29

¹ ^a 1 Sam. 28:1
^b Josh. 12:18; 19:30;
1 Sam. 4:1; 1 Kin.
20:30
² ^c 1 Sam. 6:4;
7:7 ^d 1 Sam. 28:1,
2 ⁱ *passed on in the rear*
³ ^e 1 Sam. 27:7
^f 1 Sam. 27:1-6;
1 Chr. 12:19, 20;
Dan. 6:5

sat on the bed. ²⁴Now the woman had a fattened calf in the house, and she hastened to kill it. And she took flour and kneaded *it*, and baked unleavened bread from it. ²⁵So she brought *it* before Saul and his servants, and they ate. Then they rose and went away that night.

The Philistines Reject David

29 Then ^athe Philistines gathered together all their armies ^bat Aphek, and the Israelites encamped by a fountain which *is in Jezreel*. ²And the ^clords of the Philistines ¹passed in review by hundreds and by thousands, but ^dDavid and his men passed in review at the rear with Achish. ³Then the princes of the Philistines said, "What *are* these Hebrews *doing here*?"

And Achish said to the princes of the Philistines, "Is this not David, the servant of Saul king of Israel, who has been with me ^ethese days, or these years? And to this day I have ^ffound no fault in him since he defected to *me*."

⁴But the princes of the Philistines were angry with him; so the princes of

28:19, 20 Saul and his sons would die in the battle with the Philistines the very next day. The words **with me** simply refer to the grave. This text is not intended to provide a final answer concerning Saul's spiritual status. At the very least, it assumes the reality of life after death. **no strength**: Saul's sinful actions in seeking out a medium resulted in his complete collapse. He was terrified, sick, and totally weakened.

28:24 Unleavened bread was baked without yeast and could be prepared without waiting for it to rise.

29:1, 2 Aphek was about 13 miles northeast of Joppa. **a fountain which is in Jezreel**: The Israelites gathered at a prominent but un-

identified spring in the Valley of Jezreel. **passed in review**: Apparently, the Philistine troops convened at an agreed-upon rendezvous to be reviewed and arranged in companies.

29:3 David was in a predicament, for he would not fight against his own people. He could do nothing but wait for the Lord to provide him with a means of escape from this dangerous situation. **Achish** came quickly to David's defense when the other princes questioned David's loyalty. Achish had **found no fault** with David since his "defection" from Saul.

29:4 Make this fellow return: Achish was unsuccessful in persuading his fellow princes and soldiers to accept David and his men

the Philistines said to him, ^a“Make this fellow return, that he may go back to the place which you have appointed for him, and do not let him go down with us to ^bbattle, lest ⁱin the battle he become our adversary. For with what could he reconcile himself to his master, if not with the heads of these ^jmen? ⁵Is this not David, ^kof whom they sang to one another in dances, saying:

^l“Saul has slain his thousands,
And David his ten thousands?”

⁶Then Achish called David and said to him, “Surely, as the LORD lives, you have been upright, and ^myour going out and your coming in with me in the army is good in my sight. For to this day ⁿI have not found evil in you since the day of your coming to me. Nevertheless the lords do not favor you. ⁷Therefore return now, and go in peace, that you may not displease the lords of the Philistines.”

⁸So David said to Achish, “But what have I done? And to this day what have you found in your servant as long as I have been with you, that I may not go and fight against the enemies of my lord the king?”

⁹Then Achish answered and said to David, “I know that you *are* as good in my sight ^aas an angel of God; nevertheless ^pthe princes of the Philistines have said, ‘He shall not go up with us to the battle.’ ¹⁰Now therefore, rise early in the morning with your master’s servants ^qwho have come with ²you. And as soon as you are up early in the morning and have light, depart.”

4 ^q 1 Sam. 27:6
^h 1 Sam. 14:21
ⁱ 1 Sam. 29:9 / 1 Chr. 12:19, 20
⁵ ^k 1 Sam. 21:11
ⁱ 1 Sam. 18:7
⁶ ^m 2 Sam. 3:25;
2 Kin. 19:27
ⁿ 1 Sam. 29:3
⁹ ^o 2 Sam. 14:17, 20;
19:27 ^p 1 Sam. 29:4
¹⁰ ^q 1 Chr. 12:19,
22 ² So with MT,
Tg., Vg.; LXX adds
*and go to the
place which I have
selected for you
there; and set no
bothersome word
in your heart, for
you are good before
me. And rise on
your way*

11 ^r 2 Sam. 4:4

CHAPTER 30

1 ^a 1 Sam. 27:6
^b 1 Sam. 15:7; 27:8
² ^c 1 Sam. 27:2, 3
⁵ ^d 1 Sam. 25:42, 43
⁶ ^e Ex. 17:4; John
8:59 ^f 1 Sam. 23:16;
Is. 25:4; Hab. 3:17-19
⁷ Lit. bitter
⁷ ^g 1 Sam. 23:2-9
^h 1 Sam. 23:6
⁸ ⁱ 1 Sam. 23:2, 4;
Ps. 50:15; 91:15

¹¹ So David and his men rose early to depart in the morning, to return to the land of the Philistines. ^r And the Philistines went up to Jezreel.

David's Conflict with the Amalekites

30 Now it happened, when David and his men came to ^aZiklag, on the third day, that the ^bAmalekites had invaded the South and Ziklag, attacked Ziklag and burned it with fire, ²and had taken captive the ^cwomen and those who *were* there, from small to great; they did not kill anyone, but carried *them* away and went their way. ³So David and his men came to the city, and there it was, burned with fire; and their wives, their sons, and their daughters had been taken captive. ⁴Then David and the people who *were* with him lifted up their voices and wept, until they had no more power to weep. ⁵And David's two ^dwives, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail the widow of Nabal the Carmelite, had been taken captive. ⁶Now David was greatly distressed, for ^ethe people spoke of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was ^fgrieved, every man for his sons and his daughters. ⁷But David strengthened himself in the LORD his God.

⁷ Then David said to Abiathar the priest, Ahimelech's son, “Please bring the ephod here to me.” And ^hAbiathar brought the ephod to David. ⁸ So David inquired of the LORD, saying, “Shall I pursue this troop? Shall I overtake them?”

And He answered him, “Pursue, for you shall surely overtake *them* and without fail recover *all*.”

⁹ So David went, he and the six hundred

as part of the Philistine forces. They feared that David and his men might switch their allegiance back to Saul. See 14:21 for an example of what they feared.

29:5 Saul has slain his thousands: The popular Israelite taunt song (18:7) continued to echo in the ears of the Philistines (21:11).

29:6 Achish was thoroughly deceived by David's display of loyalty, as the LORD lives: Achish swore by the name of the God of Israel to impress David with the sincerity of his confidence in him. Achish had been close enough to David to know the language that David would understand best. The **lords** here are the Philistine rulers.

29:7, 8 go in peace: This farewell was much more than a courtesy. Achish was releasing David from any further obligation that he had incurred when Achish had made David a vassal king in Ziklag (27:6). **But what have I done:** David, who seems to have been a pretty fair actor, feigned surprise that Achish would dismiss him from the engagement.

29:9 Achish had been deceived by David. **Good** here means “blameless.” The comparison with **an angel of God** appears again in 2 Sam. 14:17.

29:10 your master's servants: Achish was referring to Saul as David's master.

29:11 After the departure of David and his men, the Philistines marched north from Aphek (v. 1) to the Valley of Jezreel.

30:1 The attack on **Ziklag** took place **on the third day** after David and his men left the Philistine army at Aphek. **The Amalekites** were

a nomadic people who roamed the Negev, the dry land south of the hill country (see Num. 13:29). For their attack on the Israelites after the Exodus from Egypt (Ex. 17:8–13), they were placed under divine judgment (Deut. 25:19).

30:2–4 carried them away: Rather than kill the citizens of Ziklag, the Amalekites probably intended to make them slaves. Among those who were taken captive were David's two wives (v. 5), along with the wives and children of his men.

30:6 David faced a serious crisis in his leadership. He was **distressed** not only because of his personal grief but by the difficult situation pressing on him. **the people spoke of stoning him:** It is often the nature of unhappy people to vent their frustration through acts of hostility against their leaders (see Ex. 17:4). **strengthened himself in the LORD his God:** Unlike Saul, David knew where to turn in a time of crisis (see Phil. 4:13). He had learned to wait on God, confident of God's eventual deliverance (see Ps. 40:1–3).

30:7 Abiathar, whose name means “The Great One Is Father,” was the son of **Ahimelech**, the high priest from whom David had received provisions at Nob (21:1–9). The Urim and Thummim were attached to the breastplate of the **ephod** that David requested be brought to him (see Ex. 28:30). By means of the Urim and Thummim, God could be consulted and His will determined.

30:9 The Brook Besor emptied into the Mediterranean Sea just south of the Philistine city of Gaza (6:17).

men who *were* with him, and came to the Brook Besor, where those stayed who were left behind. ¹⁰But David pursued, he and four hundred men; ⁱfor two hundred stayed *behind*, who were so weary that they could not cross the Brook Besor.

¹¹Then they found an Egyptian in the field, and brought him to David; and they gave him bread and he ate, and they let him drink water. ¹²And they gave him a piece of ^ka cake of figs and two clusters of raisins. So ^lwhen he had eaten, his strength came back to him; for he had eaten no bread nor drunk water for three days and three nights. ¹³Then David said to him, “To whom do you *belong*, and where *are* you from?”

And he said, “I *am* a young man from Egypt, servant of an Amalekite; and my master left me behind, because three days ago I fell sick. ¹⁴We made an invasion of the southern *area* of ^mthe Cherethites, in the *territory* which *belongs* to Judah, and of the southern *area* ⁿof Caleb; and we burned Ziklag with fire.”

¹⁵And David said to him, “Can you take me down to this troop?”

So he said, “Swear to me by God that you will neither kill me nor deliver me into the hands of my ^omaster, and I will take you down to this troop.”

¹⁶And when he had brought him down, there they were, spread out over all the land, ^peating and drinking and dancing, because of all the great spoil which they had taken from the land of the Philistines and from the land of Judah. ¹⁷Then David attacked them from twilight until the evening of the next day.

10 / 1 Sam. 30:9, 21
12 * 1 Sam. 25:18;
1 Kin. 20:7 / Judg.
15:19; 1 Sam. 14:27
14 ^m 2 Sam. 8:18;
1 Kin. 1:38, 44;
Ezek. 25:16; Zeph.
2:5 ⁿ Josh. 14:13;
15:13
15 ^o Deut. 23:15
16 ^p 1 Thess. 5:3

Not a man of them escaped, except four hundred young men who rode on camels and fled. ¹⁸So David recovered all that the Amalekites had carried away, and David rescued his two wives. ¹⁹And nothing of theirs was lacking, either small or great, sons or daughters, spoil or anything which they had taken from them; ^qDavid recovered all. ²⁰Then David took all the flocks and herds they had driven before those *other* livestock, and said, “This is David’s spoil.”

²¹Now David came to the ^rtwo hundred men who had been so weary that they could not follow David, whom they also had made to stay at the Brook Besor. So they went out to meet David and to meet the people who *were* with him. And when David came near the people, he ²greeted them. ²²Then all the wicked and ^sworthless³ men of those who went with David answered and said, “Because they did not go with us, we will not give them *any* of the spoil that we have recovered, except for every man’s wife and children, that they may lead *them* away and depart.”

²³But David said, “My brethren, you shall not do so with what the LORD has given us, who has preserved us and delivered into our hand the troop that came against us. ²⁴For who will heed you in this matter? But ^tas his part *is* who goes down to the battle, so *shall* his part *be* who stays by the supplies; they shall share alike.” ²⁵So it was, from that day forward; he made it a statute and an ordinance for Israel to this day.

²⁶Now when David came to Ziklag, he

19 ^q 1 Sam. 30:8
21 ^r 1 Sam. 30:10
² asked them
concerning their
welfare
22 ^s Deut. 13:13;
Judg. 19:22 ³ Lit.
men of Belial
24 ^t Num. 31:27;
Josh. 22:8

30:10 weary: The weariness of David’s men was due to the fact that they had traveled about 80 miles from Aphek to Ziklag (29:1; 30:1), only to set off immediately in pursuit of the Amalekites.

30:11, 12 found an Egyptian: A sick slave had been left by the Amalekites to die in the wilderness (v. 13). Life had been so devalued by the Amalekites that it was considered more economical to replace a slave than provide medical treatment for him when he was sick. **cake of figs and two clusters of raisins:** These foods were a regular part of the diet of David’s men (25:18).

30:14 The Cherethites (see 2 Sam. 8:18; 15:18; 20:7, 23) were a clan closely related to, if not actually a part of, the Philistines (see Ezek. 25:16; Zeph. 2:5). The **southern area of Caleb** refers to the part of Judah which was inherited by Caleb (Judg. 1:20).

30:15 In exchange for protection, the Egyptian agreed to lead David and his men to the Amalekites.

30:16 eating and drinking and dancing: The Amalekites were enjoying the booty they had taken from Philistia and Judah, including Ziklag.

30:17–20 Twilight here probably means just before first light in the morning. It is likely that David attacked the Amalekites in the early morning and that the battle continued through the next day. God was faithful to His earlier promise (v. 8); David’s men were able to recover their wives and possessions. Not only did the men of David recover their own possessions, but they were able to capture the **flocks and herds** of the Amalekites. These animals were **driven before** the other livestock as they returned triumphantly to Ziklag.

30:22, 23 wicked and worthless men: These men insisted that the spoil captured from the Amalekites should not be divided with the men who stayed at the Brook Besor with the supplies. **with what the LORD has given us:** David pointed out that the booty captured from the Amalekites was actually a gift from God, who had given them the victory.

30:24 For who will heed you in this matter: David questioned whether the men who waited at the Brook Besor would accept the proposal of the warriors who wanted to exclude them from any part in the spoil. **they shall share alike:** David’s band of warriors were one, although they had different strengths and abilities. They would share equally in the fruits of victory.

30:26–31 David also shared the booty taken from the Amalekites with the elders of Judah. This goodwill gesture helped David re-

worthless

(Heb. *beliya'al*) (30:22; Job 34:18; Prov. 6:12) Strong’s #1100

This word has the basic sense of “unworthy” and “wicked.” It occurs in the OT most frequently in phrases like “worthless men” (30:22; Prov. 6:12) and “worthless rogues” (2 Chr. 13:7). Worthless people are said to dig up evil (Prov. 16:27) and to plot wickedness (Nah. 1:11). This word became a proper name for Satan during the intertestamental period; thus Paul asked, “What accord has Christ with Belial?” (2 Cor. 6:15).



Bow and Arrow

Bows were the most characteristic weapons of warfare in the OT period, serving often as the decisive element in a battle. Simple bows, composed of a piece of wood and string, did not have much power or range, so the composite bow was developed early in the history of the Middle East. The composite bow was a combination of wood and animal horn. This combination of materials provided the bow with the flexibility and strength needed for effective combat. The bow was usually the first weapon fired in an open-field battle because the archers of the hostile armies could send arrows long distances. When attacking a city, the archers of the attacking army would try to pick city defenders off the walls. Archers of the defending city would use their bows to try to keep the army from getting close enough to break down the city's defenses.

Archers on a Lachish relief. Note the one archer on the top right defending the city from the tower and the ones on the bottom left attacking the city.

Kim Walton, courtesy of the British Museum



sent *some* of the ⁴spoils to the elders of Judah, to his friends, saying, "Here is a present for you from the spoils of the enemies of the LORD"—²⁷ to those who were in Bethel, those who were in ^uRamoth of the South, those who were in ^vJattir, ²⁸those who were in ^wAroer, those who were in ^xSiphmoth, those who were in ^yEshtemoa, ²⁹those who were in Rachal, those who were in the cities of ^zthe Jerahmeelites, those who were in the cities of the ^aKenites, ³⁰those who were in ^bHormah, those who were in ⁵Chorashan, those who were in Athach, ³¹those who were in ^cHebron, and to all the places where David himself and his men were accustomed to ^drove.

The Tragic End of Saul and His Sons

31 Now ^athe Philistines fought against Israel; and the men of Is-

26 ⁴booty
27 ^uJosh. 19:8
^vJosh. 15:48; 21:14
28 ^wJosh. 13:16
^x1 Chr. 27:27
^yJosh. 15:50
29 ^z1 Sam. 27:10
^aJudg. 1:16; 1 Sam. 15:6; 27:10
30 ^bNum. 14:45; 21:3; Josh. 12:14; 15:30; 19:4; Judg. 1:17 ⁵Or *Borashan*
31 ^cNum. 13:22; Josh. 14:13-15; 21:11-13; 2 Sam. 2:1
^d1 Sam. 23:22

CHAPTER 31

1 ^a1 Chr. 10:1-12
^b1 Sam. 28:4
2 ^c1 Sam. 14:49;
1 Chr. 8:33
3 ^d2 Sam. 1:6 ¹Lit.
found him

rael fled from before the Philistines, and fell slain on Mount ^bGilboa. ²Then the Philistines followed hard after Saul and his sons. And the Philistines killed ^cJonathan, Abinadab, and Malchishua, Saul's sons. ³^dThe battle became fierce against Saul. The archers ¹hit him, and he was severely wounded by the archers.

⁴^eThen Saul said to his armorbearer, "Draw your sword, and thrust me through with it, lest ^fthese uncircumcised men come and thrust me through and ²abuse me."

But his armorbearer would not, ^gfor he was greatly afraid. Therefore Saul took a sword and ^hfell on it. ⁵And when his armorbearer saw that Saul was dead, he

4 ^eJudg. 9:54; 1 Chr. 10:4 ^fJudg. 14:3; 1 Sam. 14:6; 17:26, 36
^g2 Sam. 1:14 ^h2 Sam. 1:6, 10 ²torture

establish his relationships among the leaders of Judah after his stay in Philistine territory.

30:27 Bethel is not the well-known city of Benjamin, but probably the Bethel of Josh. 19:4. **Ramoth of the South** may be the same city as Ramah of the South (Josh. 19:8), whose location is uncertain. **Jattir**, a Levitical city (see Josh. 21:14) allotted to Judah (see Josh. 15:48), was about 13 miles southwest of Hebron.

30:28 Aroer was a village about 12 miles southeast of Beersheba. The village of **Siphmoth** has not been identified. **Eshtemoa** was a Levitical city (see Josh. 21:14) in the hill country of Judah.

30:29 Rachal is of uncertain location. The **Jerahmeelites** were one of the clans of Judah (1 Chr. 2:9).

30:30 Hormah was where the Israelites were first defeated by the Canaanites (Num. 14:45). The location of the city, allotted to Judah (see Josh. 15:30) and to Simeon (see Josh. 19:4), is uncertain. **Chorashan** and **Athach** are also of uncertain location.

30:31 Hebron, also known as Kirjath Arba (Gen. 23:2), was soon to become David's capital (see 2 Sam. 5:3). Hebron was captured by Joshua and given to Caleb (Josh. 14:13). It was a Levitical city (Josh. 21:11) and a city of refuge (Josh. 20:7).

31:1 Mount Gilboa was a small mountain range in the eastern part of the Jezreel valley.

31:2 Saul's fourth son, Ishbosheth, was apparently not present at this battle, since Abner promoted him to king after Saul's death (2 Sam. 2:8-10).

31:4 Saul took a sword and fell on it: This account of Saul's death is different from that given by the Amalekite in 2 Sam. 1:6-10. His story was probably a fabrication intended to win David's approval.

31:5 In a demonstration of loyalty, Saul's **armorbearer** joined his master in death.

also fell on his sword, and died with him. ⁶So Saul, his three sons, his armorbearer, and all his men died together that same day.

⁷And when the men of Israel who *were* on the other side of the valley, and *those* who *were* on the other side of the Jordan, saw that the men of Israel had fled and that Saul and his sons were dead, they forsook the cities and fled; and the Philistines came and dwelt in them. ⁸So it happened the next day, when the Philistines came to strip the slain, that they found Saul and his three sons fallen on Mount Gilboa. ⁹And they cut off his head and stripped off his armor, and sent *word*

⁹ ⁱ Judg. 16:23, 24; 2 Sam. 1:20
¹⁰ ^j 1 Sam. 21:9
^k Judg. 2:13; 1 Sam. 7:3 ^l 2 Sam. 21:12
^m Judg. 1:27 ³ Beth Shean, Josh. 17:11
¹¹ ⁿ 1 Sam. 11:1-13
¹² ^o 1 Sam. 11:1-11; 2 Sam. 2:4-7
^p 2 Chr. 16:14; Jer. 34:5; Amos 6:10
¹³ ^q 2 Sam. 2:4, 5; 21:12-14 ^r Gen. 50:10

throughout the land of the Philistines, to ⁱproclaim *it* in the temple of their idols and among the people. ¹⁰^jThen they put his armor in the temple of the ^kAshtoreths, and ^lthey fastened his body to the wall of ^mBeth ³Shan.

¹¹ⁿNow when the inhabitants of Jabesh Gilead heard what the Philistines had done to Saul, ¹²^oall the valiant men arose and traveled all night, and took the body of Saul and the bodies of his sons from the wall of Beth Shan; and they came to Jabesh and ^pburned them there. ¹³Then they took their bones and ^qburied *them* under the tamarisk tree at Jabesh, ^rand fasted seven days.

31:6 all his men: This does not refer to the whole army (v. 7), but rather to men who were particularly associated with Saul, perhaps his royal bodyguards.

31:7 The other side of the valley refers to the Valley of Jezreel. **they forsook the cities and fled:** As a result of Israel's defeat, many of the cities of northern Israel were abandoned. The people fled to remote regions to escape the Philistine menace.

31:8, 9 the Philistines came to strip the slain: Battlefield looting was the rule in ancient times. The victors gathered clothes, weapons, and armor from the slain. **to proclaim it in the temple of their idols:** The victory of the Philistines was announced to assembled worshipers as a public testimony of the greatness of their gods in overcoming the Israelites.

31:10 The armor of Saul was placed in the **temple** dedicated to the worship of Ashtoreth, or Ishtar, the Canaanite goddess of fertility and war. **Beth Shan** was at the junction of the Jezreel and Jordan valleys, about four miles west of the Jordan. Although Saul's body was fastened to the wall of the city, 1 Chr. 10:10 records that his head was displayed in the temple of Dagon.

31:11 The inhabitants of Jabesh Gilead had been delivered from the threats of Nahash the Ammonite by Saul in his first military campaign as king of Israel (11:1–11).

31:12 the valiant men arose: Out of gratitude to Saul for delivering their city, the men of Jabesh Gilead risked their lives to recover the bodies of Saul and his sons and to give them a proper burial. **burned them:** Cremation was not the normal practice for disposing of the dead among the ancient Hebrews. The reason they burned the bodies of Saul and his sons may be that the corpses had been mutilated by the Philistines (v. 9).

31:13 Although the bodies of Saul and his sons were burned, the **bones** were recovered and **buried**. Later, David exhumed the bodies of Saul and Jonathan and had them reburied in Benjamin (2 Sam. 21:11–14). **fasted seven days:** In ancient Israel, fasting was a way of expressing sorrow in mourning. With their fasting, the men of **Jabesh** showed their respect for Israel's first king.

THE SECOND BOOK OF SAMUEL



SECOND SAMUEL recounts the triumphs and defeats of King David. From his rise to the throne to his famous last words, this biography describes a remarkable, divinely-inspired leader. As king, David took a divided and defeated Israel from his predecessor King Saul and built a prominent nation. Like most political biographies, 2 Samuel highlights the character traits that enabled David to succeed—his reliance on God for guidance (2:1), his sincerity (5:1–5), and his courage (5:6, 7). But the book also describes the tragic consequences of David's lust (12:1–23) and pride (24:1–17). By presenting both the strengths and the weaknesses of David, the book gives a complete picture of a very real person—a person from whom we can learn.

Title Second Samuel is named after the prophet Samuel, even though he does not appear in the narratives of the book. This is because 1 and 2 Samuel were originally one volume. When the Hebrew Scriptures were translated into the Greek language (around 150 B.C.), the books of Samuel and Kings were united as a complete history of the Hebrew monarchy. This collection was divided into four sections: First, Second, Third, and Fourth Kingdoms. Samuel and Kings were later separated again, but the divisions of the Greek translation persisted. The result was a 1 and 2 Samuel and a 1 and 2 Kings, corresponding to the four sections of Kingdoms in the Septuagint.

Author and Date Jewish tradition holds that the prophet Samuel wrote 1 Samuel 1–24, and that the prophets Nathan and Gad composed the rest of 1 Samuel and all of 2 Samuel. It is quite evident that some sections of 1 Samuel and all of 2 Samuel were written after the death of Samuel (1 Sam. 25:1; 28:3). Indeed, some notes may have been added even after the division of the monarchy in 930 B.C. (1 Sam. 27:6). In the absence of any reference to the fall of Samaria, the capital of the northern kingdom, it is reasonable to assume that the books were complete by 722 B.C. The majority of the composition of the Books of Samuel may have been done during David and Solomon's reigns (c. 1010–930 B.C.), with only a small number of notations coming from later periods.

Historical Setting Second Samuel covers the period from the death of Saul (c. 1010 B.C.) to the end of David's career (c. 970 B.C.). During the 40 years of his reign, David welded the loose-knit tribes together into a strong monarchy and transformed the youthful nation into a military power able to dominate surrounding nations.

After capturing the Jebusite fortress Jerusalem, David made it his capital. This new site became the powerful geographical base for the establishment of David's empire. Then David began to free the Israelite territory from Philistine and Canaanite domination. In doing so, David extended his kingdom by military conquests to the north, south, east, and west (see ch. 8).

In addition to military conquest, David was the first of Israel's kings to use marriage alliances as an important dimension of the nation's foreign policy. Marriage alliances between royal houses as a means of concluding treaties and cementing relationships between states were common occurrences in the ancient Middle East. The first such marriage alliance is alluded to in 3:3, where Absalom, David's third son, is called "the son of Maacah, the daughter of Talmai, king of Geshur."



The Gihon spring (see 2 Sam. 5:8) provided a natural water source for ancient Jerusalem.

Todd Bolen/www.BiblePlaces.com

David's conquests and alliances gave him control of territory from the border of Egypt to the Euphrates. This was largely due to David's strong military presence in comparison with the general weakness that characterized Egypt and Mesopotamia at this time. For a brief period, Israel was as strong as any nation of the ancient world.

Theme The unifying theme of 2 Samuel is the establishment of the kingdom of Israel, progressing from a diverse group of divided and warring tribes to a solidified kingdom under David. However the purpose for recording these events was not merely to have an "official" record of David's reign. Throughout the narrative, there is a continuing interest in the rule of God over His people. The book emphasizes that it was God who rejected Saul for his disobedience, chose David for the throne, and disciplined David for his pride. God was still the true King of Israel.

The key to David's successful reign was his relationship with the Lord. God had described him as a man after His own heart (1 Sam. 13:14). In his youth, David had demonstrated his strong faith in God by challenging a giant with only a few stones and his faith in God's strength (1 Sam. 17:45–51). In his adulthood, he continued to rely on God for guidance and strength (2:1; 5:19). Early in his reign, he demonstrated the importance of his religious convictions to all Israel by bringing the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem in the midst of a lavish celebration before the Lord (6:1–23). Following that, his eagerness to build a temple for the glory of the Lord was known to all (7:1–3). With such actions and the numerous songs he wrote in praise of God, David led the Israelites back to the true worship of God. Even when he sinned, he demonstrated to the people his repentant heart before the living God (12:13–23; 24:17–25). In the final analysis, David's religious leadership was the most significant part of his reign.

Through all the triumphs and tragedies of David's reign, God was acting in the national and personal events of His people in order to accomplish His will. The Lord gave David a glimpse of His ultimate will in the promises He gave him, commonly called the Davidic covenant (7:12–16). In this unconditional covenant, God promised David an eternal dynasty, an eternal throne, and an eternal kingdom. Ultimately, a righteous King greater than David was coming. He would be David's son and would rule from David's throne forever (Is. 9:7). This promised King is Jesus (see Luke 1:31–33; John 1:49).

CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

In spite of his sins of adultery, murder, and deceit (chs. 11–24), David remains a man after God's own heart. This is seen in his response and faithful attitude toward God. Like Jesus, David characterizes his reign with justice,

wisdom, integrity, courage, and compassion. His throne is none other than the one that belonged to Melchizedek (see Gen. 14:18). Although David barely compares to the King, Jesus Christ, he comes closer than anyone else in Scripture. In 2 Samuel, God makes a covenant with David (7:4–17). Without understanding the magnitude of it, the shepherd-turned-king receives God’s three-fold promise of an eternal kingdom, throne, and seed. Amazingly, these are the same three promises given to Jesus (Luke 1:32, 33).

And on a curious note, David ruled for a time in Hebron before the 33 years he reigned in Jerusalem. Jesus’ life on earth as king of the Jews was also for 33 years, but this was only a continuation of His majestic rule in heaven that preceded His incarnation.

2 SAMUEL OUTLINE

- I. The personal triumphs of David 1:1—10:19
 - A. The period of transition: David’s lament for Saul and Jonathan 1:1–27
 - B. The period of beginnings: David’s reign over Judah at Hebron 2:1—4:12
 - C. The period of growth and achievement: David’s reign over all Israel 5:1—10:19
- II. The personal troubles of David 11:1—20:26
 - A. David’s great sin against Bathsheba, Uriah, and the Lord 11:1—12:31
 - B. Trouble in David’s family: Absalom’s murder of Amnon 13:1—18:33
 - C. David’s reinstatement as king 19:1—20:26
- III. An appendix to the life of David 21:1—24:25
 - A. David’s reconciliation with the Gibeonites 21:1–14
 - B. The exploits of David and his men 21:15–22
 - C. The psalm of David in praise to the Lord for his deliverance 22:1–51
 - D. David’s last words 23:1–7
 - E. The roster of David’s mighty men and the numbering of the people 23:8—24:25

c. 1018 B.C.

Samuel anoints David to be king

1010 B.C.

David begins to reign at Hebron

1003 B.C.

David’s reign is acknowledged throughout Israel

990 B.C.

David commits adultery with Bathsheba

980 B.C.

Absalom revolts against his father David

970 B.C.

David dies and Solomon becomes king

930 B.C.

Solomon dies and the kingdom divides

The Report of Saul's Death

Now it came to pass after the ^adeath of Saul, when David had returned from ^bthe slaughter of the Amalekites, and David had stayed two days in Ziklag, ²on the third day, behold, it happened that ^ca man came from Saul's camp ^dwith his clothes ¹torn and dust on his head. So it was, when he came to David, that he ^efell to the ground and prostrated himself.

³And David said to him, "Where have you come from?"

So he said to him, "I have escaped from the camp of Israel."

⁴Then David said to him, ^f"How did the matter go? Please tell me."

And he answered, "The people have fled from the battle, many of the people are fallen and dead, and Saul and ^gJonathan his son are dead also."

⁵So David said to the young man who told him, "How do you know that Saul and Jonathan his son are dead?"

⁶Then the young man who told him said, "As I happened by chance to be on ^hMount Gilboa, there was ⁱSaul, leaning on his spear; and indeed the chariots and horsemen followed hard after him. ⁷Now when he looked behind him, he saw me and called to me. And I answered, 'Here I am.' ⁸And he said to me, 'Who are you?' So I answered him, 'I am an Amalekite.' ⁹He said to me again, 'Please stand over me and kill me, for ²anguish has come upon me, but my life still remains in me."

CHAPTER 1

¹ ^a 1 Sam. 31:6
^b 1 Sam. 30:1, 17, 26
² ^c 2 Sam. 4:10
^d 1 Sam. 4:12
^e 1 Sam. 25:23 ¹ To show grief
⁴ ^f 1 Sam. 4:16; 31:3
⁹ 1 Sam. 31:2
⁶ ^h 1 Sam. 31:1
ⁱ 1 Sam. 31:2-4
⁹ ² agony

¹⁰ Judg. 9:54;
 2 Kin. 11:12
¹¹ ^k 2 Sam. 3:31;
 13:31
¹² ² 2 Sam. 3:31
^m 1 Sam. 31:13
ⁿ 2 Sam. 6:21
¹⁴ ^o Num. 12:8
^p 1 Sam. 31:4
^q 1 Sam. 24:6; 26:9
¹⁵ ^r 2 Sam. 4:10, 12
¹⁶ ^s 1 Sam. 26:9;
 2 Sam. 3:28; 1 Kin.
 2:32-37 ^t 2 Sam.
 1:10; Luke 19:22
¹⁸ ^u 1 Sam. 31:3
^v Josh. 10:13 ³ Lit. of
 the Upright

¹⁰So I stood over him and ^jkilled him, because I was sure that he could not live after he had fallen. And I took the crown that *was* on his head and the bracelet that *was* on his arm, and have brought them here to my lord."

¹¹Therefore David took hold of his own clothes and ^ktore them, and *so did* all the men who *were* with him. ¹²And they ^lmourned and wept and ^mfasted until evening for Saul and for Jonathan his son, for the ⁿpeople of the LORD and for the house of Israel, because they had fallen by the sword.

¹³Then David said to the young man who told him, "Where *are* you from?"

And he answered, "I *am* the son of an alien, an Amalekite."

¹⁴So David said to him, "How ^owas it you were not ^pafraid to ^qput forth your hand to destroy the LORD's anointed?"

¹⁵Then ^rDavid called one of the young men and said, "Go near, *and* execute him!" And he struck him so that he died.

¹⁶So David said to him, ^s"Your blood is on your own head, for ^tyour own mouth has testified against you, saying, 'I have killed the LORD's anointed.'"

The Song of the Bow

¹⁷Then David lamented with this lamentation over Saul and over Jonathan his son, ¹⁸*and* he told *them* to teach the children of Judah *the Song of the Bow*; indeed *it is* written ^vin the Book ³of Jasher:

1:1 The death of Saul is recorded in 1 Sam. 31:3–5. **The Amalekites** were a nomadic, marauding people who roamed the southern part of Canaan. They were fierce enemies of Israel until they were brought under Israelite control in the time of David. **Ziklag** was one of the Israelite cities of the southern desert or Negev, originally assigned to Judah (Josh. 15:31). David was granted authority over the city when he served as vassal to Achish, king of Gath (1 Sam. 27:6).

1:2 clothes torn and dust on his head: The man was in mourning (1 Sam. 4:12). He **fell to the ground** to show his support for David as Saul's successor to the throne of Israel. In these actions of mourning and humility, the man attempted to demonstrate respect for both the dead king and the one who was to become king.

1:3 escaped from the camp of Israel: The army of Israel had fallen in defeat to the Philistines, but the man had escaped from the battlefield.

1:6–10 The Amalekite's report of Saul's death is different from the account in 1 Sam. 31:4, which states that Saul died by falling on his sword. It appears that the Amalekite's story was a fabrication. Perhaps he sought recognition or reward from David by claiming to have slain Saul.

1:6 Mount Gilboa is a small mountain range located in the eastern part of the Jezreel valley.

1:9 In this context, **anguish** refers to the agony of death.

1:10 I was sure that he could not live: According to the Amalekite's story, since Saul had no hope of recovery, there was justification in putting him to death. The **crown** was a mark of royalty. The **bracelet** was an ornament worn on the upper part of the arm. Apparently, it was the custom for kings to go into battle in royal regalia (see 1 Kin. 22:30). The Amalekite brought these items to David in order to substantiate his story.

1:11 tore them: Tearing one's clothes was a traditional expression of mourning in ancient times (3:31; see Gen. 37:34).

1:12 the people of the Lord: David and his associates mourned not only for the fallen king and prince, but also for those who had died from the ranks of Saul's army. This is surprising, for it was the same army that had been attempting to capture and kill David. He did not see them as enemies, but as members of God's family.

1:13 Where are you from: David's question might have been designed to determine whether the Amalekite resided in Israel or in Amalekite territory to the south. He might have been wondering how the man could be so ignorant of David's respect for Saul's life.

1:14 David's use of the phrase **the LORD's anointed** indicates that even though Saul was his enemy, David respected Saul's divine right to be king. With Saul's anointing, God had declared a sacred relationship between Himself and Saul (see 1 Sam. 10:1); Saul as king served as God's representative and ruler over His people. David repeatedly refused to harm him because of this (1 Sam. 24:6; 26:9).

1:15 execute him: David apparently believed the Amalekite's story and had him put to death on the basis of his own testimony. David's execution of the Amalekite was a strong statement to those under his command that he had no part in Saul's death and did not reward it in any way. Thus he exemplified respect for authority and distanced himself from the charge of being a usurper.

1:16 Your blood is on your own head: The Amalekite, not the executioner, was morally accountable for the shedding of his own blood.

1:18 The Hebrew phrase **the children of Judah** means not young people but the descendants or tribe of Judah. **The Song of the Bow:** The words for "the Song of" do not appear in the Hebrew, leading some to suggest that the men of Judah were to be instructed in warfare and the use of the bow (Ps. 18:34; 144:1; 149:6). Others

- 19^a “The beauty of Israel is slain on your high places!
^wHow the mighty have fallen!”
 20^x Tell *it* not in Gath,
 Proclaim *it* not in the streets of
^yAshkelon—
 Lest ^zthe daughters of the Philistines
 rejoice,
 Lest the daughters of ^athe
 uncircumcised triumph.
- 21^a “O ^bmountains of Gilboa,
^cLet *there be* no dew nor rain upon you,
 Nor fields of offerings.
 For the shield of the mighty is ^dcast
 away there!
 The shield of Saul, not ^danointed
 with oil.
- 22 From the blood of the slain,
 From the fat of the mighty,
^eThe bow of Jonathan did not turn
 back,
 And the sword of Saul did not return
 empty.
- 23^a “Saul and Jonathan *were* beloved and
 pleasant in their lives,
 And in their ^fdeath they were not
 divided;
 They were swifter than eagles,
 They were ^gstronger than lions.
- 24^a “O daughters of Israel, weep over
 Saul,
 Who clothed you in scarlet, with
 luxury;

19 ^w 2 Sam. 1:27
 20 ^x 1 Sam. 27:2;
 31:8-13; Mic. 1:10
^y 1 Sam. 6:17; Jer.
 25:20 ^z Ex. 15:20;
 Judg. 11:34; 1 Sam.
 18:6 ^a 1 Sam. 31:4
 21 ^b 1 Sam. 31:1
^c Ezek. 31:15
^d 1 Sam. 10:1 ⁴ Lit.
defiled
 22 ^e Deut. 32:42;
 1 Sam. 18:4
 23 ^f 1 Sam. 31:2-4
^g Judg. 14:18

26 ^h 1 Sam. 18:1-4;
 19:2; 20:17
 27 ⁱ 2 Sam. 1:19, 25

CHAPTER 2

1 ^a Judg. 1:1; 1 Sam.
 23:2, 4, 9; 30:7;
 8 ^b 1 Sam. 30:31;
 2 Sam. 2:11; 5:1-3;
 1 Kin. 2:11
 2 ^c 1 Sam. 25:42,
 43; 30:5
 3 ^d 1 Sam. 27:2, 3;
 30:1; 1 Chr. 12:1
 4 ^e 1 Sam. 30:26;
 2 Sam. 2:11; 5:5;
 19:14, 41-43
^f 1 Sam. 16:13;
 2 Sam. 5:3 ^g 1 Sam.
 31:11-13

Who put ornaments of gold on your
 apparel.

- 25^a “How the mighty have fallen in the
 midst of the battle!
 Jonathan *was* slain in your high
 places.
- 26 I am distressed for you, my brother
 Jonathan;
 You have been very pleasant to me;
^hYour love to me was wonderful,
 Surpassing the love of women.
- 27^a “How ⁱthe mighty have fallen,
 And the weapons of war perished!”

David Anointed King of Judah

2 It happened after this that David
^ainquired of the LORD, saying, “Shall
 I go up to any of the cities of Judah?”
 And the LORD said to him, “Go up.”
 David said, “Where shall I go up?”
 And He said, “To ^bHebron.”
²So David went up there, and his ^ctwo
 wives also, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and
 Abigail the widow of Nabal the Carmel-
 ite. ³And David brought up ^dthe men
 who *were* with him, every man with his
 household. So they dwelt in the cities of
 Hebron.
⁴^eThen the men of Judah came, and
 there they ^fanointed David king over the
 house of Judah. And they told David, say-
 ing, ^g“The men of Jabesh Gilead *were the*
ones who buried Saul.” ⁵So David sent

suggest that the poem was known as *The Song of the Bow*, based on the reference in v. 22. It is also possible the title refers to the tune for the song. **The Book of Jasher** was perhaps a collection of hymns about Israel's wars, in which important events and national figures were commemorated in poetry (Num. 21:14–18; Josh. 10:13).

1:19 The beauty of Israel refers to Saul and Jonathan. **High places** alludes to Mt. Gilboa (v. 6), where the warriors died.

1:20 Gath and Ashkelon are mentioned as representatives of the Philistine cities (see 1 Sam. 6:17) that would rejoice over the deaths of Israel's royal family. These two cities joined with Ekron, Gaza, and Ashdod to form the Philistine pentapolis, or five-city league.

1:21 no dew nor rain: A curse was pronounced on the mountains of Gilboa, the scene of the military disaster (1:6; 1 Sam. 31:8). **not anointed with oil:** Shields were normally wiped with oil to cleanse, polish, and protect them. Saul's shield was declared useless because it had not protected him from death.

1:23, 24 Eagles and lions were poetic symbols of speed and strength. **weep over Saul:** David invited the women of Israel to lead in public lamentation for Saul, whose military exploits elevated the standard of royalty and enriched the nation (1 Sam. 14:47). David did not want the women of Philistia to sing (v. 20), but he invited the women of Israel to lament.

1:25 How the mighty have fallen: The poetic repetition of these words from v. 19 prepares the reader for the shift in focus of the poem to Jonathan.

1:26 The Hebrew word for **distressed** means a tightness or constriction, as though life itself were closing in. **Your love:** David compared Jonathan's love with that of women in its depth and loyalty. David was not afraid to speak of his deep and genuine love for his friend.

1:27 How the mighty have fallen: The third repetition of this phrase (compare vv. 19, 25) brings the psalm to its painful conclusion. The phrase **weapons of war** is a figurative reference to the fallen warriors.

2:1 David inquired of the LORD: Before taking an important step, it was David's custom to seek the will of the Lord (1 Sam. 23:2; 30:8). This was sometimes done by means of the Urim and Thummim which were attached to the breastplate of the priest's ephod (see Ex. 28:30; Lev. 8:8; Num. 27:21; Deut. 33:8; 1 Sam. 23:6–9; Ezra 2:63; Neh. 7:65). The Lord directed David to **Hebron** (1 Sam. 30:31). Its central location—about 20 miles south of Jerusalem—and defensible position made it a suitable capital for David.

2:2 his two wives: David's marriages to Abigail and Ahinoam are recorded in 1 Sam. 25:2–43.

2:3 The ancient name for Hebron was Kirjath Arba (see Gen. 23:2), meaning “Town of Four.” Apparently, the town had four suburbs, one of which must have been Mamre (Gen. 35:27); hence, one may speak of **the cities of Hebron** (Josh. 21:11).

2:4 anointed David: This is actually the second anointing of David. The first had been performed by the prophet Samuel while Saul was still king (1 Sam. 16:13). The first anointing was a mark of God's intention; this second anointing was the recognition by the people of Judah that David was truly the Lord's anointed (5:3). **Jabesh Gilead** was on the north bank of the Jabbok River, about seven miles east of the Jordan. The men of Jabesh Gilead had risked their lives to provide Saul and Jonathan a proper burial (1 Sam. 31:11–13).

2:5–7 sent messengers: David's sincere action of appreciation for the kindness of the men also announced to them that he was ready to act on their behalf, because he was now the anointed king of the tribe of Judah. **let your hands be strengthened:** David made an

messengers to the men of Jabesh Gilead, and said to them, ^h“You are blessed of the LORD, for you have shown this kindness to your lord, to Saul, and have buried him. ⁶And now may ⁱthe LORD show kindness and truth to you. I also will repay you this kindness, because you have done this thing. ⁷Now therefore, let your hands be strengthened, and be valiant; for your master Saul is dead, and also the house of Judah has anointed me king over them.”

Ishbosheth Made King of Israel

⁸But ^jAbner the son of Ner, commander of Saul’s army, took ¹Ishbosheth the son of Saul and brought him over to ^kMahanaim; ⁹and he made him king over ^lGilead, over the ^mAshurites, over ⁿJezreel, over Ephraim, over Benjamin, and over all Israel. ¹⁰Ishbosheth, Saul’s son, was forty years old when he began to reign over Israel, and he reigned two years. Only the house of Judah followed David. ¹¹And ^othe ²time that David was king in Hebron over the house of Judah was seven years and six months.

Israel and Judah at War

¹²Now Abner the son of Ner, and the servants of Ishbosheth the son of Saul, went out from Mahanaim to ^pGibeon. ¹³And ^qJoab the son of Zeruiah, and the servants of David, went out and met them by ^rthe pool of Gibeon. So they sat down, one on one side of the pool and the other

⁵ ^h Ruth 2:20; 3:10
⁶ ⁱ Ex. 34:6; 2 Tim. 1:16, 18
⁸ ^j 1 Sam. 14:50;
² Sam. 3:6 ^k Gen. 32:2; Josh. 21:38;
² Sam. 17:24 ^l Esh-Baal, 1 Chr. 8:33; 9:39
⁹ ^m Josh. 22:9
¹¹ ⁿ Judg. 1:32
¹¹ ^o 2 Sam. 29:1
¹ Kin. 2:11 ² Lit. number of days
¹² ^p Josh. 10:2-12; 18:25
¹³ ^q 1 Sam. 26:6;
² Sam. 8:16; 1 Chr. 2:16; 11:6 ^r Jer. 41:12

on the other side of the pool. ¹⁴Then Abner said to Joab, “Let the young men now arise and compete before us.”

And Joab said, “Let them arise.”

¹⁵So they arose and went over by number, twelve from Benjamin, *followers* of Ishbosheth the son of Saul, and twelve from the servants of David. ¹⁶And each one grasped his opponent by the head and *thrust* his sword in his opponent’s side; so they fell down together. Therefore that place was called ³the Field of Sharp Swords, which *is* in Gibeon. ¹⁷So there was a very fierce battle that day, and Abner and the men of Israel were beaten before the servants of David.

¹⁸Now the ³three sons of Zeruiah were there: Joab and Abishai and Asahel. And Asahel was ^tas fleet of foot ^uas a wild gazelle. ¹⁹So Asahel pursued Abner, and in going he did not turn to the right hand or to the left from following Abner.

²⁰Then Abner looked behind him and said, “Are you Asahel?”

He answered, “I am.”

²¹And Abner said to him, “Turn aside to your right hand or to your left, and lay hold on one of the young men and take his armor for yourself.” But Asahel would not turn aside from following him. ²²So Abner said again to Asahel, “Turn aside from following me. Why should I strike you to the ground? How then could I face your brother Joab?” ²³However, he refused to turn aside. Therefore Abner struck him ^vin the stomach with

¹⁶ ³ Heb. *Helkath Hazzurim*
¹⁸ ³ 1 Chr. 2:16
¹ Chr. 12:8; Hab. 3:19 ^u Ps. 18:33
²³ ^v 2 Sam. 3:27; 4:6; 20:10

appeal to the men of Gilead for their strong support of his kingship. However, their loyalty to Saul’s dynasty prevailed, and Jabesh Gilead became the headquarters of Ishbosheth, David’s rival.

2:8 Ishbosheth means “Man of Shame.” His original name Esh-Baal, meaning “Man of the Master” or “Man of the Lord,” was changed because “Baal” suggested Baal worship (1 Chr. 8:33; 9:39). **Mahanaim**, the capital of Gilead, was north of the Jabbok (1 Kin. 4:14). It was named by Jacob when he saw the encampment of the angels of God around his own camp (Gen. 32:2). The name means “Double Camp.”

2:9 Gilead usually refers to the central part of the Israelite territory east of the Jordan; here the term probably refers more generally to all of that territory. **Ashurites** is apparently a variant of the term *Asherites* (Judg. 1:32), referring to the tribe of Asher. The territory of Asher extended north from Mt. Carmel along the Mediterranean coast and east into the foothills of the mountains of Galilee. **Jezreel** refers to the broad valley between the mountains of Galilee and the mountain range to the south. **Ephraim** and Manasseh occupied the central district north of **Benjamin**, the small plateau just north of Jerusalem.

2:10, 11 While David was king in Hebron for seven and a half years, Ishbosheth reigned for only **two years**. The difference may mean that Ishbosheth took about five years to recover the northern territory from the Philistines after Saul’s defeat. His reign of two years would be his reign over “all Israel” (v. 9).

2:12, 13 Gibeon was about six miles northwest of Jerusalem. **pool of Gibeon**: Excavations at El-Jib—the site of Gibeon—uncovered a rock-cut pool 37 feet in diameter and 82 feet deep. A spiral staircase of 79 steps cut in the rock leads to the bottom. The pool was meant either to store rainwater or to provide access to the water table.

Joab: David’s nephew became a competent military commander of David’s forces (10:7–14; 12:26–28).

2:14–17 Abner proposed a contest between champions to determine the outcome of the conflict between Ishbosheth and David (1 Sam. 17:38–54). This was not a friendly game that he proposed; it was a fight to the death in order to determine a victor. Yet the outcome of the contest would presumably save many lives. The two groups of **twelve** faced each other. Two champions contended at a time, each killing the other, until all 24 had died. Had one group of champions clearly triumphed over the other, the contest would have determined the future ruler of Israel. **fierce battle**: Since the contest between the champions was a draw, warfare between the two armies ensued, with David’s men claiming victory.

2:18 Joab, Abishai, and Asahel were brothers, all sons of David’s sister **Zeruiah** (1 Chr. 2:13–16). The **wild gazelle** was renowned in Israel for its beauty and swiftness.

2:19 Asahel knew that if **Abner** was dead, Ishbosheth’s power base would dissolve, and the tribes could be united under King David.

2:21 Abner, confident that he could defeat Asahel, wanted to avoid the blood feud that would likely develop if he were to kill Joab’s brother. It also appears that Asahel, renowned for his speed (v. 18), did not have on the body armor that would have made a fight with Abner a fair contest. Abner pleaded with Asahel to **turn aside** or at least to put on **armor**.

2:23 Unable to deter Asahel from pursuing him, Abner stabbed him with the **blunt end** of his spear, which was the end opposite the spear head. It was probably pointed so that it could be stuck in the ground (1 Sam. 26:7).

the blunt end of the spear, so that the spear came out of his back; and he fell down there and died on the spot. So it was *that* as many as came to the place where Asahel fell down and died, stood ¹⁰still.

²⁴Joab and Abishai also pursued Abner. And the sun was going down when they came to the hill of Ammah, which is before Giah by the road to the Wilderness of Gibeon. ²⁵Now the children of Benjamin gathered together behind Abner and became ⁴a unit, and took their stand on top of a hill. ²⁶Then Abner called to Joab and said, “Shall the sword devour forever? Do you not know that it will be bitter in the latter end? How long will it be then until you tell the people to return from pursuing their brethren?”

²⁷And Joab said, “As God lives, ⁵unless ^xyou had spoken, surely then by morning all the people would have given up pursuing their brethren.” ²⁸So Joab blew a trumpet; and all the people stood still and did not pursue Israel anymore, nor did they fight anymore. ²⁹Then Abner and his men went on all that night through the plain, crossed over the Jordan, and went through all Bithron; and they came to Mahanaim.

³⁰So Joab returned from pursuing Abner. And when he had gathered all the people together, there were missing of David’s servants nineteen men and Asahel. ³¹But the servants of David had struck down, of Benjamin and Abner’s men, three hundred and sixty men who died. ³²Then they took up Asahel and buried him in his father’s tomb, which

²³ w 2 Sam. 20:12
²⁵ ⁴ one band
²⁷ x 2 Sam. 2:14 ⁵ if you had not spoken

was in ^yBethlehem. And Joab and his men went all night, and they came to Hebron at daybreak.

3 Now there was a long ^awar between the house of Saul and the house of David. But David grew stronger and stronger, and the house of Saul grew weaker and weaker.

Sons of David

²Sons were born ^bto David in Hebron: His firstborn was Amnon ^cby Ahinoam the Jezreelitess; ³his second, ¹Chileab, by Abigail the widow of Nabal the Carmelite; the third, ^dAbsalom the son of Maacah, the daughter of Talmai, king ^eof Geshur; ⁴the fourth, ^fAdonijah the son of Haggith; the fifth, Shephatiah the son of Abital; ⁵and the sixth, Ithream, by David’s wife Eglah. These were born to David in Hebron.

Abner Joins Forces with David

⁶Now it was so, while there was war between the house of Saul and the house of David, that Abner was strengthening *his hold* on the house of Saul.

⁷And Saul had a concubine, whose name was ^gRizpah, the daughter of Aiah. So Ishbosheth said to Abner, “Why have you ^hgone in to my father’s concubine?”

⁸Then Abner became very angry at the words of Ishbosheth, and said, “Am I ⁱa dog’s head that belongs to Judah? Today I show loyalty to the house of Saul your father, to his brothers, and to his friends, and have not delivered you into the hand of David; and you charge me today with a

32 y 1 Sam. 20:6

CHAPTER 3

¹ a 1 Kin. 14:30; [Ps. 46:9]
² b 1 Chr. 3:1-4
^c 1 Sam. 25:42, 43
³ d 2 Sam. 15:1-10
^e Josh. 13:13; 1 Sam. 27:8; 2 Sam. 13:37; 14:32; 15:8 ¹ Daniel, 1 Chr. 3:1
⁴ f 1 Kin. 1:5
⁷ g 2 Sam. 21:8-11
^h 2 Sam. 16:21
⁸ i Deut. 23:18;
 1 Sam. 24:14;
 2 Sam. 9:8; 16:9

2:25 the children of Benjamin: The men of Saul’s tribe were among the strongest supporters of Abner and Ishbosheth.

2:26–28 devour forever: Recognizing that continued fighting would only result in further loss of life and deepened hostility, Abner and Joab agreed to call off the conflict. The use of silver trumpets to signal the army was established at the time of Moses (Num. 10:1–10). Here, the **trumpet**, a ram’s horn or shofar, was used to mark a truce between the warring sides.

2:29 Abner’s army retreated across the Jordan and returned to **Mahanaim**, Ishbosheth’s headquarters (vv. 8, 12).

2:32 After burying Asahel at **Bethlehem**, 6 miles south of Jerusalem, Joab and his men marched another 14 miles to **Hebron**, David’s capital (v. 1).

3:1 a long war: The conflict between the followers of Saul and the followers of David was not limited to the battle recorded in ch. 2. Hostilities continued between the two royal houses, with David gradually gaining ascendancy.

3:2 David began his reign in Judah with two wives, Ahinoam and Abigail. In Hebron, he married four more wives, each of whom bore him a son. This was despite the warning against polygamy in Deut. 17:17. **Amnon**, notorious for having violated his sister Tamar, was later murdered by Absalom (ch. 13). Amnon’s mother, **Ahinoam**, is not the same as Saul’s wife Ahinoam (1 Sam. 14:50).

3:3 Chileab is called Daniel in 1 Chr. 3:1. The story of his mother, **Abigail**, is found in 1 Sam. 25. She is not the same as Abigail the mother of Amasa (17:25). **Absalom** died at the hands of Joab

(18:14). Absalom’s mother, **Maacah**, is identified as **the daughter of Talmai, king of Geshur**. Geshur was the Aramean kingdom on the east side of the Jordan, northeast of the Sea of Galilee. David used marriage alliances to conclude treaties and cement relations between Israel and foreign nations. However, such alliances were forbidden by God’s law (see Deut. 7:3).

3:4 Adonijah attempted to take his father’s throne just before David proclaimed Solomon king (1 Kin. 1). **Shephatiah** and his mother, **Abital**, are mentioned only here and in 1 Chr. 3:3.

3:5 Ithream and his mother, **Eglah**, are mentioned only here and in 1 Chr. 3:3. **in Hebron:** These six sons, each from a different mother, constituted the royal family during David’s reign over the house of Judah. The dynastic lists in Chronicles include four sons of David by Bathsheba (1 Chr. 3:5) and nine other sons whose mothers are not named (1 Chr. 3:6–8).

3:6, 7 The phrase **strengthening his hold** implies that Abner was usurping Ishbosheth’s authority, becoming the power behind the throne. **father’s concubine:** Ishbosheth’s charge, that Abner was having sexual relations with one of Saul’s concubines, was serious. The royal harem was the property of the king’s successor. Taking a king’s concubine was tantamount to claiming the throne (16:20–22).

3:8 Am I a dog’s head: In the ancient Middle East, dogs were scavengers, living off dead animals and garbage, and were viewed with contempt (9:8; Deut. 23:18; 1 Sam. 17:43; 1 Kin. 22:38; 2 Kin. 9:36). **that belongs to Judah:** Since Judah was the enemy of Israel, this phrase intensifies the metaphor.

fault concerning this woman? ^{9j} May God do so to Abner, and more also, if I do not do for David ^k as the LORD has sworn to him— ¹⁰ to transfer the kingdom from the ² house of Saul, and set up the throne of David over Israel and over Judah, ^l from Dan to Beersheba.” ¹¹ And he could not answer Abner another word, because he feared him.

¹² Then Abner sent messengers on his behalf to David, saying, “Whose *is* the land?” saying *also*, “Make your covenant with me, and indeed my hand *shall be* with you to bring all Israel to you.”

¹³ And David said, “Good, I will make a covenant with you. But one thing I require of you: ^m you shall not see my face unless you first bring ⁿ Michal, Saul’s daughter, when you come to see my face.” ¹⁴ So David sent messengers to ^o Ishbosheth, Saul’s son, saying, “Give *me* my wife Michal, whom I betrothed to myself ^p for a hundred foreskins of the Philistines.” ¹⁵ And Ishbosheth sent and took her from *her* husband, from ³ Paltiel the son of Laish. ¹⁶ Then her husband went along with her to ^q Bahurim, ⁴ weeping behind her. So Abner said to him, “Go, return!” And he returned.

¹⁷ Now Abner had communicated with the elders of Israel, saying, “In time past you were seeking for David *to be* king over you. ¹⁸ Now then, do *it!*” ¹⁹ For the LORD has spoken of David, saying, ‘By the hand of My servant David, ⁵ I will save

9 / Ruth 1:17; 1 Kin. 19:2 * 1 Sam. 15:28; 16:1, 12; 28:17; 1 Chr. 12:23
10 / Judg. 20:1; 1 Sam. 3:20; 2 Sam. 17:11; 1 Kin. 4:25
2 family
13 ^m Gen. 43:3
ⁿ 1 Sam. 18:20; 19:11; 25:44; 2 Sam. 6:16
14 ^o 2 Sam. 2:10
^p 1 Sam. 18:25-27
15 ³ Palti, 1 Sam. 25:44
16 ^q 2 Sam. 16:5; 19:16 ⁴ Lit. *going and weeping*
18 ^r 2 Sam. 3:9 ⁵ So with many Heb. mss., LXX, Syr., Tg.; MT *he*

19 ^s 1 Sam. 10:20; 21; 1 Chr. 12:29
21 ^t 2 Sam. 3:10, 12
^u 1 Kin. 11:37
22 ⁶ booty

My people Israel from the hand of the Philistines and the hand of all their enemies.” ¹⁹ And Abner also spoke in the hearing of ^s Benjamin. Then Abner also went to speak in the hearing of David in Hebron all that seemed good to Israel and the whole house of Benjamin.

²⁰ So Abner and twenty men with him came to David at Hebron. And David made a feast for Abner and the men who *were* with him. ²¹ Then Abner said to David, “I will arise and go, and ^l gather all Israel to my lord the king, that they may make a covenant with you, and that you may ^u reign over all that your heart desires.” So David sent Abner away, and he went in peace.

Joab Murders Abner

²² At that moment the servants of David and Joab came from a raid and brought much ⁶ spoil with them. But Abner *was* not with David in Hebron, for he had sent him away, and he had gone in peace. ²³ When Joab and all the troops that *were* with him had come, they told Joab, saying, “Abner the son of Ner came to the king, and he sent him away, and he has gone in peace.” ²⁴ Then Joab came to the king and said, “What have you done? Look, Abner came to you; why *is it* that you sent him away, and he has already gone? ²⁵ Surely you realize that Abner the son of Ner came to deceive you, to

3:9, 10 The phrase **may God do so to Abner** is a prayer for divine judgment should Abner fail to keep his oath. The words **as the LORD has sworn** indicate that Abner knew that David had been divinely chosen to succeed Saul (vv. 17, 18). The expression **from Dan to Beersheba** is used to refer to the whole territory of Israel from its northern to its southern border, a distance of about 150 miles (Judg. 20:1; 1 Sam 3:20).

3:12 **Whose is the land:** The implication here is that the land could be David’s if he entered into a binding agreement with Abner, because it was Abner who actually held all the power.

3:13 David’s first wife **Michal** (1 Sam. 18:17–27) was left in Gibeah

when David fled from Saul’s court (1 Sam. 19:11–17). She was later given by Saul, perhaps out of spite, to a man named Palti (1 Sam. 25:44).

3:14 David’s request for Michal was formally addressed to Ishbosheth. This might have been a difficult demand for Ishbosheth since Michal was his sister. However, he was powerless to thwart Abner’s plan. **a hundred foreskins:** David mentioned the number which Saul had originally asked for; David actually paid him double (1 Sam. 18:25–27).

3:16 Michal’s second husband appears brokenhearted at her forced removal from his home. Nothing is said of Michal’s feelings; however she grew to despise David (6:16). **Bahurim** was near Jerusalem, east of Olivet (16:5).

3:17, 18 **For the LORD has spoken:** The Bible does not record elsewhere the divine promise quoted by Abner and referred to in vv. 9, 10. It is possible that this was a revelation that God gave to him alone.

3:19 David faced the most opposition from Saul’s tribe, **Benjamin**. Abner personally campaigned for David’s kingship in this tribe. After winning support for David in Israel, Abner proceeded to **Hebron** (2:1) to announce the people’s decision to acknowledge David as king.

3:22, 23 The words **gone in peace** are repeated (v. 21), to emphasize that the hostilities between David and Abner had been resolved.

3:24, 25 **What have you done:** Learning of Abner’s visit, Joab challenged the king for allowing the commander of a hostile army and a cousin of Saul to come and go from Hebron without being apprehended and put to death. He insisted that Abner was trying to trick David with a display of good faith and sincerity, and that his real purpose was to gather intelligence.

covenant

(Heb. *berith*) (3:12; 23:5; Gen. 6:18; 15:18; Ex. 2:24; Jer. 31:31) Strong’s #1285

Generally, the word *covenant* refers to an agreement between two or more parties. The term often refers to God’s self-imposed obligation to reconcile fallen humanity to Himself. God’s redemptive plans throughout history promise salvation and blessing to those who obediently serve Him. God made several covenants with His people in the OT. He made a covenant with Noah after the Flood (Gen. 9:9–17), a covenant with Abraham (Gen. 17:15, 16), and a covenant with David (see 23:5). These covenants prefigure the supreme covenant made through Christ’s sacrifice on the Cross. Jesus initiated the New Covenant which Jeremiah foresaw (Jer. 31:31–34).

know ^v your going out and your coming in, and to know all that you are doing.”

²⁶ And when Joab had gone from David's presence, he sent messengers after Abner, who brought him back from the well of Sirah. But David did not know it. ²⁷ Now when Abner had returned to Hebron, Joab ^w took him aside in the gate to speak with him privately, and there ⁷ stabbed him ^x in the stomach, so that he died for the blood of ^y Asahel his brother.

²⁸ Afterward, when David heard it, he said, “My kingdom and I ^{are} ⁸ guiltless before the LORD forever of the blood of Abner the son of Ner. ²⁹ ^z Let it rest on the head of Joab and on all his father's house; and let there never fail to be in the ⁹ house of Joab one ^a who has a discharge or is a leper, who leans on a staff or falls by the sword, or who lacks bread.”

³⁰ So Joab and Abishai his brother killed Abner, because he had killed their brother ^b Asahel at Gibeon in the battle.

David's Mourning for Abner

³¹ Then David said to Joab and to all the people who were with him, ^c “Tear your clothes, ^d gird yourselves with sackcloth, and mourn for Abner.” And King David followed the coffin. ³² So they buried Abner in Hebron; and the king lifted up his voice and wept at the grave of Abner, and all the people wept. ³³ And the king sang *a lament* over Abner and said:

“Should Abner die as a ^e fool dies?”

³⁴ Your hands were not bound
Nor your feet put into fetters;
As a man falls before wicked men, so
you fell.”

²⁵ ^v Deut. 28:6;
1 Sam. 29:6; Is.
37:28
²⁷ ^w 2 Sam.
20:9, 10; 1 Kin.
2:5 ^x 2 Sam. 4:6
⁷ 2 Sam. 2:23 ⁷ Lit.
struck
²⁸ ⁸ *innocent*
²⁹ ^z Deut. 21:6-
9; 1 Kin. 2:32, 33
^a Lev. 15:2 ⁹ *family*
³⁰ ^b 2 Sam. 2:23
³¹ ^c Josh. 7:6;
2 Sam. 1:2, 11
^d Gen. 37:34
³³ ^e 2 Sam. 13:12, 13

³⁵ ^f 2 Sam. 12:17;
Jer. 16:7, 8 ^g Ruth
1:17 ^h Judg. 20:26;
2 Sam. 1:12
³⁹ ⁱ 2 Sam. 19:5-7
1 Kin. 2:5, 6, 32-34;
2 Tim. 4:14

CHAPTER 4

1 ^a Ezra 4:4; Is.
13:7 ^b Matt. 2:3
⁷ Ishbosheth ² Lit.
his hands dropped
2 ^c Josh. 18:25
³ *considered part of*
3 ^d Neh. 11:33
4 ^e 2 Sam. 9:3
^f 1 Sam. 29:1,
11 ^g 2 Sam. 9:6
⁴ Merib-Baal, 1 Chr.
8:34; 9:40

Then all the people wept over him again.

³⁵ And when all the people came ^f to persuade David to eat food while it was still day, David took an oath, saying, ^g “God do so to me, and more also, if I taste bread or anything else ^h till the sun goes down!” ³⁶ Now all the people took note of it, and it pleased them, since whatever the king did pleased all the people. ³⁷ For all the people and all Israel understood that day that it had not been the king's *intent* to kill Abner the son of Ner. ³⁸ Then the king said to his servants, “Do you not know that a prince and a great man has fallen this day in Israel? ³⁹ And I *am* weak today, though anointed king; and these men, the sons of Zeruiah, ⁱ are too harsh for me. ^j The LORD shall repay the evildoer according to his wickedness.”

Ishbosheth Is Murdered

4 When Saul's ¹ son heard that Abner had died in Hebron, ^a he ² lost heart, and all Israel was ^b troubled. ² Now Saul's son *had* two men *who were* captains of troops. The name of one *was* Baanah and the name of the other Rechab, the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, of the children of Benjamin. (For ^c Beeroth also was ³ *part* of Benjamin, ³ because the Beerothites fled to ^d Gittaim and have been sojourners there until this day.)

⁴ Jonathan, Saul's son, had a son *who was* lame in *his* feet. He was five years old when the news about Saul and Jonathan came ^f from Jezreel; and his nurse took him up and fled. And it happened, as she made haste to flee, that he fell and became lame. His name *was* ^g Mephibosheth. ⁴

3:27 stabbed him: This was an act of treachery, especially in Hebron, a city of refuge (Josh. 20:7). In a city of refuge, a blood avenger could not slay a murderer without a trial (Num. 35:22–25). Joab wanted to avenge the death of **Asahel his brother**, who was killed in the course of a battle (2:18–23).

3:28, 29 My kingdom and I: David issued a public proclamation denying any involvement in the murder of Abner. The death of Abner was not only an act of treachery, but also a great blow to David's hopes for a peaceable unification of the nation under his control. **Let it rest on the head of Joab:** This verse forms a strong curse on the household of Joab. Both a discharge (see Lev. 15:2–33) and leprosy (see Lev. 13) made the afflicted person ritually unclean, an outcast from the community. The phrase **leans on a staff** describes one who is crippled, lame, or blind.

3:30 Abishai was Joab's other brother (2:18). His involvement in the murder of Abner is mentioned only here.

3:31 Tear your clothes: These actions were associated in ancient times with mourning the dead (1:11; Gen. 37:34). **Sackcloth** was coarse material, in contrast to more comfortable clothing. **followed the coffin:** David led the funeral procession.

3:33, 34 as a fool dies: Certainly a warrior like Abner deserved a more noble death. How much better for Abner to have died fighting than to have been stabbed to death while under a promise of safe passage. **Your hands were not bound:** Abner was not guilty of any crime that required him to be bound with chains and fetters.

3:35 The murder of Abner had the potential of breaking the frag-

ile union of the twelve tribes. David refused to participate in the meal that was customarily served to mourners after the burial as evidence of his genuine remorse. In his oath **God do so to me, and more also**, David prayed that God would do the worst thing imaginable should he eat food before sunset (compare a similar oath by Abner in 3:9).

3:36, 37 All Israel refers to the people of the northern tribes and the Benjamites, who would be inclined to suspect David of plotting the murder of Ishbosheth's military commander. All the people became confident of David's innocence.

3:38 His servants refers to David's confidential servants or advisors. The words **a prince** and **a great man** reflect how highly David regarded Abner.

4:1 Saul's son Ishbosheth lost the **heart** to act as king, since Abner, his primary supporter, was gone. **Israel was troubled** at the possibility of an attack by David's men.

4:2, 3 The fact that **Baanah** and **Rechab** were from the tribe of **Benjamin**, the tribe of Saul, makes their actions all the more reprehensible. **Beeroth** was one of the four cities of the Gibeonites (Josh. 9:17), with whom Joshua had made a covenant. For some reason, **the Beerothites fled to Gittaim** and their city was reoccupied by Benjamites (Neh. 11:33).

4:4 Merib-Baal, which means “The Master Is Advocate,” was the original name of Jonathan's son (1 Chr. 8:34; 9:40). The author of Samuel changed it to **Mephibosheth**, meaning “He Scatters Shame,” apparently to avoid the idolatrous implications of the word Baal.

⁵Then the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, Rechab and Baanah, set out and came at about the heat of the day to the ^hhouse of Ishbosheth, who was lying on his bed at noon. ⁶And they came there, all the way into the house, *as though* to get wheat, and they ⁵stabbed him ⁱin the stomach. Then Rechab and Baanah his brother escaped. ⁷For when they came into the house, he was lying on his bed in his bedroom; then they struck him and killed him, beheaded him and took his head, and were all night escaping through the plain. ⁸And they brought the head of Ishbosheth to David at Hebron, and said to the king, “Here is the head of Ishbosheth, the son of Saul your enemy, ^jwho sought your life; and the LORD has avenged my lord the king this day of Saul and his descendants.”

⁹But David answered Rechab and Baanah his brother, the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, and said to them, “As the LORD lives, ^kwho has redeemed my life from all adversity, ¹⁰when ^lsomeone told me, saying, ‘Look, Saul is dead,’ thinking to have brought good news, I arrested him and had him executed in Ziklag—the one who *thought* I would give him a reward for *his* news. ¹¹How much more, when wicked men have killed a righteous person in his own house on his bed? Therefore, shall I not now ^mrequire his ⁶blood

⁵ ^h 2 Sam. 2:8, 9
⁶ ⁱ 2 Sam. 2:23;
20:10 ⁵ Lit. *struck*
⁸ / 1 Sam. 19:2, 10,
11; 23:15; 25:29
⁹ ^k Gen. 48:16;
1 Kin. 1:29; Ps. 31:7
¹⁰ ^j 2 Sam. 1:2-16
¹¹ ^m [Gen. 9:5;
6; Ps. 9:12] ⁶ Or
bloodshed

⁷ Lit. *consume you*
¹² ⁿ 2 Sam. 1:15
^o 2 Sam. 3:32

CHAPTER 5

¹ ^a 1 Chr. 11:1-3
^b Gen. 29:14; Judg.
9:2; 2 Sam. 19:12, 13
² ^c 1 Sam. 18:5, 13,
16 ^d 1 Sam. 16:1
³ ^e 2 Sam. 3:17;
1 Chr. 11:3 ^f 2 Sam.
2:4; 3:21; 2 Kin. 11:17
^g Judg. 11:11; 1 Sam.
23:18
⁴ ^h Gen. 41:46;
Num. 4:3; Luke 3:23
ⁱ 1 Kin. 2:11; 1 Chr.
26:31; 29:27
⁵ / 2 Sam. 2:11;
1 Chr. 3:4; 29:27
⁶ ^k Judg. 1:21
^j Josh. 15:63; Judg.
1:8; 19:11, 12

at your hand and ⁷remove you from the earth?” ¹²So David ⁿcommanded his young men, and they executed them, cut off their hands and feet, and hanged *them* by the pool in Hebron. But they took the head of Ishbosheth and buried *it* in the ^otomb of Abner in Hebron.

David Reigns over All Israel

5 Then all the tribes of Israel ^acame to David at Hebron and spoke, saying, “Indeed ^b*we are* your bone and your flesh. ²Also, in time past, when Saul was king over us, ^cyou were the one who led Israel out and brought them in; and the LORD said to you, ^d‘You shall shepherd My people Israel, and be ruler over Israel.’” ^{3e}Therefore all the elders of Israel came to the king at Hebron, ^fand King David made a covenant with them at Hebron ^gbefore the LORD. And they anointed David king over Israel. ⁴David *was* ^hthirty years old when he began to reign, *and* ⁱhe reigned forty years. ⁵In Hebron he reigned over Judah ^jseven years and six months, and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty-three years over all Israel and Judah.

The Conquest of Jerusalem

^{6k} And the king and his men went to Jerusalem against ^lthe Jebusites, the inhab-

4:5 The **house of Ishbosheth** was at Mahanaim (2:8, 12). Ishbosheth was taking his midday rest, as perhaps were the members of the palace guard.

4:7 The murderers fled by way of **the plain**, meaning by way of the Jordan valley.

4:8–10 Rechab and Baanah **brought the head of Ishbosheth to David**, perhaps in hopes of receiving a reward. They used the spiritual language **the LORD has avenged** to describe their despicable actions. Yet their lofty words did not fool David. The oath **as the LORD lives** implies that David was under God’s protection. There was no need to kill Ishbosheth to defend David’s life. **Someone** was the Amalekite who claimed to have killed Saul (1:2–16).

4:11 Ishbosheth was viewed as a **righteous person** since he was innocent of any wicked deed or crime. He had simply assumed royal power after the death of his father Saul.

4:12 The execution of the assassins was justified on the basis of Gen. 9:5. Their corpses were **hanged**, or impaled, **by the pool in Hebron**, which was frequented daily by the people of the city. Their bodies warned the people of the consequences of such foolish and evil actions. David demonstrated his respect for the slain son of Saul by having the **head of Ishbosheth** buried in Abner’s grave at Hebron.

5:1 **All the tribes** refers to tribal leaders, such as elders and heads of clans (v. 3). **We are your bone and your flesh** means “we are your relatives” (Gen. 29:14; Judg. 9:2). The representatives of the tribes of Israel acknowledged their solidarity as a people.

5:2 The words **led Israel out** speak of David’s service as a military leader during Saul’s reign. The word **shepherd** is a vivid metaphor of the relationship between a king and his people. The Scriptures apply this metaphor both to God and to human rulers (Ps. 23:1; Ezek. 34:1–10).

5:3 **before the LORD**: Making a covenant was not merely a civil arrangement but a sacred occasion. **they anointed**: This was David’s third anointing (2:4; 1 Sam. 16:13). His first anointing was in anticipation of his rule; his second was acknowledgment of his rule over Judah; his third was acknowledgment of his rule over the entire nation.

5:6–9 David’s first move as king was to conquer Jebus, which came to be known as **Jerusalem**. The name Jerusalem may mean “Foundation of Peace.” The city was strategically located in the hill country near the border of Judah and Benjamin, making it a foreign wedge between the northern and southern tribes. Although the city was attacked by men from both Benjamin and Judah, the Jebusites were not driven out of Jerusalem at the time of the conquest (Josh. 15:63; Judg. 1:21). An earlier name of Jerusalem was Salem, known

Jerusalem

(Heb. *yerushalaim*) (5:5; Is. 40:2; Zech. 2:12) Strong’s #3389

The name Jerusalem is related to the word for “peace” (see the psalmist’s prayer for “the peace of Jerusalem,” Ps. 122:6). During the reign of King David, Jerusalem was made the political and religious capital of Israel and became central to the unfolding of God’s redemptive plan. Jerusalem is described variously in the OT as: the city of God (Ps. 87:1–3); the place where God has put His name (2 Kin. 21:4); a place of salvation (Is. 46:13); the throne of God (Jer. 3:17); and a holy city (Is. 52:1). The prophets foresaw an approaching time when Jerusalem would be judged because of its iniquity (Mic. 4:10–12), but in pronouncing judgment they could also see its glorious restoration (Is. 40:2; 44:25–28; Dan. 9:2; Zeph. 3:16–20). This vision of a restored Jerusalem included the hope of a New Jerusalem in which God would gather all His people (Is. 65:17–19; Rev. 21:1, 2).

itants of the land, who spoke to David, saying, “You shall not come in here; but the blind and the lame will repel you,” thinking, “David cannot come in here.”⁷ Nevertheless David took the stronghold of Zion^m (that is, the City of David).

⁸ Now David said on that day, “Whoever climbs up by way of the water shaft and defeats the Jebusites (the lame and the blind, *who are hated by David’s soul*), *he shall be chief and captain.*” Therefore they say, “The blind and the lame shall not come into the house.”

⁷ ^m 2 Sam. 6:12, 16;
1 Kin. 2:10; 8:1; 9:24
⁸ ⁿ 1 Chr. 11:6–9

⁹ ^o 2 Sam. 5:7; 1 Kin.
9:15, 24 ¹ Lit. *The
Landfill*
¹⁰ ^p 1 Sam. 17:45
^q 1 Sam. 18:12, 28
¹¹ ^r 1 Kin. 5:1–18
^s 1 Chr. 14:1
¹² ^t Num. 24:7 ^u Is.
45:4

⁹ Then David dwelt in the stronghold, and called it ^o the City of David. And David built all around from ¹ the Millo and inward. ¹⁰ So David went on and became great, and ^p the LORD God of hosts *was* with ^q him.

¹¹ Then ^r Hiram ^s king of Tyre sent messengers to David, and cedar trees, and carpenters and masons. And they built David a house. ¹² So David knew that the LORD had established him as king over Israel, and that He had ^t exalted His kingdom ^u for the sake of His people Israel.

because of its righteous king Melchizedek (Gen. 14:18–20). Mt. Moriah—where Abraham had prepared to offer Isaac—was also located at Jerusalem (Gen. 22:2).

5:6 The **Jebusites** were one of the Canaanite tribes living in the Promised Land (Gen. 10:16–18). Jerusalem was on a hill just south of Mt. Moriah, with steep cliffs on all sides except the north, making it a natural fortress. The defenders felt able to boast that **the blind and the lame** would be enough to defeat David.

5:7 Jerusalem is referred to as the **stronghold of Zion**. The word Zion originally applied to the Jebusite stronghold, which became **the City of David** after its capture. As the city expanded to the north, encompassing Mt. Moriah, the temple mount came to be called **Zion** (Ps. 78:68, 69). Eventually the term was used as a synonym for Jerusalem (Is. 40:9).

5:8 The **water shaft** extended about 230 feet up from the Gihon spring to the top of the hill where the Jebusite fortress was situated (2 Chr. 32:30). The tunnel gave the city a secure water supply in the event of a siege. The phrase **the lame and the blind** became something of a taunt, which David turned first into a challenge, and then into a victory song.

5:9 The term **City of David** is used in Luke 2:11 to refer to Bethlehem, the city of David’s birth. Here the term refers to Zion, the city from which he ruled Israel.

5:10 **God of hosts** may also be translated “God of Armies” (6:2). The hosts are the armies of angels that are at the Lord’s command (v. 24).

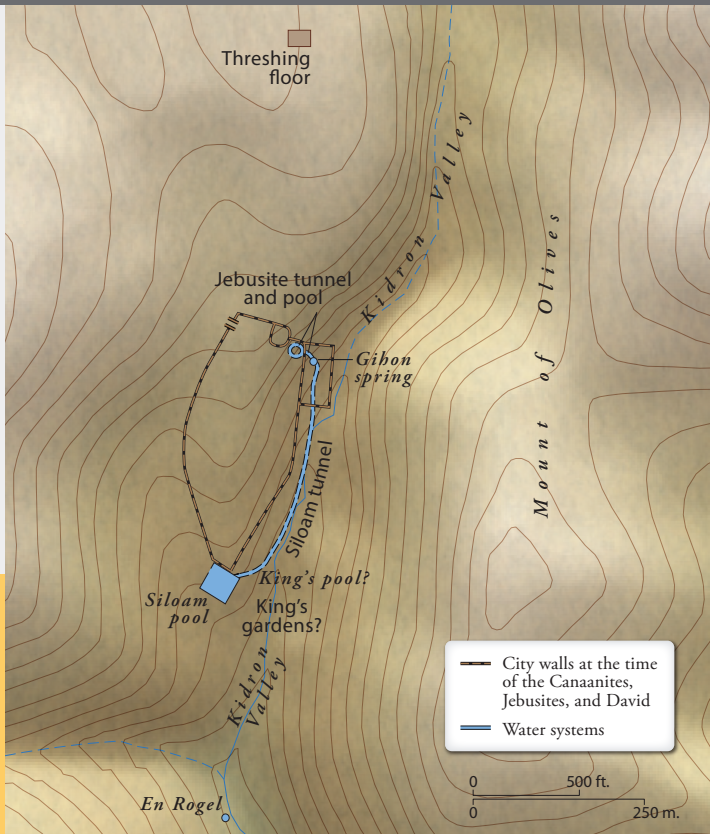
5:11, 12 **Tyre**, located on the Mediterranean coast north of Israel, was a Phoenician city noted for its commerce, craftsmen, and wealth. Hiram’s kindness toward David was probably prompted by

The City of the Jebusites/David’s Jerusalem

Substantial historical evidence, both biblical and extra-biblical, places the temple of Solomon on the holy spot where King David built an altar to the Lord. David had purchased the land from Araunah the Jebusite, who was using the exposed bedrock as a threshing floor (2 Sam. 24:18–25). Tradition claims a much older sanctity for the site, associating it with the altar of Abraham on Mount Moriah (Gen. 22:1–19; 2 Chr. 3:1). The writer of Genesis equates Moriah with “the Mount of the LORD” (Gen. 22:14).

c. 1000 B.C.

Less than 11 acres in size, Jebus, a Canaanite city, could well defend itself against attack, with walls atop steep canyons and shafts reaching an underground water source. David captured the stronghold c. 1000 B.C. and made it his capital.





Cedar

The most valuable and majestic trees described in the Bible are the “cedars of Lebanon.” These trees grow to a height of 70–80 feet, with long, spreading branches. The trunks of some cedars are 30–40 feet in circumference. These huge trees continue to grow for hundreds of years. They were symbols of strength and durability and noted for their toughness. The cedar produces five-inch cones that take three years to mature and from which fragrant sap exudes. The wood is red and free of knots, and because of its bitterness, repels insects and resists rot. Cedar wood was used for building David’s and Solomon’s houses, making idols, and constructing ships. Cedars grow on Mt. Lebanon today; but less than a dozen of these trees stand in the actual groves mentioned by the Bible, near the Lebanon coast of the Mediterranean.



Cedar of Lebanon
© Sybille Yates/Shutterstock

¹³ And ^vDavid took more concubines and wives from Jerusalem, after he had come from Hebron. Also more sons and daughters were born to David. ¹⁴ Now ^wthese *are* the names of those who were born to him in Jerusalem: ²Shammua, Shobab, Nathan, ^xSolomon, ¹⁵Ibhar, ³Elishua, Nepheg, Japhia, ¹⁶Elishama, Elia-da, and Eliphelet.

The Philistines Defeated

¹⁷ ^yNow when the Philistines heard that they had anointed David king over Israel, all the Philistines went up to

¹³ ^v [Deut. 17:17]; 1 Chr. 3:9
¹⁴ ^w 1 Chr. 3:5–8
^x 2 Sam. 12:24
² Shimea, 1 Chr. 3:5
¹⁵ ³ Elishama, 1 Chr. 3:6
¹⁷ ^y 1 Chr. 11:16
² 2 Sam. 23:14
¹⁸ ^a Gen. 14:5; Josh. 15:8; 1 Chr. 11:15; Is. 17:5
¹⁹ ^b 1 Sam. 23:2; 2 Sam. 2:1
²⁰ ^c 1 Chr. 14:11; Is. 28:21 ⁴ Lit. *Master of Breakthroughs*
²¹ ^d Deut. 7:5, 25

search for David. And David heard *of it* ^z and went down to the stronghold. ¹⁸ The Philistines also went and deployed themselves in ^a the Valley of Rephaim. ¹⁹ So David ^b inquired of the LORD, saying, “Shall I go up against the Philistines? Will You deliver them into my hand?”

And the LORD said to David, “Go up, for I will doubtless deliver the Philistines into your hand.”

²⁰ So David went to ^c Baal Perazim, and David defeated them there; and he said, “The LORD has broken through my enemies before me, like a breakthrough of water.” Therefore he called the name of that place ^d Baal Perazim. ²¹ And they left their ⁵ images there, and David and his men ^d carried them away.

²² ^e Then the Philistines went up once again and deployed themselves in the Valley of Rephaim. ²³ Therefore ^f David inquired of the LORD, and He said, “You shall not go up; circle around behind them, and come upon them in front of the mulberry trees. ²⁴ And it shall be, when you ^g hear the sound of marching in the tops of the mulberry trees, then you shall advance quickly. For then ^h the LORD will go out before you to strike the camp of the Philistines.” ²⁵ And David did so, as the LORD commanded him; and he drove back the Philistines from ⁱ Geba ⁶ as far as ^j Gezer.

The Ark Brought to Jerusalem

6 Again David gathered all *the* choice men of Israel, thirty thousand. ² And

⁵ idols ²² ^e 1 Chr. 14:13 ²³ ^f 2 Sam. 5:19 ²⁴ ^g 2 Kin. 7:6; 1 Chr. 14:15 ^h Judg. 4:14 ²⁵ ⁱ 1 Chr. 14:16 ^j Josh. 16:10 ⁶ So with MT, Tg., Vg.; LXX Gibeon

economic interests, for he could profit from trade with Israel. The house that Hiram had built for David must have been sumptuous for the place and time. Most buildings in Israel were made of stone. The use of cedar wood added elegance to David’s palace. Certainly he spoke of his home with reasonable pride (7:2).

5:13 These marriages reflect David’s involvement in international treaties and alliances which were sealed with the marriage of a king’s daughter to the other participant in the treaty. **Concubines**, wives who did not have the legal rights of a true wife, were part of a royal harem. The status of kings in ancient times was often measured in part by the size of their harems. Yet for Israel’s kings, there had been a warning from God against acquiring many wives (Deut. 17:17).

5:14 Shammua is known as Shimea in 1 Chr. 3:5. Shammua, Shobab, Nathan, and Solomon were David’s sons by Bathsheba (1 Chr. 3:5), the wife of Uriah. David planned Uriah’s death so that he could marry Bathsheba (ch. 11). The child born of David and Bathsheba’s affair died in infancy (12:15–23).

5:15, 16 The lists in 1 Chr. 3:5–9 and 14:4, 5 record two additional sons, Nogah and another Eliphelet (Elpelet in 1 Chr. 14:4).

5:17 The Hebrew word translated **stronghold** means “mountain fortress,” suggesting a fortress other than Jerusalem. Therefore, it is possible that these attacks took place between the time when David was anointed over all Israel (v. 4) and when he captured Jerusalem (vv. 6–10).

5:18 The Valley of Rephaim, or “Valley of the Giants” (21:15–22), extends southwest from Jerusalem toward the coastal plain. The significance of the valley as a strategic approach to Jerusalem is evidenced by the fact that the Philistines made a second attempt to capture the city from this route (v. 22).

5:19 As was his custom, David inquired of the LORD before engaging the Philistines in battle (see 2:1; 1 Sam. 23:2; 30:8). In matters of warfare, David was not presumptuous. He wished to know the will of God in choosing his battles and their timing.

5:21 The idol images which the Philistines had taken into battle to assure them of victory were captured and carried away by David’s men. This looting would have been regarded by the Philistines as a defeat of their gods by the God of Israel. According to 1 Chr. 14:12, David and his men burned the idols.

5:25 The Geba mentioned here is not the Geba of 1 Sam. 13:3, which was 6 miles north of Jerusalem. This Geba was most likely located south, in the Valley of Rephaim. Gezer was about 20 miles northwest of Jerusalem.

6:1 The thirty thousand men were not all the men of Israel capable of bearing arms, but the best of them.

6:2 Baale Judah, meaning “Masters of Judah,” was also called Baalah and Kirjath Jearim (Josh. 15:9; 1 Chr. 13:6). It was a city on the border of Judah and Benjamin, about 10 miles northwest of Jerusalem. **the Name, the LORD of Hosts:** The personal name of

^aDavid arose and went with all the people who *were* with him from ¹Baale Judah to bring up from there the ark of God, whose name is called ²by the Name, the LORD of Hosts, ^bwho dwells *between* the cherubim. ³So they set the ark of God on a new cart, and brought it out of the house of Abinadab, which *was* on ^cthe hill; and Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, drove the new ³cart. ⁴And they brought it out of ^dthe house of Abinadab, which *was* on the hill, accompanying the ark of God; and Ahio went before the ark. ⁵Then David and all the house of Israel ^eplayed *music* before the LORD on all kinds of *instruments* of fir wood, on harps, on stringed instruments, on tambourines, on sistrums, and on cymbals.

⁶And when they came to ^fNachon's threshing floor, Uzzah put out *his* ^ghand to the ark of God and ⁴took hold of it, for the oxen stumbled. ⁷Then the anger of the LORD was aroused against Uzzah, and God struck him there for *his* ⁵error; and he died there by the ark of God. ⁸And David became angry because of the LORD's outbreak against Uzzah; and he called the name of the place ⁶Perez Uzzah to this day.

⁹^hDavid was afraid of the LORD that day; and he said, "How can the ark of the LORD come to me?" ¹⁰So David would not move the ark of the LORD with him into the ⁱCity of David; but David took it aside into the house of Obed-Edom the ^jGittite. ¹¹^kThe ark of the LORD remained in the house of Obed-Edom the Gittite three months. And the LORD ^lblessed Obed-Edom and all his household.

CHAPTER 6

² ^a 1 Chr. 13:5;
⁶ ^b Ex. 25:22;
¹ Sam. 4:4; Ps. 80:1
¹ Baalah, Kirjath
¹ Jeairim, Josh. 15:9;
¹ Chr. 13:6 ² LXX,
¹ Tg., Vg. omit *by the*
¹ Name; many Heb.
¹ mss., Syr. there
³ ^c 1 Sam. 26:1
³ LXX adds *with*
³ the ark
⁴ ^d 1 Sam. 7:1; 1 Chr.
¹³:7
⁵ ^e 1 Sam. 18:6, 7
⁶ ^f 1 Chr. 13:9
⁹ Num. 4:15, 19, 20
⁴ held it
⁷ ^g Or *irreverence*
⁸ ^h Lit. *Outburst*
¹ Against Uzzah
⁹ ⁱ Deut. 9:19; Ps.
¹¹⁹:120; Luke 5:8
¹⁰ ^j 2 Sam. 5:7
¹ 1 Chr. 13:13; 26:4-8
¹¹ ^k 1 Chr. 13:14
¹ Gen. 30:27; 39:5

¹² ^m 1 Chr.
¹⁵:25-16:3
¹³ ⁿ Num. 4:15;
¹ Josh. 3:3; 1 Sam.
⁶:15; 2 Sam. 15:24;
¹ Chr. 15:2, 15
^o 1 Kin. 8:5
¹⁴ ^p Ps. 30:11; 149:3
^q 1 Sam. 2:18, 28
⁷ whirled about
¹⁵ ^r 1 Chr. 15:28

BIBLE TIMES & CULTURE NOTES



Dancing

Among the Israelites, dancing generally occurred among women, either singly or in groups. It was a way of celebrating joyous occasions. Indeed, dancing became a symbol of joy, the opposite of mourning. Dancing by the Israelites was usually accompanied by the rhythmic beating of timbrels—or tambourines. On great national occasions, Israel also praised the Lord with stringed instruments, flutes, and cymbals. Men and women never danced together. Even on those occasions where both sexes participated in the sacred professional dances, they always danced separately (Ps. 68:25; Jer. 31:13). Dancing for sensual entertainment was unheard of in Israel. Salome's infamous dance, which won her John the Baptist's head on a platter, was in the tradition of Greek dancing, a sensual art form rather than an act of worship (Matt. 14:6).

¹² Now it was told King David, saying, "The LORD has blessed the house of Obed-Edom and all that *belongs* to him, because of the ark of God." ^m So David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-Edom to the City of David with gladness. ¹³ And so it was, when ⁿ those bearing the ark of the LORD had gone six paces, that he sacrificed ^o oxen and fatted sheep. ¹⁴ Then David ^p danced ⁷ before the LORD with all *his* might; and David *was* wearing ^q a linen ephod. ¹⁵ ^r So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the LORD with shouting and with the sound of the trumpet.

God is revealed in Ex. 3:13-15, where the context reveals that the Lord is the mighty God of the patriarchs who intervenes on behalf of His people. At times the Name of God is accompanied by the designation "of Hosts" (5:10), referring to the angelic armies of the universe (see 1 Kin. 22:19; Luke 2:13) as well as the armies of Israel (1 Sam. 17:45). **Cherubim** are angelic beings generally regarded as guardians of God's holiness (see Gen. 3:24; Ex. 25:22; Ps. 80:1; 99:1). God revealed Himself to Moses from between the two cherubim mounted at opposite ends of the mercy seat over the ark of the covenant (Ex. 25:22; Num. 7:89).

6:3 they set the ark of God on a new cart: The law was specific that the ark was to be carried by the sons of Kohath, not by a cart or any other vehicle (see Ex. 25:14, 15; Num. 3:30, 31). David was doing what the Philistines had done (1 Sam. 6:7, 8). The ark had been taken to the **house of Abinadab** after its recovery from the Philistines (see 1 Sam. 7:1, 2). The **sons of Abinadab** should probably be understood in a broader sense as "the descendants of Abinadab."

6:5 Played literally means they "made merry" with dancing and music (v. 21). The worshipers had a variety of string, wind, and percussion instruments. **Sistrums** refers to Egyptian instruments consisting of rings hanging loosely on metal rods that make a rattling sound when shaken.

6:6 A threshing floor was a place for processing grain, separating kernels from the chaff (Ruth 3:2). In order to steady the ark when it seemed as though it would fall, **Uzzah put out his hand**.

6:7 Although Uzzah's violation was unintentional, his error cost him

his life. God had warned His people that not even the Levites could touch the holy objects of the tabernacle; the death penalty had been specified for violators (Num. 4:15).

6:8 David became angry—not at himself for the carelessness that resulted in this calamity, but at God. He named the place of the tragedy **Perez Uzzah**, recalling what had happened.

6:9 David was afraid of the Lord: The tragedy of Uzzah rekindled a necessary "fear of God" in the heart of David. Properly understood (see Eccl. 12:13, 14), the fear of the Lord is essential to the pursuit of obedience and holiness.

6:10 Obed-Edom was a Levite of the family of Korah, and later one of the doorkeepers for the ark (see 1 Chr. 15:18, 24; 26:4-8). He was called the **Gittite** because he was from the Levitical city of Gath Rimmon (see Josh. 21:24).

6:13 This time the ark was carried (see Ex. 25:14, 15), rather than transported by cart. Some interpreters think that the procession was halted and sacrifices were offered every **six paces**. It is also possible that the sacrifices were offered only once after the ark bearers had advanced the first six paces, thus consecrating the solemn procession.

6:14 The Hebrew word translated **danced** literally means "whirled." The **linen ephod** was a short, sleeveless garment worn by priests (see 1 Sam. 2:18). David wore it to honor the Lord in view of his priestly activities that day (v. 13).

6:15 Shouting was an expression of celebration and triumph (see Is. 44:23). The **trumpet** refers to the ram's horn or the shofar (2:28).

¹⁶Now as the ark of the LORD came into the City of David, ^sMichal, Saul's daughter, looked through a window and saw King David leaping and whirling before the LORD; and she despised him in her heart. ¹⁷So ^tthey brought the ark of the LORD, and set it in ^uits place in the midst of the tabernacle that David had erected for it. Then David ^voffered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the LORD. ¹⁸And when David had finished offering burnt offerings and peace offerings, ^whe blessed the people in the name of the LORD of hosts. ^{19x}Then he distributed among all the people, among the whole multitude of Israel, both the women and the men, to everyone a loaf of bread, a piece of meat, and a cake of raisins. So all the people departed, everyone to his house.

^{20y}Then David returned to bless his household. And Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David, and said, "How glorious was the king of Israel today, ^zuncovering himself today in the eyes of the maids of his servants, as one of the ^abase fellows ⁸shamelessly uncovers himself!"

²¹So David said to Michal, "*It was before the LORD, ^bwho chose me instead of your father and all his house, to appoint me ruler over the ^cpeople of the LORD, over Israel. Therefore I will play music before the LORD. ²²And I will be even*

16 ^s 2 Sam. 3:14
17 ^t 1 Chr. 16:1
^u 1 Chr. 15:1; 2 Chr. 1:4
^v 1 Kin. 8:5, 62, 63
18 ^w 1 Kin. 8:14, 15, 55
19 ^x 1 Chr. 16:3
20 ^y Ps. 30:16
^z 2 Sam. 6:14, 16
^a Judg. 9:4 ⁸ openly
21 ^b 1 Sam. 13:14;
15:28 ^c 2 Kin. 11:17

23 ^d 1 Sam. 15:35;
Is. 22:14

CHAPTER 7

1 ^a 1 Chr. 17:1-27
2 ^b 2 Sam. 5:11
^c Acts 7:46 ^d Ex. 26:1
3 ^e 1 Kin. 8:17, 18;
1 Chr. 22:7
5 ^f 1 Kin. 5:3, 4; 8:19;
1 Chr. 22:8
6 ^g Josh. 18:1; 1 Kin. 8:16
^h Ex. 40:18, 34
7 ⁱ Lev. 26:11, 12
^j 2 Sam. 5:2; [Acts 20:28]

more undignified than this, and will be humble in my own sight. But as for the maidservants of whom you have spoken, by them I will be held in honor."

²³Therefore Michal the daughter of Saul had no children ^dto the day of her death.

God's Covenant with David

7 Now it came to pass ^awhen the king was dwelling in his house, and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies all around, ²that the king said to Nathan the prophet, "See now, I dwell in ^ba house of cedar, ^cbut the ark of God dwells inside tent ^dcurtains."

³Then Nathan said to the king, "Go, do all that *is* in your ^eheart, for the LORD *is* with you."

⁴But it happened that night that the word of the LORD came to Nathan, saying, ⁵"Go and tell My servant David, 'Thus says the LORD: ^f"Would you build a house for Me to dwell in? ⁶For I have not dwelt in a house ^gsince the time that I brought the children of Israel up from Egypt, even to this day, but have moved about in ^ha tent and in a tabernacle. ⁷Wherever I have ⁱmoved about with all the children of Israel, have I ever spoken a word to anyone from the tribes of Israel, whom I commanded ^jto shepherd My people Israel, saying, 'Why have you not built Me a house of cedar?''" ⁸Now therefore, thus

6:17 David erected a tent, no doubt patterned after the **tabernacle** of Moses, to serve as a temporary shelter for the ark until a more permanent building could be constructed. **burnt offerings**: See Lev. 1. **peace offerings**: See Lev. 3.

6:18 **he blessed the people**: David acted as a priest for the congregation; in this respect, he is a type of the Savior Jesus who is the great King and Priest.

6:19 A distinctive feature of the peace offering (v. 17) was that a portion would be eaten by the worshiper as a fellowship meal before the Lord. David shared this meal with those who participated in the celebration. **A cake of raisins** was a sweet treat (Song 2:5) sometimes used for religious offerings in Canaanite rites (Hos. 3:1) as well as in the worship of God.

6:20 **to bless his household**: At the moment of his greatest spiritual experience, David took pleasure in the prospect of bringing God's blessing to his home, only to be met by the curses of his wife. The scornful remark about David's **uncovering himself** no doubt refers to the priestly attire worn by the king instead of his royal robes (v. 14). Dancing about in this short garment, David had exposed more of himself than Michal thought appropriate. The term **base fellows** refers to empty persons, those of no value or worth.

6:21 David rebuked Michal by reminding her that God had chosen him in place of her **father** Saul, an evidence of divine blessing on his religious commitment and enthusiasm.

6:22 David declared that he would gladly be **even more undignified and humble** in his own sight to worship the Lord and to be **held in honor** by those who shared his spiritual values.

6:23 Michal's childlessness was the result of either estrangement from David, or perhaps divine punishment because of her refusal to join in the celebration of God's name. Thus there was no successor to the throne from the house of Saul. His sons were all dead, and his daughter remained childless. It is evident from this verse that

Michal had not had children with Palti during her years as his wife.

7:1 The **house** refers to the palace that the Phoenicians had built for David (5:11). **Rest from all his enemies** probably refers to the peace that prevailed after David's defeat of the Philistines (5:17-25).

7:2 **Nathan** was a personal advisor to David. As a **prophet** (Ex. 7:1, 2), he spoke for God, advising David on religious matters. Nathan later confronted David regarding his sins of adultery and murder (12:1-15). He helped Bathsheba secure the throne for Solomon (see 1 Kin. 1:10-45), aided in the establishment of music in the temple worship (see 2 Chr. 29:25), and chronicled the reigns of David and Solomon (see 1 Chr. 29:29; 2 Chr. 9:29). Although there was nothing immoral about dwelling in **a house of cedar**, David realized he had to give his attention to spiritual priorities.

7:3 Nathan encouraged the king to follow the leading of his heart and build a temple for the ark. However, he spoke on the basis of his own understanding and not as a word from the Lord. His words **the LORD is with you** indicate in this context a general blessing and not a specific utterance of God.

7:5 Although Nathan had at first encouraged David to build a temple for the ark (v. 3), the Lord revealed that this was not His intention at all. The question **Would you build a house for Me to dwell in** implied a negative answer.

7:6 **A tent** was a traveler's dwelling. The **tabernacle** was the portable structure or the "dwelling place" of God in the midst of His people (see Ex. 25:9, 22).

7:7 Throughout the history of God's dealings with the Israelites, never once did He reprove them for failing to build Him a permanent sanctuary. The word **shepherd** is a metaphor of leadership and was used throughout the ancient Middle East to refer to national leaders (see Ezek. 34:2). The Great Shepherd is, of course, God (see Ps. 23).

7:8 The formal and profound nature of the text is emphasized by the use of the name **LORD of hosts**. God reminded David of His gracious

shall you say to My servant David, ‘Thus says the LORD of hosts: ^k“I took you from the sheepfold, from following the sheep, to be ruler over My people, over Israel. ⁹And ^lI have been with you wherever you have gone, ^mand have ¹cut off all your enemies from before you, and have made you a great name, like the name of the great men who *are* on the earth. ¹⁰Moreover I will appoint a place for My people Israel, and will ⁿplant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own and move no more; ^onor shall the sons of wickedness oppress them anymore, as previously, ¹¹since the time that I commanded judges to *be* over My people Israel, and have caused you to rest from all your enemies. Also the LORD ²tells you ^qthat He will make you a ³house.

¹²“When your days are fulfilled and you ^srest with your fathers, ^tI will set up your seed after you, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. ¹³^uHe shall build a house for My name, and I will ^vestablish the throne of his kingdom forever. ¹⁴^wI will be his Father, and he shall be ^xMy son. If he commits iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men and with the ⁴blows of the sons of men. ¹⁵But My mercy shall not depart from him, ^yas I took *it* from Saul, whom I removed from before you. ¹⁶And ^zyour house and your kingdom shall be established forever before ⁵you. Your throne shall be established forever.””

¹⁷According to all these words and according to all this vision, so Nathan spoke to David.

⁸ ^k 1 Sam. 16:11, 12; Ps. 78:70, 71
⁹ ^l 1 Sam. 18:14; 2 Sam. 5:10
^m 1 Sam. 31:6
¹ *destroyed*
¹⁰ ⁿ Ex. 15:17; Ps. 44:2; 80:8; Jer. 24:6
^o Ps. 89:22, 23; Is. 60:18
¹¹ ^p Judg. 2:14-16
^q Ex. 1:21; 1 Sam. 25:28; 2 Sam. 7:27
² *declares to you*
³ Royal dynasty
¹² ^r 1 Kin. 2:1
^s Deut. 31:16; Acts 13:36 ¹ 1 Kin. 8:20; Ps. 132:11; Matt. 1:6; Luke 3:31
¹³ ^u 1 Kin. 5:5; 8:19; 2 Chr. 6:2 ^v 2 Sam. 7:16; [Is. 9:7; 49:8]
¹⁴ ^w [Heb. 1:5]
^x [Ps. 2:7; 89:26, 27, 30]; Matt. 3:17
⁴ *strokes*
¹⁵ ^y 1 Sam. 15:23, 28; 16:14
¹⁶ ^z 2 Sam. 7:13; Ps. 89:36, 37; Matt. 25:31; John 12:34
⁵ *LXX Me*
¹⁸ ^a Gen. 32:10; Ex. 3:11; 1 Sam. 18:18
¹⁹ ^b [Is. 55:8, 9]
²⁰ ^c [1 Sam. 16:7]; Ps. 139:1; John 21:17
²² ^d Deut. 10:17; 1 Chr. 16:25; 2 Chr. 2:5; Ps. 86:10; Jer. 10:6 ^e Ex. 15:11; Deut. 3:24; 4:35; 32:39 ^f Ex. 10:2; Ps. 44:1 ⁶ Tg., Syr. O
LORD God
²³ ^g Ps. 147:20
^h Deut. 9:26; 33:29
²⁴ ⁱ Gen. 17:7, 8; Ex. 6:7; [Deut. 26:18]
^j Ps. 48:14

David's Thanksgiving to God

¹⁸Then King David went in and sat before the LORD; and he said: ^a“Who *am* I, O Lord God? And what is my house, that You have brought me this far? ¹⁹And yet this was a small thing in Your sight, O Lord God; and You have also spoken of Your servant's house for a great while to come. ^b*Is* this the manner of man, O Lord God? ²⁰Now what more can David say to You? For You, Lord God, ^cknow Your servant. ²¹For Your word's sake, and according to Your own heart, You have done all these great things, to make Your servant know *them*. ²²Therefore ^dYou are great, ⁶O Lord God. For ^e*there is none* like You, nor *is there any* God besides You, according to all that we have heard with our ^fears. ²³And who *is* like Your people, like Israel, ^gthe one nation on the earth whom God went to redeem for Himself as a people, to make for Himself a name—and to do for Yourself great and awesome deeds for Your land—before ^hYour people whom You redeemed for Yourself from Egypt, the nations, and their gods? ²⁴For ⁱYou have made Your people Israel Your very own people forever; ^jand You, LORD, have become their God.

²⁵“Now, O LORD God, the word which You have spoken concerning Your servant and concerning his house, establish *it* forever and do as You have said. ²⁶So let Your name be magnified forever, saying, ‘The LORD of hosts *is* the God over Israel.’ And let the house of Your servant David be established before You. ²⁷For You, O LORD of hosts, God of Israel, have

dealings in taking him from the humble role of a shepherd to serve as king over His people.

7:9 A great name or reputation was highly valued by the Hebrews. As God promised to make the name Abram great (see Gen. 12:2), so He promised David that his name would be renowned.

7:10 God promised to provide Israel a secure dwelling place in the land of Israel. No longer would the Israelites be exposed to repeated attacks from their enemies, as had happened during the time of the judges.

7:11 house: David wanted to build God a house—that is, a temple (vv. 2-7). Instead, God intended to build David a house—that is, a dynasty of long duration.

7:12 The first provision of the Davidic covenant was that David would have a son for whom God would establish a **kingdom**.

7:13 House here refers to the temple (see 1 Kin. 6). God also promised to **establish the throne of Solomon's kingdom forever** (see 1 Chr. 22:6-10). This is not to say that Solomon would rule forever. Rather, the right to rule, represented by the image of the throne, would always belong to his descendants. Further, there would always be a male heir who would be able to rule.

7:14 iniquity: The sins of David's sons would require divine chastening (1 Kin. 11:1-13). The **rod of men** and **blows of the sons of men** would serve as instruments of chastening (1 Kin. 11:14, 23).

7:15 Although Solomon's sins would justify chastening, God promised that His **mercy** would not be removed, as was necessary in the case of Saul (1 Sam. 13:13, 14; 15:22, 23).

7:18 The words **sat before the LORD** indicate that David was in the tent which served to house the ark. **Who am I, O Lord God:** David's rhetorical question reflected his sense of unworthiness to have been extended such a gracious promise (vv. 12-16).

7:19 David acknowledged that what God had done for him so far was far greater than anything he deserved. As if this were only **a small thing**, God now extended the promise concerning David's dynasty far into the future. All of human history leads inevitably to the rule of Christ on earth. This is its destiny, its prophetic fulfillment, the final meaning of all history.

7:22 All that we have heard with our ears refers to the shared tradition regarding God's work in history (Deut. 4:32-40).

7:24 Your people Israel: At the heart of God's promise to David was the continuation of His promise to the nation of Israel (see Gen. 12:1-3).

7:25 Having praised God for His gracious works, David prayed for the fulfillment of the promise. As David undoubtedly knew, God's will would be accomplished whether he prayed for it or not. But like David, when we pray *in* God's will for God's will, we become *a part* of His will. We also become an expectant people, ready to respond to God with great praise when He has accomplished His will (see Ps. 142).

7:26 The **name** of God refers here to His reputation. David wanted God's reputation to be magnified through the fulfillment of His promise.



Chariots

The chariot rivaled the composite bow in its effectiveness as a weapon, but only wealthier nations could establish and maintain a chariot force. Chariots were introduced in Mesopotamia about 2800 B.C. The advantage of the chariot is that it can bring great firepower quickly to the key point of the battle. Chariots came in many different forms. They could be two-wheeled or four-wheeled, drawn by two to four horses. Some chariots would carry as many as four warriors. In combat a chariot usually carried two soldiers—a driver who controlled the reins and a warrior who needed both arms free to fire his bow. In some cases, depending on the nation and the period of history, a third person might serve as a shield bearer to protect both the warrior and the driver. The warrior was usually equipped with a bow, as well as a medium-range weapon, such as the javelin or spear.



A war chariot with a driver, archer, and two shield bearers, Assyrian, 645–635 B.C.

Baker Photo Archive. The British Museum.

revealed *this* to Your servant, saying, ‘I will build you a house.’ Therefore Your servant has found it in his heart to pray this prayer to You.

²⁸“And now, O Lord God, You are God, and ^bYour words are true, and You have promised this goodness to Your servant. ²⁹Now therefore, let it please You to bless the house of Your servant, that it may continue before You forever; for You, O Lord God, have spoken *it*, and with Your blessing let the house of Your servant be blessed ¹forever.”

David's Further Conquests

8 After this it came to pass that David ¹attacked the Philistines and subdued them. And David took ²Metheg Ammah from the hand of the Philistines.

²Then ^ahe defeated Moab. Forcing them down to the ground, he measured them off with a line. With two lines he

²⁸ ^k Ex. 34:6; Josh. 21:45; John 17:17
²⁹ ¹ 2 Sam. 22:51

CHAPTER 8

¹ ¹ Lit. *struck* ² Lit. *The Bridle of the Mother City*
² ^a Num. 24:17

^b 2 Sam. 12:31
^c 1 Sam. 10:27;
1 Kin. 4:21
³ ^d 1 Sam. 14:47;
2 Sam. 10:16, 19
^e Gen. 15:18; 2 Sam. 10:15–19
⁴ ^f Josh. 11:6, 9
⁵ ^g *seven thousand*,
1 Chr. 18:4
⁶ ^h 1 Kin. 11:23–25
⁷ ⁱ 2 Sam. 7:9; 8:14
⁷ ¹ 1 Kin. 10:16

measured off those to be put to death, and with one full line those to be kept alive. So the Moabites became David's ^bservants, and ^cbrought tribute.

³David also defeated Hadadezer the son of Rehob, king of ^dZobah, as he went to recover ^ehis territory at the River Euphrates. ⁴David took from him one thousand *chariots*, ³seven hundred horsemen, and twenty thousand foot soldiers. Also David ^fhamstrung all the chariot *horses*, except that he spared *enough* of them for one hundred chariots.

⁵When the Syrians of Damascus came to help Hadadezer king of Zobah, David killed twenty-two thousand of the Syrians. ⁶Then David put garrisons in Syria of Damascus; and the Syrians became David's servants, and brought tribute. So ^hthe LORD preserved David wherever he went. ⁷And David took ⁱthe shields of gold that had belonged to the servants

7:28 You are God, and Your words are true: David acknowledged that God could be trusted to fulfill His promise.

8:1 The Philistines seem to have migrated from the Aegean Islands and Asia Minor to the eastern Mediterranean region around 1200 B.C. They settled on the coastal plain of Israel and developed a relatively advanced culture and a powerful army. The Philistines were a major threat to Israel during the reigns of Saul and David (see 5:17; 1 Sam. 13:5; 17:1; 23:1; 28:1).

8:2 The Moabites were descendants of the incestuous relationship between Lot and his older daughter (see Gen. 19:36, 37). These people occupied the land opposite Judah, east of the Jordan River and the Dead Sea. This verse may indicate that David spared the young Moabites (whose height was **a line**) and executed the adults (whose height was **two lines**). In any event, the survivors became vassals, or **servants** of David. Centuries later, the Moabites won their freedom from being vassals to Israel (see 2 Kin. 1:1).

8:3 David's campaign to the north resulted in the defeat of **Hadadezer**, who ruled the Aramean kingdom of **Zobah**, which extended north of Damascus.

8:4 hamstrung: David disabled the horses by cutting the back sinews of the hind legs to prevent them from being used for military activity (see Josh. 11:6, 9).

8:5 Damascus, located at an oasis near the foot of the Anti-Lebanon mountains, was one of the most strategically located cities of the ancient world. Damascus lay at the crossroads of the two main international highways—the Via Maris, leading south and west to Egypt, and the King's Highway, leading from the east side of the Jordan south to Arabia.

8:6 The garrisons of Israelite soldiers were intended to keep the **Syrians of Damascus** under David's control.

8:7 Shields of gold were splendid trophies of war (see 1 Kin. 10:16, 17).

of Hadadezer, and brought them to Jerusalem.⁸ Also from ⁴Betah and from ^jBerthai,⁵ cities of Hadadezer, King David took a large amount of bronze.

⁹When ⁶Toi king of ^kHamath heard that David had defeated all the army of Hadadezer, ¹⁰then Toi sent ⁷Joram his son to King David, to ⁸greet him and bless him, because he had fought against Hadadezer and defeated him (for Hadadezer had been at war with Toi); and Joram brought with him articles of silver, articles of gold, and articles of bronze.¹¹ King David also ¹dedicated these to the LORD, along with the silver and gold that he had dedicated from all the nations which he had subdued—¹²from ⁹Syria, from Moab, from the people of Ammon, from the ^mPhilistines, from Amalek, and from the spoil of Hadadezer the son of Rehob, king of Zobah.

¹³And David made *himself* a ⁿname when he returned from killing ^oeighteen thousand ¹Syrians in ^pthe Valley of Salt.¹⁴ He also put garrisons in Edom; throughout all Edom he put garrisons; and ^qall the Edomites became David's servants. And the LORD preserved David wherever he went.

David's Administration

¹⁵So David reigned over all Israel; and David administered judgment and justice to all his people.¹⁶ ^rJoab the son of Zeruiah was over the army; ^sJehoshaphat the son of Ahilub was recorder; ¹⁷^tZadok the son of Ahitub and Ahimelech the son of Abiathar were the priests; ²Seraiah was the ³scribe; ¹⁸^uBenaiah the son of Jehoiada was over both the ^vCherethites and the

⁸ / Ezek. 47:16
⁴ Tibhath, 1 Chr. 18:8
⁵ Chun, 1 Chr. 18:8
⁹ * 1 Kin. 8:65; 2 Kin. 14:28; 2 Chr. 8:4
⁶ Tou, 1 Chr. 18:9
¹⁰ ⁷ Hadoram, 1 Chr. 18:10
⁸ Lit. ask him of his welfare
¹¹ ¹ 1 Kin. 7:51
¹² ^m 2 Sam. 5:17-25
⁹ LXX, Syr., Heb. mss. Edom
¹³ ⁿ 2 Sam. 7:9
^o 2 Kin. 14:7
^p 1 Chr. 18:12; Ps. 60:title
¹ LXX, Syr., Heb. mss. Edomites and 1 Chr. 18:12
¹⁴ ^q Gen. 27:29, 37-40; Num. 24:18; 1 Kin. 11:15
¹⁶ ^r 2 Sam. 19:13; 20:23; 1 Chr. 11:6
¹ 1 Kin. 4:3
¹⁷ ^t 1 Chr. 6:4-8; 24:3
² Shavsha, 1 Chr. 18:16
³ secretary
¹⁸ ^u 1 Kin. 1:8; 1 Chr. 18:17
^v 1 Sam. 30:14; 1 Kin. 1:38
⁴ Lit. priests

CHAPTER 9

¹ ^a 1 Sam. 18:3; 20:14-16; 2 Sam. 21:7; [Prov. 27:10]
¹ covenant faithfulness
² ^b 2 Sam. 16:1-4; 19:17, 29
³ ^c 1 Sam. 20:14
⁴ 2 Sam. 4:4
⁴ ^c 2 Sam. 17:27-29
⁶ ^d 2 Sam. 16:4; 19:24-30
² Or Merib-Baal

Pelethites; and David's sons were ⁴chief ministers.

David's Kindness to Mephibosheth

⁹Now David said, "Is there still anyone who is left of the house of Saul, that I may ^ashow him ¹kindness for Jonathan's sake?"

²And there was a servant of the house of Saul whose name was ^bZiba. So when they had called him to David, the king said to him, "Are you Ziba?"

He said, "At your service!"

³Then the king said, "Is there not still someone of the house of Saul, to whom I may show ^cthe kindness of God?"

And Ziba said to the king, "There is still a son of Jonathan *who is* ^dlame in his feet."

⁴So the king said to him, "Where *is* he?"

And Ziba said to the king, "Indeed he *is* in the house of ^eMachir the son of Ammiel, in Lo Debar."

⁵Then King David sent and brought him out of the house of Machir the son of Ammiel, from Lo Debar.

⁶Now when ^fMephibosheth² the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, had come to David, he fell on his face and prostrated himself. Then David said, "Mephibosheth?"

And he answered, "Here is your servant!"

⁷So David said to him, "Do not fear, for I will surely show you kindness for Jonathan your father's sake, and will restore to you all the land of Saul your grandfather; and you shall eat bread at my table continually."

8:8 **Betah**, an Aramean city, was also known as Tibhath (see 1 Chr. 18:8). **Berthai**, also known as Berothah (see Ezek. 47:16), was about 30 miles northwest of Damascus.

8:9 **Hamath** was about 100 miles northeast of Damascus.

8:10 The rich gifts of **Toi**, king of Hamath, reflect his desire to establish friendly relations with his powerful new neighbor. The gifts may also indicate that Toi voluntarily submitted to David and became his vassal.

8:11 The **silver and gold** that David received from the nations he conquered were turned over to the priests to be used in building the temple (see 1 Kin. 7:51).

8:13 **Name** refers to the reputation **David** gained as a result of his military exploits.

8:15 **David reigned over all Israel**: As a result of David's conquests, the sovereignty of Israel extended from the Gulf of Aqaba and the River of Egypt to the Euphrates River—the very region God had promised Abraham in Gen. 15:18. The words translated **judgment and justice** together mean "genuine justice." David was careful to see that the decisions he made and the laws he enforced were "fair and right" for all.

8:16 **Joab**, the commander-in-chief of David's army, had led the successful attack on the city of Jebus, which became David's capital, Jerusalem (see 1 Chr. 11:6, 7). Joab was David's nephew; **Zeruiah**, his mother, was David's sister (see 1 Chr. 2:13-16). **Jehoshaphat** the **recorder** kept track of state business, brought appropriate concerns

to the king's attention, and advised him on official matters. His career extended into the reign of Solomon (see 1 Kin. 4:3).

8:17 **Zadok** and **Ahimelech** are mentioned as the principal priests during David's reign (see 15:24; 1 Sam. 22:20-23; 1 Kin. 1:7, 8). **The scribe** served as secretary of state, drafting official documents, handling correspondence, and maintaining court records.

8:18 **Chief ministers** were confidential advisors.

9:1 **for Jonathan's sake**: David and Jonathan had entered into a covenant of friendship and protection that was to extend to their offspring (see 1 Sam. 18:3, 4; 20:14, 15, 42).

9:2 **Ziba** was a servant of King Saul (16:1-4; 19:29).

9:3 **The kindness of God** recalls the words of the oath that Jonathan had David swear (see 1 Sam. 20:14).

9:4 **Machir the son of Ammiel** was a man, apparently of wealth and position, who extended hospitality to David during Absalom's revolt (17:27-29). **Lo Debar** was about ten miles south of the Sea of Galilee just east of the Jordan.

9:5 Once he was made aware of Jonathan's son, David did not hesitate to fulfill his covenant commitment to his friend. He immediately sent for Mephibosheth to be brought to Jerusalem.

9:7 **Do not fear**: Mephibosheth had good reason to be afraid. It was usual in the ancient Middle East for founders of new dynasties to kill the children of former rulers to keep them from trying to regain the throne in the name of their families. **The land of Saul** refers to the house and property at Gibeah which was claimed by David when

⁸Then he bowed himself, and said, “What is your servant, that you should look upon such ^aa dead dog as I?”

⁹And the king called to Ziba, Saul’s servant, and said to him, ^h“I have given to your master’s son all that belonged to Saul and to all his house. ¹⁰You therefore, and your sons and your servants, shall work the land for him, and you shall bring in *the harvest*, that your master’s son may have food to eat. But Mephibosheth your master’s son ⁱshall eat bread at my table always.” Now Ziba had ^jfifteen sons and twenty servants.

¹¹Then Ziba said to the king, “According to all that my lord the king has commanded his servant, so will your servant do.”

“As for Mephibosheth,” *said the king*, “he shall eat at ³my table like one of the king’s sons.” ¹²Mephibosheth had a young son ^kwhose name was Micha. And all who dwell in the house of Ziba were servants of Mephibosheth. ¹³So Mephibosheth dwelt in Jerusalem, ^lfor he ate continually at the king’s table. And he ^mwas lame in both his feet.

The Ammonites and Syrians Defeated

10 It happened after this that the ^aking of the people of Ammon died, and Hanun his son reigned in his place. ²Then David said, “I will show ^bkindness to Hanun the son of ^cNahash,

⁸ ^a 2 Sam. 16:9
⁹ ^b 2 Sam. 16:4; 19:29
¹⁰ ^c 2 Sam. 9:7, 11, 13; 19:28 / 2 Sam. 19:17
¹¹ ^d LXX *David’s table*
¹² ^e 1 Chr. 8:34
¹³ ^f 2 Sam. 9:7, 10, 11; 1 Kin. 2:7; 2 Kin. 25:29 ^g 2 Sam. 9:3

CHAPTER 10

¹ ^a 2 Sam. 11:1;
 1 Chr. 19:1
² ^b 2 Sam. 9:1; 1 Kin. 2:7 ^c 1 Sam. 11:1

⁴ ^d Is. 20:4; 47:2
⁵ ^e humiliated
⁶ ^f Gen. 34:30; Ex. 5:21 ^g 2 Sam. 8:3;
 5 ^h Judg. 18:28
^h Deut. 3:14; Josh. 13:11, 13 ⁱ Judg. 11:3, 5
⁷ ^j 2 Sam. 23:8

hash, as his father showed kindness to me.”

So David sent by the hand of his servants to comfort him concerning his father. And David’s servants came into the land of the people of Ammon. ³And the princes of the people of Ammon said to Hanun their lord, “Do you think that David really honors your father because he has sent comforters to you? Has David not *rather* sent his servants to you to search the city, to spy it out, and to overthrow it?”

⁴Therefore Hanun took David’s servants, shaved off half of their beards, cut off their garments in the middle, ^dat their buttocks, and sent them away. ⁵When they told David, he sent to meet them, because the men were greatly ⁱashamed. And the king said, “Wait at Jericho until your beards have grown, and *then* return.”

⁶When the people of Ammon saw that they ^ehad made themselves repulsive to David, the people of Ammon sent and hired ^fthe Syrians of ^gBeth Rehob and the Syrians of Zoba, twenty thousand foot soldiers; and from the king of ^hMaacah one thousand men, and from ⁱIsh-Tob twelve thousand men. ⁷Now when David heard *of it*, he sent Joab and all the army ^jof the mighty men. ⁸Then the people of Ammon came out and put themselves in

he took the throne (12:8). To **eat bread** at the king’s table was not a temporary honor; it meant that he would have a pension from the king. **continually**: These privileges and provisions would continue throughout Mephibosheth’s life.

9:8 such a dead dog as I: Dogs in Israel were regarded as unclean scavengers, and were generally viewed with contempt (see 2 Kin. 9:34–37; Prov. 26:11). Mephibosheth used the expression as a figure of speech. The remark reflects his low self-image and his astonishment at the grace being shown him.

9:10 your sons and your servants, shall work the land for him: The size of Saul’s estate is reflected in the fact that Ziba had 15 sons and 20 servants. **that your master’s son may have food to eat**: Although Mephibosheth would always have a place at David’s table as a member of the royal court, the income from Saul’s estate would provide for his house and family in Jerusalem.

9:11 In his dealings with Mephibosheth, David exemplified God’s grace. Mephibosheth was wonderfully blessed, not because of anything he did, but because of David’s faithfulness to a covenant promise. Likewise, believers are blessed, not because of any good work (see Eph. 2:8, 9), but because of God’s faithfulness to the new covenant (see Jer. 31:31–34) and the promises of the gospel. As Mephibosheth was regarded as an adopted son—**like one of the king’s sons**—with attendant privileges and blessings, so believers have been adopted as sons and daughters into the family of God (see John 1:12; Rom. 8:15; Eph. 1:5).

9:12 The family of Saul continued through **Micha** for several centuries (1 Chr. 8:34–40).

9:13 Mephibosheth had become **lame** as a result of a fall that had occurred when his nurse was fleeing from Gibeah after the report of the deaths of Saul and Jonathan (4:4). For more on the story of Mephibosheth, see 16:1–4; 19:24–30; 21:7.

10:1 The king of Ammon was Nahash (v. 2), probably the same Nahash who was defeated by Saul at Jabesh Gilead (see 1 Sam. 11:1–11).

10:2 as his father showed kindness to me: The occasion of Nahash’s kindness is not recorded. One possibility is that Nahash, an enemy of Saul, had given aid to David during his war with Ishbosheth (2:8–4:12). **to comfort him concerning his father**: David wanted to console Hanun over his father’s death and to congratulate him on his new position as king.

10:3 David’s gesture of kindness was met with suspicion by the king’s advisors, **the princes**. They suspected that David had sent the men as spies for the purpose of planning an attack on **the city** of Rabbah (11:1).

10:4 David’s servants were abused and humiliated. The beard was regarded in Semitic culture as a significant aspect of a man’s appearance. Cutting off half the beard was a very serious insult. **Hanun** doubled the insult when he **cut off their garments**, leaving the soldiers indecently exposed.

10:5 To prevent their further humiliation, David ordered the messengers to remain in **Jericho** until their beards grew back. Jericho was just west of the Jordan and 15 miles northeast of Jerusalem.

10:6 Made themselves repulsive could be literally translated, “made themselves stinking.” To protect themselves against Israelite revenge, the Ammonites hired 33,000 mercenary soldiers from several Aramean states to the north. **Beth Rehob** and **Zoba** were Aramean city-states located north of Israel. **Maacah** was a small Aramean kingdom east of the Jordan whose territory was assigned to the half-tribe of Manasseh (see Josh. 12:5; 13:11). **Ish-Tob** was a town at Et-Taiyibeh, 45 miles northeast of modern Amman, Jordan.

10:7 Although **mighty men** is used elsewhere to mean a select group of David’s warriors (16:6; 20:7), the context here suggests that the whole army of Israel is intended.

10:8 The **gate** was an important part of a city’s defensive fortification. The gates of fortified cities usually had towers which gave the defenders an advantage over enemies seeking to break through. The Ammonites fought near the gate so they could retreat into the

battle array at the entrance of the gate. And ^kthe Syrians of Zoba, Beth Rehob, Ish-Tob, and Maacah *were* by themselves in the field.

⁹When Joab saw that the battle line was against him before and behind, he chose some of Israel's best and put *them* in battle array against the Syrians. ¹⁰And the rest of the people he put under the command of ^lAbishai his brother, that he might set *them* in battle array against the people of Ammon. ¹¹Then he said, "If the Syrians are too strong for me, then you shall help me; but if the people of Ammon are too strong for you, then I will come and help you. ¹²*m* Be of good courage, and let us *n*be strong for our people and for the cities of our God. And may *o*the LORD do *what is* good in His sight."

¹³So Joab and the people who *were* with him drew near for the battle against the Syrians, and they fled before him. ¹⁴When the people of Ammon saw that the Syrians were fleeing, they also fled before Abishai, and entered the city. So Joab returned from the people of Ammon and went to *n*Jerusalem.

¹⁵When the Syrians saw that they had been defeated by Israel, they gathered together. ¹⁶Then ²Hadadezer sent and brought out the Syrians who *were* beyond ³the River, and they came to Helam. And ⁴Shobach the commander of Hadadezer's army *went* before them. ¹⁷When it was told David, he gathered all Israel, crossed over the Jordan, and came to Helam. And the Syrians set themselves in battle array

⁸ ^a 2 Sam. 10:6
¹⁰ ¹ 1 Sam. 26:6;
 2 Sam. 3:30
¹² ^m Deut. 31:6;
 Josh. 1:6, 7, 9;
 Neh. 4:14 ⁿ 1 Sam.
 4:9; ¹ Cor. 16:13
^o 1 Sam. 3:18
¹⁴ ^p 2 Sam. 11:1
¹⁶ ² Heb. *Hadadezer*
³ The Euphrates
⁴ *Shophach*, 1 Chr.
 19:16

¹⁸ ^q 1 Chr. 19:18
¹⁹ ^r 2 Sam. 8:6
² Heb. *Hadadezer*

CHAPTER 11

¹ ^a 1 Kin. 20:22-
 26 ^b 1 Chr. 20:1
^c 2 Sam. 12:26; Jer.
 49:2, 3; Amos 1:14
² ^d Deut. 22:8;
 1 Sam. 9:25; Matt.
 24:17; Acts 10:9
^e Gen. 34:2; [Ex.
 20:17]; Job 31:1;
 [Matt. 5:28]
³ ^f 2 Sam. 23:39
^g 1 Sam. 26:6
¹ *Bathsua*, 1 Chr.
 3:5 ² *Ammiel*,
 1 Chr. 3:5
⁴ ^h [Lev. 20:10;
 Deut. 22:22]; Ps.
 51:title; [James 1:14,
 15] ⁱ Lev. 15:19, 28

against David and fought with him. ¹⁸Then the Syrians fled before Israel; and David killed seven hundred charioteers and forty thousand ^qhorsemen of the Syrians, and struck Shobach the commander of their army, who died there. ¹⁹And when all the kings *who were* servants to ⁵Hadadezer saw that they were defeated by Israel, they made peace with Israel and *r*served them. So the Syrians were afraid to help the people of Ammon anymore.

David, Bathsheba, and Uriah

11 It happened in the spring of the year, at the ^atime when kings go out to *battle*, that ^bDavid sent Joab and his servants with him, and all Israel; and they destroyed the people of Ammon and besieged ^cRabbah. But David remained at Jerusalem.

²Then it happened one evening that David arose from his bed ^dand walked on the roof of the king's house. And from the roof he ^esaw a woman bathing, and the woman *was* very beautiful to behold. ³So David sent and inquired about the woman. And *someone* said, "Is this not ¹Bathsheba, the daughter of ²Eliam, the wife ^fof Uriah the ^gHittite?" ⁴Then David sent messengers, and took her; and she came to him, and ^hhe lay with her, for she was ⁱcleansed from her impurity; and she returned to her house. ⁵And the woman conceived; so she sent and told David, and said, "I *am* with child."

⁶Then David sent to Joab, *saying*, "Send me Uriah the Hittite." And Joab

walled city if the battle turned against them. The mercenary soldiers were in more exposed positions **in the field**.

10:9 before and behind: Joab had allowed himself to become trapped between two enemy forces—the **Syrians** and the Ammonites. If he attacked either enemy separately, his rear troops would be exposed to the other. Joab decided to risk attacking both forces at the same time.

10:10 Abishai, Joab's brother, was placed in command of the rest of the militia in order to attack the **people of Ammon**. Abishai was one of David's mighty men (23:18). He was a brave warrior (see 1 Sam. 26:6–9) and a successful commander (see 1 Chr. 18:12, 13), but was impetuous and perhaps even bloodthirsty (16:9; 19:21). He had played a part in the murder of Abner (3:30).

10:12 Joab's exhortation, **be of good courage, and let us be strong**, is reminiscent of God's charge to Joshua at the beginning of the conquest (see Josh. 1:6, 7). **may the LORD do what is good in His sight:** Having done his best to prepare for the battle, Joab took confidence in the sovereignty of God.

10:14 As the battle turned against the **Syrians**, the **people of Ammon** fled for shelter behind their city walls. **The city** refers to Rabbah (11:1), the capital of the Ammonites.

10:16 Hadadezer ruled the Aramean kingdom of Zobah, which extended north of Damascus (8:3). **The River** refers to the Euphrates, designated by God as the northeast boundary of the Promised Land (see Gen. 15:18).

10:18 seven hundred charioteers: According to 1 Chr. 19:18, "seven thousand" charioteers were killed. One of these texts must

be the result of a copyist's error. Probably seven hundred is correct.

10:19 All the kings who had been vassal rulers under **Hadadezer** transferred their allegiance to David. The word **served** indicates that they submitted to Israel's authority and brought them tribute (8:2).

11:1 Kings in the ancient Middle East went to battle **in the spring of the year**, when they could be assured of good weather and an abundance of food along the way. **David sent Joab** and his army to besiege the Ammonite capital of **Rabbah**. But instead of going off to war with his army, **David remained at Jerusalem**.

11:2 from the roof he saw a woman bathing: In ancient times, Israelite houses had an enclosed courtyard. Bathsheba was actually in her own house. **very beautiful:** Scripture rarely describes the physical appearance of people, but both Bathsheba and David (1 Sam. 16:12) are described as being of exceptionally fine appearance.

11:3 Bathsheba means "Daughter of Sheba." In 1 Chr. 3:5, her name is given as Bathshua.

11:4 she came to him: David was using his power as king to take advantage of Uriah's wife. It is difficult to know what Bathsheba's part was in all of this. **cleansed from her impurity:** Lev. 15:19–24 called for seven days of purification following a woman's monthly period.

11:5 told David: In Lev. 20:10 the command is clear that both parties in an adulterous relationship were to be put to death. But in practice, a woman who became pregnant might be forced to bear the shame and guilt alone. Bathsheba's situation was precarious because it would have been known that her husband was off at war.

sent Uriah to David. ⁷When Uriah had come to him, David asked how Joab was doing, and how the people were doing, and how the war prospered. ⁸And David said to Uriah, “Go down to your house and ^jwash your feet.” So Uriah departed from the king’s house, and a gift of food from the king followed him. ⁹But Uriah slept at the ^kdoor of the king’s house with all the servants of his lord, and did not go down to his house. ¹⁰So when they told David, saying, “Uriah did not go down to his house,” David said to Uriah, “Did you not come from a journey? Why did you not go down to your house?”

¹¹And Uriah said to David, ^l“The ark and Israel and Judah are dwelling in tents, and ^mmy lord Joab and the servants of my lord are encamped in the open fields. Shall I then go to my house to eat and drink, and to lie with my wife? As you live, and as your soul lives, I will not do this thing.”

¹²Then David said to Uriah, “Wait here today also, and tomorrow I will let you depart.” So Uriah remained in Jerusalem that day and the next. ¹³Now when David called him, he ate and drank

8 / Gen. 18:4; 19:2
9 ^k 1 Kin. 14:27, 28
11 ^j 2 Sam. 7:2, 6
^m 2 Sam. 20:6-22

13 ⁿ Gen. 19:33, 35
^o 2 Sam. 11:9
14 ^p 1 Kin. 21:8, 9
15 ^q 2 Sam. 12:9
³ fiercest
21 ^r Judg. 9:50-54
⁴ Jerubbaal (Gideon), Judg. 6:32ff.

before him; and he made him ⁿdrunk. And at evening he went out to lie on his bed ^owith the servants of his lord, but he did not go down to his house.

¹⁴In the morning it happened that David ^pwrote a letter to Joab and sent *it* by the hand of Uriah. ¹⁵And he wrote in the letter, saying, “Set Uriah in the forefront of the ³hottest battle, and retreat from him, that he may ^qbe struck down and die.” ¹⁶So it was, while Joab besieged the city, that he assigned Uriah to a place where he knew there *were* valiant men. ¹⁷Then the men of the city came out and fought with Joab. And *some* of the people of the servants of David fell; and Uriah the Hittite died also.

¹⁸Then Joab sent and told David all the things concerning the war, ¹⁹and charged the messenger, saying, “When you have finished telling the matters of the war to the king, ²⁰if it happens that the king’s wrath rises, and he says to you: ‘Why did you approach so near to the city when you fought? Did you not know that they would shoot from the wall?’ ²¹Who struck ^rAbimelech the son of ⁴Jerubbesheth? Was it not a woman who cast a piece of

11:8 Go down to your house and wash your feet: David encouraged Uriah to visit his wife. It is likely that David’s words, “wash your feet,” meant that Uriah should sleep with his wife that night. The **gift of food** was given by David for Uriah and Bathsheba to enjoy together, to encourage them to be intimate.

11:11 The **ark** accompanied the army on their military campaign (see 15:24; 1 Sam. 4:3).

11:14, 15 How sad that David would use the dangers of war to achieve his own ends, that he would send to his death an innocent

man, and that he would have no thought of God, while Uriah was consumed with righteousness.

11:16 Valiant means outstanding in battle. David sent Uriah to where he thought the fighting would be fiercest.

11:19 charged the messenger: Joab anticipated David’s anger over the loss of life and the questions he would ask about why this was allowed to happen.

11:21 Abimelech the son of Jerubbesheth refers to the son of Gideon. Jerubbesheth is also called Jerubbaal or Gideon (see Judg.

An Innocent Victim

Uriah the Hittite was one of David’s mighty men (23:39). The name Uriah means “Flame of the Lord” or “The Lord Is Light.” The fact that he is called a Hittite suggests that he may have been a foreign mercenary who had become a worshiper of Israel’s God. Immediately, a contrast is set before the reader. On the one hand there was David, the Lord’s anointed, the regent of God on earth. On the other hand there was Uriah, a convert—a man who was not born in the faith of Israel, but who willingly chose it for his own.

David used his authority as king to take advantage of Uriah’s wife Bathsheba while Uriah was fighting a war for Israel. As a result of David’s sin, Bathsheba became pregnant. David attempted to cover things up by calling Uriah home from battle. If Uriah had relations with his wife while on leave, he might believe the child was his.

However, Uriah, the ever-dedicated soldier, refused to enjoy the comforts of home while his comrades were on the battlefield. In this, he showed himself to be more righteous than David. Uriah’s words in 11:11 must have stung David’s conscience. He had neglected his duty. Moreover, he had stolen the wife of one of his best soldiers while his warriors risked their lives for him. Yet David persisted in covering up his sin; he attempted to break Uriah’s resolve by giving him too much to drink. But even the effects of alcohol did not soften Uriah’s determination. Once again, he refused to enjoy the comforts offered him.

Failing to cover up sin, David plotted the loyal soldier’s death. Perhaps David could not face the shame of seeing Uriah after the warrior had learned that David had slept with his wife. David’s orders—which were carried back to the battle lines by Uriah himself—were for Joab, the commander of the army, to put Uriah in the heat of battle, and then to withdraw the other soldiers so that Uriah would be left alone and killed. So Uriah died in battle.

After Uriah’s death, David took Bathsheba as his wife as soon as possible, to make it appear that the child was legitimate. However, “the thing that David had done displeased the LORD” (11:27). Although David had managed to conceal his sin from the people, God knew about it all. David’s sin would not go unpunished (ch. 12). Even the king of Israel had to submit to God’s discipline.



a millstone on him from the wall, so that he died in Thebez? Why did you go near the wall?"—then you shall say, 'Your servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also.'

²²So the messenger went, and came and told David all that Joab had sent by him. ²³And the messenger said to David, "Surely the men prevailed against us and came out to us in the field; then we drove them back as far as the entrance of the gate. ²⁴The archers shot from the wall at your servants; and *some* of the king's servants are dead, and your servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also."

²⁵Then David said to the messenger, "Thus you shall say to Joab: 'Do not let this thing ⁵displease you, for the sword devours one as well as another. Strengthen your attack against the city, and overthrow it.' So encourage him."

²⁶When the wife of Uriah heard that Uriah her husband was dead, she mourned for her husband. ²⁷And when her mourning was over, David sent and brought her to his house, and she ³became his wife and bore him a son. But the thing that David had done ⁷displeased ⁶the LORD.

Nathan's Parable and David's Confession

12 Then the LORD sent Nathan to David. And ^ahe came to him, and ^bsaid to him: "There were two men in one city, one rich and the other poor. ²The rich *man* had exceedingly many

²⁵ ⁵ Lit. *be evil in your sight*
²⁷ ² Sam. 12:9
¹ Chr. 21:7; [Heb. 13:4]
⁶ Lit. *was evil in the eyes of*

CHAPTER 12

¹ ^a Ps. 51:1title
^b 1 Kin. 20:35-41

⁵ ¹ *deserves to die, lit. is a son of death*
⁶ ^c [Ex. 22:1]; Luke 19:8
⁷ ^d 1 Sam. 16:13;
² Sam. 5:3
⁹ ^e 1 Sam. 15:19
^f Num. 15:31
⁹ ² Sam. 11:14-17, 27
¹⁰ ^h ² Sam. 13:28;
^{18:14}; 1 Kin. 2:25;
[Amos 7:9]

flocks and herds. ³But the poor *man* had nothing, except one little ewe lamb which he had bought and nourished; and it grew up together with him and with his children. It ate of his own food and drank from his own cup and lay in his bosom; and it was like a daughter to him. ⁴And a traveler came to the rich man, who refused to take from his own flock and from his own herd to prepare one for the wayfaring man who had come to him; but he took the poor man's lamb and prepared it for the man who had come to him."

⁵So David's anger was greatly aroused against the man, and he said to Nathan, "As the LORD lives, the man who has done this ¹shall surely die! ⁶And he shall restore ^cfourfold for the lamb, because he did this thing and because he had no pity."

⁷Then Nathan said to David, "You *are* the man! Thus says the LORD God of Israel: 'I ^danointed you king over Israel, and I delivered you from the hand of Saul. ⁸I gave you your master's house and your master's wives into your keeping, and gave you the house of Israel and Judah. And if *that had been* too little, I also would have given you much more! ⁹^eWhy have you ^fdespised the commandment of the LORD, to do evil in His sight? ⁹You have killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword; you have taken his wife *to be* your wife, and have killed him with the sword of the people of Ammon. ¹⁰Now therefore, ^hthe sword shall never depart

6:32). Abimelech's death during the siege of **Thebez** is recorded in Judg. 9:50–55. **Was it not a woman:** For a soldier to die at the hand of a woman was regarded as practically a fate worse than death (see Judg. 9:54).

11:23, 24 The report revealed that Joab did not follow David's orders exactly. David had told Joab to have Uriah killed by withdrawing soldiers from around him, leaving him to face the enemy alone. Perhaps Joab thought that this would be an obvious betrayal and would be difficult to explain to the other officers in the army. Instead, he devised a plan to have the soldiers fight near the wall. This maneuver endangered more soldiers and resulted in greater loss of life.

11:27 when her mourning was over: Ordinarily, Israelites mourned a death for seven days (see 1 Sam. 31:13).

12:1 There were two men: As king, David was the highest judge and the court of final appeal. The words **one rich and the other poor** present the story as a morality tale that would gain David's attention without raising his suspicions.

12:3 The poor man's **ewe lamb** was more a dearly loved pet than a farm animal. The details about sharing **food** and drink emphasize how precious the lamb was to the poor man.

12:4 he took the poor man's lamb: These words are reminiscent of 11:4, "David sent messengers, and took her."

12:5 David's anger was greatly aroused at the loathsome injustice that had been done. **the man who has done this shall surely die:** No capital crime had been committed; ordinarily, the rich man would not have been executed. Ironically, it was David who deserved to die for the crimes of adultery and murder (see Lev. 20:10; 24:17).

12:6 he shall restore fourfold: David demanded that restitution be made to the poor man according to the Law of Moses (see Ex. 22:1).

12:7 You are the man: It took courage and a strong commitment to the Lord for Nathan to speak these words to the king. David in his wrath could have retaliated against the prophet and had him executed. Nathan continued to present the words of God. It was the Lord who had made David king (see 2:4; 5:3; 1 Sam. 16:13), and it was He who had delivered David from Saul (see 1 Sam. 19:8–24).

12:8 your master's wives: Saul had had one wife, Ahinoam (see 1 Sam. 14:50), and one concubine, Rizpah (3:7). There is no indication that David married either of them after Saul's death. Since Ahinoam was the mother of David's wife Michal (see 1 Sam. 14:49, 50), the law prohibited her from becoming David's wife (see Lev. 18:17). The word translated *wives* may also be translated "women," including the female servants and courtesans that became David's when he became king. **I also would have given you much more:** The grace of God to David was not something that was about to be exhausted; all David had to do was ask, and God would have granted him favor upon favor.

12:9 you despised the commandment of the LORD: David had broken the tenth, the seventh, and the sixth commandments (Ex. 20:1–17; Deut. 5:6–21), the ones about coveting, adultery, and murder. The word translated *despised* means "to think light of." This is the same term used of Esau, who despised his birthright (Gen. 25:34). **killed him with the sword of the people of Ammon:** Although David's own sword was clean, there was still blood on his hands.

12:10, 11 The judgment pronounced on David and his family was threefold: (1) Bloodshed would persist all the days of David's life;

from your house, because you have despised Me, and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife.’¹¹ Thus says the LORD: ‘Behold, I will raise up adversity against you from your own house; and I will ⁱtake your wives before your eyes and give *them* to your neighbor, and he shall lie with your wives in the sight of this sun. ¹²For you did *it* secretly, ^jbut I will do this thing before all Israel, before the sun.’”

¹³^kSo David said to Nathan, ^l“I have sinned against the LORD.”

And Nathan said to David, “The LORD also has ^mput away your sin; you shall not die. ¹⁴However, because by this deed you have given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD ⁿto blaspheme, the child also *who is* born to you shall surely die.”¹⁵ Then Nathan departed to his house.

The Death of David's Son

And the ^oLORD struck the child that Uriah's wife bore to David, and it became ill. ¹⁶David therefore pleaded with God for the child, and David fasted and went in and ^play all night on the ground. ¹⁷So the elders of his house arose *and went* to him, to raise him up from the ground. But he would not, nor did he eat food with them. ¹⁸Then on the seventh day it came to pass that the child died. And the servants of David were afraid to tell him that the child was dead. For they said, “Indeed, while the child was alive, we

¹¹ ⁱ Deut. 28:30; 2 Sam. 16:21, 22
¹² ^j 2 Sam. 16:22
¹³ ^k 1 Sam. 15:24
¹⁴ ^l 2 Sam. 24:10; Job 7:20; Ps. 51; Luke 18:13 ^m 2 Sam. 24:10; Job 7:21; [Ps. 32:1-5; Prov. 28:13; Mic. 7:18]; Zech. 3:4
¹⁴ ⁿ Is. 52:5; [Ezek. 36:20, 23]; Rom. 2:24
¹⁵ ^o 1 Sam. 25:38
¹⁶ ^p 2 Sam. 13:31

²⁰ ^q Ruth 3:3; Matt. 6:17 ^r Job 1:20
²² ^s Is. 38:1-5; Joel 2:14; Jon. 3:9 ^t Heb. mss., Syr. God
²³ ^u Gen. 37:35
^u Job 7:8-10
²⁴ ^v Matt. 1:6
^w 1 Chr. 22:9 ^x So with Kt., LXX, Vg.; Qr., a few Heb. mss., Syr., Tg. she
²⁵ ^y Qr., some Heb. mss., Syr., Tg. she
^z Lit. Beloved of the LORD

spoke to him, and he would not heed our voice. How can we tell him that the child is dead? He may do some harm!”

¹⁹ When David saw that his servants were whispering, David perceived that the child was dead. Therefore David said to his servants, “Is the child dead?”

And they said, “He is dead.”

²⁰ So David arose from the ground, washed and ^qanointed himself, and changed his clothes; and he went into the house of the LORD and ^rworshiped. Then he went to his own house; and when he requested, they set food before him, and he ate. ²¹ Then his servants said to him, “What *is* this that you have done? You fasted and wept for the child *while he was* alive, but when the child died, you arose and ate food.”

²² And he said, “While the child was alive, I fasted and wept; ^sfor I said, ‘Who can tell *whether* ²the LORD will be gracious to me, that the child may live?’ ²³But now he is dead; why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go ^tto him, but ^uhe shall not return to me.”

Solomon Is Born

²⁴ Then David comforted Bathsheba his wife, and went in to her and lay with her. So ^vshe bore a son, and ^whe³ called his name Solomon. Now the LORD loved him, ²⁵and He sent *word* by the hand of Nathan the prophet: So ⁴he called his name ⁵Jedidiah, because of the LORD.

(2) David's own family would bring **adversity** against him; (3) David's wives would be taken by another. These predictions of judgment were fulfilled in the violation of Tamar (13:11–14), the violent deaths of Amnon and Absalom (13:28, 29; 18:15), and Absalom's public appropriation of David's concubines (16:22).

12:12 David's sin was private, but God's discipline and correction were public.

12:13 I have sinned against the LORD: David did not attempt to rationalize his sin or to make an excuse for himself. A fuller expression of David's confession is found in Ps. 51. **The LORD also has put away your sin:** God accepted David's confession and extended divine forgiveness. **you shall not die:** This is an evidence of divine grace. David was deserving of the death penalty for adultery and murder (see Lev. 20:10; Num. 35:31–33). God's grace is able to circumvent His own plan for punishment.

12:14 Although David's sin was forgiven, **the child** born of his adulterous relationship with Bathsheba would die. David's actions had given an opportunity for **the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme**. The LORD could not ignore David's sins and give unbelievers an opportunity to say, “The God of Israel must not be very holy. Look how He tolerates sin in the life of the king!” While God forgives sin, He does not necessarily remove its consequences (Gal. 6:7).

12:15 the child: The baby seems not to have lived long enough to be named. Normally a child would be named at the time of circumcision, the eighth day (Luke 1:59).

12:16 pleaded: In this verse, we sense the heart of David in anguish before the LORD. **fasted:** Fasting is an expression of the intensity of a petitioner's concern.

12:17 The elders of his house were the senior officials and advisors of David's royal court.

12:18 the servants of David were afraid: Those who had observed the intensity of David's grief before the death of his child expected that his rage would be uncontrollable when he learned that the baby had died.

12:20 So David arose from the ground: Usually, we think of the process of grieving as following the death of a loved one. In David's case, his grieving began when the child became ill. Once the child was dead, there was nothing he could do but worship the LORD. **he went into the house of the LORD:** David left his palace and ascended Mt. Moriah to worship at the tabernacle.

12:22 Who can tell: These words give us a remarkable insight into the meaning of prayer. As long as there is any possibility of God intervening in a new way, prayer should continue unabated. If one's hope is in God, then there is never the sense that it is too late until it is too late. God may intervene at the very last moment. Should He intervene and find us not still at prayer?

12:23 I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me: The child could not return to life, but David would someday join his son in death.

12:24 The name **Solomon** is related to the Hebrew word for *peace*, and means “Peaceable” or “Peaceful.” **the LORD loved him:** God was not going to strike this child as He had the first one (v. 15). This child was God's choice.

12:25 Nathan the prophet was sent by the LORD to give Solomon the name **Jedidiah**, meaning “Beloved of the LORD” (v. 24). The Hebrew name is related to David's name, meaning “Beloved.” The divinely sanctioned name, spoken by the prophet of the LORD, was the final symbol of God's forgiveness in the lives of David and Bathsheba.

David's Conquests



Once he had become king over all Israel (2 Sam. 5:1–5), David

- (1) conquered the Jebusite fortress of Zion/Jerusalem and made it his royal city (5:6–10);
- (2) received the recognition of and assurance of friendship from Hiram of Tyre, king of the Phoenicians (5:11, 12);
- (3) decisively defeated the Philistines so that their hold on Israelite territory was broken and their threat to Israel eliminated (5:17–25; 8:1);
- (4) defeated the Moabites and imposed his authority over them (8:2);
- (5) crushed the Syrian kingdoms of Hadadezer (king of Zobah), Damascus, and Maacah and put them under tribute (8:3–8; 10:6–19). Talmi, the Syrian king of Geshur, apparently had made peace with David while he was still reigning in Hebron and sealed the alliance by giving his daughter Maacah in marriage to David (3:3; cf. 1 Chr. 2:23);
- (6) subdued Edom and incorporated it into his empire (8:13, 14);
- (7) defeated the Ammonites and brought them into subjection (12:26–31);
- (8) subjugated the remaining Canaanite cities that had previously maintained their independence from Israel, such as Beth Shean, Megiddo, Taanach, and Dor.

Since David had earlier crushed the Amalekites (1 Sam. 30:17, 18), his wars thus completed the conquest begun by Joshua and secured all the borders of Israel. His empire (united Israel plus the subjugated kingdoms) reached from Ezion Geber on the eastern arm of the Red Sea to the Euphrates River.

Rabbah Is Captured

²⁶Now ^aJoab fought against ^bRabbah of the people of Ammon, and took the royal city. ²⁷And Joab sent messengers to David, and said, “I have fought against Rabbah, and I have taken the city’s water supply.” ²⁸Now therefore, gather the rest of the people together and encamp against the city and take it, lest I take the city and it be called after my name.” ²⁹So David gathered all the people together and went to Rabbah, fought against it, and took it. ³⁰^zThen he took their king’s crown from his head. Its weight *was* a talent of gold, with precious stones. And it was *set* on David’s head. Also he brought out the ⁶spoils of the city in great abundance. ³¹And he brought out the people who *were* in it, and put *them to work* with saws and iron picks and iron axes, and made them cross over to the brick works. So he did to all the cities of the people of Ammon. Then David and all the people returned to Jerusalem.

Amnon and Tamar

13 After this ^aAbsalom the son of David had a lovely sister, whose name *was* ^bTamar; and ^cAmnon the son of David loved her. ²Amnon was so distressed over his sister Tamar that he became sick; for she *was* a virgin. And it was improper for Amnon to do anything to her. ³But Amnon had a friend whose name *was* Jonadab ^dthe son of Shimeah, David’s brother. Now Jonadab *was* a very crafty man. ⁴And he said to him, “Why *are* you, the king’s son, becoming thinner day after day? Will you not tell me?”

26 ^x 1 Chr. 20:1
^y Deut. 3:11; 2 Sam. 11:1
30 ^z 1 Chr. 20:2
⁶ plunder

CHAPTER 13

1 ^a 2 Sam. 3:2, 3;
1 Chr. 3:2 ^b 1 Chr.
3:9 ^c 2 Sam. 3:2
3 ^d 1 Sam. 16:9

6 ^e Gen. 18:6
9 ^f Gen. 45:1
11 ^g Gen. 39:12;
[Deut. 27:22]; Ezek.
22:11
12 ^h [Lev. 18:9-11;
20:17] ⁱ Gen. 34:7;
Judg. 19:23; 20:6
^j Lit. *humble me*
13 ^j Gen. 20:12

Amnon said to him, “I love Tamar, my brother Absalom’s sister.”

⁵So Jonadab said to him, “Lie down on your bed and pretend to be ill. And when your father comes to see you, say to him, ‘Please let my sister Tamar come and give me food, and prepare the food in my sight, that I may see *it* and eat it from her hand.’” ⁶Then Amnon lay down and pretended to be ill; and when the king came to see him, Amnon said to the king, “Please let Tamar my sister come and ^emake a couple of cakes for me in my sight, that I may eat from her hand.”

⁷And David sent home to Tamar, saying, “Now go to your brother Amnon’s house, and prepare food for him.” ⁸So Tamar went to her brother Amnon’s house; and he was lying down. Then she took flour and kneaded *it*, made cakes in his sight, and baked the cakes. ⁹And she took the pan and placed *them* out before him, but he refused to eat. Then Amnon said, ^f“Have everyone go out from me.” And they all went out from him. ¹⁰Then Amnon said to Tamar, “Bring the food into the bedroom, that I may eat from your hand.” And Tamar took the cakes which she had made, and brought *them* to Amnon her brother in the bedroom. ¹¹Now when she had brought *them* to him to eat, ^ghe took hold of her and said to her, “Come, lie with me, my sister.”

¹²But she answered him, “No, my brother, do not ⁱforce me, for ^hno such thing should be done in Israel. Do not do this ⁱdisgraceful thing!” ¹³And I, where could I take my shame? And as for you, you would be like one of the fools in Israel. Now therefore, please speak to the king; ^jfor he will not withhold me from

12:27 taken the city’s water supply: Joab assured that once he had done this the city could not hold out against a siege.

12:28, 29 lest I take the city: Joab wanted David to have the credit for defeating Rabbah and conquering the people of Ammon. So it was that David arrived with his elite corps and won the victory that was years in the making.

12:30 a talent of gold: The crown weighed about 75 pounds. It was an example of the opulence of the spoils from the city, which came in great abundance. It is possible that the crown was a symbol of the Ammonite god Milcom (see 1 Kin. 11:5).

12:31 saws and iron picks and iron axes: The foreign policy of ancient Israel was announced in Deut. 20. The Israelites were to exterminate the Canaanites and subjugate the other nations as God’s judgment on the sins of those peoples. David punished the Ammonites in forced work parties with various tools and implements.

13:1 Absalom and Tamar were children of David and Maacah, daughter of Talmi, king of Geshur (3:3). **Amnon**, David’s firstborn son, was the child of Ahinoam, the woman from Jezreel (3:2). **loved her:** Amnon’s love for his half-sister was polluted by the passion of lust.

13:2 it was improper for Amnon to do anything to her: Marriage to a sister or half sister was forbidden by the Law of Moses (see Lev. 18:11).

13:3 Jonadab was a cousin to both Amnon and Tamar. The Hebrew

word translated **crafty** is the same one used elsewhere for those who are “wise,” “technically skilled,” or “experienced.”

13:4, 5 becoming thinner: Amnon’s lust for his sister had made him obsessive; his was a self-destructive course of life. Sadly, he would destroy others as well. **pretend to be ill:** Jonadab, Amnon’s shrewd cousin, devised a plan to lure unsuspecting Tamar into Amnon’s bedroom. Feigning illness would be a means of gaining sympathy and avoiding the usual proprieties.

13:7, 8 your brother Amnon’s house: Apparently the royal princes had separate residences. This allowed Amnon to put his evil plan into action without the knowledge of the other members of the family. **made cakes in his sight:** Amnon was able to look from his bedroom into the courtyard where the baking was being done.

13:12 While Canaanites and foreigners might have condoned such practices, incest was forbidden among Israelites (see Lev. 18:9, 11; 20:17). The words **disgraceful thing** translate a word used elsewhere to refer to a grave sin or sexual offense (see Gen. 34:7; Judg. 20:6).

13:13 The word translated **fools** is related to the word translated *disgraceful thing* in v. 12. **he will not withhold me from you:** While the law forbade incestuous marriage (see Lev. 18:11), this regulation may not always have been strictly observed. It is also possible that Tamar made this suggestion as a way of escaping her immediate danger, with no real thought to the possibility of marriage.

you.” ¹⁴However, he would not heed her voice; and being stronger than she, he ^kforced her and lay with her.

¹⁵Then Amnon hated her ²exceedingly, so that the hatred with which he hated her *was* greater than the love with which he had loved her. And Amnon said to her, “Arise, be gone!”

¹⁶So she said to him, “No, indeed! This evil of sending me away *is* worse than the other that you did to me.”

But he would not listen to her. ¹⁷Then he called his servant who attended him, and said, “Here! Put this *woman* out, away from me, and bolt the door behind her.” ¹⁸Now she had on ^la robe of many colors, for the king’s virgin daughters wore such apparel. And his servant put her out and bolted the door behind her.

¹⁹Then Tamar put ^mashes on her head, and tore her robe of many colors that *was* on her, and ⁿlaid her hand on her head and went away crying bitterly. ²⁰And Absalom her brother said to her, “Has Amnon your brother been with you? But now hold your peace, my sister. He *is* your brother; do not take this thing to heart.” So Tamar remained desolate in her brother Absalom’s house.

²¹But when King David heard of all these things, he was very angry. ²²And Absalom spoke to his brother Amnon ^oneither good nor bad. For Absalom ^phated Amnon, because he had forced his sister Tamar.

Absalom Murders Amnon

²³And it came to pass, after two full

¹⁴ ^k Lev. 18:9; [Deut. 22:25; 27:22]; 2 Sam. 12:11
¹⁵ ² with a very great hatred
¹⁸ ^l Gen. 37:3; Judg. 5:30; Ps. 45:13, 14
¹⁹ ^m Josh. 7:6; 2 Sam. 1:2; Job 2:12; 42:6 ⁿ Jer. 2:37
²² ^o Gen. 24:50; 31:24 ^p [Lev. 19:17; 18; 1 John 2:9, 11; 3:10, 12, 15]

²³ ^q Gen. 38:12, 13; 1 Sam. 25:4
²⁸ ^r Judg. 19:6, 9, 22; Ruth 3:7; 1 Sam. 25:36; Esth. 1:10
³ Lit. sons of valor
²⁹ ^s 2 Sam. 12:10
^t 2 Sam. 18:9; 1 Kin. 1:33, 38
³¹ ^u 2 Sam. 1:11
^v 2 Sam. 12:16
³² ^w 2 Sam. 13:3-5

years, that Absalom ^qhad sheepshearers in Baal Hazor, which *is* near Ephraim; so Absalom invited all the king’s sons. ²⁴Then Absalom came to the king and said, “Kindly note, your servant has sheepshearers; please, let the king and his servants go with your servant.”

²⁵But the king said to Absalom, “No, my son, let us not all go now, lest we be a burden to you.” Then he urged him, but he would not go; and he blessed him.

²⁶Then Absalom said, “If not, please let my brother Amnon go with us.”

And the king said to him, “Why should he go with you?” ²⁷But Absalom urged him; so he let Amnon and all the king’s sons go with him.

²⁸Now Absalom had commanded his servants, saying, “Watch now, when Amnon’s ^rheart is merry with wine, and when I say to you, ‘Strike Amnon!’ then kill him. Do not be afraid. Have I not commanded you? Be courageous and ³valiant.” ²⁹So the servants of Absalom ^sdid to Amnon as Absalom had commanded. Then all the king’s sons arose, and each one got on ^this mule and fled.

³⁰And it came to pass, while they were on the way, that news came to David, saying, “Absalom has killed all the king’s sons, and not one of them is left!” ³¹So the king arose and ^utore his garments and ^vlay on the ground, and all his servants stood by with their clothes torn. ³²Then ^wJonadab the son of Shimeah, David’s brother, answered and said, “Let not my lord suppose they have killed all

13:14 he forced her: The word can also mean, “he humiliated her.”
13:15 Amnon hated her exceedingly: Amnon’s lustful passion, once gratified, turned to hatred. Probably there was a measure of self-hatred as well.

13:16 The words at the end of the verse, **but he would not listen to her**, repeat the phrasing of v. 14.

13:17 It is difficult to translate the contempt which Amnon had for Tamar. Referring to Tamar, Amnon commanded his servant in a tone one might use to speak of dumping trash.

13:18 she had on a robe of many colors: The exact meaning of this phrase is debated; recent study suggests that it refers to a long garment with sleeves.

13:19 Tamar put ashes on her head, and tore her robe: These were traditional signs of grief and mourning among peoples of the ancient Middle East (see Job 1:20; 2:12). **laid her hand on her head:** This is another expression of mourning (see Jer. 2:37). Tamar had much to mourn. She had lost her virginity. Shamed by her own brother, she was as good as dead—the prospect of marriage and family was ruined.

13:20 hold your peace . . . do not take this thing to heart: Absalom’s words seem cold and heartless. Apparently, he wanted to avoid a public scandal. Absalom planned to take revenge, but wished to conceal his plan at that time. **Desolate**, the term used to describe Tamar as she lived in the home of her brother Absalom, is used of ravaged cities and ruined lands (see Is. 6:11).

13:21 David was **very angry** over Amnon’s violation of Tamar, but did nothing to punish his son. This may have been because Amnon was David’s firstborn (3:2) and was expected to succeed him on the throne. Amnon deserved the death penalty (see Lev. 20:17).

13:23 Absalom delayed his revenge **two full years**, evidently to catch Amnon off guard. Absalom planned to murder his brother to avenge his sister’s rape and perhaps to enhance his own chances of making a bid for the throne. Having carefully planned the murder of his brother, Absalom invited the **king’s sons** to a sheep shearing festival at **Baal Hazor**, a mountain about 15 miles north of Jerusalem. **Ephraim** here is not the tribe but a city about two miles south of Baal Hazor (see 2 Chr. 13:19; John 11:54).

13:25 David declined the invitation, offering the excuse that he did not want to be a burden on Absalom. **he blessed him:** David wished Absalom well. Given the outcome of the story, David’s memory of his blessing on Absalom must have been a grief to him (v. 36).

13:26, 27 Why should he go with you: Absalom’s request seems to have aroused David’s suspicions. After all, David knew about the blood feud between the two brothers (v. 22). Nevertheless, Absalom persuaded his father to allow Amnon and the rest of the king’s sons to attend the celebration.

13:28 Absalom’s servants planned to attack Amnon when his **heart was merry with wine**—that is, after the wine had dulled his senses and put him off guard. **Have I not commanded you:** These words indicate that Absalom would take full responsibility for the slaying.

13:30 Absalom has killed all the king’s sons: The report that reached David was greatly exaggerated. This news must have been utterly shattering to David.

13:31 tore his garments: Tearing one’s clothes was a sign of grief and mourning (1:11; 13:19).

13:32 Jonadab, a cousin both of Amnon and Tamar, had helped Amnon plan his encounter with Tamar (v. 3). **Shimeah** was David’s



Donkeys and Mules

As obedient servants, donkeys stand about four feet high and are usually gray, reddish-brown, or white. The long-suffering donkey often won the affection of the household and was decorated with beads and bright ribbons, but his true role was to serve as a work animal. He trampled seed, turned the millstone to grind grain, and pulled the plow. These animals could carry great weight in spite of their small size. Since they required only a fraction as much fodder as a horse, they were also more economical to own. The donkey was a safe and comfortable animal to ride. The offspring of a male donkey (jack) and female horse (mare) was a mule. The mule had the sure-footedness and endurance of the donkey, coupled with the greater size and strength of the horse. Crossbreeding like this was outlawed among the Jewish people (Lev. 19:19), but from David's time mules were imported and increasingly used by the Israelites.



Funerary relief: Donkey at millstone, first-century A.D., Ostia

Baker Photo Archive, courtesy of the Vatican Museum

the young men, the king's sons, for only Amnon is dead. For by the command of Absalom this has been determined from the day that he forced his sister Tamar. ³³Now therefore, ^xlet not my lord the king take the thing to his heart, to think that all the king's sons are dead. For only Amnon is dead."

Absalom Flees to Geshur

³⁴Then Absalom fled. And the young man who was keeping watch lifted his eyes and looked, and there, many people were coming from the road on the hill-

³³ ^x 2 Sam. 19:19
³⁴ ^y 2 Sam. 13:37,
³⁸ ^z LXX adds *And the watchman went and told the king, and said, "I see men from the way of Horonaim, from the regions of the mountains."*
³⁷ ^z 2 Sam. 3:3;
¹ Chr. 3:2
³⁸ ^a 2 Sam. 14:23,
³²; 15:8
³⁹ ^b Gen. 38:12;
² Sam. 12:19, 23
^z So with MT, Syr.,
^vg.; LXX the spirit of

side behind ⁴him. ³⁵And Jonadab said to the king, "Look, the king's sons are coming; as your servant said, so it is." ³⁶So it was, as soon as he had finished speaking, that the king's sons indeed came, and they lifted up their voice and wept. Also the king and all his servants wept very bitterly.

³⁷But Absalom fled and went to ^zTalmai the son of Ammihud, king of Geshur. And David mourned for his son every day. ³⁸So Absalom fled and went to ^aGeshur, and was there three years. ³⁹And ⁵King David ⁶longed to go to Absalom. For he had been ^bcomforted concerning Amnon, because he was dead.

Absalom Returns to Jerusalem

14 So Joab the son of Zeruiah perceived that the king's heart *was* concerned ^aabout Absalom. ²And Joab sent to ^bTekoa and brought from there a wise woman, and said to her, "Please pretend to be a mourner, ^cand put on mourning apparel; do not anoint yourself with oil, but act like a woman who has been mourning a long time for the dead. ³Go to the king and speak to him in this manner." So Joab ^dput the words in her mouth.

⁴And when the woman of Tekoa ¹spoke to the king, she ^efell on her face to the ground and prostrated herself, and said, ^f"Help, O king!"

⁵Then the king said to her, "What troubles you?"

And she answered, ^g"Indeed I *am* a widow, my husband is dead. ⁶Now your

the king; Tg. the soul of King David ⁶ So with MT, Tg.; LXX, Vg. ceased to pursue after

CHAPTER 14 ¹ ^a 2 Sam. 13:39 ² ^b 2 Sam. 23:26; 2 Chr. 11:6; Amos 1:1 ^c Ruth 3:3 ³ ^d Ex. 4:15; 2 Sam. 14:19 ⁴ ^e 1 Sam. 20:41; 25:23; 2 Sam. 1:2 ^f 2 Kin. 6:26, 28 ¹ Many Heb. mss., LXX, Syr., Vg. came ⁵ ^g [Zech. 7:10]

older brother, the third son of Jesse (called Shammah in 1 Sam. 16:9; 17:13; Shimea in 1 Chr. 2:13). Jonadab knew that Absalom's treachery had been brewing ever since the violation of his sister by Amnon.

13:34 The statement **Absalom fled** is repeated three times (vv. 37, 38) to contrast Absalom's flight with the return of the rest of David's sons. **The young man who was keeping watch** refers to the watchman on the city walls whose job was to alert the citizens of approaching danger (see Ezek. 3:17).

13:37 **Talmai** was Absalom's grandfather, the father of David's wife Maacah (3:3). He ruled as king of the territory of **Geshur**, northeast of the Sea of Galilee. **And David mourned for his son**: This mourning must refer to Amnon, who had been killed. But it is somewhat ambiguous, placed in the context of Absalom's exile. It is possible that David's grief over the exile of Absalom was also an intense pain to him (v. 39).

13:39 As David's grief over Amnon's death gradually diminished, he **longed to go to Absalom**: Apparently, David wanted to see Absalom, but thought it inappropriate in view of the circumstances, or impossible due to the distance and royal commitments.

14:1 the king's heart: Joab's long association with David enabled

him to know the king's thoughts. He was well aware that the king longed to be reconciled with his son, but that apart from some external prompting, he was not about to make the first move.

14:2 Tekoa, the hometown of the prophet Amos, was on the edge of the hill country, about six miles south of Bethlehem. **do not anoint yourself with oil**: Olive oil was used in ancient times as a soothing lotion that made the skin and hair shine. Its use is associated with celebration and joy (see Ps. 104:15; 133:2).

14:3–5 Joab gave the woman the story to tell to the king. As a wise woman (v. 2), she would know how to reply to David's responses and questions. **fell on her face**: The woman bowed before the king as a preliminary sign of her request for help. The same word is used for bowing before God when one comes into His presence for holy worship. **my husband is dead**: Although she had already described herself as a **widow**, these words may have been added for emotional effect.

14:6 The mention of **two sons** must have struck a chord in David; certainly he could not have been impassive when she described the one killing the other.

maidservant had two sons; and the two fought with each other in the field, and *there was* no one to part them, but the one struck the other and killed him.⁷ And now the whole family has risen up against your maidservant, and they said, ‘Deliver him who struck his brother, that we may execute him^h for the life of his brother whom he killed; and we will destroy the heir also.’ So they would extinguish my ember that is left, and leave to my husband *neither* name nor remnant on the earth.”

⁸Then the king said to the woman, “Go to your house, and I will give orders concerning you.”

⁹And the woman of Tekoa said to the king, “My lord, O king, *letⁱ the² iniquity be on me and on my father’s house,^j and the king and his throne be guiltless.”*

¹⁰So the king said, “Whoever says *anything* to you, bring him to me, and he shall not touch you anymore.”

¹¹Then she said, “Please let the king remember the LORD your God, and do not permit^k the avenger of blood to destroy anymore, lest they destroy my son.”

And he said, ¹⁴“As the LORD lives, not one hair of your son shall fall to the ground.”

¹²Therefore the woman said, “Please, let your maidservant speak *another* word to my lord the king.”

And he said, “Say on.”

¹³So the woman said: “Why then have you schemed such a thing against^m the people of God? For the king speaks this thing as one who is guilty, *in that* the king does not bringⁿ his banished one home again. ¹⁴For we^o will surely die and *become* like water spilled on the ground,

⁷ ^p Num. 35:19; Deut. 19:12, 13
⁹ ⁱ Gen. 27:13; 43:9; 1 Sam. 25:24; Matt. 27:25 / ² Sam. 3:28, 29; 1 Kin. 2:33
² ^{guilt}
¹¹ ^k Num. 35:19, 21; [Deut. 19:4–10] / 1 Sam. 14:45; 1 Kin. 1:52; Matt. 10:30; Acts 27:34
¹³ ^m Judg. 20:2
ⁿ 2 Sam. 13:37, 38
¹⁴ ^o Job 30:23; 34:15; [Heb. 9:27]

^p Job 34:19; Matt. 22:16; Acts 10:34; Rom. 2:11 ^q Num. 35:15 ³ ^{cast out}
¹⁶ ^r Deut. 32:9; 1 Sam. 26:19; 2 Sam. 20:19
¹⁷ ^s 1 Sam. 29:9; 2 Sam. 19:27
^t 1 Kin. 3:9
¹⁹ ^u 2 Sam. 14:3
²⁰ ^v 2 Sam. 14:17; 19:27

which cannot be gathered up again. Yet God does not^p take away a life; but He^q devises means, so that His banished ones are not³ expelled from Him. ¹⁵Now therefore, I have come to speak of this thing to my lord the king because the people have made me afraid. And your maidservant said, ‘I will now speak to the king; it may be that the king will perform the request of his maidservant. ¹⁶For the king will hear and deliver his maidservant from the hand of the man *who would* destroy me and my son together from the ‘inheritance of God.’ ¹⁷Your maidservant said, ‘The word of my lord the king will now be comforting; for^s as the angel of God, so is my lord the king in ‘discerning good and evil. And may the LORD your God be with you.’”

¹⁸Then the king answered and said to the woman, “Please do not hide from me anything that I ask you.”

And the woman said, “Please, let my lord the king speak.”

¹⁹So the king said, “Is the hand of Joab with you in all this?” And the woman answered and said, “As you live, my lord the king, no one can turn to the right hand or to the left from anything that my lord the king has spoken. For your servant Joab commanded me, and^u he put all these words in the mouth of your maidservant. ²⁰To bring about this change of affairs your servant Joab has done this thing; but my lord *is* wise, ^vaccording to the wisdom of the angel of God, to know everything that *is* in the earth.”

²¹And the king said to Joab, “All right, I have granted this thing. Go therefore, bring back the young man Absalom.”

14:7 that we may execute him: The punishment for murder was death. The issue seemed clear, but the consequences for the woman were intolerable. **So they would extinguish my ember:** The woman used a graphic picture of the extinction of her family. The demise of a family name and the end of a surviving remnant or family line were crucial matters to the Hebrew people.

14:8 David apparently wanted to put the woman off with a promise of future action. Perhaps he was seeking to avoid having to defend the guilty son who was worthy of death. Perhaps he wanted to meet with his counselors or pray to the Lord for direction.

14:9, 10 let the iniquity be on me and on my father’s house: The persistent woman expressed her willingness to bear any guilt if David would let the blood of her son go unavenged. David gave the persistent woman assurances of his protection, but was unwilling at this point to offer protection to her son.

14:11 The Hebrew phrase **avenger of blood** joins the term sometimes translated *kinsman redeemer* to the word for *blood*. The kinsman redeemer is the protector of family rights. Here, the protector of the family would be expected to bring vengeance on one who had taken the life of a family member. Cities of refuge had been established under Moses for protection from the blood avenger in cases where the killing was accidental (see Num. 35:9–34). In this case, the woman pressed David to the limit with respect to her son. David promised that **not one hair** of her son’s head would **fall to the ground**.

14:13 you schemed such a thing against the people of God: She accused David of doing to the nation what her enemy was trying to do to her (v. 7)—taking away the heir to the throne. **his banished one:** Although not formally banished, Absalom was in his extended exile from Israel.

14:14 For we will surely die: The woman may be referring to Amnon (13:28–33). Amnon was dead, and no amount of punishment against Absalom would bring him back to life. **God does not take away a life:** God’s will is to forgive sinners. The divine example is set in significant contrast with David, who had refused to forgive his son Absalom.

14:15 After speaking of David’s treatment of Absalom, the woman returned to her story about her own family. **the people have made me afraid:** The woman said she was afraid that she would lose her own son to the avenger of blood (v. 7).

14:16 the man who would destroy me: Although the woman’s life was not in jeopardy, the death of the son would mean the extinction of her family, depriving her of a future share in the workings of God among His people.

14:17 as the angel of God: The woman suggested that the king had superhuman ability in the exercise of judgment. She used flattery and an appeal to piety to get David to act.

14:19, 20 David recognized **the hand of Joab** in the woman’s charade. The woman explained that Joab was simply trying to be an agent for change in the relationship between David and Absalom.

²²Then Joab fell to the ground on his face and bowed himself, and ⁴thanked the king. And Joab said, “Today your servant knows that I have found favor in your sight, my lord, O king, in that the king has fulfilled the request of his servant.” ²³So Joab arose ¹⁰and went to Geshur, and brought Absalom to Jerusalem. ²⁴And the king said, “Let him return to his own house, but ^xdo not let him see my face.” So Absalom returned to his own house, but did not see the king’s face.

David Forgives Absalom

²⁵Now in all Israel there was no one who was praised as much as Absalom for his good looks. ²⁶From the sole of his foot to the crown of his head there was no blemish in him. ²⁶And when he cut the hair of his head—at the end of every year he cut *it* because it was heavy on him—when he cut it, he weighed the hair of his head at two hundred shekels according to the king’s standard. ²⁷^zTo Absalom were born three sons, and one daughter whose name *was* Tamar. She was a woman of beautiful appearance.

²⁸And Absalom dwelt two full years in Jerusalem, ^abut did not see the king’s face. ²⁹Therefore Absalom sent for Joab, to send him to the king, but he would not come to him. And when he sent again the second time, he would not come. ³⁰So he said to his servants, “See, Joab’s field is near mine, and he has barley there; go and set it on fire.” And Absalom’s servants set the field on fire.

²² ⁴Lit. *blessed*
²³ ^w2 Sam. 13:37;
³⁸
²⁴ ^xGen. 43:3;
² Sam. 3:13
²⁵ ^yDeut. 28:35;
Job 2:7; Is. 1:6
²⁷ ^z2 Sam. 13:1;
18:18
²⁸ ^a2 Sam. 14:24

³² ^b1 Sam. 20:8;
[Prov. 28:13]
³³ ^cGen. 33:4;
45:15; Luke 15:20

CHAPTER 15

¹ ^a2 Sam. 12:11
^b1 Kin. 1:5
² ^cDeut. 19:17 ¹Lit. *controversy*
³ ²Lit. *words* ³Lit. *listener*
⁴ ^dJudg. 9:29

³¹Then Joab arose and came to Absalom’s house, and said to him, “Why have your servants set my field on fire?”

³²And Absalom answered Joab, “Look, I sent to you, saying, ‘Come here, so that I may send you to the king, to say, “Why have I come from Geshur? *It would be better for me to be there still.*”’ Now therefore, let me see the king’s face; but ^bif there is iniquity in me, let him execute me.”

³³So Joab went to the king and told him. And when he had called for Absalom, he came to the king and bowed himself on his face to the ground before the king. Then the king ^ckissed Absalom.

Absalom’s Treason

15 After this ^ait happened that Absalom ^bprovided himself with chariots and horses, and fifty men to run before him. ²Now Absalom would rise early and stand beside the way to the gate. So it was, whenever anyone who had a ^clawsuit¹ came to the king for a decision, that Absalom would call to him and say, “What city *are* you from?” And he would say, “Your servant is from such and such a tribe of Israel.” ³Then Absalom would say to him, “Look, your ²case is good and right; but *there is* no ³deputy of the king to hear you.” ⁴Moreover Absalom would say, ^d“Oh, that I were made judge in the land, and everyone who has any suit or cause would come to me; then I would give him justice.” ⁵And so it was, whenever anyone came near to

14:22 the king has filled the request of his servant: Apparently, Joab had made other attempts to bring about the reconciliation of David and Absalom.

14:23 David’s unwillingness to go himself may reflect some reluctance to forgive his son. **Geshur** was northeast of the Sea of Galilee. Talmi, Absalom’s grandfather and the father of David’s wife Maacah, ruled the region (3:3; 13:37).

14:24–26 do not let him see my face: David refused to grant an immediate audience to his son because he had not forgotten Absalom’s heinous crime. **his good looks:** Absalom must have had the look of royalty. Many people must have viewed him as Israel’s next king. By his charm and personal appeal, he later was able to lead the nation in a rebellion against his father (15:1–12). The reference to Absalom’s long **hair** provides the background for the account of his death (18:9). **Two hundred shekels** was a considerable weight, about five pounds.

14:27 In addition to three sons, Absalom had a daughter whom he named **Tamar**, perhaps after his sister (13:1). Apparently, Absalom’s sons died in infancy. When he set up a pillar in Jerusalem to memorialize his name, he mentioned having no sons (18:18).

14:29 Joab’s failure to heed Absalom’s summons seems inconsistent with his earlier effort to bring about Absalom’s return (v. 22). Joab’s refusal to go to Absalom no doubt contributed to Absalom’s simmering resentment of the royal house.

14:32 Come here, so that I may send you to the king: Perhaps Joab resented being treated like Absalom’s servant. **if there is iniquity in me, let him execute me:** Absalom pleaded that his offense either be punished or completely forgiven.

14:33 the king kissed Absalom: The kiss was the symbol of their reconciliation. Although David and Absalom were reconciled, the seeds of bitterness that had been sown would soon bear the fruit of conspiracy and rebellion. David’s protracted delay in coming to terms with his son ultimately led to disaster. For the moment, though, there was peace.

15:1–3 chariots and horses, and fifty men to run before him: This royal treatment was intended to attract attention to Absalom and to remind the people of his relationship to David as heir to the throne (1 Kin. 1:5). The runners would announce the coming of his chariot. Absalom would stand along the **way** leading to the royal palace, welcoming and showing interest in visitors who had come to Jerusalem to present their cases before the king. **good and right:** Absalom ingratiated himself to the people. Only those who really had a complaint would make the arduous trip to Jerusalem in the hope that they might find favor with the king. When they were told that they were right, but that the present administration would not help, their frustration was only increased. **no deputy of the king to hear you:** The implication of Absalom’s remark was that David was too busy to hear the case, yet too jealous of his own authority to delegate someone to deal with the concern.

15:4 Administration of justice, the proper relationship between people in society according to God’s standard of righteousness, was a major concern of OT rulers and prophets (8:15; 1 Kin. 3:28; 10:9; Is. 1:17; Amos 5:24). Absalom was playing on the people’s emotions when he presented himself as the answer to their need for justice, but had none to give them.

15:5, 6 When anyone approached Absalom with a show of rever-

bow down to him, that he would put out his hand and take him and ^ekiss him. ⁶In this manner Absalom acted toward all Israel who came to the king for judgment. ^fSo Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel.

⁷Now it came to pass ^gafter ⁴forty years that Absalom said to the king, “Please, let me go to ^hHebron and pay the vow which I made to the LORD. ⁸ⁱFor your servant ^jtook a vow ^kwhile I dwelt at Geshur in Syria, saying, ‘If the LORD indeed brings me back to Jerusalem, then I will serve the LORD.’”

⁹And the king said to him, “Go in peace.” So he arose and went to Hebron.

¹⁰Then Absalom sent spies throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, “As soon as you hear the sound of the trumpet, then you shall say, ‘Absalom ^lreigns in Hebron!’” ¹¹And with Absalom went two hundred men ^minvited from Jerusalem, and they ⁿwent along innocently and did not know anything. ¹²Then Absalom sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, ^oDavid’s counselor, from his city—from ^pGiloh—while he offered sacrifices. And the conspiracy grew strong, for the people with Absalom ^qcontinually increased in number.

David Escapes from Jerusalem

¹³Now a messenger came to David,

⁵ ^e 2 Sam. 14:33; 20:9
⁶ ^f [Rom. 16:18]
⁷ ^g [Deut. 23:21]
^h 2 Sam. 3:2, 3
ⁱ LXX mss., Syr., Josephus four
⁸ ^j 1 Sam. 16:2
^k Gen. 28:20, 21
^l 2 Sam. 13:38
^m 1 Kin. 1:34;
ⁿ 2 Kin. 9:13
^o 1 Sam. 16:3, 5
^p Gen. 20:5
^q 2 Sam. 16:15;
^r 1 Chr. 27:33; Ps. 41:9; 55:12-14
^s Josh. 15:51
^t Ps. 3:1

¹³ ^r Judg. 9:3;
^s 2 Sam. 15:6 ^t Lit. after
¹⁴ ^s 2 Sam. 12:11;
^t Ps. 3:1
¹⁶ ^t Ps. 3:1
^u 2 Sam. 12:11;
^v 16:21, 22
¹⁸ ^v 2 Sam. 8:18
^w 1 Sam. 23:13;
^x 25:13; 30:1, 9 ^y Lit. by his hand
¹⁹ ^x 2 Sam. 18:2
²⁰ ^y 1 Sam. 23:13

saying, ^r“The hearts of the men of Israel are ^swith Absalom.”

¹⁴So David said to all his servants who were with him at Jerusalem, “Arise, and let us ^sflee, or we shall not escape from Absalom. Make haste to depart, lest he overtake us suddenly and bring disaster upon us, and strike the city with the edge of the sword.”

¹⁵And the king’s servants said to the king, “We are your servants, *ready to do whatever my lord the king commands.*”

¹⁶Then ^tthe king went out with all his household after him. But the king left ^uten women, concubines, to keep the house. ¹⁷And the king went out with all the people after him, and stopped at the outskirts. ¹⁸Then all his servants passed ^obefore him; ^vand all the Cherethites, all the Pelethites, and all the Gittites, ^wsix hundred men who had followed him from Gath, passed before the king.

¹⁹Then the king said to ^xIttai the Gittite, “Why are you also going with us? Return and remain with the king. For you are a foreigner and also an exile from your own place. ²⁰In fact, you came *only yesterday*. Should I make you wander up and down with us today, since I go ^yI know not where? Return, and take your brethren back. Mercy and truth *be with you.*”

²¹But Ittai answered the king and said,

ence or respect, the prince would extend **his hand**, as one would with an equal. In ancient times, a **kiss** could serve as a greeting—a sign of friendship, affection, and loyalty (19:39). **Absalom stole the hearts**: Through personal charm and promises, Absalom managed to win the affection and loyalty of the Israelites.

15:7, 8 Absalom sought David’s permission to move to **Hebron**, about 20 miles south of Jerusalem, where he would have more freedom to start a rebellion. Since Absalom was born in Hebron (3:2, 3), it would probably not seem unusual to David that he would want to fulfill his vow there. **Geshur in Syria** was the region northeast of the Sea of Galilee.

15:10 sent spies: Away from the attention of David and those loyal to him, Absalom began to enlist conspirators and sympathizers to join him in the forthcoming revolt. The slogan **Absalom reigns in Hebron** purposely alluded to David’s kingship. David had been anointed king in Hebron (2:1-7; 5:1-5).

15:11 Absalom invited **two hundred** unsuspecting men to join him in Hebron for the supposed fulfillment of his vow (vv. 7, 8). No doubt he hoped they would give their support to him when they realized what was happening.

15:12 Ahithophel was from Giloh, a city in the mountains of Judah (Josh. 15:51).

15:13 The hearts of the men of Israel: By his deceptive practices, Absalom had gained the sympathy and support of the Israelites. One of the reasons he may have been able to do this was David’s troubling rise to power. When David’s power in Judah was confined to Hebron (ch. 2), he was resented by the supporters of Saul in the rest of the country. Old suspicions and resentments could be stroked again by a person who knew how to use people to his own advantage—a disreputable ability in which Absalom excelled.

15:14 Arise, and let us flee: David seems to have been taken completely by surprise. He was unprepared to thwart Absalom’s rebellion. He fled from Jerusalem to avoid unnecessary risk of life and the tragedy of a military assault on the capital city.

15:15 The loyalty of David’s **servants** must have been a real encouragement in a time of such disloyalty from David’s own family.

15:17 After leaving Jerusalem, David and the royal family stopped at the east edge of town before crossing the Kidron (v. 23), to allow his royal bodyguard to pass in review before him (v. 18). The need to flee the palace was immediate. But before those with him dashed off in headlong flight, David gathered them together to take stock of matters and to plan their next move.

15:18 The Cherethites and Pelethites were elite units of David’s army. These trusted troops of David were not Israelites, but mercenaries from a variety of nations, possibly Crete and Philistia. They had been with David for years, owed him their loyalty, and would defend him and his family to the death. **Gittites** were either Philistine mercenary soldiers whom David had recruited during his stay in Gath (see 1 Sam. 21:10-15) or David’s original followers from Gath (1 Sam. 23:13).

15:19 remain with the king: David gave his foreign mercenaries the chance to leave him. As foreigners, they were not obligated to fight in the coming civil war.

15:20 you came only yesterday: This is an obvious exaggeration, but reflects the fact that Ittai’s association with David had been brief. He did not have the long-term relationship with David that the troops mentioned in v. 18 had. **Mercy and truth be with you**: David used the covenantal language of the biblical faith in his blessing on Ittai.

15:21 As the LORD lives: With these words, the foreign military officer declared his abiding faith in and commitment to the God of Israel. These are words of the strongest oath, and they distinguish the true believer in various periods of Israel’s history (see 1 Kin. 17:1, 12; 18:10). **whether in death or life**: Ittai’s words are similar to those of another foreigner who came to faith in God—Ruth of Moab (Ruth 1:16, 17). Ittai’s later appointment as commander of a third of the army (18:2) was David’s way of showing his gratitude for such loyalty.

²²“As the LORD lives, and as my lord the king lives, surely in whatever place my lord the king shall be, whether in death or life, even there also your servant will be.”

²³So David said to Ittai, “Go, and cross over.” Then Ittai the Gittite and all his men and all the little ones who were with him crossed over. ²⁴And all the country wept with a loud voice, and all the people crossed over. The king himself also crossed over the Brook Kidron, and all the people crossed over toward the way of the wilderness.

²⁵There was Zadok also, and all the Levites with him, bearing the ark of the covenant of God. And they set down the ark of God, and Abiathar went up until all the people had finished crossing over from the city. ²⁶Then the king said to Zadok, “Carry the ark of God back into the city. If I find favor in the eyes of the LORD, He will bring me back and show me both it and His dwelling place. ²⁷But if He says thus: ‘I have no delight in you,’ here I am, let Him do to me as seems good to Him.” ²⁸The king also said to Zadok the priest, “Are you not a seer?” Return to the city in peace, and your two sons with you, Ahimaaz your son, and Jonathan the son of Abiathar. ²⁹See, I will wait in the plains of the

²¹ ² Ruth 1:16, 17; [Prov. 17:17]
²³ ² 2 Sam. 15:28; 16:2
²⁴ ² 2 Sam. 8:17
²⁵ Num. 4:15; 1 Sam. 4:4
²⁶ ¹ 1 Sam. 22:20
²⁷ ² [Ps. 43:3] ¹ Ex. 15:13; Jer. 25:30
²⁸ ² Num. 14:8; 2 Sam. 22:20; 1 Kin. 10:9; 2 Chr. 9:8; Is. 62:4
²⁹ ¹ 1 Sam. 3:18
²⁷ ¹ 1 Sam. 9:6-9
² 2 Sam. 17:17-20
² prophet
²⁸ ² Josh. 5:10; 2 Sam. 17:16

³⁰ ² 2 Sam. 19:4; Esth. 6:12; Ezek. 24:17, 23
³¹ ² Is. 20:2-4
³² ² Jer. 14:3, 4
³³ ² [Ps. 126:6]
³⁴ ² Ps. 3:1, 2; 55:12
³⁵ ² 2 Sam. 16:23; 17:14, 23
³⁶ ² Josh. 16:2
³⁷ ² 2 Sam. 1:2
³⁸ ² 2 Sam. 19:35
³⁹ ² 2 Sam. 16:19
⁴⁰ ² 2 Sam. 17:15, 16

wilderness until word comes from you to inform me.” ²⁹Therefore Zadok and Abiathar carried the ark of God back to Jerusalem. And they remained there.

³⁰So David went up by the Ascent of the Mount of Olives, and wept as he went up; and he had his head covered and went barefoot. And all the people who were with him covered their heads and went up, weeping as they went up. ³¹Then someone told David, saying, “Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom.” And David said, “O LORD, I pray, turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness!”

³²Now it happened when David had come to the top of the mountain, where he worshiped God—there was Hushai the Archite coming to meet him with his robe torn and dust on his head. ³³David said to him, “If you go on with me, then you will become a burden to me. ³⁴But if you return to the city, and say to Absalom, ‘I will be your servant, O king; as I was your father’s servant previously, so I will now also be your servant,’ then you may defeat the counsel of Ahithophel for me. ³⁵And do you not have Zadok and Abiathar the priests with you there? Therefore it will be that whatever you hear from the king’s house, you shall tell to Zadok and Abiathar the priests. ³⁶In-

15:23 The **Brook Kidron** is a small stream that flows through the valley separating Jerusalem and the Mount of Olives during the rainy season (October through March). The **way of the wilderness** refers to the road leading through the wilderness of Judah to Jericho and down to the fords of the Jordan River.
15:24–26 **Zadok** and **Abiathar** were the main priests functioning during David’s reign. They were loyal to David. They wanted to bring the **ark**, which David had brought to Jerusalem with a great celebration (ch. 6), **back into the city**. It was David who was going into exile, not the Lord; the symbol of God’s presence with His people would remain in the place of worship for the entire community. **He will bring me back:** David committed the entire situation to the sovereign care and will of God. Contrast David’s submission to the

Lord’s will to Absalom’s deceitful words (v. 8). **His dwelling place** refers to the tabernacle that had been set up for the ark (7:6).
15:27 **Are you not a seer:** A prophet could come from any tribe, even from among the sons of Aaron. Thus a priest could also be a prophet of the Lord (see Zech. 1:1). David wanted the priests to remain in Jerusalem to minister in the tabernacle and intercede before God for him. Perhaps God would grant them a message that they could relay to him.
15:28 **The plains of the wilderness** refers to the Jordan valley near Jericho. **until word comes from you to inform me:** As vv. 35, 36 further explain, Zadok and Abiathar were to remain in Jerusalem to gather information for David. They could return a message from the Lord as well as news from the enemy camp.
15:30 **head covered . . . barefoot:** These were outward signs of mourning (see Jer. 14:3; Ezek. 24:17). The **Mount of Olives** was located east of Jerusalem.
15:31 **Ahithophel** was Bathsheba’s grandfather (11:3). A wise counselor (16:23), he had been in David’s service (v. 12) but had switched his allegiance to Absalom. David prayed for his enemy to be confused. The name Ahithophel may mean “Brother of Folly.” If so, it may have been a name given to him later on account of his defection from David.
15:32–34 **where he worshiped God:** Prior to the building of the Jerusalem temple, there was apparently a place of worship located on the Mount of Olives. **Hushai** proved to be a loyal friend of David (15:37; 16:16). **Archite** was the name of a family living on the southern boundary of Ephraim, between Bethel and Ataroth (see Josh. 16:2). Hushai’s **torn robe** and the **dust on his head** were signs of grief (1:11; 13:19). Rather than joining David’s followers, Hushai was directed to return to Jerusalem to thwart the counsel that Ahithophel would be giving to Absalom.
15:35, 36 Hushai was given a key role in relaying information about the enemy to David through **Zadok** and **Abiathar** and their sons, **Ahimaaz** and **Jonathan**.

ark

(Heb. *’aron*) (6:2; 15:24; Ex. 25:10; 1 Sam. 4:3) Strong’s #727

This Hebrew word can be translated *chest* (2 Kin. 12:9) or *sarcophagus* (Gen. 50:26), but usually appears in the phrase *’aron haberith*, which means “ark of the covenant.” The ark was a wooden chest overlaid with gold (Ex. 25:10–22), housing the Ten Commandments (Ex. 40:20), Aaron’s staff, and a pot of manna (Heb. 9:4). It sat in the Most Holy Place as a reminder of Israel’s covenant with God and His presence among them. When the Israelites became careless with the ark (1 Sam. 4:1–11), God allowed it to be captured in order to demonstrate that His covenant relationship with them transcended symbols and superstitions. What He required was continual obedience to His covenant and a contrite heart surrendered to Him (Ps. 51:17; Is. 57:15).

deed *they have* there ^wwith them their two sons, Ahimaaz, Zadok's *son*, and Jonathan, Abiathar's *son*; and by them you shall send me everything you hear."

³⁷So Hushai, ^xDavid's friend, went into the city. ^yAnd Absalom came into Jerusalem.

Mephibosheth's Servant

16 When^a David was a little past the top of the mountain, there was ^bZiba the servant of Mephibosheth, who met him with a couple of saddled donkeys, and on them two hundred loaves of bread, one hundred clusters of raisins, one hundred summer fruits, and a skin of wine. ²And the king said to Ziba, "What do you mean to do with these?"

So Ziba said, "The donkeys are for the king's household to ride on, the bread and summer fruit for the young men to eat, and the wine for ^cthose who are faint in the wilderness to drink."

³Then the king said, "And where is your ^dmaster's son?"

^eAnd Ziba said to the king, "Indeed he is staying in Jerusalem, for he said, 'Today the house of Israel will restore the kingdom of my father to me.'"

⁴So the king said to Ziba, "Here, all that belongs to Mephibosheth is yours."

And Ziba said, "I humbly bow before you, that I may find favor in your sight, my lord, O king!"

Shimei Curses David

⁵Now when King David came to ^fBahurim, there was a man from the family of

36 ^w 2 Sam. 15:27
37 ^x 2 Sam. 16:16;
1 Chr. 27:33
^y 2 Sam. 16:15

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1 ^a 2 Sam. 15:30,
32 ^b 2 Sam. 9:2;
19:17, 29
2 ^c 2 Sam. 15:23;
17:29
3 ^d 2 Sam. 9:9, 10
^e 2 Sam. 19:27
5 ^f 2 Sam. 3:16

⁹ 2 Sam. 19:21;
1 Kin. 2:8, 9, 44-46
7 ^h Deut. 13:13 ⁱ Lit.
man of bloodshed
² worthless man
8 ^j Judg. 9:24, 56,
57; 1 Kin. 2:32, 33
² 2 Sam. 1:16; 3:28,
29; 4:11, 12 ³ Lit.
man of bloodshed
9 ^k 1 Sam. 24:14;
2 Sam. 9:8 ^l Ex.
22:28
10 ^m 2 Sam. 3:39;
19:22; [1 Pet. 2:23]
ⁿ 2 Kin. 18:25; [Lam.
3:38] ^o [Rom. 9:20]
11 ^p 2 Sam. 12:11
^q Gen. 15:4
12 ^r Deut. 23:5;
Neh. 13:2; Prov.
20:22 ^s Deut. 23:5;
[Rom. 8:28; Heb.
12:10, 11] ^t So with
Kt., LXX, Syr., Vg.;
Qr. my eyes; Tg.
tears of my eyes
13 ⁵ Lit. dusted him
with dust

the house of Saul, whose name was ^gShimei the son of Gera, coming from there. He came out, cursing continuously as he came. ⁶And he threw stones at David and at all the servants of King David. And all the people and all the mighty men were on his right hand and on his left. ⁷Also Shimei said thus when he cursed: "Come out! Come out! You ¹bloodthirsty man, ^hyou ²rogue! ⁸The LORD has ⁱbrought upon you all ^jthe blood of the house of Saul, in whose place you have reigned; and the LORD has delivered the kingdom into the hand of Absalom your son. So now you are caught in your own evil, because you are a ³bloodthirsty man!"

⁹Then Abishai the son of Zeruiah said to the king, "Why should this ^kdead dog ^lcurse my lord the king? Please, let me go over and take off his head!"

¹⁰But the king said, ^m"What have I to do with you, you sons of Zeruiah? So let him curse, because ⁿthe LORD has said to him, 'Curse David.' ^oWho then shall say, 'Why have you done so?'"

¹¹And David said to Abishai and all his servants, "See how ^pmy son who ^qcame from my own body seeks my life. How much more now ^rmay this Benjamite? Let him alone, and let him curse; for so the LORD has ordered him. ¹²It may be that the LORD will look on ⁴my affliction, and that the LORD will ^rrepay me with ^sgood for his cursing this day." ¹³And as David and his men went along the road, Shimei went along the hillside opposite him and cursed as he went, threw stones at him and ⁵kicked up dust. ¹⁴Now the king

15:37 The word **friend** can mean a counselor or an advisor (see 1 Kin. 4:5).

16:1 **Ziba**, a long-time servant of both Saul and Mephibosheth, assisted David and his party with provisions for their initial flight. **Summer fruits** probably refers to fresh figs (see Mic. 7:1) or fig cakes (see 1 Sam. 25:18). **skin of wine**: In ancient times, wine was carried in animal-skin containers. The skin expanded with the liquid when it fermented (see Matt. 9:17).

16:3 **Your master's son** is a reference to Mephibosheth. **Ziba** had been in the service of Jonathan, father of Mephibosheth (9:2, 9). **Today the house of Israel will restore the kingdom of my father to me**: According to Ziba, Mephibosheth was staying in Jerusalem in hopes that Absalom's rebellion would result in his elevation to the throne. Even though David had shown special concern for Mephibosheth (ch. 9), the latter may have had some thoughts that this might be the time to advance the cause of the dynasty of Saul. **16:5** **Bahurim** was near Jerusalem, east of the Mount of Olives (3:16). **Shimei the son of Gera** was a distant relative of Saul (see 19:16-23; 1 Kin. 2:8, 9, 36-46). **cursing continuously**: These were not simple insults or merely the words of someone with a foul mouth. Shimei was asking God to destroy David (see Num. 22:6).

16:6 **threw stones**: Throwing stones is a gesture of contempt, as if the fleeing king were merely a stray dog. Stones can also be dangerous weapons, as is shown by the fact that stoning was a normal means of capital punishment among the Hebrews (see also 1 Kin. 21:13). **All the mighty men** refers to David's royal troops and bodyguards (17:8).

16:7, 8 **Come out** might be rephrased, "Go out" (into banishment and exile) or "Begone!" **You bloodthirsty man**: David was a man of war, and he was guilty of killing Uriah (11:14-27). But Shimei blamed the demise of Saul's family on David (v. 5)—an unjust charge (ch. 1). **You rogue**, literally "man of Belial," is an expletive against David that means worthless or useless. **The blood of the house of Saul** may refer to the murders of Ishbosheth and Abner, although David was completely innocent of their deaths (3:22-4:12).

16:9 **Abishai** was a nephew of David, the son of David's sister **Zeruiah** (1 Chr. 2:16). He was consistently devoted to David (19:21, 22; 1 Sam. 26:8). In the ancient Middle East, a **dead dog** was something utterly contemptible (3:8).

16:10 **What have I to do with you**: This idiom means that David did not share the feelings and views of Abishai. **sons of Zeruiah**: Apparently David considered that Joab, also a son of Zeruiah (1 Chr. 2:16), would share Abishai's willingness to kill Shimei. **the LORD has said to him, 'Curse David'**: David might have remembered God's promise "to raise up adversity" for his sin with Bathsheba (12:11) and took Shimei's cursing as part of this discipline.

16:11 David argued that if his own **son** showed him no loyalty, there was no reason to expect respect from the **Benjamite**, that is, a person from the tribe of Saul.

16:12 **the LORD will repay me with good**: David hoped that the Lord would look upon his repentant heart and render a blessing to compensate for Shimei's curse.

and all the people who *were* with him became weary; so they refreshed themselves there.

The Advice of Ahithophel

¹⁵Meanwhile ¹Absalom and all the people, the men of Israel, came to Jerusalem; and Ahithophel *was* with him. ¹⁶And so it was, when Hushai the Archite, ¹⁷“David’s friend, came to Absalom, that ¹⁸Hushai said to Absalom, “*Long live the king! Long live the king!*”

¹⁹So Absalom said to Hushai, “*Is this your loyalty to your friend?*” ²⁰Why did you not go with your friend?”

²¹And Hushai said to Absalom, “No, but whom the Lord and this people and all the men of Israel choose, his I will be, and with him I will remain. ²²Furthermore, ²³whom should I serve? *Should I not serve* in the presence of his son? As I have served in your father’s presence, so will I be in your presence.”

15 ¹ 2 Sam. 15:12, 37
16 ¹⁶ 2 Sam. 15:37
17 ¹⁷ 2 Sam. 15:34
18 ¹⁸ 2 Sam. 19:25; [Prov. 17:17]
19 ¹⁹ 2 Sam. 15:34

20 ²⁰ 2 Sam. 15:12
21 ²¹ 2 Sam. 15:16; 20:3 ²² Gen. 34:30; 1 Sam. 13:4
22 ²² 2 Sam. 2:7; Zech. 8:13
23 ²³ 2 Sam. 12:11, 12
24 ²⁴ 2 Sam. 15:12

CHAPTER 17

2 ² Deut. 25:18;
2 Sam. 16:14
¹ tremble with fear

²⁰Then Absalom said to ²¹Ahithophel, “Give advice as to what we should do.”

²²And Ahithophel said to Absalom, “Go in to your father’s ²³concubines, whom he has left to keep the house; and all Israel will hear that you ²⁴are abhorred by your father. Then ²⁵the hands of all who are with you will be strong.” ²⁶So they pitched a tent for Absalom on the top of the house, and Absalom went in to his father’s concubines ²⁷in the sight of all Israel.

²⁸Now the advice of Ahithophel, which he gave in those days, *was* as if one had inquired at the oracle of God. So *was* all the advice of Ahithophel ²⁹both with David and with Absalom.

17Moreover Ahithophel said to Absalom, “Now let me choose twelve thousand men, and I will arise and pursue David tonight. ²I will come upon him while he *is* ³weary and weak, and make him ⁴afraid. And all the peo-

16:15 Ahithophel, David’s former counselor (15:12), had switched his allegiance to Absalom (15:31). In this context, **the men of Israel** refers to Absalom’s followers.

16:16–18 Long live the king: Hushai deceptively professed loyalty to Absalom. In fact, these words could easily have applied to David for he was still the divinely sanctioned king. By using his words carefully, Hushai was able to lead his hearers to think he was praising Absalom, when in fact he was shouting for David. **your friend:** Absalom apparently was referring to Hushai’s title, “David’s friend” (15:37). **whom the Lord:** With these well-planned words, Hushai professed allegiance to whomever the Lord would choose as king. **his I will be:** Hushai’s real allegiance was with David, who he knew was God’s chosen one.

16:19 in the presence of his son: Hushai wished to imply that his allegiance to Absalom was the natural outgrowth of his loyalty to David. It was appropriate for a son to succeed his father, and for supporters of the dynasty to give their allegiance to the new king.

16:22 Concubines were unofficial wives. In ancient times, taking over a king’s harem was a recognized means of claiming the throne.

When Ahithophel advised Absalom to have sexual relations with David’s concubines, he knew that this would finalize the breach between Absalom and David. It was an irrevocable action. The **tent** that Absalom pitched **in the sight of all Israel** was probably a bridal tent. Absalom made the people of Israel fully aware that he was engaging in sexual relations with his father’s concubines. Putting the tent on the roof of the palace was an insolent act that was guaranteed to stir the populace one way or another.

16:23 at the oracle of God: Ahithophel had acquired such a reputation that his counsel was taken to be equivalent to a word from the Lord. He was not a prophet, but his words were received as if they were prophetic.

17:1, 2 Ahithophel realized that the fleeing king was in a vulnerable situation. He counseled Absalom to pursue and kill David and his followers in order to eliminate any chance that David would regain the throne. The **twelve thousand men** that he asked for would likely have had an easy time defeating the weary troops of David.

I will strike only the king: Despite his celebrated wisdom, Ahithophel underestimated the loyalty of David’s crack troops. Ahithophel

David's Triumphs and Troubles	
David's Triumphs	
David's Wise Actions	David's Victories
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> David prayed for guidance (2:1). David punished the assassins of his enemy Ishbosheth (4:12). David prayed for God's deliverance (5:19). David brought the ark to Jerusalem (6:12). David offered sacrifices to God and blessed the people (6:18). David praised God for His goodness (7:18–24; 22:1–4). David confessed his sins (12:13; 24:10). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Judeans anointed David king (2:4). The Israelites anointed David king (5:3). David conquered Jerusalem (5:6, 7). God promised David an eternal dynasty (7:16). David's army defeated the Philistines (8:1). David's army defeated the Moabites (8:2). David's army defeated the Syrians (8:6). David's army defeated the Ammonites (11:1).
David's Troubles	
David's Unwise Actions	David's Reverses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> David seduced Bathsheba (11:4). David ordered the murder of Uriah (11:15, 17). David failed to forgive Absalom or instruct him (13:39; 14:24). David ordered that a census be taken of the Israelites (24:2). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bathsheba became pregnant (11:5). David and Bathsheba's child died (12:18). Amnon seduced Tamar (13:14). Absalom murdered Amnon (13:29). Absalom usurped the throne (16:15). A plague ravaged the Israelites (24:15).

ple who *are* with him will flee, and I will ^bstrike only the king. ³Then I will bring back all the people to you. When all return except the man whom you seek, all the people will be at peace.” ⁴And the saying pleased Absalom and all the ^celders of Israel.

The Advice of Hushai

⁵Then Absalom said, “Now call Hushai the Archite also, and let us hear what he ^dsays too.” ⁶And when Hushai came to Absalom, Absalom spoke to him, saying, “Ahithophel has spoken in this manner. Shall we do as he says? If not, speak up.”

⁷So Hushai said to Absalom: “The advice that Ahithophel has given is not good at this time. ⁸For,” said Hushai, “you know your father and his men, that they *are* mighty men, and they *are* enraged in their minds, like ^ea bear robbed of her cubs in the field; and your father is a man of war, and will not camp with the people. ⁹Surely by now he is hidden in some pit, or in some *other* place. And it will be, when some of them are overthrown at the first, that whoever hears it will say, ‘There is a slaughter among the people who follow Absalom.’ ¹⁰And even he *who* is valiant, whose heart is like the heart of a lion, will ^fmelt completely. For all Israel knows that your father is a mighty man, and *those* who *are* with him *are*

² ^b Zech. 13:7
⁴ ^c 2 Sam. 5:3; 19:11
⁵ ^d 2 Sam. 15:32-34
⁸ ^e Hos. 13:8
¹⁰ ^f Josh. 2:11

¹¹ ^g Judg. 20:1;
 2 Sam. 3:10 ^h Gen.
 22:17; Josh. 11:4;
 1 Kin. 20:10
¹³ ⁱ Mic. 1:6
¹⁴ ^j 2 Sam. 15:31, 34
¹⁵ ^k 2 Sam. 15:35,
 36
¹⁶ ^l 2 Sam. 15:28
¹⁷ ^m 2 Sam. 15:27,
 36; 1 Kin. 1:42, 43

valiant men. ¹¹Therefore I advise that all Israel be fully gathered to you, ^ofrom Dan to Beersheba, ^hlike the sand that is by the sea for multitude, and that you go to battle in person. ¹²So we will come upon him in some place where he may be found, and we will fall on him as the dew falls on the ground. And of him and all the men who *are* with him there shall not be left so much as one. ¹³Moreover, if he has withdrawn into a city, then all Israel shall bring ropes to that city; and we will ⁱpull it into the river, until there is not one small stone found there.”

¹⁴So Absalom and all the men of Israel said, “The advice of Hushai the Archite is better than the advice of Ahithophel.” For ^jthe LORD had purposed to defeat the good advice of Ahithophel, to the intent that the LORD might bring disaster on Absalom.

Hushai Warns David to Escape

¹⁵^kThen Hushai said to Zadok and Abiathar the priests, “Thus and so Ahithophel advised Absalom and the elders of Israel, and thus and so I have advised. ¹⁶Now therefore, send quickly and tell David, saying, ‘Do not spend this night ^lin the plains of the wilderness, but speedily cross over, lest the king and all the people who *are* with him be swallowed up.’” ¹⁷^mNow Jonathan and

might have been able to defeat David in a surprise raid, but David’s loyal warriors would not have scattered.

17:3 I will bring back all the people: Ahithophel tried to persuade Absalom that if he killed only David, the people would align themselves with Absalom, and **peace** would be restored in the land.

17:5 Although Absalom was pleased with Ahithophel’s counsel (v. 4), he did not accept it immediately. He summoned **Hushai** (16:16) to get a second opinion on the matter.

17:7 Hushai, David’s confidant, set about to frustrate Ahithophel’s wise counsel. He realized that the plan proposed by Ahithophel would prove fatal for David. The words **at this time** leave room for an appreciation of Ahithophel’s past counsel and might have been intended to deter suspicion over his critical evaluation.

17:8 Mighty men are heroic fighting men. **Like a bear robbed of her cubs:** Hushai used a strong simile to depict the ferocity of David and his men. There is no more dangerous foe in the woods than a mother bear who believes her cubs to be in danger. **will not camp with the people:** Hushai suggested that David, as an experienced warrior, would not camp with the civilian refugees. He would know that doing so would leave him vulnerable to attack and capture.

17:9 hidden in some pit: The countryside of Judah was riddled with caves, ravines, and hiding places. **a slaughter:** Hushai suggested that David could not be taken without some loss of life, and this would give rise to the rumor that Absalom was suffering a severe defeat.

17:10 Valiant means well-trained and able to fight. **will melt completely:** Hushai suggested that even the bravest of Absalom’s soldiers would yield to panic when facing David and his veterans.

17:11, 12 all Israel: Hushai advised that Absalom was going to need a larger army than he presently had, and that Absalom himself should lead the force into battle. **Dan to Beersheba** means the whole country, from Dan in the north to Beersheba in the south, a distance of about 150 miles. **like the sand:** Hushai used this figure

of speech to describe the army that would be needed to destroy David’s forces. Hushai knew it would take time to gather so many men, and that time was what David needed the most. **in some place:** The implication of this remark is that Absalom did not know where David was hiding.

17:13 The river means any river, not necessarily the Jordan.

17:15 Zadok and Abiathar the priests had stayed in Jerusalem at David’s request (15:24–29). David had arranged for them to gather information about Absalom’s activities and forward it to him through their sons (15:35, 36).

17:16 The plains of the wilderness means the Jordan valley in the vicinity of Jericho (15:28). Hushai told David to cross the Jordan since he could not be sure that Absalom would act on his counsel.

17:17, 18 Jonathan and Ahimaaz were the sons of Abiathar and

advice

(Heb. *’etsah*) (17:7; Job 38:2; Ps. 1:1; Prov. 8:14) Strong’s #6098

This Hebrew term has two primary meanings: “counsel” and “plan.” Both senses are used of God (Jer. 32:19; Is. 5:19) and man (2 Kin. 18:20; Prov. 20:5). While the counsel of the Lord stands forever, He brings the counsel of the nations to nothing (Ps. 33:10, 11; Prov. 21:30). One of the psalmists prayed to be guided by God’s counsel, a prayer not made by the rebellious people of Isaiah’s day (Ps. 73:24; Is. 30:1). The Hebrew kings typically sought counsel from advisors who were old, experienced, and wise; however, Rehoboam tragically sought out the counsel of his peers (1 Kin. 12:8, 13; Ezek. 7:26). Solomon describes those who heed counsel as being wise (Prov. 12:15; 19:20), and the psalmists proclaimed their reliance on God’s counsel (Ps. 16:7; 73:24).

Ahimaaz ^astayed at ^eEn Rogel, for they dared not be seen coming into the city; so a female servant would come and tell them, and they would go and tell King David. ¹⁸Nevertheless a lad saw them, and told Absalom. But both of them went away quickly and came to a man's house ^pin Bahurim, who had a well in his court; and they went down into it. ^{19q}Then the woman took and spread a covering over the well's mouth, and spread ground grain on it; and the thing was not known. ²⁰And when Absalom's servants came to the woman at the house, they said, "Where *are* Ahimaaz and Jonathan?"

So ^rthe woman said to them, "They have gone over the water brook."

And when they had searched and could not find *them*, they returned to Jerusalem. ²¹Now it came to pass, after they had departed, that they came up out of the well and went and told King David, and said to David, ^s"Arise and cross over the water quickly. For thus has Ahithophel advised against you." ²²So David and all the people who *were* with him arose and crossed over the Jordan. By morning light not one of them was left who had not gone over the Jordan.

²³Now when Ahithophel saw that his advice was not followed, he saddled a donkey, and arose and went home to ^this house, to his city. Then he ²put his ^uhousehold in order, and ^vhanged himself, and died; and he was buried in his father's tomb.

²⁴Then David went to ^wMahanaim.

¹⁷ ^a Josh. 2:4-6
^e Josh. 15:7; 18:16
¹⁸ ^p 2 Sam. 3:16; 16:5
¹⁹ ^q Josh. 2:4-6
²⁰ ^r Ex. 1:19; [Lev. 19:11]; Josh. 2:3-5
²¹ ^s 2 Sam. 17:15, 16
²³ ^t 2 Sam. 15:12
^u 2 Kin. 20:1 ^v Matt. 27:5 ² Lit. *gave charge concerning his house*
²⁴ ^w Gen. 32:2; Josh. 13:26; 2 Sam. 2:8; 19:32

²⁵ ^x 2 Sam. 19:13; 20:9-12; 1 Kin. 2:5, 32 ^y 1 Chr. 2:16
³ ^z Jether, 1 Chr. 2:17
⁴ So with MT, some LXX mss., Tg.; some LXX mss. *Ishmaelite* (cf. 1 Chr. 2:17); Vg. of *Jezebel*
²⁷ ^z 1 Sam. 11:1; 2 Sam. 10:1; 12:29 ^a 2 Sam. 9:4
^b 2 Sam. 19:31, 32; 1 Kin. 2:7
²⁹ ^c 2 Sam. 16:2, 14

CHAPTER 18

¹ ^a Ex. 18:25; Num. 31:14; 1 Sam. 22:7
¹ Lit. *attended to*
² ^b Judg. 7:16; 1 Sam. 11:11
^c 2 Sam. 15:19-22
³ ^d 2 Sam. 21:17

And Absalom crossed over the Jordan, he and all the men of Israel with him. ²⁵And Absalom made ^xAmasa captain of the army instead of Joab. This Amasa *was* the son of a man whose name *was* ³Jithra, an ⁴Israelite, who had gone in to ^yAbigail the daughter of Nahash, sister of Zeruiah, Joab's mother. ²⁶So Israel and Absalom encamped in the land of Gilead.

²⁷Now it happened, when David had come to Mahanaim, that ^zShobi the son of Nahash from Rabbah of the people of Ammon, ^aMachir the son of Ammiel from Lo Debar, and ^bBarzillai the Gileadite from Rogelim, ²⁸brought beds and basins, earthen vessels and wheat, barley and flour, parched *grain* and beans, lentils and parched *seeds*, ²⁹honey and curds, sheep and cheese of the herd, for David and the people who *were* with him to eat. For they said, "The people are hungry and weary and thirsty ^cin the wilderness."

Absalom's Defeat and Death

18 And David ¹numbered the people who *were* with him, and ^aset captains of thousands and captains of hundreds over them. ²Then David sent out one third of the people under the hand of Joab, ^bone third under the hand of Abishai the son of Zeruiah, Joab's brother, and one third under the hand of ^cIttai the Gittite. And the king said to the people, "I also will surely go out with you myself."

^{3d} But the people answered, "You shall

Zadok. **En Rogel** was a spring or well south of Jerusalem at the junction of the Hinnom and Kidron valleys (Josh. 15:7; 18:16). **a female servant**: The young men would arouse suspicion by coming into the city, so a woman servant served as an intermediary. **a lad saw them**: The efforts of Jonathan and Ahimaaz to avoid detection were unsuccessful. **Bahurim** was on the east side of the Mount of Olives (16:5). The word translated **well** may also refer to a pit or cistern. Apparently, there was no water in it at this time.

17:22 Although the **Jordan** was not a large river, crossing it could be dangerous, even at the fords. David was safer once he got his family and followers across that barrier. There is a certain sadness in what David had to do. While the tribal allotments of ancient Israel included land on both sides of the Jordan, there was always an emotional understanding that the "real" land of Israel was west of the Jordan. David was truly in exile. Later, his enemies would charge him with having "fled from the land" (19:9).

17:23 **Ahithophel** committed suicide when he learned that his advice was not being followed. He apparently realized that Absalom's cause was doomed, and that when David returned he would be put to death as a disloyal subject.

17:24 **Mahanaim** was formerly Ishbosheth's capital (2:8). It was east of the Jordan and north of the Jabbok.

17:25 **Absalom** put his army under the command of **Amasa**, since Joab had remained loyal to David. **who had gone in to Abigail**: This is not the usual phrase for marriage, perhaps indicating that Abigail did not leave her father's authority completely.

17:26 **Gilead** refers to the mountainous region east of the Jordan and between the Yarmuk valley to the north and the Jabbok valley

to the south. Gilead was famous in biblical times for its forests (Jer. 22:6), pasture lands (Num. 32:1-4), and the medicinal balms made from its plants (Jer. 8:22; 46:11).

17:27 When David arrived in the fortified city of **Mahanaim**, he found a gracious reception. **Shobi** was a vassal king under David who ruled **Rabbah**, the capital of **Ammon**. **Lo Debar** was about ten miles south of the Sea of Galilee, east of the Jordan River in the Jordan valley (9:4). **Barzillai** was an old man of great wealth (19:31-39; 1 Kin. 2:7).

17:29 The rulers showed compassion to David and his **weary** followers. Jesus taught that kindness done to others in need would not be forgotten (Matt. 25:34-36).

18:1 To prepare for battle, **David** counted and reviewed his fighting forces. **captains of thousands**: Although only a small contingent of troops left Jerusalem with David, other loyal followers soon rallied to his cause.

18:2 **David** divided his men into three companies—a frequent military tactic in ancient times (see Judg. 7:16; 1 Sam. 11:11). **Abishai**, the oldest son of David's sister **Zeruiah** (1 Chr. 2:16), was noted for his brave but impetuous spirit (3:30; 16:9; 1 Sam. 26:6-9). **Joab**, the younger brother of Abishai, had become commander of David's army as a result of his heroic leadership in the capture of Jerusalem (1 Chr. 11:4-6). Little is known of **Ittai** except that he was strongly committed to serving David and the Lord (15:19-22).

18:3 **You shall not go out**: Although David wanted to accompany his men into battle (v. 2), he was persuaded not to go, both for his own protection and for the safety of Mahanaim (17:27).

not go out! For if we flee away, they will not care about us; nor if half of us die, will they care about us. But *you are* worth ten thousand of us now. For you are now more help to us in the city.”

⁴Then the king said to them, “Whatever seems best to you I will do.” So the king stood beside the gate, and all the people went out by hundreds and by thousands. ⁵Now the king had commanded Joab, Abishai, and Ittai, saying, “Deal gently for my sake with the young man Absalom.” ⁶And all the people heard when the king gave all the captains orders concerning Absalom.

⁶So the people went out into the field of battle against Israel. And the battle was in the ^fwoods of Ephraim. ⁷The people of Israel were overthrown there before the servants of David, and a great slaughter of twenty thousand took place there that day. ⁸For the battle there was scattered over the face of the whole countryside, and the woods devoured more people that day than the sword devoured.

⁹Then Absalom met the servants of David. Absalom rode on a mule. The mule went under the thick boughs of a great terebinth tree, and ⁹his head caught in the terebinth; so he was left hanging between heaven and earth. And the mule which *was* under him went on. ¹⁰Now a certain man saw *it* and told Joab, and said, “I just saw Absalom hanging in a terebinth tree!”

¹¹So Joab said to the man who told him, “You just saw *him!* And why did you not strike him there to the ground? I would have given you ten *shekels* of silver and a belt.”

¹²But the man said to Joab, “Though I were to receive a thousand *shekels* of silver in my hand, I would not raise my hand against the king’s son. ^hFor in our hearing the king commanded you and

5 ^e 2 Sam. 18:12
6 ^f Josh. 17:15, 18;
2 Sam. 17:26
9 ^g 2 Sam. 14:26
12 ^h 2 Sam. 18:5

Abishai and Ittai, saying, ²‘Beware lest anyone *touch* the young man Absalom!’ ¹³Otherwise I would have dealt falsely against my own life. For there is nothing hidden from the king, and you yourself would have set yourself against *me*.”

¹⁴Then Joab said, “I cannot linger with you.” And he took three spears in his hand and thrust them through Absalom’s heart, while he was *still* alive in the midst of the terebinth tree. ¹⁵And ten young men who bore Joab’s armor surrounded Absalom, and struck and killed him.

¹⁶So Joab blew the trumpet, and the people returned from pursuing Israel. For Joab held back the people. ¹⁷And they took Absalom and cast him into a large pit in the woods, and ⁱlaid a very large heap of stones over him. Then all Israel ^jfled, everyone to his tent.

¹⁸Now Absalom in his lifetime had taken and set up a ³pillar for himself, which *is* in ^kthe King’s Valley. For he said, ^l“I have no son to keep my name in remembrance.” He called the pillar after his own name. And to this day it is called Absalom’s Monument.

David Hears of Absalom’s Death

¹⁹Then ^mAhimaaz the son of Zadok said, “Let me run now and take the news to the king, how the LORD has ⁴avenged him of his enemies.”

²⁰And Joab said to him, “You shall not take the news this day, for you shall take the news another day. But today you shall take no news, because the king’s son is dead.” ²¹Then Joab said to the Cushite, “Go, tell the king what you have seen.” So the Cushite bowed himself to Joab and ran.

²²And Ahimaaz the son of Zadok said again to Joab, “But ⁵whatever happens, please let me also run after the Cushite.”

² Vss. ‘Protect the young man Absalom for me!’
17 ⁱ Deut. 21:20, 21; Josh. 7:26;
8:29 / 2 Sam. 19:8;
20:1, 22
18 ^k Gen. 14:17
1/2 Sam. 14:27
³ monument
19 ^m 2 Sam. 15:36;
17:17 ⁴ vindicated
22 ⁵ Lit. *be what may*

18:6 the woods of Ephraim: The battle took place in a dense forest north of the Jabbok River, east of the Jordan.

18:7, 8 Absalom’s newly organized army, the people of Israel, were no match for the experienced soldiers of David. **the woods devoured:** Because of the rugged nature of the terrain and dense growth in the forest, more deaths resulted from the pursuit than from actual combat.

18:9 the terebinth, sometimes translated *oak* or *elm*, was a strong tree, native to the land of Israel. It grows to a height of around 35 feet.

18:11 ten shekels: The shekel was the basic unit of weight, equal to 11.3 grams or about a half ounce. The **belt** was part of a soldier’s equipment (1 Sam. 18:4; 1 Kin. 2:5).

18:12–14 against the king’s son: The soldier had not forgotten David’s command not to harm Absalom (v. 5). Since the spears did not kill Absalom immediately (v. 15), the word translated **heart** may refer to Absalom’s trunk.

18:16 Joab blew the trumpet to signal the army to stop its pursuit. The death of Absalom meant the end of the rebellion. The trumpet was a ram’s horn or shofar (2:28; 6:15).

18:17 Rather than returning Absalom’s body to Jerusalem for honorable burial, Joab had it buried in a **large pit** in the forest. The heap of stones that covered the grave may have been symbolic of a stoning, the legal penalty due a rebel son (Deut. 21:20, 21).

18:18 The King’s Valley was near Jerusalem (Gen. 14:17). **to this day:** The great monument that Absalom had erected for himself was still in existence when the narrator wrote this section of 2 Samuel.

18:19 Ahimaaz with Jonathan had carried the message from Zadok and Abiathar, urging David to flee across the Jordan (17:20, 21). The word **avenged** is used here in the sense of “delivered.”

18:21–23 Cushite means someone of the land from Cush, the remote region of what is today southern Egypt and Sudan. **let me also run:** Ahimaaz could not be restrained from also running to David with the good news of victory. **The plain** was the floor of the Jordan valley. Ahimaaz took a longer route, but avoided the hilly terrain on the road taken by the Cushite.

So Joab said, “Why will you run, my son, since you have no news ready?”

²³ “But whatever happens,” *he said*, “let me run.”

So he said to him, “Run.” Then Ahimaaz ran by way of the plain, and outran the Cushite.

²⁴ Now David was sitting between the ^atwo gates. And the watchman went up to the roof over the gate, to the wall, lifted his eyes and looked, and there was a man, running alone. ²⁵ Then the watchman cried out and told the king. And the king said, “If he is alone, *there is news in his mouth*.” And he came rapidly and drew near.

²⁶ Then the watchman saw *another* man running, and the watchman called to the gatekeeper and said, “There is *another* man, running alone!”

And the king said, “He also brings news.”

²⁷ So the watchman said, ⁶ “I think the running of the first is like the running of Ahimaaz the son of Zadok.”

And the king said, “He is a good man, and comes with ^agood news.”

²⁸ So Ahimaaz called out and said to the king, ⁷ “All is well!” Then he bowed down with his face to the earth before the king, and said, ⁸ “Blessed *be* the LORD your God, who has delivered up the men who raised their hand against my lord the king!”

²⁹ The king said, “Is the young man Absalom safe?”

Ahimaaz answered, “When Joab sent the king’s servant and *me* your servant, I saw a great tumult, but I did not know what it *was about*.”

³⁰ And the king said, “Turn aside *and* stand here.” So he turned aside and stood still.

²⁴ ^a Judg. 5:11; 2 Sam. 13:34; 2 Kin. 9:17
²⁷ ^a 1 Kin. 1:42
⁶ Lit. / see the running
²⁸ ^a 2 Sam. 16:12
⁷ Peace be to you

³¹ Just then the Cushite came, and the Cushite said, “There is good news, my lord the king! For the LORD has avenged you this day of all those who rose against you.”

³² And the king said to the Cushite, “Is the young man Absalom safe?”

So the Cushite answered, “May the enemies of my lord the king, and all who rise against you to do harm, be like *that* young man!”

David’s Mourning for Absalom

³³ Then the king was deeply moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept. And as he went, he said thus: ^a “O my son Absalom—my son, my son Absalom—if only I had died in your place! O Absalom my son, ^r my son!”

19 And Joab was told, “Behold, the king is weeping and ^amourning for Absalom.” ² So the victory that day was *turned* into ^bmourning for all the people. For the people heard it said that day, “The king is grieved for his son.”

³ And the people ¹stole back ^cinto the city that day, as people who are ashamed steal away when they flee in battle. ⁴ But the king ^dcovered his face, and the king cried out with a loud voice, “O my son Absalom! O Absalom, my son, my son!”

⁵ Then ^fJoab came into the house to the king, and said, “Today you have disgraced all your servants who today have saved your life, the lives of your sons and daughters, the lives of your wives and the lives of your concubines, ⁶ in that you love your enemies and hate your friends. For you have declared today that you ²regard neither princes nor servants; for today I perceive that if Absalom had lived and all of us had died today, then it would have pleased you well. ⁷ Now therefore,

³³ ^a 2 Sam. 12:10
^r 2 Sam. 19:4

CHAPTER 19

¹ ^a Jer. 14:2
² ^b Esth. 4:3
³ ^c 2 Sam. 17:24, 27; 19:32 ¹ went by stealth
⁴ ^d 2 Sam. 15:30
^e 2 Sam. 18:33
⁵ ^f 2 Sam. 18:14
⁶ ² have no respect for

18:24 two gates: The city of Mahanaim evidently had a double gate. Between the outer and inner gates there were probably stone benches. **The roof over the gate** refers to the gatehouse or fortress located on the wall over the city gate. **The watchman** at the gate was responsible to warn the city of an approaching army and to announce the arrival of important visitors. **Lifted his eyes** is a common Hebrew idiom that means “looked” (Gen. 22:4).

18:25, 26 If he is alone: The fact that only one runner was approaching led David to assume that the news was good. Perhaps he assumed that a group of men running toward the gate would have indicated a rout. Yet the approach of **another man** complicated the picture.

18:28 All is well: The messenger’s greeting was *shalom*, the word usually translated *peace*. **your God:** Ahimaaz recognized God’s strong association with David.

18:29 Is the young man Absalom safe: David expressed his first concern, his interest in the welfare of his son. Ahimaaz did not give a straight answer to David, though he knew that Absalom was dead (v. 20).

18:31, 32 the LORD has avenged: Like Ahimaaz (v. 28), the Cushite gave God credit for delivering David. Furthermore he gave an hon-

est answer to David’s question about Absalom, although his words were carefully worded so as to soften the blow.

18:33 Was deeply moved can mean “quaked” or “quivered.” David was overcome with sorrow.

19:2, 3 the victory that day was turned into mourning: David’s unrestrained expression of grief over the death of his son turned the well-deserved victory celebration into a day of mourning, not so much for Absalom himself, but for the grief brought upon David by his death (18:33). **the people stole back into the city:** What a description for the return of victorious warriors! Like cowards who had fled from battle, David’s soldiers crept back into the city of Mahanaim (17:27), hoping to escape notice.

19:4 David covered his face as an expression of mourning (15:30). **my son:** His words, which were so touching when first announced (18:33), take on a grating sound when repeated many times.

19:5, 6 you have disgraced all your servants: Joab argued that by honoring his rebel son and neglecting his loyal soldiers, David had shamed and embarrassed those who had served him well. **Your enemies:** literally “those who hate you.” **Your friends:** literally “those who love you.” **Princes** refers to the captains of the army.

19:7 Speak comfort may be rephrased “speak to the heart.” David

arise, go out and speak ³comfort to your servants. For I swear by the LORD, if you do not go out, not one will stay with you this night. And that will be worse for you than all the evil that has befallen you from your youth until now.” ⁸Then the king arose and sat in the ⁹gate. And they told all the people, saying, “There is the king, sitting in the gate.” So all the people came before the king.

For everyone of Israel had ^hfled to his tent.

David Returns to Jerusalem

⁹Now all the people were in a dispute throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, “The king saved us from the hand of our ⁱenemies, he delivered us from the hand of the ^jPhilistines, and now he has ^kfled from the land because of Absalom. ¹⁰But Absalom, whom we anointed over us, has died in battle. Now therefore, why do you say nothing about bringing back the king?”

¹¹So King David sent to ^lZadok and Abiathar the priests, saying, “Speak to the elders of Judah, saying, ‘Why are you the last to bring the king back to his house, since the words of all Israel have come to the king, to his ^{very} house? ¹²You *are* my brethren, you *are* ^mmy bone and my flesh. Why then are you the last to bring back the king?’ ¹³” And say to Amasa, ‘Are you not my bone and my flesh? ^oGod do so to me, and more also, if you are not commander of the army before me ⁴continually in place of Joab.’”

⁷ ³ Lit. to the heart of
⁸ ⁹ 2 Sam. 15:2;
 18:24 ^h 2 Sam.
 18:17
⁹ ² 2 Sam. 8:1-
 14 ² 2 Sam. 3:18
^k 2 Sam. 15:14
¹¹ ² 2 Sam. 15:24
¹² ^m 2 Sam. 5:1;
 1 Chr. 11:1
¹³ ⁿ 2 Sam. 17:25;
 1 Chr. 2:17 ^o Ruth
 1:17 ⁴ permanently

¹⁴ ^p Judg. 20:1
¹⁵ ^q Josh. 5:9;
 1 Sam. 11:14, 15
^r 2 Sam. 17:22
¹⁶ ^s 2 Sam. 16:5;
 1 Kin. 2:8
¹⁷ ^t 2 Sam. 3:19;
 1 Kin. 12:21
^u 2 Sam. 9:2, 10;
 16:1, 2
¹⁹ ^v 1 Sam. 22:15
^w 2 Sam. 16:5;
 6 ^x 2 Sam. 13:33
^z charge me with
 iniquity
²⁰ ^y Judg. 1:22;
 1 Kin. 11:28
²¹ ^z [Ex. 22:28]
^a [1 Sam. 26:9]

¹⁴So he swayed the hearts of all the men of Judah, ⁿjust as *the heart of* one man, so that they sent *this word* to the king: “Return, you and all your servants!”

¹⁵Then the king returned and came to the Jordan. And Judah came to ^qGilgal, to go to meet the king, to escort the king ^racross the Jordan. ¹⁶And ^sShimei the son of Gera, a Benjamite, who *was* from Bahurim, hurried and came down with the men of Judah to meet King David. ¹⁷*There were* a thousand men of ^tBenjamin with him, and ^uZiba the servant of the house of Saul, and his fifteen sons and his twenty servants with him; and they went over the Jordan before the king. ¹⁸Then a ferryboat went across to carry over the king’s household, and to do what he thought good.

David’s Mercy to Shimei

Now Shimei the son of Gera fell down before the king when he had crossed the Jordan. ¹⁹Then he said to the king, ^v“Do not let my lord ⁵impute iniquity to me, or remember what ^wwrong your servant did on the day that my lord the king left Jerusalem, that the king should ^xtake *it* to heart. ²⁰For I, your servant, know that I have sinned. Therefore here I am, the first to come today of all ^ythe house of Joseph to go down to meet my lord the king.”

²¹But Abishai the son of Zeruiah answered and said, “Shall not Shimei be put to death for this, ^zbecause he ^acursed the LORD’s anointed?”

would have to speak words of encouragement if he expected his troops to continue their support of his kingship.

19:8 The gate was the primary meeting place in ancient cities. **So all the people came before the king:** Although not directly stated, the context implies that David followed Joab’s counsel by expressing appreciation to his loyal troops and faithful followers. **For everyone of Israel had fled to his tent:** This parenthetical note indicates that the rebellion ended and Absalom’s followers returned home.

19:9, 10 The movement to restore David to power was not unanimous. Some Israelites thought that because he had **fled from the land**, David lost his right to rule. There may also have been some fear that David would avenge himself on those who had supported Absalom.

19:11 Zadok and Abiathar were priests who had remained in Jerusalem at David’s request during the rebellion (15:24–29). The **elders of Judah** were reluctant to call David back to Jerusalem, perhaps because of their part in Absalom’s insurrection (15:10, 11). David asked his friends, the priests, to begin the movement to invite David back to his throne. Apparently, he did not want to come into Jerusalem without public support for his rule.

19:12 My brethren refers to the elders of Judah (v. 11). David knew that he needed the support of his own tribe and its leaders to resume his leadership over the nation. Without their full support there was no hope for the renewal of his kingship.

19:13 Amasa, David’s nephew, had commanded the army of Absalom (17:25). David offered him Joab’s position as commander-in-chief of David’s army. This offer was intended to secure the alle-

giance of Amasa and the rebel army, as well as to discipline Joab for killing Absalom against his orders (18:14, 15).

19:14 David’s acts of diplomacy were effective; he was invited to return as king. The fact that David was the anointed of the Lord meant that God would ensure that David would be restored. But David could not simply wait in exile in a foreign land. He had to act on the belief that God would continue to work His will.

19:15 Gilgal, the first place the Israelites camped after they crossed the Jordan (Josh. 4:19, 20), was about a mile from Jericho.

19:16 Shimei, who had cursed David when he was forced to leave Jerusalem, no doubt feared that David would punish him for this outrageous behavior (16:5–8). He hurried to meet the king so he could make amends.

19:17 a thousand men of Benjamin: This large contingent was a very good sign to David that his old hostilities with the family of Saul were over at last. **they went over the Jordan:** Ziba and his sons forded the Jordan to assist David and his family in crossing.

19:19 what wrong your servant did: Shimei’s confession showed genuine repentance and godly sorrow. He added no excuse, self-justification, or explanation (compare Saul’s behavior in 1 Sam. 13:11, 12; 15:20, 21).

19:20 The designation **house of Joseph** was sometimes applied to the northern tribes (Ps. 78:67; Ezek. 37:16) since Ephraim, the tribe of Joseph’s son (see Gen. 48:5, 13–20), was the largest and most powerful tribe in the north.

19:21–23 Abishai once again (16:9, 10) called for the death of Shimei for cursing God’s **anointed** (23:1). **What have I to do with you:** David often had to quell the fiery spirit of his nephew (16:10).

²² And David said, ^b“What have I to do with you, you sons of Zeruiah, that you should be adversaries to me today? ‘Shall any man be put to death today in Israel? For do I not know that today I *am* king over Israel?’” ²³ Therefore ^d the king said to Shimei, “You shall not die.” And the king swore to him.

David and Mephibosheth Meet

²⁴ Now ^e Mephibosheth the son of Saul came down to meet the king. And he had not cared for his feet, nor trimmed his mustache, nor washed his clothes, from the day the king departed until the day he returned in peace. ²⁵ So it was, when he had come to Jerusalem to meet the king, that the king said to him, ^f“Why did you not go with me, Mephibosheth?”

²⁶ And he answered, “My lord, O king, my servant deceived me. For your servant said, ‘I will saddle a donkey for myself, that I may ride on it and go to the king,’ because your servant *is* lame. ²⁷ And ^g he has slandered your servant to my lord the king, ^h but my lord the king *is* like the angel of God. Therefore do *what is* good in your eyes. ²⁸ For all my father’s house were but dead men before my lord the king. ⁱ Yet you set your servant among those who eat at your own table. Therefore what right have I still to ⁶ cry out anymore to the king?”

²⁹ So the king said to him, “Why do you speak anymore of your matters? I have said, ‘You and Ziba divide the land.’”

³⁰ Then Mephibosheth said to the king, “Rather, let him take it all, inasmuch as my lord the king has come back in peace to his own house.”

David’s Kindness to Barzillai

³¹ And ^j Barzillai the Gileadite came

²² ^b 2 Sam. 3:39; 16:10 ^c 1 Sam. 11:13
²³ ^d 1 Kin. 2:8, 9, 37, 46
²⁴ ^e 2 Sam. 9:6; 21:7
²⁵ ^f 2 Sam. 16:17
²⁷ ^g 2 Sam. 16:3, 4
^h 2 Sam. 14:17, 20
²⁸ ⁱ 2 Sam. 9:7-13
⁶ *complain*
³¹ ^j 2 Sam. 17:27-29; 1 Kin. 2:7

³² ^k 2 Sam. 17:27-29
³⁵ ^l Ps. 90:10
³⁷ ^m 2 Sam. 19:40; Jer. 41:17
³⁹ ⁿ Gen. 31:55; Ruth 1:14; 2 Sam. 14:33
⁴⁰ ⁷ MT Chimham

down from Rogelim and went across the Jordan with the king, to escort him across the Jordan. ³² Now Barzillai was a very aged man, eighty years old. And ^k he had provided the king with supplies while he stayed at Mahanaim, for he *was* a very rich man. ³³ And the king said to Barzillai, “Come across with me, and I will provide for you while you are with me in Jerusalem.”

³⁴ But Barzillai said to the king, “How long have I to live, that I should go up with the king to Jerusalem? ³⁵ I *am* today ^l eighty years old. Can I discern between the good and bad? Can your servant taste what I eat or what I drink? Can I hear any longer the voice of singing men and singing women? Why then should your servant be a further burden to my lord the king? ³⁶ Your servant will go a little way across the Jordan with the king. And why should the king repay me *with* such a reward? ³⁷ Please let your servant turn back again, that I may die in my own city, near the grave of my father and mother. But here is your servant ^m Chimham; let him cross over with my lord the king, and do for him what seems good to you.”

³⁸ And the king answered, “Chimham shall cross over with me, and I will do for him what seems good to you. Now whatever you request of me, I will do for you.” ³⁹ Then all the people went over the Jordan. And when the king had crossed over, the king ⁿ kissed Barzillai and blessed him, and he returned to his own place.

The Quarrel About the King

⁴⁰ Now the king went on to Gilgal, and ⁷ Chimham went on with him. And all the people of Judah escorted the king,

David had spared Shimei’s life once before because of the timing of his attack on him; here he spared his life again because of the timing of Shimei’s repentance. **You shall not die:** The amnesty granted Shimei was apparently conditioned on his continued loyalty. When David was near death, he ordered that Shimei be put to death by Solomon (1 Kin. 2:8, 9, 36–46). David could not put Shimei to death himself because of his oath; however, his son could do it if there were just cause.

19:24 Mephibosheth was actually the son of Jonathan and the grandson of Saul (4:4; 9:1–13). Ziba claimed that Mephibosheth, in the turmoil of Absalom’s revolt, sought to advance the cause of the house of Saul (16:1–4). **cared for his feet:** The personal neglect of Mephibosheth must have been striking. He intended his personal appearance to be a sign of mourning David’s absence.

19:26–30 Mephibosheth claimed that Ziba had taken advantage of him, since he was not able to saddle or mount his donkey without help. **he has slandered your servant:** At this point, David faced a dilemma. Who was telling the truth—Mephibosheth or Ziba?

Why do you speak anymore: David found the whole issue too complex to sort out. **divide the land:** In this way, both Ziba and Mephibosheth would be provided for in a generous manner (see

16:14). **let him take it all:** Mephibosheth’s final words indicated his submission to David’s decision.

19:32–34 very aged: The 80-year-old Barzillai had proven himself to be an extraordinary help to David during David’s exile. This was an opportunity for David to repay his kindness. **very rich:** Barzillai did not need money; David’s offer of a royal pension was based on his loyal friendship.

19:35, 36 Can I discern between the good and bad: There was no effective contrast between the opportunity David offered and Barzillai’s present living situation at Mahanaim. What real difference would the change make in his life, since he was too old to enjoy the pleasures of the court? In going **a little way across the Jordan** with David, Barzillai fulfilled his duty as a gracious host.

19:37, 38 Chimham was later identified by the historian Josephus as Barzillai’s son (see 1 Kin. 2:7). **I will do for him:** Because of his love for Barzillai, David promised to give a royal patronage to Chimham. This was similar to the provision David had made for Mephibosheth because of his love for Jonathan (ch. 9).

19:40 The term **all** is figurative. It means that as a whole Judah supported David. **Half** means that the people of Israel were less enthusiastic.

and also half the people of Israel. ⁴¹Just then all the men of Israel came to the king, and said to the king, “Why have our brethren, the men of Judah, stolen you away and ^obrought the king, his household, and all David’s men with him across the Jordan?”

⁴²So all the men of Judah answered the men of Israel, “Because the king is ^pa close relative of ours. Why then are you angry over this matter? Have we ever eaten at the king’s *expense*? Or has he given us any gift?”

⁴³And the men of Israel answered the men of Judah, and said, “We have ^qten shares in the king; therefore we also have more *right* to David than you. Why then do you despise us—were we not the first to advise bringing back our king?”

Yet ^rthe words of the men of Judah were ^sfiercer than the words of the men of Israel.

The Rebellion of Sheba

20 And there happened to be there a ¹rebel, whose name was Sheba the son of Bichri, a Benjaminite. And he blew a trumpet, and said:

“We have no share in David,
Nor do we have inheritance in the
son of Jesse;
^bEvery man to his tents, O Israel!”

²So every man of Israel deserted David, and followed Sheba the son of Bichri. But the ^cmen of Judah, from the Jordan as far as Jerusalem, remained loyal to their king.

³Now David came to his house at Jerusalem. And the king took the ten women,

⁴¹ ^o 2 Sam. 19:15
⁴² ^p 2 Sam. 19:12
⁴³ ^q 1 Kin. 11:30,
31 ^r Judg. 8:1; 12:1
^s harsher

CHAPTER 20

¹ ^a 2 Sam. 19:43;
1 Kin. 12:16
^b 1 Sam. 13:2;
2 Sam. 18:17; 2 Chr.
10:16 ¹ Lit. man of
Belial
² ^c 2 Sam. 19:14

³ ^d 2 Sam. 15:16;
16:21, 22
⁴ ^e 2 Sam. 17:25;
19:13
⁶ ^f 2 Sam. 21:17
⁹ 2 Sam. 11:11; 1 Kin.
1:33
⁷ ^h 2 Sam. 8:18;
1 Kin. 1:38, 44
¹² 2 Sam. 15:18
⁹ Matt. 26:49; Luke
22:47
¹⁰ ^k 2 Sam. 3:27;
1 Kin. 2:5 ¹² 2 Sam.
2:23

^dhis concubines whom he had left to keep the house, and put them in seclusion and supported them, but did not go in to them. So they were shut up to the day of their death, living in widowhood.

⁴And the king said to Amasa, ^e“Assemble the men of Judah for me within three days, and be present here yourself.” ⁵So Amasa went to assemble *the men of Judah*. But he delayed longer than the set time which David had appointed him. ⁶And David said to ^fAbishai, “Now Sheba the son of Bichri will do us more harm than Absalom. Take ^gyour lord’s servants and pursue him, lest he find for himself fortified cities, and escape us.” ⁷So Joab’s men, with the ^hCherethites, the Pelethites, and ⁱall the mighty men, went out after him. And they went out of Jerusalem to pursue Sheba the son of Bichri. ⁸When they *were* at the large stone which is in Gibeon, Amasa came before them. Now Joab was dressed in battle armor; on it was a belt *with* a sword fastened in its sheath at his hips; and as he was going forward, it fell out. ⁹Then Joab said to Amasa, “Are you in health, my brother?” ^jAnd Joab took Amasa by the beard with his right hand to kiss him. ¹⁰But Amasa did not notice the sword that *was* in Joab’s hand. And ^khe struck him with it ^lin the stomach, and his entrails poured out on the ground; and he did not *strike* him again. Thus he died.

Then Joab and Abishai his brother pursued Sheba the son of Bichri. ¹¹Meanwhile one of Joab’s men stood near Amasa, and said, “Whoever favors Joab and whoever *is* for David—follow Joab!” ¹²But Amasa wallowed in *his* blood in the middle of the highway. And when

19:41, 42 stolen you away: The people of Israel were annoyed by the fact that David’s supporters in Judah had the greater part in bringing the king back from exile east of the Jordan. **The men of Judah** pointed out that even though they had a tribal relationship with David, they had never taken advantage of their privileged position.

19:43 The people of Israel were claiming a greater share in David’s kingship since Israel’s northern territory was formed by **ten** tribes. **fiercer:** This bitterness between the tribes of Israel and the tribe of Judah would lead finally to the division of the nation at the time of the death of Solomon, David’s son (1 Kin. 12). In the present situation, it threatened to erupt into civil war—which would take place under the leadership of Sheba (ch. 20).

20:1 **Sheba** was from Benjamin, the same tribe as Saul. The term **rebel**, which also means “worthless person,” suggests that Sheba was a scoundrel. **trumpet:** As was usual for military signals (2:28; 15:10; 18:16; 20:22), Sheba sounded a shofar or ram’s horn. **We have no share in David:** These three lines of poetry form a campaign slogan or song of rebellion. **Every man to his tents** may be paraphrased, “Let’s go back home, and from there we can resist the king.”

20:2 every man of Israel: There was a general rebellion among the northern tribes. **From the Jordan as far as Jerusalem:** The people along David’s route to Jerusalem expressed their loyalty to the king.

20:4 Amasa, who had commanded Absalom’s army (17:25), had

been offered Joab’s position as commander-in-chief of David’s army (19:13). Apparently, he accepted the offer and was commissioned to put down Sheba’s rebellion.

20:5, 6 But he delayed: Amasa’s delay in carrying out David’s order to gather forces against Sheba’s rebellion could have resulted in a disaster like that of Absalom’s revolt. **Abishai,** Joab’s older brother (1 Chr. 2:16), was enlisted to take command of the soldiers of Judah and put down Sheba’s revolt. David knew that Sheba’s revolt was potentially more dangerous than Absalom’s, since Sheba’s rebellion was based on long-standing tribal animosity between Israel and Judah.

20:7 Joab’s men are distinguished from the rest of David’s army. Apparently, Joab maintained his own group of elite soldiers.

20:8, 9 Gibeon was about six miles northwest of Jerusalem. Joab apparently adjusted his sword so that it fell from the sheath as he stepped forward to greet **Amasa** (v. 4). Assuming a mere accident, Amasa did not pay attention to the weapon in Joab’s left hand (v. 10). **Are you in health, my brother:** The term translated *health* is the Hebrew word *shalom*, meaning “peace.” **Brother** is not just a formality here; Joab and Amasa were cousins, sons of two of David’s sisters (1 Chr. 2:16, 17). **Joab took Amasa by the beard:** This friendly greeting, a preliminary to a kiss, was now a preparation for killing him.

20:12 wallowed in his blood: The bloody spectacle of Amasa lying on the road caused the soldiers to stop and think about what it

the man saw that all the people stood still, he moved Amasa from the highway to the field and threw a garment over him, when he saw that everyone who came upon him halted. ¹³When he was removed from the highway, all the people went on after Joab to pursue Sheba the son of Bichri.

¹⁴And he went through all the tribes of Israel to ^mAbel and Beth Maachah and all the Berites. So they were gathered together and also went after ²Sheba. ¹⁵Then they came and besieged him in Abel of Beth Maachah; and they ⁿcast up a siege mound against the city, and it stood by the rampart. And all the people who *were* with Joab battered the wall to throw it down.

¹⁶Then a wise woman cried out from the city, "Hear, hear! Please say to Joab, 'Come nearby, that I may speak with you.'" ¹⁷When he had come near to her, the woman said, "Are you Joab?"

He answered, "I am."

Then she said to him, "Hear the words of your maidservant."

And he answered, "I am listening."

¹⁸So she spoke, saying, "They used to talk in former times, saying, 'They shall surely seek *guidance* at Abel,' and so they would end *disputes*. ¹⁹I am among the peaceable and faithful in Israel. You seek to destroy a city and a mother in Israel. Why would you swallow up ^othe inheritance of the LORD?"

²⁰And Joab answered and said, "Far be it, far be it from me, that I should swallow up or destroy! ²¹That is not so. But a man from the mountains of Ephraim, Sheba the son of Bichri by name, has raised his hand against the king, against

14 ^m 1 Kin. 15:20;
2 Kin. 15:29; 2 Chr.
16:4 ² Lit. *him*
15 ⁿ 2 Kin. 19:32;
Ezek. 4:2
19 ^o 1 Sam. 26:19;
2 Sam. 14:16; 21:3

22 ^p 2 Sam. 20:16;
[Eccl. 9:13-16]
23 ^q 2 Sam. 8:16-18;
1 Kin. 4:3-6
24 ^r 1 Kin. 4:6
^s 2 Sam. 8:16;
1 Kin. 4:3
25 ^t 2 Sam. 8:17;
1 Kin. 4:4
26 ^u 2 Sam. 8:18
³ Or *David's priest*

CHAPTER 21

1 ^a Num. 27:21;
2 Sam. 5:19 ¹ Lit.
house of bloodshed
2 ^b Josh. 9:3, 15-20
^c [Ex. 34:11-16]
3 ^d 1 Sam. 26:19;
2 Sam. 20:19

David. Deliver him only, and I will depart from the city."

So the woman said to Joab, "Watch, his head will be thrown to you over the wall." ²²Then the woman ^pin her wisdom went to all the people. And they cut off the head of Sheba the son of Bichri, and threw *it* out to Joab. Then he blew a trumpet, and they withdrew from the city, every man to his tent. So Joab returned to the king at Jerusalem.

David's Government Officers

²³And ^qJoab was over all the army of Israel; Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was over the Cherethites and the Pelethites; ²⁴Adoram was ^rin charge of revenue; ^sJehoshaphat the son of Ahilud was recorder; ²⁵Sheva was scribe; ^tZadok and Abiathar were the priests; ²⁶^uand Ira the Jairite was ³a chief minister under David.

David Avenges the Gibeonites

21 Now there was a famine in the days of David for three years, year after year; and David ^ainquired of the LORD. And the LORD answered, "It is because of Saul and his ¹bloodthirsty house, because he killed the Gibeonites." ²So the king called the Gibeonites and spoke to them. Now the Gibeonites were not of the children of Israel, but ^bof the remnant of the Amorites; the children of Israel had sworn protection to them, but Saul had sought to kill them ^cin his zeal for the children of Israel and Judah.

³Therefore David said to the Gibeonites, "What shall I do for you? And with what shall I make atonement, that you may bless ^dthe inheritance of the LORD?"

might mean to follow Joab. One of the soldiers finally covered the corpse so that the shocking scene would not impede the movement of the soldiers any further.

20:14 He probably refers to Sheba, who traveled the land attempting to raise popular support for his rebellion. **Abel and Beth Maachah** were cities in northern Galilee so closely connected that they became identified. They were four miles west of Dan (1 Kin. 15:20; 2 Kin. 15:29).

20:15 A siege mound was used in ancient warfare to allow soldiers to reach the top of a city wall. The mound consisted of dirt and debris placed against the wall.

20:18, 19 The wise woman explained to Joab that **Abel** was famous for the wisdom and counsel offered by its citizens. In addition to being **peaceable and faithful**, Abel was noted as a **mother city**, or a recognized leader in the region. The citizens had done nothing to deserve the city's destruction.

20:21, 22 his head will be thrown to you: Convinced that the death of **Sheba** would end the siege, the people of Abel cut off his head and threw it **over the wall** to Joab.

20:23 Joab was the overall commander of David's army, while **Benaiah** was in charge of the **Cherethites and the Pelethites**, foreign mercenaries who fought for David.

20:24, 25 Revenue may refer to forced labor (see 1 Kin. 12:18). The **recorder**, meaning "one who causes to remember," was responsible for

keeping official records. The **scribe** was the king's official secretary. **20:26 Ira** replaced David's sons (8:18) as **chief minister**, a word customarily translated **priest**.

21:1 Famine was a means of divine chastening intended to lead God's people to repentance (Deut. 28:47, 48). **he killed the Gibeonites:** About 400 years earlier, the Gibeonites had deceived Joshua and the Israelites into making a treaty that guaranteed their protection and security (Josh. 9:3-27). Saul had broken that agreement by putting some Gibeonites to death (v. 9). This incident was not recorded elsewhere.

21:2 The Gibeonites were Canaanites living near the site of present-day El-Jib, about six miles northwest of Jerusalem. **Amorites** is used here as a general designation for the original population of Canaan (Gen. 15:16). Saul's **zeal for the children of Israel and Judah** led him to attempt to exterminate the foreign element from the land of Israel. Righteous zeal can be an act of heroic faith (Num. 25). But when zeal is misdirected, it can have serious consequences (see Rom. 10:2; Phil. 3:6).

21:3 The word translated **make atonement** means to remove sin or defilement by offering a substitute or paying a ransom. David offered to make a settlement with the Gibeonites for the wrong Saul had done. **that you may bless the inheritance of the LORD:** David wanted the Gibeonites once again to look with favor upon the people of Israel.

⁴And the Gibeonites said to him, “We will have no silver or gold from Saul or from his house, nor shall you kill any man in Israel for us.”

So he said, “Whatever you say, I will do for you.”

⁵Then they answered the king, “As for the man who consumed us and plotted against us, *that* we should be destroyed from remaining in any of the territories of Israel, ⁶let seven men of his descendants be delivered ^eto us, and we will hang them before the LORD ^fin Gibeah of Saul, ^gwhom the LORD chose.”

And the king said, “I will give *them*.”

⁷But the king spared ^hMephibosheth the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, because of ⁱthe LORD’s oath that *was* between them, between David and Jonathan the son of Saul. ⁸So the king took Armoni and Mephibosheth, the two sons of ^jRizpah the daughter of Aiah, whom she bore to Saul, and the five sons of ^kMichal the daughter of Saul, whom she ³brought up for Adriel the son of Barzillai the Meholahite; ⁹and he delivered them into the hands of the Gibeonites, and they hanged them on the hill ^kbefore the LORD. So they fell, *all* seven together, and were put to death in the days of harvest, in the first *days*, in the beginning of barley harvest.

¹⁰Now ^lRizpah the daughter of Aiah took sackcloth and spread it for herself on the rock, ^mfrom the beginning of harvest until the late rains poured on them from heaven. And she did not allow the birds of the air to rest on them by day nor the beasts of the field by night.

⁶ ^e Num. 25:4
^f 1 Sam. 10:26
^g 1 Sam. 10:24;
 [Hos. 13:11]
⁷ ^h 2 Sam. 4:4; 9:10
ⁱ 1 Sam. 18:3; 20:12-17; 23:18; 2 Sam. 9:1-7
⁸ ^j 2 Sam. 3:7
⁹ ^k Merab, 1 Sam. 18:19; 25:44; 2 Sam. 3:14; 6:23 ^l Lit. bore to Adriel
¹⁰ ^l 2 Sam. 6:17
¹¹ ^m 2 Sam. 3:7; 21:8
ⁿ Deut. 21:23

¹² ⁿ 1 Sam. 31:11-13
¹³ ^o 1 Sam. 31:8 ^p Beth Shean, Josh. 17:11
¹⁴ ^q Josh. 18:28
¹⁵ ^r Josh. 7:26; 2 Sam. 24:25
¹⁶ ^s Num. 13:22, 28; Josh. 15:14; 2 Sam. 21:18-22 ^t Or Rapha
¹⁷ ^u 2 Sam. 20:6-10 ^v 2 Sam. 18:3
¹⁸ ^w 2 Sam. 22:29; 1 Kin. 11:36
¹⁹ ^x 1 Chr. 20:4-8

¹¹And David was told what Rizpah the daughter of Aiah, the concubine of Saul, had done. ¹²Then David went and took the bones of Saul, and the bones of Jonathan his son, from the men of ^jJabesh Gilead who had stolen them from the street of ^kBeth Shan, where the ^oPhilistines had hung them up, after the Philistines had struck down Saul in Gilboa. ¹³So he brought up the bones of Saul and the bones of Jonathan his son from there; and they gathered the bones of those who had been hanged. ¹⁴They buried the bones of Saul and Jonathan his son in the country of Benjamin in ^pZelah, in the tomb of Kish his father. So they performed all that the king commanded. And after that ^qGod heeded the prayer for the land.

Philistine Giants Destroyed

¹⁵When the Philistines were at war again with Israel, David and his servants with him went down and fought against the Philistines; and David grew faint. ¹⁶Then Ishbi-Benob, who *was* one of the sons of ^sthe ^rgiant, the weight of whose bronze spear *was* three hundred *shekels*, who was bearing a new *sword*, thought he could kill David. ¹⁷But ^tAbishai the son of Zeruiah came to his aid, and struck the Philistine and killed him. Then the men of David swore to him, saying, ^u“You shall go out no more with us to battle, lest you quench the *“lamp of Israel.”*

¹⁸^vNow it happened afterward that there was again a battle with the Philistines

21:4–6 No amount of monetary compensation, **silver or gold**, would satisfy the Gibeonites for the wrong that was done. **Nor shall you kill any man in Israel for us** may also be translated, “It is not for us to put a man to death in Israel.” The implication would then be that they had no authority, as a subject people, for taking blood vengeance. The Gibeonites sought justice in keeping with the principle of Num. 35:31, that a life demands a life. They asked David for royal authority to execute **seven** of Saul’s **descendants**. The term **hang** suggests some form of solemn execution, followed by the public exposure of the dead body, which was impaled on a post (Num. 25:4). The words **before the LORD** indicate that the judgment was intended to satisfy divine justice (v. 1). **Gibeah**, about three miles north of Jerusalem, had been Saul’s capital (1 Sam. 10:26).

21:7 **because of the LORD’s oath**: Because of David’s covenant of friendship with **Jonathan**, his son **Mephibosheth** was **spared** (1 Sam. 18:3; 20:8, 16). For the story of Mephibosheth, see 4:4; 9:1–13; 16:1–4; 19:24–30.

21:8 **Mephibosheth**, the son of **Rizpah**, is not the same as Jonathan’s son of the same name (v. 7). Rizpah was Saul’s concubine (3:7). The **Barzillai** mentioned here is not the same as David’s loyal friend of 17:27.

21:9 **they hanged them**: God’s law explicitly prohibited the punishment of a son for the sins of his father (Deut. 24:16; 2 Kin. 14:6, Ezek. 18:1–4, 14–17). Since there is no condemnation of David in the text and since God apparently honored the action and ended the famine (v. 14), it is possible that those who were executed had been implicated in the killing of the Gibeonites.

21:10 **Rizpah** remained near the bodies, protecting them from

scavengers, from the barley harvest to the early rains (late April to October).

21:12, 13 **Beth Shan** was at the junction of the Jezreel and Jordan valleys, about four miles west of the Jordan. **from the street**: Apparently the bodies of **Saul** and **Jonathan** had been suspended on a wall along a main street of the Philistine city (1 Sam. 31:10). **Gilboa** is a small mountain range in the eastern part of the Jezreel valley (1 Sam. 31:1). **Those who had been hanged** refers to the seven sons in vv. 8–10.

21:14 **Zelah** was a town allotted to **Benjamin** (Josh. 18:28). **God heeded the prayer for the land**: Divine justice had been satisfied. God responded to the prayers of His people, bringing an end to the famine.

21:15–22 This section records the exploits of David and his men against the Philistines. The word translated **giant** throughout this section (vv. 16, 18, 20, 22) means one of the Rephaim, a people living in Canaan who were noted for their large size (Gen. 15:19–21; Num. 13:33; Deut. 2:11).

21:16 **the spear of Ishbi-Benob** weighed **three hundred shekels**, or approximately seven and a half pounds.

21:17 **Abishai** was Joab’s brother (3:30; 16:9–11; 20:6; 1 Sam. 26:6–9). **You shall go out no more with us**: David’s men did not want him to risk his life in battle. The **lamp of Israel** refers to **David**, whose life and leadership provided righteous guidance for the people of Israel.

21:18 **Sibbechai the Hushathite** is listed in 1 Chr. 11:29 with David’s mighty men.

at Gob. Then ^wSibbechai the Hushathite killed ⁶Saph, who *was* one of the sons of ⁷the giant. ¹⁹Again there was war at Gob with the Philistines, where ^xElhanan the son of ⁸Jaare-Oregim the Bethlehemite killed ^y*the brother of Goliath* the Gittite, the shaft of whose spear *was* like a weaver's beam.

²⁰Yet again ^zthere was war at Gath, where there was a man of *great* stature, who had six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot, twenty-four in number; and he also was born to ⁹the giant. ²¹So when he ^adefied Israel, Jonathan the son of ¹Shimea, David's brother, killed him.

^{22b}These four were born to ²the giant in Gath, and fell by the hand of David and by the hand of his servants.

Praise for God's Deliverance

22 Then David ^aspoke to the LORD the words of this song, on the day when the LORD had ^bdelivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul. ²And he ^csaid:

^d"The LORD *is* my rock and my
^efortress and my deliverer;
³ The God of my strength, ^fin whom I
will trust;
My ^gshield and the ^hhorn ¹ of my
salvation,
My ⁱstronghold and my ^jrefuge;
My Savior, You save me from
violence.
⁴ I will call upon the LORD, *who is*
worthy to be praised;
So shall I be saved from my enemies.
⁵ "When the waves of death
surrounded me,
The floods of ungodliness ²made me
afraid.
⁶ The ^ksorrows of Sheol
surrounded me;
The snares of death confronted me.
⁷ In my distress ^lI called upon the
LORD,
And cried out to my God;
He ^mheard my voice from His temple,
And my cry *entered* His ears.

The Situations Behind the Psalms		
Almost half of the psalms were written by David. A number of these have strong connections to specific events from the life of David as recorded in 1 and 2 Samuel.		
Event in David's Life	Passage	Related Psalm
Saul sent men to kill David.	1 Sam. 19:11	Ps. 59
David fled from Saul to Achish, king of Gath.	1 Sam. 21:10–12	Ps. 56
David feigned insanity in Gath.	1 Sam. 21:13	Ps. 34
David fled to the cave of Adullam.	1 Sam. 22:1	Ps. 142
Doeg the Edomite told Saul that David was in Nob.	1 Sam. 22:9	Ps. 52
The Ziphites told Saul that David was hiding in the hill of Hachilah.	1 Sam. 23:19	Ps. 54
David spared Saul's life.	1 Sam. 24:3, 4	Ps. 57
David and his army killed 18,000 Syrians in the Valley of Salt.	2 Sam. 8:13	Ps. 60
David admitted his sin with Bathsheba to Nathan the prophet.	2 Sam. 12:13	Ps. 51
David fled from his son Absalom.	2 Sam. 15:16	Ps. 3
The Israelites mourned the civil war between Absalom and David.	2 Sam. 15:23	Ps. 63
Shimei cursed David.	2 Sam. 16:5	Ps. 7
David rejoiced over his deliverance from Saul.	2 Sam. 22:1–51	Ps. 18

18 ^w 1 Chr. 11:29;
27:11 ⁶ Sippai,
1 Chr. 20:4 ⁷ Or
Rapha
19 ^x 2 Sam. 23:24
✓ 1 Sam. 17:4; 1 Chr.
20:5 ⁸ Jair, 1 Chr.
20:5
20 ^z 1 Chr. 20:6 ⁹ Or
Rapha
21 ^a 1 Sam. 17:10
¹ Shammah,
1 Sam. 16:9 and
elsewhere
22 ^b 1 Chr. 20:8 ² Or
Rapha

CHAPTER 22
1 ^a Ex. 15:1; Deut.
31:30; Judg. 5:1
^b Ps. 18:title; 34:19
2 ^c Ps. 18

⁸ "Then ⁿthe earth shook and trembled;
^oThe foundations of ³heaven quaked
and were shaken,
Because He was angry.
⁹ Smoke went up from His nostrils,
And devouring ^pfire from His mouth;
Coals were kindled by it.
¹⁰ He ^qbowed the heavens also, and
came down
With ^rdarkness under His feet.
¹¹ He rode upon a cherub, and flew;

^dDeut. 32:4; 1 Sam. 2:2 ^ePs. 91:2 ³ / Ps. 7:1; Heb. 2:13 ^aGen.
15:1; Deut. 33:29; Ps. 84:11 ^hLuke 1:69 ⁱProv. 18:10 ^jPs. 9:9;
46:1, 7, 11; Jer. 16:19 ¹Strength ⁵ ²Or overwhelmed ⁶ ^kPs.
116:3 ⁷ / Ps. 116:4; 120:1 ^mEx. 3:7; Ps. 34:6, 15 ⁸ ⁿJudg. 5:4;
Ps. 77:18; 97:4 ^o Job 26:11 ³ So with MT, LXX, Tg.; Syr., Vg. ^phills
(cf. Ps. 18:7) ⁹ ^pDeut. 32:22; Ps. 97:3, 4; Heb. 12:29 ¹⁰ ^qEx.
19:16–20; Is. 64:1 ^rEx. 20:21

21:21 Jonathan was David's nephew, the son of **Shimea**.

22:1 While this psalm later became part of the congregational worship of Israel (Ps. 18), it began as David's personal and earnest expression of praise **to the LORD**. This song was composed when God delivered David **from the hand of Saul** during David's wilderness exploits. Perhaps an incident such as the one recorded in 1 Sam. 23:24–28 provided the impetus for David to write this "song of testimony."

22:3 the horn of my salvation: The horn of an animal was used for protection and defense. Hence, the horn stands for might and power.

22:4 To be praised means "to be boasted about joyfully." God is not only worthy of our contemplative worship, but also to be celebrated for what He does for us.

22:6 Sheol is used in Hebrew poetry as a synonym for death. Many believe the word is derived from the Hebrew word meaning "to ask" or "to enquire." In the OT, Sheol is described as a place of "dust," referring to death (Job 17:16), as a place of "corruption" (Ps. 16:10), and as a "Pit" (Isa. 14:15).

22:7–15 These verses describe God's active intervention in terms reminiscent of His appearance to Moses at Mt. Sinai, with earthquakes, thunder, darkness, and lightning (Ex. 19:16–20; Ps. 68).

- And He ⁴was seen ^supon the wings of the wind.
- 12 He made ^tdarkness canopies around Him,
Dark waters *and* thick clouds of the skies.
- 13 From the brightness before Him
Coals of fire were kindled.
- 14“ The LORD ^uthundered from heaven,
And the Most High uttered His voice.
- 15 He sent out ^varrows and scattered them;
Lightning bolts, and He vanquished them.
- 16 Then the channels of the sea ^wwere seen,
The foundations of the world were uncovered,
At the ^xrebukey of the LORD,
At the blast of the breath of His nostrils.
- 17“ He ^ysent from above, He took me,
He drew me out of many waters.
- 18 He delivered me from my strong enemy,
From those who hated me;
For they were too strong for me.
- 19 They confronted me in the day of my calamity,
But the LORD was my ^zsupport.
- 20^a He also brought me out into a broad place;
He delivered me because He ^bdelighted in me.
- 21“ The ^cLORD rewarded me according to my righteousness;
According to the ^dcleanness of my hands
He has recompensed me.
- 22 For I have ^ekept the ways of the LORD,
And have not wickedly departed from my God.
- 23 For all His ^fjudgments *were* before me;

11 ^s Ps. 104:3 ⁴ So with MT, LXX; many Heb. mss., Syr., Vg. *flew* (cf. Ps. 18:10); Tg. *spoke with power*
12 ^t Job 36:29; Ps. 97:2
14 ^u 1 Sam. 2:10; Job 37:2-5; Ps. 29:3
15 ^v Deut. 32:23; Josh. 10:10; 1 Sam. 7:10; Ps. 7:13
16 ^w Nah. 1:4 x Ex. 15:8
17 ^y Ps. 144:7; Is. 43:2
19 ^z Is. 10:20
20 ^a Ps. 31:8; 118:5
^b 2 Sam. 15:26
21 ^c 1 Sam. 26:23; [Ps. 7:8] ^d [Job 17:9]; Ps. 24:4
22 ^e Gen. 18:19; 2 Chr. 34:33; Ps. 119:3
23 ^f [Deut. 6:6-9; 7:12]; Ps. 119:30, 102
24 ^g Gen. 6:9; 7:1; Job 1:1; [Eph. 1:4; Col. 1:21, 22]
25 ^h 2 Sam. 22:21
ⁱ rewarded ⁶ LXX, Syr., Vg. *the cleanness of my hands in His sight* (cf. Ps. 18:24); Tg. *my cleanness before His word*
26 ⁱ [Matt. 5:7]
27 ^j [Lev. 26:23, 24; Rom. 1:28]
28 ^k Ps. 72:12 ¹ Job 40:11 ² afflicted
29 ^m Ps. 119:105; 132:17
30 ⁿ 2 Sam. 5:6-8
31 ^o [Deut. 32:4]; Dan. 4:37; [Matt. 5:48] ^p Ps. 12:6; [Prov. 30:5]
32 ^q Is. 45:5, 6
33 ^r Ps. 27:1 ^s [Heb. 13:21] ^t Ps. 101:2, 6
⁸ DSS, LXX, Syr., Vg. *It is God who arms me with strength* (cf. Ps. 18:32); Tg. *It is God who sustains me with strength*
⁹ So with Qr., LXX, Syr., Tg., Vg. (cf. Ps. 18:32); Kt. *His*

- And *as for* His statutes, I did not depart from them.
- 24 I was also ^gblameless before Him,
And I kept myself from my iniquity.
- 25 Therefore ^hthe LORD has ⁵recompensed me according to my righteousness,
According to ⁶my cleanness in His eyes.
- 26“ With ⁱthe merciful You will show Yourself merciful;
With a blameless man You will show Yourself blameless;
- 27 With the pure You will show Yourself pure;
And ^jwith the devious You will show Yourself shrewd.
- 28 You will save the ^khumble⁷ people;
But Your eyes *are* on ^lthe haughty, *that* You may bring *them* down.
- 29“ For You *are* my ^mlamp, O LORD;
The LORD shall enlighten my darkness.
- 30 For by You I can run against a troop;
By my God I can leap over a ⁿwall.
- 31 *As for* God, ^oHis way *is* perfect;
^pThe word of the LORD *is* proven;
He *is* a shield to all who trust in Him.
- 32“ For ^qwho *is* God, except the LORD?
And who *is* a rock, except our God?
- 33⁸ God *is* my ^rstrength *and* power,
And He ^smakes ⁹my way ^tperfect.
- 34 He makes ¹my feet ^ulike the *feet* of deer,
And ^vsets me on my high places.
- 35 He teaches my hands ²to make war,
So that my arms can bend a bow of bronze.
- 36“ You have also given me the shield of Your salvation;

34 ^u 2 Sam. 2:18; Hab. 3:19 ^v Is. 33:16 ¹ So with Qr., LXX, Syr., Tg., Vg. (cf. Ps. 18:33); Kt. *His* 35 ² Lit. *for the war*

22:16 The imagery used here recalls the miraculous parting of the Red Sea (see Ex. 14).

22:21 according to my righteousness: David believed that God would deal with people according to their conduct, punishing the wicked and blessing the righteous (Deut. 30:15–20). These words may appear self-righteous, but they must be compared with David’s own confessions of sinfulness (compare 12:13; Ps. 38:1–10). His righteousness was based on God’s unfailing kindness to him (v. 51; Ps. 38:15).

22:22 I have kept the ways of the Lord: One thinks of David’s rash action of adultery with Bathsheba and his sending Uriah to die. How then could he say these words? Perhaps this psalm was written before those events had taken place. Yet, there were doubtless many other sins in David’s life even before the sins of great notoriety. In any event, David was forgiven those sins when he acknowledged

them to the Lord. As is the case with believers today, David could stand in a *position* of righteousness even as he strove, by the power of God’s Spirit, to *live* in righteousness.

22:24 David did not claim sinless perfection. The word **blameless** is used of a person who is sound, wholesome, and has integrity (Gen. 17:1).

22:30 run against a troop: David refers to a successful military pursuit (see 1 Sam. 30:8).

22:32 who is God: The rhetorical question emphasizes the reality of God in contrast with false gods and idols (see Is. 40:25).

22:34 Deer are noted for their swiftness, agility, and surefootedness. They are also a picture of graceful beauty.

22:35 It would take unusual strength to **bend a bow of bronze** (see Job 20:24).

Your gentleness has made me great.
 37 You ^wenlarged my path under me;
 So my feet did not slip.

38 “I have pursued my enemies and
 destroyed them;
 Neither did I turn back again till
 they were destroyed.

39 And I have destroyed them and
 wounded them,
 So that they could not rise;
 They have fallen ^xunder my feet.

40 For You have ^yarmed me with
 strength for the battle;
 You have ^zsubdued under me ^zthose
 who rose against me.

41 You have also ^dgiven me the ^anecks
 of my enemies,
 So that I destroyed those who
 hated me.

42 They looked, but *there was* none to
 save;
Even ^bto the LORD, but He did not
 answer them.

43 Then I beat them as fine ^cas the dust
 of the earth;
 I trod them ^dlike dirt in the streets,
 And I ⁵spread them out.

44 “You ^ehave also delivered me from the
⁶strivings of my people;
 You have kept me as the ^fhead of the
 nations.
^gA people I have not known shall
 serve me.

45 The foreigners submit to me;
 As soon as they hear, they obey me.

46 The foreigners fade away,
 And ⁷come frightened ^hfrom their
 hideouts.

47 “The LORD lives!
 Blessed *be* my Rock!

37 ^w 2 Sam. 22:20;
 Prov. 4:12
 39 ^x Mal. 4:3
 40 ^y [Ps. 18:32] ^z [Ps.
 44:5] ³ Lit. *caused to*
bow down
 41 ^a Gen. 49:8; Josh.
 10:24 ⁴ *given me*
victory over
 42 ^b 1 Sam. 28:6;
 Prov. 1:28; Is. 1:15
 43 ^c 2 Kin. 13:7;
 Ps. 18:42 ^d Is. 10:6
⁵ *scattered*
 44 ^e 2 Sam. 3:1
⁶ *contentions*
^f Deut. 28:13 ^g [Is.
 55:5]
 46 ^h 1 Sam. 14:11;
 [Mic. 7:17] ⁷ *So with*
 LXX, Tg., Vg. (cf.
 Ps. 18:45); MT *gird*
themselves

47 ⁱ [2 Sam. 22:3];
 Ps. 89:26
 48 ^j 1 Sam. 24:12;
 Ps. 144:2
 49 ^k Ps. 140:1, 4, 11
 50 ^l 2 Sam. 8:1-14
^m Ps. 57:7; Rom. 15:9
 51 ⁿ Ps. 144:10 ^o Ps.
 89:20 ^p 2 Sam. 7:12-
 16; Ps. 89:29

CHAPTER 23

1 ^a 2 Sam. 7:8, 9; Ps.
 78:70, 71 ^b 1 Sam.
 16:12, 13; Ps. 89:20
 2 ^c Matt. 22:43;
 [2 Pet. 1:21]
 3 ^d [Deut. 32:4]
^e Ex. 18:21; [Is.
 11:1-5]
 4 ^f Ps. 89:36; Is. 60:1

Let God be exalted,
 The ⁱRock of my salvation!
 48 *It is* God who avenges me,
 And ^jsubdues the peoples under me;
 49 He delivers me from my enemies.
 You also lift me up above those who
 rise against me;
 You have delivered me from the
^kviolent man.

50 Therefore I will give thanks to You,
 O LORD, among ^lthe Gentiles,
 And sing praises to Your ^mname.

51 “*Heⁿ is the tower of salvation to His*
king,
And shows mercy to His ^oanointed,
To David and ^phis descendants
forevermore.”

David's Last Words

23 Now these *are* the last words of
 David.

Thus says David the son of Jesse;
Thus says ^athe man raised up on high,
^bThe anointed of the God of Jacob,
 And the sweet psalmist of Israel:

2 “The ^cSpirit of the LORD spoke by me,
 And His word *was* on my tongue.

3 The God of Israel said,
^dThe Rock of Israel spoke to me:
 ‘He who rules over men *must be* just,
 Ruling ^ein the fear of God.

4 And ^f*he shall be* like the light of the
 morning *when* the sun rises,
 A morning without clouds,
 Like the tender grass *springing* out of
 the earth,
 By clear shining after rain.’

5 “Although my house *is* not so with
 God,

22:41 the necks of my enemies: This metaphor is taken from the custom of a victorious king putting his foot on the neck of a defeated foe as a sign of complete overthrow (see Ps. 110:1).

22:44 as the head of the nations: Through his military exploits and international agreements, David was able to exercise control over many surrounding nations.

22:47 The LORD lives: This shout of faith became a motto in biblical times, particularly when shouted in contrast to the false gods of other nations, who had no life. Like a **Rock**, God is strong, steadfast, and a place of refuge (see Ps. 91:1-3). Perhaps this metaphor recalled to David the many times he had taken refuge in rocks to elude his pursuers (1 Sam 23:25).

22:50 Because God delivered His own (vv. 48, 49), David vowed to praise Him. The word translated **give thanks** means “to confess publicly” or “to give public acknowledgment.” It is the primary Hebrew word for praise in the Book of Psalms.

22:51 His anointed: David referred to himself as God’s royal representative on earth. But the word *anointed* also points to David’s descendant, King Jesus. He is the ultimate Anointed One, the meaning of the name Messiah. The name derived from the Greek word for *anointed* is Christ. It is not just the “last name” of Jesus, but His great title: He is the Anointed One who is anticipated by the promises of the OT.

23:1 The Hebrew word for **thus says** is a stylized term that is often used in prophetic speech. It adds significance to what is said and may be translated “the solemn utterance” or “a revelation.” This is a very impressive term in Hebrew poetry; here it is used twice in one verse. **raised up on high:** David recalled his humble origins as a son of Jesse, whom God sovereignly exalted to the throne of Israel. **the sweet psalmist of Israel:** Of 150 psalms in the Book of Psalms, 73 are attributed to David by the text. No person in the Scriptures is more closely associated with music in the worship of the Lord than King David.

23:2 The spirit of the LORD spoke: David claimed to speak the words of God through his inspired poetry (see Ps. 139:4). This is a claim to the divine inspiration of the Scriptures, just as much as are the NT passages 2 Tim. 3:16; Heb. 1:1, 2; 2 Pet. 1:19-21.

23:3, 4 He who rules over men: David voiced God’s expectations for rulers. Bringing blessing like the light dawn after the rain, like a clear morning, like tender grass—each of these similes speaks of new life, purity, and refreshment. The function of the king was not to impoverish the nation. Instead, the king was to ennoble the people as he presented to them the refreshing will of God.

23:5 The establishment of the **everlasting covenant** that God made with David is recorded in 7:12-16. Here and in Ps. 89 are

- ⁶ Yet He has made with me an everlasting covenant,
Ordered in all *things* and secure.
For *this* is all my salvation and all my desire;
Will He not make *it* increase?
- ⁶ But *the sons* of rebellion *shall* all be as
thorns thrust away,
Because they cannot be taken with hands.
- ⁷ But the man *who* touches them
Must be ¹ armed with iron and the shaft of a spear,
And they shall be utterly burned with fire in *their* place.”

⁵ ² Sam. 7:12; Ps. 89:29; Is. 55:3
⁷ ¹ Lit. *filled*
⁸ ² Lit. *One Who Sits in the Seat* (1 Chr. 11:11) ³ So with MT, Tg.; LXX, Vg. *the three*
⁹ ¹ 1 Chr. 11:12; 27:4
⁴ *Dodai*, 1 Chr. 27:4
¹⁰ ¹ Judg. 8:4
¹ 1 Sam. 30:24, 25
¹¹ ¹ 1 Chr. 11:27
¹ 1 Chr. 11:13, 14

David's Mighty Men

⁸ These *are* the names of the mighty men whom David had: ² Josheb-Bashebeth the Tachmonite, chief among ³ the captains. He was called Adino the Eznite, because he had killed eight hundred men at one time. ⁹ And after him was ^h Eleazar the son of ⁴ Dodo, the Ahohite, *one* of the three mighty men with David when they defied the Philistines *who* were gathered there for battle, and the men of Israel had retreated. ¹⁰ He arose and attacked the Philistines until his hand was ⁱ weary, and his hand stuck to the sword. The LORD brought about a great victory that day; and the people returned after him only to ^j plunder. ¹¹ And after him was ^k Shammah the son of Agee the Hararite. ¹ The Philistines had gathered together into a troop where there was a piece of ground full of lentils. So the people fled from the Philistines. ¹² But he stationed himself in the middle of the field, defended it, and killed the

¹³ ^m 1 Chr. 11:15
ⁿ 1 Sam. 22:1
^o 2 Sam. 5:18
¹⁴ ^p 1 Sam. 22:4, 5
¹⁷ ^q [Lev. 17:10]
¹⁸ ^r 2 Sam. 21:17;
1 Chr. 11:20 ^s So with MT, LXX, Vg.; some Heb. mss., Syr. *thirty*; Tg. *the mighty men*
²⁰ ^s Josh. 15:21
^t Ex. 15:15 ⁶ Lit. *great of acts*
²¹ ⁷ Lit. *a man of appearance*

Philistines. So the LORD brought about a great victory.

¹³ Then ^m three of the thirty chief men went down at harvest time and came to David at ⁿ the cave of Adullam. And the troop of Philistines encamped in ^o the Valley of Rephaim. ¹⁴ David *was* then in ^p the stronghold, and the garrison of the Philistines *was* then in Bethlehem. ¹⁵ And David said with longing, “Oh, that someone would give me a drink of the water from the well of Bethlehem, which is by the gate!” ¹⁶ So the three mighty men broke through the camp of the Philistines, drew water from the well of Bethlehem that *was* by the gate, and took it and brought it to David. Nevertheless he would not drink it, but poured it out to the LORD. ¹⁷ And he said, “Far be it from me, O LORD, that I should do this! Is *this* not ^q the blood of the men who went in *jeopardy* of their lives?” Therefore he would not drink it.

These things were done by the three mighty men.

¹⁸ Now ^r Abishai the brother of Joab, the son of Zeruiah, was chief of ⁵ *another* three. He lifted his spear against three hundred *men*, killed *them*, and won a name among *these* three. ¹⁹ Was he not the most honored of three? Therefore he became their captain. However, he did not attain to the *first* three.

²⁰ Benaiah *was* the son of Jehoiada, the son of a valiant man from ^s Kabzeel, ⁶ who had done many deeds. ⁴ He had killed two lion-like heroes of Moab. He also had gone down and killed a lion in the midst of a pit on a snowy day. ²¹ And he killed an Egyptian, ⁷ a spectacular man. The Egyptian *had* a spear in his hand; so he went down to him with a staff, wrested

David's celebrations of the covenant in song. **Will He not make it increase:** This rhetorical question expresses David's faith that God would carry out His promise. The covenant was based on God's sovereign, unchangeable will.

23:6, 7 sons of rebellion: The Hebrew word used here is one of contempt and scorn. It is the word that wicked Shimei hurled at David when the latter was fleeing from the rebellion of his son Absalom (16:7). The word was also used to describe Sheba, the scoundrel from the tribe of Benjamin (20:1). David anticipated God's judgment upon the ungodly, who are likened to **thorns** fit only to be **burned**.

23:8 The term **mighty men** suggests that these were the elite of David's troops, possibly his personal bodyguards. These men were heroes in the full sense of the word. Their listing must have inspired others to attain to such accomplishments. **eight hundred:** Although 1 Chr. 11:11 records three hundred, this figure is probably accurate (v. 18).

23:13, 14 The Valley of Rephaim was a route to Jerusalem (5:18). **Bethlehem**, David's hometown (1 Sam. 16:1–13), was about six miles south of Jerusalem.

23:16 poured it out to the Lord: The water had been provided at such great risk that David regarded it as too precious to drink, and offered it as a sacrifice. Ordinarily, wine was used for a drink offering (Lev. 23:13, 18, 37); here, water more costly than the finest wine was poured in celebration before the Lord.

23:17 David calls the water **blood** because it was brought to him at the risk of life.

23:18 The exploits of **Abishai**, the brother of Joab, are detailed in the record of the life of David (2:18; 10:10; 1 Sam. 26:6–9).

23:20–23 Benaiah served as commander over the Cherethites and the Pelethites (8:18). He was in charge of David's personal bodyguards. The term **his guard** means “his obedience”—that is, those who were bound to obey and protect David. **snowy day:** A light snowfall is not unusual in the Judean hill country during the winter.

mighty men

(Heb. *gibbor*) (23:8; Joel 3:9) Strong's #1368

This word emphasizes excellence. In the OT, it is used for the excellence of a lion (Prov. 30:30), of good or bad men (Gen. 10:9; 1 Chr. 19:8), of giants (Gen. 6:4), of angels (Ps. 103:20), or even God (Deut. 10:17; Neh. 9:32). The phrase “mighty God” is used three times in the OT, including Isaiah's messianic prophecy of the birth of Jesus (Is. 9:6; 10:21; Jer. 32:18). The Scriptures state that the mighty man is not victorious because of his strength (Ps. 33:16) but because of his understanding and knowledge of the Lord (Jer. 9:23, 24).

the spear out of the Egyptian's hand, and killed him with his own spear. ²²These things Benaiah the son of Jehoiada did, and won a name among three mighty men. ²³He was more honored than the thirty, but he did not attain to the first three. And David appointed him ^uover his guard.

²⁴^v Asahel the brother of Joab was one of the thirty; Elhanan the son of Dodo of Bethlehem, ²⁵^w Shammah the Harodite, Elika the Harodite, ²⁶Helez the Paltite, Ira the son of Ikkeish the Tekoite, ²⁷Abiezer the Anathothite, Mebunnai the Hushathite, ²⁸Zalmon the Ahohite, Maharai the Netophathite, ²⁹Heleb the son of Baanah (the Netophathite), Ittai the son of Ribai from Gibeah of the children of Benjamin, ³⁰Benaiah a Pirathonite, Hiddai from the brooks of ^xGaash, ³¹Abi-Albon the Arbathite, Azmaveth the Barhumite, ³²Eliabha the Shaalbonite (of the sons of Jashen), Jonathan, ³³^y Shammah the ⁸Hararite, Ahiam the son of Sharar the Hararite, ³⁴Eliphelet the son of Ahasbai, the son of the Maachathite, Eliam the son of ^zAhithophel the Gilonite, ³⁵⁹Hezrai the Carmelite, Paarai the Arbite, ³⁶Igal the son of Nathan of ^aZobah, Bani the Gadite, ³⁷Zelek the Ammonite, Naharai the Beerothite (armorbearer of Joab the son of Zeruiah), ³⁸^bIra the Ithrite, Gareb the Ithrite, ³⁹^{and} ^cUriah the Hittite: thirty-seven in all.

David's Census of Israel and Judah

24 Again ^athe anger of the LORD was aroused against Israel, and He moved David against them to say, ^b“Go, ¹number Israel and Judah.”

²So the king said to Joab the commander of the army who was with him, “Now go throughout all the tribes of Israel,

²³ ^u 2 Sam. 8:18; 20:23
²⁴ ^v 2 Sam. 2:18; 1 Chr. 27:7
²⁵ ^w 1 Chr. 11:27
³⁰ ^x Judg. 2:9
³³ ^y 2 Sam. 23:11
⁸ Or Ararite
³⁴ ^z 2 Sam. 15:12
³⁵ ⁹ Hezro, 1 Chr. 11:37
³⁶ ^a 2 Sam. 8:3
³⁸ ^b 1 Chr. 2:53
³⁹ ^c 2 Sam. 11:3, 6

CHAPTER 24

¹ ^a 2 Sam. 21:1, 2
² Num. 26:2; 1 Chr. 27:23, 24 ¹ take a census of

² ^c Judg. 20:1; 2 Sam. 3:10 ^d [Jer. 17:5]
³ ^e Deut. 1:11
⁴ ² overruled
⁵ ^f Deut. 2:36; Josh. 13:9, 16 ⁹ Num. 32:1, 3
⁶ ^h Josh. 19:47; Judg. 18:29 ⁱ Josh. 19:28; Judg. 18:28
⁷ ^j Josh. 19:29
^k Josh. 11:3; Judg. 3:3
⁹ ¹ 1 Chr. 21:5
¹⁰ ^m 1 Sam. 24:5
ⁿ 2 Sam. 23:1
^p 2 Sam. 12:13
¹ 1 Sam. 13:13; [2 Chr. 16:9]

^cfrom Dan to Beersheba, and count the people, that ^dI may know the number of the people.”

³And Joab said to the king, “Now may the LORD your God ^eadd to the people a hundred times more than there are, and may the eyes of my lord the king see it. But why does my lord the king desire this thing?” ⁴Nevertheless the king's word ²prevailed against Joab and against the captains of the army. Therefore Joab and the captains of the army went out from the presence of the king to count the people of Israel.

⁵And they crossed over the Jordan and camped in ^fAroer, on the right side of the town which is in the midst of the ravine of Gad, and toward ^gJazer. ⁶Then they came to Gilead and to the land of Tahtim Hodshi; they came to ^hDan Jaan and around to ⁱSidon; ⁷and they came to the stronghold of ^jTyre and to all the cities of the ^kHivites and the Canaanites. Then they went out to South Judah as far as Beersheba. ⁸So when they had gone through all the land, they came to Jerusalem at the end of nine months and twenty days. ⁹Then Joab gave the sum of the number of the people to the king. ¹And there were in Israel eight hundred thousand valiant men who drew the sword, and the men of Judah were five hundred thousand men.

The Judgment on David's Sin

¹⁰And ^mDavid's heart condemned him after he had numbered the people. So ⁿDavid said to the LORD, ^o“I have sinned greatly in what I have done; but now, I pray, O LORD, take away the iniquity of Your servant, for I have ^pdone very foolishly.”

¹¹Now when David arose in the morn-

23:24–39 thirty: The list actually contains 31 names. Apparently, the number of active soldiers in this unit was kept close to 30. With minor variations, this list is also recorded in 1 Chr. 11:26–41.

23:39 thirty-seven: This figure includes the three (vv. 8–17); Abishai and Benaiah (vv. 18–23); the 31 (vv. 24–39); and David's commander, Joab (v. 37).

24:3 why does my lord the king desire this thing: Joab, for all his faults, saw the error in David's plan (1 Chr. 21:3) and raised his protest in the form of a question. Why was this census considered sinful when God had commanded a numbering in the time of Moses (Num. 1:1–3)? David may have been trusting in military strength rather than God's protective care (Deut. 17:16). Verse 9 suggests that this census was the first step in preparing for a military draft. God's plan seems to have been for Israel to have a citizen army rather than a large standing army, so that Israel would trust in His protection.

24:5 The numbering began in the territory east of the Jordan. Aroer was about 14 miles east of the Dead Sea on the north bank of the Arnon River. Jazer was east of the Jordan, about six and a half miles west of present-day Amman.

24:6 Gilead was east of the Jordan between the Jabbok and

Yarmuk Rivers. Dan Jaan is thought to refer to the city of Dan, about 23 miles north of the Sea of Galilee. Sidon was on the Mediterranean coast north of Tyre.

24:7 Tyre was on the Mediterranean coast about 35 miles northwest of the Sea of Galilee. The Hivites were Canaanites who occupied the region of Lebanon (Judg. 3:3), Shechem (Gen. 34:2), and Gibeon (Josh. 9:3). Canaanites is a general term for the non-Israelite inhabitants of the land. Beersheba was in the desert parts of Judah about 28 miles southwest of Hebron.

24:9 men who drew the sword: The numbers given refer only to men of military age. It is impressive that the division of Israel and Judah was so well established. This division would in the end result in a divided kingdom. The numbers—800,000 in Israel and 500,000 in Judah—are clearly rounded figures.

24:10 David's heart condemned him: David fell into sin on several occasions, but his heart was always sensitive to God's righteous will. He quickly confessed his wrong and sought restoration with the Lord. The text still does not state precisely what the sin was. However, we may surmise that David's intent in numbering the people had some sinister aspect to it—perhaps pride in the size of his empire.

ing, the word of the LORD came to the prophet ^aGad, David's ^rseer, saying, ¹²“Go and tell David, ‘Thus says the LORD: “I offer you three *things*; choose one of them for yourself, that I may do *it* to you.”’” ¹³So Gad came to David and told him; and he said to him, “Shall ^sseven³ years of famine come to you in your land? Or shall you flee three months before your enemies, while they pursue you? Or shall there be three days’ plague in your land? Now consider and see what answer I should take back to Him who sent me.”

¹⁴And David said to Gad, “I am in great distress. Please let us fall into the hand of the LORD, ^tfor His mercies *are* great; but “do not let me fall into the hand of man.”

¹⁵So ^vthe LORD sent a plague upon Israel from the morning till the appointed time. From Dan to Beersheba seventy thousand men of the people died. ¹⁶^wAnd when the ⁴angel stretched out His hand over Jerusalem to destroy it, ^xthe LORD relented from the destruction, and said to the ⁴angel who was destroying the people, “It is enough; now restrain your hand.” And the ⁴angel of the LORD was by the threshing floor of ⁵Araunah the Jebusite.

¹⁷Then David spoke to the LORD when he saw the angel who was striking the people, and said, “Surely ^yI have sinned, and I have done wickedly; but these sheep, what have they done? Let Your hand, I pray, be against me and against my father’s house.”

11 ^q 1 Sam. 22:5
^r 1 Sam. 9:9; 1 Chr. 29:29
^s Ezek. 14:21
^t So with MT, Syr., Tg., Vg.; LXX *three* (cf. 1 Chr. 21:12)
^u [Ps. 51:1; 103:8, 13, 14; 119:156; 130:4, 7] ^v [Is. 47:6; Zech. 1:15]
^w 1 Chr. 21:14
^x Ex. 12:23;
^y 2 Kin. 19:35; Acts 12:23 ^x Gen. 6:6;
^z 1 Sam. 15:11 ⁴ Or *Angel* ⁵ Ornan,
¹ Chr. 21:15
¹⁷ ^y 2 Sam. 7:8;
¹ Chr. 21:17; Ps. 74:1

18 ^z 1 Chr. 21:18
¹ ^a Gen. 23:8-16
² Num. 16:48, 50
³ 1 Sam. 6:14;
⁴ Kin. 19:21
⁵ ^d [Ezek. 20:40, 41]
⁶ ^e 1 Chr. 21:24, 25
⁷ ^f 2 Sam. 21:14
⁸ 2 Sam. 24:21

The Altar on the Threshing Floor

¹⁸And Gad came that day to David and said to him, ^z“Go up, erect an altar to the LORD on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite.” ¹⁹So David, according to the word of Gad, went up as the LORD commanded. ²⁰Now Araunah looked, and saw the king and his servants coming toward him. So Araunah went out and bowed before the king with his face to the ground.

²¹Then Araunah said, “Why has my lord the king come to his servant?”

^aAnd David said, “To buy the threshing floor from you, to build an altar to the LORD, that ^bthe plague may be withdrawn from the people.”

²²Now Araunah said to David, “Let my lord the king take and offer up whatever *seems* good to him. ^cLook, *here are* oxen for burnt sacrifice, and threshing implements and the yokes of the oxen for wood. ²³All these, O king, Araunah has given to the king.”

And Araunah said to the king, “May the LORD your God ^daccept you.”

²⁴Then the king said to Araunah, “No, but I will surely buy *it* from you for a price; nor will I offer burnt offerings to the LORD my God with that which costs me nothing.” So ^eDavid bought the threshing floor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver. ²⁵And David built there an altar to the LORD, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. ^fSo the LORD heeded the prayers for the land, and ^gthe plague was withdrawn from Israel.

24:11 Gad, David’s prophet or **seer**, is first mentioned in 1 Sam. 22:5. He may have been one of the writers or contributing editors of 2 Samuel.

24:13 David was given a choice of three punishments for his sin: (1) **seven years of famine**, (2) **three months** of flight, or (3) **three days of plague**. Moses warned of all of these punishments for those who broke God’s covenant (Deut. 28:15–68).

24:14 **let us fall into the hand of the LORD**: David calculated that God would be more merciful than a person. He apparently took the third option, a plague. **Mercies** speaks of a mother’s tender compassion for her child. Even in the exercise of His wrath, God has mercy on those He disciplines (Hab. 3:2).

24:15 The nature of the **plague** is not specified, only that its origin was from the LORD. The number of those who died was very high, over three times the number of soldiers of Absalom’s army who perished in his abortive rebellion (18:7).

24:16 The judgment was carried out by **the angel of the LORD** (Judg. 6:11–22). In a demonstration of divine grace, God withheld the plague from destroying the people of Jerusalem. A **threshing floor** is a hard, flat surface where wheat is crushed to separate the kernels from the straw. **Araunah**, called Ornan in 2 Chr. 3:1, was a **Jebusite**, one of the original inhabitants of Jerusalem.

24:17 David interceded on behalf of the people—**these sheep**—regarding the plague. He once again confessed his sin (v. 10) and asked God to hold him, rather than the people, accountable.

24:22 **Threshing implements** refers to the heavy, wooden sleds which were dragged over wheat during the threshing process to break it up.

24:23, 24 Araunah wanted to *give* David the threshing floor and the oxen for sacrifice. David was unwilling to offer to the LORD that which cost him nothing. This is a powerful principle for all worship and service before the LORD. If there is no cost, there is no real sacrifice. David understood and practiced the principle of sacrificial giving to the LORD (see 2 Cor. 8:1–4). **the threshing floor**: The threshing floor was located on Mt. Moriah, where Abraham had bound Isaac (Gen. 22:2). Later, Solomon would build the temple at this site (1 Kin. 6; 1 Chr. 21:27–22:1; 2 Chr. 3:1). **Fifty shekels of silver** paid only for the threshing floor, the oxen, and the implements. The land that surrounded the threshing floor would cost considerably more—600 shekels or 15 pounds of gold (1 Chr. 21:25).

24:25 The **burnt** offering was the principal atoning sacrifice for unintentional sins (Lev. 1:1–17; 6:8–13). It was completely consumed upon the altar, except for the hide, which was given to the officiating priest. The **peace** offering was an optional sacrifice, which did not form any part of the regular offerings required in the tabernacle or temple (Lev. 3:1–17; 7:11–34). It was a voluntary expression of thanksgiving or worship. The preservation of Jerusalem and the purchase of the temple site prepared the way for the coming of David’s successor, King Solomon. He would build the temple for the true worship of Israel’s God.

THE FIRST BOOK OF THE KINGS



FIRST KINGS records the lives of a number of famous people, both good and evil. King David, King Solomon, and the Queen of Sheba are famous examples of righteous people searching after God's wisdom. On the other hand, Ahab and Jezebel are two notorious examples of wicked people discarding God's law and rebelling against Him. To confront a man as wicked as Ahab, God sent someone more than equal to the task, the prophet Elijah. Often described as Israel's greatest and most dramatic prophet, Elijah displayed at Mount Carmel in an unforgettable way the power of God over the false god Baal and his four hundred prophets.

In the final analysis, 1 Kings is the story of one people headed down two different paths. It is a story of good kings and bad kings, true prophets and false prophets, and of disobedience and loyalty to God. Most importantly, it is a story of Israel's spiritual odyssey and God's faithfulness to His people.

Author and Composition First and Second Kings were originally one book in the Hebrew canon, as were the books of Samuel. The translators of the Septuagint, the Greek Old Testament of about 150 B.C., joined Samuel and Kings together and divided the resulting book into four parts. When Samuel and Kings were separated later, these four parts became 1 and 2 Samuel and 1 and 2 Kings.

Traditionally, Jeremiah was identified as the author of 1 and 2 Kings. However, contemporary critical scholarship has suggested that the books were the result of a compilation process that began with its initial composition in the late seventh century B.C. and concluded in the middle of the sixth century B.C. The proponents of this view have identified a Deuteronomistic school of writers as the source of 1 and 2 Kings because of the emphasis in these books on religious orthodoxy (the Law and the temple), the ministry of the prophets, and the central place of the Davidic dynasty.

Evangelical biblical scholars have largely rejected the idea of a Deuteronomistic school of writers. Many continue to endorse the traditional view that Jeremiah wrote the books of the Kings. They cite as evidence for his authorship his priestly origin, his prophetic activity, his access to governmental authorities at the highest level, and his great personal involvement in the complex religious, social, and political activities that occurred during the collapse and fall of Judah in the early sixth century B.C. Certainly no other single person would have been in a better position to know the spiritual situation of the day and to have access to the state records, historical information, and source material necessary for writing 1 and 2 Kings.

Nevertheless, differences in writing style between the books of Jeremiah and Kings, as well as distinctions in the use of the names of Judah's kings make any final determination of the authorship of the books of the Kings uncertain. If due weight is given to the long section dealing with Judah (2 Kin. 18:1—25:26), it may reasonably be said that both books of Kings, except the final appended historical notice (2 Kin. 25:27–30), are the work of an author who lived through the last days of Judah and the fall of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. Perhaps the spiritual reform that followed the recovery of the Book of the Law during Josiah's reign (c. 622 B.C.) provided the necessary

impetus for the author to gather up his sources and write an account of Israel's faithfulness to the covenant from the days of David until his own time.

To compose a work covering nearly four hundred years, the author of the Book of Kings would need excellent source material. Three sources are specifically named: (1) The Book of the Acts of Solomon (11:41), which detailed the events of the Solomonic era; (2) The Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel (cited 17 times in 14:19—15:31), which were the court records of the northern kingdom; and (3) The Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah (mentioned 15 times in 1 Kin. 14:29—2 Kin. 24:5), which were court records of the southern kingdom. Furthermore, the author might have had biographical accounts of David (1:1—2:11), Elijah, and Elisha (1 Kin. 16:29—2 Kin. 9:37), and access to the Book of Isaiah (compare Is. 36—39 to 2 Kin. 18:13—20:19). Such material was preserved in priestly and prophetic centers in both the northern and southern kingdoms.

Historical Content The author of 1 and 2 Kings was heir to a long history of God's dealing with His people. In the Books of Kings, the narrator presents a selected rehearsal of the events of the nation covering the period from the death of King David in the early tenth century B.C. to the fall of Jerusalem around 586 B.C. The author's focus is on the spiritual successes and failures in Israel's history.

First Kings begins this narrative with a detailed account of the great Solomonic era (971–930 B.C.; chs. 1–11). The narrative highlights Solomon's godly wisdom (1 Kin. 3; 4), his building projects, the temple and palace complex (1 Kin. 5–8), and then Solomon's spiritual failures toward the end of his reign. After Solomon's demise, the book addresses the division of the kingdom into a northern kingdom (Israel), made up of ten tribes under Jeroboam I, and a southern kingdom, centered in Judah under Solomon's son Rehoboam as king (12:1–24). Thereafter, the different fortunes of the two kingdoms are traced in terms of the blessings and punishments that come as a result of the people's obedience or disobedience to God's law. The sorry picture of Israel's growing apostasy is sketched up to the accession of Ahaziah in the northern kingdom (853–852 B.C.) and the reign of Jehoshaphat in the south (872–847 B.C.). During this period, the two kingdoms had to face the rising imperialism of Assyria, particularly during the reigns of the Assyrian kings, Ashurnasirpal II (883–859 B.C.) and Shalmaneser III (859–824 B.C.).

Thus the narrative of 1 Kings stretches from the high prosperity of the Solomonic kingdom in the tenth century B.C. to the insecurity of the mid-ninth century B.C. During this period, the internal spiritual weakness of the two Israelite kingdoms that would one day spell their defeat was beginning to take shape. The book covers an era of dramatic change.

Purpose The author's purpose in writing 1 and 2 Kings was not primarily to provide historical information. Instead, the author wanted to evaluate Israel's spiritual odyssey that resulted in God's chastisement (2 Kin. 17:7–23; 24:18–20). As a result, the author devotes considerable attention to evaluating the kings according to the way they responded to the responsibilities detailed in the Mosaic and Davidic covenants. The author notes specifically those who handled such responsibilities

1003 B.C.

David becomes king over all Israel

988 B.C.

Solomon is born

970 B.C.

David dies and Solomon becomes king

930 B.C.

Solomon dies; Jeroboam reigns in Israel and Rehoboam reigns in Judah

910 B.C.

Asa becomes king in Judah

909 B.C.

Baasha becomes king in Israel

874 B.C.

Ahab becomes king in Israel

872 B.C.

Jehoshaphat becomes king in Judah

865 B.C.

Elijah begins to prophesy against Ahab



The high place at Dan, where Jeroboam set up one of the golden calves (1 Kin. 12:29)

Kim Walton



Assyrian king Sargon II

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well, such as Hezekiah and Josiah. Moreover, the ministry of the prophets as God's authoritative messengers is highlighted. Particular attention is given to the ministries of Elijah (1 Kin. 17–19; 21; 2 Kin. 2:1–11) and Elisha (2 Kin. 2:12–8:15).

In the entire account, the author repeatedly underscores the necessity for a genuinely godly walk—one in obedience to God's law. Particularly in the accounts relating to Elijah, the author contrasts the true worship of the living God with the false religion of the Canaanites (1 Kin. 17; 18). The main difference between the true God and the false gods is that the living God faithfully fulfills His promises (1 Kin. 8:20, 23–26). Hence, the author pays special attention to God's promises in the Davidic covenant. In that covenant, God had promised to bless Israel (1 Kin. 2:4, 5, 45; 3:6, 14; 6:12, 13; 2 Kin. 8:19). Yet this blessing was tied to obedience: Israel's only hope for God's blessing and true success lay in obedience to God's word (1 Kin. 2:2–4). The failures of the Israelites to walk in God's ways and their subsequent chastisement can serve as a warning to us. At the same time, the prophets, who stood up for God's truth in a period of decline, can motivate us to stand for truth and righteousness in our time.

CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

Although he was not all that intelligent morally, Solomon's mind-boggling wisdom points ahead to the One the apostle Paul would call the "wisdom from God" (1 Cor. 1:30). Yet in spite of Solomon's wisdom, splendor, and influence, when Jesus comes onto the scene and announces His arrival, it is only fitting that He say, "indeed a greater than Solomon is here" (Matt. 12:42).

But Solomon is not the only Messianic prototype in 1 Kings. Later in the book we are introduced to Elijah (18:1). It is true that he actually resembles John the Baptist more than Jesus, but his prophetic ministry—punctuated with miracles of feeding people with small amounts of food and raising a child from the dead—hints at the Messiah to come. And on the Mount of Transfiguration, it is Moses and Elijah who appear with Jesus (Matt. 17:3).

1 KINGS OUTLINE

- I. The united kingdom 1:1—11:43
 - A. The decline of David and the exaltation of Solomon as king 1:1—2:12
 - B. The establishment of the Solomonic kingdom 2:13–46
 - C. The wisdom of Solomon 3:1—4:34
 - D. The building program of Solomon's kingdom 5:1—8:66
 - E. The events of Solomon's reign 9:1—11:43
- II. The divided kingdom 12:1—22:53
 - A. The accession of Rehoboam and the division of the kingdom 12:1–24
 - B. The early kings of the two nations 12:25—16:14
 - C. The third dynasty in the northern kingdom: Omri 16:15—22:53

Adonijah Presumes to Be King

Now King David was ^aold, ¹advanced in years; and they put covers on him, but he could not get warm. ²Therefore his servants said to him, “Let a young woman, a virgin, be sought for our lord the king, and let her ²stand before the king, and let her care for him; and let her lie in your bosom, that our lord the king may be warm.” ³So they sought for a lovely young woman throughout all the territory of Israel, and found ^bAbishag the ^cShunammite, and brought her to the king. ⁴The young woman *was* very lovely; and she cared for the king, and served him; but the king did not know her.

⁵Then ^dAdonijah the ³son of Haggith exalted himself, saying, “I will ⁴be king”; and ^ehe prepared for himself chariots and horsemen, and fifty men to run before him. ⁶(And his father had not ⁵rebuked him at any time by saying, “Why have you done so?” He *was* also very good-looking. ^f*His mother* had borne him after Absalom.) ⁷Then he conferred with ^gJoab the son of Zeruiah and with ^hAbiathar the priest, and ⁱthey followed and helped Adonijah. ⁸But ^jZadok the priest, ^kBenaiah the son of Jehoiada, ^lNathan the prophet, ^mShimei, Rei, and ⁿthe mighty men who *belonged* to David were not with Adonijah.

⁹And Adonijah sacrificed sheep and oxen and fattened cattle by the stone of ^oZohaleth, which *is* by ^pEn Rogel; ⁷he also invited all his brothers, the king’s sons, and all the men of Judah, the king’s servants. ¹⁰But he did not invite Nathan

CHAPTER 1

¹ ^a 1 Chr. 23:1
¹ Seventy years
² ² Or *serve*
³ ³ 1 Kin. 2:17
^c Josh. 19:18; 1 Sam. 28:4
⁵ ⁴ 2 Sam. 3:4
^e 2 Sam. 15:1 ³ The fourth son ⁴ Lit. *reign*
⁶ ^f 2 Sam. 3:3, 4;
¹ Chr. 3:2 ⁵ Lit. *pained*
⁷ ^g 1 Chr. 11:6
^h 2 Sam. 20:25
ⁱ 1 Kin. 2:22, 28
⁸ ^h 1 Kin. 2:35
^k 1 Kin. 2:25; 2 Sam. 8:18 ² Sam. 12:1 ^m 1 Kin. 4:18
ⁿ 2 Sam. 23:8
⁹ ^o Josh. 15:7; 18:16; 2 Sam. 17:17 ⁶ Lit. *Serpent* ⁷ A spring south of Jerusalem in the Kidron Valley

¹⁰ ^p 2 Sam. 12:24
¹¹ ^q 2 Sam. 3:4

BIBLE TIMES & CULTURE NOTES



Chronology of Kings

The chronology of 1 and 2 Kings is an ongoing problem for scholars. The dating may be affected by several factors:

- 1. Coregencies.** In many cases, father and son may have ruled jointly for some years, making it almost impossible to date their reigns without overlapping.
- 2. Accession and non-accession-year dating.** In accession-year dating, the reckoning of the new king’s reign does not begin officially until the new year. In non-accession-year dating, the last months of the preceding king’s reign are reckoned as one year, while the remaining months are also reckoned as a full year for the new ruler. To further complicate matters, Israel used non-accession-year dating until about 900 B.C., then changed to accession-year dating. Judah used accession-year dating until about 850 B.C., then adopted the other method.
- 3. Religious and civil new years.** Years were reckoned both from Tishri to Tishri (the seventh month) and from Nisan to Nisan (the first month).

the prophet, Benaiah, the mighty men, or ^pSolomon his brother.

¹¹So Nathan spoke to Bathsheba the mother of Solomon, saying, “Have you not heard that Adonijah the son of ^qHaggith has become king, and David our lord does not know *it*?” ¹²Come, please, let me now give you advice, that you may save your own life and the life of your son Solomon. ¹³Go immediately to King David

1:1–2:11 This section places Solomon’s reign in the context of the provisions of the Davidic covenant (2 Sam. 7). The narrator emphasizes that Solomon’s accession to the throne was the Lord’s sovereign will.

1:1–3 David was about 70 years old at the time of his death (2 Sam. 5:4; 1 Chr. 29:26–28), and the long years of warfare had doubtlessly taken their physical toll. **warm:** Using a healthy person’s body warmth to **care** for a sick person is a medical procedure noted by the second-century Greek physician Galen and the Jewish historian Josephus.

1:5 The name of David’s fourth son, **Adonijah**, means “The Lord Is My Lord” (2 Sam. 3:2–4). Amnon and Absalom, David’s first and third sons, both experienced violent deaths (2 Sam. 13:28, 29; 18:14). Chileab, his second son, apparently died at an early age. **I will be king:** Adonijah, the oldest surviving son, might have assumed that he would inherit the crown even though Solomon had been designated as successor (1:13, 17, 30; 2:15; 1 Chr. 22:9, 10). Adonijah evidently knew of the intended royal succession, because he deliberately avoided inviting those who would support the king’s choice (vv. 8, 10). Adonijah thus **exalted himself** against God’s will.

1:6 rebuked: While David had been a most capable leader and a man of deep spiritual sensitivity, he had not exercised proper parental discipline of his children (2 Sam. 13:21–39; 14:18–24).

1:7 In gaining important allies to support his quest for the crown, Adonijah sought the assistance of **Joab**, David’s general, and **Abiathar**, the high priest.

1:8 Zadok was descended from the priestly line of Eleazar (2 Sam. 8:17). **Benaiah** served as the commander of the king’s bodyguard and was considered one of David’s mighty men (2 Sam. 23:20–23). The prophet **Nathan** had long been David’s confidant, spiritual advisor, and conscience (2 Sam. 12:1–25). **Shimei** is probably the man who later became Solomon’s district governor (4:18); he should not be confused with David’s foolish enemy, Shimei the son of Gera (see 2:8; 2 Sam. 19:18–23).

1:9 Zohaleth means “Serpent.” Perhaps this was the shape of an outcropping of rock that was a well-known rendezvous point. Adonijah’s ceremonial meal was held at **En Rogel** near the intersection of the Hinnom and Kidron valleys, a place well situated for Adonijah’s purposes. En Rogel had positive associations with David (2 Sam. 17:17).

1:11 It is a mark of David’s integrity that **Nathan**, who had confronted him with his terrible sin, was still welcome in the royal household (2 Sam. 12:1–15). Nathan went to Bathsheba because she would not want to see Adonijah displace her son Solomon as heir to the throne. As David’s wife, Bathsheba had immediate access to him, and she also had considerable influence in civil and social matters (15:10–13; 19:1–3; 21:5–15, 25). If Adonijah became king she and Solomon could probably expect to die in a royal purge of all potential claimants to the throne (compare 15:29; 16:11; 2 Kin. 9:30–37; 10:1–17; 11:1).

1:12–27 Nathan and Bathsheba planned together (v. 14) how Nathan could confirm Bathsheba’s report to the king. Nathan knew of David’s solemn oath to Bathsheba (vv. 13, 30; see Lev. 19:12), but

and say to him, ‘Did you not, my lord, O king, swear to your maidservant, saying, ^r“Assuredly your son Solomon shall reign after me, and he shall sit on my throne”? Why then has Adonijah become king?’ ¹⁴Then, while you are still talking there with the king, I also will come in after you and confirm your words.”

¹⁵So Bathsheba went into the chamber to the king. (Now the king was very old, and Abishag the Shunammite was serving the king.) ¹⁶And Bathsheba bowed and did homage to the king. Then the king said, “What is your wish?”

¹⁷Then she said to him, “My lord, ^syou swore by the LORD your God to your maidservant, *saying*, ‘Assuredly Solomon your son shall reign after me, and he shall sit on my throne.’ ¹⁸So now, look! Adonijah has become king; and now, my lord the king, you do not know about *it*. ¹⁹He has sacrificed oxen and fattened cattle and sheep in abundance, and has invited all the sons of the king, Abiathar the priest, and Joab the commander of the army; but Solomon your servant he has not invited. ²⁰And as for you, my lord, O king, the eyes of all Israel *are* on you, that you should tell them who will sit on the throne of my lord the king after him. ²¹Otherwise it will happen, when my lord the king ^urests with his fathers, that I and my son Solomon will be counted as offenders.”

²²And just then, while she was still talking with the king, Nathan the prophet also came in. ²³So they told the king, saying, “Here is Nathan the prophet.” And when he came in before the king, he bowed down before the king with his face to the ground. ²⁴And Nathan said, “My lord, O king, have you said, ‘Adonijah shall reign after me, and he shall sit on my throne’? ²⁵For he has gone down today, and has sacrificed oxen and fattened cattle and sheep in abundance, and has invited all the king’s sons, and

¹³ ^r 1 Kin. 1:30;
1 Chr. 22:9-13
¹⁷ ^s 1 Kin. 1:13, 30
¹⁹ ^t 1 Kin. 1:7-9, 25
²¹ ^u Deut. 31:16;
2 Sam. 7:12; 1 Kin.
2:10
²⁵ ^v 1 Kin. 1:9, 19

^w 1 Sam. 10:24 ⁸ Lit.
Let King Adonijah
live
²⁹ ^x 2 Sam. 4:9; 12:5
³⁰ ^y 1 Kin. 1:13, 17
³¹ ^z Neh. 2:3; Dan.
2:4; 3:9
³³ ^a 2 Sam. 20:6
^b Esth. 6:8 ^c 2 Chr.
32:30; 33:14 ⁹ A
spring east of
Jerusalem in the
Kidron Valley
³⁴ ^d 1 Sam. 10:1;
16:3, 12; 2 Sam.
2:4; 5:3; 1 Kin.
19:16; 2 Kin. 9:3;
11:12; 1 Chr. 29:22
^e 2 Sam. 15:10;
2 Kin. 9:13; 11:14
^f Lit. Let King
Solomon live
³⁶ ^f Jer. 28:6

the commanders of the army, and Abiathar the priest; and look! They are eating and drinking before him; and they say, ^w“*Long*⁸ live King Adonijah!’” ²⁶But he has not invited me—me your servant—nor Zadok the priest, nor Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, nor your servant Solomon. ²⁷Has this thing been done by my lord the king, and you have not told your servant who should sit on the throne of my lord the king after him?”

David Proclaims Solomon King

²⁸Then King David answered and said, “Call Bathsheba to me.” So she came into the king’s presence and stood before the king. ²⁹And the king took an oath and said, ^x“As the LORD lives, who has redeemed my life from every distress, ³⁰^yjust as I swore to you by the LORD God of Israel, saying, ‘Assuredly Solomon your son shall be king after me, and he shall sit on my throne in my place,’ so I certainly will do this day.”

³¹Then Bathsheba bowed with *her* face to the earth, and paid homage to the king, and said, ^z“Let my lord King David live forever!”

³²And King David said, “Call to me Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada.” So they came before the king. ³³The king also said to them, ^a“Take with you the servants of your lord, and have Solomon my son ride on my own ^bmule, and take him down to ^cGihon.” ³⁴There let Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet ^danoint him king over Israel; and ^eblow the horn, and say, ^f“*Long* live King Solomon!” ³⁵Then you shall come up after him, and he shall come and sit on my throne, and he shall be king in my place. For I have appointed him to be ruler over Israel and Judah.”

³⁶Benaiah the son of Jehoiada answered the king and said, ^f“Amen! May the LORD God of my lord the king say so

was concerned that David might fail to act quickly against Adonijah’s attempted usurpation of the crown. Bathsheba’s report of the crisis was couched in terms that would provoke in David a proper sense of alarm.

1:25, 26 Giving the names of **Abiathar**, who was with Adonijah, and of **Zadok, Benaiah, and Solomon**, who were not, helped David see the situation that was developing.

1:27 **Has this thing been done:** Nathan’s question was both respectful and tactical. David had to act, even though he was reluctant to oppose his rebellious son (see the story of the rebellion of Absalom, 2 Sam. 15–18).

1:29 An oath in the name of **the LORD** was the strongest oath a faithful Israelite would take (see 17:1). During the OT period, Israelites would use very strong language in oaths (see Ruth’s words to Naomi, Ruth 1:17). Jesus told His followers to avoid oaths completely (see Matt. 5:33–37). **who has redeemed my life:** In these words of

praise, David celebrated the innumerable times that the Lord had acted on his behalf, to deliver him from his enemies and from his own sins. Some of David’s psalms were written in connection with those times of God’s deliverance (Ps. 40; 142).

1:31 **King David live forever:** Bathsheba put her seal on the occasion by bowing before him and expressing the hope that his kingdom would never end.

1:32, 33 David summoned the recognized leaders in Israel who had not been party to the conspiracy (vv. 8, 10, 26) to lend their support to the coronation of Solomon. Solomon’s prestige would be enhanced by riding upon the royal mule (2 Sam. 13:29; 18:9; Zech. 9:9; Matt. 21:5). **Gihon** was a spring, the principal water supply for Jerusalem. It was in the Kidron valley east of the city.

1:34–37 The plans for public proclamation, with David’s sanction and with a priestly blessing, were designed to let the people of the city know that Solomon was to be the next king of Israel.

too. ^{37g}As the LORD has been with my lord the king, even so may He be with Solomon, and ^hmake his throne greater than the throne of my lord King David.”

³⁸So Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, ⁱBenaiah the son of Jehoiada, the ^jCherethites, and the Pelethites went down and had Solomon ride on King David’s mule, and took him to Gihon. ³⁹Then Zadok the priest took a horn of ^koil from the tabernacle and ^lanointed Solomon. And they blew the horn, ^mand all the people said, ²“Long live King Solomon!” ⁴⁰And all the people went up after him; and the people played the flutes and rejoiced with great joy, so that the earth *seemed to split* with their sound.

⁴¹Now Adonijah and all the guests who *were* with him heard *it* as they finished eating. And when Joab heard the sound of the horn, he said, “Why *is* the city in such a noisy uproar?” ⁴²While he was still speaking, there came ⁿJonathan, the son of Abiathar the priest. And Adonijah said to him, “Come in, for ^oyou are a prominent man, and bring good news.”

⁴³Then Jonathan answered and said to Adonijah, “No! Our lord King David has made Solomon king. ⁴⁴The king has sent with him Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, the Cherethites, and the Pelethites; and they have made him ride on the king’s mule. ⁴⁵So Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet have anointed him king at Gihon; and they have gone up from there rejoicing, so that the city is in an uproar. This *is* the noise that you have heard. ⁴⁶Also Solomon ^psits on the throne of the kingdom. ⁴⁷And moreover the king’s servants have gone to bless our lord King David, saying, ^q“May God make the name

^{37 g} Josh. 1:5, 17; 1 Sam. 20:13
^h 1 Kin. 1:47
^{38 i} 2 Sam. 8:18; 23:20–23 / 2 Sam. 20:7; 1 Chr. 18:17
^{39 k} Ex. 30:23, 25, 32; Ps. 89:20 / 1 Chr. 29:22
^m 1 Sam. 10:24
² Lit. *Let King Solomon live*
^{42 n} 2 Sam. 17:17, 20
^o 2 Sam. 18:27
^{46 p} 1 Kin. 2:12; 1 Chr. 29:23
^{47 q} 1 Kin. 1:37

^r Gen. 47:31
^{48 s} 1 Kin. 3:6; [Ps. 132:11, 12] / 2 Sam. 7:12
^{50 u} Ex. 27:2; 30:10; 1 Kin. 2:28
^{52 v} 1 Sam. 14:45; 2 Sam. 14:11; Acts 27:34

CHAPTER 2

^{1 a} Gen. 47:29; Deut. 31:14
¹ *commanded*
^{2 b} Josh. 23:14
^c Deut. 31:7, 23; 1 Chr. 22:13
^{3 d} [Deut. 29:9; Josh. 1:7]; 1 Chr. 22:12, 13
^{4 e} 2 Sam. 7:25 / [Ps. 132:12]

of Solomon better than your name, and may He make his throne greater than your throne.” Then the king bowed himself on the bed. ⁴⁸Also the king said thus, “Blessed *be* the LORD God of Israel, who has ^sgiven *one* to sit on my throne this day, while my eyes see *‘it!’*”

⁴⁹So all the guests who were with Adonijah were afraid, and arose, and each one went his way.

⁵⁰Now Adonijah was afraid of Solomon; so he arose, and went and ^ttook hold of the horns of the altar. ⁵¹And it was told Solomon, saying, “Indeed Adonijah is afraid of King Solomon; for look, he has taken hold of the horns of the altar, saying, ‘Let King Solomon swear to me today that he will not put his servant to death with the sword.’”

⁵²Then Solomon said, “If he proves himself a worthy man, ^vnot one hair of him shall fall to the earth; but if wickedness is found in him, he shall die.” ⁵³So King Solomon sent them to bring him down from the altar. And he came and fell down before King Solomon; and Solomon said to him, “Go to your house.”

David’s Instructions to Solomon

2 Now ^athe days of David drew near that he should die, and he ¹charged Solomon his son, saying: ^{2b}“I go the way of all the earth; ^cbe strong, therefore, and prove yourself a man. ³And keep the charge of the LORD your God: to walk in His ways, to keep His statutes, His commandments, His judgments, and His testimonies, as it is written in the Law of Moses, that you may ^dprosper in all that you do and wherever you turn; ⁴that the LORD may ^efulfill His word which He spoke concerning me, saying, ^f“If your

1:38 The **Cherethites** and **Pelethites** were David’s bodyguard (2 Sam. 8:18; 15:18; 20:7). Their association with David stretched back to his days among the Philistines, with whom both groups are usually identified (1 Sam. 30:13, 14; Ezek. 25:16; Zeph. 2:5).

1:39, 40 Solomon’s anointing by the priest **Zadok** was normal procedure for an uninterrupted succession to the throne. When there was an interruption in the dynastic line, the anointing was performed by a prophet (see 19:15–18; 2 Kin. 9:1–10). Every priestly anointing would recall the words of Ps. 2, in accordance with the words of the Davidic covenant of 2 Sam. 7. The anointing announced that the anointed one was now the adopted son of the living God. Every anointing in the OT points forward to the ultimate Anointed One, the Messiah Jesus. The blowing of the **horn** celebrated and announced the anointing of a new king. The joy of the people seemed boundless, as **the earth seemed to split with their sound**.

1:41–49 The **noise** first, and then the news of the anointing of Solomon at Gihon, quickly reached Adonijah and his party at En Rogel just a few hundred feet further south (v. 9). This led to the complete demoralization of the coconspirators of Adonijah.

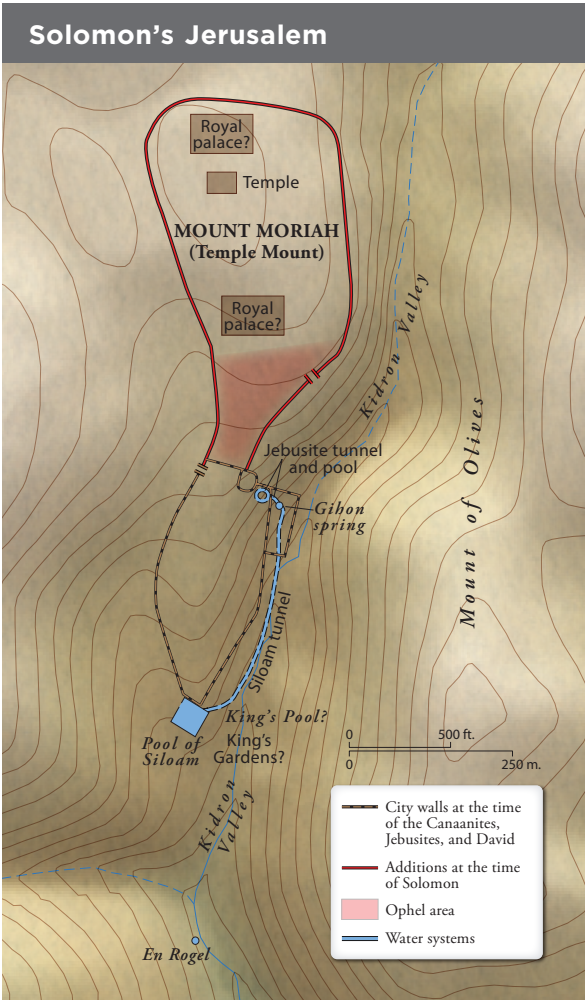
1:50–53 Adonijah’s quest for mercy at the bloodstained (Lev. 4:7, 18, 25, 30) **horns of the altar** (v. 50) was in keeping with the traditional function of the altar as a haven of refuge for those who had

committed unintentional crimes (Ex. 21:12–14). Later Joab also would try to find safety there (2:28).

1:53 Even though David was still alive (see 2:1–12) and the coronation had not yet taken place, the public celebration at his prophetic anointing at Gihon (1:38–40) was basically the same as declaring **Solomon** Israel’s king. The name **Solomon** is related to the Hebrew word for “peace,” and the verb meaning “to be complete.” **Go to your house:** Solomon gave temporary clemency to his half brother, likely out of respect for his father.

2:1–3 he charged Solomon: David was following spiritual precedent as well as the custom of the ancient Middle East by passing on instruction to his son (see 1 Chr. 28; 29). David’s charge to Solomon was reminiscent of Moses’ words to the Israelites (Deut. 31:6) and the Lord’s admonition to Joshua (Josh. 1:6, 7, 9). The specific instructions given here echo the standards of righteousness associated with the Mosaic covenant (Deut. 5:33; 8:6, 11; 11:1, 22).

2:4 not lack a man: God had made an unconditional covenant with David (2 Sam. 7:12–16; 1 Chr. 17:11–14), granting to him a continual posterity and a royal dynasty. Although the Davidic covenant was an everlasting sacred promise, individual kings through their evil behavior could fail to receive the benefits of the covenant (see Ps. 89:3, 4, 14–24, 27–37). The line of promise would be preserved and



c. 950 B.C.
Solomon extended the city northward from the original site and there built his magnificent temple.
His royal residence was nearby, but its exact location is unknown.

sons take heed to their way, to ^gwalk before Me in truth with all their heart and with all their soul.' He said, ^h'you shall not lack a man on the throne of Israel.'

⁵"Moreover you know also what Joab the son of Zeruiah ⁱdid to me, and what he did to the two commanders of the armies of Israel, to ^jAbner the son of Ner and ^kAmasa the son of Jether, whom he killed. And he shed the blood of war in peacetime, and put the blood of war on his belt that *was* around his waist, and on his sandals that *were* on his feet. ⁶Therefore do ^laccording to your wisdom, and do not let his gray hair go down to the grave in peace.

⁷"But show kindness to the sons of ^mBarzillai the Gileadite, and let them be among those who ⁿeat at your table, for so ^othey came to me when I fled from Absalom your brother.

⁸"And see, *you have* with you ^pShimei the son of Gera, a Benjamite from Bahurim, who cursed me with a malicious curse in the day when I went to Mahanaim. But ^qhe came down to meet me at the Jordan, and ^rI swore to him by the Lord, saying, 'I will not put you to death with the sword.' ⁹Now therefore, ^sdo not hold him guiltless, for you *are* a wise man and know what you ought to do to him; but ^tbring his gray hair down to the grave with blood."

Death of David

¹⁰So ^uDavid ²rested with his fathers, and was buried in ^vthe City of David. ¹¹The period that David ^wreigned over Israel *was* forty years; seven years he reigned in Hebron, and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty-three years. ¹²^xThen Sol-

4 ^g 2 Kin. 20:3 ^h 2 Sam. 7:12, 13; 1 Kin. 8:25 ⁵ 2 Sam. 3:39; 18:5, 12, 14 ² 2 Sam. 3:27; 1 Kin. 2:32 ^k 2 Sam. 20:10 ⁶ 1 Kin. 2:9; Prov. 20:26 ⁷ ^m 2 Sam. 19:31-39 ⁿ 2 Sam. 9:7, 10; 19:28 ^o 2 Sam. 17:17-29 ⁸ ^p 2 Sam. 16:5-13 ^q 2 Sam. 19:18 ^r 2 Sam. 19:23 ⁹ ^s Ex. 20:7; Job 9:28 ^t Gen. 42:38; 44:31 ¹⁰ ^u 1 Kin. 1:21; Acts 2:29; 13:36 ^v 2 Sam. 5:7; 1 Kin. 3:1 ² Died and joined his ancestors ¹¹ ^w 2 Sam. 5:4, 5; 1 Chr. 3:4; 29:26, 27 ¹² ^x 1 Kin. 1:46; 1 Chr. 29:23

Israel "would not lack a man," but there would come a time when the promised Ruler would not be on an earthly throne (Hos. 3:4). God's prophets predict that the heir of the throne of David will yet reign over a repentant, regathered, and restored Israel (see Jer. 33:19–26; Ezek. 34:22–31) in fulfillment of the promises contained in the Abrahamic, Davidic, and New covenants (Ezek. 37:21–28; Mic. 7:18–20). The NT reveals that all this will be realized in Jesus Christ, the Savior King (Acts 3:25, 26; 15:16, 17; Gal. 3:26–29; Rev. 3:21), who is David's Heir in the ultimate sense (Acts 2:22–36).

2:5–9 David's parting advice singled out some problems that had not been solved. One concerned Joab. The bold, headstrong Joab had murdered two generals (2 Sam. 3:27; 20:10) and David's son Absalom (2 Sam. 18:14); he also had joined Adonijah's ill-fated conspiracy (1:7, 19). Another problem concerned Shimei, who had treated the king shamefully on a previous occasion (2 Sam. 16:5–13; 19:16–23). **gray hair:** Both Joab and Shimei had lived a long time without requital for their wicked deeds. The aged king knew that these men would likely continue to be a problem to Solomon even as they had been to him.

2:7 David also included directions of kindness for the household of Barzillai, who had stood by him throughout the period associated with Absalom's rebellion (2 Sam. 17:27–29; 19:31–39). **To eat at the king's table** carried with it not only distinct honor, but royal favor (see 2 Sam. 9:7; 2 Kin. 25:29). It meant that the royal household would make provision for this family in perpetuity.

2:10 There is a so-called tomb of David today on Mt. Zion in Jerusalem marking approximately where he might have been **buried**.

omon sat on the throne of his father David; and his kingdom was ⁹firmly established.

Solomon Executes Adonijah

¹³Now Adonijah the son of Haggith came to Bathsheba the mother of Solomon. So she said, ^z“Do you come peaceably?”

And he said, “Peaceably.” ¹⁴Moreover he said, “I have something *to say* to you.”

And she said, “Say it.”

¹⁵Then he said, “You know that the kingdom was ^amine, and all Israel had set their expectations on me, that I should reign. However, the kingdom has been turned over, and has become my brother’s; for ^bit was his from the LORD. ¹⁶Now I ask one petition of you; do not ³deny me.”

And she said to him, “Say it.”

¹⁷Then he said, “Please speak to King Solomon, for he will not refuse you, that he may give me ^cAbishag the Shunammite as wife.”

¹⁸So Bathsheba said, “Very well, I will speak for you to the king.”

¹⁹Bathsheba therefore went to King Solomon, to speak to him for Adonijah. And the king rose up to meet her and ^dbowed down to her, and sat down on his throne and had a throne set for the king’s mother; ^eso she sat at his right hand. ²⁰Then she said, “I desire one small petition of you; do not ^frefuse me.”

And the king said to her, “Ask it, my mother, for I will not refuse you.”

²¹So she said, “Let Abishag the Shunammite be given to Adonijah your brother as wife.”

²²And King Solomon answered and said to his mother, “Now why do you ask Abishag the Shunammite for Adonijah? Ask for him the kingdom also—for he *is* my ^golder brother—for him, and for ^hAbiathar the priest, and for Joab the son of Zeruiah.” ²³Then King Solomon swore by the LORD, saying, ^h“May God do so to me, and more also, if Adonijah has not spoken this word against his own life! ²⁴Now therefore, *as* the LORD lives,

¹² ^v1 Kin. 2:46;
2 Chr. 1:1
¹³ ^z1 Sam. 16:4, 5
¹⁵ ^a1 Kin. 1:11, 18
^b1 Chr. 22:9, 10;
28:5-7; [Dan. 2:21]
¹⁶ ³ Lit. *turn away the face*
¹⁷ ^c1 Kin. 1:3, 4
¹⁹ ^d [Ex. 20:12]
^e Ps. 45:9
²⁰ ⁴ Lit. *turn away the face*
²² ^f1 Kin. 1:6;
2:15; 1 Chr. 3:2, 5
^g1 Kin. 1:7
²³ ^h Ruth 1:17

²⁴ ⁱ2 Sam. 7:11, 13;
1 Chr. 22:10 ³ Royal
dynasty
²⁵ ^j2 Sam. 8:18;
1 Kin. 4:4
²⁶ ^k Josh. 21:18; Jer.
1:1 ^l1 Sam. 22:23;
23:6; 2 Sam. 15:14,
29 ^m Lit. *you are a man of death*
²⁷ ⁿ1 Sam. 2:31-35
²⁸ ^o1 Kin. 1:7
²⁹ ^p1 Kin. 1:50
³⁰ ^q [Gen. 21:14]
³¹ ^r [Ex. 21:14]
^s [Num. 35:33; Deut.
19:13; 21:8, 9]
³² ^t [Gen. 9:6];
Judg. 9:24, 57
^u2 Chr. 21:13,
14 ^v2 Sam. 3:27
^w2 Sam. 20:9, 10
⁷ Or *bloodshed*

who has confirmed me and set me on the throne of David my father, and who has established a ⁵house for me, as He ⁱpromised, Adonijah shall be put to death today!”

²⁵So King Solomon sent by the hand of ^jBenaiah the son of Jehoiada; and he struck him down, and he died.

Abiathar Exiled, Joab Executed

²⁶And to Abiathar the priest the king said, “Go to ^kAnathoth, to your own fields, for ⁶you *are* deserving of death; but I will not put you to death at this time, ^lbecause you carried the ark of the Lord God before my father David, and because you were afflicted every time my father was afflicted.” ²⁷So Solomon removed Abiathar from being priest to the LORD, that he might ^mfulfill the word of the LORD which He spoke concerning the house of Eli at Shiloh.

²⁸Then news came to Joab, for Joab ⁿhad defected to Adonijah, though he had not defected to Absalom. So Joab fled to the tabernacle of the LORD, and ^otook hold of the horns of the altar. ²⁹And King Solomon was told, “Joab has fled to the tabernacle of the LORD; there *he is*, by the altar.” Then Solomon sent Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, saying, “Go, ^pstrike him down.” ³⁰So Benaiah went to the tabernacle of the LORD, and said to him, “Thus says the king, ^q‘Come out!’”

And he said, “No, but I will die here.” And Benaiah brought back word to the king, saying, “Thus said Joab, and thus he answered me.”

³¹Then the king said to him, ^r“Do as he has said, and strike him down and bury him, ^sthat you may take away from me and from the house of my father the innocent blood which Joab shed. ³²So the LORD ^twill return his ⁷blood on his head, because he struck down two men more righteous ^uand better than he, and killed them with the sword—^vAbner the son of Ner, the commander of the army of Israel, and ^wAmasa the son of Jether, the commander of the army of Judah—though my father David did not know

2:13, 17 come peaceably: Adonijah would have Bathsheba believe that his request for Abishag was simply compensation for not receiving the crown that all had expected to go to him. Yet Adonijah’s plea carried with it serious ramifications. Taking a member of the king’s harem would normally be interpreted as a claim to the throne (2 Sam. 3:7–10; 12:8; 16:21, 22). **Abishag** had cared for David in his old age (1:1–4, 15).

2:22 the kingdom also: Solomon not only saw through Adonijah’s plot, but recognized Joab and Abiathar as fellow conspirators. All three were dealt with severely (vv. 23–35).

2:25 hand of Benaiah: This mighty man of David did not partici-

pate in Adonijah’s plots (1:8, 26). Furthermore, he participated in the anointing of Solomon at Gihon (1:38).

2:27 When **Abiathar** was removed from office as a priest, his influence was greatly restricted. Solomon spared Abiathar’s life in recognition of his past service to God and David (2 Sam. 15:24, 29; 1 Chr. 15:11–15). With this act God’s word to Eli came to fulfillment. Eli’s descendants were removed from serving the Lord (1 Sam. 2:30–33).

2:28 Because Joab was a murderer (2 Sam. 3:27; 18:14; 20:10), he could not claim the protective sanctity of the **horns of the altar** (1:50). Therefore, he could not escape execution (vv. 29–31).

it. ³³ Their blood shall therefore return upon the head of Joab and ^u upon the head of his descendants forever. ^v But upon David and his descendants, upon his house and his throne, there shall be peace forever from the LORD.”

³⁴ So Benaiah the son of Jehoiada went up and struck and killed him; and he was buried in his own house in the wilderness. ³⁵ The king put Benaiah the son of Jehoiada in his place over the army, and the king put ^z Zadok the priest in the place of ^a Abiathar.

Shimei Executed

³⁶ Then the king sent and called for ^b Shimei, and said to him, “Build yourself a house in Jerusalem and dwell there, and do not go out from there anywhere. ³⁷ For it shall be, on the day you go out and cross ^c the Brook Kidron, know for certain you shall surely die; ^d your ^e blood shall be on your own head.”

³⁸ And Shimei said to the king, “The saying is good. As my lord the king has said, so your servant will do.” So Shimei dwelt in Jerusalem many days.

³⁹ Now it happened at the end of three years, that two slaves of Shimei ran away to ^e Achish the son of Maachah, king of Gath. And they told Shimei, saying, “Look, your slaves are in Gath!” ⁴⁰ So Shimei arose, saddled his donkey, and went to Achish at Gath to seek his slaves. And Shimei went and brought his slaves from Gath. ⁴¹ And Solomon was told that Shimei had gone from Jerusalem to Gath and had come back. ⁴² Then the king sent and called for Shimei, and said to him, “Did I not make you swear by the LORD, and warn you, saying, ‘Know for certain that on the day you go out and travel anywhere, you shall surely die’? And you said to me, ‘The word I have heard is good.’ ⁴³ Why then have you not kept the oath of the LORD and the commandment that I gave you?” ⁴⁴ The king said more-

³³ ^x 2 Sam. 3:29
^y [Prov. 25:5]
³⁵ ^z 1 Sam. 2:35;
 1 Kin. 4:4; 1 Chr.
 6:53; 24:3; 29:22
^a 1 Kin. 2:27
³⁶ ^b 2 Sam. 16:5-13;
 1 Kin. 2:8
³⁷ ^c 2 Sam. 15:23;
 2 Kin. 23:6; John
 18:1 ^d Lev. 20:9;
 Josh. 2:19; 2 Sam.
 1:16; Ezek. 18:13
^e Or bloodshed
³⁹ ^e 1 Sam. 27:2

⁴⁴ ^f 2 Sam. 16:5-13
^g 1 Sam. 25:39;
 2 Kin. 11:1, 12-16; Ps.
 7:16; Ezek. 17:19
⁴⁵ ^h 2 Sam. 7:13;
 [Prov. 25:5]
⁴⁶ ⁱ 1 Kin. 2:12;
 2 Chr. 1:1

CHAPTER 3

¹ ^a 1 Kin. 7:8;
 9:24 ^b 2 Sam. 5:7
^c 1 Kin. 7:1 ^d 1 Kin. 6
^e 1 Kin. 9:15, 19 ^f an
 alliance
² ^f [Deut. 12:2-5,
 13, 14]; 1 Kin. 11:7;
 22:43
³ ^g [Rom. 8:28]
^h [1 Kin. 3:6, 14]
⁴ ⁱ 1 Kin. 9:2; 2 Chr.
 1:3 ^j 1 Chr. 16:39;
 21:29
⁵ ^k 1 Kin. 9:2; 11:9;
 2 Chr. 1:7 ^l Num.
 12:6; Matt. 1:20;
 2:13
⁶ ^m 2 Chr. 1:8
ⁿ 1 Kin. 2:4; 9:4;
 2 Kin. 20:3 ^o 2 Sam.
 7:8-17; 1 Kin. 1:48
^p 1 Chr. 22:5; Jer.
 1:6, 7

over to Shimei, “You know, as your heart acknowledges, ^f all the wickedness that you did to my father David; therefore the LORD will ^g return your wickedness on your own head. ⁴⁵ But King Solomon shall be blessed, and ^h the throne of David shall be established before the LORD forever.”

⁴⁶ So the king commanded Benaiah the son of Jehoiada; and he went out and struck him down, and he died. Thus the ⁱ kingdom was established in the hand of Solomon.

Solomon Requests Wisdom

3 Now ^a Solomon made ¹ a treaty with Pharaoh king of Egypt, and married Pharaoh’s daughter; then he brought her ^b to the City of David until he had finished building his ^c own house, and ^d the house of the LORD, and ^e the wall all around Jerusalem. ² ^f Meanwhile the people sacrificed at the high places, because there was no house built for the name of the LORD until those days. ³ And Solomon ^g loved the LORD, ^h walking in the statutes of his father David, except that he sacrificed and burned incense at the high places.

⁴ Now ⁱ the king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there, ^j for that was the great high place: Solomon offered a thousand burnt offerings on that altar. ⁵ ^k At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon ^l in a dream by night; and God said, “Ask! What shall I give you?”

⁶ ^m And Solomon said: “You have shown great mercy to Your servant David my father, because he ⁿ walked before You in truth, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with You; You have continued this great kindness for him, and You ^o have given him a son to sit on his throne, as it is this day. ⁷ Now, O LORD my God, You have made Your servant king instead of my father David, but I am a ^p little child; I do not know how

2:35 Solomon then decisively appointed his two loyalists to the positions vacated. **Benaiah** became the captain of the army and **Zadok** the high priest. **Zadok** was a descendant of Eleazar, the son of Aaron (see 1 Chr. 6:4-8).

2:36-46 At first Solomon placed **Shimei** under an extended house arrest rather than executing him outright for his shameful treatment of David (see 2:8, 9). However, Shimei felt he must pursue **two slaves** that had run away. This disobedience led to his death. **all the wickedness:** Shimei had openly opposed and cursed David (2 Sam. 16:5-13; 19:16-23). He openly violated the terms of the agreement with Solomon (vv. 36, 37). By executing Joab and Shimei and removing Abiathar, Solomon fulfilled David’s instructions to him (vv. 5, 8) and also solved the problem of a hostile high priest.

3:1 married: In the ancient Middle East, political alliances were often ratified by the marriage of the son of one king to the daughter of another. Except in unusual circumstances, the pharaohs of Egypt

did not observe this custom (but see 1 Chr. 4:17, 18). Therefore, the giving of Pharaoh’s daughter to Solomon attested to the Israelite king’s growing prestige and importance to the Egyptian king. Pharaoh gave the important town of Gezer to the couple as a wedding present (9:16). **house of the Lord:** Both Solomon’s palace and the temple are called a house. Just as Solomon occupied the palace, the Lord was considered uniquely present with His people in the temple.

3:2 Whether the worship ceremonies took place in specially constructed enclosures or at an open-air sanctuary (13:32), such hilltop areas or **high places** provided a setting where Canaanite religious rites could be infiltrated into Israel’s worship (11:7; 2 Kin. 16:4).

3:5 Gibeon is a hill about six miles northwest of Jerusalem.

3:7 The term for **child** often refers to a servant or to an inexperienced person still in training for a profession (see 19:21; 20:14, 15; 2 Kin. 4:12). With proper humility, Solomon stressed his relative youth and inexperience.

⁹to go out or come in. ⁸And Your servant is in the midst of Your people whom You ^rhave chosen, a great people, ^stoo numerous to be numbered or counted. ⁹^tTherefore give to Your servant an ²understanding heart ^uto judge Your people, that I may ^vdiscern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of Yours?"

¹⁰The speech pleased the Lord, that Solomon had asked this thing. ¹¹Then God said to him: "Because you have asked this thing, and have ^wnot asked long life for yourself, nor have asked riches for yourself, nor have asked the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern justice, ¹²^xbehold, I have done according to your words; ^ysee, I have given you a wise and understanding heart, so that there has not been anyone like you before you, nor shall any like you arise after you. ¹³And I have also ^zgiven you what you have not asked: both ^ariches and honor, so that there shall not be anyone like you among the kings all your days. ¹⁴So ^bif you walk in My ways, to keep My statutes and My commandments, ^cas your father David walked, then I will ^dlengthen ³your days."

¹⁵Then Solomon ^eawoke; and indeed it had been a dream. And he came to Jerusalem and stood before the ark of the covenant of the LORD, offered up burnt offerings, offered peace offerings, and ^fmade a feast for all his servants.

Solomon's Wise Judgment

¹⁶Now two women *who were* harlots came to the king, and ^gstood before him. ¹⁷And one woman said, "O my lord, this woman and I dwell in the same house; and I gave birth while she *was* in the house. ¹⁸Then it happened, the third day after I had given birth, that this woman also gave birth. And we *were* together; ⁴no one *was* with us in the house, except the two of us in the house. ¹⁹And this

⁷ ^a Num. 27:17; 2 Sam. 5:2
⁸ ^r [Ex. 19:6; Deut. 7:6] ^s Gen. 13:6; 15:5; 22:17
⁹ ^t 2 Chr. 1:10; [James 1:5] ^u Ps. 72:1, 2 ^v 2 Sam. 14:17; Is. 7:15; [Heb. 5:14] ² Lit. *hearing*
¹¹ ^w [James 4:3]
¹² ^x [1 John 5:14, 15] ^y 1 Kin. 4:29–31; 5:12; 10:24; Eccl. 1:16
¹³ ^z [Matt. 6:33; Eph. 3:20] ^a 1 Kin. 4:21, 24; 10:23; 1 Chr. 29:12
¹⁴ ^b [1 Kin. 6:12]
^c 1 Kin. 15:5 ^d Ps. 91:16; Prov. 3:2
³ *prolong*
¹⁵ ^e Gen. 41:7
^f Gen. 40:20; 1 Kin. 8:65; Esth. 1:3; Dan. 5:1; Mark 6:21
¹⁶ ^g Num. 27:2
¹⁸ ⁴ Lit. *no stranger*

woman's son died in the night, because she lay on him. ²⁰So she arose in the middle of the night and took my son from my side, while your maidservant slept, and laid him in her bosom, and laid her dead child in my bosom. ²¹And when I rose in the morning to nurse my son, there he was, dead. But when I had examined him in the morning, indeed, he was not my son whom I had borne."

²²Then the other woman said, "No! But the living one *is* my son, and the dead one *is* your son."

And the first woman said, "No! But the dead one *is* your son, and the living one *is* my son."

Thus they spoke before the king.

²³And the king said, "The one says, 'This *is* my son, who lives, and your son *is* the dead one'; and the other says, 'No! But your son *is* the dead one, and my son *is* the living one.'" ²⁴Then the king said, "Bring me a sword." So they brought a sword before the king. ²⁵And the king said, "Divide the living child in two, and give half to one, and half to the other."

²⁶Then the woman whose son *was* living spoke to the king, for ^hshe yearned with compassion for her son; and she said, "O my lord, give her the living child, and by no means kill him!"

But the other said, "Let him be neither mine nor yours, *but* divide *him*."

²⁷So the king answered and said, "Give the first woman the living child, and by no means kill him; she *is* his mother."

²⁸And all Israel heard of the judgment which the king had rendered; and they feared the king, for they saw that the ⁱwisdom of God *was* in him to administer justice.

Solomon's Administration

4 So King Solomon was king over all Israel. ²And these *were* his officials: Azariah the son of Zadok, the priest; ³Elihioreph and Ahijah, the sons of Shisha,

²⁶ ^h Gen. 43:30; Is. 49:15; Jer. 31:20; Hos. 11:8
²⁸ ⁱ 1 Kin. 3:9, 11; 2 Chr. 1:12; Dan. 1:17; [Col. 2:2, 3]

3:9 an understanding heart: The phrase suggested not only the willingness and patience to listen to all sides of an issue, but also the desire for the ability to reason.

3:12 God answered Solomon's request in abundant measure, granting him not only an **understanding heart**, but one that was **wise** for handling the crucial affairs of life in a fair and skillful manner. The abilities that God gave to Solomon were truly exceptional.

3:13 what you have not asked: Because Solomon chose a greater gift than riches and honor, God promised him everything else as well (Matt. 6:33).

3:15 a dream: Dreams were one of the ways that God revealed His will (Gen. 20:3; 37:5; Dan. 2:3). Although David had brought the **ark of the covenant** to Jerusalem (2 Sam. 6), the tabernacle and its furnishings remained in Gibeon, which served as an important worship center (v. 4; see 2 Chr. 1:3–5).

3:16 The fact that **harlots** could appear before Solomon suggested

that he made himself available to persons of all stations of life who had a legitimate claim for justice.

3:26 yearned with compassion: Her love as a mother made her give up her own child rather than see it die.

3:28 wisdom . . . justice: These important qualities which marked Solomon's reign from the beginning would characterize the rule of Israel's Messiah in a far greater way (Is. 11:1–5).

4:1–6 Solomon's wisdom was also demonstrated in his appointment of proper officials for all the needs of state. For civil affairs, Solomon appointed **scribes** and a chief officer over the district officials (Azariah). He chose **Benaiah** to replace Joab as commander for **the army** (see also 2:35) and a head of forced **labor**. As a part of his personal staff, he appointed a special advisor, **the king's friend**; a chief of protocol, **the recorder**; and a minister of palace and state, to be **over the household**. This last position became a powerful office in royal administration. Men who occupied this powerful position were Obadiah (18:3), Eliakim (2 Kin. 18:18), and Shebna (Is. 22:15).

¹scribes; ^aJehoshaphat the son of Ahilud, the recorder; ^{4b}Benaiah the son of Jehoia-da, over the army; Zadok and ^cAbiathar, the priests; ⁵Azariah the son of Nathan, over ^dthe officers; Zabud the son of Nathan, ^aa priest and ^fthe king's friend; ⁶Ahishar, over the household; and ^gAdoniram the son of Abda, over the labor force.

⁷And Solomon had twelve governors over all Israel, who provided food for the king and his household; each one made provision for one month of the year. ⁸These *are* their names: ²Ben-Hur, in the mountains of Ephraim; ⁹Ben-Deker, in Makaz, Shaalvim, Beth Shemesh, and Elon Beth Hanan; ¹⁰^dBen-Hesed, in Arubboth; to him *belonged* Sochoh and all the land of Hephher; ¹¹⁵Ben-Abinadab, in all the regions of Dor; he had Taphath the daughter of Solomon as wife; ¹²Baana the son of Ahilud, in Taanach, Megiddo, and all Beth Shean, which is beside Zaretan below Jezreel, from Beth Shean to Abel Meholah, as far as the other side of Jokne-am; ¹³⁶Ben-Geber, in Ramoth Gilead; to him *belonged* ^hthe towns of Jair the son of Manasseh, in Gilead; to him *also belonged* ⁱthe region of Argob in Bashan—sixty large cities with walls and bronze gate-bars; ¹⁴Ahinadab the son of Iddo, in Mahanaim; ¹⁵^jAhimaaz, in Naphtali; he also took Basemath the daughter of Solomon as wife; ¹⁶Baanah the son of ^kHushai, in Asher and Aloth; ¹⁷Jehoshaphat the son of Paruah, in Issachar; ¹⁸^lShimei the son of Elah, in Benjamin; ¹⁹Geber the son of Uri, in the land of Gilead, in ^mthe country of Sihon king of the Amorites, and of Og king of Bashan. *He was* the only governor who *was* in the land.

Prosperity and Wisdom of Solomon's Reign

²⁰Judah and Israel *were* as numerous

CHAPTER 4

3 ^a 2 Sam. 8:16;
20:24 ¹ secretaries
4 ^b 1 Kin. 2:35
5 ^c 1 Kin. 2:27
5 ^d 1 Kin. 4:7
6 ^e 2 Sam. 8:18; 20:26
7 ^f 2 Sam. 15:37;
16:16; 1 Chr. 27:33
6 ^g 1 Kin. 5:14
8 ² Lit. Son of Hur
9 ³ Lit. Son of Deker
10 ⁴ Lit. Son of Hesed
11 ⁵ Lit. Son of Abinadab
13 ^a Num. 32:41;
1 Chr. 2:22 ¹ Deut.
3:4 ⁶ Lit. Son of Geber
15 ² 2 Sam. 15:27
16 ^a 2 Sam. 15:32;
1 Chr. 27:33
18 ¹ 1 Kin. 1:8
19 ^m Deut. 3:8-10
20 ⁿ Gen. 22:17;
32:12; 1 Kin. 3:8;
[Prov. 14:28] ^o Ps.
72:3, 7; Mic. 4:4
21 ^p Ex. 34:24;
2 Chr. 9:26; Ps. 72:8
22 ^q Neh. 5:18 ⁸ Lit.
bread ⁹ Each about
5 bushels
24 ^r Ps. 72:11
25 ^u 1 Kin. 5:4; 1 Chr.
22:9 ¹ The Euphrates
25 ^v [Jer. 23:6]
26 ^w [Mic. 4:4; Zech.
3:10] ^x Judg. 20:1
27 ² lived in safety
26 ^y 1 Kin. 10:26;
2 Chr. 1:14 ^z [Deut.
17:16] ³ So with
MT, most other
authorities; some
LXX mss. four
thousand; cf. 2 Chr.
9:25
27 ^a 1 Kin. 4:7
29 ^b 1 Kin. 3:12
30 ^c Gen. 25:6 ^d Is.
19:11, 12; Acts 7:22

as the sand by the sea in multitude, ^eeating and drinking and rejoicing. ²¹So ^pSolomon reigned over all kingdoms from ^qthe ⁷River to the land of the Philistines, as far as the border of Egypt. ^r*They* brought tribute and served Solomon all the days of his life.

²²s Now Solomon's ⁸provision for one day was thirty ⁹kors of fine flour, sixty kors of meal, ²³ten fatted oxen, twenty oxen from the pastures, and one hundred sheep, besides deer, gazelles, roebucks, and fatted fowl.

²⁴For he had dominion over all *the region* on this side of ¹the River from Tiphseh even to Gaza, namely over ^tall the kings on this side of the River; and ^uhe had peace on every side all around him. ²⁵And Judah and Israel ^vdwelt ²safely, ^weach man under his vine and his fig tree, ^xfrom Dan as far as Beersheba, all the days of Solomon.

²⁶s Solomon had ³forty thousand stalls of ^zhorses for his chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen. ²⁷And ^athese governors, each man in his month, provided food for King Solomon and for all who came to King Solomon's table. There was no lack in their supply. ²⁸They also brought barley and straw to the proper place, for the horses and steeds, each man according to his charge.

²⁹And ^bGod gave Solomon wisdom and exceedingly great understanding, and largeness of heart like the sand on the seashore. ³⁰Thus Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the men ^cof the East and all ^dthe wisdom of Egypt. ³¹For he was ^ewiser than all men—^fthan Ethan the Ezrahite, ^gand Heman, Chalcol, and Darda, the sons of Mahol; and

31 ^e 1 Kin. 3:12 ¹ 1 Chr. 15:19; Ps. 89:title ⁹ 1 Chr. 2:6; Ps. 88:title

4:7–19 These **twelve governors** were in charge of Solomon's districts. They were responsible for handling lesser administrative tasks and raising revenue for the crown. The districts did not follow tribal boundaries.

4:18 Not the same person as the **Shimei** at 2:8. This Shimei may be the Shimei of 1:8—a supporter of Solomon.

4:20, 21 numerous as the sand: God fulfilled His promise to make Abraham's descendants numerous, a great nation (Gen. 15:5, 18). Solomon's kingdom extended far beyond the traditional boundaries of Israel. Through this greatly expanded empire, Jewish people not only traveled to far-flung regions, but they took with them their knowledge of the living God. **River:** The Euphrates.

4:22 kors: The kor was the same size as the homer (Ezek. 45:14), six and a quarter bushels, a normal load for a donkey.

4:23 oxen ... fowl: Meat was a rare item in a person's diet, suggestive of a feast (Prov. 9:2).

4:24, 25 The name Solomon is related to the word **peace**. It is fitting for this name to be associated with the time of Israel's great reign of peace. The **vine** and **fig tree** are symbols of God's blessing for those who obey His covenant.

4:26 forty thousand stalls: Some Greek manuscripts read four

thousand (a figure also found in 2 Chr. 9:25). According to 10:26 and 2 Chr. 1:14, Solomon had 1,400 chariots. Since three horses were considered a chariot team and would be quartered together, four thousand would be about the number of horses Solomon needed.

4:27, 28 The immense provisions needed for the royal house (vv. 22, 23) were supplied monthly by each of the 12 **governors** (see 4:7–19).

4:29 In addition to giving Solomon, literally, a hearing (3:9) and discerning (3:12) heart, God gave him **largeness** (or breadth) **of heart**. All three Hebrew terms underscore Solomon's understanding. This verse describes Solomon's understanding as limitless and immeasurable, like **the sand on the seashore**, just like the numbers of the Israelites (v. 20).

4:30 The term **men of the East** has been associated with Mesopotamia (Gen. 29:1), the east bank of the Jordan (Is. 11:14), or with Arabia in general (Judg. 6:3, 33; 7:12). All these are places whose inhabitants had a reputation for wisdom (see Obad. 8). The fabled reputation of **the wisdom of Egypt** had been attested to in Egyptian literature for more than a millennium before Solomon's time.

4:31 Ethan the Ezrahite: See the title of Ps. 89. **Heman:** See 1 Chr. 16:42 (where Jeduthun may be the same as Ethan).

his fame was in all the surrounding nations. ^{32h}He spoke three thousand proverbs, and his ⁱsongs were one thousand and five. ³³Also he spoke of trees, from the cedar tree of Lebanon even to the hyssop that springs out of the wall; he spoke also of animals, of birds, of creeping things, and of fish. ³⁴And men of all nations, from all the kings of the earth who had heard of his wisdom, ^jcame to hear the wisdom of Solomon.

Solomon Prepares to Build the Temple

5 Now ^aHiram king of Tyre sent his servants to Solomon, because he heard that they had anointed him king in place of his father. ^bfor Hiram had always loved David. ²Then ^cSolomon sent to Hiram, saying:

- ³ ^dYou know how my father David could not build a house for the name of the LORD his God ^ebecause of the wars which were fought against him on every side, until the LORD put ¹his foes under the soles of his feet.
- ⁴ But now the LORD my God has given me ^frest² on every side; *there is neither adversary nor ³evil occurrence.*
- ⁵ ^gAnd behold, ⁴I propose to build a house for the name of the LORD my God, ^has the LORD spoke to my father David, saying, “Your son, whom I will set on your throne in your place, he shall build the house for My name.”
- ⁶ Now therefore, command that they cut down ⁱcedars for me from Lebanon; and my servants will be with your servants, and I will pay you

³² ^hProv. 1:1; 10:1; 25:1; Eccl. 12:9
ⁱSong 1:1
³⁴ ¹1 Kin. 10:1;
 2 Chr. 9:1, 23

CHAPTER 5

¹ ^a 1 Kin. 5:10, 18;
 2 Chr. 2:3 ^b 2 Sam. 5:11; 1 Chr. 14:1
² ^c 2 Chr. 2:3
³ ^d 1 Chr. 28:2, 3
^e 1 Chr. 22:8; 28:3
^f Lit. *them*
⁴ ^f 1 Kin. 4:24;
 1 Chr. 22:9 ² *peace*
³ *misfortune*
⁵ ^g 2 Chr. 2:4
^h 2 Sam. 7:12, 13;
 1 Kin. 6:38; 1 Chr. 17:12; 22:10; 28:6;
 2 Chr. 6:2 ⁴ Lit. *I am saying*
⁶ ⁱ 2 Chr. 2:8, 10

⁹ ^j Ezra 3:7 ^k Ezek. 27:17; Acts 12:20
¹¹ ² 2 Chr. 2:10
⁵ Each about
 5 bushels ⁶ So
 with MT, Tg., Vg.;
 LXX, Syr. *twenty
 thousand kors*
¹² ^m 1 Kin. 3:12

wages for your servants according to whatever you say. For you know *there is none among us who has skill to cut timber like the Sidonians.*

⁷So it was, when Hiram heard the words of Solomon, that he rejoiced greatly and said,

Blessed *be* the LORD this day, for He has given David a wise son over this great people!

⁸Then Hiram sent to Solomon, saying:

I have considered *the message* which you sent me, *and* I will do all you desire concerning the cedar and cypress logs.

⁹ My servants shall bring *them* down ^jfrom Lebanon to the sea; I will float them in rafts by sea to the place you indicate to me, and will have them broken apart there; then you can take *them* away. And you shall fulfill my desire ^kby giving food for my household.

¹⁰Then Hiram gave Solomon cedar and cypress logs *according to* all his desire. ¹¹^lAnd Solomon gave Hiram twenty thousand ⁵kors of wheat *as* food for his household, and ⁶twenty kors of pressed oil. Thus Solomon gave to Hiram year by year.

¹²So the LORD gave Solomon wisdom, ^mas He had promised him; and there was peace between Hiram and Solomon, and the two of them made a treaty together.

4:32–34 proverbs . . . songs: Solomon was the author of a large part of the Book of Proverbs. He is also traditionally assigned the authorship of the Song of Solomon, Ps. 72 and 127, and Ecclesiastes.

5:1 Hiram: This Phoenician king ruled over Tyre for 34 years (978–944 B.C.). **Loved** reflects traditional Middle Eastern diplomatic vocabulary for political alliances and reinforces the biblical evidence that Hiram was David’s friend and ally (v. 12; see 2 Sam. 5:11, 12). Hiram initiated the relationship with Solomon, based on his earlier relationship with David. When Solomon wrote to Hiram (vv. 2–6), he spoke freely of the Lord as the God of David and himself. Hiram responded with praise (v. 7).

5:3 house: Although God did not allow David to build the temple (2 Sam. 7:13), David made preparations for it (1 Chr. 21:18–22:19; 28:9–29:19). **name:** God’s name was associated with His revealed character and reputation (see Ex. 3:14, 15), as well as His sovereign ownership of everything (Ex. 20:24; Ps. 22:22).

5:4 The shift from “the LORD his God” (v. 3) to **the LORD my God** demonstrates that Solomon and his father had the same faith.

5:6 cedars . . . Lebanon: In addition to the Bible, other ancient literature attests to the extensive use of wood from the cedar trees of Lebanon for building and furnishing temples and palaces. The principal building material in Jerusalem was limestone. **none among us:** Since Israel did not have cedar forests like those in Lebanon, the Israelites did not have workmen skilled in building with it.

5:7 Blessed be the Lord: The acknowledgment of another peo-

ple’s deity is well known both in the Bible (10:9; Dan. 3:28) and in other ancient Middle Eastern literature.

5:8–11 Hiram’s reply indicates that he was a shrewd businessman. Not only would Solomon pay the wages of Hiram’s **servants**, but he would make the payments to Hiram (vv. 6, 11; 2 Chr. 2:10). In addition to men and material, Hiram also supplied gold to Solomon, for which he apparently demanded collateral (9:10–14), and which Solomon could later redeem (2 Chr. 8:1, 2).

understanding

(Heb. *tebunah*) (4:29; Job 12:13; Prov. 3:13; 21:30) Strong’s #8394

The verbal root of this noun means “to distinguish” or “to discern.” Thus this noun conveys the idea of discernment. The Hebrew word is directly connected to the idea of wisdom in 22 passages, including Prov. 8 where they are both personified (7:14; Ex. 31:3; Prov. 8:1; 10:23). Due to its close association with wisdom, the word occurs often in Proverbs. Solomon contrasted *understanding* with folly (Prov. 14:29; 15:21; 18:2). He also exhorted his son to apply his heart to understanding (Prov. 2:2). Ultimately all discernment is from the Lord (Prov. 2:6), whose wisdom is infinite (Ps. 147:5; Is. 40:28).

¹³Then King Solomon raised up a labor force out of all Israel; and the labor force was thirty thousand men. ¹⁴And he sent them to Lebanon, ten thousand a month in shifts: they were one month in Lebanon and two months at home; ¹⁵Adoniram was in charge of the labor force. ¹⁶So Solomon had seventy thousand who carried burdens, and eighty thousand who quarried stone in the mountains, ¹⁷besides three thousand ¹⁸three hundred from the ¹⁹chiefs of Solomon's deputies, who supervised the people who labored in the work. ¹⁷And the king commanded them to quarry large stones, costly stones, and ¹⁸hewn stones, to lay the foundation of the ¹⁹temple. ¹⁸So Solomon's builders, Hiram's builders, and the Gebalites quarried them; and they prepared timber and stones to build the ⁹temple.

Solomon Builds the Temple

6 And ^ait came to pass in the four hundred and ¹eightieth year after the children of Israel had come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month of ²Ziv, which is the second month, ^bthat he began to build the house of the LORD. ²Now ^cthe house which King Solomon built for the LORD, its length was sixty cubits, its width twenty, and its height thirty cubits. ³The vestibule in front of

14 ^a 1 Kin. 12:18
15 ^a 1 Kin. 9:20-22;
2 Chr. 2:17, 18
16 ^a 1 Kin. 9:23 ⁷ So
with MT, Tg., Vg.;
LXX six hundred
17 ^a 1 Kin. 6:7;
1 Chr. 22:2 ⁸ Lit.
house
18 ⁹ Lit. house

CHAPTER 6
1 ^a 2 Chr. 3:1, 2
^b Acts 7:47 ¹ So
with MT, Tg., Vg.;
LXX fortieth ² Or
Ayyar, April or May
2 ^c Ezek. 41:1
3 ³ Heb. heykal;
here the main
room of the
temple; elsewhere
called the holy
place, Ex. 26:33;
Ezek. 41:1 ⁴ About
30 feet ⁵ Lit. it
⁶ About 15 feet
4 ^d Ezek. 40:16;
41:16
5 ^e Ezek. 41:6
^f 1 Kin. 6:16, 19-21,
31 ⁷ Lit. house
⁸ Heb. debir; here
the inner room
of the temple;
elsewhere called
the Most Holy
Place, v. 16
6 ⁹ Lit. house
7 ^g Ex. 20:25; Deut.
27:5, 6
8 ¹ So with MT, Vg.;
LXX upper story; Tg.
ground story

the ³sanctuary of the house was ⁴twenty cubits long across the width of the house, and the width of ⁵the vestibule extended ⁶ten cubits from the front of the house. ⁴And he made for the house ^dwindows with beveled frames.

⁵Against the wall of the ⁷temple he built ^echambers all around, against the walls of the temple, all around the sanctuary ^fand the ⁸inner sanctuary. Thus he made side chambers all around it. ⁶The lowest chamber was five cubits wide, the middle was six cubits wide, and the third was seven cubits wide; for he made narrow ledges around the outside of the temple, so that the support beams would not be fastened into the walls of the ⁹temple. ⁷And ^gthe temple, when it was being built, was built with stone finished at the quarry, so that no hammer or chisel or any iron tool was heard in the temple while it was being built. ⁸The doorway for the ¹middle story was on the right side of the temple. They went up by stairs to the middle story, and from the middle to the third.

⁹h So he built the ²temple and finished it, and he paneled the temple with beams and boards of cedar. ¹⁰And he built side chambers against the entire temple, each five cubits high; they were attached to the temple with cedar beams.

9 ^h 1 Kin. 6:14, 38 ² Lit. house

5:13, 14 labor force: The workmen were put to work as forced labor gangs on public projects. Solomon's long and extensive use of this type of social conscription to accomplish his vast building projects became a source of considerable difficulty for his successor Rehoboam (12:4).

5:15-17 quarried stone: Stonecutters were common laborers who cut and crushed rocks from a quarry.

6:1 four hundred and eightieth year: Many scholars take this date as the key date for establishing the time of the Exodus. The division of the kingdom at the death of Solomon can be dated at 930 B.C. (11:41-43). Allowing 40 years for Solomon's rule (11:42), the

fourth year of his reign would be 966 B.C. If the Exodus took place 480 years before 966 B.C., its date was 1446 B.C. Some consider this date too early for what occurs in the Book of Exodus and date the Exodus in the thirteenth century B.C. They suggest that the 480 years may be a round figure representing 12 generations, or that it may have been arrived at by adding the length of various concurrent or overlapping periods as though they were placed in one lineal string of eras.

6:2 house... for the LORD: For the interior of the temple Solomon followed the floor plan of the tabernacle but doubled its dimensions. **sixty cubits:** The standard cubit was about 18 inches. The dimensions here are approximately 90 feet long, 30 feet wide, and 45 feet high. Solomon's temple was constructed on Mt. Moriah (2 Chr. 3:1; see Gen. 22:2) at the threshing floor of Ornan (or Araunah, 2 Sam. 24:24). Like the tabernacle, the temple was divided into the Most Holy Place, the holy place, and an outer courtyard. The outer court contained a bronze altar for sacrifices and a brass basin set on the backs of 12 bulls. On the east end of the temple there was a porch. Before the entrance to the porch were two freestanding pillars: Jachin (to the right) and Boaz (to the left; see 7:21). Passing over the front porch one would enter the holy place. A veil separated the holy place from the Most Holy Place, in which were housed the ark and the mercy seat guarded by two cherubim. Only the priests could enter the temple itself to minister before the Lord.

6:5, 6 Three-storied chambers were built along the temple's outer walls. A series of **ledges** served as resting places for the beams of the floors. This meant that the three floors were progressively wider as one went up.

6:7 The rock was precut at the quarry for its proper fit in the temple building, so **no... tool was heard** at the temple itself. This required a high degree of skill in measuring, cutting, and fitting the immense stones in place.

stone

(Heb. *eben*) (5:17; Gen. 35:14; 2 Kin. 12:12) Strong's #68

The stones that littered the landscape of the ancient Middle East were used in numerous ways. They were the building material for houses, city walls, and fortifications (5:17; 2 Kin. 12:12). Stones were also used for religious purposes, to build sacred pillars (Gen. 35:14) and altars (Deut. 27:5). Sometimes stones were piled up as a memorial that marked the site of a divine revelation (Gen. 28:18, 22) or a significant event in the life of an individual (Gen. 31:46) or a nation (4:6). Because a stone was commonly used as a foundation for a structure, God Himself was called the "Stone of Israel" (Gen. 49:24). But Isaiah also described the Lord as "a stone of stumbling" for those Israelites who rejected Him (Is. 8:14). These same images were applied to Jesus Christ in the NT (Is. 28:16; 1 Pet. 2:4-8).

¹¹Then the word of the LORD came to Solomon, saying: ¹²*“Concerning this temple which you are building, ⁱif you walk in My statutes, execute My judgments, keep all My commandments, and walk in them, then I will perform My ⁴word with you, ^jwhich I spoke to your father David. ¹³And ^kI will dwell among the children of Israel, and will not ^lfor-sake My people Israel.”*

¹⁴So Solomon built the temple and finished it. ¹⁵And he built the inside walls of the temple with cedar boards; from the floor of the temple to the ceiling he paneled the inside with wood; and he covered the floor of the temple with planks

¹² ¹1 Kin. 2:4; 9:4 / [2 Sam. 7:13; 1 Chr. 22:10] ³ Lit. *house* ⁴ *promise*
¹³ ^k Ex. 25:8; Lev. 26:11; [2 Cor. 6:16; Rev. 21:3] ^l [Deut. 31:6]

¹⁶ ^m Ex. 26:33; Lev. 16:2; 1 Kin. 8:6; 2 Chr. 3:8; Ezek. 45:3; Heb. 9:3
¹⁹ ⁵ The Most Holy Place

of cypress. ¹⁶Then he built the twenty-cubit room at the rear of the temple, from floor to ceiling, with cedar boards; he built *it* inside as the inner sanctuary, as the ^mMost Holy Place. ¹⁷And in front of it the temple sanctuary was forty cubits long. ¹⁸The inside of the temple was cedar, carved with ornamental buds and open flowers. All *was* cedar; there was no stone *to be* seen.

¹⁹And he prepared the ⁵inner sanctuary inside the temple, to set the ark of the covenant of the LORD there. ²⁰The inner sanctuary *was* twenty cubits long, twenty cubits wide, and twenty cubits high. He overlaid it with pure gold, and overlaid

6:11 word of the LORD: This message to Solomon might have come by means of a prophet. On other occasions, Solomon had more personal encounters with the Lord (3:5; 9:2; 11:11).

6:12, 13 The most important work of Solomon was certainly the building of the temple. God promised to bless Solomon and his work if he faithfully obeyed His commands.

6:19 The ark of the covenant of the LORD (Deut. 10:8; Josh. 3:11)

is so named because it housed the two stone tablets of the covenant—the Ten Commandments (Deut. 10:1–5). The ark symbolized the presence of the sovereign God in the midst of His people (8:10, 11; Josh. 3:13).

6:20 the inner sanctuary: The Most Holy Place was a cube of 30 feet. **with pure gold:** The amount of gold is given as six hundred talents, or about 23 tons, in 2 Chr. 3:8.

Sparing No Expense

Whenever modern-day churches draw up plans and budgets for buildings in which to worship, they face an age-old tension: What is appropriate for a worship center in terms of size, materials, beauty, and expense? For Solomon, there seems to have been only one answer to that question as he proposed to build God's temple: Spare no expense! Consider the costliness of Solomon's temple:

- It was made of the most precious of building materials, many of them imported: cedar (5:6), quarried stone (5:15–18), gold (6:20–22), olive wood (6:23–28, 31–33), cypress (6:34), and bronze (7:13–47).
- The project employed 30,000 laborers (5:13), 150,000 stonemasons and haulers (5:15), and 3,300 supervisors (5:16).
- The temple was paneled with cedar, some of which was ornately carved (6:9, 15–18).
- Its floors and walls were overlaid with gold (6:20–22).
- It was furnished with items of finely crafted wood and gold (6:23–35; 7:48–50).
- So much bronze was used that its weight (and therefore cost) was not determined (7:45–47).
- The work continued nonstop for seven years (6:37–38).

Was Solomon justified in incurring such an expense? The question is not easily answered.

On the one hand, the project contributed to a number of problems of Solomon's reign: heavy taxation, a growing underclass of foreigners, and the depletion of the forests of Lebanon. The temple was not the sole cause of these troubles (9:15–19), but it was built with a policy of “only the best” that seemed to typify the Solomonic kingdom.

On the other hand, Solomon apparently recognized that architecture is not neutral; it makes a statement. The temple was a remarkable work of art, built to the glory of God (8:12, 13). God apparently approved of Solomon's achievement, for He blessed the sanctuary with His presence (8:10, 11).

Yet even as the construction went forward, the Lord reminded His builder that what mattered was not a house of cedar and gold, but the keeping of the Law (6:11–13). Perhaps that is the most important architectural principle of all when it comes to houses of worship: It is not the size, beauty, or expense of the structure, but the sincere devotion and obedience of those who worship in the structure. After all, the Lord does not dwell only in sanctuaries built by people, but in the people themselves (8:27; Acts 7:48; 17:24; 1 Cor. 6:19, 20).



One register from the Frieze of the Transportation of Timber, Neo-Assyrian period, c. 713–706 B.C. Cedar logs from Lebanon were likely floated in a similar manner for Solomon's temple.

Kim Walton, courtesy of the Louvre

the altar of cedar. ²¹So Solomon overlaid the inside of the temple with pure gold. He stretched gold chains across the front of the inner sanctuary, and overlaid it with gold. ²²The whole temple he overlaid with gold, until he had finished all the temple; also he overlaid with gold ⁿthe entire altar that *was* by the inner sanctuary.

²³Inside the inner sanctuary ^ohe made two cherubim of olive wood, *each* ten cubits high. ²⁴One wing of the cherub *was* five cubits, and the other wing of the cherub five cubits: ten cubits from the tip of one wing to the tip of the other. ²⁵And the other cherub *was* ten cubits; both cherubim *were* of the same size and shape. ²⁶The height of one cherub *was* ten cubits, and so *was* the other cherub. ²⁷Then he set the cherubim inside the inner ⁶room; and ⁿthey stretched out the wings of the cherubim so that the wing of the one touched *one* wall, and the wing of the other cherub touched the other wall. And their wings touched each other in the middle of the room. ²⁸Also he overlaid the cherubim with gold.

²⁹Then he carved all the walls of the temple all around, both the inner and outer *sanctuaries*, with carved ^qfigures of cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers. ³⁰And the floor of the temple he overlaid with gold, both the inner and outer *sanctuaries*.

³¹For the entrance of the inner sanctuary he made doors of olive wood; the lintel and doorposts *were* ⁷one-fifth of the wall. ³²The two doors *were* of olive wood; and he carved on them figures of cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers, and

²² ⁿ Ex. 30:1, 3, 6
²³ ^o Ex. 37:7-9;
2 Chr. 3:10-12
²⁷ ^p Ex. 25:20; 37:9;
1 Kin. 8:7; 2 Chr. 5:8
⁶ Lit. *house*
²⁹ ^q Ex. 36:8, 35
³¹ ^r Or *five-sided*

³³ ⁸ temple ⁹ Or
four-sided
³⁴ ^r Ezek. 41:23-25
³⁶ ^s 1 Kin. 7:12; Jer.
36:10
³⁷ ^t 1 Kin. 6:1 ¹ Or
Ayyar, April or May
³⁸ ^u 2 Sam. 7:13;
1 Kin. 5:5; 6:1;
8:19 ² Or *Heshvan*,
October or
November

CHAPTER 7
¹ ^a 1 Kin. 3:1; 9:10;
2 Chr. 8:1
² ^b 1 Kin. 10:17, 21;
2 Chr. 9:16 ¹ About
150 feet ² About
75 feet

overlaid *them* with gold; and he spread gold on the cherubim and on the palm trees. ³³So for the door of the ⁸sanctuary he also made doorposts of olive wood, ⁹one-fourth of the wall. ³⁴And the two doors *were* of cypress wood; ^rtwo panels *comprised* one folding door, and two panels *comprised* the other folding door. ³⁵Then he carved cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers *on them*, and overlaid *them* with gold applied evenly on the carved work.

³⁶And he built the ^sinner court with three rows of hewn stone and a row of cedar beams.

³⁷^tIn the fourth year the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid, in the month of ¹Ziv. ³⁸And in the eleventh year, in the month of ²Bul, which is the eighth month, the house was finished in all its details and according to all its plans. So he was ^useven years in building it.

Solomon's Other Buildings

⁷ But Solomon took ^athirteen years to build his own house; so he finished all his house.

²He also built the ^bHouse of the Forest of Lebanon; its length *was* ¹one hundred cubits, its width ²fifty cubits, and its height thirty cubits, with four rows of cedar pillars, and cedar beams on the pillars. ³And *it was* paneled with cedar above the beams that *were* on forty-five pillars, fifteen to a row. ⁴*There were* windows *with beveled frames* in three rows, and window *was* opposite window in three tiers. ⁵And all the doorways and doorposts *had* rectangular frames; and

6:23 The two **cherubim** were overlaid with gold and set so as to face the door to the holy place (2 Chr. 3:12, 13). These cherubim were large, standing 15 feet high. They were in addition to the two cherubim on the mercy seat (8:6–8). A cherub was probably similar to the winged sphinxes common in ancient Middle Eastern sculpture.

gold

(Heb. *zahab*) (6:20; 2 Sam. 21:4; 2 Chr. 9:1, 9; Job 23:10) Strong's #2091

This word almost always denotes the substance of gold, although occasionally it represents an alloy of gold (10:16) or the color gold (Zech. 4:12). Gold symbolized wealth and was quite often mentioned along with silver, both of which were abundant during Solomon's reign (Gen. 13:2; 2 Chr. 1:15; Ezek. 16:13). In the OT, most references to gold relate to the tabernacle or to Solomon's temple and palace (Ex. 25:3; 2 Chr. 2:7; 9:13–27). Although gold was valued highly and continues to be, the Scripture asserts that certain qualities are to be valued more: wisdom (Job 28:17), loving favor (Prov. 22:1), and the judgments, law, and commandments of the Lord (Ps. 19:9, 10; 119:72, 127).

ture. These creatures had a human face, a lion's body, and wings (see Ex. 25:19).
6:27 The **inner room** symbolized the dwelling place of the living God among His people. Only one person would enter this room, and that was the high priest on one day of the year.
6:29, 30 The decoration of the temple must have been exquisite. **cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers:** These same three figures are mentioned in vv. 32, 35. The temple was decorated with beautiful carvings, even in places most people would never see. The beauty of the building was a symbol of the beauty of God's presence.
6:31 The **entrance** to the inner sanctuary was two doors made of olive wood. A veil or curtain hung there as well (Ex. 26:31–36; 2 Chr. 3:14).
6:33, 34 Double-leaved, foldable doors made of cypress wood gave access to the holy place.
6:36 The use of the **inner court** was restricted to the priests.
6:37, 38 seven years: The period of time was necessary because of the greatness of the task. Solomon had immense crews of men engaged in the building of the temple (see 5:13–18).
7:1, 2 Solomon's desire to complete the Lord's house before building his own **house** is commendable. **House of the Forest of Lebanon:** Rows of cedar pillars as well as the free use of cedar throughout this building, gave a forest-like appearance to it. The building apparently was used at least in part as an armory (10:16, 17; Is. 22:8).

window *was* opposite window *in* three tiers.

⁶He also made the Hall of Pillars: its length *was* fifty cubits, and its width thirty cubits; and in front of them *was* a portico with pillars, and a canopy *was* in front of them.

⁷Then he made a hall for the throne,

⁷ ³ Lit. floor of the upper level
⁸ c 1 Kin. 3:1; 9:24; 11:1; 2 Chr. 8:11

the Hall of Judgment, where he might judge; and *it was* paneled with cedar from floor to ³ceiling.

⁸And the house where he dwelt *had* another court inside the hall, of like workmanship. Solomon also made a house like this hall for Pharaoh's daughter, ^cwhom he had taken *as wife*.

7:6, 7 The **Hall of Pillars** was a colonnaded entry hall to the Hall of Judgment. The **Hall of Judgment** was where the king could hear and decide cases too difficult for lesser officials.

7:8 **house where he dwelt:** Solomon's own house and that of

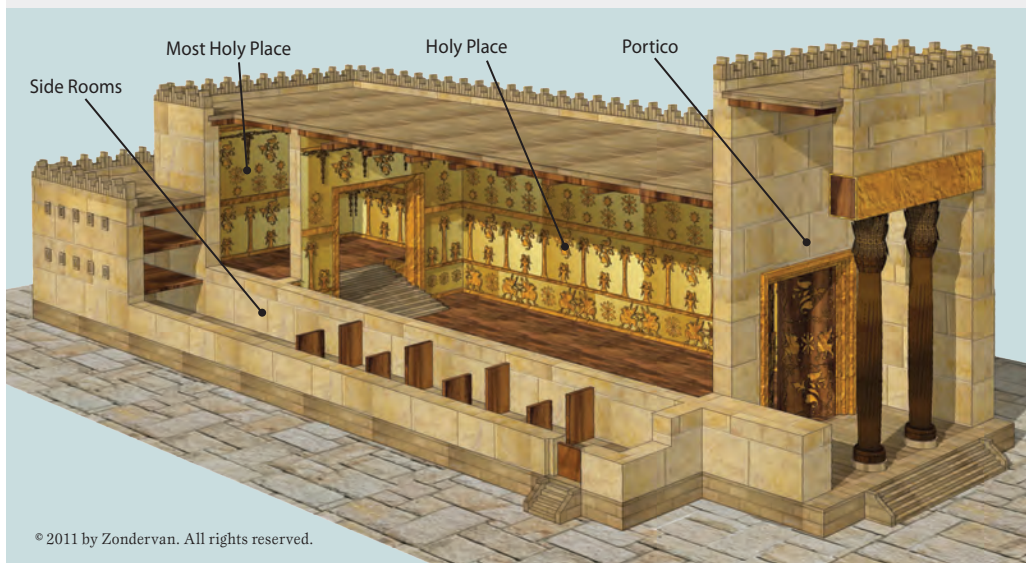
Pharaoh's daughter are mentioned last. The gate between the palace complex and the temple area is called "the gate of the escorts" (2 Kin. 11:19).

Solomon's Temple

The temple of Solomon, located near the king's palace, functioned as God's royal palace and Israel's national center of worship. The Lord said to Solomon, "I have consecrated this house . . . to put My name there forever, and My eyes and My heart will be there perpetually" (1 Kin. 9:3). By its cosmological and royal symbolism, the sanctuary taught the absolute sovereignty of the Lord over the whole creation and his special headship over Israel.

The floor plan is a type that has a long history in Semitic religion, particularly among the West Semites. An early example of the tripartite division into portico, main hall, and inner sanctuary has been found at Syrian Ebla (c. 2300 B.C.) and, much later but more contemporaneous with Solomon, at 'Ain Dara in north Syria (tenth century B.C.) and at Tell Taynat in southeast Turkey (eighth century B.C.). Like Solomon's, the temples at 'Ain Dara and at Tell Taynat had three divisions, had two columns supporting the entrance, and were located adjacent to the royal palace.

Many archaeological parallels can be drawn to the methods of construction used in the temple, e.g., the "hewn stone and . . . cedar beams" technique described in 1 Kin. 6:36. Interestingly, evidence for the largest bronze-casting industry ever found in the Holy Land comes from the same locale and period as that indicated in Scripture: Zarethan in the Jordan valley c. 1000 B.C.



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960–586 B.C.

Temple source materials are subject to academic interpretation, and subsequent art reconstructions vary.

This model recognizes influence from the wilderness tabernacle, accepts general Near Eastern cultural diffusion, and rejects overt pagan Canaanite symbols. It uses known archaeological parallels to supplement the text and assumes interior dimensions from 1 Kin. 6:17–20.

⁹All these *were* of costly stones cut to size, trimmed with saws, inside and out, from the foundation to the eaves, and also on the outside to the great court. ¹⁰The foundation *was* of costly stones, large stones, some ten cubits and some eight cubits. ¹¹And above *were* costly stones, hewn to size, and cedar wood. ¹²The great court *was* enclosed with three rows of hewn stones and a row of cedar beams. So were the ^dinner court of the house of the LORD ^eand the vestibule of the temple.

Hiram the Craftsman

¹³Now King Solomon sent and brought ^fHuram from Tyre. ¹⁴*He was* the son of a widow from the tribe of Naphtali, and ^ghis father *was* a man of Tyre, a bronze worker; ^hhe was filled with wisdom and

12 ^d 1 Kin. 6:36
^e John 10:23; Acts 3:11
13 ^f Heb. Hiram; cf. 2 Chr. 2:13, 14
14 ^f 2 Chr. 2:14
^g 2 Chr. 4:16 ^h Ex. 31:3; 36:1

15 ⁱ 2 Kin. 25:17;
2 Chr. 3:15; 4:12; Jer. 52:21 ^j fashioned

understanding and skill in working with all kinds of bronze work. So he came to King Solomon and did all his work.

The Bronze Pillars for the Temple

¹⁵And he ^jcast ⁱtwo pillars of bronze, each one eighteen cubits high, and a line of twelve cubits measured the circumference of each. ¹⁶Then he made two capitals of cast bronze, to set on the tops of the pillars. The height of one capital *was* five cubits, and the height of the other capital *was* five cubits. ¹⁷*He made* a lattice network, with wreaths of chainwork, for the capitals which *were* on top of the pillars: seven chains for one capital and seven for the other capital. ¹⁸So he made the pillars, and two rows of pomegranates above the network all around to

7:9 costly stones: Exquisitely dressed blocks of the best quality limestone.

7:12 The great court was an outer court enclosing the entire temple and palace complex.

7:13, 14 Hiram was of mixed parentage. His father was a Phoenician artisan who had married a widow from the tribe of Naphtali (2 Chr. 2:14). Like his father, Hiram had become a master crafts-

man; his contributions to the work on the temple were extensive (7:40–47).

7:15–22 Among the major works of Hiram were the freestanding pillars of bronze near the entrance of the temple. These were objects of great beauty and gave the appearance of formidable strength. These pillars spoke of the power and might of God.

Temple Furnishings

Glimpses of the rich ornamentation of Solomon's temple can be gained through recent discoveries that illumine the text of 1 Kin. 6–7.

1 ARK OF THE COVENANT

Cherubim with wings flanking a royal throne are attested in Egyptian, Israelite, and Phoenician art (e.g., at Megiddo).

2 SEA OF CAST BRONZE

An extremely close parallel to the wheeled portable basins used in the courtyard of the temple has come from archaeological excavations on Cyprus. This representation combines elements from the biblical text with the archaeological evidence.

3 INCENSE ALTAR


A stone incense altar having four horns on the corners was found at Megiddo. It provides a clear idea of the shape of the gold incense altar in the temple.

4 TABLE FOR THE SHOWBREAD

The table for the showbread was made of gold.

5 LAMPSTAND

Ten lampstands were in the temple, five on each side of the sanctuary (1 Kin. 7:49), to which were added ten tables (2 Chr. 4:8). Ritual sevenfold lamps have been found at several places in Israel, including Hazor and Dothan. The stand itself is modeled on bronze ones from the excavations at Megiddo.



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cover the capitals that *were* on top; and thus he did for the other capital.

¹⁹The capitals which *were* on top of the pillars in the hall *were* in the shape of lilies, four cubits. ²⁰The capitals on the two pillars also *had pomegranates* above, by the convex surface which *was* next to the network; and there *were* ^jtwo hundred such pomegranates in rows on each of the capitals all around.

²¹^kThen he set up the pillars by the vestibule of the temple; he set up the pillar on the right and called its name ⁶Jachin, and he set up the pillar on the left and called its name ⁷Boaz. ²²The tops of the pillars were in the shape of lilies. So the work of the pillars was finished.

The Sea and the Oxen

²³And he made ^lthe Sea of cast bronze, ten cubits from one brim to the other; *it was* completely round. Its height *was* five cubits, and a line of thirty cubits measured its circumference.

²⁴Below its brim *were* ornamental buds encircling it all around, ten to a cubit, ^mall the way around the Sea. The ornamental buds *were* cast in two rows when it was cast. ²⁵It stood on ⁿtwelve oxen: three looking toward the north, three looking toward the west, three looking toward the south, and three looking toward the east; the Sea *was set* upon them, and all their back parts *pointed* inward. ²⁶It *was* a handbreadth thick; and its brim was shaped like the brim of a cup, *like* a lily blossom. It contained ⁸two thousand baths.

The Carts and the Lavers

²⁷He also made ten ⁹carts of bronze; four cubits *was* the length of each cart, four cubits its width, and three cubits its height. ²⁸And this *was* the design of the carts: They had panels, and the panels *were* between frames; ²⁹on the panels that *were* between the frames *were* lions, oxen, and cherubim. And on the frames *was* a pedestal on top. Below the lions and oxen *were* wreaths of plaited work. ³⁰Every cart had four bronze wheels

20 / 2 Chr. 3:16; 4:13; Jer. 52:23
21 ^k 2 Chr. 3:17 ⁶ Lit. He Shall Establish
⁷ Lit. In It Is Strength
23 / 2 Kin. 25:13; 2 Chr. 4:2; Jer. 52:17
24 ^m 2 Chr. 4:3
25 ⁿ 2 Chr. 4:4, 5; Jer. 52:20
26 ⁸ About 12,000 gallons; three thousand, 2 Chr. 4:5
27 ⁹ Or stands

and axles of bronze, and its four feet had supports. Under the laver *were* supports of cast *bronze* beside each wreath. ³¹Its opening inside the crown at the top *was* one cubit in diameter; and the opening *was* round, shaped *like* a pedestal, one and a half cubits in outside diameter; and also on the opening *were* engravings, but the panels were square, not round. ³²Under the panels *were* the four wheels, and the axles of the wheels *were joined* to the cart. The height of a wheel *was* one and a half cubits. ³³The workmanship of the wheels *was* like the workmanship of a chariot wheel; their axle pins, their rims, their spokes, and their hubs *were* all of cast *bronze*. ³⁴And *there were* four supports at the four corners of each cart; its supports *were* part of the cart itself. ³⁵On the top of the cart, at the height of half a cubit, *it was* perfectly round. And on the top of the cart, its flanges and its panels *were* of the same casting. ³⁶On the plates of its flanges and on its panels he engraved cherubim, lions, and palm trees, wherever there was a clear space on each, with wreaths all around. ³⁷Thus he made the ten carts. All of them were of ¹the same mold, one measure, and one shape.

³⁸Then ^ohe made ten lavers of bronze; each laver contained ²forty baths, and each laver *was* four cubits. On each of the ten carts *was* a laver. ³⁹And he put five carts on the right side of the house, and five on the left side of the house. He set the Sea on the right side of the house, toward the southeast.

Furnishings of the Temple

⁴⁰^pHuram³ made the lavers and the shovels and the bowls. So Hiram finished doing all the work that he was to do for King Solomon for the house of the LORD: ⁴¹the two pillars, the *two* bowl-shaped capitals that *were* on top of the two pillars; the two ^qnetworks covering the two bowl-shaped capitals which *were* on top of the pillars; ⁴²^rfour hundred pomegranates for the two networks (two rows of pomegranates for each network, to cover the two bowl-shaped capitals that *were* on

37 ¹ one
38 ^o Ex. 30:18;
2 Chr. 4:6 ² About 240 gallons
40 ^p 2 Chr. 4:11–5:1
³ Heb. Hiram; cf. 2 Chr. 2:13, 14
41 ^q 1 Kin. 7:17, 18
42 ^r 1 Kin. 7:20

7:21 Jachin ... Boaz: Giving symbolic names to the pillars helped teach their meaning in the true worship of the living God. Jachin means "He Will Establish." Boaz may mean "In Him Is Strength." Another possible meaning is "He Is Quick." These two free-standing pillars were placed near the porch in front of the temple (2 Chr. 3:17). There is a question about the height of the capitals. Verse 16 records it as five cubits (as does Jer. 52:22), but 2 Kin. 25:17 as three cubits. This apparent discrepancy may involve simply a difference in what was measured, with 2 Kin. 25:17 recording the size of only the upper portion of the capitals.

7:23–26 Cast in one piece and set upon 12 bronze oxen, the **Sea of**

cast bronze replaced the laver of washings for the tabernacle (Ex. 30:17–21). While the quantity of water held by the Sea is given here as two thousand baths (about 11,500 gallons), three thousand baths (17,500 gallons) is recorded in 2 Chr. 4:5. The figure in 2 Chronicles could be an error of copying (in the previous verse the number three occurs four times), or possibly it is an example of using different standards for the length of the cubit.

7:27–38 The **ten carts** each containing a bronze laver (v. 38) were arranged beside the molten Sea, five on either side, and were used for rinsing the burnt offerings (2 Chr. 4:6). These carts were both functional and ornamental.

top of the pillars); ⁴³the ten carts, and ten lavers on the carts; ⁴⁴one Sea, and twelve oxen under the Sea; ⁴⁵the pots, the shovels, and the bowls.

All these articles which ⁴Huram made for King Solomon for the house of the LORD were of burnished bronze. ⁴⁶^tIn the plain of Jordan the king had them cast in clay molds, between ^uSuccoth and ^vZaretan. ⁴⁷And Solomon did not weigh all the articles, because *there were* so many; the weight of the bronze was not ^wdetermined.

⁴⁸Thus Solomon had all the furnishings made for the house of the LORD: ^xthe altar of gold, and ^ythe table of gold on which *was* ^zthe showbread; ⁴⁹the lampstands of pure gold, five on the right *side* and five on the left in front of the inner sanctuary, with the flowers and the lamps and the wick-trimmers of gold; ⁵⁰the basins, the trimmers, the bowls, the ladles, and the ⁵censers of pure gold; and the hinges of gold, *both* for the doors of the inner room (the Most Holy Place) and for the doors of the main hall of the temple.

⁵¹So all the work that King Solomon had done for the house of the LORD was finished; and Solomon brought in the things ^awhich his father David had dedicated: the silver and the gold and the furnishings. He put them in the treasuries of the house of the LORD.

The Ark Brought into the Temple

8 Now ^aSolomon assembled the elders of Israel and all the heads of the tribes, the chief fathers of the children of Israel, to King Solomon in Jerusalem,

⁴⁵ ^s Ex. 27:3; 2 Chr. 4:16 ^t Heb. *Hiram*; cf. 2 Chr. 2:13, 14 ⁴⁶ ^u 2 Chr. 4:17 ^v Gen. 33:17; Josh. 13:27 ^w Josh. 3:16 ⁴⁷ ^x 1 Chr. 22:3, 14 ⁴⁸ ^y Ex. 37:25, 26; 2 Chr. 4:8 ^z Ex. 37:10, 11 ¹ Lev. 24:5-8 ⁵⁰ ⁵ *firepans* ⁵¹ ^a 2 Sam. 8:11; 1 Chr. 18:11; 2 Chr. 5:1

CHAPTER 8

¹ ^a Num. 1:4; 7:2; 2 Chr. 5:2-14

^b 2 Sam. 6:12-17; 1 Chr. 15:25-29 ^c 2 Sam. 5:7; 6:12, 16 ² ^d Lev. 23:34; 1 Kin. 8:65; 2 Chr. 7:8-10 ¹ Or *Tishri*, September or October ³ ^e Num. 4:15; 7:9; Deut. 31:9; Josh. 3:3, 6 ⁴ ^f 1 Kin. 3:4; 2 Chr. 1:3 ² ^g *tent* ⁵ ^g 2 Sam. 6:13; 2 Chr. 1:6 ⁶ ^h 2 Sam. 6:17 ¹ Ex. 26:33, 34; 1 Kin. 6:19 ¹ 1 Kin. 6:27 ⁸ ^k Ex. 25:13-15; 37:4, 5 ³ ⁱ *heads* ⁹ ^j Ex. 25:21; Deut. 10:2 ^m Ex. 25:16; Deut. 10:5; Heb. 9:4 ⁿ Ex. 24:7, 8; 40:20; Deut. 4:13 ^o Ex. 34:27, 28 ¹⁰ ^p Ex. 40:34, 35; 2 Chr. 7:1, 2 ¹¹ ^q 2 Chr. 7:1, 2

^bthat they might bring ^cup the ark of the covenant of the LORD from the City of David, which is Zion. ²Therefore all the men of Israel assembled with King Solomon at the ^dfeast in the month of ¹Ethanim, which *is* the seventh month. ³So all the elders of Israel came, ^eand the priests took up the ark. ⁴Then they brought up the ark of the LORD, ^fthe ²tabernacle of meeting, and all the holy furnishings that *were* in the tabernacle. The priests and the Levites brought them up. ⁵Also King Solomon, and all the congregation of Israel who were assembled with him, *were* with him before the ark, ^gsacrificing sheep and oxen that could not be counted or numbered for multitude. ⁶Then the priests ^hbrought in the ark of the covenant of the LORD to ⁱits place, into the inner sanctuary of the temple, to the Most Holy Place, ^junder the wings of the cherubim. ⁷For the cherubim spread *their* two wings over the place of the ark, and the cherubim overshadowed the ark and its poles. ⁸The poles ^kextended so that the ³ends of the poles could be seen from the holy *place*, in front of the inner sanctuary; but they could not be seen from outside. And they are there to this day. ⁹¹Nothing *was* in the ark ^mexcept the two tablets of stone which Moses ⁿput there at Horeb, ^owhen the LORD made a *covenant* with the children of Israel, when they came out of the land of Egypt.

¹⁰And it came to pass, when the priests came out of the holy *place*, that the cloud ^pfilled the house of the LORD, ¹¹so that the priests could not continue ministering because of the cloud; for the ^qglory of the LORD filled the house of the LORD.

7:48 The furnishings of the temple were designed to correspond with similar furnishings in the tabernacle. The golden altar replaced the altar of incense (Ex. 30:2–4), ten golden tables (2 Chr. 4:8) took the place of the table of the presence (Ex. 25:23–30), and ten lampstands were substituted for the one golden lampstand (Ex. 25:31–40). Although there were ten tables and lampstands where before there was one, their functions remained the same, all ten being considered one unit (see 2 Chr. 29:18).

7:51 The gifts of David dedicated to service in the temple were probably stored in one of the side chambers. David's personal example of giving (see 1 Chr. 29:1–9) provided a high model of godly concern in leadership.

8:1 Having been brought to Jerusalem previously (2 Sam. 6), the ark of the covenant was now put in its place in the temple. Because the temple was completed in the eighth month of Solomon's eleventh year of reign, Solomon must have waited some 11 months for the dedication of the temple. This would allow all the furnishings to be completed and installed, final touches to be added, and ample preparation to be made for this solemn yet joyful event. The feast of tabernacles, occurring at the conclusion of the ceremonial year and commemorating God's granting of rest in the Promised Land to His people would provide a particularly appropriate occasion. Moreover, the covenant renewal observed in connection with this great feast (Deut. 31:10) made this time all the more appropriate. Accordingly, the festival season was lengthened to two weeks to

allow the sacredness and joy of these days to have their full effect (see 2 Chr. 5:11–13).

8:3, 4 The holy ark was carried by the priests; all was done as God's law demanded.

8:5–7 The joy of the people is seen in the abundance of sacrifices of sheep and oxen. The placement of the holy ark in its proper place without incident was truly a reason to celebrate. They had brought the symbol of the living God into the shrine which had been built to honor Him.

8:8 poles could be seen: This statement probably means that the carrying poles of the ark, which were not to be removed from their rings (Ex. 25:15), were so long that if one were to attempt to see their length, one would have to look into the Most Holy Place to see their ends. The ark with its poles was thus aligned crosswise to the door (or north to south).

8:9 The two tablets of stone upon which the Ten Commandments were inscribed were known as the "tablets of the covenant" (Deut. 9:9) and were kept in the ark (Deut. 10:1–5, 8) along with the jar of manna (Ex. 16:33, 34) and Aaron's rod that budded (Num. 17:10).

8:10, 11 As a cloud had covered the tabernacle and God's glory had filled it when it was inaugurated (Ex. 40:34, 35), so now a cloud filled the temple. This visible presence of God's dwelling with His people—sometimes called the "shekinah glory"—gave the people assurance and incentive for obedient and holy living.

12^r Then Solomon spoke:

“The LORD said He would dwell ^sin the dark cloud.

13 ^tI have surely built You an exalted house,

“And a place for You to dwell in forever.”

Solomon's Speech at Completion of the Work

14 Then the king turned around and ^vblessed the whole assembly of Israel, while all the assembly of Israel was standing. 15 And he said: ^w“Blessed *be* the LORD God of Israel, who ^xspoke with His mouth to my father David, and with His hand has fulfilled *it*, saying, 16 “Since the day that I brought My people Israel out of Egypt, I have chosen no city from any tribe of Israel *in which* to build a house, that ^yMy name might be there; but I chose ^zDavid to be over My people Israel.’ 17 Now ^ait was in the heart of my father David to build a ⁴temple for the name of the LORD God of Israel. 18 ^bBut the LORD said to my father David, ‘Whereas it was in your heart to build a temple for My name, you did well that it was in your heart. 19 Nevertheless ^cyou shall not build the temple, but your son who will come from your body, he shall build the temple for My name.’ 20 So the LORD has fulfilled His word which He spoke; and I have ⁵filled the position of my father David, and sit on the throne of Israel, ^das the LORD promised; and I have built a temple for the name of the LORD God of Israel. 21 And there I have made a place for the ark, in which *is* ^ethe covenant of the

12 ^r 2 Chr. 6:1 ^s Lev. 16:2; Ps. 18:11; 97:2
13 ^t 2 Sam. 7:13
^u [Ex. 15:17]; Ps. 132:14

14 ^v 2 Sam. 6:18; 1 Kin. 8:55
15 ^w 1 Chr. 29:10, 20; Neh. 9:5; Luke 1:68
^x 2 Sam. 7:2, 12, 13, 25; 1 Chr. 22:10
16 ^y Deut. 12:5;
1 Kin. 8:29 ^z 1 Sam. 16:1; 2 Sam. 7:8;
1 Chr. 28:4

17 ^a 2 Sam. 7:2, 3;
1 Chr. 17:1, 2 ⁴ Lit. house, and so in vv. 18–20
18 ^b 2 Chr. 6:8, 9
19 ^c 2 Sam. 7:5, 12, 13; 1 Kin. 5:3, 5; 6:38;
1 Chr. 17:11, 12; 22:8–10; 2 Chr. 6:2
20 ^d 1 Chr. 28:5, 6
⁵ risen in the place of

21 ^e Deut. 31:26;
1 Kin. 8:9
22 ^f 1 Kin. 8:54;
2 Chr. 6:12 ^g Ex. 9:33; Ezra 9:5
23 ^h Ex. 15:11;
2 Sam. 7:22 ⁱ [Deut. 7:9; Neh. 1:5; Dan. 9:4] / [Gen. 17:1; 1 Kin. 3:6]; 2 Kin. 20:3
25 ^k 2 Sam. 7:12, 16;
1 Kin. 2:4; 9:5
26 ^l 2 Sam. 7:25
27 ^m [2 Chr. 2:6; Is. 66:1; Acts 7:49; 17:24] ⁿ 2 Cor. 12:2
29 ^o Deut. 12:11
^p 1 Kin. 9:3; 2 Chr. 7:15 ^q Dan. 6:10
⁶ Lit. house

LORD which He made with our fathers, when He brought them out of the land of Egypt.”

Solomon's Prayer of Dedication

22 Then Solomon stood before ^fthe altar of the LORD in the presence of all the assembly of Israel, and ^gspread out his hands toward heaven; 23 and he said: “LORD God of Israel, ^hthere is no God in heaven above or on earth below like You, ⁱwho keep Your covenant and mercy with Your servants who ^jwalk before You with all their hearts. 24 You have kept what You promised Your servant David my father; You have both spoken with Your mouth and fulfilled *it* with Your hand, as *it* is this day. 25 Therefore, LORD God of Israel, now keep what You promised Your servant David my father, saying, ^k“You shall not fail to have a man sit before Me on the throne of Israel, only if your sons take heed to their way, that they walk before Me as you have walked before Me.’ 26 ^lAnd now I pray, O God of Israel, let Your word come true, which You have spoken to Your servant David my father.

27 “But ^mwill God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the ⁿheaven of heavens cannot contain You. How much less this temple which I have built! 28 Yet regard the prayer of Your servant and his supplication, O LORD my God, and listen to the cry and the prayer which Your servant is praying before You today: 29 that Your eyes may be open toward this ⁶temple night and day, toward the place of which You said, ^o“My name shall be ^pthere,’ that You may hear the prayer which Your servant makes ^qtoward this

8:12, 13 Then Solomon spoke: God’s dwelling in dark clouds is often mentioned in the Scriptures (Ex. 19:9; 20:21). This is a sign of His transcendence. Yet He is both near and far, both immanent and transcendent. God is obscured by a dark cloud; but at the same time He chooses to be present in His exalted house.

8:14–21 Here is a model for public declaration in a formal setting. Throughout there is glory given to the Lord, as well as a fair assessment of the work of His people in accomplishing His will.

8:20 the LORD has fulfilled: Israel’s God is a keeper of promises. His promise to give Abraham’s descendants a land (Gen. 15:13, 14, 18–21; see Josh. 14:12–15) had been provisionally realized (Josh. 21:43–45). Solomon also appropriated God’s promise to David (see 2 Sam. 7:12–18). Subsequent kings in the Davidic line could likewise by faith enjoy the blessings of God promised in the Davidic covenant (see Ps. 89:3, 4, 19–24, 27–37; see Ps. 2).

8:22–30 Solomon had begun his reign with a conscious dependence on God (3:9). His long public prayer (vv. 22–53) recognized that continuing need in his life (vv. 26, 28) and the lives of his people (vv. 30, 31, 33, 35, 38, 44, 46–48). In his prayer Solomon stressed God’s faithfulness, and the need for similar faithfulness on the part of Israel, rulers and people alike, if God’s full blessings were to be realized.

8:27 heaven . . . temple: The God of Scripture is infinite; all that He has made, vast as creation may be, finally has its limits. No mere building, no matter how wonderful, can be thought of as the dwell-

ing place of God. Yet in His grace the Lord condescends to be viewed as having His dwelling among men. God’s dwelling in a temple prefigured the Incarnation when the Creator became man, born in a stable in Bethlehem.

supplication

(Heb. *techinnah*) (8:28; Jer. 42:2, 9; Dan. 9:20) Strong’s #8467

This word signifies a petition for favor or mercy. Supplication is almost always directed to God; but Jeremiah used the word twice to represent a formal petition he made to a king (Jer. 37:20; 38:26). Of the 24 occurrences of this word in the OT, 13 are in connection with Solomon’s prayer dedicating the temple (8:23—9:3; 2 Chr. 6:14–42). Other words with the same root (and indicating supplication) occur seven times in the same context. Supplication is generally a petition for God to be merciful in the impending distress; thus personal enemies are cited on several occasions (Ps. 55:1–3; 119:70; Jer. 36:7). The Bible specifically records that God heard the supplications of David (Ps. 6:9), Solomon (9:3), and of wicked King Manasseh, who humbled himself before God (2 Chr. 33:12, 13).

place.^{30r} And may You hear the supplication of Your servant and of Your people Israel, when they pray toward this place. Hear in heaven Your dwelling place; and when You hear, forgive.

³¹ “When anyone sins against his neighbor, and is forced to take ^san oath, and comes *and* takes an oath before Your altar in this temple, ³² then hear in heaven, and act, and judge Your servants, ^tcondemning the wicked, bringing his way on his head, and justifying the righteous by giving him according to his righteousness.

³³ “When Your people Israel are defeated before an enemy because they have sinned against You, and ^vwhen they turn back to You and confess Your name, and pray and make supplication to You in this temple, ³⁴ then hear in heaven, and forgive the sin of Your people Israel, and bring them back to the land which You gave to their ^wfathers.

³⁵ “When the heavens are shut up and there is no rain because they have sinned against You, when they pray toward this place and confess Your name, and turn from their sin because You afflict them, ³⁶ then hear in heaven, and forgive the sin of Your servants, Your people Israel, that You may ^yteach them ^zthe good way in which they should walk; and send rain on Your land which You have given to Your people as an inheritance.

³⁷ “When there is famine in the land, pestilence *or* blight *or* mildew, locusts *or* grasshoppers; when their enemy besieges them in the land of their ⁷cities; whatever plague *or* whatever sickness *there is*; ³⁸ whatever prayer, whatever supplication is made by anyone, *or* by all Your people Israel, when each one knows the plague of his own heart, and spreads out his hands toward this temple: ³⁹ then hear in heaven Your dwelling place, and forgive, and act, and give to everyone according to all his ways, whose heart You know (for You alone ^bknow the hearts of all the sons of men), ⁴⁰ ^cthat they may fear You all the days that they live in the land which You gave to our fathers.

³⁰ ^r Neh. 1:6
³¹ ^s Ex. 22:8-11
³² ^t Deut. 25:1
³³ ^v Lev. 26:17; Deut. 28:25 ^v Lev. 26:39, 40
³⁴ ^w [Lev. 26:40-42; Deut. 30:1-3]
³⁵ ^x Lev. 26:19; Deut. 28:23
³⁶ ^y Ps. 25:4; 27:11; 94:12 ^z 1 Sam. 12:23
³⁷ ^a Lev. 26:16, 25, 26; Deut. 28:21, 22, 27, 38, 42, 52 ⁷ Lit. *gates*
³⁹ ^b [1 Sam. 16:7; 1 Chr. 28:9; Jer. 17:10]; Acts 1:24
⁴⁰ ^c [Ps. 130:4]

⁴² ^d Ex. 13:3; Deut. 3:24

⁴³ ^e [Ex. 9:16; 1 Sam. 17:46; 2 Kin. 19:19] ^f Ps. 102:15

⁴⁵ ^g *justice*
⁴⁶ ^g 2 Chr. 6:36; Ps. 130:3; Prov. 20:9; Eccl. 7:20; [Rom. 3:23; 1 John 1:8, 10] ^h Lev. 26:34, 44; Deut. 28:36, 64; 2 Kin. 17:6, 18; 25:21

⁴⁷ ⁱ [Lev. 26:40-42]; Neh. 9:2 / Ezra 9:6, 7; Neh. 1:6; Ps. 106:6; Dan. 9:5
⁴⁹ ^j Lit. *bring back to their heart*

⁴⁸ ^k Jer. 29:12-14
⁴⁹ ^l Dan. 6:10; Jon. 2:4

⁵⁰ ^m [2 Chr. 30:9]; Ezra 7:6; Ps. 106:46; Acts 7:10

⁵¹ ⁿ Ex. 32:11, 12; Deut. 9:26-29; Neh. 1:10; [Rom. 11:28, 29]

⁴¹ “Moreover, concerning a foreigner, who is not of Your people Israel, but has come from a far country for Your name’s sake ⁴² (for they will hear of Your great name and Your ^dstrong hand and Your outstretched arm), when he comes and prays toward this temple, ⁴³ hear in heaven Your dwelling place, and do according to all for which the foreigner calls to You, ^ethat all peoples of the earth may know Your name and ^ffear You, as *do* Your people Israel, and that they may know that this temple which I have built is called by Your name.

⁴⁴ “When Your people go out to battle against their enemy, wherever You send them, and when they pray to the LORD toward the city which You have chosen and the temple which I have built for Your name, ⁴⁵ then hear in heaven their prayer and their supplication, and maintain their ^gcause.

⁴⁶ “When they sin against You ^g (for *there is* no one who does not sin), and You become angry with them and deliver them to the enemy, and they take them captive ^h to the land of the enemy, far or near; ⁴⁷ ⁱyet when they ^gcome to themselves in the land where they were carried captive, and repent, and make supplication to You in the land of those who took them captive, ^jsaying, ‘We have sinned and done wrong, we have committed wickedness’; ⁴⁸ and *when* they ^kreturn to You with all their heart and with all their soul in the land of their enemies who led them away captive, and ^lpray to You toward their land which You gave to their fathers, the city which You have chosen and the temple which I have built for Your name: ⁴⁹ then hear in heaven Your dwelling place their prayer and their supplication, and maintain their ^lcause, ⁵⁰ and forgive Your people who have sinned against You, and all their transgressions which they have transgressed against You; and ^mgrant them compassion before those who took them captive, that they may have compassion on them ⁵¹ (for ⁿthey *are* Your people and

8:30 Since God was present in the temple in Jerusalem, prayer was to be directed toward **this place** (see Ex. 15:17; Dan. 6:10).

8:31, 32 Solomon’s first request asks for righteous judgment. In such situations where there was insufficient evidence to establish a charge, the accused was obliged to **take an oath** declaring his innocence.

8:33 sinned against You: Solomon’s second request asks for forgiveness of sin, where sin against God has caused Israel to be defeated.

8:35–40 Solomon’s third and fourth requests deal with healing the land after distress or drought due to the people’s sin (see Deut. 28:21–24, 38, 42, 52, 59–61). The remedy in such cases of judgment is repentance and prayer for forgiveness, followed by renewed faithfulness to the standards of God’s covenant.

8:41–43 Solomon’s fifth request deals with prayer by a **foreigner**. Unlike God’s people or resident aliens within the commonwealth of Israel (see Deut. 10:18, 19), foreigners have no particular claim on the ear of God. But God’s people expected foreigners to be drawn to Him through the worship of His people.

8:44–53 Solomon’s sixth and seventh requests concern matters relative to wartime situations. **Battle** (v. 44) was to be waged in accordance with divine directions (Deut. 20; 21:10–14) and could be lost by disobedience (see Deut. 28:64–68; Josh. 7). Believers must face all of life’s crucial encounters with trust in God and faithful adherence to the standards of His word (Ps. 91; 119:57–61, 161–168, 173–176).

Your inheritance, whom You brought out of Egypt, ^aout of the iron furnace), ⁵²*r* that Your eyes may be open to the supplication of Your servant and the supplication of Your people Israel, to listen to them whenever they call to You. ⁵³For You separated them from among all the peoples of the earth *to be* Your inheritance, ^qas You spoke by Your servant Moses, when You brought our fathers out of Egypt, O Lord God.”

Solomon Blesses the Assembly

⁵⁴*r* And so it was, when Solomon had finished praying all this prayer and supplication to the LORD, that he arose from before the altar of the LORD, from kneeling on his knees with his hands spread up to heaven. ⁵⁵Then he stood ^sand blessed all the assembly of Israel with a loud voice, saying: ⁵⁶“Blessed *be* the LORD, who has given ^trest² to His people Israel, according to all that He promised. ^uThere has not failed one word of all His good promise, which He promised through His servant Moses. ⁵⁷May the LORD our God be with us, as He was with our fathers. ^vMay He not leave us nor forsake us, ⁵⁸that He may ^wincline our hearts to Himself, to walk in all His ways, and to keep His commandments and His statutes and His judgments, which He commanded our fathers. ⁵⁹And may these words of mine, with which I have made supplication before the LORD, be near the LORD our God day and night, that He may maintain the cause of His servant and the cause of His people Israel, as each day may require, ⁶⁰*x* that all the peoples of the earth may know that ^ythe LORD is God; *there is* no other. ⁶¹Let your ^zheart therefore be ³loyal to the LORD our God, to walk in His statutes and keep His commandments, as at this day.”

Solomon Dedicates the Temple

⁶²Then ^athe king and all Israel with him offered sacrifices before the LORD. ⁶³And Solomon offered a sacrifice of peace offerings, which he offered to the

⁵¹ ^o Deut. 4:20; Jer. 11:4
⁵² ^p 1 Kin. 8:29
⁵³ ^q Ex. 19:5, 6
⁵⁴ ^r 2 Chr. 7:1
⁵⁵ ^s Num. 6:23-26; 2 Sam. 6:18; 1 Kin. 8:14
⁵⁶ ^t 1 Chr. 22:18
⁵⁷ ^u Deut. 12:10; Josh. 21:45; 23:14 ² *peace*
⁵⁸ ^v Deut. 31:6; Josh. 1:5; 1 Sam. 12:22; [Rom. 8:31-37]; Heb. 13:5
⁵⁹ ^w Ps. 119:36; Jer. 31:33
⁶⁰ ^x Josh. 4:24; 1 Sam. 17:46; 1 Kin. 8:43; 2 Kin. 19:19
⁶¹ ^y Deut. 4:35, 39; 1 Kin. 18:39; [Jer. 10:10-12]
⁶² ^z Deut. 18:13; 1 Kin. 11:4; 15:3, 14; 2 Kin. 20:3 ³ *Lit. at peace with*
⁶³ ^a 2 Chr. 7:4-10

⁶⁴ ^b 2 Chr. 7:7
⁶⁵ ^d Lev. 23:34; 1 Kin. 8:2 ^e Num. 34:8; Josh. 13:5; Judg. 3:3; 2 Kin. 14:25 ^f Gen. 15:18; Ex. 23:31; Num. 34:5 ^g 2 Chr. 7:8
⁶⁶ ^h 2 Chr. 7:9
ⁱ *thanked*

CHAPTER 9

¹ ^a 2 Chr. 7:11
² ^b 1 Kin. 7:1 ^c 2 Chr. 8:6
³ ^d 1 Kin. 3:5; 11:9; 2 Chr. 1:7
⁴ ^e 2 Kin. 20:5; Ps. 10:17 ^f 1 Kin. 8:29
⁵ ^g Deut. 11:12
⁶ ^h Gen. 17:1 ⁱ 1 Kin. 11:4, 6; 15:5 ^j 1 Kin. 8:61
⁷ ^k 2 Sam. 7:12, 16; 1 Kin. 2:4; 6:12; 8:25; 1 Chr. 22:10; Matt. 1:6; 25:31
⁸ ^l 2 Sam. 7:14-16; 2 Chr. 7:19, 20; Ps. 89:30 ¹ *turn back*

LORD, twenty-two thousand bulls and one hundred and twenty thousand sheep. So the king and all the children of Israel dedicated the house of the LORD. ⁶⁴On ^bthe same day the king consecrated the middle of the court that *was* in front of the house of the LORD; for there he offered burnt offerings, grain offerings, and the fat of the peace offerings, because the ^cbronze altar that *was* before the LORD *was* too small to receive the burnt offerings, the grain offerings, and the fat of the peace offerings.

⁶⁵At that time Solomon held ^da feast, and all Israel with him, a great assembly from ^ethe entrance of Hamath to ^fthe Brook of Egypt, before the LORD our God, ^gseven days and seven *more* days—fourteen days. ⁶⁶^hOn the eighth day he sent the people away; and they ⁱblessed the king, and went to their tents joyful and glad of heart for all the good that the LORD had done for His servant David, and for Israel His people.

God's Second Appearance to Solomon

⁹And ^ait came to pass, when Solomon had finished building the house of the LORD ^band the king's house, and ^call Solomon's desire which he wanted to do, ²that the LORD appeared to Solomon the second time, ^das He had appeared to him at Gibeon. ³And the LORD said to him: ^e“I have heard your prayer and your supplication that you have made before Me; I have consecrated this house which you have built ^fto put My name there forever, ^gand My eyes and My heart will be there perpetually. ⁴Now if you ^hwalk before Me ⁱas your father David walked, in integrity of heart and in uprightness, to do according to all that I have commanded you, ^{and} if you ^jkeep My statutes and My judgments, ⁵then I will establish the throne of your kingdom over Israel forever, ^kas I promised David your father, saying, ‘You shall not fail to have a man on the throne of Israel.’ ⁶^lBut if you or your sons at all ¹turn from following Me, and do not keep My commandments ^{and} My statutes which I have set before you,

8:54 he arose . . . from kneeling: The parallel account of 2 Chr. 6:12-42 records that Solomon knelt on a tall platform that he had built for the occasion in order that all might see him praying before God. Chronicles reports that Solomon closed his prayer with a plea (see Ps. 132:8-10) that God would continue residing with His people and remembering His promises to David (2 Chr. 6:41, 42). The writer of Kings records Solomon's dedicatory blessing on the congregation of Israel, in which Solomon praises God for giving the people their present rest (vv. 54-66; see Deut. 12:9-25), invokes God's continued presence and direction of His people (vv. 57-60), and challenges the people to be loyal to God and His laws (v. 61). Chronicles adds that Solomon's prayer and blessing were accompanied by heavenly fire that consumed the sacrifice on the altar (2 Chr. 7:1-3).

8:60 all the peoples: This verse does not limit God to the Jews only but includes Gentiles as well.

8:61 The Hebrew term translated **loyal** basically means “at peace with,” hence, “complete” or “perfect” (see also 11:4; 15:3, 14).

8:62-66 The ceremony concluded with many special **sacrifices** (v. 62) and ended on a high note of **joyful** (v. 66) praise and thanksgiving to God for His goodness.

9:1-9 the second time: God had appeared previously to Solomon in Gibeon (3:4-15). The Lord's warning was a necessary reminder for Solomon, who would come to compromise the conditions required for enjoying God's blessing. Solomon would have to endure the consequences of disobedience (see 11:1-11).

but go and serve other gods and worship them, ^{7m}then I will ²cut off Israel from the land which I have given them; and this house which I have consecrated ⁿfor My name I will cast out of My sight. ^oIsrael will be a proverb and a byword among all peoples. ⁸And as for ^pthis house, which is exalted, everyone who passes by it will be astonished and will hiss, and say, ^q“Why has the LORD done thus to this land and to this house?” ⁹Then they will answer, “Because they forsook the LORD their God, who brought their fathers out of the land of Egypt, and have embraced other gods, and worshiped them and served them; therefore the LORD has brought all this ^rcalamity on them.”

Solomon and Hiram Exchange Gifts

¹⁰Now ^sit happened at the end of twenty years, when Solomon had built the two houses, the house of the LORD and the king's house ^{11t}(Hiram the king of Tyre had supplied Solomon with cedar and cypress and gold, as much as he desired), that King Solomon then gave Hiram twenty cities in the land of Galilee. ¹²Then Hiram went from Tyre to see the cities which Solomon had given him, but they did not please him. ¹³So he said, “What *kind of cities* are these which you have given me, my brother?” ^uAnd he called them the land of ³Cabul, as they are to this day. ¹⁴Then Hiram sent the king one hundred and twenty talents of gold.

Solomon's Additional Achievements

¹⁵And this is the reason for ^vthe labor force which King Solomon raised: to build the house of the LORD, his own house, ⁴the ^wMillo, the wall of Jerusalem, ^xHazor, ^yMegiddo, and ^zGezer. ¹⁶(Pharaoh king of Egypt had gone up and taken Gezer and burned it with fire, ^ahad killed the Canaanites who dwelt in the city, and had given it as a dowry to his daughter, Solomon's wife.)



BIBLE TIMES & CULTURE NOTES

Forced Labor

Adoram (or Adoniram), David's superintendent of forced labor, kept his job under Solomon. The need for forced labor increased during Solomon's reign because of the building of the temple, as well as the construction of palaces and fortifications. Solomon also had extensive personal properties that required maintenance and needed a large work squad. During Solomon's reign, the superintendent of forced labor held an important office, for he supervised the work of thousands of people. Adoniram was responsible for 150,000 foreign men in the labor force with 3,600



Israelite supervisors over them. He also had 30,000 Israelites working for him, supervised by 300 officers. The entire structure of nearly 184,000 men must have been well organized and carefully policed, but we have no way of knowing exactly how that was done. We do not know whether the army or a special force was responsible to see that the work was done.

Prisoners working at a quarry, Assyrian, 700–692 B.C.

Kim Walton, courtesy of the British Museum

^{7 m} [Lev. 18:24-29; Deut. 4:26; 2 Kin. 17:23; 25:21 ⁿ [Jer. 7:4-14] ^o Deut. 28:37; Ps. 44:14; Jer. 24:9 ² destroy ^{8 p} 2 Chr. 7:21 ^q [Deut. 29:24-26]; Jer. 22:8, 9 ^{9 r} [Deut. 29:25-28] ^{10 s} 1 Kin. 6:37, 38; 7:1; 2 Chr. 8:1 ^{11 t} 1 Kin. 5:1 ^{13 u} Josh. 19:27 ³ Lit. Good for Nothing ^{15 v} 1 Kin. 5:13 ^w 2 Sam. 5:9; 1 Kin. 9:24 ^x Josh. 11:1; 19:36 ^y Josh. 17:11 ^z Josh. 16:10 ⁴ Lit. The Landfill ^{16 a} Josh. 16:10; Judg. 1:29 ^{17 b} Josh. 10:10;

¹⁷ And Solomon built Gezer, Lower ^bBeth Horon, ^{18 c}Baalath, and Tadmor in the wilderness, in the land of Judah, ¹⁹all the storage cities that Solomon had, cities for ^dhis chariots and cities for his ^ecavalry, and whatever Solomon ^fdesired to build in Jerusalem, in Lebanon, and in all the land of his dominion.

^{20 g}All the people who were left of the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, who were not of the children of Israel— ²¹that is, their descendants ^hwho were left in the land after them, ⁱwhom the children of Israel had not been able to destroy completely—

16:3; 21:22; 2 Chr. 8:5 ^{18 c} Josh. 19:44; 2 Chr. 8:4 ^{19 d} 1 Kin. 10:26; 2 Chr. 1:14 ^e 1 Kin. 4:26 ^f 1 Kin. 9:1 ^{20 g} 2 Chr. 8:7 ^{21 h} Judg. 1:21-36; 3:1 ⁱ Josh. 15:63; 17:12, 13

9:10–14 These **twenty cities** (v. 11) lay east and southeast of Acco in the tribal allotment to Asher. Apparently they had been ceded to Hiram as collateral for the gold necessary for furnishing the temple and palace complex. Hiram's displeasure with them would later result in Solomon's redeeming the towns by repaying the debt in some other manner (see 2 Chr. 8:1, 2).

9:14 one hundred and twenty talents of gold: This is an immense amount (see also the gift of the queen of Sheba in 10:10). A talent was said to be the full load one man could carry (see 2 Kin. 5:23). It was equal to three thousand shekels, or about 70 pounds.

9:15 The identification and location of the **Millo** are uncertain. Probably the word refers to architectural terraces and buttressing on the slope of the eastern hill of Jerusalem. **Hazor, Megiddo, and Gezer:** These three cities were important commercial, administrative, and military centers for Solomon. Archaeological excavations have un-

covered common design elements in the walls and gates of all three. **9:16 Gezer,** which had been a strong Canaanite city, was part of Ephraim's territorial assignment. Ephraim had never taken Gezer; however, Egypt had conquered the city. Its key location on the edge of the lowlands west of Jerusalem made it a splendid gift for Pharaoh to give on the occasion of his daughter's marriage to Solomon. **9:17, 18** Three cities were key to Solomon's defensive strategy. **Lower Beth Horon** and **Baalath** served to defend Judah's western front. **Tadmor** is probably the important commercial city in Syria, later known as Palmyra.

9:20, 21 The five nations listed here are peoples who constituted the early inhabitants of Canaan. Several such lists are given in the OT (see Josh. 3:10). **Solomon** assigned their surviving members to work on public projects in accordance with the principle of compulsory labor (see 5:13).

^jfrom these Solomon raised ^kforced labor, as it is to this day. ²²But of the children of Israel Solomon ^lmade no forced laborers, because they *were* men of war and his servants: his officers, his captains, commanders of his chariots, and his cavalry.

²³Others *were* chiefs of the officials who *were* over Solomon's work: ^mfive hundred and fifty, who ruled over the people who did the work.

²⁴But ⁿPharaoh's daughter came up from the City of David to ^oher house which ⁵Solomon had built for her. ^pThen he built the Millo.

^{25q}Now three times a year Solomon offered burnt offerings and peace offerings on the altar which he had built for the LORD, and he burned incense with them *on the altar* that *was* before the LORD. So he finished the temple.

^{26r}King Solomon also built a fleet of ships at ^sEzion Geber, which *is* near ⁶Elath on the shore of the Red Sea, in the land of Edom. ^{27t}Then Hiram sent his servants with the fleet, seamen who knew the sea, to work with the servants of Solomon. ²⁸And they went to ^uOphir, and acquired four hundred and twenty talents of gold from there, and brought *it* to King Solomon.

The Queen of Sheba's Praise of Solomon

10 Now when the ^aqueen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the LORD, she came ^bto test him with hard questions. ²She came to Jerusalem with a very great ¹retinue, with camels that bore spices, very much gold, and precious stones; and when she came to Solomon, she spoke with him about all that was in her heart. ³So Solomon answered all her questions; there was nothing ²so difficult for the

21 ^jJudg. 1:28,
35 ^kEzra 2:55, 58;
Neh. 7:57
22 ^l[Lev. 25:39]
23 ^m2 Chr. 8:10
24 ⁿ1 Kin. 3:1
^o1 Kin. 7:8 ^p2 Sam.
5:9; 1 Kin. 11:27;
2 Chr. 32:5 ⁵Lit. *he*;
cf. 2 Chr. 8:11
25 ^qEx. 23:14-17;
Deut. 16:16; 2 Chr.
8:12, 13
26 ^r2 Chr. 8:17, 18
^sNum. 33:35; Deut.
2:8; 1 Kin. 22:48
⁶Heb. *Eloth*
27 ^t1 Kin. 5:6, 9;
10:11
28 ^uJob 22:24

CHAPTER 10

1 ^a2 Chr. 9:1; Matt.
12:42; Luke 11:31
^bJudg. 14:12; Ps.
49:4; Prov. 1:6
2 ¹company
3 ²too

5 ^c1 Chr. 26:16;
2 Chr. 9:4
8 ^dProv. 8:34
9 ^e1 Kin. 5:7
²Sam. 22:20
^q2 Sam. 8:15; Ps.
72:2; [Prov. 8:15]
10 ^hPs. 72:10, 15
11 ⁱ1 Kin. 9:27, 28;
Job 22:24 ³*algum*,
2 Chr. 9:10, 11
12 ^j2 Chr. 9:11
^k2 Chr. 9:10 ⁴Or
supports

king that he could not explain *it* to her. ⁴And when the queen of Sheba had seen all the wisdom of Solomon, the house that he had built, ⁵the food on his table, the seating of his servants, the service of his waiters and their apparel, his cup-bearers, ^eand his entryway by which he went up to the house of the LORD, there was no more spirit in her. ⁶Then she said to the king: "It was a true report which I heard in my own land about your words and your wisdom. ⁷However I did not believe the words until I came and saw with my own eyes; and indeed the half was not told me. Your wisdom and prosperity exceed the fame of which I heard. ^{8d}Happy *are* your men and happy *are* these your servants, who stand continually before you *and* hear your wisdom! ^{9e}Blessed be the LORD your God, who ^fdelighted in you, setting you on the throne of Israel! Because the LORD has loved Israel forever, therefore He made you king, ^gto do justice and righteousness."

¹⁰Then she ^hgave the king one hundred and twenty talents of gold, spices in great quantity, and precious stones. There never again came such abundance of spices as the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon. ¹¹ⁱAlso, the ships of Hiram, which brought gold from Ophir, brought great quantities of ³almug wood and precious stones from Ophir. ^{12j}And the king made ⁴steps of the almug wood for the house of the LORD and for the king's house, also harps and stringed instruments for singers. There never again came such ^kalmug wood, nor has the like been seen to this day.

¹³Now King Solomon gave the queen of Sheba all she desired, whatever she asked, besides what Solomon had given her according to the royal generosity. So she turned and went to her own country, she and her servants.

9:25 These **three times a year** included the Feasts of Unleavened Bread, Pentecost, and Tabernacles (see Deut. 16:16). Not only did Solomon show himself a faithful spiritual shepherd by leading his people in worship, but continual attention to prescribed religious duties would keep the temple **finished**, or properly maintained.

9:26 **Ezion Geber** was at the head of the modern Gulf of Aqaba. Its key location as an outlet to the Red Sea and the regions beyond made it commercially important to Solomon and to Hiram, his Phoenician trading partner (2 Chr. 8: 17, 18).

9:28 One of the main commercial sites reached via Ezion Geber, **Ophir** may have supplied gold for Solomon to repay his debt to Hiram (see 5:8-11; 9:11-14). Solomon also received a generous gift of gold from the queen of Sheba (10:10).

10:1 Located in southwestern Arabia (present-day Yemen), **Sheba** was the homeland of the Sabaeans, a people whose far-flung commercial enterprises stretched from Syria to east Africa to distant India. The Sabaeans dealt in such precious commodities as gold, gemstones, perfumes, and rare spices. The **queen of Sheba** came to ask Solomon **hard questions** to satisfy her own mind and to

examine his wisdom. She serves as an example of what must have happened on a lesser scale throughout the reign of Solomon. His wisdom, which became proverbial (4:29-34), was an attractive force. Wise men and sages from other cultures came to Jerusalem and learned of the wisdom that is rooted in the fear of God (Prov. 1:7).

10:3-9 Solomon's brilliant replies to the queen of Sheba's difficult **questions** (v. 3), as well as the skillful use of his wisdom for the needs and interests of his kingdom convinced her that such wisdom must be divinely bestowed. Her acknowledgment of Solomon's God and the Lord's covenant faithfulness toward Israel does not necessarily mean that she made a commitment of personal faith in the Lord. Such recognition of foreign deities was common in the literature of the ancient world. However, the possibility exists that she experienced a spiritual awakening as a result of her time with Solomon (see 5:7).

10:10 one hundred and twenty talents: Solomon used the gold not only to furnish the temple (6:20-35; 7:49-51) and palace (10:18-21) but also to make five hundred ornamental shields, which were placed in the House of the Forest of Lebanon (10:16, 17).

Solomon's Great Wealth

¹⁴The weight of gold that came to Solomon yearly was six hundred and sixty-six talents of gold, ¹⁵besides *that* from the ¹traveling merchants, from the income of traders, ^mfrom all the kings of Arabia, and from the governors of the country.

¹⁶And King Solomon made two hundred large shields of hammered gold; six hundred *shekels* of gold went into each shield. ¹⁷He also made ⁿthree hundred shields of hammered gold; three minas of gold went into each shield. The king put them in the ^oHouse of the Forest of Lebanon.

¹⁸Moreover the king made a great throne of ivory, and overlaid it with pure gold. ¹⁹The throne had six steps, and the top of the throne *was* round at the back; *there were* armrests on either side of the place of the seat, and two lions stood beside the armrests. ²⁰Twelve lions stood there, one on each side of the six steps; nothing like *this* had been made for any other kingdom.

²¹^qAll King Solomon's drinking vessels *were* gold, and all the vessels of the House of the Forest of Lebanon *were* pure gold. Not *one* *was* silver, for this was accounted as nothing in the days of Solomon. ²²For the king had ^rmerchant⁵ ships at sea with the fleet of Hiram. Once every three years the merchant ^sships came bringing gold, silver, ivory, apes, and ⁶monkeys. ²³So ^tKing Solomon surpassed all the kings of the earth in riches and wisdom.

²⁴Now all the earth sought the presence of Solomon to hear his wisdom, which God had put in his heart. ²⁵Each man brought his present: articles of silver

15 ² Chr. 1:16
^m 2 Chr. 9:24; Ps.
 72:10
 17 ⁿ 1 Kin. 14:26
^o 1 Kin. 7:2
 18 ^p 1 Kin. 10:22;
 2 Chr. 9:17; Ps. 45:8
 21 ^q 2 Chr. 9:20
 22 ^r Gen. 10:4;
 2 Chr. 20:36 ^s 1 Kin.
 9:26-28; 22:48; Ps.
 72:10 ⁵ Lit. *ships*
of Tarshish, deep-
 sea vessels ⁶ Or
peacocks
 23 ^t 1 Kin. 3:12, 13;
 4:30; 2 Chr. 1:12

26 ^u 1 Kin. 4:26;
 2 Chr. 1:14; 9:25
^v [Deut. 17:16];
 1 Kin. 9:19 ⁷ So
 with LXX, Syr., Tg.,
 Vg. (cf. 2 Chr. 9:25);
 MT *led*
 27 ^w [Deut. 17:17];
 2 Chr. 1:15-17
 28 ^x [Deut. 17:16];
 2 Chr. 1:16; 9:28
 29 ^y Josh. 1:4; 2 Kin.
 7:6, 7 ⁸ Lit. *by their*
hands

CHAPTER 11

1 ^a [Neh. 13:26]
^b [Deut. 17:17];
 1 Kin. 3:1
 2 ^c Ex. 34:16; [Deut.
 7:3, 4]
 4 ^d [Deut. 17:17;
 Neh. 13:26] ^e 1 Kin.
 8:61 ^f 1 Kin. 9:4
⁷ Lit. *at peace with*
 5 ^g Judg. 2:13; 1 Kin.
 11:33

and gold, garments, armor, spices, horses, and mules, at a set rate year by year.

²⁶^uAnd Solomon ^vgathered chariots and horsemen; he had one thousand four hundred chariots and twelve thousand horsemen, whom he ⁷stationed in the chariot cities and with the king at Jerusalem. ²⁷^wThe king made silver as *common* in Jerusalem as stones, and he made cedar trees as abundant as the sycamores which *are* in the lowland.

²⁸^xAlso Solomon had horses imported from Egypt and Keveh; the king's merchants bought them in Keveh at the *current* price. ²⁹Now a chariot that was imported from Egypt cost six hundred *shekels* of silver, and a horse one hundred and fifty; ^yand ⁸thus, through their agents, they exported *them* to all the kings of the Hittites and the kings of Syria.

Solomon's Heart Turns from the LORD

11 But ^aKing Solomon loved ^bmany foreign women, as well as the daughter of Pharaoh: women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians, and Hittites— ²from the nations of whom the LORD had said to the children of Israel, ^c“You shall not intermarry with them, nor they with you. Surely they will turn away your hearts after their gods.” Solomon clung to these in love. ³And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines; and his wives turned away his heart. ⁴For it was so, when Solomon was old, ^dthat his wives turned his heart after other gods; and his ^eheart was not ¹loyal to the LORD his God, ^fas *was* the heart of his father David. ⁵For Solomon went after ^gAshto-

10:16, 17 Made of wood (or basketwork) and covered with gold plating, these **shields** were intended for ceremonial occasions.

10:18 The **throne of ivory** was probably made of wood inlaid with ivory, as well as being overlaid with finest gold. Solomon received ivory as a result of his trading ventures with Hiram (v. 22).

10:22 Solomon's **merchant ships** are linked to his commercial arrangements with Hiram.

10:24, 25 **all the earth**: This phrase refers to the international reputation of Solomon's wisdom.

10:26 **one thousand four hundred chariots**: The reasonableness of the figure given here may be seen in that Shalmaneser III of Assyria reports that at the Battle of Qarqar (853 B.C.) he faced a combined enemy chariot force of 3,900, some two thousand of whom were supplied by Israel.

10:27 **silver . . . cedar**: The point is that Israel under Solomon enjoyed its greatest period of prosperity. This time of prosperity and peace also must have allowed for the growth of scholarship and for arts and music.

10:28 **Keveh** is probably the city of Que attested in a ninth century B.C. inscription found in southern Asia Minor. Que is probably also the Cilicia of classical literature (see Acts 6:9).

11:1 **many foreign women**: The word order in the Hebrew text emphasizes the word *foreign*, with a secondary emphasis on the adjective *many*. Solomon had committed two egregious sins. Tak-

ing foreign wives violated the Lord's prohibitions against marrying Canaanite women (v. 2; Ex. 34:12-17; Deut. 7:1-3); taking many wives violated the standard of monogamy established at the beginning (Gen. 2:24, 25), and resulted in rampant polygamy, something God had also forbidden to Israel's future kings (Deut. 17:17). Doubtless many of Solomon's marriages were in accord with the common ancient Middle Eastern convention of sealing alliances by marriages between members of the royal houses contracting the alliances. Solomon's yielding to the customs of the day would have serious spiritual consequences for himself (vv. 3-13) and his people (2 Kin. 17:7-20).

11:2 **clung to these in love**: Our harsh assessment of Solomon's many wives is mitigated somewhat by the use of this phrase (compare also, “King Solomon loved,” in v. 1).

11:3 **seven hundred . . . three hundred**: If the reference to 60 queens and 80 concubines in Song 6:8 is to Solomon's wives, it represents a much earlier period in Solomon's reign.

11:4 Although it is true that David did not always live up to God's standards, he was **loyal** to God and trusted Him implicitly, even when he was rebuked for his sins (see 2 Sam. 12:13; Ps. 32:1-5; 53:1-5). Because of the influence of his many wives, Solomon compromised his faith by worshiping foreign gods.

11:5 **Ashtoreth** was a Canaanite goddess of love and war. **Milcom** was the national god of the Ammonites.

reth the goddess of the Sidonians, and after ⁱMilcom² the abomination of the ⁱAmmonites. ⁶Solomon did evil in the sight of the LORD, and did not fully follow the LORD, as *did* his father David. ^{7j}Then Solomon built a ³high place for ^kChemosh the abomination of Moab, on ^lthe hill that is east of Jerusalem, and for Molech the abomination of the people of Ammon. ⁸And he did likewise for all his foreign wives, who burned incense and sacrificed to their gods.

⁹So the LORD became angry with Solomon, because his heart had turned from the LORD God of Israel, ^mwho had appeared to him twice, ¹⁰and ⁿhad commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods; but he did not keep what the LORD had commanded. ¹¹Therefore the LORD said to Solomon, “Because you have done this, and have not kept My covenant and My statutes, which I have commanded you, ^oI will surely tear the kingdom away from you and give it to your ^pservant. ¹²Nevertheless I will not do it in your days, for the sake of your father David; I will tear it out of the hand of your son. ^{13q}However I will not tear away the whole kingdom; I will give ^rone tribe to your son ^sfor the sake of My servant David, and for the sake of Jerusalem ^twhich I have chosen.”

Adversaries of Solomon

¹⁴Now the LORD ^uraised up an adversary against Solomon, Hadad the Edomite; he *was* a descendant of the king in Edom. ^{15v}For it happened, when David was in Edom, and Joab the commander of the army had gone up to bury the slain, ^wafter he had killed every male in Edom ¹⁶(because for six months Joab remained there with all Israel, until he had cut

⁵ ⁿ [Lev. 20:2-5]
² 2 Kin. 23:13 ² Or
Molech
⁷ 1 Num. 33:52
^k Num. 21:29; Judg.
11:24 ² 2 Kin. 23:13
³ A place for pagan
worship
⁹ ^m 1 Kin. 3:5; 9:2
¹⁰ ⁿ 1 Kin. 6:12;
9:6, 7
¹¹ ^o 1 Kin. 11:31;
12:15, 16 ^p 1 Kin.
11:31, 37
¹³ ^q 2 Sam. 7:15;
1 Chr. 17:13; Ps.
89:33 ² 1 Kin. 12:20
² 2 Sam. 7:15, 16
^r Deut. 12:11; 1 Kin.
9:3; 14:21
¹⁴ ^u 1 Chr. 5:26
¹⁵ ^v 2 Sam. 8:14;
1 Chr. 18:12, 13
^w Num. 24:18, 19;
[Deut. 20:13]

²¹ ^x 1 Kin. 2:10, 34
⁴ Died and joined
his ancestors ⁵ Lit.
Send me away
²³ ^y 2 Sam. 8:3;
10:16
²⁴ ^z 2 Sam. 8:3;
10:8, 18
²⁶ ^a 1 Kin. 12:2

down every male in Edom), ¹⁷that Hadad fled to go to Egypt, he and certain Edomites of his father's servants with him. Hadad *was* still a little child. ¹⁸Then they arose from Midian and came to Paran; and they took men with them from Paran and came to Egypt, to Pharaoh king of Egypt, who gave him a house, apportioned food for him, and gave him land. ¹⁹And Hadad found great favor in the sight of Pharaoh, so that he gave him as wife the sister of his own wife, that is, the sister of Queen Tahpenes. ²⁰Then the sister of Tahpenes bore him Genubath his son, whom Tahpenes weaned in Pharaoh's house. And Genubath was in Pharaoh's household among the sons of Pharaoh.

^{21x}So when Hadad heard in Egypt that David ⁴rested with his fathers, and that Joab the commander of the army was dead, Hadad said to Pharaoh, ⁵“Let me depart, that I may go to my own country.”

²²Then Pharaoh said to him, “But what have you lacked with me, that suddenly you seek to go to your own country?”

So he answered, “Nothing, but do let me go anyway.”

²³And God raised up *another* adversary against him, Rezon the son of Eliadah, who had fled from his lord, ^uHadadezer king of Zobah. ²⁴So he gathered men to him and became captain over a band of raiders, ²when David killed those of Zobah. And they went to Damascus and dwelt there, and reigned in Damascus. ²⁵He was an adversary of Israel all the days of Solomon (besides the trouble that Hadad *caused*); and he abhorred Israel, and reigned over Syria.

Jeroboam's Rebellion

²⁶Then Solomon's servant, ^aJeroboam the son of Nebat, an Ephraimite from

11:7 The use of a **high place** in association with the worship of foreign gods shows the terrible danger that the high places presented to Israel (see 3:2–4; 14:23; see also Mic. 1:3). **Chemosh** was the national god of Moab. His worship was practiced repeatedly by God's people (see 2 Kin. 23:13). The veneration of this deity is also attested in the recently discovered Ebla Tablets in a form that suggests his association with the city of Carchemish along the upper bend of the Euphrates River. **Molech** is associated with human sacrifice and with Baal (Jer. 7:31, 32; 19:5, 6; 32:35).

11:9–13 God appeared twice before to Solomon (3:5; 9:2). Solomon's spiritual odyssey may be seen in the details of his three audiences with God. While God graciously postponed the division of Solomon's kingdom until after his death, internal troubles appeared while he was still alive (vv. 14–40).

11:11 your servant: That is, Jeroboam the son of Nebat (see 11:26; 12:20).

11:13 one tribe: The tribe is Judah, the principal tribe of the southern kingdom. Simeon had assimilated with Judah by this time (see also 12:17, 20, 21).

11:14–22 Hadad the Edomite was one of the survivors who had

escaped when David defeated the Edomite army (see 2 Sam. 8:13, 14). Pharaoh's ready reception and favorable treatment of Hadad probably had political ramifications, the pharaoh seeing in him a potential future ally on Israel's border.

11:23–25 Having escaped David's earlier campaigns against the Arameans (2 Sam. 8:3–6), **Rezon** would later become king of Damascus and his people would remain a constant threat to Israel.

11:26 The Ephraimite **Jeroboam**, at first a highly gifted, trusted official for Solomon (v. 28) would come under Solomon's wrath (v. 40). Like Hadad the Edomite (v. 17), he fled to Egypt where he found refuge. Eventually Jeroboam was instrumental in bringing about the prophesied schism of the country (12:2–19). He became the first king of the northern kingdom (12:20).

11:26, 27 this is what caused: The phrasing suggests that there was a problem in the building projects that led to Jeroboam's rebellion. These two verses explain something about Jeroboam's background. He was a major officer of one of the large work groups. Among the projects to which Jeroboam had been assigned were the building of the **Millo** (see at 9:15), and the repair of the **City of David**.

Zereda, whose mother's name *was* Zeruah, a widow, ^balso ^crebelled against the king.

²⁷ And this *is* what caused him to rebel against the king: ^dSolomon had built the Millo and ^erepaired the damages to the City of David his father. ²⁸ The man Jeroboam *was* a mighty man of valor; and Solomon, seeing that the young man *was* ^eindustrious, made him the officer over all the labor force of the house of Joseph.

²⁹ Now it happened at that time, when Jeroboam went out of Jerusalem, that the prophet ^fAhijah the Shilonite met him on the way; and he had clothed himself with a new garment, and the two *were* alone in the field. ³⁰ Then Ahijah took hold of the new garment that *was* on him, and ^gtore it *into* twelve pieces. ³¹ And he said to Jeroboam, "Take for yourself ten pieces, for ^hthus says the LORD, the God of Israel: 'Behold, I will tear the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon and will give ten tribes to you ³² (but he shall have one tribe for the sake of My servant David, and for the sake of Jerusalem, the city which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel), ³³ *i*because ⁷they have forsaken Me, and worshiped Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, Chemosh the god of the Moabites, and Milcom the god of the people of Ammon, and have not walked in My ways to do *what is* right in My eyes and *keep* My statutes and My judgments, as *did* his father David. ³⁴ However I will not take the whole kingdom out of his hand, because I have made him ruler all the days of his life for the sake of My servant David, whom I chose because he kept My commandments and

²⁶ ^b 1 Kin. 11:11; 2 Chr. 13:6 ^c 2 Sam. 20:21
²⁷ ^d 1 Kin. 9:15, 24
^e Lit. *closed up the breaches*
²⁸ ^e [Prov. 22:29]
²⁹ ^f 1 Kin. 12:15; 14:2; 2 Chr. 9:29
³⁰ ^g 1 Sam. 15:27, 28; 24:5
³¹ ^h 1 Kin. 11:11, 13
³³ ⁱ 1 Sam. 7:3; 1 Kin. 11:5-8 ⁷ So with MT, Tg.; LXX, Syr., Vg. *he has*

³⁵ ^j 1 Kin. 12:16, 17
³⁶ ^k [1 Kin. 15:4; 2 Kin. 8:19]
³⁸ ^l Deut. 31:8; Josh. 1:5 ^m 2 Sam. 7:11, 27
⁴⁰ ⁿ 1 Kin. 11:17; 14:25; 2 Chr. 12:2-9
⁴¹ ^o 2 Chr. 9:29
⁴² ^p 2 Chr. 9:30
⁴³ ^q 1 Kin. 2:10; 2 Chr. 9:31 ^r 1 Kin. 14:21; 2 Chr. 10:1
⁸ Died and joined his ancestors

CHAPTER 12

¹ ^a 2 Chr. 10:1
^b Judg. 9:6

My statutes. ³⁵ But ^jI will take the kingdom out of his son's hand and give it to you—ten tribes. ³⁶ And to his son I will give one tribe, that ^kMy servant David may always have a lamp before Me in Jerusalem, the city which I have chosen for Myself, to put My name there. ³⁷ So I will take you, and you shall reign over all your heart desires, and you shall be king over Israel. ³⁸ Then it shall be, if you heed all that I command you, walk in My ways, and do *what is* right in My sight, to keep My statutes and My commandments, as My servant David did, then ^lI will be with you and ^mbuild for you an enduring house, as I built for David, and will give Israel to you. ³⁹ And I will afflict the descendants of David because of this, but not forever."

⁴⁰ Solomon therefore sought to kill Jeroboam. But Jeroboam arose and fled to Egypt, to ⁿShishak king of Egypt, and was in Egypt until the death of Solomon.

Death of Solomon

⁴¹ Now ^othe rest of the acts of Solomon, all that he did, and his wisdom, *are* they not written in the book of the acts of Solomon? ⁴² ^pAnd the period that Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel *was* forty years. ⁴³ ^qThen Solomon ⁸rested with his fathers, and was buried in the City of David his father. And Rehoboam his son reigned in his ^rplace.

The Revolt Against Rehoboam

12 And ^aRehoboam went to ^bShechem, for all Israel had gone to Shechem to make him king. ² So it

11:29 The prophecy of **Ahijah** of Shiloh was fulfilled literally (12:1–20). Ahijah, whose name means "My Brother Is the Lord," would remain God's loyal prophet down into his old age (14:1–18).

11:30–32 God had already warned Solomon that all but **one tribe** would be taken away from Solomon's heir (v. 13; see 12:20). Only ten tribes, however, are promised to Jeroboam. The twelfth tribe might be Simeon, which was absorbed by Judah. Possibly Benjamin existed as a buffer state between Israel and Judah, at times linked with the southern kingdom (2 Chr. 11:3; 14:8) and at times with the northern kingdom.

11:33 they have forsaken Me: See the list of particulars in vv. 4–8.

11:36 This is a biblical image of one of the divinely intended functions of Davidic kings in ancient Israel. In the midst of the darkness of a pagan world, the Davidic kings were to be a **lamp** to the nations, in anticipation of the Coming One who is the Light of the World (see John 1:1–9; see also 15:4; 2 Samuel 21:17; 2 Kin. 8:19; 2 Chr. 21:7).

11:38 an enduring house: Although God gave Jeroboam the opportunity to establish a lasting dynasty, he proved unworthy (see 12:25–33; 14:10–18). Jeroboam's name would forever be associated with the spiritual infidelity that would ultimately bring the northern kingdom to ruin (see 2 Kin. 17:21–23).

11:40 Solomon, whose reign was characterized by peace more than that of any other king in Jerusalem (see again 4:24), ended his life in strife as he sought to **kill Jeroboam**. **Shishak** (or Sheshonq I, 945–924 B.C.) was the first pharaoh of Egypt's strong twenty-second

dynasty. Ironically, this future destroyer of Israel appears here as a protector of one of its future kings.

11:41–43 Because of his considerable sin, the golden era that Solomon initiated would die with him. Had he lived out his life in righteousness, and had he taught his son Rehoboam to succeed him in true justice, the golden era might have endured for generations.

11:41 The book of the acts of Solomon is mentioned only here; compare the references to the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel (14:19) and the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah (14:29). It is likely that the author of the present Book of Kings drew on these sources.

11:42 The symmetry of the **forty years** (see also 2:10–12) of the reigns of David and Solomon may be a providential congruity, speaking of God's blessing on each of their reigns.

11:43 rested with his fathers: The meaning of this idiom in the Hebrew Bible is burial in the same place as one's ancestors. There may also be an indirect reference to life after death. **Rehoboam his son:** It is usual in a royal obituary to state who it was that followed the deceased on the throne. This provides a sense of continuity.

12:1 Rehoboam became a means of prompting civil war and the secession of the ten northern tribes. Situated in Ephraim, **Shechem** was an important center of Israelite activity. By going for his coronation to a place with ancient ties to the history of his people, and which was situated in the region of the northern tribes, doubtless Rehoboam believed that he was making a strategic move. The term

The Divided Kingdom

930–586 B.C.

The division of Solomon's kingdom had geographical and political causes, with roots reaching back to earlier tribal rivalries. Israel was closer to Phoenician cities and major trade routes than Judah, whose heartland was a plateau-like ridge higher than the district around Samaria.



The Syrian wars were fierce and destructive contests between the kingdom of Damascus and Israel during the greater part of the ninth century. These wars ended with the conquests of Jeroboam II and an era of great prosperity for Israel.

The campaigns of Tiglath-Pileser III of Assyria were enormously destructive, following a celebrated pattern of siege warfare. By 732 B.C. the northern kingdom was tributary to the Assyrians.

1 The final capture and destruction of Samaria took place in 722/721 B.C. after a long siege. The surviving inhabitants were exiled to distant places in the Assyrian Empire, and new settlers were brought to Samaria.

2 The Benjamite frontier was an issue that brought Judah and Israel into conflict early in their history. After a struggle between Asa and Baasha, the border was finally fixed south of Bethel in the territory of Benjamin.

The role of Mesha, king of Moab, was first that of a vassal and then a rebel, as both the Bible and the Mesha stele make clear.

Periods of expansion and contraction characterized the two kingdoms during the period 930–722 B.C. Judah was to some extent protected by its geography, but Israel was forced to develop an efficient standing army with substantial chariotry to defend against frequent attacks. Assyrian records mention that Ahab of Israel provided 2,000 chariots—by far the largest contingent in the anti-Assyrian alliance—in the battle of Qarqar in 853 B.C.

3 Judah's prosperity was intermittent and depended in large part on control of the trade routes to Egypt and the Red Sea. Border fortresses in the Judahite desert guarded the approaches from Edom. The "front door" of Judah was through Lachish and from there up to Hebron and Jerusalem. The capital was besieged many times, most forcefully by the Assyrians in 701 B.C. and by the Babylonians in 597 and 586, leading to the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar and marking the end of the monarchy.

An impressive devotion to the Davidic dynastic line characterized the southern kingdom and helped to maintain stability, in contrast to the more mercurial northern kingdom.

happened, when ^cJeroboam the son of Nebat heard *it* (he was still in ^dEgypt, for he had fled from the presence of King Solomon and had been dwelling in Egypt), ³that they sent and called him. Then Jeroboam and the whole assembly of Israel came and spoke to Rehoboam, saying, ⁴“Your father made our *“yoke”* heavy; now therefore, lighten the burdensome service of your father, and his heavy yoke which he put on us, and we will serve you.”

⁵So he said to them, “Depart *for* three days, then come back to me.” And the people departed.

⁶Then King Rehoboam consulted the elders who stood before his father Solomon while he still lived, and he said, “How do you advise *me* to answer these people?”

⁷And they spoke to him, saying, ^f“If you will be a servant to these people today, and serve them, and answer them, and speak good words to them, then they will be your servants forever.”

⁸But he rejected the advice which the elders had given him, and consulted the young men who had grown up with him, who stood before him. ⁹And he said to them, “What advice do you give? How should we answer this people who have spoken to me, saying, ‘Lighten the yoke which your father put on us?’”

¹⁰Then the young men who had grown up with him spoke to him, saying, “Thus you should speak to this people who have spoken to you, saying, ‘Your father made our yoke heavy, but you make *it* lighter on us’—thus you shall say to them: ‘My little *finger* shall be thicker than my father’s waist!’ ¹¹And now, whereas my father put a heavy yoke on you, I will add to your yoke; my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with ²scourges!’”

¹²So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam the third day, as the king had directed, saying, “Come back to me the third day.” ¹³Then the king answered

² ^c 1 Kin. 11:26

^d 1 Kin. 11:40

⁴ ^e 1 Sam. 8:11-18;

1 Kin. 4:7; 5:13-15

¹ *hard*

⁷ ^f 2 Chr. 10:7; [Prov. 15:1]

¹¹ ² Scourges with points or barbs, lit. *scorpions*

¹³ ³ *harshly*

¹⁴ ⁴ Lit. *scorpions*

¹⁵ ⁹ Deut. 2:30;

Judg. 14:4; 1 Kin.

12:24; 2 Chr. 10:15

^h 1 Kin. 11:11, 29, 31

¹⁶ ² 2 Sam. 20:1

¹⁷ ¹ 1 Kin. 11:13, 36;

2 Chr. 11:14-17

BIBLE TIMES & CULTURE NOTES



The Divided Kingdom

Tensions had existed between the tribes since the time of the judges, especially between Judah in the south and Ephraim, the most influential tribe in the north. Solomon’s taxation to fund the building of the temple and palace in the southern city of Jerusalem alienated the northern tribes even further. After Solomon’s death, his son Rehoboam was approached by the people of Israel with a request for tax relief. Rehoboam rejected their request, and the nation split into two kingdoms. Rehoboam remained king of the southern kingdom (Judah) while Jeroboam became king of the northern kingdom (Israel). The northern kingdom of Israel collapsed in 722 B.C. when the Assyrians destroyed its capital, Samaria. The southern kingdom of Judah survived until 586 B.C., when it fell to the Babylonians.

the people ³roughly, and rejected the advice which the elders had given him; ¹⁴and he spoke to them according to the advice of the young men, saying, “My father made your yoke heavy, but I will add to your yoke; my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with ⁴scourges!” ¹⁵So the king did not listen to the people; for ^gthe turn *of events* was from the LORD, that He might fulfill His word, which the LORD had ^hspoken by Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam the son of Nebat.

¹⁶Now when all Israel saw that the king did not listen to them, the people answered the king, saying:

ⁱ“What share have we in David?

We have no inheritance in the son of Jesse.

To your tents, O Israel!

Now, see to your own house, O David!”

So Israel departed to their tents. ¹⁷But Rehoboam reigned over ^jthe children of Israel who dwelt in the cities of Judah.

all Israel refers to representatives of the northern tribes who had convened to consider the confirmation of Rehoboam as king of all the land.

12:4 A system of forced labor had been imposed by Solomon to accomplish and maintain his building projects (see 5:13–18). Because this **burdensome service** was especially hateful to the northern tribes, relief from it was a crucial issue.

12:6, 7 By **elders** is meant the chief government officials who had advised Rehoboam’s father Solomon (see 4:1–19). Their advice was to show moderation and temperance.

12:8, 9 The **young men** were men of Rehoboam’s generation whom he had appointed to government office.

12:10, 11 little finger... father’s waist: The advice of Rehoboam’s own advisors was that the system of forced labor should be inten-

sified until its sting became like that of a scorpion. **Scourges** were leather whips that could have more than one tail to which barbed points or metal spikes were attached.

12:15 from the LORD: Even at this crucial time of national schism, God was sovereignly working through human events to accomplish His will, which had been made known through earlier prophecy (11:29–39).

12:16 What share have we in David: The ancient rivalry felt by the northern tribes now came to a peak in resentment against the tribe of Judah and the house of David. Saul was from the tribe of Benjamin and had been regarded as “one of their own.” David, from the south, had seemed distant. Rehoboam’s insensitivity to the volatile situation led to a division of the nation.

12:17 cities of Judah: The southern section also included the

¹⁸Then King Rehoboam ^ksent Adoram, who *was* in charge of the revenue; but all Israel stoned him with stones, and he died. Therefore King Rehoboam mounted his chariot in haste to flee to Jerusalem. ¹⁹So ^lIsrael has been in rebellion against the house of David to this day.

²⁰Now it came to pass when all Israel heard that Jeroboam had come back, they sent for him and called him to the congregation, and made him king over all ^mIsrael. There was none who followed the house of David, but the tribe of Judah ⁿonly.

²¹And when ^oRehoboam came to Jerusalem, he assembled all the house of Judah with the tribe of ^pBenjamin, one hundred and eighty thousand chosen *men* who were warriors, to fight against the house of Israel, that he might restore the kingdom to Rehoboam the son of Solomon. ²²But ^qthe word of God came to Shemaiah the man of God, saying, ²³“Speak to Rehoboam the son of Solomon, king of Judah, to all the house of Judah and Benjamin, and to the rest of the people, saying, ²⁴“Thus says the LORD: “You shall not go up nor fight against your brethren the children of Israel. Let every man return to his house, ^rfor this thing is from Me.”” Therefore they obeyed the word of the LORD, and turned back, according to the word of the LORD.

¹⁸ ^k 1 Kin. 4:6; 5:14
¹⁹ ^l 2 Kin. 17:21
²⁰ ^m 2 Kin. 17:21
ⁿ 1 Kin. 11:13, 32, 36
²¹ ^o 2 Chr. 11:1-4
²² ^p 2 Sam. 19:17
²³ ^q 2 Chr. 11:2;
 12:5-7
²⁴ ^r 1 Kin. 12:15

²⁵ ^s Gen. 12:6;
 Judg. 9:45-49;
 1 Kin. 12:1 ^t Gen.
 32:30, 31; Judg. 8:8,
 17 ⁵ fortified
²⁷ ^u [Deut. 12:5-
 7, 14]
²⁸ ^v 2 Kin. 10:29;
 17:16; [Hos. 8:4-7]
^w Ex. 32:4, 8
²⁹ ^x Gen. 28:19
^y Judg. 18:26-31
³⁰ ^z 1 Kin. 13:34;
 2 Kin. 17:21
³¹ ^a [Num. 3:10;
 17:1-11]; Judg. 17:5;
 1 Kin. 13:33; 2 Kin.
 17:32; 2 Chr. 11:14,
 15 ⁶ Lit. *a house*;
 cf. 1 Kin. 13:32, lit.
houses
³² ^b Lev. 23:33, 34;
 Num. 29:12; 1 Kin.
 8:2, 5 ^c Amos 7:10-
 13 ⁷ instituted

Jeroboam's Gold Calves

²⁵Then Jeroboam ^sbuilt⁵ Shechem in the mountains of Ephraim, and dwelt there. Also he went out from there and built ^tPenuel. ²⁶And Jeroboam said in his heart, “Now the kingdom may return to the house of David: ²⁷If these people “go up to offer sacrifices in the house of the LORD at Jerusalem, then the heart of this people will turn back to their lord, Rehoboam king of Judah, and they will kill me and go back to Rehoboam king of Judah.”

²⁸Therefore the king asked advice, ^vmade two calves of gold, and said to the people, “It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem. ^wHere are your gods, O Israel, which brought you up from the land of Egypt!” ²⁹And he set up one in ^xBethel, and the other he put in ^yDan. ³⁰Now this thing became ^za sin, for the people went to worship before the one as far as Dan. ³¹He made ⁶shrines on the high places, ^aand made priests from every class of people, who were not of the sons of Levi.

³²Jeroboam ⁷ordained a feast on the fifteenth day of the eighth month, like ^bthe feast that *was* in Judah, and offered sacrifices on the altar. So he did at Bethel, sacrificing to the calves that he had made. ^cAnd at Bethel he installed the priests of the high places which he had made. ³³So he made offerings on the altar which he

tribal allotment of Simeon. But Simeon was absorbed by Judah; their allotment was “within the inheritance of the children of Judah” (Josh. 19:1).

12:19 That is, to the **day** of the narrator. In the end, Israel’s rebellion was its own destruction.

12:20 Jeroboam . . . king: The coronation of Jeroboam had been prophesied by Ahijah the prophet of the Lord (see 11:29–31). Nonetheless, the actual coronation apparently was done apart from priest or prophet of the Lord; there was no divine anointing, no true religious ceremony. Only the kings of the southern kingdom would have the sanction of the Davidic covenant (see 2 Sam. 7).

12:21 Rehoboam’s first inclination when he arrived in Jerusalem was to lead a war of reprisal against Israel. **Benjamin:** People of the border tribe might have gone either direction.

12:22 According to 2 Chr. 12:15, Iddo the prophet and **Shemaiah** together wrote a history of Rehoboam’s reign.

12:23, 24 this thing is from Me: The foolish behavior of Rehoboam brought about God’s judgment in dividing the nation into two new kingdoms.

12:25 built Shechem: That is, he fortified the ancient site (see 12:1). This strategic and historic city became the first capital of the northern kingdom. In fortifying this site, Jeroboam seems to have wanted to associate his reign with classic religious sites from the early history of Israel.

12:26, 27 However, Jeroboam knew **in his heart** that merely having a new presence in Shechem and Peniel would not in itself make the people of the northern kingdom forget the glories of the temple in **Jerusalem**.

12:28 Not only would they strike a familiar chord from Israel’s history, but the **two calves of gold** would arouse the interest of the remaining Canaanites in the northern kingdom. The result of Jeroboam’s action was religious confusion and apostasy; it would bring God’s sure condemnation (see 14:9). It should be recognized that this is the first time the Scriptures mention any deliberate at-

tempt to establish a heterodox doctrine, a substandard cult as an official practice for the nation of Israel. While judgment was announced on this apostasy (ch. 13), the execution of this judgment would not take place for over two hundred years (the schism came in 930 B.C.; the destruction of the northern kingdom did not come until 722 B.C.). Jeroboam appealed to the people in several ways: (1) Traveling all the way to Jerusalem was too far, and it was unnecessary. (2) These calves were gods. (3) These calves were worshiped by their ancestors.

12:29 Bethel was north of Jerusalem in Benjamite territory, although its precise location is uncertain. It has been identified with Beitin; recent archaeological discoveries suggest Tell Bireh. Ai was nearby. In any case, Bethel had enjoyed a prominent place in Israelite history throughout the earlier patriarchal (Gen. 28:10–21) and post-conquest (Judg. 20:26–31) eras. **Dan** was in the northern portion of Israel. It was known as Laish and Leshem (Josh. 19:47; Judg. 18:7) until its capture by the Danites (Judg. 18:29). By that time it had already achieved a reputation as a center for pagan worship (Judg. 18:30). Jeroboam’s choice of these two sites was a brilliant move. He had one site in the northernmost part of his kingdom and another in the southernmost part; both had long ties to Israel’s past. No longer must the people make the long, arduous, and dangerous trip to Jerusalem. Jeroboam said, in effect, “We have brought religion to you.”

12:30 The divine declaration is simple: **this thing became a sin**. The exclusive claim of Jerusalem as the central place of the worship of God in the holy temple (see 6:1) was now being ignored by the people of Israel.

12:31–33 Jeroboam’s new religious institutions included starting a new religious order that did not include the Levites; setting up shrines at high places (see 3:2, 3); and replacing the Feast of Tabernacles with a fall festival in the eighth month. His various attempts at religious innovation would quickly incur God’s denunciation (ch. 13) and earn him a reputation that would live in spiritual infamy (13:33, 34; 22:52).

had made at Bethel on the fifteenth day of the eighth month, in the month which he had ^ddevised in his own heart. And he ⁸ordained a feast for the children of Israel, and offered sacrifices on the altar and ^eburned incense.

The Message of the Man of God

13 And behold, ^aa man of God went from Judah to Bethel ¹by the word of the LORD, ^band Jeroboam stood by the altar to burn incense. ²Then he cried out against the altar ²by the word of the LORD, and said, “O altar, altar! Thus says the LORD: ‘Behold, a child, ^cJosiah by name, shall be born to the house of David; and on you he shall sacrifice the priests of the high places who burn incense on you, and men’s bones shall be ^dburned on you.’” ³And he gave ^ea sign the same day, saying, “This *is* the sign which the LORD has spoken: Surely the altar shall split apart, and the ashes on it shall be poured out.”

⁴So it came to pass when King Jeroboam heard the saying of the man of God, who cried out against the altar in Bethel, that he stretched out his hand from the altar, saying, “Arrest him!” Then his hand, which he stretched out toward him, withered, so that he could not pull it back to himself. ⁵The altar also was split apart, and the ashes poured out from the altar, according to the sign which the man of God had given by the word of the LORD. ⁶Then the king answered and said to the man of God, “Please ^fentreat the favor of the LORD your God, and pray for me, that my hand may be restored to me.”

So the man of God entreated the LORD, and the king’s hand was restored to him, and became as before. ⁷Then the king said to the man of God, “Come home with me and refresh yourself, and ^gI will give you a reward.”

33 ^dNum. 15:39
^e1 Kin. 13:1 ⁸instituted

CHAPTER 13

¹ ^a2 Kin. 23:17
^b1 Kin. 12:32;
³³ ¹at the LORD’s command
² ^c2 Kin. 23:15, 16
^d[Lev. 26:30] ²at the LORD’s command
³ ^eEx. 4:1-5; Judg. 6:17; Is. 7:14; 38:7; John 2:18; 1 Cor. 1:22
⁶ ^fEx. 8:8; 9:28; 10:17; Num. 21:7; Jer. 37:3; Acts 8:24; James 5:16
⁷ ^g1 Sam. 9:7; 2 Kin. 5:15

⁸ ^hNum. 22:18; 24:13; 1 Kin. 13:16, 17
⁹ [1 Cor. 5:11]
¹¹ ⁱ1 Kin. 13:25
³ ^jLit. son
¹² ^kLXX, Syr., Tg., Vg. showed him
¹⁶ ^k1 Kin. 13:8, 9
¹⁷ ^l1 Kin. 20:35;
1 Thess. 4:15 ⁵ ^mLit. a command came to me by

⁸But the man of God said to the king, ^h“If you were to give me half your house, I would not go in with you; nor would I eat bread nor drink water in this place. ⁹For so it was commanded me by the word of the LORD, saying, ⁱ“You shall not eat bread, nor drink water, nor return by the same way you came.”” ¹⁰So he went another way and did not return by the way he came to Bethel.

Death of the Man of God

¹¹Now an ^jold prophet dwelt in Bethel, and his ³sons came and told him all the works that the man of God had done that day in Bethel; they also told their father the words which he had spoken to the king. ¹²And their father said to them, “Which way did he go?” For his sons ⁴had seen which way the man of God went who came from Judah. ¹³Then he said to his sons, “Saddle the donkey for me.” So they saddled the donkey for him; and he rode on it, ¹⁴and went after the man of God, and found him sitting under an oak. Then he said to him, “Are you the man of God who came from Judah?”

And he said, “I *am*.”
¹⁵Then he said to him, “Come home with me and eat bread.”

¹⁶And he said, ^k“I cannot return with you nor go in with you; neither can I eat bread nor drink water with you in this place. ¹⁷For ⁵I have been told ^lby the word of the LORD, ‘You shall not eat bread nor drink water there, nor return by going the way you came.’”

¹⁸He said to him, “I too *am* a prophet as you *are*, and an angel spoke to me by the word of the LORD, saying, ‘Bring him back with you to your house, that he may eat bread and drink water.’” (He was lying to him.)

¹⁹So he went back with him, and ate bread in his house, and drank water.

13:1 man of God: This prophet is unknown to us. The phrase **by the word of the LORD** occurs seven times in this chapter (vv. 1, 2, 5, 9, 17, 18, 32) and emphasizes that the man of God was functioning at the command of God and in God’s power. **Jeroboam . . . altar to burn incense:** Having established his own deviant religion and his apostate priesthood, Jeroboam hardly had compunctions about serving priestly functions.

13:3 The word **sign** indicates something miraculous (Ex. 4:21; Jer. 33:20, 21). Miraculous signs may indicate either the intended purpose of the deed or its wondrous effects, both ideas often occurring together (see Deut. 6:22; Ps. 78:43).

13:4, 5 Unlike David, who confessed his sin when he was accused by Nathan the man of God (see 2 Sam. 12:13), the wicked Jeroboam sought to **arrest** his accuser. Instead he found his own arm “arrested” and the altar destroyed.

13:6–10 In mercy, the prophet was used by God to heal the hand of the king, but he would have none of his hospitality or reward.

13:6 the LORD your God: This language may be simply deferential to the prophet, but here it may indicate a recognition

by Jeroboam that he was no longer really serving the living God. **13:8 not go in:** In biblical times, sharing a meal was more than just a social custom. It implied an intimate fellowship. Great religious ceremonies from the Passover to the Lord’s Table center on people eating together. The prophet did not want his act of mercy to suggest that God accepted Jeroboam’s deviant worship.

13:11 Besides being an important cult center (see 12:29), **Bethel** may have had one of the early prophetic schools (see 2 Kin. 2:3–7). **an old prophet:** Perhaps the aged prophet had been previously associated with such a group. Whatever his status then, at this point he clearly tells lies (see v. 18).

13:12–18 The **prophet** was clearly an apostate. He had not spoken against Jeroboam; instead, he boldly lied to the Lord’s true prophet.

13:19 went back with him: The man of God had withstood Jeroboam’s attempt to save face by having the prophet stay with him (v. 7), yet now the prophet failed to discern the deception and plainly violated God’s clear instructions (v. 9). The prophet would pay a terrible price for his disobedience (v. 24).

²⁰Now it happened, as they sat at the table, that the word of the LORD came to the prophet who had brought him back; ²¹and he cried out to the man of God who came from Judah, saying, “Thus says the LORD: ‘Because you have disobeyed the word of the LORD, and have not kept the commandment which the LORD your God commanded you, ²²but you came back, ate bread, and drank water in the ^mplace of which *the LORD* said to you, “Eat no bread and drink no water,” your corpse shall not come to the tomb of your fathers.’”

²³So it was, after he had eaten bread and after he had drunk, that he saddled the donkey for him, the prophet whom he had brought back. ²⁴When he was gone, ⁿa lion met him on the road and killed him. And his corpse was thrown on the road, and the donkey stood by it. The lion also stood by the corpse. ²⁵And there, men passed by and saw the corpse thrown on the road, and the lion standing by the corpse. Then they went and told *it* in the city where the old prophet dwelt.

²⁶Now when the prophet who had brought him back from the way heard *it*, he said, “It *is* the man of God who was disobedient to the word of the LORD. Therefore the LORD has delivered him to the lion, which has torn him and killed him, according to the word of the LORD which He spoke to him.” ²⁷And he spoke to his sons, saying, “Saddle the donkey for me.” So they saddled *it*. ²⁸Then he went and found his corpse thrown on the road, and the donkey and the lion standing by the corpse. The lion had not eaten the corpse nor torn the donkey. ²⁹And the prophet took up the corpse of the man of God, laid it on the donkey, and brought it back. So the old prophet

^{22 m} 1 Kin. 13:9
^{24 n} 1 Kin. 20:36

³⁰ ^o Jer. 22:18
³¹ ^p Ruth 1:17;
2 Kin. 23:17, 18
^{32 q} 1 Kin. 13:2;
2 Kin. 23:16, 19
^r 1 Kin. 16:24; John
4:5; Acts 8:14 ⁶ Lit.
word ⁷ Lit. houses
^{33 s} 1 Kin. 12:31, 32;
2 Chr. 11:15; 13:9
^{34 t} 1 Kin. 12:30;
2 Kin. 17:21 ^u [1 Kin.
14:10; 15:29, 30]

CHAPTER 14

² ^v 1 Kin. 11:29–31
³ ^o 1 Sam. 9:7, 8;
1 Kin. 13:7; 2 Kin.
4:42 ¹ Lit. in your
hand
⁴ ^c 1 Kin. 11:29
² Lit. set

came to the city to mourn, and to bury him. ³⁰Then he laid the corpse in his own tomb; and they mourned over him, *saying*, ^o“Alas, my brother!” ³¹So it was, after he had buried him, that he spoke to his sons, saying, “When I am dead, then bury me in the tomb where the man of God *is* buried; ^play my bones beside his bones. ^{32 q}For the ⁶saying which he cried out by the word of the LORD against the altar in Bethel, and against all the ⁷shrines on the high places which *are* in the cities of ^rSamaria, will surely come to pass.”

^{33 s}After this event Jeroboam did not turn from his evil way, but again he made priests from every class of people for the high places; whoever wished, he consecrated him, and he became *one* of the priests of the high places. ^{34 t}And this thing was the sin of the house of Jeroboam, so as ^uto exterminate and destroy *it* from the face of the earth.

Judgment on the House of Jeroboam

14 At that time Abijah the son of Jeroboam became sick. ²And Jeroboam said to his wife, “Please arise, and disguise yourself, that they may not recognize you as the wife of Jeroboam, and go to Shiloh. Indeed, Ahijah the prophet *is* there, who told me that ^a*I would be king over this people*. ^{3 b}Also take ¹with you ten loaves, *some* cakes, and a jar of honey, and go to him; he will tell you what will become of the child.” ⁴And Jeroboam’s wife did so; she arose ^cand went to Shiloh, and came to the house of Ahijah. But Ahijah could not see, for his eyes were ²glazed by reason of his age.

⁵Now the LORD had said to Ahijah, “Here is the wife of Jeroboam, coming to ask you something about her son, for he

13:20 Whatever his motives were for bringing the man of God to his house, the aged **prophet** now received a true word from God. He realized too late his awful part in the condemnation of the man of God. The divine sentence (v. 22) would be speedily executed (v. 24).

13:24 The way **the lion** stood by both the man of God and his donkey shows that the lion did not kill for food but was God’s executioner (see vv. 25, 26, 28).

13:29–32 The old prophet was brought back to biblical faith at the sight of the death of the true prophet from Judah. The true but disobedient prophet had paid a terrible price for his disobedience to what he knew to be the word of God (vv. 20–24).

13:32 the saying . . . will surely come to pass: This confession proclaims renewal of faith in God’s word by the prophet who had become deceitful. The mercy of God is at His disposal! The Lord had healed the hand of Jeroboam (v. 6) because of His mercy, and the Lord restored the faith of the deceitful prophet because of His mercy as well.

13:32 cities of Samaria: The city of Samaria did not in fact come into being for nearly a half century (see 16:24), but the author mentions it here from his own later perspective.

13:33 Rather than learning from the report of this incident, Jeroboam became even more set in his **evil way**. His apostasy would earn for him his reputation as the one who “made Israel sin” (16:26).

14:1 Abijah: The name means “My Father Is the Lord.”

14:2 In a time of distress Jeroboam turned not to one of his own prophets but to the true prophet of God who had predicted his kingship (11:29–39). Although **Ahijah** was now old (v. 4), his spiritual insight was not so dim that he could not see through disguised human intentions (v. 5).

14:3 ten loaves: The gifts that Jeroboam’s wife took along are not those customarily given by a king (see 2 Kin. 8:7–9) but rather were common fare (see 1 Sam. 9:6–8). Jeroboam no doubt was hoping he could deceive the prophet by sending a simple gift.

14:4 Located about 20 miles north of Jerusalem, **Shiloh** had been the religious center for the nation during the time of the judges and was the location of the tabernacle (Josh. 18:1; 1 Sam. 1:3). The city was destroyed by the Philistines after the loss of the ark (1 Sam. 4:1–11; Jer. 7:12–15).

14:4–6 Although he **could not see**, Ahijah could “see” by means of the revelation of the living God.

is sick. Thus and thus you shall say to her; for it will be, when she comes in, that she will pretend to be another woman.”

⁶And so it was, when Ahijah heard the sound of her footsteps as she came through the door, he said, “Come in, wife of Jeroboam. Why do you pretend to be another person? For I have been sent to you with bad news.” ⁷Go, tell Jeroboam, “Thus says the LORD God of Israel: ^d“Because I exalted you from among the people, and made you ruler over My people Israel, ⁸and ^etore the kingdom away from the house of David, and gave it to you; and yet you have not been as My servant David, ^fwho kept My commandments and who followed Me with all his heart, to do only what was right in My eyes; ⁹but you have done more evil than all who were before you, ^gfor you have gone and made for yourself other gods and molded images to provoke Me to anger, and ^hhave cast Me behind your back— ¹⁰therefore behold! ⁱI will bring disaster on the house of Jeroboam, and ^jwill cut off from Jeroboam every male in Israel, ^kbond and free; I will take away the remnant of the house of Jeroboam, as one takes away refuse until it is all gone. ¹¹The dogs shall eat ^lwhoever belongs to Jeroboam and dies in the city, and the birds of the air shall eat whoever dies in the field; for the LORD has spoken!” ¹²Arise therefore, go to your own house. ^mWhen your feet enter the city, the child shall die. ¹³And all Israel shall mourn for him and bury him, for he is the only one of Jeroboam who shall ³come to the grave, because in him ⁿthere is found something good toward the LORD God of Israel in the house of Jeroboam.

^{14 o}“Moreover the LORD will raise up for Himself a king over Israel who shall cut off the house of Jeroboam; ⁴this is the

^{7 d} 2 Sam. 12:7, 8;
1 Kin. 16:2
^{8 e} 1 Kin. 11:31
^f 1 Kin. 11:33, 38;
15:5
^{9 g} 1 Kin. 12:28;
2 Chr. 11:15 ^h 2 Chr.
29:6; Neh. 9:26; Ps.
50:17
^{10 i} 1 Kin. 15:29
^j 1 Kin. 21:21; 2 Kin.
9:8 ^k Deut. 32:36;
2 Kin. 14:26
^{11 l} 1 Kin. 16:4;
21:24
^{12 m} 1 Kin. 14:17
^{13 n} 2 Chr. 12:12;
19:3 ³ Be buried
^{14 o} 1 Kin. 15:27-29
⁴ Or this day and
from now on

^{15 p} Deut. 29:28;
2 Kin. 17:6; Ps.
52:5 ^q [Josh. 23:15,
16] ^r 2 Kin. 15:29
^s [Ex. 34:13, 14;
Deut. 12:3] ⁵ The
Euphrates ⁶ Heb.
Asherim, Canaanite
deities
^{16 t} 1 Kin. 12:30;
13:34; 15:30, 34;
16:2
^{17 u} 1 Kin. 15:21, 33;
16:6, 8, 15, 23; Song
6:4 ^v 1 Kin. 14:12
^{18 w} 1 Kin. 14:13
^{19 x} 1 Kin. 14:30;
2 Chr. 13:2-20
^{20 y} 1 Kin. 15:25
^{21 z} 2 Chr. 12:13
^a 1 Kin. 11:32, 36
^b 1 Kin. 14:31
^{22 c} 2 Chr. 12:1, 14
^d Deut. 32:21; Ps.
78:58; 1 Cor. 10:22

day. What? Even now! ¹⁵For the LORD will strike Israel, as a reed is shaken in the water. He will ^puproot Israel from this ^qgood land which He gave to their fathers, and will scatter them ^rbeyond ⁵the River, ^sbecause they have made their ⁶wooden images, provoking the LORD to anger. ¹⁶And He will give Israel up because of the sins of Jeroboam, ^twho sinned and who made Israel sin.”

¹⁷Then Jeroboam’s wife arose and departed, and came to “Tirzah. ^vWhen she came to the threshold of the house, the child died. ¹⁸And they buried him; and all Israel mourned for him, ^waccording to the word of the LORD which He spoke through His servant Ahijah the prophet.

Death of Jeroboam

¹⁹Now the rest of the acts of Jeroboam, how he ^xmade war and how he reigned, indeed they *are* written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel. ²⁰The period that Jeroboam reigned was twenty-two years. So he rested with his fathers. Then ^yNadab his son reigned in his place.

Rehoboam Reigns in Judah

²¹And Rehoboam the son of Solomon reigned in Judah. ^zRehoboam was forty-one years old when he became king. He reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem, the city ^awhich the LORD had chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, to put His name there. ^bHis mother’s name was Naamah, an Ammonitess. ^{22 c}Now Judah did evil in the sight of the LORD, and they ^dprovoked Him to jealousy with their sins which they committed, more than all that their fathers had done. ²³For they also built for them-

14:7–16 Despite the prophetic sanction of the establishment of his kingdom (v. 7), Jeroboam’s sins were severe enough to prevent his house from staying on the throne of Israel (vv. 8–10). Worse news still would come for his family. The child would die just as his mother returned to her city, Tirzah (vv. 12, 13, 17). Moreover, an enemy would rise to destroy the household of the king (vv. 14–16).

14:10 bond and free: Like “heaven and earth” in Gen. 1:1, the two opposites together mean totality, or all kinds and classes of people (see 2 Kin. 14:26).

14:11 Dogs were scavengers in the ancient Middle East and came to symbolize the dregs of society (see 2 Kin. 8:13).

14:13 something good: Abijah’s character receives special divine consideration. Although the age of Jeroboam’s son is not certain, he may have been quite young.

14:14 cut off the house: As prophesied here, the end of Jeroboam’s line would soon be accomplished (15:27–16:7).

14:15 God had promised that He would **uproot** Israel should it violate its covenantal obligations (Deut. 28:63, 64). **wooden images:** The worship carried on here concerns the goddess Asherah. She had become associated with Baal (Judg. 3:7; 2 Kin. 23:4). Her worship would become one of the sins that would bring about the downfall of the northern kingdom (2 Kin. 17:9–11). See also 16:33.

14:17 Famed for its beauty (Song 6:4), **Tirzah** was a royal retreat and the capital of the northern kingdom’s first two dynasties (see 15:33).

14:18 all Israel mourned: The sorrow of the people was also part of Ahijah’s prophecy (v. 13).

14:19 The book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel is mentioned often in 1 Kings as an early source book for the history of the northern kingdom. These chronicles should not be confused with the biblical books of 1 and 2 Chronicles.

14:20 Each of the subsequent kings of Israel would be judged against the example of the wickedness of **Jeroboam** (see 15:34). Only with Ahab (see 16:31) was a worse pattern set.

14:21 the city which the LORD had chosen: These words celebrate not only Jerusalem (Deut. 12:1–19) but also the Davidic kingship.

14:22 Judah did evil: Although Rehoboam apparently began his reign well (see 2 Chr. 11:5–17, 23), his spiritual condition soon deteriorated (2 Chr. 12:1). Despite the fact that Judah had several spiritually sensitive kings, apostasy ultimately took its toll in the southern kingdom, just as it also did in the northern kingdom (2 Kin. 17:18–20).

14:23 The high places were a problem throughout the history of Judah and Israel (Mic. 1:3). At times, the worship offered on them might have been done sincerely, in the true worship of God

selves ^ehigh ⁷ places, ^fsacred pillars, and ^gwooden images on every high hill and ^hunder every green tree. ²⁴ⁱ And there were also ⁸perverted persons in the land. They did according to all the ^jabominations of the nations which the LORD had cast out before the children of ^kIsrael.

^{25l} It happened in the fifth year of King Rehoboam that Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem. ^{26m} And he took away the treasures of the house of the LORD and the treasures of the king's house; he took away everything. He also took away all the gold shields ⁿwhich Solomon had made. ²⁷ Then King Rehoboam made bronze shields in their place, and ⁹committed them to the hands of the captains of the ¹guard, who guarded the doorway of the king's house. ²⁸ And whenever the king entered the house of the LORD, the guards carried them, then brought them back into the guardroom.

^{29o} Now the rest of the acts of Rehoboam, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? ³⁰ And there was ^pwar between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all *their* days. ^{31q} So Rehoboam ²rested with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the City of David. ^r His mother's name *was* Naamah, an Ammonitess. Then ^sAbijam ³his son reigned in his place.

²³ ^e Deut. 12:2; Ezek. 16:24, 25
^f [Deut. 16:22]
^g [2 Kin. 17:9, 10]
^h Is. 57:5; Jer. 2:20
⁷ Places for pagan worship
²⁴ ⁱ Gen. 19:5; Deut. 23:17; 1 Kin. 15:12; 22:46; 2 Kin. 23:7 / Deut. 20:18
^k [Deut. 9:4, 5]
⁸ Heb. *qadesh*, one practicing sodomy and prostitution in religious rituals
²⁵ ¹ 1 Kin. 11:40;
² 2 Chr. 12:2
²⁶ ^m 1 Kin. 15:18;
² 2 Chr. 12:9–11
ⁿ 1 Kin. 10:17
²⁷ ⁹ entrusted ¹ Lit. runners
²⁹ ^o 2 Chr. 12:15, 16
³⁰ ^p 1 Kin. 12:21–24; 15:6
³¹ ^q 2 Chr. 12:16
^r 1 Kin. 14:21
² 2 Chr. 12:16 ² Died and joined his ancestors ³ Abijah, 2 Chr. 12:16

CHAPTER 15

¹ ^a 2 Chr. 13:1
² ^b 2 Chr. 11:20–22
^c 2 Chr. 13:2 ^d 2 Chr. 11:21
³ ^e 1 Kin. 11:4; Ps. 119:80 ¹ Lit. at peace with
⁴ ^f 2 Sam. 21:17;
¹ Kin. 11:32, 36;
² 2 Chr. 21:7
⁵ ^g 1 Kin. 9:4; 14:8;

Abijam Reigns in Judah

15 In ^a the eighteenth year of King Jeroboam the son of Nebat, Abijam became king over Judah. ² He reigned three years in Jerusalem. ^b His mother's name *was* ^cMaachah the granddaughter of ^dAbishalom. ³ And he walked in all the sins of his father, which he had done before him; ^e his heart was not ¹loyal to the LORD his God, as was the heart of his father David. ⁴ Nevertheless ^ffor David's sake the LORD his God gave him a lamp in Jerusalem, by setting up his son after him and by establishing Jerusalem; ⁵ because David ^gdid *what was* right in the eyes of the LORD, and had not turned aside from anything that He commanded him all the days of his life, ^hexcept in the matter of Uriah the Hittite. ⁶ⁱ And there was war between ²Rehoboam and Jeroboam all the days of his life. ^{7j} Now the rest of the acts of Abijam, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? And there was war between Abijam and Jeroboam.

^{8k} So Abijam ³rested with his fathers, and they buried him in the City of David. Then Asa his son reigned in his place.

Asa Reigns in Judah

⁹ In the twentieth year of Jeroboam

Luke 1:6 ^h 2 Sam. 11:3, 15–17; 12:9, 10 ⁶ ⁱ 1 Kin. 14:30; 2 Chr. 12:15–13:20 ² So with MT, LXX, Tg., Vg.; some Heb. mss., Syr. Abijam ⁷ ^j 2 Chr. 13:2–22 ⁸ ^k 2 Chr. 14:1 ³ Died and joined his ancestors

(see 3:2–4; see also 2 Kin. 12:3). But these were also the places in which Canaanite worship rites were practiced in honor of Baal and where other foreign gods were worshiped as well. **Sacred pillars** refers to standing pillars of stone or wood. God had prohibited Israel from setting these up (see Deut. 16:22). **Wooden images** is literally “Asherahs” (see v. 15), and refers to obscene wooden symbols that were associated with the sexual worship of the Canaanite deity of that name.

14:24 perverted persons: Male prostitutes were part of the fertility rituals of ancient Canaan (see Deut. 23:18). Here the word is a term that means “devoted to sacred service.” **abominations:** This is an exceedingly strong term; it describes perverted activities that impelled God to dispossess the Canaanite peoples from their land (see Deut. 18:9, 12).

14:25 Shishak: Although Jerusalem and Judah were spared total annihilation at this time because Rehoboam repented, Jerusalem was looted as a result of the sins that took place “on his watch” (2 Chr. 12:1–9). Egyptian records confirm that Shishak's invasion was widespread and highly successful.

14:26–28 The sacking of **treasures of the house of the LORD** (v. 26) is particularly shocking, when we think of the long and detailed description of Solomon's greatest accomplishment, the building and furnishing of the holy temple in Jerusalem (chs. 6–8).

14:27 bronze shields: A compelling symbol of the ruin of the temple treasures is seen in the change from shields of gold (v. 26; see 10:16, 17) to bronze.

14:29 The book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah is mentioned 15 times in Kings. Apparently it was an official record of events in the southern kingdom down to the days of Jehoiakim. Neither this work nor “the chronicles of the kings of Israel” (v. 19) is to be confused with the biblical books of Chronicles.

14:30 The early history of Rehoboam and Jeroboam (see 11:26–12:17) led to their continuing enmity and **war**.

15:1 Although it may reflect a popular name for Abijah (2 Chr. 12:16), **Abijam** is a strange name for a king of Judah, as it ties together the Hebrew word for “Father” with the Hebrew word for “Sea”—normally a deity of Canaan. It is possible that this name reflects the Canaanite influence that had come even into the royal family this early in Judah's reign. The alternative name Abijah is a standard name of praise to God. It means “My Father Is the Lord.”

15:2 The daughter of Uriel of Gibeah (2 Chr. 13:2) and Tamar (see 2 Sam. 14:27), **Maachah** was the granddaughter of Abishalom and the favorite of Rehoboam's 18 wives. A woman of strong will, she wielded a good deal of influence during the reign of her son Abijam and her grandson Asa. The mothers of the kings of Judah are named to show that the claims to the throne are legitimate.

15:3 The word translated **loyal** here denotes one who is wholly devoted to God. Contrast this negative assessment of Abijam with the positive use of the same term when Asa is evaluated (15:14).

15:4 for David's sake: That is, because of God's love for David and the promise He had made to him (see 2 Sam. 7). **lamp:** This is one of the lovely images of God's intended blessing on the Davidic house.

15:5 The quality of David's reign is celebrated. **Uriah:** At the same time, his most grievous sin is not omitted (2 Sam. 11; 12).

15:6 Because Rehoboam reigned until his fifty-eighth year (14:21), Abijam probably knew little respite from **war** (see 14:30). Abijam did at least trust God during the war against Jeroboam, and God gave him a decisive victory (see 2 Chr. 13:2–20).

15:7, 8 This follows the pattern established for recording the obituaries of the kings of Judah.

15:9 Asa: The meaning of his name is perhaps “Healer.”

king of Israel, Asa became king over Judah. ¹⁰ And he reigned forty-one years in Jerusalem. His grandmother's name was Maachah the granddaughter of Abishalom. ¹¹ Asa did *what was* right in the eyes of the LORD, as *did* his father David. ¹² And he banished the ⁴perverted persons from the land, and removed all the idols that his fathers had made. ¹³ Also he removed ⁿMaachah his grandmother from *being* queen mother, because she had made an obscene image of ⁵Asherah. And Asa cut down her obscene image and ^oburned *it* by the Brook Kidron. ¹⁴ But the ⁶high places were not removed. Nevertheless Asa's ^qheart was loyal to the LORD all his days. ¹⁵ He also brought into the house of the LORD the things which his father ^rhad dedicated, and the things which he himself had dedicated: silver and gold and utensils.

¹⁶ Now there was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel all their days. ¹⁷ And ^sBaasha king of Israel came up against Judah, and built ^tRamah, ^uthat he might let none go out or come in to Asa king of Judah. ¹⁸ Then Asa took all the silver and gold *that was* left in the treasuries of the house of the LORD and the treasuries of the king's house, and delivered them into the hand of his servants. And King Asa sent them to ^vBen-Hadad the son of Tabrimmon, the son of Hezion, king of Syria, who dwelt in ^wDamascus, saying, ¹⁹ "Let there be a treaty between you and me, as there was between my father and your father. See, I have sent you a present of silver and gold. Come and break your treaty with Baasha king of Israel, so that he will withdraw from me."

²⁰ So Ben-Hadad heeded King Asa, and

¹¹ ² Chr. 14:2
¹² ^m Deut. 23:17;
1 Kin. 14:24; 22:46
⁴ Heb. *qedeshim*,
those practicing
sodomy and
prostitution in
religious rituals
¹³ ⁿ 2 Chr. 15:16-
18 ^o Ex. 32:20 ⁵ A
Canaanite goddess
¹⁴ ^p 1 Kin. 3:2;
22:43; 2 Kin. 12:3;
2 Chr. 15:17, 18
^q [1 Sam. 16:7];
1 Kin. 8:61; 15:3
⁶ Places for pagan
worship
¹⁵ ^r 1 Kin. 7:51
¹⁷ ² Chr. 16:1-6
^t Josh. 18:25; 1 Kin.
15:21, 22 ^u 1 Kin.
12:26-29
¹⁸ ^v 2 Kin. 12:17,
18; 2 Chr. 16:2
^w Gen. 14:15; 1 Kin.
11:23, 24

²⁰ ^x 1 Kin. 20:1
^y 2 Kin. 15:29
² Judg. 18:29; 1 Kin.
12:29 ^a 2 Sam.
20:14, 15
²¹ ^b 1 Kin. 14:17;
16:15-18
²² ^c 2 Chr. 16:6
^d Josh. 21:17 ^e Josh.
18:26
²³ ^f 2 Chr. 16:11-14
²⁴ ^g 2 Chr. 17:1
^h 1 Kin. 22:41-44;
Matt. 1:8 ⁱ Died
and joined his
ancestors
²⁵ ^j 1 Kin. 14:20
²⁶ ^k 1 Kin. 12:28-33;
14:16
²⁷ ^l 1 Kin. 14:14
^j Josh. 19:44; 21:23;
1 Kin. 16:15

^x sent the captains of his armies against the cities of Israel. He attacked ^yIjon, ^zDan, ^aAbel Beth Maachah, and all Chinneroth, with all the land of Naphtali. ²¹ Now it happened, when Baasha heard *it*, that he stopped building Ramah, and remained in ^bTirzah.

²² Then King Asa made a proclamation throughout all Judah; none was exempted. And they took away the stones and timber of Ramah, which Baasha had used for building; and with them King Asa built ^dGeba of Benjamin, and ^eMizpah.

²³ The rest of all the acts of Asa, all his might, all that he did, and the cities which he built, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? But ^fin the time of his old age he was diseased in his feet. ²⁴ So Asa ^grested with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the City of David his father. ^gThen ^hJehoshaphat his son reigned in his place.

Nadab Reigns in Israel

²⁵ Now ⁱNadab the son of Jeroboam became king over Israel in the second year of Asa king of Judah, and he reigned over Israel two years. ²⁶ And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the way of his father, and in ^jhis sin by which he had made Israel sin.

²⁷ Then Baasha the son of Ahijah, of the house of Issachar, conspired against him. And Baasha killed him at ^kGibbethon, which *belonged* to the Philistines, while Nadab and all Israel laid siege to Gibbethon. ²⁸ Baasha killed him in the third year of Asa king of Judah, and

15:12 perverted persons: This term is used for sacred prostitutes in the Canaanite religious practices (22:46; 2 Kin. 23:7).

15:13 removed Maachah: Asa's many spiritual activities (see 2 Chr. 14:2-5; 15:1-18) are telescoped into a few statements here (vv. 11-15). Although the reforms mentioned in vv. 11, 12 took place early in Asa's reign (see 2 Chr. 14:2-5), the chronicler indicates (2 Chr. 15:16) that the deposing of Maachah took place in the fifteenth year of his rule (895 B.C.). Maachah's removal came as a result of a time of covenant renewal (2 Chr. 15:1-15) and a consequent reaction against her vile idolatry.

15:14 In some instances the **high places** were intended as places where the Lord was worshiped (see 3:2; 1 Sam. 9:12); in other cases they were used for pagan purposes (see 2 Chr. 14:2-3).

15:16 war: There were periods of peace between the two nations (see the league of Ahab and Jehoshaphat in ch. 22). But this was a period of warfare, particularly in the border areas.

15:17 Ramah was about five and a half miles north of Jerusalem on the main north-south commercial route through the land, and it was therefore of great importance to both kingdoms. It gave east-west access to both the foothills of Ephraim and the Mediterranean coast, so it was of strategic military importance as well. Baasha was striking a blow for control of the center of the land.

15:18 To stave off the penetration of Israel into Judah, King Asa plundered the temple for money to try to make a military alliance

with Damascus. Since the campaign mentioned here took place in the first decade of the ninth century B.C., the king involved was **Ben-Hadad I** (900-860 B.C.). **Tabrimmon:** There is a deliberate change in the Hebrew spelling of this name, based on an antipathy toward the god who is represented in the original name. Instead of writing *Tab-Ramman*, meaning "Thunderer," an epithet of the storm god Hadad (see Zech. 12:11), the author wrote *Tab-Rimmon*, the Hebrew word meaning "Pomegranate."

15:19 Asa apparently suggested that for all practical purposes **a treaty** between the house of David and Damascus had been in effect since the days of Solomon.

15:21 The retreat of **Baasha** from Ramah was due to the renewed treaty between Asa of Judah and Ben-Hadad of Damascus.

15:22 Asa's swift action in taking Ramah allowed him to dismantle its fortifications and the use of the material to fortify two nearby strategic Benjaminite towns, **Geba** and **Mizpah**. The control of these three sites afforded advanced defensive protection for Jerusalem and northern Judah.

15:25, 26 Nadab: His name means "Generous" or "Noble," but he did not live up to his name.

15:27, 28 Baasha killed him: As Baasha, a military commander for Nadab, had done to his master, so it would be done to his own house. Zimri, one of the commanders of his chariot corps, would conspire against Baasha's son Elah and kill him (16:9, 10).

reigned in his place. ²⁹And it was so, when he became king, *that* he killed all the house of Jeroboam. He did not leave to Jeroboam anyone that breathed, until he had destroyed him, according to ^mthe word of the LORD which He had spoken by His servant Ahijah the Shilonite, ³⁰ⁿbecause of the sins of Jeroboam, which he had sinned and by which he had made Israel sin, because of his provocation with which he had provoked the LORD God of Israel to anger.

³¹Now the rest of the acts of Nadab, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? ³²^oAnd there was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel all their days.

Baasha Reigns in Israel

³³In the third year of Asa king of Judah, Baasha the son of Ahijah became king over all Israel in Tirzah, and *reigned* twenty-four years. ³⁴He did evil in the sight of the LORD, and walked in ^pthe way of Jeroboam, and in his sin by which he had made Israel sin.

16 Then the word of the LORD came to ^aJehu the son of ^bHanani, against ^cBaasha, saying: ²^d“Inasmuch as I lifted you out of the dust and made you ruler over My people Israel, and ^eyou have walked in the way of Jeroboam, and have made My people Israel sin, to provoke Me to anger with their sins, ³surely I will ^ftake ¹away the posterity of Baasha and the posterity of his house, and I will make your house like ^gthe house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat. ⁴The dogs shall eat ^hwhoever belongs to Baasha and dies in the city, and the birds of the air shall eat whoever dies in the fields.”

⁵Now the rest of the acts of Baasha, what he did, and his might, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? ⁶So Baasha ²rested with his fathers and was buried in ^jTir-

²⁹ ^m 1 Kin. 14:10-14
³⁰ ⁿ 1 Kin. 14:9, 16
³² ^o 1 Kin. 15:16
³⁴ ^p 1 Kin. 13:33;
 14:16

CHAPTER 16

¹ ^q 1 Kin. 16:7;
 2 Chr. 19:2; 20:34
² 2 Chr. 16:7-10
^c 1 Kin. 15:27
² ^d 1 Sam. 2:8;
 1 Kin. 14:7 ^e 1 Kin.
 12:25-33; 15:34
³ ^f 1 Kin. 16:11;
 21:21 ^g 1 Kin. 14:10;
 15:29 ¹ *consume*
⁴ ^h 1 Kin. 14:11;
 21:24
⁵ ² 2 Chr. 16:11
⁶ ¹ 1 Kin. 14:17;
 15:21 ² Died
 and joined his
 ancestors

⁷ ^k 1 Kin. 16:1
¹ 1 Kin. 15:27, 29
⁹ ^m 2 Kin. 9:30-33
ⁿ Gen. 24:2; 39:4;
 1 Kin. 18:3 ³ Lit.
*who was over the
 house*
¹¹ ^o 1 Sam. 25:22
¹² ^p 1 Kin. 16:3
¹³ ^q Deut. 32:21;
 1 Sam. 12:21; [Is.
 41:29; Jon. 2:8;
 1 Cor. 8:4; 10:19]
⁴ Lit. *vanities*
¹⁵ ^r 1 Kin. 15:27

zah. Then Elah his son reigned in his place.

⁷And also the word of the LORD came by the prophet ^kJehu the son of Hanani against Baasha and his house, because of all the evil that he did in the sight of the LORD in provoking Him to anger with the work of his hands, in being like the house of Jeroboam, and because ^lhe killed them.

Elah Reigns in Israel

⁸In the twenty-sixth year of Asa king of Judah, Elah the son of Baasha became king over Israel, and *reigned* two years in Tirzah. ⁹^mNow his servant Zimri, commander of half *his* chariots, conspired against him as he was in Tirzah drinking himself drunk in the house of Arza, ⁿsteward³ of *his* house in Tirzah. ¹⁰And Zimri went in and struck him and killed him in the twenty-seventh year of Asa king of Judah, and reigned in his place.

¹¹Then it came to pass, when he began to reign, as soon as he was seated on his throne, *that* he killed all the household of Baasha; he ^odid not leave him one male, neither of his relatives nor of his friends. ¹²Thus Zimri destroyed all the household of Baasha, ^paccording to the word of the LORD, which He spoke against Baasha by Jehu the prophet, ¹³for all the sins of Baasha and the sins of Elah his son, by which they had sinned and by which they had made Israel sin, in provoking the LORD God of Israel to anger ^qwith their ⁴idols.

¹⁴Now the rest of the acts of Elah, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

Zimri Reigns in Israel

¹⁵In the twenty-seventh year of Asa king of Judah, Zimri had reigned in Tirzah seven days. And the people *were* encamped ^ragainst Gibbethon, which *belonged* to the Philistines. ¹⁶Now the

15:29, 30 The death of Nadab was in line with prophetic fulfillment, an act of God's judgment on the **house of Jeroboam I** (see 14:9, 16). Nonetheless, the manner of his death was condemned by God through His prophet Jehu (see 16:2, 7).

15:33 Baasha . . . in Tirzah: The second capital of Israel (see 14:17) was located in the highlands of Ephraim between Shechem (the first capital, see 12:25) and Mt. Gilboa.

15:34 did evil: Political exchange had not signaled any improvement in the spiritual climate of Israel.

16:1-7 As the son of the prophet Hanani whom Asa had executed (2 Chr. 16:7-10), **Jehu** (not to be confused with Jehu the king of Israel; see 2 Kin. 9:2) came from the southern kingdom. His long prophetic ministry lasted into the days of Jehoshaphat. Like his father before him, he confronted sin fearlessly—even in the royal house.

16:4 In the ancient Middle East considerable attention was given to the proper care of the body of the deceased. Usually the body was

interred on the day of death. When a body was left to the **dogs** and the **birds**, an intolerable feeling of shame extended to all family and friends of the deceased. For examples, see the ignoble ends of King Ahab (22:38) and Queen Jezebel (2 Kin. 9:33-37).

16:8 The first two dynasties of Israel ended in tragedy. Like Jeroboam's son Nadab (15:28), Baasha's son **Elah** was assassinated. There were three more claimants to the throne before the year 885 B.C. was finished: Zimri, Tibni, and Omri. With the advent of Omri, Israel's third dynasty would be established.

16:10-12 The assassination of Elah and the annihilation of his house by **Zimri** (v. 12), while treacherous, had prophetic sanction because of the wickedness of Elah and his father Baasha.

16:13 idols: Here the plural of the term for "vapor" is used. This is a contemptuous term describing the deities of false, pagan theology.

16:15 As Baasha had done (15:29), so **Zimri** also fulfilled prophecy against a royal house (vv. 8-14).

people *who were* encamped heard it said, “Zimri has conspired and also has killed the king.” So all Israel made Omri, the commander of the army, king over Israel that day in the camp. ¹⁷Then Omri and all Israel with him went up from Gibbethon, and they besieged Tirzah. ¹⁸And it happened, when Zimri saw that the city was ⁵taken, that he went into the citadel of the king’s house and burned the king’s house ⁶down upon himself with fire, and died, ¹⁹because of the sins which he had committed in doing evil in the sight of the LORD, ²⁰in walking in the ¹way of Jeroboam, and in his sin which he had committed to make Israel sin.

²⁰Now the rest of the acts of Zimri, and the treason he committed, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

Omri Reigns in Israel

²¹Then the people of Israel were divided into two parts: half of the people followed Tibni the son of Ginath, to make him king, and half followed Omri. ²²But the people who followed Omri prevailed over the people who followed Tibni the son of Ginath. So Tibni died and Omri reigned. ²³In the thirty-first year of Asa king of Judah, Omri became king over Israel, *and reigned* twelve years. Six years he reigned in ¹⁴Tirzah. ²⁴And he bought the hill of Samaria from Shemer for two

18 ⁵ captured ⁶ Lit. over him
19 ⁵ 1 Kin. 15:26, 34
¹ 1 Kin. 12:25-33
23 ¹ 1 Kin. 15:21;
2 Kin. 15:14

24 ¹ 1 Kin. 13:32;
2 Kin. 17:24;
John 4:4 ⁷ Heb. Shomeron
25 ¹ Mic. 6:16
26 ¹ 1 Kin. 16:19
¹ 1 Kin. 16:13 ⁸ Lit. vanities
31 ² Deut. 7:3
¹ Judg. 18:7; 1 Kin. 11:1-5 ¹ 1 Kin. 21:25, 26; 2 Kin. 10:18; 17:16
32 ² 2 Kin. 10:21, 26, 27

talents of silver; then he built on the hill, and called the name of the city which he built, ¹⁵Samaria,⁷ after the name of Shemer, owner of the hill. ²⁵¹⁰Omri did evil in the eyes of the LORD, and did worse than all who *were* before him. ²⁶For he ¹⁵walked in all the ways of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and in his sin by which he had made Israel sin, provoking the LORD God of Israel to anger with their ¹⁵idols.⁸

²⁷Now the rest of the acts of Omri which he did, and the might that he showed, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

²⁸So Omri rested with his fathers and was buried in Samaria. Then Ahab his son reigned in his place.

Ahab Reigns in Israel

²⁹In the thirty-eighth year of Asa king of Judah, Ahab the son of Omri became king over Israel; and Ahab the son of Omri reigned over Israel in Samaria twenty-two years. ³⁰Now Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the LORD, more than all who *were* before him. ³¹And it came to pass, as though it had been a trivial thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, ²that he took as wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal, king of the ¹Sidonians;⁹ and he went and served Baal and worshiped him. ³²Then he set up an altar for Baal in ¹the temple of Baal, which he had built in Samaria.

16:18 Because he **burned the king’s house** in Tirzah, Zimri may have contributed to Omri’s building of a new capital city and royal residence (v. 24), perhaps one that could be defended better.

16:21 The source of Omri’s political base is not certain. According to Josephus, **Tibni** was killed in the dynastic power struggles that brought in the dynasty of Omri.

16:23–28 Although Omri reigned for only 12 short years, he was one of the more impressive of the kings of Israel in terms of his accomplishments. He invaded Moab and figured prominently in an alliance aimed at stopping the westward advance of the rising power of Assyria. His exploits are commemorated in the Moabite Stone and the Assyrian annals. Indeed, he was so important to the Assyrians that they called Israel “The House of Omri” long after his death. Yet

the author of Kings describes little of Omri’s achievements, because he **did evil in the eyes of the LORD**.

16:24 Omri’s choice of **Samaria** as the site for his new capital city was doubtless motivated by several factors: its central geographic setting, its commercial location, and its defensive potential. As a Canaanite territory, it had political, ethnic, and religious independence from all previous allegiances.

16:30, 31 The first level of evaluation of **Ahab** is the same as that given to his father (compare v. 30 with v. 25). **a trivial thing**: By these words we realize that in Ahab we come to the very lowest point in the degeneration of the spiritual life of the kings of Israel. Each of the kings of the northern kingdom from Nadab (15:26), Jeroboam’s son, to Omri (16:26), Ahab’s father, had been guilty of walking in the perverse pathway of Jeroboam I. Ahab acted as though the sins of Jeroboam were a trivial thing. He did this in two ways: first, in his politically important marriage to Jezebel; second, in his promotion of Baal worship as the state religion. As in the case of the foreign wives of Solomon before him (11:1–13), Ahab’s marriage produced tragic results. Jezebel could influence Ahab to be wicked (ch. 21). However, when she was absent from Ahab, he had moments of relatively good behavior (ch. 20). Her father was both king and priest of Baal in Sidon; similarly, Jezebel was princess and priestess of Baal. Her Phoenician name was Abizebel, meaning “My Father (Baal) Is Noble.” The Hebrew scribes deliberately dropped a letter from her name. Thus she would be known forever as Jezebel, a dishonorable name meaning “Lacking Honor.” **he went and served Baal and worshiped him**: The outrage is that Ahab had gone quite beyond a mere combining of beliefs. He became a full-fledged worshiper of Baal, the Canaanite deity, for whom his wife Jezebel was a priestess.

16:32, 33 Further, Ahab established an **altar for Baal, a temple of Baal**, and a **wooden image**. In these actions Ahab went a con-

Baal

(Heb. *ba'al*) (16:31; 18:21; Judg. 2:13; 2 Kin. 10:20) Strong’s #1168

Baal was a pagan god of storms and fertility, worshiped throughout the ancient Middle East because of his association with powerful forces. His name literally means “Owner,” “Master,” or “Husband.” In Canaanite literature, Baal is often associated with the fertility goddess Asherah, whose sacred “Asherah poles” are mentioned numerous times in the OT (2 Kin. 21:7). Worship of these pagan deities involved self-mutilation, ritual prostitution, and infant sacrifice. Despite these despicable practices, the Israelites themselves adopted Baal worship—a factor which eventually led to God’s punishment (Judg. 2:11–15; Jer. 19:4–6).

33^d And Ahab made a ^gwooden image. Ahab ^edid more to provoke the LORD God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel who were before him. 34 In his days Hiel of Bethel built Jericho. He laid its foundation ¹with Abiram his firstborn, and with his youngest son Segub he set up its gates, ^faccording to the word of the LORD, which He had spoken through Joshua the son of Nun.

Elijah Proclaims a Drought

17 And Elijah the Tishbite, of the ^ainhabitants of Gilead, said to Ahab, ^b“As the LORD God of Israel lives, ^cbefore whom I stand, ^dthere shall not be dew nor rain ^ethese years, except at my word.”

²Then the word of the LORD came to him, saying, ³“Get away from here and turn eastward, and hide by the Brook Cherith, which flows into the Jordan. ⁴And it will be *that* you shall drink from the brook, and I have commanded the ^fravens to feed you there.”

⁵So he went and did according to the word of the LORD, for he went and stayed by the Brook Cherith, which flows into the Jordan. ⁶The ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning, and bread and meat in the evening; and he drank from the brook. ⁷And it happened after a while that the brook dried up, because there had been no rain in the land.

Elijah and the Widow

⁸Then the word of the LORD came to him, saying, ⁹“Arise, go to ^gZarephath,

33 ^d 2 Kin. 13:6
^e 1 Kin. 14:9;
 16:29, 30; 21:25
^g Heb. *Asherah*, a
 Canaanite goddess
 34 ^f Josh. 6:26 ¹ At
 the cost of the
 life of

CHAPTER 17

1 ^e Judg. 12:4
^b 1 Kin. 18:10; 22:14;
 2 Kin. 3:14; 5:20
^c Deut. 10:8 ^d 1 Kin.
 18:1; James 5:17
^e Luke 4:25
^f Job 38:41
^g Obad. 20; Luke
 4:25, 26

^h 2 Sam. 24:6
 12 ⁱ Deut. 28:23,
 24 ¹ Lit. *pitcher* or
water jar
 17 ² severe ³ He
 died.

which *belongs* to ^hSidon, and dwell there. See, I have commanded a widow there to provide for you.” ¹⁰So he arose and went to Zarephath. And when he came to the gate of the city, indeed a widow *was* there gathering sticks. And he called to her and said, “Please bring me a little water in a cup, that I may drink.” ¹¹And as she was going to get *it*, he called to her and said, “Please bring me a morsel of bread in your hand.”

¹²So she said, “As the LORD your God lives, I do not have bread, only a handful of flour in a bin, and a little oil in a ¹jar; and see, I *am* gathering a couple of sticks that I may go in and prepare it for myself and my son, that we may eat it, and ⁱdie.”

¹³And Elijah said to her, “Do not fear; go *and* do as you have said, but make me a small cake from it first, and bring *it* to me; and afterward make *some* for yourself and your son. ¹⁴For thus says the LORD God of Israel: ‘The bin of flour shall not be used up, nor shall the jar of oil run dry, until the day the LORD sends rain on the earth.’”

¹⁵So she went away and did according to the word of Elijah; and she and he and her household ate for *many* days. ¹⁶The bin of flour was not used up, nor did the jar of oil run dry, according to the word of the LORD which He spoke by Elijah.

Elijah Revives the Widow's Son

¹⁷Now it happened after these things *that* the son of the woman who owned the house became sick. And his sickness was so ²serious that ³there was no

siderable distance in establishing the Baal cult as the state religion of Israel. The worship of Baal in Israel would ultimately spell the end of both kingdoms (see 2 Kin. 17:16–23; Jer. 2:1—3:25). The sin that Ahab and Jezebel brought into the nation of Israel was a total rejection of the living God.

16:34 In defiance of Joshua’s curse (Josh. 6:26, 27), Hiel **built Jericho**. Jericho had been occupied at various times (see Judg. 3:13), but not as a permanently occupied fortified city. Either Hiel offered his sons as foundation sacrifices (following ancient custom) or they died in some mishap. One way or the other, Joshua’s curse was carried out.

17:1 No prophet had arisen since Moses (Deut. 18:15–19) like **Elijah**. His name means “The Lord Is My God.” Elijah would speak for God fearlessly in the midst of the spiritual vacuum that gripped the northern kingdom throughout the days of Ahab, Ahaziah, and Jehoram. **Tishbite** has been understood traditionally as referring to a town named Tishbe or as designation for the settlers in Gilead. A formal, solemn oath (see David’s words in 1:19), **as the LORD God of Israel lives**, was also a brilliant declaration. Elijah, who stood unafraid before the king of Israel, unannounced and uninvited, could do so because he stood before One whose glory, majesty, and power were infinitely greater than Ahab’s. **dew nor rain**: Because the Canaanite belief was that only Baal could govern the dew and the rain, Elijah’s pronouncement was as an immediate challenge: Who is really God, Baal or the Lord? (see 18:21; Deut. 28:12; 33:28).

17:5 The Brook Cherith was across the Jordan, far from the palace in Samaria.

17:6 The Lord of all creation may use any means He wishes to feed His prophet, even **the ravens**.

17:9 Zarephath was in Phoenician territory, seven miles south of Sidon, the stronghold of Baal. The Lord’s sustaining Elijah first by a raven and then by a **widow** provided the prophet with a dramatic test of faith at the outset of his ministry. The widow, too, would be taught the value of trusting in God alone (v. 24). Many widows were exceptionally poor, as they had few options in an agrarian culture. This one was in a desperate plight when she encountered God’s prophet.

17:12 the Lord your God: The widow of Zarephath was a woman of faith in the living God, even though she lived in a foreign land. **Bread** here denotes a round cake. The flour **bin** was a large earthenware container (Gen. 24:14), while **jar** denotes a smaller, portable container such as a jug or flask.

17:13 me . . . first: Elijah’s challenge to the widow would call for faith in the midst of her desperate circumstances.

17:14 The Lord God of Israel acknowledges the woman’s identification of the Lord as Elijah’s God (v. 12), but also points the widow directly to Him who is the Sustainer of all.

17:15, 16 While an apostate Israelite nation suffered because of the drought, God supplied the daily necessities to a non-Israelite who willingly took Him at His word. The fresh supply of oil and flour each day would be a reminder to both the prophet and the widow of the value of personal trust in Him who alone is sufficient to meet every need (see Phil. 4:19).

breath left in him. ¹⁸ So she said to Elijah, ^j “What have I to do with you, O man of God? Have you come to me to bring my sin to remembrance, and to kill my son?”

¹⁹ And he said to her, “Give me your son.” So he took him out of her arms and carried him to the upper room where he was staying, and laid him on his own bed. ²⁰ Then he cried out to the LORD and said, “O LORD my God, have You also brought tragedy on the widow with whom I lodge, by killing her son?” ^{21 k} And he stretched himself out on the child three times, and cried out to the LORD and said, “O LORD my God, I pray, let this child’s soul come back to him.” ²² Then the LORD heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came back to him, and he ^l revived.

²³ And Elijah took the child and brought him down from the upper room into the house, and gave him to his mother. And Elijah said, “See, your son lives!”

²⁴ Then the woman said to Elijah, “Now by this ^m I know that you *are* a man of God, *and* that the word of the LORD in your mouth *is* the truth.”

Elijah’s Message to Ahab

18 And it came to pass *after* ^a many days that the word of the LORD came to Elijah, in the third year, saying, “Go, present yourself to Ahab, and ^b I will send rain on the earth.”

² So Elijah went to present himself to Ahab; and *there* was a severe famine in Samaria. ³ And Ahab had called Obadiah, who *was* ¹ in charge of *his* house. (Now Obadiah feared the LORD greatly. ⁴ For so it was, while Jezebel ² massacred the prophets of the LORD, that Obadiah had

18 / Luke 5:8
21 ^a 2 Kin. 4:34, 35;
Acts 20:10
22 ^l Luke 7:14, 15;
Heb. 11:35
24 ^m John 2:11; 3:2;
16:30

CHAPTER 18

1 ^a 1 Kin. 17:1; Luke
4:25; James 5:17
^b Deut. 28:12
3 ^l Lit. *over the house*
4 ² Lit. *cut off*

7 ^c 2 Kin. 1:6–8
12 ^d 2 Kin. 2:16;
Ezek. 3:12, 14; Matt.
4:1; Acts 8:39

taken one hundred prophets and hidden them, fifty to a cave, and had fed them with bread and water.) ⁵ And Ahab had said to Obadiah, “Go into the land to all the springs of water and to all the brooks; perhaps we may find grass to keep the horses and mules alive, so that we will not have to kill any livestock.” ⁶ So they divided the land between them to explore it; Ahab went one way by himself, and Obadiah went another way by himself.

⁷ Now as Obadiah was on his way, suddenly Elijah met him; and he ^e recognized him, and fell on his face, and said, “Is that you, my lord Elijah?”

⁸ And he answered him, “*It is I*. Go, tell your master, ‘Elijah *is here*.’”

⁹ So he said, “How have I sinned, that you are delivering your servant into the hand of Ahab, to kill me? ¹⁰ As the LORD your God lives, there is no nation or kingdom where my master has not sent someone to hunt for you; and when they said, ‘*He is not here*,’ he took an oath from the kingdom or nation that they could not find you. ¹¹ And now you say, ‘Go, tell your master, ‘Elijah *is here*’!” ¹² And it shall come to pass, *as soon as* I am gone from you, that ^d the Spirit of the LORD will carry you to a place I do not know; so when I go and tell Ahab, and he cannot find you, he will kill me. But I your servant have feared the LORD from my youth. ¹³ Was it not reported to my lord what I did when Jezebel killed the prophets of the LORD, how I hid one hundred men of the LORD’s prophets, fifty to a cave, and fed them with bread and water? ¹⁴ And now you say, ‘Go, tell your master, ‘Elijah *is here*.’” He will kill me!”

¹⁵ Then Elijah said, “As the LORD of

17:18 Sin is not always the immediate cause of suffering (see John 9:3; Heb. 12:7–11).

17:19 Elijah stayed in an **upper room**, temporary quarters on the roof accessible from outside the house. This arrangement reserved the privacy of all parties and protected the widow’s reputation in the community.

17:21 Elijah’s action in the stretching out of himself on the dead **lad three times** may symbolize the power of the thrice holy God (see Num. 6:24–26; Is. 6:3). Elisha later would perform a similar act (2 Kin. 4:34; see also Acts 20:10).

17:21, 22 cried . . . heard: The scriptural motif of crying and being heard, or calling and being answered, is a theme that emphasizes intimacy of fellowship or communion (see Ps. 22:24; 91:15; 102:1, 2).

17:24 now . . . I know: The widow’s belief had now grown into fullness of faith. That Elijah was indeed a “man of God” (v. 18) had been proved by word and deed. The entire incident demonstrates that the Lord is the God of Israelite and Gentile alike (see Acts 10:34, 35; 11:18; Rom. 3:29), and that He is the author of life itself (see Luke 20:38; John 11:25, 26).

18:1 The NT indicates that the drought ended in the fourth year (Luke 4:25; James 5:17). If the point of reckoning here is late in the **third year**, the end of the drought may well have not occurred until some three and a half years after its inception.

18:3 Although Jewish tradition has identified them, this **Obadiah**

is probably not the author of the Book of Obadiah. Nothing in that book points to so early a date as this time. The Obadiah here is a highly sympathetic figure, whose great faith in God and heroic actions help us gain a more balanced picture of the situation of people of faith in Israel at the time. **in charge of his house:** This phrase reflects an official title (see 4:6). Obadiah was Ahab’s palace official and minister of state, in both cases serving as the king’s personal representative.

18:4 That there could be **one hundred prophets** for Obadiah to hide may be seen from the fact that associations of prophets who met and may even have lived together are known from this period onward (see 1 Sam. 10:5; 2 Kin. 2:3–7; 6:1, 2). Over twenty thousand caves have been found in the vicinity of Mt. Carmel, many of them capable of holding 50 men.

18:5 Keeping **horses** alive was important to maintain military preparedness in a world where there was nearly always the threat of new hostilities.

18:12 Obadiah was not quite sure whether he could trust the Lord’s prophet. Obadiah recognized that God’s Holy Spirit might come upon His servants (Judg. 6:34; 11:29) in such a way as to **carry** them to other places (Ezek. 8:3; 11:1). Obadiah had already jeopardized his life in hiding God’s prophets. Reporting Elijah’s presence without producing him to an already infuriated Ahab might well cost him his life (vv. 9, 14).

hosts lives, before whom I stand, I will surely present myself to him today.”

¹⁶So Obadiah went to meet Ahab, and told him; and Ahab went to meet Elijah.

¹⁷Then it happened, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said to him, *“Is that you, O troubler of Israel?”*

¹⁸And he answered, “I have not troubled Israel, but you and your father’s house *have*, ¹⁹in that you have forsaken the commandments of the LORD and have followed the Baals. ¹⁹Now therefore, send *and* gather all Israel to me on ^hMount Carmel, the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal, ⁱand the four hundred prophets of ³Asherah, who ⁴eat at Jezebel’s table.”

Elijah’s Mount Carmel Victory

²⁰So Ahab sent for all the children of Israel, and ^jgathered the prophets together on Mount Carmel. ²¹And Elijah came to all the people, and said, ^k“How long will you falter between two opinions? If the LORD *is* God, follow Him; but if Baal, ^lfollow him.” But the people answered him not a word. ²²Then Elijah said to the people, ^m“I alone am left a prophet of the LORD; ⁿbut Baal’s prophets *are* four hundred and fifty men. ²³Therefore let them give us two bulls; and let them choose one bull for themselves, cut it in pieces, and lay *it* on the wood, but put no fire *under it*; and I will prepare the other bull, and lay *it* on the wood, but put no fire *under it*. ²⁴Then you call on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the LORD; and the God who ^oanswers by fire, He is God.”

¹⁷ ^e 1 Kin. 21:20
/ Josh. 7:25; Acts 16:20
¹⁸ ^g 1 Kin. 16:30-33;
[2 Chr. 15:2]
¹⁹ ^h Josh. 19:26;
2 Kin. 2:25 ⁱ 1 Kin.
16:33 ³ A Canaanite
goddess ⁴ Are
provided for by
Jezebel
²⁰ ^j 1 Kin. 22:6
²¹ ^k 2 Kin. 17:41;
[Matt. 6:24] ^l Josh.
24:15
²² ^m 1 Kin. 19:10, 14
ⁿ 1 Kin. 18:19
²⁴ ^o 1 Kin. 18:38;
1 Chr. 21:26

⁵ Lit. *The word is good*
²⁶ ^p Ps. 115:5; Jer. 10:5; [1 Cor. 8:4]
⁶ answer ⁷ Lit.
limped about, leaped in dancing around
²⁷ ⁸ with a loud voice
²⁸ ^q [Lev. 19:28; Deut. 14:1] ⁹ swords
²⁹ ^r Ex. 29:39, 41
ⁱ 1 Kin. 18:26
³⁰ ^t 1 Kin. 19:10, 14;
2 Chr. 33:16
³¹ ^u Gen. 32:28;
35:10; 2 Kin. 17:34
³² ^v [Ex. 20:25; Col. 3:17]

So all the people answered and said, ⁵“It is well spoken.”

²⁵Now Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, “Choose one bull for yourselves and prepare *it* first, for you *are* many; and call on the name of your god, but put no fire *under it*.”

²⁶So they took the bull which was given them, and they prepared *it*, and called on the name of Baal from morning even till noon, saying, “O Baal, ⁶hear us!” But *there was* ⁷no voice; no one answered. Then they ⁷leaped about the altar which they had made.

²⁷And so it was, at noon, that Elijah mocked them and said, “Cry ⁸aloud, for he *is* a god; either he is meditating, or he is busy, or he is on a journey, *or* perhaps he is sleeping and must be awakened.” ²⁸So they cried aloud, and ⁹cut themselves, as was their custom, with ⁹knives and lances, until the blood gushed out on them. ²⁹And when midday was past, ^rthey prophesied until the *time* of the offering of the *evening* sacrifice. But *there was* ^sno voice; no one answered, no one paid attention.

³⁰Then Elijah said to all the people, “Come near to me.” So all the people came near to him. ^tAnd he repaired the altar of the LORD *that was* broken down. ³¹And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, to whom the word of the LORD had come, saying, “Israel shall be your name.” ³²Then with the stones he built an altar ^vin the name of the LORD; and he made a trench around the altar large enough to hold two seahs of seed.

18:18 Baals: The wording indicates that Ahab had a practice of attending services at various local shrines where this deity was worshipped.

18:19 The wife of Ei, **Asherah** was a fertility goddess whose exploits and veneration were linked with Baal (see 14:15). The worship of Baal and Asherah held a constant fascination for Israel from earliest times (Ex. 34:13; Num. 25; Judg. 2:13) and eventually caused Israel’s demise (2 Kin. 17:16–18).

18:22 Although there were other prophets alive at the time (v. 13), Elijah focused on the fact that he **alone** stood ready to confront the 450 prophets of Baal.

18:24 The contest between the Lord and Baal would reveal who was the true god of storm. Such a god would have lightning in his arsenal of weapons (see Ps. 18:12–14; Hab. 3:11). Sending **fire** for the wood and the offering would be a reasonable test of the power of the rival deities.

18:27 The sharp words **for he is a god** were mocking and derisive. Perhaps their god was lost in thought, **meditating**, and simply needed them to call louder. **Is busy** is a euphemism. In his harsh attack on the folly of idolatry, Elijah suggested that the reason their god did not answer was that he had gone to a celestial men’s room.

18:30 repaired the altar: This was an earlier altar that had been used by the true people of God on a legitimate high place (see 3:2–4). Elijah avoided all contact with the altar that was associated with Baal.

18:31 The numerical symbolism of **twelve stones** cannot be

missed. The people of Israel had descended from twelve tribes.

18:32 The rebuilding of the **altar in the name of the Lord** would be a reminder that the Lord had not abdicated His position; He was still the God of all Israel, including the northern kingdom, where pagan syncretism and full Baal worship prevailed.

name

(Heb. *shem*) (8:20; 18:24; Ex. 6:3) Strong’s #8034

The Hebrew word *shem* may be related to a root meaning “to mark,” but this is uncertain. In Bible times, a person’s name not only served as a means of identification, but it could also describe a person’s character, position, or destiny (see 1 Sam. 25:25 for the meaning of Nabal’s name, “Fool”). Sometimes a person was renamed, reflecting a change in that person’s character or status (see Gen. 35:10). The various names of God are especially important. Each name reveals a particular aspect of His nature (for example, God Most High or the Lord of Hosts). For this reason, His name is to be honored and should never be used irreverently (Ex. 20:7). By sharing His name with Israel, God indicated the intimacy of His covenantal relationship with them (Ex. 3:13–15).

³³ And he ^wput the wood in order, cut the bull in pieces, and laid it on the wood, and said, “Fill four waterpots with water, and ^xpour it on the burnt sacrifice and on the wood.” ³⁴ Then he said, “Do it a second time,” and they did it a second time; and he said, “Do it a third time,” and they did it a third time. ³⁵ So the water ran all around the altar; and he also filled ^ythe trench with water.

³⁶ And it came to pass, at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near and said, “**LORD ^zGod of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel,** ^alet it be known this day that You are God in Israel and I am Your servant, and that ^bI have done all these things at Your word. ³⁷ Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that You are the LORD God, and that You have turned their hearts back to You again.”

³⁸ Then ^cthe fire of the LORD fell and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood and the stones and the dust, and it licked up the water that was in the trench. ³⁹ Now when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces; and they said, ^d“The LORD, He is God! The LORD, He is God!”

⁴⁰ And Elijah said to them, ^e“Seize the prophets of Baal! Do not let one of them escape!” So they seized them; and Elijah brought them down to the Brook ^fKishon and ^gexecuted them there.

The Drought Ends

⁴¹ Then Elijah said to Ahab, “Go up, eat and drink; for there is the sound of abundance of rain.” ⁴² So Ahab went up to eat and drink. And Elijah went up to

³³ ^w Gen. 22:9; Lev. 1:6-8 ^x Judg. 6:20
³⁵ ^y 1 Kin. 18:32, 38
³⁶ ^z Gen. 28:13;
 Ex. 3:6; 4:5; [Matt. 22:32] ^a 1 Kin. 8:43;
 2 Kin. 19:19 ^b Num. 16:28
³⁸ ^c Gen. 15:17; Lev. 9:24; 10:1, 2; Judg. 6:21; 2 Kin. 1:12;
 1 Chr. 21:26; 2 Chr. 7:1; Job 1:16
³⁹ ^d 1 Kin. 18:21, 24
⁴⁰ ^e 2 Kin. 10:25
^f Judg. 4:7; 5:21
^g [Deut. 13:5; 18:20]

⁴² ^h James 5:17, 18
⁴⁴ ⁱ Lit. Bind or Harness
⁴⁶ ^j 2 Kin. 3:15;
 Is. 8:11; Ezek. 3:14
^j 2 Kin. 4:29; 9:1;
 Jer. 1:17; 1 Pet. 1:13
^k Tucked the skirts of his robe in his belt in preparation for quick travel

CHAPTER 19

1 ^a 1 Kin. 18:40
 2 ^b Ruth 1:17; 1 Kin. 20:10; 2 Kin. 6:31
 4 ^c Num. 11:15; Jer. 20:14-18; Jon. 4:3, 8
ⁱ juniper

the top of Carmel; ^h then he bowed down on the ground, and put his face between his knees, ⁴³ and said to his servant, “Go up now, look toward the sea.”

So he went up and looked, and said, “There is nothing.” And seven times he said, “Go again.”

⁴⁴ Then it came to pass the seventh time, that he said, “There is a cloud, as small as a man’s hand, rising out of the sea!” So he said, “Go up, say to Ahab, ¹ ‘Prepare your chariot, and go down before the rain stops you.’”

⁴⁵ Now it happened in the meantime that the sky became black with clouds and wind, and there was a heavy rain. So Ahab rode away and went to Jezreel. ⁴⁶ Then the ⁱhand of the LORD came upon Elijah; and he ^jgirded ² up his loins and ran ahead of Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel.

Elijah Escapes from Jezebel

19 And Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, also how he had ^aexecuted all the prophets with the sword. ² Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, ^b“So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I do not make your life as the life of one of them by tomorrow about this time.” ³ And when he saw that, he arose and ran for his life, and went to Beersheba, which belongs to Judah, and left his servant there.

⁴ But he himself went a day’s journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a ¹broom tree. And he ^cprayed that he might die, and said, “It is enough! Now, LORD, take my life, for I am no better than my fathers!”

18:33–35 third time: The three applications of water not only made the sacrifice thoroughly soaked and beyond human trickery but may again attest the power of the thrice holy God (see 17:21).

18:36 The phrase **LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel** so characteristic of worship in the early period (see Gen. 50:24; Ex. 3:6, 15, 16), reminded Elijah’s hearers of the inviolability of the Abrahamic covenant. The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, was still the God of the northern kingdom, and the nation’s only hope of life, protection, and blessing in the land of promise (Deut. 30:20; 2 Kin. 13:23).

18:37 Elijah’s prayer had two elements. First, he wished that the Lord would demonstrate clearly to the people that He alone is the living God. Second, he prayed for the full revival of God’s people. The first prayer would be answered in a dramatic manner.

18:38 Showing who really was the god of storm, Baal proved impotent, while the fire of the LORD destroyed everything on the site.

18:39 God’s power over fire, water, and rain (v. 45) demonstrated that He, not Baal, is the LORD, He is God!

18:40 The prophets were executed because of their blatant sin and the ruin they had brought upon the nation.

18:41, 42 The respective reactions of the king and the prophet are enlightening. A compromising king, as bidden, gladly celebrated, while a faithful prophet bowed down and prayed for the promised result of the Lord’s miraculous victory.

18:44 This cloud may have seemed as small as a man’s hand

when it was first visible from Mt. Carmel’s height, but Elijah sensed the approach of the growing storm and warned Ahab that he had better hurry.

18:45 Elijah had announced more than three years earlier that there would be no more rain unless it came from the hand of the living God (see 17:1).

18:46 girded up his loins: Elijah tucked his garment into his sash, enabling him to run freely the 13 miles to Jezreel.

19:1, 2 The report Ahab told Jezebel did not cause her to repent or to turn from Baal to God. Ahab merely reported the facts that led to her personal embarrassment. Her response was to issue a death warrant for Elijah.

19:3 Elijah understood Jezebel’s intentions when he saw her response, and he realized dejectedly that the Lord’s victory on Mt. Carmel would not necessarily bring a quick end to the paganism that was rampant in the land. Elijah faced profound disappointment when he saw that nothing really had changed. Despite the tremendous demonstration of the reality of God’s power on Mt. Carmel, the people would soon forget and revert to their old evil ways. He . . . ran for his life, not from fear, but from a desire that Jezebel not be the one to kill him. Actually he wished for death, but he prayed that his death would be at the Lord’s hand.

19:4 The broom tree has sufficient foliage for shade and often grows to a height of ten feet. It grows abundantly in Israel.

⁵Then as he lay and slept under a broom tree, suddenly an ²angel touched him, and said to him, “Arise *and* eat.” ⁶Then he looked, and there by his head *was* a cake baked on ³coals, and a jar of water. So he ate and drank, and lay down again. ⁷And the ⁴angel of the LORD came back the second time, and touched him, and said, “Arise *and* eat, because the journey *is* too great for you.” ⁸So he arose, and ate and drank; and he went in the strength of that food forty days and ⁴forty nights as far as ^eHoreb, the mountain of God.

⁹And there he went into a cave, and spent the night in that place; and behold, the word of the LORD *came* to him, and He said to him, “What are you doing here, Elijah?”

¹⁰So he said, ^f“I have been very ^gzealous for the LORD God of hosts; for the children of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars, and ^hkilled Your prophets with the sword. ⁱI alone am left; and they seek to take my life.”

God's Revelation to Elijah

¹¹Then He said, “Go out, and stand ^jon the mountain before the LORD.” And behold, the LORD ^kpassed by, and ^la great and strong wind tore into the mountains and broke the rocks in pieces before the LORD, *but* the LORD *was* not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, *but* the LORD *was* not in the earthquake; ¹²and after the earthquake a fire, *but* the LORD *was* not in the fire; and after the fire ⁵a still small voice.

¹³So it was, when Elijah heard *it*, that ^mhe wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood in the entrance of the cave. ⁿSuddenly a voice *came* to him,

⁵ ² Or Angel
⁶ ³ hot stones
⁷ ⁴ Or Angel
⁸ ^d Ex. 24:18; 34:28;
 Deut. 9:9-11, 18;
 Matt. 4:2 ^e Ex. 3:1;
 4:27
¹⁰ ^f Rom. 11:3
^g Num. 25:11, 13;
 Ps. 69:9 ^h 1 Kin.
 18:4 ⁱ 1 Kin. 18:22;
 Rom. 11:3
¹¹ / Ex. 19:20; 24:12;
 18 ^k Ex. 33:21, 22
^l Ezek. 1:4; 37:7
¹² ⁵ a delicate
 whispering voice
¹³ ^m Ex. 3:6; Is. 6:2
ⁿ 1 Kin. 19:9

¹⁴ ^o 1 Kin. 19:10
¹⁵ ^p 2 Kin. 8:8-15
¹⁶ ^q 2 Kin. 9:1-10
^r 1 Kin. 19:19-21;
 2 Kin. 2:9-15
¹⁷ ^s 2 Kin. 8:12; 13:3;
 22 ^t 2 Kin. 9:14-
 10:28 ^u [Hos. 6:5]
¹⁸ ^v Rom. 11:4
^w Hos. 13:2
¹⁹ ^x 1 Sam. 28:14;
 2 Kin. 2:8, 13, 14
²⁰ ^y [Matt. 8:21, 22;
 Luke 9:61, 62]; Acts
 20:37
²¹ ^z 2 Sam. 24:22

and said, “What are you doing here, Elijah?”

^{14o}And he said, “I have been very zealous for the LORD God of hosts; because the children of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars, and killed Your prophets with the sword. I alone am left; and they seek to take my life.”

¹⁵Then the LORD said to him: “Go, return on your way to the Wilderness of Damascus; ^pand when you arrive, anoint Hazael *as* king over Syria. ¹⁶Also you shall anoint ^qJehu the son of Nimshi *as* king over Israel. And ^rElisha the son of Shaphat of Abel Meholah you shall anoint *as* prophet in your place. ^{17s}It shall be *that* whoever escapes the sword of Hazael, Jehu will ^tkill; and whoever escapes the sword of Jehu, ^uElisha will kill. ^{18v}Yet I have reserved seven thousand in Israel, all whose knees have not bowed to Baal, ^wand every mouth that has not kissed him.”

Elisha Follows Elijah

¹⁹So he departed from there, and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, who *was* plowing *with* twelve yoke of oxen before him, and he was with the twelfth. Then Elijah passed by him and threw his ^xmantle on him. ²⁰And he left the oxen and ran after Elijah, and said, ^y“Please let me kiss my father and my mother, and *then* I will follow you.”

And he said to him, “Go back again, for what have I done to you?”

²¹So Elisha turned back from him, and took a yoke of oxen and slaughtered them and ^zboiled their flesh, using the oxen’s equipment, and gave it to the people, and they ate. Then he arose and followed Elijah, and became his servant.

19:5, 6 God brought Elijah a **cake** and **water**, even as He had provided for him in earlier days (see ch. 17).

19:7 Although the **angel of the LORD** can at times refer to God Himself (Ex. 3:2-6), in the Book of Kings it means a supernatural messenger (2 Kin. 1:3; 19:35).

19:8 As it frequently does in the Scriptures, **Horeb** refers to Mt. Sinai itself, “the mountain of God” (see Ex. 3:1).

19:10 **zealous**: Like Phinehas of old (Num. 25:7-13), Elijah had a passion for God that made him stand against the idolatry he saw all around him. **I alone am left**: In his depression, he thought he alone was faithful to God. When he was killed, there would be no one left to serve God.

19:11, 12 **the LORD was not in**: Although each of the things mentioned in vv. 11, 12 could signal God’s presence (see Ex. 40:38; Zech. 14:4, 5; Acts 2:2, 3), Elijah learned that God is not just a God of the spectacular. At times, the work of God is experienced in a **still small voice**, “the sound of a gentle stillness.” Elijah had called for lightning, and he had called for fire and national revival. What Elijah did not see was that God was at work in the lives of many people (v. 18).

19:15 Elijah’s work for God was far from complete, but it would now take a new direction. Elijah would **anoint** Elisha (vv. 19-21), Elisha

would anoint **Hazael** (2 Kin. 8:7-15), and Jehu would be anointed by Elisha’s servant (2 Kin. 9:1-10). The importance of Elijah’s task may be seen in that Elisha became Elijah’s designated successor, and Jehu and Hazael became kings.

19:17 The three individuals, **Elisha**, **Jehu**, and **Hazael**, were instruments of God. One would follow the other in works of judgment on God’s hard-hearted people.

19:18 There were still many people who were faithful to the living God. **Seven thousand** had not stooped to worship Baal. Although in each generation there are great spiritual leaders who do the work of God, there is a community of God among everyday people whose lives are not spectacular but who live faithfully for God.

19:21 Unlike those whom Jesus would mention in his teachings (Matt. 8:18-22; Luke 9:57-62), **Elisha turned back** to his home only to break fully with his past. As Joshua had faithfully served Moses in a period of training for a position of great responsibility, so Elisha would humbly serve this later “Moses” until Elijah was taken into heaven (2 Kin. 2:1-12). The use of the word **servant** of Elisha matches the use of this word for Gehazi, the servant of Elisha in 2 Kin. 4:12.

Lives of Elijah and Elisha

The life-and-death struggle with Baalism, acute in Elijah's day, intensified under Elisha and culminated in bloody purges of the priests of Baal. Ahab's line was overthrown, and reforms were promulgated by Jehu.

Elijah's rugged figure became a model of the ideal prophet in Israel. Jesus fulfilled 40 days and nights of desert fasting, as Elijah had done; many believed he was a reincarnated Elijah (see 1 Kin. 19:8; Matt. 4:2; 16:14).

Elisha also became a model for the prophets. Jesus' miracle of feeding the 5,000 was similar to Elisha's feeding 100 men with 20 barley loaves.



ELIJAH

Elijah of Tishbe was instrumental in Israel's reaction to Baalism. Jezebel of Tyre was symbolic of the nation's corruption.

- 1 Fed by ravens
- 2 Miracle of the widow's jar of oil
- 3 After the triumph on Mount Carmel, Elijah ordered the people to slaughter the prophets of Baal.
- 4 Elijah was so discouraged that he wanted to die. Fleeing to Sinai, he was told to anoint a new generation of political and religious leaders.
- 5 At Naboth's vineyard in Jezreel, God's servant confronted Jezebel's puppet, the king.



ELISHA

Elisha, like Elijah, performed miracles and was called "the chariots of Israel and their horsemen" (2 Kin. 13:14).

- 1 Born west of the Jordan, the prophet frequented shrines at Mount Carmel and Gilgal. Dothan, a flourishing town in this period, was probably his residence.
- 2 Spring healed
- 3 Jeered by youths
- 4 Elisha journeyed from Mount Carmel to Shunem to raise a child from the dead, as Elijah had done at Zarephath.
- 5 Vision of chariots of fire
- 6 Elisha and his servant anointed Hazael and Jehu, completing Elijah's commission at Horeb.

Ahab Defeats the Syrians

20 Now ^aBen-Hadad the king of Syria gathered all his forces together; thirty-two kings ^{were} with him, with horses and chariots. And he went up and besieged ^bSamaria, and made war against it. ²Then he sent messengers into the city to Ahab king of Israel, and said to him, “Thus says Ben-Hadad: ³‘Your silver and your gold ^{are} mine; your loveliest wives and children ^{are} mine.’”

⁴And the king of Israel answered and said, “My lord, O king, just as you say, I and all that I have ^{are} yours.”

⁵Then the messengers came back and said, “Thus speaks Ben-Hadad, saying, ‘Indeed I have sent to you, saying, “You shall deliver to me your silver and your gold, your wives and your children”; ⁶but I will send my servants to you tomorrow about this time, and they shall search your house and the houses of your servants. And it shall be, ^{that} whatever is ¹pleasant in your eyes, they will put ^{it} in their hands and take ^{it}.’”

⁷So the king of Israel called all the elders of the land, and said, “Notice, please, and see how this ^{man} seeks trouble, for he sent to me for my wives, my children, my silver, and my gold; and I did not deny him.”

⁸All the elders and all the people said to him, “Do not listen or consent.”

⁹Therefore he said to the messengers of Ben-Hadad, “Tell my lord the king, ‘All that you sent for to your servant the first time I will do, but this thing I cannot do.’”

And the messengers departed and brought back word to him.

¹⁰Then Ben-Hadad sent to him and said, “The gods do so to me, and more

CHAPTER 20

¹ ^a 1 Kin. 15:18, 20;
² Kin. 6:24 ^b 1 Kin.
16:24; 2 Kin. 6:24
⁶ ¹ ^{pleasing}
¹⁰ ^c 1 Kin. 19:2;
2 Kin. 6:31

also, if enough dust is left of Samaria for a handful for each of the people ²who follow me.”

¹¹So the king of Israel answered and said, “Tell ^{him}, ‘Let not the one who puts on ^{his} armor ^dboast like the one who takes ^{it} off.’”

¹²And it happened when *Ben-Hadad* heard this message, as he and the kings ^{were} drinking at the ³command post, that he said to his servants, “Get ready.” And they got ready to attack the city.

¹³Suddenly a prophet approached Ahab king of Israel, saying, “Thus says the LORD: ‘Have you seen all this great multitude? Behold, ^II will deliver it into your hand today, and you shall know that ^II am the LORD.’”

¹⁴So Ahab said, “By whom?”

And he said, “Thus says the LORD: ‘By the young leaders of the provinces.’”

Then he said, “Who will set the battle in order?”

And he answered, “You.”

¹⁵Then he mustered the young leaders of the provinces, and there were two hundred and thirty-two; and after them he mustered all the people, all the children of Israel—seven thousand.

¹⁶So they went out at noon. Meanwhile Ben-Hadad and the thirty-two kings helping him ^{were} getting drunk at the command post. ¹⁷The young leaders of the provinces went out first. And Ben-Hadad sent out ^a patrol, and they told him, saying, “Men are coming out of Samaria!” ¹⁸So he said, “If they have come out for peace, take them alive; and if they have come out for war, take them alive.”

¹⁹Then these young leaders of the provinces went out of the city with the

² Lit. at my feet

¹¹ ^d Prov. 27:1; [Ecc. 7:8]

¹² ^e 1 Kin. 20:16

³ Lit. booths or shelters

¹³ ^f 1 Kin. 20:28

¹⁶ ^g 1 Kin. 16:9; 20:12; [Prov. 20:1]

20:1 The king of Syria was **Ben-Hadad II** (860–842 B.C.). Although there is a modern nation called Syria, the ancient name for the people who had their capital in Damascus was *Aramean*, and their land was *Aram* (see 2 Kin. 5:1). One of the distinctive features of the ancient Middle East was the practice of forming alliances. Coalitions such as the **thirty-two kings** were common in times of war (Gen. 14:1–16).

20:2 When he is associated with his wicked wife Jezebel, **Ahab** appears as thoroughly evil. But in this chapter he appears as a capable leader in a time of international turmoil, and as a person who had some sense of the power and presence of God (see vv. 13, 14).

20:3, 4 Taken by themselves, Ben-Hadad’s words **are mine** meant no more than that Israel was a client state to the more powerful Aramean state. Ahab’s reply **all . . . are yours** would then have been acceptance of such a treaty, in which Israel was the subservient party.

20:5, 6 The language was no longer that of political formalities; this was a demand for complete surrender of everything of value, of any person of worth, of **whatever** was **pleasant** in Ahab’s eyes, to be handed over to the foreign monarch.

20:7, 8 Ahab apparently held out little hope of withstanding so vast an enemy host. His **elders** (v. 8) counseled him against submitting.

20:10 Ben-Hadad’s boast was that his striking power was so great

that Samaria would be ground to a powder, yielding barely enough for each of his soldiers to carry away **a handful**.

20:11 Ahab’s proverbial reply reminded Ben-Hadad that **a boast** alone would not get the job done.

20:12 The notice that **Ben-Hadad** was **drinking** during the time he should have been preparing for battle shows his arrogance. He was celebrating victory before he had begun fighting (see v. 16).

20:13 This **prophet** is not named. We are reminded that there were many true prophets of the Lord at the time (18:13; 20:35). **I will deliver . . . you shall know:** Just as God had demonstrated His person and power on Mt. Carmel (ch. 18), He would now make Himself known to Ahab in the coming battle.

20:14, 15 The prophet revealed the outlines of the strategy Ahab should use. To his credit, Ahab obeyed the divine command and **mustered** his force.

20:16 This was an alliance of **thirty-two kings** from small areas in Aram and the surrounding territories. But they were all **getting drunk**—an arrogant act before the battle had even begun.

20:17–21 Ahab followed up his probing skirmish with a well-timed charge by his main striking force. Ben-Hadad, the king of the Arameans, barely **escaped** (v. 20) with his life. The resulting **great slaughter** (v. 21) was a tremendous victory for the army of Ahab.

army which followed them. ²⁰And each one killed his man; so the Syrians fled, and Israel pursued them; and Ben-Hadad the king of Syria escaped on a horse with the cavalry. ²¹Then the king of Israel went out and attacked the horses and chariots, and killed the Syrians with a great slaughter.

²²And the prophet came to the king of Israel and said to him, “Go, strengthen yourself; take note, and see what you should do, ^hfor ⁴in the spring of the year the king of Syria will come up against you.”

The Syrians Again Defeated

²³Then the servants of the king of Syria said to him, “Their gods *are* gods of the hills. Therefore they were stronger than we; but if we fight against them in the plain, surely we will be stronger than they. ²⁴So do this thing: Dismiss the kings, each from his position, and put captains in their ⁵places; ²⁵and you shall muster an army like the army ⁶that you have lost, horse for horse and chariot for chariot. Then we will fight against them in the plain; surely we will be stronger than they.”

And he listened to their voice and did so.

²⁶So it was, in the spring of the year, that Ben-Hadad mustered the Syrians and went up to ⁱAphek to fight against Israel. ²⁷And the children of Israel were mustered and given provisions, and they went against them. Now the children of Israel encamped before them like two little flocks of goats, while the Syrians filled the ^jcountryside.

²⁸Then a ^kman of God came and spoke to the king of Israel, and said, “Thus says the LORD: ‘Because the Syrians have said, “The LORD is God of the hills, but He is not God of the valleys,” therefore ^lI will deliver all this great multitude into your hand, and you shall know that I *am* the LORD.’” ²⁹And they encamped opposite

²² ^h 2 Sam. 11:1;
1 Kin. 20:26 ⁴ Lit. *at the return*
²⁴ ⁵ positions
²⁵ ⁶ Lit. *that fell from you*
²⁶ ⁱ Josh. 13:4;
2 Kin. 13:17
²⁷ / Judg. 6:3-5;
1 Sam. 13:5-8
²⁸ ^k 1 Kin. 17:18
/ 1 Kin. 20:13

each other for seven days. So it was that on the seventh day the battle was joined; and the children of Israel killed one hundred thousand foot soldiers *of* the Syrians in one day. ³⁰But the rest fled to Aphek, into the city; then a wall fell on twenty-seven thousand of the men *who were* left.

And Ben-Hadad fled and went into the city, into an inner chamber.

Ahab's Treaty with Ben-Hadad

³¹Then his servants said to him, “Look now, we have heard that the kings of the house of Israel *are* merciful kings. Please, let us ^mput sackcloth around our waists and ropes around our heads, and go out to the king of Israel; perhaps he will spare your life.” ³²So they wore sackcloth around their waists and *put* ropes around their heads, and came to the king of Israel and said, “Your servant Ben-Hadad says, ‘Please let me live.’”

And he said, “Is he still alive? He *is* my brother.”

³³Now the men were watching closely to see whether *any sign of mercy would come* from him; and they quickly grasped *at this word* and said, “Your brother Ben-Hadad.”

So he said, “Go, bring him.” Then Ben-Hadad came out to him; and he had him come up into the chariot.

³⁴So *Ben-Hadad* said to him, ““The cities which my father took from your father I will restore; and you may set up marketplaces for yourself in Damascus, as my father did in Samaria.”

Then *Ahab* said, “I will send you away with this treaty.” So he made a treaty with him and sent him away.

Ahab Condemned

³⁵Now a certain man of ^othe sons of the prophets said to his neighbor ⁿby the word of the LORD, “Strike me, please.” And the man refused to strike him. ³⁶Then he said to him, “Because you have not obeyed the voice of the LORD,

³¹ ^m Gen. 37:34;
2 Sam. 3:31
³⁴ ⁿ 1 Kin. 15:20
³⁵ ^o 2 Kin. 2:3, 5, 7,
15 ^p 1 Kin. 13:17, 18

20:22 This is likely the same **prophet** through whom God had given an encouraging message (v. 13; contrast v. 35). Ahab ultimately trusted in human wisdom rather than divine standards (see v. 42). The period of late **spring** to early summer was one of the two main seasons for military expeditions. Provisions were readily available for men and cattle. The end of the rains allowed the movement of troops and provisions to be made more easily.

20:23 The Aramean advisors reflected traditional ancient Middle Eastern theological conceptions. Their gods' powers, such as their **gods of the hills**, were limited to particular locations. But the living God is not limited by time (Ps. 90:2) or space (Ps. 139:7-12). This is a fact beyond the imagination of these pagan “theologians.”

20:26 This **Aphek** is not the Philistine city where the ark was lost (see 1 Sam. 4:1), but another location just east of the Jordan in northern Gilead. Apparently the Arameans were launching their second

campaign in the Jordan valley. The Arameans would learn that the living God can deliver His people in the valley as well as the hills (see Ps. 23:4; Joel 3:12-14).

20:31 Ben-Hadad now appealed to Ahab's **merciful** nature. The Aramean king sent his servants to Ahab in the traditional attire of submission and repentance.

20:32 The term **brother** was commonly used when relations between kings were cordial (see 9:13). Ben-Hadad might have been implying, “We are both kings.”

20:35 This **certain man** is probably a different prophet than the one mentioned earlier in the story (see vv. 13, 22). **sons of the prophets**: Although this term first occurs here, prophetic associations were known at least from Samuel's time (1 Sam. 10). Obadiah had only recently been instructed about rescuing such groups of prophets from Ahab's purge (18:13-14).

surely, as soon as you depart from me, a lion shall kill you.” And as soon as he left him, ^aa lion found him and killed him.

³⁷And he found another man, and said, “Strike me, please.” So the man struck him, inflicting a wound. ³⁸Then the prophet departed and waited for the king by the road, and disguised himself with a bandage over his eyes. ³⁹Now ^ras the king passed by, he cried out to the king and said, “Your servant went out into the midst of the battle; and there, a man came over and brought a man to me, and said, ‘Guard this man; if by any means he is missing, ^syour life shall be for his life, or else you shall ⁷pay a talent of silver.’ ⁴⁰While your servant was busy here and there, he was gone.”

Then the king of Israel said to him, “So *shall* your judgment *be*; you yourself have decided it.”

⁴¹And he hastened to take the bandage away from his eyes; and the king of Israel recognized him as one of the prophets. ⁴²Then he said to him, “Thus says the LORD: ‘Because you have let slip out of *your* hand a man whom I appointed to utter destruction, therefore your life shall go for his life, and your people for his people.’”

⁴³So the king of Israel ^uwent to his house sullen and displeased, and came to Samaria.

Naboth Is Murdered for His Vineyard

21 And it came to pass after these things that Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard which *was* in ^aJezreel, next to the palace of Ahab king of Samaria. ²So Ahab spoke to Naboth, saying, “Give me your ^bvineyard, that I may have it for a vegetable garden, because it is near, next to my house; and for it I will give you a vineyard better than it. Or, if it seems good to you, I will give you its worth in money.”

³But Naboth said to Ahab, “The LORD forbid ^cthat I should give the inheritance of my fathers to you!”

⁴So Ahab went into his house sul-

36 ^a 1 Kin. 13:24
39 ^r 2 Sam. 12:1
^s 2 Kin. 10:24 ⁷ Lit. weigh
42 ^t 1 Kin. 22:31-37
43 ^u 1 Kin. 21:4

CHAPTER 21

1 ^a Judg. 6:33;
1 Kin. 18:45, 46
2 ^b 1 Sam. 8:14
3 ^c [Lev. 25:23;
Num. 36:7; Ezek.
46:18]

len and displeased because of the word which Naboth the Jezreelite had spoken to him; for he had said, “I will not give you the inheritance of my fathers.” And he lay down on his bed, and turned away his face, and would eat no food. ⁵But ^dJezebel his wife came to him, and said to him, “Why is your spirit so sullen that you eat no food?”

⁶He said to her, “Because I spoke to Naboth the Jezreelite, and said to him, ‘Give me your vineyard for money; or else, if it pleases you, I will give you *another* vineyard for it.’ And he answered, ‘I will not give you my vineyard.’”

⁷Then Jezebel his wife said to him, “You now exercise authority over Israel! Arise, eat food, and let your heart be cheerful; I will give you the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite.”

⁸And she wrote letters in Ahab’s name, sealed *them* with his seal, and sent the letters to the elders and the nobles who *were* dwelling in the city with Naboth. ⁹She wrote in the letters, saying,

Proclaim a fast, and seat Naboth

¹with high honor among the people;

¹⁰and seat two men, scoundrels,

before him to bear witness against

him, saying, “You have ^eblasphemed

God and the king.” *Then* take him out, and ^fstone him, that he may die.

¹¹So the men of his city, the elders and nobles who were inhabitants of his city, did as Jezebel had sent to them, as it *was* written in the letters which she had sent to them. ¹²^gThey proclaimed a fast, and seated Naboth with high honor among the people. ¹³And two men, scoundrels, came in and sat before him; and the scoundrels ^hwitnessed against him, against Naboth, in the presence of the people, saying, “Naboth has blasphemed God and the king!” ⁱThen they took him outside the city and stoned him with stones, so that he died. ¹⁴Then they sent to Jezebel, saying, “Naboth has been stoned and is dead.”

5 ^d 1 Kin. 19:1, 2
9 ¹ Lit. at the head
10 ^e [Ex. 22:28; Lev.
24:15, 16]; Acts 6:11
^f [Lev. 24:14]
12 ^g Is. 58:4
13 ^h [Ex. 20:16; 23:1,
7] ⁱ 2 Kin. 9:26;
2 Chr. 24:21; Acts
7:58, 59; Heb. 11:37

20:42, 43 The prophet’s dramatic tale is symbolic; as Ahab had judged the case, so he would be judged (see 22:29–37).

20:43 **Sullen** here connotes stubbornness as well as a downcast spirit. Rather than being grateful to God for the victories, Ahab resorts to human reason and adamantly refuses to change his ways.

21:1 **Samaria** was Ahab’s capital city; its name is used to represent all of Israel (see 2 Kin. 1:3; 2 Chr. 24:23; Jon. 3:6).

21:2 Technically, all land was the Lord’s, who granted it in perpetuity to each Israelite tribe and family (Lev. 25:23–28). Accordingly, the property belonged to **Naboth** (Num. 36:2–9). Even the king was obliged to obey the law (1 Sam. 10:25). Ahab therefore negotiated with Naboth for his property.

21:7 In reminding Ahab that he was king and could do as he pleased,

Jezebel reflected her Canaanite background where kings ruled absolutely (see Deut. 17:14–20; 1 Sam. 8:11–18).

21:8 Such **letters** would be written by royal scribes on scrolls or tablets and then **sealed** with the sender’s personal sign.

21:13 **two men, scoundrels**: The charge against Naboth was serious (see Ex. 22:28). Although two witnesses were required in capital cases (Deut. 17:6), these **two men** were **scoundrels**, easily bribed into giving false testimony (Prov. 19:28). Naboth was executed **outside the city** as the Law required (Lev. 24:14). God’s law was followed in the manner and place of his death, though his execution was an outrage against the whole spirit of the Law. As in the case of Achan (Josh. 7:24, 25), Naboth’s sons were stoned to death with him (see 2 Kin. 9:26), preventing any successor of Naboth from seeking to undo the illegal land seizure.

¹⁵And it came to pass, when Jezebel heard that Naboth had been stoned and was dead, that Jezebel said to Ahab, “Arise, take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, which he refused to give you for money; for Naboth is not alive, but dead.” ¹⁶So it was, when Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, that Ahab got up and went down to take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite.

The LORD Condemns Ahab

¹⁷Then the word of the LORD came to ^kElijah the Tishbite, saying, ¹⁸“Arise, go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, ^lwho lives in Samaria. There *he is*, in the vineyard of Naboth, where he has gone down to take possession of it. ¹⁹You shall speak to him, saying, “Thus says the LORD: “Have you murdered and also taken possession?”” And you shall speak to him, saying, “Thus says the LORD: ^m“In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth, dogs shall lick your blood, even yours.””

²⁰So Ahab said to Elijah, ⁿ“Have you found me, O my enemy?”

And he answered, “I have found *you*, because ^oyou have sold yourself to do evil in the sight of the LORD: ²¹‘Behold, ^pI will bring calamity on you. I will take away your ^qposterity, and will cut off from Ahab ^revery male in Israel, both ^sbond and free. ²²I will make your house like the house of ^tJeroaboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of ^uBaasha the son of Ahijah, because of the provocation with which you have provoked *Me* to anger, and made Israel sin.’ ²³And ^vconcerning Jezebel the LORD also spoke, saying, ‘The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the ²wall of Jezreel.’ ²⁴The dogs shall eat ^wwhoever belongs to Ahab and dies in the city, and the birds of the air shall eat whoever dies in the field.”

²⁵But ^xthere was no one like Ahab who sold himself to do wickedness in the

17 / [Ps. 9:12]
k 1 Kin. 19:1
18 / 1 Kin. 13:32;
2 Chr. 22:9
19 m 1 Kin. 22:38;
2 Kin. 9:26
20 n 1 Kin. 18:17
o 1 Kin. 21:25; 2 Kin.
17:17; [Rom. 7:14]
21 p 1 Kin. 14:10;
2 Kin. 9:8 q 2 Kin.
10:10 r 1 Sam. 25:22
s 1 Kin. 14:10
22 t 1 Kin. 15:29
u 1 Kin. 16:3, 11
23 v 2 Kin. 9:10,
30-37 z So with
MT, LXX; some
Heb. mss., Syr., Tg.,
Vg. plot of ground
instead of wall (cf.
2 Kin. 9:36)
24 w 1 Kin. 14:11;
16:4
25 x 1 Kin. 16:30-33;
21:20

y 1 Kin. 16:31
z incited him
26 a Gen. 15:16;
[Lev. 18:25-30];
2 Kin. 21:11
27 a Gen. 37:34;
2 Sam. 3:31; 2 Kin.
6:30
28 b [2 Kin. 22:19]
c 2 Kin. 9:25;
10:11, 17

CHAPTER 22

2 a 1 Kin. 15:24;
2 Chr. 18:2
3 b Deut. 4:43; Josh.
21:38; 1 Kin. 4:13
4 c 2 Kin. 3:7
5 d 2 Kin. 3:11
6 e 1 Kin. 18:19
f The false
prophets
7 f 2 Kin. 3:11 g Or
him

sight of the LORD, ^hbecause Jezebel his wife ³stirred him up. ²⁶And he behaved very abominably in following idols, according to all ^zthat the Amorites had done, whom the LORD had cast out before the children of Israel.

²⁷So it was, when Ahab heard those words, that he tore his clothes and ^aput sackcloth on his body, and fasted and lay in sackcloth, and went about mourning.

²⁸And the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying, ²⁹“See how Ahab has humbled himself before Me? Because he ^bhas humbled himself before Me, I will not bring the calamity in his days. ^cIn the days of his son I will bring the calamity on his house.”

Micaiah Warns Ahab

22 Now three years passed without war between Syria and Israel. ²Then it came to pass, in the third year, that ^aJehoshaphat the king of Judah went down to *visit* the king of Israel.

³And the king of Israel said to his servants, “Do you know that ^bRamoth in Gilead is ours, but we hesitate to take it out of the hand of the king of Syria?” ⁴So he said to Jehoshaphat, “Will you go with me to fight at Ramoth Gilead?”

Jehoshaphat said to the king of Israel, ^c“I am as you are, my people as your people, my horses as your horses.” ⁵Also Jehoshaphat said to the king of Israel, ^d“Please inquire for the word of the LORD today.”

⁶Then the king of Israel ^egathered ¹the prophets together, about four hundred men, and said to them, “Shall I go against Ramoth Gilead to fight, or shall I refrain?”

So they said, “Go up, for the Lord will deliver *it* into the hand of the king.”

⁷And ^fJehoshaphat said, “Is there not still a prophet of the LORD here, that we may inquire of ²Him?”

⁸So the king of Israel said to Jehosha-

21:15 Because **Naboth . . . was dead**, the property was confiscated by the throne. Although Ahab apparently was unconcerned about how this took place, he could not escape his guilty conscience (v. 20). **21:19** Soon Ahab’s blood would be licked by **dogs** at the pool in Samaria (22:37, 38). Ahab had lost all sense of God’s law, the basic teaching of which was always love for God and for neighbor (see Matt. 22:37–40). Ahab’s consistent idolatry demonstrated that he had no whole-hearted love for God (see 18:18). Taking Naboth’s vineyard showed he had no love for his neighbor either. **21:25** The vacillating nature of Ahab’s complex character is seen here. He could all too easily be led into **wickedness** by his **wife**. Nevertheless, he could at times display courage (22:34, 35) and even real humility before God (v. 29). Unfortunately, he never really entered into a genuine spiritual relationship with God. The result was that he, like all who despise God’s mercies (see 2 Pet. 3:5–10), would perish and leave his ill-gotten gain behind him (see Ps. 49:5–14).

22:1–3 Faced with the rising threat of Assyria, Ahab had failed to press his advantage of three years before. He had not reoccupied the strategic highlands of **Ramoth in Gilead**. In the days of Solomon this area served as an administrative center (4:13), but apparently it was lost during the reign of Omri. Now that Aram and Israel as allies had successfully turned back Shalmaneser III of Assyria at Qarqar (853 B.C.), control of Ramoth Gilead was crucial. **22:4** **Jehoshaphat** was the fourth king of the southern kingdom. He was related to Ahab through the marriage of his son Jehoram to Ahab’s daughter Athaliah (2 Kin. 8:18, 27). Jehoshaphat’s relation to Ahab now placed him in the precarious position of going to war with Ahab against the Arameans. **22:5** Kings in the ancient Middle East commonly sought the will of the gods before entering battle (see Judg. 20:27, 28; 1 Sam. 23:1–4). Jehoshaphat did not rely on Ahab’s false prophets; he desired a true **word of the LORD**.

phat, “*There is still one man, Micaiah the son of Imlah, by whom we may inquire of the LORD; but I hate him, because he does not prophesy good concerning me, but evil.*”

And Jehoshaphat said, “Let not the king say such things!”

⁹Then the king of Israel called an officer and said, “Bring Micaiah the son of Imlah quickly!”

¹⁰The king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, having put on *their* robes, sat each on his throne, at a threshing floor at the entrance of the gate of Samaria; and all the prophets prophesied before them. ¹¹Now Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah had made ^ghorns of iron for himself; and he said, “Thus says the LORD: ‘With these you shall ^hgore the Syrians until they are destroyed.’” ¹²And all the prophets prophesied so, saying, “Go up to Ramoth Gilead and prosper, for the LORD will deliver *it* into the king’s hand.”

¹³Then the messenger who had gone to call Micaiah spoke to him, saying, “Now listen, the words of the prophets with one accord encourage the king. Please, let your word be like the word of one of them, and speak encouragement.”

¹⁴And Micaiah said, “As the LORD lives, ⁱwhatever the LORD says to me, that I will speak.”

¹⁵Then he came to the king; and the king said to him, “Micaiah, shall we go to war against Ramoth Gilead, or shall we refrain?”

And he answered him, “Go and prosper, for the LORD will deliver *it* into the hand of the king!”

¹⁶So the king said to him, “How many times shall I make you swear that you tell me nothing but the truth in the name of the LORD?”

¹⁷Then he said, “I saw all Israel ^jscattered on the mountains, as sheep that have no shepherd. And the LORD said, ‘These have no master. Let each return to his house in peace.’”

¹⁸And the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, “Did I not tell you he would not prophesy good concerning me, but evil?”

¹¹ ^g Zech. 1:18-21
^h Deut. 33:17
¹⁴ ⁱ Num. 22:38; 24:13
¹⁷ ^j Num. 27:17;
1 Kin. 22:34-36;
2 Chr. 18:16; Matt.
9:36; Mark 6:34

¹⁹ ^k Is. 6:1; Ezek.
1:26-28; Dan. 7:9
^j Job 1:6; 2:1; Ps.
103:20; Dan. 7:10;
Zech. 1:10; [Matt.
18:10; Heb. 1:7, 14]
²² ^m Judg. 9:23;
1 Sam. 16:14; 18:10;
19:9; Job 12:16;
[Ezek. 14:9; 2 Thess.
2:11]
²³ ⁿ [Ezek. 14:9]
²⁴ ^o Jer. 20:2
² 2 Chr. 18:23
²⁵ ^q 1 Kin. 20:30
²⁷ ^r 2 Chr. 16:10;
18:25-27
²⁸ ^s Num. 16:29;
Deut. 18:20-22
³⁰ ^t 2 Chr. 35:22
³¹ ^u 1 Kin. 20:1
^v 1 Kin. 20:24; 2 Chr.
18:30

¹⁹Then Micaiah said, “Therefore hear the word of the LORD: ^kI saw the LORD sitting on His throne, ^land all the host of heaven standing by, on His right hand and on His left. ²⁰And the LORD said, ‘Who will persuade Ahab to go up, that he may fall at Ramoth Gilead?’ So one spoke in this manner, and another spoke in that manner. ²¹Then a spirit came forward and stood before the LORD, and said, ‘I will persuade him.’ ²²The LORD said to him, ‘In what way?’ So he said, ‘I will go out and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.’ And the LORD said, ^m‘You shall persuade *him*, and also prevail. Go out and do so.’ ²³Therefore look! The LORD has put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these prophets of yours, and the LORD has declared disaster against you.”

²⁴Now Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah went near and ^ostruck Micaiah on the cheek, and said, ^p“Which way did the spirit from the LORD go from me to speak to you?”

²⁵And Micaiah said, “Indeed, you shall see on that day when you go into an ^qinner chamber to hide!”

²⁶So the king of Israel said, “Take Micaiah, and return him to Amon the governor of the city and to Joash the king’s son; ²⁷and say, ‘Thus says the king: “Put this *fellow* in ^rprison, and feed him with bread of affliction and water of affliction, until I come in peace.”’”

²⁸But Micaiah said, “If you ever return in peace, ^sthe LORD has not spoken by me.” And he said, “Take heed, all you people!”

Ahab Dies in Battle

²⁹So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah went up to Ramoth Gilead. ³⁰And the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, “I will disguise myself and go into battle; but you put on your robes.” So the king of Israel ^tdisguised himself and went into battle.

³¹Now the ^uking of Syria had commanded the thirty-two ^vcaptains of his chariots, saying, “Fight with no one small or great, but only with the king of Israel.” ³²So it

22:9 The prophet **Micaiah** is not known except in connection with this incident (see 2 Chr. 18:8–27).

22:10 A **threshing floor** was often used by the Canaanites for holding court. Threshing floors could also be scenes of spiritual importance (see Judg. 6:36–40; 1 Chr. 21:15–22:1).

22:11 Zedekiah tried to validate his prophetic pronouncement with symbolic magic. The **horns** symbolize great strength (Num. 24:8; Ps. 18:2), an idea reinforced by the use of **iron**. A goring horn is used elsewhere in Scripture to symbolize victorious power (Dan. 8:7).

22:17 The imagery of **sheep** and **shepherd** was familiar to Micaiah’s hearers (see Ezek. 34:12; Mark 14:27). Micaiah’s words are

dramatic, emphasizing the gravity of Ahab’s projected venture and counteracting Zedekiah’s lies.

22:23 **lying spirit**: These prophets prophesied under the influence of evil, but their false predictions were just what Ahab wanted to hear.

22:30 By hiding himself behind a **disguise**, Ahab hoped he could thwart Micaiah’s prophecy of doom. Jehoshaphat’s participation in royal regalia in a battle where he did not even belong (2 Chr. 19:1–3) nearly cost him his life. Ben-Hadad tried to shorten the battle by finding and killing Ahab. Jehoshaphat’s life was spared not only by his timely cry but by God’s direct intervention (2 Chr. 18:31).

was, when the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat, that they said, “Surely it is the king of Israel!” Therefore they turned aside to fight against him, and Jehoshaphat ¹⁰cried out. ³³And it happened, when the captains of the chariots saw that it *was* not the king of Israel, that they turned back from pursuing him. ³⁴Now a *certain* man drew a bow at random, and struck the king of Israel between the joints of his armor. So he said to the driver of his chariot, “Turn around and take me out of the battle, for I am wounded.”

³⁵The battle increased that day; and the king was propped up in his chariot, facing the Syrians, and died at evening. The blood ran out from the wound onto the floor of the chariot. ³⁶Then, as the sun was going down, a shout went throughout the army, saying, “Every man to his city, and every man to his own country!”

³⁷So the king died, and was brought to Samaria. And they buried the king in Samaria. ³⁸Then *someone* washed the chariot at a pool in Samaria, and the dogs licked up his blood while ³the harlots bathed, according ^x to the word of the LORD which He had spoken.

³⁹Now the rest of the acts of Ahab, and all that he did, ^y the ivory house which he built and all the cities that he built, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? ⁴⁰So Ahab ⁴rested with his fathers. Then ^zAhaziah his son reigned in his place.

Jehoshaphat Reigns in Judah

^{41a}Jehoshaphat the son of Asa had become king over Judah in the fourth year of Ahab king of Israel. ⁴²Jehoshaphat *was* thirty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned twenty-five years in Jerusalem. His mother's name *was* Azubah the daughter of Shilhi. ⁴³And ^bhe walked in all the ways of his father Asa. He did not turn aside from them, doing *what was* right in the eyes of the LORD. Nevertheless ^cthe high places were not taken away, *for* the people offered sac-

32 ^w 2 Chr. 18:31
38 ^x 1 Kin. 21:19
³ Tg., Syr. *they washed his armor*
39 ^y Ps. 45:8; Amos 3:15
40 ^z 2 Kin. 1:2, 18
⁴ Died and joined his ancestors
41 ^a 2 Chr. 20:31
43 ^b 2 Chr. 17:3; 20:32, 33
^c 1 Kin. 14:23; 15:14; 2 Kin. 12:3

44 ^d 2 Chr. 19:2
^e 2 Chr. 18:1
45 ^f 2 Chr. 20:34
46 ^g Gen. 19:5; Deut. 23:17; 1 Kin. 14:24; 15:12; 2 Kin. 23:7; Jude 7 ⁵ Heb. *qadesh*, one practicing sodomy and prostitution in religious rituals
47 ^h 2 Sam. 8:14; 2 Kin. 3:9; 8:20
48 ⁱ 2 Chr. 20:35-37 / 1 Kin. 10:22
^k 1 Kin. 9:28 / 2 Chr. 20:37 ⁶ Or *ships of Tarshish*

BIBLE TIMES & CULTURE NOTES



Ivory

Because ivory comes from the tusks of elephants, it was hard to get in the Middle East. Elephants once lived in Syria, but the search for ivory killed off all of them by 800 B.C. Craftsmen around Beersheba made ivory figurines as early as 3500 B.C. Solomon's merchant ships brought him ivory for his throne (1 Kin. 10:18–22). Ahab ordered his craftsmen to build an “ivory house,” because he so admired the fine ivory work done by the Phoenicians. Pieces of ivory were inlaid in the walls of this house, and it contained many hand-carved ivory figurines. These included figures of people, animals, flowers, plants, and mythological figures. When Assyrians forced the southern kingdom to pay tribute, it included gifts of ivory.



Grazing stag ivory, ninth–eighth century B.C.
Kim Walton, courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

rifices and burned incense on the high places. ⁴⁴Also ^dJehoshaphat made ^epeace with the king of Israel.

⁴⁵Now the rest of the acts of Jehoshaphat, the might that he showed, and how he made war, *are* they not written ^f in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? ^{46g}And the rest of the ⁵perverted persons, who remained in the days of his father Asa, he banished from the land. ^{47h}*There was* then no king in Edom, only a deputy of the king.

⁴⁸ⁱJehoshaphat ^jmade ⁶merchant ships to go to ^kOphir for gold; ^lbut they never sailed, for the ships were wrecked at

22:34 The phrase **at random** indicates that the bowman did not realize that he was aiming at Ahab. The shot itself was well placed, striking the king in the gap between the breastplate and the lower armor. Ahab's wounded body was propped up in his chariot so his soldiers would keep on fighting, and not give up immediately as Ben-Hadad hoped.

22:38 The fulfillment of Elijah's grisly prophecy (see 21:19–24) concerning the house of Ahab unfolds here as **the dogs licked up his blood**.

22:39 Archaeological excavations at Samaria have illustrated the nature of Ahab's **ivory house**, a house with luxurious decorations made of ivory. The palace contained objects of ivory, and the walls and furniture were inlaid with pieces of ivory.

22:43 Jehoshaphat continued in his father Asa's spiritual footsteps.

These **high places** were often used in the worship of Israel's God (see 3:2–4).

22:45 made war: In addition to the campaign at Ramoth Gilead, Jehoshaphat's military ventures included strengthening his forces and borders (2 Chr. 17:14–19), repelling an invasion (2 Chr. 20:1–30), and conducting an Edomite campaign (2 Kin. 3:6–27).

22:46 perverted persons: See 14:24 for a description of these Canaanite cultic prostitutes, who were a part of the debased religious practices of Baal worship.

22:48 The destruction of the **merchant ships** sponsored by Jehoshaphat and Ahaziah ended the projected commercial enterprise. The prophet pronounces God's displeasure with the whole project (see 2 Chr. 20:35–37).

^mEzion Geber. ⁴⁹Then Ahaziah the son of Ahab said to Jehoshaphat, “Let my servants go with your servants in the ships.” But Jehoshaphat would not.

⁵⁰And ⁿJehoshaphat ⁷rested with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the City of David his father. Then Jehoram his son reigned in his place.

Ahaziah Reigns in Israel

^{51 o} Ahaziah the son of Ahab became

^{48 m} 1 Kin. 9:26
^{50 n} 2 Chr. 21:1
⁷ Died and joined his ancestors
^{51 o} 1 Kin. 22:40

^{52 p} 1 Kin. 15:26; 21:25
^{53 q} Judg. 2:11
^r 1 Kin. 16:30-32
⁸ In the same way that

king over Israel in Samaria in the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and reigned two years over Israel. ⁵²He did evil in the sight of the LORD, and ^pwalked in the way of his father and in the way of his mother and in the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who had made Israel sin; ⁵³for ^qhe served Baal and worshiped him, and provoked the LORD God of Israel to anger, ^raccording⁸ to all that his father had done.

22:51–53 A wicked king of the northern kingdom, **Ahaziah** followed in the path of his father Ahab, much as Amon of Judah would later follow in the path of his wicked father Manasseh (see 2 Kin. 21:19–22).

22:52 Ahaziah thus continued in the spiritual course laid out for him by his **father**. The story does not end here but is continued in 2 Kings. The division of the Book of Kings was done for convenience when the Bible was translated into Greek in the second century **B.C.**

burn incense

(Heb. *qatar*) (13:1; 22:43; Num. 16:40; 2 Chr. 13:11) Strong's #6999

This Hebrew word has the basic meaning “to produce smoke.” It is used only in reference to religious offerings. The offerings are sometimes made to the Lord and sometimes to other gods (9:25; 12:33; 2 Kin. 22:17). In the Book of Leviticus, the word is used to speak of true worship that the Lord had ordained. But in the historical books of 1 Kings—2 Chronicles, the word is primarily used for the rituals of false worship. Even many of the “good” kings of Israel failed to abolish improper burning of incense (22:43; 2 Kin. 12:3; 14:4; 15:4, 35). Jeremiah often used the word to denounce the errors of his people, though he used it once to prophesy of a time when Israel would perpetually worship the true God (Jer. 1:16; 11:13; 33:14–18).

THE SECOND BOOK OF THE KINGS



FROM THE ASCENSION of the prophet Elijah to heaven through the eventual fall of Israel and Judah, 2 Kings continues the history begun in 1 Kings of one people and two kingdoms. The narrative does not merely celebrate the Israelites. Instead, it displays both high and low points in the history of Israel and Judah. While it is true that few of the kings of the northern kingdom of Israel are spoken of highly, the kings of the southern kingdom of Judah do not fare much better. First and Second Kings are more than a recounting of names and facts. The books describe a people without direction, leaders who failed to lead, and a God who was forced to discipline His rebellious people.

Author and Composition Like 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings were originally one book in Hebrew. The book was divided into two parts when the Old Testament was translated into Greek in about 150 B.C.

Hence debate over the authorship of 1 Kings applies equally to the authorship of 2 Kings. Many evangelical biblical scholars continue to endorse the traditional view that Jeremiah wrote the Books of the Kings. They point to Jeremiah's priestly origin, his prophetic activity, his access to governmental authorities at the highest level, and his close personal involvement in the complex religious, social, and political activities that occurred during the collapse and fall of Judah in the early sixth century B.C. Jeremiah was certainly in an ideal position to know the spiritual situation of the day and to have access to state records, historical information, and other source material necessary for writing such a book. Jeremiah could well have written and compiled the book during the period of religious reform led by King Josiah (22:8).

Historical Content Second Kings continues the history of the divided kingdom from the point where 1 Kings ends, with the reigns of Ahaziah in the northern kingdom (853–852 B.C.) and Jehoshaphat in the southern kingdom (872–847 B.C.) It traces the events in the rest of Israel's third dynasty, together with corresponding details in Judah during the reigns of Jehoram and Ahaziah. In so doing, it describes details especially relevant to the prophetic ministries of Elijah and Elisha (1:1—9:37). During this period, the northern kingdom faced continued pressure from Aram (Syria) under its kings Ben-Hadad II and Hazael, as well as new threats from the rising state of Assyria with its powerful King Shalmaneser III (858–824 B.C.).

The account of the fourth dynasty in Israel begins with a purge of the rampant Baal worship that had plagued the first three dynasties (10:1—15:12). Unfortunately, the founder of this dynasty, Jehu, was an opportunist who used the attack on Baal worship to further his own causes. Rather than keeping the Law completely, he perpetuated the apostate state religion initiated by Jeroboam I—the worship of the calves at Bethel and Dan. His successors in the fourth dynasty proved little better. The corresponding rulers of the southern kingdom ranged from the wicked Athaliah to Josiah and Amaziah, who received mild divine commendation. Externally, the Aramean menace was ended by the military campaign of Adad Nirari III of Assyria. Yet Assyria itself passed into a period of decline that spanned the first half of the eighth century B.C.

With the death of Zechariah in 752 B.C., the northern kingdom entered a time of rapid decline that mirrored its spiritual condition. The combined effects of spiritual apostasy and moral debauchery, together with unwise

political entanglements with Assyria, ultimately brought the northern kingdom to its end in 722 B.C. Meanwhile, Jotham and his wicked son Ahaz were ruling the southern kingdom of Judah. Ahaz was so evil that even the godly Isaiah had little effect on the king's spiritual condition. The Scriptures attribute Judah's ultimate demise to the idolatry of this king (2 Chr. 28:23).

The remainder of 2 Kings deals with the varying fortunes and spiritual pilgrimage of the southern kingdom, tracing Judah's history from the righteous Hezekiah (chs. 18–20) to the wicked sons of Josiah, under whom Jerusalem faced three invasions and deportations, the last in 586 B.C. Thus Judah was increasingly caught up in the complex international events that took place from the late eighth to the early sixth century B.C.

Judah's ability to maintain its identity in the midst of its powerful neighbors was due on the one hand to God, who was faithful to His covenant with the house of David, and on the other hand to the spiritual gains made during the reigns of its two faithful kings, Hezekiah (729–699 B.C.) and Josiah (640–609 B.C.). However, the forces of apostasy that had brought about the collapse of the northern kingdom also took their toll in the southern kingdom. Judah was led away captive, and their exile would last 70 years. Second Kings ends on this tragic note. Only the final word of Jehoiachin's release provides a ray of hope in the darkness of captivity (25:27–30). The symbolic message is clear: the Lord would still fulfill His promise to restore His people (see 1 Kin. 8:46–53).

CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

While Elijah pointed to Jesus but was a clearer forerunner of John the Baptist (Matt. 11:14; 17:10; Luke 1:17), it is the younger man for whom Elijah prepared the way, Elisha, who definitely reminds us of Jesus. When you stop and think about it, the similarities are impressive. Elijah (like John the Baptist) lived apart from people, and he stressed the law, judgment, and repentance. But Elisha, like Jesus, lived among the people and emphasized grace, life, and hope (see 4:8–37; 6:14–23; 8:7–15; 19:16–21).



Wall relief depicting Assyrian king Sennacherib's siege of Lachish (2 Kin. 18:13, 14)

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872 B.C.
Jehoshaphat becomes king in Judah

865 B.C.
Elijah begins to prophesy against Ahab in Israel

850 B.C.
Elijah is taken to heaven; Elisha prophesies

755 B.C.
Isaiah begins to prophesy in Judah

736 B.C.
Ahaz begins to reign in Judah

722 B.C.
Israel is taken captive by the Assyrians

697 B.C.
Manasseh begins to reign in Judah

640 B.C.
Josiah's reign begins in Judah

624 B.C.
The Book of the Law is found in Jerusalem

612 B.C.
Assyria's capital Nineveh falls to the Babylonians

586 B.C.
Judah is taken captive by the Babylonians

2 KINGS OUTLINE

(Continued from the outline of 1 Kings)

- I. The divided kingdom 1:1—17:41
 - A. The third dynasty 1:1—9:37
 - B. The fourth dynasty 10:1—15:12
 - C. The decline and fall of Israel 15:13—17:41
- II. The southern kingdom alone 18:1—25:30
 - A. The reign of Hezekiah 18:1—20:21
 - B. The reigns of Manasseh and Amon 21:1—26
 - C. The reign of Josiah 22:1—23:30
 - D. The last kings of Judah and the fall of Jerusalem 23:31—25:21
 - E. Two historical appendices 25:22–30

God Judges Ahaziah

Moab ^arebelled against Israel ^bafter the death of Ahab.

²Now ^cAhaziah fell through the lattice of his upper room in Samaria, and was injured; so he sent messengers and said to them, “Go, inquire of ^dBaal-Zebub, ¹the god of Ekron, whether I shall recover from this injury.” ³But the ²angel of the LORD said to Elijah the Tishbite, “Arise, go up to meet the messengers of the king of Samaria, and say to them, ‘Is it because *there is* no God in Israel *that* you are going to inquire of Baal-Zebub, the god of Ekron?’” ⁴Now therefore, thus says the LORD: “You shall not come down from the bed to which you have gone up, but you shall surely die.” So Elijah departed.

⁵And when the messengers returned to ³him, he said to them, “Why have you come back?”

⁶So they said to him, “A man came up to meet us, and said to us, ‘Go, return to the king who sent you, and say to him, “Thus says the LORD: ‘Is it because *there is* no God in Israel *that* you are sending to inquire of Baal-Zebub, the god of Ekron? Therefore you shall not come down from the bed to which you have gone up, but you shall surely die.’”’”

⁷Then he said to them, “What kind of man *was it* who came up to meet you and told you these words?”

⁸So they answered him, ^f“A hairy man wearing a leather belt around his waist.”

And he said, ^g“It is Elijah the Tishbite.”

⁹Then the king sent to him a captain of fifty with his fifty men. So he went up

CHAPTER 1

¹ ^a 2 Sam. 8:2

^b 2 Kin. 3:5

² ^c 1 Kin. 22:40

^d 2 Kin. 1:3, 6, 16;

Matt. 10:25; Mark

3:22 ^e 1 Sam. 5:10

¹ Lit. Lord of Flies

³ ^f Or Angel

⁵ ^g Ahaziah

⁸ / Zech. 13:4;

Matt. 3:4; Mark 1:6

⁹ 1 Kin. 18:7

¹⁰ ^h 1 Kin. 18:36-38;

Luke 9:54

¹³ ⁱ 1 Sam. 26:21;

Ps. 72:14 ⁴ Lit.

bowed down

¹⁵ ^j Or Angel

to him; and there he was, sitting on the top of a hill. And he spoke to him: “Man of God, the king has said, ‘Come down!’”

¹⁰So Elijah answered and said to the captain of fifty, “If I *am* a man of God, then ^hlet fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty men.” And fire came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty. ¹¹Then he sent to him another captain of fifty with his fifty men.

And he answered and said to him: “Man of God, thus has the king said, ‘Come down quickly!’”

¹²So Elijah answered and said to them, “If I *am* a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty men.” And the fire of God came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty.

¹³Again, he sent a third captain of fifty with his fifty men. And the third captain of fifty went up, and came and ⁴fell on his knees before Elijah, and pleaded with him, and said to him: “Man of God, please let my life and the life of these fifty servants of yours ⁱbe precious in your sight.” ¹⁴Look, fire has come down from heaven and burned up the first two captains of fifties with their fifties. But let my life now be precious in your sight.”

¹⁵And the ⁵angel of the LORD said to Elijah, “Go down with him; do not be afraid of him.” So he arose and went down with him to the king. ¹⁶Then he said to him, “Thus says the LORD: ‘Because you have sent messengers to inquire of Baal-Zebub, the god of Ekron,

1:1 Moab rebelled: This chronological notice likely relates to the rebellion of Mesha, the well-known king of Moab. Its placement here may serve merely as an indicator of the problems that would soon fall on Israel.

1:2 Ahaziah: The account of his brief, wicked reign begins in 1 Kin. 22:51. The division of the Book of Kings into two parts was for the convenience of the translators, as is indicated by the fact that Ahaziah's reign carries over from one book to the other without a break.

lattice of his upper room: Houses in ancient Israel usually had one story. Palaces and grander houses would have had a second level. The upper stories commonly had balconies enclosed with latticework, allowing for the flow of air while maintaining protection from the sun and a certain privacy. Such latticework could easily be broken.

1:3 the angel of the LORD: At times this phrase refers to God. But often, and possibly here, this phrase speaks of one who is the LORD's messenger, but who is somehow distinguished from Him. The dramatic story of **Elijah** begins in 1 Kin. 17:1. **no God in Israel:** The contempt of the LORD for the errant behavior of the king is palpable in these words. **king of Samaria:** A king was identified by his country or by his capital city (see 1 Kin. 21:1; 2 Chr. 24:23; Jon. 3:6). This is just another title for the king of Israel. **god of Ekron:** Ahaziah followed the Baal worship of his father. The cult of Baal was strongly identified with Ekron, a city well known for its practice of divination (1 Sam. 6:2; Is. 2:6). Ahaziah sent his messenger to Ekron not only because the city was nearby but probably because he hoped to keep the

nature and extent of his injury secret. In ancient times, a king who was seriously injured or ill would be vulnerable to opportunistic attempts on his life and throne. Thus in his own view, and likely through the counsel of his advisors, Ahaziah did the “smart thing.” It was not, however, the right thing.

1:4 The determination of God was that the king would die for his sins. The king had sought a divine message from a foreign god, but received the LORD's word nonetheless.

1:5, 6 The messengers of the king were prevented by Elijah from completing their errand. God did not want any sham message coming and encouraging the wicked king. He had already received the word of the living God (v. 4).

1:7, 8 Although *hairy* may refer to Elijah's garments, the usual translation **hairy man** is supported by the ancient versions. Ahaziah knew the man was his opponent, **Elijah the Tishbite** (see 1 Kin. 17:1).

1:10 fire . . . from heaven: Heavenly fire could signal divine judgment (see Gen. 19:24). Elijah had already called down such fire in his contest with the prophets of Baal (1 Kin. 18:36–38). This fire was likely lightning. Baal was not the god of the storm he was reputed to be. The God of Israel was—and is—the LORD of creation.

1:13 Fifty men were a military unit attested elsewhere in the literature of the ancient Middle East. Each **captain of fifty** approached Elijah with a growing fear of the power of God associated with this great prophet.

is it because *there* is no God in Israel to inquire of His word? Therefore you shall not come down from the bed to which you have gone up, but you shall surely die.”

¹⁷So Ahaziah died according to the word of the LORD which Elijah had spoken. Because he had no son, ^jJehoram⁶ became king in his place, in the second year of Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat, king of Judah.

¹⁸Now the rest of the acts of Ahaziah which he did, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

Elijah Ascends to Heaven

2 And it came to pass, when the LORD was about to “take up Elijah into heaven by a whirlwind, that Elijah went with ^bElisha from Gilgal. ²Then Elijah said to Elisha, “Stay here, please, for the LORD has sent me on to Bethel.”

But Elisha said, “As the LORD lives, and ^das your soul lives, I will not leave you!” So they went down to Bethel.

³Now ^ethe sons of the prophets who *were* at Bethel came out to Elisha, and said to him, “Do you know that the LORD will take away your master ^ffrom over you today?”

And he said, “Yes, I know; keep silent!”

⁴Then Elijah said to him, “Elisha, stay here, please, for the LORD has sent me on to Jericho.”

But he said, “As the LORD lives, and *as* your soul lives, I will not leave you!” So they came to Jericho.

⁵Now the sons of the prophets who

17 / 1 Kin. 22:50;
2 Kin. 8:16; Matt. 1:8
⁶ The son of Ahab
king of Israel,
2 Kin. 3:1

CHAPTER 2

1 ^a Gen. 5:24;
[Heb. 11:5] ^b 1 Kin.
19:16-21
2 ^c Ruth 1:15, 16
^d 1 Sam. 1:26; 2 Kin.
2:4, 6; 4:30
3 ^e 1 Kin. 20:35;
2 Kin. 2:5, 7, 15; 4:1,
38; 9:1 ^f Lit. *from
your head*

were at Jericho came to Elisha and said to him, “Do you know that the LORD will take away your master from over you today?”

So he answered, “Yes, I know; keep silent!”

⁶Then Elijah said to him, “Stay here, please, for the LORD has sent me on to the Jordan.”

But he said, “As the LORD lives, and *as* your soul lives, I will not leave you!” So the two of them went on. ⁷And fifty men of the sons of the prophets went and stood facing *them* at a distance, while the two of them stood by the Jordan. ⁸Now Elijah took his mantle, rolled *it* up, and struck the water; and ^fit was divided this way and that, so that the two of them crossed over on dry ^gground.

⁹And so it was, when they had crossed over, that Elijah said to Elisha, “Ask! What may I do for you, before I am taken away from you?”

Elisha said, “Please let a double portion of your spirit be upon me.”

¹⁰So he said, “You have asked a hard thing. *Nevertheless*, if you see me *when I am* taken from you, it shall be so for you; but if not, it shall not be *so*.” ¹¹Then it happened, as they continued on and talked, that suddenly ^ha chariot of fire *appeared* with horses of fire, and separated the two of them; and Elijah ⁱwent up by a whirlwind into heaven.

¹²And Elisha saw *it*, and he cried out, ^j“My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and its horsemen!” So he saw him no more. And he took hold of his own clothes and tore them into two pieces.

8 / Ex. 14:21, 22;
Josh. 3:16; 2 Kin.
2:14 ⁹ Josh. 3:17
11 ^h 2 Kin. 6:17; Ps.
104:4 ⁱ Gen. 5:24;
Heb. 11:5
12 / 2 Kin. 13:14

1:17 So Ahaziah died: The prophetic word was fulfilled as announced. **no son:** This meant that the dynasty had ended. A king named Jehoram thus ruled in both kingdoms.

1:18 the rest of the acts: This follows the usual pattern for recording the obituaries of the kings of the northern kingdom.

2:1 about to take up Elijah into heaven: The story that follows is so extraordinary that the narrator introduces its subject early.

2:2-6 Stay here: The tripling of these incidents is similar to the tripling of the incidents of ch. 1 (the three bands of 50 soldiers who came to seize Elijah). **As the LORD lives:** Elisha made a solemn promise three times in these same verses; he determined that he would remain by his master Elijah no matter what might occur.

2:3 take away: The same Hebrew verb is used for Enoch’s entrance to heaven (Gen. 5:24). The work that God was about to do had been divinely revealed to many of God’s servants (see vv. 3, 5). This widespread knowledge of God’s purpose would protect against later denials by cynical persons that the event had ever taken place. **keep silent:** It is not clear what prompted Elisha’s harsh words here (and in v. 5).

2:8 The water was the Jordan River (vv. 7, 13), somewhere near Jericho. Elijah was like Moses in that his life and ministry show many parallels to that of Israel’s greatest prophet. As Moses had divided the waters of the Red Sea in the final act of the redemption of Israel from Egypt (Ex. 14), so now Elijah replicated this miracle by dividing the waters of the Jordan. The difference is that Elijah did not use the power of God as a great redeeming miracle as Moses had done,

but as an almost casual demonstration of God’s wonders as he was walking on his way.

2:9 double portion: Although the narrative reports twice as many miracles for Elisha as Elijah, that was not the point of Elisha’s request. His real request was that he would be Elijah’s spiritual successor (Deut. 21:17). It was not a double portion of Elijah’s goods that Elisha wanted but a double portion of his *spirit*. In material things, the principal heir received a double portion of his father’s goods. Elisha wanted the principle of primary inheritance to apply to spiritual things. Nearby were all sorts of prophets. All of them would be his heirs. Any one of them might become the leading successor of Elijah. We may assume from the life he lived that Elisha’s request was not due to pride. He simply wanted to be the man of God who would follow Elijah’s model.

2:11 In one of the most dramatic scenes in the Bible, heaven opened, a fiery chariot with fiery horses appeared, a whirlwind blew, and the prophet of God vanished alive into heaven. The **fire** associated with the **chariot** and the horses indicate the presence of God, much as the fiery angels do that Isaiah saw stationed around the throne of God (see Is. 6:2).

2:12 The term **my father** underscores Elijah’s relationship to Elisha as his spiritual mentor as well as the greatness of Elijah’s reputation. The whole phrase is repeated at Elisha’s passing (13:14). While these words were a tribute to Elijah on this great occasion, Elisha’s accompanying actions indicated his personal sorrow at the loss of his spiritual master and friend.

¹³He also took up the mantle of Elijah that had fallen from him, and went back and stood by the bank of the Jordan. ¹⁴Then he took the mantle of Elijah that had fallen from him, and struck the water, and said, “Where is the LORD God of Elijah?” And when he also had struck the water, ^kit was divided this way and that; and Elisha crossed over.

¹⁵Now when the sons of the prophets who *were* ^lfrom ²Jericho saw him, they said, “The spirit of Elijah rests on Elisha.” And they came to meet him, and bowed to the ground before him. ¹⁶Then they said to him, “Look now, there are fifty strong men with your servants. Please let them go and search for your master, ^mlest perhaps the Spirit of the LORD has taken him up and cast him upon some mountain or into some valley.”

And he said, “You shall not send anyone.”

¹⁷But when they urged him till he was ⁿashamed, he said, “Send *them*!” Therefore they sent fifty men, and they searched for three days but did not find him. ¹⁸And when they came back to him, for he had stayed in Jericho, he said to them, “Did I not say to you, ‘Do not go?’”

Elisha Performs Miracles

¹⁹Then the men of the city said to Elisha, “Please notice, the situation of this city is pleasant, as my lord sees; but the water is bad, and the ground barren.”

²⁰And he said, “Bring me a new bowl, and put salt in it.” So they brought *it* to him. ²¹Then he went out to the source of

¹⁴ ^k 2 Kin. 2:8
¹⁵ ^l 2 Kin. 2:7 ² Or
 at Jericho opposite
 him saw
¹⁶ ^m 1 Kin. 18:12;
 Ezek. 8:3; Acts 8:39
¹⁷ ⁿ 2 Kin. 8:11

²¹ ^o Ex. 15:25, 26;
 2 Kin. 4:41; 6:6;
 John 9:6 ³ purified
²² ^p Ezek. 47:8, 9
²⁴ ^q Deut. 27:13–26
²⁵ ^r 1 Kin. 18:19, 20;
 2 Kin. 4:25

CHAPTER 3

¹ ^o 2 Kin. 1:17
² ^p 1 Kin. 16:31, 32
³ ^c 1 Kin. 12:28–32
⁴ ^d 2 Sam. 8:2 ^e Is.
 16:1, 2
⁵ ^f 2 Kin. 1:1

the water, and ^ocast in the salt there, and said, “Thus says the LORD: ‘I have ³healed this water; from it there shall be no more death or barrenness.’” ²²So the water remains ^phealed to this day, according to the word of Elisha which he spoke.

²³Then he went up from there to Beth-el; and as he was going up the road, some youths came from the city and mocked him, and said to him, “Go up, you bald-head! Go up, you baldhead!”

²⁴So he turned around and looked at them, and ^qpronounced a curse on them in the name of the LORD. And two female bears came out of the woods and mauled forty-two of the youths.

²⁵Then he went from there to ^rMount Carmel, and from there he returned to Samaria.

Moab Rebels Against Israel

3 Now ^aJehoram the son of Ahab became king over Israel at Samaria in the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and reigned twelve years. ²And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, but not like his father and mother; for he put away the *sacred* pillar of Baal ^bthat his father had made. ³Nevertheless he persisted in ^cthe sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who had made Israel sin; he did not depart from them.

⁴Now Mesha king of Moab was a sheepbreeder, and he ^dregularly paid the king of Israel one hundred thousand ^elambs and the wool of one hundred thousand rams. ⁵But it happened, when ^fAhab died, that the king of Moab rebelled against the king of Israel.

2:13 took up the mantle: Elijah had once laid this mantle on Elisha as a symbolic action (1 Kin. 19:19); now Elisha took up the prophetic status and ministry that the mantle symbolized.

2:14 The mantle was only a symbol, but in the hands of Elijah it had been an instrument for the power of the living God. The mantle had been for Elijah what the rod had been for Moses and Aaron (see Ex. 4:1–9; 7:9). It became the symbol of God’s power in the hands of Elisha.

2:15 The spirit of Elijah: The prophets witnessed both the miracle of Elijah (v. 8) and the similar miracle of Elisha. In this way there would be common agreement that Elisha was the successor of Elijah. They **bowed**, not in worship, but in respect and submission to the will of God.

2:16 fifty strong men: Groups of 50 men were often called upon to perform an arduous task (see 1:9–15). The men decided they needed a search party. Even though they had received a revelation from God that Elijah would be taken to heaven (see v. 3), still they checked things out.

2:17 he was ashamed: Although these words may indicate Elisha’s sense of shame on behalf of his disciples for their disbelief, the use of the phrase elsewhere indicates that it means Elisha was worn out, no longer willing to resist (8:11; see Judg. 3:25). He came to the point where he gave in to their request.

2:20 Elisha performed a purification ceremony (see Lev. 2:13; Num. 18:19). The **salt** taken from a new bowl and cast into the water symbolized the cleansing of the water for new use.

2:21, 22 The miracle was done in the name of God; Elisha was only

His instrument. **to this day:** That is, at the day of the writing of the account.

2:23 Go up, you baldhead: While the severity of the sentence has been questioned, the words of the youths indicated their disbelief of Elijah’s “going up” into heaven (see v. 11) and their disrespect for God’s prophet. God did not tolerate blasphemy against Himself by the demeaning of Elijah’s departure, or the abuse of His prophet, whom He had called for an important task at a critical period in Israel’s history.

2:25 Elisha made his home on **Mount Carmel** (see 4:25), as well as in **Samaria** (see 5:3).

3:2 sacred pillar of Baal: Probably this was a stone pillar or statue erected by Ahab and bearing an inscription and image of the god Baal. Although it was put away temporarily, it apparently was not destroyed, because it later became one of the objects of Jehu’s purge (10:26, 27).

3:4 Mesha king of Moab: The existence of this Moabite king is confirmed by an inscription on a pillar known as the Moabite Stone. The inscription indicates that Omri had conquered the plains of Moab north of the Arnon River and that the area remained under Israelite control throughout Ahab’s reign. Thus the events of this chapter probably took place after Jehoram’s accession and shortly before Jehoshaphat’s death in 847 **B.C.** (1:1). **sheepbreeder:** This Hebrew word is used only of Mesha and of Amos the prophet (Amos 1:1). As for Mesha, his business must have been enormous if he could pay such an exorbitant tribute.



Moabite Stone

Discovered in Moab by a German missionary in 1868, this black basalt stone is nearly four feet high and contains about 34 lines of writing similar to Hebrew. The stone was probably erected about 850 B.C., and the story written on it celebrates King Mesha's overthrow of the nation of Israel (although the biblical account makes it clear that Israel was victorious in the battle). The stone shows that Mesha honors his god Chemosh in terms similar to the OT reverence for the Lord. Besides telling of his violent conquests, Mesha boasted on the stone of the building of cities (with Israelite forced labor) and the construction of cisterns, walls, gates, towers, a king's palace, and even a highway. The Moabite Stone has profound biblical relevance. Historically, it confirms OT accounts, it has a theological parallel to Israel's worship of one god, and it is valuable geographically because it mentions no less than 15 sites listed in the OT.



The Moabite Stone (Mesha Stele)
Mbzt 2012/Wikimedia Commons, CC-BY 3.0

⁶So King Jehoram went out of Samaria at that time and mustered all Israel. ⁷Then he went and sent to Jehoshaphat king of Judah, saying, “The king of Moab has rebelled against me. Will you go with me to fight against Moab?”

And he said, “I will go up; *⁹I am* as you *are*, my people as your people, my horses as your horses.” ⁸Then he said, “Which way shall we go up?”

And he answered, “By way of the Wilderness of Edom.”

⁹So the king of Israel went with the king of Judah and the king of Edom, and they marched on that roundabout route seven days; and there was no water for the army, nor for the animals that fol-

lowed them. ¹⁰And the king of Israel said, “Alas! For the LORD has called these three kings together to deliver them into the hand of Moab.”

¹¹But ^ⁿJehoshaphat said, “*Is there* no prophet of the LORD here, that we may inquire of the LORD by him?”

So one of the servants of the king of Israel answered and said, “Elisha the son of Shaphat *is* here, who ^ⁱ‘poured’ ^ⁱwater on the hands of Elijah.”

¹²And Jehoshaphat said, “The word of the LORD is with him.” So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat and the king of Edom ^ⁱwent down to him.

¹³Then Elisha said to the king of Israel, ^ⁿ“What have I to do with you? ^ⁱGo to ^ᵐthe prophets of your father and the ^ⁿ‘prophets of your mother.’”

But the king of Israel said to him, “No, for the LORD has called these three kings *together* to deliver them into the hand of Moab.”

¹⁴And Elisha said, ^ⁿ“As the LORD of hosts lives, before whom I stand, surely were it not that I regard the presence of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, I would not look at you, nor see you. ¹⁵But now bring me ^ᵖa musician.”

Then it happened, when the musician ^⁹played, that ^ⁱthe hand of the LORD came upon him. ¹⁶And he said, “Thus says the LORD: ^ⁿ‘Make this valley full of ^²ditches.’ ¹⁷For thus says the LORD: ‘You shall not see wind, nor shall you see rain; yet that valley shall be filled with water, so that you, your cattle, and your animals may drink.’ ¹⁸And this is a simple matter in the sight of the LORD; He will also deliver the Moabites into your hand. ¹⁹Also you shall attack every fortified city and every choice city, and shall cut down every good tree, and stop up every spring of water, and ruin every good piece of land with stones.”

²⁰Now it happened in the morning, when ^ⁱthe grain offering was offered, that

7 9 1 Kin. 22:4

11 ^ⁿ 1 Kin. 22:7
ⁱ 1 Kin. 19:21; [John 13:4, 5, 13, 14]
ⁱ Was the personal servant of
12 / 2 Kin. 2:25
13 ^ⁿ [Ezek. 14:3]
ⁱ Judg. 10:14; Ruth 1:15 ^ᵐ 1 Kin. 22:6-11
ⁿ 1 Kin. 18:19
14 ^ⁿ 1 Kin. 17:1;
2 Kin. 5:16
15 ^ᵖ 1 Sam. 10:5
⁹ 1 Sam. 16:16, 23;
1 Chr. 25:1 ^ⁱ Ezek. 1:3; 3:14, 22; 8:1
16 ^ⁱ Jer. 14:3
² water canals
20 ^ⁱ Ex. 29:39, 40

3:6 The rebellion of Moab provoked **Jehoram** into a punitive war. **3:7 Will you go with me:** Because Jehoshaphat was related to the throne of the northern kingdom through the marriage of his son Jehoram to Ahab's daughter Athaliah, it could be presumed that he would be available as an ally. Because Edom had been added to the orbit of Judah as a result of an earlier war, Jehoshaphat proposed that they march through Edom to attack the Moabite territory. This route for their forces would avoid Moabite border fortresses and bring the attack from their rear.

3:9, 10 The route was very difficult. **no water:** In such a military campaign as this, both men and animals needed more water than they could carry with them.

3:11 prophet of the Lord: A prophet or diviner often traveled with armies on their campaigns. While the account apparently focuses on the military campaign as such, the crucial role of Elisha in the story emphasizes the importance of the prophetic office in ancient Israel.

3:13 prophets of your father: Elisha spoke scathingly about

the wicked kings of the north consulting with prophets of Baal (1:2, 3).

3:14 as the LORD of hosts lives . . . I stand: This is the same language used by Elijah (see 1 Kin. 17:1). **I would not look at you:** As a devotee of Baal, Jehoram had no claim on the favor of God. Nevertheless, he would enjoy the benefits of God's grace toward Jehoshaphat.

3:15 Elisha's call for a **musician** is an effort to achieve an atmosphere free of war and strife so that he might concentrate on the anticipated divine revelation.

3:16–19 As in connection with many OT miracles, the prophet's words carry instructions for human participation (4:3, 4, 41; 6:6), in order that man's faith and the divine provision may each have their proper part.

3:20 filled with water: The dry stream beds can easily overflow their banks in downpours of rain. Even distant areas can be flooded by water from faraway mountain streams swelled by heavy rains.

suddenly water came by way of Edom, and the land was filled with water.

²¹And when all the Moabites heard that the kings had come up to fight against them, all who were able to bear arms and older were ³gathered; and they stood at the border. ²²Then they rose up early in the morning, and the sun was shining on the water; and the Moabites saw the water on the other side *as* red as blood. ²³And they said, “This is blood; the kings have surely struck swords and have killed one another; now therefore, Moab, to the spoil!”

²⁴So when they came to the camp of Israel, Israel rose up and attacked the Moabites, so that they fled before them; and they entered *their* land, killing the Moabites. ²⁵Then they destroyed the cities, and each man threw a stone on every good piece of land and filled it; and they stopped up all the springs of water and cut down all the good trees. But they left the stones of “Kir Haraseth *intact*.” However the slingers surrounded and attacked it.

²⁶And when the king of Moab saw that the battle was too fierce for him, he took with him seven hundred men who drew swords, to break through to the king of Edom, but they could not. ²⁷Then ^vhe took his eldest son who would have reigned in his place, and offered him *as* a burnt offering upon the wall; and there was great ⁴indignation against Israel. ^wSo they departed from him and returned to *their own* land.

Elisha and the Widow's Oil

4 A certain woman of the wives of ^athe sons of the prophets cried out to Elisha, saying, “Your servant my husband is dead, and you know that your servant feared the LORD. And the creditor is coming ^bto take my two sons to be his slaves.”

²So Elisha said to her, “What shall I do for you? Tell me, what do you have in

²¹ ³summoned
²⁵ ^uIs. 16:7, 11; Jer. 48:31, 36
²⁷ ^v[Deut. 18:10; Amos 2:1; Mic. 6:7] ^w2 Kin. 8:20
⁴wrath

CHAPTER 4

¹ ^a1 Kin. 20:35;
² Kin. 2:3 ^b[Lev. 25:39–41, 48];
¹ Sam. 22:2; Neh. 5:2–5; Matt. 18:25

the house?” And she said, “Your maid-servant has nothing in the house but a jar of oil.”

³Then he said, “Go, borrow vessels from everywhere, from all your neighbors—empty vessels; ^cdo not gather just a few. ⁴And when you have come in, you shall shut the door behind you and your sons; then pour it into all those vessels, and set aside the full ones.”

⁵So she went from him and shut the door behind her and her sons, who brought *the vessels* to her; and she poured *it* out. ⁶Now it came to pass, when the vessels were full, that she said to her son, “Bring me another vessel.”

And he said to her, “*There is not another vessel.*” So the oil ceased. ⁷Then she came and told the man of God. And he said, “Go, sell the oil and pay your debt; and you *and* your sons live on the rest.”

Elisha Raises the Shunammite's Son

⁸Now it happened one day that Elisha went to ^dShunem, where there was a ¹notable woman, and she ²persuaded him to eat some food. So it was, as often as he passed by, he would turn in there to eat some food. ⁹And she said to her husband, “Look now, I know that this is a holy man of God, who passes by us regularly. ¹⁰Please, let us make ³a small upper room on the wall; and let us put a bed for him there, and a table and a chair and a lampstand; so it will be, whenever he comes to us, he can turn in there.”

¹¹And it happened one day that he came there, and he turned in to the upper room and lay down there. ¹²Then he said to ^eGehazi his servant, “Call this Shunammite woman.” When he had called her, she stood before him. ¹³And he said to him, “Say now to her, ‘Look, you have been concerned for us with all this care. What *can* I do for you? Do you want me to speak on your behalf to the king or to the commander of the army?’”

³ ^c2 Kin. 3:16
⁸ ^dJosh. 19:18 ¹Lit. great ²Lit. laid hold on him
¹⁰ ³Or a small walled upper chamber
¹² ^e2 Kin. 4:29–31; 5:20–27; 8:4, 5

3:23 This is blood: The red water looked like blood, and the Moabite king assumed falsely that the former enemies had once again fallen out with each other. It was a tragic miscalculation.

4:1 A certain woman: The fate of widows was perilous in the ancient Middle East. A practical test of biblical piety was to observe how those in power treated widows and orphans (see Job 24:21; Ps. 146:9). **creditor:** Both the Bible (see Lev. 25:39–45) and other ancient laws permitted selling one’s family members into slavery for payment of debts. God’s law worked toward limiting the abuse and the length of time in such a situation.

4:2 The small flask held olive oil intended for anointing, rather than food or fuel. Such a small flask was not very valuable.

4:7 Elisha is called **the man of God** throughout this section (vv. 16, 21, 22, 25, 27). The word God in Hebrew is literally “the God,” meaning the true or genuine God. **sell . . . pay . . . live:** Elisha met not only her immediate needs but the long-range ones as well.

4:8, 9 The friendship of Elisha with the woman at **Shunem** is also similar to the friendship of Elijah with the widow of Zarephath (1 Kin. 17:8–16). **holy man of God:** The adjective describes Elisha, a man she perceived was truly set apart for the ministry of God.

4:10 upper room: Such quarters were commonly on the roof and could be reached from the outside. This accommodated the guest while providing privacy. Recognizing Elisha as one of God’s choice servants, the Shunammite woman was especially concerned that the normal measures of hospitality be applied even more fully.

4:12 The term for **servant** often means a person engaged in a period of training. Rather than looking down upon this role, such a servant could consider the position an opportunity. Often these were responsible duties. The same word was also used of Elisha’s own relation to Elijah (1 Kin. 19:21). Unfortunately, Gehazi would not prove as worthy of his master’s trust as Elisha had been of Elijah’s.

She answered, “I dwell among my own people.”

¹⁴ So he said, “What then *is* to be done for her?”

And Gehazi answered, “Actually, she has no son, and her husband is old.”

¹⁵ So he said, “Call her.” When he had called her, she stood in the doorway.

¹⁶ Then he said, ⁴ “About this time next year you shall embrace a son.”

And she said, “No, my lord. Man of God, ^f do not lie to your maidservant!”

¹⁷ But the woman conceived, and bore a son when the appointed time had come, of which Elisha had told her.

¹⁸ And the child grew. Now it happened one day that he went out to his father, to the reapers. ¹⁹ And he said to his father, “My head, my head!”

So he said to a servant, “Carry him to his mother.” ²⁰ When he had taken him and brought him to his mother, he sat on her knees till noon, and *then* died. ²¹ And she went up and laid him on the bed of the man of God, shut *the door* upon him, and went out. ²² Then she called to her husband, and said, “Please send me one of the young men and one of the donkeys, that I may run to the man of God and come back.”

²³ So he said, “Why are you going to him today? *It is* neither the ^g New Moon nor the Sabbath.”

And she said, ⁵ “*It is well.*” ²⁴ Then she saddled a donkey, and said to her servant, “Drive, and go forward; do not slacken the pace for me unless I tell you.” ²⁵ And so she departed, and went to the man of God ^h at Mount Carmel.

So it was, when the man of God saw her afar off, that he said to his servant Gehazi, “Look, the Shunammite woman!” ²⁶ Please run now to meet her, and say to

¹⁶ ^f 2 Kin. 4:28 ⁴ Lit. *About this season, as the time of life*
²³ ^g Num. 10:10; 28:11; 1 Chr. 23:31
⁵ Or *It will be well*
²⁵ ^h 2 Kin. 2:25

²⁸ ⁱ 2 Kin. 4:16
²⁹ ^j 1 Kin. 18:46;
2 Kin. 9:1 ^k Luke 10:4 ^l Ex. 7:19;
14:16; 2 Kin. 2:8,
14; Acts 19:12
⁶ Lit. *Gird up your loins. The skirt of the robe was wrapped around the legs and tucked in the belt to gain freedom of movement.*
³⁰ ^m 2 Kin. 2:2
ⁿ 2 Kin. 2:4
³¹ ^o John 11:11
³³ ^p 2 Kin. 4:4;
[Matt. 6:6]; Luke 8:51 ^q 1 Kin. 17:20
³⁴ ^r 1 Kin. 17:21–23;
Acts 20:10
³⁵ ^s 1 Kin. 17:21
^t 2 Kin. 8:1, 5

her, “*Is it well with you? Is it well with your husband? Is it well with the child?*”

And she answered, “*It is well.*” ²⁷ Now when she came to the man of God at the hill, she caught him by the feet, but Gehazi came near to push her away. But the man of God said, “Let her alone; for her soul *is* in deep distress, and the LORD has hidden *it* from me, and has not told me.”

²⁸ So she said, “Did I ask a son of my lord? ⁱ Did I not say, ‘Do not deceive me?’”

²⁹ Then he said to Gehazi, ^j “Get ⁶ yourself ready, and take my staff in your hand, and be on your way. If you meet anyone, ^k do not greet him; and if anyone greets you, do not answer him; but ^l lay my staff on the face of the child.”

³⁰ And the mother of the child said, ^m “As the LORD lives, and as your soul lives, I will not ⁿ leave you.” So he arose and followed her. ³¹ Now Gehazi went on ahead of them, and laid the staff on the face of the child; but *there* was neither voice nor hearing. Therefore he went back to meet him, and told him, saying, “The child has ^o not awakened.”

³² When Elisha came into the house, there was the child, lying dead on his bed. ³³ He ^p went in therefore, shut the door behind the two of them, ^q and prayed to the LORD. ³⁴ And he went up and lay on the child, and put his mouth on his mouth, his eyes on his eyes, and his hands on his hands; and ^r he stretched himself out on the child, and the flesh of the child became warm. ³⁵ He returned and walked back and forth in the house, and again went up ^s and stretched himself out on him; then ^t the child sneezed seven times, and the child opened his eyes. ³⁶ And he called Gehazi and said, “Call this Shunammite woman.” So he

4:14–16 Elisha decided that the best thing he could do for the woman was promise her the birth of a son, despite her years of frustration about this. **do not lie:** The Shunammite woman felt that even Elisha could not fulfill such a promise.

4:17 The birth of the son to the **woman** was similar to the fulfillment of the promise of God in the birth of Isaac (Gen. 21).

4:21 the bed of the man of God: The Shunammite’s action speaks strongly of her faith. Despite her overwhelming sorrow, she placed the fate of her child close to Elisha, through whose word, and by means of God’s mercy, she had gained her son in the first place. Placing the body on the bed of the man of God also kept his death a secret until she could reach Elisha, from whom she had once seen the impossible accomplished. Again, compare the story of Elijah and the son of the woman of Zarephath (1 Kin. 17:17–24).

4:23 New Moon . . . Sabbath: There was no work on these days and so they would be most suitable for seeing the prophet (see Ex. 20:9–12; Amos 8:5).

4:26, 27 Elisha knew that something was wrong by the furious way she drove (v. 24), but God had not made the particular issue known to the prophet. **the LORD has hidden:** The prophets did not know everything. They only knew what God made known to them (5:26).

caught him by the feet: This action is a mark of humility and reverence (see Matt. 28:9).

4:28 Did I ask: Her pain in the death of her child was worse than the emptiness she had felt before he was born. It was the prophet’s fault, she charged. Yet it was to the prophet she had come for help.

4:29 Elisha’s staff, like Elijah’s mantle (see 2:13, 14), was symbolic of the power of God and the authority of the prophet. Laid upon the body of the child, the staff would signify that the prophet intended to come, and that he had faith that God would restore the boy.

4:30 As the LORD lives: With this oath, the woman asserted her faith in the living God (1 Kin. 17:1). Elisha had used similar language when he refused to leave Elijah (2:2, 4, 6). Now he heard these words from her.

4:32–37 Elisha’s actions demonstrate that his faith was in the person and power of God alone, and not in the staff that symbolized his prophetic office. Although he repeated the symbolic actions learned from Elijah his teacher (see 1 Kin. 17:17–22), his faith transcended mere symbol and ritual. He sought God who alone can grant life and perform the miraculous (Ps. 36:9; 49:7–9). The restoration of the boy’s life (compare vv. 32, 35) is a demonstration that life itself is in the hands of God (1 Kin. 17:23).

called her. And when she came in to him, he said, “Pick up your son.” ³⁷ So she went in, fell at his feet, and bowed to the ground; then she “picked up her son and went out.

Elisha Purifies the Pot of Stew

³⁸ And Elisha returned to ^v Gilgal, and there was a ^w famine in the land. Now the sons of the prophets were ^x sitting before him; and he said to his servant, “Put on the large pot, and boil stew for the sons of the prophets.” ³⁹ So one went out into the field to gather herbs, and found a wild vine, and gathered from it a lapful of wild gourds, and came and sliced them into the pot of stew, though they did not know *what they were*. ⁴⁰ Then they served it to the men to eat. Now it happened, as they were eating the stew, that they cried out and said, “Man of God, *there is* ^y death in the pot!” And they could not eat it.

⁴¹ So he said, “Then bring some flour.” And ^z he put it into the pot, and said, “Serve it to the people, that they may eat.” And there was nothing harmful in the pot.

Elisha Feeds One Hundred Men

⁴² Then a man came from ^a Baal Shalisha, ^b and brought the man of God bread of the firstfruits, twenty loaves of barley bread, and newly ripened grain in his knapsack. And he said, “Give it to the people, that they may eat.”

⁴³ But his servant said, ^c “What? Shall I set this before one hundred men?”

He said again, “Give it to the people, that they may eat; for thus says the LORD: ^d ‘They shall eat and have *some* left over.’”

⁴⁴ So he set it before them; and they ate ^e and had *some* left over, according to the word of the LORD.

³⁷ ^a 1 Kin. 17:23; [Heb. 11:35]
³⁸ ^v 2 Kin. 2:1
^w 2 Kin. 8:1 ^x Luke 10:39; Acts 22:3
⁴⁰ ^y Ex. 10:17
⁴¹ ^z Ex. 15:25; 2 Kin. 2:21
⁴² ^a 1 Sam. 9:4
^b 1 Sam. 9:7; [1 Cor. 9:11; Gal. 6:6]
⁴³ ^c Luke 9:13; John 6:9 ^d Luke 9:17; John 6:11
⁴⁴ ^e Matt. 14:20; 15:37; John 6:13

CHAPTER 5

1 ^a Luke 4:27 ^b Ex. 11:3
 2 ^c 2 Kin. 6:23;
 13:20 ¹ Or in bands
 2 Served, lit. was before
 5 ^d 1 Sam. 9:8;
 2 Kin. 8:8, 9
 7 ^e [Gen. 30:2; Deut. 32:39; 1 Sam. 2:6]

Naaman's Leprosy Healed

5 Now ^a Naaman, commander of the army of the king of Syria, was ^b a great and honorable man in the eyes of his master, because by him the LORD had given victory to Syria. He was also a mighty man of valor, *but* a leper. ² And the Syrians had gone out ^c on ¹ raids, and had brought back captive a young girl from the land of Israel. She ² waited on Naaman's wife. ³ Then she said to her mistress, “If only my master were with the prophet who *is* in Samaria! For he would heal him of his leprosy.” ⁴ And Naaman went in and told his master, saying, “Thus and thus said the girl who *is* from the land of Israel.”

⁵ Then the king of Syria said, “Go now, and I will send a letter to the king of Israel.”

So he departed and ^d took with him ten talents of silver, six thousand *shekels* of gold, and ten changes of clothing. ⁶ Then he brought the letter to the king of Israel, which said,

Now be advised, when this letter comes to you, that I have sent Naaman my servant to you, that you may heal him of his leprosy.

⁷ And it happened, when the king of Israel read the letter, that he tore his clothes and said, “Am I ^e God, to kill and make alive, that this man sends a man to me to heal him of his leprosy? Therefore please consider, and see how he seeks a quarrel with me.”

⁸ So it was, when Elisha the man of God heard that the king of Israel had torn his clothes, that he sent to the king, saying, “Why have you torn your clothes? Please let him come to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel.”

4:38 Gilgal was the first place the Israelites camped after crossing the Jordan into Canaan (Josh. 4:19, 20). Gilgal was probably about one mile northeast of Jericho. **sitting before him:** Elisha sat at the head of the sons of the prophets.

4:39, 40 The wild gourds were poisonous. **death in the pot:** The reaction of the hungry men was immediate and frightening.

4:41 The flour had no magical properties, of course. Elisha's faith in the living God effected the miraculous cure.

4:42–44 Baal Shalisha was near Gilgal. The **firstfruits** were to be presented to God and His priests (Lev. 23:15–17, 20). With an entrenched false priesthood and a debased state religion prevailing in the northern kingdom, the man brought his offering to Elisha. The faithful prophet miraculously multiplied the loaves—with some left over.

5:1 This Aramean general **Naaman** was a remarkable figure in biblical history. This verse is filled with phrases describing his character, his honor, and his ability. Surprisingly, we read that his military victories were granted by **the LORD**. The Hebrew word translated **leper** refers to any of several serious skin diseases (Lev. 13:1–46; Num. 5:1–4), including certain fungi (Lev. 13:47–56; 14:33–57). The

king of Syria was Ben-Hadad II (860–842 B.C.). He was a constant threat to the northern kingdom and would lead an invasion against it later (6:24—7:20).

5:2 captive . . . young girl: God used the testimony of a Jewish servant girl and brought the commanding general of Israel's greatest military foe to biblical faith.

5:3 the prophet . . . in Samaria: Although Elisha traveled frequently and may sometimes have lived at Mt. Carmel (see 4:25), he apparently maintained a residence in the capital city of Samaria (see vv. 9, 24; 2:25; 6:9—7:20).

5:4, 5 It is a measure of the respect that the Aramean king had for his general that he granted his unusual request. Naaman's gifts are a measure of his wealth—and of his great personal need.

5:6 While such letters of introduction were common in the ancient Middle East, Ben-Hadad's frequent forays against Israel made the **king** suspicious that the Aramean king was seeking a pretext for yet another invasion of Israelite territory (see v. 2).

5:8 torn his clothes: Tearing a robe could be a sign of grief or agitation (see 11:14), as well as a mark of the sorrow that leads to repentance (Joel 2:13).

⁹Then Naaman went with his horses and chariot, and he stood at the door of Elisha's house. ¹⁰And Elisha sent a messenger to him, saying, "Go and ^fwash in the Jordan seven times, and your flesh shall be restored to you, and *you shall* be clean." ¹¹But Naaman became furious, and went away and said, "Indeed, I said to myself, 'He will surely come out to me, and stand and call on the name of the LORD his God, and wave his hand over the place, and heal the leprosy.' ¹²Are not the ³Abanah and the Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Could I not wash in them and be clean?" So he turned and went away in a rage. ¹³And his ^gservants came near and spoke to him, and said, "My father, if the prophet had told you to *do* something great, would you not have done it? How much more then, when he says to you, 'Wash, and be clean?'" ¹⁴So he went down and dipped seven times in the Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God; and his ^hflesh was restored like the flesh of a little child, and ⁱhe was clean.

¹⁵And he returned to the man of God, he and all his aides, and came and stood before him; and he said, "Indeed, now I know that *there is* ^jno God in all the earth, except in Israel; now therefore, please take ^ka gift from your servant."

¹⁶But he said, ^l"As the LORD lives, before whom I stand, ^mI will receive nothing." And he urged him to take *it*, but he refused.

¹⁷So Naaman said, "Then, if not, please let your servant be given two mule-loads of earth; for your servant will no longer offer either burnt offering or sacrifice to other gods, but to the LORD. ¹⁸Yet in this

¹⁰ ^f2 Kin. 4:41; John 9:7
¹² ³ So with Kt., LXX, Vg.; Qr., Syr., Tg. *Amanah*
¹³ ^g 1 Sam. 28:23
¹⁴ ^h 2 Kin. 5:10; Job 33:25 ⁱ Luke 4:27; 5:13
¹⁵ ^j Dan. 2:47; 3:29; 6:26, 27 ^k Gen. 33:11
¹⁶ ^l 2 Kin. 3:14
^m Gen. 14:22, 23; 2 Kin. 5:20, 26; [Matt. 10:8]; Acts 8:18, 20

¹⁸ ⁿ 2 Kin. 7:2, 17
²⁰ ^o 2 Kin. 4:12; 8:4, 5
²² ^p 2 Kin. 4:26
²⁴ ^q Lit. *the hill*

thing may the LORD pardon your servant: when my master goes into the temple of Rimmon to worship there, and ⁿhe leans on my hand, and I bow down in the temple of Rimmon—when I bow down in the temple of Rimmon, may the LORD please pardon your servant in this thing."

¹⁹Then he said to him, "Go in peace." So he departed from him a short distance.

Gehazi's Greed

²⁰But ^oGehazi, the servant of Elisha the man of God, said, "Look, my master has spared Naaman this Syrian, while not receiving from his hands what he brought; but *as* the LORD lives, I will run after him and take something from him."

²¹So Gehazi pursued Naaman. When Naaman saw *him* running after him, he got down from the chariot to meet him, and said, "*Is all well?*"

²²And he said, "*All is* ^pwell. My master has sent me, saying, 'Indeed, just now two young men of the sons of the prophets have come to me from the mountains of Ephraim. Please give them a talent of silver and two changes of garments.'"

²³So Naaman said, "Please, take two talents." And he urged him, and bound two talents of silver in two bags, with two changes of garments, and handed *them* to two of his servants; and they carried *them* on ahead of him. ²⁴When he came to ⁴the citadel, he took *them* from their hand, and stored *them* away in the house; then he let the men go, and they departed. ²⁵Now he went in and stood before his master. Elisha said to him, "*Where did you go, Gehazi?*"

And he said, "Your servant did not go anywhere."

5:9 at the door: For some reason Elisha did not meet with the general face to face. Perhaps it was because contact with one with skin disorder would render the prophet unclean and therefore cut off his ministry with others (see Num. 5:1–4).

5:10 Elisha's instruction for Naaman to wash **seven times** in the Jordan emphasizes that the full cure for Naaman's condition could be effected solely by the power of Israel's sovereign God. The proud Aramean needed a lesson in humility and putting his personal trust in God alone (see v. 15). The issue was obedience.

5:11, 12 Understandably, Naaman's initial response was one of disbelief and anger. This seemed a very strange and humiliating command for a general in the army of Aram. What, after all, was the Jordan compared to the greater **rivers** of Aram?

5:13, 14 Naaman listened to his advisors, did as he was commanded, and was healed. **clean:** The word suggests that the problem of skin diseases causing *uncleanness* was an issue in his country as well. The wonderful thing about Naaman is that once he gave it thought, he would have done whatever God commanded him through His prophet.

5:15 stood before him: Now that Naaman was clean, he could stand in the presence of the prophet Elisha (compare vv. 9, 10). **no God in all the earth:** Naaman stands as a wonderful example of a foreigner who came to faith in God. **take a gift:** What Naaman

had received could not have been purchased, nor would Elisha take advantage of the situation.

5:17 earth: Although ancient Middle Eastern custom associated the identity of a god with the location where he was worshiped, Elisha might have felt in this instance that Naaman's newly-gained acquaintance with Israel's God might be benefited with this tangible reminder of the land of his cure.

5:18 The name **Rimmon** is an example of a deliberate corruption of a name of a foreign god by the Hebrew scribes. Instead of writing *Ramman*, meaning "Thunderer," a name for the storm god Hadad (see Zech. 12:11), they wrote *Rimmon*, meaning "Pomegranate."

5:20 Gehazi: The sad story of Gehazi's greed serves as a contrast to the principled behavior of his master Elisha (vv. 15, 16).

5:23 talents: A talent was an enormous amount of silver—equal to 3,000 shekels, or about 70 lbs. **two of his servants:** Each would have been carrying a heavy load.

5:24 the citadel: The Hebrew word can refer to a hill or mound, or a building such as a citadel (see 2 Chr. 27:3, 4; Mic 4:8). Gehazi dismissed the men before coming to a place where his greedy gain might be observed by people who would know about Naaman and Elisha.

5:25 Since he had lied first to Naaman (v. 22), now he must lie to **Elisha**.

²⁶Then he said to him, “Did not my heart go *with you* when the man turned back from his chariot to meet you? *Is it* ^atime to receive money and to receive clothing, olive groves and vineyards, sheep and oxen, male and female servants? ²⁷Therefore the leprosy of Naaman ^cshall cling to you and your descendants forever.” And he went out from his presence ^dleprous, as *white* as snow.

The Floating Ax Head

6 And ^athe sons of the prophets said to Elisha, “See now, the place where we dwell with you is too small for us. ²Please, let us go to the Jordan, and let every man take a beam from there, and let us make there a place where we may dwell.”

So he answered, “Go.”

³Then one said, ^b“Please consent to go with your servants.”

And he answered, “I will go.” ⁴So he went with them. And when they came to the Jordan, they cut down trees. ⁵But as one was cutting down a tree, the iron *ax head* fell into the water; and he cried out and said, “Alas, master! For it was ^cborrowed.”

⁶So the man of God said, “Where did it fall?” And he showed him the place. So ^dhe cut off a stick, and threw *it* in there; and he made the iron float. ⁷Therefore he said, “Pick *it* up for yourself.” So he reached out his hand and took it.

The Blinded Syrians Captured

⁸Now the ^eking of Syria was making war against Israel; and he consulted with his servants, saying, “My camp *will be* in such and such a place.” ⁹And the man of God sent to the king of Israel, saying, “Beware that you do not pass this place, for the Syrians are coming down there.” ¹⁰Then the king of Israel sent *someone* to the place of which the man of God had

²⁶ ^q [Eccl. 3:1, 6]
²⁷ ^r [1 Tim. 6:10]
^s Ex. 4:6; Num. 12:10; 2 Kin. 15:5

CHAPTER 6

¹ ^a 2 Kin. 4:38
³ ^b 2 Kin. 5:23
⁵ ^c [Ex. 22:14]
⁶ ^d Ex. 15:25; 2 Kin. 2:21; 4:41
⁸ ^e 2 Kin. 8:28, 29

told him. Thus he warned him, and he was watchful there, not just once or twice.

¹¹Therefore the heart of the king of Syria was greatly troubled by this thing; and he called his servants and said to them, “Will you not show me which of us *is* for the king of Israel?”

¹²And one of his servants said, “None, my lord, O king; but Elisha, the prophet who *is* in Israel, tells the king of Israel the words that you speak in your bedroom.”

¹³So he said, “Go and see where he *is*, that I may send and get him.”

And it was told him, saying, “Surely *he is* in ^fDothan.”

¹⁴Therefore he sent horses and chariots and a great army there, and they came by night and surrounded the city.

¹⁵And when the servant of the man of God arose early and went out, there was an army, surrounding the city with horses and chariots. And his servant said to him, “Alas, my master! What shall we do?”

¹⁶So he answered, ^g“Do not fear, for ^hthose who *are* with us *are* more than those who *are* with them.” ¹⁷And Elisha prayed, and said, “LORD, I pray, open his eyes that he may see.” Then the LORD ⁱopened the eyes of the young man, and he saw. And behold, the mountain *was* full of ^jhorses and chariots of fire all around Elisha. ¹⁸So when *the Syrians* came down to him, Elisha prayed to the LORD, and said, “Strike this people, I pray, with blindness.” And ^kHe struck them with blindness according to the word of Elisha.

¹⁹Now Elisha said to them, “This *is* not the way, nor *is* this the city. Follow me, and I will bring you to the man whom you seek.” But he led them to Samaria.

²⁰So it was, when they had come to Samaria, that Elisha said, “LORD, open the eyes of these *men*, that they may see.” And the LORD opened their eyes, and they saw; and there *they were*, inside Samaria!

¹³ ^f Gen. 37:17
¹⁶ ^g Ex. 14:13; 1 Kin. 17:13 ^h 2 Chr. 32:7; Ps. 55:18; [Rom. 8:31]
¹⁷ ⁱ Num. 22:31; Luke 24:31 ^j 2 Kin. 2:11; Ps. 34:7; 68:17; Zech. 1:8; 6:1-7
¹⁸ ^k Gen. 19:11; Acts 13:11

5:26 Did not my heart go: The use of the term *heart* suggests not only Elisha’s knowledge but also his strong feeling for Gehazi.

5:27 The irony of justice punished Gehazi’s sin with the **leprosy of Naaman**.

6:2-5 The details of this building program set the stage for the loss of the **iron ax head**. In a time when most tools were still made of bronze, an iron blade was valuable.

6:7 he . . . took it: The man must have been tremendously impressed with what he saw, but the ax head could be of no use to him until he actually reached out and took it.

6:8-12 This remarkable narrative takes the reader into the tent of Ben-Hadad, the king of Aram, and to the meetings he had with his general staff. It turned out, much to the king’s consternation, that his plans were known to the king of Israel and his staff. Ben-Hadad suspected a spy, and he was right. The spy was Elisha, who had never left Israel.

6:13-15 Dothan was in the central highlands of Israel. It is men-

tioned only here and in Gen. 37, when Joseph was sold to the Midianites (see Gen. 37:17).

6:15 the servant of the man of God: Since Gehazi had become a leper (see 5:27), it is possible that this is another servant. However, Gehazi is mentioned again in 8:4 as one who was still faithfully representing the miracles done through Elisha.

6:16 those who are with us: Elisha knew that God’s unseen army was far more powerful than any visible army.

6:17 horses and chariots of fire: In answer to his prayer, Elisha’s reassuring words to his servant (v. 16) were validated by letting him see the spiritual realities that lay beyond normal human sight. Such a fiery scene had accompanied Elijah’s translation into heaven (2:11).

6:19, 20 I will bring you: Elisha’s words are technically true, although he employed tactics common in times of war to lead the Arameans to Samaria rather than Dothan. Such wartime measures are noted elsewhere in the Scriptures (Josh. 2:4-6; 1 Sam. 27:8-12).

²¹ Now when the king of Israel saw them, he said to Elisha, “My ¹ father, shall I kill *them*? Shall I kill *them*?”

²² But he answered, “You shall not kill *them*. Would you kill those whom you have taken captive with your sword and your bow? ^m Set food and water before them, that they may eat and drink and go to their master.” ²³ Then he prepared a great feast for them; and after they ate and drank, he sent them away and they went to their master. So ⁿ the bands of Syrian *raiders* came no more into the land of Israel.

Syria Besieges Samaria in Famine

²⁴ And it happened after this that ^o Ben-Hadad king of Syria gathered all his army, and went up and besieged Samaria. ²⁵ And there was a great ^p famine in Samaria; and indeed they besieged it until a donkey’s head was sold for eighty *shekels* of silver, and one-fourth of a ¹ kab of dove droppings for five *shekels* of silver.

²⁶ Then, as the king of Israel was passing by on the wall, a woman cried out to him, saying, “Help, my lord, O king!”

²⁷ And he said, “If the LORD does not help you, where can I find help for you? From the threshing floor or from the winepress?” ²⁸ Then the king said to her, “What is troubling you?”

And she answered, “This woman said to me, ‘Give your son, that we may eat him today, and we will eat my son tomorrow.’ ²⁹ So ^q we boiled my son, and ate him. And I said to her on the next day, ‘Give your son, that we may eat him’; but she has hidden her son.”

³⁰ Now it happened, when the king heard the words of the woman, that he ^r tore his clothes; and as he passed by on the wall, the people looked, and there underneath *he had* sackcloth on his body.

³¹ Then he said, ^s “God do so to me and

21 ¹ 2 Kin. 2:12; 5:13; 8:9
22 ^m (Rom. 12:20)
23 ⁿ 2 Kin. 5:2; 6:8, 9
24 ^o 1 Kin. 20:1
25 ^p 2 Kin. 4:38; 8:1
¹ Approximately 1 pint
29 ^q Lev. 26:27-29; Deut. 28:52-57; Lam. 4:10
30 ^r 1 Kin. 21:27
31 ^s Ruth 1:17; 1 Kin. 19:2

32 ^t Ezek. 8:1; 14:1; 20:1 ^u Luke 13:32
^v 1 Kin. 18:4, 13, 14; 21:10, 13
33 ^w Job 2:9

CHAPTER 7

1 ^a 2 Kin. 7:18,
19 ¹ A third of an ephah, or about 8 gallons
2 ^b 2 Kin. 5:18; 7:17;
19, 20 ^c Gen. 7:11; Mal. 3:10
3 ^d [Lev. 13:45, 46; Num. 5:2-4; 12:10-14]
4 ^e 2 Kin. 6:24

more also, if the head of Elisha the son of Shaphat remains on him today!”

³² But Elisha was sitting in his house, and ^t the elders were sitting with him. And *the king* sent a man ahead of him, but before the messenger came to him, he said to the elders, ^u “Do you see how this son of ^v a murderer has sent someone to take away my head? Look, when the messenger comes, shut the door, and hold him fast at the door. *Is* not the sound of his master’s feet behind him?” ³³ And while he was still talking with them, there was the messenger, coming down to him; and then *the king* said, “Surely this calamity *is* from the LORD; ^w why should I wait for the LORD any longer?”

⁷ Then Elisha said, “Hear the word of the LORD. Thus says the LORD: ^a ‘Tomorrow about this time a ¹ seah of fine flour *shall be sold* for a shekel, and two seahs of barley for a shekel, at the gate of Samaria.’”

^{2b} So an officer on whose hand the king leaned answered the man of God and said, “Look, ^c if the LORD would make windows in heaven, could this thing be?”

And he said, “In fact, you shall see *it* with your eyes, but you shall not eat of it.”

The Syrians Flee

³ Now there were four leprous men ^d at the entrance of the gate; and they said to one another, “Why are we sitting here until we die? ⁴ If we say, ‘We will enter the city,’ the famine *is* in the city, and we shall die there. And if we sit here, we die also. Now therefore, come, let us surrender to the ^e army of the Syrians. If they keep us alive, we shall live; and if they kill us, we shall only die.” ⁵ And they rose at twilight to go to the camp of the Syrians; and when they had come to the outskirts of the Syrian camp, to their surprise no

6:21–23 The end of this story is even more amazing than the beginning. The blind soldiers were brought within the capital city of Israel where they easily might have been slaughtered. Instead, they were given a banquet and were sent back to Ben-Hadad unharmed.

6:21 The term of deference **my father** was used earlier by Elisha to Elijah (see 2:12), and to Naaman by his servants (see 5:13). Its use here by King Jehoram (see 3:1) for Elisha is a clear indication that Jehoram knew he was not in charge.

6:23 bands . . . came no more: That is, for a period of time. The wars between the two nations revived after a period (see 6:24).

6:24 The siege of **Samaria**, the capital of Israel, was Ben-Hadad’s final attempt to destroy his rival Jehoram of Israel.

6:25 The desperate conditions in besieged Samaria had made even once common food and commodities scarce and expensive. The **dove droppings** may have been used for fuel or even as a substitute for salt.

6:28 eat him: Israel had been warned that national disobedience could reduce the people to such a loathsome deed (Lev. 26:29; Deut. 28:53, 57).

6:30 The king was not unmoved by the plight of his people. He tore his garments and wore **sackcloth** to attest to his concern.

6:31 if the head of Elisha: The phrase is an oath expressing the enraged king’s will to kill Elisha, whom he blamed for the severe conditions.

7:1 Public business was conducted at the city **gate** (see Gen. 19:1; Ruth 4:1). Elisha’s words were good news: Although costly, food would once again be available.

7:2 an officer: The Hebrew term for *officer* originally designated the third man in a chariot, who held a large shield. By this time it meant a high military official serving as adjutant (9:25; 10:25). The officer’s doubt brought judgment on him. Although the food did come, this officer ate none of it.

7:3, 4 Because **leprous men** were excluded from the city (Lev. 13:4–6; Num. 5:2, 3) and avoided by all, they probably were ignored by the invaders and had been left to their fate. If the ordinary people of the city were suffering from hunger, how much more must these men have been suffering. They concluded that they had nothing to lose by going to the other side.

one *was* there. ⁶For the Lord had caused the army of the Syrians ^fto hear the noise of chariots and the noise of horses—the noise of a great army; so they said to one another, “Look, the king of Israel has hired against us ^gthe kings of the Hittites and the kings of the Egyptians to attack us!” ⁷Therefore they ^harose and fled at twilight, and left the camp intact—their tents, their horses, and their donkeys—and they fled for their lives. ⁸And when these lepers came to the outskirts of the camp, they went into one tent and ate and drank, and carried from it silver and gold and clothing, and went and hid *them*; then they came back and entered another tent, and carried *some* from there *also*, and went and hid *it*.

⁹Then they said to one another, “We are not doing right. This day *is* a day of good news, and we remain silent. If we wait until morning light, some ²punishment will come upon us. Now therefore, come, let us go and tell the king’s household.” ¹⁰So they went and called to the gatekeepers of the city, and told them, saying, “We went to the Syrian camp, and surprisingly no one *was* there, not a human sound—only horses and donkeys tied, and the tents intact.” ¹¹And the gatekeepers called out, and they told *it* to the king’s household inside.

¹²So the king arose in the night and said to his servants, “Let me now tell you what the Syrians have done to us. They know that we *are* ¹hungry; therefore they have gone out of the camp to ³hide themselves in the field, saying, ‘When they come out of the city, we shall catch them alive, and get into the city.’”

¹³And one of his servants answered and said, “Please, let several *men* take five of the remaining horses which are left in the city. Look, they *may either become* like all the multitude of Israel that are left in it; or indeed, *I say*, they *may become* like all the multitude of Israel left from those who are consumed; so let us send them and see.” ¹⁴Therefore they took two chariots with horses; and the king

⁶ / 2 Sam. 5:24;
2 Kin. 19:7; Job
15:21 ^g 1 Kin. 10:29
⁷ ^h Ps. 48:4-6; [Prov.
28:1]
⁹ ² Calamity
¹² / 2 Kin. 6:24-29
³ Hide themselves
in ambush

sent them in the direction of the Syrian army, saying, “Go and see.” ¹⁵And they went after them to the Jordan; and indeed all the road *was* full of garments and weapons which the Syrians had thrown away in their haste. So the messengers returned and told the king. ¹⁶Then the people went out and plundered the tents of the Syrians. So a seah of fine flour was *sold* for a shekel, and two seahs of barley for a shekel, ^jaccording to the word of the LORD.

¹⁷Now the king had appointed the officer on whose hand he leaned to have charge of the gate. But the people trampled him in the gate, and he died, just ^kas the man of God had said, who spoke when the king came down to him. ¹⁸So it happened just as the man of God had spoken to the king, saying, ^l“Two seahs of barley for a shekel, and a seah of fine flour for a shekel, shall be *sold* tomorrow about this time in the gate of Samaria.”

¹⁹Then that officer had answered the man of God, and said, “Now look, *if* the LORD would make windows in heaven, could such a thing be?”

And he had said, “In fact, you shall see *it* with your eyes, but you shall not eat of *it*.” ²⁰And so it happened to him, for the people trampled him in the gate, and he died.

The King Restores the Shunammite’s Land

8 Then Elisha spoke to the woman ^awhose son he had restored to life, saying, “Arise and go, you and your household, and stay wherever you can; for the LORD ^bhas called for a ^cfamine, and furthermore, it will come upon the land for seven years.” ²So the woman arose and did according to the saying of the man of God, and she went with her household and dwelt in the land of the Philistines seven years.

³It came to pass, at the end of seven years, that the woman returned from the land of the Philistines; and she went to make an appeal to the king for her

¹⁶ / 2 Kin. 7:1
¹⁷ ^k 2 Kin. 6:32; 7:2
¹⁸ / 2 Kin. 7:1

CHAPTER 8

¹ ^a 2 Kin. 4:18, 31-35
^b Ps. 105:16; Hag.
1:11 ^c 2 Sam. 21:1;
1 Kin. 18:2; 2 Kin.
4:38; 6:25

7:6 the noise of a great army: Doubtless, the army was God’s (see 6:16–18). By the **kings of the Hittites** is meant the descendants of the earlier Hittites of Asia Minor who now inhabited various Aramean states. Assyrian documents routinely mention Palestine as “Hittite Land.”

7:7, 8 In their joy, the **lepers** took advantage of their good fortune. **7:9** Good news and good fortune had to be shared (Prov. 15:27; 21:17, 18), and the men feared that failure to do so might merit divine **punishment**.

7:12 what the Syrians have done: The Israelite king suspected that another military trick was being played on him. He did not connect the good news with Elisha’s prophecy of good times.

7:13–16 At last the king sent a scouting party, which confirmed the

good news. The prophecy concerning the restoration of food for the city was fulfilled (see v. 1).

7:17–20 you shall not eat of it: All of Elisha’s prophecy came true. The sudden miraculous flight of the Arameans had provided goods aplenty, but the doubting officer would not enjoy them.

8:1 As had happened in the days of Elijah (1 Kin. 17; 18), God again instituted a **famine**. Such cases of divinely induced calamities were intended to chastise His people and bring them to repentance (see Joel 2:12–14; Zeph. 3:5–7). God in His kindness spared the family of the Shunammite woman to whom Elisha had had such a significant ministry (see 4:8–37). It appears that she may have become a widow by the time of this incident.

8:3 to make an appeal: The Shunammite woman had not

house and for her land. ⁴Then the king talked with ^dGehazi, the servant of the man of God, saying, “Tell me, please, all the great things Elisha has done.” ⁵Now it happened, as he was telling the king how he had restored the dead to life, that there was the woman whose son he had ^erestored to life, appealing to the king for her house and for her land. And Gehazi said, “My lord, O king, this *is* the woman, and this *is* her son whom Elisha restored to life.” ⁶And when the king asked the woman, she told him.

So the king appointed a certain officer for her, saying, “Restore all that *was* hers, and all the proceeds of the field from the day that she left the land until now.”

Death of Ben-Hadad

⁷Then Elisha went to Damascus, and ^fBen-Hadad king of Syria was sick; and it was told him, saying, “The man of God has come here.” ⁸And the king said to ^gHazael, ^h“Take a present in your hand, and go to meet the man of God, and ⁱinquire of the LORD by him, saying, ‘Shall I recover from this disease?’” ⁹So ^jHazael went to meet him and took a present with

renounced or sold her property, but merely had left during the previous famine. Moreover, she had returned within seven years (see Deut. 15:1–6; Ruth 4:3, 4). Since the property was still legally hers, she pressed her claim to the king himself.

8:4, 5 Just as the Shunammite woman arrived, **Gehazi** was telling Jehoram about her. At this point, Gehazi was still faithful to the ministry of Elisha.

8:6 Restore all: We get a complex picture of King Jehoram. At times he was so angry at Elisha that he wished him dead (6:31), yet even then he was in mourning for his people. He acknowledged Elisha’s spiritual leadership at other times (see 6:21), but he knew that Elisha did not hold him in high regard (see 3:14). In this section, his righteous judgment should be contrasted with the wretched behavior of the wicked Ahab with respect to the land of another farmer (see 1 Kin. 21:1–16).

8:7 Although Ben-Hadad felt that Elisha’s arrival was accidental, God’s prophet had come to **Damascus** in fulfillment of the instructions originally given by God to Elijah (1 Kin. 19:15–17). The instructions concerning dynastic change in Israel would soon be carried out (9:1–13).

8:8, 9 Ironically, a sick king of Israel had inquired of a false god concerning the nature of his illness (1:2); here, the pagan king of a foreign nation inquired of the living God concerning the nature of his illness.

8:10 You shall certainly recover: Left to natural circumstances, Ben-Hadad would recover. Yet Elisha knew that Hazael would seize both the opportunity of the king’s illness and fulfill Elisha’s prophecy by assassinating the king and taking the throne. Hazael chose his own method of carrying out the issue of dynastic succession in Damascus, not God’s (see v. 15).

8:11, 12 ashamed: He had reached the end of his ability to resist his emotions. **the man of God wept:** Elisha wept over the suffering that Hazael would bring upon Israel.

8:13 In the ancient Middle East, the **dog** was despised because it was a scavenger (see 1 Kin. 14:11; 21:23). Appropriately, Hazael would similarly be held in disdain.

⁴ ^d 2 Kin. 4:12; 5:20–27
⁵ ^e 2 Kin. 4:35
⁷ ^f 2 Kin. 6:24
⁸ ^g 1 Kin. 19:15
^h 1 Sam. 9:7; 1 Kin. 14:3; 2 Kin. 5:5
ⁱ 2 Kin. 1:2
⁹ ^j 1 Kin. 19:15

¹⁰ ^k 2 Kin. 8:15
¹¹ ^l Luke 19:41
¹ *fixed his gaze*
¹² ^m 2 Kin. 10:32; 12:17; 13:3, 7; Amos 1:3, 4 ⁿ 2 Kin. 15:16; Hos. 13:16; Amos 1:13; Nah. 3:10
¹³ ^o 1 Sam. 17:43; 2 Sam. 9:8

him, of every good thing of Damascus, forty camel-loads; and he came and stood before him, and said, “Your son Ben-Hadad king of Syria has sent me to you, saying, ‘Shall I recover from this disease?’”

¹⁰ And Elisha said to him, “Go, say to him, ‘You shall certainly recover.’ However the LORD has shown me that ^khe will really die.” ¹¹Then he ^lset his countenance in a stare until he was ashamed; and the man of God ^lwept. ¹²And Hazael said, “Why is my lord weeping?”

He answered, “Because I know ^mthe evil that you will do to the children of Israel: Their strongholds you will set on fire, and their young men you will kill with the sword; and you ⁿwill dash their children, and rip open their women with child.”

¹³So Hazael said, “But what ^ois your servant—a dog, that he should do this gross thing?”

The Kings and Prophets of Israel and Judah					
The United Kingdom					
Saul 1050–1010 B.C.					
David 1010–970 B.C.					
Solomon 970–930 B.C.					
The Divided Kingdom					
Judah		B.C.	Israel		
Kings	Writing Prophets		Kings	Writing Prophets	
		950			
Rehoboam	930–913		Jeroboam I	930–910	
Abijah	913–910	925			
Asa	910–870		Nadab	910–909	
		900	Baasha	909–886	
			Elah	886–885	
			Zimri	885	
			Tibni	885–880	
		875	Omri	885–874	
Jehoshaphat	872–847		Ahab	874–853	
			Ahaziah	853–852	
Jehoram	848–841	850	Joram	852–841	
Ahaziah	841		Jehu	841–814	
Athaliah	841–835				
Joash	835–796	Joel?			
		825			
			Jehoahaz	814–798	
		800			
Amaziah	796–767		Jehoash	798–782	
Azariah	792–740		Jeroboam II	792–753	
		775			
				Amos Jonah	
Jotham	750–736	Hosea Isaiah	750	Zechariah	753
				Shallum	752
Ahaz	735–720	Micah		Menahem	751–742
				Pekahiah	741–740
			725	Pekah	752–732
Hezekiah	715–699			Hoshea	732–722

And Elisha answered, ^p“The LORD has shown me that you *will become* king over Syria.”

¹⁴Then he departed from Elisha, and came to his master, who said to him, “What did Elisha say to you?” And he answered, “He told me you would surely recover.” ¹⁵But it happened on the next day that he took a thick cloth and dipped it in water, and spread it over his face so that he died; and Hazael reigned in his place.

Jehoram Reigns in Judah

¹⁶Now ^qin the fifth year of Joram the son of Ahab, king of Israel, Jehoshaphat *having been* king of Judah, ^rJehoram the son of Jehoshaphat began to reign as ²king of Judah. ¹⁷He was ^sthirty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned eight years in Jerusalem. ¹⁸And he walked in the way of the kings of Is-

13 ^p 1 Kin. 19:15
16 ^q 2 Kin. 1:17;
3:1 ^r 2 Chr. 21:3
² Co-regent with
his father
17 ^s 2 Chr. 21:5-10

18 ^t 2 Kin. 8:26, 27
19 ^u 2 Sam. 7:13;
1 Kin. 11:36; 15:4;
2 Chr. 21:7
20 ^v Gen. 27:40;
2 Chr. 21:8-10
^w 1 Kin. 22:47
21 ³ Jehoram, v. 16
22 ^x Josh. 21:13;
2 Kin. 19:8; 2 Chr.
21:10

rael, just as the house of Ahab had done, for ^tthe daughter of Ahab was his wife; and he did evil in the sight of the LORD. ¹⁹Yet the LORD would not destroy Judah, for the sake of His servant David, ^uas He promised him to give a lamp to him *and* his sons forever.

²⁰In his days ^vEdom revolted against Judah’s authority, ^wand made a king over themselves. ²¹So ³Joram went to Zair, and all his chariots with him. Then he rose by night and attacked the Edomites who had surrounded him and the captains of the chariots; and the troops fled to their tents. ²²Thus Edom has been in revolt against Judah’s authority to this day. ^xAnd Libnah revolted at that time.

Shalmaneser III of Assyria notes Hazael’s accession to the throne with the words: “Hazael, son of nobody, seizes the throne.” By these contemptuous words, we learn that Hazael was not the son of Ben-Hadad, but an opportunistic usurper.

8:15 Having succeeded Ben-Hadad as king, **Hazael reigned** for about 40 years (842–802 B.C.). He remained an inveterate foe of God’s people (see 10:32, 33; 13:3, 22). Yet like Elisha and Jehu, Hazael was an instrument of God’s judgment on His sinful people (1 Kin. 19:15–17).

8:16–18 Jehoram: With Jehoram’s accession to the throne of Judah, kings by the same name now ruled in both kingdoms. The name Jehoram means “The Lord Is Exalted” and can be spelled Joram. **eight years:** Joram of the northern kingdom ruled from 852 to 841 B.C.; Jehoram of the southern kingdom from 848 to 841 B.C. Although he had served alongside his father Jehoshaphat for the previous four years, Jehoram now ruled in his own right. With his father’s death, he killed all his brothers and any claimant to the throne (2 Chr. 21:2–4), actions that would be repeated by his wicked wife Athaliah at the time of his death (11:1). A wicked ruler (2 Chr. 21:11), he was greatly influenced by Queen Athaliah (2 Chr. 21:6). Wickedness and spiritual bankruptcy in the royal house would bring about God’s judgment on Judah in three separate military engagements with Edom, Libnah, and a combined Philistine-Arabian incursion (2 Chr. 21:16, 17), as well as a severe plague that would eventually take the life of the king (2 Chr. 21:12–15, 18, 19).

8:18 the daughter of Ahab: Most shocking was that the same source of evil that had brought God’s judgment against the northern kingdom was now being brought into the southern kingdom. Ahab had been a wicked king, but his wickedness had been greatly accelerated by the actions and attitudes of his pagan wife Jezebel (see 1 Kin. 16:31). Now their daughter Athaliah (see 11:1) was established as the queen of Judah and the wife of a descendant of David. From the vantage point of international relations, the marriage of a daughter of the king of Israel to the king of Judah was a strategic event that could ease hostility between the two nations. But from a spiritual standpoint, this marriage was a grim omen of disaster for Judah.

8:19 Despite Jehoram’s infidelity and wickedness, God remained faithful to the Davidic covenant (see 2 Sam. 7:12–16; Ps. 89:30–37). **a lamp:** This was a figure of the hope of the Davidic promise in the darkest of times, and the fulfillment in Him who is the light of the world (see 1 Kin. 15:4; John 1:1–13).

8:20–22 Judah’s struggles with **Edom** were often accompanied by trouble with the Philistines (see 2 Chr. 21:16; Joel 3:4–8). Edom would remain a constant menace with the

The Divided Kingdom (continued)				
Judah		B.C.	Israel	
Kings	Writing Prophets		Kings	Writing Prophets
Manasseh	697–642	700		
		675		
			Israel’s Assyrian Captivity	
		650		
Amon	642–640 Nahum			
Josiah	640–609 Zephaniah			
		625		
Jehoahaz	609 Habakkuk			
Jehoiakim	609–598 Jeremiah	600		
Jehoiachin	598 Daniel			
Zedekiah	598–586 Ezekiel			
	Obadiah?	575		
Judah’s Babylonian Captivity				
		550		
	Haggai	525		
	Zechariah			
Judah’s Restoration		500		
		475		
	Malachi	450		
		425		

²³ Now the rest of the acts of Joram, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? ²⁴ So Joram ⁴ rested with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the City of David. Then ⁵ Ahaziah his son reigned in his place.

Ahaziah Reigns in Judah

²⁵ In the twelfth year of Joram the son of Ahab, king of Israel, Ahaziah the son of Jehoram, king of Judah, began to reign. ²⁶ Ahaziah *was* ² twenty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned one year in Jerusalem. His mother's name *was* Athaliah the granddaughter of Omri, king of Israel. ²⁷ *And* he walked in the way of the house of Ahab, and did evil in the sight of the LORD, like the house of Ahab, for he *was* the son-in-law of the house of Ahab.

²⁸ Now he went ^b with Joram the son of Ahab to war against Hazael king of Syria at ^c Ramoth Gilead; and the Syrians wounded Joram. ²⁹ Then ^d King Joram went back to Jezreel to recover from the wounds which the Syrians had inflicted on him at ^e Ramah, when he fought against Hazael king of Syria. ^e And Ahaziah the son of Jehoram, king of Judah, went down to see Joram the son of Ahab in Jezreel, because he was sick.

Jehu Anointed King of Israel

⁹ And Elisha the prophet called one of ^a the sons of the prophets, and said to him, ^b “Get ¹ yourself ready, take this flask of oil in your hand, ^c and go to Ramoth Gilead. ² Now when you arrive at that place, look there for Jehu the son

²⁴ ^v 2 Chr. 22:1, 7
⁴ Died and joined his ancestors
⁵ Or Azariah or Jehoahaz
²⁶ ^v 2 Chr. 22:2
²⁷ ^a 2 Chr. 22:3, 4
²⁸ ^b 2 Chr. 22:5
^c 1 Kin. 22:3, 29
²⁹ ^d 2 Kin. 9:15
^e 2 Kin. 9:16; 2 Chr. 22:6, 7
^e Ramoth, v. 28

CHAPTER 9

¹ ^a 1 Kin. 20:35
² 2 Kin. 4:29; Jer. 1:17
^c 2 Kin. 8:28,
²⁹ ¹ Lit. *Gird up your loins*

² ^d 2 Kin. 9:5, 11
³ ^e 1 Kin. 19:16
⁶ ¹ 1 Sam. 2:7, 8;
¹ Kin. 19:16; 2 Kin. 9:3;
² Chr. 22:7
⁷ ⁹ [Deut. 32:35, 41]
^h 1 Kin. 18:4; 21:15
⁸ ¹ 1 Kin. 14:10;
^{21:21}; 2 Kin. 10:17
¹ 1 Sam. 25:22
^k Deut. 32:36; 2 Kin. 14:26
⁹ ¹ 1 Kin. 14:10;
^{15:29}; 21:22
^m 1 Kin. 16:3, 11
¹⁰ ⁿ 1 Kin. 21:23;
² Kin. 9:35, 36
¹¹ ^o Jer. 29:26; Hos. 9:7; Mark 3:21; John 10:20; Acts 26:24;
¹ Cor. 4:10]

of Jehoshaphat, the son of Nimshi, and go in and make him rise up from among ^d his associates, and take him to an inner room. ³ Then ^e take the flask of oil, and pour *it* on his head, and say, ‘Thus says the LORD: “I have anointed you king over Israel.”’ Then open the door and flee, and do not delay.”

⁴ So the young man, the servant of the prophet, went to Ramoth Gilead. ⁵ And when he arrived, there *were* the captains of the army sitting; and he said, “I have a message for you, Commander.”

Jehu said, “For which *one* of us?”

And he said, “For you, Commander.”

⁶ Then he arose and went into the house. And he poured the oil on his head, and said to him, ^f “Thus says the LORD God of Israel: ‘I have anointed you king over the people of the LORD, over Israel. ⁷ You shall strike down the house of Ahab your master, that I may ^g avenge the blood of My servants the prophets, and the blood of all the servants of the LORD, ^h at the hand of Jezebel. ⁸ For the whole house of Ahab shall perish; and ⁱ I will cut off from Ahab all ^j the males in Israel, both ^k bond and free. ⁹ So I will make the house of Ahab like the house of ^l Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of ^m Baasha the son of Ahijah. ¹⁰ ⁿ The dogs shall eat Jezebel on the plot of ground at Jezreel, and *there shall be none to bury her.*”’ And he opened the door and fled.

¹¹ Then Jehu came out to the servants of his master, and *one* said to him, “*Is* all well? Why did ^o this madman come to you?”

And he said to them, “You know the man and his babble.”

¹² And they said, “A lie! Tell us now.”

result that although Amaziah would later defeat Edom (14:22), they would renew armed hostilities against Judah in the days of Ahaz (2 Chr. 28:17, 18). Edom's constant enmity against God's people served as a focus of attention for Israel's prophets, who often predicted Edom's ultimate defeat and destruction (see Is. 34:5–15; Jer. 49:7–22).

8:25 Ahaziah means “The Lord Has Grasped.”

8:26 twenty-two years old: This figure is correct; compare 2 Chr. 22:2. **granddaughter of Omri:** The Hebrew word translated *granddaughter* is literally “daughter.” Athaliah, Ahab's daughter, is the person meant (v. 18; 2 Chr. 21:6).

8:27 the way of the house of Ahab: The lowest point of Israel's religious apostasy was reached in the reign of Ahab and his wicked wife Jezebel (see 1 Kin. 16:31). Most likely due to the role of Athaliah, the evil that had spoiled Ahab affected the house of the king of Judah.

8:28 Here began the troubles with **Hazael** (v. 12). Ahaziah's grandfather Jehoshaphat had been drawn into war at **Ramoth Gilead** by Ahab (1 Kin. 22), and now Ahaziah was led by Joram to war in the same area. Ramoth Gilead means “Heights of Gilead.” It was about 25 miles east of the Jordan. Hazael had recently been crowned in Damascus, and the year 841 B.C. would witness a change in the royal houses of both Israel and Judah.

8:29 Ahab had one of his palaces at **Jezreel**, a site between Megiddo and Beth Shan (1 Kin. 18:45). Both the injured Joram and Ahaziah came to Jezreel for a most fateful meeting (ch. 9).

9:1–3 The selection of **Jehu** as the next king of Israel was by prophetic designation; contrast 1:17. The name Jehu means “The Lord Is He.” The instructions given by Elisha to one of his associates were marked by secrecy and intrigue. The action of the prophet was seditious in the eyes of the current king.

9:4, 5 for you: The servant was obedient to Elisha and was daring in his approach to Jehu.

9:6 poured the oil: As in the case of Hazael (8:7–13), the third part of the Lord's threefold command to Elijah (1 Kin. 19:15–18) was carried out by another. First, Elijah personally fulfilled the divine directive concerning Elisha (see 1 Kin. 19:19–21). Then he set in motion the process that would effect the other two commands. Elisha carried out the order with respect to Hazael. Third, one of the sons of the prophets serving under Elisha handled the case of Jehu. In the OT, an anointing was customarily reserved for a king (see 2 Sam. 2:4) or the high priest (see Ex. 40:13).

9:7–10 The prophetic words to Jehu indicate that he would destroy the evil of the house of Ahab. **Jezebel:** The wicked wife of Ahab is given special attention; her gruesome end is predicted. **fled:** Once the young prophet gave the Lord's stern message to Jehu, he fled, just as Elisha had commanded him (v. 3). His life was in danger; at this time only he knew what had transpired with Jehu.

9:12 A lie: Jehu's attempt to brush off the questions of his servants

So he said, “Thus and thus he spoke to me, saying, ‘Thus says the Lord: “I have anointed you king over Israel.”’”

¹³ Then each man hastened ¹⁴ to take his garment and put *it* ² under him on the top of the steps; and they blew trumpets, saying, “Jehu is king!”

Joram of Israel Killed

¹⁴ So Jehu the son of Jehoshaphat, the son of Nimshi, conspired against ⁹ Joram. (Now Joram had been defending Ramoth Gilead, he and all Israel, against Hazael king of Syria. ¹⁵ But ¹⁶ King ³ Joram had returned to Jezreel to recover from the wounds which the Syrians had inflicted on him when he fought with Hazael king of Syria.) And Jehu said, “If you are so minded, let no one leave *or* escape from the city to go and tell *it* in Jezreel.” ¹⁶ So Jehu rode in a chariot and went to Jezreel, for Joram was laid up there; ¹⁷ and Ahaziah king of Judah had come down to see Joram.

¹⁷ Now a watchman stood on the tower in Jezreel, and he saw the company of Jehu as he came, and said, “I see a company of men.”

And Joram said, “Get a horseman and send him to meet them, and let him say, ⁴ ‘Is it peace?’”

¹⁸ So the horseman went to meet him, and said, “Thus says the king: ‘Is it peace?’”

And Jehu said, “What have you to do with peace? ⁵ Turn around and follow me.”

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riding together behind Ahab his father, that ^vthe LORD laid this ^wburden upon him: ²⁶‘Surely I saw yesterday the blood of Naboth and the blood of his sons,’ says the LORD, ²⁷“and I will repay you ⁹in this plot;” says the LORD. Now therefore, take and throw him on the plot of ground, according to the word of the LORD.”

Ahaziah of Judah Killed

²⁷But when Ahaziah king of Judah saw *this*, he fled by the road to ¹Beth Haggan. So Jehu pursued him, and said, ²“Shoot him also in the chariot.” And *they shot him* at the Ascent of Gur, which is by Ibleam. Then he fled to ⁹Megiddo, and died there. ²⁸And his servants carried him in the chariot to Jerusalem, and buried him in his tomb with his fathers in the City of David. ²⁹In the eleventh year of Joram the son of Ahab, Ahaziah had become king over Judah.

Jezebel’s Violent Death

³⁰Now when Jehu had come to Jezreel, Jezebel heard of it; ²and she put paint on her eyes and adorned her head, and looked through a window. ³¹Then, as Jehu entered at the gate, she said, ⁴“Is it peace, Zimri, murderer of your master?”

³²And he looked up at the window, and said, “Who is on my side? Who?” So two or three eunuchs looked out at him. ³³Then he said, “Throw her down.” So they threw her down, and *some* of her blood splattered on the wall and on the horses; and he trampled her underfoot. ³⁴And when he had gone in, he ate and drank. Then he said, “Go now, see to this accursed woman, and bury her, for ^bshe was a king’s daughter.” ³⁵So they went to bury her, but they found no more of her than the skull and the feet and the palms of her hands. ³⁶Therefore they came back and told him. And he said, “This is the word of the LORD, which He spoke by His servant Elijah the Tishbite, saying, ^c‘On the plot of ground at Jezreel

25 ^v 1 Kin. 21:19, 24-29 ^w Is. 13:1
26 ^x 1 Kin. 21:13, 19
⁹ on this property
27 ^y 2 Chr. 22:7, 9
¹ Lit. The Garden House
² Lit. Strike
30 ^z [Jer. 4:30]; Ezek. 23:40
31 ^a 1 Kin. 16:9-20; 2 Kin. 9:18-22
34 ^b [Ex. 22:28]; 1 Kin. 16:31
36 ^c 1 Kin. 21:23

dogs shall eat the flesh of Jezebel; ³⁷and the corpse of Jezebel shall be ^das refuse on the surface of the field, in the plot at Jezreel, so that they shall not say, “Here lies Jezebel.””

Ahab’s Seventy Sons Killed

10 Now Ahab had seventy sons in Samaria. And Jehu wrote and sent letters to Samaria, to the rulers of ¹Jezreel, to the elders, and to ²those who reared Ahab’s sons, saying:

² Now as soon as this letter comes to you, since your master’s sons are with you, and you have chariots and horses, a fortified city also, and weapons, ³choose the ³best qualified of your master’s sons, set *him* on his father’s throne, and fight for your master’s house.

⁴But they were exceedingly afraid, and said, “Look, ^atwo kings could not ⁴stand up to him; how then can we stand?”

⁵And he who *was* in charge of the house, and he who *was* in charge of the city, the elders also, and those who reared the sons, sent to Jehu, saying, “We are your servants, we will do all you tell us; but we will not make anyone king. Do *what* is good in your sight.” ⁶Then he wrote a second letter to them, saying:

If you *are* for me and will obey my voice, take the heads of the men, your master’s sons, and come to me at Jezreel by this time tomorrow.

Now the king’s sons, seventy persons, were with the great men of the city, who were rearing them. ⁷So it was, when the letter came to them, that they took the king’s sons and ^bslaughtered seventy persons, put their heads in baskets and sent *them* to him at Jezreel.

⁸Then a messenger came and told him, saying, “They have brought the heads of the king’s sons.”

37 ^d Ps. 83:10

CHAPTER 10

¹ ¹ So with MT, Syr., Tg.; LXX Samaria; Vg. city ² the guardians of
³ ³ most upright
⁴ ^a 2 Kin. 9:24, 27
⁴ Lit. stand before
⁷ ^b Judg. 9:5; 1 Kin. 21:21; 2 Kin. 11:1

9:27 The wounded Ahaziah apparently made it to Samaria where he at last was apprehended by Jehu’s men (2 Chr. 22:8, 9) and taken to **Megiddo** where he died. His body finally was buried in the royal tombs in Jerusalem (v. 28).

9:30, 31 Jezebel knew that her end was near; she had heard about the deaths of the kings of Israel and Judah. Yet she brazenly spent time putting on her makeup and adorning herself. Defiant to the end, Jezebel called Jehu a **Zimri**, a traitor who had killed his master in order to seize the throne (1 Kin. 16:11, 12).

9:32, 33 Jehu had a couple of Jezebel’s servants throw her out the window. Her death was particularly gruesome. **Eunuchs** refers to males who have been castrated. Typically they were assigned to the harems of kings in the ancient Middle East. The word can also refer to officers in general.

9:34–37 **bury her**: After Jehu had Jezebel killed, he entered the pal-

ace to eat and drink. But then, because of Jezebel’s rank, he ordered that her body be given a proper burial. However, she had become food for **dogs**. This was the grisly fulfillment of Elijah’s prophecy (1 Kin. 21:23). Although Jezebel wanted Elijah dead (see 1 Kin. 19:1, 2), her own life was taken. **as refuse**: There was to be no marker, no mourning, no memorial, no sadness for this evil woman.

10:1 Ahab’s **seventy sons** included children and probably grandchildren. Jehu wanted to eliminate all rivals to his kingship. The **rulers of Jezreel** were Samaritan officials, who often visited the royal residence in Jezreel.

10:2–5 Jehu’s first **letter** was written in order to determine who might be the greatest risk to his reign. **two kings**: The deaths of Joram (9:14–26) and Ahaziah (9:27, 28) were fresh in the rulers’ minds, so the response of the leaders was a fearful submission to Jehu’s power.

And he said, “Lay them in two heaps at the entrance of the gate until morning.”

⁹So it was, in the morning, that he went out and stood, and said to all the people, “You *are* righteous. Indeed ^cI conspired against my master and killed him; but who killed all these? ¹⁰Know now that nothing shall ^dfall to the earth of the word of the LORD which the LORD spoke concerning the house of Ahab; for the LORD has done what He spoke ^eby His servant Elijah.” ¹¹So Jehu killed all who remained of the house of Ahab in Jezreel, and all his great men and his close acquaintances and his priests, until he left him none remaining.

Ahaziah's Forty-two Brothers Killed

¹²And he arose and departed and went to Samaria. On the way, at ⁵Beth Eked of the Shepherds, ¹³Jehu met with the brothers of Ahaziah king of Judah, and said, “Who *are* you?”

So they answered, “We *are* the brothers of Ahaziah; we have come down to greet the sons of the king and the sons of the queen mother.”

¹⁴And he said, “Take them alive!” So they took them alive, and ^gkilled them at the well of ⁶Beth Eked, forty-two men; and he left none of them.

The Rest of Ahab's Family Killed

¹⁵Now when he departed from there, he ⁷met ^hJehonadab the son of ⁱRechab, *coming* to meet him; and he greeted him and said to him, “Is your heart right, as my heart is toward your heart?”

And Jehonadab answered, “It is.”

Jehu said, “If it is, ^jgive me your hand.” So he gave *him* his hand, and he took him up to him into the chariot. ¹⁶Then he said, “Come with me, and see my ^kzeal for the LORD.” So they had him ride in his chariot. ¹⁷And when he came to Samaria, ^lhe killed all who remained to Ahab in Samaria, till he had destroyed them, according to the word of the LORD ^mwhich He spoke to Elijah.

10:9 killed all these: Jehu pretended that his message was misunderstood and that in any case it was Ahab's wickedness that ultimately had brought about the divine judgment of these men.

10:10 Evaluating Jehu is difficult. His praise for the ministry of the prophets of God and his stated respect for the word of God commend him to us. But he did not balance his judgmental actions on Ahab's family with mercy and justice for the poor and the oppressed. He was God's instrument of judgment, but he himself also stood under God's judgment (see 10:31).

10:11 Jehu . . . left him none remaining: In killing the house of Ahab, his supporters, as well as the surviving descendants of Ahaziah (vv. 13, 14), Jehu exceeded God's judgment. But he used the power God had given him for his selfish ends. Accordingly, no contradiction exists between the divine commissioning of Jehu (9:6–10) and the divine condemnation of him (10:31; see Hos. 1:4).

BIBLE TIMES & CULTURE NOTES



The Black Obelisk

Shalmaneser III (859–824 B.C.), son of Ashurnasirpal III, was the first Assyrian king to come into direct contact with Israel. He is not mentioned in the biblical narrative of the reign of Ahab of Israel (2 Chr. 18:1–34), but he does appear in an inscription that recounts a coalition composed principally of Syria and Israel (“Ahab, the Israelite”), a coalition that Shalmaneser met and presumably defeated at the famous Battle of Qarqar, on the Orontes River (853 B.C.).

This reference to Ahab is one of the most important non-biblical archaeological references to a person mentioned in Scripture. The famous Black Obelisk also mentions “Jehu, son of Omri” and describes him paying tribute to Shalmaneser. Jehu or his representative is portrayed on his hands and knees, kissing the ground at the feet of Shalmaneser. Jehu's Israelite servants are portrayed as bearing bars and vessels of precious metals, extended as presents for the Assyrian king.



King Jehu paying tribute to Shalmaneser III

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9 ^c 2 Kin. 9:14–24
10 ^d 1 Sam. 3:19;
1 Kin. 8:56; Jer.
44:28 ^e 1 Kin. 21:17–
24, 29
12 ⁵ Or The
Shearing House
13 ^f 2 Chr. 22:8
14 ^g 2 Chr. 22:8 ⁶ Or
The Shearing House
15 ^h Jer. 35:6
ⁱ 1 Chr. 2:55 / Ezra
10:19; Ezek. 17:18
⁷ Lit. found
16 ^k 1 Kin. 19:10
17 ^l 2 Kin. 9:8;

Worshippers of Baal Killed

¹⁸Then Jehu gathered all the people together, and said to them, “Ahab served Baal a little, Jehu will serve him much. ¹⁹Now therefore, call to me all the ^oprophets of Baal, all his servants, and all his priests. Let no one be missing, for I have a great sacrifice for Baal. Whoever is missing shall not live.” But Jehu acted deceptively, with the intent of destroying

2 Chr. 22:8 ^m 1 Kin. 21:21, 29 18 ⁿ 1 Kin. 16:31, 32 19 ^o 1 Kin. 18:19; 22:6

10:12–14 Beth Eked means “Binding House,” a site near Mt. Gilboa. Here Jehu slaughtered **forty-two men** of the house of Ahaziah.

10:15 Jehonadab means “The Lord Is Noble.” He came along with Jehu as an observer. **son of Rechab:** Jehonadab was an ascetic, nomadic Rechabite. These people were known for their faithfulness to God and to the austere regulations laid down by Jehonadab (see Jer. 35:1–16).

10:17 according to the word of the LORD: Jehu's action was by prophetic sanction (v. 10).

10:18–20 Finally, Jehu attacked overt Baal worship. With a lie, Jehu gathered all the principals of Baal worship to one place, the temple of Baal in Samaria (see v. 21; compare 1 Kin. 16:32). He pretended that he was an even more ardent champion of Baal than Ahab. He issued a royal decree for a national **solemn assembly for Baal**.

the worshipers of Baal. ²⁰ And Jehu said, ⁸ “Proclaim a solemn assembly for Baal.” So they proclaimed *it*. ²¹ Then Jehu sent throughout all Israel; and all the worshipers of Baal came, so that there was not a man left who did not come. So they came into the ⁹ temple of Baal, and the ¹⁰ temple of Baal was full from one end to the other. ²² And he said to the one in charge of the wardrobe, “Bring out vestments for all the worshipers of Baal.” So he brought out vestments for them. ²³ Then Jehu and Jehonadab the son of Rechab went into the temple of Baal, and said to the worshipers of Baal, “Search and see that no servants of the LORD are here with you, but only the worshipers of Baal.” ²⁴ So they went in to offer sacrifices and burnt offerings. Now Jehu had appointed for himself eighty men on the outside, and had said, “If any of the men whom I have brought into your hands escapes, *whoever lets him escape, it shall be* ⁹ his life for the life of the other.”

²⁵ Now it happened, as soon as he had made an end of offering the burnt offering, that Jehu said to the guard and to the captains, “Go in *and* kill them; let no one come out!” And they killed them with the edge of the sword; then the guards and the officers threw *them* out, and went into the ¹ inner room of the temple of Baal. ²⁶ And they brought the ¹ sacred pillars out of the temple of Baal and burned them. ²⁷ Then they broke down the *sacred* pillar of Baal, and tore down the ² temple of Baal and ³ made it a refuse dump to this day. ²⁸ Thus Jehu destroyed Baal from Israel.

²⁰ ⁸ Consecrate
²¹ ¹ Kin. 16:32;
² Kin. 11:18 ⁹ Lit. house
²⁴ ¹ Kin. 20:39
²⁵ ¹ Lit. city
²⁶ ¹ [Deut. 7:5, 25]; 1 Kin. 14:23; 2 Kin. 3:2
²⁷ ³ Ezra 6:11; Dan. 2:5; 3:29 ² Lit. house

²⁹ ¹ Kin. 12:28-30; 13:33, 34
³⁰ ² Kin. 9:6, 7
¹ 2 Kin. 13:1, 10; 14:23; 15:8, 12
³¹ ³ was not careful
¹ 1 Kin. 14:16
³² ¹ Kin. 19:17; 2 Kin. 8:12; 13:22
³³ ¹ Deut. 2:36
² Amos 1:3-5
³⁵ ² Kin. 13:1
⁴ Died and joined his ancestors

CHAPTER 11

¹ ² Chr. 22:10
² 2 Kin. 8:26 ² Kin. 9:27

²⁹ However Jehu did not turn away from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who had made Israel sin, *that is*, from ¹ the golden calves that *were* at Beth-el and Dan. ³⁰ And the LORD ² said to Jehu, “Because you have done well in doing *what* is right in My sight, *and* have done to the house of Ahab all that *was* in My heart, ³ your sons shall sit on the throne of Israel to the fourth *generation*.” ³¹ But Jehu ³ took no heed to walk in the law of the LORD God of Israel with all his heart; for he did not depart from ⁴ the sins of Jeroboam, who had made Israel sin.

Death of Jehu

³² In those days the LORD began to cut off *parts* of Israel; and ⁵ Hazael conquered them in all the territory of Israel ³³ from the Jordan eastward: all the land of Gilead—Gad, Reuben, and Manasseh—from ⁶ Aroer, which is by the River Arnon, including ⁷ Gilead and Bashan.

³⁴ Now the rest of the acts of Jehu, all that he did, and all his might, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? ³⁵ So Jehu ⁴ rested with his fathers, and they buried him in Samaria. Then ⁸ Jehoahaz his son reigned in his place. ³⁶ And the period that Jehu reigned over Israel in Samaria *was* twenty-eight years.

Athaliah Reigns in Judah

11 When ¹ Athaliah ² the mother of Ahaziah saw that her son was ³ dead, she arose and destroyed all the

10:21–23 temple of Baal: The temple that had been constructed by Ahab (see 1 Kin. 16:32). **vestments:** By having the Baal worshipers wear distinctive clothing, Jehu marked them for death. **no servants of the LORD:** Jehu carefully distinguished the enemy, in case some of the LORD’s true priests might have gathered with the priests of Baal. **10:25–28 as soon as he:** It is not clear whether a Baal priest or Jehu

himself was making the offering. If it was Jehu, it would have been the most effective way of keeping the priests from suspecting any danger. **kill them:** Jehu followed Elijah’s example on Mt. Carmel (see 1 Kin. 18:40). Yet Jehu’s executions were more thorough, for he had gathered all the priests and prophets of Baal in the nation. **to this day:** That is, at the time of writing. The suggestion is that even after the fall of Samaria one could see the foul place where the temple to Baal once had been. **destroyed Baal:** This summary statement refers only to the overt forms of Baal worship.

10:29 Jehu’s destruction of Baal worship (vv. 18–28) was a political act. His continuing the state worship policies established by Jeroboam I clearly shows his disregard for true spiritual revival in Israel.

10:30 done well: The evaluation of Jehu is one of limited obedience (see v. 31). Nonetheless, he accomplished a great deal and received God’s commendation for his work. Most likely, a prophet communicated God’s message to Jehu.

10:32, 33 Because Shalmaneser III was occupied with political pressures in the east, Hazael took advantage of the situation, harassing Israel throughout his long reign. After Jehu’s death, Hazael marched freely into Israel and even into Judah (12:17, 18; 13:22). The important point of these verses is that the attacks of Hazael were part of God’s judgment on Israel.

10:35 The record of **Jehoahaz** is given in 13:1–9. He was followed by Joash (also called Jehoash; 13:10–13), Jeroboam II (14:23–29), and very briefly by Zechariah (15:8–12). The assassination of Zechariah by Shallum after a reign of only six months ended the line of Jehu in the fourth generation, just as the Lord had said (10:30).

11:1 Athaliah means “The Lord Is Exalted.” Sadly, she did not live up

hand

(Heb. *yad*) (10:24; Ex. 15:9; 18:9, 10; 1 Kin. 2:46) Strong’s #3027

The Bible speaks often of hands in the literal sense. But because hands are involved in almost all human activity, the word is often used symbolically. Because hands do the will of the entire person, hands may represent someone’s “whole being” (Ps. 24:4; Acts 2:23). The physical position of the hands suggests a person’s attitude. Uplifted hands symbolize either praise and petition to God or violence against another person (1 Kin. 11:27; Ps. 63:4; 1 Tim. 1:8). The expression “hand of the LORD” refers to His great power (Deut. 2:15; Ezek. 1:3). Often the emphasis of this expression is on God’s power in creation (Ps. 8:6; Is. 64:8). Sometimes His power in judgment is emphasized, especially in the phrase, “His hand is stretched out” (Is. 9:12, 17; see also Ruth 1:13). However, God may also extend His hand to express His mercy and forgiveness (Ps. 37:24).

royal heirs. ²But ¹Jehosheba, the daughter of King Joram, sister of ^dAhaziah, took ²Joash the son of Ahaziah, and stole him away from among the king's sons *who were* being murdered; and they hid him and his nurse in the bedroom, from Athaliah, so that he was not killed. ³So he was hidden with her in the house of the LORD for six years, while Athaliah reigned over the land.

Joash Crowned King of Judah

⁴In ^ethe seventh year Jehoiada sent and brought the captains of hundreds—of the bodyguards and the ³escorts—and brought them into the house of the LORD to him. And he made a covenant with them and took an oath from them in the house of the LORD, and showed them the king's son. ⁵Then he commanded them, saying, “This *is* what you shall do: One-third of you who ⁴come on duty ^fon the Sabbath shall be keeping watch over the king's house, ⁶one-third *shall be* at the gate of Sur, and one-third at the gate behind the escorts. You shall keep the watch of the house, lest it be broken down. ⁷The two ⁵contingents of you who go off duty on the Sabbath shall keep the watch of the house of the LORD for the king. ⁸But you shall surround the king on all sides, every man with his weapons in his hand; and whoever comes within range, let him be put to death. You are to be with the king as he goes out and as he comes in.”

^{2 d} 2 Kin. 8:25
¹ *Jehoshebeath*,
2 Chr. 22:11 ² Or
Jehoash
^{4 e} 2 Kin. 12:2;
2 Chr. 23:1
³ *guards*
^{5 f} 1 Chr. 9:25 ⁴ Lit.
enter in
⁷ ⁵ *companies*

^{9 g} 2 Chr. 23:8
^{10 h} 2 Sam. 8:7;
1 Chr. 18:7
¹¹ ⁶ Lit. *shoulder*
^{12 i} Ex. 25:16; 31:18
1 Sam. 10:24
⁷ Law, Ex. 25:16, 21;
Deut. 31:9
^{13 k} 2 Kin. 8:26;
2 Chr. 23:12
^{14 l} 2 Kin. 23:3;
2 Chr. 34:31
¹⁵ ⁸ Lit. *between ranks*

^{9g}So the captains of the hundreds did according to all that Jehoiada the priest commanded. Each of them took his men who were to be on duty on the Sabbath, with those who were going off duty on the Sabbath, and came to Jehoiada the priest. ¹⁰And the priest gave the captains of hundreds the spears and shields which *had belonged* to King David, ^hthat were in the temple of the LORD. ¹¹Then the escorts stood, every man with his weapons in his hand, all around the king, from the right ⁶side of the temple to the left side of the temple, by the altar and the house. ¹²And he brought out the king's son, put the crown on him, and *gave him* the ⁱTestimony;⁷ they made him king and anointed him, and they clapped their hands and said, ^j“Long live the king!”

Death of Athaliah

^{13k}Now when Athaliah heard the noise of the escorts *and* the people, she came to the people *in* the temple of the LORD. ¹⁴When she looked, there was the king standing by ^la pillar according to custom; and the leaders and the trumpeters were by the king. All the people of the land were rejoicing and blowing trumpets. So Athaliah tore her clothes and cried out, “Treason! Treason!”

¹⁵And Jehoiada the priest commanded the captains of the hundreds, the officers of the army, and said to them, “Take her outside ⁸under guard, and slay with the

to her name. **all the royal heirs:** Jehu had executed King Ahaziah of Judah, Athaliah's **son**, shortly after he had executed Joram of Israel (see 9:27–29). Ahaziah's older brother had been killed in an Arabian raid (2 Chr. 22:1). Further, Jehoram had killed his brothers and other royal relatives when he took the throne (2 Chr. 21:4), while Jehu had slain still more of the royal house (10:14). Therefore, Athaliah's destruction of all of the royal heirs must have concentrated on her own grandchildren. None of the usual details relative to accession to the crown in Judah are given here; Athaliah clearly usurped the office, setting aside the precepts of the Davidic covenant (see 2 Sam. 7:12–16; Ps. 89:35–37). **11:2, 3** Josephus says that **Jehosheba** was Ahaziah's half sister (*Antiquities* 9.7.1). As the wife of the high priest Jehoiada, her marriage and her relation to the royal house made it possible for her to rescue and hide the young Joash. **Joash** (or Jehoash; see 12:1) was the son of Ahaziah. He apparently was an infant at this time. Athaliah might not have known of his existence and for this reason failed to kill him in her purges. Yet Joash was to inherit the promises of the Davidic covenant. His righteous reign (12:2) may be attributed in part to his early years spent **in the house of the LORD** and to the godly instruction and protection of his aunt Jehosheba and his uncle, the high priest Jehoiada. Meanwhile, the unthinkable was happening: The daughter of Jezebel was now the queen of Judah. A worshiper of Baal was in power in the nation of God's promise. She built in Jerusalem a temple to Baal (v. 18).

11:4–8 **the seventh year**, that is, of the reign of Athaliah and the life of Joash (v. 21). **Jehoiada:** The name of the high priest means “The Lord Knows.” Other details about Jehoiada's careful preparations are given in 2 Chr. 23:1–11. Jehoiada's plan included the royal guard: the presentation and crowning of the legitimate royal heir coincided with the changing of the guard on the Sabbath.

11:4 **bodyguards:** The men of the royal guard are identified as

the Cherethites and Pelethites in 2 Sam. 20:23; 1 Kin. 1:38. **showed them the king's son:** The revelation of this young prince was the critical moment. A zealous guard might easily have put him to death at once. There must have been a great deal of preparation on Jehoiada's part—and considerable prayer—for this moment.

11:9 The fact that the men of the royal guard followed the commands of Jehoiada the priest was remarkable. It must have been because they were utterly disgusted by the wickedness of Athaliah.

11:10, 11 **spears and shields:** David had dedicated these weapons to the temple after his campaigns against Hadadezer (2 Sam. 8:11). Since they were not gold or silver, they had apparently been ignored by Shishak when he looted the temple and palace in the days of Rehoboam (1 Kin. 14:26).

11:12 Deuteronomy prescribed the duties of the king with regard to the preservation of God's law (Deut. 17:18). By putting a copy of the law in Joash's hand and the **crown** on his head, Jehoiada presented him as the rightful heir to the throne. The term **Testimony** recalls the covenant, emphasizing that Joash's coronation was given both its scriptural warrant and its rightful connection to the Davidic covenant.

11:13–16 The execution of Athaliah is described in this section. **in the temple of the LORD:** The temple was the appropriate place to crown the king of God's appointment. It was also probably a good place to hide from a queen whose god was Baal. **there was the king:** What a shock this must have been to Athaliah. There stood a little boy that guaranteed the end of her reign. Her words **Treason! Treason!** were technically correct. But it was she who had committed treason by murdering all the survivors of the Davidic house—except for the one who was now king. **killed:** The priest would not allow her execution in the temple, but her death was necessary. With her dead, the young Joash was safe.

sword whoever follows her.” For the priest had said, “Do not let her be killed in the house of the LORD.” ¹⁶So they seized her; and she went by way of the horses’ entrance *into* the king’s house, and there she was killed.

¹⁷*m* Then Jehoiada *n* made a covenant between the LORD, the king, and the people, that they should be the LORD’s people, and *also* *o* between the king and the people. ¹⁸And all the people of the land went to the *p* temple of Baal, and tore it down. They thoroughly *q* broke in pieces its altars and *9* images, and *r* killed Mattan the priest of Baal before the altars. And *s* the priest appointed *t* officers over the house of the LORD. ¹⁹Then he took the captains of hundreds, the bodyguards, the escorts, and all the people of the land; and they brought the king down from the house of the LORD, and went by way of the gate of the escorts to the king’s house. Then he sat on the throne of the kings. ²⁰So all the people of the land rejoiced; and the city was quiet, for they had slain Athaliah with the sword *in* the king’s house. ²¹Jehoash *was* *t* seven years old when he became king.

Jehoash Repairs the Temple

12 In the seventh year of Jehu, *a* Jehoash *l* became king, and he reigned forty years in Jerusalem. His mother’s name was Zibiah of Beersheba. ²Jehoash did *what was* right in the sight of the LORD all the days in which *b* Jehoia-da the priest instructed him. ³But *c* the ²high places were not taken away; the people still sacrificed and burned incense on the high places.

⁴And Jehoash said to the priests, *d* “All the money of the dedicated gifts that are brought into the house of the LORD—each man’s *e* census ³ money, each man’s *f* assessment money—and all the money

17 *m* 2 Chr. 23:16
n Josh. 24:24, 25;
2 Chr. 15:12–15
o 2 Sam. 5:3
18 *p* 2 Kin. 10:26,
27 *q* [Deut. 12:3]
r 1 Kin. 18:40; 2 Kin.
10:11 *s* 2 Chr. 23:18
9 Idols *t* Lit. offices
21 *t* 2 Chr. 24:1–14

CHAPTER 12

1 *a* 2 Chr. 24:1
l Joash, 2 Kin.
11:2ff.
2 *b* 2 Kin. 11:4
3 *c* 1 Kin. 15:14;
22:43; 2 Kin. 14:4;
15:35 ² Places for
pagan worship
4 *d* 2 Kin. 22:4 *e* Ex.
30:13–16 *f* Lev. 27:2–
28 ³ Lit. the money
coming over

9 Ex. 35:5; 1 Chr.
29:3–9 ⁴ any man’s
heart prompts him
to bring
5 *5* Lit. breaches
6 *h* 2 Chr. 24:5
7 *i* 2 Chr. 24:6
9 *j* 2 Chr. 23:1; 24:8
k Mark 12:41; Luke
21:1
6 guarded at the
door
10 *j* 2 Sam. 8:17;
2 Kin. 19:2; 22:3, 4,
12 ⁷ secretary *8* tied
it up
11 *9* Lit. weighed
12 *m* 2 Kin. 22:5, 6
13 *n* 2 Chr. 24:14

that ⁴a man *g* purposes in his heart to bring into the house of the LORD, ⁵let the priests take *it* themselves, each from his constituency; and let them repair the ⁵damages of the temple, wherever any dilapidation is found.”

⁶Now it was so, by the twenty-third year of King Jehoash, *h* that the priests had not repaired the damages of the temple. ⁷*i* So King Jehoash called Jehoiada the priest and the *other* priests, and said to them, “Why have you not repaired the damages of the temple? Now therefore, do not take *more* money from your constituency, but deliver it for repairing the damages of the temple.” ⁸And the priests agreed that they would neither receive *more* money from the people, nor repair the damages of the temple.

⁹Then Jehoiada the priest took *j* a chest, bored a hole in its lid, and set it beside the altar, on the right side as one comes into the house of the LORD; and the priests who ⁶kept the door put *k* there all the money brought into the house of the LORD. ¹⁰So it was, whenever they saw that *there was* much money in the chest, that the king’s *l* scribe ⁷ and the high priest came up and ⁸put it in bags, and counted the money that was found in the house of the LORD. ¹¹Then they gave the money, which had been apportioned, into the hands of those who did the work, who had the oversight of the house of the LORD; and they ⁹paid it out to the carpenters and builders who worked on the house of the LORD, ¹²and to masons and stonecutters, and for buying timber and hewn stone, to *m* repair the damage of the house of the LORD, and for all that was paid out to repair the temple. ¹³However *n* there were not made for the house of the LORD basins of silver, trimmers, sprinkling-bowls, trumpets, any articles of gold or articles of silver,

11:17 **Covenant** renewal was particularly necessary after the unholly usurpation by the wicked Athaliah.

11:18 As Jezebel had seen her wicked husband Ahab build a temple to Baal in Samaria (see 1 Kin. 16:32), so her daughter Athaliah was behind the building of a temple to Baal in the holy city of Jerusalem.

Mattan the priest of Baal: The very fact that there was a priest of Baal in Jerusalem is astonishing. If Athaliah and her associates had not been stopped, the sins of Samaria would have paled beside the sins of Jerusalem.

11:19–21 The young child was established as king before the nation. **rejoiced . . . quiet:** The joy of the people and the peacefulness of the land were marks of God’s blessing to the restored Davidic dynasty.

12:2 **All the days in which Jehoiada the priest instructed him** has an ominous tone. After Jehoiada’s death, the king’s activities would take a different turn, for Jehoash would become dependent upon counsel of a different sort (see 2 Chr. 24:17–19). Nonetheless, among the kings of Judah, he was one of the few who showed some signs of righteousness.

12:3 Although God Himself might be worshiped in such **high places**, the setting provided an association with Canaanite religious rites that could too easily lead to spiritual compromise (1 Kin. 3:2–4; see also 14:23). Apostasy would become a besetting sin later in Jehoash’s reign (2 Chr. 24:17–19, 24).

12:5 Money collected from special taxes and voluntary offerings was designated for repairing **the temple**. Thus renewed concern for spiritual things was evidenced after the neglect and abuse of the previous seven years (2 Chr. 24:7).

12:9 a chest: When the priest failed to do the work (vv. 6, 7), the king took a personal hand in seeing to its accomplishment. The chest he prepared was set against the wall at the entrance facing the right side of the altar. Because the people responded generously (2 Chr. 24:10), the work proceeded and was soon completed (vv. 11, 12; 2 Chr. 24:11–13).

12:13 At first no funds were used for fashioning the sacred vessels, but there was **money** left over at the completion of the building repairs, and with it the sacred vessels could be completed as well (2 Chr. 24:14).

from the money brought into the house of the LORD. ¹⁴But they gave that to the workmen, and they repaired the house of the LORD with it. ¹⁵Moreover ^othey did not require an account from the men into whose hand they delivered the money to be paid to workmen, for they dealt faithfully. ¹⁶^pThe money from the trespass offerings and the money from the sin offerings was not brought into the house of the LORD. ^qIt belonged to the priests.

Hazael Threatens Jerusalem

¹⁷^rHazael king of Syria went up and fought against Gath, and took it; then ^sHazael set his face to ¹go up to Jerusalem. ¹⁸And Jehoash king of Judah ^ttook all the sacred things that his fathers, Jehoshaphat and Jehoram and Ahaziah, kings of Judah, had dedicated, and his own sacred things, and all the gold found in the treasuries of the house of the LORD and in the king's house, and sent *them* to Hazael king of Syria. Then he went away from Jerusalem.

Death of Joash

¹⁹Now the rest of the acts of ²Joash, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?

²⁰And ^uhis servants arose and formed a conspiracy, and killed Joash in the house of ³the Millo, which goes down to Silla. ²¹For ⁴Jozachar the son of Shimeath and Jehoabab the son of ⁵Shomer, his servants, struck him. So he died, and they buried him with his fathers in the City of David. Then ^vAmaziah his son reigned in his place.

¹⁵ ^o 2 Kin. 22:7; [1 Cor. 4:2]; 2 Cor. 8:20
¹⁶ ^p [Lev. 5:15, 18]
^q [Lev. 7:7; Num. 18:9]
¹⁷ ^r 2 Kin. 8:12
¹⁸ ^t 2 Chr. 24:23
¹ Advance upon
¹⁸ ¹ 1 Kin. 15:18;
2 Kin. 16:8; 18:15, 16
¹⁹ ² Jehoash, vv. 1-18
²⁰ ^u 2 Kin. 14:5;
2 Chr. 24:25 ³ Lit. The Landfill
²¹ ^v 2 Chr. 24:27
⁴ Zabad, 2 Chr. 24:26 ⁵ Shimrith,
2 Chr. 24:26

CHAPTER 13

¹ ^a 2 Kin. 12:1
² 2 Kin. 10:35
¹ Jehoash, 2 Kin. 12:1-18
² ^c 1 Kin. 12:26-33
² Lit. turn
³ ^d Judg. 2:14
^e 2 Kin. 8:12 ^f Amos 1:4
⁴ ^g [Ps. 78:34] ^h [Ex. 3:7, 9; Judg. 2:18];
2 Kin. 14:26
⁵ ⁱ 2 Kin. 13:25;
14:25, 27; Neh. 9:27

BIBLE TIMES & CULTURE NOTES



Millo

The Millo of Jerusalem was probably part of the fortification of the Jebusite city that David captured. It may have been either a solid tower full of earth or a bastion strengthening a weak point in the wall. It was already in existence when David's army captured the Jebusite city (2 Sam. 5:9). The Millo was one of the building projects included in King Solomon's expansion program in Jerusalem in later years. He strengthened the Millo by using conscripted labor (1 Kin. 9:15). Centuries later, King Hezekiah had the Millo repaired in preparation for an invasion and siege by the Assyrians (2 Chr. 32:5). King Joash was killed "in the house of the Millo" (2 Kin. 12:20)—the victim of a conspiracy.

Jehoahaz Reigns in Israel

13 In the twenty-third year of ^aJoash ¹the son of Ahaziah, king of Judah, ^bJehoahaz the son of Jehu became king over Israel in Samaria, and reigned seven-teen years. ²And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, and followed the ^csins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who had made Israel sin. He did not ²depart from them.

³Then ^dthe anger of the LORD was aroused against Israel, and He delivered them into the hand of ^eHazael king of Syria, and into the hand of ^fBen-Hadad the son of Hazael, all *their* days. ⁴So Jehoahaz ^gpleaded with the LORD, and the LORD listened to him; for ^hHe saw the oppression of Israel, because the king of Syria oppressed them. ⁵ⁱThen the LORD gave Israel a deliverer, so that they

12:15 dealt faithfully: Joash had commissioned such trustworthy men that no accounting of their use of the funds was necessary.

12:17, 18 The Aramean invasion recorded here took place late in Joash's reign. The **king** fell into apostasy after the death of his godly counselor, the high priest Jehoiada (2 Chr. 24:17–19, 23, 24), and this invasion came as a judgment of his wickedness.

12:20, 21 Joash was severely wounded in Hazael's invasion (see 2 Chr. 24:24, 25), then he fell victim shortly afterward to the dissent and unpopularity that culminated in his assassination. Because of Joash's apostasy and murder of Zechariah, Jehoiada's son (2 Chr. 24:17–22), the king was not laid to rest in the royal tombs (see 2 Chr. 24:25).

13:1 The name **Jehoahaz** means "The Lord Has Grasped." Two centuries later another Jehoahaz would become king of Judah following the death of his father, the godly Josiah (23:31). The 17-year reign of Jehu's son Jehoahaz lasted from 814 to 798 B.C.

13:2, 3 evil . . . sins of Jeroboam: After the end of the house of Ahab in Jehu's purge (chs. 9; 10), the kings of Israel reverted to the level of syncretism that had been established by Jeroboam I. The mention of Hazael's son **Ben-Hadad** III (802–780 B.C.) may refer to his serving as a commander in his father's army or to his growing prominence in his father's later years (v. 24).

13:4 Although Jehoahaz did not follow the Lord exclusively (v. 6), God graciously heard his genuine plea for help. In His long-suffer-

ing mercy, God often deals patiently with people and blesses them despite their failures (see 1 Kin. 21:25–29; 2 Pet. 3:9).

13:5 Israel's **deliverer** has been variously identified. Probably it was the Assyrian king Adad-Nerari III. Referring to an Assyrian king as a

anger

(Heb. *'aph*) (13:3; Deut. 6:15; Ps. 18:8; Prov. 11:22; 29:8) Strong's #639

Depending upon the context, this word signifies either "nose," "nostril," or "anger" (Gen. 2:7; Prov. 15:1). This term occurs about half of the time with words referring to burning. Thus these figures of speech typically depict anger as the fierce breathing of a person through his nose: "a burning nose" (Ex. 32:10–12). Most of the references describe God's anger. God is said to be slow to anger, but can be provoked into exercising judgment (Ps. 103:8; Deut. 4:24–25). He is compassionate, but His wrath is reserved for those who break His covenant (Deut. 13:17; 29:25–27; Josh. 23:16; Judg. 2:20; Ps. 78:38). Although God's wrath is righteous, human anger is almost always evaluated in negative terms in the OT (Gen. 49:6; Prov. 14:17).

escaped from under the hand of the Syrians; and the children of Israel dwelt in their tents as before. ⁶Nevertheless they did not depart from the sins of the house of Jeroboam, who had made Israel sin, *but* walked in them; ⁷and the ³wooden image also remained in Samaria. ⁷For He left of the army of Jehoahaz only fifty horsemen, ten chariots, and ten thousand foot soldiers; for the king of Syria had destroyed them ^kand made them ^llike the dust at threshing.

⁸Now the rest of the acts of Jehoahaz, all that he did, and his might, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? ⁹So Jehoahaz ⁴rested with his fathers, and they buried him in Samaria. Then ⁵Joash his son reigned in his place.

Jehoash Reigns in Israel

¹⁰In the thirty-seventh year of Joash king of Judah, ⁶Jehoash the son of Jehoahaz became king over Israel in Samaria, *and reigned* sixteen years. ¹¹And he did evil in the sight of the LORD. He did not depart from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel sin, *but* walked in them.

¹²^mNow the rest of the acts of Joash, ⁿall that he did, and ^ohis might with which he fought against Amaziah king of Judah, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? ¹³So Joash ^prested⁷ with his fathers. Then Jeroboam sat on his throne. And Joash was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel.

Death of Elisha

¹⁴Elisha had become sick with the illness of which he would die. Then Joash

6 / 1 Kin. 16:33
3 Heb. *Asherah*, a Canaanite goddess
7 ^k 2 Kin. 10:32
1 [Amos 1:3]
9 ⁴ Died and joined his ancestors ⁵ Or Jehoash
10 ⁶ Joash, v. 9
12 ^m 2 Kin. 14:8-15
ⁿ 2 Kin. 13:14-19, 25
^o 2 Kin. 14:9; 2 Chr. 25:17-25
13 ^p 2 Kin. 14:16
⁷ Died and joined his ancestors

14 ^q 2 Kin. 2:12
17 ^r 1 Kin. 20:26
19 ^s 2 Kin. 13:25
20 ^t 2 Kin. 3:5;
24:2 ⁸ Having prophesied at least 55 years
22 ^u 2 Kin. 8:12, 13
23 ^v 2 Kin. 14:27
^w [Ex. 2:24, 25]
^x Gen. 13:16, 17;
17:2-7; Ex. 32:13

the king of Israel came down to him, and wept over his face, and said, “O my father, my father, ^qthe chariots of Israel and their horsemen!”

¹⁵And Elisha said to him, “Take a bow and some arrows.” So he took himself a bow and some arrows. ¹⁶Then he said to the king of Israel, “Put your hand on the bow.” So he put his hand *on it*, and Elisha put his hands on the king’s hands. ¹⁷And he said, “Open the east window”; and he opened *it*. Then Elisha said, “Shoot”; and he shot. And he said, “The arrow of the LORD’s deliverance and the arrow of deliverance from Syria; for you must strike the Syrians at ^rAphek till you have destroyed *them*.” ¹⁸Then he said, “Take the arrows”; so he took *them*. And he said to the king of Israel, “Strike the ground”; so he struck three times, and stopped. ¹⁹And the man of God was angry with him, and said, “You should have struck five or six times; then you would have struck Syria till you had destroyed *it*! ^sBut now you will strike Syria *only* three times.”

²⁰Then Elisha ⁸died, and they buried him. And the ^traiding bands from Moab invaded the land in the spring of the year. ²¹So it was, as they were burying a man, that suddenly they spied a band *of raiders*; and they put the man in the tomb of Elisha; and when the man was let down and touched the bones of Elisha, he revived and stood on his feet.

Israel Recaptures Cities from Syria

²²And ^uHazael king of Syria oppressed Israel all the days of Jehoahaz. ²³But the LORD was ^vgracious to them, and ^wregarded them, ^xbecause of His covenant with Abraham,

divinely commissioned deliverer of Israel is similar to the words of God in Isaiah describing the Persian King Cyrus as “His anointed” (see Is. 45:1; compare Is. 44:28).

13:6 the wooden image: The Hebrew word for *wooden images* is a reference to the Canaanite goddess Asherah. The image itself was a sacred tree or pole that was perceived perhaps as some sexually-oriented symbol of the fertility religion of Canaan.

13:11 At first, the 16-year reign of Jehoash of Israel appears to be recorded without further elaboration (vv. 10–13). But three stories are added: the death of Elisha during his reign (vv. 14–21), his military victories over the Aramean forces (vv. 24, 25), and his war with Amaziah of Judah (v. 12; 14:8–14).

13:14 O my father: Jehoash’s cry over the aged Elisha repeats the words of Elisha spoken when Elijah was taken up to heaven (2:12). Thus, both at the beginning of his ministry and at its conclusion, Elisha is unmistakably linked to his mentor Elijah. The grief of Jehoash at the impending death of Elisha shows that, like his father Jehoahaz (see vv. 4, 5), this Israelite king possessed some genuine spirituality. The line of Jehu had its good moments and received some reward from the Lord (see 10:30). However, none of this line or any other of the kings of Israel served God with all their heart (see 10:31).

13:15–19 This section describes a symbolic act that Elisha had Joash

perform to ensure victories over his enemies; the king was only partially successful in completing the task. Elisha’s symbolic act of putting his hands **on the king’s hands** should have alerted the king that the aged prophet was conveying a divine blessing on him. Jehoash’s halfhearted compliance with Elisha’s instructions exposed his weak faith and illustrated God’s unfavorable evaluation of his character (v. 11). God’s dying prophet was rightly disturbed. Although God would allow Israel to defeat the Aramean army three times, their victory would be incomplete.

13:20 Elisha died: The supernatural translation of Elijah (ch. 2) was an unusual example of God’s power; Elisha died a normal death. **bands from Moab:** This prepares for the miracle in the grave of Elisha (v. 21), but the mention of invasions such as this reminds us of how perilous life was during so much of Israel’s history.

13:21 the man . . . revived: Even in death the mere presence of Elisha’s body was sufficient for a miracle. There was no magic in Elisha’s bones, but a demonstration of the power of God associated with His servant. This miracle should have reassured Jehoash that God intended to rescue Israel from the deadly grip of Aramean domination (see v. 25).

13:23 This verse is one of those dazzling lights that burst from the pages of the Bible, describing the wonderful mercy of the living

Isaac, and Jacob, and would not yet destroy them or cast them from His presence.

²⁴Now Hazael king of Syria died. Then Ben-Hadad his son reigned in his place. ²⁵And ⁹Jehoash the son of Jehoahaz recaptured from the hand of Ben-Hadad, the son of Hazael, the cities which he had taken out of the hand of Jehoahaz his father by war. ¹⁰Three times Joash defeated him and recaptured the cities of Israel.

Amaziah Reigns in Judah

14 In ^athe second year of Joash the son of Jehoahaz, king of Israel, ^bAmaziah the son of Joash, king of Judah, became king. ²He was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jehoaddan of Jerusalem. ³And he did *what was right* in the sight of the LORD, yet not like his father David; he did everything ^cas his father Joash had done. ⁴^dHowever the ¹high places were not taken away, and the people still sacrificed and burned incense on the high places.

⁵Now it happened, as soon as the kingdom was established in his hand, that he executed his servants ^ewho had murdered his father the king. ⁶But the children of the murderers he did not exe-

²⁵ ^v 2 Kin. 13:18, 19 ⁹ Joash, vv. 12-14, 25

CHAPTER 14

¹ ^a 2 Kin. 13:10
^b 2 Chr. 25:1, 2
³ ^c 2 Kin. 12:2
⁴ ^d 2 Kin. 12:3
¹ Places for pagan worship
⁵ ^e 2 Kin. 12:20

⁶ ^f Deut. 24:16; [Jer. 31:30; Ezek. 18:4, 20]
⁷ ^g 2 Chr. 25:5-16
^h 2 Sam. 8:13; 1 Chr. 18:12; Ps. 60:title
ⁱ Josh. 15:38 ² Lit. *The Rock*; the city of Petra
⁸ ^j 2 Chr. 25:17, 18
³ Joash, 2 Kin. 13:9, 12-14, 25; 2 Chr. 25:17ff.
⁹ ^k Judg. 9:8-15
¹ 1 Kin. 4:33
¹⁰ ^m Deut. 8:14; 2 Chr. 32:25; [Ezek. 28:2, 5, 17; Hab. 2:4]
⁴ Made you proud
¹¹ ⁿ Josh. 19:38; 21:16

cute, according to what is written in the Book of the Law of Moses, in which the LORD commanded, saying, ^f“Fathers shall not be put to death for their children, nor shall children be put to death for their fathers; but a person shall be put to death for his own sin.”

⁷^gHe killed ten thousand Edomites in ^hthe Valley of Salt, and took ²Sela by war, ⁱand called its name Joktheel to this day.

⁸^jThen Amaziah sent messengers to ³Jehoash the son of Jehoahaz, the son of Jehu, king of Israel, saying, “Come, let us face one another *in battle*.” ⁹And Jehoash king of Israel sent to Amaziah king of Judah, saying, ^k“The thistle that *was* in Lebanon sent to the ^lcedar that *was* in Lebanon, saying, ‘Give your daughter to my son as wife’; and a wild beast that *was* in Lebanon passed by and trampled the thistle. ¹⁰You have indeed defeated Edom, and ^myour heart has ⁴lifted you up. Glory *in that*, and stay at home; for why should you meddle with trouble so that you fall—you and Judah with you?”

¹¹But Amaziah would not heed. Therefore Jehoash king of Israel went out; so he and Amaziah king of Judah faced one another at ⁿBeth Shemesh, which *belongs* to Judah. ¹²And Judah was defeated by Israel, and every man fled to his tent.

God (see 14:26, 27). It draws in part on the imagery of Ex. 34:6. **His covenant:** God's faithfulness to His own promise is a regular theme of the OT (Ex. 2:23–25).

13:24 This **Ben-Hadad** is the son of Hazael (v. 3). After his father's death, he reigned as Ben-Hadad III (802–780 B.C.).

13:25 In accordance with Jehoash's striking the ground **three times** with arrows (v. 18), God gave Jehoash victory over the Arameans only three times. Yet God graciously overruled Jehoash's inadequate faith by granting Israel full victory over the Arameans during the reign of his son Jeroboam II.

14:1–3 The name **Amaziah** means “The Lord Is Mighty.” **did what was right:** Amaziah was one of the few godly kings in the kingdom of Judah; the best kings were Hezekiah (see 18:1) and Josiah (see 22:1). **his father David . . . his father Joash:** Here is a good example of different uses of the Hebrew word for *father*. It can signify either remote or immediate ancestry.

14:4 Like his father Jehoash before him (see 12:3), Amaziah allowed worship at the **high places**. This practice would blossom into open idolatry in the reigns of subsequent kings (16:4; 21:3).

14:5, 6 **executed his servants:** The principals are named in 12:20, 21. These men were guilty of assassinating his father and might have been a threat to his own reign. **Book of the Law of Moses:** Amaziah followed the law laid down in Deut. 24:16.

14:7 A more detailed account of Amaziah's defeat of the **Edomites** is given in 2 Chr. 25:5–13. Edom had regained its independence during the reign of Jehoram (see 8:20–22). Amaziah's conquest of the formidable city of **Sela** atop the seemingly unapproachable cliffs of the Wadi Musa was a monumental accomplishment. Rather than recognize God's hand in this feat, Amaziah became proud and fell into spiritual compromise (2 Chr. 25:14–16).

14:8 **let us face one another:** Amaziah's pride over his accomplishment (v. 10) and his anger over the looting of Judean cities by Israelite mercenaries dismissed before the Edomite campaign (2 Chr. 25:6–10, 13) clouded his thinking.

14:9, 10 Jehoash replied to Amaziah in the form of a fable—a kind

of story designed to teach a moral. By speaking of Amaziah as a **thistle** in comparison with the **cedar of Lebanon**, Jehoash tried to help Amaziah put a more realistic construction on his recent victory.

14:11 **Beth Shemesh:** The name of the city means “House of the Sun,” indicating that there had once been a temple to the sun god there in Canaanite times. Beth Shemesh was in the Valley of Sorek, about 15 miles west of Jerusalem. This was the town where the holy ark was taken (1 Sam. 6:10–7:2) when it came back into Israelite hands after its “wanderings” among the Philistines. The tragedy of the battle between Amaziah and Jehoash was heightened by the fact that the proud Amaziah forced a battle in his own territory, **Judah**.

14:12 **Judah was defeated:** Jehoash's forces were seasoned warriors and had defeated the Arameans (see 13:25). Amaziah's pride spelled not only his own downfall (v. 13) but that of his capital city

high places

(Heb. *bamah*) (14:4; 23:5; 1 Kin. 11:7; Jer. 19:5) Strong's #1116

This word often refers to a sacred area, an open-air sanctuary, located on top of a ridge. Before the temple was built, the Israelites could worship the true God at high places (see Solomon's worship of God at the high place at Gideon, 1 Kin. 3:2–4). But the Israelites soon began worshipping other gods, especially Baal, at these high places, copying the practices of the surrounding nations. The Israelites decorated these hilltops with pagan symbols, sacred pillars and stones, and these places were rallying points for pagan worship. They often were associated with Israel's religious rebellion and apostasy (1 Kin. 14:23; Jer. 19:5). Thus throughout the OT, the existence of *high places* and the worship that was practiced there was labeled as an affront to God (Ps. 78:58).

¹³Then Jehoash king of Israel captured Amaziah king of Judah, the son of Jehoash, the son of Ahaziah, at Beth Shemesh; and he went to Jerusalem, and broke down the wall of Jerusalem from ^athe Gate of Ephraim to ^bthe Corner Gate—⁵four hundred cubits. ¹⁴And he took all ^cthe gold and silver, all the articles that were found in the house of the LORD and in the treasuries of the king's house, and hostages, and returned to Samaria.

¹⁵^rNow the rest of the acts of Jehoash which he did—his might, and how he fought with Amaziah king of Judah—are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? ¹⁶So Jehoash ⁶rested with his fathers, and was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel. Then Jeroboam his son reigned in his place.

¹⁷^sAmaziah the son of Joash, king of Judah, lived fifteen years after the death of Jehoash the son of Jehoahaz, king of Israel. ¹⁸Now the rest of the acts of Amaziah, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? ¹⁹And ^tthey formed a conspiracy against him in Jerusalem, and he fled to Lachish; but they sent after him to Lachish and killed him there. ²⁰Then they brought him on horses, and he was buried at Jerusalem with his fathers in the City of David.

²¹And all the people of Judah took ^vAzariah,⁷ who was sixteen years old, and made him king instead of his father Amaziah. ²²He built ^wElath⁸ and restored it to Judah, after ⁹the king rested with his fathers.

¹³ ^a Neh. 8:16; 12:39 ^p Jer. 31:38; Zech. 14:10 ³ About 600 feet
¹⁴ ^q 1 Kin. 7:51; 2 Kin. 12:18; 16:8
¹⁵ ^r 2 Kin. 13:12, 13
¹⁶ ^c Died and joined his ancestors
¹⁷ ^s 2 Chr. 25:25-28
¹⁹ ^t 2 Chr. 25:27
^u Josh. 10:31
²¹ ^v 2 Kin. 15:13; 2 Chr. 26:1 ⁷ Uzziah, 2 Chr. 26:1ff; Is. 6:1; etc.
²² ^w 1 Kin. 9:26; 2 Kin. 16:6; 2 Chr. 8:17 ⁸ Heb. *Eloth*
⁹ Amaziah died and joined his ancestors.

²⁴ ^x 1 Kin. 12:26-33
²⁵ ^y 2 Kin. 10:32; 13:5, 25 ² Num. 13:21; 34:8; 1 Kin. 8:65 ^d Deut. 3:17
^b Jon. 1:1; Matt. 12:39, 40 ^c Josh. 19:13 ¹ border
² The Dead Sea
²⁶ ^d Ex. 3:7; 2 Kin. 13:4; Ps. 106:44
^e Deut. 32:36
²⁷ ^f [2 Kin. 13:5, 23]
²⁸ ^g 1 Kin. 11:24
^h 2 Sam. 8:6; 1 Kin. 11:24; 2 Chr. 8:3
²⁹ ⁱ 2 Kin. 15:8
³ Died and joined his ancestors

CHAPTER 15

¹ ^a 2 Kin. 15:13, 30
² 2 Kin. 14:21; 2 Chr. 26:1, 3, 4

Jeroboam II Reigns in Israel

²³In the fifteenth year of Amaziah the son of Joash, king of Judah, Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel, became king in Samaria, *and reigned* forty-one years. ²⁴And he did evil in the sight of the LORD; he did not depart from all the ^xsins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who had made Israel sin. ²⁵He ^yrestored the ¹territory of Israel ^zfrom the entrance of Hamath to ^athe ²Sea of the Arabah, according to the word of the LORD God of Israel, which He had spoken through His servant ^bJonah the son of Amittai, the prophet who *was* from ^cGath Hepher. ²⁶For the LORD ^dsaw that the affliction of Israel *was* very bitter; and whether bond or free, ^ethere was no helper for Israel. ²⁷^fAnd the LORD did not say that He would blot out the name of Israel from under heaven; but He saved them by the hand of Jeroboam the son of Joash.

²⁸Now the rest of the acts of Jeroboam, and all that he did—his might, how he made war, and how he recaptured for Israel, from ^gDamascus and Hamath, ^h*what had belonged* to Judah—are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? ²⁹So Jeroboam ³rested with his fathers, the kings of Israel. Then ⁱZechariah his son reigned in his place.

Azariah Reigns in Judah

15 In the twenty-seventh year of Jeroboam king of Israel, ^aAzariah the son of Amaziah, king of Judah, ^bbecame king. ²He was sixteen years old when he

(14:13, 14). **fled to his tent:** This is an idiom for a complete rout (2 Sam. 18:17).

14:13 The damage to Jerusalem's northern walls extended from the **Corner Gate**, at the northwest corner of the city wall, east to the **Gate of Ephraim**. The northwest corner of Jerusalem had always been the city's most vulnerable point (18:17). A breach in the wall of **four hundred cubits** (600 feet) was a huge gap for the invading army to enter the holy city through.

14:14 gold and silver . . . articles: The looting of precious objects from the temple, as well as from the palace—the **king's house**—shows the humiliation that Judah suffered as the result of this disastrous war fueled by Amaziah's pride. **hostages:** People as well as goods were carried off by the king of Israel. **returned:** It had not been the intention of Jehoash to occupy foreign territory.

14:17 The notice of **fifteen years** of life for Amaziah suggests he was released after the death of Jehoash for an additional period (782–767 B.C.). If so, he reigned alongside his son Azariah (or Uzziah), whose 52-year reign began in 792 B.C. (15:2).

14:19, 20 Amaziah not only reproduced his father's spiritual problems (see 14:3), he also died as his father had, at the hand of an assassin (12:20, 21). **Lachish:** This was one of the guard cities for Jerusalem, about 30 miles southwest of the capital. Lachish was seized by Sennacherib in 701 B.C., in the days of Hezekiah (18:13–17).

14:22 Elath is the famous seaport on the Gulf of Aqaba. During the reign of Ahaz, Elath was captured by Rezin of Aram and became an Edomite holding (see 16:6).

14:23 Jeroboam: This is the second king of Israel to have this name.

Jeroboam I was the founder of the northern kingdom at the time of the death of Solomon (930 B.C.; see 1 Kin. 11; 12). **forty-one years:** Jeroboam II had a very long reign. His 41 years included ten years as coregent with his father Jehoash (792–782 B.C.).

14:24 did evil: The assessment of his reign is like that of all the kings of Israel, except for the graver assessment given to the house of Ahab (see 10:29–31).

14:25 restored the territory: The first half of the eighth century B.C. was a period of prosperity and strength for the northern and southern kingdoms. Jeroboam II extended Israel's influence from the entrance of Hamath down the eastern side of the Jordan to the southern end of the Dead Sea. Since Azariah also campaigned in the southern territory, the two kingdoms must have been living in harmony and enjoying mutual cooperation. **Jonah:** Once again a prophet of God gave direction to a king. The reference to Jonah here provides the historical setting for the famous prophet.

14:26, 27 no helper: The living God saw that His people needed His help, and He became the helper of His people. God used Jeroboam II to bring Israel to a new period of greatness.

14:28 The Scriptures emphasize Jeroboam's military prowess. Yet Jeroboam's **might** may have also been economic. The well-known Samarian Ostraca, which may date from this period, record the delivery to Samaria of fine oil and barley produced on the royal estates.

14:29 The brief reign of **Zechariah** is noted in 15:8–12. He was the fourth in the line of Jehu to reign in Israel, in fulfillment of God's gracious promise to Jehu (see 10:30).

15:1, 2 Azariah (or Uzziah, 2 Chr. 26:1; Is. 1:1) is credited with

became king, and he reigned fifty-two years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jechehiah of Jerusalem. ³And he did *what* was right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father Amaziah had done, ^{4c}except that the ¹high places were not removed; the people still sacrificed and burned incense on the high places. ⁵Then the LORD ^dstruck the king, so that he was a leper until the day of his ^edeath; so he ^fdwelt in an isolated house. And Jotham the king's son *was* over the *royal* house, judging the people of the land.

⁶Now the rest of the acts of Azariah, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? ⁷So Azariah ²rested with his fathers, and ^gthey buried him with his fathers in the City of David. Then Jotham his son reigned in his place.

Zechariah Reigns in Israel

⁸In the thirty-eighth year of Azariah king of Judah, ^hZechariah the son of Jeroboam reigned over Israel in Samaria six months. ⁹And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, ⁱas his fathers had done; he did not depart from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who had made Israel sin. ¹⁰Then Shallum the son of Jabesh conspired against him, and ^jstruck and killed him in front of the people; and he reigned in his place.

¹¹Now the rest of the acts of Zechariah, indeed they *are* written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.

4 c 2 Kin. 12:3; 14:4; 15:35 ¹Places for pagan worship
5 d 2 Chr. 26:19-23; Ps. 78:31 e Is. 6:1 f [Lev. 13:46]; Num. 12:14
7 g 2 Chr. 26:23
2 Died and joined his ancestors
8 h 2 Kin. 14:29
9 i 2 Kin. 14:24
10 j Amos 7:9

12 k 2 Kin. 10:30
13 l Azariah, 2 Kin. 14:21ff; 15:1ff.
14 m 1 Kin. 14:17; Song 6:4
15 n Lit. conspired
16 o 1 Kin. 4:24
n 2 Kin. 8:12; Hos. 13:16
19 p 1 Chr. 5:26; Is. 66:19; Hos. 8:9
p 2 Kin. 14:5
q Tiglath-Pileser III, v. 29
r Support

¹²This *was* the word of the LORD which He spoke to Jehu, saying, ^k“Your sons shall sit on the throne of Israel to the fourth *generation*.” And so it was.

Shallum Reigns in Israel

¹³Shallum the son of Jabesh became king in the thirty-ninth year of ³Uzziah king of Judah; and he reigned a full month in Samaria. ¹⁴For Menahem the son of Gadi went up from ¹Tirzah, came to Samaria, and struck Shallum the son of Jabesh in Samaria and killed him; and he reigned in his place.

¹⁵Now the rest of the acts of Shallum, and the conspiracy which he ⁴led, indeed they *are* written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel. ¹⁶Then from Tirzah, Menahem attacked ^mTiphsah, all who *were* there, and its territory. Because they did not surrender, therefore he attacked *it*. All ⁿthe women there who were with child he ripped open.

Menahem Reigns in Israel

¹⁷In the thirty-ninth year of Azariah king of Judah, Menahem the son of Gadi became king over Israel, *and reigned* ten years in Samaria. ¹⁸And he did evil in the sight of the LORD; he did not depart all his days from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who had made Israel sin. ¹⁹^pPul⁵ king of Assyria came against the land; and Menahem gave Pul a thousand talents of silver, that his ⁶hand might be with him to ⁷strengthen the kingdom

52 years of reign. This figure includes 10 years during which his father Amaziah was held captive (792–782 B.C.), 15 years of coregency with Amaziah upon his release from captivity (782–767 B.C.), and 27 years of sole reign (767–740 B.C.). The latter part of Azariah's reign was tainted by his intrusion into the priestly office (2 Chr. 26:16–19), an act that resulted in his being stricken with leprosy (v. 5). This condition put his son Jotham on the throne to rule with him and handle public matters relative to the royal office. The nature of Jotham's duties (v. 5), the assigning of a full 52 years of reign to Azariah, and Isaiah's dating of his call to the year of Azariah's (or Uzziah's) death (Is. 6:1) may indicate that Azariah retained the power of the throne until the end. His name Azariah means “The Lord Has Helped.”

15:3, 4 Azariah was another of the good kings in Judah and received some of the same evaluation that was given to Jehoash in 12:2, 3 and to Amaziah in 14:3, 4.

15:5 leper: The events that brought about this affliction are described in 2 Chr. 26:16–21. **over the royal house:** Jotham assumed the office of senior administrator. While the term *over the house* is used of the office of royal steward, this office grew in prestige, and the term came to designate a senior official of high standing. Jotham handled the business of state during his father's period of isolation.

15:12 fourth generation: Jehu had been promised a continuing posterity into the fourth generation as a reward for carrying out his divine commission (see 10:30). Unfortunately, Jehu and his house proved unworthy of their God-given opportunities so that they repeatedly earned the condemnation of God's prophets (13:18, 19; Hos. 1:4; Amos 7:9). After the death of Zechariah in 752 B.C. and the end of the fourth dynasty, Israel plunged into a period of degeneracy, bloody conspiracies, and international intrigue that would

bring about its demise in 722 B.C. So Zechariah, whose name means “The Lord Remembers” (see 14:26, 27), was the last of the effective kings of Israel.

15:13–16 The short reign of **Shallum**, only one month, was indicative of the emerging collapse of the nation.

15:15 the rest of the acts: This follows the normal pattern for the obituaries of the kings of the northern kingdom. Even though Shallum was king for only one month, he still received the complete royal obituary.

15:16 Because of its beauty (Song 6:4), **Tirzah** served as a royal retreat (see 1 Kin. 14:17). It also was the national capital during Israel's first two dynasties. **ripped open:** Such inhuman atrocities were all too common in times of warfare in the ancient world (see 8:12; Amos 1:13). Israel's sin repeatedly placed it in danger of such barbaric acts (see Hos. 10:13, 14; 13:16).

15:17, 18 Menahem: This wicked king came to power by assassination and established his authority by brutal acts against humanity (vv. 14, 16). Ironically, his name means “Comforter.”

15:19 Pul is a second Babylonian name for the Assyrian king Tiglath-Pileser III (745–727 B.C.; see v. 29; 1 Chr. 5:26). Although he came to the throne as a usurper from the ranks of the military, he would prove a competent king. Under Tiglath-Pileser III and his successors, Assyria became the dominant power in the Middle East for well over a century (747–612 B.C.). It was a period of repeated Assyrian interference in the affairs of Israel and Judah. The first such instance came quickly. In 743 B.C. Tiglath-Pileser III launched a western invasion that brought a great deal of Syria and Palestine under his control. The annals of this Assyrian king record that Menahem of Israel paid tribute to him, as is also recorded here (vv. 19, 20).

Assyrian Campaigns Against Israel and Judah

The Assyrian invasions of the eighth century B.C. were the most traumatic political events in the entire history of Israel.

The brutal Assyrian style of warfare relied on massive armies, superbly equipped with the world's first great siege machines manipulated by an efficient corps of engineers.

Psychological terror, however, was Assyria's most effective weapon. It was ruthlessly applied, with corpses impaled on stakes, severed heads stacked in heaps, and captives skinned alive.

The shock of bloody military sieges on both Israel and Judah was profound. The prophets did not fail to speak out against their horror, while at the same time pleading with the people to see God's hand in history, to recognize spiritual causes in the present punishment.

1. CAMPAIGNS OF TIGLATH-PILESER III (738–732 B.C.)

King Tiglath-Pileser of Assyria (745–727 B.C.) proved to be a vigorous campaigner, first exacting tribute from Menahem and then annexing Hamath, Philistia, Galilee, Gilead, and Damascus (738–732 B.C.) during the reign of Pekah.

The ferocious onslaught against the northern tribes left only central Israel and the capital city of Samaria intact.

By this time Israel was a tiny nation wracked by pro- and anti-Assyrian factions, multiple assassinations, hypocrisy, arrogance, and fear.



Assyrian Campaigns (continued)



2. CAMPAIGN OF SHALMANESER V (725–722 B.C.)

The last king of Israel, Hoshea, conspired with Egypt and withheld the annual tribute to the Assyrians.

A protracted three-year siege conducted by Shalmaneser and concluded by Sargon II saw the end of the Israelite kingdom in 722–721 B.C.

At that time, according to Assyrian annals, "I [Sargon] besieged and conquered Samaria, led away as plunder 27,290 inhabitants . . . I installed over [those remaining] an officer of mine and imposed upon them the tribute of the former king."



3. SENNACHERIB'S CAMPAIGN AGAINST JUDAH (701 B.C.)

In the 14th year of Hezekiah, the Assyrians finally attacked Judah. The Prism of Sennacherib calls Hezekiah "overbearing and proud," indicating that he was part of Philistia's and Egypt's effort to rebel against Assyria.

A battle in the plain of Eltekeh was won by Assyria; the Egyptian and Cushite charioteers fled. Lachish was besieged and taken. Sennacherib's annals note: "As for Hezekiah the Jew, he did not submit to my yoke. I laid siege to 46 of his strong cities, walled forts and the countless small villages in their vicinity, and conquered them by means of well-tamped earth ramps and battering-rams brought near to the walls combined with the attack by foot-soldiers, using mines, breaches, and sapper work. I drove out 200,150 people, young and old, male and female, horses, mules, donkeys, camels, large and small cattle beyond counting, and considered them plunder. Himself I made a prisoner in Jerusalem, his royal residence, like a bird in a cage."

Nowhere, however, does the boastful Assyrian king record the disaster mentioned in 2 Kin. 19:35, 36; 2 Chr. 32:21; Is. 37:36, 37.

under his control. ²⁰And Menahem ^qexacted ⁷the money from Israel, from all the very wealthy, from each man fifty shekels of silver, to give to the king of Assyria. So the king of Assyria turned back, and did not stay there in the land.

²¹Now the rest of the acts of Menahem, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? ²²So Menahem ⁸rested with his fathers. Then Pekahiah his son reigned in his place.

Pekahiah Reigns in Israel

²³In the fiftieth year of Azariah king of Judah, Pekahiah the son of Menahem became king over Israel in Samaria, *and reigned* two years. ²⁴And he did evil in the sight of the LORD; he did not depart from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who had made Israel sin. ²⁵Then Pekah the son of Remaliah, an officer of his, conspired against him and ⁹killed him in Samaria, in the ^rcitadel of the king's house, along with Argob and Arieah; and with him were fifty men of Gilead. He killed him and reigned in his place.

²⁶Now the rest of the acts of Pekahiah, and all that he did, indeed they *are* written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.

Pekah Reigns in Israel

²⁷In the fifty-second year of Azariah king of Judah, ^sPekah the son of Remaliah became king over Israel in Samaria, *and reigned* twenty years. ²⁸And he did evil in the sight of the LORD; he did not depart from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who had made Israel sin. ²⁹In the days of Pekah king of Israel, ^tTiglath-Pileser king of Assyria ^ucame and took ^vIjon, Abel Beth Maachah, Jannoah, Kedesh, Hazor, Gilead, and Galilee, all the land of Naphtali; and he ^vcarried

20 ^q 2 Kin. 23:35
⁷ took
22 ⁸ Died and joined his ancestors
25 ^r 1 Kin. 16:18
⁹ Lit. struck
27 ^s 2 Chr. 28:6; Is. 7:1
29 ^t 2 Kin. 16:7, 10; 1 Chr. 5:26 ^u 1 Kin. 15:20 ^v 2 Kin. 17:6
¹ A later name of Pul, v. 19

them captive to Assyria. ³⁰Then Hoshea the son of Elah led a conspiracy against Pekah the son of Remaliah, and struck and killed him; so he ^wreigned in his place in the twentieth year of Jotham the son of Uzziah.

³¹Now the rest of the acts of Pekah, and all that he did, indeed they *are* written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.

Jotham Reigns in Judah

³²In the second year of Pekah the son of Remaliah, king of Israel, ^xJotham the son of Uzziah, king of Judah, began to reign. ³³He was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem. His mother's name *was* ^yJerusha the daughter of Zadok. ³⁴And he did *what was* right in the sight of the LORD; he did ^zaccording to all that his father Uzziah had done. ³⁵^zHowever the ³high places were not removed; the people still sacrificed and burned incense on the high places. ^aHe built the Upper Gate of the house of the LORD.

³⁶Now the rest of the acts of Jotham, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? ³⁷In those days the LORD began to send ^bRezin king of Syria and ^cPekah the son of Remaliah against Judah. ³⁸So Jotham ^drested with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the City of David his father. Then Ahaz his son reigned in his place.

Ahaz Reigns in Judah

16 In the seventeenth year of Pekah the son of Remaliah, Ahaz the son of Jotham, king of Judah, began to reign. ²Ahaz *was* twenty years old when he became king, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem; and he did not do

30 ^w 2 Kin. 17:1; [Hos. 10:3, 7, 15]
32 ^x 2 Chr. 27:1
33 ^y Jerushah, 2 Chr. 27:1
34 ^z 2 Kin. 15:3, 4; 2 Chr. 26:4, 5
35 ^z 2 Kin. 15:4
^a 2 Chr. 23:20; 27:3
³ Places for pagan worship
37 ^b 2 Kin. 16:5-9; Is. 7:1-17 ^c 2 Kin. 15:26, 27
38 ^d Died and joined his ancestors

15:23 Pekahiah means "The Lord Has Opened the Eyes." After an evil reign of two years, a usurper "closed his eyes" for him.
15:27, 28 Like Shallum and Menahem before him, **Pekah** sat on the throne through usurpation and bloody deeds. Because Hoshea's nine-year reign (17:1) began in 732 B.C., Pekah's **twenty years** must have included a time of kingship in his own district during the unsettled days of Shallum, Menahem, and Pekahiah (752–740 B.C.). Apparently Pekah rode the crest of anti-Assyrian sentiment. That same political stance ultimately brought about his downfall, during **Tiglath-Pileser III's** second western campaign (734–732 B.C.). It is this campaign in Galilee to which Isaiah alluded (see Is. 9:1).
15:30 Hoshea . . . killed him: Tiglath-Pileser III's campaign apparently caused a pro-Assyrian reaction within Israel that brought about both Pekah's death and Hoshea's ascension to the throne. The annals of Tiglath-Pileser III record Hoshea's heavy tribute and the Assyrian king's claim that he himself set the new Israelite king in office.
15:32, 33 Jotham means "The Lord Is Perfect." Jotham's reign of **sixteen years** (752–736 B.C.) includes a 12-year coregency with his father Azariah. Since Jotham is earlier credited with 20 years (v. 30), it

may be that he turned over the reigns of government to his son Ahaz in 736 B.C., even though he lived on for four more years.
15:34 Jotham's reign was partly righteous. After the purge of Ahaziah and Athaliah (9:27–29; 11:13–16), the kings of Judah who reigned in relative righteousness were Joash (Jehoash) (12:2, 3), Amaziah (14:3, 4), and Azariah (Uzziah, 15:3, 4). A positive righteousness would be modeled by Hezekiah (see 18:3–6) and again by Josiah (see 22:2).
15:36 The author of Chronicles indicates that Jotham did extensive building in Jerusalem and Judah (2 Chr. 27:3, 4) and engaged in a war against the Ammonites (2 Chr. 27:5). Jotham apparently carried out the practices that brought Judah power and prosperity during the years of his father Azariah (Uzziah).
15:37, 38 Rezin . . . Pekah: These two adversaries were even more prominent in the time of Ahaz (see ch. 16; see also Is. 7).
16:1 The name **Ahaz** means "He Has Grasped." The **seventeenth year of Pekah** was 736–735 B.C. Ahaz's 16-year reign apparently ended in 720 B.C. If so, like Jotham before him, Ahaz must have lived on another four years after giving up his rule. Hezekiah's first year of independent rule began in 715 B.C., 14 years before Sennacherib's

what was right in the sight of the LORD his God, as his father David *had done*.³ But he walked in the way of the kings of Israel; indeed ^ahe made his son pass through the fire, according to the ^babominations of the nations whom the LORD had cast out from before the children of Israel. ⁴And he sacrificed and burned incense on the ^chigh places, ^don the hills, and under every green tree.

^{5e}Then Rezin king of Syria and Pekah the son of Remaliah, king of Israel, came up to Jerusalem to *make* war; and they besieged Ahaz but could not overcome him. ⁶At that time Rezin king of Syria ^fcaptured ¹Elath for Syria, and drove the men of Judah from Elath. Then the ²Edomites went to Elath, and dwell there to this day.

⁷So Ahaz sent messengers to ^gTiglath-Pileser³ king of Assyria, saying, “I am your servant and your son. Come up and save me from the hand of the king of Syria and from the hand of the king of Israel, who rise up against me.” ⁸And Ahaz ^htook the silver and gold that was found in the house of the LORD, and in the treasuries of the king’s house, and sent it as a present to the king of Assyria. ⁹So the king of Assyria heeded him; for the king of Assyria went up against ¹Damascus and ^jtook it, carried its *people* captive to ^kKir, and killed Rezin.

¹⁰Now King Ahaz went to Damascus to meet Tiglath-Pileser king of Assyria, and saw an altar that *was* at Damascus; and King Ahaz sent to Urijah the priest the design of the altar and its pattern, according to all its workmanship. ¹¹Then ^lUrijah the priest built an altar according to all that King Ahaz had sent from Damascus. So Urijah the priest made it before King Ahaz came back from Damascus. ¹²And when the king came back from Damascus, the king saw the altar; and ^mthe king approached the altar and

CHAPTER 16

³ ^a[Lev. 18:21]; 2 Kin. 17:17; 2 Chr. 28:3; Ps. 106:37, 38; Is. 1:1 ^b[Deut. 12:31]; 2 Kin. 21:2, 11
⁴ ^c2 Kin. 15:34, 35 ^d[Deut. 12:2]; 1 Kin. 14:23
⁵ ^e2 Kin. 15:37; Is. 7:1, 4
⁶ ^f2 Kin. 14:22; 2 Chr. 26:2 ¹ Lit. *Large Tree*; sing. of *Elath* ² A few ancient mss. *Syrians*
⁷ ^g2 Kin. 15:29; 1 Chr. 5:26; 2 Chr. 28:20 ³ A later name of *Pul*, 2 Kin. 15:19
⁸ ^h2 Kin. 12:17, 18; 2 Chr. 28:21
⁹ ⁱ2 Kin. 14:28 / Amos 1:5 ^k Is. 22:6; Amos 9:7
¹¹ ^l Is. 8:2
¹² ^m2 Chr. 26:16, 19

¹⁴ ⁿ Ex. 27:1, 2; 40:6, 29; 2 Chr. 4:1 ⁴ Lit. *house*
¹⁵ ^o Ex. 29:39–41
¹⁷ ^p 2 Chr. 28:24
^q 1 Kin. 7:27–29
^r 1 Kin. 7:23–25
²⁰ ^s 2 Chr. 28:27

CHAPTER 17

¹ ^a 2 Kin. 15:30

made offerings on it. ¹³So he burned his burnt offering and his grain offering; and he poured his drink offering and sprinkled the blood of his peace offerings on the altar. ¹⁴He also brought ⁿthe bronze altar which *was* before the LORD, from the front of the ⁴temple—from between the *new* altar and the house of the LORD—and put it on the north side of the *new* altar. ¹⁵Then King Ahaz commanded Urijah the priest, saying, “On the great *new* altar burn ^othe morning burnt offering, the evening grain offering, the king’s burnt sacrifice, and his grain offering, with the burnt offering of all the people of the land, their grain offering, and their drink offerings; and sprinkle on it all the blood of the burnt offering and all the blood of the sacrifice. And the bronze altar shall be for me to inquire *by*.” ¹⁶Thus did Urijah the priest, according to all that King Ahaz commanded.

^{17p}And King Ahaz cut off ^qthe panels of the carts, and removed the lavers from them; and he took down ^rthe Sea from the bronze oxen that *were* under it, and put it on a pavement of stones. ¹⁸Also he removed the Sabbath pavilion which they had built in the temple, and he removed the king’s outer entrance from the house of the LORD, on account of the king of Assyria.

¹⁹Now the rest of the acts of Ahaz which he did, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? ²⁰So Ahaz rested with his fathers, and ^swas buried with his fathers in the City of David. Then Hezekiah his son reigned in his place.

Hoshea Reigns in Israel

17 In the twelfth year of Ahaz king of Judah, ^aHoshea the son of Elah became king of Israel in Samaria, and he reigned nine years. ²And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, but not as the kings

invasion of Judah and his siege of Jerusalem in 701 B.C. (18:13). If Ahaz was 20 years old at his accession in 736 B.C. (v. 2), he would have lived to be around 40. Since Hezekiah was 25 years old at his accession to coregency in 729 B.C., Ahaz was in his early teens when Hezekiah was born.

16:3, 4 After a series of kings in Judah who demonstrated a relative righteousness, Ahaz followed the evil ways of the kings of the northern kingdom. The author of Chronicles reports that the rite of making one’s son *pass through the fire* was connected with the Baal worship practiced in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom (23:10; 2 Chr. 28:2, 3). Ahaz was an apostate who personally led his people in the religious worship practices of Canaan (v. 4; see 2 Chr. 28:2–4).

16:5 Because of Ahaz’s sin God delivered him into the hands of an alliance of the two kings **Rezin** and **Pekah** (see 15:37). A great slaughter followed, and a complete deportation of Judah was averted only by divine intervention (2 Chr. 28:5–15).

16:6 Azariah had recovered **Elath** for Judah (see 14:22). Now this major port city (see 1 Kin. 9:26) was taken from Judah. **to this day**:

That is, the day of the narration of these events.

16:7–9 Ahaz’s request of **Tiglath-Pileser** III coincides with the Assyrian king’s second western campaign (734–732 B.C.) that eventually brought about the fall of Damascus in 732 B.C. and the replacement of Pekah with Hoshea on the throne of Israel in the same year. Tiglath-Pileser listed the tribute of both Hoshea and Ahaz in connection with his campaigning.

16:10–15 Having been summoned to Damascus by Tiglath-Pileser III, Ahaz saw a pagan **altar** that suited his tastes. His use of the altar to make sacrifices to God underscored Ahaz’s essential paganism. His paganism was also evident in his many other religious innovations (vv. 14–18; 2 Chr. 28:2–4, 22–25). Ahaz went so far in his apostasy as to shut the doors of the temple (2 Chr. 28:24).

17:1 twelfth year: Hoshea became king in 732 B.C., so the 12 years of Ahaz indicate a period of coregency with his father Jotham, perhaps arranged due to the pressures of Tiglath-Pileser’s first western campaign (744–743 B.C.). **Hoshea:** The name means “Salvation.”

of Israel who were before him. ^{3b}Shalmaneser king of Assyria came up against him; and Hoshea ^cbecame his vassal, and paid him tribute money. ⁴And the king of Assyria uncovered a conspiracy by Hoshea; for he had sent messengers to So, king of Egypt, and brought no tribute to the king of Assyria, as *he had done* year by year. Therefore the king of Assyria shut him up, and bound him in prison.

Israel Carried Captive to Assyria

⁵Now ^dthe king of Assyria went throughout all the land, and went up to Samaria and besieged it for three years. ^{6e}In the ninth year of Hoshea, the king of Assyria took Samaria and ^fcarried Israel away to Assyria, ^gand placed them in Halah and by the Habor, the River of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes.

⁷For ^hso it was that the children of Israel had sinned against the LORD their God, who had brought them up out of the land of Egypt, from under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt; and they had ⁱfeared other gods, ⁸and ^jhad walked in the statutes of the nations whom the LORD had cast out from before the children of Israel, and of the kings of Israel, which they had made. ⁹Also the children of Israel secretly did against the LORD their God things that *were* not right, and they built for themselves ¹high places in all their cities, ^kfrom watchtower to fortified city. ^{10l}They set up for themselves *sacred* pillars and ^mwooden images ²on every high hill and under every green tree. ¹¹There they burned incense on all the high places, like the nations whom the LORD had carried away before them; and they did wicked things to provoke the LORD to anger, ¹²for they served idols, ^oof which the LORD had said to them, ^p“You shall not do this thing.”

¹³Yet the LORD testified against Israel and against Judah, by all of His ^qprophets, ^revery seer, saying, ^s“Turn from your evil ways, and keep My commandments

^{3 b} 2 Kin. 18:9-12
^c 2 Kin. 24:1
^{5 d} 2 Kin. 18:9; Hos. 13:16
^{6 e} 2 Kin. 18:10, 11; Is. 7:7-9; Hos. 1:4; 13:16; Amos 4:2 ^f Lev. 26:32, 33; [Deut. 28:36, 64; 29:27, 28] ^g 1 Chr. 5:26
^{7 h} [Josh. 23:16] ⁱ Judg. 6:10
^{8 j} [Lev. 18:3; Deut. 18:9]; 2 Kin. 16:3
^{9 k} 2 Kin. 18:8
^l Places for pagan worship
^{10 l} 1 Kin. 14:23; Is. 57:5 ^m [Ex. 34:12-14; Deut. 16:21]; Mic. 5:14 ⁿ [Deut. 12:2]; 2 Kin. 16:4 ² Heb. *Asherim*, Canaanite deities
^{12 o} [Ex. 20:3-5; Lev. 26:1; Deut. 5:7, 8] ^p [Deut. 4:19]
^{13 q} Neh. 9:29, 30
^r 1 Sam. 9:9 ^s [Jer. 18:11; 25:5; 35:15; Ezek. 18:31]
^{14 t} Ex. 32:9; 33:3; Deut. 31:27; [Prov. 29:1; Acts 7:51]
^u Deut. 9:23; Ps. 78:22
^{15 v} Jer. 44:3 ^w Ex. 24:6-8; Deut. 29:25
^x Deut. 32:21; 1 Kin. 16:31; [1 Cor. 8:4]
^y 2 Chr. 13:7; Jer. 2:5; [Rom. 1:21-23]
^z [Deut. 12:30, 31]
^{16 a} Ex. 32:8; 1 Kin. 12:28
^b [1 Kin. 14:15]
^c [Deut. 4:19]
^d 1 Kin. 16:31; 22:53
^{17 e} [Lev. 18:21]; 2 Kin. 16:3; Ezek. 23:37 ^f [Lev. 19:26; Deut. 18:10-12]
^g 1 Kin. 21:20
^{18 h} 1 Kin. 11:13, 32
^{19 i} Jer. 3:8
^{20 j} Judg. 2:14; 2 Kin. 13:3; 15:29
^k 2 Kin. 24:20
^{21 l} 1 Kin. 11:11, 31
^m 1 Kin. 12:20, 28
^{22 n} 1 Kin. 14:16; Is. 8:4 ^o 2 Kin. 17:6

and My statutes, according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by My servants the prophets.” ¹⁴Nevertheless they would not hear, but ^tstiffened their necks, like the necks of their fathers, who ^udid not believe in the LORD their God. ¹⁵And they ^vrejected His statutes ^wand His covenant that He had made with their fathers, and His testimonies which He had testified against them; they followed ^xidols, ^ybecame idolaters, and *went* after the nations who *were* all around them, *concerning* whom the LORD had charged them that they should ^znot do like them. ¹⁶So they left all the commandments of the LORD their God, ^amade for themselves a molded image *and* two calves, ^bmade a wooden image and worshiped all the ^chost of heaven, ^dand served Baal. ^{17e}And they caused their sons and daughters to pass through the fire, ^fpracticed witchcraft and soothsaying, and ^gsold themselves to do evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke Him to anger. ¹⁸Therefore the LORD was very angry with Israel, and removed them from His sight; there was none left ^hbut the tribe of Judah alone.

¹⁹Also ⁱJudah did not keep the commandments of the LORD their God, but walked in the statutes of Israel which they made. ²⁰And the LORD rejected all the descendants of Israel, afflicted them, and ^jdelivered them into the hand of plunderers, until He had cast them from His ^ksight. ²¹For ^lHe tore Israel from the house of David, and ^mthey made Jeroboam the son of Nebat king. Then Jeroboam drove Israel from following the LORD, and made them commit a great sin. ²²For the children of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did; they did not depart from them, ²³until the LORD removed Israel out of His sight, ⁿas He had said by all His servants the prophets. ^oSo Israel was carried away from their own land to Assyria, *as it is* to this day.

17:3 Shalmaneser V succeeded Tiglath-Pileser III as king of Assyria in 727 B.C.

17:4 conspiracy by Hoshea: Several elements of intrigue and international affairs may have entered into the picture here. Transitions in power were often occasions for rebellion or attempted overthrow. Further, a new strong man had appeared in Egypt—Tefnekht, a pharaoh of the twenty-fourth dynasty. The time may have seemed ripe for Hoshea to enter into an anti-Assyrian coalition.

17:5, 6 After a three-year siege, Samaria fell to the Assyrians in 722 B.C. Sargon, the field commander of Shalmaneser V who succeeded him to the throne, would later claim that it was he who **took Samaria**. It was ancient practice to deport large numbers of influential citizens of a conquered country or city to decrease the possibility of rebellion (see 25:11, 12; Ezek. 1:2, 3).

17:7 Israel had sinned: The reason for the fall of Samaria and the end of the northern kingdom is clearly stated to be its spiritual failure, in turning from the living God to worship other gods that exist only in people's depraved imagination. The rehearsal that follows of Israel's spiritual adultery (vv. 9–17) makes it clear that Israel had grown thoroughly corrupt from the leaders on down (vv. 7–9, 21). Despite repeated warnings (vv. 13, 14, 23), Israel had persisted in every form of idolatry and licentious worship (vv. 10–12, 16, 17).

17:21 Jeroboam . . . made them . . . sin: Jeroboam I had initiated the state worship that in effect set the standard for all of Israel's idolatrous activities. The worship of the calves at Dan and Bethel, and Israel's fascination with Baal (v. 16; see 1 Kin. 12:28, 29; 16:32, 33), are repeatedly cited as the chief causes of Israel's spiritual defeat and political collapse. Jeroboam I's heresy was a standard of wickedness for the kings who followed him in the northern kingdom.

Assyria Resettles Samaria

^{24p}Then the king of Assyria brought people from Babylon, Cuthah, ^qAva, Hamath, and from Sepharvaim, and placed

^{24p} Ezra 4:2, 10
^q 2 Kin. 18:34

them in the cities of Samaria instead of the children of Israel; and they took possession of Samaria and dwelt in its cities. ²⁵And it was so, at the beginning

17:24 The **king of Assyria** was probably Sargon II (722–705 B.C.), although the practice described here was continued by later kings as well. Such a mixing of populations would break down ethnic dis-

Exile of the Northern Kingdom

The mass deportation policy of the Assyrians was a companion piece to the brutal and calculated terror initiated by Ashurnasirpal and followed by all his successors. It was intended to forestall revolts but, like all Draconian measures, it merely spread misery and engendered hatred. In the end, it hastened the disintegration of the Assyrian Empire.



There is some evidence that Israel experienced its first deportations under Tiglath-Pileser III (745–727 B.C.), a cruelty repeated by Sargon II (721–705 B.C.) at the time of the fall of Samaria. The latter king's inscriptions boast of carrying away 27,290 inhabitants of the city "as plunder." According to 2 Kin. 17:6, they were sent to Assyria, to Halah, to Gozan on the Habor River, and apparently to the eastern frontiers of the empire (to the towns of the Medes, most probably somewhere in the vicinity of Ecbatana, the modern Hamadan).

The sequel is provided by the inscriptions of Sargon: "The Arabs who live far away in the desert, who know neither overseers nor officials, and who had not yet brought their tribute to any king, I deported ... and settled them in Samaria." Much mythology has developed around the theme of the so-called ten lost tribes of Israel. A close examination of Assyrian records reveals that the deportations approximated only a limited percentage of the population, usually consisting of noble families. Agricultural workers, no doubt the majority, were deliberately left to care for the crops (cf. the Babylonian practice, 2 Kin. 24:14; 25:12).

of their dwelling there, *that* they did not fear the LORD; therefore the LORD sent lions among them, which killed *some* of them. ²⁶So they spoke to the king of Assyria, saying, “The nations whom you have removed and placed in the cities of Samaria do not know the rituals of the God of the land; therefore He has sent lions among them, and indeed, they are killing them because they do not know the rituals of the God of the land.” ²⁷Then the king of Assyria commanded, saying, “Send there one of the priests whom you brought from there; let him go and dwell there, and let him teach them the rituals of the God of the land.” ²⁸Then one of the priests whom they had carried away from Samaria came and dwelt in Bethel, and taught them how they should fear the LORD.

²⁹However every nation continued to make gods of its own, and put *them* ^vin the shrines on the high places which the Samaritans had made, *every* nation in the cities where they dwelt. ³⁰The men of ^sBabylon made Succoth Benoth, the men of Cuth made Nergal, the men of Hamath made Ashima, ³¹^vand the Avites made Nibhaz and Tartak; and the Sepharvites ^uburned their children in fire to Adrammelech and Anammelech, the gods of Sepharvaim. ³²So they feared the LORD, ^vand from every class they appointed for themselves priests of the ³high places, who sacrificed for them in the shrines of the high places. ³³^vThey feared the LORD, yet served their own gods—according to the rituals of the nations from among whom they were carried away.

³⁴To this day they continue practicing the former rituals; they do not fear the LORD, nor do they follow their statutes or their ordinances, or the law and commandment which the LORD had commanded the children of Jacob, ^xwhom He

²⁹ ^v 1 Kin. 12:31; 13:32
³⁰ ^s 2 Kin. 17:24
³¹ ^v Ezra 4:9 ^u [Lev. 18:21; Deut. 12:31]
³² ^v 1 Kin. 12:31; 13:33 ³ Places for pagan worship
³³ ^w Zeph. 1:5
³⁴ ^x Gen. 32:28; 35:10

³⁵ ^v Judg. 6:10
² [Ex. 20:5]
³⁶ ^a Ex. 14:15–30 ^b Ex. 6:6; 9:15
^c [Deut. 10:20]
³⁷ ^d Deut. 5:32
³⁸ ^e Deut. 4:23; 6:12
⁴¹ ^f 2 Kin. 17:32, 33

CHAPTER 18

¹ ^a 2 Kin. 17:1
² 2 Chr. 28:27; 29:1
² ^c Is. 38:5 ¹ Abijah, 2 Chr. 29:1ff.
⁴ ^d 2 Chr. 31:1
^e Num. 21:5–9
² Places for pagan worship
³ Heb. Asherah, a Canaanite goddess
⁴ Lit. Bronze Thing, also similar to Heb. nahash, serpent
⁵ ^f 2 Kin. 19:10; [Job 13:15; Ps. 13:5]
⁹ 2 Kin. 23:25

named Israel, ³⁵with whom the LORD had made a covenant and charged them, saying: ^u“You shall not fear other gods, nor ^zbow down to them nor serve them nor sacrifice to them; ³⁶but the LORD, who ^abrought you up from the land of Egypt with great power and ^ban outstretched arm, ^cHim you shall fear, Him you shall worship, and to Him you shall offer sacrifice. ³⁷And the statutes, the ordinances, the law, and the commandment which He wrote for you, ^dyou shall be careful to observe forever; you shall not fear other gods. ³⁸And the covenant that I have made with you, ^eyou shall not forget, nor shall you fear other gods. ³⁹But the LORD your God you shall fear; and He will deliver you from the hand of all your enemies.” ⁴⁰However they did not obey, but they followed their former rituals. ⁴¹So these nations feared the LORD, yet served their carved images; also their children and their children’s children have continued doing as their fathers did, even to this day.

Hezekiah Reigns in Judah

18 Now it came to pass in the third year of ^aHoshea the son of Elah, king of Israel, *that* ^bHezekiah the son of Ahaz, king of Judah, began to reign. ²He was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem. His mother’s name *was* ^cAbi ¹the daughter of Zechariah. ³And he did *what was* right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father David had done.

⁴^dHe removed the ²high places and broke the *sacred* pillars, cut down the ³wooden image and broke in pieces the ^ebronze serpent that Moses had made; for until those days the children of Israel burned incense to it, and called it ⁴Nehushtan. ⁵He ^ftrusted in the LORD God of Israel, ^gso that after him was

tinctions and weaken the loyalties that the people had. It would also help create a sense of empire. The list of cities recorded here may indicate the order for a caravan of relocated people. Samaria was the whole region where the repopulation took place; the inhabitants would eventually be called Samaritans.

17:28 one of the priests: Although a deported Israelite priest was sent back to instruct the Samaritan population in the worship of the LORD, the end result was a mixture of various forms of paganism with the apostate religion of the northern kingdom (vv. 30–33, 40, 41). In the course of time, both the Samaritans and their religion were rejected by the Jews (see John 4:9; 8:48).

17:34–39 A double charge is laid against the Samaritans: They did not worship the LORD, and they did not keep the laws and ordinances laid down by the LORD of the covenant. The author reminds all concerned that only the LORD is Israel’s Redeemer.

18:1, 2 The **third year of Hoshea** is 729 B.C. The 29 years of Hezekiah’s reign thus include a period of coregency with his father Ahaz before he ruled independently (715–699 B.C.). The name **Hezekiah**

means “The LORD Has Strengthened.”

18:3 The assessment of Hezekiah begins similar to that of his predecessors, but it goes on to transcend the evaluations of “relative righteousness” that are typical of the other kings of Judah (see 15:34, 35).

18:4 Consistently, the kings who preceded Hezekiah are criticized by the author for not destroying the **high places** (15:34, 35). While there were traditions of worship of the true God at these locations, far too often they became sites for the licentious worship of Baal and Asherah. Hezekiah’s reforms included not only the destruction of the pagan cult objects introduced in the days of his apostate father Ahaz, but the **bronze serpent** that had been preserved since the days of Moses (2 Chr. 29–31). Symbols all too easily can be made into objects of veneration. Apparently such had become the case with this precious ancient object.

18:5, 6 none like him: Hezekiah’s faith was unparalleled by any other king who had preceded him after the time of David; Josiah’s adherence to the law would be extolled in a similar manner (23:25). The fact of Hezekiah’s faith forms the basis for the account that fol-

The Danger of Relics

Jesus said, “God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth” (John 4:24). That means that we worship and serve a God whom we cannot see with our eyes but must believe with our hearts. As a result, God is a bit of an abstraction for some people. One way that they have tried to make Him more real and present is through artifacts that they have associated with Him.

Yet as understandable as the veneration of relics may be, it is a dangerous practice. It can easily tempt people to worship the object rather than the God whom the object is supposed to point to. In essence, the relic becomes a focus of idolatry.

That happened with a number of items that the Israelites venerated, including the bronze serpent that Moses had made during the Exodus journey (2 Kin. 18:4). Originally, the serpent on the pole had served as a means of healing by causing those bit by a snake to look to the Lord for help. But after the people settled in the Promised Land, they apparently turned this standard into an idol, as if the bronze serpent itself had power to heal. They burned incense to it and even gave it a name, Nehushtan.

Similarly, the Israelites turned a ceremonial robe, or ephod, that Gideon made from the spoils of his victory over the Midianites, into an idol (Judg. 8:25–27). Later they tried to use the ark of the covenant as a charm against the Philistines, with disastrous results (1 Sam. 4:1–11).

These examples show the dangers of making too much of objects and places that have had a close association with the work of God. As human beings, we live in the natural world, but we worship a supernatural God. Therefore, we need to treat shrines and relics merely as means toward that end, never as ends in themselves.

none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor who were before him. ⁶For he ^hheld fast to the LORD; he did not depart from following Him, but kept His commandments, which the LORD had commanded Moses. ⁷The LORD ⁱwas with him; he ^jprospered wherever he went. And he ^krebelled against the king of Assyria and did not serve him. ⁸¹He ⁵subdued the Philistines, as far as Gaza and its territory, ^mfrom watchtower to fortified city.

⁹Now ⁿit came to pass in the fourth year of King Hezekiah, which *was* the seventh year of Hoshea the son of Elah, king of Israel, *that* Shalmaneser king of Assyria came up against Samaria and besieged it. ¹⁰And at the end of three years they took it. In the sixth year of Hezekiah, that *is*, ^othe ninth year of Hoshea king of

⁶ ^h Deut. 10:20; Josh. 23:8
⁷ [2 Chr. 15:2]
 / Gen. 39:2, 3;
 1 Sam. 18:5, 14; Ps.
 60:12 ^k 2 Kin. 16:7
⁸ ¹ 1 Chr. 4:41; 2 Chr.
 28:18; Is. 14:29
^m 2 Kin. 17:9 ⁵ Lit.
 struck
⁹ ⁿ 2 Kin. 17:3
¹⁰ ^o 2 Kin. 17:6

¹¹ ^p 2 Kin. 17:6;
 Hos. 1:4; Amos 4:2
^q 1 Chr. 5:26
¹² ^r 2 Kin. 17:7–18
¹³ ^s 2 Chr. 32:1; Is.
 36:1–39:8

Israel, Samaria was taken. ¹¹^pThen the king of Assyria carried Israel away captive to Assyria, and put them ^qin Halah and by the Habor, the River of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes, ¹²because they ^rdid not obey the voice of the LORD their God, but transgressed His covenant *and* all that Moses the servant of the LORD had commanded; and they would neither hear nor do *them*.

¹³And ^sin the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah, Sennacherib king of Assyria came up against all the fortified cities of Judah and took them. ¹⁴Then Hezekiah king of Judah sent to the king of Assyria at Lachish, saying, “I have done wrong; turn away from me; whatever you impose on me I will pay.” And the king of Assyria assessed Hezekiah king of Judah three hundred talents of silver and thirty

lows. Because Hezekiah trusted the Lord, he could courageously withstand Assyrian tyranny. The northern kingdom fell to King Shalmaneser V in 722 B.C. because it did not keep God’s holy standards (vv. 9–12), but Hezekiah’s trust and faithfulness would let him face the later invasion of King Sennacherib (701 B.C.) and receive divine help (19:32–36).

18:7, 8 In addition to refusing to serve any longer as a vassal of Assyria, Hezekiah also conquered the **Philistines**. This helped establish Judah as an independent nation and new power in the region. No longer was Judah under the threat of military incursions from neighboring states simply because of its weakness.

18:13 Hezekiah’s **fourteenth year** of sole rule was 701 B.C. The details of the generally rebellious situation that provoked Sennacherib to invade the western portion of his empire are recounted in his annals, where Hezekiah is particularly mentioned for his involvement in the whole affair.

18:14 **I have done wrong**: Literally, “I have sinned.” Hezekiah had refused to be a vassal of Assyria and was now threatened by their army. The annals of Sennacherib report how he made a wide-ranging invasion of Judah. With the Assyrian army already at Lachish, Hezekiah felt an overwhelming sense of doom. One of Sennacherib’s inscriptions describes the siege of **Lachish** and reports the heavy tribute demanded from Hezekiah. His fulfillment of Sennach-

erib’s demands (vv. 14–16) doubtless whetted the conqueror’s appetite for additional booty. Therefore Sennacherib placed Jerusalem

done wrong

(Heb. *chata'*) (17:7; 18:14; Lev. 4:27; Judg. 20:16) Strong’s #2398

The meaning of this verb is “to miss (a target)” or “to fall short (of a goal).” The word expresses this basic meaning in Judg. 20:16, where it is translated *miss*: “every one could sling a stone at a hair’s breadth and not miss.” When applied to ethics, the word implies falling short of a moral requirement. The word is the most common OT expression for sin. Several nouns are derived from the verb, including *chet* “sin” or “guilt” (Is. 53:12), *chatta'* “sinful men” (Num. 32:14), and *chatta't* “sin offering” (Lev. 4:3). In the NT, Paul also defined sin as “falling short”: “for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Rom. 3:23). But then Paul offered the perfect remedy for our fallen condition: salvation through Jesus Christ (Rom. 3:24).

talents of gold. ¹⁵So Hezekiah ¹gave *him* all the silver that was found in the house of the LORD and in the treasuries of the king's house. ¹⁶At that time Hezekiah stripped *the gold from* the doors of the temple of the LORD, and *from* the pillars which Hezekiah king of Judah had overlaid, and gave ⁶it to the king of Assyria.

Sennacherib Boasts Against the LORD

¹⁷Then the king of Assyria sent *the* ⁷Tartan, *the* ⁸Rabsaris, and *the* ⁹Rabshakeh from Lachish, with a great army against Jerusalem, to King Hezekiah. And they went up and came to Jerusalem. When they had come up, they went and stood by the ^aaqueduct from the upper pool, ^vwhich *was* on the highway to the Fuller's Field. ¹⁸And when they had called to the king, ^wEliakim the son of Hilkiah, who *was* over the household, Shebna the ¹scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph, the recorder, came out to them. ¹⁹Then *the* Rabshakeh said to them, "Say now to Hezekiah, 'Thus says the great king, the king of Assyria: ^x"What confidence *is* this in which you trust? ²⁰You speak of *having* plans and power for war; but *they are* ²mere words. And in whom do you trust, that you rebel against me? ²¹^yNow look! You are trusting in the staff of this broken reed, Egypt, on which if a man leans, it will go into his hand and pierce it. So *is* Pharaoh king of Egypt to all who trust in him. ²²But if you say to me, 'We trust in the LORD our God,' *is* it not He ^zwhose ³high places and whose altars Hezekiah has taken away, and said to Judah and Jerusalem, 'You shall worship before this altar in Jerusalem?'"

¹⁵ ¹ 1 Kin. 15:18, 19; 2 Kin. 12:18; 16:8
¹⁶ ⁶ Lit. *them*
¹⁷ ^u 2 Kin. 20:20
^v Is. 7:3 ⁷ A title, probably Commander in Chief ⁸ A title, probably Chief Officer ⁹ A title, probably Chief of Staff or Governor
¹⁸ ^w 2 Kin. 19:2; Is. 22:20 ¹ secretary
¹⁹ ^x 2 Chr. 32:10; [Ps. 118:8, 9]
²⁰ ² Lit. *a word of the lips*
²¹ ^y Is. 30:2-7; Ezek. 29:6, 7
²² ^z 2 Kin. 18:4; 2 Chr. 31:1; 32:12
³ Places for pagan worship

²⁶ ^a Is. 36:11-39:8
^b Ezra 4:7; Dan. 2:4
⁴ Lit. *Judean*
²⁸ ⁵ Lit. *Judean*
²⁹ ^c 2 Chr. 32:15
³¹ ^d 1 Kin. 4:20, 25
⁶ By paying tribute

²³Now therefore, I urge you, give a pledge to my master the king of Assyria, and I will give you two thousand horses—if you are able on your part to put riders on them! ²⁴How then will you repel one captain of the least of my master's servants, and put your trust in Egypt for chariots and horsemen? ²⁵Have I now come up without the LORD against this place to destroy it? The LORD said to me, 'Go up against this land, and destroy it.'

²⁶^aThen Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, Shebna, and Joah said to *the* Rabshakeh, "Please speak to your servants in ^bAramaic, for we understand *it*; and do not speak to us in ⁴Hebrew in the hearing of the people who *are* on the wall."

²⁷But *the* Rabshakeh said to them, "Has my master sent me to your master and to you to speak these words, and not to the men who sit on the wall, who will eat and drink their own waste with you?"

²⁸Then *the* Rabshakeh stood and called out with a loud voice in ⁵Hebrew, and spoke, saying, "Hear the word of the great king, the king of Assyria! ²⁹Thus says the king: 'Do not let Hezekiah deceive you, for he shall not be able to deliver you from his hand; ³⁰nor let Hezekiah make you trust in the LORD, saying, 'The LORD will surely deliver us; this city shall not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria.'" ³¹Do not listen to Hezekiah; for thus says the king of Assyria: 'Make *peace* with me ⁶by a present and come out to me; and every one of you eat from his own ^dvine and every one from his own fig tree, and every one of you drink the waters of his own cistern; ³²until I come and take

under siege (18:13—19:36).
18:15, 16 This removal from the temple of immense amounts of **silver, gold**, and precious objects followed an earlier despoiling in the days of Amaziah (see 14:14).
18:17 Tartan . . . Rabsaris . . . Rabshakeh: These titles suggest persons of high station in Assyria. **a great army:** The accounts of the Assyrian kings suggest that they had mounted the largest armies known in the ancient Middle East. This huge army was stationed in the land of Judah. **Fuller's Field** was in the northwest corner of the city, the area most vulnerable to attack.
18:18 Eliakim was the senior palace administrator (see 15:5), and **Shebna** was the royal scribe. This verse indicates that Eliakim had already replaced Shebna in the office of senior palace administrator, as mentioned in Is. 22:15–25.
18:19 In the literature of the ancient Middle East, the term **great king** was reserved for a king of a major power. Here the Assyrian delegation delivered an ultimatum from the "great king" of Assyria to Jerusalem.
18:20 The Rabshakeh questioned the object of Hezekiah's **trust**. Perhaps Hezekiah's reputation for trusting in God was already widely known (v. 5). Trusting became the focal point of the Assyrian's psychological warfare (vv. 19–22, 24, 30).
18:21 Because Egypt depended upon the life-giving Nile with its reeds, the figure of a **broken reed** is most appropriate. Actually Sennacherib's warning against confidence in Egypt was well taken,

the point having been made previously by Isaiah (Is. 30:3–5; 31:1–3).
18:23 if you are able: The Assyrian official's taunt is that the Israelites do not have enough men and that the men they have are not trained for the coming conflict.
18:25 The LORD said: The Assyrians may have been aware of prophecies concerning the judgment of Judah and Jerusalem and Assyria's own role as God's avengers (Is. 10:5–11). The remark was intended to introduce stark terror into the hearts of the people of Jerusalem (see 2 Chr. 32:18) by pointing out that now even their God was against them.
18:26 Since **Aramaic** was by this time the language of international communication, it might be expected that the Rabshakeh would carry on diplomatic negotiations with officials in Judah and avoid speaking the Hebrew of the common citizens. But the Assyrians loved speaking to people in their native dialect to make the intimidation more effective.
18:27 their own waste: The Rabshakeh portrayed the potential horror of the coming siege by using an obscene expression. The words were drawn from street language.
18:29–32 trust in the LORD: The matter of trust (vv. 19–24) continued as an issue. The Rabshakeh tempted the Israelites to abandon their trust in the Lord and trust in Sennacherib instead. Then the promised covenantal blessings (vv. 31, 32; see Deut. 8:8; Mic. 4:4; Zech. 3:10) could all be theirs. The repeated use of the words **Do not listen to Hezekiah** (vv. 22, 29, 30) was designed to lead the people to rebellion against their king. Moreover, he presented

you away to a land like your own land, ^aa land of grain and new wine, a land of bread and vineyards, a land of olive groves and honey, that you may live and not die. But do not listen to Hezekiah, lest he persuade you, saying, “The LORD will deliver us.” ^{33f}Has any of the gods of the nations at all delivered its land from the hand of the king of Assyria? ³⁴Where *are* the gods of ^gHamath and Arpad? Where *are* the gods of Sepharvaim and Hena and ^hIvah? Indeed, have they delivered Samaria from my hand? ³⁵Who among all the gods of the lands have delivered their countries from my hand, ⁱthat the LORD should deliver Jerusalem from my hand?”

³⁶But the people held their peace and answered him not a word; for the king’s commandment was, “Do not answer him.” ³⁷Then Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, who *was* over the household, Shebna the scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph, the recorder, came to Hezekiah ^jwith their clothes torn, and told him the words of the Rabshakeh.

Isaiah Assures Deliverance

19 And ^aso it was, when King Hezekiah heard *it*, that he tore his clothes, covered himself with ^bsackcloth, and went into the house of the LORD. ²Then he sent Eliakim, who *was* over the household, Shebna the scribe, and the elders of the priests, covered with sackcloth, to Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz. ³And they said to him, “Thus says Hezekiah: ‘This day *is* a day of trouble, and rebuke, and blasphemy; for the children have come to birth, but *there* is no strength to ¹bring them forth. ^{4c}It

³² ^d Deut. 8:7-9; 11:12
³³ ^f 2 Kin. 19:12; Is. 10:10, 11
³⁴ ^g 2 Kin. 19:13
^h 2 Kin. 17:24
³⁵ ⁱ Dan. 3:15
³⁷ Is. 33:7

CHAPTER 19

¹ ^a 2 Kin. 18:13;
² Chr. 32:20-22; Is. 37:1
^h Ps. 69:11
³ ⁱ give birth
⁴ ^c 2 Sam. 16:12

^d 2 Kin. 18:35 ^e Ps. 50:21
⁶ ^f Is. 37:6 ^g [Ps. 112:7] ^h 2 Kin. 18:17
⁷ ⁱ 2 Kin. 19:35-37; Jer. 51:1
⁸ ^j 2 Kin. 18:14, 17
⁹ ^k 1 Sam. 23:27; Is. 37:9
¹⁰ ^l 2 Kin. 18:5
¹² ^m 2 Kin. 18:33, 34
ⁿ Ezek. 27:23
¹³ ^o 2 Kin. 18:34

may be that the LORD your God will hear all the words of *the* Rabshakeh, whom his master the king of Assyria has sent to ^dreproach the living God, and will ^ere-buke the words which the LORD your God has heard. Therefore lift up *your* prayer for the remnant that is left.”

⁵So the servants of King Hezekiah came to Isaiah. ^{6f}And Isaiah said to them, “Thus you shall say to your master, ‘Thus says the LORD: “Do not be ^gafraid of the words which you have heard, with which the ^hservants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed Me. ⁷Surely I will send ⁱa spirit upon him, and he shall hear a rumor and return to his own land; and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land.”’”

Sennacherib’s Threat and Hezekiah’s Prayer

⁸Then *the* Rabshakeh returned and found the king of Assyria warring against Libnah, for he heard that he had departed ^jfrom Lachish. ⁹And ^kthe king heard concerning Tirhakah king of Ethiopia, “Look, he has come out to make war with you.” So he again sent messengers to Hezekiah, saying, ¹⁰“Thus you shall speak to Hezekiah king of Judah, saying: ‘Do not let your God ^lin whom you trust deceive you, saying, “Jerusalem shall not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria.”’ ¹¹Look! You have heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all lands by utterly destroying them; and shall you be delivered? ^{12m}Have the gods of the nations delivered those whom my fathers have destroyed, Gozan and Haran and Rezeph, and the people of ⁿEden who *were* in Telassar? ^{13o}Where *is* the king

his land as a wonderful place for them to live in.

18:33–35 The Rabshakeh’s assertion that none of the **gods of the nations** who had opposed Assyria had withstood the Assyrian king is both another aspect of the continued psychological warfare and another evidence of the Rabshakeh’s awareness of Isaiah’s prophetic words (see v. 25; Is. 10:7–11).

19:1 he tore his clothes: Tearing of clothes was often a sign of grief (6:30) or of sorrowful repentance (see Joel 2:12, 13). The humility of the king was evidenced in this action, one already performed by his trusted servants (see 18:37). In addition to humbling himself, the king **went into the house of the LORD**. That is, he sought guidance from the living God.

19:2 The ministry of the great prophet **Isaiah** had begun in the year that Uzziah or Azariah died (see Is. 6:1), nearly four decades earlier (740 B.C.). Once Isaiah had sought out Judah’s godless King Ahaz to minister to him (Is. 7:3); now the prophet was being sought by the godly Hezekiah. Isaiah participated in the events of Hezekiah’s reign, and the details of 18:13–20:19 are also recorded in Is. 36–39.

19:3 day of trouble: The Hebrew phrase translated here indicates not only the great danger of the present Assyrian crisis, but the distress that Hezekiah felt. Hezekiah realized that the Lord’s corrective chastisement had come upon Judah and Jerusalem. The closing proverb using the imagery of **birth** (see Hos. 13:13) stresses the need

for God’s intervening strength if Jerusalem were to be delivered.

19:4 hear . . . reproach: The first verb does not suggest that God might not be aware of the words of the Rabshakeh. Rather, the words describe God as determining to redress the wrong.

19:6, 7 Isaiah’s prophecy was one of comfort. Not only would Sennacherib fail to conquer Jerusalem, but he would face a violent death upon his return home. Both points of the prophetic message would come true, although Sennacherib was not assassinated until 20 years later (c. 681 B.C.). In his annals Sennacherib boasts of five more campaigns; however, he makes no mention of any other invasions of Judah.

19:8 returned . . . departed: The Rabshakeh had been doing everything in his power to persuade Jerusalem to surrender without being attacked. But when he returned with his report, he found that his king was already distracted with another war and had already moved his army away. Still, the Rabshakeh did not give up, as v. 9 describes.

19:9 Since **Tirhakah** did not become **king** until 690 B.C., there is an apparent problem in the chronology of this verse. However, it is possible that the biblical author merely calls Tirhakah by the title he was best known by at the time of writing.

19:12 This is not the **Eden** of Genesis, but an area known today as Bit-Adini, south of Haran (see Ezek. 27:23; Amos 1:5).

of Hamath, the king of Arpad, and the king of the city of Sepharvaim, Hena, and Iyah?”

¹⁴ And Hezekiah received the letter from the hand of the messengers, and read it; and Hezekiah went up to the house of the LORD, and spread it before the LORD. ¹⁵ Then Hezekiah prayed before the LORD, and said: “O LORD God of Israel, *the One* ^qwho dwells *between* the cherubim, ^rYou are God, You alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth. You have made heaven and earth. ¹⁶ *Incline Your ear, O LORD, and hear; ^topen Your eyes, O LORD, and see; and hear the words of Sennacherib, ^uwhich he has sent to reproach the living God.* ¹⁷ Truly, LORD, the kings of Assyria have laid waste the nations and their lands, ¹⁸ and have cast their gods into the fire; for they *were* ^vnot gods, but ^wthe work of men’s hands—wood and stone. Therefore they destroyed them. ¹⁹ Now therefore, O LORD our God, I pray, save us from his hand, ^xthat all the kingdoms of the earth may ^yknow that You *are* the LORD God, You alone.”

The Word of the LORD Concerning Sennacherib

²⁰ Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent to Hezekiah, saying, “Thus says the LORD God of Israel: ^z“Because you have prayed to Me against Sennacherib king of Assyria, ^aI have heard.” ²¹ *This is the word which the LORD has spoken concerning him:*

‘The virgin, ^bthe daughter of Zion,
Has despised you, laughed you to scorn;
The daughter of Jerusalem
^cHas shaken *her* head behind your back!

14 ^p Is. 37:14
15 ^q Ex. 25:22; Ps. 80:1; Is. 37:16 ^r [Is. 44:6]
16 ^s Ps. 31:2; Is. 37:17 ^t 1 Kin. 8:29; 2 Chr. 6:40 ^u 2 Kin. 19:4
18 ^v [Is. 44:9-20; Jer. 10:3-5] ^w Ps. 115:4; Jer. 10:3; [Acts 17:29]
19 ^x Ps. 83:18 ^y 1 Kin. 8:42, 43
20 ^z Is. 37:21
^a 2 Kin. 20:5; Ps. 65:2
21 ^b Jer. 14:17; Lam. 2:13 ^c Ps. 22:7, 8
22 ^d Jer. 51:5
23 ^e 2 Kin. 18:17
^f Ps. 20:7
24 ^g Is. 19:6
25 ^h [Is. 45:7] ⁱ Is. 10:5, 6
26 ^j Ps. 129:6
27 ^k Ps. 139:1-3; Is. 37:28

²² ‘Whom have you reproached and blasphemed?
Against whom have you raised *your* voice,
And lifted up your eyes on high?
Against ^dthe Holy *One* of Israel.
²³ ^eBy your messengers you have reproached the Lord,
And said: ^f“By the multitude of my chariots
I have come up to the height of the mountains,
To the limits of Lebanon;
I will cut down its tall cedars
And its choice cypress trees;
I will enter the extremity of its borders,
To its fruitful forest.
²⁴ I have dug and drunk strange water,
And with the soles of my feet I have ^gdried up
All the brooks of defense.”

²⁵ ‘Did you not hear long ago
How ^hI made it,
From ancient times that I formed it?
Now I have brought it to pass,
That ⁱyou should be
For crushing fortified cities *into* heaps of ruins.
²⁶ Therefore their inhabitants had little power;
They were dismayed and confounded;
They were *as* the grass of the field
And the green herb,
As ^jthe grass on the housetops
And *grain* blighted before it is grown.

²⁷ ‘But ^kI know your dwelling place,
Your going out and your coming in,
And your rage against Me.

19:14 In a great act of faith, Hezekiah brought Sennacherib’s threatening letter **before the LORD**. Of course, Hezekiah understood that the Lord already knew the contents of the letter. But by this symbolic action, Hezekiah expressed his own utter dependence on God for deliverance.
19:15–19 **Hezekiah prayed:** Hezekiah knew that there is a greater King than the king of Assyria (18:19). Hezekiah’s trust in the Lord was demonstrated in his habit of prayer (see 20:2), and his prayer was answered favorably (vv. 20–34).
19:20 **Isaiah** gave him a direct answer from the Lord. This helps explain one of the ways in which the Lord spoke to the kings during the monarchy. Prophets could communicate the message from God to the king. **Because you have prayed:** The Lord rewarded His king with a promise of deliverance based in large part on his practical faith in God.
19:21 **The virgin:** Here we sense God’s approval of Jerusalem. When God speaks to His people concerning their sin, His speech can be direct, confrontational, and sometimes scathing. But when He speaks to others about His people and His city, He uses favorable language. They are, on the ideal level, like a virgin daughter to Him.

the daughter of Zion: As elsewhere in the OT (see Zeph. 3:14), this phrase should be written “daughter Zion,” without the “of.” Zion does not *have* a daughter; rather, Zion *is* the daughter. Zion (Jerusalem) is God’s daughter whom He will guard and protect as only a father would.
19:22–24 God’s answer to Hezekiah’s prayer came once again (see vv. 6, 7) through Isaiah (vv. 20, 21). **Holy One of Israel** is characteristic of Isaiah’s own manner of referring to God. He uses the phrase 26 times (see Is. 6:3). Sennacherib needed to know that his boastful pride blasphemed the sovereign and holy God of all nations. The verses that follow indicate that God knew not only the boasts, but the most inward thoughts of the Assyrian king.
19:25, 26 **Did you not hear:** Here the Lord answered the sarcasm of the Rabshakeh (18:17–25). In the manner of an ancient insult, God both asserted His own work on behalf of Judah and ridiculed the enemy who seemed completely unaware of reality.
19:27, 28 **But I know:** The Assyrians had a great gap in their understanding of reality; they did not include the living God in their processes. But they, in turn, were fully known. **Hook and bridle** are used to restrain animals (see Ps. 32:9; Ezek. 19:4). Because the Assyrian kings often treated their prisoners of war in such fashion,

28 Because your rage against Me and
your tumult
Have come up to My ears,
Therefore ¹I will put My hook in
your nose
And My bridle in your lips,
And I will turn you back
^mBy the way which you came.

29 “This *shall be* a ⁿsign to you:

You shall eat this year such as grows
²of itself,
And in the second year what springs
from the same;
Also in the third year sow and reap,
Plant vineyards and eat the fruit of
them.

30 ^o And the remnant who have escaped
of the house of Judah
Shall again take root downward,
And bear fruit upward.

31 For out of Jerusalem shall go a
remnant,
And those who escape from Mount
Zion.

^pThe zeal of the LORD ³of hosts will
do this.’

32 “Therefore thus says the LORD con-
cerning the king of Assyria:

‘He shall ^qnot come into this city,
Nor shoot an arrow there,
Nor come before it with shield,
Nor build a siege mound against it.

33 By the way that he came,
By the same shall he return;
And he shall not come into this city,’
Says the LORD.

34 ‘For ^rI will ^sdefend this city, to save it
For My own sake and ^tfor My
servant David’s sake.’”

28 ¹ Job 41:2; Ezek.
29:4; 38:4; Amos 4:2
^m 2 Kin. 19:33, 36
29 ⁿ Ex. 3:12; 1 Sam.
2:34; 2 Kin. 20:8,
9; Is. 7:11-14; Luke
2:12 ² Without
cultivation
30 ^o 2 Kin. 19:4;
2 Chr. 32:22, 23
31 ^p 2 Kin. 25:26;
Is. 9:7 ³ So with
many Heb. mss.
and ancient vss. (cf.
Is. 37:32); MT omits
of hosts
32 ^q Is. 8:7-10
34 ^r 2 Kin. 20:6;
2 Chr. 32:21
^s Is. 31:5 ^t 1 Kin.
11:12, 13

35 ^u Ex. 12:29; Is.
10:12-19; 37:36; Hos.
1:7 ⁴ Or *Angel*
36 ^v Gen. 10:11
37 ^w 2 Kin. 17:31
^x 2 Kin. 19:7; 2 Chr.
32:21 ^y Ezra 4:2

CHAPTER 20

1 ^a 2 Kin. 18:13;
2 Chr. 32:24; Is.
38:1-22
3 ^b 2 Kin. 18:3-6;
Neh. 13:22
5 ^c 1 Sam. 9:16;
10:1 ^d 2 Kin. 19:20;
Ps. 65:2 ^e Ps. 39:12;
56:8

Sennacherib's Defeat and Death

35 And ^uit came to pass on a certain
night that the ⁴angel of the LORD went
out, and killed in the camp of the Assyr-
ians one hundred and eighty-five thou-
sand; and when *people* arose early in the
morning, there were the corpses—all
dead. 36 So Sennacherib king of Assyria
departed and went away, returned *home*,
and remained at ^vNineveh. 37 Now it
came to pass, as he was worshiping in the
temple of Nisroch his god, that his sons
^wAdrammelech and Sharezer ^xstruck
him down with the sword; and they
escaped into the land of Ararat. Then
^yEsarhaddon his son reigned in his place.

Hezekiah's Life Extended

20 In ^athose days Hezekiah was sick
and near death. And Isaiah the
prophet, the son of Amoz, went to him
and said to him, “Thus says the LORD:
‘Set your house in order, for you shall die,
and not live.’”

2 Then he turned his face toward the
wall, and prayed to the LORD, saying,
3 ^b“Remember now, O LORD, I pray, how
I have walked before You in truth and
with a loyal heart, and have done *what*
was good in Your sight.” And Hezekiah
wept bitterly.

4 And it happened, before Isaiah had
gone out into the middle court, that the
word of the LORD came to him, saying,
5 “Return and tell Hezekiah ^cthe leader of
My people, ‘Thus says the LORD, the God
of David your father: ^d“I have heard your
prayer, I have seen ^eyour tears; surely I
will heal you. On the third day you shall
go up to the house of the LORD. 6 And I
will add to your days fifteen years. I will
deliver you and this city from the hand

Sennacherib would understand the threat only too well.

19:29 God graciously gave Hezekiah a **sign** (see also 20:9–11) of His good intentions for His people. Despite the fact that the Assyrian invasion had adversely affected the crops for that year and the next, by the third year the fields would again yield a plentiful harvest. Even as a natural growth would remain for the two years preceding the harvest of the third year, so God left in Israel a spiritual remnant that would in a future day swell into a mighty harvest of souls (see Joel 2:12–14; Mic. 2:12, 13; Zeph. 3:8–20).

19:30, 31 The promises in these verses were both for the immediate situation, for more remote times of regathering, and ultimately the final regathering of the Jewish people into their land in the time of the coming Messiah. **zeal**: The authenticating sign for the accomplishment of this promise is the solemn oath of God Himself (see Is. 9:7).

19:32 not come into this city: While Sennacherib later boasted of taking some 46 Judean cities, with reference to Jerusalem he could only report that he made Hezekiah “prisoner in Jerusalem, his royal residence, like a bird in a cage.” God’s defense and deliverance of Jerusalem demonstrated his faithfulness to the Davidic covenant (v. 34) in the face of blasphemous insults (vv. 22, 23, 27, 28; see 18:34, 35).

19:34 I . . . My own sake: As in the case of the redemption of Israel from Egypt at the time of the Exodus, so in the deliverance of Israel from the present trouble, God Himself would do it. He would not delegate the work of salvation to a lesser power.

19:36 departed: As God had promised through His prophet Isaiah (vv. 32–34), Sennacherib did not come against the city of Jerusalem.

19:37 The name **Nisroch** has been identified as the god Nusku or a corrupted form of Marduk, the traditional god of Mesopotamia. The events depicted here took place 20 years after God’s deliverance of Jerusalem. When his father was assassinated, Esarhaddon took the throne and ruled from 681 to 668 B.C.

20:2, 3 Contrast the action of the sick Hezekiah with that of Ahaziah in 1:1, 2. Hezekiah was a great man of prayer (see also 19:1, 14, 15). **I have walked before You**: Hezekiah’s prayer recognized that although all of life is in God’s hands, God is also a Rewarder of those who faithfully serve Him (see Deut. 5:30–33; 30:15, 16). Hezekiah’s habit of prayer would once again serve him well (see vv. 5, 6; 19:14–19).

20:4–6 The pattern of divine revelation to Hezekiah was through His prophet Isaiah (see 19:20); compare also the word of God through Jonah to King Jeroboam II (see 14:25). **defend this city**: The Lord promised deliverance for Jerusalem.



Gihon

Gihon was a spring outside the walls of Jerusalem where the city obtained part of its water supply (2 Chr. 32:30). The Canaanite inhabitants of ancient Jerusalem, or Jebus, had used and protected the spring in their fortifications. When David and his soldiers conquered Jebus, they entered it through the water shaft that led from the spring into the city (2 Sam. 5:8). Inhabitants of Jerusalem continued to use Gihon and its water channel. King Hezekiah channeled the water more elaborately when he constructed the famous Siloam tunnel in 701 B.C. as part of the city's preparation against the siege of the Assyrians (2 Kin. 20:20).

Gihon was the site where Solomon was anointed and proclaimed king (1 Kin. 1:33, 38, 45). Some scholars believe it later became customary for the new king to drink from the waters of Gihon during his coronation ceremony (Ps. 110:7).



The Gihon Spring

www.HolyLandPhotos.org

of the king of Assyria; and ^fI will defend this city for My own sake, and for the sake of My servant David.”⁷

⁷Then ^gIsaiah said, “Take a lump of figs.” So they took and laid *it* on the boil, and he recovered.

⁸And Hezekiah said to Isaiah, ^h“What is the sign that the LORD will heal me, and that I shall go up to the house of the LORD the third day?”

⁹Then Isaiah said, ⁱ“This is the sign to you from the LORD, that the LORD will do the thing which He has spoken: *shall* the shadow go forward ten degrees or go backward ten degrees?”

¹⁰And Hezekiah answered, “It is an easy thing for the shadow to go down ten ¹degrees; no, but let the shadow go backward ten degrees.”

¹¹So Isaiah the prophet cried out to the LORD, and ^jHe brought the shadow ten ²degrees backward, by which it had gone down on the sundial of Ahaz.

The Babylonian Envoys

^{12k} At that time ³Berodach-Baladan the son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent

⁶ ² Kin. 19:34;
2 Chr. 32:21
⁷ ⁹ Is. 38:21
⁸ ^h Judg. 6:17, 37,
39; Is. 7:11, 14; 38:22
⁹ Num. 23:19; Is.
38:7, 8
¹⁰ ¹ Lit. *steps*
¹¹ / Josh. 10:12-14;
Is. 38:8 ² Lit. *steps*
¹² ^k 2 Kin. 8:8, 9;
2 Chr. 32:31; Is.
39:1-8 ³ *Merodach-*
Baladan, Is. 39:1

¹³ ² Kin. 16:9;
2 Chr. 32:27, 31 ⁴ So
with many Heb.
mss., Syr., Tg.; MT
omits *all* ⁵ Lit. *the*
house of his armor
¹⁵ ^m 2 Kin. 20:13
¹⁷ ⁿ 2 Kin. 24:13;
25:13-15; 2 Chr.
36:10; Jer. 27:21,
22; 52:17

letters and a present to Hezekiah, for he heard that Hezekiah had been sick. ¹³And ^lHezekiah was attentive to them, and showed them all the house of his treasures—the silver and gold, the spices and precious ointment, and ⁴all ⁵his armor—all that was found among his treasures. There was nothing in his house or in all his dominion that Hezekiah did not show them.

¹⁴Then Isaiah the prophet went to King Hezekiah, and said to him, “What did these men say, and from where did they come to you?”

So Hezekiah said, “They came from a far country, from Babylon.”

¹⁵And he said, “What have they seen in your house?”

So Hezekiah answered, ^m“They have seen all that *is* in my house; there is nothing among my treasures that I have not shown them.”

¹⁶Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah, “Hear the word of the LORD: ¹⁷Behold, the days are coming when all that *is* in your house, and what your fathers have accumulated until this day, ⁿshall be carried to Babylon; nothing shall be left,” says the LORD. ¹⁸‘And

20:7 The practice of applying **figs** to an ulcerated sore is well attested in the records of the ancient Middle East, being mentioned as early as the Ras Shamra (Ugaritic) tablets of the second millennium B.C.

20:9 Once more the Lord provided a **sign** of His superintending intervention (see 19:29–31). Unlike his father Ahaz who cared little about a divine sign (see Is. 7:12), Hezekiah welcomed it (see vv. 10, 11). Hezekiah’s underlying trust in the Lord (see 18:5) surfaced repeatedly throughout his reign.

20:12 **Berodach-Baladan**, or more properly Merodach-Baladan, was a Chaldean king who twice ruled in Babylon (721–710, 703 B.C.). A perennial enemy of Assyria, he was twice defeated by them and cast out from Babylon. His search for allies in his resistance to Assyria may have occasioned the embassy to Hezekiah, especially because he had heard of Hezekiah’s miraculous deliverance from the Assy-

rian army (2 Chr. 32:31).

20:12–15 One of the remarkable features of the Bible is that it does not gloss over the faults of its best heroes and heroines. This is a case in point. This account of the foolishness of Hezekiah follows immediately on the narrative of his great trust in the Lord (vv. 1–11).

20:16–18 Isaiah’s messages of judgment were as important as his messages of mercy (see ch. 19; 20:1–11). **all . . . shall be carried to Babylon:** Hezekiah’s enthusiastic reception of Merodach-Baladan’s ambassadors and disclosure of his wealth to them would be remembered in a future time when Babylon was no longer Judah’s friend. Even before the fall of Jerusalem to Babylon (586 B.C.), Hezekiah’s son Manasseh was carried off to Babylon by an Assyrian king (see 2 Chr. 33:11). Isaiah pointed out Hezekiah’s foolishness.

^othey shall take away some of your sons who will ⁶descend from you, whom you will beget; ^pand they shall be ^qeunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.”

¹⁹So Hezekiah said to Isaiah, ^r“The word of the LORD which you have spoken is good!” For he said, “Will there not be peace and truth at least in my days?”

Death of Hezekiah

^{20s}Now the rest of the acts of Hezekiah—all his might, and how he ^tmade a ^upool and a ^vtunnel and ^wbrought water into the city—are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? ²¹So ^wHezekiah ⁸rested with his fathers. Then Manasseh his son reigned in his place.

Manasseh Reigns in Judah

21 Manasseh ^awas twelve years old when he became king, and he reigned fifty-five years in Jerusalem. His mother’s name was Hephzibah. ²And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, ^baccording to the abominations of the nations whom the LORD had cast out before the children of Israel. ³For he rebuilt the ¹high places ^cwhich Hezekiah his father had destroyed; he raised up altars for Baal, and made a ²wooden image, ^das Ahab king of Israel had done; and he ^eworshiped all ³the host of heaven and served them. ^{4f}He also built altars in the house of the LORD, of which the LORD had said, ^g“In Jerusalem I will put My name.” ⁵And he built altars for all the host of heaven in the ^htwo courts of the house of the LORD. ⁶ⁱAlso he made his son pass

18 ^o 2 Kin. 24:12;
2 Chr. 33:11 ^p Dan.
1:3-7 ^q Dan. 1:11, 18
⁶ be born from
19 ^r 1 Sam. 3:18
20 ^s 2 Chr. 32:32
^t Neh. 3:16 ^u 2 Kin.
18:17; Is. 7:3 ^v 2 Chr.
32:3, 30 ^w aqueduct
21 ^w 2 Kin. 16:20;
2 Chr. 32:33 ⁸ Died
and joined his
ancestors

CHAPTER 21

1 ^a 2 Chr. 33:1-9
2 ^b 2 Kin. 16:3
3 ^c 2 Kin. 18:4, 22
^d 1 Kin. 16:31-33
^e [Deut. 4:19; 17:2-5]; 2 Kin. 17:16;
23:5 ¹ Places for
pagan worship
² Heb. *Asherah*, a
Canaanite goddess
³ The gods of the
Assyrians
4 ^f Jer. 7:30; 32:34
^g 1 Kin. 11:13
5 ^h 1 Kin. 6:36; 7:12;
2 Kin. 23:12
6 ⁱ [Lev. 18:21; 20:2];
2 Kin. 16:3; 17:17
/ Lev. 19:26, 31;
[Deut. 18:10-14];
2 Kin. 17:17
7 ^k 2 Sam. 7:13;
1 Kin. 8:29; 9:3;
2 Kin. 23:27; 2 Chr.
7:12, 16; Jer. 32:34
⁴ A Canaanite
goddess ³ Temple
8 ^l 2 Sam. 7:10;
[2 Kin. 18:11, 12]
9 ^m [Prov. 29:12]
10 ⁿ 2 Kin. 17:13
11 ^o 2 Kin. 23:26;
27; 24:3, 4 ^p 1 Kin.
21:26 ^q Gen. 15:16
² 2 Kin. 21:9
12 ^s 1 Sam. 3:11;
Jer. 19:3

through the fire, practiced ^jsoothsaying, used witchcraft, and consulted spiritists and mediums. He did much evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke *Him* to anger. ⁷He even set a carved image of ⁴Asherah that he had made, in the ⁵house of which the LORD had said to David and to Solomon his son, ^k“In this house and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, I will put My name forever; ^{8l}and I will not make the feet of Israel wander anymore from the land which I gave their fathers—only if they are careful to do according to all that I have commanded them, and according to all the law that My servant Moses commanded them.” ⁹But they paid no attention, and Manasseh ^mseduced them to do more evil than the nations whom the LORD had destroyed before the children of Israel.

¹⁰And the LORD spoke ⁿby His servants the prophets, saying, ^{11o}“Because Manasseh king of Judah has done these abominations (^phe has acted more wickedly than all the ^qAmorites who *were* before him, and ^rhas also made Judah sin with his idols), ¹²therefore thus says the LORD God of Israel: ‘Behold, I am bringing *such* calamity upon Jerusalem and Judah, that whoever hears of it, both ^shis ears will tingle. ¹³And I will stretch over Jerusalem ^tthe measuring line of Samaria and the plummet of the house of Ahab; ^uI will wipe Jerusalem as *one* wipes a dish, wiping *it* and turning *it* upside down. ¹⁴So I will forsake the ^vremnant

13 ^l Lam. 2:8; Amos 7:7, 8 ^u 2 Kin. 22:16-19; 25:4-11 ¹⁴ ^v Jer. 6:9

20:19 The word . . . is good: Although Hezekiah recognized that Isaiah’s dire prophecy was for a future day, he humbly acknowledged his folly in putting his people in danger.

20:20, 21 a pool and a tunnel: Hezekiah dug a tunnel between the spring of Gihon and the Pool of Siloam to bring a ready supply of water within the eastern wall of Jerusalem, a deed that would prove especially helpful in time of siege.

21:1 Manasseh: This wicked king bore the same name as the older son of Joseph (Gen. 41:51). His reign of **fifty-five years** (697–642 B.C.) was the longest of any of the kings of the divided kingdom. Externally, the period was one of political stability. It is known as the Assyrian Peace, an era in which the kings Esarhaddon (681–668 B.C.) and Ashurbanipal (668–626 B.C.) reigned and brought the Assyrian Empire to its zenith. However, the length of Manasseh’s reign does not indicate a good rule, but rather God’s persevering mercy and faithfulness to the Davidic covenant (see 2 Chr. 33:10–13).

21:3 high places . . . Baal . . . wooden image: All that Hezekiah had done removing the wickedness of Canaanite religion from Israel was reversed by his son. The wording suggests not simply that he allowed the rebuilding of these obscene images, but that he actively directed their construction. **host of heaven:** Worship of heavenly bodies was strictly forbidden in the law of God (Deut. 4:19; 17:2–7) and was condemned strongly by Israel’s prophets (see Is. 47:13; Amos 5:26). Yet Manasseh paid no attention to either the law or the prophets (vv. 7, 8; 2 Chr. 33:2–10).

21:4–9 The list of religious outrages of Manasseh seems unbelievably perverse. He even brought objects of pagan worship and obscene symbols of the fertility religion of Canaan into the temple itself (see vv. 4, 5, 7). All that had been accomplished by the relatively godly kings following the purge of Jehu (see 15:34) and by the very godly king Hezekiah (see 18:4–6) was undone by this reprobate. But wicked as Manasseh was, God heard his prayer when he repented and did good (see 2 Chr. 33:12–16).

21:10 The author of Chronicles (2 Chr. 33:10, 11) reports that Manasseh’s failure to heed **the prophets** of God led to his being taken prisoner by the Assyrian king. The chronicler also reports Manasseh’s repentance, restoration, and subsequent reform efforts (2 Chr. 33:12, 13, 15, 16), all of which came too late to stop Judah’s ongoing apostasy. As a result, with the accession of Manasseh’s son Amon (642–640 B.C.), Judah’s spiritual wickedness surfaced again (vv. 20–22).

21:12 his ears will tingle: The announcement of such a fearsome judgment was designed to bring the king to repentance. If God’s purpose were merely to bring judgment, He would have done so without an announcement.

21:13 the measuring line of Samaria: The figures in this verse are marvelously powerful. If the people had any realization of the horrors that had befallen their sister city to the north, they would not want to be “measured” by the same implements that had designed Samaria’s destruction. **as one wipes a dish:** God would soon bring a judgment so terrible that it would never be forgotten.

21:14 God’s declaration that He would **forsake the remnant** does

of My inheritance and deliver them into the hand of their enemies; and they shall become victims of plunder to all their enemies, ¹⁵because they have done evil in My sight, and have provoked Me to anger since the day their fathers came out of Egypt, even to this day.”

¹⁶*w* Moreover Manasseh shed very much innocent blood, till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another, besides his sin by which he made Judah sin, in doing evil in the sight of the LORD.

¹⁷Now ^xthe rest of the acts of *y*Manasseh—all that he did, and the sin that he committed—are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? ¹⁸So ^zManasseh ⁶rested with his fathers, and was buried in the garden of his own house, in the garden of Uzza. Then his son Amon reigned in his place.

Amon's Reign and Death

¹⁹*a* Amon was twenty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned two years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Meshullemeth the daughter of Haruz of Jotbah. ²⁰And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, ^bas his father Manasseh had done. ²¹So he walked in all the ways that his father had walked; and he served the idols that his father had served, and worshiped them. ²²He ^cforsook the LORD God of his fathers, and did not walk in the way of the LORD.

²³*d* Then the servants of Amon ^econspired against him, and killed the king in his own house. ²⁴But the people of the

16 *w* 2 Kin. 24:4
17 *x* 2 Chr. 33:11-19
18 *z* 2 Chr. 33:20
19 *a* 2 Chr. 33:21-23
20 *b* 2 Kin. 21:2-6, 11, 16
21 *c* Judg. 2:12, 13;
1 Kin. 11:33; 1 Chr. 28:9
22 *d* 1 Chr. 3:14;
2 Chr. 33:24, 25;
Matt. 1:10 *e* 2 Kin. 12:20; 14:19

24 *f* 2 Kin. 14:5

CHAPTER 22

1 *a* 1 Kin. 13:2;
2 Chr. 34:1 *b* Josh. 15:39
2 *c* Deut. 5:32;
Josh. 1:7
3 *d* 2 Chr. 34:8
4 *e* 2 Kin. 12:4
f 2 Kin. 12:9, 10
5 *g* 2 Kin. 12:11-14

land ^fexecuted all those who had conspired against King Amon. Then the people of the land made his son Josiah king in his place.

²⁵Now the rest of the acts of Amon which he did, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? ²⁶And he was buried in his tomb in the garden of Uzza. Then Josiah his son reigned in his place.

Josiah Reigns in Judah

22 Josiah ^awas eight years old when he became king, and he reigned thirty-one years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jedidah the daughter of Adaiah of ^bBozkath. ²And he did *what* was right in the sight of the LORD, and walked in all the ways of his father David; he ^cdid not turn aside to the right hand or to the left.

Hilkiah Finds the Book of the Law

³*d* Now it came to pass, in the eighteenth year of King Josiah, *that* the king sent Shaphan the scribe, the son of Azaliah, the son of Meshullam, to the house of the LORD, saying: ⁴“Go up to Hilkiah the high priest, that he may count the money which has been ^ebrought into the house of the LORD, which ^fthe doorkeepers have gathered from the people. ⁵And let them ^gdeliver it into the hand of those doing the work, who are the overseers in the house of the LORD; let them give it to those who *are* in the house of the LORD doing the work, to repair the

not mean He would abolish the Davidic covenant (see Ps. 89:30–37). Rather, the meaning of God's word here is that Judah, the political remnant of God's kingdom (17:18), would also know chastisement for its sin.

21:15 since the day: The story of the OT is not a record of God's anger, but of the *delay* of the exercise of His wrath.

21:16 innocent blood: In times of deep wickedness true believers often lose their lives (see Joel 3:19). Innocent blood may also refer

to human sacrifice (v. 6; 2 Chr. 33:6).

21:18 garden of Uzza: His burial place apparently was not among the other kings of Judah. Some have suggested that the garden of Uzza was a sacred shrine to an astral deity.

21:19–22 Amon: This wicked king followed in the path of his father Manasseh, much as Ahaziah of Israel followed in the path of his father Ahab (see 1 Kin. 22:51–53).

21:23, 24 conspired against him: No reason is assigned for the conspiracy that brought about Amon's assassination. While it may have had some connection with the international crisis that precipitated Ashurbanipal's renewed attention to the west, Amon's own wickedness may have provided a sufficient cause. The assassins were themselves executed.

22:1 The name **Josiah** means “The Lord Supports.” Like the name of Cyrus (Is. 44:28; 45:1) and of the city of Bethlehem (Mic. 5:2), the name Josiah was announced by a prophet long before the time of his birth (see 1 Kin. 13:1, 2).

22:2 what was right: The young Josiah apparently was in the hands of godly advisors, one of whom may have been the prophet Zephaniah. In any case, his own concern for righteousness led to reform early in his reign (see 2 Chr. 34:3–7).

22:3 In his **eighteenth year** of reign (c. 622 B.C.), Josiah began extensive repairs on the temple (vv. 4–7; 2 Chr. 34:8–13).

22:4 Hilkiah the high priest: This man was a major figure in the revival of true religion that young Josiah accomplished. The work of restoring the temple was under his direction.

22:5–7 The careful accounting for the money used in the restoration of the temple is akin to that in the time of King Joash of Judah and of

garden

(Heb. *gan*) (21:18, 26; Gen. 2:8–10; Song 4:15, 16; Jer. 31:12) Strong's #1588

Gardens that belonged to kings (25:4; Neh. 3:15) were actually royal parks. Occasionally, parts of royal gardens might be used for purposes such as vegetable gardens (1 Kin. 21:2) or even burial grounds (21:18, 26). When ordinary people owned gardens, their main function was to produce food (Num. 24:6; Jer. 29:5). Gardens are spoken of symbolically in the Bible as portraits of happiness and fruitfulness. For example, the lovers in the Song of Solomon compared one another to a garden of delights (Song 4:12; 5:1; 8:13). The Garden of Eden represented God's ideal environment for man. Some of this garden's features, especially its rivers and the Tree of Life, are also used to portray God's final blessings for His people (Ezek. 47:12; Rev. 22:1, 2, 14).

damages of the house—⁶to carpenters and builders and masons—and to buy timber and hewn stone to repair the house. ⁷However ^hthere need be no accounting made with them of the money delivered into their hand, because they deal faithfully.”

⁸Then Hilkiah the high priest said to Shaphan the scribe, ⁱ“I have found the Book of the Law in the house of the LORD.” And Hilkiah gave the book to Shaphan, and he read it. ⁹So Shaphan the scribe went to the king, bringing the king word, saying, “Your servants have ¹gathered the money that was found in the house, and have delivered it into the hand of those who do the work, who oversee the house of the LORD.” ¹⁰Then Shaphan the scribe showed the king, saying, “Hilkiah the priest has given me a book.” And Shaphan read it before the king.

¹¹Now it happened, when the king heard the words of the Book of the Law,

⁷ ^h 2 Kin. 12:15;
[1 Cor. 4:2]
⁸ ⁱ Deut. 31:24-26;
2 Chr. 34:14
⁹ ¹ Lit. poured out

¹² / 2 Kin. 25:22; Jer.
26:24 ² Abdon the
son of Micah, 2 Chr.
34:20
¹³ ^k [Deut. 29:23-
28; 31:17, 18]
¹⁴ / 2 Chr. 34:22
¹⁶ ^m Deut. 29:27;
[Dan. 9:11-14]

that he tore his clothes. ¹²Then the king commanded Hilkiah the priest, ^jAhikam the son of Shaphan, ²Achbor the son of Michaiah, Shaphan the scribe, and Asaiah a servant of the king, saying, ¹³“Go, inquire of the LORD for me, for the people and for all Judah, concerning the words of this book that has been found; for great ^kis the wrath of the LORD that is aroused against us, because our fathers have not obeyed the words of this book, to do according to all that is written concerning us.”

¹⁴So Hilkiah the priest, Ahikam, Achbor, Shaphan, and Asaiah went to Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum the son of ^lTikvah, the son of Harhas, keeper of the wardrobe. (She dwelt in Jerusalem in the Second Quarter.) And they spoke with her. ¹⁵Then she said to them, “Thus says the LORD God of Israel, “Tell the man who sent you to Me, ¹⁶“Thus says the LORD: ‘Behold, ^mI will bring calamity

the high priest associated with him, Jehoiada (12:9–16).

22:8, 9 By the **Book of the Law** may be meant either parts or all of the Pentateuch. This book, though placed by the side of the ark of the covenant (Deut. 31:26), may have been lost, set aside, or hidden during the wicked reigns of Manasseh and Amon.

22:10–13 read it before the king: This is the dramatic event that shaped Josiah’s reign. Imagine what it must have been for the young king to hear the Word of God read for the first time. **tore his clothes:** Once again (see 19:1) a godly king tore his clothes in genuine remorse. Josiah’s great qualities are seen in his desiring prophetic sanction for his new walk. He did not wish to move on

with his own plan without a clear confirmation from the Lord.

22:14 Although **Huldah the prophetess** is mentioned only here (and in 2 Chr. 34:22–28) in the Scriptures, some have suggested that her husband Shallum was related to Jeremiah (see Jer. 32:7–12).

22:15 Huldah takes her place beside several prophetesses recorded in the Scriptures, such as Miriam (Ex. 15:20) and Deborah (Judg. 4:4). This woman was an authoritative agent for the transmission of the word of God to the highest authorities in the land of Judah. She served at the same time as other godly prophets, such as Jeremiah and Zephaniah.

22:16 all the words: The threat of calamity for apostasy that the

Female Prophets

Huldah played a significant part in the history of Israel, although she appeared only once on the stage of the nation’s history, during a time of religious defection.

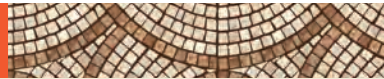
In Jerusalem, King Josiah of Judah initiated renewed interest in the Book of the Law, and Huldah participated in the subsequent spiritual revival. She was the wife of Shallum, who was “keeper of the wardrobe” (possibly either royal robes and attire or priestly garments and vestments). They lived in the Second Quarter, a newer section of Jerusalem which developed as a westward or northern expansion of the old city (perhaps somewhat like a modern-day suburb).

Huldah, not Jeremiah or Zephaniah (both of whom were active as prophets during this time), was consulted when the king instructed the priests to “inquire of the LORD” as to the meaning of the Book of the Law, a scroll that had been found during the work of restoration and cleaning in the temple. It was significant that with the number of prophets living in Jerusalem at that time, the priest Hilkiah and the rest of the king’s advisors turned to a woman for a word from God. This nullifies the reasoning some use to suggest that God only uses women for ministry when no men are available. Obviously, whether in a private audience or in the presence of the congregation, God used Huldah to bear testimony and deliver a message from Him to the high priest and to the king (22:14–20).

The tradition of female prophets is mentioned only sporadically in the Old Testament, but Huldah is not the only one highlighted. She is in good company with Miriam and Deborah (Ex. 15:20; Judg. 4:4); however, another female, Noadiah (Neh. 6:14), was a false prophet who worked against the people of God.

The regard for Huldah’s own integrity and authority as a woman of God made her validation of the recently discovered Book of the Law all that was required for immediate action on the part of the king. Her message was not her own, but from the Lord. The fact that the phrase, “Thus says the LORD,” is repeated four times in her short prophecy emphasizes that Huldah understood her responsibility and opportunity to be a channel through whom God delivered His word (22:15–17, 19).

All of the reforms set forth by King Josiah were based on the word of God as given to a woman. Huldah was apparently so well known as a woman of God and so highly trusted with regard to her understanding of God’s Law that for a time her nation’s whole religious consciousness and practice were re-ignited in faithfulness to God. Huldah, a deeply devout woman, made her God-given spiritual gifts available to God, and she was obedient and faithful to deliver the Word from God to her people.



on this place and on its inhabitants—all the words of the book which the king of Judah has read—¹⁷“because they have forsaken Me and burned incense to other gods, that they might provoke Me to anger with all the works of their hands. Therefore My wrath shall be aroused against this place and shall not be quenched.”¹⁸ But as for^o the king of Judah, who sent you to inquire of the LORD, in this manner you shall speak to him, ‘Thus says the LORD God of Israel: “Concerning the words which you have heard—¹⁹because your^p heart was tender, and you^q humbled yourself before the LORD when you heard what I spoke against this place and against its inhabitants, that they would become^r a desolation and^s a curse, and you tore your clothes and wept before Me, I also have heard^{you},” says the LORD.²⁰ “Surely, therefore, I will³ gather you to your fathers, and you^t shall⁴ be gathered to your grave in peace; and your eyes shall not see all the calamity which I will bring on this place.”’” So they brought back word to the king.

Josiah Restores True Worship

23 Now^a the king sent them to gather all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem to him.² The king went up to the house of the LORD with all the men of Judah, and with him all the inhabitants of Jerusalem—the priests and the

17 ^a Deut. 29:25-27; 2 Kin. 21:22
18 ^o 2 Chr. 34:26
19 ^p 1 Sam. 24:5; [Ps. 51:17; Is. 57:15]
^q Ex. 10:3; 1 Kin. 21:29; [2 Chr. 7:14]
^r Lev. 26:31; 32 ^s Jer. 26:6; 44:22
20 ^t 2 Kin. 23:30; [Ps. 37:37; Is. 57:1, 2] ³ Cause you to join your ancestors in death ⁴ Die a natural death

CHAPTER 23

1 ^a 2 Sam. 19:11;
2 Chr. 34:29, 30

2 ^b Deut. 31:10-13
^c 2 Kin. 22:8
3 ^d 2 Kin. 11:14
^e 2 Kin. 11:17
4 ^f 2 Kin. 25:18; Jer. 52:24 ^g 2 Kin. 21:3-7
¹ A Canaanite goddess ² The gods of the Assyrians
5 ^h 2 Kin. 21:3 ³ Of the Zodiac
6 ⁱ 2 Kin. 21:7 / Ex. 32:20 ^k 2 Chr. 34:4
⁴ Heb. *Asherah*, a Canaanite goddess

prophets and all the people, both small and great. And he^b read in their hearing all the words of the Book of the Covenant^c which had been found in the house of the LORD.

³ Then the king^d stood by a pillar and made a^e covenant before the LORD, to follow the LORD and to keep His commandments and His testimonies and His statutes, with all^{his} heart and all^{his} soul, to perform the words of this covenant that were written in this book. And all the people took a stand for the covenant.⁴ And the king commanded Hilkiah the high priest, the^f priests of the second order, and the doorkeepers, to bring^g out of the temple of the LORD all the articles that were made for Baal, for¹ Asherah, and for all² the host of heaven; and he burned them outside Jerusalem in the fields of Kidron, and carried their ashes to Bethel.⁵ Then he removed the idolatrous priests whom the kings of Judah had ordained to burn incense on the high places in the cities of Judah and in the places all around Jerusalem, and those who burned incense to Baal, to the sun, to the moon, to the³ constellations, and to^h all the host of heaven.⁶ And he brought out theⁱ wooden⁴ image from the house of the LORD, to the Brook Kidron outside Jerusalem, burned it at the Brook Kidron and ground^{it} to^j ashes, and threw its ashes on^k the graves of the

king heard may have been intended to reinforce the message of the parts of the Book of the Law that were found when the temple was being repaired and were read to the king (Deut. 28:15–68).

22:17–19 First was the bad news, addressed principally to the wicked who had forsaken God. Second was the good news, that Josiah would be delivered from impending judgment, basically due to his piety in a very difficult time.

22:20 in peace: Huldah's good word for Josiah personally was that

he would not see the calamity that God was going to bring upon the people. Josiah's subsequent death in battle (23:29, 30) was not at issue in Huldah's prophecy. Like his godly grandfather Hezekiah, the righteous Josiah would not live to see God's future judgment of Judah (see 20:19).

23:1 all the elders: We may contrast Jehu's great gathering of the priests and prophets of Baal, in anticipation of his great "sacrifice" (see 10:18–31).

23:2 he read . . . the Book of the Covenant: Like Moses (Ex. 24:3–8) and Joshua (Josh. 8:34, 35) before him, Josiah followed the ancient standard for godly leadership (Deut. 17:18–20; 31:9–13) and assembled the people to renew the covenant (see also Josh. 24). The king's own spiritual reaction and the reforms that he enacted (see 2 Chr. 35:1–19) suggest that the texts dealing with covenant obligations and sanctions (Lev. 26; Deut. 28) were a part of the public reading.

23:4 Articles of pagan worship had been taken to the **fields of Kidron** in the reforms of Asa (1 Kin. 15:13) and Hezekiah (2 Chr. 29:16; 30:14). **to Bethel:** Carrying the remaining ashes of burned religious articles to Bethel was a bold condemnation of both the pagan religious rites and the place associated with them (see 1 Kin. 12:28–30; Amos 4:4, 5). Thus Josiah's reforms spilled over into the northern kingdom as well.

23:5 idolatrous priests: The term used here is also used by Zephaniah, who employs it of those priests who led the rites associated with Baal and with star worship of various kinds (Zeph. 1:4). These priests had been appointed by Judah's past kings but functioned outside the divinely established priesthood. Hosea had condemned the idolatrous priests who officiated in the calf worship at Bethel (Hos. 10:5).

23:6 Although destroyed by Hezekiah (18:4), **wooden images** associated with the worship of Asherah had been reintroduced by

wooden image

(Heb. *asherah*) (17:10; 21:7; 23:6) Strong's #842

This word is both the name of a Canaanite fertility goddess (Asherah) and the designation of a wooden object representing her. In the OT, the word is rarely used as a proper name (21:7; 23:4; 1 Kin. 15:13; 18:19); far more often it is used for a carved image (21:7; 1 Kin. 14:15). Asherahs were placed on hills. Frequently altars and other images were next to these wooden images (1 Kin. 14:23; 2 Chr. 31:1; 33:19). The Lord warned His people before they entered the Promised Land that this false religion would snare them if they did not banish it from the land (Ex. 34:12–16; Deut. 7:2–6; 12:3; 16:21). Nevertheless, the problem persisted during much of the periods of the judges and kings (Judg. 3:7; 1 Kin. 16:33), although occasional reforms did seek to eliminate these images (18:4; Judg. 6:25–30). The prophets consistently sounded a clarion call to abandon such false worship, for God's judgment was coming (Is. 17:8; 27:9; Jer. 17:2; Mic. 5:14).

Israel and the kings of Judah. ²³But in the eighteenth year of King Josiah this Passover was held before the LORD in Jerusalem. ²⁴Moreover Josiah put away those who consulted mediums and spiritists, the household gods and idols, all the abominations that were seen in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem, that he might perform the words of ^kthe law which were written in the book ^lthat Hilkiah the priest found in the house of the LORD. ^{25m}Now before him there was no king like him, who turned to the LORD with all his heart, with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the Law of Moses; nor after him did *any* arise like him.

Impending Judgment on Judah

²⁶Nevertheless the LORD did not turn from the fierceness of His great wrath, with which His anger was aroused against Judah, ⁿbecause of all the provocations with which Manasseh had provoked Him. ²⁷And the LORD said, “I will also remove Judah from My sight, as ^oI have removed Israel, and will cast off this city Jerusalem which I have chosen, and the house of which I said, ^p“My name shall be there.”

Josiah Dies in Battle

²⁸Now the rest of the acts of Josiah, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? ^{29q}In his days Pharaoh Necho king of Egypt went ⁸to the aid of the king of Assyria, to the River Euphrates; and King Josiah went against him. And *Pharaoh Necho* killed him at ^rMegiddo when he ^sconfronted him. ^{30t}Then his ser-

²⁴ ^k [Lev. 19:31; 20:27]; Deut. 18:11
^l 2 Kin. 22:8
²⁵ ^m 2 Kin. 18:5
²⁶ ⁿ 2 Kin. 21:11, 12; 24:3, 4; Jer. 15:4
²⁷ ^o 2 Kin. 17:18, 20; 18:11; 21:13 ^p 1 Kin. 8:29; 9:3; 2 Kin. 21:4, 7
²⁹ ^q 2 Chr. 35:20; Jer. 2:16; 46:2
^r Judg. 5:19; Zech. 12:11 ^s 2 Kin. 14:8
⁸ Or to attack, Heb. *al* can mean together with or against
³⁰ ^t 2 Chr. 35:24; 2 Kin. 22:20

vants moved his body in a chariot from Megiddo, brought him to Jerusalem, and buried him in his own tomb. And ^uthe people of the land took Jehoahaz the son of Josiah, anointed him, and made him king in his father’s place.

The Reign and Captivity of Jehoahaz

^{31v}Jehoahaz was twenty-three years old when he became king, and he reigned three months in Jerusalem. His mother’s name was ^wHamutal the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. ³²And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his fathers had done. ³³Now Pharaoh Necho put him in prison ^xat Riblah in the land of Hamath, that he might not reign in Jerusalem; and he imposed on the land a tribute of one hundred talents of silver and a talent of gold. ³⁴Then ^yPharaoh Necho made Eliakim the son of Josiah king in place of his father Josiah, and ^zchanged his name to ^aJehoiakim. And *Pharaoh* took Jehoahaz ^band went to Egypt, and ⁹he died there.

Jehoiakim Reigns in Judah

³⁵So Jehoiakim gave ^cthe silver and gold to Pharaoh; but he taxed the land to give money according to the command of Pharaoh; he exacted the silver and gold from the people of the land, from every one according to his assessment, to give *it* to Pharaoh Necho. ^{36d}Jehoiakim was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. His mother’s name was Zebudah the daughter of Pedaiah of Rumah. ³⁷And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his fathers had done.

^u 2 Chr. 36:1-4
³¹ ^v 1 Chr. 3:15; Jer. 22:11 ^w 2 Kin. 24:18
³³ ^x 2 Kin. 25:6; Jer. 52:27
³⁴ ^y 2 Chr. 36:4
^z 2 Kin. 24:17; Dan. 1:7 ^a Matt. 1:11
^b Jer. 22:11, 12; Ezek. 19:3, 4 ⁹ Jehoahaz 35 < 2 Kin. 23:33
³⁶ ^d 2 Chr. 36:5; Jer. 22:18, 19; 26:1

23:25 no king: Josiah’s following of the Law was unparalleled among the kings of Israel and Judah. Like his grandfather Hezekiah, who was famed for being without equal in his trust of the Lord (18:5), Josiah was truly a righteous king. Because of their outstanding examples of godliness, the authors of Kings and Chronicles devote considerable space to their reigns (chs. 18–20; 22:1—23:30; 2 Chr. 29–32; 34; 35).

23:27 Despite their efforts, Judah’s sin was so entrenched that judgment was inevitable (17:18, 19; 23:26, 27; Lam. 1:5). Even though Manasseh repented, he still reaped the results of his sin.

23:29, 30 Pharaoh Necho (609–594 B.C.) was the recently crowned king of Egypt’s twenty-sixth dynasty. During the long years of Josiah’s reign (640–609 B.C.), Assyrian power had steadily crumbled until, as Nahum had predicted, Nineveh itself had fallen (612 B.C.) to a coalition of Chaldeans, Medes, and others. The surviving Assyrian forces had regrouped at Haran. Because Egypt was a long-standing ally of Assyria, Necho journeyed northward to help the beleaguered Assyrians. Josiah’s deployment of his forces in the Valley of Megiddo was an attempt to prevent the Egyptians from aiding the Assyrian forces at Haran. Although Pharaoh Necho would be delayed sufficiently so that Haran would be lost to the Assyrians, Josiah’s action ultimately cost him his life (2 Chr. 35:20–25).

23:31 Jehoahaz (called Shallum in Jer. 22:11) was Josiah’s third son (see 24:18; 1 Chr. 3:15). The name Jehoahaz means “The Lord Has Grasped.” This is the same name as the king of Israel, the son of Jehu (10:35). Johanan, Josiah’s first son, apparently had died and Eliakim (or Jehoiakim), the second son, was bypassed. A fourth son, Mattaniah (or Zedekiah), would eventually ascend to the throne and rule as Judah’s last king (598–586 B.C.). Jehoahaz’s reign of **three months** came to an end with the return of Pharaoh Necho from Haran. Jehoahaz was summoned to Riblah, Necho’s headquarters in Syria. Then he was led away to die in Egypt. His brother Eliakim was installed on the throne with his name changed to Jehoiakim. Judah thus became no more than a vassal of Egypt. The curse for Judah’s disobedience was about to fall (see Deut. 28:64–68).

23:37 did evil: Jehoiakim’s short reign (608–598 B.C.) was noted for its extreme wickedness (2 Chr. 36:5, 8). Jeremiah depicts him as a despicable monster who took advantage of his people (Jer. 22:13, 14, 17), filled the land with every sort of vice and violence (Jer. 18:18–20), and opposed all that was holy (Jer. 25:1–7). Unlike his father Josiah, who led the nation in reformation at the hearing of the Word of God (22:11; 23:1–25), Jehoiakim went so far as to cut up and burn a scroll of Scripture (Jer. 36:21–24) and to kill Urijah, a true prophet of God (Jer. 26:20–23).

Judah Overrun by Enemies

24 In ^ahis days Nebuchadnezzar king of ^bBabylon came up, and Jehoiakim became his vassal for three years. Then he turned and rebelled against him. ^{2c} And the LORD sent against him *raiding* ¹bands of Chaldeans, bands of Syrians, bands of Moabites, and bands of the people of Ammon; He sent them against Judah to destroy it, ^daccording to the word of the LORD which He had spoken by His servants the prophets. ³ Surely at the commandment of the LORD *this* came upon Judah, to remove *them* from His sight ^ebecause of the sins of Manasseh, according to all that he had done, ^{4f}and also because of the innocent blood that he had shed; for he had filled Jerusalem with innocent blood, which the LORD would not pardon.

⁵ Now the rest of the acts of Jehoiakim, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? ^{6g} So Jehoiakim rested with his fathers. Then Jehoiachin his son reigned in his place.

⁷ And ^hthe king of Egypt did not come out of his land anymore, for ⁱthe king of Babylon had taken all that belonged to the king of Egypt from the Brook of Egypt to the River Euphrates.

The Reign and Captivity of Jehoiachin

^{8j} Jehoiachin² was eighteen years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem three months. His mother's name was Nehushta the daughter of El-nathan of Jerusalem. ⁹ And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father had done.

CHAPTER 24

¹ ^a 2 Chr. 36:6; Jer. 25:1, 9; Dan. 1:1
² ^b 2 Kin. 20:14
² ^c Jer. 25:9; 32:28; 35:11; Ezek. 19:8
² ^d 2 Kin. 20:17; 21:12-14; 23:27 ¹ troops
³ ^e 2 Kin. 21:2, 11; 23:26
⁴ ^f 2 Kin. 21:16
⁶ ^g 2 Chr. 36:6, 8; Jer. 22:18, 19
⁷ ^h Jer. 37:5-7 ¹ Jer. 46:2
⁸ ⁱ 1 Chr. 3:16; 2 Chr. 36:9 ² Jeconiah,
1 Chr. 3:16; Jer. 24:1; or Coniah, Jer. 22:24, 28

¹⁰ ^k Dan. 1:1 ³ Lit. came into siege
¹² ^j Jer. 22:24-30; 24:1; 29:1, 2; Ezek. 17:12 ^m 2 Chr. 36:10
¹³ ⁿ 2 Kin. 20:17; Is. 39:6 ^o Dan. 5:2, 3
^p Jer. 20:5
¹⁴ ^q Is. 3:2, 3; Jer. 24:1 ^r 2 Kin. 24:16; Jer. 52:28 ^s 1 Sam. 13:19 ^t 2 Kin. 25:12
¹⁵ ^u 2 Chr. 36:10; Esth. 2:6; Jer. 22:24-28; Ezek. 17:12
¹⁶ ^v Jer. 52:28
¹⁷ ^w Jer. 37:1
^x 1 Chr. 3:15; 2 Chr. 36:10 ^y 2 Chr. 36:4
⁴ Lit. his
¹⁸ ^z 2 Chr. 36:11; Jer. 52:1

^{10k} At that time the servants of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up against Jerusalem, and the city ³ was besieged. ¹¹ And Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came against the city, as his servants were besieging it. ^{12l} Then Jehoiachin king of Judah, his mother, his servants, his princes, and his officers went out to the king of Babylon; and the king of Babylon, ^min the eighth year of his reign, took him prisoner.

The Captivity of Jerusalem

¹³ⁿ And he carried out from there all the treasures of the house of the LORD and the treasures of the king's house, and he ^ocut in pieces all the articles of gold which Solomon king of Israel had made in the temple of the LORD, ^pas the LORD had said. ¹⁴ Also ^qhe carried into captivity all Jerusalem: all the captains and all the mighty men of valor, ^rten thousand captives, and ^sall the craftsmen and smiths. None remained except ^tthe poorest people of the land. ¹⁵ And ^uhe carried Jehoiachin captive to Babylon. The king's mother, the king's wives, his officers, and the mighty of the land he carried into captivity from Jerusalem to Babylon. ^{16v} All the valiant men, seven thousand, and craftsmen and smiths, one thousand, all *who were* strong and fit for war, these the king of Babylon brought captive to Babylon.

Zedekiah Reigns in Judah

¹⁷ Then ^wthe king of Babylon made Mattaniah, ^x*Jehoiachin's*⁴ uncle, king in his place, and ^ychanged his name to Zedekiah.

^{18z} Zedekiah was twenty-one years old

24:1 After defeating the Assyrians and Egyptians at the Battle of Carchemish (605 B.C.), Nebuchadnezzar invaded Judah and made the country his vassal. He took Daniel and other notables to Babylon as spoils of war. Nebuchadnezzar, who succeeded his father as king of Babylon in 605 B.C. and reigned until 562 B.C., boasted in his annals of 605 and 604 B.C. of the subjugation and submission of all Syria and Palestine. Jehoiakim served Nebuchadnezzar **three years** and then rebelled, perhaps finding courage to do so when Pharaoh Necho succeeded in turning back the Babylonians at the Egyptian border in 601 B.C.

24:2 The name **Chaldeans** originally applied to certain inhabitants of southern Mesopotamia. But by the neo-Babylonian period, the term Chaldean had become identified with Babylonians, and Babylonia was called Chaldea. After the fall of the Chaldean or Neo-Babylonian Empire, the term Chaldean was used to mean "soothsayer" (see Dan. 2:2). In this verse the ethnic sense of the term is meant. Not only Chaldeans but raiding parties from nearby countries harassed Judah.

24:3 Because Jehoiakim and Judah had reproduced **the sins of Manasseh** (see 21:1-17), God's judgment was inevitable. Jehoiakim himself would die soon, even as Nebuchadnezzar was launching a second campaign into Judah (598 B.C.).

24:8 The name **Jehoiachin** means "The Lord Has Appointed." **eigh-**

teen years old: Because the scriptural descriptions of Jehoiachin seem to represent him as a mature young man (Jer. 22:24-30; Ezek. 19:6), Jehoiachin's age at accession was probably 18 rather than eight, as given elsewhere in some manuscripts (compare 2 Chr. 36:9).

24:12 Jehoiachin apparently had died before Nebuchadnezzar arrived at Jerusalem, because it was **Jehoiachin** who was carried off captive with other leaders of Judah (such as Ezekiel, see Ezek. 1:1). He had reigned only three months (v. 8); the year was 598 B.C. Jeremiah called him "Jeconiah" and "Coniah" (Jer. 22:24, 28).

24:14 **Ten thousand** is probably a round number for deportees of all types from Judah and Jerusalem. The figure probably includes various categories of exiles, such as those mentioned in v. 16.

24:15 **carried Jehoiachin captive:** Jehoiachin's captivity (see 2 Chr. 36:9, 10) was prophesied in Jer. 22:24-27. Unlike Jehoahaz, who was carried off into Egypt previously (23:33) and disappears from the pages of sacred history, Jehoiachin's eventual release is recorded twice (25:27-30; Jer. 52:31-34).

24:17 **Mattaniah** is Josiah's youngest son. His name means "The Gift of the Lord." All three of Josiah's sons who succeeded him as king reigned under a throne name: Shallum (1 Chr. 3:15; Jer. 22:11) ruled as Jehoahaz (23:31); Eliakim as Jehoiakim (23:34); and Mattaniah as Zedekiah. Likewise, Jeconiah (1 Chr. 3:16; Jer. 24:1), Jehoiakim's son, ruled as Jehoiachin (24:8).

Nebuchadnezzar's Campaigns Against Judah

605–586 B.C.

Events in Judah moved swiftly following the death of Josiah. Pharaoh Necho pressed his advantage by deporting Jehozahaz, the new ruler, and appointing a second son of Josiah, Jehoiakim, as king.



The prophet Jeremiah was taken to Egypt by Judahite refugees fleeing from Babylonian-controlled territory. They brought him to Tahpanhes, where he continued his prophecies.

DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM 586 B.C.

Zedekiah, the last king of Judah, was appointed by Nebuchadnezzar, but he also rebelled. Jerusalem was attacked and besieged for two and a half years. Lured by a feint of Pharaoh's army, the Babylonians withdrew temporarily. When the Egyptians retreated, however, the Babylonians returned with a vengeance to Jerusalem.

Facing starvation, Zedekiah with his army fled by night "by way of the gate between two walls" (2 Kin. 25:4) toward the Jordan River, but both were overtaken in the plains of Jericho.

Zedekiah was captured and was dragged off in chains to Riblah, where he saw his sons slaughtered before he was blinded and taken to Babylon. One month later (in 586 B.C.) Jerusalem was ransacked and burned. Numerous high officials were executed, the temple furnishings were carried off, and the people were exiled.

Dramatic military dispatches found at Lachish warn of the encircling army.

The Chaldeans (Kaidu), as the Neo-Babylonians were called, had important connections at Ur and Haran, centers of worship of the moon-god Sin. They also developed the trade routes across North Arabia, where Tema was particularly important, becoming the residence of Nabonidus during the last days of the kingdom.



CONQUEST OF JERUSALEM c. 597 B.C.

Soon a stronger power appeared in the north in the person of Nebuchadnezzar, king of the Chaldeans (Neo-Babylonians), who determined to follow the fierce policies of his Assyrian predecessors.

The tribute of Jehoiakim was paid at a distance when he heard of Nebuchadnezzar's approach. After three years as a Babylonian vassal, he rebelled, bringing a rapid response in the form of small-scale raids from Babylonians, Arameans, Moabites, and Ammonites (c. 602 B.C.). Finally, Nebuchadnezzar's forces controlled all of the coastal territory north of the Brook of Egypt.

When 18-year-old Jehoiachin had ruled just three months (597 B.C.), the main Babylonian army struck, capturing Jerusalem and exiling the king as a captive in Babylon. Ten thousand persons were deported.

when he became king, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was ^aHamutal the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. ^{19b}He also did evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that Jehoiakim had done. ²⁰For because of the anger of the LORD *this* happened in Jerusalem and Judah, that He finally cast them out from His presence. ^cThen Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.

The Fall and Captivity of Judah

25 Now it came to pass ^ain the tenth year of his reign, in the tenth month, on the tenth *day* of the month, *that* Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and all his army came against Jerusalem and encamped against it; and they built a siege wall against it all around. ²So the city was besieged until the eleventh year of King Zedekiah. ³By the ninth *day* of the ^bfourth month the famine had become so severe in the city that there was no food for the people of the land.

⁴Then ^cthe city wall was broken through, and all the men of war *fled* at night by way of the gate between two walls, which was by the king's garden, even though the Chaldeans *were* still encamped all around against the city. And ^dthe king¹ went by way of the ²plain. ⁵But the army of the Chaldeans pursued the king, and they overtook him in the plains of Jericho. All his army was scattered from him. ⁶So they took the king and brought him up to the king of Babylon ^eat Riblah, and they pronounced judgment on him. ⁷Then they killed the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, ^fput³ out the eyes of Zedekiah, bound him with bronze fetters, and took him to Babylon.

⁸And in the fifth month, ^gon the seventh *day* of the month (which was ^hthe

18 ^a 2 Kin. 23:31
19 ^b 2 Chr. 36:12
20 ^c 2 Chr. 36:13;
Ezek. 17:15

CHAPTER 25

1 ^a 2 Chr. 36:17; Jer. 6:6; 34:2; Ezek. 4:2; 24:1, 2; Hab. 1:6
3 ^b 2 Kin. 6:24, 25; Is. 3:1; Jer. 39:2; Lam. 4:9, 10
4 ^c Jer. 39:2 ^d Jer. 39:4-7; Ezek. 12:12 ¹ Lit. *he* ² Or *Arabah*, the Jordan Valley
6 ^e 2 Kin. 23:33; Jer. 52:9
7 ^f Jer. 39:7; Ezek. 17:16 ³ *blinded*
8 ^g Jer. 52:12
^h 2 Kin. 24:12

¹ Jer. 39:9
9 ¹ 2 Kin. 25:13;
2 Chr. 36:19; Ps. 79:1; Jer. 7:14 ^k Jer. 39:8 ¹ Jer. 17:27
10 ^m 2 Kin. 14:13; Neh. 1:3
11 ⁿ Is. 1:9; Jer. 5:19; 39:9
12 ^o 2 Kin. 24:14; Jer. 39:10; 40:7; 52:16
13 ^p Jer. 52:17
^q 1 Kin. 7:15
^r 1 Kin. 7:27 ^s 1 Kin. 7:23 ^t 2 Kin. 20:17; Jer. 27:19-22
14 ^u Ex. 27:3; 1 Kin. 7:45
16 ^v 1 Kin. 7:47
17 ^w 1 Kin. 7:15-22; Jer. 52:21 ⁴ About 27 feet
18 ^x Jer. 39:9-13; 52:12-16, 24 ¹ 1 Chr. 6:14; Ezra 7:1 ^z Jer. 21:1; 29:25, 29
19 ^a Esth. 1:14; Jer. 52:25

nineteenth year of King Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon), ⁱNebuzaradan the captain of the guard, a servant of the king of Babylon, came to Jerusalem. ^{9j}He burned the house of the LORD ^kand the king's house; all the houses of Jerusalem, that is, all the houses of the great, ^lhe burned with fire. ¹⁰And all the army of the Chaldeans who *were with* the captain of the guard ^mbroke down the walls of Jerusalem all around.

¹¹Then Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carried away captive ⁿthe rest of the people *who* remained in the city and the defectors who had deserted to the king of Babylon, with the rest of the multitude. ¹²But the captain of the guard ^oleft *some* of the poor of the land as vine-dressers and farmers. ^{13p}The bronze ^qpillars that *were* in the house of the LORD, and ^rthe carts and ^sthe bronze Sea that *were* in the house of the LORD, the Chaldeans broke in pieces, and ^tcarried their bronze to Babylon. ¹⁴They also took away ^uthe pots, the shovels, the trimmers, the spoons, and all the bronze utensils with which the priests ministered. ¹⁵The fire-pans and the basins, the things of solid gold and solid silver, the captain of the guard took away. ¹⁶The two pillars, one Sea, and the carts, which Solomon had made for the house of the LORD, ^vthe bronze of all these articles was beyond measure. ^{17w}The height of one pillar *was* ⁴eighteen cubits, and the capital on it *was* of bronze. The height of the capital was three cubits, and the network and pomegranates all around the capital were all of bronze. The second pillar was the same, with a network.

^{18x}And the captain of the guard took ^ySeraiah the chief priest, ^zZephaniah the second priest, and the three doorkeepers. ¹⁹He also took out of the city an officer who had charge of the men of war, ^afive

24:18 Mattaniah, who reigned under the name **Zedekiah**, came to the throne in 598 B.C. This was the year of Jehoiakim's death and Jehoiachin's captivity. Zedekiah reigned until the fall of Jerusalem in 586 B.C.

24:20 Zedekiah rebelled: The king of Judah foolishly relied on the Egyptians under Pharaoh Apries (or Hophra, Jer. 44:30) for help (see Ezek. 17:15-18). Apries had recently succeeded Psamtik II (594-588 B.C.) on the throne. He had great plans for Egypt's renewed glory. Unfortunately, his plans were not realized. Although Apries challenged Nebuchadnezzar by attacking Phoenicia and coming to Zedekiah's assistance (Jer. 37:5), he was not able to deliver Judah (Jer. 37:7, 8). His own reign ended in a coup d'état that ultimately cost him his life.

25:2 eleventh year: The siege of Jerusalem lasted for nearly two years (see v. 1).

25:4 Zedekiah's escape route lay between **two walls** near the royal garden at the southeastern corner of the city.

25:6 After his capture, Zedekiah was taken to **Riblah** on the Orontes River in Syria, which was the field headquarters for Nebuchadnezzar's western campaigns. Jehoahaz had been summoned there

earlier by Pharaoh Necho (23:33).

25:7 put out the eyes: The annals of the ancient Middle East often mention putting out the eyes of conquered people. The last thing Zedekiah saw was the reward of his sinful folly—the horrible spectacle of his own loved ones being put to death. He would carry this picture with him until his own death in a Babylonian prison (Jer. 52:11).

25:10 The walls of Jerusalem would lie in a ruined condition for a century and a half (see Neh. 2:11—6:16).

25:17 Three cubits may be the height of the capitals not including the upper portion of ornamental work, for 1 Kin. 7:16 and Jer. 52:22 record the height of the capitals as five cubits.

25:18 Although **Seraiah** was executed at Riblah (v. 21), his son Jehozadak was simply deported (1 Chr. 6:15). Through Jehozadak's line would come Ezra, the priest and great reformer, who one day would return to Jerusalem and take up Seraiah's work (Ezra 7:1). The second martyred priest **Zephaniah** may be the priest mentioned by Jeremiah (Jer. 21:1; 29:5). Jerusalem would be less prone to future rebellions with the chief religious and civil officials gone.

Exile of the Southern Kingdom

Knowledge about the destiny of the captives from Israel and Judah is sparse in the period following the capture of Samaria and the later destruction of Jerusalem.

Assyrians and Babylonians treated their subject peoples essentially the same: overwhelming military force used in a manner inspiring psychological terror, along with mass deportations and heavy tribute.

Three deportations are mentioned in Jer. 52:28–30, the largest one consisting of 3,023 Jews who were taken to Babylon along with King Jehoiachin in 597 B.C.

After the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuzaradan, the commander of the Babylonian army, hundreds of exiles were taken to Riblah in the land of Hamath, where, in addition to Zedekiah's sons, at least 61 were executed.



Clay tablets from the fifth century B.C. called the Murashu archives have been found at Nippur. They document the commercial transactions with Jewish families who remained in Mesopotamia following Ezra's return to Jerusalem.

Ezek. 1:1–3 and 3:15 indicate that other captives were placed at Tel Abib and at the Kebar River, both probably in the locale of Nippur, as were other villages mentioned in Ezra 2:59; 8:15, 17; Neh. 7:61.

Jehoiachin and his family were kept in Babylon, where clay ration receipts bearing his name and the names of his sons have been found.

men of ⁵the king's close associates who were found in the city, the chief recruiting officer of the army, who mustered the people of the land, and sixty men of the people of the land *who were* found in the city. ²⁰So Nebuzaradan, captain of the guard, took these and brought them to the king of Babylon at Riblah. ²¹Then the king of Babylon struck them and put them to death at Riblah in the land of Hamath. ^bThus Judah was carried away captive from its own land.

Gedaliah Made Governor of Judah

²²Then he made Gedaliah the son of ^cAhikam, the son of Shaphan, governor over ^dthe people who remained in the land of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had left. ²³Now when all the ^ecaptains of the armies, they and *their* men, heard that the king of Babylon had made Gedaliah governor, they came to Gedaliah at Mizpah—Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, Johanan the son of Careah, Seraiah the son of Tanhumeth the Netophathite, and ⁶Jaazaniah the son of a Maachathite, they and their men. ²⁴And Gedaliah took an oath before them and their men, and said to them, “Do not be afraid of the servants of the Chaldeans. Dwell in the land and serve

19 ⁵ Lit. *those seeing the king's face*
21 ^b Lev. 26:33; Deut. 28:36, 64; 2 Kin. 23:27
22 ^c 2 Kin. 22:12
^d Is. 1:9; Jer. 40:5
23 ^e Jer. 40:7-9
⁶ Jeazaniah, Jer. 40:8

25 ^f Jer. 41:1-3
26 ^g 2 Kin. 19:31; Jer. 43:4-7
27 ^h 2 Kin. 24:12, 15; Jer. 52:31-34 ⁱ Gen. 40:13, 20 ^j Lit. *Man of Marduk*
29 ^j 2 Sam. 9:7
⁸ Food
30 ⁹ Lit. *allowance*
¹ Lit. *allowance*

the king of Babylon, and it shall be well with you.” ²⁵But ^fit happened in the seventh month that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, the son of Elishama, of the royal family, came with ten men and struck and killed Gedaliah, the Jews, as well as the Chaldeans who were with him at Mizpah. ²⁶And all the people, small and great, and the captains of the armies, arose ^gand went to Egypt; for they were afraid of the Chaldeans.

Jehoiachin Released from Prison

²⁷^hNow it came to pass in the thirty-seventh year of the captivity of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the twelfth month, on the twenty-seventh *day* of the month, *that* ⁷Evil-Merodach king of Babylon, in the year that he began to reign, ⁱreleased Jehoiachin king of Judah from prison. ²⁸He spoke kindly to him, and gave him a more prominent seat than those of the kings who *were* with him in Babylon. ²⁹So Jehoiachin changed from his prison garments, and he ^jate ⁸bread regularly before the king all the days of his life. ³⁰And as for his ⁹provisions, *there was a* ¹regular ration given him by the king, a portion for each day, all the days of his life.

25:21 Like Israel before it (17:18), Judah was **carried away** captive because of its sinful apostasy.
25:22 Gedaliah: Gedaliah's father Ahikam had supported Jeremiah in his struggles with the apostate officials of Judah (Jer. 26:24). Gedaliah's training and his descent from a family noted for its antiestablishment stance doubtless made him acceptable to the Babylonians. The prophet Jeremiah, spared by the Babylonians (Jer. 39:11–14; 40:1–5), was allowed to stay and assist Gedaliah in the process of reconstruction in Judah (Jer. 40:6). There is confirmation of Gedaliah's importance in a seal impression recovered at Lachish mentioning him as “over the house,” that is, a senior administrator.
25:23 Mizpah had long been a center of spiritual and political prominence (1 Sam. 10:17; 1 Kin. 15:22). It was an ideal location for

the provincial government. **Jaazaniah:** This name appears on a seal impression found in Mizpah. The murderous deeds of **Ishmael** and the role of **Johanan** in the events are detailed by Jeremiah (Jer. 40:7—43:7).
25:27 Evil-Merodach succeeded Nebuchadnezzar and reigned a short time (561–560 **B.C.**). Tablets from the reign of Nabonidus (555–539 **B.C.**) record the daily rations of Jehoiachin who is called “Yaukin, king of the land of Yahud” (Judah).
25:28 spoke kindly: Evil-Merodach's kindness toward Jehoiachin brings the Book of 2 Kings to an end—on a ray of hope. Exile is the end neither of Israel nor of the Davidic line.

THE FIRST BOOK OF THE CHRONICLES



FIRST CHRONICLES is an inspirational history. Writing after the Exile, the author sought to inspire the remnant of Israelites with their extraordinary spiritual heritage. Appropriately, the book focuses on David. He was not only Israel's great king, but also one of Israel's greatest spiritual leaders. When he became king, one of his first priorities was to establish the worship of God as the center of Israel's national life. Amidst a great celebration, David brought the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem and appointed priests to minister regularly before it (chs. 15; 16). His actions demonstrated his concern that all of Israel would "give to the LORD the glory due His name" (16:29). This was Israel's extraordinary spiritual legacy: true worship of the living God.

Author and Date Originally both 1 and 2 Chronicles were one book. The overall consistency of style in the book indicates that although several contributors might have worked on it at various stages, one editor shaped the final product.

Jewish tradition identifies the editor as Ezra. This view finds support in the common themes and emphases of Chronicles and the Book of Ezra. Both books focus on the building and dedication of the temple. However, some have argued that the genealogies in 3:17–24 preclude Ezra's authorship because they include as many as 11 generations past Zerubbabel. To include such information, the book would have to have been written as late as the middle of the third century B.C.

On the other hand, it is possible that 3:17–24 may embrace only three generations. If so, a date of approximately 425 B.C. for the completion of Chronicles is quite reasonable. Ezra was active between 460 and 430 B.C. and thus could have incorporated this particular genealogy into the book. In short, the traditional Jewish view that Ezra wrote Chronicles can be accepted if it is remembered that Ezra was a compiler. He used sources and documents that account for the stylistic differences between the Book of Ezra and Chronicles.

Sources and Historicity It is evident that Chronicles is the result of a compilation process. The chronicler made use of the Books of Samuel and Kings for about half the narrative. Also, the genealogies in the beginning of the book are largely derived from the Pentateuch. The compiler even cites some of the sources. Among these are the genealogical records of the various tribes (7:9, 40), the book of the kings of Israel (9:1), and the books of Samuel, Nathan, and Gad (29:29).

A number of accounts in Chronicles parallel parts of Samuel and Kings. The fact that these accounts do not match word for word has led some scholars to assume that the chronicler was not concerned about accuracy in citation, or that the authors of all the books drew upon another common source. In any case, the inspiration and authority of 1 Chronicles is not at stake. Writing about the same events, the compiler of 1 Chronicles simply emphasized a different perspective on them than did the authors of Samuel and Kings. The synoptic Gospels function the same way. Each Gospel presents some of the same stories of Jesus in a different way. Each gives us new details and a new perspective on the event.

This chronicler's different emphases explain many of the differences between the narratives of Chronicles and Samuel. Some of the other apparent contradictions, especially in matters of spelling and numbers, can be explained as inadvertence in copying and text transmission. Numerals appear to have been written in notations that could easily be confused, and most of the deviations between Chronicles and Samuel can be accounted for in this manner. In many instances, the discrepancies are only apparent and suitable ways have been suggested to harmonize them. In any case, none of them threatens the inspiration and inerrancy of the original text.

Purpose Writing approximately when the Israelites returned from captivity, the chronicler wanted to emphasize the Israelites' continuity with their past. The remnant was returning to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple because of the promises God had given to David many years before (see Ezra 7:10–23). God's promises were still in effect—even though the people had been in exile.

The long genealogical section in 1 Chronicles emphasizes this continuity with the past (chs. 1–9). The genealogies point out that the promises to David were founded on God's ancient promises to the patriarchs. God had pledged to Abraham that He would make him the father of a great nation, one through which He would bless the whole earth (Gen. 12:1–3). God had also promised that a king would rule over this special nation (Gen. 17:6). It was revealed to Jacob that the king would descend specifically from Jacob's son Judah (Gen. 49:10). Finally, the genealogy in the Book of Ruth explains the link between the promise and the fulfillment by tracing the line of Judah through his son Perez to King David (Ruth 4:18–22). God had faithfully fulfilled His promise.

First Chronicles recounts the lineage of the people of God's promise and emphasizes the connection between Perez and King David (2:5–15). God would establish His reign upon the earth through David's royal line (17:7–15; see Gen. 17:7, 8; 2 Sam. 7). The kings God had promised to Abraham would begin with David and culminate in the One who would reign forever, Jesus (17:14; see Matt. 9:27; 12:23; Mark 10:47, 48; Luke 18:38). God had given the promise to David, and the faithful remnant inherited that same promise.

Since the chronicler wanted to encourage the returning Israelites, he focused on the glories of David's reign—his conquest of Jerusalem (11:4–9), his heroic soldiers (11:10–47), his victories over the Philistines (18:1–12), and his celebration when bringing the ark to Jerusalem (15:25–29). On the other hand, the author of Samuel told the story of David as an objective, realistic biography that did not overlook David's sins and failures. While it does not depict David as spiritually and morally perfect (see 13:9–14; 21:1, 8), Chronicles surprisingly omits the stories that reveal David's weakness—his affair with Bathsheba, his murder of Uriah (2 Sam. 11),

c. 1900 B.C.
Jacob and his family live in Canaan

c. 1400 B.C.
The Israelites conquer the Promised Land

c. 1050 B.C.
Saul becomes king of Israel

1010 B.C.
David's reign begins in Hebron

997 B.C.
The ark is brought to Jerusalem

c. 990 B.C.
David wars against the Ammonites

c. 972 B.C.
David stores up materials for the temple

970 B.C.
David dies and Solomon becomes king

930 B.C.
Solomon dies and the kingdom divides



Music was a significant part of life in the ancient Near East. The Bible mentions several instruments, five of which are listed in 1 Chronicles 15:28 (several more are mentioned in Ps. 150:3–5; Dan. 3:5).

Baker Photo Archive



Beth Shean is the location of the temple of Dagon mentioned in 1 Chr. 10:10. The Philistine and Israelite cities were at the top of this tell (mound in the background).

© William D. Mounce

and his estrangement from his son Absalom (2 Sam. 15). These are not omitted to give a false impression of David's character, for the books of Samuel recount these incidents in detail. Instead, Chronicles was written to inspire the remnant to follow in the spiritual footsteps of David.

At a time when the Israelites were rebuilding the nation and the temple (Ezra 3:7–13), the chronicler painted a picture of David's kingdom as a kingdom founded on the true worship of God. Not the throne, but the tabernacle and temple were the focus of David's kingdom. Chronicles extensively describes how David moved the ark of the covenant to a suitable place of worship (13:1–16:3), appointed appropriate religious personnel (16:4–6, 37–43; 23:1–26:32), and made plans for building a permanent temple (chs. 22; 28; 29). The theme of Chronicles is that God Himself established David's kingdom (29:10, 11) in fulfillment of His promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Through the Davidic covenant, David's kingdom itself embodies the promise of the future kingdom whose ruler is the great Son of David, Jesus Christ.

CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

As in 1 and 2 Samuel, Jesus is foreshadowed in this book through the life and influence of King David. God's covenant with David is a prelude to what the Messiah will bring about (7:11–14). Some might try to reason that David's son Solomon fulfilled the covenant, but they would only be partly right. Only Jesus can ultimately fulfill it.

The fact that the tribe of Judah is listed first in the national genealogy (2:3–15) was not coincidental. The writer was quietly celebrating that the monarchy, the temple construction, and the future Messiah (Jesus) would come from this tribe.

1 CHRONICLES OUTLINE

- I. The genealogies 1:1—9:44
 - A. The patriarchal genealogies 1:1–54
 - B. The genealogy of Judah 2:1—4:23
 - C. The genealogy of Simeon 4:24–43
 - D. The genealogy of Reuben 5:1–10
 - E. The genealogy of Gad 5:11–17
 - F. The Hagrite campaign 5:18–22
 - G. The genealogy of the half tribe of Manasseh 5:23–26
 - H. The genealogy of Levi 6:1–81
 - I. The genealogy of Issachar 7:1–5
 - J. The genealogy of Benjamin 7:6–12
 - K. The genealogy of Naphtali 7:13
 - L. The genealogy of Manasseh 7:14–19
 - M. The genealogy of Ephraim 7:20–29
 - N. The genealogy of Asher 7:30–40
 - O. The genealogy of Benjamin 8:1–40
 - P. The settlers of Jerusalem 9:1–34
 - Q. The genealogy of Saul 9:35–44
- II. The rise of David 10:1—29:30
 - A. The death of Saul 10:1–14
 - B. The succession of David 11:1—12:40
 - C. The transfer of the ark 13:1–14
 - D. The establishment of David's rule 14:1–17
 - E. The arrival and installation of the ark 15:1—16:43
 - F. God's covenant with David 17:1–27
 - G. David's international relations 18:1—20:8
 - H. David's census and its aftermath 21:1—22:1
 - I. The preparations for succession 22:2—29:30

The Family of Adam— Seth to Abraham

Adam,^a ^bSeth, Enosh, ²Cainan, Mahalalel, Jared, ³Enoch, Methuselah, Lamech, ^{4c}Noah, ¹Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

^{5d}The sons of Japheth were Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tiras. ⁶The sons of Gomer were Ashkenaz, ²Diphath, and Togarmah. ⁷The sons of Javan were Elishah, ³Tarshishah, Kittim, and ⁴Rodanim.

^{8e}The sons of Ham were Cush, Mizraim, Put, and Canaan. ⁹The sons of Cush were Seba, Havilah, ⁵Sabta, ⁶Raama, and Sabtechah. The sons of Raama were Sheba and Dedan. ¹⁰Cush ^fbegot Nimrod; he began to be a mighty one on the earth. ¹¹Mizraim begot Ludim, Anamim, Lehabim, Naphtuhim, ¹²Pathrusim, Casluhim (from whom came the Philistines and the ^gCaphtorim). ^{13h}Canaan begot Sidon, his firstborn, and Heth; ¹⁴the Jebusite, the Amorite, and the Girgashite; ¹⁵the Hivite, the Arkite, and the Sinite; ¹⁶the Arvadite, the Zemarite, and the Hamathite.

¹⁷The sons of ⁱShem were Elam, Ashur, ^jArphaxad, Lud, Aram, Uz, Hul, Gether, and ⁷Meshech. ¹⁸Arphaxad begot Shelah, and Shelah begot Eber. ¹⁹To Eber were born two sons: the name of one was ⁸Peleg, for in his days the ⁹earth was divided; and his brother's name was Joktan. ^{20k}Joktan begot Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmaveth, Jerah, ²¹Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah, ^{22l}Ebal, Abimael, Sheba, ²³Ophir, Havilah, and Jobab. All these were the sons of Joktan.

^{24l}Shem, Arphaxad, Shelah, ^{25m}Eber, Peleg, Reu, ²⁶Serug, Nahor, Terah, ²⁷and ⁿAbram, who is Abraham. ^{28o}The sons of Abraham were ^pIsaac and ^qIshmael.

The Books of the Chronicles and the Kings

In 1 and 2 Chronicles we see repeated much of the information found in 1 and 2 Kings. The following chart shows how the books differ:

	1 and 2 Kings	1 and 2 Chronicles
Style	realism	idealism
Viewpoint	civil and political	spiritual and moral
Purpose	indictment; to document the failures of God's people	incitement; to encourage the Jews returning from captivity
Focus	northern and southern kingdoms; all kings whether good or evil	southern kingdom of Judah; King David, King Solomon, and the godly kings of Judah
Discussion of the temple and worship	five chapters (1 Kin. 5–8; 2 Kin. 12)	twenty chapters (1 Chr. 13; 15; 16; 22–26; 28; 29; 2 Chr. 2–7; 24; 29; 30; 34)

CHAPTER 1

¹ ^a Gen. 1:27; 2:7; 5:1, 2, 5 ^b Gen. 4:25, 26; 5:3–9
⁴ ^c Gen. 5:28–10:1
¹ So with MT, Vg.; LXX adds the sons of Noah
⁵ ^d Gen. 10:2–4
⁶ ² Riphath, Gen. 10:3
⁷ ³ Tarshish, Gen. 10:4 ⁴ Dodanim, Gen. 10:4
⁸ ^e Gen. 10:6
⁹ ⁵ Sabtah, Gen. 10:7
¹⁰ ⁶ Raamah, Gen. 10:7
¹⁰ ^f Gen. 10:8–10, 13
¹² ^g Deut. 2:23
¹³ ^h Gen. 9:18, 25–27; 10:15
¹⁷ ⁱ Gen. 10:22–29; 11:10 / Luke 3:36
⁷ Mash, Gen. 10:23
¹⁹ ⁸ Lit. Division, Gen. 10:25 ⁹ Or land
²⁰ ^k Gen. 10:26

The Family of Ishmael

²⁹These are their genealogies: The ^rfirstborn of Ishmael was Nebajoth; then Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, ³⁰Mishma, Dumah, Massa, ²Hadad, Tema, ³¹Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah. These were the sons of Ishmael.

The Family of Keturah

³²Now ^sthe sons born to Keturah, Abraham's concubine, were Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah. The sons of Jokshan were Sheba and Dedan. ³³The sons of Midian were Ephah, Epher, Hanoch, Abida, and Eldaah. All these were the children of Keturah.

The Family of Isaac

³⁴And ^tAbraham begot Isaac. ^uThe

²² ¹ Obal, Gen. 10:28 ²⁴ ¹ Gen. 11:10–26; Luke 3:34–36
²⁵ ^m Gen. 11:15 ²⁷ ⁿ Gen. 17:5 ²⁸ ^o Gen. 21:2, 3 ^p Gen. 21:2
^q Gen. 16:11, 15 ²⁹ ^r Gen. 25:13–16 ³⁰ ² Hadar, Gen. 25:15
³² ^s Gen. 25:1–4 ³⁴ ^t Gen. 21:2 ^u Gen. 25:9, 25, 26, 29; 32:28

1:1 Adam, Seth, Enosh: The names of these ancient, pre-Flood characters were included in the genealogical record with people whose historical identities have never been questioned, such as David (2:15) and Zerubbabel (3:19). This indicates that the chronicler had no question as to their historicity.

1:7, 8 Rodanim referred to the Rhodites, natives of the Greek island of Rhodes. **sons of Ham:** Great nations were indicated by some of the names here: **Cush** referred to the Ethiopians, **Mizraim** to the Egyptians, **Canaan** to the Canaanites.

1:10 Cush begot Nimrod: It seems that the chronicler used the genealogy of Gen. 10 as the primary source for this genealogy. However, he used it selectively. For example, Gen. 10:9–12 was not included. The apparent purpose of this genealogy was to establish the line between Adam and David, and between David and the reigning Davidic monarch.

1:12 Caphtorim: These people lived in Caphtor (Deut. 2:23), known in ancient Akkadian texts as Kaptara and probably to be identified as Crete. The Caphtorim were related to the Philistines, or the two terms might even be interchangeable (see Jer. 47:4; Amos 9:7).

1:13 Heth founded the nation of the Hittites, a people in what is now central Turkey who achieved great power and prominence in the middle of the second millennium B.C. After the Hittite kingdom

fell to the Sea Peoples around 1200 B.C., many Hittites settled in enclaves in Syria and Palestine.

1:18 Eber was the ancestor of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The name Hebrew, a derivative of Eber's name, was applied to the Israelites. The central place Eber occupies in the genealogies of Abram in Genesis and 1 Chronicles suggests a connection between the names Hebrew and Eber (1:24–27; see Gen. 10:21; 11:10–26). Indeed the name Hebrew may simply mean an “Eberite.”

1:19 the earth was divided: This refers to the division of the earth's population by the scattering of the human race following the judgment of God on the Tower of Babel. Chronologically, **Peleg** apparently fits about halfway between Shem and Abram (1:24–27), a most suitable place for the Tower of Babel episode.

1:28 Isaac was the son of the covenant, so his name occurs first when the names Isaac and Ishmael are mentioned together, even though **Ishmael** was born first. Moreover, Ishmael was the son of Abraham's concubine Hagar—not of his wife Sarai.

1:32, 33 Both Ishmael and **Midian** were descendants of Abraham, Ishmael by a concubine and Midian by another wife Abraham married after Sarah's death (Gen. 25:1, 2). The Ishmaelites and Midianites were tribes that lived in the Arabian deserts.

sons of Isaac *were* Esau and Israel. ³⁵The sons of ^vEsau *were* Eliphaz, Reuel, Jeush, Jaalam, and Korah. ³⁶And the sons of Eliphaz *were* Teman, Omar, ³Zephi, Gatam, and Kenaz; and *by* ^wTimna, Amalek. ³⁷The sons of Reuel *were* Nath, Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah.

The Family of Seir

^{38x}The sons of Seir *were* Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah, Dishon, Ezer, and Dishan. ³⁹And the sons of Lotan *were* Hori and ⁴Homam; Lotan's sister *was* Timna. ⁴⁰The sons of Shobal *were* ⁵Alian, Manahath, Ebal, ⁶Shephi, and Onam. The sons of Zibeon *were* Ajah and Anah. ⁴¹The son of Anah *was* ^yDishon. The sons of Dishon *were* ⁷Hamran, Eshban, Ithran, and Cheran. ⁴²The sons of Ezer *were* Bilhan, Zaavan, and ⁸Jaakan. The sons of Dishan *were* Uz and Aran.

The Kings of Edom

⁴³Now these *were* the ^zkings who reigned in the land of Edom before a king reigned over the children of Israel: Bela the son of Beor, and the name of his city *was* Dinhabah. ⁴⁴And when Bela died, Jobab the son of Zerah of Bozrah reigned in his place. ⁴⁵When Jobab died, Husham of the land of the Temanites reigned in his place. ⁴⁶And when Husham died, Hadad the son of Bedad, who ⁹attacked Midian in the field of Moab, reigned in his place. The name of his city *was* Avith. ⁴⁷When Hadad died, Samlah of Masrekah reigned in his place. ^{48a}And when Samlah died, Saul of Rehoboth-by-the-River reigned in his place. ⁴⁹When Saul died, Baal-Hanan the son of Achbor reigned in his place. ⁵⁰And when Baal-Hanan died, ¹Hadad reigned in his place; and the name of his city *was* ²Pai. His wife's name *was* Mehetabel the daughter of Matred, the

³⁵ ^v Gen. 36:10-19
³⁶ ^w Gen. 36:12
³ Zepho, Gen. 36:11
³⁸ ^x Gen. 36:20-28
³⁹ ⁴ Hemam or Heman, Gen. 36:22
⁴⁰ ⁵ Alvan, Gen. 36:23
⁶ Shepho, Gen. 36:23
⁴¹ ^y Gen. 36:25
⁷ Hemdan, Gen. 36:26
⁴² ⁸ Akan, Gen. 36:27
⁴³ ^z Gen. 36:31-43
⁴⁶ ⁹ Lit. struck
⁴⁸ ^a Gen. 36:37
⁵⁰ ¹ Hadar, Gen. 36:39
² Pau, Gen. 36:39

⁵¹ ³ Alvah, Gen. 36:40

CHAPTER 2

¹ ^a Gen. 29:32-35; 35:23, 26; 46:8-27
^b Gen. 29:32; 35:22
¹ Jacob, Gen. 32:28
³ ^c Gen. 38:3-5; 46:12; Num. 26:19
^d Gen. 38:2
^e Gen. 38:7
⁴ ^f Gen. 38:6
⁹ Matt. 1:3
⁵ ^h Gen. 46:12; Ruth 4:18
⁶ ¹ Kin. 4:31
² Zabdi, Josh. 7:1
³ Darda, 1 Kin. 4:31
⁷ ¹ Chr. 4:1
^k Josh. 6:18
⁴ Achan, Josh. 7:1
⁵ ^{banned or devoted}
⁹ ⁶ Aram, Matt. 1:3, 4
⁷ ⁷ Caleb, vv. 18, 42
¹⁰ ¹ Ruth 4:19-22; Matt. 1:4
^m Num. 1:7; 2:3
¹¹ ⁸ Salmon, Ruth 4:21; Luke 3:32
¹³ ¹ ¹ Sam. 16:6
⁹ Shammah, 1 Sam. 16:9
¹⁵ ¹ ¹ Sam. 16:10, 11; 17:12

daughter of Mezahab. ⁵¹Hadad died also. And the chiefs of Edom *were* Chief Timnah, Chief ³Aliah, Chief Jetheth, ⁵²Chief Aholibamah, Chief Elah, Chief Pinon, ⁵³Chief Kenaz, Chief Teman, Chief Mibzar, ⁵⁴Chief Magdiel, and Chief Iram. These *were* the chiefs of Edom.

The Family of Israel

² These *were* the ^asons of ¹Israel: ^bReuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, ²Dan, Joseph, Benjamin, Naphtali, Gad, and Asher.

From Judah to David

³The sons of ^cJudah *were* Er, Onan, and Shelah. These three *were* born to him by the daughter of ^dShua, the Canaanitess. ^eEr, the firstborn of Judah, *was* wicked in the sight of the LORD; so He killed him. ⁴And ^fTamar, his daughter-in-law, ^gbore him Perez and Zerah. All the sons of Judah *were* five.

⁵The sons of ^hPerez *were* Hezron and Hamul. ⁶The sons of Zerah *were* ²Zimri, ⁱEthan, Heman, Calcol, and ³Dara—five of them in all.

⁷The son of ^jCarmi *was* ⁴Achar, the troubler of Israel, who transgressed in the ^kaccursed ⁵thing.

⁸The son of Ethan *was* Azariah.

⁹Also the sons of Hezron who *were* born to him *were* Jerahmeel, ⁶Ram, and ⁷Chelubai. ¹⁰Ram ¹begot Amminadab, and Amminadab begot Nahshon, ^mleader of the children of Judah; ¹¹Nahshon begot ⁸Salma, and Salma begot Boaz; ¹²Boaz begot Obed, and Obed begot Jesse; ¹³ⁿJesse begot Eliab his firstborn, Abinadab the second, ⁹Shimea the third, ¹⁴Nethanel the fourth, Raddai the fifth, ¹⁵Ozem the sixth, and David the ^oseventh.

¹⁶Now their sisters *were* Zeruiah and

1:36 Timna was Eliphaz's concubine (Gen. 36:12). Timna's son Amalek was the founder of the Amalekites, a people that became one of Israel's most persistent enemies (Ex. 17:8-16; Deut. 25:17-19; 1 Sam. 15:1-3).

1:38 Seir was the patriarchal name of the pre-Edomite population of the region east and south of the Dead Sea (Gen. 36:20-30). Esau's daughter-in-law Timna (vv. 35, 36) was the sister of Lotan and daughter of Seir. Thus the people of Seir and the descendants of Esau were related by marriage, and together these two people groups became the kingdom of Edom (v. 43).

1:43 the kings . . . of Edom: Compare Gen. 36:31-39. These kings were apparently descendants of Esau. The Edomites were ruled by kings several centuries before the Israelites. This fact helps explain Israel's later demand to have "a king to judge us like all the nations" (1 Sam. 8:5). Although the Edomite kings ruled in succession, they were not parts of a dynasty, as the reference to their particular cities makes clear. Apparently Edom did not have a capital, and its kings ruled from whatever place they considered home.

1:51 The Hebrew word translated **chiefs** usually referred to military leaders. Compare Gen. 36:40-43.

2:1, 2 Compare the order of the **sons of Israel** with Gen. 35:23-26.

2:3 Though he was the fourth son of Jacob (v. 1), Judah appears first in the detailed genealogy because the messianic promise was to be channeled through him (Gen. 49:10). Thus the chronicler reveals that his genealogy and his presentation of the events are controlled by theological concerns rather than strict chronology.

2:6 Though the line to David passed through Zerah's brother Perez, Zerah's descendants are mentioned here because of the prominence of Achar (v. 7), called Achan in the narrative of Josh. 7:10-26.

Ethan, Heman, Calcol, and Dara are mentioned because of their role in temple music under King David and their distinction as poets and sages (15:16-19; 1 Kin. 4:29-31).

2:10 This genealogy is selective, focusing on only those members important to the lineage. For example, **Nahshon** was head of the tribe of Judah at the time of the wilderness march from Sinai to Kadesh Barnea (Num. 1:7; 2:3; 7:12). He was more than five generations removed from Judah himself (2:4-10), since the time between Judah and Nahshon was over 450 years.

2:16 Sisters are rarely mentioned in ancient genealogies. However, this genealogy pays particular attention to the family of David and thus to David's sisters.

Abigail. ¹⁶And the sons of Zeruiah were Abishai, Joab, and Asahel—three. ¹⁷Abigail bore Amasa; and the father of Amasa was ¹⁸Jether the Ishmaelite.

The Family of Hezron

¹⁸Caleb the son of Hezron had children by Azubah, his wife, and by Jerioth. Now these were her sons: Jesher, Shobab, and Ardon. ¹⁹When Azubah died, Caleb ²⁰took ²¹Ephrath³ as his wife, who bore him Hur. ²⁰And Hur begot Uri, and Uri begot ²¹Bezalel.

²¹Now afterward Hezron went in to the daughter of ²²Machir the father of Gilead, whom he married when he was sixty years old; and she bore him Segub. ²²Segub begot ²³Jair,⁴ who had twenty-three cities in the land of Gilead. ²³^u(Geshur and Syria took from them the towns of Jair, with Kenath and its towns—sixty towns.) All these belonged to the sons of Machir the father of Gilead. ²⁴After Hezron died in Caleb Ephrathah, Hezron's wife Abijah bore him ²⁵Ashhur the father of Tekoa.

The Family of Jerahmeel

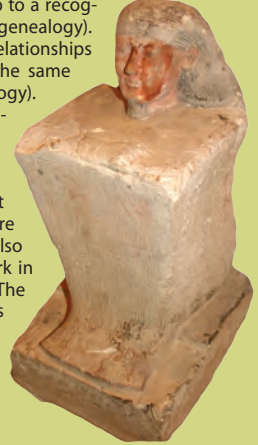
²⁵The sons of Jerahmeel, the firstborn of Hezron, were Ram, the firstborn, and Bunah, Oren, Ozem, and Ahijah. ²⁶Jerahmeel had another wife, whose name was Atarah; she was the mother of Onam. ²⁷The sons of Ram, the firstborn of Jerahmeel, were Maaz, Jamin, and Eker. ²⁸The sons of Onam were Shammai and Jada. The sons of Shammai were Nadab and Abishur.

²⁹And the name of the wife of Abishur was Abihail, and she bore him Ahban and Molid. ³⁰The sons of Nadab were Seled and Appaim; Seled died without children. ³¹The son of Appaim was Ishi, the son of Ishi was Sheshan, and ³²Sheshan's son was Ahlai. ³²The sons of Jada, the brother of Shammai, were Jether and Jonathan; Jether died without children. ³³The sons of Jonathan were Peleth and Zaza. These were the sons of Jerahmeel.

³⁴Now Sheshan had no sons, only daughters. And Sheshan had an Egyptian servant whose name was Jarha. ³⁵Sheshan gave his daughter to Jarha his servant as wife, and she bore him Attai. ³⁶Attai begot Nathan, and Nathan begot ³⁷Zabad; ³⁷Zabad begot Ephlal, and Eph-

Genealogies

Genealogies of the ancient Middle East were fluid in nature. The relationship between names might change—names might be added or omitted. Genealogies were used to legitimize a person's position by showing his relationship to a recognized and accepted ancestor (linear genealogy). They also demonstrated the relationships among members or segments of the same family (segmented or mixed genealogy). The genealogies of 1 Chronicles provide evidence that God is sovereign over history from creation. Names within genealogies are reminders of what God has done in the past and often embody hope for the future as well. Continuity with the past is also demonstrated in God's hand at work in establishing and preserving Israel. The chronicler's interest was in God's choice—whether of an individual (Abraham), a nation (Israel), a tribe (Judah), or a king (David and Solomon).



Genealogies were important in the ancient world. The surface of this statue is covered with texts that record the names and titles of twenty-six generations of Basa's paternal family, 945–715 B.C., Egypt.

Baker Photo Archive, courtesy of the Oriental Institute Museum, University of Chicago

¹⁶ ² 2 Sam. 2:18
¹⁷ ¹ Jithra the Israelite, 2 Sam. 17:25
¹⁹ ^u 1 Chr. 2:50
² Lit. took to himself
³ Or Ephrathah
²⁰ ^r Ex. 31:2; 38:22
²¹ ^s Num. 27:1; Judg. 5:14; 1 Chr. 7:14
²² ^r Judg. 10:3
⁴ Reckoned to Manasseh through the daughter of Machir, Num. 32:41; Deut. 3:14; 25:5, 6; 1 Kin. 4:13; 1 Chr. 7:14
²³ ^u Num. 32:41; Deut. 3:14; Josh. 13:30
²⁴ ^v 1 Chr. 4:5
³¹ ^w 1 Chr. 2:34, 35
³⁶ ^x 1 Chr. 11:41

³⁷ ^y 2 Chr. 23:1

lal begot ³⁸Obed; ³⁸Obed begot Jehu, and Jehu begot Azariah; ³⁹Azariah begot Helez, and Helez begot Eleasah; ⁴⁰Eleasah begot Sismai, and Sismai begot Shallum; ⁴¹Shallum begot Jekamiah, and Jekamiah begot Elishama.

The Family of Caleb

⁴²The descendants of Caleb the brother of Jerahmeel were Mesha, his firstborn, who was the father of Ziph, and the sons of Mareshah the father of Hebron. ⁴³The sons of Hebron were Korah, Tappuah, Rekem, and Shema. ⁴⁴Shema begot Raham the father of Jorkoam, and Rekem begot Shammai. ⁴⁵And the son of Shammai was Maon, and Maon was the father of Beth Zur.

⁴⁶Ephah, Caleb's concubine, bore Haran, Moza, and Gazez; and Haran begot Gazez. ⁴⁷And the sons of Jahdai were Regem, Jotham, Geshan, Pelet, Ephah, and Shaaph.

2:18 This Caleb was not the famous companion of Joshua (Num. 13:6; Josh. 14:6, 7), who lived several centuries later, during the conquest of Canaan. In fact, one of this Caleb's descendants, Bezalel (v. 20), was a craftsman charged with constructing the wilderness tabernacle (Ex. 31:2).

2:25 The sons of Jerahmeel would eventually occupy the Negev, the desert area of southern Judah.

2:42 This was the same Caleb as that of vv. 18, 19. Here his genealogy is much longer, apparently transmitted through other wives.

⁴⁸Maachah, Caleb's concubine, bore Sheber and Tirhanah. ⁴⁹She also bore Shaaph the father of Madmannah, Sheva the father of Machbenah and the father of Gibeab. And the daughter of Caleb was ^zAchsah.⁵

⁵⁰These were the descendants of Caleb: The sons of ^aHur, the firstborn of ⁶Ephrathah, were Shobal the father of ^bKirjath Jearim, ⁵¹Salma the father of Bethlehem, and Hareph the father of Beth Gader.

⁵²And Shobal the father of Kirjath Jearim had descendants: ⁷Haroeah, and half of the ⁸families of Manuhoth. ⁵³The families of Kirjath Jearim were the Ithrites, the Puthites, the Shumathites, and the Mishraites. From these came the Zorathites and the Eshtaolites.

⁵⁴The sons of Salma were Bethlehem, the Netophathites, ⁹Atroth Beth Joab, half of the Manahethites, and the Zorites.

⁵⁵And the families of the scribes who dwelt at Jabez were the Tirathites, the Shimeathites, and the Suchathites. These were the ^cKenites who came from Hammath, the father of the house of ^dRechab.

The Family of David

3 Now these were the sons of David who were born to him in Hebron: The firstborn was ^aAmnon, by ^bAhinoam the ^cJezreelitess; the second, ¹Daniel, by ^dAbigail the Carmelitess; ²the third, ^eAbsalom the son of Maacah, the daughter of Talmai, king of Geshur; the fourth, ^fAdonijah the son of Haggith; ³the fifth, Shephatiah, by Abital; the sixth, Ithream, by his wife ^gEglah.

⁴⁹ ^zJosh. 15:17 ⁵Or Achsa
⁵⁰ ^a1 Chr. 4:4
^bJosh. 9:17; 18:14
⁶Ephrath, v. 19
⁵² ⁷Reaiah,
1 Chr. 4:2 ⁸Or Manuhothites, same as Manahethites, v. 54
⁵⁴ ⁹Or Ataroth of the house of Joab
⁵⁵ ^cJudg. 1:16
^d2 Kin. 10:15; Jer. 35:2

CHAPTER 3

¹ ^a2 Sam. 3:2-5
^b1 Sam. 25:43
^cJosh. 15:56
^d1 Sam. 25:39-42
¹Chileab, 2 Sam. 3:3
² ^e2 Sam. 13:37; 15:1 ^f1 Kin. 1:5
³ ^g2 Sam. 3:5
⁴ ^h2 Sam. 2:11
²Sam. 5:5
⁵ ⁱ1 Chr. 14:4-7
^k2 Sam. 12:24, 25
²Shammua, 1 Chr. 14:4; 2 Sam. 5:14
³Bathsheba, 2 Sam. 11:3 ⁴Eliam, 2 Sam. 11:3
⁶ ^jElishua, 1 Chr. 14:5; 2 Sam. 5:15
⁶Elpelet, 1 Chr. 14:5
⁸ ¹2 Sam. 5:14-16
⁷Beeliada, 1 Chr. 14:7
⁹ ^m2 Sam. 13:1
¹⁰ ⁿ1 Kin. 11:43; Matt. 1:7-10
⁸Abijam, 1 Kin. 15:1
¹¹ ^oJehoram, 2 Kin. 1:17; 8:16 ¹Or Azariah or Jehoahaz
²Jehoash, 2 Kin. 12:1
¹² ^pUzziah, Is. 6:1
¹⁵ ^qEliakim, 2 Kin. 23:34 ⁵Jehoahaz,

⁴These six were born to him in Hebron. ^hThere he reigned seven years and six months, and ⁱin Jerusalem he reigned thirty-three years. ^{5j}And these were born to him in Jerusalem: ²Shimea, Shobab, Nathan, and ^kSolomon—four by ³Bathsua the daughter of ⁴Ammiel. ⁶Also there were Ibhar, ⁵Elishama, ⁶Eliphelet, ⁷Nogah, Nepheg, Japhia, ⁸Elishama, ⁷Eliada, and Eliphelet—^lnine in all. ⁹These were all the sons of David, besides the sons of the concubines, and ^mTamar their sister.

The Family of Solomon

¹⁰Solomon's son was ⁿRehoboam; ⁸Abijah was his son, Asa his son, Jehoshaphat his son, ¹¹Joram his son, ¹Ahaziah his son, ²Joash his son, ¹²Azariah his son, ³Azariah his son, Jotham his son, ¹³Ahaz his son, Hezekiah his son, Manasseh his son, ¹⁴Amon his son, and Josiah his son. ¹⁵The sons of Josiah were Johanan the firstborn, the second ⁴Jehoiakim, the third Zedekiah, and the fourth ⁵Shallum. ¹⁶The sons of ^oJehoiakim were ⁶Jeconiah his son and ⁷Zedekiah his son.

The Family of Jeconiah

¹⁷And the sons of ⁸Jeconiah ⁹were Assir, Shealtiel ^phis son, ¹⁸and Malchiram, Pedaiiah, Shenazzar, Jecamiah, Hoshama, and Nedabiah. ¹⁹The sons of Pedaiiah

2 Kin. 23:31 ¹⁶ ^oMatt. 1:11 ⁶Jehoiachin, 2 Kin. 24:8, or Coniah, Jer. 22:24 ⁷Mattaniah, 2 Kin. 24:17 ¹⁷ ^pMatt. 1:12
⁸Jehoiachin, 2 Kin. 24:8, or Coniah, Jer. 22:24 ⁹Or the captive
were Shealtiel

2:49 The Caleb of Joshua's time had a daughter named Achsah, who became the wife of Israel's first judge, Othniel (Judg. 1:12, 13). It might appear that the Caleb here in Chronicles must be the same as the later Caleb, but this is ruled out by the consistent use of Caleb throughout the chronicler's genealogy to refer to an earlier individual by that name. The meaning probably is that Achsah is the "daughter" of the earlier Caleb in the sense that she is his descendant. The later Caleb was doubtless a descendant of the early one, a conclusion supported by the record that both were from the tribe of Judah (2:4, 5, 9, 18, 42; Num. 13:6).

2:51 The chronicler recorded Caleb's genealogy because of the significance of Bethlehem, the birthplace of King David. One of Caleb's descendants, Salma, was the founder or father of Bethlehem.

2:55 Since the compiler of Chronicles was obviously a scribe, he was interested in tracing, if only briefly, various families of the scribes. These families are otherwise unknown, as is Jabez, the place they lived. They were Kenites, a people related to Israel through Moses' marriage to a Kenite, sometimes referred to as a Midianite (Judg. 4:11). Naming the Kenite scribes here suggests that they were descended from Judah, since the whole context of the passage is the genealogy of Judah. The genealogy also connects them with Rechab, the saintly founder of a line of pious Israelites who obeyed the commands of their fathers (see Jer. 35:1-19).

3:1-5 The fact that David had six sons by six wives in Hebron does not condone polygamy. David had fallen into the ancient custom among kings of marrying the daughters of neighboring kings in

order to create allies. Negative results inevitably followed such multiple marriages. David's first son, Amnon, raped his half sister Tamar (2 Sam. 13:14)—a deed for which he paid with his own life at the hands of his half brother Absalom. Later Adonijah tried to usurp the throne from Solomon to whom it had been promised (1 Kin. 1:5-10).

3:9 Tamar: The fact that only one daughter of David is named does not mean that he had no other daughters. Tamar appears in this genealogy because of her prominence in the story of King David's family (2 Sam. 13:1-39). The chronicler included those people who had particular relevance to the narrative and its theological purpose.

3:18 Shenazzar was probably the same man as Sheshbazzar, leader of the first group of Jews to return from Babylonian captivity (Ezra 1:8, 11) and builder of the foundation of the second temple (Ezra 5:15-17).

3:19 Zerubbabel here is designated as a son of Pedaiiah, but elsewhere (Ezra 3:2, 8, 5:2; Neh. 12:1; Hag. 1:12, 14; 2:2, 23) as a son of Pedaiiah's brother Shealtiel (v. 17). It is likely that Shealtiel had died while Zerubbabel was young and that the youth was reared by his uncle Pedaiiah, thus becoming Pedaiiah's son. This relationship may explain Luke's statement that Zerubbabel was "the son of Shealtiel" (Luke 3:27), who was in turn a descendant of David through his son Nathan. Thus in the Gospels, the line of Jesus was traced back to David through David's two sons, Solomon and Nathan. These two lines met in the marriage of Jeconiah's daughter to Shealtiel. Luke traced Jesus' line through Zerubbabel and an otherwise unknown

were Zerubbabel and Shimei. The sons of Zerubbabel were Meshullam, Hananiah, Shelomith their sister, ²⁰and Hashubah, Ohel, Berechiah, Hasadiah, and Jushab-Hesed—five in all.

²¹The sons of Hananiah were Pelatiah and Jeshaiah, the sons of Rephaiah, the sons of Arnan, the sons of Obadiah, and the sons of Shechaniah. ²²The son of Shechaniah was Shemaiah. The sons of Shemaiah were ⁹Hattush, Igal, Bariah, Neariah, and Shaphat—six in all. ²³The sons of Neariah were Elioenai, Hezekiah, and Azrikam—three in all. ²⁴The sons of Elioenai were Hodaviah, Eliashib, Pelaiiah, Akkub, Johanan, Delaiah, and Anani—seven in all.

The Family of Judah

4 The sons of Judah were ^aPerez, Hezron, ¹Carmi, Hur, and Shobal. ²And ²Reaiah the son of Shobal begot Jahath, and Jahath begot Ahumai and Lahad. These were the families of the Zorathites. ³These were the sons of the father of Etam: Jezreel, Ishma, and Idbash; and the name of their sister was Hazeleponi; ⁴and Penuel was the father of Gedor, and Ezer was the father of Hushah.

These were the sons of ^bHur, the firstborn of Ephrathah the father of Bethlehem.

⁵And ^cAshhur the father of Tekoa had two wives, Helah and Naarah. ⁶Naarah bore him Ahuzzam, Hephher, Temeni, and Haahashtari. These were the sons of Naarah. ⁷The sons of Helah were

22 ⁹ Ezra 8:2

CHAPTER 4

1 ^a Gen. 38:29;
46:12 ¹ Chelubai,
1 Chr. 2:9 or Caleb,
1 Chr. 2:18

2 ² Haroeh, 1 Chr.

2:52

4 ^b Ex. 31:2; 1 Chr.

2:50

5 ^c 1 Chr. 2:24

9 ^d Gen. 34:19 ³ Lit.

He Will Cause Pain

10 ⁴ border

11 ^e Job 8:1

12 ⁵ Lit. City of

Nahash

13 ^f Josh. 15:17;

Judg. 3:9, 11

⁶ LXX, Vg. add and

Meonothai

14 ⁹ Neh. 11:35

⁷ Lit. Valley of

Craftsmen

15 ^h Josh. 14:6, 14;

15:13, 17; 1 Chr. 6:56

⁸ Or Uknaz

17 ⁹ Lit. she

18 ⁱ Or His Judean

wife

Zereth, Zohar, and Ethnan; ⁸and Koz begot Anub, Zobebah, and the families of Aharhel the son of Harum.

⁹Now Jabez was ^dmore honorable than his brothers, and his mother called his name ³Jabez, saying, “Because I bore him in pain.” ¹⁰And Jabez called on the God of Israel saying, “Oh, that You would bless me indeed, and enlarge my ⁴territory, that Your hand would be with me, and that You would keep me from evil, that I may not cause pain!” So God granted him what he requested.

¹¹Chelub the brother of ^eShuhah begot Mehir, who was the father of Eshton. ¹²And Eshton begot Beth-Rapha, Paseah, and Tehinnah the father of ⁵Ir-Nahash. These were the men of Rechah.

¹³The sons of Kenaz were ^fOthniel and Seraiah. The sons of Othniel were ⁶Hathath, ¹⁴and Meonothai who begot Ophrah. Seraiah begot Joab the father of ^gGe Harashim, ⁷for they were craftsmen. ¹⁵The sons of ^hCaleb the son of Jephunneh were Iru, Elah, and Naam. The son of Elah was ⁸Kenaz. ¹⁶The sons of Jehallelel were Ziph, Ziphah, Tiria, and Asarel. ¹⁷The sons of Ezra were Jether, Mered, Ephraim, and Jalon. And ⁹Mered’s wife bore Miriam, Shammai, and Ishbah the father of Eshtemoa. ¹⁸(¹His wife Jehudijah bore Jered the father of Gedor, Heber the father of Sochoh, and Jekuthiel the father of Zanoah.) And these were the sons of Bithiah the daughter of Pharaoh, whom Mered took.

¹⁹The sons of Hodiah’s wife, the sister

son Rhesa (Luke 3:27). Matthew, whose interest was particularly in Joseph, traced Jesus’ ancestry back to Zerubbabel through still another son of Zerubbabel, Abiud (Matt. 1:13). Thus Luke reconstructed Mary’s genealogy.

3:21–24 Pelatiah and Jeshaiah seem to be the only two sons of Hananiah. Rephaiah . . . Shechaniah: These names were detached from the Zerubbabel genealogy and may be other Davidic families. **The sons of Shechaniah:** Four generations of Shechaniah, ending in Anani, are listed. Hence the genealogy of vv. 17–24 presupposes about seven generations. Since Jeconiah reigned around 598 B.C. (v. 17), a date of approximately 425 B.C. for Anani is reasonable. Anani is the latest generation recorded in Chronicles, and any dating of the book should take this into account.

4:1 Although the genealogy of Judah leading up to David has already been recorded (2:3–17), the chronicler here refers to other persons and events relative to that genealogy. In the list of this verse, only Perez is Judah’s own son. Hezron is his grandson, Carmi his nephew (2:5, 6), Hur the grandson of Hezron (2:18, 19), and Shobal the grandson of Hur (2:50).

4:4 Ephrathah has already been identified as Ephrath, a wife of the early Caleb (2:19) and mother of Hur. She was therefore the “great grandmother” of Bethlehem, since her son Hur was the “grandfather” of Bethlehem (2:50, 51). Elsewhere the names Bethlehem and Ephrath are closely connected. When Jacob was on the way to Mamre, his wife Rachel died near Ephrath, identified also as Bethlehem (Gen. 35:19). In Ruth 4:11, Ephrathah is synonymous with the town of Bethlehem, and in Mic. 5:2 the birthplace of the anticipated Messiah is called Bethlehem Ephrathah.

4:13 Othniel, the first of Israel’s judges (Josh. 15:17; Judg. 1:13; 3:9), was son-in-law of the later Caleb—the friend and colleague of Joshua.

4:15 Kenaz was the name of Othniel’s father (v. 13) and Caleb’s brother (Josh. 15:17), as well as of Caleb’s grandson. It is clear that Othniel had married his own first cousin, a practice that was common in the OT (see Abraham and Sarah in Gen. 11:29) and one not prohibited in the Law of Moses.

sons

(Heb. *ben*) (4:1; 7:14; Ex. 12:37; 1 Kin. 2:1) Strong’s #1121

The Hebrew noun *ben* is probably related to *banah* which means “to build,” as in “to build” a family (Ruth 4:11). The ancient Hebrews considered sons the “builders” of the next generation. *Ben* can either refer to a literal son as in 1 Kin. 2:1, or to one’s descendants as in 7:14. The word may also pertain to an attribute of an individual, as in Ben-Oni, meaning “Son of My Sorrow,” and Benjamin, meaning “Son of the Right Hand” (Gen. 35:18). In the plural, the Hebrew word for sons can be translated *children* regardless of gender, as in the phrase “children of Israel” (see Ex. 12:37). Perhaps the most significant use of the Hebrew word is for Israel’s relationship to the Lord. God Himself declared: “Israel is My son, My firstborn” (Ex. 4:22).

of Naham, *were* the fathers of Keilah the Garmite and of Eshtemoa the ⁱMaachathite. ²⁰And the sons of Shimon *were* Ammon, Rinnah, Ben-Hanan, and Tilon. And the sons of Ishi *were* Zoheth and Ben-Zoheth.

²¹The sons of ^jShelah ^kthe son of Judah *were* Er the father of Lecah, Laadah the father of Mareshah, and the families of the house of the linen workers of the house of Ashbea; ²²also Jokim, the men of Chozeba, and Joash; Saraph, who ruled in Moab, and Jashubi-Lehem. Now the ²records are ancient. ²³These *were* the potters and those who dwell at ³Netaim and ⁴Gederah; there they dwelt with the king for his work.

The Family of Simeon

²⁴The ¹sons of Simeon *were* ⁵Nemuel, Jamin, ⁶Jarib, ⁷Zerah, and Shaul, ²⁵Shallum his son, Mibsam his son, and Mishma his son. ²⁶And the sons of Mishma *were* Hamuel his son, Zacchur his son, and Shimei his son. ²⁷Shimei had sixteen sons and six daughters; but his brothers did not have many children, ^mnor did any of their families multiply as much as the children of Judah.

²⁸They dwelt at Beersheba, Moladah, Hazar Shual, ²⁹⁸Bilhah, Ezem, ⁹Tolad, ³⁰Bethuel, Hormah, Ziklag, ³¹Beth Marcaboth, ¹Hazar Susim, Beth Biri, and at Shaaraim. These *were* their cities until the reign of David. ³²And their villages *were* ²Etam, Ain, Rimmon, Tochen, and Ashan—five cities— ³³and all the villages that *were* around these cities as far as ³Baal. These *were* their dwelling places, and they maintained their genealogy: ³⁴Meshobab, Jamlech, and Joshah the son of Amaziah; ³⁵Joel, and Jehu the son of Joshibiah, the son of Seraiah, the

19 ⁱ 2 Kin. 25:23
21 ^j Gen. 38:11, 14
^k Gen. 38:1-5; 46:12
22 ² Lit. words
23 ³ Lit. Plants ⁴ Lit. Hedges
24 ¹ Num. 26:12-14
⁵ Jemuel, Gen. 46:10; Ex. 6:15; Num. 26:12
⁶ Jachin, Gen. 46:10; Num. 26:12
⁷ Zohar, Gen. 46:10; Ex. 6:15
27 ^m Num. 2:9
⁸ Balah, Josh. 19:3
⁹ Eltolad, Josh. 19:4
31 ¹ Hazar Susah, Josh. 19:5
32 ² Ether, Josh. 19:7
33 ³ Baalath Beer, Josh. 19:8

41 ^a 2 Kin. 18:8
^o 2 Kin. 19:11 ⁴ Lit. struck
43 ^p Ex. 17:14;
1 Sam. 15:8; 30:17
⁵ Lit. struck

CHAPTER 5

1 ^a Gen. 29:32; 49:3
^b Gen. 35:22; 49:4
^c Gen. 48:15, 22
² d Gen. 49:8, 10; Ps. 60:7; 108:8
^e Mic. 5:2; Matt. 2:6
¹ the right of the firstborn
3 ^f Gen. 46:9; Ex. 6:14; Num. 26:5

son of Asiel; ³⁶Elioenai, Jaakobah, Jeshohaiah, Asaiah, Adiel, Jesimiel, and Benaiiah; ³⁷Ziza the son of Shiphi, the son of Allon, the son of Jedaiah, the son of Shimri, the son of Shemaiah— ³⁸these mentioned by name *were* leaders in their families, and their father's house increased greatly.

³⁹So they went to the entrance of Gedor, as far as the east side of the valley, to seek pasture for their flocks. ⁴⁰And they found rich, good pasture, and the land was broad, quiet, and peaceful; for some Hamites formerly lived there.

⁴¹These recorded by name came in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah; and they ⁿattacked ⁴their tents and the Meunites who were found there, and ^outterly destroyed them, as it is to this day. So they dwelt in their place, because *there* was pasture for their flocks there. ⁴²Now *some* of them, five hundred men of the sons of Simeon, went to Mount Seir, having as their captains Pelatiah, Neariah, Rephaiah, and Uzziel, the sons of Ishi. ⁴³And they ⁵defeated ^pthe rest of the Amalekites who had escaped. They have dwelt there to this day.

The Family of Reuben

5 Now the sons of Reuben the firstborn of Israel—^ahe *was* indeed the firstborn, but because he ^bdefiled his father's bed, ^chis birthright was given to the sons of Joseph, the son of Israel, so that the genealogy is not listed according to the birthright; ²yet ^dJudah prevailed over his brothers, and from him *came* ^ea ruler, although ¹the birthright was Joseph's— ³the sons of ^fReuben the firstborn of Israel were Hanoch, Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi.

⁴The sons of Joel *were* Shemaiah his

4:21 The fact that **Shelah** named his son **Er** indicates that he followed the levirate custom of raising up a child in the name of a deceased brother. Er, son of Judah, had died because of some unspecified sin, but had left no children by his wife Tamar (Gen. 38:6–11). His brother Onan refused to honor the levirate practice on Er's behalf, so Tamar seduced Judah, her father-in-law, and bore the twin sons Perez and Zerah (Gen. 38:27–30). Shelah, the third son of Judah, apparently did honor his oldest brother by taking the widow Tamar as his wife and rearing a son in Er's name.

4:22 The chronicler made the point that his documentation rested on **ancient** texts. Even in the chronicler's own day, there were skeptics who questioned the accuracy of the genealogies.

4:24 The genealogy of **Simeon** appears next because the Simeonites were a small tribe (v. 27) and had no land allocated to them (Josh. 19:1–9). They settled in the territory of Judah, and their genealogy is attached to his.

4:31 Because the tribe of Simeon was so small and had settled within Judah's territory, the tribe lost its identity and was considered a part of Judah when **David** became king.

4:39–41 The chronicler describes how the Simeonites lived as shepherds in Gedor. This was an area next to Egypt, possibly the same

as Gerar (Gen. 26:17–20). The Hamites, who were Egyptians, had lived there at one time (v. 40), but were replaced by **Meunites**. The Simeonites expelled these people in the days of Hezekiah.

4:42, 43 The Simeonites pursued the Amalekites into Mt. Seir, or Edom. **to this day:** That is, to the time Chronicles was written. The Simeonites had lived in Edom from Hezekiah's time.

5:1, 2 Usually the oldest son of an ancient family became head of the family upon his father's death and also received a larger share of the inheritance than the other children. But Reuben, the firstborn of Jacob, had slept with his father's concubine—perhaps hoping in this way to guarantee his rights as the firstborn son (Gen. 35:22). Because of this despicable act, he lost the **birthright**. Instead, Jacob blessed the **sons of Joseph**, Ephraim and Manasseh (Gen. 48:15–22), thereby transmitting the birthright to Joseph and his sons. The birthright assigned to Joseph did not carry with it the right to rule the tribes and nation; that privilege was granted to Judah. **Judah prevailed** in the sense that God freely chose them as the tribe through which His messianic Deliverer and King would come (Gen. 49:10). The **ruler** from Judah was David and his dynasty, a fact well known to the ancient Israelites.

son, Gog his son, Shimei his son,⁵ Micah his son, Reaiah his son, Baal his son,⁶ and Beerah his son, whom² Tiglath-Pileser king of Assyria⁹ carried into captivity. He *was* leader of the Reubenites.⁷ And his brethren by their families,⁸ when the genealogy of their generations was registered: the chief, Jeiel, and Zechariah,⁸ and Bela the son of Azaz, the son of Shema, the son of Joel, who dwelt inⁱ Aroer, as far as Nebo and Baal Meon.⁹ Eastward they settled as far as the³ entrance of the wilderness this side of the River Euphrates, because their cattle had⁴ multiplied^j in the land of Gilead.

¹⁰Now in the days of Saul they made war^k with the Hagrites, who fell by their hand; and they dwelt in their tents throughout the entire *area* east of Gilead.

The Family of Gad

¹¹And the^l children of Gad dwelt next to them in the land of^m Bashan as far asⁿ Salcah:¹² Joel *was* the chief, Shapham the next, then Jaanai and Shaphat in Bashan,¹³ and their brethren of their father's house: Michael, Meshullam, Sheba, Jorai, Jachan, Zia, and Eber—seven *in all*.¹⁴ These *were* the children of Abihail the son of Huri, the son of Jaroah, the son of Gilead, the son of Michael, the son of Jeshishai, the son of Jahdo, the son of Buz;¹⁵ Ahi the son of Abdiel, the son of Guni, *was* chief of their father's house.¹⁶ And *the Gadites* dwelt in Gilead, in

6 ² 2 Kin. 18:11
² Heb. *Tiglath-Pileser*
⁷ ^h 1 Chr. 5:17
⁸ ⁱ Num. 32:34;
⁹ Josh. 12:2; 13:15, 16
⁹ ^j Josh. 22:8;
⁹ ³ beginning
⁴ increased
¹⁰ ^k Gen. 25:12
¹¹ ^l Num. 26:15-18
^m Josh. 13:11, 24-28
ⁿ Deut. 3:10

16 ^o 1 Chr. 27:29;
 Song 2:1; Is. 35:2;
 65:10 ⁵ open lands
¹⁷ ^p 2 Kin. 15:5, 32
¹⁸ 2 Kin. 14:16, 28
¹⁹ ^r Gen. 25:15;
 1 Chr. 1:31
²⁰ ^s [1 Chr. 5:22]
²¹ 2 Chr. 14:11-13
²² ^t Ps. 9:10; 20:7, 8;
 22:4, 5 ⁶ Lit. *was entreated for them*
²³ ^u [Josh. 23:10;
 2 Chr. 32:8; Rom. 8:31] ^w 2 Kin. 15:29;
 17:6
²³ ^x Deut. 3:9

Bashan and in its villages, and in all the⁵ common-lands of^o Sharon within their borders.¹⁷ All these were registered by genealogies in the days of^p Jotham king of Judah, and in the days of^q Jeroboam king of Israel.

¹⁸The sons of Reuben, the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh *had* forty-four thousand seven hundred and sixty valiant men, men able to bear shield and sword, to shoot with the bow, and skillful in war, who went to war.¹⁹ They made war with the Hagrites,^r Jetur, Naphish, and Nodab.²⁰ And^s they were helped against them, and the Hagrites were delivered into their hand, and all who *were* with them, for they^t cried out to God in the battle. He⁶ heeded their prayer, because they^u put their trust in Him.²¹ Then they took away their livestock—fifty thousand of their camels, two hundred and fifty thousand of their sheep, and two thousand of their donkeys—also one hundred thousand of their men;²² for many fell dead, because the war^v *was* God's. And they dwelt in their place until^w the captivity.

The Family of Manasseh (East)

²³So the children of the half-tribe of Manasseh dwelt in the land. Their *numbers* increased from Bashan to Baal Hermon, that is, to^x Senir, or Mount Hermon.²⁴ These *were* the heads of their fathers' houses: Ephraim, Ishi, Eliel, Azriel, Jeremiah, Hodaviah, and Jahdiel. They

5:6 Though the tribe of Reuben virtually disappeared from the historical record by the time of the monarchy, there still remained people who identified themselves as **Reubenites**, as this verse makes clear.

5:9 Part of the reason for the absence of Reuben in the historical account was the tribe's need to seek greater pasture lands for their animals. They had pushed east into the wilderness as far as the **River Euphrates**. For this reason, the Reubenites were the first to be deported by the Assyrians (see v. 6).

5:11 **Gad** lived near Reuben and the half tribe of Manasseh. Gad was one of the tribes that sought permission from Moses to settle east of the Jordan rather than west (Num. 32:1–42). Reuben occupied the area just east of the Dead Sea and the lower Jordan valley; Gad, the **land of Bashan** due east of the river; and Manasseh, the land to the east and north of the Sea of Galilee.

5:17 Once more the chronicler alludes to his sources, this time to genealogical records from the time of **Jotham** (750–735 B.C.) and **Jeroboam II** (793–753 B.C.). He wanted to emphasize that the genealogies are based on solid documentary research in texts that preceded his own time by more than 300 years.

5:19 The **Hagrites** and their allies were probably desert peoples who felt increasing pressure from the expanding Israelite population. Their efforts at resisting the Israelites took place in the days of Saul (v. 10), though the narratives of Saul do not mention them.

5:20 **they were helped**: The help here came from God Himself in answer to their prayers. The people of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh fielded an army of more than 44,000 men (v. 18), but ultimately it was God who brought success.

5:22 **the war was God's**: This confirms the statement about God helping the Israelites in v. 20 and goes beyond it by referring to a

practice of OT times known as "The Lord's War." At times, God commanded an offensive war as a means of achieving His purposes of conquest and occupation of the Promised Land (Deut. 20:1–20). At those times, God made it clear that the battle was by His initiative and that He would ensure its success. **the captivity**: In the light of vv. 6, 26, the captivity must be that of Tiglath-Pileser of Assyria, who carried off a significant portion of the Israelite population (2 Kin. 15:29).

generations

(Heb. *toledoth*) (5:7; Gen. 10:1; Ruth 4:18) Strong's #8435

The Hebrew *toledoth* is derived from the verb *yalad*, meaning "to give birth." *Toledoth* usually introduces an extended genealogical list, such as those in Genesis (Gen. 5:1; 10:1) and 1 Chronicles (5:7; 26:31). Ancient Hebrew culture depended on detailed genealogical lists to determine questions of inheritance and land use rights. After the conquest of Canaan, each tribe received its portion of the Promised Land to divide between its clans (Josh. 13–19). Land rights remained in the clans, passed down as part of the inheritance from father to oldest son, or daughter if there was no son (see Num. 27). Other matters, such as service in the temple and royal succession, were also determined by genealogy. Old Testament genealogies attest to God's faithfulness in fulfilling His promise to make Israel a "great nation" (Gen. 12:1–3), and the genealogy of Matt. 1 shows Jesus as the legitimate heir to David's throne.



Tiglath-Pileser

Tiglath-Pileser III, king of Assyria from 745 to 727 B.C., was also known as Pul in the OT. After stabilizing his kingdom, he began military campaigns against smaller realms such as Palestine. Kings of the northern kingdom paid monetary tribute to Tiglath-Pileser for his protection. Ahaz, king of Judah, made an alliance with him against the king of Israel and the king of Syria. This episode may have been when Tiglath-Pileser conquered the region east of the Jordan River and carried the people into exile in 733 B.C. (2 Kin. 15:29). Although the date given for the captivity of the northern kingdom by Assyria is 722 B.C., the deportation of Israel to other parts of the Assyrian Empire occurred in stages. This episode was consistent with the chronicler's theme of retribution.



Tiglath-Pileser III from a stone panel found in Central Palace of Nimrud, c. 728 B.C.
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were mighty men of valor, famous men, and heads of their fathers' houses.

²⁵ And they were unfaithful to the God of their fathers, and ²⁶played the harlot after the gods of the peoples of the land, whom God had destroyed before them. ²⁶ So the God of Israel stirred up the spirit of ²⁷Pul king of Assyria, that is, ²⁸a Tiglath-Pileser⁷ king of Assyria. He carried the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh into captivity. He took them to ²⁹Halah, Habor, Hara, and the river of Gozan to this day.

The Family of Levi

6 The sons of Levi were ¹a Gershon,¹ Kohath, and Merari. ²The sons of Kohath were Amram, ³b Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel. ³ The children of Amram were Aaron, Moses, and Miriam. And the sons of Aaron were ⁴c Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar. ⁴ Eleazar begot

²⁵ ^v 2 Kin. 17:7
²⁶ ^v 2 Kin. 15:19
^a 2 Kin. 15:29
^b 2 Kin. 17:6; 18:11
⁷ Heb. *Tilgath-Pilneser*

CHAPTER 6

¹ ^a Gen. 46:11; Ex. 6:16; Num. 26:57;
1 Chr. 23:6 ¹ Or *Gershon*, v. 16
² ^b 1 Chr. 6:18, 22
³ ^c Lev. 10:1, 2
⁸ ^d 2 Sam. 8:17
^e 2 Sam. 15:27
¹⁰ ^f 2 Chr. 26:17, 18
⁹ 1 Kin. 6:1; 2 Chr. 3:1 ² Lit. *house*
¹¹ ^h Ezra 7:3 ¹ 2 Chr. 19:11
¹² ³ Meshullam, 1 Chr. 9:11
¹⁴ ⁱ 2 Kin. 25:18-21; Neh. 11:11
¹⁵ ^k 2 Kin. 25:21
¹⁶ ^j Gen. 46:11; Ex. 6:16 ⁴ Heb. *Gershon*, an

Phinehas, and Phinehas begot Abishua; ⁵ Abishua begot Bukki, and Bukki begot Uzzi; ⁶ Uzzi begot Zerahiah, and Zerahiah begot Meraioth; ⁷ Meraioth begot Amariah, and Amariah begot Ahitub; ⁸ ^d Ahitub begot ^e Zadok, and Zadok begot Ahimaaz; ⁹ Ahimaaz begot Azariah, and Azariah begot Johanan; ¹⁰ Johanan begot Azariah (it was he ^f who ministered as priest in the ^g temple² that Solomon built in Jerusalem); ¹¹ ^h Azariah begot ⁱ Amariah, and Amariah begot Ahitub; ¹² Ahitub begot Zadok, and Zadok begot ³ Shallum; ¹³ Shallum begot Hilkiah, and Hilkiah begot Azariah; ¹⁴ Azariah begot ^j Seraiah, and Seraiah begot Jehozadak. ¹⁵ Jehozadak went into captivity ^k when the Lord carried Judah and Jerusalem into captivity by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar.

¹⁶ The sons of Levi were ¹ Gershon, ⁴ Kohath, and Merari. ² The sons of Kohath were Amram, ³ Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel. ³ The children of Amram were Aaron, Moses, and Miriam. And the sons of Aaron were ⁴ Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar. ⁴ Eleazar begot

alternate spelling for Gershon, vv. 1, 17, 20, 43, 62, 71

5:26 The famous king **Tiglath-Pileser**, who reigned around 745–727 B.C., has gone down in Assyrian annals as one of the most powerful rulers of the neo-Assyrian period. **Gozan** is Guzanu or Tell Halaf on the Habor River.

6:1 Levi: All religious personnel involved in tabernacle or temple ministry had to be members of the tribe of Levi. Aaron was himself a Levite, and from the beginning of the priesthood his descendants were designated as the only ones who could serve as priests (see 6:16–25; Ex. 28:1). Later the Levites were especially set apart for service in the tabernacle in a role subsidiary to the priests (Num. 18:1–7). Anyone who wanted to serve in the temple had to establish his Levitical credentials. The present genealogy was designed at least in part to meet that need.

6:2 Kohath: This son of Levi was the one to whom the office of priest became exclusively connected. Hence, every priest had to be a Levite, but not every Levite could become a priest.

6:3, 4 Beginning with **Eleazar**, the genealogy traces the line of high priests through Jehozadak, the priest who went into Babylonian exile with his people (v. 15). Including Eleazar and Jehozadak, there

were at least 22 high priests in unbroken succession. Another line of priests began with **Ithamar**, including such persons as Eli, Ahimelech, and Abiathar. In the days of David, priestly service was divided between the Eleazar and Ithamar priests, with the Eleazar serving two-thirds of the time and the Ithamar one-third because of the difference in their numbers (24:1–5). Solomon rejected the Ithamar priesthood, reserving the honor of the priesthood exclusively for the priests descended from Eleazar (1 Kin. 2:26, 27).

6:8 Zadok: This priest, not the same person as the Zadok of v. 12, was the one selected by David to serve along with Ahimelech the son of Abiathar as high priest (2 Sam. 8:17). Eventually Zadok became sole high priest because of Abiathar's rebellion against Solomon (1 Kin. 2:26, 27).

6:10 The detail that this **Azariah** ministered in Solomon's temple distinguishes this priest from his grandfather of the same name (v. 9).

6:14 Jehozadak: This last priest in the list was carried into exile in Babylon (v. 15). He was the father of Joshua, the priest who returned from Babylon with Zerubbabel to rebuild the temple and reestablish the Jewish community (Hag. 1:1, 12, 14).

hath, and Merari. ¹⁷These are the names of the sons of Gershon: Libni and Shimei. ¹⁸The sons of Kohath were Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel. ¹⁹The sons of Merari were Mahli and Mushi. Now these are the families of the Levites according to their fathers: ²⁰Of Gershon were Libni his son, Jahath his son, ^mZimmah his son, ²¹⁵Joah his son, ⁶Iddo his son, Zerah his son, and ⁷Jeatherai his son. ²²The sons of Kohath were ⁸Amminadab his son, ⁿKorah his son, Assir his son, ²³Elkanah his son, Ebiasaph his son, Assir his son, ²⁴Tahath his son, Uriel his son, Uzziel his son, and Shaul his son. ²⁵The sons of Elkanah were ^oAmasai and Ahimoth. ²⁶As for Elkanah, the sons of Elkanah were ⁹Zophai his son, ¹Nahath his son, ²⁷²Eliab his son, Jeroham his son, and Elkanah his son. ²⁸The sons of Samuel were ³Joel the firstborn, and Abijah ⁴the second. ²⁹The sons of Merari were Mahli, Libni his son, Shimei his son, Uziah his son, ³⁰Shimea his son, Haggiah his son, and Asaiah his son.

Musicians in the House of the LORD

³¹Now these are ^pthe men whom David appointed over the service of song in the house of the LORD, after the ^qark came to rest. ³²They were ministering with music before the dwelling place of the tabernacle of meeting, until Solomon had built the house of the LORD in Jerusalem, and they served in their office according to their order.

³³And these are the ones who ⁵ministered with their sons: Of the sons of the ^rKohathites were Heman the singer, the son of Joel, the son of Samuel, ³⁴the son of Elkanah, the son of Jeroham, the son of ⁶Eliel, the son of ⁷Toah, ³⁵the son of Zuph, the son of Elkanah, the son of Mahath, the son of Amasai, ³⁶the son of

²⁰ ^m 1 Chr. 6:42
²¹ ⁵ Ethan, v. 42
⁶ Adaiah, v. 41
⁷ Ethni, v. 41
²² ⁿ Num. 16:1
⁸ Izhar, vv. 2, 18
²⁵ ^o 1 Chr. 6:35, 36
²⁶ ⁹ Zuph, v. 35;
 1 Sam. 1:1 ¹ Toah,
 v. 34
²⁷ ² Eliel, v. 34
²⁸ ³ So with LXX,
 Syr., Arab.; cf. v.
 33 and 1 Sam. 8:2
⁴ Heb. Vasheni
³¹ ^p 1 Chr. 15:16-22,
 27; 16:4-6 ^q 2 Sam.
 6:17; 1 Kin. 8:4;
 1 Chr. 15:25-16:1
³³ ^r Num. 26:57
⁵ Lit. stood with
³⁴ ⁶ Elihu, 1 Sam.
 1:1 ⁷ Tohu, 1 Sam.
 1:1

³⁷ ^s Ex. 6:24
³⁹ ² Chr. 5:12
⁴¹ ^u 1 Chr. 6:21
⁴⁴ ⁸ Jeduthun,
 1 Chr. 9:16; 25:1,
 3, 6; 2 Chr. 35:15;
 Ps. 62:title ⁹ Or
 Kushaiah
⁴⁸ ^v 1 Chr. 9:14-34
⁴⁹ ^w Ex. 28:1; [Num.
 18:1-8] ^x Lev. 1:8, 9
^y Ex. 30:7
⁵⁰ ^z 1 Chr. 6:4-8;
 Ezra 7:5
⁵⁴ ^a Josh. 21

Elkanah, the son of Joel, the son of Azariah, the son of Zephaniah, ³⁷the son of Tahath, the son of Assir, the son of ^sEbiasaph, the son of Korah, ³⁸the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, the son of Israel. ³⁹And his brother ^tAsaph, who stood at his right hand, was Asaph the son of Berachiah, the son of Shimea, ⁴⁰the son of Michael, the son of Baaseiah, the son of Malchijah, ⁴¹the son of ^uEthni, the son of Zerah, the son of Adaiah, ⁴²the son of Ethan, the son of Zimmah, the son of Shimei, ⁴³the son of Jahath, the son of Gershon, the son of Levi.

⁴⁴Their brethren, the sons of Merari, on the left hand, were ⁸Ethan the son of ⁹Kishi, the son of Abdi, the son of Mal-luch, ⁴⁵the son of Hashabiah, the son of Amaziah, the son of Hilkiah, ⁴⁶the son of Amzi, the son of Bani, the son of Shamer, ⁴⁷the son of Mahli, the son of Mushi, the son of Merari, the son of Levi.

⁴⁸And their brethren, the Levites, were appointed to every ^vkind of service of the tabernacle of the house of God.

The Family of Aaron

⁴⁹^wBut Aaron and his sons offered sacrifices ^xon the altar of burnt offering and ^yon the altar of incense, for all the work of the Most Holy Place, and to make atonement for Israel, according to all that Moses the servant of God had commanded. ⁵⁰Now these are the ^zsons of Aaron: Eleazar his son, Phinehas his son, Abishua his son, ⁵¹Bukki his son, Uzzi his son, Zerahiah his son, ⁵²Meraioth his son, Amariah his son, Ahitub his son, ⁵³Zadok his son, and Ahimaaz his son.

Dwelling Places of the Levites

⁵⁴^aNow these are their dwelling places throughout their settlements in their territory, for they were given by lot to

6:17 Gershon: The purpose of the following genealogy was to list the principal offspring of the sons of Levi who were not priests, but regular or "ordinary" Levites.

6:18 Amram was the father of Aaron and the whole line of high priests. All other priests had to trace their lineage to Kohath through his other sons **Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel**. Descendants of Levi who were not sons of Kohath could not be priests at all.

6:22 Amminadab is another name for Izhar (v. 18), who otherwise appears as the father of Korah (6:37, 38; see Ex. 6:21; Num. 16:1).

6:28 Samuel: Samuel's ancestors were described elsewhere as Ephraimites (1 Sam. 1:1). Although Samuel was an Ephraimite by virtue of his residence in Ramathaim Zophim, a city in the tribal territory of Ephraim, this genealogy makes it clear that he was in fact a Levite. This explains why he could be trained in the tabernacle under Eli the priest (1 Sam. 2:11) and later officiate at public services that included sacrifices (1 Sam. 9:13; 10:8).

6:33-47 The temple musicians in David's time were Levites and were divided up into three groups according to their descent from Levi's three sons. The **Kohathites** in David's time were led by **Heman**, grandson of **Samuel**; the Gershonites by **Asaph** (vv. 39, 43); and

the Merarites by **Ethan** (vv. 44, 47). Ethan was otherwise known as Jeduthun (25:1).

6:49 In contrast to the Levites just listed, Aaron and his descendants had the privilege and responsibility of the office of the high priest. What set them apart from the other Levites was their access to the **altar of burnt offering and incense** and their work of making **atonement for Israel**. Levites could assist in this ministry and could officiate at local sacrifices. See the actions of the Levite Samuel (1 Sam. 7:9; 9:12, 13; 16:2-5). However, only priests in the line of Aaron could present sacrifices at the tabernacle or temple.

6:50 sons of Aaron: The genealogy of vv. 50-53 is the same as that in vv. 4-8, but this list ends with Ahimaaz. This list recites the line of Aaron only until the time of David (v. 31). Zadok and Ahimaaz were the last of the priests in the line of Eleazar under David's administration (2 Sam. 15:35, 36).

6:54 dwelling places: The remainder of the chapter describes the allocation of cities and towns to the priests (vv. 54-60), the rest of the Kohathites (vv. 61, 66-70), the Gershonites (vv. 62, 71-76), and the Merarites (vv. 63, 77-81).

the sons of Aaron, of the family of the Kohathites: ^{55b}They gave them Hebron in the land of Judah, with its surrounding ¹common-lands. ^{56c}But the fields of the city and its villages they gave to Caleb the son of Jephunneh. ⁵⁷And ^dto the sons of Aaron they gave *one of* the cities of refuge, Hebron; also Libnah with its common-lands, Jattir, Eshtemoa with its common-lands, ⁵⁸²Hilen with its common-lands, Debir with its common-lands, ⁵⁹³Ashan with its common-lands, and Beth Shemesh with its common-lands. ⁶⁰And from the tribe of Benjamin: Geba with its common-lands, ⁴Alemeth with its common-lands, and Anathoth with its common-lands. All their cities among their families *were* thirteen.

^{61e}To the rest of the family of the tribe of the Kohathites *they gave* ^fby lot ten cities from half the tribe of Manasseh. ⁶²And to the sons of Gershon, throughout their families, *they gave* thirteen cities from the tribe of Issachar, from the tribe of Asher, from the tribe of Naphtali, and from the tribe of Manasseh in Bashan. ⁶³To the sons of Merari, throughout their families, *they gave* ^gtwelve cities from the tribe of Reuben, from the tribe of Gad, and from the tribe of Zebulun. ⁶⁴So the children of Israel gave *these* cities with their ⁵common-lands to the Levites. ⁶⁵And they gave by lot from the tribe of the children of Judah, from the tribe of the children of Simeon, and from the tribe of the children of Benjamin these cities which are called by *their* names.

⁵⁵ ^b Josh. 14:13; 21:11, 12 ¹ *open lands*
⁵⁶ ^c Josh. 14:13; 15:13
⁵⁷ ^d Josh. 21:13, 19
⁵⁸ ² *Holon*, Josh. 21:15
⁵⁹ ³ *Ain*, Josh. 21:16
⁶⁰ ⁴ *Almon*, Josh. 21:18
⁶¹ ^e 1 Chr. 6:66-70
^f Josh. 21:5
⁶³ ^g Josh. 21:7, 34-40
⁶⁴ ⁵ *open lands*

⁶⁶ ^h 1 Chr. 6:61
⁶⁷ ⁱ Josh. 21:21
⁶⁸ ^j Josh. 21:22
⁷¹ ⁶ *Beeshterah*, Josh. 21:27
⁷² ⁷ *Kishon*, Josh. 21:28
⁷⁷ ⁸ *Heb. Rimmona*, an alternate spelling of *Rimmon*, 1 Chr. 4:32

⁶⁶Now ^hsome of the families of the sons of Kohath *were given* cities as their territory from the tribe of Ephraim. ⁶⁷ⁱAnd they gave them *one of* the cities of refuge, Shechem with its common-lands, in the mountains of Ephraim, also Gezer with its common-lands, ^{68j}Jokmeam with its common-lands, Beth Horon with its common-lands, ⁶⁹Aijalon with its common-lands, and Gath Rimmon with its common-lands. ⁷⁰And from the half-tribe of Manasseh: Aner with its common-lands and Bileam with its common-lands, for the rest of the family of the sons of Kohath.

⁷¹From the family of the half-tribe of Manasseh the sons of Gershon *were given* Golan in Bashan with its common-lands and ⁶Ashtaroath with its common-lands. ⁷²And from the tribe of Issachar: ⁷Kedesh with its common-lands, Daberrath with its common-lands, ⁷³Ramoth with its common-lands, and Anem with its common-lands. ⁷⁴And from the tribe of Asher: Mashal with its common-lands, Abdon with its common-lands, ⁷⁵Hukok with its common-lands, and Rehob with its common-lands. ⁷⁶And from the tribe of Naphtali: Kedesh in Galilee with its common-lands, Hammon with its common-lands, and Kirjathaim with its common-lands.

⁷⁷From the tribe of Zebulun the rest of the children of Merari *were given* ⁸Rimmon with its common-lands and Tabor with its common-lands. ⁷⁸And on the other side of the Jordan, across from Jer-

6:55 Because the priests were all Kohathites, the cities of the priests were within the districts assigned to Kohath. **Hebron**, located in Judah, is the first of these cities. **surrounding common-lands**: The priests and Levites occupied not only houses within the city walls, but they owned and worked fields immediately adjacent to the cities as well. These common-lands extended out from the perimeters of the city walls for a thousand cubits (about 1,500 ft.) in every direction (Num. 35:4, 5) and could be used for farming and grazing (Num. 35:3). This does not mean that the priests and Levites supported themselves by farming, for the Law is clear that they were to live on the tithes and offerings of the other tribes (Num. 18:21-32). The produce they received from the common-lands was a bonus. **6:56** Hebron had originally been assigned to the faithful spy Caleb as part of his inheritance (Josh. 15:13). However, Caleb's inheritance was further defined as not the city proper, but the nearby **fields and villages** (Josh. 21:11, 12). Caleb's fields were outside the thousand-cubit circumference that belonged to the priests of Hebron. **6:57** The Law specified that in the event of an unintentional killing, the perpetrator could find sanctuary in one of six **cities of refuge** scattered throughout the land (Num. 35:9-15). He or she could remain there in safety until the case came to trial (Num. 35:16-28). These six cities were included among the 48 Levitical cities, and **Hebron** was one of them. **6:60** The number **thirteen** refers to the original allotment of cities in Josh. 21:13-19. The chronicler was listing the priestly cities that existed in his own day, nearly a thousand years after the original distribution. This accounts not only for two missing cities, Juttah and Gibeon, but also for the variation in the spelling of some of the

names as well. The priestly cities were concentrated in the areas of Judah and Benjamin, conveniently located near the temple in Jerusalem. **6:61 rest of . . . the Kohathites**: These were the Levites who were not priests. Their cities were situated mainly in the **half tribe of Manasseh** on the west of the Jordan (see v. 70), just south of the plain of Jezreel. **6:66** Beginning here, there is a continuation of the description of non-priestly Kohathite cities begun in v. 61. Some of these cities were in **Ephraim**, with Manasseh to the north and Benjamin to the south. **6:67** Like Hebron, **Shechem** was both a Levitical city and a city of refuge. Shechem was especially significant in Israel. It was the site of Abraham's first altar in Canaan (Gen. 12:6, 7), the place where Jacob bought a piece of land (Gen. 33:19), and the location of the first capital of the northern kingdom (1 Kin. 12:25). **6:71 Gershon**: The tribal areas containing the cities of the Gershonite Levites were East Manasseh; Issachar, north of West Manasseh (v. 72); Asher, on the Mediterranean coast north of Mt. Carmel (v. 74); and Naphtali, west and north of the Sea of Galilee (v. 76). **Golan**: This city in Bashan east of the Jordan was a city of refuge. **6:76 Kedesh** was another of the six cities of refuge. It was the most northern of the three west of the Jordan. **6:77** The third Levitical order, that of **Merari**, occupied cities in Zebulun. Reuben was east of the Dead Sea (v. 78), and Gad was east of the Jordan from the Dead Sea almost to the Sea of Galilee (v. 80). **6:78 Bezer** was also a city of refuge, the farthest south of those east of the Jordan.

icho, on the east side of the Jordan, *they were given* from the tribe of Reuben: Bezer in the wilderness with its common-lands, Jahzah with its common-lands, ⁷⁹Kedemoth with its common-lands, and Mephaath with its common-lands. ⁸⁰And from the tribe of Gad: Ramoth in Gilead with its common-lands, Mahanaim with its common-lands, ⁸¹Heshbon with its common-lands, and Jazer with its common-lands.

The Family of Issachar

7 The sons of Issachar were ^aTola, ¹Puah, ²Jashub, and Shimron—four in all. ²The sons of Tola were Uzzi, Rephaiah, Jeriel, Jahmai, Jibsam, and Shemuel, heads of their father's house. *The sons of Tola were mighty men of valor in their generations; ^btheir number in the days of David was twenty-two thousand six hundred.* ³The son of Uzzi was Izrahiah, and the sons of Izrahiah were Michael, Obadiah, Joel, and Ishiah. All five of them were chief men. ⁴And with them, by their generations, according to their fathers' houses, were thirty-six thousand troops ready for war; for they had many wives and sons.

⁵Now their brethren among all the families of Issachar were mighty men of valor, listed by their genealogies, eighty-seven thousand in all.

The Family of Benjamin

⁶The sons of ^cBenjamin were Bela, Becher, and Jediel—three in all. ⁷The sons of Bela were Ezbon, Uzzi, Uzziel, Jerimoth, and Iri—five in all. They were heads of their fathers' houses, and they were listed by their genealogies, twenty-two thousand and thirty-four mighty men of valor.

⁸The sons of Becher were Zemirah,

CHAPTER 7

¹ ^a Num. 26:23-25
¹ ^b Puah, Gen. 46:13
² ^c Job, Gen. 46:13
² ^d 2 Sam. 24:1-9;
¹ Chr. 27:1
⁶ ^e Gen. 46:21;
¹ Num. 26:38-41;
¹ Chr. 8:1

¹² ³ Shupham, Num. 26:39
⁴ Hupham, Num. 26:39
⁵ Iri, v. 7
⁶ Ahiram, Num. 26:38
¹³ ^d Num. 26:48-50
⁷ Jahzeel, Gen. 46:24
⁸ Shilem, Gen. 46:24
¹⁴ ^e Num. 26:29-34
¹ Chr. 2:21
¹⁵ ^g Num. 26:30-33;
^{27:1} ⁹ Hupham, v. 12; Num. 26:39
¹ Shupham, v. 12; Num. 26:39
² Lit. the second
¹⁷ ^h 1 Sam. 12:11
¹⁸ ³ Jeezer, Num. 26:30

Joash, Eliezer, Elioenai, Omri, Jerimoth, Abijah, Anathoth, and Alemeth. All these *are* the sons of Becher. ⁹And they were recorded by genealogy according to their generations, heads of their fathers' houses, twenty thousand two hundred mighty men of valor. ¹⁰The son of Jediel was Bilhan, and the sons of Bilhan were Jeush, Benjamin, Ehud, Chenaanah, Zethan, Tharshish, and Ahishahar.

¹¹All these sons of Jediel were heads of their fathers' houses; *there were* seventeen thousand two hundred mighty men of valor fit to go out for war and battle. ¹²³Shuphim and ⁴Huphim were the sons of ⁵Iri, and Hushim was the son of ⁶Aher.

The Family of Naphtali

¹³The ^dsons of Naphtali were ⁷Jahziel, Guni, Jezer, and ⁸Shallum, the sons of Bilhah.

The Family of Manasseh (West)

¹⁴The ^edescendants of Manasseh: his Syrian concubine bore him ^fMachir the father of Gilead, the father of Asriel. ¹⁵Machir took as his wife *the sister* of ⁹Huphim and ¹Shuphim, whose name was Maachah. The name of Gilead's ²grandson was ^gZelophehad, but Zelophehad begot only daughters. ¹⁶(Maachah the wife of Machir bore a son, and she called his name Peresh. The name of his brother was Sheresh, and his sons were Ulam and Rakem. ¹⁷The son of Ulam was ^hBedan.) These were the descendants of Gilead the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh.

¹⁸His sister Hammoleketh bore Ishhod, ³Abiezer, and Mahlah.

¹⁹And the sons of Shemida were Ahian, Shechem, Likhi, and Aniam.

6:80 Another city of refuge, **Ramoth in Gilead**, was directly east of the Jordan. In this way the cities of refuge were distributed throughout the land so that any Israelite would be within a few miles of one of them. All six cities of refuge were assigned to the Levites, with Hebron designated for the priests (v. 55). The cities of refuge were assigned this way because the priests and Levites had judicial responsibilities in the cases involving unintentional homicide (Num. 35:25, 28; Deut. 17:8-13; 19:17-21).

7:2 The total here was limited to the **sons of Tola**. Undoubtedly there were thousands of other tribesmen of Issachar at that time, descendants of the three other sons of Issachar (v. 1).

7:4 thirty-six thousand: These appear to be the offspring of Uzzi (v. 3), the son of Tola (v. 2). Since the figure is much greater than the 22,600 of v. 2, it must reflect the population of a much later time, perhaps as late as the period just before the fall of Samaria in 722 B.C. At that time, Issachar would have had its largest population.

7:6 The chronicler recounted the genealogies of **Benjamin** in some detail because King Saul was a Benjamite (7:6-12; 8:1-40; 9:35-44). Saul was an important figure even though his reign ended tragically. The complexity of the biblical genealogies can be illustrated

by comparing the list of Benjamin's sons here with that in 8:1, 2; Gen. 46:21; Num. 26:38, 39. The differences in these genealogies are most likely due to the listing of principal descendants of different time periods.

7:13 The unusual brevity of the genealogy here may reflect the greatly reduced size and importance of **Naphtali** following the maraudings of the Assyrians under Tiglath-Pileser III. Naphtali's tribal area was specifically pointed out as the object of the Assyrian campaigns (2 Kin. 15:29).

7:14 Manasseh was the son of Joseph. **Machir:** Machir's daughter became the wife of Judah's grandson Hezron, thus joining the two tribes of Manasseh and Judah (2:21).

7:15 If the **Huphim** and **Shuphim** here are the same as in v. 12, the tribe of Manasseh and the tribe of Benjamin were connected through the marriage of Machir and **Maachah**. **Zelophehad:** Apparently a grandson of Gilead (Num. 26:30-33), this man had no sons. This situation prompted Moses to announce God's provision for the inheritance rights of daughters in such cases (Num. 36:1-9).

The Family of Ephraim

²⁰ⁱThe sons of Ephraim were Shuthelah, Bered his son, Tahath his son, Eladah his son, Tahath his son, ²¹Zabad his son, Shuthelah his son, and Ezer and Elead. The men of Gath who were born in *that* land killed *them* because they came down to take away their cattle. ²²Then Ephraim their father mourned many days, and his brethren came to comfort him.

²³And when he went in to his wife, she conceived and bore a son; and he called his name ⁴Beriah, because tragedy had come upon his house. ²⁴Now his daughter was Sheerah, who built Lower and Upper ^jBeth Horon and Uzzen Sheerah; ²⁵and Rephah was his son, *as well as* Resheph, and Telah his son, Tahan his son, ²⁶Laadan his son, Ammihud his son, ^kElishama his son, ²⁷⁵Nun his son, and ^lJoshua his son.

²⁸Now their ^mpossessions and dwelling places were Bethel and its towns: to the east ⁶Naaran, to the west Gezer and its towns, and Shechem and its towns, as far as ⁷Ayyah and its towns; ²⁹and by the borders of the children of ⁿManasseh were Beth Shean and its towns, Taanach and its towns, ^oMegiddo and its towns, Dor and its towns. In these dwelt the children of Joseph, the son of Israel.

The Family of Asher

^{30p}The sons of Asher were Imnah, Ishvah, Ishvi, Beriah, and their sister Serah. ³¹The sons of Beriah were Heber and Malchiel, who was the father of ⁸Birzathiel. ³²And Heber begot Japhlet, ⁹Shomer, ¹Hotham, and their sister Shua. ³³The sons of Japhlet were Pasach, Bimhal, and Ashvath. These were the children of Japhlet. ³⁴The sons of ^qShemer were Ahi, Rohgah, Jehubbah, and Aram. ³⁵And the sons of his brother Helem were Zo-

20 ¹ Num. 26:35-37
23 ⁴ Lit. *In Tragedy*
24 ^j Josh. 16:3, 5;
2 Chr. 8:5
26 ^k Num. 10:22
27 ^l Ex. 17:9, 14;
24:13; 33:11 ⁵ Heb.
Non
28 ^m Josh. 16:1-10
⁶ Naarath, Josh.
16:7 ⁷ Many Heb.
mss., Bg., LXX, Tg.,
Vg. *Gazza*
29 ⁿ Gen. 41:51;
Josh. 17:7 ^o Josh.
17:11
30 ^p Gen. 46:17;
Num. 26:44-47
31 ^q Or *Birzavith* or
Birzoth
32 ⁹ *Shemer*, 1 Chr.
7:34 ¹ *Helem*, 1 Chr.
7:35
34 ⁹ 1 Chr. 7:32

37 ² Jether, v. 38

CHAPTER 8

1 ^a Gen. 46:21;
Num. 26:38; 1 Chr.
7:6 ¹ *Ahiram*, Num.
26:38
3 ² *Ard*, Num. 26:40
5 ³ *Shupham*, Num.
26:39, or *Shuppim*,
1 Chr. 7:12
6 ^b 1 Chr. 6:60
^c 1 Chr. 2:52
13 ^d 1 Chr. 8:21

phah, Imna, Shelesh, and Amal. ³⁶The sons of Zophah were Suah, Harnepher, Shual, Beri, Imrah, ³⁷Bezer, Hod, Shamma, Shilshah, ²Jithran, and Beera. ³⁸The sons of Jether were Jephunneh, Pispah, and Ara. ³⁹The sons of Ulla were Arah, Haniel, and Rizia.

⁴⁰All these were the children of Asher, heads of *their fathers' houses*, choice men, mighty men of valor, chief leaders. And they were recorded by genealogies among the army fit for battle; their number was twenty-six thousand.

The Family Tree of King Saul of Benjamin

8 Now Benjamin begot ^aBela his firstborn, Ashbel the second, ¹Aharah the third, ²Nohah the fourth, and Rapha the fifth. ³The sons of Bela were ²Addar, Gera, Abihud, ⁴Abishua, Naaman, Ahoah, ⁵Gera, ³Shephuphan, and Huram.

⁶These are the sons of Ehud, who were the heads of the fathers' *houses* of the inhabitants of ^bGeba, and who forced them to move to ^cManahath: ⁷Naaman, Ahijah, and Gera who forced them to move. He begot Uzza and Ahihud.

⁸Also Shaharaim had children in the country of Moab, after he had sent away Hushim and Baara his wives. ⁹By Hodesh his wife he begot Jobab, Zibia, Mesha, Malcam, ¹⁰Jeuz, Sachiah, and Mirmah. These were his sons, heads of their fathers' *houses*.

¹¹And by Hushim he begot Abitub and Elpaal. ¹²The sons of Elpaal were Eber, Misham, and Shemed, who built Ono and Lod with its towns; ¹³and Beriah and ^dShema, who were heads of their fathers' *houses* of the inhabitants of Aijalon, who drove out the inhabitants of Gath. ¹⁴Ahio, Shashak, Jeremoth, ¹⁵Zebadiah,

7:20, 21 The genealogy of **Ephraim** follows the genealogy of his brother Manasseh. **Tahath**: This name and **Shuthelah** both occur twice, illustrating the custom of sons being named for their grandfathers or more remote ancestors.

7:21, 22 **The men of Gath** were probably the pre-conquest Philistines (see Gen. 21:32, 34; Ex. 13:17). Since the story involves Ephraim's sons in particular and not just the tribe of Ephraim, this verse establishes that Jacob's family before the Exodus had not completely lost contact with the land of Canaan.

7:24 **Lower and Upper Beth Horon**: These places were in Ephraim near the border with Benjamin.

7:27 The fact that there were nine generations between **Joshua**, the famous successor to Moses, and Ephraim (vv. 23–27) supports the view that the story in vv. 21, 22 occurred before the Exodus.

7:29 **children of Joseph**: As this phrase makes clear, vv. 28, 29 include the cities of both Ephraim and Manasseh. The cities of Beth Shean, Taanach, Megiddo, and Dor were located in Manasseh.

7:30 **Asher**: This is the last tribal genealogy in 1 Chronicles. It may be compared with the genealogies of Asher in Gen. 46:17; Num. 26:44–46.

7:40 **twenty-six thousand**: This number of fighting men would

place the completion of this genealogy in the period of David, as stated in v. 2.

8:1 The reason for this second and much more detailed genealogy of **Benjamin** was its climactic focus on the genealogy of King Saul (vv. 29–40).

8:6 A grandson of Jediahel (see 7:10) or Ashbel (see 7:6), **Ehud** apparently was the link between Benjamin and Saul. The sons of Ehud moved the Benjamites from **Geba** to **Manahath**. The former town was a Benjamite site on the border of Judah, about six miles north-east of Jerusalem.

8:9 There was a well-known Moabite king named **Mesha**. Both the Scriptures (2 Kin. 3:4) and the Moabite Stone attest to this fact. The reference here to Mesha as a son of Shaharaim and Hodesh, a Moabite wife (see v. 8), suggests that the illustrious Moabite king may have had a Benjamite father, but the evidence is not conclusive.

8:12 **Ono and Lod** were ancient towns about 12 and 7 miles southeast of Joppa. The sons of Elpaal probably rebuilt these ancient cities.

8:13 **Aijalon and Gath** were two places in the western lowlands of Israel, about 17 miles apart.

Arad, Eder, ¹⁶Michael, Ispah, and Joha were the sons of Beriah. ¹⁷Zebadiah, Meshullam, Hizki, Heber, ¹⁸Ishmerai, Jizliah, and Jobab were the sons of Elpaal. ¹⁹Jakim, Zichri, Zabdi, ²⁰Elienai, Zillethai, Eliel, ²¹Adaiah, Beraiah, and Shimrath were the sons of ⁴Shimei. ²²Ishpan, Eber, Eliel, ²³Abdon, Zichri, Hanan, ²⁴Hananiah, Elam, Antothijah, ²⁵Iphdeiah, and Penuel were the sons of Shashak. ²⁶Shamsheraï, Shehariah, Athaliah, ²⁷Jaresiah, Elijah, and Zichri were the sons of Jeroham.

²⁸These were heads of the fathers' houses by their generations, chief men. These dwelt in Jerusalem.

²⁹Now ⁵the father of Gibeon, whose wife's name was Maacah, dwelt at Gibeon. ³⁰And his firstborn son was Abdon, then Zur, Kish, Baal, Nadab, ³¹Gedor, Ahio, ⁶Zecher, ³²and Mikloth, who begot ⁷Shimeah. They also dwelt ⁸alongside their ⁹relatives in Jerusalem, with their brethren. ³³^fNer ¹begot Kish, Kish begot Saul, and Saul begot Jonathan, Malchishua, ²Abinadab, and ³Esh-Baal. ³⁴The son of Jonathan was ⁴Merib-Baal, and Merib-Baal begot ⁹Micah. ³⁵The sons of Micah were Pithon, Melech, ⁵Tarea, and Ahaz. ³⁶And Ahaz begot ⁶Jehoaddah; Jehoaddah begot Alemeth, Azmaveth, and Zimri; and Zimri begot Moza. ³⁷Moza begot Binea, ⁷Raphah his son, Eleasah his son, and Azel his son.

³⁸Azel had six sons whose names were these: Azrikam, Bocheru, Ishmael, Sheariah, Obadiah, and Hanan. All these

²¹ ⁴ Shema, 1 Chr. 7:13
²⁹ ^e 1 Chr. 9:35–38
⁵ Jeiel, 1 Chr. 9:35
³¹ ⁶ Zechariah, 1 Chr. 9:37
³² ⁷ Shimeam, 1 Chr. 9:38 ⁸ Lit. opposite ⁹ brethren
³³ ^f 1 Sam. 14:51
¹ Also the son of Gibeon, 1 Chr. 9:36, 39 ² Jishui, 1 Sam. 14:49 ³ Ishbosheth, 2 Sam. 2:8
³⁴ ^g 2 Sam. 9:12
⁴ Mephobosheth, 2 Sam. 4:4
³⁵ ⁵ Tahrea, 1 Chr. 9:41
³⁶ ⁶ Jarah, 1 Chr. 9:42
³⁷ ⁷ Raphaiah, 1 Chr. 9:43

CHAPTER 9

¹ ^c Ezra 2:59
¹ enrolled
² ^b Ezra 2:70; Neh. 7:73 ^c Ezra 2:43;
8:20
³ ^d Neh. 11:1, 2

were the sons of Azel. ³⁹And the sons of Eshek his brother were Ulam his firstborn, Jeush the second, and Eliphelet the third.

⁴⁰The sons of Ulam were mighty men of valor—archers. They had many sons and grandsons, one hundred and fifty in all. These were all sons of Benjamin.

9 So ^aall Israel was ¹recorded by genealogies, and indeed, they were inscribed in the book of the kings of Israel. But Judah was carried away captive to Babylon because of their unfaithfulness. ^{2b}And the first inhabitants who dwelt in their possessions in their cities were Israelites, priests, Levites, and ^cthe Nethinim.

Dwellers in Jerusalem

³Now in ^dJerusalem the children of Judah dwelt, and some of the children of Benjamin, and of the children of Ephraim and Manasseh: ⁴Uthai the son of Ammihud, the son of Omri, the son of Imri, the son of Bani, of the descendants of Perez, the son of Judah. ⁵Of the Shilonites: Asaiah the firstborn and his sons. ⁶Of the sons of Zerah: Jeuel, and their brethren—six hundred and ninety. ⁷Of the sons of Benjamin: Sallu the son of Meshullam, the son of Hodaviah, the son of Hassenuah; ⁸Ibneiah the son of Jeroham; Elah the son of Uzzi, the son of Michri; Meshullam the son of Shephatiah, the son of Reuel, the son of Ibnijah; ⁹and their brethren, according to their generations—nine hundred and fifty-six.

8:28 These dwell in Jerusalem: This means that the last generation in the preceding genealogy lived in Jerusalem. This city was not taken by David until approximately 1004 B.C., so the line of Benjamin was traced to at least that time. Moreover, the fact that David succeeded Saul did not mean that all Benjamites were excluded from Jerusalem or for that matter from David's favor. For example, David was careful to attend to Jonathan's survivors (2 Sam. 9:1–13), and he gave other Benjamites positions of responsibility in his new government (11:31; 12:1–7, 29).

8:29 A comparison of this genealogy (vv. 29–40) with that of 9:35–44 shows that the father of Gibeon was Jeiel. The city of Gibeon was a prominent city that existed long before this time, as the conquest narrative makes plain (Josh. 9:1–27).

8:30 Kish was the father of Saul (v. 33; 9:39). In this passage the relationship between Jeiel and Kish is unclear, because Kish is also named as the son of Ner (v. 33). However, in 9:35–39 the lineage is clearly traced from Jeiel to Ner to Kish and finally to Saul.

8:32 Since Saul was not yet born at this point in the genealogy, the Jerusalem here is the city of pre-Davidic times. Jerusalem remained under Jebusite control until David conquered it (2 Sam. 5:6–10). Perhaps at this time the Benjamites lived among the Jebusites.

8:33 Abinadab was eventually killed with his father on the battlefield at Gilboa (see 10:2; 1 Sam. 31:2). Esh-Baal evidently was Saul's youngest son, since he was not named in the genealogies of the beginning of Saul's reign (1 Sam. 14:49). He succeeded Saul as king of the northern kingdom after the five-year period in which Abner was in charge (2 Sam. 2:10; 5:4, 5). The pagan name Esh-Baal demonstrates the degree to which Saul had succumbed to religious

syncretism. The author of 2 Samuel attempted to downplay the pagan connotations of Esh-Baal by calling him Ishbosheth, meaning the "Man of Shame" (2 Sam. 2:8).

8:34 The same pagan tendency appears in the name of Jonathan's son. Merib-Baal means something like "Baal Is My Advocate."

9:1 The book or scroll mentioned here was not the canonical books of Kings, because those contain no genealogies. The reference must be to genealogical sources compiled and collected by the scribes of the kings of Israel. **carried . . . to Babylon:** This reference to the Babylonian captivity prepares the way for the genealogies and lists that follow (vv. 3, 4). As v. 3 points out, the evacuation of the cities and towns of Judah provided dwelling places for the returnees whose names follow.

9:2 Israelites: The deportation of Israel by the Assyrians from 734–722 B.C. resulted in Israel's dispersion throughout the eastern Mediterranean world. However, it is apparent from this verse that some of them joined their Judean brethren in the return from Babylon after 539 B.C. The word Nethinim, derived from the Hebrew verb "to give" and thus meaning "the ones given," refers to temple slaves. Since the Nethinim were distinct from the priests and Levites, these temple slaves must have been from other tribes (see Ezra 2:43; 7:7; Neh. 7:46, 60, 73; 10:28).

9:3 Ephraim and Manasseh: These two tribes descended from Joseph and were especially blessed by the Lord (Gen. 49:22–26; Deut. 33:13–17). However, these two tribes did not belong to the nation of Judah. This is another confirmation that the community included Israelites as well as Judeans.

All these men *were* heads of a father's house in their fathers' houses.

The Priests at Jerusalem

¹⁰*c* Of the priests: Jedaiah, Jehoiarib, and Jachin; ¹¹² Azariah the son of Hilkiah, the son of Meshullam, the son of Zadok, the son of Meraioth, the son of Ahitub, the officer over the house of God; ¹² Adaiah the son of Jeroham, the son of Pashur, the son of Malchijah; Maasai the son of Adiel, the son of Jahzerah, the son of Meshullam, the son of Meshillemith, the son of Immer; ¹³ and their brethren, heads of their fathers' houses—one thousand seven hundred and sixty. *They were* ³very able men for the work of the service of the house of God.

The Levites at Jerusalem

¹⁴ Of the Levites: Shemaiah the son of Hasshub, the son of Azrikam, the son of Hashabiah, of the sons of Merari; ¹⁵ Bakbakkar, Heresh, Galal, and Mattaniah the son of Micah, the son of Zichri, the son of Asaph; ¹⁶ Obadiah the son of Shemaiah, the son of Galal, the son of Jeduthun; and Berechiah the son of Asa, the son of Elkanah, who lived in the villages of the Netophathites.

The Levite Gatekeepers

¹⁷ And the gatekeepers *were* Shallum, Akkub, Talmon, Ahiman, and their brethren. Shallum *was* the chief. ¹⁸ Until then *they had been* gatekeepers for the camps of the children of Levi at the King's Gate on the east.

¹⁹ Shallum the son of Kore, the son of Ebiasaph, the son of Korah, and his

¹⁰ *c* Neh. 11:10-14
¹¹ ² 2 Chr. 31:13; Jer. 20:1 ² Seraiah, Neh. 11:11
¹³ ³ Lit. *mighty men of strength*
¹⁵ ⁹ Neh. 11:17
¹⁶ ^h Neh. 11:17
ⁱ Neh. 11:17

¹⁹ ⁴ Lit. *thresholds*
²⁰ Num. 25:6-13; 31:6
²¹ ^k 1 Chr. 26:2, 14 ⁵ *gatekeeper*
²² ¹ 1 Chr. 26:1, 2 ^m 1 Sam. 9:9
²⁵ ⁿ 2 Kin. 11:4-7; 2 Chr. 23:8
²⁷ ^o 1 Chr. 23:30-32 ⁶ *the watch was committed to them*
²⁹ ^p 1 Chr. 23:29
³⁰ ^q Ex. 30:22-25

brethren, from his father's house, the Korahites, *were* in charge of the work of the service, ⁴gatekeepers of the tabernacle. Their fathers had been keepers of the entrance to the camp of the LORD. ²⁰ And Phinehas the son of Eleazar had been the officer over them in time past; the LORD *was* with him. ²¹ ^k Zechariah the son of Meshelemiah *was* ⁵keeper of the door of the tabernacle of meeting.

²² All those chosen as gatekeepers *were* two hundred and twelve. ¹ They were recorded by their genealogy, in their villages. David and Samuel ^m the seer had appointed them to their trusted office. ²³ So they and their children *were* in charge of the gates of the house of the LORD, the house of the tabernacle, by assignment. ²⁴ The gatekeepers were assigned to the four directions: the east, west, north, and south. ²⁵ And their brethren in their villages *had* to come with them from time to time ⁿ for seven days. ²⁶ For in this trusted office *were* four chief gatekeepers; they were Levites. And they had charge over the chambers and treasuries of the house of God. ²⁷ And they lodged *all* around the house of God because ⁶ they *had* the ^o responsibility, and they *were* in charge of opening *it* every morning.

Other Levite Responsibilities

²⁸ Now *some* of them were in charge of the serving vessels, for they brought them in and took them out by count. ²⁹ *Some* of them *were* appointed over the furnishings and over all the implements of the sanctuary, and over the ^p fine flour and the wine and the oil and the incense and the spices. ³⁰ And *some* of the sons of the priests made ^q the ointment of the spices.

9:14-16 The normal pattern of dividing the genealogy of the **Levites** according to the three sons of Levi is not followed here (see 6:1). Rather, there are seven families listed in vv. 14-16, six of them living in Jerusalem and the seventh in Netophah. **Merari** is mentioned, but not Kohath or Gershon. In place of Gershon stands his descendant **Asaph** (6:39-43). **Jeduthun**: This is another name for Ethan, descendant of Merari (6:44-47). Both vv. 14 and 16 appear to list Merarites. **Elkanah**: The presence of this name suggests that this family is Kohathite (6:33-38). **Netophathites**: This refers to the inhabitants of the village of Netophah, a little over three miles southeast of Bethlehem. The Gershonites and Merarites evidently lived in Jerusalem in the postexilic period, while the Kohathite or the Korahite Levites lived in Netophah.
9:18 King's Gate on the east: This was the famous gate just east of the temple (Ezek. 46:1, 2). After the days of the wilderness tabernacle (Num. 3:27-31), and since the time of Zechariah and the temple of Solomon (v. 21; see 26:1, 2, 14), the Korahites had been responsible for keeping the gates and attending to the place of worship.
9:19 As descendants of Kohath (Ex. 6:18, 21), **Korah** and his line had close connections with the priesthood. However, they could not be priests since they were descended from Izhar rather than Amram. Their close connection explains why these particular Levites ministered within the precincts of the temple.
9:22 The **gatekeepers** had been appointed in the days of **David**

and **Samuel** (see 26:1-19). Since Samuel died long before David made his appointments, the chronicler must be saying that David was encouraged and instructed by the prophet from the days of his youth. In a sense, Samuel **appointed** the gatekeepers through David.
9:25 The gatekeepers lived in villages surrounding Jerusalem (v. 22). They came to Jerusalem on a rotating schedule to attend to their temple duties, serving for periods of **seven days**.
9:26 chief gatekeepers: Since there were four sides to the city and temple (v. 24) and four main gates, there must also be four **Levites** responsible for the oversight of these portals. They opened and closed the gates and provided security (v. 27). However, they also oversaw all the various rooms and other facilities of the temple.
treasuries: This referred to the places where money was kept and to storage rooms in general.
9:27 they lodged: Whereas the Levites who tended the gates lived in surrounding villages, those in charge must have lived in the city, probably near the gates of the temple. They had to be nearby in order to supervise temple affairs, including the **opening** and closing of the gates.
9:30 Although the Levites could handle such matters as the serving vessels (v. 28), furnishings, implements, and even materials for an offering (such as flour, wine, incense, and spices, v. 29), they were not allowed to prepare the **ointment of the spices**. This was reserved for the priests alone, as Ex. 30:23-25, 33, 37, 38 states.

³¹ Mattithiah of the Levites, the firstborn of Shallum the Korahite, had the trusted office ^rover the things that were baked in the pans. ³² And some of their brethren of the sons of the Kohathites ^swere in charge of preparing the showbread for every Sabbath.

³³ These are ^tthe singers, heads of the fathers' houses of the Levites, *who lodged in the chambers, and were free from other duties*; for they were employed in *that* work day and night. ³⁴ These heads of the fathers' houses of the Levites *were* heads throughout their generations. They dwelt at Jerusalem.

The Family of King Saul

³⁵ Jeiel the father of Gibeon, whose wife's name *was* ^uMaacah, dwelt at Gibeon. ³⁶ His firstborn son *was* Abdon, then Zur, Kish, Baal, Ner, Nadab, ³⁷ Gedor, Ahio, ⁷Zechariah, and Mikloth. ³⁸ And Mikloth begot ⁸Shimeam. They also dwelt alongside their relatives in Jerusalem, with their brethren. ³⁹ ^vNer begot Kish, Kish begot Saul, and Saul begot Jonathan, Malchishua, Abinadab, and Esh-Baal. ⁴⁰ The son of Jonathan *was* Merib-Baal, and Merib-Baal begot Micah. ⁴¹ The sons of Micah *were* Pithon, Melech, ⁹Tahrea, ^wand ¹Ahaz. ⁴² And Ahaz begot ²Jarah; Jarah begot Alemeth, Azmaveth, and Zimri; and Zimri begot Moza; ⁴³ Moza begot Binea, ³Rephaiah his son, Eleasah his son, and Azel his son.

⁴⁴ And Azel had six sons whose names *were* these: Azrikam, Bocheru, Ishmael, Sheariah, Obadiah, and Hanan; these *were* the sons of Azel.

Tragic End of Saul and His Sons

10 Now ^athe Philistines fought against Israel; and the men of Is-

³¹ ^r Lev. 2:5; 6:21
³² ^s Lev. 24:5-8
³³ ^t 1 Chr. 6:31; 25:1
³⁵ ^u 1 Chr. 8:29-32
³⁷ ⁷ Zecher, 1 Chr. 8:31
³⁸ ⁸ Shimeah, 1 Chr. 8:32
³⁹ ^v 1 Chr. 8:33-38
⁴¹ ^w 1 Chr. 8:35
⁹ Tarea, 1 Chr. 8:35
¹ So with Arab., Syr., Tg., Vg. (cf. 8:35); MT, LXX omit and Ahaz
⁴² ² Jehoaddah, 1 Chr. 8:36
⁴³ ³ Raphah, 1 Chr. 8:37

CHAPTER 10

1 ^a 1 Sam. 31:1, 2

² ¹ Jishui, 1 Sam. 14:49
⁸ ² plunder
¹⁰ ^b 1 Sam. 31:10
³ Lit. house
¹² ^c 1 Sam. 14:52
^d 2 Sam. 21:12
¹³ ⁴ Lit. transgressed

rael fled from before the Philistines, and fell slain on Mount Gilboa. ² Then the Philistines followed hard after Saul and his sons. And the Philistines killed Jonathan, ¹Abinadab, and Malchishua, Saul's sons. ³ The battle became fierce against Saul. The archers hit him, and he was wounded by the archers. ⁴ Then Saul said to his armorbearer, "Draw your sword, and thrust me through with it, lest these uncircumcised men come and abuse me." But his armorbearer would not, for he was greatly afraid. Therefore Saul took a sword and fell on it. ⁵ And when his armorbearer saw that Saul was dead, he also fell on his sword and died. ⁶ So Saul and his three sons died, and all his house died together. ⁷ And when all the men of Israel who *were* in the valley saw that they had fled and that Saul and his sons were dead, they forsook their cities and fled; then the Philistines came and dwelt in them.

⁸ So it happened the next day, when the Philistines came to ²strip the slain, that they found Saul and his sons fallen on Mount Gilboa. ⁹ And they stripped him and took his head and his armor, and sent word throughout the land of the Philistines to proclaim the news *in the temple* of their idols and among the people. ¹⁰ ^b Then they put his armor in the ³temple of their gods, and fastened his head in the temple of Dagon.

¹¹ And when all Jabesh Gilead heard all that the Philistines had done to Saul, ¹² all the ^cvaliant men arose and took the body of Saul and the bodies of his sons; and they brought them to ^dJabesh, and buried their bones under the tamarisk tree at Jabesh, and fasted seven days.

¹³ So Saul died for his unfaithfulness which he had ⁴committed against the

9:33, 34 The head **singers**, like the chief gatekeepers (vv. 26, 27), lived in Jerusalem to be constantly on hand to supervise the ministry of the temple musicians. **They dwelt at Jerusalem:** In fact, it was the general policy that all the heads of the various Levitical classes would live in the capital.

9:40 The interest the chronicler has in the genealogy of **Jonathan** probably springs from Jonathan's close friendship with David (1 Sam. 18:1).

10:1 Some 1,700 feet in elevation, **Mount Gilboa** lies in the southeastern part of the plain of Jezreel. This was Philistine territory from the time they arrived there in about 1200 B.C. The following account of Saul's final battle closely parallels the account in 1 Sam. 31:1-13.

10:2 Saul's sons: There was a fourth son, Ishbosheth. He survived this battle and became king of Israel five years after Saul's death.

10:4 Most Semites practiced circumcision for either hygienic or religious purposes, but for the Hebrews it was the sign of God's promise through Abraham to them. The **uncircumcised** were those outside, often their enemies the Philistines. **abuse:** The Philistines could not only harm Saul personally, but bring shame on the nation that had him as their leader. Saul was driven to an extreme course of action. Suicide was a very rare occurrence among the Hebrews of OT times (see v. 5; 2 Sam. 17:23; 1 Kin. 16:18).

10:6 all his house died: This statement was written in anticipation of the death of Ishbosheth, the last of Saul's sons. With Ishbosheth's death (see 2 Sam. 4:5, 7), Saul's dynasty came to an end.

10:7 Though the **Philistines** had long dominated the Jezreel-Esdraelon Valley, there were Israelite cities in the region for some time. With Saul's death, even these were lost to the Philistines, who took them over when the Israelites abandoned them.

10:10 Dagon was worshiped by the Philistines and other peoples in Syria and northwest Mesopotamia as the god of grain. A hundred years earlier, the Philistines had placed the captured ark of the covenant in the temple of Dagon at Ashdod (1 Sam. 5:2). Later Samson stood between the central pillars of a temple of Dagon, where he was mocked by the assembled Philistines (Judg. 16:23-31). Apparently the Philistines celebrated military victory by bringing a trophy of their success back to their temple, where it could be displayed as a tribute to the might of their god.

10:11 Jabesh Gilead was just east of the Jordan, not far from Beth Shan. The care the people of this town took in retrieving Saul's corpse from Beth Shan was doubtless in memory of Saul's quick response to their cry for help early in his reign (1 Sam. 11:1-11).

10:13 Saul's untimely death was the result of disobedience to God's **word**. He had disobeyed God by not waiting for Samuel to

LORD, ^ebecause he did not keep the word of the LORD, and also because ^fhe consulted a medium for guidance. ¹⁴But *he* did not inquire of the LORD; therefore He killed him, and ^gturned the kingdom over to David the son of Jesse.

David Made King over All Israel

11 Then ^aall Israel came together to David at Hebron, saying, “Indeed we *are* your bone and your flesh. ²Also, in time past, even when Saul was king, you *were* the one who led Israel out and brought them in; and the LORD your ^bGod said to you, ‘You shall ^cshepherd My people Israel, and be ruler over My people Israel.’” ³Therefore all the elders of Israel came to the king at Hebron, and David made a covenant with them at Hebron before the LORD. And ^dthey anointed David king over Israel, according to the word of the LORD ¹by ^eSamuel.

The City of David

⁴And David and all Israel ^fwent to Jerusalem, which is Jebus, ^gwhere the Jebusites *were*, the inhabitants of the land. ⁵But the inhabitants of Jebus said to David, “You shall not come in here!” Nevertheless David took the stronghold of Zion (that is, the City of David). ⁶Now David said, “Whoever attacks the Jebusites first shall be ²chief and captain.” And Joab the son of Zeruiah went up first, and became chief. ⁷Then David dwelt in the strong-

13 ^e 1 Sam. 13:13, 14; 15:22-26 ^f [Lev. 19:31; 20:6]; 1 Sam. 28:7
14 ^a 1 Sam. 15:28; 2 Sam. 3:9, 10; 5:3; 1 Chr. 12:23

CHAPTER 11
1 ^a 2 Sam. 5:1
2 ^b 1 Sam. 16:1-3; Ps. 78:70-72
3 ^c 2 Sam. 7:7
3 ^d 2 Sam. 5:3
^e 1 Sam. 16:1, 4, 12, 13 ¹ Lit. *by the hand of Samuel*
4 ^f 2 Sam. 5:6
^g Josh. 15:8, 63; Judg. 1:21; 19:10, 11
6 ² Lit. *head*

7 ³ Zion, 2 Sam. 5:7
8 ⁴ Lit. *The Landfill*
⁵ Lit. *revived*
9 ^h 2 Sam. 3:1
ⁱ 1 Sam. 16:18
10 ^j 2 Sam. 23:8
^k 1 Sam. 16:1, 12
11 ¹ 1 Chr. 27:2
^m 1 Chr. 12:18 ⁶ So with Qr.; Kt., LXX, Vg. *the thirty* (cf. 2 Sam. 23:8)
12 ⁿ 1 Chr. 27:4
13 ⁷ *Ephes Dammim*, 1 Sam. 17:1
14 ⁸ Lit. *took their stand*
15 ^o 2 Sam. 23:13
^p 2 Sam. 5:18; 1 Chr. 14:9 ⁹ Lit. *Giants*

hold; therefore they called it ³the City of David. ⁸And he built the city around it, from ⁴the Millo to the surrounding area. Joab ⁵repaired the rest of the city. ⁹So David ^hwent on and became great, and the LORD of hosts *was* with ⁱhim.

The Mighty Men of David

¹⁰Now ^jthese *were* the heads of the mighty men whom David had, who strengthened themselves with him in his kingdom, with all Israel, to make him king, according to ^kthe word of the LORD concerning Israel.
¹¹And this *is* the number of the mighty men whom David had: ¹Jashobeam the son of a Hachmonite, ^mchief of ⁶the captains; he had lifted up his spear against three hundred, killed *by him* at one time.
¹²After him was Eleazar the son of ⁿDodo, the Ahohite, who *was one* of the three mighty men. ¹³He was with David at ⁷Pasdammin. Now there the Philistines were gathered for battle, and there was a piece of ground full of barley. So the people fled from the Philistines. ¹⁴But they ⁸stationed themselves in the middle of *that* field, defended it, and killed the Philistines. So the LORD brought about a great victory.
¹⁵Now three of the thirty chief men ^owent down to the rock to David, into the cave of Adullam; and the army of the Philistines encamped ^pin the Valley of ⁹Rephaim. ¹⁶David *was* then in the

perform a sacrifice and by not utterly destroying the Amalekites (1 Sam. 13:1-15; 15:10-23). **consulted a medium:** Before the battle, Saul had asked for Samuel's advice through the witch of En Dor (1 Sam. 28:3-25).
10:14 He killed him: This statement is shocking in its bluntness. In the final analysis, Saul's death was not by his own hand but by the hand of God. The Lord let Saul pursue a course that led to death.
turned the kingdom over: This statement confirmed Samuel's earlier word to Saul (1 Sam. 15:28).
11:1, 2 Made famous because Abraham lived (Gen. 13:18) and was buried there (Gen. 25:9), **Hebron** was a Levitical city as well (6:54, 55). David made it his capital following Saul's death (2 Sam. 2:3) and reigned there until Ishbosheth's death seven years later (2 Sam. 4:1-12; 5:5). David's legitimacy as successor to Saul was confirmed by the support he received from **all** the tribes. **You shall . . . be ruler:** The crowds were very much aware of the promise God had made to David (1 Sam. 16:12; 24:20; 28:17).
11:3 The **covenant** refers to mutual pledges made between a king and his people, ensuring stable and successful government. The Law of Moses made provision for such a covenant (see Deut. 17:18-20). Hints of the king's covenant guidelines may be found in the accession of Solomon (29:19; 1 Kin. 2:3) and Joash (2 Kin. 11:4), and in Josiah's promise to obey the statutes of the Book of the Covenant (2 Kin. 23:2, 3). **according to . . . Samuel:** Years before, Samuel had anointed David (1 Sam. 16:1, 3, 12, 13). This second anointing confirmed the first one.
11:4 **Jebus** was another name for Jerusalem. The name was coined by the Israelites because the city belonged to the **Jebusites**. The name does not occur outside the OT (see Josh. 15:8; 18:16, 28).
11:5 Another name for Jerusalem was **Zion**. The original Canaanite

city, surrounded by high, thick walls, was considered a stronghold. After David took the city and made it his capital, it became known as **the City of David**. When the temple was built on Mt. Moriah (2 Chr. 3:1), a hill just north of the city, that area and sometimes the whole city was called Mt. Zion.
11:6 The stronghold of Zion (11:5) seemed impregnable until **Joab** found a means of access. As a result, Joab was rewarded with the command of Israel's army. He already enjoyed a close relationship with David because he was a **son of Zeruiah**, David's sister (2:15, 16).
11:8 Once David occupied Mt. Ophel, the original and very small area of Jerusalem, he greatly enlarged it by building retaining walls along the Kidron valley to the east and south and the Tyropoeon valley (or the Valley of Maktesh) to the west. Between these walls and the top of the hill he built terraces, so that various buildings could be constructed there.
11:10, 11 the mighty men: This phrase applied to three persons, Jashobeam, Eleazar (v. 12), and Shammah (see 2 Sam. 23:11, 12). They were distinguished for their bravery and their service to David. Joab, already singled out as "chief" (v. 6), was above them in rank.
Jashobeam: This first of the mighty men, known in 2 Sam. 23:8 as Josheb-Basshebeth, showed his heroism by slaying **three hundred** of the enemy single-handed. This event is recorded only here.
11:15 Another elite group of **three**, not named in this episode, penetrated the defenses of the Philistines. **The cave of Adullam** was about 12 miles southwest of Bethlehem and was one of David's favorite hiding places in the days of his flight from Saul (1 Sam. 22:1). **The Valley of Rephaim** is southwest of Jerusalem in the direction of Adullam.

stronghold, and the garrison of the Philistines *was* then in Bethlehem. ¹⁷ And David said with longing, “Oh, that someone would give me a drink of water from the well of Bethlehem, which is by the gate!” ¹⁸ So the three broke through the camp of the Philistines, drew water from the well of Bethlehem that *was* by the gate, and took *it* and brought *it* to David. Nevertheless David would not drink it, but poured it out to the LORD. ¹⁹ And he said, “Far be it from me, O my God, that I should do this! Shall I drink the blood of these men *who have put their lives in jeopardy*? For at the risk of their lives they brought it.” Therefore he would not drink it. These things were done by the three mighty men.

²⁰ ^q Abishai the brother of Joab was chief of *another* ¹ three. He had lifted up his spear against three hundred *men*, killed *them*, and won a name among *these* three. ²¹ ^r Of the three he was more honored than the other two men. Therefore he became their captain. However he did not attain to the *first* three.

²² Benaiah was the son of Jehoiada, the son of a valiant man from Kabzeel, who ² had done many deeds. ^s He had killed two lion-like heroes of Moab. He also had gone down and killed a lion in the midst of a pit on a snowy day. ²³ And he killed an Egyptian, a man of *great* height, ³ five cubits tall. In the Egyptian’s hand *there was* a spear like a weaver’s beam; and he went down to him with a staff, wrested the spear out of the Egyptian’s hand, and killed him with his own spear. ²⁴ These *things* Benaiah the son of Jehoiada did, and won a name among three mighty men. ²⁵ Indeed he was more honored than the thirty, but he did not attain to

²⁰ ^q 2 Sam. 23:18; 1 Chr. 18:12 ¹ So with MT, LXX, Vg.; Syr. *thirty*
²¹ ^r 2 Sam. 23:19
²² ^s 2 Sam. 23:20
² *was great in deeds*
²³ ³ About 7½ feet

²⁶ ^t 2 Sam. 23:24
²⁷ ^u 2 Sam. 23:26; 1 Chr. 27:10
⁴ *Shammah the Harodite*, 2 Sam. 23:25 ^v *Paltite*, 2 Sam. 23:26
²⁸ ^v 1 Chr. 27:9
^w 1 Chr. 27:12
²⁹ ⁶ *Mebunnai*, 2 Sam. 23:27
⁷ *Zalmon*, 2 Sam. 23:28
³⁰ ^x 1 Chr. 27:13
⁸ *Heleb*, 2 Sam. 23:29, or *Heldai*, 1 Chr. 27:15
³¹ ^y 1 Chr. 27:14
⁹ *Ittai*, 2 Sam. 23:29
³² ¹ *Hiddai*, 2 Sam. 23:30 ² *Abi-Albon*, 2 Sam. 23:31
³³ ³ *Barhumite*, 2 Sam. 23:31
³⁴ ⁴ *Jashen*, 2 Sam. 23:32
³⁵ ⁵ *Sharar*, 2 Sam. 23:33 ⁶ *Eliphelet*, 2 Sam. 23:34
⁷ *Ahasbai*, 2 Sam. 23:34
³⁷ ⁸ *Hezrai*, 2 Sam. 23:35 ⁹ *Paarai the Arbite*, 2 Sam. 23:35
³⁹ ¹ *Beerothite*, 2 Sam. 23:37
⁴¹ ² 2 Sam. 11 ² The last sixteen are not added in 2 Sam. 23.

CHAPTER 12

¹ ^a 1 Sam. 27:2
^b 1 Sam. 27:6

the *first* three. And David appointed him over his guard.

²⁶ Also the mighty warriors *were* ^t Asahel the brother of Joab, Elhanan the son of Dodo of Bethlehem, ²⁷ ⁴ Shammoth the Harodite, ^u Helez the ⁵ Pelonite, ²⁸ ^v Ira the son of Ikkesh the Tekoite, ^w Abiezer the Anathothite, ²⁹ ⁶ Sibbechai the Hushathite, ⁷ Ilai the Ahohite, ³⁰ ^x Maharai the Netophathite, ⁸ Heled the son of Baanah the Netophathite, ³¹ ⁹ Ithai the son of Ribai of Gibeath, of the sons of Benjamin, ⁹ Benaiah the Pirathonite, ³² ¹ Hurai of the brooks of Gaash, ² Abiel the Arbathite, ³³ Azmaveth the ³ Baharumite, Eliahba the Shaalbomite, ³⁴ the sons of ⁴ Hashem the Gizonite, Jonathan the son of Shageh the Hararite, ³⁵ Ahiam the son of ⁵ Sacar the Hararite, ⁶ Eliphal the son of ⁷ Uri, ³⁶ Hephher the Mecherathite, Ahijah the Pelonite, ³⁷ ⁸ Hezro the Carmelite, ⁹ Naarai the son of Ezbai, ³⁸ Joel the brother of Nathan, Mibhar the son of Hagri, ³⁹ Zelek the Ammonite, Naharai the ¹ Berothite (the armorbearer of Joab the son of Zeruiah), ⁴⁰ Ira the Ithrite, Gareb the Ithrite, ⁴¹ ² Uriah the Hittite, ² Zabad the son of Ahlai, ⁴² Adina the son of Shiza the Reubenite (a chief of the Reubenites) and thirty with him, ⁴³ Hanan the son of Maachah, Joshaphat the Mithnite, ⁴⁴ Uzzia the Ashterathite, Shama and Jeiel the sons of Hotham the Aroerite, ⁴⁵ Jediael the son of Shimri, and Joha his brother, the Tizite, ⁴⁶ Eliel the Mahavite, Jeribai and Joshaviah the sons of Elnaam, Ithmah the Moabite, ⁴⁷ Eliel, Obed, and Jaasiel the Mezobaite.

The Growth of David’s Army

12 Now ^a these *were* the men who came to David at ^b Ziklag while he was still a fugitive from Saul the son of

11:18 David would not drink it: This was not an act of ingratitude. To the contrary, David expressed the utmost sense of appreciation. His men had risked their lives to bring water to David, and now in the face of their selflessness he felt unworthy to drink it. He **poured it out to the LORD** as though it were an offering of blood (v. 19).

11:20 Abishai was a brother of **Joab** and a son of David’s sister Zeruiah (2:16). Like Joab, Abishai was chief over other warriors because of his great exploits.

11:21 the first three: This refers to Jashobeam, Eleazar (vv. 11, 12), and Shammah. Chronicles does not mention the third one by name (see 2 Sam. 23:11, 12) but does acknowledge his existence (v. 12). For reasons not spelled out, Abishai was not qualified to be in the ranks of the first three.

11:23 Five cubits was about seven and a half feet.

11:24 three mighty men: Only Abishai and Benaiah were named as members of this group.

11:25 The next level below Joab, the commander, and the two groups of “three mighty men” was **the thirty**. Their names appear in vv. 26–47 and also in 2 Sam. 23:24–39. The term *thirty* may denote an elite military unit that consisted of approximately 30 men. The term does not indicate a literal number, because the list in vv. 26–47 includes more than 30 names.

11:26 Asahel was the third son of David’s sister Zeruiah (2:16). Apparently he was not one of the “three mighty men,” but his position as first in the list of “the thirty” suggests that he had a high rank. He may have failed to achieve greater prominence because of his untimely death at the hand of Abner (2 Sam. 2:18–23).

11:39 Ammonite: Some of David’s heroes were not Israelites. They may have been immigrants or mercenaries.

11:41 Uriah the Hittite: The irony of including this warrior in the list is obvious from the story of his death at the hands of David and Joab (2 Sam. 11:6–17). With remarkable candor, both Samuel and Chronicles include Uriah’s name among the 30.

11:42 Adina . . . the Reubenite also appears to have led a group of the **thirty**. Though there are only 16 names from Zabad through Jaasiel (vv. 41, 47), these 16 might have formed the nucleus of such a military unit. The others were no longer known, or the list was drawn up before the unit was complete.

12:1 About 25 miles southwest of Gath, **Ziklag** became David’s private possession. He received it after he had crossed over into Philistia to get away from Saul and had placed himself under the lordship of Achish, the ruler of the city-state of Gath (1 Sam. 27:1–7). As an ally and vassal of Achish, David was required to pay tribute and show his loyalty and submission. Therefore, he made raids from

Kish; and they *were* among the mighty men, helpers in the war, ²armed with bows, using both the right hand and *c*the left in *hurling* stones and *shooting* arrows with the bow. *They were* of Benjamin, Saul's brethren.

³The chief was Ahiezer, then Joash, the sons of ¹Shemaah the Gibeathite; Jeziel and Pelet the sons of Azmaveth; Berachah, and Jehu the Anathothite; ⁴Ishmaiah the Gibeonite, a mighty man among the thirty, and over the thirty; Jeremiah, Jahaziel, Johanan, and Jozabad the Gederathite; ⁵Eluzai, Jerimoth, Bealiah, Shemariah, and Shephatiah the Haruphite; ⁶Elkanah, Jisshiah, Azarel, Joezer, and Jashobeam, the Korahites; ⁷and Joelah and Zebadiah the sons of Jeroham of Gedor.

⁸*Some* Gadites ²joined David at the stronghold in the wilderness, mighty men of valor, men trained for battle, who could handle shield and spear, whose faces *were like* the faces of lions, and *were* ^das swift as gazelles on the mountains: ⁹Ezer the first, Obadiah the second, Eliab the third, ¹⁰Mishmannah the fourth, Jeremiah the fifth, ¹¹Attai the sixth, Eliel the seventh, ¹²Johanan the eighth, Elzabad the ninth, ¹³Jeremiah the tenth, and Machbanai the eleventh. ¹⁴These *were* from the sons of Gad, captains of the army; the least was over a hundred,

2 *c* Judg. 3:15; 20:16
3 ¹ Or *Hasmaah*
8 ^d 2 Sam. 2:18
² Lit. *separated themselves to*

and the greatest was over a *e*thousand. ¹⁵These *are* the ones who crossed the Jordan in the first month, when it had overflowed all its ^fbanks; and they put to flight all *those* in the valleys, to the east and to the west.

¹⁶Then some of the sons of Benjamin and Judah came to David at the stronghold. ¹⁷And David went out ³to meet them, and answered and said to them, "If you have come peaceably to me to help me, my heart will be united with you; but if to betray me to my enemies, since *there is* no ⁴wrong in my hands, may the God of our fathers look and bring judgment." ¹⁸Then the Spirit ⁵came upon ^gAmasai, chief of the captains, *and he said*:

"We are yours, O David;
We are on your side, O son of Jesse!
Peace, peace to you,
And peace to your helpers!
For your God helps you."

So David received them, and made them captains of the troop.

¹⁹And *some* from Manasseh defected to David ^hwhen he was going with the Philistines to battle against Saul; but they did not help them, for the lords of the Philistines sent him away by agreement, saying, ⁱ"He may defect to his master Saul *and endanger* our heads." ²⁰When

14 *c* 1 Sam. 18:13
15 ^f Josh. 3:15;
4:18, 19
17 ³ Lit. *before them*
⁴ Lit. *violence*
18 ^g 2 Sam. 17:25
⁵ Lit. *clothed*
19 ^h 1 Sam. 29:2
ⁱ 1 Sam. 29:4

Ziklag against various desert tribes, seizing their properties and bringing some of the plunder back to the Philistines. The rest he distributed to his own countrymen without the Philistines' knowledge. Meanwhile, David was joined at Ziklag by many other "outlaws" and refugees from Judah until he had a sizable number of **mighty men** there (1 Sam. 27:8–12).

12:2 Included among his warriors were ambidextrous Benjamites, some of Saul's own fellow tribesmen. This shows the extent of dissatisfaction with Saul's rule. That these Benjamites could use the **right hand** as well as the **left** was ironic, because the name **Benjamin** means "Son of the Right Hand" (see Judg. 20:16).

12:4 This may suggest that the Benjamites listed here formed a unit

known technically as **the thirty** (see 11:25), although not exactly 30 names are recorded here.

12:6 Since the other heroes such as the Gibeathite in v. 3 were listed by their place of origin, Korah was probably the name of a place in Benjamin. These **Korahites** should not be confused with the Levites of that name (9:19).

12:8 David had attracted a following from all over Israel. The **Gadites** came from the far northern and central areas east of the Jordan (5:11–17) to join him. **The stronghold** was the cave of Adullam, David's principal place of refuge in the Judean wilderness (see 11:15; 1 Sam. 22:1).

12:14 hundred . . . thousand: These were terms for military units which may or may not have had precisely that many men. The Gadites were so famous for their valor and leadership skills (v. 8) that they rose to high ranks in David's army.

12:15 According to the agricultural calendar, the **first month** was Nisan, corresponding approximately to April. This was the time of the spring rains (Deut. 11:14), when the rivers were often at flood stage (see Josh. 3:13; 4:18, 19). Ordinarily a person could not cross the Jordan at such times, but the Gadites were not deterred by such obstacles.

12:18 Amasai was probably an alternative spelling of Amasa, the son of David's sister Abigail (2:17). He became David's army commander after Joab had fallen from favor (2 Sam. 19:13), but he held the post for only a short time before being assassinated by Joab (2 Sam. 20:4–13). The murder was all the more reprehensible because Joab and Amasa were first cousins.

12:19 Manasseh defected: This incident reveals how compromised David's position was when he, as vassal to Achish of Gath (see v. 1), was pressed into joining the **Philistines** against Saul at Gilboa (1 Sam. 29:1–11). As it turned out, the other Philistine rulers outvoted Achish and sent David back to Ziklag before he had to go to war against his Israelite countrymen.

peace

(Heb. *shalom*) (12:18; Gen. 43:23; Num. 6:26; Is. 54:13)
Strong's #7965

This word conveys the idea of completeness and well-being—of being a perfect whole. The word denotes an absence of discomfort, whether physical ailments or strife, internal or external (Gen. 43:28; Is. 26:3; Eccl. 3:8). It is used as an ordinary greeting, as a word of assurance, and as a term of blessing (Gen. 43:23; 1 Sam. 25:5, 6; 2 Kin. 5:19). The prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel spoke out against the false prophets of their day for erroneously prophesying peace (Jer. 6:14; 8:11; Ezek. 13:10, 16). After God's judgment fell, Jeremiah proclaimed that God's thoughts toward the captives were for peace and not evil (Jer. 29:11). The word occurs in two important messianic prophecies identifying the Messiah as the Prince of Peace and the One who would assure our peace (Is. 9:6; 53:5).

he went to Ziklag, those of Manasseh who defected to him were Adnah, Joabab, Jediahel, Michael, Jozabad, Elihu, and Zillethai, captains of the thousands who were from Manasseh. ²¹ And they helped David against ^jthe bands of raiders, for they were all mighty men of valor, and they were captains in the army. ²² For at that time they came to David day by day to help him, until it was a great army, ^klike the army of God.

David's Army at Hebron

²³ Now these were the numbers of the ⁶divisions that were equipped for war, and ^lcame to David at ^mHebron to ⁿturn over the kingdom of Saul to him, ^oaccording to the word of the LORD: ²⁴ of the sons of Judah bearing shield and spear, six thousand eight hundred ⁷armed for war; ²⁵ of the sons of Simeon, mighty men of valor fit for war, seven thousand one hundred; ²⁶ of the sons of Levi four thousand six hundred; ²⁷ Jehoiaada, the leader of the Aaronites, and with him three thousand seven hundred; ²⁸ ^pZadok, a young man, a valiant warrior, and from his father's house twenty-two captains; ²⁹ of the sons of Benjamin, relatives of Saul, three thousand (until then ^qthe greatest part of them had remained loyal to the house of Saul); ³⁰ of the sons of Ephraim twenty thousand eight hundred, mighty men of valor, ⁸famous men throughout their father's house; ³¹ of the half-tribe of Manasseh eighteen thousand, who were designated by name to come and make David king; ³² of the sons of Issachar ^rwho had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do, their chiefs were two hundred; and all their brethren were at their command; ³³ of Zebulun there were fifty thousand who went out to battle, expert in war

21 / 1 Sam. 30:1, 9, 10
22 ^k Gen. 32:2; Josh. 5:13-15
23 / 2 Sam. 2:1-4
^m 1 Chr. 11:1 ⁿ 1 Chr. 10:14 ^o 1 Sam. 16:1-4 ⁶ Lit. heads of those
24 ⁷ equipped
28 ^p 2 Sam. 8:17; 1 Chr. 6:8, 53
29 ^q 2 Sam. 2:8, 9
30 ⁸ Lit. men of names
32 ^r Esth. 1:13

33 ^s Ps. 12:2; [James 1:8]
38 ^t 2 Chr. 30:12

CHAPTER 13

1 ^a 1 Chr. 11:15; 12:34
2 ^b 1 Sam. 31:1; Is. 37:4
3 ^c 1 Sam. 7:1, 2

with all weapons of war, ^sstouthearted men who could keep ranks; ³⁴ of Naphtali one thousand captains, and with them thirty-seven thousand with shield and spear; ³⁵ of the Danites who could keep battle formation, twenty-eight thousand six hundred; ³⁶ of Asher, those who could go out to war, able to keep battle formation, forty thousand; ³⁷ of the Reubenites and the Gadites and the half-tribe of Manasseh, from the other side of the Jordan, one hundred and twenty thousand armed for battle with every kind of weapon of war.

³⁸ All these men of war, who could keep ranks, came to Hebron with a loyal heart, to make David king over all Israel; and all the rest of Israel were of ^tone mind to make David king. ³⁹ And they were there with David three days, eating and drinking, for their brethren had prepared for them. ⁴⁰ Moreover those who were near to them, from as far away as Issachar and Zebulun and Naphtali, were bringing food on donkeys and camels, on mules and oxen—provisions of flour and cakes of figs and cakes of raisins, wine and oil and oxen and sheep abundantly, for there was joy in Israel.

The Ark Brought from Kirjath Jearim

13 Then David consulted with the ^acaptains of thousands and hundreds, and with every leader. ² And David said to all the assembly of Israel, "If it seems good to you, and if it is of the LORD our God, let us send out to our brethren everywhere *who are* ^bleft in all the land of Israel, and with them to the priests and Levites *who are* in their cities and their common-lands, that they may gather together to us; ³ and let us bring the ark of our God back to us, ^cfor we

12:21 When David returned to Ziklag, he found that Amalekites had attacked the city and carried off his family with other prisoners (1 Sam. 30:1). Those who had abandoned David in his march to Gilboa (v. 19) now joined him in his pursuit of these raiders (1 Sam. 30:2-25).

12:22 The army of God refers to the angelic hosts, too vast to count. David attracted so many recruits while he was in the wilderness in flight from Saul and at Ziklag that they were beyond counting.

12:28 This Zadok, apparently an Aaronite (v. 27) and therefore a priest, was probably the same Zadok who was first appointed by David as priest at Gibeon (16:39), and then by Solomon at Jerusalem (1 Kin. 2:26, 27, 35). The office of priest was not incompatible with that of warrior, as Phinehas clearly demonstrated (Num. 25:6-9; Josh. 22:30).

12:39 eating and drinking: Besides the normal festivity that accompanied such a grand occasion as the installation of a king, this phrase alludes to a covenant meal (Gen. 31:43-55; Ex. 24:11)—a meal that solemnized a covenant between David and the people (11:3).

12:40 Issachar, Zebulun, and Naphtali were geographically the

most distant of the tribes. The phrase **near to them** was a way of speaking of the common identity of God's people.

13:1 David consulted: Though David was king and therefore could have acted independently, he understood the importance of godly counsel. Before he undertook the next major step, he sought the advice of his subordinate leaders.

13:2 This ark was the ark of the covenant that contained a copy of the Ten Commandments (Ex. 25:10-22). In the days of Eli, the ark had been captured by the Philistines, in whose hands it remained for several months (1 Sam. 4:11; 6:1). Next it remained at Beth Shemesh for a short time (1 Sam. 6:13-15) and finally it resided at Kirjath Jearim (1 Sam. 6:20-7:1). **since the days of Saul:** During Saul's reign, the people of Kirjath Jearim kept the ark in their city for safekeeping. Besides holding the Ten Commandments and serving as a throne for God, the ark represented the presence of the living God among the Israelites. David wanted to unify the Israelites around their God, so he brought the ark to the nation's new political center, Jerusalem. The city was already the seat of David's government (11:4-9); now it would become the dwelling place of God.

have not inquired at it since the days of Saul.” ⁴Then all the assembly said that they would do so, for the thing was right in the eyes of all the people.

⁵So ^dDavid gathered all Israel together, from ^cShihor in Egypt to as far as the entrance of Hamath, to bring the ark of God ^ffrom Kirjath Jearim. ⁶And David and all Israel went up to ^gBaalath, ⁱto Kirjath Jearim, which belonged to Judah, to bring up from there the ark of God the LORD, ^hwho dwells *between* the cherubim, where *His* name is proclaimed. ⁷So they ²carried the ark of God ⁱon a new cart ^jfrom the house of Abinadab, and Uzza and Ahio drove the cart. ⁸Then ^kDavid and all Israel played *music* before God with all *their* might, with ³singing, on harps, on stringed instruments, on tambourines, on cymbals, and with trumpets.

⁹And when they came to ⁴Chidon’s threshing floor, Uzza put out his hand to hold the ark, for the oxen ⁵stumbled. ¹⁰Then the anger of the LORD was aroused against Uzza, and He struck him ^lbecause he put his hand to the ark; and he ^mdied there before God. ¹¹And David became angry because of the LORD’s outbreak against Uzza; therefore that place is called ⁶Perez Uzza to this day. ¹²David was afraid of God that day, saying, “How can I bring the ark of God to me?”

^{5 d} 1 Sam. 7:5
^e Josh. 13:3 / ^f 1 Sam. 6:21; 7:1, 2
^{6 g} Josh. 15:9, 60
^h Ex. 25:22; 1 Sam. 4:4; 2 Kin. 19:15
ⁱ Baale Judah, 2 Sam. 6:2
^j 1 Num. 4:15;
1 Sam. 6:7 / ^k 1 Sam. 7:1
^{2 l} *caused the ark of God to ride*
^{8 k} 2 Sam. 6:5
³ songs
^{9 d} Nachon, 2 Sam. 6:6
^{5 o} *Or let it go off*
^{10 i} [Num. 4:15]; 1 Chr. 15:13, 15
^m Lev. 10:2
^{11 e} *Lit. Outburst Against Uzza*

^{14 n} 2 Sam. 6:11
^o [Gen. 30:27]; 1 Chr. 26:4-8

CHAPTER 14

^{1 a} 2 Sam. 5:11;
1 Kin. 5:1
^{2 b} Num. 24:7
^{4 c} 1 Chr. 3:5-8
¹ Shimea, 1 Chr. 3:5
^{5 2} Elishama, 1 Chr. 3:6
³ Eliphelet, 1 Chr. 3:6
^{7 4} Eliada, 2 Sam. 5:6; 1 Chr. 3:8
^{8 d 2} Sam. 5:17-21
^{9 e} Josh. 17:15; 18:16; 1 Chr. 11:15; 14:13

¹³So David would not move the ark with him into the City of David, but took it aside into the house of Obed-Edom the Gittite. ^{14 n}The ark of God remained with the family of Obed-Edom in his house three months. And the LORD blessed ^othe house of Obed-Edom and all that he had.

David Established at Jerusalem

14 Now ^aHiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David, and cedar trees, with masons and carpenters, to build him a house. ²So David knew that the LORD had established him as king over Israel, for his kingdom was ^bhighly exalted for the sake of His people Israel.

³Then David took more wives in Jerusalem, and David begot more sons and daughters. ⁴And ^cthese are the names of his children whom he had in Jerusalem: ¹Shammua, Shobab, Nathan, Solomon, ⁵Ibhar, ²Elishua, ³Elpelet, ⁶Nogah, Nepheg, Japhia, ⁷Elishama, ⁴Beeliada, and Eliphelet.

The Philistines Defeated

⁸Now when the Philistines heard that ^dDavid had been anointed king over all Israel, all the Philistines went up to search for David. And David heard *of it* and went out against them. ⁹Then the Philistines went and made a raid ^eon

13:4 Again the chronicler highlighted the unity of the whole nation by saying that **all the people** agreed with David’s decision to bring the ark to Jerusalem.

13:5 Shihor in Egypt: This was another way of referring to the Wadi el-Arish or “River of Egypt” that marked the boundary between Egypt and Canaan. This was Israel’s most southwestern point (see Num. 34:5; Josh. 13:3). **entrance of Hamath:** This was the most northern point of the kingdom under David, about one hundred miles north of the Sea of Galilee. It was also known as Lebo Hamath (Josh. 13:5; Judg. 3:3; 2 Chr. 7:8).

13:6 A major feature of the Most Holy Place in both the tabernacle and temple was the **ark**. Above and behind the ark of the covenant, **cherubim** extended their wings over the cover (also called the mercy seat) of the ark (Ex. 25:17–22). The glory of God was perceived as sitting upon the top of the ark as a king sat on a throne. **His name:** In Deuteronomy, the presence of God is often spoken of as the presence of His name (see Deut. 12:1–14).

13:7 Only the Levites **carried the ark**. They carried it on their shoulders with poles passing through rings on the ark’s corners (Num. 4:1–16).

13:9 Chidon’s threshing floor is also called “Nachon’s threshing floor” (2 Sam. 6:6). A threshing floor was a flat rocky surface on which grain was crushed by threshing sledges drawn by oxen. The floor was probably in or near Kirjath Jearim, for it is unlikely that the cart had gone far before God exposed to them their error in transporting the ark in a way contrary to His commands.

13:10 God struck Uzza dead because of the sacred inviolability of the ark. It was a holy object, representing the presence of God Himself (Ex. 25:21, 22), so it had to be handled in accord with the strictest regulations (Num. 4:5). Handling the ark in any other way, even with the best intention, invited God’s anger (Num. 4:15). The narrative dramatically demonstrates God’s holiness. His people had to approach Him with respectful awe.

13:11 The threshing floor of Chidon was renamed **Perez Uzza**,

meaning “Outburst Against Uzza.” From that time forward, the name of this place would remind people that violating God’s holiness meant inviting His wrath.

13:13 A Gittite means someone from Gath, the name of several cities. Since **Obed-Edom** was a Levite (15:18, 24), he was probably from the Levitical city of Gath Rimmon in Dan (Josh. 21:25).

14:1, 2 A powerful king of the Phoenician city-state of Tyre, **Hiram** is mentioned in the Scriptures and in other sources. He was a contemporary of both David and Solomon. His work for David, constructing a royal palace, must have begun late in David’s reign. Hiram supplied material for the temple and other buildings, a project not completed until Solomon’s twentieth year (1 Kin. 9:10). All this indicates that the chronicler was not writing in chronological order about the building of David’s palace and the arrival of the ark. These did not take place early in his reign, but toward the end. **build him a house:** Once a king in the ancient Middle Eastern world had firmly established himself, he built a palace to publicize that fact. As v. 2 explicitly states, David built his palace with the understanding that God alone had put him in power and **exalted** him.

14:3 In addition to the wives he had taken in Hebron (2 Sam. 3:2–5), **David** married others in **Jerusalem**. Although the Bible never justifies polygamy, ancient kings frequently undertook multiple marriages for political reasons—a king would marry the daughter of another king in order to create a stronger alliance. The larger a king’s harem, the more prestige the king enjoyed (see 3:1–5).

14:4 The four **children** listed here were all sons of Bathshua (Bathsheba; see 3:5).

14:9 Extending southwest from Jerusalem and marking the northern border of Judah (Josh. 15:8), **the Valley of Rephaim** was the scene of many battles between Israel and the Philistines (11:15, 16; see 2 Sam. 5:17–22; 23:13–17). The conflict here was a preemptive strike by the Philistines designed to prevent David from taking Jerusalem and making it the capital of Israel (11:4–9). God demonstrated that He was with David by granting him victory over the Philistines.

the Valley of ⁵Rephaim. ¹⁰And David ^finquired of God, saying, “Shall I go up against the Philistines? Will You deliver them into my hand?”

The LORD said to him, “Go up, for I will deliver them into your hand.”

¹¹So they went up to Baal Perazim, and David defeated them there. Then David said, “God has broken through my enemies by my hand like a breakthrough of water.” Therefore they called the name of that place ⁶Baal Perazim. ¹²And when they left their gods there, David gave a commandment, and they were burned with fire.

^{13g}Then the Philistines once again made a raid on the valley. ¹⁴Therefore David inquired again of God, and God said to him, “You shall not go up after them; circle around them, ^hand come upon them in front of the mulberry trees. ¹⁵And it shall be, when you hear a sound of marching in the tops of the mulberry trees, then you shall go out to battle, for God has gone out before you to strike the camp of the Philistines.” ¹⁶So David did as God commanded him, and they drove back the army of the Philistines from ⁷Gibeon as far as Gezer. ¹⁷Then ⁱthe fame of David went out into all lands, and the LORD ^jbrought the fear of him upon all nations.

The Ark Brought to Jerusalem

15 David built houses for himself in the City of David; and he prepared a place for the ark of God, ^aand pitched a tent for it. ²Then David said, “No one may carry the ^bark of God but the Le-

⁹⁻⁵ Lit. *Giants*
¹⁰⁻¹ 1 Sam. 23:2, 4; 30:8; 2 Sam. 2:1; 5:19, 23; 21:1
¹¹⁻⁶ Lit. *Master of Breakthroughs*
¹³⁻⁹ 2 Sam. 5:22-25
^{14-h} 2 Sam. 5:23
¹⁶⁻⁷ *Geba*, 2 Sam. 5:25
¹⁷⁻ⁱ Josh. 6:27; 2 Chr. 26:8 / [Ex. 15:14-16; Deut. 2:25; 11:25]; 2 Chr. 20:29

CHAPTER 15

^{1-a} 1 Chr. 16:1
^{2-b} [Num. 4:15]; 2 Sam. 6:1-11

^c Num. 4:2-15; Deut. 10:8; 31:9
^{3-d} Ex. 40:20, 21; 2 Sam. 6:12; 1 Kin. 8:1; 1 Chr. 13:5
⁵⁻ⁱ *kinsmen*
^{8-e} Ex. 6:22
^{9-f} Ex. 6:18
^{11-g} 2 Sam. 8:17; 15:24-29, 35, 36; 18:19, 22, 27; 19:11; 20:25; 1 Chr. 12:28
^{h-1} 1 Sam. 22:20-23; 23:6; 30:7; 1 Kin. 2:22, 26, 27; Mark 2:6
¹²⁻² *consecrate*
¹³⁻ⁱ 2 Sam. 6:3
^{1-j} 1 Chr. 13:7-11
^{3-regarding} the ordinance
^{14-k} *consecrated*
^{15-k} Ex. 25:14; Num. 4:15; 7:9

vites, for ^cthe LORD has chosen them to carry the ark of God and to minister before Him forever.” ³And David ^dgathered all Israel together at Jerusalem, to bring up the ark of the LORD to its place, which he had prepared for it. ⁴Then David assembled the children of Aaron and the Levites: ⁵of the sons of Kohath, Uriel the chief, and one hundred and twenty of his ¹brethren; ⁶of the sons of Merari, Asaiah the chief, and two hundred and twenty of his brethren; ⁷of the sons of Gershon, Joel the chief, and one hundred and thirty of his brethren; ⁸of the sons of ^eElizaphan, Shemaiah the chief, and two hundred of his brethren; ⁹of the sons of ^fHebron, Eliel the chief, and eighty of his brethren; ¹⁰of the sons of Uzziel, Amminadab the chief, and one hundred and twelve of his brethren.

¹¹And David called for ^gZadok and ^hAbiathar the priests, and for the Levites: for Uriel, Asaiah, Joel, Shemaiah, Eliel, and Amminadab. ¹²He said to them, “You are the heads of the fathers’ *houses* of the Levites; ²sanctify yourselves, you and your brethren, that you may bring up the ark of the LORD God of Israel to the place I have prepared for it. ¹³For ⁱbecause you *did not do it* the first time, ^jthe LORD our God broke out against us, because we did not consult Him ³about the proper order.”

¹⁴So the priests and the Levites ⁴sanctified themselves to bring up the ark of the LORD God of Israel. ¹⁵And the children of the Levites bore the ark of God on their shoulders, by its poles, as ^kMoses had commanded according to the word of the LORD.

14:15 God has gone out before you: The strategy for this battle was different (vv. 10, 14) because God wanted David to understand that the battle was His, not David’s. People often attribute their success to their own intelligence or strength, overlooking the fact that God is the source of all victories.

14:16 Gibeon was about 6 miles northwest of Jerusalem, and Gezer was about 16 miles west of Gibeon. The Philistines evidently left the Valley of Rephaim, fled north to Gibeon, and then were pursued all the way to Gezer, a town close to their own territory.

15:1 The place for the ark was in the tabernacle in the City of David. The original tabernacle built in Moses’ day had been placed at Shiloh, in central Manasseh (Josh. 18:1). It remained there until the capture of the ark by the Philistines (1 Sam. 4:1–11), when it evidently was moved to Nob, just two miles from Jerusalem (1 Sam. 21:1–6). Next, the tabernacle was moved to a high place at Gibeon (2 Chr. 1:3), about two miles north of Saul’s city Gibeath. When David became king, he left the Mosaic tabernacle at Gibeon and appointed the priest Zadok to attend to its ministry (16:39). Even after he had built a new tabernacle on Mt. Zion and brought the ark into it, the original tabernacle remained at Gibeon. Finally, Solomon brought the ark from Mt. Zion and the “tabernacle of meeting” (the tabernacle of Moses) from Gibeon and stored them in the new temple Solomon had built on Mt. Moriah (2 Chr. 5:4, 5).

15:2 Having learned his lesson from the incident with Uzza (13:10), David commanded that the ark of God be moved this time according to the provisions of the Law. It was to be carried

by Levites by means of poles inserted through corner rings (Num. 4:14, 15).

15:5–7 David divided the Levites into divisions according to their genealogies. Uriel was head of the Kohathite clan (6:24), Asaiah was chief of the Merarites (6:30), and Joel was leader of the Gershonites (23:8).

15:8–10 All three of the following families were subclans of the Kohathites. Elizaphan was a grandson of Kohath (Ex. 6:18, 22), Hebron was a son of Kohath (Ex. 6:18), and Uzziel was another son of Kohath (Ex. 6:18).

15:11 The transition from the rule of Saul to David involved a transition from the old Mosaic tabernacle to the new place David had established on Mt. Zion in preparation for the temple (see v. 1). The father of Abiathar, the priest Ahimelech, was in charge of the old tabernacle when it left Shiloh and was moved to Nob (1 Sam. 21:1). Ahimelech (also known as Ahijah; see 1 Sam. 14:3; 22:9) was Eli’s great-grandson. Eli must have been a descendant of Aaron’s son Ithamar, for the priesthood was taken from his line and given to the line of Eleazar, another son of Aaron (6:3, 4; see 1 Sam. 2:22–36). The line of Eleazar produced Zadok (6:8). During David’s time, representatives of both the Ithamar and Eleazar high-priestly lineages served concurrently. Zadok, who descended from Eleazar, served at the tabernacle at Gibeon. Abiathar, a descendant of Ithamar, was chief priest at Jerusalem. When Solomon came to power, Abiathar was deposed and Zadok ministered as high priest at the temple (1 Kin. 2:26, 27, 35).

¹⁶Then David spoke to the leaders of the Levites to appoint their brethren *to be* the singers accompanied by instruments of music, stringed instruments, harps, and cymbals, by raising the voice with resounding joy. ¹⁷So the Levites appointed ¹Heman the son of Joel; and of his brethren, ^mAsaph the son of Berechiah; and of their brethren, the sons of Merari, ⁿEthan the son of Kushaiah; ¹⁸and with them their brethren of the second *rank*: Zechariah, ⁵Ben, Jaaziel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Unni, Eliab, Benaiah, Maaseiah, Mattithiah, Elipheleh, Mikneiah, Obed-Edom, and Jeiel, the gatekeepers; ¹⁹the singers, Heman, Asaph, and Ethan, *were* to sound the cymbals of bronze; ²⁰Zechariah, ⁶Aziel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Unni, Eliab, Maaseiah, and Benaiah, with strings according to ^oAlamoth; ²¹Mattithiah, Elipheleh, Mikneiah, Obed-Edom, Jeiel, and Azaziah, to direct with harps on the ^pSheminith; ²²Chenaniah, leader of the Levites, was instructor *in charge* of the music, because he *was* skillful; ²³Berechiah and Elkanah *were* doorkeepers

¹⁷ ¹ 1 Chr. 6:33; 25:1 ^m 1 Chr. 6:39
ⁿ 1 Chr. 6:44
¹⁸ ⁵ So with MT, Vg.; LXX omits Ben
²⁰ ^o Ps. 46:title
⁶ Jaaziel, v. 18
²¹ ^p Ps. 6:title

²⁴ ^q [Num. 10:8]; Ps. 81:3 ¹ 1 Chr. 13:13, 14
²⁵ ² 2 Sam. 6:12, 13; 1 Kin. 8:1
²⁷ ¹ 1 Sam. 2:18, 28
²⁸ ^u Num. 23:21; Josh. 6:20; 1 Chr. 13:8; Zech. 4:7; 1 Thess. 4:16
²⁹ ¹ 1 Sam. 18:20, 27; 19:11-17; 2 Sam. 3:13, 14; 6:16, 20-23

for the ark; ²⁴Shebaniah, Joshaphat, Nethanel, Amasai, Zechariah, Benaiah, and Eliezer, the priests, ^qwere to blow the trumpets before the ark of God; and ^rObed-Edom and Jehiah, doorkeepers for the ark.

²⁵So ^sDavid, the elders of Israel, and the captains over thousands went to bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD from the house of Obed-Edom with joy. ²⁶And so it was, when God helped the Levites who bore the ark of the covenant of the LORD, that they offered seven bulls and seven rams. ²⁷David was clothed with a robe of fine ^tlinen, as were all the Levites who bore the ark, the singers, and Chenaniah the music master *with* the singers. David also wore a linen ephod. ²⁸^uThus all Israel brought up the ark of the covenant of the LORD with shouting and with the sound of the horn, with trumpets and with cymbals, making music with stringed instruments and harps.

²⁹And it happened, ^vas the ark of the covenant of the LORD came to the City of David, that Michal, Saul's daughter,

15:17 The musician **Heman** was the grandson of the prophet Samuel (see 6:33), a Kohathite. He is probably the same Heman who appears in the superscription of Ps. 88. **Asaph** was leader of the Gershonite Levites (6:39, 43). Asaph and his sons ministered primarily as singers (25:1, 2; 2 Chr. 20:14) and composers, as their superscriptions suggest (Ps. 50; 73–83). **Ethan** was the head of the Merarite division of musicians (6:44). Ethan might be the same as “Ethan the Ezrahite,” composer of Ps. 89 and known as a wise man (1 Kin. 4:31).

15:18 second rank: The musicians apparently occupied a place of higher status than the gatekeepers, who are mentioned next (see 9:17–27).

15:20 strings according to Alamoth: The musicians listed here are the same as the gatekeepers of v. 18. Since gatekeeping was on a rotating basis and might not have required full-time attention, these two responsibilities could have been combined.

15:21 The word **Sheminith** might be derived from the Hebrew word for “eighth,” referring to the musical scales.

15:23 The responsibility of the **doorkeepers for the ark** appears limited to the task of moving the ark from the house of Obed-Edom to the Davidic tabernacle.

15:24 It is likely that **Obed-Edom** in this verse was the same person who had custody of the ark in the months just before it was brought to Jerusalem (13:13, 14). He apparently was a Levite (see 13:13) and was certainly a righteous man (see v. 25; 16:38).

15:29 David had married **Michal, Saul's daughter**, at the beginning of his time of service in Saul's court (1 Sam. 18:27). Their relationship had been stormy, perhaps in part because David had spent at least ten years in flight from her father. In fact, Saul had annulled the marriage and had given Michal to another man (1 Sam. 25:44). One of the conditions of David's peace agreement with Abner and the reunification of the nation under David's kingship was that Michal be returned to him (2 Sam. 3:13–16). Michal was one of the few links remaining between David and the dynasty of Saul. For the transfer of government from Saul to David to be complete, it was necessary for Saul's daughter to be transferred back to David—even against her will. When Michal saw David rejoicing at the return of the ark, she despised him out of loyalty to her father and anger that she had been forced to return.

King David as Priest

David's actions on the day that the ark of the covenant was brought into Jerusalem were peculiar for a king. First, David put on a linen ephod. This fine garment represented God's presence among His people and was part of the uniform of the high priest (Ex. 28:4; 1 Sam. 2:28). Then, after celebrating before the Lord and offering sacrifices to Him, David blessed the people. Blessing the people after their participation in sacrificial worship was another task of the priests (Lev. 9:22, 23; Num. 6:23). David's dress and behavior on that day resembled that of a priest (1 Chr. 15:27; 16:1–3).

The author of Hebrews gives us some insight into what occurred on that day, for he describes a priestly line different from Aaron's line—the priestly line of Melchizedek (Heb. 4:14–16; 7:20–28; 8:6). Like David, Melchizedek was a king, the king of Salem. But he was more than king; he also functioned as a priest, one who blessed Abraham (Gen. 14:18–20; Heb. 7:1–3). The Book of Hebrews identifies Jesus, a descendant of David's royal line, as a royal priest of the order of Melchizedek. Moreover, Jesus' priesthood is far superior to that of Aaron (Heb. 5:5–11; 6:13–20; 7:1–10). In the course of discussion, the author of Hebrews cites Ps. 110, a psalm of David. This psalm teaches that there would someday be a priest from a different line than Aaron's who would be a priest forever. This is Jesus, the Son of David, as the author of Hebrews explains. Thus, when David took on some of the roles of a priest on this occasion, he was acting as a royal priest in the order of Melchizedek. He was anticipating the priestly role of the Second David, Jesus Christ, who now sits as High Priest at the right hand of God the Father (Heb. 8:1).



looked through a window and saw King David whirling and playing music; and she despised him in her heart.

The Ark Placed in the Tabernacle

16 So ^athey brought the ark of God, and set it in the midst of the tabernacle that David had erected for it. Then they offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before God. ²And when David had finished offering the burnt offerings and the peace offerings, ^bhe blessed the people in the name of the LORD. ³Then he distributed to everyone of Israel, both man and woman, to everyone a loaf of bread, a piece of *meat*, and a cake of raisins.

⁴And he appointed some of the Levites to minister before the ark of the LORD, to ^ccommemorate, to thank, and to praise the LORD God of Israel: ⁵Asaph the chief, and next to him Zechariah, *then* ^dJeiel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Mattithiah, Eliab, Benaiah, and Obed-Edom: Jeiel with stringed instruments and harps, but Asaph made music with cymbals; ⁶Benaiah and Jahaziel the priests regularly *blew* the trumpets before the ark of the covenant of God.

David's Song of Thanksgiving

⁷On that day ^eDavid ^ffirst delivered *this psalm* into the hand of Asaph and his brethren, to thank the LORD:

CHAPTER 16

¹ ^a 2 Sam. 6:17;
1 Chr. 15:1
² ^b 1 Kin. 8:14
⁴ ^c Ps. 38:title;
70:title
⁵ ^d 1 Chr. 15:18
⁷ ^e 2 Sam. 22:1; 23:1
^f Ps. 105:1-15

⁸ ^g 1 Chr. 17:19, 20;
Ps. 105:1-15
¹⁴ ^h Ps. 48:10; [Is. 26:9]
¹⁶ ⁱ Gen. 17:2; 26:3;
28:13; 35:11
¹⁷ ^j Gen. 35:11, 12
^k Gen. 28:10-15
¹⁹ ^l Gen. 34:30;
Deut. 7:7

- ⁸ ^g Oh, give thanks to the LORD!
Call upon His name;
Make known His deeds among the peoples!
- ⁹ Sing to Him, sing psalms to Him;
Talk of all His wondrous works!
- ¹⁰ Glory in His holy name;
Let the hearts of those rejoice who seek the LORD!
- ¹¹ Seek the LORD and His strength;
Seek His face evermore!
- ¹² Remember His marvelous works
which He has done,
His wonders, and the judgments of His mouth,
- ¹³ O seed of Israel His servant,
You children of Jacob, His chosen ones!
- ¹⁴ He *is* the LORD our God;
His ^hjudgments *are* in all the earth.
- ¹⁵ Remember His covenant forever,
The word which He commanded, for a thousand generations,
- ¹⁶ *The* ⁱcovenant which He made with Abraham,
And His oath to Isaac,
- ¹⁷ And ^jconfirmed it to ^kJacob for a statute,
To Israel *for* an everlasting covenant,
- ¹⁸ Saying, "To you I will give the land of Canaan
As the allotment of your inheritance,"
- ¹⁹ When you were ^lfew in number,
Indeed very few, and strangers in it.

16:3 he distributed: David's distribution of food was in line with the nature of the peace offerings of vv. 1, 2. Such offerings often accompanied occasions of praise and thanksgiving such as this one. They were unique in that they provided a common meal in which all participated—the offerer, his family and friends, the priests, and even God (Lev. 7:11–14, 28–34; Deut. 12:17–19).

16:4 The appointment of **Levites** described here was of a more permanent nature than that of 15:1–24, which concerned the immediate task of moving the ark into Jerusalem. Some of the same persons were involved, as vv. 5, 6 make clear.

16:7 This strongly implies that David himself composed the **psalm**. David's musical abilities were well attested (2 Sam. 22:1; see the superscriptions of Ps. 3–9). This psalm consists of three different parts. Each portion correlates with part of another psalm, as follows: 16:8–22 with Ps. 105:1–15; 16:23–33 with Ps. 96:1–13; and 16:34–36 with Ps. 106:1, 47, 48.

16:12 His marvelous works: David appealed to the nation to reflect upon God's faithfulness as manifested in the nation's history. The God who had proved Himself in the past was the One upon whom the unified nation could depend in the years to come.

16:13 servant . . . chosen ones: These words reflect the role of Israel as an elect nation called by God to serve Him as "a kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (Ex. 19:6). David was very much aware of the importance of God's calling of Israel and of his responsibility as leader of this privileged nation.

16:15 The instrument that bound God and Israel together legally and formally was the **covenant**. This was an arrangement between two parties—in this case, a superior party and an inferior party—by which the two made solemn pledges of mutual loyalty and commitment. God's promises in the covenant were based on His faithful character.

16:16–18 To **Abraham**, God promised land (Gen. 12:7) and innumerable descendants (Gen. 15:5; 17:5–8). God designated Abraham's descendants as the people through whom He would bless all nations (Gen. 12:2, 3). In his psalm, David was reflecting on the reliability of God's promise to Abraham—a promise renewed to Isaac and confirmed to Jacob. Having just become king over all Israel, David was very much aware of God's faithfulness in granting the Israelites the land over which he had dominion.

16:19 very few: This refers to the time of the patriarchs. When Jacob went to Egypt, his extended family amounted to only 70 persons (Gen. 46:27).

minister

(Heb. *sharat*) (16:4; Num. 3:31; Ps. 101:6) Strong's #8334

This Hebrew word means "to serve." The Hebrew term can denote honorable, high-level service, either secular or sacred. The secular sense of the term refers to the work of personal attendants, usually those who would succeed the office of the one served (Gen. 39:4; Josh. 1:1, 5). The sacred use of the word applies primarily to the work of priests, although occasionally Levites, and once even angels (15:2; Deut. 17:12; Ps. 103:21; see also Heb. 1:14). Most of the time the ministering is described as to or before the Lord, but the Levites are also said to minister to the priests (Num. 18:2), to the people (Num. 16:9; Ezek. 44:11), and to the tabernacle (Num. 1:50). Ministering before the Lord occasionally involved music and song (6:31, 32; 16:4, 5).

- 20 When they went from one nation to another,
And from *one* kingdom to another people,
21 He permitted no man to do them wrong;
Yes, He ^mrebuked kings for their sakes,
22 *Saying*, ⁿ“Do not touch My anointed ones,
And do My prophets no harm.”
- 23 ^oSing to the LORD, all the earth;
Proclaim the good news of His salvation from day to day.
24 Declare His glory among the nations,
His wonders among all peoples.
- 25 For the LORD *is* great and greatly to be praised;
He *is* also to be feared above all gods.
26 For all the gods ^pof the peoples *are* ¹idols,
But the LORD made the heavens.
27 Honor and majesty *are* before Him;
Strength and gladness are in His place.
- 28 Give to the LORD, O families of the peoples,
Give to the LORD glory and strength.
29 Give to the LORD the glory *due* His name;
Bring an offering, and come before Him.
Oh, worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness!
30 Tremble before Him, all the earth.
The world also is firmly established,
It shall not be moved.

21 ^m Gen. 12:17; 20:3; Ex. 7:15-18
22 ⁿ Gen. 20:7; Ps. 105:15
23 ^o Ps. 96:1-13
26 ^p Lev. 19:4; [1 Cor. 8:5, 6]
¹ worthless things

33 ^q Is. 55:12, 13
^r [Joel 3:1-14]; Zech. 14:1-14; [Matt. 25:31-46]
34 ^s 2 Chr. 5:13; 7:3; Ezra 3:11; Ps. 106:1; 107:1; 118:1; 136:1; Jer. 33:11
35 ^t Ps. 106:47, 48
36 ^u 1 Kin. 8:15, 56; Ps. 72:18 ^v Deut. 27:15; Neh. 8:6
37 ^w 1 Chr. 16:4, 5 ^x 2 Chr. 8:14; Ezra 3:4
38 ^y 1 Chr. 13:14
39 ^z 1 Chr. 21:29; 2 Chr. 1:3 ^a 1 Kin. 3:4 ² Place for pagan worship

- 31 Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad;
And let them say among the nations,
“The LORD reigns.”
32 Let the sea roar, and all its fullness;
Let the field rejoice, and all that *is* in it.
33 Then the ^qtrees of the woods shall rejoice before the LORD,
For He *is* ^rcoming to judge the earth.
- 34 ^s Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for *He is* good!
For His mercy *endures* forever.
35 ^t And say, “Save us, O God of our salvation;
Gather us together, and deliver us from the Gentiles,
To give thanks to Your holy name,
To triumph in Your praise.”
- 36 ^u Blessed *be* the LORD God of Israel
From everlasting to everlasting!

And all ^vthe people said, “Amen!” and praised the LORD.

Regular Worship Maintained

³⁷ So he left ^wAsaph and his brothers there before the ark of the covenant of the LORD to minister before the ark regularly, as every day's work ^xrequired; ³⁸ and ^yObed-Edom with his sixty-eight brethren, including Obed-Edom the son of Jeduthun, and Hosah, *to be* gatekeepers; ³⁹ and Zadok the priest and his brethren the priests, ^zbefore the tabernacle of the LORD ^aat the ²high place that *was* at Gibeon, ⁴⁰to offer burnt offerings to the LORD on the altar of burnt offering

16:20, 21 one nation to another: In patriarchal times, God's people moved about in Canaan and occasionally dwelt among other peoples such as the Egyptians (Gen. 12:10), Philistines (Gen. 20:1; 21:34; 26:1), and even the Hittites (Gen. 23:4, 17–20). **reproved kings:** This is a reference to God's judgment on Pharaoh (Gen. 12:17) and particularly his rebuke of Abimelech, the Philistine king of Gerar (Gen. 20:3–7).

16:22 Abraham and the patriarchs were not literally anointed with oil as though they were entering the priesthood or kingship. In this context, **anointed ones** means those set apart for God's service. **prophets:** Though the office of prophet as a “professional” calling began with Samuel, there were individuals from the earliest days of biblical history who were known as prophets. The reference here is specifically to Abraham, who is called a *prophet* in Gen. 20:7, the first occurrence of the word in the Bible.

16:25 above all gods: This does not admit the real possibility of other gods. Instead it refers to the various “gods” in which the pagans believed. The heathen might fear nonexistent gods, but the living Lord was to be feared more than them all, for He is alive and demands accountability.

16:31 The phrase, the LORD reigns, is an appeal for the universal recognition of the sovereignty of the God of Israel. The Lord had called Israel into a special covenant relationship with Himself, but He did not thereby reject the other nations. Indeed, the whole

purpose of Israel's election was that Israel might be the light to the nations that would cause them to turn to the one true God (Is. 42:5–7; 43:8–13).

16:33 trees . . . rejoice: This is a figure of speech called “personification,” in which inanimate things are spoken of as if they had human characteristics. Because the whole creation was negatively affected by the fall of humanity into sin, it could not be restored to perfection and could not truly **rejoice** until humanity was redeemed. **He is coming:** This consummation of the ages will make all creation burst out in praise.

16:37 David appointed Asaph to be overall supervisor of worship before the Lord (see v. 5).

16:38 Obed-Edom: There are two men by this name in this verse. The first is the Obed-Edom whose house sheltered the ark for three months (13:14) and who was a chief doorkeeper (15:24). The second, also a gatekeeper, was a **son of Jeduthun** (perhaps the one known as Ethan; see 6:33, 39, 44).

16:39 Until the temple of Solomon was completed, there were two legitimate places for community worship—the Mosaic tabernacle at Gibeon and David's tabernacle on Mt. Zion. **Zadok**, a descendant of Eleazar, served at Gibeon, while Abiathar, a descendant of Aaron, served at Jerusalem (see 15:11).

16:40 There must have been such an altar on Mt. Zion, but the one at Gibeon was apparently considered more “official,” no doubt



Temple Music

Music was an important part of the religious life of Israel. Temple music consisted of singers and an orchestra. The singers and musicians could come only from the males of certain families. Likewise, the types of instruments were restricted. Instruments that were associated with women, with raucous merrymaking (such as the Egyptian sistrum), or with pagan worship were banned from the temple orchestra. The OT lists several kinds of instruments in the temple orchestra (15:28; 16:42; 25:1). These instruments include the big harp (*nevel*), the lyre (*kinnor*), the ram's horn (*shophar*), the trumpet (*chatotserah*), the timbrel (*toph*), and cymbals (*metsiltayim*). Cymbals were made of copper and were the only percussion instrument in the temple orchestra. They were used when the people were celebrating and praising God. Asaph, David's chief musician (16:5), was a cymbal player. When the people returned from captivity, Asaph's descendants were called to join singers and trumpets in praise to the Lord (Ezra 3:10).



Musicians, eighth century B.C., Zincirli
Kim Walton, courtesy of the Istanbul Archaeological Museum

regularly ^b morning and evening, and *to do* according to all that is written in the Law of the LORD which He commanded Israel; ⁴¹ and with them Heman and Jeduthun and the rest who were chosen, who were designated by name, to give thanks to the LORD, ^c because His mercy *endures* forever; ⁴² and with them Heman and Jeduthun, to sound aloud with trumpets and cymbals and the musical instruments of God. Now the sons of Jeduthun *were* gatekeepers.

^{43 d} Then all the people departed, every man to his house; and David returned to bless his house.

God's Covenant with David

17 Now ^a it came to pass, when David was dwelling in his house, that David said to Nathan the prophet, “See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the

40 ^b [Ex. 29:38–42; Num. 28:3, 4]
41 ^c 1 Chr. 25:1–6;
2 Chr. 5:13; 7:3; Ezra
3:11; Jer. 33:11
43 ^d 2 Sam. 6:18–20

CHAPTER 17

¹ ^a 2 Sam. 7:1; 1 Chr.
14:1

⁴ ^b [1 Chr. 28:2, 3]
⁷ ^c 1 Sam. 16:11–13

ark of the covenant of the LORD is under tent curtains.”

² Then Nathan said to David, “Do all that is in your heart, for God *is* with you.”

³ But it happened that night that the word of God came to Nathan, saying, ⁴ “Go and tell My servant David, ‘Thus says the LORD: “You shall ^b not build Me a house to dwell in. ⁵ For I have not dwelt in a house since the time that I brought up Israel, even to this day, but have gone from tent to tent, and from *one* tabernacle to *another*. ⁶ Wherever I have moved about with all Israel, have I ever spoken a word to any of the judges of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd My people, saying, ‘Why have you not built Me a house of cedar?’”’ ⁷ Now therefore, thus shall you say to My servant David, ‘Thus says the LORD of hosts: “I took you ^c from

because it had been built under Moses' leadership (2 Chr. 1:3, 5, 6). Zadok and his fellow priests officiated at the regular morning and evening sacrifices in Gibeon. Early in his reign, Solomon also went to the high place at Gibeon to offer sacrifices—an act completely acceptable to God, who blessed him there (1 Kin. 3:4, 5, 10–13; see 2 Chr. 1:3, 11, 12).

16:41 Jeduthun: This was probably another name for the musician Ethan, who is usually named together with Asaph and Heman (see 15:17, 19; 6:33, 39, 44).

16:42 instruments of God: This brief expression refers to instruments that play songs or praises to God. It is difficult to overemphasize the importance of music in OT worship. The Book of Psalms in itself and constant references to choral and orchestral ministry demonstrate the significance of music (9:33; 15:16–24; 16:4–6; 25:1–31). Music was an important way in which the people worshiped their Creator.

17:1 Nathan the prophet: This is the first time in this book that a prophet's name appears. Nathan apparently served David and Solomon as a private chaplain or counselor (2 Sam. 7:2, 3; 12:1–15;

1 Kin. 1:8–30, 32–38, 45; 2 Chr. 29:25). One of his written works, “the book of Nathan the prophet,” provided a source for the composition of the books of Chronicles (29:29; 2 Chr. 9:29). A **house of cedar** indicates David's wealth, because cedar paneling was too expensive to be used in ordinary homes.

17:5 from tent to tent: This is a reference to the movement of God from the provisional “tabernacle of meeting” (Ex. 33:7), to the Mosaic tabernacle (Ex. 40:34–38), and then to the tabernacle David erected on Mt. Zion (16:1).

17:6 In addition to having “lived” in modest surroundings, God had also “lived” like a nomad, as the house of worship moved from one place to another. In the time of the **judges**, the tabernacle was at Shiloh (Josh. 18:1) and possibly Nob (1 Sam. 21:1). Before that, it had wandered with Israel through the Sinai desert before being set up at Gilgal (Josh. 4:19; 5:10). At this time it resided at Gibeon.

17:7 In the ancient Middle East generally, as well as in the OT, kings were often compared to shepherds (Is. 44:28; Zech. 10:3; 11:4–17). It was most fitting that David, who had literally shepherded **sheep**, should be called by God to shepherd His flock, Israel.

the sheepfold, from following the sheep, to be ¹ruler over My people Israel. ⁸And I have been with you wherever you have gone, and have cut off all your enemies from before you, and have ²made you a name like the name of the great men who *are* on the earth. ⁹Moreover I will appoint a place for My people Israel, and will ^dplant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own and move no more; nor shall the sons of wickedness oppress them anymore, as previously, ¹⁰since the time that I commanded judges *to be* over My people Israel. Also I will subdue all your enemies. Furthermore I tell you that the LORD will build you a ³house. ¹¹And it shall be, when your days are ^efulfilled, when you must ^dgo *to be* with your fathers, that I will set up your ^fseed after you, who will be of your sons; and I will establish his kingdom. ^{12g}He shall build Me a house, and I will establish his throne forever. ^{13h}I will be his Father, and he shall be My son; and I will not take My mercy away from him, ⁱas I took *it* from *him* who was before you. ¹⁴And ^jI will establish him in My house and in My kingdom forever; and his throne shall be established forever.””

7 ¹ leader
8 ² given you
prestige
9 ^d [Deut. 30:1-9;
Jer. 16:14-16; 23:5-
8; 24:6; Ezek. 37:21-
27]; Amos 9:14
10 ³ Royal dynasty
11 ^e 1 Kin. 2:10;
1 Chr. 29:28 / 1 Kin.
5:5; 6:12; 8:19-21;
[1 Chr. 22:9-13;
28:20]; Matt. 1:6 ☆;
Luke 3:31 ^d Die and
join your ancestors
12 ^g 1 Kin. 6:38;
2 Chr. 6:2; [Ps.
89:20-37]
13 ^h 2 Sam. 7:14,
15; Matt. 3:17; Mark
1:11; Luke 3:22;
2 Cor. 6:18; Heb.
1:5 ☆ ⁱ [1 Sam.
15:23-28]; 1 Chr.
10:14
14 / Ps. 89:3, 4;
Matt. 19:28; 25:31;
[Luke 1:31-33]

16 ^k 2 Sam. 7:18
21 ^l [Deut. 4:6-8,
33-38]; Ps. 147:20

¹⁵ According to all these words and according to all this vision, so Nathan spoke to David.
^{16k} Then King David went in and sat before the LORD; and he said: “Who *am* I, O LORD God? And what is my house, that You have brought me this far? ¹⁷ And *yet* this was a small thing in Your sight, O God; and You have *also* spoken of Your servant’s house for a great while to come, and have regarded me according to the rank of a man of high degree, O LORD God. ¹⁸ What more can David *say* to You for the honor of Your servant? For You know Your servant. ¹⁹ O LORD, for Your servant’s sake, and according to Your own heart, You have done all this greatness, in making known all these great things. ²⁰ O LORD, *there is* none like You, nor *is there any* God besides You, according to all that we have heard with our ears. ^{21l} And who *is* like Your people Israel, the one nation on the earth whom God went to redeem for Himself *as* a people—to make for Yourself a name by great and awesome deeds, by driving out nations from before Your people whom You redeemed from Egypt? ²² For You have made Your people Israel *Your* very

17:8 made you a name: David’s reputation as a leader had become internationally known. He ranked with the great rulers of other nations.

17:9 appoint a place: This phrase did not suggest that Israel would move to a land other than Palestine, for that was the land of promise from the beginning (Gen. 13:14–17; 15:18–21; 17:8; Ex. 3:16, 17; 6:8; Deut. 1:8; Josh. 1:2–5). **sons of wickedness:** This was a general term for the Israelites’ enemies—those who had persecuted them and taken them from their homeland.

17:10–12 As used here, **house** meant dynasty. David had said that he would build a house—that is, a temple—for God, but God told David that He would build a house—that is, a dynasty—for David. A human monarchy blessed by God was already apparent in the promise God had made to Abraham (Gen. 17:6). In addition, when Jacob blessed his sons, he asserted that a scepter and lawgiver—that is, a king—would arise out of Judah (Gen. 49:10). Samuel anointed David as king (1 Sam. 16:1, 12, 13) and David received assurances that he would rule over Israel (1 Sam. 23:17; 24:20; 26:25; 28:17). But God’s promise to establish David’s dynasty forever was unprecedented.

your seed: This is a reference to Solomon. Here **house** can only mean temple, because God has no dynasty. The temple was the dwelling place of God among His people (1 Kin. 8:10, 11).

17:13 Father . . . son: This remarkable statement affirmed that the dynasty of David had such an intimate relationship with God that its kings would be considered God’s sons in an extraordinary way. **him who was before you:** This was a reference to Saul, from whom God had removed His blessing (see 10:14).

17:14 The focus clearly shifts here from David’s immediate successor, Solomon, to the entire succession of kings in David’s line. It was the **kingdom** and **throne** of the dynasty that would endure forever, a promise made possible only by the reign of Jesus Christ, the Son of David (Luke 1:32, 33).

17:16–18 David responded to God’s blessing with praise. **house:** David asked what made him the object of God’s grace. He did not have any credentials to deserve God’s amazing promises of an eternal kingdom. **small thing:** David’s lack of pedigree and royal ancestry were of no consequence to God, because He was not impressed by such things. **What more can David say:** Once the truth of the promise sank into David’s understanding, he found himself speechless.

17:20 any God besides You: This is a clear assertion of the uniqueness of Israel’s God. Statements such as “all gods” and “the gods of the peoples” in David’s song of thanksgiving (16:25, 26) must be understood in light of this clear confession that there is only one living God.

17:21 David’s observation here was not blind nationalism. As David continued to praise God, he expressed like Moses a theology of the election of Israel. God had chosen Israel, His treasured possession, by His will alone. The Israelites had nothing by which they could commend themselves to God. In fact, they were an insignificant and enslaved people (Deut. 7:6–11). Israel’s prominent place among the nations was due to the Lord’s abundant mercy.

17:22 Your very own people: This expression is clearly based on Ex. 19:5; Deut. 7:6; 14:2, where Israel is described as “a special treasure.” The statement lies at the very center of the Mosaic covenant. At Mt. Sinai, God had become the God of Israel; and Israel, in turn, had become the people of God.

throne

(Heb. *kisse*) (17:12; Ps. 103:19; Is. 66:1) Strong’s #3678

The Hebrew word can refer to any kind of seat or chair (Ps. 1:1), but usually it refers to a seat of honor (Is. 22:23), especially a throne (Esth. 5:1). Frequently the word is used to denote royal position or authority (1 Kin. 16:11). To “set up” or “establish” a throne is to establish or confirm a king and his dynasty. David’s throne was particularly important in this respect, for in His covenant with David, God promised that the throne of David’s son would be “established forever” (17:12; Ps. 89:4). Although Solomon and the succeeding kings of Judah sat on David’s throne (1 Kin. 2:12; Jer. 22:2, 4), it is Jesus, the Son of David, who will fulfill this prophecy, reigning “upon the throne of David” forever (Is. 9:7).

own people forever; and You, LORD, have become their God.

23 “And now, O LORD, the word which You have spoken concerning Your servant and concerning his house, *let it be established forever*, and do as You have said. 24 So let it be established, that Your name may be magnified forever, saying, ‘The LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, *is Israel’s God*.’ And let the house of Your servant David be established before You. 25 For You, O my God, ⁵ have revealed to Your servant that You will build him a house. Therefore Your servant has found it *in his heart* to pray before You. 26 And now, LORD, ⁶ You are God, and have promised this goodness to Your servant. 27 Now You have been pleased to bless the house of Your servant, that it may continue before You forever; for You have blessed it, O LORD, and *it shall be blessed forever*.”

David’s Further Conquests

18 After this ^a it came to pass that David ¹ attacked the Philistines, subdued them, and took Gath and its towns from the hand of the Philistines. 2 Then he ² defeated ^b Moab, and the Moabites became David’s ^c servants, and brought tribute.

3 And ^d David ³ defeated ⁴ Hadadezer king of Zobah as far as Hamath, as he went to establish his power by the River Euphrates. 4 David took from him one thousand chariots, ⁵ seven thousand horsemen, and twenty thousand foot soldiers. Also David ⁶ hamstrung all the chariot horses, except that he spared enough of them for one hundred chariots.

5 When the ^e Syrians of Damascus came to help Hadadezer king of Zobah, David killed twenty-two thousand of the Syrians. 6 Then David put *garrisons* in Syria

25 ⁵ Lit. *have uncovered the ear of*
26 ⁶ Or *You alone are*

CHAPTER 18

1 ^a 2 Sam. 8:1-18
1 Lit. *struck*
2 ^b 2 Sam. 8:2;
Zeph. 2:9 ^c Ps. 60:8
2 Lit. *struck*
3 ^d 2 Sam. 8:3
3 Lit. *struck* 4 Heb.
Hadarezer
4 ⁵ seven hundred,
2 Sam. 8:4
6 *crippled*
5 ^e 2 Sam. 8:5, 6;
1 Kin. 11:23-25

8 ^f 2 Sam. 8:8
9 1 Kin. 7:15, 23;
2 Chr. 4:12, 15, 16
7 Betah, 2 Sam.
8:8 8 Berothai,
2 Sam. 8:8 9 Heb.
Hadarezer 1 Great
laver or basin
9 ² Toi, 2 Sam. 8:9,
10 3 Lit. *struck*
10 ^h 2 Sam. 8:10-12
4 Joram, 2 Sam. 8:10
5 Lit. *struck*

BIBLE TIMES & CULTURE NOTES



The King’s Cabinet

The office of royal scribe or secretary appears frequently throughout the history of the kingdom. This high official seems to have had special assignments from time to time, but his regular duties included writing the royal correspondence and keeping the royal records—the annals of the events during the king’s reign. The office of recorder seems to have been one of high rank from the reign of King David on. He was called *mazkir* in Hebrew (“one who brings to mind”), and his official duty was to advise the king respecting important events. Jehoshaphat, the son of Ahilud, served as recorder for both David and Solomon (18:15). The recorder represented Hezekiah in public business (Is. 36:22), and during the reign of Josiah the recorder was placed in charge of repairs of the temple (2 Chr. 34:8).

of Damascus; and the Syrians became David’s servants, and brought tribute. So the LORD preserved David wherever he went. 7 And David took the shields of gold that were on the servants of Hadadezer, and brought them to Jerusalem. 8 Also from 7 Tibhath and from 8 Chun, cities of 9 Hadadezer, David brought a large amount of 1 bronze, with which 9 Solomon made the bronze 1 Sea, the pillars, and the articles of bronze.

9 Now when 2 Tou king of Hamath heard that David had 3 defeated all the army of Hadadezer king of Zobah, 10 he sent 4 Hadoram his son to King David, to greet him and bless him, because he had fought against Hadadezer and 5 defeated him (for Hadadezer had been at war with Tou); and Hadoram brought with him all kinds of 6 articles of gold, silver, and bronze. 11 King David also dedicated

17:23 the word which You have spoken: David referred here to the covenant God had just made with him concerning his dynasty (17:7-14). David’s appeal to God to establish His word came immediately after his reference to the Exodus and the Mosaic covenant. David knew that God’s covenant with him was founded on God’s previous promises to Abraham.

18:1 This is the only record of David taking a Philistine city, although he had defeated the **Philistines** many times in battle. **Gath** was the Philistine city closest to Israelite territory, so it offered the greatest threat to Israel.

18:2 It must have been with mixed feelings that David undertook a campaign against the Moabites, for he had strong emotional links with **Moab**. His great-grandmother Ruth came from Moab (Ruth 4:13-17) and David had sent his own family there for protection when he was hiding from Saul (1 Sam. 22:3, 4).

18:3 The campaign here may be connected to the Aramean war more fully outlined in 19:1-19, because **Hadadezer** is mentioned in both places. His kingdom, **Zobah**, lay immediately north of Damascus. David pursued him as far as Hamath, a hundred miles beyond Damascus, in an effort to extend the Israelite empire all

the way to the River Euphrates. David’s justification may have been God’s promise to Abraham that the land He was giving him would extend “from the river of Egypt to the great river, the River Euphrates” (Gen. 15:18).

18:5 The capital of the Aramean kingdom just north and northeast of Israel was **Damascus**.

18:6 servants . . . tribute: These technical terms, as in the case of Moab (v. 2), suggest that Damascus became a vassal state under Israel. Very quickly, Moab and Damascus became client states and Zobah an occupied territory.

18:8 To the two cities **Tibhath . . . Chun**, Samuel added a third Berothai (2 Sam. 8:8). All three are referred to in Egyptian texts. They were northeast of Baalbek in central Lebanon.

18:10 greet . . . bless: This apparently casual language covers a more formal situation in which **Tou**, king of Hamath, was approaching David in willing submission to him as king. In other words, what Moab and Damascus did involuntarily, Hamath was doing voluntarily, making itself a vassal state under Israel.

18:11 The fact that David **dedicated** all the spoils of war to God suggests that he viewed the battles as campaigns of holy war. In

these to the LORD, along with the silver and gold that he had brought from all these nations—from Edom, from Moab, from the ⁱpeople of Ammon, from the ^jPhilistines, and from ^kAmalek.

¹²Moreover ^lAbishai the son of Zerui-ah killed ^meighteen thousand ⁶Edom-ites in the Valley of Salt. ¹³ⁿHe also put garrisons in Edom, and all the Edomites became David's servants. And the LORD preserved David wherever he went.

David's Administration

¹⁴So David reigned over all Israel, and administered judgment and justice to all his people. ¹⁵Joab the son of Zerui-ah was over the army; Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud was recorder; ¹⁶Zadok the son of Ahitub and ⁷Abimelech the son of Abiathar were the priests; ⁸Shavsha was the scribe; ¹⁷^oBenaiah the son of Jeho-aiada was over the Cherethites and the Pelethites; and David's sons were ⁹chief ministers at the king's side.

The Ammonites and Syrians Defeated

19 It^a happened after this that Na-hash the king of the people of Ammon died, and his son reigned in his place. ²Then David said, "I will show kindness to Hanun the son of Nahash, because his father showed kindness to me." So David sent messengers to com-fort him concerning his father. And Da-

11 ⁱ 2 Sam. 10:14
12 2 Sam. 5:17-25
13 2 Sam. 1:1
12 ^j 2 Sam. 23:18;
1 Chr. 2:16 ^m 2 Sam.
8:13 ^k Syrians,
2 Sam. 8:13
13 ⁿ Gen. 27:29-40;
Num. 24:18; 2 Sam.
8:14
16 ⁷ Ahimelech,
2 Sam. 8:17
8 Seraiyah, 2 Sam.
8:17, or Shisha,
1 Kin. 4:3
17 ^o 2 Sam. 8:18
9 Lit. at the hand of
the king

CHAPTER 19

1 ^a 1 Sam. 11:1;
2 Sam. 10:1-19

3 ⁱ Lit. In your eyes
is David honoring
your father because
4 ^b Is. 20:4 ² in half
6 ^c 1 Chr. 18:5,
9 ³ Heb. Aram
Naharaim ⁴ Zoba,
2 Sam. 10:6

vid's servants came to Hanun in the land of the people of Ammon to comfort him.

³And the princes of the people of Ammon said to Hanun, ¹"Do you think that David really honors your father be-cause he has sent comforters to you? Did his servants not come to you to search and to overthrow and to spy out the land?"

⁴Therefore Hanun took David's ser-vants, shaved them, and cut off their garments ²in the middle, at their ^bbut-tocks, and sent them away. ⁵Then some went and told David about the men; and he sent to meet them, because the men were greatly ashamed. And the king said, "Wait at Jericho until your beards have grown, and then return."

⁶When the people of Ammon saw that they had made themselves repulsive to David, Hanun and the people of Ammon sent a thousand talents of silver to hire for themselves chariots and horsemen from ³Mesopotamia, from Syrian Maa-cah, ^cand from ⁴Zobah. ⁷So they hired for themselves thirty-two thousand char-iots, with the king of Maacah and his people, who came and encamped before Medeba. Also the people of Ammon gath-ered together from their cities, and came to battle.

⁸Now when David heard of it, he sent Joab and all the army of the mighty men. ⁹Then the people of Ammon came out and put themselves in battle array before

such war, initiated and led by God, all proceeds of the victory be-longed to Him. Such spoils were said to be "doomed to destruction" or "accursed" (Josh. 6:17, 18), meaning that they could not be used for secular purposes but were consecrated to God. When Solomon built the temple, he brought all the dedicated things into the temple treasuries (2 Chr. 5:1).

18:12 One of David's nephews (2:15, 16), **Abishai**, was included in one of the groups of David's "three mighty men" (11:19, 20). **Valley of Salt:** This was a few miles east of Beersheba.

18:13 The term **servants** suggests that Edom became not just a defeated foe, but also a vassal state under Israel's control. This al-lowed Edom to retain its own leadership, but it was under David's close supervision, as the reference to Israelite garrisons makes clear.

18:15 David awarded his nephew **Joab** (2:15, 16) the rank of com-mander of the **army** for his success in penetrating the walls of Jeru-salem (11:4-9). **recorder:** Jehoshaphat was the keeper of the royal archives or records. The chronicler himself may have had access to such documents when he composed the present work (see 27:24).

18:16 **Zadok** descended from Aaron through Eleazar (16:39). **Abimelech:** Abiathar, a descendant of Aaron's son Ithamar, had served as David's priest in the wilderness (1 Sam. 22:20) and later at Jerusalem (15:11). But he was disloyal to Solomon and was removed from office, leaving Zadok alone as high priest (1 Kin. 2:27, 35). It seems that David must have suspended Abiathar as well from ser-vice at some earlier point, for in the present passage his son Abime-lech was priest with Zadok.

18:17 **Cherethites . . . Pelethites:** These were elite companies of soldiers, probably mercenaries. They were commanded by Benaiah, a member of one of the groups of "three mighty men" (11:24). There were Philistines known as Cherethites (Ezek. 25:16; see 1 Sam. 30:14), and the connection between Pelethites and Philistines elsewhere

(2 Sam. 15:18) leads to the conclusion that they were all from Phi-listia. **chief ministers:** These were David's sons who served in his government. They are called by the Hebrew word usually translated "priests" in 2 Sam. 8:18.

19:1 Since **Nahash** was reigning in Saul's earliest years (1 Sam. 11:1), the present incident must have occurred early in David's reign at Jerusalem. Nahash evidently reigned for over 50 years (40 years of Saul, plus seven of David in Hebron, plus whatever years had passed in Jerusalem).

19:4 **shaved . . . cut off:** Ancient Semitic men were inordinately proud of their beards and scrupulously modest in their attire. The Ammonites humiliated David's men in the most offensive way possible.

19:6 **made themselves repulsive:** The Ammonites realized that David would surely retaliate for the way they had offended his delegation. **thousand talents of silver:** A talent was 75 pounds.

Mesopotamia: This was not the great land between the Tigris and the Euphrates inhabited by the Assyrians and Babylonians, but a district on the upper Euphrates known as Aram Naharaim. **Syrian Maacah:** This was a small kingdom located between Damascus and the Sea of Galilee.

19:7 The parallel account in 2 Sam. 10:6 does not mention **chariots** but says there was a total of 33,000 men. The chronicler does not mention the number of men, but only the chariots. Both writers gave different sources of the manpower and material, so clearly they were arriving at their totals from different perspectives or with different purposes in mind. **Medeba** was 20 miles southwest of Rabbah, the capital of Ammon. It is called Madaba today. **Ammon gathered:** The Israelites were apparently between the Aramean armies and the city of Rabbah (see v. 10), so when the Ammonites attacked from the city, the Israelites were pinned between two forces.

the gate of the city, and the kings who had come *were* by themselves in the field.

¹⁰When Joab saw that the battle line was against him before and behind, he chose some of Israel's best, and put *them* in battle array against the Syrians. ¹¹And the rest of the people he put under the command of Abishai his brother, and they set *themselves* in battle array against the people of Ammon. ¹²Then he said, "If the Syrians are too strong for me, then you shall help me; but if the people of Ammon are too strong for you, then I will help you. ¹³Be of good courage, and let us be strong for our people and for the cities of our God. And may the LORD do *what is good* in His sight."

¹⁴So Joab and the people who *were* with him drew near for the battle against the Syrians, and they fled before him. ¹⁵When the people of Ammon saw that the Syrians were fleeing, they also fled before Abishai his brother, and entered the city. So Joab went to Jerusalem.

¹⁶Now when the Syrians saw that they had been defeated by Israel, they sent messengers and brought the Syrians who were beyond ⁵the River, and ⁶Shophach the commander of Hadadezer's army *went* before them. ¹⁷When it was told David, he gathered all Israel, crossed over the Jordan and came upon them, and set up in *battle* array against them. So when David had set up in battle array against the Syrians, they fought with him. ¹⁸Then the Syrians fled before Israel; and David killed ⁷seven thousand

¹⁶ ⁵The Euphrates
⁶Zoba, 2 Sam. 10:6,
or Shobach, 2 Sam.
10:16
¹⁸ ⁷seven hundred,
2 Sam. 10:18

⁸horsemen, 2 Sam.
10:18

CHAPTER 20

¹ ^a 2 Sam. 11:1
² 2 Sam. 11:2–12:25
^c 2 Sam. 12:26 ¹ Lit.
at the return of
the year
² ^d 2 Sam. 12:30, 31
² plunder
³ ³ LXX cut them
with
⁴ ^e 2 Sam. 21:18
¹ Chr. 11:29
⁴ Gob, 2 Sam. 21:18
⁵ Saph, 2 Sam. 21:18
⁶ Or Raphah

charioteers and forty thousand ⁸foot soldiers of the Syrians, and killed Shophach the commander of the army. ¹⁹And when the servants of Hadadezer saw that they were defeated by Israel, they made peace with David and became his servants. So the Syrians were not willing to help the people of Ammon anymore.

Rabbah Is Conquered

20 It ^ahappened ¹in the spring of the year, at the time kings go out to battle, that Joab led out the armed forces and ravaged the country of the people of Ammon, and came and besieged Rabbah. But ^bDavid stayed at Jerusalem. And ^cJoab defeated Rabbah and overthrew it. ²Then David ^dtook their king's crown from his head, and found it to weigh a talent of gold, and *there were* precious stones in it. And it was set on David's head. Also he brought out the ²spoil of the city in great abundance. ³And he brought out the people who *were* in it, and ³put *them* to work with saws, with iron picks, and with axes. So David did to all the cities of the people of Ammon. Then David and all the people returned to Jerusalem.

Philistine Giants Destroyed

⁴Now it happened afterward ^ethat war broke out at ⁴Gezer with the Philistines, at which time ^fSibbechai the Hushathite killed ⁵Sippai, *who was one* of the sons of ⁶the giant. And they were subdued.

19:10 Completely surrounded, Joab split up his forces so that half faced those **before** and half faced those **behind**. Joab led the section that opposed the Syrians, and Abishai commanded the section that opposed the Ammonites (v. 11).

19:13 **may the LORD do what is good in His sight:** This may look like the resigned statement of a fatalist, but it was anything but that. Joab understood enough of the sovereignty and omniscience of God to know that after all human effort and energy had been expended, the battle was still God's.

19:15 The Syrians were mercenaries and had no real commitment to the task at hand. When it appeared that they were in danger of defeat, they **fled**. Their retreat so demoralized the Ammonites that they withdrew into the safety of their city.

19:17 Samuel located the setting of the **battle** at Helam (2 Sam. 10:17), about 40 miles east of the Sea of Galilee.

19:19 The defeat of Hadadezer and all his vassal kings brought about a shift in allegiance, so that all the Aramean states that had paid tribute to Zobah came under tribute to Israel. In this context, **servants** did not signify household slaves but national subservience to a greater power, in this case Israel. This effectively eliminated all the Arameans as allies of Ammon and precluded their being a further threat to Israel. With the subjugation of everything from Aram Maachah to the Euphrates, David occupied all the boundaries of the land of promise as outlined in the Abrahamic covenant (Gen. 15:18–21).

20:1 Great military operations were conducted **in the spring of the year** for two main reasons: (1) the latter rains were over and the dry months of summer, most suitable for military activity, were at hand; and (2) the barley harvests were in and the wheat harvests suf-

ficiently well along to free men of military age for battle. **besieged Rabbah:** Having defeated the Aramean allies of Ammon at Helam (19:17, 19), Joab led Israel's armies against the main enemy and principal objective, the capital of the Ammonite kingdom, Rabbah. The modern city of Amman, Jordan, occupies the ancient site. **David stayed at Jerusalem:** This agrees with Samuel's account, but Samuel also related the sordid story of David's adultery with Bathsheba, the plot to kill her husband Uriah, and the birth of David's son—all of which took place while Joab was laying siege to Rabbah. The chronicler omitted the material because it was not relevant to his literary and theological purposes. He was showing how the Davidic dynasty was the fulfillment of God's promises.

20:2 David did not participate in the initial attack on Rabbah, but he did join Joab when it fell, because Joab earnestly entreated him to come share the credit for the victory (2 Sam. 12:27, 28). The **crown** David took was ceremonial and not for wearing, since it weighed a **talent** (about 75 pounds). **set on David's head:** This was only for this ceremonial occasion. David put the crown on his head to demonstrate that he had vanquished the Ammonites and now reigned over them as well.

20:3 It was common in OT times for **people** defeated in war to be consigned to forced labor, particularly if they had been coerced into some kind of vassal relationship (see Josh. 9:22–27; 1 Kin. 9:20, 21).

20:4 The city of **Gezer** was on the frontier between Israel and Philistia, and was constantly a bone of contention between them. **Sibbechai the Hushathite:** He was one of the 30 warriors who formed an elite corps (see 11:29). **the giant:** This apparently did not refer to a single individual, but to a giant race indigenous to the country east of the Jordan (Deut. 2:10, 11, 20, 21).

⁵Again there was war with the Philistines, and Elhanan the son of ⁷Jair killed Lahmi the brother of Goliath the Gittite, the shaft of whose spear *was* like a weaver's ⁸beam.

⁶Yet again ^hthere was war at Gath, where there was a man of *great* stature, with twenty-four fingers and toes, six on *each hand* and six on *each foot*; and he also was born to ⁸the giant. ⁷So when he defied Israel, Jonathan the son of ⁹Shimea, David's brother, killed him.

⁸These were born to the giant in Gath, and they fell by the hand of David and by the hand of his servants.

The Census of Israel and Judah

21 Now, ^aSatan stood up against Israel, and moved David to ¹number Israel. ²So David said to Joab and to the leaders of the people, "Go, number Israel from Beersheba to Dan, ^band bring the number of them to me that I may know *it*."

³And Joab answered, "May the LORD make His people a hundred times more than they are. But, my lord the king, *are* they not all my lord's servants? Why then does my lord require this thing? Why should he be a cause of guilt in Israel?"

⁴Nevertheless the king's word prevailed against Joab. Therefore Joab departed and went throughout all Israel

5 ⁹ 1 Sam. 17:7;
1 Chr. 11:23 ⁷ Jaare-Oregim, 2 Sam. 21:19
6 ^h 1 Sam. 5:8;
2 Sam. 21:20 ⁸ Or Raphah
7 ⁹ Shammah, 1 Sam. 16:9 or Shimeah, 2 Sam. 21:21

CHAPTER 21
1 ^a 2 Sam. 24:1-25;
Job 1:6 ¹ take a census of
2 ^b 1 Chr. 27:23, 24

6 ^c 1 Chr. 27:24
² command
7 ³ Lit. *it was evil in the eyes of God*
8 ^d 2 Sam. 24:10
^e 2 Sam. 12:13
9 ^f 1 Sam. 9:9; 2 Kin. 17:13; 1 Chr. 29:29;
2 Chr. 16:7, 10; Is. 30:9, 10; Amos 7:12, 13
10 ^g 2 Sam. 24:12-14
12 ^h 2 Sam. 24:13
⁴ seven, 2 Sam. 24:13 ⁵ Or Angel, and so throughout the chapter

and came to Jerusalem. ⁵Then Joab gave the sum of the number of the people to David. All Israel *had* one million one hundred thousand men who drew the sword, and Judah *had* four hundred and seventy thousand men who drew the sword. ^{6c}But he did not count Levi and Benjamin among them, for the king's ²word was abominable to Joab.

⁷And ³God was displeased with this thing; therefore He struck Israel. ⁸So David said to God, ^d"I have sinned greatly, because I have done this thing; ^ebut now, I pray, take away the iniquity of Your servant, for I have done very foolishly."

⁹Then the LORD spoke to Gad, David's ^fseer, saying, ¹⁰"Go and tell David, ^gsaying, 'Thus says the LORD: 'I offer you three *things*; choose one of them for yourself, that I may do *it* to you.'"

¹¹So Gad came to David and said to him, "Thus says the LORD: 'Choose for yourself, ¹²^heither ⁴three years of famine, or three months to be defeated by your foes with the sword of your enemies overtaking *you*, or else for three days the sword of the LORD—the plague in the land, with the ⁵angel of the LORD destroying throughout all the territory of Israel.' Now consider what answer I should take back to Him who sent me."

¹³And David said to Gad, "I am in great distress. Please let me fall into the

20:7 Shimea: This was David's older brother, the third son of Jesse (2:13).

20:8 the giant: As in v. 4, this likely referred to a giant race living in and around Gath, though it is possible that a particular giant was in view. The Goliath killed by David was from Gath (1 Sam. 17:4).

21:1 The word **Satan** means "Adversary." While at first he was called "the Satan," this later came to be used as a proper name, Satan (see Zech. 3:1, 2). The NT identifies him as the evil one, the devil, and the dragon, thus linking him to the serpent in the Garden of Eden (Gen. 3:1). **moved David:** Samuel attributed David's impulse to number the people to God Himself (2 Sam. 24:1). The apparent contradiction can be resolved by recognizing that though Satan is the author of all evil, he cannot exercise his evil intentions apart from the permission of God. Moreover, God could use him to accomplish His own purposes of judgment (1 Kin. 22:19–23) or discipline (as here with David).

poses of judgment (1 Kin. 22:19–23) or discipline (as here with David).

21:2 Go, number: David's plan to take a census was not evil in itself, for the Lord Himself at other times had commanded the Israelites to be counted (see Num. 1). What was wrong with David's census was David's attitude—his pride. He wanted to **know** the number of the Israelites so that he could glory in the extent of his reign (see 2 Sam. 24:1). **Beersheba to Dan:** This was the traditional way of describing all of Israel from south to north. The distance is about 150 miles.

21:3 Joab was concerned that David's arrogant command for a census would bring punishment, not only on the king but on innocent citizens, whom Joab described as David's **servants**. David's position as king and shepherd of his people implicated them in whatever he did. **cause of guilt:** In a courageous appeal, Joab pointed out that if David's decision was put into effect David would be personally accountable for whatever followed.

21:6 The men of **Levi**, dedicated as they were to priestly service, were ordinarily exempt from military conscription (Num. 1:47–49). **Benjamin:** The reason this tribe was excluded may be that the judgment of God commenced before the task was completed (27:24). Perhaps Joab simply abandoned the task before he finished, his sense of revulsion growing more and more as he carried it out.

21:8 I have sinned: To his credit, David blamed no one but himself for the judgment of God that fell on the nation. He rightly believed that if God would forgive him, the affliction of the nation would also cease.

21:9 Gad is the second prophet named in the book (see 17:1). He also produced a composition to which the chronicler refers (29:29). Here the chronicler calls Gad a **seer**, a person who sees or receives revelations from the Lord. The author of Samuel refers to him by the more familiar term *prophet* (1 Sam. 22:5).

21:10 I offer . . . three things: This is the only place in the Bible where God offers someone a choice of punishments.

21:13 David knew that the Lord is merciful—a God who forgives.

Satan

(Heb. *satan*) (21:1; 1 Sam. 29:4; Job 2:1; Zech. 3:1) Strong's #7854

The Hebrew word from which *Satan* comes, which literally means "adversary," sometimes refers to human enemies (1 Sam. 29:4; Ps. 109:6). Once it refers to the angel of the Lord who opposed Balaam (Num. 22:22). But whenever this word is used as a proper name in the OT, it refers to the great superhuman enemy of God, people, and good (21:1; Job 1:2). This use of the word also occurs frequently in the NT. Satan is destined to fail in his continuing rebellion against God. The death of Christ on the cross is the basis for Satan's final defeat (Heb. 2:14, 15; 1 Pet. 3:18, 22). The final victory will come when Jesus returns and Satan is cast into the lake of fire (Rev. 20:1–15).

hand of the LORD, for His ⁱmercies are very great; but do not let me fall into the hand of man.”

¹⁴So the LORD sent a ^jplague upon Israel, and seventy thousand men of Israel fell. ¹⁵And God sent ⁶an ^kangel to Jerusalem to destroy it. As ⁷he was destroying, the LORD looked and ^lrelented of the disaster, and said to the angel who was destroying, “It is enough; now restrain ⁸your hand.” And the angel of the LORD stood by the ^mthreshing floor of ⁹Ornan the Jebusite.

¹⁶Then David lifted his eyes and ⁿsaw the angel of the LORD standing between earth and heaven, having in his hand a drawn sword stretched out over Jerusalem. So David and the elders, clothed in sackcloth, fell on their faces. ¹⁷And David said to God, “Was it not I who commanded the people to be numbered? I am the one who has sinned and done evil indeed; but these ^osheep, what have they done? Let Your hand, I pray, O LORD my God, be against me and my father’s house, but not against Your people that they should be plagued.”

¹⁸Therefore, the ^pangel of the LORD commanded Gad to say to David that David should go and erect an altar to the LORD on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite. ¹⁹So David went up at the word of Gad, which he had spoken in the name of the LORD. ²⁰Now Ornan turned and saw the angel; and his four sons *who were* with him hid themselves, but Ornan

¹³ ⁱPs. 51:1; 130:4, 7
¹⁴ ^j1 Chr. 27:24
¹⁵ ^k2 Sam. 24:16
¹⁶ ^lGen. 6:6 ^m2 Chr. 3:1
¹⁷ ^oOr the Angel
¹⁸ ^pOr He ⁸Or Your
¹⁹ ^qAraunah, 2 Sam. 24:16, 18–24
²⁰ ⁿJosh. 5:13;
2 Chr. 3:1
²¹ ^o2 Sam. 7:8;
Ps. 74:1
²² ^p1 Chr. 21:11, 12;
2 Chr. 3:1

²² ⁱLit. Give
²⁵ ^q2 Sam. 24:24
²⁶ ^rLev. 9:24; Judg. 6:21; 1 Kin. 18:36–38; 2 Chr. 3:1; 7:1
²⁹ ^s1 Kin. 3:4;
2 Chr. 1:3

continued threshing wheat. ²¹So David came to Ornan, and Ornan looked and saw David. And he went out from the threshing floor, and bowed before David with *his* face to the ground. ²²Then David said to Ornan, ⁱ“Grant me the place of *this* threshing floor, that I may build an altar on it to the LORD. You shall grant it to me at the full price, that the plague may be withdrawn from the people.”

²³But Ornan said to David, “Take it to yourself, and let my lord the king do *what* is good in his eyes. Look, I *also* give you the oxen for burnt offerings, the threshing implements for wood, and the wheat for the grain offering; I give *it* all.”

²⁴Then King David said to Ornan, “No, but I will surely buy *it* for the full price, for I will not take what is yours for the LORD, nor offer burnt offerings with *that which* costs *me* nothing.” ²⁵So ^qDavid gave Ornan six hundred shekels of gold by weight for the place. ²⁶And David built there an altar to the LORD, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings, and called on the LORD; and ^rHe answered him from heaven by fire on the altar of burnt offering.

²⁷So the LORD commanded the angel, and he returned his sword to its sheath.

²⁸At that time, when David saw that the LORD had answered him on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite, he sacrificed there. ²⁹^sFor the tabernacle of the LORD and the altar of the burnt offering, which Moses had made in the

David’s willingness to fall into **the hand of the LORD** demonstrated his complete trust in the grace of God. Even when God was punishing him, David trusted God rather than **man**—God’s forgiving nature over any leniency people might offer.

21:15 The Lord requires certain conditions people must meet in order for Him to act one way or another. One aspect of this is prayer, for often God chooses to act in specific cases according to whether and how His people pray. This was clearly the case here, since **God sent an angel to Jerusalem to destroy it**, but when He saw David’s repentance and heard his intercessory prayer (v. 17), **He relented**.

21:16 Sackcloth was a rough garment usually made of goat’s hair (Is. 50:3), worn by mourners to express grief (1 Kin. 21:27; Is. 32:11). David and the elders of Israel were dressed in such a manner because of the terrible calamity brought on the nation by the plague.

21:17 By calling his people **sheep**, David was acknowledging himself as their shepherd (17:7). Since that designation first arose in the context of God’s covenant promises, David’s reference to his people as sheep very likely attested to his feelings of covenant unfaithfulness and irresponsibility. He was supposed to be the one who guided the flock to safety and security, but by his arrogance in numbering the people he had brought them harm.

21:18 Building **an altar** in a time of judgment or impending judgment was for the purpose of offering propitiatory sacrifices. Sin had caused a breach between God and His people. The presentation of appropriate burnt offerings and peace offerings (v. 26) would be the occasion for reconciliation, as the Law explained (Num. 15:1–10). **threshing floor**: The altar was located precisely where the angel of the Lord stood with sword in hand to destroy Jerusalem (v. 15). This place of judgment would thereby become the place of grace and forgiveness.

21:22 Grant me . . . this threshing floor: David wanted the altar at precisely this place because this is where the angel stood with drawn sword (v. 15), and as was certainly known to David, this was where Abraham had prepared to offer Isaac as a sacrifice to God (Gen. 22:1, 2; see 2 Chr. 3:1). It is fitting that this holy place should be the site of an altar where David could make atonement for his sins and thus effect the withdrawal of the plague.

21:24 David again showed a clear perception of the essence of sacrifice. Until he owned what Ornan had, and until he had expended his own resources for it, he could not use it as an offering to God. **which costs me nothing**: While David could have rightfully accepted these gifts without paying for them, he felt that this would not suffice as sacrifice. A true sacrifice to God required labor and investment on David’s part.

21:25 The chronicler referred to the price for the whole **place**, probably several acres of valuable property. The fact that the temple was later built here suggests a large area.

21:26 Just as a three-year drought ended in the days of Elijah when the prophet called down **fire** on a sacrifice at Carmel (1 Kin. 18:38, 41), so the three-day plague God brought on Israel ended with the sacrifice at Ornan’s threshing floor.

21:28 he sacrificed there: Once David saw that God had sanctified the spot by setting fire to the sacrifice, he continued to use the altar as a regular place of offering.

21:29 This verse teaches explicitly that the original **tabernacle** and **altar of the burnt offering** had not been destroyed when the ark was taken from Shiloh. The OT account does not trace their movement fully after Shiloh, but they did end up at Nob and finally at Gibeon (see 15:1).

wilderness, *were* at that time at the high place in ¹Gibeon. ³⁰But David could not go before it to inquire of God, for he was afraid of the sword of the angel of the LORD.

David Prepares to Build the Temple

22 Then David said, ^a“This is the house of the LORD God, and this is the altar of burnt offering for Israel.” ²So David commanded to gather the ^baliens who *were* in the land of Israel; and he appointed masons to ^ccut hewn stones to build the house of God. ³And David prepared iron in abundance for the nails of the doors of the gates and for the joints, and bronze in abundance ^dbeyond measure, ⁴and cedar trees in abundance; for the ^eSidonians and those from Tyre brought much cedar wood to David.

⁵Now David said, ^f“Solomon my son is young and inexperienced, and the house to be built for the LORD *must be* exceedingly magnificent, famous and glorious throughout all countries. I will now make preparation for it.” So David made abundant preparations before his death.

⁶Then he called for his son Solomon, and ¹charged him to build a house for the LORD God of Israel. ⁷And David said to Solomon: “My son, as for me, ^git was in my mind to build a house ^hto the name of the LORD my God; ⁸but the word of the LORD came to me, saying, ⁱ“You have shed much blood and have made great wars; you shall not build a house for My name, because you have shed much blood on the earth in My sight. ^{9j}Behold, a son shall be born to you, who shall be a man of rest; and I will give him ^krest from all

29 ¹ 1 Chr. 16:39

CHAPTER 22

1 ^a Deut. 12:5;
2 Sam. 24:18; 1 Chr.
21:18, 19, 26, 28;
2 Chr. 3:1
2 ^b 1 Kin. 9:20,
21; 2 Chr. 2:17, 18
3 ^c 1 Kin. 5:17, 18
3 ^d 1 Kin. 7:47;
1 Chr. 22:14
4 ^e 1 Kin. 5:6-10
5 ^f 1 Kin. 37; 1 Chr.
29:1, 2
6 ¹ commanded
7 ^g 2 Sam. 7:1, 2;
1 Kin. 8:17; 1 Chr.
17:1; 28:2 ^h Deut.
12:5, 11
8 ⁱ 2 Sam. 7:5-13;
1 Kin. 5:3; 1 Chr.
28:3
9 ^j 1 Chr. 28:5
^k 1 Kin. 4:20, 25; 5:4

² Lit. *Peaceful*
10 ¹ 2 Sam. 7:13;
1 Kin. 5:5; 6:38;
1 Chr. 17:12, 13;
28:6; 2 Chr. 6:2
^m Heb. 1:5 ☆
11 ^a 1 Chr. 22:16
12 ^c 1 Kin. 3:9-12;
2 Chr. 1:10
13 ^p [Josh. 1:7, 8];
1 Chr. 28:7 ^q [Deut.
31:7, 8; Josh. 1:6,
7, 9; 1 Chr. 28:20]
3 ¹ commanded
14 ¹ 1 Chr. 22:3
16 ^s 1 Chr. 22:11
17 ¹ 1 Chr. 28:1-6
18 ^v Deut. 12:10;
Josh. 22:4; 2 Sam.
7:1; [1 Kin. 5:4; 8:56]

his enemies all around. His name shall be ²Solomon, for I will give peace and quietness to Israel in his days. ^{10j}He shall build a house for My name, and ^mhe shall be My son, and I *will be* his Father; and I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel forever. ¹¹Now, my son, may ⁿthe LORD be with you; and may you prosper, and build the house of the LORD your God, as He has said to you. ¹²Only may the LORD ^ogive you wisdom and understanding, and give you charge concerning Israel, that you may keep the law of the LORD your God. ^{13p}Then you will prosper, if you take care to fulfill the statutes and judgments with which the LORD ³charged Moses concerning Israel. ^qBe strong and of good courage; do not fear nor be dismayed. ¹⁴Indeed I have taken much trouble to prepare for the house of the LORD one hundred thousand talents of gold and one million talents of silver, and bronze and iron ^rbeyond measure, for it is so abundant. I have prepared timber and stone also, and you may add to them. ¹⁵Moreover *there are* workmen with you in abundance: woodsmen and stonecutters, and all types of skillful men for every kind of work. ¹⁶Of gold and silver and bronze and iron *there is* no limit. Arise and begin working, and ^sthe LORD be with you.”

¹⁷David also commanded all the ¹leaders of Israel to help Solomon his son, *saying*, ¹⁸“Is not the LORD your God with you? ^uAnd has He *not* given you rest on every side? For He has given the inhabitants of the land into my hand, and the land is subdued before the LORD and before His people. ¹⁹Now set your heart

21:30 David could not go before it: It was David's custom to offer burnt offerings on the altar at Gibeon rather than on the one in Jerusalem. He did not dare go to Gibeon this time because of the judgment that God was about to pour out on the land. He understood that his offerings had to be offered where he was—at the threshing floor of Ornan.

22:1 This observation by David marks a significant turning point in the history of the central sanctuary. As long as the ark remained at Kirjath Jearim and the Mosaic tabernacle was at Nob and Gibeon, it was impossible for worship to be carried out in the manner originally intended. David had taken the first steps toward remedying that by bringing the ark to Jerusalem and placing it in a tent that he provided on Mt. Zion. At last, and in a way totally unforeseen by anyone, the resolution of the problem was at hand. The **house of the LORD God** and the **altar of burnt offering** would be built on the threshing floor of Ornan.

22:2 The fact that David could not **build** the temple did not prevent him from providing building materials for the use of Solomon's craftsmen.

22:4 Cedar trees came from Lebanon, the principal supplier of timber in the ancient Middle Eastern world. The most expert builders also hailed from Lebanon, and from cities like Sidon and Tyre.

22:5 Solomon was born about halfway through David's reign. He reigned with his father for about two years (23:1; 28:1; 29:22). Since David was only beginning to gather building materials for the tem-

ple, Solomon could not have been over 18 years old. It was precisely because Solomon was so **young and inexperienced** that David found it necessary to provide guidance for his son.

22:8, 9 You have shed much blood: The reason that God did not allow David to build the temple comes to light—David was a man of war. Until the enemies of Israel were subdued and an era of peace inaugurated, God determined that He would not “live” in a temple. David's son Solomon **would be a man of rest**; that is, a king whose reign would be free from constant warfare. At that time of peace, God had resolved that a temple would be built.

22:12 Having just observed the youth and inexperience of Solomon (v. 5), David knew that his son needed **wisdom** more than any other single gift. **the law of the LORD:** This cannot be limited to only the sections of the Law pertaining to kingship (see Deut. 17:14–20), although this is the central focus. David must have had in mind the covenant of kingship to which he himself had subscribed when he became king at Hebron (11:3).

22:18 Rest, or peace, was a precondition for building the temple (22:8, 9). **subdued before the LORD:** In the final analysis, the conquest of the land begun in Joshua's time and completed under David, was a divine and not a human matter. The land was the Lord's and His people were His tenants. Therefore, only when God Himself brought the land into subjection would He authorize construction of a temple.

22:19 David's dreams and desires are encapsulated in this brief

and your soul to seek the LORD your God. Therefore arise and build the sanctuary of the LORD God, to ^vbring the ark of the covenant of the LORD and the holy articles of God into the house that is to be built ^wfor the name of the LORD.”

The Divisions of the Levites

23 So when David was old and full of days, he made his son ^aSolomon king over Israel.

²And he gathered together all the leaders of Israel, with the priests and the Levites. ³Now the Levites were numbered from the age of ^bthirty years and above; and the number of individual males was thirty-eight thousand. ⁴Of these, twenty-four thousand *were* to ^clook after the work of the house of the LORD, six thousand *were* ^dofficers and judges, ⁵four thousand *were* gatekeepers, and four thousand ^epraised the LORD with musical instruments, ^f“which I made,” *said David*, “for giving praise.”

⁶Also ^gDavid separated them into ¹divisions among the sons of Levi: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari.

⁷Of the ^hGershonites: ²Laadan and Shimei. ⁸The sons of Laadan: the first Jehiel, then Zetham and Joel—three *in all*. ⁹The sons of Shimei: Shelomith, Haziël, and Haran—three *in all*. These were the heads of the fathers’ *houses* of Laadan. ¹⁰And the sons of Shimei: Jahath, ³Zina, Jeush, and Beriah. These *were* the four sons of Shimei. ¹¹Jahath was the first and Zizah the second. But Jeush and Beriah did not have many sons; therefore they were assigned as one father’s house.

¹²ⁱThe sons of Kohath: Amram, Izhar,

19 ^v1 Kin. 8:1-11;
2 Chr. 5:2-14 ^w1 Kin.
5:3

CHAPTER 23

1 ^a1 Kin. 1:33-40;
1 Chr. 28:4, 5
3 ^bNum. 4:1-3
4 ^c2 Chr. 2:2, 18;
Ezra 3:8, 9 ^dDeut.
16:18-20
5 ^e1 Chr. 15:16
12 Chr. 29:25-27
6 ^fEx. 6:16; Num.
26:57; 2 Chr. 8:14
^ggroups
7 ^h1 Chr. 26:21
2 ⁱLibni, Ex. 6:17
10 ^jLXX, Vg, Zizah
and v. 11
12 ^kEx. 6:18

13 / Ex. 6:20 ^kEx.
28:1; Heb. 5:4
14 Ex. 30:7; 1 Sam.
2:28 ^m[Deut.
21:5] ⁿNum. 6:23
⁴consecrate
14 ^o1 Chr. 26:20-24
15 ^pEx. 18:3, 4
⁵Heb. *Gershom*,
1 Chr. 6:16
16 ^q1 Chr. 26:24
⁶Shubael, 1 Chr.
24:20
17 ^r1 Chr. 26:25
18 ^s1 Chr. 24:22
19 ^t1 Chr. 24:23
21 ^u1 Chr. 24:26
^v1 Chr. 24:29
22 ^w1 Chr. 24:28
^xNum. 36:6
⁷kinsmen
23 ^y1 Chr. 24:30
24 ^zNum. 10:17, 21
^aNum. 1:3; Ezra 3:8
25 ^b1 Chr. 22:18
26 ^cNum. 4:5, 15;
7:9; Deut. 10:8
27 ^d2 Sam. 23:1

Hebron, and Uzziel—four *in all*. ¹³The sons of ^jAmram: Aaron and Moses; and ^kAaron was set apart, he and his sons forever, that he should ⁴sanctify the most holy things, ^lto burn incense before the LORD, ^mto minister to Him, and ⁿto give the blessing in His name forever. ¹⁴Now ^othe sons of Moses the man of God were reckoned to the tribe of Levi. ¹⁵^pThe sons of Moses *were* ⁵Gershon and Eliezer. ¹⁶Of the sons of Gershon, ^qShebuel ⁶was the first. ¹⁷Of the descendants of Eliezer, ^rRehobiah was the first. And Eliezer had no other sons, but the sons of Rehobiah were very many. ¹⁸Of the sons of Izhar, ^sShelomith *was* the first. ¹⁹^tOf the sons of Hebron, Jeriah *was* the first, Amariah the second, Jahaziel the third, and Jekameam the fourth. ²⁰Of the sons of Uzziel, Michah *was* the first and Jesshiah the second.

²¹^uThe sons of Merari *were* Mahli and Mushi. The sons of Mahli *were* Eleazar and ^vKish. ²²And Eleazar died, and ^whad no sons, but only daughters; and their ⁷brethren, the sons of Kish, ^xtook them *as wives*. ²³^yThe sons of Mushi *were* Mahli, Eder, and Jeremoth—three *in all*.

²⁴These *were* the sons of ^zLevi by their fathers’ houses—the heads of the fathers’ *houses* as they were counted individually by the number of their names, who did the work for the service of the house of the LORD, from the age of ^atwenty years and above.

²⁵For David said, “The LORD God of Israel ^bhas given rest to His people, that they may dwell in Jerusalem forever”; ²⁶and also to the Levites, “They shall no longer ^ccarry the tabernacle, or any of the articles for its service.” ²⁷For by the ^dlast

verse. At that time, the **sanctuary** was divided—at Gibeon and Mt. Zion—and the ark was not united with the altar at Zion (see v. 1). More than anything else, David wanted the Israelites to worship the Lord as He had instructed them.

23:1 made . . . Solomon king: The phrasing suggests that this is an official appointment of Solomon to be coregent with David, a choice that had to be accepted and later ratified by the whole nation (see 29:22).

23:3 A Levite normally entered service at age 25 (Num. 8:24, 25). However, exceptions were made (Num. 4:3) to answer the needs of various time periods and ministries. Evidently in David’s time enough Levites could be found aged **thirty** and over that there was no need to call younger Levites into service.

23:4 the work of the house of the LORD: The work clearly involved anything around the temple except the work of gatekeepers and musicians, who had their own divisions (v. 5). **officers and judges:** To provide ready access to the Levites in matters of religious questions and activities, six thousand Levites were distributed throughout the land (see 26:29–32), presumably in the Levitical cities (6:54–81).

23:13 give the blessing: This referred to the priestly benediction of Num. 6:24–26.

23:14 sons of Moses: Because the priesthood was limited to Aaron, brother of Moses, and his descendants, Moses and his sons could

not have served as priests. However, they could assume other responsibilities of Levites (see Judg. 18:30).

23:20 Uzziel was the fourth son of Kohath (v. 12). There were nine Kohathite divisions of Levites: two from Amram, one from Izhar, four from Hebron, and two from Uzziel.

23:22 Eleazar, son of Mahli, left no sons, so his **daughters** married their cousins, **the sons of Kish**. This resulted in a merger of the two lines of Mahli into one, so there was only one Levitical division through this branch of the Merarites.

23:23 The Mushi branch of Merarites produced **three** Levitical divisions in David’s temple organization, making four in all, including the one traced to Mahli.

23:24 These were the sons of Levi: All three Levitical lines resulted in a total of 22 divisions, nine Gershonite, nine Kohathite, and four Merarite (24:18; 25:31). **twenty years and above:** At the beginning of the lists of divisions, the minimum age of the Levites was 30 (v. 3). The number *twenty* here was not a contradiction, for as v. 27 makes clear, the lower age was set by David in his last words. It seems that as time went by even 38,000 Levites were not sufficient, so that within two years or so it was necessary to lower the minimum age requirement.

23:27 by the . . . words of David: This remarkable statement made David almost a second Moses, in the sense that he was free to change a Mosaic legislation without challenge or reproach.

words of David the Levites *were* numbered from twenty years old and above; ²⁸because their duty *was* to help the sons of Aaron in the service of the house of the LORD, in the courts and in the chambers, in the purifying of all holy things and the work of the service of the house of God, ²⁹both with ^ethe showbread and ^fthe fine flour for the grain offering, with ^gthe unleavened cakes and ^h*what is baked in the pan*, with what is mixed and with all kinds of ⁱmeasures and sizes; ³⁰to stand every morning to thank and praise the LORD, and likewise at evening; ³¹and at every presentation of a burnt offering to the LORD ^jon the Sabbaths and on the New Moons and on the ^kset ⁸ feasts, by number according to the ordinance governing them, regularly before the LORD; ³²and that they should ^lattend to the ^mneeds of the tabernacle of meeting, the needs of the holy *place*, and the ⁿneeds of the sons of Aaron their brethren in the work of the house of the LORD.

The Divisions of the Priests

24 Now *these are* the divisions of the sons of Aaron. ^aThe sons of Aaron *were* Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and

²⁹ ^e Ex. 25:30 ^f Lev. 6:20 ^g Lev. 2:1, 4 ^h Lev. 2:5, 7 ⁱ Lev. 19:35 ^j Num. 10:10 ^k Lev. 23:2-4 ⁸ appointed feasts ³² ^l 2 Chr. 13:10, 11 ^m [Num. 1:53]; 1 Chr. 9:27 ⁿ Num. 3:6-9, 38

CHAPTER 24

¹ ^a Lev. 10:1-6; Num. 26:60, 61; 1 Chr. 6:3

² ^b Num. 3:1-4; 26:61 ³ ^c 1 Chr. 18:16 ¹⁰ ^d Neh. 12:4, 17; Luke 1:5

Ithamar. ²And ^bNadab and Abihu died before their father, and had no children; therefore Eleazar and Ithamar ministered as priests. ³Then David with Zadok of the sons of Eleazar, and ^cAhimelech of the sons of Ithamar, divided them according to the schedule of their service.

⁴There were more leaders found of the sons of Eleazar than of the sons of Ithamar, and *thus* they were divided. Among the sons of Eleazar *were* sixteen heads of *their* fathers' houses, and eight heads of their fathers' houses among the sons of Ithamar. ⁵Thus they were divided by lot, one group as another, for there were officials of the sanctuary and officials *of the house* of God, from the sons of Eleazar and from the sons of Ithamar. ⁶And the scribe, Shemaiah the son of Nethanel, *one of* the Levites, wrote them down before the king, the leaders, Zadok the priest, Ahimelech the son of Abiathar, and the heads of the fathers' *houses* of the priests and Levites, one father's house taken for Eleazar and *one* for Ithamar.

⁷Now the first lot fell to Jehoiarib, the second to Jedaiah, ⁸the third to Harim, the fourth to Seorim, ⁹the fifth to Malchijah, the sixth to Mijamin, ¹⁰the seventh to Hakkoz, the eighth to ^dAbijah, ¹¹the

23:29 To free the priests for the work of offering sacrifices, the Levites prepared elements for the sacrificial ritual, such as **fine flour** and **unleavened cakes**, and in other ways assisted the prescribed services.

23:30 **thank and praise:** This ministry fell to the Levites engaged in choral and orchestral duties (25:1-31).

23:31 **burnt offering:** Though Levites outside the priestly line could not officiate at the sacrifices of the central sanctuary, they could assist the priests, for example by helping to skin the animal and cut it up. **Sabbaths:** The reason for the plural was not only because there were many Saturdays in a year, but other days as well could be called a "Sabbath." For example, the eighth day of the Feast of Tabernacles was considered a Sabbath no matter what day of the week it was (Lev. 23:39). **New Moons:** This referred to the first day of every month, otherwise known as the Feast of Trumpets (Num.

28:11-15). **set feasts:** These would be Passover and Unleavened Bread (Lev. 23:4-8), the Feast of Weeks or Pentecost (Lev. 23:9-22), and the Feast of Tabernacles (Lev. 23:33-43).

23:32 **tabernacle of meeting:** At this point the temple had not yet been built, so David's regulations for the Levites pertained to their service in the intermediate tabernacles at Gibeon and Mt. Zion. **holy place:** This referred to the outer room of the tabernacle as opposed to the Most Holy Place, to which only the high priest had access.

24:1 In order for the priests to serve in rotation and have time off from their duties, they were assigned to shifts or **divisions**. For this rotation, David divided the priests by their lines of descent from Aaron (see v. 3).

24:2 **Nadab and Abihu died:** This referred to the incident in which these two sons of Aaron incurred the wrath of God by offering up incense kindled with improper fire, that is, fire that did not originate from God (Lev. 9:23-10:2).

24:3 The **Ahimelech** here was the son of Abiathar (see v. 6), the young priest of Nob who had joined David in the wilderness many years before (1 Sam. 22:20). There is not a complete genealogy of Abiathar in the OT, but it is clear from this passage that his ancestry was from Aaron through **Ithamar**.

24:4, 5 When the descendants of the two lines were identified there were **sixteen** family divisions from Eleazar and **only eight** from Ithamar. This complicated the process of dividing the service assignments fairly. The solution was to assign the duties by casting lots. Evidently the priestly lines would each serve in turn, but the order of succession within each was determined **by lot**.

24:6 **Shemaiah . . . wrote them down:** In order to arrange the schedule for the priests' service and to keep it functioning properly, it was necessary that records be kept of all the names of the Levites by family and the shifts they were to fill in their rotation.

24:7 **first lot:** Since Eleazar and Ithamar are mentioned in that order in v. 6, it may be assumed that this list of names gives first someone from Eleazar, next someone from Ithamar, and so on alternately through the list.

24:10 This **Abijah** may be the ancestor of Zacharias, father of John the Baptist, who is named in Luke 1:5.

Levites

(Heb. *levi*) (23:26; Num. 3:9) Strong's #3881

The Levites were the descendants of Levi, one of the 12 sons of Jacob. The name is related to the verb *lavah* meaning "to join," implying that the Levites were "joined" to God (see Gen. 29:34). The tribe had three branches, named after the three sons of Levi: the Gershonites, the Kohathites, and the Merarites (Num. 3). At Mt. Sinai, God chose Aaron, Moses' brother and a Kohathite, to be the nation's high priest (Ex. 28:1). No one but a descendant of Aaron could serve as a priest, but the other branches of the Levites shared many of their privileges and responsibilities (Num. 18:2). Originally the non-priestly Levites helped care for the tabernacle (Num. 4), but when David began preparations for building the temple, he created new duties for these Levites, making them singers, gatekeepers, treasurers, and royal officials (24:1-26:19).

ninth to Jeshua, the tenth to Shecaniah, ¹²the eleventh to Eliashib, the twelfth to Jakim, ¹³the thirteenth to Huppah, the fourteenth to Jeshebeah, ¹⁴the fifteenth to Bilgah, the sixteenth to Immer, ¹⁵the seventeenth to Hezir, the eighteenth to ¹Happizzez, ¹⁶the nineteenth to Pethahiah, the twentieth to ²Jehezekel, ¹⁷the twenty-first to Jachin, the twenty-second to Gamul, ¹⁸the twenty-third to Delaiah, the twenty-fourth to Maaziah.

¹⁹This *was* the schedule of their service ⁶for coming into the house of the LORD according to their ordinance by the hand of Aaron their father, as the LORD God of Israel had commanded him.

Other Levites

²⁰And the rest of the sons of Levi: of the sons of Amram, ³Shubael; of the sons of Shubael, Jehdeiah. ²¹Concerning ¹Rehabiah, of the sons of Rehabiah, the first *was* Isshiah. ²²Of the Izharites, ⁴Shelomoth; of the sons of Shelomoth, Jahath. ²³Of the sons ⁵of ⁹Hebron, Jeriah ⁵*was* the first, Amariah the second, Jahaziel the third, and Jekameam the fourth. ²⁴Of the sons of Uzziel, Michah; of the sons of Michah, Shamir. ²⁵The brother of Michah, Isshiah; of the sons of Isshiah, Zechariah. ²⁶^hThe sons of Merari *were* Mahli and Mushi; the son of Jaaziah, Beno. ²⁷The sons of Merari by Jaaziah *were* Beno, Shoham, Zaccur, and Ibri. ²⁸Of Mahli: Eleazar, ⁱwho had no sons. ²⁹Of Kish: the son of Kish, Jerahmeel.

³⁰Also ^jthe sons of Mushi *were* Mahli, Eder, and Jerimoth. These *were* the sons of the Levites according to their fathers' houses.

³¹These also cast lots just as their brothers the sons of Aaron did, in the presence of King David, Zadok, Ahime-

15 ¹ LXX, Vg.
Aphses
16 ² MT Jehezekel
19 ^e 1 Chr. 9:25
20 ³ Shebuel, 1 Chr. 23:16
21 ^f 1 Chr. 23:17
22 ⁴ Shelomith, 1 Chr. 23:18
23 ^g 1 Chr. 23:19;
26:31 ⁵ Supplied from 23:19 (following some Heb. mss. and LXX mss.)
26 ^h Ex. 6:19; 1 Chr. 23:21
28 ⁱ 1 Chr. 23:22
30 ^j 1 Chr. 23:23

CHAPTER 25

1 ^a 1 Chr. 6:30, 33, 39, 44; 2 Chr. 5:12
2 ¹ Jesharelah, v. 14
2 ² Lit. at the hands of
3 ² 1 Chr. 16:41,
42 ³ Jizri, v. 11 ⁴ So with one Heb. ms., LXX mss. ⁵ Shimei is the sixth, v. 17
4 ⁶ Azarel, v. 18
7 Shubael, v. 20
8 Jeremoth, v. 22
5 ^c 1 Chr. 16:42
9 Increase his power or influence
6 ^d 1 Chr. 15:16
e 1 Chr. 15:19; 25:2
7 ^f 1 Chr. 23:5
8 ^g 2 Chr. 23:13

lech, and the heads of the fathers' houses of the priests and Levites. The chief fathers *did* just as their younger brethren.

The Musicians

25 Moreover David and the captains of the army separated for the service *some* of the sons of ^aAsaph, of Heman, and of Jeduthun, who *should* prophesy with harps, stringed instruments, and cymbals. And the number of the skilled men performing their service *was*: ²Of the sons of Asaph: Zaccur, Joseph, Nethaniah, and ¹Asharelah; the sons of Asaph *were* ²under the direction of Asaph, who prophesied according to the order of the king. ³Of ^bJeduthun, the sons of Jeduthun: Gedaliah, ³Zeri, Jeshiah, ⁴Shimei, Hashabiah, and Mattithiah, ⁵six, under the direction of their father Jeduthun, who prophesied with a harp to give thanks and to praise the LORD. ⁴Of Heman, the sons of Heman: Bukkiah, Mattaniah, ⁶Uzziel, ⁷Shebuel, ⁸Jerimoth, Hananiah, Hanani, Eliathah, Giddalti, Romamti-Ezer, Joshbekashah, Mallothi, Hothir, and Mahazioth. ⁵All these *were* the sons of Heman the king's seer in the words of God, to ⁹exalt his ^chorn. For God gave Heman fourteen sons and three daughters.

⁶All these *were* under the direction of their father for the music *in* the house of the LORD, with cymbals, stringed instruments, and ^dharps, for the service of the house of God. Asaph, Jeduthun, and Heman *were* ^eunder the authority of the king. ⁷So the ^fnumber of them, with their brethren who were instructed in the songs of the LORD, all who were skillful, *was* two hundred and eighty-eight.

⁸And they cast lots for their duty, the small as well as the great, ⁹the teacher with the student.

24:20, 21 sons of Levi: The non-priestly Levites also were divided by clan to determine their service rotation. The first division is Kohath, whose name does not appear but is implied in the mention of his son Amram. **Jehdeiah** and **Isshiah**, who were direct descendants of Moses (23:14–17), were omitted from the earlier list of Levites (23:16, 17).

24:22–24 The Izharites were Kohathites (see 23:12). **Hebron** was the third of the Kohathite clans (see 23:12). **Uzziel** was the last division of the Kohathites (see 23:12).

24:26 Founder of the entire clan that bears his name (see 23:6). **Merari** was the third son of Levi. **Jaaziah:** This descendant of Merari appears for the first time here.

24:31 To assure the fairness of the Levites' assignments, they were selected by their divisions through the casting of the sacred **lots** (see v. 5). **fathers . . . younger brethren:** There was no age discrimination in the work and shifts allocated to each. All served equally no matter what their age or status.

25:1 The involvement of **captains of the army** in the selection of Levitical musicians may at first appear strange. However in the conduct of God's battles against those who opposed His people, music was frequently an important element. **prophesy:** The role

of a prophet was not limited to prediction or proclamation in words. Any divinely authorized utterance or deed from a prophet was a form of prophesying. Vocal and instrumental music could be a kind of prophetic message, usually in the form of praise (see 1 Sam. 10:5, 6; 2 Kin. 3:15).

25:2 according to the order of the king: This underscored the leading role David took in the religious life of the nation (see 23:27). Even as king, David ordered that proper worship be given to the Lord.

25:5 Like Nathan (17:1) and Gad (21:9), **Heman** enjoyed a close relationship to David. **fourteen sons and three daughters:** The sons were accounted for in vv. 4, 13, 23–31. The daughters were not named but clearly participated along with their brothers in the public worship of God.

25:6 the authority of the king: Once more the chronicler insisted that even the religious life of the nation was under the king's supervision. Israel was a theocracy in which God was the ultimate King and therefore head over all aspects of national life. As God's son (17:13), the king not only oversaw civil affairs, but also the worship of the Lord, the true King of Israel.

25:8 small . . . great . . . teacher . . . student: The equality of all

⁹Now the first lot for Asaph came out for Joseph; the second for Gedaliah, him with his brethren and sons, twelve; ¹⁰the third for Zaccur, his sons and his brethren, twelve; ¹¹the fourth for ¹Jizri, his sons and his brethren, twelve; ¹²the fifth for Nathaniah, his sons and his brethren, twelve; ¹³the sixth for Bukkiah, his sons and his brethren, twelve; ¹⁴the seventh for ²Jesharelah, his sons and his brethren, twelve; ¹⁵the eighth for Jeshaiiah, his sons and his brethren, twelve; ¹⁶the ninth for Mattaniah, his sons and his brethren, twelve; ¹⁷the tenth for Shimei, his sons and his brethren, twelve; ¹⁸the eleventh for ³Azarel, his sons and his brethren, twelve; ¹⁹the twelfth for Hashabiah, his sons and his brethren, twelve; ²⁰the thirteenth for ⁴Shubael, his sons and his brethren, twelve; ²¹the fourteenth for Mattithiah, his sons and his brethren, twelve; ²²the fifteenth for ⁵Jeremoth, his sons and his brethren, twelve; ²³the sixteenth for Hananiah, his sons and his brethren, twelve; ²⁴the seventeenth for Joshbekashah, his sons and his brethren, twelve; ²⁵the eighteenth for Hanani, his sons and his brethren, twelve; ²⁶the nineteenth for Mallothi, his sons and his brethren, twelve; ²⁷the twentieth for Eliathah, his sons and his brethren, twelve; ²⁸the twenty-first for Hothir, his sons and his brethren, twelve; ²⁹the twenty-second for Giddalti, his sons and his brethren, twelve; ³⁰the twenty-third for Mahazith, his sons and his brethren, twelve; ³¹the twenty-fourth for Romamti-Ezer, his sons and his brethren, twelve.

The Gatekeepers

26 Concerning the divisions of the gatekeepers: of the Korahites, ¹Meshelemiah the son of ^aKore, of the sons of ²Asaph. ²And the sons of Meshelemiah were ^bZechariah the firstborn, Jediahel the second, Zebadiah the third, Jathniel the fourth, ³Elam the fifth, Jehohanan the sixth, Eliehoenai the seventh. ⁴Moreover the sons of ^cObed-Edom were Shemaiah the firstborn, Jehozabad

11 ¹ Zeri, v. 3
14 ² Asharelah, v. 2
18 ³ Uzziel, v. 4
20 ⁴ Shebuel, v. 4
22 ⁵ Jerimoth, v. 4

CHAPTER 26

1 ^a Ps. 42: title
1 Shelemiah, v. 14
2 Ebiasaph, 1 Chr. 6:37; 9:19
2 ^b 1 Chr. 9:21
4 ^c 1 Chr. 15:18, 21

8 ^d 1 Chr. 9:13
10 ^e 1 Chr. 16:38
13 ^f 1 Chr. 24:5, 31; 25:8
14 ³ Meshelemiah, v. 1
15 ⁴ Heb. asuppm
16 ^g 1 Kin. 10:5; 2 Chr. 9:4
17 ⁵ Heb. asuppm
18 ⁶ Probably a court or colonnade extending west of the temple
20 ^h 1 Chr. 9:26

the second, Joah the third, Sacar the fourth, Nethanel the fifth, ⁵Ammiel the sixth, Issachar the seventh, Peulthai the eighth; for God blessed him.

⁶Also to Shemaiah his son were sons born who governed their fathers' houses, because they *were* men of great ability. ⁷The sons of Shemaiah *were* Othni, Rephael, Obed, and Elzabad, whose brothers Elihu and Semachiah *were* able men.

⁸All these *were* of the sons of Obed-Edom, they and their sons and their brethren, ^dable men with strength for the work: sixty-two of Obed-Edom.

⁹And Meshelemiah had sons and brethren, eighteen able men.

¹⁰Also ^eHosah, of the children of Merari, had sons: Shimri the first (for *though* he was not the firstborn, his father made him the first), ¹¹Hilkiah the second, Tebaliah the third, Zechariah the fourth; all the sons and brethren of Hosah *were* thirteen.

¹²Among these *were* the divisions of the gatekeepers, among the chief men, *having* duties just like their brethren, to serve in the house of the LORD. ¹³And they ^fcast lots for each gate, the small as well as the great, according to their father's house. ¹⁴The lot for the East Gate fell to ³Shelemiah. Then they cast lots for his son Zechariah, a wise counselor, and his lot came out for the North Gate; ¹⁵to Obed-Edom the South Gate, and to his sons the ⁴storehouse. ¹⁶To Shuppim and Hosah *the lot came out* for the West Gate, with the Shallecheth Gate on the ^gascending highway—watchman opposite watchman. ¹⁷On the east *were* six Levites, on the north four each day, on the south four each day, and for the ⁵storehouse two by two. ¹⁸As for the ⁶Parbar on the west, *there were* four on the highway and two at the Parbar. ¹⁹These were the divisions of the gatekeepers among the sons of Korah and among the sons of Merari.

The Treasuries and Other Duties

²⁰Of the Levites, Ahijah *was* ^hover

these servants of God is seen in the equal distribution of their assignments, a principle that had determined the nature of the ministry of the priests as well (24:31).

26:1 There were four **divisions of the gatekeepers**, but they came from only two of the Levitical clans, Kohath and Merari.

26:2 In both 9:21 and here, **Zechariah** is the son of Meshelemiah. This means that the lists of 9:17–27 and 26:1–19 refer to the same time and circumstances.

26:4 This **Obed-Edom** was probably not the Obed-Edom of 13:14, but a gatekeeper, the son of Jeduthun (16:38).

26:6 The oldest son of Obed-Edom (v. 4), **Shemaiah**, gave rise to a subclan of gatekeepers whose total number is given in v. 8.

26:12 The foregoing list appears to have identified the head gate-

keepers only, that is, the **chief men**. Like their Levitical brethren in music (25:7) and the priests (24:31), these officials served right along with the four thousand others who made up the whole contingent of gatekeepers (23:5). They were not excused from such work because of their leadership positions.

26:14 The **East Gate** was the most important because it led straight into the main entrance of the temple (see 9:17, 18). It was therefore assigned to Shelemiah (or Meshelemiah, v. 1) himself. **North Gate:** This was the responsibility of the oldest son of Shelemiah.

26:15 South Gate: Obed-Edom was in charge of the gate itself, and **his sons** (vv. 4, 5) took charge of the **storehouse**. This was undoubtedly the same as the treasuries (v. 20).

26:20 house of God: This likely referred to the storage area where

the treasuries of the house of God and over the treasuries of the ⁱdedicated⁷ things. ²¹The sons of ^sLaadan, the descendants of the Gershonites of Laadan, heads of their fathers' *houses*, of Laadan the Gershonite: ⁹Jehieli. ²²The sons of Jehieli, Zetham and Joel his brother, *were* over the treasuries of the house of the LORD. ²³Of the ^jAmramites, the Izharites, the Hebronites, and the Uzzielites: ²⁴^kShebuel the son of Gershom, the son of Moses, *was* overseer of the treasuries. ²⁵And his brethren *were* Rehabiah his son, Jeshaiiah his son, Joram his son, Zichri his son, and ^lShelomith his son.

²⁶This Shelomith and his brethren *were* over all the treasuries of the dedicated things ^mwhich King David and the heads of fathers' *houses*, the captains over thousands and hundreds, and the captains of the army, had dedicated. ²⁷Some of the ¹spoils won in battles they dedicated to maintain the house of the LORD. ²⁸And all that Samuel ⁿthe seer, Saul the son of Kish, Abner the son of Ner, and Joab the son of Zeruiah had dedicated, every dedicated *thing*, was under the hand of Shelomith and his brethren.

²⁹Of the Izharites, Chenaniah and his sons ^operformed duties as ^pofficials and judges over Israel outside Jerusalem.

³⁰Of the Hebronites, ^qHashabiah and his brethren, one thousand seven hundred able men, had the oversight of Israel on the west side of the Jordan for all the business of the LORD, and in the service of the king. ³¹Among the Hebronites, ^rJerijah *was* head of the Hebronites ac-

²⁰ ⁱ 2 Sam. 8:11; 1 Chr. 26:22, 24, 26; 28:12; Ezra 2:69
⁷ *holy things*
²¹ ^s *Libni*, 1 Chr. 6:17 ⁹ *Jehiel*, 1 Chr. 23:8; 29:8
²³ / Ex. 6:18; Num. 3:19
²⁴ ^k 1 Chr. 23:16
²⁵ / 1 Chr. 23:18
²⁶ ^m 2 Sam. 8:11
²⁷ ¹ *plunder*
²⁸ ⁿ 1 Sam. 9:9
²⁹ ^o Neh. 11:16
^p 1 Chr. 23:4
³⁰ ^q 1 Chr. 27:17
³¹ ^r 1 Chr. 23:19

⁵ Josh. 21:39
³² ^t 2 Chr. 19:11

CHAPTER 27

² ^a 1 Chr. 11:11
⁴ ^t Heb. *Dodai*, usually spelled *Dodo*, 2 Sam. 23:9
⁵ ^b 1 Chr. 18:17
⁶ ^c 2 Sam. 23:20-23

cording to his genealogy of the fathers. In the fortieth year of the reign of David they were sought, and there were found among them capable men ^sat Jazer of Gilead. ³²And his brethren *were* two thousand seven hundred able men, heads of fathers' *houses*, whom King David made officials over the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, for every matter pertaining to God and the ^taffairs of the king.

The Military Divisions

27 And the children of Israel, according to their number, the heads of fathers' *houses*, the captains of thousands and hundreds and their officers, served the king in every matter of the *military* divisions. *These divisions* came in and went out month by month throughout all the months of the year, each division *having* twenty-four thousand.

²Over the first division for the first month *was* ^aJashobeam the son of Zabdiel, and in his division *were* twenty-four thousand; ³*he was* of the children of Perez, and the chief of all the captains of the army for the first month. ⁴Over the division of the second month *was* ¹Dodai an Ahohite, and of his division Mikloth also *was* the leader; in his division *were* twenty-four thousand. ⁵The third captain of the army for the third month *was* ^bBenaiah, the son of Jehoiada the priest, who was chief; in his division *were* twenty-four thousand. ⁶This was the Benaiah *who was* ^cmighty among the thirty, and was over the thirty; in his division *was* Ammizabad his son.

regular tabernacle or temple paraphernalia were kept at hand for the worship services (see 9:28, 29). **dedicated things:** The second storehouse would contain the items taken as spoils of war that were used exclusively for holy purposes. David had already obtained a great amount of these (vv. 26–28).

26:21–24 The Levites listed in vv. 21–23 were in charge of the regular storehouse (v. 22; see 23:8). **Shebuel** seems to have had general oversight of the regular storehouse. The Gershonites and other Kohathites of vv. 21–23 were under his direction.

26:25 The descendants of **Eliezer** became directors of the second storehouse, that of “the dedicated things” (v. 20). All the Levites who attended to the affairs of the tabernacle and temple treasuries traced their lineage back to Moses.

26:26 The **treasuries of the dedicated things** fell under **Shelomith**’s jurisdiction. These spoils of war were kept in storage until they could be used in the building and decoration of the temple (22:14; 29:2; 2 Chr. 5:1).

26:28 Showing the long-standing commitment of the nation to build and furnish the house of God, the chronicler listed leaders of the past who had **dedicated** spoils of war as readily as David had done.

26:30 This third Kohathite clan was responsible specifically for Israel on the west side of the Jordan.

26:31 Since Hashabiah directed the Hebronites on the west (v. 30), **Jerijah** took charge of those on the east. He must have been over Hashabiah as well because he is called here **head of the He-**

bronites. fortieth year: David reigned for 40 years (29:27), so these arrangements were completed in his very last year. **Jazer of Gilead:** This Levitical city (6:81) was located in the tribal territory of Gad, about seven miles west of Rabbah.

26:32 Reubenites . . . Gadites . . . half-tribe of Manasseh: These were the tribes of Israel who occupied the east side of the Jordan.

27:1 heads of fathers’ houses: This probably referred to tribal units, since the order appears to be in decreasing size through thousands and hundreds. **month by month:** The view that *fathers’ houses* meant *tribes* is strengthened by the fact that there were 12 divisions, one for each month. Apparently a professional standing army is being described here, one broken up into 12 corps that served a month at a time on a rotating basis. **twenty-four thousand:** The total available manpower throughout Israel would be 288,000.

27:2 A connection can be made here to the list of David’s mighty men, which is also headed by **Jashobeam** (11:11). He was one of “the three,” which meant he was regarded as unusually heroic.

27:4 Dodai’s son Eleazar was the second of the mighty men included in the first trio along with Jashobeam (11:12).

27:5 As the son of a priest, **Benaiah** was from the tribe of Levi. In the earlier list of mighty men he was celebrated for having killed a lion and a gigantic Egyptian (11:22, 23). Because of this kind of courage, he became part of the second group of “the three” (11:24). Later he was named commander of the entire Israelite army (1 Kin. 4:4). His son served with him (v. 6).

⁷The fourth *captain* for the fourth month was ^dAsahel the brother of Joab, and Zebadiah his son after him; in his division were twenty-four thousand. ⁸The fifth captain for the fifth month was ²Shamhuth the Izrahite; in his division were twenty-four thousand. ⁹The sixth *captain* for the sixth month was ^eIra the son of Ikesh the Tekoite; in his division were twenty-four thousand. ¹⁰The seventh *captain* for the seventh month was ^fHelez the Pelonite, of the children of Ephraim; in his division were twenty-four thousand. ¹¹The eighth *captain* for the eighth month was ^gSibbechai the Hushathite, of the Zarhites; in his division were twenty-four thousand. ¹²The ninth *captain* for the ninth month was ^hAbiezer the Anathothite, of the Benjamites; in his division were twenty-four thousand. ¹³The tenth *captain* for the tenth month was ⁱMaharai the Netophathite, of the Zarhites; in his division were twenty-four thousand. ¹⁴The eleventh *captain* for the eleventh month was ^jBenaiah the Pirathonite, of the children of Ephraim; in his division were twenty-four thousand. ¹⁵The twelfth *captain* for the twelfth month was ³Heldai the Netophathite, of Othniel; in his division were twenty-four thousand.

Leaders of Tribes

¹⁶Furthermore, over the tribes of Israel: the officer over the Reubenites was Eliezer the son of Zichri; over the Sime-

⁷ ^d 2 Sam. 23:24; 1 Chr. 11:26
⁸ ² *Shammah*, 2 Sam. 23:11, or *Shammoth*, 1 Chr. 11:27
⁹ ^e 1 Chr. 11:28
¹⁰ ^f 1 Chr. 11:27
¹¹ ^g 2 Sam. 21:18; 1 Chr. 11:29; 20:4
¹² ^h 1 Chr. 11:28
¹³ ⁱ 2 Sam. 23:28; 1 Chr. 11:30
¹⁴ ^j 1 Chr. 11:31
¹⁵ ³ *Heleb*, 2 Sam. 23:29, or *Heled*, 1 Chr. 11:30

¹⁷ ^k 1 Chr. 26:30
¹⁸ ^l 1 Sam. 16:6
²³ ^m (Deut. 6:3)
ⁿ Gen. 15:5; 22:17; 26:4; Ex. 32:13; Deut. 1:10
²⁴ ^o 2 Sam. 24:12-15; 1 Chr. 21:1-7

onites, Shephatiah the son of Maachah; ¹⁷over the Levites, ^kHashabiah the son of Kemuel; over the Aaronites, Zadok; ¹⁸over Judah, ^lElihu, one of David's brothers; over Issachar, Omri the son of Michael; ¹⁹over Zebulun, Ishmaiah the son of Obadiah; over Naphtali, Jerimoth the son of Azriel; ²⁰over the children of Ephraim, Hoshea the son of Azaziah; over the half-tribe of Manasseh, Joel the son of Pedaiiah; ²¹over the half-tribe of Manasseh in Gilead, Iddo the son of Zechariah; over Benjamin, Jaasiel the son of Abner; ²²over Dan, Azarel the son of Jeroham. These were the leaders of the tribes of Israel.

²³But David did not take the number of those twenty years old and under, because ^mthe LORD had said He would multiply Israel like the ⁿstars of the heavens. ²⁴Joab the son of Zeruiah began a census, but he did not finish, for ^owrath came upon Israel because of this census; nor was the number recorded in the account of the chronicles of King David.

Other State Officials

²⁵And Azmaveth the son of Adiel was over the king's treasuries; and Jehonathan the son of Uzziash was over the storehouses in the field, in the cities, in the villages, and in the fortresses. ²⁶Ezri the son of Chelub was over those who did the work of the field for tilling the ground. ²⁷And Shimei the Ramathite was over the vineyards, and Zabdi the Shiphmite was

27:7 David's nephew **Asahel** (see 2:15, 16) was among the 30 mighty men but did not achieve a position among "the three" (11:26). His son also served with him.

27:9 A **Tekoite** was a person from the village of Tekoa, some five or six miles southeast of Bethlehem. This would make Ira a member of the tribe of Judah. It is clear that even if the military divisions were made up along tribal lines, their commanders were often David's own fellow Judeans. This appears to be so for Jashobeam (v. 2), Asahel (v. 7), Shamhuth (v. 8), and now Ira.

27:10 **Helez**: The leadership of the army was not limited to Judeans (27:9), since Helez was an Ephraimite in such a position.

27:11 Since Husha was a Judean (4:4), **Sibbechai** also came from the tribe of Judah. **Zarhites** likely referred to descendants of Zerah, a son of Judah (2:4; see Num. 26:20). The present passage apparently placed the Hushathites in a position subsidiary to the Zarhites. In any case, Sibbechai was one of the 30 heroes, having distinguished himself by killing a Philistine giant (11:29; see 2 Sam. 21:18).

27:12 A Benjamite commander, **Abiezer** came from the Levitical town of Anathoth, just north of Jerusalem. He was also a member of the elite 30 (11:28).

27:13 Since Netophah was a village near Bethlehem, **Maharai** was still another of David's fellow tribesmen named as commander of a **division** and member of the valorous 30 (11:30).

27:14 Another Ephraimite, this **Benaiah** (see v. 5) came from Pirathon, five miles south of Samaria. Like the others he was one of the 30 mighty men (11:31).

27:15 Like Maharai (v. 13), this captain came from Netophah. Besides being one of the 30 (11:30), **Heldai** could claim descent from Israel's first judge, **Othniel**.

27:16 **officer**: The list that begins here (vv. 16–22) is clearly nonmilitary and tribal in nature. The description of these officers is much more political than the descriptions of the captains and officers of the military divisions (see v. 1).

27:18 **Elihu**: This brother of David is usually called Eliab (1 Sam. 16:6).

27:23 **take the number**: This ties in the previous list of tribes and leaders with David's ill-fated census near the end of his reign (v. 24; 21:1–17). So confident was David that his military might would be sufficient for any encounter, he omitted from his census all **those twenty years old and under**. Even so, the result of this census was over a million men (see 21:5), a multitude very much like **the stars of the heavens**—the words of God's promise to Abraham (see Gen. 12:2; 15:5).

27:24 Joab's count included all the tribes except for Levi and Benjamin (see 21:6). Although these two tribes are included in the present list (vv. 17, 21), nothing is said of their being counted. On the other hand, Asher and Gad, missing in this list (see vv. 16–22), must have been included in Joab's **census**.

27:25 As opposed to the "treasuries of the house of God" and the "treasuries of the dedicated things" (26:20), the **king's treasuries** were the royal storehouses. They contained the revenues of the state in the form of precious metals (29:3–5) and other goods and commodities gained through taxation, tribute, and other means (see 2 Chr. 9:13, 14). **storehouses**: These were regional collection facilities ranging no doubt from granaries to warehouses to places of safe deposit of valuables. According to the following list, their primary purpose was to store agricultural produce.

27:27 **vineyards**: This industry was in two divisions, one to grow the grapes and the other to make **wine**.

over the produce of the vineyards for the supply of wine. ²⁸Baal-Hanan the Gerderite was over the olive trees and the sycamore trees that *were* in the lowlands, and Joash *was* over the store of oil. ²⁹And Shitrai the Sharonite *was* over the herds that fed in Sharon, and Shaphat the son of Adlai was over the herds *that were* in the valleys. ³⁰Obil the Ishmaelite *was* over the camels, Jehdeiah the Meronothite *was* over the donkeys, ³¹and Jaziz the ^pHagrite *was* over the flocks. All these *were* the officials over King David's property.

³²Also Jehonathan, David's uncle, *was* a counselor, a wise man, and a ⁴scribe; and Jehiel the ⁵son of Hachmoni *was* with the king's sons. ³³^qAhithophel *was* the king's counselor, and ^rHushai the Archite *was* the king's companion. ³⁴After Ahithophel *was* Jehoiada the son of Benaiah, then ^sAbiathar. And the general of the king's army *was* ^tJoab.

Solomon Instructed to Build the Temple

28 Now David assembled at Jerusalem all ^athe leaders of Israel: the officers of the tribes and ^bthe captains of the divisions who served the king, the captains over thousands and captains over hundreds, and ^cthe stewards over all the substance and ^lpossessions of the king and of his sons, with the officials, the valiant men, and all ^dthe mighty men of valor.

²Then King David rose to his feet and said, "Hear me, my brethren and my people: ^eI *had* it in my heart to build a house of rest for the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and for ^fthe footstool of our

31 ^p 1 Chr. 5:10
32 ⁴ *secretary* ² Or Hachmoni
33 ^q 2 Sam. 15:12
^r 2 Sam. 15:32-37
34 ^s 1 Kin. 1:7
^t 1 Chr. 11:6

CHAPTER 28

1 ^a 1 Chr. 27:16
^b 1 Chr. 27:1,
² ^c 1 Chr. 27:25
^d 2 Sam. 23:8-39;
1 Chr. 11:10-47 ¹ Or livestock
2 ^e 2 Sam. 7:2 ^f Ps. 99:5; 132:7; [Is. 66:1]

3 ^g 2 Sam. 7:5, 13;
1 Kin. 5:3 ^h [1 Chr. 17:4; 22:8]
4 ⁱ 1 Sam. 16:6-13
/ Gen. 49:8-10;
1 Chr. 5:2; Ps.
60:7 ^k 1 Sam. 16:1
^l 1 Sam. 13:14; 16:12,
13; Acts 13:22
5 ^m 1 Chr. 31:9;
14:3-7; 23:1 ⁿ 1 Chr.
22:9; 29:1
6 ^o 2 Sam. 7:13, 14;
1 Kin. 6:38; 1 Chr.
22:9, 10; 2 Chr.
1:9; 6:2
7 ^p 1 Chr. 22:13
9 ^q [1 Sam. 12:24];
Jer. 9:24; Hos. 4:1;
[John 17:3] ^r 2 Kin.
20:3 ^s [1 Sam. 16:7;
1 Kin. 8:39; 1 Chr.
29:17]; Jer. 11:20;
17:10; 20:12; Rev.
2:23 ^t 2 Chr. 15:2;
[Jer. 29:13] ^u Deut.
31:17
10 ^v 1 Chr. 22:13;
28:6

God, and had made preparations to build it. ³But God said to me, ^g'You shall not build a house for My name, because you *have been* a man of war and have shed ^hblood.' ⁴However the LORD God of Israel ⁱchose me above all the house of my father to be king over Israel forever, for He has chosen ^jJudah *to be* the ruler. And of the house of Judah, ^kthe house of my father, and ^lamong the sons of my father, He was pleased with me to make *me* king over all Israel. ⁵^mAnd of all my sons (for the LORD has given me many sons) ⁿHe has chosen my son Solomon to sit on the throne of the kingdom of the LORD over Israel. ⁶Now He said to me, 'It is ^oyour son Solomon *who* shall build My house and My courts; for I have chosen him *to be* My son, and I will be his Father. ⁷Moreover I will establish his kingdom forever, ^pif he is steadfast to observe My commandments and My judgments, as it is this day.' ⁸Now therefore, in the sight of all Israel, the assembly of the LORD, and in the hearing of our God, be careful to seek out all the commandments of the LORD your God, that you may possess this good land, and leave it as an inheritance for your children after you forever.

⁹"As for you, my son Solomon, ^qknow the God of your father, and serve Him ^rwith a loyal heart and with a willing mind; for ^sthe LORD searches all hearts and understands all the intent of the thoughts. ^tIf you seek Him, He will be found by you; but if you forsake Him, He will ^ucast you off forever. ¹⁰Consider now, ^vfor the LORD has chosen you to build a house for the sanctuary; be strong, and do it."

27:29 A fertile plain between Israelite and Philistine territory, **Sharon** was ideal for grazing cattle and sheep. It is appropriate that someone from Sharon, who knew the land and all its seasonal changes, should be in charge of the livestock of that region.

27:30 Inhabitants of the desert were at home with the breeding and use of camels (Gen. 37:25), so naturally an **Ishmaelite** would be in charge of such animals.

27:31 Since there was no essential difference between the king and his state, the **property** of the king consisted of the assets of the nation.

27:34 **Jehoiada the son of Benaiah**: In the list of military officers there was also a "Benaiah who was a son of Jehoiada" (see v. 5). This is probably an example of the custom in which a man is named after his grandfather. The counselor Jehoiada was probably the grandson of Jehoiada the priest and son of the famous warrior Benaiah (v. 5). **Joab**: From the days of David's conquest of Jerusalem, Joab held the position of commander of the army of Israel (11:6), a post he kept until Solomon became king (1 Kin. 2:28–35).

28:1 These were the individuals of 27:1–34, plus others no doubt, who were **the leaders** of all the branches and extensions of Israel's government. The occasion was of such significance that a total assembly of dignitaries was essential.

28:2 The word **footstool** is a metaphor describing either the ark of the covenant or the tabernacle as the earthly base of God's activity. He sits on a throne in heaven, and His connection with the earth is

focused in his earthly dwelling place, the tent or the ark. Elsewhere, the whole earth is described as God's footstool (Is. 66:1).

28:5 The call to rule was not limited to David, but included his descendants (see 17:11). Since only one of his **sons** could reign in his place, a choice had to be made (see 14:3, 4), and God chose Solomon to succeed David as the king of Israel (22:9, 10; see 2 Sam. 12:24; 1 Kin. 1:13, 30).

28:6 **My son . . . his Father**: This remarkable statement not only shows that the Davidic kings enjoyed unparalleled access to the Lord as His adopted sons (see 17:3; Ps. 2:7), but it anticipates the absolute sonship of the Son of David, Jesus Christ (Acts 13:33; Heb. 1:5).

28:7 The conditional aspect of the covenant with David and his dynasty is real, not hypothetical. Not one of the kings, including David, was able to **observe the commandments and judgments** perfectly. Therefore they were unable in themselves to reign forever or even set the stage for an everlasting rule. But One would come who would be able to do so and who would fulfill the covenant perfectly. This One was Jesus, the Son of David (see Matt. 5:7; 21:9).

28:9 True service of God is more than rational and intellectual. It requires a commitment of the emotions as well. This was precisely where Solomon failed. Even though he had great wisdom (2 Chr. 1:12; 9:3, 22, 23), he allowed his **heart** to turn aside from God because he loved foreign women (1 Kin. 11:1–4). Loyalty of heart is essential for faithful, effective service.

¹¹Then David gave his son Solomon ^wthe plans for the vestibule, its houses, its treasuries, its upper chambers, its inner chambers, and the place of the mercy seat; ¹²and the ^xplans for all that he had by the Spirit, of the courts of the house of the LORD, of all the chambers all around, ^yof the treasuries of the house of God, and of the treasuries for the dedicated things; ¹³also for the division of the priests and the ^zLevites, for all the work of the service of the house of the LORD, and for all the articles of service in the house of the LORD. ¹⁴*He gave* gold by weight for *things* of gold, for all articles used in every kind of service; also *silver* for all articles used in every kind of service; ¹⁵the weight for the ^alampstands of gold, and their lamps of gold, by weight for each lampstand and its lamps; for the lampstands of silver by weight, for the lampstand and its lamps, according to the use of each lampstand. ¹⁶And by weight *he gave* gold for the tables of the showbread, for each ^btable, and silver for the tables of silver; ¹⁷also pure gold for the forks, the basins, the pitchers of pure gold, and the golden bowls—*he gave gold* by weight for every bowl; and for the silver bowls, *silver* by weight for every bowl; ¹⁸and refined gold by weight for the ^caltar of incense, and for the construction of the chariot, that is, the gold ^dcherubim that spread *their wings* and overshadowed the ark of the covenant of the LORD. ¹⁹*“All this,” said David,* *“the LORD made me understand in writing, by His hand upon me, all the ²works of these plans.”*

²⁰And David said to his son Solomon,

¹¹ ^w 1 Kin. 6:3; 1 Chr. 28:19
¹² ^x Ex. 25:40; Heb. 8:5 ^y 1 Chr. 26:20, 28
¹³ ^z 1 Chr. 23:6
¹⁵ ^a Ex. 25:31-39; 1 Kin. 7:49
¹⁶ ^b 1 Kin. 7:48
¹⁸ ^c Ex. 30:1-10
^d Ex. 25:18-22; 1 Sam. 4:4; 1 Kin. 6:23
¹⁹ ^e Ex. 25:40; 1 Chr. 28:11, 12
² ^{details}

²⁰ ^f Deut. 31:6, 7; Josh. 1:6-9; 1 Chr. 22:13 ^g Josh. 1:5; Heb. 13:5
²¹ ^h 1 Chr. 24-26
ⁱ Ex. 35:25-35; 36:1, 2; 2 Chr. 2:13, 14

CHAPTER 29

¹ ^a 1 Chr. 28:5
^b 1 Kin. 3:7; 1 Chr. 22:5; Prov. 4:3 ¹ Lit. *palace*
² ^c Is. 54:11, 12; Rev. 21:18
⁴ ^d 1 Kin. 9:28

^f*“Be strong and of good courage, and do it; do not fear nor be dismayed, for the LORD God—my God—will be with you.* ^g*He will not leave you nor forsake you, until you have finished all the work for the service of the house of the LORD.* ^h*Here are* ⁱthe divisions of the priests and the Levites for all the service of the house of God; and ^jevery willing craftsman *will be* with you for all manner of workmanship, for every kind of service; also the leaders and all the people *will be* completely at your command.”

Offerings for Building the Temple

29 Furthermore King David said to all the assembly: “My son Solomon, whom alone God has ^achosen, is ^byoung and inexperienced; and the work is great, because the ¹temple is not for man but for the LORD God. ²Now for the house of my God I have prepared with all my might: gold for *things to be made of* gold, silver for *things of* silver, bronze for *things of* bronze, iron for *things of* iron, wood for *things of* wood, ^conyx stones, stones to be set, glistening stones of various colors, all kinds of precious stones, and marble slabs in abundance. ³Moreover, because I have set my affection on the house of my God, I have given to the house of my God, over and above all that I have prepared for the holy house, my own special treasure of gold and silver: ⁴three thousand talents of gold, of the gold of ^dOphir, and seven thousand talents of refined silver, to overlay the walls of the houses; ⁵the gold for *things of* gold and the silver for *things of* silver, and for all kinds of work *to be done* by the

28:11 The **plans** for the temple, as v. 12 makes clear, were not from David’s own creative imagination but from the Spirit of God. **vestibule:** This was a porch in front of the temple (see 2 Chr. 3:4). **treasuries:** These, also called storehouses (26:15, 17), included “treasuries of the house of God” and “treasuries of the dedicated things” (26:20). **upper chambers:** Besides the main temple building, there were rooms of all kinds attached to it to accommodate the priests, the Levites, and all the equipment and items they needed to carry out the temple worship (see Neh. 13:4, 5). Some of these chambers were built high on the outside of the temple walls (1 Kin. 6:6, 8). **the place of the mercy seat:** This was the Most Holy Place, the inner room that housed the ark of the covenant, the cover of which was known as the mercy seat (Ex. 25:17). **28:12, 13 by the Spirit:** Moses had received the plans for the tabernacle by direct revelation from God (Ex. 25:8, 9). David explained that he received the plans for the temple in the same way. David wanted it to be known that even the assignments he gave to the **priests and the Levites** (23:1—26:32) were revealed to him by God. **28:18 The chariot** was a way of referring to the cherubim who hovered over the ark with outstretched wings, symbolizing the holiness of God. Cherubim appear in the story of the expulsion of man and woman from the Garden of Eden (Gen. 3:24) and as guardians of the “throne” of God in the tabernacle (Ex. 25:18–20) and temple (2 Chr. 3:10–13). They overshadowed the mercy seat of the ark of the covenant, enhancing its glory and protecting its holiness.

28:19 David asserted that **all the works of these plans** existed in written form from the hand of the Lord. David himself may have been the scribe, for he said that God’s hand was upon him in the production of the plans. The detailed precision of the temple plans (vv. 11–18) attests to the clarity of the revelation and to its faithful recording by David. **28:20 Be strong and of good courage:** David’s charge to Solomon is very similar to the charge given to Joshua when Moses handed over the leadership of Israel to him. For Moses’ charge to Joshua, see Deut. 31:7, 8; for God’s charge to Joshua, see Josh. 1:6–9. **29:1** God Himself had **chosen** David out of all his brothers (28:4). Now He chose Solomon out of all of his brothers to succeed David on the throne (28:5). **the work is great:** Since the very plans and specifications had been revealed to David by God (28:19), David was fully aware of the significance of his charge to Solomon. God’s work could not be undertaken lightly. Solomon himself was aware of his limitations in this respect and of his need for supernatural direction (2 Chr. 1:10; 2:2–7). **29:3** Because David loved God, he loved the work of God. **my own special treasure:** As a testimony to his professed affection for the house of his God, David pledged generous gifts from his own resources. **29:5** This magnanimous gesture by David gave him the boldness to solicit a similar response from those under him. It is important to note that David asked the others to **consecrate** themselves,

hands of craftsmen. Who *then* is ^ewilling to ²consecrate himself this day to the LORD?"

⁶Then ^fthe leaders of the fathers' *houses*, leaders of the tribes of Israel, the captains of thousands and of hundreds, with ^gthe officers over the king's work, ^hoffered willingly. ⁷They gave for the work of the house of God five thousand talents and ten thousand darics of gold, ten thousand talents of silver, eighteen thousand talents of bronze, and one hundred thousand talents of iron. ⁸And whoever had *precious stones* gave *them* to the treasury of the house of the LORD, into the hand of ⁱJehiel³ the Gershonite. ⁹Then the people rejoiced, for they had offered willingly, because with a loyal heart they had ^joffered willingly to the LORD; and King David also rejoiced greatly.

David's Praise to God

¹⁰Therefore David blessed the LORD before all the assembly; and David said:

"Blessed are You, LORD God of Israel,
our Father, forever and ever.
¹¹ ^kYours, O LORD, *is* the greatness,
The power and the glory,
The victory and the majesty;
For all *that is* in heaven and in earth
is Yours;
Yours *is* the kingdom, O LORD,
And You are exalted as head over all.
¹² ^lBoth riches and honor *come* from
You,
And You reign over all.

⁵ ^e 2 Chr. 29:31;
[2 Cor. 8:5, 12] ² Lit.
fill his hand
⁶ ^f 1 Chr. 27:1; 28:1
^g 1 Chr. 27:25-31
^h Ex. 35:21-35
⁸ ⁱ 1 Chr. 23:8
³ Possibly the same
as *Jehieli*, 1 Chr.
26:21, 22
⁹ ^j Ex. 25:2; 1 Kin.
8:61; 2 Cor. 9:7
¹¹ ^k Matt. 6:13;
1 Tim. 1:17; Rev. 5:13
¹² ^l Rom. 11:36

¹⁴ ⁴ Lit. *of Your
hand*
¹⁵ ^m Lev. 25:23;
Ps. 39:12; Heb.
11:13, 14; 1 Pet.
2:11 ⁿ Job 14:2; Ps.
90:9 ⁵ *sojourners*,
temporary
residents
⁶ *transients*,
temporary
residents in
an even more
temporary sense
¹⁷ ^o [1 Sam. 16:7;
1 Chr. 28:9] ^p Prov.
11:20
¹⁹ ^q [1 Chr. 28:9];
Ps. 72:1

In Your hand *is* power and might;
In Your hand *it is* to make great
And to give strength to all.

¹³ "Now therefore, our God,
We thank You
And praise Your glorious name.
¹⁴ But who *am* I, and who *are* my
people,
That we should be able to offer so
willingly as this?
For all things *come* from You,
And ⁴ of Your own we have given
You.
¹⁵ For ^m we *are* ⁵ aliens and ⁶ pilgrims
before You,
As *were* all our fathers;
ⁿ Our days on earth *are* as a shadow,
And without hope.

¹⁶ "O LORD our God, all this abundance
that we have prepared to build You a
house for Your holy name is from Your
hand, and *is* all Your own. ¹⁷ I know also,
my God, that You ^o test the heart and
^p have pleasure in uprightness. As for
me, in the uprightness of my heart I have
willingly offered all these *things*; and
now with joy I have seen Your people,
who are present here to offer willingly
to You. ¹⁸ O LORD God of Abraham, Isaac,
and Israel, our fathers, keep this forever
in the intent of the thoughts of the heart
of Your people, and fix their heart toward
You. ¹⁹ And ^q give my son Solomon a loyal
heart to keep Your commandments and
Your testimonies and Your statutes, to do

not their treasures. David knew that those who first consecrated themselves to God would have no difficulty in being generous to the work of God.

29:7 five thousand talents: About 190 tons. **ten thousand darics:** About 185 pounds of gold. **eighteen thousand talents of bronze:** This was equivalent to about 675 tons. **one hundred thousand talents of iron:** This was approximately 3,750 tons.

29:8 These **precious stones** provided the adornments worn on the shoulders and breastplate of the high priest (Ex. 28:9–12, 17–21).

29:9 loyal heart: The Hebrew is literally "with a fullness of heart." This parallels the word **willingly**, and the two words together suggest that coercion played no part in the offering.

29:10 David blessed the LORD: Upon the completion of the offerings, David offered praise, using a song no doubt composed especially for this occasion (vv. 10–12), followed by a prayer of confession and petition.

29:11 The purpose of the temple was to exalt the **LORD** and to acknowledge the universality of His **kingdom**. David modeled before the people the worship of the living God. It typically starts with praise for God's eternity, His complete control over the universe, and His great power. He is the glorious Master over all (see Ps. 134:3).

29:12–14 David confessed that the **riches and honor** he enjoyed had come from God's generosity. The offerings he and his people had just made were possible only because God first had given to them. **able to offer so willingly:** Not only the ability to give, but the willingness to give, is a gift of God (see 2 Cor. 9:7, 8).

29:15 aliens and pilgrims: David asserts that life on earth is transitory and even nomadic. Only when a person becomes conscious

of his or her place within the care and blessing of a sovereign God does life become more than a **shadow**. Suddenly the **hope** of a future with God illuminates that person's journey on this earth (see Heb. 11:13–16; 13:14).

29:17 If people truly can give nothing of value to God, why does He ask His people to give? David answers this question. God enjoys a person's **uprightness** or righteousness. With gifts, offerings, and sacrifices, a person tangibly demonstrates not only gratitude to God, but trust in Him (see 1 Sam. 15:22). A righteous life always produces a generous spirit. For this reason, David could proclaim that his giving was only out of the uprightness of his heart. Moreover, his **joy** was heightened all the more when he saw that his people also understood this principle of true giving.

29:18 This formula **LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel** was associated with God's covenantal promises to the Israelites (see Ex. 3:6, 15; 6:3, 4; Deut. 6:10). With this name of God, David was petitioning God to keep His people always in covenant fellowship with Himself.

29:19 In his prayer, David used the language of the covenant—**commandments, testimonies, and statutes** (see Deut. 6:1, 2, 20; 8:11; 11:1). Unlike v. 18, David uses this language not as much for the nation as a whole as for his son Solomon. God had already made a covenant with David (17:7–14) and promised to renew it with his descendants. As with giving (see v. 14), zeal for faithfulness to God's covenant must also come from God Himself (v. 14). Therefore, David prayed that God would give Solomon a **loyal heart** to be obedient. In Solomon's case, David's particular concern was that his son would keep his pledge **to build the temple**.

all *these things*, and to build the ⁷temple for which ^rI have made provision.”

²⁰Then David said to all the assembly, “Now bless the LORD your God.” So all the assembly blessed the LORD God of their fathers, and bowed their heads and prostrated themselves before the LORD and the king.

Solomon Anointed King

²¹And they made sacrifices to the LORD and offered burnt offerings to the LORD on the next day: a thousand bulls, a thousand rams, a thousand lambs, with their drink offerings, and ^ssacrifices in abundance for all Israel. ²²So they ate and drank before the LORD with great gladness on that day. And they made Solomon the son of David king the second time, and ^tanointed *him* before the LORD *to be* the leader, and Zadok *to be* priest. ²³Then Solomon sat on the throne of the LORD as king instead of David his father, and prospered; and all Israel obeyed him.

19 ^r 1 Chr. 29:1, 2
⁷ Lit. *palace*
21 ^s 1 Kin. 8:62, 63
22 ^r 1 Kin. 1:32-35,
39; 1 Chr. 23:1

24 ^w Eccl. 8:2 ⁸ Lit.
gave the hand
25 ^r 1 Kin. 3:13;
2 Chr. 1:12; Eccl. 2:9
27 ^w 2 Sam. 5:4;
1 Kin. 2:11 ^x 2 Sam.
5:5
28 ^y Gen. 25:8
^z 1 Chr. 23:1
29 ⁹ Lit. *words*
30 ^a Dan. 2:21;
4:23, 25

²⁴All the leaders and the mighty men, and also all the sons of King David, ^usubmitted ⁸ themselves to King Solomon. ²⁵So the LORD exalted Solomon exceedingly in the sight of all Israel, and ^vbestowed on him *such* royal majesty as had not been on any king before him in Israel.

The Close of David’s Reign

²⁶Thus David the son of Jesse reigned over all Israel. ²⁷^wAnd the period that he reigned over Israel *was* forty years; ^xseven years he reigned in Hebron, and thirty-three *years* he reigned in Jerusalem. ²⁸So he ^ydied in a good old age, ^zfull of days and riches and honor; and Solomon his son reigned in his place. ²⁹Now the acts of King David, first and last, indeed they *are* written in the ⁹book of Samuel the seer, in the book of Nathan the prophet, and in the book of Gad the seer, ³⁰with all his reign and his might, ^aand the events that happened to him, to Israel, and to all the kingdoms of the lands.

29:22 the second time: This unusual phrase can only refer to the ratification of Solomon’s kingship, not to its original establishment. David had appointed his son to be king at least two years earlier (see 23:1), an appointment that made Solomon a coregent rather than a true king, since he ruled alongside his father David. **Zadok . . . priest:** Zadok had remained loyal to David and Solomon. But Abiathar defected to Adonijah, David’s other son who attempted to overthrow Solomon’s succession (see 1 Kin. 1:1–8). **29:23** Once more the chronicler ties the kingship of David and that of God closely together. As God’s son (see 17:13), Solomon would sit on the throne as God’s representative. In that sense, the royal throne was also **the throne of the LORD** (see also v. 20). Eventually, Jesus as the Son of David and the Son of God would sit on that throne and reign forever (see Luke 1:32).

29:25 any king before him: Obviously this included only Saul and David, but it is still a remarkable statement in light of David’s widely recognized power and magnificence (11:9; 14:2; 18:1–13; 29:28). **29:28** In comparison to the patriarchs and even to such men as Eli and Samuel, David’s 70 years seem short. However, in his time this was a **good old age**. Moses used it as the standard for reasonable longevity (see Ps. 90:10). **29:29** Here the chronicler revealed three sources he used in writing, and the reader interested in more information about **the acts of King David** is referred to those books. This note shows that the author of Chronicles did not invent the account or depend on oral tradition. Instead the chronicler cited texts available in his day.



THE SECOND BOOK OF THE CHRONICLES

WHEN IT WAS FIRST WRITTEN, 2 Chronicles brought a ray of hope to a people desperately in need of encouragement. The Israelite community, reduced to a tiny minority in exile among the Babylonians, was struggling to understand its place. Had God's promises to Abraham and David been revoked because of the nation's sins? Was there any hope of reviving David's dynasty? Could Judaism survive without the temple? Second Chronicles addressed questions like these. Its answers came in a historical review of God's faithfulness to the Israelites. Although the nation had steadily declined over the centuries, God had always been faithful to those who remained true to Him. The good that God had done in the past would be the pattern for His future acts. God would keep His glorious promises to the Israelites.

Author and Composition First and 2 Chronicles were at first a single book (see Introduction to 1 Chronicles). The book itself does not state who wrote it, but the overall consistency of viewpoint and style indicates that it was probably the work of one person. Most commentators refer to this person as the "chronicler." One Jewish tradition identifies him as Ezra (c. 460–430 B.C.) because Chronicles and Ezra share common themes like extensive lists, the Levites, and the temple.

The chronicler had access to many official documents, which he often mentions by name. These include (1) the book of the kings of Israel and Judah (27:7; 35:27; 36:8); (2) the book of the kings of Judah and Israel (16:11; 25:26; 28:26; 32:32); (3) the book of the kings of Israel (20:34; 33:18); (4) the annals (commentary) of the book of the kings (24:27); (5) the book of Nathan, the prophecy of Ahijah, and the visions of Iddo (9:29); (6) the history of Shemaiah (12:15); (7) the annals of Iddo (13:22); (8) the writings of the prophet Isaiah (26:22); (9) the sayings of Hozai (33:19); and (10) the Laments (35:25). The chronicler also cites the canonical books of 1 and 2 Kings.

Purpose The details of the history of Israel and Judah in 2 Chronicles communicate the great message of redemption—particularly God's blessing on David and his successors. First Chronicles focuses on the Davidic covenant during David's time, and 2 Chronicles continues that theme in the period after David's death. Even though 2 Chronicles relates the experiences of Solomon and his successors, it continues to emphasize God's promise of an everlasting dynasty to David. Successors to David came and went. Some were true to the requirements of that covenant—they "walked in the former ways of [their] father David" (17:3)—and others were not. But God's commitment to the household of David continued throughout, even after the exile to Babylon.

Because of this emphasis on covenant, 2 Chronicles makes frequent mention of priests, Levites, the temple, and other elements of Israel's religious life. It tells how Solomon's temple was built and furnished (2:1—8:16) and includes a thorough description of the temple and its ministry (20:5–13, 24–30; 23:12–21; 24:4–14; 29:3—31:21; 34:3—35:19).

The centrality of the Davidic covenant also explains why 2 Chronicles devotes more attention to Judah than to Israel. Ever since the division into southern and northern kingdoms (10:16–19; see 1 Kin. 11:9–13), Judah had become the inheritors of God's promises to David. Though David's successors ruled only the smaller kingdom of



Tablet of Asherah, a Canaanite goddess. King Asa of Judah commanded that figurines, as well as foreign altars, high places, and sacred stones be destroyed (2 Chr. 14:3–5).

Kim Walton, courtesy of the Louvre

Judah, God had remained faithful to His unconditional covenant with David. Judah was the nucleus through which God would accomplish His work of redemption.

CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

The temple in 2 Chronicles is spotlighted in chapters 2 and 7. It suggests the incarnation of Jesus. Although the temple is built to be God's dwelling place on earth, Solomon realizes that no manmade building can house the God of the universe: "But will God indeed dwell with men on the earth?" (6:18). This verse touches on the truth—Solomon knows that God could willingly dwell in the temple, but beyond that He would come in a much

more glorious way. Solomon's words anticipate Jesus' arrival as Immanuel, "God with us" (Matt. 1:23). As beautiful as the temple is, when Jesus later walks inside its walls, He says of Himself, "In this place there is One greater than the temple" (Matt. 12:6). Jesus also likens His body to the temple (John 2:19). In fact, according to the Book of Revelation, at the end of time Jesus, the Lamb of God, will replace the need for an earthly temple (Rev. 21:22).

1010 B.C.
David's reign begins in Hebron

970 B.C.
David dies and Solomon becomes king

967 B.C.
Solomon begins construction on the temple

930 B.C.
Solomon dies and the kingdom divides

910 B.C.
Asa becomes king in Judah

872 B.C.
Jehoshaphat becomes king in Judah

755 B.C.
Isaiah begins to prophesy in Judah

722 B.C.
Israel is taken captive by the Assyrians

624 B.C.
The Book of the Law is found in Jerusalem

586 B.C.
Judah is taken captive by the Babylonians

2 CHRONICLES OUTLINE

- I. The reign of Solomon 1:1—9:31
 - A. Solomon's inauguration 1:1–17
 - B. Solomon's temple 2:1—7:22
 - C. Solomon's kingdom 8:1—9:31
- II. The kingdom of Judah 10:1—36:23
 - A. The division of the kingdom 10:1—11:23
 - B. The rulers of Judah 12:1—36:14
 - C. The Exile 36:15–23

Solomon Requests Wisdom

Now ^aSolomon the son of David was strengthened in his kingdom, and ^bthe LORD his God *was* with him and ^cexalted him exceedingly.

²And Solomon spoke to all Israel, to ^dthe captains of thousands and of hundreds, to the judges, and to every leader in all Israel, the heads of the fathers' houses. ³Then Solomon, and all the assembly with him, went to ¹the high place that *was* at ^eGibeon; for the tabernacle of meeting with God was there, which Moses the servant of the LORD had ^fmade in the wilderness. ⁴But David had brought up the ark of God from Kirjath Jearim to *the place* David had prepared for it, for he had pitched a tent for it at Jerusalem. ⁵Now ^hthe bronze altar that ⁱBezalel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, had made, ²he put before the tabernacle of the LORD; Solomon and the assembly sought Him *there*. ⁶And Solomon went up there to the bronze altar before the LORD, which *was* at the tabernacle of meeting, and ^joffered a thousand burnt offerings on it.

⁷^kOn that night God appeared to Solomon, and said to him, "Ask! What shall I give you?"

⁸And Solomon said to God: "You have shown great ^lmercy to David my father, and have made me ^mking in his place. ⁹Now, O LORD God, let Your promise to David my father be established, ⁿfor You have made me king over a people like the ^odust of the earth in multitude. ¹⁰^pNow

CHAPTER 1

¹ ^a 1 Kin. 2:46
^b Gen. 39:2 ^c 1 Chr. 29:25
² ^d 1 Chr. 27:1-34
³ ^e 1 Kin. 3:4; 1 Chr. 16:39; 21:29 ^f Ex. 25-27; 35:4-36:38
⁴ ^g Place for worship
⁵ ^h Ex. 25:10-22; 2 Sam. 6:2-17; 1 Chr. 15:25-16:1
⁶ ⁱ Ex. 27:1, 2; 38:1, 2 ^j Ex. 31:2 ^k Some authorities it was *there*
⁷ ^l 1 Kin. 3:4
⁸ ^m 1 Kin. 3:5-14; 9:2
⁹ ⁿ Ps. 18:50
¹⁰ ^p 1 Chr. 28:5
¹¹ ^q 2 Sam. 7:8-16; 1 Kin. 3:7, 8 ^r Gen. 13:16; Num. 23:10
¹² ^s 1 Kin. 3:9

⁹ Num. 27:17; Deut. 31:2
¹¹ ^r 1 Kin. 31:1-13
¹² ^s 1 Kin. 10:23; 1 Chr. 29:25; 2 Chr. 9:22; Eccl. 2:9
¹³ ^t Place for worship
¹⁴ ^u 1 Kin. 10:26; 2 Chr. 9:25
¹⁵ ^v 1 Kin. 10:27; 2 Chr. 9:27; Job 22:24
¹⁶ ^w 1 Kin. 10:28; 22:36; 2 Chr. 9:28

give me wisdom and knowledge, that I may ^qgo out and come in before this people; for who can judge this great people of Yours?"

¹¹^rThen God said to Solomon: "Because this was in your heart, and you have not asked riches or wealth or honor or the life of your enemies, nor have you asked long life—but have asked wisdom and knowledge for yourself, that you may judge My people over whom I have made you king—¹²wisdom and knowledge *are* granted to you; and I will give you riches and wealth and honor, such as ^snone of the kings have had who *were* before you, nor shall any after you have the like."

Solomon's Military and Economic Power

¹³So Solomon came to Jerusalem from ³the high place that *was* at Gibeon, from before the tabernacle of meeting, and reigned over Israel. ¹⁴^tAnd Solomon gathered chariots and horsemen; he had one thousand four hundred chariots and twelve thousand horsemen, whom he stationed in the chariot cities and with the king in Jerusalem. ¹⁵^uAlso the king made silver and gold as common in Jerusalem as stones, and he made cedars as abundant as the sycamores which *are* in the lowland. ¹⁶^vAnd Solomon had horses imported from Egypt and Keveh; the king's merchants bought them in Keveh at the *current* price. ¹⁷They also acquired and imported from Egypt a chariot for

1:1 exalted him exceedingly: The repetition here of the wording from 1 Chr. 29:25 shows how 1 and 2 Chronicles were originally one book, even though it is customary to print the two parts separately.

1:3 The term **high place** comes from the fact that many ancient worshippers used hills for their sacred rites, thinking that such places were good "meeting points" between heaven and earth. Over time, *high place* came to mean any worship center, whether it was on a hill or not. In the OT, the high places were usually associated with pagan, particularly Canaanite, religion, but there was nothing inherently evil about using a hilltop as a place of worship. Thus the patriarchs (Gen. 12:8; 22:2) and other worshippers of God offered their sacrifices on high places (1 Sam. 9:12; 1 Kin. 18:19, 36-38). The high place at Gibeon was the location of the Mosaic **tabernacle** after Saul destroyed Nob (1 Sam. 22:19). It seems that the Israelites moved the tabernacle to Nob after they had stopped using Shiloh as the religious center of Israel (1 Sam. 4:21, 22; Jer. 7:12). The tabernacle remained in Gibeon together with the great bronze altar throughout David's reign.

1:5 Bezalel was one of the two men chosen especially by God to build the tabernacle in the wilderness (Ex. 31:1-11). Aholiab was the other. The text here mentions Bezalel alone apparently because he was the master craftsman, while Aholiab was his assistant. **the assembly sought Him there:** This phrase is important because **Solomon** and the people, as a congregation, usually worshiped God at Gibeon.

1:6 went up: Solomon's worship at Gibeon affirmed the covenant that bound God and the Davidic dynasty together (1 Chr. 17:7-14) and showed that Solomon accepted the religious responsibilities of his office (v. 3).

1:9 Solomon knew about the Abrahamic covenant and God's promise to make Abraham's descendants like **the dust of the earth** (Gen. 13:16). Solomon believed that the promise had come to pass, and he was confident that God would fulfill His **promise to David** as well. This meant that he saw his own succession (1 Chr. 17:11) and the building of the temple as fulfillment of God's promises (1 Chr. 17:12, 13).

1:10 go out and come in: This figure of speech refers to the totality of Solomon's life. As king he would lead by example as well as by edict.

1:11, 12 Solomon's request for wisdom centered on God's **people** and how he could best serve them, not on his own gain. Once Solomon had demonstrated this spirit of servanthood, God granted many unsolicited blessings.

1:14 Solomon located his **chariots** in other **cities** besides Jerusalem, possibly in Hazor, Megiddo, and Gezer (1 Kin. 9:15, 19). The 1,400 chariots and twelve thousand horsemen here compare to four thousand stalls for horses and chariots and twelve thousand horsemen in 9:25. A chariot force of 1,400 units was a significant achievement for Israel, a nation located primarily in hilly terrain where chariots were of limited value.

1:16 Keveh was probably an ancient name for what later came to be known as Cilicia. This city was on the northeast Mediterranean coast, a region famous for horses. The **horses imported from Egypt** were larger horses bred in Nubia and used mainly for pulling chariots.

1:17 six hundred shekels of silver: It is often impossible to assign a price in a modern currency to the goods and services of the ancient world. But this verse suggests that a chariot cost as much as

six hundred *shekels* of silver, and a horse for one hundred and fifty; thus, ⁴through their agents, they exported them to all the kings of the Hittites and the kings of Syria.

Solomon Prepares to Build the Temple

2 Then Solomon ^adetermined to build a temple for the name of the LORD, and a royal house for himself. ^{2b}Solomon selected seventy thousand men to bear burdens, eighty thousand to quarry *stone* in the mountains, and three thousand six hundred to oversee them.

³Then Solomon sent to ¹Hiram king of Tyre, saying:

“As you have dealt with David my father, and sent him cedars to build himself a house to dwell in, so deal with me. ⁴Behold, ^dI am building a temple for the name of the LORD my God, to dedicate it to Him, ^eto burn before Him ²sweet incense, for ^fthe continual showbread, for ^gthe burnt offerings morning and evening, on the ^hSabbaths, on the New Moons, and on the ³set feasts of the LORD our God. This is an ordinance forever to Israel.

⁵ And the temple which I build *will be* great, for ⁱour God is greater than all gods. ^{6j}But who is able to build Him a temple, since heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain Him? Who *am* I then, that I should build Him a temple, except to burn sacrifice before Him?

⁷ Therefore send me at once a man skillful to work in gold and silver, in bronze and iron, in purple and crimson and blue, who has skill to

17 ⁴ Lit. *by their hands*
CHAPTER 2
1 ^a 1 Kin. 5:5
2 ^b 1 Kin. 5:15, 16; 2 Chr. 2:18
3 ^c 1 Chr. 14:1
1 Heb. *Huram*; cf. 1 Kin. 5:1
4 ^d 2 Chr. 2:1 ^e Ex. 30:7 ^f Ex. 25:30; Lev. 24:8 ^g Ex. 29:38-42 ^h Num. 28:3, 9-11 ² Lit. *incense of spices*
3 ⁱ appointed
5 ^j Ps. 135:5; [1 Cor. 8:5, 6]
6 ^j 1 Kin. 8:27; 2 Chr. 6:18; Is. 66:1

7 ^k 1 Chr. 22:15
8 ^l 1 Kin. 5:6
9 ⁴ Lit. *house*
10 ^m 1 Kin. 5:11
11 ⁿ 1 Kin. 10:9; 2 Chr. 9:8
12 ^o 1 Kin. 5:7
^p Gen. 1; 2; Acts 4:24; 14:15; Rev. 10:6 ² Heb. *Huram*; cf. 1 Kin. 5:1
13 ⁶ *Hiram*, 1 Kin. 7:13 ⁷ Lit. *father*, 1 Kin. 7:13, 14
14 ^q 1 Kin. 7:13, 14

engrave with the skillful men who are with me in Judah and Jerusalem, ^kwhom David my father provided. ^{8l}Also send me cedar and cypress and algum logs from Lebanon, for I know that your servants have skill to cut timber in Lebanon; and indeed my servants *will be* with your servants, ⁹to prepare timber for me in abundance, for the ⁴temple which I am about to build *shall be* great and wonderful.

^{10 m}And indeed I will give to your servants, the woodsmen who cut timber, twenty thousand kors of ground wheat, twenty thousand kors of barley, twenty thousand baths of wine, and twenty thousand baths of oil.

¹¹Then Hiram king of Tyre answered in writing, which he sent to Solomon:

“Because the LORD loves His people, He has made you king over them.

^{12.5}Hiram also said:

“Blessed be the LORD God of Israel, ^pwho made heaven and earth, for He has given King David a wise son, endowed with prudence and understanding, who will build a temple for the LORD and a royal house for himself!

¹³ And now I have sent a skillful man, endowed with understanding, ⁶Huram my ⁷master *craftsman* ^{14q}(the son of a woman of the daughters of Dan, and his father was a man of Tyre), skilled to work in gold and silver, bronze and iron,

four horses. **they exported them:** Solomon had a thriving business in horses and chariots. Because Israel was on the route between Asia and Africa, such goods would go through Israel and become subject to Solomon's heavy import and export taxes. **Hittites** were the peoples of the ancient nation of Hatti in central Asia Minor. They reached the height of their power at about 1350–1300 **B.C.**, but were nearly exterminated by the Sea Peoples in about 1200 **B.C.** There were pockets of Hittites in Solomon's day, mainly north of Israel among the Syrians.

2:1 a royal house for himself: It was customary for a new king to build a palace as a physical and visible sign of his newly won sovereignty, though this usually was done right after a military conquest (see 1 Chr. 14:1, 2).

2:3 Hiram king of Tyre was the same Phoenician ruler who had provided men and materials for David's palace (1 Chr. 14:1).

2:5 Solomon's statement that **our God is greater than all gods** means that God is the only true God, not that He is the greatest one among many lesser ones. All pagan "gods" are actually imaginary.

2:6 Solomon could not **build** a dwelling place for God because God could never be contained within any physical structure. The

temple provided a place for God's people to go and offer sacrifices of worship to the Lord.

2:7, 8 The skillful men . . . with me refers to the ones David had already selected and organized for the purpose of building the temple (1 Chr. 22:15, 16). The chronicler emphasized David's intense interest in the temple and the elaborate steps he took to prepare for its building (1 Chr. 22:1–19). **Algum logs** probably refers to a kind of exotic tree imported from Ophir—south Arabia, perhaps Yemen.

2:10 The amount of **ground wheat** here is about 125,000 bushels or 3,750 tons. **Twenty thousand baths** is approximately 115,000 gallons.

2:12 Blessed be the LORD God of Israel: Most likely a polite salutation to Solomon rather than a sincere recognition of God as the one true God. **a wise son:** It is clear from his letter that Hiram knew a great deal about Solomon, including: (1) the background of Solomon's request for materials and workmen, (2) Solomon's selection by God to be king (v. 11), (3) Solomon's unusual wisdom, and (4) Solomon's call to build the temple. Apparently Hiram, David, and Solomon maintained close contact.

2:14 Hiram had an Israelite mother and a Phoenician **father**. Moses

stone and wood, purple and blue, fine linen and crimson, and to make any engraving and to accomplish any plan which may be given to him, with your skillful men and with the skillful men of my lord David your father.

¹⁵ Now therefore, the wheat, the barley, the oil, and the wine which ^vmy lord has spoken of, let him send to his servants. ^{16s} And we will cut wood from Lebanon, as much as you need; we will bring it to you in rafts by sea to ⁸Joppa, and you will carry it up to Jerusalem.

^{17t} Then Solomon numbered all the aliens who *were* in the land of Israel,

¹⁵ ^v 2 Chr. 2:10
¹⁶ ^s 1 Kin. 5:8, 9
⁸ Heb. *Japho*
¹⁷ ^t 1 Kin. 5:13;
 2 Chr. 8:7, 8

^v 1 Chr. 22:2
¹⁸ ^v 2 Chr. 2:2

CHAPTER 3

¹ ^a 1 Kin. 6:1 ^b Gen. 22:2-14 ^c 1 Chr. 21:18; 22:1 ¹ Lit. *He, following MT, Vg.; LXX the LORD; Tg. the Angel of the LORD*
² *Araunah*, 2 Sam. 24:16

after the census in which “David his father had numbered them; and there were found to be one hundred and fifty-three thousand six hundred. ¹⁸ And he made ^vseventy thousand of them bearers of burdens, eighty thousand stonemasons in the mountain, and three thousand six hundred overseers to make the people work.

Solomon Builds the Temple

3 Now ^aSolomon began to build the house of the LORD at ^bJerusalem on Mount Moriah, where ¹*the LORD* had appeared to his father David, at the place that David had prepared on the threshing floor of ^cOrnan² the Jebusite.

had warned the Israelites not to take spouses committed to pagan religions (Deut. 7:1–5).

2:16 Joppa, now known as Jaffa, was the only seaport on the Israelite Mediterranean coast between Dor on the north and Philistia to the south. Jonah sailed from Joppa to escape God’s call to Nineveh (Jon. 1:3). Though Hiram’s rafts helped transport the timber from Lebanon to Israel, the route from Joppa to **Jerusalem** was not so easy—it was a winding, steep ascent of nearly 40 miles.

2:17 Solomon’s policy of forced labor drafted **aliens** first into the hard work of carrying loads and quarrying stone (v. 18). The term suggests any persons living in Israel who were not native Israelites.

The census refers to David’s ill-advised count in the closing years of his reign (1 Chr. 21:1–5).

3:1 Mount Moriah was sacred and therefore an appropriate place for the temple not only because the **threshing floor of Ornan** was there (see 1 Chr. 21:18–30), but also because it was the “land of Moriah” to which Abraham took Isaac for sacrifice (Gen. 22:2). David had received explicit instructions from the Lord that the very site that he had purchased from Ornan, and where he had already built an altar, should be the location of the future temple (1 Chr. 21:18, 26). Mount Moriah is known today as the temple mount and the site of the Muslim Dome of the Rock. It is

Solomon’s Temple

Solomon’s temple was the first of three temples that Israel built in its long history. David wanted to build it, but as a man of war he was unqualified to build such a holy place. So with the plans that God gave David and David passed on to him, King Solomon built the house of God. As God had instructed, Solomon built it on Mount Moriah just north of the ancient City of David.

Solomon wanted to build a temple worthy of being the center of worship for the entire nation, so he used only the best craftsmen and materials. The materials included cedar and alnum logs, gold and silver, cut stone, and fine linen. Most of the temple’s beams, posts, walls, and doors were overlaid with gold, decorated with carvings of palm trees, garlands, and cherubim. The Most Holy Place alone was overlaid with 23 tons of fine gold. In this room two giant gold cherubim, with seven-and-a-half-foot wings overshadowed the ark of the covenant. A veil of crimson and fine linen separated the Most Holy Place from the holy place. The temple’s furnishings included ten lampstands of gold, ten tables, and one hundred bowls of gold. Only the most skilled craftsmen worked on these details. The temple was 60 cubits long and 20 cubits wide or 90 by 30 feet.



A third-century A.D. interpretation of Solomon’s temple from a wall painting at Dura-Europos

Z. Radovan/www.BibleLandPictures.com

It took seven years for Solomon’s workers to complete this grand building, and the finished structure dazzled all who saw it. Yet for all its beauty, Solomon knew that no manmade building could contain God, as heaven itself could not contain Him (6:18). The temple served mainly as a reminder of God’s covenant. To all who came and worshiped there, God held out His promised presence.

However, the temple was no guarantee of that presence. God had promised to live among the Israelites forever, and the temple was God’s so-called “dwelling place,” but for the Holy God to live among His people they had to remain faithful to Him. Unfortunately they did not remain faithful, and consequently the temple was looted and destroyed as were the second and third temples after it.

BIBLE TIMES & CULTURE NOTES

The Color Purple

Since dyes were made from vegetable sources or from shellfish, quality control was difficult. The completed colors were often impure and inexact. These problems were compounded by the fact that many dyes were closely guarded family recipes that were sometimes lost or changed. The most precious of ancient dyes was purple. In Ugarit, a city of the Canaanites, wool was often dyed this color. Phoenicia derived its name from the source of the dye. The word “Canaan” probably means “land of purple.” The dye itself was derived from the murex shellfish found in the Mediterranean Sea. Approximately 250,000 mollusks were required to make one ounce of the dye, which partly accounts for its great price. It was highly valued within the nation of Israel. The Lord prescribed the use of purple in several features of the tabernacle, such as the curtains (Ex. 26:1) and the screens (Ex. 27:16). It was also an essential part of the temple (2 Chr. 2:14).

Murex shell used for making purple dye

Dezidor/Wikimedia Commons, CC-BY 3.0

3 ^d 1 Kin. 6:2; 1 Chr. 28:11-19

The length *was* sixty cubits (by cubits according to the former measure) and the width twenty cubits. ⁴And the *e*vestibule that *was* in front of ³the sanctuary *was* twenty cubits long across the width of the house, and the height *was* ⁴one hundred and twenty. He overlaid the inside with pure gold. ⁵^fThe larger ⁵room he ^gpaneled with cypress which he overlaid with fine gold, and he carved palm trees and chainwork on it. ⁶And he decorated the house with precious stones for beauty, and the gold *was* gold from Parvaim. ⁷He also overlaid the house—the beams and doorposts, its walls and doors—with gold; and he carved cherubim on the walls.

⁸And he made the ^hMost Holy Place. Its length *was* according to the width of the house, twenty cubits, and its width twenty cubits. He overlaid it with six hundred talents of fine gold. ⁹The weight of the nails *was* fifty shekels of gold; and he overlaid the upper ⁱarea with gold. ¹⁰In the Most Holy Place he made two cherubim, fashioned by carving, and overlaid them with gold. ¹¹The wings of the cherubim *were* twenty cubits in *overall* length: one wing of the *one cherub* *was* five cubits, touching the wall of the room, and the other wing *was* five cubits, touching the wing of the other cherub; ¹²*one* wing of the other cherub *was* five cubits, touching the wall of the room, and the other wing *also was* five cubits, touching the wing of the other cherub. ¹³The wings of these cherubim spanned twenty cubits overall. They stood on their feet, and they faced inward. ¹⁴And he made the ^kveil of blue, purple, crimson, and fine linen, and wove cherubim into it.

¹⁵Also he made in front of the ⁶temple ^ltwo pillars ⁷thirty-five cubits ⁸high, and the capital that *was* on the top of each of

4 ^e 1 Kin. 6:3; 1 Chr. 28:11 ³ The holy place, the main room of the temple, 1 Kin. 6:3
⁴ So with MT, LXX, Vg.; Arab., some LXX mss., Syr. *twenty*
5 ^f 1 Kin. 6:17
9 ¹ Kin. 6:15; Jer. 22:14 ⁵ Lit. *house*
8 ^h Ex. 26:33; 1 Kin. 6:16
9 ¹ Chr. 28:11
10 ¹ Ex. 25:18-20; 1 Kin. 6:23-28
14 ^k Ex. 26:31; Matt. 27:51; Heb. 9:3
15 ^l 1 Kin. 7:15-20; Jer. 52:21 ⁶ Lit. *house* ⁷ *eighteen*, 1 Kin. 7:15; 2 Kin. 25:17; Jer. 52:21
⁸ Lit. *long*

a hill directly north of Mt. Zion, the location of David’s tabernacle (1 Chr. 15:1).

3:2 The **second day of the second month** fell in April of the modern calendar. Making arrangements for the building, amassing building materials, and clearing the site could easily have required four years.

3:3 The Israelites had two standard **cubits**, one about 17.4 inches long and the other about 20.4 inches. Probably **the former measure** mentioned here was the 17.4-inch cubit, making the temple **foundation** about 90 feet long and 30 feet wide. The Mosaic tabernacle was 45 feet long and 15 feet wide (Ex. 26:15–37).

3:5 The **larger room** was the holy place or “sanctuary” (1 Kin. 6:17).

3:8 The **Most Holy Place** was the inner sanctuary, where the ark of the covenant (1 Kin. 6:19) was kept. This room was cubical in shape, **twenty cubits** (30 ft.) on a side (see 1 Kin. 6:20 for the height). **Six hundred talents** is approximately 23 tons of **gold**.

3:9 **Gold** by itself is too soft to use for **nails**, so the nails mentioned here must have been decorative or else some other metal plated with gold. The weight **fifty shekels** (about 1.2 lbs.) implies that they were plated nails.

3:10 The **cherubim** that Solomon had fashioned for the Most Holy Place were not the ones carved into the walls of the holy place (see v. 7), but additional ones carved and plated with **gold** here in the Most Holy Place.

3:11–13 The **cherubim** stood side by side with outstretched wings **touching** in the middle and overshadowing the ark. Since each wing *was* **five cubits** long and the room *was* 20 cubits across, the cherubim’s wings spanned the entire width of the room. Facing **inward** meant that the cherubim were facing the veil and the holy place.

3:14 The **veil** was a heavy curtain between the holy place and the Most Holy Place. It shielded the ark and cherubim from view (see 5:9). Cherubim were woven into the fabric of the veil. The materials and colors used here—**blue, purple, crimson, and fine linen**—are the same as those of the veil of the tabernacle.

3:15 The **two pillars** in front were free-standing and did not support any part of the temple. **Thirty-five cubits** was about 53 feet, and with the **capital that was . . . five cubits**, the pillars were about 60 feet tall.

them was five cubits. ¹⁶He made wreaths of chainwork, as in the inner sanctuary, and put *them* on top of the pillars; and he made ^mone hundred pomegranates, and put *them* on the wreaths of chainwork. ¹⁷Then he ⁿset up the pillars before the temple, one on the right hand and the other on the left; he called the name of the one on the right hand ⁹Jachin, and the name of the one on the left ¹Boaz.

Furnishings of the Temple

4 Moreover he made ^aa bronze altar: twenty cubits was its length, twenty cubits its width, and ten cubits its height.

^{2b}Then he made the ¹Sea of cast bronze, ten cubits from one brim to the other; *it was* completely round. Its height was five cubits, and a line of thirty cubits measured its circumference. ^{3c}And under it *was* the likeness of oxen encircling it all around, ten to a cubit, all the way around the Sea. The oxen *were* cast in two rows, when it was cast. ⁴It stood on twelve ^doxen: three looking toward the north, three looking toward the west, three looking toward the south, and three looking toward the east; the Sea *was set* upon them, and all their back parts *pointed* inward. ⁵*It was* a handbreadth thick; and its brim was shaped like the brim of a cup, *like* a lily blossom. It contained ²three thousand baths.

⁶He also made ^eten lavers, and put five on the right side and five on the left, to

16 ^m 1 Kin. 7:20
17 ⁿ 1 Kin. 7:21 ⁹ Lit.
He Shall Establish
¹ Lit. *In It Is Strength*

CHAPTER 4

1 ^c Ex. 27:1, 2;
2 Kin. 16:14; Ezek.
43:13, 16
2 ^b Ex. 30:17-21;
1 Kin. 7:23-26
¹ Great laver or
basin
3 ^c 1 Kin. 7:24-26
4 ^d 1 Kin. 7:25
5 ² About 8,000
gallons; two
thousand, 1 Kin.
7:26
6 ^e 1 Kin. 7:38, 40

^f Ex. 30:19-21
³ Great basin
7 ⁹ 1 Kin. 7:49
^h Ex. 25:31; 1 Chr.
28:12, 19
8 ¹ 1 Kin. 7:48
/ 1 Chr. 28:17
9 ^k 1 Kin. 6:36
/ 2 Kin. 21:5
10 ^m 1 Kin. 7:39
11 ⁿ 1 Kin. 7:40-51
12 ^o 1 Kin. 7:41
13 ^p 1 Kin. 7:20
14 ^q 1 Kin. 7:27, 43
16 ^r 1 Kin. 7:45;
2 Chr. 2:13 ⁴ Lit.
father

wash in them; such things as they offered for the burnt offering they would wash in them, but the ³Sea *was* for the ^fpriests to wash in. ^{7g}And he made ten lampstands of gold ^haccording to their design, and set *them* in the temple, five on the right side and five on the left. ⁸ⁱHe also made ten tables, and placed *them* in the temple, five on the right side and five on the left. And he made one hundred ^jbowls of gold.

⁹Furthermore ^khe made the court of the priests, and the ^lgreat court and doors for the court; and he overlaid these doors with bronze. ^{10m}He set the Sea on the right side, toward the southeast.

¹¹Then ⁿHuram made the pots and the shovels and the bowls. So Huram finished doing the work that he was to do for King Solomon for the house of God: ¹²the two pillars and ^othe bowl-shaped capitals *that were* on top of the two pillars; the two networks covering the two bowl-shaped capitals which *were* on top of the pillars; ^{13p}four hundred pomegranates for the two networks (two rows of pomegranates for each network, to cover the two bowl-shaped capitals *that were* on the pillars); ¹⁴he also made ^qcarts and the lavers on the carts; ¹⁵one Sea and twelve oxen under it; ¹⁶also the pots, the shovels, the forks—and all their articles ^rHuram his ⁴master *craftsman* made of burnished bronze for King Solomon for the house of the LORD.

¹⁷In the plain of Jordan the king had

3:16 As in v. 5, **chainwork** appears to be a network of fruits and plants, as the presence of **pomegranates** indicates. First Kings expands the description (1 Kin. 7:17–20). There were seven wreaths of chainwork on each capital and two rows of pomegranates above the wreaths. The capitals seem to have been in the form of lilies four cubits high with a one-cubit width band at their base. The wreaths and strands of pomegranates were intertwined around the base. The **one hundred pomegranates** were one of four strands, two to each pillar, or 400 pomegranates in all.

3:17 The names **Jachin** and **Boaz** mean “He Establishes” and “In Him Is Strength.” Thus the two pillars were constant reminders of the presence and power of God.

4:1 The **bronze altar** was for burnt offerings in the courtyard of the temple.

4:2 The **Sea** was a receptacle for water corresponding to the much smaller bronze laver of the Mosaic tabernacle (Ex. 30:17–21). That laver provided water for the priests to wash their hands and feet in preparation for ministering at the altar. The Sea served the same purpose (see v. 6). It was huge—15 feet in diameter and 45 feet in **circumference**.

4:3 The **oxen** stood for strength and fertility. Other Bible passages use the ox’s horn to signify this (see 1 Sam. 2:10).

4:4 The **twelve oxen** were in addition to the ones engraved on the outside of the Sea, and like them they symbolized strength and productivity. Their number corresponds to the twelve tribes of Israel.

4:5 The Sea was very heavy even when empty. When filled with **three thousand baths** (about 27,000 gallons) of water, it would have weighed about 110 tons more.

4:6 The **ten lavers** were arranged in two rows of **five**, on the north and south sides of the Sea. According to 1 Kin. 7:38, each held 40 baths or about 230 gallons. They could accommodate large animals

such as oxen. The law of the **burnt offering** required that certain parts of the animal be washed in water before being placed on the altar (see Lev. 1:9, 13).

4:7 Whereas the wilderness tabernacle had only one lampstand, this temple had **ten** (see Ex. 25:31), five on the north side of the holy place and five on the south. They probably had the same form as the one in the tabernacle—a central stand with three branches extending from each side, making a total of seven lamps per unit (see Ex. 25:32, 37). They symbolized the light of God’s creation (Gen. 1:3–5) and the fact that God Himself is light (see John 8:12).

4:8 There had been only one **table** in the tabernacle (Ex. 25:23), but the temple had **ten**. They held the loaves of showbread (Ex. 25:30). **Bowls of gold**: The word for bowls here is derived from the Hebrew verb meaning “to sprinkle.” The priests used the bowls to hold liquids that were sprinkled.

4:9 There were areas in and about the temple that only the priests could enter. One of these was the area immediately surrounding it and enclosed by a separating wall, the **court of the priests**. The **great court** was an outer area where the people in general could go.

4:10 The **Sea** was placed to one side of the entrance to the temple, to the **southeast**. The temple faced east.

4:14 **Carts** were mobile stands designed as bases for the **ten lavers** referred to in v. 6. They were four cubits on a side and three cubits high, had four bronze wheels, and were covered on the sides by richly decorated panels (1 Kin. 7:27–37).

4:17 Many bronze products were made at a place in the Jordan valley about 35 miles north of the Dead Sea. Archaeologists have uncovered evidence of this work in an area where the **clay** is suitable for bronze casting.

them cast in clay molds, between Succoth and ⁵Zeredah. ¹⁸s And Solomon had all these articles made in such great abundance that the weight of the bronze was not determined.

¹⁹Thus ^aSolomon had all the furnishings made for the house of God: the altar of gold and the tables on which *was* ^uthe showbread; ²⁰the lampstands with their lamps of pure gold, to burn ^vin the prescribed manner in front of the inner sanctuary, ²¹with ^wthe flowers and the lamps and the wick-trimmers of gold, of purest gold; ²²the trimmers, the bowls, the ladles, and the censers of pure gold. As for the entry of the ⁶sanctuary, its inner doors to the Most Holy Place, and the doors of the main hall of the temple, *were* gold.

⁵So ^aall the work that Solomon had done for the house of the LORD was finished; and Solomon brought in the things which his father David had dedicated: the silver and the gold and all the furnishings. And he put *them* in the treasuries of the house of God.

The Ark Brought into the Temple

^{2b}Now Solomon assembled the elders of Israel and all the heads of the tribes, the chief fathers of the children of Israel, in Jerusalem, that they might bring the ark of the covenant of the LORD up ^cfrom the City of David, which is Zion. ^{3d}Therefore all the men of Israel assembled with the king ^eat the feast, which *was* in the seventh month. ⁴So all the elders of Israel came, and the ^fLevites took up the ark. ⁵Then they brought up the

17 ⁵ Zaretan, 1 Kin. 7:46
18 ⁵ 1 Kin. 7:47
19 ¹ 1 Kin. 7:48-50
^u Ex. 25:30
20 ^v Ex. 27:20, 21
21 ^w Ex. 25:31
22 ⁶ Lit. house

CHAPTER 5
1 ^a 1 Kin. 7:51
2 ^b 1 Kin. 8:1-9; Ps. 47:9 ^c 2 Sam. 6:12
3 ^d 1 Kin. 8:2 ^e Lev. 23:34; 2 Chr. 7:8-10
4 ^f 1 Chr. 15:2, 15

7 ⁹ 2 Chr. 4:20 ¹ Lit. house
9 ^h Ex. 25:13-15
² Lit. it is
10 ⁱ Ex. 25:16; Deut. 10:2, 5; 2 Chr. 6:11; Heb. 9:4 ³ Or where
11 ^j 1 Chr. 24:1-5
⁴ consecrated
12 ^k Ex. 32:26; 1 Chr. 25:1-7 ¹ 1 Chr. 13:8; 15:16, 24

ark, the tabernacle of meeting, and all the holy furnishings that *were* in the tabernacle. The priests and the Levites brought them up. ⁶Also King Solomon, and all the congregation of Israel who were assembled with him before the ark, were sacrificing sheep and oxen that could not be counted or numbered for multitude. ⁷Then the priests brought in the ark of the covenant of the LORD to its place, into the ⁸inner sanctuary of the ¹temple, to the Most Holy Place, under the wings of the cherubim. ⁸For the cherubim spread *their* wings over the place of the ark, and the cherubim overshadowed the ark and its poles. ⁹The poles extended so that the ends of the ^hpoles of the ark could be seen from *the holy place*, in front of the inner sanctuary; but they could not be seen from outside. And ²they are there to this day. ¹⁰Nothing was in the ark except the two tablets which Moses ⁱput *there* at Horeb, ³when the LORD made *a covenant* with the children of Israel, when they had come out of Egypt.

¹¹And it came to pass when the priests came out of the Most Holy Place (for all the priests who *were* present had ⁴sanctified themselves, without keeping to their ^jdivisions), ^{12k}and the Levites *who were* the singers, all those of Asaph and Heman and Jeduthun, with their sons and their brethren, stood at the east end of the altar, clothed in white linen, having cymbals, stringed instruments and harps, ^land with them one hundred and twenty priests sounding with trumpets—¹³indeed it came to pass, when the trumpeters and singers *were* as one, to make

4:19 This is the first mention of the **altar of gold** in Chronicles (see Ex. 30:1-10; 1 Kin. 7:48). This altar was used for offering incense. It was in the holy place just in front of the veil (see 3:14).
4:22 inner doors: The tabernacle had only a veil between the holy place, here called **the sanctuary**, and the **Most Holy Place** (Ex. 26:31-33). Solomon's temple had a set of doors there as well.
5:1 The treasures of the house of God listed here were dedicated by David in the sense that he had allotted them to the building and maintenance of the temple (see 1 Chr. 18:7, 8; 29:3-5). Solomon put them in the regular temple treasures.
5:2 Though David had built a tabernacle on Mt. Zion to house the **ark** (1 Chr. 15:1), it was still separate from the original tabernacle at Gibeon and thus was not yet in a permanent location. Completing Solomon's temple made it possible at last to place the ark in its proper setting.
5:3 Since this was in the **seventh month** (that is, Ethanim or Tishri; 1 Kin. 8:2), the feast was Tabernacles. This feast was an appropriate occasion for moving the ark to a permanent location, because the Feast of Tabernacles commemorated Israel's wandering in the wilderness, when the ark had no permanent place (Lev. 23:39-43).
5:5 The term **tabernacle of meeting** refers to the Mosaic tabernacle. Solomon ended worship at the high place at Gibeon by dismantling the Mosaic tabernacle located there (see 1:3) and by bringing it and all its **furnishings** to Jerusalem.
5:6 Like David before him, Solomon, a priestly **king**, exercised the privileges of his office by offering sacrifices (see 1 Chr. 16:1-3).

5:8 According to Moses' instructions (Ex. 25:12-15; Num. 4:6), the ark had rings attached to each corner, through which **poles** were inserted to carry it. These poles were about 20 cubits (30 feet) long, since those who ministered in the holy place could see them at either end of the veil (v. 9).
5:9 to this day: This statement would be charged with emotion for any Israelite who lived through the Babylonian Exile years later, when Nebuchadnezzar's army destroyed Solomon's temple and carried away many of its furnishings.
5:11 On this day of inaugurating the temple **all the priests** participated in the services regardless of their priestly **divisions**. From then on they would serve in rotation according to their division (see 1 Chr. 24:1-19). **The Most Holy Place** was normally restricted to the high priest only (Lev. 16:15; Heb. 9:7); on this occasion the regular priests had entered it to bring in the ark (v. 7).
5:12 Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun were the heads of the divisions of Levitical musicians (see 1 Chr. 6:33, 39, 44; 15:17; 16:37, 42; 25:1). The **east end of the altar** was between the east gate of the inner court and the great bronze altar. Altogether there were far more than **one hundred and twenty priests**; the ones numbered here were probably a select group of instrumentalists.
5:13 As v. 14 suggests, the **cloud** was a manifestation of God's glory. In a sense, the cloud both revealed and concealed the glory of God, which is too awesome for human eyes to see (see Ex. 19:16, 18; 20:18, 21; 24:16-18; 33:9, 10, 22; 40:34-38).

one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the LORD, and when they lifted up their voice with the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of music, and praised the LORD, *saying*:

m“For He is good,
For His mercy *endures* forever,”

that the house, the house of the LORD, was filled with a cloud, ¹⁴so that the priests could not ⁵continue ministering because of the cloud; ⁿfor the glory of the LORD filled the house of God.

6 Then ^aSolomon spoke:

“The LORD said He would dwell in the ^bdark cloud.

² I have surely built You an exalted house,
And ^ca place for You to dwell in forever.”

Solomon's Speech upon Completion of the Work

³Then the king turned around and ^dblessed the whole assembly of Israel, while all the assembly of Israel was standing. ⁴And he said: “Blessed *be* the LORD God of Israel, who has fulfilled with His hands *what* He spoke with His mouth to my father David, ^esaying, ⁵‘Since the day that I brought My people out of the land of Egypt, I have chosen no city from any tribe of Israel *in which* to build a house,

^{13 m} 1 Chr. 16:34, 41; 2 Chr. 7:3; Ezra 3:11; Ps. 100:5; 106:1; 136; Jer. 33:11
^{14 n} Ex. 40:35; 1 Kin. 8:11; 2 Chr. 7:2; Ezek. 43:5 ⁵ Lit. *stand to minister*

CHAPTER 6

^{1 e} Ex. 19:9; 20:21; 1 Kin. 8:12-21
^b [Lev. 16:2]; Ps. 97:2
^{2 c} 2 Sam. 7:13; 1 Chr. 17:12; 2 Chr. 7:12
^{3 d} 2 Sam. 6:18
^{4 e} 1 Chr. 17:5

^{6 f} Deut. 12:5-7; 2 Chr. 12:13; Zech. 2:12 ^g 1 Sam. 16:7-13; 1 Chr. 28:4
^{7 h} 2 Sam. 7:2; 1 Chr. 17:1; 28:2; Ps. 132:1-5 ¹ Lit. *house*, and so in vv. 8-10
^{9 i} 1 Chr. 28:3-6
^{10 j} 1 Kin. 2:12; 10:9
^{11 k} 2 Chr. 5:7-10
^{12 l} 1 Kin. 8:22; 2 Chr. 7:7-9 ² Lit. *he*

that My name might be there, nor did I choose any man to be a ruler over My people Israel. ^{6f}Yet I have chosen Jerusalem, that My name may be there, and I ^ghave chosen David to be over My people Israel.’ ⁷Now ^hit was in the heart of my father David to build a ¹temple for the name of the LORD God of Israel. ⁸But the LORD said to my father David, ‘Whereas it was in your heart to build a temple for My name, you did well in that it was in your heart. ⁹Nevertheless you shall not build the temple, but your son who will come from your body, he shall build the temple for My ⁱname.’ ¹⁰So the LORD has fulfilled His word which He spoke, and I have filled the position of my father David, and ^jsit on the throne of Israel, as the LORD promised; and I have built the temple for the name of the LORD God of Israel. ¹¹And there I have put the ark, ^kin which *is* the covenant of the LORD which He made with the children of Israel.”

Solomon's Prayer of Dedication

^{12l}Then ²Solomon stood before the altar of the LORD in the presence of all the assembly of Israel, and spread out his hands ¹³(for Solomon had made a bronze platform five cubits long, five cubits wide, and three cubits high, and had set it in the midst of the court; and he stood on it, knelt down on his knees before all the assembly of Israel, and spread out his hands toward heaven); ¹⁴and he said:

6:1, 2 The dark cloud which had represented the glory of God now filled the temple (5:14). This was in line with God's own promise to David when He said, in response to David's decision to build a temple, that He had lived in a portable tabernacle (1 Chr. 17:5). Although David's son built a temple for God, the time would come when God would build David an eternal **house** or dynasty. With David's permanent dynasty would come God's permanent relationship with His people (1 Chr. 17:7-14). Thus Solomon built the “house” in which God could live among them.

6:4 fulfilled with His hands: A direct reference to the covenant that God had made with David, when He promised him an everlasting house (see 1 Chr. 17:11, 12). Solomon, as David's chosen heir, had lived to see God's words of promise come true. God had made Solomon king and built the temple. Solomon may have hired Phoenician craftsmen, but he knew that the project's success lay with God, and that “His hands” really had done the work.

6:6 I have chosen Jerusalem: This refers not so much to Jerusalem as a political capital, as it was for David and Solomon (1 Chr. 11:4-8), but as a place for God's name. This emphasis is unmistakable in the narrative about Ornan's threshing floor (see 1 Chr. 21:18—22:1). Only Jerusalem would be acceptable as a place for God's earthly dwelling. **I have chosen David:** In His grace God chose David long before David actually took the throne, as Samuel's anointing of him in his youth made clear (1 Sam. 16:1, 12, 13).

6:11 The covenant of the LORD refers to the stone tablets of the Ten Commandments (see 5:10).

6:13 The bronze platform was not a regular feature of the temple but a stage constructed for Solomon's speech, so the assembly outside the walls of the courtyard could see him. It was seven and a half feet square and four and a half feet high.

6:14 no God . . . like You: God is different from all other “gods.” He alone made and kept a **covenant** with His people, something unheard of in the religious traditions of the nations. Solomon's acclamation makes sense to every child of God who reflects on God's faithfulness. **covenant and mercy:** The word for *mercy* here

assembly

(Heb. *qahal*) (6:3; Deut. 18:16; Judg. 20:2) Strong's #6951

The Hebrew term denotes a gathering of people for any type of occasion. It is used in a secular sense to designate civil meetings, war councils, a gathering of evildoers, and even an assembly of the dead (1 Sam. 17:47; 1 Kin. 12:3; Ps. 26:5; Prov. 21:16). But the word is also used to speak of the gathering of individuals for religious purposes, such as the receiving of the Mosaic Law and the celebration of religious festivals before the Lord (30:23; Deut. 5:22). Sometimes the term applies to groups of men only—most frequently with assemblies for war, but once, apparently, for those gathered to hear Joshua's reading of the Law (Josh. 8:35). During the time of Ezra, women, children, and even servants were specifically included in one religious assembly (Ezra 2:64, 65; 10:1). The expression “assembly of the LORD” occurs several times in the OT to indicate a gathering of God's people for religious or secular purposes—including once to grumble against Moses (Num. 20:4; Deut. 23:1-3; 1 Chr. 28:8; Neh. 13:1).

"LORD God of Israel, ^mthere is no God in heaven or on earth like You, who keep Your ⁿcovenant and mercy with Your servants who walk before You with all their hearts. ^{15o}You have kept what You promised Your servant David my father; You have both spoken with Your mouth and fulfilled it with Your hand, as it is this day. ¹⁶Therefore, LORD God of Israel, now keep what You promised Your servant David my father, saying, ^p"You shall not fail to have a man sit before Me on the throne of Israel, ^qonly if your sons take heed to their way, that they walk in My law as you have walked before Me." ¹⁷And now, O LORD God of Israel, let Your word come true, which You have spoken to Your servant David.

¹⁸"But will God indeed dwell with men on the earth? ^rBehold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain You. How much less this ³temple which I have built! ¹⁹Yet regard the prayer of Your servant and his supplication, O LORD my God, and listen to the cry and the prayer which Your servant is praying before You: ²⁰that Your eyes may be ^sopen toward this temple day and night, toward the place where You said You would put Your name, that You may hear the prayer which Your servant makes ^ttoward this place. ²¹And may You hear the supplications of Your servant and of Your people Israel, when they pray toward this place. Hear from heaven Your dwelling place, and when You hear, ^uforgive.

²²"If anyone sins against his neighbor, and is forced to take an ^voath, and comes and takes an oath before Your altar in this temple, ²³then hear from heaven, and act, and judge Your servants, bringing retribution on the wicked by bringing his way on his own head, and justifying the righteous by giving him according to his ^wrighteousness.

14 ^m [Ex. 15:11; Deut. 4:39] ⁿ [Deut. 7:9]
15 ^o 1 Chr. 22:9, 10
16 ^p 2 Sam. 7:12, 16; 1 Kin. 2:4; 6:12; 2 Chr. 7:18 ^q Ps. 132:12
18 ^r [2 Chr. 2:6; Is. 66:1; Acts 7:49]
³ Lit. house
20 ^s 2 Chr. 7:15 ^t Ps. 5:7; Dan. 6:10
21 ^u [Is. 43:25; 44:22; Mic. 7:18]
22 ^v Ex. 22:8-11
23 ^w [Job 34:11]

24 ^x 2 Kin. 21:14, 15
26 ^y Deut. 28:23, 24; 1 Kin. 17:1
28 ^z 2 Chr. 20:9
^a [Mic. 6:13]
30 ^b [1 Chr. 28:9; Prov. 21:2; 24:12]
^c [1 Sam. 16:7]
32 ^d John 12:20; Acts 8:27

²⁴"Or if Your people Israel are defeated before an ^xenemy because they have sinned against You, and return and confess Your name, and pray and make supplication before You in this temple, ²⁵then hear from heaven and forgive the sin of Your people Israel, and bring them back to the land which You gave to them and their fathers.

²⁶"When the ^yheavens are shut up and there is no rain because they have sinned against You, when they pray toward this place and confess Your name, and turn from their sin because You afflict them, ²⁷then hear ⁱⁿ heaven, and forgive the sin of Your servants, Your people Israel, that You may teach them the good way in which they should walk; and send rain on Your land which You have given to Your people as an inheritance.

²⁸"When there ^zis famine in the land, pestilence or blight or mildew, locusts or grasshoppers; when their enemies besiege them in the land of their cities; whatever plague or whatever ^asickness *there is*; ²⁹whatever prayer, whatever supplication is *made* by anyone, or by all Your people Israel, when each one knows his own burden and his own grief, and spreads out his hands to this temple: ³⁰then hear from heaven Your dwelling place, and forgive, and give to everyone according to all his ways, whose heart You know (for You alone ^bknow the ^chearts of the sons of men), ³¹that they may fear You, to walk in Your ways as long as they live in the land which You gave to our fathers.

³²"Moreover, concerning a foreigner, ^dwho is not of Your people Israel, but has come from a far country for the sake of Your great name and Your mighty hand and Your outstretched arm, when they come and pray in this temple; ³³then hear from heaven Your dwelling place,

connotes loyalty; it means that God is faithful to His **servants**—to those who **walk before Him with all their hearts**.

6:16 Solomon's very position as king attested to God's having fulfilled His **promise** (see v. 10). But portions of God's promise depended on God's people obeying God's law. **Only if David's sons took heed to their way** would they enjoy the full benefits of God's favor. So Solomon prayed that his people would stay faithful. God would be faithful to them—would they be faithful to Him? No matter what their choice, however, God would carry out his ultimate plan to send the Messiah (see Ps. 89:30–37).

6:18 will God . . . dwell with men: God is altogether separate from humanity (2:6), but He accommodates Himself to the low position of human beings in order to fellowship with them (see Gen. 2:8; 11:5; 18:1, 2; Ex. 23:20–26). He did this in an ultimate sense in the incarnation of Jesus Christ (John 1:14).

6:21 The temple was God's **dwelling place** in the sense that it gave God's people a place to pray to the living God. Yet God could not be contained within the four walls of a building (see v. 18).

6:22 comes and takes an oath: A reference to legal oaths in which people swore their innocence before God (see Ex. 22:8–11; Deut.

17:8, 9). Such oaths had to be sworn in the temple and before the **altar**, symbolic of God's presence among His people.

6:23 Solomon's request that God **hear from heaven** underscored God's transcendence. Although God had chosen to be present on earth at the temple, He also transcended the temple building.

6:25 bring them back: A hint of the future captivity and deportation of God's disobedient **people** (Deut. 28:29, 30). When the Exile to Babylon became a reality, the temple was destroyed and no one could pray at that place as before. But even in those days, God's people directed their prayer toward Jerusalem. This is what Daniel did (see Dan. 6:10).

6:29 Israel was a community and could pray together as a nation. But each member was also responsible for his or her own sin (Ezek. 18:1–4) and each needed to seek God's forgiveness. Prayer toward the temple could be national or individual.

6:32, 33 God made His covenant exclusively with Israel, the nation descended from Abraham, but He did so for the purpose of attracting the nations to Himself, the Creator of all people. A **foreigner** who embraced the Lord as God would be numbered among God's people.

and do according to all for which the foreigner calls to You, that all peoples of the earth may know Your name and fear You, as *do* Your people Israel, and that they may know that ⁴this temple which I have built is called by Your name.

³⁴“When Your people go out to battle against their enemies, wherever You send them, and when they pray to You toward this city which You have chosen and the temple which I have built for Your name, ³⁵then hear from heaven their prayer and their supplication, and maintain their cause.

³⁶“When they sin against You (for *there is* ^eno one who does not sin), and You become angry with them and deliver them to the enemy, and they take them ^fcaptive to a land far or near; ³⁷*yet* when they ⁵come to themselves in the land where they were carried captive, and repent, and make supplication to You in the land of their captivity, saying, ‘We have sinned, we have done wrong, and have committed wickedness’; ³⁸and *when* they return to You with all their heart and with all their soul in the land of their captivity, where they have been carried captive, and pray toward their land which You gave to their fathers, the ^gcity which You have chosen, and toward the temple which I have built for Your name: ³⁹then hear from heaven Your dwelling place their prayer and their supplications, and maintain their cause, and forgive Your people who have sinned against You. ⁴⁰Now, my God, I pray, let Your eyes be ^hopen and *let* Your ears *be* attentive to the prayer *made* in this place.

⁴¹“Now ⁱtherefore,
Arise, O LORD God, to Your ^jresting place,
You and the ark of Your strength.
Let Your priests, O LORD God, be clothed with salvation,
And let Your saints ^krejoice in goodness.

³³ ⁴Lit. *Your name is called upon this house*

³⁶ ^eProv. 20:9; Eccl. 7:20; [Rom. 3:9, 19; 5:12; Gal. 3:10]; James 3:2; 1 John 1:8 ^fDeut. 28:63–68

³⁷ ⁵Lit. *bringing back to their hearts*

³⁸ ^gDan. 6:10

⁴⁰ ^h2 Chr. 6:20

⁴¹ ¹Ps. 132:8–10, 16 ¹1 Chr. 28:2 ^kNeh. 9:25

⁴² ¹2 Sam. 7:15; Ps. 89:49; 132:1, 8–10; Is. 55:3

CHAPTER 7

¹ ^a1 Kin. 8:54 ^bLev. 9:24; Judg. 6:21;

¹ Kin. 18:38; 1 Chr. 21:26 ^c1 Kin. 8:10,

¹¹ ¹Lit. *house*

² ^d2 Chr. 5:14

³ ^e2 Chr. 5:13; Ps. 106:1; 136:1 ¹1 Chr. 16:41; 2 Chr. 20:21

⁴ ^g1 Kin. 8:62, 63

⁶ ^h1 Chr. 15:16

² Chr. 5:12 ² Lit.

hand

⁷ ¹1 Kin. 8:64–

66; 9:3

⁸ ^k1 Kin. 8:65

¹1 Kin. 4:21, 24;

² Kin. 14:25

⁴²“O LORD God, do not turn away the face of Your Anointed;
¹Remember the mercies of Your servant David.”

Solomon Dedicates the Temple

7 When ^aSolomon had finished praying, ^bfire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and ^cthe glory of the LORD filled the ¹temple. ²^dAnd the priests could not enter the house of the LORD, because the glory of the LORD had filled the LORD’s house. ³When all the children of Israel saw how the fire came down, and the glory of the LORD on the temple, they bowed their faces to the ground on the pavement, and worshiped and praised the LORD, *saying*:

“For *He* is good,
¹For His mercy *endures* forever.”

⁴^gThen the king and all the people offered sacrifices before the LORD. ⁵King Solomon offered a sacrifice of twenty-two thousand bulls and one hundred and twenty thousand sheep. So the king and all the people dedicated the house of God. ⁶^hAnd the priests attended to their services; the Levites also with instruments of the music of the LORD, which King David had made to praise the LORD, saying, “For His mercy *endures* forever,” whenever David offered praise by their ²ministry. ⁱThe priests sounded trumpets opposite them, while all Israel stood.

⁷Furthermore ^jSolomon consecrated the middle of the court that *was* in front of the house of the LORD; for there he offered burnt offerings and the fat of the peace offerings, because the bronze altar which Solomon had made was not able to receive the burnt offerings, the grain offerings, and the fat.

⁸^kAt that time Solomon kept the feast seven days, and all Israel with him, a very great assembly ^lfrom the entrance of

6:36 there is no one who does not sin: This statement is repeated in the NT (see Rom. 3:23; 1 John 1:8–10). All people sin and are guilty before God. **take them captive:** Solomon’s speech anticipated the possibility of exile (v. 25), something that had already taken place by the time Chronicles was written.

6:40 Let Your eyes be open: God is Spirit (John 4:24) and doesn’t have physical eyes and ears, but He is a Person who intimately knows us and hears our prayers. Solomon was praying that God would not ignore His people.

6:41 In light of Ps. 132:8, 9 (the passage quoted by Solomon), the **resting place** is the temple. **Ark** is a synonym for the presence of God.

6:42 Your Anointed: A reference to Solomon, which shows that he understood his unique role as one set apart by God for royal service (see 1 Chr. 22:10, 11). Like David, Solomon was a messianic figure who

anticipated the goal of his royal line, the true Anointed One, Jesus Christ (see 1 Sam. 2:10; Ps. 2:2; 18:50; 89:38, 51; 132:17).

7:1, 2 God responded positively to Solomon’s prayer by igniting the sacrifices with heavenly **fire**, an act of approval recorded in other parts of the Bible as well (see Judg. 6:21; 1 Kin. 18:38). **Glory . . . filled:** This was in the form of a thick cloud that filled the **temple** with darkness. The **priests** could no longer minister because of their awe and reverence before the glory of the Lord.

7:3 The people saw in God’s **glory** His acceptance of the king and the temple, two central elements in His covenant promise to David (see 1 Chr. 17:11, 12).

7:8 The **feast** was the Feast of Tabernacles, which began on the fifteenth day of the seventh month and continued through the twenty-second day (Lev. 23:34–36). **Hamath and Brook of Egypt** specify the extent of Solomon’s early kingdom from north to south.

Hamath to ^mthe³ Brook of Egypt. ⁹And on the eighth day they held a ⁿsacred assembly, for they observed the dedication of the altar seven days, and the feast seven days. ¹⁰^oOn the twenty-third day of the seventh month he sent the people away to their tents, joyful and glad of heart for the good that the LORD had done for David, for Solomon, and for His people Israel. ¹¹Thus ^pSolomon finished the house of the LORD and the king's house; and Solomon successfully accomplished all that came into his heart to make in the house of the LORD and in his own house.

God's Second Appearance to Solomon

¹²Then the LORD ^qappeared to Solomon by night, and said to him: "I have heard your prayer, ^rand have chosen this ^splace for Myself as a house of sacrifice. ¹³^tWhen I shut up heaven and there is no rain, or command the locusts to devour the land, or send pestilence among My people, ¹⁴if My people who are ^ucalled by My name will ^vhumble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, ^wthen I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land. ¹⁵Now ^xMy eyes will be open and My ears attentive to prayer ^ymade in this place. ¹⁶For now ^zI have chosen and ⁴sanctified this house, that My name may be there forever; and ⁵My eyes and ⁶My heart will be there perpetually. ¹⁷^zAs for you, if you walk before Me as your fa-

8 ^m Josh. 13:3 ³ The Shihor, 1 Chr. 13:5
9 ⁿ Lev. 23:36
10 ^o 1 Kin. 8:66
11 ^p 1 Kin. 9:1
12 ^q 1 Kin. 3:5; 11:9
^r Deut. 12:5, 11
^s 2 Chr. 6:20
13 ^t Deut. 28:23, 24;
1 Kin. 17:1; 2 Chr.
6:26-28
14 ^u Deut. 28:10;
[Is. 43:7] ^v 2 Chr.
12:6, 7; [James 4:10]
^w 2 Chr. 6:27, 30
15 ^x 2 Chr. 6:20, 40
16 ^y 1 Kin. 9:3;
2 Chr. 6:6 ⁴ set
apart ⁵ My
attention ⁶ My
concern
17 ^z 1 Kin. 9:4

18 ^a 2 Sam. 7:12-16;
1 Kin. 2:24; 2 Chr.
6:16
19 ^b Lev. 26:14, 33;
[Deut. 28:15, 36]
20 ^c Deut. 28:63-68;
2 Kin. 25:1-7 ^d Ps.
44:14 ⁷ set apart
21 ^e 2 Kin. 25:9
^f 2 Chr. 29:8
^g [Deut. 29:24,
25; Jer. 22:8, 9]
⁸ Temple ⁹ Or was

CHAPTER 8

1 ^a 1 Kin. 9:10-14
^b 1 Kin. 6:38-7:1
2 ¹ Heb. Hiram,
2 Chr. 2:3

ther David walked, and do according to all that I have commanded you, and if you keep My statutes and My judgments, ¹⁸then I will establish the throne of your kingdom, as I covenanted with David your father, saying, ^a"You shall not fail to have a man as ruler in Israel."

¹⁹^b"But if you turn away and forsake My statutes and My commandments which I have set before you, and go and serve other gods, and worship them, ²⁰^cthen I will uproot them from My land which I have given them; and this house which I have ⁷sanctified for My name I will cast out of My sight, and will make it a proverb and a ^dbyword among all peoples.

²¹"And as for ^ethis ⁸house, which ⁹is exalted, everyone who passes by it will be ^fastonished and say, ^g"Why has the LORD done thus to this land and this house?" ²²Then they will answer, "Because they forsook the LORD God of their fathers, who brought them out of the land of Egypt, and embraced other gods, and worshiped them and served them; therefore He has brought all this calamity on them."

Solomon's Additional Achievements

8 It ^acame to pass at the end of ^btwenty years, when Solomon had built the house of the LORD and his own house, ²that the cities which ¹Hiram had given to Solomon, Solomon built them; and

The Brook of Egypt is probably the Wadi el-Arish, a seasonal stream about 40 miles southwest of Gaza.

7:9 The Feast of Tabernacles ended with an **eighth day** assembly, which fell always on the twenty-second day of the seventh month, Tishri. The seven-day **dedication of the altar** is the one referred to in 5:3.

7:10 he sent the people away to their tents: Probably a reference to the huts or booths in which people stayed as part of the Feast of Tabernacles (Lev. 23:42, 43). Few if any Israelites used tents for their housing at this time.

7:11 The king's house refers to Solomon's own palace, a project much more elaborately explained in 1 Kings (see 1 Kin. 2:1; 7:1, 8). Since it took Solomon 13 years to build his palace and 20 years in all

to build it and the temple (8:1), these events too are halfway through Solomon's 40-year reign.

7:12 In the next several verses (vv. 13–15), the Lord reviews and answers the petitions of **Solomon** (6:14–42). Solomon's prayers had been **heard** and would be answered, but there were conditions (see v. 14).

7:14 If God's people would do three things, God would respond in three ways. The Lord's people needed to become **humble**, that is, confess; they needed to **pray**, or repent; and they needed to **turn**, or come back to Him. If they did, God would **hear**, **forgive**, and **heal** them.

7:17, 18 if you walk: The Lord challenged Solomon to remain faithful to Him and to the laws of the covenant so that he could enjoy the full benefit of God's blessing (vv. 17–20). **I will establish the throne:** The conditions for God's blessing on David and his line did not extend to the ongoing existence of that dynasty. The covenant promises to David were unqualified. The Lord had told David that if his son—that is, Solomon—sinned he would be disciplined, but "My mercy shall not depart from him," and "your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you" (2 Sam. 7:15, 16; see 1 Chr. 17:13, 14). Solomon might sin and be disciplined, but God's promises would stand—David's dynasty would go on.

7:19 if you turn: Here the word for *you* is plural. The Lord was speaking to the nation as a whole.

7:20 proverb: The nation of Israel would become an object lesson to other nations, who would see the temple lying in ruins and understand the clear message about sin and its cost.

7:22 embraced other gods: Idolatry would be the downfall of the nation (Deut. 28; 29).

8:1, 2 This compressed account of transactions between Solomon and **Hiram** is more fully spelled out in 1 Kin. 9:10–14. In payment for

pray

(Heb. *palaf*) (7:14; Gen. 20:7; Num. 21:7; 1 Kin. 8:44; Is. 16:12; Jer. 7:16) Strong's #6419

The Hebrew verb translated *pray* in God's promise concerning the revival of Israel (7:14) can also mean "to inter-vene," "to interpose," "to arbitrate," or even "to judge." The Lord was asking His people to intercede for others in their prayers. During the dedication of the temple, Solomon modeled intercessory prayer (6:3–42). He pleaded with God on behalf of the people and continued to pray with determination until the Lord answered. According to the Lord, this type of prayer would be the catalyst for revival and restoration in the future (see Dan. 9:3–19).

he settled the children of Israel there. ³And Solomon went to Hamath Zobah and seized it. ^{4c}He also built Tadmor in the wilderness, and all the storage cities which he built in ^dHamath. ⁵He built Upper Beth Horon and ^eLower Beth Horon, fortified cities *with* walls, gates, and bars, ⁶also Baalath and all the storage cities that Solomon had, and all the chariot cities and the cities of the cavalry, and all that Solomon ^fdesired to build in Jerusalem, in Lebanon, and in all the land of his dominion.

^{7g}All the people *who were* left of the Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, who *were* not of Israel—⁸that is, their descendants who were left in the land after them, whom the children of Israel did not destroy—from these Solomon raised forced labor, as it is to this day. ⁹But Solomon did not make the children of Israel ²servants for his work. Some *were* men of war, captains of his officers, captains of his chariots, and his cavalry. ¹⁰And others *were* chiefs of the officials of King Solomon: ^htwo hundred and fifty, who ruled over the people.

¹¹Now Solomon ⁱbrought the daughter of Pharaoh up from the City of David to the house he had built for her, for he said, “My wife shall not dwell in the house of David king of Israel, because *the places* to which the ark of the LORD has come are holy.”

¹²Then Solomon offered burnt offerings to the LORD on the altar of the LORD which he had built before the vestibule, ¹³according to the ^jdaily rate, offering according to the commandment of Moses, for the Sabbaths, the New Moons, and the ^kthree appointed yearly ^lfeasts—the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Feast of Weeks, and the Feast of Tabernacles. ¹⁴And, according to the ³order of David

4 c 1 Kin. 9:17, 18
d 1 Chr. 18:3, 9
5 e 1 Chr. 7:24
6 f 2 Chr. 7:11
7 g Gen. 15:18-21;
1 Kin. 9:20
9 2 slaves
10 h 1 Kin. 9:23
11 i 1 Kin. 3:1; 7:8;
9:24; 11:1
13 j Ex. 29:38-42;
Num. 28:3, 9, 11, 26;
29:1 k Ex. 23:14-17;
34:22, 23; Deut.
16:16 l Lev. 23:1-44
14 3 ordinance

m 1 Chr. 24:3
n 1 Chr. 25:1
o 1 Chr. 9:17; 26:1
15 p 1 Chr. 26:20-28
16 q So with LXX,
Syr., Vg.; MT as
far as
17 r 1 Kin. 9:26;
2 Chr. 20:36 s Heb.
Eloah, 2 Kin. 14:22
18 t 1 Kin. 9:27;
2 Chr. 9:10, 13
s 1 Chr. 29:4

CHAPTER 9

1 a 1 Kin. 10:1; Ps.
72:10; [Matt. 12:42;
Luke 11:31]
4 b Neh. 1:11

his father, he appointed the ^mdivisions of the priests for their service, ⁿthe Levites for their duties (to praise and serve before the priests) as the duty of each day required, and the ^ogatekeepers by their divisions at each gate; for so David the man of God had commanded. ¹⁵They did not depart from the command of the king to the priests and Levites concerning any matter or concerning the ^ptreasuries.

¹⁶Now all the work of Solomon was well-ordered ⁴from the day of the foundation of the house of the LORD until it was finished. So the house of the LORD was completed.

¹⁷Then Solomon went to ^qEzion Geber and ⁵Elath on the seacoast, in the land of Edom. ^{18r}And Hiram sent him ships by the hand of his servants, and servants who knew the sea. They went with the servants of Solomon to ^sOphir, and acquired four hundred and fifty talents of gold from there, and brought it to King Solomon.

The Queen of Sheba's Praise of Solomon

9 Now ^awhen the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon, she came to Jerusalem to test Solomon with hard questions, *having* a very great retinue, camels that bore spices, gold in abundance, and precious stones; and when she came to Solomon, she spoke with him about all that was in her heart. ²So Solomon answered all her questions; there was nothing so difficult for Solomon that he could not explain it to her. ³And when the queen of Sheba had seen the wisdom of Solomon, the house that he had built, ⁴the food on his table, the seating of his servants, the service of his waiters and their apparel, his ^bcupbearers and their apparel, and his entryway by which he

the timber and gold that Hiram provided for Solomon's construction projects, Solomon gave 20 Galilean cities to Hiram. The Phoenician did not like the cities, but he took them anyway and even paid 120 talents of gold for them. Eventually Solomon took back the cities, rebuilt them, and settled Israelites in them once more.

8:4 Solomon **built** and fortified cities such as **Tadmor** because they were on vital caravan routes. These fortified cities provided protection to his own caravans and became the customs points at which Solomon collected taxes. **storage cities:** Facilities were scattered throughout Solomon's outlying provinces to provide warehouses for his armies and merchantmen, as well as to store produce and other tribute paid by the vassal states (see 1 Kin. 9:19).

8:5 **Upper Beth Horon** and **Lower Beth Horon** were strategically located near the border between Judah and the northern tribal districts, along a major mountain pass to the Mediterranean (see Josh. 10:10; 1 Sam. 13:18).

8:7, 8 The people groups named in this verse were remnants of the population of Canaan who survived the conquest. **Israel** reduced many of them to **forced labor** (see 2:17).

8:11 **The daughter of Pharaoh** is not named here. Solomon

had married her early in his reign (1 Kin. 3:1) and had provided her housing near David's palace on Mt. Zion. She had been forbidden to live in the palace, presumably because she was neither Hebrew nor God-fearing.

8:13 **The daily rate** refers to the morning and evening sacrifices of lambs, one on each occasion (Ex. 29:38-42).

8:14, 15 Solomon, like all kings in David's line, had jurisdiction over **the priests and Levites**, as well as over civil, military, and political affairs.

8:17 **Ezion Geber** and **Elath** were cities located close together at the northern end of the east branch of the Red Sea.

8:18 The Phoenicians were world-famous mariners, so when Solomon undertook a merchant marine enterprise he called once more on his good friend **Hiram**, the King of Tyre. The land of **Ophir**, located apparently in South Arabia (see 1 Chr. 29:4), was a source of finest **gold**.

9:1 Sheba was more than a thousand miles south of Israel, at the southern end of the Arabian Peninsula. **hard questions:** Solomon was known for his great wisdom (1:10-12; 1 Kin. 4:29-34).



went up to the house of the LORD, there was no more spirit in her.

⁵Then she said to the king: “*It was a true report which I heard in my own land about your words and your wisdom.*”
⁶However I did not believe their words until I came and saw with my own eyes; and indeed the half of the greatness of your wisdom was not told me. You exceed the fame of which I heard.
⁷Happy are your men and happy are these your servants, who stand continually before you and hear your wisdom!
⁸Blessed be the LORD your God, who delighted in you, setting you on His throne *to be* king for the LORD your God! Because your God has ^cloved Israel, to establish them forever, therefore He made you king over them, to do justice and righteousness.”

⁹And she gave the king one hundred and twenty talents of gold, spices in great abundance, and precious stones; there never were any spices such as those the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon.

¹⁰Also, the servants of Hiram and the servants of Solomon, ^dwho brought gold from Ophir, brought ¹algun wood and precious stones.
¹¹And the king made walkways of the ²algun wood for the house of the LORD and for the king’s house, also harps and stringed instruments for singers; and there were none such *as these* seen before in the land of Judah.

¹²Now King Solomon gave to the queen of Sheba all she desired, whatever she asked, *much more* than she had brought to the king. So she turned and went to her own country, she and her servants.

Solomon’s Great Wealth

^{13e}The weight of gold that came to Solomon yearly was six hundred and sixty-six talents of gold, ¹⁴besides *what* the traveling merchants and traders brought. And all the kings of Arabia and governors of the country brought gold and silver to Solomon.
¹⁵And King Solomon made two hundred large shields of hammered gold; six hundred *shekels* of hammered gold went into each shield.
¹⁶*He* also made three hundred shields of

8 ^c Deut. 7:8; 2 Chr. 2:11; [Ps. 44:3]
 10 ^d 2 Chr. 8:18
¹ *almug*, 1 Kin. 10:11, 12
 11 ² *almug*, 1 Kin. 10:11, 12
 13 ^e 1 Kin. 10:14-29

16 ^f 1 Kin. 7:2
³ *three minas*, 1 Kin. 10:17
 18 ⁴ Lit. *hands*
 21 ^g 2 Chr. 20:36, 37; Ps. 72:10
⁵ Heb. *Huram*; cf. 1 Kin. 10:22
⁶ Lit. *ships of Tarshish*, deep-sea vessels
⁷ Or *peacocks*

BIBLE TIMES & CULTURE NOTES



Ophir

Although Ophir is mentioned several times in the OT, its exact location remains a mystery. Some believe Ophir was an island situated in the Red Sea; others think it was in India; still others believe it was in Africa, perhaps Somaliland, or on the southwest corner of the Arabian Peninsula, perhaps in the land of Sheba. Ophir is consistently associated in the OT with gold, probably its most noteworthy product. The gold may have come from Ophir itself, or it may have simply passed through Ophir from its place of origin. The air of mystery about Ophir adds to its significance when spoken of in a symbolic way in the Bible. Psalm 45:9 speaks of “the queen in gold from Ophir.” Job 28:16 says that wisdom “cannot be valued in the gold of Ophir,” suggesting its incomparable worth.

hammered gold; ³three hundred *shekels* of gold went into each shield. The king put them in the ^fHouse of the Forest of Lebanon.

¹⁷Moreover the king made a great throne of ivory, and overlaid it with pure gold.
¹⁸The throne *had* six steps, with a footstool of gold, *which were* fastened to the throne; there were ⁴armrests on either side of the place of the seat, and two lions stood beside the armrests.
¹⁹Twelve lions stood there, one on each side of the six steps; nothing like *this* had been made for any *other* kingdom.

²⁰All King Solomon’s drinking vessels *were* gold, and all the vessels of the House of the Forest of Lebanon *were* pure gold. Not *one was* silver, for this was accounted as nothing in the days of Solomon.
²¹For the king’s ships went to ^gTarshish with the servants of ⁵Hiram. Once every three years the ⁶merchant ships came, bringing gold, silver, ivory, apes, and ⁷monkeys.

²²So King Solomon surpassed all the kings of the earth in riches and wisdom.
²³And all the kings of the earth sought the presence of Solomon to hear his wisdom, which God had put in his heart.
²⁴Each man brought his present: articles

9:8 Blessed be the Lord your God: This was the language of politeness in the ancient world and does not suggest that the queen of Sheba was converted. Visiting dignitaries customarily praised the god of the host nation. Still, the queen’s statements about God’s love of **Israel** and election of Solomon were true enough (see 1 Chr. 17:11–14).

9:13 Solomon’s annual income in **gold** through taxes alone amounted to 25 tons. Since king and state were identified, this figure reflects the annual revenues of the entire nation through taxes.

9:14 The **gold and silver** that the **kings** and **governors** brought

to Solomon was tribute—a form of taxation on vassal states, not a voluntary gift.

9:15 The **shields of hammered gold** were for decorative or ceremonial purposes, not the armory. Gold was too expensive, too heavy, and too soft to use in battle.

9:21 To Tarshish is possibly a figure of speech, meaning “a great distance” or “to the ends of the earth.”

9:23 In the context of Solomon’s own time and place, **all the kings** referred to the kings of the eastern Mediterranean world.

9:24 Each man brought his present: Ordinary presents are not

of silver and gold, garments, ^harmor, spices, horses, and mules, at a set rate year by year.

²⁵ Solomon ⁱ had four thousand stalls for horses and chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen whom he stationed in the chariot cities and with the king at Jerusalem.

²⁶ So he reigned over all the kings ^k from ⁸ the River to the land of the Philistines, as far as the border of Egypt. ²⁷ ^l The king made silver as common in Jerusalem as stones, and he made cedar trees ^m as abundant as the sycamores which are in the lowland. ²⁸ ⁿ And they brought horses to Solomon from Egypt and from all lands.

Death of Solomon

²⁹ ^o Now the rest of the acts of Solomon, first and last, are they not written in the book of Nathan the prophet, in the prophecy of ^p Ahijah the Shilonite, and in the visions of ^q Iddo the seer concerning Jeroboam the son of Nebat? ³⁰ ^r Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel forty years. ³¹ Then Solomon ⁹ rested with his fathers, and was buried in the City of David his father. And Rehoboam his son reigned in his place.

The Revolt Against Rehoboam

10 And ^a Rehoboam went to Shechem, for all Israel had gone to Shechem to make him king. ² So it happened, when Jeroboam the son of Nebat heard it (he was in Egypt, ^b where he had fled from the presence of King Solomon), that Jeroboam returned from Egypt. ³ Then they sent for him and called him. And Jeroboam and all Israel came and spoke to Rehoboam, saying, ⁴ “Your father made our yoke heavy; now therefore, lighten the burdensome service of your father and

²⁴ ^h 1 Kin. 20:11
²⁵ ⁱ Deut. 17:16;
1 Kin. 4:26; 10:26;
2 Chr. 1:14; Is. 2:7
²⁶ ^j 1 Kin. 4:21
^k Gen. 15:18;
Ps. 72:8 ⁸ The
Euphrates
²⁷ ^l 1 Kin. 10:27
^m 2 Chr. 1:15-17
²⁸ ⁿ 1 Kin. 10:28;
2 Chr. 1:16
²⁹ ^o 1 Kin. 11:41
^p 1 Kin. 11:29
^q 2 Chr. 12:15; 13:22
³⁰ ^r 1 Kin. 4:21;
11:42, 43; 1 Chr.
29:28
³¹ ^s Died and
joined his
ancestors

CHAPTER 10

1 ^a 1 Kin. 12:1-20
2 ^b 1 Kin. 11:40

⁸ ^c 1 Kin. 12:8-11
¹¹ ^t Scourges with
points or barbs, lit.
scorpions
¹² ^d 1 Kin. 12:12-14
¹⁴ ² So with many
Heb. mss., LXX, Syr.,
Vg. (cf. v. 10; 1 Kin.
12:14); MT / ³ Lit.
scorpions

his heavy yoke which he put on us, and we will serve you.”

⁵ So he said to them, “Come back to me after three days.” And the people departed.

⁶ Then King Rehoboam consulted the elders who stood before his father Solomon while he still lived, saying, “How do you advise me to answer these people?”

⁷ And they spoke to him, saying, “If you are kind to these people, and please them, and speak good words to them, they will be your servants forever.”

⁸ ^c But he rejected the advice which the elders had given him, and consulted the young men who had grown up with him, who stood before him. ⁹ And he said to them, “What advice do you give? How should we answer this people who have spoken to me, saying, ‘Lighten the yoke which your father put on us?’”

¹⁰ Then the young men who had grown up with him spoke to him, saying, “Thus you should speak to the people who have spoken to you, saying, ‘Your father made our yoke heavy, but you make it lighter on us’—thus you shall say to them: ‘My little finger shall be thicker than my father’s waist! ¹¹ And now, whereas my father put a heavy yoke on you, I will add to your yoke; my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with ¹ scourges!’”

¹² So ^d Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam on the third day, as the king had directed, saying, “Come back to me the third day.” ¹³ Then the king answered them roughly. King Rehoboam rejected the advice of the elders, ¹⁴ and he spoke to them according to the advice of the young men, saying, ² “My father made your yoke heavy, but I will add to it; my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with ³ scourges!”

given and received at a **set rate** so these presents were tribute paid to the king by vassals.

9:26 Most of the kings of Israel had continuing trouble with the **Philistines**, even though they were able to subdue every other surrounding neighbor. David had some success against the Philistines (1 Chr. 18:2), and later Jehoshaphat managed to exact tribute from some of them (see 17:11).

9:29 **Nathan the prophet** had rebuked David for his adultery and murder (2 Sam. 12:1) and had become a confidant and counselor to both David and **Solomon** (1 Kin. 1:8, 11). **Ahijah the Shilonite** would select **Jeroboam** as the first king of the northern kingdom of Israel (1 Kin. 11:26–40) and later would announce God’s judgment on him (1 Kin. 14:1–16). **Iddo the seer** was a contemporary of Ahijah who compiled accounts of both Jeroboam and Rehoboam (12:15).

9:31 **Rehoboam** was a son of Solomon by his wife Naamah of Ammon (12:13). Rehoboam was 41 when he began to rule, so he must have been born during the period when Solomon ruled alongside David (see 1 Chr. 29:22, 23).

10:1 Why did Rehoboam go to **Shechem** to be crowned? First,

Shechem had a rich history dating back to Abraham’s travels in the land (see Gen. 12:6, 7; 35:4; Josh. 24:1–28). But more importantly, a rift had begun to develop between the northern and southern tribes (1 Kin. 11:26–40), and Shechem would be a more neutral place than Jerusalem.

10:2 As head of all of Solomon’s forced labor in the district of Ephraim, **Jeroboam** enjoyed great favor with the king. But the prophet Ahijah informed him that he would become ruler of the ten northern tribes because of Solomon’s idolatry (1 Kin. 11:26–33). When Solomon heard of this he tried to kill Jeroboam (1 Kin. 11:40), but Jeroboam fled to **Egypt**.

10:4 Solomon’s heavy **yoke** included taxation and forced labor (see 1 Sam. 8:11–18; 1 Kin. 4:7; 9:15).

10:10, 11 Rehoboam promised that even the lesser evils of his reign—his **finger**—would be as hard as anything they knew under Solomon. The young men compared Solomon’s rule to a **whip** and Rehoboam’s to a **scourge**, a whip with sharp bits of metal that cut the flesh and caused excruciating pain.

¹⁵So the king did not listen to the people; ^efor the turn of *events* was from God, that the LORD might fulfill His *f*word, which He had spoken by the hand of Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam the son of Nebat.

¹⁶Now when all Israel *saw* that the king did not listen to them, the people answered the king, saying:

“What share have we in David?
We have no inheritance in the son of
Jesse.
Every man to your tents, O Israel!
Now see to your own house,
O David!”

So all Israel departed to their tents.
¹⁷But Rehoboam reigned over the children of Israel who dwelt in the cities of Judah.

¹⁸Then King Rehoboam sent Hadoram, who *was* in charge of revenue; but the children of Israel stoned him with stones, and he died. Therefore King Rehoboam mounted *his* chariot in haste to flee to Jerusalem. ^{19g}So Israel has been in rebellion against the house of David to this day.

11 Now ^awhen Rehoboam came to Jerusalem, he assembled from the house of Judah and Benjamin one hundred and eighty thousand chosen *men* who were warriors, to fight against Israel, that he might restore the kingdom to Rehoboam.

²But the word of the LORD came

¹⁵ ^e Judg. 14:4;
1 Chr. 5:22; 2 Chr.
11:4; 22:7 ^f 1 Kin.
11:29-39
¹⁹ ^g 1 Kin. 12:19

CHAPTER 11

¹ ^e 1 Kin. 12:21-24

² ^b 1 Chr. 12:5;
2 Chr. 12:15
¹⁴ ^c Num. 35:2-5
^d 1 Kin. 12:28-33;
2 Chr. 13:9
¹⁵ ^e 1 Kin. 12:31;
13:33; 14:9; [Hos.
13:2]

^bto Shemaiah the man of God, saying,
³“Speak to Rehoboam the son of Solomon, king of Judah, and to all Israel in Judah and Benjamin, saying, ⁴“Thus says the LORD: “You shall not go up or fight against your brethren! Let every man return to his house, for this thing is from Me.”” Therefore they obeyed the words of the LORD, and turned back from attacking Jeroboam.

Rehoboam Fortifies the Cities

⁵So Rehoboam dwelt in Jerusalem, and built cities for defense in Judah. ⁶And he built Bethlehem, Etam, Tekoa, ⁷Beth Zur, Sochoh, Adullam, ⁸Gath, Mareshah, Ziph, ⁹Adoraim, Lachish, Azekah, ¹⁰Zorah, Aijalon, and Hebron, which are in Judah and Benjamin, fortified cities. ¹¹And he fortified the strongholds, and put captains in them, and stores of food, oil, and wine. ¹²Also in every city *he put* shields and spears, and made them very strong, having Judah and Benjamin on his side.

Priests and Levites Move to Judah

¹³And from all their territories the priests and the Levites who *were* in all Israel took their stand with him. ¹⁴For the Levites left ^etheir common-lands and their possessions and came to Judah and Jerusalem, for ^dJeroboam and his sons had rejected them from serving as priests to the LORD. ¹⁵^eThen he appointed for

10:15 the turn of events was from God: Human foolishness and decisions achieved God’s purposes. Solomon’s defection from God late in his reign had already disqualified his descendants from ruling over all Israel (1 Kin. 11:9–13). Rehoboam initiated the split with his own foolish actions.

10:16 In the people’s poem, **Israel** referred to the ten northern tribes, **David** to the southern kingdom of Judah.

10:18 Hadoram, called Adoniram in 1 Kin. 4:6, was Jeroboam’s counterpart in Judah as officer in charge of forced labor.

11:1 Shortly after the kingdom divided, the tribe of **Benjamin** joined Judah to form the southern kingdom. This is ironic because Saul was a Benjamite. However, Benjamites had shown great loyalty to David many years before (see 2 Sam. 19:16–20, 40–43). Also, Benjamin was closer geographically to Judah than to the northern tribes.

11:2 Like Nathan, Ahijah, and Iddo (9:29), **Shemaiah** was a prophet who wrote. The writer of Chronicles depended on Shemaiah’s writings for some of his information (see 12:15).

11:13, 14 all their territories: Though Israel and Judah had split into two kingdoms, **the priests and the Levites** of Israel sided with Judah. One reason for this was that they knew that Rehoboam was David’s offspring, and therefore the heir of God’s covenant promise to David. Another reason was that Jeroboam had established his own religious cult which had no need for the true priests of God (see 1 Kin. 12:25–33).

11:15 The **calf idols** were the golden calves that Jeroboam had installed at Bethel and Dan.

Judah Rides a Spiritual Roller Coaster

Period of Reform	Asa Jehoshaphat		Joash		Hezekiah		Josiah	
Period of Rebellion	Rehoboam Abijah	Jehoram Ahaziah Athaliah	Amaziah Uzziah Jotham Ahaz	Manasseh Amon	Jehoahaz Jehoiakim Jehoiachin Zedekiah			
Chapters	11–13	14–20	21–23	23; 24	25–28	29–32	33	34; 35

himself priests for the ¹high places, for ^fthe demons, and ^gthe calf idols which he had made. ^{16h} And ²after *the Levites left*, those from all the tribes of Israel, such as set their heart to seek the LORD God of Israel, ⁱcame to Jerusalem to sacrifice to the LORD God of their fathers. ¹⁷ So they ^jstrengthened the kingdom of Judah, and made Rehoboam the son of Solomon strong for three years, because they walked in the way of David and Solomon for three years.

The Family of Rehoboam

¹⁸ Then Rehoboam took for himself as wife Mahalath the daughter of Jerimoth the son of David, and of Abihail the daughter of ^kElijah the son of Jesse. ¹⁹ And she bore him children: Jeush, Shamariah, and Zaham. ²⁰ After her he took ^lMaachah the ³granddaughter of ^mAbsalom; and she bore him ⁿAbijah, Attai, Ziza, and Shelomith. ²¹ Now Rehoboam loved Maachah the granddaughter of Absalom more than all his ^owives and his concubines; for he took eighteen wives and sixty concubines, and begot twenty-eight sons and sixty daughters. ²² And Rehoboam ^pappointed ^qAbijah the son of Maachah as chief, *to be leader among his brothers*; for he *intended* to make him king. ²³ He dealt wisely, and ⁴dispersed some of his sons throughout all the territories of Judah and Benjamin, to every ^rfortified city; and he gave them provisions in abundance. He also sought many wives *for them*.

15 ^f [Lev. 17:7; 1 Cor. 10:20] ^g 1 Kin. 12:28
1 ⁱ Places for pagan worship
16 ^h 2 Chr. 14:7
1 ^j 2 Chr. 15:9, 10;
30:11, 18 ² Lit. *after them*
17 ^k 2 Chr. 12:1, 13
18 ^l ¹ Sam. 16:6
20 ^m 2 Chr. 13:2
ⁿ 1 Kin. 15:2
^o 1 Kin. 14:31 ³ Lit. *daughter*, but in the broader sense of granddaughter
21 ^p Deut. 17:17
22 ^q Deut. 21:15-17
^r 2 Chr. 13:1
23 ⁴ 2 Chr. 11:5
⁴ distributed

CHAPTER 12

1 ^a 2 Chr. 11:17
^b 1 Kin. 14:22-24
2 ^c 1 Kin. 11:40;
14:25
3 ^d 2 Chr. 16:8;
Nah. 3:9
5 ^e 2 Chr. 11:2
6 ^f [James 4:10]
^g Ex. 9:27; [Dan. 9:14]
7 ^h 1 Kin. 21:28, 29
8 ⁱ Is. 26:13 / [Deut. 28:47, 48]
9 ^k 1 Kin. 14:25, 26

Egypt Attacks Judah

12 Now ^ait came to pass, when Rehoboam had established the kingdom and had strengthened himself, that ^bhe forsook the law of the LORD, and all Israel along with him. ^{2c} And it happened in the fifth year of King Rehoboam *that* Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem, because they had transgressed against the LORD, ³ with twelve hundred chariots, sixty thousand horsemen, and people without number who came with him out of Egypt—^dthe Lubim and the Sukkiim and the Ethiopians. ⁴ And he took the fortified cities of Judah and came to Jerusalem.

⁵ Then ^eShemaiah the prophet came to Rehoboam and the leaders of Judah, who were gathered together in Jerusalem because of Shishak, and said to them, “Thus says the LORD: ‘You have forsaken Me, and therefore I also have left you in the hand of Shishak.’”

⁶ So the leaders of Israel and the king ^fhumbled themselves; and they said, ^g“The LORD is righteous.”

⁷ Now when the LORD saw that they humbled themselves, ^hthe word of the LORD came to Shemaiah, saying, “They have humbled themselves; *therefore* I will not destroy them, but I will grant them some deliverance. My wrath shall not be poured out on Jerusalem by the hand of Shishak. ⁸ Nevertheless ⁱthey will be his servants, that they may distinguish ^jMy service from the service of the kingdoms of the nations.”

^{9k} So Shishak king of Egypt came up

11:16 Once the legitimate religious leaders had **left** Israel, the worshipers of God in the northern kingdom could no longer worship in good conscience, so they made pilgrimages **to Jerusalem** three times a year (see 1 Kin. 12:27, 32, 33).

11:17 Jeroboam’s program of establishing a new religious structure in Israel apparently took at least **three years**. Meanwhile, the pilgrimage of godly Israelites from the north to Jerusalem

strengthened Rehoboam and weakened Jeroboam (1 Kin. 12:27).

11:18 **Mahalath** may have been David’s great-granddaughter. **Rehoboam** was David’s grandson, so in any case this marriage was within the larger royal family.

11:20 Rehoboam’s claims to legitimacy took further support from his marriage to **Maachah**, granddaughter of David’s son Absalom. Their son **Abijah** would eventually succeed Rehoboam (see 12:16).

11:22 Rehoboam named his son Abijah to be the next **king** to ensure a smooth succession following his death. Abijah probably served under or alongside Rehoboam, just as Solomon had served under David (1 Chr. 23:1).

12:1 the law: The normal Hebrew word for the Mosaic covenant, the Ten Commandments.

12:2, 3 **Egypt** was beginning to recover from a long period of decline and wanted to reestablish control over Palestine. God used their ambitions to discipline Rehoboam for abandoning the Lord.

The Lubim were the Libyans. **The Sukkiim** were other desert tribes, perhaps from western Libya. **Ethiopians:** Sometimes referred to as Cushites, these famous warriors originated in the lands south of Egypt.

12:8 In order that the Judeans might understand how privileged they were to serve God, He would allow them to become **servants** to the Egyptians. Only then would they appreciate again the joy of being God’s servant people.

12:9 **The treasures of the king’s house** that the Egyptians seized

transgressed

(Heb. *ma’al*) (12:2; Lev. 6:2; Ezek. 14:13) Strong’s #4603

The principal sense of this word is “to break a trust,” most often willfully but in some cases unintentionally (Lev. 5:15). The term is used in association with the word *sin* on several occasions (Lev. 5:15; 6:2; Ezek. 18:22–24). Transgression is almost always against the Lord and may be committed by individuals or communities, especially the covenant community (Num. 31:16; Neh. 1:6, 7; Ezek. 14:13). Also a wife can transgress against her husband, or a king can transgress by not rendering a true judgment (Num. 5:12; Prov. 16:10). The word occurs predominantly in the exilic and postexilic books. There death, military defeat, and exile are all viewed as divine judgments on Israel’s transgressions (12:1–9; 1 Chr. 10:13; Ezek. 39:23; Dan. 9:7).

against Jerusalem, and took away the treasures of the house of the LORD and the treasures of the king's house; he took everything. He also carried away the gold shields which Solomon had ¹made. ¹⁰Then King Rehoboam made bronze shields in their place, and committed them ^mto the hands of the captains of the guard, who guarded the doorway of the king's house. ¹¹And whenever the king entered the house of the LORD, the guard would go and bring them out; then they would take them back into the guardroom. ¹²When he humbled himself, the wrath of the LORD turned from him, so as not to destroy *him* completely; and things also went well in Judah.

The End of Rehoboam's Reign

¹³Thus King Rehoboam strengthened himself in Jerusalem and reigned. Now ⁿRehoboam was forty-one years old when he became king; and he reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem, ^othe city which the LORD had chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, to put His name there. His mother's name was Naamah, an ^pAmmonitess. ¹⁴And he did evil, because he did not prepare his heart to seek the LORD.

¹⁵The acts of Rehoboam, first and last, are they not written in the book of Shemaiah the prophet, ^qand of Iddo the seer concerning genealogies? ^rAnd there were wars between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all their days. ¹⁶So Rehoboam ¹rested with his fathers, and was buried in the City of David. Then ^sAbijah² his son reigned in his place.

Abijah Reigns in Judah

13 In ^athe eighteenth year of King Jeroboam, Abijah became king over ^bJudah. ²He reigned three years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was ¹Michaiah the daughter of Uriel of Gibeah.

And there was war between Abijah and Jeroboam. ³Abijah set the battle in

Shishak

Shishak was a Libyan war chieftain who became pharaoh of Egypt and reigned from about 940 to 915 B.C. In about 926 B.C., in the fifth year of the reign of King Rehoboam, Shishak invaded Judah and captured many of its fortified cities (1 Kin. 14:25). He then marched against Jerusalem, Rehoboam's capital city, forcing Rehoboam to pay tribute and plundering the treasures of the temple and Rehoboam's palace (1 Kin. 14:25, 26). The Egyptian account of Shishak's invasion of Judah was recorded on the wall of the temple of the Egyptian god Amon at Karnak (ancient Thebes), in southern Egypt. More than a hundred cities captured or destroyed by Shishak are listed, including Adoraim, Aijalon, and Socoh. Cities from the northern kingdom of Israel, such as Shechem, Beth Shean, and Megiddo, are also listed on this monument as being captured by Shishak.



Part of the Shishak List at Karnak
Baker Photo Archive

⁹ ¹ 1 Kin. 10:16, 17;
2 Chr. 9:15, 16
¹⁰ ^m 1 Kin. 14:27
¹³ ⁿ 1 Kin. 14:21
^o 2 Chr. 6:6 ^p 1 Kin.
11:1, 5
¹⁵ ^q 2 Chr. 9:29;
13:22 ^r 1 Kin. 14:30
¹⁶ ^s 2 Chr. 11:20-22
¹ Died and joined
his ancestors
² Abijah, 1 Kin.
14:31

CHAPTER 13

¹ ^a 1 Kin. 15:1
^b 1 Kin. 12:17
² ¹ Maachah, 1 Kin.
15:2; 2 Chr. 11:20, 21
⁴ ^c Josh. 18:22
⁵ ^d 2 Sam. 7:8-16
^e Lev. 2:13; Num.

order with an army of valiant warriors, four hundred thousand choice men. Jeroboam also drew up in battle formation against him with eight hundred thousand choice men, mighty men of valor.

⁴Then Abijah stood on Mount ^eZemaraim, which is in the mountains of Ephraim, and said, "Hear me, Jeroboam and all Israel: ⁵Should you not know that the LORD God of Israel ^dgave the dominion over Israel to David forever, to him and his sons, ^eby a covenant of salt? ⁶Yet Jeroboam the son of Nebat, the servant of Solomon the son of David, rose up and ^frebelled against his lord. ⁷Then ^gworthless

18:19 ⁶ ¹ 1 Kin. 11:28; 12:20 ⁷ ^g Judg. 9:4

had been spoils of war captured by David and dedicated to God (1 Chr. 18:6-8; 22:14). Judah was now a vassal state of Egypt.

12:12 The king's conduct had inevitable consequences on the nation. When a king obeyed God, the Lord would bless the nation. When the king turned away from the Lord, his subjects would suffer. But when the king repented and **humbled himself** before God, God's forgiveness and restoration would cover both him and his kingdom.

12:14 did not prepare his heart to seek the Lord: Note the differences between David, Solomon, Rehoboam, and Abijah (in ch. 13). David, a man of God (see 8:14), died at a very old age with riches and honor. Solomon died wise, rich, and powerful. But Rehoboam **did evil**. As a result, he fought wars throughout most of his troubled reign. Abijah followed Rehoboam's example of not honoring God (13:8-18).

13:4 Mount Zemaraim was a few miles southwest of Bethel (see Josh. 18:22).

13:5 covenant of salt: Salt was a preservative and symbolized durability—an apt description of the eternal Davidic covenant (see Lev. 2:13; Num. 18:19). **Israel** refers to the whole nation, not just the northern kingdom.

13:6 Abijah blamed the division of the kingdom on **Jeroboam**, not Rehoboam, or even Solomon (see 10:16). But Jeroboam's rebellion was fueled by Solomon's disobedience to the covenant and his harsh policies. Moreover, Rehoboam's foolish plan to increase the severity of those abuses infuriated the Israelites even more. The blame lay with all three—Jeroboam, Rehoboam, and Solomon.

13:7, 8 Abijah's version of the nation's division put his father in a relatively good light. According to Abijah, if Rehoboam had made any mistakes, it was merely because he was **young and**

rogues gathered to him, and strengthened themselves against Rehoboam the son of Solomon, when Rehoboam was ^hyoung and inexperienced and could not withstand them. ⁸ And now you think to withstand the kingdom of the LORD, which is in the hand of the sons of David; and you *are* a great multitude, and with you *are* the gold calves which Jeroboam ⁱmade for you as gods. ^{9j} Have you not cast out the priests of the LORD, the sons of Aaron, and the Levites, and made for yourselves priests, like the peoples of *other* lands, ^kso that whoever comes to consecrate himself with a young bull and seven rams may be a priest of ^l*things that are* not gods? ¹⁰ But as for us, the LORD *is* our ^mGod, and we have not forsaken Him; and the priests who minister to the LORD *are* the sons of Aaron, and the Levites *attend* to *their* duties. ¹¹ⁿ And they burn to the LORD every morning and every evening burnt sacrifices and sweet incense; *they* also *set* the ^oshowbread *in order* on the pure *gold* table, and the lampstand of gold with its lamps ^pto burn every evening; for we keep the command of the LORD our God, but you have forsaken Him. ¹² Now look, God Himself is with us as *our* ^qhead, ^rand His priests with sounding trumpets to sound the alarm against you. O children of Israel, do not fight against the LORD God of your fathers, for you shall not prosper!”

¹³ But Jeroboam caused an ambush to go around behind them; so they were in front of Judah, and the ambush *was* behind them. ¹⁴ And when Judah looked around, to their surprise the battle line *was* at both front and rear; and they ^scried out to the LORD, and the priests sounded the trumpets. ¹⁵ Then the men of Judah gave a shout; and as the men of Judah shouted, it happened that God ^tstruck Jeroboam and all Israel before Abijah and Judah. ¹⁶ And the children of

^{7 h} 2 Chr. 12:13
^{8 i} 1 Kin. 12:28; 14:9;
2 Chr. 11:15; [Hos.
8:4-6]
^{9 j} 2 Chr. 11:13-15
^k Ex. 29:29-33 /Jer.
2:11; 5:7
^{10 m} Josh. 24:15
^{11 n} Ex. 29:38;
2 Chr. 2:4 ° Ex.
25:30; Lev. 24:5-9
^p Ex. 27:20, 21; Lev.
24:2, 3
^{12 q} Josh. 5:13-15;
[Heb. 2:10] ° [Num.
10:8-10]
^{14 r} Josh. 24:7;
2 Chr. 6:34, 35; 14:11
^{15 t} 1 Kin. 14:14;
2 Chr. 14:12

^{18 u} 1 Chr. 5:20;
2 Chr. 14:11; [Ps.
22:5]
^{19 v} Josh. 15:9 ° Or
Ephron
^{20 w} 1 Sam. 2:6;
25:38; Acts 12:23
^x 1 Kin. 14:20
^{22 y} 2 Chr. 9:29 ° Or
commentary, Heb.
midrash

CHAPTER 14
^{1 a} 1 Kin. 15:8
^{3 b} 1 Kin. 15:14;
2 Chr. 15:17 ° [Ex.
34:13] ° 1 Kin. 11:7
⁷ Places for pagan
worship
^{4 c} [2 Chr. 7:14]
^{5 d} Places for pagan
worship
^{6 f} 2 Chr. 15:15

Israel fled before Judah, and God delivered them into their hand. ¹⁷ Then Abijah and his people struck them with a great slaughter; so five hundred thousand choice men of Israel fell slain. ¹⁸ Thus the children of Israel were subdued at that time; and the children of Judah prevailed, ^ubecause they relied on the LORD God of their fathers.

¹⁹ And Abijah pursued Jeroboam and took cities from him: Bethel with its villages, Jeshanah with its villages, and ^vEphrain² with its villages. ²⁰ So Jeroboam did not recover strength again in the days of Abijah; and the LORD ^wstruck him, and ^xhe died.

²¹ But Abijah grew mighty, married fourteen wives, and begot twenty-two sons and sixteen daughters. ²² Now the rest of the acts of Abijah, his ways, and his sayings *are* written in ^ythe ³annals of the prophet Iddo.

14 So Abijah rested with his fathers, and they buried him in the City of David. Then ^aAsa his son reigned in his place. In his days the land was quiet for ten years.

Asa Reigns in Judah

² Asa did *what was* good and right in the eyes of the LORD his God, ³for he removed the altars of the foreign *gods* and ^bthe ¹high places, and ^cbroke down the *sacred* pillars ^dand cut down the wooden images. ⁴ He commanded Judah to ^eseek the LORD God of their fathers, and to observe the law and the commandment. ⁵ He also removed the ²high places and the incense altars from all the cities of Judah, and the kingdom was quiet under him. ⁶ And he built fortified cities in Judah, for the land had rest; he had no war in those years, because the LORD had given him ^frest. ⁷ Therefore he said to Judah, “Let us build these cities and make

inexperienced. Abijah further equated the kingdom of Judah with the kingdom of the LORD, making the victory of Judah over Israel sound like a foregone conclusion. This was a misrepresentation of the truth (see v. 6) designed to scare the Israelites.

13:9 Jeroboam’s illicit religion filled the priestly ranks with anyone who had the means to purchase the office. Thus Abijah asserted that all a person had to do to **consecrate himself** was to come with the appropriate sacrifices (1 Kin. 12:31; see Lev. 8:2). But Abijah’s words were hypocritical, for the same evil deeds were going on in his own kingdom (see 14:2–5).

13:10, 11 The **priests** of Judah were true priests, who traced their ancestry to **Aaron** as the Law required (see 1 Chr. 6:1–15). Throughout the passage the contrast is between the authorized worship at Jerusalem and the illicit practice of religion at Dan and Bethel. In summary, Abijah argued that Judah had remained true to God while Israel had **forsaken Him**.

13:19 Among the Israelite cities that fell to Judah was none other than **Bethel**, the southern center of the false religious cult that

Jeroboam had established (see 1 Kin. 12:29). **Jeshanah** may have been some six miles north of Bethel. **Ephrain**, otherwise known as Ephron, lay four miles northeast of Bethel.

13:21 One of the gauges of a king’s power and prosperity was the size of his family.

14:1 Abijah’s son **Asa** reigned for 41 years, until 870 B.C. (see 16:13). **ten years:** This suggests that during the first ten years of Asa’s reign there was peace between Judah and Israel (see v. 6).

14:3 Sacred pillars were stone posts associated with Canaanite fertility rites. **Wooden images** were fashioned from live evergreen trees, which were regarded as a fertility symbol, since they retain their leaves throughout the year. Eventually, cut poles took the place of live trees, because they could be erected anywhere, even in places where trees did not grow.

14:6 Rehoboam had **built fortified cities** in his time, but Shishak of Egypt had destroyed them (11:5–12; 12:2–4). It is likely that Asa merely rebuilt them. The phrase **in those years** refers to the first ten years of Asa’s reign, the years of peace (v. 1).

walls around *them*, and towers, gates, and bars, *while* the land is yet before us, because we have sought the LORD our God; we have sought *Him*, and He has given us rest on every side.” So they built and prospered. ⁸And Asa had an army of three hundred thousand from Judah who carried ³shields and spears, and from Benjamin two hundred and eighty thousand men who carried shields and drew ^gbows; all these *were* mighty men of ^hvalor.

⁹ⁱThen Zerah the Ethiopian came out against them with an army of a million men and three hundred chariots, and he came to ^jMareshah. ¹⁰So Asa went out against him, and they set the troops in battle array in the Valley of Zephathah at Mareshah. ¹¹And Asa ^kcried out to the LORD his God, and said, “LORD, *it is* ^lnothing for You to help, whether with many or with those who have no power; help us, O LORD our God, for we rest on You, and ^min Your name we go against this multitude. O LORD, You *are* our God; do not let man prevail against You!”

¹²So the LORD ⁿstruck the Ethiopians before Asa and Judah, and the Ethiopians fled. ¹³And Asa and the people who *were* with him pursued them to ^oGerar. So the Ethiopians were overthrown, and they could not recover, for they were broken before the LORD and His army. And they carried away very much ⁴spoil. ¹⁴Then they defeated all the cities around Gerar, for ^pthe fear of the LORD came upon them; and they plundered all the cities, for there was exceedingly much ⁵spoil in them. ¹⁵They also ⁶attacked the livestock enclosures, and carried off sheep and camels in abundance, and returned to Jerusalem.

The Reforms of Asa

15 Now ^athe Spirit of God came upon Azariah the son of Oded. ²And he

⁸ ^g 1 Chr. 12:2
^h 2 Chr. 13:3 ³ large shields
⁹ ⁱ 2 Chr. 12:2, 3; 16:8 / Josh. 15:44
¹¹ ^k Ex. 14:10; 2 Chr. 13:14; [Ps. 22:5] ^l [1 Sam. 14:6] ^m 1 Sam. 17:45; [Prov. 18:10]
¹² ⁿ 2 Chr. 13:15
¹³ ^o Gen. 10:19; 20:1 ⁴ plunder
¹⁴ ^p Gen. 35:5; Deut. 11:25; Josh. 2:9; 2 Chr. 17:10
⁵ plunder
¹⁵ ^o Lit. struck

CHAPTER 15

¹ ^o Num. 24:2; Judg. 3:10; 2 Chr. 20:14; 24:20

² ^o [James 4:8]
³ ⁱ [1 Chr. 28:9]; 2 Chr. 14:4; 33:12, 13; [Jer. 29:13; Matt. 7:7]
⁴ 2 Chr. 24:20 ^l Lit. before
⁵ Hos. 3:4 ² Kin. 12:2 ^g Lev. 10:11; 2 Chr. 17:8, 9
⁶ ⁿ [Deut. 4:29]
⁶ ⁱ Matt. 24:7 ² Lit. beaten in pieces
⁸ 2 Chr. 13:19 ³ So with MT, LXX; Syr., Vg. Azariah the son of Oded (cf. v. 1)
⁹ ^k 2 Chr. 11:16
¹¹ ² Chr. 14:13-15
⁴ Lit. in that day
⁵ plunder
¹² ^m 2 Kin. 23:3; 2 Chr. 23:16; 34:31; Neh. 10:29
¹³ ⁿ Ex. 22:20
^o Deut. 13:5-15

went out ¹ to meet Asa, and said to him: “Hear me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin. ^bThe LORD *is* with you while you are with Him. ^cIf you seek Him, He will be found by you; but ^dif you forsake Him, He will forsake you. ^{3e}For a long time Israel *has been* without the true God, without a ^fteaching priest, and without ^glaw; ⁴but ^hwhen in their trouble they turned to the LORD God of Israel, and sought Him, He was found by them. ⁵And in those times *there was* no peace to the one who went out, nor to the one who came in, but great turmoil *was* on all the inhabitants of the lands. ⁶ⁱSo nation was ²destroyed by nation, and city by city, for God troubled them with every adversity. ⁷But you, be strong and do not let your hands be weak, for your work shall be rewarded!”

⁸And when Asa heard these words and the prophecy of ³Oded the prophet, he took courage, and removed the abominable idols from all the land of Judah and Benjamin and from the cities ^jwhich he had taken in the mountains of Ephraim; and he restored the altar of the LORD *that was* before the vestibule of the LORD. ⁹Then he gathered all Judah and Benjamin, and ^kthose who dwelt with them from Ephraim, Manasseh, and Simeon, for they came over to him in great numbers from Israel when they saw that the LORD his God was with him.

¹⁰So they gathered together at Jerusalem in the third month, in the fifteenth year of the reign of Asa. ¹¹And they offered to the LORD ⁴at that time seven hundred bulls and seven thousand sheep from the ⁵spoil they had brought. ¹²Then they ^mentered into a covenant to seek the LORD God of their fathers with all their heart and with all their soul; ¹³ⁿand whoever would not seek the LORD God of Israel ^owas to be put to death, whether small or great, whether man or woman.

14:9 Since Egypt was strong at this time (12:3) and fully in control of its own territory, it is likely that **Zerah** and his large army were mercenaries of the Egyptian king Osorkon I (914–874 B.C.), successor to Shishak. **Mareshah** was one of Asa’s important fortified cities, about 25 miles southwest of Jerusalem (11:8). It was near the Via Maris, the coastal highway connecting Egypt and Canaan, making it strategically important.

14:10 The **Valley of Zephathah** was on the north side of Mareshah. **14:11** *it is nothing for You to help:* Asa showed great faith in his prayer before the battle against Zerah’s huge army. **in Your name:** Asa believed that God was on his side and that Zerah’s attack was aimed at the Lord as well as at God’s people (see 13:8, 12, 14, 15).

14:13, 14 **Gerar** was at the frontier between Egypt and Canaan and might have been in Egyptian territory at this time.

15:3–5 **For a long time:** Much of what Azariah said to Asa could be said of the era of the judges, a time marked by long years of apostasy, ignorance, and lawlessness (see Judg. 18:1; 21:25). **in their trouble:** These times were difficult. The Israelites were constantly

being invaded and harassed. But when circumstances looked most hopeless, the people cried out to God in repentance, and He delivered them (see Judg. 2:11–19). **no peace:** Beside the dangers of war, the continual perils of robbery and crime plagued the nation, a point expressly made in the Song of Deborah (Judg. 5:6, 7).

15:9 Along with godly priests and Levites (see 11:13–17), many of the ordinary citizens of Israel **came over to** Judah when they saw Asa’s zeal for God, and God’s blessing upon him.

15:10 The **third month** quite likely locates this festival at the time of the firstfruits, the Feast of Pentecost (see Lev. 23:15–21; Num. 28:26–31).

15:11 **Spoil** likely refers to the animals taken from the Ethiopians after Asa’s victory over Zerah (14:15). If so, the battle of Mareshah (see 14:9, 10) must have taken place right before this event.

15:12 Asa gathered an assembly to reaffirm Israel’s **covenant** (or promise) to seek the Lord. The nation had assembled before to renew their commitment to God (Deut. 27:9, 10; 29:1; 31:10–13; Josh. 8:30–35; 24:1–28).

¹⁴Then they took an oath before the LORD with a loud voice, with shouting and trumpets and rams' horns. ¹⁵And all Judah rejoiced at the oath, for they had sworn with all their heart and ¹⁶sought Him with all their soul; and He was found by them, and the LORD gave them ¹⁷rest all around.

¹⁶Also he removed ¹⁷Maachah, the ¹⁸mother of Asa the king, from *being* queen mother, because she had made an obscene image of ¹⁹Asherah; and Asa cut down her obscene image, then crushed and burned *it* by the Brook Kidron. ²⁰But ²¹the ²²high places were not removed from Israel. Nevertheless the heart of Asa was loyal all his days.

¹⁸He also brought into the house of God the things that his father had dedicated and that he himself had dedicated: silver and gold and utensils. ¹⁹And there was no war until the thirty-fifth year of the reign of Asa.

Asa's Treaty with Syria

16 In the thirty-sixth year of the reign of Asa, ¹Baasha king of Israel came up against Judah and built Ramah, ²that he might let none go out or come in to Asa king of Judah. ³Then Asa brought silver and gold from the treasures of the house of the LORD and of the king's house, and sent to Ben-Hadad king of Syria, who dwelt in Damascus, saying, ⁴*Let there be a treaty between you and me, as there was between my father and your father. See, I have sent you silver and gold; come, break your treaty with Baasha king of Israel, so that he will withdraw from me.*

⁴So Ben-Hadad heeded King Asa, and sent the captains of his armies against the cities of Israel. They attacked Ijon, Dan,

¹⁵ ¹⁶ 2 Chr. 15:2
¹⁶ 2 Chr. 14:7
¹⁶ 1 Kin. 15:2,
10, 13
¹⁶ Or
grandmother ¹⁷ A
Canaanite deity
¹⁷ 1 Kin. 15:14;
2 Chr. 14:3, 5
¹⁸ Places for pagan
worship

CHAPTER 16

¹ 1 Kin. 15:17-22
² 2 Chr. 15:9

⁷ 1 Kin. 16:1; 2 Chr.
19:2
⁸ 2 Chr. 32:8-
10; Ps. 118:9; [Is.
31:1; Jer. 17:5]
⁸ 2 Chr. 14:9
¹² 2 Chr. 12:3
⁹ 2 Chr. 13:16, 18
⁹ Job 34:21; [Prov.
5:21; 15:3; Jer.
16:17; 32:19]; Zech.
4:10
¹ 1 Sam. 13:13
¹ 1 Kin. 15:32
¹⁰ 2 Chr. 18:26;
Jer. 20:2; Matt. 14:3
¹¹ 1 Kin. 15:23, 24;
2 Chr. 14:2
¹² [Jer. 17:5]
¹³ 1 Kin. 15:24
¹ Died and joined
his ancestors
¹⁴ 2 Lit. *dug*

Abel Maim, and all the storage cities of Naphtali. ⁵Now it happened, when Baasha heard *it*, that he stopped building Ramah and ceased his work. ⁶Then King Asa took all Judah, and they carried away the stones and timber of Ramah, which Baasha had used for building; and with them he built Geba and Mizpah.

Hanani's Message to Asa

⁷And at that time ⁸Hanani the seer came to Asa king of Judah, and said to him: ⁹*“Because you have relied on the king of Syria, and have not relied on the LORD your God, therefore the army of the king of Syria has escaped from your hand. ¹⁰Were ¹¹the Ethiopians and ¹²the Lubim not a huge army with very many chariots and horsemen? Yet, because you relied on the LORD, He delivered them into your ¹³hand. ¹⁴For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him. In this ¹⁵you have done foolishly; therefore from now on ¹⁶you shall have wars.”* ¹⁷Then Asa was angry with the seer, and ¹⁸put him in prison, for *he* was enraged at him because of this. And Asa oppressed *some* of the people at that time.

Illness and Death of Asa

¹¹Note that the acts of Asa, first and last, are indeed written in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel. ¹²And in the thirty-ninth year of his reign, Asa became diseased in his feet, and his malady was severe; yet in his disease he ¹³did not seek the LORD, and ¹⁴the physicians.

¹³So Asa ¹⁴rested with his fathers; he died in the forty-first year of his reign. ¹⁵They buried him in his own tomb, which he had ¹⁶made for himself in the

15:14 Taking an oath was an essential part of covenant-making (Ex. 24:7, 8; Deut. 27:11–26; 29:12). The people declared their determination to keep the covenant and agreed to accept God's judgment if they broke it.

15:15 The conflict with Zerah the Ethiopian (14:9) had broken the ten-year period of peace at the start of Asa's reign (14:1). After winning the war and renewing the covenant with God, Judah once again had **rest all around**.

15:16 **Maachah** is called Asa's **mother**, a Hebrew word that can also mean *grandmother*. Maachah was the mother of Asa's father, Abijah (see 13:2). Still, Asa demoted her **from being queen mother** because she had set up pagan idols—a courageous and delicate task for anyone, even a king.

15:17 **high places were not removed from Israel**: Asa destroyed the high places of Judah, but not those of Israel (see 14:3, 5).

15:18 **silver and gold and utensils**: These items were taken as spoils of war and **dedicated** to the worship of God; they could not then be used for any other purpose (1 Chr. 18:8; 26:20).

16:2, 3 The **treasures of the house of the LORD** were items of value stored in the temple as ordinary revenue (see 1 Chr. 26:20). They did not include things dedicated to the Lord (see 15:18). Asa

used these treasures to secure Ben-Hadad's assistance against **Baasha king of Israel**.

16:4 **Ijon** was in the tribal territory of Naphtali, some ten miles north of **Dan** and 35 miles north of the Sea of Galilee. **Abel Maim** was only three miles west of Dan. **Naphtali** was the most northern tribal territory of Israel, very close to Damascus.

16:6 Diverted by attacks from the north, **Baasha** left **Ramah** unfinished (v. 5). Asa, the king of Judah, took advantage of the situation and built his own fortifications at **Geba**, just east of Ramah, and at **Mizpah**, between Ramah and Bethel. Ramah ended up between Asa's fortresses and the Israelites could not rebuild it.

16:7–9 **Hanani the seer** was probably the father of another prophet Jehu, who once challenged King Jehoshaphat of Judah (see 19:2; 20:34).

16:12 **diseased in his feet**: Asa may have been suffering from gout, a common disease in the ancient world. For his malady Asa **did not seek the LORD, but the physicians**. The problem was not that Asa used doctors, but that he failed to turn to God during his sickness.

16:14 **great burning**: This had nothing to do with cremation, but was the burning of spices and perfumes to mourn a king's death (see 21:19).

City of David; and they laid him in the bed which was filled ^awith spices and various ingredients prepared in a mixture of ointments. They made ^ba very great burning for him.

Jehoshaphat Reigns in Judah

17 Then ^aJehoshaphat his son reigned in his place, and strengthened himself against Israel. ²And he placed troops in all the fortified cities of Judah, and set garrisons in the land of ^bJudah and in the cities of Ephraim ^cwhich Asa his father had taken. ³Now the LORD was with Jehoshaphat, because he walked in the former ways of his father David; he did not seek the Baals, ⁴but sought ¹the God of his father, and walked in His commandments and not according to ^dthe acts of Israel. ⁵Therefore the LORD established the kingdom in his hand; and all Judah ^egave presents to Jehoshaphat, ^fand he had riches and honor in abundance. ⁶And his heart took delight in the ways of the LORD; moreover ^ghe removed the ²high places and wooden images from Judah.

⁷Also in the third year of his reign he sent his leaders, Ben-Hail, Obadiah, Zechariah, Nethanel, and Michaiiah, ^hto teach in the cities of Judah. ⁸And with them *he sent* Levites: Shemaiah, Nathaniah, Zebadiah, Asahel, Shemiramoth, Jehonathan, Adonijah, Tobijah, and Tobadonijah—the Levites; and with them Elishama and Jehoram, the priests. ⁹ⁱSo they taught in Judah, and *had* the Book of the Law of the LORD with them; they went throughout all the cities of Judah and taught the people.

¹⁰And ^jthe fear of the LORD fell on all the kingdoms of the lands that *were* around Judah, so that they did not make war against Jehoshaphat. ¹¹Also *some* of the Philistines ^kbrought Jehoshaphat presents and silver as tribute;

14 ^o Gen. 50:2; Mark 16:1; John 19:39, 40 ^p 2 Chr. 21:19; Jer. 34:5

CHAPTER 17

1 ^a 1 Kin. 15:24; 2 Chr. 20:31
2 ^b 2 Chr. 11:5
3 ^c 2 Chr. 15:8
4 ^d 1 Kin. 12:28
5 ^e LXX the LORD God
5 ^f 1 Sam. 10:27; 1 Kin. 10:25 ^g 2 Chr. 18:1
6 ^h 1 Kin. 22:43; 2 Chr. 15:17; 19:3; 20:33 ⁱ 2 Places for pagan worship
7 ^j 2 Chr. 15:3; 35:3
9 ^k Deut. 6:4-9; 2 Chr. 35:3; Neh. 8:3, 7
10 ^l Gen. 35:5; 2 Chr. 14:14
11 ^m 2 Sam. 8:2; 2 Chr. 9:14; 26:8

16 ⁿ Judg. 5:2, 9; 1 Chr. 29:9
19 ^o 2 Chr. 17:2

CHAPTER 18

1 ^a 2 Chr. 17:5
2 ^b 1 Kin. 22:44; 2 Kin. 8:18 ^c 1 Kin. 22:40
2 ^d [Ex. 23:2]; 1 Kin. 22:2

and the Arabians brought him flocks, seven thousand seven hundred rams and seven thousand seven hundred male goats.

¹²So Jehoshaphat became increasingly powerful, and he built fortresses and storage cities in Judah. ¹³He had much property in the cities of Judah; and the men of war, mighty men of valor, *were* in Jerusalem.

¹⁴These *are* their numbers, according to their fathers' houses. Of Judah, the captains of thousands: Adnah the captain, and with him three hundred thousand mighty men of valor; ¹⁵and next to him *was* Jehohanan the captain, and with him two hundred and eighty thousand; ¹⁶and next to him *was* Amasiah the son of Zichri, ¹who willingly offered himself to the LORD, and with him two hundred thousand mighty men of valor. ¹⁷Of Benjamin: Eliada a mighty man of valor, and with him two hundred thousand men armed with bow and shield; ¹⁸and next to him *was* Jehozabad, and with him one hundred and eighty thousand prepared for war. ¹⁹These served the king, besides ^mthose the king put in the fortified cities throughout all Judah.

Micaiah Warns Ahab

18 Jehoshaphat ^ahad riches and honor in abundance; and by marriage he ^ballied himself with ^cAhab. ²^dAfter some years he went down to *visit* Ahab in Samaria; and Ahab killed sheep and oxen in abundance for him and the people who were with him, and persuaded him to go up *with him* to Ramoth Gilead. ³So Ahab king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat king of Judah, "Will you go with me *against* Ramoth Gilead?"

And he answered him, "I *am* as you *are*, and my people as your people; *we will* be with you in the war."

⁴Also Jehoshaphat said to the king of

17:2 cities of Ephraim: Ephraim is a synonym for Israel. The cities referred to here are mentioned also in 15:8; they could include Ramah, Geba, and Mizpah as well (16:6), depending on fluctuations of the border between Israel and Judah.

17:3 Jehoshaphat was the first king since David who **walked in the former ways of his father David**. He obeyed God's commandments and took delight in the Lord's ways.

17:9 The Book of the Law refers to the five books of Moses, the Pentateuch. When Moses passed the leadership of Israel on to Joshua he instructed him never to let "this Book of the Law" depart from his mouth (Josh. 1:8). Unfortunately, Jehoshaphat's initiative in sending out teachers to instruct the nation in God's laws was not the norm (see 15:3).

17:11 There is no record of Jehoshaphat conquering Philistia, but he was powerful enough to compel at least some of the **Philistines** to pay **tribute** to his sovereignty. Up to this point, only David had obtained such respect (see 1 Chr. 18:2).

17:13-18 Jehoshaphat's **men of war** were grouped into three di-

visions of Judeans with a total number of 780,000 (vv. 14-16), and two divisions of Benjamites numbering 380,000 (vv. 17, 18). The Hebrew word for **thousand** can also mean "clan" (as in Judg. 6:15; 1 Sam. 10:19) or "village" (as in Mic. 5:2), and possibly "company" in a military context. Thus 780,000 may refer to 780 companies and 380,000 to 380 companies. The totals would then be nearer to 78,000 and 38,000.

17:19 Jehoshaphat's troops were stationed at Jerusalem. He had additional forces **in the fortified cities throughout** the countryside.

18:1 Jehoshaphat **allied himself with Ahab** by arranging for his son Jehoram to marry Ahab's daughter Athaliah (see 21:5, 6; 22:2).

18:2 Ahab died in battle a few days after Jehoshaphat's **visit** (v. 34). **Ramoth Gilead:** This important city some 35 miles east of Beth Shan was controlled by the Arameans. It was also one of the Israelite cities of refuge (Josh. 20:8; 1 Chr. 6:80).

18:3 I am as you are: Jehoshaphat was referring to the intermarriage of their families (v. 1).

Israel, “Please inquire for the word of the LORD today.”

⁵Then the king of Israel gathered the prophets together, four hundred men, and said to them, “Shall we go to war against Ramoth Gilead, or shall I refrain?”

So they said, “Go up, for God will deliver it into the king’s hand.”

⁶But Jehoshaphat said, “*Is there* not still a prophet of the LORD here, that we may inquire of *him*?”¹

⁷So the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, “*There is* still one man by whom we may inquire of the LORD; but I hate him, because he never prophesies good concerning me, but always evil. He is Micaiah the son of Imla.”

And Jehoshaphat said, “Let not the king say such things!”

⁸Then the king of Israel called one of his officers and said, “Bring Micaiah the son of Imla quickly!”

⁹The king of Israel and Jehoshaphat king of Judah, clothed in their robes, sat each on his throne; and they sat at a threshing floor at the entrance of the gate of Samaria; and all the prophets prophesied before them. ¹⁰Now Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah had made *horns* of iron for himself; and he said, “Thus says the LORD: ‘With these you shall gore the Syrians until they are destroyed.’”

¹¹And all the prophets prophesied so, saying, “Go up to Ramoth Gilead and prosper, for the LORD will deliver it into the king’s hand.”

¹²Then the messenger who had gone to call Micaiah spoke to him, saying, “Now listen, the words of the prophets with one accord encourage the king. Therefore please let your word be like the word of one of them, and speak encouragement.”

¹³And Micaiah said, “As the LORD lives, *whatever* my God says, that I will speak.”

¹⁴Then he came to the king; and the king said to him, “Micaiah, shall we go

4 ^e 1 Sam. 23:2, 4, 9;
2 Sam. 2:1
6 ^f 2 Kin. 3:11 ¹ Or him
10 ^g Zech. 1:18-21
13 ^h Num. 22:18-20,
35; 23:12, 26; 1 Kin.
22:14

16 ⁱ Jer. 23:1-8;
31:10j / Num. 27:17;
1 Kin. 22:17; [Ezek.
34:5-8]; Matt. 9:36;
Mark 6:34
18 ^k Is. 6:1-5; Dan.
7:9, 10
20 ^l Job 1:6;
2 Thess. 2:9
22 ^m Job 12:16, 17;
Is. 19:12-14; Ezek.
14:9
23 ⁿ Jer. 20:2; Mark
14:65; Acts 23:2

to war against Ramoth Gilead, or shall I refrain?”

And he said, “Go and prosper, and they shall be delivered into your hand!”

¹⁵So the king said to him, “How many times shall I make you swear that you tell me nothing but the truth in the name of the LORD?”

¹⁶Then he said, “I saw all Israel *i*scattered on the mountains, as sheep that have no *j*shepherd. And the LORD said, ‘These have no master. Let each return to his house in peace.’”

¹⁷And the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, “Did I not tell you he would not prophesy good concerning me, but evil?”

¹⁸Then Micaiah said, “Therefore hear the word of the LORD: I saw the LORD sitting on His *k*throne, and all the host of heaven standing on His right hand and His left. ¹⁹And the LORD said, ‘Who will persuade Ahab king of Israel to go up, that he may fall at Ramoth Gilead?’ So one spoke in this manner, and another spoke in that manner. ²⁰Then a *l*spirit came forward and stood before the LORD, and said, ‘I will persuade him.’ The LORD said to him, ‘In what way?’ ²¹So he said, ‘I will go out and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.’ And the LORD said, ‘You shall persuade *him* and also prevail; go out and do so.’ ²²Therefore look! ^mThe LORD has put a lying spirit in the mouth of these prophets of yours, and the LORD has declared disaster against you.”

²³Then Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah went near and *n*struck Micaiah on the cheek, and said, “Which way did the spirit from the LORD go from me to speak to you?”

²⁴And Micaiah said, “Indeed you shall see on that day when you go into an inner chamber to hide!”

²⁵Then the king of Israel said, “Take Micaiah, and return him to Amon the

18:5 The prophets were probably prophets of Asherah, the Canaanite goddess worshiped by Ahab's wife Jezebel (see v. 6; 1 Kin. 18:19).

18:9 The entrance of the gate often led to a large open place in Israelite cities. Public assemblies could convene there or in rooms built into the sides of the gateway. The threshing floor was a large, flat area where grain was separated from straw (see 1 Chr. 21:15). The threshing floor of Ornan was just outside the walls of Jerusalem, where the winds could blow away the chaff. This is probably where the kings had set up their thrones.

18:10 Horns symbolize strength in the OT, so horns of iron would represent great strength (see Zech. 1:18–21).

18:11 In this context, prophesied suggests rantings and ravings typical of the demon-possessed false prophets of Canaan (see 1 Kin. 18:26–29), not true prophecy.

18:13 whatever my God says: The true prophets' prophecies come directly from God. Their words are God's words.

18:15 Ahab knew from experience that his prophets told him what they thought he wanted to hear, not the truth. Because their prophecies agreed with Micaiah's, he knew that Micaiah must have been lying when he prophesied success.

18:16 The Bible often uses sheep and shepherd as metaphors for the people of a nation and their king (see 1 Chr. 17:6, 7). no master: This is a prediction of Ahab's death (v. 34).

18:18 Micaiah saw the Lord in heaven. Here we see God's sovereignty over all. The spirits who stood before Him were both angels and demons, and none could act without God's permission.

18:21, 22 A lying spirit was a demon whom the Lord allowed to deceive the prophets. God cannot lie (see Num. 23:19), but He does allow others to do so. In this sense, God put a lying spirit in the mouth of Ahab's prophets.

governor of the city and to Joash the king's son; ²⁶and say, "Thus says the king: ^a"Put this *fellow* in prison, and feed him with bread of affliction and water of affliction, until I return in peace."'"

²⁷But Micaiah said, "If you ever return in peace, the LORD has not spoken by *me*." And he said, "Take heed, all you people!"

Ahab Dies in Battle

²⁸So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah went up to Ramoth Gilead. ²⁹And the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "I will ^adisguise myself and go into battle; but you put on your robes." So the king of Israel disguised himself, and they went into battle.

³⁰Now the king of Syria had commanded the captains of the chariots who *were* with him, saying, "Fight with no one small or great, but only with the king of Israel."

³¹So it was, when the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat, that they said, "It is the king of Israel!" Therefore they surrounded him to attack; but Jehoshaphat ^ccried out, and the LORD helped him, and God diverted them from him. ³²For so it was, when the captains of the chariots saw that it was not the king of Israel, that they turned back from pursuing him. ³³Now a certain man drew a bow at random, and struck the king of Israel between the ²joints of his armor. So he said to the driver of his chariot, "Turn around and take me out of the battle, for I am wounded." ³⁴The battle increased that day, and the king of Israel propped *himself* up in *his* chariot facing the Syrians until evening; and about the time of sunset he died.

19 Then Jehoshaphat the king of Judah returned safely to his house in Jerusalem. ²And Jehu the son of Hanani ^athe seer went out to meet him, and said to King Jehoshaphat, "Should you help

²⁶ ^a 2 Chr. 16:10
²⁷ ^p Deut. 18:22
²⁹ ^a 2 Chr. 35:22
³¹ ^r 2 Chr. 13:14, 15
³³ ² Or *scale armor and the breastplate*

CHAPTER 19

² ^a 1 Sam. 9:9;
 1 Kin. 16:1; 2 Chr.
 20:34

^b Ps. 139:21 ^c 2 Chr. 32:25
³ ^d 2 Chr. 17:4, 6
^e 2 Chr. 30:19 ¹ Or *Asherim*, Heb. *Asheroth*
⁴ ^r 2 Chr. 15:8-13
⁵ ^a [Deut. 16:18-20]
⁶ ^a [Lev. 19:15; Deut. 1:17]; Ps. 58:1
⁷ Ps. 82:1; [Eccl. 5:8]
² Lit. *in the matter of the judgment*
⁷ [Gen. 18:25; Deut. 32:4]; Rom. 9:17 ^k [Deut. 10:17, 18; Job 34:19]; Acts 10:34; Rom. 2:11; Gal. 2:6; [Eph. 6:9; Col. 3:25]
⁸ ¹ Deut. 16:18;
 2 Chr. 17:8 ³ LXX, Vg. *for the inhabitants of Jerusalem*
⁹ ^m [2 Sam. 23:3]
¹⁰ ⁿ Deut. 17:8
^o Num. 16:46
^p [Ezek. 3:18]
¹¹ ^q Ezra 7:3 ^r 1 Chr. 26:30 ^s [2 Chr. 15:2; 20:17]

the wicked and ^blove those who hate the LORD? Therefore the ^cwrath of the LORD is upon you. ³Nevertheless ^dgood things are found in you, in that you have removed the ¹wooden images from the land, and have ^eprepared your heart to seek God."

The Reforms of Jehoshaphat

⁴So Jehoshaphat dwelt at Jerusalem; and he went out again among the people from Beersheba to the mountains of Ephraim, and brought them back to the LORD God of their ^ffathers. ⁵Then he set ^gjudges in the land throughout all the fortified cities of Judah, city by city, ⁶and said to the judges, "Take heed to what you are doing, for ^hyou do not judge for man but for the LORD, ⁱwho is with you ²in the judgment. ⁷Now therefore, let the fear of the LORD be upon you; take care and do *it*, for ^jthere is no iniquity with the LORD our God, no ^kpartiality, nor taking of bribes."

⁸Moreover in Jerusalem, for the judgment of the LORD and for controversies, Jehoshaphat ^lappointed some of the Levites and priests, and some of the chief fathers of Israel, ³when they returned to Jerusalem. ⁹And he commanded them, saying, "Thus you shall act ^min the fear of the LORD, faithfully and with a loyal heart: ¹⁰ⁿ Whatever case comes to you from your brethren who dwell in their cities, whether of bloodshed or offenses against law or commandment, against statutes or ordinances, you shall warn them, lest they trespass against the LORD and ^owrath come upon ^pyou and your brethren. Do this, and you will not be guilty. ¹¹And take notice: ^qAmariah the chief priest is over you ^rin all matters of the LORD; and Zebadiah the son of Ishmael, the ruler of the house of Judah, for all the king's matters; also the Levites *will be* officials before you. Behave courageously, and the LORD will be ^swith the good."

18:27 A real prophet's predictions always came true (Deut. 13:1-3; 18:22). Micaiah staked his reputation on the fact that Ahab would not come home **in peace**—that is, alive.

18:33 at random: This is the human perspective. The wounding of Ahab, disguised as he was, appeared to be an accident. But from God's perspective, chance had no part in it. The arrow reached its true destination. Ahab's disguise could not foil God's plan. Micaiah's prophecy had come true (see v. 16).

19:2 The prophet Hanani had once chastised King Asa for depending on the Arameans to defeat Baasha, king of Israel (see 16:7). **Jehu the son of Hanani**, also a prophet, now went on a similar mission to Jehoshaphat.

19:4 Originally the land of Israel stretched "from Dan to Beersheba" (see Judg. 20:1). Dan refers to the town of Dan just north of the Sea of Galilee, not the tribe of Dan near Judah. But after the division into two kingdoms **the mountains of Ephraim** became the northern

border of Judah. Thus this verse asserts that Jehoshaphat restored the people of Judah to more faithful observance of the covenant. This was admirable, but it was also a basic duty of the Davidic monarch (see 14:4; 15:9; 17:7-9). Jehoshaphat was only doing his job.

19:5, 6 The role of Jehoshaphat's **judges** differed from that of the heroic leaders who led Israel before David's time (Judg. 2:16). The judges that Jehoshaphat appointed served as local officials in the **fortified cities**.

19:8 Matters too difficult for the local judges or those that required appeal went to the high court in **Jerusalem** where the **Levites, priests, and chief fathers** sat.

19:11 As chief priest, **Amariah** (mentioned only here) held jurisdiction over all **matters of the LORD**, that is, religious cases. **Zebadiah, the ruler of the house of Judah** (see 1 Kin. 4:7), ruled over **all the king's matters**—that is, civil cases.

*Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir
Defeated*

20 It happened after this *that* the people of ^aMoab with the people of ^bAmmon, and *others* with them besides the ^cAmmonites, ¹ came to battle against Jehoshaphat. ²Then some came and told Jehoshaphat, saying, “A great multitude is coming against you from beyond the sea, from ²Syria; and they are ^din Hazazon Tamar” (which is ^eEn Gedi). ³And Jehoshaphat feared, and set ³himself to ^fseek the LORD, and ^gproclaimed a fast throughout all Judah. ⁴So Judah gathered together to ask ^hhelp from the LORD; and from all the cities of Judah they came to seek the LORD.

⁵Then Jehoshaphat stood in the assembly of Judah and Jerusalem, in the house of the LORD, before the new court, ⁶and said: “O LORD God of our fathers, are You not ⁱGod in heaven, and ^jdo You not rule over all the kingdoms of the nations, and ^kin Your hand is *there not* power and might, so that no one is able to withstand You? ⁷Are You not ^lour God, *who* ^mdrove out the inhabitants of this land before Your people Israel, and gave it to the descendants of Abraham ⁿYour friend forever? ⁸And they dwell in it, and have built You a sanctuary in it for Your name, saying, ⁹“If disaster comes upon us—sword, judgment, pestilence, or famine—we will stand before this temple and in Your presence (for Your ^pname is in this temple), and cry out to You in our affliction, and You will hear and save.” ¹⁰And now, here are the people of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir—whom You ^qwould not let Israel invade when they came out of the land of Egypt, but ^rthey turned from them and did not destroy them— ¹¹here they are, rewarding us ^sby coming to throw us out of Your possession which You have given us to

CHAPTER 20

¹ ^a 1 Chr. 18:2
^b 1 Chr. 19:15
^c 2 Chr. 26:7 ¹ So with MT, Vg.; LXX *Meunites* (cf. 2 Chr. 26:7)
² ^d Gen. 14:7 ^e Josh. 15:62 ² So with MT, LXX, Vg.; Heb. mss., Old Lat. *Edom*
³ ^f 2 Chr. 19:3
^g 1 Sam. 7:6; Ezra 8:21; Jer. 36:9; Jon. 3:5 ³ Lit. *his face*
⁴ ^h 2 Chr. 14:11
⁵ ⁱ Deut. 4:39; Josh. 2:11; [1 Kin. 8:23]; Matt. 6:9 / Ps. 22:28; 47:2, 8; Dan. 4:17, 25, 32 ^k 1 Chr. 29:12; 2 Chr. 25:8; Ps. 62:11; Matt. 6:13
⁷ ^j Gen. 13:14-17; 17:7; Ex. 6:7 ^m Ps. 44:2 ⁿ Is. 41:8; James 2:23
⁹ ^o 1 Kin. 8:33, 37; 2 Chr. 6:28-30
^p 2 Chr. 6:20
¹⁰ ^q Deut. 2:4, 9, 19
^r Num. 20:21
¹¹ ^s Ps. 83:1-18

¹² ^t Judg. 11:27; [1 Sam. 3:13] ^u Ps. 25:15; 121:1, 2; 123:1, 2; 141:8
¹⁴ ^v Num. 11:25, 26; 24:2; 2 Chr. 15:1; 24:20
¹⁵ ^w Ex. 14:13, 14; [Deut. 1:29, 30; 31:6, 8]; 2 Chr. 32:7
^x 1 Sam. 17:47; Zech. 14:3
¹⁶ ^x *streambed or wadi*
¹⁷ ^y Ex. 14:13, 14
^z Num. 14:9; [2 Chr. 15:2; 32:8]
¹⁸ ^z Ex. 4:31; 2 Chr. 7:3; 29:28
²⁰ ^b Is. 7:9

inherit. ¹²O our God, will You not ^tjudge them? For we have no power against this great multitude that is coming against us; nor do we know what to do, but “our eyes are upon You.”

¹³Now all Judah, with their little ones, their wives, and their children, stood before the LORD.

¹⁴Then ^vthe Spirit of the LORD came upon Jahaziel the son of Zechariah, the son of Benaiah, the son of Jeiel, the son of Mattaniah, a Levite of the sons of Asaph, in the midst of the assembly. ¹⁵And he said, “Listen, all you of Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem, and you, King Jehoshaphat! Thus says the LORD to you: ^w“Do not be afraid nor dismayed because of this great multitude, ^xfor the battle is not yours, but God’s. ¹⁶Tomorrow go down against them. They will surely come up by the Ascent of Ziz, and you will find them at the end of the ⁴brook before the Wilderness of Jeruel. ¹⁷^yYou will not *need* to fight in this *battle*. Position yourselves, stand still and see the salvation of the LORD, who is with you, O Judah and Jerusalem!” Do not fear or be dismayed; tomorrow go out against them, ^zfor the LORD is with you.”

¹⁸And Jehoshaphat ^abowed his head with *his* face to the ground, and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem bowed before the LORD, worshipping the LORD. ¹⁹Then the Levites of the children of the Kohathites and of the children of the Korahites stood up to praise the LORD God of Israel with voices loud and high.

²⁰So they rose early in the morning and went out into the Wilderness of Tekoa; and as they went out, Jehoshaphat stood and said, “Hear me, O Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem: ^bBelieve in the LORD your God, and you shall be established; believe His prophets, and you shall prosper.” ²¹And when he had

20:1 Moab went to battle against Jehoshaphat under the leadership of Mesha, who had gained Moab’s independence from the Omri dynasty of Israel soon after Ahab died (see 18:34). The battle mentioned here took place when Ahab’s son Ahaziah was king of Israel (20:35). The defeat of Jehoshaphat’s enemies in Israel only meant the rise of other enemies outside Israel. This situation would test Jehoshaphat’s faith.

20:2 Hazazon Tamar is on the western shore of the Dead Sea, a few miles south of Qumran. It was David’s hiding place in the days of Saul (1 Sam. 23:29).

20:3, 4 seek the LORD: Jehoshaphat’s reforms (see 19:4) were not hollow religiosity, and they did not break under the strain of sour circumstances. As soon as he heard of bad news from the north, Jehoshaphat sought God and **proclaimed a fast**. He knew that success required God’s favor. And if God was for them, they could not lose (vv. 6–12; see 13:5, 12).

20:7 Jehoshaphat recalled God’s care for His people Israel in the past, when He had led them to victory over their Canaanite foes.

20:14 As a member of the Asaph division of the Levites (1 Chr. 6:39;

15:17, 19; 16:7), **Jahaziel** was probably a musician. Music was an important part of Israel’s religious life (see 13:12). The people would go into battle praising God with instruments and voices (vv. 19, 21, 22, 28).

20:16, 17 The **Ascent of Ziz** was a dry stream bed just north of En Gedi. The **Wilderness of Jeruel** lay between Hebron and the Dead Sea.

20:19 The **Kohathites** were members of the Levitical division of Heman (1 Chr. 6:33). The **Korahites** were a subclan of the Kohathites (1 Chr. 6:37, 39), who were employed as gatekeepers to the temple (1 Chr. 26:1–19). Their positive response to Jahaziel’s speech and their praise to God (see vv. 15–17) was as important as any military preparation.

20:20 Tekoa was a town about ten miles south of Jerusalem. The **Wilderness of Tekoa** was between the town and the Ascent of Ziz (v. 16).

20:21 sing . . . praise: The battle was the Lord’s and its outcome was certain. The people celebrated God and His victory (see Ex. 15:1, 20, 21; Judg. 7:18–20; Ps. 47; 98).

consulted with the people, he appointed those who should sing to the LORD, ^eand who should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army and were saying:

^d“Praise the LORD,
“For His mercy *endures* forever.”

²²Now when they began to sing and to praise, ^fthe LORD set ambushes against the people of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, who had come against Judah; and they were defeated. ²³For the people of Ammon and Moab stood up against the inhabitants of Mount Seir to utterly kill and destroy *them*. And when they ⁵had made an end of the inhabitants of Seir, ^gthey helped to destroy one another.

²⁴So when Judah came to a place overlooking the wilderness, they looked toward the multitude; and there *were* their dead bodies, fallen on the earth. No one had escaped.

²⁵When Jehoshaphat and his people came to take away their spoil, they found among them an abundance of valuables on the ⁶dead bodies, and precious jewelry, which they stripped off for themselves, more than they could carry away; and they were three days gathering the spoil because there was so much. ²⁶And on the fourth day they assembled in the Valley of ⁷Berachah, for there they blessed the LORD; therefore the name of that place was called The Valley of Berachah until this day. ²⁷Then they returned, every man of Judah and Jerusa-

21 ^c 1 Chr. 16:29; Ps. 29:2; 90:17; 96:9; 110:3 ^d 1 Chr. 16:34; Ps. 106:1; 136:1 ^e 1 Chr. 16:41; 2 Chr. 5:13
22 ^f Judg. 7:22;
1 Sam. 14:20
23 ^g Judg. 7:22;
1 Sam. 14:20 ⁵ *had finished*
25 ⁶ A few Heb. mss., Old Lat., Vg. garments; LXX armor
26 ⁷ Lit. *Blessing*

27 ^h Neh. 12:43
29 ⁱ 2 Chr. 14:14; 17:10
30 ^j 1 Kin. 22:41-43; 2 Chr. 14:6, 7; 15:15; Job 34:29
31 ^k [1 Kin. 22:41-43]
32 ^l 2 Chr. 14:2
33 ^m 2 Chr. 15:17; 17:6 ⁿ 2 Chr. 12:14; 19:3 ⁸ Places for pagan worship
34 ^o 1 Kin. 16:1, 7
35 ^p 2 Chr. 18:1
^q 1 Kin. 22:48-53
^r [2 Chr. 19:2]
36 ^s 1 Kin. 9:26; 10:22

lem, with Jehoshaphat in front of them, to go back to Jerusalem with joy, for the LORD had ^hmade them rejoice over their enemies. ²⁸So they came to Jerusalem, with stringed instruments and harps and trumpets, to the house of the LORD. ²⁹And ⁱthe fear of God was on all the kingdoms of *those* countries when they heard that the LORD had fought against the enemies of Israel. ³⁰Then the realm of Jehoshaphat was quiet, for his ^jGod gave him rest all around.

The End of Jehoshaphat's Reign

³¹^kSo Jehoshaphat was king over Judah. *He was* thirty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned twenty-five years in Jerusalem. His mother's name *was* Azubah the daughter of Shilhi. ³²And he walked in the way of his father ^lAsa, and did not turn aside from it, doing *what was* right in the sight of the LORD. ³³Nevertheless ^mthe ⁸high places were not taken away, for as yet the people had not ⁿdirected their hearts to the God of their fathers.

³⁴Now the rest of the acts of Jehoshaphat, first and last, indeed they *are* written in the book of Jehu the son of Hanani, ^owhich is mentioned in the book of the kings of Israel.

³⁵After this ^pJehoshaphat king of Judah allied himself with Ahaziah king of Israel, ^qwho acted very ^rwickedly. ³⁶And he allied himself with him ^sto make ships to go to Tarshish, and they made the ships in Ezion Geber. ³⁷But Eliezer the son of Dodavah of Mareshah prophesied against

20:23 Before Judah's armies could even reach the battlefield, the Ammonites and Moabites attacked their Edomite allies and destroyed them, then they turned against each other. As a result, Judah won without even having to fight. God had demonstrated that the battle was His (v. 15) and that He could accomplish His purposes without even using an army.

20:25 Spoils of war like **valuables** (precious metals) and **jewelry** became God's property, because God Himself had triumphed and therefore deserved the fruits of war (see 15:18; Josh. 6:24; 1 Chr. 18:7, 8).

20:26 After they experienced God's blessing and protection in the wilderness, the Judeans renamed Ziz the **Valley of Berachah**, meaning "Blessing," to remind themselves of God's goodness.

20:29 The LORD had fought: The spectacle of Jehoshaphat's enemies in defeat, like the battles that Joshua had led years before, struck fear in the hearts of enemy nations (17:10; see Josh. 2:9-11; 1 Chr. 14:17) because it involved an obvious miracle. No human army could prevail over God's omnipotence.

20:34 For a complete account of Jehoshaphat's reign the chronicler recommended the **book of Jehu**, which itself was cited in **the book of the kings of Israel**. Jehu was the son of the prophet Hanani and was a prophet himself (see 19:2). He is mentioned in 1 Kings in connection with the kings of Israel (see 1 Kin. 16:1, 7). He was therefore a good source of information about both the northern and southern kingdoms.

20:35 **Ahaziah** was the son of Ahab; he succeeded his father and reigned for two years (1 Kin. 22:51). Ahaziah was injured in a fall and

turned to the Philistine gods rather than to the Lord for healing (2 Kin. 1:2).

20:36 **Tarshish** was in the western Mediterranean. The name also came to represent any place far away. Ships of Tarshish were large vessels able to transport heavy cargo over long distances (see 8:17, 18; 9:21). **Ezion Geber** was a port on the Gulf of Aqaba (or Elath), the eastern arm of the Red Sea (see 8:17).

right

(Heb. *yashar*) (20:32; Ex. 15:26; Deut. 12:25; Judg. 17:6) Strong's #3477

The Hebrew word frequently translated **right** (as when used in Chronicles and Kings to assess the reigns of the kings of Israel and Judah) derives from a Hebrew word meaning "to be level" or "to be upright." By extension it carries connotations of being just or righteous. The word is not only used to speak of the perfect righteousness of God (Deut. 32:4; Ps. 111:7, 8) but is also used to speak of the integrity of one's speech (Job 6:25; Eccl. 12:10) or the righteous quality of a person's lifestyle (Prov. 11:3, 6). The word even implies pure and faithful motives (as in Deut. 9:5; 1 Kin. 9:4). As Israel's second king, David exemplified these qualities in his life (1 Kin. 3:6), becoming a standard for assessing all the kings that followed him (see 17:3; 34:2).

Jehoshaphat, saying, “Because you have allied yourself with Ahaziah, the LORD has destroyed your works.” ¹Then the ships were wrecked, so that they were not able to go ²to Tarshish.

Jehoram Reigns in Judah

21 And ^aJehoshaphat ¹rested with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the City of David. Then Jehoram his son reigned in his place. ²He had brothers, the sons of Jehoshaphat: Azariah, Jehiel, Zechariah, Azaryahu, Michael, and Shephatiah; all these were the sons of Jehoshaphat king of Israel. ³Their father gave them great gifts of silver and gold and precious things, with fortified cities in Judah; but he gave the kingdom to Jehoram, because he *was* the firstborn.

⁴Now when Jehoram ²was established over the kingdom of his father, he strengthened himself and killed all his brothers with the sword, and also *others* of the princes of Israel.

⁵^bJehoram *was* thirty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned eight years in Jerusalem. ⁶And he walked in the way of the kings of Israel, just as the house of Ahab had done, for he had the daughter of ^cAhab as a wife; and he did evil in the sight of the LORD. ⁷Yet the LORD would not destroy the house of David, because of the ^dcovenant that He had made with David, and since He had promised to give a lamp to him and to his ^esons forever.

⁸^fIn his days Edom revolted against Judah’s authority, and made a king over themselves. ⁹So Jehoram went out with his officers, and all his chariots with him. And he rose by night and attacked the Edomites who had surrounded him and the captains of the chariots. ¹⁰Thus Edom has been in revolt against Judah’s authority to this day. At that time Lib-

³⁷ ¹ 1 Kin. 22:48
² 2 Chr. 9:21

CHAPTER 21

¹ ^a 1 Kin. 22:50
¹ Died and joined his ancestors
⁴ ² Lit. *arose*
⁵ ^b 2 Kin. 8:17-22
⁶ ^c 2 Chr. 18:1
⁷ ^d 2 Sam. 7:8-17
^e 1 Kin. 11:36; 2 Kin. 8:19; Ps. 132:11
⁸ ^f 2 Kin. 8:20; 14:7; 10; 2 Chr. 25:14, 19

¹¹ ^g [Lev. 20:5]
³ Places for pagan worship
¹³ ^h 2 Chr. 21:11
ⁱ [Ex. 34:15]; Deut. 31:16 / 1 Kin. 16:31-33; 2 Kin. 9:22
^k 1 Kin. 2:32; 2 Chr. 21:4
¹⁵ ⁱ 2 Chr. 21:18, 19
¹⁶ ^m 2 Chr. 33:11; [Jer. 51:11] ⁿ 1 Kin. 11:14, 23 ^o 2 Chr. 17:11
¹⁷ ^p 2 Chr. 24:7
⁴ *Ahaziah or Azariah*, 2 Chr. 22:1
¹⁸ ^q 2 Chr. 13:20; 21:15; Acts 12:23
¹⁹ ^r 2 Chr. 16:14
⁵ Burning of spices

nah revolted against his rule, because he had forsaken the LORD God of his fathers. ¹¹Moreover he made ³high places in the mountains of Judah, and caused the inhabitants of Jerusalem to ^gcommit harlotry, and led Judah astray.

¹²And a letter came to him from Elijah the prophet, saying,

Thus says the LORD God of your father David:

Because you have not walked in the ways of Jehoshaphat your father, or in the ways of Asa king of Judah, ¹³but have walked in the way of the kings of Israel, and have ^hmade Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to ⁱplay the harlot like the ^jharlotry of the house of Ahab, and also have ^kkilled your brothers, those of your father’s household, *who were* better than yourself, ¹⁴behold, the LORD will strike your people with a serious affliction—your children, your wives, and all your possessions; ¹⁵and you *will become* very sick with a ^ldisease of your intestines, until your intestines come out by reason of the sickness, day by day.

¹⁶Moreover the ^mLORD ⁿstirred up against Jehoram the spirit of the Philistines and the ^oArabians who *were* near the Ethiopians. ¹⁷And they came up into Judah and invaded it, and carried away all the possessions that were found in the king’s house, and also ^phis sons and his wives, so that there was not a son left to him except ⁴Jehoahaz, the youngest of his sons.

¹⁸After all this the LORD struck him ^qin his intestines with an incurable disease. ¹⁹Then it happened in the course of time, after the end of two years, that his intestines came out because of his sickness; so he died in severe pain. And his people made no ⁵burning for him, like ^rthe burning for his fathers.

21:2 The names of Jehoram’s **brothers** highlight Jehoram’s choice as king emphatically, as if to say, “Not these brothers, but this one.” We soon learn how significant for all of them this choice turned out to be (see v. 4).

21:3 gifts . . . fortified cities: Jehoshaphat did what his great-grandfather Rehoboam had done. He gave the kingdom to his firstborn and then distributed extravagant gifts to his other sons (11:23). The purpose evidently was to satisfy each of his sons, since only one of them could succeed him as king.

21:4 princes of Israel: Jehoram extended his bloody purge as far as his distant relatives in Israel (see 18:1). He was so evil that not even blood ties restrained his lust for power.

21:7 Individual kings such as Jehoram committed evil and scorned **covenant** obligations, but the promise of God to **David** (Ps. 89:30–37) concerning his house remained intact (see 1 Chr. 17:7–14).

a lamp: This is a figurative way of describing a descendant of David (see 1 Kin. 11:36).

21:8 Edom revolted: Jehoram’s father Jehoshaphat had conquered Edom (20:22, 36).

21:10 In the western lowlands of Judah, **Libnah** was close to the border with Philistia.

21:11 commit harlotry: Israel’s covenant with God was like a marriage relationship, and to violate it was to commit spiritual unfaithfulness (see Ezek. 16:15–43; 23:1–21; Hos. 4:11–19). Like Solomon before him (1 Kin. 11:1–8), Jehoram failed to provide godly leadership. He **led Judah astray**.

21:12 Though 1 and 2 Kings pay considerable attention to **Elijah the prophet** (1 Kin. 17:1–2; 2 Kin. 2:18), the books of the Chronicles mention him only here. He had been taken up into heaven after King Ahaziah’s death (2 Kin. 1:17; 2:1).

21:16 The Arabians were from the southwestern part of the Arabian peninsula, probably near present-day Yemen. They lived across the Red Sea from the **Ethiopians**.

²⁰He was thirty-two years old when he became king. He reigned in Jerusalem eight years and, to no one's sorrow, departed. However they buried him in the City of David, but not in the tombs of the kings.

Ahaziah Reigns in Judah

22 Then the inhabitants of Jerusalem made ^aAhaziah his youngest son king in his place, for the raiders who came with the ^bArabians into the camp had killed all the ^colder sons. So Ahaziah the son of Jehoram, king of Judah, reigned. ²Ahaziah was ¹forty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned one year in Jerusalem. His mother's name was ^dAthaliah the ²granddaughter of Omri. ³He also walked in the ways of the house of Ahab, for his mother advised him to do wickedly. ⁴Therefore he did evil in the sight of the LORD, like the house of Ahab; for they were his counselors after the death of his father, to his destruction. ⁵He also followed their advice, and went with ³Jehoram the son of Ahab king of Israel to war against Hazael king of Syria at Ramoth Gilead; and the Syrians wounded Joram. ⁶^eThen he returned to Jezreel to recover from the wounds which he had received at Ramah, when he fought against Hazael king of Syria. And ⁴Azariah the son of Jehoram, king of Judah, went down to see Jehoram the son of Ahab in Jezreel, because he was sick.

⁷His going to Joram ^fwas God's occasion for Ahaziah's ⁵downfall; for when he arrived, ^ghe went out with ⁶Jehoram against Jehu the son of Nimshi, ^hwhom the LORD had anointed to ⁷cut off the house of Ahab. ⁸And it happened, when

CHAPTER 22

1 ^a 2 Chr. 21:17;
22:6 ^b 2 Chr. 21:16
2 ^c 2 Chr. 21:17
2 ^d 2 Chr. 21:6
1 twenty-two, 2 Kin.
8:26 ² Lit. daughter
5 ³ Joram, v. 7;
2 Kin. 8:28
6 ^e 2 Kin. 9:15
4 Heb. mss., LXX,
Syr., Vg. Ahaziah
and 2 Kin. 8:29
7 ^f Judg. 14:4; 1 Kin.
12:15; 2 Chr. 10:15
g 2 Kin. 9:21-24
h 2 Kin. 9:6, 7 ⁵ Lit.
crushing ⁶ Joram,
vv. 5, 7; 2 Kin. 8:28
7 destroy

8 ⁸ 2 Kin. 9:22-24
2 Kin. 10:10-14;
Hos. 1:4
9 ^k [2 Kin. 9:27]
1 ¹ Kin. 15:24
m 2 Chr. 17:4; 20:3, 4
10 ⁿ 2 Kin. 11:1-3
11 ⁸ Jehoshabea,
2 Kin. 11:2

BIBLE TIMES & CULTURE NOTES



Queen Mothers

The writers of 1 and 2 Kings and 2 Chronicles tell us much about the queen mothers of Judah. In referring to the 20 different kings who ruled in Judah from the time of Solomon to the time of the Exile, only once do these books fail to mention a queen mother. We assume that the mother of the king must have been an important person in Judah. Unfortunately, very little is known about her role in the government or the society.

Athaliah, the mother of Ahaziah, seized the throne when her son was killed in battle. She then tried to kill all the rightful heirs (22:10). But one of the infant princes was hidden from her. For six years Athaliah ruled Judah with an iron hand; but as soon as the young prince was old enough to become king, Athaliah was overthrown and killed (2 Kin. 11:1-16).

Jehu was ⁱexecuting judgment on the house of Ahab, and ^jfound the princes of Judah and the sons of Ahaziah's brothers who served Ahaziah, that he killed them. ⁹^kThen he searched for Ahaziah; and they caught him (he was hiding in Samaria), and brought him to Jehu. When they had killed him, they buried him, "because," they said, "he is the son of ^lJehoshaphat, who ^msought the LORD with all his heart."

So the house of Ahaziah had no one to assume power over the kingdom.

Athaliah Reigns in Judah

¹⁰ⁿNow when Athaliah the mother of Ahaziah saw that her son was dead, she arose and destroyed all the royal heirs of the house of Judah. ¹¹But ⁸Jehoshabeath,

21:20 The tombs of the kings was a royal cemetery in Jerusalem where most of David's dynasty were buried (Asa was an exception; see 16:14). Jehoram was not buried there, but in Jerusalem, the **City of David**.

22:1 Ahaziah of Judah was the namesake of his uncle from Israel. Ahaziah's father Jehoram had married a sister of Ahab's son Ahaziah (see 1 Kin. 22:40; 2 Kin. 1:17; 8:18).

22:5 Jehoram the son of Ahab succeeded his brother Ahaziah because Ahaziah had no sons of his own (2 Kin. 1:17). He is also called Joram, a short form of Jehoram, to distinguish him from his brother-in-law Jehoram who was king of Judah. **Hazael** was the king of Damascus who came to power after assassinating Ben-Hadad (2 Kin. 8:7-15). Elijah had prophesied that this would come about and had even commissioned Elisha to anoint Hazael to his new position (1 Kin. 19:15). **Ramoth Gilead:** Ahab and Jehoshaphat had tried to recover this city from Aramean domination 12 years earlier (18:3, 28-34). Ahab's son Jehoram persuaded Ahaziah king of Judah to join him in a renewed effort to accomplish that objective.

22:6 Jezreel was a royal city located in the Plain of Jezreel and frequented by the kings of Israel. It was about 10 miles west of the Jordan and 25 miles west of Ramoth Gilead (see 1 Kin. 21:1-4). In this instance **Ramah** is an abbreviated form of Ramoth Gilead.

22:7, 8 Ahaziah's visit to his dying uncle turned out to be **God's occasion for Ahaziah's downfall**. Jehu was an officer in Israel's army who participated in the campaign against Ramoth Gilead and who was anointed there as king by a servant of Elisha (2 Kin. 9:1-6). Elijah had prophesied that Jehu would become king of Israel (1 Kin. 19:16). Elisha carried out the commission through his servant, telling Jehu to remove Joram from the throne and to eradicate the entire Omri dynasty (2 Kin. 9:7-10).

22:9 When Ahaziah became aware of the slaughter of the northern dynasty and even some of his own relatives who happened to be in Jezreel (see v. 8), he fled to Israel's capital, **Samaria**. But Jehu found him there and murdered him. In one day, both kingdoms lost their rulers. **they buried him:** The people honored him in this way only because Ahaziah was the grandson of the godly Jehoshaphat.

22:10 Most of the **royal heirs** Athaliah murdered were her own grandchildren. She wanted to stamp out the Davidic dynasty and bring Judah back under Israelite control. But this could not happen as long as Jehu was in power in the north.

22:11 It was Ahaziah's own sister **Jehoshabeath** who rescued her nephew Joash from her mother Athaliah.

the daughter of the king, took ^cJoash the son of Ahaziah, and stole him away from among the king's sons who were being murdered, and put him and his nurse in a bedroom. So Jehoshabeath, the daughter of King Jehoram, the wife of Jehoiada the priest (for she was the sister of Ahaziah), hid him from Athaliah so that she did not kill him. ¹²And he was hidden with them in the house of God for six years, while Athaliah reigned over the land.

Joash Crowned King of Judah

23 In ^athe seventh year ^bJehoiada strengthened himself, and made a covenant with the captains of hundreds: Azariah the son of Jeroham, Ishmael the son of Jehohanan, Azariah the son of ^cObed, Maaseiah the son of Adaiah, and Elishaphat the son of Zichri. ²And they went throughout Judah and gathered the Levites from all the cities of Judah, and the ^dchief fathers of Israel, and they came to Jerusalem.

³Then all the assembly made a covenant with the king in the house of God. And he said to them, "Behold, the king's son shall reign, as the LORD has ^esaid of the sons of David. ⁴This is what you shall do: One-third of you ^fentering on the Sabbath, of the priests and the Levites, shall be keeping watch over the doors; ⁵one-third shall be at the king's house; and one-third at the Gate of the Foundation. All the people shall be in the courts of the house of the LORD. ⁶But let no one come into the house of the LORD except the priests and ^gthose of the Levites who serve. They may go in, for they are holy; but all the people shall keep the watch of the LORD. ⁷And the Levites shall surround the king on all sides, every man with his weapons in his hand; and whoever comes into the house, let him be put to death. You are to be with the king when he comes in and when he goes out."

11 ^o 2 Kin. 12:18

CHAPTER 23

1 ^o 2 Kin. 11:4

^b 2 Kin. 12:2 ^c 1 Chr.

2:37, 38

2 ^d Ezra 1:5

3 ^e 2 Sam. 7:12;

1 Kin. 2:4; 9:5; 2 Chr.

6:16; 7:18; 21:7

4 ^f 1 Chr. 9:25

6 ^g 1 Chr. 23:28-32

8 ^h 1 Chr. 24:1-31

9 ⁱ 2 Sam. 8:7

11 / Deut. 17:18

^j Law, Ex. 25:16,

21; 31:18

12 ^k 2 Chr. 22:10

13 ^l 1 Chr. 25:6-8

^m 2 Kin. 9:23

15 ⁿ Neh. 3:28; Jer.

31:40

16 ^o Josh. 24:24, 25;

2 Chr. 15:12-15

⁸So the Levites and all Judah did according to all that Jehoiada the priest commanded. And each man took his men who were to be on duty on the Sabbath, with those who were going *off duty* on the Sabbath; for Jehoiada the priest had not dismissed ^hthe divisions. ⁹And Jehoiada the priest gave to the captains of hundreds the spears and the large and small ⁱshields which *had belonged* to King David, that *were* in the temple of God. ¹⁰Then he set all the people, every man with his weapon in his hand, from the right side of the temple to the left side of the temple, along by the altar and by the temple, all around the king. ¹¹And they brought out the king's son, put the crown on him, ^jgave him the ¹Testimony, and made him king. Then Jehoiada and his sons anointed him, and said, "*Long live the king!*"

Death of Athaliah

¹²Now when ^kAthaliah heard the noise of the people running and praising the king, she came to the people *in* the temple of the LORD. ¹³When she looked, there was the king standing by his pillar at the entrance; and the leaders and the trumpeters *were* by the king. All the people of the land were rejoicing and blowing trumpets, also the singers with musical instruments, and ^lthose who led in praise. So Athaliah tore her clothes and said, ^m"Treason! Treason!"

¹⁴And Jehoiada the priest brought out the captains of hundreds who were set over the army, and said to them, "Take her outside under guard, and slay with the sword whoever follows her." For the priest had said, "Do not kill her in the house of the LORD."

¹⁵So they seized her; and she went by way of the entrance ⁿof the Horse Gate *into* the king's house, and they killed her there.

¹⁶Then Jehoiada made a ^ocovenant be-

22:12 Though **Athaliah reigned for six years**, she was not a descendant of David and therefore was never listed among the kings of Judah. Meanwhile, her grandson Joash remained the sole survivor in the Davidic line.

23:2 The **Levites** were the religious leaders of the nation; the **chief fathers** were the civil leaders. Jehoiada needed support and help from both civil and religious leaders to overthrow Athaliah.

23:3 covenant: This was a solemn pledge to restore the throne to Joash and to submit to him as David's rightful heir (see 1 Chr. 29:21-24). **he said:** The speech was given by Jehoiada, not Joash (vv. 3, 8).

23:4 One-third: Jehoiada was referring to the changing of **priests and the Levites** for the week to come (see 1 Chr. 24:3). The coming and going of so many men at once would disguise the plot.

23:8 Though one division of priests and **Levites** would normally replace the other, both **divisions** remained at the temple so they would have enough men to place Joash, the true heir, on David's throne.

23:9 The temple contained **spears** and **shields** that David himself had assembled over 150 years before (9:15, 16; 12:10, 11; see 2 Sam. 8:10, 11; 1 Chr. 18:7, 10, 11; 29:2). Jehoiada distributed these among the soldiers, who could not have carried their own weapons into the area without arousing suspicion.

23:11 The Testimony was a copy of the Law of Moses, part of which outlined the king's covenant privileges and duties (see Deut. 17:18-20; 1 Chr. 29:19). **anointed him:** An anointing was the sign and seal of the king's appointment by God and a symbol of the Spirit of God upon him (see 1 Sam. 16:13; 1 Kin. 1:39).

23:13 The pillar was probably one of the two that stood in front of the temple (see 3:15).

23:14 not . . . in the house of the LORD: The temple was regarded as a place of sanctuary from violence.

23:15 The Horse Gate in the temple provided access to the royal palace. There was another Horse Gate in the city wall.

tween himself, the people, and the king, that they should be the LORD's people. ¹⁷And all the people went to the ²temple of Baal, and tore it down. They broke in pieces its altars and images, and ³killed Mattan the priest of Baal before the altars. ¹⁸Also Jehoiada appointed the oversight of the house of the LORD to the hand of the priests, the Levites, whom David had ⁴assigned in the house of the LORD, to offer the burnt offerings of the LORD, as *it is* written in the ⁵Law of Moses, with rejoicing and with singing, *as it was established* by David. ¹⁹And he set the ⁶gatekeepers at the gates of the house of the LORD, so that no one *who was* in any way unclean should enter.

²⁰ⁱThen he took the captains of hundreds, the nobles, the governors of the people, and all the people of the land, and brought the king down from the house of the LORD; and they went through the Upper Gate to the king's house, and set the king on the throne of the kingdom. ²¹So all the people of the land rejoiced; and the city was quiet, for they had slain Athaliah with the sword.

Joash Repairs the Temple

24 Joash ^awas seven years old when he became king, and he reigned forty years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Zibiah of Beersheba. ²Joash ^bdid *what was* right in the sight of the LORD all the days of Jehoiada the priest. ³And Jehoiada took two wives for him, and he had sons and daughters.

⁴Now it happened after this *that* Joash set his heart on repairing the house of the LORD. ⁵Then he gathered the priests and the Levites, and said to them, "Go out to the cities of Judah, and ^cgather from all Israel money to repair the house of your God from year to year, and see that you do it quickly."

However the Levites did not do it quickly. ⁶^dSo the king called Jehoiada the chief *priest*, and said to him, "Why have you not required the Levites to bring in

¹⁷ ^p Deut. 13:6-9; 1 Kin. 18:40 ² Lit. house
¹⁸ ^q 1 Chr. 23:6, 30, 31; 24:1 ^r Num. 28:2
¹⁹ ^s 1 Chr. 26:1-19
²⁰ ^t 1 Kin. 9:22; 2 Kin. 11:19

CHAPTER 24

1 ^u 2 Kin. 11:21; 12:1-15
2 ^b 2 Chr. 26:4, 5
3 ^c 2 Kin. 12:4
6 ^d 2 Kin. 12:7

^e Ex. 30:12-16
^f Num. 1:50; Acts 7:44
7 ^g 2 Chr. 21:17
^h 2 Kin. 12:4
8 ⁱ 2 Kin. 12:9
9 ^j 2 Chr. 24:6
11 ^k 2 Kin. 12:10
12 ^l 2 Chr. 30:12
14 ^m 2 Kin. 12:13

from Judah and from Jerusalem the collection, *according to the commandment of* ^eMoses the servant of the LORD and of the assembly of Israel, for the ^ftabernacle of witness?" ⁷For ^gthe sons of Athaliah, that wicked woman, had broken into the house of God, and had also presented all the ^hdedicated things of the house of the LORD to the Baals.

⁸Then at the king's command ⁱthey made a chest, and set it outside at the gate of the house of the LORD. ⁹And they made a proclamation throughout Judah and Jerusalem to bring to the LORD ^jthe collection *that* Moses the servant of God *had imposed* on Israel in the wilderness. ¹⁰Then all the leaders and all the people rejoiced, brought their contributions, and put *them* into the chest until all had given. ¹¹So it was, at that time, when the chest was brought to the king's official by the hand of the Levites, and ^kwhen they saw that *there was* much money, that the king's scribe and the high priest's officer came and emptied the chest, and took it and returned it to its place. Thus they did day by day, and gathered money in abundance.

¹²The king and Jehoiada gave it to those who did the work of the service of the house of the LORD; and they hired masons and carpenters to ^lrepair the house of the LORD, and also those who worked in iron and bronze to restore the house of the LORD. ¹³So the workmen labored, and the work was completed by them; they restored the house of God to its original condition and reinforced it. ¹⁴When they had finished, they brought the rest of the money before the king and Jehoiada; ^mthey made from it articles for the house of the LORD, articles for serving and offering, spoons and vessels of gold and silver. And they offered burnt offerings in the house of the LORD continually all the days of Jehoiada.

Apostasy of Joash

¹⁵But Jehoiada grew old and was full of days, and he died; *he was* one hundred

23:17 killed Mattan: The Law required that leaders in the worship of false gods be put to death (Deut. 13:6-11). This sort of execution had been carried out before (see 1 Kin. 18:40; 2 Kin. 10:25-28).

23:20 The Upper Gate joined the temple to the royal palace on the north side of the temple (see 27:3).

24:1, 2 Joash could not rule alone at the age of **seven**, so his uncle Jehoiada acted as his guardian and counselor (see v. 3). As long as Jehoiada was alive, **Joash did what was right** (but see vv. 17, 18).

24:4 Repairing the house of the LORD was necessary because of the neglect it had suffered during the evil reigns of Jehoram, Ahaziah, and Athaliah (see v. 7).

24:6 the collection: This was the "atonement money" that the Levites collected for the temple and its services (Ex. 30:11-16).

24:7 The dedicated things included gold, silver, and other valu-

ables collected as tribute from defeated enemies and presented to God as spoils of war (2 Sam. 8:10, 11).

24:12 The priests and Levites who supervised various ministries such as music, gatekeeping, and maintenance did **the work of the service**. They knew best what the needs were, so **the king and Jehoiada** gave the money to them.

24:14 The people had been so generous (see v. 11) that **money** remained after all the work had been done. This extra money allowed for a complete restocking of the temple with the **gold and silver** implements needed for its services. The daily **burnt offerings** were a sign of spiritual vitality and faithfulness to God. As long as **Jehoiada** remained alive, Judah enjoyed a revival of the true worship of God.

and thirty years old when he died. ¹⁶And they buried him in the City of David among the kings, because he had done good in Israel, both toward God and His house.

¹⁷Now after the death of Jehoiada the leaders of Judah came and bowed down to the king. And the king listened to them. ¹⁸Therefore they left the house of the LORD God of their fathers, and served ⁿwooden images and idols; and ^owrath came upon Judah and Jerusalem because of their trespass. ¹⁹Yet He ^psent prophets to them, to bring them back to the LORD; and they testified against them, but they would not listen.

²⁰Then the Spirit of God ¹came upon ^qZechariah the son of Jehoiada the priest, who stood above the people, and said to them, “Thus says God: ^r‘Why do you transgress the commandments of the LORD, so that you cannot prosper?’ ^sBecause you have forsaken the LORD, He also has forsaken you.” ²¹So they conspired against him, and at the command of the king they ^tstoned him with stones in the court of the house of the LORD. ²²Thus Joash the king did not remember the kindness which Jehoiada his ²father had done to him, but killed his son; and as he died, he said, “The LORD look on it, and ^urepay!”

Death of Joash

²³So it happened in the spring of the year that ^vthe army of Syria came up against him; and they came to Judah and Jerusalem, and destroyed all the leaders of the people from among the people, and sent all their ³spoils to the king of Damascus. ²⁴For the army of the Syrians ^wcame with a small company of men; but the LORD ^xdelivered a very great army into their hand, because they had forsaken the LORD God of their fathers. So they ^yexecuted judgment against Joash.

¹⁸ ^a 1 Kin. 14:23
^o [Ex. 34:12-14];
 Judg. 5:8; 2 Chr.
 19:2; 28:13; 29:8;
 32:25
¹⁹ ^p 2 Kin. 17:13;
 21:10-15; 2 Chr.
 36:15, 16; Jer. 7:25;
 26; 25:4
²⁰ ^q Judg. 6:34;
 Matt. 23:35 ^r Num.
 14:41; [Prov. 28:13]
^s [2 Chr. 15:2] ¹ Lit.
 clothed
²¹ ^t [Neh. 9:26];
 Matt. 23:35; Acts
 7:58, 59
²² ^u [Gen. 9:5]
² Foster father
²³ ^v 2 Kin. 12:17; Is.
 7:2 ³ plunder
²⁴ ^w Lev. 26:8;
 [Deut. 32:30]; Is.
 30:17 ^x Lev. 26:25;
 [Deut. 28:25]
^y 2 Chr. 22:8; Is. 10:5

²⁵ ^z 2 Kin. 12:20, 21;
 2 Chr. 25:3 ⁴ LXX,
 Vg. son and vv.
 20-22
²⁶ ³ Jozachar, 2 Kin.
 12:21 ⁶ Shomer,
 2 Kin. 12:21
²⁷ ² 2 Kin. 12:18
^b 2 Kin. 12:21 ⁷ Or
 commentary, Heb.
 midrash

CHAPTER 25

¹ ^a 2 Kin. 14:1-6
² ^b 2 Kin. 14:4;
 2 Chr. 25:14
³ ^c 2 Kin. 14:5; 2 Chr.
 24:25
⁴ ^d Deut. 24:16;
 2 Kin. 14:6; Jer.
 31:30; [Ezek. 18:20]
⁵ ^e Num. 1:3

²⁵And when they had withdrawn from him (for they left him severely wounded), ^zhis own servants conspired against him because of the blood of the ⁴sons of Jehoiada the priest, and killed him on his bed. So he died. And they buried him in the City of David, but they did not bury him in the tombs of the kings.

²⁶These are the ones who conspired against him: ⁵Zabad the son of Shimeath the Ammonitess, and Jehozabad the son of ⁶Shimrith the Moabite. ²⁷Now *concerning* his sons, and ^athe many oracles about him, and the repairing of the house of God, indeed they *are* written in the ⁷annals of the book of the kings. ^bThen Amaziah his son reigned in his place.

Amaziah Reigns in Judah

25 Amaziah ^awas twenty-five years old *when* he became king, and he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem. His mother's name *was* Jehoaddan of Jerusalem. ²And he did *what was* right in the sight of the LORD, ^bbut not with a loyal heart.

³*c*Now it happened, as soon as the kingdom was established for him, that he executed his servants who had murdered his father the king. ⁴However he did not execute their children, but *did as it is* written in the Law in the Book of Moses, where the LORD commanded, saying, ^d“The fathers shall not be put to death for their children, nor shall the children be put to death for their fathers; but a person shall die for his own sin.”

The War Against Edom

⁵Moreover Amaziah gathered Judah together and set over them captains of thousands and captains of hundreds, according to *their* fathers' houses, throughout all Judah and Benjamin; and he numbered them ^efrom twenty years old and above, and found them to be

24:16 Jehoiada was buried **among the kings** because of his service to God and to Joash.

24:19 The extent of Jehoiada's positive influence on Joash became obvious soon after the priest's death. King Joash became a proponent of idolatry and **would not listen** to God's rebukes. Because of this, God abandoned the Judeans to their evil ways (v. 20).

24:20, 21 Jesus spoke of “Zechariah, son of Berechiah” as one of a series of prophets who was murdered in the temple court (Matt. 23:34, 35). This could be the Zechariah who wrote the Book of Zechariah (Zech. 1:7), which says nothing about his death. **Zechariah the son of Jehoiada** also died a martyr in the temple court, as described here. Either (1) the chronicler's Zechariah was actually the grandson of Jehoiada and the son of an unmentioned Berechiah, or (2) the prophet who wrote the Book of Zechariah was also slain in the temple precincts, a fact recorded only in the Gospels.

24:22 killed his son: Besides forgetting all the good Jehoiada had done for him, Joash had killed his own cousin (see 22:11; 24:20).

This once-good king had sunk to the level of his evil grandmother Athaliah (see 22:10), despite decades of past faithfulness to God. The weakness of his own convictions did him in. As long as he received good advice, he did well. But all depended on the quality of that counsel. Once it was gone, he abandoned God.

24:24, 25 God arranged for Israel's defeat and Joash's death in fulfillment of Zechariah's dying cry for justice (v. 22). **Judgment** for evil does not always come so quickly, but it is just as inevitable no matter how long it is delayed. **tombs of the kings:** Like his grandfather Jehoram, Joash was excluded from the royal cemetery because he fell far short of the Davidic ideal (see 21:20). Ironically, Jehoiada, who was not a king at all, was buried among the kings because of his faithfulness to God and to God's chosen king (v. 16).

25:4 Amaziah did what was “right in the sight of the LORD” (v. 2) by obeying the **Book of Moses** with regard to the innocent children of lawbreakers (Deut. 24:16).

three hundred thousand choice *men, able* to go to war, who could handle spear and shield. ⁶He also hired one hundred thousand mighty men of valor from Israel for one hundred talents of silver. ⁷But a *f* man of God came to him, saying, “O king, do not let the army of Israel go with you, for the LORD *is* not with Israel—*not with* any of the children of Ephraim. ⁸But if you go, be gone! Be strong in battle! *Even so*, God shall make you fall before the enemy; for God has *g* power to help and to overthrow.”

⁹Then Amaziah said to the man of God, “But what *shall we* do about the hundred talents which I have given to the troops of Israel?”

And the man of God answered, *h* “The LORD is able to give you much more than this.” ¹⁰So Amaziah discharged the troops that had come to him from Ephraim, to go back home. Therefore their anger was greatly aroused against Judah, and they returned home in great anger.

¹¹Then Amaziah strengthened himself, and leading his people, he went to *i* the Valley of Salt and killed ten thousand of the people of Seir. ¹²Also the children of Judah took captive ten thousand alive, brought them to the top of the rock, and cast them down from the top of the rock, so that they all were dashed in pieces.

¹³But as for the soldiers of the army which Amaziah had discharged, so that they would not go with him to battle, they raided the cities of Judah from Samaria to Beth Horon, killed three thousand in them, and took much *l* spoil.

¹⁴Now it was so, after Amaziah came from the slaughter of the Edomites, that *j* he brought the gods of the people of Seir, set them up to *be* *k* his gods, and bowed down before them and burned incense

⁷ *2 Chr. 11:2*
⁸ *2 Chr. 14:11; 20:6*
⁹ *h [Deut. 8:18]; Prov. 10:22*
¹¹ *2 Kin. 14:7*
¹³ *l plunder*
¹⁴ *2 Chr. 28:23*
^k [Ex. 20:3, 5]

¹⁵ *l [Ps. 96:5]*
^m *2 Chr. 25:11*
¹⁶ *n [1 Sam. 2:25]*
¹⁷ *o 2 Kin. 14:8-14*
² *Jehoash, 2 Kin. 14:8ff.*
¹⁹ *p 2 Chr. 26:16; 32:25; [Prov. 16:18]*
²⁰ *q 1 Kin. 12:15; 2 Chr. 22:7* *2 Chr. 25:14*
²¹ *s Josh. 19:38*

to them. ¹⁵Therefore the anger of the LORD was aroused against Amaziah, and He sent him a prophet who said to him, “Why have you sought *l* the gods of the people, which *m* could not rescue their own people from your hand?”

¹⁶So it was, as he talked with him, that *the king* said to him, “Have we made you the king’s counselor? Cease! Why should you be killed?”

Then the prophet ceased, and said, “I know that God has *n* determined to destroy you, because you have done this and have not heeded my advice.”

Israel Defeats Judah

¹⁷Now *o* Amaziah king of Judah asked advice and sent to ²Joash the son of Jehoahaz, the son of Jehu, king of Israel, saying, “Come, let us face one another *in battle*.”

¹⁸And Joash king of Israel sent to Amaziah king of Judah, saying, “The thistle that *was* in Lebanon sent to the cedar that was in Lebanon, saying, ‘Give your daughter to my son as wife’; and a wild beast that *was* in Lebanon passed by and trampled the thistle. ¹⁹Indeed you say that you have defeated the Edomites, and your heart is lifted up to *p* boast. Stay at home now; why should you meddle with trouble, that you should fall—you and Judah with you?”

²⁰But Amaziah would not heed, for *q* it came from God, that He might give them into the hand of *their enemies*, because they *r* sought the gods of Edom. ²¹So Joash king of Israel went out; and he and Amaziah king of Judah faced one another at *s* Beth Shemesh, which *belongs* to Judah. ²²And Judah was defeated by Israel, and every man fled to his tent. ²³Then Joash the king of Israel captured

25:6 The king of Israel was Jehoash (or Joash; v. 17). The hiring of Israelite mercenaries here, though judged evil (v. 7), implies that good relations existed between the two kingdoms.

25:7 As the breakaway kingdom that no longer stood within the Davidic covenant, Israel had disqualified itself as the people of the Lord. It was therefore improper for Judah to form alliances with the northern kingdom (see 19:2; 20:36, 37; 22:7). Because Ephraim was the dominant tribe in Israel, the whole kingdom at times was known as Ephraim (see Hos. 4:15–19).

25:8 If this war had been sanctioned by the Lord, victory would have been certain. But Amaziah had made his own decision to go to battle (v. 5) and had no assurance of God’s help.

25:10 Amaziah heeded the prophet’s advice and sent the Israelites back without even demanding the return of the hundred talents of silver he had paid them (v. 9). This greatly aroused the Israelite mercenaries because they thought their share of the spoils would have been much more than that.

25:11 The Valley of Salt probably refers to the desert south of the Dead Sea. The people of Seir were the Edomites (see 20:10). Amaziah wanted to recover Edom as a Judean province, but he only succeeded in part (see 21:8, 10; 26:2).

25:13 The soldiers who attacked and sacked cities of Judah were those from Israel whom Amaziah had hired and then released (vv. 6, 10). Having been denied a part in the spoils of Edom, they set out to get them from Judah.

25:14 Amaziah had listened to the prophet of God, but then he turned around and worshiped the gods of the people of Seir. This is why the chronicler said that Amaziah served God, “but not with a loyal heart” (v. 2).

25:18 The thistle here represents Amaziah, and the cedar Joash. The point is that it was arrogant for the weak, insignificant Amaziah to suppose that he could defeat Joash. The wild beast that passes by and tramples the thistle represents the war that Amaziah was so eager to pursue. Such a war would crush him.

25:20 it came from God: As we find several times in 2 Chronicles, what appears to be a purely human decision or action turns out to be part of God’s plan of blessing or judgment (see 22:7).

25:21 Of the three places named Beth Shemesh, this one was 18 miles west of Jerusalem. The ark of the covenant came here when it returned from Philistia (see 1 Sam. 6:12–14).

25:23 Since Ephraim lay north of Jerusalem, the Gate of Ephraim was probably in the northern wall of the city, perhaps the same

Amaziah king of Judah, the son of Joash, the son of ¹Jehoahaz, at Beth Shemesh; and he brought him to Jerusalem, and broke down the wall of Jerusalem from the Gate of Ephraim to the Corner Gate—four hundred cubits. ²⁴And *he took* all the gold and silver, all the articles that were found in the house of God with ^uObed-Edom, the treasures of the king's house, and hostages, and returned to Samaria.

Death of Amaziah

²⁵^v Amaziah the son of Joash, king of Judah, lived fifteen years after the death of Joash the son of Jehoahaz, king of Israel. ²⁶Now the rest of the acts of Amaziah, from first to last, indeed *are* they not written in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel? ²⁷After the time that Amaziah turned away from following the LORD, they made a conspiracy against him in Jerusalem, and he fled to Lachish; but they sent after him to Lachish and killed him there. ²⁸Then they brought him on horses and buried him with his fathers in ³the City of Judah.

Uzziah Reigns in Judah

26 Now all the people of Judah took ¹Uzziah, who *was* sixteen years old, and made him king instead of his father Amaziah. ²He built ²Elath and restored it to Judah, after the king rested with his fathers.

³Uzziah *was* sixteen years old when he became king, and he reigned fifty-two years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jecholiah of Jerusalem. ⁴And he did *what was* ^aright in the sight of the LORD,

23 ^v 2 Chr. 21:17; 22:1, 6
24 ^u 1 Chr. 26:15
25 ^v 2 Kin. 14:17-22
28 ³ The City of David

CHAPTER 26

1 ¹ Azariah, 2 Kin. 14:21ff.
2 ² Heb. *Eloth*
4 ^a 2 Chr. 24:2

5 ^b 2 Chr. 24:2
^c Gen. 41:15; Dan. 1:17; 10:1 ^d [2 Chr. 15:2; 20:20; 31:21]
³ Heb. mss., LXX, Syr., Tg., Arab. *fear*
⁶ ^e Is. 14:29
7 ^f 2 Chr. 21:16
8 ^g 2 Sam. 8:2; 2 Chr. 17:11
9 ^h 2 Kin. 14:13; 2 Chr. 25:23; Neh. 3:13, 19, 32; Zech. 14:10
10 ⁴ Or *the fertile fields*
12 ⁵ Lit. *chief fathers*

according to all that his father Amaziah had done. ^{5b}He sought God in the days of Zechariah, who ^chad understanding in the ³visions of God; and as long as he sought the LORD, God made him ^dprosper.

⁶Now he went out and ^emade war against the Philistines, and broke down the wall of Gath, the wall of Jabneh, and the wall of Ashdod; and he built cities *around* Ashdod and among the Philistines. ⁷God helped him against ^fthe Philistines, against the Arabians who lived in Gur Baal, and against the Meunites. ⁸Also the Ammonites ^gbrought tribute to Uzziah. His fame spread as far as the entrance of Egypt, for he became exceedingly strong.

⁹And Uzziah built towers in Jerusalem at the ^hCorner Gate, at the Valley Gate, and at the corner buttress of the wall; then he fortified them. ¹⁰Also he built towers in the desert. He dug many wells, for he had much livestock, both in the lowlands and in the plains; *he also had* farmers and vinedressers in the mountains and in ⁴Carmel, for he loved the soil.

¹¹Moreover Uzziah had an army of fighting men who went out to war by companies, according to the number on their roll as prepared by Jeiel the scribe and Maaseiah the officer, under the hand of Hananiah, *one* of the king's captains. ¹²The total number of ⁵chief officers of the mighty men of valor *was* two thousand six hundred. ¹³And under their authority *was* an army of three hundred and seven thousand five hundred, that made war with mighty power, to help the king against the enemy. ¹⁴Then Uzziah

as the later Damascus Gate. The **Corner Gate** was at the east or west end of the north wall. **Four hundred** cubits was about six hundred feet.

25:24 One reason Joash's forces demolished the north wall was to gain access to the temple and its treasures. Obed-Edom's sons had been put in charge of the storehouse of the temple, probably meaning both the treasuries of the house of the Lord and the treasuries of the dedicated things (see 1 Chr. 26:15, 20). The **treasures of the king's house** refers not only to the king's private wealth but also to the state coffers, for there was no difference in principle and practice between the two (9:13; see 1 Chr. 29:3). **hostages**: These might have included Amaziah himself.

25:27 They must refer to those who decried the defection of Amaziah from the Lord and who wanted to restore a godly regime. Thus Amaziah, like his father Joash (24:25), was assassinated. The fact that Amaziah reached the city of **Lachish** on the border with Philistia, some 25 miles from Jerusalem, suggests that he may have been seeking sanctuary among the Philistines.

25:28 **City of Judah**: This is an unusual way of speaking of the City of David. Since there is no note that he was buried with his **fathers** in the royal tombs, he probably was not.

26:2 On the eastern arm of the Red Sea, **Elath** was technically in Edomite territory (see 8:17) but regularly was under Israel or Judah throughout OT times (20:36; 21:8–10). Some time after Amaziah's death, Uzziah rebuilt Elath.

26:5 The **Zechariah** named here may have been the son of Jehoia-da (24:20, 21).

26:6 Also known as Jabneel (see Josh. 15:11), **Jabneh** lay near the Mediterranean coast, less than 10 miles north of **Ashdod**. The geographical pattern of Uzziah's campaigns suggests that he was trying to gain access to the Mediterranean Sea and neutralize Philistine influence.

26:7 **Gur Baal** was most likely at present-day Tell Ghurr, about eight miles east of Beersheba. The **Meunites** were a desert tribe living mainly in Edom, south and west of the Dead Sea (see 1 Chr. 4:39–41).

26:8 The last recorded contact of Judah with Ammon was almost a hundred years earlier, in the days of Jehoshaphat. The **Ammonites** and Moabites had defeated the Edomites, but then began to fight each other (20:1, 22, 23). Evidently they still had not recovered sufficiently to prevent **Uzziah** from dominating them and extracting tribute from them.

26:9 The **Corner Gate** was at one end of the north wall of **Jerusalem** (see 25:23). The **Valley Gate** was on the west side of the city near the temple mount (see Neh. 2:13, 15).

26:10 Archaeological research has uncovered many **towers in the desert** that date from the time of Uzziah. **Carmel** was a region south of Hebron, not the famous mountain where Elijah confronted the prophets of Baal. David often went to Carmel when he was fleeing from Saul (1 Sam. 25:2, 5, 7).

prepared for them, for the entire army, shields, spears, helmets, body armor, bows, and slings *to cast stones*.¹⁵ And he made devices in Jerusalem, invented by *skillful men*, to be on the towers and the corners, to shoot arrows and large stones. So his fame spread far and wide, for he was marvelously helped till he became strong.

The Penalty for Uzziah's Pride

¹⁶But *when* he was strong his heart was *lifted up*, to *his* destruction, for he transgressed against the LORD his God *by entering the temple of the LORD to burn incense on the altar of incense*.¹⁷ So *Azariah the priest* went in after him, and with him were eighty priests of the LORD—valiant men.¹⁸ And they withstood King Uzziah, and said to him, “*It is not for you, Uzziah, to burn incense to the LORD, but for the priests, the sons of Aaron, who are consecrated to burn incense. Get out of the sanctuary, for you have trespassed! You shall have no honor from the LORD God.*”

¹⁹Then Uzziah became furious; and he *had a censer in his hand to burn incense*. And while he was angry with the priests, *leprosy broke out on his forehead*, before the priests in the house of the LORD, beside the incense altar.²⁰ And Azariah the chief priest and all the priests looked at him, and there, on his forehead, he *was leprous*; so they thrust him out of that place. Indeed he also *hurried to get out*, because the LORD had struck him.

²¹*King Uzziah was a leper until the day of his death*. He dwelt in an *isolated house*, because he was a leper; for he was cut off from the house of the LORD. Then

15 ⁱ Ex. 39:3, 8
16 ^j [Deut. 32:15]
^k Deut. 8:14; 2 Chr. 25:19 / ^l 1 Kin. 13:1–4;
2 Kin. 16:12, 13
17 ^m 1 Chr. 6:10
18 ⁿ [Num. 3:10; 16:39, 40; 18:7]
^o Ex. 30:7, 8; Heb. 7:14
19 ^p Lev. 13:42; Num. 12:10; 2 Kin. 5:25–27
20 ^q Esth. 6:12
21 ^r 2 Kin. 15:5
^s [Lev. 13:46; Num. 5:2]

22 ^t 2 Kin. 20:1; 2 Chr. 32:20, 32; Is. 1:1
23 ^u 2 Kin. 15:7; 2 Chr. 21:20; 28:27; Is. 6:1 ^v Died and joined his ancestors

CHAPTER 27

1 ^w 2 Kin. 15:32–35
^x Jerusha, 2 Kin. 15:33
2 ^y 2 Kin. 15:35; Ezek. 20:44; 30:13
3 ^z 2 Chr. 33:14; Neh. 3:26
5 ^{aa} 2 Chr. 26:8
6 ^{ab} 2 Chr. 26:5

Jotham his son *was over the king's house, judging the people of the land*.

²²Now the rest of the acts of Uzziah, from first to last, the prophet *Isaiah the son of Amoz* wrote.²³^u So Uzziah *rested with his fathers, and they buried him with his fathers in the field of burial which belonged to the kings, for they said, “He is a leper.”* Then Jotham his son reigned in his place.

Jotham Reigns in Judah

27 Jotham *was* twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem. His mother's name *was Jerushah the daughter of Zadok*.² And he did *what was right in the sight of the LORD*, according to all that his father Uzziah had done (although he did not enter the temple of the LORD). But still *the people acted corruptly*.

³He built the Upper Gate of the house of the LORD, and he built extensively on the wall of *Ophel*.⁴ Moreover he built cities in the mountains of Judah, and in the forests he built fortresses and towers.⁵ He also fought with the king of the *Ammonites* and defeated them. And the people of Ammon gave him in that year one hundred talents of silver, ten thousand kors of wheat, and ten thousand of barley. The people of Ammon paid this to him in the second and third years also.⁶ So Jotham became mighty, *because he prepared his ways before the LORD his God*.

⁷Now the rest of the acts of Jotham, and all his wars and his ways, indeed they *are written in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah*.⁸ He was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he

26:15 devices: This is one of the earliest references to catapults, which seem to have been defensive weapons, since their users were **on the towers and the corners**.

26:16 Uzziah, swollen with pride, entered the temple. Uzziah was a descendant of David, but there were strict limits on his role in worship. Evidently Uzziah chafed at the restrictions.

26:17 The **Azariah** named here may be the same as Azariah the son of Johanan (1 Chr. 6:10).

26:18 the priests, the sons of Aaron: Uzziah sinned when he exercised priestly privileges that were reserved for the Aaronic order (see Num. 16:39, 40).

26:19 Leprosy was any kind of serious skin condition (see Lev. 13:1–14:32). Today, *leprosy* refers technically to Hansen's disease, a disease not known in Biblical times.

26:20 The urgency of the priests to **thrust him out**, as well as Uzziah's own haste to leave, came from the strict requirements of the Law (see Lev. 22:2–6; Num. 12:10, 15). The Law viewed leprosy as a breach of God's own holiness; it was a graphic symbol of defilement.

26:21 isolated house: Because of his uncleanness, Uzziah had no access to the temple either as a worshiper or as king. **was over the king's house:** Control of the temple and the state now passed to Jotham. This implies a coregency. As long as Uzziah lived, Jotham exercised power on his behalf.

26:22 Isaiah was the prophet who wrote the Book of Isaiah (see Is. 1:1). He witnessed the last years of Uzziah but wrote virtually nothing about him in his book that has survived.

26:23 reigned: This simply means that Jotham made the transition from coregent (v. 21) to full and independent king.

27:1 Jotham's **sixteen years** began 11 years before Uzziah died. This suggests that Uzziah had leprosy for more than a decade before he died.

27:3 The **Upper Gate** connected the temple and the royal palace (23:20). Jotham repaired or rebuilt it. **the wall of Ophel:** Ophel was the original Jebusite area of Jerusalem. Its walls dated back hundreds of years and must have required regular maintenance.

27:4 cities . . . fortresses and towers: From the earliest days, the kings of Judah had built defense works and facilities for storing food and supplies (8:2, 4–6; 11:5–12; 14:6, 7; 17:12; 26:9, 10). In Jotham's time the Assyrians and other potential enemies were becoming a threat, so this building was necessary.

27:5 Uzziah had reduced the Ammonite **people** to tributary status, but evidently they had broken free. Jotham therefore reasserted his control and forced renewed payments. **second and third years:** After three years the tribute ended, suggesting that Ammon once more regained its independence.

reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem. ⁹/So Jotham ²rested with his fathers, and they buried him in the City of David. Then ⁹Ahaz his son reigned in his place.

Ahaz Reigns in Judah

28 Ahaz ^awas twenty years old when he became king, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem; and he did not do *what was* right in the sight of the LORD, as his father David *had done*. ²For he walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, and made ^bmolded images for ^cthe Baals. ³He burned incense in ^dthe Valley of the Son of Hinnom, and burned ^ehis children in the ^ffire, according to the abominations of the nations whom the LORD had ^gcast out before the children of Israel. ⁴And he sacrificed and burned incense on the ¹high places, on the hills, and under every green tree.

Syria and Israel Defeat Judah

⁵Therefore ^hthe LORD his God delivered him into the hand of the king of Syria. They ⁱdefeated him, and carried away a great multitude of them as captives, and brought *them* to Damascus. Then he was also delivered into the hand of the king of Israel, who defeated him with a great slaughter. ⁶For ^jPekah the son of Remaliah killed one hundred and twenty thousand in Judah in one day, all valiant men, ^kbecause they had forsaken the LORD God of their fathers. ⁷Zichri, a mighty man of Ephraim, killed Maaseiah the king's son, Azrikam the officer over the house, and Elkanah *who was* second to the king. ⁸And the children of Israel carried away captive of their ^lbrethren two hundred thousand women, sons, and daughters; and they also took away much ²spoil from them, and brought the spoil to Samaria.

⁹ ² Kin. 15:38 ⁹ Is. 1:1; Hos. 1:1; Mic. 1:1
² Died and joined his ancestors

CHAPTER 28

¹ ^a ² Kin. 16:2-4
² ^b Ex. 34:17; Lev. 19:4 ^c Judg. 2:11
³ ^d Josh. 15:8
^e ² Kin. 23:10 ^f [Lev. 18:21]; ² Kin. 16:3;
² Chr. 33:6 ^g [Lev. 18:24-30]
⁴ ¹ Places for pagan worship
⁵ ^h [Is. 10:5] ² Kin. 16:5, 6; ² Chr. 24:24; Is. 7:1, 17
⁶ ^j ² Kin. 15:27
^k [2 Chr. 29:8]
⁸ ^l Deut. 28:25, 41; ² Chr. 11:4
² plunder

⁹ ^m ² Chr. 25:15
⁹ Ps. 69:26; [Is. 10:5; 47:6]; Ezek. 25:12, 15; 26:2; Obad. 10; [Zech. 1:15] ⁹ Ezra 9:6; Rev. 18:5
¹⁰ ^p [Lev. 25:39, 42, 43, 46]
¹¹ ^q Ps. 78:49; James 2:13
¹⁴ ³ plunder
¹⁵ ^r ² Chr. 28:12
¹ [Prov. 25:21, 22; Luke 6:27; Rom. 12:20] ⁴ Deut. 34:3; Judg. 1:16 ⁴ plunder
¹⁶ ^u ² Kin. 16:7
⁵ LXX, Syr., Vg. king (cf. v. 20)

Israel Returns the Captives

⁹ But a ^m prophet of the LORD was there, whose name was Oded; and he went out before the army that came to Samaria, and said to them: "Look, ⁿbecause the LORD God of your fathers was angry with Judah, He has delivered them into your hand; but you have killed them in a rage *that* ^oreaches up to heaven. ¹⁰And now you propose to force the children of Judah and Jerusalem to be your ^pmale and female slaves; *but are* you not also guilty before the LORD your God?" ¹¹Now hear me, therefore, and return the captives, whom you have taken captive from your brethren, ^qfor the fierce wrath of the LORD is upon you."

¹²Then some of the heads of the children of Ephraim, Azariah the son of Johanan, Berechiah the son of Meshillemoth, Jehizkiah the son of Shallum, and Amasa the son of Hadlai, stood up against those who came from the war, ¹³and said to them, "You shall not bring the captives here, for we *already* have offended the LORD. You intend to add to our sins and to our guilt; for our guilt is great, and *there is* fierce wrath against Israel."

¹⁴So the armed men left the captives and the ³spoil before the leaders and all the assembly. ¹⁵Then the men ^rwho were designated by name rose up and took the captives, and from the ⁴spoil they clothed all who were naked among them, dressed them and gave them sandals, ^sgave them food and drink, and anointed them; and they let all the feeble ones ride on donkeys. So they brought them to their brethren at Jericho, ^tthe city of palm trees. Then they returned to Samaria.

Assyria Refuses to Help Judah

¹⁶^u At the same time King Ahaz sent to the ⁵kings of Assyria to help him.

28:1 Ahaz's reign of **sixteen years** could mean that he came to the throne about four years after the sixteen-year tenure of his father Jotham (see 27:1).

28:3 The **Valley of the Son of Hinnom** was just outside the western wall of Jerusalem. It was a dumping ground for all kinds of refuse, much of which was burned. The valley itself became a symbol of impurity. It was used as a site of pagan worship, including human sacrifice (see 2 Kin. 23:10; Jer. 7:31, 32; 19:2-6; 32:35). **the abominations of the nations:** Worshipers of the Ammonite god Molech practiced human and child sacrifice (see Lev. 18:21; 20:2-5; Deut. 12:31).

28:4 **every green tree:** Canaanite nature cults focused on evergreens, probably as symbols of perpetual fertility.

28:5 **king of Syria:** Rezin (2 Kin. 16:5).

28:6 **Pekah**, who assassinated Pekahiah son of Menahem so he could become king of Israel (see 2 Kin. 15:23-25), reigned for 20 years (2 Kin. 15:27). He was murdered in a plot headed by Hoshea, the last king of Israel. **because they had forsaken the LORD God:** Pekah was not offended by Judah's godlessness and did not himself initiate this purge. Rather, God used Pekah to carry out His judgment.

28:7 The **officer over the house** was a manager of the palace and all of its staff and activities.

28:9 This prophet **Oded** is mentioned only here. **killed . . . in a rage:** God used the Israelite armies to carry out his judgment on Judah (v. 6), but He never intended for the Israelites to enjoy it. Oded condemned their malicious and self-serving attitude.

28:10 The Israelites intended to make the survivors of Judah their **slaves**, although this was forbidden by the Law of Moses (Lev. 25:39-46).

28:13 **offended the LORD:** This admission by Israel's leaders applies not only to the outrageous slaughter of their brethren from Judah (v. 6) but also to the whole course of their history until then. The Israelites could see from the rise of the Assyrians and their encroachment on Israel that the end was near. Within ten years, the Assyrians would capture Samaria and deport all of the Israelites. The Israelites brought this judgment on themselves (see 2 Kin. 17:7, 18).

28:15 **anointed them:** They applied balms and oils to the wounded.

28:16 The **kings of Assyria** were Tiglath-Pileser III, Shalmaneser V, and Sargon II.

¹⁷For again the ^vEdomites had come, attacked Judah, and carried away captives. ¹⁸^wThe Philistines also had invaded the cities of the lowland and of the South of Judah, and had taken Beth Shemesh, Aijalon, Gederoth, Sochoh with its villages, Timnah with its villages, and Gimzo with its villages; and they dwelt there. ¹⁹For the LORD ^bbrought Judah low because of Ahaz king of ^xIsrael, for he had ^yencouraged moral decline in Judah and had been continually unfaithful to the LORD. ²⁰Also ^zTiglath-Pileser ⁷ king of Assyria came to him and distressed him, and did not assist him. ²¹For Ahaz took part of the treasures from the house of the LORD, from the house of the king, and from the leaders, and he gave it to the king of Assyria; but he did not help him.

Apostasy and Death of Ahaz

²²Now in the time of his distress King Ahaz became increasingly unfaithful to the LORD. This is that King Ahaz. ²³For ^ahe sacrificed to the gods of Damascus which had defeated him, saying, “Because the gods of the kings of Syria help them, I will sacrifice to them ^bthat they may help me.” But they were the ruin of him and of all Israel. ²⁴So Ahaz gathered the articles of the house of God, cut in pieces the articles of the house of God, ^cshut up the doors of the house of the LORD, and made for himself altars in every corner of Jerusalem. ²⁵And in every single city of Judah he made ^dhigh places to burn incense

¹⁷ ^v 2 Chr. 21:10; Obad. 10–14
¹⁸ ^w 2 Chr. 21:16, 17; Ezek. 16:27, 57
¹⁹ ^x 2 Kin. 16:2; 2 Chr. 21:2 ^y Ex. 32:25 ^b humbled Judah
²⁰ ^z 2 Kin. 15:29; 16:7–9; 1 Chr. 5:26
⁷ Heb. *Tilgath-Pileser*
²³ ^a 2 Chr. 25:14
^b Jer. 44:17, 18
²⁴ ^c 2 Chr. 29:3, 7
²⁵ ^d Places for pagan worship

²⁶ ^d 2 Kin. 16:19, 20
²⁷ ^e 2 Chr. 21:20;
 24:25 ⁹ Died and joined his ancestors

CHAPTER 29

¹ ^a 2 Kin. 18:1; 2 Chr. 32:22, 33 ¹ *Abi*, 2 Kin. 18:2
³ ^b 2 Chr. 28:24; 29:7
⁵ ^c 1 Chr. 15:12; 2 Chr. 29:15, 34; 35:6 ² *consecrate*
⁶ ^d [Is. 1:4]; Jer. 2:27; Ezek. 8:16 ³ *Temple*

to other gods, and provoked to anger the LORD God of his fathers.

²⁶^d Now the rest of his acts and all his ways, from first to last, indeed they are written in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel. ²⁷So Ahaz ⁹rested with his fathers, and they buried him in the city, in Jerusalem; but they ^edid not bring him into the tombs of the kings of Israel. Then Hezekiah his son reigned in his place.

Hezekiah Reigns in Judah

29 Hezekiah ^abecame king when he was twenty-five years old, and he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was ¹Abijah the daughter of Zechariah. ²And he did *what was right* in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father David had done.

Hezekiah Cleanses the Temple

³In the first year of his reign, in the first month, he ^bopened the doors of the house of the LORD and repaired them. ⁴Then he brought in the priests and the Levites, and gathered them in the East Square, ⁵and said to them: “Hear me, Levites! Now ²sanctify yourselves, ^csanctify the house of the LORD God of your fathers, and carry out the rubbish from the holy place. ⁶For our fathers have trespassed and done evil in the eyes of the LORD our God; they have forsaken Him, have ^dturned their faces away from the ³dwelling place of the LORD, and turned

28:17 The relationship between **Judah** and the **Edomites** changed often. Judah usually dominated Edom and was never under its control, but the extent of domination varied from one generation to the next (see 8:17; 20:2, 22, 36; 21:8–10; 25:11; 26:2). Now Edom was independent once again and powerful enough to invade Judah and take prisoners. Ahaz solicited help from Assyria (v. 16).

28:18 lowland: This region between the hill country of Judah and the coastal plain is commonly called the Shephelah. **The South** was the Negev. **Beth Shemesh** was 18 miles west of Jerusalem near the Philistine border. **Aijalon** was in the Aijalon valley seven miles north of Beth Shemesh. **Gederoth** was possibly the same as Gederah, located about three miles west of Aijalon. **Sochoh** was in the southern lowlands, about ten miles southwest of Hebron. **Gimzo** was eight miles northwest of Aijalon. All these places were near valleys that led up to central Judah from the surrounding plains. Control of them meant control of Judah itself. Because Ahaz understood this, he appealed to Assyria.

28:20 Tiglath-Pileser brought Mesopotamian influence over the countries of the eastern Mediterranean to its highest point. He undertook a campaign against Arpad in Syria and terrorized Menahem of Israel so much that Menahem paid him a huge bribe to be left alone (2 Kin. 15:19). Tiglath returned to the west again, and Ahaz scrambled for protection against Syria and Israel (2 Kin. 16:5–7; Is. 7:1, 2). The Assyrians overran Damascus and replaced the assassinated Pekah of Israel with Hoshea (2 Kin. 15:30), but they **did not assist** Ahaz. The king of Judah's troubles with the Edomites, Philistines, Arameans, and even Israelites (Is. 7:1) were over for the time being, but at great cost.

28:23 King Ahaz's idolatry and unfaithfulness to God (v. 19) led to

God's judgment. Rather than repent, Ahaz sought to appease the gods who **had defeated him**, the **gods of Damascus**. Not only was he being idolatrous, he was ignoring the fact that Damascus itself had fallen to the Assyrians.

28:24 The account in 2 Kin. 16:10–18 relates how Ahaz, having seen an altar in Damascus, ordered one like it to be built in Jerusalem. On this altar he offered regular burnt offerings. He used the great bronze altar of Solomon as a means of divination. He dismantled the carts supporting the lavers (4:14) and took the great bronze Sea from its pedestals (4:2, 3). These must have been among the **articles** that he destroyed.

28:25 If destroying **high places** is a sign of a godly reign (see 14:3, 5; 15:16; 16:6), then constructing them is a clear sign of the opposite. The phrase **God of his fathers** calls attention to God's covenant relationship with both Israel and Judah.

28:27 The term **kings of Israel** refers not just to the northern kingdom, but to the entire nation under God.

29:2 Hezekiah was the only king of Judah who was as faithful to the Lord as **David** had been.

29:3 The **first year** of Hezekiah's independent rule began in 715 B.C. Hezekiah had ruled alongside Ahaz since 729 B.C. The fact that Hezekiah began his work on the restoration of the temple in his **first month** testifies to his zeal for God's work. Hezekiah **opened the doors** of the temple as a step toward spiritual renewal. Ahaz had closed the doors as an expression of hostility to God and the covenant (see 28:24). Hezekiah wasted no time in dealing with the sins of his predecessor.

29:4 The **East Square** was the courtyard directly in front of the portico of the temple (see 4:9, 10; 6:13; 7:7).

their backs on Him. ^{7e}They have also shut up the doors of the vestibule, put out the lamps, and have not burned incense or offered burnt offerings in the holy place to the God of Israel. ⁸Therefore the ^fwrath of the LORD fell upon Judah and Jerusalem, and He has ^ggiven them up to trouble, to desolation, and to ^hjeering, as you see with your ⁱeyes. ⁹For indeed, because of this ^jour fathers have fallen by the sword; and our sons, our daughters, and our wives *are* in captivity.

¹⁰“Now *it is* in my heart to make ^ka covenant with the LORD God of Israel, that His fierce wrath may turn away from us. ¹¹My sons, do not be negligent now, for the LORD has ^lchosen you to stand before Him, to serve Him, and that you should minister to Him and burn incense.”

¹²Then these Levites arose: ^mMahath the son of Amasai and Joel the son of Azariah, of the sons of the ⁿKohathites; of the sons of Merari, Kish the son of Abdi and Azariah the son of Jehallelel; of the Gershonites, Joah the son of Zimmah and Eden the son of Joah; ¹³of the sons of Elizaphan, Shimri and Jeiel; of the sons of Asaph, Zechariah and Mattaniah; ¹⁴of the sons of Heman, Jehiel and Shimeih; and of the sons of Jeduthun, Shemaiah and Uzziel.

¹⁵And they gathered their brethren, ^osanctified⁴ themselves, and went ac-

⁷ ^e 2 Chr. 28:24
⁸ ^f 2 Chr. 24:18
⁹ ^g 2 Chr. 28:5 ^h 1 Kin. 9:8; Jer. 18:16; 19:8; 25:9, 18; 29:18
ⁱ Deut. 28:32
⁹ ^j Deut. 28:25;
2 Chr. 28:5-8, 17
¹⁰ ^k 2 Chr. 15:12;
23:16
¹¹ ^l Num. 3:6;
8:14; 18:2, 6; 2 Chr. 30:16, 17
¹² ^m 2 Chr. 31:13
¹³ ⁿ Num. 3:19, 20
¹⁵ ^o 2 Chr. 29:5
⁴ *consecrated*

^p 1 Chr. 23:28
¹⁶ ^q 2 Chr. 15:16;
30:14
¹⁷ ⁵ *consecrate*
¹⁹ ^r 2 Chr. 28:24
⁶ *consecrated*
²¹ ^s Lev. 4:3-14

cording to the commandment of the king, at the words of the LORD, ^pto cleanse the house of the LORD. ¹⁶Then the priests went into the inner part of the house of the LORD to cleanse *it*, and brought out all the debris that they found in the temple of the LORD to the court of the house of the LORD. And the Levites took *it* out and carried *it* to the Brook ^qKidron.

¹⁷Now they began to ⁵sanctify on the first *day* of the first month, and on the eighth day of the month they came to the vestibule of the LORD. So they sanctified the house of the LORD in eight days, and on the sixteenth day of the first month they finished.

¹⁸Then they went in to King Hezekiah and said, “We have cleansed all the house of the LORD, the altar of burnt offerings with all its articles, and the table of the showbread with all its articles. ¹⁹Moreover all the articles which King Ahaz in his reign had ^rcast aside in his transgression we have prepared and ⁶sanctified; and there they *are*, before the altar of the LORD.”

Hezekiah Restores Temple Worship

²⁰Then King Hezekiah rose early, gathered the rulers of the city, and went up to the house of the LORD. ²¹And they brought seven bulls, seven rams, seven lambs, and seven male goats for a ^ssin

29:9 captivity: This could refer to the fall of Samaria and deportation of the northern tribes just seven years earlier (2 Kin. 17:6). But under the wicked leadership of Ahaz, many of the people of Judah had been taken captive by Rezin of Damascus and Pekah of Israel (see 28:5–8). Hezekiah’s reference to Judah and Jerusalem (v. 8) suggests that he might have been referring to this.

cleanse

(Heb. *taher*) (29:16; Lev. 14:48; Ps. 51:2, 7; Is. 66:17) Strong’s #2891

This Hebrew term means “to make free from blemish,” almost always in a ritual or spiritual sense (although once the word is used for the wind’s cleaning away of clouds and once for the refiner’s purifying of silver; see Job 37:21; Mal. 3:3). Almost half the occurrences are in Leviticus, where ritual cleansing is related to sanctification and is opposed to the moral filthiness of the Israelites (Lev. 16:19). Objects and people involved in the worship of the Lord—such as the temple, the furniture in the temple, and the Levites—needed cleansing because the Lord is a holy God (Num. 8:5–22; 1 Chr. 23:28). The ritual external cleansing of people was a symbol of internal purity (Gen. 35:2; Zech. 3:3–5). Jeremiah and Ezekiel prophesied of the future cleansing of the people from their sins so that they could truly be God’s people, both outside and inside (Jer. 33:8; Ezek. 36:25, 33; 37:23). The idea of cleansing carries through into the NT. The Book of Revelation pictures the Lamb’s bride—the church—in clean linen which symbolizes the righteous acts of believers (2 Cor. 7:1; Eph. 5:26; 1 John 1:9; Rev. 19:8).

29:10 Hezekiah’s covenant placed him and his people under the authority of God. Hezekiah pledged himself to lead the nation in faithfulness, as the terms of the original Davidic covenant demanded (23:3, 11, 16; see Deut. 17:18–20; 31:9–13; 1 Chr. 28:9).

29:12 Kohathites . . . Merari . . . Gershonites: Hezekiah summoned the leaders of the three major Levitical clans, two leaders from each clan.

29:13, 14 The family of **Elizaphan** was part of Kohath (1 Chr. 15:8). **Asaph** was the father of a division of Levitical musicians (see 1 Chr. 25:1, 2). **Heman** and **Jeduthun** were musicians (see 1 Chr. 25:1, 3–5). Jeduthun was also known as Ethan (1 Chr. 15:17, 19).

29:15 The phrase **at the words of the LORD** means that Hezekiah undertook his reformation at God’s direction. His instructions to the nation in this case had unique authority (see 1 Chr. 28:11–19; 29:23, 24).

29:16 The **inner part** apparently refers to the Most Holy Place, and the term **temple** may refer also to the larger chamber, the holy place (3:5–7; 4:7, 8). The **court** was the inner court just outside the temple, the area restricted to the priests and Levites (4:9). The work of temple repair and restoration began in the Most Holy Place and then continued until it reached the courtyard. The **Brook Kidron** was the wadi just east of Jerusalem where debris was burned (see 15:16).

29:17 The work began on the **first day of the first month** of Hezekiah’s reign, not of the calendar month (v. 3). The **vestibule** was a porch across the front of the temple. **Sanctify** means to “cleanse or purify” or “to set apart for a holy purpose.”

29:19 articles: Ahaz had destroyed some but not all of the temple implements (see 28:24).

29:21 bulls . . . rams . . . lambs: The Law required the sacrifice of these animals for atonement of **sin** in general (see Lev. 1:3–13). On the other hand, the sacrifice of **goats** atoned for specific sins (Lev. 4:1–5:13). Here the priests offered **seven** of each kind to signify the

offering for the kingdom, for the sanctuary, and for Judah. Then he commanded the priests, the sons of Aaron, to offer *them* on the altar of the LORD. ²² So they killed the bulls, and the priests received the blood and ^usprinkled *it* on the altar. Likewise they killed the rams and sprinkled the blood on the altar. They also killed the lambs and sprinkled the blood on the altar. ²³ Then they brought out the male goats *for* the sin offering before the king and the assembly, and they laid their ^uhands on them. ²⁴ And the priests killed them; and they presented their blood on the altar as a sin offering ^vto make an atonement for all Israel, for the king commanded *that* the burnt offering and the sin offering *be made* for all Israel.

²⁵ ^w And he stationed the Levites in the house of the LORD with cymbals, with stringed instruments, and with harps, ^xaccording to the commandment of David, of ^yGad the king's seer, and of Nathan the prophet; ^zfor thus *was* the commandment of the LORD by His prophets. ²⁶ The Levites stood with the instruments ^aof David, and the priests with ^bthe trumpets. ²⁷ Then Hezekiah commanded *them* to offer the burnt offering on the altar. And when the burnt offering began, ^cthe song of the LORD *also* began, with the trumpets and with the instruments of David king of Israel. ²⁸ So all the assembly worshiped, the singers sang, and the trumpeters sounded; all *this continued* until the burnt offering was finished. ²⁹ And when they had finished offering, ^dthe king and all who were present with him bowed and worshiped. ³⁰ Moreover King Hezekiah and the leaders commanded the Levites to sing praise to the LORD with the words

²² ^t Lev. 8:14, 15, 19, 24; Heb. 9:21
²³ ^u Lev. 4:15, 24; 8:14
²⁴ ^v Lev. 14:20
²⁵ ^w 1 Chr. 16:4; 25:6 ^x 1 Chr. 23:5; 25:1; 2 Chr. 8:14
²⁶ ^y 2 Sam. 24:11
²⁷ ^z 2 Chr. 30:12
²⁸ ^a 1 Chr. 23:5; Amos 6:5 ^b Num. 10:8, 10; 1 Chr. 15:24; 16:6; 2 Chr. 5:12
²⁹ ^c 2 Chr. 23:18
³⁰ ^d 2 Chr. 20:18

of David and of Asaph the seer. So they sang praises with gladness, and they bowed their heads and worshiped.

³¹ Then Hezekiah answered and said, "Now *that* you have consecrated yourselves to the LORD, come near, and bring sacrifices and ^ethank offerings into the house of the LORD." So the assembly brought in sacrifices and thank offerings, and as many as were of a ^fwilling heart *brought* burnt offerings. ³² And the number of the burnt offerings which the assembly brought was seventy bulls, one hundred rams, *and* two hundred lambs; all these *were* for a burnt offering to the LORD. ³³ The consecrated things *were* six hundred bulls and three thousand sheep. ³⁴ But the priests were too few, so that they could not skin all the burnt offerings; therefore ^gtheir brethren the Levites helped them until the work was ended and until the *other* priests had ^hsanctified themselves, ⁱfor the Levites were ^jmore diligent in ^jsanctifying themselves than the priests. ³⁵ Also the burnt offerings *were* in abundance, with ^kthe fat of the peace offerings and *with* ^lthe drink offerings *for every* burnt offering.

So the service of the house of the LORD was set in order. ³⁶ Then Hezekiah and all the people rejoiced that God had prepared the people, since the events took place so suddenly.

Hezekiah Keeps the Passover

30 And Hezekiah sent to all Israel and Judah, and also wrote letters to Ephraim and Manasseh, that they should come to the house of the LORD at Jerusalem, to keep the Passover to the LORD God of Israel. ² For the king and his

³¹ ^e Lev. 7:12 ^f Ex. 35:5, 22
³⁴ ^g 2 Chr. 35:11
^h 2 Chr. 30:3 ⁱ Ps. 7:10 ^j 2 Chr. 29:5
^j consecrated
³⁵ ^k Lev. 3:15, 16
^l Num. 15:5-10

wholeness of their repentance. The **kingdom** refers to the nation as a political entity, **Judah** to the people. Both the state and the people needed atonement. The **sanctuary** refers to the temple itself. **29:24** The repetition of **all Israel** here suggests that Hezekiah meant to include all twelve tribes, including the northern kingdom (see 30:1-9).

29:25 King David was responsible for religious as well as civil and political matters. He had exercised that responsibility by appointing Levitical musicians and instructing them about their temple ministries (see 1 Chr. 23:2, 27; 25:1-31). He was guided and advised by two of God's faithful prophets, **Gad** and **Nathan**.

29:26 The **instruments of David** were those deemed appropriate for temple worship (see 1 Chr. 25:1, 3, 5, 6).

29:30 The **words of David and of Asaph** refers to the psalms of David and Asaph (1 Chr. 6:39; 15:17; 16:5), many of them in the Book of Psalms. The people of Judah used these psalms for community worship and private meditation.

29:31 Sometimes called "peace" or "fellowship" offerings, **thank offerings** celebrated the relationship gained by the offerings of atonement (vv. 21-24; see Lev. 3:1-17; 7:11-36). **willing heart:** People gave these gifts to God not out of compulsion but as joyful responses to the grace of God.

29:33 The thank offerings included people, priests, and God Him-

self. In effect, the **consecrated things** made up a banquet at which everyone gathered before the Lord for fellowship and communion. **29:34** Under Ahaz the **priests** and **Levites** had been stripped of their duties. Now, 20 years later, there were not enough priests. Hezekiah had to reconsecrate the older priests and commission new ones. His reforms took place so quickly (v. 3) that the priests received a special dispensation to assign Levites to areas of ministry otherwise closed to them, such as skinning sacrificial animals (see Lev. 1:5, 6).

30:1-3 Though the kingdom of **Israel** had split more than two centuries before, **Hezekiah** never lost sight of the fact that God's covenant was made with all twelve tribes and that His promises included them all (see Ezek. 37:15-28). The **Passover** was ordinarily celebrated in the first month of the religious year (Ex. 12:6, 18). But this year the repair and consecration of the temple was still underway (see 29:1-17). The Law made provision for the Passover to be postponed if a person was absent on an important journey or was ritually defiled (Num. 9:9-12). Hezekiah interpreted this Law to include the priests who had not yet consecrated themselves to ministry (see 29:34). All the people of Israel had not had time to gather **together at Jerusalem** in any case, so they delayed the celebration until the **second month**.

leaders and all the assembly in Jerusalem had agreed to keep the Passover in the second ^amonth. ³For they could not keep it ^bat ¹the regular time, ^cbecause a sufficient number of priests had not consecrated themselves, nor had the people gathered together at Jerusalem. ⁴And the matter pleased the king and all the assembly. ⁵So they ²resolved to make a proclamation throughout all Israel, from Beersheba to Dan, that they should come to keep the Passover to the LORD God of Israel at Jerusalem, since they had not done it for a long time in the *prescribed* manner.

⁶Then the ^drunners went throughout all Israel and Judah with the letters from the king and his leaders, and spoke according to the command of the king: “Children of Israel, ^ereturn to the LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel; then He will return to the remnant of you who have escaped from the hand of ^fthe kings of ^gAssyria. ⁷And do not be ^hlike your fathers and your brethren, who trespassed against the LORD God of their fathers, so that He ⁱgave them up to ^jdesolation, as you see. ⁸Now do not be ^kstiff-necked, ³as your fathers *were*, but yield yourselves to the LORD; and enter His sanctuary, which He has sanctified forever, and serve the LORD your God, ^lthat the fierceness of His wrath may turn away from you. ⁹For if you return to the LORD, your brethren and your children *will be treated* with ^mcompassion by those who lead them captive, so that they may come back to this land; for the LORD your God is

CHAPTER 30

² ^a Num. 9:10, 11; 2 Chr. 30:13, 15
³ ^b Ex. 12:6, 18
^c 2 Chr. 29:17, 34
¹ The first month, Lev. 23:5; lit. *that time*
⁵ ^d established a decree to
⁶ ^e Esth. 8:14; Job 9:25; Jer. 51:31
⁴ [Jer. 4:1; Joel 2:13]
² Kin. 15:19, 29
⁹ 2 Chr. 28:20
⁷ ^h Ezek. 20:18 ¹ Is. 1:9 ² Chr. 29:8
⁸ ^k Ex. 32:9; Deut. 10:16; Acts 7:51
² Chr. 29:10
³ Rebellious
⁹ ^m Ps. 106:46

ⁿ [Ex. 34:6; Mic. 7:18] ^o [Is. 55:7]
¹⁰ ^p 2 Chr. 36:16
¹¹ ^q 2 Chr. 11:16; 30:18, 21
¹² ^r [2 Cor. 3:5; Phil. 2:13; Heb. 13:20, 21]
⁵ 2 Chr. 29:25
¹³ ¹ Lev. 23:6; Num. 9:11
¹⁴ ^u 2 Chr. 28:24
^v 2 Chr. 29:16
¹⁵ ^w 2 Chr. 29:34 ⁴ humbled themselves ⁵ set themselves apart
¹⁶ ^x 2 Chr. 35:10, 15
⁶ Or in their proper order
¹⁷ ^y 2 Chr. 29:34
⁷ consecrated
¹⁸ ^z 2 Chr. 30:1, 18, 25

ⁿgracious and merciful, and will not turn His face from you if you ^oreturn to Him.”

¹⁰So the runners passed from city to city through the country of Ephraim and Manasseh, as far as Zebulun; but ^pthey laughed at them and mocked them. ¹¹Nevertheless ^qsome from Asher, Manasseh, and Zebulun humbled themselves and came to Jerusalem. ¹²Also ^rthe hand of God was on Judah to give them singleness of heart to obey the command of the king and the leaders, ^sat the word of the LORD.

¹³Now many people, a very great assembly, gathered at Jerusalem to keep the Feast of ^tUnleavened Bread in the second month. ¹⁴They arose and took away the ^ualtars that *were* in Jerusalem, and they took away all the incense altars and cast *them* into the Brook ^vKidron. ¹⁵Then they slaughtered the Passover *lamb*s on the fourteenth *day* of the second month. The priests and the Levites ⁴were ^washamed, and ⁵sanctified themselves, and brought the burnt offerings to the house of the LORD. ¹⁶They stood in their ^xplace ⁶according to their custom, according to the Law of Moses the man of God; the priests sprinkled the blood *received* from the hand of the Levites. ¹⁷For *there were* many in the assembly who had not ⁷sanctified themselves; ⁸therefore the Levites had charge of the slaughter of the Passover *lamb*s for everyone *who was* not clean, to sanctify *them* to the LORD. ¹⁸For a multitude of the people, ^zmany from Ephraim, Manasseh, Issachar, and Zebulun, had not cleansed themselves,

30:5 The fact that **all Israel** was included reveals that there were many followers of God left in the northern kingdom, despite more than two hundred years of backsliding and the Assyrian conquest (see 29:24).

30:6 the LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel: Hezekiah appealed to the nation on the basis of the ancient Abrahamic covenant (see 29:5). Even though the kingdom was divided and many of its people languished in exile far from home, God's promise could not change, and it bound them all together as God's people. They still had time to return to the Lord. **the remnant:** In some places the word *remnant* means the godly elect from among the Israelite people as a whole (Is. 46:3; Mic. 2:12; 5:7, 8). Here it means those Israelites who had survived Assyrian slaughter and deportation.

30:8 People who were not priests were not allowed to enter the temple, so **enter His sanctuary** is a figure of speech for serving the Lord.

30:9 The **brethren and children** were Israelites who had been carried away into Assyrian captivity. Hezekiah pleaded with the remnant left behind to repent, promising that this would result in better treatment of those in captivity and would guarantee their return to the **land**. According to the covenant (see Deut. 28–30), obedience would lead to blessing in the land, and disobedience would result in exile.

30:10 Zebulun was probably the northernmost territory of Israel at this time because Naphtali had been taken by Tiglath-Pileser III (2 Kin. 15:29).

30:12 In Judah the reaction to Hezekiah's invitation was totally

different from Israel's (vv. 10, 11), because God had put His **hand . . . on Judah**. God's grace is always a part of a person's efforts to please Him.

30:13 Because the **Feast of Unleavened Bread** immediately followed the Passover and was connected to it (Lev. 23:4–8), the Feast of Unleavened Bread sometimes referred to the Passover as well (Ezra 6:22). **second month:** A postponement of the feast from the first month was possible under certain circumstances (see v. 2).

30:14 The debris removed from the temple had already been hauled off to the Brook Kidron for burning (29:16), but the burnt offering and **incense altars** still remained in Jerusalem until the time of the Passover.

30:16 The Levites killed the animals and then handed the **blood** over to the priests to apply it. Usually burnt offerings were sacrificed by the individual worshipers who gave the blood to the priests (Lev. 1:4, 5).

30:17 Traditionally the **slaughter** of the Passover lamb was performed by the head of the family (Ex. 12:3–6). But on this occasion many were not ritually purified, and the Levites acted on their behalf.

30:18–20 not cleansed . . . yet they ate: Those who came from distant parts of Israel were disqualified from sacrificing and did not do so. Still, they ate the Passover meal, in violation of the Law of Moses (see Ex. 12:43–49). They felt it more important to obey the spirit of the Passover than its letter. Hezekiah prayed for them, asking God to observe the desire of their hearts. In response, God **healed the people**; that is, He healed their relationship with Him.

^ayet they ate the Passover contrary to what was written. But Hezekiah prayed for them, saying, “May the good LORD provide atonement for everyone ¹⁹who ^bprepares his heart to seek God, the LORD God of his fathers, though *he* is not *cleansed* according to the purification of the sanctuary.” ²⁰And the LORD listened to Hezekiah and healed the people.

²¹So the children of Israel who were present at Jerusalem kept ^cthe Feast of Unleavened Bread seven days with great gladness; and the Levites and the priests praised the LORD day by day, *singing* to the LORD, accompanied by loud instruments. ²²And Hezekiah gave encouragement to all the Levites ^dwho taught the good knowledge of the LORD; and they ate throughout the feast seven days, offering peace offerings and ^emaking confession to the LORD God of their fathers.

²³Then the whole assembly agreed to keep *the feast* ^fanother seven days, and they kept it *another* seven days with gladness. ²⁴For Hezekiah king of Judah ^ggave to the assembly a thousand bulls and seven thousand sheep, and the leaders gave to the assembly a thousand bulls and ten thousand sheep; and a great number of priests ^hsanctified ⁸themselves. ²⁵The whole assembly of Judah rejoiced, also the priests and Levites, all the assembly that came from Israel, the sojourners ⁱwho came from the land of Israel, and those who dwelt in Judah. ²⁶So there was great joy in Jerusalem, for since the time of ^jSolomon the son of David, king of Israel, *there had been* nothing like this in Jerusalem. ²⁷Then the priests, the Levites, arose and ^kblessed the people, and their voice was heard; and their prayer

¹⁸ ^aEx. 12:43–49; [Num. 9:10]

¹⁹ ^b2 Chr. 19:3

²¹ ^cEx. 12:15; 13:6;

1 Kin. 8:65

²² ^d[Deut. 33:10];

2 Chr. 17:9; 35:3

^eEzra 10:11

²³ ^f1 Kin. 8:65;

2 Chr. 35:17, 18

²⁴ ^g2 Chr. 35:7;

8 ^h2 Chr. 29:34

⁸ ^{consecrated}

²⁵ ⁱ2 Chr. 30:11, 18

²⁶ ^j2 Chr. 7:8–10

²⁷ ^kNum. 6:23

ⁱDeut. 26:15; Ps. 68:5

CHAPTER 31

1 ^a2 Kin. 18:4

^fPlaces for pagan worship

2 ^a1 Chr. 23:6; 24:1

^c1 Chr. 23:30, 31

² Temple

3 ^d2 Chr. 35:7

^eNum. 28:1–29:40

³ ^{share} ⁴ ^{property}

4 ^fNum. 18:8; 2 Kin.

12:16; Neh. 13:10;

Ezek. 44:29 ^gMal.

2:7 ⁵ ^{the portion due}

5 ^hEx. 22:29;

Neh. 13:12 ⁱ[Lev.

27:30]; Deut. 14:28;

26:12, 13

came *up* to ^lHis holy dwelling place, to heaven.

The Reforms of Hezekiah

31 Now when all this was finished, all Israel who were present went out to the cities of Judah and ^abroke the *sa-c*red pillars in pieces, cut down the wooden images, and threw down the ^lhigh places and the altars—from all Judah, Benjamin, Ephraim, and Manasseh—until they had utterly destroyed them all. Then all the children of Israel returned to their own cities, every man to his possession.

²And Hezekiah appointed ^bthe divisions of the priests and the Levites according to their divisions, each man according to his service, the priests and Levites ^cfor burnt offerings and peace offerings, to serve, to give thanks, and to praise in the gates of the ²camp of the LORD. ³The king also *appointed* a ³portion of his ^dpossessions ⁴for the burnt offerings: for the morning and evening burnt offerings, the burnt offerings for the Sabbaths and the New Moons and the set feasts, as *it is* written in the ^eLaw of the LORD.

⁴Moreover he commanded the people who dwelt in Jerusalem to contribute ^fsupport ⁵for the priests and the Levites, that they might devote themselves to ^gthe Law of the LORD.

⁵As soon as the commandment was circulated, the children of Israel brought in abundance ^hthe firstfruits of grain and wine, oil and honey, and of all the produce of the field; and they brought in abundantly the ⁱtithe of everything.

Genuine seeking after God is more important than adherence to ritual (see 1 Sam. 15:22).

30:22 taught the good knowledge of the LORD: Because of Ahaz's many years of wicked rule (28:23–25), the people of Judah must have become ignorant of the truths of their faith. The people from the north (v. 18) had virtually no preaching of God's revelation for 200 years, apart from the witness of the prophets such as Hosea and Amos. But the Levites' ministry included teaching (17:8–10; Deut. 17:18; 31:9–13; 33:10), and this great Passover was an opportunity to explain the history and purpose of God's covenant with Israel. The people *ate throughout the feast* because a meal was the central feature of the thank or **peace offerings** (see 29:31; Lev. 7:28–36; 9:18).

30:23 Like Solomon before him (7:8–10), Hezekiah found it impossible to limit the festivities to eight days (including the Passover). Their common consent to celebrate **another seven days** was a sure sign of renewed spiritual vitality.

30:25 The sojourners were aliens who lived in Israel and Judah and who could come to the festivals because they adhered to God and the Law (see Deut. 16:11; 26:11; 29:11; 31:12).

30:27 blessed the people: This may have been the formal blessing of Num. 6:24–26.

31:1 The phrases **all Israel** and **all the children of Israel** refer to the entire nation, north and south, Israel and Judah.

31:2 The long interruption (28:24) of Judah's official worship in the time of Ahaz brought chaos to their religious life. They abandoned the system of priestly and Levitical **divisions**. Just as David had originally organized the Levitical system (see 1 Chr. 23:1–26:28), so now Hezekiah had to reorganize it.

31:3 New Moons: This celebration came at the appearance of the new moon, the beginning of another month (see Num. 28:11–15). Though there were many **set feasts** by the end of the OT period, the ones in view here were the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread (Lev. 23:4–8); the Feast of Firstfruits or Pentecost (Lev. 23:15–22); and the Feast of Tabernacles (Lev. 23:33–43).

31:4 The Law stated clearly that the people were to **contribute support** by their tithes and offerings so the work of the temple could go on (see Num. 18:8–24).

31:5 The early harvests of grain, particularly barley, were being reaped at this time. The Passover had been held in the second month (30:2) and it was now already the third (v. 7). The **firstfruits** began appearing at the time of the Feast of Passover and Unleavened Bread—that is, in early April or so, and the harvests were fully gathered in some 50 days later, at the time of the Feast of Weeks or Pentecost (Lev. 23:9–22). **the tithe:** A tenth of the harvest belonged to the Levites, whose sustenance depended on it (v. 4; see Num. 18:21–24). There were three tithes—two every year and one every third year.

⁶ And the children of Israel and Judah, who dwelt in the cities of Judah, brought the tithe of oxen and sheep; also the ^jtithe of holy things which were consecrated to the LORD their God they laid in heaps.

⁷ In the third month they began laying them in heaps, and they finished in the seventh month. ⁸ And when Hezekiah and the leaders came and saw the heaps, they blessed the LORD and His people Israel. ⁹ Then Hezekiah questioned the priests and the Levites concerning the heaps. ¹⁰ And Azariah the chief priest, from the ^khouse of Zadok, answered him and said, ¹⁴ “Since *the people* began to bring the offerings into the house of the LORD, we have had enough to eat and have plenty left, for the LORD has blessed His people; and what is left is this great ^mabundance.”

¹¹ Now Hezekiah commanded *them* to prepare ⁿrooms⁶ in the house of the LORD, and they prepared them. ¹² Then they faithfully brought in the offerings, the tithes, and the dedicated things; ^oCononiah the Levite had charge of them, and Shimei his brother *was* the next. ¹³ Jehiel, Azaziah, Nahath, Asahel, Jerimoth, Jozabad, Eliel, Ismachiah, Mahath, and Benaiah *were* overseers under the hand of Cononiah and Shimei his brother, at the commandment of Hezekiah the king and Azariah the ^pruler of the house of God. ¹⁴ Kore the son of Imnah the Levite, the keeper of the East Gate, *was* over the ^qfreewill offerings to God, to distribute the offerings of the LORD and the most holy things. ¹⁵ And under him *were* ^rEden, Miniamin, Jeshua, Shemaiah, Amariah, and Shecaniah, *his* faithful assistants in

⁶ / [Lev. 27:30]; Deut. 14:28
¹⁰ ^k 1 Chr. 6:8, 9
¹ [Mal. 3:10] ^m Ex. 36:5
¹¹ ⁿ 1 Kin. 6:5-8
⁶ storerooms
¹² ^o 2 Chr. 35:9; Neh. 13:13
¹³ ^p 1 Chr. 9:11; Jer. 20:1
¹⁴ ^q Deut. 23:23; 2 Chr. 35:8
¹⁵ ^r 2 Chr. 29:12

¹ Josh. 21:1-3, 9
¹ 1 Chr. 9:26
¹⁷ ^u 1 Chr. 23:24, 27
¹⁸ ^v consecrated
¹⁹ ^v Lev. 25:34; Num. 35:1-4
^w 2 Chr. 31:12-15
²⁰ ^x 2 Kin. 20:3; 22:2
²¹ ^x 2 Chr. 26:5; 32:30; Ps. 1:3

CHAPTER 32

¹ ^o 2 Kin. 18:13-19:37; Is. 36:1-37:38

^s the cities of the priests, to distribute ^talotments to their brethren by divisions, to the great as well as the small.

¹⁶ Besides those males from three years old and up who were written in the genealogy, they distributed to everyone who entered the house of the LORD his daily portion for the work of his service, by his division, ¹⁷ and to the priests who were written in the genealogy according to their father's house, and to the Levites ^ufrom twenty years old and up according to their work, by their divisions, ¹⁸ and to all who were written in the genealogy—their little ones and their wives, their sons and daughters, the whole company of them—for in their faithfulness they ^vsanctified themselves in holiness.

¹⁹ Also for the sons of Aaron the priests, *who were* in ^vthe fields of the common-lands of their cities, in every single city, *there were* men who were ^wdesignated by name to distribute portions to all the males among the priests and to all who were listed by genealogies among the Levites.

²⁰ Thus Hezekiah did throughout all Judah, and he ^xdid what *was* good and right and true before the LORD his God.

²¹ And in every work that he began in the service of the house of God, in the law and in the commandment, to seek his God, he did *it* with all his heart. So he ^yprospered.

Sennacherib Boasts Against the LORD

32 After ^athese deeds of faithfulness, Sennacherib king of Assyria came and entered Judah; he encamped against the fortified cities, thinking to win them

31:6 The **holy things** were likely metals and other nonperishables (24:10, 11; see 1 Chr. 29:2, 7, 8) which were **consecrated to ... God** for use in worship and service.

31:7 The **third month** was the month after the delayed Passover (30:2) and the time of the early harvest (v. 5). The **seventh month** was Tishri, the month of the final annual harvest of fruits. The Feast

of Tabernacles celebrated the year-end harvest (Lev. 23:39; Deut. 16:13) at this time. There was a continual ingathering from the third to the seventh month, and the people brought their tithes to the temple as an expression of renewed devotion.

31:10 The **chief priests** from Solomon's time onward were Zadokites (see 1 Kin. 2:27, 35).

31:11 **prepare rooms**: Places already existed in the temple for storing food supplies and other materials (see 1 Chr. 26:15, 20).

31:14 At the front of the temple the **East Gate** led to the great courtyard and the Kidron valley beyond (see 1 Chr. 26:14).

31:15 Because most of the priests lived in the cities allotted to them and not in Jerusalem (see 1 Chr. 6:54-60), Kore and his **assistants** took provisions to them (v. 14).

31:16 **three years old**: The boys described here were young apprentice priests dedicated to the office by their parents. Samuel had such a ministry (see 1 Sam. 1:24, 28; 2:18).

31:17 All religious personnel had to descend from Levi, but the priests as such had to trace their **genealogy** specifically to Aaron (see 1 Chr. 6:49-53).

31:18 **all who were written in the genealogy**: This is an all-inclusive way of designating both priests and Levites. Anyone whose lineage was Levitical could draw upon the tithes and offerings raised for their support.

32:1 In Hezekiah's fourteenth year, **Sennacherib** invaded Judah and eventually laid siege to Jerusalem (2 Kin. 18:13-17). One of the

tithe

(Heb. *ma'aser*) (31:5, 12; Gen. 14:20) Strong's #4643

The Hebrew word translated *tithe* is derived from *'aser*, the Hebrew number for *ten*. In Gen. 14:20, Abraham gave the priest Melchizedek a tenth of his wealth. This set the precedent throughout the OT for what was considered an appropriate portion of one's wealth to give to the Lord. According to the Law, Israelites were to set aside a tenth of their annual produce for God (Deut. 14:22-28). Whatever was given to the Lord was considered holy (Lev. 27:30-33) and was to be used to support the ministry of the priests and Levites (Num. 18:21). The prophet Malachi proclaimed that the failure to bring a tithe to God was the equivalent of robbing Him (Mal. 3:8).

over to himself. ²And when Hezekiah saw that Sennacherib had come, and that his purpose was to make war against Jerusalem, ³he consulted with his leaders and ¹commanders to stop the water from the springs which *were* outside the city; and they helped him. ⁴Thus many people gathered together who stopped all the ^bsprings and the brook that ran through the land, saying, “Why should the ²kings of Assyria come and find much water?” ⁵And ^che strengthened himself, ^dbuilt up all the wall that was broken, raised *it* up to the towers, and *built* another wall outside; also he repaired ³the ^eMillo in the City of David, and made ⁴weapons and shields in abundance. ⁶Then he set military captains over the people, gathered them together to him in the open square of the city gate, and ^fgave them encouragement, saying, ^{7g}“Be strong and courageous; ^hdo not be afraid nor dismayed before the king of Assyria, nor before all the multitude that *is* with him; for ⁱthere are more with us than with him. ⁸With him *is* an ^jarm of flesh; but ^kwith us *is* the LORD our God, to help us and to fight our battles.” And the people were strengthened by the words of Hezekiah king of Judah.

^{9l}After this Sennacherib king of Assyria sent his servants to Jerusalem (but he and all the forces with him *laid siege* against Lachish), to Hezekiah king of Judah, and to all Judah who *were* in Jerusalem, saying, ^{10m}“Thus says Sennacherib king of Assyria: ‘In what do you trust, that you remain under siege in Jerusalem?’ ¹¹Does not Hezekiah persuade you to give yourselves over to die by famine and by thirst, saying, ⁿ“The LORD our God will deliver us from the hand of the king of Assyria?” ^{12o}Has not the same

³ ¹ Lit. *mighty men*
⁴ ^o 2 Kin. 20:20 ² So with MT, Vg.; Arab., LXX, Syr. *king*
⁵ ^c Is. 22:9, 10
^d 2 Kin. 25:4; 2 Chr. 25:23 ^e 2 Sam. 5:9; 1 Kin. 9:15, 24; 11:27; 2 Kin. 12:20;
¹ Chr. 11:8 ³ Lit. *The Landfill* ⁴ *javelins*
⁶ ^f 2 Chr. 30:22; Is. 40:2
⁷ ^g [Deut. 31:6]
^h 2 Chr. 20:15
ⁱ 2 Kin. 6:16; [Rom. 8:31]
⁸ ^j [Jer. 17:5; 1 John 4:4] ^k Ex. 14:13;
¹ Sam. 17:45-47;
² Chr. 13:12; 20:17; [Rom. 8:31]
⁹ ^l 2 Kin. 18:17
¹⁰ ^m 2 Kin. 18:19
¹¹ ⁿ 2 Kin. 18:30
¹² ^o 2 Kin. 18:22

^p 2 Chr. 31:1, 2
¹³ ^q 2 Kin. 18:33-35
¹⁴ ^r [Is. 10:5-12]
¹⁵ ^s 2 Kin. 18:29
¹⁷ ^t 2 Kin. 19:9;
¹ Cor. 8:5, 6]
^u 2 Kin. 19:12; Dan. 3:15
¹⁸ ^v 2 Kin. 18:28; Ps. 59:6 ⁵ Lit. *Judean*
¹⁹ ^w 2 Kin. 19:18; [Ps. 96:5; 115:4-8]
²⁰ ^x 2 Kin. 19:15
^y 2 Kin. 19:2

Hezekiah taken away His high places and His altars, and commanded Judah and Jerusalem, saying, “You shall worship before one altar and burn incense on ^yit”? ¹³Do you not know what I and my fathers have done to all the peoples of *other* lands? ^qWere the gods of the nations of those lands in any way able to deliver their lands out of my hand? ¹⁴Who *was there* among all the gods of those nations that my fathers utterly destroyed that could deliver his people from my hand, that your God should be able to deliver you from my ^rhand? ¹⁵Now therefore, ^sdo not let Hezekiah deceive you or persuade you like this, and do not believe him; for no god of any nation or kingdom was able to deliver his people from my hand or the hand of my fathers. How much less will your God deliver you from my hand?”

¹⁶Furthermore, his servants spoke against the LORD God and against His servant Hezekiah.

¹⁷He also wrote letters to revile the LORD God of Israel, and to speak against Him, saying, ^t“As the gods of the nations of *other* lands have not delivered their people from my hand, so the God of Hezekiah will not deliver His people from my ^uhand.” ^{18v}Then they called out with a loud voice in ^vHebrew to the people of Jerusalem who *were* on the wall, to frighten them and trouble them, that they might take the city. ¹⁹And they spoke against the God of Jerusalem, as against the gods of the people of the earth—^wthe work of men’s hands.

Sennacherib’s Defeat and Death

^{20x}Now because of this King Hezekiah and ^ythe prophet Isaiah, the son of

most imperialistic of Assyria’s kings, Sennacherib undertook many military campaigns to the west. In his own inscriptions he boasts of having taken many of Judah’s cities, a claim supported by the parallel account in 2 Kings. The **fortified cities** that he took had first been built and equipped by Solomon (8:2-6), and then rebuilt and enlarged by Solomon’s successors down to the time of Hezekiah (see 11:5-12; 14:6, 7; 17:12; 26:9, 10; 27:4; 32:29).

32:3 With the help of 2 Kin. 20:20 we learn that Hezekiah managed to **stop the water** by concealing the springs **outside the city** and then digging a tunnel to bring them to the Pool of Siloam inside the city walls. Hezekiah hid the source of water and made it unavailable to the enemy. The Siloam Inscription describes how workmen constructed the 1,800-foot tunnel connecting the springs of Gihon to the Pool of Siloam.

32:4 The **brook** was the Wadi Kidron, east of Jerusalem.

32:5 **Millo** means landfill and refers to extensive terracing that surrounded the ancient hills of Ophel and Mt. Zion. The work of extending the hills of Jerusalem was first undertaken by **David** (1 Chr. 11:7, 8) and continued by Solomon (1 Kin. 9:15).

32:6 The main **city gate** was where the population could assemble and where court and other official functions were held (see 6:12; 29:4).

32:7 **more with us**: This is not Judah’s army; Hezekiah meant the armies of heaven (see 2 Kin. 6:14-17).

32:9 Both the OT and Assyrian inscriptions document the **siege against Lachish**, an important fortified city west of Jerusalem and near the great coastal route (see 11:9). Its capture by Assyria would cut off access to Jerusalem from the west and would give Assyria control of the coast.

32:10 The **siege of Jerusalem** had not actually begun, but Sennacherib’s envoys spoke of it as already underway. Jerusalem was under siege psychologically.

32:13 Sennacherib’s messengers tried to destroy the peoples’ faith in God by pointing out that the other nations, despite their many gods and many altars, had been powerless to resist the Assyrians. The Assyrians thought the true God was no different than the **gods of the nations** they had already subjugated.

32:17 Sennacherib **also wrote letters** because he wanted to avoid a long and costly siege.

32:18 Aramaic had become the language of international communication and diplomacy. The Judean negotiators wanted the matter discussed in Aramaic because they felt that they deserved to be addressed in regular diplomatic language. The Assyrians continued the dialogue in Hebrew to **frighten and trouble the people**.

32:20 By now the **prophet Isaiah** had been involved in public ministry to the kings of Judah for nearly 40 years (see 26:22; Is. 6:1).

Amoz, prayed and cried out to heaven. ²¹ Then the LORD sent an angel who cut down every mighty man of valor, leader, and captain in the camp of the king of Assyria. So he returned ^ashamefaced to his own land. And when he had gone into the temple of his god, some of his own offspring struck him down with the sword there.

²² Thus the LORD saved Hezekiah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem from the hand of Sennacherib the king of Assyria, and from the hand of all *others*, and ^bguided them on every side. ²³ And many brought gifts to the LORD at Jerusalem, and ^bpresents ⁷ to Hezekiah king of Judah, so that he was ^cexalted in the sight of all nations thereafter.

Hezekiah Humbles Himself

²⁴ In those days Hezekiah was sick and near death, and he prayed to the LORD; and He spoke to him and gave him a sign. ²⁵ But Hezekiah ^edid not repay according to the favor *shown* him, for ^fhis heart was lifted up; ^gtherefore wrath was looming over him and over Judah and Jerusalem. ²⁶ Then Hezekiah humbled himself for the pride of his heart, he and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the wrath of the LORD did not come upon them ⁱin the days of Hezekiah.

Hezekiah's Wealth and Honor

²⁷ Hezekiah had very great riches and honor. And he made himself treasuries for silver, for gold, for precious stones, for spices, for shields, and for all kinds of desirable items; ²⁸ storehouses for the harvest of grain, wine, and oil; and stalls for all kinds of livestock, and ⁸folds for flocks. ²⁹ Moreover he provided cities for

²¹ ² 2 Kin. 19:35; Is. 10:12-19; Zech. 14:3
^a Ps. 44:7
²² ⁶ LXX gave them rest; Vg. gave them treasures
²³ ^b 2 Sam. 8:10; 2 Chr. 17:5; 26:8; Ps. 45:12 ^c 2 Chr. 1:1 ⁷ Lit. precious things
²⁴ ^d 2 Kin. 20:1-11; Is. 38:1-8
²⁵ ^e Ps. 116:12
^f 2 Chr. 26:16; [Hab. 2:4] ^g 2 Chr. 24:18
²⁶ ^h Jer. 26:18, 19
ⁱ 2 Kin. 20:19
²⁸ ⁸ So with LXX, Vg.; Arab., Syr. omit folds for flocks; MT flocks for sheepfolds

²⁹ ⁱ 1 Chr. 29:12
³⁰ ^k Is. 22:9-11
¹ 2 Chr. 31:21 ⁹ Lit. brought it straight to (cf. 2 Kin. 20:20)
³¹ ^m 2 Kin. 20:12; Is. 39:1 ⁿ [Deut. 8:2, 16]
³² ^o Is. 36-39
^p 2 Kin. 18-20
³³ ^q 1 Kin. 1:21; 2 Kin. 20:21 ^r Ps. 112:6; Prov. 10:7
¹ Died and joined his ancestors

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¹ ^a 2 Kin. 21:1-9
² ^b [Deut. 18:9-12]; 2 Chr. 28:3; [Jer. 15:4]
³ ^c 2 Kin. 18:4; 2 Chr. 30:14; 31:1
^d Deut. 16:21; 2 Kin. 23:5, 6 ^e Deut. 17:3
¹ Places for pagan worship ² The gods of the Assyrians
⁴ ^f Deut. 12:11; 1 Kin. 8:29; 9:3; 2 Chr. 6:6; 7:16

himself, and possessions of flocks and herds in abundance; for ^jGod had given him very much property. ³⁰ This same Hezekiah also stopped the water outlet of Upper Gihon, and ⁹brought the water by tunnel to the west side of the City of David. Hezekiah ^lprospered in all his works.

³¹ However, *regarding* the ambassadors of the princes of Babylon, whom they ^msent to him to inquire about the wonder that was *done* in the land, God withdrew from him, in order to ⁿtest him, that He might know all *that was* in his heart.

Death of Hezekiah

³² Now the rest of the acts of Hezekiah, and his goodness, indeed they *are* written in ^othe vision of Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, and in the ^pbook of the kings of Judah and Israel. ³³ So Hezekiah ^lrested with his fathers, and they buried him in the upper tombs of the sons of David; and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem ^rhonored him at his death. Then Manasseh his son reigned in his place.

Manasseh Reigns in Judah

33 Manasseh ^awas twelve years old when he became king, and he reigned fifty-five years in Jerusalem. ² But he did evil in the sight of the LORD, according to the ^babominations of the nations whom the LORD had cast out before the children of Israel. ³ For he rebuilt the ¹high places which Hezekiah his father had ^cbroken down; he raised up altars for the Baals, and ^dmade wooden images; and he worshiped ^eall ²the host of heaven and served them. ⁴ He also built altars in the house of the LORD, of which the LORD had said, ^f"In Jerusalem shall

He had considerable prestige and was especially important as a counselor of young Hezekiah (see Is. 37:1-7).

32:21 Sennacherib returned shamefaced to his own land, Assyria, and its capital Nineveh. The same Sennacherib who had mocked God's ability to preserve Hezekiah and Judah (vv. 17, 19) now died a violent death while in the very act of worshipping his god. **his own offspring:** Sennacherib's sons were Adrammelech and Sharezer. His two sons assassinated him 20 years after the siege of Jerusalem and fled for their lives. Then a third son Esarhaddon became king.

32:24 Hezekiah was sick: His sickness struck shortly after Sennacherib's defeat (see 2 Kin. 20:1, 12) and involved affliction with boils (see Is. 38:10-21). **a sign:** When Isaiah told Hezekiah he would recover, the king wanted confirmation. The sundial moved backward for him ten degrees, adding 40 minutes to the day (Is. 38:8).

32:25 God had given Hezekiah an extraordinary favor—15 additional years of life (2 Kin. 20:6). But his heart was lifted up: Hezekiah had received Babylonian envoys who had come to congratulate him on his recovery and probably to enlist his support in their struggle against Assyria (2 Kin. 20:12-19). Their visit ignited his desire to show off all the treasures of his kingdom. Because of this indulgence in pride, God's wrath was looming. The account in Kings reveals Isaiah's response to Hezekiah's pride. The time would come,

the prophet said, when all the wealth that Hezekiah had used to impress his visitors would be seized by the same Babylonians and taken to their distant land (2 Kin. 20:16-18; see Is. 39:6, 7).

32:30 Upper Gihon was a spring in the Kidron valley near the Water Gate. The tunnel meandered from Gihon south and then west for over five hundred yards (see vv. 3, 4). It ended at the Pool of Siloam, then on the southwest side of Jerusalem.

32:31 The test was not for God's benefit, but for Hezekiah's.

32:32 The vision of Isaiah is the prophetic Book of Isaiah (Is. 1:1). **32:33** The term upper tombs probably refers to the royal cemetery where all the godly descendants of David were buried. Others were entombed in the City of David, but not in the same area (see 28:27).

honored: This would include such rites and ceremonies as public lamentation and ritual fires (see 16:14).

33:2 Manasseh was not the only king who lived according to the abominations of the nations. Ahaz did too (see 28:3).

33:3 The host of heaven were the gods of the sun, moon, and stars. The Babylonians especially revered these deities (see Deut. 4:19; Ezek. 8:16).

33:4 In Jerusalem shall My name be: The point was that God had the exclusive right to inhabit the temple, as opposed to the deities Manasseh introduced (v. 5).

My name be forever.”⁵ And he built altars for all the host of heaven^d in the two courts of the house of the LORD.^{6h} Also he caused his sons to pass through the fire in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom; he practicedⁱ soothsaying, used witchcraft and sorcery, and^j consulted mediums and spiritists. He did much evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke Him to anger.^{7k} He even set a carved image, the idol which he had made, in the³ house of God, of which God had said to David and to Solomon his son,¹⁴ “In this house and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, I will put My name forever; ^{8m} and I will not again remove the foot of Israel from the land which I have appointed for your fathers—only if they are careful to do all that I have commanded them, according to the whole law and the statutes and the ordinances by the hand of Moses.”⁹ So Manasseh seduced Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to do more evil than the nations whom the LORD had destroyed before the children of Israel.

Manasseh Restored After Repentance

¹⁰ And the LORD spoke to Manasseh and his people, but they would not⁴ listen. ¹¹ⁿ Therefore the LORD brought upon them the captains of the army of the king of Assyria, who took Manasseh with⁵ hooks, ⁶ bound him with⁶ bronze fetters, and carried him off to Babylon. ¹² Now when he was in affliction, he implored the LORD his God, and^p humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers, ¹³ and prayed to Him; and He^q received

⁵ 2 Chr. 4:9
⁶ ^h [Lev. 18:21]; Deut. 18:10; 2 Kin. 23:10; 2 Chr. 28:3; Ezek. 23:37, 39
ⁱ Deut. 18:11; 2 Kin. 17:17 / [Lev. 19:31; 20:27]; 2 Kin. 21:6
⁷ ^k 2 Kin. 21:7; 2 Chr. 25:14 / Ps. 132:14
³ Temple
⁸ ^m 2 Sam. 7:10
¹⁰ ^a obey
¹¹ ⁿ Deut. 28:36
^o 2 Chr. 36:6; Job 36:8; Ps. 107:10, 11
⁵ Nose hooks, 2 Kin. 19:28
⁶ chains
¹² ^p 2 Chr. 7:14; 32:26; [1 Pet. 5:6]
¹³ ^q 1 Chr. 5:20; Ezra 8:23

^r 1 Kin. 20:13; Ps. 9:16; Dan. 4:25
¹⁴ ^s 1 Kin. 1:33
² Chr. 27:3
¹⁵ ^u 2 Chr. 33:3, 5, 7
¹⁶ ^v Lev. 7:12
¹⁷ ^w 2 Chr. 32:12
⁷ Places for pagan worship
¹⁸ ^x 1 Sam. 9:9
⁸ Lit. words
¹⁹ ^y Places for pagan worship
¹ LXX the seers
²⁰ ^y 1 Kin. 1:21; 2 Kin. 21:18

his entreaty, heard his supplication, and brought him back to Jerusalem into his kingdom. Then Manasseh^r knew that the LORD *was* God.

¹⁴ After this he built a wall outside the City of David on the west side of^s Gihon, in the valley, as far as the entrance of the Fish Gate; and it^t enclosed Ophel, and he raised it to a very great height. Then he put military captains in all the fortified cities of Judah. ¹⁵ He took away^u the foreign gods and the idol from the house of the LORD, and all the altars that he had built in the mount of the house of the LORD and in Jerusalem; and he cast *them* out of the city. ¹⁶ He also repaired the altar of the LORD, sacrificed peace offerings and^v thank offerings on it, and commanded Judah to serve the LORD God of Israel. ¹⁷ ^w Nevertheless the people still sacrificed on the⁷ high places, *but* only to the LORD their God.

Death of Manasseh

¹⁸ Now the rest of the acts of Manasseh, his prayer to his God, and the words of^x the seers who spoke to him in the name of the LORD God of Israel, indeed they *are written* in the⁸ book of the kings of Israel. ¹⁹ Also his prayer and *how* God received his entreaty, and all his sin and trespass, and the sites where he built⁹ high places and set up wooden images and carved images, before he was humbled, indeed they *are written* among the sayings of¹ Hozai. ²⁰ ^y So Manasseh rested with his fathers, and they buried him in his own house. Then his son Amon reigned in his place.

33:5 In addition to altars inside the temple (v. 4), Manasseh erected altars to his astral deities in the **two courts**—that is, the court of the priests and Levites and the one open to the public (4:9; see 1 Kin. 7:9–12).

33:6 Valley of the Son of Hinnom: Like Ahaz, Manasseh practiced human sacrifice, going so far as to offer up his own children (28:3). **Soothsaying** is divination, an attempt to determine the plans and purposes of the gods so as to avert their hostility or take advantage of their favors. **Witchcraft** and **sorcery** attempt to bring about desired results by employing magical or mystical rituals. **Mediums** are those who claim to contact and consult with the dead. The witch of En Dor appears to have done this, for she feared for her life when she realized that Saul had condemned necromancers to death (see 1 Sam. 28:3, 9). **spiritists:** These are “knowing ones” whose specialty also is communication with the dead in the hope of acquiring information inaccessible to the living. All such practices were common among Canaanite and other pagan religions and were to be strictly avoided by God’s people (see Deut. 13:1–6; 18:9–14).

33:8 God’s ancient promise never to remove the people of Israel from the land they had inherited was conditioned on their obedience to all the covenant stipulations—**law, statutes, and ordinances**—to which they had sworn (see Gen. 17:7, 8; Lev. 26:27–35, 46). Manasseh’s behavior had greatly jeopardized the presence of the people in the land.

33:11 For some time **Babylon** had been part of the Assyrian Empire, though it had broken free on occasion, especially under the lead-

ership of Berodach-Baladan, Hezekiah’s contemporary (see 2 Kin. 20:12). Ashurbanipal brought Babylon back under Assyrian domination. He was the king who took Manasseh to Babylon as a prisoner.

33:14 The term **City of David** originally referred to Mt. Zion alone (see 1 Chr. 11:5) but eventually designated the entire city including Mt. **Ophel**, the original Jebusite settlement. **Gihon** was the spring that was the main source of water for Jerusalem (see 32:3, 4, 30). It was in the Kidron valley near the northeastern brow of Mt. Zion. The **Fish Gate** was in the center of the wall north of the temple. Manasseh’s construction began at Gihon and went north past Mt. Ophel to the northeast corner of the temple mount. Then it went west to the Fish Gate. This was a total distance of about 750 yards. These **fortified cities** were the same ones that had been captured by Sennacherib.

33:15 Manasseh **took away** the old idols—a sign of true conversion and devotion to God (v. 13).

33:17 The sin of worshiping at **high places** was in their association with paganism (see Deut. 12:2, 3). The temple represented the dwelling place of God among His people. At this time, God wanted all worship by the people as a community to take place there. This is what is meant by the exclusiveness of the central sanctuary (see Deut. 12:5–28).

33:20 in his own house: Manasseh had truly converted (v. 13), but his prior sin had been so heinous that he was denied burial in the royal cemetery (see 32:33).

Amon's Reign and Death

^{21z} Amon *was* twenty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned two years in Jerusalem. ²² But he did evil in the sight of the LORD, as his father Manasseh had done; for Amon sacrificed to all the carved images which his father Manasseh had made, and served them. ²³ And he did not humble himself before the LORD, ^a as his father Manasseh had humbled himself; but Amon trespassed more and more.

^{24b} Then his servants conspired against him, and ^c killed him in his own house. ²⁵ But the people of the land executed all those who had conspired against King Amon. Then the people of the land made his son Josiah king in his place.

Josiah Reigns in Judah

34 Josiah ^a *was* eight years old when he became king, and he reigned thirty-one years in Jerusalem. ² And he did *what was* right in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the ways of his father David; *he did not* turn aside to the right hand or to the left.

³ For in the eighth year of his reign, while he was still ^b young, he began to ^c seek the God of his father David; and in the twelfth year he began ^d to purge Judah and Jerusalem ^e of the ¹ high places, the wooden images, the carved images, and the molded images. ^{4f} They broke down the altars of the Baals in his presence, and the incense altars which *were* above them he cut down; and the wooden images, the carved images, and the molded images he broke in pieces, and made dust of them ^g and scattered *it* on the graves of those who had sacrificed to them. ⁵ He also ^h burned the bones of the priests on

^{21 z} 2 Kin. 21:19-24; 1 Chr. 3:14
^{23 a} 2 Chr. 33:12, 19
^{24 b} 2 Kin. 21:23, 24; 2 Chr. 24:25 c 2 Chr. 25:27

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^{1 a} 2 Kin. 22:1, 2; Jer. 1:2; 3:6
^{3 b} Eccl. 12:1
c 2 Chr. 15:2; [Prov. 8:17] ^d 1 Kin. 13:2
^e 2 Chr. 33:17-19, 22
^f Places for pagan worship
^{4 f} Lev. 26:30; 2 Kin. 23:4 g 2 Kin. 23:6
^{5 h} 1 Kin. 13:2

ⁱ 2 Kin. 23:20
^{6 z} Lit. *swords*
^{7 i} Deut. 9:21
^{8 k} 2 Kin. 22:3-20
^j 2 Kin. 25:22
^m 2 Chr. 18:25 ³ Lit. *house*
^{9 n} 2 Kin. 12:4
^o 2 Chr. 30:6
^{13 p} 2 Chr. 8:10

their ⁱ altars, and cleansed Judah and Jerusalem. ⁶ And *so he did* in the cities of Manasseh, Ephraim, and Simeon, as far as Naphtali and all around, with ² axes. ⁷ When he had broken down the altars and the wooden images, had ^j beaten the carved images into powder, and cut down all the incense altars throughout all the land of Israel, he returned to Jerusalem.

Hilkiah Finds the Book of the Law

^{8k} In the eighteenth year of his reign, when he had purged the land and the ³ temple, he sent ^l Shaphan the son of Azaliah, Maaseiah the ^m governor of the city, and Joah the son of Joahaz the recorder, to repair the house of the LORD his God. ⁹ When they came to Hilkiah the high priest, they delivered ⁿ the money that was brought into the house of God, which the Levites who kept the doors had gathered from the hand of Manasseh and Ephraim, from all the ^o remnant of Israel, from all Judah and Benjamin, and *which* they had brought back to Jerusalem. ¹⁰ Then they put *it* in the hand of the foremen who had the oversight of the house of the LORD; and they gave it to the workmen who worked in the house of the LORD, to repair and restore the house. ¹¹ They gave *it* to the craftsmen and builders to buy hewn stone and timber for beams, and to floor the houses which the kings of Judah had destroyed. ¹² And the men did the work faithfully. Their overseers *were* Jahath and Obadiah the Levites, of the sons of Merari, and Zechariah and Meshullam, of the sons of the Kohathites, to supervise. *Others* of the Levites, all of whom were skillful with instruments of music, ¹³ *were* ^p over the burden bearers and *were* overseers of

33:22 The **carved images** were in addition to the wooden images he had made (v. 3). The images were representations of deity carved from wood or stone. The carved image to which **Amon sacrificed** had been set up in the temple as an idol (v. 7). It was later removed from the city (v. 15) but apparently not destroyed, since Amon set it up again.

33:25 At this time **people of the land** was a technical term that indicated a certain level of leadership, perhaps a council of elders. In crises like the assassination of Amon they could assume interim powers until proper government could be restored (see 22:1; 26:1; 36:1).

34:3 The **wooden images** were poles dedicated to Asherah, the Canaanite fertility goddess (see 33:3). The **molded images** were like the **carved images** except that they were made of molded metal (see Ex. 32:4, 8; Is. 42:17; Hos. 13:2).

34:4 Josiah's destruction of the altars and idols built by his grandfather Manasseh and father Amon recall Moses' grinding up the golden calf and scattering its **dust** upon the waters (Ex. 32:20).

34:5 **burned the bones of the priests:** This act of Josiah, which took place at Bethel, fulfilled the words of the prophet of Judah in the days of Jeroboam I, king of Israel (see 1 Kin. 13:1, 2; 2 Kin. 23:15, 16). The prophet had mentioned Josiah by name three hundred years before.

34:6 Josiah's purge of the idolatrous cults was not limited to Judah and Bethel but extended from the south—**Simeon**—to the north—**Naphtali**. Israel had been subject to Assyria for a century, and new religious movements such as that of the Samaritans had gained a foothold in the region (see 2 Kin. 17:24–31; 23:19).

34:8 **Shaphan** was a scribe or secretary of the king (v. 15). He was responsible for state records that must have included the original temple plans and specifications. The temple was repaired strictly according to its original pattern. The office of **governor** was like that of the modern mayor (see 18:25). A **recorder** kept the royal diaries. Official happenings were duly noted and recorded for posterity. The work of men like **Joah** provided sources for later historians such as the author of Chronicles (see 1 Chr. 18:15).

34:9 **Hilkiah** was probably the **high priest** of the genealogy of 1 Chr. 6:13 (see Ezra 7:1).

34:11 Josiah's work of restoring what was destroyed included not only repairs to the temple and related buildings, but repairs to the fortifications (see 15:8; 24:5; 28:24; 29:6, 7; 32:5).

34:12 The **sons of Merari** and the **Kohathites** were two of the three clans of Levi (see 1 Chr. 6:1, 16; 23:6).

all who did work in any kind of service. ⁹And *some* of the Levites *were* scribes, officers, and gatekeepers.

¹⁴Now when they brought out the money that was brought into the house of the LORD, Hilkiah the priest ^rfound the Book of the Law of the LORD *given* by Moses. ¹⁵Then Hilkiah answered and said to Shaphan the scribe, “I have found the Book of the Law in the house of the LORD.” And Hilkiah gave the ^sbook to Shaphan. ¹⁶So Shaphan carried the book to the king, bringing the king word, saying, “All that was committed to your servants they are doing. ¹⁷And they have ⁴gathered the money that was found in the house of the LORD, and have delivered it into the hand of the overseers and the workmen.” ¹⁸Then Shaphan the scribe told the king, saying, “Hilkiah the priest has given me a book.” And Shaphan read it before the king.

¹⁹Thus it happened, when the king heard the words of the Law, that he tore his clothes. ²⁰Then the king commanded Hilkiah, ^tAhikam the son of Shaphan, ⁵Abdon the son of Micah, Shaphan the scribe, and Asaiah a servant of the king, saying, ²¹“Go, inquire of the LORD for me, and for those who are left in Israel and Judah, concerning the words of the book that is found; for great *is* the wrath of the LORD that is poured out on us, because our fathers have not ^ukept the word of

¹³ ^q 1 Chr. 23:4, 5
¹⁴ ^r 2 Kin. 22:8
¹⁵ ^s Deut. 31:24, 26
¹⁷ ⁴ Lit. *poured out*
²⁰ ^t Jer. 26:24
⁵ *Achbor the son of Michaiah*, 2 Kin. 22:12
²¹ ^u 2 Kin. 17:15-19

²² ⁶ *Tikvah*, 2 Kin. 22:14 ⁷ *Harhas*, 2 Kin. 22:14
²⁴ ^v 2 Chr. 36:14-20
^u Deut. 28:15-68
²⁷ ^x 2 Kin. 22:19;
 2 Chr. 12:7; 30:6;
 33:12, 13

the LORD, to do according to all that is written in this book.”

²²So Hilkiah and those the king *had appointed* went to Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum the son of ⁶Tokhath, the son of ⁷Hasrah, keeper of the wardrobe. (She dwelt in Jerusalem in the Second Quarter.) And they spoke to her to that *effect*.

²³Then she answered them, “Thus says the LORD God of Israel, ‘Tell the man who sent you to Me, ²⁴“Thus says the LORD: ‘Behold, I will ^bbring calamity on this place and on its inhabitants, all the curses that are written in the ^wbook which they have read before the king of Judah, ²⁵because they have forsaken Me and burned incense to other gods, that they might provoke Me to anger with all the works of their hands. Therefore My wrath will be poured out on this place, and not be quenched.’” ²⁶But as for the king of Judah, who sent you to inquire of the LORD, in this manner you shall speak to him, ‘Thus says the LORD God of Israel: “Concerning the words which you have heard— ²⁷because your heart was tender, and you humbled yourself before God when you heard His words against this place and against its inhabitants, and you humbled yourself before Me, and you tore your clothes and wept before Me, I also have heard *you*,” says the ^xLORD. ²⁸“Surely I will gather you to

34:16 Shaphan delivered the scroll because he was the king’s scribe. He would know how to assess the authenticity of the text and tell the king whether it was important.

34:21 Josiah knew that the scroll contained the Book of the Law of the Lord, but he did not know what to do about the words of **wrath** and judgment that it contained. **our fathers have not kept . . . all that is written:** Josiah wanted to know what God demanded of him because he fully intended to comply.

34:22 **Huldah the prophetess** is one of four female prophets named in the OT, the other three being Miriam (Ex. 15:20), Deborah (Judg. 4:4), and Noadiah (Neh. 6:14). **Shallum**’s job was to super-

vises the storage and distribution of garments worn by the priests and Levites in the course of their duties. The **Second Quarter** was probably a suburb of Jerusalem near the Fish Gate north of the city (Zeph. 1:10).

34:23 **Thus says the LORD** indicates that Huldah’s words were a prophecy.

34:24 **written in the book:** Both Deuteronomy and Leviticus have long lists of blessings and **curses** attached to the covenant with Israel (see Deut. 28; 29).

34:28 **gather you to your fathers:** In the context of the whole message, this was a promise that Josiah would die and be buried

The Book of the Law of the LORD

Hilkiah’s discovery of “the Book of the Law of the LORD” began a great revival in Israel (34:14). King Josiah’s response to the book inspired him to initiate a reformation and refocus attention on Jerusalem as the center of worship (see 2 Kin. 23:4–20). It was one of the nation’s greatest moments.

What was this “Book of the Law of the LORD”? The reforms that Josiah introduced reflect many of the themes of Deuteronomy, so it seems clear that Josiah’s book must have included at least Deuteronomy. But the law that was “given by Moses” (see 34:14) technically includes the whole Pentateuch, the first five books of the Bible (Ex. 24:4), and there seems no reason to doubt that this was the case in Josiah’s day.

This copy of the Law somehow survived the long period of religious suppression under Manasseh and Amon. We may never know who put it in the temple or why, but God saw to its preservation and discovery.

King Josiah’s humble, obedient response to the book was and remains a model of how all people should respond to God’s revealed Word. Josiah listened to the Scripture, allowed its words of truth to judge him, and humbly confessed that he had neglected God’s commands (34:18, 19). After learning more about its truths (34:21), he shared the Scripture with others and led them in following it. He had the book read before the entire nation and led the Israelites in recommitting their lives to the Lord (34:29–33).



your fathers, and you shall be gathered to your grave in peace; and your eyes shall not see all the calamity which I will bring on this place and its inhabitants.””” So they brought back word to the king.

Josiah Restores True Worship

²⁹” Then the king sent and gathered all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem. ³⁰ The king went up to the house of the LORD, with all the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem—the priests and the Levites, and all the people, great and small. And he ²read in their hearing all the words of the Book of the Covenant which had been found in the house of the LORD. ³¹ Then the king ^astood in ^bhis place and made a ^ccovenant before the LORD, to follow the LORD, and to keep His commandments and His testimonies and His statutes with all his heart and all his soul, to perform the words of the covenant that were written in this book. ³² And he made all who were present in Jerusalem and Benjamin take a stand. So the inhabitants of Jerusalem did according to the covenant of God, the God of their fathers. ³³ Thus Josiah removed all the ^dabominations from all the country that *belonged* to the children of Israel, and made all who were present in Israel ^edil-

²⁹ ^ν 2 Kin. 23:1-3
³⁰ ^α Neh. 8:1-3
³¹ ^α 2 Chr. 6:13
^b 2 Kin. 11:14; 23:3;
2 Chr. 30:16 ^c 2 Chr.
23:16; 29:10
³³ ^α 1 Kin. 11:5;
2 Chr. 33:2 ^δ Lit.
serve to serve

^e Jer. 3:10

CHAPTER 35

1 ^α 2 Kin. 23:21, 22
^b Ex. 12:6; Num. 9:3;
Ezra 6:19
2 ^c 2 Chr. 23:18;
Ezra 6:18 ^d 2 Chr.
29:5-15
3 ^e Deut. 33:10;
2 Chr. 17:8, 9; Neh.
8:7 ^f 2 Chr. 34:14
9 Ex. 40:21; 2 Chr.
5:7 ^h 1 Chr. 23:26
4 ⁱ 1 Chr. 9:10-13
/ 1 Chr. 23-26
^k 2 Chr. 8:14
^l households
5 ^l Ps. 134:1
6 ^m 2 Chr. 29:5, 15

igently serve the LORD their God. ^eAll his days they did not depart from following the LORD God of their fathers.

Josiah Keeps the Passover

35 Now ^aJosiah kept a Passover to the LORD in Jerusalem, and they slaughtered the Passover *lambs* on the ^bfourteenth *day* of the first month. ² And he set the priests in their ^cduties and ^dencouraged them for the service of the house of the LORD. ³ Then he said to the Levites ^ewho taught all Israel, who were holy to the LORD: ^f“Put the holy ark ^gin the house which Solomon the son of David, king of Israel, built. ^h*It shall no longer be a burden on your shoulders.* Now serve the LORD your God and His people Israel. ⁴ Prepare *yourselves* ⁱaccording to your fathers’ ^jhouses, according to your divisions, following the ^kwritten instruction of David king of Israel and the ^lwritten instruction of Solomon his son. ⁵ And ^lstand in the holy *place* according to the divisions of the fathers’ houses of your brethren the *lay* people, and *according to* the division of the father’s house of the Levites. ⁶ So slaughter the Passover *offerings*, ^mconsecrate yourselves, and prepare *them* for your brethren, that *they* may do according to the word of the LORD by the hand of Moses.”

among his own people, not in a foreign land. Huldah’s promise that Josiah would die **in peace** meant that he would be spared the **calamity** by which Judah would be judged. Josiah died in a time of war (see 35:23, 24), but that war was not the time of calamity. The calamity came later when Babylonian forces captured Jerusalem (see 36:17–20).

34:30 The term **Book of the Covenant** refers to the Book of the Law of the Lord (v. 14), the Pentateuch. Josiah was about to lead the community in renewing the covenant. His reading of the scroll was part of his duties as king (see Deut. 17:18–20).

34:31 Very few of the kings of Judah promised to **follow the LORD**

as Josiah did. After David, only Joash, Hezekiah, and Josiah made such public commitments (see 23:3; 29:10; 1 Chr. 17:7–14). They stand head and shoulders above the other kings of Judah and Israel. The terms **commandments, testimonies, and statutes** were all technical terms referring to the covenant (see Deut. 4:40, 45; 5:31; 6:1, 17).

34:33 We know that Josiah’s commitment to the Lord was real because he **removed all the abominations**. This included any and all idols that had been introduced by earlier kings.

35:3 Josiah’s command to **put the holy ark in the house** means that the ark of the covenant had been removed from the temple. Who removed it and when is not known, but there were plenty of wicked kings who could have done so. **no longer . . . on your shoulders**: The only proper way for transporting the ark was by means of poles thrust through corner rings of the ark and borne on the shoulders of the Levites (see Num. 4:5, 6; 1 Chr. 15:2). The fact that they were carrying it about shows that it had no regular place of storage. Manasseh’s vehement opposition to God must have kept the ark in constant jeopardy. But once the temple had been cleansed and repaired, the ark could be returned to its place.

35:4 In preparation for the Passover the priests and Levites had to organize themselves by their assignments within **divisions**. The divisions were determined by the genealogical registers (see 1 Chr. 6:1–30). **David** set up the divisions before the temple was built (see 1 Chr. 23:3—26:32) and **Solomon** confirmed them (8:14).

35:5 The term **holy place** here refers to the whole temple area. The **lay people** could not enter the area where the great bronze altar stood, so the Levites represented them there by tribe, clan, and family units. In former times the heads of families offered their own Passover lambs and thus had access to the altar (Ex. 12:3), but by Josiah’s time the responsibility for slaughter rested upon the Levites alone (see 30:15–20).

35:6 **prepare them for your brethren**: The Levites were standing in for the people in the sacrifice of the **Passover** lambs. This became the tradition from that time on, with the result that the priests gained influence and power.

Passover

(Heb. *pesach*) (30:1, 35:1; Ex. 12:11, 43; Ezek. 45:21) Strong’s #6453

The name Passover is derived from the Hebrew word meaning “to pass” or “to leap over.” The festival was named in this way because it commemorated the time when God spared the firstborn of the Israelites, who sprinkled the blood from the Passover lamb on their doorposts. The Lord “passed over” the families so designated, not visiting their households with death (Ex. 12). So that the Israelites would not forget God’s mercy on them, the Law of Moses prescribed in detail the ritual for commemorating the Passover (see Lev. 23:5–8; Num. 28:16–25; Deut. 16:1–8). King Hezekiah’s great Passover signaled spiritual renewal in Judah, including the removal of sin and impurity (30:14), joyful praise for God’s pardon (30:21, 22), and a prolonged celebration of God’s blessing (30:23–26). Later Jesus celebrated this feast with His disciples (Matt. 26:2, 18), and in His death and resurrection He became its fulfillment, the ultimate Passover Lamb for our sins (John 1:29, 1 Cor. 5:7; 1 Pet. 1:19).

⁷Then Josiah ⁿgave the *lay* people lambs and young goats from the flock, all for Passover *offerings* for all who were present, to the number of thirty thousand, as well as three thousand cattle; these *were* from the king's ^opossessions. ⁸And his ^pleaders gave willingly to the people, to the priests, and to the Levites. Hilkiah, Zechariah, and Jehiel, rulers of the house of God, gave to the priests for the Passover *offerings* two thousand six hundred *from the flock*, and three hundred cattle. ⁹Also ^qConaniah, his brothers Shemaiah and Nethanel, and Hashabiah and Jeiel and Jozabad, chief of the Levites, gave to the Levites for Passover *offerings* five thousand *from the flock* and five hundred cattle.

¹⁰So the service was prepared, and the priests ^rstood in their places, and the ^sLevites in their divisions, according to the king's command. ¹¹And they slaughtered the Passover *offerings*; and the priests ^tsprinkled *the blood* with their hands, while the Levites ^uskinned *the animals*. ¹²Then they removed the burnt offerings that *they* might give them to the divisions of the fathers' houses of the *lay* people, to offer to the LORD, as *it is written* ^vin the Book of Moses. And so *they did* with the cattle. ¹³Also they ^wroasted the Passover *offerings* with fire according to the ordinance; but the *other* holy *offerings* they ^xboiled in pots, in caldrons, and in pans, and divided *them* quickly among all the *lay* people. ¹⁴Then afterward they prepared portions for themselves

⁷ ⁿ 2 Chr. 30:24
² 2 Chr. 31:3
⁸ ^p Num. 7:2
⁹ ^o 2 Chr. 31:12
¹⁰ ^r Ezra 6:18; Heb. 9:6
² 2 Chr. 5:12; 7:6; 8:14, 15; 13:10; 29:25-34
¹¹ ^t Ex. 12:22; 2 Chr. 29:22
^u 2 Chr. 29:34
¹² ^v Lev. 3:3; Ezra 6:18
¹³ ^w Ex. 12:8, 9; Deut. 16:7
^x 1 Sam. 2:13-15

and for the priests, because the priests, the sons of Aaron, *were busy* in offering burnt offerings and fat until night; therefore the Levites prepared portions for themselves and for the priests, the sons of Aaron. ¹⁵And the singers, the sons of Asaph, *were* in their places, according to the ^ycommand of David, Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun the king's seer. Also the gatekeepers ^zwere at each gate; they did not have to leave their position, because their brethren the Levites prepared portions for them.

¹⁶So all the service of the LORD was prepared the same day, to keep the Passover and to offer burnt offerings on the altar of the LORD, according to the command of King Josiah. ¹⁷And the children of Israel who were present kept the Passover at that time, and the Feast of ^aUnleavened Bread for seven days. ¹⁸^bThere had been no Passover kept in Israel like that since the days of Samuel the prophet; and none of the kings of Israel had kept such a Passover as Josiah kept, with the priests and the Levites, all Judah and Israel who were present, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. ¹⁹In the eighteenth year of the reign of Josiah this Passover was kept.

Josiah Dies in Battle

²⁰^cAfter all this, when Josiah had prepared the temple, Necho king of Egypt came up to fight against ^dCarchemish by the Euphrates; and Josiah went out against him. ²¹But he sent messengers to him, saying, "What have I to do with you,

¹⁵ ^y 1 Chr. 25:1-6
² 1 Chr. 9:17, 18
¹⁷ ^a Ex. 12:15; 13:6; 2 Chr. 30:21
¹⁸ ^b 2 Kin. 23:22, 23
²⁰ ^c 2 Kin. 23:29
^d Is. 10:9; Jer. 46:2

35:7 Normally the people provided the Passover lambs and young goats from their own flocks (Ex. 12:3, 5), but Josiah was being generous (see 30:24). That Josiah gave **thirty thousand** of them means that the total number of people must have been 150,000 or more, as each household offered its own lamb or goat. The **cattle** were for the burnt offerings that went with this particular Passover (v. 12).

35:8 Hilkiah was the chief priest under Josiah (see 34:9).

35:11 The way the **priests** and **Levites** prepared **the animals** was in accord with Moses' instructions (Ex. 12:4, 8, 9, 21, 22).

35:12 This particular Passover included a time of fellowship and praise. The **cattle** were used for **burnt offerings** (vv. 7-9) for the celebration of the thank or peace offerings (see Lev. 3:1-5). The offerer, his family, and the priests and Levites could all eat any Passover animals and burnt offerings that were sacrificed as thank offerings. The Passover of Josiah was an occasion for recalling the deliverance of Israel from Egypt (Ex. 12:24-27), and a time of great festive celebration of God's goodness in bringing reformation and renewal. The **Book of Moses** was probably the scroll that Hilkiah found in the temple (34:14, 15); Josiah's desire to conduct the Passover sprang from the discovery and reading of the book.

35:13 The **other holy offerings**, distinguished from the Passover offerings, were the cattle slaughtered for thank or peace offerings (v. 7).

35:14 **Themselves** refers to the **Levites**, who had helped the priests.

35:15 **Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun** headed up the Levitical musical divisions in the days of David (see 1 Chr. 15:17; 25:1). The day-long Passover celebration was accompanied by music.

35:16 It was most unusual to have such a combination of festivals and offerings all on **the same day**.

35:17 The Passover was held on the fourteenth day of the month Nisan (see v. 1) and was followed for the next **seven days** by the Feast of Unleavened Bread, up through the twenty-first day of Nisan (see 30:21-23; Lev. 23:4-8; Num. 28:16-25; Deut. 16:1-8).

35:18 It had been almost four hundred years since the **days of Samuel the prophet** (see 1 Sam. 7:15-17). **None of the kings** had held so great a Passover in all that time (30:26).

35:19 Josiah was 26 years old (see 34:8) in the **eighteenth year** of his reign.

35:20 Located on the upper Euphrates River, **Carchemish** was one of the last strongholds of Assyria to resist the onslaught of the rising neo-Babylonian kingdom. The Babylonians and Medes were on their way to subdue Haran and Carchemish. Necho, more afraid of the Babylonians than the Assyrians, was hoping to get to Carchemish in time to assist his Assyrian allies in their time of peril. Josiah was an ally of Babylon, so he went to Megiddo (v. 22) to intercept the Egyptians and allow for the Babylonians to attack Haran and Carchemish without Egyptian interference.

35:21 **The house** is a reference to the Babylonians. **God commanded me**: God sometimes spoke to pagan rulers about a course of action He wanted them to take (36:22; see Gen. 20:6; 41:25; Dan. 2:28). Necho did not know that the source of his divine leading was the God of Israel and not one of his own Egyptian deities. But God did direct him, displaying His sovereignty over even the wicked and unbelieving powers of this world (see Is. 44:28-45:1).



Egypt's Pharaohs

The pharaohs of Egypt had a long history with the Jews. During this time, Necho succeeded his father as pharaoh in 610 B.C. Recognizing the growing menace of Babylon, he marched through Canaan to help the Assyrians fight this common enemy. King Josiah tried to stop him at Megiddo, but Necho defeated him and continued on his march. Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the Egyptian army at Carchemish on the Euphrates River in 605 B.C., but Necho escaped, captured the new king of Judah, and made Judah a buffer state between Babylon and Egypt. When Nebuchadnezzar attacked Judah in 601 B.C., Egypt was able to stop him temporarily. Pharaoh Apries encouraged King Jehoiakin to resist the Babylonian intruders. But Nebuchadnezzar succeeded in capturing Jerusalem in 586 B.C. and carried its people into exile.



Bronze head from a figurine depicting Pharaoh Necho, late 7th century B.C.

Kim Walton, courtesy of The Reuben and Edith Hecht Museum at the University of Haifa, Israel

king of Judah? *I have not come against you this day, but against the house with which I have war; for God commanded me to make haste. Refrain from meddling with God, who is with me, lest He destroy you.* ²²Nevertheless Josiah would not turn his face from him, but ^edisguised himself so that he might fight with him, and did not heed the words of Necho from the mouth of God. So he came to fight in the Valley of Megiddo. ²³And the archers shot King Josiah; and the king said to his servants, “Take me away, for I am severely wounded.” ²⁴fHis servants therefore took him out of that chariot and put him in the second

²² ^e 1 Kin. 22:30; 2 Chr. 18:29
²⁴ ^f 2 Kin. 23:30
^g 1 Kin. 14:18; Zech. 12:11
²⁵ ^h Lam. 4:20 / Jer. 22:10, 11 / Matt. 9:23 ^k Jer. 22:20

CHAPTER 36

1 ^a 2 Kin. 23:30-34
2 ⁱ MT Joahaz
4 ² Lit. his ³ MT Joahaz
5 ^b 2 Kin. 23:36, 37; 1 Chr. 3:15 ^c Jer. 22:13-19
6 ^d 2 Kin. 24:1; Hab. 1:6 ^e [Deut. 29:22-29]; 2 Chr. 33:11;

chariot that he had, and they brought him to Jerusalem. So he died, and was buried in *one of the tombs of his fathers*. And ^gall Judah and Jerusalem mourned for Josiah. ²⁵Jeremiah also ^hlamented for ⁱJosiah. And to this day ^jall the singing men and the singing women speak of Josiah in their lamentations. ^kThey made it a custom in Israel; and indeed they *are* written in the Laments. ²⁶Now the rest of the acts of Josiah and his goodness, according to *what was* written in the Law of the Lord, ²⁷and his deeds from first to last, indeed they *are* written in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah.

The Reign and Captivity of Jehoahaz

36 Then ^athe people of the land took Jehoahaz the son of Josiah, and made him king in his father's place in Jerusalem. ²¹Jehoahaz was twenty-three years old when he became king, and he reigned three months in Jerusalem. ³Now the king of Egypt deposed him at Jerusalem; and he imposed on the land a tribute of one hundred talents of silver and a talent of gold. ⁴Then the king of Egypt made ²Jehoahaz's brother Eliakim king over Judah and Jerusalem, and changed his name to Jehoiakim. And Necho took ³Jehoahaz his brother and carried him off to Egypt.

The Reign and Captivity of Jehoiakim

^{5b}Jehoiakim was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. And he did ^eevil in the sight of the Lord his God. ^{6d}Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up against him, and bound him in ⁴bronze fetters to ^ecarry him off to Babylon.

Jer. 36:30 ⁴ chains

35:22 The major route from Egypt to the upper Euphrates was the Via Maris or the Way of the Sea. This route went up the coast of Palestine before turning inland through the mountain pass at **Megiddo**. It crossed the Plain of Jezreel or Esdraelon, crossed the Jordan near the Sea of Galilee, and passed through Damascus where it joined the north-south route to upper Syria. Josiah's objective was to control the pass at Megiddo and dictate the movement of traffic through that vital point. **35:24** As a godly successor of David, Josiah was buried with full honors in the royal **tombs of his fathers** in the City of David (see 32:33). **35:27** The book of the kings of Israel and Judah may have been the canonical book of 1 and 2 Kings. **36:1** The people of the land was a technical term that referred to a body of leaders such as a council of elders or a kind of informal parliament (see 33:25). This group acted in time of crisis, such as the death of Josiah in battle. His loss was made worse by the fact that he had at least four sons who could succeed him. Josiah may not have made his choice of successor clear. Johanan was the oldest son,

followed by Jehoiakim, Zedekiah, and Shallum (1 Chr. 3:15). Shallum was the same as **Jehoahaz** (see Jer. 22:11). **36:3** The king of Egypt was Necho (see 35:20). After Assyria's defeat at Haran and Carchemish, the Egyptian army withdrew south of the Euphrates to dominate Syria and Palestine. Judah became an Egyptian vassal state, which explains why Necho could depose Jehoahaz and require **tribute**. Judah had become a poor and weak nation, smaller by far than at any other time in its history. Josiah left them richer spiritually, but poorer financially. **36:4** Necho required the change of name in order to display his power over **Eliakim**. **36:6** **Nebuchadnezzar** was the son of Nabopolassar, founder of the Neo-Babylonian or Chaldean Empire. He was leading a campaign against Carchemish when he succeeded his father. He drove Egypt out of Syria and Palestine and took some Jewish captives, including Daniel, back to Babylon (see Dan. 1:1). At the same time, Jehoiakim changed his loyalty from Necho to Nebuchadnezzar and remained a trusted vassal for three years (see 2 Kin. 24:1). But then

^{7f}Nebuchadnezzar also carried off *some* of the articles from the house of the LORD to Babylon, and put them in his temple at Babylon. ⁸Now the rest of the acts of Jehoiakim, the abominations which he did, and what was found against him, indeed they *are* written in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah. Then ⁵Jehoiachin his son reigned in his place.

The Reign and Captivity of Jehoiachin

^{9g}Jehoiachin was ⁶eight years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem three months and ten days. And he did evil in the sight of the LORD. ¹⁰At the turn of the year ^hKing Nebuchadnezzar summoned *him* and took him to Babylon, ⁱwith the costly articles from the house of the LORD, and made ^jZedekiah, ⁷⁸*Jehoiakim's* brother, king over Judah and Jerusalem.

Zedekiah Reigns in Judah

^{11k}Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he became king, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. ¹²He did evil in the sight of the LORD his God, and ^ldid not humble himself before Jeremiah the prophet, *who spoke* from the mouth of the LORD. ¹³And he also ^mrebelled against King Nebuchadnezzar, who had made him swear *an oath* by God; but he ⁿstiffened his neck and hardened his heart against turning to the LORD God of Israel. ¹⁴Moreover all the leaders of the priests and the people transgressed more and more, *according* to all the abominations of the nations, and defiled the house of the LORD which He had consecrated in Jerusalem.

⁷ ^f 2 Kin. 24:13; Dan. 1:1, 2
⁸ ² Or Jeconiah
⁹ ² 2 Kin. 24:8-17
⁶ Heb. mss., LXX, Syr. *eighteen* and 2 Kin. 24:8
¹⁰ ^h 2 Kin. 24:10-17
ⁱ Dan. 1:1, 2 / Jer. 37:1
⁷ Or Mattaniah
⁸ Lit. *his brother*, 2 Kin. 24:17
¹¹ ^k 2 Kin. 24:18-20; Jer. 52:1
¹² ^j Jer. 21:3-7; 44:10
¹³ ^m Jer. 52:3; Ezek. 17:15
ⁿ 2 Kin. 17:14; [2 Chr. 30:8]

¹⁵ ^o Jer. 7:13; 25:3, 4
¹⁶ ^p 2 Chr. 30:10; Jer. 5:12, 13
^q [Prov. 1:24-32] / Jer. 38:6; Matt. 23:34
² 2 Chr. 34:25; Ps. 79:5
¹⁷ ^r Num. 33:56; Deut. 4:26; 28:49; 2 Kin. 25:1; Ezra 9:7; Is. 3:8
^u Ps. 74:20
¹⁸ ^v 2 Kin. 25:13-15; 2 Chr. 36:7, 10
¹⁹ ^w 2 Kin. 25:9; Ps. 79:1, 7; Is. 1:7, 8; Jer. 52:13
²⁰ ^x 2 Kin. 25:11; Jer. 5:19; Mic. 4:10
^y Jer. 17:4; 27:7
²¹ ^z Jer. 25:9-12; 27:6-8; 29:10
^a Lev. 26:34-43; Dan. 9:2
^b Lev. 25:4, 5
²² ^c Ezra 1:1-3
^d Jer. 29:10

The Fall of Jerusalem

^{15o}And the LORD God of their fathers sent *warnings* to them by His messengers, rising up early and sending *them*, because He had compassion on His people and on His dwelling place. ¹⁶But ^pthey mocked the messengers of God, ^qdespised His words, and ^rscoffed at His prophets, until the ^swrath of the LORD arose against His people, till *there was* no remedy.

^{17t}Therefore He brought against them the king of the Chaldeans, who ^ukilled their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion on young man or virgin, on the aged or the weak; He gave *them* all into his hand. ^{18v}And all the articles from the house of God, great and small, the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king and of his leaders, all *these* he took to Babylon. ^{19w}Then they burned the house of God, broke down the wall of Jerusalem, burned all its palaces with fire, and destroyed all its precious possessions. ²⁰And ^xthose who escaped from the sword he carried away to Babylon, ^ywhere they became servants to him and his sons until the rule of the kingdom of Persia, ²¹to fulfill the word of the LORD by the mouth of ^zJeremiah, until the land ^ahad enjoyed her Sabbaths. As long as she lay desolate ^bshe kept Sabbath, to fulfill seventy years.

The Proclamation of Cyrus

^{22c}Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of ^dJeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of

Jehoiakim rebelled against Babylon, and in about 602 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar returned to Jerusalem to punish him. Nebuchadnezzar bound Jehoiakim to carry him off to Babylon. He did not actually take him away, since Jehoiakim reigned until about 598 B.C. and died of natural causes in Jerusalem (see 2 Kin. 24:6; Jer. 22:18, 19).

36:7 Nebuchadnezzar . . . carried off: The Babylonian king looted the temple of much of its treasure, fulfilling the prophecy made to Hezekiah a century earlier (see 32:31; 2 Kin. 20:17). His temple was the Esagila, the temple of Babylon's patron god Marduk.

36:10 Zedekiah was the youngest of the four sons of Josiah and the third to rule over Judah (see v. 1). He became king by Nebuchadnezzar's appointment, showing Judah's status as a Babylonian vassal (see v. 3).

36:12 Jeremiah was the famous prophet who composed the Book of Jeremiah, which includes his words to Zedekiah (Jer. 21:3-7; 32:5).

36:13 By 588 B.C. Zedekiah rebelled against King Nebuchadnezzar and, like his brother and nephew before him, invited swift Babylonian retribution. Nebuchadnezzar captured Jerusalem after a two-year siege (see 2 Kin. 25:1-3).

36:14 The abominations of the nations refers primarily to idolatry and all the immorality and perversity that went with it. God's covenant with Israel required them to be different from the nations in this key respect (see Ex. 23:24; Lev. 26:1; Deut. 4:15-20, 25-28; 18:9-14; 27:14, 15).

36:15 God's messengers were the prophets He had sent from the beginning of Israel's history.

36:17 The king of the Chaldeans (Babylonians) was Nebuchadnezzar, who reigned from 605 to 562 B.C. He became an instrument of God's judgment all through Judah's last years and well into the Exile (see Dan. 2:37, 38; 5:18, 19).

36:20 until the rule of the kingdom of Persia: Cyrus conquered Babylon in 539 B.C. and allowed the Jews to return to Jerusalem the following year.

36:21 In two places (Jer. 25:12; 29:10), Jeremiah predicted the Exile and its length (see Dan. 9:2). **Sabbaths:** According to the Law of Moses the land was to lie fallow every seventh year (Lev. 25:4). This became known as the sabbatical year. Judah's exile in Babylon allowed the land to enjoy the Sabbaths it had missed (see Lev. 26:33-35).

36:22 The first year of Cyrus refers to his first year of rule over Babylon, not his first year over Media and Persia. He began to rule Media and Persia in 550 B.C. Twelve years later he brought Babylon under his control and issued his famous decree, known from the OT (here and Ezra 1:2-4) and from the Cylinder of Cyrus. This was his first year of involvement with the Jewish people. Jeremiah's 70 years were from about 609 to 539 B.C. **The LORD stirred up:** Cyrus was both a mighty monarch and the instrument by whom God delivered His people from exile, returned them to their land, and rebuilt the temple (see Is. 44:28-45:1).

^eCyrus king of Persia, so that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and also *put it* in writing, saying,

²³ ^fThus says Cyrus king of Persia:
All the kingdoms of the earth the


22 ^eIs. 44:28; 45:1
23 ^fEzra 1:2, 3
^gTemple

LORD God of heaven has given me. And He has commanded me to build Him a ^ghouse at Jerusalem which is in Judah. Who *is* among you of all His people? May the LORD his God *be* with him, and let him go up!

36:23 the LORD God . . . has given me: According to his own account on the Cylinder of Cyrus, the god who called and blessed Cyrus was Marduk, chief deity of the Babylonian pantheon of gods. Since that document was for Babylonian readers, his reference to Marduk is understandable. The Bible attributes his success to the living Lord. It was God Himself who gave Cyrus sovereignty, who commanded him to rebuild the **Jerusalem** temple, and who had

inspired him to release the Jews to their own country. It is not likely that Cyrus was a convert to Judaism. Like Nebuchadnezzar (see Dan. 2:47; 3:28, 29; 4:34–37) and Darius the Mede (Dan. 6:26, 27), Cyrus was willing to include Israel's God among the gods he recognized and extolled. The temple and the holy city lay in ruins, but God was not done yet. He was about to bring His people back to the land and to revive His promises to save and restore them.

THE BOOK OF EZRA



THE BOOK OF EZRA is a remarkable witness to God's faithfulness to His people. Together with Nehemiah, Ezra describes the events leading to the return of the Judeans from captivity in Babylon and the discouraging experiences of that small community in the harsh world of the Promised Land. But through every experience God proved Himself faithful. Through the leadership of Ezra and Zerubbabel, God fulfilled His promises announced by His prophets to restore His people from Babylon, to rebuild the temple at Jerusalem, and to renew their hope that the Davidic kingdom would be restored.

Author and Composition The Book of Ezra does not name its author, but Jewish tradition ascribes the book to Ezra along with the books of Chronicles and Nehemiah. Modern scholars generally agree with this tradition. Despite some dissimilarities, Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah form a connected work. The themes of the temple and the Levites, and the focus on lists, appear in all three books. In the Hebrew Bible, Ezra and Nehemiah are together as one book. Thus it seems that one author compiled all three books.

The fact that Ezra is the principal character of major sections of Ezra lends some credibility to his authorship of this book. Ezra participates in the events described in the second half of Ezra (chs. 7–10), as well as in events described in a portion of the Book of Nehemiah (chs. 8–10). Both passages are written in the first person and provide detailed descriptions. Such vivid descriptions point to an eyewitness as the author. It is generally agreed that these chapters at least were drawn directly from Ezra's memoirs.

On the other hand, the first half of Ezra records events that occurred nearly 60 years before Ezra returned to Judah. If Ezra compiled the book, he had to consult other sources for those passages. In fact, much of the Book of Ezra consists of information obtained from other official sources: (1) the decree of Cyrus (1:2–4), (2) the list of the articles of the temple (1:9–11), (3) the list of those who returned to Jerusalem (2:2–58), (4) the letter to Artaxerxes (4:11–16), (5) the reply of Artaxerxes (4:17–22), (6) the report of Tattenai (5:7–17), (7) the decree of Cyrus (6:2–5), (8) the reply of Darius (6:6–8), (9) the genealogy of Ezra (7:1–5), (10) the authorization of Artaxerxes (7:12–26), (11) the list of the heads of the clans (8:1–14), and (12) the list of those involved in mixed marriages (10:18–44). Over half of the Book of Ezra consists of official documents and lists. Moreover, the book is written in two languages. Most of the royal correspondence in the book is written in Aramaic, the international language of the Persian world, while the narrative sections are in Hebrew. In conclusion, the Book of Ezra is the work of a compiler, and that compiler certainly could have been the scribe Ezra.

Historical Setting In 539 B.C., Cyrus of Persia defeated the Babylonian Empire. Unlike the Babylonian kings before him, Cyrus allowed captive peoples to return to their homelands and live by their traditions and reestablish the worship of their respective gods. At the same time, all these peoples remained an integral part of the Persian Empire, subject to the emperor.

The Jewish people had been exiled to Babylon in three stages, and they returned with the permission of the Persians in three stages. Zerubbabel led the first group of returning Israelites (538 B.C.) and started to rebuild the



Ruins of Xerxes' palace at Persepolis. It is believed that Cyrus the Great chose the site of Persepolis, Darius the Great built the foundations and great palaces, and construction was completed during the reign of Xerxes. All three kings play a role in the Book of Ezra.

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temple (chs. 1–6). The priest Ezra led the second group (458 B.C.) and instituted a number of reforms (chs. 7–10). Finally, Nehemiah led the third group (444 B.C.) and rebuilt the wall around Jerusalem (Neh. 1–6).

Work on the restoration of the temple began in the reign of Cyrus (536 B.C.), extended through the time of Cambyses, and was completed in the sixth year of Darius I (515 B.C.). The reforming careers of Ezra and Nehemiah spanned the reigns of Artaxerxes Longimanus (464–424 B.C.) and Darius II (423–405 B.C.).

Return from Exile

Restoration of the Jewish exiles began under Cyrus (559–530 B.C.), who allowed them to return to Judah with the captured temple treasures. The temple was consecrated in 516 B.C. by official permission of Darius I (522–486).

Ezra won the approval of Artaxerxes I (465–424 B.C.) to return with additional exiles and to promote obedience to the law; Nehemiah, to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem.

Babylon and vicinity long retained a large and prosperous Jewish community, as clay tablets from the Murashu archives at Nippur testify.

The map shows the Persian Empire, including the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, the Mediterranean Sea, the Red Sea, and the Arabian Desert. Key cities marked include Haran, Aleppo, Nineveh, Tiphshah, Byblos, Tyre, Samaria, Ashdod, Jerusalem, Damascus, Babylon, Nippur, Achmetha, and Shushan (Susa). Three return routes are highlighted: First (orange arrow) from Babylon to Jerusalem, Second (yellow arrow) from Babylon to Jerusalem, and Third (blue arrow) from Babylon to Jerusalem.

Return routes	
First	Zerubbabel – 538 B.C. 49,697 return Temple finished – 516 B.C.
Second	Ezra – 458 B.C. 1,758 return Reforms
Third	Nehemiah – 444 B.C. ? return Walls rebuilt

Content The Books of Ezra and Nehemiah are one work in the Hebrew Bible, and should be studied together for a better understanding of the return of the Babylonian exiles to Jerusalem. The combined narrative presents the story of the exiles' return in two time periods, each marked by two prominent leaders: rebuilding the temple, under Zerubbabel and Joshua the priest (538–515 B.C.); and restoring the worship of God and rebuilding Jerusalem's walls, under Ezra and Nehemiah (458–420 B.C.).

Yet the Book of Ezra is not simply a string of historical facts about the returning exiles. Instead, the narrative shows how God fulfilled His promises announced by the prophets. He brought His people back from Babylon, rebuilt the temple at Jerusalem, restored the patterns of true worship, and even preserved the re-assembled community from fresh relapses into heathen customs and idolatrous worship. Through the prophets and leaders He had called, the Lord had preserved and cultivated a small group of returning exiles, the remnant of Israel.

The extraordinary reality of God's promised restoration of His people (Jer. 27:22) is recorded in detail in the Book of Ezra. The remnant did not merely return to the devastated ruins of Jerusalem; they came back with a hope, placed in their hearts by God, to rebuild the nation. With godly determination, they rebuilt the temple. Then the Lord sent Ezra and Nehemiah to exhort them to obey His law wholeheartedly. While the people were rebuilding Jerusalem's walls, God was rebuilding their hearts so that they would truly obey and worship Him. The restoration of the remnant was a complete restoration. The message for Ezra's day—as well as for our own—is that the God of Israel is faithful to His promises. He will completely restore His people when they come back to Him.

CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

Ezra reveals God's continued fulfillment of His promise to keep David's descendants alive. Zerubbabel, the grandson of Jeconiah, is part of Jesus' earthly genealogy (1 Chr. 3:17–19; Matt. 1:12, 13). It may seem insignificant that the remnant of David's extended family had to return to Jerusalem, but it isn't. The positive turn of events sets up the good fortune that will give way to the Good News of Jesus. Without access to the original "land of promise," Jesus couldn't have been born in Bethlehem, which was a requirement for the Messiah (Mic. 5:2). As Ezra documents the return from Babylon, the soundtrack of forgiveness and restoration plays in the background. It is a melody line that will accompany the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. It is music to God's ears to hear His people confess and repent (10:1).

EZRA OUTLINE

- I. The return of the first group of exiles and the rebuilding 1:1—6:22
 - A. The return of the first group of exiles 1:1—2:70
 - B. The rebuilding of the temple 3:1—6:22
- II. The return of the second group of exiles and Ezra's reforms 7:1—10:44
 - A. The return of the second group of exiles 7:1—8:36
 - B. The dissolution of the Israelites' mixed marriages 9:1—10:44

586 B.C.
The Babylonians take Judah captive

559–530 B.C.
Cyrus reigns in Persia

539 B.C.
Cyrus conquers Babylon

538 B.C.
The return of the Jews to Judea begins

536–515 B.C.
The temple is rebuilt

521–486 B.C.
Darius I reigns in Persia

c. 520 B.C.
Haggai and Zechariah begin to prophesy

485–465 B.C.
Ahasuerus (Xerxes I) reigns in Persia

464–424 B.C.
Artaxerxes Longimanus reigns in Persia

458 B.C.
Ezra leads a group of returnees

444 B.C.
Nehemiah leads a group of returnees

End of the Babylonian Captivity

Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD ^aby the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, ^bso that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and also *put it in writing*, saying,

² Thus says Cyrus king of Persia: All the kingdoms of the earth the LORD God of heaven has given me. And He has ^ccommanded me to build Him a ¹house at Jerusalem which *is* in Judah. ³Who *is* among you of all His people? May his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem which *is* in Judah, and build the house of the LORD God of Israel ^d(He *is* God), which *is* in Jerusalem. ⁴And whoever is left in any place where he dwells, let the men of his place help him with silver and gold, with goods and livestock, besides the freewill offerings for the house of God which *is* in Jerusalem.

⁵Then the heads of the fathers' *houses* of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests and the Levites, with all whose spirits ^eGod ²had moved, arose to go up and build the house of the LORD which *is* in Jerusalem. ⁶And all those who *were* around them ³encouraged them with articles of silver and gold, with goods and livestock, and with precious things, besides all *that was* ^fwillingly offered.

^{7g}King Cyrus also brought out the articles of the house of the LORD, ^hwhich Nebuchadnezzar had taken from Jerusalem and put in the ⁴temple of his

BIBLE TIMES & CULTURE NOTES



Cyrus, King of Persia

Cyrus the Great was the founder of the Persian Empire and the Achaemenid dynasty. More than a century before Cyrus was born, Isaiah prophesied—and named *Cyrus* in his prophecy—that he would issue a decree allowing the Israelites to return to their homeland from exile. Josephus, a first-century Jewish historian, would later assert that Cyrus was shown the prophecy of Isaiah recorded in Is. 44:28–45:1 and “an earnest desire and ambition seized upon [Cyrus] to fulfill what was written” (*Antiquities* 11.1). If this story is true, it is possible that Daniel was the one who showed Cyrus Isaiah’s prophecy (see Dan. 6:28; 9:1, 2; 10:1). Certainly Cyrus’s decrees might have been part of a clever military strategy. At this point, he had not yet conquered Egypt. A strong settlement of loyal people between him and the Egyptians would have been wise. This was a novel political policy; for the first time in hundreds of years, a king permitted a subjected people to return to their homeland. But the important point is that God worked through this powerful ruler of the ancient world.



The Cyrus Cylinder which is an account of his conquest of Babylon in 539 B.C.

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CHAPTER 1

1 ^a 2 Chr. 36:22, 23; Jer. 25:12; 29:10
^b Ezra 5:13, 14; Is. 44:28–45:13
^c Is. 44:28; 45:1, 13
¹ Temple
³ ^d 1 Kin. 8:23;

gods; ⁸and Cyrus king of Persia brought them out by the hand of Mithredath the treasurer, and counted them out to

18:39; Is. 37:16; Dan. 6:26 ⁵ ^e [Phil. 2:13] ² *stirred up* ⁶ ^f Ezra 2:68 ³ Lit. *strengthened their hands* ⁷ ⁹ Ezra 5:14; 6:5; Dan. 1:2; 5:2, 3 ^h 2 Kin. 24:13; 2 Chr. 36:7, 18 ⁴ Lit. *house*

1:1 The first year of Cyrus is the first year of his rule over Babylon. In 539 B.C. Cyrus the Great, founder of the greater Persian Empire, conquered Babylon without a struggle. He ruled as king of Persia from 559–530 B.C. **the word of the LORD by . . . Jeremiah:** Jeremiah had prophesied that the Babylonian captivity would last 70 years (see Jer. 25:11; 29:10), after which the Lord would judge Babylon (see Jer. 25:12–14). Cyrus’s **proclamation** was probably shouted by heralds in the principal towns of the empire and posted in public. **put it in writing:** The proclamation was also preserved in the official records in Persia (6:1).

1:2 the LORD God of heaven: After the destruction of Jerusalem, God was no longer identified with the temple as the One who dwelt between the cherubim (see 1 Sam. 4:4; 2 Sam. 6:2). The Persians could understand that there was a particular “God of Israel,” but they would have recognized Him as simply one god among others. However, the phrase *God of heaven* indicates that the Lord is not just another god, but that only He is God. The fact that Cyrus used this title for the Lord suggests that He was prompted by Jewish advisors. **He has commanded me to build Him a house at Jerusalem:** Over one hundred years before Cyrus issued this decree, Isaiah prophesied that the king would make such an order (see Is. 44:28; 45:1).

1:3 He is God: It is likely that Cyrus was speaking as a polytheist who merely recognized that the **God of Israel** should be worshiped in Jerusalem.

1:4 let the men of his place help him: The assistance that the Israelites were to receive from their non-Jewish neighbors in rebuilding the temple is reminiscent of the help an earlier generation received from the Egyptians before the Exodus (see Ex. 12:35, 36). In a sense, the return to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple was a second Exodus (see Is. 43:14–21; 48:20, 21).

1:5 Moved here translates the same Hebrew word as *stirred* in v. 1. The verb means “to rouse” or “to stir up” (see Is. 45:13; Hag. 1:14; Zech. 4:1).

1:6 All those who were around included non-Jewish neighbors (v. 3) as well as Jews who wanted to stay in Babylon.

1:7 King Cyrus also brought: The people who returned to Jerusalem were helped not only by their neighbors, but by the king himself. Cyrus ordered the return of the temple articles that had been taken by **Nebuchadnezzar** (see 2 Kin. 24:1–7, 11–13; 25:8–17; 2 Chr. 36:5–7, 9, 10, 13–19; Dan. 1:2).

1:8 Mithredath the treasurer: not the same as the Mithredath in 4:7. The name **Sheshbazzar** occurs only in two passages (vv. 8–11; 5:14–16), both related to official Persian actions. On the

ⁱSheshbazzar the prince of Judah. ⁹This is the number of them: thirty gold platters, one thousand silver platters, twenty-nine knives, ¹⁰thirty gold basins, four hundred and ten silver basins of a similar *kind*, and one thousand other articles. ¹¹All the articles of gold and silver were five thousand four hundred. All *these* Sheshbazzar took with the captives who were brought from Babylon to Jerusalem.

8 ⁱEzra 5:14, 16

CHAPTER 2

1 ^a Neh. 7:6-73; Jer. 32:15; 50:5; Ezek. 14:22 ^b 2 Kin. 24:14-16; 25:11; 2 Chr. 36:20
2 ¹ Azariah, Neh. 7:7

The Captives Who Returned to Jerusalem

2 Now ^athese are the people of the province who came back from the captivity, of those who had been carried away, ^bwhom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away to Babylon, and who returned to Jerusalem and Judah, everyone to his *own city*.

²Those who came with Zerubbabel were Jeshua, Nehemiah, ¹Seraiah,

other hand, the name Zerubbabel is used in passages related to Jewish activity. Ezra 5:2, 16 appear to identify Sheshbazzar and Zerubbabel. It is possible that Sheshbazzar was a name by which Zerubbabel was known in Persian circles. There are two other possibilities: (1) some suggest that Sheshbazzar died and his work was continued by Zerubbabel; (2) some suggest that Sheshbazzar is another name for Shenazzar (1 Chr. 3:18), an uncle of Zerubbabel. **The prince of Judah** means he was in the Davidic royal line. Zerubbabel was the grandson of King Jehoiakim. In 1 Chr. 3:17-19 he is called the son of Pedaiah instead of Shealtiel. It may be that Shealtiel died childless and his brother Pedaiah married his widow, following the custom of levirate marriage (see Deut. 25:5-10; 1 Chr. 3:18).

1:9-11 The separate items listed in vv. 9, 10 total 2,499. However, the total for **all the articles** given in v. 11 is 5,400. Probably vv. 9, 10 list only the larger and more important items that were transported back to Jerusalem.

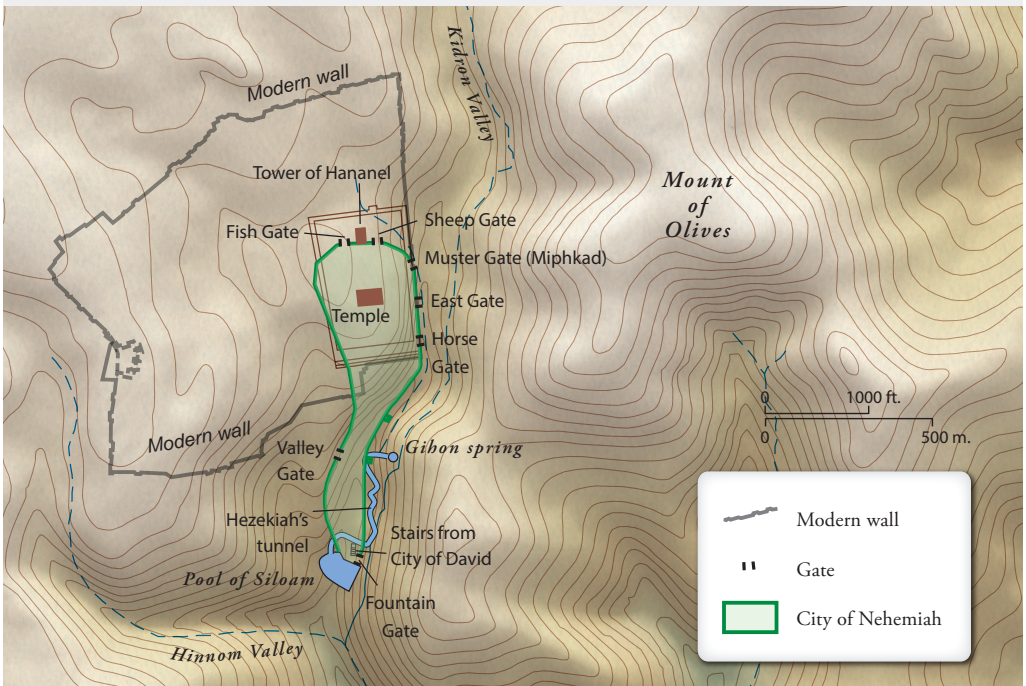
2:1 **The people of the province** refers to the Jewish people of Judah (see 5:8; Neh. 1:2, 3; 11:3). The use of this phrase probably indicates that the register of ch. 2 was compiled in Babylon. Nehemiah's list in Neh. 7:4-73 would have been compiled after he arrived in Jerusalem, which could account for some of the differences between the two registers. **His own city** means the city where a person's family had lived.

2:2 The men listed in this verse were the leaders of the expedition. **Jeshua** was Joshua the high priest (see Hag. 1:1; Zech. 3:1). **Nehemiah**, listed as a leader here, was not the same man who rebuilt the wall of Jerusalem 90 years later. **Mordecai** was not the man of the same name who figures so prominently in the Book of Esther. Nehemiah gives a similar list (Neh. 7:7), with some differences of spelling and an extra leader Nahamani on the list. Those who returned to Jerusalem are called **the people of Israel** and not Judah, because all twelve tribes of Israel were represented.

Jerusalem of the Returning Exiles

AFTER 458 B.C.

A smaller city was rebuilt, with new walls higher on the eastern hill. Temple worship was restored in a rebuilt temple on the former site. Rebuilding on the western hill did not occur until later.



²Reelaiah, Mordecai, Bilshan, ³Mispar, Bigvai, ⁴Rehum, and Baanah. The number of the men of the people of Israel: ³the people of Parosh, two thousand one hundred and seventy-two; ⁴the people of Shephatiah, three hundred and seventy-two; ⁵the people of Arah, ⁶seven hundred and seventy-five; ⁶the people of ^dPahath-Moab, of the people of Jeshua and Joab, two thousand eight hundred and twelve; ⁷the people of Elam, one thousand two hundred and fifty-four; ⁸the people of Zattu, nine hundred and forty-five; ⁹the people of Zaccai, seven hundred and sixty; ¹⁰the people of ⁵Bani, six hundred and forty-two; ¹¹the people of Bebai, six hundred and twenty-three; ¹²the people of Azgad, one thousand two hundred and twenty-two; ¹³the people of Adonikam, six hundred and sixty-six; ¹⁴the people of Bigvai, two thousand and fifty-six; ¹⁵the people of Adin, four hundred and fifty-four; ¹⁶the people of Ater of Hezekiah, ninety-eight; ¹⁷the people of Bezai, three hundred and twenty-three; ¹⁸the people of ⁶Jorah, one hundred and twelve; ¹⁹the people of Hashum, two hundred and twenty-three; ²⁰the people of ⁷Gibbar, ninety-five; ²¹the people of Bethlehem, one hundred and twenty-three; ²²the men of Netophah, fifty-six; ²³the men of Anathoth, one hundred and twenty-eight; ²⁴the people of ⁸Azmaveth, forty-two; ²⁵the people of ⁹Kirjath Arim, Chephirah, and Bereroth, seven hundred and forty-three; ²⁶the people of Ramah and Geba, six hundred and twenty-one; ²⁷the men of Michmas, one hundred and twenty-two; ²⁸the men of Bethel and Ai, two hundred and twenty-three; ²⁹the people of Nebo, fifty-two; ³⁰the people of Magbish, one hundred and fifty-six; ³¹the people of the other ^eElam, one thousand two hundred

² ² Raamiah, Neh. 7:7
³ ³ Mispereth, Neh. 7:7
⁴ ⁴ Nehum, Neh. 7:7
⁵ ⁵ Neh. 7:10
⁶ ⁶ Neh. 7:11
¹⁰ ⁵ Binnui, Neh. 7:15
¹⁸ ⁶ Hariph, Neh. 7:24
²⁰ ⁷ Gibeon, Neh. 7:25
²⁴ ⁸ Beth Azmaveth, Neh. 7:28
²⁵ ⁹ Kirjath Jearim, Neh. 7:29
³¹ ^e Ezra 2:7

³⁶ ^f 1 Chr. 24:7-18
³⁷ ^g 1 Chr. 24:14
³⁸ ^h 1 Chr. 9:12
³⁹ ⁱ 1 Chr. 24:8
⁴⁰ ⁱ Judah, Ezra 3:9, or Hodevah, Neh. 7:43
⁴³ ^j 1 Chr. 9:2; Ezra 7:7
⁴⁴ ² Sia, Neh. 7:47
⁵⁰ ³ Nephishesim, Neh. 7:52
⁵² ⁴ Bazlith, Neh. 7:54
⁵⁵ ^k 1 Kin. 9:21

and fifty-four; ³²the people of Harim, three hundred and twenty; ³³the people of Lod, Hadid, and Ono, seven hundred and twenty-five; ³⁴the people of Jericho, three hundred and forty-five; ³⁵the people of Senaah, three thousand six hundred and thirty.

³⁶The priests: the sons of ^jJedaiah, of the house of Jeshua, nine hundred and seventy-three; ³⁷the sons of ^gImmer, one thousand and fifty-two; ³⁸the sons of ^hPashhur, one thousand two hundred and forty-seven; ³⁹the sons of ⁱHarim, one thousand and seventeen.

⁴⁰The Levites: the sons of Jeshua and Kadmiel, of the sons of ⁱHodaviah, seventy-four.

⁴¹The singers: the sons of Asaph, one hundred and twenty-eight.

⁴²The sons of the gatekeepers: the sons of Shallum, the sons of Ater, the sons of Talmon, the sons of Akkub, the sons of Hatita, and the sons of Shobai, one hundred and thirty-nine *in* all.

⁴³^jThe Nethinim: the sons of Ziha, the sons of Hasupha, the sons of Tabbaoth, ⁴⁴the sons of Keros, the sons of ²Siaha, the sons of Padon, ⁴⁵the sons of Lebanah, the sons of Hagabah, the sons of Akkub, ⁴⁶the sons of Hagab, the sons of Shalmal, the sons of Hanan, ⁴⁷the sons of Giddel, the sons of Gahar, the sons of Reaiah, ⁴⁸the sons of Rezin, the sons of Nekoda, the sons of Gazzam, ⁴⁹the sons of Uzza, the sons of Paseah, the sons of Besai, ⁵⁰the sons of Asnah, the sons of Meunim, the sons of ³Nephusim, ⁵¹the sons of Bakbuk, the sons of Hakupha, the sons of Harhur, ⁵²the sons of ⁴Bazluth, the sons of Mehida, the sons of Harsha, ⁵³the sons of Barkos, the sons of Sisera, the sons of Tamah, ⁵⁴the sons of Nezhiah, and the sons of Hatipha.

⁵⁵The sons of ^kSolomon's servants: the

2:3–20 These verses contain the names and numbers of the families who returned to Jerusalem. It may be that these were the people whose homes were in the city of Jerusalem itself.

2:21–35 These verses list the returnees according to their cities. Note that Jerusalem is not listed. Perhaps the registry dealt first with the inhabitants of Jerusalem (vv. 2–20) and then focused on those outside Jerusalem.

2:36–39 The total number of **priests** listed is 4,289. This was about ten percent of the returning remnant.

2:40 The **Levites** assisted the priests in the temple and in teaching the people the Law (see Neh. 8:7–9). Compared to the number of priests who returned to Jerusalem (vv. 36–39), it is striking how few Levites were with them (other Levites are included in the special lists of vv. 41, 42). According to 1 Chr. 23:4, 24,000 Levites were involved in the worship of God during the time of David.

2:41 The **singers** were Levites who had the responsibility of praising God with music (see 1 Chr. 15:16). Though only 128 singers returned to Jerusalem, at one time there had been as many as four thousand people who “praised the **LORD** with musical instruments” in Solomon’s temple (1 Chr. 23:5).

2:42 The **gatekeepers**, who were also Levites (see 1 Chr. 26:1–19), prevented unauthorized people from entering the restricted area of the temple. There were 139 gatekeepers in the return to Jerusalem under Zerubbabel; compare that figure to the four thousand gatekeepers who guarded the temple during the time of Solomon (see 1 Chr. 23:5).

2:43–50 **Nethinim** means “Given Ones” or “Dedicated Ones.” In 1 Chr. 9:2, the Nethinim are distinguished from the priests and the Levites. Jewish tradition identifies the Nethinim with the Gibeonites who had been assigned by Joshua to assist the Levites in more menial tasks (see Josh. 9:27).

2:55 The **sons of Solomon’s servants** are linked with the Nethinim (v. 43). The numbers of the two groups are totaled together (see v. 58; Neh. 7:60). The sons of Solomon’s servants were probably descendants of the inhabitants of Canaan at the time of Solomon—that is, descendants of the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites whom Solomon had hired to build the temple (see 1 Kin. 5:13).

sons of Sotai, the sons of ¹Sophereth, the sons of ⁵Peruda, ⁵⁶the sons of Jaala, the sons of Darkon, the sons of Giddel, ⁵⁷the sons of Shephatiah, the sons of Hat-til, the sons of Pochereth of Zebaim, and the sons of ⁶Ami. ⁵⁸All the ^mNethinim and the children of ⁿSolomon's servants were three hundred and ninety-two.

⁵⁹And these *were* the ones who came up from Tel Melah, Tel Harsha, Cherub, ⁷Addan, and Immer; but they could not ⁸identify their father's house or their ⁹genealogy, whether they *were* of Israel: ⁶⁰the sons of Delaiah, the sons of Tobiah, and the sons of Nekoda, six hundred and fifty-two; ⁶¹and of the sons of the priests: the sons of ^oHabaiah, the sons of ¹Koz, and the sons of ^pBarzillai, who took a wife of the daughters of Barzillai the Gileadite, and was called by their name. ⁶²These sought their listing *among* those who were registered by genealogy, but they were not found; ^qtherefore they *were excluded* from the priesthood as defiled. ⁶³And the ²governor said to them that they ^rshould not eat of the most holy things till a priest could consult with the ^sUrim and Thummim.

⁶⁴^rThe whole assembly together *was* forty-two thousand three hundred and sixty, ⁶⁵besides their male and female servants, of whom *there were* seven thousand three hundred and thirty-seven; and they had two hundred men and women singers. ⁶⁶Their horses *were* seven hundred and thirty-six, their mules two hundred and forty-five, ⁶⁷their camels four hundred and thirty-five, and *their* donkeys six thousand seven hundred and twenty.

⁵⁵ ¹Neh. 7:57-60
⁵Perida, Neh. 7:57
⁵⁷ ⁶Amon, Neh. 7:59

⁵⁸ ^mJosh. 9:21, 27;
¹Chr. 9:2 ⁿ1 Kin. 9:21

⁵⁹ ⁷Or Addon,
Neh. 7:61 ⁸Lit. tell
⁹Lit. seed

⁶¹ ^oNeh. 7:63

⁶² ²Sam. 17:27;

¹Kin. 2:7 ¹Or

Hakkoz

⁶² ^qNum. 3:10

⁶³ ^rLev. 22:2, 10,

15, 16 ^sEx. 28:30;

Num. 27:21 ²Heb.

Tirshatha

⁶⁴ ¹Neh. 7:66; Is.

10:22

⁶⁸ ^uEzra 1:6; 3:5;

Neh. 7:70

⁶⁹ ^v1 Chr. 26:20;

Ezra 8:25-35

⁷⁰ ^wEzra 6:16, 17;

Neh. 7:73

CHAPTER 3

¹ ^aNeh. 7:73; 8:1, 2

² ^b1 Chr. 6:14, 15;

Ezra 4:3; Neh. 12:1,

8; Hag. 1:1; 2:2

^cEzra 2:2; 4:2, 3; 5:2

^d1 Chr. 3:17 ^eDeut.

12:5, 6 ¹Or Joshua

²Jehozadak, 1 Chr.

6:14

³Num. 28:3

³foundations

⁴ ^fLev. 23:33-43;

Neh. 8:14-18; Zech.

14:16 ^hEx. 23:16

ⁱNum. 29:12, 13

⁵ ^jEx. 29:38; Num.

28:3, 11, 19, 26;

Ezra 1:4; 2:68; 7:15,

16; 8:28

⁶⁸^u*Some* of the heads of the fathers' houses, when they came to the house of the LORD which is in Jerusalem, offered freely for the house of God, to erect it in its place: ⁶⁹According to their ability, they gave to the ^vtreasury for the work sixty-one thousand gold drachmas, five thousand minas of silver, and one hundred priestly garments.

⁷⁰^wSo the priests and the Levites, some of the people, the singers, the gatekeepers, and the Nethinim, dwelt in their cities, and all Israel in their cities.

Worship Restored at Jerusalem

3 And when the ^aseventh month had come, and the children of Israel *were* in the cities, the people gathered together as one man to Jerusalem. ²Then ¹Jeshua the son of ^bJozadak ²and his brethren the priests, ^cand Zerubbabel the son of ^dShealtiel and his brethren, arose and built the altar of the God of Israel, to offer burnt offerings on it, as it is ^ewritten in the Law of Moses the man of God. ³Though fear *had come* upon them because of the people of those countries, they set the altar on its ³bases; and they offered ^fburnt offerings on it to the LORD, *both* the morning and evening burnt offerings. ⁴^gThey also kept the Feast of Tabernacles, ^has it is written, and ⁱoffered the daily burnt offerings in the number required by ordinance for each day. ⁵Afterwards *they offered* the ^jregular burnt offering, and *those* for New Moons and for all the appointed feasts of the LORD that were consecrated, and *those* of everyone who willingly offered a freewill offering to the

2:59-63 Although these people could not prove their Jewish origin, they were permitted to return to Jerusalem. But without genealogies they were **excluded from the priesthood**, according to the Law of Moses (see Num. 16:1-40). **The governor Zerubbabel** was careful to follow the Law by declaring that the would-be priests **should not eat of the most holy things**, meaning that they should not participate in priestly functions. **The Urim and Thummim** were sacred lots that were used to determine God's will (see Ex. 28:30).

2:64 forty-two thousand three hundred and sixty: The individual numbers listed in ch. 2 add up to only 29,818. It is possible that the larger total includes women, who are not named in the lists.

2:65 The **singers** listed here were not the temple choir of v. 41. These were professional singers employed for banquets, feasts, and funerals (see 2 Chr. 35:25; Eccl. 2:7, 8). Their presence could be an indication of luxury (see 2 Sam. 19:35). It appears that many of the Jewish people had achieved some prosperity while living in Babylon. The Jews had not been enslaved in exile; they had only been restricted from returning to their land.

2:66 The large number of **horses** listed here also suggests affluence among those who returned to Jerusalem. Prior to this time, horses in Israel had been used only for war and ceremonies. Only the very rich and well-armed owned horses. The rich also rode **mules**, for they were scarce in Israel.

2:67 The beasts of burden were **camels** and **donkeys**. Camels were expensive; the poorer classes rode donkeys.

2:68 when they came to the house of the LORD: The first thing that many of the returnees did when they reached Jerusalem was to contribute to the rebuilding of the temple. Offerings were brought even before the people settled in their houses (v. 70).

2:69 Ezra records the amount of gold, silver, and garments given for the rebuilding of the temple, as does Nehemiah (see Neh. 7:70-72). However, the two sets of figures do not match. Apparently Ezra's list rounds off the figures, while Nehemiah's list presents them in more precise detail. It is also possible that the two lists give totals from different times of collection—perhaps in Babylon and then later in Jerusalem. **Drachmas** were Persian gold coins that weighed about two-tenths of an ounce, the weight of a quarter. Five thousand minas were about 6,300 pounds of silver.

3:1 The seventh month was sacred to the Jewish people. The first day of the month was the Feast of Trumpets (see Num. 29:1-6), the tenth day was the Day of Atonement (see Num. 29:7-11), and the fifteenth day was the Feast of Tabernacles (see Num. 29:12-38). **as one man:** The people had come with the common desire of worshiping God (v. 9).

3:2, 3 Jeshua was the same person as the priest Joshua (see Hag. 1:1; Zech. 3:1); his father's name **Jozadak** was also spelled Jehozadak (see 1 Chr. 6:14; Hag. 1:1).

3:4 In obedience to God's Word, the Israelites observed **the Feast of Tabernacles** or Booths, which commemorated the earlier generation's wanderings in the wilderness (see Num. 29:13-38).

Zerubbabel's Temple

Construction of the second temple was started in 536 B.C. on the Solomonic foundations leveled a half-century earlier by the Babylonians. People who remembered the earlier temple wept at the comparison (Ezra 3:12). Not until 516 B.C., the 6th year of the Persian emperor Darius I (522–486), was the temple finally completed at the urging of Haggai and Zechariah (Ezra 6:13–15).

Archaeological evidence confirms that the Persian period in the Holy Land was a comparatively impoverished one in terms of material culture. Later Aramaic documents from Elephantine in Upper Egypt illustrate the official process of gaining permission to construct a Jewish place of worship and the opposition engendered by such a project.

Of the temple and its construction, little is known. Consequently, all art reconstructions of it are tentative. Among the few contemporary buildings, the Persian palace at Lachish and the Tobiad monument at Iraq al-Amir may be compared in terms of technique.

Unlike the more famous structures razed in 586 B.C. and A.D. 70, the temple begun by Zerubbabel suffered no major hostile destruction, but was gradually repaired and reconstructed over a long period of time. Eventually it was replaced entirely by Herod's magnificent edifice.



LORD. ⁶From the first day of the seventh month they began to offer burnt offerings to the LORD, although the foundation of the temple of the LORD had not been laid. ⁷They also gave money to the masons and the carpenters, and ^hfood, drink, and oil to the people of Sidon and Tyre to bring cedar logs from Lebanon to the sea, to ⁱJoppa, ^maccording to the permission which they had from Cyrus king of Persia.

⁷ ^k 1 Kin. 5:6, 9; 2 Chr. 2:10; Acts 12:20 ^l 2 Chr. 2:16; Acts 9:36 ^m Ezra 1:2; 6:3

⁸ ⁿ Ezra 3:2; 4:3 ^o 1 Chr. 23:4, 24 ^p Jehozadak, 1 Chr. 6:14 ^q ^s Hodaviah, Ezra 2:40

God at Jerusalem, ^rZerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, Jeshua the son of ⁴Jozadak, and the rest of their brethren the priests and the Levites, and all those who had come out of the captivity to Jerusalem, began ^{work} ^oand appointed the Levites from twenty years old and above to oversee the work of the house of the LORD. ⁹Then Jeshua ^{with} his sons and brothers, Kadmiel ^{with} his sons, and the sons of ⁵Judah, arose as one to oversee those working on the house of God: the sons of Henadad ^{with} their sons and their brethren the Levites.

¹⁰When the builders laid the foun-

Restoration of the Temple Begins

⁸Now in the second month of the second year of their coming to the house of

3:7 When Solomon built the first temple, he purchased materials from **Sidon and Tyre**, had them shipped to **Joppa**, and paid for them with grain, wine, and oil (see 2 Chr. 2:10–16).

3:8 The construction of Solomon's temple had begun in the second month of the year (see 1 Kin. 6:1). Likewise, construction of the second temple began in the second month. **from twenty years old and above:** The Law had required that Levites be at least 30 years old before they entered into service (Num. 4:1–3). Later, the minimum age was reduced to 25 (see Num. 8:24). Finally, David lowered

the minimum age to 20 (see 1 Chr. 23:24, 27). The lower minimum age allowed more Levites to enter into temple service. This provision was vital in view of the small number of Levites who made the trip back to Jerusalem (2:40).

3:10, 11 The returnees to Jerusalem celebrated laying the temple's foundation in almost the same way that the previous generation had celebrated the first temple (see 2 Chr. 5:13). Two choruses were sung **responsively**. One group sang **For He is good**; the other group responded with **For His mercy endures forever** (see Neh. 12:31).

dation of the temple of the LORD, ^pthe ⁶priests stood in their apparel with trumpets, and the Levites, the sons of Asaph, with cymbals, to praise the LORD, according to the ^qordinance⁷ of David king of Israel. ¹¹r And they sang responsively, praising and giving thanks to the LORD:

^s“For *He* is good,

^tFor His mercy *endures* forever toward Israel.”

Then all the people shouted with a great shout, when they praised the LORD, because the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid.

¹²But many of the priests and Levites and ^uheads of the fathers’ *houses*, old men who had seen the first temple, wept with a loud voice when the foundation of this temple was laid before their eyes. Yet many shouted aloud for joy, ¹³so that the people could not discern the noise of the shout of joy from the noise of the weeping of the people, for the people shouted with a loud shout, and the sound was heard afar off.

Resistance to Rebuilding the Temple

4 Now when ^athe ¹adversaries of Judah and Benjamin heard that the descendants of the captivity were building the temple of the LORD God of Israel, ²they came to Zerubbabel and the heads of the fathers’ *houses*, and said to them, “Let us build with you, for we seek your God as you *do*; and we have sacrificed to Him ^bsince the days of Esarhaddon king of Assyria, who brought us here.” ³But Zerubbabel and Jeshua and the rest of

¹⁰ ^p 1 Chr. 16:5, 6
^q 1 Chr. 6:31; 16:4;
 25:1 ⁶ So with LXX,
 Syr., Vg.; MT they
 stationed the priests
⁷ Lit. *hands*
¹¹ ^r Ex. 15:21; 2 Chr.
 7:3; Neh. 12:24
^s 1 Chr. 16:34; Ps.
 136:1 ^t 1 Chr. 16:41;
 Jer. 33:11
¹² ^u Ezra 2:68

CHAPTER 4

¹ ^a Ezra 4:7-9
¹ *enemies*
² ^b 2 Kin. 17:24;
 19:37; Ezra 4:10

³ ^c Neh. 2:20 ^d Ezra
 1:1-4 ² Temple
⁴ ^e Ezra 3:3
⁵ ^f Ezra 5:5; 6:1
⁷ ^g Ezra 7:1, 7, 21
^h 2 Kin. 18:26 ³ Or
in peace
⁸ ⁴ The original
 language of Ezra
 4:8 through 6:18 is
 Aramaic.
⁹ ¹ 2 Kin. 17:30, 31
⁵ Lit. *Then* ⁶ Or *Susa*
¹⁰ ² Kin. 17:24;
 Ezra 4:1 ^k Ezra
 4:11, 17; 7:12 ⁷ The
 Euphrates ⁸ Lit.
 and now

the heads of the fathers’ *houses* of Israel said to them, ^c“You may do nothing with us to build a ²house for our God; but we alone will build to the LORD God of Israel, as ^dKing Cyrus the king of Persia has commanded us.” ⁴Then ^ethe people of the land tried to discourage the people of Judah. They troubled them in building, ⁵and hired counselors against them to frustrate their purpose all the days of Cyrus king of Persia, even until the reign of ^fDarius king of Persia.

Rebuilding of Jerusalem Opposed

⁶In the reign of Ahasuerus, in the beginning of his reign, they wrote an accusation against the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem.

⁷In the days of ^gArtaxerxes also, ³Bishlam, Mithredath, Tabe, and the rest of their companions wrote to Artaxerxes king of Persia; and the letter *was* written in ^hAramaic script, and translated into the Aramaic language. ⁸Rehum the commander and Shimshai the scribe wrote a letter against Jerusalem to King Artaxerxes in this fashion:

⁹ ⁵From Rehum the commander, Shimshai the scribe, and the rest of their companions—*representatives* of ⁱthe Dinaites, the Apharsathchites, the Tarpelites, the people of Persia and Erech and Babylon and ⁶Shushan, the Dehavites, the Elamites, ¹⁰^jand the rest of the nations whom the great and noble Osnapper took captive and settled in the cities of Samaria and the remainder beyond ⁷the River—^kand ⁸so forth.

3:12 Solomon’s temple had been destroyed in 586 B.C., and this scene took place 50 years later. The **old men** could remember the grandeur of the first temple, and they **wept**.

4:1 The **adversaries of Judah** were the Samaritans. Esarhaddon (v. 2), who ruled Assyria from 681–669 B.C., had transported the conquered people of the northern kingdom to other lands. He then brought people from other lands into Palestine. These foreigners intermarried with the Hebrews who were left in the land. Their offspring became the Samaritans. **Judah and Benjamin**: The southern kingdom of Judah is called the nation of Judah and Simeon. The southern kingdom also included land from Benjamin, in which Jerusalem was located.

4:2 **we seek your God as you do**: The Samaritans did not use the proper name for God—that is, Yahweh—perhaps suggesting that their understanding of the Lord was still quite poor. As a result, they presented the threat of syncretism, or mixing true worship of God with the worship of false gods. This was the sin that had led to the deportation of the Israelites in the first place.

4:3 **You may do nothing with us** is not a rude rebuff; it is a righteous refusal. The people offering help were not friends, but adversaries (v. 1). They may have sacrificed to the Lord, but they were idolatrous at the same time (see 2 Kin. 17:29–35).

4:4, 5 **The people of the land** is another way of referring to the Samaritans, who became active enemies of Israel’s rebuilding pro-

gram for the next several years. The Samaritans **troubled** the Jewish people, perhaps with threats and attempts to cut off their supplies. The Samaritans then **hired counselors**, or lawyers, probably to represent them against the Jewish community at the Persian court. The Samaritans persisted in these attacks **until the reign of Darius** as much as 14 years later.

4:6 When Darius I died (486 B.C.), his son **Ahasuerus** reigned (485–465 B.C.). Ahasuerus’s Greek name was Xerxes. He is the same king who appears in the Book of Esther. At the beginning of his reign, the Samaritans wrote him a letter hoping to stop the Jews from completing work on the temple. Apparently nothing was accomplished by the letter.

4:7 **Artaxerxes** Longimanus (464–424 B.C.) succeeded his father Xerxes. He too received a letter from the Samaritans against the Jews (v. 6). The letter was **written in Aramaic script, and translated**, or read aloud in Aramaic. Like the Samaritans’ letter to Ahasuerus, this letter evidently was ignored.

4:9, 10 The point of these two verses is that the Samaritan letter reflected the views of the whole province. The beginning of the letter, filled with rhetoric and flourish, was designed to bring political pressure on the Persian king. **Osnapper** was probably another name for Ashurbanipal, the king of Assyria (669–626 B.C.) who completed the transplanting begun by Esarhaddon (v. 2). **The River** is the Euphrates.

¹¹ (This is a copy of the letter that they sent him)

To King Artaxerxes from your servants, the men *of the region* beyond the River, ⁹and so forth:

¹² Let it be known to the king that the Jews who came up from you have come to us at Jerusalem, and are building the ¹rebellious and evil city, and are finishing *its* ^mwalls and repairing the foundations. ¹³ Let it now be known to the king that, if this city is built and the walls completed, they will not pay ⁿtax, tribute, or custom, and the king's treasury will be diminished. ¹⁴ Now because we receive support from the palace, it was not proper for us to see the king's dishonor; therefore we have sent and informed the king, ¹⁵ that search may be made in the book of the records of your fathers. And you will find in the book of the records and know that this city *is* a rebellious city, harmful to kings and provinces, and that they have incited sedition within the city in former times, for which cause this city was destroyed.

¹⁶ We inform the king that if this city is rebuilt and its walls are completed, the result will be that you will have no dominion beyond the River.

¹⁷ The king sent an answer:

To Rehum the commander, *to* Shimshai the scribe, *to* the rest of their companions who dwell in Samaria,

¹¹ ⁹ Lit. *and now*
¹² ² Chr. 36:13
^m Ezra 5:3, 9
¹³ ⁿ Ezra 4:20; 7:24

¹⁷ ¹ Lit. *and now*
¹⁹ ² Lit. *by me a decree has been put forth*
²⁰ ¹ Kin. 4:21;
1 Chr. 18:3; Ps.
72:8 ^p Gen. 15:18;
Josh. 1:4
²¹ ³ *put forth a decree*

CHAPTER 5

¹ a Hag. 1:1 ^b Zech. 1:1

and *to* the remainder beyond the River:

Peace, ¹and so forth.

¹⁸ The letter which you sent to us has been clearly read before me. ¹⁹ And ²I gave the command, and a search has been made, and it was found that this city in former times has revolted against kings, and rebellion and sedition have been fostered in it. ²⁰ There have also been mighty kings over Jerusalem, who have ^oruled over all *the region* ^pbeyond the River; and tax, tribute, and custom were paid to them. ²¹ Now ³give the command to make these men cease, that this city may not be built until the command is given by me.

²² Take heed now that you do not fail to do this. Why should damage increase to the hurt of the kings?

²³ Now when the copy of King Artaxerxes' letter *was* read before Rehum, Shimshai the scribe, and their companions, they went up in haste to Jerusalem against the Jews, and by force of arms made them cease. ²⁴ Thus the work of the house of God which *is* at Jerusalem ceased, and it was discontinued until the second year of the reign of Darius king of Persia.

Restoration of the Temple Resumed

5 Then the prophet ^aHaggai and ^bZechariah the son of Iddo, prophets, prophesied to the Jews who *were* in Judah and Jerusalem, in the name of the God

4:11 **Your servants** is a technical term for vassals. By including this term in the introduction of the letter, the men were assuring the king of their allegiance and were reporting the rebellion of the Jewish people. **And so forth** may mean "and now" (v. 10).
4:12 **the rebellious and evil city:** The rebellion to which the Samaritans referred was the long period of siege the armies of Babylon were compelled to undertake against Israel. **finishing its walls:** The Jews perhaps had begun construction on the walls but were nowhere near completing them. They were not finished until many years later (see Neh. 6).
4:14, 15 The Samaritans suggested that the king search his official records to see if Jerusalem had been destroyed in the past because of rebellion. Indeed it had. Nebuchadnezzar had conquered Jerusalem years before because it had rebelled against him.
4:16 The Samaritan letter concluded with a warning that if the king did not stop the Jews, he would lose not only income, but also dominion over Jerusalem and the region beyond the Euphrates River.
4:17 In this context, the word **peace** is used of the treaty relationship that existed between the king and his vassals (5:7).
4:19 A search of the king's official records confirmed the Samaritans' allegation of **rebellion** and **sedition** on the part of the people of Jerusalem, no doubt referring to the revolts under Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah (see 2 Kin. 24:1–20). The fact that these revolts were against the Babylonians and not against the Persians was

not important. The Persians had become the heirs of the Babylonian Empire, and they would take such a report seriously.
4:20 The Persian king also found out that Jewish kings had **ruled over** a large region. David and Solomon had both possessed a great sphere of rule. Subsequent kings had aspired to the former glory of David and Solomon.
4:21, 22 The Persian king Artaxerxes ordered the Jewish people to **cease** their work on the temple. However, he left open the possibility of a future change in policy. Years later at the request of Nehemiah the decision was reviewed (see Neh. 2:1–8).
4:23 **By force** may suggest that the enforcers of the king's edict demolished the part of the wall that had been repaired. This would have been part of the rubble that Nehemiah discovered when he arrived in Jerusalem (see Neh. 2:12–16).
5:1 **Haggai**, who wrote the OT book that bears his name, began his ministry in August, 520 B.C. (see Hag. 1:1). **Zechariah**, the prophet who also wrote an OT book, began his prophetic ministry in October or November of the same year (see Zech. 1:1). The Jews had been forced to stop working on the temple (4:24). Now years later, God revived His work. He instructed His prophets to prophesy, and He expected His people to respond in faith and action. The phrase **who was over them** is a reminder of the sovereignty of God. No king other than the Lord Himself commanded His people.

of Israel, *who was* over them. ²So ^cZerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and Jeshua the son of ¹Jozadak rose up and began to build the house of God which is in Jerusalem; and ^dthe prophets of God *were* with them, helping them.

³At the same time ^eTattenai the governor of the *region* beyond ²the River and Shethar-Boznai and their companions came to them and spoke thus to them: ^f“Who has commanded you to build this ³temple and finish this wall?” ^{4g}Then, accordingly, we told them the names of the men who were constructing this building. ⁵But ^hthe eye of their God was upon the elders of the Jews, so that they could not make them cease till a report could go to Darius. Then a ⁱwritten answer was returned concerning this *matter*. ⁶This is a copy of the letter that Tattenai sent:

The governor of the *region* beyond the River, and Shethar-Boznai, ^jand his companions, the Persians who *were* in the *region* beyond the River, to Darius the king.

⁷(They sent a letter to him, in which was written thus)

To Darius the king:

All peace.

² ^c Ezra 3:2; Hag. 1:12 ^d Ezra 6:14; Hag. 2:4
¹ ^j Jehozadak, 1 Chr. 6:14
³ ^c Ezra 5:6; 6:6
^f Ezra 1:3; 5:9 ² The Euphrates ³ Lit. house
⁴ ^g Ezra 5:10
⁵ ^h 2 Chr. 16:9; Ezra 7:6, 28; Ps. 33:18
ⁱ Ezra 6:6
⁶ ^j Ezra 4:7-10

⁸ ⁴ Lit. house ⁵ Lit. stones too heavy to be carried
⁹ ^k Ezra 5:3, 4
¹¹ ¹ 1 Kin. 6:1, 38
⁶ Lit. house
¹² ^m 2 Chr. 34:25; 36:16, 17 ⁿ 2 Kin. 24:2; 25:8-11; 2 Chr. 36:17; Jer. 52:12-15
^o Jer. 13:19
¹³ ^p Ezra 1:1
⁷ Temple
¹⁴ ^q Ezra 1:7, 8; 6:5; Dan. 5:2

⁸ Let it be known to the king that we went into the province of Judea, to the ⁴temple of the great God, which is being built with ⁵heavy stones, and timber is being laid in the walls; and this work goes on diligently and prospers in their hands.

⁹ Then we asked those elders, and spoke thus to them: ^k“Who commanded you to build this temple and to finish these walls?” ¹⁰We also asked them their names to inform you, that we might write the names of the men who *were* chief among them.

¹¹ And thus they returned us an answer, saying: “We are the servants of the God of heaven and earth, and we are rebuilding the ⁶temple that was built many years ago, which a great king of Israel built ^land completed. ¹²But ^mbecause our fathers provoked the God of heaven to wrath, He gave them into the hand of ⁿNebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, the Chaldean, *who* destroyed this temple and ^ocarried the people away to Babylon. ¹³However, in the first year of ^pCyrus king of Babylon, King Cyrus issued a decree to build this ⁷house of God. ¹⁴Also, ^qthe gold and silver articles of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the temple that *was*

5:2 Zerubbabel the civil governor and **Jeshua** (also known as Joshua) the high priest led the people once again in rebuilding the temple. The prophets Haggai and Zechariah joined in this call to action.

5:3 When the temple rebuilding resumed, resistance renewed. **Tattenai** was a regional **governor**. Since there were only 20 regional governors called satraps in the Persian Empire (8:36), it may be assumed that Tattenai was a very powerful man. Zerubbabel, as governor of the small district of Judah, was under the authority of Tattenai (1:8). The position of **Shethar-Boznai** is not described, but he was probably an aide or a secretary to Tattenai. The regional governor and his staff personally visited Jerusalem.

5:4 The official delegation of Tattenai asked who had commanded the work on the temple to be done (v. 3). The answer in this verse gives **the names of the men who were constructing** the temple, but not the name of the one who commanded the work to be done.

5:5 The eye of their God is a way of speaking of the sovereignty and providence of God (v. 1): God was protecting and watching over those who obeyed His command. The governor decided that he would not stop the work on the temple until an **answer was returned** from the king. In other words, Tattenai checked out the Jewish leaders' version of what was taking place.

5:6 The governor sent his inquiring letter to King **Darius** (who ruled from 521–486 B.C.). The fact that Tattenai contacted the emperor shows that despite his own considerable power, he still had to proceed under the process of Persian custom and law.

5:7, 8 The walls described in Tattenai's letter were the walls of the temple, not the walls of the city. **Timber** was used for the beams of the temple floor and roof. Most of the temple construction was done with massive stones, but beams and slats were also used.

5:11 In his report to Darius, Tattenai indicated that he had learned a great deal from the Jews about their history and destiny, including a reference to a **great king**, that is, Solomon.

5:12 Though the Jewish people acknowledged that **Nebuchadnezzar** destroyed the first temple, they traced the cause not to his power, but to their sin and ultimately to God's judgment. Tattenai's use of the title **God of heaven** is perhaps an unwitting acknowledgment of the reality and sovereignty of God.

5:13–16 This portion of Tattenai's letter to King Cyrus describes the events that led to the official Persian decree to rebuild the temple (1:1–4). Note that the delay described in ch. 4 is not mentioned here. **Sheshbazzar** may have been the Persian name for Zerubbabel. Alternatively he may have been the Jewish prince who was first appointed to lead the temple rebuilding efforts, but who did not survive and was replaced by Zerubbabel (see 1:8).

Jews

(Heb. *yehudaye*) (5:1; 6:7; Dan. 3:8) Strong's #3062

The name Jew is popularly associated with the verb *yadah* (meaning “to praise” or “to give thanks”) on the basis of Jacob's blessing upon his son Judah in Gen. 49:8: “Judah, you are he whom your brothers shall praise.” Thus a Jew may be a person from the tribe of Judah (Num. 10:14). Later the name Jew was applied directly to those Israelites living in the geographical region known as Judah (see Jer. 7:30). The use of the name Jew for the Israelites as a people group became prominent during the postexilic period. This use is found in the NT as well: Jesus is called “King of the Jews” (Matt. 27:29). In his letter to the Romans, Paul states that the true Jew is a person marked by “circumcision . . . of the heart” (Rom. 2:28, 29).

in Jerusalem and carried into the temple of Babylon—those King Cyrus took from the temple of Babylon, and they were given to ¹one named Sheshbazzar, whom he had made governor. ¹⁵And he said to him, ‘Take these articles; go, carry them to the temple *site* that *is* in Jerusalem, and let the house of God be rebuilt on its former site.’ ¹⁶Then the same Sheshbazzar came *and* ¹⁷laid the foundation of the house of God which *is* in Jerusalem; but from that time even until now it has been under construction, and ¹⁸it is not finished.”

¹⁷ Now therefore, if *it seems* good to the king, ¹⁸let a search be made in the king’s treasure house, which *is* there in Babylon, whether it is *so* that a decree was issued by King Cyrus to build this house of God at Jerusalem, and let the king send us his pleasure concerning this *matter*.

The Decree of Darius

6 Then King Darius issued a decree, ^aand a search was made in the ¹archives, where the treasures were stored in Babylon. ²And at ²Achmetha, in the palace that *is* in the province of ^bMedia, a scroll was found, and in it a record *was* written thus:

³ In the first year of King Cyrus, King Cyrus issued a ^cdecree *concerning* the house of God at Jerusalem: “Let the house be rebuilt, the place where they offered sacrifices; and let the foundations of it be firmly laid, its height sixty cubits *and* its width sixty cubits, ^{4d}with three rows of heavy stones and one row of new timber. Let the ^eexpenses be paid from the king’s treasury. ⁵Also let ^fthe gold and silver articles of the house of God, which

14 ¹ Hag. 1:14; 2:2, 21
16 ¹ Ezra 3:8-10; Hag. 2:18 ¹ Ezra 6:15
17 ¹ Ezra 6:1, 2

CHAPTER 6
1 ^a Ezra 5:17 ¹ Lit. *house of the scrolls*
2 ^b 2 Kin. 17:6
² Probably *Ecbatana*, the ancient capital of Media
3 ^c Ezra 1:1; 5:13
4 ^d 1 Kin. 6:36
^e Ezra 3:7
5 ^f Ezra 1:7, 8; 5:14

Nebuchadnezzar took from the temple which *is* in Jerusalem and brought to Babylon, be restored and taken back to the temple which *is* in Jerusalem, *each* to its place; and deposit *them* in the house of God”—

⁶ *Now therefore*, Tattenai, governor of *the region* beyond the River, and Shethar-Boznai, and your companions the Persians who *are* beyond the River, keep yourselves far from there. ⁷Let the work of this house of God alone; let the governor of the Jews and the elders of the Jews build this house of God on its site.

⁸ Moreover I issue a decree *as to* what you shall do for the elders of these Jews, for the building of this ³house of God: Let the cost be paid at the king’s expense from taxes *on the region* beyond the River; this is to be given immediately to these men, so that they are not hindered. ⁹And whatever they need—young bulls, rams, and lambs for the burnt offerings of the God of heaven, wheat, salt, wine, and oil, according to the request of the priests who *are* in Jerusalem—let it be given them day by day without fail, ^{10h}that they may offer sacrifices of sweet aroma to the God of heaven, and pray for the life of the king and his sons.

¹¹ Also I issue a decree that whoever alters this edict, let a timber be pulled from his house and erected, and let him be hanged on it; ⁱand let his house be made a refuse heap because of this. ¹²And may the God who causes His ^jname to dwell there destroy any king or people who put their hand to alter it, or to destroy this ⁴house of God which *is* in Jerusalem. I Darius issue a decree; let it be done diligently.

6 ⁹ Ezra 5:3, 6
⁸ 3 Temple
10 ^h Ezra 7:23; [Jer. 29:7; 1 Tim. 2:1, 2]
11 ⁱ Dan. 2:5; 3:29
12 ^j Deut. 12:5, 11; 1 Kin. 9:3 ⁴ Temple

5:17 Apparently the king’s treasure house contained the official records as well as the treasury. Tattenai’s request to find the original decree issued by King Cyrus delayed the rebuilding. The trip from Jerusalem to Babylon (7:9) took eight months. The search for official documents also took time. The entire process could have taken as long as a year.
6:1, 2 At the suggestion of Tattenai and his aides (5:17), King Darius ordered his staff to search the official records in the archives, or “house of the books,” to see whether Cyrus had authorized the rebuilding of the temple at Jerusalem. Apparently nothing was found in Babylon, and the search moved on to Achmetha, the summer residence of the Persian kings.
6:3–5 King Darius began his reply to Tattenai by quoting from the decree of King Cyrus. Cyrus’s public proclamation can be found in 1:2–4. **its height sixty cubits and its width sixty cubits:** Though the complete dimensions are not given, it is likely that the second temple was built on the foundation stones that were still in place

from the time of Solomon (see 1 Kin. 6:2). The **three rows of heavy stones and one row of new timber** describes the construction of the wall of the inner court (see 1 Kin. 6:36). The heavy stones that had aroused Tattenai’s suspicion (5:8) were expressly authorized.
6:6, 7 therefore: Based on the discovery of the decrees of Cyrus, King Darius issued an order of his own. He concluded that what the Jewish people were doing was legal and that the regional government should stop opposing them.
6:8–10 Moreover: King Darius endorsed Cyrus’ order and added his own decree. **taxes on the region beyond the River:** Not only could Tattenai not stop reconstruction of the temple, he also had to fund its completion.
6:11, 12 Also I issue a decree: To ensure obedience, Darius decreed that violation of his order would be punished by death. **Hanged** does not mean hanged by the neck from a rope. It refers to impaling the dead body of the condemned on a pole as a public display and a grim warning to others.

The Temple Completed and Dedicated

¹³Then Tattenai, governor of the region beyond the River, Shethar-Boznai, and their companions diligently did according to what King Darius had sent. ¹⁴^kSo the elders of the Jews built, and they prospered through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo. And they built and finished it, according to the commandment of the God of Israel, and according to the ⁵command of ^lCyrus, ^mDarius, and ⁿArtaxerxes king of Persia. ¹⁵Now the temple was finished on the third day of the month of Adar, which was in the sixth year of the reign of King Darius. ¹⁶Then the children of Israel, the priests and the Levites and the rest of the descendants of the captivity, celebrated ^othe dedication of this ⁶house of God with joy. ¹⁷And they ^poffered sacrifices at the dedication of this house of God, one hundred bulls, two hundred rams, four hundred lambs, and as a sin offering for all Israel twelve male goats, according to the number of the tribes of Israel. ¹⁸They assigned the priests to their ^qdivisions and the Levites to their ^rdivisions, over the service of God in Jerusalem, ^sas it is written in the Book of Moses.

¹⁴ ^k Ezra 5:1, 2
^l Ezra 1:1; 5:13; 6:3
^m Ezra 4:24; 6:12
ⁿ Ezra 7:1, 11; Neh. 2:1
⁵ decree
¹⁶ ^o 1 Kin. 8:63;
 2 Chr. 7:5 ⁶ Temple
¹⁷ ^p Ezra 8:35
¹⁸ ^q 1 Chr. 24:1;
 2 Chr. 35:5 ^r 1 Chr. 23:6
^s Num. 3:6; 8:9
¹⁹ ^r Ex. 12:6 ⁷ The Hebrew language resumes in Ezra 6:19 and continues through 7:11.

²⁰ ^u 2 Chr. 29:34;
 30:15 ^v 2 Chr. 35:11
²¹ ^w Ezra 9:11
⁸ uncleanness
²² ^x Ex. 12:15; 13:6;
 7; 2 Chr. 30:21; 35:17
^y Ezra 7:27; [Prov. 21:1]
^z 2 Kin. 23:29;
 2 Chr. 33:11; Ezra 1:1; 6:1

CHAPTER 7

1 ^a Neh. 2:1 ^b 1 Chr. 6:14
^c Jer. 52:24
^d 2 Chr. 35:8
⁶ ^e Ezra 7:11, 12, 21

The Passover Celebrated

¹⁹⁷And the descendants of the captivity kept the Passover ^ton the fourteenth

day of the first month. ²⁰For the priests and the Levites had ^upurified themselves; all of them were ^vritually clean. And they ^vslaughtered the Passover lambs for all the descendants of the captivity, for their brethren the priests, and for themselves. ²¹Then the children of Israel who had returned from the captivity ate together with all who had separated themselves from the ^wfilth⁸ of the nations of the land in order to seek the LORD God of Israel. ²²And they kept the ^xFeast of Unleavened Bread seven days with joy; for the LORD made them joyful, and ^yturned the heart ^zof the king of Assyria toward them, to strengthen their hands in the work of the house of God, the God of Israel.

The Arrival of Ezra

⁷Now after these things, in the reign of ^aArtaxerxes king of Persia, Ezra the ^bson of Seraiah, ^cthe son of Azariah, the son of ^dHilkiah, ²the son of Shallum, the son of Zadok, the son of Ahitub, ³the son of Amariah, the son of Azariah, the son of Meraioth, ⁴the son of Zeremiah, the son of Uzzi, the son of Bukki, ⁵the son of Abishua, the son of Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the chief priest—⁶this Ezra came up from Babylon; and he was ^ea skilled scribe in the Law of Moses, which the LORD God of Israel had given. The king granted him all

6:13 Tattenai **diligently** carried out the king's orders. There is no indication that Tattenai mistreated the Jews in any way.

6:14 and they prospered: God blessed the people because they listened to the prophets and the preaching of the Word of God. **Artaxerxes** (464–424 B.C.) did assist the rebuilding of the temple, although it was completed years before Artaxerxes came to power. Artaxerxes contributed to the welfare of the temple by issuing a decree regarding its maintenance (7:15, 21).

6:15 The temple was completed in 515 B.C. in **Adar**, the month of February–March.

6:16 celebrated . . . with joy: Some people have suggested that Ps. 145–148 was used to celebrate the completion of the rebuilding of the temple.

6:17 As was the case with the dedication of the first temple, this dedication was celebrated with an abundance of **sacrifices**. Although there were more than 200 times as many sheep and oxen offered in Solomon's dedication (see 1 Kin. 8:63), it should be noted there were more people—and more wealthy people—participating in Solomon's dedication.

6:18 The Law laid down the duties of the **priests** and **Levites** (see Num. 18). Later the **divisions** of priests and Levites were instituted by David.

6:19 This celebration of **the Passover** must have been exceptionally memorable; it was the first time since the captivity that the people were able to celebrate according to the Law—with sacrifices offered in the temple (v. 20).

6:20 **The priests and the Levites . . . purified themselves** so that they could perform the duties of their office. The Levites **slaughtered the Passover lambs** for themselves and others. Originally the Passover lamb was killed by the head of each household (see Ex. 12:6). In the days of Hezekiah, the Levites killed the Passover lambs for everyone who was not clean (see 2 Chr. 30:17). In the days

of Josiah, the Levites killed all of the Passover lambs for everyone (see 2 Chr. 35:10–14). Thus the observance of Passover was slightly modified over the years, though it was still observed on the original day (compare Ex. 12:6 with 6:19).

6:21 **The nations of the land** evidently refers to the people who had been transplanted into Palestine by the Assyrians (4:4). Those **who had separated themselves** were Israelites who had remained in the land during the captivity. The **filth** from which they separated themselves was the idolatry practiced by the pagans and perhaps their intermarriages with foreigners.

6:22 **The Feast of Unleavened Bread** immediately followed the Feast of Passover. **The king of Assyria** is a reference to Darius. Even though he was actually the king of Persia, Darius could be called the king of Assyria because he was the ruler of the former realm of Assyria. The title **God of Israel** was probably effective in helping the Jewish people recapture a sense of their true heritage and rekindle their true hope.

7:1–5 after these things: The events of ch. 6 took place during the reign of King Darius; more specifically the temple was completed and dedicated in 515 B.C. Chapter 7 jumps forward many years to the reign of **Artaxerxes** (464–424 B.C.), for Ezra returned around 458 B.C. Thus between chs. 6 and 7 there is a gap of approximately 60 years. During this period, the events of the Book of Esther took place. **Ezra**, the leader of the second return to Jerusalem, is introduced with a long genealogy, demonstrating that he was from a priestly family—the family of **Aaron**. **Seraiah** saw the fall of Jerusalem (see 2 Kin. 25:18), and his son Jehozadak went into exile (see 1 Chr. 6:15). The phrase **son of Seraiah** indicates Ezra's line of descent rather than the name of his father.

7:6 Ezra was not only from a priestly family, he was also a **skilled scribe**—one who copied and studied the Law. After the Exile, the office of scribe came into prominence, in some ways replacing the

his request,^f according to the hand of the LORD his God upon him. ^{7g}Some of the children of Israel, the priests, ^hthe Levites, the singers, the gatekeepers, and ⁱthe Nethinim came up to Jerusalem in the seventh year of King Artaxerxes. ⁸And Ezra came to Jerusalem in the fifth month, which *was* in the seventh year of the king. ⁹On the first *day* of the first month he began *his* journey from Babylon, and on the first *day* of the fifth month he came to Jerusalem, ^jaccording to the good hand of his God upon him. ¹⁰For Ezra had prepared his heart to ^kseek ^lthe Law of the LORD, and to do *it*, and to ^lteach statutes and ordinances in Israel.

The Letter of Artaxerxes to Ezra

¹¹This is a copy of the letter that King Artaxerxes gave Ezra the priest, the scribe, expert in the words of the commandments of the LORD, and of His statutes to Israel:

¹² ²Artaxerxes, ^mking of kings,

To Ezra the priest, a scribe of the Law of the God of heaven:

Perfect *peace*, ⁿand ³so forth.

6 ^f Ezra 7:9, 28; 8:22
7 ^g Ezra 8:1-14
^h Ezra 8:15 ⁱ Ezra 2:43; 8:20
9 ^j Ezra 7:6; Neh. 2:8, 18
10 ^k Ps. 119:45
^l Deut. 33:10; Ezra 7:6, 25; Neh. 8:1-8; [Mal. 2:7] ^l Study 12 ^m Ezek. 26:7; Dan. 2:37 ⁿ Ezra 4:10 ² The original language of Ezra 7:12-26 is Aramaic.
³ Lit. and now

14 ^o Esth. 1:14
⁴ from before
15 ^p 2 Chr. 6:2; Ezra 6:12; Ps. 135:21
16 ^q Ezra 8:25
^r 1 Chr. 29:6, 9
⁵ Temple
17 ^s Num. 15:4-13
^t Deut. 12:5-11

¹³I issue a decree that all those of the people of Israel and the priests and Levites in my realm, who volunteer to go up to Jerusalem, may go with you. ¹⁴And whereas you are being sent ^{4b}by the king and his ^oseven counselors to inquire concerning Judah and Jerusalem, with regard to the Law of your God which *is* in your hand; ¹⁵and *whereas you are* to carry the silver and gold which the king and his counselors have freely offered to the God of Israel, ^pwhose dwelling *is* in Jerusalem; ^{16q}and *whereas* all the silver and gold that you may find in all the province of Babylon, along with the freewill offering of the people and the priests, *are to be* ^rfreely offered for the ⁵house of their God in Jerusalem— ¹⁷now therefore, be careful to buy with this money bulls, rams, and lambs, with their ^sgrain offerings and their drink offerings, and ^toffer them on the altar of the house of your God in Jerusalem.

¹⁸ And whatever seems good to you and your brethren to do with the rest of the silver and the gold, do it according to the will of your God. ¹⁹Also the articles that are given to you for the

prophet in importance, and eventually eclipsing even the role of the priest. **The Law of Moses** actually refers to God’s law. Moses may have been the person most closely associated with the Law, but it was the Law that **the LORD God of Israel had given**. The latter is by far the more significant designation (see John 1:17). The phrase **according to the hand of the LORD his God upon him** is used repeatedly throughout this chapter and the next one (7:9, 28; 8:18, 22, 31; Neh. 2:8, 18). The phrase depicts God’s grace working on Ezra’s behalf.

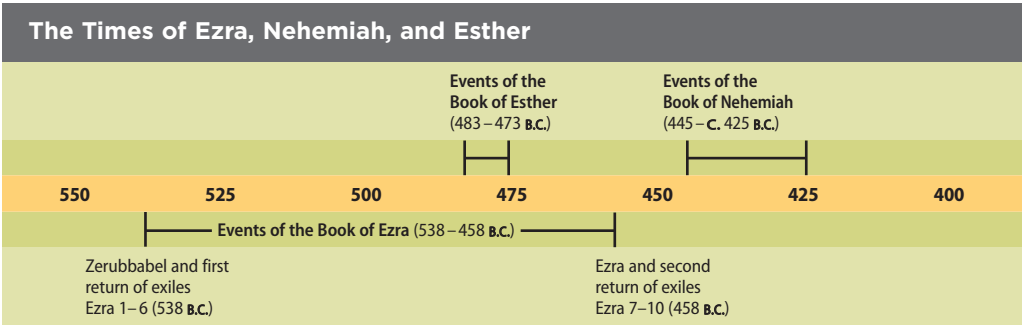
7:8, 9 The first month is March–April; the fifth month is July–August. The route traveled by Ezra was dangerous because a rebellion had broken out in Egypt and spring was the time when ancient armies began their campaigns.

7:10 Throughout his life, Ezra had concentrated fully on the study, practice, and communication of the Word of God. **Heart** indicates the whole of one’s being. Ezra diligently searched the Scriptures so that he could live by them and teach them to Israel. Because of this, the gracious hand of God empowered him (v. 9).

7:11 the priest, the scribe, expert: These words describe Ezra with exceptional praise. Ezra is referred to as “the scribe’s scribe” or the teacher of scribes.

7:12 Ancient Middle Eastern monarchs commonly took self-aggrandizing titles such as **king of kings** (see Ezek. 26:7; Dan. 2:37). The Persian kings were literally kings over many kings because the Persian Empire included many conquered kingdoms. **Perfect peace** describes a treaty relationship between the Persian emperor and the vassal state of Judah.

7:15, 16 Three sources of offerings for the temple are listed: (1) **the silver and gold of the king and his counselors**, (2) **the silver and gold of the people of Babylon**, and (3) **the freewill offering of the Jewish people** who remained in Babylon. Note that God accepts the gifts of those who do not know Him, as well as the gifts of those who know and serve Him in truth. The only gifts God rejects are those given by people who appear to know Him but whose hearts are far from Him (see Is. 1:10–15). The **dwelling of God in Jerusalem** is a reference to the temple.



service of the house of your God, deliver in full before the God of Jerusalem. ²⁰ And whatever more may be needed for the house of your God, which you may have occasion to provide, pay *for it* from the king's treasury.

²¹ And I, *even I*, Artaxerxes the king, issue a decree to all the treasurers who *are in the region* beyond the River, that whatever Ezra the priest, the scribe of the Law of the God of heaven, may require of you, let it be done diligently, ²² up to one hundred talents of silver, one hundred kors of wheat, one hundred baths of wine, one hundred baths of oil, and salt without prescribed limit. ²³ Whatever ⁶is commanded by the God of heaven, let it diligently be done for the ⁷house of the God of heaven. For why should there be wrath against the realm of the king and his sons?

²⁴ Also we inform you that it shall not be lawful to impose tax, tribute, or custom on any of the priests, Levites, singers, gatekeepers, Nethinim, or servants of this house of God. ²⁵ And you, Ezra, according to your God-given wisdom, ^aset magistrates and judges who may judge all the people who *are in the region* beyond the River, all such as know the laws of your God; and ^vteach those who do not know *them*. ²⁶ Whoever will not observe the law of your God and the law of the king, let judgment be executed speedily on him, whether *it be* death, or ⁸banishment, or confiscation of goods, or imprisonment.

^{27 w} Blessed ⁹be the LORD God of our fathers, ^xwho has put *such a thing* as this in the king's heart, to beautify the house of the LORD which *is in* Jerusalem, ²⁸ and ^yhas extended mercy to me before the

²³ ⁶ Lit. *is from the decree* ⁷ Temple
²⁵ ^u Ex. 18:21, 22; Deut. 16:18 ^v 2 Chr. 17:7; Ezra 7:10; [Mal. 2:7; Col. 1:28]
²⁶ ⁸ Lit. *rooting out*
²⁷ ^w 1 Chr. 29:10
^x Ezra 6:22; [Prov. 21:1] ^y The Hebrew language resumes in Ezra 7:27.
²⁸ ^v Ezra 9:9

² Ezra 5:5; 7:6, 9; 8:18

CHAPTER 8

² ^a 1 Chr. 3:22; Ezra 2:68
³ ^b Ezra 2:3
⁴ ^c Ezra 10:30
⁵ ¹ So with MT, Vg.; LXX the sons of Zatho, Shechaniah
¹⁰ ² So with MT, Vg.; LXX the sons of Banni, Shelomith
¹¹ ^d Ezra 10:28
¹² ³ Or the youngest son,
¹⁴ ⁴ Or Zakkur

king and his counselors, and before all the king's mighty princes.

So I was encouraged, as ^zthe hand of the LORD my God *was* upon me; and I gathered leading men of Israel to go up with me.

Heads of Families Who Returned with Ezra

8 These *are* the heads of their fathers' ⁸houses, and *this is* the genealogy of those who went up with me from Babylon, in the reign of King Artaxerxes: ²of the sons of Phinehas, Gershom; of the sons of Ithamar, Daniel; of the sons of David, ^aHattush; ³of the sons of Shecaniah, of the sons of ^bParosh, Zechariah; and registered with him *were* one hundred and fifty males; ⁴of the sons of ^cPahath-Moab, Eliehoenai the son of Zerariah, and with him two hundred males; ⁵of ¹the sons of Shechaniah, Ben-Jahaziel, and with him three hundred males; ⁶of the sons of Adin, Ebed the son of Jonathan, and with him fifty males; ⁷of the sons of Elam, Jeshaiiah the son of Athaliah, and with him seventy males; ⁸of the sons of Shephatiah, Zebadiah the son of Michael, and with him eighty males; ⁹of the sons of Joab, Obadiah the son of Jehiel, and with him two hundred and eighteen males; ¹⁰of ²the sons of Shelomith, Ben-Josiphiah, and with him one hundred and sixty males; ¹¹of the sons of ^dBebai, Zechariah the son of Bebai, and with him twenty-eight males; ¹²of the sons of Azgad, Johanan ³the son of Hakkatan, and with him one hundred and ten males; ¹³of the last sons of Adonikam, whose names *are* these—Eliphelet, Jeiel, and Shemaiah—and with them sixty males; ¹⁴also of the sons of Bigvai, Uthai and ⁴Zabbud, and with them seventy males.

Servants for the Temple

¹⁵Now I gathered them by the river that flows to Ahava, and we camped

7:20 And whatever more may be needed: Ezra had what amounted to a royal blank check.

7:21–23 The decree of Artaxerxes included an order to the provincial **treasurers** to allow Ezra to claim extra supplies from them. However, there were limits on the supplies. Ezra could take no more than one hundred talents of silver (nearly four tons), one hundred kors of wheat (about 625 bushels), and one hundred baths each of wine and oil (about 600 gallons each).

7:24 All temple officials were exempt from every form of **tax**. Artaxerxes, like Cyrus (1:2–4) and Darius (6:1–10) before him, wanted to win the goodwill and avoid the wrath of the gods that were worshipped throughout the empire.

7:25, 26 Ezra was given authority to set up a judicial system with the power to punish. Although the **magistrates and judges** had authority over only Jewish people, their authority extended beyond

Jerusalem to Syria, Phoenicia, and Palestine. Ezra later used his authority to punish sin in the community (10:8).

7:27, 28 To beautify the house of the LORD is a reference to the reestablishment of moral, spiritual, and religious life. **I was encouraged:** With renewed vigor, Ezra gathered **leading men of Israel** to return to Jerusalem with him.

8:1 These are the heads of their fathers' houses: The list of people who returned to Jerusalem recalls the list of the men for war at the time of the anticipated conquest of the land of Canaan (see Num. 1; 26).

8:2–14 In this list, 12 families are represented by their chiefs and the number of males in each family is given. The total number of the heads of families who accompanied Ezra back to Jerusalem was 1,496.

8:15 Ezra discovered that there were no **sons of Levi** among the

there three days. And I looked among the people and the priests, and found none of the ^esons of Levi there. ¹⁶Then I sent for Eliezer, Ariel, Shemaiah, Elnathan, Jarib, Elnathan, Nathan, Zechariah, and ^fMeshullam, leaders; also for Joarib and Elnathan, men of understanding. ¹⁷And I gave them a command for Iddo the chief man at the place Casiphia, and ⁵I told them what they should say ⁶to Iddo and his brethren the Nethinim at the place Casiphia—that they should bring us servants for the house of our God. ¹⁸Then, by the good hand of our God upon us, they ⁸brought us a man of understanding, of the sons of Mahli the son of Levi, the son of Israel, namely Sherebiah, with his sons and brothers, eighteen men; ¹⁹and ^hHashabiah, and with him Jeshaiiah of the sons of Merari, his brothers and their sons, twenty men; ²⁰also of the Nethinim, whom David and the leaders had appointed for the service of the Levites, two hundred and twenty Nethinim. All of them were designated by name.

Fasting and Prayer for Protection

²¹Then I ^jproclaimed a fast there at the river of Ahava, that we might ^khumble ourselves before our God, to seek from Him the ^lright way for us and our little ones and all our possessions. ²²For ^mI was ashamed to request of the king an escort of soldiers and horsemen to help us against the enemy on the road, because we had spoken to the king, saying, ⁿ“The hand of our God is upon all those for ^ogood who seek Him, but His power and His wrath ^pare against all those who ^qfor-sake Him.” ²³So we fasted and entreated

15 ^e Ezra 7:7; 8:2
16 ^f Ezra 10:15
17 ⁵ Lit. I put words in their mouths to say ⁶ So with Vg.; MT to Iddo his brother; LXX to their brethren
18 ⁹ 2 Chr. 30:22; Neh. 8:7
19 ^h Neh. 12:24
20 ⁱ Ezra 2:43; 7:7
21 ¹ 1 Sam. 7:6; 2 Chr. 20:3 ^k Lev. 16:29; 23:29; Is. 58:3, 5 ^l Ps. 5:8
22 ^m 1 Cor. 9:15
ⁿ Ezra 7:6, 9, 28
^o [Ps. 33:18, 19; 34:15, 22; Rom. 8:28] ^p [Ps. 34:16]
^q [2 Chr. 15:2]

23 ^r [1 Chr. 5:20]; 2 Chr. 33:13; Is. 19:22
25 ^s Ezra 7:15, 16
28 ^t Lev. 21:6-9; Deut. 33:8 ^u Lev. 22:2, 3; Num. 4:4, 15, 19, 20
^v consecrated
29 ^w Ezra 4:3
31 ^x Ezra 7:6, 9, 28
32 ^y Neh. 2:11

our God for this, and He ^ranswered our prayer.

Gifts for the Temple

²⁴And I separated twelve of the leaders of the priests—Sherebiah, Hashabiah, and ten of their brethren with them—²⁵and weighed out to them ^sthe silver, the gold, and the articles, the offering for the house of our God which the king and his counselors and his princes, and all Israel *who were* present, had offered. ²⁶I weighed into their hand six hundred and fifty talents of silver, silver articles *weighing* one hundred talents, one hundred talents of gold, ²⁷twenty gold basins *worth* a thousand drachmas, and two vessels of fine polished bronze, precious as gold. ²⁸And I said to them, “You are ^tholy ⁷ to the LORD; the articles are ^uholy also; and the silver and the gold *are* ^vholy also; and the silver and the gold *are* a freewill offering to the LORD God of your fathers. ²⁹Watch and keep *them* until you weigh *them* before the leaders of the priests and the Levites and ^wheads of the fathers’ houses of Israel in Jerusalem, *in* the chambers of the house of the LORD.” ³⁰So the priests and the Levites received the silver and the gold and the articles by weight, to bring *them* to Jerusalem to the house of our God.

The Return to Jerusalem

³¹Then we departed from the river of Ahava on the twelfth *day* of the first month, to go to Jerusalem. And ^wthe hand of our God was upon us, and He delivered us from the hand of the enemy and from ambush along the road. ³²So we ^xcame to Jerusalem, and stayed there three days.

returnees who accompanied him back to Jerusalem. Zerubbabel had faced a similar problem. Over four thousand priests returned with him to Jerusalem, but only 74 Levites were among the returnees (2:36–42).

8:17 The location and significance of **Casiphia** is uncertain. It has been suggested that this is Ctesipon on the Tigris River, near modern Baghdad. The Hebrew word for **the place**, a synonym for the holy place (see Deut. 12:5), may mean that there was a Jewish sanctuary or temple in Casiphia.

8:21 On the road to Jerusalem, the large Jewish caravan would have been an easy target for robbers. Knowing that the returnees needed the Lord’s help, Ezra **proclaimed a fast** as a symbol of their submission to God.

8:22 To persuade the king to let him return to Jerusalem, Ezra had told him about the **power** and **wrath** of God. So when Ezra received the king’s permission to return, he was **ashamed** to ask for an armed **escort**. Later Nehemiah would accept a military escort for his return to Jerusalem (see Neh. 2:7–9).

8:24–30 Before the returnees departed, Ezra entrusted the load of valuables to 12 people. Although v. 24 reads as though **Sherebiah**, **Hashabiah**, and their **brethren** were **priests**, v. 18 indicates that they were Levites. Verse 30 confirms that the treasure was entrusted to priests and Levites. Ezra followed the Law, which taught that the

priests were to handle the sacred objects and the Levites were to carry them (see Num. 3:8, 31, 45). **the silver, the gold, and the articles**: One talent was about 75 pounds (7:22). The 650 talents of silver weighed nearly 25 tons. The one hundred talents of gold weighed over three tons. These figures do not include the numerous other valuable objects of exquisite artistry.

8:31 According to 7:9, the returnees began their journey on the first day of the first month. According to v. 15, the returnees camped at the river for three days. Yet this verse speaks of the departure on **the twelfth day of the first month**. These time discrepancies may be explained as follows: The people began to assemble at the river on the first day of the first month. During the course of the first three days, Ezra discovered that there were no Levites among the travelers. During the next eight days, Ezra enlisted Levites (vv. 15–20), entreated the Lord (vv. 21–23), and entrusted the travelers’ considerable load to the priests and Levites (vv. 24–30). The returnees then departed from the river on the twelfth day. So from their point of view, the journey to Jerusalem began on the first day of the first month, when the people left their homes in Babylon. The group departed from the river on the twelfth day of the first month.

8:32 The returnees arrived in **Jerusalem** on the first day of the fifth month (7:9). The trip took about three and a half months (compare 7:9 with 8:31).

³³Now on the fourth day the silver and the gold and the articles were ^aweighed in the house of our God by the hand of Meremoth the son of Uriah the priest, and with him was Eleazar the son of Phinehas; with them were the Levites, ²Jozabad the son of Jeshua and Noadiah the son of Binnui, ³⁴with the number and weight of everything. All the weight was written down at that time.

³⁵The children of those who had been ^acarried away captive, who had come from the captivity, ^boffered burnt offerings to the God of Israel: twelve bulls for all Israel, ninety-six rams, seventy-seven lambs, and twelve male goats ^aas a sin offering. All *this was* a burnt offering to the LORD.

³⁶And they delivered the king's ^corders to the king's satraps and the governors *in the region* beyond ^dthe River. So they gave support to the people and the ^ehouse of God.

Intermarriage with Pagans

9 When these things were done, the leaders came to me, saying, "The people of Israel and the priests and the Levites have not ^aseparated themselves from the peoples of the lands, ^bwith respect to the abominations of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Periz-

³³ ^y Ezra 8:26, 30
² Neh. 11:16
³⁵ ^a Ezra 2:1 ^b Ezra 6:17
³⁶ ^c Ezra 7:21-24
^d The Euphrates
^e Temple

CHAPTER 9

¹ ^a Ezra 6:21;
 Neh. 9:2 ^b Deut.
 12:30, 31

² ^c Ex. 34:16;
 [Deut. 7:3]; Ezra
 10:2; Neh. 13:23
^d Ex. 22:31; [Deut.
 7:6] ^e [2 Cor. 6:14]
¹ ^a unfaithfulness
³ ^f Job 1:20 ^g Ps.
 143:4
⁴ ^h Ezra 10:3; Is.
 66:2 ⁱ Ex. 29:39
⁵ ^j Ex. 9:29
⁶ ^k Dan. 9:7, 8 ^l Ps.
 38:4 ^m 2 Chr. 28:9;
 [Ezra 9:13, 15]; Rev.
 18:5
⁷ ⁿ 2 Chr. 36:14-17;
 Ps. 106:6; Dan. 9:5, 6
^o Deut. 28:36; Neh.
 9:30 ^p Deut. 32:25
^q Dan. 9:7, 8 ^r Lit.
 shame of faces

zites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites. ²For they have ^ctaken some of their daughters *as wives* for themselves and their sons, so that the ^dholy seed is ^emixed with the peoples of *those* lands. Indeed, the hand of the leaders and rulers has been foremost in this ^ftrespass. ³So when I heard this thing, ¹I tore my garment and my robe, and plucked out some of the hair of my head and beard, and sat down ^gastonished. ⁴Then everyone who ^htrembled at the words of the God of Israel assembled to me, because of the transgression of those who had been carried away captive, and I sat astonished until the ⁱevening sacrifice.

⁵At the evening sacrifice I arose from my fasting; and having torn my garment and my robe, I fell on my knees and ^jspread out my hands to the LORD my God. ⁶And I said: "O my God, I am too ^kashamed and humiliated to lift up my face to You, my God; for ^lour iniquities have risen higher than *our* heads, and our guilt has ^mgrown up to the heavens. ⁷Since the days of our fathers to this day ⁿwe have been very guilty, and for our iniquities ^owe, our kings, *and* our priests have been delivered into the hand of the kings of the lands, to the ^psword, to captivity, to plunder, and to ^qhumiliation, ²

8:33, 34 After three days' rest, the returnees deposited their treasury in the temple (see Neh. 2:11). Four men—two priests and two Levites—counted and **weighed** everything. A **written** inventory was then put on file.

8:35 The **sin offering**, which consisted of **twelve male goats**, one for each tribe of Israel, was for the atonement for sins. The **burnt offerings** signified the surrender of the entire nation to the service of the Lord.

8:36 The **king's orders** were the authorization for Ezra to administer the Jewish law among the Jewish people of the province. Satraps, or "protectors of the realm," were highly placed individuals who ruled under the emperor in various regions of his empire (5:3).

9:1 When these things were done: These words seem to imply that **the leaders came** to Ezra immediately after the events of ch. 8. Actually, over four months passed between the events of ch. 8 and those of ch. 9. Ezra arrived on the first day of the fifth month (7:9) and he deposited the treasure in the temple on the fourth day of the fifth month (8:33). The assembly that took place soon after the leaders' report occurred on the twentieth day of the ninth month (10:9). The delivery of the royal orders to the regional governor (8:36) may have taken weeks or even months. It was after Ezra had delivered the decree and returned to Jerusalem that he received the report from the leaders. **The people . . . have not separated themselves from the peoples of the lands:** Both the leaders and the people of Israel had failed to remain separate from the Gentiles who lived in the land. The same kind of problem existed in Zerubbabel's day (6:21). **the abominations of the Canaanites:** The language here reflects that of the Law (see Gen. 15:16, 19–21; Deut. 18:9–12). The term *abominations* occurs often in the first five books of the Bible (see Deut. 17:1; 18:12; 22:5; 23:18) and in the Prophets (see Jer. 7:10; 44:22).

9:2 The Jewish returnees were marrying the pagan peoples of the land, a practice that the Law of Moses expressly prohibited (see Ex. 34:16; Deut. 7:3).

9:5 knees . . . hands: Physical postures of prayer are often described in the Bible. Kneeling is a sign of humble respect. Raising one's hands is a sign of openness to God and recognizing that all gifts are from the Lord's hand.

9:6 ashamed and humiliated: Ezra felt an overwhelming sense of shame. His prayer was one of confession. Though Ezra had not participated in this sin himself, he identified with the sins of the people.

9:7 Ezra further acknowledged that the people's sinful actions were part of their history. The whole nation—**kings and priests**, as well as the people—had sinned in the past, and they had suffered for it at **the hand of the kings of the lands**. This suffering had included **the sword**, loss of life; **captivity**, loss of freedom; **plunder**, loss of property; and **humiliation**, loss of honor.

remnant

(Heb. *sha'ar*) (9:8, 15) Strong's #7604

To be a *remnant* means "to remain" or "to be left over." A remnant is what survives after a catastrophe. In Ezra, the word frequently refers to those Israelites who survived the Exile and returned to resettle the Promised Land (9:8). The prophets use the word to speak not only of a group of Israelites who survived a particular calamity but to those Israelites who remained faithful to God (Amos 5:14, 15). The concept of the remnant is central to Isaiah, who prophesies that the Root of Jesse, the Messiah, would one day gather the remnant of Israel from all the nations, even attracting some Gentiles to Himself (Is. 11:10, 11, 16). The *remnant* therefore becomes a powerful OT theme of covenant faithfulness and salvation, for in sparing His people God maintained a nation through whom all the world would be blessed (Gen. 12:3).

as *it is* this day. ⁸And now for a little while grace has been *shown* from the LORD our God, to leave us a remnant to escape, and to give us a peg in His holy place, that our God may ⁷enlighten our eyes and give us a measure of revival in our bondage. ⁹For we *were* slaves. ¹⁰Yet our God did not forsake us in our bondage; but ¹¹He extended mercy to us in the sight of the kings of Persia, to revive us, to repair the house of our God, to rebuild its ruins, and to give us ¹²a wall in Judah and Jerusalem. ¹³And now, O our God, what shall we say after this? For we have forsaken Your commandments, ¹⁴which You commanded by Your servants the prophets, saying, ‘The land which you are entering to possess is an unclean land, with the ¹⁵uncleanness of the peoples of the lands, with their abominations which have filled it from one end to another with their impurity. ¹⁶Now therefore, ¹⁷do not give your daughters as wives for their sons, nor take their daughters to your sons; and ¹⁸never seek their peace or prosperity, that you may be strong and eat the good of the land, and ¹⁹leave it as an inheritance to your children forever.’ ²⁰And after all that has come upon us for our evil deeds and for our great guilt, since You our God ²¹have punished us less than our iniquities *deserve*, and have given us *such* deliverance as this, ²²should we ²³again break Your commandments, and ²⁴join in marriage with the people *committing* these abominations? Would You not be ²⁵angry with us until You had ²⁶consumed us, so that *there would be* no remnant or survivor? ²⁷O LORD God of Israel, ²⁸You *are* righteous, for we are left as a remnant, as *it is* this day. ²⁹Here we are before You, ³⁰in our guilt, though no one can stand before You because of this!”

Confession of Improper Marriages

10 Now ^awhile Ezra was praying, and while he was confessing,

⁸ ^r Ps. 34:5
⁹ ^s Neh. 9:36; Esth. 7:4 ^t Neh. 9:17; Ps. 136:23 ^u Ezra 7:28
^v Is. 5:2
¹¹ ^w Ezra 6:21
¹² ^x [Ex. 23:32; 34:15, 16; Deut. 7:3, 4]; Ezra 9:2 ^y Deut. 23:6 ^z [Prov. 13:22; 20:7]
¹³ ^a [Ps. 103:10]
¹⁴ ^b [John 5:14; 2 Pet. 2:20] ^c Neh. 13:23 ^d Deut. 9:8
¹⁵ ^e destroyed
¹⁶ ^f Neh. 9:33; Dan. 9:14 ^g [Rom. 3:19]
¹⁷ ^h 1 Cor. 15:17

CHAPTER 10

¹ ^a Dan. 9:4, 20

^b 2 Chr. 20:9 ^c Neh. 8:1-9
² ^d Ezra 10:10, 13, 14, 17, 18; Neh. 13:23-27 ^e *been unfaithful to*
³ ^f 2 Chr. 34:31
⁴ ^g Ezra 9:4 ^h Deut. 7:2, 3 ⁱ Deut. 24:1, 2
⁴ ^j 1 Chr. 28:10
⁵ ^k Ezra 10:12, 19; Neh. 5:12; 13:25
⁶ ^l Deut. 9:18
⁹ ^m 1 Sam. 12:18; Ezra 9:4; 10:3

weeping, and bowing down ^bbefore the house of God, a very large assembly of men, women, and children gathered to him from Israel; for the people wept very ^cbitterly. ²And Shechaniah the son of Jehiel, ^done of the sons of Elam, spoke up and said to Ezra, “We have ^etrespassed¹ against our God, and have taken pagan wives from the peoples of the land; yet now there is hope in Israel in spite of this. ³Now therefore, let us make ^fa covenant with our God to put away all these wives and those who have been born to them, according to the advice of my master and of those who ^gtremble at ^hthe commandment of our God; and let it be done according to the ⁱlaw. ⁴Arise, for *this* matter is your *responsibility*. We also are with you. ⁵Be of good courage, and do *it*.”

⁵Then Ezra arose, and made the leaders of the priests, the Levites, and all Israel ^jswear an oath that they would do according to this word. So they swore an oath. ⁶Then Ezra rose up from before the house of God, and went into the chamber of Jehohanan the son of Eliashib; and ^kwhen he came there, he ^late no bread and drank no water, for he mourned because of the guilt of those from the captivity.

⁷And they issued a proclamation throughout Judah and Jerusalem to all the descendants of the captivity, that they must gather at Jerusalem, ⁸and that whoever would not come within three days, according to the instructions of the leaders and elders, all his property would be confiscated, and he himself would be separated from the assembly of those from the captivity.

⁹So all the men of Judah and Benjamin gathered at Jerusalem within three days. ¹⁰It was the ninth month, on the twentieth of the month; and ¹¹all the people sat in the open square of the house of God, trembling because of *this* matter and because of heavy rain. ¹²Then Ezra the priest stood up and said to them,

9:8, 9 a peg in His holy place: This metaphor refers to a peg in the wall on which a utensil is hung (see Eccl. 12:11). God’s mercy had permitted the remnant to be fixed in the place God had chosen. **enlighten:** God had given the light of His will to those who were in the darkness of sin. **bondage:** The people were no longer slaves; they were free. **repair the house of our God:** The temple had been rebuilt. **wall:** The people had a wall of protection in the form of the king’s decree (7:12–26).

9:10–12 Ezra confessed the sins of the nation by referring to what **the prophets** had preached. The prophets (Moses is called a prophet in Deut. 18:15; 34:10; Hos. 12:13) prohibited intermarriage with Gentiles (see Deut. 7:1–3; 23:7; Mal. 2:10–16).

9:13–15 Ezra ended his prayer not by asking for forgiveness, but by declaring that God was **righteous** (see Deut. 32:4; Ps. 119:137; Zeph. 3:5). Israel was guilty and deserved whatever justice God gave them. God would have been just in consuming them, even to the point that there was **no remnant or survivor**.

10:1 Many people in Israel were concerned about the sin in their midst. So while Ezra wept, prayed, and confessed, these people **gathered** around him and **wept very bitterly**.

10:3 Making a **covenant** with God means binding oneself by an oath to God to do something. It was the most binding form of commitment a person could make.

10:4 Arise: Shechaniah (v. 2) reminded Ezra that it was his **responsibility** to teach Israel the law of God (7:25).

10:7, 8 within three days: This was a reasonable demand because Bethel (2:28), Lod (2:33), and Jericho (2:34) were some of the more distant Jewish cities, and they were all within three days’ journey. According to the Law, the money from the sale of **confiscated** property went into the temple treasury (see Lev. 27:28, 29, where *devoted* means “confiscated”).

10:9 The ninth month (Chislew; see Neh. 1:1) is November–December.

"You have ²transgressed and ³have taken pagan wives, adding to the guilt of Israel. ¹¹Now therefore, ^mmake confession to the LORD God of your fathers, and do His will; ⁿseparate yourselves from the peoples of the land, and from the pagan wives."

¹²Then all the assembly answered and said with a loud voice, "Yes! As you have said, so we must do. ¹³But *there* are many people; *it is* the season for heavy rain, and we are not able to stand outside. Nor *is this* the work of one or two days, for *there* are many of us who have transgressed in this matter. ¹⁴Please, let the leaders of our entire assembly stand; and let all those in our cities who have taken pagan wives come at appointed times, together with the elders and judges of their cities, until ^othe fierce wrath of our God is turned away from us in this matter." ¹⁵Only Jonathan the son of Asahel and Jahaziah the son of Tikvah opposed this, and ^pMeshullam and Shabbethai the Levite gave them support.

¹⁶Then the descendants of the captivity did so. And Ezra the priest, with certain ^qheads of the fathers' households, were set apart by the fathers' households, each of them by name; and they sat down on the first day of the tenth month to examine the matter. ¹⁷By the first day of the first month they finished *questioning* all the men who had taken pagan wives.

Pagan Wives Put Away

¹⁸And among the sons of the priests who had taken pagan wives *the following* were found of the sons of ^rJeshua the son of ^sJozadak, and his brothers: Maaseiah, Eliezer, Jarib, and Gedaliah. ¹⁹And they ^sgave their promise that they would put away their wives; and *being* ^tguilty, they *presented* a ram of the flock as their ^utrespass offering.

¹⁰ ²acted unfaithfully ³Heb. have caused to dwell or have brought back
¹¹ ^m[Lev. 26:40-42]; Josh. 7:19; [Prov. 28:13] ⁿEzra 10:3
¹⁴ ^o2 Kin. 23:26; 2 Chr. 28:11-13; 29:10; 30:8
¹⁵ ^pEzra 8:16; Neh. 3:4
¹⁶ ^qEzra 4:3
¹⁸ ^rEzra 5:2; Hag. 1:1, 12; 2:4; Zech. 3:1; 6:11
^sJehozadak, 1 Chr. 6:14
¹⁹ ^s2 Kin. 10:15
^tLev. 6:4, 6 ^uLev. 5:6, 15

²⁵ ^vEzra 2:3; 8:3; Neh. 7:8
²⁸ ^wEzra 8:11
²⁹ ^sOr Jeremoth
³⁰ ^xEzra 8:4
³⁵ ⁶Or Cheluhi or Cheluhu
³⁷ ⁷Or Jaasu
⁴³ ⁸Or Jaddu

²⁰Also of the sons of Immer: Hanani and Zebadiah; ²¹of the sons of Harim: Maaseiah, Elijah, Shemaiah, Jehiel, and Uziah; ²²of the sons of Pashhur: Elioenai, Maaseiah, Ishmael, Nethanel, Jozabad, and Elasah.

²³Also of the Levites: Jozabad, Shimei, Kelaiah (the same *is* Kelita), Pethahiah, Judah, and Eliezer.

²⁴Also of the singers: Eliashib; and of the gatekeepers: Shallum, Telem, and Uri.

²⁵And others of Israel: of the ^vsons of Parosh: Ramiah, Jeziel, Malchiah, Mijamin, Eleazar, Malchijah, and Benaiah; ²⁶of the sons of Elam: Mattaniah, Zechariah, Jehiel, Abdi, Jeremoth, and Eliah; ²⁷of the sons of Zattu: Elioenai, Eliashib, Mattaniah, Jeremoth, Zabad, and Aziza; ²⁸of the ^wsons of Bebai: Jehohanan, Hananiah, Zabbai, and Athlai; ²⁹of the sons of Bani: Meshullam, Malluch, Adaiah, Jashub, Sheal, and ⁵Ramoth; ³⁰of the ^xsons of Pahath-Moab: Adna, Chelal, Benaiah, Maaseiah, Mattaniah, Bezalel, Binnui, and Manasseh; ³¹of the sons of Harim: Eliezer, Ishijah, Malchijah, Shemaiah, Shimeon, ³²Benjamin, Malluch, and Shemariah; ³³of the sons of Hashum: Mattenai, Mattattah, Zabad, Eliphelet, Jeremai, Manasseh, and Shimei; ³⁴of the sons of Bani: Maadai, Amram, Uel, ³⁵Benaiah, Bedeiah, ⁶Cheluh, ³⁶Vaniah, Meremoth, Eliashib, ³⁷Mattaniah, Mattenai, ⁷Jaasai, ³⁸Bani, Binnui, Shimei, ³⁹Shelemiah, Nathan, Adaiah, ⁴⁰Machnadebai, Shashai, Sharai, ⁴¹Azarel, Shelemiah, Shemariah, ⁴²Shallum, Amariah, and Joseph; ⁴³of the sons of Nebo: Jeiel, Mattithiah, Zabad, Zebina, ⁸Jaddai, Joel, and Benaiah.

⁴⁴All these had taken pagan wives, and some of them had wives *by whom* they had children.

10:13, 14 The people faced two problems: (1) There were too many of them for the investigation to be done in a day or even two days. (2) The weather would not permit them to stay in Jerusalem. The people who had traveled from a distance could not stay in the city, living and sleeping in the open air, during the cold, rainy period. Therefore they requested that the investigation be organized by their officials.

10:15 Two men, with the support of two Levites, opposed Ezra's plan. The reasons for their opposition are not given. Apparently their objections had no effect (vv. 16–18). **Meshullam** is likely the same man who was part of the group of learned teachers that Ezra had recruited (8:16); however, he is not the same man who is mentioned among the repentant offenders in v. 29.

10:18–44 The list of those who had taken pagan wives included 113 men: 17 priests, 10 Levites, and 86 others.

10:19 They gave their promise may also be translated "they gave their hand." The symbol of raising a hand to take an oath is still practiced in many cultures. With this sign, the Israelites agreed to put away their unlawful wives and offer a sacrifice according to the requirements of Lev. 5:14–19. Although this promise and sacrifice are mentioned only in connection with the priests, it is likely that everyone on the list fulfilled these requirements.

10:25–44 Others of Israel refers to the people, as opposed to the leaders.

10:44 Even though some had had children with their pagan wives, they still separated themselves from them.

THE BOOK OF

NEHEMIAH



TIMES OF TRIAL require godly leadership. This book is principally the story of such gifted leadership in the person of Nehemiah. Facing criticism and opposition, Nehemiah resolutely led the small Israelite community as they rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem for its physical protection. But he also did not hesitate to guide the Israelites spiritually. By demanding that the Israelites obey God's law, Nehemiah pursued their spiritual as well as their physical welfare.

Author Many readers naturally conclude that the book was written by Nehemiah because of the words of the first verse, "The words of Nehemiah the son of Hachaliah." In fact, it is widely believed that Nehemiah originated the following passages: 1:1—7:5; 12:27–43; 13:4–31. But there are two different views about the authorship of the rest of Nehemiah. Some believe that Nehemiah wrote the whole book, relying on his own memories. Others believe that Ezra wrote the book, using Nehemiah's memoirs, for the passages listed above. As evidence for the second view, it is noted that Neh. 7:5–73 and Ezra 2:1–70 are almost identical.

The similarities of Nehemiah and Ezra can be explained partly by the fact that they are only one book in the Hebrew Bible (see the Introduction for Ezra). In fact, many scholars argue that Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah were compiled by the same person. All these books exhibit similar themes, such as a focus on the Levites, the temple, and extensive lists. With such priestly interests, the one who masterminded this long document may well have been a priest—like Ezra (see the Introduction to 1 Chronicles).

Historical Background The historical setting of Nehemiah is the setting of the second half of the Hebrew book of Ezra–Nehemiah (458–420 B.C.). During this period, the Persian Emperor Artaxerxes I Longimanus allowed the Jews to return to their land and rebuild Jerusalem.

At that time Nehemiah occupied a prominent position in the emperor's court: He was the trusted cupbearer of Artaxerxes I. In Artaxerxes's twentieth year on the throne (444 B.C.), he allowed Nehemiah to go to Jerusalem and rebuild its walls. Nehemiah stayed in Jerusalem for 12 years and then returned to Persia in Artaxerxes's thirty-second year (432 B.C.). Around 425 B.C., Nehemiah left Persia and returned to Jerusalem for the last time (13:6). Nehemiah's memoirs could not have been completed until after his second visit to Jerusalem. Thus the earliest that the Book of Nehemiah could have been completed would be around 425 B.C.

The Order of Ezra and Nehemiah There has been considerable discussion of the question of the order of the returns of Ezra and Nehemiah to Jerusalem. The Bible clearly presents the return of Ezra as preceding that of Nehemiah: Ezra returned in the seventh year of the reign of Artaxerxes (Ezra 7:8) while Nehemiah returned in the twentieth year (2:1). However, based on the way the revival of Ezra appears in the middle of the story of Nehemiah (chs. 8–10), many have argued that Nehemiah returned before Ezra.

The arguments for reversing Ezra and Nehemiah in this way are generally not convincing. Nevertheless, the inclusion of part of the Ezra story in the middle of the Nehemiah memoirs still needs explanation. It could be that Nehemiah's rebuilding the walls of the city was only part of the reconstruction needed among God's people. Even more necessary was the reinstitution of the Law. Certainly Ezra had used the Law previously in his dealings with the people, but at this time the great priest and scribe Ezra partnered with Nehemiah in order to

thoroughly teach the people God's law (8:9). Apparently, the compiler of Nehemiah wanted to show that the wall of the city would mean nothing without the wall of the Law surrounding the people.

Purpose In His covenant with Israel, God had spoken of a place where He would establish His name. In fact, Moses had told the Israelites to “seek the place where the LORD your God chooses, out of all your tribes, to put His name for His dwelling place” (Deut. 12:5). Later, it was revealed that this place was Jerusalem. When the temple was built during Solomon's reign, Jerusalem was at the height of its glory. Its fame helped to spread the glory of God's name throughout the nations. But God allowed Jerusalem to be destroyed because of the faithlessness of the Israelites. Even though Jerusalem lay in ruins during Nehemiah's time, it was still God's purpose to establish His name there.

The Book of Nehemiah records the restoration of Jerusalem under the leadership of Nehemiah. In the book, the returning Jews showed spiritual lethargy and a coldhearted indifference toward God. This problem continued, for the Book of Malachi denounces the Israelites for the same attitudes. It took a determined, godly leader like Nehemiah to motivate this group to act on God's promises and rebuild Jerusalem's walls.

However, the completion of Jerusalem's walls is only half the story of Nehemiah. The walls are rebuilt by chapter 6, but the book has seven more chapters. These last chapters record a revival and describe the repopulation of the city. The subject of the book is not merely the rebuilding of the walls, but the complete restoration of the people of Jerusalem.

The Book of Nehemiah makes it clear that God did not restore His people only one time; rather, He repeatedly, constantly, and continually restored His people. He sent a number of prophets and leaders to teach, motivate, and guide the people into righteousness. Zerubbabel led a group of exiles to Jerusalem and began to rebuild the temple (see Ezra 1–6). Then Ezra led a second group of exiles back to Jerusalem and helped restore the people to obedience to the Mosaic law (see Ezra 7–10). Then Nehemiah returned and motivated the people to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem (chs. 1–6). Finally, Nehemiah returned a second time and exhorted the people to adhere closely to God's law (ch. 13). The pattern is clear: God continually restored His people. In spite of their unfaithfulness, God accomplished His will. The restored walls of Jerusalem, the repopulation of Jerusalem, and the repeated reformation of the Israelites were clearly God's work. In the end, His name would be glorified.

586 B.C.
The Babylonians
take Judah captive

539 B.C.
Cyrus of Persia
conquers Babylon

538 B.C.
The return of the
Jews to Judea
begins

536–515 B.C.
The temple is
rebuilt

464–424 B.C.
Artaxerxes
Longimanus
reigns in Persia

458 B.C.
Ezra leads a group
of returnees

444 B.C.
Nehemiah leads a
group of returnees

c. 443 B.C.
Jerusalem's wall is
reconstructed

Achaemenid Tombs at Naqsh-e Rostam, Iran, from left to right: Darius I, Xerxes I, Artaxerxes I. Nehemiah was the cupbearer for Artaxerxes and was sent by him to Jerusalem to help rebuild the city walls (Neh. 2).

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CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

Like Jesus, Nehemiah gives up a high position in order to identify with the plight of his people. Like Jesus, he comes with a specific mission and accomplishes it. And like Jesus, Nehemiah's life is punctuated by his prayerful dependence on God (1:5; Luke 6:12). His purpose is not just to get the Jews back to Jerusalem; his ultimate goal is restoration! The temple is rebuilt. The city walls are repaired. Jerusalem is reconstructed. The covenant is renewed. The people are reformed. According to the apostle Paul, Jesus came into our world for exactly the same reasons: reconciliation and renewal (2 Cor. 5:18, 19).

NEHEMIAH OUTLINE

- I. The rebuilding of Jerusalem's walls 1:1—6:19
 - A. The prayer of Nehemiah concerning Jerusalem 1:1–11
 - B. The planning of Nehemiah concerning Jerusalem 2:1–20
 - C. The work of Nehemiah in rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem 3:1–32
 - D. Opposition to the rebuilding of the walls 4:1–23
 - E. The conflict of the Jewish people within Jerusalem 5:1–19
 - F. Renewed opposition to rebuilding of the walls 6:1–19
- II. The restoration of the Jewish community in Jerusalem 7:1—13:31
 - A. The registry of the people 7:1–73
 - B. Revival under Ezra 8:1—10:39
 - C. The repopulation of Jerusalem 11:1—12:26
 - D. The dedication of Jerusalem's walls 12:27–47
 - E. The restoration of the people 13:1–31

Nehemiah Prays for His People

The words of ^aNehemiah the son of Hachaliah.

It came to pass in the month of Chislev, ⁱⁿ the ^btwentieth year, as I was in ^cShushan ¹ the ²citadel, ²that ^dHanani one of my brethren came with men from Judah; and I asked them concerning the Jews who had escaped, who had survived the captivity, and concerning Jerusalem. ³And they said to me, “The survivors who are left from the captivity in the ^eprovince *are* there in great distress and ^freproach. ^gThe wall of Jerusalem ^his also broken down, and its gates are burned with fire.”

⁴So it was, when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept, and mourned *for many days*; I was fasting and praying before the God of heaven.

⁵And I said: “I pray, ⁱLORD God of heaven, O great and ^jawesome God, ^kYou

CHAPTER 1

¹ ^a Neh. 10:1 ^b Neh. 2:1 ^c Esth. 1:1, 2, 5; Dan. 8:2 ¹ Or *Susa* ² Or *fortified palace*, and so elsewhere in the book ² ^d Neh. 7:2 ³ ^e Neh. 7:6 ^f Neh. 2:17 ^g Neh. 2:17 ^h 2 Kin. 25:10 ⁵ ⁱ Dan. 9:4 ^j Neh. 4:14 ^k [Ex. 20:6; 34:6, 7]; Ps. 89:2, 3

³ Lit. *Him* ⁴ Lit. *His* ⁶ ¹ Kin. 8:28, 29; 2 Chr. 6:40; Dan. 9:17, 18 ^m Ezra 10:1; Neh. 9:2; Dan. 9:20 ⁷ ⁿ Ps. 106:6; Dan. 9:5 ^o Deut. 28:15 ⁸ ^p Lev. 26:33; Deut. 4:25-27; 28:63-67 ⁵ *act treacherously* ⁹ ^q Lev. 26:39; [Deut. 4:29-31; 30:2-5] ^r Deut. 30:4

who keep *Your* covenant and mercy with those who love ³You and observe ⁴Your commandments, ⁶please let Your ear be attentive and ^lYour eyes open, that You may hear the prayer of Your servant which I pray before You now, day and night, for the children of Israel Your servants, and ^mconfess the sins of the children of Israel which we have sinned against You. Both my father's house and I have sinned. ⁷ⁿWe have acted very corruptly against You, and have ^onot kept the commandments, the statutes, nor the ordinances which You commanded Your servant Moses. ⁸Remember, I pray, the word that You commanded Your servant Moses, saying, ^p*If you* ⁵are unfaithful, I will scatter you among the nations; ⁹^qbut if you return to Me, and keep My commandments and do them, ^rthough some of you were cast out to the farthest part of the heavens, *yet* I will gather them

1:1 Nehemiah, whose name means “The Lord Comforts,” was a highly placed statesman associated with Ezra in the work of reestablishing the people of Judah in the Promised Land. **The month of Chislev** corresponds to our November–December (see Ezra 10:9). **The twentieth year** refers to the twentieth year of the rule of Artaxerxes I Longimanus (464–424 B.C.)—that is, 444 B.C. Artaxerxes was the same Persian king who had commissioned Ezra to return to Jerusalem (see Ezra 7:1). **Shushan the citadel** was about 150 miles north of the Persian Gulf, in present-day Iran. The citadel, or the fortified royal palace, was built on an acropolis. The city served as a winter residence for the monarchs of Persia. Shushan is also notable in biblical history as the place where Daniel received his vision of the rams and goats (see Dan. 8:2), and as the home of Mordecai and Esther (see Esth. 1:2).

1:2 Nehemiah's brother **Hanani** (7:2) had visited Jerusalem and returned to Shushan. This journey, which covered nearly a thousand miles one way, would probably have taken at least four months. It had taken Ezra and his caravan four months to make a similar round trip from Babylon to Jerusalem (see Ezra 7:9). Nehemiah was concerned about the Jewish people and Jerusalem.

1:3 Life was difficult for the people in Jerusalem. This difficulty was due in large part to the condition of Jerusalem's **wall**. In the ancient Middle East, a city wall provided protection for the inhabitants. The condition of a city wall was also seen as an indication of the strength of the people's gods. The ruined condition of the wall of Jerusalem reflected badly on God's name.

1:4 wept . . . mourned: Nehemiah was deeply disturbed. Without a wall, Jerusalem was vulnerable to attack. The riches of the temple treasury (see Ezra 8:15–36) would have been quite a temptation for Israel's enemies. **God of heaven:** This title for God is used frequently in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah.

1:5 LORD: Nehemiah called on God by using His covenant name (see Ex. 6:2–9). Nehemiah's use of this title is similar to our use of the phrase “in Jesus' name” in our prayers. **God of heaven:** Nehemiah acknowledged God's government of the world, including His sovereignty over the pagan king who was over Nehemiah, the Jewish people, and the city of Jerusalem. **covenant and mercy:** By using these two words together, Nehemiah was holding God to His promises. The Lord had staked His character on His loyalty to His covenant with His people. According to the terms of the Mosaic covenant (see Deut. 28; 29), God made His covenant blessings available to those who kept His commandments.

1:6 let Your ear be attentive and Your eyes open: Nehemiah asked God to look at him and listen to him as he prayed. These words were designed to encourage the one praying, for God does not turn His ears from or close His eyes to His people (see Ex. 2:23–25). **the**

children of Israel: By using this ancient name for the Jewish people, Nehemiah indicated the continuity of the Jewish people of his day with the Israelites of the past: Nehemiah then confessed the sins of his father's house as well as his own. His confession was national, communal, and personal. His own sin was part of the whole.

1:7 Israel had sinned against the Lord and against His **commandments**. By using the word **we**, Nehemiah included himself among the sinful people. **commandments . . . statutes . . . ordinances:** These words describe the totality of God's law (9:13, 14).

1:8 Remember: After confessing his sin and the sin of the people, Nehemiah reminded God of what He Himself had said. **I will scatter you among the nations:** This is an allusion to God's covenant in Lev. 26:27–45 and Deut. 30:1–5. Nehemiah himself was born in Persia, a distant nation, because of God's fulfillment of this promise.

1:9 The Lord had promised that if the nation of Israel would **return** to Him in obedience, He would gather them to their land. Nehemiah addressed the Lord as a covenant-keeping God. He confessed his and the people's sin because the Law demanded confession (see Lev. 16:21). Then he held God to His covenant to return Israel to the land. **bring them to the place which I have chosen as a dwelling for My name:** The ultimate intent of God's covenant was not just to return the people, but to return them to the place where God had established His name. For that to be accomplished, much needed to be done. So while it was true that some people had returned to the land and that the temple had been rebuilt, the fact remained that Jerusalem's wall was in ruins and the people

confess

(Heb. *yadah*) (1:6; Lev. 5:5; Num. 5:7; Ps. 92:1; 106:47) Strong's #3034

This Hebrew verb conveys two distinct meanings. The first is related to the offering of thanksgiving or praise to God (2 Chr. 5:13; Ps. 92:1; 106:47). The second is that of confession, such as the confession of God's greatness (1 Kin. 8:33, 35) and the confession of sin before God (1:6; 9:2; Dan. 9:4). The basic meaning of the word *yadah* is “to throw” or “to cast off.” In one sense, confession is the “casting off” of sin by acknowledging our transgressions of God's commandments for holy living (Ps. 32:5; Prov. 28:13). In another sense, confession of sin is thanksgiving because it recognizes that forgiveness of sin is accomplished only by the grace and goodness of God (2 Chr. 30:22; Dan. 9:4).

from there, and bring them to the place which I have chosen as a dwelling for My name.¹⁰ Now these are Your servants and Your people, whom You have redeemed by Your great power, and by Your strong hand.¹¹ O Lord, I pray, please let Your ear be attentive to the prayer of Your servant, and to the prayer of Your servants who desire to fear Your name; and let Your servant prosper this day, I pray, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man.”

For I was the king’s cupbearer.

Nehemiah Sent to Judah

2 And it came to pass in the month of Nisan, in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, when wine was before him, that I took the wine and gave it to the king. Now I had never been sad in his presence before. 2 Therefore the king said to me, “Why is your face sad, since you are not sick? This is nothing but sorrow of heart.”

So I became dreadfully afraid, 3 and said to the king, “May the king live forever! Why should my face not be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers’ tombs, lies waste, and its gates are burned with fire?”

10 Ex. 32:11; Deut. 9:29; Dan. 9:15
11 Neh. 1:6 vs. 26:8; [Heb. 13:18] v Gen. 40:21; Neh. 2:1

CHAPTER 2

1 Ezra 7:1 Neh. 1:11 Artaxerxes Longimanus
2 c Prov. 15:13 2 Lit. very much
3 d 1 Kin. 1:31; Dan. 2:4; 5:10; 6:6, 21
e 2 Kin. 25:8-10; 2 Chr. 36:19; Jer. 52:12-14 f 2 Kin. 24:10; Neh. 1:3

4 g Neh. 1:4
6 h Neh. 5:14; 13:6
7 i Ezra 7:21; 8:36
3 The Euphrates
8 j Neh. 3:7 k Ezra 5:5; 7:6, 9, 28; Neh. 2:18 l palace m Lit. house

4 Then the king said to me, “What do you request?”

So I prayed to the God of heaven. 5 And I said to the king, “If it pleases the king, and if your servant has found favor in your sight, I ask that you send me to Judah, to the city of my fathers’ tombs, that I may rebuild it.”

6 Then the king said to me (the queen also sitting beside him), “How long will your journey be? And when will you return?” So it pleased the king to send me; and I set him a time.

7 Furthermore I said to the king, “If it pleases the king, let letters be given to me for the governors of the region beyond the River, that they must permit me to pass through till I come to Judah, 8 and a letter to Asaph the keeper of the king’s forest, that he must give me timber to make beams for the gates of the citadel which pertains to the temple, for the city wall, and for the house that I will occupy.” And the king granted them to me according to the good hand of my God upon me.

9 Then I went to the governors in the region beyond the River, and gave them the king’s letters. Now the king had sent captains of the army and horsemen with

were under reproach (5:9). In that sense, Jerusalem had not yet been restored.

1:10 Your servants and Your people: By using this phrasing, Nehemiah was suggesting to the Lord that the time was right, the people were right, and the task was right to restore Jerusalem. **Your strong hand** is one of the phrases associated with God’s deliverance of Israel from Egypt (see Ex. 6:1; 13:14; 15:6; Deut. 6:21).

1:11 Your servant . . . Your servants: Nehemiah and the godly people of Israel shared common concerns before God. **let Your servant prosper:** Nehemiah requested permission to return to Jerusalem, rebuild the wall, and restore the community. He enjoyed the comfort and convenience of a royal palace and a position of honor and responsibility. There were many compelling reasons for him to stay where he was, but he asked for permission to do God’s work. **As the king’s cupbearer,** Nehemiah held an honored position. His constant proximity to the king of Persia made him privy to the state secrets and personal affairs of the king.

2:1 Nisan corresponds to March–April. **sad in his presence:** Four months after hearing the report from his brother concerning Jerusalem, Nehemiah was still grieving over the conditions in Jerusalem.

2:2 The king noticed Nehemiah’s sad expression and concluded that it was caused by **sorrow of heart** rather than physical illness.

I became dreadfully afraid: Persian monarchs believed that just being in their presence would make any person happy. Yet, Nehemiah was about to request the emperor’s permission to go to Jerusalem, suggesting that he would rather be somewhere other than in the emperor’s presence. On top of that, it was Artaxerxes himself who had ordered the work on the wall to be stopped (see Ezra 4:21–23). Nehemiah had reason to be afraid.

2:3 live forever: Addressing the king with proper respect, Nehemiah related the burden of his heart. **the place of my fathers’ tombs:** It is possible that this phrase was designed to catch the king’s attention. In many Asian cultures, a connection with the burial places of one’s ancestors was a matter of great importance.

2:4 I prayed: Even though Nehemiah had come into the presence of the king, he had never left the presence of the true King of kings.

2:5 After his silent prayer (v. 4), Nehemiah spoke boldly, asking

for permission to leave the king’s palace to travel to Jerusalem to rebuild the wall. Again Nehemiah spoke of his **fathers’ tombs** (v. 3). Though this was not his principal concern, it must have been something he thought would be important to the king.

2:6 How long will your journey be . . . when will you return: In responding to Nehemiah’s request (v. 5), the king might have had Nehemiah executed on the spot; or he might have dismissed Nehemiah with a laugh. However, his questions implied that the request was already granted. **I set him a time:** The fact that Nehemiah responded quickly to the king’s request for specific details indicates that he had been planning the trip. **it pleased the king to send me:** The king not only sent Nehemiah to Jerusalem, he made him governor (5:14). With the possibility of unrest in Egypt and in Cyprus, the king might have decided that Jerusalem needed a wall after all (see Ezra 4:21).

2:7 Nehemiah knew that he needed safe passage for his journey to Judah, so he requested letters from the king to show to the governors of the region beyond the Euphrates River.

2:8 Nehemiah’s plans were detailed. He asked the king for permission to go to Jerusalem (v. 5), for letters to ensure safe passage (v. 7), and also for provisions. Nehemiah requested a letter addressed to Asaph, the man in charge of the king’s forest, to enable him to obtain supplies of lumber for three projects: (1) the gates of the citadel, (2) the city wall, and (3) his personal house. Jerusalem had plenty of limestone for building projects. But timber, necessary for making roofs and other parts of large building projects, was scarce. The citadel was a fortress situated just northwest of the temple. It overlooked and protected the temple area. **according to the good hand of my God:** The king graciously granted Nehemiah all that he had requested, but Nehemiah knew that the ultimate source of his provisions was God.

2:9 captains of the army and horsemen: Nehemiah had a military escort to Jerusalem. In 458 B.C. Ezra had journeyed to Jerusalem with 1,800 people carrying valuable treasures, and had refused a military escort (see Ezra 8:22). Fourteen years later, Nehemiah made the same trip with a smaller company and no valuables, but the king sent an escort with him.



Sanballat

The name *Sanballat* means “the god Sin has given life.” A leading opponent of the Jews after their return from the captivity, he tried to hinder Nehemiah in his work of rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem. Sanballat’s designation as “the Horonite” probably indicates the town of his origin, possibly Horonaim of Moab (Is. 15:5; Jer. 48:3, 5, 34) or Beth Horon in Ephraim near Jerusalem (2 Chr. 8:5). In papyri found at the Jewish settlement in Elephantine, Egypt, Sanballat is called the governor of Samaria. His daughter married “one of the sons of Joiada, the son of Eliashib the high priest” (Neh. 13:28). Nehemiah viewed such a “mixed marriage” as a defilement of the priesthood, so he drove Joiada away. Sanballat’s opposition to Nehemiah’s work may have stemmed from jealousy; he may have felt that his authority was threatened by the reawakening of the land of Judah.

Elephantine Papyrus: A letter to Bagohi about the rebuilding of the Jewish temple in Elephantine mentions the name of Sanballat.

Kim Walton, courtesy of the Neues Museum, Berlin



me. ¹⁰When ¹Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite ⁶official heard of it, they were deeply disturbed that a man had come to seek the well-being of the children of Israel.

Nehemiah Views the Wall of Jerusalem

¹¹So I ^mcame to Jerusalem and was there three days. ¹²Then I arose in the night, I and a few men with me; I told no one what my God had put in my heart to do at Jerusalem; nor was there any animal with me, except the one on which I rode. ¹³And I went out by night ⁿthrough the Valley Gate to the Serpent Well and the ⁷Refuse Gate, and ⁸viewed the walls of Jerusalem which were ^obroken down and its gates which were burned with fire. ¹⁴Then I went on to the ^pFountain Gate and to the ^qKing’s Pool, but *there* was no room for the animal under me

¹⁰ ^r2 Neh. 2:19; 4:1

⁶ Lit. servant

¹¹ ^m Ezra 8:32

¹³ ⁿ 2 Chr. 26:9;

Neh. 3:13 ^o Neh.

1:3; 2:17 ⁷ *Dung*

⁸ examined

¹⁴ ^p Neh. 3:15

^q 2 Kin. 20:20

¹⁵ ^r 2 Sam. 15:23;
Jer. 31:40 ⁹ *torrent*

valley, wadi

¹ examined

¹⁷ ^s Neh. 1:3; Ps.

44:13; 79:4; Jer.

24:9; Ezek. 5:14, 15;

22:4 ² *desolate*

¹⁸ ^t Neh. 2:8

^u 2 Sam. 2:7 ³ Lit.

strengthened

to pass. ¹⁵So I went up in the night by the ^rvalley,⁹ and ¹viewed the wall; then I turned back and entered by the Valley Gate, and so returned. ¹⁶And the officials did not know where I had gone or what I had done; I had not yet told the Jews, the priests, the nobles, the officials, or the others who did the work.

¹⁷Then I said to them, “You see the distress that *we are* in, how Jerusalem *lies* ²waste, and its gates are burned with fire. Come and let us build the wall of Jerusalem, that we may no longer be ^sa reproach.” ¹⁸And I told them of ^tthe hand of my God which had been good upon me, and also of the king’s words that he had spoken to me.

So they said, “Let us rise up and build.” Then they ^uset³ their hands to *this* good work.

¹⁹But when Sanballat the Horonite,

2:10 Sanballat was the governor of Samaria. **Horonite** refers to Sanballat’s city Beth-Horon. **Tobiah** was probably Sanballat’s secretary and confidential advisor. **Ammonite**: At the time of Nehemiah, the Ammonites (see Gen. 19:38) had pushed west into the land vacated by Judah. The prospect of a strong Jewish community in newly fortified Jerusalem would have seemed threatening to the Ammonite power.

2:12–15 Since Nehemiah had arrived in Jerusalem from the north, he would have seen that side of the wall as he approached the city. If he lived in the southwestern part of the city, he would have had ample time for viewing the western wall. Nehemiah seems to have been concerned with inspecting the southern and eastern walls of Jerusalem. With a few servants, he passed through **the Valley Gate** into the Valley of Hinnom. He then traveled along the south wall. When the piles of stone and heaps of rubble obstructed his passage, he dismounted his animal and continued on foot up the Kidron valley in order to view the eastern wall.

2:16 the officials did not know: The only people who knew Nehemiah’s plans were the few men who had made the secret night ride with him (v. 12).

2:17 we: Nehemiah encouraged all of the people to assist in rebuilding the city’s walls.

2:18 Nehemiah emphasized that it was not just *his* idea to rebuild the wall of Jerusalem. Rather, the idea had come to him from the Lord (vv. 8, 12). In response to Nehemiah’s challenge, the people replied, **Let us rise up and build**.

2:19 In v. 10, Nehemiah here mentioned two men who were unhappy about his coming—Sanballat and Tobiah. Here the opposition grows to three. **Geshem** was the leader of a company of Arab troops maintained by Sanballat. In v. 10, Nehemiah’s opponents were grieved; here **they laughed**. They accused Nehemiah of false motives, of plotting rebellion against the king. The same charge had been directed against the Jewish people in Zerubbabel’s time (see Ezra 4).

Tobiah the Ammonite official, and Geshem the Arab heard of it, they laughed at us and despised us, and said, “What is this thing that you are doing? ^vWill you rebel against the king?”

²⁰ So I answered them, and said to them, “The God of heaven Himself will prosper us; therefore we His servants will arise and build, ^wbut you have no heritage or right or memorial in Jerusalem.”

Rebuilding the Wall

3 Then ^aEliashib the high priest rose up with his brethren the priests ^band built the Sheep Gate; they consecrated it and hung its doors. They built ^cas far as the Tower of ¹the Hundred, and consecrated it, then as far as the Tower of ^dHananel. ²² Next to *Eliashib* ^ethe men of Jericho built. And next to them Zaccur the son of Imri built.

³ Also the sons of Hassenaah built ^fthe Fish Gate; they laid its beams and ^ghung its doors with its bolts and bars. ⁴ And next to them ^hMeremoth the son of Urijah, the son of ³Koz, made repairs. Next to them ⁱMeshullam the son of Berechiah, the son of Meshezabel, made repairs. Next to them Zadok the son of Baana made repairs. ⁵ Next to them the Tekoites made repairs; but their nobles did not put their ⁴shoulders to ^jthe work of their Lord.

⁶ Moreover Jehoiada the son of Paseah and Meshullam the son of Besodeiah repaired ^kthe Old Gate; they laid its beams and hung its doors, with its bolts and bars. ⁷ And next to them Melatiah the Gibeonite, Jadon the Meronothite, the ^lmen of Gibeon and Mizpah, repaired the ^mresidence ⁵of the governor of the region ⁶beyond the River. ⁸ Next to him Uzziel the son of Harhaiah, one of the goldsmiths, made repairs. Also next to him Hananiah, ⁷one of the perfumers, made repairs; and they ⁸fortified Jerusalem as far as the ⁿBroad Wall. ⁹ And next to them Rephaiah the son of Hur, leader

19 ^v Neh. 6:6
20 ^w Ezra 4:3; Neh. 6:16

CHAPTER 3

1 ^a Neh. 3:20; 12:10; 13:4, 7, 28
^b John 5:2 ^c Neh. 12:39 ^d Jer. 31:38; Zech. 14:10 ¹ Heb. Hammeah
² ^e Ezra 2:34; Neh. 7:36 ² Lit. On his hand
³ ^f 2 Chr. 33:14; Neh. 12:39; Zeph. 1:10
^g Neh. 6:1; 7:1
⁴ ^h Ezra 8:33 ⁱ Ezra 10:15 ³ Or Hakkoz
⁵ [Judg. 5:23] ⁴ Lit. necks
⁶ ^k Neh. 12:39
⁷ ^l Neh. 7:25 ^m Ezra 8:36; Neh. 2:7-9
⁵ Lit. throne ⁶ West of the Euphrates
⁸ ⁿ Neh. 12:38 ⁷ Lit. the son ⁸ restored

11 ^a Neh. 12:38
13 ^p Neh. 2:13, 15
^q Neh. 2:13
14 ^r Jer. 6:1
15 ^s Neh. 2:14
¹ Is. 8:6; John 9:7
² 2 Kin. 25:4 ³ Or Shiloah
16 ^v 2 Kin. 20:20; Is. 7:3; 22:11 ¹ LXX, Syr., Vg. tomb
18 ² So with MT, Vg.; some Heb. mss., LXX, Syr. Binnui (cf. v. 24)
19 ^w 2 Chr. 26:9
³ Lit. turning
20 ⁴ A few Heb. mss., Syr., Vg. Zaccai ⁵ Lit. turning

of half the district of Jerusalem, made repairs. ¹⁰ Next to them Jedaiah the son of Harumaph made repairs in front of his house. And next to him Hattush the son of Hashabnah made repairs.

¹¹ Malchijah the son of Harim and Hashub the son of Pahath-Moab repaired another section, ^aas well as the Tower of the Ovens. ¹² And next to him was Shallum the son of Hallohesh, leader of half the district of Jerusalem; he and his daughters made repairs.

¹³ Hanun and the inhabitants of Zanoah repaired ^bthe Valley Gate. They built it, hung its doors with its bolts and bars, and *repaired* a thousand cubits of the wall as far as ^cthe Refuse Gate.

¹⁴ Malchijah the son of Rechab, leader of the district of ^rBeth Haccerem, repaired the Refuse Gate; he built it and hung its doors with its bolts and bars.

¹⁵ Shallun the son of Col-Hozeh, leader of the district of Mizpah, repaired ^sthe Fountain Gate; he built it, covered it, hung its doors with its bolts and bars, and repaired the wall of the Pool of ^tShelah ⁹ by the ^uKing's Garden, as far as the stairs that go down from the City of David. ¹⁶ After him Nehemiah the son of Azbuk, leader of half the district of Beth Zur, made repairs as far as *the place* in front of the ¹tombs of David, to the ^vman-made pool, and as far as the House of the Mighty.

¹⁷ After him the Levites, *under* Rehum the son of Bani, made repairs. Next to him Hashabiah, leader of half the district of Keilah, made repairs for his district. ¹⁸ After him their brethren, *under* ²Bavai the son of Henadad, leader of the *other* half of the district of Keilah, made repairs. ¹⁹ And next to him Ezer the son of Jeshua, the leader of Mizpah, repaired another section in front of the Ascent to the Armory at the ^wbuttress. ³ ²⁰ After him Baruch the son of ⁴Zabbai carefully repaired the other section, from the ⁵buttress to the door of the house of Eliashib

2:20 Nehemiah ignored his opponents' accusation that he was rebelling against the king. He asserted that God was involved in what he was doing. Nehemiah's motive was not rebellion against the king, but submission to God. **you have no heritage:** Nehemiah indicated that Samaritans and foreign people had no place in Jerusalem (see Ezra 4:3).

3:1 **Eliashib the high priest** and the other **priests** were the first people to start rebuilding Jerusalem's walls. At this point in Israel's history, the priests were the leaders. There were no kings or judges, so the people looked to the priests for leadership. It is significant that the high priest and the priests **built the Sheep Gate**. The Sheep Gate was on Jerusalem's northeast side, just north of the temple and was used for bringing sheep to the temple for sacrifice. **They . . . consecrated it:** The priests dedicated the repaired gate, wall, and tower to the Lord. They knew that unless God blessed the

city with His presence, no walls and gates would keep the people safe (see Ps. 127:1).

3:2 Next to: The idea here is that the people worked together—not just in the same place, but in cooperation.

3:8–13 These verses detail the rebuilding of the western portion of Jerusalem's wall.

3:8 The Broad Wall was probably built in the seventh century B.C. by Hezekiah to accommodate the influx of refugees from the fall of Samaria in 722 B.C. (see 2 Chr. 32:5).

3:14 This verse describes the rebuilding of the southern portion of Jerusalem's wall.

3:15–32 These verses detail the rebuilding of the eastern portion of Jerusalem's wall.

3:15 The Fountain Gate probably faced the En Rogel spring. **The Pool of Shelah** is also known as the Pool of Siloam or Shiloah.

the high priest. ²¹After him Meremoth the son of Urijah, the son of ⁶Koz, repaired another section, from the door of the house of Eliashib to the end of the house of Eliashib.

²²And after him the priests, the men of the plain, made repairs. ²³After him Benjamin and Hasshub made repairs opposite their house. After them Azariah the son of Maaseiah, the son of Ananiah, made repairs by his house. ²⁴After him ^xBinnui the son of Henadad repaired another section, from the house of Azariah to ^ythe ⁷buttress, even as far as the corner. ²⁵Palal the son of Uzai made repairs opposite the ⁸buttress, and on the tower which projects from the king's upper house that was by the ^zcourt of the prison. After him Pedaiah the son of Parosh made repairs.

²⁶Moreover ^athe Nethinim who dwelt in ^bOphel made repairs as far as the place in front of ^cthe Water Gate toward the east, and on the projecting tower. ²⁷After them the Tekoites repaired another section, next to the great projecting tower, and as far as the wall of Ophel.

²⁸Beyond the ^dHorse Gate the priests made repairs, each in front of his *own* house. ²⁹After them Zadok the son of Immer made repairs in front of his *own* house. After him Shemaiah the son of Shechaniah, the keeper of the East Gate, made repairs. ³⁰After him Hananiah the son of Shelemiah, and Hanun, the sixth son of Zalaph, repaired another section. After him Meshullam the son of Berechiah made repairs in front of his ⁹dwelling. ³¹After him Malchijah, ¹one of the goldsmiths, made repairs as

²¹ ⁶ Or *Hakkoz*
²⁴ ^x Ezra 8:33
^y Neh. 3:19 ⁷ Lit. turning
²⁵ ^z Jer. 32:2; 33:1; 37:21 ⁸ Lit. turning
²⁶ ^a Ezra 2:43; Neh. 11:21 ^b 2 Chr. 27:3
^c Neh. 8:1; 3; 12:37
²⁸ ^d 2 Kin. 11:16; 2 Chr. 23:15; Jer. 31:40
³⁰ ⁹ Lit. room
³¹ ¹ Lit. a son of the goldsmiths

² Lit. Inspection or Recruiting
³² ^e Neh. 3:1; 12:39

CHAPTER 4

¹ ^e Neh. 2:10, 19
³ ^b Neh. 2:10, 19
⁴ ^c Ps. 123:3; ⁴ ^d Ps. 79:12; Prov. 3:34
⁵ ^c Ps. 69:27, 28; 109:14, 15; Jer. 18:23
⁷ ^f Neh. 4:1 ⁹ Neh. 2:19 ¹ Lit. breaks

far as the house of the Nethinim and of the merchants, in front of the ²Miphkad Gate, and as far as the upper room at the corner. ³²And between the upper room at the corner, as far as the ^eSheep Gate, the goldsmiths and the merchants made repairs.

The Wall Defended Against Enemies

4 But it so happened, ^awhen Sanballat heard that we were rebuilding the wall, that he was furious and very indignant, and mocked the Jews. ²And he spoke before his brethren and the army of Samaria, and said, "What are these feeble Jews doing? Will they fortify themselves? Will they offer sacrifices? Will they complete it in a day? Will they revive the stones from the heaps of rubbish—stones that are burned?"

³Now ^bTobiah the Ammonite was beside him, and he said, "Whatever they build, if even a fox goes up on it, he will break down their stone wall."

⁴"Hear, O our God, for we are despised; ^dturn their reproach on their own heads, and give them as plunder to a land of captivity! ⁵"Do not cover their iniquity, and do not let their sin be blotted out from before You; for they have provoked You to anger before the builders.

⁶So we built the wall, and the entire wall was joined together up to half its height, for the people had a mind to work.

⁷Now it happened, ^fwhen Sanballat, Tobiah, ^gthe Arabs, the Ammonites, and the Ashdodites heard that the walls of Jerusalem were being restored and the ¹gaps were beginning to be closed, that they became very angry, ⁸and all of them

3:28 In the easternmost part of the city, the **Horse Gate** was the gate leading to the Kidron valley.

3:32 Goldsmiths and merchants also labored on the wall. They were not bricklayers, but they worked just the same.

4:1 furious . . . indignant: These two words together mean "burning with rage."

4:2 Sanballat gathered men from the **army of Samaria**, his local militia, and then mocked the Jewish people with sarcastic questions. **these feeble Jews:** The verb from which the adjective *feeble* is derived is used of a woman who is no longer able to bear children (1 Sam. 2:5), of a fisherman whose trade fails (Is. 19:8), and of the inhabitants of a defeated land (Hos. 4:3). **fortify . . . offer sacrifices . . . complete it in a day . . . revive the stones:** Sanballat poured contempt on the Jewish people and on their God. The reference to reviving the stones came from the fact that the stones of the former wall had been **burned**. When limestone is subjected to intense heat, it becomes unsuitable for building.

4:3 Tobiah, the aide of Sanballat (2:10, 19), carried Sanballat's jest (v. 2) even further. Tobiah declared that if a small creature like **a fox** jumped on the wall, the wall would collapse because of its flimsy construction.

4:4, 5 Nehemiah did not respond to his opponents (vv. 2, 3). Instead, he prayed that the Lord would not forgive them. Nehemiah believed that when the people of God were involved in the work of God, any assault on them was an assault on God. In this case, to despise the Jewish workers was to despise God Himself.

4:7, 8 When their ridicule did not stop the work on the wall, Nehemiah's opponents tried a threat of attack. The opposition against Nehemiah had started with two people (2:10) and had grown to three (2:19). Here it had become a multitude, one which surrounded Jerusalem. **Sanballat** was a Samaritan; Samaria was north of Jerusalem. **The Arabs** were to the south, **the Ammonites** to the east and **the Ashdodites** to the west.

carefully

(Heb. *charah*) (3:20; Ex. 32:10; Jon. 4:1) Strong's #2734

The Hebrew verb translated *carefully* here usually means "to burn with anger" (Gen. 39:19; Jon. 4:1) and depicts anger as a burning fire. This is the type of intense anger the Lord displayed when the Israelites worshiped a worthless idol of a calf instead of their Deliverer (see Ex. 32:10, where the word is translated "burn hot"). In the present passage, the word denotes burning with zeal, not anger. In other words, Baruch earnestly wanted to repair the walls of Jerusalem because he knew it was God's city and God's work. His repairs were for the glory of the living Lord.

^hconspired together to come *and* attack Jerusalem and create confusion. ⁹Nevertheless ⁱwe made our prayer to our God, and because of them we set a watch against them day and night.

¹⁰Then Judah said, “The strength of the laborers is failing, and *there is* so much rubbish that we are not able to build the wall.”

¹¹And our adversaries said, “They will neither know nor see anything, till we come into their midst and kill them and cause the work to cease.”

¹²So it was, when the Jews who dwelt near them came, that they told us ten times, “From whatever place you turn, *they will be* upon us.”

¹³Therefore I positioned *men* behind the lower parts of the wall, at the openings; and I set the people according to their families, with their swords, their spears, and their bows. ¹⁴And I looked, and arose and said to the nobles, to the leaders, and to the rest of the people, ^j“Do not be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, ^kgreat and awesome, and ^lfight for your brethren, your sons, your daughters, your wives, and your houses.”

¹⁵And it happened, when our enemies heard that it was known to us, and ^mthat God had brought their plot to nothing, that all of us returned to the wall, everyone to his work. ¹⁶So it was, from that time on, *that* half of my ser-

8 ^h Ps. 83:3-5
9 ⁱ [Ps. 50:15]
14 ^j [Num. 14:9];
Deut. 1:29 ^k [Deut.
10:17] ^l 2 Sam.
10:12
15 ^m Job 5:12

16 ² Supported
20 ⁿ Ex. 14:14, 25;
Deut. 1:30; 3:22;
20:4; Josh. 23:10;
2 Chr. 20:29
21 ³ Lit. *them*

CHAPTER 5

1 ^a Lev. 25:35-37;
Neh. 5:7, 8

vants worked at construction, while the other half held the spears, the shields, the bows, and *wore* armor; and the leaders ²were behind all the house of Judah. ¹⁷Those who built on the wall, and those who carried burdens, loaded themselves so that with one hand they worked at construction, and with the other held a weapon. ¹⁸Every one of the builders had his sword girded at his side as he built. And the one who sounded the trumpet *was* beside me.

¹⁹Then I said to the nobles, the rulers, and the rest of the people, “The work *is* great and extensive, and we are separated far from one another on the wall. ²⁰Wherever you hear the sound of the trumpet, rally to us there. ⁿOur God will fight for us.”

²¹So we labored in the work, and half of ³the *men* held the spears from day-break until the stars appeared. ²²At the same time I also said to the people, “Let each man and his servant stay at night in Jerusalem, that they may be our guard by night and a working party by day.” ²³So neither I, my brethren, my servants, nor the men of the guard who followed me took off our clothes, *except* that everyone took them off for washing.

Nehemiah Deals with Oppression

5 And there was a great ^aoutrage of the people and their wives against their

4:9 Prior to this verse the prayers recorded in the Book of Nehemiah are individual prayers. This one was a group prayer. Nehemiah's spirit had affected the entire group of workers. They not only prayed, but they set a **watch** and did what was humanly possible to protect themselves from attack.

4:10 Under the circumstances, some of the workers became discouraged. The wall was half finished (v. 6), but the task was taking its toll. The words of the fatigued **laborers** appear as a song or poem in the Hebrew text.

4:11, 12 While the Jewish workers became discouraged (v. 10), the opposition intensified. The **adversaries** began a whispering campaign among the Jewish people to stop the building of the wall. These enemies used fear as a weapon, and they used the Jewish people to do their dirty work.

4:13 **I positioned men:** Because there was no Jewish army, the

people had to defend themselves. Nehemiah placed men strategically on the wall. From the high places on the wall, men could see the approaching enemy. Other men defended the low places of the wall.

4:14, 15 nobles . . . leaders . . . rest of the people: Nehemiah's strategy was to address both leaders and laypeople. In this way, all the community would have “ownership” of the same ideals. **fight for your brethren:** Nehemiah reminded the Jewish people that they were not mercenary soldiers earning a salary or hoping for loot. Not only were their own lives at stake, but so were the lives of their loved ones. God answered Nehemiah's prayers. The people were inspired by his wise words and **returned** to their tasks.

4:16–18 Nehemiah armed the workers and divided his own **servants** into two groups. Half of them worked on the wall and half of them stood guard. Since the builders needed both hands to work, their swords were hung on their sides. Those who carried baskets of debris on their heads held their weapons in one hand and supported the load with the other.

4:19, 20 Nehemiah instituted an alarm system for those who worked on the wall. Apparently the workers were scattered all over the wall and separated so far from each other that some were beyond the reach of the human voice. For that reason, a trumpeter with a ram's horn stood near Nehemiah wherever he went. If the wall was attacked, the alarm would gather all of the people quickly to the danger spot. **Our God will fight for us:** These words evoked the spirit of the Exodus (see Num. 10:1–10). God had fought for their ancestors, and now God would fight for them.

4:21–23 Nehemiah instituted a 24-hour work and watch program. The people worked during the day and stood guard at night. Workers living out of town were asked to remain in the city rather than return home. Except for **washing**, Nehemiah and his men never took off their **clothes**. They worked day and night.

5:1–5 The prolonged period of working, watching, fear, and wear-

awesome

(Heb. *yare'*) (1:5; 4:14; Gen. 32:11) Strong's #3372

The Hebrew word translated *awesome* is derived from the Hebrew verb meaning “to fear.” In this context, the word does not mean “frightening.” Rather it suggests the quality that inspires reverence or godly fear. In some Bible passages, “fearing” and godly living are so closely related that they are almost synonymous (Lev. 19:14; 25:17; Deut. 17:19; 2 Kin. 17:34). Thus while ordinary fear paralyzes a person, godly fear leads to submission and obedience to God. The person who properly fears God avoids evil (Job 1:1) and walks in God's ways (Ps. 128:1).

^bJewish brethren. ²For there were those who said, “We, our sons, and our daughters *are* many; therefore let us get grain, that we may eat and live.”

³There were also *some* who said, “We have mortgaged our lands and vineyards and houses, that we might buy grain because of the famine.”

⁴There were also those who said, “We have borrowed money for the king’s tax *on* our lands and vineyards. ⁵Yet now *our* flesh *is* as the flesh of our brethren, our children as their children; and indeed we ^dare forcing our sons and our daughters to be slaves, and *some* of our daughters have been brought into slavery. *It is* not in our power *to redeem them*, for other men have our lands and vineyards.”

⁶And I became very angry when I heard their outcry and these words. ⁷After serious thought, I rebuked the nobles and rulers, and said to them, ^e“Each of you is ¹exacting usury from his brother.” So I ²called a great assembly against them. ⁸And I said to them, “According to our ability we have ^fredeemed our Jewish brethren who were sold to the nations. Now indeed, will you even sell your brethren? Or should they be sold to us?”

Then they were silenced and found nothing *to say*. ⁹Then I said, “What you are doing *is* not good. Should you not walk ^gin the fear of our God ^hbecause of the reproach of the nations, our enemies? ¹⁰I also, *with* my brethren and my servants, am lending them money and grain. Please, let us stop this ³usury! ¹¹Restore now to them, even this day, their lands,

¹ ^b Deut. 15:7
⁵ ^c Is. 58:7; ^d Ex. 21:7; [Lev. 25:39]
⁷ ^e [Ex. 22:25; Lev. 25:36; Deut. 23:19, 20]; Ezek. 22:12
¹ ^f *charging interest*
² ^g *Lit. held*
⁸ ^h ⁱ Lev. 25:48
⁹ ^j Lev. 25:36
^h ² Sam. 12:14; Rom. 2:24; [1 Pet. 2:12]
¹⁰ ³ *interest*

¹² ⁱ Ezra 10:5; Jer. 34:8, 9
¹³ / Matt. 10:14; Acts 13:51; 18:6
^k 2 Kin. 23:3 ⁴ *Lit. my lap*
¹⁴ / Neh. 2:1; 13:6
^m [1 Cor. 9:4-15]
¹⁵ ⁿ 2 Cor. 11:9;
12:13 ^o Neh. 5:9
¹⁶ ^p Neh. 4:1; 6:1
⁵ ^q *So with MT; LXX, Syr., Vg. /*
¹⁷ ^q 2 Sam. 9:7;
1 Kin. 18:19

their vineyards, their olive groves, and their houses, also a hundredth of the money and the grain, the new wine and the oil, that you have charged them.”

¹²So they said, “We will restore *it*, and will require nothing from them; we will do as you say.”

Then I called the priests, ⁱand required an oath from them that they would do according to this promise. ¹³Then ^jI shook out ⁴the fold of my garment and said, “So may God shake out each man from his house, and from his property, who does not perform this promise. Even thus may he be shaken out and emptied.”

And all the assembly said, “Amen!” and praised the LORD. ^kThen the people did according to this promise.

The Generosity of Nehemiah

¹⁴Moreover, from the time that I was appointed to be their governor in the land of Judah, from the twentieth year ^luntil the thirty-second year of King Artaxerxes, twelve years, neither I nor my brothers ^mate the governor’s provisions. ¹⁵But the former governors who *were* before me laid burdens on the people, and took from them bread and wine, besides forty shekels of silver. Yes, even their servants bore rule over the people, but ⁿI did not do so, because of the ^ofear of God. ¹⁶Indeed, I also continued the ^pwork on this wall, and ⁵we did not buy any land. All my servants *were* gathered there for the work.

¹⁷And ^qat my table *were* one hundred and fifty Jews and rulers, besides those

ness inevitably led to trouble among the people in Jerusalem. There were three groups of complainers, each introduced with the phrase **there were those who said**. The first group had large families, and did not have enough food to eat. The second group had large mortgages to pay and could not buy food. The third group had large taxes to pay and had been forced to mortgage their land and even to sell their children. The people’s basic problem is pinpointed in the words **against their Jewish brethren**. The people were not complaining merely about poverty and high taxes; they were grumbling about each other. In v. 1 the **people** refers to the poor; the **brethren** refers to the rich rulers (v. 7). In short, this was a class conflict. The poor people had **mortgaged their lands and vineyards and houses**. They had **borrowed money** and even had sold their sons and daughters into slavery. From the perspective of the Law, there were two problems here: (1) usury, lending money and charging interest, and (2) slavery. It was not wrong for a Jewish person to lend money with interest to a non-Jewish person (see Deut. 23:19, 20), nor was it wrong for a Jewish person to lend money to a fellow Jew. However, the Law did prohibit usury (see Ex. 22:25). Also, a Jewish person could hire himself out to someone, but not as a slave (see Lev. 25:35–40).

5:6 I became very angry: Nehemiah’s first response to the sins of the Jewish people was anger. Deliberate disobedience to the Word of God ought to make a person indignant toward the sin—but not toward the sinner.

5:7–10 After getting angry at the sins of the Jewish people (v. 6), Nehemiah spent some time in **serious thought**. He then confronted

the guilty people. **rebuked:** This term is used often by the prophets to speak of legal cases brought against guilty persons (13:11). After rebuking the guilty parties privately, Nehemiah confronted them in public with the same charges. **not good:** Two issues were at stake here—**fear of God** (1:5) and **the reproach of the nations**. When Israel, a nation called by the Lord, stopped honoring and obeying Him, it became a scandal because God’s name was being dishonored.

5:11 Nehemiah challenged the lenders to **restore** what they had taken with interest. The **hundredth of the money** is probably a reference to the interest they had been charging.

5:13 Nehemiah **shook** his **garment** as if he were getting rid of what he was carrying. In doing so, he dramatized what God would do if the people broke their promise. God would shake them loose from their houses and their possessions.

5:14 During his 12-year administration (444–432 B.C.), Nehemiah did not collect taxes from the people, although as governor he had that right.

5:15 Several **former governors** had paid their own expenses with the people’s taxes. **laid burdens:** The former governors had made life difficult for the people. **Rule** here indicates an arbitrary, oppressive rule—the abuse of power through extortion.

5:16 Nehemiah had not acquired mortgages on **land**. As governor, he could easily have acquired real estate and sold it at great profit. But instead of making money for themselves, Nehemiah and his servants worked on the wall of Jerusalem for the protection of the people and the glory of God.

who came to us from the nations around us. ¹⁸Now *that* ^rwhich was prepared daily *was* one ox *and* six choice sheep. Also fowl were prepared for me, and once every ten days an abundance of all kinds of wine. Yet in spite of this ^sI did not demand the governor's provisions, because the bondage was heavy on this people.

¹⁹*r*Remember me, my God, for good, *according to* all that I have done for this people.

Conspiracy Against Nehemiah

6 Now it happened ^awhen Sanballat, Tobiah, ¹Geshem the Arab, and the rest of our enemies heard that I had rebuilt the wall, and *that* there were no breaks left in it ^b(though at that time I had not hung the doors in the gates), ²that Sanballat and ²Geshem ^csent to me, saying, “Come, let us meet together ³among the villages in the plain of ^dOno.” But they ^ethought to do me harm.

³So I sent messengers to them, saying, “I *am* doing a great work, so that I cannot come down. Why should the work cease while I leave it and go down to you?”

18 ^r 1 Kin. 4:22
^s Neh. 5:14, 15
19 ^r 2 Kin. 20:3;
Neh. 13:14, 22, 31

CHAPTER 6

1 ^a Neh. 2:10, 19;
4:1, 7; 13:28 ^b Neh.
3:1, 3 ¹ Or *Gashmu*
2 ^c Prov. 26:24, 25
^d 1 Chr. 8:12; Neh.
11:35 ^e Ps. 37:12, 32
² Or *Gashmu* ³ Or
in Kephirim, exact
location unknown

6 ^f Neh. 2:19 ⁴ Heb.
Gashmu

⁴But they sent me this message four times, and I answered them in the same manner.

⁵Then Sanballat sent his servant to me as before, the fifth time, with an open letter in his hand. ⁶In it *was* written:

It is reported among the nations, and ⁴Geshem says, *that* you and the Jews plan to rebel; therefore, according to these rumors, you are rebuilding the wall, ^fthat you may be their king. ⁷And you have also appointed prophets to proclaim concerning you at Jerusalem, saying, “*There is a king in Judah!*” Now these matters will be reported to the king. So come, therefore, and let us consult together.

⁸Then I sent to him, saying, “No such things as you say are being done, but you invent them in your own heart.”

⁹For they all *were trying* to make us afraid, saying, “Their hands will be weakened in the work, and it will not be done.”

Now therefore, *O God*, strengthen my hands.

5:19 Nehemiah’s motives were pure. He was not doing **good** for the praise of men, but to please God. His prayer is repeated at the end of the book (13:31).

6:2 Nehemiah’s enemies, realizing that open opposition had not worked and that the wall was close to being finished, suggested a conference. **The plain of Ono** was about 20 miles northwest of Jerusalem. Somehow, perhaps by a word from the Lord, Nehemiah was warned of his enemy’s intent.

6:7 The evidence that was used to accuse Nehemiah of rebellion was the assertion that **prophets** were proclaiming Nehemiah to be king. Zechariah had prophesied that a king was coming (see Zech.

9:9). With all the activity of the rebuilding of the wall, people were probably talking about what Zechariah had said. Nehemiah’s enemies threatened to take the matter to the king of Persia. They used this threat as leverage to force Nehemiah to attend their proposed meeting. Although they had no real intention of going to the king (v. 9), they hoped their threats would ruin Nehemiah’s reputation so that the workers would lose their resolve.

6:8, 9 Nehemiah would not allow himself to get sidetracked. Instead, he committed his enemy’s accusations to the Lord (see Ps. 31:13, 14). His enemies wanted to weaken his hands, so he prayed for the Lord to **strengthen** him.

How Nehemiah Handled Opposition		
As leader of the effort to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, Nehemiah faced resistance of almost every variety.		
Resistance	Nehemiah's Response	Reference
Sanballat and Tobiah angrily ridiculed Nehemiah.	Nehemiah and the people prayed and renewed their commitment to work.	4:1–6
Sanballat, Tobiah, and a coalition of Arabs, Ammonites, and Ashdodites threatened an attack.	Nehemiah and the people prayed and appointed an around-the-clock guard.	4:7–9
The Israelites became discouraged and fearful.	Nehemiah spoke words of reassurance and armed all the workers.	4:10–23
Some of the Jewish officials took advantage of the poor by charging exorbitant interest rates and seizing their property.	Nehemiah rebuked these opportunists and ordered them to return the seized assets.	5:1–13
Sanballat, Tobiah, and Geshem tried to distract Nehemiah with offers to meet and talk.	Nehemiah refused the offers and kept his focus on the goal of finishing the walls.	6:1–4
Sanballat spread slanderous reports that Nehemiah intended to make himself king.	Nehemiah denied the accusation and prayed for strength.	6:5–9
Shemaiah, a subordinate of Tobiah and Sanballat, tried to convince Nehemiah to be a coward and break God's law by hiding in the temple.	Nehemiah discerned the trick and prayed for strength and justice.	6:10–14

¹⁰Afterward I came to the house of Shemaiah the son of Delaiah, the son of Mehetabel, who *was* a secret informer; and he said, “Let us meet together in the house of God, within the ⁵temple, and let us close the doors of the temple, for they are coming to kill you; indeed, at night they will come to kill you.”

¹¹And I said, “Should such a man as I flee? And who *is there* such as I who would go into the temple to save his life? I will not go in!” ¹²Then I perceived that God had not sent him at all, but that ⁸he pronounced *this* prophecy against me because Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him. ¹³For this reason he *was* hired, that I should be afraid and act that way and sin, so *that* they might have *cause* for an evil report, that they might reproach me.

¹⁴^hMy God, remember Tobiah and Sanballat, according to these their works, and the ⁱprophetess Noadiah and the rest of the prophets who would have made me afraid.

The Wall Completed

¹⁵So the wall was finished on the twenty-fifth *day* of Elul, in fifty-two days. ¹⁶And it happened, ^jwhen all our enemies heard *of it*, and all the nations around us saw *these things*, that they were very disheartened in their own eyes; for ^kthey perceived that this work was done by our God.

¹⁷Also in those days the nobles of Judah

¹⁰ ⁵ Lit. *house*
¹² ⁹ Ezek. 13:22
¹⁴ ^h Neh. 13:29
ⁱ Ezek. 13:17
¹⁶ / Neh. 2:10, 20;
 4:1, 7; 6:1 ^k Ps. 126:2

¹⁸ / Neh. 13:4,
 28 ^m Ezra 10:15;
 Neh. 3:4
¹⁹ ⁶ Or *affairs*

CHAPTER 7

1 ^a Neh. 6:1, 15
 2 ^b Neh. 1:2 ^c Neh.
 2:8; 10:23 ^d Ex.
 18:21 ⁱ *palace*
 4 ^e Deut. 4:27

sent many letters to Tobiah, and *the letters* of Tobiah came to them. ¹⁸For many in Judah were pledged to him, because he was the ^lson-in-law of Shechaniah the son of Arah, and his son Jehohanan had married the daughter of ^mMeshullam the son of Berechiah. ¹⁹Also they reported his good deeds before me, and reported my ⁶words to him. Tobiah sent letters to frighten me.

⁷Then it was, when the wall was built and I had ^ahung the doors, when the gatekeepers, the singers, and the Levites had been appointed, ²that I gave the charge of Jerusalem to my brother ^bHanani, and Hananiah the leader ^cof the ¹citadel, for he *was* a faithful man and ^dfeared God more than many.

³And I said to them, “Do not let the gates of Jerusalem be opened until the sun is hot; and while they stand *guard*, let them shut and bar the doors; and appoint guards from among the inhabitants of Jerusalem, one at his watch station and another in front of his own house.”

The Captives Who Returned to Jerusalem

⁴Now the city *was* large and spacious, but the people in it *were* ^efew, and the houses *were* not rebuilt. ⁵Then my God put it into my heart to gather the nobles, the rulers, and the people, that they might be registered by genealogy. And I found a register of the genealogy of those

6:10 Evidently **Shemaiah** was a priest. When Nehemiah visited him, Shemaiah proposed that they enter the holy place to be safe from assassins. Shemaiah's suggestion was for Nehemiah to flee into the sanctuary. It was lawful for an Israelite to seek refuge at the altar outside the temple (see Ex. 21:13, 14), but only a priest could enter the holy place. Nehemiah's enemies were subtly tempting him. If they could trap him in sin, this would discredit him and the work. Then the people would cease to follow him, and the work on the wall would stop.

6:11–14 God gave Nehemiah the wisdom to discern the error in Shemaiah's counsel. **Tobiah and Sanballat** were the principal instigators behind Shemaiah. Nehemiah indignantly rejected Shemaiah's counsel for two reasons. First, a man such as himself should not **flee**. Nehemiah was the governor, a leader of the people. He was responsible to the king and ultimately to the King of kings. A man in his position should not run and hide out of fear. Second, Nehemiah refused to go to the temple to save his life. The Law prohibited him from entering the Most Holy Place under penalty of death (see Num. 18:7).

6:17–19 Here is a postscript. It turns out that during the building of the wall, a number of personal letters had been exchanged between some of the **nobles of Judah and Tobiah**. Tobiah and his son **Jehohanan** had married Jewish women. Some of the nobles sang Tobiah's praises to Nehemiah and then reported back to Tobiah everything they learned from the governor. With these letters, they hoped either to entrap Nehemiah in his own words or to intimidate him.

7:1 **The Levites** were assistants to the priests (Num. 18:1–4) and guarded and cleaned the sanctuary. Nehemiah **appointed** the Levites to their duties in the temple. **The gatekeepers and singers** were numbered among the Levites. The gatekeepers kept watch

over the house of God and opened and closed the gates of the temple court (see 1 Chr. 9:17–19; 26:12–19). The singers led the people in their musical worship of God. The number of Levites, gatekeepers, and singers is given in vv. 43–45.

7:2 Nehemiah appointed two guards over the city as municipal officers in charge of security, each guard responsible for half of Jerusalem (3:9–12). One of the guards was Nehemiah's brother **Hanani**, who had visited Jerusalem and brought back a bleak report to Nehemiah in Shushan (1:2). The other guard was **Hananiah**. Nehemiah put him over **the citadel** because he was **faithful** and because he **feared God**.

7:3 Nehemiah not only established guards over Jerusalem (v. 2), he also established guidelines for protecting the city. **The gates** of a city normally opened at sunrise, but Nehemiah ordered Jerusalem's gates to be kept closed until the sun was high. This extra precaution would have discouraged enemies from mounting a surprise attack at sunrise. Gates were critical to the defense of an ancient city. Nehemiah also ordered the citizens of Jerusalem to organize a civil defense, with people taking turns standing guard at night outside their own houses. This was a clever strategy. The people would have been more alert in guarding their own homes than they would have been in guarding a general part of the city.

7:4 For the size of the **city**, Jerusalem was underpopulated. Even though it was 90 years since people had returned under Zerubbabel to live there, there was still much undeveloped space within the walls renewed by Nehemiah.

7:5 **my God put it into my heart**: Nehemiah attributed to the Lord the idea of a census that would show the distribution of the population. If he knew the population pattern in the capital and the countryside, he could then determine which districts could best afford to lose a portion of their inhabitants to Jerusalem.

who had come up in the first *return*, and found written in it:

- 6 ^fThese *are* the people of the province who came back from the captivity, of those who had been carried away, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away, and who returned to Jerusalem and Judah, everyone to his city.
- 7 Those who came with ^gZerubbabel *were* Jeshua, Nehemiah, ²Azariah, Raamiah, Nahamani, Mordecai, Bilshan, ³Mispereth, Bigvai, Nehum, and Baanah.

The number of the men of the people of Israel: ⁸the sons of Parosh, two thousand one hundred and seventy-two;
⁹the sons of Shephatiah, three hundred and seventy-two;
¹⁰the sons of Arah, six hundred and fifty-two;
¹¹the sons of Pahath-Moab, of the sons of Jeshua and Joab, two thousand eight hundred and eighteen;
¹²the sons of Elam, one thousand two hundred and fifty-four;
¹³the sons of Zattu, eight hundred and forty-five;
¹⁴the sons of Zaccai, seven hundred and sixty;
¹⁵the sons of ⁴Binnui, six hundred and forty-eight;
¹⁶the sons of Bebai, six hundred and twenty-eight;
¹⁷the sons of Azgad, two thousand three hundred and twenty-two;
¹⁸the sons of Adonikam, six hundred and sixty-seven;
¹⁹the sons of Bigvai, two thousand and sixty-seven;
²⁰the sons of Adin, six hundred and fifty-five;
²¹the sons of Ater of Hezekiah, ninety-eight;
²²the sons of Hashum, three hundred and twenty-eight;
²³the sons of Bezai, three hundred and twenty-four;
²⁴the sons of ⁵Hariph, one hundred and twelve;
²⁵the sons of ⁶Gibeon, ninety-five;
²⁶the men of Bethlehem and

6 ^f Ezra 2:1-70
7 ^g Ezra 5:2; Neh. 12:1, 47; Matt. 1:12, 13
2 ^h Seraiah, Ezra 2:2
3 ⁱ Mispar, Ezra 2:2
15 ⁴ Bani, Ezra 2:10
24 ⁵ Jorah, Ezra 2:18
25 ⁶ Gibbar, Ezra 2:20

28 ⁷ Azmaveth, Ezra 2:24
29 ⁸ Kirjath Arim, Ezra 2:25
34 ^h Neh. 7:12
39 ⁱ 1 Chr. 24:7
40 ^j 1 Chr. 9:12
41 ^k Ezra 2:38; 10:22
42 ^l 1 Chr. 24:8
43 ⁹ Hodaviah, Ezra 2:40; or Judah, Ezra 3:9

- Netophah, one hundred and eighty-eight;
²⁷the men of Anathoth, one hundred and twenty-eight;
²⁸the men of ⁷Beth Azmaveth, forty-two;
²⁹the men of ⁸Kirjath Jearim, Chephirah, and Beeroth, seven hundred and forty-three;
³⁰the men of Ramah and Geba, six hundred and twenty-one;
³¹the men of Michmas, one hundred and twenty-two;
³²the men of Bethel and Ai, one hundred and twenty-three;
³³the men of the other Nebo, fifty-two;
³⁴the sons of the other ^hElam, one thousand two hundred and fifty-four;
³⁵the sons of Harim, three hundred and twenty;
³⁶the sons of Jericho, three hundred and forty-five;
³⁷the sons of Lod, Hadid, and Ono, seven hundred and twenty-one;
³⁸the sons of Senaah, three thousand nine hundred and thirty.
- 39 The priests: the sons of ⁱJedaiah, of the house of Jeshua, nine hundred and seventy-three;
⁴⁰the sons of ^jImmer, one thousand and fifty-two;
⁴¹the sons of ^kPashhur, one thousand two hundred and forty-seven;
⁴²the sons of ^lHarim, one thousand and seventeen.
- 43 The Levites: the sons of Jeshua, of Kadmiel, *and* of the sons of ⁹Hodevah, seventy-four.
- 44 The singers: the sons of Asaph, one hundred and forty-eight.
- 45 The gatekeepers: the sons of Shallum, the sons of Ater, the sons of Talmon, the sons of Akkub, the sons of Hatita, the sons of Shobai, one hundred and thirty-eight.
- 46 The Nethinim: the sons of Ziha, the sons of Hasupha, the sons of Tabbaoth,

7:6-73 Nehemiah discovered a list, recorded by families, of the names of the Jewish people who came from Persia to Judah in 536 B.C. under Zerubbabel. This long list consisted of the names of leaders (v. 7), people by families (vv. 8-25), people by cities (vv. 26-38), priests (vv. 39-42), Levites (vv. 43-45), Nethinim or temple servants (vv. 46-56), Solomon's servants (vv. 57-60), returnees without a genealogy (vv. 61-65), the total number of people (vv. 66, 67), their animals (vv. 68, 69), and the gifts given for the support of the work (vv. 70-72). This same list is found in Ezra 2 with some minor variations.

⁴⁷ the sons of Keros,
 the sons of ¹ Sia,
 the sons of Padon,
⁴⁸ the sons of ² Lebanah,
 the sons of ³ Hagabah,
 the sons of ⁴ Salmal,
⁴⁹ the sons of Hanan,
 the sons of Giddel,
 the sons of Gahar,
⁵⁰ the sons of Reaiah,
 the sons of Rezin,
 the sons of Nekoda,
⁵¹ the sons of Gazzam,
 the sons of Uzza,
 the sons of Paseah,
⁵² the sons of Besai,
 the sons of Meunim,
 the sons of ⁵ Nephishesim,
⁵³ the sons of Bakbuk,
 the sons of Hakupha,
 the sons of Harhur,
⁵⁴ the sons of ⁶ Bazlith,
 the sons of Mehida,
 the sons of Harsha,
⁵⁵ the sons of Barkos,
 the sons of Sisera,
 the sons of Tamah,
⁵⁶ the sons of Nezhiah,
 and the sons of Hatipha.

⁵⁷ The sons of Solomon's servants: the sons of Sotai,
 the sons of Sophereth,
 the sons of ⁷ Perida,
⁵⁸ the sons of Jaala,
 the sons of Darkon,
 the sons of Giddel,
⁵⁹ the sons of Shephatiah,
 the sons of Hattil,
 the sons of Pochereth of Zebaim,
 and the children of ⁸ Amon.
⁶⁰ All the Nethinim, and the sons of Solomon's servants, *were* three hundred and ninety-two.

⁶¹ And these *were* the ones who came up from Tel Melah, Tel Harsha, Cherub, ⁹ Addon, and Immer, but they could not identify their father's house nor their lineage, whether they *were* of Israel: ⁶² the sons of Delaiah, the sons of Tobiah, the sons of Nekoda, six hundred and forty-two;
⁶³ and of the priests: the sons of Habaiah,

⁴⁷ ¹ Siaha, Ezra 2:44
⁴⁸ ² MT Lebanah
³ MT Hogabah
⁴ Shalmal, Ezra 2:46; or Shalmal
⁵² ⁵ Nephusim, Ezra 2:50
⁵⁴ ⁶ Bazluth, Ezra 2:52
⁵⁷ ⁷ Peruda, Ezra 2:55
⁵⁹ ⁸ Ami, Ezra 2:57
⁶¹ ⁹ Addan, Ezra 2:59

⁶³ ¹ Or Hakkoz
⁶⁵ ² Heb. Tirshatha
⁷⁰ ^m Neh. 8:9
⁷¹ ⁿ Heb. Tirshatha
⁷¹ ⁿ Ezra 2:69
⁷³ ^o Ezra 3:1

CHAPTER 8

¹ ^a Ezra 3:1 ^b Neh. 3:26 ^c Ezra 7:6

the sons of ¹ Koz,
 the sons of Barzillai, who took a wife of the daughters of Barzillai the Gileadite, and was called by their name.

⁶⁴ These sought their listing *among* those who were registered by genealogy, but it was not found; therefore they were excluded from the priesthood as defiled. ⁶⁵ And the ² governor said to them that they should not eat of the most holy things till a priest could consult with the Urim and Thummim.

⁶⁶ Altogether the whole assembly *was* forty-two thousand three hundred and sixty, ⁶⁷ besides their male and female servants, of whom *there were* seven thousand three hundred and thirty-seven; and they had two hundred and forty-five men and women singers. ⁶⁸ Their horses were seven hundred and thirty-six, their mules two hundred and forty-five, ⁶⁹ *their* camels four hundred and thirty-five, *and* donkeys six thousand seven hundred and twenty.

⁷⁰ And some of the heads of the fathers' *houses* gave to the work. ^m The ³ governor gave to the treasury one thousand gold drachmas, fifty basins, and five hundred and thirty priestly garments. ⁷¹ Some of the heads of the fathers' *houses* gave to the treasury of the work ⁿ twenty thousand gold drachmas, and two thousand two hundred silver minas. ⁷² And that which the rest of the people gave *was* twenty thousand gold drachmas, two thousand silver minas, and sixty-seven priestly garments.

⁷³ So the priests, the Levites, the gatekeepers, the singers, *some* of the people, the Nethinim, and all Israel dwelt in their cities.

Ezra Reads the Law

^a When the seventh month came, the children of Israel *were* in their cities.

⁸ Now all ^a the people gathered together as one man in the open square that *was* ^b in front of the Water Gate; and they told Ezra the ^c scribe to bring the Book of

7:70 One thousand gold **drachmas** would weigh about nine pounds.

8:1 The phrase **all the people** indicates that people gathered together from the cities and the countryside of Judah. The **open square** was presumably located between the southeast part of the temple and the eastern wall. The leader—in this case, the reader—

was **Ezra**. This is the first time Ezra is mentioned in the Book of Nehemiah. The people instructed Ezra to get the Book of the Law, which Ezra had brought to Jerusalem as much as 13 years before. What had been confined to private study among learned men was made public to everyone.

the Law of Moses, which the LORD had commanded Israel. ²So Ezra the priest brought ^dthe Law before the assembly of men and women and all who *could* hear with understanding ^eon the first day of the seventh month. ³Then he ^fread from it in the open square that *was* in front of the Water Gate ¹from morning until midday, before the men and women and those who could understand; and the ears of all the people *were attentive* to the Book of the Law.

⁴So Ezra the scribe stood on a platform of wood which they had made for the purpose; and beside him, at his right hand, stood Mattithiah, Shema, Anaiah, Urijah, Hilkiah, and Maaseiah; and at his left hand Pedaiah, Mishael, Malchijah, Hashum, Hashbadana, Zechariah, and Meshullam. ⁵And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people, for he was *standing* above all the people; and when he opened it, all the people ^gstood up. ⁶And Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God.

Then all the people ^hanswered, “Amen, Amen!” while ⁱlifting up their hands. And they ^jbowed their heads and worshiped the LORD with *their* faces to the ground.

⁷Also Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodijah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, and the Levites, ^khelped the people to understand the Law; and the people ^lstood in their place. ⁸So they read distinctly

² ^d [Deut. 31:11, 12; Neh. 8:9 ^e Lev. 23:24; Num. 29:1-6 ³ / Deut. 31:9-11; 2 Kin. 23:2 ¹ Lit. *from the light* ⁵ ^g Judg. 3:20; 1 Kin. 8:12-14 ⁶ ^h Neh. 5:13; [1 Cor. 14:16] / Ps. 28:2; Lam. 3:41; 1 Tim. 2:8 / Ex. 4:31; 12:27; 2 Chr. 20:18 ⁷ ^k Lev. 10:11; Deut. 33:10; 2 Chr. 17:7; [Mal. 2:7] / Neh. 9:3

⁹ ^m Ezra 2:63; Neh. 7:65, 70; 10:1 ⁿ Lev. 23:24; Num. 29:1 ^o Deut. 16:14; Eccl. 3:4 ² Heb. *Tirshatha* ¹⁰ ^p [Deut. 26:11-13]; Esth. 9:19, 22; Rev. 11:10 ¹² ^q Neh. 8:10 ^r Neh. 8:7, 8 ¹⁴ ^s Lev. 23:34, 40, 42; Deut. 16:13 ³ Temporary shelters ¹⁵ ^t Lev. 23:4 ^u Deut. 16:16

from the book, in the Law of God; and they gave the sense, and helped *them* to understand the reading.

⁹^m And Nehemiah, who *was* the ²governor, Ezra the priest *and* scribe, and the Levites who taught the people said to all the people, ⁿ“This day is holy to the LORD your God; ^odo not mourn nor weep.” For all the people wept, when they heard the words of the Law.

¹⁰Then he said to them, “Go your way, eat the fat, drink the sweet, ^pand send portions to those for whom nothing is prepared; for *this day is holy* to our Lord. Do not sorrow, for the joy of the LORD is your strength.”

¹¹So the Levites quieted all the people, saying, “Be still, for the day *is* holy; do not be grieved.” ¹²And all the people went their way to eat and drink, to ^qsend portions and rejoice greatly, because they ^runderstood the words that were declared to them.

The Feast of Tabernacles

¹³Now on the second day the heads of the fathers’ *houses* of all the people, with the priests and Levites, were gathered to Ezra the scribe, in order to understand the words of the Law. ¹⁴And they found written in the Law, which the LORD had commanded by Moses, that the children of Israel should dwell in ^sbooths³ during the feast of the seventh month, ¹⁵and ^tthat they should announce and proclaim in all their cities and ^uin Jerusalem, say-

8:2 In Scripture, **women** are often presumed to be present in group gatherings; here they are mentioned explicitly. Everyone **who could hear with understanding**—that is, older children as well as adults—gathered **on the first day of the seventh month**. The wall had been completed on the twenty-fifth day of the sixth month (6:15) so this event took place just a few days after the completion of the wall.

8:3 morning until midday: This would have been a period of about six hours.

8:5 As Ezra unrolled the scroll, **the people stood**, signifying their reverence for the Word. This gesture later became characteristic of the Jewish people in synagogue services.

8:6 Before reading the Book of the Law, Ezra led the people in prayer. **Blessed** here indicates identifying God as the source of the blessing of the people (see Ps. 103:1). The people answered **Amen** and lifted their hands, indicating their participation with Ezra in prayer. Then they bowed their heads and worshiped the LORD with their faces to the ground, indicating their willing submission to their Lord and Creator.

8:8 they read distinctly: The Levites explained fully the meaning of the Law of God. **they gave the sense:** The Levites explained the Law so that the people got the sense and insight of what was being read.

8:9-11 Once the people understood the Word of God, they **wept**. They had heard the high standard of the Law and recognized their low standing before the LORD, and were convicted. Nehemiah, Ezra, and the Levites were undoubtedly glad to see the people’s conviction. However, they urged the people to stop crying and reminded them that this **day was holy to the LORD**. The first day of the sev-

enth month (v. 2) was the Feast of Trumpets. It was not a time to weep, but to celebrate. The people were instructed to celebrate the feast with eating, drinking, and sharing. **The joy of the LORD** could refer to the joy that God has, but the context indicates that this is something the people also experienced. It is a God-given gladness found when we are in communion with God. When our goal is to know more about the LORD, the byproduct is His joy. **Strength** here means “place of safety,” a “refuge,” or “protection.” The people’s refuge was God: They had built a wall and they carried spears and swords, but He was their protection.

8:12 The people went to their houses **to eat and drink**, to share and **rejoice**, because they took to heart the words of Nehemiah, Ezra, and the Levites (vv. 1-9). They obeyed the Word of the LORD and celebrated the Feast of Trumpets.

8:13 The **heads** of families, **the priests**, and the **Levites** came back the next day to hear more teaching from God’s Word. **understand:** Even the leaders gathered to gain the sense of the Scriptures and how they should act.

8:14 By this time, the reading of the Law had advanced to Lev. 23. The listeners discovered that they were to observe the Feast of Tabernacles from the fifteenth to the twenty-second day of the seventh month. During this time, the people were to live in **booths** made of fresh branches of fruit and palm trees. The booths would be set up in courts, streets, public squares, and housetops. No secular work was to be done during this festival. This feast was observed in memory of the their ancestors’ living in booths—that is, tents—after the Exodus (see Lev. 23:40). The booth was not a symbol of misery, but of protection, preservation, and shelter.

ing, “Go out to the mountain, and ^vbring olive branches, branches of oil trees, myrtle branches, palm branches, and branches of leafy trees, to make booths, as *it is written*.”

¹⁶Then the people went out and brought *them* and made themselves booths, each one on the ^wroof of his house, or in their courtyards or the courts of the house of God, and in the open square of the ^xWater Gate ^yand in the open square of the Gate of Ephraim. ¹⁷So the whole assembly of those who had returned from the captivity made ⁴booths and sat under the booths; for since the days of Joshua the son of Nun until that day the children of Israel had not done so. And there was very ^zgreat gladness. ¹⁸Also ^aday by day, from the first day until the last day, he read from the Book of the Law of God. And they kept the feast ^bseven days; and on the ^ceighth day *there was a sacred assembly, according to the prescribed manner.*

The People Confess Their Sins

⁹Now on the twenty-fourth day of ^athis month the children of Israel were assembled with fasting, in sackcloth, ^band with ¹dust on their heads. ²Then ^cthose of Israelite lineage separated themselves from all foreigners; and they stood and ^dconfessed their sins and the iniquities of their fathers. ³And they stood up in their place and ^eread from the

¹⁵ ^v Lev. 23:40
¹⁶ ^w Deut. 22:8
^x Neh. 12:37 ^y 2 Kin. 14:13; Neh. 12:39
¹⁷ ^z 2 Chr. 30:21
⁴ Temporary shelters
¹⁸ ^a Deut. 31:11
^b Lev. 23:36 ^c Num. 29:35

CHAPTER 9

¹ ^a Neh. 8:2 ^b Josh. 7:6; 1 Sam. 4:12;
 2 Sam. 1:2; Job 2:12
¹ Lit. *earth on them*
² ^c Ezra 10:11; Neh. 13:3, 30 ^d Neh. 1:6
³ ^e Neh. 8:7, 8

⁴ ² Lit. *ascent*
⁵ ^f 1 Chr. 29:13
⁶ ^g Deut. 6:4; 2 Kin. 19:15, 19; [Ps. 86:10];
 Is. 37:16, 20 ^h Gen. 1:1; Ex. 20:11; Rev. 14:7 ⁱ [Deut. 10:14];
 1 Kin. 8:27 ^j Gen. 2:1 ^k [Ps. 36:6]
⁷ ^l Gen. 11:31
^m Gen. 17:5
⁸ ⁿ Gen. 15:6; 22:1-3; [James 2:21-23]

Book of the Law of the LORD their God *for one-fourth of the day; and for another fourth they confessed and worshiped the LORD their God.*

⁴Then Jeshua, Bani, Kadmiel, Shebaniah, Bunni, Sherebiah, Bani, *and* Chenani stood on the ²stairs of the Levites and cried out with a loud voice to the LORD their God. ⁵And the Levites, Jeshua, Kadmiel, Bani, Hashabiah, Sherebiah, Hodijah, Shebaniah, *and* Pethahiah, said:

“Stand up *and* bless the LORD your God Forever and ever!

“Blessed be ^fYour glorious name, Which is exalted above all blessing and praise!

⁶ ^gYou alone *are* the LORD;

^hYou have made heaven,

ⁱThe heaven of heavens, with ^jall their host,

The earth and everything on it,
 The seas and all that is in them,
 And You ^kpreserve them all.

The host of heaven worships You.

⁷ “You *are* the LORD God,
 Who chose ^lAbram,
 And brought him out of Ur of the Chaldeans,

And gave him the name ^mAbraham;

⁸ You found his heart ⁿfaithful before You,

8:16 The people observed the Feast of Tabernacles according to the Law. Those who lived in cities built their **booths** on the flat tops of their houses or **in their courtyards**. The priests and Levites built their booths in the **courts** of the temple. The people from the country constructed huts in the street before the **Water Gate** and the **Gate of Ephraim**.

8:17 *since the days of Joshua . . . the children of Israel had not done so*: The reference here is to the construction of booths. The people of Israel had certainly celebrated the Feast of Tabernacles since the days of Joshua. In fact, those who had returned with Ezra kept the feast the first year of their return (see 1 Kin. 8:65; 2 Chr. 7:9; see especially Ezra 3:4).

8:18 The reading of the Law was required during the celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles, which occurred on the Sabbath year (see Deut. 31:10, 11).

9:1 *the twenty-fourth day of this month*: The people’s public worship had begun on the first day of the seventh month (8:2). More than three weeks later, the people were still engaged in public worship. **Fasting, sackcloth, and dust** were traditional signs of mourning; here these signs were preparation for the confession of the people’s sin (v. 2).

9:2 *Of Israelite lineage* means “the seed of Israel.” The separation **from all foreigners** was a sacred separation from foreign persons who worshiped other gods and whose practices might have brought harm to the integrity of the Lord’s worship by His people. **their sins and the iniquities of their fathers**: The confession of the people’s own sins was for personal and corporate forgiveness; the confession of their fathers’ sins was for remembrance, that they might not continue in past evil actions and attitudes.

9:3 As in 8:5, the people **stood** in reverence at hearing the reading of the Scriptures. **one-fourth of the day**: Approximately three

hours (compare 8:3) were spent in public reading and three hours were spent in corporate worship. **confessed**: When this word is used with God as its object, as in this verse, it refers to the praise of God.

9:5 *Stand up and bless the LORD your God*: These words were shouted by **the Levites. Forever and ever**: The Lord of Hosts will be praised through all eternity. **Your glorious name**: The importance of the name of God can scarcely be overestimated. This psalm is solidly based on the theology of the Law (the books of Moses) as would be expected following the three-week reading of the Scriptures (8:1, 2). Thus this poem’s exaltation of the Lord’s name is based on God’s own revelation of His name recorded in the Book of Exodus (see Ex. 3:14). The prophet Isaiah also praised the Lord’s “glorious name” (Is. 63:14).

9:6 One of the fundamental teachings of Scripture is that God is not one among many; He **alone** is the living God (see Deut. 6:4). **heaven . . . earth . . . seas**: God alone has made all things, and He alone preserves all things. Therefore, worship is due Him. The first section of this psalm (vv. 5, 6) establishes the mood for the whole poem: God is incomparable (see Num. 23:8, 9; Deut. 4:32–40; Ps. 113:4–6).

9:7, 8 *You are the LORD God*: The word order of the Hebrew text is striking: “You are He, Yahweh (the) God.” The use of the definite article on the word God marks Him as “the true God.” **Abraham**: The story of the election of Abraham begins in Gen. 12:1–3. The point here is to emphasize God’s grace. **You found his heart faithful**: None of the people of biblical history was without sin except Jesus. Still, there were some whose faithfulness to God was constant. Among them were Abraham and Sarah (see Heb. 11). The subsequent history of the people of Israel was not marked by the steady faithfulness seen in Abraham, much to the displeasure of the Lord. The Promised Land, **the land of the Canaanites**, was populated

And made a ^ocovenant with him
To give the land of the Canaanites,
The Hittites, the Amorites,
The Perizzites, the Jebusites,
And the Gergashites—
To give *it* to his descendants.
You ^phave performed Your words,
For You *are* righteous.

9 “You^q saw the affliction of our fathers
in Egypt,
And ^rheard their cry by the Red Sea.

10 You ^sshowed signs and wonders
against Pharaoh,
Against all his servants,
And against all the people of his
land.
For You knew that they ^tacted
³proudly against them.
So You ^umade a name for Yourself, as
it is this day.

11 ^v And You divided the sea before them,
So that they went through the midst
of the sea on the dry land;
And their persecutors You threw into
the deep,
^w As a stone into the mighty waters.

8 ^o Gen. 15:18
P Josh. 23:14
9 ^q Ex. 2:25; 3:7 ^r Ex.
14:10
10 ^s Ex. 7–14 ^t Ex.
18:11 ³ *presump-
tuously or insolently*
^u Jer. 32:20
11 ^v Ex. 14:20–28
^w Ex. 15:1, 5

12 ^x Ex. 13:21, 22
13 ^y Ex. 20:1–18
^z [Rom. 7:12]
14 ^a Gen. 2:3; Ex.
16:23; 20:8; 23:12
15 ^b Ex. 16:14–17;
John 6:31 ^c Ex. 17:6;
Num. 20:8; [1 Cor.
10:4] ^d Deut. 1:8
^e Lit. *raised Your
hand to*
16 ^e Ps. 106:6
⁵ *presumptuously*

12 Moreover You ^xled them by day with
a cloudy pillar,
And by night with a pillar of fire,
To give them light on the road
Which they should travel.

13[“] You^y came down also on Mount
Sinai,
And spoke with them from heaven,
And gave them ^zjust ordinances and
true laws,
Good statutes and commandments.

14 You made known to them Your ^aholy
Sabbath,
And commanded them precepts,
statutes and laws,
By the hand of Moses Your servant.

15 You ^bgave them bread from heaven
for their hunger,
And ^cbrought them water out of the
rock for their thirst,
And told them to ^dgo in to possess
the land
Which You had ^dsworn to give them.

16[“] But^e they and our fathers acted
⁵proudly,

by diverse groups of people who had all lost their right to the land because of their sinfulness (see Gen. 15:18–21; Ex. 3:8, 17; 23:23; 33:2; Deut. 7:1; Josh. 3:10). **You have performed Your words:** This is the essence of the psalm. God’s faithfulness to His people cannot be challenged. **You are righteous:** One of the greatest reasons to celebrate the character of God is His conformity to His own standard of perfection (v. 33).

9:9 The Book of Exodus tells about the plight of the Israelites in Egypt and their complaint to the Lord for deliverance. It then speaks of God’s mercy in His response to the people’s need. This verse suggests that before the people expressed their hurt, the Lord was already aware of their troubles.

9:10 The **signs and wonders** were the ten plagues of Ex. 7–12. These great acts of God were directed primarily **against Pharaoh**. **acted proudly:** In Ex. 18:11, Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses, used this same phrase to describe the presumptuous actions of the Egyp-

tians. It was the proud actions of the Egyptians that brought God’s judgment on them.

9:11, 12 **You divided the sea** refers to God’s acts of deliverance at the Red Sea (see Ex. 14; 15). Note the simile of Pharaoh’s troops sinking **as a stone** (compare Ex. 15:5). **cloudy pillar . . . pillar of fire:** The continued presence of God in the lives of His people was indicated by these symbols (see Ex. 13:21, 22; Num. 10:11, 34; Deut. 1:33).

9:14 The significance of the **Sabbath** in God’s law for Israel is celebrated here (see Ex. 20:8–11; 23:10–13; 31:12–18). **By the hand of Moses:** The Law came from the Lord, but it was given by the agency of Moses (see John 1:17).

9:15 The gifts of **bread**, or manna (see Ex. 16:9–35), and **water** (see Ex. 17:1–7) demonstrated God’s care for His people in their journey to the Promised Land.

9:16, 17 **But they:** These words stand in shocking contrast to the description of God’s actions in vv. 9–15. The sin of the Israelites was

The Levites’ Psalm

The ninth chapter of Nehemiah is one of the most eloquent recitals of God’s marvelous acts in Israel’s history. Along with Moses’ “Song of the Sea” (Ex. 15), “The Song of Moses” (Deut. 32), “Deborah’s Song” (Judg. 5), “Hannah’s Song” (1 Sam. 2), and David’s “Song of the Bow” (2 Sam. 1), this poem is one of the great psalms in Scripture.

Interestingly enough, the occasion for this grand psalm was not an official feast day. The twenty-fourth day of Tishri was two days after the celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles, the joyous celebration of God’s provision for the Israelites in the wilderness. Apparently, Ezra and the Levites saw the need for the people to confess their sins more fully in light of the reading of God’s law (8:7, 8). Thus in the spirit of the Day of Atonement, which occurred on the tenth day of that month, the people gathered to praise God, confess their sins, and renew their commitment to the covenant. King Josiah had led a similar covenant renewal ceremony after reading God’s law (2 Chr. 34:29–32).

The Levites led the confession with the psalm recorded here. Similar to Psalms 78, 105, and 106, this psalm vividly rehearses the story of the nation of Israel with a glorious focus on God’s gracious action among His people. Ultimately, this was the history of God’s saving works. The poem has four parts: (1) glorification of God’s name (vv. 5, 6); (2) recital of God’s faithfulness to His people despite their checkered history (vv. 7–31); (3) acknowledgment of God’s righteousness (vv. 32–35); and (4) confession (vv. 36, 37). This psalm about the history of Israel’s salvation evoked a response: The Israelites humbled themselves before their Lord and recommitted themselves to His covenant.

A true understanding of God’s merciful work on our behalf always leads to confession, worship, and renewal. Psalms like this one can help us restore a true picture of the gracious Lord we worship.



- ^fHardened⁶ their necks,
And did not heed Your
commandments.
- 17 They refused to obey,
And ^gthey were not mindful of Your
wonders
That You did among them.
But they hardened their necks,
And ^hin their rebellion
They appointed ^ha leader
To return to their bondage.
But You *are* God,
Ready to pardon,
ⁱGracious and merciful,
Slow to anger,
Abundant in kindness,
And did not forsake them.
- 18“Even ^jwhen they made a molded calf
for themselves,
And said, ‘This *is* your god
That brought you up out of Egypt,’
And worked great provocations,
- 19 Yet in Your ^kmanifold mercies
You did not forsake them in the
wilderness.
The ^lpillar of the cloud did not
depart from them by day,
To lead them on the road;
Nor the pillar of fire by night,
To show them light,
And the way they should go.
- 20 You also gave Your ^mgood Spirit to
instruct them,
And did not withhold Your ⁿmanna
from their mouth,
And gave them ^owater for their
thirst.
- 21 ^pForty years You sustained them in
the wilderness;
They lacked nothing;

16 ^fDeut. 1:26-33;
31:27; Neh. 9:29
^gStiffened their
necks, became
stubborn
17 ^gPs. 78:11, 42-45
^hNum. 14:4; Acts
7:39 ⁱJoel 2:13 ^jSo
with MT, Vg.; LXX
in Egypt
18 ^hEx. 32:4-8, 31
19 ^hPs. 106:45 ⁱEx.
13:20-22; 1 Cor. 10:1
20 ^mNum. 11:17
ⁿEx. 16:14-16 ^oEx.
17:6
21 ^pDeut. 2:7

^qDeut. 8:4; 29:5
22 ^rNum. 21:21-35
^sLit. *corners* ^gSo
with MT, Vg.; LXX
omits *The land of*
23 ^sGen. 15:5;
22:17; Heb. 11:12
24 ^rJosh. 1:2-4
^uJosh. 18:1; [Ps.
44:2, 3] ¹Lit. *sons*
25 ^vNum. 13:27
^wDeut. 6:11; Josh.
24:13 ^x[Deut.
32:15] ^yHos. 3:5
^zLit. *trees for eating*
26 ^zJudg. 2:11
^a1 Kin. 14:9; Ps.
50:17

- Their ^qclothes did not wear out
And their feet did not swell.
- 22“Moreover You gave them kingdoms
and nations,
And divided them into ⁸districts.
So they took possession of the land
of ^rSihon,
⁹The land of the king of Heshbon,
And the land of Og king of
Bashan.
- 23 You also multiplied ^stheir children as
the stars of heaven,
And brought them into the land
Which You had told their fathers
To go in and possess.
- 24 So ^tthe ¹people went in
And possessed the land;
^uYou subdued before them the
inhabitants of the land,
The Canaanites,
And gave them into their hands,
With their kings
And the people of the land,
That they might do with them as
they wished.
- 25 And they took strong cities and a
^vrich land,
And possessed ^whouses full of all
goods,
Cisterns *already* dug, vineyards, olive
groves,
And ²fruit trees in abundance.
So they ate and were filled and ^xgrew
fat,
And delighted themselves in Your
great ^ygoodness.
- 26“Nevertheless they ^zwere disobedient
And rebelled against You,
^aCast Your law behind their backs

that they **acted proudly**—that is, they behaved toward God in the same way that the people of Egypt had behaved toward them. The primary reference here is to the rebellion of Israel against the Lord at Kadesh (see Num. 13; 14). The people's rebellion went so far that they **appointed a leader** to take them back to Egypt. **But You:** These words contrast the words “But they” at the beginning of v. 16 (see Ex. 34:6). **Ready to pardon** means abounding in forgiveness. **Slow to anger:** This phrase translates a Hebrew idiom (“long of nose”) that has the same meaning as the English expression “to have a long fuse.” **Kindness,** from a word that means “loyal love,” is used often in the Book of Psalms (see Ps. 13:5). Because of God's loyalty and steadfastness, He **did not forsake** His people.

9:18–21 In these verses, the poet describes the faithfulness of God to the Israelites in the wilderness despite their wretched behavior. **Molded calf** is a reference to the act of rebellion described in Ex. 32. **Manifold mercies** describes deep feelings like those of a mother for her child. **You did not forsake them** is repeated from v. 17. God would have been justified in abandoning His people because of their extreme sinfulness and wicked rebellion; yet He was compelled by His character not to do so. **You also gave Your good Spirit:** God not only gave gifts to His people, He made Himself known in their midst. **Forty years:** The wilderness experience (see Deut. 2:7) is viewed in two ways in the Bible: (1) as a period of prolonged punishment because of rebellion; and (2) as a period of

continued mercy because of God's unchanging character. **clothes . . . feet:** God's provisions were daily experiences of divine miracles (see Deut. 8:4; 29:5).

9:22–25 The poet describes the mercies of God in Israel's conquest of the Promised Land and in God's continuing provision for them. **kingdoms and nations:** The Bible celebrates the conquest of the land east of the Jordan, as well as the conquest of Canaan itself. **as the stars:** The miraculous growth of the people is described in this familiar hyperbole (see Gen. 15:5; 22:17). **the people went in:** The conquest of the land as described in the Book of Joshua is indicated here. **strong cities . . . rich land . . . houses:** With few exceptions, the people of Israel conquered the inhabitants of Canaan in such a way that they were able to move into the Canaanites' undamaged homes and cities. The Israelites were also able to enjoy crops and wells for which they did not have to work. All of this is testimony to God's **great goodness**.

9:26–29 The rebellion of the people was expressed during the period of the judges and throughout the period of the kings. **Cast Your law behind their backs** is a graphic metaphor for rebellion. **killed Your prophets:** Jesus also directed this charge against the rebellious people (see Matt. 23:31). **You delivered them into the hand of their enemies** refers to the experiences of the Israelites during the period described by the Book of Judges. **he shall live by them:** Salvation in any period is only by grace through faith

And killed Your ^bprophets, who
³testified against them
 To turn them to Yourself;
 And they worked great provocations.
²⁷ ^cTherefore You delivered them into
 the hand of their enemies,
 Who oppressed them;
 And in the time of their trouble,
 When they cried to You,
 You ^dheard from heaven;
 And according to Your abundant
 mercies
^eYou gave them deliverers who saved
 them
 From the hand of their enemies.

²⁸“ But after they had rest,
^fThey again did evil before You.
 Therefore You left them in the hand
 of their enemies,
 So that they had dominion over them;
 Yet when they returned and cried out
 to You,
 You heard from heaven;
 And ^gmany times You delivered them
 according to Your mercies,
²⁹ And ⁴testified against them,
 That You might bring them back to
 Your law.
 Yet they acted ⁵proudly,
 And did not heed Your
 commandments,
 But sinned against Your judgments,
^h“ Which if a man does, he shall live by
 them.”
 And they shrugged their shoulders,
⁶Stiffened their necks,
 And would not hear.
³⁰ Yet for many years You had patience
 with them,
 And ⁷testified ⁱagainst them by Your
 Spirit ^jin Your prophets.
 Yet they would not listen;
^kTherefore You gave them into the
 hand of the peoples of the lands.
³¹ Nevertheless in Your great mercy
^lYou did not utterly consume them
 nor forsake them;
 For You *are* God, gracious and
 merciful.

²⁶ ^b 1 Kin. 18:4;
 19:10; Matt.
 23:37; Acts 7:52
³ admonished or
 warned them
²⁷ ^c Judg. 2:14; Ps.
 106:41 ^d Ps. 106:44
^e Judg. 2:18
²⁸ ^f Judg. 3:12 ^g Ps.
 106:43
²⁹ ^h Lev. 18:5; Rom.
 10:5; [Gal. 3:12]
⁴ admonished them
⁵ presumptuously
⁶ Became stubborn
³⁰ ⁱ 2 Kin. 17:13-18;
 2 Chr. 36:11-20; Jer.
 7:25 ^j [Acts 7:51];
 1 Pet. 1:11 ^k Is. 5:5
⁷ admonished or
 warned them
³¹ ^l Jer. 4:27; [Rom.
 11:2-5]

³² ^m [Ex. 34:6,
 7] ⁿ 2 Kin. 15:19;
 17:3-6; Ezra 4:2, 10
⁸ hardship
³³ ^o Ps. 119:137;
 [Dan. 9:14] ^p Ps.
 106:6; [Dan. 9:5,
 6, 8]
³⁵ ^q Deut. 28:47
³⁶ ^r Deut. 28:48;
 Ezra 9:9
³⁷ ^s Deut. 28:33, 51
^t Deut. 28:48
³⁸ ^u 2 Kin. 23:3;
 2 Chr. 29:10; Ezra
 10:3

³²“ Now therefore, our God,
 The great, the ^mmighty, and
 awesome God,
 Who keeps covenant and mercy:
 Do not let all the ⁸trouble seem small
 before You
 That has come upon us,
 Our kings and our princes,
 Our priests and our prophets,
 Our fathers and on all Your people,
ⁿ From the days of the kings of
 Assyria until this day.
³³ However ^oYou *are* just in all that has
 befallen us;
 For You have dealt faithfully,
 But ^pwe have done wickedly.
³⁴ Neither our kings nor our princes,
 Our priests nor our fathers,
 Have kept Your law,
 Nor heeded Your commandments
 and Your testimonies,
 With which You testified against
 them.
³⁵ For they have ^qnot served You in
 their kingdom,
 Or in the many good *things* that You
 gave them,
 Or in the large and rich land which
 You set before them;
 Nor did they turn from their wicked
 works.
³⁶“ Here ^rwe *are*, servants today!
 And the land that You gave to our
 fathers,
 To eat its fruit and its bounty,
 Here we *are*, servants in it!
³⁷ And ^sit yields much increase to the
 kings
 You have set over us,
 Because of our sins;
 Also they have ^tdominion over our
 bodies and our cattle
 At their pleasure;
 And we *are* in great distress.
³⁸“ And because of all this,
 We ^umake a sure covenant and
 write it;

(see Eph. 2:8, 9). Keeping the Law was never a means of salvation, but a guide for living a life that pleases the Lord.

9:30, 31 God continued to be faithful to His disobedient people. **For many years** refers to the history of the people of Israel from Saul to the last of the kings. **Your Spirit in Your prophets** speaks of God's work in inspiring the words of the prophets of Israel (see Jer. 1:9). **You gave them into the hand of the peoples of the lands** refers to the captivity of Israel. **nor forsake them:** For the time in this psalm (vv. 17, 19), this reality is affirmed.

9:32 Now refers to the time of the great revival under Ezra (8:1, 2). **covenant and mercy:** God's covenant loyalty is unbreakable (see Heb. 6:17, 18). **Do not let all the trouble seem small:** In view of the unspeakable wonder of God, the hardship of His people might seem too small a matter to be noticed. **kings . . . people:** The effects

of Israel's trouble were all-inclusive. **From the days of the kings of Assyria:** The incursions of the Assyrians, beginning with Tiglath-Pileser III, began a period of oppression for the Jewish people. **9:33 You are just:** The poet affirms the righteousness of God. **You have dealt faithfully . . . we have done wickedly:** This is the basic reality not only of this chapter, but of the history of God and His people.

9:36, 37 Servants is used as a term of irony here. The people of Israel had been called to be the servants of God (see Lev. 25:55), but here they were servants of foreign rulers. The produce of the land did not belong to them; it went to **kings**. The people were taxed by Persians for the produce of the land that was God's gift to them.

9:38 The psalm ends in action, not just sentiment. The intent was changed behavior. The pledge was to mirror God's faithfulness. The

Our leaders, our Levites, *and* our priests ^v seal it.”

The People Who Sealed the Covenant

10 Now those who placed their seal on the document were:

Nehemiah the ¹governor, ^athe son of Hacaliah, and Zedekiah, ^{2b}Seraiah, Azariah, Jeremiah, ³Pashhur, Amariah, Malchijah, ⁴Hattush, Shebaniah, Malluch, ⁵Harim, Meremoth, Obadiah, ⁶Daniel, Ginnethon, Baruch, ⁷Meshullam, Abijah, Mijamin, ⁸Maaziah, Bilgai, *and* She-maiah. These *were* the priests.

⁹The Levites: Jeshua the son of Azariah, Binnui of the sons of Henadad, *and* Kadmiel.

¹⁰Their brethren: Shebaniah, Hodijah, Kelita, Pelaiah, Hanan, ¹¹Micha, Rehob, Hashabiah, ¹²Zaccur, Sherebiah, Shebaniah, ¹³Hodijah, Bani, *and* Beninu.

¹⁴The leaders of the people: ^cParosh, Pahath-Moab, Elam, Zattu, Bani, ¹⁵Bunni, Azgad, Bebai, ¹⁶Adonijah, Bigvai, Adin, ¹⁷Ater, Hezekiah, Azzur, ¹⁸Hodijah, Hashum, Bezai, ¹⁹Hariph, Anathoth, Nebai, ²⁰Magpiash, Meshullam, Hezir, ²¹Meshezabel, Zadok, Jaddua, ²²Pelatiah, Hanan, Anaiah, ²³Hoshea, Hananiah, Hasshub, ²⁴Hallohesh, Pilha, Shobek, ²⁵Rehum, Hashabnah, Maaseiah, ²⁶Ahijah, Hanan, Anan, ²⁷Malluch, Harim, *and* Baanah.

38 ^v Neh. 10:1

CHAPTER 10

1 ^a Neh. 1:1 1 ^b Heb. Tirshatha
2 ^b Neh. 12:1-21
14 ^c Ezra 2:3

28 ^d Ezra 2:36-43
^e Ezra 9:1; Neh. 13:3
29 ^f Deut. 29:12; Neh. 5:12; Ps. 119:106 ^g 2 Kin. 23:3; 2 Chr. 34:31
30 ^h Ex. 34:16; Deut. 7:3; [Ezra 9:12]
31 ⁱ Ex. 20:10; Lev. 23:3; Deut. 5:12 / Ex. 23:10, 11; Lev. 25:4; Jer. 34:14 ^k [Deut. 15:1, 2]; Neh. 5:12
^l merchandise
^m collection
32 ⁱ Ex. 30:11-16; 38:25, 26; 2 Chr. 24:6, 9; Matt. 17:24
33 ^m Lev. 24:5;
2 Chr. 24 ⁿ Num. 28; 29

The Covenant That Was Sealed

^{28d} Now the rest of the people—the priests, the Levites, the gatekeepers, the singers, the Nethinim, ^eand all those who had separated themselves from the peoples of the lands to the Law of God, their wives, their sons, and their daughters, everyone who had knowledge and understanding— ²⁹these joined with their brethren, their nobles, ^fand entered into a curse and an oath ^gto walk in God’s Law, which was given by Moses the servant of God, and to observe and do all the commandments of the LORD our Lord, and His ordinances and His statutes: ³⁰We would not give ^hour daughters as wives to the peoples of the land, nor take their daughters for our sons; ³¹ⁱ if the peoples of the land brought ²wares or any grain to sell on the Sabbath day, we would not buy it from them on the Sabbath, or on a holy day; and we would forego the ^jseventh year’s *produce* and the ^kexacting ³of every debt.

³² Also we made ordinances for ourselves, to exact from ourselves yearly ^lone-third of a shekel for the service of the house of our God: ³³for ^mthe showbread, for the regular grain offering, for the ⁿregular burnt offering of the Sabbaths, the New Moons, and the set feasts; for the holy things, for the sin offerings to make atonement for Israel, and all the work of the house of our God. ³⁴We cast

new **covenant** community desired to demonstrate the faithfulness of Abraham and Sarah.

10:1 The way someone “signed” a **document** in the ancient world was similar to the use of a wax **seal** in more recent times. A distinctive seal was pressed into soft clay. The pattern of the seal showed what authority issued that document.

10:2-8 The **priests** who sealed the covenant are listed here. Some of these names appear in a later list as heads of priestly houses (12:11-20). Twenty-one priests who were heads of households signed the agreement in the name of the houses and families of their respective classes. Ezra’s name does not appear, perhaps indicating that he was not the head of a household.

10:9-13 The **Levites** also signed the covenant. Some of these names appear later as heads of the orders of Levites (12:8).

10:14-27 Forty-four **leaders** also signed the covenant. In contrast to the religious leaders, these were the political leaders of the Jewish community (compare 7:4-63; Ezra 2).

10:28 Not only leaders, but laypeople signed the covenant. **The Nethinim** were temple servants who did menial work in the sanctuary (see Ezra 2:43). **Those who had separated themselves from the peoples of the lands** were the descendants of those Israelites who had been left in the land and who joined the returning remnant. Men, women, and children of sufficient age signed the covenant.

10:29 **entered into a curse:** The phrase points to the penalties for failure to comply with the covenant. The people took an oath to live by the Word of God. **God’s Law:** The Law was a gift of God, **given by Moses.** The Israelites swore that they would observe the law of God. **commandments . . . ordinances . . . statutes:** This is a way of speaking of the whole law of God (1:7).

10:30 The Israelites’ decision to obey the Word of God in every area of their lives (v. 29) was not just a general statement. The people

specifically vowed to obey the Word of God in their marriage relationships. Marriage with non-Jewish people was clearly forbidden in the Scriptures (see Ex. 34:12-16; Deut. 7:3; Josh. 23:12; Judg. 3:6).

We would not give our daughters . . . nor take their daughters: The parents of Israel decided that they would not permit their children to marry non-Jews. In the ancient world, marriages usually were arranged by the parents.

10:31 Other areas of life were included in the people’s dedication to God’s law. This verse deals with **Sabbath** observance. Three particulars regarding the Sabbath are mentioned. First, the people promised to stop all buying and selling from foreigners on the Sabbath. Second, they pledged to observe the Sabbatical year—that is, to leave their fields uncultivated during every seventh year (see Lev. 25:1-7). Third, they decided not to collect debts during the Sabbatical year (see Deut. 15:1-6). The people were dedicating themselves to observe the Word of God in their business life.

10:32-39 The remainder of the chapter covers the people’s promise to obey the Word of God concerning the temple. In this area, the people made four promises: (1) They promised to pay a temple tax to defray the expenses of the worship services in God’s sanctuary. Verse 33 lists the objects that the tax would supply. (2) They promised to provide a **wood offering.** The Law prescribed that wood should be constantly burning on the altar (see Lev. 6:12, 13). Nehemiah made this the business of the congregation. (3) They promised to offer their **firstfruits** at the temple. The firstfruits of the ground were given to the Lord as an acknowledgment of His status as landowner (see Ex. 23:19; 34:26; Deut. 26:2). The people promised the firstfruits of **all trees**, which means that they were going beyond the requirements of the Law. The firstborn of the animals also belonged to the Lord (see Num. 18:15, 17-19). (4) They promised to pay **the priests.**

lots among the priests, the Levites, and the people, ^ofor bringing the wood offering into the house of our God, according to our fathers' houses, at the appointed times year by year, to burn on the altar of the LORD our God ^pas it is written in the Law.

³⁵And we made ordinances ^qto bring the firstfruits of our ground and the firstfruits of all fruit of all trees, year by year, to the house of the LORD; ³⁶to bring the ^rfirstborn of our sons and our cattle, as it is written in the Law, and the firstborn of our herds and our flocks, to the house of our God, to the priests who minister in the house of our God; ³⁷to bring the firstfruits of our dough, our offerings, the fruit from all kinds of trees, the new wine and oil, to the priests, to the storerooms of the ⁴house of our God; and to bring ^tthe tithes of our land to the Levites, for the Levites should receive the tithes in all our farming communities. ³⁸And the priest, the descendant of Aaron, shall be with the Levites ^uwhen the Levites receive tithes; and the Levites shall bring up a tenth of the tithes to the house of our God, to ^vthe rooms of the storehouse.

³⁹For the children of Israel and the children of Levi ^wshall bring the offering of the grain, of the new wine and the oil, to the storerooms where the articles of the sanctuary are, where the priests who minister and the gatekeepers ^xand the singers are; and we will not ^yneglect the house of our God.

The People Dwelling in Jerusalem

11 Now the leaders of the people dwelt at Jerusalem; the rest of the people cast lots to bring one out of ten to dwell in Jerusalem, ^athe holy city, and nine-tenths were to dwell in other cities. ²And the people blessed all the men who ^bwillingly offered themselves to dwell at Jerusalem.

³These are the heads of the province who dwelt in Jerusalem. (But in the cities of Judah everyone dwelt in his own possession in their cities—Israelites, priests, Levites, ^dNethinim, and ^edescendants of Solomon's servants.) ⁴Also ^fin Jerusalem

³⁴ ^o Neh. 13:31; [Is. 40:16] ^p Lev. 6:12
³⁵ ^q Ex. 23:19;
34:26; Lev. 19:23;
Num. 18:12; Deut.
26:1, 2
³⁶ ^r Ex. 13:2, 12, 13;
Lev. 27:26, 27; Num.
18:15, 16
³⁷ ^s Lev. 23:17;
Num. 15:19; 18:12;
Deut. 18:4; 26:2
^t Lev. 27:30; Num.
18:21; Mal. 3:10
⁴ Temple
³⁸ ^u Num. 18:26
^v 1 Chr. 9:26; 2 Chr.
31:11
³⁹ ^w Deut. 12:6, 11;
2 Chr. 31:12; Neh.
13:12 ^x Neh. 13:10,
11 ^y [Heb. 10:25]

CHAPTER 11

¹ ^a Neh. 10:18;
Matt. 4:5; 5:35;
27:53
² ^b Judg. 5:9; 2 Chr.
17:16
³ ^c 1 Chr. 9:2, 3
^d Ezra 2:43 ^e Ezra
2:55
⁴ ^f 1 Chr. 9:3

⁹ Gen. 38:29
⁹ ¹ Or Hassenuah
10 ^h 1 Chr. 9:10
14 ² Or the son of
Haggadolim
16 ¹ Ezra 10:15
/ Ezra 8:33 ^k 1 Chr.
26:29 ³ Temple
17 ⁴ Or Michah
18 ¹ Neh. 11:1

dwelt some of the children of Judah and of the children of Benjamin.

The children of Judah: Athaiah the son of Uzziyah, the son of Zechariah, the son of Amariah, the son of Shephatiah, the son of Mahalalel, of the children of ^gPerez; ⁵and Maaseiah the son of Baruch, the son of Col-Hozeh, the son of Hazaiah, the son of Adaiah, the son of Joiarib, the son of Zechariah, the son of Shiloni. ⁶All the sons of Perez who dwelt at Jerusalem were four hundred and sixty-eight valiant men.

⁷And these are the sons of Benjamin: Sallu the son of Meshullam, the son of Joed, the son of Pedaiiah, the son of Kolaiah, the son of Maaseiah, the son of Ithiel, the son of Jeshaiiah; ⁸and after him Gabbai and Sallai, nine hundred and twenty-eight. ⁹Joel the son of Zichri was their overseer, and Judah the son of ⁱSenuah was second over the city.

¹⁰^hOf the priests: Jedaiah the son of Joiarib, and Jachin; ¹¹Seraiah the son of Hilkiah, the son of Meshullam, the son of Zadok, the son of Meraioth, the son of Ahitub, was the leader of the house of God. ¹²Their brethren who did the work of the house were eight hundred and twenty-two; and Adaiah the son of Jeroham, the son of Pelaliah, the son of Amzi, the son of Zechariah, the son of Pashhur, the son of Malchijah, ¹³and his brethren, heads of the fathers' houses, were two hundred and forty-two; and Amashai the son of Azarel, the son of Ahzai, the son of Meshillemoth, the son of Immer, ¹⁴and their brethren, mighty men of valor, were one hundred and twenty-eight. Their overseer was Zabdiel ²the son of one of the great men.

¹⁵Also of the Levites: Shemaiah the son of Hasshub, the son of Azrikam, the son of Hashabiah, the son of Bunni; ¹⁶ⁱShabbethai and ^jJozabad, of the heads of the Levites, had the oversight of ^kthe business outside of the ³house of God; ¹⁷Mattaniah the son of ⁴Micha, the son of Zabdi, the son of Asaph, the leader who began the thanksgiving with prayer; Bakbukiah, the second among his brethren; and Abda the son of Shammua, the son of Galal, the son of Jeduthun. ¹⁸All the Levites in ^lthe holy city were two hundred and eighty-four.

11:1 Nehemiah cast lots to repopulate Jerusalem. Here the casting of lots was to determine God's will. Solomon wrote, "The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the LORD" (Prov. 16:33). **one out of ten:** This was the proportion demanded in order to bring the population of Jerusalem to the level deemed necessary for its strength and viability.

11:4-9 Four hundred and sixty-eight men from the tribe of Judah lived in Jerusalem; nine hundred and twenty-eight men from the tribe of Benjamin also lived there. According to

1 Chr. 9:3, descendants of Ephraim and Manasseh also made their home in Jerusalem.

11:12 The work of the house refers to the work of the temple—specifically, attending the sacrifices of the temple.

11:14 Mighty men of valor refers to the men who guarded the city of Jerusalem.

11:16 The oversight of the business outside of the house of God refers to the maintenance of the temple, including repairs.

¹⁹Moreover the gatekeepers, Akkub, Talmon, and their brethren who kept the gates, *were* one hundred and seventy-two.

²⁰And the rest of Israel, of the priests and Levites, *were* in all the cities of Judah, everyone in his inheritance. ²¹*m* But the Nethinim dwelt in Ophel. And Zihai and Gishpa *were* over the Nethinim.

²²Also the overseer of the Levites at Jerusalem *was* Uzzi the son of Bani, the son of Hashabiah, the son of Mattaniah, the son of Micha, of the sons of Asaph, the singers in charge of the ⁵service of the ⁶house of God. ²³For ⁿ*it was* the king's command concerning them that a ⁷certain portion should be for the singers, a quota day by day. ²⁴Pethahiah the son of Meshezabel, of the children of ^oZerah the son of Judah, *was* ^pthe ⁸king's deputy in all matters concerning the people.

The People Dwelling Outside Jerusalem

²⁵And as for the villages with their fields, *some* of the children of Judah dwelt in ^qKirjath Arba and its villages, Dibon and its villages, Jekabzeel and its villages; ²⁶in Jeshua, Moladah, Beth Pelet, ²⁷Hazar Shual, and Beersheba and its villages; ²⁸in Ziklag and Meconah and its villages; ²⁹in En Rimmon, Zorah, Jarmuth, ³⁰Zanoah, Adullam, and their villages; in Lachish and its fields; in Azekah and its villages. They dwelt from Beersheba to the Valley of Hinnom.

³¹Also the children of Benjamin from Geba *dwelt* in Michmash, Aija, and Bethel, and their villages; ³²in Anathoth, Nob, Ananiah; ³³in Hazor, Ramah, Gittaim; ³⁴in Hadid, Zeboim, Neballat; ³⁵in Lod, Ono, and ^rthe Valley of Craftsmen. ³⁶Some of the Judean divisions of Levites *were* in Benjamin.

The Priests and Levites

12 Now these *are* the ^apriests and the Levites who came up with ^bZerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua: ^cSeraiah, Jeremiah, Ezra, ²Am-

²¹ ^m 2 Chr. 27:3; Neh. 3:26
²² ⁵ work ⁶ Temple
²³ ⁿ Ezra 6:8, 9; 7:20
⁷ fixed share
²⁴ ^o Gen. 38:30
^p 1 Chr. 18:17 ⁸ Lit. at the king's hand
²⁵ ^q Josh. 14:15
³⁵ ^r 1 Chr. 4:14

CHAPTER 12

¹ ^a Ezra 2:1, 2; 7:7
^b Neh. 7:7; Matt. 1:12, 13 ^c Neh. 10:2-8

² ⁱ Melichu, v. 14
³ ² Shebaniah, v. 14
⁴ ³ Harim, v. 15
⁵ ⁴ Meraioth, v. 15
⁶ ⁴ Luke 1:5
⁷ ⁵ Ginnethon, v. 16
⁸ ⁶ Minjamin, v. 17
⁹ ⁷ Moadiah, v. 17
¹⁰ ⁷ Ezra 3:2; Hag. 1:1; Zech. 3:1
¹¹ ⁸ Sallai, v. 20
¹² ⁸ Neh. 11:17
¹³ ⁹ Neh. 7:70, 71; 8:13; 11:13
¹⁴ ⁹ Malluch, v. 2
¹⁵ ¹ Shechaniah, v. 3
¹⁶ ² Rehun, v. 3
¹⁷ ³ Meremoth, v. 3
¹⁸ ⁴ Mijamin, v. 5
¹⁹ ⁵ Maadiah, v. 5
²⁰ ⁶ Sallu, v. 7
²¹ ¹ 1 Chr. 24:6
²² ¹ 1 Chr. 9:14-22
²³ ¹ Neh. 11:17
²⁴ ¹ Ezra 3:11 ¹ 1 Chr. 23-26 ⁷ Lit. watch by watch

ariah, ¹Malluch, Hattush, ^{3,2}Shechaniah, ³Rehum, ⁴Meremoth, ⁴Iddo, ⁵Ginnethoi, ^dAbijah, ^{5,6}Mijamin, ⁷Maadiah, Bilgah, ⁶Shemaiah, Joarib, Jedaiah, ^{7,8}Sallu, Amok, Hilkiah, and Jedaiah.

These *were* the heads of the priests and their brethren in the days of ^eJeshua.

⁸Moreover the Levites *were* Jeshua, Binnui, Kadmiel, Sherebiah, Judah, and Mattaniah ^f*who led* the thanksgiving psalms, he and his brethren. ⁹Also Bakbukiah and Unni, their brethren, *stood* across from them in *their* duties.

¹⁰Jeshua begot Joiakim, Joiakim begot Eliashib, Eliashib begot Joiada, ¹¹Joiada begot Jonathan, and Jonathan begot Jaddua.

¹²Now in the days of Joiakim, the priests, the ^gheads of the fathers' *houses were*: of Seraiah, Meraiah; of Jeremiah, Hananiah; ¹³of Ezra, Meshullam; of Amariah, Jehohanan; ¹⁴of ⁹Melichu, Jonathan; of ¹Shebaniah, Joseph; ¹⁵of ²Harim, Adna; of ³Meraioth, Helkai; ¹⁶of Iddo, Zechariah; of Ginnethon, Meshullam; ¹⁷of Abijah, Zichri; *the son* of ⁴Minjamin; of ⁵Moadiah, Piltai; ¹⁸of Bilgah, Shammua; of Shemaiah, Jehonathan; ¹⁹of Joarib, Mattenai; of Jedaiah, Uzzi; ²⁰of ⁶Sallai, Kallai; of Amok, Eber; ²¹of Hilkiah, Hashabiah; and of Jedaiah, Nethanel.

²²During the reign of Darius the Persian, a record *was also kept* of the Levites and priests *who had been* ^hheads of their fathers' *houses* in the days of Eliashib, Joiada, Johanan, and Jaddua. ²³The sons of Levi, the heads of the fathers' *houses* until the days of Johanan the son of Eliashib, *were* written in the book of the ⁱchronicles.

²⁴And the heads of the Levites *were* Hashabiah, Sherebiah, and Jeshua the son of Kadmiel, with their brothers across from them, to ^jpraise and give thanks, ^kgroup ⁷alternating with group, ^laccording to the command of David the man of God. ²⁵Mattaniah, Bakbukiah, Obadiah, Meshullam, Talmon, and Akkub *were*

11:19 The gatekeepers were also defenders of the city.

11:22 The overseer of the Levites: Uzzi was a principal administrator of the temple.

11:24 The king's deputy was the representative of the people. This individual may have received and forwarded petitions and complaints to the king.

11:25-36 These verses record the residents outside Jerusalem—namely the tribes of Judah (vv. 25-30) and Benjamin (vv. 31-36). The people of Judah lived in 17 towns and their surrounding villages. The descendants of Benjamin occupied 15 sites.

11:25 Kirjath Arba is another name for Hebron.

12:1 The return of Zerubbabel is recorded in Ezra 1-6. Jeshua is Joshua the priest. Ezra: This is not the priest who wrote the book of the same name (see Ezra 7:1).

12:9 stood across from them: The singing was conducted with two choirs standing opposite each other.

12:10, 11 The listing of the descendants of Eliashib all the way to Jaddua may indicate that someone who lived after Ezra and Nehemiah added some of these names.

12:12-21 In vv. 1-7, the names of 22 priests are listed. Here only 20 names are recorded. Hattush (v. 2) and Maadiah (v. 5) are not mentioned in this list.

12:22 Darius refers to Darius II (Nothus), who ruled Persia from 423 to 405 B.C.

12:23 The book of the chronicles was not the biblical book, but an official record of the heads of the fathers' houses.

gatekeepers keeping the watch at the storerooms of the gates. ²⁶These *lived* in the days of Joiakim the son of Jeshua, the son of ^gJozadak, and in the days of Nehemiah ^mthe governor, and of Ezra the priest, ⁿthe scribe.

Nehemiah Dedicates the Wall

²⁷Now at ^othe dedication of the wall of Jerusalem they sought out the Levites in all their places, to bring them to Jerusalem to celebrate the dedication with gladness, ^pboth with thanksgivings and singing, *with* cymbals and stringed instruments and harps. ²⁸And the sons of the singers gathered together from the countryside around Jerusalem, from the ^qvillages of the Netophathites, ²⁹from the house of Gilgal, and from the fields of Geba and Azmaveth; for the singers had built themselves villages all around Jerusalem. ³⁰Then the priests and Levites ^rpurified themselves, and purified the people, the gates, and the wall.

³¹So I brought the leaders of Judah up on the wall, and appointed two large thanksgiving choirs. ^s*One* went to the right hand on the wall ^ttoward the Refuge Gate. ³²After them went Hoshaiiah and half of the leaders of Judah, ³³and Azariah, Ezra, Meshullam, ³⁴Judah, Benjamin, Shemaiah, Jeremiah, ³⁵and some of the priests' sons ^uwith trumpets—Zechariah the son of Jonathan, the son of Shemaiah, the son of Matthaniah, the son of Michaiah, the son of Zaccur, the son of Asaph, ³⁶and his brethren, Shemaiah, Azarel, Milalai, Gilalai, Maai, Nethanel, Judah, and Hanani, with ^vthe musical ^winstruments of David the man of God. And Ezra the scribe *went* before them. ³⁷^xBy the Fountain Gate, in front of them, they went up ^ythe stairs of the ^zCity of David, on the stairway of the wall, beyond the house of David, as far as ^athe Water Gate eastward.

³⁸^bThe other thanksgiving choir went

²⁶ ^m Neh. 8:9 ⁿ Ezra 7:6, 11 ^g Jehozadak, 1 Chr. 6:14
²⁷ ^o Deut. 20:5; Neh. 7:1; Ps. 30:title
^p 1 Chr. 25:6; 2 Chr. 5:13; 7:6
²⁸ ^q 1 Chr. 9:16
³⁰ ^r Ezra 6:20; Neh. 13:22, 30
³¹ ^s Neh. 12:38
^t Neh. 2:13; 3:13
³⁵ ^u Num. 10:2, 8
³⁶ ^v 1 Chr. 23:5
^w 2 Chr. 29:26, 27
³⁷ ^x Neh. 2:14; 3:15
^y Neh. 3:15 ^z 2 Sam. 5:7-9 ^a Neh. 3:26; 8:1, 3, 16
³⁸ ^b Neh. 12:31

^c Neh. 3:11 ^d Neh. 3:8
³⁹ ^e 2 Kin. 14:13; Neh. 8:16 ^f Neh. 3:6
^g Neh. 3:3 ^h Neh. 3:1
ⁱ Neh. 3:32
^j Jer. 32:2 ^k Heb. Hammeah
⁴¹ ^l Or Mijamin, v. 5
⁴² ^m Lit. *made their voice to be heard*
⁴³ ⁿ Ezra 3:13
⁴⁴ ^o 2 Chr. 31:11, 12; Neh. 13:5, 12, 13 ^p Neh. 10:37-39
⁴⁵ ^q Lit. *stood*
⁴⁶ ^r 1 Chr. 25; 26
⁴⁷ ^s 1 Chr. 25:1; 2 Chr. 29:30
⁴⁸ ^t Neh. 11:23
⁴⁹ Num. 18:21, 24
⁵⁰ Num. 18:26 ^u set apart

the opposite *way*, and I *was* behind them with half of the people on the wall, going past the ^cTower of the Ovens as far as ^dthe Broad Wall, ³⁹^eand above the Gate of Ephraim, above ^fthe Old Gate, above ^gthe Fish Gate, ^hthe Tower of Hananel, the Tower of ⁱthe Hundred, as far as ^jthe Sheep Gate; and they stopped by ^kthe Gate of the Prison.

⁴⁰So the two thanksgiving choirs stood in the house of God, likewise I and the half of the rulers with me; ⁴¹and the priests, Eliakim, Maaseiah, ¹Minjamin, Michaiah, Elioenai, Zechariah, *and* Hananiah, with trumpets; ⁴²also Maaseiah, Shemaiah, Eleazar, Uzzi, Jehohanan, Malchijah, Elam, and Ezer. The singers ²sang loudly with Jezrahiah the director.

⁴³Also that day they offered great sacrifices, and rejoiced, for God had made them rejoice with great joy; the women and the children also rejoiced, so that the joy of Jerusalem was heard ^kafar off.

Temple Responsibilities

⁴⁴¹And at the same time some were appointed over the rooms of the storehouse for the offerings, the firstfruits, and the ^mtithes, to gather into them from the fields of the cities the portions specified by the Law for the priests and Levites; for Judah rejoiced over the priests and Levites who ³ministered. ⁴⁵Both the singers and the gatekeepers kept the charge of their God and the charge of the purification, ⁿaccording to the command of David *and* Solomon his son. ⁴⁶For in the days of David ^oand Asaph of old *there were* chiefs of the singers, and songs of praise and thanksgiving to God. ⁴⁷In the days of Zerubbabel and in the days of Nehemiah all Israel gave the portions for the singers and the gatekeepers, a portion for ^peach day. ^qThey also ⁴consecrated *holy things* for the Levites, ^rand the Levites consecrated *them* for the children of Aaron.

12:27–29 After the completion of Jerusalem's wall (ch. 6), a revival of the people broke out (see chs. 8–10). After the revival, Nehemiah took steps to repopulate the city (see 7:4, 5; 11:1, 2). These two factors explain why the dedication of the wall was delayed. The people celebrated the dedication of the wall **with gladness**, referring not only to their festivity but to the worship of God. **Thanksgivings**, a term commonly found in the Book of Psalms (see Ps. 147:7), means "public acknowledgment," "to declare aloud, in public, to another." This word, along with **singing and instruments**, suggests the use of the Psalms in musical settings with words of praise and instrumental accompaniment.

12:30 The method of purification is not stated, but the order is—the **priests and Levites**, followed by **the people, the gates, and the wall**. Those who bore the vessels of the Lord had to be cleansed first.

12:36 The association of the name **David** with **musical instruments** was a reference to Israel's glorious past.

12:43 The **sacrifices** offered at the dedication of the wall probably were not burnt offerings, but peace offerings in which the people shared a common meal. The dedication was an occasion for great rejoicing. Everyone, including wives and children, took part.

12:44–47 After the dedication of the wall, the people took steps to provide for the **priests, Levites, singers, and gatekeepers** who served in the temple. The joy of the Lord should produce service for the Lord. In this case, the people's joy overflowed into providing for the temple. Men were appointed as custodians of the firstfruits and tithes. **the days of David and Asaph**: The times of the great music of Israel were never forgotten; they served as a model for the days still to come.

Principles of Separation

13 On that day ^athey read from the Book of Moses in the hearing of the people, and in it was found written ^bthat no Ammonite or Moabite should ever come into the assembly of God, ²because they had not met the children of Israel with bread and water, but ^chired Balaam against them to curse them. ^dHowever, our God turned the curse into a blessing. ³So it was, when they had heard the Law, ^ethat they separated all the mixed multitude from Israel.

The Reforms of Nehemiah

⁴Now before this, ^fEliashib the priest, having authority over the storerooms of the house of our God, *was* allied with ^gTobiah. ⁵And he had prepared for him a large room, ^hwhere previously they had stored the grain offerings, the frankincense, the articles, the tithes of grain, the new wine and oil, ⁱwhich were commanded *to be given* to the Levites and singers and gatekeepers, and the offerings for the priests. ⁶But during all this I was not in Jerusalem, ^jfor in the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes king of Babylon I had returned to the king. Then after certain days I obtained leave from the king, ⁷and I came to Jerusalem and discovered the evil that Eliashib had done for Tobiah, in ^kpreparing a room for him in the courts of the ^lhouse of God. ⁸And it grieved me bitterly; therefore I threw all the household goods of Tobiah out of the room. ⁹Then I commanded them to ^lcleanse the rooms; and I brought back into them the articles of the house of God, with the grain offering and the frankincense.

¹⁰I also realized that the portions for

CHAPTER 13

¹ ^a [Deut. 31:11, 12];
² Kin. 23:2; Neh.
 8:3, 8; 9:3; Is. 34:16
³ Deut. 23:3, 4
⁴ ^c Num. 22:5; Josh.
 24:9, 10 ^d Num.
 23:1; 24:10; Deut.
 23:5
⁵ ^e Neh. 9:2; 10:28
⁶ ^f Neh. 12:10
⁷ Neh. 2:10; 4:3; 6:1
⁸ ^g Neh. 12:44
⁹ Num. 18:21, 24
¹⁰ ^h Neh. 5:14-16
¹¹ ⁱ Neh. 13:1, 5
¹² Temple
¹³ ^j 2 Chr. 29:5, 15, 16

¹⁰ ^m Neh. 10:37;
 Mal. 3:8 ⁿ Num.
 35:2
¹¹ ^o Neh. 13:17, 25
¹² ^p Neh. 10:39
¹³ ^q Neh. 10:38;
 12:44
¹⁴ ^r 2 Chr. 31:12
¹⁵ ^s 1 Cor. 4:2
¹⁶ ^t Neh. 5:19;
 13:22, 31
¹⁷ ^u [Ex. 20:10]
¹⁸ ^v Neh. 10:31; [Jer.
 17:21]
¹⁹ ^w Ezra 9:13; [Jer.
 17:21]
²⁰ ^x Lev. 23:32

the Levites had ^mnot been given *them*; for each of the Levites and the singers who did the work had gone back to ⁿhis field. ¹¹So ^oI contended with the rulers, and said, ^p“Why is the house of God forsaken?” And I gathered them together and set them in their place. ¹²^qThen all Judah brought the tithe of the grain and the new wine and the oil to the storehouse. ¹³^rAnd I appointed as treasurers over the storehouse Shelemiah the priest and Zadok the scribe, and of the Levites, Pedaiiah; and next to them *was* Hanan the son of Zaccur, the son of Mattaniah; for they were considered ^sfaithful, and their task *was* to distribute to their brethren.

¹⁴^tRemember me, O my God, concerning this, and do not wipe out my good deeds that I have done for the house of my God, and for its services!

¹⁵In those days I saw *people* in Judah treading wine presses ^uon the Sabbath, and bringing in sheaves, and loading donkeys with wine, grapes, figs, and all *kinds of burdens*, ^vwhich they brought into Jerusalem on the Sabbath day. And I warned *them* about the day on which they were selling provisions. ¹⁶Men of Tyre dwelt there also, who brought in fish and all kinds of goods, and sold *them* on the Sabbath to the children of Judah, and in Jerusalem.

¹⁷Then I contended with the nobles of Judah, and said to them, “What evil thing is this that you do, by which you profane the Sabbath day? ¹⁸^wDid not your fathers do thus, and did not our God bring all this disaster on us and on this city? Yet you bring added wrath on Israel by profaning the Sabbath.”

¹⁹So it was, at the gates of Jerusalem, as it ^xbegan to be dark before the

13:1-3 The first area of backsliding for the **people** was their relationship with foreigners. Even though 9:2 states that “those of Israelite lineage separated themselves from all foreigners,” the people once again allowed foreigners into the congregation. Relationships between the Jewish people and the foreigners in the land had caused them to violate God’s command (see also 1 Cor. 15:33).

13:4-9 The second major area of backsliding dealt with in this chapter (vv. 1-3) was that the high priest was allowing God’s enemy to live in God’s house. **Eliashib** was the high priest (vv. 4, 28). **Tobiah** was one of the men who had tried to stop the building of the wall (2:10, 19; 4:3; 6:10-12, 17, 19). Eliashib allowed Tobiah to stay in the large room of the temple that had previously been used for storing grain and the like. In fact, Tobiah had been given access to several rooms of the temple.

13:8, 9 When Nehemiah returned to Jerusalem, he immediately initiated reforms. He removed Tobiah’s furniture from the chamber and then ordered that the room be cleansed. When the washing, scouring, and sprinkling with blood were completed, the chamber was once again filled with **grain** and the other items that had been there before.

13:10, 11 Contended is a term used often in the prophets to refer to God bringing a legal case against His errant people (see Jer. 2:9). Nehemiah was acting like a prophet, bringing a legal case against an

apostate person. He contended for what was right. Note the pointed question he asked: **Why is the house of God forsaken?**

13:12, 13 Then all Judah brought the tithe: The gifts that should have been brought earlier were finally being brought by the people. **treasurers:** Nehemiah chose faithful men (see 7:2; 1 Cor. 4:2; 2 Tim. 2:2) to make sure the gifts were distributed properly.

13:14 Normally prayer is offered to the Lord before or during an event. In this case, Nehemiah’s prayer followed his **good deeds**. Nehemiah was saying, “What I did, I did in accordance with Your will; now preserve it and protect me.”

13:15-22 Another difficulty that Nehemiah faced concerned **the Sabbath**. The Jewish people in Judah were working on Saturday. People were buying and selling produce in Jerusalem. **Men of Tyre** brought fish and other things to be sold both in **Judah** and **Jerusalem**. These were all violations of Ex. 20:8-11 and of the people’s own oath (10:31). The people had put their business ahead of obedience to God’s command concerning their day of rest.

13:19-22 I commanded the gates to be shut: Nehemiah took charge, ordering the gates to be closed from Friday evening to Saturday evening and even posting his own servants as guards. When the **merchants** set up outside the wall, Nehemiah **warned** them that if they stayed around again **on the Sabbath**, he would himself attack them. Awed by the threat of the one-man army, the merchants left.

Sabbath, that I commanded the gates to be shut, and charged that they must not be opened till after the Sabbath. ¹⁹Then I posted *some* of my servants at the gates, *so that* no burdens would be brought in on the Sabbath day. ²⁰Now the merchants and sellers of all kinds of ²wares ³lodged outside Jerusalem once or twice.

²¹Then I warned them, and said to them, “Why do you spend the night ⁴around the wall? If you do *so* again, I will lay hands on you!” From that time on they came no *more* on the Sabbath. ²²And I commanded the Levites that ⁵they should cleanse themselves, and that they should go and guard the gates, to sanctify the Sabbath day.

Remember me, O my God, *concerning* this also, and spare me according to the greatness of Your mercy!

²³In those days I also saw Jews *who* ⁶had married women of ⁷Ashdod, Ammon, and Moab. ²⁴And half of their children spoke the language of Ashdod, and could not speak the language of Judah, but spoke according to the language of one or the other people.

²⁵So I ⁸contended with them and

¹⁹ ⁹Jer. 17:21, 22
²⁰ ²merchandise
³spent the night
²¹ ⁴Lit. before
²² ²1 Chr. 15:12;
Neh. 12:30
²³ ⁵Ex. 34:16;
Deut. 7:3, 4; Ezra
9:2; Neh. 10:30
²⁴ Neh. 4:7
²⁵ ⁸Prov. 28:4

⁴ Ezra 10:5;
Neh. 10:29, 30
⁵ pronounced them
cursed
²⁶ ⁶1 Kin. 11:1, 2
⁷2 Sam. 12:24, 25
⁹1 Kin. 11:4-8
²⁷ ⁷Ezra 10:2;
Neh. 13:23
²⁸ ¹Neh. 12:10, 12
¹Neh. 4:1, 7; 6:1, 2
²⁹ ⁸Neh. 6:14 / Mal.
2:4, 11, 12
³⁰ ⁹Neh. 10:30
⁹ Neh. 12:1
³¹ ⁹Neh. 10:34
⁹ Neh. 13:14, 22

⁵cursed them, struck some of them and pulled out their hair, and made them ¹⁰swear by God, *saying*, “You shall not give your daughters as wives to their sons, nor take their daughters for your sons or yourselves. ²⁶Did not Solomon king of Israel sin by these things? Yet among many nations there was no king like him, ¹¹who was beloved of his God; and God made him king over all Israel. ¹²Nevertheless pagan women caused even him to sin. ²⁷Should we then hear of your doing all this great evil, ¹²transgressing against our God by marrying pagan women?”

²⁸And *one* of the sons ¹³of Joiada, the son of Eliashib the high priest, *was* a son-in-law of ¹³Sanballat the Horonite; therefore I drove him from me.

²⁹¹⁴Remember them, O my God, because they have defiled the priesthood and ¹⁴the covenant of the priesthood and the Levites.

³⁰¹⁵Thus I cleansed them of everything pagan. I also ¹⁵assigned duties to the priests and the Levites, each to his service, ³¹and *to bringing* ¹⁶the wood offering and the firstfruits at appointed times.

¹⁶Remember me, O my God, for good!

13:23, 24 The problem of Jews marrying foreigners had been dealt with 30 years before by Ezra (see Ezra 9:1–4). The people had then made a covenant, vowing that they would not do this (10:30). In this case Nehemiah found children of the mixed marriages who could not speak Hebrew, the **language** of Scripture. Without knowing Hebrew, these children could not learn the Law in their homes or worship in the holy temple. The Jews were raising children who did not know or worship the living God.


13:25–27 Nehemiah’s attack on the Jews who had married non-Jews was confrontational, direct, and even brutal. **contended . . . cursed . . . struck . . . pulled out their hair:** It is unnerving to read this list of verbs and imagine the scene. These were not the dispassionate remarks of someone giving a seminar. Nehemiah used everything he could, including his hands, to enforce obedience to the Law. **made them swear:** Nehemiah forced them to comply to the will of God in this matter. After all, this was the principal issue that had led to Israel’s captivity in the beginning. Nehemiah simply could not allow such a disaster to happen again. **Solomon:** Despite his greatness and God’s love for him, even Solomon had sinned

greatly in this regard (see 1 Kin. 11:4–8). How then, with the great lessons of the past so clearly before them, could the people repeat these sins?

13:28, 29 I drove him from me: This action was taken against the most prominent offender, the grandson of the high priest Eliashib. This young man had married the daughter of Sanballat (2:10), the governor of Samaria and the archenemy of the Jewish people. The marriage was particularly offensive because it formed a treasonable alliance with Israel’s enemies and compromised the purity of the high priesthood (ch. 12). Because of the seriousness of this offense, Nehemiah took dramatic action. He expelled the young man from the community, praying that God would remember those who had defiled the priesthood.

13:30, 31 I cleansed them of everything pagan: Nehemiah’s testimony was that he had done everything he knew how to bring about righteousness in the priesthood and among the Levites, including their offerings and service. Nehemiah’s last recorded words (see 5:19), **remember me, O my God, for good,** would serve well as the last words of any person of faith.

THE BOOK OF ESTHER



THE BOOK OF ESTHER has all the elements of a great novel. There is the beautiful young orphan girl who rises from obscurity to become queen. She even hides a secret that could bring about her demise. Then there is the ambitious villain whose passion is to destroy the innocent. Finally the story line involves a power struggle, romantic love, and a startling exposé. But in the end, the point of this true story is clear: Once again the Israelites' God miraculously saves His people from certain destruction.

Author and Date The identity of the author of Esther is unknown. However the writer was probably Jewish and lived in Persia. A strong Jewish spirit pervades the book, particularly evident in the account of the establishment of the Jewish festival Purim. Moreover, the author was acquainted with Persian culture, as the extensive descriptions of the palace complex at Shushan (also called Susa) and the domestic details about the reign of King Ahasuerus indicate. For these reasons, some Jewish rabbis have ascribed the authorship of the book to Mordecai, one of its principal characters.

Whoever the author was, the Book of Esther was probably written shortly after the reign of Ahasuerus, no earlier than 465 B.C. The author writes of the rule of Ahasuerus and the deeds of Mordecai (10:2) in the past tense, indicating the book was not composed during Ahasuerus's reign. Yet the fact that Greek words do not appear in the book rules out a date after about 300 B.C. when the Greek language became more prominent in the ancient Middle East. On the other hand, the numerous words of Persian origin in the book point to its being composed during the latter half of the fifth century B.C. For example, the book calls Xerxes by the Hebrew name Ahasuerus, a spelling derived from the Persian Khshayarsha. If it had been written after 300 B.C. a spelling closer to the Greek form Xerxes would be expected.

Historical Background The events of Esther span a decade during the reign of Ahasuerus (Xerxes), who succeeded his father Darius as ruler of the Persian Empire in 486 B.C. During his reign (486–465 B.C.), Ahasuerus continued his father's campaign against Greece for its role in the Ionian revolt. After suffering defeat, he retired to Shushan, one of the four capitals of the Persian Empire. Around 483 B.C. he threw an extravagant feast in Shushan to celebrate his achievements and ten years later he executed Haman for his evil schemes (1:3; 7:9).

Historical Accuracy Some critical scholars question the historical accuracy of Esther on various counts. One difficulty is the passage that describes the royal feast (1:3–5). The passage appears to indicate that the feast lasted a particularly long time: "one hundred and eighty days in all" (1:4). However, a better interpretation is that this long period of time was the period of preparation for the military campaign in Greece, during which Ahasuerus displayed his power and wealth to his officials. The feast itself lasted seven days—a lengthy time for a feast, but not an incredible period (1:5).

Another difficulty is that neither Vashti nor Esther is mentioned outside the Bible. However, historians do note that following his unsuccessful campaign against Greece (482–479 B.C.), Ahasuerus sought refuge in his harem. This coincides with the elevation of Esther (2:17). Furthermore, the word translated "queen" (1:9; 2:22) may refer merely to a principal wife rather than to a woman who ruled beside the king. Thus the obscurity of

Esther and Vashti would be understandable. Even so, some still balk at the idea that a Persian ruler would marry a Jewish woman rather than choosing someone from the aristocratic Persian families. However, the Book of Esther makes it clear that Esther initially hid her Jewish identity. She used her Persian name Ishtar or Esther instead of her Hebrew name Hadassah. The climax of the story involves her surprising revelation that she was a Jew.

Importance in the Canon The Book of Esther has held an important place in the canon due to its strong testimony to God's providence and protection of His people. However, the book has been challenged by some. One of the main points in the dispute is the remarkable fact that neither the word God nor God's name Yahweh is found in the book. There are two explanations that may account for this. First, it may be a result of the author's chosen point of view. The author might have viewed the Jewish people who remained in Persia and did not return to the land of Israel (Ezra 1:1) as a people cut off from the principal blessings of God. Thus the absence of God's name in the book might be a way of expressing God's distance from the exiles. At the same time, the book clearly reveals God's surprising protection of them.

Second, the author may have written the book in the form of a Persian state chronicle in order to explain to the Persians the Jewish celebration of Purim. In accordance with this style, the author emphasizes the king's name, titles, and lists, but writes about the Jewish people in a detached tone. This could help explain why the Book of Esther is the only book in the Bible that does not directly mention God.

Themes Through the twists and turns of the Book of Esther's story line, the author weaves an underlying story about God's character. The narrative demonstrates God's providence and sovereignty in a situation that seemed hopeless. The Israelites were living among foreigners who did not fear God and who did not care about them. An implacable enemy of the Israelites had gained power at court and was laying a plan to destroy the Jews. But at a time when God seemed so distant, He was actually preparing to deliver His people. God was in control of every event—even the sleeplessness of a foreign king (6:1).

Thus in the Persian capital, God demonstrated His covenant loyalty to the Israelites. Long ago, God had promised Abraham that He would curse any individual who cursed the Israelites (Gen. 12:2, 3). The downfall of Haman dramatically illustrated God's faithfulness to His promise. Even to the Israelites who remained in a foreign land, God remained true to His word, for they were still His people. Thus the author of Esther clearly illustrates what the Israelites were celebrating at the Feast of Purim: God's faithful protection of His people.



Persian archers on glazed brick from the Achaemenid palace in Susa (sixth century B.C.)

Z. Radovan/www.BibleLandPictures.com

CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

Esther puts herself in harm's way for her people as she attempts to be an advocate. The similarities to Jesus' mission on our behalf are staggering. Esther's rise to power was orchestrated by God "for such a time as this" (4:14), the apostle Paul describes Jesus' entrance into our world as something that occurred "when the fullness of the time had come" (Gal. 4:4).

Another remarkable similarity between Esther's story and Jesus is the satanic attempt to destroy the divine plot of redemption God set in motion. But in both cases, God brings about His purpose by preserving His people in spite of opposition and danger.

ESTHER OUTLINE

- I. A dethroned queen and a discovered queen 1:1—2:23
 - A. The grand banquet 1:1–9
 - B. Vashti's reluctance to expose herself to the drunken crowd 1:10–12
 - C. Vashti's demotion as the chief of wives 1:13–22
 - D. The search for a new queen 2:1–4
 - E. The discovery and approval of Esther 2:5–18
 - F. Mordecai's revelation of a plot 2:19–23
- II. Haman's schemes against the Jewish people in Persia 3:1—7:10
 - A. Haman's hatred of Mordecai 3:1–6
 - B. Haman's decree 3:7–15
 - C. Mordecai's reminder to Esther 4:1–17
 - D. Esther's two banquets 5:1—7:10
- III. The deliverance of the Jewish people 8:1—9:32
 - A. A royal reversal 8:1–14
 - B. Rejoicing among the Jewish people 8:15–17
 - C. Two days of deliverance 9:1–17
 - D. The Feast of Purim 9:18–32
- IV. Mordecai's preeminence 10:1–4

538 B.C.

The return of the Jews to Judea begins under Cyrus

521–486 B.C.

Darius I reigns in Persia

486–465 B.C.

Ahasuerus (Xerxes I) reigns in Persia; events of Esther

464–424 B.C.

Artaxerxes Longimanus reigns in Persia

458 B.C.

Ezra leads a group of returnees



Painting by Bernardo Cavallino of Esther approaching King Ahasuerus

Esther in front of Ahasuerus, c.1645–50, Cavallino, Bernardo (1616–54)/Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence, Italy/The Bridgeman Art Library

The King Dethrones Queen Vashti

Now it came to pass in the days of ^aAhasuerus¹ (this *was* the Ahasuerus who reigned ^bover one hundred and twenty-seven provinces, ^cfrom India to Ethiopia), ²in those days when King Ahasuerus ^dsat on the throne of his kingdom, which *was* in ^eShushan² the ³citadel, ³that in the third year of his reign he ^fmade a feast for all his officials and servants—the powers of Persia and Media, the nobles, and the princes of the provinces *being* before him— ⁴when he showed the riches of his glorious kingdom and the splendor of his excellent majesty for many days, one hundred and eighty days *in all*.
⁵And when these days were completed, the king made a feast lasting seven

CHAPTER 1
1 ^a Ezra 4:6; Dan. 9:1 ^b Esth. 8:9 ^c Dan. 6:1
2 ^d Generally identified with Xerxes I (485–464 B.C.)
2 ^e 1 Kin. 1:46
2 ^f Neh. 1:1; Dan. 8:2 ² Or Susa ³ Or fortified palace, and so elsewhere in the book
3 ^f Gen. 40:20; Esth. 2:18

5 ⁴ Or Susa ⁵ palace
6 ⁹ Esth. 7:8; Ezek. 23:41; Amos 2:8; 6:4
7 ^h Esth. 2:18 ⁶ Lit. hand

days for all the people who were present in ⁴Shushan the ⁵citadel, from great to small, in the court of the garden of the king's palace. ⁶*There were* white and blue linen *curtains* fastened with cords of fine linen and purple on silver rods and marble pillars; *and the* ⁹couches *were* of gold and silver on a *mosaic* pavement of alabaster, turquoise, and white and black marble. ⁷And they served drinks in golden vessels, each vessel being different from the other, with royal wine in abundance, ^haccording to the ⁶generosity of the king. ⁸In accordance with the law, the drinking was not compulsory; for so the king had ordered all the officers of his household, that they should do according to each man's pleasure.
⁹Queen Vashti also made a feast for

1:1 The kingdom of **Ahasuerus** extended from **India** (the region drained by the Indus River) to **Ethiopia** (Cush, or northern Sudan). **provinces:** The Persian kingdom under Ahasuerus was divided into small areas called provinces and larger divisions called satrapies. **1:2** The capital of ancient Elam, **Shushan** (or Susa) was one of four royal residences for the Persian emperors. Shushan was 150 miles north of the Persian Gulf. It was the location of one of Daniel's visions (Dan. 8:2), and it was where Nehemiah served as cupbearer to King Artaxerxes I (see Neh. 1:1, 2). **citadel:** The capital city had a palace fortress on the highest point of the city, the acropolis. **1:3–5** In the **third year** of his reign, Ahasuerus displayed the riches of his kingdom for six months. **made a feast:** There is some uncertainty about whether the king gave one feast or two. It is possible that v. 3 introduces the idea of the grand banquet and v. 5 records

the specifics of what turned out to be a seven-day festival. It is not likely that the feasting itself extended for 180 days. **Persia and Media:** Previously the Medes had been the stronger of the two nations. Beginning with the reign of Cyrus, the Persians dominated the kingdom. Together they established a powerful empire (see Dan. 5:28). **1:6, 7 white and blue:** These were the royal colors of the Persians. The Persian custom was to recline on couches at the table. **1:8** The monarch **ordered** that guests could drink as much or as little as they pleased. This differed from the usual Persian custom by which people at a banquet were required to drink each time the king raised his cup. **1:9 Vashti:** The queen gave a separate banquet for the women guests.



the women in the royal palace which *belonged* to King Ahasuerus.

¹⁰On the seventh day, when the heart of the king was merry with wine, he commanded Mehuman, Biztha, ⁱHarbona, Bigtha, Abagtha, Zethar, and Carcas, seven eunuchs who served in the presence of King Ahasuerus, ¹¹to bring Queen Vashti before the king, *wearing* her royal crown, in order to show her beauty to the people and the officials, for she *was* beautiful to behold. ¹²But Queen Vashti refused to come at the king's command *brought* by his eunuchs; therefore the king was furious, and his anger burned within him.

¹³Then the king said to the ^jwise men ^kwho understood the times (for this *was* the king's manner toward all who knew law and justice, ¹⁴those closest to him *being* Carshena, Shethar, Admatha, Tarshish, Meres, Marsena, and Memucan, ^mwho had access to the king's presence, *and* who ⁷ranked highest in the kingdom): ¹⁵"What *shall we* do to Queen Vashti, according to law, because she did not obey the command of King Ahasuerus *brought to her* by the eunuchs?"

¹⁶And Memucan answered before the king and the princes: "Queen Vashti has not only wronged the king, but also all the princes, and all the people who are in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus. ¹⁷For the queen's behavior will become known to all women, so that they will ⁿdespise their husbands in their eyes, when they report, 'King Ahasuerus commanded Queen Vashti to be brought in before him, but she did not come.' ¹⁸This very day the *noble* ladies of Persia and Media will say to all the king's officials that they have heard of the behavior of the queen. Thus *there will be* excessive

10 ⁱ Esth. 7:9
13 ^j Jer. 10:7; Dan. 2:12; Matt. 2:1
^k 1 Chr. 12:32
14 ⁱ Ezra 7:14
^m 2 Kin. 25:19;
[Matt. 18:10] ⁷ Lit.
sat in first place
17 ⁿ [Eph. 5:33]

contempt and wrath. ¹⁹If it pleases the king, let a royal ⁸decree go out from him, and let it be recorded in the laws of the Persians and the Medes, so that it will ^onot ⁹be altered, that Vashti shall come no more before King Ahasuerus; and let the king give her royal position to another who is better than she. ²⁰When the king's decree which he will make is proclaimed throughout all his empire (for it is great), all wives will ^phonor their husbands, both great and small."

²¹And the reply pleased the king and the princes, and the king did according to the word of Memucan. ²²Then he sent letters to all the king's provinces, ^qto each province in its own script, and to every people in their own language, that each man should ^rbe master in his own house, and speak in the language of his own people.

Esther Becomes Queen

2 After these things, when the wrath of King Ahasuerus subsided, he remembered Vashti, ^awhat she had done, and what had been decreed against her. ²Then the king's servants who attended him said: "Let beautiful young virgins be sought for the king; ³and let the king appoint officers in all the provinces of his kingdom, that they may gather all the beautiful young virgins to ¹Shushan the ²citadel, into the women's quarters, under the custody of ³Hegai the king's eunuch, custodian of the women. And let beauty preparations be given *them*. ⁴Then let the young woman who pleases the king be queen instead of Vashti."

This thing pleased the king, and he did so.

⁵In ⁴Shushan the ⁵citadel there was a certain Jew whose name *was* Mordecai the son of Jair, the son of Shimei, the

19 ^o Esth. 8:8; Dan. 6:8 ⁸ Lit. word
⁹ pass away
20 ^p [Eph. 5:33; Col. 3:18; 1 Pet. 3:1]
22 ^q Esth. 3:12;
8:9 ^r [Eph. 5:22-24;
1 Tim. 2:12]

CHAPTER 2

1 ^a Esth. 1:19, 20
3 ¹ Or Susa ² palace
³ Heb. Hege
5 ⁴ Or Susa ⁵ palace

1:10 Castrated men, or **eunuchs**, were assigned to act as harem attendants and as agents of communication between the king and his harem (6:14). Because of the level of trust these men could attain, they might also function as administrators in the kingdom as well. **Harbona** plays a significant role later in the story (see 7:9).

1:13 **men who understood the times**: Court astrologers and magicians gave advice and predicted the future on the basis of what they pretended to know about the supernatural. The prophets often looked upon such charlatans with derisive scorn (see Is. 44:24, 25).

1:14 The **seven** counselors of Ezra 7:14 were probably the same group of men. These men enjoyed the unusual privilege of speaking personally with the king.

1:16–18 Acting as spokesman for the others, **Memucan** responded shrewdly by enlarging the offense beyond a personal affront to the king.

1:18 **contempt**: The Hebrew word used occurs only here in the OT. It is related to the verb translated *despise* in v. 17.

1:19 **royal decree**: Memucan urged the king to take immediate action against Vashti. The queen would be given what amounted

to a divorce. This would have the effect of demoting her from her privileged position as the chief wife of the king.

1:22 **sent letters**: The Persians were known for their excellent postal system. **speak in the language of his own people**: This suggests the respect that was held for local languages and dialects in the Persian Empire.

2:3 It was customary for the virgins of the king's harem to spend a year in **beauty** treatments and purification rites before going to see the king (see v. 12). Again we see the exaggerated sense of power of the king contrasted with the fragile status of women. **Beautiful young virgins** were seen to exist merely to bring pleasure to the king.

2:5 The name **Mordecai** is related to the name of Marduk, the principal Babylonian deity. The phrase **a certain Jew**, along with the genealogy and the tribal name Benjamite, prepares us for the upcoming conflict with Haman in ch. 3. **Shimei** may refer to the man from the family of Saul who cursed David (see 2 Sam. 16:5–13). **Kish** may be the father of Saul (see 1 Sam. 9:1, 2). If these figures are the ones intended, they are Mordecai's remote ancestors from the tribe of Benjamin.



Shushan

The palace at Shushan (also called Susa) was built by Darius I, Ahasuerus's father. Archaeologists have found in its dedication inscription (housed at the Louvre in Paris), a confirmation of its lavish appointments and ornamentation. Excavation has determined that the king received visitors in a large hall separated from his private living quarters by a courtyard. The hall contained 36 columns and was flanked on three sides by porticoes, each having two rows of six columns. The remains of colorfully glazed decorative brick, which formed large mosaics of human figures, winged lions and bulls, sphinxes, and winged sun disks have also been unearthed at Susa. The foundation charter describes the materials used to build the royal compound (cedar, gold, ivory, lapis lazuli, turquoise, and marble) as tribute coming from all parts of the Persian Empire.

A glazed brick relief panel from the palace at Shushan (Susa)
© 2013 by Zondervan

son of ^bKish, a Benjamite. ^{6c}*Kish*⁶ had been carried away from Jerusalem with the captives who had been captured with ⁷Jeconiah king of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away. ⁷And *Mordecai* had brought up Hadassah, that is, Esther, ^dhis uncle's daughter, for she had neither father nor mother. The young woman *was* love-

5 ^b 1 Sam. 9:1
6 ^c 2 Kin. 24:14, 15;
2 Chr. 36:10, 20;
Jer. 24:1 ⁶ Lit. Who
⁷ Jehoiachin, 2 Kin.
24:6
7 ^d Esth. 2:15
8 ^e Esth. 2:3 ⁸ Or
Susa ⁹ palace
9 ^f Esth. 2:3, 12
¹ Lit. her portions

ly and beautiful. When her father and mother died, Mordecai took her as his own daughter.

⁸So it was, when the king's command and decree were heard, and when many young women were ^egathered at ⁸Shushan the ⁹citadel, *under* the custody of Hegai, that Esther also was taken to the king's palace, into the care of Hegai the custodian of the women. ⁹Now the young woman pleased him, and she obtained his favor; so he readily gave ^fbeauty preparations to her, besides ⁷her allowance. Then seven choice maidservants were provided for her from the king's palace, and he moved her and her maidservants to the best *place* in the house of the women.

^{10g}Esther had not ²revealed her people or family, for Mordecai had charged her not to reveal *it*. ¹¹And every day Mordecai paced in front of the court of the women's quarters, to learn of Esther's welfare and what was happening to her.

¹²Each young woman's turn came to go in to King Ahasuerus after she had completed twelve months' preparation, according to the regulations for the women, for thus were the days of their preparation apportioned: six months with oil of myrrh, and six months with perfumes and preparations for beautifying women. ¹³Thus *prepared*, each young woman went to the king, and she was given whatever she desired to take with her from the women's quarters to the king's palace. ¹⁴In the evening she went, and in the morning she returned to the second house of the women, to the custo-

10 ^g Esth. 2:20 ² Revealed the identity of

2:6 This verse is difficult to interpret, as the Hebrew text does not indicate the subject of the verb **had been carried away**. The subject could not be Mordecai. If he had been among those carried away into captivity, he would not likely have lived until the time of Ahasuerus. The subject might be Mordecai's ancestor Kish, understood to be a different person than the father of Saul. It is also possible that the original phrasing merely means that Mordecai and his family were among those descended from the captives who were taken to Babylon in the days of Nebuchadnezzar. In this case, the person who was brought to Babylon is not specifically mentioned; only the more well-known ancestors are noted.

2:7 Hadassah is a Hebrew name that means "Myrtle." Esther is a Persian name meaning "Star." Like the name of her cousin Mordecai, the name **Esther** was related to that of a local deity, the goddess Ishtar. Jewish people in antiquity customarily had two names when they lived in regions distant from Israel. One would be their secular name, a name understandable in their adopted culture, and the other would be their sacred name given in Hebrew. **lovely and beautiful**: The two words complement each other to mean "supremely lovely" or "exceedingly beautiful."

2:8 We cannot determine whether Esther went willingly or reluctantly to the king's palace. She was brought into the palace complex, but not yet into the living quarters of the king. As custodian of the king's harem, **Hegai** was a eunuch (2:3).

2:9 obtained his favor: This phrase characterizes Esther's relationships with all who knew her, including the king (see v. 17). Esther found favor with many, as is demonstrated throughout the chapter. The Hebrew word for *favor* is a term used regularly in the Bible to describe the character of God. This word may be translated "loyal love." The frequency of this concept with regard to Esther in this book may be a subtle way of suggesting the presence of the Lord without actually mentioning His name. **her allowance**: Hegai made certain that Esther received choice food in liberal portions. He also gave her seven personal attendants and the most desirable place to live within the quarters of the harem.

2:10 Many reasons have been suggested concerning Esther's hesitation to **reveal** her national origin. The time does come when Esther would identify herself and her people (see ch. 8). In fact, her self-disclosure would come at the point when the danger to her person was highest.

2:14 concubines: These women lived unfortunate, though highly pampered, lives. If the king never **called for** them again, they were destined to live as though they were widows for the remainder of their years (see 2 Sam. 20:3). The point made here emphasizes how courageous Esther was when she later made her appearance before Ahasuerus (see 4:11; 5:1).

dy of Shaashgaz, the king's eunuch who kept the concubines. She would not go in to the king again unless the king delighted in her and called for her by name.

¹⁵Now when the turn came for Esther ^hthe daughter of Abihail the uncle of Mordecai, who had taken her as his daughter, to go in to the king, she requested nothing but what Hegai the king's eunuch, the custodian of the women, advised. And Esther ⁱobtained favor in the sight of all who saw her. ¹⁶So Esther was taken to King Ahasuerus, into his royal palace, in the tenth month, which is the month of Tebeth, in the seventh year of his reign. ¹⁷The king loved Esther more than all the *other* women, and she obtained grace and favor in his sight more than all the virgins; so he set the royal ^jcrown upon her head and made her queen instead of Vashti. ¹⁸Then the king ^kmade a great feast, the Feast of Esther, for all his officials and servants; and he proclaimed a holiday in the provinces and gave gifts according to the ³generosity of a king.

Mordecai Discovers a Plot

¹⁹When virgins were gathered together a second time, Mordecai sat within the king's gate. ²⁰*Now* Esther had not revealed her family and her people, just as Mordecai had charged her, for Esther obeyed the command of Mordecai as when she was brought up by him.

²¹In those days, while Mordecai sat within the king's gate, two of the king's eunuchs, ⁴Bigthan and Teresh, doorkeepers, became furious and sought to lay hands on King Ahasuerus. ²²So

15 ^h Esth. 2:7; 9:29
ⁱ Esth. 5:2, 8
^j Esth. 1:11
^k Esth. 1:3 ³ Lit.
hand
²⁰ ⁱ Esth. 2:10;
^j Prov. 22:6
²¹ ⁴ *Bigthana*,
^{Esth.} 6:2

22 ^m Esth. 6:1, 2
²³ ⁿ Esth. 6:1

CHAPTER 3

1 ^a Num. 24:7;
¹ Sam. 15:8 ^b Esth.
^{5:11}
² ^c Esth. 2:19, 21; 5:9
^d Esth. 3:5; Ps. 15:4
³ ^e Esth. 3:2
⁵ ^f Esth. 3:2; 5:9
⁹ Dan. 3:19
⁶ ^h Ps. 83:4; [Rev.
^{12:1-17]}
⁷ ⁱ Esth. 9:24-26
¹ Lit. *from day to
day and month to
month*

the matter became known to Mordecai, ^mwho told Queen Esther, and Esther informed the king in Mordecai's name. ²³And when an inquiry was made into the matter, it was confirmed, and both were hanged on a gallows; and it was written in ⁿthe book of the chronicles in the presence of the king.

Haman's Conspiracy Against the Jews

3 After these things King Ahasuerus promoted Haman, the son of Hammedatha the ^aAgagite, and ^badvanced him and set his seat above all the princes who *were* with him. ²And all the king's servants who *were* ^cwithin the king's gate bowed and paid homage to Haman, for so the king had commanded concerning him. But Mordecai ^dwould not bow or pay homage. ³Then the king's servants who *were* within the king's gate said to Mordecai, "Why do you transgress the ^eking's command?" ⁴Now it happened, when they spoke to him daily and he would not listen to them, that they told *it* to Haman, to see whether Mordecai's words would stand; for *Mordecai* had told them that he *was* a Jew. ⁵When Haman saw that Mordecai ^fdid not bow or pay him homage, Haman was ^gfilled with wrath. ⁶But he disdained to lay hands on Mordecai alone, for they had told him of the people of Mordecai. Instead, Haman ^hsought to destroy all the Jews who *were* throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus—the people of Mordecai.

⁷In the first month, which is the month of Nisan, in the twelfth year of King Ahasuerus, ⁱthey cast Pur (that *is*, the lot), before Haman ¹to determine the

2:15 Again we see the providence of God at work. Esther found favor with everyone she encountered. Here we learn her father's name, **Abihail** (see 2:7).

2:16 Esther became the principal wife of the king four years after Vashti was divorced. The month **Tebeth** corresponds to our December–January.

2:17 The king apparently was so delighted with Esther that he **made her queen** right away. The nouns **grace and favor** together mean "abundant favor."

2:19 sat within the king's gate: This phrase has a special significance; it means that Mordecai had an official position. Shortly after Esther became queen, she gave Mordecai a position within the king's gate where official business took place (see Deut. 22:13–15).

2:21, 22 Mordecai learned of a plot by **two angry eunuchs** to take the king's life. Mordecai not only used this information to save the king, but eventually his own people.

3:1 Some believe **Agagite** is a reference to the historical district of Agag within the Persian Empire. Others believe this term more likely linked Haman's descent with the Amalekites. These people, descendants of Esau (see Gen. 36:12), were ancient enemies of the Hebrews (see Ex. 17:8). Agag, a king of the Amalekites, was captured by King Saul (see 1 Sam. 15:8). If Mordecai descended from Saul, and Haman from the Amalekites (as many rabbis believe), then what follows is the continuation of a long-standing hostility between their families.

3:2 All the officials of the king were on duty within the king's gate.

Mordecai would not bow or pay homage: To comprehend the force of this verse, we need to look at v. 4. There Mordecai reportedly told the king's servants that he was a Jew. It is not known whether the bowing was required as an act of worship to the king's man or merely as an overt sign of deep respect. The Hebrew verbs in this passage usually describe the worship of God. There were occasions when Hebrews bowed before kings or high officials (1 Sam. 24:8) without any violation of the prohibitions of false worship. It may be that in Mordecai's case also, the bow was not to be a religious act, but one of honor. As a Jew, Mordecai may not have been able to bring himself to show this sign of respect to one who was an ancestral enemy.

3:5, 6 Mordecai's daily refusal to bow down to **Haman** filled the official with such rage that he sought to kill all Jewish people in the Persian Empire. Haman's Amalekite ancestry would account for his deep hatred.

3:7 Nisan: This, the first month of the ancient lunar calendar, corresponds to March–April. The twelfth year of the king's reign was 474 **B.C.** **they cast Pur:** The word *pur* was the basis for the name of the Feast of Purim in ch. 9. The casting of lots was common in ancient times. The fact that the lot was cast at the beginning of the year to determine the best time to destroy the Jewish people fits with the culture of the day. The Babylonian religion maintained that the gods gathered at the beginning of each year to establish the destiny of human beings.

day and the ²month, ³until it fell on the twelfth month, which is the month of Adar.

⁸Then Haman said to King Ahasuerus, “There is a certain people scattered and dispersed among the people in all the provinces of your kingdom; ^jtheir laws are different from all other people’s, and they do not keep the king’s laws. Therefore it is not fitting for the king to let them remain. ⁹If it pleases the king, let a decree be written that they be destroyed, and I will pay ten thousand talents of silver into the hands of those who do the work, to bring it into the king’s treasuries.”

¹⁰So the king ^ktook ^lhis signet ring from his hand and gave it to Haman, the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the ^menemy of the Jews. ¹¹And the king said to Haman, “The money and the people are given to you, to do with them as seems good to you.”

¹²ⁿThen the king’s scribes were called on the thirteenth day of the first month, and a decree was written according to all that Haman commanded—to the king’s satraps, to the governors who were over each province, to the officials of all people, to every province ^oaccording to its script, and to every people in their language. ^pIn the name of King Ahasuerus it was written, and sealed with the king’s signet ring. ¹³And the letters were ^qsent by couriers into all the king’s provinces, to destroy, to kill, and to annihilate all the Jews, both young and old, little children and women, ^rin one day, on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is the month of Adar, and ^sto plunder their ^tpossessions. ¹⁴^tA copy of the document

⁷ ² LXX adds to destroy the people of Mordecai in one day; Vg. adds the nation of the Jews should be destroyed
³ So with MT, Vg.; LXX and the lot fell on the fourteenth of the month
⁸ / Ezra 4:12-15; Acts 16:20, 21
¹⁰ ^k Gen. 41:42
¹ Esth. 8:2, 8 ^m Esth. 7:6
¹² ⁿ Esth. 8:9
^o Esth. 1:22 ^p 1 Kin. 21:8; Esth. 8:8-10
¹³ ^q 2 Chr. 30:6; Esth. 8:10, 14 ^r Esth. 8:12 ^s Esth. 8:11; 9:10 ^t LXX adds the text of the letter here
¹⁴ ^t Esth. 8:13, 14

¹⁵ ^u Esth. 8:15; [Prov. 29:2] ^v Or Susa ⁶ palace ⁷ in confusion

CHAPTER 4

¹ ² 2 Sam. 1:11; Esth. 3:8-10; Jon. 3:5, 6 ^b Josh. 7:6; Ezek. 27:30
^c Gen. 27:34 ¹ Lit. Mordecai
⁷ ^d Esth. 3:9
⁸ ^e Esth. 3:14, 15

was to be issued as law in every province, being published for all people, that they should be ready for that day. ¹⁵The couriers went out, hastened by the king’s command; and the decree was proclaimed in ⁵Shushan the ⁶citadel. So the king and Haman sat down to drink, but ^uthe city of Shushan was ⁷perplexed.

Esther Agrees to Help the Jews

4 When Mordecai learned all that had happened, ¹he ^atore his clothes and put on sackcloth ^band ashes, and went out into the midst of the city. He ^ccried out with a loud and bitter cry. ²He went as far as the front of the king’s gate, for no one ^dmight enter the king’s gate clothed with sackcloth. ³And in every province where the king’s command and decree arrived, ^ethere was great mourning among the Jews, with fasting, weeping, and wailing; and many lay in sackcloth and ashes.

⁴So Esther’s maids and eunuchs came and told her, and the queen was deeply distressed. Then she sent garments to clothe Mordecai and take his sackcloth away from him, but he would not accept them. ⁵Then Esther called Hathach, one of the king’s eunuchs whom he had appointed to attend her, and she gave him a command concerning Mordecai, to learn what and why this was. ⁶So Hathach went out to Mordecai in the city square that was in front of the king’s gate. ⁷And Mordecai told him all that had happened to him, and ^dthe sum of money that Haman had promised to pay into the king’s treasuries to destroy the Jews. ⁸He also gave him ^ea copy of the written

3:8 Haman did not identify the **people** at first. He may have played on the Persian emperor’s native sense of superiority to other peoples. Haman acted as if his motive were no more than proper concern for the welfare of the king. He implied that this unnamed group was rebellious, a present danger to the king.

3:10 The king’s **signet ring** symbolized his authority. When he gave this ring to Haman, he was passing to him a symbol of his own royal person. This meant that Haman could proceed with his plan.

3:11 It might seem that the king was refusing to accept **the money**. However, this is difficult to harmonize with Mordecai’s words to Esther in 4:7 and her comments about being “sold” in 7:4. More likely, the king was engaging in the common method of bargaining (Gen. 23:7–18).

3:12 scribes: The king had secretaries who put into writing the official documents. This verse gives us a picture of the comprehensiveness of the decree. It was given to officials in the provinces, making sure it was distributed everywhere. It was also written in the language of each people group within the realm. The mark of a signet ring was similar to an official signature in our own day (1 Kin. 21:8).

3:13 The couriers were royal messengers stationed at various spots along the main roads who would carry messages on horseback. The plot to **kill** the Jewish people included the slaughter of those of all age groups and both sexes. The month **Adar:** This corresponds to February–March (3:7; 8:12).

3:15 The contempt of the king and Haman who **sat down to drink** while this message was being delivered cannot help but strike a

responsive chord of empathy for the Jewish people among the readers of this book. The text notes that even the people in the city of Shushan were perplexed.

4:1, 2 In the ancient Middle East **sackcloth and ashes** were used as a visible sign of mourning, indicating a sense of desolation.

4:3 In this book **fasting** connotes a strong but veiled appeal to God to intervene in a time of severe crisis. In v. 16 Esther commanded a three-day fast among Shushan’s Jews. The queen herself, along with her maids, undertook a fast at this time before she approached the king. Even the Feast of Purim, which was established to commemorate the Jewish people’s deliverance, incorporated fasting (see 9:31).

4:4 The verb **distressed** is strong, suggesting the idea of writhing in severe pain or anguish. Certainly Esther was deeply disturbed by Mordecai’s appearance and agony, though she did not as yet understand what had happened (see v. 5).

4:5, 6 city square: Many events took place in the plaza of a city, including gatherings, proclamations, and public lamentation.

4:7 If Mordecai had not been appointed as a high official at the **king’s gate**, it is unlikely that he would have known about Haman’s bribe to the king. He was providentially placed by God in an exalted position in a foreign government, as were Joseph (see Gen. 41), Daniel (see Dan. 2:48), and Nehemiah (see Neh. 1:11). This is one of the many ways God used the descendants of Abraham to be a blessing to the nations (see Gen. 12:2).

4:8 Mordecai recognized the decree as a threat to the very existence

decree for their destruction, which was given at ²Shushan, that he might show it to Esther and explain it to her, and that he might command her to go in to the king to make supplication to him and plead before him for her people. ⁹So Hathach returned and told Esther the words of Mordecai.

¹⁰Then Esther spoke to Hathach, and gave him a command for Mordecai: ¹¹“All the king’s servants and the people of the king’s provinces know that any man or woman who goes into ⁷the inner court to the king, who has not been called, ⁸*he has* but one law: put *all* to death, except the one ^hto whom the king holds out the golden scepter, that he may live. Yet I myself have not been ⁱcalled to go in to the king these thirty days.” ¹²So they told Mordecai Esther’s words.

¹³And Mordecai told *them* to answer Esther: “Do not think in your heart that you will escape in the king’s palace any more than all the other Jews. ¹⁴For if you remain completely silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father’s house will perish. Yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for *such* a time as this?”

¹⁵Then Esther told *them* to reply to Mordecai: ¹⁶“Go, gather all the Jews

⁸ ² Or Susa
¹¹ ⁷ Esth. 5:1; 6:4
⁹ Dan. 2:9 ^h Esth.
5:2; 8:4 ⁱ Esth. 2:14

¹⁶ / Esth. 5:1 ^k Gen.
43:14 ³ Or Susa
¹⁷ ⁴ LXX adds a
prayer of Mordecai
here

CHAPTER 5

¹ ^a Esth. 4:16 ^b Esth.
4:11; 6:4 ¹ LXX adds
many extra details
in vv. 1, 2
² ^c [Prov. 21:1]
^d Esth. 4:11; 8:4
³ ^e Esth. 7:2; Mark
6:23

who are present in ³Shushan, and fast for me; neither eat nor drink for ^jthree days, night or day. My maids and I will fast likewise. And so I will go to the king, which *is* against the law; ^kand if I perish, I perish!”

¹⁷So Mordecai went his way and did according to all that Esther commanded ⁴him.

Esther’s Banquet

5 Now it happened ^aon the third day that Esther put on *her* royal robes and stood in ^bthe inner court of the king’s palace, across from the king’s house, while the king sat on his royal throne in the royal house, facing the entrance of the ¹house. ²So it was, when the king saw Queen Esther standing in the court, *that* ^cshe found favor in his sight, and ^dthe king held out to Esther the golden scepter that *was* in his hand. Then Esther went near and touched the top of the scepter.

³And the king said to her, “What do you wish, Queen Esther? What is your request? ^eIt shall be given to you—up to half the kingdom!”

⁴So Esther answered, “If it pleases the king, let the king and Haman come today to the banquet that I have prepared for him.”

of his people, so he boldly commanded Esther to intercede for her people before the king, knowing that this could only be at the risk of her life (see v. 11). If she was not identified as a Hebrew woman, she might possibly escape the fate of her people—but only if her association with Mordecai (see 2:7, 15) was not remembered by their enemies. In any event, she would be in a most risky position. **make supplication:** The word means to ask for a gracious response. It is a term that often is used of coming to the Lord for deliverance; here it is used of coming to a king for mercy.

4:10, 11 Esther understood that Mordecai was asking her to risk her life. She was understandably fearful. Her fear was compounded by the fact that the king had not summoned her for **thirty days**, implying that she had not been enjoying the king’s favor recently. Who knew if he would still have regard for her at all?

4:14 This verse constitutes the classic reference to the providence of God in the book. Mordecai, by his confidence that **relief and deliverance** would come from **another place**, was strongly asserting his faith in God and His promised protection of the Jewish people. God controls all that happens in His world and would intervene with or without Esther. If she refused to help, she would perish, along with her **father’s house**. Mordecai may be referring to divine judgment here. In the closing appeal, Mordecai suggested a providential reason for her becoming queen at this precise time in history; that is, Esther was acting as God’s agent in delivering the Jewish people.

4:15, 16 Esther agreed to intervene with the king on behalf of her people. The fasting for **three days** implies a period of earnestly seeking God in prayer at this critical juncture. But even at this point, the narrator did not use the name of God—something that is most remarkable. Esther was also looking for the support of the Jewish community by asking them to join in this fast. Esther understood fully that she was breaking the law of the land and that she might have to suffer the ultimate consequence; she might **perish**.

5:2 she found favor in his sight: Again we are struck by the providence of God, demonstrated by the king’s response to Esther. To indicate his approval, the king held out the **golden scepter** to her.

5:3 The king, knowing that Esther must have had an unusual reason for daring to approach him, asked her what she wanted. He promised her **up to half his kingdom**. A similar promise was given to the daughter of Herodias by King Herod in Mark 6:23. Perhaps the phrase was a common form of exaggeration among royalty. Although it probably was exaggerated, the statement certainly showed the king’s favorable attitude toward her.

5:4 If it pleases the king: This expression is found frequently

fasting

(Heb. *tsum*) (4:16; 2 Sam. 12:23) Strong’s #6684

The Hebrew root word simply means “to abstain from food.” At times fasting meant abstaining from drinking, bathing, anointing with oil, or sexual intercourse as well. In essence, fasting acknowledges human frailty before God and appeals to His mercy. Fasting was a common practice in the ancient world, associated with mourning for the dead (2 Sam. 12:21, 22), intercessory prayer (4:3, 16), repentance and contrition for sin (Jer. 36:9; Jon. 3:5), and times of distress (Judg. 20:26; Neh. 1:4). Fasting was required for the Day of Atonement (see the phrase “afflict your souls” in Lev. 16:31). There were also four fast days that commemorated the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians (Zech. 8:19). Fasts varied in length from one day (1 Sam. 14:24; Dan. 6:18) to seven days (1 Sam. 31:13) and could even last up to 40 days on extraordinary occasions (Ex. 34:28). The strict fasts lasted from sunset to sunset, whereas the more lenient fasts lasted from sunrise to sunset. But no matter what type of fasting was performed, the prophet Isaiah admonished his people to participate in acts of righteousness and social justice with their fasting (Is. 58:3–9).

⁵Then the king said, “Bring Haman quickly, that he may do as Esther has said.” So the king and Haman went to the banquet that Esther had prepared.

⁶At the banquet of wine ^fthe king said to Esther, ^g“What is your petition? It shall be granted you. What is your request, up to half the kingdom? It shall be done!”

⁷Then Esther answered and said, “My petition and request is this: ⁸If I have found favor in the sight of the king, and if it pleases the king to grant my petition and ²fulfill my request, then let the king and Haman come to the ^hbanquet which I will prepare for them, and tomorrow I will do as the king has said.”

Haman's Plot Against Mordecai

⁹So Haman went out that day ⁱjoyful and with a glad heart; but when Haman saw Mordecai in the king's gate, and ^jthat he did not stand or tremble before him, he was filled with indignation against Mordecai. ¹⁰Nevertheless Haman ^krestrained himself and went home, and he sent and called for his friends and his wife Zeresh. ¹¹Then Haman told them of his great riches, ^lthe multitude of his children, everything in which the king had promoted him, and how he had ^madvanced him above the officials and servants of the king.

¹²Moreover Haman said, “Besides, Queen Esther invited no one but me to come in with the king to the banquet that she prepared; and tomorrow I am again invited by her, along with the king. ¹³Yet all this avails me nothing, so long as I see

6 ^f Esth. 7:2 ^g Esth. 9:12
8 ^h Esth. 6:14 ² Lit. to do
9 ⁱ [Job 20:5; Luke 6:25] / Esth. 3:5
10 ^k 2 Sam. 13:22
11 ^l Esth. 9:7-10
^m Esth. 3:1

14 ⁿ Esth. 7:9
^o Esth. 6:4 ^p Esth. 7:10 ³ Lit. tree or wood ⁴ About 75 feet

CHAPTER 6

1 ^a Esth. 2:23; 10:2
¹ Lit. the king's sleep fled away
2 ² Bigthan, Esth. 2:21
4 ^b Esth. 5:1 ^c Esth. 5:14

Mordecai the Jew sitting at the king's gate.”

¹⁴Then his wife Zeresh and all his friends said to him, “Let a ⁿgallows³ be made, ⁴fifty cubits high, and in the morning ^osuggest to the king that Mordecai be hanged on it; then go merrily with the king to the banquet.”

And the thing pleased Haman; so he had ^pthe gallows made.

The King Honors Mordecai

6 That night ¹the king could not sleep. So one was commanded to bring ^athe book of the records of the chronicles; and they were read before the king. ²And it was found written that Mordecai had told of ²Bigthana and Teresh, two of the king's eunuchs, the doorkeepers who had sought to lay hands on King Ahasuerus. ³Then the king said, “What honor or dignity has been bestowed on Mordecai for this?”

And the king's servants who attended him said, “Nothing has been done for him.”

⁴So the king said, “Who is in the court?” Now Haman had *just* entered ^bthe outer court of the king's palace ^cto suggest that the king hang Mordecai on the gallows that he had prepared for him.

⁵The king's servants said to him, “Haman is there, standing in the court.”

And the king said, “Let him come in.”

⁶So Haman came in, and the king asked him, “What shall be done for the man whom the king delights to honor?”

Now Haman thought in his heart, “Whom would the king delight to honor

throughout the book. It was a formula of polite address. Esther made her initial request; she invited the king and Haman to come to her **banquet** that same day.

5:6–8 The king continued examining Esther for the real **request**. She delayed and asked the two back for a second banquet the following day. One may ask why Esther waited instead of disclosing what was on her mind. The delay providentially allowed time for the king's sleepless night and the events that followed (ch. 6).

5:9 Haman's good spirits on the way home from the banquet were from the wine he had drunk and from the honor of being invited along with the king to the feast at Esther's table. However, his mood changed quickly when he encountered Esther's cousin. This time **Mordecai** did not even rise in his presence. Further, Mordecai showed no sign of fear before him, despite the death decree against the Jewish people.

5:11, 12 Haman's vanity matched that of the king he served. He bragged to his wife and friends about his wealth, his sons, and his status in the kingdom. It was considered a great blessing among ancient Semitic peoples to have many sons. In Persia, the man with the most sons would receive presents from the king himself.

5:14 gallows: This word is the usual word for wood, the material the gallows were made of (2:23). Its height, **fifty cubits**, was about 75 feet.

6:1 This verse marks the turning point of the book. Within this chapter we observe a series of events that unmistakably point to God's sovereign hand controlling all events. Only because of his sleepless

night did the king learn of Mordecai's past bravery on his behalf. **the book of the records of the chronicles:** This would be the official record of the events of the Persian Empire. It is referred to in 2:23 and again in 10:2. Ezra 4:15 also mentions such a work. Apparently the chronicles **were read before the king** for an extended period. **6:2, 3** The king might have been aware to some extent of Mordecai's deed when it originally occurred. In 2:23 the author says that the events were written down “in the presence of the king.” Now the Lord led the king to this very text. It was customary for the Persian kings to reward promptly those who performed some noteworthy act of service. There are records of Darius and Ahasuerus bestowing such honors on deserving recipients. The two nouns **honor** and **dignity** mean “great honor.”

6:4, 5 Again we see the hand of God sovereignly at work on behalf of His people. No sooner had Mordecai's reward been discussed than Haman appeared in the king's **court**. Ironically, Haman, who knew nothing of the recent discussion, was coming to recommend that Mordecai be hanged.

6:6–11 One cannot miss the irony and humor of this turn of events. In his arrogance, Haman presumed that the king desired to honor him. He suggested a course of action that he would most enjoy, a royal parade through the city plaza so that everyone could see and hear about the king's delight in him. The king obliged, but was planning the reward for a man Haman regarded as his enemy. Worst of all, it was Haman who had to lead Mordecai through the square and proclaim the king's pleasure in Mordecai.

more than ^d me?" ⁷ And Haman answered the king, "For the man whom the king delights to honor, ⁸ let a royal robe be brought which the king has worn, and ^e a horse on which the king has ridden, which has a royal ³ crest placed on its head. ⁹ Then let this robe and horse be delivered to the hand of one of the king's most noble princes, that he may array the man whom the king delights to honor. Then ⁴ parade him on horseback through the city square, ^f and proclaim before him: 'Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delights to honor!'"

¹⁰ Then the king said to Haman, "Hurry, take the robe and the horse, as you have suggested, and do so for Mordecai the Jew who sits within the king's gate! Leave nothing undone of all that you have spoken."

¹¹ So Haman took the robe and the horse, arrayed Mordecai and led him on horseback through the city square, and proclaimed before him, "Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delights to honor!"

¹² Afterward Mordecai went back to the king's gate. But Haman ^g hurried to his house, mourning ^h and with his head covered. ¹³ When Haman told his wife Zeresh and all his friends everything that had happened to him, his wise men and his wife Zeresh said to him, "If Mordecai, before whom you have begun to fall, is of Jewish descent, you will not prevail against ⁱ him but will surely fall before him."

¹⁴ While they *were* still talking with him, the king's eunuchs came, and hastened to bring Haman to ^j the banquet which Esther had prepared.

6 ^d [Prov. 16:18; 18:12]
8 ^e 1 Kin. 1:33
³ crown
9 ^f Gen. 41:43 ⁴ Lit. cause him to ride
12 ^g 2 Chr. 26:20
^h 2 Sam. 15:30; Jer. 14:3, 4
13 ⁱ [Gen. 12:3]; Zech. 2:8
14 ^j Esth. 5:8

CHAPTER 7

2 ^a Esth. 5:6
4 ^b Esth. 3:9; 4:7
^c Deut. 28:68
6 ^d Esth. 3:10
8 ^e Esth. 1:6 ^f Job 9:24
9 ^g Esth. 1:10

Haman Hanged Instead of Mordecai

7 So the king and Haman went to dine with Queen Esther. ² And on the second day, ^a at the banquet of wine, the king again said to Esther, "What is your petition, Queen Esther? It shall be granted you. And what is your request, up to half the kingdom? It shall be done!"

³ Then Queen Esther answered and said, "If I have found favor in your sight, O king, and if it pleases the king, let my life be given me at my petition, and my people at my request. ⁴ For we have been ^b sold, my people and I, to be destroyed, to be killed, and to be annihilated. Had we been sold as ^c male and female slaves, I would have held my tongue, although the enemy could never compensate for the king's loss."

⁵ So King Ahasuerus answered and said to Queen Esther, "Who is he, and where is he, who would dare presume in his heart to do such a thing?"

⁶ And Esther said, "The adversary and ^d enemy is this wicked Haman!"

So Haman was terrified before the king and queen.

⁷ Then the king arose in his wrath from the banquet of wine and *went* into the palace garden; but Haman stood before Queen Esther, pleading for his life, for he saw that evil was determined against him by the king. ⁸ When the king returned from the palace garden to the place of the banquet of wine, Haman had fallen across ^e the couch where Esther *was*. Then the king said, "Will he also assault the queen while I *am* in the house?"

As the word left the king's mouth, they ^f covered Haman's face. ⁹ Now ^g Harbonah, one of the eunuchs, said to the

6:8 The **royal crest** on the head of the horse was a crown that formed from the forelock of the horse. Stone carvings of horses with this type of crest have been found at Persepolis, another Persian capital (1:2).

6:10 The term **Jew**, derived from Judah, came into use during the Exile because the people were principally from the southern kingdom of Judah.

6:13 The issue of the ongoing survival of the Jewish people is the point of this verse. Haman's wife and friends told Haman that he would **not prevail**, for the very reason of Mordecai's Jewish descent. The Hebrew wording is quite strong: the meaning is that he will most certainly fall.

6:14 The role of **eunuchs** as royal messengers is portrayed again in this verse (1:10). They were the ones who came to take Haman briskly to Esther's second banquet.

7:3, 4 Esther repeated her address of 5:8 and now added her request. **let my life be given:** Esther asked the king to spare her life and the lives of her people. This latter appeal was an impassioned plea to the king in which she also disclosed her true identity to him for the first time. Esther told the king that she and her fellow Jewish people **have been sold**, referring to Haman's bribe to the king in 3:9.

7:5 Esther's speech had a dramatic effect on the king. She had aroused more than his curiosity. He was angry. The life of his own queen was in danger because of a plot by one of his trusted men.

The phrase **dare presume in his heart** reflects the depths of the king's passion here.

7:6 Esther finally exposed the culprit. It was none other than Haman, the **adversary and enemy**, "the fierce enemy." It is no wonder that Haman was **terrified** before Esther and the king. In his evil plan to kill his enemy, he had unwittingly threatened the queen's life.

7:7 The king was astonished and furious. He left the room and went out to the **palace garden**. This must have been a very unusual act for an autocrat. Usually, he would be expected to respond immediately and rashly. However, this time he was so taken aback by the turn of events that he needed time to think. The king's enraged response alerted Haman to the precariousness of his situation.

7:8 Haman was draped over the queen's **couch** in a compromising position. Presumably, he was grasping at her with a desire to implore her favor. The king, on discovering this outrageous situation, wondered aloud if Haman intended to ravage the queen. The Persians had strict rules about contact with the harem by any male other than the king. The eunuchs were the only persons who had access to the rooms of these women. Haman was in danger merely by being near her. This sight enraged the king. As he spoke, **they covered Haman's face**. It is likely that it was the eunuchs who came and did this. The covering of his face signified that he was condemned to death.

7:9 Harbonah: This eunuch, first mentioned in 1:10, spoke at a

king, “Look! ^hThe ¹gallows, fifty cubits high, which Haman made for Mordecai, who spoke ⁱgood on the king’s behalf, is standing at the house of Haman.”

Then the king said, “Hang him on it!”
¹⁰So ^jthey ^khanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Then the king’s wrath subsided.

Esther Saves the Jews

8 On that day King Ahasuerus gave Queen Esther the house of Haman, the ^aenemy of the Jews. And Mordecai came before the king, for Esther had told ^bhow he *was related* to her. ²So the king took off ^chis signet ring, which he had taken from Haman, and gave it to Mordecai; and Esther appointed Mordecai over the house of Haman.

³Now Esther spoke again to the king, fell down at his feet, and implored him with tears to counteract the evil of Haman the Agagite, and the scheme which he had devised against the Jews. ⁴And ^dthe king held out the golden scepter toward Esther. So Esther arose and stood before the king, ⁵and said, “If it pleases the king, and if I have found favor in his sight and the thing *seems* right to the king and I am pleasing in his eyes, let it be written to revoke the ^eletters devised by Haman, the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, which he wrote to annihilate the Jews who *are* in all the king’s provinces. ⁶For how can I endure to see ^fthe evil that will come to my people? Or how can I endure to see the destruction of my countrymen?”

⁷Then King Ahasuerus said to Queen Esther and Mordecai the Jew, “Indeed, ^gI have given Esther the house of Haman, and they have hanged him on the gallows

⁹ ^h Esth. 5:14; [Ps. 7:16; Prov. 11:5, 6]
ⁱ Esth. 6:2 ¹ Lit. *tree or wood*
¹⁰ ^j [Ps. 7:16; 94:23; Prov. 11:5, 6] ^k Ps. 37:35, 36; Dan. 6:24

CHAPTER 8

¹ ^a Esth. 7:6 ^b Esth. 2:7, 15
² ^c Esth. 3:10
⁴ ^d Esth. 4:11; 5:2
⁵ ^e Esth. 3:13
⁶ ^f Neh. 2:3; Esth. 7:4; 9:1
⁷ ^g Esth. 8:1; Prov. 13:22

⁸ ^h Esth. 1:19; Dan. 6:8, 12, 15 ¹ Lit. *as is good in your eyes*
⁹ ⁱ Esth. 3:12 ^j Esth. 1:1 ^k Esth. 1:22; 3:12
¹⁰ ¹ ¹ Kin. 21:8; Esth. 3:12, 13 ² Lit. *sons of the swift horses*
¹¹ ^m Esth. 9:2
ⁿ Esth. 9:10, 15, 16
¹² ^o Esth. 3:13; 9:1
³ LXX adds the text of the letter here
¹³ ^p Esth. 3:14, 15
¹⁴ ⁴ Or *Susa*
⁵ *palace*

because he *tried* to lay his hand on the Jews. ⁸You yourselves write *a decree* concerning the Jews, ¹as you please, in the king’s name, and seal *it* with the king’s signet ring; for whatever is written in the king’s name and sealed with the king’s signet ring ^hno one can revoke.”

⁹ⁱSo the king’s scribes were called at that time, in the third month, which is the month of Sivan, on the twenty-third *day*; and it was written, according to all that Mordecai commanded, to the Jews, the satraps, the governors, and the princes of the provinces ^jfrom India to Ethiopia, one hundred and twenty-seven provinces *in all*, to every province ^kin its own script, to every people in their own language, and to the Jews in their own script and language. ¹⁰^lAnd he wrote in the name of King Ahasuerus, sealed *it* with the king’s signet ring, and sent letters by couriers on horseback, riding on royal horses ²bred from swift steeds.

¹¹By these letters the king permitted the Jews who *were* in every city to ^mgather together and protect their lives—to ⁿdestroy, kill, and annihilate all the forces of any people or province that would assault them, *both* little children and women, and to plunder their possessions, ¹²^oon one day in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus, on the thirteenth *day* of the twelfth month, which *is* the month of ³Adar. ¹³^pA copy of the document was to be issued as a decree in every province and published for all people, so that the Jews would be ready on that day to avenge themselves on their enemies. ¹⁴The couriers who rode on royal horses went out, hastened and pressed on by the king’s command. And the decree was issued in ⁴Shushan the ⁵citadel.

critical moment to the ruler. He disclosed the story of the **gallows** which Haman had prepared for Mordecai and told the king where it was located. He reminded the monarch of Mordecai’s bravery on behalf of the king. Ahasuerus took Harbonah’s cue and commanded his servants to **hang** Haman on those very gallows.

8:1 On the same day as Haman’s execution, the king gave his queen **the house of Haman**. The term *house* here refers to his estate. This was in keeping with Persian law, which put the estate of a traitor into the custody of the crown.

8:2 Mordecai was given Haman’s position as the prime minister. He received the full authority of the king, as evidenced by the transfer of the **signet ring** to him. Esther also put Mordecai in charge of Haman’s estate, which gave him great wealth.

8:3–6 Esther, knowing that danger still lurked ahead for her people, pleaded passionately for their lives before the king. The queen continued to receive the blessing of the monarch as he again extended the **golden scepter** to her. Courageously Esther implored the king to **revoke** Haman’s hateful decree against all the Jews in the empire. The parallel statements in v. 6 reinforce Esther’s poignant and personal plea to her king. The queen, by speaking in the first person, demonstrated her deep attachment to her people.

8:7 Mordecai had heard Esther’s entire presentation to the king.

Ahasuerus, by reiterating what he already had done, communicated his support for Esther and her people.

8:8 In the Persian Empire, a royal **decree** could not be altered, but a second one could invalidate it. Thus the king instructed Mordecai and Esther to write a second decree. The second decree would carry all the weight of the former one—but would reverse the expected results.

8:9 Sivan: This would be May–June. The date would give the Jewish people approximately eight months of preparation for any attack (see 3:13).

8:11 Some commentators understand this verse to mean that the Jewish people were given permission to slaughter even the wives and children of any people that would attack them. Another view is that the Jewish people may not have carried out what was permitted, but killed only the men who attacked them (see 9:6). There is another possibility that the verse refers to the women and children of the Jews. That is, the assault mentioned in the verse was expected to be directed against the men, women, children, and possessions of the Jews. Against such assault, the Jews were to arm themselves and make proper defenses (see 9:5, 6). **plunder their possessions:** This concluding phrase could be a citation of Haman’s decree (see 3:13). If so, it would explain why the Jewish people did not take any plunder (see 9:10), but simply defended themselves against their enemies.

¹⁵ So Mordecai went out from the presence of the king in royal apparel of ⁶blue and white, with a great crown of gold and a garment of fine linen and purple; and ⁷the city of ⁷Shushan rejoiced and was glad. ¹⁶ The Jews had ^rlight and gladness, joy and honor. ¹⁷ And in every province and city, wherever the king's command and decree came, the Jews had joy and gladness, a feast ^sand a holiday. Then many of the people of the land ^tbecame Jews, because ^ufear of the Jews fell upon them.

The Jews Destroy Their Tormentors

9 Now ^ain the twelfth month, that is, the month of Adar, on the thirteenth day, ^bthe time came for the king's command and his decree to be executed. On the day that the enemies of the Jews had hoped to overpower them, the opposite occurred, in that the Jews themselves ^coverpowered those who hated them. ² The Jews ^dgathered together in their cities throughout all the provinces of King Ahasuerus to lay hands on those who ^esought their harm. And no one could withstand them, ^fbecause fear of them fell upon all people. ³ And all the officials of the provinces, the satraps, the governors, and all those doing the king's work, helped the Jews, because the fear of Mordecai fell upon them. ⁴ For Mordecai ^{was} great in the king's palace, and his fame spread throughout all the provinces; for this man Mordecai ^gbecame increasingly prominent. ⁵ Thus the Jews defeated all their enemies with the stroke of the sword, with slaughter and destruction, and did what they pleased with those who hated them.

⁶ And in ^hShushan ⁱthe ²citadel the Jews killed and destroyed five hundred

¹⁵ ^a Esth. 3:15; Prov. 29:2 ^b violet ⁷ Or Susa
¹⁶ ^r Ps. 97:11; 112:4
¹⁷ ^s 1 Sam. 25:8; Esth. 9:19 ^t Ps. 18:43 ^u Gen. 35:5; Ex. 15:16; Deut. 2:25; 11:25; 1 Chr. 14:17; Esth. 9:2

CHAPTER 9

¹ ^a Esth. 8:12 ^b Esth. 3:13 ^c 2 Sam. 22:41
² ^d Esth. 8:11; 9:15-18 ^e Ps. 71:13, 14
^f Esth. 8:17
⁴ ^g 2 Sam. 3:1; 1 Chr. 11:9; [Prov. 4:18]
⁶ ^h Esth. 1:2; 3:15; 4:16 ⁱ Or Susa
² palace

¹⁰ ^j Esth. 5:11; 9:7-10; Job 18:19; 27:13-15; Ps. 21:10 / Esth. 8:11 ³ spoil
¹¹ ⁴ Or Susa
⁵ palace ⁶ Lit. came
¹² ^k Esth. 5:6; 7:2
¹³ ^l Esth. 8:11; 9:15
^m 2 Sam. 21:6, 9
¹⁵ ⁿ Esth. 8:11; 9:2
^o Esth. 9:10 ⁷ Or Susa
¹⁶ ^p Esth. 9:2
^q Esth. 8:11
¹⁷ ⁸ Lit. it
¹⁸ ⁹ Or Susa

men. ⁷ Also Parshandatha, Dalphon, Aspatha, ⁸ Poratha, Adalia, Aridatha, ⁹ Parmashta, Arisai, Aridai, and Vajezatha— ¹⁰ ⁱ the ten sons of Haman the son of Hammedatha, the enemy of the Jews—they killed; ^j but they did not lay a hand on the ³plunder.

¹¹ On that day the number of those who were killed in ⁴Shushan the ⁵citadel ⁶was brought to the king. ¹² And the king said to Queen Esther, "The Jews have killed and destroyed five hundred men in Shushan the citadel, and the ten sons of Haman. What have they done in the rest of the king's provinces? Now ^kwhat is your petition? It shall be granted to you. Or what is your further request? It shall be done."

¹³ Then Esther said, "If it pleases the king, let it be granted to the Jews who ^{are} in Shushan to do again tomorrow ^laccording to today's decree, and let Haman's ten sons ^mbe hanged on the gallows."

¹⁴ So the king commanded this to be done; the decree was issued in Shushan, and they hanged Haman's ten sons.

¹⁵ And the Jews who ^{were} in ⁷Shushan ⁿgathered together again on the fourteenth day of the month of Adar and killed three hundred men at Shushan; ^o but they did not lay a hand on the plunder.

¹⁶ The remainder of the Jews in the king's provinces ^pgathered together and protected their lives, had rest from their enemies, and killed seventy-five thousand of their enemies; ^q but they did not lay a hand on the plunder. ¹⁷ This ^{was} on the thirteenth day of the month of Adar. And on the fourteenth of ⁸the month they rested and made it a day of feasting and gladness.

The Feast of Purim

¹⁸ But the Jews who ^{were} at ⁹Shushan

8:15, 16 Mordecai, dressed in royal attire, received a joyful welcome from the **city of Shushan**, which included both Gentiles and Jews. The residents of this city **rejoiced** that Mordecai had been appointed as prime minister. The word **light** conveys the sense of happiness.

8:17 Note the marked contrast of the reaction of the Jewish people to this second decree as compared to the first one (see 4:3). The reality of their deliverance influenced the Gentiles in the empire as well. **became**: This is the only place in the OT that this Hebrew word is used of conversion to Judaism. The unexpected turn of events in favor of the Jewish people greatly moved their neighbors.

9:2 The Jewish people assembled throughout the kingdom to **lay hands on** or **kill** (see 2:21) their foes. The enemies of the Jewish people could not succeed in their assault against them due to a **fear** of them. This may have included a fear of the God of the Jewish people.

9:3, 4 In addition to a fear of the Jewish people, there was also a **fear of Mordecai** among the leaders, which caused them to assist the Jewish people. Their motive may have been to protect themselves politically in light of Mordecai's power and popularity.

9:5, 6 The defense of the Jewish people against their enemies was

strong and certain. They **killed** five hundred of their enemies in Shushan alone.

9:7-10 The patterns of reprisal and vengeance were so deeply ingrained in the cultures of the ancient Middle East that the survival of even one of these sons might mean trouble for the next generation of Jewish people. By listing each of the vanquished sons of their mortal enemy, the Jewish people celebrated the fact that the victory was complete.

9:11-14 Esther renewed her original request (8:11) for the Jews to have the authority to protect themselves against attack. The king assented. He also ordered **Haman's ten sons** to be exposed on the gallows. The men were already dead (v. 10). Their bodies were displayed as a warning to anyone who planned evil toward the Jews.

9:16 In Deut. 25:17-19, Moses linked the people's continued **rest from their enemies** with the command to "blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven." In this chapter, the blessing of rest for the Jewish people is associated with the destruction of their enemies (vv. 18, 22). This similarity with Deuteronomy reinforces the argument that Haman was a descendant of the Amalekites. This group may have been quite large by the time of King Ahasuerus.

9:18, 19 These verses summarize the days of deliverance for the

assembled together ^ron the thirteenth day, as well as on the fourteenth; and on the fifteenth of ¹the month they rested, and made it a day of feasting and gladness. ¹⁹Therefore the Jews of the villages who dwelt in the unwall'd towns celebrated the fourteenth day of the month of Adar ^swith gladness and feasting, ^tas a holiday, and for ^usending presents to one another.

²⁰And Mordecai wrote these things and sent letters to all the Jews, near and far, who *were* in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus, ²¹to establish among them that they should celebrate yearly the fourteenth and fifteenth days of the month of Adar, ²²as the days on which the Jews had rest from their enemies, as the month which was turned from sorrow to joy for them, and from mourning to a holiday; that they should make them days of feasting and joy, of ^vsending presents to one another and gifts to the ^wpoor. ²³So the Jews accepted the custom which they had begun, as Mordecai had written to them, ²⁴because Haman, the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the enemy of all the Jews, ^xhad plotted against the Jews to annihilate them, and had cast Pur (that *is*, the lot), to consume them and destroy them; ²⁵but ^ywhen ²Esther came before the king, he commanded by letter that ³this wicked plot which *Haman* had devised against the Jews should ^zreturn on his own head, and that he and his sons should be hanged on the gallows.

²⁶So they called these days Purim, after the name ⁴Pur. Therefore, because of all the words of ^athis letter, what they had seen concerning this matter, and what had happened to them, ²⁷the Jews established and imposed it upon themselves and their descendants and all who would

18 ^r Esth. 9:11, 15
1 ⁱ Lit. *it*
19 ^s Deut. 16:11,
14 ^t Esth. 8:16,
17 ^u Neh. 8:10, 12;
Esth. 9:22
22 ^v Neh. 8:10; Esth.
9:19 ^w [Deut. 15:7-
11]; Job 29:16
24 ^x Esth. 3:6,
7; 9:26
25 ^y Esth. 7:4-10;
8:3; 9:13, 14 ^z Esth.
7:10 ² Lit. *she or it*
3 Lit. *his*
26 ^a Esth. 9:20
4 Lit. *Lot*

27 ^b Esth. 8:17; [Is.
56:3, 6]; Zech. 2:11
29 ^c Esth. 2:15
d Esth. 8:10; 9:20, 21
30 ^e Esth. 1:1
31 ^f Esth. 4:3, 16

CHAPTER 10

1 ^a Gen. 10:5; Ps.
72:10; Is. 11:11; 24:15
2 ^b Esth. 8:15; 9:4
c Esth. 6:1 ¹ Lit.
made him great
3 ^d Gen. 41:40,
43, 44; 2 Chr. 28:7
e Neh. 2:10; Ps.
122:8, 9 ² Lit. *seed*.
LXX, Vg. add a
dream of Mordecai
here; Vg. adds six
more chapters

^bjoin them, that without fail they should celebrate these two days every year, according to the written *instructions* and according to the *prescribed* time, ²⁸that these days *should be* remembered and kept throughout every generation, every family, every province, and every city, that these days of Purim should not fail *to be observed* among the Jews, and that the memory of them should not perish among their descendants.

²⁹Then Queen Esther, ^cthe daughter of Abihail, with Mordecai the Jew, wrote with full authority to confirm this ^dsecond letter about Purim. ³⁰And *Mordecai* sent letters to all the Jews, to ^ethe one hundred and twenty-seven provinces of the kingdom of Ahasuerus, *with* words of peace and truth, ³¹to confirm these days of Purim at their *appointed* time, as Mordecai the Jew and Queen Esther had prescribed for them, and as they had decreed for themselves and their descendants concerning matters of their ^ffasting and lamenting. ³²So the decree of Esther confirmed these matters of Purim, and it was written in the book.

Mordecai's Advancement

10 And King Ahasuerus imposed tribute on the land and on ^athe islands of the sea. ²Now all the acts of his power and his might, and the account of the greatness of Mordecai, ^bto which the king ¹advanced him, *are* they not written in the book of the ^cchronicles of the kings of Media and Persia? ³For Mordecai the Jew *was* ^dsecond to King Ahasuerus, and was great among the Jews and well received by the multitude of his brethren, ^eseeking the good of his people and speaking peace to all his ²countrymen.

Jewish people. In Shushan, they had two days of fighting, then they rested and celebrated on the fifteenth day of **Adar** (February–

Pur

(Heb. *pur*) (3:7; 9:24, 26) Strong's #6332

Pur, originally a Babylonian word meaning "lot" or "fate," is used in the Book of Esther as a synonym for the normal Hebrew word for "lot." Lot casting, similar to rolling dice, was a common way to make a random selection (Neh. 11:1) or to discern the will of a god (Jon. 1:7). Believing that his gods controlled the fall of the *pur*, Haman cast lots to determine the right day to destroy the Jews (see 3:7). What he failed to realize was that God is sovereign and cannot be manipulated by superstition (see Prov. 16:33). By casting lots, Haman inadvertently chose the day of the Jews' deliverance—a day that is still celebrated in the Festival of Purim (9:28).

March; see 3:7, 12). The Jewish people in the remainder of the Persian provinces fought for one day and fasted on the fourteenth day of that month.

9:20–25 In light of the difference of timing between the Jews in Shushan and Jews in the rest of the kingdom, Mordecai told the people by **letter** that they should designate both the fourteenth and the fifteenth of Adar as annual holidays. These verses summarize the events of the book.

9:26–28 Purim: This verse explains the name of the two-day festival. The name is derived from the word *pur*, meaning "lot," the lot that was cast to determine the day of the Jewish people's death. Purim reminds the Jews of God's deliverance from their day of destruction. The feast was established as an annual festival.

10:1 tribute: This word may refer both to taxation and forced labor that the king imposed on all his territory.

10:2, 3 The Book of Esther concludes with high praise of Mordecai, whose deeds were recorded in the official chronicles of the Persian Empire. Mordecai held the **second** highest rank in the land, a note that recalls Joseph's ascendancy in Egypt (Gen. 41:37–45).

THE BOOK OF JOB



AT ONE TIME OR ANOTHER, almost everyone has felt like Job. While going through trials and times of suffering, we are often overwhelmed by self-pity. We want an explanation for why God allows trials to happen to us. The Book of Job records the troubling questions, the terrifying doubts, and the very real anguish of a sufferer. The Book of Job can help us in the time when we are surrounded with troubles by giving us a glimpse of God's perspective on our suffering.

Historical Setting Numerous details in the Book of Job indicate a patriarchal setting for its events: (1) Job's wealth is measured in livestock (1:3; 42:12), the same way Abraham and Jacob's wealth is measured (Gen. 12:16; 13:2; 30:43; 32:5). (2) The Sabeans and Chaldeans are portrayed as nomadic marauders (1:15, 17), indicating an early date. (3) The Hebrew word for "piece of silver" in Job (42:11) is otherwise found only in conjunction with the patriarch Jacob (Gen. 33:19; Josh. 24:32). (4) Without a priesthood or a sanctuary, Job offers sacrifices to God in a patriarchal fashion (1:5). (5) Job's longevity is consistent with the life spans of the patriarchs (42:16). (6) The preference in the poetic sections of the book for the divine name Shaddai over the divine name Yahweh may indicate a period before the Exodus (see Ex. 3:14, 15).

The text indicates that the events of Job occurred in the land of Uz (1:1), but the location of Uz is unknown. That Job was the greatest among the people of the East (1:3) indicates that Job lived east of the Jordan River. Some have concluded that Uz was located in Syria or northwest Mesopotamia. However, most writers think Uz was located near Edom, because many of the proper names in the Book of Job occur in the genealogy of Esau, the father of the Edomites (see Gen. 36).

Author and Date There is no consensus about who wrote the Book of Job or when it was written. Suggestions for an author include Job, Elihu, Solomon, and even Moses.

As for the time of writing, there is strong literary evidence that the Book of Job was compiled and written during the time of Solomon, when wisdom literature flourished. The mention of iron tools and weapons (19:24; 20:24; 40:18) and even mining (28:2) implies a date during the Iron Age (after 1200 B.C.). Moreover, the description of a horse in a military context (39:19–25) may indicate the mounted warhorse, which was used at the earliest around the tenth century B.C. Furthermore, at least two passages in Job may allude to biblical passages from the Solomonic era (compare 7:17, 18 with Ps. 8:4; compare 28:28 with Prov. 3:7; 9:10). These various strands of evidence may indicate that Job was written around Solomon's reign.

Structure The basic structure of the Book of Job consists of a prose framework in the prologue (chs. 1; 2) and epilogue (42:7–17) enclosing the poetic body of the book (3:1—42:6). There are significant differences between the poetic body and the prologue and epilogue. The prologue and epilogue present Job as a patient "saint" who righteously endured suffering. On the other hand, the poetic body presents Job as despairing of fair treatment by God (9:1–3, 13–21). According to some critics, these differences indicate that the two sections are separate works by different authors. According to this view, the compiler of Job simply failed to reconcile the "two Jobs."



"Your hands have made me and fashioned me, an intricate unity; yet You would destroy me. Remember, I pray, that You have made me like clay. And will You turn me into dust again?" (Job 10:8, 9).

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The apparent contradictions within Job should not be considered an indication of poor editing, but the deliberate work of an accomplished author. The tension between the "patient" Job and the "impatient" Job contributes to the overall message of the book. It shows Job as a real person. He was no "plaster saint," who suffered stoically. Instead, he struggled with his emotions and feelings as we do today. The Book of Job teaches that it is not wrong for a person to ask the question *why*, as Job did repeatedly (see ch. 3). But these questions must not grow into accusations against the sovereign Lord.

Themes The Book of Job explores all the traditional Middle Eastern explanations of the problem of the "righteous sufferer." These include: (1) the inherent sinfulness of the human race (5:6, 7; 15:14, 16); (2) the accusation that God is unjust (9:22–24); and (3) the limitations of human understanding (11:7–9). But the main difference between the Book of Job and other ancient texts that address this same problem is God's direct intervention in Job's life. Thus the uniqueness of the Book of Job is not in its approach to the problem of suffering, but in its revelation of the sovereign God to whom everyone must properly relate. Sufferer and nonsufferer alike must humbly trust in God's sovereign grace. Because Job and his friends were ignorant of Satan's challenge to God, the Book of Job contains much bad theology and misapplied truth. It is important to read passages in the Book of Job in light of the message and purpose of the entire book. The only proper response to the omnipotent God is submission and faith.

The Book of Job repeatedly emphasizes the sovereignty and omnipotence of God. For instance, the Hebrew divine name *Shaddai*, usually translated as "Almighty," is employed by all characters in the book. Eliphaz describes the Almighty as controlling the destiny of everyone (5:17–20) and as independent of humanity (22:2, 3). Bildad argues that the Almighty is just (8:3, 4) and sovereign in His rule over the universe (25:2, 3). Finally Zophar describes the ways of the Almighty as beyond human comprehension (11:7–10). Hence, Job's friends use the name *Shaddai* to speak of God's transcendence, as well as His sovereign power.

This emphasis on the sovereignty of God refutes a simplistic understanding of divine retribution, which assumes that there is an automatic connection between one's spirituality and prosperity on earth. Such was the basis of Satan's accusation in the prologue that Job served God only for his own profit (1:9–11). Moreover, it is the basis for Eliphaz and Bildad's advice to Job. Both claimed that Job's suffering pointed to a hidden sin in Job's life, because God certainly would not punish an upright person (4:7–11; 8:11–22; 18:5–21). But God's answer to Job refuted this false belief (38:1—39:30). The Lord declares Himself completely sovereign. He is not obligated to bless those who obey Him. All His actions are based on His gracious nature and His own free will.

In this way, the Book of Job is an extended refutation of Satan's challenge that prosperity is connected to people's goodness, and consequently that people's suffering is connected to their sin.

In this way, the Book of Job teaches that the Lord is not bound to anyone's preconceived theological system. Elihu's speech on God's greatness and His sovereign majesty over nature (36:1—37:24) serves as a prelude to the climax of the book: the Lord's answer to Job (38:1—42:6). In His speech, God lowers Himself to Job's level in order to answer Job's questions. In the process, He reveals to all people that He is completely free but also truly good. He is the sovereign and benevolent Creator who continues to determine the course of the universe according to His own hidden plan. Just like Job, we must learn to submit to the Almighty God and accept by faith that He has a good plan for us.

CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

Although Jesus is not named in the Book of Job, He is the only Redeemer Job could have been referring to when he says, "For I know that my Redeemer lives, and He shall stand at last on the earth" (19:25). No one else can be called our Redeemer who came to earth as a human being to die for us. No other book in the Bible includes such graphic detail of the problems and questions that believers wrestle with and skeptics ask. In this book are found the wide range of human hurts that Jesus identified with in His earthly life, as well as the ones He empathizes with as He intercedes for us in heaven (Heb. 4:15).

JOB OUTLINE

- I. Prose prologue 1:1—2:13
 - A. Job's piety and prosperity 1:1—5
 - B. Job's perseverance during two tests 1:6—2:13
- II. Poetic body 3:1—42:6
 - A. Job's initial monologue 3:1—26
 - B. A dialogue in three cycles 4:1—27:23
 - C. Interlude: a poem on wisdom 28:1—28
 - D. Job's concluding monologues 29:1—31:40
 - E. Elihu's speeches 32:1—37:24
 - F. God's speeches and Job's responses 38:1—42:6
- III. Prose epilogue 42:7—17
 - A. God's rebuke of Job's three friends 42:7—9
 - B. God's restoration of Job's prosperity 42:10—17



Job was a great man with thousands of animals, including sheep, camels, oxen, and donkeys. The animals and servants were the first things taken from Job (Job 1:14–17).

Job and His Family in Uz

There was a man ^ain the land of Uz, whose name was ^bJob; and that man was ^cblameless and upright, and one who ^dfeared God and ^eshunned evil. ²And seven sons and three daughters were born to him. ³Also, his possessions were seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen, five hundred female donkeys, and a very large household, so that this man was the greatest of all the ²people of the East.

⁴And his sons would go and feast in their houses, each on his appointed day, and would send and invite their three sisters to eat and drink with them. ⁵So it was, when the days of feasting had run their course, that Job would send and ³sanctify them, and he would rise early in the morning ^eand offer burnt offerings according to the number of them all. For Job said, “It may be that my sons have sinned and ^fcursed ^dGod in their hearts.” Thus Job did regularly.

CHAPTER 1

¹ ^a 1 Chr. 1:17
^b Ezek. 14:14, 20;
James 5:11 ^c Gen.
6:9; 17:1; [Deut.
18:13] ^d [Prov. 16:6]
¹ Lit. turned away
from
³ ² Lit. sons
⁵ ^e Gen. 8:20; [Job
42:8] ^f 1 Kin. 21:10,
13 ³ consecrate
⁴ Lit. blessed, but
in an evil sense; cf.
Job 1:11; 2:5, 9

⁶ ⁹ Job 2:1 ⁵ Lit. the
Adversary
⁷ ^h [1 Pet. 5:8] ⁶ Lit.
the Adversary
⁸ ⁷ Lit. set your
heart on ⁸ Lit. turns
away from
¹⁰ ⁱ Job 29:2-6; Ps.
34:7; Is. 5:2 ^j [Ps.
128:1, 2; Prov. 10:22]
⁹ Protected him
¹¹ ^k Job 2:5; 19:21
^l Is. 8:21; Mal. 3:13,
14 ¹ Lit. bless, but
in an evil sense; cf.
Job 1:5

Satan Attacks Job's Character

⁶Now ⁹there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and ⁵Satan also came among them. ⁷And the LORD said to ⁶Satan, “From where do you come?”

So Satan answered the LORD and said, “From ^hgoing to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it.”

⁸Then the LORD said to Satan, “Have you ⁷considered My servant Job, that *there* is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and ⁸shuns evil?”

⁹So Satan answered the LORD and said, “Does Job fear God for nothing? ¹⁰*i* Have You not ⁹made a hedge around him, around his household, and around all that he has on every side? ^jYou have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. ¹¹*k* But now, stretch out Your hand and touch all that he has, and he will surely ^lcurse ¹You to Your face!”

¹²And the LORD said to Satan, “Behold,

1:1 The dramatic events of the prologue of the Book of Job set the stage for the intricate dialogues of the main body (3:1—42:6). **Uz:** The precise location is unknown but may have been near Edom. Two aspects of Job's character and actions are highlighted. **Blameless and upright,** meaning “straightforward,” and “ethically straight,” emphasize his spotless character. Like Daniel (see Dan. 6:4), Job was blameless before his human critics, but not completely sinless before God. He later testified of his personal integrity (31:5, 6). Job **feared God and shunned evil**, an indication that his right relationship with God motivated him to turn away from evil. This descriptive phrase indicates that Job was the epitome of wisdom (28:28; Prov. 3:7; 14:16; see also Prov. 1:7; 9:10). **1:2** Job had an ideal family consisting of **seven sons and three daughters**. The number seven was the biblical number of completeness. In the ancient Middle East, having many children was generally considered a sign of God's blessing (Ps. 127:3-5). **1:4** Each of Job's sons would participate in a feast with his siblings on his **appointed day**. The term could refer to a birthday celebration. However, the context of v. 5 may indicate a regular, perhaps weekly or seasonal, cycle of celebration and feasting. **1:5** When Job undertook to **sanctify** his children through **burnt offerings**, he performed an intercessory role that corresponds to what he did when he prayed for his friends in the epilogue (42:10).

cursed God: The Hebrew text has “blessed God,” which is probably a euphemism—a reverent substitution of a milder word by a Hebrew scribe because he could not bear to have the word *cursed* next to the divine name. **1:6** The **sons of God** are celestial beings or angels who were created by Him and who serve Him (4:18; Ps. 103:20, 21) as his “holy ones” (5:1). The imagery seemingly indicates a heavenly council over which the Lord sits as Supreme King (Ps. 89:5-7; Dan. 7:9, 10). Strictly speaking, **Satan** may be a title rather than the personal name of the leader of all evil forces. The Hebrew word was not clearly used as a proper name until 1 Chr. 21:1, chronologically one of the last OT books written. Nevertheless, the characteristics of the “Adversary” in the Book of Job imply that he was in fact Satan. He answered God's questions in an antagonistic manner and accused Job of ulterior motives. That Satan **came among** the hosts of heaven at this time suggests that Satan still had access to God's court, and that his final banishment was still in the future. **1:7** The Hebrew word Yahweh, usually translated **the LORD**, is the personal name of the true God of the OT (see Ex. 3:14, 15). It is the particular name of God in covenantal relations with His people Israel (see Ex. 6:1-6; 19:3-8). This indicates that though Job was not an Israelite, he had a relationship with the true God (see v. 21 where the Lord's name is employed). **From where do you come:** God's inquiry does not imply an ignorance of Satan's behavior but was part of the conversation with Satan. See the similar function of the question posed to Adam after the Fall (Gen. 3:9). **1:8** My **servant** refers to the proper relationship every person should have with God—that is, a joyful and reverent trust in God. Job was a model of this type of relationship with the Lord in the prologue and the epilogue (see 2:3; 42:7). **1:9** Satan, always “the adversary,” questioned Job's motives for fearing and serving God. The expression **for nothing** is emphatic in the Hebrew text. The question may be paraphrased, “Is Job really free of ulterior motives?” **1:10** God had placed a **hedge** of protection **around** Job and his **household**. No harm could come to him unless the Lord permitted it (v. 12; see 2:4-6). Believers today should take great comfort from the biblical teaching that the Lord protects His people—whether by a cloud (Ex. 14:19, 20), or by a wall of fiery hosts (2 Kin. 6:17), or through guardian angels (Heb. 1:14). **1:11** Satan ignored customary court etiquette that would not permit him to address God directly as **You**, or use the personal references **Your hand** or **Your face**. Such irreverence was part of his

blameless

(Heb. *tam*) (1:1, 8; 8:20; 9:21; Ps. 37:37; Prov. 29:10) Strong's #8535

The verbal root of this Hebrew word means “to be complete.” Thus this word signifies an individual's integrity—a wholeness and wholesomeness. The word is used as a term of endearment for the Shulamite bride in the Song of Solomon (see “perfect” in Song 5:2; 6:9). In the OT, the blameless are frequently associated with the upright (1:1, 8; 2:3; Ps. 37:37; Prov. 29:10) and contrasted with the wicked (9:22; Ps. 64:2-4). Job's claim to be blameless agrees with God's assessment of him, but it is not a claim to absolute perfection (1:8; 9:21; 14:16, 17). The psalmist writes that the future of the blameless man is peace—as was the case for Job (42:10-12; Ps. 37:37).

all that he has *is* in your ²power; only do not lay a hand on his *person*.”

So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD.

Job Loses His Property and Children

¹³ Now there was a day ^m when his sons and daughters *were* eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house; ¹⁴ and a messenger came to Job and said, “The oxen were plowing and the donkeys feeding beside them, ¹⁵ when the ³Sabeans ⁴raided *them* and took them away—indeed they have killed the servants with the edge of the sword; and I alone have escaped to tell you!”

¹⁶ While he *was* still speaking, another also came and said, “The fire of God fell from heaven and burned up the sheep and the servants, and ⁵consumed them; and I alone have escaped to tell you!”

¹² ² Lit. *hand*
¹³ ^m [Eccl. 9:12]
¹⁵ ³ Lit. *Sheba*; cf. Job 6:19 ⁴ Lit. *fell upon*
¹⁶ ⁵ *destroyed*

¹⁸ ⁿ Job 1:4, 13
¹⁹ ⁶ LXX omits *across*
²⁰ ^o Gen. 37:29, 34; Josh. 7:6; Ezra 9:3
^p [1 Pet. 5:6]
²¹ ^q [Ps. 49:17; Eccl. 5:15]; 1 Tim. 6:7

¹⁷ While he *was* still speaking, another also came and said, “The Chaldeans formed three bands, raided the camels and took them away, yes, and killed the servants with the edge of the sword; and I alone have escaped to tell you!”

¹⁸ While he *was* still speaking, another also came and said, ⁿ “Your sons and daughters *were* eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house, ¹⁹ and suddenly a great wind came from ⁶across the wilderness and struck the four corners of the house, and it fell on the young people, and they are dead; and I alone have escaped to tell you!”

²⁰ Then Job arose, ^otore his robe, and shaved his head; and he ^pfell to the ground and worshiped. ²¹ And he said:

^q “Naked I came from my mother's womb,

constant strategy to demean God. **curse:** The sin of cursing God is a pivotal issue for the Book of Job. Job feared that his children might think or speak irreverently of God (v. 5). But Satan asserted that Job would **surely curse** God if his prosperity and blessings were removed. Even Job's wife would urge him to “curse God and die” (2:9). **1:12** That **Satan** must receive permission from the Lord to **lay a hand on** Job (see v. 11) indicates that God limits Satan's power. Believers can find strength and assurance from the fact that Satan's actions are limited by God's sovereign control. After the prologue, Satan is never mentioned directly again in the Book of Job; he is only a minor character compared to the Lord of the universe.

1:13–19 In one **day** Job plummeted from the pinnacle of prosperity to the pit of poverty. He must have felt that all heaven and earth had turned against him. The four rapid disasters that struck him came alternately from earth and heaven. First was the raiding of his livestock and **servants**; then from heaven, **the fire of God**; then again from earth, the loss of his **camels** and **servants**; and then the climactic blow again from heaven, **a great wind** that demolished his **house** and killed his children.

1:15 The **Sabeans** were nomadic raiders from Sheba. They were

probably the people of the queen of Sheba (see 1 Kin. 10:1–13). Her homeland was probably southwestern Arabia, present-day Yemen.

1:17 The **Chaldeans** were part of various west Semitic marauding tribes active in the middle Euphrates from the twelfth to the ninth century **B.C.** They migrated eastward into Assyria and then into Babylonia, and were the forerunners of the Chaldean or neo-Babylonian dynasty established by Nebuchadnezzar's father.

1:20 Finally the spotlight focuses on Job's reaction to his trials. Did he serve God for profit as Satan had alleged (1:9)? Job passed the first test with a model response. He showed intense grief according to the accepted custom of his day (v. 20). Then he humbly accepted God's will without complaining or blaming God for his tragedies. Job acknowledged God's sovereign control over all circumstances when he **fell to the ground and worshiped**. The context indicates that Job's fall was not an involuntary reflex of despair but a deliberate act of humility before God. Job's initial response was an ideal example of how to respond in time of crisis. Job is not only an ancient biblical hero but also an example for us when we face trials that test the mettle of each person's faith (see 1 Pet. 1:6, 7).

1:21 Job gave a realistic appraisal of his status: just as he came into

Satan: The Accuser

While the Book of Job teaches us much about human suffering, we also learn a great deal about Satan and his relationship to God. The first two chapters of Job demonstrate that although Satan is in rebellion, he is still accountable to God.

Originally an angel of God, Satan became corrupt through his own pride (2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6). Ever since his rebellion against God, Satan has been God's enemy as well as ours. In fact, the Hebrew word for Satan means “Adversary.” In the story of Job, Satan remained true to his name by accusing Job and afflicting him with all kinds of suffering. However Satan's power is not equal to God's. Although Satan attempts to hamper God's work, he is limited by God. As much as he may wish to be a god, Satan still remains answerable to God.

In addition to being accountable to God (1:6), Satan, as a created being, is finite. He is not all-powerful, and he can only be in one place at one time (1:7). Therefore, his fellow fallen angels must aid him in his evil work. Of course, Satan can tempt us, but he cannot know what is in our minds or foretell our future (1:9–11). Most important, he can do nothing without God's permission (1:6–12). Because God actively restrains Satan (1:12; 2:6) and promises that He will not allow us to be tempted beyond what we can bear (1 Cor. 10:13), we can be confident that with God's power we can overcome Satan. Although we live in a fallen world, Satan does not have free reign to do whatever evil he wishes. God is still, and always will be, sovereign.

It was Satan who planned and implemented Job's suffering. God may have allowed Satan to test Job for a time. But in His time God Himself delivered Job from suffering, restored him, and blessed him even more than before (42:10). Even through Satan's evil plan, God had accomplished His good purposes. The relationship between Job and God was tested, and it withstood the test. God's love had won; Satan's accusations were answered. It was finally clear to all that God was both sovereign and compassionate. Through the experience, Job learned to appreciate God's gifts to him even more (42:1–6).



And naked shall I return there.
The LORD ^r gave, and the LORD has
^s taken away;
^t Blessed be the name of the LORD.”

^{22u} In all this Job did not sin nor charge
God with wrong.

Satan Attacks Job's Health

2 Again ^a there was a day when the
sons of God came to present them-
selves before the LORD, and Satan came
also among them to present himself be-
fore the LORD. ² And the LORD said to Sa-
tan, “From where do you come?”

^b Satan answered the LORD and said,
“From going to and fro on the earth, and
from walking back and forth on it.”

³ Then the LORD said to Satan, “Have
you considered My servant Job, that *there*
is none like him on the earth, ^c a blame-
less and upright man, one who fears God
and shuns evil? And still he ^d holds fast
to his integrity, although you incited Me
against him, ^e to ¹ destroy him without
cause.”

⁴ So Satan answered the LORD and said,
“Skin for skin! Yes, all that a man has
he will give for his life. ^{5f} But stretch out
Your hand now, and touch his ^g bone and
his flesh, and he will surely ² curse You
to Your face!”

^{6h} And the LORD said to Satan, “Behold,
he *is* in your hand, but spare his life.”

⁷ So Satan went out from the pres-
ence of the LORD, and struck Job with

²¹ ^r Eccl. 5:19;
[James 1:17] ^s Gen.
31:16; [1 Sam. 2:6]
^t Eph. 5:20; [1 Thess.
5:18]
²² ^u Job 2:10

CHAPTER 2

¹ ^a Job 1:6-8
² ^b Job 1:7
³ ^c Job 1:1, 8 ^d Job
27:5, 6 ^e Job 9:17
¹ Lit. *consume*
⁵ ^f Job 1:11 ^g Job
19:20 ² Lit. *bless*,
but in an evil sense;
cf. Job 1:5
⁶ ^h Job 1:12

⁷ ⁱ Is. 1:6
⁸ ^j Job 42:6; Jer.
6:26; Ezek. 27:30;
Jon. 3:6; Matt. 11:21
⁹ ³ Lit. *Bless*, but in
an evil sense; cf.
Job 1:5
¹⁰ ^k Job 1:21, 22;
[Heb. 12:6; James
5:10, 11] ¹ Job 1:22;
[James 1:12] ^m Ps.
39:1
¹¹ ⁿ Gen. 36:11;
1 Chr. 1:36; Job 6:19;
Jer. 49:7; Obad. 9
^o Gen. 25:2; 1 Chr.
1:32 ^p Job 42:11;
Rom. 12:15
¹² ^q Josh. 7:6; Neh.
9:1; Lam. 2:10; Ezek.
27:30
¹³ ^r Gen. 50:10;
Ezek. 3:15

CHAPTER 3

² ¹ Lit. *answered*

painful boils ⁱ from the sole of his foot to
the crown of his head. ⁸ And he took for
himself a potsherd with which to scrape
himself ^j while he sat in the midst of the
ashes.

⁹ Then his wife said to him, “Do you
still hold fast to your integrity? ³ Curse
God and die!”

¹⁰ But he said to her, “You speak as one
of the foolish women speaks. ^k Shall we
indeed accept good from God, and shall
we not accept adversity?” ¹ In all this Job
did not ^m sin with his lips.

Job's Three Friends

¹¹ Now when Job's three friends
heard of all this adversity that had come
upon him, each one came from his own
place—Eliphaz the ⁿ Temanite, Bildad
the ^o Shuhite, and Zophar the Naama-
thite. For they had made an appointment
together to come ^p and mourn with him,
and to comfort him. ¹² And when they
raised their eyes from afar, and did not
recognize him, they lifted their voices
and wept; and each one tore his robe and
^q sprinkled dust on his head toward heav-
en. ¹³ So they sat down with him on the
ground ^r seven days and seven nights, and
no one spoke a word to him, for they saw
that *his* grief was very great.

Job Deplores His Birth

3 After this Job opened his mouth and
cursed the day of his *birth*. ² And Job
¹ spoke, and said:

the world **naked**, so would he leave it **naked**. Then he repeatedly
acknowledged the control of **the Lord** over all circumstances. The
name Yahweh is used three times in this verse to emphasize Job's
dependence on the true God. Except for 12:9, this is the only place
where Job mentions the covenantal name of God. Though Job was
not an Israelite, having lived in Uz centuries before the nation of
Israel came out of Egypt, he worshiped the God of Israel.

2:3 The first sentence of this verse repeats 1:8 verbatim, empha-
sizing that Job's character had remained flawless despite Satan's
assaults. In the second sentence the Lord affirms that Job had main-
tained **his integrity** (the same Hebrew root as *blameless* in 1:1, 8),
although **Satan** had **incited** Him to destroy Job **without cause**.
“Without cause” translates the same Hebrew word Satan had used
in insinuating that Job did not serve God “for nothing” (1:9). Now
the Lord throws it back in his face.

2:4 The origin of the proverb **skin for skin** utilized by **Satan** is
disputed. Some think it may have originated from the practice of
bartering animal skins. Others believe that the phrase is similar to
the proverb “life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth” (Ex. 21:23–25).
In the last half of the verse Satan charges that Job would be willing
to lose his possessions or even his family, as long as **his life** was
spared.

2:6 When the Lord placed Job into Satan's **hand**, it is extraordi-
nary that He commanded Satan to **spare his life**. Ironically, the
word *spare* normally refers to God's role in His providential care
of people (see 29:2).

2:7 The disease that afflicted Job with **painful boils** from head to
toe is difficult to identify. The term for *boils* was used to describe
the plague of boils in Egypt (Ex. 9:9–11). The same phrase *painful*

boils, as one of the covenant curses for the disobedient (see Deut.
28:35), denoted an incurable illness.

2:9 The words of Job's wife—**curse God and die**—were probably
Job's most severe trial. Ironically, her question **do you still hold
fast to your integrity** employs almost exactly the same wording
the Lord had used (see v. 3). The wording emphasizes Job's perse-
verance, which his wife misconstrued as religious fanaticism—she
thought he was blindly refusing to face the reality of his desperate
situation.

2:10 Job's response to the second test, the loss of his health and
alienation from his wife, was once again commendable. His rhetor-
ical question, urging the acceptance of both **good** and **adversity
from God**, anticipates one of the central messages of the Book of
Job: The person of faith will trust in God through prosperity or ad-
versity, even while unable to understand why bad things happen.

2:11 **Eliphaz the Temanite** was apparently an Edomite from
Teman in northern Edom (Gen. 36:11). The term **Shuhite** may refer
to Bildad's ancestry, or more likely to his geographical origin, since
the other two friends seem to be identified by their home towns.
Zophar the Naamathite may have come from Naameh, a moun-
tainous area in northwestern Arabia.

2:12, 13 These friends truly cared for Job because they **wept**
and stayed close by him for **seven days and seven nights**. Yet later they
would fail Job miserably by not listening to him (see 8:4–6; 13:5–13).

3:1 When **Job . . . cursed the day of his birth**, he came close
to blasphemy. The Hebrew word for *cursed*, meaning “to hold in
contempt,” is elsewhere employed of cursing God (Ex. 22:28; Lev.
24:15) or cursing one's parents (Ex. 21:17). Job's pain had driven him
to express a very strong malediction against the day of his birth

- 3 “May^a the day perish on which I was born,
And the night *in which* it was said,
‘A male child is conceived.’
4 May that day be darkness;
May God above not seek it,
Nor the light shine upon it.
5 May darkness and ^bthe shadow of death claim it;
May a cloud settle on it;
May the blackness of the day terrify it.
6 As *for* that night, may darkness seize it;
May it not ²rejoice among the days of the year,
May it not come into the number of the months.
7 Oh, may that night be barren!
May no joyful shout come into it!
8 May those curse it who curse the day,
Those ^cwho are ready to arouse Leviathan.
9 May the stars of its morning be dark;
May it look for light, but *have* none,
And not see the ³dawning of the day;
10 Because it did not shut up the doors of my *mother’s* womb,
Nor hide sorrow from my eyes.
11 “Why^d did I not die at birth?
Why did I *not* ⁴perish when I came from the womb?
12 ^eWhy did the knees receive me?
Or why the breasts, that I should nurse?
13 For now I would have lain still and been quiet,
I would have been asleep;
Then I would have been at rest
14 With kings and counselors of the earth,
Who ^fbuilt ruins for themselves,
15 Or with princes who had gold,
Who filled their houses *with* silver;
16 Or *why* was I not hidden ^glike a stillborn child,
Like infants who never saw light?
17 There the wicked cease *from* troubling,

3 ^a Job 10:18, 19;
Jer. 20:14–18
5 ^b Job 10:21, 22;
Jer. 13:16; Amos 5:8
6 ² LXX, Syr., Tg.,
Vg. *be joined*
8 ^c Jer. 9:17
9 ³ *eyelids of the dawn*
11 ^d Job 10:18, 19
⁴ *expire*
12 ^e Gen. 30:3
14 ^f Job 15:28; Is. 58:12
16 ^g Ps. 58:8

17 ^h Job 17:16 ⁵ Lit.
weary of strength
18 ⁱ Job 39:7 ⁶ *are at ease*
20 ^j Jer. 20:18
^k 2 Kin. 4:27
21 ^l Rev. 9:6 ^m Prov. 2:4 ⁷ Lit. *wait*
22 ⁿ Job 7:15, 16
23 ^o Job 19:8; Ps. 88:8; Lam. 3:7

BIBLE TIMES & CULTURE NOTES



Miscarriage

Sensing he was about to lose family, health, and possessions, Job wished that he had been “hidden like a stillborn child, like infants who never saw light” (3:16). Just as in our day, not all women in Bible times were able to carry the fetus long enough to give birth. Although the tragedy of miscarriage was probably whispered about in the women’s circles, the people’s sense of good taste probably kept them from discussing it openly.

The women in Bible times might trace the problem to a food that had been eaten or something that had been drunk. For example, during the days of the prophet Elisha, the women in Jericho were convinced that the water from the nearby spring was causing them to miscarry (2 Kin. 2:19, 20). Sometimes miscarriage was caused by accident. A pregnant woman might be jostled or kicked by an animal. She might get caught between two men who were fighting. According to Mosaic Law, the person who inflicted the blow was fined if the mother miscarried. If the miscarriage caused complications and the woman died as a result, the Law exacted the death penalty (Ex. 21:22, 23).

- And there the ⁵weary are at ^hrest.
18 There the prisoners ⁶rest together;
ⁱThey do not hear the voice of the oppressor.
19 The small and great are there,
And the servant *is* free from his master.
20 “Why^j is light given to him who is in misery,
And life to the ^kbitter of soul,
21 Who ^llong⁷ for death, but it does not come,
And search for it more than ^mhidden treasures;
22 Who rejoice exceedingly,
And are glad when they can find the ⁿgrave?
23 Why *is light given* to a man whose way is hidden,
^oAnd whom God has hedged in?

and the night of his conception, which were personified as those responsible for his existence (see vv. 3–6). However, Job did not commit blasphemy. He did not curse the Chaldeans or Sabeans, much less God. Neither did he express thoughts of suicide.

3:3–10 Job’s wish that he had never been born because his life was full of **sorrow** (vv. 3, 10) reflects a serious misunderstanding about the basic meaning of human existence. The Bible teaches that the purpose of life is not happiness but the praise of God’s glory (Eph. 1:3–14).

3:8 Job employed two separate Hebrew words translated **curse**, different from the Hebrew term in v. 1. He wished that the popular magicians who cast spells on the day for their clients could have

cast a spell on his day so that he would never have been born. Job’s belief in one God (see 31:26–28) indicates that he was speaking poetically and dramatically. He was not endorsing any kind of pagan magic, but employing vivid and forceful language to express the intensity of his agony and despair.

3:20–22 Even though Job longed for **death**, he was not considering suicide. The context of other passages indicates that Job merely wished that the Lord would let him die (see 7:15–21; 10:18–22).

3:23 Job bemoaned that God had **hedged him in** so that he could not die. The irony is that Job perceived God’s protective hedge around him as keeping him from a desirable death. This is a typical feeling of those who suffer.

24 For my sighing comes before ⁸I eat,
And my groanings pour out like
water.
25 For the thing I greatly ^pfeared has
come upon me,
And what I dreaded has happened
to me.
26 I am not at ease, nor am I quiet;
I have no rest, for trouble comes.”

Eliphaz: Job Has Sinned

4 Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered
and said:

2 “If one attempts a word with you, will
you become weary?
But who can withhold himself from
speaking?
3 Surely you have instructed many,
And you ^ahave strengthened weak
hands.
4 Your words have upheld him who
was stumbling,
And you ^bhave strengthened the
¹feeble knees;
5 But now it comes upon you, and you
are weary;
It touches you, and you are troubled.
6 Is not ^cyour reverence ^dyour
confidence?
And the integrity of your ways your
hope?
7 “Remember now, ^ewho *ever* perished
being innocent?
Or where were the upright *ever* cut off?
8 Even as I have seen,
^fThose who plow iniquity
And sow trouble reap the same.
9 By the blast of God they perish,
And by the breath of His anger they
are consumed.

24 ⁸ Lit. *my bread*
25 ^p [Job 9:28;
30:15]

CHAPTER 4
3 ^a Is. 35:3
4 ^b Is. 35:3 ¹ Lit.
bending
6 ^c Job 1:1 ^d Prov.
3:26
7 ^e [Job 8:20; 36:6;
7; Ps. 37:25]
8 ^f [Job 15:31, 35;
Prov. 22:8; Hos.
10:13; Gal. 6:7]

10 ^g Job 5:15; Ps.
58:6
11 ^h Job 29:17; Ps.
34:10
13 ⁱ Job 33:15
14 ^j Hab. 3:16
18 ^k Job 15:15
20 ^l Ps. 90:5, 6

10 The roaring of the lion,
The voice of the fierce lion,
And ^othe teeth of the young lions are
broken.
11 ^hThe old lion perishes for lack of prey,
And the cubs of the lioness are
scattered.
12 “Now a word was secretly brought
to me,
And my ear received a whisper of it.
13 ⁱIn disquieting thoughts from the
visions of the night,
When deep sleep falls on men,
14 Fear came upon me, and ^jtrembling,
Which made all my bones shake.
15 Then a spirit passed before my
face;
The hair on my body stood up.
16 It stood still,
But I could not discern its
appearance.
A form *was* before my eyes;
There was silence;
Then I heard a voice *saying*:
17 ^kCan a mortal be more righteous than
God?
Can a man be more pure than his
Maker?
18 If He ^kputs no trust in His servants,
If He charges His angels with error,
19 How much more those who dwell in
houses of clay,
Whose foundation is in the dust,
Who are crushed before a moth?
20 ^lThey are broken in pieces from
morning till evening;
They perish forever, with no one
regarding.
21 Does not their own excellence go
away?
They die, even without wisdom.”

4:1 Since **Eliphaz the Temanite** spoke first, he was probably the oldest and therefore presumably the wisest of the three. Eliphaz was a little more courteous to Job than were his other two friends. However, his observations were distorted. Eliphaz firmly believed that God would never punish the righteous and would not preserve the sinner. He concluded that since Job was suffering, he must be a sinner (see 22:4–11, 21–30).
4:2–6 Though Eliphaz seems surprised at Job’s response (ch. 3), his initial remarks are complimentary and courteous. The content of vv. 7–11 suggests that v. 6 probably contains at least a mild rebuke.
4:5 The phrase **you are weary** translates one word in the original Hebrew and repeats the same root word found in the phrase “will you become weary” in v. 2. This repetition indicates that Eliphaz had already recognized the apparent contradiction between the patient Job of the prologue and the impatient Job of the dialogue.
4:7–9 Eliphaz highlights the retribution doctrine—that is, God supports the righteous but abandons the wicked—with two rhetorical questions. He supports his belief by an appeal to his experience; that is, “you reap what you sow.” Because the word **trouble** is the same word used by Job to describe his own plight as full of “sorrow” (3:10) and “misery” (3:20), Eliphaz may be equating Job with the wicked **who plow iniquity**.

4:10, 11 To the reader it may seem that Eliphaz suddenly adds illustrations of God’s retribution on animals. But probably these are proverbial sayings with a double meaning. Eliphaz may have been implying that Job’s “groanings” or “roaring” made him comparable to the old lion, symbolizing the wicked, whose sins were now being repaid with suffering.
4:12–17 Eliphaz appeals to a vision to authenticate his theology. He claims that he **heard a voice** that told him that no one was **righteous** compared to **God**, implying that Job was not righteous. But contrast the Lord’s unqualified commendation of Job in the prologue (see 1:1, 8; 2:3).
4:19, 20 The description of people as living **in houses of clay** with their **foundation . . . in the dust** emphasizes the mortality and fragility of human existence. Like the temporary houses they live in, people can perish without anyone knowing. Elsewhere Job uses the same two Hebrew words in parallel to describe the fragility of the human body. Since the body is fashioned from clay, God the potter who fashioned it can easily turn it back to dust (see 10:8, 9; 33:6).
4:21 The Hebrew word for the phrase **their own excellence** may mean “tent cord.” Thus the text may be stating that humanity’s existence is as precarious as a tent in the midst of a windstorm.

Eliphaz: Job Is Chastened by God

- 5** “Call out now;
Is there anyone who will answer you?
And to which of the holy ones will you turn?
² For wrath kills a foolish man,
And envy slays a simple one.
³ “I have seen the foolish taking root,
But suddenly I cursed his dwelling place.
⁴ His sons are ^bfar from safety,
They are crushed in the gate,
And ^cthere is no deliverer.
⁵ Because the hungry eat up his harvest,
¹ Taking it even from the thorns,
² And a snare snatches their ³substance.
⁶ For affliction does not come from the dust,
Nor does trouble spring from the ground;
⁷ Yet man is ^dborn to ⁴trouble,
As the sparks fly upward.

⁸ “But as for me, I would seek God,
And to God I would commit my cause—
⁹ Who does great things, and unsearchable,
Marvelous things without number.
¹⁰ “He gives rain on the earth,
And sends waters on the fields.
¹¹ ^fHe sets on high those who are lowly,
And those who mourn are lifted to safety.
¹² ^gHe frustrates the devices of the crafty,
So that their hands cannot carry out their plans.
¹³ He catches the ^hwise in their own craftiness,
And the counsel of the cunning comes quickly upon them.
¹⁴ They meet with darkness in the daytime,
And grope at noontime as in the night.

CHAPTER 5

³ ^a [Ps. 37:35, 36]; Jer. 12:1-3
⁴ ^b Ps. 119:155 ^c Ps. 109:12
⁵ ¹ LXX *They shall not be taken from evil men*; Vg. *And the armed man shall take him by violence* ² LXX *The might shall draw them off*; Vg. *And the thirsty shall drink up their riches* ³ wealth
⁷ ^d Job 14:1 ⁴ labor
¹⁰ ^e [Job 36:27-29; 37:6-11; 38:26]
¹¹ ^f Ps. 113:7
¹² ^g Neh. 4:15
¹³ ^h [Job 37:24; 1 Cor. 3:19]

¹⁵ ⁱ Job 4:10, 11; Ps. 35:10
¹⁶ ^j 1 Sam. 2:8; Ps. 107:41, 42
¹⁷ ^k Ps. 94:12; [Prov. 3:11, 12; Heb. 12:5, 6; Rev. 3:19]
¹⁸ ^l [Deut. 32:39; 1 Sam. 2:6, 7]; Is. 30:26; Hos. 6:1
¹⁹ ^m Ps. 34:19; 91:3; [1 Cor. 10:13] ⁿ Ps. 91:10; [Prov. 24:16]
²⁰ ^o Ps. 33:19, 20; 37:19 ⁵ Lit. *hand*
²¹ ^p Job 5:15; Ps. 31:20
²² ^q Ps. 91:13; Is. 11:9; 35:9; 65:25; Ezek. 34:25 ^r Hos. 2:18
²³ ^s Ps. 91:12
²⁵ ^t Ps. 112:2 ^u Ps. 72:16
²⁶ ^v [Prov. 9:11; 10:27]
²⁷ ^w Ps. 111:2

- ¹⁵ But ⁱHe saves the needy from the sword,
From the mouth of the mighty,
And from their hand.
¹⁶ ^jSo the poor have hope,
And injustice shuts her mouth.

¹⁷ “Behold, ^k happy is the man whom God corrects;
Therefore do not despise the chastening of the Almighty.
¹⁸ ^lFor He bruises, but He binds up;
He wounds, but His hands make whole.
¹⁹ ^mHe shall deliver you in six troubles,
Yes, in seven ⁿno evil shall touch you.
²⁰ ^oIn famine He shall redeem you from death,
And in war from the ⁵power of the sword.
²¹ ^pYou shall be hidden from the scourge of the tongue,
And you shall not be afraid of destruction when it comes.
²² You shall laugh at destruction and famine,
And ^qyou shall not be afraid of the ^rbeasts of the earth.
²³ ^sFor you shall have a covenant with the stones of the field,
And the beasts of the field shall be at peace with you.
²⁴ You shall know that your tent is in peace;
You shall visit your dwelling and find nothing amiss.
²⁵ You shall also know that ^tyour descendants *shall be* many,
And your offspring ^ulike the grass of the earth.
²⁶ ^vYou shall come to the grave at a full age,
As a sheaf of grain ripens in its season.
²⁷ Behold, this we have ^wsought out; It is true.
Hear it, and know for yourself.”

5:1 Eliphaz’s warning against appealing to **holy ones** or angels anticipates Job’s later desire for a “mediator” (see 9:33).

5:3-7 Eliphaz begins another appeal to personal observation and experience. Eliphaz uses a play on the words **ground** and **man**, along with the repetition of the word **trouble**, to aid his argument that Job’s trouble did not come out of nowhere—that is, **spring from the ground**.

5:7 The word **sparks** may allude to the Ugaritic god of the underworld who was supposedly responsible for plagues and lightning. A reference like this to mythology does not imply or endorse a belief in other gods. Eliphaz is saying “just as a plague springs up from the demonic forces of hell, so does trouble come from a person’s nature.”

5:17 Eliphaz insinuates that since Job’s suffering was a result of God’s **chastening** for his sin, he should **not despise** or reject

what God was trying to teach him. Though it is true that God sometimes disciplines people for their sin through pain and suffering (32:1—37:24; Prov. 3:11; Heb. 12:7), Eliphaz was wrong to suggest that this was necessarily so in Job’s case. The divine title *Shaddai*, translated **Almighty**, is used in Job 31 times, but only 17 times in all the rest of the OT.

5:18-21 Eliphaz states that God is the author of both pain and healing. God would heal the **wounds** he inflicted for discipline. When God does allow pain to come into our lives, it is not to harm us, but to make us better.

5:23 The presence of stones in a field could make land impossible to farm (see 2 Kin. 3:19, 25). Thus the expression **covenant with the stones of the field** would mean being at **peace** and harmony with even the destructive forces of nature—including **the beasts of the field** (see v. 22).

Job: My Complaint Is Just

6 Then Job answered and said:

- ² “Oh, that my grief were fully weighed,
And my calamity laid with it on the
scales!
- ³ For then it would be heavier than the
sand of the sea—
Therefore my words have been rash.
- ⁴ ^aFor the arrows of the Almighty are
within me;
My spirit drinks in their poison;
^bThe terrors of God are arrayed
^cagainst me.
- ⁵ Does the ^dwild donkey bray when it
has grass,
Or does the ox low over its fodder?
- ⁶ Can flavorless food be eaten without
salt?
Or is there *any* taste in the white of
an egg?
- ⁷ My soul refuses to touch them;
They are as loathsome food to me.
- ⁸ “Oh, that I might have my request,
That God would grant *me* the thing
that I long for!
- ⁹ That it would please God to
crush me,
That He would loose His hand and
^ecut me off!
- ¹⁰ Then I would still have comfort;
Though in anguish I would exult,
He will not spare;
For ^fI have not concealed the words
of ^gthe Holy One.
- ¹¹ “What strength do I have, that I
should hope?
And what *is* my end, that I should
prolong my life?

CHAPTER 6

⁴ ^a Job 16:13; Ps.
38:2 ^b Ps. 88:15, 16
^c Job 30:15
⁵ ^d Job 39:5-8
⁹ ^e Num. 11:15;
1 Kin. 19:4; Job 7:16;
9:21; 10:1
¹⁰ ^f Acts 20:20
^g [Lev. 19:2; Is.
57:15]

¹⁴ ^h [Prov. 17:17]
ⁱ Or *despairing*
¹⁵ ⁱ Ps. 38:11 ^j Jer.
15:18
¹⁹ ^k Gen. 25:15;
Is. 21:14; Jer.
25:23 ^l 1 Kin. 10:1;
Ps. 72:10; Ezek.
27:22, 23
²⁰ ^m Jer. 14:3 ² Lit.
ashamed
²¹ ⁿ Job 13:4 ^o Ps.
38:11

- ¹² Is my strength the strength of stones?
Or is my flesh bronze?
- ¹³ Is my help not within me?
And is success driven from me?
- ¹⁴ “To ^h him who is ⁱ afflicted, kindness
should be shown by his friend,
Even though he forsakes the fear of
the Almighty.
- ¹⁵ ⁱ My brothers have dealt deceitfully
like a brook,
^j Like the streams of the brooks that
pass away,
¹⁶ Which are dark because of the ice,
And into which the snow vanishes.
- ¹⁷ When it is warm, they cease to
flow;
When it is hot, they vanish from
their place.
- ¹⁸ The paths of their way turn aside,
They go nowhere and perish.
- ¹⁹ The caravans of ^k Tema look,
The travelers of ^l Sheba hope for
them.
- ²⁰ They are ^m disappointed ² because
they were confident;
They come there and are confused.
- ²¹ For now ⁿ you are nothing,
You see terror and ^o are afraid.
- ²² Did I ever say, ‘Bring *something*
to me’?
Or, ‘Offer a bribe for me from your
wealth’?
- ²³ Or, ‘Deliver me from the enemy’s
hand’?
Or, ‘Redeem me from the hand of
oppressors’?
- ²⁴ “Teach me, and I will hold my tongue;
Cause me to understand wherein I
have erred.

6:1 When Job **answered**, he did not respond directly to Eliphaz. This may be the reason the text does not specify a name here. Job usually responded to all three of his friends, not to one individually (see 6:24–30). His friends in turn did not respond point-by-point to what Job said. Consequently the dialogue is not so much a conversation between friends as it is a speech contest in which one speaker tries to win a debate and impress his audience with his rhetoric.

6:4 Job’s suffering was so intense that he portrayed it as caused by **arrows of the Almighty** that were dipped in **poison**. The arrows of the Lord are generally symbolic of His judgment (Deut. 32:23, 42) or wrath (Ps. 38:1, 2). Job also assumed that God was required to reward the obedient and punish the guilty in this life, and he may have presumed that the Lord was punishing him unjustly.

6:10 Though the exact translation is disputed, the overall context of this verse seems to indicate that Job was more concerned to preserve his relationship to **the Holy One** than to have God remove his pain and **anguish** through death (vv. 8, 9).

6:14 The exact meaning of the Hebrew word translated **afflicted** is disputed. It may mean “to melt”; thus the idea could be “failing” or “despairing.” Verse 14 seems to be transitional, linking Job’s despair of vv. 8–13 with his disappointment of vv. 15–21.

6:15 Since the friends are called **my brothers**, Job apparently at one time had a close relationship with them. This only intensified his feelings of disappointment. He compares them to **the streams**

of the brooks, the torrents of water that fill the ravines during the rainy season and **pass away** in the summer.

6:18 The word **paths** in this verse concludes the imagery of empty ravines left by the seasonal streams called “wadis” (vv. 15–18) and links this section to the next (see v. 19).

6:19, 20 Job compares his intense disappointment with his friends to the thirsty **caravans of Tema** and **the travelers of Sheba**, whose hopes for water were dashed by reaching the dry stream beds. Tema was located in northern Arabia and Sheba in southwestern Arabia. These caravans and travelers would have been familiar to his friends, since the story of Job most likely occurred near Edom in northern Arabia.

6:21 When Job hoped to receive help from his three friends, they offered **nothing**. This was like a desert wadi, a seasonal stream that vanishes in the time of greatest need.

6:24–26 Job pleads with his would-be counselors to have understanding rather than an argumentative spirit. The friends’ demeanor degenerates into arguments and reproofs as they overreact to Job’s words, which even Job admits belonged to the **wind**. A counselor must be willing to make allowances for overreaction in someone who suffers and not respond with similar emotion. The sufferer often needs someone to be a friend who will listen with understanding, rather than a judge who simply wishes to give reproof.

- 25 How forceful are right words!
But what does your arguing prove?
- 26 Do you intend to rebuke *my* words,
And the speeches of a desperate one,
which are as wind?
- 27 Yes, you overwhelm the fatherless,
And you ^pundermine your friend.
- 28 Now therefore, be pleased to look at me;
For I would never lie to your face.
- 29 ^qYield now, let there be no injustice!
Yes, concede, my ^rrighteousness ³still stands!
- 30 Is there injustice on my tongue?
Cannot my ⁴taste discern the unsavory?

27 ^p Ps. 57:6
29 ^q Job 17:10 ^r Job 27:5, 6; 34:5 ³ Lit. *is in it*
30 ⁴ *palate*

CHAPTER 7

1 ^a [Job 14:5, 13, 14]; Ps. 39:4
2 ¹ Lit. *pants for*
3 ^b [Job 15:31]
4 ^c Deut. 28:67; Job 7:13, 14
5 ^d Is. 14:11

Job: My Suffering Is Comfortless

- 7 “Is there not ^a a time of hard service
for man on earth?
Are not his days also like the days of
a hired man?
- 2 Like a servant who ¹earnestly desires
the shade,
And like a hired man who eagerly
looks for his wages,
- 3 So I have been allotted ^bmonths of
futility,
And wearisome nights have been
appointed to me.
- 4 ^cWhen I lie down, I say, ‘When shall I
arise,
And the night be ended?’
For I have had my fill of tossing till
dawn.
- 5 My flesh is ^dcaked with worms and
dust,
My skin is cracked and breaks out
afresh.

6 ^e Job 9:25; 16:22;
17:11; Is. 38:12;
[James 4:14]
7 ^f Job 7:16; Ps.
78:39; 89:47
8 ^g Job 8:18; 20:9
9 ^h 2 Sam. 12:23
10 ⁱ Ps. 103:16
11 ^j Ps. 39:1, 9
12 ^k 1 Sam. 1:10
13 ^l Job 9:27
15 ² Lit. *my bones*
16 ^m Job 10:1
17 ⁿ Job 14:6 ^o Ps.
62:9 ³ Without
substance, futile
17 ^p Job 22:2; Ps.
8:4; 144:3; Heb. 2:6

- 6 “My ^e days are swifter than a weaver’s
shuttle,
And are spent without hope.
- 7 Oh, remember that ^fmy life is a
breath!
My eye will never again see good.
- 8 ^gThe eye of him who sees me will see
me no *more*;
While your eyes *are* upon me, I shall
no longer *be*.
- 9 As the cloud disappears and vanishes
away,
So ^hhe who goes down to the grave
does not come up.
- 10 He shall never return to his house,
ⁱNor shall his place know him
anymore.
- 11 “Therefore I will ^jnot restrain my
mouth;
I will speak in the anguish of my
spirit;
I will ^kcomplain in the bitterness of
my soul.
- 12 Am I a sea, or a sea serpent,
That You set a guard over me?
- 13 ^lWhen I say, ‘My bed will comfort me,
My couch will ease my complaint,’
14 Then You scare me with dreams
And terrify me with visions,
- 15 So that my soul chooses strangling
And death rather than ²my body.
- 16 ^mI loathe *my life*;
I would not live forever.
ⁿLet me alone,
For ^omy days *are but* ³a breath.
- 17 “What ^p is man, that You should exalt
him,
That You should set Your heart on
him,

6:29, 30 The repeated word **injustice** in these verses is the same term used by Eliphaz in 5:16. Eliphaz argued that God “saves the needy” from the unscrupulous tactics of the wicked (5:12–15), so that “the poor have hope and injustice shuts her mouth.” Job responds by implying that the words of Eliphaz deal injustice to him in his time of need (see 6:14–21) by assuming that he is not righteous.

7:1, 2 Job argues that his own lot is worse than the **hard service** of the hired laborer or the common slave. Job’s use of the word **servant** is an ironic indicator that his life as God’s servant (see the same Hebrew term in 1:8) has now become full of drudgery and slavery rather than joyous trust in the Lord.

7:3 Although the Book of Job does not record how long Job suffered, the phrase **months of futility** implies that it was a considerable time.

7:6 Job’s choice of the word **hope** in the context of the **weaver’s shuttle** may convey a double meaning (see also 11:18). The Hebrew word for *hope* sounds like the Hebrew word that means “thread” or “cord” (see Josh. 2:18, 21). Not only did Job believe his days were without *hope* but that he had not even a *thread* of hope left. As if he were regarding a thread in a weaver’s shuttle, Job could not see the design that God had for his life through the suffering that he was experiencing. Though sometimes we may question the Lord as Job did, we must realize that the great Weaver has a design that we may not be able to see until He is finished with our lives.

7:9, 10 Job describes **the grave** (sometimes rendered Sheol) as a place from which one **shall never return** (see 10:21). The focus here is on death. Though the dead person would **never return to his house** on earth, there was a belief in a meeting “house” in the underworld for those who had been on earth (see 30:23).

7:11 Job speaks frankly with God as he begins to pour out his **anguish** and to **complain in bitterness**. He had no fear that the Lord would misinterpret him as his human counselors had. The Lord did not reprimand Job for this but instead commended Job for speaking “what is right” (see 42:7).

7:12 The **sea** and its terrifying inhabitant the **sea serpent** symbolized chaos and the forces of evil and were even considered gods in the pagan religions of the ancient world. Once again Job employs mythological imagery to express his frustration and deep anguish. Although Job interprets the Lord’s **guard** as an invasion of privacy (vv. 13, 14, 17–20), God has designed it for a benevolent purpose (see 3:23).

7:15 Job is not considering suicide when he states that he would choose **strangling and death rather than** to live in his **body** (see 3:20–22). Strangling may refer to the symptoms of his disease, such as coughing or choking, that he wishes God would use to kill him.

7:17, 18 These verses sound similar to Ps. 8:4. Whereas the psalmist marvels that God should “visit him,” Job uses the same word in a negative sense to complain that He **should visit him** all the time.

18 That You should ⁴visit him every morning,
And test him every moment?
 19 How long?
 Will You not look away from me,
 And let me alone till I swallow my saliva?
 20 Have I sinned?
 What have I done to You, ⁹O watcher of men?
 Why ⁷have You set me as Your target,
 So that I am a burden ⁵to myself?
 21 Why then do You not pardon my transgression,
 And take away my iniquity?
 For now I will lie down in the dust,
 And You will seek me diligently,
 But I *will* no longer *be*.”

Bildad: Job Should Repent

8 Then Bildad the Shuhite answered and said:

2 “How long will you speak these things,
 And the words of your mouth *be like* a strong wind?
 3 ^aDoes God subvert judgment?
 Or does the Almighty pervert justice?
 4 If ^byour sons have sinned against Him,
 He has cast them away ¹for their transgression.
 5 ^cIf you would earnestly seek God
 And make your supplication to the Almighty,
 6 If you *were* pure and upright,
 Surely now He would ²awake for you,
 And prosper your rightful dwelling place.
 7 Though your beginning was small,
 Yet your latter end would ^dincrease abundantly.

18 ⁴ *attend to*
 20 ⁹ Ps. 36:6 ^r Ps.
 21:12 ⁵ So with
 MT, Tg., Vg.; LXX,
 Jewish tradition
 to You

CHAPTER 8

3 ^a Gen. 18:25;
 [Deut. 32:4; 2 Chr.
 19:7; Job 34:10,
 12; 36:23; 37:23];
 Rom. 3:5
 4 ^b Job 1:5, 18,
 19 ¹ Lit. *into the*
hand of their
transgression
 5 ^c [Job 5:17-27;
 11:13]
 6 ² *arise*
 7 ^d Job 42:12

8 ^e Deut. 4:32; 32:7;
 Job 15:18; 20:4
 9 ^f Gen. 47:9; [1 Chr.
 29:15]; Job 7:6; [Ps.
 39:5; 102:11; 144:4]
³ Lit. *not*
 12 ⁹ Ps. 129:6
 13 ^h Ps. 9:17 ¹ Job
 11:20; 18:14; 27:8;
 Ps. 112:10; [Prov.
 10:28]
 14 ⁴ Lit. *a spider's*
house
 15 ⁷ Job 8:22; 27:18;
 Ps. 49:11
 18 ^k Job 7:10
 19 ⁱ Ps. 113:7
 20 ^m Job 4:7 ⁵ *reject*
 21 ⁶ Lit. *shouts*
of joy

8 “For ^einquire, please, of the former age,
 And consider the things discovered by their fathers;
 9 For ^f*we were born* yesterday, and know ³nothing,
 Because our days on earth *are* a shadow.
 10 Will they not teach you and tell you,
 And utter words from their heart?
 11 “Can the papyrus grow up without a marsh?
 Can the reeds flourish without water?
 12 ^gWhile it *is* yet green *and* not cut down,
 It withers before any *other* plant.
 13 So *are* the paths of all who ^hforget God;
 And the hope of the ⁱhypocrite shall perish,
 14 Whose confidence shall be cut off,
 And whose trust *is* ⁴a spider’s web.
 15 ^jHe leans on his house, but it does not stand.
 He holds it fast, but it does not endure.
 16 He grows green in the sun,
 And his branches spread out in his garden.
 17 His roots wrap around the rock heap,
 And look for a place in the stones.
 18 ^kIf he is destroyed from his place,
 Then *it* will deny him, *saying*, ‘I have not seen you.’
 19 “Behold, this is the joy of His way,
 And ^lout of the earth others will grow.
 20 Behold, ^mGod will not ⁵cast away the blameless,
 Nor will He uphold the evildoers.
 21 He will yet fill your mouth with laughing,
 And your lips with ⁶rejoicing.

7:20, 21 Job appeals to God to show him what he has done to deserve being made a **target** for God’s persecution. When Job calls God the **watcher of men**, he employs a participle that normally describes God in a positive role as one who preserves His people (Ps. 31:23).

8:2 Bildad twists Job’s words of 6:26. Job had acknowledged that he had overreacted with words that belonged to the **wind**. To paraphrase Bildad’s sarcastic response: “Yes, you’re right, Job! All your words are like a mighty wind; you are full of hot air!”

8:3 Bildad argues that God could never **pervert justice**. The only possible conclusion was that Job and his children received what they deserved as sinners (see vv. 4–7, 20).

8:4–6 The repetition of the word **if** in these three successive verses illustrates the presumptive nature of Bildad’s statements (vv. 8–22). In his zeal to defend orthodox doctrine, he fails to listen to Job’s pain.

8:5, 6 Bildad admonishes Job to **seek God** now so that God will restore Job’s prosperity, rather than talking about how God will seek

him unsuccessfully once he is dead (7:21). Bildad uses the words **pure and upright**, the same words the Lord has already employed in affirming Job’s blameless character (see 1:8; 2:3).

8:7 The advice that Job’s **latter end would increase abundantly** anticipates Job’s restoration in the epilogue (42:10–17), though it came about in a way quite different from what Bildad envisioned.

8:11–19 Bildad uses illustrations from nature to support his belief that God punishes only the wicked and always rewards the righteous in this life. He falsely deduces that one can always determine the cause by looking at the effect. Oversimplification resulting in pat, inadequate answers is a common error of Job’s counselors.

8:14, 15 The metaphor of the **spider’s web** implies that Job had trusted in his house and riches, which were no more permanent than the web.

8:20, 21 Bildad’s dogmatic statement about how **God will not cast away the blameless** is undermined by the fact that he uses the word *blameless* in the same way the Lord used it in the prologue (1:1, 8; 2:3) to describe Job.

- 22 Those who hate you will be ⁿclothed with shame,
And the dwelling place of the wicked
⁷will come to nothing.”

Job: There Is No Mediator

9 Then Job answered and said:

- 2 “Truly I know *it is so*,
But how can a ^aman be ^brighteous
before God?
3 If one wished to ¹contend with
Him,
He could not answer Him one time
out of a thousand.
4 ^cGod is wise in heart and mighty in
strength.
Who has hardened *himself* against
Him and prospered?
5 He removes the mountains, and they
do not know
When He overturns them in His
anger;
6 He ^dshakes the earth out of its
place,
And its ^epillars tremble;
7 He commands the sun, and it does
not rise;
He seals off the stars;
8 ^fHe alone spreads out the heavens,
And ²treads on the ³waves of the
sea;
9 ^gHe made ⁴the Bear, Orion, and the
Pleiades,
And the chambers of the south;
10 ^hHe does great things past finding
out,
Yes, wonders without number.

22 ^aPs. 35:26;
109:29 ⁷Lit. *will
not be*

CHAPTER 9

2 ^a[Job 4:17; 15:14-
16; Ps. 143:2; Rom.
3:20] ^b[Hab. 2:4;
Rom. 1:17; Gal. 3:11;
Heb. 10:38]
3 ¹*argue*
4 ^cJob 36:5
6 ^dIs. 2:19, 21; Hag.
2:6; Heb. 12:26
^eJob 26:11
8 ^fGen. 1:6; Job
37:18; Ps. 104:2, 3;
Is. 40:22 ²*walks*
³Lit. *heights*
9 ^gGen. 1:16; Job
38:31; Amos 5:8
⁴Heb. *Ash, Kesil,*
and *Kimah*
10 ^hJob 5:9

11 ⁱ[Job 23:8, 9;
35:14]
12 ^j[Is. 45:9; Dan.
4:35; Rom. 9:20]
³Lit. *who can turn
Him back?*
13 ^kJob 26:12
^eHeb. *rahab*
15 ^lJob 10:15;
23:1-7
17 ^mJob 2:3

- 11 ⁱIf He goes by me, I do not see *Him*;
If He moves past, I do not perceive
Him;
12 ^jIf He takes away, ⁵who can hinder
Him?
Who can say to Him, ‘What are You
doing?’
13 God will not withdraw His anger,
^kThe allies of ⁶the proud lie prostrate
beneath Him.
14 “How then can I answer Him,
And choose my words *to reason* with
Him?
15 ^lFor though I were righteous, I could
not answer Him;
I would beg mercy of my Judge.
16 If I called and He answered me,
I would not believe that He was
listening to my voice.
17 For He crushes me with a tempest,
And multiplies my wounds ^mwithout
cause.
18 He will not allow me to catch my
breath,
But fills me with bitterness.
19 If *it is a matter* of strength, indeed *He*
is strong;
And if of justice, who will appoint
my day *in court*?
20 Though I were righteous, my own
mouth would condemn me;
Though I *were* blameless, it would
prove me perverse.
21 “I am blameless, yet I do not know
myself;
I despise my life.

9:3 The verb **to contend** indicates that Job was considering the idea of entering a legal case against God. The prophets often used this word when speaking of God bringing a legal case against Israel (Is. 1:2; Mic. 6:1). Job’s legal dilemma before the Lord, who served simultaneously as Job’s judge and legal adversary (see 13:20–28), underscores the urgency and hopelessness of Job’s call for a mediator to hear his case (v. 33). Job calculates that the chances of answering God’s interrogation are very slim, **one in a thousand**—something God later verifies (see 38:1—42:6). The legal term **answer** means to respond to an accusation in court, particularly under cross-examination.

9:8 spreads out the heavens: Job attributes this phenomenon to God **alone**. The fact that the Lord **treads on the waves of the sea** shows His unique control over the alleged forces of evil (see 38:8–12). The word **waves** emphasizes that the Lord **treads** the supposed sea god Yamm under his feet (see also v. 13). This verse emphasizes that the sea is merely a natural force under the control of the omnipotent God.

9:9, 10 the Bear, Orion . . . the Pleiades: God’s creation of the wonders of the heavens is also celebrated by Amos (see Amos 5:8). Indeed, these words come back on Job’s head (38:31–33). **great things . . . wonders:** The works of God are so amazing and numerous that the human mind simply cannot comprehend them.

9:17 This verse teems with possible ironic innuendoes. Job’s statement that God **crushes him with a tempest** anticipates the appearance of the Lord “out of the whirlwind” in 38:1, but with a different result. Job blames God for crushing and wounding him

without cause, when actually it was Satan who had sought to destroy him without cause (2:3). The Hebrew word translated **crushes** in this verse is translated **bruise** in Gen. 3:15 and describes the conflict between Satan and humanity.

9:21 The phrase **I do not know myself** means “I do not care for myself” according to the clarification given in the rest of the verse.

proud

(Heb. *rahab*) (9:13; 26:12; Is. 30:7) Strong’s #7293

The verbal root of this word means “to act stormily” or “to behave tempestuously.” The derived proper noun designates a mythological, primeval sea monster. Later it became a designation for Egypt. Isaiah reports the Lord Himself calling Egypt by this name (Is. 30:7); elsewhere Isaiah uses the word in a context that suggests a double reference—to both the sea monster and Egypt (Is. 51:9). When referring to the sea monster, this word is always couched in language depicting God’s cosmic power (9:1–13; 26:12, 13; Ps. 89:8–12; Is. 51:6–11). The ancient Middle East had many mythological tales of powerful primeval sea monsters. The Bible uses this image of Rahab, not to endorse mythology but to demonstrate the Lord’s supremacy over all powers—even the ones in people’s imagination.



Soapwort

Before the manufacture of soap as we know it today, people in Palestine used a crude form of soap made from the ashes of the roots of the soapwort, mixed with olive oil. The Hebrew words for these soap plants—*bor* and *borith*—literally meant “that which cleanses.” For making soap, the Hebrews used several types of scrubby alkaline plants that grew in the area of the Dead Sea and the Mediterranean. They often used this soft soap for bathing (9:30; Jer. 2:22). Generally, Hebrew women used the root of the soapwort for washing linens because they believed it would not make them shrink. Men used the ashes of the glasswort and the saltwort to make potash for smelting metals (Is. 1:25; Mal. 3:2).



A flowering soapwort plant
© Flaviano Fabrizio/Shutterstock

22 *It is all one thing;*
Therefore I say, “He destroys the blameless and the wicked.”
23 If the scourge slays suddenly,
He laughs at the plight of the innocent.
24 The earth is given into the hand of the wicked.
He covers the faces of its judges.
If it is not *He*, who else could it be?
25 “Now ^omy days are swifter than a runner;
They flee away, they see no good.
26 They pass by like ⁷swift ships,
^pLike an eagle swooping on its prey.
27 ^qIf I say, ‘I will forget my complaint,
I will put off my sad face and wear a smile,’
28 ^rI am afraid of all my sufferings;
I know that You ^swill not hold me innocent.

22 ^a [Eccl. 9:2, 3]; Ezek. 21:3
25 ^o Job 7:6, 7
26 ^p Job 39:29; Hab. 1:8 ⁷ Lit. *ships of reeds*
27 ^q Job 7:13
28 ^r Ps. 119:120
^s Ex. 20:7
30 ^t [Jer. 2:22] ^u *I ye*
31 ⁹ *loathe*
32 ^u Eccl. 6:10; [Is. 45:9; Jer. 49:19; Rom. 9:20]
33 ^v [1 Sam. 2:25]; Job 9:19; Is. 1:18
34 ^w Job 13:20, 21; Ps. 39:10

CHAPTER 10
1 ^a 1 Kin. 19:4; Job 7:16; Jon. 4:3 ^b Job 7:11 ¹ Lit. *leave on myself*
4 ^c [1 Sam. 16:7; Job 28:24; 34:21]
8 ^d Job 10:3; Ps. 119:73 ^e [Job 9:22]

29 *If I am condemned,*
Why then do I labor in vain?
30 ^f If I wash myself with snow water,
And cleanse my hands with ^gsoap,
31 Yet You will plunge me into the pit,
And my own clothes will ^habhor me.
32 “For ⁱ*He is* not a man, as I am,
That I may answer Him,
And that we should go to court together.
33 ^j Nor is there any mediator between us,
Who may lay his hand on us both.
34 ^k Let Him take His rod away from me,
And do not let dread of Him terrify me.
35 Then I would speak and not fear Him,
But it is not so with me.

Job: I Would Plead with God

10 “My ^asoul loathes my life;
I will ¹give free course to my complaint,
^bI will speak in the bitterness of my soul.
2 I will say to God, ‘Do not condemn me;
Show me why You contend with me.
3 Does it seem good to You that You should oppress,
That You should despise the work of Your hands,
And smile on the counsel of the wicked?
4 Do You have eyes of flesh?
Or ^cdo You see as man sees?
5 Are Your days like the days of a mortal man?
Are Your years like the days of a mighty man,
6 That You should seek for my iniquity
And search out my sin,
7 Although You know that I am not wicked,
And there is no one who can deliver from Your hand?
8 ‘Your ^dhands have made me and fashioned me,
An intricate unity;
Yet You would ^edestroy me.

9:22–24 Job contradicts Bildad’s claims of 8:3, 20 by accusing God of unjustly destroying both the blameless and the wicked (see 8:20, 21). Thus Job accuses God of being an unjust Judge who blindfolds earthly judges (v. 24).
9:28 Job desires to stand before God as an **innocent** man—not absolutely sinless, but innocent of any sin comparable to his suffering.
9:32, 33 Job complains that God is **not a man** who would go to court with Him (see 9:3). Neither does Job have an impartial mediator between God and himself—a mediator who can present his case before God. The desire for a mediator between God and humanity is a key theme in Job (see 16:19; 19:25), and it anticipates the NT emphasis on Jesus as the true Mediator between God and all of humanity (see 1 Tim. 2:5).

10:2 **Show me:** Job dares to speak to God as an equal. Again using legal language (see 9:3), Job demands that God give him a fair trial through proper court protocol. Here Job comes close to unjustified indignation at God’s sovereign will for his life.
10:7 This verse serves as a transition from Job’s complaint (vv. 1–6) to his brief description of how God had lovingly created him (vv. 8–12). Job knows that he is **not wicked**, and he thinks that God is unjust in oppressing him. Yet Job also realizes that there is **no one who can deliver** him from God’s hand.
10:8–17 In these verses, Job paints a portrait of the apparently contradictory nature of God, contrasting His loving character with His judgment. Job wonders how the God who had so carefully fashioned him in the womb can turn against him like a **fierce**

- 9 Remember, I pray, ^fthat You have made me like clay.
And will You turn me into dust again?
- 10 ^gDid You not pour me out like milk,
And curdle me like cheese,
- 11 Clothe me with skin and flesh,
And knit me together with bones and sinews?
- 12 You have granted me life and favor,
And Your care has preserved my spirit.
- 13 ‘And these *things* You have hidden in Your heart;
I know that this *was* with You:
- 14 If I sin, then ^hYou mark me,
And will not acquit me of my iniquity.
- 15 If I am wicked, ⁱwoe to me;
^jEven if I am righteous, I ²cannot lift up my head.
I am full of disgrace;
^kSee my misery!
- 16 If *my head* is exalted,
^lYou hunt me like a fierce lion,
And again You show Yourself awesome against me.
- 17 You renew Your witnesses against me,
And increase Your indignation toward me;
Changes and war are *ever* with me.
- 18 ‘Why ^mthen have You brought me out of the womb?
Oh, that I had perished and no eye had seen me!
- 19 I would have been as though I had not been.
I would have been carried from the womb to the grave.
- 20 ⁿAre not my days few?
Cease! ^oLeave me alone, that I may take a little comfort,

9 ^f Gen. 2:7; Job 33:6
10 ^g [Ps. 139:14-16]
14 ^h Job 7:20; Ps. 139:1
15 ⁱ Job 10:7; Is. 3:11
/ [Job 9:12, 15] ^k Ps. 25:18 ² Lit. *will not*
16 ^l Is. 38:13; Lam. 3:10; Hos. 13:7
18 ^m Job 3:11-13
20 ⁿ Ps. 39:5 ^o Job 7:16, 19

21 ^p Ps. 88:12 ^q Ps. 23:4

CHAPTER 11

2 ¹ Lit. *a man of lips*
3 ² *be silent*
4 ³ Job 6:30
6 ⁴ [Ezra 9:13] ³ Lit. *forgets some of your iniquity for you*
7 ⁵ Job 33:12, 13; 36:26; [Eccl. 3:11; Rom. 11:33]
8 ⁶ The abode of the dead

- 21 Before I go *to the place from which* I shall not return,
^pTo the land of darkness ^qand the shadow of death,
- 22 A land as dark as darkness *itself*,
As the shadow of death, without any order,
Where even the light is like darkness.’”

Zophar Urges Job to Repent

11 Then Zophar the Naamathite answered and said:

- 2 “Should not the multitude of words be answered?
And should ¹a man full of talk be vindicated?
- 3 Should your empty talk make men ²hold their peace?
And when you mock, should no one rebuke you?
- 4 For you have said,
^a“My doctrine *is* pure,
And I am clean in your eyes.”
- 5 But oh, that God would speak,
And open His lips against you,
- 6 That He would show you the secrets of wisdom!
For *they would* double *your* prudence.
Know therefore that ^bGod ³exacts from you
Less than your iniquity *deserves*.
- 7 “Can ^cyou search out the deep things of God?
Can you find out the limits of the Almighty?
- 8 *They are* higher than heaven— what can you do?
Deeper than ⁴Sheol— what can you know?
- 9 Their measure *is* longer than the earth
And broader than the sea.

lion. This is the desperate cry of a sufferer blind to the fact that God is working good out of all the tragic events of his life (see 42:12).

10:15, 16 Not being able to **lift up his head** expresses Job’s shame and **disgrace** (see Judg. 8:28; Lam. 2:10). Job’s **misery** was so deep that although he believed he was innocent, he felt like a criminal with no self-esteem or dignity.

10:17 The phrase **You renew Your witnesses against me** is a legal metaphor that may refer to each new aspect of Job’s illness. In the equivalent **war** metaphor, the Lord was sending **changes** or troop reinforcements against him.

10:18–22 Job asks why he was ever born (vv. 18, 19; see 3:3–10). Then, he wishes the Lord would **leave him alone** to die (vv. 20–22; see 3:20–26; 7:16–21). In contrast to 3:17–19, where the grave is described as a place of rest and freedom, the grave here is **the land of darkness** lacking **any order**. Job amplifies his wish that he could have gone straight from **the womb** to the tomb by linking the darkness of the grave with the dark day of his birth (3:3–9).

Four different words for darkness in vv. 21, 22 stress the gloom and dreariness of the grave.

11:1–20 **Zophar the Naamathite** (see 2:11) was even more rude than Bildad (vv. 2–6; 8:1–13). He was a brash dogmatist who based his arguments on misapplied theology coupled with simplistic reasoning.

11:4 Zophar exaggerates what Job has said about his innocence (see 9:14–21) to make Job look foolish. Job never stated that his **doctrine was pure**.

11:7–9 When Zophar interrogates Job about the impossibility of comprehending the **deep things of God**, he employs for **search out** the same term Job used to describe God’s wonders as beyond “finding out” (9:10). Thus Zophar may be trying to turn Job’s words against him by saying that Job’s actions are inconsistent with his theology. Since these verses anticipate portions of the Lord’s speeches (see 38:16–18, 34–38), Zophar’s doctrine is correct, but the application is wrong. Biblical truth misapplied perverts the intent of the Scriptures and misleads.

10^d If He passes by, imprisons, and gathers *to judgment*,
Then who can ⁵hinder Him?
11 For ^eHe knows deceitful men;
He sees wickedness also.
Will He not then consider *it*?
12 For an ^fempty-headed man will be wise,
When a wild donkey's colt is born a man.

13^g If you would ^gprepare your heart,
And ^hstretch out your hands toward Him;
14 If iniquity *were* in your hand, *and*
you put it far away,
And ⁱwould not let wickedness dwell in your tents;

10 ^d Job 9:12; [Rev. 3:7] ⁵ *restrain*
11 ^e [Ps. 10:14]
12 ^f [Ps. 39:5]; Rom. 1:22
13 ^g [1 Sam. 7:3]
^h Ps. 88:9
14 ⁱ Ps. 101:3

15 ^j Job 22:26; Ps. 119:6; [1 John 3:21]
16 ^k Is. 65:16
17 ^l Ps. 37:6; Prov. 4:18; Is. 58:8, 10
18 ^m Lev. 26:5, 6; Ps. 3:5; Prov. 3:24

15 ^j Then surely you could lift up your face without spot;
Yes, you could be steadfast, and not fear;
16 Because you would ^kforget *your* misery,
And remember *it* as waters *that* have passed away,
17 And *your* life ^lwould be brighter than noonday.
Though you were dark, you would be like the morning.
18 And you would be secure, because there is hope;
Yes, you would dig *around you*,
and ^mtake your rest in safety.

11:10–12 Zophar’s rhetorical question about God, **who can hinder Him**, echoes Job’s sentiments in 9:12 verbatim. However, Zophar denies Job’s allegation that God does not know the difference between the righteous and the wicked (v. 11; see 9:22). As a retort to Job’s rhetorical question (6:5) in which he compared his own cries to the braying of the “wild donkey,” Zophar employs what may be a proverbial statement about the wild donkey. He could be implying that Job’s “empty talk” indicates that he is **empty-headed** (vv. 3, 12).
11:13, 14 stretch out your hands: Stretching out the hands was a posture of prayer as well as of praise (see Ps. 134:2). Assuming that

Job is suffering because of his **iniquity**, Zophar rudely repudiates Job’s assertion that he has no “injustice” on his tongue (6:30) by alleging that, in fact, it is Job’s **tents** that are full of **wickedness** or injustice. The implication may be that Job had acquired his wealth by wrong means or had tolerated evil in his household.
11:16 as waters . . . passed away: This is similar to our expression “water under the bridge.”
11:18, 19 The phrase **dig around you** is a literal rendition of a Hebrew root that may mean “to look carefully about” with “eagle eye” scrutiny (see the usage of the same Hebrew term in 39:29).

Job’s Counseling Sessions			
Name	Explanation for Suffering	Advice to Job	Job’s Reply
Job’s wife		“Curse God and die!” (2:9)	“Shall we indeed accept good from God, and shall we not accept adversity?” (2:10)
Eliphaz	“Those who plow iniquity and sow trouble reap the same.” (4:8)	“Do not despise the chastening of the Almighty.” (5:17)	“I loathe my life . . . let me alone.” (7:16)
Bildad	Does God subvert judgment? Or does the Almighty pervert justice?” (8:3)	“Seek God . . . make your supplication . . . [be] pure and upright.” (8:5, 6)	“I am blameless.” (9:21); “Show me why You contend with me.” (10:2)
Zophar	“For He knows deceitful men; He sees wickedness also. Will He not then consider it?” (11:11)	“Prepare your heart . . . stretch out your hands toward Him; put [iniquity] far away.” (11:13, 14)	“You are all worthless physicians.” (13:4); “I desire to reason with God.” (13:3)
Eliphaz 2	“The wicked man writhes with pain all his days.” (15:20)	“Your own mouth condemns you.” (15:6)	“Miserable comforters are you all!” (16:2); “Surely even now my witness [of my innocence] is in heaven.” (16:19)
Bildad 2	“The light of the wicked indeed goes out.” (18:5)	“[Listen to us and] gain understanding.” (18:2)	“You have wronged me.” (19:3); “Have pity on me.” (19:21)
Zophar 2	“The triumphing of the wicked is short.” (20:5)		“The wicked live and become old.” (21:7)
Eliphaz 3	“Is not your wickedness great, and your iniquity without end?” (22:5)	“Acquaint yourself with Him . . . receive, please, instruction from His mouth . . . return to the Almighty.” (22:21–23)	“Oh . . . that I might . . . present my case before Him.” (23:3, 4)
Bildad 3	“How then can man be righteous before God?” (25:4)		“Far be it from me that I should say you are right; till I die I will not put away my integrity from me.” (27:5)
Elihu	“In this you are not righteous . . . Why do you contend with Him?” (33:12, 13)	“Obey and serve Him.” (36:11); “Cry for help.” (36:13)	
The Lord	“Who is this who darkens counsel by words without knowledge?” (38:2)	“I will question you.” (38:3); The Lord asked Job more than 70 questions that reveal His power and sovereignty.	“I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.” (42:6)

- 19 You would also lie down, and no one would make *you* afraid;
Yes, many would court your favor.
20 But ⁿthe eyes of the wicked will fail,
And they shall not escape,
And ^otheir hope—⁶loss of life!”

Job Answers His Critics

- 12** Then Job answered and said:
2 “No doubt you *are* the people,
And wisdom will die with you!
3 But I have ¹understanding as well as you;
I *am* not ^ainferior to you.
Indeed, who does not *know* such things as these?
4 “I ^bam one mocked by his friends,
Who ^ccalled on God, and He answered him,
The just and blameless *who is* ridiculed.
5 A ²lamp is despised in the thought of one who is at ease;
It is made ready for ^dthose whose feet slip.
6 ^eThe tents of robbers prosper,
And those who provoke God are secure—
In what God provides by His hand.
7 “But now ask the beasts, and they will teach you;
And the birds of the air, and they will tell you;
8 Or speak to the earth, and it will teach you;
And the fish of the sea will explain to you.
9 Who among all these does not know
That the hand of the LORD has done this,
10 ^fIn whose hand is the ³life of every living thing,
And the ^gbreath of ⁴all mankind?
11 Does not the ear test words
And the ⁵mouth taste its food?
12 Wisdom *is* with aged men,
And with ⁶length of days, understanding.

20 ⁿ Lev. 26:16;
Deut. 28:65; Job
17:5 ^o Job 18:14;
[Prov. 11:7] ⁶ Lit. *the
breathing out of life*

CHAPTER 12

3 ^a Job 13:2 ¹ Lit.
a heart
4 ^b Job 21:3 ^c Ps.
91:15
5 ^d Prov. 14:2 ² Or
disaster
6 ^e [Job 9:24; 21:6-
16; Ps. 73:12; Jer.
12:1; Mal. 3:15]
10 ^f [Acts 17:28]
^g Job 27:3; 33:4 ³ Or
soul ⁴ Lit. *all flesh
of men*
11 ⁵ *palate*
12 ⁶ Long life

13 ^h Job 9:4; 36:5
14 ⁱ Job 11:10;
Is. 25:2
15 ^j Deut. 11:17;
[1 Kin. 8:35, 36]
^k Gen. 7:11-24
19 ⁷ Lit. *priests*, but
not in a technical
sense
20 ^l Job 32:9
21 ^m [Job 34:19]; Ps.
107:40; [Dan. 2:21]
⁸ *loosens the belt of*
22 ⁿ Dan. 2:22;
[1 Cor. 4:5]
23 ^o Is. 9:3; 26:15
⁹ Lit. *spreads out*
24 ^p Ps. 107:4 ¹ Lit.
heart
25 ^q Job 5:14; 15:30;
18:18 ^r Ps. 107:27

CHAPTER 13

2 ^a Job 12:3
3 ^b Job 23:3; 31:35
4 ^c Job 6:21; [Jer.
23:32]
5 ^d Job 13:13; 21:5;
Prov. 17:28

- 13^a With Him *are* ^hwisdom and strength,
He has counsel and understanding.
14 If ⁱHe breaks *a thing* down, it cannot
be rebuilt;
If He imprisons a man, there can be
no release.
15 If He ^jwithholds the waters, they
dry up;
If He ^ksends them out, they
overwhelm the earth.
16 With Him *are* strength and prudence.
The deceived and the deceiver *are*
His.
17 He leads counselors away plundered,
And makes fools of the judges.
18 He loosens the bonds of kings,
And binds their waist with a belt.
19 He leads ⁷princes away plundered,
And overthrows the mighty.
20 ^lHe deprives the trusted ones of
speech,
And takes away the discernment of
the elders.
21^m He pours contempt on princes,
And ⁸disarms the mighty.
22 He ⁿuncovers deep things out of
darkness,
And brings the shadow of death to
light.
23 ^oHe makes nations great, and destroys
them;
He ⁹enlarges nations, and guides
them.
24 He takes away the ¹understanding
of the chiefs of the people of the
earth,
And ^pmakes them wander in a
pathless wilderness.
25 ^qThey grope in the dark without light,
And He makes them ^rstagger like a
drunken *man*.

- 13** “Behold, my eye has seen all *this*,
My ear has heard and
understood it.
2 ^aWhat you know, I also know;
I *am* not inferior to you.
3 ^bBut I would speak to the Almighty,
And I desire to reason with God.
4 But you forgers of lies,
^cYou *are* all worthless physicians.
5 Oh, that you would be silent,
And ^dit would be your wisdom!

12:4 mocked by his friends: The verb Job uses is also found in a similar negative context in Ps. 2:4. In those contexts, the verb indicates ridicule. But in other passages, this word expresses joy and laughter (Gen. 21:6).

12:22 God’s reversal of **darkness to light** was precisely what Job needed (see 10:21, 22).

12:24, 25 God’s coming reversal of human wisdom is desired by all who presently suffer the arrogance of people who prate their knowledge with no fear of the living God (see Prov. 1:7).

13:3, 4 Job desires to **reason** or argue his cause before God. He rejects the incompetent counsel of his three friends who, like **worthless physicians**, have made a wrong diagnosis concerning the cause of his disease and suffering. In fact they were **forgers of lies**, literally “falsehood-plasterers.” Job’s friends were smearing his sores with a sham concoction of dogma. Instead of piously accusing their unfortunate friend, they should have been praying with him. **13:5–13** In response to Zophar’s derisive question concerning Job’s words (11:3), Job expresses the desire that his friends would

- 6 Now hear my reasoning,
And heed the pleadings of my lips.
- 7 ^cWill you speak ¹wickedly for God,
And talk deceitfully for Him?
- 8 Will you show partiality for Him?
Will you contend for God?
- 9 Will it be well when He searches you
out?
Or can you mock Him as one mocks
a man?
- 10 He will surely rebuke you
If you secretly show partiality.
- 11 Will not His ²excellence make you
afraid,
And the dread of Him fall upon you?
- 12 Your platitudes *are* proverbs of ashes,
Your defenses are defenses of clay.
- 13^a Hold³ your peace with me, and let
me speak,
Then let come on me what *may*!
- 14 Why^f do I take my flesh in my teeth,
And put my life in my hands?
- 15^g Though He slay me, yet will I trust
Him.
^hEven so, I will defend my own ways
before Him.
- 16 He also *shall* be my salvation,
For a ⁱhypocrite could not come
before Him.
- 17 Listen carefully to my speech,
And to my declaration with your
ears.
- 18 See now, I have prepared *my* case,
I know that I shall be ^jvindicated.
- 19^k Who *is* he *who* will contend
with me?
If now I hold my tongue, I perish.

Job's Despondent Prayer

- 20^a "Only^l two *things* do not do to me,
Then I will not hide myself from
You:

7 ^c Job 27:4; 36:4
¹ *unrighteously*
11 ² *Lit. exaltation*
13 ³ *Be silent*
14 ^f Job 18:4
15 ^a Ps. 23:4; [Prov.
14:32] ^h Job 27:5
16 ^j Job 8:13
18 ^k [Rom. 8:34]
19 ^k Job 7:21; 10:8;
Is. 50:8
20 ⁱ Job 9:34

21 ^m Job 9:34; Ps.
39:10
22 ⁿ Job 9:16; 14:15
24 ^o [Deut. 32:20];
Ps. 13:1 ^p Lam. 2:5
25 ^q Is. 42:3
26 ^r Job 20:11
27 ^s Job 33:11 ⁴ *Lit.*
inscribe a print ⁵ *Lit.*
roots
28 ⁶ *Lit. He*

CHAPTER 14

1 ^a Job 5:7; Eccl.
2:23 ¹ *turmoil*
2 ^b Job 8:9; Ps.
90:5, 6, 9; 102:11;
103:15; 144:4; Is.
40:6; James 1:10, 11;
1 Pet. 1:24
3 ^c Ps. 8:4; 144:3
^d [Ps. 143:2] ² *LXX*,
Syr., Vg. *him*
4 ^e [Job 15:14; 25:4;
Ps. 51:2, 5, 10; John
3:6; Rom. 5:12;
Eph. 2:3]
5 ^f Job 7:1; 21:21;
Heb. 9:27

- 21^m Withdraw Your hand far from me,
And let not the dread of You make
me afraid.
- 22 Then call, and I will ⁿanswer;
Or let me speak, then You respond
to me.
- 23 How many *are* my iniquities and
sins?
Make me know my transgression and
my sin.
- 24 ^o Why do You hide Your face,
And ^pregard me as Your enemy?
- 25 ^q Will You frighten a leaf driven to and
fro?
And will You pursue dry stubble?
- 26 For You write bitter things against me,
And ^rmake me inherit the iniquities
of my youth.
- 27 ^s You put my feet in the stocks,
And watch closely all my paths.
You ⁴set a limit for the ⁵soles of my
feet.
- 28^a "Man⁶ decays like a rotten thing,
Like a garment that is moth-eaten.

14 "Man *who* is born of woman
Is of few days and ^afull of
¹trouble.

- 2 ^b He comes forth like a flower and
fades away;
He flees like a shadow and does not
continue.
- 3 And ^cdo You open Your eyes on such
a one,
And ^dbring ²me to judgment with
Yourself?
- 4 Who ^ecan bring a clean *thing* out of
an unclean?
No one!
- 5 ^f Since his days *are* determined,
The number of his months *is* with
You;

be absolutely **silent**. Indeed, that would have been the friends' wisest action (Prov. 17:28). Job's sarcasm reflects his earlier words to them in 12:2. Using the vocabulary of a wisdom teacher, Job explains his reason for insisting on silence. He wants them to **hear** and pay attention to his words. He urges them to listen diligently to his words instead of trying to defend God. Their pious **platitudes** are as worthless as **proverbs** composed of **ashes**.

13:14 The latter half of the verse seems to clarify **take my flesh in my teeth** to mean risking loss of one's **life** like an animal who tries to defend itself while carrying its prey in its mouth.

13:15 trust Him: While this verse is widely known as a powerful statement of Job's trust in God, it is not without difficulties. The Hebrew word translated *Him* is similar in sound to the Hebrew word for *no*. Thus some have translated the verse as follows: "Behold, He will slay me; I have no hope." Yet the positive translation of the verse as it is here seems preferable because it follows the flow of the section (vv. 13–19), which has other positive elements (see vv. 16, 19). It also makes wonderful sense within the verse. Job believes that God is in the process of slowly taking his life. But in a bold declaration of faith, Job declares his absolute trust in God, for when he would be brought into God's presence, he would plead his cause directly

with God. And then, if not before, Job would rediscover what he had never really lost: God's love and salvation (v. 16).

13:20–28 Since Job is still in this life of pain (see v. 15), he turns to God as best he can and appeals his case directly to Him. Job requests that God, as plaintiff, list the specific charges He has against him rather than continue being his Judge.

13:24 The Hebrew terminology resembles vv. 20, 21. Job asks **why** does God **hide His face**, a Hebrew idiom indicating the absence of God's favor and blessing.

13:27 In a portrait of God's "malevolent activities," Job uses the verb **watch**. The word normally describes God's benevolent care over a person's life, but in the Book of Job it depicts the role God gives to Satan (in 2:6).

14:1–6 Job agrees with Eliphaz's assessment that a person is born for trouble. He stresses life's misery and brevity through two vivid metaphors: a fading **flower** and a fleeing **shadow**.

14:5 That God has **determined** the length of a person's life (see Ps. 90:10) emphasizes God's sovereign power and wisdom, and conversely the impotence of human beings, who are under divinely set **limits**.

You have appointed his limits, so that he cannot pass.

⁶ Look away from him that he may³ rest,

Till ^hlike a hired man he finishes his day.

⁷ “For there is hope for a tree,
If it is cut down, that it will sprout again,
And that its tender shoots will not cease.

⁸ Though its root may grow old in the earth,

And its stump may die in the ground,
⁹ Yet at the scent of water it will bud
And bring forth branches like a plant.

¹⁰ But man dies and ⁴is laid away;
Indeed he ⁵breathes his last
And where *is* ⁱhe?

¹¹ As water disappears from the sea,
And a river becomes parched and dries up,

¹² So man lies down and does not rise.
^jTill the heavens *are* no more,
They will not awake
Nor be roused from their sleep.

¹³ “Oh, that You would hide me in the grave,
That You would conceal me until
Your wrath is past,
That You would appoint me a set time, and remember me!

¹⁴ If a man dies, shall he live *again*?
All the days of my hard service ^kI will wait,
Till my change comes.

¹⁵ ^lYou shall call, and I will answer You;
You shall desire the work of Your hands.

¹⁶ For now ^mYou number my steps,
But do not watch over my sin.

¹⁷ ⁿMy transgression *is* sealed up in a bag,
And You ⁶cover my iniquity.

⁶ ^g Job 7:16, 19; Ps. 39:13 ^h Job 7:1 ³ Lit. *cease*
¹⁰ ^j Job 10:21,
²² ⁴ *lies prostrate*
⁵ *expires*
¹² / Ps. 102:25,
26; [Is. 51:6; 65:17;
66:22]; Acts 3:21;
[2 Pet. 3:7; 10, 11;
Rev. 20:11; 21:1]
¹⁴ ^k Job 13:15
¹⁵ ^l Job 13:22
¹⁶ ^m Job 10:6, 14;
13:27; 31:4; 34:21;
Ps. 56:8; 139:1-3;
Prov. 5:21; [Jer. 32:19]
¹⁷ ⁿ Deut. 32:32-34
⁶ Lit. *plaster over*

²¹ ^o Eccl. 9:5; Is. 63:16

CHAPTER 15

¹ ^a Job 4:1
² ^l Lit. *his belly*
⁴ ² *meditation or complaint*
⁶ ^g Job 9:20; [Luke 19:22]
⁷ ^c Job 38:4, 21; Ps. 90:2; Prov. 8:25
⁸ ^d Job 29:4; Rom. 11:34; [1 Cor. 2:11]

¹⁸ “But *as* a mountain falls *and* crumbles away,
And *as* a rock is moved from its place;

¹⁹ As water wears away stones,
And *as* torrents wash away the soil of the earth;

So You destroy the hope of man.

²⁰ You prevail forever against him, and he passes on;
You change his countenance and send him away.

²¹ His sons come to honor, and ^ohe does not know *it*;
They are brought low, and he does not perceive *it*.

²² But his flesh will be in pain over it,
And his soul will mourn over it.”

Eliphaz Accuses Job of Folly

15 Then ^aEliphaz the Temanite answered and said:

² “Should a wise man answer with empty knowledge,
And fill ¹himself with the east wind?

³ Should he reason with unprofitable talk,
Or by speeches with which he can do no good?

⁴ Yes, you cast off fear,
And restrain ²prayer before God.

⁵ For your iniquity teaches your mouth,
And you choose the tongue of the crafty.

⁶ ^bYour own mouth condemns you, and not I;
Yes, your own lips testify against you.

⁷ “*Are* you the first man *who* was born?
^cOr were you made before the hills?

⁸ ^dHave you heard the counsel of God?
Do you limit wisdom to yourself?

14:7–9 hope for a tree: Job implies that life is better for trees than for people. When a tree falls, it can sprout again. This is precisely the point of Isaiah’s beautiful prophecy (Is. 6:13). The house of Jesse—that is, Israel—will be cut off, as one might cut down a great oak tree. But in God’s great mercy, that tree will sprout new growth. The “holy seed” is in the stump. That new growth is the beautiful Branch (Is. 11:1), the Savior King whose name is Jesus.

14:13 Job’s wish for **the grave** to be a temporary hiding place from God’s **wrath** differs dramatically from his earlier remarks concerning the grave (see 7:9, 10; 10:18–22). He attributes the cause of his suffering to God’s wrath because he assumes the retribution dogma that the righteous are always blessed and the wicked will eventually experience God’s judgment.

14:14 Job’s question **if a man dies, shall he live again** is answered with an emphatic “Yes” by Jesus and the NT authors (see John 11:23–26; 1 Cor. 15:3–57; see also Is. 26:19; Dan. 12:2). But Job responds to his own question by a determination to **wait** for his

change to come. Since Job considers life hard (see 7:1), perhaps he is implying that he will wait for relief from his suffering through death to find out the answer.

15:2, 3 The insinuation that Job had filled himself **with the east wind** is an allusion to the violent and scorching wind from the desert that brought no rain. Thus Eliphaz is implying that Job’s arguments were destructive (see vv. 12, 13) and without beneficial substance (see the context of v. 3).

15:4–6 Eliphaz’s statement **your own mouth condemns you** expresses ironic agreement with Job’s earlier words (9:20). But Eliphaz deliberately twists Job’s words to say that Job no longer needs a day in court since his own mouth has already incriminated him.

15:7 **Are you the first man who was born:** This sarcastic question anticipates a theme developed in the Lord’s speeches (see 38:4–21).

15:8–10 wisdom . . . know: Eliphaz throws Job’s words of 12:3; 13:2 back into his face. He counters Job’s sarcastic rebuttal to Bildad that wisdom comes only with age (12:12) by saying that people **much**

- 9 ^eWhat do you know that we do not know?
What do you understand that *is* not in us?
- 10 ^fBoth the gray-haired and the aged *are* among us,
 Much older than your father.
- 11 *Are* the consolations of God too small for you,
 And the word *spoken* ³gently with you?
- 12 Why does your heart carry you away,
 And ⁴what do your eyes wink at,
- 13 That you turn your spirit against God,
 And let *such* words go out of your mouth?
- 14 “What ^g*is* man, that he could be pure?
 And *he who* is born of a woman, that he could be righteous?
- 15 ^hIf *God* puts no trust in His saints,
 And the heavens are not pure in His sight,
- 16 ⁱHow much less man, *who* is abominable and filthy,
^jWho drinks iniquity like water!
- 17 “I will tell you, hear me;
 What I have seen I will declare,
- 18 What wise men have told,
 Not hiding *anything* received ^kfrom their fathers,
- 19 To whom alone the ⁵land was given,
 And ^lno alien passed among them:
- 20 The wicked man writhes with pain all *his* days,
^mAnd the number of years is hidden from the oppressor.
- 21 ⁶Dreadful sounds *are* in his ears;
ⁿIn prosperity the destroyer comes upon him.
- 22 He does not believe that he will ^oreturn from darkness,
 For a sword is waiting for him.
- 23 He ^pwanders about for bread, *saying*, “Where *is* it?”
 He knows ^qthat a day of darkness is ready at his hand.

9 ^e Job 12:3; 13:2
 10 ^f Job 8:8-10;
 12:12; 32:6, 7
 11 ³ Or a secret thing
 12 ⁴ Or why do your eyes flash
 14 ^g Job 14:4; Prov. 20:9; [Eccl. 7:20; 1 John 1:8, 10]
 15 ^h Job 4:18; 25:5
 16 ⁱ Job 4:19; Ps. 14:3; 53:3 / Job 34:7; Prov. 19:28
 18 ^k Job 8:8; 20:4
 19 ^j Joel 3:17 ⁵ Or earth
 20 ^m Ps. 90:12
 21 ⁿ Job 20:21;
 1 Thess. 5:3
 6 Terrifying
 22 ^o Job 14:10-12
 23 ^p Ps. 59:15;
 109:10 ^q Job 18:12

24 ⁷ attack
 27 ^r Ps. 17:10; 73:7;
 119:70
 29 ^s Job 20:28;
 27:16, 17
 30 ^t Job 4:9
 31 ^u Job 35:13;
 Is. 59:4
 32 ^v Job 22:16; Ps. 55:23; Eccl. 7:17
 35 ^w Ps. 7:14; Is. 59:4; [Hos. 10:13]

CHAPTER 16

2 ^a Job 13:4; 21:34
 1 Troublesome

- 24 Trouble and anguish make him afraid;
 They overpower him, like a king ready for ⁷battle.
- 25 For he stretches out his hand against God,
 And acts defiantly against the Almighty,
- 26 Running stubbornly against Him
 With his strong, embossed shield.
- 27 “Though ^r he has covered his face with his fatness,
 And made *his* waist heavy with fat,
- 28 He dwells in desolate cities,
 In houses which no one inhabits,
 Which are destined to become ruins.
- 29 He will not be rich,
 Nor will his wealth ^scontinue,
 Nor will his possessions overspread the earth.
- 30 He will not depart from darkness;
 The flame will dry out his branches,
 And ^tby the breath of His mouth he will go away.
- 31 Let him not ^utrust in futile *things*,
 Deceiving himself,
 For futility will be his reward.
- 32 It will be accomplished ^vbefore his time,
 And his branch will not be green.
- 33 He will shake off his unripe grape like a vine,
 And cast off his blossom like an olive tree.
- 34 For the company of hypocrites *will be* barren,
 And fire will consume the tents of bribery.
- 35 “They conceive trouble and bring forth futility;
 Their womb prepares deceit.”

Job Reproaches His Pitiless Friends

16 Then Job answered and said:

- 2 “I have heard many such things;
^aMiserable ¹comforters *are* you all!

older than Job's father are on their side. Since Job was already a mature man who had raised ten grown children, this may be an exaggeration for effect.

15:13 The Hebrew word translated **spirit** may also be translated “temper” or “anger,” as in Prov. 16:32.

15:14, 15 Eliphaz rephrases his thought of 4:17, 18 by interweaving an apparent gibe at Job's complaint of 14:1 about man “born of woman.”

15:17, 18 The phrase **what I have seen** shows that Eliphaz bases his instruction on experience and observation (see 4:1). He also appeals to the wisdom tradition as Bildad has done in 8:8–10.

15:20 **hidden from**: The Hebrew could also be translated “stored up for.”

15:21 **dreadful**: Eliphaz begins his subtle argument to prove that Job is a wicked man. He alludes to Job's *dread*, the same word

translated *feared* in 3:25, as an implicit indicator that Job is wicked. 15:23, 24 By using the phrase **make him afraid** in the context of **a day of darkness**, Eliphaz twists the words of Job's lament about the day of his birth (3:4, 5) to fit the dark day of his death (10:18–22). Then in contrast to 14:20 where Job blames God for prevailing against people, Eliphaz says that the wicked man's own fears **overpower him**.

15:27–33 The imagery of the **fat** man who eventually loses his **wealth** and **possessions** by divine punishment for his wickedness, insinuates that Job's calamities have occurred because of his own self-indulgence.

15:34 In mentioning the **fire** that **will consume** the tents of the wicked, Eliphaz employs the same two words that describe the fire of God that devoured Job's sheep and servants (see 1:16).

16:2 **I have heard many such things**: Beginning with a rare direct

- 3 Shall ²words of wind have an end?
Or what provokes you that you
answer?
- 4 I also could speak as you *do*,
If your soul were in my soul's place.
I could heap up words against you,
And ^bshake my head at you;
- 5 But I would strengthen you with my
mouth,
And the comfort of my lips would
relieve *your grief*.
- 6 "Though I speak, my grief is not
relieved;
And *if* I remain silent, how am I
eased?
- 7 But now He has ^cworn me out;
You ^dhave made desolate all my
company.
- 8 You have shriveled me up,
And it is a ^ewitness *against me*;
My leanness rises up against me
And bears witness to my face.
- 9 ^fHe tears *me* in His wrath, and
hates me;
He gnashes at me with His teeth;
^gMy adversary sharpens His gaze
on me.
- 10 They ^hgape at me with their mouth,
They ⁱstrike me reproachfully on the
cheek,
They gather together against me.
- 11 God ^jhas delivered me to the
ungodly,
And turned me over to the hands of
the wicked.
- 12 I was at ease, but He has
^kshattered me;
He also has taken *me* by my neck,
and shaken me to pieces;
He has ^lset me up for His target,
- 13 His archers surround me.
He pierces my ³heart and does not
pity;
He pours out my gall on the ground.
- 14 He breaks me with wound upon
wound;
He runs at me like a ⁴warrior.

3 ² Empty words
4 ^a Ps. 22:7; 109:25;
Lam. 2:15; Zeph.
2:15; Matt. 27:39
7 ^c Job 7:3 ^d Job
16:20; 19:13-15
8 ^e Job 10:17
9 ^f Job 10:16, 17;
19:11; Hos. 6:1 ^g Job
13:24; 33:10
10 ^h Ps. 22:13;
35:21 ⁱ Is. 50:6;
Lam. 3:30; Mic. 5:1;
Matt. 26:67; Mark
14:65; Luke 22:63;
Acts 23:2
11 ^j Job 1:15, 17
12 ^k Job 9:17 ^l Job
7:20; Lam. 3:12
13 ³ Lit. kidneys
14 ⁴ Vg. giant

15 ^m Job 30:19; Ps.
7:5 ⁵ Lit. horn
16 ⁶ Lit. red
18 ⁿ Job 27:9; [Ps.
66:18]
19 ^o Gen. 31:50;
Rom. 1:9; Phil. 1:8;
1 Thess. 2:5
21 ^p Job 31:35; Eccl.
6:10; [Is. 45:9; Rom.
9:20] ⁷ friend
22 ^q Job 10:21;
Eccl. 12:5

CHAPTER 17

1 ^a Ps. 88:3, 4
2 ^b 1 Sam. 1:6; Job
12:4; 17:6; 30:1, 9;
34:7 ¹ Lit. lodge
3 ^c Prov. 6:1; 17:18;
22:26
4 ^d Job 12:20; 32:9
5 ^e Job 11:20
6 ^f Job 30:9
7 ^g Ps. 6:7; 31:9

- 15 "I have sewn sackcloth over my skin,
And ^mlaid my ⁵head in the dust.
- 16 My face is ⁶flushed from weeping,
And on my eyelids *is* the shadow of
death;
- 17 Although no violence *is* in my hands,
And my prayer *is* pure.
- 18 "O earth, do not cover my blood,
And ⁿlet my cry have no *resting* place!
- 19 Surely even now ^omy witness *is* in
heaven,
And my evidence *is* on high.
- 20 My friends scorn me;
My eyes pour out *tears* to God.
- 21 ^pOh, that one might plead for a man
with God,
As a man *pleads* for his ⁷neighbor!
- 22 For when a few years are finished,
I shall ^qgo the way of no return.

Job Prays for Relief

- 17 "My spirit is broken,
My days are extinguished,
^aThe grave *is ready* for me.
- 2 Are not mockers with me?
And does not my eye ¹dwell on their
^bprovocation?
- 3 "Now put down a pledge for me with
Yourself.
Who *is* he ^cwho will shake hands
with me?
- 4 For you have hidden their heart from
^dunderstanding;
Therefore You will not exalt *them*.
- 5 He who speaks flattery to *his* friends,
Even the eyes of his children will
^efail.
- 6 "But He has made me ^fa byword of
the people,
And I have become one in whose
face men spit.
- 7 ^gMy eye has also grown dim because
of sorrow,
And all my members *are* like
shadows.

allusion to what the previous speaker just said, Job belittles his friends as **miserable comforters**. To paraphrase Job: "Speaking of trouble, rather than comforting me in my troubles as a good counselor should, you have increased my trouble despite your claims to the contrary."

16:3 The phrase **words of wind** is a caustic comeback to Eliphaz's words in 15:2 and Bildad's in 8:2. Both had twisted Job's words of 6:26 (see 8:2; 15:2, 3).

16:4, 5 The phrase **shake my head at you** indicates a mocking posture (as in Ps. 22:7). However, the word **comfort**, meaning "to nod the head sympathetically," is used in 2:11 of the friends who came to console him. In effect, Job is saying: "Please nod your head with understanding instead of mocking and ridiculing me."

16:10 strike me: Those who mocked and mistreated Job were probably various passersby (30:1, 9–12).

16:19, 21 The identity of Job's **witness** is disputed. One's understanding about Job's "Redeemer" in 19:25 will affect one's understanding of Job's *witness* (see 19:25). Some argue that Job was referring to God. However, the context of 9:33, where Job wished for an impartial mediator between God and himself (see 9:32, 33), and the immediate context of v. 21 suggest that Job was using a legal metaphor to express his wish for an advocate who would **plead for him with God, as a man pleads for his neighbor** on earth. This anticipates Jesus Christ, who is our Intercessor (Heb. 7:25) and Advocate (1 John 2:1).

17:3 In another legal metaphor, Job appeals to God to act as his advocate by laying down a **pledge**, that is, providing bail. The use of the same metaphor in Ps. 119:121, 122 to indicate the psalmist's request for relief from his "oppressors" may suggest that Job was pleading for God to demonstrate confidence in his innocence.

8 Upright *men* are astonished at this,
And the innocent stirs himself up
against the hypocrite.

9 Yet the righteous will hold to his
^hway,
And he who has ⁱclean hands will be
stronger and stronger.

10 “But please, ^jcome back again, ²all of
you,
For I shall not find *one* wise *man*
among you.

11 ^kMy days are past,
My purposes are broken off,
Even the ³thoughts of my heart.

12 They change the night into day;
‘The light is near,’ *they say*, in the face
of darkness.

13 If I wait for the grave *as* my house,
If I make my bed in the darkness,

14 If I say to corruption, ‘You *are* my
father,’
And to the worm, ‘You *are* my
mother and my sister,’

15 Where then *is* my ^lhope?
As for my hope, who can see it?

16 Will they go down ^mto the gates of
⁴Sheol?
Shall *we have* ⁿrest together in the
dust?”

Bildad: The Wicked Are Punished

18 Then ^aBildad the Shuhite an-
swered and said:

2 “How long *till* you put an end to words?
Gain understanding, and afterward
we will speak.

3 Why are we counted ^bas beasts,
And regarded as stupid in your sight?

4 ^cYou ¹who tear yourself in anger,
Shall the earth be forsaken for you?
Or shall the rock be removed from
its place?

5 “The ^dlight of the wicked indeed goes
out,

9 ^h Prov. 4:18 ⁱ Ps.
24:4
10 ^j Job 6:29 ² So
with some Heb.
mss., LXX, Syr., Vg.;
MT, Tg. *all of them*
11 ^k Job 7:6
³ *desires*
15 ^l Job 7:6; 13:15;
14:19; 19:10
16 ^m Jon. 2:6 ⁿ Job
3:17-19; 21:33 ⁴ The
abode of the dead

CHAPTER 18

1 ^a Job 8:1
3 ^b Ps. 73:22
4 ^c Job 13:14 ¹ Lit.
one who tears
his soul
5 ^d Job 21:17; Prov.
13:9; 20:20; 24:20

6 ^e Job 21:17; Ps.
18:28
7 ^f Job 5:12, 13; 15:6
8 ^g Job 22:10;
Ps. 9:15; 35:8; Is.
24:17, 18
9 ^h Job 5:5
11 ⁱ Job 20:25; Jer.
6:25
12 ^j Job 15:23
13 ^k *parts*
14 ^k Job 11:20
16 ^l Job 29:19
17 ^m Job 24:20;
[Ps. 34:16]; Prov.
10:7 ³ Lit. *before*
the outside, i.e., the
distinguished or
famous
18 ^a Or *They drive*
him
19 ⁿ Job 27:14, 15;
Is. 14:22
20 ^o Ps. 37:13; Jer.
50:27; Obad. 12
⁵ Lit. *who came*
after ⁶ Lit. *who*
have gone before
21 ^p Jer. 9:3;
1 Thess. 4:5

And the flame of his fire does not
shine.

6 The light is dark in his tent,
^eAnd his lamp beside him is put out.

7 The steps of his strength are
shortened,
And ^fhis own counsel casts him down.

8 For ^ghe is cast into a net by his own
feet,
And he walks into a snare.

9 The net takes *him* by the heel,
And ^ha snare lays hold of him.

10 A noose *is* hidden for him on the
ground,
And a trap for him in the road.

11 ⁱTerrors frighten him on every side,
And drive him to his feet.

12 His strength is starved,
And ^jdestruction *is* ready at his side.

13 It devours patches of his skin;
The firstborn of death devours his
²limbs.

14 He is uprooted from ^kthe shelter of
his tent,
And they parade him before the king
of terrors.

15 They dwell in his tent *who are* none
of his;
Brimstone is scattered on his
dwelling.

16 ^lHis roots are dried out below,
And his branch withers above.

17 ^mThe memory of him perishes from
the earth,
And he has no name ³among the
renowned.

18 ⁴He is driven from light into darkness,
And chased out of the world.

19 ⁿHe has neither son nor posterity
among his people,
Nor any remaining in his dwellings.

20 Those ⁵in the west are astonished ^aat
his day,
As those ⁶in the east are frightened.

21 Surely such *are* the dwellings of the
wicked,
And this *is* the place of *him who*
^pdoes not know God.”

17:12 This verse may be a caricature of the friends’ false assurances that if he would repent, his **darkness** would soon become **light**.
17:13, 14 Job counters the false assurances of his friends with a facetious statement about waiting for **the grave** as one who longingly desires to go home to his **house** and his long-lost relatives, **corruption** (or “the pit”) and the **worm**.
18:3 When Bildad asks why he and his friends are **counted as beasts**, he apparently resents the implication of Job’s words in 12:7–9.
18:4 The phrase **you who tear yourself in anger** seems to be Bildad’s answer to Job’s allegation that God had torn Job in His anger (16:13).
18:8–10 net . . . trap: Six different Hebrew synonyms for various types of nets and traps emphasize the many imminent dangers that God has designed for the wicked to ensure that they will be caught in their wickedness.
18:13, 14 Bildad cruelly attributes Job’s disease to **the firstborn**

of death, a reference to the demon of plagues and disease (see 3:8). **The king of terrors** is probably death personified as a king. Others suggest that this may refer to Satan.
18:16–19 In describing **roots** as being **dried** or withered, Bildad contradicts Job’s previous argument about the tree that is cut down but sprouts up from its roots (see 14:7, 8). There seems to be no hope for Job’s family tree because God, who is about to wipe **the memory** of Job **from the earth**, has already removed his descendants or **posterity**. In ancient times this was a sign of a divine curse. Once again Bildad manifests great insensitivity toward Job over the loss of his children (see 8:4).
18:21 In this summation of the evidence, Bildad uses the word **wicked**, in Hebrew literally the “unjust one,” to suggest that he is refuting Job’s allegation that God has turned him over to the “ungodly.” Bildad believes that the evidence he has exhibited in vv. 5–20 implicates Job himself as the culprit, the wicked one.

Job Trusts in His Redeemer

19 Then Job answered and said:

- ² “How long will you torment my soul,
And break me in pieces with words?
³ These ten times you have
¹ reproached me;
You are not ashamed *that* you ² have
wronged me.
⁴ And if indeed I have erred,
My error remains with me.
⁵ If indeed you ^a exalt *yourselves*
against me,
And plead my disgrace against me,
⁶ Know then that ^b God has
wronged me,
And has surrounded me with His
net.

CHAPTER 19

³ ¹ shamed or
disgraced ² A
Jewish tradition
make yourselves
strange to me
⁵ = Ps. 35:26; 38:16;
55:12, 13
⁶ Job 16:11

⁷ ³ violence
⁸ = Job 3:23; Ps.
88:8; Lam. 3:7, 9
⁴ walled off my way
⁹ = Job 12:17, 19; Ps.
89:44
¹⁰ = Job 17:14-16
¹¹ = Job 13:24; 33:10

- ⁷ “If I cry out concerning ³ wrong, I am
not heard.
If I cry aloud, *there is* no justice.
⁸ “He has ⁴ fenced up my way, so that I
cannot pass;
And He has set darkness in my
paths.
⁹ ^d He has stripped me of my glory,
And taken the crown *from* my head.
¹⁰ He breaks me down on every side,
And I am gone;
My ^e hope He has uprooted like a
tree.
¹¹ He has also kindled His wrath
against me,
And ^f He counts me as *one of* His
enemies.

19:2 How long will you torment: Job is tired of hearing Bildad's rude questions and the tormenting words of all his friends.

19:5–8 Job's friends have used the **disgrace** associated with his disease to **plead** the case that he is guilty of sin (10:17; 16:8; see 17:3). With the statement **God has wronged me**, Job responds to Bildad's implication in 8:3 that God does not subvert justice. He argues that Bildad's theory about God does not fit the facts. Instead he asserts that God has wrongly entrapped him as though he were a wild animal or criminal. In describing God as surrounding

him **with His net**, Job continues the imagery of the divine hunter initiated by Bildad. Essentially, Job feels **fenced** in by God when it is really Satan who has been mistreating him (see 1:10; 3:23).

19:9, 10 Job compares his removal from the respected position of judge or city councilman (see 29:7–25) to being dethroned like a king whose **crown** is taken from his **head**. Job's **hope**, which had once sprouted up like a new tree from a stump (see 14:7–9), has been totally **uprooted**.

The Mystery of Human Suffering

Bildad's speech to Job can be summed up: “You got what you deserved.” Bildad and Job's two other friends Eliphaz and Zophar had concluded that Job's suffering was certainly evidence of some sin in his life.

Job's friends were not reciting falsehoods; much of what they said was theologically sound at least in the abstract. The Scriptures, especially Deuteronomy (see Deut. 27; 28), indicate that the righteous can expect God's blessing and the wicked can expect God's curse. Both Eliphaz (15:17–35) and Zophar (20:4–29) conceded that sometimes the wicked enjoyed temporary prosperity as Job had. However, they asserted, as the Book of Proverbs does (Prov. 1:17–19; 6:14, 15), that eventually the wicked would be punished. Conversely, Elihu declared that God would reward the righteous with prosperity and security (36:7–11). The Book of Psalms teaches the same doctrine, that whatever the righteous person does “shall prosper” (Ps. 1:3). With this type of reasoning, all of Job's friends came to the same conclusion: Job's suffering was a sign of sin in his life (4:7–11; 8:11–22).

So where did Job's counselors go wrong? Their mistake was that they misapplied an abstract truth. Yes, in the end God rewards the righteous and punishes the wicked. Moreover God Himself had declared to Moses that He would not leave the guilty unpunished (Ex. 34:7). But Job's friends did not have God's perspective on Job's situation. Like Jesus' disciples, they automatically assumed that when catastrophe struck, it was God's punishment on that person (see John 9:1–3). But Job's story and Jesus' response to His disciples (John 9:3) indicate that human suffering is not always the sign of God's judgment. In this fallen world, sometimes the innocent suffer. But even through their suffering, God accomplishes His good will. In Job's case, Satan's false accusation was refuted and God's sovereignty was proven. The suffering of the blind man made it possible for Jesus to demonstrate His healing power and to transform the man into a witness to Jesus' deity (John 9:3, 30–33). Often our suffering or the suffering of others blinds us to the reality that the sovereign God is working His own good purposes through a fallen world.



Job and his friends
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12 His troops come together
And build up their road
against me;
They encamp all around my tent.

13^a He^g has removed my brothers far
from me,
And my acquaintances are
completely estranged from me.

14 My relatives have failed,
And my close friends have
forgotten me.

15 Those who dwell in my house, and
my maidservants,
Count me as a stranger;
I am an alien in their sight.

16 I call my servant, but he gives no
answer;
I beg him with my mouth.

17 My breath is offensive to my wife,
And I am ⁵repulsive to the children
of my own body.

18 Even ^hyoung children despise me;
I arise, and they speak against me.

19 ⁱAll my close friends abhor me,
And those whom I love have turned
against me.

20^j My bone clings to my skin and to my
flesh,
And I have escaped by the skin of
my teeth.

21^k “Have pity on me, have pity on me,
O you my friends,
For the hand of God has
struck me!

22 Why do you ^hpersecute me as God
does,
And are not satisfied with my flesh?

13 ^g Job 16:20; Ps. 31:11; 38:11; 69:8; 88:8, 18
17 ⁵ Lit. *strange*
18 ^h 2 Kin. 2:23; Job 17:6
19 ⁱ Ps. 38:11; 55:12, 13
20 ^j Job 16:8; 33:21; Ps. 102:5; Lam. 4:8
22 ^k Job 13:24, 25; 16:11; 19:6; Ps. 69:26

26 ^l [Ps. 17:15]; Matt. 5:8; 1 Cor. 13:12; [1 John 3:2]
⁶ Lit. *struck off*
27 ⁷ Lit. *kidneys*

CHAPTER 20

1 ^a Job 11:1
3 ¹ Lit. *of my insulting correction*
4 ^b Job 8:8; 15:10

23^a “Oh, that my words were written!
Oh, that they were inscribed in a
book!

24 That they were engraved on a rock
With an iron pen and lead, forever!

25 For I know *that* my Redeemer lives,
And He shall stand at last on the
earth;

26 And after my skin is ⁶destroyed, this
I know,
That ⁱin my flesh I shall see God,
Whom I shall see for myself,
And my eyes shall behold, and not
another.
How my ⁷heart yearns within me!

28 If you should say, ‘How shall we
persecute him?’—
Since the root of the matter is found
in me,

29 Be afraid of the sword for yourselves;
For wrath *brings* the punishment of
the sword,
That you may know *there is* a
judgment.”

Zophar's Sermon on the Wicked Man

20 Then ^aZophar the Naamathite answered and said:

2 “Therefore my anxious thoughts make
me answer,
Because of the turmoil within me.

3 I have heard the rebuke ¹that
reproaches me,
And the spirit of my understanding
causes me to answer.

4 “Do you *not* know this of ^bold,
Since man was placed on earth,

19:17 The mention of **the children of Job's own body** is problematic since the book seems to document the loss of all ten of his children (see 1:2, 18, 19). It is possible this is a rhetorical statement: “I would be repulsive even to my children” (compare v. 18).

19:20 The meaning of the phrase **skin of my teeth** is uncertain. It may imply that his body was so devastated by disease that his teeth had fallen out and only the *skin* or gums of his teeth were left intact.

19:21 That Job believed **the hand of God has struck** him is ironic, since in fact, God had refused Satan's request to “stretch out His hand” against Job (1:11; 2:5).

19:25, 26 Job expresses his confidence in his living **Redeemer**, which in this legal context may be translated “Vindicator” or “Protector of the Family Rights” (see Ps. 119:154; also Ruth 4:1 where the word is translated *close relative*). Some interpreters believe that Job was referring to God, a view supported by the context of 17:3 and possibly by the mention of **God** in v. 26. However, the context of the Book of Job—Job's longing for a mediator (9:33) and his desire for someone to plead on his behalf with God (16:19–21)—may suggest that he was thinking of someone other than God. Here is a strong, resolute hope for a mediator between God and humanity. Ultimately Job's longing for a vindicator or mediator was fulfilled in Jesus Christ (see 1 Tim. 2:5).

19:27 Again, the redundant, emphatic pronoun **I** in the Hebrew text (as in v. 25) indicates a strong belief and deep conviction. This is a wonderful example of a sufferer passionately expressing his resolute faith even in the middle of a horrible situation.

19:29 Job's warning to his friends to be **afraid of the sword for yourselves** may have been his rebuttal of Eliphaz's remarks about the wicked person watching in dread for the sword (15:22).

20:4, 5 Zophar confronts Job's confident statement in 19:25 with a sarcastic rebuke. Since Job supposedly knew so much about his Redeemer, surely he knew the wisdom teaching that the **wicked** prosper only for a **short** time.

behold

(Heb. *ra'ah*) (19:27; Deut. 3:27; Eccl. 11:7; Is. 26:10; Lam 1:9) Strong's #7200

This is the common term used in reference to the natural function of the eyes and is thus most often translated as *see* (Gen. 48:10; Deut. 1:8; 2 Kin. 3:14; Mic. 7:9, 10). The word also has a number of metaphorical meanings, such as acceptance (Gen. 7:1; Num. 23:21) and provision (Gen. 22:8, 14; 1 Sam. 16:1). It can even convey the notion of assurance and salvation as is the case here. In 42:5 the word means “to see” in the sense of “to come to recognize” or “to experience fully” something previously known or understood. At times the word is associated with a prophetic message, as a prophet is described as seeing a vision from God (Is. 6:1; Jer. 1:11–13; Ezek. 1:1).

- 5 ^cThat the triumphing of the wicked is short,
And the joy of the hypocrite is *but*
for a ^dmoment?
- 6 ^eThough his haughtiness mounts up
to the heavens,
And his head reaches to the clouds,
7 ^fYet he will perish forever like his
own refuse;
Those who have seen him will say,
“Where is he?”
- 8 He will fly away ^flike a dream, and
not be found;
Yes, he ^gwill be chased away like a
vision of the night.
- 9 The eye *that* saw him will *see him* no
more,
Nor will his place behold him
anymore.
- 10 His children will seek the favor of
the poor,
And his hands will restore his
wealth.
- 11 His bones are full of ^hhis youthful
vigor,
ⁱBut it will lie down with him in the
dust.
- 12^a Though evil is sweet in his mouth,
And he hides it under his tongue,
13 ^bThough he spares it and does not
forsake it,
But still keeps it in his ²mouth,
14 ^cYet his food in his stomach turns
sour;
It becomes cobra venom within
him.
- 15 He swallows down riches
And vomits them up again;
God casts them out of his belly.
- 16 He will suck the poison of cobras;
The viper’s tongue will slay him.
- 17 He will not see ^jthe streams,
The rivers flowing with honey and
cream.
- 18 He will restore that for which he
labored,
And will not swallow *it* down;
From the proceeds of business
He will get no enjoyment.

5 ^c Ps. 37:35, 36
^d [Job 8:13; 13:16;
15:34; 27:8]
6 ^e Is. 14:13, 14
8 ^f Ps. 73:20;
90:5 ^g Job 18:18;
27:21-23
11 ^h Job 13:26 ⁱ Job
21:26
13 ² Lit. *palate*
17 ^j Ps. 36:8; Jer.
17:8

19 ³ crushed
20 ^k Eccl. 5:13-15
⁴ Lit. *belly*
22 ⁵ Or *the*
wretched or sufferer
24 ^l Is. 24:18; Amos
5:19
25 ^m Job 16:13
ⁿ Job 18:11, 14
⁶ Gallbladder
26 ^o Ps. 21:9
28 ^p Job 20:15;
21:30
29 ^q Job 27:13;
31:2, 3

CHAPTER 21

2 ¹ comfort
3 ^a Job 16:10

- 19 For he has ³oppressed *and* forsaken
the poor,
He has violently seized a house
which he did not build.
- 20^a Because ^khe knows no quietness in
his ⁴heart,
He will not save anything he desires.
- 21 Nothing is left for him to eat;
Therefore his well-being will not last.
- 22 In his self-sufficiency he will be in
distress;
Every hand of ⁵misery will come
against him.
- 23 *When* he is about to fill his stomach,
God will cast on him the fury of His
wrath,
And will rain *it* on him while he is
eating.
- 24 ^lHe will flee from the iron weapon;
A bronze bow will pierce him
through.
- 25 It is drawn, and comes out of the
body;
Yes, ^mthe glittering *point comes* out of
his ⁶gall.
- ⁿTerrors *come* upon him;
26 Total darkness *is* reserved for his
treasures.
- ^oAn unfanned fire will consume him;
It shall go ill with him who is left in
his tent.
- 27 The heavens will reveal his iniquity,
And the earth will rise up against
him.
- 28 The increase of his house will depart,
And *his goods* will flow away in the
day of His ^pwrath.
- 29^q *This is* the portion from God for a
wicked man,
The heritage appointed to him by God.”

Job's Discourse on the Wicked

21 Then Job answered and said:

- 2 “Listen carefully to my speech,
And let this be your ¹consolation.
3 Bear with me that I may speak,
And after I have spoken, keep
^amocking.

20:7 The word **refuse** may also be translated “dung.” A scathing comment.

20:12-19 Though **evil** may be **sweet** to the wicked for a while, the certain consequences of their behavior will bring about their downfall.

20:20, 21 In stating that the wicked person **knows no quietness**, Zophar implies that Job has received what he deserves. Zophar’s statement that the **well-being** or “prosperity” of the wicked **will not last** fits Job’s circumstances: Job has lost everything. In essence, Zophar is confirming Job’s complaint in 7:7 that he will “never again see good.”

20:27 Zophar apparently reverses Job’s appeal to the earth and heavens (16:18, 19) for vindication. He argues that the **heavens**

and **the earth** will bear witness not to Job’s innocence but to his **iniquity**.

20:29 In this summary verdict, Zophar suggests that it is too late for Job to repent (contrast his previous words in 11:13-20). God would have no clemency for such a **wicked** person.

21:2 your consolation: Job tells the three friends that if they will **listen carefully**, they will finally be of some consolation, or comfort, to him.

21:3 keep mocking: Perhaps Job turned directly to Zophar to rebuke the most offensive of his friends. Zophar had not only claimed that Job mocked (see 11:3 where Zophar used the same Hebrew word for *mocking*), but he mocked Job’s words (20:9).

- 4 “As for me, *is* my complaint against man?
And if *it were*, why should I not be impatient?”
- 5 Look at me and be astonished;
^bPut *your* hand over *your* mouth.
- 6 Even when I remember I am terrified,
And trembling takes hold of my flesh.
- 7 ^cWhy do the wicked live *and* become old,
Yes, become mighty in power?
- 8 Their descendants are established with them in their sight,
And their offspring before their eyes.
- 9 Their houses *are* safe from fear,
^dNeither *is* ²the rod of God upon them.
- 10 Their bull breeds without failure;
Their cow calves ^ewithout miscarriage.
- 11 They send forth their little ones like a flock,
And their children dance.
- 12 They sing to the tambourine and harp,
And rejoice to the sound of the flute.
- 13 They ^fspend their days in wealth,
And ³in a moment go down to the ⁴grave.
- 14 ^gYet they say to God, ‘Depart from us,
For we do not desire the knowledge of Your ways.
- 15 ^hWho *is* the Almighty, that we should serve Him?
And ⁱwhat profit do we have if we pray to Him?’
- 16 Indeed ⁵their prosperity *is* not in their hand;
^jThe counsel of the wicked is far from me.
- 17 “How often is the lamp of the wicked put out?
How often does their destruction come upon them,
The sorrows God ^kdistributes in His anger?”

5 ^b Judg. 18:19; Job 13:5; 29:9; 40:4
7 ^c Job 12:6; Ps. 17:10, 14; 73:3, 12; [Jer. 12:1]; Hab. 1:13, 16
9 ^d Ps. 73:5 ² The rod of God’s chastisement
10 ^e Ex. 23:26
13 ^f Job 21:23; 36:11
³ Without lingering
⁴ Or Sheol
14 ^g Job 22:17
15 ^h Ex. 5:2; Job 22:17; 34:9 ⁱ Job 35:3; Mal. 3:14
16 ^j Job 22:18; Ps. 1:1; Prov. 1:10 ⁵ Lit. *their goal*
17 ^k [Job 31:2, 3; Luke 12:46]

18 ¹ Ps. 1:4; 35:5; Is. 17:13; Hos. 13:3
⁶ steals away
19 ^m [Ex. 20:5]; Jer. 31:29; Ezek. 18:2
⁷ stores up ⁸ Lit. *his*
20 ⁿ Ps. 75:8; Is. 51:17; Jer. 25:15; Rev. 14:10; 19:15
22 ^o Job 35:11; 36:22; [Is. 40:13; 45:9; Rom. 11:34; 1 Cor. 2:16]
24 ⁹ LXX, Vg. *bowels*; Syr. *sides*; Tg. *breasts*
26 ^p Job 3:13; 20:11; Eccl. 9:2
28 ¹ Vg. omits *the tent*
30 ^q Job 20:29; [Prov. 16:4; 2 Pet. 2:9]

- 18 ^l They are like straw before the wind,
And like chaff that a storm ⁶carries away.
- 19 *They say*, ‘God ⁷lays up ⁸one’s iniquity ^mfor his children’;
Let Him recompense him, that he may know *it*.
- 20 Let his eyes see his destruction,
And ⁿlet him drink of the wrath of the Almighty.
- 21 For what does he care about his household after him,
When the number of his months is cut in half?
- 22 “Can ^o *anyone* teach God knowledge,
Since He judges those on high?
- 23 One dies in his full strength,
Being wholly at ease and secure;
- 24 His ⁹pails are full of milk,
And the marrow of his bones is moist.
- 25 Another man dies in the bitterness of his soul,
Never having eaten with pleasure.
- 26 They ^plie down alike in the dust,
And worms cover them.
- 27 “Look, I know your thoughts,
And the schemes *with which* you would wrong me.
- 28 For you say,
‘Where *is* the house of the prince?
And where *is* ¹the tent,
The dwelling place of the wicked?’
- 29 Have you not asked those who travel the road?
And do you not know their signs?
- 30 ^q For the wicked are reserved for the day of doom;
They shall be brought out on the day of wrath.
- 31 Who condemns his way to his face?
And who repays him *for what* he has done?
- 32 Yet he shall be brought to the grave,
And a vigil kept over the tomb.

21:7 Why do the wicked live: With a rhetorical question, Job begins exposing the loopholes in the retribution dogma—the belief that suffering always indicates God’s punishment of a person. The prosperity of the wicked is still a mystery for believers today. Other biblical writers agonized over it (see Ps. 37; 73; Jer. 12:1–4). But the Scriptures affirm that God is controlling everything to accomplish His good purposes (see Rom. 8:28).

21:9 Job reacts to Eliphaz’s argument in 15:21–24 that although the wicked live peacefully for a while, they live in terror of inevitable destruction. Job contradicts this by saying that the wicked even live in their **houses** safe—without **fear**. The wicked simply deny God’s existence, so they live without any fear of His judgment.

21:17 The rhetorical questions introduced by **how often** expect the answer “not very often.” With the first question about **the lamp of the wicked**, Job challenges Bildad’s belief that the wicked per-

son’s light does go out (see 18:5, 6). The second question opposes Zophar’s dogmatic statement in 20:23 that God will judge the wicked before they find enjoyment in life.

21:19–21 Job denies the dogma that even if a wicked person prospers temporarily, his children will be punished. Job’s position is sustained by other passages in the Bible (see Deut. 24:16; Ezek. 18:1–28; John 9:1–3).

21:30 Job may be quoting his friends’ position that the **wicked** are doomed. However, the Hebrew words translated **reserved for** could also be rendered “spared from,” which would indicate Job’s own contrary belief. This latter view is supported by the Hebrew word translated **brought out**. This word reappears in v. 32 in the context of a wicked person being *brought* to the cemetery without being repaid for what he has done (see v. 31).

- 33 The clods of the valley shall be sweet to him;
 Everyone shall follow him,
 As countless *have gone* before him.
 34 How then can you comfort me with empty words,
 Since ²falsehood remains in your answers?"

Eliphaz Accuses Job of Wickedness

22 Then ^aEliphaz the Temanite answered and said:

- 2 "Can ^ba man be profitable to God,
 Though he who is wise may be profitable to himself?
 3 *Is it* any pleasure to the Almighty that you are righteous?
 Or *is it* gain to Him that you make your ways blameless?
 4 "Is it because of your fear of Him that He corrects you,
 And enters into judgment with you?
 5 *Is not* your wickedness great,
 And your iniquity without end?
 6 For you have ^ctaken pledges from your brother for no reason,
 And stripped the naked of their clothing.
 7 You have not given the weary water to drink,
 And you ^dhave withheld bread from the hungry.
 8 But the ¹mighty man possessed the land,
 And the honorable man dwelt in it.
 9 You have sent widows away empty,
 And the ²strength of the fatherless was crushed.
 10 Therefore snares *are* all around you,
 And sudden fear troubles you,
 11 Or darkness *so that* you cannot see;
 And an abundance of ^ewater covers you.

33 ^f Heb. 9:27
 34 ² faithlessness

CHAPTER 22

1 ^a Job 4:1; 15:1; 42:9
 2 ^b Job 35:7; [Ps. 16:2; Luke 17:10]
 6 ^c [Ex. 22:26, 27]; Deut. 24:6, 10, 17; Job 24:3, 9; Ezek. 18:16
 7 ^d Deut. 15:7; Job 31:17; Is. 58:7; Ezek. 18:7; Matt. 25:42
 8 ¹ Lit. *man of arm*
 9 ² Lit. *arms*
 11 ^e Job 38:34; Ps. 69:1, 2; 124:5; Lam. 3:54

13 ^f Ps. 73:11
 14 ^g Ps. 139:11, 12
 16 ^h Job 14:19; 15:32; Ps. 90:5; Is. 28:2; Matt. 7:26, 27
 17 ⁱ Job 21:14, 15
 3 LXX, Syr. *us*
 19 ^j Ps. 52:6; 58:10; 107:42
 20 ^k LXX *substance is*
 21 ^k [Ps. 34:10]; Is. 27:5
 22 ^l Job 6:10; 23:12; Prov. 2:6 ^m [Ps. 119:11]

- 12^a Is not God in the height of heaven?
 And see the highest stars, how lofty they are!
 13 And you say, ^f"What does God know?
 Can He judge through the deep darkness?
 14^g Thick clouds cover Him, so that He cannot see,
 And He walks above the circle of heaven?
 15 Will you keep to the old way
 Which wicked men have trod,
 16 Who ^hwere cut down before their time,
 Whose foundations were swept away by a flood?
 17 ⁱThey said to God, "Depart from us!
 What can the Almighty do to ³them?"
 18 Yet He filled their houses with good *things*;
 But the counsel of the wicked is far from me.
 19^a The ^jrighteous see *it* and are glad,
 And the innocent laugh at them:
 20^k Surely our ⁴adversaries are cut down,
 And the fire consumes their remnant?
 21^a Now acquaint yourself with Him,
 and ^kbe at peace;
 Thereby good will come to you.
 22 Receive, please, ^linstruction from His mouth,
 And ^mlay up His words in your heart.
 23 If you return to the Almighty, you will be built up;
 You will remove iniquity far from your tents.

21:33 shall be sweet: Job uses the same Hebrew word Zophar employed (in 20:12) in arguing that evil is sweet to the wicked person but will become bitter in his stomach (20:14). Job contradicts this by saying that things are sweet for the wicked even in the grave.

22:2 The implication of Eliphaz's rhetorical question—that a human being cannot put God under any obligation that God must repay—is a valid theological principle that the Lord Himself corroborates in 41:11. However, his application of that principle to Job's circumstances (vv. 3–5) was invalid, for it was based on the faulty assumption that the righteous are always blessed and the wicked always experience God's judgment on earth.

22:3, 4 The same Hebrew root words for **blameless** and **fear** had earlier been used by Eliphaz in his courteous remarks about Job's "reverence" and "integrity" (4:6). In these verses, Eliphaz is being sarcastic. **22:6–9 naked . . . weary . . . widows:** Eliphaz lists some trumped up charges concerning the way Job gained his great wealth: greedy exploitation of the poor in business dealings; lack of hospitality or charity; and lack of compassion to the bereaved. Job categorically denied these charges (see 29:11–17; 31:13–22), and God's own witness to Satan reveals to the reader that the charges were false (1:8).

22:13, 14 Can He judge: Eliphaz misrepresents Job's position. Although he accuses Job of not understanding God, it is Eliphaz who has the greater misunderstanding.

22:15–17 Eliphaz twists Job's words recorded in 21:14–16 to support his own view that Job was walking in **wicked** ways. Because of this, Job's prosperity was only temporary.

22:18 The phrase **but the counsel of the wicked is far from me** (quoting Job in 21:16) may be an example of innuendo, mocking Job for what he was saying and also expressing Eliphaz's own sentiments.

22:21 The Hebrew word translated **acquaint yourself**, or sometimes "yield," is derived from the same root as "be profitable" in v. 2. This might be a play on words: "Although you cannot be profitable to God through your efforts, you can acquaint yourself with or yield to Him."

22:23 Eliphaz issues another call for repentance (5:8–17) by asking Job to **return to the Almighty**. Then he suggests that Job **remove iniquity far from his tents**, a reiteration of Zophar's words (see 11:14).

- 24 Then you will ⁿlay your gold in the dust,
And the *gold* of Ophir among the stones of the brooks.
- 25 Yes, the Almighty will be your ⁵gold
And your precious silver;
- 26 For then you will have your ^odelight in the Almighty,
And lift up your face to God.
- 27 ^pYou will make your prayer to Him,
He will hear you,
And you will pay your vows.
- 28 You will also declare a thing,
And it will be established for you;
So light will shine on your ways.
- 29 When they cast *you* down, and you say, ‘Exaltation *will come!*’
Then ^qHe will save the humble *person*.
- 30 He will *even* deliver one who is not innocent;
Yes, he will be delivered by the purity of your hands.”

Job Proclaims God’s Righteous Judgments

- 23** Then Job answered and said:
- 2 “Even today my ^acomplaint is bitter;
¹ My hand is listless because of my groaning.
- 3 ^bOh, that I knew where I might find Him,
That I might come to His seat!
- 4 I would present *my* case before Him,
And fill my mouth with arguments.
- 5 I would know the words *which* He would answer me,
And understand what He would say to me.
- 6 ^cWould He contend with me in His great power?
No! But He would take *note* of me.
- 7 There the upright could reason with Him,
And I would be delivered forever from my Judge.
- 8 “Look, ^dI go forward, but He is not *there*,
And backward, but I cannot perceive Him;

24 ⁿ 2 Chr. 1:15
25 ⁵ Ancient vss. suggest *defense*; MT *gold*, as in v. 24
26 ^o Job 27:10; Ps. 37:4; Is. 58:14
27 ^p Job 11:13; 33:26; [Is. 58:9–11]
29 ^q Job 5:11; [Matt. 23:12; James 4:6; 1 Pet. 5:5]

CHAPTER 23

2 ^a Job 7:11 ¹ So with MT, Tg., Vg.; LXX, Syr. *His*
3 ^b Job 13:3, 18; 16:21; 31:35
6 ^c Is. 57:16
8 ^d Job 9:11; 35:14

10 ^e [Ps. 1:6; 139:1–3] ^f [Ps. 17:3; 66:10; James 1:12]
11 ^g Job 31:7; Ps. 17:5
12 ^h Job 6:10; 22:22
ⁱ Ps. 44:18 ² Lit. *appointed portion*
13 ^j [Ps. 115:3]
14 ^k [1 Thess. 3:2–4]
16 ^l Ps. 22:14
17 ^m Job 10:18, 19
³ Or *by or before*

CHAPTER 24

1 ^a [Acts 1:7] ^b [Is. 2:12]; Jer. 46:10; [Obad. 15]; Zeph. 1:7
2 ^c [Deut. 19:14; 27:17]; Prov. 22:28; 23:10; Hos. 5:10
3 ^d [Deut. 24:6, 10, 12, 17]; Job 22:6, 9
4 ^e Job 29:16; Prov. 28:28

- 9 When He works on the left hand, I cannot behold *Him*;
When He turns to the right hand, I cannot see *Him*.
- 10 But ^eHe knows the way that I take;
When ^fHe has tested me, I shall come forth as gold.
- 11 ^gMy foot has held fast to His steps;
I have kept His way and not turned aside.
- 12 I have not departed from the ^hcommandment of His lips;
ⁱI have treasured the words of His mouth
More than my ²necessary food.
- 13 “But He *is* unique, and who can make Him change?
And *whatever* ^jHis soul desires, *that* He does.
- 14 For He performs *what is* ^kappointed for me,
And many such *things are* with Him.
- 15 Therefore I am terrified at His presence;
When I consider *this*, I am afraid of Him.
- 16 For God ^lmade my heart weak,
And the Almighty terrifies me;
- 17 Because I was not ^mcut off ³from the presence of darkness,
And He did *not* hide deep darkness from my face.

Job Complains of Violence on the Earth

- 24** “Since ^atimes are not hidden from the Almighty,
Why do those who know Him see not His ^bdays?
- 2 “*Some* remove ^clandmarks;
They seize flocks violently and feed *on them*;
- 3 They drive away the donkey of the fatherless;
They ^dtake the widow’s ox as a pledge.
- 4 They push the needy off the road;
All the ^epoor of the land are forced to hide.

22:24, 25 Eliphaz implies that Job has been trusting in his riches rather than in God, something Job would deny in 31:24, 25. Then he urges Job to trust in **the Almighty** God as he does in **gold**.

22:30 Eliphaz’s prediction that God would **deliver one who is not innocent** through the **purity** of Job’s **hands** would be fulfilled ironically through Job’s prayer for the three friends (42:8–10).

23:10, 11 Job’s use of the metaphor about **gold** to express his assurance of being found pure from guilt may be a rebuttal to Eliphaz’s brazen words of 22:24, 25. When Job asserts that he has **kept** God’s **way**, he rejects Eliphaz’s accusation that he has kept the way of the wicked (see 22:15).

23:13–16 When Job contemplates the **unique** power and sover-

eign freedom of God, he is **terrified**. To him, God seems to be a capricious despot who does as He pleases (see 9:12, 34).

23:17 This verse likely describes Job’s **deep** depression, not only because of his losses, but also because of his failure to understand God’s purpose.

24:1 **Since times are not hidden from the Almighty** might also be translated, “Why are not times stored up by the Almighty?” The parallelism of the second line may indicate that the word *times* alludes to the set **days** for God’s judgment.

24:2 Removing **landmarks** in the ancient Middle East was tantamount to stealing land. It was a serious crime that placed a person under a divine curse (see Deut. 27:17).

5 Indeed, *like* wild donkeys in the desert,
They go out to their work, searching
for food.

The wilderness *yields* food for them
and for their children.

6 They gather their fodder in the field
And glean in the vineyard of the
wicked.

7 They *f*spend the night naked,
without clothing,
And have no covering in the cold.

8 They are wet with the showers of the
mountains,
And *g*huddle around the rock for
want of shelter.

9 “Some snatch the fatherless from the
breast,
And take a pledge from the poor.

10 They cause *the poor* to go naked,
without *h* clothing;
And they take away the sheaves from
the hungry.

11 They press out oil within their walls,
And tread winepresses, yet suffer
thirst.

12 The dying groan in the city,
And the souls of the wounded cry
out;
Yet God does not charge *them* with
wrong.

13“ There are those who rebel against
the light;
They do not know its ways
Nor abide in its paths.

14 *i* The murderer rises with the light;
He kills the poor and needy;
And in the night he is like a thief.

15 *j* The eye of the adulterer waits for the
twilight,

k Saying, ‘No eye will see me’;
And he *l* disguises *his* face.

16 In the dark they break into houses
Which they marked for themselves
in the daytime;

l They do not know the light.

17 For the morning is the same to them
as the shadow of death;
If *someone* recognizes *them*,
They *are* in the terrors of the shadow
of death.

7 ^f Ex. 22:26, 27;
[Deut. 24:12, 13];
Job 22:6; [James
2:15, 16]

8 ^g Lam. 4:5

10 ^h Job 31:19

14 ⁱ Ps. 10:8

15 ^j Prov. 7:7-10

^k Ps. 10:11 ^l Lit.
puts a covering on
his face

16 ^l [John 3:20]

18“ They *should be* swift on the face of
the waters,
Their portion *should be* cursed in the
earth,

So that no one would turn into the
way of their vineyards.

19 As drought and heat ² consume the
snow waters,
So ³ the grave consumes those who
have sinned.

20 The womb *should* forget him,
The worm *should* feed sweetly on
him;

m He *should* be remembered no more,
And wickedness *should* be broken
like a tree.

21 For he ⁴ preys on the barren who do
not bear,
And does no good for the widow.

22“ But God draws the mighty away with
His power;
He rises up, but no man is sure of
life.

23 He gives them security, and they rely
on it;

Yet *n* His eyes *are* on their ways.

24 They are exalted for a little while,
Then they are gone.
They are brought low;
They are ⁵ taken out of the way like
all others;
They dry out like the heads of grain.

25“ Now if *it is* not *so*, who will prove me
a liar,
And make my speech worth
nothing?”

Bildad: How Can Man Be Righteous?

25 Then ^a Bildad the Shuhite an-
swered and said:

2 “Dominion and fear *belong* to Him;
He makes peace in His high places.

3 ¹ Is there any number to His armies?
Upon whom does ^b His light not rise?

4 ^c How then can man be righteous
before God?
Or how can he be ^d pure who is born
of a woman?

19 ² Lit. seize ³ Or
Sheol

20 ^m Job 18:17; Ps.

34:16; Prov. 10:7

21 ⁴ Lit. feeds on

23 ⁿ Ps. 11:4; [Prov.

15:3]

24 ⁵ Lit. gathered up

CHAPTER 25

1 ^a Job 8:1; 18:1

3 ^b James 1:17

¹ Can His armies be
counted?

4 ^c Job 4:17; 15:14;

Ps. 130:3; 143:2

^d [Job 14:4]

24:9 It is ironic that Job complains about God allowing people to **snatch** an infant from its mother's **breast**. Previously he had complained that God had not taken him from his mother's breasts after his own birth (see 3:12).

24:12 In this transition between lists of social crimes and criminal acts, Job protests against God ignoring those who **cry out** for help, since God was supposedly ignoring his own cries for help.

24:16 Thieves would **break**, literally “dig,” **into houses** by night. The walls of houses were built of mud bricks through which thieves could dig. **Marked for themselves** may mean “shut themselves up” by day.

24:18–25 These verses about the ultimate fate of the wicked are problematic. They sound more like the friends' words than Job's (see 15:1–21:34). Therefore, critics usually assign them to Zophar, who has no speech in the third cycle of dialogues, or to Bildad, whose last speech is very short (25:1–6). However, they should be considered as Job's words, for he was probably quoting his friends' viewpoint in order to refute them.

25:2 In referring to God's **dominion and fear**, Bildad seems to be responding to Job's comments (in 23:13–17) that the very thought of God's sovereignty made him afraid.

25:4 Bildad repeats the previous rhetorical questions posed by Job

⁵ If even the moon does not shine,
And the stars are not pure in His
^esight,
⁶ How much less man, *who is f*a
maggot,
And a son of man, *who is* a worm?"

Job: Man's Frailty and God's Majesty

26 But Job answered and said:

² "How have you helped *him who is*
without power?
How have you saved the arm *that has*
no strength?
³ How have you counseled *one who has*
no wisdom?
And *how* have you declared sound
advice to many?
⁴ To whom have you uttered words?
And whose spirit came from you?

⁵ "The dead tremble,
Those under the waters and those
inhabiting them.
⁶ *a*Sheol is naked before Him,
And Destruction has no covering.
⁷ *b*He stretches out the north over
empty space;
He hangs the earth on nothing.
⁸ *c*He binds up the water in His thick
clouds,

⁵ ^e Job 15:15
⁶ ^f Ps. 22:6

CHAPTER 26

⁶ ^a [Ps. 139:8]; Prov. 15:11; [Heb. 4:13]
⁷ ^b Job 9:8; Ps. 24:2; 104:2
⁸ ^c Job 37:11; Prov. 30:4

¹ *do not break*
¹⁰ ^d [Job 38:1-11]; Ps. 33:7; 104:9; Prov. 8:29; Jer. 5:22
¹¹ ² *amazed*
¹² ^e Ex. 14:21; Job 9:13; Is. 51:15; [Jer. 31:35] ³ Heb. *rahab*
¹³ ^f [Job 9:8]; Ps. 33:6 ^g Is. 27:1

CHAPTER 27

² ^a Job 34:5

Yet the clouds ¹ are not broken
under it.

⁹ He covers the face of *His* throne,
And spreads His cloud over it.
¹⁰ ^d He drew a circular horizon on the
face of the waters,
At the boundary of light and
darkness.
¹¹ The pillars of heaven tremble,
And are ²astonished at His rebuke.
¹² ^e He stirs up the sea with His power,
And by His understanding He breaks
up ³the storm.
¹³ ^f By His Spirit He adorned the
heavens;
His hand pierced ^gthe fleeing serpent.
¹⁴ Indeed these *are* the mere edges of
His ways,
And how small a whisper we hear
of Him!
But the thunder of His power who
can understand?"

Job Maintains His Integrity

27 Moreover Job continued his dis-
course, and said:

² "As God lives, *a* *who* has taken away
my justice,
And the Almighty, *who* has made my
soul bitter,

(see 9:2) and Eliphaz (see 4:17; 15:14) to emphasize that a person cannot **be righteous or pure** before the Lord.

25:5, 6 Bildad's view of God's dominion and majesty in the heavens causes him to devalue mortal **man** as a **maggot**. He responds insensitively to Job by suggesting that Job does not need to wait until he dies to be grouped with the maggots (the same Hebrew word that Job used in 17:14). This was caustic sarcasm, for Job was in fact covered with worms (see 7:5).

26:2-4 **How have:** Rather than presenting genuine questions, these verses are probably sarcastic exclamations by Job to imply how little Bildad has helped him. To paraphrase Job: "You've really been a big help to me! How encouraging that you tell me I'm nothing but a worm (see 25:6)! Finally my cries for help have been answered."

Sheol

(Heb. *she'ol*) (11:8; 26:6; 2 Sam. 22:6; Ps. 16:10; Is. 5:14; Jon. 2:2) Strong's #7585

The Hebrew word translated *Sheol* possibly derives from the verb meaning "to inquire" or "to question," and could be associated with the prevalent ancient practice of necromancy, the attempt to communicate with the dead through a medium. Necromancy was condemned by God (see Lev. 20:27; 1 Chr. 10:13). *Sheol* was a common name for the *grave* (7:9; 14:13; Ps. 30:3) or *hell* (Ps. 139:8; Is. 14:9; Hab. 2:5). The Israelites understood *Sheol* to be the invisible domain for deceased souls of both the righteous and unrighteous—all awaiting the final resurrection on the last day. The OT makes no distinction between the state of the righteous and unrighteous dead in *Sheol*, whereas Jesus' parable of the rich man and Lazarus implies separate realms for the two (Luke 16:19-31).

26:5, 6 The words of these verses echo the thoughts of God's omnipotence found in the Psalms (see Ps. 139:7-12). While **Sheol** and **Destruction**—that is, death or the place of the dead—were fearful, hidden concepts to Job and his contemporaries, they caused no fear and held no secrets for the all-knowing God.

26:7 **the north over empty space:** The Hebrew word translated *north* probably does not refer to a geographical designation (see Ps. 48:1, 2, where the same Hebrew term describes God's mountain), but to God's dwelling place in the heavens (see v. 9, which mentions God's throne). If the statement that God **hangs the earth on nothing** (see Gen. 1:2) refers to the suspension of earth in space, it preceded Newton's concept of gravitational attraction by thousands of years. Job probably thought, as did other ancients, that the earth was a circular disk (see v. 10) supported by nothing. In other words, he thought of the earth as floating on the vast subterranean waters.

26:10, 11 Job's graphic description of the **circular horizon** and the pillars of heaven—probably the mountains that held up the heavens in ancient cosmology—pictures the way the earth appears to the human eye.

26:12, 13 **With His power** God controls **the sea**, which was a symbol of evil and chaos. The highly figurative language may express the power of God over creation in a wide variety of ways. Here the sea and **storm** are merely creatures under the control of the Creator.

26:14 This is one of the most stunning of all the verses in the Bible that describe the **power** of God. Job asserts that if we truly considered God's great power, we would know that what we observe of creation represents **the mere edges** of His garment—just His **whisper**. What would happen to us if ever He were to **thunder**?

27:1 **Moreover Job continued his discourse:** The different editorial formula for introducing the speaker (as in 29:1) suggests something unusual. Perhaps Job had paused briefly to wait for Zophar before he continued speaking.

27:2 **As God lives:** These words reflect part of an oath formula

- 3 As long as my breath *is* in me,
And the breath of God in my
nostrils,
- 4 My lips will not speak wickedness,
Nor my tongue utter deceit.
- 5 Far be it from me
That I should say you are right;
Till I die ^bI will not put away my
integrity from me.
- 6 My righteousness I ^chold fast, and
will not let it go;
^dMy heart shall not ¹reproach *me* as
long as I live.
- 7 “May my enemy be like the wicked,
And he who rises up against me like
the unrighteous.
- 8 ^eFor what is the hope of the hypocrite,
Though he may gain *much*,
If God takes away his life?
- 9 ^fWill God hear his cry
When trouble comes upon him?
- 10 ^gWill he delight himself in the
Almighty?
Will he always call on God?
- 11 “I will teach you ²about the hand of
God;
What *is* with the Almighty I will not
conceal.
- 12 Surely all of you have seen *it*;
Why then do you behave with
complete nonsense?
- 13 “This ^his the portion of a wicked man
with God,
And the heritage of oppressors,
received from the Almighty:
- 14 ⁱIf his children are multiplied, *it is* for
the sword;
And his offspring shall not be
satisfied with bread.

5 ^b Job 2:9; 13:15
6 ^c Job 2:3; 33:9
^d Acts 24:16
¹ *reprove*
8 ^e Matt. 16:26;
Luke 12:20
9 ^f Job 35:12, 13; Ps.
18:41; Prov. 1:28;
28:9; [Is. 1:15]; Jer.
14:12; Ezek. 8:18;
[Mic. 3:4; John 9:31;
James 4:3]
10 ^g Job 22:26, 27;
[Ps. 37:4; Is. 58:14]
11 ² Or by
13 ^h Job 20:29
14 ⁱ Deut. 28:41;
Esth. 9:10; Hos. 9:13

15 / Ps. 78:64
³ Lit. *his*
17 ^k Prov. 28:8;
[Eccl. 2:26]
18 / Is. 1:8; Lam.
2:6 ⁴ So with
MT, Vg.; LXX, Syr.
spider (cf. 8:14); Tg.
decay ⁵ Temporary
shelter
19 ^m Job 7:8, 21;
20:7 ⁶ So with MT,
Tg.; LXX, Syr. *But*
shall not add (i.e.,
do it again); Vg. *But*
take away nothing
20 ⁿ Job 18:11
22 ^o Jer. 13:14; Ezek.
5:11; 24:14 ⁷ Lit.
hand

CHAPTER 28

2 ¹ Lit. *dust*

- 15 Those who survive him shall be
buried in death,
And ^jtheir ³widows shall not weep,
- 16 Though he heaps up silver like
dust,
And piles up clothing like clay—
- 17 He may pile *it* up, but ^kthe just will
wear *it*,
And the innocent will divide the
silver.
- 18 He builds his house like a ⁴moth,
^lLike a ⁵booth *which* a watchman
makes.
- 19 The rich man will lie down,
⁶But not be gathered *up*;
He opens his eyes,
And he *is* ^mno more.
- 20 ⁿTerrors overtake him like a flood;
A tempest steals him away in the
night.
- 21 The east wind carries him away, and
he is gone;
It sweeps him out of his place.
- 22 It hurls against him and does not
^ospare;
He flees desperately from its ⁷power.
- 23 *Men* shall clap their hands at him,
And shall hiss him out of his place.

Job's Discourse on Wisdom

- 28 “Surely there is a mine for silver,
And a place *where* gold is refined.
- 2 Iron is taken from the ¹earth,
And copper *is* smelted *from* ore.
- 3 *Man* puts an end to darkness,
And searches every recess
For ore in the darkness and the
shadow of death.
- 4 He breaks open a shaft away from
people;
In places forgotten by feet

used in ancient courts. Job paradoxically combines these words with two accusations against God. According to Job, the living God is the very one who has denied him **justice**—his legal right to due process. Job swears in the name of the divine Judge who, as his opponent, has perverted justice in His own favor. He alleges that God has **made** him **bitter**. Job's responses only exposed the attitude that lay deep within his being. The message of the Lord for Job was that no matter what the circumstances, one should resolutely trust in God (see 40:8; 42:1–6).

27:4, 5 Job denies that he would use the tactics of his so-called friends (see 13:7). He not only refuses to **speak wickedness**, he will not lie nor attempt to defend himself. **you**: This Hebrew plural (also in vv. 11, 12) refers to all of Job's three friends. Job maintains that they are erroneous in their reasoning, and to agree with them would be to compromise his integrity.

27:5, 6 Job's determination to **hold fast** his **righteousness and integrity** was remarkable. The Hebrew word translated *hold fast* also occurs in 2:9. Though Job believed that God had taken away a fair trial (v. 2), he would not **put away** his integrity. He persevered despite the discouraging words of his wife and friends.

27:7–12 In this imprecatory prayer, Job wishes that his **enemy** would receive the fate reserved for the **wicked**. Since he turns the words of his friends back against them, he may be alluding to

his friends collectively as an enemy who **rises up against** him and deserves the fate of the wicked.

27:10, 11 Job returns Eliphaz's own advice back to him (in 22:22–27). Whereas Eliphaz counseled Job to turn to the Almighty for instruction and to delight in Him, Job denies that a godless person would turn to God, much less **delight himself in the Almighty**. Therefore, Job insists that Eliphaz and his friends should turn to the Almighty and receive instruction.

27:13–23 Since these verses sound more like the friends' words than Job's, some scholars assign them to Zophar or Bildad. However, since Job had a fondness for turning the words of his friends back in their faces, these verses may be a satirical paraphrase of the friends' teaching about the fate of the wicked (see 24:18–25). **27:17** Job's prediction that the **innocent will divide the silver** may foreshadow what happens to Job himself in 42:11.

28:1–28 This is a magnificent wisdom hymn that is naturally divided into three stanzas by the refrain of vv. 12, 20, with v. 28 serving as a conclusion. Only God knows true wisdom, the wisdom He has placed in the fabric of creation (vv. 21–27) and has revealed to humanity (v. 28).

28:2–4 The mention of **iron** being mined **from the earth** implies a time after the beginning of the Iron Age (around 1200 B.C.) for the writing of the Book of Job.



Glass

Because it was so rare, glass was a form of wealth. Before craftsmen developed the art of glass blowing, they molded the glass around an inner core while the glass was in a sticky, plastic form. When the glass cooled and hardened, they took away the core and the glass object was ready for use. Archaeologists have discovered a glass factory that operated at El-Amarna in Egypt about 1400 B.C.; it produced small glass bottles that were exported to Palestine. The Egyptians also sent these bottles to Haran, Cyprus, and the Aegean Islands. The Egyptians were good at making glass pots, bottles, and other vessels, and coloring them to look like the original containers. The Phoenicians began making blown glass about 100 B.C. They could produce blown glass much more rapidly than molded glass, so this lowered the cost of glass objects and made them more common. Romans used these glass vessels nearly as much as pottery.



Ointment bottles from Acco, first to third centuries A.D.
Kim Walton, courtesy of the Eretz Israel Museum

They hang far away from men;
They swing to and fro.
5 As *for* the earth, from it comes bread,
But underneath it is turned up as by
fire;
6 Its stones *are* the source of sapphires,
And it contains gold dust.
7 *That* path no bird knows,
Nor has the falcon's eye seen it.
8 The ²proud lions have not trodden it,
Nor has the fierce lion passed over it.
9 He puts his hand on the flint;
He overturns the mountains ³at the
roots.
10 He cuts out channels in the rocks,
And his eye sees every precious thing.
11 He dams up the streams from
trickling;
What is hidden he brings forth to
light.
12 "But^a where can wisdom be found?
And where *is* the place of
understanding?
13 Man does not know its ^bvalue,
Nor is it found in the land of the
living.
14 ^cThe deep says, '*It is not in me*';
And the sea says, '*It is not with me*'.
15 It ^dcannot be purchased for gold,
Nor can silver be weighed *for* its price.

8 ² Lit. *sons of pride*,
figurative of the
great lions
9 ³ At the base
12 ^a Eccl. 7:24
13 ^b Prov. 3:15
14 ^c Job 28:22
15 ^d Prov. 3:13-15;
8:10, 11, 19

17 ^e Prov. 8:10;
16:16 ⁴ vessels
18 ^f Prov. 3:15; 8:11
⁵ Heb. *ramoth*
19 ^g Prov. 8:19
20 ^h Job 28:12; [Ps.
111:10; Prov. 1:7;
9:10]
21 ⁱ *heaven*
22 ^j Job 28:14
⁷ Heb. *Abaddon*
24 / [Ps. 11:4; 33:13,
14; 66:7; Prov. 15:3]

16 It cannot be valued in the gold of
Ophir,
In precious onyx or sapphire.
17 Neither ^egold nor crystal can equal
it,
Nor can it be exchanged for ⁴jewelry
of fine gold.
18 No mention shall be made of ⁵coral
or quartz,
For the price of wisdom *is* above
^frubies.
19 The topaz of Ethiopia cannot
equal it,
Nor can it be valued in pure ^ggold.
20 "From ^hwhere then does wisdom
come?
And where *is* the place of
understanding?
21 It is hidden from the eyes of all
living,
And concealed from the birds of the
⁶air.
22 ⁱDestruction ⁷and Death say,
'We have heard a report about it with
our ears.'
23 God understands its way,
And He knows its place.
24 For He looks to the ends of the
earth,
And ^jsees under the whole heavens,

28:6 The term translated **sapphires** probably means lapis lazuli.
28:7, 8 The **bird**, the **falcon**, and the **lions** represent all animals
of every kind. No animal is familiar with the treasures hidden in the
earth that human beings can discover (see vv. 2–11).
28:11 The **streams from trickling** may be rephrased "the sources
of the rivers."
28:12 The word **wisdom** (see also v. 20) may emphasize the true
wisdom that only the Lord knows (see vv. 23–27) and that people
may learn in relationship with Him (see v. 28).
28:13–19 Every verse in this whole stanza has the Hebrew word

for **not** at least once, stressing the absence of wisdom and even
the desire for wisdom. Thus the rhetorical questions concerning
the whereabouts of wisdom and understanding (v. 12) receive an
emphatic answer: **not** anywhere in **the land of the living** or of
the dead (see v. 14 and its parallel in vv. 21, 22).
28:23 Only **God understands** the **way** of wisdom and **knows**
the **place** of understanding. Though people surpass the animals
in knowing the place of precious metals (v. 1), and the "source" of
gems (v. 6), God alone is the master and source of wisdom (see
vv. 27, 28).

- 25 ^kTo establish a weight for the wind,
And apportion the waters by
measure.
- 26 When He ^lmade a law for the
rain,
And a path for the thunderbolt,
- 27 Then He saw ⁸wisdom and declared
it;
He prepared it, indeed, He searched
it out.
- 28 And to man He said,
'Behold, ^mthe fear of the Lord, that is
wisdom,
And to depart from evil is
understanding.'

Job's Summary Defense

29 Job further continued his dis-
course, and said:

- 2 "Oh, that I were as *in* months ^apast,
As *in* the days *when* God ^bwatched
over me;
- 3 ^cWhen His lamp shone upon my
head,
And *when* by His light I walked
through darkness;
- 4 Just as I was in the days of my
prime,
When ^dthe friendly counsel of God
was over my tent;
- 5 When the Almighty *was* yet with me,
When my children *were* around me;
- 6 When ^emy steps were bathed with
¹cream,
And ^fthe rock poured out rivers of
oil for me!
- 7 "When I went out to the gate by the
city,
When I took my seat in the open
square,
- 8 The young men saw me and hid,
And the aged arose *and* stood;
- 9 The princes refrained from talking,
And ^gput *their* hand on their mouth;
- 10 The voice of nobles was hushed,
And their ^htongue stuck to the roof
of their mouth.

25 ^k Ps. 135:7
26 ^l Job 37:3; 38:25
27 ⁸ Lit. *it*
28 ^m [Deut. 4:6; Ps.
111:10; Prov. 1:7;
9:10; Eccl. 12:13]

CHAPTER 29

2 ^a Job 1:1-5 ^b Job
1:10
3 ^c Job 18:6
4 ^d Job 15:8; [Ps.
25:14; Prov. 3:32]
6 ^e Gen. 49:11;
Deut. 32:14; Job
20:17 ^f Deut. 32:13;
Ps. 81:16 ¹ So with
ancient vss. and
a few Heb. mss.
(cf. Job 20:17); MT
wrath
9 ^g Job 21:5
10 ^h Ps. 137:6

- 11 When the ear heard, then it
blessed me,
And when the eye saw, then it
approved me;
- 12 Because ⁱI delivered the poor who
cried out,
The fatherless and *the one who* had
no helper.
- 13 The blessing of a perishing *man*
came upon me,
And I caused the widow's heart to
sing for joy.
- 14 ^jI put on righteousness, and it
clothed me;
My justice *was* like a robe and a
turban.
- 15 I *was* ^keyes to the blind,
And I *was* feet to the lame.
- 16 I *was* a father to the poor,
And ^lI searched out the case *that* I
did not know.
- 17 I broke ^mthe fangs of the wicked,
And plucked the victim from his
teeth.
- 18 "Then I said, ⁿ"I shall die in my
nest,
And multiply *my* days as the sand.
- 19 ^oMy root *is* spread out ^pto the
waters,
And the dew lies all night on my
branch.
- 20 My glory *is* fresh within me,
And my ^qbow is renewed in my
hand.'
- 21 "Men listened to me and waited,
And kept silence for my counsel.
- 22 After my words they did not speak
again,
And my speech settled on them *as*
dew.
- 23 They waited for me *as* for the rain,
And they opened their mouth wide
as for ^rthe spring rain.
- 24 If I mocked at them, they did not
believe *it*,
And the light of my countenance
they did not cast down.

12 ¹ Job 31:16-23;
[Ps. 72:12; Prov.
21:13; 24:11]
14 ^j Deut. 24:13; Job
27:5, 6; Ps. 132:9; [Is.
59:17; 61:10; Eph.
6:14]
15 ^k Num. 10:31
16 ^l Prov. 29:7
17 ^m Ps. 58:6; Prov.
30:14
18 ⁿ Ps. 30:6
19 ^o Job 18:16 ^p Ps.
1:3; [Jer. 17:7, 8]
20 ^q Gen. 49:24; Ps.
18:34
23 ^r [Zech. 10:1]

28:28 This verse vindicates Job's stance and marks a transition from the dialogue to the discourses. The words **He said** may introduce a reference to the Book of Proverbs (see Prov. 3:7; 9:10).

29:2 Job's wish for the prosperity of **months past** suggests how long it was since his suffering began (see 7:3).

29:3 The picture of God's **lamp** shining on Job's **head** symbolizes divine blessing and success (contrast 18:5, 6; 21:17; see also Ps. 18:28, 29).

29:7 The **gate of the city** with its nearby **open square**, similar to the modern courthouse square, was a place where town business and court proceedings were held (see Ruth 4:1).

29:8-11 **saw me and hid**: Job describes the respect he had received from young and old alike because of his position in the city.

29:14 The vivid portrait of Job being **clothed in righteousness**

and wearing **justice** like a judicial **robe** is a stark contrast to his present condition, with his flesh being "clothed" with worms and dust (see 7:5). He will emphasize this in ch. 30.

29:17 **broke the fangs**: Job had rescued the poor (see v. 12) and the helpless from the wicked. Functioning much like a judge, Job had established justice and righteousness (see v. 14). This explains his frequent use of legal metaphors in his speeches (see 9:3).

29:20 Job reminisces about his past days of **glory**. While undergoing severe trials, he did what many of us do: He longed for "the good old days" when he still had prowess or "glory" with the bow. The phrase **bow is renewed** apparently symbolizes a rejuvenation of vigor and might (see Gen. 49:24). Bows were usually unstrung when not in use, allowing the wood to retain its strength.

25 I chose the way for them, and sat as chief;
So I dwelt as a king in the army,
As one *who* comforts mourners.

30 “But now they mock at me, *men*
1 younger than I,
Whose fathers I disdained to put
with the dogs of my flock.
2 Indeed, what *profit* is the strength of
their hands to me?
Their vigor has perished.
3 *They are* gaunt from want and
famine,
Fleeing late to the wilderness,
desolate and waste,
4 Who pluck 2 mallow by the bushes,
And broom tree roots for their food.
5 They were driven out from among
men,
They shouted at them as *at* a thief.
6 *They had* to live in the clefts of the
3 valleys,
In 4 caves of the earth and the rocks.
7 Among the bushes they brayed,
Under the nettles they nestled.
8 *They were* sons of fools,
Yes, sons of vile men;
They were scourged from the land.
9 “And *a* now I am their taunting song;
Yes, I am their byword.
10 They abhor me, they keep far
from me;
They do not hesitate *b* to spit in my
face.
11 Because *c* He has loosed 5 my
bowstring and afflicted me,
They have cast off restraint
before me.

CHAPTER 30

1 ¹ Lit. of fewer days
4 ² A plant of the
salty marshes
6 ³ *wadis* 4 Lit. holes
9 ^a Job 17:6; Ps.
69:12; Lam. 3:14, 63
10 ^b Num. 12:14;
Deut. 25:9; Job
17:6; Is. 50:6; Matt.
26:67; 27:30
11 ^c Job 12:18 ^d So
with MT, Syr., Tg.;
LXX, Vg. *His*

12 ^d Job 19:12
16 ^e Ps. 42:4 ^f Ps.
22:14; Is. 53:12
20 ^g Job 19:7
21 ^h Job 10:3; 16:9,
14; 19:6, 22

12 At *my* right *hand* the rabble arises;
They push away my feet,
And *d* they raise against me their
ways of destruction.
13 They break up my path,
They promote my calamity;
They have no helper.
14 They come as broad breakers;
Under the ruinous storm they roll
along.
15 Terrors are turned upon me;
They pursue my honor as the
wind,
And my prosperity has passed like a
cloud.
16 “And *e* now my soul is *f* poured out
because of my *plight*;
The days of affliction take hold
of me.
17 My bones are pierced in me at night,
And my gnawing pains take no
rest.
18 By great force my garment is
disfigured;
It binds me about as the collar of my
coat.
19 He has cast me into the mire,
And I have become like dust and
ashes.
20 “I *g* cry out to You, but You do not
answer me;
I stand up, and You regard me.
21 But You have become cruel to me;
With the strength of Your hand You
h oppose me.
22 You lift me up to the wind and cause
me to ride *on it*;
You spoil my success.

30:1 But now introduces Job’s lament (ch. 30) about the complete reversal of his former prosperity (ch. 29). Rather than everyone respecting him (see 29:8–11, 21–25), even young ruffians were daring to mock him (see 29:24). These young people were so base that Job had **disdained to put** their **fathers**, who were presumably

better than they, with his **dogs**. His words not only stress how low they are but also how humiliated he feels as an outcast among outcasts (see vv. 9–11).

30:7 **brayed**: Job’s use of this verb emphasizes not only that the ruffians are poor (see 24:5, where the poor are called “wild donkeys”), but also that they act more like animals than human beings.

30:11 When Job says God **loosed** his **bowstring**, he apparently expresses a meaning opposite to that in 29:20. Here the words mean that God had put him “on the shelf,” as a bow is set aside when it is unstrung.

30:16, 17 When Job says that his **soul is poured out** like water, he means being emotionally and physically drained of strength (see Lam. 2:11, 12) because of his **days of affliction** (see vv. 1–31). These words are much like those of David, as found in Ps. 22:14, 15.

30:18, 19 Job compares the terrible effects of his suffering and disease (see vv. 16, 17) to being choked by a powerful **force**. Then he identifies God as the One who abuses His great power by harming Job for no apparent reason (see 9:19; 24:22). To the suffering Job, God seems like a gangster who grabs a person by the neck and flings him into the **mire**. He blames the Lord for throwing him in the **ashes** (see 2:8), even though Satan was in fact the cause of his suffering (see 2:4–6).

30:21 Ironically, Job blames God’s strong **hand**, which Satan could not move, for calamities that have actually been caused by the hand of Satan (see 1:11, 12, 18, 19).

affliction

(Heb. *’oni*) (30:16; Gen. 29:32; Ex. 3:17; Neh. 9:9; Lam. 1:9) Strong’s #6040

The Hebrew word translated *affliction* here comes from a root meaning “misery” or “poverty.” The image evoked by this word is that of a person bowed down under the weight of a heavy burden. Scripture portrays the Lord as seeing the afflictions that bring pain to His people and hearing the anguished cries of those in distress (as in Gen. 16:11; Ex. 2:23–25). The Lord urges us to place our burdens on Him, for He is strong enough to bear them and loves us so much that He will assist us in our time of need (1 Pet. 5:7). Moreover, since He controls all events, we can be assured that He is accomplishing good out of the temporary difficulties we are now facing (Rom. 8:28). The entire story of Job provides vivid example of this fact (42:10–17; 2 Cor. 12:7–10).

- 23 For I know *that* You will bring me to death,
And to the house ⁱappointed for all living.
- 24^a Surely He would not stretch out *His* hand against a heap of ruins,
If they cry out when He destroys *it*.
- 25 ^jHave I not wept for him who was in trouble?
Has *not* my soul grieved for the poor?
- 26 ^kBut when I looked for good, evil came to *me*;
And when I waited for light, then came darkness.
- 27 ^lMy heart is in turmoil and cannot rest;
Days of affliction confront me.
- 28 ^mI go about mourning, but not in the sun;
I stand up in the assembly *and* cry out for help.
- 29ⁿ I am a brother of jackals,
And a companion of ostriches.
- 30ⁿ My skin grows black and falls from me;
^oMy bones burn with fever.
- 31 My harp is *turned* to mourning,
And my flute to the voice of those who weep.

- 31** “I have made a covenant with my eyes;
Why then should I ¹look upon a ^ayoung woman?
- 2 For what *is* the ^ballotment of God from above,
And the inheritance of the Almighty from on high?
- 3 Is it not destruction for the wicked,
And disaster for the workers of iniquity?
- 4 ^cDoes He not see my ways,
And count all my steps?

23 ⁱ [Heb. 9:27]
25 ^j Ps. 35:13, 14; Rom. 12:15
26 ^k Job 3:25, 26; Jer. 8:15
27 ^l *I see the inside*
28 ^m Job 30:31; Ps. 38:6; 42:9; 43:2
29 ⁿ Ps. 44:19; 102:6; Mic. 1:8
30 ⁿ Ps. 119:83; Lam. 4:8; 5:10 ^o Ps. 102:3

CHAPTER 31

1 ^a [Matt. 5:28]
¹ look intently or gaze
2 ^b Job 20:29
4 ^c [2 Chr. 16:9]; Job 24:23; 28:24; 34:21; 36:7; [Prov. 5:21; 15:3; Jer. 32:19]

6 ^d Job 23:10; 27:5,
6 ^e Lit. Let Him weigh me
7 ^f Num. 15:39; [Ezek. 11:9]; Ezek. 6:9; [Matt. 5:29]
8 ^g [Lev. 26:16; Deut. 28:30, 38; Job 20:18; Mic. 6:15]
³ uprooted
10 ^h Deut. 28:30; 2 Sam. 12:11; Jer. 8:10
11 ⁱ Gen. 38:24; [Lev. 20:10; Deut. 22:22]; Job 31:28
13 ^j [Deut. 24:14, 15]
14 ^k [Ps. 44:21]
15 ^k Job 34:19; Prov. 14:31; 22:2; [Mal. 2:10]
16 ^l Job 29:12

- 5 “If I have walked with falsehood,
Or if my foot has hastened to deceit,
- 6 ² Let me be weighed on honest scales,
That God may know my ^dintegrity.
- 7 If my step has turned from the way,
Or ^emy heart walked after my eyes,
Or if any spot adheres to my hands,
- 8 *Then* ^flet me sow, and another eat;
Yes, let my harvest be ³rooted out.
- 9 “If my heart has been enticed by a woman,
Or *if* I have lurked at my neighbor’s door,
- 10 *Then* let my wife grind for ^ganother,
And let others bow down over her.
- 11 For that *would be* wickedness;
Yes, ^hit *would be* iniquity *deserving of* judgment.
- 12 For that *would be* a fire *that* consumes to destruction,
And would root out all my increase.
- 13^a If I have ⁱdespised the cause of my male or female servant
When they complained against me,
- 14 What then shall I do when ^jGod rises up?
When He punishes, how shall I answer Him?
- 15 ^kDid not He who made me in the womb make them?
Did not the same One fashion us in the womb?
- 16^a If I have kept the poor from *their* desire,
Or caused the eyes of the widow to ^lfail,
- 17 Or eaten my morsel by myself,
So that the fatherless could not eat of it

30:23 I know: Job declares his frustration with God almost as directly as he had expressed his confidence in the Redeemer (19:25). Just as surely as he knows that God will vindicate him, he also knows that God will **bring him to death**.

30:25 Job builds on the image of the helpless (v. 24) by remembering his own compassion for the **poor**. Now that he is downcast, why does God not sympathize with him?

30:28, 29 In light of the nearby reference to Job’s dark, diseased skin (see v. 30), the word **mourning** might mean “darkened,” as in 6:16. When Job cries **out for help**, both God (see v. 20) and people of all social classes ignore him. His loud cries for justice are as futile as the wails of **jackals** and **ostriches**. Because of his diseased condition (see v. 30), Job feels ostracized, like these animal inhabitants of desolate places.

31:1–40 Job’s oath of innocence (see 29:1—31:40) contains curses that he invites God to impose if He is to find Job guilty (see vv. 8, 10, 22, 40). Thus ch. 31 corresponds structurally to Job’s curse against his day of birth in ch. 3. It bears a general similarity to the oath of clearance, widely used in ancient Mesopotamia. In this oath, an accused person would swear his innocence at a trial. However, the ethical content of Job’s confession, with its emphasis on inward

motivation (see vv. 1, 2, 24, 25, 33, 34) and attitude (see vv. 1, 7, 9, 26, 27, 29, 30), is unique and unparalleled until Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount (see Matt. 5–7). Yet in this oath, a hint of pride creeps in (see vv. 13, 16, 37), setting the stage for the speeches of Elihu and the Lord.

31:1 This verse begins Job’s oath of innocence (ch. 31). When Job made a **covenant with his eyes**, he wisely recognized that the eye is the main avenue for temptation (see vv. 7, 9, 26, 27).

31:5 The word **if** was part of a formula used by accused persons to swear their innocence (see vv. 7, 9, 13, 16, 19–21, 24–26, 29, 33, 38, 39). The full oath formula was, in effect, “If I am guilty of this crime, may God impose that curse.” Because of hesitation about speaking a curse, the person swearing the oath would normally use an abbreviated version. By contrast, Job’s daring use of the full formula four times (see vv. 7–10, 21, 22, 38–40) demonstrates his confidence that he would be acquitted.

31:13 Job implies that he had been fairer in listening to the lawsuit or **cause** (see Mic. 6:1) of his own servants than God was being with his complaint.

31:16 Job claims to have satisfied the **desire** of the **poor**, possibly in contrast to God’s refusal to give Job a fair hearing before Him.

- 18 (But from my youth I reared him as a father,
And from my mother's womb I guided ⁴the widow);
- 19 If I have seen anyone perish for lack of clothing,
Or any poor *man* without covering;
- 20 If his ⁵heart has not ^mblessed me,
And *if* he was *not* warmed with the fleece of my sheep;
- 21 If I have raised my hand ⁿagainst the fatherless,
When I saw I had help in the gate;
22 *Then* let my arm fall from my shoulder,
Let my arm be torn from the socket.
- 23 For ^odestruction *from* God is a terror to me,
And because of His magnificence I cannot endure.
- 24 "If ^pI have made gold my hope,
Or said to fine gold, '*You are my confidence*';
- 25 ^qIf I have rejoiced because my wealth *was* great,
And because my hand had gained much;
- 26 ^rIf I have observed the ⁶sun when it shines,
Or the moon moving *in* brightness,
- 27 So that my heart has been secretly enticed,
And my mouth has kissed my hand;
- 28 This also *would be* an iniquity *deserving of* judgment,
For I would have denied God *who is* above.
- 29 "If ^sI have rejoiced at the destruction of him who hated me,
Or lifted myself up when evil found him
- 30 ^t(Indeed I have not allowed my mouth to sin
By asking for a curse on his ⁷soul);

18 ⁴ Lit. *her*
20 ^m [Deut. 24:13]
⁵ Lit. *joins*
21 ⁿ Job 22:9
23 ^o Is. 13:6
24 ^p [Matt. 6:19, 20; Mark 10:23-25]
25 ^q Job 1:3, 10; Ps. 62:10
26 ^r [Deut. 4:19; 17:3]; Ezek. 8:16
⁶ Lit. *light*
29 ^s [Prov. 17:5; 24:17]; Obad. 12
30 ^t [Matt. 5:44]
⁷ Or *life*

32 ^u Gen. 19:2, 3
⁸ So with LXX, Syr., Tg., Vg.; MT *road*
33 ^v Gen. 3:10; [Prov. 28:13] ⁹ Or *as men do*
34 ^w Ex. 23:2
35 ^x Job 19:7; 30:20, 24, 28 ^y Job 13:22, 24; 33:10 ¹ Lit. *Accuser*
39 ^z Job 24:6, 10-12; [James 5:4] ^a 1 Kin. 21:19 ² Lit. *strength*
40 ^b Gen. 3:18

CHAPTER 32

1 ^a Job 6:29; 31:6; 33:9
2 ^b Gen. 22:21

- 31 If the men of my tent have not said,
'Who is there that has not been satisfied with his meat?'
- 32 ^u(*But* no sojourner had to lodge in the street,
For I have opened my doors to the ⁸traveler);
- 33 If I have covered my transgressions ^vas ⁹Adam,
By hiding my iniquity in my bosom,
- 34 Because I feared the great ^wmultitude,
And dreaded the contempt of families,
So that I kept silence
And did not go out of the door—
- 35 ^xOh, that I had one to hear me!
Here is my mark.
Oh, ^ythat the Almighty would answer me,
That my ¹Prosecutor had written a book!
- 36 Surely I would carry it on my shoulder,
And bind it on me *like* a crown;
- 37 I would declare to Him the number of my steps;
Like a prince I would approach Him.
- 38 "If my land cries out against me,
And its furrows weep together;
- 39 If ^zI have eaten its ²fruit without money,
Or ^acaused its owners to lose their lives;
- 40 *Then* let ^bthistles grow instead of wheat,
And weeds instead of barley."

The words of Job are ended.

Elihu Contradicts Job's Friends

32 So these three men ceased answering Job, because he *was* ^arighteous in his own eyes. ²Then the wrath of Elihu, the son of Barachel the ^bBuzite, of

31:22 The loss of an **arm** in ancient society usually meant the loss of income, respect, and even life itself.

31:27 The phrase **my mouth has kissed my hand** reflects the apparent ancient custom of kissing the hand as a prelude to the superstitious and idolatrous act of throwing a kiss to the heavenly bodies.

31:28 **God who is above:** Job was resolute in his belief in the one, living God. Though he lived in a world filled with notions of many gods, Job believed in one God. This text expresses the monotheism of early biblical faith, in contrast to the prevailing polytheism of that time.

31:35 Job's wish for **one to hear** him seems to express his continued desire for an impartial mediator or judge (see 9:32, 33; 16:19; 19:25). Job's **mark** refers to his written signature attached to his oath of innocence (ch. 31). He seeks a subpoena to compel God the **Prosecutor** to **answer** him with specific charges, or perhaps an acquittal in a **book**, that is, a legal document. Hence, Job is arguing that God has not been following proper court procedure (13:22).

31:36 Job believed that the written charges would be so few, if any, that he could wear the document proudly on his **shoulder**.

31:37 Job **would declare to God the number of his steps** or give account for his every act and thought (see 14:16; 31:4). His idea of approaching God **like a prince** shows his confidence that he will be vindicated but reflects a lack of humility, an attitude that the Lord Himself will address (see 38:2, 3; 40:9-14).

31:40 **the words of Job are ended:** For the second time, the dialogue comes to a close (see 27:23), ending in a stalemate. Job has finished his words, and his three friends have nothing more to say. This leads to the voice of a new speaker, Elihu.

32:1 The phrase **these three men** seems to stress the distant relationship between Job and his so-called friends. A gulf existed partly because the trio had been accusing Job of self-righteousness.

32:2 **Elihu** was of the tribe of Buz and of the **family of Ram**, perhaps an ancestor of King David (see Ruth 4:19). His name means "He Is My God." Elihu was angry about what both Job and his friends

the family of Ram, was aroused against Job; his wrath was aroused because he ^cjustified himself rather than God. ³ Also against his three friends his wrath was aroused, because they had found no answer, and *yet* had condemned Job.

⁴ Now because they *were* years older than he, Elihu had waited ¹ to speak to Job. ⁵ When Elihu saw that *there* was no answer in the mouth of these three men, his wrath was aroused.

⁶ So Elihu, the son of Barachel the Buzite, answered and said:

“I *am* ^d young in years, and you *are* very old;

Therefore I was afraid,
And dared not declare my opinion to you.

⁷ I said, ² ‘Age should speak,
And multitude of years should teach wisdom.’

⁸ But *there is* a spirit in man,
And ^e the breath of the Almighty gives him understanding.

⁹ ^f Great ³ men are not *always* wise,
Nor do the aged *always* understand justice.

¹⁰ “Therefore I say, ‘Listen to me,
I also will declare my opinion.’

¹¹ Indeed I waited for your words,
I listened to your reasonings,
while you searched out what to say.

¹² I paid close attention to you;
And surely not one of you convinced Job,
Or answered his words—

¹³ ^g Lest you say,
‘We have found wisdom’;
God will vanquish him, not man.

¹⁴ Now he has not ⁴ directed *his* words against me;
So I will not answer him with your words.

¹⁵ “They are dismayed and answer no more;
Words escape them.

2 ^c Job 27:5, 6
4 ¹ Vg. *till Job had spoken*
6 ^d Lev. 19:32
7 ² Lit. *Days, i.e., years*
8 ^e 1 Kin. 3:12; 4:29; [Job 35:11; 38:36; Prov. 2:6; Eccl. 2:26; Dan. 1:17; 2:21; Matt. 11:25; James 1:5]
9 ^f [1 Cor. 1:26] ³ Or *Men of many years*
13 ^g [Jer. 9:23; 1 Cor. 1:29]
14 ⁴ *ordered*

19 ⁵ *bosom*
⁶ *opening*
22 ^h Job 27:8

CHAPTER 33

4 ^a [Gen. 2:7]; Job 32:8
6 ^b Job 4:19 ¹ Lit. *as your mouth*
7 ^c Job 9:34
8 ² Lit. *in my ears*
9 ^d Job 10:7
10 ^e Job 13:24; 16:9

¹⁶ And I have waited, because they did not speak,
Because they stood still *and* answered no more.

¹⁷ I also will answer my part,
I too will declare my opinion.

¹⁸ For I am full of words;
The spirit within me compels me.

¹⁹ Indeed my ⁵ belly *is* like wine *that* has no ⁶ vent;
It is ready to burst like new wineskins.

²⁰ I will speak, that I may find relief;
I must open my lips and answer.

²¹ Let me not, I pray, show partiality to anyone;
Nor let me flatter any man.

²² For I do not know how to flatter,
Else my Maker would soon take me ^h away.

Elihu Contradicts Job

33 “But please, Job, hear my speech,
And listen to all my words.

² Now, I open my mouth;
My tongue speaks in my mouth.

³ My words *come* from my upright heart;
My lips utter pure knowledge.

⁴ ^a The Spirit of God has made me,
And the breath of the Almighty gives me life.

⁵ If you can answer me,
Set *your words* in order before me;
Take your stand.

⁶ ^b Truly I *am* ¹ as your spokesman before God;
I also have been formed out of clay.
⁷ ^c Surely no fear of me will terrify you,
Nor will my hand be heavy on you.

⁸ “Surely you have spoken ² in my hearing,
And I have heard the sound of *your* words, *saying*,

⁹ ‘I *am* pure, without transgression;
I *am* innocent, and *there is* no iniquity in me.

¹⁰ Yet He finds occasions against me,
^e He counts me as His enemy;

had been saying. Like the other friends, Elihu thought that Job had only **justified himself**.

32:4, 5 The editorial introduction (vv. 1–5) emphasizes the **wrath** of the young man against Job (v. 2) and against his three friends (vv. 3, 5). The word *wrath* is found four times in these verses.

32:6–22 I am young: Elihu introduces himself and his four speeches as he explains why he has waited to speak but feels compelled to speak out at the present time.

32:21, 22 As a reassurance to Job concerning his complaint that the friends are partial to God (see 13:7–10), Elihu promises not to **show partiality** in his voluntary role as an arbiter (see vv. 12–14).

33:7 Elihu responds to Job’s **fear** of God (see 9:34; 13:21). Elihu re-

assures Job that he has nothing to *dread* since his **hand** will not **be heavy** on him.

33:9–13 In vv. 9–11, Elihu summarizes Job’s position as he perceives it. Then he confronts Job by saying that Job is **not righteous** in attacking God. With great perception, Elihu cuts straight to the heart of Job’s problem. Job has been treating God as though he were God’s equal. Since **God is greater than man**, Elihu asks: **Why do you contend** or “file a lawsuit” against God? Job had been treating God as though He were merely a human who could be held accountable in court (see 34:23). Elihu continues this thought when he implies that Job has become proud—even while he sits dejected in the ashes (see v. 17; 35:12–16).

- ¹¹ *f*He puts my feet in the stocks,
He watches all my paths.’
- ¹²“Look, *in* this you are not righteous.
I will answer you,
For God is greater than man.
- ¹³ Why do you *g*contend with Him?
For He does not give an accounting
of any of His words.
- ¹⁴ *h*For God may speak in one way, or in
another,
Yet *man* does not perceive it.
- ¹⁵ *i*In a dream, in a vision of the night,
When deep sleep falls upon men,
While slumbering on their beds,
- ¹⁶ *j*Then He opens the ears of men,
And seals their instruction.
- ¹⁷ In order to turn man *from his* deed,
And conceal pride from man,
- ¹⁸ He keeps back his soul from the
Pit,
And his life from ³perishing by the
sword.
- ¹⁹“*Man* is also chastened with pain on
his ^kbed,
And with strong *pain* in many of his
bones,
- ²⁰ *l*So that his life abhors ^mbread,
And his soul ⁴succulent food.
- ²¹ His flesh wastes away from sight,
And his bones stick out *which once*
were not seen.
- ²² Yes, his soul draws near the Pit,
And his life to the executioners.
- ²³“If there is a messenger for him,
A mediator, one among a thousand,
To show man His uprightness,
- ²⁴ Then He is gracious to him, and
says,
‘Deliver him from going down to the
Pit;
I have found ⁵a ransom’;
- ²⁵ His flesh shall be young like a
child’s,
He shall return to the days of his
youth.
- ²⁶ He shall pray to God, and He will
delight in him,
He shall see His face with joy,
For He restores to man His
righteousness.

¹¹ *f* Job 13:27; 19:8
¹³ *g* Job 40:2; [Is.
45:9]
¹⁴ *h* Job 33:29; 40:5;
Ps. 62:11
¹⁵ *i* [Num. 12:6]
¹⁶ *j* [Job 36:10, 15]
¹⁸ ³ Lit. *passing*
¹⁹ *k* Job 30:17
²⁰ *l* Ps. 107:18
^m Job 3:24; 6:7
⁴ *desirable*
²⁴ ⁵ *an atonement*

²⁷ *n* [2 Sam. 12:13;
Prov. 28:13; Luke
15:21; 1 John 1:9]
^o [Rom. 6:21]
²⁸ *p* Is. 38:17
⁶ Kt. *my*
³⁰ *q* Ps. 56:13
³³ *r* Ps. 34:11 ⁷ *Keep
silent*

CHAPTER 34

³ *a* Job 6:30; 12:11
⁵ *b* Job 13:18; 33:9
^c Job 27:2
⁶ *d* Job 6:4; 9:17
¹ Lit. *arrow*
⁷ *e* Job 15:16
² *derision*
⁹ *f* Mal. 3:14
¹⁰ *g* [Gen. 18:25;
Deut. 32:4; 2 Chr.
19:7]; Job 8:3; 36:23;
Ps. 92:15; Rom. 9:14
³ *men of heart*

- ²⁷ Then he looks at men and *n*says,
‘I have sinned, and perverted *what*
was right,
And it ^odid not profit me.’
- ²⁸ He will ^predeem ⁶his soul from going
down to the Pit,
And ⁶his life shall see the light.
- ²⁹“Behold, God works all these *things*,
Twice, *in fact*, three *times* with a man,
³⁰ *q*To bring back his soul from the Pit,
That he may be enlightened with the
light of life.
- ³¹“Give ear, Job, listen to me;
Hold your peace, and I will speak.
- ³² If you have anything to say,
answer me;
Speak, for I desire to justify you.
- ³³ If not, ^rlisten to me;
⁷ Hold your peace, and I will teach you
wisdom.”

Elihu Proclaims God's Justice

34 Elihu further answered and said:

- ² “Hear my words, you wise *men*;
Give ear to me, you who have
knowledge.
- ³ *a* For the ear tests words
As the palate tastes food.
- ⁴ Let us choose justice for ourselves;
Let us know among ourselves what
is good.
- ⁵ “For Job has said, *b*‘I am righteous,
But ^cGod has taken away my justice;
- ⁶ *d* Should I lie concerning my right?
My ¹wound *is* incurable, *though I am*
without transgression.’
- ⁷ What man *is* like Job,
^e *Who* drinks ²scorn like water,
- ⁸ Who goes in company with the
workers of iniquity,
And walks with wicked men?
- ⁹ For *f*he has said, ‘It profits a man
nothing
That he should delight in God.’
- ¹⁰“Therefore listen to me, you ³men of
understanding;
^g Far be it from God *to do* wickedness,
And *from* the Almighty *to commit*
iniquity.

33:14, 15 In response to 7:14 where Job complained of nightmares, Elihu suggests that God may have been trying to teach Job something through a **dream** or a **vision of the night**.

33:23 The precise identity of the **messenger** or angel is disputed. God may have employed this figure as a **mediator** to address Job's need for an impartial arbiter (9:32, 33; 16:19) and to contradict Elihu's counsel of 5:1. The intermediary role of this messenger to lead Job to repentance (see v. 27) sounds much like the role that Christ would play (see Heb. 7:25).

33:29, 30 This conclusion to vv. 14–30 succinctly states God's primary purpose in getting a person's attention through dreams and suffering: He wants to keep him from **the Pit**—that is, the grave and hell—and give that person **the light of life**—a meaningful life.

34:2 In vv. 2–15 Elihu addresses **you wise men**, probably a sarcastic reference to the three friends whose wisdom he had belittled in 32:12–16.

- 11 ^h For He repays man *according to* his work,
And makes man to find a reward
according to *his* way.
- 12 Surely God will never do wickedly,
Nor will the Almighty ⁱ pervert justice.
- 13 Who gave Him charge over the earth?
Or who appointed *Him* over the whole world?
- 14 If He should set His heart on it,
If He should ^j gather to Himself His Spirit and His breath,
- 15 ^k All flesh would perish together,
And man would return to dust.
- 16 “If *you have* understanding, hear this;
Listen to the sound of my words:
- 17 ^l Should one who hates justice govern?
Will you ^m condemn *Him who is* most just?
- 18 ⁿ Is it *fitting* to say to a king, ‘*You are* worthless,’
And to nobles, ‘*You are wicked*’?
- 19 Yet He ^o is not partial to princes,
Nor does He regard the rich more
than the poor;
For ^p they *are* all the work of His hands.
- 20 In a moment they die, ^q in the middle of the night;
The people are shaken and pass away;
The mighty are taken away without a hand.
- 21 “For ^r His eyes *are* on the ways of man,
And He sees all his steps.
- 22 ^s There is no darkness nor shadow of death
Where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves.
- 23 For He need not further consider a man,
That he should go before God in judgment.
- 24 ^t He breaks in pieces mighty men without inquiry,
And sets others in their place.
- 25 Therefore He knows their works;
He overthrows *them* in the night,
And they are crushed.

11 ^h Job 34:25; Ps. 62:12; [Prov. 24:12; Jer. 32:19]; Ezek. 33:20; [Matt. 16:27]; Rom. 2:6; [2 Cor. 5:10; Rev. 22:12]
12 ⁱ Job 8:3
14 ^j Job 12:10; Ps. 104:29; [Eccl. 12:7]
15 ^k [Gen. 3:19]; Job 10:9; [Eccl. 12:7]
17 ^l 2 Sam. 23:3; Job 34:30 ^m Job 40:8
18 ⁿ Ex. 22:28
19 ^o [Deut. 10:17; Acts 10:34; Rom. 2:11, 12] ^p Job 31:15
20 ^q Ex. 12:29; Job 34:25; 36:20
21 ^r [2 Chr. 16:9]; Job 31:4; Ps. 34:15; [Prov. 5:21; 15:3; Jer. 16:17; 32:19]
22 ^s [Ps. 139:11, 12; Amos 9:2, 3]
24 ^t Job 12:19; [Dan. 2:21]

27 ^u 1 Sam. 15:11
^v Ps. 28:5; Is. 5:12
28 ^w Job 35:9;
James 5:4 ^x [Ex. 22:23]; Job 22:27
35 ^y Job 35:16; 38:2
37 ^z Job 7:11; 10:1

CHAPTER 35

3 ^a Job 21:15; 34:9

- 26 He strikes them as wicked *men*
In the open sight of others,
- 27 Because they ^u turned back from Him,
And ^v would not consider any of His ways,
- 28 So that they ^w caused the cry of the poor to come to Him;
For He ^x hears the cry of the afflicted.
- 29 When He gives quietness, who then can make trouble?
And when He hides *His* face, who then can see Him,
Whether *it is* against a nation or a man alone?—
- 30 That the hypocrite should not reign,
Lest the people be ensnared.
- 31 “For has *anyone* said to God,
‘I have borne *chastening*;
I will offend no more;
- 32 Teach me *what* I do not see;
If I have done iniquity, I will do no more’?
- 33 Should He repay *it* according to your terms,
Just because you disavow it?
You must choose, and not I;
Therefore speak what you know.
- 34 “Men of understanding say to me,
Wise men who listen to me:
- 35 ‘Job ^y speaks without knowledge,
His words *are* without wisdom.’
- 36 Oh, that Job were tried to the utmost,
Because *his* answers *are like* those of wicked men!
- 37 For he adds ^z rebellion to his sin;
He claps *his hands* among us,
And multiplies his words against God.”

Elihu Condemns Self-Righteousness

35 Moreover Elihu answered and said:

- 2 “Do you think this is right?
Do you say,
‘My righteousness is more than God’s’?
3 For ^a you say,
‘What advantage will it be to You?
What profit shall I have, more than *if*
I had sinned?’

34:11, 12 Surely God: Perhaps in response to Job’s charges in 9:22–24, Elihu defends God’s impartiality according to the traditional retribution dogma: God will justly punish the wicked. Elihu defends God’s justice by siding with Bildad (see 8:3) against Job (see 19:6).
34:16 Elihu addresses Job directly in vv. 16–33, as indicated by the singular Hebrew verb translated **hear**.
34:17 The two rhetorical questions in this verse seem to rephrase Job’s complaints of 9:14–31 and 24:1–17 in order to refute them.
Will you condemn Him who is most just: The second question anticipates the Lord’s own rebuke of Job in 40:8.

34:28 Elihu responds to Job’s complaints about God ignoring the plight of the poor and afflicted (see 24:1–12) by asserting that God does hear **the cry of the poor and the cry of the afflicted**.
34:34–37 Elihu’s conclusion mixes sound analysis with an unfair representation of Job’s position. His statement that Job’s words are **without knowledge** anticipates the Lord’s own words (see 38:2).
35:3 By reading between the lines of Job’s many complaints, Elihu exaggerates Job’s position: “What benefit do I receive for being good?” Though Job had never made a bargain to serve God for mutual benefit, as in the religions of his day, Job’s actions and words

4 “I will answer you,
And ^byour companions with you.
5 ^cLook to the heavens and see;
And behold the clouds—
They are higher than you.
6 If you sin, what do you accomplish
^dagainst Him?
Or, if your transgressions are
multiplied, what do you do to
Him?
7 ^eIf you are righteous, what do you
give Him?
Or what does He receive from your
hand?
8 Your wickedness affects a man such
as you,
And your righteousness a son of
man.
9 “Because ^fof the multitude of
oppressions they cry out;
They cry out for help because of the
arm of the mighty.
10 But no one says, ^g“Where is God my
Maker,
^hWho gives songs in the night,
11 Who ⁱteaches us more than the
beasts of the earth,
And makes us wiser than the birds
of heaven?”
12 ^jThere they cry out, but He does not
answer,
Because of the pride of evil men.
13 ^kSurely God will not listen to empty
talk,
Nor will the Almighty regard it.
14 ^lAlthough you say you do not see
Him,
Yet justice is before Him, and ^myou
must wait for Him.
15 And now, because He has not
ⁿpunished in His anger,
Nor taken much notice of folly,
16 ^oTherefore Job opens his mouth in
vain;
He multiplies words without
knowledge.”

4 ^b Job 34:8
5 ^c Gen. 15:5; [Job
22:12; Ps. 8:3]
6 ^d Job 7:20; [Prov.
8:36; Jer. 7:19]
7 ^e Job 22:2; Ps.
16:2; Prov. 9:12;
[Luke 17:10; Rom.
11:35]
9 ^f Job 34:28
10 ^g Is. 51:13 ^h Job
8:21; Ps. 42:8; 77:6;
149:5; Acts 16:25
11 ⁱ Job 36:22; Ps.
94:12; [Is. 48:17]; Jer.
32:33; [1 Cor. 2:13]
12 ^j Prov. 1:28
13 ^k Job 27:9; [Prov.
15:29; Is. 1:15]; Jer.
11:11; [Mic. 3:4]
14 ^l Job 9:11 ^m [Ps.
37:5, 6]
15 ⁿ Ps. 89:32
16 ^o Job 34:35; 38:2

CHAPTER 36

5 ^a Job 12:13, 16;
37:23; [Ps. 99:2-5]
¹ of heart
6 ^b Job 5:15
7 ^c [Ps. 33:18; 34:15]
^d Job 5:11; Ps. 113:8
8 ^e Ps. 107:10
² chains
9 ³ proudly
10 ^f Job 33:16; 36:15
⁴ discipline
11 ^g Job 21:13; [Is.
1:19, 20]
12 ^h Job 4:21 ⁵ MT
as one without
knowledge

Elihu Proclaims God's Goodness

36 Elihu also proceeded and said:

2 “Bear with me a little, and I will show
you
That *there are* yet words to speak on
God's behalf.
3 I will fetch my knowledge from
afar;
I will ascribe righteousness to my
Maker.
4 For truly my words *are* not false;
One who is perfect in knowledge is
with you.
5 “Behold, God is mighty, but despises
no one;
He is mighty in strength ¹ of
understanding.
6 He does not preserve the life of the
wicked,
But gives justice to the
^boppressed.
7 ^cHe does not withdraw His eyes from
the righteous;
But ^d*they are* on the throne with
kings,
For He has seated them forever,
And they are exalted.
8 And ^e*if they are* bound in
²fetters,
Held in the cords of affliction,
9 Then He tells them their work and
their transgressions—
That they have acted ³defiantly.
10 ^fHe also opens their ear to
⁴instruction,
And commands that they turn from
iniquity.
11 If they obey and serve *Him*,
They shall ^gspend their days in
prosperity,
And their years in pleasures.
12 But if they do not obey,
They shall perish by the sword,
And they shall die ⁵without
^hknowledge.

right

(Heb. *mishpat*) (35:2; Ps. 1:5; 9:4; Prov. 12:5; Jer. 26:11) Strong's #4941

The Hebrew term translated here as *right* represents an important idea in the understanding of the judicial side of government, whether by humans or by God. The central idea of most uses of the term in the Bible is “justice” (Ps. 72:1, 2). The word can be used to designate the act (see “judgment” in Josh. 20:6), the place (see “the Hall of Judgment” in 1 Kin. 7:7), or the process (see “judgment” in Is. 3:14) of a case of litigation, as well as the sentence (see “deserves” in Jer. 26:11) or the time of judgment (see “judgment” in Ps. 1:5). In the present passage, Elihu was asking whether Job had the legal right to question God's righteousness. Elihu correctly perceived that Job was implying that his ethical standards were higher than God's (see 29:12–17; 31:13, 16).

may have seemed to reflect that pagan attitude (see Job's own paraphrase of the sentiments of the wicked in 21:15). **35:4–8** God was not under any obligation to Job for any work or deed (see 41:11). Therefore, it was logically inconsistent for Job to demand that God must appear in court (see 31:35).

35:12, 13 One reason God **does not answer** when people **cry out** is that they are full of **pride** and devoid of pure motives (see James 4:3). Elihu implies that Job's prayers have not been heard because of his pride (see also 33:17). This accurate perception prepares the way for the speeches of God (see chs. 38; 39).

36:5, 6 Elihu states his thesis: God is both **mighty** and just in His dealings with humankind (see 36:1—37:24). Elihu challenges Job's assertion that the wicked are not punished by God (21:7) and his subsequent arguments (see 21:27–33). Then Elihu counters Job's complaints of 24:1–17.

- 13^a But the hypocrites in heart ⁱstore up wrath;
They do not cry for help when He binds them.
- 14^j They ⁶die in youth,
And their life *ends* among the ⁷perverted persons.
- 15 He delivers the poor in their affliction,
And opens their ears in oppression.
- 16^a Indeed He would have brought you out of dire distress,
^kInto a broad place where *there is* no restraint;
And ^lwhat is set on your table *would be* full of ^mrichness.
- 17 But you are filled with the judgment due the ⁿwicked;
Judgment and justice take hold of *you*.
- 18 Because *there is* wrath, *beware* lest He take you away with *one* blow;
For ^oa large ransom would not help you avoid *it*.
- 19^p Will your riches,
Or all the mighty forces,
Keep you from distress?
- 20 Do not desire the night,
When people are cut off in their place.
- 21 Take heed, ^qdo not turn to iniquity,
For ^ryou have chosen this rather than affliction.
- 22^a Behold, God is exalted by His power;
Who teaches like Him?
- 23^s Who has assigned Him His way,
Or who has said, ‘You have done ^twrong’?

Elihu Proclaims God’s Majesty

- 24^a Remember to ^umagnify His work,
Of which men have sung.
- 25 Everyone has seen it;
Man looks on *it* from afar.
- 26^a Behold, God *is* great, and we ^vdo not know *Him*;
^wNor can the number of His years *be* discovered.

13 ⁱ[Rom. 2:5]
14 ^jPs. 55:23 ⁶Lit. *Their soul dies*
⁷Heb. *qedeshim*, those practicing sodomy or prostitution in religious rituals
16 ^kPs. 18:19; 31:8; 118:5 ^lPs. 23:5
^mPs. 36:8
17 ⁿJob 22:5, 10, 11
18 ^oPs. 49:7
19 ^p[Prov. 11:4]
21 ^qJob 36:10; [Ps. 31:6; 66:18] ^rJob 36:8, 15; [Heb. 11:25]
23 ^sJob 34:13; [Is. 40:13, 14] ^t[Deut. 32:4]; Job 8:3
24 ^u[Ps. 92:5; Rev. 15:3]
26 ^vJob 11:7-9; 37:23; [1 Cor. 13:12]
28 ^w[Prov. 3:20]
30 ^xJob 37:3
31 ^a[Acts 14:17]
^bGen. 9:3; Ps. 104:14, 15
32 ^cPs. 147:8
^dstrike the mark
33 ^d1 Kin. 18:41; Job 37:2 ⁹Lit. *what is rising*

CHAPTER 37

3 ¹Or *light*
4 ^aPs. 29:3
5 ^bJob 5:9; 9:10; 36:26; Rev. 15:3
6 ^cPs. 147:16, 17
7 ^dLit. *shower of rain*
7 ^dPs. 109:27 ^ePs. 19:3, 4
8 ^fJob 38:40; Ps. 104:21, 22
10 ^gJob 38:29, 30; Ps. 147:17, 18

- 27 For He ^xdraws up drops of water,
Which distill as rain from the mist,
- 28^y Which the clouds drop down
And pour abundantly on man.
- 29 Indeed, can *anyone* understand the spreading of clouds,
The thunder from His canopy?
- 30 Look, He ^zscatters His light upon it,
And covers the depths of the sea.
- 31 For ^aby these He judges the peoples;
He ^bgives food in abundance.
- 32^e He covers *His* hands with lightning,
And commands it to ⁸strike.
- 33^d His thunder declares it,
The cattle also, concerning ⁹the rising *storm*.

- 37^a “At this also my heart trembles,
And leaps from its place.
- 2 Hear attentively the thunder of His voice,
And the rumbling *that* comes from His mouth.
- 3 He sends it forth under the whole heaven,
His ¹lightning to the ends of the earth.
- 4 After it ^aa voice roars;
He thunders with His majestic voice,
And He does not restrain them when His voice is heard.
- 5 God thunders marvelously with His voice;
^bHe does great things which we cannot comprehend.
- 6 For ^cHe says to the snow, ‘Fall *on* the earth’;
Likewise to the ²gentle rain and the heavy rain of His strength.
- 7 He seals the hand of every man,
^dThat ^eall men may know His work.
- 8 The beasts ^fgo into dens,
And remain in their lairs.
- 9 From the chamber of *the south* comes the whirlwind,
And cold from the scattering winds *of the north*.
- 10^g By the breath of God ice is given,
And the broad waters are frozen.

36:13, 14 Affliction will also reveal **the hypocrites** who, because their hearts are incorrigibly wicked, **do not cry to God for help**. The warning is clear: Do not reject God’s message by failing to cry out to Him for help (see Rom. 1:18–32).

36:16–25 Take heed: Elihu says that God intended to teach Job something through his affliction. Rather than trying to correct the Teacher, Job should **remember to magnify God’s work** as Maker of all things. Thus Elihu is setting the stage for the Lord, who will emphasize this concept in His speeches (see 38:1–42:6).

36:32 God the sovereign warrior **commands** the thunderstorm as He dispenses **lightning from His hands** like arrows (see 16:12, 13). The Book of Job makes clear that God alone controls the unpredictable changes of the weather (see 38:22–30, 34–38).

37:2 The plural Hebrew verb **hear attentively** indicates that Elihu

appeals to Job and his friends and perhaps to any bystanders listening.

37:4 The **voice** of God **roars**. The Hebrew word for *roars* seems to compare thunder to God growling like a lion, the majestic king of beasts.

37:6, 7 He says: As God once spoke and brought forth light, land, and all manner of life (see Gen. 1:3, 9, 14, 20, 24, 26), so now He speaks and controls all that He has made (see Ps. 147:15–18). God uses the winter storms to stop **the hand of every man** so that he cannot work but instead **may** recognize the **work** of God.

37:9 Elihu continues to praise the all-powerful God with a series of metaphors. He describes God as keeping the wind in a **chamber** just as He does the snow and hail (see 38:22, 23).

37:10 In a poetic figure of speech, Elihu speaks of the **breath of**

- 11 Also with moisture He saturates the thick clouds;
He scatters His ³bright clouds.
- 12 And they swirl about, being turned by His guidance,
That they may ^hdo whatever He commands them
On the face of ⁴the whole earth.
- 13 ⁱHe causes it to come,
Whether for ⁵correction,
Or ^jfor His land,
Or ^kfor mercy.
- 14“Listen to this, O Job;
Stand still and ^lconsider the wondrous works of God.
- 15 Do you know when God ⁶dispatches them,
And causes the light of His cloud to shine?
- 16^mDo you know how the clouds are balanced,
Those wondrous works of ⁿHim who is perfect in knowledge?
- 17 Why ^{are} your garments hot,
When He quiets the earth by the south *wind*?
- 18 With Him, have you ^ospread out the ^pskies,
Strong as a cast metal mirror?
- 19“Teach us what we should say to Him,
For we can prepare nothing because of the darkness.
- 20 Should He be told that I *wish* to speak?
If a man were to speak, surely he would be swallowed up.
- 21 Even now *men* cannot look at the light *when it is* bright in the skies,

11 ³ clouds of light
12 ^h Job 36:32;
Ps. 148:8 ⁴ Lit. *the world of the earth*
13 ⁱ Ex. 9:18, 23;
1 Sam. 12:18, 19
/ Job 38:26, 27
^k 1 Kin. 18:41–46
⁵ Lit. *a rod*
14 ^l Ps. 111:2
15 ⁶ places them
16 ^m Job 36:29
ⁿ Job 36:4
18 ^o Gen. 1:6; [Is. 44:24] ^p Job 9:8; Ps. 104:2; [Is. 45:12; Jer. 10:12; Zech. 12:1]

23 ^q [Job 11:7, 8; Rom. 11:33, 34; 1 Tim. 6:16] ^r [Job 9:4; 36:5]
24 ^s [Matt. 10:28] ^t [Job 5:13; Matt. 11:25]; 1 Cor. 1:26

CHAPTER 38

1 ^a Ex. 19:16; Job 40:6
2 ^b Job 34:35; 42:3
^c 1 Tim. 1:7
3 ^d Job 40:7 ¹ Lit. *gird up your loins like*
4 ^e Job 15:7; Ps. 104:5
5 ² measuring line
7 ^f Job 1:6

- When the wind has passed and cleared them.
- 22 He comes from the north *as* golden *splendor*;
With God *is* awesome majesty.
- 23 *As for* the Almighty, ^qwe cannot find Him;
^rHe *is* excellent in power,
In judgment and abundant justice;
He does not oppress.
- 24 Therefore men ^sfear Him;
He shows no partiality to any *who are* ^twise of heart.”

The LORD Reveals His Omnipotence to Job

38 Then the LORD answered Job ^aout of the whirlwind, and said:

- 2 “Who ^bis this who darkens counsel
By ^cwords without knowledge?
- 3 ^dNow ¹prepare yourself like a man;
I will question you, and you shall answer Me.
- 4 “Where ^ewere you when I laid the foundations of the earth?
Tell *Me*, if you have understanding.
- 5 Who determined its measurements?
Surely you know!
Or who stretched the ²line upon it?
- 6 To what were its foundations fastened?
Or who laid its cornerstone,
- 7 When the morning stars sang together,
And all ^fthe sons of God shouted for joy?

God causing **ice** to form and **waters** to freeze. All of this is spoken with joyful delight, for Elihu is celebrating God’s control of the world.

37:12 The nautical term **guidance**, literally “steerings” or “rope-pullings” (see the usage of this word in Prov. 1:5), portrays God as the wise Captain who skillfully charts the course for the clouds, which respond obediently to His hand at the helm.

37:13 God **causes** the storm **to come** for three specific reasons: (1) for punishment for people’s wickedness, (2) for the nourishment of the earth (see context of vv. 3, 6, 12), and (3) for supplying the needs of His people. **For correction** presents the idea of judgment by His rod or scepter. **for mercy**: The faithfulness and loyalty of God to His covenant promises are often tied to this word. This is the word that may be translated “loyal love.” Thus God uses storms both to judge the earth and to bring the blessing of rain for His people (Ex. 15:7–10; Deut. 28:12).

37:18 Strong as a cast metal mirror: Ancient mirrors were firm and unbreakable because they were made of polished bronze.

37:21, 22 If people **cannot look** at the bright **light** of the sun **in the skies**, how much more difficult is it to approach God (see v. 20), who appears in His own **golden splendor** and **awesome majesty**? See the experience of Moses described in Ex. 34. **the north**: In ancient times, north was viewed as the direction of God’s abiding place (see Is. 14:13).

37:23, 24 Elihu’s concluding words offer praise to the living God who is at once elusive—we **cannot find Him**—and merciful—**He does not oppress**. **Judgment** means “justice.” **Justice** means “righteousness.” **fear**: Finally Elihu speaks of the reverential awe and worshipful wonder that all people should have for their omnipotent Creator.

38:1 out of the whirlwind: Though Job feared that God would crush him in a tempest (see 9:17), God does not come to destroy Job; rather God overwhelms Job into submission in order to restore him to his proper role as the Lord’s servant.

38:2, 3 The theme of the first speech of the Lord is given here: Job **darkens the counsel** of the Lord—that is, God’s plan or design for the universe. Ironically, God challenges Job to teach Him (v. 3; 40:7). These challenges are designed to alert Job to the consequences of his complaints and demands. Job’s defiant attempt to meet God on equal footing in a law court (see 31:35–37) amounts to a rival claim to His throne (see 40:10–14).

38:4–7 Perhaps partially in reply to Job’s words about the Lord shaking the pillars of the earth (9:5, 6), the Lord asks Job if he was an eyewitness when He laid the earth’s **foundations**.

38:7 The joyful response of the **morning stars**, personified as singing, and **the sons of God** (see 1:6) as eyewitnesses to the earth’s creation contrast with Job’s complaints that were spoken in ignorance.

- 8 “Or ^awho shut in the sea with doors,
When it burst forth *and* issued from
the womb;
9 When I made the clouds its garment,
And thick darkness its swaddling
band;
10 When ^bI fixed My limit for it,
And set bars and doors;
11 When I said,
‘This far you may come, but no
farther,
And here your proud waves ⁱmust
stop!’
12“Have you ^jcommanded the morning
since your days *began*,
And caused the dawn to know its
place,
13 That it might take hold of the ends of
the earth,
And ^kthe wicked be shaken out
of it?
14 It takes on form like clay *under* a
seal,
And stands out like a garment.
15 From the wicked their ^llight is
withheld,
And ^mthe ³upraised arm is broken.
16“Have you ⁿentered the springs of the
sea?
Or have you walked in search of the
depths?
17 Have ^othe gates of death been
⁴revealed to you?
Or have you seen the doors of the
shadow of death?
18 Have you comprehended the breadth
of the earth?
Tell *Me*, if you know all this.
19“Where *is* the way *to* the dwelling of
light?
And darkness, where *is* its place,

8 ^a Gen. 1:9; Ps.
33:7; 104:9; Prov.
8:29; [Jer. 5:22]
10 ^b Job 26:10
11 ⁱ [Ps. 89:9; 93:4]
12 ^j [Ps. 74:16;
148:5]
13 ^k Job 34:25; Ps.
104:35
15 ^j Job 18:5; [Prov.
13:9] ^m [Num.
15:30]; Ps. 10:15;
37:17 ³ Lit. *high*
16 ⁿ [Ps. 77:19];
Prov. 8:24
17 ^o Ps. 9:13 ⁴ Lit.
opened

22 ^p Ps. 135:7
23 ^q Ex. 9:18; Josh.
10:11; Is. 30:30;
Ezek. 13:11, 13; Rev.
16:21
24 ⁵ Lit. *divided*
25 ^r Job 28:26
27 ^s Ps. 104:13, 14;
107:35
28 ^r Job 36:27,
28; [Ps. 147:8; Jer.
14:22]
29 ^u [Job 37:10]; Ps.
147:16, 17
30 ^v [Job 37:10]
⁶ Lit. *imprisoned*
31 ^w Job 9:9; Amos
5:8 ⁷ Or *the Seven
Stars*

- 20 That you may take it to its
territory,
That you may know the paths *to* its
home?
21 Do you know *it*, because you were
born then,
Or *because* the number of your days
is great?
22“Have you entered ^pthe treasury of
snow,
Or have you seen the treasury of
hail,
23 ^qWhich I have reserved for the time of
trouble,
For the day of battle and war?
24 By what way is light ⁵diffused,
Or the east wind scattered over the
earth?
25“Who ^rhas divided a channel for the
overflowing *water*,
Or a path for the thunderbolt,
26 To cause it to rain on a land *where*
there is no one,
A wilderness in which *there is* no
man;
27 ^sTo satisfy the desolate waste,
And cause to spring forth the growth
of tender grass?
28 ^tHas the rain a father?
Or who has begotten the drops of
dew?
29 From whose womb comes the
ice?
And the ^ufrost of heaven, who gives
it birth?
30 The waters harden like stone,
And the surface of the deep is
^vfrozen.⁶
31“Can you bind the cluster of the
^wPleiades,⁷
Or loose the belt of Orion?

38:8–11 The Lord emphasizes His control of the **sea** and its **proud waves**. These forces, which ancient society considered to be chaotic and threatening, were allowed to exist only within divinely set limits (v. 10). Though Job knew this in theory (see 26:12, 13), he needed to apply this truth to his life.

38:12–15 The Lord answers Job’s complaints that wickedness is rampant at night (24:13–17). Using personification, the Lord describes how He alone commands **the morning** to get out of bed and **the dawn** to pull off the covers of the night in order to shake out the wicked like bedbugs. God implies that only because of His control of the darkness are the activities of the wicked curbed at all. The Lord grants some freedom to humanity, but the wicked cannot go beyond His set limits. This section may be compared with the more familiar words of David in Ps. 19.

38:16, 17 Has Job ever been to the bottom of the sea, or taken a trip through the **gates of death**? Perhaps in response to Job’s desire for a respite in the darkness of Sheol (10:18–22), the Lord wants to know if he has ever been there.

38:19–21 Since Job had spoken intelligently about the distant horizons (see 26:10), the Lord exposes Job’s limited knowledge

by asking him to lead a guided tour to the abode of **light** and **darkness**. Since Job had stated that the wicked “do not know the light” or “abide in its paths” (see 24:13, 16), the Lord reveals the deficiencies of Job’s secondhand knowledge. Had Job been there in person, he would have understood that the Lord has a **place** for both **darkness** and dawn, as well as for good and evil.

38:22–30 By asking if Job understands the seemingly unpredictable weather phenomena, the Lord reveals that His designs are not centered on humanity alone. Though God utilizes meteorological elements to intervene in human affairs (vv. 22–24), He also uses them to limit the chaotic wilderness and sea (vv. 25–30) that lie outside the human realm.

38:22, 23 The graphic metaphor of **the treasury for snow** and **hail** portrays these elements as weapons in the arsenal of God. He uses hail as slingstones (see Josh. 10:11). He prepares other weapons, including snow (see Ps. 68:14), thunderstorms, lightning (see v. 24), and winds (see 37:9).

38:29 frost of heaven: Since frost is water vapor from the atmosphere that has condensed on cold surfaces, the word *heaven* may refer here to the atmospheric heavens.

32 Can you bring out ⁸Mazzaroth in its season?
Or can you guide ⁹the Great Bear with its cubs?

33 Do you know ^xthe ordinances of the heavens?
Can you set their dominion over the earth?

34“ Can you lift up your voice to the clouds,
That an abundance of water may cover you?

35 Can you send out lightnings, that they may go,
And say to you, ‘Here we *are*!’?”

36^y Who has put wisdom in ¹the mind?
Or who has given understanding to the heart?

37 Who can number the clouds by wisdom?
Or who can pour out the bottles of heaven,

38 When the dust hardens in clumps,
And the clods cling together?

39“ Can^z you hunt the prey for the lion,
Or satisfy the appetite of the young lions,

40 When they crouch in *their* dens,
Or lurk in their lairs to lie in wait?

41^a Who provides food for the raven,
When its young ones cry to God,
And wander about for lack of food?

39 “Do you know the time when the wild ^amountain goats bear young?
Or can you mark when ^bthe deer gives birth?

2 Can you number the months *that* they fulfill?
Or do you know the time when they bear young?

32 ⁸ Lit. *Constellations* ⁹ Or *Arcturus*
33 ^x [Ps. 148:6]; Jer. 31:35, 36
36 ^y [Job 9:4; 32:8; Ps. 51:6; Eccl. 2:26; James 1:5] ¹ Lit. *the inward parts*
39 ^z Ps. 104:21
41 ^a Ps. 147:9; [Matt. 6:26; Luke 12:24]

CHAPTER 39

1 ^a Deut. 14:5;
1 Sam. 24:2; Ps. 104:18 ^b Ps. 29:9

3 ¹ Lit. *pangs*
5 ² A species of wild donkey
6 ^c Job 24:5; Jer. 2:24; Hos. 8:9 ³ Lit. *salt land*
8 ^d Gen. 1:29
9 ^e Num. 23:22; Deut. 33:17; Ps. 22:21; 29:6; 92:10; Is. 34:7
12 ⁴ Lit. *seed*

3 They bow down,
They bring forth their young,
They deliver their ¹offspring.

4 Their young ones are healthy,
They grow strong with grain;
They depart and do not return to them.

5 “Who set the wild donkey free?
Who loosed the bonds of the ²onager,

6 ^cWhose home I have made the wilderness,
And the ³barren land his dwelling?

7 He scorns the tumult of the city;
He does not heed the shouts of the driver.

8 The range of the mountains *is* his pasture,
And he searches after ^devery green thing.

9 “Will the ^ewild ox be willing to serve you?
Will he bed by your manger?

10 Can you bind the wild ox in the furrow with ropes?
Or will he plow the valleys behind you?

11 Will you trust him because his strength *is* great?
Or will you leave your labor to him?

12 Will you trust him to bring home your ⁴grain,
And gather it to your threshing floor?

13“ The wings of the ostrich wave proudly,
But are her wings and pinions *like* the kindly stork’s?

14 For she leaves her eggs on the ground,
And warms them in the dust;

15 She forgets that a foot may crush them,
Or that a wild beast may break them.

38:32 The **Great Bear with its cubs** is a reference to the constellation known as Ursa Major.

38:34–38 In asking whose command the clouds obey, the Lord implies Job’s impotence and ignorance of these matters, as well as His own sovereignty and omniscience. **voice:** The Lord alone controls the storms and lightning (see 36:32). The obedience even of lightning to God’s command serves as another subtle rebuke to Job’s complaints.

38:39–39:30 The Lord interrogates Job concerning the animal kingdom to demonstrate Job’s impotence to govern it and his ignorance of God’s providential plan (see 38:1–40:5). The wild animals listed were either favorite game animals of kings or used by royalty. Before Job could validate his claims to be able to run the universe better than the Lord, he would need to prove that he could control these hostile forces.

38:41 If the Lord provides for the young **raven** who cries out for help, how much more will He hear and provide for people when they genuinely cry out for help?

39:1–4 God, who provides the prey for the predators (see 38:39–41), also takes care of that prey, which includes the **mountain goats** and **deer**. By taking care of them in their most vulnerable moment of giving birth, the Lord provides for order and balance in nature.

39:4 The Hebrew word translated **with grain** may also be rendered “in the open field.”

39:5–7 The **wild donkey**, the symbol of the exploited poor in 24:5, finds satisfaction where God has placed him on earth free from the **shouts of the driver** or “slave driver.” This contrasts with Job’s complaints about the voice of the oppressor (3:18). True freedom is found in being content where God has placed us (see Phil. 4:10–12).

39:13–18 Job had identified himself closely with the **ostrich** (see 30:29). Therefore, the Lord ironically agrees that there are similarities. Both are deficient in knowledge (see v. 17; 38:2). But although the ludicrous-looking ostrich is no doubt laughed at (as was Job; see 30:1) and experiences misfortunes (see vv. 14–16), the ostrich is not concerned about the situation. This contrasts with Job, who has been full of worry (see 3:25; 15:24).

- 16 She ^ftreats her young harshly, as though *they were* not hers;
Her labor is in vain, without ⁵concern,
- 17 Because God deprived her of wisdom,
And did not ^gendow her with understanding.
- 18 When she lifts herself on high,
She scorns the horse and its rider.
- 19^a Have you given the horse strength?
Have you clothed his neck with ⁶thunder?
- 20 Can you ⁷frighten him like a locust?
His majestic snorting strikes terror.
- 21 He paws in the valley, and rejoices in *his* strength;
^hHe gallops into the clash of arms.
- 22 He mocks at fear, and is not frightened;
Nor does he turn back from the sword.
- 23 The quiver rattles against him,
The glittering spear and javelin.
- 24 He devours the distance with fierceness and rage;
Nor does he come to a halt because the trumpet *has* sounded.
- 25 At *the blast of* the trumpet he says, 'Aha!'
He smells the battle from afar,
The thunder of captains and shouting.
- 26^a Does the hawk fly by your wisdom,
And spread its wings toward the south?
- 27 Does the ⁱeagle mount up at your command,
And ^jmake its nest on high?

16 ^fLam. 4:3 ⁵Lit. fear
17 ^gJob 35:11
19 ⁶Or *a mane*
20 ⁷make him spring
21 ^hJer. 8:6
27 ⁱProv. 30:18, 19
/ Jer. 49:16; Obad. 4

30 ^kMatt. 24:28;
Luke 17:37

CHAPTER 40

1 ^aJob 38:1
2 ^bJob 9:3; 10:2;
33:13 ^cJob 13:3;
23:4
4 ^dEzra 9:6; Job
42:6 ^eJob 29:9;
Ps. 39:9
6 ^fJob 38:1
7 ^gJob 38:3 ^hJob
42:4 ⁱLit. *gird up
your loins*
8 ^jJob 16:11; 19:6;
[Ps. 51:4; Rom. 3:4]
²nullify
9 ^jJob 37:4; [Ps.
29:3, 4]

- 28 On the rock it dwells and resides,
On the crag of the rock and the stronghold.
- 29 From there it spies out the prey;
Its eyes observe from afar.
- 30 Its young ones suck up blood;
And ^kwhere the slain *are*, there it is."

40 Moreover the LORD ^aanswered Job, and said:

- 2 "Shall ^bthe one who contends with the Almighty correct *Him*?
He who ^crebukes God, let him answer it."

Job's Response to God

³Then Job answered the LORD and said:

- 4 "Behold, ^dI am vile;
What shall I answer You?
^eI lay my hand over my mouth.
5 Once I have spoken, but I will not answer;
Yes, twice, but I will proceed no further."

God's Challenge to Job

⁶Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said:

- 7 "Now ^g¹prepare yourself like a man;
^hI will question you, and you shall answer Me:
- 8 "Would ⁱyou indeed ²annul My judgment?
Would you condemn Me that you may be justified?
- 9 Have you an arm like God?
Or can you thunder with ^ja voice like His?

39:26–30 God asks Job if he designed the majestic birds—the hawk and the eagle—by his aerodynamic genius. **eagle:** The context of v. 30, where the young birds feast on the blood of the slain, suggests that a vulture is in view. However, the traditional translation *eagle* conveys the royal and majestic qualities associated with the vulture in the ancient Middle East (vv. 26–30), in contrast to the revulsion its name brings to many modern readers.

39:30 The implication is that God allows the young vultures to feed on the blood of slain people to help prevent the spread of disease. This is an answer to Job's complaint about God's failure to stop the exploitation of the helpless (24:1–17) and His ignoring of the pleas of the dying. The Lord demonstrates to Job again that He limits evil.

40:1, 2 Moreover the LORD answered: The Lord reinforces His initial thematic challenge (see 38:2, 3) with a dynamic question loaded with legal terminology. The word **contend** means "to bring a lawsuit" (see 9:3). God reverses Job's accusation that God has brought a lawsuit against him (see 10:2 for the same Hebrew word). It really has been Job accusing God, not the other way around. The Lord reprimands Job for his error. Who is Job to judge God? The Lord might be implying that Job has been trying to be his own "mediator" or "redeemer" (see 40:14).

40:4 vile: The context of vv. 4, 5 suggests that the Hebrew word

for *vile* means "insignificant" or "unworthy." Job's placing his **hand over his mouth** is probably a gesture of respect (see 29:9) as God's subordinate.

40:6, 7 prepare yourself: But God has not finished speaking. The words of v. 7 are repeated from 38:3; but the stakes are even higher now.

40:8 The Lord confronts Job with critical errors in his speeches. Job has dared to **annul** God's **judgment** or justice. The context of Elihu's speeches, where Elihu used this same word concerning the Lord's kingship over the universe (see 34:17; 37:23), suggests that Job has maligned God's justice by claiming that God rules without establishing moral or social order in the universe (see 24:1–17). Because Job had assumed the inflexible retribution dogma, which views suffering in this world as God's punishment for sin, Job had to **condemn** God in order to maintain his own innocence.

40:9–14 The absurdity of Job's defiant criticism of the way the Lord runs the universe (see 29:2–17 for Job's claim to be fair in his judicial duties) is forcefully brought to his attention by God's ironic invitation to become "king for a day" over the whole universe. If Job had the power, let him don the royal regalia of God's majestic attributes and **humble** the **proud** and **wicked** forces in the world. Job had criticized God for not doing this well enough (21:30, 31; 24:1–17).

- 10 ^k Then adorn yourself *with* majesty and splendor,
And array yourself with glory and beauty.
- 11 Disperse the rage of your wrath;
Look on everyone *who* is proud, and humble him.
- 12 Look on everyone *who* is ^l proud, and bring him low;
Tread down the wicked in their place.
- 13 Hide them in the dust together,
Bind their faces in hidden darkness.
- 14 Then I will also confess to you
That your own right hand can save you.
- 15 “Look now at the ³ behemoth, which I made *along* with you;
He eats grass like an ox.
- 16 See now, his strength *is* in his hips,
And his power *is* in his stomach muscles.
- 17 He moves his tail like a cedar;
The sinews of his thighs are tightly knit.
- 18 His bones *are like* beams of bronze,
His ribs like bars of iron.
- 19 He *is* the first of the ^m ways of God;
Only He who made him can bring near His sword.
- 20 Surely the mountains ⁿ yield food for him,
And all the beasts of the field play there.
- 21 He lies under the lotus trees,
In a covert of reeds and marsh.
- 22 The lotus trees cover him *with* their shade;
The willows by the brook surround him.

10 ^k Ps. 93:1; 104:1
12 ^l 1 Sam. 2:7; [Is. 2:12; 13:11]; Dan. 4:37
15 ³ A large animal, exact identity unknown
19 ^m Job 26:14
20 ⁿ Ps. 104:14

CHAPTER 41

1 ^a Ps. 74:14; 104:26;
Is. 27:1 ¹ A large sea creature, exact identity unknown
2 ^b 2 Kin. 19:28; Is. 37:29 ² thorn
6 ³ Or bargain over him

- 23 Indeed the river may rage,
Yet he is not disturbed;
He is confident, though the Jordan gushes into his mouth,
- 24 *Though* he takes it in his eyes,
Or one pierces *his* nose with a snare.

- 41 “Can you draw out ^a Leviathan ¹ with a hook,
Or *snare* his tongue with a line *which* you lower?
- 2 Can you ^b put a reed through his nose,
Or pierce his jaw with a ² hook?
- 3 Will he make many supplications to you?
Will he speak softly to you?
- 4 Will he make a covenant with you?
Will you take him as a servant forever?
- 5 Will you play with him *as with* a bird,
Or will you leash him for your maidens?
- 6 Will *your* companions ³ make a banquet of him?
Will they apportion him among the merchants?
- 7 Can you fill his skin with harpoons,
Or his head with fishing spears?
- 8 Lay your hand on him;
Remember the battle—
Never do it again!
- 9 Indeed, *any* hope of *overcoming* him is false;
Shall *one not* be overwhelmed at the sight of him?
- 10 No one *is so* fierce that he would dare stir him up.
Who then is able to stand against Me?

40:15–24 The identity of the **behemoth**, meaning the “great beast,” is disputed. Suggestions include the elephant, some sort of dinosaur, or a purely mythical monster. The hippopotamus, which had overtones of cosmic evil, seems to fit the biblical and cultural evidence best. Job could not approach, much less subdue, this massive beast; how could he force his way to the Almighty with his case (see 40:15—41:34)? As the description of the beast continues, the elaborate language goes beyond any physical hippopotamus and presents the beast as a symbol of chaos. The same pattern is seen in the development of the Leviathan in the next section (see ch. 41).

40:24 The clause **though he takes it in his eyes** is one possible translation of the Hebrew. However, it might also be construed as a question: “Can one take him by his eyes?” The phrase *in his eyes* may refer to the difficulty of capturing the hippopotamus when it is submerged, with only its eyes above the water. Also, because of the thick hide of the hippopotamus most weapons are ineffective unless they are shot through its eyes.

41:1 The identity of **Leviathan**, basically a transliteration of the Hebrew word for “sea monster” or “sea serpent,” is disputed. The traditional view is that it is the crocodile. As in the case of the behemoth (40:15–24), the description of Leviathan begins as a grand, poetic description of a well-known, formidable beast. But by the

time the description is complete (see vv. 18–21), Leviathan has become a fire-breathing dragon, a powerful symbol of chaos, evil, and destruction. Ultimately, Leviathan’s image is a portrait of chaos at the beginning of God’s creation and of Satan at the consummation of the ages (see Ps. 74:2–17; Is. 27:1; 51:9). Only God can control and destroy Leviathan; Job can only shrink back in humble fear.

41:2 The **reed** indicates the material that was twisted or spun into a cord or rope, perhaps to “string” the Leviathan like a fish. However, the clause **pierce his jaw with a hook** may suggest the picture of Leviathan as a prisoner of war with a hook or ring in his jaw or nose (see 2 Chr. 33:11). This view is supported by the context of v. 4. This imagery is also used in Ezek. 29:3, 4, which describes the Lord capturing Pharaoh like a crocodile and putting hooks in his jaw.

41:4 The Lord continues to confront Job with a series of rhetorical questions. Can Job make Leviathan an eternal **servant** or vassal? The Lord’s mention of the **covenant** implies that perhaps Job could offer it a peace treaty, like a great king subduing a lesser king in battle (see v. 34).

41:10 When the Lord says **no one** would be so foolish as to **stir** Leviathan **up**, he is replying to Job’s desire that this monster be roused (see 3:8). In effect, the Lord questions Job: “What would you do, Job, if he were provoked?” (see vv. 8, 9).

¹¹ *c* Who has preceded Me, that I should pay *him*?

^d Everything under heaven is Mine.

¹² “I will not ^d conceal his limbs,
His mighty power, or his graceful proportions.

¹³ Who can ^e remove his outer coat?
Who can approach *him* with a double bridle?

¹⁴ Who can open the doors of his face,
With his terrible teeth all around?

¹⁵ His rows of ^f scales are *his* pride,
Shut up tightly *as with* a seal;

¹⁶ One is so near another
That no air can come between them;

¹⁷ They are joined one to another,
They stick together and cannot be parted.

¹⁸ His sneezings flash forth light,
And his eyes *are* like the eyelids of the morning.

¹⁹ Out of his mouth go burning lights;
Sparks of fire shoot out.

²⁰ Smoke goes out of his nostrils,
As from a boiling pot and burning rushes.

²¹ His breath kindles coals,
And a flame goes out of his mouth.

²² Strength dwells in his neck,
And ^g sorrow dances before him.

²³ The folds of his flesh are joined together;
They are firm on him and cannot be moved.

²⁴ His heart is as hard as stone,
Even as hard as the lower *millstone*.

²⁵ When he raises himself up, the mighty are afraid;
Because of his crashings they ^h are beside themselves.

²⁶ *Though* the sword reaches him, it cannot avail;
Nor does spear, dart, or javelin.

²⁷ He regards iron as straw,
And bronze as rotten wood.

²⁸ The arrow cannot make him flee;
Slingstones become like stubble to him.

BIBLE TIMES & CULTURE NOTES



Bulrushes

Two Hebrew words refer to this plant—*gome* and *agmon*. Scholars generally believed this plant was the papyrus. It grew abundantly in northern Egypt along the banks of the upper Nile. Although it still grows there today, overuse has made it scarce. It also grows in northern Galilee at the mouth of the Jordan. Papyrus is a shallow-rooted plant that grows in mire (8:11). It reaches about ten feet high on an unbranched stem, which is two to three inches in diameter at the base. A large tufted head at the top of the stem droops when the plant is mature. The Egyptians used this plant for making boats and fishing rope. They used its sap for sugars, medicine, and fuel. The pithy substance inside the stem was eaten. More important for us today is the fact that the Egyptians first manufactured paper from this plant.



Papyrus plants along the Nile River

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¹¹ *c* [Rom. 11:35]

^d Ex. 19:5; [Deut.

10:14; Job 9:5–

10; 26:6–14]; Ps.

24:1; 50:12; 1 Cor.

10:26, 28

¹² ^f Lit. *keep silent about*

¹³ ^g Lit. *take off the face of his garment*

¹⁵ ^h Lit. *shields*

²² ⁱ *despair*

²⁵ ^j *Or purify themselves*

²⁹ Darts are regarded as straw;
He laughs at the threat of javelins.

³⁰ His undersides *are* like sharp
potsherds;
He spreads pointed *marks* in the mire.

³¹ He makes the deep boil like a pot;
He makes the sea like a pot of ointment.

³² He leaves a shining wake behind him;
One would think the deep had white hair.

³³ On earth there is nothing like him,
Which is made without fear.

³⁴ He beholds every high *thing*;
He *is* king over all the children of pride.”

41:11 Who has preceded Me could also be rendered “who has confronted Me?” **that I should pay:** The Hebrew verb means “to pay a debt” or “to make restitution for something lost or stolen.” The Lord confronts Job for implying that God owed him something for being righteous (see 34:5–8) or that God had to make restitution for the property and posterity He had allegedly stolen from Job (see 10:3). Thus the Lord plainly refutes Job’s misconception that God is obligated to reward a person who is obedient. The idea that God does not have to reward us for what we consider good works is an essential part of the biblical doctrine of salvation by grace apart from our works (see Eph. 2:8–10).

41:12–34 mighty power: The Lord reinforces the argument of

vv. 1–11 by describing the invincibility and terrifying splendor of Leviathan’s bodily features.

41:19–21 Using poetic exaggeration (see v. 18), the Lord gradually transforms the physical Leviathan to the mythological dragon (see 7:12), which breathes **fire** and **smoke** (vv. 19–21). Even though the Leviathan (probably the crocodile; see 41:1–34) was God’s creature, it terrified the Egyptians so much that they worshiped it as a god.

41:34 The phrase **he beholds every high thing** could also be translated “he looks down on everything haughty.” **King** Leviathan, who is **over all** who have **pride**, gazes with a look of superiority at the haughty. Therefore Job, whose pride had been exposed, could

Job's Repentance and Restoration

42 Then Job answered the LORD and said:

- 2 “I know that You ^acan do everything,
And that no purpose of Yours can be
withheld from You.
3 You asked, ^b“Who is this who hides
counsel without knowledge?”
Therefore I have uttered what I did
not understand,
^c“Things too wonderful for me, which
I did not know.
4 Listen, please, and let me speak;
You said, ^d“I will question you, and
you shall answer Me.”
5 “I have ^eheard of You by the hearing
of the ear,
But now my eye sees You.
6 Therefore I ^fabhor ¹myself,
And repent in dust and ashes.”

⁷And so it was, after the LORD had spoken these words to Job, that the LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite, “My wrath is aroused against you and your two friends, for you have not spoken of Me *what is right*, as My servant Job *has*. ⁸Now therefore, take for yourselves ^gseven bulls and seven rams, ^hgo to My servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; and My servant Job shall ⁱpray for you. For I will accept ²him, lest I deal with you *according to your folly*; because you

CHAPTER 42

2 ^a Gen. 18:14;
[Matt. 19:26; Mark
10:27; 14:36; Luke
18:27]
3 ^b Job 38:2 ^c Ps.
40:5; 131:1; 139:6
4 ^d Job 38:3; 40:7
5 ^e Job 26:14; [Rom.
10:17]
6 ^f Ezra 9:6; Job
40:4 ¹ despise
8 ^g Num. 23:1
9 [Matt. 5:24] ⁱ Gen.
20:17; [James 5:15,
16; 1 John 5:16]
² Lit. *his face*

9 ³ Lit. *lifted up the
face of Job*
10 [Deut. 30:3; Ps.
14:7; 85:1-3; 126:1
^h Is. 40:2 ⁴ Lit.
*turned the captivity
of Job, what was
captured from Job*
11 ⁱ Job 19:13
12 ^m Job 1:10;
8:7; James 5:11
ⁿ Job 1:3
13 ^o Job 1:2
14 ⁵ Lit. *Handsome
as the Day* ⁶ Cassia,
a fragrance ⁷ Lit.
*The Horn of Color or
The Colorful Ray*
16 ^p Job 5:26; Prov.
3:16
17 ^q Gen. 15:15;
25:8; Job 5:26

have not spoken of Me *what is right*, as My servant Job *has*.”

⁹So Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite went and did as the LORD commanded them; for the LORD had ³accepted Job. ^{10j}And the LORD ⁴restored Job's losses when he prayed for his friends. Indeed the LORD gave Job ^ktwice as much as he had before. ¹¹Then ^lall his brothers, all his sisters, and all those who had been his acquaintances before, came to him and ate food with him in his house; and they consoled him and comforted him for all the adversity that the LORD had brought upon him. Each one gave him a piece of silver and each a ring of gold.

¹²Now the LORD blessed ^mthe latter *days* of Job more than his beginning; for he had ⁿfourteen thousand sheep, six thousand camels, one thousand yoke of oxen, and one thousand female donkeys. ^{13o}He also had seven sons and three daughters. ¹⁴And he called the name of the first ⁵Jemimah, the name of the second ⁶Keziah, and the name of the third ⁷Keren-Happuch. ¹⁵In all the land were found no women *so beautiful* as the daughters of Job; and their father gave them an inheritance among their brothers.

¹⁶After this Job ^plived one hundred and forty years, and saw his children and grandchildren *for four generations*. ¹⁷So Job died, old and ^qfull of days.

never succeed in subduing the mighty Leviathan or validating his claim to be able to rule the world better than God.

42:6 The phrase **I abhor myself** means “to reject” or “to recant.” Job repents of his words and accusations that were based on the false belief that God always rewards the righteous in this life. Instead of accusing God of injustice, Job submits to the will of the sovereign Lord of the universe.

42:7, 8 In contrast to his friends, Job had **spoken** of God **what is right**. Unlike the friends, Job had recanted his false belief, repented of his pride (v. 6), and affirmed God's unconditional sovereignty over his life (v. 2). Job had been right in maintaining his innocence in the face of his friends' false accusations.

42:10 Since Israelite law required a thief to restore double for steal-

ing “an ox or donkey or sheep” (Ex. 22:4), it was ironic that **the LORD gave Job twice** the amount of livestock he had before (see v. 12). Clearly, the Lord was not admitting that He owed Job anything (see 41:11), but He was expressing His benevolent mercy.

42:12-17 Job's restored prosperity should not be seen as compensation for his piety (see 41:11). After Job had given up his demand for his former prosperity, the Lord could give it to him as a free gift. This conclusion shows that the Book of Job does not totally reject the principle of divine retribution but only its false application. It concurs with the Book of Proverbs that the fear of the Lord normally leads to an abundant and long life. But we cannot presume that God will always operate in this manner, as Job's friends had done.

THE BOOK OF PSALMS



AS ONE OF THE GREATEST collections of songs, prayers, and poetry, the Book of Psalms expresses the deepest passions of humanity. In these pages we can hear the psalmist's desperate cry in the midst of despair, but also his ecstatic praise of his Provider and Comforter. We can hear him pouring out his soul in confession, but also bubbling over with joy. The psalms lead us through the valleys and peaks of human experience, but in the end they guide us to the praise of our loving Creator.

Authors The superscription, the introductory words found before the first verse in most psalms, many times attributes the following psalm to King David, the “sweet psalmist of Israel” (2 Sam. 23:1). These superscriptions were probably not part of the psalms when they were originally composed but were added by editors to aid in the interpretation of the poems. Nevertheless, there is no reason to discount them. The historical books of the Bible speak of David's considerable accomplishments as a musician, singer, and composer of poems (1 Sam. 16:19–23; 18:10; 2 Sam. 1:17–27; 23:1–7; 1 Chr. 29:10–15). Moreover, one of David's psalms is recorded in 2 Samuel 22 and reappears with only slight variation as Psalm 18. Parts of the medley that David presented to Asaph in 1 Chronicles 16:8–36 are taken from Psalm 105:1–15, Psalm 96, and Psalm 106:1, 47, 48. Thus the connection between King David and the Psalms is well documented.

Of course, David is not the only composer of the Psalms. Others include contemporaries of David whom he placed in charge of worship in Jerusalem: Ethan, Heman, and Asaph. Solomon followed in his father David's footsteps by writing psalms as well as proverbs. Some of the earliest psalms were written by Moses, five centuries before the time of David. One priestly family, the sons of Korah, continued to write psalms for centuries. Women, such as Deborah (see Judg. 5) and Hannah (see 1 Sam. 2), wrote psalms as well. However, the composers of many of the psalms remain anonymous. Some of these anonymous psalms may be attributed to David, but certainly not all of them. Psalms were still being written during the time of Ezra. It was in Ezra's time that the Book of Psalms as we know it was compiled.

Structure Like the Pentateuch, the five books of Moses, the Book of Psalms is arranged in five sections: Book I (Ps. 1–41), Book II (Ps. 42–72), Book III (Ps. 73–89), Book IV (Ps. 90–106), and Book V (Ps. 107–150). Each book concludes with a doxology, an affirmation of praise to God found in the last verse or two of the concluding psalm. In the case of Book V, the entire last poem, Psalm 150, is the concluding doxology. The reason for this arrangement of the Book of Psalms is not clear. Most likely it had something to do with the use of the Psalms in the praise of God in temple worship. Books I and II are composed primarily of Davidic psalms; Book III includes the psalms of Asaph (Ps. 73–83) and the psalms of the sons of Korah (Ps. 84–88). Books IV and V include anonymous psalms, along with a few by David and others.

Categories of the Psalms Many of the psalms can be identified as certain types by their theme.

The royal psalms emphasize God as King, often using the words “the LORD reigns.” These psalms speak of His rule as Creator, as Savior of Israel, and as the Coming One. The royal psalms often point forward to the coming rule of the Savior King, the Lord Jesus.

The psalms of Zion focus on Jerusalem, using its endearing name Zion. These psalms rhapsodize on the city as God's choice for the site of His holy temple, the place for true worship of His name.

The penitential psalms are poems in which the poet confesses sin to the Lord, asks for and receives forgiveness, and then praises God for the renewed relationship that God's forgiveness provides.

The wisdom psalms focus on some of the same issues that are found in the Book of Proverbs. These psalms present sharp contrasts between the righteous and the wicked, address God's blessing and cursing, and often focus on righteous living.

One subcategory of the wisdom psalms is the Torah psalms. These are poems that focus on the beauty, truth, and sufficiency of the Law of God. Two other subcategories of the wisdom psalms are the creation psalms and the history psalms. In the creation psalms, the poet calls for the believer to praise God as the Creator of the universe and the Savior of His people. In the history psalms, the poet recounts the history of Israel and asks for a renewed commitment to God—even in the face of a history of rebellion.

Some of the most troubling psalms are those that contain prayers asking God to curse the wicked. These imprecatory psalms are sometimes thought to conflict with the sentiment of the gospel, but in fact they accurately reflect God's abhorrence of evil.

In contrast to the imprecatory psalms are the joyful and prophetic Passover psalms that became a part of the Passover celebration in Judaism. These psalms are a remarkable celebration of the great acts of the Lord in delivering His people from Egypt, the theme of the Passover celebration. They point forward to the deliverance that would come through the Savior Jesus.

A final group of psalms is clustered at the end of the book. These are the Hallel psalms, named for the principal Hebrew word for praise, *hallel*. As their name suggests, these psalms praise God for His character and saving works.

Characteristics In order to fully appreciate the Psalms, a certain number of their characteristics should be kept in mind.

First, the psalms were written for singing. These were songs for public worship in the temple of ancient Israel. They are not merely poems, but lyrics for music from the ancient world. As such they contain musical conventions peculiar to music and worship during that time.

Second, the poems in the Psalms were written over a period of a thousand years, from the time of Moses in the fifteenth century B.C. to the time of Ezra in the fifth century B.C. Although David is the main author associated with the composition of the Psalms, many other authors from various time periods contributed psalms to what would become the Book of Psalms.

Third, the psalms were collected and arranged over a long period of time. This process involved some editorial additions to the poems, some cutting and expanding, and some rearranging and restructuring of various psalms. The Holy Spirit who had inspired these poems in the beginning oversaw this process of restructuring them for temple worship.

Fourth, the psalms were written in the language of the human spirit, the utterances of the soul. The psalms are not cool, reasoned prose, but deeply emotional works that use wrenching language, dramatic exaggeration, and figurative speech.



Musicians with two different harps, Assyria 645–635 B.C.

Kim Walton, courtesy of the British Museum

Fifth, psalms and the writing of psalms were part of ordinary life for the Israelites. The Scriptures record a number of times when the Israelites spontaneously responded to the Lord with a psalm of praise. Moses sang a psalm in praise of God (Ex. 15); Deborah and Hannah did the same (Judg. 5; 1 Sam. 2); and David blessed the Lord with a psalm (1 Chr. 29). Through a psalm the Israelites would express their devotion and thanks to their Lord. This tradition continued into the New Testament period, for Mary in Luke 1 responded to the angel's message with a psalm. This Israelite tradition of psalm writing was confirmed by the discovery of a number of original psalms among the Dead Sea Scrolls discovered in 1947.

Sixth, individual psalms were written for different purposes. Some began as works of private devotion, while others were designed from the beginning to be used in public worship. Ultimately, all the psalms became the treasure of all the people in temple worship, for no matter what subject they addressed, they always led the people to the worship of the living God.

Finally, it must be remembered that the psalms were written in the language of response. Each psalm records in powerful, poetic language one individual's response to God. From a desperate cry to an ecstatic shout of joy, each psalmist responds to God in the middle of a particular situation. Even though the psalms became a part of the community's worship life, they remained a vehicle for individual expression as well. Even today, the psalms are used both in public worship and in the devotional moments of individual Christians.



Harpist from Ashdod, tenth century **B.C.**
Kim Walton, courtesy of the Israel Museum, Jerusalem

CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

Finding Jesus in the Book of Job is a bit more of a challenge than finding references to Him in the Psalms. The Psalms are replete with allusions to Him! The coming King is a frequently repeated theme of these ancient Hebrew worship songs. Many specifically anticipate the life and ministry of Jesus Christ, the One who came centuries later as the promised Messiah. One kind of messianic psalm called the enthronement psalm anticipates the day when Yahweh (Jehovah) will consummate His kingdom in the person of the Messiah. The psalmists may not have understood what they were writing, but they wrote with both eyes focused on eternity (see Ps. 96–99).

PSALMS OUTLINE

Book I:	Psalms 1–41
Book II:	Psalms 42–72
Book III:	Psalms 73–89
Book IV:	Psalms 90–106
Book V:	Psalms 107–150

Book One: Psalms 1–41

PSALM 1

The Way of the Righteous and the End of the Ungodly

Blessed ^a is the man
Who walks not in the counsel of
the ¹ungodly,
Nor stands in the path of sinners,
^bNor sits in the seat of the scornful;
² But ^chis delight is in the law of the
LORD,
^dAnd in His law he ²meditates day
and night.
³ He shall be like a tree
^ePlanted by the ³rivers of water,
That brings forth its fruit in its
season,
Whose leaf also shall not wither;
And whatever he does shall ^fprosper.
⁴ The ungodly *are* not so,
But *are* ^glike the chaff which the
wind drives away.

PSALM 1

1 ^a Prov. 4:14 ^b Ps.
26:4, 5; Jer. 15:17
¹ wicked
2 ^c Ps. 119:14, 16,
35 ^d [Josh. 1:8]
² ponders by talking
to himself
3 ^e [Ps. 92:12–14];
Jer. 17:8; Ezek. 19:10
^f Gen. 39:2, 3, 23; Ps.
128:2 ³ channels
4 ^g Job 21:18; Ps.
35:5; Is. 17:13
6 ^h Ps. 37:18; [Nah.
1:7; John 10:14;
2 Tim. 2:19]

PSALM 2

1 ^a Acts 4:25, 26 [☆]
¹ Gentiles ² throug
tumultuously
³ worthless or empty
2 ^b [Matt. 12:14;
26:3, 4, 59–66;
27:1, 2; Mark 3:6;
11:18] ^c [John
1:41] [☆] ⁴ Christ,
Commissioned
One, Heb. *Messiah*
3 ^d Luke 19:14
4 ^e Ps. 37:13

⁵ Therefore the ungodly shall not
stand in the judgment,
Nor sinners in the congregation of
the righteous.
⁶ For ^hthe LORD knows the way of the
righteous,
But the way of the ungodly shall
perish.

PSALM 2

The Messiah's Triumph and Kingdom

Why ^a do the ¹nations ²rage,
And the people plot a ³vain thing?
² The kings of the earth set
themselves,
And the ^brulers take counsel together,
Against the LORD and against His
^cAnointed, ⁴saying,
³ “Let ^dus break Their bonds in pieces
And cast away Their cords from us.”
⁴ He who sits in the heavens ^eshall
laugh;
The Lord shall hold them in derision.

Psalm 1, a wisdom psalm, presents a vivid contrast between the way of the righteous (vv. 1–3) and the way of the wicked (vv. 4–6). No author is named nor is any circumstance given for the writing of this poem. It was probably written late in Israel's history. With its focus on the distinctions of character and the different destinies of the righteous and the wicked, this psalm serves as an introduction to the entire Book of Psalms. It affirms that there is one way to true life; to ignore this way is to foolishly accept death (see Prov. 1:20–33).

1:1 The Hebrew word for **man** in this context means “person,” without reference to gender. **Who walks not:** The parallelism in this verse speaks of an increasingly deeper involvement with wickedness: “walking beside,” “standing with,” “sitting beside.” Similarly, the terms for the wicked are progressive: **ungodly**, **sinners**, and **the scornful**. The imagery of this verse presents an ideal righteous person—one who is *in* the world, but quite unaffected by the world.

1:2 But his delight: Instead of finding enjoyment in entanglements with wicked persons, the godly person finds his or her deep enjoyment in the things of God, particularly the Word of God. **The law of the LORD** refers specifically to the Pentateuch, the first five books of the OT. The Hebrew word for *law* expresses the idea of God pointing out the path for life in fellowship with Him (19:7–11). **Meditates** means “to mumble” or “to speak to oneself” (4:4). Biblical meditation is focusing the mind on Scripture.

1:3 like a tree: This simile presents an image of a desert date palm

that has been firmly planted in a well-watered oasis (Jer. 17:8). Everything about the tree is valuable and productive. Likewise, the righteous are valuable and productive to God—people in whom He finds pleasure (33:15; 147:11). **Shall prosper** is not a guarantee of the future financial worth of the righteous; rather, the righteous person is always useful and productive to the Lord.

1:4, 5 Like **chaff**, the refuse that is blown away by the wind after the grain harvest, the **ungodly** have no stability (35:5; 83:13). When the judgment comes, the ungodly will no longer **stand** (5:5). This is similar to the picture of final judgment in the Olivet Discourse of Jesus (Matt. 25:31–46).

1:6 The Bible speaks of two ways (Prov. 2:8; 4:19), only one of which leads to God. This is a consistent biblical theme, culminating in the celebrated words of Jesus, “I am the way” (John 14:6). The verb **knows** in this context refers not just to God's awareness, but to an intimate, personal knowledge (101:4). God is intimately involved with the way of the righteous, but has no connection with the way of the ungodly, except in judgment (146:9).

Psalm 2, a royal psalm, focuses on the coming glorious reign of the Lord's Messiah. The author is anonymous in the Hebrew text, but the NT apostles assign it to David (Acts 4:24–26). This psalm should be read in conjunction with Ps. 110. Both psalms point prophetically to the coming rule of Jesus (see Acts 13:33; Heb. 1:5; 6:5; Rev. 2:26, 27; 12:5). Psalm 2 has four movements, each related to a different voice or speaker: (1) a description of the plans of the wicked (vv. 1–3); (2) the Father's derisive laughter from heaven (vv. 4–6); (3) the Son's declaration of the Father's decree (vv. 7–9); (4) the Spirit's instruction to all kings to obey the Son (vv. 10–12).

2:1 **Why do the nations rage:** This passage has multiple meanings. Originally it referred to the nations that confronted David and his legitimate successors. But the Davidic kings were mere shadows of the coming great King, the Savior Jesus. Consequently, the verse also refers to any attack on Jesus and His divine kingdom. This assault by the nations occurred in its most dramatic form at the cross, but resistance to God's kingdom has continued. Throughout history, nations have resisted the claims of the gospel, the foundation of Jesus' kingdom.

2:2 **LORD** refers to the Father. **His Anointed** (18:50; 132:10) refers to the Son. The word conveys a sense of royalty, for kings were anointed (see 1 Sam. 10:1; 16:13). **The kings of the earth** would attempt to withstand the very King of the universe.

2:4, 5 **hold them in derision:** God laughs scornfully at an attack

nations

(Heb. *goy*) (2:1; 10:16; Judg. 2:21) Strong's #1471

The Hebrew word *goy* basically means a body or group of people and is usually translated *nation*. Although *goy* can be used to designate the people of Israel, especially before their settlement in Canaan (Josh. 4:1; 5:6), the term generally refers to neighboring pagan nations (Deut. 4:38; Judg. 2:21, 22). These nations, characterized by wickedness (Deut. 9:4, 5), were considered enemies of God (2:1; 10:16). Yet the nations were not without hope, for the OT also speaks of the grace of God extending to all people through the coming of the promised Messiah (Is. 2:2; 11:10; 42:6).

- 5 Then He shall speak to them in His wrath,
And distress them in His deep displeasure:
6 “Yet I have ⁵set My King
⁶On My holy hill of Zion.”
7 “I will declare the ⁷decree:
The LORD has said to Me,
^fYou are My Son,

⁶ ⁵ Lit. *installed*
⁶ Lit. *Upon Zion, the hill of My holiness*
⁷ ^f Matt. 3:17; Mark 1:1, 11; Luke 3:22; John 1:18; Acts 13:33; [Heb. 1:5; 5:5] ☆ ⁷ Or *decree of the LORD: He said to Me*
⁹ ^g Ps. 89:23; 110:5, 6 ☆; [Rev. 2:26, 27;

- Today I have begotten You.
8 Ask of Me, and I will give You
The nations *for* Your inheritance,
And the ends of the earth *for* Your possession.
9 ^g You shall ⁸break them with a rod of iron;

12:5; 19:15] ⁸ So with MT, Tg., LXX, Syr., Vg. *rule* (cf. Rev. 2:27)

on His Son (37:13). The idea of “fighting off” the will of God is truly preposterous. **He who sits in the heavens:** God is King of the universe (Ps. 93). What are the puny kings of the earth compared to Him?

2:6 My King: David and his legitimate heirs were given a divine promise that they would rule the Israelites under the Lord’s blessing. Any attack on the king of Israel was an assault on God’s promise. **Zion** is another name for Jerusalem. **My holy hill:** The site of Zion was “holy,” for it was declared to be so by God. It was the place where Abraham bound his son Isaac (Gen. 22), where the holy temple was built (2 Chr. 3), and where the Savior Jesus would die (Matt. 27).

2:7 You are My Son: Each time a legitimate son of David was crowned king as the successor to his father in the city of Jerusalem, these words could be used of him. The new king was adopted by God as his “son”; he would look to God as his “Father” (see 2 Sam. 7:5, 14). This formula of adoption was announced in a solemn ceremony of coronation attended by priests and prophets, with pomp and celebratory worship of God. In the NT, the Son of God is also declared to be the King, the true Anointed, the Christ (see Matt. 3:17; Mark 1:1, 11; Luke 3:22; John 1:18; Acts 13:33; Heb. 1:5; 5:5).

2:9 rod of iron: The future rule of the royal Son would be absolute. There would be no rebellion.

The Poetry of the Psalms

A fuller appreciation of the eloquence of the Psalms can be gained by understanding the basics of Hebrew poetry. The lack of a predictable rhythm and rhyme has confused some people about the poetic nature of the Psalms. Although Hebrew poetry contains some rhythm, it primarily makes use of repetition and recapitulation. One line of a verse is followed by another that gives a variation of the same idea. Not only do the psalmists use this poetic technique, but the authors of proverbs use it as well (see the Introduction to Proverbs). The second line of a proverb usually reinforces the meaning of the first line (see Prov. 22:1). This reinforcement of the thought is not mere tautology, but the graceful artistry of a poet. The first line makes a statement that the second line sharpens or heightens.

A psalmist could modify this general pattern in a number of ways. First, the psalmist could use *synonymous parallelism* to make the two elements similar. For example:

But his delight is in the law of the LORD,
And in His law he meditates day and night. (1:2)

Second, the psalmist could contrast the two elements. This type of parallelism, called *antithetical parallelism*, usually contains the word “but.” For example:

For the LORD knows the way of the righteous,
But the way of the ungodly shall perish. (1:6)

Third, the psalmist could develop the theme of the first line in the second line. This is called *synthetic parallelism*. For example:

Blessed is the man
Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly,
Nor stands in the path of sinners,
Nor sits in the seat of the scornful. (1:1)

A fourth improvement on general parallelism is *climactic parallelism*. In this type of parallelism, the first member of a couplet is incomplete and the second member partially repeats the first member and then completes the thought. For example:

Give to the LORD, O families of the peoples,
Give to the LORD glory and strength. (96:7)

Finally, the psalmist could use *emblematic parallelism*. In this type, the first line contains a figure of speech and the following lines explain the figure by expansion or explanation. In the following example, the parallel lines of this verse explain the meaning of the expression “like a tree.”

He shall be like a tree
Planted by the rivers of water,
That brings forth its fruit in its season,
Whose leaf also shall not wither;
And whatever he does shall prosper. (1:3)

With poetic parallelism, the Hebrew psalmist powerfully expresses his praise of the Lord. By reading the psalms aloud and emphasizing the parallel elements, one can gain some sense of the harmonious poetic language from which the translation is derived.



You shall dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel.'"

¹⁰ Now therefore, be wise, O kings;
Be instructed, you judges of the earth.

¹¹ Serve the LORD with fear,
And rejoice with trembling.

^{12,9} Kiss the Son, lest ¹He be angry,
And you perish *in* the way,
When ^hHis wrath is kindled but a little.

ⁱBlessed *are* all those who put their trust in Him.

PSALM 3

The LORD Helps His Troubled People

A Psalm of David ^a when he fled from Absalom his son.

LORD, how they have increased who trouble me!

Many *are* they who rise up against me.

² Many *are* they who say of me,
"There is no help for him in God."

Selah

³ But You, O LORD, *are* ^ba shield ¹for me,

My glory and ^cthe One who lifts up my head.

¹² ^h[Rev. 6:16, 17]
¹[Ps. 5:11; 34:22]
⁹LXX, Vg. Embrace discipline; Tg. Receive instruction
¹LXX the LORD

PSALM 3

title ^a2 Sam. 15:13-17
³ ^bPs. 5:12; 28:7
^cPs. 9:13; 27:6 ¹Lit. around

⁴ ^dPs. 4:3; 34:4 ^ePs. 2:6; 15:1; 43:3
⁵ ^fLev. 26:6; Ps. 4:8; Prov. 3:24
⁶ ^gPs. 23:4; 27:3
⁷ ^hJob 16:10
⁸ ⁱPs. 28:8; 35:3; [Is. 43:11]

PSALM 4

title ¹Choir Director
¹ ²Be gracious to me

⁴ I cried to the LORD with my voice,
And ^dHe heard me from His ^eholy hill. *Selah*

⁵ ^fI lay down and slept;
I awoke, for the LORD sustained me.

⁶ ^gI will not be afraid of ten thousands of people
Who have set *themselves* against me all around.

⁷ Arise, O LORD;
Save me, O my God!

^hFor You have struck all my enemies on the cheekbone;
You have broken the teeth of the ungodly.

⁸ ⁱSalvation *belongs* to the LORD.
Your blessing *is* upon Your people. *Selah*

PSALM 4

The Safety of the Faithful

To the ¹Chief Musician. With stringed instruments. A Psalm of David.

Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness!

You have relieved me in *my* distress;

² Have mercy on me, and hear my prayer.

2:10, 11 be wise: Potentially rebellious kings would avoid terrible judgment only by submitting to the Anointed of God. **rejoice with trembling:** Only with the proper fear, adoration, reverence, and awe of the Most Holy God could there be genuine joy in the coming kingdom.

2:12 Kiss the Son: In this passage, the kings and all peoples were presented with a clear choice. They could either love and respect the Lord's Anointed and so experience His great blessing, or they could refuse to submit, and incur God's wrath.

Psalm 3 is a lament psalm ascribed to David. The superscription indicates a precise setting: the period of David's flight from his son Absalom (2 Sam. 15). This is one of the few psalm titles that ties a psalm to a specific incident in the life of David. The brief poem has four movements: (1) David's opening lament (vv. 1, 2); (2) his strong confession of trust (vv. 3, 4); (3) his determined act of faith (vv. 5, 6); (4) his continuing plea (vv. 7, 8).

3:1, 2 Many: At this point in David's life there was one specific foe who troubled him greatly—his son Absalom. However, David's friends had also become his foes because they were advising him that no one would help him, not even God. **Selah:** This is a musical term, perhaps indicating a pause in the lyrics for a musical interlude.

3:3, 4 The phrase **but You, O LORD** changes the mood of the psalm from dejection to confidence. David says three things of the Lord: (1) When no one would help David, God was his **shield**. (2) When David had nothing to treasure, God was his **glory**. (3) When no one would encourage him, God Himself would encourage him and lift his **head**. **Holy hill** is a poetic reference to God's dwelling in heaven; the place of Israel's worship was but a physical symbol of this dwelling.

3:5, 6 I lay down and slept: Given the stress that David faced, it is remarkable that he was able to enjoy a night's rest. This was possible only because of God's sustaining power. God's gift of rest may be given even in the most troubling times. **I will not be afraid:** When God is one's protector, there is no need to fear (23:4; 27:3; 118:6).

3:7, 8 In the language of the lament psalms, David calls out for God

to **arise**, to move on his behalf, to incline to his prayer (40:1). **on the cheekbone:** In the poetic imagery David uses, his enemies are like powerful beasts whose strength is in their jaws and whose terror is in their teeth. God's strike at the source of their strength means that they are no longer a threat. **Salvation,** in this instance, refers to deliverance from the immediate pressure that the psalm has already described. One meaning of the Hebrew word translated *salvation* is "room to breathe." **Your people:** As is the pattern in Psalms, the experience of the individual becomes the template for the community. **Psalm 4** is linked to Ps. 3 in mood and concept. Both speak of the possibility of finding such peace in God's presence that even when torn by physical and emotional pain, a person may still have restful sleep (3:5; 4:8). This is a lament psalm of the individual, but one in which there is an unusual degree of confidence. Psalm 4 is the first of the psalms to have a superscription that focuses on its musical nature. **To the Chief Musician** is a notice that indicates that this psalm is from an early collection of psalms used in temple worship. **With stringed instruments** specifies the musical setting for the psalm. **A Psalm of David** serves not only as a notice of authorship, but also as a reminder that the poem was to be sung. The structure of the psalm is as follows: (1) a petition for deliverance (v. 1); (2) an address to the wicked, encouraging them to turn from falsehood and to trust in God (vv. 2–5); (3) an assertion that only God is able to provide genuine joy, deep peace, and abiding safety (vv. 6–8).

4:1 O God of my righteousness can also be translated "O my righteous God." The phrase has two meanings: (1) Only God is righteous. (2) All of a person's righteousness is found in Him alone. The psalmist is facing a very pressing need, but his confidence in God remains especially strong. He addresses God in terms of His character—His "righteousness." Then he speaks of God's earlier saving works in his life: **You have relieved me in my distress.**

4:2 How long: The psalmists often use these words to question God (13:1, 2). Here they are addressed to the wicked. **my glory:** For the believer, one's sense of glory or honor is found in relationship to the Savior.

- 2 How long, O you sons of men,
Will you turn my glory to shame?
How long will you love worthlessness
And seek falsehood? *Selah*
- 3 But know that ^athe LORD has ³set
 apart for Himself him who is
 godly;
 The LORD will hear when I call to Him.
- 4 ^bBe ⁴angry, and do not sin.
^cMeditate within your heart on your
 bed, and be still. *Selah*
- 5 Offer ^dthe sacrifices of righteousness,
 And ^eput your trust in the LORD.
- 6 *There are many who say,*
"Who will show us any good?"
^fLORD, lift up the light of Your
 countenance upon us.
- 7 You have put ^ggladness in my heart,
 More than in the season that their
 grain and wine increased.
- 8 ^hI will both lie down in peace, and
 sleep;
ⁱFor You alone, O LORD, make me
 dwell in safety.

PSALM 5

A Prayer for Guidance

To the Chief Musician. With ¹flutes.
 A Psalm of David.

Give ^aear to my words, O LORD,
 Consider my ²meditation.

3 ^a [2 Tim. 2:19]
³ Many Heb. mss.,
 LXX, Tg., Vg. *made*
wonderful
 4 ^b [Ps. 119:11; Eph.
 4:26] ^c Ps. 77:6
^d Lit. *Tremble or Be*
agitated
 5 ^d Deut. 33:19; Ps.
 51:19 ^e Ps. 37:3,
 5; 62:8
 6 ^f Num. 6:26; Ps.
 80:3, 7, 19
 7 ^g Ps. 97:11, 12; Is.
 9:3; Acts 14:17
 8 ^h Job 11:19; Ps. 3:5
ⁱ [Lev. 25:18]; Deut.
 12:10

PSALM 5

title ¹ Heb.
nehiloth
 1 ^a Ps. 4:1 ² Lit.
groaning

3 ^b Ps. 55:17; 88:13
 4 ^c Lit. *sojourn*
 5 ^c [Hab. 1:13]
^d Ps. 1:5
 6 ^e Ps. 55:23
 7 ^f Lit. *the temple of*
Your holiness
 8 ^f Ps. 25:4, 5; 27:11;
 31:3
 9 ^g Rom. 3:13
⁵ *uprightness*

- 2 Give heed to the voice of my cry,
 My King and my God,
 For to You I will pray.
- 3 My voice You shall hear in the
 morning, O LORD;
^bIn the morning I will direct *it* to You,
 And I will look up.
- 4 For You *are* not a God who takes
 pleasure in wickedness,
 Nor shall evil ³dwell with You.
- 5 The ^cboastful shall not ^dstand in
 Your sight;
 You hate all workers of iniquity.
- 6 You shall destroy those who speak
 falsehood;
 The LORD abhors the ^ebloodthirsty
 and deceitful man.
- 7 But as for me, I will come into Your
 house in the multitude of Your
 mercy;
 In fear of You I will worship toward
⁴Your holy temple.
- 8 ^fLead me, O LORD, in Your
 righteousness because of my
 enemies;
 Make Your way straight before my
 face.
- 9 For *there is* no ⁵faithfulness in their
 mouth;
 Their inward part is destruction;
^gTheir throat is an open tomb;
 They flatter with their tongue.

4:3 set apart: This is the central point of this psalm. God has identified the **godly**—those who are devoted to God and His ways. He exercises special care over them and listens to their prayers.

4:4, 5 Be angry, and do not sin: These words are cited by Paul in the NT to describe “righteous indignation” (Eph. 4:26). Here the psalmist exhorts his reader not to let anger or anxiety erode complete trust or faith in the Lord. **Offer the sacrifices of righteousness:** These words speak of the salvation experience. **put your trust in the LORD:** Those being addressed here are the wicked (1:4–6). Thus in this psalm, the poet calls his neighbors to put their faith in God (Ps. 67).

4:6 any good: Although our lives often seem to be filled with uncertainty, there is never uncertainty with God. **light of Your countenance:** This phrase recalls the Aaronic benediction (Num. 6:26) and indicates God’s favor. Those on whom the Lord shines His face are truly blessed.

4:7 grain and wine: The joy God gives transcends the joy of the harvest. Agricultural produce, the result of abundant rain on fertile soil, was a blessing of God on His people. But there is something greater than full barns and overflowing cisterns—the joy of God’s presence.

4:8 The peace that God gives is far from a relaxation technique. It is a peace that enables an anxious person to lie down **and sleep** (3:5).

Psalm 5, a lament psalm, speaks of an unspecified but distressing period of David’s life, a time marked by enemies who verbally opposed him and his rule. When David’s enemies hurled curses at him, they believed that those curses called on divine power to destroy him. In this psalm, David is in distress because of the lies and boasts of his adversaries (101:7). He identifies his own cause with that of the Lord, so that attacks on him become attacks on God Himself. The “righteous” in v. 12 ultimately points to the Savior Jesus, as is common in the Book of Psalms (1:6). The psalm has three movements: (1) a prayer to the Lord for deliverance in a time of trouble (vv. 1–6); (2) a desire to worship the Lord in a time of

trouble (vv. 7–9); (3) a longing for final judgment by the Lord in times of trouble (vv. 10–12).

5:1–3 Give ear: As in 4:1, this is the language of a person who believes from experience that God has forgotten his plight. The sufferer calls on the Lord to listen, even though the Lord has been continually listening and caring. **Meditation** here refers to incessant groaning. **My King:** The psalmists often address God in heaven as King, the ruler over all. At times, the psalms focus on prayer **in the morning** (88:13)—a commendable habit that helps a person to dedicate all the activities of the day to the glory of God.

5:4–6 Takes pleasure means to find enjoyment or reason for laughter. There is no enjoyment to be found in evil. The Hebrew word for **boastful** is the same one used to describe the praise of God. The praise of God is the focus of the Psalms; but praise of self—a mere boast—is a twisted, human perversion of true praise.

not stand: This psalm speaks of final judgment on the wicked (compare 1:5). They will not be allowed to stay in His glorious presence. **You hate:** God’s hatred is not merely a feeling, but an action of His will. The phrase **workers of iniquity** occurs often in the Psalms to describe those who characteristically practice evil (14:4).

5:7, 8 But as for me: In the Hebrew text, these words indicate a sharp contrast with the previous description of the wicked. The Hebrew word **temple** can be used of any very large structure—“palace” or “big house.” David was a leader in reforming the worship of God in Jerusalem, and he established a structure for the worship that would take place in the temple to be built by Solomon. David uses the word *temple* in anticipation of the future glorious building; all later generations of Hebrew worshipers would understand their own worship better because of the use of this word in these psalms. **Make Your way straight:** David prayed that God would make clear His will for him.

5:9, 10 Their throat is an open tomb: These words describe

¹⁰ Pronounce them guilty, O God!
 Let them fall by their own
 counsels;
 Cast them out in the multitude of
 their transgressions,
 For they have rebelled against You.

¹¹ But let all those rejoice who put their
 trust in You;
 Let them ever shout for joy, because
 You ⁶ defend them;
 Let those also who love Your name
 Be joyful in You.

¹² For You, O LORD, will bless the
 righteous;
 With favor You will surround him as
 with a shield.

PSALM 6

A Prayer of Faith in Time of Distress

To the Chief Musician. With stringed
 instruments. ^a On ¹ an eight-stringed harp.
 A Psalm of David.

O LORD, ^b do not rebuke me in Your
 anger,
 Nor chasten me in Your hot
 displeasure.

² Have mercy on me, O LORD, for I *am*
 weak;
 O LORD, ^c heal me, for my bones are
 troubled.

³ My soul also is greatly ^d troubled;
 But You, O LORD—how long?

¹¹ ⁶ protect, lit.
 cover

PSALM 6

title ^a Ps. 12: title
¹ Heb. *sheminith*
¹ b Ps. 38:1; 118:18;
 [Jer. 10:24]
² c Ps. 41:4; 147:3;
 [Hos. 6:1]
³ d Ps. 88:3; John
 12:27

⁵ e Ps. 30:9; 88:10-
 12; 115:17; [Eccl.
 9:10]; Is. 38:18
⁶ f Or Every night
⁷ g Job 17:7; Ps. 31:9
⁸ h [Matt. 25:41]
^h Ps. 3:4; 28:6

PSALM 7

title ^a Hab. 3:1
^b 2 Sam. 16 ¹ Heb.
Shiggaion

⁴ Return, O LORD, deliver me!
 Oh, save me for Your mercies' sake!

⁵ ^e For in death *there is* no remembrance
 of You;
 In the grave who will give You
 thanks?

⁶ I am weary with my groaning;
² All night I make my bed swim;
 I drench my couch with my tears.

⁷ ^f My eye wastes away because of grief;
 It grows old because of all my
 enemies.

⁸ ^g Depart from me, all you workers of
 iniquity;
 For the LORD has ^h heard the voice of
 my weeping.

⁹ The LORD has heard my supplication;
 The LORD will receive my prayer.

¹⁰ Let all my enemies be ashamed and
 greatly troubled;
 Let them turn back *and* be ashamed
 suddenly.

PSALM 7

*Prayer and Praise for Deliverance
 from Enemies*

A ^a Meditation ¹ of David, which he sang
 to the LORD ^b concerning the words
 of Cush, a Benjamite.

O LORD my God, in You I put my
 trust;

the perverse language used by people in opposition to God. Paul used the words of these verses to argue for depravity of all people (Rom. 3:13).

5:11, 12 rejoice: Here the psalmist describes the joy of the saved, the ecstasy of the ones whom God saves from their own deserved destruction. Our joy must always be focused on our Savior (Phil. 4:4).

Psalm 6 is a lament psalm that shares elements of the penitential psalms. David was experiencing what he feared to be a mortal illness. He sensed that this illness may have fallen on him because of his own sinfulness. The title of the psalm is similar to those of Ps. 4; 5. The specification of instruments is a reminder that this very personal psalm became part of the worship of the community when the temple was built. The psalm has four movements: (1) a petition for the Lord's mercy at a time of great pain (vv. 1–3); (2) an affirmation that the praise of the Lord comes from the living (vv. 4, 5); (3) a description of the psalmist's suffering (vv. 6, 7); (4) a rebuke of the psalmist's enemies, for the Lord has heard his prayer (vv. 8–10).

6:1–3 in Your anger: The psalmist suffers from a grave physical illness, one from which he fears he might not recover (v. 5). His principal concern is not only that his suffering might be more than he could stand, but that it comes as a result of God's severe anger. In his mourning, David cries out to God (as in 38:1). **My bones** is a poetic way of describing a deeply troubling illness; David's entire being is in torment.

6:4, 5 Return: This is a typical part of a petition in the psalms of lament (Ps. 13). The call for God to act is based on faith, even during a period of great stress. **Your mercies' sake:** Perhaps the most significant single term in the Hebrew text regarding the character of God is the word rendered *mercies* here. The Hebrew word describes what some prefer to call the loyal love of God. The translations vary because the word has much depth. Aside from the personal

name of God (Yahweh), it may be the single most important term describing Him as the object of praise in the Book of Psalms (36:5). **In the grave:** If God still desires to hear David's voice in worship, He must keep David alive. David would be of no use to God dead; alive he could sing, shout, and testify to God's love and His mercy (94:17).

6:8–10 Depart: Psalm 6 is a lament psalm in which the Lord answers the prayer of the afflicted David. The change of mood in the psalm is due to the Lord's response. David who has been so ill is now healed. The Lord has answered David's prayer. **workers of iniquity:** See 14:4; 101:8. **Let all my enemies be ashamed:** The psalmist speaks in righteous indignation against those who have reviled him, and more importantly have ridiculed his God.

Psalm 7 is a lament psalm, featuring David's protests of innocence. In some psalms, the psalmist indicates that his suffering is deserved. Such cases lead to confession of sin. But in other cases, psalmists, like David in this psalm, do not believe they deserve the suffering or the feeling of being abandoned by God. Hence this psalm expresses David's extreme sorrow. Often we are shocked when we face suffering. But the dominant message in the Book of Psalms is twofold: (1) God is good, and (2) life is difficult. The life of faith is lived between these two realities. Although the title of the psalm refers to "Cush, a Benjamite," the Scriptures do not identify who this person was or what event in David's life prompted this psalm. The psalm has several brief movements: (1) an initial appeal for deliverance (vv. 1, 2); (2) a protest of innocence (vv. 3–5); (3) an appeal for God's judgment, part one (vv. 6–8); (4) an appeal for God's judgment, part two (vv. 9, 10); (5) a picture of God's judging work (vv. 11–13); (6) a portrait of the wicked (vv. 14–16); (7) a vow of praise (v. 17).

7:1, 2 I put my trust: The verb here can describe the action of a bird seeking refuge in the wings of its mother. This picture is found

- ^c Save me from all those who persecute me;
And deliver me,
^d Lest they tear me like a lion,
^e Rending *me* in pieces, while *there is*
none to deliver.
- ³ O LORD my God, ^f if I have done
this:
If there is ^g iniquity in my hands,
⁴ If I have repaid evil to him who was
at peace with me,
Or ^h have plundered my enemy
without cause,
⁵ Let the enemy pursue me and
overtake *me*;
Yes, let him trample my life to the
earth,
And lay my honor in the dust. *Selah*
- ⁶ Arise, O LORD, in Your anger;
ⁱ Lift Yourself up because of the rage
of my enemies;
^j Rise up ² for me *to* the judgment You
have commanded!
- ⁷ So the congregation of the peoples
shall surround You;
For their sakes, therefore, return on
high.
- ⁸ The LORD shall judge the peoples;
^k Judge me, O LORD, ^l according to my
righteousness,
And according to my integrity
within me.
- ⁹ Oh, let the wickedness of the wicked
come to an end,
But establish the just;
^m For the righteous God tests the
hearts and ³ minds.
- ^{10d} My defense *is* of God,
Who saves the ⁿ upright in heart.

1 ^c Ps. 31:15
2 ^d Ps. 57:4; Is. 38:13
^e Ps. 50:22
3 ^f 2 Sam. 16:7
^g 1 Sam. 24:11
4 ^h 1 Sam. 24:7; 26:9
6 ⁱ Ps. 94:2 / Ps.
35:23; 44:23 ² So
with MT, Tg., Vg.;
LXX O LORD my God
8 ^k Ps. 26:1; 35:24;
43:1 / Ps. 18:20;
35:24
9 ^m [1 Sam. 16:7]
³ Lit. *kidneys*, the
most secret part
of man
10 ⁿ Ps. 97:10, 11;
125:4 ⁴ Lit. *My
shield is upon God*

12 ^o Deut. 32:41
14 ^p Job 15:35; Is.
59:4; [James 1:15]
15 ^q [Job 4:8]; Ps.
57:6
16 ^r Esth. 9:25; Ps.
140:9 ⁵ The crown
of his own head

PSALM 8

title ¹ Heb. *Al
Gittith*
1 ^a Ps. 148:13 ^b Ps.
113:4

- ¹¹ God *is* a just judge,
And God is angry *with the wicked*
every day.
- ¹² If he does not turn back,
He will ^a sharpen His
sword;
He bends His bow and makes it
ready.
- ¹³ He also prepares for Himself
instruments of death;
He makes His arrows into fiery
shafts.
- ^{14p} Behold, *the wicked* brings forth
iniquity;
Yes, he conceives trouble and brings
forth falsehood.
- ¹⁵ He made a pit and dug it out,
^q And has fallen into the ditch *which*
he made.
- ^{16r} His trouble shall return upon his
own head,
And his violent dealing shall
come down on ⁵ his own
crown.
- ¹⁷ I will praise the LORD according to
His righteousness,
And will sing praise to the name of
the LORD Most High.

PSALM 8

The Glory of the LORD in Creation

To the Chief Musician. ¹ On the instrument
of Gath. A Psalm of David.

O LORD, our Lord,
How ^a excellent *is* Your name in all
the earth,
Who have ^b set Your glory above the
heavens!

in the Book of Psalms (11:1; 17:8) and in the historical books (Ruth 2:12). **Tear me like a lion** vividly conveys the psalmist's fear. David had witnessed a lion who had captured its prey, and he compares his own fate to being captured and torn apart.

7:3–5 if I have done this: David protests that he is innocent of whatever charge his enemy has brought against him (Ps. 94). **let him trample my life:** These solemn words are spoken to God. The Lord can enact His judgment through David's enemies if his protest of innocence is false.

7:6–8 in Your anger: This is a plea for God to display His anger against the psalmist's adversaries, to judge them for their slander against David. **Lift Yourself up:** David implores the Lord to rise from His throne to intervene on his behalf, to bring justice in the intolerable situation (3:7). **Judge me:** Only someone confident of his own innocence would dare to pray these words before the Lord. David was innocent of the charges. He had not attacked someone without cause (see vv. 3–5).

7:9, 10 In the Hebrew, **hearts and minds** is literally "hearts and kidneys"—an ancient way of describing the innermost person. **My defense** means "my shield." God hovers over the believer like a military shield, an invisible defense (33:20).

7:11–13 God is angry: The indignation of God is directed at the enemies of His people. **sharpen His sword:** The imagery in vv. 12,

13 is of a great warrior preparing for battle: the Warrior is the Lord and the battle is against the wicked (37:9; 118:10).

7:14–16 conceives trouble: The wicked become "mothers" to trouble. They will give birth to their own destruction.

7:17 Most High is a term often used to describe God's authority over the nations (47:2; 78:35; Deut. 32:8). The God of Israel is not just another national deity—He rules all nations.

Psalm 8, a psalm of praise with wisdom connections, is a poetic reflection of the great creation text of Gen. 1. This psalm expresses wonder at the majestic and sublime nature of God. However, the center of the psalm focuses on human beings, a rarity in Scripture. But even this focus leads to the praise of God, the Creator of humanity. Thus the psalm sets to music the significance of the phrase "in His image" in Gen. 1:26–28. The structure of the poem is: (1) a prologue in praise of God's excellent name (v. 1); (2) the praise of God from children (v. 2); (3) the praise of the Creator of humanity (vv. 3–8); (4) an epilogue in praise of God's excellent name (v. 9).

8:1 How excellent is Your name: The name of God and the glory of God are alternate ways of describing who He is. See the description of the meaning of the name of God in Ex. 3:14, 15 and the focus on the name of God in 113:1–3. This psalm ends with the same words it begins with. These words of praise to the name of

2 ^cOut of the mouth of babes and nursing infants
You have ²ordained strength,
Because of Your enemies,
That You may silence ^dthe enemy
and the avenger.

3 When I ^econsider Your heavens, the
work of Your fingers,
The moon and the stars, which You
have ordained,

4 ^fWhat is man that You are mindful of
him,
And the son of man that You ^gvisit ³
him?

5 For You have made him a little lower
than ⁴the angels,
And You have crowned him with
glory and honor.

6 ^hYou have made him to have dominion
over the works of Your hands;
ⁱYou have put all *things* under his
feet,

2 ^c Matt. 21:16 ☆;
[1 Cor. 1:27] ^d Ps.
44:16 ² established
3 ^e Ps. 111:2
4 ^f Job 7:17, 18;
[Heb. 2:6-8] ^g [Job
10:12] ³ give
attention to or
care for
5 ⁴ Heb. Elohim,
God; LXX, Syr., Tg.,
Jewish tradition
angels
6 ^h [Gen. 1:26, 28]
ⁱ [1 Cor. 15:27; Eph.
1:22; Heb. 2:8]

9 / Ps. 8:1

PSALM 9

title ¹ Heb. *Muth
Labben*
2 ^a Ps. 5:11; 104:34
^b [Ps. 83:18; 92:1]

7 All sheep and oxen—
Even the beasts of the field,
8 The birds of the air,
And the fish of the sea
That pass through the paths of the
seas.

9 ^jO LORD, our Lord,
How excellent *is* Your name in all
the earth!

PSALM 9

Prayer and Thanksgiving for the LORD's Righteous Judgments

To the Chief Musician. To *the tune of*
1 "Death of the Son." A Psalm of David.

I will praise *You*, O LORD, with my
whole heart;
I will tell of all Your marvelous works.
2 I will be glad and ^arejoice in You;
I will sing praise to Your name,
^bO Most High.

God form a frame for its central subject—the praise of man as male and female, whom God has made to reflect His majesty.

8:2 mouth of babes: This verse was quoted by Jesus (Matt. 21:16) to the priests and scribes who wanted to squelch the people who were speaking the words of 118:26 in praise of Jesus.

8:3, 4 Your heavens: David is in awe at the splendors of creation; the wonders of nature lead him to praise its Creator. Even the universe with its infinite distances was the work of the Lord's fingers (19:1). **What is man:** In view of the vastness of creation and the surpassing glory of God the Creator, who are we to presume upon Him? Here *man* refers to all human beings regardless of gender.

8:5–8 You have made him a little lower than the angels: The response to the rhetorical questions of v. 4 is stunning. Man, as male and female, stands at the summit of God's creation. The Hebrew text is "You have made him to lack little of God." The Septuagint, the ancient Greek translation of the OT, translates the Hebrew word meaning "God" as *angels*. The author of Hebrews bases his argument in Heb. 2:5–9 on the Septuagint. So both readings are true. God made human beings in His image, just a little lower than angels. The words **crowned him with glory** fill out and explain the parallel phrase "a little lower than the angels." God created human

beings as majestic creatures who were to rule over His creation. But in our fallen state, we are profoundly disfigured, a perversion of the majesty God has intended (9:20). However, Jesus restores those who put their trust in Him.

8:9 O LORD, our Lord: The first word is the divine name Yahweh. The second Hebrew word translated *our Lord* speaks of the One in control: "our Sovereign."

Psalm 9 may have been originally one poem with Ps. 10. Indeed, there is evidence that several of the psalms have been restructured in varying ways (see Ps. 42; 43). Note that Ps. 10 does not have a new superscription and that the two psalms deal with the same theme. Moreover, the psalms in the Hebrew text form a partial acrostic pattern. Ten of the initial letters of verses in Ps. 9 follow the order of the Hebrew alphabet, and seven initial letters in Ps. 10 continue the same pattern. In Hebrew, this pattern is pleasing to the listener and attests to the skill of the poet. Although Ps. 9; 10 are psalms of lament, they present a triumphant determination to praise God. The structure of Ps. 9 is as follows: (1) a determination to praise the Lord (vv. 1, 2); (2) a rehearsal of God's saving deeds (vv. 3–5); (3) a rebuke of God's enemies (vv. 6–8); (4) a statement of confession (vv. 9, 10); (5) an ascription of praise to God (vv. 11, 12); (6) a petition

Image of God: His Reflection in Us



What a magnificent concept—God's creation of mankind in His image—patterned after Him, mirroring a family resemblance of Him (2 Cor. 3:18). This does not pertain to the physical nature but rather to the spiritual and moral nature. How are we like God?

- We are capable of communicating, and in so doing, we can bless or curse (James 3:9).
- We are creative, and creativity gives us joy and satisfaction (Prov. 31:13–22).
- We experience emotions and feelings; we long for relationships and fellowship (Ps. 16:11).
- We discern between right and wrong (Is. 6:5).
- We act and are responsible for our actions (John 3:18).
- We long to pursue Him. Mary sat at Jesus' feet, listening to Him. Jesus let her know that sitting at His feet was important (Luke 10:42).

Even though the original intimate relationship between God and humanity was severed by the Fall (Gen. 3:5–7), God has pursued His children down through the ages, sending His Son that we might be reconciled to Him and become His daughters and sons, His heirs (Rom. 8:14–17). His image can be reflected in us. Through Christ the image is brought back into focus so that His glory shines from the reflection.

- 3 When my enemies turn back,
They shall fall and perish at Your
presence.
- 4 For You have maintained my right
and my cause;
You sat on the throne judging in
righteousness.
- 5 You have rebuked the ²nations,
You have destroyed the wicked;
You have ^cblotted out their name
forever and ever.
- 6 O enemy, destructions are finished
forever!
And you have destroyed cities;
Even their memory has ^dperished.
- 7 ^eBut the LORD shall endure forever;
He has prepared His throne for
judgment.
- 8 ^fHe shall judge the world in
righteousness,
And He shall administer judgment
for the peoples in uprightness.
- 9 The LORD also will be a ^grefuge³ for
the oppressed,
A refuge in times of trouble.
- 10 And those who ^hknow Your name
will put their trust in You;
For You, LORD, have not forsaken
those who seek You.

5 ^c Prov. 10:7
² *Gentiles*
6 ^d [Ps. 34:16]
7 ^e Ps. 102:12, 26;
Heb. 1:11
8 ^f [Ps. 96:13; 98:9;
Acts 17:31]
9 ^g Ps. 32:7; 46:1;
91:2 ³ Lit. *secure*
height
10 ^h Ps. 91:14

11 ⁱ Ps. 66:16;
107:22
12 ^j [Gen. 9:5; Ps.
72:14] ⁴ *afflicted*
14 ^k Ps. 13:5; 20:5;
35:9 ⁵ Jerusalem
15 ^l Ps. 7:15, 16
⁶ *Gentiles*
16 ^m Ex. 7:5 ⁿ Ps.
92:3 ⁷ Heb.
Higgaion
17 ^o Job 8:13; Ps.
50:22 ⁸ *Gentiles*

- 11 Sing praises to the LORD, who dwells
in Zion!
ⁱ Declare His deeds among the people.
- 12 ^j When He avenges blood, He
remembers them;
He does not forget the cry of the
⁴ humble.
- 13 Have mercy on me, O LORD!
Consider my trouble from those who
hate me,
You who lift me up from the gates of
death,
- 14 That I may tell of all Your praise
In the gates of ⁵ the daughter of
Zion.
I will ^k rejoice in Your salvation.
- 15 ^l The ⁶ nations have sunk down in the
pit *which* they made;
In the net which they hid, their own
foot is caught.
- 16 The LORD is ^m known *by* the
judgment He executes;
The wicked is snared in the work of
his own hands.
ⁿ Meditation.⁷ *Selah*
- 17 The wicked shall be turned into hell,
And all the ⁸ nations ^o that forget
God.

for deliverance by God (vv. 13–16); (7) a vision of the judgment of the wicked (vv. 17, 18); (8) a call for deliverance by God (vv. 19, 20). The title of the psalm, which ascribes the poem to David, may also indicate the tune to which it was to be sung, “Death of the Son.”

9:1, 2 with my whole heart: Real praise is not halfhearted; it involves one’s whole being (146:2). The words of these two verses are characteristic of the praise of God in the Psalms. He is to be praised for His works and His name. His name represents who He is; His works stand for all He does. **Most High** is a designation for the Lord, especially as He rules the nations (47:2; 78:35; Deut. 32:8). **9:3–5** The **enemies** are not identified; this is common in the Psalms. All subsequent readers can fill in their own list of those who trouble them. The poet has confidence that God is in control (v. 4) and that He executes judgment (v. 5). Therefore in the middle of trouble, the psalmist is able to foresee the end of his enemies (vv. 17, 18).

9:6–8 One day even the names of the enemies of God will be forgotten. But the name of God will **endure forever**. One day there will be a final judgment when God will make right every wrong and establish His peace based on justice (96:13).

9:9, 10 Refuge speaks of a secure height, something inaccessiblely high. David was often outdoors, and he used images from physical geography to describe the wonder of God’s protective care (91:1, 2). **who know Your name:** To know the name of God was the OT equivalent of saving faith in the NT. **have not forsaken:** This is a further explanation of the meaning of God’s name. Since the Lord is God, He cannot abandon those to whom He has bound Himself. He is a faithful God—a God who never gives up on His people.

9:11, 12 He avenges blood: God is the Avenger, not any person (Deut. 32:35). One day God will judge the wicked. In the end, He will establish His just rule.

9:13–16 David asks that his life be spared **from the gates of death** so that he might praise the Lord in the **gates** of the temple. David moved from the gates of death to the gates of life. Only God could accomplish such a sudden reversal; only the Lord could lift him from

such depths. **Daughter of Zion** was an endearing term for Jerusalem. As Jacob was God’s “son,” so Jerusalem was God’s “daughter” (Ps. 48). **In the net:** David prays that the evil the wicked intend for him will become their own trap (7:15, 16; 35:7, 8).

9:17, 18 hell: Just as the Psalms speak of heaven as the destiny of the righteous (see 23:6), so they also speak of hell as the destiny of the wicked (see 1:6). It is a place from which the righteous want to be delivered (86:13). Passages like this one confirm the NT affirmation of a day of final judgment in which the righteousness of God will be displayed and the wickedness of unrepentant humankind will finally receive punishment (see Matt. 25:31–46). **The expectation of the poor** describes the often frustrated hope that the oppressed may feel in this life. One day, however, they will be vindicated, for God Himself is their Protector (140:12).

judgment

(Heb. *mishpat*) (9:16; 99:4; 140:12; Ex. 23:6; 1 Kin. 7:7; Amos 5:7, 15, 24; 5:12) Strong’s #4941

Judgment (also translated “justice”) specifies what is right, not only as measured by a code of law, but also by what makes for right relationships as well as harmony and peace. The OT prophets were champions of social justice. God’s judgment is His just, fair, and impartial treatment of all people. His actions and decisions are true and right (Job 34:12; Rev. 16:7). His demands on individuals and nations to look after victims of oppression are just demands (82:1–8). As Lord and Judge, God brings justice to nations (67:4) and “sets things right” in behalf of the poor, the oppressed, and the victims of injustice (103:6; 146:6–9). For the wicked, the unjust, and the oppressor, God as supreme Judge of the earth is a dreaded force. But for all who are unjustly treated, God’s judgment is reason for hope.

18^p For the needy shall not always be forgotten;
 9 The expectation of the poor shall *not* perish forever.

19 Arise, O LORD,
 Do not let man prevail;
 Let the ⁹nations be judged in Your sight.
 20 Put them in fear, O LORD,
 That the ¹nations may know themselves *to be but* men.

Selah

PSALM 10

A Song of Confidence in God's Triumph over Evil

Why do You stand afar off,
 O LORD?
 Why do You hide in times of trouble?
 2 The wicked in *his* pride ¹persecutes the poor;
 a Let them be caught in the plots which they have devised.
 3 For the wicked ^bboasts of his heart's desire;
 2 He ^cblesses the greedy *and* renounces the LORD.
 4 The wicked in his proud countenance does not seek *God*;
 3 God *is* in none of his ^dthoughts.
 5 His ways ⁴are always prospering;
 Your judgments *are* far above, out of his sight;
 As *for* all his enemies, he sneers at them.
 6 e He has said in his heart, "I shall not be moved;
 f I shall never be in adversity."

18 ^p Ps. 9:12; 12:5
 9 [Ps. 62:5; 71:5];
 Prov. 23:18
 19 ⁹ Gentiles
 20 ¹ Gentiles

PSALM 10

2 ^a Ps. 7:16; 9:16
 1 *hotly pursues*
 3 ^b Ps. 49:6; 94:3, 4
 c Prov. 28:4 2 Or *The greedy man curses and spurns the LORD*
 4 ^d Ps. 14:1; 36:1
 3 Or *All his thoughts are, "There is no God"*
 5 ^e Lit. *are strong*
 6 ^e Ps. 49:11; [Eccl. 8:11] ^f Rev. 18:7

7 g His mouth is full of cursing and ^hdeceit and oppression;
 Under his tongue *is* trouble and iniquity.
 8 He sits in the lurking places of the villages;
 In the secret places he murders the innocent;
 His eyes are secretly fixed on the helpless.
 9 He lies in wait secretly, as a lion in his den;
 He lies in wait to catch the poor;
 He catches the poor when he draws him into his net.
 10 So ⁵he crouches, he lies low,
 That the helpless may fall by his ⁶strength.
 11 He has said in his heart,
 "God has forgotten;
 He hides His face;
 He will never see."
 12 Arise, O LORD!
 O God, ⁱlift up Your hand!
 Do not forget the ^jhumble.
 13 Why do the wicked renounce God?
 He has said in his heart,
 "You will not require *an account*."
 14 But You have ^kseen, for You observe trouble and grief,
 To repay *it* by Your hand.
 The helpless ^lcommits ⁷himself to You;
 m You are the helper of the fatherless.
 15 Break the arm of the wicked and the evil *man*;
 Seek out his wickedness *until* You find none.

7 ⁹ [Rom. 3:14] ^h Ps. 55:10, 11
 10 ⁵ Or *he is crushed, is bowed*
 6 Or *mighty ones*
 12 ⁱ Ps. 17:7; 94:2;
 Mic. 5:9 / Ps. 9:12
 14 ^k [Ps. 11:4]
 1 [2 Tim. 1:12] ^m Ps. 68:5; Hos. 14:3 ⁷ Lit. *leaves, entrusts*

9:19, 20 Do not let man prevail: Although human beings are made in God's image as described in Ps. 8, the wickedness of fallen humanity is profound. Humanity in rebellion against God is a gross perversion of God's plan. The Lord cannot allow this arrogance to go unchallenged.
Psalm 10 was originally part of Ps. 9. The two are found as one psalm in the Septuagint, the ancient Greek translation of the Hebrew Scripture. Psalm 10 reiterates the desire expressed in Ps. 9, that the Lord would deal with the wicked enemies of the psalmist. This psalm reflects a sense of urgency: The psalmist pleads for immediate deliverance from his enemies. The structure of Ps. 10 is: (1) an inquiry into the Lord's inaction (vv. 1, 2); (2) a description of the actions of the wicked (vv. 3–11); (3) a renewed call for the Lord to rise in judgment (vv. 12, 13); (4) a confession of trust in the Lord's final judgment (vv. 14, 15); (5) a presentation of praise to God who is King (vv. 16–18).
10:1, 2 Stand afar off are classic words of lament or mourning (13:1–3). As the psalmist views the actions of the wicked, he finds himself angry at wickedness and wondering how God can remain apathetic and inactive. But even with his doubts, he continues to pray to the only God who can deliver him from his troubles.
10:3, 4 God is in none of his thoughts: For the psalmist, this is the most difficult part of his circumstances (14:1). With no thought

of God, his wicked enemies are able to boast in themselves. They turn reality upside down by praising evil and spurning God.
10:6 Only those who stand on the sure foundation of God's Word can confidently say, **I shall not be moved** (see 15:5). The wicked who have lost all sense of God assume that they can use these words themselves. But eventually they will be swept away by the turmoil and troubles of this world (see Prov. 10:25; Matt. 7:24–27).
10:8–10 sits in the lurking places: The psalmist views the wicked as oppressors. They are similar to lurking beasts, ready to pounce on their prey.
10:11 God has forgotten: The wicked behave the way they do because they doubt that the Lord knows, cares, or will act. They want to believe that there will be no final judgment, so they feel free to do as they please. But the truth is that God will establish justice (see vv. 14, 15).
10:12, 13 Arise, O LORD: The psalmist returns to his call for God to act (see 9:19, 20).
10:14, 15 You have seen is the classic confession of trust in God in the psalms of lament. God does know; He does see; and He will act. God protects those like **the fatherless** who have no other protection (27:10). **Break the arm:** As in 3:7, this is a call for God to destroy the power of the wicked. This impassioned curse on the wicked displays the righteousness of God.

- ¹⁶ *n* The LORD is King forever and ever;
The nations have perished out of His land.
- ¹⁷ LORD, You have heard the desire of the humble;
You will prepare their heart;
You will cause Your ear to hear,
- ¹⁸ To ⁸ do justice to the fatherless and the oppressed,
That the man of the earth may ⁹ oppress no more.

PSALM 11

Faith in the LORD's Righteousness

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David.

- I**n ^a the LORD I put my trust;
How can you say to my soul,
“Flee as a bird to your mountain?”
- ² For look! ^b The wicked bend *their* bow,
They make ready their arrow on the string,
That they may shoot ¹ secretly at the upright in heart.
- ³ ^c If the foundations are destroyed,
What can the righteous do?
- ⁴ The LORD is in His holy temple,
The LORD's ^d throne is in heaven;
^e His eyes behold,
His eyelids test the sons of men.
- ⁵ The LORD ^f tests the righteous,
But the wicked and the one who loves violence His soul hates.

¹⁶ ⁿ Ps. 29:10
¹⁸ ⁸ vindicate
⁹ terrify

PSALM 11

¹ ^a Ps. 56:11
² ^b Ps. 64:3, 4 ¹ Lit. in darkness
³ ^c Ps. 82:5; 87:1; 119:152
⁴ ^d Ps. 2:4; [Is. 66:1]; Matt. 5:34; 23:22; [Acts 7:49]; Rev. 4:2 ^e [Ps. 33:18; 34:15, 16]
⁵ ^f Gen. 22:1; [James 1:12]

⁶ ⁹ 1 Sam. 1:4; Ps. 75:8; Ezek. 38:22
² Their allotted portion or serving
⁷ ^h Ps. 33:5; 45:7
³ Or The upright beholds His countenance

PSALM 12

title ^a Ps. 6: title
¹ Heb. *sheminith*
¹ ^b [Is. 57:1]; Mic. 7:2
² Save
² ^c Ps. 10:7; 41:6
³ An inconsistent mind
³ ^d destroy ⁵ great

- ⁶ Upon the wicked He will rain coals;
Fire and brimstone and a burning wind
⁹ *Shall be* ² the portion of their cup.
- ⁷ For the LORD is righteous,
He ^h loves righteousness;
³ His countenance beholds the upright.

PSALM 12

Man's Treachery and God's Constancy

To the Chief Musician. ^a On ¹ an eight-stringed harp. A Psalm of David.

- H**elp, ² LORD, for the godly man ^b ceases!
For the faithful disappear from among the sons of men.
- ² ^c They speak idly everyone with his neighbor;
With flattering lips and ³ a double heart they speak.
- ³ May the LORD ⁴ cut off all flattering lips,
And the tongue that speaks ⁵ proud things,
- ⁴ Who have said,
“With our tongue we will prevail;
Our lips are our own;
Who is lord over us?”
- ⁵ “For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy,

10:16–18 The LORD is King: These words suggest that Ps. 9; 10 are royal psalms. Usually the royal psalms have a more positive viewpoint. They take the stance that God is King and the world is established and will not be moved. On the other hand, Ps. 9; 10 question how there can be such distress in the world with God as King. But since God is King, this psalm concludes with the fervent prayer that the will of God may be done on earth as it is in heaven (Rev. 19:1–6).

Psalm 11 is a psalm of trust. The title ascribes the psalm to David. In the middle of the psalms of lament (see Ps. 9; 10; 12), this psalm expresses great trust in the Almighty Lord. It is the context of adversity that makes this psalm of trust all the more impressive. This brief poem has three movements: (1) an affirmation of trust in the Lord even during the assaults of the wicked (vv. 1–3); (2) an affirmation of trust in the Lord who reigns above and who will judge the actions of the wicked (vv. 4–6); (3) an affirmation of trust in the Lord because of who He is (v. 7).

11:1–3 The phrase **I put my trust** describes seeking refuge, similar to a bird under the wings of its mother (Ruth 2:12). **Flee as a bird:** Here is the contemptuous challenge of the wicked. They are like their father, the devil (John 8:44; 2 Cor. 11:13–15). They view the righteous as helpless birds flying to their mountain home. They do not realize that their mountain home is protection in the Lord Himself. **bend their bow:** This is a picture of the wicked on the hunt for the righteous (10:8–10). **foundations are destroyed:** These verses are the taunt of the wicked to the righteous. They are a false charge; the words are untrue. The foundations are *not* destroyed; there is a great deal the righteous *can do* (Eph. 6:10–18). Most important, the righteous can keep trusting in God, their true foundation.

11:4–6 The words **in His holy temple** prove that the charge of

v. 3 is false. God *is* in control; the foundations are not destroyed. **His eyes behold:** It may appear that God is not involved (10:11), but He does see and He will act (Ex. 2:23–25; 3:6–15). **tests the righteous:** There are times when the Lord allows trials to come into the life of the righteous as a test. But God's actions are more severe toward the wicked, whom He **hates**. The Hebrew word for *hates* is a strong term that speaks primarily of rejection (5:5). **rain coals:** The source for “fire and brimstone” judgment is the story of God's judgment on Sodom and the other cities near the Dead Sea in Gen. 19.

11:7 Because **the LORD is righteous**, the believer who is under stress can continue to trust in Him. Such faith allows one to ignore the taunts of the wicked. The believer needs only to return to the enfolding wings of God to renew strength and purpose in the midst of a troubled day.

Psalm 12, a psalm of lament, begins with a focus on the power of the wicked's perverse mouth (Ps. 52; 120). It concludes powerfully with an assertion of the power of the pure and truthful words of God. The title ascribes the poem to David. The psalm has five movements: (1) a description of the language of the wicked (vv. 1, 2); (2) a prayer for God's intervention (vv. 3, 4); (3) the intervention of God to deliver His own (v. 5); (4) a characterization of the language of God (vv. 6, 7); (5) a reminder of the continuing presence of the wicked (v. 8).

12:1, 2 godly man ceases: David wonders if there are any righteous people left. **speak idly:** This psalm charges the wicked for using words to destroy and hurt others.

12:4 With our tongue: Because the wicked do not submit to any authority over them, much less God Himself, they believe they can say anything they want.

12:5–7 Now I will arise: With these dramatic words, God speaks

Now I will arise,” says the LORD;
“I will set *him* in the safety for which
he yearns.”

6 The words of the LORD *are* ^dpure
words,
Like silver tried in a furnace of earth,
Purified seven times.

7 You shall keep them, O LORD,
You shall preserve them from this
generation forever.

8 The wicked prowl on every side,
When villainy is exalted among the
sons of men.

PSALM 13

Trust in the Salvation of the LORD

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David.

How long, O LORD? Will You forget
me forever?
^aHow long will You hide Your face
from me?
2 How long shall I take counsel in my
soul,
Having sorrow in my heart daily?
How long will my enemy be exalted
over me?

6 ^d 2 Sam. 22:31;
Ps. 18:30; 119:140;
Prov. 30:5

PSALM 13

1 ^a Job 13:24; Ps.
89:46

3 ^b 1 Sam. 14:29;
Ezra 9:8; Job 33:30;
Ps. 18:28 ^c Jer.
51:39

PSALM 14

1 ^a Ps. 10:4; 53:1
2 ^b Ps. 33:13, 14;
102:19; Rom. 3:11

3 Consider *and* hear me, O LORD my God;
^b Enlighten my eyes,
^c Lest I sleep the *sleep* of death;
4 Lest my enemy say,
“I have prevailed against him”;
Lest those who trouble me rejoice
when I am moved.

5 But I have trusted in Your mercy;
My heart shall rejoice in Your
salvation.

6 I will sing to the LORD,
Because He has dealt bountifully
with me.

PSALM 14

Folly of the Godless, and God’s Final Triumph

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David.

The ^afool has said in his heart,
“*There is no God.*”
They are corrupt,
They have done abominable works,
There is none who does good.

2 ^b The LORD looks down from heaven
upon the children of men,
To see if there are any who
understand, who seek God.

to David and reveals His righteous character. He will not linger; He will judge the speech of the wicked. **pure words:** In contrast to the idle words of the wicked (vv. 1–4), the words of God are altogether trustworthy. The eternal and steadfast nature of the Lord Himself stands behind His words. He will establish justice just as He has promised to David (v. 5).

12:8 The wicked prowl: Even with God’s words of judgment, there are still wicked people looking for those whom they might destroy. One day there will be full punishment (10:16–18). For now, we still struggle with the help of the Holy Spirit against the evil in our own souls and the pervasive wickedness in our world.

Psalm 13 is a psalm of lament, an impassioned cry to the Lord for help. It is ascribed to David. The psalm is brief, even terse; but it is remarkably powerful in its tone and imagery. There are similarities between this psalm and Ps. 142. This psalm has three movements: (1) a lament of the forsaken (vv. 1, 2); (2) a petition for deliverance (vv. 3, 4); (3) a confession and a vow of praise (vv. 5, 6).

13:1, 2 These two verses present all three pronouns that occur

in a typical lament psalm: (1) *I* am hurting; (2) *You* have forgotten; (3) *they* are winning. Four times in two verses David screams out **how long** (4:2; 6:3). The Lord allows David to pour out his anxiety before Him. But by the end of David’s prayer, the Lord has granted him a correct perspective on his situation. David’s only option is to trust in the sovereign mercy of his loving God.

13:3, 4 Enlighten my eyes: As a person who is nearing death might sense the dimming of his vision (38:10), David also senses his death and pleads with God to intervene before he dies. **Lest my enemy say:** If God does not intervene, not only will the psalmist be lost from the community that praises the living God (6:5), but his enemies will also claim a victory over him and his God. Fundamentally, the Lord’s honor is at stake. **rejoice:** The enemies’ rejoicing would be intolerable because it would be aimed in part against God in whom the psalmist has trusted (35:19).

13:5, 6 This is the turning point of the psalm. The tone of the psalm abruptly changes from despair to hope. In this verse, David recalls his commitment to trust God completely. The term **mercy** describes God’s *loyal love*. His faithfulness to His commitment to take care of His people. **I will sing** was the psalmist’s vow to praise God in the worshiping community. Based on the assurance that God will deliver him, David resolves to tell the people about it—this is the essence of praise (40:1–3).

Psalm 14, which is closely allied with Ps. 53, is a wisdom psalm attributed to David. It speaks of the foolishness of living as if God did not exist. The psalm has three movements: (1) a description of the pervasiveness of evil (vv. 1–3); (2) an assertion that final judgment is coming (vv. 4–6); (3) a prayer for God’s kingdom (v. 7).

14:1 The word **fool** refers not to mental inability but to moral and spiritual insensitivity. The phrase **no God** suggests “practical atheism,” the view that if there is a God, it really does not matter to one’s life. This is the viewpoint stated in 10:4, 11; 12:4. The Hebrew word for **corrupt** has the idea of soured milk. Those who cease to believe in God will eventually “sour”; they will degenerate into doing evil.

14:2, 3 The LORD looks down: Here the Lord’s inquiry leads to judgment (as in Gen. 6:12). The pictorial language is a way of describing the omniscience of God, the fact that the Lord knows

words

(Heb. *imrah*) (12:6; 138:2; Deut. 33:9; Is. 32:9) Strong’s #565

This Hebrew word, based on the common verb meaning “to say,” occurs mainly in poetry. Over half of its appearances are in Ps. 119, where it refers to what God has said. It is also used to refer to the prophetic warning of Isaiah (Is. 28:23), the humble prayer of the psalmists (17:6), or even the prideful boast of Lamech (Gen. 4:23). In Ps. 119, the term is used in parallel with “statute,” “commandment,” “judgment,” “precept,” and “testimony.” The psalmist describes treacherous people as not keeping God’s word, but the psalmist himself treasures God’s word in his heart as a guide for life, that he might not sin against the Lord (119:11, 67, 133, 158).

- 3 ^cThey have all turned aside,
They have together become corrupt;
*There is none who does good,
No, not one.*
- 4 Have all the workers of iniquity no
knowledge,
Who eat up my people *as* they eat
bread,
And ^ddo not call on the LORD?
5 There they are in great fear,
For God *is* with the generation of the
righteous.
- 6 You shame the counsel of the poor,
But the LORD *is* his ^erefuge.
- 7 ^fOh, ¹that the salvation of Israel
would come out of Zion!
^gWhen the LORD brings back ²the
captivity of His people,
Let Jacob rejoice *and* Israel be glad.

PSALM 15

The Character of Those Who May Dwell with the LORD

A Psalm of David.

- L**ORD, ^awho may ¹abide in Your
tabernacle?
Who may dwell in Your holy hill?
- 2 He who walks uprightly,
And works righteousness,

3 ^c Rom. 3:12
4 ^d Ps. 79:6; Is. 64:7;
Jer. 10:25; Amos
8:4; Mic. 3:3
6 ^e Ps. 9:9; 40:17;
46:1; 142:5
7 ^f Ps. 53:6; [Rom.
11:25-27] ^g Deut.
30:3; Job 42:10
¹ Lit. *Who will give
out of Zion the
salvation of Israel?*
² Or *His captive
people*

PSALM 15

1 ^a Ps. 24:3-5
¹ *sojourn*

2 ^b Zech. 8:16; [Eph.
4:25]
3 ^c [Lev. 19:16-18]
^d Ex. 23:1 ² *receive*
4 ^e Esth. 3:2 ¹ Lev.
5:4
5 ^g 2 Pet. 1:10

PSALM 16

title ^a Ps. 56-60
1 ¹ *Watch over*
2 ^b Job 35:7

- And speaks the ^btruth in his
heart;
3 He *who* ^cdoes not backbite with his
tongue,
Nor does evil to his neighbor,
^dNor does he ²take up a reproach
against his friend;
4 ^eIn whose eyes a vile person is
despised,
But he honors those who fear the
LORD;
He *who* ^fswears to his own hurt and
does not change;
5 He *who* does not put out his money
at usury,
Nor does he take a bribe against
the innocent.
- He who does these *things* ^gshall
never be moved.

PSALM 16

The Hope of the Faithful, and the Messiah's Victory

A ^aMichtam of David.

- P**reserve ¹me, O God, for in You I put
my trust.
- 2 *O my soul*, you have said to the LORD,
“You *are* my Lord,
^bMy goodness is nothing apart from
You.”

everything. **No, not one:** The biblical teaching on depravity is not that each individual is as evil as he or she could possibly be, but that sin is present in every individual (Rom. 3). Since no one is perfect, all must ask God for His forgiveness—something He freely gives to those who place their trust in His son Jesus (Eph. 1:7; 1 John 1:9). **14:4, 5** The wicked lack **knowledge** of God’s truth. Although people may be brilliant in their chosen fields, they can still be morally insensitive and spiritually closed to the issues that have eternal consequences. **My people** refers to those who are faithful to God. God has delivered a group of people from the prison of wickedness. These people are His people and must follow His ways. They may become special targets of the wicked because they are different. **There** is an adverb of place that alludes to the final judgment. **14:6 His refuge** speaks of shelter, as in the shadow of a tree. David as an outdoorsman had experienced the urgent need of shelter from the fierce elements. He uses this common experience to describe the various ways in which God protects His people from the storm of evil that surrounds them (9:9). **14:7 The salvation of Israel** refers to a future salvation, the coming reign of God (Ps. 2; 89). **Psalm 15** may be a wisdom psalm, but its principal focus is on the proper approach to the worship of God. Although all of the psalms were used in the worship of God, we might call this poem a worship psalm because of its special focus on this subject. The psalm asks the question, Who is righteous enough to approach God? We who are in Christ learn to come boldly into the presence of the Father because we come on the authority of His Son (Heb. 4:16). Jesus makes us feel at home in the presence of the Father. This psalm, ascribed to David, is posed in question-and-answer format. There are three movements: (1) the question of who may approach the holy God (v. 1); (2) the response (vv. 2-4); (3) the blessing (v. 5). **15:1 who may abide:** Except for priests, people did not live in

the precincts of the temple. These words describe an approach to God’s presence in which one might feel accepted, even “at home.” **holy hill:** As in 3:4, this phrase is used of the presence of God in the temple or the tabernacle. The Hebrew term is a general one that refers to wherever the tabernacle was in David’s day; later readers and singers of this psalm appropriately applied the word to the temple built in Jerusalem. **15:2-4 He who walks uprightly** speaks of relative righteousness, not absolute righteousness, for no one is innocent before God. The Lord commands us to be holy (see 1 Pet. 1:15, 16), and He also gives us the power to become holy (2 Thess. 2:16, 17). **vile person is despised:** The righteous hate what God hates (vv. 4, 5). The point is not so much the emotion of hatred as the deliberate rejection of wicked ways (1:1). **swears to his own hurt:** When a righteous person takes an oath, it must be honored even if it requires suffering. **15:5 never be moved:** The promise of God for the righteous is for this life and for the life to come. The Lord is the righteous person’s sure foundation. **Psalm 16**, a psalm of lament, has a remarkable prophetic aspect that parallels many of the messianic prophecies concerning the Suffering Servant (Is. 53). This poem of David became central in the preaching of the apostles in the early church (Acts 2:22-31). The psalm has four movements: (1) a petition to God for deliverance (vv. 1-3); (2) a condemnation of the wicked and their practices (v. 4); (3) an exaltation of the psalmist’s relationship with God (vv. 5-8); (4) a confident assertion that God will spare the psalmist’s life and bless it (vv. 9-11). **16:1 I put my trust:** David uses the expression of a bird seeking refuge under its mother’s wing to indicate his complete trust in the Lord (compare 7:1; 11:1). From this strong stance of confidence, he is able to boast that his goodness comes only from God. He shares with the people of God the enjoyment of God’s presence.

- 3 As for the saints who *are* on the earth,
“They are the excellent ones, in
 ^cwhom is all my delight.”
- 4 Their sorrows shall be multiplied
 who hasten *after* another *god*;
 Their drink offerings of ^dblood I will
 not offer,
 ^eNor take up their names on my lips.
- 5 O LORD, *You are* the portion of my
 inheritance and my cup;
 You ²maintain my lot.
- 6 The lines have fallen to me in
 pleasant *places*;
 Yes, I have a good inheritance.
- 7 I will bless the LORD who has given
 me counsel;
 My ³heart also instructs me in the
 night seasons.
- 8 ^fI have set the LORD always before me;
 Because *He is* at my right hand I
 shall not be moved.
- 9 Therefore my heart is glad, and my
 glory rejoices;
 My flesh also will ⁴rest in hope.
- 10 ^gFor You will not leave my soul in
 ⁵Sheol,
 Nor will You allow Your Holy One to
 ⁶see corruption.
- 11 You will show me the ^hpath of life;
 In Your presence *is* fullness of joy;

3 ^c Ps. 119:63
4 ^d Ps. 106:37, 38
 ^e [Ex. 23:13]; Josh. 23:7
5 ² Lit. *uphold*
7 ³ Mind, lit. *kidneys*
8 ^f [Acts 2:25–28]
9 ⁴ Or *dwelt securely*
10 ^g Ps. 49:15; 86:13;
 Acts 2:31, 32 ☆;
 Heb. 13:20 ⁵ The
 abode of the dead
 ⁶ *undergo*
11 ^h Ps. 139:24;
 [Matt. 7:14]

PSALM 17

3 ^a Job 23:10; Ps. 66:10; Zech. 13:9;
 [1 Pet. 1:7] ^b Ps. 39:1 ¹ *examined*
 ² *Nothing evil*
5 ^c Job 23:11; Ps. 44:18; 119:133
6 ^d Ps. 86:7; 116:2

At Your right hand *are* pleasures
forevermore.

PSALM 17

*Prayer with Confidence in Final
Salvation*

A Prayer of David.

- H**ear a just cause, O LORD,
Attend to my cry;
Give ear to my prayer *which is* not
 from deceitful lips.
- 2 Let my vindication come from Your
 presence;
 Let Your eyes look on the things that
 are upright.
- 3 You have tested my heart;
 You have visited *me* in the night;
 ^aYou have ¹tried me and have found
 ²nothing;
 I have purposed that my mouth shall
 not ^btransgress.
- 4 Concerning the works of men,
 By the word of Your lips,
 I have kept away from the paths of
 the destroyer.
- 5 ^cUphold my steps in Your paths,
 That my footsteps may not slip.
- 6 ^dI have called upon You, for You will
 hear me, O God;
 Incline Your ear to me, *and* hear my
 speech.

16:5–8 My inheritance refers to the Promised Land. God had given this inheritance to His people (Deut. 6:1–3). However there was a greater inheritance for the Levites, who did not receive a share in the land (Num. 26:62); their share of the inheritance was in the Lord. David had an ancestral inheritance in the land. As king, he also had extensive royal holdings. But he realized that no inheritance was greater than his relationship with Almighty God.

joy

(Heb. *simchah*) (16:11; Neh. 8:12, 17; Prov. 21:15; Jon. 4:6)
Strong's #8057

This Hebrew word is one of several frequently occurring Hebrew words that express exceeding gladness or rejoicing. Like its synonyms, this word can apply to a disposition of the heart (Prov. 14:10; Jer. 15:16). It is frequently set in a context of feasting (see Neh. 8:12) and singing (137:3; 1 Sam. 18:6), as it is in a prophecy concerning God's singing over Jerusalem (Zeph. 3:17). The word is also used for the senseless happiness of the enemies of God's people (Judg. 16:23; Ezek. 35:15; 36:5), of the foolish (Prov. 15:21), of the lazy (Prov. 21:17), and of the hypocrites (Job 20:5). However, joy in the Bible is usually associated with the people of God, who celebrate God's blessing at a number of occasions—feasts, coronations of kings, victories in battle, and the dedication of the rebuilt walls of Jerusalem (Num. 10:10; 1 Kin. 1:40; 2 Chr. 20:27; Neh. 12:27). In fact, Moses exhorts the Israelites to serve God with joy, so that they would not lose their blessing (see Deut. 28:47).

16:11 path of life: With this phrase David speaks of his escape from death at a critical point, but he also indicates the eternal life given by the resurrected Savior to all who trust in Him.

Psalm 17 is a special use of the psalm of lament; it is a protest of innocence (Ps. 26; 35; 43; 69). The psalm is ascribed to David. At times, David suffers under the heavy hand of God's anger because of unconfessed sin in his life. But there are other occasions where he insists that his present troubles are not caused by any fault in his life. In such a case, he calls upon God to vindicate him. God indicates through these psalms that He has a special concern for people who experience undeserved suffering, even though He allows the trouble to come for reasons that may never be known in this life. The poem has six movements: (1) a plea for vindication (vv. 1, 2); (2) an acknowledgment of God's testing (vv. 3–5); (3) a plea for God's mercy (vv. 6–9); (4) a description of the wicked (vv. 10–12); (5) a renewed plea for vindication (vv. 13, 14); (6) a statement of resolute faith (v. 15).

17:1, 2 a just cause: With these words, David sets the tone of the psalm. By protesting his innocence, he hopes to convince God to move on his behalf and deliver him from his trouble. He asks for God to search him thoroughly and to declare his **vindication**, often translated “justice” or “judgment.”

17:3 tested my heart: David knows that God has done what he is requesting even before he asks. That is, God knew David's needs and what was in his heart. David's prayer helps David to focus on the source of his strength and reaffirm his determination to live a pure life (1:1–3; 19:14).

17:6–9 Incline Your ear is pictorial language describing the mercy of God (40:1): God will stoop down to earth to hear David's plea.

lovingkindness: This significant term for God's loyal love is enhanced by the Hebrew term for **marvelous**, a word used in the

- 7 Show Your marvelous lovingkindness
by Your right hand,
O You who ³save those who trust in
You
From those who rise up *against them*.
8 Keep me as the ⁴apple of Your eye;
Hide me under the shadow of Your
wings,
9 From the wicked who oppress me,
From my deadly enemies who
surround me.
- 10 They have closed up their ^efat hearts;
With their mouths they ^fspeak
proudly.
11 They have now surrounded us in our
steps;
They have set their eyes, crouching
down to the earth,
12 As a lion is eager to tear his prey,
And like a young lion lurking in
secret places.
- 13 Arise, O LORD,
Confront him, cast him down;
Deliver my life from the wicked with
Your sword,
14 With Your hand from men, O LORD,
From men of the world *who have*
their portion in *this* life,
And whose belly You fill with Your
hidden treasure.
They are satisfied with children,
And leave the rest of their *possession*
for their babes.
- 15 As for me, ^gI will see Your face in
righteousness;
^hI shall be satisfied when I ⁱawake in
Your likeness.

7 ³ deliver
8 ⁴ pupil
10 ^e Ezek. 16:49
^f [1 Sam. 2:3]
15 ^g [1 John 3:2]
^h Ps. 4:6, 7; 16:11
ⁱ [Is. 26:19]

PSALM 18

title ^a Ps. 36:title
^b 2 Sam. 22
1 ^c Ps. 144:1
2 ^d Heb. 2:13 ¹ Lit.
rock ² Strength
3 ^e Ps. 76:4; Rev.
5:12
4 ^f Ps. 116:3 ³ Lit.
Belial
7 ^g Acts 4:31

PSALM 18

God the Sovereign Savior

To the Chief Musician. *A Psalm* of David
^a the servant of the LORD, who spoke to the
LORD the words of ^b this song on the day that
the LORD delivered him from the hand of all
his enemies and from the hand of Saul.

And he said:

- I** ^c will love You, O LORD, my strength.
² The LORD is my rock and my
fortress and my deliverer;
My God, my ¹ strength, ^d in whom I
will trust;
My shield and the ² horn of my
salvation, my stronghold.
- ³ I will call upon the LORD, ^e *who is*
worthy to be praised;
So shall I be saved from my
enemies.
- ⁴ ^f The pangs of death surrounded me,
And the floods of ³ ungodliness made
me afraid.
- ⁵ The sorrows of Sheol surrounded me;
The snares of death confronted me.
- ⁶ In my distress I called upon the
LORD,
And cried out to my God;
He heard my voice from His
temple,
And my cry came before Him, *even*
to His ears.
- ⁷ ^g Then the earth shook and trembled;
The foundations of the hills also
quaked and were shaken,
Because He was angry.

Bible only with reference to God. **The apple of Your eye:** Just as a person has an instinctive response to protect the eye, so God cares instinctively for His servants. **shadow of Your wings:** Here God is described as a “mother hen” in a positive sense. Chicks who flee for protection to the wings of their mother find not only safety but warmth and love as well. In the same way, God protects us.

17:10–12 The words **fat hearts** are a description of insensitivity, similar to the language of Is. 6:10. **As a lion:** This language is similar to that of 10:8–10. The point is that the wicked are insensitive to human needs; they are like lions who wait for the right opportunity to destroy their prey.

17:13, 14 Arise, O LORD: The same language is used in 9:19, 20; 10:12, 13. **their portion in this life:** The wicked live their lives with only the pursuit of the pleasures of this world in mind. The righteous should not try to obtain what this life can offer, but instead pursue God and His ways.

17:15 when I awake in Your likeness: This verse is a key text on biblical immortality in the OT. Having rejected the idea that the pleasures of this life are ultimately fulfilling, David anticipates the day when he will awake in glory and be made in the likeness of God.

Psalm 18 is attributed to David. The text of this psalm is found in 2 Sam. 22 with some variations. The superscription indicates that this psalm was David’s hymn of celebration to the grace of God. This may be a psalm of trust (Ps. 23), but it is unique. The lengthy poem has several movements: (1) a statement of faith and a de-

scription of deliverance (vv. 1–6); (2) a poetic description of God’s battle for David’s deliverance (vv. 7–19); (3) a recital of the blessings of God on the righteous (vv. 20–27); (4) an offering of praise to the person of the Lord (vv. 28–36); (5) a recounting of battles and victories in the Lord (vv. 37–45); (6) concluding praise for God’s work of deliverance (vv. 46–50).

18:1 I will love You, O LORD: Twice in the Psalms the poet declares a love for God (116:1). Here an unusual word for *love* is used, referring to compassion as deep as a mother’s love.

18:2 The Hebrew word for **my rock** is balanced by its parallel Hebrew word **my strength**, meaning also “my rock.” References to God as a mountain fortress that protects the believer are found many times in the Psalms (91:1–3; 144:1). This is a particularly apt image for David, who many times had to hide in the mountains for security (see 1 Sam. 26:1, 20). The words **strength** and **stronghold** reinforce the image of God as Protector. The **horn** symbolized strength.

18:4–6 In these verses, David describes how his life is endangered. Using very strong language, he expresses the pain he feels as he watches death come near: **sorrows of Sheol**. But even in the great depths of his trouble, David makes his distress known to God. He cries out to the Lord and the faithful God answers him.

18:7–9 the earth shook . . . He bowed the heavens: Underlying these poetic words is the understanding that the Almighty will turn the universe inside out, if necessary, to deliver His servant.

- 8 Smoke went up from His nostrils,
And devouring fire from His mouth;
Coals were kindled by it.
- 9 ^h He bowed the heavens also, and
came down
With darkness under His feet.
- 10 ⁱ And He rode upon a cherub, and
flew;
^j He flew upon the wings of the
wind.
- 11 He made darkness His secret place;
^k His canopy around Him *was* dark
waters
And thick clouds of the skies.
- 12 ^l From the brightness before Him,
His thick clouds passed with
hailstones and coals of fire.
- 13 The LORD thundered from heaven,
And the Most High uttered ^m His
voice,
ⁿ Hailstones and coals of fire.
- 14 ⁿ He sent out His arrows and scattered
^o the foe,
Lightnings in abundance, and He
vanquished them.
- 15 Then the channels of the sea were
seen,
The foundations of the world were
uncovered
At Your rebuke, O LORD,
At the blast of the breath of Your
nostrils.
- 16 ^o He sent from above, He took me;
He drew me out of many waters.
- 17 He delivered me from my strong
enemy,
From those who hated me,
For they were too strong for me.
- 18 They confronted me in the day of my
calamity,
But the LORD was my support.
- 19 ^p He also brought me out into a broad
place;
He delivered me because He
delighted in me.

9 ^h Ps. 144:5
10 ⁱ Ps. 80:1; 99:1
/ [Ps. 104:3]
11 ^k Ps. 97:2
12 ^l Ps. 97:3; 140:10;
Hab. 3:11
13 ^m [Ps. 29:3-9;
104:7] ⁿ So with
MT, Tg., Vg.; a few
Heb. mss., LXX
omit *Hailstones and
coals of fire*
14 ⁿ Josh. 10:10;
Ps. 144:6; Is. 30:30;
Hab. 3:11 ^o Lit.
them
16 ^o Ps. 144:7
19 ^p Ps. 4:1; 31:8;
118:5

20 ^q 1 Sam. 24:19;
[Job 33:26]; Ps. 7:8
23 ^o with
24 ^r 1 Sam. 26:23;
Ps. 18:20
25 ^s [1 Kin. 8:32; Ps.
62:12]; Matt. 5:7
26 ^t [Lev. 26:23-28];
Prov. 3:34
27 ^u [Ps. 101:5];
Prov. 6:17
28 ^v 1 Kin. 15:4; Job
18:6; [Ps. 119:105]
29 ^w Or *run through*
30 ^w [Deut. 32:4];
Rev. 15:3 ^x Ps. 12:6;
119:140; [Prov. 30:5]
^y [Ps. 17:7] ^z Lit.
refined
31 ^z [Deut. 32:31;
39:1 Sam. 2:2; Ps.
86:8-10; Is. 45:5]
32 ^a [Ps. 91:2]

- 20 ^q The LORD rewarded me according to
my righteousness;
According to the cleanness of my
hands
He has recompensed me.
- 21 For I have kept the ways of the LORD,
And have not wickedly departed
from my God.
- 22 For all His judgments *were* before me,
And I did not put away His statutes
from me.
- 23 I was also blameless ⁶ before Him,
And I kept myself from my
iniquity.
- 24 ^r Therefore the LORD has recompensed
me according to my
righteousness,
According to the cleanness of my
hands in His sight.
- 25 ^s With the merciful You will show
Yourself merciful;
With a blameless man You will show
Yourself blameless;
- 26 With the pure You will show
Yourself pure;
And ^t with the devious You will show
Yourself shrewd.
- 27 For You will save the humble people,
But will bring down ^u haughty looks.
- 28 ^v For You will light my lamp;
The LORD my God will enlighten my
darkness.
- 29 For by You I can ⁷ run against a
troop,
By my God I can leap over a wall.
- 30 As for God, ^w His way *is* perfect;
^x The word of the LORD is ⁸ proven;
He *is* a shield ^y to all who trust in
Him.
- 31 ^z For who *is* God, except the LORD?
And who *is* a rock, except our God?
- 32 *It is* God who ^a arms me with
strength,
And makes my way perfect.

18:10-12 The language **He rode upon a cherub** is similar to the descriptions of Baal in Canaanite poetry. Thus David is taking the words typically used to praise Baal and applying them to the living God, the only One who truly deserves such praise. The *cherub* is a royal symbol and thus speaks of God's power and glory (80:1). The references to **darkness** speak of the hiddenness of God. He cannot be completely understood by those whom He has created. The references to **brightness** speak of God's holiness.

18:15 the channels of the sea: This culminates the picture of God's turning the universe upside down (v. 7). Even the most hidden passages of the sea are exposed, as are the elements that hold the earth together. The Lord God does all this to rescue His servant David (v. 16). All of the Lord's fearsome power is used to save the one who worships Him. The passage vividly illustrates why the believer has no reason to fear (see Heb. 13:6).

18:16-19 He drew me out of many waters: Again, David draws from the language of the Canaanites, turning it to the praise of God.

The *waters* were regarded as dark gods in Canaan. But according to David, God is Lord of all, and the waters are His creatures. He delivers His servant David from any power that might hold him. Why David might ask, would God tear apart all of creation to act on his behalf? Because God takes pleasure in those who serve Him.

18:20-23 cleanness of my hands: David pleads his integrity, as in Ps. 17. Contrast this language with the description of the bloodied hands of unfit worshipers in Is. 1:15. **blameless:** As in Ps. 15, these are descriptions of relative righteousness. No one is completely innocent before God. But God enables His servants to pursue godliness in this life.

18:25-27 With the merciful: The poet describes the actions of God in terms of the people to whom He relates. God deals with each person according to his or her attitude. He opposes the proud but delivers the **humble**, for the humble turn to Him for strength.

18:31 who is God: With a question, David confesses that he cannot compare God to any person, god, or object (113:5; Is. 40:25).

33 ^b He makes my feet like the *feet of*
deer,
And ^c sets me on my high places.
34 ^d He teaches my hands to make war,
So that my arms can bend a bow of
bronze.

35 You have also given me the shield of
Your salvation;
Your right hand has held me up,
Your gentleness has made me great.
36 You enlarged my path under me,
^e So my feet did not slip.

37 I have pursued my enemies and
overtaken them;
Neither did I turn back again till
they were destroyed.

38 I have wounded them,
So that they could not rise;
They have fallen under my feet.

39 For You have armed me with
strength for the battle;
You have ^g subdued under me those
who rose up against me.

40 You have also given me the necks of
my enemies,
So that I destroyed those who
hated me.

41 They cried out, but *there was* none to
save;
^f Even to the LORD, but He did not
answer them.

42 Then I beat them as fine as the dust
before the wind;
I ^g cast them out like dirt in the
streets.

43 You have delivered me from the
strivings of the people;

33 ^b 2 Sam. 2:18;
Hab. 3:19 ^c Deut.
32:13; 33:29
34 ^d Ps. 144:1
36 ^e Ps. 66:9; Prov.
4:12
39 ^g Lit. *caused
to bow*
41 ^f Job 27:9; Prov.
1:28; Is. 1:15; Ezek.
8:18; Zech. 7:13
42 ^g Zech. 10:5

43 ^h 2 Sam. 8; Ps.
89:27 ⁱ Is. 52:15
^j Gentiles
44 ² feign
submission
45 ^j Mic. 7:17
47 ^k Ps. 47:3
48 ⁱ Ps. 27:6; 59:1
49 ^m 2 Sam. 22:50;
Rom. 15:9 ³ nations
50 ⁿ 2 Sam. 7:12; Ps.
21:1; 144:10 ⁴ Lit.
seed

PSALM 19

1 ^a Is. 40:22; [Rom.
1:19, 20] ^b Gen.
1:6, 7 ¹ expanse of
heaven ² the work
of His hands

^h You have made me the head of the
¹ nations;

ⁱ A people I have not known shall
serve me.

44 As soon as they hear of me they obey
me;

The foreigners ² submit to me.

45 ^j The foreigners fade away,
And come frightened from their
hideouts.

46 The LORD lives!
Blessed *be* my Rock!
Let the God of my salvation be
exalted.

47 *It is* God who avenges me,

^k And subdues the peoples under me;

48 He delivers me from my enemies.

^l You also lift me up above those who
rise against me;
You have delivered me from the
violent man.

49 ^m Therefore I will give thanks to You,
O LORD, among the ³ Gentiles,
And sing praises to Your name.

50 ⁿ Great deliverance He gives to His
king,
And shows mercy to His anointed,
To David and his ⁴ descendants
forevermore.

PSALM 19

The Perfect Revelation of the LORD

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David.

The ^a heavens declare the glory of
God;
And the ^b firmament ¹ shows ² His
handiwork.

18:35, 36 The use of battle armor, such as a **shield**, as an image of God's provision for the righteous, is found in both the OT and NT (Eph. 6:10–20).

18:37–41 pursued my enemies: God gives David strength to complete the battle against his enemies. God Himself is a Warrior (Ex. 15:3) and He outfits His servants for battle. **to the LORD:** Apparently in the extremes of battle, the enemies of David found no help from their gods, so they screamed aloud to David's God for deliverance. But God would not answer them. There is only one prayer from the wicked to which He gladly listens—the prayer of repentance.

18:43 Head of the nations is language that prophetically speaks of the reign of the Messiah. David gained his empire by the work of the Lord on his behalf. But David's empire was only a picture of the kingdom of God that will one day be governed by David's greater Son, the Lord Jesus.

18:49, 50 Ordinarily, praise to the Lord was given in the congregation of the Israelites. On occasion the poets speak of God's victories **among the Gentiles** who still worship other gods (138:1). This was a form of mission activity during the OT period (117:1). By proclaiming the victories of God to the nations, the poets were calling for the nations to respond in faith. How fitting that Paul would cite this verse (or its parallel in 2 Sam. 22:50) in Rom. 15:9 as an indicator of God's ongoing intention to bring His salvation to all people. **to His**

king: David's victories are prototypes of the victories of the great King to come. The use of the word **anointed** is appropriate for David, but it points forward to the Savior who is *the Anointed One* (2:2). The words **to David and his descendants forevermore** connect the previous promises to the only Son of David who inherited an eternal kingdom, the Savior Jesus (2 Sam. 7).

Psalm 19, a wisdom psalm, celebrates the Word of God in the context of creation. Thus it is both a creation psalm and a Torah

shield

(Heb. *magen*) (18:30, 35; Gen. 15:1) Strong's #4043

The Hebrew noun for **shield** is derived from the verb *ganan*, which means "to defend" and signifies the protective guardianship of God. The shield is a common biblical symbol for protection. Kings and rulers are described as "shields" protecting their people (47:9; 89:1, 8), and the Bible frequently depicts God as a shield protecting those who trust in Him (18:30). This imagery has its roots in the Abrahamic covenant, where God describes Himself as Abraham's shield (Gen. 15:1). David praises the Lord for being his "shield," "stronghold," and "refuge" (2 Sam. 22:3).

2 Day unto day utters speech,
And night unto night reveals
knowledge.
3 *There is no speech nor language*
Where their voice is not
heard.
4 ^cTheir ³line has gone out through all
the earth,
And their words to the end of the
world.

In them He has set a ⁴tabernacle for
the sun,
5 Which *is like a bridegroom coming*
out of his chamber,
^d*And rejoices like a strong man to run*
its race.
6 Its rising is from one end of
heaven,
And its circuit to the other end;
And there is nothing hidden from its
heat.

7 ^eThe law of the LORD *is perfect,*
⁵*converting the soul;*
The testimony of the LORD *is sure,*
making ^fwise the simple;
8 The statutes of the LORD *are right,*
rejoicing the heart;
The commandment of the LORD *is*
pure, enlightening the eyes;
9 The fear of the LORD *is clean,*
enduring forever;
The judgments of the LORD *are true*
and righteous altogether.

4 ^c Rom. 10:18
3 LXX, Syr., Vg.
sound; Tg. *business*
4 *tent*
5 ^d Eccl. 1:5
7 ^e Ps. 111:7; [Rom.
7:12] ^f Ps. 119:130
5 *restoring*

10 ^g Ps. 119:72,
127; Prov. 8:10, 11,
19 ^h *honey in the*
combs
12 ^h [Ps. 51:1, 2]
13 ⁱ Num. 15:30 / Ps.
119:133; [Rom. 6:12-
14] ^j Or much
14 ^k Ps. 51:15 / Ps.
31:5; Is. 47:4 ^l Lit.
rock

PSALM 20

1 ^l Lit. *set you on*
high

10 More to be desired *are they* than
^ggold,
Yea, than much fine gold;
Sweeter also than honey and the
⁶honeycomb.
11 Moreover by them Your servant is
warned,
And in keeping them *there is* great
reward.

12 Who can understand *his* errors?
^hCleanse me from secret *faults.*
13 Keep back Your servant also from
ⁱpresumptuous *sins;*
Let them not have ^jdominion
over me.
Then I shall be blameless,
And I shall be innocent of ⁷great
transgression.

14 ^kLet the words of my mouth and the
meditation of my heart
Be acceptable in Your sight,
O LORD, my ⁸strength and my
^lRedeemer.

PSALM 20

The Assurance of God's Saving Work

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David.

May the LORD answer you in
the day of trouble;
May the name of the God of Jacob
¹defend you;

psalm. Both the creation psalms and the Torah psalms are regarded as subgroups of the wisdom psalms. The poem begins with the heavens, centers on the Word, and culminates in the heart of the servant of God. The poem has three movements: (1) a celebration of the greatness of God's creation (vv. 1–6); (2) a celebration of the purity of the Word of God (vv. 7–11); (3) a contemplation of the life of the person of God (vv. 12–14).
19:1–6 All of creation including the **heavens** reveals God's glory and majesty (Rom. 1:18–20). **Firmament** is another word for heaven (Gen. 1:6). The vast expanse we see is testimony to the craftsmanship of God (8:3). From the vantage point of earth, there is no heavenly body so wonderful as **the sun**. In the ancient Middle East the sun was often thought of as a god. In this poem, the sun is but a

stunning symbol of the Creator. **Like a bridegroom**, it is pictured as celebrating its Creator.
19:7–10 The law is the Torah, which means "instruction" or "direction." This passage (vv. 7–9) presents six words for the law of God—**law, testimony, statutes, commandment, fear, and judgments**; six evaluations of the law—**perfect, sure, right, pure, clean, and true**; and six results—**converting the soul, making wise the simple, rejoicing the heart, enlightening the eyes, enduring forever, and righteous altogether**. The value of the Scripture cannot be compared with any other desirable thing—even **gold**. It provides the key to wisdom, joy, and most importantly, eternal life.
19:12–14 his errors: The discussion of the nature and perfection of the law of God leads the psalmist to consider his own imperfection. He is aware of both hidden **faults** and **presumptuous sins**; he asks to be delivered from both. His final prayer corresponds to 139:23, 24. **My strength** means "my rock" (see 18:1). **My Redeemer** describes God as the One who purchases our freedom from any bondage or slavery. The principal meaning of the word is "defender of family rights."
Psalm 20, a royal psalm, is a psalm of trust ascribed to David. The tone of the psalm is one of blessing, such as a king might bestow on his people, perhaps on the eve of battle. The brief poem has three movements: (1) God's blessing in battle (vv. 1–5); (2) the assurance of God's deliverance (v. 6); (3) an assertion of faith in God the King (vv. 7–9).
20:1–5 The day of trouble likely refers to the day of battle. But it has wide application for any troubled day in the life of the believer. **sanctuary**: Help from God was perceived to come from the temple in Jerusalem. Ultimately it comes from God's dwelling in heaven, of which the earthly sanctuary was a symbol. **your offerings**: The

pure

(Heb. *bar*) (19:8; 24:4; Prov. 14:4) Strong's #1249

This Hebrew term appears only seven times in the Bible and always in the poetic books. Possibly it derives from a verb that can mean (1) to purify, (2) to choose or select, or (3) to make shine or polish. In 19:8, the word is associated with the eyes, suggesting radiance (compare Prov. 4:18). The concepts of "selectness" and "radiance" may fit the use of this word in the description of the chaste and pure Shulamite (the word is translated as *favorite* and *clear* in Song 6:9, 10). The term appears with other words denoting cleanness and purity (19:7–9), especially purity of the heart (24:4; 73:1).

- 2 May He send you help from the sanctuary,
And strengthen you out of Zion;
3 May He remember all your offerings,
And accept your burnt sacrifice. *Selah*
- 4 May He grant you according to your heart's *desire*,
And ^afulfill all your ²purpose.
5 We will rejoice in your salvation,
And in the name of our God we will set up *our* banners!
May the LORD fulfill all your petitions.
- 6 Now I know that the LORD saves His ³anointed;
He will answer him from His holy heaven
With the saving strength of His right hand.
- 7 Some *trust* in chariots, and some in ^bhorses;
But we will remember the name of the LORD our God.
- 8 They have bowed down and fallen;
But we have risen and stand upright.
- 9 Save, LORD!
May the King answer us when we call.

PSALM 21

Joy in the Salvation of the LORD

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David.

The king shall have joy in Your strength, O LORD;

4 ^a Ps. 21:2
² *counsel*
6 ³ Commissioned one, Heb. *messiah*
7 ^b Deut. 20:1; Ps. 33:16, 17; Prov. 21:31; Is. 31:1

PSALM 21

2 ^a 2 Sam. 7:26-29
4 ^b Ps. 61:5, 6; 133:3
6 ^c Ps. 16:11; 45:7
¹ Lit. *joyful with gladness*
7 ² *shaken*
10 ³ Lit. *seed*
11 ^d Ps. 2:1-4

- And in Your salvation how greatly shall he rejoice!
2 You have given him his heart's desire,
And have not withheld the ^arequest of his lips. *Selah*
- 3 For You meet him with the blessings of goodness;
You set a crown of pure gold upon his head.
- 4 ^b He asked life from You, *and* You gave it to him—
Length of days forever and ever.
- 5 His glory is great in Your salvation;
Honor and majesty You have placed upon him.
- 6 For You have made him most blessed forever;
^c You have made him ¹exceedingly glad with Your presence.
- 7 For the king trusts in the LORD,
And through the mercy of the Most High he shall not be ²moved.
- 8 Your hand will find all Your enemies;
Your right hand will find those who hate You.
- 9 You shall make them as a fiery oven in the time of Your anger;
The LORD shall swallow them up in His wrath,
And the fire shall devour them.
- 10 Their offspring You shall destroy from the earth,
And their ³descendants from among the sons of men.
- 11 For they intended evil against You;
They devised a plot *which* they are not able to ^dperform.

soldiers who were about to go to war would have completed the necessary sacrifices for confession of sin (see Lev. 1–7). In the immediate context, **salvation** is used to describe daily deliverance from the rigors of the battle and the victory over the enemy. But the Lord's deliverance of us from our spiritual troubles should prompt the same type of praise.

20:6 King David was the **anointed** of the Lord (18:50). **His right hand:** This is a slogan that describes God's powerful deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt (17:7; 44:3; 118:16; see also Ex. 15:6).

20:7–9 Chariots were the leading weapon on the ancient battlefield. The implements of warfare are mere tools in God's hand—the wise trust in God because the battle belongs to Him. **May the King answer:** Above King David was God the Great King; moreover, one day King Jesus would rule from sea to sea.

Psalm 21 is another of the royal psalms of David. Psalm 20 is a prayer of the king for God's blessing on his army. Psalm 21 is an assurance of God's blessing on the king. Both psalms, as is the case with all the royal psalms, speak ultimately of the great King to come, the Lord Jesus. Psalm 21 has four movements: (1) a declaration of praise to God by the king (vv. 1, 2); (2) a review of God's blessing on the king (vv. 3–7); (3) an expectation of the final destruction of all enemies of the king (vv. 8–12); (4) a renewed commitment by the people to praise God (v. 13).

21:1, 2 joy in Your strength: An ancient king would tend to find joy in his own strength and power (20:7, 8). But a wise king would

find pleasure in the Almighty, for all power comes from Him. **Your salvation:** Ultimately, spiritual salvation may be in view, but the immediate issue is more mundane. One meaning of the Hebrew word *salvation* is "room to breathe." God had given King David a release from the pressures and constraints that bound him. Jesus speaks of this kind of salvation in Matt. 24:13, as does Paul in Phil. 1:19 (see also James 1:21). **his heart's desire:** The Lord gives people their aspirations when they are derived from a fundamental desire for God's honor and glory (20:4; 37:4; 145:19).

21:3–7 blessings of goodness: King David acknowledges that all he has is God's gift; his kingship itself (the **crown**) is a gift from the Lord. But God's greatest gift is **life**—temporal and eternal. In response to God for His many gifts, David trusts **in the LORD**, for he knows that this trust is not misplaced (15:5). These words of this passage should not be limited to King David, for they also speak generally of God's blessings on all believers. Each of us shares in the blessings of true royalty when we place our trust in the Lord, the Great King.

21:8–10 As is customary in the Psalms, the **enemies** of the king are the enemies of the Lord. Therefore the curse on the enemies is provoked by holy zeal for the glory of God (Num. 25). **The time of Your anger** may refer to any period of God's judgment, but compare to "the day of the LORD" (Joel 2:1; Zeph. 1:14). **Their offspring:** The wicked intend evil against the Lord; but He will prevail, causing them to flee from His anger.

- 12 Therefore You will make them turn their back;
You will make ready *Your arrows* on
Your string toward their faces.
- 13 Be exalted, O LORD, in Your own strength!
We will sing and praise Your power.

PSALM 22

The Suffering, Praise, and Posterity of the Messiah

To the Chief Musician. Set to 1 “The Deer of the Dawn.” A Psalm of David.

- M**y ^aGod, My God, why have
You forsaken Me?
*Why are You so far from helping Me,
And from the words of My groaning?*
- 2 O My God, I cry in the daytime, but
You do not hear;
And in the night season, and am not
silent.
- 3 But You *are* holy,
Enthroned in the ^bpraises of Israel.
- 4 Our fathers trusted in You;
They trusted, and You delivered
them.
- 5 They cried to You, and were
delivered;
^cThey trusted in You, and were not
ashamed.
- 6 But I *am* ^da worm, and no man;
^eA reproach of men, and despised by
the people.

PSALM 22
title ¹ Heb. *Ajeleth Hashahar*
¹ ^a [Matt. 27:46; Mark 15:34] ☆
³ ^b Deut. 10:21; Ps. 148:14
⁵ ^c Is. 49:23
⁶ ^d Job 25:6; Is. 41:14 ^e Ps. 109:25; [Is. 53:3]; Matt. 27:39-44

⁷ ^f Matt. 27:39 ☆;
Mark 15:29 ² Show contempt with their mouth
⁸ ^g Matt. 27:43 ☆;
Luke 23:35 ^h Ps. 91:14 ³ LXX, Syr., Vg. *hoped*; Tg. *praised*
⁹ ⁱ [Ps. 71:5, 6]
¹⁰ ^j [Is. 46:3; 49:1]; Luke 1:35
¹² ^k Ps. 22:21; 68:30 ¹ Deut. 32:14
¹³ ^m Job 16:10; Ps. 35:21; Lam. 2:16; 3:46 ⁴ Lit. *have opened their mouths at Me*
¹⁴ ⁿ Ps. 31:10; Dan. 5:6 ⁵ Lit. *in the midst of My bowels*
¹⁵ ^o Prov. 17:22 ^p John 19:28

- ⁷ ^f All those who see Me ridicule Me;
They ²shoot out the lip, they shake
the head, *saying*,
- ⁸ “He ^gtrusted in the LORD, let Him
rescue Him;
^hLet Him deliver Him, since He
delights in Him!”
- ⁹ ⁱ But You *are* He who took Me out of
the womb;
You made Me trust *while* on My
mother’s breasts.
- ¹⁰ I was cast upon You from birth.
From My mother’s womb
^jYou *have been* My God.
- ¹¹ Be not far from Me,
For trouble *is* near;
For *there is* none to help.
- ¹² ^k Many bulls have surrounded Me;
Strong *bulls* of ^lBashan have
encircled Me.
- ¹³ ^m They ⁴gape at Me *with* their mouths,
Like a raging and roaring lion.
- ¹⁴ I am poured out like water,
ⁿAnd all My bones are out of joint;
My heart is like wax;
It has melted ⁵within Me.
- ¹⁵ ^o My strength is dried up like a
potsherd,
And ^pMy tongue clings to My jaws;
You have brought Me to the dust of
death.
- ¹⁶ For dogs have surrounded Me;
The congregation of the wicked has
enclosed Me.

21:13 Be exalted: The psalmist concludes with a shout of joy as he leads the faithful people in praising God for the promise of His final victory.

Psalm 22 is a profound lament psalm that concludes as a triumphant psalm of praise for God’s deliverance. Although this psalm speaks of David’s own distress and the Lord’s deliverance of him, it also prophetically describes in remarkable detail Jesus’ crucifixion and resurrection. The language David uses to describe his own predicament is prompted by the Holy Spirit. Thus it could span a thousand years to describe precisely the experiences of the Savior Jesus—both His excruciating death and victorious resurrection. See also Ps. 69, which predicts the emotional and spiritual suffering of Jesus. The title of Psalm 22 indicates that it was sung to the tune “The Deer of the Dawn.” This lengthy poem has two main sections: (1) a description of the agony of impending death—an interplay of lament, confession, and petition (vv. 1–21); (2) an ecstatic celebration of great victory—a series of vows to praise God in the congregation (vv. 22–31).

22:1, 2 With the words **My God, My God**, David expresses a painful sense of separation from God at a time of great trouble (38:21). These words were quoted by Jesus while in agony on the cross (Matt. 27:46; Mark 15:34).

22:4 Our fathers trusted in You: Even in the midst of great pain, David confesses his faith in the God of his fathers. God has been faithful to earlier generations; surely He will continue to be faithful to those who call upon Him (see v. 21 for God’s faithful answer).

22:6–8 David’s suffering makes him feel as though he were no

longer human—instead he feels like a **worm**. When David was at his lowest, his enemies ridiculed his faith in the Lord. These words also describe the experience of the Savior who endured the verbal abuse of His tormentors (Matt. 27:27–31, 39–44).

22:9 You made Me trust: With troubles and taunts swirling around him, David places his trust in the Lord—the One he has trusted throughout his whole life. David’s response to difficult circumstances is instructive. Instead of doubting God’s goodness, David reaffirms his lifelong faith in the Almighty.

22:11 Be not far from Me: David repeats his original plea (v. 1) for emphasis (vv. 19–21). He cannot endure his suffering without divine support.

22:12–15 David uses striking imagery to describe his distress. He is surrounded by animals—**bulls** and **lions**. Moreover, David’s distress is so profound that he feels as if his life has been drained from him, as one might empty a jug of water. These words become even more poignant when they are applied to the sufferings of Jesus on the cross (see John 19:34). **My tongue clings to My jaws:** Jesus’ words “I thirst” (John 19:28) expressed the pain of terrible thirst. **the dust of death:** For David, death would be avoided at this time (as in 16:9, 10). For the Savior, however, there was no reprieve.

22:16 dogs: This is the third animal portrayal of the psalmist’s enemies (vv. 12, 13). **They pierced My hands and My feet** explicitly predicts the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus Christ. The words are merely a figure of speech for the terrifying experiences of David; but as a prophet (Acts 2:30), David spoke accurately of the sufferings of Jesus.

- ^aThey⁶ pierced My hands and My feet;
¹⁷ I can count all My bones.
^rThey look *and* stare at Me.
^{18 s}They divide My garments among them,
 And for My clothing they cast lots.
¹⁹ But You, O LORD, do not be far from Me;
 O My Strength, hasten to help Me!
²⁰ Deliver Me from the sword,
^tMy⁷ precious *life* from the power of the dog.
^{21 u}Save Me from the lion's mouth
 And from the horns of the wild oxen!
^vYou have answered Me.
^{22 w}I will declare Your name to ^xMy brethren;
 In the midst of the assembly I will praise You.
^{23 y}You who fear the LORD, praise Him!
 All you ⁸descendants of Jacob, glorify Him,
 And fear Him, all you offspring of Israel!
²⁴ For He has not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted;
 Nor has He hidden His face from Him;
 But ^zwhen He cried to Him, He heard.
^{25 a}My praise *shall be* of You in the great assembly;
^bI will pay My vows before those who fear Him.

16 ^aIs. 53:7; Matt. 27:35; John 20:25
⁶ So with some Heb. mss., LXX, Syr., Vg.; MT *Like a lion* instead of *They pierced*
 17 ^r Luke 23:27, 35 ☆
 18 ^s Matt. 27:35; Mark 15:24; Luke 23:34; John 19:24
 20 ^t Ps. 35:17 ⁷ Lit. *My only one*
 21 ^u 2 Tim. 4:17
^v Is. 34:7
 22 ^w Matt. 4:23; Mark 1:21, 39; Heb. 2:12 ☆ ^x [Rom. 8:29]
 23 ^y Ps. 135:19, 20
⁸ Lit. *seed*
 24 ^z Ps. 31:22; Heb. 5:7
 25 ^a Ps. 35:18; 40:9, 10 ^b Ps. 61:8; Eccl. 5:4
 27 ⁹ *Gentiles* ¹ So with MT, LXX, Tg.; Arab., Syr., Vg. *Him*
 28 ^c [Ps. 47:7]; Obad. 21; [Zech. 14:9]; Matt. 6:13
 29 ^d Ps. 17:10; 45:12; Hab. 1:16 ^e Ps. 28:1; [Is. 26:19] ² Death

PSALM 23

1 ^a Ps. 78:52; 80:1; [Is. 40:11]; Ezek. 34:11, 12; [John 10:11; 1 Pet. 2:25; Rev. 7:16, 17] ^b [Ps. 34:9, 10; Phil. 4:19]
¹ *lack*
 2 ^c Ps. 65:11-13; Ezek. 34:14 ^d [Rev. 7:17] ² Lit. *pastures of tender grass* ³ Lit. *waters of rest*

- ²⁶ The poor shall eat and be satisfied;
 Those who seek Him will praise the LORD.
 Let your heart live forever!
²⁷ All the ends of the world
 Shall remember and turn to the LORD,
 And all the families of the ⁹ nations
 Shall worship before ¹ You.
^{28 c} For the kingdom *is* the LORD's,
 And He rules over the nations.
^{29 d} All the prosperous of the earth
 Shall eat and worship;
^e All those who go down to ² the dust
 Shall bow before Him,
 Even he who cannot keep himself alive.
³⁰ A posterity shall serve Him.
 It will be recounted of the Lord to the *next* generation,
³¹ They will come and declare His righteousness to a people who will be born,
 That He has done *this*.

PSALM 23

The LORD the Shepherd of His People

A Psalm of David.

- T**he LORD *is* ^amy shepherd;
^bI shall not ¹want.
^{2 c}He makes me to lie down in ²green pastures;
^dHe leads me beside the ³still waters.

22:18 The soldiers at Jesus' crucifixion gambled for His **garments**, in direct fulfillment of this text (Matt. 27:35).

22:19–21 Up to this point, the focus of this psalm has been on the suffering of the psalmist. The Lord God, who seemed so distant (vv. 1, 11), is now petitioned to draw near, to **help, deliver, and save**. The Lord is the only source of **strength** to help David fight off the attacks of his tormentors. The use of animal imagery is now given in reverse order: **dog, lion, and wild oxen**—in contrast to bulls (v. 12), a lion (v. 13), and dogs (v. 16).

22:22–24 Not only does the psalm describe David's pain and prophetically Jesus' suffering on the cross, it also depicts God's deliverance. The Lord has answered, and David who has suffered so much promises to sing the praises of the Lord, his Deliverer. **Nor has He hidden His face:** The psalm begins with a sense of desperation based on a feeling of separation from God (v. 1). But the psalm ends with praise and gratitude: In reality God is near, He has answered, and He does save. David's hope has not been misplaced.

22:25, 26 David promises to praise the Lord for His miraculous salvation among other believers—in the **great assembly** at the temple (13:6). This public proclamation would encourage others to place their trust in the faithful Lord who rescues His people.

22:27–30 All the ends of the world: For David, these words refer to the spread of the news of his deliverance to places far outside of Judah. For the Savior Jesus, these words speak of the eventual spread of the gospel of redemption to **all the families of the nations**, a fulfillment of God's promise that He would bless all nations through Abraham's descendants (Gen. 12:3). **Those who go down**

to the dust is a common biblical expression for physical death and the resulting decay.

22:31 to a people who will be born: The gospel message of the death and resurrection of Jesus will spread not only geographically but also throughout all time. All people will hear the clear message of what God **has done**.

Psalm 23 is a psalm of trust. Within the six verses there is a development of the single theme of the first verse: David has no fear or concern, for the Lord is His Shepherd. This psalm of trust presents David in two ways. On the one hand, he is the "sheep" whose Shepherd is the Lord. At the same time, one of the most common descriptions of kingship in the ancient world is that of shepherd. In this sense, David as king was shepherd over the flock of Israel. This means that Ps. 23 is also a royal psalm. Even though the word "king" does not appear in it, this psalm is a description of what it means to be a good ruler. Moreover, the psalm prophetically speaks of Jesus. He is the Good Shepherd whose flock trusts in Him (John 10) and the King whose perfect rule will be established (Luke 23:2, 3; Rev. 17:14). The psalm has two movements: (1) a description of the Lord as Shepherd caring for the psalmist's every need (vv. 1–4); (2) a description of the Lord as Shepherd extending His mercy to all (vv. 5, 6).

23:1 The LORD is my shepherd: The word pictures David uses for God come from his own life and experience. He had been a shepherd in his youth (1 Sam. 16:19).

23:2 Any disturbance or intruder scares sheep. They are very fearful animals and cannot **lie down** unless they feel totally secure. **green**



Shepherds and Sheep

Shepherding and goatherding were among the major occupations of Palestine throughout its history. Sheep and goats were sometimes herded together and sometimes herded separately. Either way, the methods were the same. Shepherding had many other occupations that grew up around it, including sheepbreeders, and sheepshearers, who cut the sheep's wool. Ancient shepherds walked in front of their flocks. A flock knew its shepherd's voice and would follow only him. Often for protection, flocks were lodged together at night and separated in the morning when the shepherds called their sheep by name. They provided their flocks with water and food. They knew each sheep and lamb. When one was lost, they went out to find it. Small lambs, unable to keep up with the flock, were often carried next to a shepherd's breast inside the fold of his outer garment. The shepherd also protected his flock, risking his life if necessary.



A shepherd with his flock at Laodicea

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- ³ He restores my soul;
^cHe leads me in the paths of
 righteousness
 For His name's sake.
- ⁴ Yea, though I walk through the valley
 of the shadow of death,
^gI will fear no evil;
^hFor You *are* with me;
 Your rod and Your staff, they
 comfort me.
- ⁵ You ⁱprepare a table before me in the
 presence of my enemies;
 You ^janoint my head with oil;
 My cup runs over.

³ ^e Ps. 5:8; 31:3;
 Prov. 8:20
⁴ ^f Job 3:5; 10:21,
 22; 24:17; Ps. 44:19
^g [Ps. 3:6; 27:1] ^h Ps.
 16:8; [Is. 43:2]
⁵ ⁱ Ps. 104:15 / Ps.
 92:10; Luke 7:46

⁶ ⁴ So with LXX,
 Syr., Tg., Vg.; MT
 return ⁵ Or To the
 end of my days, lit.
 For length of days

PSALM 24

1 ^a 1 Cor. 10:26, 28

- ⁶ Surely goodness and mercy shall
 follow me
 All the days of my life;
 And I will ⁴dwell in the house of the
 LORD
⁵ Forever.

PSALM 24

The King of Glory and His Kingdom

A Psalm of David.

The ^aearth is the LORD's, and all its
 fullness,
 The world and those who dwell
 therein.

pastures: David uses eloquent language to express his view of the abundant care God gives to His people. **still waters:** Sheep are afraid of fast-flowing streams. God's provision of *still waters* has a soothing effect and calms the sheep.

23:3 He restores my soul: God refreshes His people with His quiet voice and gentle touch. For this reason, the sheep know the Shepherd and are known by Him (John 10:14). **For His name's sake:** The loving actions of the Shepherd proceed from His nature.

23:4 The valley of the shadow of death can refer to any distressing time in our lives. The awareness of our own mortality often comes with sickness, trials, and hardship. But the Lord, our Protector, can lead us through these dark and difficult valleys to eternal life with Him. There is no need to fear death's power (1 Cor. 15:25–27). **You are with me:** The Good Shepherd is with us even in what seem the most difficult and troubling situations. **Your rod and Your staff:** Ancient shepherds used the *rod* and *staff* to rescue, protect, and guide the sheep. Thus they become symbols of the Good Shepherd's loving care over His flock. The sheep are not alone, their Shepherd is standing over them, guiding them into safety—just as the Lord stands over us and protects us.

23:5 a table before me: God's provision is so luxurious, it is as though He has prepared a banquet. **anoint:** Typically an honored guest in the ancient Middle East was anointed with olive oil that contained perfumes. **My cup:** God's provision is as abundant as the wine offered to a guest by a generous host. The lavish treatment of the guest is indicative of the loving care of God for His people.

23:6 The use of both **goodness** and **mercy** to describe God's loyal love intensifies the meaning of the two words. What is described in v. 5 is God's overabundant mercy—love that is in no way deserved. The Hebrew verb **follow** describes an animal in pursuit. When the Lord is our Shepherd, instead of being stalked by wild beasts we are pursued by the loving care of the Lord. **the house of the Lord forever:** God's promise for the Israelites was not just for the enjoyment of this life in the land of promise (see 6:1–3); it was also for the full enjoyment of the life to come in His blessed presence (16:9–11; 17:15; 49:15).

Psalm 24, a psalm of David, is one of the royal psalms. The psalm describes the Lord's entrance into the holy city. It may have been sung when David brought the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem (2 Sam. 6:15). This psalm is often linked with Ps. 22; 23, for all three psalms speak prophetically of the Lord Jesus. Psalm 24 also has some affinities with Ps. 15, for both ask and answer the question of who is fit to come into the presence of the Lord. The answer in Ps. 15 focuses on a person's righteousness; the answer in Ps. 24 focuses on the King of glory. Psalm 24 should also be read with Ps. 2; 110, which share a focus on the return of the Lord Jesus Christ to establish His kingdom on earth. This psalm has three movements: (1) praise to God the Creator and Sovereign of the world (vv. 1, 2); (2) an inquiry concerning the appropriate approach to the Lord (vv. 3–6); (3) an anticipation of the King of glory (vv. 7–10).

24:1, 2 The earth is the Lord's: The psalmist praises God as Sovereign over all He has created. These words also set the stage for the

- 2 For He has ^bfounded it upon the seas,
And established it upon the ¹waters.
- 3 ^cWho may ascend into the hill of the LORD?
Or who may stand in His holy place?
- 4 He who has ^dclean hands and ^ea pure heart,
Who has not lifted up his soul to an idol,
Nor ^fsworn deceitfully.
- 5 He shall receive blessing from the LORD,
And righteousness from the God of his salvation.
- 6 This *is* Jacob, the generation of those who ^gseek Him,
Who seek Your face. *Selah*
- 7 ^hLift up your heads, O you gates!
And be lifted up, you everlasting doors!
- ⁱAnd the King of glory shall come in.
- 8 Who *is* this King of glory?
The LORD strong and mighty,
The LORD mighty in ^jbattle.
- 9 Lift up your heads, O you gates!
Lift up, you everlasting doors!
And the King of glory shall come in.
- 10 Who *is* this King of glory?
The LORD of hosts,
He *is* the King of glory. *Selah*

2 ^b Ps. 89:11 ¹ Lit. rivers

3 ^c Ps. 15:1-5

4 ^d [Job 17:9]; Ps.

26:6 ^e Ps. 51:10;

73:1; [Matt. 5:8]

^f Ps. 15:4

6 ^g Ps. 27:4, 8

7 ^h Ps. 118:20; Is.

26:2 ⁱ Ps. 29:2, 9;

97:6; Hag. 2:7; Acts

7:2; [1 Cor. 2:8]

8 ^j Rev. 19:13-16

PSALM 25

1 ^a Ps. 86:4; 143:8

2 ^b Ps. 34:8 ^c Ps.

13:4; 41:11

3 ⁱ Waits for You

in faith

4 ^d Ex. 33:13; Ps. 5:8;

27:11; 86:11; 119:27;

143:8

6 ^e Ps. 103:17; 106:1

7 ^f Job 13:26; [Jer.

3:25] ^g Ps. 51:1

PSALM 25

A Plea for Deliverance and Forgiveness

A Psalm of David.

- T**o ^aYou, O LORD, I lift up my soul.
²O my God, I ^btrust in You;
Let me not be ashamed;
^cLet not my enemies triumph over me.
- 3 Indeed, let no one who ¹waits on You be ashamed;
Let those be ashamed who deal treacherously without cause.
- 4 ^dShow me Your ways, O LORD;
Teach me Your paths.
- 5 Lead me in Your truth and teach me,
For You *are* the God of my salvation;
On You I wait all the day.
- 6 Remember, O LORD, ^eYour tender mercies and Your lovingkindnesses,
For they *are* from of old.
- 7 Do not remember ^fthe sins of my youth, nor my transgressions;
^gAccording to Your mercy remember me,
For Your goodness' sake, O LORD.
- 8 Good and upright *is* the LORD;
Therefore He teaches sinners in the way.

question of vv. 3–5: If God is Lord over all, who then may approach Him? **those who dwell therein:** God's rule extends to all people, even those who do not acknowledge His power. **founded it upon the seas:** Drawing on the language of Gen. 1 in which God calls the dry land to rise from the watery abyss (Gen. 1:2, 9), David describes God's continued control over the waters.

24:3 Who may ascend: As in Ps. 15, those who approach the Holy One to worship Him in the temple in Jerusalem—**His holy place**—must approach Him in righteousness. This verse highlights the inability of any person except the King of glory to stand before God.

24:4, 5 Clean hands refers to a person's actions; **pure heart** refers to inner attitude.

24:7 Lift up your heads: The gates of the city seem to sag; the doors appear loose. But they must rouse themselves for **the King of glory**. One is coming who is worthy to stand in the holy place. As He nears, the gates raise themselves to honor His entry.

24:8 Who is this King: This is praise for the King who is fresh from battle. This is the One who may enter the city, the Lord Himself. Only with the coming of Jesus did the meaning of this ancient poem become clear (see Matt. 21:1–10; Rev. 19).

24:9, 10 The LORD of hosts: The repetition in these verses is for effect and emphasis. This is praise for the coming King.

Psalm 25 is a psalm of lament. But in the middle of his sorrow, David petitions the Lord to forgive him. Although the psalm contains elements of a lament psalm and a penitential psalm, the mixture of the two forms makes the psalm unique. The psalm is an acrostic, with one poetic line for each successive letter of the Hebrew alphabet. The structure of the psalm is as follows: (1) an introductory appeal that David will not be ashamed before his enemies (vv. 1–3); (2) a call for God to forgive David (vv. 4–7); (3) a focus on the character of God (vv. 8–10); (4) a renewed call for God to forgive David (vv. 11–18); (5) a concluding appeal that David will

not be ashamed before his enemies (vv. 19–21); (6) a concluding prayer for Israel (v. 22).

25:1, 2 Let me not be ashamed is the opening and closing appeal of Ps. 25 (v. 20). Shame is the intended end of the enemies of God (35:26), but not of the faithful. **who waits:** Waiting on the Lord is the equivalent of hoping in Him (25:5; 40:1).

25:4–7 Show me is an appeal to God to enter into David's life more directly, to help him become conformed to the character of God (Rom. 12:1, 2). **sins of my youth:** Both the sins of immaturity and the **transgressions** of adulthood need forgiveness (see 1 John 1:9).

25:8 Good and upright is the Lord: In the midst of David's plea for forgiveness, he praises God by speaking of two of God's characteristics. God *must* be both good and upright. Because He is both, the Lord extends mercy to repentant believers and at the same time promises not to allow the guilty to go unpunished. God will bring justice to this fallen world.

remember

(Heb. *zakar*) (25:6, 7; 106:45) Strong's #2142

This Hebrew verb has as its basic meaning "to contemplate" or "to call to mind." When it refers to recalling past ideas or events it is translated *remember* (Gen. 42:9; Num. 11:5). In other passages, it pertains to thinking about the future and is translated *dwell on* (Eccl. 5:20), *consider* (Lam. 1:9), and *mention* (Jer. 20:9). The psalmists frequently call on God to remember His people (106:4) or His mercy (25:6, 7). This does not imply that God has forgotten, but instead it is a request that God would take action according to His promises.

9 The humble He guides in justice,
And the humble He teaches His way.
10 All the paths of the LORD *are* mercy
and truth,
To such as keep His covenant and
His testimonies.
11 ^h For Your name's sake, O LORD,
Pardon my iniquity, for it is great.
12 Who *is* the man that fears the LORD?
ⁱ Him shall ² He teach in the way ² He
chooses.
13 ^j He himself shall dwell in ³ prosperity,
And ^k his descendants shall inherit
the earth.
14 ^l The secret of the LORD *is* with those
who fear Him,
And He will show them His
covenant.
15 ^m My eyes *are* ever toward the LORD,
For He shall ⁴ pluck my feet out of
the net.
16 ⁿ Turn Yourself to me, and have mercy
on me,
For I *am* ⁵ desolate and afflicted.
17 The troubles of my heart have
enlarged;
Bring me out of my distresses!
18 ^o Look on my affliction and my pain,
And forgive all my sins.
19 Consider my enemies, for they are
many;
And they hate me with ⁶ cruel
hatred.
20 Keep my soul, and deliver me;
Let me not be ashamed, for I put my
trust in You.
21 Let integrity and uprightness
preserve me,
For I wait for You.
22 ^p Redeem Israel, O God,
Out of all their troubles!

11 ^h Ps. 31:3; 79:9;
109:21; 143:11
12 ⁱ [Ps. 25:8; 37:23]
2 Or *he*
13 ^j [Prov. 19:23]
^k Ps. 37:11; 69:36;
Matt. 5:5 ³ Lit.
goodness
14 ^l [Prov. 3:32;
John 7:17]
15 ^m [Ps. 123:2;
141:8] ⁴ Lit. *bring*
out
16 ⁿ Ps. 69:16
⁵ *lonely*
18 ^o 2 Sam. 16:12;
Ps. 31:7
19 ⁶ *violent hatred*
22 ^p [Ps. 130:8]

PSALM 26

1 ^a Ps. 7:8 ^b 2 Kin.
20:3; [Prov. 20:7]
^c [Ps. 13:5; 28:7]
2 ^d Ps. 17:3; 139:23
¹ *test me*
3 ^e 2 Kin. 20:3; Ps.
86:11
4 ^f Ps. 1:1; Jer. 15:17
5 ^g Ps. 31:6; 139:21
8 ^h Ps. 27:4; 84:1-
4, 10 ² Lit. *of the*
tabernacle of Your
glory
9 ⁱ Ps. 28:3 ³ *Do not*
take away
10 ¹ 1 Sam. 8:3
12 ^k Ps. 40:2

PSALM 26

A Prayer for Divine Scrutiny and Redemption

A Psalm of David.

Vindicate ^a me, O LORD,
For I have ^b walked in my integrity.
^c I have also trusted in the LORD;
I shall not slip.
2 ^d Examine me, O LORD, and ¹ prove me;
Try my mind and my heart.
3 For Your lovingkindness *is* before my
eyes,
And ^e I have walked in Your truth.
4 I have not ^f sat with idolatrous
mortals,
Nor will I go in with hypocrites.
5 I have ^g hated the assembly of
evildoers,
And will not sit with the wicked.
6 I will wash my hands in innocence;
So I will go about Your altar, O LORD,
7 That I may proclaim with the voice
of thanksgiving,
And tell of all Your wondrous works.
8 LORD, ^h I have loved the habitation of
Your house,
And the place ² where Your glory
dwells.
9 ⁱ Do ³ not gather my soul with sinners,
Nor my life with bloodthirsty men,
10 In whose hands *is* a sinister scheme,
And whose right hand is full of
^j bribes.
11 But as for me, I will walk in my
integrity;
Redeem me and be merciful to me.
12 ^k My foot stands in an even place;
In the congregations I will bless the
LORD.

25:11–14 Pardon my iniquity: David returns to the subject of his own sinfulness, summarizing vv. 4–7 as well as expressing his desire for the Lord to teach him. **fear Him:** Those who fear the Lord pay attention to His instructions and thus learn the secrets of God's wisdom (111:10; Prov. 1:7; 3:32).
25:19, 20 Let me not be ashamed is a reprise of the opening verses, with emphasis both on David's **enemies** (v. 2) and on his continuing stance of waiting in expectant hope (v. 5).
25:22 Redeem Israel: This concluding verse is outside the general acrostic pattern of the psalm. Here David petitions the Lord to be compassionate with the nation Israel just as He has been with David. The Lord was not only the personal Savior of David, but also the Savior of all the Israelites.
Psalm 26 is a psalm of lament in which there is a protest of innocence (Ps. 17; 35; 43; 69). The structure of the Psalm is as follows: (1) a prayer for vindication (vv. 1, 2); (2) an assertion of integrity (vv. 3–5); (3) a vow of praise (vv. 6–8); (4) a prayer for discrimination (vv. 9, 10); (5) an assertion of integrity (vv. 11, 12).
26:1, 2 The Hebrew word for **vindicate** usually means "to judge"; however, here it means "to declare righteous." **my integrity:** This

is the prayer of a forgiven sinner who is living in the fear of God but whose life has been plagued by undeserved evil. **My mind and my heart** refer to the innermost person.
26:3, 4 Your lovingkindness: The loyal love (13:5) of God is the recurring focus of the Book of Psalms. **have not sat:** As in the description of righteousness in 1:1, David declares that he has no part with men of wickedness or idolatry. Instead he has continually sought the Lord.
26:6–8 go about Your altar: The heart of this psalm is the desire to worship God in integrity. In this regard, the poem shares the spirit of Ps. 15. **where Your glory dwells:** The place where God chose to reveal His glory to His people. The priests interceded for the people with the required offerings. Today "the Most Holy Place" is in the presence of God, where our Savior pleads our case (see Heb. 7:25).
26:9 Do not gather: On the basis of his protests of integrity (vv. 1, 2), David prays for divine discrimination (4:3). God distinguishes those who have responded to His grace from those who have not.
26:12 As always in the Psalms, praise is a public and vocal action that has its proper place in the **congregations** of believers.

Names and Descriptions of God in the Psalms

The chief purpose of the Psalms is to praise God, and in doing this they describe Him. Below is a list of the numerous titles and descriptions the psalmists use to praise the Lord.

Name of God	Description of God
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• the LORD (1:2)• God of my righteousness (4:1)• My King (5:2)• O LORD my God (7:1)• the LORD Most High (7:17)• God of my salvation (18:46)• God of Jacob (20:1)• O My Strength (22:19)• King of glory (24:7, 8)• LORD of hosts (24:10)• God of glory (29:3)• O LORD God of truth (31:5)• the LORD God of Israel (41:13)• O Mighty One (45:3)• the King of all earth (47:7)• God of Abraham (47:9)• God Most High (57:2)• YAH (68:4)• the Almighty (68:14)• GOD the Lord (68:20)• O Holy One of Israel (71:22)• O Shepherd of Israel (80:1)• the LORD our Maker (95:6)• God their Savior (106:21)• the Mighty One of Jacob (132:2)• the God of gods (136:2)• the God of heaven (136:26)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• a shield for me (3:3)• My glory (3:3)• the One who lifts up my head (3:3)• the righteous God (7:9)• a just judge (7:11)• a refuge (9:9)• the portion of my inheritance and my cup (16:5)• my strength (18:1)• the horn of my salvation, my stronghold (18:2)• my support (18:18)• my shepherd (23:1)• my light and my salvation (27:1)• the strength of my life (27:1)• the saving refuge of His anointed (28:8)• my helper (30:10)• rock of refuge (31:2)• my hiding place (32:7)• my help and my deliverer (40:17)• the God of my life (42:8)• my exceeding joy (43:4)• a very present help in trouble (46:1)• our guide even to death (48:14)• my defense (59:9)• my God of mercy (59:10)• a shelter for me, a strong tower from the enemy (61:3)• a father of the fatherless, a defender of widows (68:5)• the strength of my heart and my portion forever (73:26)• the great God, and the great King above all gods (95:3)• He who keeps Israel (121:4)• your shade at your right hand (121:5)• my portion in the land of the living (142:5)• my high tower (144:2)

PSALM 27

An Exuberant Declaration of Faith

A Psalm of David.

The **LORD** is my ^alight and my salvation;
Whom shall I fear?
The ^b**LORD** is the strength of my life;
Of whom shall I be afraid?
² When the wicked came against me
To ^ceat ¹ up my flesh,
My enemies and foes,
They stumbled and fell.
³ ^dThough an army may encamp
against me,
My heart shall not fear;
Though war may rise against me,
In this I *will be* confident.

⁴ ^eOne *thing* I have desired of the **LORD**,
That will I seek:
That I may ^fdwelt in the house of the **LORD**
All the days of my life,
To behold the ²beauty of the **LORD**,
And to inquire in His temple.
⁵ For ^gin the time of trouble
He shall hide me in His pavilion;
In the secret place of His tabernacle
He shall hide me;
He shall ^hset me high upon a rock.

⁶ And now ⁱmy head shall be ³lifted
up above my enemies all
around me;
Therefore I will offer sacrifices of
⁴joy in His tabernacle;
I will sing, yes, I will sing praises to
the **LORD**.

⁷ Hear, O **LORD**, *when* I cry with my
voice!
Have mercy also upon me, and
answer me.
⁸ *When You said*, “Seek My face,”
My heart said to You, “Your face,
LORD, I will seek.”

PSALM 27 1 ^a Ps. 18:28; 84:11; [Is. 60:19, 20; Mic. 7:8] ^b Ex. 15:2; Ps. 62:7; 118:14; Is. 12:2; 33:2 2 ^c Ps. 14:4 1 ^d devour 3 ^d Ps. 3:6 4 ^e Ps. 26:8; 65:4 1 ^f Luke 2:37 2 ^g delightfulness 5 ^g Ps. 31:20; 91:1 ^h Ps. 40:2 6 ^h Ps. 3:3 3 ⁱ Lifted up in honor 4 ⁱ joyous shouts

Psalm 27, a psalm of trust (Ps. 23), begins with David’s affirmation of the reality of God in his life. The poem presents a strong desire to live in the presence of God and points to the ongoing need for believers to continue to “wait” on the Lord. The psalm has six movements: (1) a determination not to fear enemies because of God’s presence (vv. 1–3); (2) a desire to live in the presence of the Lord (vv. 4, 5); (3) an affirmation of praise in God (v. 6); (4) a prayer for God’s continuing presence (vv. 7–10); (5) a prayer for continuing trust in the midst of a life of stress (vv. 11–13); (6) a word of instruction (v. 14). **27:1, 2 Light** indicates deliverance from darkness (Gen. 1:3), which is a biblical symbol of evil. The word **salvation** combined with the

word *light* means “saving light” (3:8). **To eat up my flesh:** David pictures his enemies as ravenous beasts who would shred his flesh (10:8–10; 22:12–16). **27:4, 5** The phrase **dwelt in the house of the LORD** expresses David’s desire to be always nearer to God’s presence. **The beauty of the LORD** speaks of God’s “pleasant nature.” The name Naomi in the Book of Ruth is related to the Hebrew word for *beauty*. **27:6 Sacrifices of joy** are praise offerings the believers bring to God to celebrate the blessings He gives them (Heb. 13:15). **27:8–13** Throughout this psalm, seeking the presence of God (His **face**) was the psalmist’s highest purpose. **Enemies** might dissuade

⁹ *J* Do not hide Your face from me;
Do not turn Your servant away in
anger;
You have been my help;
Do not leave me nor forsake me,
O God of my salvation.

¹⁰ *k* When my father and my mother
forsake me,
Then the LORD will take care of me.

¹¹ *l* Teach me Your way, O LORD,
And lead me in a smooth path,
because of my enemies.

¹² Do not deliver me to the will of my
adversaries;
For *m* false witnesses have risen
against me,
And such as breathe out violence.

¹³ *I would have lost heart*, unless I had
believed
That I would see the goodness of the
LORD
n In the land of the living.

¹⁴ *o* Wait ⁵ on the LORD;
Be of good courage,
And He shall strengthen your heart;
Wait, I say, on the LORD!

PSALM 28

Rejoicing in Answered Prayer

A Psalm of David.

To You I will cry, O LORD my Rock:
^a Do not be silent to me,
^b Lest, if You *are* silent to me,
I become like those who go down to
the pit.

² Hear the voice of my supplications
When I cry to You,
^c When I lift up my hands ^d toward
Your holy sanctuary.

⁹ / Ps. 69:17; 143:7
¹⁰ *k* Is. 49:15
¹¹ / Ps. 25:4; 86:11;
119:33
¹² *m* Deut. 19:18;
Ps. 35:11; Matt.
26:60 ☆; Mark
14:56; John 19:33
¹³ *n* Job 28:13; Ps.
52:5; 116:9; 142:5;
Is. 38:11; Jer. 11:19;
Ezek. 26:20
¹⁴ *o* Ps. 25:3; 37:34;
40:1; 62:5; 130:5;
Prov. 20:22; Is. 25:9;
[Hab. 2:3] ⁵ Wait
in faith

PSALM 28

¹ *o* Ps. 35:22; 39:12;
83:1 ^b Ps. 88:4;
143:7; Prov. 1:12
² *c* Ps. 5:7 ^d Ps.
138:2

³ *e* Ps. 12:2; 55:21;
62:4; Jer. 9:8 ¹ *drag*
⁴ / [Ps. 62:12]; 2 Tim.
4:14; [Rev. 18:6;
22:12]
⁵ *o* Is. 5:12
⁷ *h* Ps. 18:2; 59:17
ⁱ Ps. 13:5; 112:7
⁸ / Ps. 20:6 ² So
with MT, Tg.;
LXX, Syr., Vg.
the strength
of His people
³ Commissioned
one, Heb. *messiah*
⁹ *k* [Deut. 9:29;
32:9; 1 Kin. 8:51;
Ps. 33:12]; 106:40
ⁱ Deut. 1:31; Is. 63:9

PSALM 29

¹ *o* 1 Chr. 16:28, 29
¹ *Ascribe*

³ Do not ¹ take me away with the
wicked
And with the workers of iniquity,
^c Who speak peace to their neighbors,
But evil *is* in their hearts.

⁴ *f* Give them according to their deeds,
And according to the wickedness of
their endeavors;
Give them according to the work of
their hands;
Render to them what they deserve.

⁵ Because *g* they do not regard the
works of the LORD,
Nor the operation of His hands,
He shall destroy them
And not build them up.

⁶ Blessed *be* the LORD,
Because He has heard the voice of
my supplications!

⁷ The LORD *is* ^h my strength and my
shield;
My heart ⁱ trusted in Him, and I am
helped;
Therefore my heart greatly rejoices,
And with my song I will praise Him.

⁸ The LORD *is* ² their strength,
And He *is* ^j the saving refuge of His
³ anointed.

⁹ Save Your people,
And bless ^k Your inheritance;
Shepherd them also,
^l And bear them up forever.

PSALM 29

*Praise to God in His Holiness
and Majesty*

A Psalm of David.

Give ¹ *a* unto the LORD, O you mighty
ones,

the righteous from seeking the presence of the Lord. But the psalmist wants to know God's presence in this life—in **the land of the living**.

27:14 To wait on the LORD is to demonstrate confident expectation. The Hebrew word for *wait* may also be translated "hope." To hope in God is to wait for His timing and His action (40:1; Is. 40:31). **Psalm 28**, a psalm of lament, is attributed to David. The psalm includes a prayer against David's enemies and a royal invocation of praise to the Lord. The psalm has four movements: (1) an appeal to God that He not be silent (vv. 1, 2); (2) a petition to be distinguished from the wicked and their deserved punishment (vv. 3–5); (3) a blessing of the Lord for His work in the psalmist's life (vv. 6, 7); (4) praise for the Lord who delivers His anointed and His people (vv. 8, 9).

28:1, 2 my Rock: For further references to God as a fortress and refuge, see 91:1, 2. **Do not be silent:** One of the ways David senses the distance of God is His "silence" (13:1; 22:1). David might be referring merely to his lack of a sense of intimacy with God (27:4, 5), but it is also possible that he is awaiting a specific word from the Lord through a prophet or a priest. **The pit** is one of the terms for death in the Psalms (9:17, 18; 16:10; 143:7). As in 6:5, David asks to be rescued from death so that he might live to praise God. **lift up my hands:** One of the standard postures for prayer in the Bible (134:2).

28:3–5 Do not take me away: Again, the psalmist is asking to be delivered from death (6:5). **according to their deeds:** David pronounces his curse on the wicked, from whom he wishes to be distinguished (4:3). **they do not regard:** The language here is similar to that of Paul in Rom. 1:18–32. One day even the wicked will have to acknowledge God as their Creator and give Him the glory He deserves.

28:6, 7 Blessed be the Lord: See 103:1, 2 for a development of this theme. **Because** the plea of the psalmist has been **heard**, the last section of the poem is a hymn of praise (138:1).

28:8, 9 The term His anointed acknowledges God's covenant with David, His promise that He would be David's God and David would be His representative. This passage became a heritage of the monarchy, a treasure for each godly king in the Davidic line to go back to for strength and encouragement. **Shepherd them:** As in Ps. 23; 80, the comparison of God with a shepherd is an image of the loving care of a great king (Eccl. 12:11). This image also foreshadows Jesus, the coming King and the Good Shepherd (John 10:11).

Psalm 29 is a worship psalm (see also Ps. 15). But it is also a royal psalm that uses striking language to assert the sovereign reign of the Almighty. David has taken over some of the vocabulary and poetic style of the Canaanites and used it to praise the living God.

- Give unto the LORD glory and strength.
 2 ² Give unto the LORD the glory ³ due to His name;
 Worship the LORD in ^b the ⁴ beauty of holiness.
- 3 The voice of the LORD *is* over the waters;
^c The God of glory thunders;
 The LORD *is* over many waters.
- 4 The voice of the LORD *is* powerful;
 The voice of the LORD *is* full of majesty.
- 5 The voice of the LORD breaks ^d the cedars,
 Yes, the LORD splinters the cedars of Lebanon.
- 6 ^e He makes them also skip like a calf,
 Lebanon and ^f Sirion like a young wild ox.
- 7 The voice of the LORD ⁵ divides the flames of fire.
- 8 The voice of the LORD shakes the wilderness;
 The LORD shakes the Wilderness of ^g Kadesh.
- 9 The voice of the LORD makes the ^h deer give birth,
 And strips the forests bare;
 And in His temple everyone says,
 “Glory!”
- 10 The ⁱ LORD sat *enthroned* at the Flood,
 And ^j the LORD sits as King forever.

2 ^b 2 Chr. 20:21;
 Ps. 110:3 ² *Ascribe*
³ Lit. of His name
⁴ majesty
 3 ^c [Job 37:4, 5]; Ps.
 18:13; Acts 7:2
 5 ^d Judg. 9:15; 1 Kin.
 5:6; Ps. 104:16; Is.
 2:13; 14:8
 6 ^e Ps. 114:4 ^f Deut.
 3:9
 7 ² *stirs up*, lit.
hews out
 8 ^g Num. 13:26
 9 ^h Job 39:1
 10 ⁱ Gen. 6:17; Job
 38:8, 25 / Ps. 10:16

11 ^k Ps. 28:8; 68:35;
 [Is. 40:29]

PSALM 30

title ^a Deut. 20:5
 1 ^b Ps. 28:9 ^c Ps.
 25:2
 2 ^d Ps. 6:2; 103:3;
 [Is. 53:5]
 3 ^e Ps. 86:13 ¹ So
 with Qr., Tg.; Kt.,
 LXX, Syr., Vg. *from*
those who descend
to the pit
 4 ^f Ps. 97:12 ² Or *His*
holiness
 5 ^g Ps. 103:9; Is.
 26:20; 54:7, 8 ^h Ps.
 63:3 ³ a shout of joy
 6 ^d shaken
 7 ⁱ [Deut. 31:17; Ps.
 104:29; 143:7]

- 11 ^k The LORD will give strength to His people;
 The LORD will bless His people with peace.

PSALM 30

The Blessedness of Answered Prayer

A Psalm. A Song ^a at the dedication of the house of David.

- I** will extol You, O LORD, for You have ^b lifted me up,
 And have not let my foes ^c rejoice over me.
- 2 O LORD my God, I cried out to You,
 And You ^d healed me.
- 3 O LORD, ^e You brought my soul up from the grave;
 You have kept me alive, ^f that I should not go down to the pit.
- 4 ^f Sing praise to the LORD, you saints of His,
 And give thanks at the remembrance of ² His holy name.
- 5 For ^g His anger *is but for* a moment,
^h His favor *is for* life;
 Weeping may endure for a night,
 But ³ joy *comes* in the morning.
- 6 Now in my prosperity I said,
 “I shall never be ^d moved.”
- 7 LORD, by Your favor You have made my mountain stand strong;
ⁱ You hid Your face, *and* I was troubled.

As in the case of Ps. 93, the result is both a debunking of Baal and an unusual way of praising the true God of Israel. The psalm has three movements: (1) a call to the angels and all people to acknowledge the supremacy of God (vv. 1, 2); (2) a description of the living God as Lord over storms (vv. 3–9); (3) a blessing from God, who is enthroned as King on high, to His people (vv. 10, 11).

29:1 Give here means “to ascribe.” **O you mighty ones** means “O sons of gods.” This Hebrew phrase refers to spiritual beings who are in the presence of God. We know these beings to be angels. The Hebrew words are similar to those of Job 1:6, which also describes the angels who are in the presence of God.

29:2 glory due to His name: The call is for the angelic hosts to acknowledge fully the wonder of God. The poets of the Bible delighted in taking the ideas of the Canaanites and then stripping them of their essentials. See the scathing attacks on idolatry in 115:4–8; Is. 41:21–29. Here the poet takes a treasured image of Canaanite thought—Baal with other gods bowing before him—and turns it inside out. It is not Baal, but the true God who is worshiped. He is worshiped not by gods who do not even exist, but by His own angels.

29:3 The voice of the LORD: Both the language and the parallelism of this verse directly reflect Canaanite poetry. Baal was believed to be the god of the storm who thundered in the heavens. Here the sound of thunder is a symbol of the voice of God. The phrase “the voice of the LORD” occurs seven times in the passage (vv. 3–9), like rapidly succeeding peals of thunder.

29:5–9 cedars of Lebanon: There is a dramatic energy to these verses as they trace the movement of the storm from the north of

Lebanon and Sirion, an ancient name for Mt. Hermon (Deut. 3:9) to Kadesh in the south. Nothing stops the advance of the storm; its effects reach from sea to land, from north to south, from animals to trees. As at the beginning of the psalm, all the angels in the heavenly sanctuary acknowledge the surpassing **glory** of the omnipotent God.

29:10, 11 As Baal was supposed to have been victorious over the waters, here it is God who is the true victor over all. He even controls the waters at the height of their destructive power, the **Flood**. There is no one to oppose His glorious rule; He is King forever. **The LORD will give strength:** Since He is the true God, there is none other. Only He can empower His people.

Psalm 30, a psalm of declarative praise, commemorates a time when God delivered David from mortal illness. The psalm has five movements: (1) a determination to praise the Lord (v. 1); (2) a report of deliverance (vv. 2, 3); (3) a call for others to join in the praise of the Lord (vv. 4, 5); (4) a report of the psalmist’s mortal illness (vv. 6–10); (5) a presentation of the psalmist’s praise to the Lord (vv. 11, 12).

30:1 I will extol You: David begins his song with a strong determination to praise God.

30:2, 3 up from the grave: David is not reporting a resurrection, but a deliverance from a nearly fatal illness. As in 28:1, the psalmist describes death as a great **pit** into which a person drops into the enveloping darkness of the unknown.

30:4, 5 Possibly David judges his illness to be in some way related to God’s **anger**. **in the morning:** For a sick person, nothing is so long as a painful, sleepless night; few things are as desired as the coming of morning (5:3; 130:6; 143:8).



The Music of the Psalms

The Book of Psalms is the hymnal of ancient Israel. The psalms are ancient lyrics preserved with occasional musical notations. Most of these musical notations are found in the superscriptions or titles. For instance, many are directed “To the Chief Musician” (Ps. 31). Others call for musical accompaniment. For example, Ps. 4 calls for stringed instruments, Ps. 5 for flutes, Ps. 6 for an eight-stringed harp, and Ps. 8 for the instrument of Gath. The titles sometimes specify the tune to be used, such as “Death of the Son” in Ps. 9 and “The Lilies” in Ps. 45. In this way the superscriptions contain hints of the musical nature of the psalms. Furthermore the psalms themselves present a balanced picture of the use of music in worship. For example, in Ps. 33 the purpose of godly music is to rejoice in the God who has given new life.



Double flute player, Israel, seventh century B.C.
Kim Walton, courtesy of the Israel Museum

8 I cried out to You, O LORD;
And to the LORD I made supplication:
9 “What profit is *there* in my blood,
When I go down to the pit?
J Will the dust praise You?
Will it declare Your truth?
10 Hear, O LORD, and have mercy on me;
LORD, be my helper!”
11 *k* You have turned for me my mourning into dancing;
You have put off ⁵ my sackcloth and clothed me with gladness,
12 To the end that *my* ⁶glory may sing praise to You and not be silent.
O LORD my God, I will give thanks to You forever.

9 / [Ps. 6:5]
11 ^k Eccl. 3:4; Is. 61:3; Jer. 31:4 ⁵ The sackcloth of my mourning
12 ⁶ soul

PSALM 31

1 ^a Ps. 22:5 ¹ have taken refuge
2 ^b Ps. 17:6; 71:2; 86:1; 102:2 ² strength ³ Lit. house of fortresses
3 ^c [Ps. 18:2] ^d Ps. 23:3; 25:11
5 ^e Luke 23:46
^f [Deut. 32:4]; Ps. 71:22
6 ^g Jon. 2:8
7 ^h [John 10:27] ⁴ troubles
8 ⁱ [Deut. 32:30]; Ps. 37:33 ^j [Ps. 4:1; 18:19]

PSALM 31

The LORD a Fortress in Adversity

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David.

*I*n ^a You, O LORD, I ¹ put my trust;
Let me never be ashamed;
Deliver me in Your righteousness.
2 ^b Bow down Your ear to me,
Deliver me speedily;
Be my rock of ² refuge,
A ³ fortress of defense to save me.
3 ^c For You *are* my rock and my fortress;
Therefore, ^d for Your name's sake,
Lead me and guide me.
4 Pull me out of the net which they
have secretly laid for me,
For You *are* my strength.
5 ^e Into Your hand I commit my spirit;
You have redeemed me, O LORD God of ^f truth.
6 I have hated those ^g who regard
useless idols;
But I trust in the LORD.
7 I will be glad and rejoice in Your
mercy,
For You have considered my
trouble;
You have ^h known my soul in
⁴ adversities,
8 And have not ⁱ shut ⁵ me up into the
hand of the enemy;
^j You have set my feet in a wide place.
9 Have mercy on me, O LORD, for I am
in trouble;
^k My eye wastes away with grief,
Yes, my soul and my ⁶ body!
10 For my life is spent with grief,
And my years with sighing;
My strength fails because of my
iniquity,
And my bones waste away.

⁵ given me over 9 ^k Ps. 6:7 ⁶ Lit. belly

30:9, 10 As in 6:5, the psalmist pleads with God to save his life so that he can fulfill his promise to **praise** God in the worship of the community. The emphasis is on singing praise to God in this life. **Helper** can be translated “power” or “strength” (33:20). What a sick person needs is strength for recovery: God is that powerful force. **30:11, 12 mourning into dancing:** The psalmist has been transformed and renewed because of God’s blessing on his life. He boasts in God as he fulfills his vow of praise. **My glory** refers to the psalmist’s inner being (16:9). **Psalm 31** is a psalm of lament, but it has such a strong element of trust that it can also be classified as a psalm of trust (see Ps. 23 for an example). The psalms of trust grow out of the confession of trust that occurs in the psalms of lament. In this psalm, the relationship between the two classifications is apparent. There are two major sections: (1) the presentation of lament in the context of trust (vv. 1–18); (2) the presentation of praise in the context of lament (vv. 19–24).

31:1–3 The phrase **I put my trust** pictures the action of a bird seeking refuge under its mother’s wings (11:1; 17:7; 91:1–4). A different word for *trust* occurs in vv. 6, 14, which has the connotation of leaning on someone or something (Prov. 3:5, 6). The imagery of God as the **rock** and fortress for the believer recurs often in the Psalms (91:1–3). **31:5** With the words **into Your hand I commit my spirit**, David expresses a complete dependence on God—his life is in God’s hands to do with as He pleases. These words were spoken by Jesus on the cross shortly before His death (Luke 23:46) and by Stephen before his death (Acts 7:59). **31:9–11 I am in trouble** are classic words of lament and thus begin the lament section of this psalm. **My eye wastes away:** David uses similar language in 6:7 to express his sorrow. **a reproach:** As in the case of Ps. 30, it is possible that what faces the psalmist is a terrible illness—perhaps a physical condition that makes him repulsive to others.

- 11 ¹ I am a ⁷ reproach among all my enemies,
But ^m especially among my neighbors,
And *am* repulsive to my acquaintances;
ⁿ Those who see me outside flee from me.
12 ^o I am forgotten like a dead man, out of mind;
I am like a ⁸ broken vessel.
13 ^p For I hear the slander of many;
^q Fear *is* on every side;
While they ^r take counsel together against me,
They scheme to take away my life.
14 But as for me, I trust in You, O LORD;
I say, “You *are* my God.”
15 My times *are* in Your ^s hand;
Deliver me from the hand of my enemies,
And from those who persecute me.
16 ^t Make Your face shine upon Your servant;
Save me for Your mercies’ sake.
17 ^u Do not let me be ashamed, O LORD,
for I have called upon You;
Let the wicked be ashamed;
^v Let them be silent in the grave.
18 ^w Let the lying lips be put to silence,
Which ^x speak insolent things proudly and contemptuously against the righteous.
19 ^y Oh, how great *is* Your goodness,
Which You have laid up for those who fear You,
Which You have prepared for those who trust in You
In the presence of the sons of men!
20 ^z You shall hide them in the secret place of Your presence

11 ¹ [Is. 53:4] ^m Job 19:13; Ps. 38:11; 88:8, 18 ⁿ Ps. 64:8
⁷ despised thing
12 ^o Ps. 88:4, 5 ⁸ Lit. perishing
13 ^p Ps. 50:20; Jer. 20:10 ^q Lam. 2:22
^r Ps. 62:4; Matt. 27:1
15 ^s [Job 14:5; 24:1]
16 ^t Ps. 4:6; 80:3
17 ^u Ps. 25:2, 20
^v [1 Sam. 2:9]; Ps. 94:17; 115:17
18 ^w Ps. 109:2; 120:2
^x [1 Sam. 2:3]; Ps. 94:4; [Jude 15]
19 ^y Ps. 145:7; [Rom. 2:4; 11:22]
20 ^z [Ps. 27:5; 32:7]

^a Job 5:21 ⁹ shelter
21 ^b [Ps. 17:7]
¹ fortified
24 ^c [Ps. 27:14]

PSALM 32

title ¹ Heb. *Maschil*
1 ^a [Ps. 85:2; 103:3]; Rom. 4:7, 8
2 ^b [2 Cor. 5:19]
^c John 1:47 ² charge his account with
4 ^d 1 Sam. 5:6; Ps. 38:2; 39:10

- From the plots of man;
^a You shall keep them secretly in a ⁹ pavilion
From the strife of tongues.
21 Blessed *be* the LORD,
For ^b He has shown me His marvelous kindness in a ¹ strong city!
22 For I said in my haste,
“I am cut off from before Your eyes”;
Nevertheless You heard the voice of my supplications
When I cried out to You.
23 Oh, love the LORD, all you His saints!
For the LORD preserves the faithful,
And fully repays the proud person.
24 ^c Be of good courage,
And He shall strengthen your heart,
All you who hope in the LORD.

PSALM 32

The Joy of Forgiveness

A Psalm of David. A ¹ Contemplation.

- B**lessed *is he* whose ^a transgression *is* forgiven,
Whose sin *is* covered.
2 Blessed *is* the man to whom the LORD ^b does not ² impute iniquity,
And ^c in whose spirit *there is* no deceit.
3 When I kept silent, my bones grew old
Through my groaning all the day long.
4 For day and night Your ^d hand was heavy upon me;
My vitality was turned into the drought of summer. *Selah*

31:15–18 With the words **my times are in Your hand**, David reaffirms his earlier expression of complete dependence on the Lord (v. 5). David petitions the Lord, who is in complete control of his life, for deliverance. **Your face shine:** As in 4:6, this expression grows out of the words of the Aaronic benediction in Num. 6:24–26. It is a plea for God to “smile” in favor on David.

31:19–22 This verse begins the praise section of the psalm. David affirms that the delights of knowing God far outweigh any other kind of pleasure. **the secret place:** God makes His people safe in the intimacy of His friendship (27:5). **I said in my haste:** The psalmist says things in his pain that he would not say under normal circumstances.

31:23, 24 David encourages the community to join him in praising God. Of all the sacrifices offered in the OT period, only the sacrifice of praise continues in NT worship (Heb. 13:15). **All you who hope in the LORD** is a characteristic term of piety in the Bible.

Psalm 32, a wisdom psalm, is also one of the great penitential psalms. It is generally believed that this psalm—like Ps. 51—has its origin in David’s response to God following his infamous affair with Bathsheba (2 Sam. 11). It is one of the marks of the integrity of Scripture that the low points as well as the triumphs of its principal characters are described. The structure of this psalm is as follows:

(1) a description of blessing (vv. 1, 2); (2) a report of David’s agony before he confessed his sins (vv. 3–5); (3) a lesson to others based on David’s experience with the Lord (vv. 6, 7); (4) an oracle from the Lord on righteous living (vv. 8, 9); (5) concluding praise to the Lord for His mercy (vv. 10, 11).

32:1 Blessed, the word that begins the Book of Psalms (1:1), means “to be happy.” It is appropriate that this term is used of both the righteous person of the first psalm and the confessed sinner in this psalm. **sin is covered:** The poet describes God’s dealing with sin in various ways. Sin can be taken away, the basic meaning of the word **forgiven**, and covered, the basic meaning of atonement.

32:3–5 I kept silent: The silence was a stubborn resistance to admitting guilt, a hope that in time the sin and its penalty would go away. The more David delayed his confession, the more he suffered. David realized it was not just his conscience or his feelings that were assaulting him, but the heavy **hand** of God (38:1, 6–8). No matter who else is hurt, the principal offense of any sin is always against **the Lord**. **You forgave:** The consequences of David’s sin with Bathsheba remained despite God’s forgiveness (2 Sam. 12:13–20). But at this point, the greater news was God’s forgiveness. God had restored His relationship with David.

- ⁵ I acknowledged my sin to You,
And my iniquity I have not
hidden.
^e I said, "I will confess my
transgressions to the LORD,"
And You forgave the iniquity of my
sin. *Selah*
- ⁶ ^fFor this cause everyone who is godly
shall ^gpray to You
In a time when You may be found;
Surely in a flood of great
waters
They shall not come near him.
- ⁷ ^h You *are* my hiding place;
You shall preserve me from
trouble;
You shall surround me with ⁱsongs of
deliverance. *Selah*
- ⁸ I will instruct you and teach you in
the way you should go;
I will guide you with My eye.
- ⁹ Do not be like the ^jhorse *or* like the
mule,
Which have no understanding,
Which must be harnessed with bit
and bridle,
Else they will not come near you.
- ¹⁰ ^k Many sorrows *shall be* to the
wicked;
But ^lhe who trusts in the LORD,
mercy shall surround him.
- ¹¹ ^m Be glad in the LORD and rejoice, you
righteous;
And shout for joy, all *you* upright in
heart!

⁵ ^e 2 Sam. 12:13; Ps.
38:18; [Prov. 28:13;
1 John 1:9]
⁶ ^f [1 Tim. 1:16] ^g Ps.
69:13; Is. 55:6
⁷ ^h Ps. 9:9 ⁱ Ex. 15:1;
Judg. 5:1; [Ps. 40:3]
⁹ ^j Prov. 26:3
¹⁰ ^k Ps. 16:4; [Prov.
13:21; Rom. 2:9]
¹¹ ^m Ps. 5:11, 12; Prov.
16:20
¹¹ ^m Ps. 64:10; 68:3;
97:12

PSALM 33

¹ ^a Ps. 32:11; 97:12;
Phil. 3:1; 4:4
² ⁱ Lit. *Sing to Him*
⁶ ^b Gen. 1:6, 7; Ps.
148:5; [Heb. 11:3;
2 Pet. 3:5] ^c Gen.
2:1 ^d [Job 26:13]
⁷ ^e Gen. 1:9; Job
26:10; 38:8 ² LXX,
Tg., Vg. *in a vessel*
⁹ ^f Gen. 1:3; Ps.
148:5
¹⁰ ^g [Ps. 2:1-3]; Is.
8:10; 19:3

PSALM 33

*The Sovereignty of the LORD in
Creation and History*

- R**ejoice ^a in the LORD, O you
righteous!
For praise from the upright is
beautiful.
- ² Praise the LORD with the harp;
¹ Make melody to Him with an
instrument of ten strings.
- ³ Sing to Him a new song;
Play skillfully with a shout of joy.
- ⁴ For the word of the LORD *is* right,
And all His work *is done* in truth.
- ⁵ He loves righteousness and justice;
The earth is full of the goodness of
the LORD.
- ⁶ ^b By the word of the LORD the heavens
were made,
And all the ^chost of them ^dby the
breath of His mouth.
- ⁷ ^e He gathers the waters of the sea
together ² as a heap;
He lays up the deep in storehouses.
- ⁸ Let all the earth fear the LORD;
Let all the inhabitants of the world
stand in awe of Him.
- ⁹ For ^fHe spoke, and it was *done*;
He commanded, and it stood fast.
- ¹⁰ ^g The LORD brings the counsel of the
nations to nothing;
He makes the plans of the peoples of
no effect.

32:6 who is godly: On the basis of his own experience, David instructs the congregation. They too can experience forgiveness if they will come to the Lord in faith as David has.

32:7 The psalm has quick and dramatic shifts. After addressing the congregation, David speaks directly to God: **You are my hiding place.**

32:8, 9 I will instruct you: The speaker changes. The Lord "comes into the psalm" to instruct the people. He exhorts the people not to be like a **horse** that will not go where its rider wants it to go; it has to be disciplined because it is stubborn. God does not want to muzzle or bridle His people like a horse. He expects His servants to respond promptly to Him of their own accord.

32:10, 11 The psalmist resumes his song by contrasting the **many sorrows** of the wicked with the joy of the forgiven sinner. He then calls for all the righteous to join him in public praise of the wonder of God's mercy.

Psalm 33, a psalm of descriptive praise, calls for all people to join Israel's faithful in praising God and waiting on (trusting in) the Lord. This is one of the few anonymous psalms in Book I (see also Ps. 1; 2; 10). The structure is as follows: (1) a call for the righteous to praise God, in view of His righteous acts in creation (vv. 1-7); (2) a call for the nations to praise God, in view of His sovereign work in creation (vv. 8-12); (3) a call for the people to praise God, in view of His care of creation (vv. 13-19); (4) a concluding affirmation of confidence in God (vv. 20-22).

33:1-3 God sees the praise from believers as **beautiful** (147:1). **harp:** Throughout the Psalms, many instruments are employed

to praise the name of the Lord (98:5; 150:3-5). **to Him:** Praise is always directed to One who deserves all praise, the Lord Almighty. **33:4, 5** Although the world is filled with evil and with people who have no thought of God (Ps. 14), believers must look beyond the apparent confusion of the world to see God's **goodness**—the goodness that manifests itself every time the sun rises, a bird sings, and a mother lovingly embraces her child. Out of His goodness, God holds together the earth and provides for the sustenance of all people. One day God's goodness will prevail over all evil (98:2). **33:6, 7** The reference to God's control of the **waters of the sea** has a twofold origin (24:2; 93:3, 4). It grows out of the creation story in Gen. 1, in which God brings dry land from the waters and establishes His place for the waters that remain (Gen. 1:6-10). The idea also grows out of Canaanite religious ideas, for the Canaanites considered the seas as malevolent deities. But the Lord alone is God. No power—no matter how evil—is a threat to His control (Job 26:10; Prov. 8:28, 29).

33:8, 9 The Bible presents the **fear** of the Lord as a mark of reverence and awe on the part of those who recognize Him as Lord (40:3). **He spoke:** The account of creation in Gen. 1 describes God's word as the sole source of creation. This psalm emphasizes God's word as the controlling element in creation (vv. 4, 6). It was by God's "breath" (v. 6) that He made all things.

33:10-12 In contrast to the ineffective **counsel of the nations**, the counsel of God is wise counsel that lasts forever. **Blessed** means to be manifestly happy; the same word is used at the beginning of Ps. 1. Those who listen to God's counsel will be happy.

- 11 ^h The counsel of the LORD stands forever,
The plans of His heart to all generations.
- 12 Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD,
The people He has ⁱ chosen as His own inheritance.
- 13 ^j The LORD looks from heaven;
He sees all the sons of men.
- 14 From the place of His dwelling He looks
On all the inhabitants of the earth;
- 15 He fashions their hearts individually;
^k He ³ considers all their works.
- 16 ^l No king is saved by the multitude of an army;
A mighty man is not delivered by great strength.
- 17 ^m A horse is a ⁴ vain hope for safety;
Neither shall it deliver *any* by its great strength.

11 ^h [Job 23:13; Prov. 19:21]
12 ⁱ [Ex. 19:5; Deut. 7:6]; Ps. 28:9
13 ^j Job 28:24; [Ps. 14:2]
15 ^k [2 Chr. 16:9]; Job 34:21; [Jer. 32:19]
³ understands
16 ^l Ps. 44:6; 60:11; [Jer. 9:23, 24]
17 ^m [Ps. 20:7; 147:10; Prov. 21:31]
⁴ false

18 ⁿ [Job 36:7]; Ps. 32:8; 34:15; [1 Pet. 3:12]
19 ^o Job 5:20; Ps. 37:19

PSALM 34

title ^a 1 Sam. 21:10-15
1 ^b [Eph. 5:20; 1 Thess. 5:18]

- 18 ⁿ Behold, the eye of the LORD is on those who fear Him,
On those who hope in His mercy,
- 19 To deliver their soul from death,
And ^o to keep them alive in famine.
- 20 Our soul waits for the LORD;
He is our help and our shield.
- 21 For our heart shall rejoice in Him,
Because we have trusted in His holy name.
- 22 Let Your mercy, O LORD, be upon us,
Just as we hope in You.

PSALM 34

The Happiness of Those Who Trust in God

A Psalm of David ^a when he pretended madness before Abimelech, who drove him away, and he departed.

I will ^b bless the LORD at all times;
His praise *shall* continually *be* in my mouth.

33:13–15 The LORD looks on humankind with a sense of discriminating pleasure. The emphasis of this section is not condemnation, but discrimination.

33:16, 17 army: People should not rely on physical strength or material resources to save them. Salvation belongs to the Lord (3:8), both for spiritual deliverance and for physical strength.

33:18, 19 eye of the LORD: This is a particularly warm image of God's care for His people. God watches all people, but He looks with delight on **those who fear Him and hope in His mercy** (147:11).

33:20–22 waits: To wait on God is to adopt a stance of resolute faith (40:1). **Just as we hope:** The psalm concludes with a phrase similar to "Amen." This is a "yes" to God's mercy, a statement of agreement with His provisions.

Psalm 34 is a wisdom psalm and a psalm of praise. It is written in the form of an acrostic, with one verse for each letter of the Hebrew

alphabet. One verse appears to have dropped out at some point; there is no verse for the Hebrew letter *waw*, that would otherwise appear after v. 5. The title of the psalm ascribes it to David and specifies that it was written to commemorate his escape from Abimelech the king of Gath (1 Sam. 21:10–15). The name of the king in 1 Sam. 21 is Achish. It is believed that Abimelech was a throne name and Achish a personal name. The structure of the poem is as follows: (1) a call for the congregation to join the psalmist in praise (vv. 1–3); (2) a declaration concerning the psalmist's deliverance from trouble (vv. 4–7); (3) instruction about the fear of the Lord (vv. 8–14); (4) a declaration of praise to the Lord (vv. 15–22).

34:1–3 at all times: The determination of David to praise God is similar to the words of Paul in 1 Thess. 5:18. **Exalt His name together** is David's call for the congregation to join him in his praise of God.

Psalms on Creation

The poets of the Old Testament loved to describe the natural world. Like all people in that ancient time, they lived closer to nature than do most of us. They enjoyed nature's beautiful and fascinating manifestations. They observed the ways of birds and badgers, the flowing rivers, and the pulsing of the waves. In this respect the biblical poets have much in common with many other poets throughout history.

But in two important ways the biblical poets were different from their neighbors in the ancient Middle East. First, they resisted the temptation to deify nature. Their neighbors did not merely rhapsodize about birds and trees, hills and seas—they worshiped them. The biblical poets learned to do something truly new. Namely, they loved nature but did not bow to it. They enjoyed nature but did not worship it.

The second distinctive of the biblical poets was their identification of "nature." For them, nature was always "creation." The word nature does not itself deify the world, but it still implies that the world has its own sense of being, its own power, and its own dynamic. On the other hand, the word creation is a term of faith. It expresses the belief that everything that exists is made by God. All the beauty and splendor of the universe comes from God's creative hands.

In some ways, the modern emphasis on "Mother Earth" is simply a revival of the goddess cults of the ancient Middle East. However, the authors of the creation psalms have the right perspective. We can express our enjoyment of creation without worshipping it. We can love the earth because we first love its Creator. We can rejoice in the marvels of nature—the sparkling waterfall and the soaring eagle—because we know they are the handiwork of God. Any efforts to "save" the earth should arise from our worship of its Creator and our knowledge that we are called to responsible stewardship because everything God created is a gift from Him.



2 My soul shall make its boast in the LORD;
The humble shall hear *of it* and be glad.

3 Oh, magnify the LORD with me,
And let us exalt His name together.

4 I ^csought the LORD, and He heard me,
And delivered me from all my fears.

5 They looked to Him and were radiant,
And their faces were not ashamed.

6 This poor man cried out, and the LORD heard *him*,
And saved him out of all his troubles.

7 ^dThe ¹angel of the LORD ^eencamps all around those who fear Him,
And delivers them.

8 Oh, ^ftaste and see that the LORD is good;
^gBlessed is the man *who* trusts in Him!

9 Oh, fear the LORD, you His saints!
There is no ²want to those who fear Him.

10 The young lions lack and suffer hunger;
^hBut those who seek the LORD shall not lack any good *thing*.

11 Come, you children, listen to me;
ⁱI will teach you the fear of the LORD.

12 ^jWho is the man *who* desires life,
And loves *many* days, that he may see good?

13 Keep your tongue from evil,
And your lips from speaking ^kdeceit.

14 ^lDepart from evil and do good;
^mSeek peace and pursue it.

4 ^c [2 Chr. 15:2; Ps. 9:10; Matt. 7:7; Luke 11:9]
7 ^d [Ps. 91:11; Dan. 6:22 ^e 2 Kin. 6:17]
ⁱ Or Angel
8 ^f Ps. 119:103; [Heb. 6:5]; 1 Pet. 2:3
^g Ps. 2:12
9 ² lack
10 ^h [Ps. 84:11]
11 ⁱ Ps. 32:8
12 ^j [1 Pet. 3:10-12]
13 ^k [Eph. 4:25]
14 ^l Ps. 37:27; Is. 1:16, 17 ^m [Rom. 14:19; Heb. 12:14]

15 ⁿ Job 36:7; [Ps. 33:18]
16 ^o Lev. 17:10; Jer. 44:11; Amos 9:4
^p Job 18:17; Ps. 9:6; 109:15; [Prov. 10:7]
³ destroy
17 ^q Ps. 34:6; 145:19
18 ^r [Ps. 145:18]
^s Ps. 51:17; [Is. 57:15]
⁴ are crushed in spirit
19 ^t Prov. 24:16
^u Ps. 34:4, 6, 17
20 ^v John 19:33, 36 ☆
21 ^w Ps. 94:23; 140:11; Prov. 24:16
⁵ held guilty
22 ^x 1 Kin. 1:29

PSALM 35
1 ¹ Contend for me

15 ⁿ The eyes of the LORD *are* on the righteous,
And His ears *are open* to their cry.

16 ^o The face of the LORD *is* against those who do evil,
^pTo ³cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.

17 *The righteous* cry out, and ^qthe LORD hears,
And delivers them out of all their troubles.

18 ^rThe LORD *is* near ^sto those who have a broken heart,
And saves such as ⁴have a contrite spirit.

19 ^tMany *are* the afflictions of the righteous,
^uBut the LORD delivers him out of them all.

20 He guards all his bones;
^vNot one of them is broken.

21 ^wEvil shall slay the wicked,
And those who hate the righteous shall be ⁵condemned.

22 The LORD ^xredeems the soul of His servants,
And none of those who trust in Him shall be condemned.

PSALM 35

The LORD the Avenger of His People

A Psalm of David.

Plead ¹my cause, O LORD, with those who strive with me;
Fight against those who fight against me.

34:4-7 He heard me is a classic statement of praise in the psalms. God is praised for the deliverance He provides in response to the prayers of His people (40:1). **were radiant:** Those who came to God in prayer as David did found themselves transformed; it was as if they also experienced what Moses had on Mt. Sinai (Ex. 34:29; 2 Cor. 3:18). **Poor man** refers to the needy as well as the humble, whom the Lord delights to deliver (147:6). The phrase **the angel of the LORD** and the name of God are often interchanged. With the sense of God surrounding or hovering over the believer in this manner, there is no need to fear—even in the most desperate times.

34:8, 9 The center of biblical mission in the OT is found in the words **taste and see**. The task of Israel was to attract the nations to their God. For their faithfulness to Him, God had promised to bless them abundantly, and when the nations saw this blessing they would see that the living God was with them. In the midst of a world of gods who were not good at all, there was one living God, and He was altogether good (100:5). **Fear** is a call to awe, wonder, worship, and reverence (Prov. 1:7). To fear God is to respond to Him in piety and obedience.

34:10 People who live by their wits may eat as infrequently as **young lions. shall not lack:** As is true of 23:1, this is not a categorical statement. Time after time, however, the believer is able to attest to the ways God has met needs.

34:11-14 Come, you children: David took on the role of a wisdom

teacher addressing the young people who are in his charge (Prov. 3:1-12). **Depart from evil:** The same sentiment is found in 37:27.

34:15, 16 In this context, **the eyes of the LORD** symbolize His care and protection.

34:17-19 the LORD hears: With slight variations, this is a reprise of v. 6. **The LORD is near:** When the Scriptures speak of God being near, it is to comfort the believer with a sense of His care.

34:20 guards all his bones: This verse, which speaks of the Lord's preservation of the righteous, notes that not a bone is broken. John 19:33-36 shows that the words of this verse were fulfilled in detail in the death of Jesus. Despite the terrible suffering the Savior endured, none of His bones were broken. When the Roman soldiers came to break Jesus' legs to hasten His death, they found that He had already died.

34:22 This verse is outside the acrostic pattern; it summarizes the psalm, giving appropriate praise to the Lord who saves those who put their faith in Him (see 1 Tim. 4:10).

Psalm 35 is a psalm of lament and a protest of innocence (Ps. 17; 26; 43; 69). Like Ps. 94, this poem by David places an unusual emphasis on the role of his enemies. Sometimes it is called an imprecatory psalm. The structure of the psalm is as follows: (1) an appeal to God the Warrior and Judge to plead the psalmist's cause (vv. 1-3); (2) a series of petitions for God to dishonor His enemies, deliver His servant, and glorify Himself (vv. 4-10); (3) a second series of

2 Take hold of shield and ²buckler,
And stand up for my help.
3 Also draw out the spear,
And stop those who pursue me.
Say to my soul,
“I *am* your salvation.”
4 “Let those be put to shame and
brought to dishonor
Who seek after my life;
Let those be ^bturned back and
brought to confusion
Who plot my hurt.
5 ^cLet them be like chaff before the wind,
And let the ³angel of the LORD chase
them.
6 Let their way be ^ddark and slippery,
And let the angel of the LORD pursue
them.
7 For without cause they have ^ehidden
their net for me *in* a pit,
Which they have dug without cause
for my life.
8 ⁴ Let ^fdestruction come upon him
unexpectedly,
And let his net that he has hidden
catch himself;
Into that very destruction let him fall.
9 And my soul shall be joyful in the
LORD;
It shall rejoice in His salvation.
10 ^g All my bones shall say,
“LORD, ^h who *is* like You,
Delivering the poor from him who is
too strong for him,
Yes, the poor and the needy from
him who plunders him?”
11 Fierce witnesses rise up;
They ask me *things* that I do not
know.
12 ⁱ They reward me evil for good,
To the sorrow of my soul.
13 But as for me, ^j when they were sick,
My clothing *was* sackcloth;
I humbled myself with fasting;
And my prayer would return to my
own ⁵ heart.

The Christ of the Psalms		
Psalm	Portrayal	Fulfilled
2:7	The Son of God	Matthew 3:17
8:2	Praised by children	Matthew 21:15, 16
8:6	Ruler of all	Hebrews 2:8
16:10	Rises from death	Matthew 28:7
22:1	Forsaken by God	Matthew 27:46
22:7, 8	Derided by enemies	Luke 23:35
22:16	Hands and feet pierced	John 20:27
22:18	Lots cast for clothes	Matthew 27:35, 36
34:20	Bones unbroken	John 19:32, 33, 36
35:11	Accused by false witnesses	Mark 14:57
35:19	Hated without cause	John 15:25
40:7, 8	Delights in God's will	Hebrews 10:7
41:9	Betrayed by a friend	Luke 22:47
45:6	The eternal King	Hebrews 1:8
68:18	Ascends to heaven	Acts 1:9–11
69:9	Zealous for God's house	John 2:17
69:21	Given vinegar and gall	Matthew 27:34
109:4	Prays for enemies	Luke 23:34
109:8	His betrayer replaced	Acts 1:20
110:1	Rules over His enemies	Matthew 22:44
110:4	A priest forever	Hebrews 5:6
118:22	The chief stone of God's building	Matthew 21:42
118:26	Comes in the name of the Lord	Matthew 21:9

2 ² A small shield
4 ^a Ps. 40:14, 15;
70:2, 3 ^b Ps. 129:5
5 ^c Job 21:18; Ps.
83:13; Is. 29:5 ³ Or
Angel
6 ^d Ps. 73:18; Jer.
23:12
7 ^e Ps. 9:15
8 ^f [Ps. 55:23]; Is.
47:11; [1 Thess. 5:3]
⁴ Lit. *Let destruction
he does not know
come upon him,*
10 ^g Ps. 51:8

14 I paced about as though *he were* my
friend *or* brother;
I bowed down ⁶ heavily, as one who
mourns *for his* mother.
15 But in my ⁷ adversity they rejoiced
And gathered together;
Attackers gathered against me,

^h [Ex. 15:11]; Ps. 71:19; 86:8; [Mic. 7:18] 12 ⁱ Ps. 38:20; 109:5;
Jer. 18:20; John 10:32 13 / Job 30:25 ⁵ Lit. *bosom* 14 ^e in
mourning 15 ⁷ limping, stumbling

petitions and promises (vv. 11–18); (4) a third series of petitions and promises (vv. 19–28).
35:1–3 Plead my cause is the classic protest of innocence (Ps. 17; 26; 43; 69). David has been wrongly attacked, so he prays that God will deliver him from these assaults (see Ps. 94). **stand up for my help**: David is not afraid to ask God to take up arms like a soldier and fight for him. The psalmist does not shrink from asking the Lord to comfort him by saying the words **I am your salvation**. All these demands demonstrated David's complete dependence on the Lord.
35:4–7 David's first petition calls for **shame** on his enemies (v. 26). This is not just a call to embarrass them; it is a call for final judgment. In this instance, **the angel of the Lord** is a scourge (contrast 34:7). **without cause**: Here is the heart of David's position: he has not done anything to cause this evil attack upon himself.

35:9, 10 These two verses are the first prayer of confidence in this psalm (vv. 17, 27). **All my bones** refers to the inner being, the total person. **who is like You**: There is nothing in all the universe to be compared with God.
35:11–15 The psalmist begins his second cycle of petition with reference to treacherous **witnesses**, like the false witnesses in the story of Jezebel and Naboth in 1 Kin. 21. The actions of these witnesses are even more shameful because they had received the help of the psalmist in their own times of need. **they rejoiced**: The ferocity of these witnesses is appalling. The psalmist finds that they are like animals in the way they treat him, rejoicing that troubles have come upon him.

And I did not know *it*;
 They tore *at me* and did not cease;
 16 With ungodly mockers at feasts
 They gnashed at me with their
 teeth.

17 Lord, how long will You ^klook on?
 Rescue me from their destructions,
 My precious *life* from the lions.

18 I will give You thanks in the great
 assembly;
 I will praise You among ^smany
 people.

19 ^lLet them not rejoice over me who are
 wrongfully my enemies;
 Nor let them wink with the eye who
 hate me without a cause.

20 For they do not speak peace,
 But they devise deceitful matters
 Against *the* quiet ones in the land.

21 They also opened their mouth wide
 against me,
 And said, “Aha, aha!
 Our eyes have seen *it*.”

22 *This* You have seen, O LORD;
 Do not keep silence.
 O Lord, do not be far from me.

23 Stir up Yourself, and awake to my
 vindication,
 To my cause, my God and my Lord.

24 Vindicate me, O LORD my God,
 according to Your righteousness;
 And let them not rejoice over me.

25 Let them not say in their hearts, “Ah,
 so we would have *it*!”
 Let them not say, “We have
 swallowed him up.”

26 Let them be ashamed and brought to
 mutual confusion

17 ^kPs. 13:1; [Hab.
 1:13]
 18 ^sa mighty
 19 ^lPs. 69:4; 109:3;
 Lam. 3:52; [John
 15:25 ☆]

26 ^mPs. 109:29
 27 ⁿRom. 12:15

PSALM 36

1 ^aRom. 3:18
 3 ^bPs. 94:8; Jer.
 4:22
 4 ^cProv. 4:16; [Mic.
 2:1] ^dIs. 65:2 ^e[Ps.
 52:3; Rom. 12:9]
^freject, loathe

Who rejoice at my hurt;
 Let them be ^mclothed with shame
 and dishonor
 Who exalt themselves against me.

27 ⁿLet them shout for joy and be
 glad,
 Who favor my righteous cause;
 And let them say continually,
 “Let the LORD be magnified,
 Who has pleasure in the prosperity
 of His servant.”

28 And my tongue shall speak of Your
 righteousness
 And of Your praise all the day
 long.

PSALM 36

Man's Wickedness and God's Perfections

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of
 David the servant of the LORD.

An oracle within my heart
 concerning the transgression of
 the wicked:
^aThere is no fear of God before his
 eyes.

2 For he flatters himself in his own
 eyes,
 When he finds out his iniquity *and*
 when he hates.

3 The words of his mouth *are*
 wickedness and deceit;
^bHe has ceased to be wise *and* to do
 good.

4 ^cHe devises wickedness on his
 bed;
 He sets himself ^din a way *that is* not
 good;
 He does not ⁱabhor ^eevil.

35:18 give You thanks: This is the second of the vows of praise that follow each cycle of petition in this psalm (vv. 9, 10, 27, 28). The Hebrew word for *thanks* means “to make public acknowledgment,” to praise God in the community (122:4; 136:1).

35:19–21 The enemies would **rejoice** if someone like David fell, who had trusted in the Lord. **hate me without a cause:** Again, David asserts his innocence (v. 7). The fact that he is hated for no cause is baffling and discouraging. The passage also predicts the suffering of the Savior Jesus (John 15:23–25). **peace:** Far more than simply an absence of war, the biblical *peace* has the idea of wholeness, things as they ought to be. Note that the contrasting opposite here is not war, but deceit. **Aha, aha:** These contemptuous sneers are similar to the assaults in 22:7.

35:22–25 You have seen: The wicked were not the only ones who have seen David’s grave distress (v. 21); God has also seen his pain. **Stir up Yourself:** The people of Israel know that God, unlike the false gods (1 Kin. 18:27), never sleeps (121:4; Is. 40:28). Yet for David, it seems as though God is napping (44:23).

35:26–28 The phrase **be ashamed** refers not to simple embarrassment, but to the revelation of the complete emptiness of wickedness before the judgment seat of God (14:5; 31:17; 36:12). **Who favor:** Only here do we learn that David has defenders: those who are on his side will share his joy when he is saved.

Psalm 36 is a wisdom psalm that gives a revelation of the nature of sin and an exaltation of God’s unfailing love (see also Ps. 14; 53). The structure is as follows: (1) a revelation of the nature of sin (vv. 1–4); (2) praises to God, centering on His loyal love (vv. 5–9); (3) a prayer for God to continue His loyal love to His people even in the context of His final judgment (vv. 10–12).

36:1–4 The term **oracle** was used by the prophets of the OT to mean a divine utterance. In Mic. 4:6 the same Hebrew word is translated “says the LORD.” In this psalm, David “the prophet” (Acts 2:30) has received a prophetic revelation as striking as any among the sons of the prophets. He has received divine insight into the nature of wickedness. **no fear of God:** Underlying wickedness is a complete disregard for the reality of God in a person’s life and in the world. The word translated *fear* in this psalm is the same word used for “terror” at the final judgment (14:5). **flatters himself:** With no sense of God or of final judgment, the wicked become egotistical. **words of his mouth:** The theme of the wicked mouth is developed in Ps. 12. **ceased to be wise:** The wisdom that the psalmist observes here is the practical outworking of the skill of sound living. **Wickedness** is crookedness and perversity.

- 5 Your mercy, O LORD, *is* in the heavens;
Your faithfulness *reaches* to the
clouds.
- 6 Your righteousness *is* like the ²great
mountains;
^fYour judgments *are* a great deep;
O LORD, You preserve man and beast.
- 7 How precious *is* Your lovingkindness,
O God!
Therefore the children of men ^gput
their trust under the shadow of
Your wings.
- 8 ^hThey are abundantly satisfied with
the fullness of Your house,
And You give them drink from ⁱthe
river of Your pleasures.
- 9 ^jFor with You *is* the fountain of life;
^kIn Your light we see light.
- 10 Oh, continue Your lovingkindness to
those who know You,
And Your righteousness to the
upright in heart.
- 11 Let not the foot of pride come
against me,
And let not the hand of the wicked
drive me away.
- 12 There the workers of iniquity have
fallen;
They have been cast down and are
not able to rise.

PSALM 37

The Heritage of the Righteous and the Calamity of the Wicked

A Psalm of David.

D^o^a not fret because of evildoers,
Nor be envious of the workers of
iniquity.

6 ^f Job 11:8; Ps.
77:19; [Rom. 11:33]
2 Lit. *mountains
of God*
7 ^g Ruth 2:12; Ps.
17:8; 57:1; 91:4
8 ^h Ps. 63:5; 65:4; Is.
25:6; Jer. 31:12-14
9 ⁱ Ps. 46:4; Rev. 22:1
9 ^j [Jer. 2:13; John
4:10, 14] ^k [1 Pet.
2:9]

PSALM 37

1 ^a Ps. 73:3; [Prov.
23:17; 24:19]

2 ^b Job 14:2; Ps.
90:5, 6; 92:7; James
1:11
4 ^c Job 22:26; Ps.
94:19; Is. 58:14 ^d Ps.
21:2; 145:19; [Matt.
7:7, 8]
5 ^e [Ps. 55:22; Prov.
16:3; 1 Pet. 5:7]
7 Lit. *Roll off onto*
6 ^f Job 11:17; [Is.
58:8, 10]
7 ^g Ps. 40:1; 62:5;
[Lam. 3:26] ^h [Ps.
73:3-12]
8 ⁱ [Eph. 4:26] / Ps.
73:3
9 ^k Ps. 25:13; Prov.
2:21; [Is. 57:13;
60:21; Matt. 5:5]
2 destroyed
10 ^l [Heb. 10:37]
^m Job 7:10; Ps.
37:35, 36
11 ⁿ [Matt. 5:5]
12 ^o Ps. 35:16

- 2 For they shall soon be cut down ^blike
the grass,
And wither as the green herb.
- 3 Trust in the LORD, and do good;
Dwell in the land, and feed on His
faithfulness.
- 4 ^c Delight yourself also in the LORD,
And He shall give you the desires of
your ^dheart.
- 5 ^e Commit ^l your way to the LORD,
Trust also in Him,
And He shall bring *it* to pass.
- 6 ^f He shall bring forth your
righteousness as the light,
And your justice as the noonday.
- 7 Rest in the LORD, ^gand wait patiently
for Him;
Do not fret because of him who
^hprosper in his way,
Because of the man who brings
wicked schemes to pass.
- 8 ⁱ Cease from anger, and forsake wrath;
^jDo not fret—it *only causes* harm.
- 9 For evildoers shall be ²cut off;
But those who wait on the LORD,
They shall ^kinherit the earth.
- 10 For ^lyet a little while and the wicked
shall be no more;
Indeed, ^myou will look carefully for
his place,
But it *shall be no more*.
- 11 ⁿ But the meek shall inherit the earth,
And shall delight themselves in the
abundance of peace.
- 12 The wicked plots against the just,
^oAnd gnashes at him with his teeth.

36:5, 6 The contrast of these verses with the previous ones is extreme. Just as the revelation of depravity in vv. 1–4 is awful, the revelation of the Lord's love is even more wonderful. **great mountains . . . great deep:** The contrasts continue with David ranging from the highest mountains to the depths of the sea to describe the perfect character of God. The height of the great mountains can be compared to how great God's righteousness is; the depth of the seas can be compared with how mysterious and inaccessible God's true judgments are. The word **deep** is also used in Gen. 1:2. **36:7–9 their trust:** Because of God's nature, righteous men and women come to Him like nestlings seeking shelter under the wings of the mother bird (7:1; 11:1; 16:1; 31:1). Although the wicked are never **satisfied** (Prov. 27:20), the one who trusts in the Lord can find ample satisfaction. **fountain of life:** God's salvation and continuing mercy to His people are often described in terms of life-giving water (Is. 12:3; Jer. 2:13).

36:10–12 continue: On the basis of two of the revelations this psalm presents—the nature of the wicked (vv. 1–4) and the nature of God's loyal love (vv. 5–9)—David prays that God's loyal love will continue in the lives of His people. **There the workers of iniquity have fallen:** This is the third revelation in this psalm. David is given a glimpse of the horror of divine judgment on the wicked. In effect, the psalmist "sees" the judgment scene and shudders.

Psalm 37 is a wisdom psalm written as an acrostic. Its simple mes-

sage is to maintain patience in the midst of troubles. God's people can have such patience because they know that their eternal reward will abundantly surpass any temporal troubles. The structure of the poem is as follows: (1) the need for patience in light of the apparent success of the wicked (vv. 1–11); (2) the need for patience in light of the final judgment of the wicked (vv. 12–22); (3) encouragement for the righteous in view of the role of the wicked (vv. 23–33); (4) a renewed call for patience in view of the apparent success of the wicked (vv. 34–40).

37:1–4 Do not fret is the theme of this psalm. When the wicked seem to prosper, the psalmist calls for patience, a renewed sense of dependence on the Lord, and a new sense of pleasure in knowing Him. **the desires of your heart:** When the righteous have desires that spring from the Lord, the Lord will surely fulfill those desires. **37:5 To commit your way** means "to roll it over on" the Lord. What a splendid picture of trusting in Him.

37:7, 8 Rest . . . wait patiently: These commands reemphasize the major point of the psalm, "do not fret" (v. 1). This is not a call to be inactive, but to depend actively on the living Lord. The psalm gives us a commandment to cease from worry.

37:9–11 The wicked sometimes appear to prosper; but constantly throughout this psalm the writer reminds his listeners that they will **be cut off, yet a little while:** From God's vantage point, the flourishing of the wicked is short (Eccl. 3:16, 17). **the meek shall**

- ¹³ *p* The Lord laughs at him,
For He sees that ^qhis day is coming.
- ¹⁴ The wicked have drawn the sword
And have bent their bow,
To cast down the poor and needy,
To slay those who are of upright conduct.
- ¹⁵ Their sword shall enter their own heart,
And their bows shall be broken.
- ¹⁶ *r* A little that a righteous man has
Is better than the riches of many wicked.
- ¹⁷ For the arms of the wicked shall be broken,
But the LORD upholds the righteous.
- ¹⁸ The LORD knows the days of the upright,
And their inheritance shall be forever.
- ¹⁹ They shall not be ashamed in the evil time,
And in the days of famine they shall be satisfied.
- ²⁰ But the wicked shall perish;
And the enemies of the LORD,
Like the splendor of the meadows,
shall vanish.
Into smoke they shall vanish away.
- ²¹ The wicked borrows and does not repay,
But ^sthe righteous shows mercy and gives.
- ²² *t* For *those* blessed by Him shall inherit the earth,
But *those* cursed by Him shall be ³cut off.
- ²³ *u* The steps of a *good* man are ⁴ordered by the LORD,
And He delights in his way.

¹³ *p* Ps. 2:4; 59:8
^q 1 Sam. 26:10; Job 18:20
¹⁶ *r* Prov. 15:16; 16:8; [1 Tim. 6:6]
²¹ *s* Ps. 112:5, 9
²² *t* [Prov. 3:33]
³ *destroyed*
²³ *u* [1 Sam. 2:9]; Ps. 40:2; 66:9; 119:5
⁴ *established*

²⁴ *v* Prov. 24:16
²⁶ *w* [Deut. 15:8]; Ps. 37:21 ⁵ Lit. *all the day*
²⁹ *x* Ps. 37:9; Prov. 2:21
³⁰ *y* [Matt. 12:35]
³¹ ⁶ *slip*
³² *z* Ps. 10:8; 17:11
³³ *a* Ps. 31:8; [2 Pet. 2:9]
³⁴ *b* Ps. 27:14; 37:9

- ²⁴ *v* Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down;
For the LORD upholds *him with His hand*.
- ²⁵ I have been young, and *now* am old;
Yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken,
Nor his descendants begging bread.
- ²⁶ *w* He is ⁵ever merciful, and lends;
And his descendants *are* blessed.
- ²⁷ Depart from evil, and do good;
And dwell forevermore.
- ²⁸ For the LORD loves justice,
And does not forsake His saints;
They are preserved forever,
But the descendants of the wicked shall be cut off.
- ²⁹ *x* The righteous shall inherit the land,
And dwell in it forever.
- ³⁰ *y* The mouth of the righteous speaks wisdom,
And his tongue talks of justice.
- ³¹ The law of his God *is* in his heart;
None of his steps shall ⁶slide.
- ³² The wicked ^zwatches the righteous,
And seeks to slay him.
- ³³ The LORD ^awill not leave him in his hand,
Nor condemn him when he is judged.
- ³⁴ *b* Wait on the LORD,
And keep His way,
And He shall exalt you to inherit the land;
When the wicked are cut off, you shall see *it*.
- ³⁵ I have seen the wicked in great power,
And spreading himself like a native green tree.

inherit the earth: Jesus quoted these words in Matt. 5:5, confirming the OT and showing the importance of the Psalms in His life.

37:13 The Lord laughs: These words recall the scornful laughter in 2:4. What sheer horror for the wicked to hear God's laughter directed against them! Contrast this laughter with the delight that the Lord finds in the ways of the righteous (see v. 23).

37:18 The phrase **the LORD knows the days of the upright** has several meanings: (1) God knows our circumstances and provides for us; (2) God knows how long we will live and will sustain us to the end (90:12); (3) God knows that our days on earth are only the beginning of our days with Him in eternity.

37:21 the righteous shows mercy: There are many contrasts between the wicked and the righteous in the wisdom psalms; this one is based on contrasting attitudes toward possessions (15:5; 112:5). Of all the things on earth that God has created, only one will last—people. All material things will pass away (2 Pet. 3:10–12).

37:24 upholds him: The righteous know that when they fall, they are never left lying there; when they stumble, they are never completely forsaken.

37:25 begging bread: These words may be viewed from two perspectives: (1) The hunger of the righteous is temporary and will be replaced by fullness in the days to come; and (2) there is a hunger that the righteous never need to suffer: they are never deprived of the Lord's presence (see John 6:35). Perhaps this is also a call to help the righteous when they do suffer hunger in this world.

37:27–29 The same command to **depart from evil** is found in 34:14. In this life people must choose either to cling to God and righteousness, or to pursue evil. The way of God leads to everlasting life. **the LORD loves justice:** Because God stands opposed to injustice, to support injustice is to become His enemy. God's people ought to love the things that He loves and detest the things that He hates.

37:31 in his heart: At numerous places in the Psalms, the poet declares his love for God's law and his effort to make it integral to his life (1:2; 19:7–11; 119:1–176).

37:34, 35 To wait on the LORD is an act of faith; not to wait on Him is foolishness. **like a native green tree:** David admits that the wicked might prosper, but he also affirms that they will not enjoy success forever.

- 36 Yet ⁷he passed away, and behold, he *was no more*;
Indeed I sought him, but he could not be found.
- 37 Mark the blameless *man*, and observe the upright;
For the future of *that man is* peace.
- 38 ^cBut the transgressors shall be destroyed together;
The future of the wicked shall be cut off.
- 39 But the salvation of the righteous *is* from the LORD;
He is their strength ^din the time of trouble.
- 40 And ^ethe LORD shall help them and deliver them;
He shall deliver them from the wicked,
And save them,
^fBecause they trust in Him.

PSALM 38

Prayer in Time of Chastening

A Psalm of David. ^aTo bring to remembrance.

- O** LORD, do not ^brebuke me in Your wrath,
Nor chasten me in Your hot displeasure!
- 2 For Your arrows pierce me deeply,
And Your hand presses me down.
- 3 *There is* no soundness in my flesh
Because of Your anger,
Nor *any* health in my bones
Because of my sin.
- 4 For my iniquities have gone over my head;
Like a heavy burden they are too heavy for me.

36 ⁷So with MT, LXX, Tg.; Syr., Vg. *I passed by*
38 ^c[Ps. 1:4-6; 37:20, 28]
39 ^dPs. 9:9; 37:19
40 ^ePs. 22:4; Is. 31:5; Dan. 3:17; 6:23
^f1 Chr. 5:20; Ps. 34:22

PSALM 38
title ^aPs. 70:title
1 ^bPs. 6:1

6 ¹ Lit. *bent down*
11 ^cPs. 31:11; 88:18
15 ^d[Ps. 39:7]
² I wait for You,
O LORD ³ answer

- 5 My wounds are foul *and* festering
Because of my foolishness.
- 6 I am ¹troubled, I am bowed down greatly;
I go mourning all the day long.
- 7 For my loins are full of inflammation,
And *there is* no soundness in my flesh.
- 8 I am feeble and severely broken;
I groan because of the turmoil of my heart.
- 9 Lord, all my desire *is* before You;
And my sighing is not hidden from You.
- 10 My heart pants, my strength fails me;
As for the light of my eyes, it also has gone from me.
- 11 My loved ones and my friends ^cstand aloof from my plague,
And my relatives stand afar off.
- 12 Those also who seek my life lay snares *for me*;
Those who seek my hurt speak of destruction,
And plan deception all the day long.
- 13 But I, like a deaf *man*, do not hear;
And *I am* like a mute *who* does not open his mouth.
- 14 Thus I am like a man who does not hear,
And in whose mouth *is* no response.
- 15 For ²in You, O LORD, ^dI hope;
You will ³hear, O Lord my God.
- 16 For I said, "*Hear me*, lest they rejoice over me,
Lest, when my foot slips, they exalt *themselves* against me."

37:37 In this context **peace** suggests "everything as it ought to be." The destiny of the righteous is in sharp contrast to the fate of the wicked (1:4-6).

37:39, 40 salvation: The principal issue here is not regeneration but sanctification—the daily deliverance of God's people from temptation and evil. **they trust:** The psalm concludes with the righteous trusting God, like chicks running to the wings of their mother (17:8; 36:7).

Psalm 38 is a psalm of lament, specifically a penitential psalm. In it, David pleads earnestly for the mercy of God even when he senses God's discipline. The structure of the psalm is as follows: (1) a plea to God to stop rebuking (vv. 1-5); (2) a description of David's suffering (vv. 6-8); (3) a second plea based on the actions of David's friends and foes (vv. 9-12); (4) a commitment by David to trust solely in the Lord even in the time of His anger (vv. 13-16); (5) a third plea for deliverance based on David's weakening condition (vv. 17-20); (6) a concluding plea based on David's certainty that there is salvation in the Lord alone (vv. 21, 22).

38:1-4 As in 6:1, David has two concerns. His first concern is the

painful distress he feels during the time of God's discipline on his life (32:4). David's second concern is that God might be placing His heavy hand on him in **wrath**, as He does on the wicked (37:22). **my iniquities have gone over my head:** David uses expressive language to describe his loss of control: he cannot free himself from the burden of sin (69:5). This is similar to Paul speaking of himself as the "chief" of sinners (1 Tim. 1:15).

38:6 I am troubled: David feels he is carrying an immense load. In this case, the heavy load is guilt.

38:9-12 light of my eyes: As in 13:3, David complains that he is about to lose his vision: probably he means that an oppression like death seems about to overcome him. **My loved ones:** David expresses sorrow because even those closest to him are leaving him. See Job's similar experience in Job 2:9, 10.

38:13 David is determined, even in the gravest suffering, not to present an opportunity for his enemies to condemn the name of the Lord. In this, David's silence foreshadows the silence of the Savior Jesus before His accusers (see Mark 14:61).

17 ^cFor I *am* ready to fall,
And my sorrow *is* continually
before me.
18 For I will ^fdeclare my iniquity;
I will be ^gin ⁴anguish over my
sin.
19 But my enemies *are* vigorous, *and*
they are strong;
And those who hate me wrongfully
have multiplied.
20 Those also ^hwho render evil for
good,
They are my adversaries, because I
follow *what is* good.
21 Do not forsake me, O LORD;
O my God, ⁱbe not far from me!
22 Make haste to help me,
O Lord, my salvation!

PSALM 39

Prayer for Wisdom and Forgiveness

To the Chief Musician. To Jeduthun.
A Psalm of David.

I said, “I will guard my ways,
Lest I sin with my ^atongue;
I will restrain my mouth with a
muzzle,
While the wicked are before me.”
2 ^bI was mute with silence,
I held my peace *even* from good;
And my sorrow was stirred up.
3 My heart was hot within me;
While I was ^jmusings, the fire
burned.
Then I spoke with my tongue:

17 ^ePs. 51:3
18 ^fPs. 32:5
9 [2 Cor. 7:9, 10]
⁴ anxiety
20 ^hPs. 35:12
21 ⁱPs. 22:19; 35:22

PSALM 39
1 ^a Job 2:10; Ps.
34:13; [James
3:5-12]
2 ^bPs. 38:13
3 ^j meditating

4 ^cPs. 90:12; 119:84
5 ^dPs. 62:9; [Eccl.
6:12]
6 ² make an uproar
for nothing
7 ^ePs. 38:15
8 ^fPs. 44:13; 79:4;
119:22
9 ^gPs. 39:2 ^h2 Sam.
16:10; Job 2:10
10 ⁱJob 9:34; 13:21
11 ^jJob 13:28; [Ps.
90:7]; Is. 50:9
12 ^kGen. 47:9; Lev.
25:23; 1 Chr. 29:15;
Ps. 119:19; Heb.
11:13; 1 Pet. 2:11

4 “LORD, ^emake me to know my end,
And what *is* the measure of my days,
That I may know how frail I *am*.
5 Indeed, You have made my days *as*
handbreadths,
And my age *is* as nothing before You;
Certainly every man at his best state
is but ^dvapor. *Selah*
6 Surely every man walks about like a
shadow;
Surely they ²busy themselves in vain;
He heaps up *riches*,
And does not know who will gather
them.
7 “And now, Lord, what do I wait for?
My ^ehope *is* in You.
8 Deliver me from all my
transgressions;
Do not make me ^fthe reproach of the
foolish.
9 ^gI was mute, I did not open my
mouth,
Because it was ^hYou who did *it*.
10 ⁱRemove Your plague from me;
I am consumed by the blow of Your
hand.
11 When with rebukes You correct man
for iniquity,
You make his beauty ^jmelt away like
a moth;
Surely every man *is* vapor. *Selah*
12 “Hear my prayer, O LORD,
And give ear to my cry;
Do not be silent at my tears;
For I *am* a stranger with You,
A sojourner, ^kas all my fathers *were*.

38:18 I will declare: David’s silence is only before his enemies (vv. 13–16); to the Lord he willingly confesses his sins. He expects that the merciful God will forgive and restore him (Ps. 32).
38:21 be not far from me: These words echo the sentiment of 22:1. All that is left for David is to trust in God. In that sense, David was in the right place, for confidence in any person or thing other than God Himself is misplaced trust.

hope

(Heb. *yachal*) (38:15; 130:5, 7; 131:3; Lam. 3:21–24) Strong’s #3176

This Hebrew word signifies “to wait with expectation.” Almost half of its occurrences are in the Psalms, and it is especially frequent in Ps. 119. Sometimes the idea of hope is expressed with confidence (Job 13:15; Is. 51:5), and sometimes hope is clearly in vain (Ezek. 13:6). The Bible describes Noah as waiting for seven days to send out the dove (Gen. 8:12) and men as waiting to hear the counsel of Job (Job 29:21); but by far the main object of “expectant waiting” or “hope” is God, His word, His judgment, and His mercy (33:18; 119:43; Mic. 7:7). That hope is not misplaced, for the One in whom we hope is completely faithful to His promises (see Heb. 10:23).

Psalm 39 is a wisdom psalm in the form of a psalm of individual lament. The title indicates that this is a psalm of David composed for Jeduthun. Psalm 39 is unusual in many respects. It speaks of a determination to be silent against foes, whereas most psalms speak boldly against enemies. Moreover, it ends with a request that God leave the psalmist alone, a stance that is remarkably like sections of the Book of Job. The structure of the poem is in four movements: (1) a determination by the psalmist to be silent before his foes (vv. 1–3); (2) a petition to God for help in view of the brevity of life (vv. 4–6); (3) a petition for forgiveness and deliverance (vv. 7–11); (4) a petition for God to leave him alone (vv. 12, 13).
39:1 will restrain my mouth: David determines to be silent in suffering so that he will not speak out foolishly. See 32:3 for another reason to be silent.
39:4, 5 Make me to know my end is an appeal to God to deliver the psalmist before his life passes him by (90:7–12). **Vapor** refers to something that passes quickly, not something that has no meaning.
39:7, 8 My hope is in You: David knows that his only chance of deliverance is in God. But he also believes that his trouble has come from God. He is in a quandary. Should he ask for God’s help or should he ask God to leave him alone? Unlike most of the psalms of lament, there is noticeable difficulty in moving into a posture of praise. **my transgressions:** David acknowledges his sin and throws himself on the mercy of the Lord (Ps. 32).
39:12, 13 Hear my prayer: David has been silent for a period of his distress (vv. 2, 9) but can remain silent no longer. Here he cries for God not to be silent, but to deliver him. **Remove Your gaze:**

- ¹³ ^lRemove Your gaze from me, that I
may regain strength,
Before I go away and ^mam no more.”

PSALM 40

Faith Persevering in Trial

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David.

- ¹ ^aI waited patiently for the LORD;
And He inclined to me,
And heard my cry.
² He also brought me up out of a
horrible pit,
Out of ^bthe miry clay,
And ^cset my feet upon a rock,
And established my steps.
³ ^dHe has put a new song in my
mouth—
Praise to our God;
Many will see *it* and fear,
And will trust in the LORD.
⁴ ^eBlessed is that man who makes the
LORD his trust,
And does not respect the proud, nor
such as turn aside to lies.
⁵ ^fMany, O LORD my God, are Your
wonderful works
Which You have done;
^gAnd Your thoughts toward us
Cannot be recounted to You in order;
If I would declare and speak of them,
They are more than can be numbered.
⁶ ^hSacrifice and offering You did not
desire;
My ears You have opened.
Burnt offering and sin offering You
did not require.

¹³ ^l Job 7:19; 10:20,
21; 14:6; Ps. 102:24
^m [Job 14:10]

PSALM 40

¹ ^a Ps. 25:5; 27:14;
37:7
² ^b Ps. 69:2, 14; Jer.
38:6 ^c Ps. 27:5
³ ^d Ps. 32:7; 33:3
⁴ ^e Ps. 34:8; 84:12
⁵ ^f Job 9:10 ^g Ps.
139:17; [Is. 55:8]
⁶ ^h [1 Sam. 15:22];
Ps. 51:16; Is. 1:11;
[Jer. 6:20; 7:22, 23];
Amos 5:22; [Mic.
6:6-8; Heb. 10:5-9]

⁸ ⁱ [Matt. 26:39;
John 4:34; 6:38];
Heb. 10:7 ^j [Ps.
37:31; Jer. 31:33;
2 Cor. 3:3]
⁹ ^k Ps. 22:22, 25
^l Ps. 119:13
¹⁰ ^m Acts 20:20, 27
¹¹ ⁿ Ps. 61:7; Prov.
20:28
¹² ^o Ps. 38:4; 65:3
¹³ ^p Ps. 70:1
¹⁴ ^q Ps. 35:4, 26;
70:2; 71:13 ^r Lit.
soul

- ⁷ Then I said, “Behold, I come;
In the scroll of the book *it is* written
of me.
⁸ ⁱI delight to do Your will,
O my God,
And Your law *is* ^jwithin my heart.”
⁹ ^kI have proclaimed the good news of
righteousness
In the great assembly;
Indeed, ^lI do not restrain my lips,
O LORD, You Yourself know.
¹⁰ ^mI have not hidden Your righteousness
within my heart;
I have declared Your faithfulness and
Your salvation;
I have not concealed Your
lovingkindness and Your truth
From the great assembly.
¹¹ Do not withhold Your tender mercies
from me, O LORD;
ⁿLet Your lovingkindness and Your
truth continually preserve me.
¹² For innumerable evils have
surrounded me;
^oMy iniquities have overtaken me, so
that I am not able to look up;
They are more than the hairs of my
head;
Therefore my heart fails me.
¹³ ^pBe pleased, O LORD, to deliver me;
O LORD, make haste to help me!
¹⁴ ^qLet them be ashamed and brought to
mutual confusion
Who seek to destroy my ^rlife;
Let them be driven backward and
brought to dishonor
Who wish me evil.

If God is not going to deliver him, the despondent psalmist asks God to just leave him alone. It is rare outside the Book of Job to find language such as this (Job 7:19; 10:20, 21; 14:6). Sometimes the pain of the psalmist was so far from being resolved at the time when he composed his poem that he remained on the edge of despair to the last verse. Yet the fact that God saves those who call upon Him is described again and again in the Book of Psalms (22:21; 118:21).

Psalm 40 is a psalm of declarative praise that moves into a psalm of lament. This psalm is a remarkable example of how troubles and difficulties forced David to depend continually on the Lord. The structure of the psalm is as follows: (1) a report of deliverance (vv. 1–3); (2) instruction to the people to commit their lives to the Lord (vv. 4, 5); (3) a confession about worship (vv. 6–8); (4) a report to God of the fulfillment of the vow of praise (vv. 9, 10); (5) a renewed lament (vv. 11, 12); (6) a set of petitions for deliverance (vv. 13–15); (7) continuing praise in the midst of trouble (vv. 16, 17).

40:1 The Hebrew translated **I waited patiently** is literally “waiting I waited.” The emphasis of this phrase is not really on patience, but on the fact that David waited solely on the Lord. The verb “to wait” expresses a confident trust or faith in the Lord (130:5). David knows that salvation comes only from the Almighty (3:8). The words **He inclined to me** present the image of the Creator of the universe, the King of heaven, stooping from His throne to save the helpless.

40:2, 3 horrible pit: David writes this poem during a period of terrible stress; he feels as if he is stuck in a pit or swamp. No matter how hard he tries, he cannot get out. But David turns his frustration

over to the Lord and trusts in His strength. **a new song:** The Lord’s salvation prompts David to praise God. The music is new because God’s salvation is fresh and new to David.

40:4, 5 The proud refers to idolaters who will not bow in humility before the Lord (147:6). **Lies** refers to idols. Not only are the works of God directed toward the people of faith, but so are His **thoughts**. He is thinking about us.

40:6 The Lord takes pleasure in those who obediently come to Him with praise on their lips (1 Sam. 15:22, 23). **My ears You have opened:** The Lord not only gives us ears to hear His word, but also grants us understanding so that we can truly obey Him.

40:7, 8 Behold, I come: David brings his sacrifice, but his focus is on presenting his own life to the Lord (Rom. 12:1, 2). According to the Book of Hebrews, Jesus spoke these words to the Father (Heb. 10:4–6). **Delight** is related to the word *desire* in v. 6. What brings pleasure to God will also bring delight to His people.

40:11, 12 Do not withhold: Even after the experience of deliverance with which the psalm begins, David has another reason to turn to the Lord in renewed prayer. The Hebrew for **Your tender mercies** (which can also mean “womb”) refers to God’s affection for us. In effect, David is asking the Lord to surround him with warmth and comfort that is practically maternal.

40:13–15 deliver me: David does not ask for forgiveness of sin here (contrast 51:3, 4), but for deliverance from powerful enemies. **Aha, aha:** David’s enemies are all around him, taunting him mercilessly (35:21).

15 Let them be ^rconfounded because of
their shame,
Who say to me, “Aha, aha!”

16 ^sLet all those who seek You rejoice
and be glad in You;
Let such as love Your salvation ^tsay
continually,
“The LORD be magnified!”

17 ^uBut I am poor and needy;
^vYet the LORD thinks upon me.
You *are* my help and my deliverer;
Do not delay, O my God.

PSALM 41

The Blessing and Suffering of the Godly

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David.

Blessed is he who considers the
¹poor;
The LORD will deliver him in time of
trouble.

2 The LORD will preserve him and keep
him alive,
And he will be blessed on the earth;
^aYou will not deliver him to the will
of his enemies.

3 The LORD will strengthen him on his
bed of illness;
You will ²sustain him on his sickbed.

4 I said, “LORD, be merciful to me;
^bHeal my soul, for I have sinned
against You.”

15 ^rPs. 73:19
16 ^sPs. 70:4 ^tPs.
35:27
17 ^uPs. 70:5; 86:1;
109:22 ^vPs. 40:5;
1 Pet. 5:7

PSALM 41

1 ¹helpless or
powerless
2 ^aPs. 27:12
3 ²restore
4 ^bPs. 6:2; 103:3;
147:3

6 ³empty words
7 ⁴plot
8 ⁵Lit. A thing of
Belial
9 ^c2 Sam. 15:12; Job
19:13, 19 ^dPs. 55:12-
14, 20; Jer. 20:10;
Obad. 7; [Mic. 7:5];
Matt. 26:14-16,
21-25, 47-50; John
13:18, 21-30 ^e; Acts
1:16, 17 ⁶Acted as
a traitor
12 ^e[Job 36:7; Ps.
21:6; 34:15]
13 ^fPs. 72:18, 19;
89:52; 106:48; 150:6

5 My enemies speak evil of me:
“When will he die, and his name
perish?”

6 And if he comes to see *me*, he speaks
³lies;
His heart gathers iniquity to itself;
When he goes out, he tells *it*.

7 All who hate me whisper together
against me;
Against me they ⁴devise my
hurt.

8 “An ⁵evil disease,” *they say*, “clings to
him.
And *now* that he lies down, he will
rise up no more.”

9 ^cEven my own familiar friend in
whom I trusted,
^dWho ate my bread,
Has ⁶lifted up *his* heel against me.

10 But You, O LORD, be merciful to me,
and raise me up,
That I may repay them.

11 By this I know that You are well
pleased with me,
Because my enemy does not triumph
over me.

12 As for me, You uphold me in my
integrity,
And ^eset me before Your face
forever.

13 ^fBlessed *be* the LORD God of Israel
From everlasting to everlasting!
Amen and Amen.

40:16, 17 The LORD be magnified: With these great words of praise, David encourages others in the community to glorify the Lord (35:27). **poor and needy:** The psalmist is still in trouble, pleading with God to deliver him anew.

Psalm 41 is a lament psalm. Since it begins and concludes with words of praise to God, it may also be called a psalm of praise. The poem is ascribed to David and speaks of the plight of a person suffering from serious physical illness. Ultimately, it presents the victory of the Savior Jesus over His enemies, especially the great enemy Satan. There are four movements in the psalm: (1) an affirmation of confidence in the Lord’s power to deliver the godly from distress (vv. 1–3); (2) a description of David’s distress (vv. 4–9); (3) a renewed expression of hope in the Lord (vv. 10–12); (4) a coda of praise marking the end of Book I of the Psalms (v. 13).

41:1 Blessed is the same word that begins Ps. 1. The same word introduces the first and last psalms of Book I (see Introduction). When the verb *blessed* is used with God as its object (as in v. 13), it serves as a word of praise (103:1, 2). To bless God is to identify Him as the source of our blessings. **The poor** refers not only to those who do not have enough money, but also to those who suffer illness or misfortune through no fault of their own. For such persons, God is Defender, Deliverer, and Sustainer (10:2, 9; 35:10; 69:33; 109:16; 140:12).

41:2, 3 Blessed on the earth refers to the acts of God’s goodness in a person’s life, including health, wealth, longevity, spiritual vitality, and harmony with God and people (Prov. 3:1–4). **bed of illness:** The distress in this psalm is the psalmist’s serious physical illness.

41:4 for I have sinned: In the context of the psalm, this is a general acknowledgment of sin and the need for God’s forgiveness and restoration (1 John 1:9).

41:5–8 At times, the psalmist’s **enemies** are indicated (3:1), but more often these enemies are left unspecified in the Psalms, allowing others to think in terms of their own situations. **his name perish:** In ancient cultures, for a person not to be remembered was like saying that he or she had never existed. The righteous in Israel hoped that their names would endure after them, that they would have a “great name” (Gen. 12:2). **he speaks lies:** David charges his enemies with visiting his sickbed on the pretext of mercy but with malice in their hearts.

41:9 Familiar friend describes a close, intimate relationship. The outrage of betrayal by one so close is nearly unbearable (Matt. 26:14–16). The fulfillment of this verse in the experience of Jesus and Judas is remarkable. Not only did the two eat a meal together (Matt. 26:21–25; Mark 14:18–21; Luke 22:21), but Jesus also called Judas a “friend” at the moment of betrayal (Matt. 26:50). Moreover Jesus quoted this verse, noting its fulfillment in Judas (John 13:18).

41:10–12 Raise me up was David’s prayer for healing from the disease that had him bedridden (v. 3). In another sense, these words look forward to Jesus’ resurrection (16:10, 11; 118:17, 18). **does not triumph:** The failure of David’s enemy to destroy his life was an indicator of God’s pleasure in David’s life. **my integrity:** These words suggest that it is the righteous person who is suffering in this psalm, not an unrepentant sinner (26:1). **before Your face forever:** David prays not only for a long life on earth (v. 2), but also for eternal life in God’s presence (23:6). His ultimate hope is to glorify and praise God in His presence forever.

41:13 Blessed: This psalm begins with a blessing of God on the righteous; it ends with the righteous blessing their Lord. The word here for *blessed* is different from the word in v. 1. Here the word identifies the Lord as the source of our blessing. The word **Amen**,

Book Two: Psalms 42–72

PSALM 42

Yearning for God in the Midst of Distresses

To the Chief Musician. A ¹ Contemplation of the sons of Korah.

- A**s the deer ²pants for the water brooks,
 So pants my soul for You, O God.
² *a* My soul thirsts for God, for the ^bliving God.
 When shall I come and ³appear before God?
³ *c* My tears have been my food day and night,
 While they continually say to me,
d “Where is your God?”
⁴ When I remember these *things*,
e I pour out my soul within me.
 For I used to go with the multitude;
f I went with them to the house of God,
 With the voice of joy and praise,
 With a multitude that kept a pilgrim feast.
⁵ *g* Why are you ⁴cast down, O my soul?
 And *why* are you disquieted within me?
^h Hope in God, for I shall yet praise Him
⁵ For the help of His countenance.
⁶ ⁶ O my God, my soul is cast down within me;

PSALM 42

title ¹ Heb. *Maschil*
² *a* Ps. 63:1; 84:2; 143:6; [Jer. 10:10]
^b Rom. 9:26;
¹ Thess. 1:9 ³ So with MT, Vg.; some Heb. mss., LXX, Syr., Tg. *I see the face of God*
³ *c* Ps. 80:5; 102:9
^d Ps. 79:10; 115:2; Joel 2:17; Mic. 7:10
⁴ *e* 1 Sam. 1:15; Job 30:16 ^f Ps. 55:14; 122:1; Is. 30:29
⁵ *g* Ps. 42:11; 43:5
^h Ps. 71:14; Lam. 3:24 ⁴ Lit. *bowed down* ⁵ So with MT, Tg.; a few Heb. mss., LXX, Syr., Vg. *The help of my countenance, my God*
⁶ *e* So with MT, Tg.; a few Heb. mss., LXX, Syr., Vg. *put my God at the end of v. 5*

⁷ Or *Mount*
⁷ *i* Ps. 69:1, 2; 88:7; Jon. 2:3
⁸ / Deut. 28:8 ^k Job 35:10; Ps. 149:5
⁹ / Ps. 38:6
¹⁰ *m* Ps. 42:3; Joel 2:17; Mic. 7:10 ⁸ Lit. *shattering* ⁹ *revile*
¹¹ *n* Ps. 43:5 ¹ Lit. *salvation*

PSALM 43

¹ *a* [Ps. 26:1; 35:24]
^b 1 Sam. 24:15; Ps. 35:1

- Therefore I will remember You from the land of the Jordan,
 And from the heights of Hermon,
 From ⁷the Hill Mizar.
⁷ Deep calls unto deep at the noise of Your waterfalls;
ⁱ All Your waves and billows have gone over me.
⁸ The LORD will ^jcommand His lovingkindness in the daytime,
 And ^kin the night His song *shall be* with me—
 A prayer to the God of my life.
⁹ I will say to God my Rock,
^l “Why have You forgotten me?
 Why do I go mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?”
¹⁰ As with a ⁸breaking of my bones,
 My enemies ⁹reproach me,
^m While they say to me all day long,
 “Where is your God?”
¹¹ ⁿ Why are you cast down, O my soul?
 And why are you disquieted within me?
 Hope in God;
 For I shall yet praise Him,
 The ¹help of my countenance and my God.

PSALM 43

Prayer to God in Time of Trouble

Vindicate ^ame, O God,
 And ^bplead my cause against an ungodly nation;
 Oh, deliver me from the deceitful and unjust man!

meaning “surely” and “let it be,” is an affirmation of faith in God. It is simply saying “yes” to God. The repetition of the word parallels the repetition of the word *everlasting* and expresses enthusiastic agreement with the praise in the psalm.

Psalm 42 and Ps. 43 were probably originally one poem, like Ps. 9; 10. Note that Ps. 43 does not have a superscription and that 43:5 repeats the refrain of 42:5, 11. Apparently a longer psalm was divided into two sections for use in temple worship. As an independent poem, Ps. 42 is an individual lament with a strong emphasis on trust (see Ps. 23). The psalm’s two movements both conclude with a refrain of encouragement to hope in God (vv. 5, 11), even though the psalmist was in exile far from the temple. The psalm is attributed to the sons of Korah, a musical family in Israel. They descended from the priest who had led an abortive rebellion against the leadership of Moses and Aaron (Num. 16). God’s judgment came upon Korah and his companions, but Korah’s family continued for hundreds of years to be some of the premier leaders of worship music in Israel. The structure of the poem is as follows: (1) a description of the psalmist’s longing for God’s presence (vv. 1–4); (2) a description of the psalmist’s fear that God might no longer remember him (vv. 5–11).

42:1–4 pants: The verb “to pant” is unusually expressive of a spiritual thirst for God. The poet describes his experience of being cut off from the worshiping community. He feels distant from God’s presence among His people and he longs for intimacy with God (see v. 4). For the believer who lived during OT times, there was only one place where the true worship of the Lord was possible—the temple in Jerusalem. **go with the multitude:** The psalmist

was consumed with thoughts of the worship of God that he had experienced at the temple in Jerusalem among throngs of joyful believers (Ps. 100). Generally the focus of worship in the Book of Psalms is on the community worshipping together (compare Acts 2:40–47; Heb. 13:15, 16).

42:5 Why are you cast down: These words are repeated in v. 11 and 43:5. The psalmist reminds himself that one day he will experience anew the presence of God. In the end, his hope in the Lord will not be misplaced. **praise Him:** As is common in the Psalms, the poet is not describing an act of private devotion, but of public praise of the goodness of God. This is praise in words and songs that would be repeated in the midst of the congregation (22:22; Eph. 5:19; Heb. 13:15).

42:6 The land of the Jordan and the heights of Hermon refer to the Promised Land, from which the people were exiled.

42:9–11 Why have You forgotten me: The psalmist asks these troubling questions in faith, for he remembers that God is his **Rock**, his protector and foundation. He cannot help but **hope** in Him in the middle of difficult circumstances.

Psalm 43 is a continuation of Ps. 42. The original poem was separated into the two psalms we have today so they could more easily be used for worship in the temple. As it stands, Ps. 43 shares features of a psalm of lament and a psalm of trust. The structure of the poem is as follows: (1) a call for vindication from the Lord (vv. 1, 2); (2) a prayer for the psalmist’s return to the temple to worship God (vv. 3, 4); (3) a renewed call for hope in God (v. 5).

43:1, 2 Vindicate me is a protest of innocence (Ps. 17; 26; 35). The

2 For You *are* the God of my strength;
Why do You cast me off?
^cWhy do I go mourning because of the
oppression of the enemy?

3 ^dOh, send out Your light and Your truth!
Let them lead me;
Let them bring me to ^eYour holy hill
And to Your ^ftabernacle.

4 Then I will go to the altar of God,
To God my exceeding joy;
And on the harp I will praise You,
O God, my God.

5 ^fWhy are you cast down, O my soul?
And why are you disquieted
within me?

2 ^c Ps. 42:9
3 ^d [Ps. 40:11] ^e Ps.
3:4 ^f *dwelling
places*
5 ^f Ps. 42:5, 11

² Lit. *salvation*

PSALM 44

title ^a Ps. 42: title
¹ Heb. *Maschil*
1 ^b [Ex. 12:26, 27;
Deut. 6:20]; Judg.
6:13; Ps. 78:3

Hope in God;
For I shall yet praise Him,
The ²help of my countenance and
my God.

PSALM 44

*Redemption Remembered in
Present Dishonor*

To the Chief Musician. A ^aContemplation ¹
of the sons of Korah.

We have heard with our ears,
O God,
^bOur fathers have told us,
The deeds You did in their days,
In days of old:

psalmist takes the stance of one wrongfully attacked. **Why do You cast me off:** More hurtful than the words of the psalmist's enemies is the sense that God has rejected him (Ps. 13).

43:3, 4 Your light and Your truth: The psalmist asks God for deliverance. See 104:2 for the significance of *light*; see 100:5 for the significance of *truth*. Only the "true light" of God could save the psalmist from the lies and darkness all about him. **Your tabernacle:** More than anything else the psalmist desires to rejoin the worshiping community in praising God (149:1).

43:5 Why are you cast down: These words are the refrain of this and the previous psalm (see 42:5, 11). In time of doubt and stress, the poet urges his inner being, by the power of God, to keep believing. He knows that one day, by God's grace, he will return to the place of praise to God, the center of worship in Jerusalem.

Psalm 44 is a lament of the community, a collective sigh of the people of Israel for God to help them in a time of great national

stress. The psalm also presents an occasion for a rehearsal of God's great deeds in the Exodus, the major saving action of the Lord in the OT period (Ps. 105). This psalm is attributed to the sons of Korah, the descendants of the rebellious priest mentioned in Num. 16. The structure of the poem is as follows: (1) a rehearsal of God's deliverance of Israel in the past (vv. 1–3); (2) a statement of confidence in God the great King (vv. 4–8); (3) a lament of the people (vv. 9–12); (4) a protest of innocence of the people (vv. 13–22); (5) a petition of the people (vv. 23–26).

44:1–3 heard with our ears: God's marvelous intervention in history to deliver the Israelites from Egypt was the cornerstone of OT faith (17:7; 118:16; Ex. 15:6). Each generation of Israelites was obligated to tell the next generation about what God had done for them. The story that they told was not merely a national history, but also a description of the loving character of God (Deut. 8). **Your right hand** became a slogan of redemption in Israel. **You favored**

Psalms for Every Occasion		
Just as our modern hymnals contain different kinds of songs—anthems, choruses, and calls to worship—so the hymnal of ancient Israel, the Book of Psalms, contains songs for different occasions and purposes.		
Type of Psalm	Purpose	Examples
Individual Lament	To remind God of a desperate personal situation and to request help	Ps. 3–7; 12; 13; 22; 25–28; 35; 38–40; 42; 43; 51; 54–57; 59; 61; 63; 64; 69–71; 86; 88; 102; 109; 120; 130; 140–143
National Lament	To tell God of a pressing national emergency and to ask for His intervention	Ps. 44; 60; 74; 79; 80; 83; 85; 90; 123
Individual Thanksgiving	To express individual gratitude or trust in a public manner	Ps. 18; 30; 32; 34; 40; 41; 66; 106; 116; 138
National Thanksgiving	To acknowledge as a nation God's gracious acts	Ps. 124; 126
General Praise	To exalt God's character	Ps. 8; 19; 29; 103; 104; 139; 148; 150
Specific Praise	To praise God for specified acts or attributes	Ps. 33; 36; 105; 111; 113; 117; 135; 136; 146; 147
Enthronement	To celebrate God's kingship, or His reign over the earth	Ps. 47; 93; 96–99
Ascent or Pilgrimage	To be sung by pilgrims traveling to Jerusalem for Israel's religious feasts	Ps. 43; 46; 48; 76; 84; 87; 120–134
Royal	To portray and compare the rule of an earthly king with the reign of the heavenly King	Ps. 2; 18; 20; 21; 45; 72; 89; 101; 110; 132; 144
Didactic	To teach how to live in a way that honors God	Ps. 1; 37; 119
Imprecatory	To call down divine judgment on the enemies of Israel and God	Ps. 7; 35; 40; 55; 58; 59; 69; 79; 109; 137; 139; 144

- 2 ^c You drove out the ² nations with Your hand,
But them You planted;
You afflicted the peoples, and cast them out.
- 3 For ^d they did not gain possession of the land by their own sword,
Nor did their own arm save them;
But it was Your right hand, Your arm, and the light of Your countenance,
^e Because You favored them.
- 4 ^f You are my King, ³ O God;
⁴ Command victories for Jacob.
- 5 Through You ^g we will push down our enemies;
Through Your name we will trample those who rise up against us.
- 6 For ^h I will not trust in my bow,
Nor shall my sword save me.
- 7 But You have saved us from our enemies,
And have put to shame those who hated us.
- 8 ⁱ In God we boast all day long,
And praise Your name forever. *Selah*
- 9 But ^j You have cast *us* off and put us to shame,
And You do not go out with our armies.
- 10 You make us ^k turn back from the enemy,
And those who hate us have taken ⁵ spoil for themselves.
- 11 ^l You have given us up like sheep *intended* for food,
And have ^m scattered us among the nations.
- 12 ⁿ You sell Your people for *next to* nothing,
And are not enriched by selling them.
- 13 ^o You make us a reproach to our neighbors,
A scorn and a derision to those all around us.

2 ^c Ex. 15:17; 2 Sam. 7:10; Jer. 24:6; Amos 9:15 ² *Gentiles, heathen*
3 ^d [Deut. 8:17, 18]; Josh. 24:12 ^e [Deut. 4:37; 7:7, 8]
4 ^f [Ps. 74:12] ³ So with MT, Tg.; LXX, Vg. and my God
4 ^f So with MT, Tg.; LXX, Syr., Vg. Who commands
5 ^g Deut. 33:17; [Dan. 8:4]
6 ^h [1 Sam. 17:47]; Ps. 33:16; [Hos. 1:7]
8 ⁱ Ps. 34:2; [Jer. 9:24]
9 ^j Ps. 60:1
10 ^k Lev. 26:17; Josh. 7:8, 12; Ps. 89:43 ⁵ *plunder*
11 ^l Job 23:11; 8:36 ^m Lev. 26:33; Deut. 4:27; 28:64; Ps. 106:27; Ezek. 20:23
12 ⁿ Is. 52:3, 4; Jer. 15:13
13 ^o Ps. 79:4; 80:6; Jer. 24:9

14 ^p Deut. 28:37
^q Job 16:4
16 ^r Ps. 8:2
17 ^s Dan. 9:13
18 ^t Job 23:11
19 ^u Is. 34:13 ^v [Ps. 23:4]
20 ^w [Deut. 6:14]
⁶ *Worshiped*
21 ^x Job 31:14; [Ps. 139:1, 2; Jer. 17:10]
22 ^y Rom. 8:36
23 ^z Ps. 7:6
24 ^a Job 13:24
25 ^b Ps. 119:25
⁷ *Ground, in humiliation*

- 14 ^p You make us a byword among the nations,
^q A shaking of the head among the peoples.
- 15 My dishonor *is* continually before me,
And the shame of my face has covered me,
- 16 Because of the voice of him who reproaches and reviles,
^r Because of the enemy and the avenger.
- 17 ^s All this has come upon us;
But we have not forgotten You,
Nor have we dealt falsely with Your covenant.
- 18 Our heart has not turned back,
^t Nor have our steps departed from Your way;
- 19 But You have severely broken us in ^u the place of jackals,
And covered us ^v with the shadow of death.
- 20 If we had forgotten the name of our God,
Or ^w stretched ⁶ out our hands to a foreign god,
- 21 ^x Would not God search this out?
For He knows the secrets of the heart.
- 22 ^y Yet for Your sake we are killed all day long;
We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.
- 23 ^z Awake! Why do You sleep, O Lord?
Arise! Do not cast *us* off forever.
- 24 ^a Why do You hide Your face,
And forget our affliction and our oppression?
- 25 For ^b our soul is bowed down to the ⁷ dust;
Our body clings to the ground.
- 26 Arise for our help,
And redeem us for Your mercies' sake.

them: The selection of Israel as the people of God came by His grace alone (4:3; Rom. 11).

44:4, 5 my King: In this community lament, it is striking that here the speaker is singular. It may be that these words are spoken by Israel's king to the King of glory. As the king of the nation, it was appropriate for him to lead the people in asking for God's renewed favor. **through Your name:** The king affirms that victory will be won only by God's Spirit.

44:9–12 The words **cast us off** begin the lament section of the psalm. The army of Israel was not to be regarded as merely a group of warriors—they were the warriors of the Almighty (Ps. 144). Their victories were the victories of God and their defeats were losses that He allowed them to endure. **You sell Your people:** When the people suffered loss, it was as though God had “sold” them. But God's deliverance of them from suffering is depicted as His purchase of His people—the meaning of the word *redemption* (see v. 26).

44:17–20 we have not forgotten: The people protest that they have not rejected God. The implication is that their troubles would be deserved if they had rejected him. **Stretched out our hands** refers to a posture of prayer (Ps. 134). They protest that they have not prayed to the idols of the nations, but have been faithful to the only living God.

44:22 as sheep: These words predict another beloved Son of the Most High who would also feel cast off by the Lord (Is. 53:7; see also Rom. 8:36).

44:23–26 Israel's God does not sleep (121:3, 4; Is. 40:28). The cry to **awake** is an appeal for God to act on behalf of His people. The cry is based on the people's faith that the Lord will forgive. **redeem us:** In v. 12, the people suggested that God had sold them; here they ask Him to redeem them—to buy them back for Himself.

BIBLE TIMES & CULTURE NOTES



Scepter

The scepter (45:6) was the official staff of a ruler, symbolizing his authority and power. Since the first kings were nomadic princes, originally the scepter was a simple shepherd's staff. In some instances the scepter was a strong rod (Ezek. 19:11, 14). Sometimes the symbolism of a scepter refers to the Messiah who will rule from Israel, from the tribe of Judah in particular (Gen. 49:10). In the NT, the Book of Hebrews describes Christ as the Son who rules with a scepter of righteousness (Heb. 1:8, quoting Ps. 45:6).



The breaking of a scepter signified the downfall of the one who possessed it. This symbolism was used by several of the OT prophets to predict what would happen to the enemies of the nation of Israel (Is. 14:5; Ezek. 19:1–14).

When the Roman soldiers mocked Jesus before His crucifixion, they placed a reed in His hand as a mock scepter and saluted Him as “King of the Jews” (Matt. 27:29).

Bronze and silver scepter head found in the sacred area at Dan (ninth century B.C.)

Z. Radovan/www.BibleLandPictures.com

PSALM 45

The Glories of the Messiah and His Bride

To the Chief Musician. ^aSet to ¹“The Lilies.”
A ²Contemplation of the sons of Korah.
A Song of Love.

My heart is overflowing with a good theme;
I recite my composition concerning the King;

PSALM 45

title ^a Ps. 69: title
¹ Heb. Shoshannim
² Heb. Maschil
¹ ³ skillful
² b Luke 4:22
³ c [Is. 49:2; Heb. 4:12]; Rev. 1:16
^a [Is. 9:6] ^e Jude 25
⁴ Belt on
⁴ ^f Rev. 6:2
⁶ g [Ps. 93:2]; Heb. 1:8, 9 ^h [Num. 24:17]

My tongue is the pen of a ³ready writer.

- ² You are fairer than the sons of men;
^b Grace is poured upon Your lips;
Therefore God has blessed You forever.
- ³ ⁴ Gird Your ^csword upon Your thigh,
^d O Mighty One,
With Your ^eglory and Your majesty.
- ⁴ ^f And in Your majesty ride
prosperously because of truth,
humility, and righteousness;
And Your right hand shall teach You
awesome things.
- ⁵ Your arrows are sharp in the heart of
the King's enemies;
The peoples fall under You.
- ⁶ ^g Your throne, O God, is forever and
ever;
A ^hscepter of righteousness is the
scepter of Your kingdom.
- ⁷ You love righteousness and hate
wickedness;
Therefore God, Your God, has
ⁱanointed You
With the oil of ^jgladness more than
Your companions.
- ⁸ All Your garments are ^kscented with
myrrh and aloes and cassia,
Out of the ivory palaces, by which
they have made You glad.
- ⁹ ^l Kings' daughters are among Your
honorable women;
^m At Your right hand stands the queen
in gold from Ophir.
- ¹⁰ Listen, O daughter,
Consider and incline your ear;

⁷ ⁱ Ps. 2:2 / Ps. 21:6; Heb. 1:8, 9 ⁸ ^k Song 1:12, 13 ⁹ ^j Song 6:8 ^m 1 Kin. 2:19

Psalm 45 is a royal psalm—a royal wedding song that celebrates human marriage in such a grand manner that the NT writers applied it to the great King Jesus as well (compare vv. 6, 7 with Heb. 1:8, 9). Like many other psalms, this one not only portrays the joy of human marriage, but also describes prophetically the glorious reign of Jesus (see Ps. 2; 22; 69). This psalm was composed by the sons of Korah. The structure is as follows: (1) introduction of the “good theme” (v. 1); (2) wedding wishes for the great king (vv. 2–9); (3) wedding wishes for the beautiful bride (vv. 10–15); (4) concluding blessings on the king (vv. 16, 17).

45:2–5 You are fairer: This poem's cultural setting is the opulence of an ancient eastern royal court. The profuse description of the royal groom would be appropriate in that culture. **O Mighty One:** In the ancient Middle East the king was supposed to be a great warrior. The model in Israel was David, the celebrated champion who defeated the giant Goliath (1 Sam. 17). The term Mighty One is also a messianic title. **Your glory and Your majesty** can be rephrased as “Your majestic glory.” **right hand:** The victories of the king's hand would be awesome, a symbol pointing back to Exodus and forward to the works of the Savior Jesus.

45:6–9 The words **Your throne** indicate the messianic direction

of the psalm. Here the King is addressed as **God**, yet it is “God, Your God” who anointed Him. Thus these verses describe the interaction of the Father and the Son, for both are called “God.” The writer of Hebrews used these verses to assert Jesus' deity (Heb. 1:8, 9). **anointed You:** Anointing set aside a particular person for special service to God. In OT times, those who were anointed for special service foreshadowed the Anointed One, the meaning of *Messiah* and *Christ*. As symbols appropriate for divine service, the **garments** of a priest or king had to be clean and luxurious. The king was surrounded by radiant women; his bride the queen was resplendent in her precious golden garments. This is a portrait of heaven, with God as King and the church as His radiant bride (Rev. 19:1–10). **Ophir**, possibly located in southern Arabia or on the east coast of Africa (2 Chr. 8:17, 18), was known in the OT world as a source of fine **gold**.

45:10–14 O daughter: The beautiful bride forsakes her own family and relationships as she becomes part of the family of her king and husband. **worship Him:** The bride is to give homage and worship to the great King. **robes of many colors:** In the ancient world, the beauty of the bride's gowns might be an expression of her family's wealth, their pride in her, and their love for her.

- "Forget your own people also, and
your father's house;
11 So the King will greatly desire your
beauty;
"Because He *is* your Lord, worship Him.
12 And the daughter of Tyre *will come*
with a gift;
"The rich among the people will seek
your favor.
- 13 The royal daughter *is* all glorious
within *the palace*;
Her clothing *is* woven with gold.
14 *a* She shall be brought to the King in
robes of many colors;
The virgins, her companions who
follow her, shall be brought to
You.
15 With gladness and rejoicing they
shall be brought;
They shall enter the King's palace.
- 16 Instead of Your fathers shall be Your
sons,
"Whom You shall make princes in all
the earth.
17 *s* I will make Your name to be
remembered in all generations;
Therefore the people shall praise You
forever and ever.

PSALM 46

God the Refuge of His People and Conqueror of the Nations

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of the sons
of Korah. A Song *a* for Alamoth.

- G**od *is* our *b* refuge and strength,
c A *1* very present help in trouble.
2 Therefore we will not fear,
Even though the earth be removed,
And though the mountains be
carried into the *2* midst of the sea;

10 *n* Deut. 21:13;
Ruth 1:16, 17
11 *o* Ps. 95:6; [Is.
54:5]
12 *p* Is. 49:23
14 *q* Song 1:4
16 *r* [1 Pet. 2:9; Rev.
1:6; 20:6]
17 *s* Mal. 1:11

PSALM 46

title *a* 1 Chr. 15:20
1 *b* Ps. 62:7,
8 *c* [Deut. 4:7;
Ps. 145:18] *1* An
abundantly
available help
2 *2* Lit. heart

3 *d* [Ps. 93:3, 4]
4 *e* [Ezek. 47:1-12]
f Ps. 48:1, 8; Is. 60:14
3 dwelling places
5 *g* [Deut. 23:14; Is.
12:6]; Ezek. 43:7;
Hos. 11:9; [Joel
2:27; Zeph. 3:15;
Zech. 2:5, 10, 11;
8:3] *4* shaken *5* Lit.
at the turning of the
morning
6 *h* Ps. 2:1, 2
7 *i* Num. 14:9; 2 Chr.
13:12
9 *j* Is. 2:4 *k* Ps. 76:3
l Ezek. 39:9
10 *m* [Is. 2:11, 17]

- 3 *d* Though its waters roar *and* be
troubled,
Though the mountains shake with its
swelling. *Selah*
- 4 There *is* a *e* river whose streams shall
make glad the *f* city of God,
The holy *place* of the *3* tabernacle of
the Most High.
- 5 God *is* *g* in the midst of her, she shall
not be *4* moved;
God shall help her, just *5* at the break
of dawn.
- 6 *h* The nations raged, the kingdoms
were moved;
He uttered His voice, the earth melted.
- 7 The *i* LORD of hosts *is* with us;
The God of Jacob *is* our refuge. *Selah*
- 8 Come, behold the works of the LORD,
Who has made desolations in the
earth.
- 9 *j* He makes wars cease to the end of
the earth;
k He breaks the bow and cuts the spear
in two;
l He burns the chariot in the fire.
- 10 Be still, and know that I *am* God;
m I will be exalted among the nations,
I will be exalted in the earth!
- 11 The LORD of hosts *is* with us;
The God of Jacob *is* our refuge. *Selah*

PSALM 47

Praise to God, the Ruler of the Earth

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of the
sons of Korah.

- O**h, clap your hands, all you
peoples!

Psalm 46 as a psalm of trust (Ps. 23) rejoices in the deliverance that the Lord gives His people in the midst of a fearsome battle or siege. There is reason to believe that Ps. 46–48 form a trilogy that focuses on God's special love for Jerusalem. Psalm 46 was Martin Luther's basis for the Reformation hymn "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God." The poem has three movements, each indicated by the closing word *Selah*, a musical notation perhaps indicating a musical interlude (vv. 3, 7, 11). The psalm is also called "A Song for Alamoth," a word that may refer to soprano voices. The structure of the psalm is as follows: (1) a celebration of God as our defense even though the earth is moved (vv. 1–3); (2) a celebration of God as our defense even though the nations rage (vv. 4–7); (3) a celebration of God as our defense even when the Lord brings His judgment (vv. 8–11).

46:1 Our refuge and strength may be rephrased "our impenetrable defense." The psalms regularly use imagery of a fortress to describe God. In the ancient Middle East, cities were built on heights with high walls for defense. Yet there was no city and no defensive structure that was impenetrable. However, the psalmist describes here the One who is a sure defense.

46:2, 3 earth be removed: The wording of vv. 2, 3 moves the action to a cosmic level. What if the struggle were not just an or-

inary war with ordinary weapons? What if the war involved even shaking the mountains and causing the seas to roar? It makes no difference. God is a refuge for His people against everything actual or imagined.

46:5 God is in the midst of her: The people do not have an absentee deliverer, a defense that is only sometimes present. The Lord lives with His people. Consequently, His protection can be counted on.

46:7 The LORD of hosts is with us: These words form a refrain (see v. 11). The pairing of the words "the LORD of hosts" with "the God of Jacob" is notable in both this verse and v. 11. This refrain praises the Almighty, the Commander of heaven's armies, for choosing to live with the descendants of Jacob, His people. Who could protect His people better? See 9:9; 48:3 for other uses of the word **refuge**.

46:8–10 desolations: The picture here is of final judgment (Ps. 1; 110). **Be still:** The call for stillness before the Lord is not a preparation for worship, but for impending judgment (Hab. 2:20; Zeph. 1:7; Zech. 2:13). God will be exalted. All the earth will bow before Him.

Psalm 47, a royal psalm attributed to the sons of Korah, presents the grand ascent of the King of kings to His throne. The psalm also presents the joy of the people over the fact that the great King's rule

Shout to God with the voice of triumph!
2 For the LORD Most High *is* awesome;
He is a great ^aKing over all the earth.
3 ^bHe will subdue the peoples under us,
And the nations under our feet.
4 He will choose our ^cinheritance
for us,
The excellence of Jacob whom He
loves. *Selah*
5 ^dGod has gone up with a shout,
The LORD with the sound of a trumpet.
6 Sing praises to God, sing praises!
Sing praises to our King, sing
praises!
7 ^eFor God *is* the King of all the earth;
^fSing praises with understanding.
8 ^gGod reigns over the nations;
God ^hsits on His ⁱholy throne.
9 The princes of the people have
gathered together,
^jThe people of the God of Abraham.

PSALM 47
2 ^a Deut. 7:21; Neh. 1:5; Ps. 76:12
3 ^b Ps. 18:47
4 ^c [1 Pet. 1:4]
5 ^d Ps. 68:24, 25
7 ^e Zech. 14:9
11 Cor. 14:15
8 ^g 1 Chr. 16:31 ^h Ps. 97:2 ⁱ Ps. 48:1
9 ^j [Rom. 4:11, 12]

PSALM 48
1 ^a Ps. 46:4; 87:3; Matt. 5:35
2 ^b Ps. 50:2 ⁱ height
4 ^c 2 Sam. 10:6, 14

^kFor the shields of the earth *belong* to God;
He is greatly exalted.

PSALM 48

The Glory of God in Zion

A Song. A Psalm of the sons of Korah.

Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised
In the ^acity of our God,
In His holy mountain.
2 ^bBeautiful in ⁱelevation,
The joy of the whole earth,
Is Mount Zion *on* the sides of the north,
The city of the great King.
3 God *is* in her palaces;
He is known as her refuge.
4 For behold, ^cthe kings assembled,
They passed by together.
5 They saw *it*, *and* so they marveled;
They were troubled, they hastened away.

means the end of all inequity, warfare, and trouble (Is. 11:3–5). The poets of Scripture knew that God is King as Creator of the world (Ps. 93), that He is King of His people because He is their Savior (Ps. 99), and that He is the coming King in the prophetic future. This last is the focus of Ps. 47. The structure of the poem is as follows: (1) a call to shout in triumph at the coming of the King (vv. 1–4); (2) a call to shout in triumph at the enthronement of the King (vv. 5–7); (3) a call to rejoice in the rule of the King (vv. 8, 9).

47:1–3 clap your hands: There are many ways in which the people of God express their joy in Him; one is the clapping of hands in joyful adoration. **all you peoples:** It is principally the people of God who will praise the great King; but the call for the nations was always a part of the larger picture in the theology of the Psalms (Ps. 67; 117). **the LORD Most High:** The divine name usually translated “the LORD” is buttressed by the term *Most High*, which speaks of God’s power over all nations (7:17; 77:10; 78:17, 35, 56; 82:6; 107:11; Deut. 32:8). **Awesome** is related to the word for “fear” and suggests reverence for Almighty God (147:11). **Great King** is the key phrase of this psalm. All kings have derived authority; only one King, the great God of heaven, is absolute in power and righteousness. **He will subdue:** The promise of the eventual victory of God’s people under the leadership of their great King is a basic focus in the Bible (Ps. 2; 110; 1 Cor. 15:24–28). The outcome of the final battle was determined long ago by God.

47:4 The words **whom He loves** are perhaps the most significant contribution of this poem to our understanding of God’s purposes. To love means “to make one’s choice in.” God had chosen the Israelites to be His holy people and in that way He loved them. In his dialogue with Nicodemus, Jesus explained that God’s love extended to all the nations as well as to Israel (John 3:16).

47:5–7 God has gone up: This psalm speaks of an anticipated enthronement of God. As He seats Himself on the throne, all who see Him in heaven and earth shout aloud in triumph. **Sing praises:** The repetition of this command in vv. 6, 7 is similar to the angelic voices singing of the holiness of God in Is. 6:3. The reason for the call to sing is clear: **God is the King of all the earth;** He deserves our praise. This psalm speaks of the coming great reign of Jesus when He establishes His holy rule.

47:8, 9 God reigns: We know that God is King over the earth. There are other forces clearly at work, but they function only by His permission. One day there will be an end to all evil, to all acts of rebellion, and to all acts of oppression. **The people of the God of**

Abraham: This is the prophetic picture of the ultimate fulfillment of the Abrahamic covenant (Gen. 12:1–3). One day all the peoples of the earth who have come to faith in God through Jesus will discover that they are one people. They are all the true seed of Abraham, because they, like Abraham, believed in God (Gen. 15:6; Gal. 3:5–8). Then all **shields** will belong to God; there will be no other power on earth or in the universe apart from the power of God. **Greatly exalted** comes from the term meaning “to go up,” the same root used in v. 5. God’s ascent to His throne will come with the enthronement of Jesus and His coming rule in the New Jerusalem (Rev. 20). **Psalm 48** unites with Ps. 46; 47 to form three great psalms of praise to God for His kingship and His love for the holy city of Jerusalem. This emphasis on Jerusalem has led many scholars to speak of these psalms as “Songs of Zion.” Attributed to the sons of Korah, this psalm calls the people to offer reverent praise to their Lord. The structure is as follows: (1) a celebration of God’s greatness in the holy city of Zion (vv. 1–3); (2) a description of the gathering of the kings and the peoples to witness God’s rule (vv. 4–11); (3) a celebration of God’s greatness in the holy city of Zion (vv. 12–14). **48:1 Great** is used often in the Psalms to describe the person of God (21:5; 77:13; 95:3; 96:4; 145:3; 147:5). **city of our God:** The city of Jerusalem had a particularly dear place in the heart of God’s people (see 1 Kin. 14:21). The city was holy because of the presence of God in the temple.

48:2, 3 The joy of the whole earth: As is strongly established in the Book of Psalms, the purpose of God’s work in Israel was to draw all nations to Himself (117:1). **sides of the north:** This phrasing is likely borrowed from Canaanite poetry. In Canaanite thought, the great gods resided in some remote northern location. For Israel, God’s dwelling was the physical city of Jerusalem. **The city of the great King:** Jesus quoted these words in Matt. 5:35 and identified the city as Jerusalem. **God is in her palaces:** These words express a prayer for the present and hope for the future. The point is clear: the beauty of the city of Jerusalem comes from the presence of the Lord, who has made His dwelling there.

48:4–7 This section describes from a different point of view the final battle referred to in Ps. 2; 110. Psalm 48 describes the approach and hasty retreat of the errant **kings**. The connection between this text and Ps. 2 is heightened by the use of an unusual Hebrew word for **fear**—a term meaning “trembling” or “quaking terror”—which is found in both places (2:11).

BIBLE TIMES & CULTURE NOTES



Tarshish

Tarshish was a city or territory in the western portion of the Mediterranean Sea with which the Phoenicians traded. Tarshish is believed by some to be Tartessus, in southern Spain, near Gibraltar. When Jonah fled from God's instruction to go to Nineveh, he boarded a ship bound for Tarshish, in the opposite direction from Nineveh (Jon. 1:3). Tarshish was famous for its ships, which carried gold, silver, iron, tin, lead, ivory, apes, and monkeys.

Because the ships of Tarshish carried such great riches, they became symbols of wealth, power, and pride. When God judged the nations for their sinful ways, He destroyed their "ships of Tarshish" to humble them and to demonstrate His great power (2 Chr. 20:35–37; Is. 2:16; 23:1, 14).

6 ^d Ex. 15:15
7 ^e 1 Kin. 10:22;
Ezek. 27:25
8 ^f [Ps. 87:5; Is. 2:2];
Mic. 4:1
9 ^g Ps. 26:3
10 ^h [Deut. 28:58];
Josh. 7:9; Mal. 1:11

- 6 Fear ^d took hold of them there,
And pain, as of a woman in birth
pangs,
7 As when You break the ^e ships of
Tarshish
With an east wind.
- 8 As we have heard,
So we have seen
In the city of the LORD of hosts,
In the city of our God:
God will ^f establish it forever. *Selah*
- 9 We have thought, O God, on ^g Your
lovingkindness,
In the midst of Your temple.
10 According to ^h Your name, O God,
So is Your praise to the ends of the
earth;
Your right hand is full of
righteousness.
11 Let Mount Zion rejoice,
Let the daughters of Judah be glad,
Because of Your judgments.

13 ⁱ [Ps. 78:5–7]
14 ^j Is. 58:11 ² So
with MT, Syr.; LXX,
Vg. Forever

PSALM 49

4 ¹ riddle
6 ^a Job 31:24; Ps.
52:7; [Prov. 11:28;
Mark 10:23, 24]
7 ^b Job 36:18, 19
8 ^c [Matt. 16:26]
9 ^d Ps. 89:48
² experience
corruption

- 12 Walk about Zion,
And go all around her.
Count her towers;
13 Mark well her bulwarks;
Consider her palaces;
That you may ⁱ tell it to the
generation following.
- 14 For this is God,
Our God forever and ever;
^j He will be our guide
² Even to death.

PSALM 49

The Confidence of the Foolish

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of the
sons of Korah.

- Hear this, all peoples;
Give ear, all inhabitants of the
world,
2 Both low and high,
Rich and poor together.
3 My mouth shall speak wisdom,
And the meditation of my heart *shall*
give understanding.
- 4 I will incline my ear to a proverb;
I will disclose my ¹ dark saying on
the harp.
- 5 Why should I fear in the days of
evil,
When the iniquity at my heels
surrounds me?
6 Those who ^a trust in their wealth
And boast in the multitude of their
riches,
7 None *of them* can by any means
redeem *his* brother,
Nor ^b give to God a ransom for
him—
8 For ^c the redemption of their souls is
costly,
And it shall cease forever—
9 That he should continue to live
eternally,
And ^d not ² see the Pit.

48:8 As . . . we have seen: The people who first sang this song knew the presence of God in temple worship. They knew that they were in the city where God had chosen to establish His blessing.

48:9 We have thought: The verb is an unusual one in Hebrew. It refers to making comparisons and looking for similarities, thinking and considering with discrimination. The point is that nothing can be compared to the loyal love of God.

48:12–14 Praising the city of Zion is another way of praising God, whose dwelling was there. To be a **guide** describes the work of a shepherd (78:52).

Psalm 49, a wisdom psalm attributed to the sons of Korah, has many similarities with Proverbs and Ecclesiastes. The psalm calls for the wise person to realize that there is nothing to fear from the oppressive rich: like animals, they too will die. But the righteous will live forever. This psalm is quite different from a psalm of praise; it is an instruction text set to music. Its structure is: (1) a call for understanding (vv. 1–4); (2) a declaration of the vanity of

trusting in wealth (vv. 5–9); (3) a declaration of the worthlessness of possessions after death (vv. 10–12); (4) a description of God's redemption (vv. 13–15); (5) the conclusion that there is no need to fear the rich (vv. 16–20).

49:1–4 Hear this, all peoples: The call for wisdom and understanding goes to all, similar to the calls for universal worship of the Lord (Ps. 117). **Dark saying**, which may be translated "riddle" or "enigma," refers to a perplexing moral problem: how do the righteous come to terms with oppressive rich people who seem to have no thought for God?

49:6–9 Those who trust in their wealth: As in the teaching of Jesus (Mark 10:24), there is a warning against trusting in wealth, for wealth can achieve nothing of lasting value in this life or the life to come. **Nor give to God a ransom**: Wealth cannot buy redemption. **Pit** refers to the power of death in its dark aspect (16:10). Only God has the power to deliver us from death and hell.

10 For he sees wise men die;
Likewise the fool and the senseless
person perish,
And leave their wealth to others.
11³ Their inner thought *is that* their
houses *will last* forever,
Their dwelling places to all
generations;
They ^ecall *their* lands after their own
names.
12 Nevertheless man, *though* in honor,
does not ⁴remain;
He is like the beasts *that* perish.
13 This is the way of those who *are*
^ffoolish,
And of their posterity who approve
their sayings. *Selah*
14 Like sheep they are laid in the grave;
Death shall feed on them;
^gThe upright shall have dominion
over them in the morning;
^hAnd their beauty shall be consumed
in ⁵the grave, far from their
dwelling.
15 But God ⁱwill redeem my soul from
the power of ⁶the grave,
For He shall ^jreceive me. *Selah*
16 Do not be afraid when one becomes
rich,
When the glory of his house is
increased;
17 For when he dies he shall carry
nothing away;
His glory shall not descend after him.
18 Though while he lives ^khe blesses
himself
(For *men* will praise you when you
do well for yourself),
19 He shall go to the generation of his
fathers;
They shall never see ^llight.⁷

11 ^e Gen. 4:17; Deut. 3:14 ³ LXX, Syr., Tg., Vg. *Their graves shall be their houses forever*
12 ⁴ So with MT, Tg.; LXX, Syr., Vg. *understand* (cf. v. 20)
13 ^f [Luke 12:20]
14 ^g Ps. 47:3; [Dan. 7:18; 1 Cor. 6:2; Rev. 2:26] ^h Job 4:21
⁵ Or *Sheol*
15 ⁱ [Hos. 13:4]; Mark 16:6; 7; Acts 2:31, 32 [☆] / Ps. 73:24 ⁶ Or *Sheol*
18 ^k Deut. 29:19; Luke 12:19
19 ^j Job 33:30 ⁷ The light of life
20 ^m Eccl. 3:19
PSALM 50
1 ^a Is. 9:6
2 ^b Deut. 33:2; Ps. 80:1
3 ^c Lev. 10:2; Num. 16:35; [Ps. 97:3]
4 ^d Deut. 4:26; 31:28; 32:1; Is. 1:2
5 ^e Deut. 33:3 ^f Ex. 24:7 ¹ Lit. *cut*
6 ^g [Ps. 97:6] ^h Ps. 75:7
7 ⁱ Ex. 20:2
8 ^j Jer. 7:22 ^k Is. 1:11; [Hos. 6:6] ² *reprove*
9 / Ps. 69:31

20 A man *who is* in honor, yet does not understand,
^mIs like the beasts *that* perish.

PSALM 50

God the Righteous Judge

A Psalm of Asaph.

The ^aMighty One, God the LORD,
Has spoken and called the earth
From the rising of the sun to its
going down.
2 Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty,
^bGod will shine forth.
3 Our God shall come, and shall not
keep silent;
^cA fire shall devour before Him,
And it shall be very tempestuous all
around Him.
4 ^dHe shall call to the heavens from
above,
And to the earth, that He may judge
His people:
5 “Gather ^eMy saints together to Me,
^fThose who have ¹made a covenant
with Me by sacrifice.”
6 Let the ^gheavens declare His
righteousness,
For ^hGod Himself *is* Judge. *Selah*
7 “Hear, O My people, and I will speak,
O Israel, and I will testify against
you;
ⁱI am God, your God!
8 ^jI will not ²rebuke you ^kfor your
sacrifices
Or your burnt offerings,
Which are continually before Me.
9 ^lI will not take a bull from your
house,
Nor goats out of your folds.

49:10 The theme that **wise men die** is developed in Ecclesiastes. The rich and the poor, the wise and the fool, all have the same fate—physical death.
49:14, 15 These verses vividly describe both the power of death and the greater power of God. **their beauty shall be consumed:** Death is the great leveler. People who have beauty, riches (vv. 16, 17), and power in this world will lose them all at death. They will be stripped of everything except their character or soul. This is why the Scriptures exhort us to pursue character development—God’s law, holiness, wisdom, and knowledge—more than anything else. Each use of the word **grave** in these two verses is a translation of the Hebrew word *Sheol*, meaning death (16:10). **God will redeem my soul:** The psalmist trusts in God to deliver him from the power of death.
Psalm 50, a wisdom psalm, is the first of 12 poems attributed to Asaph, one of the music leaders appointed by David. This psalm contrasts the distinctions of the righteous and the wicked in the eyes of God, a constant theme of the wisdom writers. True wisdom in biblical thought is based on the “fear of the Lord,” a proper response to the awesome nature of God. In this psalm, God is portrayed as the great Judge (Ps. 96–98). The structure of the psalm is: (1) the praise of God who shines forth from Zion (vv. 1–3);

(2) a vision of the coming of God, the great Judge (vv. 4–6); (3) the instruction of the great Judge to His people concerning sacrifice (vv. 7–15); (4) the rebuke of the great Judge to the wicked (vv. 16–21); (5) the words of the great Judge on condemnation and salvation (vv. 22, 23).
50:1, 2 The Hebrew text uses the three terms **the Mighty One, God, and the LORD** as a stunning introduction to this poem. This language suggests a grand display of God Himself in the midst of His people (18:7–9). **Out of Zion:** The glory of God shines from His sanctuary in Jerusalem.
50:3–6 Our God shall come: This prophetic language speaks of the coming kingdom of God (Ps. 96–98). **God Himself is Judge:** See 75:7 for a powerful development of this idea. This is the point of this psalm; God is the great Judge. When used of God, the Hebrew word for Judge has connotations of royalty (94:2). Thus this wisdom psalm is also a royal psalm, because it speaks of the coming of the great King who both rules and judges.
50:8–10 not rebuke you: The sacrifices were commanded by God in Leviticus, but the people had difficulty keeping a godly perspective on the nature of sacrifices. **every beast of the forest:** The people were not doing God a favor by bringing their animals, for everything belonged to Him anyway. He knows every bird and beast.

- 10 For every beast of the forest *is* Mine,
And the cattle on a thousand hills.
- 11 I know all the birds of the
mountains,
And the wild beasts of the field *are*
Mine.
- 12^a “If I were hungry, I would not tell
you;
^mFor the world *is* Mine, and all its
fullness.
- 13ⁿ Will I eat the flesh of bulls,
Or drink the blood of goats?
- 14^o Offer to God thanksgiving,
And ^ppay your vows to the Most
High.
- 15^q Call upon Me in the day of trouble;
I will deliver you, and you shall
glorify Me.”
- 16 But to the wicked God says:
“What *right* have you to declare My
statutes,
Or take My covenant in your mouth,
17^r Seeing you hate instruction
And cast My words behind you?
18 When you saw a thief, you
^sconsented³ with him,
And have been a ‘partaker with
adulterers.
- 19 You give your mouth to evil,
And ^uyour tongue frames deceit.
- 20 You sit *and* speak against your
brother;
You slander your own mother’s son.
- 21 These *things* you have done, and I
kept silent;
^vYou thought that I was altogether
like you;

12^m Ex. 19:5; [Deut.
10:14; Job 41:11];
1 Cor. 10:26
13ⁿ [Ps. 51:15–17]
14^o Hos. 14:2; Heb.
13:15 ^p Num. 30:2;
Deut. 23:21
15^q Job 22:27;
[Zech. 13:9]
17^r Neh. 9:26; Rom.
2:21
18^s [Rom. 1:32]
^t 1 Tim. 5:22 ³ LXX,
Syr., Tg., Vg., *ran*
19^u Ps. 52:2
21^v [Rom. 2:4]

^w [Ps. 90:8]
22^x [Job 8:13]
23^y Gal. 6:16

PSALM 51

title ^a 2 Sam. 12:1
1^b [Is. 43:25; 44:22;
Acts 3:19; Col. 2:14]
2^c Jer. 33:8; Ezek.
36:33; [Heb. 9:14;
1 John 1:7, 9]
4^d 2 Sam. 12:13
^e [Luke 5:21] ^f Rom.
3:4 ¹ LXX, Tg., Vg. *in*
Your words

But I will rebuke you,
And ^wset *them* in order before your
eyes.

- 22^a “Now consider this, you who ^xforget
God,
Lest I tear *you* in pieces,
And *there be* none to deliver:
23 Whoever offers praise glorifies Me;
And ^yto him who orders *his* conduct
aright
I will show the salvation of God.”

PSALM 51

A Prayer of Repentance

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David
^awhen Nathan the prophet went to him,
after he had gone in to Bathsheba.

- H**ave mercy upon me, O God,
According to Your
lovingkindness;
According to the multitude of Your
tender mercies,
^bBlot out my transgressions.
2^c Wash me thoroughly from my
iniquity,
And cleanse me from my sin.
- 3 For I acknowledge my
transgressions,
And my sin *is* always before me.
- 4^d Against You, You only, have I
sinned,
And done *this* evil ^ein Your sight—
^fThat You may be found just ¹when
You speak,
And blameless when You judge.

50:12–15 If I were hungry: The God of Israel does not hunger for food; however, He does “hunger” for righteousness of His people.

Call upon Me: Sacrifice in the Bible was for the good of the people. The Lord designated the sacrificial system as the place when He would shower His mercy on those He loves.

50:16–20 As in the case of 1:4, the attention of the psalm turns from the righteous who need instruction to the **wicked** who merit judgment. This section announces God’s judgment not against the nations, but against the people of Israel who heard but spurned God’s word. **You give your mouth to evil:** God offered truth, but these people chose falsehoods. They had seen the light but preferred to live in darkness (John 3:16–21). **your own mother’s son:** There was no sense of decency remaining in these wicked persons; even normal bonds of family relationships were disregarded.

50:22, 23 In the climax of the revelation of the coming judgment in this psalm, the Lord offers an opportunity to repent and receive forgiveness. This is an indicator of His grace. The Lord wants to save; His warnings are another expression of His mercy.

Psalm 51 is associated with one of the hardest experiences of David’s life, the aftermath of his affair with Bathsheba. This is one of several psalms of David in which the title specifies the incident that inspired the poem. For the account of David’s sin and Nathan’s rebuke, see 2 Sam. 11; 12:1–15. David’s response to Nathan was immediate: “I have sinned against the **LORD**” (2 Sam. 12:13). Sometime later, he wrote this memorable, penitential psalm. The structure of the poem is as follows: (1) a plea for God’s mercy in the context of

David’s confession (vv. 1, 2); (2) an acknowledgment that David’s sin was against the Lord (vv. 3, 4); (3) a confession that sin pervades David’s being (vv. 5, 6); (4) a series of pleas for forgiveness (vv. 7–13); (5) a vow of praise by the forgiven sinner (vv. 14, 15); (6) a statement on the meaning of true worship (vv. 16, 17); (7) a plea for God to restore the fortunes of the people (vv. 18, 19).

51:1, 2 David’s call for **mercy** is the only appropriate request for a confessing sinner. No sinner should ask for justice, for that would mean judgment and ruin. Mercy and forgiveness is God’s gift to the confessing sinner. Even when the Lord forgives, He does not tarnish His just character: confessed sins are covered by the sacrifice of His perfect Son on the cross (see 2 Cor. 5:21). The phrase **according to Your lovingkindness** expresses God’s loyal or covenantal love to His people (13:5).

51:3, 4 The months of agony that David suffered because of his guilt are expressed in the striking words—**my sin is always before me**. See the development of these ideas in Ps. 32. **Against You:** David had sinned against Bathsheba, Uriah, and the nation he was called to rule. But none of these indictments were as serious as David’s offense against God. The first few verses use several different words to describe sin—“transgression,” “iniquity,” and “sin.” The words for forgiveness are all pictorial words: “blot out” (v. 1), “wash,” and “cleanse” (v. 2). All these words express the seriousness of sin and the great lengths God goes to in removing our sin. **be found just:** The Lord deals with sin in two ways: The wicked receive God’s just condemnation; the righteous receive His undeserved mercy.

5 ^g Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity,
And in sin my mother conceived me.
6 Behold, You desire truth in the inward parts,
And in the hidden *part* You will make me to know wisdom.
7 ^h Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;
Wash me, and I shall be ⁱ whiter than snow.
8 Make me hear joy and gladness,
That the bones You have broken ^j may rejoice.
9 Hide Your face from my sins,
And blot out all my iniquities.
10 ^k Create in me a clean heart, O God,
And renew a steadfast spirit within me.
11 Do not cast me away from Your presence,
And do not take Your ^l Holy Spirit from me.
12 Restore to me the joy of Your salvation,
And uphold me *by* Your ^m generous Spirit.
13 *Then* I will teach transgressors Your ways,
And sinners shall be converted to You.
14 Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God,

5 ^g [Job 14:4; Ps. 58:3; John 3:6; Rom. 5:12]
7 ^h Ex. 12:22; Lev. 14:4; Num. 19:18; Heb. 9:19 ⁱ [Is. 1:18]
8 ^j [Matt. 5:4]
10 ^k [Ezek. 18:31; Eph. 2:10]
11 ^l [Luke 11:13]
12 ^m [2 Cor. 3:17]

16 ⁿ [1 Sam. 15:22]; Ps. 50:8-14; [Mic. 6:6-8]
17 ^o Ps. 34:18; [Is. 57:15]; 66:2
19 ^p Ps. 4:5

PSALM 52

title ^a 1 Sam. 22:9
^b Ezek. 22:9 ^c Heb. Maschil

The God of my salvation,
And my tongue shall sing aloud of Your righteousness.
15 O Lord, open my lips,
And my mouth shall show forth Your praise.
16 For ⁿ You do not desire sacrifice, or else I would give *it*;
You do not delight in burnt offering.
17 ^o The sacrifices of God *are* a broken spirit,
A broken and a contrite heart—
These, O God, You will not despise.
18 Do good in Your good pleasure to Zion;
Build the walls of Jerusalem.
19 Then You shall be pleased with ^p the sacrifices of righteousness,
With burnt offering and whole burnt offering;
Then they shall offer bulls on Your altar.

PSALM 52

The End of the Wicked and the Peace of the Godly

To the Chief Musician. A ¹ Contemplation of David ^a when Doeg the Edomite went and ^b told Saul, and said to him, “David has gone to the house of Ahimelech.”

Why do you boast in evil,
O mighty man?

51:5, 6 brought forth in iniquity: Sin was found in David from the beginning; from birth he was inclined towards sin (see Rom. 5:12). **Inward parts**, a rare word in the Hebrew Bible, indicates something clouded over, difficult for anyone but God to see. The Lord’s penetrating gaze searches the innermost recesses of a person’s mind and heart.

heart
(Heb. *leb*) (51:10; Jer. 31:33) Strong’s #3820

The Hebrew nouns *leb* and *lebab* are synonymous words, which speak of a person’s inner being and therefore are often translated *heart*. To the Hebrews, the heart was the seat of the affections, will, and mind. One’s emotions and understanding were centered in the heart (Prov. 15:13, 14), thus blurring the common dichotomy between mind and heart, intellect and emotions. Therefore to have a “clean heart” (51:10) is to have pure thoughts and desires. To have a “hardened heart” (Ex. 4:21) or a “heart of stone” (Ezek. 36:26) is to have a closed mind and deadened emotions. Early in human history, God identified the human heart as the center of rebellion, producing all kinds of evil (see Gen. 8:21). For this reason, people found it impossible to obey God’s simple command to love Him “with all [their] heart” (Deut. 6:5). To remedy this deplorable situation, God determined to replace their “stony heart” with a “heart of flesh,” one which would love and obey its Creator (Ezek. 36:26, 27).

51:7 hyssop: Here David refers to the ritual acts of cleansing described in the Law of Moses (Lev. 14:4; Num. 19:6). David repeatedly calls for his cleansing (see also v. 9). By this, he expresses his profound sense of guilt.
51:10 This verse is significant in two areas, repentance and creation. The verb translated **create** is the same one used in Gen. 1:1 and refers to what only God can do. David was asking that his heart be renewed, restored, and transformed. God is the only source of such a renewal.
51:13, 14 David calls **sinners** to salvation in this verse. He vows that he will use his experience of God’s grace as a renewed motivation to bring others into the knowledge of the love and mercy of God (40:3). **my tongue shall sing:** David desires to be forgiven for several reasons: (1) for his own peace, (2) for the message of hope that he could communicate to others, and (3) for the praise he would be able to give in the community of the faithful.
51:16 You do not desire sacrifice: The key term here is the verb *desire*, which means “to find pleasure in.” God’s pleasure is not in the sacrificed animal, but in the restored person. He demanded sacrifices, even from David; but His pleasure is in the person who comes obediently to Him (Gen. 4:1–7; John 4:21–24; Rom. 12:1, 2). Actions not accompanied by a contrite heart are not acceptable to God (Is. 1:12–20).
51:18, 19 Do good: David declared God’s goodness to the whole community in their collective worship (125:4). The Hebrew verb translated **pleased** is the same verb translated *delight* in v. 16. God took pleasure in those whose hearts were humble before Him. Their sacrifices were a source of joy.
Psalm 52, a psalm of lament, strongly emphasizes judgment of David’s enemies. The title of this psalm specifies the incident in Da-

The goodness of God *endures* continually.

² Your tongue devises destruction,
Like a sharp razor, working
deceitfully.

³ You love evil more than good,
Lying rather than speaking
righteousness. *Selah*

⁴ You love all devouring
words,
You deceitful tongue.

⁵ God shall likewise destroy you
forever;
He shall take you away, and pluck
you out of *your* dwelling
place,
And uproot you from the land of the
living. *Selah*

⁶ The righteous also shall see and
fear,
And shall laugh at him,
saying,

⁷ “Here is the man *who* did not make
God his strength,
But trusted in the abundance of his
riches,
And strengthened himself in his
²wickedness.”

⁸ But I *am* ^clike a green olive tree in
the house of God;
I trust in the mercy of God forever
and ever.

⁹ I will praise You forever,
Because You have done *it*;
And in the presence of Your
saints

I will wait on Your name, for *it* ³is
good.

⁷ ² Lit. *desire*, in evil
sense
⁸ ^c Jer. 11:16
⁹ ³ Or *has a good
reputation*

PSALM 53

Folly of the Godless, and the Restoration of Israel

To the Chief Musician. Set to “Mahalath.”
A ¹Contemplation of David.

The ^afool has said in his heart,
“*There is no God.*”

They are corrupt, and have done
abominable iniquity;
^b*There is none* who does good.

² God looks down from heaven upon
the children of men,
To see if there are *any* who
understand, who ^cseek God.

³ Every one of them has turned
aside;
They have together become
corrupt;
There is none who does good,
No, not one.

⁴ Have the workers of iniquity ^dno
knowledge,
Who eat up my people *as* they eat
bread,
And do not call upon God?

⁵ “*There they are* in great fear
Where no fear was,
For God has scattered the bones of
him who encamps against you;
You have put *them* to shame,
Because God has despised them.

⁶ ^fOh, that the salvation of Israel would
come out of Zion!
When God brings back ²the captivity
of His people,
Let Jacob rejoice *and* Israel be glad.

PSALM 53

title ¹ Heb. *Maschil*
¹ ^a Ps. 10:4 ^b Rom.
3:10-12
² ^c [2 Chr. 15:2]
⁴ ^d Jer. 4:22
⁵ ^e Lev. 26:17, 36;
Prov. 28:1
⁶ ^f Ps. 14:7 ² Or *His
captive people*

vid's life that prompted him to write it. Doeg, an official of Saul, had spied on David when he fled to Ahimelech, the priest at Nob, for provisions and guidance (1 Sam. 21:7). Doeg's report angered Saul so much that he destroyed the priestly family at Nob (1 Sam. 22). This incident must have been disheartening to David. His actions had caused the death of others, and his enemies were determined to destroy him. The structure is: (1) the question of why the wicked boast in evil (vv. 1-4); (2) a proclamation that God will destroy the wicked (vv. 5-7); (3) a vow to praise the Lord (vv. 8, 9).

52:1-4 Boast is related to the word meaning “praise”; however, boasting in evil is no more than a perversion of praise. **Mighty** is likely used here sarcastically; the only Mighty One is the Lord. **The goodness of God** is His “loyal love.” The contrast is between a wicked man who boasts in evil and the Lord who is constant in His supreme character. **Your tongue** refers to more than just words. These people used language as a weapon, for they believed that the gods could empower their words to a devastating effect.

52:5-7 God shall likewise destroy you forever: The poet uses the strongest terms to describe divine judgment on those who practice evil. **Uproot you from the land of the living** refers to death, but not eternal death. **The righteous also shall see and fear:** This fear is a deepened respect for God and a sense of awe before His throne. **Here is the man:** The righteous laugh at the wicked because of their foolishness. A reference to *man* often

means man in his strength; but this “man” has no real strength at all. He seeks strength in himself instead of seeking the source of all strength, the Almighty.

52:8, 9 A green olive tree is a symbol of beauty. In Rom. 11, the olive tree is used as a symbol of the Gentiles who are grafted into the root, the people of God or the church. The Hebrew word for **mercy** is the same term, meaning “loyal love,” that is translated “goodness” in v. 1. The Hebrew word for **praise** is the same word sometimes translated “give thanks” (105:1); it typically refers to vocal and public praise.

Psalms 53 is a recasting of Ps. 14 with only slight differences, particularly in the ending. Its structure is as follows: (1) an announcement of the judgment of the fool (v. 1); (2) the Lord's examination of people (v. 2, 3); (3) the judgment of the Lord (vv. 4, 5); (4) a prayer for the salvation of Israel (v. 6).

53:1 In the Bible, the term **fool** does not mean mental incompetence, but moral and spiritual insensitivity. The fool is the one who ignores God.

53:4, 5 God has scattered the bones: This is a prophetic pronouncement of the final judgment on the wicked. Those who did not fear God will be filled with **great fear**, for God will come in His glory and power. One day there will be no more wickedness to contaminate the earth or to compromise the people of God.

PSALM 54

Answered Prayer for Deliverance
from Adversaries

To the Chief Musician. With
¹stringed instruments. A ²Contemplation
of David ^awhen the Ziphites went
and said to Saul, “Is David not
hiding with us?”

Save me, O God, by Your name,
And vindicate me by Your
strength.

² Hear my prayer, O God;
Give ear to the words of my
mouth.

³ For strangers have risen up
against me,
And oppressors have sought after
my life;
They have not set God before them. *Selah*

⁴ Behold, God *is* my helper;
The Lord *is* with those who ³uphold
my life.

⁵ He will repay my enemies for their
evil.

⁴ Cut them off in Your ⁵truth.

⁶ I will freely sacrifice to You;
I will praise Your name, O LORD, for
it is good.

⁷ For He has delivered me out of all
trouble;
^b And my eye has seen *its desire* upon
my enemies.

PSALM 54

title ^a 1 Sam. 23:19
¹ Heb. *neginoth*
² Heb. *Maschil*
⁴ ³ sustain my soul
⁵ ⁴ Destroy them
⁵ Or faithfulness
⁷ ^b Ps. 59:10

PSALM 55

title ¹ Heb.
neginoth ² Heb.
Maschil
² ^a Is. 38:14; 59:11;
Ezek. 7:16 ³ wander
³ ^b 2 Sam. 16:7, 8
⁴ ^c Ps. 116:3
⁹ ^d speech, their
counsel

PSALM 55

Trust in God Concerning the
Treachery of Friends

To the Chief Musician. With ¹stringed
instruments. A ²Contemplation of David.

Give ear to my prayer, O God,
And do not hide Yourself from my
supplication.

² Attend to me, and hear me;
I ^aam ³restless in my complaint, and
moan noisily,

³ Because of the voice of the enemy,
Because of the oppression of the
wicked;
^b For they bring down trouble
upon me,
And in wrath they hate me.

⁴ ^c My heart is severely pained
within me,
And the terrors of death have fallen
upon me.

⁵ Fearfulness and trembling have come
upon me,
And horror has overwhelmed me.

⁶ So I said, “Oh, that I had wings like a
dove!
I would fly away and be at rest.

⁷ Indeed, I would wander far off,
And remain in the wilderness. *Selah*

⁸ I would hasten my escape
From the windy storm and tempest.”

⁹ Destroy, O Lord, and divide their
⁴tongues,

Psalm 54 is a psalm of lament in which the answer to the prayer is declared before the end of the poem. The prayer’s answer may have come through a priest or prophet. The psalmist knew that he was being answered, and he sought immediately to make God’s goodness known. Psalm 54 is another of David’s psalms in which the title indicates the specific situation that gave rise to the poem (Ps. 51; 52). Twice the people of the Wilderness of Ziph had informed Saul that David was hiding in their region (1 Sam. 23:19–23; 26:1–3). David’s distress is understandable; yet from the Ziphites’ viewpoint, their actions were warranted. After all, Saul was the king and David was a fugitive. The structure of the poem is as follows: (1) a call for God’s help in the midst of persecution from many foes (vv. 1–3); (2) a declaration that God is David’s Helper (vv. 4, 5); (3) a vow of praise (vv. 6, 7).

54:1–3 Save me, O God, by Your name: The poets of the Bible knew the significance of God’s name even when they did not use it. The people of Ziph probably are indicated by the words **strangers** and **oppressors**. David makes the point that they are not pious people. Since he is God’s servant, he expects that God will deliver him.

54:4, 5 Helper could also be translated “power.” The Lord was David’s strength in his time of need. **Cut them off** is David’s curse on his enemies, an imprecation. Even so, David did not take vengeance into his own hands. Only the Lord can take revenge.

54:6, 7 I will freely sacrifice to You: The prayer has been answered, and God is honored. Thus David expresses his willingness to fulfill his vow.

Psalm 55 deals with life and death, deliverance from hell, and the abiding presence of God. It speaks prophetically of the experience

of the Savior Jesus. This psalm consists of many short sections, and its choppy quality shows the deep emotion behind it. The structure of the poem is: (1) a call for God to hear in the midst of the distress (vv. 1–3); (2) a wish to escape death (vv. 4–8); (3) a prayer for God’s judgment on the wicked (vv. 9–11); (4) the description of a friend’s betrayal (vv. 12–14); (5) a renewed prayer for God’s judgment on the wicked (v. 15); (6) a prayer for deliverance for the righteous (vv. 16–19); (7) a retrospective on the friend’s betrayal (vv. 20, 21); (8) a call for hope in the midst of trouble (v. 22); (9) a concluding statement of confidence in view of final judgment (v. 23).

55:1–3 Give ear to my prayer: The poem begins in a way that is common in the lament psalms. There is a call to God, a reference to the psalmist’s distress, and a notice concerning his enemy. David’s shock is not that he is in distress again or even that he has more enemies. The great shock is that the enemy is his own friend (vv. 12–14).

55:4–8 David’s intense pain can be felt in his strong language. The phrase **terrors of death** is unusual. The Hebrew word for *terror* or “dread” is first used in Scripture to describe the horror that Abraham felt in the unnatural darkness that seized him as God was about to come near (Gen. 15:12). The word also described the horrors that would fall on the people of Canaan when the Lord gave the land to the Israelites (Ex. 15:16). To strengthen this feeling, David speaks of a “trembling fear” and an overwhelming **horror** (see also Ezek. 7:18).

55:9 David calls for God’s judgment on the wicked; he renews this call in vv. 15, 23.

- For I have seen ^dviolence and strife
in the city.
- 10 Day and night they go around it on
its walls;
^eIniquity and trouble *are* also in the
midst of it.
- 11 Destruction *is* in its midst;
^fOppression and deceit do not depart
from its streets.
- 12 ^gFor *it is* not an enemy *who*
reproaches me;
Then I could bear *it*.
Nor *is it* one *who* hates me who has
^hexalted *himself* against me;
Then I could hide from him.
- 13 But *it was* you, a man my equal,
ⁱMy companion and my acquaintance.
- 14 We took sweet counsel together,
And ^jwalked to the house of God in
the throng.
- 15 Let death seize them;
Let them ^kgo down alive into ^lhell,
For wickedness *is* in their dwellings
and among them.
- 16 As for me, I will call upon God,
And the LORD shall save me.
- 17 ^lEvening and morning and at noon
I will pray, and cry aloud,
And He shall hear my voice.
- 18 He has redeemed my soul in peace
from the battle *that was*
against me,
For ^mthere were many against me.
- 19 God will hear, and afflict them,
ⁿEven He who abides from of old.
- Selah*
- Because they do not change,
Therefore they do not fear God.

9 ^d Jer. 6:7
10 ^e Ps. 10:7
11 ^f Ps. 10:7
12 ^g Ps. 41:9 ^h Ps.
35:26; 38:16
13 ⁱ 2 Sam. 15:12
14 ^j Ps. 42:4
15 ^k Num. 16:30, 33
^l Or *Sheol*
17 ^m Dan. 6:10;
Luke 18:1; Acts 3:1;
10:3, 30
18 ⁿ 2 Chr. 32:7, 8
19 ⁿ [Deut. 33:27]

20 ^o Acts 12:1 ^p Ps.
7:4 ^q treaty
21 ^q Ps. 28:3; 57:4;
[Prov. 5:3, 4; 12:18]
22 ^r [Ps. 37:5; Matt.
6:25-34; Luke 12:22-
31; 1 Pet. 5:7] ^s Ps.
37:24 ^t shaken
23 ^t Ps. 5:6 ^u Prov.
10:27

PSALM 56

title ^a 1 Sam. 21:11
¹ Heb. *Jonath Elem*
Rechokim
1 ^b Ps. 57:1
2 ^c Ps. 57:3
4 ^d Ps. 118:6; Is. 31:3;
[Heb. 13:6]

- 20 He has ^oput forth his hands against
those who ^pwere at peace with
him;
He has broken his ^qcovenant.
- 21 ^q *The words* of his mouth were
smoother than butter,
But war *was* in his heart;
His words were softer than oil,
Yet they *were* drawn swords.
- 22 ^r Cast your burden on the LORD,
And ^sHe shall sustain you;
He shall never permit the righteous
to be ^tmoved.
- 23 But You, O God, shall bring them
down to the pit of destruction;
^uBloodthirsty and deceitful men ^ushall
not live out half their days;
But I will trust in You.

PSALM 56

Prayer for Relief from Tormentors

To the Chief Musician. Set to ¹“The Silent
Dove in Distant Lands.” A Michtam of David
when the ^aPhilistines captured him in Gath.

- B**e ^bmerciful to me, O God, for man
would swallow me up;
Fighting all day he oppresses me.
- 2 My enemies would ^chound *me* all
day,
For *there are* many who fight against
me, O Most High.
- 3 Whenever I am afraid,
I will trust in You.
- 4 In God (I will praise His word),
In God I have put my trust;
^dI will not fear.
What can flesh do to me?

55:12–14 Here is the reason for David’s terrible pain in this psalm. It was not an ordinary enemy who had risen up against him; it was his **companion**, his confidant and friend. The one who betrayed him was not only a close friend, but a person with whom David had worshiped the Lord.

55:15 In rage, David cries: **Let death seize them**. His words are directed against the wicked generally, and not personally against the one who had distressed David (vv. 13, 14). David could express his emotions to God in prayer, but judgment or revenge was in God’s hands (see Rom. 12:19).

55:16–19 The words **as for me** mark a dramatic turning point in the psalm. David reverts to a stance of faith; he declares his trust in the omnipotent Lord. **God will hear**: David reminds himself of the great acts of deliverance that God has done on his behalf in the past and the work that God will continue to do in the future. In a similar way, we should also remind ourselves of God’s faithfulness in times of distress.

55:20 He has put forth his hands: David turns to describe his former friend, now his enemy (vv. 13, 14). He had been completely taken in by the man’s lies.

55:22 To anyone who has experienced grief or desolation, the command to **cast one’s burden on the Lord** is refreshing. The Lord is the one constant in life (v. 19) and the one true friend (27:10). He can always bear the burden.

Psalm 56 is a psalm of lament. This poem of David has the same setting as Ps. 34—the flight of David to Achish at Gath. In Ps. 34, Achish is referred to as “Abimelech,” his royal designation. The fact that two of David’s psalms are tied to this one event demonstrates how devastating the experience was to David. Cut off from all he had known, David tried to find refuge among the Philistines. When they turned on him, he nearly lost his life. He escaped by pretending to be insane (1 Sam. 21:10–15). This psalm was sung in corporate worship, for it is addressed to the “Chief Musician” and is set to the tune “The Silent Dove in Distant Lands.” The structure of the poem is: (1) a cry to God who alone is David’s help (vv. 1, 2); (2) a confession of trust in God (vv. 3, 4); (3) a description of the work of David’s enemies (vv. 5–7); (4) a confession of why David trusts in God during his time of distress (vv. 8–11); (5) a vow to praise the Lord (vv. 12, 13).

56:1 Be merciful to me: David cries out to God because of his overwhelming sense of loss during his time as a fugitive in a foreign land (see 1 Sam. 21:10–15).

56:3, 4 I will trust are words of abiding confidence, even in times of distress. Alternating passages of pain and faith are a characteristic of the lament psalms (Ps. 13). **I will praise His word**: This insert is also found twice in v. 10. The idea of **what can flesh do** is repeated in v. 11 and is developed more fully in 118:6. These words are also an OT basis for the apostle Paul’s confidence expressed in Rom. 8:31.

5 All day they twist my words;
All their thoughts *are* against me for
evil.

6 They gather together,
They hide, they mark my steps,
When they lie in wait for my life.

7 Shall they escape by iniquity?
In anger cast down the peoples,
O God!

8 You number my wanderings;
Put my tears into Your bottle;
Are they not in Your book?

9 When I cry out to *You*,
Then my enemies will turn back;
This I know, because *God* is for me.

10 In God (I will praise *His* word),
In the LORD (I will praise *His* word),

11 In God I have put my trust;
I will not be afraid.
What can man do to me?

12 Vows *made* to You *are binding* upon
me, O God;
I will render praises to You,

13 *For* You have delivered my soul from
death.
Have You not kept my feet from
falling,
That I may walk before God
In the *light* of the living?

PSALM 57

Prayer for Safety from Enemies

To the Chief Musician. Set to ¹“Do Not Destroy.” A Michtam of David ^awhen he fled from Saul into the cave.

Be merciful to me, O God, be merciful to me!

8 ^a [Mal. 3:16]
9 ^f [Ps. 118:6; Rom. 8:31]
13 ^g Ps. 116:8, 9
^h Job 33:30

PSALM 57

title ^a 1 Sam. 22:1
¹ Heb. *Al Tashcheth*

1 ^b Ruth 2:12; Ps. 17:8; 63:7 ^c Is. 26:20
2 ^d [Ps. 138:8]
3 ^e Ps. 144:5, 7 ^f Ps. 43:3 ² *saps at*
or *hounds me, or crushes me*
4 ^g Prov. 30:14
5 ^h Ps. 108:5
6 ⁱ Ps. 9:15
7 ^j Ps. 108:1-5
8 ^k Ps. 16:9

For my soul trusts in You;
^b And in the shadow of Your wings I
will make my refuge,
^c Until *these* calamities have
passed by.

2 I will cry out to God Most High,
To God ^dwho performs *all things*
for me.

3 ^e He shall send from heaven and
save me;
He reproaches the one who ²would
swallow me up. *Selah*
God ^fshall send forth His mercy and
His truth.

4 My soul *is* among lions;
I lie *among* the sons of men
Who are set on fire,
^g Whose teeth *are* spears and
arrows,
And their tongue a sharp
sword.

5 ^h Be exalted, O God, above the
heavens;
Let Your glory *be* above all the
earth.

6 ⁱ They have prepared a net for my
steps;
My soul is bowed down;
They have dug a pit before me;
Into the midst of it they *themselves*
have fallen. *Selah*

7 ^j My heart is steadfast, O God, my
heart is steadfast;
I will sing and give praise.

8 Awake, ^k my glory!
Awake, lute and harp!
I will awaken the dawn.

56:5 All day they twist my words: In lament psalms, the poet typically complains about lies, the misuse of language, and deceitful speech (Ps. 12).

56:8–11 You number my wanderings: The psalmist is confident that God has a particular interest in his every pain, even his every tear. He also knows the great truth that comes from the meaning of God’s name, that the Lord is *for* us. See 118:6, 7 for a further development of this idea. **I will praise His word:** The double insert of this shout of praise shows the psalmist’s great enthusiasm for the praise of God. **In God:** The poet repeats the words of v. 4 as a refrain of confidence.

56:12, 13 Vows made to You: The poet takes very seriously his determination to praise the Lord. **You have delivered my soul:** Here is the psalmist’s report of deliverance. In the congregation of believing people, David rejoices in the Lord.

Psalm 57 is another of David’s poems in which the title gives the specific setting of the psalm. The narrative of David’s life indicates that he twice hid in caves—once in Adullam (1 Sam. 22:1–5) which was the setting of Ps. 142, and once in En Gedi (1 Sam. 24:1–7), the setting of this poem. In En Gedi, David spared Saul’s life even though Saul had become an easy target. While pursuing David, the king had entered a cave to relieve himself. It so happened that he chose the very cave in which David was hiding. Rather than killing Saul while he had the chance, David cut off a piece of the king’s

garment. David later repented even of that act against Saul. This psalm is one of four that were set to the tune “Do Not Destroy” (Ps. 58; 59; 75). The structure of the poem is as follows: (1) a call for mercy in the midst of calamities (vv. 1–3); (2) a confession of trust in the midst of trouble (vv. 4–6); (3) a determination to praise God in the midst of the people (vv. 7–11).

57:1–3 The opening cry **be merciful to me** is similar to many in the lament psalms, but here it is followed immediately by a confession of trust in the Lord. **in the shadow:** The picture of hiding under the wings of a mother bird is a familiar theme in the Psalms (91:1–4). Here the psalmist vows that he will pray only to his God, for God alone can deliver him from trouble. The Hebrew word for **performs** is translated “will perfect” in 138:8; the point is that God acts on behalf of His servant.

57:4–6 The psalmist’s foes are like **lions** prowling about for prey. **Be exalted:** In the midst of his distress, the psalmist shouts his praise to God (v. 11). One of the ways in which God exalts Himself is by graciously delivering the needy. **They have prepared a net:** The psalmist is like a bird that is easily caught; yet by God’s mercy, his enemies will fall into their own pit.

57:7 Near the end of his life, Paul was able to say that he had kept the faith (2 Tim. 4:7). With the words **my heart is steadfast**, David is assuring God of much the same thing: he has remained faithful to the God who has provided for him from the beginning.

- ⁹ ^lI will praise You, O Lord, among the peoples;
I will sing to You among the
³nations.
- ^{10m}For Your mercy reaches unto the heavens,
And Your truth unto the clouds.
- ^{11 n}Be exalted, O God, above the heavens;
Let Your glory *be* above all the earth.

PSALM 58

The Just Judgment of the Wicked

To the Chief Musician. Set to ¹“Do Not Destroy.” A Michtam of David.

- D**o you indeed speak righteousness, you silent ones?
Do you judge uprightly, you sons of men?
- ² No, in heart you work wickedness;
You weigh out the violence of your hands in the earth.
- ^{3 a}The wicked are estranged from the womb;
They go astray as soon as they are born, speaking lies.
- ^{4 b}Their poison *is* like the poison of a serpent;
They are like the deaf cobra *that* stops its ear,
- ⁵ Which will not ^cheed the voice of charmers,
Charming ever so skillfully.
- ^{6 d}Break ² their teeth in their mouth, O God!

⁹ / Ps. 108:3
³ Gentiles
^{10 m} Ps. 103:11
^{11 n} Ps. 57:5

PSALM 58

title ¹ Heb. *Al Tashcheth*
^{3 a} [Ps. 53:3; Is. 48:8]
^{4 b} Eccl. 10:11
^{5 c} Jer. 8:17
^{6 d} Job 4:10 ² Break away

^{7 e} Josh. 2:11; 7:5;
Ps. 112:10; Is. 13:7;
Ezek. 21:7
^{8 f} Job 3:16
^{9 g} Ps. 118:12; Eccl. 7:6 ^h Job 27:21;
Prov. 10:25
^{10 i} [Deut. 32:43];
Jer. 11:20 / Ps. 68:23
^{11 k} Ps. 92:15; Prov. 11:18; [2 Cor. 5:10]
/ Ps. 50:6; 75:7

PSALM 59

title ^a 1 Sam. 19:11
¹ Heb. *Al Tashcheth*
¹ ² Lit. Set me on high

- Break out the fangs of the young lions, O LORD!
- ^{7 e}Let them flow away as waters *which* run continually;
When he bends *his* bow,
Let his arrows be as if cut in pieces.
- ⁸ Let *them be* like a snail which melts away as it goes,
^f*Like* a stillborn child of a woman, that they may not see the sun.
- ⁹ Before your ^gpots can feel *the* burning thorns,
He shall take them away ^has with a whirlwind,
As in His living and burning wrath.
- ¹⁰ The righteous shall rejoice when he sees the ⁱvengeance;
^jHe shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked,
- ^{11 k}So that men will say,
“Surely *there is* a reward for the righteous;
Surely He is God who ^ljudges in the earth.”

PSALM 59

The Assured Judgment of the Wicked

To the Chief Musician. Set to ¹“Do Not Destroy.” A Michtam of David ^awhen Saul sent men, and they watched the house in order to kill him.

- D**eliver me from my enemies, O my God;
²Defend me from those who rise up against me.

57:9, 10 I will praise You: As is common in the Psalms, the conclusion is a vow to praise the Lord. Such praise would be centered on the Lord's saving acts. In this poem, the praise of the Lord revolves around His **mercy** and **truth** (86:15). The words of v. 11 serve as a refrain, a repetition of the words of praise in v. 5.

Psalm 58, an imprecatory psalm, might have been provoked by a very strong attack on David. This is one of the four psalms set to the tune “Do Not Destroy” (Ps. 57; 59; 75). It has four parts: (1) a description of wicked judges who wreak havoc on the earth (vv. 1, 2); (2) a description of the wicked who continue in evil (vv. 3–5); (3) a prayer for divine vengeance against the wicked (vv. 6–9); (4) a promise that the righteous will be vindicated (vv. 10, 11).

58:1, 2 You silent ones is a derisive term for the wicked judges. Although they were merely humans, they were behaving as though they had divine power. **Wickedness . . . violence:** Instead of establishing righteousness, these wicked judges were producing havoc. They thought they had all power **in the earth**. But they would soon learn that God “judges in the earth” (v. 11).

58:4, 5 The effects of the wicked in powerful places are as deadly as the effects of poisonous snakes that are out of control. The word **charmers** refers to those who have the ability to “control” the behavior of snakes; but in this case, not even the equivalent of charmers could control the destruction and evil that resulted from wicked people in high places.

58:6, 7 In 57:4, the wicked are described as having powerful **teeth**,

as though they were carnivores, eating the righteous alive. Here David asks God to shatter their teeth, symbolizing the destruction of the power of the wicked over the poor and defenseless (3:7).

58:8 The ancient Israelites desired children so much that a live birth was considered extremely precious. Alternatively a **stillborn child** would cause great sorrow.

58:9 In this verse, David speaks of the certainty of divine judgment. **Before your pots can feel:** It takes some time for a pot to boil. But the judgment of God will come suddenly—even before a pot would feel the heat. **as with a whirlwind:** The image speaks of sudden destruction. **As in His living and burning wrath** may also be translated “As He lives, so real is His anger.”

58:10 The destruction of the wicked brings sadness at the thought of the waste of human dreams, lives, and hopes. But there is great joy for **the righteous** in the recognition that the Savior King has won the victory (Rev. 19:11–21). There is also joy in knowing that wickedness will no longer anger the Lord of the universe (68:3). Justice will be established forever.

58:11 a reward for the righteous: See 1 Cor. 3:11–15 for further development of this theme. **in the earth:** This is the fitting arena of divine judgment, for the wicked judges thought they possessed all authority on earth (v. 2).

Psalm 59, a psalm of lament, contains strong assurance of the final judgment of the wicked. The superscription refers to the story found in 1 Sam. 19:9–17: David escaped Saul's anger with

2 Deliver me from the workers of iniquity,
And save me from bloodthirsty men.

3 For look, they lie in wait for my life;
^bThe mighty gather against me,
Not *for* my transgression nor *for* my sin, O LORD.

4 They run and prepare themselves
through no fault of *mine*.

^cAwake to help me, and behold!

5 You therefore, O LORD God of hosts,
the God of Israel,
Awake to punish all the ³nations;
Do not be merciful to any wicked transgressors. *Selah*

6 ^dAt evening they return,
They growl like a dog,
And go all around the city.

7 Indeed, they belch with their mouth;
^eSwords *are* in their lips;
For *they say*, ^f“Who hears?”

8 But ^gYou, O LORD, shall laugh at them;
You shall have all the ⁴nations in derision.

9 I will wait for You, O You ⁵his Strength;

^hFor God *is* my ⁶defense.

10⁷ My God of mercy shall ⁱcome to meet me;
God shall let ^jme see *my desire* on my enemies.

3 ^b Ps. 56:6
4 ^c Ps. 35:23
5 ³ *Gentiles*
6 ^d Ps. 59:14
7 ^e Ps. 57:4; Prov. 12:18 ^f Job 22:13; Ps. 10:11
8 ^g Prov. 1:26
4 *Gentiles*
9 ^h [Ps. 62:2] ⁵ So with MT, Syr.; some Heb. mss., LXX, Tg., Vg. *my Strength*
6 *Lit. fortress*
10 ⁱ Ps. 21:3 / Ps. 54:7 ⁷ So with Qr.; some Heb. mss., LXX, Vg. *My God, His mercy*; Kt., some Heb. mss., Tg. *O God, my mercy*; Syr. *O God, Your mercy*

12 ^k Prov. 12:13
13 ^l Ps. 104:35 ^m Ps. 83:18
14 ⁿ Ps. 59:6
15 ^o Job 15:23 ^p So with LXX, Vg.; MT, Syr., Tg. *spend the night*
17 ^p Ps. 18:1

11 Do not slay them, lest my people forget;
Scatter them by Your power,
And bring them down,
O Lord our shield.

12^k For the sin of their mouth *and* the words of their lips,
Let them even be taken in their pride,
And for the cursing and lying *which* they speak.

13^l Consume *them* in wrath, consume *them*,
That they *may* not *be*;
And ^mlet them know that God rules in Jacob
To the ends of the earth. *Selah*

14 And ⁿat evening they return,
They growl like a dog,
And go all around the city.

15 They ^owander up and down for food,
And ^phowl if they are not satisfied.

16 But I will sing of Your power;
Yes, I will sing aloud of Your mercy in the morning;
For You have been my defense
And refuge in the day of my trouble.

17 To You, ^pO my Strength, I will sing praises;
For God *is* my defense,
My God of mercy.

help from his wife Michal. She showed unusual heroism and great devotion to David—actions that resulted in a strained relationship with her father Saul. Psalm 59 has four parts: (1) a prayer for deliverance (vv. 1–5); (2) a confident hope (vv. 6–10); (3) a renewed prayer for deliverance (vv. 11–13); (4) a renewed hope (vv. 14–17).

59:1, 2 The repetition of the phrase **deliver me** is for emphasis, meaning “to bring one out” of trouble and distress. The verb translated **defend** means “to set on high” or “to place out of reach of trouble” (91:14). **Save me:** This is the most common of the Hebrew verbs for salvation. It suggests “to give room to” or “to expand an area to breathe.”

59:3, 4 they lie in wait: Enemies become like wild animals on the hunt or enemy soldiers lurking along one’s paths. **Not for my transgression:** There were times in David’s life when he knew that he was suffering because of sin in his life (Ps. 32). There were other times when he believed himself to be innocent of sin, but still he was hounded by wicked persons. Here he shouts his protest aloud: **through no fault of mine.** He is guilty of no wickedness that would cause such merciless attacks on him.

59:5 David’s call for the Lord to **awake** is another way of asking God to pay attention to his plight (7:6; 35:23; 44:23; Is. 51:9). To ensure God’s reception of his bold shout, David uses the “full name” of God: **LORD God of hosts, the God of Israel.** The Commander of the armies of angels is also the Protector of His people. **Do not be merciful:** The righteous constantly experience the mercy of the Lord, but His mercy is not extended to those who constantly oppose Him. The **wicked transgressors** were those who engaged in constant acts of treachery.

59:6, 7 A dog in the ancient Hebrew culture was considered a semi-wild scavenger, not the beloved pet of our own day. **Who hears:** Like those described in Ps. 9; 10, the wicked here believe

that they will face no punishment for their evil. They are profoundly mistaken (75:7, 10; 92:6).

59:8 But You: This is a complete turnaround in the psalm—from thoughts about the wicked to an acknowledgment of the reality of God in human affairs. **shall laugh . . . in derision:** The wording is the same as in 2:4 (Job 9:23; Prov. 1:26). There is the pleasurable laughter of God in joy with His people (see 147:11; Zeph. 3:17). But this is the laughter of contempt.

59:9 Wait can also mean “watch.” The enemies of David had come to watch for him; but David was determined to “watch” for God. **His Strength** may also be translated “My Strength” or “O My Strong One.” The noun **my defense** means “a high place of refuge” and is related to the verb in v. 1. The same word is used again in vv. 16, 17 (62:2).

59:10 My God of mercy: The term *mercy* is sometimes translated “loyal love” (13:5). The Lord is the “God of my loyal love.”

59:11 This verse begins the second round of the petition in the psalm. The imprecation or curse in this verse is unusual. Instead of asking for the destruction of the wicked, the psalmist asks for them to be scattered, to be made fugitives. This would be a constant reminder of the consequences of evil.

59:13 The repetition of this verbal phrase **consume them** is similar to the repetition of the phrase *deliver me* in vv. 1, 2. **that God rules in Jacob:** The idea is similar to 58:11.

59:16, 17 But I: The words of these verses capture the positive thrust of this psalm. David sings with joyful abandon of his relationship with God, despite the presence of wicked persons. There are two verbs translated **I will sing**; together they capture the idea that singing in the name of the Lord is a wonderful act of faith (Ex. 15:2).

59:17 You, O my Strength is repeated from v. 9. In God, the believer finds strength, **defense**, and **mercy**. This psalm ends in a grand manner with bold faith in the living God.

PSALM 60

Urgent Prayer for the Restored Favor of God

To the Chief Musician. ^aSet to ¹“Lily of the Testimony.” A Michtam of David. For teaching. ^bWhen he fought against Mesopotamia and Syria of Zobah, and Joab returned and killed twelve thousand Edomites in the Valley of Salt.

- O** God, ^cYou have cast us off;
You have broken us down;
You have been displeased;
Oh, restore us again!
- ² You have made the earth tremble;
You have broken it;
^dHeal its breaches, for it is shaking.
- ³ ^eYou have shown Your people hard things;
^fYou have made us drink the wine of ²confusion.
- ⁴ ^gYou have given a banner to those who fear You,
That it may be displayed because of the truth. *Selah*
- ⁵ ^hThat Your beloved may be delivered,
Save *with* Your right hand, and hear me.
- ⁶ God has ⁱspoken in His holiness:
“I will rejoice;
I will ^jdivide ^kShechem
And measure out ^lthe Valley of Succoth.
- ⁷ Gilead *is* Mine, and Manasseh *is* Mine;
^mEphraim also *is* the ³helmet for My head;
ⁿJudah *is* My lawgiver.

Cities and Regions in Psalm 60



PSALM 60

title ^aPs. 80
^b2 Sam. 8:3, 13;
1 Chr. 18:3 ¹Heb.
Shushan Eduth
1 ^cPs. 44:9
2 ^d[2 Chr. 7:14]; Is.
30:26
3 ^ePs. 71:20 ^fIs.
51:17, 22;

- ⁸ ^oMoab *is* My washpot;
^pOver Edom I will cast My shoe;
^qPhilistia, shout in triumph because of Me.”

Jer. 25:15 ²staggering 4 ^qPs. 20:5; Is. 5:26; 11:12; 13:2
5 ^aPs. 108:6-13 6 ¹Ps. 89:35 / Josh. 1:6 ^kGen. 12:6 ^lJosh.
13:27 7 ^mDeut. 33:17 ⁿ[Gen. 49:10] ³Lit. protection
8 ^a2 Sam. 8:2 ^p2 Sam. 8:14; Ps. 108:9 ^q2 Sam. 8:1

Psalm 60, a psalm of community lament (Ps. 80), expresses David's great faith in the eventual victory he would find in the Lord. In this psalm, we hear the voice of God breaking into the poem itself and pronouncing His judgment on David's enemies (vv. 6–8; see also Ps. 12; 75; 87; 91). Since the tone of the psalm is military in nature, it is possible that this poem was used in military training. Along with training in weapons and tactics, David gave ongoing instruction to his soldiers about how to trust their Lord. The heading and content of this psalm add additional information to the account in 2 Sam. 8:3–8. The campaign of David and his general Joab against Hadadezer, the king of Zobah, did not succeed at first. This psalm describes the feelings of David and his army at the time of their defeat. But it also records their confident expectation that they would eventually succeed, something celebrated in the heading of the psalm and confirmed in 2 Sam. 8. The psalm has four movements: (1) a lament of the people when they experienced defeat (vv. 1–3); (2) an expression of confidence and a prayer for deliverance (vv. 4, 5); (3) the voice of God giving assurance of ultimate victory (vv. 6–8); (4) an expression of confidence in the Lord (vv. 9–12).

60:1–3 David accuses God of having **broken them down**. This is a poetic description of an otherwise unknown defeat of the armies of Israel in a battle that was part of the campaign against Aram

of Zobah and Mesopotamian allies (2 Sam. 8). The defeat was so startling that it caused the people of Israel to feel as though God had **made the earth tremble**, a metaphor for devastation. **wine of confusion**: The defeat sent the people reeling; they could not understand how it could have happened.

60:4, 5 a banner: Despite the recent defeat, the people still had reason to hope in a final victory for Israel over its foes. The term **beloved** (127:2; Is. 5:1; Jer. 11:15) is particularly endearing. God had a reason to act on behalf of His people: He loved them.

60:6–8 At this point in the poem, God speaks (75:2–5, 10; 91:14–16). The Lord affirms that He is in charge, that the land belongs to Him, and that He will give victory to His people. **In His holiness** can also mean “in His holy place.” **I will rejoice**: It gives God pleasure to grant His people success. **Shechem** and **the Valley of Succoth** represent regions west and east of the Jordan River in the central parts of the land. **Gilead** and **Manasseh** are also regions east and west of the Jordan; **Ephraim** and **Judah** are regions in the north and south. The Lord was asserting His sovereignty over the entire land of Israel. **Moab . . . Edom . . . Philistia**: These traditional enemies of Israel were also enemies of God. The Lord would not allow them to disturb His people.

9 Who will bring me *to* the strong city?
Who will lead me to Edom?
10 *Is it* not You, O God, *who* cast us off?
And You, O God, *who* did *not* go out with our armies?
11 Give us help from trouble,
For the help of man *is* useless.
12 Through God *we* will do valiantly,
For it is He *who* shall tread down our enemies.

PSALM 61

Assurance of God's Eternal Protection

To the Chief Musician. On ¹a stringed instrument. A Psalm of David.

Hear my cry, O God;
Attend to my prayer.
2 From the end of the earth I will cry to You,
When my heart is overwhelmed;
Lead me to the rock that is higher than I.
3 For You have been a shelter for me,
^aA strong tower from the enemy.
4 I will abide in Your ²tabernacle forever;
^bI will trust in the shelter of Your wings. *Selah*
5 For You, O God, have heard my vows;
You have given *me* the heritage of those who fear Your name.
6 You will prolong the king's life,
His years as many generations.

10 ^r Ps. 108:11
^s Josh. 7:12
11 ^t Ps. 118:8; 146:3
12 ^u Num. 24:18

PSALM 61

title ¹ Heb. *neginah*
3 ^a Prov. 18:10
4 ^b Ps. 91:4 ² tent

7 ^c Ps. 40:11 ³ Lit. guard or keep

PSALM 62

title ^a 1 Chr. 25:1
1 ^b Ps. 33:20
2 ^c Ps. 55:22
¹ strong tower
² shaken
3 ^d Is. 30:13
4 ^e Ps. 28:3
5 ³ hope
6 ⁴ shaken
7 ^f [Jer. 3:23]

7 He shall abide before God forever.
Oh, prepare mercy ^cand truth, *which* may ³preserve him!

8 So I will sing praise to Your name forever,
That I may daily perform my vows.

PSALM 62

A Calm Resolve to Wait for the Salvation of God

To the Chief Musician. To ^aJeduthun.
A Psalm of David.

Truly ^bmy soul silently *waits* for God;
From Him *comes* my salvation.
2 He only *is* my rock and my salvation;
He is my ¹defense;
I shall not be greatly ^cmoved.²
3 How long will you attack a man?
You shall be slain, all of you,
^dLike a leaning wall and a tottering fence.
4 They only consult to cast *him* down from his high position;
They ^edelight in lies;
They bless with their mouth,
But they curse inwardly. *Selah*
5 My soul, wait silently for God alone,
For my ³expectation *is* from Him.
6 He only *is* my rock and my salvation;
He is my defense;
I shall not be ⁴moved.
7 ^fIn God *is* my salvation and my glory;
The rock of my strength,
And my refuge, *is* in God.

60:10 Is it not You: The very One the people thought had **cast** them **off** (v. 1) would lead them to final victory.

60:11, 12 Ultimately, true **help**—the Hebrew word means “salvation”—comes only from God. **we will do valiantly:** As the title records, this was what happened. David's general Joab led the battle, and under God's hand Israel's enemies were soundly defeated. This psalm presents a strong encouragement to all believers who are presently experiencing difficulties in their lives: **When the help of man proves useless**, often God dramatically provides strength and power so that our boast is solely in Him.

Psalm 61, a royal psalm attributed to David, has elements of lament (Ps. 13) and trust (Ps. 23). In this psalm, the king of Israel points to the great King who is to come. The title includes the words “On a stringed instrument” (see the titles of Ps. 4; 6; 54; 55; 67; 76). The psalm has four parts: (1) a petition to God (vv. 1, 2); (2) an affirmation that God is David's refuge (vv. 3, 4); (3) an affirmation that God provides (vv. 5–7); (4) a vow to praise God (v. 8).

61:1 Hear my cry is classic language of a lament psalm. David calls on the Lord to hear the prayer of the troubled believer (5:2, 3; 17:1; 55:2; 66:19; 86:6; 142:6).

61:2 From the end of the earth: David describes his sense of being far from God's presence in his time of need. His prayer is that he might be brought back to **the rock that is higher** than he. The imagery of God as a Rock for the believer was introduced

by Moses (see Deut. 2:4) and is developed elsewhere in the Psalms (62:2; 71:3; 91:1, 2; 144:1).

61:3 The idea of God as one's **shelter** or refuge is seen in a number of passages in the Psalms (14:6; 46:1; 62:7, 8; 71:7; 91:2, 9; 94:22; 142:5). Such verses present the psalmist's strong affirmation of the protection and deliverance to be found in God.

61:4 I will abide implies strong determination. It is used of a worshiper in God's house in 15:1. Elsewhere, the psalmist compares himself to (1) an everlasting guest in the tent of the Lord (Ps. 15) and (2) a chick who has complete **trust** under its mother's wings (63:7; 91:4).

61:5 The pronoun **You** is emphasized in this verse as David celebrates the work of God in his life and in the life of his people. **the heritage:** God had given the nation to David for him to rule responsibly. These words also refer to the greater reality of the Savior King who would receive the nations as His inheritance to rule forever. **who fear Your name:** This is standard language describing biblical piety. To *fear* is to hold the name of God in awe and wonder, in worship and obedience (see 147:11; Ex. 20:20).

61:6, 7 The terms **many generations** and **forever** refer to David's long rule but more literally prophesy the eternal rule of Jesus, the King of kings. **Mercy and truth** together mean “loving loyalty” (see John 1:14 for an equivalent expression: “grace and truth”). Psalm 23 presents the believer pursued by God's “goodness and mercy” (23:6); but here the king is guarded by God's loving loyalty.

Where to Find Comfort and Encouragement in the Psalms

When you feel abandoned	Ps. 10
When your world seems to be falling apart	Ps. 46
When you are afraid	Ps. 23; 91
When you feel guilty	Ps. 51
When your family gets on your nerves	Ps. 127; 128
When you are facing a daunting challenge	Ps. 27
When you are discouraged by the apparent prosperity of the wicked	Ps. 37; 73
When you do not feel very thankful	Ps. 107
When you feel as if God has forgotten you	Ps. 139
When you are tempted to lose faith in God	Ps. 62
When you have lost your eternal perspective	Ps. 90
When you feel like you are barely hanging on	Ps. 86
When you are wondering what God expects	Ps. 15
When you want to know God better	Ps. 42; 63
When you need to be reminded of the goodness of God	Ps. 103
When you need to recommit yourself to serving God	Ps. 116
When you need wisdom	Ps. 119
When you need a reminder of God's mercy	Ps. 136
When you feel like celebrating	Ps. 95–100

- ⁸ Trust in Him at all times, you people;
^a Pour out your heart before Him;
 God is a refuge for us. *Selah*

- ⁹ ^h Surely men of low degree *are* ⁵ a vapor,

⁸ ⁹ 1 Sam. 1:15; Ps. 42:4; Lam. 2:19
⁹ ^a Job 7:16; Ps. 39:5; Is. 40:17
⁵ *vanity*
¹⁰ ^h Job 31:25;
 [Mark 10:24; Luke

Men of high degree *are* a lie;
 If they are weighed on the scales,
 They *are* altogether *lighter* than vapor.
¹⁰ Do not trust in oppression,
 Nor vainly hope in robbery;
ⁱ If riches increase,
 Do not set *your* heart *on* them.

- ¹¹ God has spoken once,
 Twice I have heard this:
 That power *belongs* to God.
¹² Also to You, O Lord, *belongs* mercy;
 For ^j You ⁶ render to each one
 according to his work.

PSALM 63

Joy in the Fellowship of God

A Psalm of David ^a when he was in the wilderness of Judah.

- O** God, You *are* my God;
 Early will I seek You;
^b My soul thirsts for You;
 My flesh longs for You
 In a dry and thirsty land
 Where there is no water.
² So I have looked for You in the
 sanctuary,
 To see ^c Your power and Your glory.
³ ^d Because Your lovingkindness *is*
 better than life,
 My lips shall praise *You*.

12:15; 1 Tim. 6:10] ¹² ^j [Matt. 16:27]; Rom. 2:6; 1 Cor. 3:8
⁶ *reward*
PSALM 63 title ^a 1 Sam. 22:5 ¹ ^b Ps. 42:2; [Matt. 5:6]
² ^c Ps. 27:4 ³ ^d Ps. 138:2

61:8 My vows refers to the vows of praise to God mentioned in v. 5 (see also 22:22–26; 66:13; 76:11).

Psalm 62 is a wisdom psalm that eloquently urges silent confidence in the victory of God over all enemies because salvation is found only in Him. Jeduthun in the superscription was the chief of one of the choirs in the temple (1 Chr. 9:16) whose descendants founded a temple choir (1 Chr. 16:41, 42). The superscription “To Jeduthun” is also found in Ps. 39; 77. This psalm consists of seven brief sections: (1) a statement of confidence in God (vv. 1, 2); (2) a direct challenge to the wicked (v. 3); (3) a description of the ways of the wicked (v. 4); (4) a renewed statement of confidence in God (vv. 5–7); (5) a direct challenge to the righteous (v. 8); (6) a further description and warning of the ways of the wicked (vv. 9, 10); (7) a final statement of confidence in God (vv. 11, 12).

62:1, 2 In these two verses, David declares his complete dependence on God. **silently waits:** David expresses silent resignation before the sovereign will of the living God. **My defense** is from the word also used in 59:9, 16, 17. **not be greatly moved:** See the development of David’s confidence in God in the wording of v. 6.

62:3 How long: David addresses his tormentors directly, expecting that they will soon be judged. **attack:** The word means to threaten or shout at someone.

62:5 wait silently: A different Hebrew word is used here, but the concept of v. 1 is restated. **My expectation** may also be translated “hope” (71:5).

62:6, 7 Verse 6 is a restatement of v. 2, but strengthened by drop-

ping the word *greatly*. Verse 7 restates v. 6. **My salvation and my glory** may be rephrased “my glorious salvation.”

62:8 Trust: David addresses the righteous (contrast v. 3) with his lesson of reliance on God (40:3). What is true for David (v. 7) is extended to all in the believing community.

62:11 once, Twice: It is a convention of wisdom literature to use a number and then raise it by one (Prov. 30:11–33). The point here is that David has heard the message with certainty.

62:12 Mercy can be translated “loyal love,” the covenantal love of the Lord (13:5). **to each one:** God is the true Judge; He will repay and reward every person (Eccl. 12:13, 14).

Psalm 63 is a royal psalm with elements of the psalms of trust (Ps. 23). The brief biographical note in the title “when he was in the wilderness of Judah” possibly refers to an incident during the period when Saul was chasing David (1 Sam. 22–24). The pattern of the psalm is as follows: (1) a search for a renewed sense of God’s presence (vv. 1, 2); (2) a confession of David’s faith in God (vv. 3–5); (3) an expression of confidence in the Lord even during the lonely night watches (vv. 6–8); (4) a prediction of the end of David’s enemies (vv. 9, 10); (5) a renewal of David’s confession of trust in God the great King (v. 11).

63:1, 2 O God, You are my God: The opening words indicate faith in God, but they also suggest a time of trouble (22:1). **thirsts . . . longs:** The poet is away from the place of God’s worship and feels the distance keenly (42:1, 2). **The sanctuary** had been at Nob (1 Sam. 21:1), and it was there that David had sought the presence of the Lord. Later it was moved to Jerusalem (76:1, 2).

63:3–5 The psalmist expresses his joy in knowing God and his

4 Thus I will bless You while I live;
I will ^elift up my hands in Your
name.
5 My soul shall be satisfied as with
¹marrow and ²fatness,
And my mouth shall praise You with
joyful lips.
6 When ^fI remember You on my bed,
I meditate on You in the *night*
watches.
7 Because You have been my help,
Therefore in the shadow of Your
wings I will rejoice.
8 My soul follows close behind You;
Your right hand upholds me.
9 But those *who* seek my life, to
destroy *it*,
Shall go into the lower parts of the
earth.
10 They shall ³fall by the sword;
They shall be ⁴a portion for jackals.
11 But the king shall rejoice in God;
^gEveryone who swears by Him shall
glory;
But the mouth of those who speak
lies shall be stopped.

PSALM 64

*Oppressed by the Wicked but
Rejoicing in the LORD*

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David.

Hear my voice, O God, in my
¹meditation;
Preserve my life from fear of the
enemy.

4 ^e Ps. 28:2; 143:6
5 ¹ Lit. *fat*
² Abundance
6 ^f Ps. 42:8
10 ³ Lit. *pour him*
out by the hand of
the sword ⁴ Prey
11 ^g Deut. 6:13; [Is.
45:23; 65:16]

PSALM 64
1 ¹ complaint

3 ^a Ps. 58:7
5 ^b Ps. 10:11; 59:7
8 ^c Ps. 31:11
9 ^d Jer. 50:28; 51:10
10 ^e Job 22:19; Ps.
32:11

2 Hide me from the secret plots of the
wicked,
From the rebellion of the workers of
iniquity,
3 Who sharpen their tongue like a
sword,
^a And bend *their bows to shoot* their
arrows—bitter words,
4 That they may shoot in secret at the
blameless;
Suddenly they shoot at him and do
not fear.
5 They encourage themselves *in* an evil
matter;
They talk of laying snares
secretly;
^b They say, “Who will see them?”
6 They devise iniquities:
“We have perfected a shrewd
scheme.”
Both the inward thought and the
heart of man are deep.
7 But God shall shoot at them *with* an
arrow;
Suddenly they shall be wounded.
8 So He will make them stumble over
their own tongue;
^c All who see them shall flee away.
9 All men shall fear,
And shall ^ddeclare the work of
God;
For they shall wisely consider His
doing.
10 ^e The righteous shall be glad in the
LORD, and trust in Him.
And all the upright in heart shall
glory.

determination to continue praising God throughout his life. **Lovingkindness** may also be translated “loyal love” (13:5). **Praise** is a vocal, public act in the Psalms (Heb. 13:15). **bless . . . hands:** Praise (the meaning of *bless* here) and raising the hands in worship are often associated in the Psalms (134:2). To lift the hands to the Lord expresses dependence on Him, coupled with an acknowledgment of His power, wonder, and majesty (77:2). **be satisfied . . . with joyful lips:** In coming to the Lord in praise, the poet finds the refreshment he has sought (v. 1).

63:6 From his **bed**, David continues to fix his thoughts on God (77:6). **night watches:** The Israelites counted three watches to the night. Evidently David is having difficulty sleeping, and he directs his thoughts to worship. **Meditate** means “to speak” about the things of God or to fill one’s mind with the knowledge of God (1:2; 77:12).

63:7, 8 in the shadow of Your wings: See 91:4 for this expression of faith in God. **Your right hand:** The same power of God that delivered Israel from Egypt (Ex. 15:6) would support David—and all other believers in their daily life (74:11).

63:9, 10 David predicts the destruction of his enemies. They will be driven to barren places where only **jackals**, wild dogs of the desert, roam.

63:11 The king refers to David. When he finally became king, David would find his true pleasure in God. **Everyone who swears by Him** refers to those who believe in the Lord.

Psalm 64 has elements of lament (Ps. 13) and imprecation (Ps. 137), but it appears to be basically a wisdom psalm. It contrasts the righteous and the wicked, compares their destinies, and is itself a “meditation” (v. 1). The structure of the poem is: (1) an appeal for protection from the wicked (vv. 1, 2); (2) a description of the evil activities of the wicked (vv. 3–6); (3) an expectation of the defeat of the wicked by God (vv. 7–9); (4) a description of the joy of the righteous (v. 10).

64:1 The initial cry of the psalmist expressed with the verbs **hear** and **preserve** resembles the psalms of lament (Ps. 13), but the term **my meditation** suggests that this is a wisdom psalm. This observation is confirmed in the rest of the psalm, which contrasts the destiny of the wicked with that of the righteous, a theme of wisdom psalms. In other passages the term *meditation* has the idea of “complaint” (55:2; 102:2; 142:2). But in this psalm the word indicates contemplation, for David contemplated the wicked and their end (see also 73:17).

64:5, 6 The arrogance of the wicked in their plots against the righteous is a continuing theme in the Psalms (Ps. 9; 10; 12). **Who will see:** The wicked do not know, or do not care, that there is One who sees (73:11), and who will repay (75:7).

64:10 The joy of confident **trust** in God cannot be overstated. By placing our problems into God’s hands, we can rest in His sovereign will for our lives. Concerns about the future can be cast aside, for the Lord controls our future and has good plans for us (see Rom.

PSALM 65

Praise to God for His Salvation and Providence

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David.
A Song.

- P**raise is awaiting You, O God, in Zion;
And to You the ¹vow shall be performed.
² O You who hear prayer,
^aTo You all flesh will come.
³ Iniquities prevail against me;
As *for* our transgressions,
You will ^bprovide atonement for them.

⁴ *c*Blessed is the man You ^dchoose,
And cause to approach You,
That he may dwell in Your courts.
e We shall be satisfied with the
goodness of Your house,
Of Your holy temple.
⁵ By awesome deeds in righteousness
You will answer us,
O God of our salvation,
You *who are* the confidence of all the
ends of the earth,
And of the far-off seas;
⁶ Who established the mountains by
His strength,
^fBeing clothed with power;
⁷ *g*You who still the noise of the seas,
The noise of their waves,
^hAnd the tumult of the peoples.

PSALM 65

¹ ⁱ A promised deed
² ^a [Is. 66:23]
³ ^b Ps. 51:2; 79:9;
Is. 6:7; [Heb. 9:14;
1 John 1:7, 9]
⁴ ^c Ps. 33:12 ^d Ps.
4:3 ^e Ps. 36:8
⁶ ^f Ps. 93:1
⁷ ^g Matt. 8:26 ^h Is.
17:12, 13

⁸ ² shout for joy
⁹ ⁱ [Deut. 11:12];
Jer. 5:24 / Ps. 46:4;
104:13; 147:8 ³ give
attention to
¹³ ^k Is. 44:23; 55:12

PSALM 66

¹ ^a Ps. 100:1

- ⁸ They also who dwell in the farthest
parts are afraid of Your signs;
You make the outgoings of the
morning and evening ²rejoice.

⁹ You ³visit the earth and ⁱwater it,
You greatly enrich it;
^jThe river of God is full of water;
You provide their grain,
For so You have prepared it.
¹⁰ You water its ridges abundantly,
You settle its furrows;
You make it soft with showers,
You bless its growth.

¹¹ You crown the year with Your
goodness,
And Your paths drip *with*
abundance.
¹² They drop *on* the pastures of the
wilderness,
And the little hills rejoice on every
side.
¹³ The pastures are clothed with flocks;
^kThe valleys also are covered with
grain;
They shout for joy, they also sing.

PSALM 66

Praise to God for His Awesome Works

To the Chief Musician. A Song. A Psalm.

- M**ake ^aa joyful shout to God, all
the earth!
² Sing out the honor of His name;
Make His praise glorious.

8:28). **All the upright in heart** is another designation for **the righteous** or “the blameless” (v. 4). Their **glory** is their exuberant praise to God (63:11).

Psalm 65 is a wisdom psalm and more particularly a creation psalm (as Ps. 19). It celebrates rainfall, sharing the mood of Ps. 104 in this regard. But this is also a prophetic psalm, although it is not always recognized as such. The prophetic element is signaled in the first verse, the vow of praise yet to be paid—that is, all creation is waiting to praise the Lord when He finally appears in glory (see Rom. 14:10, 11; Rev. 19:5). The psalm has five movements: (1) a vow of praise yet to be performed (vv. 1–3); (2) a blessing pronounced on the redeemed (v. 4); (3) a celebration of God’s power that extends throughout the earth (vv. 5–8); (4) a celebration of God’s provision of rain (vv. 9, 10); (5) a celebration of God’s coming blessings in the year of His goodness (vv. 11–13).

65:1 Praise is awaiting You: There is still a vow of praise to be performed (v. 3). In the background of this psalm is an idea not far from that of Paul in Rom. 8:22, the groaning of creation for its release from the curse brought on it by humanity’s fall (Gen. 3:17). The point of the psalm is twofold: (1) Every good rain and every full harvest is a blessing from God, showing His delight in His creation. (2) A day of God’s goodness is coming in which good rains and harvests will be greater than ever before.

65:2, 3 atonement: David speaks of a coming day when sin will be dealt with fully, when redemption will be completely paid. This took place in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ (see Eph. 1:7).

65:4 shall be satisfied: In other psalms, David expresses his desire to live in the presence of God (27:4, 5). The fulfillment of this desire in David’s day came through the sacrificial services of worship in Israel.

65:5–8 The **awesome** power of God at creation in the beginning (Job 26) will one day be seen anew in the restoration of all things. **noise of the seas:** God’s power over the “dark powers” of the seas is a regular theme in the royal psalms (Ps. 93).

65:9, 10 You visit the earth: Rainfall is seen here as a gracious visitation of God. This is in keeping with the provisions of God’s covenant with Israel (Deut. 28:12). These words have some fulfillment every time the rains bring productivity to the earth.

65:11–13 Your paths: The picture is of wagon tracks across the heavens, where the “cart” of God’s mercies slashes abundance on the earth below. **they also sing:** The “singers” here are the pastures and the valleys. The coming of God’s kingdom to earth will be a magnificent time of productivity (67:6). This is the vow that remains to be performed (v. 1).

Psalm 66, a psalm of praise, offers significant contributions to our understanding of the values of biblical worship. In the course of the psalm, the poet offers *descriptive praise*, praising God for who He is and what He does, as well as *declarative praise*, praising God for specific answers to prayer. The structure of the psalm is as follows: (1) a call for all the earth to join in the celebratory worship of God (vv. 1–4); (2) an enumeration of reasons to worship God (vv. 5–7); (3) a call for the peoples to join the psalmist in descriptive praise of God (vv. 8–12); (4) the psalmist’s decision to participate in holy worship (vv. 13–15); (5) declarative praise of God (vv. 16–19); (6) a final blessing of the Lord (v. 20).

66:1, 2 As in 100:1, the call is not only for the people of Israel, but for peoples of **all the earth** to join in the praise of the living God, the Most High (Ps. 87; 96; 117). **Sing out the honor of His name:** The Lord is pleased with music that praises His glorious name

3 Say to God,
 “How ^bawesome are Your works!
^cThrough the greatness of Your
 power
 Your enemies shall submit
 themselves to You.
 4 ^dAll the earth shall worship You
 And sing praises to You;
 They shall sing praises to Your
 name.” *Selah*
 5 Come and see the works of God;
 He is awesome in His doing toward
 the sons of men.
 6 ^eHe turned the sea into dry land;
^fThey went through the river on
 foot.
 There we will rejoice in Him.
 7 He rules by His power forever;
 His eyes observe the nations;
 Do not let the rebellious exalt
 themselves. *Selah*
 8 Oh, bless our God, you peoples!
 And make the voice of His praise to
 be heard,
 9 Who keeps our soul among the
 living,
 And does not allow our feet to ¹be
 moved.
 10 For ^gYou, O God, have tested us;
^hYou have refined us as silver is
 refined.
 11 ⁱYou brought us into the net;
 You laid affliction on our
 backs.
 12 ^jYou have caused men to ride over
 our heads;
^kWe went through fire and through
 water;
 But You brought us out to ²rich
 fulfillment.

3 ^b Ps. 65:5 ^c Ps.
 18:44
 4 ^d Ps. 117:1; Zech.
 14:16
 6 ^e Ex. 14:21 ^f Josh.
 3:14-16
 9 ¹ *slip*
 10 ^g Job 23:10; Ps.
 17:3 ^h [Is. 48:10;
 Zech. 13:9; Mal. 3:3;
 1 Pet. 1:7]
 11 ⁱ Lam. 1:13; Ezek.
 12:13
 12 ^j Is. 51:23 ^k Is.
 43:2 ² *abundance*

13 ¹ Ps. 100:4;
 116:14, 17-19
^m [Eccl. 5:4]
³ Promised deeds
 17 ⁴ *praised*
 18 ⁿ Job 27:9; [Prov.
 15:29; 28:9]; Is. 1:15;
 [John 9:31; James
 4:3]
 19 ^o Ps. 116:1, 2

PSALM 67

title ¹ Heb.
neginoth
 1 ^a Num. 6:25
 2 ^b Acts 18:25 ^c Is.
 52:10; Titus 2:11

13 ^l I will go into Your house with burnt
 offerings;
^m I will pay You my ³vows,
 14 Which my lips have uttered
 And my mouth has spoken when I
 was in trouble.
 15 I will offer You burnt sacrifices of fat
 animals,
 With the sweet aroma of
 rams;
 I will offer bulls with goats. *Selah*
 16 Come and hear, all you who fear
 God,
 And I will declare what He has done
 for my soul.
 17 I cried to Him with my mouth,
 And He was ⁴extolled with my
 tongue.
 18 ⁿ If I regard iniquity in my heart,
 The Lord will not hear.
 19 But certainly God ^ohas heard me;
 He has attended to the voice of my
 prayer.
 20 Blessed be God,
 Who has not turned away my
 prayer,
 Nor His mercy from me!

PSALM 67

An Invocation and a Doxology

To the Chief Musician. On ¹stringed
 instruments. A Psalm. A Song.

God be merciful to us and bless us,
 And ^acause His face to shine
 upon us, *Selah*
 2 That ^bYour way may be known on
 earth,
^cYour salvation among all nations.

(Ex. 15:2). The Lord’s name describes His character, so honoring God’s name is honoring God Himself (Ex. 3:14, 15).

66:3, 4 How awesome: The works of God are designed to bring a sense of awe to people (19:1, 2). In this context, **submit** means “to cringe” before God. The term translated **worship** means “to kneel” or “to bow down.” The opening verses of this psalm present a call and an expectation that one day all the earth will worship God, with a particular focus on the glory of God’s name.

66:8, 9 To bless God is to identify Him as the source of our blessing (see 103:1, 2). **you peoples:** The call is to all the nations of the earth (vv. 1, 4, 5). God’s preservation of His people is one of many reasons to bless Him.

66:13–15 Your house refers to the temple in Jerusalem where God lived among His people. During periods of distress in his life, the poet made **vows** that when God brought him out of distress, he would publicly acknowledge God’s deliverance (40:1–3; 61:5, 8; 76:11). Each of the **sacrifices** would be accompanied by the heart attitude of the true worshiper (see John 4:23, 24). The psalmist speaks very personally of his intent to bring abundant sacrifices in his worship of God.

66:16–19 You who fear God refers to those who respond in awe and wonder to the Lord (v. 4). **iniquity:** Among the things that can block effective prayer is ongoing sin in a believer’s life (Ps. 32).

But the psalmist here confesses that God **has heard**. The psalmist appeals to the “peoples” in vv. 8, 9; he calls out to believers in vv. 16–19.

66:20 The concluding words of the poem are an affirmation of the psalmist’s blessing of the Lord (v. 8) based on his realization of God’s continuing goodness in his life.

Psalm 67, a psalm of praise, serves as a marvelous invocation and doxology in worship. The poem calls the nations of the world to praise God, to join Israel in honoring the Creator. There is: (1) a call for God’s blessing for the purpose of world evangelization (vv. 1, 2); (2) a call for the nations to bless the Lord in view of His righteous judgments (vv. 3, 4); (3) a call for the nations to bless the Lord in view of His coming kingdom (vv. 5–7).

67:1, 2 cause His face to shine: In the language of the Aaronic benediction (Num. 6:24–26), the psalmist calls for God to smile on His people (Ps. 80). From the beginning, God had intended to bring His blessing to **all nations**, in fulfillment of the provisions of the Abrahamic covenant (Gen. 12:3). This passage anticipates the thrust of world mission that is found in the NT (Matt. 28:18–20; Acts 1:8). The point in this psalm is clear: May God bless His people Israel in such a manner that the message of God’s way would become known throughout the earth.

- ³ Let the peoples praise You, O God;
Let all the peoples praise You.
- ⁴ Oh, let the nations be glad and sing
for joy!
For ^dYou shall judge the people
righteously,
And govern the nations on earth.
- Selah*
- ⁵ Let the peoples praise You, O God;
Let all the peoples praise You.
- ⁶ ^eThen the earth shall ²yield her
increase;
God, our own God, shall
bless us.
- ⁷ God shall bless us,
And all the ends of the earth shall
fear Him.

PSALM 68

The Glory of God in His Goodness to Israel

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David.
A Song.

- L**et ^aGod arise,
Let His enemies be scattered;
Let those also who hate Him flee
before Him.
- ² ^bAs smoke is driven away,
So drive *them* away;
^cAs wax melts before the fire,
So let the wicked perish at the
presence of God.
- ³ But ^dlet the righteous be glad;
Let them rejoice before God;
Yes, let them rejoice exceedingly.
- ⁴ Sing to God, sing praises to His
name;

⁴ ^d [Ps. 96:10, 13;
98:9]
⁶ ^e Lev. 26:4; Ps.
85:12; [Ezek. 34:27];
Zech. 8:12 ² give
her produce

PSALM 68

¹ ^a Num. 10:35
² ^b [Is. 9:18]; Hos.
13:3 ^c Ps. 97:5;
Mic. 1:4
³ ^d Ps. 32:11

⁴ ^e Deut. 33:26
^f [Ex. 6:3] ¹ Praise
² MT deserts; Tg.
heavens (cf. v. 34
and Is. 19:1) ³ Lit.
LORD, a shortened
Heb. form
⁵ ^g [Ps. 10:14, 18;
146:9]
⁶ ^h Ps. 107:4-7
ⁱ Acts 12:6-11 / Ps.
107:34
⁷ ^k Ex. 13:21; [Hab.
3:13]
⁹ ^j Lev. 26:4; Deut.
11:11; Job 5:10;
Ezek. 34:26
¹⁰ ^m Deut. 26:5;
Ps. 74:19
¹¹ ⁿ host
¹² ^o Num. 31:8;
Josh. 10:16; Judg.
5:19 ⁵ plunder
¹³ ^p Ps. 81:6
^p Ps. 105:37 ⁶ Or
saddlebags

- ^eExtol ¹ Him who rides on the
² clouds,
^fBy His name ³YAH,
And rejoice before Him.
- ⁵ ^gA father of the fatherless, a defender
of widows,
Is God in His holy habitation.
- ⁶ ^hGod sets the solitary in families;
ⁱHe brings out those who are bound
into prosperity;
But ^jthe rebellious dwell in a dry *land*.
- ⁷ O God, ^kwhen You went out before
Your people,
When You marched through the
wilderness, *Selah*
- ⁸ The earth shook;
The heavens also dropped *rain* at the
presence of God;
Sinai itself *was moved* at the presence
of God, the God of Israel.
- ⁹ ^jYou, O God, sent a plentiful rain,
Whereby You confirmed Your
inheritance,
When it was weary.
- ¹⁰ Your congregation dwelt in it;
^mYou, O God, provided from Your
goodness for the poor.
- ¹¹ The Lord gave the word;
Great *was* the ⁴company of those
who proclaimed *it*:
- ¹² ⁿKings ⁿof armies flee, they flee,
And she who remains at home
divides the ⁵spoil.
- ¹³ ^oThough you lie down among the
⁶sheepfolds,
^pYou *will be* like the wings of a dove
covered with silver,
And her feathers with yellow gold.”

67:3, 4 Let the peoples praise You: God’s desire is for all people to praise Him, for He is their Creator and their Provider (2 Pet. 3:9). This should also be the desire of God’s people.

67:5–7 yield her increase: As in the prophetic aspect of Ps. 65, the coming of God’s kingdom on earth will be marked by a magnificent increase in production. The curse on the land (Gen. 3:17–19; Rom. 8:22) will be lifted in “the year of God’s goodness” (65:11).

Psalm 68 is based in part on the Song of Deborah in Judg. 5. It speaks with great power of the glory of God. The first and last verses of the psalm (vv. 1, 35) capture its essence. The title refers to it as both a “Psalm” and a “Song,” indicating its musical nature. The structure of the psalm is as follows: (1) a call for God to rise in judgment against the wicked (vv. 1–3); (2) a call for the people of God to praise Him for His wonders and mercies (vv. 4–6); (3) a review of the works of God on behalf of His people (vv. 7–14); (4) a celebration of the city of God and His saving works (vv. 15–20); (5) an anticipation of the final victory of God over all His enemies (vv. 21–27); (6) an anticipation of the worship of God by the peoples of the earth (vv. 28–35).

68:1–3 Let God arise . . . flee before Him: The presence of the wicked on the earth is an assault on God’s holiness and a constant threat to the righteous. Only God’s mercy compels Him to delay His judgment (75:2). But when God awakes, His enemies will be scattered; they will disappear like **smoke**. **let the righteous . . . rejoice**

exceedingly: The joy of the righteous will be great when there is an end to all evil (58:10).

68:4 Extol Him who rides on the clouds: A well-known description of Baal was as “the rider of the clouds.” Here the title is stripped from the supposed “god” Baal and given to the living God of Scripture. The fact that the Lord is the Rider of the clouds indicates that He is the One who brings rain and controls the powerful forces of a storm (147:8, 9, 15–18). **YAH** is a shortened form of the divine name Yahweh (Ex. 3:14, 15). There is a significant emphasis on the name of God in this section (122:4; 135:1–3).

68:5 The Lord is not limited to clouds and storms; He also meets the needs of the helpless. For all people, He is **in His holy habitation**, dispensing justice.

68:7–10 The poet describes the work of God on behalf of His people in poetic terms that recall the Exodus events and draw on the Song of Deborah (Judg. 5:4). The language of this section is also an expansion of the description in v. 4; this is the march of God as the true God of the Storm.

68:11 The term translated **word** refers to a command rather than a revelation. The command was that God’s works would be made known among the peoples. **Those who proclaimed it** translates a feminine participle. Thus the people who made the proclamation were women, most likely the women who gave praise to God under the direction of Miriam (Ex. 15:20, 21).

- 14 ^q When the Almighty scattered kings in it,
It was *white* as snow in Zalmon.
- 15 A mountain of God *is* the mountain of Bashan;
A mountain *of many* peaks *is* the mountain of Bashan.
- 16 Why do you ⁷ fume with envy, you mountains of *many* peaks?
^r *This is* the mountain *which* God desires to dwell in;
Yes, the LORD will dwell *in it* forever.
- 17 ^s The chariots of God are twenty thousand,
Even thousands of thousands;
The Lord is among them *as in* Sinai, in the Holy Place.
- 18 ^t You have ascended on high,
^u You have led captivity captive;
^v You have received gifts among men,
Even from ^w the rebellious,
^x That the LORD God might dwell *there*.
- 19 Blessed *be* the Lord,
Who daily loads us *with benefits*,
The God of our salvation! *Selah*
- 20 Our God *is* the God of salvation;
And ^y to God the Lord *belong* escapes from death.
- 21 But ^z God will wound the head of His enemies,
^a The hairy scalp of the one who still goes on in his trespasses.
- 22 The Lord said, “I will bring ^b back from Bashan,
I will bring *them* back ^c from the depths of the sea,
- 23 ^d That ^e your foot may crush *them* in blood,

14 ^q Josh. 10:10
16 ^r [Deut. 12:5];
1 Kin. 9:3 ^s Lit. *stare*
17 ^s Deut. 33:2;
Dan. 7:10
18 ^t Mark 16:19;
Acts 1:9; Eph. 4:8;
Phil. 2:9; Col. 3:1;
Heb. 1:3 ^u Judg.
5:12 ^v Acts 2:4, 33;
10:44–46; [1 Cor.
12:4–11; Eph. 4:7–12]
^w [1 Tim. 1:13] ^x Ps.
78:60
20 ^y [Deut. 32:39]
21 ^z Hab. 3:13 ^a Ps.
55:23
22 ^b Num. 21:33;
Deut. 30:1–9; Amos
9:1–3 ^c Ex. 14:22
23 ^d Ps. 58:10
^e LXX, Syr., Tg., Vg.
you may dip your foot

^e 1 Kin. 21:19; Jer.
15:3
24 ^f Lit. *goings*
25 ^f 1 Chr. 13:8
26 ^g Deut. 33:28;
Is. 48:1
27 ^h Judg. 5:14;
1 Sam. 9:21
ⁱ *throng*
28 ⁱ Ps. 42:8; Is.
26:12 ^j LXX, Syr.,
Tg., Vg. *Command*,
O God
29 ^j 1 Kin. 10:10;
25; 2 Chr. 32:23; Ps.
45:12; 72:10; Is. 18:7
30 ^k Ps. 22:12
^l 2 Sam. 8:2
31 ^m Is. 19:19–23
ⁿ Is. 45:14; Zeph.
3:10 ^o Ps. 44:20
32 ^p [Ps. 67:3, 4]

- ^e And the tongues of your dogs *may*
have their portion from *your*
enemies.”
- 24 They have seen Your ^g procession,
O God,
The procession of my God, my King,
into the sanctuary.
- 25 ^f The singers went before, the players
on instruments *followed* after;
Among *them were* the maidens
playing timbrels.
- 26 Bless God in the congregations,
The Lord, from ^h the fountain of
Israel.
- 27 ^h There *is* little Benjamin, their
leader,
The princes of Judah *and* their
ⁱ company,
The princes of Zebulun *and* the
princes of Naphtali.
- 28 ^j Your God has ⁱ commanded your
strength;
Strengthen, O God, what You have
done for us.
- 29 Because of Your temple at Jerusalem,
^j Kings will bring presents to You.
- 30 Rebuke the beasts of the reeds,
^k The herd of bulls with the calves of
the peoples,
Till everyone ^l submits himself with
pieces of silver.
Scatter the peoples *who* delight in
war.
- 31 ^m Envoys will come out of Egypt;
ⁿ Ethiopia will quickly ^o stretch out her
hands to God.
- 32 Sing to God, you ^p kingdoms of the
earth;
Oh, sing praises to the Lord, *Selah*

68:14 The Almighty is the name Shaddai, a title that refers to the majesty and strength of the Lord (91:1). The scattering of **kings** refers to the early battles won by Israel during the wilderness period and at the time of the conquest of the land of Canaan.

68:15, 16 Bashan was a very fertile area northeast of the Sea of Galilee, a part of the former territory of Og. It is possible that the connotation of Bashan as a place of plenty is transferred poetically to Jerusalem in these verses, for it was only in Jerusalem that the Lord had sworn that he would **dwell**.

68:18 When God delivered His people from Egypt, He brought them out with great treasures from the Egyptians (Ex. 12:35, 36). These gifts were used by the people of Israel to build the tabernacle (Ex. 35) **that the Lord God might dwell there**.

68:19, 20 This section is a benediction, a blessing on the Lord, for His **daily** mercies in the lives of the people of faith. **The God of our salvation** is a great title for the One who saved Israel from Egypt, who saved Israel from their sin, who continues to save His people in their daily lives, and who will glorify His people in the future.

68:21, 22 The Lord is the Victor over the **enemies** of His people. None shall escape, whether near—**Bashan**—or far—in **the sea**. Like grapes they will be crushed, and justice will finally be served (58:10).

68:24–27 The **procession** of God could refer to one of three things: (1) carrying the ark of the covenant through the wilderness during the time of the Exodus; (2) God leading as the Commander of His armies in Israel; (3) the grand procession of the Savior King as He comes to establish His reign on earth (Rev. 19:14–21). **Timbrels**, or tambourines, often played by women, were used for both sacred and secular occasions. Associated with dance, they suggested joy (81:2; 149:3; 150:4; see also Judg. 11:34; 1 Sam. 18:6, 7; 2 Sam. 6:5; Is. 30:32). **The fountain of Israel** is a poetic term for the people as they rise to praise God. **little Benjamin**: The role of Benjamin, one of the smaller tribes, was significant. Saul was from this tribe, and the city of Jerusalem was located within its borders.

68:29, 30 **Kings . . . presents**: The term *presents* means “gifts offered in homage.” Royal guests came to Solomon with gifts (1 Kin. 10:1–10); but the ultimate prophetic fulfillment of this verse was in the kings who came to Jerusalem to bring gifts to the infant Jesus (Matt. 2:1–12). One day all kings will show their obedience and humility before Jesus, the great King (2:10–12; 76:11). Egypt, Assyria, and Canaan may be indicated by the phrases **the beasts of the reeds, the herd of bulls, and the calves of the peoples**. The point of these verses seems to be general submission to the royal house in Jerusalem.

- 33 To Him ^qwho rides on the heaven
of heavens, *which were* of old!
Indeed, He sends out His voice, a
^rmighty voice.
- 34 ^sAscribe strength to God;
His excellence *is* over Israel,
And His strength *is* in the
clouds.
- 35 O God, ^t*You are* more awesome than
Your holy places.
The God of Israel *is* He who gives
strength and power to *His*
people.

Blessed *be* God!

PSALM 69

An Urgent Plea for Help in Trouble

To the Chief Musician. Set to ¹“The Lilies.”
A Psalm of David.

- S**ave me, O God!
For ^athe waters have come up to *my*
²neck.
- ^bI sink in deep mire,
Where *there is* no standing;
I have come into deep waters,
Where the floods overflow me.
- ^cI am weary with my crying;
My throat is dry;
^dMy eyes fail while I wait for my God.
- ⁴ Those who ^ehate me without a
cause
Are more than the hairs of my head;
They are mighty who would
destroy me,
Being my enemies wrongfully;
Though I have stolen nothing,
I *still* must restore it.

33 ^q Deut. 33:26;
Ps. 18:10 ^r Ps. 46:6;
Is. 30:30
34 ^s Ps. 29:1
35 ^t Ps. 76:12

PSALM 69

title ¹ Heb.
Shoshannim
1 ^a Job 22:11; Jon.
2:5 ² Lit. *soul*
2 ^b Ps. 40:2
3 ^c Ps. 6:6 ^d Deut.
28:32; Ps. 119:82,
123; Is. 38:14
4 ^e Ps. 35:19; John
15:25 ☆

- ⁵ O God, You know my foolishness;
And my sins are not hidden from
You.
- ⁶ Let not those who ³wait for You,
O Lord God of hosts, be
ashamed because of me;
Let not those who seek You be
⁴confounded because of me,
O God of Israel.
- ⁷ Because for Your sake I have borne
reproach;
Shame has covered my face.
- ⁸ ^fI have become a stranger to my
brothers,
And an alien to my mother's
children;
- ⁹ ^gBecause zeal for Your house has
eaten me up,
^hAnd the reproaches of those who
reproach You have fallen
on me.
- ¹⁰ When I wept *and chastened* my soul
with fasting,
That became my reproach.
- ¹¹ I also ⁵made sackcloth my garment;
I became a byword to them.
- ¹² Those who ⁶sit in the gate speak
against me,
And I *am* the song of the ⁱdrunkards.
- ¹³ But as for me, my prayer *is* to You,
O LORD, *in* the acceptable time;
O God, in the multitude of Your
mercy,
Hear me in the truth of Your
salvation.
- ¹⁴ Deliver me out of the mire,
And let me not sink;
Let me be delivered from those who
hate me,
And out of the deep waters.

6 ³ Wait in faith
4 *dishonored*
8 ^f Is. 53:3; Mark
3:21 ☆; Luke 8:19;
John 7:3-5
9 ^g John 2:17
^h Rom. 15:3
11 ⁵ Symbolic of
sorrow
12 ⁱ Job 30:9 ⁶ Sit as
judges

68:33–35 The psalm ends with a celebration of the presence of God in the midst of His people. This section looks forward to the reign of Jesus the Savior King (Zeph. 3:14–17). **Him who rides on the heaven of heavens** is a development of the phrase found in v. 4. The Lord's **voice** is the thunder; God is the true God of storm (77:16–20) and Creator of the universe. When all things are considered, there is nothing in the universe that can be compared with God. Thus the poet says **You are more awesome than Your holy places**. **Psalm 69**, a psalm of lament, is more specifically a protest of innocence. This highly messianic psalm presents a remarkable description of the suffering of Jesus Christ. Whereas Ps. 22 describes Jesus' physical sufferings, Ps. 69 focuses more on His emotional and spiritual suffering. Yet like Ps. 22, this psalm was written by David approximately a thousand years before the events it describes. Both psalms begin with the sufferings of David but have their full meaning in the sufferings of Jesus. Its structure is as follows: (1) a cry for deliverance that expresses the psalmist's weariness (vv. 1–3); (2) a description of the psalmist's enemies (v. 4); (3) a lament that expresses the psalmist's sense of alienation (vv. 5–12); (4) a cry for deliverance from the mire (vv. 13–18); (5) a lament that expresses the psalmist's reproach (vv. 19–21); (6) a petition for God to bring His judgment on the wicked (vv. 22–28); (7) a determination to praise the Lord (vv. 29–36).

69:2, 3 I sink in deep mire: The opening words of this psalm of

anguish use the strong image of a person about to drown—not just in deep waters, but in muck (40:2). This powerfully descriptive language expresses extreme mental anguish. **I am weary:** As a drowning man might exhaust his voice entirely, so David is worn out from praying and crying out to the Lord (6:6).

69:4 hate me without a cause: These words describe David's experience in a difficult period of his life. It seems that his foes are innumerable; but more devastating to him than their number is the fact that he has not caused their attack. Any attack is difficult; an unprovoked attack is intolerable. Yet these words also are prophetic of the sufferings of Jesus (35:19; 109:3–5; John 15:23–25).

69:9–12 zeal for Your house: Like Phinehas in Num. 25, David describes himself as a zealot for the house of the Lord. Jesus' cleansing of the temple was a fulfillment of these words (see John 2:17). **When I wept:** Even the piety of David has become a reason for his enemies to chide him. **Those who sit in the gate:** The elders of the cities looked with contempt on David; similarly, many of the elders of Jerusalem held Jesus in disdain.

69:14–16 The words **deliver me out of the mire** tie the psalm together; compare the words of vv. 1–3. **Hear me:** This renewed plea to God is based on the character of the Lord; His lovingkindness or loyal love, and His tender mercies compelled David to keep looking to the Lord for deliverance.

15 Let not the floodwater overflow me,
Nor let the deep swallow me up;
And let not the pit shut its mouth
on me.

16 Hear me, O LORD, for Your
lovingkindness *is* good;
Turn to me according to the
multitude of Your tender
mercies.

17 And do not hide Your face from Your
servant,
For I am in trouble;
Hear me speedily.

18 Draw near to my soul, *and* redeem it;
Deliver me because of my enemies.

19 You know ^jmy reproach, my shame,
and my dishonor;
My adversaries *are* all before You.

20 Reproach has broken my heart,
And I am full of ⁷heaviness;
^kI looked for *someone* to take pity, but
there was none;
And for ^lcomforters, but I found
none.

21 They also gave me gall for my food,
^mAnd for my thirst they gave me
vinegar to drink.

22 ⁿLet their table become a snare before
them,
And their well-being a trap.

23 ^oLet their eyes be darkened, so that
they do not see;
And make their loins shake
continually.

24 ^pPour out Your indignation upon
them,
And let Your wrathful anger take
hold of them.

25 ^qLet their dwelling place be desolate;
Let no one live in their tents.

26 For they persecute the *ones* ^rYou have
struck,
And talk of the grief of those You
have wounded.

27 ^sAdd iniquity to their iniquity,
^tAnd let them not come into Your
righteousness.

19 ^j Ps. 22:6, 7; Heb. 12:2
20 ^k Is. 63:5 ^l Job 16:2 ⁷ Lit. *sickness*
21 ^m Matt. 27:34, 48 ☆; Mark 15:23, 36; Luke 23:36; John 19:28-30
22 ⁿ Rom. 11:9, 10
23 ^o Is. 6:9, 10
24 ^p Jer. 10:25; 1 Thess. 2:16
25 ^q Matt. 23:38; Luke 13:35; Acts 1:20
26 ^r [Is. 53:4; 1 Pet. 2:24]
27 ^s Neh. 4:5; [Rom. 1:28] ^t [Is. 26:10]

28 ^u [Ex. 32:32]; Phil. 4:3; [Rev. 3:5; 13:8] ^v Ezek. 13:9; Luke 10:20; Heb. 12:23
30 ^w [Ps. 28:7]
31 ^x Ps. 50:13, 14, 23; 51:16
32 ^y Ps. 34:2 ^z Ps. 22:26
33 ^a [Ps. 68:6]; Eph. 3:1
34 ^b Ps. 96:11; Is. 44:23; 49:13 ^c Is. 55:12
35 ^d Ps. 51:18; Is. 44:26
36 ^e Ps. 102:28 ⁸ Lit. *seed*

PSALM 70

title ^a Ps. 38:title
1 ^b Ps. 40:13-17
2 ^c Ps. 35:4, 26 ¹ So with MT, LXX, Tg., Vg.; some Heb. mss., Syr. *appalled* (cf. 40:15)

28 Let them ^ube blotted out of the book
of the living,
^vAnd not be written with the
righteous.

29 But I *am* poor and sorrowful;
Let Your salvation, O God, set me up
on high.

30 ^wI will praise the name of God with a
song,
And will magnify Him with
thanksgiving.

31 ^x *This* also shall please the LORD better
than an ox *or* bull,
Which has horns and hooves.

32 ^yThe humble shall see *this and* be
glad;
And you who seek God, ^zyour hearts
shall live.

33 For the LORD hears the poor,
And does not despise ^aHis
prisoners.

34 ^bLet heaven and earth praise Him,
The seas ^cand everything that moves
in them.

35 ^dFor God will save Zion
And build the cities of Judah,
That they may dwell there and
possess it.

36 Also, ^ethe ⁸descendants of His
servants shall inherit it,
And those who love His name shall
dwell in it.

PSALM 70

Prayer for Relief from Adversaries

To the Chief Musician. A *Psal*m of David.
^aTo bring to remembrance.

Make haste, ^bO God, to deliver me!
Make haste to help me, O LORD!

2 ^cLet them be ashamed and
confounded
Who seek my life;
Let them be ¹turned back and
confused
Who desire my hurt.

69:20, 21 for my thirst: At one point during Jesus' suffering on the cross, He was offered vinegar to soothe His thirst (Matt. 27:34; Mark 15:23; Luke 23:36; John 19:28-30).

69:24-28 Pour out Your indignation upon them may refer to the Lord's judgment on His foes in this lament over Jerusalem. The words of v. 25 were fulfilled in Judas Iscariot. See Acts 1:20, in which the words of this verse are joined to the words of 109:8.

69:29-33 The phrase **I am poor** refers to a brokenness of spirit and sense of worthlessness caused by the assaults of the wicked. The *poor* in the psalms become a portrait of the Savior, illustrating the magnitude of Jesus' humility (described by Paul in Phil. 2:5-7).

I will praise: David praised God in exuberant joy when the Lord saved him from the depths of despair. All humble people, especially

those who suffer the indignities brought about by the wicked, will join in praise and joy before God their Savior.

Psalm 70, a psalm of lament, is a reprise of 40:13-17. The description of the poor and needy was such a necessary element in the encouragement of people enduring troubles that this section was selected for individual use as a freestanding poem.

70:2 Let them be ashamed and confounded: David prays that those who rejoice in his misery will be proven wrong in their assumption that the Lord is unable to help His people. In this way, the Lord's deliverance of David will result in God's name being glorified—both by the joy of God's people and the shame of His enemies (see also vv. 3, 4).

- 3 ^d Let them be turned back because of their shame,
Who say, ² “Aha, aha!”
- 4 Let all those who seek You rejoice
and be glad in You;
And let those who love Your
salvation say continually,
“Let God be magnified!”
- 5 ^e But I *am* poor and needy;
^f Make haste to me, O God!
You *are* my help and my deliverer;
O LORD, do not delay.

PSALM 71

God the Rock of Salvation

- In ^a You, O LORD, I put my trust;
Let me never be put to shame.
- 2 ^b Deliver me in Your righteousness,
and cause me to escape;
^c Incline Your ear to me, and save me.
- 3 ^d Be my ¹ strong refuge,
To which I may resort continually;
You have given the ^e commandment
to save me,
For You *are* my rock and my
fortress.
- 4 ^f Deliver me, O my God, out of the
hand of the wicked,
Out of the hand of the unrighteous
and cruel man.
- 5 For You are ^g my hope, O Lord God;
You *are* my trust from my youth.
- 6 ^h By You I have been ² upheld from
birth;

3 ^d Ps. 40:15 ² An expression of scorn
5 ^e Ps. 72:12, 13 ^f Ps. 141:1

PSALM 71

1 ^a Ps. 25:2, 3
2 ^b Ps. 31:1 ^c Ps. 17:6
3 ^d Ps. 31:2, 3 ^e Ps. 44:4 ¹ Lit. rock of refuge or rock of habitation
4 ^f Ps. 140:1, 3
5 ^g Jer. 14:8; 17:7, 13; 17:50:7
6 ^h Ps. 22:9, 10; Is. 46:3 ² sustained from the womb

7 ⁱ Is. 8:18; Zech. 3:8;
1 Cor. 4:9
8 / Ps. 35:28
10 ^k 2 Sam. 17:1
12 / Ps. 35:22 ^m Ps. 70:1
13 ³ ashamed

You are He who took me out of my
mother's womb.
My praise *shall be* continually of You.

- 7 ⁱ I have become as a wonder to many,
But You *are* my strong refuge.
- 8 Let ^j my mouth be filled *with* Your
praise
And *with* Your glory all the day.
- 9 Do not cast me off in the time of old
age;
Do not forsake me when my strength
fails.
- 10 For my enemies speak against me;
And those who lie in wait for my life
^k take counsel together,
11 Saying, “God has forsaken him;
Pursue and take him, for *there is*
none to deliver *him*.”
- 12 ^l O God, do not be far from me;
O my God, ^m make haste to
help me!
- 13 Let them be ³ confounded *and*
consumed
Who are adversaries of my life;
Let them be covered *with* reproach
and dishonor
Who seek my hurt.
- 14 But I will hope continually,
And will praise You yet more and
more.
- 15 My mouth shall tell of Your
righteousness
And Your salvation all the day,
For I do not know *their* limits.

70:4, 5 The last three words of the psalm **do not delay** indicate the near-desperation of David. The cry echoes David's plea in v. 1 for the Lord to “come quickly” to save him. Even in panic-stricken despair, David does not forget to praise his Lord. He reminds himself that the Lord is his only source of strength, help, and deliverance. **Psalm 71** is a psalm of lament with a major focus on the psalmist's trust in God. The psalm alternates between expressions of desperate need and resolute trust in the Lord. In this interplay, the psalmist models the way believers should react to suffering. The poet describes himself as an old man who has trusted in God for a long time (vv. 9, 18). In his great time of need, he asks God to be faithful to His servant. The structure of the psalm is as follows: (1) a confession of the psalmist's resolute trust in God (vv. 1–3); (2) petitions for God to deliver the psalmist from trouble (vv. 4–6); (3) a determination to praise God even in the midst of trouble (vv. 7, 8); (4) petitions for deliverance (vv. 9–11); (5) a call for judgment on the psalmist's enemies (vv. 12, 13); (6) a commitment to trust and praise God (vv. 14–16); (7) a renewal of the psalmist's petitions based on his experience of God's faithfulness (vv. 17, 18); (8) a renewal of trust in God (vv. 19–21); (9) a determination to praise God (vv. 22–24). **71:1** The theme of the psalm is stated in this verse. On the basis of resolute **trust** (61:4; 91:3), the psalmist asks that he **never be put to shame**. Trusting in God is never foolish (4:2; 119:31).

71:2, 3 in Your righteousness: The psalmist is concerned not only with his own plight but with the character of God (vv. 15, 16, 19, 24). The psalmist's point is that God could display His righteousness by answering the needs of the psalmist, whose life had been lived in

constant trust in God. **strong refuge:** The Hebrew words mean literally “rock fortress.” The Lord is the only source of continual protection for the psalmist.

71:4 The Hebrew root of **deliver me** means “to cause to escape” (17:13; 37:40; 144:2). After asking for deliverance, the poet reasserts his strong faith in God, calling Him his **hope** and his **trust**, the One who has sustained him from his birth (22:10). He prays in faith, not allowing his circumstances to cause him to doubt the goodness of God.

71:7 a wonder: The poet declares that the work of God in his life has made him a special sign to the people, similar to the great miracles of God through Moses and Aaron in Egypt (Ex. 7:3; 11:9). **71:9–11** The poet uses familiar images in the psalms of lament (Ps. 13) to encourage God to respond to his need. **in the time of old age:** The psalmist has trusted in God his entire life (v. 6); it would be sad if he were dismissed by the Lord late in life (v. 18). Not only was the psalmist's own life and comfort at stake, but so was the reputation of God. If the enemies concluded that **God has forsaken him**, then the reputation of the Lord would be tarnished in the world.

71:12, 13 do not be far: These words evoke the language of 22:1, 19. **confounded:** The language of this verse is imprecatory (Ps. 137); the poet calls for justice and vengeance against his enemies, for they are in fact enemies of the living God (v. 24).

71:14 I will hope: The Hebrew text has an emphatic pronoun meaning “as for me,” bringing determination to the poet's words. The Hebrew verb translated *hope* describes a confident expectation that God will intervene and deliver (147:11).

16 I will go in the strength of the Lord
God;
I will make mention of Your
righteousness, of Yours only.

17 O God, You have taught me from my
ⁿyouth;
And to this *day* I declare Your
wondrous works.

18 Now also ^owhen I am old and
grayheaded,
O God, do not forsake me,
Until I declare Your strength to *this*
generation,
Your power to everyone *who* is to
come.

19 Also ^pYour righteousness, O God, is
⁴very high,
You who have done great things;
^qO God, who *is* like You?

20 ^rYou, who have shown me great and
severe troubles,
^sShall revive me again,
And bring me up again from the
depths of the earth.

21 You shall increase my greatness,
And comfort me on every side.

22 Also ^twith the lute I will praise
You—
And Your faithfulness, O my God!
To You I will sing with the harp,
O ^uHoly One of Israel.

23 My lips shall greatly rejoice when I
sing to You,

17 ^a Deut. 4:5; 6:7
18 ^a [Is. 46:4]
19 ^p Deut. 3:24; Ps.
57:10 ^q Ps. 35:10
⁴ *great*, lit. *to the*
height of heaven
20 ^r Ps. 60:3 ^s Hos.
6:1, 2
22 ^t Ps. 92:1-3
^u 2 Kin. 19:22; Is. 1:4

23 ^v Ps. 103:4

PSALM 72

title ^a Ps. 127:title
2 ^b [Is. 9:7; 11:2-5;
32:1] ☆
3 ^c Ps. 85:10
4 ^d Is. 11:4 ☆ ¹ *crush*
5 ^e Ps. 72:7, 17;
89:36 ☆ ² *So with*
MT, Tg.; LXX, Vg.
They shall continue

And ^vmy soul, which You have
redeemed.

24 My tongue also shall talk of Your
righteousness all the day
long;
For they are confounded,
For they are brought to shame
Who seek my hurt.

PSALM 72

*Glory and Universality of the
Messiah's Reign*

A Psalm ^a of Solomon.

Gⁱve the king Your judgments,
O God,
And Your righteousness to the king's
Son.

2 ^bHe will judge Your people with
righteousness,
And Your poor with justice.

3 ^cThe mountains will bring peace to
the people,
And the little hills, by righteousness.

4 ^dHe will bring justice to the poor of
the people;
He will save the children of the
needy,
And will ¹break in pieces the
oppressor.

5 2 They shall fear You
^eAs long as the sun and moon
endure,
Throughout all generations.

71:17, 18 youth . . . old and grayheaded: The poet has trusted in God all his life. In his old age, he faces a crisis. He fully expects that God in His righteousness (vv. 2, 15, 16, 19, 24) will respond favorably to his request to deliver him and preserve him from shame (v. 1). For his part, the psalmist will continue to praise the Lord.

71:19, 20 The poet speaks of the **great things** that God had done, for which He is worthy of praise. He also speaks of the **great and severe troubles** that he has experienced at God's hand, and from

which he seeks relief. **Depths of the earth** is a metaphor for the psalmist's despondency (40:2); he feels as though he has already dropped headlong into a pit.

71:22, 23 The poem concludes with a bold vow of praise, in confident expectation that the psalmist's prayer will be answered. The poet praises God with **the lute**, but also with his **lips**. At the same time, his inner being, his **soul**, is filled with praises to the living God.

71:24 brought to shame: The psalm comes full circle with the word *shame*. The poet begins by asking the Lord to prevent him from becoming shamed (v. 1), and he ends the poem with a declaration that the wicked have been shamed. The Lord has answered his prayer; He has protected His righteous servant.

Psalm 72, a royal psalm, is one of two psalms (see also Ps. 127) ascribed to Solomon, the son of David. King Solomon might have arranged David's psalms in something like their present order, then appended his own psalm to the group (see v. 20). This psalm is intensely messianic, speaking in ideal terms of the coming of the great King. On the basis of the ideals of ancient Middle Eastern royalty, the psalm calls for a good king to govern Israel under God's blessing. Ultimately this King is the Savior Jesus. The psalm has the following structure: (1) a call for a reign of judgment (vv. 1-4); (2) anticipation of a reign of righteousness (vv. 5-7); (3) a vision of a universal reign (vv. 8-11); (4) a vision of a reign of compassionate justice (vv. 12-14); (5) a prediction of a reign of great blessing (vv. 15-17); (6) praise for the God who will establish this glorious reign (vv. 18-20).

72:5-7 Fear You is an expression of wonder, awe, reverence, worship, and obedience. **He shall come down:** The great King is pictured as the gentle rains of God's blessing on the earth. His reign will lead to true **peace**, the state of things as they really ought to be.

wondrous works

(Heb. *pala'*) (71:17; 107:8; 118:23; 119:27) Strong's #6381

The core meaning of this word is "to do something extraordinary." In reference to people, the word is used to describe an action or understanding beyond the normal capacity of humans (Deut. 17:8; 30:11; 2 Sam. 13:2; Prov. 30:18) or beyond normal obligations (Lev. 22:21; 27:2; Num. 6:2; 15:3, 8). However, the highest sense of the word is reserved for God alone, especially in the Psalms in which it occurs most frequently and always in reference to God (72:18; 136:4). God is wonderful in counsel; nothing is too marvelous for Him (Gen. 18:14; Is. 28:29). His wondrous works are cosmic (107:24; Job 37:14), national (Ex. 3:20; Is. 29:14), and personal (31:21; Job 10:16). Not everyone understands them (78:32; 106:7), but the Bible exhorts believers to remember these wonderful works of God and publicly praise Him for them (96:3; 105:2, 5; 1 Chr. 16:9, 12, 24).

- 6 ^fHe shall come down like rain upon
the grass before mowing,
Like showers *that* water the earth.
- 7 In His days the righteous shall
flourish,
^gAnd abundance of peace,
Until the moon is no more.
- 8 ^hHe shall have dominion also from sea
to sea,
And from the River to the ends of
the earth.
- 9 ⁱThose who dwell in the wilderness
will bow before Him,
^jAnd His enemies will lick the dust.
- 10 ^kThe kings of Tarshish and of the isles
Will bring presents;
The kings of Sheba and Seba
Will offer gifts.
- 11 ^lYes, all kings shall fall down before
Him;
All nations shall serve Him.
- 12 For He ^mwill deliver the needy when
he cries,
The poor also, and *him* who has no
helper.
- 13 He will spare the poor and needy,
And will save the souls of the needy.
- 14 He will redeem their life from
oppression and violence;
And ⁿprecious shall be their blood in
His sight.
- 15 And He shall live;
And the gold of ^oSheba will be given
to Him;
Prayer also will be made for Him
continually,
And daily He shall be praised.
- 16 There will be an abundance of grain
in the earth,
On the top of the mountains;
Its fruit shall wave like Lebanon;
^pAnd *those* of the city shall flourish
like grass of the earth.

BIBLE TIMES & CULTURE NOTES



Lebanon

In ancient times the Phoenicians used the city-states of Byblos, Sidon, and Tyre as the base of a great sea-trading empire in what is now Lebanon. Over the years, these city-states were conquered by Egyptians, Assyrians, Persians, and the Greeks under Alexander the Great. The scenic beauty of the country has inspired many symbolic references in the Bible and the rich vegetation of Lebanon became a symbol of fruitfulness and fertility. Originally, the famed cedars of Lebanon covered the region, but bands of marauding conquerors from Mesopotamia, Egypt, Israel, and Tyre destroyed the forests by using the wood for palaces, furniture, ships, coffins, and musical instruments. By the sixth century A.D., the beautiful groves were almost gone. The climate of Lebanon ranges from the almost tropical heat and vegetation of the plain of Dan to heavy snow in the plain of el-Bekaa. Mainly it has a Mediterranean climate with cool, wet winters and hot, dry summers.



The harbor at Tyre

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6 ^f Deut. 32:2;
2 Sam. 23:4; Hos.
6:3
7 ^g Is. 2:4 ☆
8 ^h Ex. 23:31; [Is. 9:6;
Zech. 9:10]
9 ⁱ Ps. 74:14; Is.
23:13 / Is. 49:23 ☆;
Mic. 7:17
10 ^k 1 Kin. 10:2;
2 Chr. 9:21
11 ^l Is. 49:23 ☆
12 ^m Job 29:12
14 ⁿ 1 Sam. 26:21;
[Ps. 116:15] ☆

- 17 ^q His name shall endure forever;
His name shall continue as long as
the sun.
And ^r *men* shall be blessed in Him;
^s All nations shall call Him blessed.

- 18 ^t Blessed *be* the LORD God, the God of
Israel,
^u Who only does wondrous things!

15 ^o Is. 60:6 ☆ 16 ^p 1 Kin. 4:20 17 ^q [Ps. 89:36] ☆ ^r [Gen.
12:3] ^s Luke 1:48 18 ^t 1 Chr. 29:10 ^u Ex. 15:11; Job 5:9

72:8–10 The promises of God to Abraham included a promise that his descendants would have **dominion** over the land of Canaan (Gen. 15:18–21). These verses expand the geographical dimensions to include the entire earth. **The River** refers to the Euphrates—a distant, significant waterway that many Israelites hoped would become the extent of their kingdom. The glorious coming King will have the river as a *near* border; His territory will extend **to the ends of the earth**. No one will escape the power of His reign, not even those **in the wilderness**. **Lick the dust**: The King's enemies will have their faces to the ground in forced submission to His majesty. **Tarshish** and **Sheba** were the most distant places known to the Israelites; they suggest distances beyond Solomon's imagination. As Solomon had received **gifts** from the queen of Sheba (1 Kin. 10:1–10), so he predicted that the coming King would receive gifts from rulers all over the earth.

72:13, 14 This section emphasizes the work of the King on behalf of

the **poor** and **needy**. **precious shall be their blood**: The blood shed by the needy points to the blood the Savior shed on the cross (see Heb. 12:24). No wonder Jesus finds the shed blood of others to be precious.

72:15–17 The promise of life in the words **He shall live** is a messianic theme (16:10, 11; 91:16; 118:17, 18), for the coming Savior is the only One who grants true life (John 11:25). **gold of Sheba**: This is a reference to v. 10. The **name** of the great King will be regarded as the greatest name in the universe; Paul speaks this way of Jesus' name in Phil. 2:9–11.

72:18, 19 These magnificent words of benediction mark the conclusion of the psalm, as well as the conclusion of Book II of the Psalms. The repetition of the word **blessed**, the focus on the **name** (as in 89:16), and the double **Amen** all indicate that this psalm was used in the worship of God in His temple.

19 And ^vblessed *be* His glorious name forever!
^wAnd let the whole earth be filled *with* His glory.
Amen and Amen.

20 The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended.

Book Three: Psalms 73–89

PSALM 73

The Tragedy of the Wicked, and the Blessedness of Trust in God

A Psalm of ^aAsaph.

Truly God is good to Israel,
To such as are pure in heart.
2 But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled;
My steps had nearly ^bslipped.
3 ^cFor I *was* envious of the boastful,
When I saw the prosperity of the ^dwicked.
4 For *there are* no ¹pangs in their death,
But their strength *is* firm.
5 ^e*They are not* in trouble *as other* men,
Nor are they plagued like *other* men.
6 Therefore pride serves as their necklace;
Violence covers them ^f*like a* garment.
7 ^gTheir ²eyes bulge with abundance;
They have more than heart could wish.
8 ^hThey scoff and speak wickedly *concerning* oppression;
They ⁱspeak ³loftily.

19 ^v [Neh. 9:5]
^w Num. 14:21; Hab. 2:14

PSALM 73

title ^a Ps. 50:title
2 ^b Job 12:5
3 ^c Ps. 37:1, 7; [Prov. 23:17] ^d Job 21:5-16; Jer. 12:1
4 ¹ pains
5 ^e Job 21:9
6 ^f Ps. 109:18
7 ^g Job 15:27; Jer. 5:28 ² Tg. *face bulges*; LXX, Syr., Vg. *iniquity bulges*
8 ^h Ps. 53:1 ¹ 2 Pet. 2:18; Jude 16
³ Proudly

9 / Rev. 13:6
10 ^k [Ps. 75:8]
11 ¹ Job 22:13
13 ^m Job 21:15; 35:3; Mal. 3:14 ⁴ *kept my heart pure in vain*
16 ⁵ *troublesome in my eyes*
17 ⁿ [Ps. 37:38; 55:23]
18 ^o Ps. 35:6

9 They set their mouth ^jagainst the heavens,
And their tongue walks through the earth.
10 Therefore his people return here,
^kAnd waters of a full *cup* are drained by them.
11 And they say, ^l“How does God know?
And is there knowledge in the Most High?”
12 Behold, these *are* the ungodly,
Who are always at ease;
They increase *in* riches.
13 Surely I have ⁴cleansed my heart *in* ^mvain,
And washed my hands in innocence.
14 For all day long I have been plagued,
And chastened every morning.
15 If I had said, “I will speak thus,”
Behold, I would have been untrue to the generation of Your children.
16 When I thought *how* to understand this,
It *was* ⁵too painful for me—
17 Until I went into the sanctuary of God;
Then I understood their ⁿend.
18 Surely ^oYou set them in slippery places;
You cast them down to destruction.
19 Oh, how they are *brought* to desolation, as in a moment!
They are utterly consumed with terrors.
20 As a dream when *one* awakes,
So, Lord, when You awake,
You shall despise their image.

72:20 The prayers of David: The superscription of Ps. 72 attributes the psalm to Solomon. It is possible that Solomon wrote this poem in honor of his father David at the end of an early edition of the psalms so far collected. Other psalms were added later to this original collection.

Psalm 73 is a psalm of trust with some features of the wisdom psalms. The psalm is unusual in that it tells a story about the psalmist’s struggle with envy, doubts, and his faith in God. But through his struggles, the psalmist Asaph learned to trust in God. The structure of the poem is as follows: (1) the temptation to be envious of the wicked (vv. 1–3); (2) a description of the wicked (vv. 4–14); (3) the realization that the end of the wicked is the balancing factor (vv. 15–20); (4) the psalmist’s regret over his uncertainty (vv. 21–24); (5) a renewed resolve to trust in God alone (vv. 25, 26); (6) the destruction of the wicked (v. 27); (7) a renewed trust in God (v. 28).

73:1–3 In the opening verses Asaph describes the crisis of faith he experienced. He begins with one of the basic elements of biblical theology, that **God is good to Israel** (100:5; 106:1; 107:1). But then he confesses that he almost **stumbled** when he became **envious** of the success and wealth of the **wicked**.

73:5, 6 Asaph observes that the attitudes and actions of the wicked

seem to place no constraints upon them. They appear not to have **trouble**. Their **pride** and **violence** are not hidden but are displayed like jewelry. They fulfill their lustful appetites and boast about their wicked accomplishments.

73:12 Asaph describes the apathy about God characteristic of the wicked, who had concluded that God—if there was a God—was disengaged from people’s lives. Asaph is bothered by the fact that with this aberrant view of life the wicked are still able to enjoy life, drink their fill, and live **at ease**. Thus the psalmist feels that his own acts of righteous living are without meaning or purpose.

73:15–17 untrue: Asaph realizes that if he continued on this path, he would be abandoning the faith. He finds the issue **painful** to consider until he comes to a new sense of enlightenment in **the sanctuary**, the temple in Jerusalem. He rediscovered something he probably knew but had not really considered: The prosperity of the wicked will not last. Their wealth will have no value in the next life.

73:19 Asaph remembers that the wicked are just a step away from disaster. In **a moment** they could find all of their wealth valueless and their pleasure vanished as they face an eternity separated from the presence of their Creator.

- 21 Thus my heart was grieved,
And I was ⁶vexed in my mind.
- 22 ^pI was so foolish and ignorant;
I was *like* a beast before You.
- 23 Nevertheless I *am* continually with
You;
You hold *me* by my right hand.
- 24 ^qYou will guide me with Your counsel,
And afterward receive me *to* glory.
- 25 ^rWhom have I in heaven *but* You?
And *there is* none upon earth *that* I
desire besides You.
- 26 ^sMy flesh and my heart fail;
But God is the ⁷strength of my heart
and my ^tportion forever.
- 27 For indeed, ^uthose who are far from
You shall perish;
You have destroyed all those who
⁸desert You for harlotry.
- 28 But *it is* good for me to ^vdraw near to
God;
I have put my trust in the Lord God,
That I may ^wdeclare all Your works.

PSALM 74

A Plea for Relief from Oppressors

A ¹Contemplation of Asaph.

- O** God, why have You cast *us* off
forever?
Why does Your anger smoke against
the sheep of Your pasture?
- 2 Remember Your congregation, *which*
You have purchased of old,
The tribe of Your inheritance, *which*
You have redeemed—

21 ⁶ Lit. *pierced in my kidneys*
22 ^p Ps. 92:6
24 ^q Ps. 32:8; 48:14;
Is. 58:11
25 ^r [Phil. 3:8]
26 ^s Ps. 84:2 ^t Ps.
16:5 ⁷ Lit. *rock*
27 ^u [Ps. 119:155]
⁸ Are unfaithful
to You
28 ^v [Heb. 10:22;
James 4:8] ^w Ps.
116:10; 2 Cor. 4:13

PSALM 74

title ¹ Heb. *Maschil*

4 ^a Lam. 2:7 ^b Num.
2:2
8 ^c Ps. 83:4
² oppress
9 ^d 1 Sam. 3:1; Lam.
2:9; Ezek. 7:26;
Amos 8:11
10 ³ revile
11 ^e Lam. 2:3
12 ^f Ps. 44:4

- This Mount Zion where You have
dwelt.
- 3 Lift up Your feet to the perpetual
desolations.
The enemy has damaged everything
in the sanctuary.
- 4 ^a Your enemies roar in the midst of
Your meeting place;
^b They set up their banners *for*
signs.
- 5 They seem like men who lift up
Axes among the thick trees.
- 6 And now they break down its carved
work, all at once,
With axes and hammers.
- 7 They have set fire to Your sanctuary;
They have defiled the dwelling place
of Your name to the ground.
- 8 ^c They said in their hearts,
“Let us ²destroy them altogether.”
They have burned up all the meeting
places of God in the land.
- 9 We do not see our signs;
^d *There is* no longer any prophet;
Nor *is there* any among us who
knows how long.
- 10 O God, how long will the adversary
³reproach?
Will the enemy blaspheme Your
name forever?
- 11 ^e Why do You withdraw Your hand,
even Your right hand?
Take it out of Your bosom and
destroy *them*.
- 12 For ^fGod is my King from of old,
Working salvation in the midst of the
earth.

73:21–24 Asaph **was grieved** because of his own lapse of faith (vv. 1–3). In the manner of a wisdom psalm, he speaks of his own **foolishness, like a beast**: An animal has no sense of eternity and a divine perspective. The poet was making an animal-like decision when he began to wonder about the wicked (vv. 1–3). But God had never left him, even when he struggled with doubts. **And afterward**: What helped the psalmist gain a proper perspective on this life was the afterlife. The righteous will have the glorious privilege of living with God forever.

73:27, 28 The contrast between the words **shall perish** and **draw near to God** explains the heart of the psalm. There are those who may enjoy great wealth and notoriety today, but nothing they have or do will last forever. Therefore, Asaph concludes he has **put his trust in the Lord God**. Only those who place their trust in God will find eternal life and eternal peace.

Psalm 74 is a lament psalm of the community (as is Ps. 80) and a powerful presentation of Hebrew poetry at its best. The poem describes God's actions in the past and the desire of His people for Him to act in the present. In some ways, Ps. 75 may be regarded as the Lord's answer to the difficult questions of Ps. 74. This is one of 11 psalms attributed to Asaph (Ps. 50; 73–83). The outline of the poem is: (1) a community lament over a foreign invasion (vv. 1–8); (2) a community complaint that there appears to be no hope (vv. 9–11); (3) a recounting of God's historic victories against evil powers (vv. 12–17); (4) a petition for God to remember His covenant and deliver His people (vv. 18–21); (5) a call for God to act on His own behalf against His enemies (vv. 22, 23).

74:1, 2 O God, why is a classic lament in the Psalms (13:1). The invasion of a foreign power into Judah and Jerusalem had devastated the people. The foreign invader is viewed as an expression of the **anger** of the Lord. The principal call of the psalm is for the Lord to **remember** His people and the foolish ridicule of their enemies (vv. 18, 22). In his appeal to God the poet uses a series of endearing terms to describe the people of God: **the sheep of Your pasture, Your congregation, the tribe of Your inheritance, and this Mount Zion**. The psalmist also focuses on the loving actions of God for His people in the past: **You have purchased, You have redeemed, You have dwelt**. In the context of God's past faithfulness to the people He has chosen, the poet calls upon God to deliver His people in their time of need (vv. 20, 22).

74:3–7 Lift up Your feet is a call for God “to get up and walk” to see what is going on. The worst part of the enemy invasion was the desecration of the temple in Jerusalem. Several terms are used to describe this holy place: **the sanctuary, Your meeting place, and the dwelling place of Your name**.

74:11 The poet calls on God to fight against the enemy, to extend His **right hand** to protect and deliver the people as He had during the Exodus (63:8; see also Ex. 15:6).

74:12 The Lord is **King** by virtue of His creation of the earth (Ps. 93). He is King because of His special relationship with Israel (44:4; 99:1–3). And He is the coming King who will reign over all (96:13; 97:1–6; 98:6–9). **from of old**: The poet recalls the ancient victories of the Lord over the dark forces in a poetic recasting of the events of creation. **Salvation** here refers to God's deliverance of

¹³ You divided the sea by Your strength;
You broke the heads of the ⁴ sea
serpents in the waters.

¹⁴ You broke the heads of ⁵ Leviathan in
pieces,
And gave him as food to the people
inhabiting the wilderness.

¹⁵ You broke open the fountain and the
flood;
ⁱ You dried up mighty rivers.

¹⁶ The day is Yours, the night also is
^j Yours;
^k You have prepared the light and the
sun.

¹⁷ You have ^l set all the borders of the
earth;
^m You have made summer and winter.

¹⁸ Remember this, *that* the enemy has
reproached, O LORD,
And *that* a foolish people has
blasphemed Your name.

¹⁹ Oh, do not deliver the life of Your
turtledove to the wild beast!
Do not forget the life of Your poor
forever.

²⁰ Have respect to the covenant;
For the ⁶ dark places of the earth are
full of the ⁷ haunts of ⁸ cruelty.

²¹ Oh, do not let the oppressed return
ashamed!
Let the poor and needy praise Your
name.

¹³ ⁹ Ex. 14:21 ⁴ sea
monsters
¹⁴ ⁵ A large
sea creature of
unknown identity
¹⁵ ^h Ex. 17:5, 6;
Num. 20:11; Ps.
105:41; Is. 48:21
ⁱ Ex. 14:21, 22; Josh.
2:10; 3:13
¹⁶ ^j Job 38:12
^k Gen. 1:14-18
¹⁷ ^l Deut. 32:8; Acts
17:26 ^m Gen. 8:22
²⁰ ⁿ Gen. 17:7;
8; Lev. 26:44, 45
⁶ hiding places
⁷ homes ⁸ violence

²² ⁹ reviles or
taunts

PSALM 75

title ^a Ps. 57:title
¹ Heb. *Al Tashcheth*
² ² appointed
⁴ ^b [1 Sam. 2:3]; Ps.
94:4 ³ Raise the
head proudly like a
horned animal
⁵ ⁴ Insolent pride

²² Arise, O God, plead Your own cause;
Remember how the foolish man
⁹ reproaches You daily.

²³ Do not forget the voice of Your
enemies;
The tumult of those who rise
up against You increases
continually.

PSALM 75

*Thanksgiving for God's Righteous
Judgment*

To the Chief Musician. Set to ^a "Do ¹ Not
Destroy." A Psalm of Asaph. A Song.

We give thanks to You, O God,
we give thanks!
For Your wondrous works declare
that Your name is near.

² "When I choose the ² proper time,
I will judge uprightly.

³ The earth and all its inhabitants are
dissolved;
I set up its pillars firmly. *Selah*

⁴ "I said to the boastful, 'Do not deal
boastfully,'
And to the wicked, ^b 'Do not ³ lift up
the horn.

⁵ Do not lift up your horn on high;
Do *not* speak with ⁴ a stiff neck."

earth from the dark forces represented by the waters and serpents (vv. 13–15).

74:13 the sea . . . the heads of the sea serpents: In Canaanite mythology, the sea and its serpents joined together as enemies of Baal. Supposedly Baal was victorious over these enemies and subsequently became king. The poets of the Bible use the language of Canaanite myth to describe the victories of God in the formation of the earth, in the deliverance of His people from Egypt, and in future battles (77:16–20; 93:1–5; Is. 27:1; 51:9, 10). The division of the waters described in Gen. 1:6–8 is viewed as a battle in which God was victorious over both sea and serpents.

74:14 One of the enemies of Baal was the sea monster Lotan. In Hebrew literature this figure became the **Leviathan**. The name speaks poetically of various evil forces over which God has ultimate control and victory. Eventually the Leviathan became a symbol for Satan (Is. 27:1) who is "the dragon, that serpent of old" (Rev. 20:2). In this context, the **people** refers to beasts.

74:15 the fountain: The Lord gave water to the people of Israel in the wilderness (Ex. 17:5, 6; Num. 20:8–13). **mighty rivers:** He also enabled His people to cross over the Red Sea (Ex. 14) and the River Jordan (Josh. 3).

74:16, 17 In His great works of creation (Gen. 1) God established His rule over **day, night, light, and the sun**. In addition, He established the seasons and set **borders**, a reference to the limitations He placed on the waters (Prov. 8:27–29). Asaph's argument is that since God is in control, why was He allowing chaos in Israel?

74:18–21 Three times in this poem the poet calls upon God to **remember** (vv. 2, 22). In addition to appealing to the honor of God's **name** (v. 10), the poet uses endearing terms for God's people who are in distress: **Your turtledove, Your poor, the oppressed, and the poor and needy**. These were the people with whom the Lord Himself had chosen to make a **covenant**.

74:22, 23 The phrase **plead Your own cause** refers to a legal com-

plaint and is often used by the prophets in contexts of impending judgment on Israel (Mic. 6:1). For the third time in this poem (vv. 2, 18), God is asked to **remember** His stake in Israel and His need to defend His own reputation against **foolish** people.

Psalm 75, a grand psalm of praise (Ps. 100), contains a lively interchange between the people, the psalmist, and the Lord. For other psalms in which the Lord speaks, see Ps. 12; 75; 87; 91. In some ways this psalm may be regarded as God's answer to the questions presented in Ps. 74. The structure of the psalm is based on its varied speakers: (1) the people's praise of God for the sense of His presence (v. 1); (2) God's announcement of His sovereign determination to judge the earth at the proper time (vv. 2–5); (3) the people's declaration that God is the true Judge (vv. 6–9); (4) God's declaration of His intention to bring final judgment (v. 10).

75:1 Thanks indicates public acknowledgment of God. **Your wondrous works** speaks of the actions only God can perform, those that instill a sense of awe on the part of His people. **Your name is near:** God Himself is ready to intervene on the part of His people.

75:2 When I choose the proper time: God will not be rushed—not even by His people. **Uprightly** indicates the fullness and perfection of God's justice.

75:3 The earth . . . dissolved: In times of great stress, it may seem that the world is falling apart (60:2). God's response is **I set up its pillars firmly**. God has not abandoned His people, nor has He given up His authority.

75:4, 5 On the basis of God's determination to wait until the "proper time" (v. 2), there are strong warnings to **boastful and wicked** people who misinterpret God's delay and think there will be no judgment. The **horn** is an ancient symbol of strength. The wicked strut around like powerful animals, brandishing symbols of power with no thought of God. But the power of the wicked is feeble compared to the strength of the Almighty (v. 10).

- 6 For exaltation *comes* neither from the east
Nor from the west nor from the south.
- 7 But ^cGod *is* the Judge:
^dHe puts down one,
And exalts another.
- 8 For ^ein the hand of the LORD *there is*
a cup,
And the wine is red;
It is fully mixed, and He pours it out;
Surely its dregs shall all the wicked
of the earth
Drain *and* drink down.
- 9 But I will declare forever,
I will sing praises to the God of
Jacob.
- 10“ All^f the ⁵horns of the wicked I will
also cut off,
But ^gthe horns of the righteous shall
be ^hexalted.”

PSALM 76

The Majesty of God in Judgment

To the Chief Musician. On ¹stringed
instruments. A Psalm of Asaph. A Song.

- In ^aJudah God *is* known;
His name *is* great in Israel.
- 2 In ²Salem also is His tabernacle,
And His dwelling place in Zion.

7 ^c Ps. 50:6 ^d 1 Sam. 2:7; Ps. 147:6; Dan. 2:21
8 ^e Job 21:20; Ps. 60:3; Jer. 25:15; Rev. 14:10; 16:19
10 ^f Ps. 101:8; Jer. 48:25 ^g Ps. 89:17; 148:14 ^h 1 Sam. 2:1
⁵ Strength

PSALM 76

title ¹ Heb.
neginoth
1 ^c Ps. 48:1, 3
2 ² Jerusalem

4 ^b Ezek. 38:12
5 ^c Is. 10:12; 46:12
^d Ps. 13:3 ³ Lit. *have
slumbered their
sleep*
6 ^e Ex. 15:1-21; Ezek. 39:20; Nah. 2:13;
Zech. 12:4
7 ^f [Ezra 9:15; Nah. 1:6; Mal. 3:2; Rev. 6:17]
8 ^g Ex. 19:9 ^h 1 Chr. 16:30; 2 Chr. 20:29
9 ⁱ [Ps. 9:7-9]
10 ^j Ex. 9:16; Rom. 9:17
11 ^k [Eccl. 5:4-6]
^l 2 Chr. 32:22, 23

- 3 There He broke the arrows of the
bow,
The shield and sword of battle. *Selah*
- 4 You *are* more glorious and excellent
^bThan the mountains of prey.
- 5 ^cThe stouthearted were plundered;
^dThey ³have sunk into their sleep;
And none of the mighty men have
found the use of their hands.
- 6 ^eAt Your rebuke, O God of Jacob,
Both the chariot and horse were cast
into a dead sleep.
- 7 You, Yourself, *are* to be feared;
And ^fwho may stand in Your presence
When once You are angry?
- 8 ^gYou caused judgment to be heard
from heaven;
^hThe earth feared and was still,
- 9 When God ⁱarose to judgment,
To deliver all the oppressed of the
earth. *Selah*
- 10 ^jSurely the wrath of man shall praise
You;
With the remainder of wrath You
shall gird Yourself.
- 11 ^kMake vows to the LORD your God,
and pay *them*;
^lLet all who are around Him bring
presents to Him who ought to be
feared.

75:7 The words **God is the Judge** establish the fact that He is the true ruler of the universe (50:6; 58:11). **He puts down . . . exalts:** As Daniel declares in his prayer (Dan. 2:20–22), God is sovereign in the world’s affairs.

75:8 This is not a cup of blessing, but of the Lord’s wrath. The biblical image of **wine** and judgment goes back to Jacob’s blessing on Judah (Gen. 49:11) and is referred to in Christ’s judgment as depicted in Rev. 19:13–15.

75:10 The psalm concludes with the words of God. Here God depicts the contrasting fates of the **wicked** and the **righteous**. **horns:** The wicked have proudly lifted up their horn (vv. 4, 5) by boasting in their strength. The Lord will take away the very strength in which they have boasted.

Psalm 76 is a psalm of praise with a strong focus on the fear of God. The psalm has four movements: (1) a celebration of the center of worship in Jerusalem (vv. 1–3); (2) a celebration of the victories of God against His enemies (vv. 4–6); (3) a description of the fear of the earth at the anger of God (vv. 7–10); (4) an exhortation to the righteous to worship the Lord (vv. 11, 12).

76:1–3 The word translated **tabernacle** signifies a lair, like that of a great lion. **Salem** is the shortened form of the name Jerusalem.

76:4–6 more glorious and excellent: Nothing in all the universe or in all eternity can ever be compared with God (77:13). His glory and beauty are unsurpassed and His power is unassailable. **Chariot and horse** refers to the defeat of the army of Pharaoh (Ex. 14; 15).

76:7 The repetition of pronouns **You, Yourself** is for emphasis: Only the Almighty is **to be feared**. For the righteous, the fear of God is a response of awe, wonder, adoration, and worship. For the wicked, the fear of God is terror, for there is no escape from Him (14:5).

76:8–10 judgment to be heard: In God’s victories over the enemies of His people, word of God’s glory and justice would spread

to the entire world. Even the **wrath of men** will praise God because any anger against God is utterly futile. As Paul writes, “For who has resisted His will?” (Rom. 9:19). A person’s futile hostility to God will only result in a demonstration of God’s power and a subsequent glorification of His name. See the Lord’s response to Pharaoh (Ex. 11:9).

76:11, 12 The psalmist instructs the righteous in the true worship of the sovereign Lord of creation. **Make vows:** These are vows of praise, sacrifice, and faithful living (61:5; 8; 66:13; Heb. 13:15). As one might **bring presents** to a king (72:10), so the righteous should

glorious

(Heb. *’or*) (18:28; 76:4; 77:18; 97:4; Job 33:30; Eccl. 8:1)
Strong’s #215

This Hebrew word is the common word meaning “to give light.” The author of Proverbs likens the life of the just to the light of the sun (Prov. 4:18). For one’s eyes to be lit means that one has been revived or has received wisdom or understanding (13:3; 19:8; 1 Sam. 14:27–29; Ezra 9:8). The common prayer request that God would cause His face to shine upon someone was always, except for one possible early exception (Num. 6:25), a petition that God would grant mercy from distress (31:16; 67:1; 80:3, 7, 19; 119:135; Dan. 9:17). In the present passage, as elsewhere, the light is from the glory of God’s presence, which is to be reflected by His people (Is. 60:1–3; Ezek. 43:2). One day, the light of the sun and moon will be completely replaced by the light of God’s glory (Is. 60:19, 20; Rev. 21:23; 22:5).

12 He shall cut off the spirit of
princes;
^m *He is* awesome to the kings of the
earth.

PSALM 77

*The Consoling Memory of God's
Redemptive Works*

To the Chief Musician. ^aTo Jeduthun.
A Psalm of Asaph.

I cried out to God with my voice—
To God with my voice;
And He gave ear to me.
2 In the day of my trouble I sought the
Lord;
My hand was stretched out in the
night without ceasing;
My soul refused to be comforted.
3 I remembered God, and was
troubled;
I complained, and my spirit was
overwhelmed. *Selah*
4 You hold my eyelids *open*;
I am so troubled that I cannot
speak.
5 I have considered the days of old,
The years of ancient times.
6 I call to remembrance my song in the
night;
I meditate within my heart,
And my spirit ¹ makes diligent
search.
7 Will the Lord cast off forever?
And will He be favorable no more?
8 Has His mercy ceased forever?
Has *His* ^b promise failed
² forevermore?

12 ^m Ps. 68:35

PSALM 77

title ^a Ps. 39:title
6 ¹ *ponders
diligently*
8 ^b [2 Pet. 3:8,
9] ² Lit. *unto
generation and
generation*

10 ³ Lit. *infirmity*
13 ^c Ps. 73:17 ⁴ Or
holiness
16 ^d Ex. 14:21; Hab.
3:8, 10

9 Has God forgotten to be gracious?
Has He in anger shut up His tender
mercies? *Selah*
10 And I said, "This is my ³ anguish;
But I will remember the years of the
right hand of the Most High."
11 I will remember the works of the
LORD;
Surely I will remember Your wonders
of old.
12 I will also meditate on all Your
work,
And talk of Your deeds.
13 Your way, O God, *is* in ⁴ the
^c sanctuary;
Who *is* so great a God as *our* God?
14 You *are* the God who does wonders;
You have declared Your strength
among the peoples.
15 You have with *Your* arm redeemed
Your people,
The sons of Jacob and Joseph. *Selah*
16 The waters saw You, O God;
The waters saw You, they were
^d afraid;
The depths also trembled.
17 The clouds poured out water;
The skies sent out a sound;
Your arrows also flashed about.
18 The voice of Your thunder *was* in the
whirlwind;
The lightnings lit up the world;
The earth trembled and shook.
19 Your way *was* in the sea,
Your path in the great waters,
And Your footsteps were not
known.
20 You led Your people like a flock
By the hand of Moses and Aaron.

bringing their gifts to God—the ultimate gift being the dedication of their lives to the service of God (Rom. 12:1).

Psalm 77 is a psalm of a troubled believer. It is marked by a sense of inward trouble and reflection. Key terms in the psalm are the verbs "to remember" and "to meditate." The outline is as follows: (1) a cry to God (vv. 1–3); (2) doubts (vv. 4–6); (3) a question: Has God forgotten? (vv. 7–9); (4) focus on the goodness of God (vv. 10–12); (5) remembrance of the incomparability of God (vv. 13–15); (6) remembrance that God is Lord of the sea (vv. 16–20).

77:1, 2 stretched out: Asaph was in such need that he held his hand out before the Lord throughout the night (63:4; 134:1, 2). All the while, he groaned and complained as he remembered God. What he knew of God contrasted with what he was experiencing. The more the psalmist thought about these things, the more troubled he became.

77:4–6 You hold my eyelids open: Asaph could not sleep (63:6). Through the night he thought about his situation and his past (vv. 4–6), but most importantly he turned to God. First he cries out to the Lord in anguish (vv. 7–9). But then his focus changes; he reminds himself of the power of God and all the miraculous things the Lord has done (vv. 10–20).

77:9 Wondering if God is finished with him, Asaph asks if the Lord will ever show mercy to him again. Each of the verses presents painful questions; perhaps none as difficult as the one in v. 9: **Has God**

forgotten to be gracious? Asaph was at the depths of despair.

77:11–13 I will remember the works of the Lord: Asaph made a conscious decision to turn from his pain and focus his thoughts on the person, works, and wonders of God. His first focus is on the incomparability of God. **Who is so great a God as our God?** With this question Asaph reminds himself that the living God cannot be compared to any other god or power. This wondrous God demonstrated His power in a variety of ways, but especially in the redemption of Israel from Egypt.

77:16–18 Asaph now turns his thoughts to God's sovereignty over the powers of the sea, His control over the **waters** and the **depths** (74:12–15; 93:1–5). Moreover, the Almighty controls the **skies**, for a storm as depicted in these verses is merely a response to His strength. **Your arrows** is a poetic description of lightning.

77:19 This verse presents images of God as the Lord of the storm (vv. 16–18) and the sea, walking on the waters. The term **great waters** may be rephrased "many waters" (18:16; 32:6; 144:7). The point is that the waters are no threat to God, for they are merely another pathway for Him to walk.

77:20 God is Lord of His people. He is the Shepherd who leads His **flock**, as He has done from the time of **Moses and Aaron**. Lost in contemplation of the greatness of God, the poet seems thoroughly distracted from his pain. He does not mention it again, not daring to compare it to the greatness of the Almighty.

PSALM 78

*God's Kindness to Rebellious Israel*A ^aContemplation¹ of Asaph.

- G**ive ear, O my people, *to* my law;
Incline your ears to the words of
my mouth.
- ² I will open my mouth in a ^bparable;
I will utter ²dark sayings of old,
- ³ Which we have heard and known,
And our fathers have told us.
- ⁴ ^cWe will not hide *them* from their
children,
^dTelling to the generation to come the
praises of the LORD,
And His strength and His wonderful
works that He has done.
- ⁵ For ^eHe established a testimony in
Jacob,
And appointed a law in Israel,
Which He commanded our fathers,
That ^fthey should make them known
to their children;
- ⁶ ^gThat the generation to come might
know *them*,
The children *who* would be born,
That they may arise and declare *them*
to their children,
- ⁷ That they may set their hope in God,
And not forget the works of God,
But keep His commandments;
- ⁸ And ^hmay not be like their fathers,
ⁱA stubborn and rebellious generation,
A generation ^jthat did not ³set its
heart aright,
And whose spirit was not faithful to
God.

PSALM 78

title ^aPs. 74:title
¹Heb. *Maschil*
²^bMatt. 13:34, 35
²obscure sayings or
riddles
⁴^cEx. 12:26, 27;
Deut. 4:9; 6:7; Job
15:18; Is. 38:19; Joel
1:3 ^dEx. 13:8, 14
⁵^ePs. 147:19
^fDeut. 4:9; 11:19
⁶^gPs. 102:18
⁸^h2 Kin. 17:14;
2 Chr. 30:7; Ezek.
20:18 ⁱEx. 32:9;
Deut. 9:7, 24; 31:27;
Judg. 2:19; Is. 30:9
^jJob 11:13; Ps. 78:37
³Lit. *prepare its*
heart

⁹⁴Lit. *bow shooters*
¹⁰^k2 Kin. 17:15
¹¹^lPs. 106:13
¹²^mEx. 7–12
ⁿNum. 13:22; Is.
19:11; 30:4; Ezek.
30:14
¹³^oEx. 14:21 ^pEx.
15:8
¹⁴^qEx. 13:21
¹⁵^rEx. 17:6; Num.
20:11; Is. 48:21;
[1 Cor. 10:4]
¹⁶^sNum. 20:8,
10, 11
¹⁷^tDeut. 9:22; Is.
63:10; Heb. 3:16
¹⁸^uEx. 16:2
¹⁹^vEx. 16:3; Num.
11:4; 20:3; 21:5

- ⁹ The children of Ephraim, *being*
armed *and* ⁴carrying bows,
Turned back in the day of battle.
- ¹⁰ ^kThey did not keep the covenant of
God;
- They refused to walk in His law,
- ¹¹ And ^lforgot His works
And His wonders that He had shown
them.
- ¹² ^mMarvelous things He did in the sight
of their fathers,
In the land of Egypt, ⁿ*in* the field of
Zoan.
- ¹³ ^oHe divided the sea and caused them
to pass through;
And ^pHe made the waters stand up
like a heap.
- ¹⁴ ^qIn the daytime also He led them with
the cloud,
And all the night with a light of fire.
- ¹⁵ ^rHe split the rocks in the wilderness,
And gave *them* drink in abundance
like the depths.
- ¹⁶ He also brought ^sstreams out of the
rock,
And caused waters to run down like
rivers.
- ¹⁷ But they sinned even more against
Him
By ^trebellious against the Most High
in the wilderness.
- ¹⁸ And ^uthey tested God in their heart
By asking for the food of their fancy.
- ¹⁹ ^vYes, they spoke against God:
They said, "Can God prepare a table
in the wilderness?"

Psalms 78, a wisdom psalm, relates the early history of Israel in a dramatic poetic alternation between reports of the faithfulness of God to His people and of their periodic outbreaks of stubbornness, willfulness, and rebellion against Him. Asaph expresses an intense desire that the present generation not repeat the failures of so many past generations. The structure of the poem is as follows: (1) the lesson of the past works of God in Israel's history (vv. 1–4); (2) an exhortation for each generation to teach the next (vv. 5–8); (3) the rebellion of the people of Ephraim (vv. 9–11); (4) God's marvelous salvation of Israel in the Exodus (vv. 12–16); (5) the people's complaints (vv. 17–20); (6) God's anger against the ungrateful people (vv. 21–25); (7) God's judgment through the quail (vv. 26–31); (8) the continuing unbelief of the people (vv. 32, 33); (9) the people's remembrance of God's true character and God's remembrance of the people's weaknesses (vv. 34–39); (10) God's faithfulness and the people's unfaithfulness (vv. 40–55); (11) Israel's sins during the period of the judges (vv. 56–64); (12) God's victory over Israel's enemies (vv. 65, 66); (13) God's choice of Judah, Jerusalem, and David (vv. 67–72).

78:1, 2 The psalmist uses the vocabulary of the wisdom school to establish himself. **My law** is the familiar word *Torah*. The wisdom writers use this word to connote insight; their instruction is always in accord with the "instruction" of Moses (Prov. 1:8; 3:1; 4:2). The terms **parable** and **dark sayings** or riddles indicate sayings with "deeper meanings" or "teachings with a point" (Prov. 1:6). With the words **my people** the psalmist shows himself to be one with them even though he stands over them as their teacher.

78:3, 4 Asaph explains that the teaching was designed to be passed from one generation to the next, so that each generation would contribute to **the praises of the Lord**. The phrase **His strength and His wonderful works** means "His extraordinarily wonderful works."

78:5, 6 The **testimony** God established was a lasting procedure, a means whereby one generation would pass on to the next the need to know the Lord. **the generation to come**: The psalm will make the point that the generations had not handed on the teaching as they should have.

78:8 Because **their fathers** did not believe in God, the present generation needs to be different from their predecessors.

78:9 Asaph's first illustration of the faithlessness of previous generations is taken from an incident in which the people of **Ephraim** rejected God. The poet may be referring to Ephraim's conflict with Jephthah (Judg. 12:1–7).

78:12–16 The poet celebrates the **marvelous things** God did for Israel in delivering them from Egypt, especially at the crossing of the Red Sea (Ex. 14), the signs of God's presence with His people (Ex. 13:21), and the bringing of water from the rock in the wilderness (Ex. 17:1–7; Num. 20:1–13).

78:17, 18 The Hebrew word translated **rebellious** here is translated *provoked* in two other places in this poem (vv. 40, 56). **food of their fancy**: This derivative language is used to describe the outrageous ungratefulness of the Israelites as they clamored for food and water in the wilderness.

20^w Behold, He struck the rock,
So that the waters gushed out,
And the streams overflowed.
Can He give bread also?
Can He provide meat for His
people?"

21 Therefore the LORD heard *this* and
^xwas furious;
So a fire was kindled against Jacob,
And anger also came up against
Israel,

22 Because they ^ydid not believe in God,
And did not trust in His salvation.

23 Yet He had commanded the clouds
above,

^zAnd opened the doors of heaven,

24^a Had rained down manna on them to
eat,
And given them of the ⁵bread of
^bheaven.

25 Men ate angels' food;
He sent them food to ⁶the full.

26^c He caused an east wind to blow in
the heavens;
And by His power He brought in the
south wind.

27 He also rained meat on them like the
dust,
Feathered fowl like the sand of the
seas;

28 And He let *them* fall in the midst of
their camp,
All around their dwellings.

29^d So they ate and were well filled,
For He gave them their own desire.

30 They were not ⁷deprived of their
craving;
But ^ewhile their food *was* still in
their mouths,

31 The wrath of God came against
them,
And slew the stoutest of them,
And struck down the choice *men* of
Israel.

20 ^w Num. 20:11
21 ^x Num. 11:1
22 ^y Deut. 1:32;
9:23; [Heb. 3:18]
23 ^z Gen. 7:11; [Mal.
3:10]
24 ^a Ex. 16:4 ^b John
6:31 ⁵ Lit. *grain*
25 ⁶ *satiation*
26 ^c Num. 11:31
29 ^d Num. 11:19, 20
30 ^e Num. 11:33
⁷ Lit. *separated*

32 ^f Num. 14:16, 17
^g Num. 14:11; Ps.
78:11, 22
33 ^h Num. 14:29, 35
34 ⁱ Num. 21:7;
[Hos. 5:15]
35 ^j [Deut. 32:4,
15] ^k [Ex. 15:13];
Deut. 7:8; Is. 41:14;
44:6; 63:9
36 ^l Ex. 24:7, 8; Ezek.
33:31
38 ^m [Num. 14:18-
20] ⁿ Ex. 34:6 ^o [Is.
48:9] ^p 1 Kin. 21:29
39 ^q Job 10:9; Ps.
103:14-16 ^r John
3:6 ^s [Job 7:7, 16;
James 4:14]
40 ^t Ps. 95:8-10;
[Eph. 4:30]; Heb.
3:16 ^u *rebelled*
against Him
41 ^v Num. 14:22;
Deut. 6:16
42 ⁹ Lit. *hand*

32 In spite of this ^fthey still sinned,
And ^gdid not believe in His
wondrous works.

33^h Therefore their days He consumed in
futility,
And their years in fear.

34ⁱ When He slew them, then they
sought Him;
And they returned and sought
earnestly for God.

35 Then they remembered that ^jGod
was their rock,
And the Most High God ^ktheir
Redeemer.

36 Nevertheless they ^lflattered Him
with their mouth,
And they lied to Him with their
tongue;

37 For their heart was not steadfast
with Him,
Nor were they faithful in His
covenant.

38^m But He, *being* full of ⁿcompassion,
forgave *their* iniquity,
And did not destroy *them*.

Yes, many a time ^oHe turned His
anger away,

And ^pdid not stir up all His wrath;

39 For ^qHe remembered ^rthat they *were*

but flesh,
^sA breath that passes away and does
not come again.

40 How often they ^tprovoked ⁸Him in
the wilderness,
And grieved Him in the desert!

41 Yes, ^uagain and again they tempted
God,

And limited the Holy One of Israel.

42 They did not remember His ⁹power:
The day when He redeemed them
from the enemy,

43 When He worked His signs in Egypt,
And His wonders in the field of
Zoan;

78:21–25 God's **anger** against His people centered on their lack of faith and **trust** in Him, evidenced by their contempt for the manna He gave them. The poet refers to God's manna as the **bread of heaven** and **angels' food**. The Israelites audaciously rejected the food of angels.

78:29 **For He gave them their own desire**: People of true faith will seek God's will and respond in grateful praise. Self-centered people will simply complain and suffer the result.

78:32, 33 **In spite of this**: The poet says that the people had suffered enough from their ingratitude to have learned the lesson of faith. Unfortunately, they had *not* learned. So God determined that they would not enter the land of Canaan but would spend their days **in futility**.

78:34, 35 The people tended to remember the true character of God only when pressed to do so by His judgments; but God always remembered (v. 39) the frail nature of the people. The image of God as a **rock** is found in Moses (Deut. 32:4) and is developed elsewhere in the Psalms (61:2; 62:2, 7; 91:1, 2; 144:1). God as **Redeemer** is the

Savior, who rescued Israel from Egypt just as He also delivered them from their sins (19:14; Is. 41:14; 44:6). The title **Most High God** emphasizes the majesty and power of God. God surpasses all powers, all creation, and nothing can be compared to Him. It is utter folly for a person to shake a small fist at the Most High. This title is found three times in this psalm (vv. 17, 35, 56); it is also found in 7:17; 9:2; 18:13; 21:7; 46:4; 50:14; 56:2; 57:2; 73:11; 77:10; 82:6; 83:18; 87:5; 91:1; 92:1; 107:11.

78:38 **full of compassion**: The awesome transcendence of the Lord is complemented in this section (v. 35) by an emphasis on His compassionate mercy.

78:40–42 The verb translated **provoked** here is used three times in this psalm (*rebell* in v. 17; see also v. 56). Even though God had showered blessings on His people, they provoked Him with their contempt and ingratitude. **The Holy One of Israel** (89:18) is a phrase particularly favored by the prophet Isaiah (Is. 1:4; 5:24).

78:43–55 This section is a poetic retelling of the way God helped Israel in Egypt and during the wilderness years. Verses 43–51 recount

44 ^v Turned their rivers into blood,
And their streams, that they could
not drink.

45 ^w He sent swarms of flies among them,
which devoured them,
And ^x frogs, which destroyed them.

46 He also gave their crops to the
caterpillar,
And their labor to the ^y locust.

47 ^z He destroyed their vines with
hail,
And their sycamore trees with
frost.

48 He also gave up their ^a cattle to the
hail,
And their flocks to fiery ¹ lightning.

49 He cast on them the fierceness of His
anger,
Wrath, indignation, and trouble,
By sending angels of destruction
among them.

50 He made a path for His anger;
He did not spare their soul from
death,
But gave ² their life over to the
plague,

51 And destroyed all the ^b firstborn in
Egypt,
The first of *their* strength in the tents
of Ham.

52 But He ^c made His own people go
forth like sheep,
And guided them in the wilderness
like a flock;

53 And He ^d led them on safely, so that
they did not fear;
But the sea ^e overwhelmed their
enemies.

54 And He brought them to His ^f holy
border,
This mountain ^g *which* His right hand
had acquired.

55 ^h He also drove out the nations before
them,
ⁱ Allotted them an inheritance by
³ survey,
And made the tribes of Israel dwell
in their tents.

56 ^j Yet they tested and provoked the
Most High God,
And did not keep His testimonies,

44 ^v Ex. 7:20
45 ^w Ex. 8:24
^x Ex. 8:6
46 ^y Ex. 10:14
47 ^z Ex. 9:23-25
48 ^a Ex. 9:19
¹ lightning bolts
50 ² Or their beasts
51 ^b Ex. 12:29, 30
52 ^c Ps. 77:20
53 ^d Ex. 14:19, 20
^e Ex. 14:27, 28
54 ^f Ex. 15:17 ^g Ps.
44:3
55 ^h Josh. 11:16-23;
Ps. 44:2 ⁱ Josh.
13:7; 19:51;
23:4 ³ surveyed
measurement, lit.
measuring cord
56 ^j Judg. 2:11-13

57 But ^k turned back and acted
unfaithfully like their fathers;
They were turned aside ^l like a
deceitful bow.

58 ^m For they provoked Him to anger with
their ⁿ high places,
And moved Him to jealousy with
their carved images.

59 When God heard *this*, He was
furious,
And greatly abhorred Israel,

60 ^o So that He forsook the tabernacle of
Shiloh,
The tent He had placed among men,

61 ^p And delivered His strength into
captivity,
And His glory into the enemy's
hand.

62 ^q He also gave His people over to the
sword,
And was furious with His
inheritance.

63 The fire consumed their young men,
And ^r their maidens were not given
in marriage.

64 ^s Their priests fell by the sword,
And ^t their widows made no
lamentation.

65 Then the Lord awoke as *from*
sleep,
^u Like a mighty man who shouts
because of wine.

66 And ^v He beat back His enemies;
He put them to a perpetual reproach.

67 Moreover He rejected the tent of
Joseph,
And did not choose the tribe of
Ephraim,

68 But chose the tribe of Judah,
Mount Zion ^w which He loved.

69 And He built His ^x sanctuary like the
heights,
Like the earth which He has
established forever.

70 ^y He also chose David His servant,
And took him from the sheepfolds;

71 From following ^z the ewes that had
young He brought him,
^a To shepherd Jacob His people,
And Israel His inheritance.

57 ^k Ezek. 20:27, 28
^l Hos. 7:16
58 ^m Deut. 32:16,
21; Judg. 2:12; 1 Kin.
14:9; Is. 65:3 ⁿ Deut.
12:2
60 ^o 1 Sam. 4:11; Jer.
7:12-14; 26:6-9
61 ^p Judg. 18:30
62 ^q Judg. 20:21;
1 Sam. 4:10
63 ^r Jer. 7:34; 16:9;
25:10
64 ^s 1 Sam. 4:17;
22:18 ^t Job 27:15;
Ezek. 24:23
65 ^u Is. 42:13
66 ^v 1 Sam. 5:6
68 ^w [Ps. 87:2]
69 ^x 1 Kin. 6:1-38
70 ^y 1 Sam. 16:11,
12; 2 Sam. 7:8
71 ^z 2 Sam. 7:8; [Is.
40:11] ^a 2 Sam. 5:2;
1 Chr. 11:2

the ten plagues of Ex. 7-12, and vv. 52, 53 speak of the deliverance of Israel at the Red Sea (Ex. 14). Verse 54 speaks of the experience at Mt. Sinai, and v. 55 summarizes the conquest of the land of Canaan. **78:56 Tested and provoked** may be rephrased "thoroughly provoked." The title **Most High** is used three times in this poem (vv. 17, 35), as is the Hebrew word for *provoked* (vv. 17, 40). The two words emphasize the seriousness of the Israelites' action; they were rebelling against their Creator, the Ruler of the entire universe. **78:58-64** A different Hebrew word from the one used in v. 56 is used for **provoked** here, but it conveys the same idea. **High places** refers to the places where the Canaanites worshiped Baal

and other fertility gods. **Carved images** were fertility symbols from Canaanite cults. The reference to **Shiloh** places this period of Israel's apostasy in the latter period of the judges (1 Sam. 1:3). **His strength** and **His glory** are unusual ways of speaking of the ark of the covenant, which was lost to the Philistines during the battle of Aphek (1 Sam. 4:1-11). At this time the suffering of the people was acute, including even the deaths of **priests** (1 Sam. 4:17, 18). **78:68, 69** The choice of **Judah** over the other tribes and of **Zion** over other cities is explained only in terms of God's sovereignty and love. The description of the **sanctuary** suggests that this psalm was written after Solomon's temple was built.

72 So he shepherded them according to the ^bintegrity of his heart,
And guided them by the skillfulness of his hands.

PSALM 79

*A Dirge and a Prayer for Israel,
Destroyed by Enemies*

A Psalm of Asaph.

O God, the ¹nations have come into
^aYour inheritance;
Your holy temple they have defiled;
^bThey have laid Jerusalem ²in heaps.

72 ^b 1 Kin. 9:4

PSALM 79

1 ^a Ps. 74:2 ^b 2 Kin. 25:9, 10; 2 Chr. 36:17-19; Jer. 26:18; 52:12-14; Mic. 3:12
¹ Gentiles ² in ruins

2 ^c Deut. 28:26; Jer. 7:33; 19:7; 34:20

4 ^d Ps. 44:13; [Dan. 9:16]

5 ^e Ps. 74:1, 9

2 ^cThe dead bodies of Your servants
They have given *as* food for the birds
of the heavens,
The flesh of Your saints to the beasts
of the earth.
3 Their blood they have shed like
water all around Jerusalem,
And *there was* no one to bury them.
4 We have become a reproach to our
^dneighbors,
A scorn and derision to those who
are around us.
5 ^eHow long, LORD?
Will You be angry forever?

78:72 The words of praise for David in v. 72 are very close to 1 Kin. 9:4, suggesting some connection between the two passages. The shepherding attributed to David is an ideal; it will be fully realized in the Savior King, Jesus, the true Good Shepherd (Ps. 23; John 10). **Psalm 79**, a lament of the community (see Ps. 80), was written in response to an attack on the city of Jerusalem and the sacking of the holy temple. In these respects this psalm is similar to Ps. 74. It is possible that the event behind the psalm was the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians; however, it may have been an earlier, less final devastation. The development of the poem is as follows: (1) a lament for the devastation of Jerusalem (vv. 1-4); (2) a call for God to punish the enemies of Judah and Jerusalem (vv. 5-7); (3) a plea for forgiveness and deliverance (vv. 8-10); (4) a prayer for God

to help His people and judge their enemies (vv. 11, 12); (5) a vow of praise in anticipation of the Lord's deliverance (v. 13). **79:1 the nations have come:** The words of this section are quite similar in tone to 74:1-8. **Your holy temple:** It is not clear whether the destruction described in this verse was what the Babylonians did in 586 B.C. The ruin of Jerusalem—it was **in heaps**—may indicate an invasion of the land prior to its total destruction. **79:2-4** The lament over the dead defenders of Jerusalem is similar to the words of Jer. 7:32-34; Lam. 4:1-10. **reproach . . . derision:** The wording is very close to 44:13. **79:5** The question **how long** is a standard element in the lament psalms (13:1, 2; 80:4). The question is based on the Lord's eternal character. Since God is eternal, Asaph asks, will He be **angry forever?**

Psalms of Lament



In the lament psalms, we hear the strong, emotional words of sufferers. These are words written by real people in very difficult situations. Sometimes the forcefulness of the psalmists' complaints against God is shocking. But these godly sufferers know that God will not be angry with their honesty, for even when they scream at God, it is a scream of faith. The following is the basic structure of the psalms of lament:

- | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. An introductory cry | 4. Reasons for God to act |
| 2. The lament proper | 5. Petitions |
| • I am hurting | • Hear me |
| • You do not care | • Save me |
| • The enemy is winning | • Punish them |
| 3. A confession of trust | 6. A vow to praise God |

The introductory cry can be very brief—just an “O God,” as in 79:1. This is the psalmist's cry of distress to the living God who will act on his behalf once again—even as He has done in the past.

The lament proper often consists of three parts. The first part introduces the pain and hurt that the psalmist is experiencing (6:6). The second part of the lament is the most astonishing, for in this part the psalmist addresses God directly. Often, God is accused of inattention, forgetfulness, or no longer caring about the psalmist and his plight (13:1). In the third part, the psalmist describes the success of the wicked (10:3-11). The wicked present two intolerable problems to the psalmist: one is the personal attack upon the psalmist, a friend of God; and the other is what this evil attack means for the reputation of God.

In the lament psalms, these complaints are followed by statements of trust. The confession of trust shows that the psalmist still believes in God—even when his faith is under assault by the evils of the world, the pressures of advisors, and nagging doubts. In the middle of his painful situation, the psalmist reminds himself of God's care for him in the past (13:5).

Many of the lament psalms contain a section giving further reasons for God to act. Here the psalmist describes in more detail his own situation, the acts of the wicked, or the consequences to his life and to the community of believers if the Lord does not deliver him from his distress.

On the basis of a renewed trust in the Lord, the psalmist presents his petitions. He calls out to God to listen to him, to deliver him (71:2), and to punish his enemies, who mock his faith in God (71:13). Finally, the psalm concludes with a vow of praise. The psalmist promises to praise God before the congregation when God delivers him from his plight (9:14).

The psalms of lament are a model of godly response to suffering. The Lord does not expect us to remain stoic when we face suffering. We can pour out our souls to the Lord. However in the middle of our cry, we must remember God's loving care for us in the past so we can willingly trust Him with the future. With this type of response, we can renew our hope in the living Lord.

- Will Your ^fjealousy burn like fire?
⁶ *g* Pour out Your wrath on the ³ nations
 that ^h do not know You,
 And on the kingdoms that ⁱ do not
 call on Your name.
⁷ For they have devoured Jacob,
 And laid waste his dwelling place.
⁸ *j* Oh, do not remember ⁴ former
 iniquities against us!
 Let Your tender mercies come
 speedily to meet us,
 For we have been brought very low.
⁹ Help us, O God of our salvation,
 For the glory of Your name;
 And deliver us, and provide
 atonement for our sins,
^h For Your name's sake!
¹⁰ *k* Why should the ⁵ nations say,
 "Where *is* their God?"
 Let there be known among the
 nations in our sight
 The avenging of the blood of Your
 servants *which has been* shed.
¹¹ Let ^m the groaning of the prisoner
 come before You;
 According to the greatness of Your
⁶ power
 Preserve those who are appointed to
 die;
¹² And return to our neighbors
ⁿ sevenfold into their bosom
^o Their reproach with which they have
 reproached You, O Lord.
¹³ So ^p we, Your people and sheep of
 Your pasture,
 Will give You thanks forever;

⁵ ^f [Zeph. 3:8]
⁶ ^g Jer. 10:25;
 [Zeph. 3:8] ^h Is.
 45:4, 5; 1 Thess. 4:5;
 [2 Thess. 1:8] ⁱ Ps.
 53:4 ³ *Gentiles*
⁸ ^j Is. 64:9 ⁴ Or
against us the
iniquities of those
who were before us
⁹ ^k Jer. 14:7, 21
¹⁰ ^l Ps. 42:10
⁵ *Gentiles*
¹¹ ^m Ps. 102:20
⁶ *Lit. arm*
¹² ⁿ Gen. 4:15; Lev.
 26:21; Prov. 6:31; Is.
 30:26 ^o Ps. 74:10,
 18, 22
¹³ ^p Ps. 74:1; 95:7

^q Is. 43:21

PSALM 80

title ^a Ps. 45: title
¹ Heb. *Shoshannim*
² Heb. *Eduth*
¹ ^b [Ex. 25:20–22];
 1 Sam. 4:4; 2 Sam.
 6:2 ^c Ps. 77:20
^d Deut. 33:2
² ^e Ps. 78:9, 67
³ ^f Lam. 5:21
^g Num. 6:25; Ps. 4:6
⁴ ^h Ps. 79:5
⁵ ⁱ Ps. 42:3; Is. 30:20

^a We will show forth Your praise to all
 generations.

PSALM 80

Prayer for Israel's Restoration

To the Chief Musician. ^a Set to ¹ "The Lilies."
 A ² Testimony of Asaph. A Psalm.

- G**ive ear, O Shepherd of Israel,
^b You who lead Joseph ^c like a
 flock;
 You who dwell *between* the cherubim,
^d shine forth!
² Before ^e Ephraim, Benjamin, and
 Manasseh,
 Stir up Your strength,
 And come *and* save us!
³ ^f Restore us, O God;
^g Cause Your face to shine,
 And we shall be saved!
⁴ O LORD God of hosts,
^h How long will You be angry
 Against the prayer of Your
 people?
⁵ ⁱ You have fed them with the bread of
 tears,
 And given them tears to drink in
 great measure.
⁶ You have made us a strife to our
 neighbors,
 And our enemies laugh among
 themselves.
⁷ Restore us, O God of hosts;
 Cause Your face to shine,
 And we shall be saved!

79:6, 7 Pour out Your wrath: An imprecation or curse on one's enemies is often found in the psalms of lament (Ps. 137). Vengeance is left to the Lord, but such a call for vengeance is based in part on the covenant provisions God had established with Abraham. God had promised to curse those who cursed Abraham's descendants (Gen. 12:2, 3).

79:10 The appeal is based on the character of God as expressed by His name (Ex. 3:14, 15; 6:2, 3). Another basis for the poet's appeal is the international reputation of God (42:10). If God delivered the Israelites, His power would be demonstrated to all the nations.

79:11, 12 Groaning may also be translated *crying*. **Your power** refers to the powerful, outstretched arm of God that had delivered Israel from Egypt (Ex. 6:6). **Reproach** refers to an insult or taunt (74:10, 18, 22).

79:13 Sheep of Your pasture describes the Israelites. God's care for the Israelites was so great that they were called His sheep (77:20; 95:7; 100:3). The people vowed to bring **thanks**, or public acknowledgment (35:18; 105:1), and **praise** to God.

Psalm 80, a lament of the community, has especially powerful imagery. The psalm is marked by two metaphors for Israel in its relation to God: (1) the flock of the Good Shepherd; (2) the vine of the True Vinedresser. Both of these metaphors are used by Jesus of His people in the NT (John 10; 15). This is one of Asaph's psalms (Ps. 50; 73–83) and is set to the tune "The Lilies" (Ps. 45; 69). The structure of the poem is as follows: (1) a call for the Shepherd of Israel to restore the distressed (vv. 1–3); (2) a complaint concerning

the Lord's anger against His people (vv. 4–7); (3) the metaphor of a vine (vv. 8–13); (4) an appeal for God to return, revive, and restore Israel (vv. 14–19).

80:1, 2 O Shepherd of Israel is reminiscent of the teaching of Ps. 23 and points forward to the teaching of John 10. God's pattern is to **lead** His people as a shepherd might lead a **flock**. **between the cherubim:** In the Most Holy Place, the ark of the covenant was topped by the mercy seat on which were two cherubim, heavenly symbols of the throne of God (Ex. 25:22). **shine forth:** After Moses had been in close proximity to the Lord, his own face was transformed by a resplendent glow (Ex. 34:29–35). Here the appeal means that the Lord should make His presence known in a saving manner. The tribes **Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh** may be representative of the whole nation. Ephraim was in the north; Benjamin was where Jerusalem was located; Manasseh was partly across the Jordan.

80:3 Cause Your face to shine is reminiscent of the priestly benediction, "The LORD make His face shine upon you" (Num. 6:25).

80:4, 5 Since their request for deliverance has seemed to go unanswered, the people ask whether God's anger is directed even **against their prayer**. The phrases **bread of tears** and **tears to drink** refer to the manna and water that God provided for Israel in the wilderness. The idea is that God had given the people of past generations nourishing food; but the people of this generation have only their tearful despair.



Euphrates

The Euphrates is the longest river of Western Asia and one of two major rivers in Mesopotamia. The river begins in the mountains of Armenia in modern-day Turkey, heads west toward the Mediterranean Sea, turns to the south, swings in a wide bow through Syria, and then flows a thousand miles southeast to join the Tigris River before it empties into the Persian Gulf. The ruins of many ancient cities are located along the river in Iraq—Babylon, Eridu, Kish, Larsa, Nippur, Sippar, and Ur.

In the Bible the Euphrates appears in both Genesis (Gen. 2:14) and Revelation (Rev. 9:14, 16:12). It is referred to as “the River Euphrates,” “the great river Euphrates,” or simply as “the River.” The Euphrates formed the northern boundary of the territories promised by God to Israel (Gen. 15:18; Josh. 1:4). David attempted to expand the boundaries of his kingdom to this river (2 Sam. 8:3).



Canyon of the Euphrates River, Turkey

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- 8 You have brought ⁱa vine out of Egypt;
^kYou have cast out the ³nations, and
planted it.
- 9 You prepared *room* for it,
And caused it to take deep root,
And it filled the land.
- 10 The hills were covered with its
shadow,
And the ⁴mighty cedars with its
^lboughs.
- 11 She sent out her boughs to ⁵the Sea,
And her branches to ⁶the River.
- 12 Why have You ^mbroken down her
⁷hedges,
So that all who pass by the way
pluck her *fruit*?
- 13 The boar out of the woods uproots it,
And the wild beast of the field
devours it.
- 14 Return, we beseech You, O God of
hosts;
ⁿLook down from heaven and see,
And visit this vine
- 15 And the vineyard which Your right
hand has planted,

8 / [Is. 5:1, 7]; Jer. 2:21; Ezek. 15:6; 17:6; 19:10 ^k Ps. 44:2; Acts 7:45
³ Gentiles
10 ⁱ Lev. 23:40 ⁴ Lit. cedars of God
11 ⁵ The Mediterranean
⁶ The Euphrates
12 ^m Is. 5:5; Nah. 2:2
⁷ walls or fences
14 ⁿ Is. 63:15

15 ^o [Is. 49:5]
16 ^p [Ps. 39:11]
17 ^q Ps. 89:21

PSALM 81

title ^a Ps. 8: title
¹ Heb. *Al Gittith*

- And the branch *that* You made
strong ^a for Yourself.
- 16 *It is* burned with fire, *it is* cut down;
^pThey perish at the rebuke of Your
countenance.
- 17 ^qLet Your hand be upon the man of
Your right hand,
Upon the son of man *whom* You
made strong for Yourself.
- 18 Then we will not turn back from
You;
Revive us, and we will call upon
Your name.
- 19 Restore us, O LORD God of hosts;
Cause Your face to shine,
And we shall be saved!

PSALM 81

An Appeal for Israel's Repentance

To the Chief Musician. ^a On ¹ an instrument
of Gath. A Psalm of Asaph.

Sing aloud to God our strength;
Make a joyful shout to the God of
Jacob.

80:8–11 God's bringing the Israelites from **Egypt** to Canaan is compared to transplanting **a vine**. The vine grew phenomenally, so that it **filled the land** and reached to the Mediterranean **Sea** and the Euphrates **River**. These expansions of the Lord's vine occurred during the reigns of David and Solomon.

80:12 But then there came a dramatic change. The Lord broke **down her hedges**—that is, He removed Israel's protective walls. Israel became weak, subject to all kinds of assaults.

80:14–17 **Look down from heaven:** The appeal is for the heavenly Vinedresser to observe the sorry state of His vine. The Hebrew word translated **visit** can describe a gracious visit of the Lord (65:9)

or a visit in judgment. Of course, the prayer offered is for a merciful visit from Israel's Protector. The appeal is for God to use His **right hand** (Ex. 15:6) to restore what He had **planted**. The Hebrew term for **vineyard** is used only here in the Bible; it literally means “root-stock.” **Branch** means “son”; it is the same Hebrew word translated *son of man* in v. 17. The nation of Israel was God's own son (Ex. 4:22). **80:18** **Revive us** is a call for new life from God's Spirit. **we will call upon Your name:** In response to God's work of deliverance, the poet promises renewed praise centered on the *name* of God. **Psalm 81** begins as a psalm of praise and becomes a psalm of admonition (Ps. 50), in which the voice of the Lord Himself is heard

- 2 Raise a song and strike the timbrel,
The pleasant harp with the lute.
- 3 Blow the trumpet at the time of the New Moon,
At the full moon, on our solemn feast day.
- 4 For ^bthis is a statute for Israel,
A law of the God of Jacob.
- 5 This He established in Joseph as a testimony,
When He went throughout the land of Egypt,
^cWhere I heard a language I did not understand.
- 6 “I removed his shoulder from the burden;
His hands were freed from the baskets.
- 7 ^dYou called in trouble, and I delivered you;
^eI answered you in the secret place of thunder;
I ^ftested you at the waters of ²Meribah. *Selah*
- 8 “Hear,^g O My people, and I will admonish you!
O Israel, if you will listen to Me!
- 9 There shall be no ^hforeign god among you;
Nor shall you worship any foreign god.
- 10 ⁱI am the LORD your God,
Who brought you out of the land of Egypt;

4 ^a Lev. 23:24; Num. 10:10
5 ^c Deut. 28:49; Ps. 114:1; Jer. 5:15
7 ^d Ex. 2:23; 14:10; Ps. 50:15 ^e Ex. 19:19; 20:18 ^f Ex. 17:6, 7; Num. 20:13 ² Lit. *Strife or Contention*
8 ^g [Ps. 50:7]
9 ^h [Ex. 20:3; Deut. 5:7; 32:12]; Ps. 44:20; [Is. 43:12]
10 ⁱ Ex. 20:2; Deut. 5:6

/ Ps. 103:5
11 ^k Ex. 32:1; Deut. 32:15
12 ^l [Job 8:4; Acts 7:42; Rom. 1:24, 26] ³ the dictates of their heart
13 ^m [Deut. 5:29; Is. 48:18]
15 ⁿ Rom. 1:30 ⁴ Lit. *time*
16 ^o Deut. 32:14
^p Job 29:6 ⁵ Lit. *fat of wheat*

PSALM 82

1 ^a [2 Chr. 19:6; Eccl. 5:8] ^b Ps. 82:6 ¹ Heb. *El*, lit. *God* ² Judges; Heb. *elohim*, lit. *mighty ones or gods*
2 ^c [Deut. 1:17]; Prov. 18:5

- ^jOpen your mouth wide, and I will fill it.
- 11 “But My people would not heed My voice,
And Israel would *have* ^knone of Me.
- 12 ^lSo I gave them over to ³their own stubborn heart,
To walk in their own counsels.
- 13 “Oh,^m that My people would listen to Me,
That Israel would walk in My ways!
- 14 I would soon subdue their enemies,
And turn My hand against their adversaries.
- 15 ⁿThe haters of the LORD would pretend submission to Him,
But their ⁴fate would endure forever.
- 16 He would ^ohave fed them also with ⁵the finest of wheat;
And with honey ^pfrom the rock I would have satisfied you.”

PSALM 82

A Plea for Justice

A Psalm of Asaph.

- GOD ^astands in the congregation of ¹the mighty;
He judges among ^bthe ²gods.
- 2 How long will you judge unjustly,
And ^cshow partiality to the wicked?
Selah

(Ps. 75). The structure of the poem is as follows: (1) a call for the people to praise the Lord (vv. 1, 2); (2) a command for the people to celebrate the New Moon festival (vv. 3–5); (3) the Lord's report of His deliverance of His people (vv. 6, 7); (4) the Lord's admonition concerning idolatry (vv. 8–10); (5) the Lord's description of Israel's failure to obey Him (vv. 11, 12); (6) the Lord's lamentation of Israel's failure to obey (vv. 13–16).

81:1 Sing aloud . . . Make a joyful shout: The energy level of this psalm is similar to that of other psalms of praise (33:1–3; 35:27, 28; 66:1–4; 95:1, 2; 100:1, 2). The use of voices and instruments to praise God is a standard element of joyful worship in the Psalms (Ps. 149; 150).

81:3–5 The New Moon festival is mentioned in association with the Feast of Trumpets (Num. 29:6). Regulations for this festival can be found in the instructions to the Levites during the time of David (1 Chr. 23:31) and Solomon (2 Chr. 2:4). This psalm seems to be a basic instruction on the festival. **a statute . . . A law . . . a testimony:** The language and regulations of this passage are as solemn as any in the Torah. The basis for the New Moon festival was the salvation of Israel from Egypt. **a language:** As in 114:1, there is a disdain for the history, culture, and language of Egypt.

81:6, 7 his shoulder . . . His hands: This is a poetic way of describing how God delivered His people from the Egyptian taskmasters (Ex. 1). **I answered you:** The Lord's appearance to Moses on Mt. Sinai was God's great revelation of Himself (Ex. 19; 20).

81:8–10 The phrase translated **I will admonish you** is also found in 50:7, where it is translated “I will testify against you.” The basic

stipulation of the first commandment is repeated: there must be **no foreign god** among the Israelites (Ex. 20:3). God's great description of His own saving work for the Israelites is quoted from Ex. 20:2. Then the Lord invites His people to **open** their **mouth** so that He can meet their needs (v. 16).

81:11, 12 The people's resistance to obeying God led to their punishment. God identifies the root of the people's problem as **their own stubborn heart**. They wanted to follow their own ways and refused to listen to God.

Psalm 82 is a wisdom psalm. The structure of the psalm is as follows: (1) God's call for the judges of the earth to appear in the heavenly assembly (vv. 1, 2); (2) God's review of His commands to the judges of the earth (vv. 3, 4); (3) God's hearing of the complaint of the oppressed (v. 5); (4) God's announcement of His judgment on the judges of the earth (vv. 6, 7); (5) the prayer of the people of the earth for divine justice (v. 8).

82:1, 2 The congregation of the mighty refers to an assembly before God. As a wisdom writer, the poet Asaph uses the language of Job 1, Ps. 110, and Is. 6 as a teaching device to present a morality tale. Asaph describes the wicked judges of all time gathering before God and His angels to give an accounting of themselves. **gods:** The Hebrew word may refer to the true God or to false gods. Here it is the judges of the earth (see also v. 6). Asaph uses this honorific term sarcastically to express his contempt for the evil judges. **judge unjustly:** The unrighteous judges had perverted their calling, which was to represent God Himself by establishing justice on the earth.

- ³ ³ Defend the poor and fatherless;
Do justice to the afflicted and
^dneedy.
- ⁴ Deliver the poor and needy;
Free *them* from the hand of the
wicked.
- ⁵ They do not know, nor do they
understand;
They walk about in darkness;
All the ^efoundations of the earth are
⁴unstable.
- ⁶ I said, ^f“You *are* ⁵gods,
And all of you *are* children of the
Most High.
- ⁷ But you shall die like men,
And fall like one of the princes.”
- ⁸ Arise, O God, judge the earth;
^gFor You shall inherit all nations.

PSALM 83

Prayer to Frustrate Conspiracy Against Israel

A Song. A Psalm of Asaph.

- D**^o ^anot keep silent, O God!
Do not hold Your peace,
And do not be still, O God!
- ² For behold, ^bYour enemies make a
¹tumult;
And those who hate You have ²lifted
up their head.
- ³ They have taken crafty counsel
against Your people,

³ ^d[Deut. 24:17;
Is. 11:4; Jer. 22:16]
³ Vindicate
⁵ ^ePs. 11:3 ⁴ moved
⁶ ^fJohn 10:34
⁵ Judges; Heb.
elohim, lit. mighty
ones or gods
⁸ ^gPs. 2:8; [Rev.
11:15]

PSALM 83

¹ ^a Ps. 28:1
² ^b Ps. 81:15; Is.
7:22; Acts 4:25
¹ uproar ² Exalted
themselves

³ ^c [Ps. 27:5]
⁴ ^d Esth. 3:6, 9; Jer.
11:19; 31:36
⁵ ³ Lit. heart ⁴ Lit.
cut a covenant
⁶ ^e 2 Chr. 20:1,
10, 11
⁹ ^f Num. 31:7; Judg.
7:22 ^g Judg. 4:15-
24; 5:20, 21
¹⁰ ^h Zeph. 1:17
¹¹ ⁱ Judg. 7:25
ⁱ Judg. 8:12-21
¹³ ^k Is. 17:13 ^j Job
21:18; Ps. 35:5; Is.
40:24; Jer. 13:24

- And consulted together ^cagainst Your
sheltered ones.
- ⁴ They have said, “Come, and ^dlet us
cut them off from *being* a nation,
That the name of Israel may be
remembered no more.”
- ⁵ For they have consulted together
with one ³consent;
They ⁴form a confederacy against
You:
- ⁶ ^eThe tents of Edom and the
Ishmaelites;
Moab and the Hagrites;
⁷ Gebal, Ammon, and Amalek;
Philistia with the inhabitants of Tyre;
⁸ Assyria also has joined with them;
They have helped the children of Lot.
Selah
- ⁹ Deal with them as *with* ^fMidian,
As *with* ^gSisera,
As *with* Jabin at the Brook Kishon,
¹⁰ Who perished at En Dor,
^hWho became *as* refuse on the earth.
- ¹¹ Make their nobles like ⁱOreb and like
Zeeb,
Yes, all their princes like ^jZebah and
Zalmunna,
- ¹² Who said, “Let us take for ourselves
The pastures of God for a
possession.”
- ¹³ ^kO my God, make them like the
whirling dust,
^lLike the chaff before the wind!

82:3 God expects all judges to administer true justice. **Do justice:** These words summarize the teaching of the Law and indicate God’s basic desire that the defenseless would find a haven of justice in the courts.

82:5 They do not know is the collective sigh of oppressed people of all ages. Wicked judges act as if they did not care about their official responsibility or the judgment they will face for abusing it. **All the foundations of the earth are unstable:** In 11:3, the taunt of the wicked is that the earth’s foundations are destroyed. This is said to be untrue, for God is still in control. In this psalm, however, the situation is deemed unstable because of the profound wickedness of the judges.

82:6, 7 die like men: Jesus quoted these verses in His exchange with the religious authorities who wanted to stone Him for declaring Himself to be the Son of God (John 10:31–35).

82:8 Arise, O God: In view of the overwhelming disaster that wicked judges have created, the poor and afflicted of all time call out for the true Judge, God Himself to come. Their cry will not go unheeded. The righteous Judge is coming, and He will establish justice (96:13; 98:9).

Psalm 83 is a psalm of lament in which particular attention is given to the wicked. The curse that Asaph utters against the wicked puts this psalm in the category of the imprecatory psalms. When we read the strong words in this psalm, we need to keep in mind that the intent of the psalmist Asaph is to vindicate the glory of God. The psalm’s structure is as follows: (1) a call for God to speak out in judgment on the wicked (vv. 1–4); (2) a recital of the acts of the wicked (vv. 5–8); (3) a recital of God’s acts of judgment in the past (vv. 9–12); (4) a call for God to judge the wicked (vv. 13–18).

83:1 Do not keep silent: Calls for God to awaken, to rouse Himself, to turn and look, and to speak, are all ways the psalmists prayed for God to act. They believed that God as the Holy One would root out all evil. What they did not always recognize was that God’s delay in judgment was an expression of His mercy.

83:2, 3 Asaph feels revulsion against the **enemies** of the Lord. He hates what God hates (101:6–8). The attacks of the wicked are not only against God, but also against the **people** of God.

83:4 let us cut them off: God’s attitude toward those who plot the destruction of His people is clear: His curse will rest on them (Gen. 12:2, 3). Asaph here is simply praying that God would act according to His promises.

83:5–8 consulted together: Throughout history, many nations have conspired to bring about the ruin of Israel and Judah. All such endeavors are condemned in this psalm. **against You:** In conspiring against the people of God, the wicked actually resist God Himself. **The tents of Edom:** The place names in this passage refer to nations on the borders of Israel and Judah. The **Hagrites** may have come from Arabia (1 Chr. 5:10, 19, 20). The people of **Gebal** may have lived in a mountainous region south of the Dead Sea; alternatively, Gebal may have been another name for Byblos, a city near Tyre.

83:9 Asaph recites God’s great victories against the formidable foes of Israel. God’s victory at **Midian** was accomplished through Gideon (Judg. 7). God’s victory over **Sisera** was accomplished through Deborah and Barak (Judg. 4; 5). The same God who had battled Israel’s enemies in the past would fight all those who might oppose His people in the future.

83:13 In a culture in which remembering a person was very im-

- 14 As the fire burns the woods,
And as the flame ^msets the
mountains on fire,
15 So pursue them with Your tempest,
And frighten them with Your
storm.
16 Fill their faces with shame,
That they may seek Your name,
O LORD.
17 Let them be ^sconfounded and
dismayed forever;
Yes, let them be put to shame and
perish,
18 ⁿThat they may know that You, whose
^oname alone *is* the LORD,
Are ^pthe Most High over all the
earth.

PSALM 84

The Blessedness of Dwelling in the House of God

To the Chief Musician. ^aOn ¹an instrument of Gath. A Psalm of the sons of Korah.

How ^blovely ²*is* Your tabernacle,
O LORD of hosts!

- ² ^cMy soul longs, yes, even faints
For the courts of the LORD;
My heart and my flesh cry out for
the living God.

14 ^m Ex. 19:18;
Deut. 32:22
17 ^s *ashamed*
18 ⁿ Ps. 59:13 ^o Ex.
6:3 ^p [Ps. 92:8]

PSALM 84

title ^a Ps. 8: title
¹ Heb. *Al Gittith*
1 ^b Ps. 27:4; 46:4, 5
² *are Your dwellings*
2 ^c Ps. 42:1, 2

4 ^d [Ps. 65:4]
6 ^e 2 Sam. 5:22-25
³ Lit. *Weeping* ⁴ Or
 blessings
7 ^f Prov. 4:18; Is.
40:31; John 1:16;
2 Cor. 3:18 ^g Ex.
34:23; Deut. 16:16
⁵ LXX, Syr., Vg. *The
God of gods shall
be seen*
9 ^h Gen. 15:1
⁶ Commissioned
one, Heb. *messiah*
10 ⁷ *stand at the
threshold*

- 3 Even the sparrow has found a home,
And the swallow a nest for herself,
Where she may lay her young—
Even Your altars, O LORD of hosts,
My King and my God.
4 Blessed *are* those who dwell in Your
^dhouse;
They will still be praising You. *Selah*
5 Blessed *is* the man whose strength *is*
in You,
Whose heart *is* set on pilgrimage.
6 *As they* pass through the Valley ^eof
³Baca,
They make it a spring;
The rain also covers it with ⁴pools.
7 They go ^ffrom strength to strength;
⁵*Each one* ^gappears before God in
Zion.
8 O LORD God of hosts, hear my
prayer;
Give ear, O God of Jacob! *Selah*
9 ^hO God, behold our shield,
And look upon the face of Your
⁶anointed.
10 For a day in Your courts *is* better
than a thousand.
I would rather ⁷be a doorkeeper in
the house of my God
Than dwell in the tents of wickedness.

portant, an ultimate curse would have been to regard a person's memory as **whirling dust** or windblown **chaff**.

83:16 Shame is the opposite of dignity, an attribute of the righteous (25:2; 97:7). **seek Your name:** Asaph's first call for God to shame Israel's enemies is redemptive—that the nations might hear, feel shame, repent, and seek the face of the Lord. Yet if they continued in their wicked path, they would face further confounding and would one day face God in judgment. The title **Most High** is often used in the Psalms to speak of God's control over all the nations of the world (47:2; 78:35; 97:9).

Psalm 84 is one of the psalms of Zion. These psalms celebrate God's presence in Jerusalem, the city where His temple was built. Today it is not necessary to go to Jerusalem to draw near to God, for God is near those who trust in His Son (Matt. 28:18–20). This psalm was composed by the sons of Korah (see Ps. 42; 44–49; 85; 87; 88). There are six movements: (1) the expression of the desire to be at home in Zion (vv. 1, 2); (2) the blessings of being at home in Zion (vv. 3, 4); (3) the blessings of those who make pilgrimages to Zion (vv. 5–7); (4) a prayer for God's attention in Zion (vv. 8, 9); (5) the joy of being at home in Zion (vv. 10, 11); (6) the blessing of trusting in God (v. 12).

84:1, 2 Tabernacle is used here as a poetic term for the temple that was built by Solomon. **longs . . . faints:** For a similar expression of a psalmist's desire for the Lord's presence, see 42:1, 2. **the living God:** All other "gods" are nonentities; but He who created the universe, who chose Israel as His people, and who provided salvation for the world, lives forever in great glory.

84:3, 4 sparrow . . . swallow: By describing the approach of birds to the courtyards of the temple, the poet expresses his own great joy. **Blessed**, the same term used in 1:1, means "O, the great happiness of."

84:5–7 The phrase **whose heart is set on pilgrimage** refers those who make their way to the temple not out of obligation, but out of a wellspring of joy. **The Valley of Baca**, or "Valley of Weeping," refers to the various difficulties that one might face on a pilgrimage. The

person on a pilgrimage might discover that the once-dark valley is filled with springs, **rain**, and **pools**—all signs of God's blessing. **strength to strength:** As one nears the temple, the rigors of the journey become tolerable, for the joy of the approaching arrival strengthens the soul.

84:8 Lord God of hosts, literally the "God of armies," speaks of God's transcendence. The **hosts** are the angelic armies of the heavens. This title is balanced by the phrase **God of Jacob**, referring to the covenant relationship God established with the patriarchs of Israel.

84:9 The two phrases **our shield** and **Your anointed** both point to the same person, the king of Israel (see 89:3, 4). Each person who was anointed in the OT foreshadowed the coming Anointed One, the Messiah.

84:10, 11 a day . . . a thousand: Nothing in the pilgrim's daily experience can be compared to a day spent in the worship of God in the holy temple. **a doorkeeper . . . dwell in the tents:** The role of a menial servant in the **house of his God** is more desirable

sun

(Heb. *shemesh*) (84:11; Josh. 10:12, 13). Strong's #8121

The Hebrew word for *sun* most often refers to the celestial body that illuminates the earth (136:7, 8). The idiom "before the sun" may describe an action done openly or in public (see 2 Sam 12:12). The sun is also a biblical symbol for righteousness (Mal. 4:2) and even a title for God in the Psalms (84:11). Many of the ancients worshiped the sun, moon, and stars (see 2 Kin. 21:3; Ezek. 8:16). But the psalmist understood that the sun, moon, and stars worshiped God because He created them (148:3). In the new creation, there will be no need of the sun because God Himself will be an everlasting light to the people (Is. 60:19).

- 11 For the LORD God is ⁱa sun and
^jshield;
The LORD will give grace and glory;
^kNo good *thing* will He withhold
From those who walk uprightly.
- 12 O LORD of hosts,
^lBlessed is the man who trusts in You!

PSALM 85

Prayer that the LORD Will Restore Favor to the Land

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm ^aof the
sons of Korah.

- L**ORD, You have been favorable to
Your land;
You have ^bbrought back the captivity
of Jacob.
- 2 You have forgiven the iniquity of
Your people;
You have covered all their sin. *Selah*
- 3 You have taken away all Your wrath;
You have turned from the fierceness
of Your anger.
- 4 ^cRestore us, O God of our salvation,
And cause Your anger toward us to
cease.
- 5 ^dWill You be angry with us forever?
Will You prolong Your anger to all
generations?
- 6 Will You not ^erevive us again,
That Your people may rejoice in You?

11 ⁱIs. 60:19, 20;
Mal. 4:2; Rev. 21:23
/ Gen. 15:1 ^kPs.
34:9, 10
12 ^l[Ps. 2:12; 40:4]

PSALM 85

title ^aPs. 42:title
1 ^bEzra 1:11–2:1;
Ps. 14:7; Jer. 30:18;
31:23; Ezek. 39:25;
Hos. 6:11; Joel 3:1
4 ^cPs. 80:3, 7
5 ^dPs. 79:5
6 ^eHab. 3:2

8 ^ffoolishness
9 ^gIs. 46:13 ^hHag.
2:7; Zech. 2:5; [John
1:14]
10 ⁱPs. 72:3; [Is.
32:17]; Luke 2:14
12 ^j[Ps. 84:11;
James 1:17]

PSALM 86

2 ^kLit. *soul*

- 7 Show us Your mercy, LORD,
And grant us Your salvation.
- 8 I will hear what God the LORD will
speak,
For He will speak peace
To His people and to His saints;
But let them not turn back to ^lfolly.
- 9 Surely ^mHis salvation is near to those
who fear Him,
ⁿThat glory may dwell in our land.
- 10 Mercy and truth have met together;
^oRighteousness and peace have kissed.
- 11 Truth shall spring out of the earth,
And righteousness shall look down
from heaven.
- 12 ⁱYes, the LORD will give *what is good*;
And our land will yield its increase.
- 13 Righteousness will go before Him,
And shall make His footsteps *our*
pathway.

PSALM 86

Prayer for Mercy, with Meditation on the Excellencies of the LORD

A Prayer of David.

- B**ow down Your ear, O LORD,
hear me;
For I *am* poor and needy.
- 2 Preserve my ^llife, for I *am* holy;
You are my God;
Save Your servant who trusts in You!

than a life of luxury with those who practice **wickedness**. **Sun and shield** means “splendid shield.” **Grace and glory** may be rephrased as “glorious grace.” Whereas the anointed king was a “shield” (v. 9), the greater Shield is God Himself. **No good thing will He withhold**: This is the observation of a wise and righteous person; time after time, God gives good gifts to His people.

Psalm 85 is a prayer for restoration that is rooted deeply in trust in God. The setting for the psalm appears to be the restoration of the people of God following a great catastrophe—perhaps the Babylonian captivity. With this psalm, the people prayed for a revival of their spirits and a renewal in their land. The ultimate fulfillment of their prayer would be in the coming glorious kingdom of the Savior Jesus. This is one of the psalms composed by the sons of Korah (see Ps. 42; 44–49; 84; 87; 88). The development of this psalm is in four sections: (1) a celebration of God’s favor on the land (vv. 1–3); (2) a petition for restoration and revival (vv. 4–7); (3) an expectation that God will act soon (vv. 8, 9); (4) a description of the restoration (vv. 10–13).

85:1 You have brought back the captivity may refer to the return of the exiles from Babylon. But it also may be a more general reversal of fortune (14:7).

85:4–7 God of our salvation may be rephrased as “our Saving God.” **Your anger**: The first section of this psalm already says God’s anger has turned away from the people (v. 3). Yet until the restoration is complete, the people still feel the effects of God’s wrath. This suggests an understanding that the people’s troubles were due to their own sin disciplined by God. **revive us**: The people prayed for their own welfare and for renewed ability to praise God. **Mercy** may also be translated “loyal love.”

85:8, 9 The speaker here may be a priest expecting to **hear** a direct revelation from the Lord. Such a revelation would be consistent

with God’s character. **Peace** suggests wholeness, fullness, things as they ought to be. The word **saints** is related to the term translated *mercy* in v. 7; these are people who reflect the love of God in their own lives. **not turn back to folly**: God’s blessing would continue only as long as the people remained faithful to Him. **His salvation** can describe any act of mercy on the part of God.

85:10–13 The words **mercy** and **truth** often appear together in the Scriptures to express one concept (see 25:10; 61:7; 86:15; 89:14). Here they are viewed as separate entities that come together, in the same way that **righteousness and peace have kissed**. The union of God’s mercy and truth and His righteousness and peace describes the way things ought to be, or the state of *peace* spoken of in v. 8. The blending of the ideals of **truth** and **righteousness** in v. 11 suggests a vision of the kingdom of God (see Is. 11). The fact that the word **righteousness** appears three times in the last four verses of this psalm alludes to the holiness of the coming kingdom of God and the sinlessness of the Savior and King who will rule over it.

Psalm 86 is a psalm of lament in which David expresses grave concerns about his lowly state, as well as joy in the God who alone is merciful. This poem is the only one in Book III of the Psalms that has David’s name in the title. The structure is as follows: (1) a call for God to deliver David from distress (vv. 1–5); (2) a call for God to hear David’s prayer (vv. 6, 7); (3) a statement that there is none other like God (vv. 8–10); (4) a petition for God to teach David about Himself so that he can praise Him forever (vv. 11–13); (5) a comparison of the assaults of the wicked with the character of the Lord (vv. 14, 15); (6) a renewed call for God to show His goodness to David in his distress (vv. 16, 17).

86:1–4 Bow down Your ear: As in 31:2, David uses a dramatic phrase that captures the grandeur of God on high and David’s

- 3 Be merciful to me, O Lord,
For I cry to You all day long.
- 4 ² Rejoice the soul of Your servant,
^a For to You, O Lord, I lift up my soul.
- 5 For ^b You, Lord, *are* good, and ready
to forgive,
And abundant in mercy to all those
who call upon You.
- 6 Give ear, O LORD, to my prayer;
And attend to the voice of my
supplications.
- 7 In the day of my trouble I will call
upon You,
For You will answer me.
- 8 ^c Among the gods *there is* none like
You, O Lord;
Nor *are there any works* like Your
works.
- 9 All nations whom You have made
Shall come and worship before You,
O Lord,
And shall glorify Your name.
- 10 For You *are* great, and ^d do wondrous
things;
^e You alone *are* God.
- 11 ^f Teach me Your way, O LORD;
I will walk in Your truth;
³ Unite my heart to fear Your name.
- 12 I will praise You, O Lord my God,
with all my heart,
And I will glorify Your name
forevermore.

4 ^a Ps. 25:1; 143:8
² Make glad
5 ^b Ps. 130:7; 145:9;
[Joel 2:13]
8 ^c [Ex. 15:11];
2 Sam. 7:22; 1 Kin.
8:23; Ps. 89:6; Jer.
10:6
10 ^d [Ex. 15:11]
^e Deut. 6:4; Is.
37:16; Mark 12:29;
1 Cor. 8:4
11 ^f Ps. 27:11;
143:8 ³ Give me
singleness of heart

13 ⁴ The abode of
the dead
15 ⁹ Ex. 34:6; [Ps.
86:5]

PSALM 87

2 ^a Ps. 78:67, 68
3 ^b Is. 60:1

- 13 For great *is* Your mercy toward me,
And You have delivered my soul
from the depths of ⁴ Sheol.
- 14 O God, the proud have risen
against me,
And a mob of violent *men* have
sought my life,
And have not set You before them.
- 15 But ⁹ You, O Lord, *are* a God full of
compassion, and gracious,
Longsuffering and abundant in
mercy and truth.
- 16 Oh, turn to me, and have mercy on me!
Give Your strength to Your servant,
And save the son of Your
maidservant.
- 17 Show me a sign for good,
That those who hate me may see *it*
and be ashamed,
Because You, LORD, have helped me
and comforted me.

PSALM 87

The Glories of the City of God

A Psalm of the sons of Korah. A Song.

- H**is foundation *is* in the holy
mountains.
- 2 ^a The LORD loves the gates of Zion
More than all the dwellings of Jacob.
- 3 ^b Glorious things are spoken of you,
O city of God! *Selah*

humble position on the earth below. Here the phrase **I am holy** does not speak of the transcendence of God, as in Is. 6:3. Rather it speaks of the faithfulness and godliness of a righteous person who, by God's grace, is living in accordance with God's law. It is another way that David describes himself as a **servant** of the Lord. **Rejoice:** God rejoices in those who serve Him, and His servants find their joy in Him.

86:8, 9 Among the gods: The ancient nations took their sense of identity in part from their ties to their supposed gods. When the nations found out that their "gods" did not exist, they would have to acknowledge that the Lord alone is God. Here David envisions other nations worshiping the true God and thus anticipates the missionary thrust of the NT (Ps. 117; Matt. 28:18–20).

86:11–13 Teach me Your way: David asks the Lord to teach him so that he will be able to praise God in the midst of the congregation. **Mercy** is the "loyal love" of the Lord. **depths of Sheol:** David describes the Lord as mercifully delivering him from certain death (9:17; 116:3, 4).

86:14 The Psalms consistently describe God as the enemy of the **proud** and the friend of the humble (138:6; 147:6).

86:15 The phrase **abundant in mercy and truth** is a precursor of the NT phrase "full of grace and truth" (John 1:14). The Lord upholds the truth so that He can mercifully free those caught in falsehoods.

86:16 save the son of Your maidservant: The idea here may be that since David's mother was a pious woman, the Lord ought to save David from his lowly state (116:16).

Psalm 87, a psalm of Zion, is also an intensely evangelistic psalm that anticipates the NT mission to present the gospel to the entire world (see Matt. 28:18–20). This psalm is one of the collection from the sons of Korah (Ps. 42; 44–49; 84; 85; 88). It has three movements: (1) a description of God's love for the city of Zion (vv. 1–3);

(2) a description of the citizens of Zion coming from all nations (vv. 4–6); (3) a celebration of God's salvation (v. 7).

87:1 His foundation: God Himself established Zion or Jerusalem as the center of true worship. He ordained Solomon to build a temple there so that He could live among the Israelites (1 Kin. 6:13). Zion is holy because of God's declaration (1 Kin 11:13), His promise, the worship given Him there (1 Kin. 8:14–66), the future work of the Savior there (Matt. 21:4–11), and the future rule of the King there (Rev. 21).

87:2, 3 God has a special love for the place where His name is worshipped. **The gates of Zion** are the conspicuous entrance to the city. The verb **loves** includes the idea of choice (see Deut. 6:5) as well as emotion. God chose Jerusalem; and He also has an enduring

truth

(Heb. *emet*) (86:11; 1 Kin. 10:6; Esth. 9:30) Strong's #571

This Hebrew term signifies truth that conforms to a standard—either to created reality or to God's standards. Truth is often associated with mercy, especially God's mercy (57:3; 117:2; Gen. 24:49). This word is also frequently used in the context of legal language: In secular contexts it is used in speaking of witnesses and judgments (Prov. 14:25; Zech. 8:16), while in religious contexts it is used in reference to the law and commandments of God (119:142, 151). Truth is precious, and its absence was lamented by the Prophets (Is. 59:14; Jer. 9:5; Hos. 4:1). God desires truth in the inward parts of His people (15:2; 51:6); thus it is the basis of a life-style that pleases Him (25:5, 10; 26:3).

4 “I will make mention of ¹Rahab and Babylon to those who know Me;
Behold, O Philistia and Tyre, with Ethiopia:
‘This *one* was born there.’”

5 And of Zion it will be said,
“This *one* and that *one* were born in her;
And the Most High Himself shall establish her.”

6 The LORD will record,
When He ^cregisters the peoples:
“This *one* was born there.” *Selah*

7 Both the singers and the players on instruments *say*,
“All my springs *are* in you.”

PSALM 88

A Prayer for Help in Despondency

A Song. A Psalm of the sons of Korah. To the Chief Musician. Set to “Mahalath Leannoth.”
A ¹Contemplation of ^aHeman the Ezrahite.

O LORD, ^bGod of my salvation,
I have cried out day and night
before You.

2 Let my prayer come before You;
2 Incline Your ear to my cry.

4 ¹ Egypt
6 ^c Is. 4:3

PSALM 88

title ^a 1 Kin. 4:31;
1 Chr. 2:6 ¹ Heb.
Maschil
1 ^b Ps. 27:9; [Luke
18:7]
2 ² Listen to

3 ^c Ps. 107:18
4 ^d [Ps. 28:1] ^e Ps.
31:12 ³ Die
5 ⁴ Lit. *Free*
7 ¹ Ps. 42:7
8 ⁹ Job 19:13, 19; Ps.
31:11; 142:4 ^h Lam.
3:7 ⁵ taken away
my friends
9 ¹ Ps. 86:3
10 ⁶ *shades, ghosts*

3 For my soul is full of troubles,
And my life ^cdraws near to the grave.

4 I am counted with those who ^dgo ³
down to the pit;
^eI am like a man *who has* no strength,

5 ⁴ Adrift among the dead,
Like the slain who lie in the grave,
Whom You remember no more,
And who are cut off from Your hand.

6 You have laid me in the lowest pit,
In darkness, in the depths.

7 Your wrath lies heavy upon me,
And You have afflicted *me* with all
^fYour waves. *Selah*

8 ⁹ You have ⁵put away my
acquaintances far from me;
You have made me an abomination
to them;
^hI am shut up, and I cannot get out;

9 My eye wastes away because of affliction.

ⁱLORD, I have called daily upon You;
I have stretched out my hands to You.

10 Will You work wonders for the dead?
Shall ⁶the dead arise *and* praise You?
Selah

11 Shall Your lovingkindness be
declared in the grave?

affection for the city. **City of God** may also be translated “city of the True God.”

87:4 I will make mention: In this verse, God Himself speaks. **Rahab** is a symbolic name for Egypt (Is. 30:7) that has negative connotations. It alludes to the arrogance of the Egyptians. This is not the Rahab of Josh. 2:3–11, whose name is spelled differently in Hebrew. **Babylon** was the proverbial seat of apostasy and idolatry (Gen. 10:10). **To those who know Me** may be rephrased “as those who know Me.” Thus the verse anticipates a time when foreigners would know and worship the living God. Among those who came to Zion to worship the Lord were people from Egypt, Babylon, **Philistia**, **Tyre**, and **Ethiopia**. At the time of the writing of this psalm, perhaps in the later period of Hezekiah’s reign, foreigners were worshiping God in the temple along with Jews.

87:5 And of Zion: Despite their foreign heritage, the people who worshiped God were considered as having been **born** in Zion. Thus this psalm anticipates the NT teaching of the second birth (John 3). The title **Most High** is used particularly with reference to God’s power over the nations (47:2; 78:35; 82:6). **shall establish her:** Zion would become the place where more and more people from other nations would come to worship the living God. This is prophetic of the coming of the gospel of Jesus, the spread of that gospel, and the culmination of the gospel in the rule of the Savior King (Is. 2:1–4).

87:6 The LORD will record pictures God making a register of the people of the nations. All believers will find their true identity in the Lord, to whom they will offer their worship in Zion.

87:7 The singers and the players are called to celebrate together the joy of the Savior God. The image of **springs** indicates salvation, which is found only in the Lord (Is. 12:3). This anticipated the salvation that God would offer through Jesus Christ (Titus 2:11).

Psalm 88 begins as a psalm of lament but never comes to the resolution of trust and praise that is the hallmark of those psalms. Thus Ps. 88 can be considered a psalm of complaint, a development of

the lament portion of the psalms of lament. The title ascribes the psalm to the sons of Korah (Ps. 42; 44–49; 84; 85; 87), more specifically to Heman the Ezrahite. Heman is identified in 1 Kin. 4:31 as a gifted wise man, and in 1 Chr. 15:16–19 as one of the musically gifted Levites who ministered in worship during the time of David. The term Ezrahite may mean “native born.” The name of the tune perhaps means “A Dance of Affliction.” The structure is: (1) an opening prayer for deliverance (vv. 1, 2); (2) Heman’s impending death (vv. 3–5); (3) a complaint about the Lord’s attack on Heman (vv. 6–8); (4) God’s delay in coming to the aid of Heman (vv. 9–12); (5) Heman’s desperation as he senses no deliverance from the Lord (vv. 13–18).

88:1, 2 Even in the midst of despair, Heman confesses his faith in God’s saving goodness—**O LORD, God of my salvation** (vv. 9, 13). **cried out . . . my cry:** This language of desperate weeping is not unusual in the psalms of lament. The Hebrew word for *cried* indicates a loud scream. The psalmist’s appeal for God to listen—**incline Your ear**—has the same wording as in 86:1.

88:3–5 **Grave** here is the familiar word Sheol (86:13), which is often linked with the term **pit** as a symbol of death (30:3; 143:7; Prov. 1:12; Is. 14:15; 38:18). Heman feels so near to death that he describes himself as **adrift among the dead**.

88:6–8 Heman feels as though he were in **the lowest pit** and the deepest darkness. His most vexing problem, however, is his belief that God has brought this trouble on him. **put away . . . from me:** Not only does he feel troubled by God; he is also alone, separated from all of his friends.

88:9 Verses 9 and 13 are a reprise of v. 1. Heman continues to pray. Even though his eyes are strained and bloodshot from constant weeping, he continues to call out to the Lord for salvation.

88:10–12 The context of these verses is the worshiping community in Jerusalem (Ps. 6). If God allows Heman to die, Heman’s voice will never again be heard in the temple giving praise to God. The word translated **place of destruction** is also found in Job 26:6; 28:22; Prov. 15:11; 27:20.

Or Your faithfulness in the place of destruction?

12 Shall Your wonders be known in the dark?

And Your righteousness in the land of forgetfulness?

13 But to You I have cried out, O LORD,
And in the morning my prayer
comes before You.

14 LORD, why do You cast off my soul?
Why do You hide Your face
from me?

15 I *have been* afflicted and ready to die
from *my* youth;
I suffer Your terrors;
I am distraught.

16 Your fierce wrath has gone over me;
Your terrors have ⁷cut me off.

17 They came around me all day long
like water;
They engulfed me altogether.

18 ^jLoved one and friend You have put
far from me,
And my acquaintances into darkness.

PSALM 89

Remembering the Covenant with David, and Sorrow for Lost Blessings

A ¹Contemplation of ^aEthan the Ezrahite.

I will sing of the mercies of the LORD
forever;

With my mouth will I make
known Your faithfulness to all
generations.

2 For I have said, “Mercy shall be built
up forever;

^bYour faithfulness You shall establish
in the very heavens.”

16 ⁷destroyed me
18 / Job 19:13; Ps.
31:11; 38:11

PSALM 89

title ^a 1 Kin. 4:31
¹ Heb. *Maschil*
2 ^b [Ps. 119:89, 90]

3 “^cI have made a covenant with My
chosen,
I have ^dsworn to My servant David:
4 ‘Your seed I will establish forever,
And build up your throne ^eto all
generations.’” *Selah*

5 And ^fthe heavens will praise Your
wonders, O LORD;
Your faithfulness also in the
assembly of the saints.

6 ^gFor who in the heavens can be
compared to the LORD?
Who among the sons of the mighty
can be likened to the LORD?

7 ^hGod is greatly to be feared in the
assembly of the saints,
And to be held in reverence by all
those around Him.

8 O LORD God of hosts,
Who *is* mighty like You, O LORD?
Your faithfulness also surrounds
You.

9 ⁱYou rule the raging of the sea;
When its waves rise, You still them.

10 ^jYou have broken ²Rahab in pieces, as
one who is slain;
You have scattered Your enemies
with Your mighty arm.

11 ^kThe heavens *are* Yours, the earth also
is Yours;
The world and all its fullness, You
have founded them.

12 The north and the south, You have
created them;

^lTabor and ^mHermon rejoice in Your
name.

13 You have a mighty arm;
Strong is Your hand, *and high is*
Your right hand.

3 ^c 1 Kin. 8:16
^d 2 Sam. 7:11; 1 Chr.
17:10-12
4 ^e [2 Sam. 7:13; Is.
9:7; Luke 1:33]
5 ^f [Ps. 19:1]
6 ^g Ps. 86:8; 113:5
7 ^h Ps. 76:7, 11
9 ⁱ Ps. 65:7; 93:3, 4;
107:29
10 / Ex. 14:26-28; Ps.
87:4; Is. 30:7; 51:9
² Egypt
11 ^k [Gen. 1:1; 1 Chr.
29:11]
12 ^l Josh. 19:22;
Judg. 4:6; Jer. 46:18
^m Deut. 3:8; Josh.
11:17; 12:1; Song 4:8

88:17, 18 In this psalm, Heman renews his complaints from earlier sections. However, he does not come to any resolution. As a person adrift at sea is aware only of the engulfing **water**, so Heman knows only the terrors of his life, which he believes come from the Lord. **Loved one:** In v. 8, Heman describes himself as removed from his friends; now he says his friends are removed from him. At the close of the psalm, Heman still feels alone, even though the psalms consistently describe a Lord that hears and answers those who call on Him (see 28:6).

Psalm 89 begins as a psalm of praise but ends as a psalm of lament. It celebrates God's covenant with David (2 Sam. 7) and then laments how David's descendants had not remained faithful to the provisions of that covenant (see 2 Sam. 7:14). Yet even in the face of unfaithfulness, this psalm reaffirms God's faithfulness to His covenant and its ultimate fulfillment in David's greater Son, the Messiah (vv. 33–37). The title attributes the psalm to Ethan, who was also known as Jeduthun (1 Chr. 25:1, 3, 6). The structure of the psalm is: (1) praise to the Lord for His everlasting covenant with David (vv. 1–4); (2) a celebration of God who established His covenant with David (vv. 5–18); (3) a review of the covenant with David (vv. 19–37); (4) consternation at a time of national distress (vv. 38–45); (5) a complaint to the Lord to provoke Him to remember His covenant and restore the fortunes of His people (vv. 46–51); (6) an appendix of blessing (v. 52).

89:1, 2 The **mercies** of the Lord in this psalm center on the covenant He made with David, promising him an eternal dynasty (see 2 Sam. 7). **Mercy**, which may be translated “loyal love,” refers to the exact words of God's promise to David (2 Sam. 7:15). The Lord had promised that His mercy would always rest on David's son.

89:3, 4 Ethan quoted God's words to David in 2 Sam. 7. David is referred to as **My chosen** and **My servant** (v. 20)—names that describe his intimate relationship with the Lord (see 2 Sam. 7:7). **Your seed . . . your throne:** God had promised David a line of descent and an enduring throne (2 Sam. 7:12, 13).

89:6 All praise in heaven and earth belongs to God, who is incomparable. No one, not even the supposed gods, can match His strength and love. This is the point of the question, **who in the heavens can be compared to the Lord?** The Hebrew phrase for **the sons of the mighty** may mean “sons of gods” or “heavenly beings.” The reference could be to other supposed gods or to angels, members of the heavenly court (Job 1:6).

89:9, 10 Rahab is a title for Egypt (87:4). **The sea** and Rahab refer to God's great victories: in the beginning, His control of His creation; in the historic past, His victory over Egypt; and in the future, His complete triumph over Satan, sin, and death (Is. 27:1; 51:9). The psalmists regularly assert God's complete control of creation (see 24:1). Nothing can challenge God's majestic rule over the entire universe.

89:13, 14 God is the great Deliverer; He brandished His **arm** and

14 Righteousness and justice *are* the foundation of Your throne; Mercy and truth go before Your face.

15 Blessed *are* the people who know the ⁿjoyful sound! They walk, O LORD, in the light of Your countenance.

16 In Your name they rejoice all day long, And in Your righteousness they are exalted.

17 For You *are* the glory of their strength, And in Your favor our ³horn is ^oexalted.

18 For our shield *belongs* to the LORD, And our king to the Holy One of Israel.

19 Then You spoke in a vision to Your ⁴holy one, And said: “I have given help to *one who is* mighty; I have exalted one ^pchosen from the people.

20 ^qI have found My servant David; With My holy oil I have anointed him,

21 ^rWith whom My hand shall be established; Also My arm shall strengthen him.

22 The enemy shall not ⁵outwit him, Nor the son of wickedness afflict him.

23 I will beat down his foes before his face, And plague those who hate him.

24 “But My faithfulness and My mercy *shall be* with him, And in My name his horn shall be exalted.

25 Also I will ^sset his hand over the sea, And his right hand over the rivers.

15 ^a Lev. 23:24; Num. 10:10; Ps. 98:6
17 ^o Ps. 75:10; 92:10; 132:17 ³ Strength
19 ^p 1 Kin. 11:34
⁴ So with many Heb. mss.; MT, LXX, Tg., Vg. *holy ones*
20 ^q 1 Sam. 13:14; 16:1-12; Acts 13:22
21 ^r Ps. 80:17
22 ^s Or *exact usury from him*
25 ^s Ps. 72:8

26 ^t 2 Sam. 7:14; [1 Chr. 22:10]; Jer. 3:19 ^u 2 Sam. 22:47
27 ^v Ex. 4:22; Ps. 2:7; Jer. 31:9; [Col. 1:15, 18] ^w Num. 24:7; [Ps. 72:11]; Rev. 19:16
28 ^x Is. 55:3
29 ^y [1 Kin. 2:4; Is. 9:7]; Jer. 33:17
^z Deut. 11:21
30 ^a [2 Sam. 7:14]
^b Ps. 119:53
³ ⁶ *profane*
33 ^c 2 Sam. 7:14, 15
⁷ Lit. *break off* ⁸ Lit. *deal falsely with My faithfulness*
34 ^d [Num. 23:19]; Jer. 33:20-22
35 ^e [1 Sam. 15:29]; Amos 4:2; [Titus 1:2]
36 ^f [Luke 1:33]
⁹ Ps. 72:17
38 ^h [1 Chr. 28:9] ⁱ Deut. 32:19 ⁹ *rejected*
¹ Commissioned one, Heb. *messiah*

26 He shall cry to Me, ‘You *are* ^tmy Father,
My God, and ^uthe rock of my salvation.’

27 Also I will make him ^v*My* firstborn,
^wThe highest of the kings of the earth.

28 ^x My mercy I will keep for him forever,
And My covenant shall stand firm with him.

29 His seed also I will make *to endure* forever,
^yAnd his throne ^zas the days of heaven.

30 “If ^a his sons ^bforsake My law And do not walk in My judgments,

31 If they ⁶break My statutes And do not keep My commandments,

32 Then I will punish their transgression with the rod, And their iniquity with stripes.

33 ^c Nevertheless My lovingkindness I will not ⁷utterly take from him,
Nor ⁸allow My faithfulness to fail.

34 My covenant I will not break, Nor ^dalter the word that has gone out of My lips.

35 Once I have sworn ^eby My holiness; I will not lie to David:

36 ^fHis seed shall endure forever, And his throne ⁹as the sun before Me;

37 It shall be established forever like the moon,
Even *like* the faithful witness in the sky.” *Selah*

38 But You have ^hcast off and ⁱabhorred,⁹
You have been furious with Your ¹anointed.

hand in delivering His people from Egypt (Ex. 6:6; 15:6). **Righteousness and justice** means “utter righteousness.” **Mercy and truth** may be rephrased as “unbreakable loyalty.”

89:15–18 Blessed, the same word used in 1:1, means “manifest happiness.” To exalt the **horn** of the people (75:4, 5; 92:10; 132:17) means to give them power and eventual triumph. **The Holy One of Israel** (78:41) is the title Isaiah uses to describe God, following his experience of God’s holiness in his memorable vision of God’s throne (Is. 6).

89:19 The psalm recounts God’s remarkable intervention in the life of David and the specifics of His covenant with David. **Your holy one**: David had been singled out as holy to the Lord. Yet his beginnings were not spectacular, for he was **from the people**; he had been an ordinary shepherd (2 Sam 7:18). In these respects and in many others, David was a type, or a divinely intended portrait, of the Savior. In a similar way, Jesus came from humble origins as the son of a carpenter. Yet He was the Holy One, the Son of the Most High.

89:24, 25 My faithfulness and My mercy: The usual order of

this common phrase is reversed here (vv. 1, 2). But the point is the same: God will remain true to His word and demonstrate His love to His servant. **sea . . . rivers**: The possible reference here is to Israel’s expansion of its borders. But note the language used to describe God’s control over creation (vv. 9, 10). The Lord is extending to His servant the authority He has over creation.

89:26–30 Father . . . firstborn: This wording is derived from God’s covenant with David (2 Sam. 7:14). **seed . . . throne**: These words are repeated from v. 4 (see v. 36; 2 Sam. 7:12, 13). **his sons**: The provisions of the Davidic covenant in 2 Sam. 7 included the discipline of errant sons.

89:34 The words **my covenant I will not break** and the wording of v. 35 are strong, so as to assure the reader that the will of the Lord is quite settled in this matter. The people might become faithless, but God cannot deny Himself. In spite of errors, rebellions, sins, and apostasies in the lives of many of the kings of Judah, God is determined to complete, fulfill, and accomplish His grand plan for David’s dynasty (2 Sam. 7:1–24).

- 39 You have renounced the covenant of Your servant;
 You have ²profaned his crown *by casting it* to the ground.
- 40 You have broken down all his hedges;
 You have brought his ³strongholds to ruin.
- 41 All who pass by the way ^kplunder him;
 He is a reproach to his neighbors.
- 42 You have exalted the right hand of his adversaries;
 You have made all his enemies rejoice.
- 43 You have also turned back the edge of his sword,
 And have not sustained him in the battle.
- 44 You have made his ⁴glory cease,
 And cast his throne down to the ground.
- 45 The days of his youth You have shortened;
 You have covered him with shame. *Selah*
- 46 How long, LORD?
 Will You hide Yourself forever?
 Will Your wrath burn like fire?
- 47 Remember how short my time ¹is;
 For what ^mfutility have You created all the children of men?
- 48 What man can live and not ⁵see "death"?
 Can he deliver his life from the power of ⁶the grave? *Selah*
- 49 Lord, where *are* Your former lovingkindnesses,
 Which You ^oswore to David ^pin Your truth?

39 / Ps. 74:7; Lam. 5:16 ² defiled
 40 ³ fortresses
 41 ^k Ps. 80:12
 44 ⁴ splendor or brightness
 47 ¹ Ps. 90:9 ^m Ps. 62:9
 48 ⁿ [Eccl. 3:19]
⁵ experience death
⁶ Or Sheol
 49 ^o [2 Sam. 7:15]; Jer. 30:9; Ezek. 34:23 ^p Ps. 54:5

50 ^q Ps. 69:9, 19
 51 ^r Ps. 74:10, 18, 22
⁷ Commissioned one, Heb. *messiah*
 52 ^s Ps. 41:13

PSALM 90

title ^a Deut. 33:1
 1 ^b [Deut. 33:27; Ezek. 11:16] ¹ LXX, Tg., Vg. *refuge*
 2 ^c Job 15:7; [Prov. 8:25, 26] ² Lit. *gave birth to*
 3 ^d Gen. 3:19; Job 34:14, 15
 4 ^e 2 Pet. 3:8
 5 ^f Ps. 73:20 ^g Is. 40:6

- 50 Remember, Lord, the reproach of Your servants—
^q How I bear in my bosom *the reproach of all the many peoples*,
- 51 ^r With which Your enemies have reproached, O LORD,
 With which they have reproached the footsteps of Your ⁷anointed.
- 52 ^s Blessed *be* the LORD forevermore!
 Amen and Amen.

Book Four: Psalms 90–106

PSALM 90

The Eternity of God, and Man's Frailty

A Prayer ^a of Moses the man of God.

- L**ord, ^bYou have been our ¹dwelling place in all generations.
² ^cBefore the mountains were brought forth,
 Or ever You ²had formed the earth and the world,
 Even from everlasting to everlasting, You *are* God.
- 3 You turn man to destruction,
 And say, ^d"Return, O children of men."
- 4 ^eFor a thousand years in Your sight
Are like yesterday when it is past, And like a watch in the night.
- 5 You carry them away *like a flood*;
^f*They are like a sleep.*
 In the morning ^gthey are like grass *which grows up*;

89:39 After the long recital of the details of the Lord's covenant with David and God's sworn statement that He would not revoke it (v. 35), the psalmist questions whether the covenant had really been honored. Most likely the occasion of this psalm was the defeat of Israel's armies, accounting for the psalmist's strong sense of consternation before the Lord. With the repeated use of the pronoun **You**, he addresses his complaint directly to God. **You have renounced the covenant of Your servant:** As in the case of Ps. 60, the military defeat that likely sparked this psalm was a temporary situation; a victory was still to come. Nonetheless, the poet presses his claim to God: This is the covenant that the Lord has established, that He has sworn Himself to uphold.

89:40–45 As a result of the military defeat, the people were despondent and disillusioned. The psalmist voices their feelings and thus allows the process of healing to begin, even as the people wait for their deliverance from the Lord.

89:49–51 The writer complains that God has not been keeping His promises to David (2 Sam. 7:1–24). As a result, His people are experiencing undeserved **reproach** from their enemies. There is no resolution to this psalm; it ends with the people, the king, and the psalmist in distress. Yet the inclusion of this psalm among the praises of Israel suggests that God *did* answer this prayer of His beleaguered people, just as He did in the case of Ps. 60.

89:52 This verse is an editorial addition to Ps. 89, the concluding line of praise for Book III of the Psalms.

Psalm 90 is a psalm of lament in which the community complains of God's judgment and the brevity of life. But even in the midst of sorrow, the people acknowledge the security they have in the Lord and pray for renewal. This is the only poem in the Book of Psalms attributed to Moses, who wrote two other poems recorded in the Pentateuch (Ex. 15; Deut. 32). Psalm 90 has four sections: (1) an affirmation of the security of a life lived close to the Lord (vv. 1, 2); (2) a complaint about the brevity of life (vv. 3–6); (3) a complaint about God's judgment on His people (vv. 7–12); (4) a prayer for restoration (vv. 13–17).

90:1, 2 **Lord** here is not God's personal name (Ex. 3:14, 15), but a Hebrew word celebrating His majestic authority. The word suggests a title similar to "my Supreme Master." **Dwelling place** refers to the Lord as the "refuge" of His people (71:3; 91:9). **In all generations:** Throughout history, people have found the Lord to be their refuge in life.

90:4, 5 Even if people lived a **thousand years**, they would pass away like **a watch in the night**. A thousand years may seem long at the time, but not in comparison to God's eternal existence. **Grass** sprouts after the spring rains, but wilts quickly in the heat—almost in a single day.

6 In the morning it flourishes and grows up;
In the evening it is cut down and withers.

7 For we have been consumed by Your anger,
And by Your wrath we are terrified.

8 ^h You have set our iniquities before You,
Our ⁱ secret *sins* in the light of Your countenance.

9 For all our days have passed away in Your wrath;
We finish our years like a sigh.

10 The days of our lives *are* seventy years;
And if by reason of strength *they are* eighty years,
Yet their boast *is* only labor and sorrow;
For it is soon cut off, and we fly away.

11 Who knows the power of Your anger?
For as the fear of You, *so is* Your wrath.

12 ^j So teach *us* to number our days,
That we may gain a heart of wisdom.

13 Return, O LORD!
How long?
And ^k have compassion on Your servants.

14 Oh, satisfy us early with Your mercy,
^l That we may rejoice and be glad all our days!

15 Make us glad according to the days *in which* You have afflicted us,
The years *in which* we have seen evil.

8 ^h Ps. 50:21; [Jer. 16:17] ⁱ Ps. 19:12; [Eccl. 12:14]
12 / Deut. 32:29; Ps. 39:4
13 ^k Ex. 32:12; Deut. 32:36
14 ^l Ps. 85:6

16 ^m [Deut. 32:4]; Hab. 3:2
17 ⁿ Ps. 27:4 ^o Is. 26:12

PSALM 91

1 ^a Ps. 27:5; 31:20; 32:7 ^b Ps. 17:8; Is. 25:4; 32:2
2 ^c Ps. 142:5
3 ^d Ps. 124:7; Prov. 6:5 ^e One who catches birds in a trap or snare
4 ^e Ps. 17:8 ² A small shield
5 ^f [Job 5:19; Ps. 112:7; Is. 43:2]

16 Let ^m Your work appear to Your servants,
And Your glory to their children.

17 ⁿ And let the beauty of the LORD our God be upon us,
And ^o establish the work of our hands for us;
Yes, establish the work of our hands.

PSALM 91

Safety of Abiding in the Presence of God

He ^a who dwells in the secret place of the Most High
Shall abide ^b under the shadow of the Almighty.

2 ^c I will say of the LORD, "*He is my refuge and my fortress;*
My God, in Him I will trust."

3 Surely ^d He shall deliver you from the snare of the ¹ fowler
And from the perilous pestilence.

4 ^e He shall cover you with His feathers,
And under His wings you shall take refuge;
His truth *shall be your* shield and ² buckler.

5 ^f You shall not be afraid of the terror by night,
Nor of the arrow *that* flies by day,
6 Nor of the pestilence *that* walks in darkness,
Nor of the destruction *that* lays waste at noonday.

7 A thousand may fall at your side,
And ten thousand at your right hand;
But it shall not come near you.

90:7 wrath: The allusion is to the anger of God against the unbelieving Israelites in the wilderness (see Num. 13; 14). An entire generation spent their lives wandering in the wilderness because of their unbelief and rebellion.

90:10 seventy . . . eighty years: The point here is not to set a maximum, but to present a context for the brevity of human life. No matter how long people live, it is inevitable that they will fly away to death.

90:11, 12 These verses are the key of the psalm. Moses had experienced a sufficient measure of God's **anger** (Ex. 32; Num. 14:11–25; Deut. 3:23–28). **teach:** What Moses needed was a new understanding of the meaning of his own life. **number our days:** This is more than just having a sense of mortality; it means valuing the time we do have by using it for eternal purposes.

90:13, 14 Moses uses the word "**return**" in v. 3 to refer to God's call for his death. Here he asks God to **return** for a renewed sense of life. **compassion . . . mercy:** Moses is asking God for new meaning in his life in the days that remain.

90:16, 17 Your work . . . Your glory: Moses asks God to give him a sense of lasting meaning in life, something that will continue to the next generation. The same idea is expressed in the words **the work of our hands**. **Beauty** refers to the "pleasantness" of God. **Psalm 91**, a psalm of trust, does not identify its author. The psalm is sufficiently similar to Ps. 90, a psalm of Moses, that it might also be by him. Alternatively, the experiences and ideas of Moses could have been used by an anonymous writer. This poem has a very

strong messianic thrust, and God Himself speaks in vv. 14–16 (see also Ps. 12; 60; 75; 87). The development of the psalm is in four main sections: (1) a confession of confidence in the Lord (vv. 1, 2); (2) assurance that those who trust in the Lord need not fear evil (vv. 3–8); (3) promises of God's protection to the coming One (vv. 9–13); (4) a description of the Lord's protection of the coming One (vv. 14–16).

91:1, 2 in the secret place: The person who trusts in God is the one who lives close to Him. The title **Most High** emphasizes God's majesty (92:1) and is parallel to the term **Almighty**, a translation of the divine title Shaddai. Together the terms Most High and Shaddai speak of God as a mountain-like majesty, in whose presence there is a "secret place" or a **shadow**. **My refuge and my fortress** may be rephrased as "my secure fortress."

91:3 fowler . . . pestilence: The images of a bird trap and various types of disease are a general description of dangers that might come to helpless people.

91:4 His feathers . . . His wings: God is described as a mother hen under whose wings the psalmist can come for refuge (61:4; 63:7). **Shield and buckler** indicates complete protection from all harm. God is an all protective shield for the believer.

91:5, 6 The interplay of words for **night** and **day** in these verses indicates the universal nature of God's protection. **Terror, arrow, pestilence, and destruction** together refer to evil in general.

91:7, 8 A thousand . . . ten thousand: Like the Israelites in Egypt who were spared the danger that touched their neighbors (Ex. 9:26; 10:23; 11:7), believers in the Lord are protected from any assault.

- 8 Only ^gwith your eyes shall you look,
And see the reward of the wicked.
- 9 Because you have made the LORD,
who is ^hmy refuge,
Even the Most High, ⁱyour dwelling
place,
- 10 ^jNo evil shall befall you,
Nor shall any plague come near your
dwelling;
- 11 ^kFor He shall give His angels charge
over you,
To keep you in all your ways.
- 12 In *their* hands they shall ³bear you
up,
^lLest you ⁴dash your foot against a
stone.
- 13 You shall tread upon the lion and the
cobra,
The young lion and the serpent you
shall trample underfoot.
- 14^aBecause he has set his love upon Me,
therefore I will deliver him;
I will ⁵set him on high, because he
has ^mknown My name.
- 15 He shall ⁿcall upon Me, and I will
answer him;
I *will be* ^owith him in trouble;
I will deliver him and honor him.
- 16 With ⁶long life I will satisfy him,
And show him My salvation.”

PSALM 92

Praise to the LORD for His Love and Faithfulness

A Psalm. A Song for the Sabbath day.

It is ^agood to give thanks to the LORD,
And to sing praises to Your name,
O Most High;

8 ^g Ps. 37:34;
Mal. 1:5
9 ^h Ps. 91:2 ⁱ Ps. 90:1
10 ^j [Prov. 12:21]
11 ^k Ps. 34:7; Matt.
4:6; Luke 4:10; [Heb.
1:14]
12 ^l Matt. 4:6; Luke
4:11 ³ lift ⁴ strike
14 ^m [Ps. 9:10]
⁵ exalt him
15 ⁿ Job 12:4; Ps.
50:15 ^o Is. 43:2
16 ⁶ Lit. length
of days

PSALM 92

1 ^a Ps. 147:1

2 ^b Ps. 89:1
3 ^c 1 Chr. 23:5
5 ^d Ps. 40:5; [Rev.
15:3] ^e Ps. 139:17;
18; [Is. 28:29; Rom.
11:33, 34]
6 ^f Ps. 73:22
7 ^g Job 12:6; Ps.
37:1, 2; Jer. 12:1, 2;
[Mal. 3:15] ⁱ sprout
8 ^h [Ps. 83:18]
9 ⁱ Ps. 68:1
10 ^j Ps. 89:17 ^k Ps.
23:5 ² Strength
11 ^l Ps. 54:7
12 ^m Num. 24:6; Ps.
52:8; Jer. 17:8; Hos.
14:5, 6

- 2 To ^bdeclare Your lovingkindness in
the morning,
And Your faithfulness every night,
- 3 ^cOn an instrument of ten strings,
On the lute,
And on the harp,
With harmonious sound.
- 4 For You, LORD, have made me glad
through Your work;
I will triumph in the works of Your
hands.
- 5 ^d O LORD, how great are Your works!
^e Your thoughts are very deep.
- 6 ^f A senseless man does not know,
Nor does a fool understand this.
- 7 When ^gthe wicked ¹spring up like
grass,
And when all the workers of iniquity
flourish,
It is that they may be destroyed
forever.
- 8 ^h But You, LORD, *are* on high
forevermore.
- 9 For behold, Your enemies, O LORD,
For behold, Your enemies shall perish;
All the workers of iniquity shall ⁱbe
scattered.
- 10 But ^jmy ²horn You have exalted like
a wild ox;
I have been ^kanointed with fresh oil.
- 11 ^l My eye also has seen *my desire* on
my enemies;
My ears hear *my desire* on the
wicked
Who rise up against me.
- 12^mThe righteous shall flourish like a
palm tree,
He shall grow like a cedar in
Lebanon.

look . . . And see: The punishment of the wicked is as sure as the deliverance of the righteous.

91:9, 10 In vv. 14–16, God describes directly the same person addressed by the psalmist in vv. 9–13. This person is the coming One.

My refuge is the same word used in v. 2. **Dwelling place** is the same word used in 90:1. **Most High:** The psalmist indicates that the coming One's faith in God is the same as the psalmist's.

91:11–13 His angels . . . a stone: These words were used by Satan to tempt the Savior (Matt. 4:5, 6). **the lion and the cobra:** The animal and snake imagery in this verse pictures all kinds of evil that might threaten the coming One. The Father will protect Him no matter what the danger.

91:14 The verb used here for **love** is not the usual Hebrew word for love. It has the idea of “holding close to,” even “hugging tightly in love” (Deut. 7:7; 10:15). **He has known My name** speaks of an intimate, experiential knowledge of the Father (John 1:18).

Psalm 92, a psalm of descriptive praise (Ps. 113), celebrates the person and work of God in an exuberant way. The psalm also includes several wisdom themes. The title is unusual in that it attaches the designation “for the Sabbath day.” The poem has four brief sections: (1) an encouragement for the people to respond to God in praise and worship (vv. 1–4); (2) a celebration of the wisdom of

God in bringing judgment on the wicked (vv. 5–9); (3) an acknowledgment of the mercy of God who has established the believer's present life (vv. 10, 11); (4) an anticipation of the mercy of God that will continue in the life to come (vv. 12–15).

92:1–4 The wording of this section has similarities to Ps. 33:1, 2; 147:1; 149:1. **To give thanks** means “to give public acknowledgment” or to praise God verbally in a public setting (35:18; 105:1).

92:6 A senseless man . . . a fool: In contrast to the limitless wisdom of God is the shallow nature of the fool (14:1).

92:8, 9 You, LORD, are on high forevermore is the central shout of this psalm of descriptive praise (113:4). The Lord's eternality is contrasted with the brevity of the lives of His **enemies**. Because of God's patience, He allows evil to occur (2 Pet. 3:9)—but He will not allow it to flourish forever.

92:10 My horn You have exalted (75:4, 5; 89:17, 24; 132:17) is a figure of speech for the psalmist's eventual triumph, the celebration of the psalmist's strength. **I have been anointed with fresh oil** is not just a general statement of God's interest in the poet, but a prediction of the coming One, the Lord's Anointed.

92:12–15 The language of this section speaks of God's continuing blessing on the believer not only in this life but also in the life to come (Ps. 23). The **tree** image recalls the words of 1:3.

13 Those who are planted in the house
of the LORD
Shall flourish in the courts of our
God.
14 They shall still bear fruit in old age;
They shall be ³fresh and
⁴flourishing,
15 To declare that the LORD is upright;
^aHe is my rock, and ^othere is no
unrighteousness in Him.

PSALM 93

The Eternal Reign of the LORD

The ^aLORD reigns, He is clothed with
majesty;
The LORD is clothed,
^bHe has girded Himself with strength.
Surely the world is established, so
that it cannot be ¹moved.

14 ³ Full of oil or
sap, lit. fat ⁴ green
15 ^a [Deut. 32:4]
^o [Rom. 9:14]

PSALM 93

1 ^a Ps. 96:10 ^b Ps.
65:6 ¹ shaken

2 ^c Ps. 45:6; [Lam.
5:19]
3 ² raised up
4 ^d Ps. 65:7
5 ³ Lit. for length
of days

PSALM 94

1 ^a Deut. 32:35; [Is.
35:4; Nah. 1:2; Rom.
12:19]

2 ^cYour throne is established from of
old;
You are from everlasting.
3 The floods have ²lifted up, O LORD,
The floods have lifted up their voice;
The floods lift up their waves.
4 ^dThe LORD on high is mightier
Than the noise of many waters,
Than the mighty waves of the sea.
5 Your testimonies are very sure;
Holiness adorns Your house,
O LORD, ³forever.

PSALM 94

God the Refuge of the Righteous

O LORD God, ^ato whom vengeance
belongs—

Psalm 93, a royal psalm, focuses on the reign of God over the earth, making use of a distinctly Canaanite perspective. The psalmist denies Baal and shouts exuberantly in praise of God. God is King of the universe. What are humans compared to Him? God is King of heaven. What are the gods compared to Him? God is King of all. To whom may He be compared (Is. 40:25)? This focus is one of the most impressive ideas in the Bible. The structure of Ps. 93 is as follows: (1) the establishment of the reign of God as King of creation (vv. 1, 2); (2) the celebration of the stability of God as King of creation (vv. 3, 4); (3) the acknowledgment of the excellent nature of God (v. 5). **93:1, 2 The LORD reigns** is the key of the royal psalms (96:10; 97:1; 99:1). The language **girded Himself with strength** describes the victor of one-on-one combat. God is dressed in the garments of victory. This is a celebration of God as the Creator. **cannot be moved**: There is no power on earth or in the universe that can wrench control of the earth from God. **from of old**: Unlike Baal, who was a recent “upstart” in the myths of Canaan, the rule of God is from antiquity. The living God is eternal.

93:3, 4 The floods: Baal was supposed to have been victorious

over the waters; thus this section of the poem is a continuing refutation of Baal worship while it joyfully celebrates the power of God. **The LORD . . . is mightier**: The Creator King is infinite in power; no force in the universe competes with Him.

93:5 While this psalm uses language resembling the worship of Baal to emphasize the greatness of God (Ps. 29), it also glorifies God with praises never attributed to Baal. None of the accolades of Baal speak of his **testimonies**. But God is superior to Baal, for He is faithful to His word. He is the gracious God who speaks to His people; He is the holy God of Scripture who is approached by His people; and He is the eternal God whom we worship, as did the people of ancient Israel.

Psalm 94 is a royal psalm, since the phrase “Judge of the earth” (v. 2) is equivalent to “King” (50:4–6). The righteous call for the divine Judge to punish evil in the world (82:8; 96:13; 98:9). Psalms 93–99 are a splendid set of psalms focused on the eternal reign of God. The order of the psalm is as follows: (1) a call for the Judge of the earth to punish the wicked (vv. 1–3); (2) a description of the senseless acts of the wicked (vv. 4–7); (3) a chiding of the wicked.

Royal Psalms

Some of the most inspiring psalms are the royal psalms. These are psalms that celebrate God as King. It is amazing that the first time Scripture refers to God as King is in one of the oracles of Balaam, the pagan seer who was blind to spiritual reality until God confronted him (Num. 23:21). Once God was revealed as the Great King, the psalmists made much of that fact.

The reign of God in the Psalms is presented against the cultural backdrop of Canaanite thought and religion. The Canaanites regarded their chief deity El as king of the gods. But according to Canaanite mythology, El’s rule was attacked by Baal, a god of storm and fertility. He defeated a number of the followers of El. These were the gods Yamm (the god of the sea), Lotan (a sea monster), and Mot (the god of death). Baal himself was mortally wounded in this conflict and Anat, the wife-sister of Baal, was associated with his resuscitation. With this victory, Baal became king. But there was always a lingering question: How long would Baal rule? How long would his enemies remain defeated? Could not Lotan surge anew and threaten Baal’s position? The Canaanites who believed in these stories lived their lives on the brink of a heavenly catastrophe. Their gods were fragile; they were easily established and easily deposed.

It is against this background that the words of Ps. 93 obtain their force. The living God is the King from the beginning of time; He is no recent claimant to power (vv. 1, 2). As King, He exercises authority over all. He does not have to fear a resurgent sea (vv. 3, 4). Not only is the Lord omnipotent, but He is truthful and holy, unlike any of the gods of the Canaanite imagination (v. 5).

In general, the royal psalms speak of the Lord as King in three different ways. He is King over creation, for He is the Creator (74:12–17). He is King over the Israelites (44:4), for He is their Savior. And He is the coming King, for He will eventually judge everyone (47:7, 8). Sometimes in people’s minds God’s kingdom is narrowly identified with the coming glorious rule of Jesus: God’s present reign over creation is ignored. But sometimes the opposite is true. God’s present rule can be emphasized so much that Jesus’ coming is disregarded. The royal psalms consistently balance these two ideas: “The LORD reigns” (93:1), but the Lord is also coming to establish His permanent rule (24:9).



- O God, to whom vengeance belongs,
shine forth!
- ² Rise up, O ^b Judge of the earth;
¹ Render punishment to the proud.
- ³ LORD, ^c how long will the wicked,
How long will the wicked triumph?
- ⁴ They ^d utter speech, *and* speak
insolent things;
All the workers of iniquity boast in
themselves.
- ⁵ They break in pieces Your people,
O LORD,
And afflict Your heritage.
- ⁶ They slay the widow and the
stranger,
And murder the fatherless.
- ⁷ ^e Yet they say, “The LORD does not see,
Nor does the God of Jacob
² understand.”
- ⁸ Understand, you senseless among the
people;
And *you* fools, when will you be
wise?
- ⁹ ^f He who planted the ear, shall He not
hear?
He who formed the eye, shall He not
see?
- ¹⁰ He who ³ instructs the ⁴ nations, shall
He not correct,
He who teaches man knowledge?
- ¹¹ The LORD ^g knows the thoughts of man,
That they *are* futile.
- ¹² Blessed is the man whom You
^h instruct, O LORD,
And teach out of Your law,
- ¹³ That You may give him ⁵ rest from
the days of adversity,
Until the pit is dug for the wicked.

² ^b [Gen. 18:25]
¹ *Repay with*
³ ^c [Job 20:5]
⁴ ^d Ps. 31:18;
Jude 15
⁷ ^e Job 22:13;
Ps. 10:11 ² *pay*
attention
⁹ ^f [Ex. 4:11; Prov.
20:12]
¹⁰ ³ *disciplines*
⁴ *Gentiles*
¹¹ ^g Job 11:11; 1 Cor.
3:20
¹² ^h [Deut. 8:5; Job
5:17; Ps. 119:71;
Prov. 3:11, 12; Heb.
12:5, 6]
¹³ ⁵ *relief*

- ¹⁴ For the LORD will not ⁶ cast off His
people,
Nor will He forsake His inheritance.
- ¹⁵ But judgment will return to
righteousness,
And all the upright in heart will
follow it.
- ¹⁶ Who will rise up for me against the
evildoers?
Who will stand up for me against the
workers of iniquity?
- ¹⁷ Unless the LORD *had been* my help,
My soul would soon have settled in
silence.
- ¹⁸ If I say, “My foot slips,”
Your mercy, O LORD, will hold me up.
- ¹⁹ In the multitude of my anxieties
within me,
Your comforts delight my soul.
- ²⁰ Shall ⁱ the throne of iniquity, which
devises evil by law,
Have fellowship with You?
- ²¹ They gather together against the life
of the righteous,
And condemn ^j innocent blood.
- ²² But the LORD has been my defense,
And my God the rock of my refuge.
- ²³ He has brought on them their own
iniquity,
And shall ⁷ cut them off in their own
wickedness;
The LORD our God shall cut them off.

PSALM 95

A Call to Worship and Obedience

Oh come, let us sing to the LORD!
Let us shout joyfully to the Rock of
our salvation.

ed concerning their ignorance of God (vv. 8–11); (4) a blessing on the righteous (vv. 12–15); (5) a prayer for God’s intervention in the psalmist’s life (vv. 16–19); (6) a prayer for God’s defense of His own purposes (vv. 20–23).

94:1–3 Even when the poets call out for divine **vengeance**, they recognize that God decides when to exercise His wrath and judgment. God’s law clearly states that vengeance belongs to Him (Deut. 32:35). **How long will the wicked triumph:** This question is based on a concern for the glory of God. How long would the wicked defy God? The answer, of course, is in God’s mercy. The Lord may delay this judgment, but in His own timing He will come to establish true justice (2 Pet. 3:9).

94:4–6 The Psalms often describe the wicked in terms of their evil **speech** (Ps. 12). **They slay the widow and the stranger:** The Israelites had been commanded to comfort widows and orphans and to welcome strangers as long as those strangers obeyed the Law of God (Ex. 22:22). Thus the wicked were brazenly disobeying God’s commands.

94:8–11 The command to **understand** is for fools to abandon their foolishness. Surely, the poet argues, the Creator of the earth is not deaf, nor is the Fashioner of the eye blind. Although idols do not have real eyes and ears (115:3–8), the God of heaven does see and hear. **The LORD knows:** The difference between the thoughts of God and the thoughts of human beings is beyond comprehen-

sion. **The thoughts of man** apart from God are **futile** or “quickly passing.”

94:12 Blessed is the man: This beatitude uses the word with which the Book of Psalms begins, a term meaning “manifest happiness.” These words are very similar to the ideas of 1:2.

94:13, 14 Pit is one of the words used as a synonym for Sheol (16:10). Digging the “pit” is a way of describing the preparations for the final judgment of the wicked (Rev. 20). **will not cast off His people:** God will not forget His people any more than He will forget or deny Himself (2 Tim. 2:13).

94:16–19 Who will rise up for me is an appeal to the Lord who alone is the sure defense of the believer. **settled in silence:** The psalmist exclaims that if the Lord had not delivered him, he would have died. As in Ps. 6, if the psalmist had died, his voice would no longer be able to praise God in the temple. The **comforts** of God extend from His hearing the call of the righteous to His meeting their needs even when they are not aware of them.

94:20–23 Throne of iniquity is a description of the wicked who have great power. The holy Lord cannot tolerate evil in His presence. **The LORD . . . shall cut them off:** Final judgment will one day come to the wicked.

Psalm 95 places particular emphasis on the worship of God, making it a worship psalm. But it is also a royal psalm because of the way it acknowledges God as the great King (v. 3). The psalm has three

¹⁴ ⁶ *abandon*
²⁰ ⁱ Amos 6:3
²¹ ^j [Ex. 23:7];
Ps. 106:38; [Prov.
17:15]; Matt. 27:4
²³ ⁷ *destroy them*

- 2 Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving;
Let us shout joyfully to Him with ^apsalms.
- 3 For ^bthe LORD is the great God,
And the great King above all gods.
- 4 ¹ In His hand are the deep places of the earth;
The heights of the hills are His also.
- 5 ^cThe sea is His, for He made it;
And His hands formed the dry land.
- 6 Oh come, let us worship and bow down;
Let ^dus kneel before the LORD our Maker.
- 7 For He is our God,
And ^ewe are the people of His pasture,
And the sheep ²of His hand.

- ^fToday, if you will hear His voice:
8 “Do not harden your hearts, as in the ³rebellion,
^gAs in the day of ⁴trial in the wilderness,
9 When ^hyour fathers tested Me;
They tried Me, though they ⁱsaw My work.
- 10 For ^jforty years I was ⁵grieved with that generation,
And said, ‘It is a people who go astray in their hearts,
And they do not know My ways.’
11 So ^kI swore in My wrath,
‘They shall not enter My rest.’ ”

PSALM 95

2 ^a Eph. 5:19; James 5:13
3 ^b [Ps. 96:4; 1 Cor. 8:5, 6]
4 ¹ In His possession
5 ^c Gen. 1:9, 10; Jon. 1:9
6 ^d 2 Chr. 6:13; Dan. 6:10; [Phil. 2:10]
7 ^e Ps. 79:13 / Heb. 3:7-11, 15; 4:7
2 Under His care
8 ^g Ex. 17:2-7; Num. 20:13 ³ Or Meribah, lit. Strife, Contention
4 Or Massah, lit. Trial, Testing
9 ^h Ps. 78:18; [1 Cor. 10:9] ⁱ Num. 14:22
10 / Acts 7:36;
13:18; Heb. 3:10, 17
5 ^j disgusted
11 ^k Num. 14:23, 28-30; Deut. 1:35; Heb. 4:3, 5

PSALM 96

1 ^a 1 Chr. 16:23-33
3 ¹ Gentiles
4 ^b Ps. 145:3 ^c Ps. 18:3 ^d Ps. 95:3
5 ^e 1 Chr. 16:26; [Jer. 10:11] ^f Ps. 115:15; Is. 42:5
6 ^g Ps. 29:2
7 ^h 1 Chr. 16:28, 29; Ps. 29:1, 2 ² Ascribe
8 ³ Ascribe
9 ⁱ 1 Chr. 16:29; 2 Chr. 20:21; Ps. 29:2
10 / Ps. 93:1; 97:1; [Rev. 11:15; 19:6]
4 Gentiles

PSALM 96

A Song of Praise to God Coming in Judgment

- Oh, ^asing to the LORD a new song!
Sing to the LORD, all the earth.
- 2 Sing to the LORD, bless His name;
Proclaim the good news of His salvation from day to day.
- 3 Declare His glory among the ¹nations,
His wonders among all peoples.
- 4 For ^bthe LORD is great and ^cgreatly to be praised;
^dHe is to be feared above all gods.
- 5 For ^eall the gods of the peoples are idols,
^fBut the LORD made the heavens.
- 6 Honor and majesty are before Him;
Strength and ^gbeauty are in His sanctuary.
- 7 ^hGive ²to the LORD, O families of the peoples,
Give to the LORD glory and strength.
- 8 ³Give to the LORD the glory ^{due} His name;
Bring an offering, and come into His courts.
- 9 Oh, worship the LORD ⁱin the beauty of holiness!
Tremble before Him, all the earth.
- 10 Say among the ⁴nations, ^j“The LORD reigns;
The world also is firmly established,

movements, each reflecting a “mood” of the worshiping community: (1) the worship of God in a mood of celebration (vv. 1–5); (2) the worship of God in a contemplative mood (vv. 6, 7); (3) the worship of God in obedience (vv. 8–11).

95:1–4 Oh come: The psalm begins with energy and delight at the prospect of worshipping God in the temple (Ps. 100). The use of the **psalms** in worship is indicated in this passage. **In His hand** refers to God’s control over all that He has made.

95:6, 7 Each of the key verbs in this sentence describes a physical posture of humility before the Lord. The Hebrew word translated **worship** means literally “to prostrate oneself.” When **bow down**, **kneel**, and **worship** occur together as in this verse, they amplify each other and call for a reflective, humble approach to God. Worship is joyful and can be done with abandon (vv. 1–5); but at other times worship may be quiet reverence of the Almighty (see Ps. 134). **people of His pasture:** These words seem to be an inversion of the wording of 100:3, expressing the loving care the Father has for His children.

95:7–11 The third movement of this psalm is a call for obedience in worship and a reminder of God’s judgments in past times on people who did not take Him seriously. The entire section is quoted in its entirety in Heb. 3:7–11, with a notable introduction: “Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says” (Heb. 3:7). This phrase reminds us that the words of the psalms, which are the response of the worshiping Israelite community, are also the oracles of God.

95:8 The word **rebellion** is literally “Meribah,” a word that would remind the Israelites of the times they had doubted the Lord’s provision for them (Ex. 17:7; Num. 20:13). The event of Meribah was the

rebellion of the first generation at Kadesh (Num. 14). By refusing to enter Canaan, the entire generation of Israelites lost their opportunity to enjoy the promises of God in the land of blessing.

Psalm 96, a royal psalm, is part of the set that begins at Ps. 93. This psalm emphasizes world mission, specifically the prophetic fulfillment of the mission provision of the Abrahamic covenant (Ps. 67). The structure of the poem is as follows: (1) a call to praise God (vv. 1–3); (2) a celebration of God the Creator (vv. 4–6); (3) a celebration of God the King (vv. 7–10); (4) a celebration of God the coming One (vv. 11–13).

96:3 Among the nations is a bold declaration that one day the message of God’s mercy will be known the world over. One day the message of God’s salvation will be known **among all peoples**. This declaration depends on God’s promise to Abraham that through his descendants all nations of the earth will be blessed (Gen. 12:1–3). It also anticipates Jesus’ command to his disciples to spread the news of God’s goodness to a desperate world (Matt. 28:18–20; see also Ps. 67).

96:4–6 The mention of other gods in v. 4 is clarified by the words of v. 5: these gods are merely **idols**. **Honor and majesty** may be rephrased as “majestic honor.” **Strength and beauty** may be rephrased as “beautiful strength.”

96:7–9 families of the peoples: The allusion to the Abrahamic covenant continues (vv. 2, 3; see Gen. 12:1–3). One day, the praise of God will come gladly from people of all nations. **Give to the LORD:** The words of vv. 7–9 are quoted from 29:1, 2, with the substitution of “O families of the peoples” for “O you mighty ones.”

96:10 The LORD reigns is the key phrase of the royal psalms (93:1).

It shall not be ⁵ moved;
^k He shall judge the peoples righteously.”

- ¹¹ ^l Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad;
^m Let the sea roar, and ⁶ all its fullness;
¹² Let the field be joyful, and all that is in it.
 Then all the trees of the woods will rejoice
¹³ before the LORD
 For He is coming, for He is coming to judge the earth.
ⁿ He shall judge the world with righteousness,
 And the peoples with His truth.

PSALM 97

A Song of Praise to the Sovereign LORD

- T**he LORD ^a reigns;
 Let the earth rejoice;
 Let the multitude of ¹ isles be glad!
² ^b Clouds and darkness surround Him;
^c Righteousness and justice *are* the foundation of His throne.
³ ^d A fire goes before Him,
 And burns up His enemies round about.
⁴ ^e His lightnings light the world;
 The earth sees and trembles.
⁵ ^f The mountains melt like wax at the presence of the LORD,
 At the presence of the Lord of the whole earth.

¹⁰ ^k Ps. 67:4
⁵ *shaken*
¹¹ ^l Ps. 69:34; Is. 49:13 ^m Ps. 98:7
⁶ *all that is in it*
¹³ ⁿ [Rev. 19:11]

PSALM 97

¹ ^a [Ps. 96:10] ¹ Or coastlands
² ^b Ex. 19:9; Deut. 4:11; 1 Kin. 8:12; Ps. 18:11 ^c [Ps. 89:14]
³ ^d Ps. 18:8; Dan. 7:10; Hab. 3:5
⁴ ^e Ex. 19:18
⁵ ^f Ps. 46:6; Amos 9:5; Mic. 1:4; Nah. 1:5

⁶ ^g Ps. 19:1
⁷ ^h [Ex. 20:4] ⁱ [Heb. 1:6]
⁹ ^j Ps. 83:18 ^k Ex. 18:11; Ps. 95:3; 96:4
¹⁰ ^l [Ps. 34:14; Prov. 8:13; Amos 5:15; Rom. 12:9] ^m Ps. 31:23; 145:20; Prov. 2:8 ⁿ Ps. 37:40; Jer. 15:21; Dan. 3:28
¹¹ ^o Job 22:28; Ps. 112:4; Prov. 4:18
¹² ^p Ps. 33:1 ^q Ps. 30:4 ² Or for the memory ³ Or His holiness

PSALM 98

¹ ^a Ps. 33:3; Is. 42:10
^b Ex. 15:11; Ps. 77:14
² ^c Is. 52:10; [Luke 1:77; 2:30, 31] ^d Is. 62:2; Rom. 3:25
¹ *Gentiles*

- ⁶ ^g The heavens declare His righteousness,
 And all the peoples see His glory.
⁷ ^h Let all be put to shame who serve carved images,
 Who boast of idols.
ⁱ Worship Him, all *you* gods.
⁸ Zion hears and is glad,
 And the daughters of Judah rejoice
 Because of Your judgments, O LORD.
⁹ For You, LORD, *are* ^j most high above all the earth;
^k You are exalted far above all gods.
¹⁰ You who love the LORD, ^l hate evil!
^m He preserves the souls of His saints;
ⁿ He delivers them out of the hand of the wicked.
¹¹ ^o Light is sown for the righteous,
 And gladness for the upright in heart.
¹² ^p Rejoice in the LORD, you righteous,
^q And give thanks ² at the remembrance of ³ His holy name.

PSALM 98

A Song of Praise to the LORD for His Salvation and Judgment

A Psalm.

- O**h, ^a sing to the LORD a new song!
 For He has ^b done marvelous things;
 His right hand and His holy arm
 have gained Him the victory.
² ^c The LORD has made known His salvation;
^d His righteousness He has revealed in the sight of the ¹ nations.

It was the countercultural cry of ancient Israelites in a world that believed that gods could rise and fall. In contrast, the living God remains Ruler for all eternity. **He shall judge:** This verse answers the cry of the oppressed peoples of world history. God will restore justice (82:8; 94:1–3).

96:11–13 Let the heavens rejoice: This poem calls for all of creation to respond to the coming of the King of glory. **He is coming . . . He is coming:** Like the echo of approaching footsteps, the words echo each other. **judge the world:** See 98:9 for similar words; see Rev. 19; 20 for their fulfillment.

Psalm 97, one of the series of royal psalms (Ps. 93–99), has a particularly apocalyptic tone in its description of God’s final judgment on the wicked before He establishes His great kingdom. The structure of the poem is: (1) a call for the praise of God the King (v. 1); (2) a vision of the coming judgment of the wicked (vv. 2–6); (3) a prophetic statement about the end of idolatry (vv. 7–9); (4) a promise of great joy for the righteous (vv. 10, 11); (5) a call for the praise of God the King (v. 12).

97:1 The LORD reigns is the key phrase of the royal psalms (93:1). **The earth** as a whole and its smallest parts—the **isles**—join together in rejoicing at the prospect of God’s reign on earth.

97:2 Clouds and darkness may be rephrased “impenetrable clouds,” an indicator of the final judgment and God’s awesome power (Joel 2:2; Zeph. 1:15). **Righteousness and justice** may be rephrased as “absolute righteousness.” The foundation of God’s coming judgment will be His integrity; His judgments will be correct.

97:3 fire: The psalmist uses the imagery of the storm god Baal to describe God’s judgment. This poetic language attempts to describe the final judgment of God upon the earth before He establishes His kingdom.

97:7, 8 The continuing practice of idolatry throughout world history is a grave offense against the Lord. Such behavior will finally end in **shame** and terror (14:5). **Worship Him:** Anything that serves as an object of worship will one day bow before the true God (115:4–10).

97:10, 11 To **hate** means to reject; to **love** means to choose. Since both are an expression of the will and not merely an emotion, the Bible commands both love and hatred. **Light is sown:** The picture is that of someone sowing seed, with the seed being light and joy. This speaks of the restoration of the earth (Ps. 110).

97:12 Rejoice: The psalm begins and ends on a note of rejoicing. **Psalm 98**, one of the set of royal psalms that includes Ps. 93–99, is an exuberant psalm of praise. This poem shares the same joy as Ps. 96. The outline is as follows: (1) a call to praise God as the Savior (vv. 1–3); (2) a call to praise God as the King (vv. 4–6); (3) a call to praise God as the coming Judge (vv. 7–9).

98:1–2 The term **marvelous things** is used only to describe the actions of God in the Bible. The **right hand** of the Lord is a way of referring to His great salvation of Israel from Egypt (Ex. 15:6; Deut. 4:34). The phrase is like a slogan for the Lord’s redemption (118:15, 16). **sight of the nations:** God’s salvation was designed to be a witness to the nations (Deut. 4:6).

- 3 He has remembered His mercy and His faithfulness to the house of Israel;
 ^cAll the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.
- 4 Shout joyfully to the LORD, all the earth;
 Break forth in song, rejoice, and sing praises.
- 5 Sing to the LORD with the harp,
 With the harp and the sound of a psalm,
- 6 With trumpets and the sound of a horn;
 Shout joyfully before the LORD, the King.
- 7 Let the sea roar, and all its fullness,
 The world and those who dwell in it;
8 Let the rivers clap *their* hands;
 Let the hills be joyful together
9 before the LORD,
 ^fFor He is coming to judge the earth.
 With righteousness He shall judge the world,
 And the peoples with ²equity.

PSALM 99

Praise to the LORD for His Holiness

- T**he LORD reigns;
 Let the peoples tremble!
 ^aHe dwells *between* the cherubim;
 Let the earth be ¹moved!
- 2 The LORD *is* great in Zion,
 And He *is* high above all the peoples.
- 3 Let them praise Your great and awesome name—
 ²He *is* holy.

3 ^c [Is. 49:6]; Luke 3:6; [Acts 13:47; 28:28]
9 ^f [Ps. 96:10, 13]
² *uprightness*

PSALM 99

1 ^a Ex. 25:22;
1 Sam. 4:4; Ps. 80:1
¹ *shaken*
3 ² *Or It*

- 4 The King's strength also loves justice;
 You have established equity;
 You have executed justice and righteousness in Jacob.
- 5 Exalt the LORD our God,
 And worship at His footstool—
 He *is* holy.
- 6 Moses and Aaron were among His priests,
 And Samuel was among those who
 ^bcalled upon His name;
 They called upon the LORD, and He answered them.
- 7 He spoke to them in the cloudy pillar;
 They kept His testimonies and the ³ordinance He gave them.
- 8 You answered them, O LORD our God;
 You were to them God-Who-Forgives,
 Though You took vengeance on their deeds.
- 9 Exalt the LORD our God,
 And worship at His holy hill;
 For the LORD our God *is* holy.

PSALM 100

A Song of Praise for the LORD's Faithfulness to His People

- ^a A Psalm of Thanksgiving.
- M**ake ^ba joyful shout to the LORD, ¹all you lands!
2 Serve the LORD with gladness;
 Come before His presence with singing.

6 ^b 1 Sam. 7:9; 12:18
⁷ *statute*

PSALM 100

title ^a Ps. 145: **title**
1 ^b Ps. 95:1 ¹ *Lit. all the earth*

98:7, 8 In Canaanite thought, **the sea** represented a dark deity. In the Psalms, the sea is a part of creation that God completely controls (Ps. 93). The **clapping of the hands of the rivers** and the rejoicing of the **hills** represents the praise of creation at the establishment of God's kingdom on the earth.

98:9 He is coming: This verse and 96:13 answer the call for justice found at many points in the Psalms. The coming of the Judge is a reason for joy. At last the Lord will put an end to cruelty, evil, and injustice.

Psalm 99, the last of the set of royal psalms that began with Ps. 93, praises God as the King of His people. The psalm has three movements, each ending with the words "He is holy": (1) praise to the Lord in the greatness of His glory (vv. 1–3); (2) praise to the King in the justice of His rule (vv. 4, 5); (3) praise to the Lord who answers the prayers of His people (vv. 6–9).

99:1, 2 The cherubim are the angels most closely related to the glory of God. Two gold cherubim graced the mercy seat of the ark of the covenant (Ex. 25:18–22). **Let the earth be moved:** Since God is the great King, the stability of the earth depends on Him; He can shake the world to demonstrate His power over it (Matt. 24:29).

great in Zion: The holy temple in Jerusalem was the earthly structure for God's heavenly presence. But His reign extends throughout the entire world.

99:3 awesome name: The name of God is a blessing and comfort; it also evokes awe and wonder. **Holy** means to be "distant" or "dis-

tinct from." This is the principal Hebrew word used to describe the transcendence of God (113:4–6).

99:5 The footstool of the Lord is sometimes said to be the earth (Is. 66:1); but more specifically, Zion is the Lord's footstool (132:7; Is. 60:13). When the Israelites came to the temple in Jerusalem to worship, they pictured themselves as being at the feet of the Creator.

99:6 The psalmists worshiped God by recalling His saving acts to their predecessors. **Moses** is mentioned by name in the Psalms several times (77:20; 103:7; 105:26; 106:16, 23, 32), as is **Aaron** (77:20; 105:26; 106:16; 115:10, 12; 118:3; 133:2; 135:19). This psalm is the only one to mention **Samuel** by name. **He answered:** The inference is clear—the Lord heard their prayers and did not remain silent. Since God answered the prayers of our ancestors, surely He will continue to answer the prayers of those who call upon Him.

99:9 His holy hill: As in 2:6, the site of Zion is "holy" because of the presence of the Lord. This holy hill is also His "footstool" (see v. 5).

Psalm 100 is a psalm of descriptive praise that follows a set of royal psalms (Ps. 93–99). Perhaps the ancient editors felt that the royal psalms demanded the response of worship provided by this psalm. The phrase "A Psalm of Thanksgiving" refers to public acknowledgment of the Lord.

100:1, 2 The Hebrew verb for **make a joyful shout** is a highly charged command for public praise. The command is addressed not just to Israel but to all the earth. The Israelites were to be a people who would attract the nations to worship God. **with gladness:**

- ³ Know that the LORD, He is God;
^cIt is He who has made us, and ²not
 we ourselves;
^dWe are His people and the sheep of
 His pasture.
- ⁴ ^eEnter into His gates with
 thanksgiving,
 And into His courts with praise.
 Be thankful to Him, and bless His
 name.
- ⁵ For the LORD is good;
^fHis mercy is everlasting,
 And His truth endures to all
 generations.

PSALM 101

Promised Faithfulness to the LORD

A Psalm of David.

I will sing of mercy and justice;
 To You, O LORD, I will sing praises.

- ² I will behave wisely in a ¹perfect
 way.
 Oh, when will You come to me?
 I will ^awalk within my house with a
 perfect heart.
- ³ I will set nothing ²wicked before my
 eyes;
^bI hate the work of those ^cwho fall
 away;
 It shall not cling to me.
- ⁴ A perverse heart shall depart from me;
 I will not ^dknow wickedness.

³ ^c Job 10:3, 8; Ps.
 119:73; 139:13, 14;
 [Eph. 2:10] ^d Ps.
 95:7; [Is. 40:11];
 Ezek. 34:30, 31 ² So
 with Kt., LXX, Vg.;
 Qr., many Heb.
 mss., Tg. we are His
⁴ ^e Ps. 66:13;
 116:17-19
⁵ ^f Ps. 136:1

PSALM 101

² ^a 1 Kin. 11:4
¹ blameless
³ ^b Ps. 97:10 ^c Josh.
 23:6 ² worthless
⁴ ^d [Ps. 119:115]

⁵ ^e Prov. 6:17
⁶ ³ blameless
⁷ ⁴ Lit. be
 established
⁸ ^f [Ps. 75:10]; Jer.
 21:12 ⁹ Ps. 48:2, 8

PSALM 102

title ^a Ps. 61:2
² ^b Ps. 27:9; 69:17
³ ^c James 4:14 ¹ Lit.
 end in

- ⁵ Whoever secretly slanders his
 neighbor,
 Him I will destroy;
^cThe one who has a haughty look and
 a proud heart,
 Him I will not endure.
- ⁶ My eyes shall be on the faithful of the
 land,
 That they may dwell with me;
 He who walks in a ³perfect way,
 He shall serve me.
- ⁷ He who works deceit shall not dwell
 within my house;
 He who tells lies shall not ⁴continue
 in my presence.
- ⁸ ^fEarly I will destroy all the wicked of
 the land,
 That I may cut off all the evildoers
⁹from the city of the LORD.

PSALM 102

The LORD's Eternal Love

A Prayer of the afflicted, ^awhen he is
 overwhelmed and pours out his complaint
 before the LORD.

- H**ear my prayer, O LORD,
 And let my cry come to You.
² ^bDo not hide Your face from me in the
 day of my trouble;
 Incline Your ear to me;
 In the day that I call, answer me
 speedily.
- ³ For my days ¹are ^cconsumed like
 smoke,

Joyful abandon was not the only mood of worship in ancient Israel (Ps. 95), but there was great emphasis placed on it.

100:3 The words **the LORD, He is God** reflect the great confession of faith in Deut 6:4-9. To **know** that the Lord is God is very similar to the command to "hear" in Deuteronomy. **And not we ourselves** is sometimes read "and His we are." **sheep of His pasture**: An inversion of these words can be found in 95:7.

100:4 Enter: The commands of vv. 1, 2 are reiterated. The people of the Lord may actually come into His presence and bring Him worship that pleases Him. **Be thankful** is a command for public expression of praise (106:1).

100:5 the LORD is good: The shout of the goodness of God in this verse is buttressed by an appeal to **His mercy** and **His truth**. The Hebrew word for *truth* comes from the root meaning "to be established" or "to be confirmed." From this root also comes the word *amen*, meaning "surely" or "truly." God's goodness is based on His loyal love and His truth.

Psalm 101 is a royal psalm. David the king declares his purposes and asks for God's help in maintaining righteousness. This brief psalm has a tone of strong judgment, indicating a desire not only to preserve the innocent and protect the needy, but also to maintain the reputation of God against the attacks of His foes. The outline of the poem is: (1) a determination to praise the Lord (v. 1); (2) a determination to behave wisely (v. 2); (3) a determination to abstain from wickedness (vv. 3-5); (4) a determination to discriminate between the righteous and the wicked (vv. 6-8).

101:1, 2 Mercy and justice may be rephrased as "gracious justice." There is a harshness to the tone of the psalm that might emphasize

the *justice* element of this phrasing; but underlying the justice is God's "mercy" or "loyal love." **Behave wisely** means to act with skill. The strong form of the word indicates intense determination, not just a passing desire.

101:3, 4 The Hebrew expression for **wicked** implies utter worthlessness. The phrase **I hate** indicates utter rejection (5:5). David hated what God hated and loved what God loved. **not know**: The Hebrew verb for "to know" here has the idea of experience or intimate relationship with something or someone.

101:6-8 David made a covenant with his **eyes** (Job 31:1) to observe the righteous and sustain them in their walk. Alternatively, his eyes were also directed *against* the wicked. **the evildoers**: Elsewhere, this Hebrew phrase is rendered *workers of iniquity* (14:4).

Psalm 102, a penitential psalm, has an unusual inscription. The title describes a person in distress but does not name him. The structure of the poem is: (1) a cry to the Lord for deliverance (vv. 1, 2); (2) a description of the groaning brought about by guilt (vv. 3-7); (3) a description of suffering that results from the laughter of enemies (vv. 8-11); (4) praise to the Lord who rises to answer prayer (vv. 12-17); (5) praise to the Lord who stoops to the needs of His people (vv. 18-22); (6) a petition to the Lord to renew the strength of His servant (vv. 23-28).

102:1 In its entreaty to the Lord to **hear**, the beginning of the psalm reflects a pattern of lament (see 13:1, 2). The next section (vv. 3-7) reflects a pattern of penitence (see 32:3-5).

102:3 my days are consumed: This description of the psalmist's sense of his own frailty is matched by the words of 144:4, "like a passing shadow."

And my bones are burned like a hearth.
 4 My heart is stricken and withered like grass,
 So that I forget to eat my bread.
 5 Because of the sound of my groaning
 My bones cling to my ² skin.
 6 I am like a pelican of the wilderness;
 I am like an owl of the desert.
 7 I lie awake,
 And am like a sparrow alone on the housetop.
 8 My enemies reproach me all day long;
 Those who deride me swear an oath against me.
 9 For I have eaten ashes like bread,
 And mingled my drink with weeping,
 10 Because of Your indignation and Your wrath;
 For You have lifted me up and cast me away.
 11 My days *are* like a shadow that lengthens,
 And I wither away like grass.
 12 But You, O LORD, shall endure forever,
 And the remembrance of Your name to all generations.
 13 You will arise *and* have mercy on Zion;
 For the time to favor her,
 Yes, the set time, has come.
 14 For Your servants take pleasure in her stones,
 And show favor to her dust.
 15 So the ³ nations shall ^d fear the name of the LORD,
 And all the kings of the earth Your glory.
 16 For the LORD shall build up Zion;
^c He shall appear in His glory.
 17 ^f He shall regard the prayer of the destitute,
 And shall not despise their prayer.

⁵ ² flesh
 15 ^a 1 Kin. 8:43
³ Gentiles
 16 ^e [Is. 60:1, 2]
 17 ^f Neh. 1:6; Ps. 22:24

18 ^g Deut. 31:19;
 [Rom. 15:4; 1 Cor. 10:11] ^h Ps. 22:31
 19 ⁱ Deut. 26:15;
 Ps. 14:2
 23 ^j Ps. 79:11
 21 ^k Ps. 22:22
 22 ^l [Is. 2:2, 3; 49:22,
 23; 60:3]; Zech.
 8:20-23
 23 ^m Job 21:21
 24 ⁿ [Ps. 39:13]; Is.
 38:10 ^o Job 36:26;
 [Ps. 90:2]; Hab. 1:12
 25 ^p [Gen. 1:1; Neh.
 9:6; Heb. 1:10-12]
 26 ^q Is. 34:4; 51:6;
 Matt. 24:35; [2 Pet.
 3:7, 10-12]; Rev.
 20:11 ^r continue
 27 ^r [Is. 41:4; 43:10;
 Mal. 3:6; Heb. 13:8];
 James 1:17
 28 ^s Ps. 69:36

PSALM 103

1 ^a Ps. 104:1, 35

18 This will be ^g written for the generation to come,
 That ^h a people yet to be created may praise the LORD.
 19 For He ⁱ looked down from the height of His sanctuary;
 From heaven the LORD viewed the earth,
 20 ^j To hear the groaning of the prisoner,
 To release those appointed to death,
 21 To ^k declare the name of the LORD in Zion,
 And His praise in Jerusalem,
 22 ^l When the peoples are gathered together,
 And the kingdoms, to serve the LORD.
 23 He weakened my strength in the way;
 He ^m shortened my days.
 24 ⁿ I said, "O my God,
 Do not take me away in the midst of my days;
^o Your years *are* throughout all generations.
 25 ^p Of old You laid the foundation of the earth,
 And the heavens *are* the work of Your hands.
 26 ^q They will perish, but You will ^r endure;
 Yes, they will all grow old like a garment;
 Like a cloak You will change them,
 And they will be changed.
 27 But ^r You *are* the same,
 And Your years will have no end.
 28 ^s The children of Your servants will continue,
 And their descendants will be established before You."

PSALM 103

Praise for the LORD's Mercies

A Psalm of David.

Bless ^a the LORD, O my soul;
 And all that is within me, *bless* His holy name!

102:6-8 The psalmist names birds—a **pelican**, **an owl**, and a **sparrow**—who live in distant, lonely places. The psalmist felt isolated, alone, and vulnerable, an isolation intensified by the harsh ranting of his enemies, who **deride** him for his decision to trust in the Lord.

102:12 *Shall endure* may also be translated "sits enthroned." God is King forever. He is gracious, loves His people, and promises to favor them. With these words of praise, the psalmist expresses his hope that God will deliver him.

102:15 The psalmist anticipates a time when the Lord will reign over all the **nations** (Ps. 96-98); but his prayer is for God's answer to his own cry for deliverance.

102:18, 19 The psalmist realizes that the Eternal One has stooped from heaven to meet his need, that the King of kings has come to

his aid. His joy is such that he wants people who have not yet been born to learn what God has done.

102:24, 25 *midst of my days*: The psalmist remembers his troubling experiences and contrasts the brevity of his own life with the eternity of God. **Of old**: God is eternal and His works are from ancient times. The writer of the Book of Hebrews applies these words of creation and eternity to the Son (vv. 25-27; Heb. 1:10-12).

Psalm 103, a wisdom psalm attributed to David, is also a psalm of praise. The poem begins with the psalmist speaking in the singular (v. 1), but then moves to include the community, both angels and people (vv. 20-22). The structure of the psalm is: (1) praise of the Lord for His many benefits (vv. 1-5); (2) praise of the Lord for His ongoing mercy (vv. 6-10); (3) praise of the Lord for His transcendent glory and gentle care (vv. 11-14); (4) a comparison of the transitory

- 2 Bless the LORD, O my soul,
And forget not all His benefits:
- 3 ^bWho forgives all your iniquities,
Who ^cheals all your diseases,
- 4 Who redeems your life from
destruction,
^dWho crowns you with
lovingkindness and tender
mercies,
- 5 Who satisfies your mouth with good
things,
So that ^eyour youth is renewed like
the eagle's.
- 6 The LORD executes righteousness
And justice for all who are
oppressed.
- 7 ^fHe made known His ways to
Moses,
His acts to the children of Israel.
- 8 ^gThe LORD is merciful and gracious,
Slow to anger, and abounding in
mercy.
- 9 ^hHe will not always strive *with us*,
Nor will He keep *His anger* forever.
- 10 ⁱHe has not dealt with us according to
our sins,
Nor punished us according to our
iniquities.
- 11 For as the heavens are high above the
earth,
So great is His mercy toward those
who fear Him;
- 12 As far as the east is from the west,
So far has He ^jremoved our
transgressions from us.

3 ^p Ps. 130:8; Is.
33:24 ^c [Ex. 15:26];
Ps. 147:3; [Is. 53:5];
Jer. 17:14
4 ^d [Ps. 5:12]
5 ^e [Is. 40:31]
7 ^f Ex. 33:12-17; Ps.
147:19
8 ^g [Ex. 34:6, 7;
Num. 14:18]; Deut.
5:10; Neh. 9:17; Ps.
86:15; Jer. 32:18;
Jon. 4:2; James 5:11
9 ^h [Ps. 30:5; Is.
57:16]; Jer. 3:5; [Mic.
7:18]
10 ⁱ [Ezra 9:13; Lam.
3:22]
12 ^j [2 Sam. 12:13; Is.
38:17; 43:25; Zech.
3:9; Heb. 9:26]

13 ^k Mal. 3:17
14 ^l Understands
our constitution
15 ^l Is. 40:6-8;
James 1:10, 11;
1 Pet. 1:24
16 ^m [Is. 40:7] ⁿ Job
7:10 ² not
18 ^o [Deut. 7:9]; Ps.
25:10
19 ^p [Ps. 47:2; Dan.
4:17, 25]
20 ^q Ps. 148:2
21 ^r [Matt. 6:10]
21 ^s [Heb. 1:14]
³ servants

- 13 ^k As a father pities *his* children,
So the LORD pities those who fear
Him.
- 14 For He ^lknows our frame;
He remembers that we *are* dust.
- 15 As *for* man, ^lhis days *are* like grass;
As a flower of the field, so he
flourishes.
- 16^m For the wind passes over it, and it is
²gone,
And ⁿits place remembers it no
more.
- 17 But the mercy of the LORD *is* from
everlasting to everlasting
On those who fear Him,
And His righteousness to children's
children,
- 18 ^o To such as keep His covenant,
And to those who remember His
commandments to do them.
- 19 The LORD has established His throne
in heaven,
And ^pHis kingdom rules over all.
- 20 ^q Bless the LORD, you His angels,
Who excel in strength, who ^rdo His
word,
Heeding the voice of His word.
- 21 Bless the LORD, all *you* His hosts,
^s *You* ³ministers of His, who do His
pleasure.
- 22 Bless the LORD, all His works,
In all places of His dominion.
- Bless the LORD, O my soul!

nature of humanity with the everlasting rule of God (vv. 15–19); (5) a call to heaven and earth to bless the Lord (vv. 20–22).

103:1 To bless the LORD is to remember that He is the source of all our blessings. The psalmist blesses the Lord with his entire being (146:2).

103:3–5 heals all your diseases: There are godly people who suffer illness, despite repeated prayers for healing. Even though God is not bound to heal every disease, every healing does come from Him. **Who satisfies your mouth:** In addition to being a healer, God provides food as well as other blessings (111:5). His mercy enables the believer to rise up like an eagle (see Is. 40:31).

103:6 God is *for* the helpless and the **oppressed**. He is not unfair, for He is the One who will restore justice to the earth.

103:7 made known His ways to Moses: God blessed His servant Moses in a special way by revealing the Law to him. **His acts:** During the Exodus and the wilderness wanderings, God acted on the Israelites' behalf. He saved them from Pharaoh's army, provided them with water and food, but most importantly revealed the Law to them.

103:8–14 The LORD is merciful: This is a basic description of God in the OT (see 86:15; Ex. 34:6, 7). If God dealt with us **according to our sins**, no one could stand before Him (130:3). There is no way to compare the divine with the mortal; the mercy of God is greater than **the heavens**. He removes our sins completely (Mic. 7:19) and cares for His people as a good **father** cares for his **children**. The fact that God remembers who we are and how He made us is another mark of His mercy, for **we are dust**.

103:17–19 Mercy may be rephrased as "loyal love." God's anger is

for a moment (v. 8); His loyal love is forever. His blessing is on those who keep faith with Him (147:11). **His throne:** The Lord is King of all and King forever. His rule is the only rule that matters.

103:20–22 Bless the LORD: The poet began the psalm with a call to his own inner being to respond with praise to God (v. 1); he concludes the psalm with a call to heaven and earth to join him in joyful praise.

soul

(Heb. *nephesh*) (11:5; 103:1, 2; Lev. 26:30; Is. 1:14; 42:1; Jer. 5:9; 15:1) Strong's #315

This Hebrew word occurs more than 750 times in the Bible. It has quite a number of meanings, but most of them can be reduced to the following three categories: (1) life or the life force, especially in connection with blood (Gen. 9:4, 5; Lev. 17:11, 14); (2) one's soul or the immaterial being, the seat of intellect and emotion (42:1, 2; 86:4; 1 Sam. 1:10; 2 Sam. 5:8; Prov. 23:7; Song 1:7); and (3) an individual or person (84:2; Gen. 2:7; Judg. 12:3; Ezek. 18:4). Originally the word probably referred to the breath (Job 41:21). The Bible typically considers a person as an interconnected whole. This is why the Bible tells us to love God with all our heart, soul, and strength—in other words, with our entire being (Deut. 6:4, 5; Josh. 22:5).

PSALM 104

Praise to the Sovereign LORD for His Creation and Providence

Bless ^athe LORD, O my soul!

- O LORD my God, You are very great:
You are clothed with honor and
majesty,
- 2 Who cover *Yourself* with light as *with*
a garment,
Who stretch out the heavens like a
curtain.
- 3 ^bHe lays the beams of His upper
chambers in the waters,
Who makes the clouds His chariot,
Who walks on the wings of the wind,
- 4 Who makes His angels spirits,
His ¹ministers a flame of fire.
- 5 *You who* ²laid the foundations of the
earth,
So *that* it should not be moved
forever,
- 6 You ^ccovered it with the deep as *with*
a garment;
The waters stood above the
mountains.
- 7 At Your rebuke they fled;
At the voice of Your thunder they
hastened away.
- 8 ³They went up over the mountains;
They went down into the valleys,
To the place which You founded for
them.
- 9 You have ^dset a boundary that they
may not pass over,
^eThat they may not return to cover
the earth.
- 10 He sends the springs into the valleys;
They flow among the hills.
- 11 They give drink to every beast of the
field;
The wild donkeys quench their thirst.

PSALM 104

1 ^a Ps. 103:1
3 ^b [Amos 9:6]
4 ¹ servants
5 ² Lit. *founded the earth upon her bases*
6 ^c Gen. 1:6
8 ³ Or *The mountains rose up; The valleys sank down*
9 ^d Job 26:10; Ps. 33:7; [Jer. 5:22]
^e Gen. 9:11-15

13 ^f Ps. 147:8 ^g Jer. 10:13
14 ^h Gen. 1:29 ⁱ Job 28:5
15 ^j Judg. 9:13; Ps. 23:5; Prov. 31:6; Eccl. 10:19

BIBLE TIMES & CULTURE NOTES



Language

The language of the Psalms resembles the poetry of the ancient city of Ugarit. The Psalms pick up some of the phrases and expressions that were popular during that time, but this does not mean that the Psalms were copied from the literature of Ugarit. Psalm 104 is remarkably similar to the Egyptian “Hymn to Aton” in its use of poetic parallelism and in the thoughts of some verses. Although these similarities are too close to be incidental, a close comparison of the two poems shows that the biblical poem is clearly monotheistic (affirming the existence of one God) and quite different from the Egyptian poem in structure. Perhaps the Hebrew poet composed his hymn with the Egyptian piece before him. What the polytheistic poet ascribed to Aton, the monotheistic biblical poet attributed to Yahweh.

- 12 By them the birds of the heavens
have their home;
They sing among the branches.
- 13 ^fHe waters the hills from His upper
chambers;
The earth is satisfied with ^gthe fruit
of Your works.
- 14 ^hHe causes the grass to grow for the
cattle,
And vegetation for the service of
man,
That he may bring forth ⁱfood from
the earth,
- 15 And ^jwine *that* makes glad the heart
of man,
Oil to make *his* face shine,
And bread *which* strengthens man’s
heart.
- 16 The trees of the LORD are full of
sap,
The cedars of Lebanon which He
planted,

Psalm 104, a wisdom psalm, is also a creation psalm (Ps. 19). It is an exuberant poetic recasting of Gen. 1, a joyful celebration of the world as the creation of God. The poetry of the psalmists and the prophets often reflects upon God’s work in creation. The structure of the poem is: (1) praise for God’s great creation (vv. 1, 2); (2) the creation of the heavens (vv. 3, 4); (3) the creation of the earth (vv. 5–9); (4) the waters of blessing (vv. 10–13); (5) the fullness of the earth (vv. 14–18); (6) the patterns of life (vv. 19–23); (7) praise for God’s great creation (vv. 24–26); (8) an acknowledgment that all life is dependent upon the Lord (vv. 27–30); (9) a prayer for God’s glory (vv. 31, 32); (10) a personal response to God (vv. 33–35). **104:2** God is Spirit (see John 4:24), and descriptions of Him vary through the Bible. One strong description of Him is **light** (see 1 John 1:5). Here light is described as the garment that enfolds His wonder. The first act of God in Genesis was the command for light (Gen. 1:3). **104:3, 4 beams of His upper chambers:** With these poetic words, the psalmist alludes to the heavenly dwelling place of God, a

place beyond human understanding. **makes the clouds His chariot:** Idolaters used similar language of Baal. The psalmist strips Baal of these honors and applied them to the living God (Ps. 93). **Angels** are also spirit beings; they may appear as flames of fire (Is. 6:2). **104:5–7 You who laid the foundations of the earth** is a poetic way of describing how God created the heavens and the earth. **The deep** is the same term used in Gen. 1:2. **At Your rebuke:** The poet recalls that God brought dry land from the watery abyss in Gen. 1:9, 10. The word of God is referred to as a “rebuke” or a “thundering.” **104:9 A boundary** is a regular theme in wisdom literature (Prov. 8:29). God’s control over the turbulent waters (Ps. 93) is proof that He, not Baal, is the true Sovereign. **104:14, 15 vegetation:** The basis for this section is Gen. 1:11–13, the creative acts of God on the third day. Here the psalmist indicates the specific purpose of God’s creation: to provide for the needs of human beings. **Wine, oil, and bread**—staples of everyday life in Israel—are blessings of God to enrich life.

- 17 Where the birds make their nests;
The stork has her home in the fir trees.
- 18 The high hills *are* for the wild goats;
The cliffs are a refuge for the ^krock⁴ badgers.
- 19 ^lHe appointed the moon for seasons;
The ^msun knows its going down.
- 20 ⁿYou make darkness, and it is night,
In which all the beasts of the forest creep about.
- 21 ^oThe young lions roar after their prey,
And seek their food from God.
- 22 *When* the sun rises, they gather together
And lie down in their dens.
- 23 Man goes out to ^phis work
And to his labor until the evening.
- 24 ^qO LORD, how manifold are Your works!
In wisdom You have made them all.
The earth is full of Your ^rpossessions—
- 25 This great and wide sea,
In which *are* innumerable teeming things,
Living things both small and great.
- 26 There the ships sail about;
There is that ^sLeviathan⁵
Which You have ^tmade to play there.
- 27 ^tThese all wait for You,
That You may give *them* their food in due season.
- 28 *What* You give them they gather in;
You open Your hand, they are filled with good.

18 ^k Lev. 11:5 ⁴ rock
hyraxes
19 ^l Gen. 1:14 ^m Job
38:12; Ps. 19:6
20 ⁿ [Ps. 74:16; Is.
45:7]
21 ^o Job 38:39
23 ^p Gen. 3:19
24 ^q Ps. 40:5; Prov.
3:19; [Jer. 10:12];
51:15 ^r Ps. 65:9
26 ^s Job 41:1; Is.
27:1 ⁵ A large
sea creature of
unknown identity
⁶ Lit. *formed*
27 ^t Job 36:31; Ps.
136:25

29 ^u Job 34:15;
[Eccl. 12:7]
30 ^v Is. 32:15
31 ^w Gen. 1:31;
Prov. 8:31
32 ^x Hab. 3:10 ^y Ex.
19:18; Ps. 144:5
33 ^z Ps. 63:4
34 ^a Ps. 19:14
35 ^b Ps. 37:38
⁷ Heb. *Hallelujah*

PSALM 105

1 ^a 1 Chr. 16:8-22,
34; Ps. 106:1; Is. 12:4
^b Ps. 145:12
2 ^c Ps. 119:27

- 29 You hide Your face, they are troubled;
^a You take away their breath, they die
and return to their dust.
- 30 ^v You send forth Your Spirit, they are
created;
And You renew the face of the earth.
- 31 May the glory of the LORD endure
forever;
May the LORD ^wrejoice in His works.
- 32 He looks on the earth, and it
^xtrembles;
^y He touches the hills, and they
smoke.
- 33 ^z I will sing to the LORD as long as I
live;
I will sing praise to my God while I
have my being.
- 34 May my ^ameditation be sweet to
Him;
I will be glad in the LORD.
- 35 May ^bsinners be consumed from the
earth,
And the wicked be no more.
- Bless the LORD, O my soul!
⁷ Praise the LORD!

PSALM 105

The Eternal Faithfulness of the LORD

- O**h, ^agive thanks to the LORD!
Call upon His name;
^bMake known His deeds among the
peoples!
- 2 Sing to Him, sing psalms to Him;
^cTalk of all His wondrous works!

104:19 seasons: The events of the fourth day of creation are reviewed here (Gen. 1:14–19). The point is that God has established the patterns of life.

104:24 The Hebrew wisdom writers looked at the world with a sense of wonder and reverence because it reflected the **wisdom** of its Creator.

104:25, 26 References to the **sea** in the psalms are generally in the context of Canaanite ideas. The Canaanites said that Baal controlled the powerful gods of the seas. But the psalmist asserts in the face of this falsehood that God created the waters and everything in them—even Leviathan, the great sea monster (see Job 41).

104:27–30 These all wait: All creation depends on the Creator for birth, life, and sustenance. Even death is controlled by the Sovereign One.

104:31 God continues to **rejoice** in His creative work on earth (Prov. 8:30, 31). The Lord considered His creation “good” from the beginning (Gen. 1:31), and His pleasure in it remains.

104:34, 35 my meditation: The poet wants to respond properly to God’s creation. **Bless the LORD** echoes the beginning of the psalm (v. 1).

Psalms 105, a psalm of praise (compare Ps. 113), focuses on the positive experiences of Israel in their early history. Contrast Ps. 106, which reviews the same period of history but with an emphasis on the faithlessness of the people. This poem celebrates God’s faithfulness to His covenant with Abraham in the lives of His people. The people needed to remember to be faithful to God, who had

never forgotten to be faithful to them. The structure of the poem is: (1) a call for praise to God (vv. 1–6); (2) God’s covenant with Abraham (vv. 7–12); (3) the early experiences of God’s people (vv. 13–15); (4) the experience of Joseph (vv. 16–22); (5) the experience of Israel in Egypt (vv. 23–25); (6) the great deliverance from Egypt (vv. 26–36); (7) the great provisions (vv. 37–41); (8) God’s promise to Abraham (vv. 42–45).

give thanks

(Heb. *yadah*) (105:1; 122:4; 136:1) Strong’s #3034

Surprisingly in Hebrew, there is no verb that means “to thank” in the way the English word *thank* is used as a common expression of gratitude between people. The meaning of the Hebrew word is “to make public acknowledgment,” and its association with the Hebrew noun *yad*, meaning “hand,” suggests hands outstretched towards God. The word is used regularly in the Bible to depict public commendation of God’s person and attributes, and the public testimony to what He has done for His people; this is the core meaning of *praise*. Old Testament believers such as Leah (Gen. 29:35), David (2 Chr. 7:6), the psalmists (7:17; 42:5; 118:21), and the prophets (Is. 25:1; Jer. 33:11) all gave thanks, praising the Lord for His mercy towards them.

- 3 Glory in His holy name;
Let the hearts of those rejoice who
seek the LORD!
- 4 Seek the LORD and His strength;
^dSeek His face evermore!
- 5 ^eRemember His marvelous works
which He has done,
His wonders, and the judgments of
His mouth,
- 6 O seed of Abraham His servant,
You children of Jacob, His chosen
ones!
- 7 He *is* the LORD our God;
^fHis judgments *are* in all the earth.
- 8 He ^gremembers His covenant
forever,
The word *which* He commanded, for
a thousand generations,
- 9 ^hThe *covenant* which He made with
Abraham,
And His oath to Isaac,
- 10 And confirmed it to Jacob for a
statute,
To Israel *as* an everlasting covenant,
- 11 Saying, ⁱ“To you I will give the land
of Canaan
As the allotment of your
inheritance,”
- 12 ^jWhen they were few in number,
Indeed very few, ^kand strangers in it.
- 13 When they went from one nation to
another,
From *one* kingdom to another
people,
- 14 ^lHe permitted no one to do them
wrong;
Yes, ^mHe rebuked kings for their
sakes,
- 15 *Saying*, “Do not touch My anointed
ones,
And do My prophets no harm.”
- 16 Moreover ⁿHe called for a famine in
the land;
He destroyed all the ^oprovision of
bread.

4 ^d Ps. 27:8
5 ^e Ps. 77:11
7 ^f [Is. 26:9]
8 ^g Luke 1:72
9 ^h Gen. 17:2; Luke
1:73; [Gal. 3:17];
Heb. 6:17
11 ⁱ Gen. 13:15;
15:18
12 ^j Gen. 34:30;
[Deut. 7:7] ^k Gen.
23:4; Heb. 11:9
14 ^l Gen. 35:5
^m Gen. 12:17
16 ⁿ Gen. 41:54
^o Lev. 26:26; Is. 3:1;
Ezek. 4:16

17 ^p [Gen. 45:5]
^q Gen. 37:28, 36;
Acts 7:9
18 ^r Gen. 40:15 ^s His
soul came into iron
19 ^t Gen. 39:11-21;
41:25, 42, 43
20 ^u Gen. 41:14
21 ^v Gen. 41:40-44
22 ^w Bind as
prisoners
23 ^x Gen. 46:6; Acts
7:15 ^y Ps. 78:51
24 ^z Ex. 1:7, 9
25 ^{aa} Ex. 1:8-10; 4:21
26 ^{ab} Ex. 3:10; 4:12-15
27 ^{ac} Ex. 7-12; Ps.
78:43
29 ^{ad} Ex. 7:20, 21; Ps.
78:44
30 ^{ae} Ex. 8:6
31 ^{af} Ex. 8:16, 17
32 ^{ag} Ex. 9:23-25
33 ^{ah} Ps. 78:47
34 ^{ai} Ex. 10:4

- 17 ^p He sent a man before them—
Joseph—*who* ^qwas sold as a slave.
- 18 ^r They hurt his feet with fetters,
^s He was laid in irons.
- 19 Until the time that his word came to
pass,
^t The word of the LORD tested him.
- 20 ^u The king sent and released him,
The ruler of the people let him go
free.
- 21 ^v He made him lord of his house,
And ruler of all his possessions,
- 22 To ^wbind his princes at his pleasure,
And teach his elders wisdom.
- 23 ^x Israel also came into Egypt,
And Jacob dwelt ^yin the land of
Ham.
- 24 ^z He increased His people greatly,
And made them stronger than their
enemies.
- 25 ^{aa} He turned their heart to hate His
people,
To deal craftily with His servants.
- 26 ^{ab} He sent Moses His servant,
And Aaron whom He had chosen.
- 27 They ^{ac}performed His signs among
them,
And wonders in the land of Ham.
- 28 He sent darkness, and made *it* dark;
And they did not rebel against His
word.
- 29 ^{ad} He turned their waters into blood,
And killed their fish.
- 30 ^{ae} Their land abounded with frogs,
Even in the chambers of their kings.
- 31 ^{af} He spoke, and there came swarms of
flies,
And lice in all their territory.
- 32 ^{ag} He gave them hail for rain,
And flaming fire in their land.
- 33 ^{ah} He struck their vines also, and their
fig trees,
And splintered the trees of their
territory.
- 34 ^{ai} He spoke, and locusts came,
Young locusts without number,

105:5 The psalmist calls to memory what God did for His people in fulfillment of the covenant with Abraham (Gen. 12:1-3; 13:14-17; 15:13-21; 17:7, 8; 26:3, 4; 28:13-15). **Remember** is the key idea of the psalm: the psalmist wanted to remind God's people of His goodness.

105:8 The psalmist assured his audience that even if they did not remember, God does remember. **He remembers:** The words of the original promise to Abraham set out the Lord's obligation in strong terms (Gen. 12:1-3). These ideas are reinforced by the dramatic encounter with Abraham in Gen. 15. In the story of the binding of Isaac in Gen. 22, the Lord undertakes an irrevocable oath of obligation (Gen. 22:16-18).

105:13-15 When they went: This section is an overview of the history of Israel, probably written after the return of the exiles from Babylon (Ps. 147). This is not a necessary conclusion, but it appears

likely. The major theme of the poem is God's faithfulness to His people in their early history. **My anointed ones:** The parallel term **My prophets** suggests that these are the leaders of Israel—the kings and priests.

105:17 The experiences of **Joseph** occupy a long section of the Book of Genesis (Gen. 37-50). Here Joseph's story is recounted as poetry and song.

105:26 The psalmist recites the history of the plagues to demonstrate the Lord's power. The plagues took place within time and space; they were the action of God with humans in the real world. But the verses of this psalm are not historical prose; they are a poetic version of the events that capture the horror of it. The order of the plagues is not followed strictly, and only eight of the plagues are mentioned (Ex. 7-11).

35 And ate up all the vegetation in their land,
And devoured the fruit of their ground.

36^h He also ³destroyed all the firstborn in their land,
ⁱThe first of all their strength.

37 ^jHe also brought them out with silver and gold,
And *there was* none feeble among His tribes.

38^k Egypt was glad when they departed,
For the fear of them had fallen upon them.

39 ^lHe spread a cloud for a covering,
And fire to give light in the night.

40^m *The people* asked, and He brought quail,
And ⁿsatisfied them with the bread of heaven.

41 ^oHe opened the rock, and water gushed out;
It ran in the dry places *like* a river.

42 For He remembered ^pHis holy promise,
And Abraham His servant.

43 He brought out His people with joy,
His chosen ones with ^qgladness.

44^q He gave them the lands of the ^rGentiles,
And they inherited the labor of the nations,

36^h Ex. 12:29; 13:15; Ps. 135:8; 136:10
ⁱ Gen. 49:3 ³ Lit. struck down

37 ^j Ex. 12:35; 36

38^k Ex. 12:33

39 ^l Ex. 13:21; Neh. 9:12; Ps. 78:14; Is. 4:5

40^m Ex. 16:12 ⁿ Ps. 78:24

41 ^o Ex. 17:6; Num. 20:11; Ps. 78:15; 114:8; Is. 48:21; [1 Cor. 10:4]

42 ^p Gen. 15:13, 14; Ps. 105:8

43^k ^q *a joyful shout*

44^q Josh. 11:16-23; 13:7; Ps. 78:55

^r *nations*

45 ^r [Deut. 4:1, 40]

^q Heb. *Hallelujah*

PSALM 106

1 ^a 1 Chr. 16:34, 41

ⁱ Heb. *Hallelujah*

2 ² *express*

3 ^b Ps. 15:2 ^c [Gal. 6:9] ³ LXX, Syr., Tg., Vg. *those who do*

4 ^d Ps. 119:132

5 ^d The people of Your inheritance

6 ^e 1 Kin. 8:47; [Ezra 9:7; Neh. 1:7; Jer. 3:25; Dan. 9:5]

45 ^r That they might observe His statutes
And keep His laws.

⁶ Praise the LORD!

PSALM 106

Joy in Forgiveness of Israel's Sins

Praise ¹ the LORD!

^a Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for *He is* good!
For His mercy *endures* forever.

2 Who can ² utter the mighty acts of the LORD?
Who can declare all His praise?

3 Blessed *are* those who keep justice,
And ³ he who ^b does righteousness at ^c all times!

4 ^d Remember me, O LORD, with the favor *You have toward* Your people.
Oh, visit me with Your salvation,

5 That I may see the benefit of Your chosen ones,
That I may rejoice in the gladness of Your nation,

That I may glory with ⁴ Your inheritance.

6 ^e We have sinned with our fathers,
We have committed iniquity,
We have done wickedly.

105:43, 44 with gladness: This poem celebrates the joy of the Lord in His acts of deliverance. **gave them the lands:** The psalm was probably composed after the exile in Babylon. A celebration of God's gift of land would have been a tremendous source of encouragement to the people who had just returned to the land.

Psalm 106, a wisdom psalm, rehearses much of the same history covered in Ps. 105. The two poems are companions, although their perspectives are different. Psalm 106 emphasizes the rebellion of the people despite the unflagging goodness of God. If Ps. 105 is about remembering, Ps. 106 is about forgetting—specifically God's people forgetting His mercies. This is a psalm of praise (as is Ps. 105), in that it calls for the praise of God despite the short memories of His people. The structure of Ps. 106 is: (1) a call to praise God (v. 1); (2) a report on the status of the present generation (vv. 2–15); (3)

a recitation of the works of God on behalf of earlier generations (vv. 16–43); (4) a concluding appeal (vv. 44–47); (5) words of praise to conclude Book IV of the Psalms (v. 48).

106:1–4 Oh, give thanks to the Lord: The words of v. 1 and the general language of **praise** in v. 2 connect this poem with Ps. 105 as a set (105:1, 2). Possibly both psalms were written by the same poet and were designed to go together, since this psalm builds on the theme of remembering. **Remember me** seems to be a personal prayer based on the recitation of Israel's history in Ps. 105.

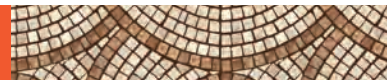
106:6 We have sinned with our fathers: The confession of sin comes without warning. This is a psalm of community penitence. The connection of the present generation to the sins of the fathers is ominous. Would the present generation have to suffer the misfortunes and judgments that God brought upon their fathers?

Two Sides of the Coin

"Think positive" is the message preached from many pulpits today. And for good reason: The message of salvation in Christ is good, positive news in a world that sometimes seems more and more depressing by the day.

However, before we can fully embrace the good news about God's Son, we must first accept the bad news about our own sin. Psalm 106 is the flip side of Ps. 105. Both recall Israel's history. But whereas Ps. 105 is an enthusiastic celebration of the Lord's faithfulness, Ps. 106 focuses on the continuing unfaithfulness of His people. Still, the piece is not without hope: The Lord remains committed to mercy, forgiveness, and doing the mighty wonders necessary to sustain His wayward children (106:44–46). No wonder the psalm concludes with a blessing for the Lord "from everlasting to everlasting" (106:48).

If Ps. 105 stood alone, the forgetful student of history might assume that God swept His people into the Promised Land with no setbacks or opposition. But Ps. 106 puts things in perspective. As we look at that same history, it confronts us with the ugly face of sin and shows why people (and nations) so badly need forgiveness. Thus Ps. 105 and 106 show the two realities involved in salvation: sin and grace. Focusing on either one without the other will lead to distortion.



- 7 Our fathers in Egypt did not understand Your wonders;
They did not remember the multitude of Your mercies,
fBut rebelled by the sea—the Red Sea.
- 8 Nevertheless He saved them for His name's sake,
gThat He might make His mighty power known.
- 9 hHe rebuked the Red Sea also, and it dried up;
So iHe led them through the depths,
As through the wilderness.
- 10 He j saved them from the hand of him who hated them,
And redeemed them from the hand of the enemy.
- 11 kThe waters covered their enemies;
There was not one of them left.
- 12 lThen they believed His words;
They sang His praise.
- 13mThey soon forgot His works;
They did not wait for His counsel,
- 14nBut lusted exceedingly in the wilderness,
And tested God in the desert.
- 15 oAnd He gave them their request,
But p sent leanness into their soul.
- 16 When q they envied Moses in the camp,
And Aaron the saint of the LORD,
- 17 rThe earth opened up and swallowed Dathan,
And covered the faction of Abiram.
- 18 sA fire was kindled in their company;
The flame burned up the wicked.
- 19 tThey made a calf in Horeb,
And worshiped the molded image.
- 20 Thus u they changed their glory
Into the image of an ox that eats grass.
- 21 They forgot God their Savior,
Who had done great things in Egypt,

7 f Ex. 14:11, 12
8 g Ex. 9:16
9 h Ex. 14:21; Ps. 18:15; Is. 51:10; Nah. 1:4 i Is. 63:11-13
10 j Ex. 14:30
11 k Ex. 14:27, 28; 15:5
12 l Ex. 15:1-21
13 m Ex. 15:24; 16:2; 17:2
14 n Num. 11:4; 1 Cor. 10:6
15 o Num. 11:31
p Is. 10:16
16 q Num. 16:1-3
17 r Num. 16:31, 32; Deut. 11:6
18 s Num. 16:35, 46
19 t Ex. 32:1-4; Deut. 9:8; Acts 7:41
20 u Jer. 2:11; Rom. 1:23

23 v Ex. 32:10; Deut. 9:19 w Ezek. 22:30
24 x Deut. 8:7; Jer. 3:19; Ezek. 20:6
y Deut. 1:32; 9:23; [Heb. 3:18, 19]
25 z Num. 14:2, 27; Deut. 1:27
26 a Ezek. 20:15, 16; [Heb. 3:11, 18]
b Num. 14:28-30
c make them fall
27 d Lev. 26:33; Ezek. 20:23 e make their descendants fall also f Gentiles
28 g Num. 25:3; Deut. 4:3; Hos. 9:10
h offered
29 i Num. 25:7, 8
30 j Gen. 15:6; Num. 25:11-13
31 k Num. 20:3-13; Ps. 81:7 l Deut. 1:37; 3:26 m Or Meribah
32 n Num. 20:3, 10

- 22 Wondrous works in the land of Ham,
Awesome things by the Red Sea.
- 23 v Therefore He said that He would destroy them,
Had not Moses His chosen one
w stood before Him in the breach,
To turn away His wrath, lest He destroy them.
- 24 Then they despised x the pleasant land;
They y did not believe His word,
- 25 z But complained in their tents,
And did not heed the voice of the LORD.
- 26 a Therefore He raised His hand in an oath against them,
b To c overthrow them in the wilderness,
- 27 d To e overthrow their descendants among the f nations,
And to scatter them in the lands.
- 28 g They joined themselves also to Baal of Peor,
And ate sacrifices h made to the dead.
- 29 Thus they provoked Him to anger with their deeds,
And the plague broke out among them.
- 30 i Then Phinehas stood up and intervened,
And the plague was stopped.
- 31 And that was accounted to him j for righteousness
To all generations forevermore.
- 32 k They angered Him also at the waters of l strife,
m So that it went ill with Moses on account of them;
- 33 n Because they rebelled against His Spirit,
So that he spoke rashly with his lips.

106:8-12 God knew that His people would be faithless repeatedly, yet He **saved them for His name's sake**. The crossing of the **waters** of the Red Sea was not mentioned in Ps. 105 but is included here. **Then they believed:** The people were often faithless; but they had moments of true faith and performed actions of true praise.

106:13-15 **They soon forgot:** These words contrast dramatically with the emphasis of Ps. 105, which may indicate that the two psalms were written by the same poet and designed to go together. **He gave them their request:** Several times God gave the people what they thought they wanted, but with the gift came His judgment on their sin.

106:17 The rebellion of **Dathan** and **Abiram** is described in Num. 16.

106:19, 20 The story of the gold **calf** is recorded in Ex. 32. **changed their glory:** In exchange for the living God, the people accepted an image of an ox.

106:24 The fact that **they despised the pleasant land** is regarded as a result of their unbelief and rejection of God's good gift. God's judgment (Num. 13; 14) was fully deserved.

106:28-30 **Baal of Peor** refers to the incident described in Num. 25, following the encounter of Balaam and Balak at Moab. However, this psalm adds a new detail to the story: eating sacrifices offered to the dead. **Phinehas**, one of the great champions of God in the OT, is celebrated in this poem. As Abraham's faith was accounted to him for righteousness (Gen. 15:6), so was the action of Phinehas (Num. 25).

106:32, 33 **Waters of strife** is a reference to Meribah (95:8; Num. 20:1-13). Here the sin of Moses is called "speaking **rashly**." In Num. 20:12, God specifically identified Moses' sin as dishonoring Him before the people by not trusting Him. By not following God's command "to speak" to the rock, Moses had not modeled proper obedience and respect for God's command.

- ³⁴ ^jThey did not destroy the peoples,
^kConcerning whom the LORD had
 commanded them,
³⁵ ^lBut they mingled with the Gentiles
 And learned their works;
³⁶ ^mThey served their idols,
ⁿWhich became a snare to them.
³⁷ ^oThey even sacrificed their sons
 And their daughters to ^pdemons,
³⁸ And shed innocent blood,
 The blood of their sons and
 daughters,
 Whom they sacrificed to the idols of
 Canaan;
 And ^qthe land was polluted with
 blood.
³⁹ Thus they ¹were ^rdefiled by their
 own works,
 And ^splayed ²the harlot by their own
 deeds.
⁴⁰ Therefore ^tthe wrath of the LORD
 was kindled against His people,
 So that He abhorred ^uHis own
 inheritance.
⁴¹ And ^vHe gave them into the hand of
 the Gentiles,
 And those who hated them ruled
 over them.
⁴² Their enemies also oppressed them,
 And they were brought into
 subjection under their hand.
⁴³ ^wMany times He delivered them;
 But they rebelled in their counsel,
 And were brought low for their
 iniquity.
⁴⁴ Nevertheless He regarded their
 affliction,
 When ^xHe heard their cry;

34 ^j Judg. 1:21
^k [Deut. 7:2, 16];
 Judg. 2:2
 35 ^l Judg. 3:5, 6
 36 ^m Judg. 2:12
ⁿ Deut. 7:16
 37 ^o [Deut. 12:31;
 32:17, 18]; 2 Kin.
 16:3; 17:17; Ezek.
 16:20, 21; [1 Cor.
 10:20] ^p [Lev. 17:7]
 38 ^q [Num. 35:33; Is.
 24:5; Jer. 3:1, 2]
 39 ^r [Lev. 18:24];
 Ezek. 20:18 ^s [Lev.
 17:7; Num. 15:39];
 Judg. 2:17; Hos. 4:12
^t became unclean
^u Were unfaithful
 40 ^v Judg. 2:14; Ps.
 78:59 ^w [Deut. 9:29;
 32:9]
 41 ^x Judg. 2:14;
 [Neh. 9:27]
 43 ^y Judg. 2:16;
 [Neh. 9:27]
 44 ^z Judg. 3:9; 6:7;
 10:10
 45 ^{aa} [Lev. 26:41, 42]
^{ab} Judg. 2:18 ^{ac} Ps.
 69:16
 46 ^{ad} 1 Kin. 8:50;
 [2 Chr. 30:9]; Ezra
 9:9; Neh. 1:11; Jer.
 42:12
 47 ^{ae} 1 Chr. 16:35, 36
 48 ^{af} Ps. 41:13 ^{ag} Heb.
 Hallelujah

PSALM 107

1 ^{ah} 1 Chr. 16:34;
 Ps. 106:1; Jer.
 33:11 ^{ai} Heb. same
 as *goodness*, vv.
 8, 15, 21, 31, and
lovingkindness, v. 43
 3 ^{aj} Is. 43:5, 6; Jer.
 29:14; 31:8-10;
 [Ezek. 39:27, 28]
 4 ^{ak} Num. 14:33;
 32:13; [Deut. 2:7;
 32:10]; Josh. 5:6;
 14:10

- ⁴⁵ ^hAnd for their sake He remembered
 His covenant,
 And ⁱrelented ^aaccording to the
 multitude of His mercies.
⁴⁶ ^bHe also made them to be pitied
 By all those who carried them away
 captive.
⁴⁷ ^cSave us, O LORD our God,
 And gather us from among the
 Gentiles,
 To give thanks to Your holy name,
 To triumph in Your praise.
⁴⁸ ^dBlessed ^{be} the LORD God of Israel
 From everlasting to everlasting!
 And let all the people say, "Amen!"
³ Praise the LORD!

Book Five: Psalms 107–150

PSALM 107

Thanksgiving to the LORD for His Great Works of Deliverance

- O**h, ^agive thanks to the LORD, for *He*
 is good!
 For His ¹mercy *endures* forever.
² Let the redeemed of the LORD
 say so,
 Whom He has redeemed from the
 hand of the enemy,
³ And ^bgathered out of the lands,
 From the east and from the west,
 From the north and from the south.
⁴ They wandered in ^cthe wilderness in
 a desolate way;
 They found no city to dwell in.

106:34–39 God's judgment on Israel in Canaan was a result of the Israelites' failure to **destroy the peoples**. If the Canaanites had been driven out of the land, the people of Israel might never have succumbed to the idolatry that marked their existence for hundreds of years. Instead, the Israelites learned to worship the Canaanite idols. They participated in the worst aspects of their religion and **played the harlot** against God their Redeemer.

106:40 The wrath of the LORD must be viewed in the context of His long-standing mercy and forbearance. There was a long history of rebellion in the face of His gracious provision before God became enraged. Yet even in the midst of His wrath, God's merciful nature was evident. He remained faithful to His covenant with His people even during their rebellion.

106:47 The words of appeal **save us** are buttressed with the words **O LORD our God**. Though the people had been faithless, the LORD was still their God. If they would return to Him, they would have a home in His mercy and a promise of eventual triumph.

106:48 Blessed be the LORD God of Israel: This verse is an addition to Ps. 106 that forms the concluding verse of Book IV of the Psalms. It is a beautiful liturgical call for the people together to bless their faithful God.

Psalm 107, a wisdom psalm, shares the form and many of the same themes as Ps. 105 and 106. The fact that this psalm begins Book V of the Psalms, however, suggests that it may not have been written as a companion psalm to the previous two psalms. Psalm 107 reviews

God's actions in the experiences of His people, using illustrations not found in the narrative of the Pentateuch. The psalm begins and concludes with appeals to trust in the "loyal love" of God. The structure of the psalm is: (1) a celebration of God's enduring loyal love (vv. 1–3); (2) affirmation that God meets the needs of those who wander in the wilderness (vv. 4–9); (3) assurance that God delivers those in exile or in prison (vv. 10–16); (4) a declaration that God saves the foolish who call to Him (vv. 17–22); (5) God's salvation of those caught in storms (vv. 23–32); (6) God's provision for those in barren lands (vv. 33–38); (7) an affirmation that God multiplies peoples who are diminished (vv. 39–42); (8) a call to rediscover the loyal love of God (v. 43).

107:1 Oh, give thanks to the LORD: The beginning of this psalm links it to the two preceding poems (105:1; 106:1). The key point of this psalm is that God's **mercy endures forever**. He is always willing to restore those who call on Him.

107:4–9 They wandered in the wilderness: This may refer to the historical experience of Israel in the desert of Sinai. It also can apply to any group of dispersed Hebrew people away from the mercies of God. **Oh, that men would give thanks to the LORD**: These words are a refrain throughout the psalm, exhorting the reader to thank God for His mercy (vv. 15, 21, 31). **He satisfies**: This is the point that every generation of believers needs to remember. We will never discover anything more satisfying than the LORD, who will meet all our needs.

- 5 Hungry and thirsty,
Their soul fainted in them.
- 6 ^dThen they cried out to the LORD in
their trouble,
And He delivered them out of their
distresses.
- 7 And He led them forth by the ^eright
way,
That they might go to a city for a
dwelling place.
- 8 ^fOh, that *men* would give thanks to
the LORD *for* His goodness,
And *for* His wonderful works to the
children of men!
- 9 For ^gHe satisfies the longing soul,
And fills the hungry soul with
goodness.
- 10 Those who ^hsat in darkness and in
the shadow of death,
ⁱBound ²in affliction and irons—
- 11 Because they ^jrebelled against the
words of God,
And ³despised ^kthe counsel of the
Most High,
- 12 Therefore He brought down their
heart with labor;
They fell down, and *there was* ^lnone
to help.
- 13 Then they cried out to the LORD in
their trouble,
And He saved them out of their
distresses.
- 14 ^mHe brought them out of darkness and
the shadow of death,
And broke their chains in pieces.
- 15 Oh, that *men* would give thanks to
the LORD *for* His goodness,
And *for* His wonderful works to the
children of men!
- 16 For He has ⁿbroken the gates of
bronze,
And cut the bars of iron in two.
- 17 Fools, ^obecause of their transgression,
And because of their iniquities, were
afflicted.
- 18 ^pTheir soul abhorred all manner of
food,
And they ^qdrew near to the gates of
death.
- 19 Then they cried out to the LORD in
their trouble,
And He saved them out of their
distresses.

6 ^d Ps. 50:15; [Hos. 5:15]
7 ^e Ezra 8:21; Ps. 5:8; Jer. 31:9
8 ^f Ps. 107:15, 21
9 ^g [Ps. 34:10; Luke 1:53]
10 ^h [Is. 42:7; Mic. 7:8; Luke 1:79] ⁱ Job 36:8 ² Prisoners
11 ^j Lam. 3:42 ^k [Ps. 73:24] ³ scorned
12 ^l Ps. 22:11
14 ^m Ps. 68:6
16 ⁿ [Is. 45:1, 2
17 ^o [Is. 65:6, 7; Jer. 30:14, 15]; Lam. 3:39; Ezek. 24:23
18 ^p Job 33:20
^q Job 33:22

20 ^r Matt. 8:8
^s 2 Kin. 20:5; Ps. 30:2
^t Job 33:28, 30
22 ^u Lev. 7:12; Ps. 50:14; Heb. 13:15
^v Ps. 9:11 ⁴ joyful singing
25 ^w Jon. 1:4
26 ^x Ps. 22:14
27 ⁵ Lit. *all their wisdom is swallowed up*
29 ^y Ps. 89:9; Matt. 8:26; Luke 8:24
31 ^z Ps. 107:8, 15, 21
32 ^a Ps. 22:22, 25
33 ^b 1 Kin. 17:1, 7; Is. 50:2
34 ^c Gen. 13:10; Deut. 29:23 ⁶ Lit. *a salty waste*
35 ^d Ps. 114:8; [Is. 41:17, 18]

- 20 ^rHe sent His word and ^shealed them,
And ^tdelivered *them* from their
destructions.
- 21 Oh, that *men* would give thanks to
the LORD *for* His goodness,
And *for* His wonderful works to the
children of men!
- 22 ^uLet them sacrifice the sacrifices of
thanksgiving,
And ^vdeclare His works with
⁴rejoicing.
- 23 Those who go down to the sea in
ships,
Who do business on great waters,
- 24 They see the works of the LORD,
And His wonders in the deep.
- 25 For He commands and ^wraises the
stormy wind,
Which lifts up the waves of the sea.
- 26 They mount up to the heavens,
They go down again to the depths;
^xTheir soul melts because of trouble.
- 27 They reel to and fro, and stagger like
a drunken man,
And ⁵are at their wits' end.
- 28 Then they cry out to the LORD in
their trouble,
And He brings them out of their
distresses.
- 29 ^yHe calms the storm,
So that its waves are still.
- 30 Then they are glad because they are
quiet;
So He guides them to their desired
haven.
- 31 ^zOh, that *men* would give thanks to
the LORD *for* His goodness,
And *for* His wonderful works to the
children of men!
- 32 Let them exalt Him also ^ain the
assembly of the people,
And praise Him in the company of
the elders.
- 33 He ^bturns rivers into a wilderness,
And the watersprings into dry
ground;
- 34 A ^cfruitful land into ⁶barrenness,
For the wickedness of those who
dwell in it.
- 35 ^dHe turns a wilderness into pools of
water,
And dry land into watersprings.

107:10 Those who sat in darkness refers to prisoners. Those who know the Lord will call out to Him in their distress, even though it may have been their own rebellion that caused the distress. The mercy of God is demonstrated in His acts of deliverance, acts that call for renewed praise to Him for His goodness.

107:17 Fools is a harsh word that emphasizes moral failure (Prov. 1:7; 15:5). These people deserved the trouble they suffered. Yet they too may call upon the Lord, and He will deliver and restore them.

107:33–35 He turns rivers into a wilderness: Because of the people's sinfulness, God may bring curses on the land and afflict people with harsh circumstances in order to drive them back into His loving arms (1 Kin. 17:1–7). **turns a wilderness into pools of water:** When His people cried to Him for assistance, God restored the fertility of the land (Deut. 30:1–10; Ruth 1:6).

- 36 There He makes the hungry dwell,
That they may establish a city for a
dwelling place,
- 37 And sow fields and plant vineyards,
That they may yield a fruitful
harvest.
- 38 ^eHe also blesses them, and they
multiply greatly;
And He does not let their cattle
^fdecrease.
- 39 When they are ^gdiminished and
brought low
Through oppression, affliction, and
sorrow,
- 40 ^hHe pours contempt on princes,
And causes them to wander in the
wilderness *where there is no way*;
- 41 ⁱYet He sets the poor on high, far
from affliction,
And ^jmakes *their* families like a
flock.
- 42 ^kThe righteous see *it* and rejoice,
And all ^liniquity stops its mouth.
- 43^mWhoever *is* wise will observe these
things,
And they will understand the
lovingkindness of the LORD.

PSALM 108

Assurance of God's Victory over Enemies

A Song. A Psalm of David.

- O** ^aGod, my heart is steadfast;
I will sing and give praise, even
with my glory.
- 2 ^bAwake, lute and harp!
I will awaken the dawn.
- 3 I will praise You, O LORD, among the
peoples,
And I will sing praises to You among
the nations.
- 4 For Your mercy *is* great above the
¹heavens,
And Your truth *reaches* to the clouds.

38 ^e Gen. 12:2;
17:16, 20 ^f Ex. 1:7;
[Deut. 7:14]
39 ^g 2 Kin. 10:32
40 ^h Job 12:21, 24
41 ⁱ 1 Sam. 2:8; [Ps.
113:7, 8] ^j Ps. 78:52
42 ^k Job 5:15, 16
^l Job 5:16; Ps. 63:11;
[Rom. 3:19]
43 ^m Ps. 64:9; Jer.
9:12; [Hos. 14:9]

PSALM 108

1 ^a Ps. 57:7-11
2 ^b Ps. 57:8-11
4 ⁱ *skies*

- 5 ^cBe exalted, O God, above the
heavens,
And Your glory above all the earth;
- 6 ^dThat Your beloved may be delivered,
Save *with* Your right hand, and
²hear me.
- 7 God has spoken in His holiness:
“I will rejoice;
I will divide Shechem
And measure out the Valley of
Succoth.
- 8 Gilead *is* Mine; Manasseh *is* Mine;
Ephraim also *is* the ³helmet for My
head;
^eJudah *is* My lawgiver.
- 9 Moab *is* My washpot;
Over Edom I will cast My shoe;
Over Philistia I will triumph.”
- 10 ^fWho will bring me *into* the strong
city?
Who will lead me to Edom?
- 11 *Is it* not *You*, O God, *who* cast us off?
And *You*, O God, *who* did not go out
with our armies?
- 12 Give us help from trouble,
For the help of man is useless.
- 13 ^gThrough God we will do valiantly,
For *it is* He *who* shall tread down our
enemies.

PSALM 109

Plea for Judgment of False Accusers

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David.

- D**o ^anot keep silent,
O God of my praise!
- 2 For the mouth of the wicked and the
mouth of the deceitful
Have opened against me;
They have spoken against me with a
^blying tongue.
- 3 They have also surrounded me with
words of hatred,
And fought against me ^cwithout a
cause.

5 ^c Ps. 57:5, 11
6 ^d Ps. 60:5-12 ² Lit.
answer
8 ^e [Gen. 49:10]
³ Lit. *protection*
10 ^f Ps. 60:9
13 ^g Ps. 60:12

PSALM 109

1 ^a Ps. 83:1
2 ^b Ps. 27:12
3 ^c Ps. 35:7; 69:4;
John 15:25 ☆

107:43 Whoever is wise: There is no wisdom apart from centering in and responding to the love of God. The psalmist exhorts the readers to review God's history of delivering those in trouble, and to praise His great love.

Psalm 108, a psalm of trust, reveals the assurance a person can have when the Lord is his or her God. The psalm is actually a medley of two other psalms of David. Verses 1-5 are from 57:7-11, and vv. 6-13 are from 60:5-12. Since David is the author of both of these psalms, the verses of this psalm may be ascribed to him as well, even if the arrangement may have been the work of an anonymous editor. As this psalm shows, there was considerable reworking of some parts of the Book of Psalms so that the psalms could be used in the varying circumstances of temple worship.

108:2 I will awaken the dawn: The psalmist wanted to sing to the Lord before the sun rose. The prospect of a sleepless night did not deter him from praise and thanksgiving.

108:7 The remarkable fact about the words **I will rejoice** is that they are spoken by God. The Lord has pleasure in delivering His people and giving them victory: He celebrates His deliverance of them.

Psalm 109, a psalm of lament, pays particular attention to the psalmist's enemies. As a result, this poem may also be regarded as an imprecatory psalm. The structure is: (1) a call for God not to be silent in the midst of the attacks from the psalmist's enemies (vv. 1-5); (2) a call for God to bring judgment on the wicked (vv. 6-20); (3) a call for God to come to the aid of the innocent (vv. 21-29); (4) a determination to praise the Lord (vv. 30, 31).

109:1-3 The call to **not keep silent** is a regular feature of the lament psalms. **fought against me without a cause:** The psalmist declares his innocence and insists that his enemies have rewarded his prayers with evil, his love with hatred.

- 4 In return for my love they are my accusers,
But I *give myself* to prayer.
- 5 Thus ^dthey have rewarded me evil for good,
And hatred for my love.
- 6 Set a wicked man over him,
And let ^ean ¹accuser stand at his right hand.
- 7 When he is judged, let him be found guilty,
And ^flet his prayer become sin.
- 8 Let his days be ^gfew,
And ^hlet another take his office.
- 9 ⁱLet his children be fatherless,
And his wife a widow.
- 10 Let his children ²continually be vagabonds, and beg;
Let them ³seek *their bread* also from their desolate places.
- 11 ^jLet the creditor seize all that he has,
And let strangers plunder his labor.
- 12 Let there be none to extend mercy to him,
Nor let there be any to favor his fatherless children.
- 13 ^kLet his ⁴posterity be cut off,
And in the generation following let their ^lname be blotted out.
- 14^mLet the iniquity of his fathers be remembered before the LORD,
And let not the sin of his mother ⁿbe blotted out.
- 15 Let them be continually before the LORD,
That He may ^ocut off the memory of them from the earth;
- 16 Because he did not remember to show mercy,
But persecuted the poor and needy man,
That he might even slay the ^pbroken in heart.
- 17 ^qAs he loved cursing, so let it come to him;
As he did not delight in blessing, so let it be far from him.

5 ^d Ps. 35:7, 12; 38:20; Prov. 17:13
6 ^e Zech. 3:1 ¹ Heb. *satan*
7 ^f [Prov. 28:9]
8 ^g [Ps. 55:23]; John 17:12 ^h Ps. 69:25;
Acts 1:20 ☆
9 ⁱ Ex. 22:24
10 ² *wander continuously* ³ So with MT, Tg., LXX, Vg. *be cast out*
11 ^j Neh. 5:7; Job 5:5; 18:9
13 ^k Job 18:19; Ps. 37:28 ^l Prov. 10:7
⁴ *descendants be destroyed*
14 ^m [Ex. 20:5; Num. 14:18]; Is. 65:6; [Jer. 32:18] ⁿ Neh. 4:5; Jer. 18:23
15 ^o Job 18:17; [Ps. 34:16]
16 ^p [Ps. 34:18]
17 ^q Prov. 14:14; [Matt. 7:2]

18 ^r Num. 5:22
23 ^s Ps. 102:11
24 ^t Heb. 12:12
25 ^u Ps. 22:7; Jer. 18:16; Lam. 2:15
^v Matt. 27:39; Mark 15:29
27 ^w Job 37:7
28 ^x 2 Sam. 6:11, 12
^y Is. 65:14
29 ^z Job 8:22; Ps. 35:26
30 ^a Ps. 35:18; 111:1

- 18 As he clothed himself with cursing as with his garment,
So let it ^renter his body like water,
And like oil into his bones.
- 19 Let it be to him like the garment which covers him,
And for a belt with which he girds himself continually.
- 20 *Let this be* the LORD's reward to my accusers,
And to those who speak evil against my person.
- 21 But You, O God the Lord,
Deal with me for Your name's sake;
Because Your *mercy is good*, deliver me.
- 22 For I *am* poor and needy,
And my heart is wounded within me.
- 23 I am gone ^slike a shadow when it lengthens;
I am shaken off like a locust.
- 24 My ^tknees are weak through fasting,
And my flesh is feeble from lack of fatness.
- 25 I also have become "a reproach to them;
When they look at me, ^vthey shake their heads.
- 26 Help me, O LORD my God!
Oh, save me according to Your mercy,
- 27^w That they may know that this *is* Your hand—
That You, LORD, have done it!
- 28 ^x Let them curse, but You bless;
When they arise, let them be ashamed,
But let ^yYour servant rejoice.
- 29 ^z Let my accusers be clothed with shame,
And let them cover themselves with their own disgrace as with a mantle.
- 30 I will greatly praise the LORD with my mouth;
Yes, ^aI will praise Him among the multitude.

109:6–8 Set a wicked man over him: Here the psalm takes a decidedly negative tone. The description of the wife of the enemy becoming an impoverished widow and the children becoming beggars seems particularly harsh. However, the psalmist directs these strong requests to the Lord; he does not actually take the sword into his own hand. He may feel compelled to vent his anger in words, but the psalmist understands that vengeance itself belongs to the Lord. **let another take his office:** These words (along with the words of 69:25) are quoted in Acts 1:20 as having been fulfilled in the replacement of Judas Iscariot.

109:14–16 Let the iniquity of his fathers be remembered: Although the psalmist's words may seem extremely hostile, he is simply asking that his enemy's evil actions be judged. **The poor** are not those without wealth so much as those without protection or defenders.

109:21 The poet asks for action that would befit God's **name**, a name associated with righteousness (23:3). His appeal is to God's **mercy** or "loyal love." The poet describes himself as a wasted, hollow shell of a man, as in 22:6–8. The intensity of the psalmist's attacks on his enemies can be explained in part by the intensity of his own afflictions, as described in these verses.

109:27 That they may know: Even in the psalmist's intense emotional state, he wants to see the name of God defended, proclaimed, and honored. The Psalms always lead to the praise of God, even from the depths of desperate circumstances.

109:30, 31 The poet makes his vow of **praise** for the deliverance he knows that the Lord will provide. This vow to praise God is a characteristic of many of the psalms. **He shall stand at the right hand of the poor:** See 142:4 for a description of God as a shield at one's right hand.

- 31 For ^bHe shall stand at the right hand
of the poor,
To save *him* from those ⁵who
condemn him.

PSALM 110

Announcement of the Messiah's Reign

A Psalm of David.

The ^aLORD said to my Lord,
“Sit at My right hand,
Till I make Your enemies Your
^bfootstool.”

31 ^b [Ps. 16:8] ⁵ Lit.
judging his soul

PSALM 110

1 ^a Matt. 22:44 ☆;
Mark 12:36; 16:19;
Luke 20:42, 43; Acts
2:34, 35; Col. 3:1;
Heb. 1:13 ^b [1 Cor.
15:25; Eph. 1:22]
2 ^c [Rom. 11:26,
27] ^d [Ps. 2:9; Dan.
7:13, 14]
3 ^e Judg. 5:2; Neh.
11:2 ^f 1 Chr. 16:29;
Ps. 96:9
4 ^g [Num. 23:19]

- 2 The LORD shall send the rod of Your
strength ^cout of Zion.
^dRule in the midst of Your enemies!
3 ^eYour people *shall be* volunteers
In the day of Your power;
^fIn the beauties of holiness, from the
womb of the morning,
You have the dew of Your youth.
4 The LORD has sworn
And ^gwill not relent,
“You *are a* ^hpriest forever
According to the order of ⁱMelchizedek.”

^h [Zech. 6:13] ⁱ [Heb. 5:6, 10; 6:20] ☆

Psalm 110, a royal psalm, is one of the most directly messianic of all the psalms. It should be read in conjunction with other messianic psalms such as Ps. 2; 24. Jesus Himself identified David as the writer of this psalm, as the title also indicates. Jesus' interpretation of this psalm is crucial for unlocking the psalm's meaning (Matt. 22:41–45; Mark 12:35–37; Luke 20:41–44; compare Peter's exposition of the psalm in Acts 2:34–36). The interpretative key to the psalm lies in the identification of “my Lord” in v. 1. Jesus asserted that in v. 1, David was speaking of someone greater than himself. Since no ordinary son of David could be greater than him, “my Lord” of v. 1 refers to the coming Messiah, God's Son. Hence this psalm describes a conversation between God the Father and God the Son (v. 1), in which the Father grants the Son royal and priestly honors. The structure of this brief psalm is as follows: (1) God's command to the Son to sit at His right hand (v. 1); (2) God's command to the Son to rule in the midst of His enemies (vv. 2, 3); (3) God's appointment of the Son to be a priest forever (v. 4); (4) God's description of the battle the Son must wage to win His kingdom (vv. 5–7).

110:1 The LORD is the Hebrew name Yahweh and refers to God the Father. **to my Lord:** According to Jesus' interpretation of the passage (Matt. 22:41–45; Mark 12:35–37; Luke 20:41–44), this is a reference to the Son of God in heaven in the presence of the Father. David himself confesses the Son to be his Lord, that is, his master

or sovereign. **at My right hand:** This position of high honor beside the Father was given to the Savior upon His resurrection and ascension (Acts 2:33–36; 1 Cor. 15:20–28; Col. 3:1; Heb. 1:13). The Savior's placing His feet on His foes depicts the utter defeat of the enemies of Christ. Paul too describes this complete victory of Jesus (1 Cor. 15:25, 26; Eph. 1:22, 23).

110:2, 3 Rule: The Father commands the Son to take His kingdom back from His enemies. The outcome of this final battle was determined long ago (47:3). **Your people:** The description in vv. 2, 3 of the people who join the coming King in His great battle accords well with that in Rev. 19:14. **From the womb of the morning** describes the volunteer army in their robust and fresh vigor; they are ready for a holy battle.

110:4 priest: David himself had performed some priestly functions, especially when he led the worship surrounding the arrival of the ark of the covenant (2 Sam 6:12–19). He even exercised some authority over the priests by supervising the Levites (1 Chr. 23:1–6). But here David envisions God appointing the coming Messiah to be a priest (Heb. 7). This was a source of confusion for Jews, as evidenced by the questions the NT Jews had about the Messiah. Some Dead Sea Scrolls give evidence that more than one Messiah was anticipated. According to Scripture, the Messiah would be a descendant of David (Is. 9:7), but this prophecy presents Him as a

The Messiah in the Psalms

For the Christian, perhaps nothing in the Psalms is more compelling than the prophecies that the book contains concerning the Lord Jesus Christ. Psalm 2 speaks of His coming reign; Ps. 22 describes His crucifixion; Ps. 16 speaks of His resurrection; Ps. 110 pictures the Savior at the right hand of the Father in heaven and as a Priest according to the order of Melchizedek. These and other celebrated passages have led many to speak of a category of messianic psalms.

Many psalms are messianic because they point forward to Jesus Christ. Some psalms are directly prophetic (Ps. 2; 110). Others prophetically foreshadow events related to Christ (compare the description of a wedding of a King in Ps. 45 with Heb. 1:8, 9; Rev. 19:6–8). But almost all the psalms point forward in some way to the coming Messiah and His eternal reign of righteousness (1:1–3; 41:9). For example, the words of 6:8, “Depart from me, all you workers of iniquity,” do not seem to have a messianic thrust to them. Yet they are messianic, for Jesus is recorded to have used these very words in His prophetic pronouncement of the final judgment (see Matt. 7:23). This indicates that David's experience recorded in Ps. 6 was in some manner prophetically linked to the experience of Jesus. In fact, David's language in the psalms regularly suggests the language of the great King to come—that is, Jesus Christ. Consider the words of 7:8:

The LORD shall judge the peoples;
Judge me, O LORD, according to my righteousness,
And according to my integrity within me.

These words are David's protest. Suffering without cause, he cried out to God to clear his name. But David, though innocent of the specific charge, was not innocent of every charge. There is only One whose innocence is absolute, whose freedom from sin is complete. Jesus is the One who can be judged on the basis of His righteousness alone. He alone could say these words without flinching, for these words depict His character.

The suffering of the poor (as in Ps. 13), the unjust attacks upon the righteous (as in Ps. 7), the idealization of justice (as in Ps. 15), the portrait of the righteous person (as in Ps. 1), the images of royalty (as in Ps. 45), even the pronouncements of curses on one's enemies (as in Ps. 6) are all motifs of the Messiah in the Psalms. Jesus is the coming One; many of the psalms are in fact His songs.

- ⁵ The Lord *is* ^jat Your right hand;
He shall ¹execute kings ^kin the day
of His wrath.
- ⁶ He shall judge among the nations,
He shall fill *the places* with dead
bodies,
^lHe shall ²execute the heads of many
countries.
- ⁷ He shall drink of the brook by the
wayside;
^mTherefore He shall lift up the head.

PSALM 111

Praise to God for His Faithfulness and Justice

Praise ¹ the LORD!

- ^aI will praise the LORD with *my* whole
heart,
In the assembly of the upright and *in*
the congregation.
- ² ^bThe works of the LORD *are* great,
^cStudied by all who have pleasure in
them.
- ³ His work *is* ^dhonorable and glorious,
And His righteousness endures
forever.
- ⁴ He has made His wonderful works to
be remembered;
^eThe LORD *is* gracious and full of
compassion.
- ⁵ He has given food to those who fear
Him;
He will ever be mindful of His
covenant.
- ⁶ He has declared to His people the
power of His works,
In giving them the ²heritage of the
nations.

⁵ / [Ps. 16:8] ^k Ps.
2:5, 12; [Rom. 2:5;
Rev. 6:17] ¹ Lit.
break kings in
pieces
⁶ / Ps. 68:21 ² Lit.
break in pieces
⁷ ^m [Is. 53:12]

PSALM 111

¹ ^a Ps. 35:18 ¹ Heb.
Hallelujah
² ^b Ps. 92:5 ^c Ps.
143:5
³ ^d Ps. 145:4, 5
⁴ ^e [Ps. 86:5]
⁶ ² inheritance

- ⁷ The works of His hands *are* ^fverity ³
and justice;
All His precepts *are* sure.
- ⁸ ^gThey stand fast forever and ever,
And *are* ^hdone in truth and
uprightness.
- ⁹ ⁱHe has sent redemption to His
people;
He has commanded His covenant
forever:
^jHoly and awesome *is* His name.
- ¹⁰ ^kThe fear of the LORD *is* the beginning
of wisdom;
A good understanding have all those
who do *His commandments*.
His praise endures forever.

PSALM 112

The Blessed State of the Righteous

Praise ¹ the LORD!

- Blessed *is* the man *who* fears the
LORD,
Who ^adelights greatly in His
commandments.
- ² ^bHis descendants will be mighty on
earth;
The generation of the upright will be
blessed.
- ³ ^cWealth and riches *will be* in his
house,
And his righteousness ²endures
forever.
- ⁴ ^dUnto the upright there arises light in
the darkness;
He is gracious, and full of
compassion, and righteous.

⁷ / [Rev. 15:3]
³ *truth*
⁸ ^a Is. 40:8; Matt.
5:18 ^h [Rev. 15:3]
⁹ / Luke 1:68 / Luke
1:49
¹⁰ ^k Job 28:28;
[Prov. 1:7; 9:10];
Eccl. 12:13

PSALM 112

¹ ^a Ps. 128:1 ¹ Heb.
Hallelujah
² ^b [Ps. 102:28]
³ ^c Prov. 3:16;
8:18; [Matt. 6:33]
² *stands*
⁴ ^d Job 11:17; Ps.
97:11

priest. This might seem to be a contradiction because true priests had to be descendants of Aaron. The solution to this problem is that the Messiah was a priest by divine declaration—not human descent. **Melchizedek** is first mentioned in Gen. 14:18–20. He was a true priest of the Most High God, unrelated to Abraham and who lived hundreds of years before Aaron. He became a prototype of the Messiah, whose priesthood was not based upon connection with the line of Aaron, but was by divine decree (Heb. 5:5–11; 6:20; 7:1–28).

110:5–7 The Savior King is in battle (vv. 2, 3), and the Father is His shield at His **right hand** (16:8; 142:4). God the Father assists the Son in the battle. **execute kings**: The rule of the King will be absolute, dramatic, and forceful. **dead bodies**: This image is elaborated in Rev. 19:19–21. **He shall lift up the head**: As the great Victor, the Son will hold His head high in triumph over all His enemies (3:3).

Psalm 111, a wisdom psalm, also serves as a psalm of praise. This psalm and the next are written as acrostics. The structure of Ps. 111 is: (1) a determination to praise God in the midst of the congregation (v. 1); (2) a description of the praise of God for His wonderful works towards His people (vv. 2–9); (3) a concluding word tying the nature of true wisdom to the fear of the Lord (v. 10).

111:2–9 The distinctive message of this section of the psalm is an appreciation of **the works of the LORD** for the way they cause the psalmist to glorify God. Creation calls attention to the Creator

(19:1–6; 104:1–35). **Gracious and full of compassion** may be rephrased as “wonderfully gracious.” Faith understands **food** and all other provisions as gifts of God. **redemption**: The psalmists constantly look back to the Exodus, but they also speak of that which was still to come—redemption in the Savior Jesus.

111:10 The fear of the LORD describes an obedient response of wonder and awe before the Most High God.

Psalm 112, a wisdom psalm, is very similar to Ps. 111; together they form a matched pair of acrostic poems. The structure of the poem is: (1) a determination to praise God (v. 1); (2) the praise of God based on His works with His people (vv. 2–9); (3) the defeat of the wicked (v. 10).

112:1 Praise the LORD: Like Ps. 111, this psalm begins with the Hebrew word *hallelujah*. It then picks up where Ps. 111 left off. **Blessed**, a word meaning “one who is manifestly happy,” is the same term with which the Book of Psalms begins.

112:2–9 His descendants will be mighty: Compare the blessings of vv. 2, 3 with the strong curses placed on the wicked in 109:6–13 to see the vivid contrast the Psalms make between the destinies of the wicked and the righteous. This black and white distinction is characteristic of the wisdom writers in Israel. The description of the **good man** in v. 5 is similar to the description in Ps. 15. The **horn** is a symbol of power. When used of a righteous person, it speaks of prominence and a lasting sense of worth in his or her life.

- 5 ^c A good man deals graciously and lends;
He will guide his affairs ^f with
discretion.
- 6 Surely he will never be shaken;
^g The righteous will be in everlasting
remembrance.
- 7 ^h He will not be afraid of evil tidings;
His heart is steadfast, trusting in the
LORD.
- 8 His ⁱ heart is established;
^j He will not be afraid,
Until he ^k sees his desire upon his
enemies.
- 9 He has dispersed abroad,
He has given to the poor;
His righteousness endures forever;
His ³ horn will be exalted with honor.
- 10 The wicked will see *it* and be grieved;
He will gnash his teeth and melt
away;
The desire of the wicked shall perish.

PSALM 113

The Majesty and Condescension of God

Praise ¹ the LORD!

- ^a Praise, O servants of the LORD,
Praise the name of the LORD!
- 2 ^b Blessed be the name of the LORD
From this time forth and
forevermore!
- 3 ^c From the rising of the sun to its
going down
The LORD's name *is* to be praised.

5 ^c Ps. 37:26; [Luke 6:35] ^f [Eph. 5:15; Col. 4:5]
6 ^g Prov. 10:7
7 ^h [Prov. 1:33]
8 ⁱ Heb. 13:9 / [Ps. 27:1; 56:11]; Prov. 1:33; 3:24; [Is. 12:2]
^k Ps. 59:10
9 ³ Strength

PSALM 113

1 ^a Ps. 135:1 ¹ Heb. Hallelujah
2 ^b [Dan. 2:20]
3 ^c Is. 59:19; Mal. 1:11

4 ^d Ps. 97:9; 99:2
^e [Ps. 8:1]
5 ^f Ps. 89:6; [Is. 57:15]
6 ^g [Ps. 11:4; Is. 57:15]
7 ^h 1 Sam. 2:8; Ps. 107:41 / Ps. 72:12
8 ⁱ [Job 36:7]
9 ^k 1 Sam. 2:5; Is. 54:1 ² childless

PSALM 114

1 ^a Ex. 12:51; 13:3
^b Ps. 81:5 ¹ who spoke unintelligibly
2 ^c Ex. 6:7; 19:6; 25:8; 29:45, 46; Deut. 27:9
3 ^d Ex. 14:21; Ps. 77:16 ^e Josh. 3:13-16
4 ^f Ex. 19:18; Judg. 5:5; Ps. 29:6; Hab. 3:6

- 4 The LORD *is* ^d high above all
nations,
^e His glory above the heavens.
- 5 ^f Who *is* like the LORD our God,
Who dwells on high,
- 6 ^g Who humbles Himself to
behold
*The things that are in the heavens
and in the earth?*
- 7 ^h He raises the poor out of the dust,
And lifts the ⁱ needy out of the ash
heap,
- 8 That He may ^j seat *him* with
princes—
With the princes of His people.
- 9 ^k He grants the ² barren woman a
home,
Like a joyful mother of children.
- Praise the LORD!

PSALM 114

The Power of God in His Deliverance of Israel

- W**hen ^a Israel went out of Egypt,
The house of Jacob ^b from a people
¹ of strange language,
- 2 ^c Judah became His sanctuary,
And Israel His dominion.
- 3 ^d The sea saw *it* and fled;
^e Jordan turned back.
- 4 ^f The mountains skipped like rams,
The little hills like lambs.

112:10 Here as in Ps. 1, the contrast between the righteous and the wicked is sharp and uncompromising. The desire of the righteous will prevail (v. 8), but the desire of the wicked will **perish**.

Psalm 113, a psalm of descriptive praise, begins and concludes with the words "Praise the LORD!" (in Hebrew, *hallelujah*). This psalm and Ps. 114 are regularly recited at the Passover Seder, a celebratory meal before the serving of the dinner. Ps. 115–118 are recited following the dinner. The structure of Ps. 113 is: (1) an exhortation to praise the name of the Lord (vv. 1–3); (2) a celebration of the transcendent glory and abundant mercy of the Lord (vv. 4–6); (3) illustrations of God's grace (vv. 7–9).

113:1–3 The name of the LORD refers to the person of God. In biblical times there was a close association between a person's name and his or her identity. The name symbolized the person. Therefore, praising the *name* of God centers one's thoughts on God's character. The rising of the sun is the east and its going down is the west. The verse does not mean at every time, from dawn to dusk, but in every place, from east to west, the name of God is to be praised.

113:4–6 high above all nations: Unlike the man-made gods of the ancient Middle East, the Lord is not limited to a certain tribe or territory. He is sovereign over all; He is Most High (7:17; 47:2). **glory above the heavens**: Not only is God supreme over all nations, His glory cannot be contained in the universe. His glory is not only beyond the universe, it is beyond the capacity of human language to fully describe. Perhaps this explains Paul's response to his visit above the heavens (2 Cor. 12:1–4). The rhetorical words **who is like the LORD** present the incomparability of God (Is. 40:25). **Who humbles Himself**: God draws near to us.

113:7 The poor might try to eke out their existence by scratching at rubbish heaps outside the city wall, that is, **out of the dust**. God's care for the poor and needy is a special interest in the Psalms. In this psalm we see a marvelous picture of salvation. While we scavenge about for significance, God's mercy in Jesus makes us citizens of heaven.

113:9 No image better conveys human emotional suffering in biblical times than that of the **barren woman**. In that time and culture, a barren woman was without significance and without joy. Note that God stoops down to bring her the joy for which she craves—happy children. Salvation is like that. Not only does God fill us with significance, but also with joy.

Psalm 114 celebrates Israel's deliverance from Egypt. There is a light, lively spirit to this poem that balances the heavier pacing and stronger theology of the first song of deliverance in Ex. 15. This poem is recited with Ps. 113 at Passover before the dinner is served. This psalm has three movements: (1) a celebration of Israel's redemption from Egypt (vv. 1, 2); (2) a characterization of Israel's enemies (vv. 3–6); (3) a celebration of the Lord who redeemed Israel (vv. 7, 8).

114:1, 2 The newly freed slaves left Egypt still refusing the **strange language** of their long-term captors. With this slight, Israel affirmed that true values in life were not to be found in the "glories of Egypt," but in the presence of the Lord. **sanctuary**: This verse anticipates the NT sense of God living among His people rather than in a shrine (Ezek. 37:26, 27; 2 Cor. 6:16–18).

114:3–6 The sea and the Jordan, the mountains and the hills, all appear as frightened animals before the awesome presence of the Lord, who is not mentioned until v. 7.

5 ^g What ails you, O sea, that you fled?
O Jordan, *that* you turned back?
6 O mountains, *that* you skipped like
rams?
O little hills, like lambs?
7 Tremble, O earth, at the presence of
the Lord,
At the presence of the God of
Jacob,
8 ^h Who turned the rock *into* a pool of
water,
The flint into a fountain of waters.

5 ^g Hab. 3:8
8 ^h Ex. 17:6; Num.
20:11; Ps. 107:35

PSALM 115
1 ^a [Is. 48:11]; Ezek.
36:32
2 ^b Ps. 42:3, 10
¹ nations
3 ^c [1 Chr. 16:26]

PSALM 115

*The Futility of Idols and the
Trustworthiness of God*

Not ^a unto us, O LORD, not unto us,
But to Your name give glory,
Because of Your mercy,
Because of Your truth.
2 Why should the ¹ Gentiles say,
^b“So where is their God?”
3 ^c But our God *is* in heaven;
He does whatever He pleases.

114:8 God not only delivered His people from Egypt, He also provided for their needs by bringing water from a **rock** (Ex. 17; Num. 20). Water was a physical blessing, but also a spiritual symbol of His salvation.
Psalm 115, a community psalm of praise, focuses on the glory of the Lord in the salvation of His people. Several sections of this psalm are used in Ps. 135. This poem has five movements: (1) a glorification of the Lord who alone deserves praise (vv. 1, 2); (2) a comparison of the false gods and the true, living God (vv. 3–8); (3) a litany of trust in the Lord (vv. 9–11); (4) a litany of blessing in the Lord (vv. 12–15); (5) a glorification of the Lord (vv. 16–18).

115:1, 2 Not unto us: People have a natural tendency to divert to themselves glory that belongs to God. This psalm redirects the glory to its proper focus, the Lord Himself. The **Gentiles**, who do not know God, are prone to insult believers in times of testing when God’s activity is not apparent (42:3).
115:3, 4 Like the prophets (Is. 40; Jer. 10), the psalms are derisive toward the **idols** of the nations. The psalmist denies any reality to the false gods created by people (135:15–18). In contrast to these “gods” that have to be carried about, propped up, and coddled, Israel exalted the **God** who **is in heaven** and who **does whatever He pleases**. He is the only God who can demand our worship.

Psalms of the Passover



The celebrants of the Passover today either read or sing Ps. 113–118 as part of the *haggadah*, the liturgical retelling of the story of God’s deliverance of Israel from Egypt. As part of the Passover commemoration of God’s saving acts during the Exodus, these psalms lead the celebrants through a cycle of praise to their God and Savior.

Before the Passover feast, celebrating Jews read or sing Ps. 113 and 114. Both psalms remarkably capture in poetry and song the major ideas of the prose liturgy that is also recited before the Passover meal. That is, they speak of God’s saving works at the time of the Exodus. The first psalm focuses the worshipers on the condescending grace of God. He is the merciful Redeemer who bends from heaven to meet the needs of His people. Then with the singing of Ps. 114, the Jews recall Israel’s deliverance from Egypt—the reason for the Passover celebration and the central act of God’s saving grace. This psalm begins on a light and happy note, the salvation of Israel, and ends on an arresting and somber note, the earth trembling before the Almighty Lord. It is a wonderful companion piece to the songs of Moses and Miriam in Ex. 15.

After the meal, Ps. 115–118; 136 are read or sung. Psalm 115 is similar to a responsive reading, which includes the community’s expression of trust in the Lord (vv. 1–8, 12, 13, 16–18) and the priest’s blessing (vv. 9–11, 14, 15). After declaring their confidence in God, the celebrants praise God for saving them with the words of Ps. 116. Then the two verses of Ps. 117 build on the previous psalm by exhorting *all* the nations to praise the Lord for His love and faithfulness. Psalm 118 continues the emphasis on God’s faithfulness by celebrating the Lord’s enduring love in a responsive or antiphonal song. The heart of this psalm prophetically describes God’s deliverance of a rejected person; the despised or rejected One is Jesus Himself (v. 22; Is. 53:3; Mark 12:1–12). Finally Ps. 136 concludes the Passover supper. With the recitation of the history of the Lord’s saving works, it continues the previous psalm’s refrain “For His mercy endures forever.” With these songs, the celebrants leave the meal with their hunger satisfied, their hearts filled with thankfulness, and their lips overflowing with praise to the Lord.



An ancient Haggadah, c. A.D. 1300, read or sung before the eating of the Passover meal
Z. Radovan/www.BibleLandPictures.com

- 4 ^d Their idols *are* silver and gold,
The work of men's hands.
- 5 They have mouths, but they do not
speak;
Eyes they have, but they do not see;
- 6 They have ears, but they do not hear;
Noses they have, but they do not
smell;
- 7 They have hands, but they do not
handle;
Feet they have, but they do not walk;
Nor do they mutter through their
throat.
- 8 ^e Those who make them are like them;
So is everyone who trusts in them.
- 9 ^f O Israel, trust in the LORD;
^g He *is* their help and their shield.
- 10 O house of Aaron, trust in the LORD;
He *is* their help and their shield.
- 11 You who fear the LORD, trust in the
LORD;
He *is* their help and their shield.
- 12 The LORD ² has been mindful of *us*;
He will bless us;
He will bless the house of Israel;
He will bless the house of Aaron.
- 13 ^h He will bless those who fear the
LORD,
Both small and great.
- 14 May the LORD give you increase more
and more,
You and your children.
- 15 *May you be* ⁱ blessed by the LORD,
^j Who made heaven and earth.
- 16 The heaven, *even* the heavens, *are*
the LORD's;
But the earth He has given to the
children of men.
- 17 ^k The dead do not praise the LORD,
Nor any who go down into silence.

4 ^d Deut. 4:28;
2 Kin. 19:18; Is.
37:19; 44:10, 20;
Jer. 10:3
8 ^e Ps. 135:18; Is.
44:9-11
9 ^f Ps. 118:2, 3 ^g Ps.
33:20
12 ² *has*
remembered us
13 ^h Ps. 128:1, 4
15 ⁱ [Gen. 14:19]
/ Gen. 1:1; Acts
14:15; Rev. 14:7
17 ^k Ps. 6:5; 88:10-
12; [Is. 38:18]

18 / Ps. 113:2; Dan.
2:20

PSALM 116

1 ^a Ps. 18:1
3 ^b Ps. 18:4-6 ¹ Lit.
cords ² *distresses*
³ Lit. *found me*
5 ^c [Ps. 103:8]
^d [Ezra 9:15; Neh.
9:8; [Ps. 119:137;
145:17; Jer. 12:1;
Dan. 9:14]
7 ^e [Jer. 6:16; Matt.
11:29] / Ps. 13:6
8 ^f Ps. 56:13
9 ^h Ps. 27:13
10 ⁱ 2 Cor. 4:13
11 ^j Ps. 31:22 ^k Rom.
3:4

- 18 ^l But we will bless the LORD
From this time forth and
forevermore.

Praise the LORD!

PSALM 116

Thanksgiving for Deliverance from Death

- I** ^a love the LORD, because He has heard
My voice *and* my supplications.
- ² Because He has inclined His ear to me,
Therefore I will call *upon Him* as
long as I live.
- 3 ^b The ¹ pains of death surrounded me,
And the ² pangs of Sheol ³ laid hold
of me;
I found trouble and sorrow.
- 4 Then I called upon the name of the
LORD:
“O LORD, I implore You, deliver my
soul!”
- 5 ^c Gracious *is* the LORD, and ^d righteous;
Yes, our God *is* merciful.
- 6 The LORD preserves the simple;
I was brought low, and He
saved me.
- 7 Return to your ^e rest, O my soul,
For ^f the LORD has dealt bountifully
with you.
- 8 ^g For You have delivered my soul from
death,
My eyes from tears,
And my feet from falling.
- 9 I will walk before the LORD
^h In the land of the living.
- 10 ⁱ I believed, therefore I spoke,
“I am greatly afflicted.”
- 11 ^j I said in my haste,
^k “All men *are* liars.”

115:9–11 On the basis of the confession of the reality of God, the psalm commences a litany that encourages trust in God alone. With this litany the choir leader would exhort first **Israel**, then the **house of Aaron**, and finally all **who fear the Lord** to trust God. The refrain proclaims God's protective care over them: **He is their help and their shield**.

115:12–15 A second litany focuses on God's blessing. Not only is He the only God who is trustworthy, He also desires to bless all those who trust in Him.

115:16, 17 The plural **heavens** may refer to the dwelling place of God (2 Cor. 12:2). **The dead**: As in 6:5, this is not a theology of death, but of praise. It is the work of the living to praise God. When anyone dies, that voice is lost from the living choir. **Praise the Lord**: Many of the Passover psalms (Ps. 115–117) conclude with word *hallelujah*, the Hebrew for “praise the LORD.”

Psalms 116, a messianic psalm, is one of the Passover psalms (Ps. 113–118). This psalm most likely was recited by Jesus on the night of His arrest, the night He celebrated Passover with His disciples (Luke 22:15). The structure of the poem is: (1) a declaration of the psalmist's love for the Lord (vv. 1, 2); (2) an experience on the brink

of death (vv. 3, 4); (3) praise for God (vv. 5–7); (4) the psalmist's deliverance from death (vv. 8–11); (5) a vow of praise to the Lord (vv. 12–14); (6) a reflection on the psalmist's deliverance (vv. 15–17); (7) payment of his vow of praise to the Lord (vv. 18, 19).

116:1, 2 The wording of **I love the Lord** in Hebrew suggests deep excitement and emotion. **He has inclined His ear to me**: As in 40:1, these words speak of the love of God: He bends from His place of glory to meet the needs of His people.

116:3 **Pains of death** describes the psalmist's harrowing experience of suffering that brought him seemingly to the brink of death (86:13). These words point prophetically to the Savior's anguish on the cross (Matt. 27:27–35).

116:6 In this context, **simple** means innocent, clean, or untarnished. In the Book of Proverbs, the word usually means naive or untested (Prov. 1:22).

116:9, 10 Paul quotes the words **I believed, therefore I spoke** in 2 Cor. 4:13, 14 as proof of the scriptural hope of the resurrection of the Savior Jesus. The belief in v. 10 is the hope, articulated in v. 9, that the psalmist would walk in the land of the living.

12 What shall I render to the LORD
For all His benefits toward me?
13 I will take up the cup of salvation,
And call upon the name of the LORD.
14 ¹I will pay my vows to the LORD
Now in the presence of all His
people.

15^m Precious in the sight of the LORD
Is the death of His saints.

16 O LORD, truly ⁿI am Your servant;
I am Your servant, ^othe son of Your
maidservant;
You have loosed my bonds.
17 I will offer to You ^pthe sacrifice of
thanksgiving,
And will call upon the name of the
LORD.

18 I will pay my vows to the LORD
Now in the presence of all His
people,
19 In the ^qcourts of the LORD's house,
In the midst of you, O Jerusalem.

⁴ Praise the LORD!

PSALM 117

Let All Peoples Praise the LORD

Praise^a the LORD, all you Gentiles!
¹Laud Him, all you peoples!
² For His merciful kindness is great
toward us,

14 ¹Ps. 116:18
15 ^mPs. 72:14; [Rev.
14:13]
16 ⁿPs. 119:125;
143:12 ^oPs. 86:16
17 ^pLev. 7:12; Ps.
50:14; 107:22
19 ^qPs. 96:8 ⁴Heb.
Hallelujah

PSALM 117

1 ^aRom. 15:11
¹ Praise

2 ^b[Ps. 100:5]

PSALM 118

1 ^a1 Chr. 16:8, 34;
Jer. 33:11 ^b2 Chr.
5:13; 7:3; Ezra 3:11;
[Ps. 136:1-26]
2 ^c[Ps. 115:9]
5 ^dPs. 120:1 ^ePs.
18:19
6 ^fPs. 27:1; 56:9;
[Rom. 8:31; Heb.
13:6]
7 ^gPs. 54:4 ^hPs.
59:10
8 ⁱ2 Chr. 32:7, 8;
Ps. 40:4; Is. 31:1, 3;
57:13; Jer. 17:5
9 ^jPs. 146:3

And ^bthe truth of the LORD *endures*
forever.

Praise the LORD!

PSALM 118

*Praise to God for His Everlasting
Mercy*

Oh, ^agive thanks to the LORD, for *He*
is good!

^bFor His mercy *endures* forever.

2 ^cLet Israel now say,
“His mercy *endures* forever.”

3 Let the house of Aaron now say,
“His mercy *endures* forever.”

4 Let those who fear the LORD now
say,
“His mercy *endures* forever.”

5 ^dI called on the LORD in distress;
The LORD answered me *and* ^eset me
in a broad place.

6 ^fThe LORD is on my side;
I will not fear.
What can man do to me?

7 ^gThe LORD is for me among those who
help me;
Therefore ^hI shall see *my desire* on
those who hate me.

8 ⁱIt is better to trust in the LORD
Than to put confidence in man.

9 ^jIt is better to trust in the LORD
Than to put confidence in princes.

116:12, 13 With the phrase **what shall I render**, the psalmist vows to praise God in an audible and public manner among the people of faith. At Passover this psalm is read after the meal, immediately following the third cup of wine, called **the cup of salvation**. How appropriate that this Passover psalm would call to mind God's cup of salvation the very night that the Savior was betrayed (Matt. 26:27; Luke 22:14–22).

116:16, 17 The psalmist declares that he is God's **servant**. As Jesus demonstrated in the Upper Room celebration of the Passover, every true follower of Christ must become a servant. Just as Jesus the Son of God became a servant to His disciples and washed their feet, so every believer needs to serve others (John 13:1–17). The words of the psalm were prophetically fulfilled when they were sung by Jesus on the night before He was crucified. The term **thanksgiving** basically means “public acknowledgment.”

116:18 I will pay my vows: These words are evidently the concluding words of the psalmist, declaring his intention to make good on his promise to bring his offering of praise to the temple court.

Psalm 117 is a descriptive psalm of praise. It is the shortest psalm and has a simple structure: (1) a call for the nations to praise God (v. 1); (2) an enumeration of reasons for the nations to praise God (v. 2).

117:1 Laud, which means “to speak well of,” nicely parallels the term **praise**, which means “to be excitedly boastful about.” The Hebrew word for Gentiles means all people except Jews; the word for **peoples** speaks of smaller groups of people, along ethnic and language lines.

117:2 Merciful kindness, or “loyal love,” refers to God's faithfulness to His covenant promises to His people. The reason the nations are to give praise to God is found in His relationship with Israel.

Praise the LORD: The concluding Hallelujah is an appropriate shout of triumph in God's mercy.

Psalm 118, a psalm of declarative praise, is the climax of the group of psalms called the Passover psalms or Hallel psalms, after the Hebrew word for praise, *hallel*. *Hallelujah* comes from this word. These psalms were probably sung by the Savior on the night before His death. The structure of the poem is: (1) a call for the praise of God in the community of the redeemed (vv. 1–4); (2) a report of confidence in the Lord (vv. 5–9); (3) a report of God's deliverance in a time of trouble (vv. 10–14); (4) the praise of the Lord by the righteous (vv. 15–18); (5) the declaration of the psalmist that he would enter the gate of the city to praise the Lord (vv. 19–21); (6) the picture of the rejected cornerstone (vv. 22–24); (7) the shout of “Hosanna” by the people in praise of God (vv. 25, 26); (8) the continuing determination of the psalmist to bring his praise to the Lord (vv. 27, 28); (9) the renewed call for the praise of God (v. 29).

118:2 The liturgical instruction **let Israel now say** appears from time to time in the Psalms (Ps. 124; 129). This psalm was recited in antiphonal responses. The refrain praises God's mercy: **His mercy endures forever**.

118:5–8 The idea of **distress** in these psalms is a picture of constraint, constriction, or lack of room. Even when surrounded by impossible circumstances, the believer can proclaim **the LORD is on my side**. And if so, **what can man do to me?** See 56:4, 9; 94:17. If our trust is in the Lord's strength, we do not have to fear the reprisals of our enemies. **confidence in princes:** Although relying on other people is part of living, our ultimate trust can only be placed in the Lord God. Even powerful rulers are limited by their own mortality (146:3).

- 10 All nations surrounded me,
But in the name of the LORD I will
destroy them.
- 11 They ^ksurrounded me,
Yes, they surrounded me;
But in the name of the LORD I will
destroy them.
- 12 They surrounded me ^llike bees;
They were quenched ^mlike a fire of
thorns;
For in the name of the LORD I will
^ldestroy them.
- 13 You pushed me violently, that I might
fall,
But the LORD helped me.
- 14 ⁿThe LORD *is* my strength and song,
And He has become my salvation.
- 15 The voice of rejoicing and salvation
Is in the tents of the righteous;
The right hand of the LORD does
valiantly.
- 16 ^oThe right hand of the LORD is exalted;
The right hand of the LORD does
valiantly.
- 17 ^pI shall not die, but live,
And ^qdeclare the works of the LORD.
- 18 The LORD has ^rchastened² me
severely,
But He has not given me over to
death.
- 19 ^sOpen to me the gates of
righteousness;
I will go through them,
And I will praise the LORD.
- 20 ^tThis is the gate of the LORD,
^u"Through which the righteous shall
enter.

11 ^k Ps. 88:17
12 ^l Deut. 1:44
^m Eccl. 7:6; Nah. 1:10
^l cut them off
14 ⁿ Ex. 15:2; Is. 12:2
16 ^o Ex. 15:6
17 ^p [Ps. 6:5]; Hab.
1:12 ^q Ps. 73:28
18 ^r Ps. 73:14;
Jer. 31:18; [1 Cor.
11:32]; 2 Cor. 6:9
² disciplined
19 ^s Is. 26:2
20 ^t Ps. 24:7 ^u Is.
35:8; [Rev. 21:27;
22:14, 15]

21 ^v Ps. 116:1
22 ^w Matt. 21:42;
Mark 12:10, 11; Luke
20:17; Acts 4:11;
[Eph. 2:20; 1 Pet.
2:7, 8]
23 ³ Lit. *This is from
the LORD*
26 ^x Matt. 21:9;
23:39; Mark 11:9;
Luke 13:35; 19:38 ☆
27 ^y Esth. 8:16;
[1 Pet. 2:9]
28 ^z Ex. 15:2; Is. 25:1

PSALM 119

1 ^a Ps. 128:1; [Ezek.
11:20; 18:17]; Mic.
4:2 ¹ blameless

- 21 I will praise You,
For You have ^vanswered me,
And have become my salvation.
- 22 ^wThe stone *which* the builders
rejected
Has become the chief cornerstone.
- 23 ³ This was the LORD's doing;
It *is* marvelous in our eyes.
- 24 This *is* the day the LORD has made;
We will rejoice and be glad in it.
- 25 Save now, I pray, O LORD;
O LORD, I pray, send now prosperity.
- 26 ^x Blessed *is* he who comes in the name
of the LORD!
We have blessed you from the house
of the LORD.
- 27 God *is* the LORD,
And He has given us ^ylight;
Bind the sacrifice with cords to the
horns of the altar.
- 28 You *are* my God, and I will praise
You;
^z You *are* my God, I will exalt You.
- 29 Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for *He* is
good!
For His mercy *endures* forever.

PSALM 119

Meditations on the Excellencies of the Word of God

N ALEPH

Blessed *are* the ¹undefiled in the
way,
^a Who walk in the law of the LORD!

118:10, 11 The poet feels that he is alone and that the whole world is arrayed against him. The words **I will destroy them** are used three times in vv. 10–12; the repetition is for emphasis and finality. Even though the psalmist is completely encircled by his enemies, he knows that God will help him triumph over them.

118:13, 14 **You pushed me:** Translated literally, the Hebrew phrase means "pushing, you pushed me to make me fall." **But the LORD helped me:** Compare Paul's words in 2 Tim. 4:17, 18. Deliverance always comes from God. The Lord is not only our Helper, but also our **strength and song**. These words are a quotation from the "Song of Moses" (Ex. 15:2); they are also quoted in Is. 12:2. The God who delivered the Israelites by dividing the waters of the Red Sea was ready to deliver the psalmist from trouble.

118:15–17 **The voice of rejoicing:** The psalmist summons the people of God to join him in praise, just as in the days of the Exodus from Egypt. The slogan of redemption, **the right hand of the LORD**, is also a quotation from the Song of Moses (Ex. 15:6). It depicts God using His limitless strength to save the psalmist. **I shall not die:** The poet describes a near-death experience, as in 16:9–11.

118:19–21 **Open to me the gates:** The poet draws on the wording and imagery of Ps. 24. There is only One who can enter the gates of the Lord of His own accord—the perfect King of glory. **gate of the LORD:** It is possible that the literal reference is to the gate of Jerusalem, the city of God—or even to a gate of the temple. Jesus declared that He was the *gate* or door leading to **salvation** (see John 10:9).

118:22 The Savior is pictured as a discarded **stone** that is then reused as the most significant stone of all, the **chief cornerstone**. This potent imagery depicts Jesus' rejection by many (Is. 53:3; Mark 8:31; Luke 9:22; 17:25). Jesus elaborated on this prophetic verse with the parable of the vineyard owner. In this parable, the rejection included the murder of the owner's son—a reference to God's only Son (Mark 12:1–12). But even though the Savior was rejected, He was elevated to the right hand of God (Acts 7:56). Only God could do this marvelous and unexpected work. The cross, the symbol of Jesus' rejection, has become the symbol of our salvation (1 Cor. 1:18; Heb. 12:2).

118:25, 26 The words **save now** in Hebrew are more familiar in the transliteration "hosanna." These words are so significant that if the children had not shouted them aloud (see Matt. 21:16) when Jesus entered Jerusalem, the stones would have had to shout them (Luke 19:40). The words **blessed is he who comes** are the words the people used to bless Jesus on his triumphal entry into Jerusalem (Matt. 21:9; Mark 11:9; Luke 19:38). As God's only Son, Jesus is the One who comes **in the name of the LORD**; He is the One who reveals God the Father (John 14:8–11).

118:29 The closing words call the community to end the psalm as it began (v. 1)—with praise for the goodness and love of the Most High God.

Psalm 119, a wisdom psalm, is the premier song about the Torah (Ps. 19). It celebrates the Word of God in a way that is almost exhaustive. This very lengthy poem is an acoustic: For each of the

2 Blessed *are* those who keep His testimonies,
Who seek Him with the ^bwhole heart!
3 ^cThey also do no iniquity;
They walk in His ways.
4 You have commanded *us*
To keep Your precepts diligently.
5 Oh, that my ways were directed
To keep Your statutes!
6 ^dThen I would not be ashamed,
When I look into all Your commandments.
7 I will praise You with uprightness of heart,
When I learn Your righteous judgments.
8 I will keep Your statutes;
Oh, do not forsake me utterly!

ב BETH

9 How can a young man cleanse his way?
By taking heed according to Your word.

2 ^b Deut. 6:5; 10:12;
11:13; 13:3
3 ^c [1 John 3:9; 5:18]
6 ^d Job 22:26

10 ^e 2 Chr. 15:15
11 ^f Ps. 37:31; Luke
2:19
13 ^g Ps. 34:11
15 ² look into
16 ^h Ps. 1:2
17 ⁱ Ps. 116:7

10 With my whole heart I have ^esought You;
Oh, let me not wander from Your commandments!
11 ^fYour word I have hidden in my heart,
That I might not sin against You.
12 Blessed *are* You, O LORD!
Teach me Your statutes.
13 With my lips I have ^gdeclared
All the judgments of Your mouth.
14 I have rejoiced in the way of Your testimonies,
As *much as* in all riches.
15 I will meditate on Your precepts,
And ²contemplate Your ways.
16 I will ^hdelight myself in Your statutes;
I will not forget Your word.

ג GIMEL

17 ⁱDeal bountifully with Your servant,
That I may live and keep Your word.
18 Open my eyes, that I may see
Wondrous things from Your law.

22 consonants in the Hebrew alphabet, there are eight verses beginning with that letter. Within the psalm, eight words for God’s Law occur again and again: law; testimonies; promise; precepts; statutes; commandments; judgments; word. The psalm uses the full meaning of all these words as it elaborates on the application of the Law of God to both daily life and Israel’s destiny. The Law is never considered a curse; it is always seen as a gift from God. The cumulative effect of this lengthy celebration of the Word of God is impressive: the psalmist cannot stop praising God for His mercy and goodness in providing His people with instructions for living. **119:1** The Hebrew word *torah*, translated **law**, basically means “instruction” or “direction.” Broadly it refers to all God’s instructions from Moses to the prophets. More strictly it refers to the first five books of the OT. The Law was never designed as a means of salva-

tion; no one could be saved by keeping it. The Lord gave His law to a people with whom He had already graciously established a covenantal relationship (Ex. 20:2). Instead, the Law was the means for the Israelites to learn how to live as God’s holy people. The psalmists consistently describe the Law of God as a great blessing, for it was God’s gracious revelation to His people for their own good (Deut. 6:1–3). In the Law, God mercifully pointed out the right path to follow. Only mistaken legalistic interpretations of the Law prompted the negative statements concerning it in the NT. **119:16** The Hebrew word for **statutes** refers to something marked out as a boundary, something inscribed or engraved. Hence the word speaks of the permanence of the Law. Indeed God Himself had engraved it in stone (Ex. 24:12). The same word is often translated “decree” (2:7).

Synonyms for God’s Revelation in Psalm 119			
Word	Number of Occurrences	Meaning	Key Verse
law (Heb. <i>torah</i>)	25	the first five books of the Old Testament; the Torah; the Pentateuch	“So shall I keep Your law continually, forever and ever” (v. 44)
testimonies (Heb. <i>’edot</i>)	22	ordinances; God’s standard of conduct according to the Ten Commandments	“Blessed are those who keep His testimonies” (v. 2)
way (Heb. <i>derek</i>)	11	the pattern of life required by God’s law	“I have chosen the way of truth” (v. 30)
precepts (Heb. <i>piqqudim</i>)	21	injunction; requirement; commandment	“I will keep Your precepts with my whole heart” (v. 69)
statutes (Heb. <i>huqqim</i>)	21	things inscribed; enacted laws	“I will keep Your statutes” (v. 8)
commandments (Heb. <i>mitsvot</i>)	22	a distinct, authoritative order	“I do Your commandments” (v. 166)
judgments (Heb. <i>mishpat</i>)	23	a binding law; judicial decision	“I will praise You . . . when I learn Your righteous judgments” (v. 7)
word (Heb. <i>imrah</i>)	39	a general term for God’s revelation	“Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You” (v. 11)

- 19 ^jI *am* a stranger in the earth;
Do not hide Your commandments
from me.
- 20 ^kMy soul ³breaks with longing
For Your judgments at all times.
- 21 You rebuke the proud—the cursed,
Who stray from Your
commandments.
- 22 ^lRemove from me reproach and
contempt,
For I have kept Your testimonies.
- 23 Princes also sit *and* speak against me,
But Your servant meditates on Your
statutes.
- 24 Your testimonies also *are* my delight
And my counselors.

7 DALETH

- 25^mMy soul clings to the dust;
ⁿRevive me according to Your word.
- 26 I have declared my ways, and You
answered me;
^oTeach me Your statutes.
- 27 Make me understand the way of
Your precepts;
So ^pshall I meditate on Your
wonderful works.
- 28 ^qMy soul ⁴melts from ⁵heaviness;
Strengthen me according to Your
word.
- 29 Remove from me the way of lying,
And grant me Your law graciously.
- 30 I have chosen the way of truth;
Your judgments I have laid *before me*.
- 31 I cling to Your testimonies;
O LORD, do not put me to shame!
- 32 I will run the course of Your
commandments,
For You shall ^renlarge my heart.

7 HE

- 33 ^sTeach me, O LORD, the way of Your
statutes,
And I shall keep it *to* the end.
- 34 ^tGive me understanding, and I shall
keep Your law;
Indeed, I shall observe it with *my*
whole heart.
- 35 Make me walk in the path of Your
commandments,
For I delight in it.
- 36⁶Incline my heart to Your testimonies,
And not to ^ucovetousness.

19 ^j Gen. 47:9; Lev. 25:23; 1 Chr. 29:15; Ps. 39:12; Heb. 11:13
20 ^k Ps. 42:1, 2; 63:1; 84:2 ³ is *crushed*
22 ^l Ps. 39:8
25 ^m Ps. 44:25 ⁿ Ps. 143:11
26 ^o Ps. 25:4; 27:11; 86:11
27 ^p Ps. 145:5, 6
28 ^q Ps. 107:26 ⁴ Lit. *drops* ⁵ *grief*
32 ^r 1 Kin. 4:29; Is. 60:5; 2 Cor. 6:11, 13
33 ^s [Matt. 10:22; Rev. 2:26]
34 ^t [Prov. 2:6; James 1:5]
36 ^u Ezek. 33:31; [Mark 7:20-23]; Luke 12:15; [Heb. 13:5] ⁶ Cause me to long for

- 37 ^vTurn ⁷ away my eyes from ^wlooking
at worthless things,
And revive me in ⁸Your way.
- 38 ^xEstablish Your word to Your
servant,
Who *is devoted* to fearing You.
- 39 Turn away my reproach which I
dread,
For Your judgments *are* good.
- 40 Behold, I long for Your precepts;
Revive me in Your righteousness.

1 WAW

- 41 Let Your mercies come also to me,
O LORD—
Your salvation according to Your
word.
- 42 So shall I have an answer for him
who ⁹reproaches me,
For I trust in Your word.
- 43 And take not the word of truth
utterly out of my mouth,
For I have hoped in Your ordinances.
- 44 So shall I keep Your law continually,
Forever and ever.
- 45 And I will walk ¹ at ^yliberty,
For I seek Your precepts.
- 46 ^zI will speak of Your testimonies also
before kings,
And will not be ashamed.
- 47 And I will delight myself in Your
commandments,
Which I love.
- 48 My hands also I will lift up to Your
commandments,
Which I love,
And I will meditate on Your statutes.

1 ZAYIN

- 49 Remember the word to Your servant,
Upon which You have caused me to
hope.
- 50 This *is* my ^acomfort in my affliction,
For Your word has given me life.
- 51 The proud have me in great derision,
Yet I do not turn aside from Your
law.
- 52 I remembered Your judgments of old,
O LORD,
And have comforted myself.
- 53 ^bIndignation has taken hold of me
Because of the wicked, who forsake
Your law.

37 ^v Is. 33:15 ^w Prov. 23:5 ⁷ Lit. *Cause my eyes to pass away from* ⁸ So with MT, LXX, Vg.; Tg. *Your words*
38 ^x 2 Sam. 7:25
42 ⁹ *taunts*
45 ^y Prov. 4:12 ¹ Lit. *in a wide place*
46 ^z Ps. 138:1; Matt. 10:18; Acts 26
50 ^a Job 6:10; [Rom. 15:4]
53 ^b Ex. 32:19; Ezra 9:3; Neh. 13:25

119:22 The Hebrew word translated **testimonies** is derived from the Hebrew verb meaning “to witness” or “to testify.” It refers to the Ten Commandments, called the “two tablets of the Testimony” (Ex. 31:18). The commandments were a testimony because they were a witness to the Israelites of their faithfulness or unfaithfulness to the covenant (Deut. 31:26).

119:37 The phrase **Your way** describes the will of God as a path, distinguished from other paths that lead to destruction (compare

Prov. 2:8). God’s path leads to life, and His ways are a reflection of His good character.

119:44, 45 at liberty: The psalmist celebrates the freedom that is found in obeying God’s instruction. Although many think of laws, instructions, and commandments (v. 47) as limiting and restricting, the Law of God paradoxically frees us. It frees us from sin (v. 133) and gives us the peace that comes from following the Lord’s instructions (v. 165).

54 Your statutes have been my songs
In the house of my pilgrimage.
55 ^c I remember Your name in the night,
O LORD,
And I keep Your law.
56 This has become mine,
Because I kept Your precepts.

▮ HETH

57 ^d You are my portion, O LORD;
I have said that I would keep Your
words.
58 I entreated Your favor with *my*
whole heart;
Be merciful to me according to Your
word.
59 I ^e thought about my ways,
And turned my feet to Your
testimonies.
60 I made haste, and did not delay
To keep Your commandments.
61 The cords of the wicked have
bound me,
But I have not forgotten Your law.
62 ^f At midnight I will rise to give thanks
to You,
Because of Your righteous judgments.
63 I *am* a companion of all who fear
You,
And of those who keep Your
precepts.
64 ^g The earth, O LORD, is full of Your
mercy;
Teach me Your statutes.

▮ TETH

65 You have dealt well with Your
servant,
O LORD, according to Your word.
66 Teach me good judgment and
^h knowledge,
For I believe Your commandments.
67 Before I was ⁱ afflicted I went astray,
But now I keep Your word.
68 You *are* ^j good, and do good;
Teach me Your statutes.
69 The proud have ^k forged ² a lie
against me,
But I will keep Your precepts with
my whole heart.
70 ^l Their heart is ³ as fat as grease,
But I delight in Your law.

55 ^c Ps. 63:6
57 ^d Num. 18:20;
Ps. 16:5; Jer. 10:16;
Lam. 3:24
59 ^e Mark 14:72;
Luke 15:17
62 ^f Acts 16:25
64 ^g Ps. 33:5
66 ^h Phil. 1:9
67 ⁱ Prov. 3:11; Jer.
31:18, 19; [Heb.
12:5-11]
68 ^j Ps. 106:1; 107:1;
[Matt. 19:17]
69 ^k Job 13:4; Ps.
109:2 ² Lit. *smear*
me with a lie
70 ^l Deut. 32:15; Job
15:27; Ps. 17:10; Is.
6:10; Jer. 5:28; Acts
28:27 ³ Insensible

72 ^m Ps. 19:10; Prov.
8:10, 11, 19
73 ⁿ Job 10:8; 31:15;
[Ps. 139:15, 16]
74 ^o Ps. 34:2
75 ^p [Heb. 12:10]
⁴ Lit. *righteous*
78 ^q Ps. 25:3
81 ^r Ps. 73:26; 84:2
83 ^s Job 30:30
84 ^t Ps. 39:4 ^u Rev.
6:10
85 ^v Ps. 35:7; Prov.
16:27; Jer. 18:22

71 It is good for me that I have been
afflicted,
That I may learn Your statutes.
72 ^m The law of Your mouth is better to me
Than thousands of *coins* of gold and
silver.

▮ YOD

73 ⁿ Your hands have made me and
fashioned me;
Give me understanding, that I may
learn Your commandments.
74 ^o Those who fear You will be glad
when they see me,
Because I have hoped in Your word.
75 I know, O LORD, ^p that Your
judgments *are* ⁴ right,
And *that* in faithfulness You have
afflicted me.
76 Let, I pray, Your merciful kindness be
for my comfort,
According to Your word to Your
servant.
77 Let Your tender mercies come to me,
that I may live;
For Your law is my delight.
78 Let the proud ^q be ashamed,
For they treated me wrongfully with
falsehood;
But I will meditate on Your precepts.
79 Let those who fear You turn to me,
Those who know Your testimonies.
80 Let my heart be blameless regarding
Your statutes,
That I may not be ashamed.

▮ KAPH

81 ^r My soul faints for Your salvation,
But I hope in Your word.
82 My eyes fail *from searching* Your
word,
Saying, "When will You comfort
me?"
83 For ^s I have become like a wineskin
in smoke,
Yet I do not forget Your statutes.
84 ^t How many *are* the days of Your
servant?
^u When will You execute judgment on
those who persecute me?
85 ^v The proud have dug pits for me,
Which is not according to Your law.

119:56 precepts: This Hebrew word means "an appointed thing," "something for which one is given charge." The word has the same idea as a commandment (v. 4), for both words assume that the One who commands has the authority "to take charge" or "to appoint."
119:61, 62 the wicked have bound me: The psalmist describes a hostile world in which even rulers persecute him (v. 161). His enemies not only fabricate lies about him (v. 69), but also seek his death (v. 87). Yet in the same breath by which the psalmist voices his concerns, he proclaims his allegiance to the Law. He will not abandon the truth even under pressure.

119:70–72 The psalmist regularly affirms his **delight** with the Law (vv. 25, 35, 47, 174). This is not the delight of a passive observer, but the delight of a disciple who has staked his life and security on a cause or principle. The psalmist maintains this type of complete commitment to the Law, which he consistently values over material wealth (vv. 14, 127, 162).
119:82 The Hebrew term for **word** is derived from the verb "to say." The term is a general word for God's Law, encompassing everything that the Lord has promised and spoken.

- 86 All Your commandments *are* faithful;
They persecute me ^wwrongfully;
Help me!
87 They almost made an end of me on
earth,
But I did not forsake Your precepts.
88 Revive me according to Your
lovingkindness,
So that I may keep the testimony of
Your mouth.

5 LAMED

- 89^x Forever, O LORD,
Your word ⁵is settled in heaven.
90 Your faithfulness *endures* to all
generations;
You established the earth, and it
⁶abides.
91 They continue this day according to
^yYour ordinances,
For all *are* Your servants.
92 Unless Your law *had been* my delight,
I would then have perished in my
affliction.
93 I will never forget Your precepts,
For by them You have given me life.
94 I *am* Yours, save me;
For I have sought Your precepts.
95 The wicked wait for me to destroy me,
But I will ⁷consider Your
testimonies.
96^z I have seen the consummation of all
perfection,
But Your commandment *is*
exceedingly broad.

D MEM

- 97 Oh, how I love Your law!
^a*It is* my meditation all the day.
98 You, through Your commandments,
make me ^bwiser than my
enemies;
For they *are* ever with me.
99 I have more understanding than all
my teachers,
^cFor Your testimonies *are* my
meditation.

86 ^w Ps. 35:19
89 ^x Ps. 89:2; Is.
40:8; Matt. 24:35;
[1 Pet. 1:25] ⁵ Lit.
stands firm
90 ⁶ Lit. *stands*
91 ^y Jer. 33:25
95 ⁷ *give attention*
to
96 ^z Matt. 5:18
97 ^a Ps. 1:2
98 ^b Deut. 4:6
99 ^c [2 Tim. 3:15]

100 ^d [Job 32:7-9]
⁸ *aged*
103 ^e Ps. 19:10;
Prov. 8:11
105 ^f Prov. 6:23
106 ^g Neh. 10:29
108 ^h Hos. 14:2;
Heb. 13:15
109 ⁱ Judg. 12:3;
Job 13:14 ⁹ In
danger
110 ^j Ps. 140:5
111 ^k Deut. 33:4
¹ *inheritance*
113 ² Lit. *divided in*
heart or mind
114 ^l [Ps. 32:7]

- 100^d I understand more than the
⁸ancients,
Because I keep Your precepts.
101 I have restrained my feet from every
evil way,
That I may keep Your word.
102 I have not departed from Your
judgments,
For You Yourself have taught me.
103^e How sweet are Your words to my
taste,
Sweeter than honey to my mouth!
104 Through Your precepts I get
understanding;
Therefore I hate every false way.

J NUN

- 105^f Your word *is* a lamp to my feet
And a light to my path.
106^g I have sworn and confirmed
That I will keep Your righteous
judgments.
107 I am afflicted very much;
Revive me, O LORD, according to
Your word.
108 Accept, I pray, ^hthe freewill offerings
of my mouth, O LORD,
And teach me Your judgments.
109ⁱ My life *is* continually ⁹in my hand,
Yet I do not forget Your law.
110^j The wicked have laid a snare for me,
Yet I have not strayed from Your
precepts.
111^k Your testimonies I have taken as a
¹heritage forever,
For they *are* the rejoicing of my
heart.
112 I have inclined my heart to perform
Your statutes
Forever, to the very end.

D SAMEK

- 113 I hate the ²double-minded,
But I love Your law.
114^l You *are* my hiding place and my
shield;
I hope in Your word.

119:89–91 The stability of the universe, or the **heaven**, mirrors God's **faithfulness**, love, and care. But even more important, it reflects the permanence of God's laws and the fact that the universe serves Him.

119:97–103 The psalmist again and again proclaims his **love** for the Law (vv. 47, 119, 127, 159, 167). He compares his desire to a thirst for water (v. 131) and a craving for honey (v. 103). Fundamentally, his attraction to the Law is the result of his love for God Himself, his Teacher (vv. 102, 132).

119:105 **Word** means the utterance of the Lord God. That God speaks at all to His people indicates His wonderful grace. God's speech to His people is something the psalmists marvel at, for God has not spoken this way to any other nation (147:19, 20). Here the psalmist describes God's Word as **light**, that is, a guide for living. In v. 130, the light refers to understanding.

law

(Heb. *torah*) (1:2; 89:30; 119:97; Ex. 24:12) Strong's #8451

Although usually translated *law*, the noun *torah* is derived from the verb *yarah*, meaning "to teach," and should be understood as carrying the idea of "instruction." The term can refer to any set of regulations, such as the instructions of parents (Prov. 1:8) or of a psalmist (78:1). But usually the word refers to God's law. The writer of Ps. 119 expressed great love for God's law, because it led him to wisdom and righteousness (119:97–176). In the NT, Paul also praised God's law because it pointed out his sin and made him realize his desperate need for a Savior (Rom. 7:7).

115^m Depart from me, you evildoers,
For I will keep the commandments
of my God!
116 Uphold me according to Your word,
that I may live;
And do not let me ⁿbe ashamed of
my hope.
117³ Hold me up, and I shall be safe,
And I shall observe Your statutes
continually.
118 You reject all those who stray from
Your statutes,
For their deceit is falsehood.
119 You ⁴put away all the wicked of the
earth ^olike ⁵dross;
Therefore I love Your testimonies.
120^p My flesh trembles for fear of You,
And I am afraid of Your judgments.

‣ AYIN

121 I have done justice and
righteousness;
Do not leave me to my oppressors.
122 Be ^qsurety ⁶for Your servant for
good;
Do not let the proud oppress me.
123 My eyes fail *from seeking* Your
salvation
And Your righteous word.
124 Deal with Your servant according to
Your mercy,
And teach me Your statutes.
125^r I *am* Your servant;
Give me understanding,
That I may know Your testimonies.
126 *It is time for You to act, O LORD,*
For they have ⁷regarded Your law as
void.
127^s Therefore I love Your
commandments
More than gold, yes, than fine gold!
128 Therefore all *Your precepts*
concerning all things
I consider *to be* right;
I hate every false way.

‣ PE

129 Your testimonies are wonderful;
Therefore my soul keeps them.
130 The entrance of Your words gives
light;
^tIt gives understanding to the ^usimple.
131 I opened my mouth and ^vpanted,
For I longed for Your
commandments.

115 ^m Ps. 6:8; Matt.
7:23
116 ⁿ Ps. 25:2;
[Rom. 5:5; 9:33;
10:11; Phil. 1:20]
117 ³ Uphold me
119 ^o Is. 1:22, 25;
Ezek. 22:18, 19
⁴ destroy, lit. cause
to cease ⁵ slag or
refuse
120 ^p Job 4:14;
Hab. 3:16
122 ^q Job 17:3; Heb.
7:22 ⁶ guaranty
125 ^r Ps. 116:16
126 ⁷ broken Your
law
127 ^s Ps. 19:10
130 ^t Prov. 6:23
^u [Ps. 19:7]; Prov. 1:4
131 ^v Ps. 42:1

132 ^w Ps. 106:4 ^x Ps.
51:1; [2 Thess. 1:6]
133 ^y Ps. 17:5 ^z [Ps.
19:13; Rom. 6:12]
134 ^a Luke 1:74
135 ^b Num. 6:25;
Ps. 4:6
136 ^c Jer. 9:1, 18;
14:17; Lam. 3:48;
Ezek. 9:4
137 ^d Ezra 9:15;
Neh. 9:33; Jer. 12:1;
Lam. 1:18; Dan.
9:7, 14
138 ^e [Ps. 19:7-9]
139 ^f Ps. 69:9; John
2:17 ^g put an end to
140 ^g Ps. 12:6 ^h Lit.
refined or tried
142 ^h [Ps. 19:9; John
17:17]
143 ⁱ Lit. *found*
147 ^j Ps. 5:3
148 ^k Ps. 63:1, 6

132¹⁰ Look upon me and be merciful
to me,
^xAs Your custom *is* toward those who
love Your name.
133^y Direct my steps by Your word,
And ^zlet no iniquity have dominion
over me.
134^a Redeem me from the oppression of
man,
That I may keep Your precepts.
135^b Make Your face shine upon Your
servant,
And teach me Your statutes.
136^c Rivers of water run down from my
eyes,
Because *men* do not keep Your law.

‣ TSADDE

137^d Righteous *are* You, O LORD,
And upright *are* Your judgments.
138^e Your testimonies, *which* You have
commanded,
Are righteous and very faithful.
139^f My zeal has ⁸consumed me,
Because my enemies have forgotten
Your words.
140^g Your word *is* very ⁹pure;
Therefore Your servant loves it.
141 *I am* small and despised,
Yet I do not forget Your precepts.
142 Your righteousness *is* an everlasting
righteousness,
And Your law *is* ^htruth.
143 Trouble and anguish have
¹overtaken me,
Yet Your commandments *are* my
delights.
144 The righteousness of Your
testimonies *is* everlasting;
Give me understanding, and I shall
live.

‣ QOPH

145 I cry out with *my* whole heart;
Hear me, O LORD!
I will keep Your statutes.
146 I cry out to You;
Save me, and I will keep Your
testimonies.
147ⁱ I rise before the dawning of the
morning,
And cry for help;
I hope in Your word.
148^j My eyes are awake through the *night*
watches,
That I may meditate on Your word.

119:127 Commandments pertain to anything the Lord God has ordered. The word alludes to God's authority to govern His people. The commandments of God are positive and negative, specific and general, restrictive and permissive. Yet most important, they help a person to identify his or her way in a world that is filled with confusion, sin, and error.

119:132 As Your custom: Here the psalmist identifies himself as a servant of the Lord and asks to be treated as one of His own. The psalmist's reference to God's mercy in this verse alludes to God's promise to show mercy to those who love Him (Ex. 20:6).

- 149 Hear my voice according to Your lovingkindness;
O LORD, revive me according to Your justice.
- 150 They draw near who follow after wickedness;
They are far from Your law.
- 151 You *are*^k near, O LORD,
And all Your commandments *are* truth.
- 152 Concerning Your testimonies,
I have known of old that You have founded them ^lforever.

resh

- 153^m Consider my affliction and deliver me,
For I do not forget Your law.
- 154ⁿ Plead my cause and redeem me;
Revive me according to Your word.
- 155 Salvation *is* far from the wicked,
For they do not seek Your statutes.
- 156² Great *are* Your tender mercies,
O LORD;
Revive me according to Your judgments.
- 157 Many *are* my persecutors and my enemies,
Yet I do not ^o turn from Your testimonies.
- 158 I see the treacherous, and ^p am disgusted,
Because they do not keep Your word.
- 159 Consider how I love Your precepts;
Revive me, O LORD, according to Your lovingkindness.
- 160 The entirety of Your word *is* truth,
And every one of Your righteous judgments *endures* forever.

shin

- 161^q Princes persecute me without a cause,
But my heart stands in awe of Your word.
- 162 I rejoice at Your word
As one who finds great treasure.

151 ^k [Ps. 145:18];
Is. 50:8
152 ^l Luke 21:33
153 ^m Lam. 5:1
154 ⁿ 1 Sam. 24:15;
Mic. 7:9
156 ² Or *Many*
157 ^o Ps. 44:18
158 ^p Ezek. 9:4
161 ^q 1 Sam. 24:11;
26:18

165 ^r Prov. 3:2;
[Is. 26:3; 32:17]
³ Lit. *they have no stumbling block*
166 ^s Gen. 49:18
168 ^t Job 24:23;
Prov. 5:21
169 ^u Ps. 119:27, 144
170 ^v Prayer of supplication
171 ^w Ps. 119:7
173 ^x Josh. 24:22;
Luke 10:42
174 ^y Ps. 119:166
^y Ps. 119:16, 24
176 ^z [Is. 53:6]; Jer.
50:6; Matt. 18:12;
Luke 15:4; [1 Pet.
2:25]

PSALM 120

1 ^a Jon. 2:2

- 163 I hate and abhor lying,
But I love Your law.
- 164 Seven times a day I praise You,
Because of Your righteous judgments.
- 165^r Great peace have those who love
Your law,
And ³ nothing causes them to stumble.
- 166^s LORD, I hope for Your salvation,
And I do Your commandments.
- 167 My soul keeps Your testimonies,
And I love them exceedingly.
- 168 I keep Your precepts and Your testimonies,
^t For all my ways *are* before You.

tau

- 169 Let my cry come before You, O LORD;
“Give me understanding according to Your word.
- 170 Let my ⁴ supplication come before You;
Deliver me according to Your word.
- 171^v My lips shall utter praise,
For You teach me Your statutes.
- 172 My tongue shall speak of Your word,
For all Your commandments *are* righteousness.
- 173 Let Your hand become my help,
For ^w I have chosen Your precepts.
- 174^x I long for Your salvation, O LORD,
And ^y Your law *is* my delight.
- 175 Let my soul live, and it shall praise You;
And let Your judgments help me.
- 176^z I have gone astray like a lost sheep;
Seek Your servant,
For I do not forget Your commandments.

PSALM 120

Plea for Relief from Bitter Foes

A Song of Ascents.

In ^a my distress I cried to the LORD,
And He heard me.

119:149 To **revive** means “to cause to live.” With this word the psalmist begs God to transform his life, to breathe new life back into his soul. The psalmist does not want his obedience to be mechanical; he asks for a renewed spirit. The basis of his plea is God’s covenantal love and His just nature.

119:160 The word **judgments** is derived from the Hebrew word meaning “to judge.” God has given decisions that are like the calls of a referee or the legal rulings of a judge; He has rendered judgments on what is acceptable behavior and what actions will receive His blessing. God is the Judge over all, and His decisions establish true justice.

119:169–176 come before: This term usually refers to the presentation of an offering before God. The only offering the psalmist can present here is his **cry** for help. Although he has **chosen** the Law of God to live by, he has not always kept it. Therefore, the psalmist

ends his lengthy poem with a confession and a plea for salvation. **Psalm 120** is the first of a group of psalms called the Songs of Ascent (Ps. 120–134). This group of hymns was likely used by pilgrims making their way to Jerusalem to worship the Lord during the three annual national feasts—Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles (Lev. 23). As pilgrim families made the arduous journey to the holy city for festive worship, they would use these psalms as encouragement along the way. It is also possible that once they arrived in Jerusalem, they would sing these songs anew as they drew near the temple, reenacting their journey and affirming God’s blessing on their path. Ps. 120, a psalm of lament, focuses on the lies of the wicked that affect the righteous. The structure of the psalm is: (1) a report of deliverance and a prayer for help (vv. 1, 2); (2) a taunt of the adversary who attacks with lies (vv. 3, 4); (3) a lament concerning life in a hostile environment (vv. 5–7).

Blessings and Benefits of Following God's Law	
Blessings and Benefits	Verses in Psalm 119
• Peace	v. 165
• Power to resist sin	vv. 3, 11, 101, 165
• Joy	vv. 16, 24, 35, 47, 77, 92, 174
• Understanding	vv. 99, 125, 130, 169
• Strength	v. 28
• Freedom	v. 45
• Hope	vv. 114, 147
• Comfort in suffering	vv. 50, 52
• No shame	vv. 6, 31, 46, 80
• Reverence for God	vv. 120, 161
• A thankful heart	v. 62
• A worshipful heart	vv. 164, 171, 175
• A clean life	vv. 9, 80, 104, 112, 140, 158, 163
• Personal revival	vv. 25, 37, 40, 88, 107, 149, 154, 159

- 2 Deliver my soul, O LORD, from lying lips
And from a deceitful tongue.
- 3 What shall be given to you,
Or what shall be done to you,
You false tongue?
- 4 Sharp arrows of the ¹warrior,
With coals of the broom tree!
- 5 Woe is me, that I dwell in ^bMeshech,
^cThat I dwell among the tents of Kedar!
- 6 My soul has dwelt too long
With one who hates peace.
- 7 I am for peace;
But when I speak, they are for war.

4 ¹ mighty one
5 ^b Gen. 10:2; 1 Chr. 1:5; Ezek. 27:13; 38:2, 3; 39:1 ^c Gen. 25:13; Is. 21:16; 60:7; Jer. 2:10; 49:28; Ezek. 27:21

PSALM 121

1 ^a [Jer. 3:23]
2 ^b [Ps. 124:8]
3 ^c 1 Sam. 2:9; Prov. 3:23, 26 ^d [Ps. 127:1; Prov. 24:12]; Is. 27:3 ¹ slip
5 ^e Is. 25:4 ^f Ps. 16:8 ² protector
6 ^g Ps. 91:5; Is. 49:10; Jon. 4:8; Rev. 7:16

PSALM 121

God the Help of Those Who Seek Him

A Song of Ascents.

- I ^a will lift up my eyes to the hills—
From whence comes my help?
- 2 ^b My help comes from the LORD,
Who made heaven and earth.
- 3 ^c He will not allow your foot to ¹be moved;
^d He who keeps you will not slumber.
- 4 Behold, He who keeps Israel
Shall neither slumber nor sleep.
- 5 The LORD is your ²keeper;
The LORD is ^eyour shade ^fat your right hand.
- 6 ^g The sun shall not strike you by day,
Nor the moon by night.
- 7 The LORD shall ³preserve you from all evil;
He shall ^hpreserve your soul.
- 8 The LORD shall ⁱpreserve ^d your going out and your coming in
From this time forth, and even forevermore.

PSALM 122

The Joy of Going to the House of the LORD

A Song of Ascents. Of David.

- I was glad when they said to me,
^a “Let us go into the house of the LORD.”

7 ^h Ps. 41:2 ³ keep 8 ⁱ Deut. 28:6; [Prov. 2:8; 3:6] ⁴ keep
PSALM 122 1 ^a [Is. 2:3; Mic. 4:2]; Zech. 8:21

120:2, 3 lying lips: In the context of these psalms, the lying lips belong to those who assault the believers for their trust in the Lord (40:4). **You false tongue:** As in Ps. 12, the poet is distraught at the seeming power of the words of the wicked.

120:5–7 This section of the psalm reveals the intensity of the psalmist's distress—**woe is me**. His environment was hostile even to his faith. **Meshech** and **Kedar** are random examples of the pagan peoples among whom the psalmist had to live. **I am for peace:** This may have set the stage for believers to make their pilgrimage to Jerusalem. In Zion they would be among the people of God. In Jerusalem they would hear the words of truth. In the temple they could pray for the peace of God (122:6; 125:5; 128:6).

Psalm 121, a psalm of trust (Ps. 23), is the second song of ascent. Ps. 120 sets the stage for the Israelites' journey to the Holy City; this poem is a song “for the road.” The psalm may also have been designed for antiphonal response, like Ps. 118; 124; 129; 134; 135; 136. The structure of the poem is: (1) an affirmation that help is from God (vv. 1, 2); (2) a word of praise to God, who does not slumber (vv. 3, 4); (3) a word of praise to God who keeps His people (vv. 5, 6); (4) an affirmation that God will protect His people during their journeys (vv. 7, 8).

121:1, 2 The words **lift up my eyes** dramatically picture a traveler approaching the city of Jerusalem. On first sight of the city walls and the temple, the singer asks rhetorically where help is to

be found. The answer is the strong affirmation: **My help comes from the LORD**.

121:3–6 He will not allow: It is possible that several sections of this brief poem were recited back and forth by small groups of pilgrims; there is an antiphonal quality to these verses (also Ps. 124). **will not slumber:** On the long journey to Jerusalem the people would have to stop and sleep, yet they would still be cared for by God. The language of confidence in this psalm indicates that it is about the psalmist's trust in the living Lord, his Protector. The phrase **nor the moon** indicates that at no time is God “off duty.” The Keeper of Israel is always present.

121:8 and even forevermore: In what appears to be an antiphonal response to the words of vv. 6, 7, the poem concludes with a renewed affirmation of God's ongoing protection in this life and the life to come (23:6).

Psalm 122, a psalm of Zion, is the third song of ascent. This poem describes the joy of the pilgrim on arriving at Jerusalem to worship God. This is one of four songs of ascent attributed to David (also Ps. 124; 131; 133). The structure of the poem is as follows: (1) a description of the pilgrim's joy in coming to Jerusalem (vv. 1, 2); (2) a description of the beauty of Jerusalem (vv. 3–5); (3) a prayer for the peace of Jerusalem (vv. 6–9).

122:1 I was glad: The Hebrew verb for laughter and delight is used to describe the attitude of the pilgrim who arrives in Jeru-

- 2 Our feet have been standing
Within your gates, O Jerusalem!
- 3 Jerusalem is built
As a city that is ^bcompact
together,
- 4 ^cWhere the tribes go up,
The tribes of the LORD,
¹To ^dthe Testimony of Israel,
To give thanks to the name of the
LORD.
- 5 ^eFor thrones are set there for
judgment,
The thrones of the house of David.
- 6 ^fPray for the peace of Jerusalem:
“May they prosper who love you.
- 7 Peace be within your walls,
Prosperity within your palaces.”
- 8 For the sake of my brethren and
companions,
I will now say, “Peace ^{be} within
you.”
- 9 Because of the house of the LORD our
God
I will ^gseek your good.

PSALM 123

Prayer for Relief from Contempt

A Song of Ascents.

Unto You ^aI lift up my eyes,
O You ^bwho dwell in the heavens.

3 ^p 2 Sam. 5:9
4 ^c Ex. 23:17; Deut.
16:16 ^d Ex. 16:34
¹ Or *As a testimony*
to
5 ^e Deut. 17:8;
2 Chr. 19:8
6 ^f Ps. 51:18
9 ^g Neh. 2:10; Esth.
10:3

PSALM 123

1 ^a Ps. 121:1; 141:8
^b Ps. 2:4; 11:4; 115:3

2 ^c Ps. 25:15

PSALM 124

1 ^a Ps. 118:6; [Rom.
8:31] ^b Ps. 129:1
3 ^c Num. 16:30; Ps.
56:1, 2; 57:3; Prov.
1:12
4 ¹ *swept over*

- 2 Behold, as the eyes of servants *look* to
the hand of their masters,
As the eyes of a maid to the hand of
her mistress,
^cSo our eyes *look* to the LORD our God,
Until He has mercy on us.
- 3 Have mercy on us, O LORD, have
mercy on us!
For we are exceedingly filled with
contempt.
- 4 Our soul is exceedingly filled
With the scorn of those who are at
ease,
With the contempt of the proud.

PSALM 124

The LORD the Defense of His People

A Song of Ascents. Of David.

- “I**f it had not been the LORD who was
on our ^aside,”
^bLet Israel now say—
2 “If it had not been the LORD who was
on our side,
When men rose up against us,
3 Then they would have ^cswallowed us
alive,
When their wrath was kindled
against us;
4 Then the waters would have
overwhelmed us,
The stream would have ¹gone over
our soul;

salem to worship the Lord. The joy of the pilgrim in this psalm contrasts strongly with the sorrow of those who were not able to come to worship God, because of personal (42:1–3) or national exile (137:1–3).

122:3 The visitor is overwhelmed not just by the buildings of **Jerusalem**, but by the fact that the city was the place for the worship of God. **Where the tribes go up:** This refers to the three annual feasts of ancient Israel (Lev. 23), as well as to any time that an individual or family needed to worship the Lord in the Holy City.

122:4 The Testimony of Israel may refer to the ark of the covenant (Ex. 16:34). **To give thanks** means “to make a public declaration” or “to give public acknowledgment” (105:1). The people of God would praise God for His goodness in their own lives. Their vocal praises would accompany their offerings of animals, grain, wine, and oil.

122:5 thrones: Jerusalem was not only the central place for worship, it was also the site where civil judgments and decisions were made. Religious and civil issues were closely intertwined in the Law of God.

122:6–9 peace of Jerusalem: In the process of praying for the good of the city, the people came under God’s blessing. It is God’s desire for the city to have peace (125:5; 128:6). True peace will only come when the Prince of Peace returns to establish His rule (Ps. 98).

Because of the house: The determination of the pilgrim to seek the good of Jerusalem was based on the fact that the site was the central location for the worship of the Lord and the place God had chosen for Himself (1 Kin. 11:36).

Psalm 123, an individual psalm of lament, is the fourth song of ascent. This brief poem has two sections, as follows: (1) an affirmation that the people’s eyes are fixed on the Lord (vv. 1, 2); (2) a petition for the Lord to direct His attention to His people (vv. 3, 4).

123:1, 2 who dwell in the heavens: The temple was considered

God’s dwelling place (132:5, 13, 14); yet the Israelites also knew that the One who made the heavens did not live in buildings made by hands (113:4–6). **As the eyes:** True servants fix their eyes on their masters; similarly, our eyes should be fixed on God. The more we look to the Lord, the more we become like Him (2 Cor. 3:18). Not being distracted by the other things of this life causes us to win in the race of life (Heb. 12:1, 2).

123:3 The people who prayed for God’s **mercy** had to endure the **contempt** of their neighbors. Perhaps they were being mocked for their resolute faith in God at a time when it seemed that God was not answering their prayers.

Psalm 124, a psalm of declarative praise, is one of four songs of ascent attributed to David (see also Ps. 122; 131; 133). This psalm

mercy

(Heb. *chanan*) (102:14; 123:2; Ex. 33:19; Is. 26:10) Strong’s #2603

This term signifies an act of graciousness to someone in need, from a person of superior rank or circumstance. The writers of wisdom literature frequently commend showing mercy to the needy (112:5; Prov. 14:21, 31; 28:8). But most of the references to *mercy* in the Bible have to do with the direct agent of mercy. The Scripture records God’s mercy being sought on numerous occasions, often using the phrase familiar from the psalms of lament, “Have mercy on me” (4:1; 6:2; 25:16; 51:1; 86:16). God shows His graciousness in many ways, including the prevention of harm, the bestowal of family and possessions, and the communication of divine law (119:29, 124; Gen. 33:5, 11; 2 Kin. 13:23).

- 5 Then the swollen waters
Would have ²gone over our soul.”
- 6 Blessed *be* the LORD,
Who has not given us *as* prey to their
teeth.
- 7 ^dOur soul has escaped ^eas a bird from
the snare of the ³fowlers;
The snare is broken, and we have
escaped.
- 8 ^fOur help *is* in the name of the LORD,
^gWho made heaven and earth.

PSALM 125

The LORD the Strength of His People

A Song of Ascents.

- T**hose who trust in the LORD
Are like Mount Zion,
Which cannot be moved, *but* abides
forever.
- 2 As the mountains surround
Jerusalem,
So the LORD surrounds His people
From this time forth and forever.
- 3 For ^athe scepter of wickedness shall
not rest
On the land allotted to the righteous,
Lest the righteous reach out their
hands to iniquity.

5 ² swept over
7 ^d Ps. 91:3 ^e Prov.
6:5; Hos. 9:8
³ Persons who
catch birds in a trap
or snare
8 ^f [Ps. 121:2] ^g Gen.
1:1; Ps. 134:3

PSALM 125

3 ^a Prov. 22:8;
Is. 14:5

5 ^b Prov. 2:15; Is.
59:8 ^c Ps. 128:6;
[Gal. 6:16]

PSALM 126

1 ^a Ps. 85:1; Jer.
29:14; Hos. 6:11;
Joel 3:1 ^b Acts
12:9 ^c Those of the
captivity
2 ^c Job 8:21
^d Gentiles

- 4 Do good, O LORD, to *those who are*
good,
And to *those who are* upright in their
hearts.
- 5 As for such as turn aside to their
^bcrooked ways,
The LORD shall lead them away
With the workers of iniquity.
- ^cPeace *be* upon Israel!

PSALM 126

A Joyful Return to Zion

A Song of Ascents.

- W**hen ^athe LORD brought back ¹the
captivity of Zion,
^bWe were like those who dream.
- 2 Then ^cour mouth was filled with
laughter,
And our tongue with singing.
Then they said among the ²nations,
“The LORD has done great things for
them.”
- 3 The LORD has done great things
for us,
And we are glad.
- 4 Bring back our captivity, O LORD,
As the streams in the South.

was likely designed to be read aloud as an antiphonal response (see also 118:1–4; compare Ps. 121; 129; 134; 135; 136). The structure of the poem is: (1) a call for the people to confess God’s deliverance (vv. 1–5); (2) a blessing on the Lord for His deliverance (vv. 6–8).

124:1, 2 The LORD who was on our side amplifies the meaning of the divine name of God (Ex. 3:14, 15). The wording of the Hebrew text is even more dramatic: “The LORD was for us.” The priests may have spoken the words **let Israel now say** as encouragement for the people to rehearse aloud their national experience (Ps. 129).

124:3 swallowed us alive: The poet describes his enemies first as ravenous beasts, then as raging waters; but God has defeated them all. As in other psalms, the reference to raging **waters** has a double source—the story of creation and the Canaanite myths concerning evil gods who were believed to be water deities (Ps. 93).

124:6, 7 Blessed be the LORD: Blessing God means identifying Him as the source of our blessing (103:2). **as prey:** The animal imagery of the enemies (v. 3) continues in this praise of God. The image of a helpless **bird** that has escaped a trap is common in the Psalms (111:1–3).

124:8 The words who made heaven and earth are similar to the words in 121:2; 134:3. These liturgical phrases were recited by the worshiping community during their journey to Jerusalem and when they arrived for corporate worship.

Psalm 125, a psalm of trust (Ps. 23), is also a song of Zion. This anonymous poem is the sixth song of ascent. The structure of the poem is as follows: (1) a celebration of God’s protection of the righteous (vv. 1, 2); (2) a declaration that the power of the wicked cannot endure (v. 3); (3) a prayer for the upright (v. 4); (4) a curse on the wicked and a call for the peace of Israel (v. 5).

125:1, 2 As in the other songs of Zion (Ps. 48), there is a deep belief in the invincibility of the city of Jerusalem because of the Lord’s choice of **Mount Zion** (1 Kin. 11:36). Likewise, the psalmist proclaims that those who trust in the Lord will endure. **the mountains surround Jerusalem:** Jerusalem is built on one of seven mountain

peaks in the region. The mountains provide some protection for the city, since any invading army would have to march through arduous and dangerous mountain paths. Yet the city’s true protection comes from the Lord.

125:3 The scepter of wickedness is a symbol of the power of evil. This verse recalls the Lord’s promise that the gates of hell will not prevail against His church (Matt. 16:18). In this way, God in His mercy protects His people from participation in evil.

125:5 The phrase **workers of iniquity** is often found in the wisdom psalms (14:4); the Lord will oppose those who do evil. **Peace:** The psalm concludes with a prayer for God’s peace to rest on His people. The same prayer appears at the close of Ps. 128; it may be a shortened version of the priestly benediction recorded in Num. 6:24, 25.

Psalm 126, a song of Zion, is the seventh song of ascent. The distinctive element of this poem is that it comes from the time of the restoration of Jerusalem following the Babylonian captivity (compare Ps. 137). The mood of this psalm is one of sweet joy following the sorrows of long separation. The structure of the poem is: (1) a description of the return from captivity (vv. 1–3); (2) a prayer for God to complete the process of return (v. 4); (3) a comparison of the return from captivity to a long-delayed harvest (vv. 5, 6).

126:1 The return from Babylonian **captivity** had been anticipated for so long that it seemed like a dream to the returnees. Some of the people had waited an entire lifetime. The joy of the people could not be contained; their praise to God was unstoppable. The mood of this section is one of laughter and joy, of rejoicing in God’s salvation (Is. 12).

126:4 The people who returned were a small percentage of those who had been exiled. **Bring back** is the beginning of the prayer that God would complete the restoration of His people to their land. Ultimately, this is a prayer for the coming of Jesus, who will complete God’s work among His people.

- 5 ^dThose who sow in tears
Shall reap in joy.
6 He who continually goes ³forth
weeping,
Bearing ⁴seed for sowing,
Shall doubtless come again ⁵with
^erejoicing,
Bringing his sheaves *with him*.

PSALM 127

Laboring and Prospering with the LORD

A Song of Ascents. Of Solomon.

- U**nless the LORD builds the house,
They labor in vain who build it;
Unless ^athe LORD guards the city,
The watchman stays awake in vain.
2 *It is vain for you to rise up early,
To sit up late,
To ^beat the bread of sorrows;
For so He gives His beloved sleep.*
3 Behold, ^cchildren *are* a heritage from
the LORD,
^dThe fruit of the womb *is* a ^ereward.
4 Like arrows in the hand of a warrior,
So are the children of one's youth.
5 ^fHappy *is* the man who has his quiver
full of them;

5 ^d Is. 35:10; 51:11;
61:7; Jer. 31:9; [Gal.
6:9]
6 ^e Is. 61:3 ³ to and
fro ⁴ Lit. a bag of
seed for sowing
⁵ with shouts of joy

PSALM 127

1 ^a [Ps. 121:3-5]
2 ^b [Gen. 3:17, 19]
3 ^c [Gen. 33:5; Josh.
24:3, 4; Ps. 113:9]
^d Deut. 7:13; 28:4; Is.
13:18 ^e [Ps. 113:9]
5 ^f Ps. 128:2, 3

^g Job 5:4; Prov.
27:11

PSALM 128

1 ^a Ps. 119:1
2 ^b Is. 3:10 ^c Deut.
4:40 ¹ Fruit of the
labor
3 ^d Ezek. 19:10 ^e Ps.
127:3-5 ^f Ps. 52:8;
144:12
5 ^g Ps. 134:3
6 ^h Gen. 48:11;
50:23; Job 42:16; Ps.
103:17; [Prov. 17:6]
ⁱ Ps. 125:5

- ^gThey shall not be ashamed,
But shall speak with their enemies in
the gate.

PSALM 128

Blessings of Those Who Fear the LORD

A Song of Ascents.

- B**lessed ^ais every one who fears the
LORD,
Who walks in His ways.
2 ^bWhen you eat the ¹labor of your hands,
You *shall be* happy, and *it shall be*
^cwell with you.
3 Your wife *shall be* ^dlike a fruitful vine
In the very heart of your house,
Your ^echildren ^flike olive plants
All around your table.
4 Behold, thus shall the man be blessed
Who fears the LORD.
5 ^gThe LORD bless you out of Zion,
And may you see the good of
Jerusalem
All the days of your life.
6 Yes, may you ^hsee your children's
children.
ⁱPeace *be* upon Israel!

126:5 The people of Judah had gone to Babylon in **tears**. Yet their sorrow reaped tremendous rewards; the Lord came to the rescue of His humbled people (34:18; Is. 66:2; Matt. 5:4). Upon their return to Jerusalem and Judah, they were reaping a harvest of rejoicing. **Psalm 127**, a wisdom psalm and the eighth song of ascent, is one of only two psalms attributed to Solomon (the other is Ps. 72). The structure of the poem is: (1) an exhortation about the vanity of an endeavor in which the Lord is not active (vv. 1, 2); (2) a celebration of the value of an endeavor in which the Lord is glorified (vv. 3–5). **127:1, 2** With the words **unless the Lord builds**, the psalmist asserts that life lived apart from God is not worth living, a view that this psalm shares with the Book of Ecclesiastes. Even building a house is useless if the Lord is not in the process. The phrase **the bread of sorrows** captures the essence of those removed from a sense of the Lord in their lives. The food that should give them strength for life and a zest for living only maintains them in their miserable state.

127:3–5 children are a heritage: Children are God's gifts (128:3). **Like arrows:** In ancient times, having many children was regarded as a symbol of strength. This was particularly true in an agricultural economy, since the extra hands of children increased the productivity of the farmer. A full **quiver** was a mark of God's blessing. The blessing of a home in ancient times gave a person a measure of pride in the community. **The gate** was the place where the elders of the city met and where citizens would convene (Ruth 4:1–12).

Psalm 128, a wisdom psalm, is also a psalm of Zion. Like Ps. 127, this poem addresses God's blessings in the home and family. The feasts of ancient Israel were family affairs. As families made their way to the holy city for the annual festivals, they would encounter other families and mutually celebrate the goodness of God in their lives. Psalm 128 is the ninth song of ascent. The structure of the poem is as follows: (1) a blessing on the righteous (v. 1); (2) a description of the blessing (vv. 2–4); (3) a prayer for the blessing (v. 5); (3) a blessing on the community (v. 6).

128:1 The word **blessed** describes the happiness of those who

trust in the Lord and do His will (127:5). **who fears the Lord:** The fear of God is an attitude of respect, a response of reverence and wonder. It is the only appropriate response to our Creator and Redeemer.

128:2, 3 labor of your hands: There is a reward in work and a satisfaction in labor that is a blessing of God (Eccl. 3:9–13). **Your wife:** This psalm focuses on the godly man in ancient Israel. Bearing children was a mark of God's blessing on his wife. His children were regarded as precious provisions, like **olive plants**, in his home (127:3–5). In that time more children meant more people who could work in the fields and increase the general welfare of the family.

128:5, 6 The Lord bless you: This is the psalmist's prayer for the man who desires for his own family the blessings described in the psalm. **children's children:** This priestly prayer of blessing includes a desire for longevity and for happy posterity in the land. Only when God grants His **peace** on His people will the ideal conditions of family life be realized. Therefore, whoever prays for the blessing of God on a family also prays for the blessing of God's peace on the community as a whole (122:6–9; 125:5).

happy

(Heb. 'esher) (84:12; 127:5; 144:15; Eccl. 10:17) Strong's #835

This Hebrew word can also mean "blessed" or "fortunate." As in 1:1, it is often used in congratulatory exclamation. The characteristic biblical beatitude concerns a person who trusts in the Lord and lives by His revelation (1:1, 2; 34:8; Prov. 16:20). The word is often associated with those who have found wisdom or express benevolence; thus over half of its occurrences are in Psalms, with several more in Proverbs (41:1; Prov. 3:13, 18; 14:21). Jesus begins the Sermon on the Mount with a list of beatitudes that conform to the OT pattern (see Matt. 5:3–12).

PSALM 129

Song of Victory over Zion's Enemies

A Song of Ascents.

“Many a time they have
^aafflicted ¹me from ^bmy
youth,”
^cLet Israel now say—
²“Many a time they have afflicted me
from my youth;
Yet they have not prevailed
against me.
³The plowers plowed on my back;
They made their furrows long.”
⁴The LORD *is* righteous;
He has cut in pieces the cords of the
wicked.
⁵Let all those who hate Zion
Be put to shame and turned
back.
⁶Let them be as the ^dgrass on the
housetops,
Which withers before it
grows up,
⁷With which the reaper does not fill
his hand,
Nor he who binds sheaves, his
²arms.
⁸Neither let those who pass by them
say,
^e“The blessing of the LORD *be* upon
you;
We bless you in the name of the
LORD!”

PSALM 129

1 ^a [Jer. 1:19; 15:20];
Matt. 16:18; 2 Cor.
4:8, 9 ^b Ezek. 23:3;
Hos. 2:15 ^c Ps. 124:1
¹ persecuted
6 ^d Ps. 37:2
7 ² *armsful*, lit.
bosom
8 ^e Ruth 2:4

PSALM 130

1 ^a Lam. 3:55
3 ^b [Ps. 143:2]
^c [Nah. 1:6; Mal.
3:2]; Rev. 6:17 ¹ take
note of
4 ^d [Ex. 34:7; Neh.
9:17; Ps. 86:5; Is.
55:7; Dan. 9:9]
^e [1 Kin. 8:39, 40;
Jer. 33:8, 9]
5 ^f [Ps. 27:14] ^g Ps.
119:81
6 ^h Ps. 119:147
7 ⁱ Ps. 131:3 / [Ps.
86:5, 15; Is. 55:7]
8 ^k [Ps. 103:3, 4];
Luke 1:68; Titus
2:14

PSALM 130

Waiting for the Redemption of the LORD

A Song of Ascents.

Out ^aof the depths I have cried to
You, O LORD;
²Lord, hear my voice!
Let Your ears be attentive
To the voice of my
supplications.
³^bIf You, LORD, should ¹mark
iniquities,
O Lord, who could ^cstand?
⁴But *there is* ^dforgiveness with
You,
That ^eYou may be feared.
⁵^fI wait for the LORD, my soul
waits,
And ^gin His word I do hope.
⁶^hMy soul *waits* for the Lord
More than those who watch for the
morning—
Yes, *more than* those who watch for
the morning.
⁷ⁱO Israel, hope in the LORD;
For ^jwith the LORD *there is*
mercy,
And with Him *is* abundant
redemption.
⁸And ^kHe shall redeem Israel
From all his iniquities.

Psalm 129, a psalm of trust (Ps. 23), has its roots in the psalms of lament, for those psalms contain a section proclaiming trust in the Lord. The psalm has an antiphonal quality, calling for response and counter-response (compare 118:1–4; 124:1–5). This is the tenth song of ascent. Its structure is as follows: (1) a rehearsal of the afflictions of Israel (vv. 1–3); (2) an affirmation of the victory of God (v. 4); (3) a condemnation of the wicked who have afflicted Israel (vv. 5–8).

129:1–4 Many a time: The psalm begins with a liturgy of suffering, as the people of God acknowledge that throughout their history in the land they have been under constant assault by various peoples. With the words **let Israel now say**, the priest calls for the people to rehearse their history aloud (124:1). **The plowers plowed:** This imagery of the brutal treatment they suffered was especially vivid in an agrarian setting. Even in the midst of such cruel circumstances, the Lord was **righteous**. He remained faithful to His promises to His people and He fought for them.

129:5, 6 those who hate Zion: This begins the imprecation or cursing of the foes of Jerusalem. **Shame** is the intended end of the wicked (35:26). This is not just a desire for their embarrassment but for complete humiliation before the Lord. **as the grass on the housetops:** Sod was sometimes used on the roofs of houses. After a spring rain, there might be grass growing on the housetop. But this was not grass that flourished; it soon withered under the summer heat. The curse here is strong: May the enemies wither as quickly as rooftop grass.

Psalm 130 is a penitential psalm. Its placement following a psalm of imprecation (Ps. 129) is fitting. After all, a person might take such joy in the destruction of the wicked that he or she no longer would consider his or her own heart before the Lord. This psalm is the

eleventh song of ascent. The structure is as follows: (1) a call for God's mercy (vv. 1, 2); (2) a recognition of God's forgiveness (vv. 3, 4); (3) an expectation of God's forgiveness (v. 5, 6); (4) a call for God's mercy on all (vv. 7, 8).

130:1 The poet shouts aloud to God from **the depths** of his own despair (Ps. 32; 51). In this case it was not enemies who were plowing his back (129:3), but his own sense of sin that was eating at the depths of his soul.

130:3, 4 God does not **mark** or keep count of our sins. Through the sacrificial system and ultimately in the provision of Jesus Christ, God dismissed His people's sins altogether (Mic. 7:19); He does not keep track—as an accountant would—of their sins. The grace of God in His provision for **forgiveness** is not to be taken lightly (Rom. 6:1, 2). The truly forgiven sinner realizes the magnitude of God's grace, remains grateful for Jesus' sacrifice for sins, and lives in the *fear* or awe of God (Ps. 128).

130:5, 6 I wait . . . I do hope: In these two verses, the poet repeats five times that his hope is in the Lord. This was a confident expectation in the God who is always faithful to His promises.

130:7, 8 The psalm moves from the experience of an individual to that of the community. After proclaiming his own hope, the psalmist exhorts the community of **Israel to hope in the LORD**. God is not only capable of delivering the individual, He also delivers the community of believers who hope in Him (131:3). **He shall redeem:** In the OT, the redemption of God's people refers to God's deliverance of His people from Egypt and from all other national foes, as well as to God's forgiveness of sins through the sacrificial system. The final redemption of all God's people came only in the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ (Gal. 3:13).

PSALM 131

Simple Trust in the LORD

A Song of Ascents. Of David.

LORD, my heart is not ¹haughty,
Nor my eyes ²lofty.
^aNeither do I ³concern myself with
great matters,
Nor with things too ⁴profound
for me.

² Surely I have calmed and quieted my
soul,
^bLike a weaned child with his mother;
Like a weaned child *is* my soul
within me.

³ ^cO Israel, hope in the LORD
From this time forth and forever.

PSALM 132

The Eternal Dwelling of God in Zion

A Song of Ascents.

LORD, remember David
And all his afflictions;
² How he swore to the LORD,
^aAnd vowed to ^bthe Mighty One of
Jacob:

PSALM 131

¹ ^a Jer. 45:5; [Rom.
12:16] ¹ Proud
² Arrogant ³ Lit.
walk in ⁴ difficult
² ^b [Matt. 18:3;
1 Cor. 14:20]
³ ^c [Ps. 130:7]

PSALM 132

² ^a Ps. 65:1 ^b Gen.
49:24; [Is. 49:26;
60:16]

⁴ ^c Prov. 6:4
⁵ ^d 1 Kin. 8:17; 1 Chr.
22:7; Ps. 26:8; Acts
7:46
⁶ ^e 1 Sam. 17:12
^f 1 Sam. 7:1 ^g 1 Chr.
13:5 ¹ Heb. *Jaar*, lit.
Woods
⁷ ^h Ps. 5:7; 99:5
⁸ ⁱ Num. 10:35 / Ps.
78:61
⁹ ^j Job 29:14
¹⁰ ^k Commissioned
One, Heb. *Messiah*
¹¹ ^l [Ps. 89:3, 4, 35;
110:4] ^m 2 Sam.
7:12; [1 Kin. 8:25;
2 Chr. 6:16; Luke
1:69; Acts 2:30]
³ ⁿ offspring

³ “Surely I will not go into the chamber
of my house,
Or go up to the comfort of my bed;
⁴ I will ^enot give sleep to my eyes
Or slumber to my eyelids,
⁵ Until I ^dfind a place for the LORD,
A dwelling place for the Mighty One
of Jacob.”

⁶ Behold, we heard of it ^ein
Ephrathah;
^fWe found it ^gin the fields of ¹the
woods.
⁷ Let us go into His tabernacle;
^hLet us worship at His footstool.
⁸ ⁱArise, O LORD, to Your resting
place,
You and ^jthe ark of Your strength.
⁹ Let Your priests ^kbe clothed with
righteousness,
And let Your saints shout for joy.

¹⁰ For Your servant David’s sake,
Do not turn away the face of Your
²Anointed.

¹¹ ^lThe LORD has sworn *in* truth to
David;
He will not turn from it:
“I will set upon your throne ^mthe
³fruit of your body.”

Psalm 131, a psalm of trust, is one of four songs of ascent attributed to David (also Ps. 122; 124; 133). The structure of the poem is as follows: (1) a statement of humility (v. 1); (2) a portrait of trust (v. 2); (3) a call for hope (v. 3).

131:1 my heart is not haughty: David presents himself with genuine humility, a delicate balance between self-abasement and arrogant pride. From the life of David we know that he was not always able to keep this balance. But it was his desire, and at times—by God’s grace—a reality in his life.

131:2, 3 Like a weaned child: The image is that of a child who is no longer unsettled and discontented, but one who is at peace and trusting in his mother, who is there to comfort and to meet his needs. The words **hope in the LORD** recall 130:7.

Psalm 132, a royal psalm, is the thirteenth song of ascent. Like Ps. 89, this poem reflects in poetry God’s covenant with David (2 Sam. 7), in which He promised David a royal house—a promise that would be fulfilled in the coming of the great Savior King. It is possible that this psalm was written late in Israel’s history, after the exile in Babylon. This would explain the people’s call for God to remember His covenant with David. With no king on the royal throne of David, the people had great reason to call upon God to remember His promise. Psalm 132 is the longest of the songs of ascent and is sometimes classified as a messianic psalm. Its structure is as follows: (1) a call for God to remember His covenant with David (vv. 1–5); (2) the expectation of the fulfillment of the promise (vv. 6–9); (3) a prayer for God’s kingdom to come (v. 10); (4) a recitation of the promise yet to be fulfilled (vv. 11, 12); (5) an elaboration of God’s covenant with David (vv. 13–18).

132:1 If this psalm was written during the postexilic period, the words **remember David** have a significant meaning. During the years between the return of the people to Jerusalem and the birth of Jesus, there would have been a growing desire on the part of godly people for the Lord to restore David’s kingdom in fulfillment of the Lord’s promise.

132:2 The Mighty One of Jacob is a rare designation for God. Identical or similar expressions are found elsewhere in the Bible

only in Gen. 49:24 and the Book of Isaiah (Is. 1:24; 49:26; 60:16). **a place:** The poet recalls David’s desire to build a temple for the Lord (2 Sam. 7:1, 2).

132:6–8 Ephrathah refers to the region of Bethlehem (Ruth 1:2). The temple in Jerusalem was regarded as the **footstool** of God, whose dwelling is in heaven (99:5). In the context of this psalm, the call **arise, O LORD** is a prayer for God to fulfill His covenant promise to place a great king on David’s throne (v. 1).

132:10 Do not turn away: Based on God’s promise to David (2 Sam. 7), the psalmist calls for God to fulfill His word to send His Anointed. This is a clarion call for the coming of the Savior King, Jesus.

132:11, 12 The words **the LORD has sworn** are a poetic recasting of the central words of the Davidic covenant in 2 Sam. 7:8–16 (see also 89:3, 4, 26–29). The ultimate fulfillment of these words is in Jesus Christ, the Son of David (Luke 1:32, 33; Acts 2:30). **your sons:** The

shout for joy

(Heb. *ranan*) (51:14; 132:9; Is. 35:6) Strong’s #7442

This Hebrew word means “to utter loudly,” with the vast majority of references being to shouts of joy or hearty, joyful singing (35:27; 59:16; 71:23). Twice the term is used of the summons of wisdom and once for the boisterous clamoring of a drunk (78:65; Prov. 1:20; 8:3). About half of its occurrences are in Psalms and about one-fourth are in Isaiah. This word is associated with many terms for joy in the OT (32:11; Is. 49:13; Zech. 2:10). It is used to summon the heavens, the Gentiles, and most frequently the people of God—collectively and individually—to rejoice in God’s blessings (33:11; Deut. 32:43; Is. 44:23; Zech. 2:10). Our loud rejoicing in the Lord is based on His greatness and His goodness to us (5:11; 145:7; Lev. 9:24; Is. 12:6).

12 If your sons will keep My covenant
And My testimony which I shall teach them,
Their sons also shall sit upon your throne forevermore.”

13ⁿ For the LORD has chosen Zion;
He has desired *it* for His ⁴dwelling place:

14^a “This ^o is My resting place forever;
Here I will dwell, for I have desired it.

15^p I will abundantly bless her ⁵provision;
I will satisfy her poor with bread.

16^q I will also clothe her priests with salvation,
^r And her saints shall shout aloud for joy.

17^s There I will make the ⁶horn of David grow;
^t I will prepare a lamp for My ⁷Anointed.

18 His enemies I will ^uclothe with shame,
But upon Himself His crown shall flourish.”

PSALM 133

Blessed Unity of the People of God

A Song of Ascents. Of David.

Behold, how good and how pleasant *it is*
For ^abrethren to dwell together in unity!

13 ^a [Ps. 48:1, 2]
⁴ home
14 ^o Ps. 68:16; Matt. 23:21
15 ^p Ps. 147:14
⁵ supply of food
16 ^q 2 Chr. 6:41; Ps. 132:9; 149:4
^r 1 Sam. 4:5; Hos. 11:12
17 ^s Ezek. 29:21; Luke 1:69 ^t 1 Kin. 11:36; 15:4; 2 Kin. 8:19; 2 Chr. 21:7; Ps. 18:28
⁶ Government
⁷ Heb. *Messiah*
18 ^u Job 8:22; Ps. 35:26

PSALM 133

1 ^a Gen. 13:8; Heb. 13:1

3 ^b Deut. 4:48 ^c Lev. 25:21; Deut. 28:8; Ps. 42:8

PSALM 134

2 ^a [1 Tim. 2:8]

PSALM 135

1 ^a Ps. 113:1

2 *It is* like the precious oil upon the head,
Running down on the beard,
The beard of Aaron,
Running down on the edge of his garments.

3 *It is* like the dew of ^bHermon,
Descending upon the mountains of Zion;
For ^cthere the LORD commanded the blessing—
Life forevermore.

PSALM 134

Praising the LORD in His House at Night

A Song of Ascents.

Behold, bless the LORD,
All *you* servants of the LORD,
Who by night stand in the house of the LORD!

2 ^a Lift up your hands *in* the sanctuary,
And bless the LORD.

3 The LORD who made heaven and earth
Bless you from Zion!

PSALM 135

Praise to God in Creation and Redemption

Praise the LORD!
Praise the name of the LORD;
^a Praise *Him*, O you servants of the LORD!

promise to David was specific in terms of God's intended blessings on faithful sons, His chastening of wayward sons, and His ultimate fulfillment in the anticipated coming Son.

132:13 God's choice of the Davidic line was also a choice of **Zion** as His dwelling place.

132:17 This verse celebrates God's covenant to send His **Anointed One** (v. 10). The words **horn** and **lamp** speak of the Messiah's authority and righteousness (Is. 11:1–5). **His crown**: The Messiah's kingdom will be established forever (Is. 9:7); His enemies will not withstand Him (Ps. 2).

Psalm 133 is one of four songs of ascent attributed to David (see Ps. 122; 124; 131). With its emphasis on the unity of the believers, this poem anticipates Jesus' prayer in John 17. The structure of the psalm is as follows: (1) a portrait of the beauty of unity (v. 1); (2) the blessing of unity (vv. 2, 3).

133:1, 2 Good and . . . pleasant may be rephrased as “great delight” or “good pleasure.” There is a sense of serene wonder in these words describing the unity of God's people. **like the precious oil**: Priests were anointed with a fragrant oil as a symbol of God's blessing on their holy office (Ex. 30:22–33). This psalm pictures the oil in such large quantity that it flows from the **head** to the **beard** to the garment of **Aaron**, who represented the priests of God. When God's people live together in unity, they experience God's blessing.

133:3 like the dew of Hermon: This high mountain to the north of Israel received such large amounts of water that it seemed to be a source of moisture for the lands below. Similarly, the blessings of God flow to His people. **the blessing**: The intent of God is for the good of His people in this life and in the life to come. The people of Israel rarely achieved the level of unity—or the level of bless-

ing—that the poem describes. Ultimately, this is a portrait of the kingdom of God. One day there will be the spiritual unity of God's people that this poem describes.

Psalm 134 concludes the songs of ascent. This psalm was likely read as a responsive poem of praise (see also Ps. 118; 121; 124; 129; 135; 136). The structure of this brief poem is as follows: (1) the blessing of the priests by the people (vv. 1, 2); (2) the blessing of the people by the priests (v. 3).

134:1, 2 To bless the LORD is to identify Him as the source of all blessing (103:2). In this context, **servants of the LORD** refers to the priests of Israel who conducted their ministry at all hours in the temple (135:1, 2). The idea behind this blessing was that the people who had come to worship at the temple were getting ready to go home. They had come for a great festival but had to return to their regular work and routine. However, the priests remained at the holy temple. It was their continuing worship of the Lord that allowed God's blessing to continue on the nation as a whole. **Lift up your hands**: One of the standard postures for prayer in biblical times was to stand with hands stretched out toward heaven (1 Tim. 2:8). **134:3 Bless you from Zion** may have been the grateful response of the priests to the people, their own blessing on the people from the holy temple.

Psalm 135, a psalm of descriptive praise that recalls ideas and motifs from several earlier psalms, may have been composed after the exile in Babylon. The psalm presents God's saving works during the Exodus and contains a scathing attack on idolatry, taken from Ps. 115. The beginning and ending of this poem are written in the pattern of liturgical praise. The structure is as follows: (1) a call for the priests to bless the name of the Lord (vv. 1–4); (2) praise for the

- 2 ^b You who stand in the house of the LORD,
In ^c the courts of the house of our God,
3 Praise the LORD, for ^d the LORD is good;
Sing praises to His name, ^e for it is pleasant.
4 For ^f the LORD has chosen Jacob for Himself,
Israel for His ^g special treasure.
- 5 For I know that ^h the LORD is great,
And our Lord is above all gods.
6 ⁱ Whatever the LORD pleases He does,
In heaven and in earth,
In the seas and in all deep places.
7 ^j He causes the ² vapors to ascend from the ends of the earth;
^k He makes lightning for the rain;
He brings the wind out of His ^l treasuries.
- 8 ^m He ³ destroyed the firstborn of Egypt,
ⁿ Both of man and beast.
9 ^o He sent signs and wonders into the midst of you, O Egypt,
^p Upon Pharaoh and all his servants.
10 ^q He defeated many nations
And slew mighty kings—
11 Sihon king of the Amorites,
Og king of Bashan,
And ^r all the kingdoms of Canaan—
12 ^s And gave their land as a ⁴ heritage,
A heritage to Israel His people.
- 13 ^t Your name, O LORD, *endures* forever,
Your fame, O LORD, throughout all generations.

2 ^b Luke 2:37 ^c Ps. 116:19
3 ^d [Ps. 119:68] ^e Ps. 147:1
4 ^f [Ex. 19:5]; Mal. 3:17; [Titus 2:14; 1 Pet. 2:9] ^g *precious possession*
5 ^h Ps. 95:3; 97:9
6 ⁱ Ps. 115:3
7 ^j Jer. 10:13 / Job 28:25, 26; 38:24-28
^k Jer. 51:16 ^l Water vapor
8 ^m Ex. 12:12; Ps. 78:51 ³ Lit. *struck down* ⁴ Lit. *From man to beast*
9 ⁿ Ex. 7:10; Deut. 6:22; Ps. 78:43 ^o Ps. 136:15
10 ^p Num. 21:24; Ps. 136:17
11 ^q Josh. 12:7-24
12 ^r Ps. 78:55; 136:21, 22
^s *inheritance*
13 ^t [Ex. 3:15; Ps. 102:12]

14 ^u Deut. 32:36
15 ^v [Ps. 115:4-8]
19 ^w [Ps. 115:9]
21 ^x Ps. 134:3

PSALM 136

1 ^a Ps. 106:1 ^b 1 Chr. 16:34; Jer. 33:11
2 ^c [Deut. 10:17]

- 14 ^s For the LORD will judge His people,
And He will have compassion on His servants.
- 15 ^t The idols of the nations *are* silver and gold,
The work of men's hands.
16 They have mouths, but they do not speak;
Eyes they have, but they do not see;
17 They have ears, but they do not hear;
Nor is there *any* breath in their mouths.
18 Those who make them are like them;
So is everyone who trusts in them.
- 19 ^u Bless the LORD, O house of Israel!
Bless the LORD, O house of Aaron!
20 Bless the LORD, O house of Levi!
You who fear the LORD, bless the LORD!
21 Blessed be the LORD ^v out of Zion,
Who dwells in Jerusalem!
- Praise the LORD!

PSALM 136

Thanksgiving to God for His Enduring Mercy

- O**h, ^a give thanks to the LORD, for *He is good!*
^b For His mercy *endures* forever.
2 Oh, give thanks to ^c the God of gods!
For His mercy *endures* forever.
3 Oh, give thanks to the Lord of lords!
For His mercy *endures* forever:

Lord who alone is the great and active God (vv. 5–7); (3) praise for the Lord's saving deeds (vv. 8–12); (4) praise for the Lord's saving name (vv. 13, 14); (5) contempt for the ineffective and powerless gods of the nations (vv. 15–18); (6) a call for the people to bless the name of the Lord (vv. 19–21).

135:1–4 you servants of the LORD: This psalm begins with a call for the priests of Israel to praise God in the temple (134:1, 2). The endearing term **special treasure** is used only here in the Psalms (see also Ex. 19:5; Deut. 7:6; 14:2).

135:6, 7 Whatever the LORD pleases: These words are adapted from 115:3. The words **lightning for the rain** appear to be a citation of Jer. 10:13, indicating that this psalm was written after the exile in Babylon. The point of this section is clear: God is active in all creation. Conversely, the gods of the nations are impotent (vv. 15–18).

135:8 firstborn of Egypt: Like Ps. 78, this psalm rehearses the saving events of the Exodus, culminating in the events of the Passover (Ex. 12:12). The defeat of Egypt was solely the work of the Lord. Israel was merely His instrument; the battle belonged to Him (Ex. 15:3).

135:13, 14 God's saving actions established His reputation. Because of them, His **name** and His fame spread throughout the world. **He will have compassion:** As in Ps. 147, those who faced the hardships of restoring themselves in the land needed to know of God's continuing promise of mercy (Ps. 132).

135:15 The idols of the nations: This verse is a citation from 115:4–8. It is a devastating satirical attack on pagan idolatry. The

people who returned from Babylon had had their fill of the worship of idols; at long last, the people of Israel were ready to worship the only true God.

135:19, 20 To bless the LORD is to identify Him as the source of all blessings (103:2) and to be grateful for all that He has given. This section is a sustained liturgy for the people to encourage one another to praise the Lord.

Psalm 136 is the quintessential psalm of descriptive praise. The worship leader, perhaps a priest, would read the first part of each verse. The people would then respond with their praise centering on the mercy of God: "For His mercy endures forever." This psalm, known as the "Great Hallel," was often recited in the temple as the Passover lambs were being slain. Some include Ps. 135 and the psalms of ascents (Ps. 120–134) in the "Great Hallel." The pattern for the psalm is: (1) a call for the people to praise the Lord (vv. 1–3); (2) praise for the Lord who is the great Creator (vv. 4–9); (3) praise for the Lord who is the great Deliverer (vv. 10–22); (4) praise for the Lord who remembers His people forever (vv. 23–25); (5) a concluding call for the people to praise the Lord (v. 26).

136:1, 2 Give thanks means "to give public acknowledgment"; it is one of the principal words for praise in the Psalms (35:18; 105:1; 122:4). **Mercy**, which may also be translated "loyal love," is the most significant term used in the Psalms to describe the character of God. His mercy is "forever"; it is part of His eternal character. **God of gods:** The poet uses Hebrew superlatives to proclaim the Lord as the Supreme Deity.

BIBLE TIMES & CULTURE NOTES



Story Music

The use of the epic song in worship started with the Hebrews, centuries before the Greek epics were written (such as *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*). The earliest Hebrew worship songs arose out of a religious feeling toward God at important moments. For instance, the first recorded appearance of story music was when Miriam, Moses' sister, sang with joy after the Jews escaped the Pharaoh's men (Ex. 15:19–21). Many of the Psalms were epics (e.g., Ps. 114; 136; 137) and the prophets sometimes burst forth in epic songs (e.g., Is. 26; Hab. 3). The Hebrews did not apply intricate melodies to their epics, the tonal range of their songs was probably not great, and they selected rhythm instruments rather than melodic instruments. However, it is clear that the Hebrews came to consider the story songs an essential part of their worship. Their music sprang from the soul of a people whose everyday life was religiously ordered.

4 ^d Deut. 6:22; Job 9:10; Ps. 72:18
5 ^e Gen. 1:1, 6–8; Prov. 3:19; Jer. 51:15
6 ^f Gen. 1:9; Ps. 24:2; [Is. 42:5]; Jer. 10:12
7 ^g Gen. 1:14–18
8 ^h Gen. 1:16
10 ⁱ Ex. 12:29; Ps. 135:8
11 ^j Ex. 12:51; 13:3, 16

12 ^k Ex. 6:6; Deut. 4:34; 5:15; 7:19; 9:29; 11:2; 2 Kin. 17:36; 2 Chr. 6:32; Jer. 32:17 ^l Mighty power
13 ^m Ex. 14:21
15 ⁿ Ex. 14:27
16 ^o Ex. 13:18; 15:22; Deut. 8:15
17 ^p Ps. 135:10–12
18 ^q Deut. 29:7
19 ^r Num. 21:21
20 ^s Num. 21:33
21 ^t Josh. 12:1
² inheritance
23 ^u Gen. 8:1; Deut. 32:36; Ps. 113:7
24 ^v Ps. 44:7
25 ^w Ps. 104:27; 145:15

12 ^k With a strong hand, and with ^l an outstretched arm,
For His mercy *endures* forever;
13 ^l To Him who divided the Red Sea in two,
For His mercy *endures* forever;
14 And made Israel pass through the midst of it,
For His mercy *endures* forever;
15 ^m But overthrew Pharaoh and his army in the Red Sea,
For His mercy *endures* forever;
16 ⁿ To Him who led His people through the wilderness,
For His mercy *endures* forever;
17 ^o To Him who struck down great kings,
For His mercy *endures* forever;
18 ^p And slew famous kings,
For His mercy *endures* forever—
19 ^q Sihon king of the Amorites,
For His mercy *endures* forever;
20 ^r And Og king of Bashan,
For His mercy *endures* forever—
21 ^s And gave their land as a ² heritage,
For His mercy *endures* forever;
22 A heritage to Israel His servant,
For His mercy *endures* forever.
23 Who ^t remembered us in our lowly state,
For His mercy *endures* forever;
24 And ^u rescued us from our enemies,
For His mercy *endures* forever;
25 ^v Who gives food to all flesh,
For His mercy *endures* forever.
26 Oh, give thanks to the God of heaven!
For His mercy *endures* forever.

PSALM 137

Longing for Zion in a Foreign Land

By the rivers of Babylon,
There we sat down, yea, we wept
When we remembered Zion.

136:4, 5 In the OT, the term **great wonders** is used exclusively for the awe-inspiring actions of God. God's creation of the universe is the grand display of His **wisdom**. The heavens give a clear presentation of the glory of God (19:1–6). Romans 1:20 teaches that God's "invisible attributes" are clearly seen through the things He has made.
136:10–13 struck Egypt: The poet refers to God's great acts of deliverance in bringing Israel from Egypt at the dawn of Israel's redemption (Ps. 78; 105; 135:8–12). **strong hand**: This is a slogan of redemption (118:15, 16; see Ex. 15:6). It has been said when God created the universe, it was the work of His fingers (8:3); but when He battled for the salvation of His people, it was with His strong right hand. **divided the Red Sea**: God brought Israel across the Jordan by dividing its waters, then used the same waters to destroy the pursuing army of Egypt.
136:19, 20 The poet's recital of Israel's history includes the capture

of the lands east of the Jordan, including the territories of **Sihon** and **Og** (Num. 21). The result was the gift of the land of Canaan to the people of Israel.
136:23 It is possible that the words **remembered us** suggest the return of the people of Judah and Jerusalem to their land following the Babylonian captivity. Like Ps. 135, Ps. 136 may have been written after the Exile.
136:26 Oh, give thanks: The psalm ends as it begins, with celebration of God's continuing faithfulness to His people Israel and a call to thank Him for His goodness.
Psalm 137, a song of Zion, is also a particularly impassioned imprecatory psalm. Although no author is named, the psalm clearly shares with the Book of Lamentations the despair of those who suffered the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians in 586 B.C. This troubling psalm is one of deeply felt emotion. Its pattern is as follows: (1) weeping in Babylon at the memory of the destruction

- 2 We hung our harps
Upon the willows in the midst
of it.
- 3 For there those who carried us
away captive asked of us a
song,
And those who ^aplundered us
requested mirth,
Saying, “Sing us *one* of the songs of
Zion!”
- 4 How shall we sing the LORD’s
song
In a foreign land?
- 5 If I forget you, O Jerusalem,
Let my right hand forget *its*
skill!
- 6 If I do not remember you,
Let my ^btongue cling to the roof of
my mouth—
If I do not exalt Jerusalem
Above my chief joy.
- 7 Remember, O LORD, against ^cthe sons
of Edom
The day of Jerusalem,
Who said, ⁱ“Raze it, raze it,
To its very foundation!”
- 8 O daughter of Babylon, ^dwho are to
be destroyed,
Happy the one ^ewho repays you as
you have served us!
- 9 Happy the one who takes and
^fdashes
Your little ones against the rock!

PSALM 137

3 ^a Ps. 79:1
6 ^b Job 29:10; Ps.
22:15; Ezek. 3:26
7 ^c Jer. 49:7-22;
Lam. 4:21; Ezek.
25:12-14; 35:2;
Amos 1:11; Obad.
10-14 ⁱ Lit. *Make
bare*
8 ^d Is. 13:1-6; 47:1
^e Jer. 50:15; Rev.
18:6
9 ^f 2 Kin. 8:12; Is.
13:16; Hos. 13:16;
Nah. 3:10

PSALM 138

1 ^a Ps. 119:46
2 ^b Ps. 28:2 ^c 1 Kin.
8:29 ^d Is. 42:21
4 ^e Ps. 102:15
6 ^f [Ps. 113:4-7]
9 Prov. 3:34; [Is.
57:15]; Luke 1:48;
[James 4:6; 1 Pet.
5:5]
7 ^h [Ps. 23:3, 4]

PSALM 138

The LORD's Goodness to the Faithful

A Psalm of David.

- I** will praise You with my whole heart;
^aBefore the gods I will sing praises to
You.
- 2 ^bI will worship ^ctoward Your holy
temple,
And praise Your name
For Your lovingkindness and Your
truth;
For You have ^dmagnified Your word
above all Your name.
- 3 In the day when I cried out, You
answered me,
And made me bold *with* strength in
my soul.
- 4 ^eAll the kings of the earth shall praise
You, O LORD,
When they hear the words of Your
mouth.
- 5 Yes, they shall sing of the ways of the
LORD,
For great *is* the glory of the LORD.
- 6 ^fThough the LORD *is* on high,
Yet ^gHe regards the lowly;
But the proud He knows from afar.
- 7 ^hThough I walk in the midst of
trouble, You will revive me;
You will stretch out Your hand
Against the wrath of my enemies,
And Your right hand will save me.

of Zion (vv. 1-3); (2) longing for Jerusalem and the restoration of song in praise of God (vv. 4-6); (3) desiring reprisals against Edom and Babylon for their destruction of Jerusalem (vv. 7-9).

137:1, 2 Babylon was one of the great empires in world history. When this psalm was written, the Jews were living there in involuntary exile. **we wept:** The emotions of the psalm are clearly indicated. The memory of Zion was painful for those in a foreign land (42:1-3). **hung our harps:** Making joyful music to the Lord in a foreign land was so difficult that the captives refused to make music at all. They took the words of their captors as taunts.

137:5, 6 If I forget you: It is difficult for the modern reader to appreciate the love for Zion among the people of OT faith. As we observe regularly in the Psalms, this love was not just for a place but for its function in their lives. It was in **Jerusalem** that the temple had been built. The place was holy because of God's presence there (2:6).

137:7 Remember, O LORD: After speaking with great passion about his own remembering and forgetting (vv. 4-6), the psalmist calls upon the Lord to remember the abominable actions of the people of Edom in the day of Jerusalem's trouble (see Ps. 129 for a similar sentiment). **Raze it:** The men of Edom leered and jeered as Jerusalem was shamefully leveled.

137:9 Happy is the same term of blessing that begins the first psalm (1:1; 146:5). The blessing would come on the army that finally destroyed the wicked city of Babylon, that had itself been used as a tool of judgment in the hands of Almighty God (Hab. 1:12-17).

Psalm 138 is a psalm of declarative praise attributed to David. The mood of this psalm contrasts strongly with that of Ps. 137. Its

structure is as follows: (1) a declaration of praise to God because of an overwhelming answer to the prayer of the king (vv. 1-3); (2) a prophetic vision of a future time in which all kings of the earth will join in the praise of God (vv. 4-6); (3) a determination to continually trust in God (vv. 7, 8).

138:1, 2 As in many psalms, the poet begins his praise with a determination to involve his **whole** being (146:1). **Before the gods:** David is so confident in his faith in the Lord that he is determined to take the name of God into foreign territory. **Your holy temple:** The use of the word "temple" does not rule out David as the author of this or similar poems (15:1). The Hebrew term is a general one that would fit whatever building was in use in David's day. The term was also proper for later readers and singers of this psalm when the actual temple had been built.

138:4-6 David, as a king who believed in God, looked forward to a day when **all the kings of the earth** would share his experience. **great is the glory of the LORD:** This is another way of expressing the reality of the living God. **regards the lowly:** God comes to the humble because they will have regard for Him. Conversely, He distances Himself from the proud (86:14; 147:6).

138:7, 8 Though I walk: The poet is well aware that new troubles will confront him. He has confidence that God, who has blessed him in the experience of this psalm, will continue to bless his path. **perfect:** The same Hebrew verb is translated "perform" in 57:2. The point of the word is that God acts on behalf of His servants. **Your mercy, O LORD, endures forever:** This is a slight rewording of the refrain in Ps. 136.

8 ⁱThe LORD will ¹perfect *that which*
concerns me;
Your mercy, O LORD, *endures* forever;
^jDo not forsake the works of Your
hands.

PSALM 139

God's Perfect Knowledge of Man

For the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David.

O LORD, ^aYou have searched me and
known *me*.
^bYou know my sitting down and my
rising up;
You ^cunderstand my thought afar
off.
^dYou ¹comprehend my path and my
lying down,

8 ⁱ Ps. 57:2; [Phil.
1:6] ^j Job 10:3, 8
¹ complete

PSALM 139

1 ^a Ps. 17:3; Jer. 12:3
2 ^b 2 Kin. 19:27 ^c Is.
66:18; Matt. 9:4
3 ^d Job 14:16; 31:4
¹ Lit. *winnow*

4 ^e [Heb. 4:13]
5 ² enclosed
6 ^f Job 42:3; Ps. 40:5
7 ^g [Jer. 23:24;
Amos 9:2-4]
8 ^h [Amos 9:2-4]
ⁱ [Job 26:6; Prov.
15:11] ³ Or *Sheol*

And are acquainted with all my
ways.

4 For *there is* not a word on my tongue,
But behold, O LORD, ^eYou know it
altogether.

5 You have ²hedged me behind and
before,

And laid Your hand upon me.

6 ^f*Such* knowledge is too wonderful for
me;

It is high, I cannot *attain* it.

7 ^gWhere can I go from Your Spirit?
Or where can I flee from Your
presence?

8 ^hIf I ascend into heaven, You *are*
there;

ⁱIf I make my bed in ³hell, behold,
You *are there*.

Psalm 139, attributed to David, is a wisdom psalm of descriptive praise. This mixture of wisdom and praise is not uncommon in the Psalms (see Ps. 145; 146). This poem describes the attributes of the Lord not as abstract qualities, but as active qualities by which He relates Himself to His people. The structure of the psalm is: (1) a description of God's intimate knowledge of His servant (vv. 1-6); (2) a celebration of God's presence with David (vv. 7-12); (3) a celebration of God's creation of David from the moment of conception (vv. 13-16); (4) a declaration that God's thoughts toward David are innumerable (vv. 17, 18); (5) a prayer for the punishment of God's enemies (vv. 19-22); (6) a prayer that God might search and lead David (vv. 23, 24).

139:1-5 You have searched me: God is active to search and test His servants. He knows our motives, desires, and words before they are expressed. In short, He knows His servants completely. But as v. 5 makes clear, the purpose of His intimate knowledge of His servants is protective and helpful, not judgmental and condemning. **139:7** There are two different ways in which the words **where can I go** can be understood. One is that David *wanted* to flee from the presence of God, but could not. The second view takes the words as a celebration of God's mercy, that there was no place in all creation where David, the servant of God, would find himself separated from God's presence.

The Sanctity of Life: Created in His Image

God places special value on human life (Gen. 1:26, 27; Ps. 8:4-6). Human life is sacred because the man and woman alone were created in the image of God, and that life deserves protection. God commands His people to protect and defend innocent human life (Ezek. 16:20, 21, 36, 38). Under the Mosaic Law, the murder of another person deserved punishment by death because of the value of the life that was destroyed (Gen. 9:6; Ex. 20:13).

Scripture extends this special status and protection to human life in every stage of development and need (Is. 46:3, 4). The unborn child shares in God's image (Ps. 139:13-16) and is protected under Old Testament law (Ex. 21:22-25). Believers are exhorted to defend and care for the sick, the elderly, and the poor (Lev. 19:32; Deut. 15:7, 8). No one is excluded from protection and care.

Throughout history this biblical view of the sanctity of all human life has faced opposition—most notably from those who advocate a “quality of life” viewpoint, suggesting that human life must possess certain qualities and abilities before it can be considered truly valuable and worthy of life sustenance. According to this distorted humanistic view, if the unborn child, the handicapped infant, or the elderly person does not possess these qualities, that individual is not entitled to the protection which Scripture or the Law would give.

The Bible rejects this “quality of life” view. The value of human life does not depend upon the person's functional abilities or independent viability but is assured because of the image of God which is found in every human life. God does not measure the quality of a human being before He bestows His image. God calls upon us to extend our care and compassion to every life He has created, in every stage of development and in every need.



Psalm 139:13-16 declares that an unborn child shares in God's image.

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- 9 *If* I take the wings of the morning,
And dwell in the uttermost parts of
the sea,
- 10 Even there Your hand shall lead me,
And Your right hand shall hold me.
- 11 If I say, "Surely the darkness shall
⁴fall on me,"
Even the night shall be light
about me;
- 12 Indeed, ⁱthe darkness ⁵shall not hide
from You,
But the night shines as the day;
The darkness and the light *are* both
alike *to You*.
- 13 For You formed my inward parts;
You ⁶covered me in my mother's
womb.
- 14 I will praise You, for ⁷I am fearfully
and wonderfully made;
Marvelous are Your works,
And *that* my soul knows very well.
- 15 ^kMy ⁸frame was not hidden from
You,
When I was made in secret,
And skillfully wrought in the lowest
parts of the earth.
- 16 Your eyes saw my substance, being
yet unformed.
And in Your book they all were
written,
The days fashioned for me,
When *as yet there were* none of
them.
- 17 ^lHow precious also are Your thoughts
to me, O God!
How great is the sum of them!
- 18 *If* I should count them, they would
be more in number than the
sand;
When I awake, I am still with You.

11 ⁴Vg.,
Symmachus cover
12 / Job 26:6; 34:22;
[Dan. 2:22; Heb.
4:13] ⁵Lit. is not
dark
13 ⁶wove
14 ⁷So with MT,
Tg.; LXX, Syr., Vg.
You are fearfully
wonderful
15 ^kJob 10:8, 9;
Eccl. 11:5 ⁸Lit.
bones were
17 ^l[Ps. 40:5; Rom.
11:33]

19 ^m[Is. 11:4] ⁿPs.
119:115 ⁹Lit. men of
bloodshed
20 ^oJude 15 ¹LXX,
Vg. They take Your
cities in vain
21 ^p2 Chr. 19:2
22 ²complete
23 ^qJob 31:6; Ps.
26:2
24 ^rPs. 5:8; 143:10

PSALM 140

2 ^aPs. 56:6
3 ^bPs. 58:4; Rom.
3:13; James 3:8
4 ^cPs. 71:4

- 19 Oh, that You would ^mslay the
wicked, O God!
ⁿDepart from me, therefore, you
⁹bloodthirsty men.
- 20 For they ^ospeak against You
wickedly;
¹Your enemies take *Your name* in
vain.
- 21 ^pDo I not hate them, O LORD, who
hate You?
And do I not loathe those who rise
up against You?
- 22 I hate them with ²perfect hatred;
I count them my enemies.
- 23 ^qSearch me, O God, and know my
heart;
Try me, and know my anxieties;
- 24 And see if *there is any* wicked way
in me,
And ^rlead me in the way everlasting.

PSALM 140

Prayer for Deliverance from Evil Men

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David.

- D**eliver me, O LORD, from evil men;
Preserve me from violent men,
2 Who plan evil things in *their* hearts;
²They continually gather together *for*
war.
3 They sharpen their tongues like a
serpent;
The ^bpoison of asps *is* under their
lips. *Selah*
- 4 ^cKeep me, O LORD, from the hands of
the wicked;
Preserve me from violent men,
Who have purposed to make my
steps stumble.

139:10–12 Your hand: The wording of v. 10 seems protective, suggesting that the psalm speaks of God's helpful presence. **darkness:** Here David stretches his imagination to the brink. Darkness refers to death or the "pit" (16:10). This is an expansion of the words of v. 8, "If I make my bed in hell." David suggests this as the one place in the universe where God would not be present. But even though God is opposed to all darkness, God would turn the darkness into light in order to find His servant David. As in 18:7–12, the Lord would overturn the structure of the universe to save the person who worshiped Him.

139:13–16 You formed my inward parts: David affirms that the work of God in his life extended back to his development in his mother's womb. **You covered me** may also be translated as "You wove me together," a description of the work of God creating the person in the mother's womb. **I am fearfully and wonderfully made** might be rephrased as "I am an awesome wonder" (Ps. 8). **skillfully wrought:** The development of the fetus was something quite mysterious to the ancients. To them, it was as though the fetus were being developed in the middle of the earth. The Hebrew word **my substance** indicates the embryo. **in Your book:** The idea is that the life of a person, and the structure and meaning of that person's life, are all established from the beginning by God.

139:19 slay the wicked: David desires a world in which there is no

more evil, no more distraction, no more destruction. The enemies of God are David's own enemies because his life and thoughts are so closely tied to the Lord.

139:23, 24 Search me, O God: These words are similar to those of 19:14. David asks God to examine his thoughts and purge him of sin so that he might enter into everlasting life.

Psalms 140, a psalm of individual lament ascribed to David, is particularly concerned with the wicked. David's desire for the judgment of the Lord to come upon the wicked identifies this poem as an imprecatory psalm. The structure of Ps. 140 is as follows: (1) a petition that David be delivered from the wicked (vv. 1–3); (2) a petition that David be kept from the wicked (vv. 4, 5); (3) a confession of trust in the Lord (vv. 6–8); (4) a prayer for the punishment of the wicked (vv. 9–11); (5) a declaration that the Lord will deliver the afflicted (vv. 12, 13).

140:1 Deliver me: David cries out to the Lord for deliverance from the wicked, who continually harm the innocent. The words **violent men** are repeated in v. 4. The word *violent* describes people who are harsh and ruthless, who plan the destruction of the righteous. They are purposefully evil and will be satisfied only if they can participate in the destruction of God's people. But God is always ready to deliver His precious ones from their grasp.

5 The proud have hidden a ^dsnare for me, and cords;
They have spread a net by the wayside;
They have set traps for me. *Selah*

6 I said to the LORD: “You *are* my God;
Hear the voice of my supplications,
O LORD.

7 O God the Lord, the strength of my salvation,
You have ⁱcovered my head in the day of battle.

8 Do not grant, O LORD, the desires of the wicked;
Do not further his *wicked* scheme,
^e*Lest* they be exalted. *Selah*

9 “As *for* the head of those who surround me,
Let the evil of their lips cover them;
10 ^fLet burning coals fall upon them;
Let them be cast into the fire,
Into deep pits, that they rise not up again.

11 Let not a slanderer be established in the earth;
Let evil hunt the violent man to overthrow *him*.”

12 I know that the LORD will ^gmaintain
The cause of the afflicted,
And justice for the poor.

13 Surely the righteous shall give thanks to Your name;
The upright shall dwell in Your presence.

PSALM 141

Prayer for Safekeeping from Wickedness

A Psalm of David.

LORD, I cry out to You;
Make haste to me!

5 ^dPs. 35:7; Jer. 18:22
7 ⁱsheltered
8 ^eDeut. 32:27
10 ^fPs. 11:6
12 ^g1 Kin. 8:45;
Ps. 9:4

PSALM 141

2 ^a[Ex. 30:8]; Luke 1:10; [Rev. 5:8; 8:3, 4] ^bPs. 134:2; [1 Tim. 2:8] ^cEx. 29:39, 41; 1 Kin. 18:29, 36; Dan. 9:21
3 ^d[Prov. 13:3; 21:23]
4 ^eProv. 23:6
5 ^f[Prov. 9:8; Eccl. 7:5; Gal. 6:1]
6 ⁱrock
8 ^g2 Chr. 20:12; Ps. 25:15 ²Lit. *Do not make my soul bare*
9 ^hPs. 119:110
10 ⁱPs. 35:8

Give ear to my voice when I cry out to You.

2 Let my prayer be set before You ^aas incense,
^bThe lifting up of my hands *as* ^cthe evening sacrifice.

3 Set a guard, O LORD, over my ^dmouth;
Keep watch over the door of my lips.

4 Do not incline my heart to any evil thing,
To practice wicked works
With men who work iniquity;
^eAnd do not let me eat of their delicacies.

5 ^fLet the righteous strike me;
It shall be a kindness.
And let him rebuke me;
It shall be as excellent oil;
Let my head not refuse it.

For still my prayer *is* against the deeds of the wicked.

6 Their judges are overthrown by the sides of the ⁱcliff,
And they hear my words, for they are sweet.

7 Our bones are scattered at the mouth of the grave,
As when one plows and breaks up the earth.

8 But ^gmy eyes *are* upon You, O God the Lord;
In You I take refuge;
²Do not leave my soul destitute.

9 Keep me from ^hthe snares they have laid for me,
And from the traps of the workers of iniquity.

10 ⁱLet the wicked fall into their own nets,
While I escape safely.

140:6 With the words **You are my God**, David confesses his complete trust in the Lord even though he is surrounded by people plotting his destruction. On the basis of his trust, he now pleads with the Lord to deliver him.

140:10 Let burning coals fall upon them: Here David recalls the judgment of Sodom and Gomorrah (11:6; Gen. 19:12–29) and asks God to use this particular judgment on his enemies.

140:12, 13 The cause of the poor and the afflicted is of special interest to the Lord. He promises to uphold and comfort them (41:1; 72:4; 109:31; Luke 4:18; 6:20).

Psalm 141, an individual psalm of lament, is ascribed to David. In this case no particular event is cited as the cause for David’s distress. Because this poem records David’s desire for the judgment of his enemies, it falls into the category of the imprecatory psalms also. The structure is: (1) an introductory cry to the Lord (vv. 1, 2); (2) a prayer for a guard over David’s mouth (vv. 3, 4); (3) an acceptance of righteous rebuke (v. 5a); (4) a vision of the punishment of the wicked (vv. 5b–7); (5) a statement of confidence in the Lord (vv. 8–10).

141:1, 2 Lord, I cry out to you: David asks to be heard as he prays in the assembly of the righteous. As the smoke and aroma of in-

cense rises to the Lord as something sweet and compelling, so David desires that his prayer will not be ignored. **The lifting up of my hands:** With this impressive gesture David is asking God to pay attention to his plea.

141:3 Set a guard: This is a prayer for wisdom, for restraining evil language, and for knowing the correct words to speak. David wanted to avoid any act of impiety, irreverence, or even idolatry; he did not want to offend God with anything he said.

141:5 With the words **let the righteous strike me**, David expresses his willingness to accept the judgment of the righteous; what bothers him is the instruction and judgment of the wicked. **against the deeds of the wicked:** As in Ps. 140, the wicked have brought David to his state of distress. He envisions a day when the wicked will be destroyed—their power will collapse and justice will reign in its place.

141:8 In light of the wicked’s strength, it is easy for us to fix our eyes on, or worry about, the wicked. It is also natural to focus on ourselves: we either become self-absorbed in our difficulties or exalt ourselves in our victories. But David fixes his **eyes** only on the Lord (2 Cor. 3:18; Heb. 12:2, 3).

PSALM 142

A Plea for Relief from Persecutors

A ^aContemplation ¹ of David. A Prayer
^bwhen he was in the cave.

- I** cry out to the LORD with my voice;
 With my voice to the LORD I make
 my supplication.
- ² I pour out my complaint before
 Him;
 I declare before Him my trouble.
- ³ When my spirit ²was ^coverwhelmed
 within me,
 Then You knew my path.
 In the way in which I walk
 They have secretly ^dset a snare
 for me.
- ⁴ Look on *my* right hand and see,
 For *there is* no one who
 acknowledges me;
 Refuge has failed me;
 No one cares for my soul.
- ⁵ I cried out to You, O LORD:
 I said, “You *are* my refuge,
 My portion in the land of the
 living.
- ⁶ ³ Attend to my cry,
 For I am brought very low;
 Deliver me from my persecutors,
 For they are stronger than I.
- ⁷ Bring my soul out of prison,
 That I may ^epraise Your name;
 The righteous shall surround me,
 For You shall deal bountifully
 with me.”

PSALM 142

title ^aPs. 32:title
^b1 Sam. 22:1; Ps.
 57:title ¹Heb.
Maschil
³c Ps. 77:3 ^dPs.
 141:9 ²Lit. *fainted*
⁶³ Give heed
⁷^e Ps. 34:1, 2

PSALM 143

²^a [Ex. 34:7]; Job
 4:17; 9:2; 25:4; Ps.
 130:3; Eccl. 7:20;
 [Rom. 3:20-23; Gal.
 2:16]
³¹ *dark places*
⁴^b Ps. 77:3
⁵^c Ps. 77:5, 10, 11
² *ponder*
⁶^d Ps. 63:1
⁷^e Ps. 28:1
³ *become* ⁴Die

PSALM 143

An Earnest Appeal for Guidance and Deliverance

A Psalm of David.

- H**ear my prayer, O LORD,
 Give ear to my supplications!
 In Your faithfulness answer me,
 And in Your righteousness.
- ² Do not enter into judgment with
 Your servant,
^aFor in Your sight no one living is
 righteous.
- ³ For the enemy has persecuted my
 soul;
 He has crushed my life to the
 ground;
 He has made me dwell in ¹darkness,
 Like those who have long been
 dead.
- ⁴ ^bTherefore my spirit is overwhelmed
 within me;
 My heart within me is distressed.
- ⁵ ^cI remember the days of old;
 I meditate on all Your works;
 I ²muse on the work of Your hands.
- ⁶ I spread out my hands to You;
^dMy soul *longs* for You like a thirsty
 land. *Selah*
- ⁷ Answer me speedily, O LORD;
 My spirit fails!
 Do not hide Your face from me,
^eLest I ³be like those who ⁴go down
 into the pit.

Psalm 142, a psalm of individual lament ascribed to David, provides a specific reference for the setting of the poem. The term *the cave* may refer to one of two occasions on which David hid from King Saul in a cave. One occurred in En Gedi (Ps. 57; 1 Sam. 24); the other at Adullam (1 Sam. 22:1, 2). The second may well be the setting for this poem of deep anguish. This was a time in David's life when it appeared that he was totally alone. In fact, he began to doubt whether even God was truly for him. But as the superscription indicates, David turned to the Lord in prayer. The structure of the psalm is: (1) David's cry for help from the cave of his despair (vv. 1, 2); (2) David's lament of distress that no one was on his side (vv. 3, 4); (3) David's confession of trust and petition for deliverance (vv. 5, 6); (4) David's vow of praise when God delivered him (v. 7).

142:1 I cry out: There is a significant emphasis on the vocal and desperate nature of David's lament in this psalm. **With my voice** may also be translated "aloud."

142:3-5 In the midst of his distress, David makes his preliminary confession of trust—God **knew** his **path** from the beginning. **Look on my right hand:** With enemies on every path, David screams aloud to God that he is defenseless. The armed soldier in ancient Israel probably would have had his spear or sword in his right hand and his shield in his left. The shield of one man would protect the right side of his neighbor. David cries that there is no one on his right side; he expects to find God there (3:3, 4). **You are my refuge:** In the midst of his pain, David renews his confession of trust that somehow God must be near. He then pleads with God to deliver him from his foes.

142:7 The cave that was intended as a place of refuge has become

a place of confinement—a **prison**. The psalm ends with a vow that when God would deliver him from his awful experience, David would bring renewed **praise** to God in the worshiping community. Even though he is still in the midst of his distress, David is able to conclude with a prayer of faith: **You shall deal bountifully with me.**

Psalm 143, a psalm of individual lament ascribed to David, is similar in tone to other psalms of distress, particularly Ps. 6. Some scholars categorize Ps. 6 and 143 as penitential psalms. The structure of Ps. 143 is as follows: (1) a presentation of great personal distress (vv. 1-4); (2) a longing for former days of delight (vv. 5, 6); (3) prayers for deliverance (vv. 7-12).

143:2, 3 David asks God not to bring him **into judgment**, yet he does not confess his sins as in Ps. 32; 38. **no one living is righteous:** This is not so much a confession of sin as an observation that everyone is sinful. **in darkness:** The biblical metaphor of light and darkness begins in Gen. 1:2, 3. To live in darkness is similar to being in the pit (v. 7); this is the reason for the parallel to those who are already dead (Job 10:21, 22).

143:5, 6 the days of old: This is similar to 42:4, in which the psalmist remembers rejoicing in temple worship in times gone by. **spread out my hands:** This was one of the traditional postures for prayer in biblical times.

143:7, 8 the pit: Without a renewed sense of God's presence, described by the words, **Your face**, David believes that he is as good as dead. **in the morning:** Often in the psalms there is an expectation that an answer from God might come with the morning light (5:3; 30:5; 130:6).

8 Cause me to hear Your
lovingkindness ^fin the morning,
For in You do I trust;
^gCause me to know the way in which
I should walk,
For ^hI lift up my soul to You.

9 Deliver me, O LORD, from my enemies;
⁵In You I take shelter.

10 ⁱTeach me to do Your will,
For You *are* my God;
^jYour Spirit *is* good.
Lead me in ^kthe land of uprightness.

11 ^lRevive me, O LORD, for Your name's
sake!
For Your righteousness' sake bring
my soul out of trouble.

12 In Your mercy ^mcut ⁶off my enemies,
And destroy all those who afflict my
soul;
For I *am* Your servant.

PSALM 144

*A Song to the LORD Who Preserves
and Prospers His People*

A Psalm of David.

Blessed *be* the LORD my Rock,
^aWho trains my hands for war,
And my fingers for battle—

2 My lovingkindness and my fortress,
My high tower and my deliverer,
My shield and *the One* in whom I
take refuge,
Who subdues ^lmy people under me.

3 ^bLORD, what *is* man, that You take
knowledge of him?
Or the son of man, that You are
mindful of him?

8 ^fPs. 46:5 ^gPs. 5:8
^hPs. 25:1
9 ⁵LXX, Vg. To You
I flee
10 ⁱPs. 25:4, 5
^jNeh. 9:20 ^kIs.
26:10
11 ^lPs. 119:25
12 ^mPs. 54:5 ⁶put
an end to

PSALM 144

1 ^a2 Sam. 22:35;
Ps. 18:34
2 ⁱSo with MT, LXX,
Vg.; Syr., Tg. *the*
peoples (cf. 18:47)
3 ^bJob 7:17; Ps. 8:4;
Heb. 2:6

4 ^cPs. 39:11 ^dJob
8:9; 14:2; Ps. 102:11
5 ^ePs. 18:9; Is. 64:1
^fPs. 104:32
6 ^gPs. 18:13, 14
8 ^hPs. 12:2 ²empty
or worthless
9 ⁱPs. 33:2, 3; 40:3
10 ^jPs. 18:50
³deliverance
12 ^kPs. 128:3
⁴corner pillars

4 ^cMan is like a breath;
^dHis days *are* like a passing shadow.

5 ^eBow down Your heavens, O LORD,
and come down;
^fTouch the mountains, and they shall
smoke.

6 ^gFlash forth lightning and scatter
them;
Shoot out Your arrows and destroy
them.

7 Stretch out Your hand from above;
Rescue me and deliver me out of
great waters,
From the hand of foreigners,
Whose mouth ^hspeaks ²lying words,
And whose right hand is a right
hand of falsehood.

9 I will ⁱsing a new song to You,
O God;
On a harp of ten strings I will sing
praises to You,

10 *The One* who gives ³salvation to kings,
^jWho delivers David His servant
From the deadly sword.

11 Rescue me and deliver me from the
hand of foreigners,
Whose mouth speaks lying words,
And whose right hand is a right
hand of falsehood—

12 That our sons *may be* ^kas plants
grown up in their youth;
That our daughters *may be* as
⁴pillars,
Sculptured in palace style;

13 *That* our barns *may be* full,
Supplying all kinds of produce;
That our sheep may bring forth
thousands
And ten thousands in our fields;

143:11, 12 for Your name's sake: The requests of the psalmists are often tied to various character traits of God. When we pray “in Jesus’ name,” we pray both in the authority of His name and in the character it represents. **I am Your servant:** To be a servant of the Lord is a position to which even kings might aspire. Since there is no greater Lord, there is no greater position than to be aligned with His purposes.

Psalm 144, a psalm of descriptive praise with overtones of lament and petition, is ascribed to David. This poem is similar to Ps. 18 in that it describes the salvation acts of the Lord in terms of great heavenly phenomena. It is also possible that this psalm was used in the training of the army (as was Ps. 149). Warfare in ancient Israel was tied closely to the worship of God. Deliverance from the enemy was not just a task for tough soldiers, it was a matter of active piety. The structure is as follows: (1) a confession of praise to God the great warrior (vv. 1, 2); (2) a description of the frailty of human beings (vv. 3, 4); (3) a description of the saving acts of God (vv. 5–8); (4) a determination to praise the Lord (vv. 9, 10); (5) a call for God’s continual deliverance of His people (vv. 11–15).

144:1 The Lord my Rock is often used in the Psalms to describe God as the fortress of His people. At times, the word is translated *strength* (18:1). David found in the Lord the protection and preparation he needed in times of battle.

144:3, 4 what is man: This is a quotation from 8:4, but without the stunning answer presented in 8:5. Here the rhetorical question is used to speak of the frailty of humans who are in need of God’s help. **passing shadow:** The sense of human frailty is illustrated dramatically in these words (102:2, 3).

144:6 The lightning of the Lord is a symbol of His judgment (97:4). Here David celebrates God’s righteous judgments, which he prays will be exercised against his evil foes.

144:9, 10 I will sing a new song is David’s vow to respond to God’s deliverance with renewed worship and praise (149:1). **David:** It is rare for these poems to mention the psalmist by name (18:50). David’s use of his own name indicated to later generations that this psalm arose out of actual experiences in his life.

144:11 lying words: The principal lie of the enemy was that the Lord could not save His people (Ps. 12).

144:12–15 The image of **pillars** seems to indicate health, beauty, and dignity. **barns:** Agricultural productivity was possible only in times of peace and would be meaningful only in times of national freedom. **Happy** is often translated “blessed” (1:1). Its use twice in v. 15 is dramatic. The happiness that David describes refers both to external well-being—in **such a state**—and to internal peace—**whose God is the LORD**.

- 14 *That our oxen may be well laden;
That there be no ⁵breaking in or
going out;
That there be no outcry in our streets.*
15 ¹Happy are the people who are in
such a state;
Happy are the people whose God is
the LORD!

PSALM 145

A Song of God's Majesty and Love

^a A Praise of David.

- I** will ¹extol You, my God, O King;
And I will bless Your name forever
and ever.
2 Every day I will bless You,
And I will praise Your name forever
and ever.
3 ^bGreat is the LORD, and greatly to be
praised;
And ^cHis greatness is ²unsearchable.
4 ^dOne generation shall praise Your
works to another,
And shall declare Your mighty acts.
5 ³I will meditate on the glorious
splendor of Your majesty,
And ⁴on Your wondrous works.
6 Men shall speak of the might of Your
awesome acts,
And I will declare Your greatness.
7 They shall ⁵utter the memory of
Your great goodness,
And shall sing of Your
righteousness.

14 ⁵ Lit. *breach*
15 ¹ Deut. 33:29; [Ps.
33:12; Jer. 17:7]

PSALM 145

title ^a Ps. 100:1
1 ¹ *praise*
3 ^b [Ps. 147:5] ^c Job
5:9; 9:10; 11:7; Is.
40:28; [Rom. 11:33]
² Beyond our
understanding
4 ^d Is. 38:19
5 ³ So with MT,
Tg.; DSS, LXX, Syr.,
Vg. *They* ⁴ Lit. *on*
the words of Your
wondrous works
7 ⁵ *eagerly utter*, lit.
bubble forth

8 ^e [Ex. 34:6, 7;
Num. 14:18]; Ps.
86:5, 15
9 ^f [Ps. 100:5]; Jer.
33:11; Nah. 1:7;
[Matt. 19:17; Mark
10:18]
10 ^g Ps. 19:1
13 ^h Dan. 2:44; 4:3;
[1 Tim. 1:17; 2 Pet.
1:11] ⁶ So with MT,
Tg.; DSS, LXX, Syr.,
Vg. *add The LORD*
is faithful in all His
words, And holy in
all His works
14 ⁱ Ps. 146:8
15 ^j Ps. 104:27 ^k Ps.
136:25
16 ⁱ Ps. 104:21, 28

- 8** ^eThe LORD is gracious and full of
compassion,
Slow to anger and great in
mercy.
9 ^fThe LORD is good to all,
And His tender mercies are over all
His works.
10 ^gAll Your works shall praise You,
O LORD,
And Your saints shall bless You.
11 They shall speak of the glory of Your
kingdom,
And talk of Your power,
12 To make known to the sons of men
His mighty acts,
And the glorious majesty of His
kingdom.
13 ^hYour kingdom is an everlasting
kingdom,
And Your dominion endures
throughout all ⁶generations.
14 The LORD upholds all who fall,
And ⁱraises up all *who are* bowed
down.
15 ^jThe eyes of all look expectantly to
You,
And ^kYou give them their food in
due season.
16 You open Your hand
^lAnd satisfy the desire of every living
thing.
17 The LORD is righteous in all His
ways,
Gracious in all His works.

Psalm 145, a wisdom psalm, is also a psalm of declarative praise. The poem is written in the form of an acrostic, with one verse for each letter of the Hebrew alphabet. The structure of the psalm is: (1) a focus on the greatness of the Lord (vv. 1–3); (2) an expectation of the ongoing praise of the Lord (vv. 4–7); (3) a focus on the character of the Lord (vv. 8, 9); (4) an expression concerning the kingdom of the Lord (vv. 10–13); (5) an acknowledgment of the grace of the Lord to all (vv. 14–16); (6) a focus on the righteous grace of the Lord (vv. 17–21).

145:3 The familiar words **great is the LORD** express God's grandeur in the universe and remind us of how small we are in His presence. The fact that frail humans are used to praise God is a marvel to the psalmist.

145:4 **One generation . . . to another:** The expectation is that the message of God's wonder and mercy will be known throughout the land and will be taught for generations.

145:7 The word **memory** may refer to the divine name of God. The Hebrew term for *memory* is translated "memorial" in Ex. 3:15.

145:8 God had described Himself as **gracious and full of compassion** (Ex. 34:6, 7; Num. 14:18). David uses God's own words to praise Him for His merciful character (86:5, 15; 111:4; 112:4).

145:10–13 **All Your works** echoes the words of 19:1–3. All that God has made bears the marks of His wonder (111:2). **They shall speak:** The task of the righteous is to declare the works of the Lord to all people. **an everlasting kingdom:** Because the rule of God is eternal, the message of His wonders needs to be delivered to all people in the present time.

145:14 The words **upholds all who fall** describe the ongoing ac-

tions of God on behalf of the needy in a way that may suggest that these words are absolute and invariable. Yet the same people who sang the songs of praise also cried out to the Lord with the psalms of lament. In a world in which life is tough, the psalms delight in affirming that God is good and that there is no limit to His power, His love, and His concern for His people. The psalms celebrate each example of God's saving mercy and each example of His grace. Time after time, instance after instance—the whole becomes a beautiful tapestry of His ongoing grace.

145:17 The pairing of **righteous** and **gracious** is a powerful demonstration of the character of God. His righteousness leads to

extol

(Heb. *rum*) (30:1; 34:3; 145:1; Ex. 15:2; Is. 25:1) Strong's #7311

The Hebrew word translated *extol* here is one of the many Hebrew words for praise in the Psalms. The specific meaning of this word is "to hold high" or "to esteem greatly." In contrast to King David's praise of the Lord as the exalted One (99:9; 2 Sam. 22:47), Lucifer's downfall came in trying to exalt himself above God (Is. 14:13). Thus in a negative sense, the word *rum* can mean "haughty" (see 2 Sam. 22:28). The psalmist's strong determination to honor and esteem God in 145:1 is indicated by the highly energized verb he employs in this passage, a verb which indicates a command directed to himself.

18^m The LORD is near to all who call upon Him,
 To all who call upon Him ⁿin truth.
 19 He will fulfill the desire of those who fear Him;
 He also will hear their cry and save them.
 20 ^oThe LORD preserves all who love Him,
 But all the wicked He will destroy.
 21 My mouth shall speak the praise of the LORD,
 And all flesh shall bless His holy name
 Forever and ever.

PSALM 146

The Happiness of Those Whose Help Is the LORD

Praise ¹ the LORD!
^a Praise the LORD, O my soul!
 2 ^b While I live I will praise the LORD;
 I will sing praises to my God while I have my being.
 3 ^c Do not put your trust in princes,
 Nor in ² a son of man, in whom *there*
 is no ³ help.
 4 ^d His spirit departs, he returns to his earth;
 In that very day ^e his plans perish.
 5 ^f Happy *is he* who has the God of Jacob for his help,
 Whose hope *is* in the LORD his God,

18 ^m [Deut. 4:7]
ⁿ [John 4:24]
 20 ^o [Ps. 31:23]
 PSALM 146
 1 ^a Ps. 103:1 ¹ Heb.
Hallelujah
 2 ^b Ps. 104:33
 3 ^c [Is. 2:22] ² A human being
³ salvation
 4 ^d [Eccl. 12:7] ^e [Ps. 33:10; 1 Cor. 2:6]
 5 ^f Jer. 17:7

6 ^g Gen. 1:1; Ex. 20:11; Acts 4:24; Rev. 14:7
 7 ^h Ps. 103:6 ⁱ Ps. 107:9 / Ps. 107:10; Is. 61:1
 8 ^k Matt. 9:30; [John 9:7, 32, 33] ¹ Luke 13:13
 9 ^m Deut. 10:18; Ps. 68:5 ⁿ Ps. 147:6
⁴ Lit. *makes crooked*
 10 ^o Ex. 15:18; Ps. 10:16; [Rev. 11:15]

PSALM 147
 1 ^a Ps. 92:1 ^b Ps. 135:3 ^c Ps. 33:1
¹ Heb. *Hallelujah*
 2 ^d Ps. 102:16
^e Deut. 30:3; Is. 11:12; 56:8; Ezek. 39:28

6 ^g Who made heaven and earth,
 The sea, and all that *is* in them;
 Who keeps truth forever,
 7 ^h Who executes justice for the oppressed,
ⁱ Who gives food to the hungry.
^j The LORD gives freedom to the prisoners.
 8 ^k The LORD opens *the eyes of* the blind;
^l The LORD raises those who are bowed down;
 The LORD loves the righteous.
 9 ^m The LORD watches over the strangers;
 He relieves the fatherless and widow;
ⁿ But the way of the wicked He ⁴ turns upside down.
 10 ^o The LORD shall reign forever—
 Your God, O Zion, to all generations.

Praise the LORD!

PSALM 147

Praise to God for His Word and Providence

Praise ¹ the LORD!
 For ^a *it* is good to sing praises to our God;
^b For *it* is pleasant, and ^c praise is beautiful.
 2 The LORD ^d builds up Jerusalem;
^e He gathers together the outcasts of Israel.

His discriminating judgment; His grace leads to His saving works and forgiving actions. God both preserves and destroys based on His infallible insight into human intent and purposes.

145:21 My mouth: David resolved to be faithful in praising the Lord (146:1), but he also saw his praise as one part of the praise of all creation—that is, **all flesh**.

Psalm 146, a psalm of descriptive praise, is part of the grand pinnacle of praise in this book of praises. Each of the last five psalms begins and ends with the Hebrew word “Hallelujah!” This final set of praise psalms forms an exuberant ending to Israel’s orchestrated responses to the wonder of God and His gracious works on their behalf. Psalm 146 also shows some similarities with wisdom literature. The structure of the poem is as follows: (1) a call for a life of praise to God (vv. 1, 2); (2) a warning against putting one’s trust even in good people (vv. 3, 4); (3) a blessing on the one who finds help in God (vv. 5–7); (4) a description of the wonderful works of God in the lives of His people (vv. 8, 9); (5) a call to praise God the great King (v. 10). **146:1, 2 My soul** is another way of speaking of one’s inner being and is often used as a substitute for the pronouns “I” or “me.” **While I live:** The poet makes a strong vow to praise the Lord for the rest of his life.

146:3 in princes: The point is that even the best of people are not adequate help in times of terrible stress. Even princes are mortal, and are not able even to help themselves (118:9). In contrast is the individual who finds ultimate help in God who lives forever (vv. 5–7).

146:5, 6 Happy indicates a deep and abiding pleasure, a manifest joy. This is the proper description of one whose help and hope is in

God. **Who made heaven and earth:** Creation themes pervade the hymns of Israel (Ps. 104); here the point is that the Creator of the universe is the One who comes to the aid of the righteous.

146:8, 9 the eyes of the blind: In these two verses there is a special focus on the gracious actions of God on behalf of the impaired, the helpless, the lonely, and the needy (38:6). **But the way of the wicked:** The contrast in God’s treatment of the righteous and the wicked is as pronounced in this psalm as it is in other psalms (1:4, 6; 147:6).

146:10 The Lord shall reign forever: The Bible presents several dimensions of the rule of God: He is King as Creator (Ps. 93); He is King as Savior of His people (Ps. 99); and He is King as the coming One (Ps. 98). This verse speaks of God’s present and eternal reign rather than specifically of His coming rule at the end of time. **Praise the Lord:** The use of the Hebrew term *hallelujah* at the end of the psalm balances its use at the beginning.

Psalm 147, a psalm of descriptive praise, places a strong emphasis on creation themes. This anonymous poem was likely written following the return of the Jewish people to Jerusalem from the Babylonian captivity (also Ps. 126; 132; 135). The structure is threefold, with each section introduced by a command to praise the Lord: (1) a command to praise the Lord for His restorative mercies (vv. 1–6); (2) a command to praise the Lord for the joy He finds in His people (vv. 7–11); (3) a command to praise the Lord for His Word (vv. 12–20).

147:1 The sentiment **praise is beautiful** is also expressed in 33:1. The people of God may bring their offerings of praise and worship to the Lord.

147:2, 3 builds up Jerusalem: The few people who had returned

- 3 ^fHe heals the brokenhearted
And binds up their ²wounds.
- 4 ^gHe counts the number of the stars;
He calls them all by name.
- 5 ^hGreat is our Lord, and ⁱmighty in
power;
^jHis understanding is infinite.
- 6 ^kThe LORD lifts up the humble;
He casts the wicked down to the
ground.
- 7 Sing to the LORD with thanksgiving;
Sing praises on the harp to our God,
- 8 ^lWho covers the heavens with clouds,
Who prepares rain for the earth,
Who makes grass to grow on the
mountains.
- 9 ^mHe gives to the beast its food,
And ⁿto the young ravens that cry.
- 10 ^oHe does not delight in the strength of
the horse;
He takes no pleasure in the legs of a
man.
- 11 The LORD takes pleasure in those
who fear Him,
In those who hope in His mercy.
- 12 Praise the LORD, O Jerusalem!
Praise your God, O Zion!
- 13 For He has strengthened the bars of
your gates;
He has blessed your children within
you.
- 14 ^pHe makes peace in your borders,
And ^qfills you with ³the finest
wheat.

3 ^f [Ps. 51:17]; Is. 61:1; Luke 4:18 ² Lit. sorrows
4 ^g Is. 40:26
5 ^h Ps. 48:1 ⁱ Nah. 1:3 ^j Is. 40:28
6 ^k Ps. 146:8, 9
8 ^l Job 38:26; Ps. 104:13
9 ^m Job 38:41
ⁿ [Matt. 6:26]
10 ^o Ps. 33:16, 17
14 ^p Is. 54:13; 60:17,
18 ^q Ps. 132:15 ³ Lit. fat of wheat

- 15 ^rHe sends out His command to the
earth;
His word runs very swiftly.
- 16 ^sHe gives snow like wool;
He scatters the frost like ashes;
- 17 He casts out His hail like
⁴morsels;
Who can stand before His cold?
- 18 ^tHe sends out His word and melts
them;
He causes His wind to blow, and the
waters flow.
- 19 ^uHe declares His word to
Jacob,
^vHis statutes and His judgments to
Israel.
- 20 ^wHe has not dealt thus with any
nation;
And as for His judgments, they have
not known them.

⁵ Praise the LORD!

PSALM 148

Praise to the LORD from Creation

Praise ¹ the LORD!

- Praise the LORD from the heavens;
Praise Him in the heights!
- 2 Praise Him, all His angels;
Praise Him, all His hosts!
- 3 Praise Him, sun and moon;
Praise Him, all you stars of light!
- 4 Praise Him, ^ayou heavens of
heavens,
And ^byou waters above the heavens!

15 ^r [Ps. 107:20]
16 ^s Job 37:6
17 ⁴ fragments of food
18 ^t Job 37:10
19 ^u Deut. 33:4; Ps. 103:7 ^v Mal. 4:4
20 ^w Deut. 4:32-34;
[Rom. 3:1, 2] ⁵ Heb. Hallelujah

PSALM 148

1 ¹ Heb. Hallelujah
4 ^a Deut. 10:14;
1 Kin. 8:27; [Neh. 9:6] ^b Gen. 1:7

from captivity faced an immense task. But they needed to know, as do all subsequent people who do the work of the Lord, that because the work was God's, He would see that it was accomplished. It is a privilege for God's people to be counted as part of the fulfillment of the task, but the glory belongs to Him. **He heals the brokenhearted:** God's principal work is within the human heart (51:10-12).

147:4-6 He counts the number of the stars: Quoted from Is. 40:26, these words describe the infinite knowledge of God. But the words signify more: God's principal interest is not in stars or insects; God's interest is in His people (v. 11). **lifts up the humble:** God's greatness may be approached only by the humble; He resists the proud, but He comforts the lowly (86:14; 146:9; James 4:6).

147:7-9 Sing praises: The second movement of the psalm begins with a new call for the praise of God (vv. 1, 12). **rain for the earth:** A regular part of God's covenantal mercies is the bringing of rain for produce and livelihood (Lev. 26:1-13). More than that, God sends rain on the just and the unjust because of His continuing mercy to all. We may describe the actions of these verses as God's "regular mercies." **beast:** Jesus describes God's care as extending even to sparrows (Matt. 10:29).

147:10, 11 He does not delight: The enjoyment God finds in His people is greater than any pleasure He may find in horses or runners. Forms of the verb *delight* and *takes pleasure* are found in 40:6-8; 51:16. These are God's responses to true piety; He enjoys people who respond rightly to Him (86:4). **To fear God** is to be properly responsive to Him in awe and wonder.

147:12 The words **praise the Lord** introduce the third movement

of the psalm. This section was a reminder to the new settlers in the land of promise that God had blessed them in numerous ways. He had given them protection, posterity, peace, and productivity. **147:19, 20** God's word goes throughout His creation, causing snow, frost, hail, wind, and every other aspect of weather to obey His command. Here He gives His word to His people. Shall we obey as does the wind? Or shall we be the only element of creation that is unresponsive to the divine will? **not dealt thus:** Israel confessed the unique revelation that it had received from God and acknowledged their unique responsibility. Our responsibility is as profound as Israel's, for we too have heard the testimonies of the Creator through Scripture.

Psalm 148 is a complex psalm. Because of its many references to the creation, it can be labeled a wisdom psalm, and more particularly a creation psalm (Ps. 19; 104). It is also highly charged with praise. Like Ps. 19, this psalm moves from the heavens to the human heart. The structure is as follows: (1) a call for the heavens to give God praise because He is the Creator (vv. 1-6); (2) a call for the elements of the earth to give God praise because He is also their Creator (vv. 7-12); (3) a call for the people of God to give God praise because of His wonder in their midst (vv. 13, 14).

148:1-5 Praise Him: All of the universe is called to boast of the wonder of God. In this first section, praise is commanded from all aspects of the heavens above, including the angelic hosts. The language **waters above the heavens** comes from the creation story in Gen. 1:7. **He commanded:** Genesis 1 describes creation as a spontaneous response to the word of God (33:9; 147:15).

- 5 Let them praise the name of the LORD,
For ^cHe commanded and they were created.
- 6 ^dHe also established them forever and ever;
He made a decree which shall not pass away.
- 7 Praise the LORD from the earth,
^eYou great sea creatures and all the depths;
- 8 Fire and hail, snow and clouds;
Stormy wind, fulfilling His word;
- 9 ^fMountains and all hills;
Fruitful trees and all cedars;
- 10 Beasts and all cattle;
Creeping things and flying fowl;
- 11 Kings of the earth and all peoples;
Princes and all judges of the earth;
- 12 Both young men and maidens;
Old men and children.
- 13 Let them praise the name of the LORD,
For His ^gname alone is exalted;
His glory *is* above the earth and heaven.
- 14 And He ^hhas exalted the ²horn of His people,
The praise of ⁱall His saints—
Of the children of Israel,
^jA people near to Him.
- 3 Praise the LORD!

5 ^c Gen. 1:1, 6
6 ^d Ps. 89:37; [Jer. 31:35, 36; 33:20, 25]
7 ^e Is. 43:20
9 ^f Is. 44:23; 49:13
13 ^g Ps. 8:1
14 ^h 1 Sam. 2:1; Ps. 75:10 ⁱ Ps. 149:9
/ Lev. 10:3; Eph. 2:17 ² Strength or dominion ³ Heb. Hallelujah

PSALM 149

1 ^a Ps. 33:3 ¹ Heb. Hallelujah
2 ^b Judg. 8:23; Zech. 9:9; Matt. 21:5
3 ^c Ex. 15:20; Ps. 81:2
4 ^d Ps. 35:27 ^e Ps. 132:16; Is. 61:3
² meek
5 ^f Job 35:10
6 ^g Heb. 4:12; Rev. 1:16
9 ^h Deut. 7:1, 2; Ezek. 28:26 ⁱ Ps. 148:14; 1 Cor. 6:2
³ Heb. Hallelujah

PSALM 149

Praise to God for His Salvation and Judgment

Praise ¹ the LORD!

- ^a Sing to the LORD a new song,
And His praise in the assembly of saints.
- 2 Let Israel rejoice in their Maker;
Let the children of Zion be joyful in their ^bKing.
- 3 ^cLet them praise His name with the dance;
Let them sing praises to Him with the timbrel and harp.
- 4 For ^dthe LORD takes pleasure in His people;
^eHe will beautify the ²humble with salvation.
- 5 Let the saints be joyful in glory;
Let them ^fsing aloud on their beds.
- 6 Let the high praises of God *be* in their mouth,
And ^ga two-edged sword in their hand,
To execute vengeance on the nations,
And punishments on the peoples;
- 8 To bind their kings with chains,
And their nobles with fetters of iron;
- 9 ^hTo execute on them the written judgment—
ⁱThis honor have all His saints.
- 3 Praise the LORD!

148:7, 8 The focus of the psalm switches to **the earth**. All hosts above and all creatures below are to praise our great God. **great sea creatures**: This includes real sea creatures that inspired awe and wonder, as well as creatures of mythology that the Canaanites had made into gods. Israel called on all creatures to praise God—both those that are His creation and those that their neighbors believed to be gods. In this way, every principality and power, every creature known and unknown, was called to worship God. **Fire and hail**: All natural phenomena are at God's command (147:15–18). **148:14 the horn of His people**: The people are pictured here as an animal whose strength is in its horn. **near**: When we consider the meaning of God's holiness (99:1; Is. 6:3), the marvel that He approaches us to mercifully provide for us becomes overwhelming. **Psalm 149**, an exuberant call to praise God, was used by the army

of Israel as well as by the people in their worship of God. The structure of the psalm is: (1) a call for a new song of praise (v. 1); (2) a call for the joyful worship of praise in the congregation of the Lord (vv. 2–5); (3) a call for the joyful worship of praise in the army of the Lord (vv. 6–8); (4) a concluding shout of praise (v. 9).

149:1 The call for a **new song** comes at several points in the Psalms (33:3; 40:3; 144:9). These words encourage more than just novelty; they call for freshness and integrity in performing music. **In the assembly of saints**: One of the primary emphases in the Book of Psalms is that the praise of God is to take place in the center of the worshipping community. Praise unites the people of God (33:1–3).

149:2–5 Maker: Not only is God the Creator of the universe (8:3; 19:1; 104:1–35), He is particularly the Creator of His people (100:3) and their great King (Ps. 93). In the temple of the preexilic period, sacred **dance** was an integral aspect of worship (150:4). **Saints** refers to the redeemed who have been made God's people by His grace. The Hebrew word is related to the term meaning "loyal love" (13:5). The *saints* are those who demonstrate in their lives the characteristics of God whom they serve. **on their beds**: In some of the festivals of Israel, such as Passover, the people would recline at feast tables as a vivid symbol that they had been redeemed. In the first Passover (Ex. 12), the people were to eat standing, ready to travel. The custom had developed for the people to recline at the table, symbolizing their redemption and enjoyment of God's work in their lives.

149:6 two-edged sword: The focus of the psalm switches from the congregation at worship to the army in training. Israel's army was to be the vanguard for the battle of the Lord. Their training was to have a strong component of praise and worship to God.

149:9 the written judgment: It is likely that this is a direct reference to the Law (perhaps Deut. 7:1, 2) in which God decreed His judgment on the peoples of the land of Canaan.

sing

(Heb. *shir*) (149:1; 137:3, 4; 1 Sam. 18:6; 1 Chr. 16:9; Is. 5:1; Zeph. 2:14) Strong's #7891

This Hebrew word signifies singing, often with various musical instruments accompanying (1 Kin. 10:12; 1 Chr. 15:16; 2 Chr. 9:11). It is used most frequently as a participle meaning "singers" (especially in Nehemiah) and as a summons—of oneself or of the entire world—to sing praises to the Lord (13:6; 21:13; 96:1; 2 Chr. 35:25; Ezra 7:7). Singing is often associated with giving praise to God (106:12; Judg. 5:3). Songs are sung to the Lord to extol His great power and His mercy to His people (59:16; 89:1; Ex. 15:1; 1 Chr. 16:23, 24; Jer. 20:13).



Trumpet

The trumpet was used by the priests during services of sacrifice, especially to signal the Day of Atonement. The trumpet was also used to rally troops on the battlefield. Made of metal or bones, the trumpet featured a sounding air column not quite two feet long. This short length gave this instrument a high, shrill sound. The tone of the trumpet apparently could be regulated (2 Chr. 5:12). One distinctive type of trumpet or horn used by the Hebrew people was the ram's horn, also known by its Hebrew name, the *shophar* (Hos. 5:8). The *shophar* was the greatest of the Jewish ritual instruments. Eventually the horn of a mountain goat was used for this instrument, rather than the horn of a ram. The *shophar* was basically a signaling instrument, used to assemble the army, to sound an attack, or to sound an alarm.



Shophar

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PSALM 150

Let All Things Praise the LORD

Praise^a ¹ the LORD!

- Praise God in His sanctuary;
Praise Him in His mighty ²firmament!
- ² Praise Him for His mighty acts;
Praise Him according to His excellent
^bgreatness!
- ³ Praise Him with the sound of the
³trumpet;
Praise Him with the lute and harp!
- ⁴ Praise Him with the timbrel and
dance;
Praise Him with stringed
instruments and flutes!
- ⁵ Praise Him with loud cymbals;
Praise Him with clashing cymbals!
- ⁶ Let everything that has breath praise
the LORD.

⁴ Praise the LORD!

PSALM 150 ¹ ^a Ps. 145:5, 6 ¹ Heb. *Hallelujah* ² *expanse of heaven* ² ^b Deut. 3:24 ³ ³ *cornet* ⁶ ⁴ Heb. *Hallelujah*

Psalm 150, a psalm of praise, is a development of the Hebrew word *hallelujah*, meaning "Praise the LORD." How fitting that this book of praises—the meaning of the name of the Book of Psalms in Hebrew—ends in repeated commands to praise the Lord. The structure is as follows: (1) a call for the praise of God in heaven above (v. 1); (2) a call for the praise of God for His great works (v. 2); (3) a call for the praise of God with all instruments (vv. 3–5); (4) a call for the praise of God from all creatures here below (v. 6).

150:1 in His sanctuary: The intent is for praise to come to God in His dwelling in heaven (148:1–4).

150:3–5 The varied instruments in this section include horns, reeds, strings, and percussion, encompassing many of the instruments known in Israel at that time (33:2, 3; 98:4–6).

150:6 everything that has breath: The very breath that God gives us should be used to praise Him. As long as we live we should praise our Creator (146:1, 2). By His breath God created all things (33:6), and by our breath we should adore Him. The Book of Psalms begins with God's blessing on the righteous (1:1) and concludes with all of creation blessing its loving Creator.

praise

(Heb. *halal*) (146:1, 10; 147:1; 149:3; 150:1, 6) Strong's #1984

The verb *halal* is a common Hebrew word for *praise*. It may be used to exalt human beauty (Song 6:9), a virtuous wife (Prov. 31:30), or a wise man (Prov. 12:8), but most frequently *halal* is used to praise God. It often occurs in the imperative, expressing an exhortation or command: "Praise!" (135:1) or "Praise Him" (150:2). The most familiar example of the imperative is *halleluyah* (meaning "Praise the LORD!"; see 146:1; 150:6), a combination of *halal* and the divine name *Yah*. The last five psalms present a climax to the praises contained in the Book of Psalms, commanding believers (145:10), the Israelites (149:2), the angels (148:2), Jerusalem itself (147:12), the heavens (148:1), and finally every being that has breath (150:6) to praise the Almighty God, the Creator of the universe.

PROVERBS

EVERYONE KNOWS THE VALUE of good advice. Listening to those who are wiser than we are gives us the benefit of their hard-won experience. Growing up, getting along with others, and holding a job all would be impossible without guidance from folks who have been there before. The Book of Proverbs gives that kind of help.

But the book is more than a collection of “tips and tricks.” It passes on a core of knowledge and experience that God says we *must* have if we are to live successfully. These proverbs are not merely old sayings that concern people in far-off lands, but universal principles that apply to all people of all times. They speak to modern problems as much as to ancient ones because they concern human nature and God’s ways. Human nature has not changed since Solomon’s time; neither has God’s. Only the landscape around us has changed.



Boundary marker of Eanna-shum-iddina, governor of Sealand (Babylonian, c. 1100 B.C.). Proverbs 23:10 prohibits the moving of boundary stones, which would be the equivalent of stealing land.

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Author and Date King Solomon wrote many proverbs, more than those which have survived to this day. The title of the Book of Proverbs (1:1) and two collections of maxims within it (10:1; 25:1) identify him as their author. First Kings confirms this by attributing three thousand proverbs and more than a thousand songs to him (1 Kin. 4:32). In fact, the writer of Kings boasted that Solomon’s wisdom exceeded that of all the wise men in the East and in Egypt (1 Kin. 4:30). Solomon’s interests and research covered nearly every aspect of knowledge, from zoology and botany to grammar and theology. To think of wisdom in Israel was to think of Solomon, who was granted wisdom by God’s gracious gift (see 1 Kin. 3:12).

Although Solomon was the main writer of the Book of Proverbs (10:1—22:16), some proverbs were written by other writers, and some of Solomon’s were not added to the book until after his death. Agur wrote chapter 30, and Lemuel wrote 31:1–9. Moreover, it is not clear whether Solomon wrote the first nine chapters; they may have been contributed by someone else as an introduction to the book. Proverbs 25:1 tells us that a group of assistants to King Hezekiah (who reigned about 729–699 B.C.) compiled and added the proverbs of Solomon contained in chapters 25–29. The Book of Proverbs as we know it may well have been completed during Hezekiah’s time, but we cannot be certain, because we have no information about Agur (ch. 30) or Lemuel (31:1–9) besides their names.

Structure Solomon’s 375 proverbs (10:1—22:16) appear as a large collection with no particular organization to the whole. In places a few sentences on one theme appear together, but other sentences on that theme often

appear elsewhere as well. we might expect all proverbs on poverty to be in one section and all on child-rearing in another, but these and many other topics are interspersed throughout the collection. sometimes repeated words or sounds are the link between separate sentences. or it may be that phrases repeat, suggesting a new linking of ideas.

In addition to the proverbs that stand alone, at the beginning and ending of the book sections of extended instruction appear together (chs. 1–9; 30; 31). these chapters contain some of the same proverbs as the rest of the book, but as units they differ greatly from the main section of solomon's proverbs (10:1—22:16). unlike the scattered arrangement of solomon's main section, these chapters develop themes.

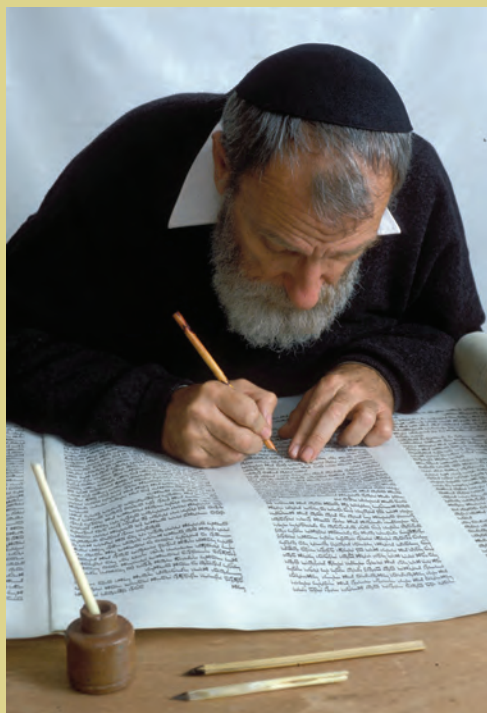
Purpose and Theme the prologue states the book's purpose and theme (1:1–7): it is to give a course of instruction in wisdom, preparation for life, and the ways of life in God's world. Many topics, such as riches, success, and social relations, appear in other collections of wisdom literature that have survived from the ancient Middle East, but they are treated differently. Israel's contribution to wisdom literature was to place all wisdom in the context of faith in the Lord. the words "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge" (1:7) set the record straight, so to speak. this is the foundation on which all other wise sayings stand. It is the Book of Proverbs' central idea: Fear of the Lord motivates us to obey God's commandments, and obedience to them constitutes true wisdom.

CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

although Jesus is not identified by name in 8:22–31, it is clear that the writer is describing him. wisdom, godlike and perfect, is personified: "I have been established from everlasting, from the beginning, before there was ever an earth . . . when he prepared the heavens, I was there . . . I was beside him as a master craftsman; and I was daily his delight" (8:23, 27, 30). compare that to John 1:1, 3, "In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God . . . all things were made through him, and without him nothing was made that was made." this divine wisdom is also the source of biological and spiritual life (3:18; 8:35). It is right and moral (8:8, 9), and it is available to all who will receive it.

PROVERBS OUTLINE

- I. Prologue: title, purpose, and theme 1:1–7
- II. the invitation and instruction of wisdom
1:8—9:18
- III. solomon's proverbs 10:1—22:16
- IV. the sayings of the wise 22:17—24:22
- V. Further sayings of the wise 24:23–34
- VI. solomon's proverbs transcribed by
hezekiah's men 25:1—29:27
- VII. the instruction of a girl 30:1–33
- VIII. the instruction of king Lemuel's mother
31:1–9
- IX. Epilogue: the acrostic poem on the virtuous
wife 31:10–31



A book like Proverbs would have likely been given to scribes and copied over and over.

Z. Radovan/www.BibleLandPictures.com

The Beginning of Knowledge

The ^aproverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel:

- ² To know wisdom and instruction,
To ¹perceive the words of understanding,
- ³ To receive the instruction of wisdom,
Justice, judgment, and equity;
- ⁴ To give prudence to the ^bsimple,
To the young man knowledge and discretion—
- ⁵ ^cA wise *man* will hear and increase learning,
And a man of understanding will ²attain wise counsel,
- ⁶ To understand a proverb and an enigma,
The words of the wise and their ^driddles.
- ⁷ ^eThe fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of knowledge,
But fools despise wisdom and instruction.

Shun Evil Counsel

- ⁸ ^fMy son, hear the instruction of your father,
And do not forsake the law of your mother;
- ⁹ For they *will be* a ^ggraceful ornament on your head,
And chains about your neck.
- ¹⁰ My son, if sinners entice you,
^hDo not consent.

CHAPTER 1

¹ ^a 1 kin. 4:32; Prov. 10:1; 25:1; Eccl. 12:9
² ⁱ understand or discern
⁴ ^b Prov. 9:4
⁵ ^c Prov. 9:9
² ^{acquire}
⁶ ^d num. 12:8; Ps. 78:2; dan. 8:23
⁷ ^e Job 28:28; Ps. 111:10; Prov. 9:10; 15:33; [Eccl. 12:13]
⁸ ^f Prov. 4:1
⁹ ^g Prov. 3:22
¹⁰ ^h Gen. 39:7-10; deut. 13:8; Ps. 50:18; [Eph. 5:11]

¹¹ ⁱ Prov. 12:6; Jer. 5:26
¹² ^j Ps. 28:1 ³ or the grave
¹³ ^k ¹ it. *wealth*
⁵ ^{plunder}
¹⁵ ^k Ps. 1:1; Prov. 4:14 ^l Ps. 119:101
¹⁶ ^m Prov. 6:17, 18; [Is. 59:7]; r om. 3:15
¹⁷ ⁶ ^{futility} ⁷ ¹ it. *lord of the wing*
¹⁹ ⁿ Prov. 15:27; [1 tim. 6:10]
²⁰ ^o Prov. 8:1; 9:3; [John 7:37] ⁸ ^{in the street}
²¹ ⁹ ¹ XX, syr., tg. *top of the walls*; vg. *the head of multitudes*
²² ¹ ^{naive} ² ^{naivete}

- ¹¹ If they say, “Come with us,
Let us ⁱlie in wait to *shed* blood;
Let us lurk secretly for the innocent without cause;
- ¹² Let us swallow them alive like ³Sheol,
And whole, ^jlike those who go down to the Pit;
- ¹³ We shall find all *kinds* of precious ⁴possessions,
We shall fill our houses with ⁵spoil;
- ¹⁴ Cast in your lot among us,
Let us all have one purse”—
- ¹⁵ My son, ^kdo not walk in the way with them,
^lKeep your foot from their path;
^{16m}For their feet run to evil,
And they make haste to shed blood.
- ¹⁷ Surely, in ⁶vain the net is spread
In the sight of any ⁷bird;
- ¹⁸ But they lie in wait for their *own* blood,
They lurk secretly for their *own* lives.
- ¹⁹ⁿ So are the ways of everyone who is greedy for gain;
It takes away the life of its owners.

The Call of Wisdom

- ²⁰ Wisdom calls aloud ⁸outside;
She raises her voice in the open squares.
- ²¹ She cries out in the ⁹chief concourses,
At the openings of the gates in the city
She speaks her words:
^{22o} How long, you ¹simple ones, will you love ²simplicity?
For scorners delight in their scorning,
And fools hate knowledge.

1:2, 3 verses 2–6 explain the purpose of the Book of Proverbs. the verbs **to know**, **to perceive**, and **to receive** refer to the ways we acquire wisdom. **Wisdom** refers to skill. **Instruction** could also be translated *discipline*; it refers to the process of receiving knowledge and then applying it to daily life. a person develops discipline in life by applying words of insight.

1:3 the word for **wisdom** in this verse is different from the word used in v. 1. this word denotes applied skill, such as that of an artisan or a musician. that is, wisdom affects living much the way the skills of artists affect the practice of their craft. the words **justice**, **judgment**, and **equity** give wisdom, discipline, and words of insight a moral context. Biblical wisdom involves all of life; it involves a change of behavior and a commitment to justice.

1:4 **The simple** or “naive” is young, inexperienced, and likely to make mistakes. the terms **prudence** and **discretion** include the harsh facts of life. a wise person has learned by experience how to distinguish what is true, praiseworthy, and good from what is false, shameful, and bad (see r om. 12:1, 2).

1:5, 6 **increase learning**: no one finishes the study of wisdom; there is always more to learn. verse 6 speaks of the lessons that a more mature person gains from the study of a **proverb**, **an enigma**, **words of the wise**, and **riddles**.

1:7 **The fear of the LORD** is the most basic ingredient in wisdom. all wisdom depends on knowledge of God and submission to his will. to know something but not to know God overturns the value of having knowledge in the first place. **Fools** have rejected the fear

of the LORD. the term **despise** packs a strongly negative punch—not fearing God is the same as rejecting wisdom outright (see dan. 11:32; John 17:3).

1:8, 9 the opening words of wisdom’s instruction come as an appeal from parents to their **son** (a generic term for child)—a theme that continues throughout the book. Both **father** and **mother** teach.

1:10–14 **if sinners entice you**: this is the first of several texts in which wisdom teaches by means of a story.

1:15–18 the parents speak words of caution. one step on this precipitous path is a step toward destruction. spreading a **net** in the sight of the bird one wishes to trap would be a fruitless task. yet the fool is less sensible than the bird; he will watch the trap being set and get caught in it anyway.

1:19 **It takes away the life**: these words conclude the story and introduce a theme that the following passages develop further: the study of wisdom is a matter of life and death.

1:20, 21 the word **wisdom** is plural but the verb **calls** is singular. the plural is intensive—it calls attention to the word and heightens its meaning.

1:22–27 wisdom addresses the **simple ones**, or “open ones,” the naive. these are young people who have not yet made up their minds about life or the direction they will take. wisdom ridicules those who reject her when they come to face the inevitable judgment of their foolishness (see Ps. 2:4). yet wisdom laughs with joy at God’s works and has delight in the people of God (8:30, 31).

- 23 Turn at my rebuke;
Surely ^pI will pour out my spirit on you;
I will make my words known to you.
- 24 ^qBecause I have called and you refused,
I have stretched out my hand and no one regarded,
- 25 Because you ^rdisdained all my counsel,
And would have none of my rebuke,
- 26 ^sI also will laugh at your calamity;
I will mock when your terror comes,
- 27 When ^tyour terror comes like a storm,
And your destruction comes like a whirlwind,
When distress and anguish come upon you.
- 28 “Then ^u they will call on me, but I will not answer;
They will seek me diligently, but they will not find me.
- 29 Because they ^vhated knowledge
And did not ^wchoose the fear of the LORD,
- 30 ^xThey would have none of my counsel
And despised my every rebuke.
- 31 Therefore ^ythey shall eat the fruit of their own way,
And be filled to the full with their own fancies.
- 32 For the ^zturning away of the simple will slay them,
And the complacency of fools will destroy them;
- 33 But whoever listens to me will dwell ^zsafely,
And ^awill be ⁴secure, without fear of evil.”

23 ^p Is. 32:15; Joel 2:28; [John 7:39]
24 ^q Is. 65:12; 66:4; Jer. 7:13; Zech. 7:11
25 ^r Ps. 107:11; Luke 7:30
26 ^s Ps. 2:4
27 ^t [Prov. 10:24, 25]
28 ^u 1 sam. 8:18; Job 27:9; 35:12; Ps. 18:41; Is. 1:15; Jer. 11:11; 14:12; Ezek. 8:18; Mic. 3:4; Zech. 7:13; [James 4:3]
29 ^v Job 21:14; Prov. 1:22 ^w Ps. 119:173
30 ^x Ps. 81:11; Prov. 1:25
31 ^y Job 4:8; Prov. 5:22, 23; 22:8; Is. 3:11; Jer. 6:19
32 ^z waywardness
33 ^a Prov. 3:24-26
^a Ps. 112:7 ⁴ at ease

CHAPTER 2

1 ^a [Prov. 4:21]
4 ^b [Prov. 3:14]
5 ^c [James 1:5, 6]
6 ^d 1 kin. 3:9, 12; [Job 32:8; James 1:5]
7 ^e [Ps. 84:11]; Prov. 30:5
8 ^f [1 sam. 2:9]; Ps. 66:9
11 ^g Prov. 4:6; 6:22
13 ^h Ps. 82:5; Prov. 4:19; [John 3:19, 20]

The Value of Wisdom

- 2 My son, if you receive my words,
And ^atreasure my commands within you,
- 2 So that you incline your ear to wisdom,
And apply your heart to understanding;
- 3 Yes, if you cry out for discernment,
And lift up your voice for understanding,
- 4 ^bIf you seek her as silver,
And search for her as for hidden treasures;
- 5 ^cThen you will understand the fear of the LORD,
And find the knowledge of God.
- 6 ^dFor the LORD gives wisdom;
From His mouth *come* knowledge and understanding;
- 7 He stores up sound wisdom for the upright;
^eHe is a shield to those who walk uprightly;
- 8 He guards the paths of justice,
And ^fpreserves the way of His saints.
- 9 Then you will understand righteousness and justice,
Equity *and* every good path.
- 10 When wisdom enters your heart,
And knowledge is pleasant to your soul,
- 11 Discretion will preserve you;
^gUnderstanding will keep you,
- 12 To deliver you from the way of evil,
From the man who speaks perverse things,
- 13 From those who leave the paths of uprightness
To ^hwalk in the ways of darkness;

1:28-33 I will not answer: when fools despise wisdom, they must face the results of their choice. Their hatred for wisdom arises out of a refusal to fear God (v. 29). verses 31, 32 pick up the theme of v. 19 from the parents' instruction: Fools bring about their own destruction. Their rejection of wisdom **will slay them**. This dismal warning ends with a promise of life to the few who will **listen**; they will find safety and ease.

2:1-4 These verses begin the second of the **my son** passages and tie the concepts of wisdom and the knowledge of God more closely together. On the one hand, wisdom is near and available. yet it is not easy to embrace.

2:5-8 when a person seeks wisdom, he or she finds it in **the fear of the LORD**, or **the knowledge of God**. Those who know God fear (revere) him. verses 6-8 resemble the words of a psalm (compare Ps. 91). **sound wisdom:** here is another word for wisdom, a word that may be translated "abiding success" or "victory."

2:8-13 the phrase **paths of justice** (v. 8) contrasts strongly with **ways of darkness** (v. 13). This contrast introduces one of the dominant themes of Proverbs, the contrast of two roads. Jesus spoke of two roads, one narrow and the other broad (Matt. 7:13, 14). The right road is marked by demands of **righteousness, justice, and equity** (see 1:3). These demands come from God's law.

2:10, 11 enters your heart: These words stress the internalization

of wisdom. The proverbs do not merely provide knowledge; they provide insight to be learned intimately and practiced.

2:12-15 The way of evil (v. 12) contrasts directly with the way of wisdom. It is characterized by **perverse things**, by lies and distortion, by twisting and deception, and by darkness and deviousness.

equity

(heb. *mesar*) (2:9; Ps. 17:2; 75:2; 99:4) strong's #4339

The verbal root of this word means "to be smooth, straight, or level." Most of the occurrences of this word are in Psalms and Proverbs. Quite frequently, especially in Psalms, the word for equity appears in legal contexts with "righteousness" and "judgment," indicating a fair or impartial hearing (8:6-8; Ps. 9:8; 58:1; 96:10; 98:9; Is. 45:19). Proverbs often associates *equity* with *wisdom* (8:6; 23:15, 16). It is used by the biblical writers to describe the speech of a righteous person, wisdom, and even God himself (8:6; Is. 33:15; 45:19). God takes pleasure in equity; thus it is one of the bases of a righteous lifestyle (2:9; 1 chr. 29:17; Is. 26:7).

14 ⁱWho rejoice in doing evil,
And delight in the perversity of the
wicked;
15 ^jWhose ways *are* crooked,
And *who are* devious in their
paths;
16 To deliver you from ^kthe immoral
woman,
^lFrom the seductress *who* flatters with
her words,
17 Who forsakes the companion of her
youth,
And forgets the covenant of her
God.
18 For ^mher house ^lleads down to
death,
And her paths to the dead;
19 None who go to her return,
Nor do they ²regain the paths of
life—
20 So you may walk in the way of
goodness,
And keep ^{to} the paths of
righteousness.
21 For the upright will dwell in the
ⁿland,
And the blameless will remain in it;
22 But the wicked will be ³cut off from
the ⁴earth,
And the unfaithful will be uprooted
from it.

Guidance for the Young

3 My son, do not forget my law,
^aBut let your heart keep my
commands;
2 For length of days and long life
And ^bpeace they will add to you.

14 ⁱ Prov. 10:23; Jer.
11:15; [r om. 1:32]
15 ^j Ps. 125:5; [Prov.
21:8]
16 ^k Prov. 5:20; 6:24;
7:5 ^l Prov. 5:3
18 ^m Prov. 7:27
^l sinks
19 ² ⁱ it. reach
21 ⁿ Ps. 37:3
22 ³ destroyed
⁴ land

CHAPTER 3

1 ^a deut. 8:1
2 ^b Ps. 119:165;
Prov. 4:10

3 ^c Ex. 13:9; deut.
6:8; Prov. 6:21
^d Prov. 7:3; Jer. 17:1;
[2 cor. 3:3]
4 ^e 1 sam. 2:26;
l uke 2:52; r om.
14:18 ^l ⁱ it. good
understanding
5 ^f [Ps. 37:3, 5]; Prov.
22:19 ^g Prov. 23:4;
[Jer. 9:23, 24]
6 ^h [1 chr. 28:9];
Prov. 16:3; [Phil.
4:6; James 1:5] ² o r
make smooth or
straight
7 ⁱ r om. 12:16
8 ^j Job 21:24
³ Body, lit. navel
⁴ ⁱ it. drink
9 ^k Ex. 22:29; deut.
26:2; [Mal. 3:10]
10 ^l deut. 28:8
11 ^m Job 5:17; Ps.
94:12; heb. 12:5, 6;
r ev. 3:19
12 ⁿ deut. 8:5; Prov.
13:24
13 ^o Prov. 8:32,
34, 35

3 Let not mercy and truth forsake you;
^cBind them around your neck,
^dWrite them on the tablet of your
heart,
4 ^eAnd so find favor and ^lhigh esteem
In the sight of God and man.
5 ^fTrust in the LORD with all your heart,
^gAnd lean not on your own
understanding;
6 ^hIn all your ways acknowledge Him,
And He shall ²direct your paths.
7 Do not be wise in your own ⁱeyes;
Fear the LORD and depart from evil.
8 It will be health to your ³flesh,
And ^jstrength ⁴to your bones.
9 ^kHonor the LORD with your
possessions,
And with the firstfruits of all your
increase;
10 ^lSo your barns will be filled with
plenty,
And your vats will overflow with
new wine.
11^m My son, do not despise the
chastening of the LORD,
Nor detest His correction;
12 For whom the LORD loves He
corrects,
ⁿJust as a father the son *in whom* he
delights.
13 ^oHappy *is* the man *who* finds wisdom,
And the man *who* gains
understanding;

2:16–19 The immoral woman is literally “the strange woman.” a dulteress was foreign and strange to the ideal of God’s law. “a dulteress” also connoted prostitution, because the “foreign women” of the ancient Middle Eastern fertility cults included sexual practices in their worship rituals.

3:1, 2 Law and commands are words that, as in 1:8, draw attention to the connection between wisdom and the law of Moses. t he proverbs are an application of the law.

wisdom

(heb. *chokmah*) (3:13; 1 kin. 4:29) strong’s #2451

t he word *chokmah* also means “skill” and can refer to ability in craftsmanship (Ex. 31:6), in war (Is. 10:13), and in trade (Ezek. 28:4, 5). t he most common use of *chokmah* is in reference to wisdom in daily living. t his is the sense of the word as it is used throughout Proverbs, which teaches that true wisdom involves not only intelligence but also moral integrity (8:7–9). Because a sinful lifestyle is ultimately self-destructive, wisdom is extolled as the only path to a full and fruitful life (3:13–26). t he source of wisdom is God, who by wisdom, founded the earth (3:19), numbered the clouds (Job 38:37), and made the world (Jer. 10:12). he alone can provide men and women with the wisdom to live righteously (2:6; Job 11:6).

3:3, 4 Mercy and truth is an important pair of words in the Bible, describing God’s character (see Ps. 100:5) and the demands he makes of his people. t he apostle John used the Greek equivalent of these words, “grace and truth,” to describe Jesus’ character (John 1:14).

3:5, 6 t he words trust in the LORD echo the command of deut. 6:5 to love God with all our being. t he verb **trust** is complemented by the verb “lean.” t rusting in God is a conscious dependence on God, much like leaning on a tree for support. t he idea is reinforced here by the command to **acknowledge Him**, which means to observe him and get to know him in the process of living. In doing so, a person finds time and time again that God smoothes out paths.

3:7–10 t he promises in these verses describe general patterns, not rules that have no exceptions. t hese are the results that often follow a full commitment to God. t he command to honor God with wealth and to give to him from the **firstfruits** of all income is a part of what it means to worship God. In God’s covenant with Israel, fullness of **barns** and **vats** was God’s blessing, a part of God’s covenant promise. yet these verses should not be taken as a formula for getting rich. t hey speak of what righteous people can reasonably expect in life, not what God promises to return on investments.

3:11, 12 t he discipline of the LORD is the other side of his grace. we should cherish God’s correction in our lives, because God disciplines only those he **loves** (see heb. 12:7–10).

3:13–18 Happy: t he beatitudes of Jesus in the sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5:3–12) work much the way these verses do. t he hebrew term *blessed* is an explosive word: “o the manifold happiness

- 14^p For her proceeds *are* better than the profits of silver,
And her gain than fine gold.
- 15 She *is* more precious than rubies,
And ^aall the things you may desire cannot compare with her.
- 16^r Length of days *is* in her right hand,
In her left hand riches and honor.
- 17^s Her ways *are* ways of pleasantness,
And all her paths *are* peace.
- 18 She *is* ^ta tree of life to those who take hold of her,
And happy *are* all who ⁵retain her.
- 19^u The LORD by wisdom founded the earth;
By understanding He established the heavens;
- 20 By His knowledge the depths were ^vbroken up,
And clouds drop down the dew.
- 21 My son, let them not depart from your eyes—
Keep sound wisdom and discretion;
- 22 So they will be life to your soul
And grace to your neck.
- 23^w Then you will walk safely in your way,
And your foot will not stumble.
- 24 When you lie down, you will not be afraid;
Yes, you will lie down and your sleep will be sweet.
- 25^x Do not be afraid of sudden terror,
Nor of trouble from the wicked when it comes;
- 26 For the LORD will be your confidence,
And will keep your foot from being caught.
- 27^y Do not withhold good from ⁶those to whom it is due,
When it is in the power of your hand to do so.

14^p Job 28:13
15^a Matt. 13:44
16^r Prov. 8:18;
[1 Tim. 4:8]
17^s [Matt. 11:29]
18^t Gen. 2:9; Prov. 11:30; 13:12; 15:4;
r ev. 2:7 ⁵hold her fast
19^u Ps. 104:24;
Prov. 8:27
20^v Gen. 7:11
23^w [Ps. 37:24;
91:11, 12]; Prov. 10:9
25^x Ps. 91:5; 1 Pet. 3:14
27^y r om. 13:7;
[Gal. 6:10] ⁶l it. its owners

28^z l ev. 19:13;
deut. 24:15
30^a Prov. 26:17;
[r om. 12:18]
31^b Ps. 37:1; Prov. 24:1
32^c Ps. 25:14
33^d l ev. 26:14, 16;
deut. 11:28; Zech. 5:3, 4; Mal. 2:2 ^eJob 8:6; Ps. 1:3
34^f James 4:6;
1 Pet. 5:5

CHAPTER 4

1^a Ps. 34:11; Prov. 1:8
3^b 1 Chr. 29:1
4^c 1 Chr. 28:9; Eph. 6:4 ^dProv. 7:2
5^e Prov. 2:2, 3
6^f 2 Thess. 2:10

- 28^z Do not say to your neighbor,
“Go, and come back,
And tomorrow I will give *it*,”
When you have it with you.
- 29 Do not devise evil against your neighbor,
For he dwells by you for safety’s sake.
- 30^a Do not strive with a man without cause,
If he has done you no harm.
- 31^b Do not envy the oppressor,
And choose none of his ways;
- 32 For the perverse *person* is an abomination to the LORD,
^cBut His secret counsel *is* with the upright.
- 33^d The curse of the LORD *is* on the house of the wicked,
But ^eHe blesses the home of the just.
- 34^f Surely He scorns the scornful,
But gives grace to the humble.
- 35 The wise shall inherit glory,
But shame shall be the legacy of fools.

Security in Wisdom

- 4 Hear, ^a*my* children, the instruction of a father,
And give attention to know understanding;
- 2 For I give you good doctrine:
Do not forsake my law.
- 3 When I was my father’s son,
^bTender and the only one in the sight of my mother,
- 4 ^cHe also taught me, and said to me:
“Let your heart retain my words;
^dKeep my commands, and live.
- 5 ^eGet wisdom! Get understanding!
Do not forget, nor turn away from the words of my mouth.
- 6 Do not forsake her, and she will preserve you;
^fLove her, and she will keep you.

of” (see Ps. 1:1). It implies that God is truly pleased. The person who has discovered wisdom has found a priceless treasure. A dam and Eve were expelled from the Garden and forbidden access to the tree of life (Gen. 3:22–24), but wisdom is another **tree of life** and will begin to restore the lost happiness of Paradise.

3:19, 20 by wisdom founded the earth: One central theme in Proverbs is the association of wisdom with creation. Chapter 8 is devoted to this theme.

3:21 let them not depart: This verse encourages the son to keep faith with wisdom. The intent is much like that of the shema (see deut. 6:4–9). It also resembles the basic ideas of Ps. 91 (compare v. 26 with Ps. 91:10–13).

3:28 This verse introduces a passage that explains the proper treatment of **your neighbor**, a theme that Jesus also developed (Luke 10:25–37).

3:31–35 There is no benefit in feeling **envy** for **the wicked**, because God detests wickedness. Only a fool would wish to be detest-

able to God! The section ends with a contrast of God’s blessing on the righteous and his curse on the wicked (see Gen. 12:3).

4:1–4 In most of the ancient Middle East instruction in wisdom was primarily a matter of training for the court. The masters were regarded as “fathers” of the students. But in Israel, training in wisdom extended to the home. **Instruction of a father** implies warmth and affection, as well as a parent’s concern and discipline. Verse 1 begins a little like the first parental section (1:8), but the addressee is now plural, **my children**. As his father had taught him, so the son now teaches his own sons, one generation instructing another. The call for parents to teach the things of God to their children is based on deut. 6:7 and is reflected in the Psalms (as in Ps. 78:3, 4). **4:5–7** Verses 5–9 present an impassioned plea from the father to his sons to **get wisdom** whatever the cost. The presentation in these early chapters of Proverbs follows the pattern: statement, restate-ment, embellishment. By making generous use of creative restate-ment, the ideas come through all the more strongly. Particularly

7 ^gWisdom is the principal thing;
Therefore get wisdom.
And in all your getting, get
understanding.

8 ^hExalt her, and she will promote you;
She will bring you honor, when you
embrace her.

9 She will place on your head ⁱan
ornament of grace;
A crown of glory she will deliver to
you.”

10 Hear, my son, and receive my
sayings,
^jAnd the years of your life will be
many.

11 I have ^ktaught you in the way of
wisdom;
I have led you in right paths.

12 When you walk, ^lyour steps will not
be hindered,
^mAnd when you run, you will not
stumble.

13 Take firm hold of instruction, do not
let go;
Keep her, for she is your life.

14 ⁿDo not enter the path of the
wicked,
And do not walk in the way of evil.

15 Avoid it, do not travel on it;
Turn away from it and pass on.

16 ^oFor they do not sleep unless they
have done evil;
And their sleep is ^ltaken away
unless they make *someone* fall.

17 For they eat the bread of wickedness,
And drink the wine of violence.

18 ^pBut the path of the just ^qis like the
shining ²sun,
That shines ever brighter unto the
perfect day.

19 ^rThe way of the wicked is like
darkness;
They do not know what makes them
stumble.

7 ^g Prov. 3:13, 14;
Matt. 13:44
8 ^h 1 sam. 2:30
9 ⁱ Prov. 3:22
10 ^j Prov. 3:2
11 ^k 1 sam. 12:23
12 ^l Job 18:7; Ps.
18:36 ^m [Ps. 91:11];
Prov. 3:23
14 ⁿ Ps. 1:1; Prov.
1:15
16 ^o Ps. 36:4; Mic.
2:1 ^l It. *robbed*
18 ^p Is. 26:7; Matt.
5:14, 45; Phil. 2:15
^q 2 sam. 23:4 ² It.
light
19 ^r 1 sam. 2:9; [Job
18:5, 6]; Prov. 2:13;
[Is. 59:9, 10; Jer.
23:12]; John 12:35

20 My son, give attention to my words;
Incline your ear to my sayings.

21 Do not let them depart from your
eyes;
Keep them in the midst of your
heart;

22 For they *are* life to those who find
them,
And health to all their flesh.

23 Keep your heart with all diligence,
For out of it *spring* the issues of ^slife.

24 Put away from you a ³deceitful
mouth,
And put perverse lips far from you.

25 Let your eyes look straight ahead,
And your eyelids look right before
you.

26 Ponder the path of your ^tfeet,
And let all your ways be established.

27 Do not turn to the right or the left;
Remove your foot from evil.

The Peril of Adultery

5 My son, pay attention to my
wisdom;

¹ Lend your ear to my understanding,
² That you may ²preserve discretion,
And your lips ^amay keep knowledge.

³ ^bFor the lips of ³an immoral woman
drip honey,
And her mouth is ^csmoother than oil;

⁴ But in the end she is bitter as
wormwood,
Sharp as a two-edged sword.

⁵ Her feet go down to death,
^dHer steps lay hold of ⁴hell.

⁶ Lest you ponder *her* path of life—
Her ways are unstable;
You do not know *them*.

⁷ Therefore hear me now, *my* children,
And do not depart from the words of
my mouth.

⁸ Remove your way far from her,
And do not go near the door of her
house,

⁹ Lest you give your ⁵honor to others,
And your years to the cruel *one*;

23 ^s [Matt. 12:34;
15:18, 19; Mark 7:21;
Luke 6:45]
24 ³ *devious*
26 ^t Prov. 5:21; heb.
12:13

CHAPTER 5

1 ¹ It. *Bow*
2 ^a Mal. 2:7
² *appreciate good
judgment*
3 ^b Prov. 2:16
^c Ps. 55:21 ³ It. *a
strange*
5 ^d Prov. 7:27 ⁴ Or
Sheol
9 ⁵ *vigor*

striking are the words of v. 7: **Wisdom is the principal thing**. t he word *principal* is translated “the beginning of” in 1:7, but here it has the force of “first in importance.”

4:8, 9 t hese verses emphasize the supreme value of wisdom. t he person who holds wisdom in highest esteem and embraces it fully will be exalted and honored; its very presence becomes an **ornament of grace** and a **crown of glory**. t hese metaphors are compelling calls for a heartfelt response (see 1:9; 3:3).

4:10–19 t hese verses present a renewed appeal from father to son to walk in **the way of wisdom** and to avoid **the path of the wicked** at all costs. t he contrast of the two **paths** is profound. t he way of wisdom is straight, unencumbered, and safe. t he way of the wicked is tortuous, hazardous, and marked by violence. o ne road is a path of light, the other of darkness; one leads to promise, the other to a stumbling destruction.

4:20–27 t his section demands constancy of **heart** and purpose,

honesty in speech, steadiness of gaze, and a right goal in walk and **life**. setting off on the path of wisdom is no casual thing. Much of this chapter reiterates and refines the themes found in chs. 1–3. t he emphasis on virtue prepares us for the frightening warnings of ch. 5.

5:1–6 c hapter 5 returns to the theme of the **immoral woman** (see 2:16–19). t his passage speaks strongly for marital fidelity against any and all pressure to the contrary. If you want to **preserve discretion**, heed these words, lest your **feet go down to death**.

5:8–10 t he Bible teaches elsewhere that temptation in general is unavoidable, but some temptations should be avoided at all costs. a wise son knows this and will **not go near** an immoral woman. t he apostle Paul’s instruction to t imothy to flee youthful lusts (2 t im. 2:22) teaches the same theme. Involvement with such sin dishonors and consumes all who fall into it.

- 10 Lest aliens be filled with your
⁶wealth,
 And your labors go to the house of a
 foreigner;
- 11 And you mourn at last,
 When your flesh and your body are
 consumed,
- 12 And say:
 “How I have hated instruction,
 And my heart despised correction!
 I have not obeyed the voice of my
 teachers,
 Nor inclined my ear to those who
 instructed me!
- 14 I was on the verge of total ruin,
 In the midst of the assembly and
 congregation.”
- 15 Drink water from your own cistern,
 And running water from your own
 well.
- 16 Should your fountains be dispersed
 abroad,
⁷Streams of water in the streets?
 Let them be only your own,
 And not for strangers with you.
- 18 Let your fountain be blessed,
 And rejoice with ^ethe wife of your
 youth.
- 19 ^fAs a loving deer and a graceful doe,
 Let her breasts satisfy you at all
 times;
 And always be ⁸enraptured with her
 love.
- 20 For why should you, my son, be
 enraptured by ^gan immoral
 woman,
 And be embraced in the arms of a
 seductress?
- 21 ^hFor the ways of man are before the
 eyes of the LORD,
 And He ⁹ponders all his paths.
- 22 ⁱHis own iniquities entrap the wicked
 man,
 And he is caught in the cords of his
 sin.

10 ⁶ | it. strength
 16 ⁷ Channels
 18 ^e deut. 24:5;
 Eccl. 9:9; Mal. 2:14
 19 ^f song 2:9 ⁸ | it.
 intoxicated
 20 ^g Prov. 2:16
 21 ^h 2 chr. 16:9; Job
 31:4; 34:21; Prov.
 15:3; Jer. 16:17;
 32:19; hos. 7:2; heb.
 4:13 ⁹ observes, lit.
 weighs
 22 ⁱ n um. 32:23;
 Ps. 9:5; Prov. 1:31;
 ls. 3:11

23 ^j Job 4:21

CHAPTER 6

1 ^a Prov. 11:15
¹ guaranty or
 collateral ² | it.
 struck
 4 ^b Ps. 132:4
 5 ³ one who
 catches birds in a
 trap or snare
 6 ^c Job 12:7
 7 ⁴ | it. leader
 8 ⁵ | it. bread
 9 ^d Prov. 24:33, 34
^e | it. lie down
 11 ^e Prov. 10:4

- 23 ^jHe shall die for lack of instruction,
 And in the greatness of his folly he
 shall go astray.

Dangerous Promises

- 6 My son, ^aif you become ¹surety for
 your friend,
 If you have ²shaken hands in pledge
 for a stranger,
- 2 You are snared by the words of your
 mouth;
 You are taken by the words of your
 mouth.
- 3 So do this, my son, and deliver
 yourself;
 For you have come into the hand of
 your friend:
 Go and humble yourself;
 Plead with your friend.
- 4 ^bGive no sleep to your eyes,
 Nor slumber to your eyelids.
- 5 Deliver yourself like a gazelle from
 the hand of the hunter,
 And like a bird from the hand of the
³fowler.

The Folly of Indolence

- 6 ^cGo to the ant, you sluggard!
 Consider her ways and be wise,
 Which, having no ⁴captain,
 Overseer or ruler,
 Provides her ⁵supplies in the
 summer,
 And gathers her food in the harvest.
- 9 ^dHow long will you ⁶slumber,
 O sluggard?
 When will you rise from your sleep?
- 10 A little sleep, a little slumber,
 A little folding of the hands to
 sleep—
- 11 ^eSo shall your poverty come on you
 like a prowler,
 And your need like an armed man.

The Wicked Man

- 12 A worthless person, a wicked man,
 Walks with a perverse mouth;

5:15 In an arid country like Israel, a **well** was a prized possession and a privilege to be cared for. so was (and is) a spouse. **Drink water** is an oblique reference to sexual union (see 9:17), and **from your own cistern** is a clear call to marital fidelity—one man, one woman, together in marriage. the writers of the Bible sometimes speak of salvation as a spring (Is. 12:3); to call one’s spouse a spring of water was a term of endearment (see song 4:15).

5:18–20 the words **rejoice with the wife of your youth** comprise a command and an encouragement to find pleasure in the mutual joy of married love. Indeed, pleasure in the marriage bed is **blessed** by God (see song; heb. 13:4).

6:1–5 these verses warn against putting up **surety** (see 11:15), or cosigning a loan. this does not mean we should never be generous or helpful if we have the means, only that we should not promise what we cannot deliver. In solomon’s day, a cosigner who could not pay could lose all he had and be reduced to slavery besides.

Even though laws differ today, inability to pay a debt is still a form of bondage and can be a serious problem. Modern conditions are different than in ot times, but the warning still applies.

6:6–11 this passage warns against the trap of laziness. the **sluggard** or lazy person is held captive to leisure. he can learn all he needs to know by studying the **ant**, a humble creature that busies itself with storing food during the summer against the winter that lies ahead. like the ant, a wise person works hard. By contrast, the lazy person is addicted to sleep and has lost all interest in work (see 26:13–16).

6:12–15 A **wicked man** is a troublemaker. unlike the sluggard, whose only desire is another place to nap, the troublemaker cannot wait to cause more problems or to get into more mischief. unlike the sluggard (see v. 6), he is too busy, though he is doing the wrong things. he delights in bringing dissension. But like the sluggard, he does not realize that **calamity** awaits him.

¹³ *f*He winks with his eyes,
He ⁷shuffles his feet,
He points with his fingers;
¹⁴ Perversity *is* in his heart,
^gHe devises evil continually,
^hHe sows discord.
¹⁵ Therefore his calamity shall come
ⁱsuddenly;
Suddenly he shall ^jbe broken
^kwithout remedy.

¹³ ^f Job 15:12; Ps. 35:19; Prov. 10:10
⁷ gives signals, lit. scrapes
¹⁴ ^g Prov. 3:29; Mic. 2:1 ^h Prov. 6:19
¹⁵ ⁱ Prov. 24:22; Is. 30:13; 1 Thess. 5:3
^j Jer. 19:11 ^k 2 Chr. 36:16
¹⁶ ^g ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^{aa} ^{ab} ^{ac} ^{ad} ^{ae} ^{af} ^{ag} ^{ah} ^{ai} ^{aj} ^{ak} ^{al} ^{am} ^{an} ^{ao} ^{ap} ^{aq} ^{ar} ^{as} ^{at} ^{au} ^{av} ^{aw} ^{ax} ^{ay} ^{az} ^{ba} ^{bb} ^{bc} ^{bd} ^{be} ^{bf} ^{bg} ^{bh} ^{bi} ^{bj} ^{bk} ^{bl} ^{bm} ^{bn} ^{bo} ^{bp} ^{bq} ^{br} ^{bs} ^{bt} ^{bu} ^{bv} ^{bw} ^{bx} ^{by} ^{bz} ^{ca} ^{cb} ^{cc} ^{cd} ^{ce} ^{cf} ^{cg} ^{ch} ^{ci} ^{cj} ^{ck} ^{cl} ^{cm} ^{cn} ^{co} ^{cp} ^{cq} ^{cr} ^{cs} ^{ct} ^{cu} ^{cv} ^{cw} ^{cx} ^{cy} ^{cz} ^{da} ^{db} ^{dc} ^{dd} ^{de} ^{df} ^{dg} ^{dh} ^{di} ^{dj} ^{dk} ^{dl} ^{dm} ^{dn} ^{do} ^{dp} ^{dq} ^{dr} ^{ds} ^{dt} ^{du} ^{dv} ^{dw} ^{dx} ^{dy} ^{dz} ^{ea} ^{eb} ^{ec} ^{ed} ^{ee} ^{ef} ^{eg} ^{eh} ^{ei} ^{ej} ^{ek} ^{el} ^{em} ^{en} ^{eo} ^{ep} ^{eq} ^{er} ^{es} ^{et} ^{eu} ^{ev} ^{ew} ^{ex} ^{ey} ^{ez} ^{fa} ^{fb} ^{fc} ^{fd} ^{fe} ^{ff} ^{fg} ^{fh} ^{fi} ^{fj} ^{fk} ^{fl} ^{fm} ^{fn} ^{fo} ^{fp} ^{fq} ^{fr} ^{fs} ^{ft} ^{fu} ^{fv} ^{fw} ^{fx} ^{fy} ^{fz} ^{ga} ^{gb} ^{gc} ^{gd} ^{ge} ^{gf} ^{gg} ^{gh} ^{gi} ^{gj} ^{gk} ^{gl} ^{gm} ^{gn} ^{go} ^{gp} ^{gq} ^{gr} ^{gs} ^{gt} ^{gu} ^{gv} ^{gw} ^{gx} ^{gy} ^{gz} ^{ha} ^{hb} ^{hc} ^{hd} ^{he} ^{hf} ^{hg} ^{hh} ^{hi} ^{hj} ^{hk} ^{hl} ^{hm} ^{hn} ^{ho} ^{hp} ^{hq} ^{hr} ^{hs} ^{ht} ^{hu} ^{hv} ^{hw} ^{hx} ^{hy} ^{hz} ^{ia} ^{ib} ^{ic} ^{id} ^{ie} ^{if} ^{ig} ^{ih} ⁱⁱ ^{ij} ^{ik} ^{il} ^{im} ⁱⁿ ^{io} ^{ip} ^{iq} ^{ir} ^{is} ^{it} ^{iu} ^{iv} ^{iw} ^{ix} ^{iy} ^{iz} ^{ja} ^{jb} ^{jc} ^{jd} ^{je} ^{jf} ^{jj} ^{jk} ^{jl} ^{jm} ^{jn} ^{jo} ^{jp} ^{jq} ^{jr} ^{js} ^{jt} ^{ju} ^{jv} ^{jw} ^{jx} ^{jy} ^{jz} ^{ka} ^{kb} ^{kc} ^{kd} ^{ke} ^{kf} ^{kg} ^{kh} ^{ki} ^{kj} ^{kl} ^{km} ^{kn} ^{ko} ^{kp} ^{kq} ^{kr} ^{ks} ^{kt} ^{ku} ^{kv} ^{kx} ^{ky} ^{kz} ^{la} ^{lb} ^{lc} ^{ld} ^{le} ^{lf} ^{lg} ^{lh} ^{li} ^{lj} ^{lk} ^{ll} ^{lm} ^{ln} ^{lo} ^{lp} ^{lq} ^{lr} ^{ls} ^{lt} ^{lu} ^{lv} ^{lw} ^{lx} ^{ly} ^{lz} ^{ma} ^{mb} ^{mc} ^{md} ^{me} ^{mf} ^{mg} ^{mh} ^{mi} ^{mj} ^{mk} ^{ml} ^{mm} ^{mn} ^{mo} ^{mp} ^{mq} ^{mr} ^{ms} ^{mt} ^{mu} ^{mv} ^{mw} ^{mx} ^{my} ^{mz} ^{na} ^{nb} ^{nc} nd ^{ne} ^{nf} ^{ng} ^{nh} ⁿⁱ ^{nj} ^{nk} ^{nl} ^{nm} ⁿⁿ ^{no} ^{np} ^{nq} ^{nr} ^{ns} ^{nt} ^{nu} ^{nv} ^{nw} ^{nx} ^{ny} ^{nz} ^{oa} ^{ob} ^{oc} ^{od} ^{oe} ^{of} ^{og} ^{oh} ^{oi} ^{oj} ^{ok} ^{ol} ^{om} ^{on} ^{oo} ^{op} ^{oq} ^{or} ^{os} ^{ot} ^{ou} ^{ov} ^{ow} ^{ox} ^{oy} ^{oz} ^{pa} ^{pb} ^{pc} ^{pd} ^{pe} ^{pf} ^{pg} ^{ph} ^{pi} ^{pj} ^{pk} ^{pl} ^{pm} ^{pn} ^{po} ^{pp} ^{pq} ^{pr} ^{ps} ^{pt} ^{pu} ^{pv} ^{pw} ^{px} ^{py} ^{pz} ^{qa} ^{qb} ^{qc} ^{qd} ^{qe} ^{qf} ^{qg} ^{qh} ^{qi} ^{qj} ^{qk} ^{ql} ^{qm} ^{qn} ^{qo} ^{qp} ^{qq} ^{qr} ^{qs} ^{qt} ^{qu} ^{qv} ^{qw} ^{qx} ^{qy} ^{qz} ^{ra} ^{rb} ^{rc} rd ^{re} ^{rf} ^{rg} ^{rh} ^{ri} ^{rj} ^{rk} ^{rl} ^{rm} ^{rn} ^{ro} ^{rp} ^{rq} ^{rr} ^{rs} ^{rt} ^{ru} ^{rv} ^{rw} ^{rx} ^{ry} ^{rz} ^{sa} ^{sb} ^{sc} ^{sd} ^{se} ^{sf} ^{sg} ^{sh} ^{si} ^{sj} ^{sk} ^{sl} sm ^{sn} ^{so} ^{sp} ^{sq} ^{sr} ^{ss} st ^{su} ^{sv} ^{sw} ^{sx} ^{sy} ^{sz} ^{ta} ^{tb} ^{tc} ^{td} ^{te} ^{tf} ^{tg} th ^{ti} ^{tj} ^{tk} ^{tl} tm ^{tn} ^{to} ^{tp} ^{tq} ^{tr} ^{ts} ^{tu} ^{tv} ^{tw} ^{tx} ^{ty} ^{tz} ^{ua} ^{ub} ^{uc} ^{ud} ^{ue} ^{uf} ^{ug} ^{uh} ^{ui} ^{uj} ^{uk} ^{ul} ^{um} ^{un} ^{uo} ^{up} ^{uq} ^{ur} ^{us} ^{ut} ^{uu} ^{uv} ^{uw} ^{ux} ^{uy} ^{uz} ^{va} ^{vb} ^{vc} ^{vd} ^{ve} ^{vf} ^{vg} ^{vh} ^{vi} ^{vj} ^{vk} ^{vl} ^{vm} ^{vn} ^{vo} ^{vp} ^{vq} ^{vr} ^{vs} ^{vt} ^{vu} ^{vv} ^{vw} ^{vx} ^{vy} ^{vz} ^{wa} ^{wb} ^{wc} ^{wd} ^{we} ^{wf} ^{wg} ^{wh} ^{wi} ^{wj} ^{wk} ^{wl} ^{wm} ^{wn} ^{wo} ^{wp} ^{wq} ^{wr} ^{ws} ^{wt} ^{wu} ^{wv} ^{ww} ^{wx} ^{wy} ^{wz} ^{xa} ^{xb} ^{xc} ^{xd} ^{xe} ^{xf} ^{xg} ^{xh} ^{xi} ^{xj} ^{xk} ^{xl} ^{xm} ^{xn} ^{xo} ^{xp} ^{xq} ^{xr} ^{xs} ^{xt} ^{xu} ^{xv} ^{xw} ^{xx} ^{xy} ^{xz} ^{ya} ^{yb} ^{yc} ^{yd} ^{ye} ^{yf} ^{yg} ^{yh} ^{yi} ^{yj} ^{yk} ^{yl} ^{ym} ^{yn} ^{yo} ^{yp} ^{yq} ^{yr} ^{ys} ^{yt} ^{yu} ^{yv} ^{yw} ^{yx} ^{yy} ^{yz} ^{za} ^{zb} ^{zc} ^{zd} ^{ze} ^{zf} ^{zg} ^{zh} ^{zi} ^{zj} ^{zk} ^{zl} ^{zm} ^{zn} ^{zo} ^{zp} ^{zq} ^{zr} ^{zs} ^{zt} ^{zu} ^{zv} ^{zw} ^{zx} ^{zy} ^{zz}

¹⁶ These six *things* the LORD
hates,
Yes, seven *are* an abomination to
⁸Him:
¹⁷ ^l A ^g proud look,
^m A lying tongue,
ⁿ Hands that shed innocent blood,

Prov. 21:4 ^m Ps. 120:2; Prov. 12:22 ⁿ deut. 19:10; Prov. 28:17; Is. 1:15 ^g ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^{aa} ^{ab} ^{ac} ^{ad} ^{ae} ^{af} ^{ag} ^{ah} ^{ai} ^{aj} ^{ak} ^{al} ^{am} ^{an} ^{ao} ^{ap} ^{aq} ^{ar} ^{as} ^{at} ^{au} ^{av} ^{aw} ^{ax} ^{ay} ^{az} ^{ba} ^{bb} ^{bc} ^{bd} ^{be} ^{bf} ^{bg} ^{bh} ^{bi} ^{bj} ^{bk} ^{bl} ^{bm} ^{bn} ^{bo} ^{bp} ^{bq} ^{br} ^{bs} ^{bt} ^{bu} ^{bv} ^{bw} ^{bx} ^{by} ^{bz} ^{ca} ^{cb} ^{cc} ^{cd} ^{ce} ^{cf} ^{cg} ^{ch} ^{ci} ^{cj} ^{ck} ^{cl} ^{cm} ^{cn} ^{co} ^{cp} ^{cq} ^{cr} ^{cs} ^{ct} ^{cu} ^{cv} ^{cw} ^{cx} ^{cy} ^{cz} ^{da} ^{db} ^{dc} ^{dd} ^{de} ^{df} ^{dg} ^{dh} ^{di} ^{dj} ^{dk} ^{dl} ^{dm} ^{dn} ^{do} ^{dp} ^{dq} ^{dr} ^{ds} ^{dt} ^{du} ^{dv} ^{dw} ^{dx} ^{dy} ^{dz} ^{ea} ^{eb} ^{ec} ^{ed} ^{ee} ^{ef} ^{eg} ^{eh} ^{ei} ^{ej} ^{ek} ^{el} ^{em} ^{en} ^{eo} ^{ep} ^{eq} ^{er} ^{es} ^{et} ^{eu} ^{ev} ^{ew} ^{ex} ^{ey} ^{ez} ^{fa} ^{fb} ^{fc} ^{fd} ^{fe} ^{ff} ^{fg} ^{fh} ^{fi} ^{fj} ^{fk} ^{fl} ^{fm} ^{fn} ^{fo} ^{fp} ^{fq} ^{fr} ^{fs} ^{ft} ^{fu} ^{fv} ^{fw} ^{fx} ^{fy} ^{fz} ^{ga} ^{gb} ^{gc} ^{gd} ^{ge} ^{gf} ^{gg} ^{gh} ^{gi} ^{gj} ^{gk} ^{gl} ^{gm} ^{gn} ^{go} ^{gp} ^{gq} ^{gr} ^{gs} ^{gt} ^{gu} ^{gv} ^{gw} ^{gx} ^{gy} ^{gz} ^{ha} ^{hb} ^{hc} ^{hd} ^{he} ^{hf} ^{hg} ^{hh} ^{hi} ^{hj} ^{hk} ^{hl} ^{hm} ^{hn} ^{ho} ^{hp} ^{hq} ^{hr} ^{hs} ^{ht} ^{hu} ^{hv} ^{hw} ^{hx} ^{hy} ^{hz} ^{ia} ^{ib} ^{ic} ^{id} ^{ie} ^{if} ^{ig} ^{ih} ⁱⁱ ^{ij} ^{ik} ^{il} ^{im} ⁱⁿ ^{io} ^{ip} ^{iq} ^{ir} ^{is} ^{it} ^{iu} ^{iv} ^{iw} ^{ix} ^{iy} ^{iz} ^{ja} ^{jb} ^{jc} ^{jd} ^{je} ^{jf} ^{jj} ^{jk} ^{jl} ^{jm} ^{jn} ^{jo} ^{jp} ^{jq} ^{jr} ^{js} ^{jt} ^{ju} ^{jv} ^{jw} ^{jx} ^{jy} ^{jz} ^{ka} ^{kb} ^{kc} ^{kd} ^{ke} ^{kf} ^{kg} ^{kh} ^{ki} ^{kj} ^{kl} ^{km} ^{kn} ^{ko} ^{kp} ^{kq} ^{kr} ^{ks} ^{kt} ^{ku} ^{kv} ^{kx} ^{ky} ^{kz} ^{la} ^{lb} ^{lc} ^{ld} ^{le} ^{lf} ^{lg} ^{lh} ^{li} ^{lj} ^{lk} ^{ll} ^{lm} ^{ln} ^{lo} ^{lp} ^{lq} ^{lr} ^{ls} ^{lt} ^{lu} ^{lv} ^{lw} ^{lx} ^{ly} ^{lz} ^{ma} ^{mb} ^{mc} ^{md} ^{me} ^{mf} ^{mg} ^{mh} ^{mi} ^{mj} ^{mk} ^{ml} ^{mm} ^{mn} ^{mo} ^{mp} ^{mq} ^{mr} ^{ms} ^{mt} ^{mu} ^{mv} ^{mw} ^{mx} ^{my} ^{mz} ^{na} ^{nb} ^{nc} nd ^{ne} ^{nf} ^{ng} ^{nh} ⁿⁱ ^{nj} ^{nk} ^{nl} ^{nm} ⁿⁿ ^{no} ^{np} ^{nq} ^{nr} ^{ns} ^{nt} ^{nu} ^{nv} ^{nw} ^{nx} ^{ny} ^{nz} ^{oa} ^{ob} ^{oc} ^{od} ^{oe} ^{of} ^{og} ^{oh} ^{oi} ^{oj} ^{ok} ^{ol} ^{om} ^{on} ^{oo} ^{op} ^{oq} ^{or} ^{os} ^{ot} ^{ou} ^{ov} ^{ow} ^{ox} ^{oy} ^{oz} ^{pa} ^{pb} ^{pc} ^{pd} ^{pe} ^{pf} ^{pg} ^{ph} ^{pi} ^{pj} ^{pk} ^{pl} ^{pm} ^{pn} ^{po} ^{pp} ^{pq} ^{pr} ^{ps} ^{pt} ^{pu} ^{pv} ^{pw} ^{px} ^{py} ^{pz} ^{qa} ^{qb} ^{qc} ^{qd} ^{qe} ^{qf} ^{qg} ^{qh} ^{qi} ^{qj} ^{qk} ^{ql} ^{qm} ^{qn} ^{qo} ^{qp} ^{qq} ^{qr} ^{qs} ^{qt} ^{qu} ^{qv} ^{qw} ^{qx} ^{qy} ^{qz} ^{ra} ^{rb} ^{rc} rd ^{re} ^{rf} ^{rg} ^{rh} ^{ri} ^{rj} ^{rk} ^{rl} ^{rm} ^{rn} ^{ro} ^{rp} ^{rq} ^{rr} ^{rs} ^{rt} ^{ru} ^{rv} ^{rw} ^{rx} ^{ry} ^{rz} ^{sa} ^{sb} ^{sc} ^{sd} ^{se} ^{sf} ^{sg} ^{sh} ^{si} ^{sj} ^{sk} ^{sl} sm ^{sn} ^{so} ^{sp} ^{sq} ^{sr} ^{ss} st ^{su} ^{sv} ^{sw} ^{sx} ^{sy} ^{sz} ^{ta} ^{tb} ^{tc} ^{td} ^{te} ^{tf} ^{tg} th ^{ti} ^{tj} ^{tk} ^{tl} tm ^{tn} ^{to} ^{tp} ^{tq} ^{tr} ^{ts} ^{tu} ^{tv} ^{tw} ^{tx} ^{ty} ^{tz} ^{ua} ^{ub} ^{uc} ^{ud} ^{ue} ^{uf} ^{ug} ^{uh} ^{ui} ^{uj} ^{uk} ^{ul} ^{um} ^{un} ^{uo} ^{up} ^{uq} ^{ur} ^{us} ^{ut} ^{uu} ^{uv} ^{uw} ^{ux} ^{uy} ^{uz} ^{va} ^{vb} ^{vc} ^{vd} ^{ve} ^{vf} ^{vg} ^{vh} ^{vi} ^{vj} ^{vk} ^{vl} ^{vm} ^{vn} ^{vo} ^{vp} ^{vq} ^{vr} ^{vs} ^{vt} ^{vu} ^{vv} ^{vw} ^{vx} ^{vy} ^{vz} ^{wa} ^{wb} ^{wc} ^{wd} ^{we} ^{wf} ^{wg} ^{wh} ^{wi} ^{wj} ^{wk} ^{wl} ^{wm} ^{wn} ^{wo} ^{wp} ^{wq} ^{wr} ^{ws} ^{wt} ^{wu} ^{wv} ^{ww} ^{wx} ^{wy} ^{wz} ^{xa} ^{xb} ^{xc} ^{xd} ^{xe} ^{xf} ^{xg} ^{xh} ^{xi} ^{xj} ^{xk} ^{xl} ^{xm} ^{xn} ^{xo} ^{xp} ^{xq} ^{xr} ^{xs} ^{xt} ^{xu} ^{xv} ^{xw} ^{xx} ^{xy} ^{xz} ^{ya} ^{yb} ^{yc} ^{yd} ^{ye} ^{yf} ^{yg} ^{yh} ^{yi} ^{yj} ^{yk} ^{yl} ^{ym} ^{yn} ^{yo} ^{yp} ^{yq} ^{yr} ^{ys} ^{yt} ^{yu} ^{yv} ^{yw} ^{yx} ^{yy} ^{yz} ^{za} ^{zb} ^{zc} ^{zd} ^{ze} ^{zf} ^{zg} ^{zh} ^{zi} ^{zj} ^{zk} ^{zl} ^{zm} ^{zn} ^{zo} ^{zp} ^{zq} ^{zr} ^{zs} ^{zt} ^{zu} ^{zv} ^{zw} ^{zx} ^{zy} ^{zz}

6:16–19 t his passage is a numerical proverb (see 30:15–31) that describes **seven** things that **the LORD hates**. t he use of numerical progression—six, even seven—in these proverbs is a rhetorical device that embellishes the poetry, provides a memory aid, and builds to a climax. t he progression involves not just the numbers but also the words that describe God’s response; the word **hates**

progresses to **abomination**. t he word *abomination* is the Bible’s strongest expression of hatred for wickedness (compare Lev. 18:22). In a list of this type, the last item is the most prominent. t hus the reader knows that causing **discord among brethren** (see v. 14) causes God’s greatest disapproval. c ontrast the blessing of God on brothers who live together in peace (Ps. 133:1).

The Poetry of the Proverbs



a proverb is a self-contained unit that presents a capsule truth about life, the world, and the way God works. t he Book of Proverbs contains many hundreds of these “sayings of the wise.” t hey are written in hebrew poetic style, with its customary varieties of parallel units. t hey often employ bold imagery and daring uses of language. t hey are short, memorable, and transferable to all people of all times. sometimes they state what is obvious to all, and sometimes they reveal what cannot be seen by direct observation.

Proverbs is cast in hebrew poetry, a rich pattern of rhetoric that shares with poetry of many cultures a special use of words for effect, sound and sense, vivid imagery, and concise language. In contrast to other types of poetry, hebrew poets—from the psalmists to the authors of proverbs—use parallelism, the repetition of related thoughts (see the article on “t he Poetry of the Psalms,” Ps. 2, p. 837).

Synonymous parallelism restates the first line in slightly different terms:

a good name is to be chosen rather than great riches,
l oving favor rather than silver and gold. (22:1)

Both lines say nearly the same thing; but the restatement drives the point home. t he pattern is: “a is so; so is B.”

Antithetical parallelism expresses the thought negatively:

a prudent man foresees evil and hides himself,
But the simple pass on and are punished. (22:3)

t his proverb contrasts the prudent person with the simple person. t he antithesis goes both ways. Each line amplifies and explains the other.

Climactic parallelism is when the second line completes the thought of the first line:

t he rich and the poor have this in common,
t he l ORD is the maker of them all. (22:2)

t he two lines are incomplete without each other.

Finally, many of the proverbs are based on *comparisons* between two parallel lines. t hese are the “better than” proverbs:

Better is a little with righteousness,
t han vast revenues without justice. (16:8)

a ll these examples illustrate the heart of hebrew poetry: parallelism. Each verse sharpens and heightens the thought by use of restatement, comparison, and building to a climax. t hese subtle devices draw us in and cause us to see and understand the point of each proverb more clearly.

a proverb is memorable and transferable. a modern example is the saying “a stitch in time saves nine,” which comes from the observation that fixing a loose thread when it first starts to loosen saves the trouble of resewing the whole seam later on. t his terse statement is short and easy to remember. It also applies to many areas of life—to the timely changing of a car’s oil or to interpersonal conflicts as well as to sewing.

t he hebrew proverb typically compares a principle with an ordinary human experience to illustrate its truth. Proverbs 21:17, for example, speaks of love of “wine and oil” to illustrate the danger of indulging in luxury. Everyone has felt a desire to have the best. t he concrete example encourages us to see the truth of the proverb and to apply it immediately to our lives.

It is important to keep in mind that most proverbs are generalizations, not promises or predictions of the future. t hey report what we observe to be true most often, or what we can reasonably expect God to do. a ll of them rely on the assumption that final outcomes include eternity—which is to say, things may not turn out the way we hoped in this life. In keeping with this, the verbs in most proverbs use a tense that depicts actions repeated regularly, indicating that proverbs should be treated as guidelines.

- 18 ^o A heart that devises wicked plans,
^p Feet that are swift in running to evil,
 19 ^q A false witness *who* speaks lies,
 And one who ^r sows discord among
 brethren.

Beware of Adultery

- 20 ^s My son, keep your father's
 command,
 And do not forsake the law of your
 mother.
 21 ^t Bind them continually upon your
 heart;
 Tie them around your neck.
 22 ^u When you roam, ^v they will lead you;
 When you sleep, ^w they will keep
 you;
 And *when* you awake, they will speak
 with you.
 23 ^w For the commandment *is* a lamp,
 And the law a light;
 Reproofs of instruction *are* the way
 of life,
 24 ^x To keep you from the evil woman,
 From the flattering tongue of a
 seductress.
 25 ^y Do not lust after her beauty in your
 heart,
 Nor let her allure you with her
 eyelids.
 26 For ^z by means of a harlot
 A *man is reduced* to a crust of
 bread;
^a And ² an adulteress will ^b prey upon
 his precious life.
 27 Can a man take fire to his bosom,
 And his clothes not be burned?
 28 Can one walk on hot coals,
 And his feet not be seared?
 29 So *is* he who goes in to his neighbor's
 wife;
 Whoever touches her shall not be
 innocent.
 30 *People* do not despise a thief
 If he steals to satisfy himself when
 he is starving.
 31 Yet *when* he is found, ^c he must
 restore sevenfold;
 He may have to give up all the
 substance of his house.

18 ^o Gen. 6:5; Ps.
 36:4; Prov. 24:2;
 Jer. 18:18; Mark
 14:1, 43-46 ^p 2 kin.
 5:20-27; Is. 59:7;
 Rom. 3:15
 19 ^q Ps. 27:12; Prov.
 19:5, 9; Matt. 26:59-
 66 ^r Prov. 6:14;
 1 Cor. 1:11-13; [Jude
 3, 4, 16-19]
 20 ^s Eph. 6:1
 21 ^t Prov. 3:3
 22 ^u [Prov. 3:23]
^v Prov. 2:11 ¹ I it. it
 23 ^w Ps. 19:8; 2 Pet.
 1:19
 24 ^x Prov. 2:16
 25 ^y Matt. 5:28
 26 ^z Prov. 29:3
^a Gen. 39:14 ^b Ezek.
 13:18 ² wife of
 another, lit. *a man's*
 wife
 31 ^c Ex. 22:1-4

32 ^d Prov. 7:7
 34 ^e Prov. 27:4;
 Song 8:6
 35 ³ I it. *lift up the*
face of any

CHAPTER 7

1 ^a Prov. 2:1
 2 ^b Lev. 18:5; Prov.
 4:4; [Is. 55:3] ^c deut.
 32:10; Ps. 17:8;
 Zech. 2:8
 3 ^d deut. 6:8; Prov.
 6:21
 5 ^e Prov. 2:16; 5:3
 7 ^f [Prov. 6:32;
 9:4, 16] ¹ I it. sons
² lacking
 9 ^g Job 24:15
 11 ^h Prov. 9:13;
 1 Tim. 5:13 ⁱ titus
 2:5

- 32 Whoever commits adultery with a
 woman ^d lacks understanding;
 He *who* does so destroys his own
 soul.
 33 Wounds and dishonor he will get,
 And his reproach will not be wiped
 away.
 34 For ^e jealousy *is* a husband's fury;
 Therefore he will not spare in the
 day of vengeance.
 35 He will ³ accept no recompense,
 Nor will he be appeased though you
 give many gifts.

- 7 My son, keep my words,
 And ^a treasure my commands within
 you.
 2 ^b Keep my commands and live,
^c And my law as the apple of your eye.
 3 ^d Bind them on your fingers;
 Write them on the tablet of your
 heart.
 4 Say to wisdom, "You *are* my sister,"
 And call understanding *your* nearest
 kin,
 5 ^e That they may keep you from the
 immoral woman,
 From the seductress *who* flatters with
 her words.

The Crafty Harlot

- 6 For at the window of my house
 I looked through my lattice,
 7 And saw among the simple,
 I perceived among the ¹ youths,
 A young man ^f devoid ² of
 understanding,
 8 Passing along the street near her
 corner;
 And he took the path to her house
 9 ^g In the twilight, in the evening,
 In the black and dark night.
 10 And there a woman met him,
 With the attire of a harlot, and a
 crafty heart.
 11 ^h She *was* loud and rebellious,
ⁱ Her feet would not stay at home.
 12 At times *she was* outside, at times in
 the open square,
 Lurking at every corner.

6:20-24 ^t his passage links the teaching of the father with that of the **mother** (see 1:8). ^t the mother's instruction should be bound about one's **heart** and **neck**, a constant companion and a trusted guide—just like God's law (compare deut. 6:4-9; 11:18-21). **lamp** ... **light**: compare Ps. 119:105.

6:30-35 **steals to satisfy**: ^t his passage does not condone theft. It merely contrasts theft, which can be an understandable course of action, with adultery, which never makes sense. ^t hrowing away one's commitment to one's life-long companion is pure folly. For the ancient Israelites, marital fidelity was a mark of one's fidelity to God.

7:1-5 ^t he problem of immorality (see 2:16-19; 5:1-23; 6:20-35) does have a solution: **Keep my commands . . . as the apple of your eye**. People should guard wise words as instinctively as they protect the pupil of the eye. God cares for his people with the same diligence (deut. 32:10).

7:6-10 ^t he **young man** who gives in to the immoral woman is described as **simple**, a term that pegs him as naive, inexperienced, and **devoid of understanding** (see 1:4; 9:3). he has no idea how foolish he is. he thinks he makes his way to the **woman**, but she in fact seduces him.

Wisdom Cries Out		
Wisdom is personified in the Proverbs and acts as God’s dynamic Word. In the New Testament, Jesus becomes the Wisdom and Word of God.		
Origin of Wisdom	Teaching of Wisdom	Value of Wisdom
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In God (v. 22) • From everlasting (v. 23) • Before all things (vv. 23–30) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prudence (vv. 5, 12) • Understanding (v. 5) • Excellent things (v. 6) • Truth (v. 7) • Hatred of wickedness (v. 7) • Righteousness (v. 8) • Knowledge (v. 12) • Discretion (v. 12) • Fear of the Lord (v. 13) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yields riches and honor (v. 18) • Greater than gold and silver (v. 19) • The wise are blessed (vv. 32, 34) • The wise find life (v. 35) • The foolish love death (v. 36)

13 So she caught him and kissed him; With an ³impudent face she said to him:
14^a “I have peace offerings with me; Today I have paid my vows.
15 So I came out to meet you, Diligently to seek your face, And I have found you.
16 I have spread my bed with tapestry, Colored coverings of ⁷Egyptian linen.
17 I have perfumed my bed With myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon.
18 Come, let us take our fill of love until morning; Let us delight ourselves with love.
19 For ⁴my husband *is* not at home; He has gone on a long journey;
20 He has taken a bag of money ⁵with him, And will come home ⁶on the appointed day.”
21⁷ With ^kher enticing speech she caused him to yield, ^lWith her flattering lips she ⁸seduced him.
22 Immediately he went after her, as an ox goes to the slaughter, Or ⁹as a fool to the correction of the ¹stocks,

13 ³ shameless
16 / Is. 19:9; Ezek. 27:7
19 ⁴ I it. the man
20 ⁵ I it. in his hand
6 at the full moon
21 ^k Prov. 5:3
1 Ps. 12:2 ⁷ By the greatness of her words ⁸ compelled
22 ⁹ I XX, syr., tg. as a dog to bonds; vg. as a lamb . . . to bonds ¹ shackles
23 ^m Eccl. 9:12 ² I it. is for
26 ⁿ neh. 13:26
27 ^o Prov. 2:18; 5:5; 9:18; [1 cor. 6:9, 10; rev. 22:15] ³ or Sheol
CHAPTER 8
1 ^a Prov. 1:20, 21; 9:3; [1 cor. 1:24]
2 ¹ I it. heights
5 ² naive
6 ^b Prov. 22:20

23 Till an arrow struck his liver.
^m As a bird hastens to the snare, He did not know it ²would cost his life.
24 Now therefore, listen to me, *my* children; Pay attention to the words of my mouth:
25 Do not let your heart turn aside to her ways, Do not stray into her paths;
26 For she has cast down many wounded, And ⁿall who were slain by her were strong *men*.
27 ^o Her house *is* the way to ³hell, Descending to the chambers of death.

The Excellence of Wisdom

8 Does not ^awisdom cry out, And understanding lift up her voice?
2 She takes her stand on the top of the ¹high hill, Beside the way, where the paths meet.
3 She cries out by the gates, at the entry of the city, At the entrance of the doors:
4 “To you, O men, I call, And my voice *is* to the sons of men.
5 O you ²simple ones, understand prudence, And you fools, be of an understanding heart.
6 Listen, for I will speak of ^bexcellent things, And from the opening of my lips *will* come right things;
7 For my mouth will speak truth; Wickedness *is* an abomination to my lips.
8 All the words of my mouth *are* with righteousness; Nothing crooked or perverse *is* in them.
9 They *are* all plain to him who understands, And right to those who find knowledge.

7:14–20 All the adulteress does is perverse. she audaciously begins her proposition by talking about her supposedly righteous actions that day. since the offerings she presented to the Lord were fellowship or **peace offerings**, she could bring part of them home for a feast before the Lord. But here she presents the offering as a feast for the young man she plans to entrap. her preparations and her words of invitation might pass between a wife and husband and be honored by God. But in her mouth these words become evil. she overcomes her target’s fear by assuring him that her husband will not come home and discover them together.
7:22, 23 the passage here uses several unflattering metaphors to describe how a young fool falls into immorality. the phrase **as a fool to the correction of the stocks** could be translated “as

a stag prances into captivity.” the idea is that the young man is oblivious to his fate. such a fool has no idea how foolish he is.
8:1–11 chapter 8 is a hymn of praise about how wonderful wisdom is. **Does not wisdom cry out:** wisdom wants to reach everyone and therefore broadcasts her message publicly, unlike the immoral woman, who uses privacy and deception to achieve her goals. wisdom’s words can be trusted, and her offers of grace are beneficial. her words of **truth** contrast with the lies of **wickedness** (7:21–23); wisdom will deliver on her promises; she is not a tawdry tease. what wisdom offers is of inestimable worth, far more valuable than **silver and gold**; no gems or other desirable things may be compared with it (see 3:14, 15 for a similar expression).

- 10 Receive my instruction, and not silver,
And knowledge rather than choice gold;
- 11 ^cFor wisdom *is* better than rubies,
And all the things one may desire
cannot be compared with her.
- 12 ^aI, wisdom, dwell with prudence,
And find out knowledge *and*
discretion.
- 13 ^dThe fear of the LORD *is* to hate evil;
^ePride and arrogance and the evil way
And ^fthe perverse mouth I hate.
- 14 Counsel *is* mine, and sound wisdom;
I *am* understanding, ^gI have strength.
- 15 ^hBy me kings reign,
And rulers decree justice.
- 16 By me princes rule, and nobles,
All the judges of ³the earth.
- 17 ⁱI love those who love me,
And ^jthose who seek me diligently
will find me.
- 18 ^kRiches and honor *are* with me,
Enduring riches and righteousness.
- 19 My fruit *is* better than gold, yes, than
fine gold,
And my revenue than choice silver.
- 20 I ⁴traverse the way of righteousness,
In the midst of the paths of justice,
- 21 That I may cause those who love me
to inherit wealth,
That I may fill their treasuries.
- 22 ^aThe ^lLORD possessed me at the
beginning of His way,
Before His works of old.

11 ^c Job 28:15;
Ps. 19:10; 119:127;
Prov. 3:14, 15; 4:5,
7; 16:16
13 ^d Prov. 3:7; 16:6
^e 1 sam. 2:3; [Prov.
16:17, 18; Is. 13:11]
^f Prov. 4:24
14 ^g Eccl. 7:19; 9:16
15 ^h 2 chr. 1:10;
Prov. 29:4; dan.
2:21; [Matt. 28:18];
rom. 13:1
16 ³ Mt., syr., tg.,
vg. *righteousness*;
l XX, Bg., some mss.
and editions *earth*
17 ⁱ 1 sam. 2:30;
[Ps. 91:14]; Prov. 4:6;
[John 14:21] ^j Prov.
2:4, 5; John 7:37;
James 1:5
18 ^k Prov. 3:16;
[Matt. 6:33]
20 ⁴ *walk about on*
22 ^l Job 28:26-28;
Ps. 104:24; Prov.
3:19; [John 1:1]

23 ^m [Ps. 2:6]
25 ⁿ Job 15:7, 8
26 ⁵ *outer places*
⁶ l it. *beginning of
the dust*
29 ^o Gen. 1:9, 10;
Job 38:8-11; Ps.
33:7; 104:9; Jer.
5:22 ^p Job 28:4, 6;
Ps. 104:5
30 ^q [John 1:1-3, 18]
^r [Matt. 3:17] ⁷ a
Jewish tradition
one brought up
31 ^s Ps. 16:3; John
13:1
32 ^t Ps. 119:1, 2;
128:1; Prov. 29:18;
l uke 11:28

- 23 ^m I have been established from
everlasting,
From the beginning, before there was
ever an earth.
- 24 When *there were* no depths I was
brought forth,
When *there were* no fountains
abounding with water.
- 25 ⁿ Before the mountains were settled,
Before the hills, I was brought forth;
- 26 While as yet He had not made the
earth or the ⁵fields,
Or the ⁶primal dust of the world.
- 27 When He prepared the heavens, I
was there,
When He drew a circle on the face of
the deep,
- 28 When He established the clouds
above,
When He strengthened the fountains
of the deep,
- 29 ^o When He assigned to the sea its limit,
So that the waters would not
transgress His command,
When ^pHe marked out the
foundations of the earth,
- 30 ^q Then I was beside Him *as* ⁷a master
craftsman;
^r And I was daily *His* delight,
Rejoicing always before Him,
- 31 Rejoicing in His inhabited world,
And ^smy delight *was* with the sons
of men.
- 32 ^a Now therefore, listen to me, *my*
children,
For ^tblessed *are those who* keep my
ways.

8:12, 13 The words **I, wisdom, dwell with prudence** introduce the second section of this passage about the excellence of wisdom (vv. 12–21), a gain in this context we see wisdom tied directly to **the fear of the LORD**. The offer of wisdom is held out only to those who fear God. Coming to wisdom requires coming to God, and coming to God means turning away from all that God hates—evil, pride, arrogance, misbehavior, and perverse speech. Jesus said that the truth is found in him (see John 8:32).

8:14–18 **princes . . . nobles . . . judges:** Power and authority require the use of wisdom; this is one of its loftiest appeals. What's more, wisdom leads those who follow her to **riches and honor** (see 9:1–6). These contrast directly with the shameful fate of the fool (6:33, 35).

8:22–31 This section of ch. 8 describes wisdom's role in creation. **The LORD possessed me at the beginning of His way:** The Hebrew verb for *possessed* can mean "brought forth" or "created." Melchizedek used the same word to identify God as creator of the universe (see Gen. 14:19). God, who is ever wise, produced wisdom; God, who possesses all knowledge, brought forth knowledge. Wisdom had a **beginning** only in the sense that God singled it out for special display at that time; insofar as it is one of God's perfections, it has always existed (v. 23). These verses provide part of the background for the NT portrayal of Christ as the divine word (John 1:1–3) and as the wisdom of God (1 cor. 1:24, 30; col. 2:3).

8:30, 31 The term **master craftsman** speaks of an artisan or of a darling child. Wisdom is both. With wisdom's skill, God created the universe. A proper study of the universe is a progressive discovery of God's wisdom (see rom. 1:20). **delight:** In her playful,

childlike exuberance, wisdom is a darling child. And her greatest joy comes in the finest of the work of God—the **sons of men**—that is, humankind.

8:32–36 **Now therefore, listen to me, my children:** This section is the epilogue of the ch. 8 hymn of praise. It calls everyone to listen.

instruction

(heb. *musar*) (1:2; 4:1; 8:10; deut. 11:2; Is. 26:16; 53:5) strong's #4148

The Hebrew word translated *instruction* means "discipline" that is instructive and corrective in nature. The word emphasizes the "nourishing" and "chastising" elements of bringing up a child. Instruction has to do with both the reception of knowledge through hearing and the application of that knowledge in daily life. In Proverbs, discipline comes primarily through one's father but also through one's mother (see 1:8; 3:11, 12, 13:1; 31:1). Usually the word refers to verbal instruction, but it can also refer to the rod of correction (see 13:24; 22:15; 23:13). The content of the instruction is frequently linked to wisdom, knowledge, and the fear of the LORD (1:2, 3; 12:1; 15:33; 23:12, 13). Outside of Proverbs, discipline and instruction is frequently connected to God. The Exile was identified by the prophets as God's corrective punishment on the Israelites (Jer. 2:30; 5:3; 30:14).

- 33 Hear instruction and be wise,
And do not disdain it.
- 34 ^u Blessed is the man who listens
to me,
Watching daily at my gates,
Waiting at the posts of my doors.
- 35 For whoever finds me finds life,
And ^v obtains favor from the LORD;
- 36 But he who sins against me ^w wrongs
his own soul;
All those who hate me love death.”

The Way of Wisdom

- 9 Wisdom has ^a built her house,
She has hewn out her seven pillars;
2 ^b She has slaughtered her meat,
^c She has mixed her wine,
She has also ⁱ furnished her table.
- 3 She has sent out her maidens,
She cries out from the highest places
of the city,
- 4 “Whoever ^d is simple, let him turn in
here!”
As for him who lacks understanding,
she says to him,
- 5 “Come, ^e eat of my bread
And drink of the wine I have
mixed.
- 6 Forsake foolishness and live,
And go in the way of understanding.
- 7 “He who corrects a scoffer gets shame
for himself,
And he who rebukes a wicked *man*
only harms himself.
- 8 ^f Do not correct a scoffer, lest he hate
you;
^g Rebuke a wise *man*, and he will love
you.

34 ^u Prov. 3:13, 18
35 ^v Prov. 3:4; 12:2;
[John 17:3]
36 ^w Prov. 20:2

CHAPTER 9

1 ^a [Matt. 16:18;
1 cor. 3:9, 10; Eph.
2:20-22; 1 Pet. 2:5]
2 ^b Matt. 22:4
3 Prov. 23:30
4 ^c arranged
4 ^d Ps. 19:7
5 ^e song 5:1; Is. 55:1;
[John 6:27]
8 ^f Prov. 15:12; Matt.
7:6 9 Ps. 141:5; Prov.
10:8

9 ^h [Matt. 13:12]
10 ⁱ Job 28:28; Ps.
11:10; Prov. 1:7
11 ^j Prov. 3:2, 16
12 ^k Job 35:6, 7;
Prov. 16:26
13 ^l Prov. 7:11
2 boisterous
14 ^m Prov. 9:3
16 ⁿ Prov. 7:7, 8
3 naive
17 ^o Prov. 20:17
18 ^p Prov. 2:18; 7:27
4 or Sheol

- 9 Give instruction to a wise *man*, and
he will be still wiser;
Teach a just *man*, ^h and he will
increase in learning.

- 10 “The ⁱ fear of the LORD is the
beginning of wisdom,
And the knowledge of the Holy One
is understanding.
- 11 ^j For by me your days will be
multiplied,
And years of life will be added to
you.
- 12 ^k If you are wise, you are wise for
yourself,
And if you scoff, you will bear it
alone.”

The Way of Folly

- 13 ^l A foolish woman is ² clamorous;
She is simple, and knows
nothing.
- 14 For she sits at the door of her
house,
On a seat ^m by the highest places of
the city,
- 15 To call to those who pass by,
Who go straight on their way:
- 16 “Whoever ⁿ is ³ simple, let him turn in
here”;
And as for him who lacks
understanding, she says to him,
- 17 “Stolen ^o water is sweet,
And bread eaten in secret is
pleasant.”
- 18 But he does not know that ^p the dead
are there,
That her guests are in the depths of
⁴ hell.

wisdom offers blessing and life to those who heed her, but cursing and death to those who hate her. wisdom’s gracious invitation is more desirable than anything and an invitation to a **blessed** life.

9:1 here is the final contrast between wisdom and folly. Each holds a banquet, one for life (vv. 1–6) and one for death (vv. 13–18). Between the two banquet descriptions is a section (vv. 7–12) that speaks of consequences of the life of wisdom and of the plight of folly. **Wisdom has built her house:** here as in 1:20, the term for wisdom is in the intensive plural rather than the singular. It calls attention to itself. **Seven pillars:** the number seven represents completeness, as it often does in semitic poetry. That is, it is not that there were precisely seven pillars so much as that the house of wisdom was solidly built and substantial in character.

9:2, 3 the meal at wisdom’s banquet includes **meat** and **wine** and a lovely **table** (see 7:14). Freshly butchered meat was a mark of a feast in biblical times. **mixed her wine:** wine was a staple in ancient Israel; but when a feast was special, a homemaker would add aromatic spices to the wine, enlivening the bouquet and improving the taste (see song 8:2). This all sets up a contrast with the foolish woman. While wisdom is busy, attending to every detail like a gracious hostess, the foolish woman sits at the entrance of her house with very little to do (v. 14). wisdom sends her trusted **maidens** throughout the city, inviting people to come and dine.

9:4–6 wisdom makes a point of inviting the **simple**, meaning those who have not yet made up their minds about their course in life (see 1:4; 7:6). **bread . . . wine:** wisdom promises life. **Forsake**

foolishness: the person who comes to wisdom has nothing to lose but naiveté. see heb. 5:14, which speaks of a mature person as one who is able to eat and to enjoy solid food, in contrast to the naive who is able only to drink milk (heb. 5:13).

9:7–9 a **scoffer** or mocker is thoroughly set against wisdom (see 1:22) and scoffs at the things of God (Ps. 1:1). how should a person respond to a mocker? It is best not to respond at all. By contrast, a **wise man** accepts correction and responds with gratitude to the one who points out his error. a wise person always welcomes constructive criticism; by implication, he or she is also humble (v. 10; 3:7; 11:2).

9:10–12 **fear of the LORD:** this is the central theme of the Book of Proverbs (see 1:7). the only appropriate way to approach the holy God is with fear, that is, reverence. the term **Holy One** is an intensive plural of the hebrew word for *holy*: “the most holy one” or “the quintessence of holiness.” **for yourself . . . alone:** you will feel the effects of your wisdom or foolishness directly; you cannot escape them.

9:13–18 this section is a parody of vv. 1–6. I like personified wisdom, the **foolish woman** calls out an invitation. But she is brash, loud, undisciplined, and **knows nothing** (see 7:10–12). she cries out in the same words that wisdom has used (compare v. 16 with v. 4), but with a twist: she has no marvelous banquet for her guests, only shabby food, stolen and meager. though she gets lots of attention, her appeal makes sense only to **him who lacks understanding**.

Wise Sayings of Solomon

10 The proverbs of ^aSolomon:

- ^bA wise son makes a glad father,
But a foolish son *is* the grief of his mother.
- ² ^cTreasures of wickedness profit nothing,
^dBut righteousness delivers from death.
- ³ ^eThe LORD will not allow the righteous soul to famish,
But He casts away the desire of the wicked.
- ⁴ ^fHe who has a slack hand becomes poor,
But ^gthe hand of the diligent makes rich.
- ⁵ He who gathers in ^hsummer *is* a wise son;
He who sleeps in harvest *is* ⁱa son who causes shame.
- ⁶ Blessings *are* on the head of the righteous,
But violence covers the mouth of the wicked.
- ⁷ ^jThe memory of the righteous *is* blessed,
But the name of the wicked will rot.

CHAPTER 10

¹ ^a Prov. 1:1; 25:1
^b Prov. 15:20; 17:21, 25; 19:13; 29:3, 15
² ^c Ps. 49:7; Prov. 11:4; 21:6; Ezek. 7:19; [Luke 12:19, 20] ^d Dan. 4:27
³ ^e Ps. 34:9, 10; 37:25; Prov. 28:25; [Matt. 6:33]
⁴ ^f Prov. 19:15
^g Prov. 12:24; 13:4; 21:5
⁵ ^h Prov. 6:8 ⁱ Prov. 19:26
⁷ ^j Ps. 112:6; Eccl. 8:10

⁸ ^k Prov. 10:10 ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^{aa} ^{ab} ^{ac} ^{ad} ^{ae} ^{af} ^{ag} ^{ah} ^{ai} ^{aj} ^{ak} ^{al} ^{am} ^{an} ^{ao} ^{ap} ^{aq} ^{ar} ^{as} ^{at} ^{au} ^{av} ^{aw} ^{ax} ^{ay} ^{az} ^{ba} ^{bb} ^{bc} ^{bd} ^{be} ^{bf} ^{bg} ^{bh} ^{bi} ^{bj} ^{bk} ^{bl} ^{bm} ^{bn} ^{bo} ^{bp} ^{bq} ^{br} ^{bs} ^{bt} ^{bu} ^{bv} ^{bw} ^{bx} ^{by} ^{bz} ^{ca} ^{cb} ^{cc} ^{cd} ^{ce} ^{cf} ^{cg} ^{ch} ^{ci} ^{cj} ^{ck} ^{cl} ^{cm} ^{cn} ^{co} ^{cp} ^{cq} ^{cr} ^{cs} ^{ct} ^{cu} ^{cv} ^{cw} ^{cx} ^{cy} ^{cz} ^{da} ^{db} ^{dc} ^{dd} ^{de} ^{df} ^{dg} ^{dh} ^{di} ^{dj} ^{dk} ^{dl} ^{dm} ^{dn} ^{do} ^{dp} ^{dq} ^{dr} ^{ds} ^{dt} ^{du} ^{dv} ^{dw} ^{dx} ^{dy} ^{dz} ^{ea} ^{eb} ^{ec} ^{ed} ^{ee} ^{ef} ^{eg} ^{eh} ^{ei} ^{ej} ^{ek} ^{el} ^{em} ^{en} ^{eo} ^{ep} ^{eq} ^{er} ^{es} ^{et} ^{eu} ^{ev} ^{ew} ^{ex} ^{ey} ^{ez} ^{fa} ^{fb} ^{fc} ^{fd} ^{fe} ^{ff} ^{fg} ^{fh} ^{fi} ^{fj} ^{fk} ^{fl} ^{fm} ^{fn} ^{fo} ^{fp} ^{fq} ^{fr} ^{fs} ^{ft} ^{fu} ^{fv} ^{fw} ^{fx} ^{fy} ^{fz} ^{ga} ^{gb} ^{gc} ^{gd} ^{ge} ^{gf} ^{gg} ^{gh} ^{gi} ^{gj} ^{gk} ^{gl} ^{gm} ^{gn} ^{go} ^{gp} ^{gq} ^{gr} ^{gs} ^{gt} ^{gu} ^{gv} ^{gw} ^{gx} ^{gy} ^{gz} ^{ha} ^{hb} ^{hc} ^{hd} ^{he} ^{hf} ^{hg} ^{hh} ^{hi} ^{hj} ^{hk} ^{hl} ^{hm} ^{hn} ^{ho} ^{hp} ^{hq} ^{hr} ^{hs} ^{ht} ^{hu} ^{hv} ^{hw} ^{hx} ^{hy} ^{hz} ^{ia} ^{ib} ^{ic} ^{id} ^{ie} ^{if} ^{ig} ^{ih} ⁱⁱ ^{ij} ^{ik} ^{il} ^{im} ⁱⁿ ^{io} ^{ip} ^{iq} ^{ir} ^{is} ^{it} ^{iu} ^{iv} ^{iw} ^{ix} ^{iy} ^{iz} ^{ja} ^{jb} ^{jc} ^{jd} ^{je} ^{jf} ^{jj} ^{jk} ^{jl} ^{jm} ^{jn} ^{jo} ^{jp} ^{jq} ^{jr} ^{js} ^{jt} ^{ju} ^{jv} ^{jw} ^{jx} ^{ky} ^{kz} ^{la} ^{lb} ^{lc} ^{ld} ^{le} ^{lf} ^{lg} ^{lh} ^{li} ^{lj} ^{lk} ^{ll} ^{lm} ^{ln} ^{lo} ^{lp} ^{lq} ^{lr} ^{ls} ^{lt} ^{lu} ^{lv} ^{lw} ^{lx} ^{ly} ^{lz} ^{ma} ^{mb} ^{mc} ^{md} ^{me} ^{mf} ^{mg} ^{mh} ^{mi} ^{mj} ^{mk} ^{ml} ^{mn} ^{mo} ^{mp} ^{mq} ^{mr} ^{ms} ^{mt} ^{mu} ^{mv} ^{mw} ^{mx} ^{my} ^{mz} ^{na} ^{nb} ^{nc} nd ^{ne} ^{nf} ^{ng} ^{nh} ⁿⁱ ^{nj} ^{nk} ^{nl} ^{nm} ⁿⁿ ^{no} ^{np} ^{nq} ^{nr} ^{ns} ^{nt} ^{nu} ^{nv} ^{nw} ^{nx} ^{ny} ^{nz} ^{oa} ^{ob} ^{oc} ^{od} ^{oe} ^{of} ^{og} ^{oh} ^{oi} ^{oj} ^{ok} ^{ol} ^{om} ^{on} ^{oo} ^{op} ^{oq} ^{or} ^{os} ^{ot} ^{ou} ^{ov} ^{ow} ^{ox} ^{oy} ^{oz} ^{pa} ^{pb} ^{pc} ^{pd} ^{pe} ^{pf} ^{pg} ^{ph} ^{pi} ^{pj} ^{pk} ^{pl} ^{pm} ^{pn} ^{po} ^{pp} ^{pq} ^{pr} ^{ps} ^{pt} ^{pu} ^{pv} ^{pw} ^{px} ^{py} ^{pz} ^{qa} ^{qb} ^{qc} ^{qd} ^{qe} ^{qf} ^{qg} ^{qh} ^{qi} ^{qj} ^{qk} ^{ql} ^{qm} ^{qn} ^{qo} ^{qp} ^{qq} ^{qr} ^{qs} ^{qt} ^{qu} ^{qv} ^{qw} ^{qx} ^{qy} ^{qz} ^{ra} ^{rb} ^{rc} rd ^{re} ^{rf} ^{rg} ^{rh} ^{ri} ^{rj} ^{rk} ^{rl} ^{rm} ^{rn} ^{ro} ^{rp} ^{rq} ^{rr} ^{rs} ^{rt} ^{ru} ^{rv} ^{rw} ^{rx} ^{ry} ^{rz} ^{sa} ^{sb} ^{sc} ^{sd} ^{se} ^{sf} ^{sg} ^{sh} ^{si} ^{sj} ^{sk} ^{sl} sm ^{sn} ^{so} ^{sp} ^{sq} ^{sr} ^{ss} st ^{su} ^{sv} ^{sw} ^{sx} ^{sy} ^{sz} ^{ta} ^{tb} ^{tc} ^{td} ^{te} ^{tf} ^{tg} th ^{ti} ^{tj} ^{tk} ^{tl} tm ^{tn} ^{to} ^{tp} ^{tq} ^{tr} ^{ts} ^{tt} ^{tu} ^{tv} ^{tw} ^{tx} ^{ty} ^{tz} ^{ua} ^{ub} ^{uc} ^{ud} ^{ue} ^{uf} ^{ug} ^{uh} ^{ui} ^{uj} ^{uk} ^{ul} ^{um} ^{un} ^{uo} ^{up} ^{uq} ^{ur} ^{us} ^{ut} ^{uu} ^{uv} ^{uw} ^{ux} ^{uy} ^{uz} ^{va} ^{vb} ^{vc} ^{vd} ^{ve} ^{vf} ^{vg} ^{vh} ^{vi} ^{vj} ^{vk} ^{vl} ^{vm} ^{vn} ^{vo} ^{vp} ^{vq} ^{vr} ^{vs} ^{vt} ^{vu} ^{vv} ^{vw} ^{vx} ^{vy} ^{vz} ^{wa} ^{wb} ^{wc} ^{wd} ^{we} ^{wf} ^{wg} ^{wh} ^{wi} ^{wj} ^{wk} ^{wl} ^{wm} ^{wn} ^{wo} ^{wp} ^{wq} ^{wr} ^{ws} ^{wt} ^{wu} ^{wv} ^{ww} ^{wx} ^{wy} ^{wz} ^{xa} ^{xb} ^{xc} ^{xd} ^{xe} ^{xf} ^{fg} ^{xg} ^{xh} ^{xi} ^{xj} ^{xk} ^{xl} ^{xm} ^{xn} ^{xo} ^{xp} ^{xq} ^{xr} ^{xs} ^{xt} ^{xu} ^{xv} ^{xw} ^{xa} ^{xb} ^{xc} ^{xd} ^{xe} ^{xf} ^{fg} ^{xg} ^{xh} ^{xi} ^{xj} ^{xk} ^{xl} ^{xm} ^{xn} ^{xo} ^{xp} ^{xq} ^{xr} ^{xs} ^{xt} ^{xu} ^{xv} ^{xw} ^{ya} ^{yb} ^{yc} ^{yd} ^{ye} ^{yf} ^{yg} ^{yh} ^{yi} ^{yj} ^{yk} ^{yl} ^{ym} ^{yn} ^{yo} ^{yp} ^{yq} ^{yr} ^{ys} ^{yt} ^{yu} ^{yv} ^{yw} ^{ya} ^{yb} ^{yc} ^{yd} ^{ye} ^{yf} ^{yg} ^{yh} ^{yi} ^{yj} ^{yk} ^{yl} ^{ym} ^{yn} ^{yo} ^{yp} ^{yq} ^{yr} ^{ys} ^{yt} ^{yu} ^{yv} ^{yw} ^{za} ^{zb} ^{zc} ^{zd} ^{ze} ^{zf} ^{zg} ^{zh} ^{zi} ^{zj} ^{zk} ^{zl} ^{zm} ^{zn} ^{zo} ^{zp} ^{zq} ^{zr} ^{zs} ^{zt} ^{zu} ^{zv} ^{zw} ^{zx} ^{zy} ^{zz}

10:1 The proverbs of Solomon focus on the **wise son**, as in chs. 1–9, and contrast him with the **foolish son**. t he term *son* is generic—the central issue is not that he is a son rather than a daughter, but that he is wise or foolish. t he child’s behavior affects both parents. Both parents find their joy or sadness in their child who demonstrates skill in life. t he tense of the verbs suggests that time after time a wise child gladdens parents, and time after time a foolish child brings distress to parents.

10:3 t his verse speaks of God’s gracious provision of food for the **righteous** and h is retributive justice on the **wicked**. Proverbs such as this emphasize (1) circumstances as they ought to be and (2) the *end* of the wicked (see Ps. 73:17). t hey do not necessarily indicate circumstances as they always are, nor what the wicked are experiencing right now.

10:4 **slack hand . . . poor**: Proverbs often link laziness with poverty, and hard work with riches, but not always (see v. 2). t his proverb states the norm.

10:5 **Gathers in summer** contrasts a skillful person with a shameful person, based on whether he works hard during the harvest season. t he description of the second person is particularly critical: “he who snores away during the harvest.”

10:7 In biblical times, a person’s **name** was significant and important. when a person’s name was remembered by future generations for good, that person’s life was believed to have been of great value. But when the memory of a name rotted away, it was as though that person had never lived.

10:8 t he hebrew verb for **will fall** means “is ruined” and comes from the same root as the verb *will rot* in v. 7. t his type of poetic parallelism would have delighted the ancient Israelites.

10:9 Many of the proverbs contrast two paths of life. **Walks with integrity** means conforming to God’s law as a course of life. c hoosing crooked paths is willfully to disdain the l aw God so graciously provided.

10:10 **winks with the eye**: a lthough many proverbs contrast two behaviors, both units of this proverb speak of evil actions. More-

- ⁸ The wise in heart will receive commands,
^kBut ^la prating fool will ²fall.
- ⁹ ^lHe who walks with integrity walks securely,
But he who perverts his ways will become known.
- ¹⁰ He who winks with the eye causes trouble,
But a prating fool will fall.
- ¹¹ The mouth of the righteous *is* a well of life,
But violence covers the mouth of the wicked.
- ¹² Hatred stirs up strife,
But ^mlove covers all sins.
- ¹³ Wisdom is found on the lips of him who has understanding,
But ⁿa rod *is* for the back of him who ³is devoid of understanding.
- ¹⁴ Wise *people* store up knowledge,
But ^othe mouth of the foolish *is* near destruction.
- ¹⁵ The ^prich man’s wealth *is* his strong city;

over, the second unit of this verse is identical with the second unit of v. 8; this is a connective link that ties the passage together.

10:12 **Hatred . . . love**: t his verse describes interpersonal relationships, not salvation. when people respond in love to each other, they cover over the **sins**, or offenses, that would otherwise come between them.

10:13 t his proverb tells of the positive role that speech can have—that of speaking wisdom. t he **rod** refers to punishment, in this case deserved. t he term **devoid of understanding** comes from the hebrew idiom “lack heart.” t he one who “lacks heart” is contrasted with the one who is “wise in heart” (see v. 8).

10:14, 15 t o **store up** knowledge is a strong theme in the instruction section of chs. 1–9 (see 1:1–3; 3:1). t his set of verses contrasts the wise person’s pursuit of knowledge with the empty talk of a fool. **Wealth** is like a **strong city**. In biblical times only walled cities

proverb

(heb. *mashal*) (10:1; 1 sam. 10:12; 24:13; Ezek. 14:8) strong’s #4912

t his hebrew word means an “insightful saying.” t he word is commonly associated with solomon, who spoke some three thousand proverbs (1 kin. 4:32; Eccl. 12:9). In Proverbs, the section headings indicate that both the two-line witty adage and the longer instructions of wisdom can be called by this name (see 1:1; 10:1; 25:1). In Job, even an extended philosophical discourse can be called a proverb (Job 27:1; 29:1). In Ezekiel, the insightful saying can take on the form of a parable (see Ezek. 17:2; 24:3). t he Book of Proverbs makes it clear that all of these sayings are exclusively the domain of the wise (1:6; 26:7, 9). t hey are intended to instruct us in the realities of life, the truth, and most importantly the fear of God (1:6, 7).

The destruction of the poor *is* their poverty.

16 The labor of the righteous *leads* to ^qlife,
The wages of the wicked to sin.

17 He who keeps instruction *is in* the way of life,
But he who refuses correction ⁴goes astray.

18 Whoever ^rhides hatred *has* lying lips,
And ^swhoever spreads slander *is* a fool.

19 ^tIn the multitude of words sin is not lacking,
But ^uhe who restrains his lips *is* wise.

20 The tongue of the righteous *is* choice silver;
The heart of the wicked *is* *worth* little.

21 The lips of the righteous feed many,
But fools die for lack of ⁵wisdom.

22 ^vThe blessing of the LORD makes *one* rich,
And He adds no sorrow with it.

23^wTo do evil *is* like sport to a fool,
But a man of understanding *has* wisdom.

24 ^xThe fear of the wicked will come upon him,
And ^ythe desire of the righteous will be granted.

16 ^a Prov. 6:23
17 ⁴ leads
18 ^r Prov. 26:24
^s Ps. 15:3; 101:5
19 ^t Job 11:2;
[Prov. 18:21]; Eccl.
5:3 ^u Prov. 17:27;
[James 1:19; 3:2]
21 ⁵ *it*. heart
22 ^v Gen. 24:35;
26:12; deut. 8:18;
Ps. 37:22; Prov. 8:21
23 ^w Prov. 2:14;
15:21
24 ^x Job 15:21; Prov.
1:27; Is. 66:4 ^y Ps.
145:19; Prov. 15:8;
Matt. 5:6; [1 John
5:14, 15]

25 ^z Ps. 37:9, 10
^a Ps. 15:5; Prov. 12:3;
Matt. 7:24, 25
27 ^b Prov. 9:11 ^c Job
15:32
28 ^d Job 8:13
29 ^e Ps. 1:6
30 ^f Ps. 37:22; Prov.
2:21 ⁶ land
31 ^g Ps. 37:30; Prov.
10:13

CHAPTER 11

1 ^a *1* ev. 19:35, 36;
deut. 25:13-16;
Prov. 20:10, 23; Mic.
6:11 ¹ deceptive
² *1* it. perfect stone
2 ^b Prov. 16:18;
18:12; 29:23

25 When the whirlwind passes by, ^zthe wicked *is* no *more*,
But ^athe righteous *has* an everlasting foundation.

26 As vinegar to the teeth and smoke to the eyes,
So *is* the lazy *man* to those who send him.

27 ^bThe fear of the LORD prolongs days,
But ^cthe years of the wicked will be shortened.

28 The hope of the righteous *will be* gladness,
But the ^dexpectation of the wicked will perish.

29 The way of the LORD *is* strength for the upright,
But ^edestruction *will come* to the workers of iniquity.

30 ^fThe righteous will never be removed,
But the wicked will not inhabit the ⁶earth.

31 ^gThe mouth of the righteous brings forth wisdom,
But the perverse tongue will be cut out.

32 The lips of the righteous know what is acceptable,
But the mouth of the wicked *what is* perverse.

11 Dishonest ^a1 scales *are* an abomination to the LORD,
But a ²just weight *is* His delight.

2 When pride comes, then comes ^bshame;
But with the humble *is* wisdom.

had any defense against enemy armies; likewise, a wealthy person is able to withstand the assaults of others.

10:16, 17 t these verses present the doctrine of the two ways: the righteous is on the **way of life**, but the wicked wander from it. t the phrase **wages of the wicked** is similar to Paul's expression in 1 cor. 6:23: "the wages of sin is death."

10:18–21 t these verses tell of the dangers of speech, particularly **lying** and **slander**. t the way to avoid these sins is to exercise restraint.

10:23, 24 t the word translated **sport** usually means "joyous laughter" (see Job 8:21; Ps. 126:2). a t times it means "hollow laughter" (14:13; Eccl. 7:3, 6). here the proverb uses the word in a completely negative sense. For the fool, wickedness is only a game. he makes up the rules as he goes along; for him losing is only in getting caught. But a person who has understanding takes a longer-term perspective. In the end he gets his way while justice comes upon the **wicked**.

10:25 t the short-lived nature of the wicked is contrasted with the stability of the righteous. a s in Ps. 1:3, 4, where the righteous are compared to a tree and the wicked to chaff, so in this proverb the storm blows away the wicked but cannot dislodge the righteous. t the **everlasting foundation** of the righteous is faith in God, much like the waters that nourish the tree of Ps. 1:3.

10:27 t this verse contains the first instance of the phrase **the fear of the LORD** in chs. 10–22 (see 1:7, 29; 2:5; 8:13; 9:10). t the tie of piety to long life and of wickedness to an early death is another common theme in Proverbs (see 3:1, 2).

10:28 hope . . . expectation: t he **righteous** have something to look forward to; the **wicked** do not (v. 24).

10:29 d different people see the **way of the LORD** differently. t those who are innocent see it as a shelter from the storm and the heat of the day. t those who practice iniquity see it only as a source of terror. t the viewer's perspective makes all the difference; the way of the LORD itself remains constant and true.

10:30 t his proverb presents a confident hope in the ultimate survival of the righteous and the final judgment of the **wicked**. In our limited experience, we might see the wicked succeeding and the righteous only struggling to live. But the final judgment (see Ps. 73) will reverse their fortunes.

10:31, 32 t these verses form another pair of sentences about true and false speech. t they may be compared to vv. 11, 13, 20, 21 and James 3. t his repetition with variation indicates the significance of truth and falsehood in both ancient Israel and in the modern world as well.

11:1 dealing fairly with one another is an outgrowth of the command to love one's neighbor as oneself (see 1 ev. 19:18), which in turn is an outgrowth of the central command given to Israel, to love God alone (see deut. 6:4–9). t hat is why false balances are an **abomination** to God, a term that refers to stomach-wrenching hatred.

11:2 Many proverbs contrast the arrogant with the humble, as this one does. t he hebrew word for **pride** comes from a root that means "to boil up"; it refers to a raging arrogance or insolence.

- 3 The integrity of the upright will guide ^cthem,
But the perversity of the unfaithful will destroy them.
- 4 ^dRiches do not profit in the day of wrath,
But ^erighteousness delivers from death.
- 5 The righteousness of the blameless will ³direct his way aright,
But the wicked will fall by his own ^fwickedness.
- 6 The righteousness of the upright will deliver them,
But the unfaithful will be caught by *their* lust.
- 7 When a wicked man dies, *his* expectation will ^gperish,
And the hope of the unjust perishes.
- 8 ^hThe righteous is delivered from trouble,
And it comes to the wicked instead.
- 9 The hypocrite with *his* mouth destroys his neighbor,
But through knowledge the righteous will be delivered.
- 10 ⁱWhen it goes well with the righteous, the city rejoices;
And when the wicked perish, *there* is jubilation.
- 11 By the blessing of the upright the city is ^jexalted,
But it is overthrown by the mouth of the wicked.
- 12 He who ⁴is devoid of wisdom despises his neighbor,
But a man of understanding holds his peace.
- 13 ^kA talebearer reveals secrets,
But he who is of a faithful spirit ^lconceals a matter.

3 ^c Prov. 13:6
4 ^d Prov. 10:2; Ezek. 7:19; Zeph. 1:18
^e Gen. 7:1
5 ^f Prov. 5:22 ³ or *make smooth or straight*
7 ^g Prov. 10:28
8 ^h Prov. 21:18
10 ⁱ Prov. 28:12
11 ^j Prov. 14:34
12 ^k ⁴ *It lacks heart*
13 ^k ¹ *ev. 19:16; Prov. 20:19; 1 Tim. 5:13*
^l Prov. 19:11

14 ^m 1 kin. 12:1
15 ⁿ Prov. 6:1, 2
³ *guaranty* ⁶ *those pledging guaranty*, lit. *those who strike hands*
17 ^o [Matt. 5:7; 25:34–36]
18 ^p Hos. 10:12; [Gal. 6:8, 9]; James 3:18
19 ^q Prov. 10:16; 12:28 ^r Prov. 21:16; [r om. 6:23; James 1:15]
21 ^s Prov. 16:5 ^t Ps. 112:2; Prov. 14:26
⁷ *It, hand to hand*
22 ⁸ *taste*
23 ^u Prov. 10:28; r om. 2:8, 9

- 14^m Where *there* is no counsel, the people fall;
But in the multitude of counselors *there* is safety.
- 15 He who is ⁿsurety⁵ for a stranger will suffer,
But one who hates ⁶being surety is secure.
- 16 A gracious woman retains honor,
But ruthless *men* retain riches.
- 17^o The merciful man does good for his own soul,
But *he who* is cruel troubles his own flesh.
- 18 The wicked *man* does deceptive work,
But ^phe who sows righteousness *will have* a sure reward.
- 19 As righteousness *leads* to ^qlife,
So he who pursues evil *pursues it* to his own ^rdeath.
- 20 Those who are of a perverse heart *are* an abomination to the LORD,
But *the* blameless in their ways *are* His delight.
- 21 ^s *Though they join* ⁷forces, the wicked will not go unpunished;
But ^tthe posterity of the righteous will be delivered.
- 22 As a ring of gold in a swine's snout,
So *is* a lovely woman who lacks ⁸discretion.
- 23 The desire of the righteous *is* only good,
But *the* expectation of the wicked ^u*is* wrath.

the image pictures the presumptuous or arrogant behavior of the godless person. such behavior always leads to **shame**.

11:3–6 t hese verses form a series of proverbs that contrast the results of righteousness and perversity in people's lives. a s pride and humility are contrasted in v. 2, so **integrity** and **perversity** are contrasted in v. 3.

11:4 From time to time the proverbs speak of **death** as a time of reward and punishment. **Riches** cannot help with this. o nly righteousness has meaning and power beyond the grave.

11:10, 11 t ruly **righteous** people bring justice to all the inhabitants of a **city**, and the city experiences true peace—that is, *shalom*, meaning “things as they ought to be.” Many psalm writers cried for vindication of the righteous and for a cessation of evil (see Ps. 69:22–28). For the fate of a city without any righteous persons in it, see the story of sodom and Gomorrah in Gen. 18:22–33.

11:12 Patience and control are part of wisdom. a person who is **devoid of wisdom**, who “lacks heart” (see 10:13), despises his neighbor. But the understanding person knows enough to control his passion and to keep silence (see 17:28).

11:13 a **faithful** friend **conceals** delicate matters that an unfaithful

person reveals. “I ove covers a multitude of sins” (see 10:12; James 5:20; 1 Pet. 4:8).

11:14 In modern times as much as formerly, leaders of nations need adequate **counsel**. s o do all individuals. we all need to seek advice from wise and trustworthy people.

11:15, 16 t hese two proverbs balance each other. t he first warns against rashly giving **surety** or a pledge for a stranger. t he second praises generosity; generosity begets honor. o ne of the greatest virtues is to be freed of possessiveness. t he members of the early church gave freely to those in need (acts 2:44, 45; 4:32–35).

11:19 Proverbs such as this remind us that the pursuit of righteousness is a matter of **life and death**.

11:21 t he term **join forces** is literally “hand for hand.” collective opposition to God's purposes makes no sense at all (Ps. 2:1–4).

11:22 a golden **ring** would be ludicrous on a pig's **snout**. t o the ancient Israelites, pigs were unclean and repellent. t he immoral person is compared to such an animal, no matter what the outward appearance might be.

11:23 t he term **desire** is used in some of the proverbs in a negative sense (see 13:12, 19; 18:1; 19:22), but here it has a positive meaning. t he righteous desire good.

- 24 There is *one* who ^vscatters, yet increases more;
And there is *one* who withholds more than is right,
But it *leads* to poverty.
- 25^w The generous soul will be made rich,
^x And he who waters will also be watered himself.
- 26 The people will curse ^yhim who withholds grain,
But ^zblessing *will be* on the head of him who sells *it*.
- 27 He who earnestly seeks good ⁹finds favor,
^a But trouble will come to him who seeks *evil*.
- 28^b He who trusts in his riches will fall,
But ^cthe righteous will flourish like foliage.
- 29 He who troubles his own house ^dwill inherit the wind,
And the fool *will be* ^eservant to the wise of heart.
- 30 The fruit of the righteous *is a* tree of life,
And ^fhe who ¹wins souls *is* wise.
- 31^g If the righteous will be ²recompensed on the earth,
How much more the ungodly and the sinner.
- 12** Whoever loves instruction loves knowledge,
But he who hates correction *is* stupid.
- 2 A good *man* obtains favor from the LORD,
But a man of wicked intentions He will condemn.

24 ^v Ps. 112:9; Prov. 13:7; 19:17
25 ^w Prov. 3:9, 10; [2 cor. 9:6, 7]
^x [Matt. 5:7]
26 ^y amos 8:5, 6
^z Job 29:13
27 ^a Esth. 7:10; Ps. 7:15, 16; 57:6 ⁹ I it. seeks
28 ^b Job 31:24 ^c Ps. 1:3; Jer. 17:8
29 ^d Eccl. 5:16
^e Prov. 14:19
30 ^f Prov. 14:25; [dan. 12:3; 1 cor. 9:19-22; James 5:20] ¹ I it. takes, in the sense of brings, cf. 1 sam. 16:11
31 ^g Jer. 25:29
² rewarded

CHAPTER 12

3 ^a [Prov. 10:25]
4 ^b Prov. 31:23;
1 cor. 11:7 ^c Prov. 14:30; hab. 3:16
¹ I it. A wife of valor
6 ^d Prov. 1:11, 18
^e Prov. 14:3
7 ^f Ps. 37:35-37; Prov. 11:21; Matt. 7:24-27
8 ^g 1 sam. 25:17; Prov. 18:3
9 ^h Prov. 13:7
² lightly esteemed
10 ⁱ deut. 25:4
11 ^j Gen. 3:19
^k Prov. 28:19 ¹ Prov. 6:32 ³ works or cultivates ⁴ I it. vain things ⁵ I it. heart

- 3 A man is not established by wickedness,
But the ^aroot of the righteous cannot be moved.
- 4 ^b An ¹ excellent wife *is* the crown of her husband,
But she who causes shame *is* ^clike rottenness in his bones.
- 5 The thoughts of the righteous *are* right,
But the counsels of the wicked *are* deceitful.
- 6 ^d The words of the wicked *are*, "Lie in wait for blood,"
^e But the mouth of the upright will deliver them.
- 7 ^f The wicked are overthrown and *are* no more,
But the house of the righteous will stand.
- 8 A man will be commended according to his wisdom,
^g But he who is of a perverse heart will be despised.
- 9 ^h Better *is the one* who is ²slighted but has a servant,
Than he who honors himself but lacks bread.
- 10 ⁱ A righteous *man* regards the life of his animal,
But the tender mercies of the wicked *are* cruel.
- 11 ^j He who ³tills his land will be satisfied with ^kbread,
But he who follows ⁴frivolity ^lis devoid of ⁵understanding.

11:24–26 These proverbs should shape our attitudes toward wealth: it should be shared. stinginess may lead to **poverty**. Generosity has the opposite effect. selfishness is foolish because it only creates enemies and dishonors God.

11:28 This proverb addresses the folly of trusting in **riches**. the second line can easily be misinterpreted to mean that righteousness always leads to success. the proverb actually addresses a person's attitude toward wealth. It is foolish to trust in riches instead of God.

11:30 as in 3:18, the image of the **tree of life** denotes the tree in the Garden of Eden (Gen. 2; 3). righteousness and wisdom are ways of recovering the lost tree of life.

11:31 here is a **how much more** proverb, one that argues from a premise to conclusion. since the righteous will finally find their reward (see 2 cor. 5:10), it follows that the wicked, who are defiant toward God and in conflict with his works, will certainly receive judgment.

12:1 the wise person knows that discipline and instruction will bring its own reward. yet the person who hates a reprimand is **stupid**, literally "stupid as a cow."

12:2 **He will condemn**: John's Gospel speaks of one being con-

demned already because of evil deeds, and deliberately clinging to the darkness even though the light has come (see John 3:16–21).

12:3 **c** contrasts such as the one in this proverb speak of a person's ultimate end; otherwise they would be proven false by countless examples of wicked persons who flourish while the righteous suffer. *In the end*, the righteous will stand sure, as in the image of the tree in Ps. 1:3.

12:4 **Excellent wife**, or "noble woman," are the same hebrew words used in the famous acrostic in 31:10–31. a husband whose wife is like the woman described in ch. 31 should rejoice in her, because her noble character brings him honor.

12:5, 6 our **thoughts** do matter. at the very least, they must not be **deceitful**. a person's thoughts determine what he or she says and does. the **words** of wicked persons are like a deadly ambush. **12:9** a **better . . . than** proverb, this verse contrasts a person who is a "nobody" but has a servant with a person who makes a great display but does not even have food on the table. Pretension and arrogance destroy those who indulge in them.

12:11 **tills his land**: Many proverbs contrast hard work with laziness. wise people work hard while fools waste time.

- 12 The wicked covet the catch of evil
men,
 But the root of the righteous yields
fruit.
- 13^m The wicked is ensnared by the
 transgression of *his* lips,
*"*But the righteous will come through
 trouble.
- 14^o A man will be satisfied with good by
 the fruit of *his* mouth,
*"*And the recompense of a man's
 hands will be rendered to him.
- 15^q The way of a fool *is* right in his own
 eyes,
 But he who heeds counsel *is* wise.
- 16^r A fool's wrath is known at
 once,
 But a prudent *man* covers shame.
- 17^s He *who* speaks truth declares
 righteousness,
 But a false witness, deceit.
- 18^t There is one who speaks like the
 piercings of a sword,
 But the tongue of the wise *promotes*
 health.
- 19 The truthful lip shall be established
 forever,
*"*But a lying tongue *is* but for a
 moment.
- 20 Deceit is in the heart of those who
 devise evil,
 But counselors of peace have joy.
- 21^v No grave ⁶trouble will overtake the
 righteous,
 But the wicked shall be filled with
 evil.
- 22^w Lying lips *are* an abomination to the
 LORD,
 But those who deal truthfully *are* His
 delight.
- 23^x A prudent man conceals knowledge,
 But the heart of fools proclaims
 foolishness.

13 ^m Prov. 18:7
ⁿ [2 Pet. 2:9]
 14 ^o Prov. 13:2;
 15:23; 18:20 ^p Job
 34:11; Prov. 1:31;
 24:12; [Is. 3:10, 11];
 hos. 4:9
 15 ^q Prov. 3:7; Luke
 18:11
 16 ^r Prov. 11:13;
 29:11
 17 ^s Prov. 14:5
 18 ^t Ps. 57:4; Prov.
 4:22; 15:4
 19 ^u [Ps. 52:4, 5];
 Prov. 19:9
 21 ^v Ps. 91:10; Prov.
 1:33; 1 Pet. 3:13
⁶ *harm*
 22 ^w Prov. 6:17;
 11:20; r ev. 22:15
 23 ^x Prov. 13:16

24 ^y Prov. 10:4
 25 ^z Prov. 15:13
^a Is. 50:4

CHAPTER 13

1 ^a Is. 28:14, 15
 2 ^b Prov. 12:14
 3 ^c Ps. 39:1; Prov.
 21:23; [James 3:2]
 4 ^d Prov. 10:4
 6 ^e Prov. 11:3, 5, 6

- 24^y The hand of the diligent will rule,
 But the lazy *man* will be put to
 forced labor.
- 25^z Anxiety in the heart of man causes
 depression,
 But ^a a good word makes it glad.
- 26 The righteous should choose his
 friends carefully,
 For the way of the wicked leads them
 astray.
- 27 The lazy *man* does not roast what he
 took in hunting,
 But diligence *is* man's precious
 possession.
- 28 In the way of righteousness *is* life,
 And in *its* pathway *there is* no death.

- 13 A wise son *heeds* his father's
 instruction,
^a But a scoffer does not listen to
 rebuke.
- 2 ^b A man shall eat well by the fruit of
his mouth,
 But the soul of the unfaithful feeds
 on violence.
- 3 ^c He who guards his mouth preserves
 his life,
 But he who opens wide his lips shall
 have destruction.
- 4 ^d The soul of a lazy *man* desires, and
has nothing;
 But the soul of the diligent shall be
 made rich.
- 5 A righteous *man* hates lying,
 But a wicked *man* is loathsome and
 comes to shame.
- 6 ^e Righteousness guards *him whose* way
 is blameless,
 But wickedness overthrows the
 sinner.

12:12, 13 yields fruit . . . is ensnared: wickedness hurts the wicked; righteousness helps the righteous (see v. 14). *t* his is another way of saying "whatever a man sows, that he will also reap" (Gal. 6:7). *t* he expression **the root of the righteous** also appears in v. 3.

12:16 at once: careless words can make a fool out of us, so we are wise to think before we speak. king david showed such restraint (see 2 sam. 16:5–12).

12:18, 19 Many proverbs praise people who speak carefully and truthfully. *s*peech reflects a person's character. *t* he words of a righteous person are faithful and true (v. 17), and soothe the listener.

12:22, 23 a n abomination is something that "nauseates" God (see 11:20). *t* he term conveys extreme hatred. *t* hus it is better to remain silent than to have **lying lips**.

12:24 anyone who wants to have a position of authority cannot dare to be **lazy** (see vv. 11, 14).

12:25 Anxiety loses some of its force in the face of a positive,

encouraging **word**. Barnabas's encouragement of Paul is a great example of this (see act 4:36; 9:27; 11:2–30; Gal. 2:1).

12:26 o ur friends help to determine who we will become (see 1 cor. 15:33).

12:27 Lazy people do work, they just don't finish what they start. *t* he cure for their laziness is **diligence**—to follow through to the end.

13:1 a wise son listens to instruction (see 10:1, 17) and is better off than the **scoffer**—the worst kind of fool (see Ps. 1:1). some fools are naive and inexperienced, but open to suggestions; sometimes even those established in folly may rethink their position. But scoffers laugh at righteousness. *s*uch people are impervious to rebuke. **13:5 t** he person who **hates lying** does not merely feel bad about it; he avoids it like the plague.

13:6 In the proverbs, **righteousness** is portrayed as a friend and **wickedness** as an enemy (see 11:27). wickedness hurts us but righteousness helps.

7 ^fThere is one who makes himself rich, yet *has* nothing;
And one who makes himself poor,
yet *has* great riches.

8 The ransom of a man's life *is* his riches,
But the poor does not hear rebuke.

9 The light of the righteous rejoices,
^gBut the lamp of the wicked will be put out.

10 By pride comes nothing but ^hstrife,
But with the well-advised *is* wisdom.

11 ⁱWealth *gained by* dishonesty will be diminished,
But he who gathers by labor will increase.

12 Hope deferred makes the heart sick,
But ^jwhen the desire comes, *it is* a tree of life.

13 He who ^kdespises the word will be destroyed,
But he who fears the commandment will be rewarded.

14 ^lThe law of the wise *is* a fountain of life,
To turn *one* away from ^mthe snares of death.

15 Good understanding ¹gains ⁿfavor,
But the way of the unfaithful *is* hard.

7 ^f [Prov. 11:24; 12:9; Luke 12:20, 21]
9 ^g Job 18:5, 6; 21:17; Prov. 24:20
10 ^h Prov. 10:12
11 ⁱ Prov. 10:2; 20:21
12 ^j Prov. 13:19
13 ^k Num. 15:31; 2 Chr. 36:16; Is. 5:24
14 ^l Prov. 6:22; 10:11; 14:27
^m 2 Sam. 22:6
15 ⁿ Ps. 111:10; Prov. 3:4 ¹ gives

16 ^o Prov. 12:23
17 ^p Prov. 25:13
18 ^q Prov. 15:5, 31,
32 ² ⁱ *ignores*
21 ^r Ps. 32:10; Is. 47:11
22 ^s Job 27:16, 17; Prov. 28:8; [Eccl. 2:26]
23 ^t Prov. 12:11
³ *uncultivated* ⁴ *it. what is swept away*

16 ^o Every prudent *man* acts with knowledge,
But a fool lays open *his* folly.

17 A wicked messenger falls into trouble,
But ^pa faithful ambassador *brings* health.

18 Poverty and shame *will come* to him who ²disdains correction,
But ^qhe who regards a rebuke will be honored.

19 A desire accomplished is sweet to the soul,
But *it is* an abomination to fools to depart from evil.

20 He who walks with wise *men* will be wise,
But the companion of fools will be destroyed.

21 ^r Evil pursues sinners,
But to the righteous, good shall be repaid.

22 A good *man* leaves an inheritance to his children's children,
But ^sthe wealth of the sinner is stored up for the righteous.

23 ^t Much food *is in* the ³fallow *ground of* the poor,
And for lack of justice there is ⁴waste.

13:7 rich . . . nothing: t he paradox of greed causing poverty, and of generosity causing wealth, is a recurring theme in scripture (see 11:24; Matt. 6:19–21). t the point is not how much money you have, but what you do with it.

13:9 For an ancient Israelite, an oil **lamp** would be the only source of light at night. without it, a person had no way of seeing the path in front of him (see 20:20; 24:20).

13:10 t he word **pride** (see 11:2) does not refer to self-esteem or to a positive mental attitude, but to arrogance and a refusal to glorify God. such pride is self-serving and leads to conflict.

13:11 t his proverb describes the natural long-term consequences of cheating. People who compromise their honesty to get rich merely postpone the inevitable need to earn their keep. t he day comes when their cheating catches up with them, but by then their honest colleagues have become far better at obtaining **wealth**. cheating doesn't work anymore, and the wealth of the dishonest is **diminished**.

13:12 t he **tree of life** (see 11:30) symbolizes the achievement of a deeply felt desire. It is like coming back to the Garden of Eden.

13:13 will be rewarded: a person can either despise instruction or respond in reverence, understanding that the ultimate Giver of instruction is God. c correction is only for one's good.

13:14 fountain of life (see 10:11): In an arid land such as ancient Judah, a fountain provided water for oneself and for one's flocks. It was a necessity—a source of life. t hat is a very strong endorsement for **the law of the wise**. a fountain was also a picture for salvation (Is. 12:1–3).

13:15 Favor with God and other people—a good reputation—is highly desirable because it ensures that you won't be alone in life. It comes from **good understanding**. a good reputation was the first qualification listed by the apostles for deacons in the early church (a cts 6:3).

13:16 Many proverbs pit the **fool** against the **prudent** person.

13:17 A . . . messenger who acts wickedly will be discovered and his sentence will be harsh indeed. But a messenger who acts in faithfulness brings healing as he goes. In ancient times it was not unusual for a monarch to lash out against the bearer of bad news. t his proverb is a lashing out against a wicked messenger.

13:19 Few things are as **sweet** as accomplishment. But the folly of the fool is so deeply entrenched that he becomes ill if he leaves his self-destructive path. t he term used of his revulsion, **abomination**, is the same word used of God in other passages (see 11:1).

13:20 walks with: t he selection of friends (see 12:26) is extremely important. Pressure from peers is much stronger than many people realize.

13:21 Evil is a sinner's enemy (see v. 6), not a friend; a pursuer, and not a companion.

13:22 In the Book of Proverbs, **wealth** is a topic with many themes. wealth may come as a benefit of righteous living (v. 11; 10:22); but there is no guarantee of this (28:6). wealth cannot make a person good (11:4), and in the end it matters less than God's favor anyway (11:28). **A good man** knows this and trusts in God to meet his needs; **the sinner** tries to acquire and keep wealth and in the end fails.

24^u He who spares his rod hates his son,
But he who loves him disciplines him⁵ promptly.

25^v The righteous eats to the satisfying of his soul,
But the stomach of the wicked shall be in want.

14 The wise woman builds her house,
But the foolish pulls it down with her hands.

2 He who walks in his uprightness fears the LORD,
^aBut *he who is* perverse in his ways despises Him.

3 In the mouth of a fool *is* a rod of pride,
^bBut the lips of the wise will preserve them.

4 Where no oxen *are*, the ¹trough is clean;
But much increase *comes* by the strength of an ox.

5 A ^cfaithful witness does not lie,
But a false witness will utter ^dlies.

6 A scoffer seeks wisdom and does not *find it*,
But ^eknowledge *is* easy to him who understands.

24^u Prov. 19:18
⁵ early
25^v Ps. 34:10; Prov. 10:3

CHAPTER 14

2^a [r om. 2:4]
3^b Prov. 12:6
4¹ *manger or feed trough*
5^c r ev. 1:5; 3:14
^d Ex. 23:1; deut. 19:16; Prov. 6:19; 12:17
6^e Prov. 8:9; 17:24

7^f Prov. 23:9
9^g Prov. 10:23 ² | it. *guilt*
11^h Job 8:15
12ⁱ Prov. 16:25
^j r om. 6:21 ^k Prov. 12:15
13^l Prov. 5:4; Eccl. 2:1, 2
14^m Prov. 1:31; 12:15 ⁿ Prov. 13:2; 18:20 ³ | it. *from above himself*

7 Go from the presence of a foolish man,
When you do not perceive *in him* the lips of ^fknowledge.

8 The wisdom of the prudent *is* to understand his way,
But the folly of fools *is* deceit.

9 ^gFools mock at ²sin,
But among the upright *there is* favor.

10 The heart knows its own bitterness,
And a stranger does not share its joy.

11^h The house of the wicked will be overthrown,
But the tent of the upright will flourish.

12ⁱ There is a way *that seems* right to a man,
But ^jits end *is* the way of ^kdeath.

13 Even in laughter the heart may sorrow,
And ^lthe end of mirth *may be* grief.

14 The backslider in heart will be ^mfilled with his own ways,
But a good man *will be satisfied* ³from ⁿabove.

15 The simple believes every word,
But the prudent considers well his steps.

13:24 hates . . . loves: t his is the first of several proverbs on parental discipline. a parent's loving discipline is modeled after God's loving correction (see 3:11, 12).

14:1 a wise woman builds her house; that is, she develops a peaceful setting for family nurture.

14:2 Fears the LORD contrasts starkly with **despises Him**. I ove for **uprightness** will naturally coincide with love and respect for the most upright one of all, God himself. I ove for perversity will likewise result in hatred for him. Fear of the Lord as the beginning of wisdom is the central theme of Proverbs (see 1:7).

14:3 rod of pride: t his proverb addresses the dangers of foolish speech and the rewards of sensible speech. t he words of the fool shape themselves into a rod that is ready for his enemies to use on him. t his proverb calls to mind that many people are their own worst enemy; given enough rope, they prepare a noose for their own hanging.

14:4 clean: a farmer has to put up with some disorder in the barn if he wants the help of an ox. t his is not an excuse to be slovenly, but an encouragement to work hard.

14:5 t his proverb is a restatement of God's law: "you shall not bear false witness against your neighbor" (Ex. 20:16; deut 5:20).

14:8 t his proverb contrasts prudent and foolish people. wise people know what they are doing and why they are doing it. t hey have wise reasons for what they do, based on a knowledge of their choices. **Fools**, on the other hand, deceive so often that they deceive themselves. t hey do not know where they are headed.

14:12 only when it is too late does the deluded person discover

that he is on the crowded highway to **death**. t he implication is not that he was tricked, but that he relied too heavily on his own "wisdom" rather than turning in humility to God. **a way . . . the way:** Many proverbs put their message in terms of two ways—one that leads to life and another that leads to death (see 16:25).

14:15 a characteristic of the naive person is gullibility. a **prudent** person is careful.

foolish

(heb. 'ivvelet) (14:1; 16:22; 17:12; 26:4, 5) strong's #200

t his hebrew word signifies an absence of wisdom. Except for two occurrences in the Psalms, this term occurs only in Proverbs, where the foolishness of fools is frequently contrasted with the wisdom of the wise and prudent (13:16; 14:8, 18, 24). Foolishness characterizes the speech of fools and the reactions of the impulsive person (12:23; 14:17, 29; 15:2, 14; 18:13). Foolishness affects the lifestyle of a person, causing his or her heart to fret against God (15:21; 19:3). Indeed, foolishness is often identified with iniquity and sin (5:22, 23; 24:9; Ps. 38:4, 5). a lthough Proverbs does not hold out much hope for separating an adult fool from his foolishness, the rod of correction is identified as a remedy for children (22:15; 26:11; 27:22).

- ¹⁶ ^o A wise *man* fears and departs from evil,
But a fool rages and is self-confident.
- ¹⁷ A quick-tempered *man* acts foolishly,
And a man of wicked intentions is hated.
- ¹⁸ The simple inherit folly,
But the prudent are crowned with knowledge.
- ¹⁹ The evil will bow before the good,
And the wicked at the gates of the righteous.
- ²⁰ ^p The poor *man* is hated even by his own neighbor,
But ⁴ the rich *has* many ^q friends.
- ²¹ He who despises his neighbor sins;
^r But he who has mercy on the poor, happy *is* he.
- ²² Do they not go astray who devise evil?
But mercy and truth *belong* to those who devise good.
- ²³ In all labor there is profit,
But ⁵ idle chatter *leads* only to poverty.
- ²⁴ The crown of the wise is their riches,
But the foolishness of fools *is* folly.
- ²⁵ A true witness ⁶ delivers ^s souls,
But a deceitful *witness* speaks lies.
- ²⁶ In the fear of the LORD *there is* strong confidence,
And His children will have a place of refuge.
- ²⁷ ^t The fear of the LORD *is* a fountain of life,
To turn *one* away from the snares of death.

¹⁶ ^o Job 28:28; Ps. 34:14; Prov. 22:3
²⁰ ^p Prov. 19:7
^q Prov. 19:4 ⁴ ⁱ it.
many are the lovers of the rich
²¹ ^r Ps. 112:9; [Prov. 19:17]
²³ ⁵ ⁱ it. *talk of the lips*
²⁵ ^s [Ezek. 3:18-21]
⁶ *saves lives*
²⁷ ^r Prov. 13:14

²⁹ ^u Prov. 16:32; 19:11; Eccl. 7:9; James 1:19 ⁷ ⁱ it.
short of spirit
³⁰ ^v Ps. 112:10
^u Prov. 12:4; hab. 3:16
³¹ ^x Prov. 17:5; Matt. 25:40; 1 John 3:17 ^y [Job 31:15; Prov. 22:2]
³² ^z Gen. 49:18; Job 13:15; [Ps. 16:11; 73:24]; 2 cor. 1:9; 5:8; [2 t im. 4:18]
³³ ^a Prov. 12:16
³⁴ ^b Prov. 11:11
⁸ *shame or disgrace*
³⁵ ^c Matt. 24:45-47

CHAPTER 15

¹ ^a Prov. 25:15
^b 1 sam. 25:10
² ^c Prov. 12:23
³ ^d 2 chr. 16:9; Job 34:21; Prov. 5:21; Jer. 16:17; 32:19; Zech. 4:10; heb. 4:13

- ²⁸ In a multitude of people *is* a king's honor,
But in the lack of people *is* the downfall of a prince.
- ²⁹ ^u He *who is* slow to wrath has great understanding,
But *he who is* ⁷ impulsive exalts folly.
- ³⁰ A sound heart *is* life to the body,
But ^v envy *is* ^w rottenness to the bones.
- ³¹ ^x He who oppresses the poor reproaches ^y his Maker,
But he who honors Him has mercy on the needy.
- ³² The wicked is banished in his wickedness,
But ^z the righteous has a refuge in his death.
- ³³ Wisdom rests in the heart of him who has understanding,
But ^a *what is* in the heart of fools is made known.
- ³⁴ Righteousness exalts a ^b nation,
But sin *is* a ⁸ reproach to *any* people.
- ³⁵ ^c The king's favor *is* toward a wise servant,
But his wrath *is against* him who causes shame.

- 15** A ^a soft answer turns away wrath,
But ^b a harsh word stirs up anger.
- ² The tongue of the wise uses knowledge rightly,
^c But the mouth of fools pours forth foolishness.
- ³ ^d The eyes of the LORD *are* in every place,
Keeping watch on the evil and the good.

14:16 t he phrase **fears and departs from evil** suggests fear of God (see v. 2).

14:19 In an ancient walled city, the gate area would normally be the weakest section of the wall. t he city engineers of ancient canaan developed complex structures to fortify this point. c ontrolling the gate of a city meant controlling the city; submitting at the gate meant an inability to overcome its defenses. In the end, the wicked will submit at the **gates of the righteous**.

14:21 **despises . . . sins**: see 1 ev. 19:13, 17. Jesus identified the command to love others, and not hate them, as second only to loving God (see Matt. 22:39).

14:22 o ne of the most significant pairings of words of piety in the Bible is the phrase translated **mercy and truth**. t ogether the words mean “constant faithfulness” or “true loyalty.” In the n t, the Greek equivalent of this phrase is translated “grace and truth” (John 1:14) and is used of the savior Jesus. t hose who plot evil know nothing of this characteristic.

14:26, 27 t hese proverbs interject the central idea of the Book of Proverbs—the **fear of the LORD** (see 14:2). t he fear of God provides

both protection and a **fountain of life** (see 13:14; 18:10), an image that recalls the Garden of Eden.

14:31 **oppresses . . . honors**: t he theme of “as you treat people, so you treat God” is central to scripture (Ex. 22:22–24; Matt. 25:31–46; 1 John 4:20).

14:32 some of the proverbs describe deliverance from **death** itself (see 11:4). t he teaching of life after death is not a major teaching in the ot , but neither is it altogether neglected.

14:34 **Righteousness exalts a nation**: a lthough each individual is responsible for his or her actions, the effects extend to the whole community.

15:1 o ften it is not so much what we say but the way we say it that prompts such varied responses as acceptance and **wrath**. For a bigail’s gentle words to david when he was angry, see 1 sam. 25:12–34.

15:3 t hat the **eyes of the LORD** are in every place watching everything chills those who do evil and comforts those who submit to him (see Eccl. 12:14).

- 4 A ¹wholesome tongue *is* a tree of life,
But perverseness in it breaks the
spirit.
- 5 ^eA fool despises his father's
instruction,
^fBut he who ²receives correction is
prudent.
- 6 *In* the house of the righteous *there is*
much treasure,
But in the revenue of the wicked is
trouble.
- 7 The lips of the wise ³disperse
knowledge,
But the heart of the fool *does not*
do so.
- 8 ^gThe sacrifice of the wicked *is* an
abomination to the LORD,
But the prayer of the upright *is* His
delight.
- 9 The way of the wicked *is* an
abomination to the LORD,
But He loves him who ^hfollows
righteousness.
- 10 ⁱHarsh discipline *is* for him who
forsakes the way,
And ^jhe who hates correction will die.

4 ¹ lit. *healing*
5 ^e Prov. 10:1 ^f Prov.
13:18 ² lit. *keeps*
7 ³ *spread*
8 ^e Prov. 21:27; Eccl.
5:1; Is. 1:11; Jer. 6:20;
Mic. 6:7
9 ^h Prov. 21:21
10 ⁱ 1 kin. 22:8
/ Prov. 5:12

11 ^k Job 26:6; Ps.
139:8 / 1 sam.
16:7; 2 chr. 6:30;
Ps. 44:21; acts 1:24
⁴ or *Sheol* ⁵ heb.
Abaddon
12 ^m Prov. 13:1;
amos 5:10; 2 t im.
4:3
13 ⁿ Prov. 12:25
^o Prov. 17:22 ⁶ *face*
15 ^p Prov. 17:22
16 ^q Ps. 37:16; Prov.
16:8; Eccl. 4:6;
1 t im. 6:6
17 ^r Prov. 17:1 ⁷ or
vegetables

- 11 ^k Hell ⁴ and ⁵ Destruction *are* before
the LORD;
So how much more ^lthe hearts of the
sons of men.
- 12^m A scoffer does not love one who
corrects him,
Nor will he go to the wise.
- 13ⁿ A merry heart makes a cheerful
⁶countenance,
But ^oby sorrow of the heart the spirit
is broken.
- 14 The heart of him who has
understanding seeks
knowledge,
But the mouth of fools feeds on
foolishness.
- 15 All the days of the afflicted *are*
evil,
^pBut he who is of a merry heart *has* a
continual feast.
- 16^q Better *is* a little with the fear of the
LORD,
Than great treasure with trouble.
- 17^r Better *is* a dinner of ⁷herbs where
love is,
Than a fattened calf with hatred.

15:4 t he soft answer of v. 1 is now a soothing tongue, and the hurtful word of v. 1 is now crooked dealing. t he former is like a **tree of life**, taking us back to Eden (see 3:18; 11:30; 13:12); the other **breaks the spirit**, recalling the expulsion from the Garden (Gen. 3:23, 24).

15:5 t he truly wise person profits from **instruction**. t he term for the *prudent* in the second part of this proverb means “to be shrewd.” shrewdness can be evil, but here it has the positive sense of “street smarts” (see 1:4).

15:6 o ne **house** is a blessing and the other is ruinous; the reason for this lies in how the house was acquired and how it is being used. t he house of the righteous contains great treasure because it is founded on wisdom and a proper response to God. o n the other hand, the wicked never gain enough to suit them, and lose what they have because of their deceptive ways.

15:7 People reveal who they are by what they say. t he **fool** cannot help but speak foolishness.

15:8, 9 From time to time the proverbs touch on the subject of worship (see 16:6). worship from those who are not contrite or humble is an **abomination** to God (see 11:20). From Gen. 4 to John 4 scripture contrasts good and bad worship (see Is. 1:11–15). verse 9 speaks of yet another **abomination to the LORD**—the course of life taken by the wicked.

15:10 t his proverb promises **harsh discipline** for any person who **forsakes the way** of God. t hat is, discipline comes as a means of correction, not punishment. o nly the person **who hates correction**—the one who stubbornly refuses to listen, time and time again—**will die**.

15:11 t his is a “how much more” proverb (see 11:31), which impresses on the reader the clarity with which the l ord sees people’s hearts. t he hebrew word *sheol*, translated **Hell**, in this proverb connotes the fear of the unknown (see 9:18). when used with the word for **Destruction**, *sheol* means “the mysterious realm of death,” a dark and scary condition. yet death is no mystery to the l ord. a nd if the mysterious realm of the dead is known to him, then surely a person’s heart is transparent to him. such arguments from the greater to the lesser appear in both testaments.

15:12 t he **scoffer** (see 14:6) is used as a foil or comparison in Proverbs to expose more sharply the character of the wise. whereas the sluggard is a comic figure in Proverbs, the scoffer is a villain. he delights in scorning the things of God (1:22) and is incapable of responding to discipline (9:7), reproof (9:8), or rebuke (13:1). he cannot find wisdom (14:6) and should be avoided (see Ps. 1:1). his basic problem is displayed in his response to correction. he does not learn from it nor does he seek it. t he scoffer is adamant in his folly.

15:14 t he person with an **understanding** heart, another description of the wise, is never satisfied with what he or she knows. t he pursuit of wisdom and **knowledge** are life-long occupations—never fully realized in this lifetime. But fools, not knowing the extent of their ignorance, continue to pursue folly.

banquet

(heb. *mishteh*) (15:15; Gen. 21:8; Esth. 1:3) strong’s #4960

n otable o t banquets include that of a hasuerus (Xerxes I), at which vashti refused to allow herself to be displayed (Esth. 1) and that of Belshazzar, at which the gold and silver vessels stolen from the temple by n ebuchadnezzar were used and at which the handwriting appeared on the wall (dan. 5). t he n t speaks of the messianic banquet—a banquet at the end of this age—at which the patriarchs and all the righteous will be guests, but from which the wicked will be excluded (Matt. 8:11; l uke 13:29). t he Book of r evelation concludes with all people invited to one or the other of the two banquets. at “the supper of the great God” (r ev. 19:17), the scavenger birds are invited to devour the defeated kings of the earth and their armies; at “the marriage supper of the l amb” (r ev. 19:9), christ will have fellowship with the faithful.

18 ^s A wrathful man stirs up
strife,
But *he who* is slow to anger allays
contention.

19 ^t The way of the lazy *man* is like a
hedge of thorns,
But the way of the upright is a
highway.

20 ^u A wise son makes a father glad,
But a foolish man despises his
mother.

21 ^v Folly is joy to *him who* is destitute of
⁸ discernment,
¹⁰ But a man of understanding walks
uprightly.

22 ^x Without counsel, plans go awry,
But in the multitude of counselors
they are established.

23 A man has joy by the answer of his
mouth,
And ^y a word *spoken* ⁹ in due season,
how good *it is*!

24 ^z The way of life *winds* upward for the
wise,
That he may ^a turn away from ¹ hell
below.

25 ^b The LORD will destroy the house of
the proud,
But ^c He will establish the boundary
of the widow.

26 ^d The thoughts of the wicked *are* an
abomination to the LORD,
^e But the words of the pure *are*
pleasant.

18 ^s Prov. 26:21
19 ^t Prov. 22:5
20 ^u Prov. 10:1
21 ^v Prov. 10:23
^w Eph. 5:15 ⁸ I it.
heart
22 ^x Prov. 11:14
23 ^y Prov. 25:11; Is.
50:4 ⁹ I it. *in its time*
24 ^z Phil. 3:20; [Col.
3:1, 2] ^a Prov. 14:16
¹ or *Sheol*
25 ^b Prov. 12:7; Is.
2:11 ^c Ps. 68:5, 6
26 ^d Prov. 6:16, 18
^e Ps. 37:30

27 ^f Is. 5:8; [Jer.
17:11]
28 ^g 1 Pet. 3:15
29 ^h Ps. 10:1; 34:16
ⁱ Ps. 145:18; [James
5:16]
30 ² I it. *fat*
33 ^j Prov. 1:7 ^k Prov.
18:12

CHAPTER 16

1 ^a Jer. 10:23
^b Matt. 10:19
¹ *plans*
2 ^c Prov. 21:2
3 ^d Ps. 37:5; Prov.
3:6; [1 Pet. 5:7]
² I it. *Roll*

27 ^f He who is greedy for gain troubles
his own house,
But he who hates bribes will live.

28 The heart of the righteous ⁸ studies
how to answer,
But the mouth of the wicked pours
forth evil.

29 ^h The LORD is far from the
wicked,
But ⁱ He hears the prayer of the
righteous.

30 The light of the eyes rejoices the
heart,
And a good report makes the bones
² healthy.

31 The ear that hears the rebukes of
life
Will abide among the wise.

32 He who disdains instruction despises
his own soul,
But he who heeds rebuke gets
understanding.

33 ^j The fear of the LORD is the
instruction of wisdom,
And ^k before honor is humility.

16 The ^a preparations ¹ of the heart
belong to man,
^b But the answer of the tongue is from
the LORD.

2 All the ways of a man *are* pure in his
own ^c eyes,
But the LORD weighs the spirits.

3 ^d Commit ² your works to the LORD,
And your thoughts will be
established.

15:18 a **wrathful** person can stir up strife where there is none; but a person who has a slow fuse—who is **slow to anger**—soothes contention (see v. 1).

15:20 **despises his mother**: t his proverb is like the fifth commandment: “honor your father and your mother” (see Ex. 20:12; deut. 5:16). honoring and listening to parents is a favorite theme of solomon’s proverbs; this collection begins with the same exhortation (see 10:1).

15:22 t he greater the decision, the greater the need for advice. Even wise, capable decision-makers—whether common people or rulers—need **counselors** (see 13:10).

15:23 words are powerful: they can either build up or destroy. solomon devoted many of his proverbs to the consequences of speech (see v. 4; 14:23). Just as foolish words can bring about a person’s own destruction (see 14:3), a wise **word** can bring joy to all who hear it. t he apostle James wrote of the destructive power of words (in James 3:5, 6); the author of hebrews also exhorted us to encourage one another (heb. 10:24, 25).

15:25 God will bring about justice in the end. to the haughty, God will give a dose of humility. But for the **widow**, a completely defenseless person in ancient times, God will provide protection. scripture in many places describes God as a Protector of the defenseless (see deut. 10:18; Ps. 68:5; 146:9; Jer. 49:11).

15:26 Many proverbs focus on what God hates (see vv. 8, 9). Evil **thoughts**, for one, disgust him. t here is no such thing as “private thoughts.” we should pray with david that our words and the meditation of our hearts would be acceptable in God’s sight (see Ps. 19:14).

15:31, 32 **He who disdains instruction despises his own soul**: t he natural instinct for self-preservation is dangerous when it is time to listen to a necessary rebuke. For the relationship between discipline and wisdom, see 1:7.

15:33 knowledge alone does not make a person wiser; **the fear of the LORD** must accompany it. t he same is true of **honor**.

16:1, 2 t hese verses contrast human limitations with the sovereignty of God. **Man** can plan, dream, and hope, but the final outcome is **from the LORD**. r ather than “resign ourselves to fate,” we should trust in God. o ur loving l ord is in control of our seemingly chaotic situations. verse 2 elaborates on this theme. In addition to being sovereign, God is the final Judge. a ll the injustices of this world will be corrected some glorious day.

16:3 t he verb **commit**...to is from a word meaning “to roll.” t he idea is to “roll your cares onto the l ord.” trusting the l ord with our decisions frees us from preoccupation with our problems (see 3:5, 6).

- 4 The ^eLORD has made all for Himself,
^fYes, even the wicked for the day of
³doom.
- 5 ^gEveryone proud in heart is an
abomination to the LORD;
Though they join ⁴forces, none will go
unpunished.
- 6 ^hIn mercy and truth
Atonement is provided for iniquity;
And ⁱby the fear of the LORD *one*
departs from evil.
- 7 When a man's ways please the LORD,
He makes even his enemies to be at
peace with him.
- 8 ^jBetter *is* a little with righteousness,
Than vast revenues without justice.
- 9 ^kA man's heart plans his way,
^lBut the LORD directs his steps.
- 10 Divination *is* on the lips of the king;
His mouth must not transgress in
judgment.
- 11^m Honest weights and scales *are* the
LORD's;
All the weights in the bag *are* His
⁵work.
- 12 *It is* an abomination for kings to
commit wickedness,
For ⁿa throne is established by
righteousness.
- 13 ^oRighteous lips *are* the delight of
kings,
And they love him who speaks *what*
is right.
- 14 As messengers of death *is* the king's
wrath,
But a wise man will ^pappease it.
- 4 ^e Is. 43:7; r om.
11:36 ^f Job 21:30;
[r om. 9:22] ³ I it.
evil
5 ^g Prov. 6:17; 8:13
⁴ I it. *hand to hand*
6 ^h dan. 4:27; I uke
11:41 ⁱ Prov. 8:13;
14:16
8 ^j Ps. 37:16; Prov.
15:16
9 ^k Prov. 19:21 ^l Ps.
37:23; Prov. 20:24;
Jer. 10:23
11 ^m I ev. 19:36
⁵ concern
12 ⁿ Prov. 25:5
13 ^o Prov. 14:35
14 ^p Prov. 25:15
- 15 In the light of the king's face *is* life,
And his favor *is* like a ^qcloud of the
latter rain.
- 16 ^rHow much better to get wisdom than
gold!
And to get understanding is to be
chosen rather than silver.
- 17 The highway of the upright *is* to
depart from evil;
He who keeps his way preserves his
soul.
- 18 Pride *goes* before destruction,
And a haughty spirit before ⁶a fall.
- 19 Better *to be* of a humble spirit with
the lowly,
Than to divide the ⁷spoil with the
proud.
- 20 He who heeds the word wisely will
find good,
And whoever ^strusts in the LORD,
happy *is* he.
- 21 The wise in heart will be called
prudent,
And sweetness of the lips increases
learning.
- 22 Understanding *is* a wellspring of life
to him who has it.
But the correction of fools *is* folly.
- 23 The heart of the wise teaches his
mouth,
And adds learning to his lips.
- 24 Pleasant words *are like* a honeycomb,
Sweetness to the soul and health to
the bones.
- 15 ^q Zech. 10:1
16 ^r Prov. 8:10,
11, 19
18 ⁶ stumbling
19 ⁷ plunder
20 ^s Ps. 34:8; Jer.
17:7

16:5 proud in heart: Pride has everything backwards. It takes credit away from the Giver who gives graciously and awards it to the receiver who takes without thanking. *t* hat is why God sees it as an **abomination**, a word that throughout Proverbs refers to God's revulsion (see 15:26).

16:6 In mercy and truth can also be translated "by genuine piety." **Atonement** probably alludes to a sacrificial offering, but not apart from a contrite heart (as in Ps. 40:6–8). **fear:** *r* espect for God turns a person away from evil (see 3:7).

16:8 *t* he Book of Proverbs often speaks of wealth as the reward of wisdom and virtue (see 14:11), but not always. **Righteousness** is the real treasure.

16:10 *t* his verse begins a section that relates to kings (vv. 10–15). *t* he word **divination** refers to judicial decisions. Because the nation rested in the king's hands, his first responsibility was to obey God (see king Josiah's reform of Israel, 2 kin. 22; 23). Even the king had to submit to the dictates of justice.

16:11 Honest weights and scales matter to God because God is perfectly true. Falsehood and dishonesty do not merely cheat people, they also offend God.

16:15 life . . . his favor: successfully courting a powerful person's favor is like seeing rain clouds in a dry land. *t* he phrase about the

light of the face in this proverb helps us understand aaron's benediction in num. 6:24–26.

16:17 a highway is a thoroughfare, a metaphor for the way a person lives habitually. a n **upright** person's "highway," or habit, is to **depart from evil**. *h* e does not compromise; he consistently strives to do good.

16:19 the proud: destructive pride brings down many winners and is contagious.

16:21 *t* his verse begins a small section of proverbs on the superiority of wisdom (vv. 21–24). wisdom is never easily gained or quickly achieved; that is why a wise person **increases learning**.

16:22, 23 *t* hose who possess **understanding** have access to a fountain of life that constantly renews itself and is available to everyone. *t* he phrase **wellspring of life** is an image of salvation; water was essential for life in the arid regions of ancient Israel (see Ps. 36:8–10; Jer. 2:13). *t* he wise know they are ignorant, so they keep on **learning**.

16:24 *t* he hebrew word for **honeycomb** is also used in Ps. 19:10, 11 with regard to the word of God. *t* he israelites saw honey as a healthy food as well as a sweetener. a ny comparison to it would connote positive, healthful effects.

- 25 There is a way *that seems* right to a man,
But its end *is* the way of ^tdeath.
- 26 The person who labors, labors for himself,
For his *hungry* mouth drives ^uhim on.
- 27⁸ An ungodly man digs up evil,
And *it is* on his lips like a burning ^vfire.
- 28 A perverse man sows strife,
And ^wa whisperer separates the best of friends.
- 29 A violent man entices his neighbor,
And leads him in a way *that is* not good.
- 30 He winks his eye to devise perverse things;
He ⁹purses his lips *and* brings about evil.
- 31^x The silver-haired head *is* a crown of glory,
If it is found in the way of righteousness.
- 32^y *He who is* slow to anger *is* better than the mighty,
And he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city.
- 33 The lot is cast into the lap,
But its every decision *is* from the LORD.
- 17 Better *is* ^aa dry morsel with quietness,
Than a house full of ⁱfeasting *with* strife.

25 ^t Prov. 14:12
26 ^u [Eccl. 6:7; John 6:35]
27 ^v [James 3:6]
⁸ ⁱ It. *A man of Belial*
28 ^w Prov. 17:9
30 ⁹ ⁱ It. *compresses*
31 ^x Prov. 20:29
32 ^y Prov. 14:29;
19:11

CHAPTER 17

1 ^a Prov. 15:17 ⁱ or *sacrificial meals*

2 ^b Prov. 10:5
3 ^c 1 Chr. 29:17; Ps. 26:2; Prov. 15:11;
Jer. 17:10; [Mal. 3:3]
4 ² ⁱ It. *destructive*
5 ^d Prov. 14:31
^e Job 31:29; Prov. 24:17; o bad. 12;
1 Cor. 13:6
6 ^f [Ps. 127:3; 128:3]
9 ^g [Prov. 10:12;
1 Cor. 13:5-7; James 5:20] ^h Prov. 16:28
10 ⁱ Prov. 10:17;
[Mic. 7:9]

- 2 A wise servant will rule over ^ba son who causes shame,
And will share an inheritance among the brothers.
- 3 The refining pot *is* for silver and the furnace for gold,
^cBut the LORD tests the hearts.
- 4 An evildoer gives heed to false lips;
A liar listens eagerly to a ²spiteful tongue.
- 5 ^dHe who mocks the poor reproaches his Maker;
^eHe who is glad at calamity will not go unpunished.
- 6 ^fChildren's children *are* the crown of old men,
And the glory of children *is* their father.
- 7 Excellent speech is not becoming to a fool,
Much less lying lips to a prince.
- 8 A present *is* a precious stone in the eyes of its possessor;
Wherever he turns, he prospers.
- 9 ^gHe who covers a transgression seeks love,
But ^hhe who repeats a matter separates friends.
- 10 ⁱRebuke is more effective for a wise *man*
Than a hundred blows on a fool.

16:25 contrasts of God's **way** with the way of the wicked figure in the teaching of Jesus as well as the proverbs (Matt. 7:13, 14). t his proverb likens the wicked to being on the wrong road. t hey think they are going the **right** way, but in the end it leads to **death** (see 14:12). death refers to physical death (as in 1 Cor. 11:29, 30; see also Rom. 6:23; 8:13; James 1:15; 5:20).

16:27–29 t hese verses all begin in a similar way, describing three different types of wicked people. t he word **ungodly**, or “scoundrel,” means “a man of Belial”; this person is a muckraker who uses bad information for evil purposes; he destroys people on purpose. t he **perverse** person starts fights between friends. t he **violent** man uses his power of persuasion to recruit others to join in his attacks.

16:31 o ld age becomes a **crown of glory** to those who walk the **way of righteousness**—one of the rewards of pursuing wisdom.

16:32 o ne of the most favored persons in the ancient Middle East was the military hero. yet this proverb suggests that one **who is slow to anger** and **who rules his spirit** is a greater hero than a returning warrior. controlling one's rage is more impressive than completing a daring exploit (see 14:29).

16:33 t he use of lots in ancient Israel (see v. 10) could easily be confused with luck. But when a **lot** was cast as a means of determining God's will, the people knew it did not fall indiscriminately. God exercises sovereignty over human affairs (see 16:4).

17:1 t he expression **a dry morsel** means “very little,” especially in comparison to **feasting**. But the feasting in this verse is tainted by contention. *Feasting* could also be part of a sacrifice to God, but even such a feast could be ruined by angry disputes between believers.

17:2 r eversals of fortune could happen if the **wise servant** was sufficiently skillful and the **son** and his brothers were undeserving. Much of the Book of Genesis describes the rise of an unexpected younger son over his older brother (see Gen. 25:23–34).

17:3 t he refining of **silver** and **gold** is an exacting process, involving skill and considerable heat and stress. t he refining work of God on his people often requires stress too.

17:4 t his proverb presents the **evildoer** and the **liar** as a parody of the wise. a s the righteous person listens with care to the instruction of a teacher, so the wicked person **listens** with care to the ruinous speech of the unrighteous.

17:6 o nly a grandmother or grandfather can appreciate this verse fully. yet all of us can see its central point: Grandparents adore their grandchildren, and **children** adore their parents. It is this strong bond of family ties that keeps generations together.

17:7 It is a contradiction in terms for a **fool** to speak well or for a **prince** to be a liar. It is **not becoming** for such inappropriateness to exist.

- 11 An evil *man* seeks only rebellion;
Therefore a cruel messenger will be
sent against him.
- 12 Let a man meet ^ja bear robbed of her
cubs,
Rather than a fool in his folly.
- 13 Whoever ^krewards evil for good,
Evil will not depart from his
house.
- 14 The beginning of strife *is like*
releasing water;
Therefore ^lstop contention before a
quarrel starts.
- 15^mHe who justifies the wicked, and he
who condemns the just,
Both of them alike *are* an
abomination to the LORD.
- 16 Why *is there* in the hand of a
fool the purchase price of
wisdom,
Since *he has* no heart *for it*?
- 17ⁿA friend loves at all times,
And a brother is born for adversity.
- 18^oA man devoid of ³understanding
⁴shakes hands in a pledge,
And becomes ⁵surety for his friend.
- 19 He who loves transgression loves
strife,
And ^phe who exalts his gate seeks
destruction.
- 20 He who has a ⁶deceitful heart finds
no good,
And he who has ^qa perverse tongue
falls into evil.
- 21 He who begets a scoffer *does so* to his
sorrow,
And the father of a fool has no joy.

12 / 2 sam. 17:8;
hos. 13:8
13 ^k Ps. 109:4, 5;
Jer. 18:20; rom.
12:17; 1 t hess. 5:15;
[1 Pet. 3:9]
14 ^l [Prov. 20:3;
1 t hess. 4:11]
15 ^m Ex. 23:7; Prov.
24:24; ls. 5:23
17 ⁿ r uth 1:16; Prov.
18:24
18 ^o Prov. 6:1
³ l it. heart ⁴ l it.
strikes the hands
⁵ guaranty or
collateral
19 ^p Prov. 16:18
20 ^q James 3:8
⁶ crooked

22 ^r Prov. 12:25;
15:13, 15 ⁷ o r
makes medicine
even better
23 ⁸ under cover,
lit. from the bosom
24 ^s Eccl. 2:14
25 ^t Prov. 10:1;
15:20; 19:13
27 ^u Prov. 10:19;
James 1:19
28 ^v Job 13:5

CHAPTER 18

1 ¹ sound wisdom
2 ^a Eccl. 10:3
4 ^b Prov. 10:11
c [James 3:17]

- 22 A ^r merry heart ⁷ does good, *like*
medicine,
But a broken spirit dries the bones.
- 23 A wicked *man* accepts a bribe
⁸ behind the back
To pervert the ways of justice.
- 24 ^s Wisdom *is* in the sight of him who
has understanding,
But the eyes of a fool *are* on the ends
of the earth.
- 25 A ^t foolish son *is* a grief to his
father,
And bitterness to her who bore him.
- 26 Also, to punish the righteous *is* not
good,
Nor to strike princes for *their*
uprightness.
- 27 ^u He who has knowledge spares his
words,
And a man of understanding *is* of a
calm spirit.
- 28 ^v Even a fool *is* counted wise when he
holds his peace;
When he shuts his lips, *he is*
considered perceptive.

18 A man who isolates himself seeks
his own desire;
He rages against all ¹ wise judgment.

- 2 A fool has no delight in
understanding,
But in expressing his ^a own heart.
- 3 When the wicked comes, contempt
comes also;
And with dishonor *comes* reproach.
- 4 ^b The words of a man's mouth *are*
deep waters;
^c The wellspring of wisdom *is* a
flowing brook.

17:12 nothing in the woods matches the rage of a mother **bear** who has been separated from her **cubs**; yet there is nothing in life more dangerous than the **fool** in the midst of his **folly**.

17:15 abomination to the LORD (see 16:5): since God is a God of justice, he detests those who pervert justice—both those who declare the innocent guilty and those who declare the guilty innocent.

17:17 t his proverb lauds faithfulness. unlike fickle friends (see 14:20), a true **friend** is constant, and a real **brother** helps in times of stress.

17:18 Making a **pledge** for another person is not wrong, but this proverb does call for caution in such transactions (see 11:15). t he one making the loan may lose his own independence.

17:21 t he foolish child is one of the hardest realities to face (see 10:1). t here is no heartache so grievous as the pain of realizing that one's child is a **fool**, obdurate to God, and useless in life.

17:23 l ike false weights (see 16:11), skewed justice destroys a cul-

ture. a **bribe** is literally a "gift." In v. 8, the same hebrew word is translated positively as *present*, but in this verse the meaning is negative because they purpose of the gift is to pervert justice.

17:24 Wisdom produces a satisfied life. t he fool continues searching without finding any satisfaction.

17:26 o nly a perverse population would **punish the righteous**. l ike several other proverbs, this one describes what is to be recognized as an outrage.

18:1 t his proverb condemns any person who **isolates himself** from the community for selfish reasons. s uch a recluse is so intolerant of anyone who disagrees with him that he finds fault with **all wise judgment**.

18:2 a compulsive talker never listens, only pausing to plan what he will say next. Every speech confirms what a **fool** he is.

18:4 wellspring of wisdom: t his image is similar to the phrase "a fountain of life" (see 10:11; 13:14; 14:27; 16:22).

- 5 *It is* not good to show partiality to the wicked,
Or to overthrow the righteous in ^djudgment.
- 6 A fool's lips enter into contention,
And his mouth calls for blows.
- 7 ^eA fool's mouth *is* his destruction,
And his lips *are* the snare of his ^fsoul.
- 8 ^gThe words of a ²talebearer *are* like ³tasty trifles,
And they go down into the ⁴inmost body.
- 9 He who is slothful in his work
Is a brother to him who is a great destroyer.
- 10 The name of the LORD *is* a strong ^htower;
The righteous run to it and are ⁵safe.
- 11 The rich man's wealth *is* his strong city,
And like a high wall in his own esteem.
- 12 ⁱBefore destruction the heart of a man
is haughty,
And before honor *is* humility.
- 13 He who answers a matter before he
hears it,
It is folly and shame to him.
- 14 The spirit of a man will sustain him
in sickness,
But who can bear a broken spirit?
- 15 The heart of the prudent acquires
knowledge,
And the ear of the wise seeks
knowledge.

5 ^d | ev. 19:15; deut. 1:17; 16:19; Ps. 82:2; Prov. 17:15
7 ^e Ps. 64:8; 140:9; Prov. 10:14; ^f Eccl. 10:12
8 ^g Prov. 12:18
² gossip or slanderer
³ a Jewish tradition
wounds ⁴ | it. rooms of the belly
10 ^h 2 sam. 22:2, 3, 33; Ps. 18:2; 61:3; 91:2; 144:2 ⁵ secure, lit. set on high
12 ⁱ Prov. 15:33; 16:18

16 ^j Gen. 32:20, 21; 1 sam. 25:27; Prov. 17:8; 21:14
18 ^k [Prov. 16:33]
20 ^l Prov. 12:14; 14:14
21 ^m Prov. 12:13; 13:3; Matt. 12:37
22 ⁿ Gen. 2:18; [Prov. 12:4; 19:14]
23 ^o James 2:3, 6
24 ^p Prov. 17:17; [John 15:14, 15]
^q so with Gr. mss., syr., tg., vg.; Mt may come to ruin

CHAPTER 19

1 ^a Prov. 28:6

- 16 ^j A man's gift makes room for him,
And brings him before great men.
- 17 The first *one* to plead his cause *seems* right,
Until his neighbor comes and examines him.
- 18 Casting ^klots causes contentions to cease,
And keeps the mighty apart.
- 19 A brother offended *is harder to win*
than a strong city,
And contentions *are* like the bars of a castle.
- 20 ^l A man's stomach shall be satisfied
from the fruit of his mouth;
From the produce of his lips he shall be filled.
- 21 ^m Death and life *are* in the power of the tongue,
And those who love it will eat its fruit.
- 22 ⁿ *He who* finds a wife finds a good thing,
And obtains favor from the LORD.
- 23 The poor *man* uses entreaties,
But the rich answers ^oroughly.
- 24 A man *who has* friends ⁶must himself be friendly,
^pBut there is a friend *who* sticks closer than a brother.

19 Better ^a *is* the poor who walks in his integrity
Than *one who is* perverse in his lips,
and is a fool.

18:5 show partiality: distortion of justice is all too common; many proverbs condemn it (see 17:23).

18:8 The words of a talebearer (see 16:28) are like delicious sweets. although they are fun to eat, they ruin the person's health. Gossip is fun to listen to, but the stories damage the listener's **inmost body**, or soul.

18:9 the word **slothful** means a person who is "known to be slack." It refers to a lazy person (see 15:19). **Destroyer** means "lord of destruction."

18:10, 11 the phrase **name of the Lord** (v. 10) is a way of speaking of God's person. the **righteous** turn to God for security. rich people, by contrast, tend to trust in their **wealth** (v. 11; luke 12:13–21). **safe:** God's protection is a prominent theme in scripture (see Ps. 91:1–4).

18:12 the hebrew word for **haughty**, ordinarily negative, can also be used positively to mean courage and daring (see 2 chr. 17:6). the path to **honor**, which the proud so covet, is **humility**.

18:14 this proverb affirms the value of coping skills. **Sickness** can be overcome, but there is no medicine for a **broken spirit** (see 15:13; 17:22; ls. 66:2).

18:18 whenever both sides agree on the method of settling a dis-

pute, that method is a means to peace. the **casting of lots** was a biblical pattern for assistance in decision-making (16:33). Behind the lots was the sovereign power of God.

18:20, 21 stomach . . . mouth: Inner satisfaction comes from true and good speech. **Death and life:** the words people say wield great power (see James 3:2).

18:22 favor: Problems in marriage arise from breakdowns in communication or mutual respect, not from some flaw in marriage itself (see 12:4).

18:24 this is a difficult verse to translate because of confusion over an ambiguous hebrew word translated here as **be friendly**. this translation takes it to mean "to make oneself pleasing" as in 1 sam. 29:4. to have friends one must be friendly. But the word could also mean "to beat each other up" as in ls. 24:19. then the verse could be translated, "sometimes even friends destroy each other, but there is a Friend who loves more faithfully than a brother."

19:1 this proverb, one of the "better than" proverbs (see 17:1, 10), presents a **poor** person in a more favorable light than a rich person (see 28:6). In this case, the poor person's life is marked by **integrity**, whereas the successful person has gained his wealth through cheating and deception. the Book of Proverbs does not place a

- 2 Also it is not good *for* a soul *to be* without knowledge,
And he sins who hastens with *his* feet.
- 3 The foolishness of a man twists his way,
And his heart frets against the LORD.
- 4 ^b Wealth makes many friends,
But the poor is separated from his friend.
- 5 A ^c false witness will not go unpunished,
And *he who* speaks lies will not escape.
- 6 Many entreat the favor of the nobility,
And every man *is* a friend to one who gives gifts.
- 7 ^d All the brothers of the poor hate him;
How much more do his friends go ^e far from him!
He may pursue *them* with words, *yet* they ⁱ abandon *him*.
- 8 He who gets ² wisdom loves his own soul;
He who keeps understanding ^f will find good.
- 9 A false witness will not go unpunished,
And *he who* speaks lies shall perish.
- 10 Luxury is not fitting for a fool,
Much less ^g for a servant to rule over princes.

4 ^b Prov. 14:20
5 ^c Ex. 23:1; deut. 19:16-19; Prov. 6:19; 21:28
7 ^d Prov. 14:20 ^e Ps. 38:11 ^f I it. *are not*
8 ^f Prov. 16:20 ² I it. *heart*
10 ^g Prov. 30:21, 22

11 ^h James 1:19
ⁱ Prov. 16:32; [Matt. 5:44]; Eph. 4:32; col. 3:13
12 ^j Prov. 16:14
^k Gen. 27:28; deut. 33:28; Ps. 133:3; hos. 14:5; Mic. 5:7
13 ^j Prov. 10:1
^m Prov. 21:9, 19
³ Irritation
14 ⁿ 2 cor. 12:14
^o Prov. 18:22
15 ^p Prov. 6:9
^q Prov. 10:4
16 ^r Prov. 13:13; 16:17; I uke 10:28; 11:28 ⁴ Is reckless, lit. *despises*
17 ^s deut. 15:7, 8; Job 23:12, 13; Prov. 28:27; Eccl. 11:1; Matt. 10:42; 25:40; [2 cor. 9:6-8]; heb. 6:10
18 ^t Prov. 13:24
⁵ I it. *to put him to death*; a Jewish tradition on his crying

- 11 ^h The discretion of a man makes him slow to anger,
ⁱ And his glory *is* to overlook a transgression.
- 12 ^j The king's wrath *is* like the roaring of a lion,
But his favor *is* ^k like dew on the grass.
- 13 ^l A foolish son *is* the ruin of his father,
^m And the contentions of a wife *are* a continual ³ dripping.
- 14 ⁿ Houses and riches *are* an inheritance from fathers,
But ^o a prudent wife *is* from the LORD.
- 15 ^p Laziness casts *one* into a deep sleep,
And an idle person will ^q suffer hunger.
- 16 ^r He who keeps the commandment keeps his soul,
But he who ⁴ is careless of his ways will die.
- 17 ^s He who has pity on the poor lends to the LORD,
And He will pay back what he has given.
- 18 ^t Chasten your son while there is hope,
And do not set your heart ⁵ on his destruction.
- 19 A *man of* great wrath will suffer punishment;
For if you rescue *him*, you will have to do it again.

premium on health and wealth. It gives that honor to *integrity* (see 3:1-12).

19:4 t his proverb speaks of the effects of **wealth** and poverty on friendship. It does not describe how friends ought to behave, but how many friends actually do. I like a faithful spouse, a faithful friend is priceless (see 14:20).

19:7 t he behavior of **brothers** and **friends** who abandon a friend because of poverty should be contrasted with the true friend in such texts as 17:17; 18:24.

19:8 ultimately, to **find good** means to find the Lord in his word (see 16:20).

19:10 t he phrase **is not fitting** might also be rendered "is not a pretty sight" (see 17:7). For the wrong people to rule is an outrage.

19:11 discretion: Patience and restraint are virtues of wisdom (see 16:32); rashness and violent outbursts of rage are not.

19:12 t he descriptions of a lion's **roar** and **dew on the grass** are especially fitting when a monarch has all power. his rage may be violent and unpredictable, his pleasure gracious and restorative. a good king will display rage and spread favor for the right reasons.

19:13, 14 Continual dripping speaks of constant dissension within a family. **A prudent wife** is a woman who demonstrates wisdom or skill. Finding the right spouse is a blessing from God (see 18:22).

19:15 t he proverbs have no kind words for **laziness**, the habit of the sluggard (see 6:6, 9). t he proverbs call for mercy and com-

passion on the poor and the weak, but only contempt for the lazy (see v. 17; 10:4, 5).

19:18 on his destruction: r refusal to discipline dooms a child's future (see 13:24).

friends

(heb. *rea'*) (18:24; Judg. 7:13; 1 sam. 15:28; Job 2:11) strong's #7453

t his noun designates an associate, a person who is nearby or in contact with someone else. Most frequently, it signifies simply the second person in a dialogue (Gen. 11:3; Jon. 1:7). It can even refer to someone who becomes one's adversary in a fight (Ex. 2:13; 21:14). Quite often this word is used in connection with various words for lovers and loved ones, including the people commonly associated with the term *brethren* (see Ps. 35:14; 122:8; song 5:1, 16; Jer. 3:1; hos. 3:1). t he use of this word in the commandment to love one's neighbor (I ev. 19:18) prompted a certain lawyer to ask Jesus who his neighbor was. Jesus responded with the parable of the Good samaritan (I uke 10:29-37).

- 20 Listen to counsel and receive instruction,
That you may be wise ^uin your latter days.
- 21 There are many plans in a man's heart,
^vNevertheless the LORD's counsel—that will stand.
- 22 What is desired in a man is ^ekindness,
And a poor man is better than a liar.
- 23^wThe fear of the LORD *leads* to life,
And *he who has it* will abide in satisfaction;
He will not be visited with evil.
- 24^xA lazy *man* buries his hand in the ⁷bowl,
And will not so much as bring it to his mouth again.
- 25 Strike a scoffer, and the simple ^ywill become wary;
^zRebuke one who has understanding,
and he will discern knowledge.
- 26 He who mistreats *his* father and chases away *his* mother
Is ^aa son who causes shame and brings reproach.
- 27 Cease listening to instruction, my son,
And you will stray from the words of knowledge.

20 ^u Ps. 37:37
21 ^v Ps. 33:10, 11;
Prov. 16:9; Is. 46:10;
Heb. 6:17
22 ^e 1 it.
lovingkindness
23 ^w Prov. 14:27;
[1 Tim. 4:8]
24 ^x Prov. 15:19
⁷ 1 XX, syr. *bosom*;
tg., vg. *armpit*
25 ^y deut. 13:11
^z Prov. 9:8
26 ^a Prov. 17:2

28 ^b Job 15:16 ^e 1 it.
witness of Belial,
worthless witness
29 ^c Prov. 26:3

CHAPTER 20

1 ^a Gen. 9:21; Prov.
23:29–35; Is. 28:7;
hos. 4:11
2 ¹ 1 it. *fear or terror*,
produced by the
king's wrath
3 ^b Prov. 17:14
4 ^c Prov. 10:4
^d Prov. 19:15
6 ² 1 it. *mercy*

- 28 A ^sdisreputable witness scorns justice,
And ^bthe mouth of the wicked devours iniquity.
- 29 Judgments are prepared for scoffers,
^cAnd beatings for the backs of fools.
- 20 Wine ^ais a mocker,
Strong drink *is* a brawler,
And whoever is led astray by it is not wise.
- 2 The ¹wrath of a king *is* like the roaring of a lion;
Whoever provokes him to anger sins *against* his own life.
- 3 ^b*It is* honorable for a man to stop striving,
Since any fool can start a quarrel.
- 4 ^cThe lazy *man* will not plow because of winter;
^dHe will beg during harvest and *have* nothing.
- 5 Counsel in the heart of man *is like* deep water,
But a man of understanding will draw it out.
- 6 Most men will proclaim each his own ²goodness,
But who can find a faithful man?

19:21 a wise person commits his or her **plans** to the Lord (see 16:3). a person whose plans oppose the Lord (as in Ps. 2:1–3) may actually become God's enemy. But the person whose ways are from God will certainly succeed (see also 16:1, 9).

19:22 the poor person who has integrity has more honor than the successful person who has achieved his station or rank by deception (see v. 1). **Kindness** may also mean "beauty." Faithfulness is

beautiful, whereas deception is a disfigurement of character (see 3:14; 31:18).

19:23 this proverb emphasizes the lifelong nature of genuine piety and the abundant rewards that it gives. **The fear of the Lord** is contrasted with all other pleasures (see 15:16, 33), because it alone keeps the believer innocent and provides lifelong satisfaction.

19:25 the **simple** person, the one who has yet to set his or her course in life, can learn by watching the **scoffer** suffer. the scoffer himself may not learn from his punishment, but anyone who is ready to learn surely can.

19:26, 27 the desire for a good **son**—or daughter—is the subject of several proverbs (see 10:1). a child who is abusive to his parents shames them and violates God's command (see 20:20; Ex. 20:12; deut. 5:16). the juxtaposing of this proverb addressed to **my son** for the first time since chs. 1–9 with that of the abusive son in v. 26 is deliberate. as an abusive son is shameful, so an obedient son is faithful and successful.

20:1 this chapter begins with a warning against the abuse of **wine**, or excessive drinking (see this theme more extensively in 23:29–35). a wise person takes the danger seriously. there is no wisdom in drunkenness, only **brawling** and confusion.

20:4 Because the **lazy man** (see 19:24) does not plow his field on time, he has nothing to harvest (see 10:5).

20:5 **draw it out**: the wise of ancient Israel knew something that modern counselors rediscover in their training and experience, that motivation for behavior is complex. a gifted counselor is able to draw out from a person genuine feelings and motivations, just as someone draws water from a deep well.

fear

(heb. *yir'ah*) (9:10; 16:6; 19:23) strong's #3374

this hebrew word signifies awe in regarding what is unknown or potentially dangerous. sometimes it refers to fear or terror inspired by danger or one's enemies (Ps. 56:4). More often, it means "reverence," particularly for God (19:23). the use of this word does not imply that one needs to be afraid of God, but it does demand the appropriate recognition and respect for God's fearsome qualities, such as his righteous wrath (see Ps 5:4–7). the fear of God—that is, the proper respect of God—compels us to abandon our evil ways (16:6) and teaches us wisdom (9:10). Perhaps somewhat ironically, fear of God leads to confidence in this life, for if we have submitted to the Almighty we do not have to fear any other power in this world. no one can harm us because the Almighty is our Protector (see 14:26, 27; heb. 13:6).

- 7 ^e The righteous *man* walks in his integrity;
^f His children *are* blessed after him.
- 8 A king who sits on the throne of judgment
 Scatters all evil with his eyes.
- 9 ^g Who can say, “I have made my heart clean,
 I am pure from my sin?”
- 10 ^h Diverse weights *and* diverse measures,
 They *are* both alike, an abomination to the LORD.
- 11 Even a child is ⁱ known by his deeds,
 Whether what he does *is* pure and right.
- 12 ^j The hearing ear and the seeing eye,
 The LORD has made them both.
- 13 ^k Do not love sleep, lest you come to poverty;
 Open your eyes, *and* you will be satisfied with bread.
- 14 “*It is* ³ good for nothing,” cries the buyer;
 But when he has gone his way, then he boasts.
- 15 There is gold and a multitude of rubies,
 But ^l the lips of knowledge *are* a precious jewel.
- 16 ^m Take the garment of one who is surety *for* a stranger,
 And hold it as a pledge *when it is for* a seductress.

7 ^e 2 cor. 1:12 / Ps. 37:26
 9 ^g [1 kin. 8:46; 2 chr. 6:36]; Job 9:30, 31; 14:4; [Ps. 51:5; Eccl. 7:20; r om. 3:9; 1 John 1:8]
 10 ^h deut. 25:13
 11 ⁱ Matt. 7:16
 12 / Ex. 4:11; Ps. 94:9
 13 ^k r om. 12:11
 14 ³ [1 it. *evil, evil*]
 15 ^l [Job 28:12-19; Prov. 3:13-15]
 16 ^m Prov. 22:26

- 17 ⁿ Bread gained by deceit *is* sweet to a man,
 But afterward his mouth will be filled with gravel.
- 18 ^o Plans are established by counsel;
^p By wise counsel wage war.
- 19 ^q He who goes about *as* a talebearer reveals secrets;
 Therefore do not associate with one ^r who flatters with his lips.
- 20 ^s Whoever curses his father or his mother,
^t His lamp will be put out in deep darkness.
- 21 ^u An inheritance gained hastily at the beginning
^v Will not be blessed at the end.
- 22 ^w Do not say, “I will ⁴ recompense evil”;
^x Wait for the LORD, and He will save you.
- 23 Diverse weights *are* an abomination to the LORD,
 And dishonest scales *are* not good.
- 24 A man’s steps *are* of the LORD;
 How then can a man understand his own way?
- 25 *It is* a snare for a man to devote rashly *something as* holy,
 And afterward to reconsider *his* vows.

17 ⁿ Prov. 9:17
 18 ^o Prov. 24:6
 19 ^q Prov. 11:13
 20 ^s Ex. 21:17; 1 ev. 20:9; Prov. 30:11; Matt. 15:4 / Job 18:5, 6; Prov. 24:20
 21 ^u Prov. 28:20
 22 ^w [deut. 32:35]; Prov. 17:13; 24:29; [r om. 12:17-19]; 1 t hess. 5:15; [1 Pet. 3:9] < 2 sam. 16:12
 4 repay

20:9 Who can say: t his proverb is a rhetorical question. Everyone sins, a theme that Paul addresses at length in r om. 3:10–23. anyone who claims never to sin is a liar (see 1 John 1:8, 9). But those who confess their sin obtain forgiveness (see r om. 4:7).

20:10 t he repeated emphasis on crooked weights and diverse measures (see 11:1) reminds us that cheating is a chronic problem.

20:11 by his deeds: a pattern established early in life may continue to mark a person for his or her lifetime. Even at a very early age, a person’s moral character may be revealed.

20:12 t his proverb speaks of what the LORD has made. we can use both our ears and our eyes to learn about God’s law (see Ps. 40:6; 119:18). t hey are physical means to getting the guidance we need. c ontrast this verse with Moses’ complaint of a stammering tongue and God’s response (Ex. 4:10, 11).

20:13 Sleep is a gift from God that restores a person’s energy and vitality. yet sleep can also be a matter of excess and laziness. hard work is necessary to make a living; laziness leads only to poverty (see 6:6, 9).

20:15 t his verse is not a comment on the morality of wealth, but a statement about the comparative value of wisdom and money. wisdom is simply worth more. t hus being poor and wise is more **precious** than being rich and foolish (see 19:1).

20:16 It is foolish to lend to a stranger without securing a **pledge**, or promise, of repayment (see 11:15). t he Israelites were not allowed to exact such pledges from other Israelites (see Ex. 22:25–27).

20:17 afterward: t he s criptures do not say that there is no pleasure in sinning, only that the reward doesn’t last (9:17, 18).

20:18 t his proverb is a maxim that moves from the lesser to the greater (see 15:11). we should always think before we act, and serious matters like **war** require a maximum of forethought.

20:20 t his proverb is about breaking the fifth commandment, “honor your father and your mother” (Ex. 20:12; deut. 5:16). t he term **whoever curses** is based on a word that means “to treat lightly, to regard as insignificant.” t he statement **His lamp will be put out in deep darkness** is a symbol of eternal damnation.

20:21 at the beginning: sometimes what seems to be sudden luck turns out to be a dismal turn of fortune. what seems too good to be true often is.

20:22 Because of our limited understanding and imperfection, we are not qualified to **recompense evil**. Instead we must commit our cause to God, whose vengeance is certain and perfectly just. God says “vengeance is mine; I will repay” (see Matt. 5:38, 39; r om. 12:17, 19; 1 t hess. 5:15; 1 Pet. 3:9).

20:24 Even a man with great strength does not fully control his **steps**, his life; his very breath is a gift from God. since life itself is God’s gift, only a fool assumes he knows its full meaning.

20:25 several proverbs warn against making rash promises about **holy** things, then withdrawing the promises later (see Eccl. 5:1–7). It is better never to vow than to vow and then change one’s mind.

²⁶ *y* A wise king sifts out the wicked,
And brings the threshing wheel over
them.

²⁷ *z* The spirit of a man *is* the lamp of the
LORD,
Searching all the ⁵inner depths of his
heart.

²⁸ *a* Mercy and truth preserve the king,
And by ⁶lovingkindness he upholds
his throne.

²⁹ The glory of young men *is* their
strength,
And ^bthe splendor of old men *is* their
gray head.

³⁰ Blows that hurt cleanse away evil,
As *do* stripes the ⁷inner depths of the
heart.

21 The king's heart *is* in the hand of
the LORD,
Like the ¹rivers of water;
He turns it wherever He wishes.

² *a* Every way of a man *is* right in his
own eyes,
^bBut the LORD weighs the hearts.

³ *c* To do righteousness and justice
Is more acceptable to the LORD than
sacrifice.

⁴ *d* A haughty look, a proud heart,
And the ²plowing of the wicked *are*
sin.

⁵ *e* The plans of the diligent *lead* surely
to plenty,
But *those* of everyone *who is* hasty,
surely to poverty.

²⁶ *y* Ps. 101:8
²⁷ *z* 1 cor. 2:11 ⁵ *i* it.
rooms of the belly
²⁸ *a* Ps. 101:1; Prov.
21:21 ⁶ *mercy*
²⁹ *b* Prov. 16:31
³⁰ ⁷ *i* it. *rooms of*
the belly

CHAPTER 21

¹ *1* *channels*
² *a* Prov. 16:2
^b Prov. 24:12; 1 luke
16:15
³ *c* 1 sam. 15:22;
Prov. 15:8; ls. 1:11,
16, 17; hos. 6:6;
[Mic. 6:7, 8]
⁴ *d* Prov. 6:17 ² *or*
lamp
⁵ *e* Prov. 10:4

⁶ *f* 2 Pet. 2:3 ³ *i* XX
Pursue vanity on the
snares of death; vg.
Is vain and foolish,
and shall stumble
on the snares of
death; tg. They shall
be destroyed, and
they shall fall who
seek death
⁷ *4* *i* it. *drag them*
away
⁸ ⁵ *or* *The way of a*
man is perverse and
strange;
⁹ *9* Prov. 19:13
¹⁰ ^b James 4:5
¹¹ ¹ Prov. 19:25
¹³ *j* [Matt. 7:2;
18:30-34]; James
2:13; 1 John 3:17
¹⁴ ^e *under cover,*
lit. in the bosom

⁶ *f* Getting treasures by a lying
tongue

³ *Is* the fleeting fantasy of those who
seek death.

⁷ The violence of the wicked will
⁴destroy them,
Because they refuse to do justice.

⁸ The way of ⁵a guilty man *is*
perverse;
But *as for* the pure, his work *is*
right.

⁹ Better to dwell in a corner of a
housetop,
Than in a house shared with ^ga
contentious woman.

¹⁰ *h* The soul of the wicked desires
evil;
His neighbor finds no favor in his
eyes.

¹¹ When the scoffer is punished, the
simple is made wise;
But when the ⁱwise is instructed, he
receives knowledge.

¹² The righteous *God* wisely considers
the house of the wicked,
Overthrowing the wicked for *their*
wickedness.

¹³ *j* Whoever shuts his ears to the cry of
the poor
Will also cry himself and not be
heard.

¹⁴ A gift in secret pacifies anger,
And a bribe ⁶behind the back, strong
wrath.

20:26 t his royal proverb (see v. 8) presents discipline as a merciful act. to punish wickedness is entirely appropriate. when the **wicked** are sifted out and punished with the severity that their crimes demand, all of society benefits. verse 28 provides the balance to this principle. Ideally, the **king** in Israel mirrored God's character.

20:29 Each stage of life has its own advantages. t he **young** have their youth and vigor; the aged have their wisdom (see 16:31).

20:30 suffering cleanses. n o one wants to be **hurt**, but God can bring good out of any evil and make us better through hardship.

21:1 a person can look at a river and think that it is following a random pattern, but the water is following the direction of God's hand. s o is the king. t his world's apparent chaos is God's work.

21:2 in his own eyes: a person's own defense of his life, manner, or way may convince himself, but the final evaluation belongs to God (see 17:3).

21:3 t he proverbs occasionally touch on the subject of worship (see 15:8; 16:6). t his proverb affirms, as do Ps. 40:6-8; Mic. 6:8, and numerous other passages in the Bible, that righteous living is more important than **sacrifice** (see 1 sam. 15:22).

21:4 **haughty** . . . **proud**: see 16:18. t he second unit of the verse is difficult to translate. s ome versions render the problematic h ebrew word for **plowing** as **lamp**.

21:5 Planning typically leads to **plenty**, and haste to **poverty** (see 20:21). It is not wrong to plan, but it is wrong to plan what the l ord has expressly forbidden (see also 16:1).

21:6 s ome prosperity is good and some is bad. t he difference lies in how one gets it. **A lying tongue** has a total return of zero.

21:8 **The way**: t his antithetical proverb takes us back to the very beginning of the study of wisdom, the contrast between the righteous and the wicked (see chs. 1-9; Ps. 1).

21:9 a ncient Israelite roofs were flat and could be used as a deck or terrace. o n occasion people would build a temporary shelter on a part of the roof. h ere, the harried husband finds he prefers to live on the **housetop** rather than below with the nagging words of his wife.

21:10 h ere is a person whose passion is **evil**; hence, he has no compassion for anyone. wicked persons typically refuse to think of anyone but themselves.

21:11 t he fool in this text is the worst sort, the **scoffer** (see 19:25); a person who is **simple** has enough sense to learn from seeing the scoffer punished. t he **wise** always learn, the simple sometimes learn, but the scoffer is a lost cause.

21:13 **cry himself**: a person who is indifferent to people in need will find no one helping him when he calls out for help.

- 15 *It is* a joy for the just to do justice,
But destruction *will come* to the
workers of iniquity.
- 16 A man who wanders from the way of
understanding
Will rest in the assembly of the
^kdead.
- 17 He who loves pleasure *will be* a poor
man;
He who loves wine and oil will not
be rich.
- 18 The wicked *shall be* a ransom for the
righteous,
And the unfaithful for the upright.
- 19 Better to dwell ⁷in the wilderness,
Than with a contentious and angry
woman.
- 20 ¹*There is* desirable treasure,
And oil in the dwelling of the wise,
But a foolish man squanders it.
- 21^m He who follows righteousness and
mercy
Finds life, righteousness, and honor.
- 22 A ⁿwise *man* ^sscales the city of the
mighty,
And brings down the trusted
stronghold.
- 23 ^oWhoever guards his mouth and
tongue
Keeps his soul from troubles.
- 24 A proud *and* haughty *man*—
“Scoffer” *is* his name;
He acts with arrogant pride.

16 ^k Ps. 49:14
19 ⁷ 1 it. in the land
of the desert
20 ¹ Ps. 112:3; Prov.
8:21
21 ^m Prov. 15:9;
Matt. 5:6; [r om.
2:7]; 1 cor. 15:58
22 ⁿ 2 sam. 5:6-9;
Prov. 24:5; Eccl.
7:19; 9:15, 16
^o c limbs over the
walls of
23 ^o Prov. 12:13;
13:3; 18:21; [James
3:2]

25 ^p Prov. 13:4
26 ^q [Prov. 22:9;
Eph. 4:28]
27 ^r Prov. 15:8;
Is. 66:3; Jer. 6:20;
amos 5:22
29 ⁹ Qr., I XX
understands
30 ^s Is. 8:9, 10; [Jer.
9:23, 24]; acts 5:39;
1 cor. 3:19, 20
31 ^t Ps. 3:8; Jer.
3:23; [1 cor. 15:57]

CHAPTER 22

1 ^o [Prov. 10:7];
Eccl. 7:1
2 ^p Prov. 29:13 ^c Job
31:15; [Prov. 14:31]
3 ^d Prov. 27:12; Is.
26:20

- 25 The ^pdesire of the lazy *man* kills
him,
For his hands refuse to labor.
- 26 He covets greedily all day long,
But the righteous ^qgives and does not
spare.
- 27 ^rThe sacrifice of the wicked *is* an
abomination;
How much more *when* he brings it
with wicked intent!
- 28 A false witness shall perish,
But the man who hears *him* will
speak endlessly.
- 29 A wicked man hardens his face,
But *as for* the upright, he ^sestablishes
his way.
- 30 ^s*There is* no wisdom or
understanding
Or counsel against the LORD.
- 31 The horse *is* prepared for the day of
battle,
But ^tdeliverance *is* of the LORD.

22 A ^a*good* name is to be chosen
rather than great riches,
Loving favor rather than silver and
gold.

- 2 The ^brich and the poor have this in
common,
The ^cLORD *is* the maker of them
all.
- 3 A prudent *man* foresees evil and
hides himself,
But the simple pass on and are
^dpunished.

21:15 Justice is not a heavy obligation that weighs a person down. For the righteous, promoting justice is a **joy**. For the wicked there is no joy in justice, nor will there be joy in their final end (see 10:29).

21:16 **The assembly of the dead:** the term *dead* is a frightful one, meaning “shades” (see 9:18). death in these verses may speak of physical death rather than spiritual death (as is the case in James 1).

21:20 t his proverb contrasts the prosperity of **the wise** with the poverty of the fool (see 20:15). t he key lies in the way they treat their possessions. Fools abuse or neglect their own property.

21:21 **life, righteousness and honor:** It is possible that these three ideas go together to mean “a more abundant life.” t he pursuit of righteousness is its own reward. But added rewards are found in fullness of life, achieving righteousness, and receiving honor. all these things are gifts from the l ord (see 15:9).

21:23 t his proverb has a pun on the word “to keep.” If a person **guards** or “keeps” his mouth, he **will keep** or preserve his soul. t he converse of this is seen in the many troubles a person brings on himself by careless speech.

21:24 t his proverb applies four different hebrew words for arrogance to the **scoffer** (see v. 11). t he first two words, **proud** and **haughty**, mean “profoundly arrogant” (see v. 4). t he second two, **arrogant** and **pride**, mean “boundless arrogance.”

21:25 t he longing of the lazy man **kills him**; he is devoured by his

own passions because he will not expend the energy to fulfill them. verse 26 describes further the insatiable greed of the lazy person by contrasting it with the generosity of the righteous.

21:28 a large number of proverbs focus on the **false witness** (see 19:28). t he problem with a false witness is that his lies pervert justice for others. Even if he lies only once, the lie may be circulated by others.

21:30 usually the proverbs use the word **wisdom** positively. But in this verse the word is paired with conjurers’ tricks. t hese tricks have no power over God, as Balaam the pagan prophet discovered in his encounter with the l ord on the plains of Moab (see n um. 22–24). true wisdom can be found only in God.

21:31 a soldier can do all within his ability to prepare for **battle** (see 20:18), but in the end no preparation can override God’s power. victory is in God’s hands.

22:1 t his proverb points out that a reputation has more value than possessions or wealth. a **name** cannot be replaced easily, not even with lots of money.

22:2 t his sentence eloquently repeats the theme of riches (v. 1): God makes both **the rich and the poor**. t his means that those who favor the rich over the poor (see James 2) have not only missed the point of creation, they have insulted the creator (see 14:31).

22:3 t he term **prudent** means “shrewd” (see 1:4 for a related word). t here is no wisdom in being reckless.



Religious Education

t he religious education of children was the parents' responsibility (deut. 11:19; 32:46). no exceptions were made for parents who felt they were too busy to teach. Even when children came of age and married, the parents' responsibility did not end; they also had an important part in educating the grandchildren (deut. 4:9). In fact, they often lived in the same house. t he Israelite father was ultimately responsible for the education of the children, but mothers also played a crucial role, especially until a child reached the age of five. during those formative years she was expected to shape the future of her sons and daughters. clearly, parents wanted to see the proverb come true: "train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it" (22:6). when a boy became old enough to work with his father, the father became his principal teacher, even though the mother continued to share in the teaching responsibility (1:8, 9; 6:20). If someone other than the father had to assume the responsibility of teaching a boy, then that person was considered his "father."



Roman relief of a family meal. The religious education of children was the parents' responsibility.

Relief depicting a family meal, Roman/Museo della Civiltà Romana, Rome, Italy/Giraudon/The Bridgeman Art Library

- 4 By humility *and* the fear of the LORD
Are riches and honor and life.
- 5 Thorns *and* snares *are* in the way of
the perverse;
He who guards his soul will be far
from them.
- 6 ^eTrain up a child in the way he
should go,
¹ And when he is old he will not
depart from it.
- 7 The ^frich rules over the poor,
And the borrower *is* servant to the
lender.
- 8 He who sows iniquity will reap
^gsorrow,²
And the rod of his anger will fail.
- 9 ^hHe who has a ³generous eye will be
ⁱblessed,
For he gives of his bread to the poor.

6 ^e Eph. 6:4; 2 t im.
3:15 ¹ Even
7 ^f Prov. 18:23;
James 2:6
8 ^g Job 4:8 ² trouble
9 ^h 2 cor. 9:6
ⁱ [Prov. 19:17] ³ I t.
good

10 / Ps. 101:5
11 ^k Ps. 101:6
13 ^l Prov. 26:13
14 ^m Prov. 2:16; 5:3;
7:5 ⁿ Eccl. 7:26

- 10 ^j Cast out the scoffer, and contention
will leave;
Yes, strife and reproach will cease.
- 11 ^k He who loves purity of heart
And has grace on his lips,
The king *will be* his friend.
- 12 The eyes of the LORD preserve
knowledge,
But He overthrows the words of the
faithless.
- 13 ^l The lazy *man* says, "There is a lion
outside!
I shall be slain in the streets!"
- 14^m The mouth of an immoral woman *is*
a deep pit;
ⁿ He who is abhorred by the LORD will
fall there.
- 15 Foolishness *is* bound up in the heart
of a child;

22:4 t he route to the good life—**riches and honor and life** (see 21:21 for a similar triad)—is humility (see Mic. 6:8) and the fear of God.

22:8 t he idea of just retribution is significant (see 21:7). Jesus' teaching on justice reflects the idea in this verse. a person who lives by violence is likely to die violently; a person who lives wickedly should not be surprised if he falls victim to crime (see Matt. 26:52).

22:9 t he words expressing the idea of generosity in this verse are "a good **eye**." a good eye observes the needs of others first. a bad eye sees only its own self-interest.

22:10 t he **scoffer** (see 21:24) should be expelled from the community because his influence is harmful to everyone. t he wise know that the scoffer is not a laughing matter, because he is laughing at holy things, at God himself.

22:11 a person who is marked by **purity** of speech and heart be-

comes the confidant of a good king. compare this proverb with Ps. 15, which describes a person who wants to become a friend of the LORD.

22:12 **The eyes of the LORD** (see 15:3; 21:2) are the final arbiters of knowledge and justice. t he eyes of human beings are simply not trustworthy. when the king takes his position seriously, he also makes decisions that are proper and upright (see 20:8).

22:13 t he proverbs about **lazy** people (see 19:15) provide comic relief by poking fun at how the lazy invent all sorts of excuses for avoiding work and risk. t hey will do anything to avoid doing anything.

22:14 t his proverb takes us back to the **immoral woman**, or the "strange woman" (see 2:16). her mouth is an open pit, destruction to anyone who falls there (see 9:18).

^oThe rod of correction will drive it far from him.

- 16 He who oppresses the poor to increase his *riches*,
And he who gives to the rich, *will*
surely *come* to poverty.

Sayings of the Wise

- 17 Incline your ear and hear the words of the wise,
And apply your heart to my knowledge;
18 For *it is* a pleasant thing if you keep them within you;
Let them all be fixed upon your lips,
19 So that your trust may be in the LORD;
I have instructed you today, even you.
20 Have I not written to you excellent things
Of counsels and knowledge,
21 ^pThat I may make you know the certainty of the words of truth,
^qThat you may answer words of truth To those who ⁴send to you?
22 Do not rob the ^rpoor because he is poor,
Nor oppress the afflicted at the gate;
23 ^sFor the LORD will plead their cause,
And plunder the soul of those who plunder them.
24 Make no friendship with an angry man,
And with a ^tfurious man do not go,
25 Lest you learn his ways
And set a snare for your soul.
26 ^uDo not be one of those who ⁵shakes hands in a pledge,
One of those who is ⁶surety for debts;

15 ^o Prov. 13:24; 23:13, 14
21 ^p Luke 1:3, 4
^q Prov. 25:13; 1 Pet. 3:15 ⁴ or *send you*
22 ^r Ex. 23:6; Job 31:16-21; Zech. 7:10
23 ^s 1 sam. 24:12; Ps. 12:5; 140:12
24 ^t Prov. 29:22
26 ^u Prov. 11:15
⁵ *it strikes*
⁶ *guaranty*

28 ^v deut. 19:14; 27:17; Job 24:2; Prov. 23:10
⁷ *boundary*
29 ⁸ *is prompt in his business* ⁹ *obscure*

CHAPTER 23

4 ^a [Prov. 28:20; Matt. 6:19; 1 tim. 6:9, 10; heb. 13:5]
^b *rom. 12:16*
5 ¹ *it. Will you cause your eyes to fly upon it and it is not?*
6 ^c deut. 15:9; Prov. 28:22 ² *it. one who has an evil eye*
7 ^d Prov. 12:2
9 ^e Prov. 9:8; Matt. 7:6

- 27 If you have nothing *with which* to pay,
Why should he take away your bed from under you?
28 ^v Do not remove the ancient ⁷landmark
Which your fathers have set.
29 Do you see a man *who* ⁸excels in his work?
He will stand before kings;
He will not stand before ⁹unknown men.

- 23 When you sit down to eat with a ruler,
Consider carefully what *is* before you;
2 And put a knife to your throat
If you *are* a man given to appetite.
3 Do not desire his delicacies,
For they *are* deceptive food.
4 ^a Do not overwork to be rich;
^b Because of your own understanding, cease!
5 ¹ Will you set your eyes on that which is not?
For *riches* certainly make themselves wings;
They fly away like an eagle *toward* heaven.
6 Do not eat the bread of ^ca ²miser,
Nor desire his delicacies;
7 For as he thinks in his heart, so *is* he.
“Eat and drink!” ^dhe says to you,
But his heart is not with you.
8 The morsel you have eaten, you will vomit up,
And waste your pleasant words.
9 ^e Do not speak in the hearing of a fool,
For he will despise the wisdom of your words.

22:16 t he last of the proverbs of solomon in this collection deals with social justice. ultimately, all human affairs are in God's hands, even though at times the wicked prosper. God made both the **poor** and the rich (v. 2) and he will justly determine their destinies (24:12).

22:17—24:22 t he phrase **the words of the wise** marks a new section of the Book of Proverbs. t he content changes at v. 17. t hree elements distinguish this section: (1) the change from one-verse units to multiple-verse units, (2) section headings that are embedded in the text, and (3) the affinity of this section with ancient Egyptian wisdom texts, particularly the *Instruction of Amen-em-opet*.

22:17–21 **Incline your ear:** t hese introductory words call the reader to pay attention and to prepare to learn about and worship God. t he advice emphasizes strongly that a person's **trust** must be in the LORD.

22:22, 23 Most violations of justice target **poor** and **afflicted** people because they are weak and defenseless. But anyone who does this makes an enemy of God, who **will plead their cause**.

22:24, 25 **friendship with an angry man:** whereas the words

of vv. 22, 23 are based on hebrew faith, these ideas are derived from observation of human behavior and interaction. t he Book of Proverbs includes both types of insight: revelation of truth about God, and observation of human experience (see 1 cor. 15:33).

22:28 t he ancient Israelites regarded respect for the posted **landmark** as more than a question of private property. t hey saw it as a basic part of civil life. People must feel a certain sense of public trust and fairness for society to function.

23:1–3 a big part of the training of the courtier would be in proper manners at state dinners and formal occasions. t he comment on a **knife to your throat** is prompted by two concerns: (1) rude behavior was to be avoided at all costs, and (2) too many royal dainties would likely make one ill.

23:4, 5 t hese verses call for moderation in work. **do not overwork to be rich:** although the proverbs discourage laziness (see 22:13), they also discourage any overworking whose purpose is greater wealth.

- 10 Do not remove the ancient³ landmark,
Nor enter the fields of the fatherless;
- 11 ^fFor their Redeemer *is* mighty;
He will plead their cause against you.
- 12 Apply your heart to instruction,
And your ears to words of knowledge.
- 13 ^gDo not withhold correction from a child,
For *if* you beat him with a rod, he will not die.
- 14 You shall beat him with a rod,
And deliver his soul from ⁴hell.
- 15 My son, if your heart is wise,
My heart will rejoice—indeed, I myself;
- 16 Yes, my ⁵inmost being will rejoice
When your lips speak right things.
- 17 ^hDo not let your heart envy sinners,
But *be zealous* for the fear of the LORD all the day;
- 18 ^jFor surely there is a ⁶hereafter,
And your hope will not be cut off.
- 19 Hear, my son, and be wise;
And guide your heart in the way.
- 20 ^kDo not mix with winebibbers,
Or with gluttonous eaters of meat;
- 21 For the drunkard and the glutton
will come to poverty,
And drowsiness will clothe *a man*
with rags.
- 22 ^lListen to your father who begot you,
And do not despise your mother
when she is old.
- 23 ^mBuy the truth, and do not sell it,
Also wisdom and instruction and understanding.

10 ³ *boundary*
11 ^f Prov. 22:23
13 ^g Prov. 13:24
14 ⁴ or *Sheol*
16 ⁵ *lit. kidneys*
17 ^h Ps. 37:1; Prov. 24:1, 19 ⁱ Prov. 28:14
18 ^j [Ps. 37:37]
⁶ Future, *lit. latter end*
20 ^k Prov. 20:1; 23:29, 30; Is. 5:22; Matt. 24:49; [1 uke 21:34]; r om. 13:13; [Eph. 5:18]
22 ^l Prov. 1:8; Eph. 6:1
23 ^m Prov. 4:7; 18:15; [Matt. 13:44]

24 ⁿ Prov. 10:1
27 ^o Prov. 22:14
28 ^p Prov. 7:12; Eccl. 7:26
29 ^q Is. 5:11, 22
^r Gen. 49:12
30 ¹ 1 sam. 25:36; Prov. 20:1; 21:17; Is. 5:11; 28:7; [Eph. 5:18] ^t Ps. 75:8
31 ² *goes around*
34 ⁸ *lit. heart*
35 ^u Prov. 27:22; Jer. 5:3 ^v Eph. 4:19

CHAPTER 24

1 ^a Ps. 1:1; 37:1;
Prov. 23:17

- 24 ⁿ The father of the righteous will greatly rejoice,
And he who begets a wise *child* will delight in him.
- 25 Let your father and your mother be glad,
And let her who bore you rejoice.
- 26 My son, give me your heart,
And let your eyes observe my ways.
- 27 ^o For a harlot *is* a deep pit,
And a seductress *is* a narrow well.
- 28 ^p She also lies in wait as *for* a victim,
And increases the unfaithful among men.
- 29 ^q Who has woe?
Who has sorrow?
Who has contentions?
Who has complaints?
Who has wounds without cause?
Who *has* redness of eyes?
- 30 ^s Those who linger long at the wine,
Those who go in search of ^tmixed wine.
- 31 Do not look on the wine when it is red,
When it sparkles in the cup,
When it ⁷swirls around smoothly;
- 32 At the last it bites like a serpent,
And stings like a viper.
- 33 Your eyes will see strange things,
And your heart will utter perverse things.
- 34 Yes, you will be like one who lies down in the ⁸midst of the sea,
Or like one who lies at the top of the mast, *saying*:
- 35 “They ^u have struck me, *but* I was not hurt;
They have beaten me, but I did not feel it.
When shall ^vI awake, that I may seek another *drink*?”

24 Do not be ^aenvious of evil men,
Nor desire to be with them;

23:10, 11 their Redeemer is mighty: t he tendency of evil people in all ages is to take advantage of the helpless. But the destroyer of persons needs to know that the widow and the orphan have a redeemer, a protector of family rights—his name is the living God. **23:12** t he hebrew word for **instruction** can also be translated “discipline.”

23:13, 14 he will not die . . . beat him: t his language was designed to motivate overly permissive parents, who were afraid of damaging young children with any kind of discipline, or of making rules and enforcing them. t here is no call here for abuse. l oving discipline does not destroy rebellious children; it does them a big favor.

23:17, 18 t he first proverb here sharply contrasts the vain **envy** of sinners with the **fear of the LORD**, the expression of piety that the proverbs repeatedly encourage (see 1:7). t he second gives the perspective that everyone needs: Present success—or lack of it—is not the final outcome. t here will be a future state fundamentally

different from this world. t he word **hereafter** can also be rendered “glorious future” (see num. 23:10).

23:19–21 The drunkard and the glutton have no self-control, and this fact plagues them. hebrew culture gave a prominent place to eating and drinking, but it had little tolerance for drunkenness and gluttony.

23:24, 25 the father of the righteous: Joy comes to parents who see their children succeed. But when those parents have faith in the l ord, the greatest joy comes from seeing their children be faithful to him.

23:29–35 Who has woe: a long with Isaiah’s celebrated description of debauchery (Is. 19:11–15), this section is one of the sharpest attacks on drunkenness in the Bible (see vv. 19–21; 20:1). t he satire is razor sharp and the imagery vivid.

24:1, 2 Do not be envious of evil men: w hereas 23:17, 18 tells about the future to discourage envy of the wicked, this set of verses simply points out how unworthy the wicked are of any admiration at all.

- 2 For their heart devises violence,
And their lips talk of troublemaking.
- 3 Through wisdom a house is built,
And by understanding it is
established;
- 4 By knowledge the rooms are filled
With all precious and pleasant
riches.
- 5 ^b A wise man *is* strong,
Yes, a man of knowledge increases
strength;
- 6 ^c For by wise counsel you will wage
your own war,
And in a multitude of counselors
there is safety.
- 7 ^d Wisdom *is* too lofty for a fool;
He does not open his mouth in the
gate.
- 8 He who ^eplots to do evil
Will be called a ^fschemer.
- 9 The devising of foolishness *is* sin,
And the scoffer *is* an abomination
to men.
- 10 *If* you ^ffaint in the day of adversity,
Your strength *is* small.
- 11 ^g Deliver *those who* are drawn toward
death,
And hold back *those* stumbling to the
slaughter.
- 12 If you say, “Surely we did not know
this,”
Does not ^hHe who weighs the hearts
consider *it*?
He who keeps your soul, does He *not*
know *it*?
And will He *not* render to *each* man
ⁱaccording to his deeds?
- 13 My son, ^jeat honey because *it is*
good,
And the honeycomb *which is* sweet
to your taste;
- 14 ^k So *shall* the knowledge of wisdom *be*
to your soul;

5 ^b Prov. 21:22;
Eccl. 9:16
6 ^c Luke 14:31
7 ^d Ps. 10:5; Prov.
14:6
8 ^e Prov. 6:14; 14:22;
r om. 1:30 ^f *it*.
master of evil plots
10 ^f deut. 20:8;
Job 4:5; Jer. 51:46;
heb. 12:3
11 ^g Ps. 82:4; Is.
58:6, 7; 1 John 3:16
12 ^h 1 sam. 16:7;
Prov. 21:2 ⁱ Job
34:11; Ps. 62:12; r ev.
2:23; 22:12
13 ^j Ps. 19:10;
119:103; Prov. 25:16;
song 5:1
14 ^k Ps. 19:10; 58:11;
Prov. 23:18

² *it. latter end*
16 ^j Job 5:19; [Ps.
34:19; 37:24; Mic.
7:8] ^m Esth. 7:10;
amos 5:2
17 ⁿ Job 31:29; Ps.
35:15, 19; [Prov.
17:5]; o bad. 12
18 ³ *it. it, be evil in
His eyes*
19 ^o Ps. 37:1
21 ^p [r om. 13:7;
1 Pet. 2:17]
23 ^q I ev. 19:15;
deut. 1:17; 16:19;
[John 7:24] ⁴ *it.*
recognize faces
24 ^r Prov. 17:15;
Is. 5:23
25 ^s Prov. 28:23

- If you have found *it*, there is a
²prospect,
And your hope will not be cut off.
- 15 Do not lie in wait, O wicked *man*,
against the dwelling of the
righteous;
Do not plunder his resting place;
- 16 ^l For a righteous *man* may fall seven
times
And rise again,
^m But the wicked shall fall by calamity.
- 17 ⁿ Do not rejoice when your enemy
falls,
And do not let your heart be glad
when he stumbles;
- 18 Lest the LORD see *it*, and ³it displease
Him,
And He turn away His wrath from
him.
- 19 ^o Do not fret because of evildoers,
Nor be envious of the wicked;
- 20 For there will be no prospect for the
evil *man*;
The lamp of the wicked will be put
out.
- 21 My son, ^p fear the LORD and the king;
Do not associate with those given to
change;
- 22 For their calamity will rise
suddenly,
And who knows the ruin those two
can bring?

Further Sayings of the Wise

- ²³ These *things* also belong to the wise:
- ^q *It is* not good to ⁴show partiality in
judgment.
- 24 ^r He who says to the wicked, “You *are*
righteous,”
Him the people will curse;
Nations will abhor him.
- 25 But those who rebuke *the wicked* will
have ^sdelight,
And a good blessing will come upon
them.

24:11 t these verses speak with a certain confidence and understanding of life beyond the grave (23:17, 18). t his verse is a prayer to God as **death** approaches.

24:12 according to his deeds: Jesus’ words about eternal rewards open and close the n t (compare Matt. 5:11, 12 with r ev. 22:12). yet Jesus’ action on the cross will deliver those who believe in him from any condemnation (see r om. 5:18; Gal. 3:18; r ev. 22:17).

24:13, 14 here is one of the associations in the Proverbs of **honey** and the **honeycomb** with wisdom (see 16:24). wisdom and its pursuit, while rigorous, is good for the soul and can be pleasant.

24:15, 16 ultimately the **wicked** will fall. t he righteous can be assured of this not because they are strong, but because they have a redeemer (see 23:10, 11).

24:21, 22 fear the LORD and the king: t he hebrew text breaks the phrasing: “Fear God, my son, and the king” (see also r om. 13:1–7; 1 Pet. 2:17). t his proverb relates most fully to the davidic kings, who were God’s regents on earth; one way the ancient Israelites could show respect for God would be to respect the king. But the duty to honor civil authorities still applies to all people of all times (r om. 13:1).

24:23–34 These things also belong to the wise is a sectional heading that corresponds to the one in 22:17. verses 23–34 serve as an appendix to the preceding section (22:17—24:22).

24:23, 24 Israel’s basic concern with equity in **judgment** was not unique; but in Israel a concern for equity was tied to God’s character. since God does not show partiality, neither should we.

- 26 He who gives a right answer kisses the lips.
- 27 ⁱPrepare your outside work,
Make it fit for yourself in the field;
And afterward build your house.
- 28 ^uDo not be a witness against your neighbor without cause,
⁵ For would you deceive with your lips?
- 29 ^vDo not say, “I will do to him just as he has done to me;
I will render to the man according to his work.”
- 30 I went by the field of the lazy *man*,
And by the vineyard of the man devoid of understanding;
- 31 And there it was, ^wall overgrown with thorns;
Its surface was covered with nettles;
Its stone wall was broken down.
- 32 When I saw *it*, I considered *it* well;
I looked on *it* and received instruction:
- 33 ^xA little sleep, a little slumber,
A little folding of the hands to rest;
- 34 ^ySo shall your poverty come *like* ⁶a prowler,
And your need like ⁷an armed man.

Further Wise Sayings of Solomon

25 These ^a also are proverbs of Solomon which the men of Hezekiah king of Judah copied:

- 2 ^b*It is the glory of God to conceal a matter,
But the glory of kings is to search out a matter.*
- 3 As the heavens for height and the earth for depth,
So the heart of kings *is* unsearchable.
- 4 ^cTake away the dross from silver,
And it will go to the silversmith *for* jewelry.

27 ⁱ 1 kin. 5:17;
Prov. 27:23-27
28 ^u 1 ev. 6:2, 3;
19:11; Eph. 4:25
5 1 XX, vg. Do not deceive
29 ^v [Prov. 20:22;
Matt. 5:39-44; r om.
12:17-19]
31 ^w Gen. 3:18
33 ^x Prov. 6:9, 10
34 ^y Prov. 6:9-11
6 1 it. one who walks about 7 1 it. a man with a shield

CHAPTER 25
1 ^a 1 kin. 4:32
2 ^b deut. 29:29;
r om. 11:33
4 ^c 2 1m. 2:21

5 ^d Prov. 16:12; 20:8
7 ^e 1 luke 14:7-11
8 ^f Prov. 17:14; Matt. 5:25 1 1 it. contend or bring a lawsuit
9 ^g [Matt. 18:15]
10 ² the evil report concerning you not pass away
11 ^h Prov. 15:23; ls. 50:4
13 ⁱ Prov. 13:17
14 ^j Prov. 20:6
^k Jude 12
15 ^j Prov. 15:1

- 5 Take away the wicked from before the king,
And his throne will be established in ^drighteousness.
- 6 Do not exalt yourself in the presence of the king,
And do not stand in the place of the great;
- 7 ^eFor *it is* better that he say to you,
“Come up here,”
Than that you should be put lower in the presence of the prince,
Whom your eyes have seen.
- 8 ^fDo not go hastily to ¹court;
For what will you do in the end,
When your neighbor has put you to shame?
- 9 ^gDebate your case with your neighbor,
And do not disclose the secret to another;
- 10 Lest he who hears *it* expose your shame,
And ²your reputation be ruined.
- 11 A word fitly ^hspoken *is like* apples of gold
In settings of silver.
- 12 *Like* an earring of gold and an ornament of fine gold
Is a wise rebuker to an obedient ear.
- 13 ⁱLike the cold of snow in time of harvest
Is a faithful messenger to those who send him,
For he refreshes the soul of his masters.
- 14 ^jWhoever falsely boasts of giving
Is like ^kclouds and wind without rain.
- 15 ^lBy long forbearance a ruler is persuaded,
And a gentle tongue breaks a bone.

24:28, 29 verse 29 states the “Golden rule” (Matt. 7:12) in terms of what we should *not* do. Jesus said this is our most important duty.
24:30–34 the lazy person is judged on the basis of the shambles of his field. From this sorry state of affairs the wise take a lesson. the only concern the lazy have is for a little sleep.
25:1 after the first collection of proverbs from Solomon (10:1–22:16) and proverbs from foreign sources (22:17–24:22; 24:23–34) comes a collection of proverbs attributed to solomon, but which were not compiled until the time of king Hezekiah. the following observations can be made: (1) the wisdom tradition concerning solomon was prodigious; (2) Israel’s interest in wisdom was particularly centered in times of relative peace and a vital royal court life in Jerusalem; (3) hezekiah’s involvement in this activity was a

mark of the strength of his rule and the sense he had of restoring solomon’s glory.
25:4, 5 Silver is valuable only after the impurities have been removed. similarly, wickedness needs to be removed from a king for his throne to be established rightly.
25:6, 7 Do not exalt yourself: knowing your place is a recurring theme in the Bible. It is humiliating to be told to remove yourself from a seat of honor. Jesus spoke of the same need for deference (1 luke 14:11). **Whom your eyes have seen:** this phrase reflects the custom in the ancient world of never looking directly in the eyes of a superior until told to do so (see ls. 6:5).
25:8–10 hastily to court: In our own litigious age, this group of verses has unusual relevance. seek to deal with complaints outside the court on a private level or even with an arbiter.

- 16 Have you found honey?
Eat only as much as you need,
Lest you be filled with it and vomit.
- 17 Seldom set foot in your neighbor's
house,
Lest he become weary of you and
hate you.
- 18^m A man who bears false witness
against his neighbor
Is like a club, a sword, and a sharp
arrow.
- 19 Confidence in an unfaithful *man* in
time of trouble
Is like a bad tooth and a foot out of
joint.
- 20 *Like* one who takes away a garment
in cold weather,
And like vinegar on soda,
Is one who ⁿsings songs to a heavy
heart.
- 21 ^oIf your enemy is hungry, give him
bread to eat;
And if he is thirsty, give him water
to drink;
- 22 For *so* you will heap coals of fire on
his head,
^pAnd the LORD will reward you.
- 23 The north wind brings forth rain,
And ^qa backbiting tongue an angry
countenance.
- 24 ^r*It is* better to dwell in a corner of a
housetop,
Than in a house shared with a
contentious woman.
- 25 As cold water to a weary soul,
So is ^sgood news from a far country.
- 26 A righteous *man* who falters before
the wicked

18 ^m Ps. 57:4; Prov.
12:18
20 ⁿ dan. 6:18
21 ^o Ex. 23:4, 5;
2 kin. 6:22; 2 chr.
28:15; Matt. 5:44;
r om. 12:20
22 ^p 2 sam. 16:12;
[Matt. 6:4, 6]
23 ^q Ps. 101:5
24 ^r Prov. 19:13
25 ^s Prov. 15:30

26 ³ ruined
27 ^t Prov. 27:2;
[l uke 14:11]
28 ^u Prov. 16:32

CHAPTER 26

1 ^a 1 sam. 12:17
2 ^b num. 23:8;
deut. 23:5; 2 sam.
16:12
3 ^c Ps. 32:9; Prov.
19:29
5 ^d Matt. 16:1-4;
r om. 12:16
10 ^f heb. difficult
in v. 10; ancient and
modern translators
differ greatly
11 ^e 2 Pet. 2:22
^f Ex. 8:15

Is like a murky spring and a ³polluted
well.

- 27 *It is* not good to eat much honey;
So ^tto seek one's own glory *is not*
glory.

- 28 ^u Whoever *has* no rule over his own
spirit
Is like a city broken down, without
walls.

26 As snow in summer ^aand rain in
harvest,
So honor is not fitting for a fool.

- 2 Like a flitting sparrow, like a flying
swallow,
So ^ba curse without cause shall not
alight.
- 3 ^c A whip for the horse,
A bridle for the donkey,
And a rod for the fool's back.
- 4 Do not answer a fool according to his
folly,
Lest you also be like him.
- 5 ^d Answer a fool according to his folly,
Lest he be wise in his own eyes.
- 6 He who sends a message by the hand
of a fool
Cuts off *his own* feet and drinks
violence.
- 7 *Like* the legs of the lame that hang
limp
Is a proverb in the mouth of fools.
- 8 Like one who binds a stone in a sling
Is he who gives honor to a fool.
- 9 *Like* a thorn that goes into the hand
of a drunkard
Is a proverb in the mouth of fools.
- 10¹ The great *God* who formed
everything
Gives the fool *his* hire and the
transgressor *his* wages.
- 11 ^e As a dog returns to his own vomit,
^f*So* a fool repeats his folly.

25:16 found honey: too much of even a good thing can cause illness and distress.

25:17 neighbor's house: the issue is moderation. too much "neighborliness" becomes an imposition.

25:19 an unfaithful man—annoying and undependable—cannot be trusted at all.

25:21, 22 the words of Jesus in Matt. 5:43–48 have direct ties to these verses. **Coals of fire** speaks of God's judgment (see Ps. 120:4; 140:10); the idea is that an act of kindness to your enemy may cause him or her to feel ashamed. this is just one way to overcome evil with good (see r om. 12:20).

25:27 much honey: Moderation in good things (see v. 16) goes with humility.

25:28 rule: self-control is a key part of obedience to God (see Gal. 5:22, 23).

26:1 snow in summer: a most unlikely happening in Israel. **Rain**

in harvest is not only unusual, but disastrous, because rain at that time would cause the crops to rot.

26:3 rod for the fool's back: the fool has no internal motivation to do anything. he is no better than a brute beast whom someone else has to motivate.

26:4, 5 some people have called the two proverbs here contradictory, but that is not necessary. the phrase **according to his folly** appears twice as a play on words with two shades of meaning. on the one hand, it means "avoid the temptation to stoop to his level"; that is, don't use his methods, **lest you also be like him**. on the other hand, it means "avoid the temptation to ignore him altogether"; that is, respond in *some* way, or else he will become **wise in his own eyes** and his folly will get worse.

26:11 dog . . . vomit: a fool does not learn from his mistakes. the apostle Peter cited this verse and applied it to false teachers (2 Pet. 2:22).

12^g Do you see a man wise in his own eyes?

There is more hope for a fool than for him.

13 The lazy *man* says, “*There is a lion in the road!*”

A fierce lion is in the ²streets!”

14 As a door turns on its hinges,
So *does* the lazy *man* on his bed.

15 The ^hlazy *man* buries his hand in the ³bowl;

It wearies him to bring it back to his mouth.

16 The lazy *man* is wiser in his own eyes

Than seven men who can answer sensibly.

17 He who passes by *and* meddles in a quarrel not his own

Is like one who takes a dog by the ears.

18 Like a madman who throws firebrands, arrows, and death,

19 *Is* the man *who* deceives his neighbor,
And says, *“I was only joking!”*

20 Where *there is* no wood, the fire goes out;

And where *there is* no ⁴talebearer, strife ceases.

21 ^jAs charcoal *is* to burning coals, and wood to fire,
So *is* a contentious man to kindle strife.

22 The words of a ⁵talebearer *are* like ⁶tasty trifles,
And they go down into the ⁷inmost body.

23 Fervent lips with a wicked heart
Are like earthenware covered with silver dross.

12 ^g Prov. 29:20; Luke 18:11, 12; [r ev. 3:17]

13 ² o r plazas, squares

15 ^h Prov. 19:24

³ l XX, syr. bosom; t.g., vg. armpit

19 ⁱ Eph. 5:4

20 ⁴ gossip or slanderer, lit.

whisperer

21 ⁱ Prov. 15:18

22 ⁵ gossip or slanderer

⁶ a Jewish tradition wounds ⁷ l it. rooms of the belly

24 He who hates, disguises *it* with his lips,

And lays up deceit within himself;

25 ^k When ⁸he speaks kindly, do not believe him,

For *there are* seven abominations in his heart;

26 *Though his* hatred is covered by deceit,

His wickedness will be revealed before the assembly.

27 ^l Whoever digs a pit will fall into it,
And he who rolls a stone will have it roll back on him.

28 A lying tongue hates *those who are* crushed by it,
And a flattering mouth works ^mruin.

27 Do ^a not boast about tomorrow,
For you do not know what a day may bring forth.

2 ^b Let another man praise you, and not your own mouth;
A stranger, and not your own lips.

3 A stone *is* heavy and sand *is* weighty,
But a fool’s wrath *is* heavier than both of them.

4 Wrath *is* cruel and anger a torrent,
But ^cwho *is* able to stand before jealousy?

5 ^d Open rebuke *is* better
Than love carefully concealed.

6 Faithful *are* the wounds of a friend,
But the kisses of an enemy *are* ^edeceitful.

7 A satisfied soul ^lloathes the honeycomb,
But to a hungry soul every bitter thing *is* sweet.

CHAPTER 27

1 ^a Luke 12:19-21;

James 4:13-16

2 ^b Prov. 25:27;

2 cor. 10:12, 18;

12:11

4 ^c Prov. 6:34;

1 John 3:12

5 ^d [Prov. 28:23];

Gal. 2:14

6 ^e Matt. 26:49

7 ^f t tramples on

26:12 Being haughty is even worse than being a **fool**. Egotism is the epitome of folly (see 28:11).

26:13–15 t these proverbs about the **lazy man** have a “can you top this” quality that provides comic relief; the lazy man is the object of many jokes in scripture. t this set of verses includes several (see 19:15). Each one belittles laziness and the many outrageous excuses people often use to justify it.

26:17 t he problem with taking a **dog by the ears** is that the dog will not like it and probably bite. t he same is true of getting involved in another’s quarrel. It’s an invasion of privacy.

26:20, 21 Fires do not burn without fuel; **strife**, or fighting, works the same way.

26:22 t he slanderer looks upon his nasty words as **tasty** tidbits, delicious morsels of raw gossip. Many people have an insatiable hunger for malicious gossip.

26:23 t he meaning of this proverb is not far from Jesus’ remarks to his enemies that they were like whitewashed tombs (Matt. 23:27).

n o amount of painting on the outside changes the value of the rotten interior.

26:24–26 a person who hates says one thing but stores up anger **within**. he may find that his hatred hurts him, when in his life there is so much falsehood that no one believes him no matter how gracious and truthful he might be at times. **revealed before the assembly**: w hen we lament the unfairness of the prosperity of the wicked and contrast our own situation to theirs, we need to keep Ps. 73:17 in mind. t he end will more than compensate them for the evil they have done (see r om. 6:23).

27:1 a s Jesus did in his teaching (Matt. 6:25–34), the wise of ancient Israel warned about a concern for **tomorrow** that overshadows the needs of today.

27:6 correction given in love by a **friend** is better than insincere acts of affection (see Ps. 141:5).

27:7 t hose who are full do not appreciate what they have, while to those who are **hungry** anything tastes good.

- 8 Like a bird that wanders from its nest
Is a man who wanders from his place.
- 9 Ointment and perfume delight the heart,
And the sweetness of a man's friend *gives delight* by ²heartly counsel.
- 10 Do not forsake your own friend or your father's friend,
Nor go to your brother's house in the day of your calamity;
^fBetter is a neighbor nearby than a brother far away.
- 11 My son, be wise, and make my heart glad,
^gThat I may answer him who reproaches me.
- 12 A prudent *man* foresees evil *and* hides himself;
The simple pass on *and* are ^hpunished.
- 13 Take the garment of him who is surety for a stranger,
And hold it in pledge *when* he is surety for a seductress.
- 14 He who blesses his friend with a loud voice, rising early in the morning,
It will be counted a curse to him.
- 15 A ⁱcontinual dripping on a very rainy day
And a contentious woman are alike;
- 16 Whoever ³restrains her restrains the wind,
And grasps oil with his right hand.
- 17 As iron sharpens iron,
So a man sharpens the countenance of his friend.

9 ² | *it. counsel of the soul*
10 ^f Prov. 17:17; 18:24
11 ^g Prov. 10:1; 23:15-26
12 ^h Prov. 22:3
15 ⁱ Prov. 19:13
16 ³ | *it. hides*

- 18 ^jWhoever ⁴keeps the fig tree will eat its fruit;
So he who waits on his master will be honored.
- 19 As in water face *reflects* face,
So a man's heart *reveals* the man.
- 20 ^kHell ⁵ and ⁶Destruction are never full;
So ^lthe eyes of man are never satisfied.
- 21 ^mThe refining pot *is* for silver and the furnace for gold,
And a man *is valued* by what others say of him.
- 22 ⁿThough you grind a fool in a mortar with a pestle along with crushed grain,
Yet his foolishness will not depart from him.
- 23 Be diligent to know the state of your ^oflocks,
And attend to your herds;
- 24 For riches *are* not forever,
Nor does a crown *endure* to all generations.
- 25 ^pWhen the hay is removed, and the tender grass shows itself,
And the herbs of the mountains are gathered in,
- 26 The lambs *will provide* your clothing,
And the goats the price of a field;
- 27 *You shall have* enough goats' milk for your food,
For the food of your household,
And the nourishment of your maidservants.

28 The ^awicked flee when no one pursues,
But the righteous are bold as a lion.

- 2 Because of the transgression of a land, many *are* its princes;
But by a man of understanding *and* knowledge
Right will be prolonged.

18 / 2 kin. 18:31;
song 8:12; Is. 36:16;
[1 cor. 3:8; 9:7-13];
2 tim. 2:6 ⁴ protects
or tends
20 ^k Prov. 30:15,
16; hab. 2:5 ⁱ Eccl.
1:8; 4:8 ⁵ or Sheol
⁶ heb. *Abaddon*
21 ^m Prov. 17:3
22 ⁿ Prov. 23:35;
26:11; Jer. 5:3
23 ^o Prov. 24:27
25 ^p Ps. 104:14

CHAPTER 28

1 ^a | *ev. 26:17, 36;*
Ps. 53:5

27:8 from its nest: straying from home can mean losing security and becoming open to new and powerful temptations (see the parable of the prodigal son, Luke 15).

27:11 t his is the first **my son** proverb in this collection; it is very similar to those in the earlier parts of Proverbs (see chs. 1–9). a child who grows up wise confirms that the parents who taught him or her were themselves wise (see 10:1).

27:13 n normally a **garment given in pledge** was only a symbolic collateral and was returned immediately, but not if the one making the pledge was unreliable or a stranger (see 20:16).

27:17 iron sharpens iron: a famous proverb, this verse may also be translated as applying to the will: “I let iron sharpen iron, and so let a person sharpen his friend.” t he idea is that people grow from interaction with one another.

27:18 keeps the fig tree: t his proverb speaks of faithfulness and reward. t he word **master** may refer to God.

27:19 a man's heart: t thoughts reflect a person's true character.

27:20 Hell and Destruction are used often in the Bible to describe the fearful aspect of death. t hey are like ravenous monsters. compare this proverb with the image of satan as a roaring lion (see 1 Pet. 5:8).

27:23–27 t hese verses affirm diligence and describe its practical rewards. t he model is that of the farmer who cares for his **flocks** and **herds**; if he diligently cares for them, in time they will care for him.

28:1 t he wicked **flee** when there is no cause (see Ps. 53:5) because of guilt and the fear of getting caught that goes with it.

- ^{3 b} A poor man who oppresses the poor
Is like a driving rain ¹ which leaves
no food.
- ^{4 c} Those who forsake the law praise the
wicked,
^d But such as keep the law contend
with them.
- ^{5 e} Evil men do not understand justice,
But ^f those who seek the LORD
understand all.
- ⁶ Better *is* the poor who walks in his
integrity
Than one perverse *in his* ways,
though he *be* rich.
- ⁷ Whoever keeps the law *is* a
discerning son,
But a companion of gluttons shames
his father.
- ⁸ One who increases his possessions
by usury and extortion
Gathers it for him who will pity the
poor.
- ⁹ One who turns away his ear from
hearing the law,
^g Even his prayer *is* an abomination.
- ^{10 h} Whoever causes the upright to go
astray in an evil way,
He himself will fall into his own pit;
ⁱ But the blameless will inherit good.
- ¹¹ The rich man *is* wise in his own eyes,
But the poor who has understanding
searches him out.
- ¹² When the righteous rejoice, *there is*
great ^j glory;
But when the wicked arise, men
² hide themselves.
- ^{13 k} He who covers his sins will not
prosper,

^{3 b} Matt. 18:28
¹ *It. and there is no bread*
^{4 c} Ps. 49:18; r om.
1:32 ^d 1 kin. 18:18;
neh. 13:11, 15; Matt.
3:7; 14:4; Eph. 5:11
^{5 e} Ps. 92:6; Is. 6:9;
44:18 ^f Ps. 119:100;
Prov. 2:9; John
17:17; 1 cor. 2:15;
[1 John 2:20, 27]
^{9 g} Ps. 66:18; 109:7;
Prov. 15:8
^{10 h} Ps. 7:15; Prov.
26:27 ⁱ [Matt. 6:33;
heb. 6:12; 1 Pet. 3:9]
^{12 j} Prov. 11:10;
29:2 ² *It. will be
sought for*
^{13 k} Ps. 32:3-5;
1 John 1:8-10

^{15 l} Prov. 19:12;
1 Pet. 5:8 ^m Ex. 1:14;
Prov. 29:2; Matt.
2:16
^{16 n} Eccl. 10:16;
Is. 3:12
^{17 o} Gen. 9:6
^{18 p} *delivered*
^{19 p} Prov. 12:11;
20:13
^{20 q} Prov. 13:11;
20:21; 23:4; 1 tim.
6:9
^{21 r} Prov. 18:5
^s Ezek. 13:19 ⁴ *It.
recognize faces*
^{22 t} Prov. 21:5
^{23 u} Prov. 27:5, 6

But whoever confesses and forsakes
them will have mercy.

- ¹⁴ Happy *is* the man who is always
reverent,
But he who hardens his heart will
fall into calamity.
- ^{15 l} *Like* a roaring lion and a charging
bear
^m *Is* a wicked ruler over poor people.
- ¹⁶ A ruler who lacks understanding *is* a
great ⁿ oppressor,
But he who hates covetousness will
prolong *his* days.
- ^{17 o} A man burdened with bloodshed will
flee into a pit;
Let no one help him.
- ¹⁸ Whoever walks blamelessly will be
³ saved,
But *he who is* perverse *in his* ways
will suddenly fall.
- ^{19 p} He who tills his land will have plenty
of bread,
But he who follows frivolity will
have poverty enough!
- ²⁰ A faithful man will abound with
blessings,
^q But he who hastens to be rich will
not go unpunished.
- ^{21 r} To ⁴ show partiality *is* not good,
^s Because for a piece of bread a man
will transgress.
- ²² A man with an evil eye hastens after
riches,
And does not consider that ^t poverty
will come upon him.
- ^{23 u} He who rebukes a man will find
more favor afterward
Than he who flatters with the
tongue.

28:4, 5 when a person abandons God's law, he or she loses all sense of right and praises the wicked (see r om. 1:28–32), and since true justice is from God, the ungodly have trouble understanding it. This is why the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom (see 1:7).

28:6 the proverbs balance their words on poor and rich people; they do not assume that godliness leads to wealth or that wealthy people are necessarily godly. As this proverb points out, sometimes we must choose between doing good and getting rich.

28:7 to be a companion of gluttons (see 23:20, 21) is to break God's law. This is why Jesus' enemies charged him with associating with gluttons: such accusations were attacks on his faithfulness to God (see Matt. 11:19).

28:8 Profit taken by usury is unjust. God will help the poor eventually, at their exploiters' expense.

28:10 causes the upright to go astray: these words resemble Jesus' warning against leading his disciples astray (Matt. 18:6). Paul vividly captures this kind of evil: "If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him" (see 1 cor. 3:17).

28:14 Happy is the man is a beatitude (see Ps. 1:1) about the person who is in awe of God. The person who never thinks of God faces calamity.

28:19 Tills his land is a call to hard work, a promise of reward, and a warning against frivolity or overindulgence in fun.

28:20 A faithful man succeeds. That is, faithfulness to God, not greed, determines success in life.

28:21 to exercise partiality (literally "to recognize faces") means to judge on the basis of favors or bribes instead of what is right.

28:23 rebukes a man: constructive criticism has more value than flattery, which aims only to win people's affection.

24 Whoever robs his father or his mother,
And says, “*It is no transgression,*”
The same ^vis companion to a destroyer.

25^w He who is of a proud heart stirs up strife,
^xBut he who trusts in the LORD will be prospered.

26 He who ^ytrusts in his own heart is a fool,
But whoever walks wisely will be delivered.

27^z He who gives to the poor will not lack,
But he who hides his eyes will have many curses.

28 When the wicked arise, ^amen hide themselves;
But when they perish, the righteous increase.

29 He ^awho is often rebuked, and hardens his neck,
Will suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.

2 When the righteous ¹are in authority, the ^bpeople rejoice;
But when a wicked *man* rules, ^cthe people groan.

3 Whoever loves wisdom makes his father rejoice,
But a companion of harlots wastes his wealth.

4 The king establishes the land by justice,
But he who receives bribes overthrows it.

5 A man who ^dflatters his neighbor
Spreads a net for his feet.

24 ^v Prov. 18:9
25 ^w Prov. 13:10
^x Prov. 29:25; 1 t im. 6:6
26 ^y Prov. 3:5
27 ^z deut. 15:7;
Prov. 19:17; 22:9
28 ^a Job 24:4

CHAPTER 29

1 ^a 2 chr. 36:16;
Prov. 6:15
2 ^b Esth. 8:15; Prov. 28:12 ^c Esth. 4:3
¹ become great
5 ^d Prov. 26:28

6 By transgression an evil man is snared,
But the righteous sings and rejoices.

7 The righteous ^econsiders the cause of the poor,
But the wicked does not understand such knowledge.

8 Scoffers ^fset a city aflame,
But wise *men* turn away wrath.

9 If a wise man contends with a foolish man,
^gWhether the fool rages or laughs,
there is no peace.

10^h The bloodthirsty hate the blameless,
But the upright seek his ²well-being.

11 A fool vents all his ⁱfeelings,³
But a wise *man* holds them back.

12 If a ruler pays attention to lies,
All his servants *become* wicked.

13 The poor *man* and the oppressor have this in common:
^jThe LORD gives light to the eyes of both.

14 The king who judges the ^kpoor with truth,
His throne will be established forever.

15 The rod and rebuke give ^lwisdom,
But a child left to *himself* brings shame to his mother.

16 When the wicked are multiplied,
transgression increases;
But the righteous will see their ^mfall.

17 Correct your son, and he will give you rest;
Yes, he will give delight to your soul.

7 ^a Job 29:16; Ps. 41:1; Prov. 31:8, 9
8 ^f Prov. 11:11
9 ^g Matt. 11:17
10 ^h Gen. 4:5-8;
1 John 3:12 ² I it. soul or life
11 ⁱ Prov. 14:33
³ I it. spirit
13 ^j [Matt. 5:45]
14 ^k Ps. 72:4; Is. 11:4
15 ^l Prov. 22:15
16 ^m Ps. 37:34; Prov. 21:12

28:24 robs his father: t his proverb condemns breaking the fifth commandment, “honor your father and your mother” (Ex. 20:12). r espect for parents as a duty is a common theme in the Book of Proverbs.

28:25, 26 o ne of the main causes of **strife** is pride; trust in God leads to blessing. **walks wisely:** security can only come by trusting God, not by relying on oneself.

29:1 t he hebrew phrase for **often rebuked** is “a man of rebukes.” t he judgment on a person who stubbornly rejects God’s correction is swift and final.

29:2–4 t he words **righteous are in authority** can also be translated “righteous are great.” People will always respond to good government and justice. Justice is not served by **bribes**, nor is good government established that way.

29:5, 6 Spreads a net: l ies entrap liars (see 10:8). Moreover, the evil one is trapped by his own actions. Both the liar and the wicked are contrasted with the righteous, who run happily because they are innocent of any wrongdoing.

29:7 r ighteous people are concerned for **the poor** and help them (see 22:22); the wicked do not even consider the needy.

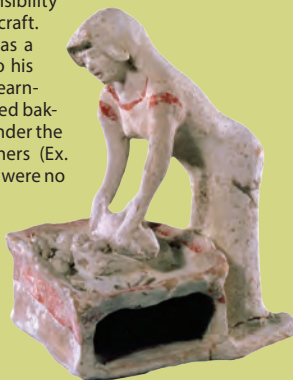
29:13 God is responsible for giving life to both the **poor man** and **the oppressor**. Jesus attested that God causes rain to fall on the just and the unjust (Matt. 5:45).

29:15–17 t he words **rod and rebuke** both speak of correction or discipline. a n undisciplined child shames everyone, especially his or her parents (see v. 17). verse 17 places the burden of correction on the parents. t he word translated **delight** speaks of rich, delicious food (see Gen. 49:20).



Vocational Training

since Israel was an agricultural society, much of the practical wisdom handed down from father to son was about farming. this included lessons on preparing the soil for planting and cultivating the various crops, as well as harvesting and storing the bounty. sons learned these skills by working alongside their fathers throughout their youth. they carefully observed their fathers planting, pruning, and harvesting. It was also the father's responsibility to teach his sons a trade or craft. For example, if the father was a potter, he taught that skill to his sons. while the boys were learning these skills, the girls learned baking, spinning, and weaving under the watchful eyes of their mothers (Ex. 35:25, 26; 2 sam. 13:8). If there were no sons in the family, daughters might be required to learn the father's work (Gen. 29:6; Ex. 2:16). such training was important, for "a child left to himself brings shame to his mother" (29:15).



Woman kneading bread, Greek, c. 500 B.C.
Girls learned baking from their mothers.

Woman kneading bread on top of a square slab, Greek, from Aulis, c. 500-475 B.C./Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford, UK/The Bridgeman Art Library

18ⁿ Where *there is* no ⁴revelation, the people cast off restraint;
But ^ohappy is he who keeps the law.

19 A servant will not be corrected by mere words;
For though he understands, he will not respond.

20 Do you see a man hasty in his words?

^pThere is more hope for a fool than for him.

18ⁿ 1 sam. 3:1; Ps. 74:9; amos 8:11, 12
^o Prov. 8:32; John 13:17 ⁴prophetic vision
20^p Prov. 26:12
22^q Prov. 26:21
23^r Job 22:29; Prov. 15:33; 18:12; Is. 66:2; dan. 4:30; Matt. 23:12; Luke 14:11; 18:14; acts 12:23; [James 4:6-10; 1 Pet. 5:5, 6]
24^s 1 ev. 5:1 ⁵ 1 it. hears the adjuration or oath

21 He who pampers his servant from childhood
Will have him as a son in the end.

22^q An angry man stirs up strife,
And a furious man abounds in transgression.

23^r A man's pride will bring him low,
But the humble in spirit will retain honor.

24 Whoever is a partner with a thief hates his own life;
^sHe ⁵swears to tell the truth, but reveals nothing.

25^t The fear of man brings a snare,
But whoever trusts in the LORD shall be ⁶safe.

26^u Many seek the ruler's ⁷favor,
But justice for man *comes* from the LORD.

27 An unjust man *is* an abomination to the righteous,
And *he who is* upright in the way is an abomination to the wicked.

The Wisdom of Agur

30 The words of Agur the son of Jakeh, *his* utterance. This man declared to Ithiel—to Ithiel and Ucal:

2^a Surely I *am* more stupid than *any* man,
And do not have the understanding of a man.

3 I neither learned wisdom
Nor have ^bknowledge of the Holy One.

25^t Gen. 12:12; 20:2; Luke 12:4; John 12:42, 43 ⁶ secure, lit. set on high 26^u Ps. 20:9 ⁷ 1 it. face

CHAPTER 30 2^a Ps. 73:22; Prov. 12:1 3^b [Prov. 9:10]

29:18 where there is no revelation: the hebrew word for *revelation* speaks of revelatory vision, a word from God. without God's revelation of the law, the people flounder. true happiness is discovered within the constraints of revelation, in the counsel of the savior.

29:20 hasty in his words: Even a wise person may become foolish by speaking too quickly. It is better to be silent or to choose words carefully than to speak whatever first comes to mind.

29:23 see Ps. 147:6; God raises the **humble** and puts down the arrogant. Mary praised God for doing this marvelous thing (see Luke 1:46–55).

29:26 God controls human affairs. therefore it makes more sense to **seek** the Lord first before stooping to seek the favor of human rulers.

30:1 an entirely new section of the Book of Proverbs begins with

the words of Agur. like I emuel (31:1–9), a gur was a non-hebrew contributor to the Book of Proverbs. he came to faith in the God of Israel in a foreign land. we know nothing about his father **Jakeh**, but the word translated **his utterance** may be a place name. **Ithiel and Ucal** were probably a gur's pupils. since the back-to-back repetition of the name Ithiel is unusual, some construe the hebrew letters differently and translate the text "I have wearied myself, o God; I have wearied myself, o God, and am consumed." t his would fit the context of the following verses.

30:2, 3 more stupid than any man: a gur means he was at a loss. similarly, his denial of **knowledge of the Holy One** is a rhetorical flourish as well (as is seen by comparison with his words of vv. 5, 6). a gur was stating with dramatic irony that he could not explain the puzzle before him.

- 4 ^c Who has ascended into heaven, or descended?
^d Who has gathered the wind in His fists?
 Who has bound the waters in a garment?
 Who has established all the ends of the earth?
 What *is* His name, and what *is* His Son's name,
 If you know?
- 5 ^e Every word of God *is* ^f pure;
^f He *is* a shield to those who put their trust in Him.
- 6 ^g Do not add to His words,
 Lest He rebuke you, and you be found a liar.
- 7 Two *things* I request of You
 (Deprive me not before I die):
- 8 Remove falsehood and lies far from me;
 Give me neither poverty nor riches—
^h Feed me with the food allotted to me;
- 9 ⁱ Lest I be full and deny *You*,
 And say, “Who *is* the LORD?”
 Or lest I be poor and steal,
 And profane the name of my God.
- 10 Do not malign a servant to his master,
 Lest he curse you, and you be found guilty.
- 11 *There is a generation that* curses its ^j father,
 And does not bless its mother.
- 12 *There is a generation* ^k *that is* pure in its own eyes,
 Yet is not washed from its filthiness.
- 13 *There is a generation—oh, how* ^l *lofty*
 are their eyes!
 And their eyelids are ² *lifted up*.
- 14^m *There is a generation whose teeth are like* swords,
 And whose fangs *are like* knives,
ⁿ *To devour the poor from off the earth,*
 And the needy from *among* men.

4 ^c [Ps. 68:18; John 3:13] ^d Job 38:4; Ps. 104:3; Is. 40:12
 5 ^e Ps. 12:6; 19:8; 119:140 ^f Ps. 18:30; 84:11; 115:9-11
ⁱ tested, refined, found pure
 6 ^g deut. 4:2; 12:32; r ev. 22:18
 8 ^h Job 23:12; Matt. 6:11; [Phil. 4:19]
 9 ⁱ deut. 8:12-14; neh. 9:25, 26; hos. 13:6
 11 ^j Ex. 21:17; Prov. 20:20
 12 ^k [Prov. 16:2]; Is. 65:5; l uke 18:11; [t itus 1:15, 16]
 13 ^l Ps. 131:1; Prov. 6:17; Is. 2:11; 5:15
² In arrogance
 14 ^m Job 29:17; Ps. 52:2 ⁿ Ps. 14:4; amos 8:4

- 15 The leech has two daughters—
 Give *and Give*!
- There are three *things that* are never satisfied,
 Four never say, “Enough!”:
- 16 ^o The ³ grave,
 The barren womb,
 The earth *that* is not satisfied with water—
 And the fire never says, “Enough!”
- 17 ^p The eye *that* mocks *his* father,
 And scorns obedience to *his* mother,
 The ravens of the valley will pick it out,
 And the young eagles will eat it.
- 18 There are three *things which* are too wonderful for me,
 Yes, four *which* I do not understand:
- 19 The way of an eagle in the air,
 The way of a serpent on a rock,
 The way of a ship in the ⁴ midst of the sea,
 And the way of a man with a virgin.
- 20 This *is* the way of an adulterous woman:
 She eats and wipes her mouth,
 And says, “I have done no wickedness.”
- 21 For three *things* the earth is perturbed,
 Yes, for four it cannot bear up:
- 22 ^q For a servant when he reigns,
 A fool when he is filled with food,
- 23 A ⁵ hateful *woman* when she is married,
 And a maidservant who succeeds her mistress.
- 24 There are four *things which* are little on the earth,
 But they *are* exceedingly wise:

16 ^o Prov. 27:20; hab. 2:5 ³ or Sheol
 17 ^p Gen. 9:22; l ev. 20:9; Prov. 20:20
 19 ⁴ l it. heart
 22 ^q Prov. 19:10; Eccl. 10:7
 23 ⁵ or hated

30:4 t his verse gives the riddle that perplexed a gur. t he questions are enigmatic. t hey culminate in **What is His name, and What is His Son's name, if you know?** at this point, the riddle has no answer. t he ot would answer that “his name” is the l ord God, but did not have a name for his son. t his riddle was to remain unsolved until Jesus answered it for nicodemus (see John 3:13). t hese verses form one of the most straightforward messianic texts in the Bible.

30:7–9 two things: t his was all a gur needed.

30:10 t his proverb is unusual in warning against slandering a **servant**. slaves in ancient times were often regarded as less than a full person.

30:11–14 a gur wrote about **a generation** plagued by social ills such as lack of respect for parents, self-righteousness, greed, and selfishness. Ironically, such evils have plagued every generation, not just a gur's.

30:17 mocks his father: t he lack of parental respect spoken of in

v. 11 leads to this curse. t he language is strong and violent, as is the punishment of the one who abuses his or her parents.

30:19 t he term translated **virgin** could also read “young woman” in this context.

30:20 t his verse contrasts with the way of v. 19; this **way** is awful whereas the former is wonderful. t he **adulterous woman** regards her illicit sexual relations without remorse, as if she were finishing a plate of food.

30:21–23 contrasting with the four wonderful things of vv. 18, 19 are four things that are grievous, an upsetting of order. t hree are clear: the **servant**, the **fool**, and the **maidservant** are all in unexpected positions of power. t he **hateful woman** describes the sorry lot of a woman whose husband hates her.

30:24–28 t his numerical proverb speaks of **four** creatures that are small in size but amazing in behavior. Each of these small creatures has a behavioral trait from which wise people can learn.

- 25 ^rThe ants *are* a people not strong,
Yet they prepare their food in the
summer;
26 ^sThe ⁶rock badgers are a feeble folk,
Yet they make their homes in the
crag;
27 The locusts have no king,
Yet they all advance in ranks;
28 The ⁷spider skillfully grasps with its
hands,
And it is in kings' palaces.
- 29 There are three *things which* are
majestic in pace,
Yes, four *which* are stately in walk:
30 A lion, *which is* mighty among beasts
And does not turn away from any;
31 A ⁸greyhound,
A male goat also,
And ⁹a king *whose troops are* with
him.
- 32 If you have been foolish in exalting
yourself,
Or if you have devised evil, ^t*put your*
hand on *your* mouth.
- 33 For as the churning of milk produces
butter,
And wringing the nose produces
blood,
So the forcing of wrath produces
strife.

The Words of King Lemuel's Mother

31 The words of King Lemuel, the ut-
terance which his mother taught
him:

- 2 What, my son?
And what, son of my womb?
And what, ^ason of my vows?
3 ^bDo not give your strength to women,
Nor your ways ^cto that which
destroys kings.

25 ^r Prov. 6:6
26 ^s 1 ev. 11:5;
Ps. 104:18 ⁶ rock
hyraxes
28 ⁷ o r lizard
31 ⁸ o r perhaps
strutting rooster, lit.
girded of waist ⁹ a
Jewish tradition a
king against whom
there is no uprising
32 ^t Job 21:5; 40:4;
Mic. 7:16

CHAPTER 31

2 ^a Is. 49:15
3 ^b Prov. 5:9 ^c deut.
17:17; 1 kin. 11:1;
neh. 13:26; Prov.
7:26; hos. 4:11

4 ^d Eccl. 10:17
5 ^e hos. 4:11 ¹ I it.
sons of affliction
6 ^f Ps. 104:15
8 ^g Job 29:15, 16;
Ps. 82 ² I it. sons of
passing away
9 ^h 1 ev. 19:15; deut.
1:16 ¹ Job 29:12; Is.
1:17; Jer. 22:16
10 ^r uth 3:11;
Prov. 12:4; 19:14
3 vv. 10-31 are an
alphabetic acrostic
in hebrew; cf. Ps.
119 ⁴ I it. a wife of
valor, in the sense
of all forms of
excellence
15 ^a Prov. 20:13;
rom. 12:11 ¹ I uke
12:42
16 ⁵ I it. the fruit of
her hands

- 4 ^d *It is* not for kings, O Lemuel,
It is not for kings to drink wine,
Nor for princes intoxicating drink;
5 ^e Lest they drink and forget the law,
And pervert the justice of all ¹ the
afflicted.
- 6 ^f Give strong drink to him who is
perishing,
And wine to those who are bitter of
heart.
- 7 Let him drink and forget his
poverty,
And remember his misery no more.
- 8 ^g Open your mouth for the speechless,
In the cause of all *who are* ² appointed
to die.
- 9 Open your mouth, ^h judge
righteously,
And ⁱ plead the cause of the poor and
needy.

The Virtuous Wife

- 10 ^j Who ³ can find a ⁴ virtuous wife?
For her worth *is* far above rubies.
- 11 The heart of her husband safely
trusts her;
So he will have no lack of gain.
- 12 She does him good and not evil
All the days of her life.
- 13 She seeks wool and flax,
And willingly works with her
hands.
- 14 She is like the merchant ships,
She brings her food from afar.
- 15 ^k She also rises while it is yet night,
And ^l provides food for her
household,
And a portion for her maidservants.
- 16 She considers a field and buys it;
From ⁵ her profits she plants a
vineyard.
- 17 She girds herself with strength,
And strengthens her arms.

30:32, 33 t he proverbs of a gur conclude with warnings against boasting and troublemaking. t he phrase **put your hand on your mouth** means "stop it." t he idea is if you are in the middle of making trouble and suddenly realize your foolishness, stop right then before things get worse.

31:1 t his verse begins a new section of material from a non-Israelite source. some have thought that the name **Lemuel**, meaning "Belonging to God," is a pseudonym for solomon, but this is only a guess.

31:2-5 l emuel's mother advised him not to **give his strength to women**. o ften in the ancient world a king would amass a large harem or involve himself sexually with many women. t he wisdom of l emuel's mother was that such behavior destroys rulers. s he likewise advised him to avoid **intoxicating drink** altogether, so that he could always have a clear enough head to rule justly.

31:8, 9 for the speechless: t he duty of a king in the ancient world was to defend the weak, to uphold the helpless. t hese ideals were rarely realized in that age or even in our own. But one day a king who is the defender of the helpless will establish his righteous reign (see 23:10, 11).

31:10 Proverbs 31:10-31 is an acrostic poem; each verse begins with a successive letter of the hebrew alphabet. some have thought that it continues the teaching of king l emuel's mother (vv. 1-9), but it may also be an independent, concluding unit. a s the Book of Proverbs begins with the Prologue (1:1-7), which gives the goals of wisdom in general terms, so now it concludes with this Epilogue (vv. 10-31), which presents them in a case study. t he opening words **who can find** position this woman as an ideal. t he phrase **a virtuous wife** speaks of excellence, moral worth, ability, and nobility, not just marital fidelity (see also 12:4). such a woman is the ideal of wisdom in action.

31:13-15 t hese verses emphasize both hard work and skill. t he woman they describe does things s he enjoys, finding her fulfillment in varied tasks. t he words **she... rises while it is yet night** describe her concern for others; she gives of herself to care for her family and servants.

31:16, 17 She considers a field; that is, she buys and sells and builds her own resources. t hese words are remarkable in light of the many restrictions placed on women in the ancient world.

- 18 She perceives that her merchandise *is* good,
And her lamp does not go out by night.
- 19 She stretches out her hands to the distaff,
And her hand holds the spindle.
- 20^m She extends her hand to the poor,
Yes, she reaches out her hands to the needy.
- 21 She is not afraid of snow for her household,
For all her household *is* clothed with scarlet.
- 22 She makes tapestry for herself;
Her clothing *is* fine linen and purple.
- 23ⁿ Her husband is known in the gates,
When he sits among the elders of the land.
- 24 She makes linen garments and sells *them*,
And supplies sashes for the merchants.

20^m deut. 15:11;
Job 31:16-20; Prov.
22:9; r om. 12:13;
Eph. 4:28; heb.
13:16
23ⁿ Prov. 12:4

- 25 Strength and honor *are* her clothing;
She shall rejoice in time to come.
- 26 She opens her mouth with wisdom,
And on her tongue *is* the law of kindness.
- 27 She watches over the ways of her household,
And does not eat the bread of idleness.
- 28 Her children rise up and call her blessed;
Her husband *also*, and he praises her:
- 29^a “Many daughters have done well,
But you excel them all.”
- 30 Charm *is* deceitful and beauty *is* passing,
But a woman *who* fears the LORD, she shall be praised.
- 31 Give her of the fruit of her hands,
And let her own works praise her in the gates.

31:18, 19 her merchandise is good: one of the avenues the woman exploits is a “cottage industry” in which she acts independently.

31:20–22 the virtuous woman works not to get rich, but to give **to the poor**. she can be concerned for others because she has provided for her family.

31:23 the virtuous woman’s husband has a position **in the gates** as an elder of the city; some of his status comes from his wife’s reputation, not just his own.

31:24 Linen garments probably indicates clothing for women.

31:25 the virtuous woman’s own **clothing** is far richer than linen or silk; she is dressed in strength and honor.

31:26 any woman who **opens her mouth with wisdom** deserves praise, given all the information on the use and misuse of speech in the Book of Proverbs. a virtuous woman takes care to speak well (James 3:2).

31:28, 29 the virtuous woman is blessed by her family—by her **children** as well as her husband. the words of v. 29 are the blessing of her husband.

31:30, 31 Charm may be used for good or for evil; it is not necessarily bad. But its good use requires the fear of the Lord—the main theme of the Book of Proverbs.

THE BOOK OF

ECCLESIASTES



THE BOOK OF ECCLESIASTES is one of the most misunderstood books in the Bible. Christians have tended either to ignore the message of the book, or to regard it as the testimony of a man living apart from God. This is unfortunate, for the book asks relevant, searching questions about the meaning of life, and it declares the utter futility of an existence without God. Like all Scripture, the Book of Ecclesiastes benefits and edifies God's people.

Negative descriptions such as “cynical,” “fatalistic,” or “existential” do not do the Book of Ecclesiastes justice. There is too much evidence of robust cheerfulness throughout its pages. “So I commended enjoyment” (8:15) is a recurrent theme that pervades the book; in fact, the Hebrew words for “gladness” and “being glad” appear seventeen times in Ecclesiastes. The underlying mood of the book is joy: finding pleasure in life despite the troubles that often plague it. Those who fear and worship God should experience this joy; they should rejoice in the gifts God has given them.

Author The writer says that he was “the son of David, king in Jerusalem” (1:1, 12, 16), words that have led many to assume that the writer was Solomon. Evidence in the book itself points to Solomon: (1) the author had “more wisdom than all who were before” him (1:16; see 1 Kin. 3:12); (2) he gathered for himself “silver and gold and the special treasures of kings” (2:8; see 1 Kin. 10:11–23); (3) he “acquired male and female servants” in great numbers (2:7; see 1 Kin. 9:20–23); (4) he engaged in extensive building projects (2:4–6; see 1 Kin. 9:1–19); (5) he developed a great understanding of plants, birds, and natural phenomena (2:4–7; see 1 Kin. 4:33); (6) he declared, “there is not a just man on earth who does good and does not sin” (7:20; see 1 Kin. 8:46); and (7) “he pondered and sought out and set in order many proverbs” (12:9; see 1 Kin. 4:32).

Nevertheless, some scholars argue that Solomon is not the author. They point to two passages to make their case: 1:12 and 1:16. The past tense of the verb in 1:12: “I . . . was king over Israel in Jerusalem” may lead the reader to think that the author was no longer king when he wrote this work. But the verb can denote a state of action that began in the past and continues into the present. Hence 1:12 could be translated, “I have been [and am] king.” Also, the phrase in 1:16 suggests there were many kings before Solomon in Jerusalem. Since David was the first Hebrew king in Jerusalem, the argument goes, the writer must have lived many generations after the time of David. Yet we should recall that the history of Jerusalem can be traced to early Canaanite settlements. The kings of Jerusalem may well have included Melchizedek (Gen. 14:18), Adoni-Zedek (Josh. 10:1), and Abdi-Khepa (mentioned in the Amarna Letters) to name just a few. Therefore it can reasonably be asserted that Solomon is the author of this wonderful but unusual book.

Purpose Solomon probably wrote this book toward the end of his life, after he had repented of idolatry and his pursuit of foreign wives. Thus the Book of Ecclesiastes is both a monument to Solomon's recommitment to the living God and a guide for others through the pitfalls and perils of life.



The Colossi of Memnon from the temple complex of Amunhotep III. The temple that once stood behind them was destroyed long ago, a poignant reminder of the ultimate meaninglessness of power and glory.

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In fact, Solomon might have written this wisdom book as a tract for other nations. That would explain why he did not write about the Law, and why he used the divine title *Elohim*, meaning “Exalted God,” instead of the covenantal name *yahweh* in the book (Ex. 3:14, 15). Solomon had entertained many dignitaries from other nations, including the queen of Sheba. The queen’s questions concerning the basic meaning of life might have prompted him to write *Ecclesiastes* to teach the Gentiles about the living God and their need to worship only him. Centuries before, Moses had called for this type of treatise to the pagan nations (Deut. 4:6–8). The nations that had heard of Israel’s success needed to know about the living and exalted God who had blessed Israel with wealth and wisdom.

Themes sometimes it is better to read the end of a book to understand better the direction in which the book is headed. This is certainly true of *Ecclesiastes*. The book should be interpreted in light of its conclusion: “Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is man’s all” (12:13). To fear God means to revere, worship, and serve God—to turn from evil and turn in awe to the living God. This was the attitude of Abraham (Gen. 22:12), Job (Job 1:1, 8, 9; 2:3), and the Egyptian midwives (Ex. 1:17, 21). It does not involve dread, but instead a proper respect for and obedience to our creator. Why should we respect and obey God? The Book of *Ecclesiastes* answers this question in its concluding verse (12:14): God will judge everyone—both the righteous and the wicked. Life cannot be lived with abandon, as if God will not see or remember the deeds of the past. For on the final day, he will call forth all men and women to account for their actions. The admonition to fear God and the expectation of divine judgment are the two great themes that conclude the book and provide an interpretive framework for the rest of it (see 12:13, 14).

The journey of Solomon to his conclusion “to fear God” is founded on the human search for meaning in life. In 3:11, Solomon eloquently expresses humankind’s dilemma: God has placed eternity in our hearts. A search for true meaning in this life—in money or fame, for instance—will only leave us empty-handed, because our souls yearn for something that will last. Our frustration arises from a hunger for fellowship with our eternal creator—the only one who can give meaning to our lives. In *Ecclesiastes*, Solomon takes us on a tour of all of life and concludes that all of it is vanity. Pleasures and riches lead merely to boredom and despair. Only a relationship with the one who created us and continues to care for us will truly satisfy. Troubles and uncertainty will continue to plague us, but even during these times we can find joy in a secure trust in our Father.

CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

Ecclesiastes is a candid commentary on the emptiness and inner perplexity that marks the life of one who is disconnected from his creator. It's a journal of honest doubts, hopes, and fears. Because all people have "eternity in their hearts" (3:11), there is a purpose for Jesus to disrobe himself of his divine dignity and descend to our sinful planet. In that we bear God's image, he desires to enter our world to provide the necessary remedy in order to maximize our eternal potential. As we peer into the looking glass and see the sad state of life lived apart from the Lord, we recognize that only in Jesus can ultimate satisfaction, wisdom, and joy be found.



A farmer plowing his vineyard. "A time to plant, and a time to pluck what is planted" (Eccl. 3:2).

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ECCLESIASTES OUTLINE

- I. Prologue 1:1–11
- II. the search for the chief good in wisdom and pleasure 1:12—2:26
 - a. the quest for wisdom and pleasure 1:12—2:11
 - B. the comparison of wisdom and pleasure 2:12–26
- III. the search for the chief good in business 3:1—5:20
 - a. God's determination of the quest 3:1–15
 - B. human injustice and perversity 3:16—4:3
 - c. human rivalries 4:4–8
 - d. Five illustrations of a better way: cooperation 4:9–16
 - E. worship of God 5:1–7
 - F. trust in the Lord 5:8–20
- IV. the search for the chief good in wealth 6:1—8:15
 - a. the quest for wealth 6:1–12
 - B. the quest for the golden mean 7:1—8:15
- v. the conclusion of the search for the chief good 8:16—12:8
 - a. the futility of wisdom 8:16—9:6
 - B. the futility of pleasure 9:7–12
 - c. the futility of business and its rewards 9:13—10:20
 - d. the chief good in wise use and enjoyment of this present life 11:1–8
 - E. the chief good in a faith in the life to come 11:9—12:8
- VI. Epilogue 12:9–14

The Vanity of Life

The words of the Preacher, the son of David, ^aking in Jerusalem.

- 2 “Vanity^b ¹ of vanities,” says the Preacher;
“Vanity of vanities, ^call is vanity.”
- 3 ^dWhat profit has a man from all his labor
In which he ²toils under the sun?
4 ^eOne generation passes away, and ^fanother generation comes;
^gBut the earth abides forever.
- 5 ^fThe sun also rises, and the sun goes down,
And ³hastens to the place where it arose.
- 6 ^gThe wind goes toward the south,
And turns around to the north;
The wind whirls about continually,
And comes again on its circuit.
- 7 ^hAll the rivers run into the sea,
Yet the sea is not full;
To the place from which the rivers come,
There they return again.
- 8 All things ^{are} ⁴full of labor;
Man cannot express *it*.

CHAPTER 1

1 ^a Prov. 1:1
2 ^b Ps. 39:5, 6;
62:9; 144:4; Eccl.
12:8 ^c [r om. 8:20,
21] ¹ or Absurdity,
Frustration, Futility,
Nonsense; and so
throughout the
book
3 ^d Eccl. 2:22; 3:9
² *labors*
4 ^e Ps. 104:5; 119:90
5 ^f Ps. 19:4-6 ³ *Is*
eager for, lit.
panting
6 ^g Eccl. 11:5;
John 3:8
7 ^h [Ps. 104:8, 9;
Jer. 5:22]
8 ^g *wearisome*

ⁱ Prov. 27:20; Eccl.
4:8
9 ⁱ Eccl. 3:15
11 ^k Eccl. 2:16
13 ^j [Eccl. 7:25;
8:16, 17] ^m Gen.
3:19; Eccl. 3:10 ⁵ or
afflicted

ⁱThe eye is not satisfied with seeing,
Nor the ear filled with hearing.

- 9 ^jThat which has been *is* what will be,
That which *is* done is what will be
done,
And *there is* nothing new under the
sun.
- 10 Is there anything of which it may be
said,
“See, this *is* new?”
It has already been in ancient times
before us.
- 11 *There is* ^kno remembrance of former
things,
Nor will there be any remembrance
of *things* that are to come
By *those* who will come after.

The Grief of Wisdom

¹²I, the Preacher, was king over Israel in Jerusalem. ¹³And I set my heart to seek and ^lsearch out by wisdom concerning all that is done under heaven; ^mthis burdensome task God has given to the sons of man, by which they may be ⁵exercised. ¹⁴I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and indeed, all is vanity and grasping for the wind.

1:1 the title **Preacher** denotes a function or a profession. It literally means “one who assembles” or “one who gathers people together.” Thus the word refers to Solomon as a person who convened an assembly of the wise in order to explore in a formal manner the meaning of life. It might be better to transliterate the Hebrew word *Qohelet* rather than to translate it, for it seems to be Solomon’s pen name.

1:2 **Vanity of vanities:** this phrase translates the Hebrew superlative, familiar from such phrases as “song of songs” and “holy of holies.” Here it might express “the ultimate absurdity” or “utter emptiness.” This has led many to conclude that the Book of Ecclesiastes is a negative, cynical book that denies any meaning in life. Others have suggested that this book explains that life *apart from* God is “utter emptiness.” However, the book itself does not say this, for there is no qualifying phrase such as “except when one is related to God.” Instead, the book clearly says that *life itself* is “vanity of vanities.” The word *vanity* means “breath” or “vapor” and thus speaks of life as “quickly passing.” Wherever we read the word *vanity* in Ecclesiastes, we should think not of what is “meaningless,” but of what is “quickly passing” (v. 14; 6:12). This is one of the key terms in the Book of Ecclesiastes, for it is found 38 times there. The teaching of the Preacher is to realize that life is a fleeting thing that needs to be savored and enjoyed as a gift from God.

1:3 the senses of the term **profit** are: (1) “advantage” and (2) “adequate gain.” Here it refers to compensation or gains, usually in the commercial realm. The question is: what is left after all expenses are taken into account? **labor:** Both the noun and the verb carry negative connotations, referring to activities requiring exertion. **under the sun:** this phrase (also translated as “under heaven” in v. 13; 2:3; 3:1) describes *life* lived here on this earth, as God has been pleased to place us. In these two verses (vv. 2, 3), the Preacher has established one of his principal ideas: Life may seem pointless because it is quickly passing. It is the burden of the rest of his book to help the assembly of the wise understand how to truly value life because it does indeed pass so very quickly.

1:4 the term **generation** suggests both the human actors and the natural phenomena as well. with the verb **passes away** we

have the first of a series of antitheses in Ecclesiastes. **the earth abides forever:** only God is eternal and everlasting in the fullest sense. But compared to the lives of humankind, the earth abides with little change.

1:5-7 **The sun . . . The wind . . . the rivers:** these three elements of God’s creation are seen to be going about in their expected courses, with little change and little effect.

1:8 **All things are full of labor:** what is true of the sun, wind, and rivers (vv. 5-7) is also true of all other temporal things. The whole world is made up of what could be called “the restless ones.” **The eye is not satisfied:** here a proverb is quoted describing insatiable appetite (4:8; 5:10; compare Prov. 27:20) in depicting the seeming pointlessness of the courses of natural phenomena.

1:10, 11 If it appears that something **new** does happen from time to time, it is only because people’s memories are short.

1:12 **I, the Preacher, was king:** there is a shift from the third person of vv. 1, 2 to the first person here. The writer, or perhaps a later editor, returns to the third person in the epilogue, 12:9-14. This is most likely a reference to Solomon as the author of the book.

1:13 **under heaven:** this is a synonymous expression for “under the sun” (vv. 3, 9); it refers to life as it is lived by people on earth. **God:** Ecclesiastes does not use the divine title *yahweh*, God’s covenantal name (Ex. 3:14, 15). Instead, the book uses the word *Elohim* for God 28 times, a word that stresses his sovereignty over all creation. The wisdom writers often use *Elohim* when they wish to speak of universal truth instead of truths that are peculiar to God’s covenantal relationship to Israel. **sons of man:** this is a way of speaking of human beings in a very general sense. **may be exercised:** this verb is used only in Ecclesiastes and means “to be occupied with” or “to be busy with”; it is associated with the noun **task** (see 3:10).

1:14 **grasping for the wind:** this phrase does not occur in the Hebrew Bible outside of Ecclesiastes. Seven of its nine occurrences (v. 14; 2:11, 17, 26; 4:4, 6; 6:9) follow “vanity” statements. The phrase explains the nature of life according to the Preacher. Life is real, but quickly passing; any attempt to seize it is as futile as grasping the wind.

Solomon's Search for Satisfaction	
Solomon drifted away from God during his lifetime, pursuing different ways to achieve satisfaction. Only after many years of futile searching did he finally remember the true source of peace: a proper relationship with God. Solomon wrote Ecclesiastes to pass on this truth. Satisfaction can be found only by fearing God and keeping His commandments (12:13).	
Solomon sought fulfillment in:	The result was:
Wisdom (1:12–18) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Acquiring more knowledge	much grief and increased sorrow (1:18)
Pleasure (2:1–3) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Laughter and mirth	vanity (2:1)
Accomplishments (2:4–6) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Building projects• Agricultural endeavors• Engineering experiments	vanity (2:11)
Possessions (2:7–17) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Large numbers of servants• Herds of cattle• Wealth in silver and gold (1 Kin. 10)• Choirs and orchestras• Seven hundred wives (1 Kin. 11:3)	no profit under the sun (2:11) hatred of life (2:17)

15ⁿ *What is crooked cannot be made straight,*
And what is lacking cannot be numbered.

16ⁱ I communed with my heart, saying, “Look, I have attained greatness, and have gained ^omore wisdom than all who were before me in Jerusalem. My

15 ⁿ Eccl. 7:13
16 ^o 1 kin. 3:12, 13; Eccl. 2:9 ⁶ I it. seen
17 ^p Eccl. 2:3, 12; 7:23, 25; [1 thess. 5:21]
18 ^q Eccl. 12:12

CHAPTER 2

1 ^a I uke 12:19

heart has ⁶understood great wisdom and knowledge.” 17^p And I set my heart to know wisdom and to know madness and folly. I perceived that this also is grasping for the wind.

18 For ^qin much wisdom is much grief,
And he who increases knowledge
increases sorrow.

The Vanity of Pleasure

2 I said ^ain my heart, “Come now, I will test you with ^bmirth; ⁱtherefore enjoy pleasure”; but surely, ^ethis also was vanity. 2 I said of laughter—“Madness!”; and of mirth, “What does it accomplish?” 3^d I searched in my heart *how* ²to gratify my flesh with wine, while guiding my heart with wisdom, and how to lay hold on folly, till I might see what *was* ^egood for the sons of men to do under heaven all the days of their lives.

4 I made my works great, I built myself ^fhouses, and planted myself vineyards. 5 I made myself gardens and orchards, and I planted all *kinds* of fruit trees in them. 6 I made myself water pools from which to ³water the growing trees of the grove. 7 I acquired male and female servants, and had ⁴servants born in my house. Yes, I had greater possessions of herds and

^b Prov. 14:13; [Eccl. 7:4; 8:15] ^c Eccl. 1:2 ¹ gladness ³ ^d Eccl. 1:17 ^e [Eccl. 3:12, 13; 5:18; 6:12] ² I it. to draw my flesh
⁴ ¹ 1 kin. 7:1–12 ⁶ ³ irrigate ⁷ ⁴ I it. sons of my house

1:15 solomon is not claiming that there is no use trying to straighten out or change anything. r ather, he explains that no amount of investigating or using the resources of earth will ever straighten out all that is **crooked**, twisted, perverted, or turned upside down (7:13).

1:16 **all who were before me in Jerusalem:** t his phrase does not rule out solomon as the author of the book just because he was preceded in Jerusalem only by his father david. t here were other kings including Melchizedek (Gen. 14:18) and a doni-Zedek (Josh. 10:1). t he city of Jerusalem had existed for hundreds of years before solomon became its king.

vanity

(heb. *hebel*) (1:14; 2:1, 11; 6:12; 7:15; Ps. 78:33; Is. 49:4) strong's #1892

t his word basically means “vapor” or “breath,” such as the rapidly vanishing vapor of one’s warm breath in cool, crisp air. with this word, the Preacher described worldly pursuits—such as wealth, honor, fame, and various pleasures—as similar to desperately grasping at air (2:17). It is absurd and useless. Jeremiah used the same word to denounce idolatry as “worthless” (Jer. 18:15); and Job used it to bemoan the brevity of human life (Job 7:16). But the Preacher of Ecclesiastes used the word more than any other o t author. a cording to him, all of life is vanity unless one recognizes that everything is from the hand of God (2:24–26).

1:17 It was not **wisdom** that solomon judges absurd, but rather becoming “more wise” (2:15) and “overly wise” (7:16).

1:18 **much wisdom is much grief:** For all of wisdom’s other advantages, solomon confesses that much wisdom and learning are the source of pain, chagrin, and sorrow. It is well known that the very process of learning is an expansion of the awareness of our ignorance. For mortals, an increase of wisdom may only increase pain (12:12).

2:1 t he Preacher uses a literary device of conversing with himself as a way of describing his thought processes. **mirth:** a new test is proposed, following the test of wisdom. It is the test of “joy,” or “pleasure.”

2:2 solomon labels the lighter side of pleasure and joy as sheer **madness**, but even the weightier aspects of laughter cause solomon to ask if anything substantial is really achieved. a s solomon writes in Prov. 14:13, “Even in laughter the heart may sorrow, and the end of mirth may be grief.”

2:3 **flesh with wine . . . heart with wisdom:** here the test is an attempt to balance excess on the one side with learning on the other.

2:4–6 **I built myself houses:** solomon worked for 13 years building “the king’s house” (1 kin. 9:10), then he built “the house of the Forest of Lebanon” (1 kin. 10:17), and another house for his wife, Pharaoh’s daughter (1 kin. 9:24). he also fortified the cities of hazor, Megiddo, Gezer, Beth horon, Baalath, and tadmor (1 kin. 9:15, 17, 18). **vineyards . . . gardens and orchards:** solomon’s interest in the natural world (God’s creation) was prodigious (1 kin. 4:33).

2:7, 8 Maintaining the various buildings and gardens of the king must have demanded an extensive staff of servants. **silver and gold:** solomon’s riches were unsurpassed by the kings of the ancient world (1 kin. 10:14–29). **musical instruments:** t he meaning

flocks than all who were in Jerusalem before me. ^{8g}I also gathered for myself silver and gold and the special treasures of kings and of the provinces. I acquired male and female singers, the delights of the sons of men, and ⁵musical instruments of all kinds.

^{9h}So I became great and ⁶excelled ⁱmore than all who were before me in Jerusalem. Also my wisdom remained with me.

- ¹⁰ Whatever my eyes desired I did not keep from them.
I did not withhold my heart from any pleasure,
For my heart rejoiced in all my labor;
And ^jthis was my ⁷reward from all my labor.
- ¹¹ Then I looked on all the works that my hands had done
And on the labor in which I had toiled;
And indeed all *was* ^kvanity and grasping for the wind.
There was no profit under the sun.

The End of the Wise and the Fool

- ¹² Then I turned myself to consider wisdom ^land madness and folly;
For what *can* the man *do* who succeeds the king?—
Only what he has already ^mdone.
- ¹³ Then I saw that wisdom ⁿexcels folly
As light excels darkness.
- ¹⁴ ^oThe wise man's eyes *are* in his head,
But the fool walks in darkness.
Yet I myself perceived
That ^pthe same event happens to them all.

⁸ ^g 1 kin. 9:28; 10:10, 14, 21 ⁵ Exact meaning unknown
⁹ ^h Eccl. 1:16 ² ^c chr. 9:22 ⁶ ⁱ it. *increased*
¹⁰ ^j Eccl. 3:22; 5:18; 9:9 ⁷ ⁱ it. *portion*
¹¹ ^k Eccl. 1:3, 14
¹² ^k Eccl. 1:17; 7:25
^m Eccl. 1:9
¹³ ⁿ Eccl. 7:11, 12, 19; 9:18; 10:10
¹⁴ ^o Prov. 17:24; Eccl. 8:1 ^p Ps. 49:10; Eccl. 9:2, 3, 11

- ¹⁵ So I said in my heart,
“As it happens to the fool,
It also happens to me,
And why was I then more wise?”
Then I said in my heart,
“This also *is* vanity.”
- ¹⁶ For *there is* ^qno more remembrance of the wise than of the fool forever,
Since all that now *is* will be forgotten in the days to come.
And how does a wise *man* die?
As the fool!

¹⁷ Therefore I hated life because the work that was done under the sun *was* distressing to me, for all *is* vanity and grasping for the wind.

¹⁸ Then I hated all my labor in which I had toiled under the sun, because ^rI must leave it to the man who will come after me. ¹⁹ And who knows whether he will be wise or a fool? Yet he will rule over all my labor in which I toiled and in which I have shown myself wise under the sun. This also *is* vanity. ²⁰ Therefore I turned my heart and despaired of all the labor in which I had toiled under the sun. ²¹ For there is a man whose labor *is* with wisdom, knowledge, and skill; yet he must leave his ^sheritage to a man who has not labored for it. This also *is* vanity and a great evil. ²² ^sFor what has man for all his labor, and for the striving of his heart with which he has toiled under the sun?
²³ For all his days *are* ^tsorrowful, and his work burdensome; even in the night his heart takes no rest. This also *is* vanity.

²⁴ ^uNothing *is* better for a man *than* that he should eat and drink, and *that* his soul should enjoy good in his labor. This also, I saw, was from the hand of

¹⁶ ^q Eccl. 1:11; 4:16
¹⁸ ^r Ps. 49:10
²¹ ⁸ ⁱ it. *portion*
²² ^s Eccl. 1:3; 3:9
²³ ^t Job 5:7; 14:1
²⁴ ^u Eccl. 3:12, 13, 22; Is. 56:12; 1 uke 12:19; 1 cor. 15:32; [1 t im. 6:17]

of the hebrew term so translated has long been debated. a n Egyptian letter found at a marna contains this word in a kadian as an explanation of an Egyptian word meaning “concubine.”

2:10 my eyes desired: solomon had limitless ability to fulfill any and all of his desires. **labor:** one of the Preacher's favorite words occurs here for the third time. It appears in the book about 31 times.

2:11 at the end of his grand quest for possessions and experiences, solomon concluded that it was **vanity** or “vapor,” a **grasping for the wind**. that is, even with all he had done and experienced, there was still a sense that nothing lasting or enduring had been achieved.

2:12 madness and folly: t his topic was introduced briefly in 1:17. t he two words together express a single concept, “senseless folly.”

2:13 t here is a relative value of **wisdom over folly**, but both have their limitations (vv. 19, 21).

2:14 the same event: some versions incorrectly render this hebrew term which means “happening,” or “event” as the word *fate*. t his is one of the Preacher's favorite words (vv. 14, 15; 3:19; 9:2, 3, 11). here, the inevitable *event* is death. Both the wise and the foolish must die.

2:17 such hatred of **life** is astonishing since the one who finds wisdom also finds life, according to Prov. 3:16; 8:35. But the Preacher's dissatisfaction was related to the quickly passing nature of every-

thing (1:2), including even the good things; they were a **grasping for the wind** (1:14).

2:20 labor in which I had toiled: t his could refer either to all the toil he had undertaken or, more probably, to the “earnings” he had gained.

2:21 t he noun **skill** is found only in Ecclesiastes (v. 21; 4:4). It depicts one who is expert at a craft. **great evil:** t he term *evil* often has a sense of moral evil; here, however, it may mean “calamity” or “ruin.” t here is a sense of sadness that runs through this section. n othing that we gain in this life can be carried on into the life to come.

2:24 t his translation, with most interpreters, assumes that the comparative form—**better**—is to be supplied here, though it is missing in the hebrew text; it is in agreement with later passages, see 3:12; 5:18; 8:15. t he Preacher concludes that all good is located only in God. **eat and drink . . . good in his labor:** t his repeated refrain marks one of the central affirmations of Ecclesiastes (vv. 24–26; 3:12, 13; 3:22; 5:18–20; 8:15; 9:7); in the midst of a world of trouble, a believer is able to seize the moment in joy from God. o nly God supplies the key to the meaning of life. without him, genuine meaning, satisfaction, and enjoyment in life are ultimately elusive. **from the hand of God:** t his figure of speech announces that even such mundane acts as eating, drinking, and earning a paycheck are gifts from God.

God. ²⁵For who can eat, or who can have enjoyment, ⁹more than I? ²⁶For God gives wisdom and knowledge and joy to a man who is good in His sight; but to the sinner He gives the work of gathering and collecting, that ^whe may give to *him* who is good before God. This also is vanity and grasping for the wind.

Everything Has Its Time

3 To everything *there is* a season,
A ^atime for every purpose under heaven:

- ² A time ¹to be born,
And ^ba time to die;
A time to plant,
And a time to pluck *what is* planted;
- ³ A time to kill,
And a time to heal;
A time to break down,
And a time to build up;
- ⁴ A time to ^cweep,
And a time to laugh;
A time to mourn,
And a time to dance;
- ⁵ A time to cast away stones,
And a time to gather stones;

²⁵ ^dso with Mt, t.g., v.g.; some heb. mss., l XX, syr. without Him
²⁶ ^v Job 32:8; Prov. 2:6; James 1:5 ^w Job 27:16, 17; Prov. 28:8

CHAPTER 3

¹ ^a Eccl. 3:17; 8:6
² ^b Job 14:5; heb. 9:27 ¹ l it. to bear
⁴ ^c r om. 12:15

⁵ ^d Joel 2:16; 1 cor. 7:5
⁷ ^e a mos 5:13
¹ Prov. 25:11
⁸ ^g Prov. 13:5; l uke 14:26
⁹ ^h Eccl. 1:3
¹⁰ ⁱ Eccl. 1:13
¹¹ ^j Job 5:9; Eccl. 7:23; 8:17; r om. 11:33
¹² ^k Eccl. 2:3, 24
¹³ ^l Eccl. 2:24

- ^d A time to embrace,
And a time to refrain from embracing;
- ⁶ A time to gain,
And a time to lose;
A time to keep,
And a time to throw away;
- ⁷ A time to tear,
And a time to sew;
^e A time to keep silence,
And a time to ^fspeak;
- ⁸ A time to love,
And a time to ^ghate;
A time of war,
And a time of peace.

The God-Given Task

^{9h} What profit has the worker from that in which he labors? ¹⁰ⁱ I have seen the God-given task with which the sons of men are to be occupied. ¹¹ He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also He has put eternity in their hearts, except that ^jno one can find out the work that God does from beginning to end.
¹² I know that nothing *is* ^kbetter for them than to rejoice, and to do good in their lives, ¹³ and also that ^levery man should eat and drink and enjoy the good of all his labor—it is the gift of God.

2:25 more than I: an alternative meaning of this phrase, “apart from God,” may be more appropriate in this context. Believers pray before their meals in order to affirm that God is the great Giver of all good gifts. They can enjoy the food on their plates only when they recognize that fact.

2:26 God gives: one of the words used most frequently in Ecclesiastes to describe God’s relationship to individuals is the verb “to give.” It appears 11 times with God as subject.

3:1–15 This poem speaks with eloquence of the role of time in the life of the believer. Some regard the Book of Ecclesiastes as describing life apart from God, but clearly this text describes life that is lived in relationship with God. Through these words, the Preacher is not teaching that everything has an opportune time according to which one should choose one action or the other. Rather, he teaches that all events are in the hand of God, who makes everything happen in the time he judges appropriate. Illustrating this comforting assertion, the Preacher turns to 14 pairs of opposites in vv. 2–8.

3:1 a season . . . A time: Both words are usually regarded as being specific points in time rather than a continuity of time. **under heaven:** that is, life “under the sun,” the sphere in which human life is lived.

3:2 born . . . die: the pairs of words in these verses are natural events in human life, and all are under the hand of the living God.

3:3 A time to kill: In the plan of God, there is a time for executing murderers (Gen. 9:6) and for going to war against enemies designated by God. **A time to break down:** there is a time for dismantling walls, stone buildings, or even nations (Is. 5:5; Jer. 18:7, 9).

3:4 weep . . . laugh: God’s plan includes both sorrows and joys. Believers do not mourn in the same way as unbelievers (1 Thess. 4:13), but we do mourn (Matt. 5:4). dancing and leaping are natural ways of expressing laughter, pleasure, and joy in the presence of the Lord (Ex. 15:20; Ps. 149:2, 3; 150:4) and in times of personal happiness (l uke 15:25).

3:5 In times of peace, **stones** were cleared from the fields, allowing for cultivation. In wartime, the rocks were thrown on the fields to make them unusable (2 Kin. 3:19, 25). **to embrace:** In this context the words describe the sexual embrace.

3:6 to keep . . . to throw away: there is a period of life in which one wishes to accumulate things for enjoyment and memories; later in life, one needs to work out ways to dispose of what has been accumulated.

3:7 when bad news came, it was customary to rip one’s garments to show grief (2 sam. 13:31). when the problem passed, it was just as well to **sew** the garment back together. **silence . . . speak:** see the two contrary ways of responding to a fool (Prov. 26:4, 5).

3:8 In this verse the first part names the positive **love** first, then the negative **hate**. the second part uses the reverse order, negative then positive, to end with **peace**.

3:9 What profit: this is the same question posed in 1:3. the answer here is that all of life unfolds the appointment of God. all the toiling of man cannot change the times, circumstances, and control of events that God has reserved to himself.

3:10 one of the words that is unique to the Book of Ecclesiastes, **task** may have a neutral connotation as here (see 5:3; 8:16) or a negative connotation (something burdensome, as in 1:13; 2:23, 26; 4:8; 5:14).

3:11 all of God’s creation is **beautiful**. the point is that God makes everything that way **in its time**. From the divine perspective, there is no ugliness in the events of our lives (3:1–8). **Eternity in their hearts** refers to a deep-seated, compulsive drive to transcend our mortality by knowing the meaning and destiny of the world. Because we are made in the image of God, we have an inborn inquisitiveness about eternal realities. we can find peace only when we come to know our eternal creator. Even then, we know God only in part (1 cor. 13:12). **from beginning to end:** all we see is the micro-moment of our own existence in the grand span of eternity. thus the scriptures call people to live in robust faith during times of trial and pain; in the grand scheme of things, God will make **everything** beautiful.

3:12, 13 nothing is better: as in 2:24, the advice of the Preacher is to seize the day in the joy of God. **rejoice . . . enjoy:** Biblical faith is a call for joy, even when we live in a wicked world and under terrible stress; this is because we find true joy in the living God.

- ¹⁴ I know that whatever God does,
It shall be forever.
^m Nothing can be added to it,
And nothing taken from it.
God does *it*, that men should fear
before Him.
^{15 n} That which is has already been,
And what is to be has already been;
And God ² requires an account of
³ what is past.

Injustice Seems to Prevail

¹⁶ Moreover ^o I saw under the sun:

In the place of ⁴ judgment,
Wickedness *was* there;
And in the place of righteousness,
⁵ Iniquity *was* there.

¹⁷ I said in my heart,

^p “God shall judge the righteous and the
wicked,
For *there is* a time there for every
⁶ purpose and for every work.”

¹⁸ I said in my heart, “Concerning the
condition of the sons of men, God tests
them, that they may see that they them-
selves are *like* animals.” ^{19 q} For what hap-
pens to the sons of men also happens to
animals; one thing befalls them: as one
dies, so dies the other. Surely, they all
have one breath; man has no advantage
over animals, for all *is* vanity. ²⁰ All go to
one place: ^r all are from the dust, and all
return to dust. ^{21 s} Who ⁷ knows the spirit

^{14 m} James 1:17
^{15 n} Eccl. 1:9 ² I it.
*seeks ³ what is
pursued*
^{16 o} Eccl. 5:8
⁴ justice
⁵ Wickedness
^{17 p} Gen. 18:25; Ps.
96:13; Eccl. 11:9;
[Matt. 16:27; r om.
2:6-10; 2 cor. 5:10;
2 t hess. 1:6-9]
⁶ desire
^{19 q} Ps. 49:12, 20;
73:22; [Eccl. 2:16]
^{20 r} Gen. 3:19; Ps.
103:14
^{21 s} Eccl. 12:7
⁷ I XX, syr., tg.,
vg. *Who knows
whether the spirit
... goes upward,
and whether ...
goes downward to
the earth?*

^{22 t} Eccl. 2:24; 5:18
^u Eccl. 2:10 ^v Eccl.
6:12; 8:7 ⁸ portion
or lot

CHAPTER 4

^{1 a} Job 35:9; Ps.
12:5; Eccl. 3:16; 5:8;
Is. 5:7 ¹ I it. *At the
hand*
^{2 b} Job 3:17, 18
^{3 c} Job 3:11-22; Eccl.
6:3; Luke 23:29
^{5 d} Prov. 6:10; 24:33
^{6 e} Prov. 15:16,
17; 16:8

of the sons of men, which goes upward,
and the spirit of the animal, which goes
down to the earth? ^{22 t} So I perceived that
nothing *is* better than that a man should
rejoice in his own works, for ^u that *is* his
⁸ heritage. ^v For who can bring him to see
what will happen after him?

4 Then I returned and considered all
the ^a oppression that is done under
the sun:

And look! The tears of the
oppressed,

But they have no comforter—

¹ On the side of their oppressors *there*
is power,

But they have no comforter.

² ^b Therefore I praised the dead who
were already dead,
More than the living who are still
alive.

³ ^c Yet, better than both *is he* who has
never existed,
Who has not seen the evil work that
is done under the sun.

The Vanity of Selfish Toil

⁴ Again, I saw that for all toil and every
skillful work a man is envied by his
neighbor. This also *is* vanity and grasping
for the wind.

⁵ ^d The fool folds his hands
And consumes his own flesh.

⁶ ^e Better a handful *with* quietness
Than both hands full, *together with*
toil and grasping for the wind.

3:14 God’s works have a durable quality to them. a s deut. 4:2; 12:32; Prov. 30:6 advise, **nothing** may be **added** and nothing **taken** away. **should fear:** t he “fear” of God in wisdom literature refers to true piety, not terror (5:7; 12:13).

3:16, 17 t he term **judgment** may also be translated “justice,” giving an even more striking contrast to these words. It was outrageous that in the very establishments where people should expect justice, they could find only **wickedness**. t he Preacher warns the wicked judges that God, the final **judge**, will come, rectify all wrongdoing, and bring true justice. t his theme is so prominent in the book that solomon repeats it in the conclusion (12:14), and he raises it often in the course of his argument (9:1; 11:9).

3:18 tests them: t he basic meaning of the verb is “to choose, select, purify, test.” d eath is the great leveler of all persons. In that regard, humans are no different than animals.

3:19 one breath: t he hebrew expression might be translated “one spirit” or “one wind.” t he phrase in this case describes breath as the sign and symbol of life (see 8:8; see also Gen. 6:17; 7:15, 22). In this, humanity and animals are alike (but see v. 21). **advantage:** t his word appears only here in Ecclesiastes. It is also found in Prov. 14:23: “In all labor there is *profit*,” and in Prov. 21:5: “t he plans of the diligent lead surely to *plenty*.”

3:20, 21 All go to one place: Both humans and beasts die and go to the grave. But this is not the end for human beings—they will face eternal life or death. t he rhetorical question **who knows** occurs six times in the hebrew Bible outside of Ecclesiastes (2 sam. 12:22; Esth. 4:14; Ps. 90:11; Prov. 24:22; Joel 2:14; John. 3:9) and four times in Ecclesiastes (2:19; 3:21; 6:12; 8:1). People and animals differ;

their bodies go back to the dust from which they came, but the human spirit is immortal.

3:22 better: a s in v. 12 and 2:24, there is a blessing given to human-kind in terms of ordinary pleasures. **his heritage:** t he allotment that God has designated may include material possessions (2:21; 11:2) or the pleasures that come from them (2:10; 3:22; 5:17, 18; 9:9).

4:1 here is another complaint that threatens the plan of God. so much pain can come to the downtrodden that they may even despair of life (1 kin. 19:4; Job 3:3–10). o nly when the oppressed go into the house of God will they gain perspective for possible recovery (5:1–6; Ps. 73:17). **they have no comforter:** t he absence of anyone to offer comfort only increases the pain and frustration.

4:2 I praised the dead: Being without a comforter is often worse than death itself.

4:3 he who has never existed: so powerfully wrong and so lonely is the suffering of the oppressed, that solomon, with a good deal of poetic license similar to Job 3:3–10, argues that nonexistence could be preferred over existence.

4:4 a man is envied by his neighbor: t o the previous obstacles to accepting that God’s plan encompasses everything is now added a fourth: the envy and cruel competition found in the world.

4:5, 6 two proverbs follow. **The fool:** t here are numerous statements in the Book of Proverbs about the self-destructive nature of laziness. **a handful:** Moderation is preferred to overexertion. In place of the sometimes cruel competition of the marketplace, solomon recommended: “Better is a little with righteousness, than vast revenues without justice” (Prov. 16:8).

⁷Then I returned, and I saw vanity under the sun:

- ⁸ There is one alone, without² companion:
He has neither son nor brother.
Yet *there* is no end to all his labors,
Nor is his^f eye satisfied with riches.
But^g he never asks,
“For whom do I toil and deprive myself of^h good?”
This also is vanity and a³ grave misfortune.

The Value of a Friend

- ⁹ Two *are* better than one,
Because they have a good reward for their labor.
¹⁰ For if they fall, one will lift up his companion.
But woe to him *who* is alone when he falls,
For *he* has no one to help him up.
¹¹ Again, if two lie down together, they will keep warm;
But how can one be warm *alone*?
¹² Though one may be overpowered by another, two can withstand him.
And a threefold cord is not quickly broken.

Popularity Passes Away

- ¹³ Better a poor and wise youth
Than an old and foolish king who will be admonished no more.
¹⁴ For he comes out of prison to be king,
Although⁴ he was born poor in his kingdom.

⁸ ^f Prov. 27:20; Eccl. 5:10; [1 John 2:16]
⁹ Ps. 39:6 ^h Eccl. 2:18-21 ² ⁱ it. *a second* ³ ⁱ it. *evil task*
¹⁴ ⁴ ^t he youth

- ¹⁵ I saw all the living who walk under the sun;
They were with the second youth who stands in his place.
¹⁶ *There was* no end of all the people⁵ over whom he was made king;
Yet those who come afterward will not rejoice in him.
Surely this also is vanity and grasping for the wind.

Fear God, Keep Your Vows

⁵ Walk ^a prudently when you go to the house of God; and draw near to hear rather ^b than to give the sacrifice of fools, for they do not know that they do evil.

- ² Do not be ^c rash with your mouth,
And let not your heart utter anything hastily before God.
For God *is* in heaven, and you on earth;
Therefore let your words ^d be few.
³ For a dream comes through much activity,
And ^e a fool's voice is known by his many words.

- ⁴ ^f When you make a vow to God, do not delay to ^g pay it;
For *He* has no pleasure in fools.
Pay what you have vowed—
⁵ ^h Better not to vow than to vow and not pay.

⁶ Do not let your ⁱ mouth cause your flesh to sin, ^j nor say before the messenger of God that it *was* an error. Why should God be angry at your ¹ excuse and destroy the work of your hands? ⁷ For in the multitude of dreams and many words *there* is also vanity. But ^k fear God.

¹⁶ ⁵ ⁱ it. *to all before whom he was to be*

CHAPTER 5
¹ ^a Ex. 3:5; Is. 1:12
^b [1 sam. 15:22]; Ps. 50:8; Prov. 15:8; 21:27; [Jos. 6:6]
² ^c Prov. 20:25
^d Prov. 10:19; Matt. 6:7
³ ^e Prov. 10:19
⁴ ^f ⁿ um. 30:2; deut. 23:21-23; Ps. 50:14; 76:11 ^g Ps. 66:13, 14
⁵ ^h Prov. 20:25; acts 5:4
⁶ ⁱ Prov. 6:2 / 1 cor. 11:10 ¹ ⁱ it. *voice*
⁷ ^k [Eccl. 12:13]

4:7, 8 t he problem of sadness and loneliness is another obstacle to accepting the fact that God has a plan that embraces everything. consider the person who has no family, not even an heir to whom he can leave all for which he has worked so hard. In 4:1 there is “no comfort.” In 4:4–6 there is no rest. In 4:8 there is no companion. **grave misfortune:** t his literally refers to an evil or burdensome task (3:10).
4:9–12 t throughout this section there is an emphasis on the obvious benefits of companions. t he intimacy and sharing of life brings relief for the problem of isolation and loneliness. a companion can offer assistance, comfort, and defense. **threefold cord:** t he Preacher uses this proverbial saying to clinch his case about the value of friends.
4:13, 14 Before the Preacher lists the final obstacle (vv. 14–16) to believing in God’s good plan, he first places the answer in proverbial form. Popularity, even in the form of royal power, is elusive. In one case, an old **king** had been born to the throne but becomes so **foolish** and senile that he cannot discern that his days for ruling are over. In another case, a young man, like Joseph, may rise from prison to take the throne (Gen. 41:14, 37–41).
4:16 those who come afterward: Even the young man who replaces his predecessor will share the old king’s fate. today’s hero may become tomorrow’s beggar.

5:1 Walk prudently: I literally, this phrase is “guard your feet” when you go to worship God. It means to behave yourself. t he idea of righteous behavior is rephrased at the end of the section in the words: “But fear God” (5:7). **to hear:** a s is common in the prophets, there is a warning to be circumspect about sacrifice. God has no pleasure in those who do all the right things for all the wrong reasons (Is. 1:10–15). **the sacrifice of fools:** a s the prophet samuel warned saul, “Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed than the fat of rams” (1 sam. 15:22).
5:2 God is in heaven . . . you on earth: t he essential contrast between God’s righteous might and our sinful mortality should cause us to revere the almighty (see v. 7).
5:4, 5 o ne should not attempt to bribe God with a hasty **vow**. t he first part of this verse is almost identical to deut. 23:21. see the later example of the lie of a naniass and sapphira (acts 5:1–11).
5:6 a priest or prophet or one of God’s angels is the **messenger of God** who would hear such excuses for unfulfilled vows (hag. 1:13; Mal. 2:7).
5:7 to fear God, a central theme of the Book of Ecclesiastes, does not mean to be afraid of God (Ex. 20:2). It means to have reverence, awe, and wonder in response to his glory. For the wisdom writers (Job 1:1; Ps. 111:10; Prov. 1:7), “to fear God” means to respond to him correctly, in true piety.

The Vanity of Gain and Honor

⁸If you ¹see the oppression of the poor, and the violent ²perversion of justice and righteousness in a province, do not marvel at the matter; for ^mhigh official watches over high official, and higher officials are over them.

⁹Moreover the profit of the land is for all; *even* the king is served from the field.

¹⁰ He who loves silver will not be satisfied with silver;
Nor he who loves abundance, with increase.
This also *is* vanity.

¹¹ When goods increase,
They increase who eat them;
So what profit have the owners
Except to see *them* with their eyes?

¹² The sleep of a laboring man *is* sweet,
Whether he eats little or much;
But the abundance of the rich will not permit him to sleep.

¹³ ⁿThere is a severe evil *which* I have seen under the sun:
Riches kept for their owner to his hurt.

¹⁴ But those riches perish through ³misfortune;
When he begets a son, *there is* nothing in his hand.

¹⁵ ^oAs he came from his mother's womb, naked shall he return,
To go as he came;
And he shall take nothing from his labor

⁸ ^r Eccl. 3:16 ^m [Ps. 12:5; 58:11; 82:1]
² *wrestling*
¹³ ⁿ Eccl. 6:1, 2
¹⁴ ³ *it, bad business*
¹⁵ ^o Job 1:21; Ps. 49:17; 1 Tim. 6:7

¹⁶ ^p Eccl. 1:3 ^q Prov. 11:29
¹⁷ ^r Ps. 127:2
¹⁸ ^s Eccl. 2:24; 3:12, 13; [1 Tim. 6:17]
^t Eccl. 2:10; 3:22
⁴ *it, portion*
¹⁹ ^u [Eccl. 6:2]
^v Eccl. 2:24; 3:13
⁵ *it, portion*

CHAPTER 6

¹ ^a Eccl. 5:13
² ^b Job 21:10; Ps. 17:14; 73:7 ^c *1 Luke 12:20* ¹ *disease*
³ ^d 2 Kin. 9:35;
Is. 14:19, 20; Jer. 22:19 ^e Job 3:16; Ps. 58:8; Eccl. 4:3 ² ^o *r miscarriage*

Which he may carry away in his hand.

¹⁶ And this also *is* a severe evil—
Just exactly as he came, so shall he go.
And ^pwhat profit has he ^qwho has labored for the wind?
¹⁷ All his days ^rhe also eats in darkness,
And *he has* much sorrow and sickness and anger.

¹⁸Here is what I have seen: ^s*It is* good and fitting *for one* to eat and drink, and to enjoy the good of all his labor in which he toils under the sun all the days of his life which God gives him; ^tfor *it is* his ⁴heritage. ¹⁹As for ^uevery man to whom God has given riches and wealth, and given him power to eat of it, to receive his ⁵heritage and rejoice in his labor—this *is* the ^vgift of God. ²⁰For he will not dwell unduly on the days of his life, because God keeps *him* busy with the joy of his heart.

6 There ^ais an evil which I have seen under the sun, and *it is* common among men: ²A man to whom God has given riches and wealth and honor, ^bso that he lacks nothing for himself of all he desires; ^cyet God does not give him power to eat of it, but a foreigner consumes it. This *is* vanity, and *it is* an evil ¹affliction.

³If a man begets a hundred *children* and lives many years, so that the days of his years are many, but his soul is not satisfied with goodness, or ^dindeed he has no burial, I say ^ethat ²a stillborn child is better than he— ⁴for it comes in vanity

5:9 for all . . . king: all people live by God's grace in his provision for the earth.

5:10 not be satisfied: the topic of an insatiable appetite is addressed for the third time (1:8; 4:8). desire always outruns possessions, no matter how vast acquisitions may grow.

5:12 there are few things so satisfying in life as **sleep** following a hard day's work; but the greedy rarely enjoy decent rest.

5:14 Misfortune literally refers to a "worthless task" (compare 3:10).

5:15 naked shall he return: the maxim that "you can't take it with you" is affirmed here (2:21).

5:16 labored for the wind: the wording is similar to "grasping for the wind" (1:14).

5:17 darkness . . . anger: the frugal lifestyle of the covetous prevents them from enjoying what they do have (contrast 2:24–26; 3:12, 13).

5:19 God has separated the **gift** of enjoying something from the gift of the object itself so that we might be driven back to the Giver.

5:20 keeps him busy: the literal meaning of the verb is debated, but it appears to be a form of the verb meaning "to answer." God keeps a person occupied and delighted primarily with himself and then with the gifts he gives. **joy of his heart:** the Preacher uses the word *joy* in two ways: (1) "enjoyment," an internal sense of pleasure (2:10, 26; 4:16; 9:7; 10:19) and (2) "pleasure," pleasurable actions (2:1, 2, 10; 7:4; 11:9).

6:2 God does not give him power: Prosperity without the divine gift of enjoyment amounts to nothing (5:19).

6:3 sometimes the achievement of the greatest of goals becomes hollow when there is no decent end to life. **stillborn child:** ordinarily a great sadness, the child who does not live is considered to be better off than the person who has lived poorly. If life is nothing more than a meaningless journey to death, then a stillborn is better off, for that child reaches the end of the worthless journey with less pain (vv. 4–6).

labor

(heb. *'amal*) (2:11; 5:18; Ps. 105:44; Jer. 20:18) strong's #5999

the noun means "toil," or work for material gain (Ps. 127:1; Prov. 16:26), but it can also mean "trouble" or "sorrow" (see Job 3:10). the effort required for work and human achievement produces "sorrow" and "troubles" in the sense that it can never satisfy the deeper needs of the human soul (6:7). however, when believers recognize that their work is a gift from God, work can become a joy (5:18–20). our work is part of God's plan to establish his eternal kingdom. In this sense, we can be assured that our faithful commitment to our work will have eternal consequences and reap eternal rewards (see 1 cor. 3:8, 14; 15:58).

and departs in darkness, and its name is covered with darkness. ⁵Though it has not seen the sun or known *anything*, this has more rest than that man, ⁶even if he lives a thousand years twice—but has not seen goodness. Do not all go to one *place*?

- 7 ^gAll the labor of man *is* for his mouth,
And yet the soul is not satisfied.
- 8 For what more has the wise *man* than the fool?
What does the poor man have,
Who knows *how* to walk before the living?
- 9 Better *is* ³the ^hsight of the eyes than the wandering of ⁴desire.
This also *is* vanity and grasping for the wind.
- 10 Whatever one is, he has been named ⁱalready,
For it is known that he *is* man;
^jAnd he cannot contend with Him who is mightier than he.
- 11 Since there are many things that increase vanity,
How *is* man the better?

6 ^f Eccl. 2:14, 15
7 ^g Prov. 16:26
9 ^h Eccl. 11:9 ³ what the eyes see ⁴ i t. soul
10 ⁱ Eccl. 1:9; 3:15
Job 9:32; Is. 45:9; Jer. 49:19

12 ^k Ps. 102:11;
James 4:14 ¹ Ps. 39:6; Eccl. 3:22 ⁵ i t. the number of the days ⁶ futile

CHAPTER 7

1 ^a Prov. 22:1
^b Eccl. 4:2
2 ^c [Ps. 90:12]
3 ^d [2 cor. 7:10]
¹ Vexation or Grief
² well or pleasing
5 ^e Ps. 141:5; [Prov. 13:18; 15:31, 32]
³ listen to
6 ^f Eccl. 2:2 ⁴ i t. sound

¹²For who knows what *is* good for man in life, ⁵all the days of his ⁶vain life which he passes like ^ka shadow? ¹Who can tell a man what will happen after him under the sun?

The Value of Practical Wisdom

- 7 A ^agood name *is* better than precious ointment,
And the day of death than the day of one's ^bbirth;
- 2 Better to go to the house of mourning
Than to go to the house of feasting,
For that *is* the end of all men;
And the living will take *it* to ^cheart.
- 3 ¹ Sorrow *is* better than laughter,
^dFor by a sad countenance the heart is made ²better.
- 4 The heart of the wise *is* in the house of mourning,
But the heart of fools *is* in the house of mirth.
- 5 ^e *It is* better to ³hear the rebuke of the wise
Than for a man to hear the song of fools.
- 6 ^fFor like the ⁴crackling of thorns under a pot,

6:6 t hat one **place** is, as 3:20 argues, the grave. If a long life terminates in death with no prospect of anything else, will that life have been worthwhile? I on life without knowing God and without the power to enjoy it is indeed frustrating and useless.

6:7 t he hebrew word for **soul** can also be translated *appetite*. If it is meant to parallel the word *mouth* in the first line, then *appetite* may be appropriate in this context. yet the translation *soul* fits well in the argument of the gift being kept separate from the power to enjoy the gift (5:10).

6:9 t he meaning of this proverb is that it is **better** making do with what we can look on and enjoy than fantasizing about desirable things that are beyond our grasp.

6:10 **Whatever** happens has been already known, because to name something is to know it (1:9–11). all things are foreknown and foreordained by God.

6:12 like a shadow: t his phrase is a confirmation of the meaning of the hebrew word translated *vanity*. I life passes away quickly, like a vapor. **what will happen after him:** t he implied answer is that only God knows what will happen to us after death. r ather than imply that nothing exists beyond the grave, this book teaches that each person's life will be reviewed by God after death.

7:1 a person's death may be **better** than the day of birth if the name of that person has merited a lasting reputation and influence.

7:2–4 t hese verses expand upon the idea of v. 1. we may learn more about the meaning of life in the **house of mourning** than in the **house of feasting**.

7:5, 6 Burning **thorns** will provide quick flames, little heat, and a lot of noise, just like the sudden outbursts of laughter among fools; there is more noise than substance.

Wisdom Literature

t he Book of Ecclesiastes is an example of what is called *wisdom literature*. common in the ancient Middle East, wisdom literature provided instructions for upright living. such writing falls into two categories: *proverbial wisdom*, short, instructive sayings of the kind found in the Book of Proverbs, and *speculation wisdom*, consisting of dialogues or monologues that subtly disclose wisdom to readers. t he Book of Job is an example of speculation wisdom in the form of dialogue; the Book of Ecclesiastes is an example of monologue.

t he wisdom taught in these books is thoroughly practical. t he wisdom literature of the Bible is more than pithy advice for day-to-day living; it provides a foundation and a way to know God himself. t he Book of Job explores the meaning of existence and a person's relationship with God; Proverbs gives advice on topics ranging from parenting to money management; the Book of Ecclesiastes comes out of the hard lessons of solomon's life. despite all his wisdom and possessions, solomon made foolish choices. as an old man looking back on his life, he could not hide his regrets. so much of what solomon had thought would bring him happiness—money, learning, and fame—crumbled before his eyes. despite its apparent cynicism, the Book of Ecclesiastes is both a warning and an encouragement from a man who wanted others to avoid his mistakes. It shows that our efforts to live without God are meaningless. t his realization is the beginning of true wisdom.



- So *is* the laughter of the fool.
This also is vanity.
- 7 Surely oppression destroys a wise *man's* reason,
8 And a bribe ⁵ debases the heart.
- 8 The end of a thing *is* better than its beginning;
^hThe patient in spirit *is* better than the proud in spirit.
- 9 ⁱDo not hasten in your spirit to be angry,
For anger rests in the bosom of fools.
- 10 Do not say,
“Why were the former days better than these?”
For you do not inquire wisely concerning this.
- 11 Wisdom *is* good with an inheritance,
And profitable ^jto those who see the sun.
- 12 For wisdom *is* ⁶a ^kdefense as money is a defense,
But the ⁷excellence of knowledge *is* that wisdom gives ^llife to those who have it.
- 13 Consider the work of God;
For ^mwho can make straight what He has made crooked?
- 14 ⁿIn the day of prosperity be joyful,
But in the day of adversity consider:
Surely God has appointed the one ⁸as well as the other,
So that man can find out nothing that will come after him.
- 15 I have seen everything in my days of vanity:

^oThere is a just *man* who perishes in his righteousness,

7 ⁹ Ex. 23:8; deut. 16:19; [Prov. 17:8, 23] ⁵ destroys
8 ^h Prov. 14:29; Gal. 5:22; Eph. 4:2
9 ⁱ Prov. 14:17; James 1:19
11 ^j Eccl. 11:7
12 ^k Eccl. 9:18
13 ^l Prov. 3:18 ⁶ a protective shade, lit. *shadow*
14 ^m Job 12:14
15 ⁿ deut. 28:47
⁸ alongside
15 ^o Eccl. 8:12-14

16 ^p Prov. 25:16; Phil. 3:6 ^q r om. 12:3
17 ^r Job 15:32; Ps. 55:23
18 ^s Eccl. 3:14; 5:7; 8:12, 13 ⁹ I it. *come forth from all of them*
19 ^t Prov. 21:22; Eccl. 9:13-18
20 ^u 1 kin. 8:46; 2 chr. 6:36; Prov. 20:9; r om. 3:23; 1 John 1:8
23 ^v r om. 1:22
¹ tested
24 ^w Job 28:12; 1 tim. 6:16 ^x r om. 11:33
25 ^y Eccl. 1:17

- And there is a wicked *man* who prolongs *life* in his wickedness.
- 16 ^p Do not be overly righteous,
^qNor be overly wise:
Why should you destroy yourself?
- 17 Do not be overly wicked,
Nor be foolish:
^rWhy should you die before your time?
- 18 *It is* good that you grasp this,
And also not remove your hand from the other;
For he who ^sfears God will ⁹escape them all.
- 19 ^tWisdom strengthens the wise
More than ten rulers of the city.
- 20 ^uFor *there is* not a just man on earth who does good
And does not sin.
- 21 Also do not take to heart everything people say,
Lest you hear your servant cursing you.
- 22 For many times, also, your own heart has known
That even you have cursed others.
- 23 All this I have ¹proved by wisdom.
^vI said, “I will be wise”;
But it *was* far from me.
- 24 ^wAs for that which is far off and ^xexceedingly deep,
Who can find it out?
- 25 ^yI applied my heart to know,
To search and seek out wisdom and the reason of *things*,
To know the wickedness of folly,
Even of foolishness *and* madness.

7:7 bribe: a nother form of this maxim is found in Ex. 23:8; deut. 16:19, see also Matt. 28:11–15; l uke 22:4–6.

7:10 t the temptation to glorify the past at the expense of the present must be resisted. t the pleasures or advantages of those **days** may be more imaginary than real.

7:11 t those who find **wisdom** find life, argues solomon (Prov. 8:35). wisdom is as good as an inheritance; in fact, wisdom is even more advantageous or profitable. **who see the sun:** t his seems to be a variation on the more familiar phrase “under the sun.”

7:12 t the word translated **defense** literally means “shade” or “shelter,” a kind of protection. t he hebrew word translated here as **excellence** is often rendered *profit* in Ecclesiastes.

7:13 t he **crooked** that needs straightening (1:15) is the presence of afflictions and adversities in life. Both prosperity and adversity come from the hand of God. For prosperity give thanks, but in adversity reflect on the goodness and comprehensiveness of the plan of God.

7:14 find out nothing: If mortals do not come to know God and his plan, they will not be able to discern anything about life (3:11) or about what will happen after they are gone.

7:15 just man: t here are inequities in life that will always be a mystery (3:16—4:3; see also 8:14).

7:16 Do not be overly righteous: Few verses in Ecclesiastes are more susceptible to incorrect interpretation than these (vv. 16–18). t his is not the so-called golden mean that advises: “don’t be too holy and don’t be too wicked; sin to a moderate degree.” t he Preacher was warning instead about pseudo-religiosity and showy forms of worship. t he hebrew verb for “be wise” may be rendered “think yourself wise,” and to “be overly righteous” would mean “righteous in your own eyes” (see Prov. 3:7).

7:18 t he **this** that solomon refers to is the true wisdom that comes from the fear of God. t he **other** is the folly of fools. **fears God:** t rue piety in reverence and awe is the best protection against either absurdity.

7:20 not a just man on earth: t his language recalls solomon’s prayer when he dedicated the temple (1 kin. 8:46; see also Ps. 14:2–4; 143:2).

7:21, 22 take to heart: a t times you may find another doing to you the same harmful thing that you have done to someone else.

7:23 proved by wisdom: t he verb means “to put to the test.”

7:24 t he theme of wisdom’s inaccessibility also appears in Job 28. t he answer to this search for wisdom is that God **can find** wisdom (see Job 28:23–28).

^{26 z} And I find more bitter than death
The woman whose heart *is* snares
and nets,
Whose hands *are* fetters.
² He who pleases God shall escape
from her,
But the sinner shall be trapped by her.

^{27 a} “Here is what I have found,” says *a* the
Preacher,
“*Adding* one thing to the other to find
out the reason,
²⁸ Which my soul still seeks but I
cannot find:
b One man among a thousand I have
found,
But a woman among all these I have
not found.
²⁹ Truly, this only I have found:
c That God made man upright,
But *d* they have sought out many
schemes.”

8 Who *is* like a wise *man*?
And who knows the interpretation
of a thing?
a A man’s wisdom makes his face shine,
And *b* the *c* sternness of his face is
changed.

Obey Authorities for God’s Sake

² I *say*, “Keep the king’s commandment
c for the sake of your oath to God. ^{3 d} Do
not be hasty to go from his presence. Do
not take your stand for an evil thing, for
he does whatever pleases him.”

⁴ Where the word of a king *is*, *there is*
power;
And *e* who may say to him, “What
are you doing?”
⁵ He who keeps his command will
experience nothing harmful;
And a wise man’s heart ² discerns
both time and judgment,

^{26 z} Prov. 5:3, 4
² *l* it. *He who is good
before God*
^{27 a} Eccl. 1:1, 2
^{28 b} Job 33:23
^{29 c} Gen. 1:27
d Gen. 3:6, 7

CHAPTER 8

^{1 a} Prov. 4:8, 9; acts
6:15 *b* deut. 28:50
¹ *l* it. *strength*
^{2 c} Ex. 22:11; 2 sam.
21:7; 1 chr. 29:24;
Ezek. 17:18; [rom.
13:5]
^{3 d} Eccl. 10:4
^{4 e} 1 sam. 13:11, 13;
Job 34:18
⁵ *l* it. *knows*

^{6 f} Eccl. 3:1, 17 ³ *is
great upon him*
^{7 g} Prov. 24:22;
Eccl. 6:12
^{8 h} Ps. 49:6, 7; Job
14:5 *i* deut. 20:5-8
¹⁰ / Eccl. 2:16; 9:5
⁴ some heb. mss.,
I XX, vg. *praised*
^{11 k} Ps. 10:6; 50:21;
Is. 26:10
¹² / Is. 65:20; [rom.
2:5-7] *m* [deut.
4:40; Ps. 37:11,
18, 19; Prov. 1:32,
33; Is. 3:10; Matt.
25:34, 41]
^{14 n} Ps. 73:14 *o* Eccl.
2:14; 7:15; 9:1-3

⁶ Because *f* for every matter there is a
time and judgment,
Though the misery of man ³ increases
greatly.
^{7 g} For he does not know what will
happen;
So who can tell him when it will
occur?
^{8 h} No one has power over the spirit to
retain the spirit,
And no one has power in the day of
death.
There is i no release from that
war,
And wickedness will not deliver
those who are given to it.

⁹ All this I have seen, and applied my
heart to every work that is done under
the sun: *There is* a time in which one man
rules over another to his own hurt.

Death Comes to All

¹⁰ Then I saw the wicked buried, who
had come and gone from the place of ho-
liness, and they were *j* forgotten ⁴ in the
city where they had so done. This also *is*
vanity. ^{11 k} Because the sentence against
an evil work is not executed speedily,
therefore the heart of the sons of men is
fully set in them to do evil. ^{12 l} Though
a sinner does evil a hundred *times*, and
his *days* are prolonged, yet I surely know
that *m* it will be well with those who fear
God, who fear before Him. ¹³ But it will
not be well with the wicked; nor will he
prolong *his* days, *which are* as a shadow,
because he does not fear before God.

¹⁴ There is a vanity which occurs on
earth, that there are just *men* to whom
it *n* happens according to the work of the
wicked; again, there are wicked *men* to
whom it happens according to the work
of the *o* righteous. I said that this also *is*
vanity.

7:26 wisdom literature is filled with warnings about the loose
woman (see Prov. 7), however, this is balanced by the Preacher’s
praise for a spouse as a gift from God (9:9).

7:28 *t* he truth that all persons are sinners is put in a deliberate
exaggeration. **Man and woman** mean “a good man” and “a good
woman.” In the Book of Proverbs, solomon asked the same ques-
tion: “who can find a faithful man?” (Prov 20:6).

7:29 Even though God made everything beautiful (3:11) and **made**
human beings **upright** (see Gen. 1:31), solomon’s search for the
“sum” had failed, yet humankind’s search for wicked devices and
intrigues had succeeded wonderfully.

8:1 *t* he idiom “to cause one’s **face** to **shine**” (see also the *l* evitical
blessing of num. 6:25) is an image of a person who is stable. *o* ut of
the depths of experience and understanding, that person is able to
enjoy life and build up others.

8:2, 3 subjects are obligated by an **oath** of allegiance to render
their obedience to “the powers that be” (rom. 13:1–5). **not . . .**
stand for an evil thing: Even before a king, evil is to be resisted
(acts 5:29).

8:4, 5 **What are you doing:** *t* his same question is asked of those
who pretend to be able to rebuke God (Job 9:12; dan. 4:32). *t* he
rhetorical question amounts to a firm denial of the king’s power.

8:6 **time and judgment:** *t* he phrase means an “appropriate time
of judgment.” God will judge everyone; every matter, including
judgment, has its set time (12:14).

8:8 since the word **spirit** is paralleled by the “day of death,” the
term *spirit* in this context means “life force” (3:19).

8:10 It was difficult to see the **wicked** receiving a funeral pro-
cession from the city to the cemetery while the righteous were
forgotten.

8:11 **sentence . . . is not executed:** *t* here are cases when God
postpones punishment, letting the guilty person live longer.

8:12, 13 the sharp contrast of the righteous and the **wicked** in
these verses is a hallmark of hebrew wisdom literature (Ps. 1).

8:14 **according . . . righteous:** although there seem to be some
glaring inequities in this present life, we know that God is working
out his good purposes (3:16—4:3; 7:15).

¹⁵ So I commended enjoyment, because a man has nothing better under the sun than to eat, drink, and be merry; for this will remain with him in his labor *all* the days of his life which God gives him under the sun.

¹⁶ When I applied my heart to know wisdom and to see the business that is done on earth, even though one sees no sleep day or night, ¹⁷ then I saw all the work of God, that ^a a man cannot find out the work that is done under the sun. For though a man labors to discover *it*, yet he will not find *it*; moreover, though a wise *man* attempts to know *it*, he will not be able to find *it*.

9 For I ¹ considered all this in my heart, so that I could declare it all: ^a that the righteous and the wise and their works *are* in the hand of God. People know neither love nor hatred *by* anything *they* see before them. ^{2b} All things *come* alike to all:

One event *happens* to the righteous
and the wicked;
To the ² good, the clean, and the
unclean;
To him who sacrifices and him who
does not sacrifice.
As is the good, so *is* the sinner;
He who takes an oath as *he* who
fears an oath.

³ This *is* an evil in all that is done under the sun: that one thing *happens* to all. Truly the hearts of the sons of men are full of evil; madness *is* in their hearts

¹⁵ ^e Eccl. 2:24
¹⁷ ^a Job 5:9; Ps.
73:16; Eccl. 3:11;
rom. 11:33

CHAPTER 9

¹ ^e deut. 33:3; Job
12:10; Eccl. 8:14
¹ ⁱ it. *put*
² ^b Gen. 3:17-19;
Job 21:7; Ps. 73:3,
12, 13; Mal. 3:15
² ⁱ XX, syr., vg. *good*
and bad,

⁵ ^e Job 14:21; Is.
63:16 ^d Job 7:8-10;
Eccl. 1:11; 2:16; 8:10;
Is. 26:14
⁷ ^e Eccl. 8:15
⁹ ^f Eccl. 2:10 ³ ⁱ it.
See life
¹⁰ ^g [col. 3:17]
^h rom. 12:11; col.
3:23
¹¹ ⁱ Jer. 9:23; amos
2:14, 15

while they live, and after that *they go* to the dead. ⁴ But for him who is joined to all the living there is hope, for a living dog is better than a dead lion.

- ⁵ For the living know that they will die;
But ^e the dead know nothing,
And they have no more reward,
For ^d the memory of them is
forgotten.
- ⁶ Also their love, their hatred, and
their envy have now perished;
Nevermore will they have a share
In anything done under the sun.
- ⁷ Go, ^e eat your bread with joy,
And drink your wine with a merry
heart;
For God has already accepted your
works.
- ⁸ Let your garments always be white,
And let your head lack no oil.

^{9.3} Live joyfully with the wife whom you love all the days of your vain life which He has given you under the sun, all your days of vanity; ^f for that *is* your portion in life, and in the labor which you perform under the sun.

^{10g} Whatever your hand finds to do, do *it* with your ^h might; for *there is* no work or device or knowledge or wisdom in the grave where you are going.

¹¹ I returned ⁱ and saw under the sun that—

The race *is* not to the swift,
Nor the battle to the strong,

8:15 In contrast to the mad search for the meaning of all things is the contentment that a wise, loving God gives to those who will receive his gifts of **enjoyment**. here is one of the central themes of Ecclesiastes. **eat, drink, and be merry**: t he Preacher marks the end of the third major section of his book with this refrain. t he wicked person (the fool) decides that the best thing to do is to “eat, drink, and be merry” with no thought given to the living God. But the righteous person (the wise) can enjoy life while thinking of God and his good gifts.

8:17 solomon equates God’s work with the activity that takes place on earth. t herefore it should not be surprising that humans can-not fathom God’s activity (3:11; 7:25–29; 11:5–8). t he hebrew word translated **attempts** can also be translated *claims* or *thinks* in this context (see 2 chr. 13:8 where the word is translated *think*).

9:1 **In the hand of God** means “in God’s control and possession.” **love nor hatred**: sometimes in hebrew two opposites together are a way of saying “everything.” I ove and hate are best viewed as words for God’s favor and disfavor.

9:2 some versions translate the word **event** as “fate” (see 2:14). however, there is no hint here of the power of fate as some people in antiquity believed. t he word simply refers to an outcome determined by God.

9:4 In this verse, solomon uses a proverb that says a living lowly creature is preferable to a dead exalted creature. t he point is not that death is the absolute end of all things; instead, the point is that while there is life, there is **hope** of doing something to the glory of God.

9:5 t his, again, is not a flat denial of any hope beyond the grave. t he point of view is limited to what can be known strictly from a human point of view, “under the sun.” **they have no more reward**: t he Preacher’s point appears to be the same as that in the Gospel of John: o ne must work while it is still day (that is, while one is still alive), for the night will come when no one can work (John 9:4).

9:7 God meant for all his gifts to be enjoyed. t he image of **bread** and **wine** is frequently used in scripture as a symbol of the fact that God gives comfort and cheer to people (Gen. 14:18; 1 sam. 16:20; 25:18; neh. 5:15; 1 am. 2:12).

9:8 It was difficult in ancient times to keep white **garments** clean (see the analogy in Is. 1:18). white garments and ointments—**oil**—were symbols of joy and purity.

9:9 Marriage is the gift of God. “Marriage is honorable” and the marriage bed “undefiled,” instructed the writer of hebrews (13:4). Marriage is to be cherished (Prov. 5:15–20) and unfaithfulness avoided (Prov. 5:1–14). **vain life**: t hat is, life that passes so quickly.

9:10 It is possible that the apostle Paul had this verse in mind when he wrote, “and whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the l ord and not to men” (col. 3:23). **no work . . . in the grave**: t his affirmation is not a denial of a personal future state after death. yet in relation to this world, the possibilities of working and learning have ceased. If we plan to do anything to the glory of God in this world, we had better do it while we still have time (John 9:4).

9:11 we would like to think that the best always win, that the de-serving are always rewarded. But our experience shows that these

Nor bread to the wise,
Nor riches to men of understanding,
Nor favor to men of skill;
But time and ^jchance happen to
them all.
¹² For ^kman also does not know his
time:
Like fish taken in a cruel net,
Like birds caught in a snare,
So the sons of men *are* ^lsnared in an
evil time,
When it falls suddenly upon them.

Wisdom Superior to Folly

¹³ This wisdom I have also seen under
the sun, and it *seemed* great to me:
^{14m} *There was* a little city with few men
in it; and a great king came against it, be-
sieved it, and built great ⁴snare around
it. ¹⁵ Now there was found in it a poor
wise man, and he by his wisdom deliv-
ered the city. Yet no one remembered that
same poor man.
¹⁶ Then I said:

“Wisdom *is* better than ⁿstrength.
Nevertheless ^othe poor man’s
wisdom *is* despised,
And his words are not heard.
¹⁷ Words of the wise, *spoken* quietly,
should be heard
Rather than the shout of a ruler of
fools.
¹⁸ Wisdom *is* better than weapons of
war;
But ^pone sinner destroys much
good.”

10 Dead ¹flies ²putrefy the
perfumer’s ointment,
And cause it to give off a foul odor;
So does a little folly to one respected
for wisdom *and* honor.
² A wise man’s heart *is* at his right
hand,
But a fool’s heart at his left.

11 / 1 sam. 6:9
12 ^k Ecccl. 8:7 ^l Prov.
29:6; 1 uke 12:20, 39;
17:26; 1 t hess. 5:3
14 ^m 2 sam. 20:16-
22 ⁴ 1 XX, syr., vg.
bulwarks
16 ⁿ Ecccl. 7:12, 19
^o Mark 6:2, 3
18 ^p Josh. 7:1-26;
2 kin. 21:2-17

CHAPTER 10

1 ¹ 1 it. *Flies of death*
² t g., vg. omit
putrefy

3 ^a Prov. 13:16; 18:2
4 ^b Ecccl. 8:3
^c 1 sam. 25:24-33;
Prov. 25:15 ³ 1 it.
healing, health
6 ^d Esth. 3:1
⁴ *exalted positions*
7 ^e Prov. 19:10;
30:22
8 ^f Ps. 7:15; Prov.
26:27
10 ⁵ 1 it. *is a*
successful
advantage
11 ^g Ps. 58:4, 5; Jer.
8:17 ⁶ 1 it. *master of*
the tongue
12 ^h Prov. 10:32;
1 uke 4:22 ¹ Prov.
10:14; Ecccl. 4:5

³ Even when a fool walks along the
way,
He lacks wisdom,
^a And he shows everyone *that* he *is* a
fool.
⁴ If the spirit of the ruler rises against
you,
^b Do not leave your post;
For ^cconciliation ³ pacifies great
offenses.
⁵ There is an evil I have seen under
the sun,
As an error proceeding from the
ruler:
⁶ ^d Folly is set in ⁴ great dignity,
While the rich sit in a lowly
place.
⁷ I have seen servants ^e on horses,
While princes walk on the ground
like servants.
⁸ ^f He who digs a pit will fall into it,
And whoever breaks through a
wall will be bitten by a
serpent.
⁹ He who quarries stones may be hurt
by them,
And he who splits wood may be
endangered by it.
¹⁰ If the ax is dull,
And one does not sharpen the
edge,
Then he must use more strength;
But wisdom ⁵ brings success.
¹¹ A serpent may bite ^g when *it is* not
charmed;
The ⁶ babbler is no different.
¹² ^h The words of a wise man’s mouth
are gracious,
But ⁷ the lips of a fool shall swallow
him up;
¹³ The words of his mouth begin with
foolishness,
And the end of his talk *is* raving
madness.

expectations are not always realized. **not to the swift . . . strong . . . wise . . . men of understanding . . . men of skill:** these five assets were enjoyed by individuals. But while some planned and counted on their assets, God in the end determined their lot. who was speedier than a sahel (2 sam. 2:22, 23), stronger than samson (Judg. 16:19), wiser than solomon (1 kin. 11:1–25), more discerning than a hithophel (2 sam. 16:23; 17:5–14), or more learned than Moses (Ex. 2:11–15; a cts 7:22)? yet each met his limit and was countered by God.
9:14–18 here is a parable about how an unstoppable military operation against a small city was prevented by the wisdom of one **poor**, but **wise man**. the conclusion is that wisdom is preferable to strength, and should be heeded.
10:1 Just as one fly can ruin a whole batch of **ointment**, so an ounce of folly will spoil a pound of wisdom.
10:2 In ancient thought, the **right hand** was the place of honor and favor, while the left hand was the reverse.

10:3 t here are times when even a **fool** acts appropriately; yet he remains a fool.
10:4 **conciliation pacifies:** t his proverb is similar to many ancient sayings that were used to train courtiers and diplomats.
10:6 **folly . . . dignity:** t hings are simply not always what we think they ought to be (9:11); but God is still in control, and he works his good purposes through events we do not understand.
10:7 **servants on horses:** In the ancient Middle East, such a reversal of the normal roles of servant and master was felt to be an outrage against society.
10:10 t he wise person will sharpen the **ax**. a person of limited training will have to work harder, as though with a dull ax, than someone wiser whose tools are in order.
10:11 a **serpent may bite:** along with the preceding verses, the point made here is that an unused skill is wasted.
10:12, 13 It is the inability of the **fool** to choose his words carefully that will bring about his own destruction.

- 14 ^j A fool also multiplies words.
No man knows what is to be;
Who can tell him ^k what will be after
him?
- 15 The labor of fools wearies them,
For they do not even know how to go
to the city!
- 16 ^l Woe to you, O land, when your king
is a child,
And your princes feast in the
morning!
- 17 Blessed *are* you, O land, when
your king is the son of
nobles,
And your ^mprinces feast at the
proper time—
For strength and not for
drunkenness!
- 18 Because of laziness the ⁿbuilding
decays,
And ^othrough idleness of hands the
house leaks.
- 19 A feast is made for laughter,
And ^pwine makes merry;
But money answers everything.
- 20 ^p Do not curse the king, even in your
thought;
Do not curse the rich, even in your
bedroom;
For a bird of the air may carry your
voice,
And a bird in flight may tell the
matter.

The Value of Diligence

11 Cast your bread ^a upon the waters,
^b For you will find it after many
days.

14 ^j [Prov. 15:2];
Ecccl. 5:3 ^k Ecccl.
3:22; 8:7
16 ^l Is. 3:4, 5; 5:11
17 ^m Prov. 31:4;
Is. 5:11
18 ⁿ Prov. 24:30–34
19 ^o Judg. 9:13; Ps.
104:15; Ecccl. 2:3
20 ^p Ex. 22:28; a cts
23:5

CHAPTER 11

1 ^a Is. 32:20 ^b [deut.
15:10; Prov. 19:17;
Matt. 10:42; 2 cor.
9:8; Gal. 6:9, 10;
heb. 6:10]

2 ^c Ps. 112:9; Matt.
5:42; l uke 6:30;
[1 tim. 6:18, 19]
^d Mic. 5:5 ^e Eph.
5:16
5 ^f John 3:8 ^g Ps.
139:14 ^h or *spirit*
7 ⁱ Ecccl. 7:11
8 ^j Ecccl. 9:7 ^k Ecccl.
12:1

- 2 ^c Give a serving ^d to seven, and also to
eight,
^e For you do not know what evil will
be on the earth.
- 3 If the clouds are full of rain,
They empty *themselves* upon the
earth;
And if a tree falls to the south or the
north,
In the place where the tree falls,
there it shall lie.
- 4 He who observes the wind will not
sow,
And he who regards the clouds will
not reap.
- 5 As ^f you do not know what *is* the
way of the ^g wind,
^g Or how the bones *grow* in the womb
of her who is with child,
So you do not know the works of
God who makes everything.
- 6 In the morning sow your seed,
And in the evening do not withhold
your hand;
For you do not know which will
prosper,
Either this or that,
Or whether both alike *will be*
good.
- 7 Truly the light is sweet,
And *it is* pleasant for the eyes ^h to
behold the sun;
- 8 But if a man lives many years
And ⁱ rejoices in them all,
Yet let him ^j remember the days of
darkness,
For they will be many.
All that is coming *is* vanity.

10:14 Who . . . after him: t his rhetorical question about the fool's lack of knowledge about the future is one of the repeated themes of Ecclesiastes. t he same question is asked in 3:22; 6:12; 8:7; in part in 9:12; and especially in the grand conclusion of 12:14.

10:15 go to the city: If fools are so untrustworthy in ordinary affairs, how can they be trusted when they express their opinion about the hereafter?

10:16 Pity those with leaders so young or inexperienced that they lose control over their areas of responsibility, or who spend their nights banqueting into the early morning.

10:17 useful nobility expresses itself in a sense of responsibility and deference to social order. t his verse is an argument for propriety. **proper time:** here is solomon's case for moderation and orderliness.

10:18 all forms of laziness bring houses and lives into disrepair.

10:19 money answers everything: rather than being cynical or critical about wealth or the rich, this comment is to be taken in the context of the dissolute nobles (v. 16) and banqueters (v. 17). wealth for them is only pleasure and a means of having fun.

10:20 a bird of the air: we should watch what we say, for we never know who is listening.

11:1 Cast your bread upon the waters: verses 1–6 emphasize the element of risk and uncertainty in commercial and agricultural enterprises. t hus if the preceding proverbs in ch. 10 deal with

royalty and leaders, these in vv. 1–6 deal with common people. Men and women must venture forth judiciously if they are ever to realize a gain, even though there is always a certain amount of risk.

11:2 seven, and also to eight: t his urges us to be generous to as many as possible—and then some.

11:3 regardless of which way a tree falls, someone is going to get the use of its wood, so stop worrying that it did not fall on your side (or even hoping that it will).

11:4 will not sow: t he person who is so cautious that he must wait for the ideal time before he makes a move is doomed to fail.

11:5 some works of God defy explanation. **who makes everything:** t he concept of God as creator in Ecclesiastes is not limited to 12:1. t he inability of humans to know God's works apart from knowing him is one of the themes of this book (3:11; 8:17; 9:12).

11:6 which will prosper: do not hold back from getting involved. l et the success or failure of a task rest in the hand of God—but get to the task.

11:7 light is sweet: an affirmation of the joy of life, despite all the troubles that the book has presented.

11:8 remember the days of darkness: In appreciating the opportunities of life, we must think more seriously about death. t his is contrasted with the joy of working while it is still light.

Seek God in Early Life

- ⁹ Rejoice, O young man, in your youth,
And let your heart cheer you in the
days of your youth;
^k Walk in the ²ways of your heart,
And ³in the sight of your eyes;
But know that for all these
^l God will bring you into judgment.
¹⁰ Therefore remove ⁴sorrow from your
heart,
And ^mput away evil from your
flesh,
ⁿ For childhood and ⁵youth are vanity.

- 12** Remember ^a now your Creator in
the days of your youth,
Before the ¹difficult days come,
And the years draw near ^bwhen you
say,
“I have no pleasure in them”:
² While the sun and the light,
The moon and the stars,
Are not darkened,
And the clouds do not return after
the rain;
³ In the day when the keepers of the
house tremble,
And the strong men bow down;
When the grinders cease because
they are few,
And those that look through the
windows grow dim;
⁴ When the doors are shut in the
streets,
And the sound of grinding is low;

⁹ ^k num. 15:39;
Job 31:7; Eccl.
2:10 ^l Eccl. 3:17;
12:14; [r om. 14:10]
² Impulses ³ as you
see to be best
¹⁰ ^m 2 cor. 7:1;
2 t im. 2:22 ⁿ Ps.
39:5 ⁴ vexation
⁵ Prime of life

CHAPTER 12

1 ^a 2 chr. 34:3;
Prov. 22:6; 1 am.
3:27 ^b 2 sam. 19:35
¹ It. evil

⁴ ^c 2 sam. 19:35
⁵ ^d Job 17:13 ^e Gen.
50:10; Jer. 9:17
⁶ ² so with Qr., tg.;
kt. removed; l XX,
vg. broken
⁷ ^f Gen. 3:19; Job
34:15; Ps. 90:3
⁹ Eccl. 3:21 ^h num.
16:22; 27:16; Job
34:14; Is. 57:16;
Zech. 12:1
⁸ / Ps. 62:9
⁹ / 1 kin. 4:32
³ arranged

- When one rises up at the sound of
a bird,
And all ^cthe daughters of music are
brought low.
⁵ Also they are afraid of height,
And of terrors in the way;
When the almond tree blossoms,
The grasshopper is a burden,
And desire fails.
For man goes to ^dhis eternal
home,
And ^ethe mourners go about the
streets.

- ⁶ Remember your Creator before the
silver cord is ²loosed,
Or the golden bowl is broken,
Or the pitcher shattered at the
fountain,
Or the wheel broken at the well.
⁷ Then the dust will return to the
earth as it was,
⁸ And the spirit will return to God
^hwho gave it.
⁸ “Vanity ⁱ of vanities,” says the
Preacher,
“All is vanity.”

The Whole Duty of Man

- ⁹ And moreover, because the Preacher
was wise, he still taught the people
knowledge; yes, he pondered and sought
out and ^jset ³in order many proverbs.

11:9 If Solomon was the author of this book and wrote it late in his life, then the point becomes even more clear. He was speaking to young people (see Prov. 1:8; 2:1; 3:1), encouraging them to learn the lessons that he had learned over the course of his extraordinary life.

Walk in the ways of your heart: This verse is not an invitation to live sinfully in sensual pleasure (as Num. 15:39 describes). Instead, it urges young people to enjoy themselves completely while not forgetting that God will review the quality of their life (3:17; 12:14).

11:10 Tragically, youth does not last; it too passes like a vapor. We all seem to discover that “we get old too soon and smart too late.”

12:1–8 Most interpreters have argued that this poem is an allegory of old age. This is the view advocated here. Other views include: (1) a description of a winter’s day as a metaphor of old age; (2) a description of people’s reaction to a fearful thunderstorm; (3) the figure of a ruined house representing the failure of human efforts; and (4) the decay of a house representing death and human frailty.

12:2 The person is losing his sight.

12:3 Verses 3–6 list the bodily infirmities that increasingly hinder an older person from serving God. If the **house** stands for the aging body, then the **keepers** are the arms and hands. **Strong men bow down:** The legs are bent in feebleness and the knees cannot be depended on for support. **Grinders cease:** The teeth, now fewer than before, cannot chew the food as well as they once did. **Those that look through the windows grow dim:** The eyes begin to lose their sight.

12:4 doors are shut in the streets: Just as the jaws of Leviathan are called the “doors of his face” (Job 41:14), so the lips and jaws are possibly intended here. **Sound of grinding is low:** A depiction of toothless old age when eating only soft foods makes little or no noise. **Daughters of music are brought low:** The ability to hear—and thus the ability to make and enjoy music—wanes.

12:5 afraid of height: Things that used to be a regular part of life now become threatening. **Almond tree blossoms:** Hair turns white. **Grasshopper is a burden:** This may refer to the halting step of the elderly as they hobble along on their canes. **Desire fails:** This is generally understood as a reference to a vanishing sexual desire. Then comes death: **eternal home.**

12:6 Some suggest that **silver cord** refers to the spinal cord. **Golden bowl is broken:** This may refer to the brain. **Pitcher shattered at the fountain:** One suggestion is that this is a failing heart. **Wheel broken at the well:** The system of veins and arteries radiating out from the heart might have appeared to the ancients like the spokes on a wheel. An alternative explanation of this verse is that each of the four images represents death. That is, there is no physical representation intended in these images as in those of vv. 3–5. Instead, this verse describes the destruction of four significant objects—a demonstration of the finality of this life.

12:7 dust will return: These words refer clearly to the universal fate of the descendants of a dam and Eve. **Spirit will return:** This is a clear allusion to Gen. 2:7. The term *spirit* is the same used in earlier passages (3:19; 21; 8:8).

12:8 The refrain of **vanity**—the brevity of life—is here repeated. It is possible that the book originally ended with these words.

12:9 Early on in his book, **the Preacher** speaks of his pursuit of wisdom (1:12–2:26). It is possible that he speaks of himself here in the third person (as in 1:1, 2). Probably it was an editor under the guiding hand of God who wrote these evaluations of Solomon, much as Joshua or some other editor wrote an evaluation of Moses under the influence of God’s spirit (Deut. 34). **Pondered . . . sought out . . . set in order:** The three verbs that describe Solomon’s activity may also be translated “weighed . . . examined . . . and arranged.”

¹⁰The Preacher sought to find ⁴acceptable words; and *what was written was upright*—words of truth. ¹¹The words of the wise are like goads, and the words of ⁵scholars are like well-driven nails, given by one Shepherd. ¹²And further, my son, be admonished by these. Of making many books *there is no end*, and ^kmuch study *is wearisome to the flesh*.

¹⁰ ⁴It. *delightful*
¹¹ ⁵It. *masters of assemblies*
¹² ^kEccl. 1:18
¹³ ¹[deut. 6:2; 10:12]; Mic. 6:8
¹⁴ ^mEccl. 11:9; Matt. 12:36; [acts 17:30, 31; rom. 2:16; 1 cor. 4:5; 2 cor. 5:10]

¹³Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter:

¹Fear God and keep His commandments,
 For this is man's all.
¹⁴ For ^mGod will bring every work into judgment,
 Including every secret thing,
 Whether good or evil.

12:10 t he Preacher devotes special care to write **acceptable** words—pleasant words, words of grace—and **words of truth**. t he truth referred to here is the truth from God.

12:11 Just as an ox goad prods an animal in the right direction, so will the words of this book when they are properly understood. **well-driven nails:** t he nails, or “pegs,” referred to here are the same as in 2 chr. 3:9; Jer. 10:4. t hese are hooks in tents where families hung the clothes and pots needed for everyday life. here they refer to mental hooks giving stability and perspective to life. **by one Shepherd:** kings were typically compared to shepherds, and solomon is claiming that the source of his ideas is God, the shepherd of Israel (Ps. 80:1).

12:12 Many other **books** may weary their readers. careful study of Ecclesiastes will have the opposite effect as it instructs, warns, and admonishes its readers.

12:13 t o **fear God** is one of the major themes of this book and of wisdom literature in the ot . t o fear God is to respond to him in awe, reverence, and wonder, to serve him in purity of action, and to shun evil and any worship of anything else in his universe. **keep His commandments:** t he commandments of the l aw are in view here. Jesus summed them up as to “love the l ord your God” and “your neighbor as yourself” (Matt. 22:34–40). **man's all:** we are whole or complete only when we fear God and obey h is commandments. what profit is there in living? If we follow what this book has said, we will have a relationship with God and find life in him.

12:14 judgment: t his same teaching is echoed by the apostle Paul in 2 cor. 5:10. death is not the end. a ll of life will be reviewed by our righteous l ord (see at 3:17). l ife must be lived through faith with the values of the eternal God in view.

THE

SONG OF SOLOMON



THE SONG OF SOLOMON is a moving love story between a young country girl and King Solomon. In delicate poetry, the lovers express intense passion and deep longing for each other. The young girl compares her love for her husband to the anticipation of a frantic search, while Solomon likens his bride's beauty to picturesque gardens and delicious fruit. Yet even in this eloquent expression of the passion between a bride and bridegroom, there is an exhortation to remain sexually pure before marriage (2:7). In this way, the book celebrates human sexuality within the context of marriage.

The book has not always been understood in this way. Jewish scholars around the time of the birth of Christ interpreted the book allegorically, stating that it describes the love of God for Israel. Similarly, some Christians have taught that the book speaks of the mystical relationship of the Lord Jesus Christ and His bride, the church.

However, one does not need to get into allegorical meanings to understand this book. The Song of Solomon celebrates the beauty and intimacy of married love in a narrative poem. It teaches that a lasting marriage requires dedication, commitment, and strong loyalty between husband and wife. The Song also presents an idealized picture of how human love can be expressed under God's blessing. This is a very important issue. Some critics have claimed that Christianity's standards for marriage ignore or undervalue sexual relationships. But the Song of Solomon refutes this. It reiterates the biblical admonition against sex outside of marriage, but it also affirms that God not only approves of, but also encourages, sexual pleasure within marriage.

Author The author of the Song of Solomon is Solomon, the son of David and the third king of Israel. He is named as the author and his name appears seven times in the book (1:1, 5; 3:7, 9, 11; 8:11, 12). Even so, some have argued that the references to Solomon may be only a stylistic device and the author may have been from a later period. The arguments for this are inconclusive. But the fact that Solomon was known for his wisdom and poetry (see 1 Kin. 4:29–34) partially substantiates his authorship of this book.

Literary Form Perhaps nowhere in the Bible is the literary culture of the Middle East more apparent than in this book. The genre or literary form of the Song of Solomon is unique in the Bible. It is a lyric idyll, a type of love song. As in the case of the Book of Job, the Song of Solomon reveals its treasures to the patient reader who approaches the book on its own terms, searching for and meditating on its meaning. The form of the lyric idyll displays two features. The first is that speeches and events do not necessarily follow in chronological order. At times the story line remains suspended while the audience views scenes from earlier or yet untold incidents.

A second feature of the lyric idyll is the use of the chorus. In addition to the two characters that carry the story line—the Shulamite and King Solomon, a group of women interrupt certain scenes with brief musical speeches or warnings. Solomon uses the chorus to make transitions from one scene to another, as well as to add emphasis to important themes.

Historical Background The Song of Solomon retells the romance between King Solomon, the richest king ever to rule Israel, and his beloved bride, who came from a small village in the region of Galilee. Solomon owned

vineyards all over the nation. One was close to Baal Hamon in the northernmost part of Galilee near the foothills of the mountains of Lebanon. On one of his visits to this vineyard, Solomon met a young woman. Strangely we never learn her name. She is called simply the Shulamite. For some time he pursued her and made periodic visits to her country home to see her. Finally, he proposed. The Shulamite gave much thought to whether she really loved Solomon and could be happy in the palace of a king. Finally she accepted.

Theology If the Bible is the book about God, then one may well ask what a narrative about human sexuality has to do with theology. This is an even more potent question when one observes that God is never mentioned in the entire text (except possibly in 8:6) nor are there any references to prayer, worship, or piety. In this respect it bears similarities to the Book of Esther, which also does not mention God. Nevertheless, Esther is a story of the redemption of God's people and includes episodes of prayer, fasting, and thanksgiving. Such themes are notably absent from Solomon's poetic story, making it unique among the books of the Bible.

To resolve this difficulty, it is important to remember that the Bible not only describes who God is and what God does, it also tells us what God desires for his people. The Song of Solomon provides an example of how God created male and female to live in happiness and fulfillment. People are created as sexual beings. It would be wrong to suggest that the full experience of our humanity is impossible apart from sexual union in marriage, since this would disqualify the widowed, divorced, and the celibate—including our savior who was celibate. At the same time, God ordained marriage from the beginning of creation: Man and woman were to become one flesh (Gen. 2:25).

Because of its emphasis on human love, this book presents an extraordinary variety of expressions for love, perhaps the richest selection in all Hebrew scripture. But within this celebration of love, the book condemns unchaste relations outside of marriage—and in particular, sexual experimentation before marriage. Indeed, this book may contain the Bible's strongest argument for chastity before marriage. Ironically because of its explicit language, ancient and modern Jewish sages forbade men to read the book before they were 30 (and presumably kept women from reading it at all). We cannot ignore the sexual content of the book, but we can appreciate the context in which it is placed—a godly marriage. The Song of Solomon is necessary reading not only for the married, but for young people who want to understand God's design for marriage.



The date palm was a treasured tree in the ancient Near East. It was sometimes associated with fertility goddesses and is compared with the stature of a woman in Song of Solomon 7:7.

CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

Just as some of the psalms have a contemporary application as well as a future-oriented one, so the entire song of solomon has three levels of fulfillment. t he encounters and affectionate exchanges between solomon and his bride are passionate poetry documenting human love. But the king also illustrates God's love for the people of God over whom he rules. a nd solomon's ornamental language also prefigures the delight and joy Jesus has for his Bride and his unconditional commitment to his church. In the nt, the followers of Jesus are seen as the personified object of h is love (2 cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:23–25; r ev. 19:7–9; 21:9).

SONG OF SOLOMON OUTLINE

- I. t hree reflections on the wedding day 1:2—2:7
 - a. In the palace 1:2–8
 - B. at the banquet table 1:9–14
 - c. In the bridal chamber 1:15—2:7
- II. t hree reflections during the courtship days 2:8—3:5
 - a. a springtime visit 2:8–14
 - B. catching the little foxes 2:15–17
 - c. a dream of separation 3:1–5
- III. two reflections on the wedding day 3:6—5:1
 - a. t he wedding procession 3:6–11
 - B. t he wedding night 4:1—5:1
- IV. Five reflections on adjustment to marriage 5:2—8:4
 - a. a dream of love refused 5:2–8
 - B. a change of attitude 5:9—6:3
 - c. t he return of solomon 6:4–10
 - d. t he shulamite in the garden 6:11–13
 - E. t he dance of the double camp
 - 6:14—8:4
- v. a final reflection: a vacation in the
 - country 8:5–14



The beloved's darling took care of the vineyards (Song 1:6).

The *a* song of songs, which is Solomon's.

The Banquet

THE ¹ SHULAMITE

- ² Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth—
^bFor ²your love *is* better than wine.
³ Because of the fragrance of your good ointments,
 Your name *is* ointment poured forth;
 Therefore the virgins love you.
⁴ *c*Draw me away!

THE DAUGHTERS OF JERUSALEM

^dWe will run after ³you.

THE SHULAMITE

The king ^ehas brought me into his chambers.

THE DAUGHTERS OF JERUSALEM

We will be glad and rejoice in ⁴you.

We will remember ³your love more than wine.

THE SHULAMITE

Rightly do they love ³you.

CHAPTER 1

¹ *a* 1 kin. 4:32
² *b* song 4:10 ¹ a young woman from the town of shulam or shunem, song 6:13. the speaker and audience are identified according to the number, gender, and person of the hebrew words. occasionally the identity is not certain. ² Masc. sing.: the Beloved
⁴ *c* hos. 11:4; John 6:44; 12:32 ^d Phil. 3:12-14 *e* Ps. 45:14; 15; John 14:2; Eph. 2:6 ³ Masc. sing.: the Beloved
⁴ Fem. sing.: the shulamite

⁶ *f* song 8:11, 12 ⁵ *i* lit. looked upon me
⁷ *g* 1 XX, syr., vg. wanders
⁸ *g* song 5:9 ⁷ *i* lit. Go out
⁹ *h* song 2:2, 10, 13; 4:1, 7; John 15:14
¹² chr. 1:16
¹⁰ *j* Ezek. 16:11

- ⁵ I *am* dark, but lovely,
 O daughters of Jerusalem,
 Like the tents of Kedar,
 Like the curtains of Solomon.
⁶ Do not look upon me, because I *am* dark,
 Because the sun has ⁵tanned me.
 My mother's sons were angry with me;
 They made me the keeper of the vineyards,
 But my own ^fvineyard I have not kept.

(TO HER BELOVED)

- ⁷ Tell me, O you whom I love,
 Where you feed *your flock*,
 Where you make *it* rest at noon.
 For why should I be as one who
⁶veils herself
 By the flocks of your companions?

THE BELOVED

- ⁸ If you do not know, ^gO fairest among women,
⁷ Follow in the footsteps of the flock,
 And feed your little goats
 Beside the shepherds' tents.
⁹ I have compared you, ^hmy love,
ⁱTo my filly among Pharaoh's chariots.
¹⁰ *j*Your cheeks are lovely with ornaments,
 Your neck with chains *of gold*.

1:1 I like the superlative expressions "holy of holies" or "king of kings," **song of songs** means "the loveliest of songs." **which is Solomon's**: there are two principal speakers in this book, the woman (the shulamite) and the man (solomon). Even though solomon wrote this book, interestingly enough the point of view presented is largely that of his bride.

1:2 t his prologue to the book forms the emotional setting for all that follows. **love**: t he hebrew noun used here means sexual love, as it clearly does in Ezek. 16:8 (also Prov. 7:18; Ezek. 23:17). t his is the hebrew word that most approximates the Greek word *eros*. In the song of solomon, this plural word (a mark of intensity) speaks of divinely blessed lovemaking (used also in v. 4; 4:10; 7:12; compare 5:1).

1:3 ointments: It was customary in biblical times to rub the body with fragrant ointments (oils) after a bath in preparation for a festive occasion (ruth 3:3). **Your name**: t he shulamite speaks of her beloved's reputation as akin to a lovely aroma; he was an object of desire to young women everywhere. t he term **virgins** is the same word used at ls. 7:14. t he word means women of marriageable age (they are the same as the "daughters of Jerusalem" in v. 5). **love**: here the common hebrew verb meaning "to love" is used of romantic feelings (as in Gen. 24:67); in other passages this verb means to choose someone (an act of the will; see deut. 6:5). t hus this hebrew verb shares some, but not all, of the meanings of the Greek verb *agapao*.

1:4 t he complexity of the interchanges in this book are illustrated in this verse. t he headings help sort out the speakers. **The king**: t his is solomon; yet aside from the title (v. 1), he is not identified by name as a protagonist until 3:7, 9, 11 (his name in v. 5 is part of a descriptive phrase). **chambers**: t his means the bridal chamber. t he verse ends with the thoughts of the young woman as she gazes at her lover: **Rightly do they love you** employs the verb for *love* found in v. 3, indicating romantic feelings.

1:5 t he shulamite compares her **dark** coloring, acquired from long hours working in the vineyards (v. 6) with the lighter complexion of the city maidens. t he point here is her class and station in life.

unlike the young women of the court in Jerusalem who had been raised in comfort and conditions of ease, this woman had worked as a field hand under the blazing sun. **but lovely**: she knows that her beauty is not diminished by her more rugged manner of living. her groom assures her that this is truly the case (v. 8). t he rare term *lovely* is used to describe physical beauty in this book (see v. 10; 2:14; 4:3; 6:4; compare the word in v. 8); in the Psalms this word speaks of the beauty of true worship to the living God (Ps. 33:1; 147:1).

O daughters of Jerusalem: t hese are women who serve as the attendants of the bride. t hese women also serve as the chorus in the book. t hey are the same as the "virgins" of v. 3.

1:6 her own vineyard refers to her appearance. unlike the beautiful women of the royal court, the shulamite had not had the lifestyle or the resources to take much time for her appearance. s till, it was she who swept away the king's heart. t he shulamite uses the word *vineyard* again with a different twist in 8:12.

1:7 you whom I love: a more literal rendering might be, "whom my soul (my inner being) loves." here the young woman mentally addresses solomon, her husband. s he pictures him as the shepherd of Israel. **one who veils herself**: solomon, as king, was busy with affairs of state. t he young bride does not want to veil herself as a prostitute would in order to get his attention, nor does she want to be left alone. s he desires to be his true companion.

1:8 If you do not know . . . feed your little goats: It would be better if she returned to the borders of I eban and the life of the farm rather than live alone and anxious in solomon's palace. t he point of this verse is that one should always count the cost of marriage to a particular person *before* the marriage. **O fairest among women**: t he term *fairest* is the usual hebrew word for "beautiful."

1:9 here is yet another term for **love** in the book, the rarer word meaning "dear companion" (compare at vv. 2, 3). **my filly**: In solomon's time the horse was the companion of kings. solomon loved horses, particularly those from Egypt. Eventually he had a stable of 12,000 horses with 1,400 chariots (1 kin. 10:26).

THE DAUGHTERS OF JERUSALEM

- 11 We will make ⁸you ornaments of gold
With studs of silver.

THE SHULAMITE

- 12 While the king *is* at his table,
My ⁹spikenard sends forth its fragrance.
13 A bundle of myrrh *is* my beloved
to me,
That lies all night between my breasts.
14 My beloved *is* to me a cluster of henna *blooms*
In the vineyards of En Gedi.

THE BELOVED

- 15 ^kBehold, you *are* fair, ^lmy love!
Behold, you *are* fair!
You *have* dove's eyes.

THE SHULAMITE

- 16 Behold, you *are* ^lhandsome, my beloved!
Yes, pleasant!
Also our ²bed *is* green.
17 The beams of our houses *are* cedar,
And our rafters of fir.
2 I *am* the rose of Sharon,
And the lily of the valleys.

THE BELOVED

- ² Like a lily among thorns,
So *is* my love among the daughters.

11 ⁸ Fem. sing.: the shulamite
12 ⁹ perfume
15 ^k song 4:1; 5:12
^l my companion, friend
16 ^l song 5:10-16
² couch

CHAPTER 2

3 ^a song 4:16; r ev. 22:1, 2
4 ^l lit. house of wine
6 ^b song 8:3
7 ^c song 3:5; 8:4
² *adure*
9 ^d Prov. 6:5; song 2:17

THE SHULAMITE

- 3 Like an apple tree among the trees of the woods,
So *is* my beloved among the sons.
I sat down in his shade with great delight,
And ^ahis fruit *was* sweet to my taste.

THE SHULAMITE TO THE DAUGHTERS OF JERUSALEM

- 4 He brought me to the ^lbanqueting house,
And his banner over me *was* love.
5 Sustain me with cakes of raisins,
Refresh me with apples,
For I *am* lovesick.
6 ^bHis left hand *is* under my head,
And his right hand embraces me.
7 ^cI ²charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem,
By the gazelles or by the does of the field,
Do not stir up nor awaken love
Until it pleases.

The Beloved's Request

THE SHULAMITE

- 8 The voice of my beloved!
Behold, he comes
Leaping upon the mountains,
Skipping upon the hills.
9 ^dMy beloved *is* like a gazelle or a young stag.
Behold, he stands behind our wall;

1:11 ornaments: these are kind words from the women of the court (see 1:4). their kindness is remarkable, since each of these women may have hoped to be chosen by the king (as v. 3 indicates).
1:12 his table: that is, the setting of the wedding banquet.

1:13, 14 this verse refers to an oriental custom for a woman to wear a small bag of **myrrh**, a perfumed ointment, around her neck at night. all the next day a lovely fragrance would linger about her. the young woman says that beginning that night, it would be her husband who would lie with her. **my beloved:** here the noun *beloved* is related to the word translated "love" in v. 2, referring to sexual love. **En Gedi:** david, solomon's father, had found refreshment and protection from the vindictive king saul in this oasis on the eastern shore of the dead sea (1 sam. 24).

1:15 Behold, you are fair: the word *fair* means "beautiful" (as in v. 8). **my love:** this term is used for the first time in the book; it means "dear friend." **dove's eyes:** the idea is purity, innocence and beauty (see 4:1; 5:12; compare 2:14; 5:2).

1:16 the word **handsome** used here is the masculine counterpart of the term translated "fair" in v. 15.

1:17 beams of our houses are cedar: Houses may mean "grand house" or "mansion," as the shulamite lies on their wedding bed (v. 16), she observes the marvelous cedar beams above her head. the opulence of solomon's personal and public buildings in Jerusalem is well documented (1 kin. 7:1-12).

2:2 solomon takes the young bride's words (v. 1) comparing herself to a simple flower and assures her that, beside her, the fancy women of the city are but **thorns**.

2:3 the **apple tree** and the raisin cakes (v. 5) are symbols for sexual passion in ancient love songs.

2:4 the banqueting house: the literal meaning of the phrase is "the house of wine," used because of the role that *wine* plays not only in feasting, but especially in weddings in biblical cultures (1:2). In the Bible, wine is a symbol of joy (see Ps. 104:15) and the drinking of wine is associated with joyful occasions. **his banner:** this may be the same term as used in num. 1:52, meaning "standard" or "flag." Even today, Jewish weddings take place under a "banner" or covering. **love:** this is the first use in the book of the common noun for love related to the verb in v. 3. this noun corresponds somewhat to the well-known Greek noun *agape*, which refers to a self-sacrificial love for others (1 cor. 13).

2:5, 6 these verses describe the joy of sexual expression between a husband and wife. **raisins . . . apples:** ancient symbols of sexual passion (see v. 3). **lovesick:** these are the words of one overwhelmed with love.

2:7 here the shulamite speaks to her attendants in their virginity and entreats them (**I charge you**) to maintain their sexual purity until marriage (see 3:5; 8:4). **By the gazelles . . . does:** she beseeches the young women by all things that are beautiful. **love:** this is the noun used in v. 4, demonstrating that this word may also be used of sexual passion. the association of this charge with the description of sexual intimacy in v. 6 suggests that the warning is against awakening such desires before **it pleases**—that is, at the proper and appropriate time within the bounds of marriage. while the Book of Proverbs frequently exhorts young men to live in sexual purity (see Prov. 7), the song of solomon frequently addresses its warnings to young women.

2:8, 9 leaping . . . skipping: this is the young bride's imaginative way of recalling the joy she experienced at her husband's arrival.

He is looking through the windows,
Gazing through the lattice.

- 10 My beloved spoke, and said to me:
“Rise up, my love, my fair one,
And come away.
11 For lo, the winter is past,
The rain is over *and* gone.
12 The flowers appear on the earth;
The time of singing has come,
And the voice of the turtledove
Is heard in our land.
13 The fig tree puts forth her green figs,
And the vines *with* the tender grapes
Give a *good* smell.
Rise up, my love, my fair one,
And come away!

- 14“ O my ^edove, in the clefts of the rock,
In the secret *places* of the cliff,
Let me see your ³face,
^fLet me hear your voice;
For your voice *is* sweet,
And your face *is* lovely.”

HER BROTHERS

- 15 Catch us ^gthe foxes,
The little foxes that spoil the vines,
For our vines *have* tender grapes.

THE SHULAMITE

- 16 ^hMy beloved *is* mine, and I *am* his.
He feeds *his* flock among the lilies.

(TO HER BELOVED)

- 17 ⁱUntil the day breaks
And the shadows flee away,
Turn, my beloved,
And be ^jlike a gazelle

14 ^e song 5:2
^f song 8:13 ³ 1t.
appearance
15 ^g Ps. 80:13; Ezek.
13:4; Luke 13:32
16 ^h song 6:3
17 ⁱ song 4:6 ^j song
8:14

⁴ 1t. *Separation*

CHAPTER 3

1 ^a Is. 26:9
3 ^b song 5:7; Is.
21:6-8, 11, 12
4 ^c song 8:2 ¹ *room*
5 ^d song 2:7; 8:4
² *adjure*
6 ^e song 8:5

Or a young stag
Upon the mountains of ⁴Bether.

A Troubled Night

THE SHULAMITE

- 3 By ^anight on my bed I sought the
one I love;
I sought him, but I did not find him.
2 “I will rise now,” I *said*,
“And go about the city;
In the streets and in the squares
I will seek the one I love.”
I sought him, but I did not find him.
3 ^bThe watchmen who go about the city
found me;
I *said*,
“Have you seen the one I love?”
4 Scarcely had I passed by them,
When I found the one I love.
I held him and would not let him go,
Until I had brought him to the
^chouse of my mother,
And into the ¹chamber of her who
conceived me.
5 ^dI ²charge you, O daughters of
Jerusalem,
By the gazelles or by the does of the
field,
Do not stir up nor awaken love
Until it pleases.

The Coming of Solomon

THE SHULAMITE

- 6 ^eWho *is* this coming out of the
wilderness
Like pillars of smoke,

t he same is true of her words for him: **gazelle . . . stag**, animals that symbolize virility. **windows . . . lattice**: t hat is, solomon was looking at *her* through an opening in the wall.

2:10 my love: a term of endearment meaning “my dear friend” (see 1:15). **my fair one**: solomon describes his bride as “beautiful” (see 1:8, 15).

2:11–13 the winter is past: By this solomon means that the time of joy has come; it is the summer of their love. solomon may have come at a time of great beauty in the fields and forests where the young woman lived; he uses the beauty of creation to describe the ripeness of time for their love.

2:14 solomon’s great find in this young woman is occasioned in part by her shy charm. **in the clefts**: solomon speaks of the shulamite using a figure of speech describing her isolated home in the mountains.

2:15 t he shulamite’s brothers called on solomon to **catch** them **the foxes**. Many times they had seen **little foxes** creep into the vineyards they tended and destroy the roots by gnawing on them. t he **vine** of the budding love of the couple was tender and needed to be protected from these “little foxes,” which symbolize the problems of life that may gnaw away at a relationship.

2:16 My beloved is mine, and I am his: t he expression describes the mutual intimacy that a married couple experiences. Both belong to each other (see 6:3; compare 7:10).

2:17 Until the day breaks: here the woman wishes the king to

leave for the night. t he book is pervaded with the sense of doing what is right at the appropriate time. here, she wishes him to flee like a **gazelle**. I later, she will want him to rush to her like one (8:14).

3:1 on my bed: t his is a dream that took place before they were married. t he young woman was becoming concerned about what she would be getting into in this royal marriage.

3:2, 3 her frantic search for her beloved is initially unsuccessful. twice in these verses she describes him as **the one I love**. In each case, the wording is “the one whom my soul (or my inner being) loves.”

3:4 a t last she finds him, using the same phrasing (**the one I love**) of vv. 2, 3. In her dream she takes him to her mother’s **house**. t hat is, the worry of his absence is intolerable to her; she wants him to move back with her to her familiar home and lifestyle.

3:5 Do not stir up: again there is a strong warning against premarital sex. People should not allow sexual passion to stir before they have gotten to know each other in other ways (2:8–17), until they have worked out the problems of their relationship (the “little foxes,” see 2:15–17), and until they have counted the costs of marriage (3:1–4).

3:6 Who is this coming: contrast the bold, royal journey here with the earlier, playful approach in 2:8. **pillars of smoke**: t his is language reminiscent of a divine visitation (see Ex. 19:18). **Perfumed**: t he precious ointments here are marks of luxury and royalty; later, on the woman, these elements would be symbols of love (4:6).

- Perfumed with myrrh and frankincense,
With all the merchant's fragrant powders?
- 7 Behold, it *is* Solomon's couch,
With sixty valiant men around it,
Of the valiant of Israel.
- 8 They all hold swords,
Being expert in war.
Every man *has* his sword on his thigh
Because of fear in the night.
- 9 Of the wood of Lebanon
Solomon the King
Made himself a ³palanquin:
- 10 He made its pillars *of* silver,
Its support *of* gold,
Its seat *of* purple,
Its interior paved *with* love
By the daughters of Jerusalem.
- 11 Go forth, O daughters of Zion,
And see King Solomon with the crown
With which his mother crowned him
On the day of his wedding,
The day of the gladness of his heart.

The Bridegroom Praises the Bride

THE BELOVED

- 4 Behold, *a* you *are* fair, my love!
Behold, you *are* fair!
You *have* dove's eyes behind your veil.
Your hair *is* like a ^bflock of goats,
Going down from Mount Gilead.
- 2 ^cYour teeth *are* like a flock of shorn sheep
Which have come up from the washing,
Every one of which bears twins,
And none *is* ¹barren among them.

9 ³ a portable enclosed chair

CHAPTER 4

1 ^a song 1:15; 5:12

^b song 6:5

2 ^c song 6:6

¹ bereaved

3 ^d song 6:7

4 ^e song 7:4 ^f neh.

3:19 ² small shields

5 ^g Prov. 5:19;

song 7:3

6 ^h song 2:17

7 ⁱ song 1:15; Eph.

5:27

8 ^j deut. 3:9; 1 chr.

5:23; Ezek. 27:5

10 ^k song 1:2, 4

³ fragrance

- 3 Your lips *are* like a strand of scarlet,
And your mouth is lovely.
- ^d Your temples behind your veil
Are like a piece of pomegranate.
- 4 ^e Your neck *is* like the tower of David,
Built ^ffor an armory,
On which hang a thousand ²bucklers,
All shields of mighty men.
- 5 ^g Your two breasts *are* like two fawns,
Twins of a gazelle,
Which feed among the lilies.
- 6 ^h Until the day breaks
And the shadows flee away,
I will go my way to the mountain of myrrh
And to the hill of frankincense.
- 7 ⁱ You *are* all fair, my love,
And *there is* no spot in you.
- 8 Come with me from Lebanon, *my* spouse,
With me from Lebanon.
Look from the top of Amana,
From the top of Senir ^jand Hermon,
From the lions' dens,
From the mountains of the leopards.
- 9 You have ravished my heart,
My sister, *my* spouse;
You have ravished my heart
With one *look* of your eyes,
With one link of your necklace.
- 10 How fair is your love,
My sister, *my* spouse!
^k How much better than wine is your love,
And the ³scent of your perfumes
Than all spices!

3:7, 8 t he **couch** was a sedan chair with poles projecting from the front and back so that a person could be carried by several bearers (vv. 9, 10). t he shulamite was being carried to the wedding and to her groom on solomon's own couch. **valiant men**: t he term describes war heroes, as v. 8 explains. **fear**: t hat is, these warriors were prepared for any threat.

3:9, 10 a pparently solomon had ordered this couch (vv. 7, 8) to be designed and built especially for the wedding. to the shulamite, the couch's rich ornamentation of **silver** and **gold** is less significant than the fact that the couch represents solomon's **love** and care for her (2:4).

3:11 O daughters of Zion: t hese are the daughters of Jerusalem (see 1:5). **And see**: For a wedding to be recognized in ancient Israel, it had to be a public event. such a day has always been regarded as a day of **gladness** (Ps. 19:5). **the crown**: solomon's royal symbol was appropriately worn at this wedding.

4:1 solomon lavishly praises his bride's great beauty. he uses verbal symbols of loveliness to paint a picture of the breathtaking charm of the shulamite. **Dove's eyes** (2:14) are a picture of purity, innocence, and beauty (as in 1:15). t he bride's **veil** would have covered the rest of her face, leaving only her beautiful eyes to be seen (see at 2:14; see also 5:7). t he king compared the movement of her flowing **hair** to the graceful movement of a **flock of goats** in their descent down from Mount Gilead.

4:2–5 t he king rhapsodizes on the perfection of his bride's **teeth**, her **lips** and facial features, her **neck**, and at last her **breasts**. **Scarlet** (v. 3) describes luxuriance and beauty; the **pomegranate** speaks of sweetness; the term **lovely** is the same rare word used first in 1:5. t he **tower of David** (v. 4) pictures strength and grace; the **fawns** (v. 5) have exquisite loveliness.

4:6 **Until the day breaks**: t he couple's first night together was a precious time (see 8:14). **the mountain of myrrh . . . the hill of frankincense**: t hese playful names again give us a glimpse into their passionate love for each other (see 1:13, 14; 2:6).

4:7 **fair**: t he king has used this term for beauty before (v. 1). however, the difference here is in the word **all**. n ow he rhapsodizes on how perfect his bride is; every part of her is attractive.

4:8 t hese words demonstrate solomon's sensitivity to his new bride's emotions at this point. he calls her mind back from thoughts afar off. he says, "**Come back with me**." his use of the word **spouse** for the first time is appropriate here on their wedding bed. see also vv. 9, 10, 11, 12; 5:1.

4:9 **My sister, my spouse**: t his strange pairing of words was based on the idea that in marriage a couple became "related." t he woman was dignified as a member of the king's family.

4:10 **your love . . . your love**: t hat is, erotic love.

4:11 **lips . . . Honey and milk**: t he sweetness of his bride's kisses are like food to him (see 5:1; compare 1:2).

- 11 Your lips, O *my* spouse,
Drip as the honeycomb;
¹ Honey and milk *are* under your
tongue;
And the fragrance of your garments
Is ^m like the fragrance of Lebanon.

- 12 A garden ⁴ enclosed
Is my sister, *my* spouse,
A spring shut up,
A fountain sealed.
13 Your plants *are* an orchard of
pomegranates
With pleasant fruits,
Fragrant henna with spikenard,
14 Spikenard and saffron,
Calamus and cinnamon,
With all trees of frankincense,
Myrrh and aloes,
With all the chief spices—
15 A fountain of gardens,
A well of ⁿ living waters,
And streams from Lebanon.

THE SHULAMITE

- 16 Awake, O north *wind*,
And come, O south!
Blow upon my garden,
That its spices may flow out.
^o Let my beloved come to his garden
And eat its pleasant ^p fruits.

THE BELOVED

- 5** I ^a have come to my garden, my
^b sister, *my* spouse;
I have gathered my myrrh with my
spice;
^c I have eaten my honeycomb with my
honey;
I have drunk my wine with my milk.

(TO HIS FRIENDS)

- Eat, O ^d friends!
Drink, yes, drink deeply,
O beloved ones!

11 ¹ Prov. 24:13, 14;
song 5:1 ^m Gen.
27:27; hos. 14:6, 7
12 ⁴ locked or
barred
15 ⁿ Zech. 14:8;
John 4:10; 7:38
16 ^o song 5:1
^p song 7:13

CHAPTER 5

1 ^a song 4:16
^b song 4:9 ^c song
4:11 ^d Luke 15:7, 10;
John 3:29

2 ^e rev. 3:20 ¹ my
companion, friend
2 curls or hair
3 ³ dirty
4 ⁴ opening
6 ^f song 3:1 ⁵ 1 it.
soul
7 ⁹ song 3:3
9 ^h song 1:8; 6:1

The Shulamite's Troubled Evening

THE SHULAMITE

- 2 I sleep, but my heart is awake;
It is the voice of my beloved!
^e He knocks, *saying*,
“Open for me, my sister, ¹ my love,
My dove, my perfect one;
For my head is covered with dew,
My ² locks with the drops of the
night.”
3 I have taken off my robe;
How can I put it on *again*?
I have washed my feet;
How can I ³ defile them?
4 My beloved put his hand
By the ⁴ latch of the door,
And my heart yearned for him.
5 I arose to open for my beloved,
And my hands dripped *with* myrrh,
My fingers with liquid myrrh,
On the handles of the lock.
6 I opened for my beloved,
But my beloved had turned away *and*
was gone.
My ⁵ heart leaped up when he spoke.
^f I sought him, but I could not find
him;
I called him, but he gave me no
answer.
7 ^g The watchmen who went about the
city found me.
They struck me, they wounded me;
The keepers of the walls
Took my veil away from me.
8 I charge you, O daughters of
Jerusalem,
If you find my beloved,
That you tell him I *am* lovesick!

THE DAUGHTERS OF JERUSALEM

- 9 What *is* your beloved
More than *another* beloved,
^h O fairest among women?

4:12 spring . . . fountain: solomon evokes thoughts of refreshment and delight. his use of the words **enclosed . . . shut up . . . sealed** indicate, in a poetic manner, his wife's virginity on their wedding night. t his was the treasure she brought to him, and which she adjoined the other young women in the court to maintain for their wedding nights as well (2:7).

4:13–15 pleasant fruits: t hese verses expand the images of the garden and the fountain for sexual love from v. 12.

4:16 t he bride is now ready to accept her lover for the first time to her **garden**. she calls on the **wind** to blow through. t hat is, she is ready to make love to her husband for the first time.

5:1 drunk my wine: t his verse is a necessary part of the preceding chapter. at the conclusion of their lovemaking, the groom speaks of his complete satisfaction in his beautiful bride.

5:2–7 I sleep: t hese words begin a section (vv. 2–8) that most likely is another dream sequence (see 3:1–5). t he bride dreams that her lover is coming to her, but she has already washed, removed her **robe**, and gotten into bed (v. 3). she finally goes to the **door** to let

him in, but he is gone. her sorrow at this drives her into the **city** to search for him. t he **watchmen** find her and are hostile toward her. **5:8, 9** t he bride asks the **daughters of Jerusalem** to help her in her search. But they question what is so special about the one for whom she seeks.

beloved

(heb. *dod*) (4:16; 1 sam. 14:50; Prov. 7:18; Is. 5:1) strong's #1730

In hebrew love poetry, *dod* is a term of endearment used for a male loved one, usually translated *beloved* (Is. 5:1). t he writer of the song of solomon uses this word 32 times. t he name david is derived from *dod* and carries the same sense, meaning “Beloved o ne.” when *dod* is used in narrative, it means “uncle” or another close male relative (1 sam. 14:50).

What *is* your beloved
More than *another* beloved,
That you so ⁶charge us?

THE SHULAMITE

- ¹⁰ My beloved *is* white and ruddy,
⁷ Chief among ten thousand.
¹¹ His head *is like* the finest gold;
His locks *are* wavy,
And black as a raven.
¹² ⁱHis eyes *are* like doves
By the rivers of waters,
Washed with milk,
And ⁸fitly set.
¹³ His cheeks *are* like a bed of spices,
Banks of scented herbs.
His lips *are* lilies,
Dripping liquid myrrh.

¹⁴ His hands *are* rods of gold
Set with beryl.
His body *is* carved ivory
Inlaid *with* sapphires.
¹⁵ His legs *are* pillars of marble
Set on bases of fine gold.
His countenance *is* like Lebanon,
Excellent as the cedars.
¹⁶ His mouth *is* most sweet,
Yes, he *is* altogether lovely.
This *is* my beloved,
And this *is* my friend,
O daughters of Jerusalem!

THE DAUGHTERS OF JERUSALEM

- 6** Where has your beloved gone,
^aO fairest among women?
Where has your beloved turned
aside,
That we may seek him with you?

THE SHULAMITE

- ² My beloved has gone to his
^bgarden,
To the beds of spices,
To feed *his flock* in the gardens,
And to gather lilies.

⁹ ^cadjure
¹⁰ ^dDistinguished
¹² ⁱsong 1:15; 4:1
⁸ sitting in a setting

CHAPTER 6

¹ ^a song 1:8; 5:9
² ^b song 4:16; 5:1

³ ^c song 2:16; 7:10
⁵ ^d song 4:1
¹ overwhelmed
⁶ ^e song 4:2
² bereaved
⁷ ^f song 4:3
⁸ ^g song 1:3
⁹ ^h song 2:14; 5:2
¹⁰ ⁱ song 6:4
¹¹ ^j song 7:12

- ³ ^cI *am* my beloved's,
And my beloved *is* mine.
He feeds *his flock* among the lilies.

Praise of the Shulamite's Beauty

THE BELOVED

- ⁴ O my love, you *are as* beautiful as
Tirzah,
Lovely as Jerusalem,
Awesome as *an army* with banners!
⁵ Turn your eyes away from me,
For they have ¹overcome me.
Your hair *is* ^dlike a flock of goats
Going down from Gilead.
⁶ ^eYour teeth *are* like a flock of sheep
Which have come up from the
washing;
Every one bears twins,
And none *is* ²barren among them.
⁷ ^fLike a piece of pomegranate
Are your temples behind your veil.

⁸ There are sixty queens
And eighty concubines,
And ^gvirgins without number.
⁹ My dove, my ^hperfect one,
Is the only one,
The only one of her mother,
The favorite of the one who bore
her.
The daughters saw her
And called her blessed,
The queens and the concubines,
And they praised her.

- ¹⁰ Who is she who looks forth as the
morning,
Fair as the moon,
Clear as the sun,
ⁱAwesome as *an army* with banners?

THE SHULAMITE

- ¹¹ I went down to the garden of nuts
To see the verdure of the valley,
^jTo see whether the vine had budded
And the pomegranates had bloomed.

5:10–16 t he bride responds to the question of v. 9 with a poem extolling the handsomeness of her husband, beginning with his **ruddy** complexion and ending with the sweetness of his **mouth**.

6:1 t he chorus members now join in the search. In the dream sequence, we suspect that the chorus is well aware of his location. It is only the bride who needs to discover his whereabouts.

6:2 his garden . . . his flock: t his is a change of language from 4:12–16. on their wedding night, the bride presented herself to solomon as his garden. But he has another “garden” to tend as well, and it is one in which he also takes great pleasure. t his is the “garden” of his work, his responsibility as the king of Israel. t he flock is the people; the lilies represent the produce of the land. t his realization leads to the strong affirmation in the next verse that the husband and wife belong to each other. another use of the word *garden* occurs in 6:11.

6:3 I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine: t these words are an inversion of the words of 2:16; compare also 7:10. **He feeds**

his flock among the lilies: with these words the bride comes to terms with the reality that, as much as she and the king are in love, he still has other responsibilities and so does she. his work as king makes him the shepherd of his people, yet his love for her does not necessarily diminish because of his devotion to his work.

6:4 beautiful . . . Lovely: t he first is the word usually translated “fair” (1:8, 15; 4:1); the second is the rarer word for beauty used first in 1:5. **Tirzah . . . Jerusalem:** solomon idealizes the beauty of these cities, even as people speak of beautiful cities in our own day. **army with banners:** From a distance, there is a kind of beauty in the sight of an army, especially for a king.

6:8, 9 sixty . . . eighty: t his use of numbers is a rhetorical device to emphasize that the bride alone is solomon's love. **praised:** here is a use of this verb in a context other than the worship of God.

6:10 morning . . . moon . . . sun: t he king's rapture at the very thought of his wife lifts his soul to the heavens.

6:11 here the term *garden* refers to the shulamite's homeland.

- 12 Before I was even aware,
My soul had made me
As the chariots of ³my noble people.

THE BELOVED AND HIS FRIENDS

- 13 Return, return, O Shulamite;
Return, return, that we may look
upon you!

THE SHULAMITE

What would you see in the
Shulamite—
As it were, the dance of ⁴the two
camps?

Expressions of Praise

THE BELOVED

- 7** How beautiful are your feet in
sandals,
^aO prince's daughter!
The curves of your thighs *are* like
jewels,
The work of the hands of a skillful
workman.
² Your navel *is* a rounded goblet;
It lacks no ¹blended beverage.
Your waist *is* a heap of wheat
Set about with lilies.
³ ^bYour two breasts *are* like two fawns,
Twins of a gazelle.
⁴ ^cYour neck *is* like an ivory tower,
Your eyes *like* the pools in Heshbon
By the gate of Bath Rabbim.
Your nose *is* like the tower of
Lebanon
Which looks toward Damascus.
⁵ Your head *crowns* you like Mount
Carmel,
And the hair of your head *is* like
purple;
A king *is* held captive by *your* tresses.
⁶ How fair and how pleasant you are,
O love, with your delights!

12 ³ heb. Ammi
Nadib
13 ⁴ heb.
Mahanaïm

CHAPTER 7

1 ^a Ps. 45:13
2 ¹ lit. *mixed* or
spiced drink
3 ^b song 4:5
4 ^c song 4:4

8 ² lit. *nose*
9 ³ *Gliding over*
⁴ I XX, syr., vg. *lips*
and teeth.
10 ^d song 2:16; 6:3
^e Ps. 45:11
12 ^f song 6:11
13 ^g Gen. 30:14
^h song 2:3; 4:13, 16;
Matt. 13:52

CHAPTER 8

2 ^a song 3:4 ^b Prov.
9:2

- ⁷ This stature of yours is like a palm
tree,
And your breasts *like* its clusters.
⁸ I said, "I will go up to the palm tree,
I will take hold of its branches."
Let now your breasts be like clusters
of the vine,
The fragrance of your ²breath like
apples,
⁹ And the roof of your mouth like the
best wine.

THE SHULAMITE

- The wine goes down* smoothly for my
beloved,
³Moving gently the ⁴lips of sleepers.
¹⁰ ^dI am my beloved's,
And ^ehis desire *is* toward me.
¹¹ Come, my beloved,
Let us go forth to the field;
Let us lodge in the villages.
¹² Let us get up early to the vineyards;
Let us ^fsee if the vine has budded,
Whether the grape blossoms are
open,
And the pomegranates are in bloom.
There I will give you my love.
¹³ The ^gmandrakes give off a fragrance,
And at our gates ^h*are* pleasant
fruits,
All manner, new and old,
Which I have laid up for you, my
beloved.
8 Oh, that you were like my brother,
Who nursed at my mother's
breasts!
If I should find you outside,
I would kiss you;
I would not be despised.
² I would lead you *and* bring you
Into the ^ahouse of my mother,
She *who* used to instruct me.
I would cause you to drink of ^bspiced
wine,
Of the juice of my pomegranate.

6:13 t he chorus calls the bride back from her daydreams and reminds her that she is solomon's queen. **Shulamite:** t he term is not a name but a title. It may mean "a woman from the village of shulam." h owever, the hometown of the woman is usually thought to be shunem. her title sounds very much like the hebrew pronunciation for the name solomon. Both words are related to the hebrew word for peace (*shalom*). **the dance of the two camps:** In hebrew, the word is Mahanaïm, the town where david fled as a fugitive from a bsalom (2 sam. 17:24). t he woman offers to dance before her beloved so that he might enjoy her beauty in lovely motion.

7:1 solomon rhapsodizes on the beauty of his bride. In the eyes of love, one's lover has a beauty that transcends what others might see. **prince's daughter:** although of common birth (1:2), the shulamite has regal beauty. **The curves of your thighs:** t he hebrew wording suggests not only her form but the fluid motion of her dance (6:13).

7:6 t his verse summarizes the king's joy in her beauty. **fair:** t his

term (here a verb) for beauty is used often in the book (see 1:8, 15). **love:** here he uses the common noun for love as in 2:4.

7:7, 8 palm tree: t his is a sexual image that has its basis in the pollination of palm trees. to fertilize a female palm tree, the gardener climbs the male tree and takes some of its flowers. t hen he climbs the female tree and ties the pollen-bearing flowers among its branches.

7:10 desire: t his word is used only three times in the Bible. here it clearly means "sexual longing."

7:12 she was familiar with all the environs, but especially the vineyards (see 1:6; compare 8:12). **my love:** t his refers to a sexual embrace; see 1:2 where the same word is used.

7:13 From early times, **mandrakes** were associated with fertility (Gen. 30:14).

8:1, 2 like my brother: t he love of the bride for her beloved was so intense that she wished that she had known him dearly his entire life.

8:2 spiced wine: t he wines of the ancient world were often flavored with aromatic spices on special occasions (Prov. 9:2).

(TO THE DAUGHTERS OF JERUSALEM)

- ³ *c* His left hand *is* under my head,
And his right hand embraces me.
⁴ *d* I charge you, O daughters of
Jerusalem,
Do not stir up nor awaken love
Until it pleases.

Love Renewed in Lebanon

A RELATIVE

- ⁵ *e* Who *is* this coming up from the
wilderness,
Leaning upon her beloved?

I awakened you under the apple
tree.
There your mother brought you
forth;
There she *who* bore you brought *you*
forth.

THE SHULAMITE TO HER BELOVED

- ⁶ *f* Set me as a seal upon your heart,
As a seal upon your arm;
For love *is* as strong as death,
^g Jealousy *as* ¹ cruel as ² the grave;
Its flames *are* flames of fire,
³ A most vehement flame.

- ⁷ Many waters cannot quench love,
Nor can the floods drown it.
^h If a man would give for love
All the wealth of his house,
It would be utterly despised.

THE SHULAMITE'S BROTHERS

- ⁸ *i* We have a little sister,
And she has no breasts.

³ *c* song 2:6
⁴ *d* song 2:7; 3:5
⁵ *e* song 3:6
⁶ *f* ls. 49:16; Jer. 22:24; hag. 2:23
⁹ Prov. 6:34, 35
¹ severe, lit. hard
² or Sheol ³ | it. A flame of YHWH, poetic form of YHWH, the LORD
⁷ *h* Prov. 6:35
⁸ *i* Ezek. 23:33

¹¹ *j* Matt. 21:33
¹³ *k* song 2:14
¹⁴ *l* r ev. 22:17, 20
m song 2:7, 9, 17
⁴ Hurry, lit. Flee

What shall we do for our sister
In the day when she is spoken for?
⁹ If she *is* a wall,
We will build upon her
A battlement of silver;
And if she *is* a door,
We will enclose her
With boards of cedar.

THE SHULAMITE

- ¹⁰ I *am* a wall,
And my breasts like towers;
Then I became in his eyes
As one who found peace.
¹¹ Solomon had a vineyard at Baal
Hamon;
^j He leased the vineyard to keepers;
Everyone was to bring for its fruit
A thousand silver *coins*.

(TO SOLOMON)

- ¹² My own vineyard *is* before me.
You, O Solomon, *may* have a
thousand,
And those who tend its fruit two
hundred.

THE BELOVED

- ¹³ You who dwell in the gardens,
The companions listen for your
voice—
^k Let me hear it!

THE SHULAMITE

- ¹⁴ *l* Make ⁴ haste, my beloved,
And *m* be like a gazelle
Or a young stag
On the mountains of spices.

8:3, 4 left . . . right: the repetition of 2:6, 7 punctuates both the joy of sexual intimacy within marriage and the warnings against sexual activity before marriage.

8:5 the king takes his bride back to her home country for a visit. the **apple tree** symbolizes the place where the shulamite had been awakened sexually and where her mother had given birth to her.

8:6 a seal is a symbol of possession or ownership. the shulamite wants the king to feel a total ownership of her in his **heart**. she is committed only to him; and she wants him to be completely committed to her. as long as she resides in his heart, she feels secure. she knows that love deeply rooted in a heart commitment is intense—**strong as death**—and passionate—like **flames of fire**.
8:7 quench . . . despised: the point of this powerful verse is that true love cannot be destroyed, and neither can it be purchased.

8:8 the shulamite came from a fatherless home where she had been raised by her mother and brothers (1:6). they alternated between protective concern for her and anger with her. But in her growing up, her brothers had protected her.

8:9 If . . . a wall: By this the brothers meant that they would praise her for virtue and strength during puberty. **if . . . a door:** however, if she were loose, like a swinging door, they would have to protect her from herself and from untoward advances by young men.

8:10 the woman explains that she has been virtuous in her


youth—a **wall**—and she will remain faithful in her adulthood—**towers**. In this way she discovers **peace**. how unexpected to find this rich hebrew word used here of sexual completion.

8:11, 12 solomon owned many vineyards, some in areas remote from Jerusalem. **Baal Hamon** ("I ord of hamon") was a site near shunem, the town near where the shulamite may have been raised. solomon's vineyard had been entrusted to the shulamite's brothers, as had the shulamite. after caring for this vineyard, the brothers earned one thousand shekels profit. But they also cared for and protected the king's other "vineyard," the shulamite. now, she requests that her brothers be rewarded with two hundred shekels profit. **My own vineyard:** this phrase takes us back to 1:6 where the shulamite makes a play on words with *vineyard*. here she sees that vineyard of old (see 7:12), but indicates that she now has another "vineyard" to tend—her dear husband.

8:13 The companions: this may be a reference to the woman's friends living nearby.

8:14 Make haste: during the period of courtship, the young woman had asked her suitor to run away like a **gazelle . . . stag**, lest they become entangled with passion too soon. now, in their married love, she wishes he would rush to her (see 4:6). **the mountains of spices:** that is, she wants him to return to her loving embrace (see 1:13; 4:6).

THE BOOK OF ISAIAH



ISAIAH was a man with a mission. The Lord had shown him a glimpse of His glorious throne and placed a call on his life. As a prophet, he spoke God's words. For the most part, these were words of confrontation, exhortation, and warning—words that made him extremely unpopular. But even when he faced opposition Isaiah continued to stand up for the truth. The Lord had called him to warn the people of their headlong rush into disaster. The Book of Isaiah records these prophetic words of warning, but it also records Isaiah's words of promise and hope. One day, a Messiah would come who would save, comfort, and bless His people.

Author Isaiah the son of Amoz has traditionally been identified as the author of the entire book that bears his name (1:1). However, since the rise of historical criticism in the late nineteenth century, debate has surrounded the authorship of Isaiah. The Book of Isaiah addresses three different historical time periods, and some critical scholars have concluded that there were three different authors for the book. Because chapters 1–39 address Israel when it was confronting Assyrian invasions during the second half of the eighth century **B.C.**, most scholars have agreed that these chapters were composed by Isaiah the son of Amoz, the so-called Proto-Isaiah (or “First Isaiah”). But chapters 40–55 speak to the discouraged exiles in Babylon in the first half of the sixth century **B.C.**, two centuries after the prophet Isaiah lived. For this reason, some have assumed an anonymous author called Deutero-Isaiah (or “Second Isaiah”) for these chapters. The rest of the book, chapters 55–66, addresses the controversies that surrounded the postexilic community in the second half of the sixth century **B.C.** Thus this last section has been identified as the work of either Deutero-Isaiah or another anonymous author called Trito-Isaiah (or “Third Isaiah”). The basis for this elaborate analysis of the Book of Isaiah is the assumption that a Hebrew prophet could only address his contemporaries and not distant generations. According to these critics, a prediction of a future event, such as Isaiah's prophetic naming of Cyrus two hundred years before that ruler came to power (44:28; 45:1), is simply impossible.

Contrary to the critics' assumption, a prophet would commonly ask one generation to participate in the future events of another generation. Moses spoke this way when he addressed the new generation of Israelites at Moab as though they had participated in the events at Mt. Sinai (Deut. 5:3); yet none of Moses' audience, with the exception of Joshua and Caleb, had actually been there (Deut. 1:35–38). Isaiah, who began his career in 740 **B.C.** and ended it around 681 **B.C.**, also used this technique. He commanded the Israelites to “go forth from Babylon” (48:20) many generations before the Exile in 586 **B.C.** and the return in 538 **B.C.** This was a miraculous prophecy of the Israelites' return from Babylon, a prophecy that would sustain the faith and hope of the exiles, such as Ezra and Nehemiah.

The internal evidence of the Book of Isaiah points to one author, the prophet Isaiah. Unlike books that have multiple authors, such as the books of Psalms and Proverbs, no editorial notices in the Book of Isaiah indicate a change of author (2:1; 13:1). Moreover there are numerous linguistic similarities throughout the book, such as the use of relatively rare titles for God, “the Holy One of Israel” and “the LORD of Hosts.” Variations in style between chapters 1–39 and chapters 40–66 may be due to differences in subject matter, changed perspectives, and perhaps even the prophet's growing maturity. The New Testament confirms the view that Isaiah authored

the entire book. The apostle John attributed prophecies from 53:1 as well as from 6:9, 10 to the prophet Isaiah (John 12:38–41). Thus there is no convincing reason to discount Isaiah's authorship of the entire book.

Interpretation Understanding Hebrew prophetic literature involves recognizing and interpreting parallelism. The Hebrews used parallelism in poetry and prophecy as a literary technique to emphasize a particular thought. Here is an example: “The ox knows its owner / and the donkey its master’s crib; / but Israel does not know, / My people do not consider” (1:3). In the first part of this verse, both the ox and the donkey intuitively know the objects that they depend on, the owner (provider) as well as the “master’s crib” (provision). The second part of the verse contrasts the intuition of animals with the behavior of the Israelites. Israel does not know “its Owner,” and even though they are God’s “people,” they “do not consider” God’s provision. Thus the second half of the verse creates the analogy in parallel with the first half.

Prophetic poetry uses colorful images that point to further meanings. Unlike prose, which addresses historical realities more directly, poetry draws its readers and listeners into spiritual realities with the

use of evocative language. Thus in 42:15, the images of “mountains and hills” represent all sorts of obstacles—both physical and spiritual—to the exiles’ return to Jerusalem. The promise that the Lord would “dry up” these obstacles means that He would eliminate all impediments to the exiles’ return, just as He had dried up the Red Sea for the Israelites long before. Similarly in 41:18, that the Lord would “open rivers” and make “the dry land springs of water” means that He would miraculously provide for the returning exiles in the same way He had provided water from a rock (Ex. 17:1–6).

Another major element in understanding prophetic literature is recognizing that the prophecies themselves and their arrangement often lack chronological perspective or have multiple fulfillments. For example, the same prophecy may speak of both Jesus’ First and Second Comings (63:1, 2). Likewise, one prophecy may speak of both the virgin birth of Jesus as well as the birth of Isaiah’s son during Pekah’s invasion. Moreover, an oracle about the servant Cyrus, the Persian emperor of the sixth century B.C. (41:1–29), may stand next to a prophecy concerning the Servant Jesus (42:1–9). Ultimately, the interpretations of Jesus and the New Testament authors provide a guide for interpreting Old Testament prophecies.

Audience As a prophet, Isaiah spoke to three historical epochs. In chapters 1–39, he delivered his message of condemnation to the eighth-century Israelites, pronouncing judgment on their immoral and idolatrous lifestyles. This judgment came quickly, for during Isaiah’s ministry, Tiglath-Pileser III (745–727 B.C.) set out to extend Assyria’s rule into the west, and in doing so put pressure on Israel and Judah. In 722 B.C. another Assyrian king, Sargon II, conquered

930 B.C.

The northern and southern kingdoms divide

792 B.C.

Azariah (Uzziah) becomes king in Judah

755 B.C.

Isaiah begins to prophesy in Judah

752 B.C.

Jotham’s reign begins in Judah

736 B.C.

Ahaz begins his reign in Judah

734 B.C.

Israel and Syria war against Judah

732 B.C.

Damascus falls to the Assyrians

729 B.C.

Hezekiah becomes king in Judah

722 B.C.

The northern kingdom is taken captive by the Assyrians



The Annals of King Sargon II, one of the kings of Assyria during Isaiah’s ministry. In 722–721 B.C. Samaria, the capital of the northern kingdom of Israel, was finally taken by Sargon II after a three-year siege started by Shalmaneser V.

the northern kingdom. Only the nation of Judah was left. But Isaiah predicted that even Judah would fall—as much later it did, in 586 B.C.

In chapters 40–55, Isaiah comforted the future generation of weary exiles—the Jews who thought that God had forgotten them (40:27). In a brilliant series of prophecies, Isaiah presented the case that Israel's captivity was not due to the superiority of Babylon's idols, but to the disciplining rod of Israel's Lord (42:23–25). He predicted the exiles' return and encouraged them to rouse themselves (52:1–10), to flee Babylon (48:20, 21), and to entrust their future to the Almighty (41:14–20).

Finally in the third section (chs. 56–66), Isaiah exhorted the Jews who had returned to the land. This was the period before the temple was rebuilt (58:12; 61:4; 64:10) or perhaps while it was being rebuilt (66:1). Isaiah encouraged these Jews to put away greed (56:9–11), self-indulgence (56:12), idolatry (57:3–10), cynicism (57:11–13), and hypocritical self-righteousness (58:1–5). But he also predicted that the community would be split between true and false worshipers (see chs. 65; 66). The complete restoration of Israel was still to come (49:8–26). The promised Messiah would appear in the future (61:1–3). Then Gentiles would join Israel's godly remnant to become the “servants” of the Lord (56:3; 65:1, 15, 16) in a new nation (65:1; 66:8). The ultimate triumph of good over evil would have to await the new heaven and the new earth (65:17–19).

CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

Following are some of Isaiah's Christological prophecies and their New Testament fulfillments: Isaiah 9:6 is fulfilled in Luke 2:11 and Ephesians 2:14–18; Isaiah 50:6 plays out with unbelievable precision in Matthew 26:67; 27:26, 30. Isaiah 61:1, 2 is nothing less than the personal mission Jesus verbalizes and embraces when He reads the scroll at the synagogue in Nazareth, as recorded in Luke 4:17–19.

Of particular importance is Isaiah's description of the five aspects of Jesus' saving work on our behalf. They appear in the five stanzas of Isaiah 52:13–53:12. There we read of Jesus' wholehearted sacrifice, His perfect character, His atonement that results in peace with God, His payment that results in our forgiveness, and His death that nullifies the effects of sin. Isaiah refers to Jesus' earthly ministry and His crucifixion as well as His eventual return to earth as the reigning King.



Part of the Great Isaiah Scroll from Qumran (1QIsa). It is the oldest complete manuscript of the Book of Isaiah (c. 150–125 B.C.). The complete scroll is 24 feet long.

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ISAIAH OUTLINE

- I. The Syrian and Assyrian background 1:1—39:8
 - A. Introduction 1:1—31
 - B. A condemnation of the people's pride and a promise of the Lord's exaltation 2:1—5:30
 - C. Isaiah's call to be the Lord's prophet 6:1—13
 - D. A condemnation of fear of the nations rather than fear of God 7:1—12:6
 - E. The day of the Lord: oracles of doom against the nations 13:1—23:18
 - F. The "little apocalypse": judgment and restoration 24:1—27:13
 - G. Six woes and promises of salvation 28:1—35:10
 - H. The history of Hezekiah and Isaiah 36:1—39:8
- II. The Babylonian background 40:1—55:13
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- III. The postexilic background 56:1—66:24
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 - D. Condemnation of hypocritical fasting 58:1—14
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 - G. The Lord's vindication of His people 59:16—21
 - H. Jerusalem's glorious future 60:1—62:12
 - I. Israel's lament 63:1—64:12
 - J. The contrast between true and nominal Israel 65:1—66:24

The ^avision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the ^bdays of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah.

The Wickedness of Judah

- ² ^cHear, O heavens, and give ear,
O earth!
For the LORD has spoken:
“I have nourished and brought up
children,
And they have rebelled against Me;
³ ^dThe ox knows its owner
And the donkey its master’s ¹crib;
But Israel ^edoes not know,
My people do not ²consider.”
- ⁴ Alas, sinful nation,
A people ³laden with iniquity,
^fA ⁴brood of evildoers,
Children who are corrupters!
They have forsaken the LORD,
They have provoked to anger
The Holy One of Israel,
They have turned away backward.
- ⁵ ^gWhy should you be stricken again?
You will revolt more and more.
The whole head is sick,
And the whole heart faints.
- ⁶ From the sole of the foot even to the
head,
There is no soundness in it,
But wounds and bruises and
putrefying sores;
They have not been closed or bound up,
Or soothed with ointment.
- ⁷ ^hYour country is desolate,
Your cities are burned with fire;

BIBLE TIMES & CULTURE NOTES



History in Isaiah

Isaiah delivered God’s message to the people of Judah and served as adviser during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah between approximately 740 and 700 B.C. His prophetic activity focused around three major crises in Judah’s history. First, in 734 B.C., Rezin, king of Syria, and Pekah, king of Israel, joined forces against Assyria. They wanted King Ahaz of Judah to join them. Isaiah counseled Judah not to join the coalition (ch. 7). Second, between 714 and 711 B.C., the ruler of the Philistine city of Ashdod led the Philistines to revolt against Assyria. Isaiah bitterly opposed any participation on the part of Judah in this rebellion (20:1–6). Third, in 701 B.C., King Hezekiah of Judah revolted against Sennacherib (705–681 B.C.), king of Assyria, who came to Judah and besieged Jerusalem. As in every crisis, Isaiah counseled faith in the Lord.



Sennacherib on his throne during the siege of Lachish. While there, he threatened King Hezekiah, but the Lord saved Hezekiah and the people of Jerusalem from the hand of Sennacherib (2 Chr. 32:1–23).

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CHAPTER 1 ¹ ^aNum. 12:6 ^b 2 Chr. 26–32 ² ^c Jer. 2:12 ³ ^d Jer. 8:7 ^e Jer. 9:3, 6
¹ manger or feed trough ² understand ⁴ ^f Is. 57:3, 4; Matt. 3:7 ³ Lit. heavy, weighed
down ⁴ offspring, seed ⁵ ^g Jer. 5:3 ⁷ ^h Deut. 28:51, 52; 2 Chr. 36:19

1:1 God mediated His message through the godly **Isaiah to Judah**, the people of the southern kingdom—specifically to their magistrates, priests, and prophets in **Jerusalem**. The nation of Israel had been divided into two parts: Judah (the southern kingdom) and Israel (the northern kingdom). While Isaiah’s message was primarily for the southern kingdom, it was also for the northern kingdom—the entire nation was heading down a path of sin and idolatry that would end in destruction. Thus in this book, the word Israel sometimes refers to both the southern and the northern kingdoms. Isaiah lived to see the nation of Assyria take the northern kingdom into captivity in 722 B.C. Therefore this record of Isaiah’s visions contains the revelations that God graciously gave during the reigns of **Uzziah** (792–740 B.C.), **Jotham** (752–736 B.C.), **Ahaz** (736–720 B.C.), and **Hezekiah** (729–699 B.C.). Because God never changes, this revelation is still relevant for His people today.

1:2, 3 The indictment against Judah has two parts: (1) Isaiah summons heaven and earth as witnesses to the trial (v. 2); (2) the Lord, as Plaintiff, indicts Judah, here called **Israel** (vv. 2, 3).

1:2 God’s relationship with His people is personal; He likens Judah to ungrateful **children** (63:8; Ex. 4:22; Hos. 11:1). The Hebrew term translated **rebelled** means “to refuse to submit to someone’s authority and rule” (63:10; 66:24).

1:3 Even an **ox** and a **donkey** recognize the **owner** who feeds them,

so they do not rebel against him. But Israel, God’s own children whom He “nourished and brought up” (v. 2), had rebelled against Him. Judah’s rebellion was incomprehensible and inexcusable.

1:4 **sinful nation**: Despite God’s divine parenting, the people had turned to sin (5:1–7). **The Holy One of Israel** is Isaiah’s favorite title for God. The Lord is holy because He is profoundly different from all of humanity (40:25). He alone is the Creator (45:11, 12) exalted in heaven (6:1–3) and without sin (6:4–7). He alone is the righteous Judge (v. 20) and the Protector of the faithful (10:20; 43:3). Yet the phrase *of Israel* describes the Holy One as sustaining a relationship with His people (Ps. 40:1).

1:5–8 Isaiah first compares the nation’s affliction to a badly wounded soldier (vv. 5, 6) and then describes its land as ravaged by war (vv. 7, 8).

1:5 Isaiah answers his own indignant question, **Why should you be stricken again?** The people would only **revolt more and more**. More preaching would only make their hearts hard (6:9, 10). In 53:4–6 Isaiah reveals God’s gracious response to their hard hearts: the Lord will strike His Servant instead of sinners (53:4–6). Such love can win over even the toughest rebel (Rom. 5:8).

1:6 From **foot to head** means everyone and everything. Judah’s wounds were not **closed**, **bound up** (bandaged), or **soothed**, because the people had refused to repent.

- Strangers devour your land in your presence;
And *it* is desolate, as overthrown by strangers.
- 8 So the daughter of Zion is left ⁱ as a ⁵booth in a vineyard,
As a hut in a garden of cucumbers,
^jAs a besieged city.
- 9 ^kUnless the LORD of hosts
Had left to us a very small remnant,
We would have become like ^lSodom,
We would have been made like
Gomorrah.
- 10 Hear the word of the LORD,
You rulers ^mof Sodom;
Give ear to the law of our God,
You people of Gomorrah:
- 11 “To what purpose *is* the multitude of
your ⁿsacrifices to Me?”
Says the LORD.
“I have had enough of burnt offerings
of rams
And the fat of fed cattle.
I do not delight in the blood of bulls,
Or of lambs or goats.
- 12 “When you come ^o to appear before Me,
Who has required this from your hand,
To trample My courts?
- 13 Bring no more ^pfutile ⁶sacrifices;
Incense is an abomination to Me.
The New Moons, the Sabbaths, and
^qthe calling of assemblies—
I cannot endure iniquity and the
sacred meeting.

8 ⁱ Job 27:18 / Jer. 4:17 ⁵ shelter

9 ^k 2 Kin. 25:11, 22; Lam. 3:22 ^l Gen. 19:24; Rom. 9:29
10 ^m Deut. 32:32
11 ⁿ [1 Sam. 15:22]
12 ^o Ex. 23:17
13 ^p Matt. 15:9 ^q Joel 1:14
⁶ worthless

14 ^r Num. 28:11
⁵ Lam. 2:6
15 ^t Prov. 1:28 ^u Ps. 66:18; Is. 59:1-3;
Mic. 3:4 ^v Pray
⁸ bloodshed
16 ^v Jer. 4:14
^w Rom. 12:9
17 ^y Some ancient
vss. *the oppressed*
¹ Vindicate
18 ^x Is. 43:26; Mic. 6:2 ^y Ps. 51:7; [Is. 43:25]; Rev. 7:14
20 ^z Is. 40:5; 58:14
Mic. 4:4; [Titus 1:2]

- 14 Your ^rNew Moons and your
^sappointed feasts
My soul hates;
They are a trouble to Me,
I am weary of bearing *them*.
- 15 ^tWhen you ⁷spread out your hands,
I will hide My eyes from you;
^uEven though you make many
prayers,
I will not hear.
Your hands are full of ⁸blood.
- 16 “Wash ^v yourselves, make yourselves
clean;
Put away the evil of your doings
from before My eyes.
- ^wCease to do evil,
17 Learn to do good;
Seek justice,
Rebuke ⁹the oppressor;
¹Defend the fatherless,
Plead for the widow.
- 18 “Come now, and let us ^xreason
together,”
Says the LORD,
“Though your sins are like scarlet,
^yThey shall be as white as snow;
Though they are red like crimson,
They shall be as wool.
- 19 If you are willing and obedient,
You shall eat the good of the land;
20 But if you refuse and rebel,
You shall be devoured by the sword”;
^zFor the mouth of the LORD has
spoken.

1:8 Daughter of Zion is a beautiful personification of Jerusalem (37:22; 60:14). Actually, the *of* in this phrase is somewhat misleading. “Daughter of Zion” seems to indicate that Zion *has* a daughter. In fact, Zion is the daughter—the daughter of the Lord. **Booth** and **hut** refer to lean-to shelters used by farmers and watchmen during the harvest.

1:9–17 This invitation to repent falls into three parts: (1) Isaiah’s appeal to the rebellious rulers and people of Jerusalem to hear the Lord’s instruction (vv. 9, 10); (2) the Lord’s scathing indictment and rejection of the people’s external, formalistic worship (vv. 11–17); (3) the Lord’s invitation to the people to repent and do justice in order to save themselves from death (vv. 18–20).

1:9 The title **LORD of hosts** describes God as ruler over all powers in heaven and earth through His command of His angelic armies. The title is a favorite of Isaiah, for it speaks of God’s holiness and sovereignty. Judah’s survival was not ultimately due to an enemy’s weakness but to God’s power. Though God punished His sinful people, He always preserved a **remnant** (6:13; 10:20; 11:16) because He was faithful to keep His promise to Abraham (Gen. 22:16–18; Ex. 34:6, 7; Mic. 7:19, 20; Rom. 9:29; 11:5). The word *remnant* basically means “survivor” (Num. 21:35; Josh. 8:22). **Sodom** and **Gomorrah** were regarded as the epitome of sinfulness; to say that Jerusalem had become like those cities was a scathing condemnation (Rev. 11:8). Elsewhere these words are used as symbols of God’s final judgment upon sinners (see Amos 4:11; Matt. 10:15; 2 Pet. 2:6).

1:10–15 God desired **sacrifices**, but not from people who disobeyed Him and mistreated others, even if the sacrifice presented was the best. “To obey is better than sacrifice,” said the early prophet Samuel (1 Sam. 15:22, 23). Later prophets agreed (Hos. 6:6; Amos 4:4; Mic. 6:6–8), and so did the Lord Jesus (Matt. 23:23). God judges not

only our outwardly pious acts, but more importantly the attitude of our hearts (1 Cor. 4:5).

1:13–15 Here is an itemized condemnation of the people’s sacred seasons, **New Moons** (Num. 28:11–15), **Sabbaths** (Ex. 31:14–17), and **appointed feasts** (Ex. 23:14–17). These feasts are condemned as **futile** because the people did not celebrate them out of love for God.

1:14 God sarcastically refers to the feasts as **your** rather than “My” **New Moons** because the people had changed the spirit of God’s ceremonial laws from love of Him to manipulation of Him.

1:15 God did not look with favor on the fervent **spread out . . . hands** of those who oppressed others, and He would not hear their **many** accompanying **prayers** (James 4:1–6).

1:16–20 The invitation to repent has two parts: (1) The people must wash themselves by seeking **justice**, by rebuking **the oppressor**, and defending **the fatherless** (James 1:27). (2) God Himself would wash the people if they were **willing and obedient** to meet this condition. As the righteous Judge, God both reproves the wicked and defends the innocent (11:4).

1:18 Reason together means “to come to a legal decision.” There is no call for a compromise here; the people were to come to an agreement with God concerning the enormous gravity of their sin. God was not declaring His people innocent of wickedness, but He was prepared to pardon their sins if they would repent and turn to Him. God offers us that same forgiveness through Jesus. **Says the LORD**: The verb form suggests a repeated offering of grace. **Scarlet** recalls the picture of “hands . . . full of blood” (v. 15). God’s grace and power can make such bloodstains as **white as snow** (Rom. 3:21–26).

1:19, 20 There was another side to God’s offer. If the sinful people did not repent, instead of the promise that they **shall eat the good of the land** (3:10) stood the threat that they **shall be devoured**

The Degenerate City

- ^{21a} How the faithful city has become a² harlot!
It was full of justice;
Righteousness lodged in it,
But now ^bmurderers.
- ^{22c} Your silver has become dross,
Your wine mixed with water.
- ^{23d} Your princes *are* rebellious,
And ^ecompanions of thieves;
Everyone loves bribes,
And follows after rewards.
They ^gdo not defend the fatherless,
Nor does the cause of the widow
come before them.
- ²⁴ Therefore the Lord says,
The LORD of hosts, the Mighty One
of Israel,
“Ah, ^hI will ³rid Myself of My
adversaries,
And ⁴take vengeance on My enemies.
- ²⁵ I will turn My hand against you,
And ⁱthoroughly ⁵purge away your
dross,
And take away all your alloy.
- ²⁶ I will restore your judges ^jas at the
first,
And your counselors as at the
beginning.
Afterward ^kyou shall be called the
city of righteousness, the faithful
city.”
- ²⁷ Zion shall be redeemed with justice,
And her ⁶penitents with
righteousness.

²¹ ^a Is. 57:3-9; Jer. 2:20 ^b Mic. 3:1-3
² Unfaithful
²² ^c Jer. 6:28
²³ ^d Hos. 9:15
^e Prov. 29:24 ^f Jer. 22:17 ^g Is. 10:2; Jer. 5:28; Ezek. 22:7; Zech. 7:10
²⁴ ^h Deut. 28:63
³ be relieved of
⁴ avenge Myself
²⁵ ⁱ Is. 48:10; Ezek. 22:19-22; Mal. 3:3
⁵ refine with lye
²⁶ ^j Jer. 33:7-11 ^k Is. 33:5; Zech. 8:3
²⁷ ⁶ Lit. returners

²⁸ ^j Job 31:3; Ps. 9:5; [Is. 66:24; 2 Thess. 1:8, 9]
²⁹ ⁷ So with MT, LXX, Vg.; some Heb. mss., Tg. you
⁸ Sites of pagan worship
³¹ ^m Ezek. 32:21
ⁿ Is. 66:24; Matt. 3:12; Mark 9:43

CHAPTER 2

² ^a Mic. 4:1 ☆
^b Gen. 49:1 ☆ Ps. 68:15
³ ^d Jer. 50:5 ☆;
[Zech. 8:21-23; 14:16-21]

- ²⁸ The ^ldestruction of transgressors and
of sinners *shall be* together,
And those who forsake the LORD
shall be consumed.
- ²⁹ For ⁷they shall be ashamed of the
⁸terebinth trees
Which you have desired;
And you shall be embarrassed
because of the gardens
Which you have chosen.
- ³⁰ For you shall be as a terebinth whose
leaf fades,
And as a garden that has no water.
- ^{31m} The strong shall be as tinder,
And the work of it as a spark;
Both will burn together,
And no one shall ⁿquench *them*.

The Future House of God

2 The word that Isaiah the son of
Amoz saw concerning Judah and
Jerusalem.

- ² Now ^ait shall come to pass ^bin the
latter days
^cThat the mountain of the LORD's
house
Shall be established on the top of the
mountains,
And shall be exalted above the hills;
And all nations shall flow to it.
- ³ Many people shall come and say,
^d“Come, and let us go up to the
mountain of the LORD,
To the house of the God of Jacob;
He will teach us His ways,
And we shall walk in His paths.”

by the sword. The promise and threat were certain because **the LORD** had spoken them. Here the verb **has spoken** indicates finality (contrast the verb *says* in v. 18). While God had graciously extended His offer of mercy over a significant period of time, this was the only offer God made. They could not “cut another deal” with Him (40:5; 55:11).

1:21–31 In these verses, God announced His intent to purify Israel. This announcement falls into two parts: (1) a prophecy of judgment (vv. 21–26); (2) an elaboration of God's sentence (vv. 27–31). God's purpose for Judah was not final destruction, but purification from social injustice (vv. 25, 26) and redemption from idolatry (vv. 27–31). Idolatry and injustice are inseparable. When people turn from trusting the fair and loving God, they will start oppressing the poor and helpless (Jer. 23:13, 14; Hos. 4:1–14; Amos 2:6–8).

1:22, 23 The debased **silver** and **wine** refer to Jerusalem's unjust rulers.

1:25 God's **hand** had effectively delivered Israel from Egypt. Now that same hand was against the people in judgment.

1:26 God's goal for Jerusalem was that it would become a **city of righteousness**, a city where the Lord would be faithfully worshipped.

1:27 The Hebrew word for **redeemed** means “ransomed” or “freed someone from another's ownership through the payment of a price.” Zion's **penitents**, those who turned their back on idolatry and injustice, would find freedom from sin and judgment.

1:29 Idolaters **shall be ashamed** because the **terebinth**, a sacred tree, and the **gardens**, sacred groves for fertility rites or the worship of spirits, would fail to save them in the time of judgment (65:3).

1:30, 31 Terebinth represents both the sacred trees (v. 29) and the **strong**, dominating rulers of Israel. **The work of it** is perhaps a reference to the injustice of Israel's tyrants (v. 23), which was the opposite of the Lord's righteous work (5:12). **no one shall quench:** God will rid His creation of the proud through His gracious, purifying judgment.

2:1–5 Isaiah's prophecy about Zion's exaltation falls into three parts: (1) an introduction locating the vision “in the latter days” (v. 2); (2) a vision of Zion established as the chief mountain (vv. 3, 4); (3) a conclusion exhorting Judah to obey the law until the vision is fulfilled (v. 5).

2:2 Some have interpreted the phrase **in the latter days** as pointing to the new epoch initiated by the saving work of Christ and the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost (see Acts 2:17). According to this interpretation, this prophecy will be completely fulfilled in the Second Coming of the Messiah (1 Cor. 15:28). Others interpret this passage as referring to conditions in Christ's future kingdom. See the fuller development of this theme in Mic. 4:1–4. Just as **the LORD's house** (the temple) was a type of the heavenly sanctuary (Heb. 9:24), so presumably **the mountain** (Mt. Zion) was a copy of a heavenly reality (Heb. 9:23, 24; 12:22–24). In the coming kingdom, the city of Jerusalem and its glorious temple will again become prominent. The false gods of pagans had sacred mountains with temples; to raise the Lord's house to **the top of the mountains**, or “as the chief mountain,” is to establish Him among the nations as the only true God.

2:3 By quoting the people's words, **let us go up to the mountain of the LORD**, Isaiah vividly depicts their regenerated hearts, since the unregenerate do not seek God (see Rom. 3:11).

^cFor out of Zion shall go forth the law,
And the word of the LORD from
Jerusalem.
⁴ He shall judge between the nations,
And rebuke many people;
They shall beat their swords into
plowshares,
And their spears into pruning
^fhooks;
Nation shall not lift up sword against
nation,
Neither shall they learn war
anymore.

The Day of the LORD

⁵ O house of Jacob, come and let us
^fwalk
In the light of the LORD.
⁶ For You have forsaken Your people,
the house of Jacob,
Because they are filled ^gwith eastern
ways;
They *are* ^hsoothsayers like the
Philistines,
ⁱAnd they ²are pleased with the
children of foreigners.
⁷ ^jTheir land is also full of silver and
gold,
And there is no end to their
treasures;

³ ^c Luke 24:47
⁴ ⁱ knives
⁵ ^f Eph. 5:8
⁶ ^g Num. 23:7
^h Deut. 18:14 ⁱ Ps.
106:35 ² Or *clap,*
shake hands to
make bargains with
the children
⁷ ^j Deut. 17:16; Is.
30:16; 31:1; Mic. 5:10

⁸ ^k Is. 40:19, 20;
Jer. 2:28
¹⁰ ^l Is. 2:19, 21; Rev.
6:15, 16
¹¹ ^m Prov. 16:5; Is.
5:15 ⁿ Hos. 2:16
³ ^{proud}
¹³ ^o Is. 14:8; Zech.
11:1, 2

Their land is also full of horses,
And there is no end to their
chariots.
⁸ ^k Their land is also full of idols;
They worship the work of their own
hands,
That which their own fingers have
made.
⁹ People bow down,
And each man humbles himself;
Therefore do not forgive them.
¹⁰ ^l Enter into the rock, and hide in the
dust,
From the terror of the LORD
And the glory of His majesty.
¹¹ The ³lofty looks of man shall be
^mhumbled,
The haughtiness of men shall be
bowed down,
And the LORD alone shall be exalted
ⁿin that day.
¹² For the day of the LORD of hosts
Shall come upon everything proud
and lofty,
Upon everything lifted up—
And it shall be brought low—
¹³ Upon ^othe cedars of Lebanon *that*
are high and lifted up,
And upon all the oaks of Bashan;

2:4 **Plowshares** probably means “hoes.” One glorious day there will be an end to all weapons, an end to all warfare. This will be possible only because of the reign of the Prince of Peace (9:6), the Savior King whose name is Jesus.

2:5 Isaiah includes himself with the godly remnant and encourages them: **let us walk**. Even though they could not see the glorious future of Zion, they continued to place their faith in God’s promises and obey His law. **Light** is a metaphor for God’s law, which illuminates the path that leads to everlasting life (Ps. 119:105).

2:6–9 The condemnation of Judah for misplaced confidence is in three parts and in the form of a prayer: (1) a judicial sentence (v. 6); (2) a condemnation of Judah’s misplaced confidence in witchcraft, pagan alliances, money, weapons, and idolatry (vv. 6–9); (3) a concluding prayer that God should not forgive the people for substituting faith in the works of their own hands for faith in Him (v. 9). The Law prohibited the king from accumulating money, weapons, and alliances, in order to keep him dependent on God (Deut. 17:16, 17). **2:6** The exhortation to **the house of Jacob** was necessary (v. 5),

for God had handed it over to destruction. **You have forsaken** was a present, but not a permanent, condition for the Israelites. To renounce **eastern ways** and **soothsayers**, the customs of Mesopotamia, was a hallmark of genuine faith in the God of Israel (Deut. 18:10). **They are pleased** could be translated “they clasp hands,” suggesting political alliances with foreigners. See 2 Kin. 16:7 for Ahaz’s dependence on the Lord for salvation.

2:8 **The work of their own hands** refers to man-made idols in particular.

2:9 **Each man humbles himself** before things that are themselves debased—idols. Wanting God to uphold moral order, yet intimately knowing God’s gracious character, Isaiah implored Him **not to forgive** those who had turned to idols.

2:10–22 Isaiah predicted that in the day of the Lord, the Lord alone would be exalted. The oracle is in three parts: (1) an introductory command to the proud to hide themselves from the terror of the Lord (vv. 10, 11); (2) a prediction that in the day of the Lord every pretension would be humbled (vv. 12–18); (3) a concluding command to the righteous to separate themselves from the proud (v. 22). **2:10** **Dust** symbolizes the abject humility of the defeated (47:1; Gen. 3:14; Ps 44:25). The wicked among the Israelites would grovel in the dust before the righteous Lord.

2:11 **Lofty looks** are the outer manifestation of proud hearts. The refrain **the LORD alone shall be exalted** highlights the theme of this prophecy and describes the coming, glorious revelation of the risen and exalted Savior King. **In that day** the Savior will be exalted above all other proud contenders.

2:12 **Lifted up** is translated “exalted” in v. 2. Any rival to God’s exaltation will be dwarfed. **The day of the LORD** is any time when the Lord of Hosts is victorious (1:9). The day of the Lord has two sides: (1) the night of God’s judgment and (2) the daylight of His salvation after judgment. Isaiah used the term to describe either or both aspects.

2:13–15 **The cedars of Lebanon** and **the high mountains**—the exalted things of creation—as well as the **high tower** and the **forti-**

light

(Heb. ‘or) (2:5; 9:2; 58:8; Eccl. 2:13; 11:7) Strong’s #216

This word refers to literal or symbolic light. The Hebrew word often denotes daylight or daybreak (Judg. 16:2; Neh. 8:3), but it can also be symbolic of life and deliverance (Job 33:28, 30; Ps. 27:1; 36:9; 49:19; Mic. 7:8, 9). In the Bible, light is frequently associated with true knowledge and understanding (42:6; 49:6; 51:4; Job 12:25), and even gladness, good fortune, and goodness (Job 30:26; Ps. 97:11). The Bible describes light as the clothing of God—a vivid picture of His honor, majesty, splendor, and glory (Ps. 104:2; Hab. 3:3, 4). A proper lifestyle is characterized by walking in God’s light (2:5; Ps. 119:105; Prov. 4:18; 6:20–23).

- ¹⁴ Upon all the high mountains,
And upon all the hills *that are*
lifted up;
- ¹⁵ Upon every high tower,
And upon every fortified wall;
- ¹⁶ Upon all the ships of Tarshish,
And upon all the beautiful sloops.
- ¹⁷ The ⁴loftiness of man shall be bowed
down,
And the haughtiness of men shall be
brought low;
The LORD alone will be exalted in
that day,
- ¹⁸ But the idols ⁵He shall utterly abolish.
- ¹⁹ They shall go into the ⁷holes of the
rocks,
And into the caves of the ⁶earth,
⁸From the terror of the LORD
And the glory of His majesty,
When He arises ⁴to shake the earth
mightily.
- ²⁰ In that day a man will cast away his
idols of silver
And his idols of gold,
Which they made, *each* for himself to
worship,
To the moles and bats,
- ²¹ To go into the clefts of the rocks,
And into the crags of the rugged
rocks,
From the terror of the LORD
And the glory of His majesty,
When He arises to shake the earth
mightily.
- ²² ⁴Sever ⁷yourselves from such a man,
Whose ⁶breath *is* in his nostrils;
For ⁸of what account is he?

Judgment on Judah and Jerusalem

- 3** For behold, the Lord, the LORD of
hosts,

¹⁴ ^p Is. 30:25
¹⁶ ^q 1 Kin. 10:22; Is.
23:1, 14; 60:9
¹⁷ ⁴ *pride*
¹⁸ ⁵ Or *shall utterly*
vanish
¹⁹ ^r Hos. 10:8; [Rev.
9:6] ^s [2 Thess. 1:9]
^t Ps. 18:7; Is. 2:21;
13:13; 24:1, 19, 20;
Hag. 2:6, 7; Heb.
12:26 ⁶ Lit. *dust*
²² ^v Ps. 146:3; Jer.
17:5 ^v Job 27:3 ⁷ Lit.
Cease yourselves
from the man ⁸ Lit.
in what is he to be
esteemed

CHAPTER 3

¹ ^a 2 Kin. 25:3; Is.
5:13; Jer. 37:21
^b Lev. 26:26 ¹ Every
support
² ^c 2 Kin. 24:14;
Is. 9:14, 15; Ezek.
17:12, 13
³ ² Eminent
looking men
⁴ ^d Eccl. 10:16
³ ^{boys} ⁴ Or
capricious ones
⁵ ⁵ *aged* ⁶ *despised*,
lightly esteemed
⁶ ⁷ Lit. *hand*
⁸ ^e 2 Chr. 36:16, 17;
Mic. 3:12

- ^a Takes away from Jerusalem and from
Judah
- ^b The ¹ stock and the store,
The whole supply of bread and the
whole supply of water;
- ² ^c The mighty man and the man of war,
The judge and the prophet,
And the diviner and the elder;
- ³ The captain of fifty and the
² honorable man,
The counselor and the skillful
artisan,
And the expert enchanter.
- ⁴ “I will give ^dchildren ³to be their
princes,
And ⁴babes shall rule over them.
- ⁵ The people will be oppressed,
Every one by another and every one
by his neighbor;
The child will be insolent toward the
⁵ elder,
And the ⁶base toward the honorable.”
- ⁶ When a man takes hold of his
brother
In the house of his father, *saying*,
“You have clothing;
You be our ruler,
And *let* these ruins *be* under your
⁷ power,”
- ⁷ In that day he will protest, saying,
“I cannot cure *your* ills,
For in my house *is* neither food nor
clothing;
Do not make me a ruler of the
people.”
- ⁸ For ^eJerusalem stumbled,
And Judah is fallen,
Because their tongue and their
doings
Are against the LORD,
To provoke the eyes of His glory.

fied wall—the exalted things made by humanity—will be humbled so that the arrogant can see the greatness of God.

2:16 The ships of Tarshish were large oceangoing vessels—prized objects which the arrogant made and considered to be more important than God.

2:18 The term **idols** means “worthless things.”

2:19 holes . . . caves: People will scurry like frightened animals with no place to hide (Matt. 24:16). **Terror** refers to the dread of the wicked at the sight of God (Ps. 14:5).

2:22 Sever yourselves: Since God will reject proud idolaters, it follows that the faithful should also reject them. How ludicrous to trust in transitory, impermanent man, whose **breath is in his nostrils**, instead of in the One who gives everyone breath.

3:1–9 This judgment against Jerusalem and Judah is in two parts: (1) a judicial sentence against anarchy (vv. 1–7); (2) an accusation of arrogance (vv. 8, 9).

3:1 **For** links this oracle with the previous exhortation to sever a relationship with an arrogant man (2:22). God **takes away** Judah's leaders through the sword and exile. No historical reference is given because the truth is universal (see 2 Kin. 25:18–21).

3:2, 3 Judah's administration was organized around warriors—**mighty man, man of war, captain of fifty**; sages—**judge, elder, honorable man, counselor**; religious mediums—**prophet, diviner, enchanter**; and craftsmen—**artisan**.

3:4 Because of the Lord's judgment on Judah, the shrewd, ungodly leaders would be replaced by **children** and **babes**, meaning inexperienced and incompetent leaders.

3:5 **For every one** to be oppressed **by another** describes a state of anarchy. In such an upside-down world, **child** is against **elder**, **the base** against **the honorable**. In His judgment, the Lord has given over the wicked to their own evil ways.

3:6, 7 During this period of deprivation, society would be so deprived of leadership and possessions that people would qualify for leadership merely by having **clothing**.

3:8 **For** links the accusation (vv. 8, 9) to the judicial sentence (vv. 1–7).

3:8, 9 The people's **tongue** and **look** betray their arrogance against God.

- 9 The look on their countenance witnesses against them,
And they declare their sin as
^fSodom;
They do not hide *it*.
Woe to their soul!
For they have brought evil upon themselves.
- 10“Say to the righteous ^gthat *it shall be well with them*,
^hFor they shall eat the fruit of their doings.
- 11 Woe to the wicked! ⁱ*It shall be ill with him*,
For the reward of his hands shall be
⁸given him.
- 12 As for My people, children are their oppressors,
And women rule over them.
O My people! ^jThose who lead you
⁹cause *you* to err,
And destroy the way of your paths.”

Oppression and Luxury Condemned

- 13 The LORD stands up ^kto ^lplead,
And stands to judge the people.
- 14 The LORD will enter into judgment
With the elders of His people
And His princes:
“For you have ²eaten up ^lthe vineyard;
The plunder of the poor *is* in your houses.
- 15 What do you mean by ^mcrushing My people
And grinding the faces of the poor?”
Says the Lord God of hosts.
- 16 Moreover the LORD says:
- “Because the daughters of Zion are haughty,
And walk with ³outstretched necks
And ⁴wanton eyes,
Walking and ⁵mincing *as* they go,
Making a jingling with their feet,

9 ^f Gen. 13:13; Is. 1:10-15
10 ^g [Deut. 28:1-14; Eccl. 8:12; Is. 54:17]
^h Ps. 128:2
11 ⁱ [Ps. 11:6; Eccl. 8:12, 13] ⁸ *done to him*
12 ^j Is. 9:16 ⁹ *lead you astray*
13 ^k Is. 66:16; Hos. 4:1; Mic. 6:2
^l *contend, plead His case*
14 ^l Matt. 21:33
² *burned*
15 ^m Mic. 3:2, 3
16 ³ Head held high ⁴ *seductive, ogling* ⁵ *tripping or skipping*

17 ⁿ Deut. 28:27
^o Jer. 13:22
18 ^p Judg. 8:21, 26
⁶ *headbands*
24 ^q Is. 22:12; Ezek. 27:31; Amos 8:10
⁷ *burning scar*
25 ⁸ Lit. *strength*
26 ^r Jer. 14:2; Lam. 1:4 ^s Lam. 2:10

CHAPTER 4

1 ^a Is. 2:11, 17
^b 2 Thess. 3:12
^c Luke 1:25

- 17 Therefore the Lord will strike with
ⁿa scab
The crown of the head of the daughters of Zion,
And the LORD will ^ouncover their secret parts.”
- 18 In that day the Lord will take away the finery:
The jingling anklets, the ⁶scarves, and the ^pcrescents;
- 19 The pendants, the bracelets, and the veils;
- 20 The headdresses, the leg ornaments, and the headbands;
The perfume boxes, the charms, and the rings;
- 21 The nose jewels,
- 22 the festal apparel, and the mantles;
- 23 The outer garments, the purses, and the mirrors;
The fine linen, the turbans, and the robes.
- 24 And so it shall be:

Instead of a sweet smell there will be a stench;
Instead of a sash, a rope;
Instead of well-set hair, ^abaldness;
Instead of a rich robe, a girding of sackcloth;
And ⁷branding instead of beauty.

25 Your men shall fall by the sword,
And your ⁸mighty in the war.

- 26 ^rHer gates shall lament and mourn,
And she *being* desolate ^sshall sit on the ground.

4 And ^ain that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying,
“We will ^beat our own food and wear our own apparel;
Only let us be called by your name,
To take away ^cour reproach.”

3:9 Considered a horribly sinful city (1:9), **Sodom** had been destroyed by God (Gen. 19). Yet Judeans were parading their defiance against God just like the Sodomites.

3:10–15 This oracle against Judah’s leaders is in three parts: (1) an affirmation that God repays good and evil (vv. 10, 11); (2) an accusation that Israel’s leaders were leading people astray (v. 12); (3) a divine lawsuit against the leaders for exploiting their subjects (vv. 13–15; see 1:23).

3:10 eat the fruit: Compare this idea with 1:19.

3:12 The lamenting words **My people** (see v. 15) are reminiscent of David’s pain over his erring son Absalom (2 Sam. 18:33).

3:13 to plead: This is a judicial term meaning to plead a case (Mic. 6:1).

3:14 The vineyard represents the nation (5:1–7), used here as a term parallel to **the poor**. The leaders had taken advantage of the weak in order to plunder them (v. 15).

3:15 Lord God of hosts: See the similar usage in 1:9.

3:16–4:1 This oracle against the vain women of Judah has three parts: (1) an accusation that the women were “haughty” and would be humbled (vv. 16, 17); (2) a list of the pretentious trappings to be done away with (vv. 18–23); (3) a depiction of Jerusalem’s desolation (3:24–4:1).

3:16 The plural **daughters of Zion** suggests the women of the city as well as a personification of Jerusalem (see 1:8). **Mincing** probably means “childlike steps.” The prophet shows his scorn for pretense and flagrant display.

3:17 The term **secret parts** and its parallel **head** may mean “forehead.”

3:24–26 Rope . . . baldness . . . sackcloth refer to the conditions of the people who are going into exile. **Your men** refers to the men of Jerusalem. The **gates of Zion mourn** because its inhabitants have gone into exile for their sins.

4:1 in that day: This phrase connects this verse with the preceding unit (3:16–26). The once-proud women of Jerusalem (3:16–23)



Grapes and Vineyards

Grapes grew plentifully in Palestine and the Hebrews devoted much time to their vineyards. The planting, pruning, and cropping of grapevines was hard work that many people considered to be menial (2 Kin. 25:12). Yet the hill country of Judah offered grapevines a perfect climate. Walled vineyards and watchtowers came to symbolize the land of Judah.

To prepare a hillside for planting a vineyard, a farmer had to clear rocks from the ground and build stone hedges to hold the soil. The vines were planted in rows eight to ten feet apart. By forbidding farmers to gather grapes for the first three years (Lev. 19:23), Mosaic Law guaranteed that the vines would be well-tended in their formative years. After clusters began to form again, pruners cut off twigs having no fruit. Wine was squeezed in September, and the Hebrews celebrated this occasion.



A view of a well-tended vineyard in the hill country of Judah. The farmer removed the stones from the soil (Is. 5:2) in order to build the retaining wall (Ps. 80:12, 13). Most of the vines in Palestine trail on the ground, because it is believed that the grapes ripen more slowly under the shadow of the leaves.

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The Renewal of Zion

² In that day ^dthe Branch of the LORD shall be beautiful and glorious; And the fruit of the earth *shall be* excellent and appealing For those of Israel who have escaped.

³ And it shall come to pass that *he who is left* in Zion and remains in Jerusalem ^ewill be called holy—everyone who is ^frecorded among the living in Jerusalem. ⁴When ^gthe Lord has washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and purged the ¹blood of Jerusalem from her midst, by the spirit of judgment and by the spir-

² ^a Is. 12:1-6; [Jer. 23:5]; Zech. 3:8
³ ^e Is. 60:21 ^f Phil. 4:3
⁴ ^g Mal. 3:2, 3
¹ bloodshed

⁵ ^h Ex. 13:21, 22; Num. 9:15-23
ⁱ Zech. 2:5 ² canopy
⁶ ^j Ps. 27:5; Is. 25:4

CHAPTER 5

¹ ^a Ps. 80:8; Jer. 2:21; Matt. 21:33; Mark 12:1; Luke 20:9

it of burning, ⁵ then the LORD will create above every dwelling place of Mount Zion, and above her assemblies, ^h a cloud and smoke by day and ⁱ the shining of a flaming fire by night. For over all the glory there *will be* a ² covering. ⁶ And there will be a tabernacle for shade in the daytime from the heat, ^j for a place of refuge, and for a shelter from storm and rain.

God's Disappointing Vineyard

5 Now let me sing to my Well-beloved A song of my Beloved ^a regarding His vineyard:

would have to beg a **man** to father their children and **take away** their **reproach**—the fact that they have no children. Most of the men of Jerusalem would have died in the process of defending the city (3:25).

4:2-6 The prophecy of Zion's restoration has three parts: (1) the Branch of the Lord will be glorious (v. 2); (2) the remnant will be sanctified (vv. 3, 4); (3) the Lord will provide a protective covering over Mt. Zion (vv. 5, 6).

4:2 In that day speaks of the future revelation of the glory of the Lord on the earth (2:2-4). **The Branch of the Lord** has the double sense of the **earth** yielding its **fruit** and of Christ yielding spiritual fruit (11:1-5; Jer. 23:5; Zech. 3:8; John 15:1-8). Because Christ humbled Himself, He will be crowned with glory (49:7; 52:13; 53:12; Phil. 2:9-11). **beautiful and glorious**: Together the words indicate "dazzling beauty." The reign of Jesus the King of Creation will be marked by plenty. The earth will be released from its curse, producing all that God intended it to produce in the beginning (Ps. 65).

4:3 recorded: The record of births in Jerusalem (Ps. 87:5, 6) may be related to the heavenly "book" (Ex. 32:32; Ps. 69:28; Dan. 7:10; Rev. 20:12).

4:4 Spirit could mean wind (the hot searing wind of fire), the human spirit, or the Holy Spirit. All three may be intended (11:2; 30:1; 42:1; 48:16; 59:21; 61:1; Luke 3:22). **The spirit of judgment . . . burning** means "a fiery judgment." Through the processes of a purging fire, which outwardly consumes the faithless and inwardly purifies the faithful, God will produce a holy city.

4:5 Create is something only God can do; the word also suggests a divine "refashioning." **Cloud and smoke** recalls God's protective presence at the Red Sea (Ex. 13:20-22), on the tabernacle (Ex. 40:34-38), and in the wilderness (Num. 9:15-23). Here the phrase symbolizes His protective **covering** over the restored and sanctified Mt. Zion. The **glory** of Mt. Zion in the messianic age will be bestowed by God Himself (40:5; 60:2; John 17:10, 22, 24).

4:6 Over the cloud and smoke on each dwelling will be the overshadowing **tabernacle**, symbolizing God's protection of and communion with His people (Ps. 91:1; Rev. 21:3).

5:1-7 Isaiah's "Song of the Vineyard" is in three parts: (1) an introduction to the allegory (vv. 1, 2); (2) an accusation and sentence (vv. 3-6); (3) an interpretation of the allegory (v. 7; see Ps. 80:8-16).

5:1-3 Judah is likened to a vineyard that has every advantage. Its

My Well-beloved has a vineyard
¹ On a very fruitful hill.
² He dug it up and cleared out its stones,
 And planted it with the choicest vine.
 He built a tower in its midst,
 And also ² made a winepress in it;
^b So He expected *it* to bring forth *good* grapes,
 But it brought forth wild grapes.
³ “And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem
 and men of Judah,
^c Judge, please, between Me and My vineyard.
⁴ What more could have been done to My vineyard
 That I have not done in ^d it?
 Why then, when I expected *it* to bring forth *good* grapes,
 Did it bring forth wild grapes?
⁵ And now, please let Me tell you
 what I will do to My vineyard:
^e I will take away its hedge, and it shall be burned;
 And break down its wall, and it shall be trampled down.
⁶ I will lay it ^f waste;
 It shall not be pruned or ³ dug,
 But there shall come up briars and ^g thorns.
 I will also command the clouds
 That they rain no rain on it.”

¹ ¹ Lit. *In a horn, the son of fatness*
² ^b Deut. 32:6 ² Lit. *hewed out*
³ ^c [Rom. 3:4]
⁴ ^d 2 Chr. 36:15, 16; Jer. 2:5; 7:25, 26; Mic. 6:3; Matt. 23:37
⁵ ^e 2 Chr. 36:19; Ps. 80:12; 89:40, 41
⁶ ^f 2 Chr. 36:19-21
⁹ ⁹ Is. 7:19-25; Jer. 25:11 ³ *hoed*

⁷ ⁴ *wailing*
⁸ ^h Jer. 22:13-17; Mic. 2:2; Hab. 2:9-12 ⁵ *Accumulate houses*
⁹ ⁹ Is. 22:14
¹⁰ ¹⁰ Ezek. 45:11 ⁶ ¹ bath = 1/10 homer
⁷ ¹ ephah = 1/10 homer
¹¹ ⁶ Prov. 23:29, 30; Eccl. 10:16, 17; Is. 5:22 ⁸ *pursue*
¹² ¹ Amos 6:5

⁷ For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts
 is the house of Israel,
 And the men of Judah are His pleasant plant.
 He looked for justice, but behold, oppression;
 For righteousness, but behold, ⁴ a cry
 for help.

Impending Judgment on Excesses

⁸ Woe to those who ⁵ join ^h house to house;
 They add field to field,
 Till *there is* no place
 Where they may dwell alone in the midst of the land!
⁹ ⁱ In my hearing the LORD of hosts
 said,
 “Truly, many houses shall be desolate,
 Great and beautiful ones, without inhabitant.
¹⁰ For ten acres of vineyard shall yield
 one ^j bath,⁶
 And a ⁷ homer of seed shall yield one
 ephah.”
¹¹ ^k Woe to those who rise early in the morning,
 That they may ⁸ follow intoxicating drink;
 Who continue until night, *till* wine
 inflames them!
¹² ^l The harp and the strings,
 The tambourine and flute,
 And wine are in their feasts;

failure to produce justifies God’s judgment (1:2, 3). **Well-beloved ... my Beloved:** Isaiah speaks of the Lord in endearing terms.
5:2 The Lord, the true Vinedresser, had done everything possible to make the soil ready to grow fine grapes. The term **wild grapes** means “stinking things” (v. 4). This result was as unexpected as were the rebellious children of 1:2–4.
5:3 My vineyard: The pronoun indicates God’s love and pride over His possession—the nation of Israel. All the more reason for God’s disappointment in its infertility.
5:4 What more could have been done: When there is a failure in human relationships, we usually expect that both parties bear part of the responsibility. When it comes to the failed relationship between God and His people, the blame falls solely on the people. The Lord did everything He could—from instructing His people to giving them the Promised Land.
5:5 Please let Me tell you may be translated more forcefully as “Now I will tell you.” God was not asking for permission; He was warning His people.
5:6 Briars and thorns symbolize the anarchy described in 3:4, 5, that will overtake the land after the Exile. **clouds:** As God had promised in His covenant with Israel on Mt. Sinai, sufficient rainfall would come to the people who were faithful to His commands, but the rain would be withheld if the people were rebellious (Deut. 28:12, 23, 24).
5:7 justice ... oppression: These words have similar sounds in Hebrew, as do the words **righteousness** and **cry for help**. Choosing similar sounding words is a common technique of Hebrew poetry.
5:8–30 This prophecy consists of six accusations or “woes” that specify the sins of “the wild grapes” (vv. 2, 4) and the nature of their acts of oppression: greed (v. 8), debauchery (vv. 11, 12), cynical unbelief (vv. 18, 19), perversion (v. 20), arrogance (v. 21), and injustice (vv. 22, 23). To these sins are added prophecies of judgment: deso-

lation (vv. 9, 10), captivity or death for the pompous leaders (vv. 13, 14), and humiliation for all (v. 15). The conquering army is depicted in vv. 26–30.
5:8 Till ... land: The greedy land barons aimed to control all of the choice land of Israel. God gave the fields, which “shall not be sold permanently, for the land is Mine” (Lev. 25:23) as a patrimony to all His people (Num. 27:7–11). Deprived of these ancestral lands, Israel’s citizens had become day laborers or slaves on what had formerly been their family inheritance.
5:9, 10 While invaders could destroy the mansions, only God could bring the drought implied in this verse. Yet both were judgments from His hand.
5:9 without inhabitant: This phrase is also found in 6:11.
5:10 One bath is about six gallons. **A homer** is about six bushels. **One ephah** is one-tenth of a homer. The produce of the land would be extremely meager in the time of divine judgment.
5:11, 12 Greed (v. 8) is closely connected with indulgent, egocentric living.
5:11 This verse is a strong condemnation of the abuse of **intoxicating drink** (beer) and **wine** (v. 22). For a contrasting example of wine used in a positive context of the enjoyment of God’s salvation, see 55:1.
5:12 The harp and the strings: For a similar idea, see Ps. 33:2. Music was played in ancient Israel both in the worship of the Lord and in times of feasting. Wine was also a part of feasting in biblical times (Prov. 9:2; John 2:10). Here **their feasts** means “their drinking parties.” **do not regard ... consider:** The people were oblivious to the reality of the work of God in their midst (Ps. 10:4). **The work of the Lord** includes justice, entailing punishing the tyrants and saving the oppressed (vv. 24, 25).

- But ^mthey do not regard the work of the LORD,
Nor consider the operation of His hands.
- 13 ⁿTherefore my people have gone into captivity,
Because *they* have no ^oknowledge;
Their honorable men *are* famished,
And their multitude dried up with thirst.
- 14 Therefore Sheol has enlarged itself
And opened its mouth beyond measure;
Their glory and their multitude and their pomp,
And he who is jubilant, shall descend into it.
- 15 People shall be brought down,
^pEach man shall be humbled,
And the eyes of the lofty shall be humbled.
- 16 But the LORD of hosts shall be ^qexalted in judgment,
And God who is holy shall be hallowed in righteousness.
- 17 Then the lambs shall feed in their pasture,
And in the waste places of ^rthe ⁹fat ones strangers shall eat.
- 18 Woe to those who ¹draw iniquity with cords of ²vanity,
And sin as if with a cart rope;
- 19 ^sThat say, "Let Him make speed *and* hasten His work,
That we may see *it*;
And let the counsel of the Holy One of Israel draw near and come,
That we may know *it*."
- 20 Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil;
Who put darkness for light, and light for darkness;

12 ^m Job 34:27; Ps. 28:5
13 ⁿ 2 Kin. 24:14-16
16 ^o Is. 1:3; 27:11; Hos. 4:6
15 ^p Is. 2:9, 11
16 ^q Is. 2:11
17 ^r Is. 10:16
9 Lit. *fatlings*, rich ones
18 ¹ *drag*
2 *emptiness or falsehood*
19 ^s Jer. 17:15; Amos 5:18

21 ^t Prov. 3:7; Rom. 1:22; 12:16; [1 Cor. 3:18-20]
23 ^u Ex. 23:8; Prov. 17:15; Is. 1:23; Mic. 3:11; 7:3
24 ^v Ex. 15:7
w Job 18:16
3 Lit. *tongue of fire*
25 ^x 2 Kin. 22:13; 17; Is. 66:15
y Ps. 18:7; Is. 64:3; Jer. 4:24; Nah. 1:5
z Is. 9:12, 17; Jer. 4:8; Dan. 9:16
26 ^a Is. 11:10, 12
b Is. 7:18; Zech. 10:8
c Mal. 1:11
d Joel 2:7

- Who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!
- 21 Woe to *those who are* ^twise in their own eyes,
And prudent in their own sight!
- 22 Woe to men mighty at drinking wine,
Woe to men valiant for mixing intoxicating drink,
- 23 Who "justify the wicked for a bribe,
And take away justice from the righteous man!"
- 24 Therefore, ^vas the ³fire devours the stubble,
And the flame consumes the chaff,
So ^wtheir root will be as rotteness,
And their blossom will ascend like dust;
Because they have rejected the law of the LORD of hosts,
And despised the word of the Holy One of Israel.
- 25 ^xTherefore the anger of the LORD is aroused against His people;
He has stretched out His hand against them
And stricken them,
And ^ythe hills trembled.
Their carcasses *were* as refuse in the midst of the streets.
- ^zFor all this His anger is not turned away,
But His hand *is* stretched out still.
- 26 ^aHe will lift up a banner to the nations from afar,
And will ^bwhistle to them from ^cthe end of the earth;
Surely ^dthey shall come with speed, swiftly.

5:13 have gone into captivity: Although the verb is in the past tense, here it refers to something still in the future—the Judeans had not yet gone into captivity. **Knowledge** refers to a personal involvement with someone or something. **thirst:** The judgment matches the crime of indulging in alcoholic beverages (see vv. 11, 12).

5:14 Sheol is the poetic word for "grave," which is here compared to a gaping jaw that devours the elite rich and the common masses alike. Sheol is portrayed as a monster in Proverbs (Prov. 1:12; 27:20).

5:15, 16 For the exaltation of the Lord alone, see 2:9, 11, 17. The judgment of the wicked is one demonstration of His exaltation.

5:15 the eyes of the lofty: Proud people get little respect from God (Ps. 147:6).

5:17 What were formerly mansions surrounded with lush vineyards would become **waste places**, where **lambs** and **fat ones**, those prepared for sacrifice, feed.

5:18, 19 Those who mocked Isaiah's proclamation of the day of the Lord were not simply "falling" into sin; rather, they labored to **draw iniquity** along, as on a **cart**.

5:20 call evil good: Those who pervert God's evaluation of what is

good by calling evil good are heading down a dangerous path—one that leads to judgment.

5:21 At the root of the moral, social, and theological corruption denounced in this prophecy is being **wise** in one's **own eyes**—an insensitive, arrogant egotism.

5:22 mighty at drinking wine: See v. 11 on the abuse of wine. The **intoxicating drink** was probably beer.

5:23 bribe: The perversion of **justice** by bribery is a serious evil that undermines society.

5:24 As the vineyard yielding only sour grapes is finally judged, so the wicked will finally be cut off without hope.

5:25 The hills—that seem most permanent—**trembled**, even as the sea "fled" before the anger of the Lord (see Ps. 114:3, 7). **Their carcasses** is a grisly image of the defeated foes of God (34:3; 66:24). The Lord's **anger is not turned away** even after the horrible judgments of vv. 24, 25. **His hand:** Often in Scripture, "the hand of God" is a symbol of His grace and salvation (Ex. 15:6). How tragic that the same **hand** is stretched out to punish His people.

5:26 The Assyrian army, which included many mercenaries (Mic. 4:11–13), literally "trampled down" (v. 5) the pleasant land of Israel.

27 No one will be weary or stumble among them,
No one will slumber or sleep;
Nor ^ewill the belt on their loins be loosed,
Nor the strap of their sandals be broken;
28 ^fWhose arrows *are* sharp,
And all their bows bent;
Their horses' hooves will ⁴seem like flint,
And their wheels like a whirlwind.
29 Their roaring *will be* like a lion,
They will roar like young lions;
Yes, they will roar
And lay hold of the prey;
They will carry *it* away safely,
And no one will deliver.
30 In that day they will roar against them
Like the roaring of the sea.
And if *one* ^glooks to the land,
Behold, darkness *and* ⁵sorrow;
And the light is darkened by the clouds.

Isaiah Called to Be a Prophet

6 In the year that ^aKing Uzziah died,
^bI saw the Lord sitting on a throne,
high and lifted up, and the train of His

27 ^e Dan. 5:6
28 ^f Jer. 5:16 ⁴ Lit.
be regarded as
30 ^g Is. 8:22; Jer.
4:23-28; Joel 2:10;
Luke 21:25, 26
⁵ distress

CHAPTER 6

1 ^a 2 Kin. 15:7; 2 Chr.
26:23; Is. 1:1 ^b John
12:41; Rev. 4:2, 3;
20:11

2 ^c Ezek. 1:11
3 ^d Rev. 4:8 ^e Num.
14:21; Ps. 72:19
5 ^f Ex. 6:12, 30
¹ destroyed, cut off
6 ^g Rev. 8:3
7 ^h Jer. 1:9; Dan.
10:16 ² atoned for

robe filled the temple. ²Above it stood seraphim; each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, ^cwith two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. ³And one cried to another and said:

^d“Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts;
^e“The whole earth is full of His glory!”

⁴And the posts of the door were shaken by the voice of him who cried out, and the house was filled with smoke.
⁵So I said:

“Woe is me, for I am ¹undone!
Because I *am* a man of ^funclean lips,
And I dwell in the midst of a people
of unclean lips;
For my eyes have seen the King,
The LORD of hosts.”

⁶Then one of the seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a live coal *which* he had taken with the tongs from ^gthe altar. ⁷And he ^htouched my mouth *with it*, and said:

“Behold, this has touched your lips;
Your iniquity is taken away,
And your sin ²purged.”

whistle: The Lord would control this army of judgment, for He would give them their signal to invade (see 7:18).

5:27-29 The preparations of the Assyrian army were complete; the soldiers were thoroughly ready for war (see 40:30, 31).

5:30 The clouds symbolize judgment.

6:1-13 Isaiah's call to be a prophet of God consists of five sections: (1) the historical setting (v. 1); (2) Isaiah's stunning vision of God (vv. 2-4); (3) his new insight into himself (v. 5); (4) his call (vv. 6-8); (5) his commission (vv. 9-13).

6:1 King Uzziah died in 740 B.C., signaling the end of an age. This good king (2 Chr. 26:1-15) would be eventually replaced by wicked Ahaz (7:1); the relative prosperity of the first half of the eighth century would be replaced by the Syro-Ephraimite wars and the Assyrian campaigns into Israel. The **throne** where **the Lord** is seated, **high** and exalted, represents His eternal, sovereign, and universal rule. He is high above all other kings, but at the same time He is concerned about the welfare of His people. **Temple** means “palace”—the Lord's throne on earth with its counterpart in heaven.

6:2 The behavior of the **seraphim** contrasts strongly with the pride

of Uzziah (2 Chr. 26:16). All human pride is mocked by the behavior of these angels. They know that in the presence of God there is no room for pomp, no reason for pride.

6:3 Holy, holy, holy: To say the word *holy* twice in Hebrew is to describe someone as “most holy.” To say the word *holy* three times intensifies the idea to the highest level. In other words, the holiness of God is indescribable in human language. To be *holy* means to be different, distant, or transcendent. Thus the song of the seraphim is a constant refrain that the transcendence of God is indescribable. Although the Lord is totally different from us—He is perfect—in His mercy He still reaches down to take care of us. **The whole earth is full of His glory:** The Hebrew word order is, “The fullness of all the earth is His glory.” We know that the glory of God transcends the universe (Ps. 113:4-6); yet in order to balance the expression of the transcendence of God in the first half of this verse, the words of the second half emphasize God's closeness to His creation—His involvement with the earth and its people.

6:4 If even the doorposts of the heavenly temple shook in response to God's holiness, how much more will the whole earth (v. 3) shake when the Lord visits it (Matt. 24:29, 30).

6:5 Confronted with this vision of the Lord, Isaiah realized that he was under judgment—that he was **undone**. He must have thought that he had come to the end of his life. **I am a man of unclean lips:** Isaiah knew that he was a sinner. He realized that his lips were the only ones not giving God praise in that setting. **a people:** Isaiah's plight is the plight of every person. No one, in his or her present state, is capable of standing before the Holy One (Ps. 24:3). **the King, the Lord of hosts:** After contemplating the death of Uzziah (v. 1), Isaiah had seen the King who will never die.

6:6 The **live coal . . . from the altar** symbolizes both the purification of blood and the fire of the Spirit that enabled the prophet to speak. From that point on, his words would be light to his hearers and power to those who would listen. The fact that a coal from the altar was used reminds us that ultimately all sin is forgiven because of a sacrifice. The sacrifices on the temple altar point to the ultimate sacrifice of the Savior Jesus. God sovereignly and graciously forgave Isaiah's sin.

6:7 Isaiah had a personal Day of Atonement before the Lord (Lev.

seraphim

(Heb. *seraphim*) (6:2, 6) Strong's #8314

This noun is probably related to the verb *saraph*, which means “to burn with fire.” These angelic creatures belong to the heavenly host and are only mentioned twice in Scripture—both times in ch. 6. Apparently these beings conduct the worship of God in heaven and are different from the cherubim, who are described in Rev. 4:6-8 as surrounding God's throne instead of standing above it, as described here (6:2). The relation of their name to burning may be due to their flaming appearance (similar to the fiery serpents of Num. 21:6; Deut. 8:15). But their name probably relates to their role in purification. Fire is a symbol for purity; appropriately one of these fiery beings purified Isaiah's lips with a live coal (6:6).

⁸Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying:

“Whom shall I send,
And who will go for ⁱUs?”

Then I said, “Here *am* I! Send me.”

⁹And He said, “Go, and ^jtell this people:

‘Keep on hearing, but do not understand;
Keep on seeing, but do not perceive.’

¹⁰“Make ^kthe heart of this people dull,
And their ears heavy,
And shut their eyes;
^lLest they see with their eyes,
And hear with their ears,
And understand with their heart,
And return and be healed.”

¹¹Then I said, “Lord, how long?”
And He answered:

^m“Until the cities are laid waste and
without inhabitant,
The houses are without a man,
The land is utterly desolate,
¹²“The LORD has removed men far away,
And the forsaken places are many in
the midst of the land.

⁸ / Gen. 1:26
⁹ / Is. 43:8; Matt.
13:14 ☆; Mark 4:12;
Luke 8:10; John
12:40; Acts 28:26;
Rom. 11:8
¹⁰ ^k Ps. 119:70;
Mark 6:1-6 ☆; Acts
7:51; Rom. 10:1-4
/ Jer. 5:21
¹¹ ^m Mic. 3:12
¹² ⁿ 2 Kin. 25:21;
Is. 5:9

¹³ ° Deut. 7:6;
Ezra 9:2

CHAPTER 7

¹ ° 2 Chr. 28 ^b 2 Kin.
16:5, 9 ¹ conquer it
² ² Lit. settled upon
³ ³ Lit. A Remnant
Shall Return
⁴ ^c Ex. 14:13; Is.
30:15; Lam. 3:26
⁴ Be careful ⁵ be
calm

¹³ But yet a tenth *will be* in it,
And will return and be for
consuming,
As a terebinth tree or as an oak,
Whose stump *remains* when it is cut
down.
So ^othe holy seed *shall be* its stump.”

Isaiah Sent to King Ahaz

7 Now it came to pass in the days of
^aAhaz the son of Jotham, the son of
Uzziah, king of Judah, *that* Rezin king
of Syria and Pekah the son of Remaliah,
king of Israel, went up to Jerusalem
to *make* war against ^bit, but could not ¹pre-
vail against it. ²And it was told to the
house of David, saying, “Syria’s forces
are ²deployed in Ephraim.” So his heart
and the heart of his people were moved
as the trees of the woods are moved with
the wind.

³Then the LORD said to Isaiah, “Go
out now to meet Ahaz, you and ³Shear-
Jashub your son, at the end of the aque-
duct from the upper pool, on the highway
to the Fuller’s Field, ⁴and say to him:
⁴“Take heed, and ⁵be ^cquiet; do not fear
or be fainthearted for these two stubs of
smoking firebrands, for the fierce anger
of Rezin and Syria, and the son of Rem-
aliah. ⁵Because Syria, Ephraim, and the

23:26–32). **taken away:** This word alludes to the Israelite practice of symbolically placing the sins of the people on a scapegoat and driving that goat into the wilderness (see Lev. 16). The Hebrew word translated **purged** means “covered” and is the same word that is translated **atonement**. The word refers to the process of killing an animal and sprinkling the blood on the altar for atonement.

6:8 At times, the prophets would be invited to participate in the heavenly court (see 1 Kin. 22:19–22; Jer. 23:18, 22). Here the Lord uses the pronoun **Us** to mean Himself and His angels (see Gen. 3:22; 11:7).

Send me: In ancient Middle Eastern religions only divine beings are sent as messengers of the gods. Yet the God of Scripture uses human beings as a matter of course. Only at certain times does He use angels in a direct way to reveal His will to humankind. Isaiah’s willingness proceeded from a grateful heart; he wanted to serve the God who had forgiven him (v. 7).

6:9, 10 Paradoxically, Isaiah’s preaching to the religious and arrogant people who **keep on hearing** was destined to **make . . . their ears heavy** (42:20). Only the humble would **understand** the Lord’s message. The more the prophet would proclaim the word of God, the less response he would get from the people. This was a call to a very discouraging ministry. In truth, the call of God is for faithfulness to Him, to His word, and to the call itself.

6:11 Understandably, Isaiah’s third expression to the Lord (compare vv. 5, 8) was one of incredulity. He wondered **how long** the people would continue to be unresponsive to his words of truth from God.

6:11, 12 The answer was grim. **waste . . . desolate:** These words describe the coming judgment of God on Judah that would lead to the nation’s captivity under the Babylonians. **Removed men . . . forsaken places** describe the desolation that would follow the conquest by Babylon.

6:13 But . . . consuming: After the coming Babylonian invasion, the part of the land and the people who remained would be scorched again (5:25). This describes the return from the Exile and the subsequent troubles of Judah in the land. **A tenth** is one of Isaiah’s expressions for the “remnant”; it is only a small percentage of the

Israelites. From Israel’s blasted **stump**, God would produce a **holy seed** (11:1), for He cannot deny the nation He has chosen (2 Tim. 2:13). An immediate fulfillment of this prophecy occurred in Isaiah’s time: King Hezekiah repented and showed himself to be part of the holy seed (see ch. 38). Ultimately, the *holy* seed would issue in the Beautiful Branch (11:1). This is the promise of the Savior Jesus.

7:1–12:6 This major section of Isaiah contains a series of prophecies related specifically to the Syro-Ephraimite wars—the invasion of Judah by Rezin and Pekah. These prophecies aimed to call Judah back to faith in God.

7:1 This is an editorial heading to 7:2–12:6 (see 2 Kin. 16:5). The Book of Isaiah was written over the period of the prophet’s lifetime; but chs. 7–12 were set in the context of the Syro-Ephraimite wars. **Syria** is the later name for the ancient nation of Aram.

7:2–8:10 This section consists of five prophecies (7:2–9, 10–17, 18–25; 8:1–4, 5–10) predicting both Judah’s deliverance from the kings of Syria and Israel and its devastation (short of annihilation) at the hand of the Assyrian king.

7:2 The phrase **house of David** is a substitute term for the king of Judah, Ahaz. This phrase recalls the Lord’s eternal covenant with David in which He promised to give to His servant an eternal seed, throne, and kingdom (see 2 Sam. 7:16; Ps. 89:19–37). The word **Ephraim** represents the northern kingdom, Israel. The **heart** of the nation was **moved** because Syria had defeated Ahaz earlier (2 Chr. 28:5).

7:3 Shear-Jashub means “A Remnant Will Return.” The name of Isaiah’s son spoke of a coming Exile and then the salvation of the remaining faithful. All this would occur long after Isaiah’s lifetime. Ahaz was probably standing at the **aqueduct** at the time of this encounter, seeking to secure Jerusalem’s supply of water in case of the siege (2 Chr. 32:30).

7:4 God contemptuously dismissed the arrogant kings of Israel and Syria. What Ahaz greatly feared, God considered merely **stubs of smoking firebrands** drawn from a bonfire. The **son of Remaliah** is Pekah, king of Israel (see v. 1).

son of Remaliah have plotted evil against you, saying, ⁶“Let us go up against Judah and ⁶trouble it, and let us make a gap in its wall for ourselves, and set a king over them, the son of Tabel”— ⁷thus says the Lord God:

- ^d“It shall not stand,
Nor shall it come to pass.
⁸ “For the head of Syria *is* Damascus,
And the head of Damascus *is* Rezin.
Within sixty-five years Ephraim will
be ⁷broken,
So that it will not be a people.
⁹ The head of Ephraim *is* Samaria,
And the head of Samaria *is*
Remaliah’s son.

⁶ *cause a sickening dread*
⁷ *2 Kin. 16:5; Is. 8:10; Acts 4:25, 26*
⁸ *2 Sam. 8:6; 2 Kin. 17:6* ⁷ *Lit. shattered*

⁹ *2 Chr. 20:20; Is. 5:24*
¹¹ *9 Matt. 12:38*
⁸ *Lit. make the request deep or make it high above*
¹⁴ *h Matt. 1:23; Luke 1:31 ☆; John 1:45; Rev. 12:5*

^fIf you will not believe,
Surely you shall not be
established.””

The Immanuel Prophecy

¹⁰Moreover the LORD spoke again to Ahaz, saying, ¹¹“Ask a sign for yourself from the LORD your God; ⁸ask it either in the depth or in the height above.”

¹²But Ahaz said, “I will not ask, nor will I test the LORD!”

¹³Then he said, “Hear now, O house of David! *Is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will you weary my God also?*

¹⁴Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: ^hBehold, the virgin shall con-

7:5, 6 The plotting of Syria and Ephraim was no secret to God, who made it known to His servant Isaiah. **Tabel** means “Good for Nothing.” Syria and Israel wanted to place an incompetent puppet king over Judah.

7:7, 8 It shall not stand: The plans of humankind are futile when they oppose the will of God. **Within sixty-five years** suggests that one must believe that God will fulfill His promises even beyond the time of one’s own death.

7:9 You is plural. The prophet was speaking to the royal family and the nation. **Believe** and **established** are a play on the same Hebrew word from which we get our word *amen*. Believing entails having knowledge of God’s Word, accepting that it is true, and placing our trust in the Lord to help us keep it. Believing the Lord is the key to receiving His promises (John 14:1).

7:10 While Isaiah’s prophecy was principally addressed to King Ahaz, it was directed to others in v. 13.

7:11 The **sign** pertains to the prediction in vv. 7–9, the demise of the power of Samaria. **In the depth or in the height** indicates that Ahaz could ask for any sign he wished.

7:12 not ask . . . test: In the mouth of the wicked Ahaz, these arrogant words rang hollow.

7:13 The pronoun **you** is plural here (see also v. 14). Thus in this verse, Isaiah is speaking to the entire royal line of David. **weary:** God responded to Ahaz in indignation. This petty and arrogant king dared to refuse the Lord; he would not trust in God even when his enemies surrounded him (see v. 12).

7:14 Again **you** is plural here. Isaiah turns from the king whom he has dismissed in judgment and addresses all who are present. The **sign** is for many. The word **LORD** speaks of the sovereignty of God, of His great control over all His creation. The pronoun **Himself** adds an absolute certainty to the impending sign. The Hebrew word rendered **virgin** means “a young woman of marriageable age.” But the word also connotes the idea of virginity, for the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible made in the second century B.C., translates the Hebrew word with a Greek word that specifically means “virgin.”

Immanuel

“Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.” During the Christmas season, this verse becomes a part of our common vocabulary (7:14). Most Christmas pageants recite the verse, and pastors explain the meaning of Immanuel, “God with Us.” How the prophecy was fulfilled in the birth of Christ is recorded in the Gospel of Matthew (Matt. 1:23). But there are still questions that surround this prophecy. For instance, how could the birth of Jesus be a sign to Ahaz?

Sometimes unraveling biblical prophecy can be difficult. This is one of those cases; Christians have interpreted this prophecy in several different ways. Some have thought the anonymous “virgin” may refer to a royal mother—more specifically Ahaz’s wife. Thus the child would be Hezekiah, Ahaz’s successor. Hezekiah would be a sign to Ahaz that God was in control: The Lord was with Ahaz; He would save Judah from the enemies that surrounded Ahaz, enabling his son to inherit the throne (Is. 7:1–3). Yet the reference to the child eating “curds and honey” was a prediction of Assyria’s eventual domination of Judah.

Others have identified Isaiah’s wife, “the prophetess” of 8:3, as the “virgin.” She was a young woman of marriageable age, another meaning of the Hebrew word translated *virgin*. The child in this case would be Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz. According to this view, the child’s two names, Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz meaning “Speed the Spoil, Hasten the Booty,” and Immanuel meaning “God with Us,” symbolize judgment and salvation. In fact, Isaiah himself described his children as “signs” to the nation (see 8:18), and he delivered a similar prophecy for this son (compare 7:16 with 8:4).

Some cite the parallel between the prophecy that a “virgin shall conceive” and Jesus’ miraculous birth as evidence that this prophecy was fulfilled only in Jesus. Mary was the virgin mother; and the birth of Jesus was the sign of God’s salvation. His name would be Immanuel, “God with Us,” because Jesus was the Son of God and He lived among us (Matt. 1:23). According to this view, Isaiah’s prophecy had no fulfillment prior to Jesus’ birth (Matt. 1:18–25).

It is not uncommon for biblical prophecies to have one level of fulfillment in the immediate future, and a final fulfillment many years later in the person and work of the Savior, Jesus. Thus the pregnancy of Isaiah’s new wife and the birth of her son (Is. 8:3) could have been a sign to King Ahaz. However, this would have been *a* fulfillment, not *the* fulfillment. The prophecy was completely fulfilled in the coming of God’s only Son to the earth. He is the only Child who can truly be called Wonderful, Counselor, and Prince of Peace (see 9:6).



ceive and bear ⁱa Son, and shall call His name ^jImmanuel.⁹ ¹⁵Curds and honey He shall eat, that He may know to refuse the evil and choose the good. ¹⁶^kFor before the Child shall know to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land that you dread will be forsaken by ^lboth her kings. ¹⁷^mThe LORD will bring the king of Assyria upon you and your people and your father's house—days that have not come since the day that ⁿEphraim departed from Judah.”

- ¹⁸ And it shall come to pass in that day
That the LORD ^owill whistle for the fly
That *is* in the farthest part of the rivers of Egypt,
And for the bee that *is* in the land of Assyria.
¹⁹ They will come, and all of them will rest
In the desolate valleys and in ^pthe clefts of the rocks,
And on all thorns and in all pastures.
²⁰ In the same day the Lord will shave with a ^qhired ^rrazor,
With those from beyond ^lthe River, with the king of Assyria,
The head and the hair of the legs,
And will also remove the beard.
²¹ It shall be in that day
That a man will keep alive a young cow and two sheep;
²² So it shall be, from the abundance of milk they give,
That he will eat curds;
For curds and honey everyone will eat who is left in the land.

¹⁴ ⁱ [Is. 9:6] / Is. 8:8, 10 ⁹ Lit. *God-With-Us*
¹⁶ ^k Is. 8:4 ¹ 2 Kin. 15:30
¹⁷ ^m 2 Chr. 28:19, 20; Is. 8:7, 8; 10:5, 6
ⁿ 1 Kin. 12:16
¹⁸ ^o Is. 5:26
¹⁹ ^p Is. 2:19; Jer. 16:16
²⁰ ^q Is. 10:5, 15 ^r 2 Kin. 16:7; 2 Chr. 28:20 ^l The Euphrates

²³ ^s Is. 5:6

CHAPTER 8

¹ ^o Is. 30:8; Hab. 2:2 ^l Lit. *Speed the Spoil, Hasten the Booty*
² ^p 2 Kin. 16:10
⁴ ^c 2 Kin. 17:6; Is. 7:16 ^d 2 Kin. 15:29 ² *knows how*
³ *plunder*
⁶ ^e John 9:7 ^f Is. 7:1, 2

- ²³ It shall happen in that day,
That wherever there could be a thousand vines
Worth a thousand *shekels* of silver,
^s It will be for briars and thorns.
²⁴ With arrows and bows *men* will come there,
Because all the land will become briars and thorns.
²⁵ And to any hill which could be dug with the hoe,
You will not go there for fear of briars and thorns;
But it will become a range for oxen
And a place for sheep to roam.

Assyria Will Invade the Land

8 Moreover the LORD said to me, “Take a large scroll, and ^awrite on it with a man’s pen concerning ^lMaher-Shalal-Hash-Baz. ²And I will take for Myself faithful witnesses to record, ^bUriah the priest and Zechariah the son of Jeberechiah.”

³Then I went to the prophetess, and she conceived and bore a son. Then the LORD said to me, “Call his name Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz; ^{4c}for before the child ²shall have knowledge to cry ‘My father’ and ‘My mother,’ ^dthe riches of Damascus and the ³spoil of Samaria will be taken away before the king of Assyria.”

⁵The LORD also spoke to me again, saying:

- ⁶ “Inasmuch as these people refused
The waters of ^eShiloah that flow softly,
And rejoice ^fin Rezin and in Remaliah’s son;

7:15 Curds and honey contrast with “bread and wine” from cultivated lands and symbolically represent the Judean’s simple diet after the Assyrian invasion. Thus the Child, similar to Isaiah’s son Shear-Jashub (see v. 3), would be identified with the remnant.

7:16 For before: Similar prophecies were spoken of the Child’s birth and Isaiah’s other son Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz (8:3): Israel and Syria would be destroyed before this child and Isaiah’s son would reach maturity (see 8:4 where Syria is referred to as Damascus and Israel as Samaria).

7:18 The invading hordes are likened to swarming insects—the **fly** and **the bee**—blanketing Judah, a condition fulfilled in the Assyrian invasions.

7:20 shave . . . the hair: This was a symbol of humiliation. **Hired** refers to Ahaz’s foolish idea of paying Assyria to save him from the alliance of Syria and Israel.

7:21, 22 in that day: This phrase can indicate times of trouble as here, or periods of blessing (as in 2:2). **A young cow and two sheep** out of what used to be a large herd indicates impoverishment in the time of trouble. The land would be so depopulated and impoverished that the limited fare of **curds and honey** (v. 15) would look like an **abundance**.

7:23–25 vines . . . thorns: The productivity of the land would be greatly reduced in the period of God’s judgment. The repetition of

briars and thorns in vv. 23–25 is emphatic; in other words, the land would no longer be cultivated.

8:1 large scroll: This message from the Lord was intended to be read and pondered by many people.

8:2 Just as the wicked Ahaz was forced to be a party to the sign regarding the birth of Immanuel (see 7:10–17), **Uriah**, an apostate priest (2 Kin. 16:10–16), and **Zechariah**, presumably a false prophet (not to be confused with the prophet who wrote the Book of Zechariah), were forced to witness to this prophecy.

8:3 Isaiah’s wife was a **prophetess** in her own right. It is possible that this was a new wife, following the death of the mother of Shear-Jashub (7:3).

8:4 spoil of Samaria . . . king of Assyria: This is a specific prediction of the fall of Samaria to the Assyrians in 722 B.C. This prophecy has to have been written shortly before that time, as the fulfillment would come before the new child would be able to speak.

8:5 The Lord also spoke to me again: This phrase introduces a new prophetic section and reminds the reader of the source of the prophetic images in the Book of Isaiah.

8:6 These people is “this people” in Hebrew, the same construction as in v. 11. The gentle waters of **Shiloah** picture the sustaining presence of the Lord; He had quietly supplied the Israelites their needs, such as pure water. Shiloah may have been a little stream that

- 7 Now therefore, behold, the Lord brings up over them The waters of ⁴the River, strong and mighty—
The king of Assyria and all his glory;
He will ⁵go up over all his channels
And go over all his banks.
- 8 He will pass through Judah,
He will overflow and pass over,
⁹He will reach up to the neck;
And the stretching out of his wings
Will ⁶fill the breadth of Your land,
O ^hImmanuel.⁷
- 9 “Be ⁱshattered, O you peoples, and be broken in pieces!
Give ear, all you from far countries.
Gird yourselves, but be broken in pieces;
Gird yourselves, but be broken in pieces.
- 10 ^jTake counsel together, but it will come to nothing;
Speak the word, ^kbut it will not stand,
^lFor ^sGod is with us.”

Fear God, Heed His Word

¹¹For the LORD spoke thus to me with ^aa strong hand, and instructed me that I should not walk in the way of this people, saying:

- 12 “Do not say, ‘A conspiracy,’
Concerning all that this people call a conspiracy,

⁷ ⁴The Euphrates
⁵Overflow
⁸ ^gIs. 30:28 ^hIs. 7:14; Matt. 1:23
⁶ Lit. be the fullness of
⁷ Lit. God-With-Us
⁹ ⁱ Joel 3:9
¹⁰ ^jIs. 7:7; Acts 5:38
^k Is. 7:14 ^lRom. 8:31
⁸ Heb. Immanuel
¹¹ ⁹ Mighty power

¹² ^l Lit. fear or terror
² Lit. in dread
¹⁴ ^m Is. 4:6; 25:4; Ezek. 11:16 ⁿ Luke 2:34; 20:17 [☆];
Rom. 9:33; 1 Pet. 2:8 ³ holy abode
⁴ stumbling over
¹⁵ ^o Matt. 21:44
⁵ captured
¹⁷ ^p Deut. 31:17; Is. 54:8 ^q Hab. 2:3
¹⁸ ^r Heb. 2:13 ^s Ps. 71:7
¹⁹ ^t 1 Sam. 28:8
^u Is. 29:4 ^v Ps. 106:28
²⁰ ^w Is. 1:10; 8:16; Luke 16:29

- Nor be afraid of their ¹ threats, nor be ² troubled.
- 13 The LORD of hosts, Him you shall hallow;
Let Him be your fear,
And let Him be your dread.
- 14 ^m He will be as a ³ sanctuary,
But ⁿ a stone of stumbling and a rock of ⁴ offense
To both the houses of Israel,
As a trap and a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.
- 15 And many among them shall ^o stumble;
They shall fall and be broken,
Be snared and ^s taken.”
- 16 Bind up the testimony,
Seal the law among my disciples.
- 17 And I will wait on the LORD,
Who ^p hides His face from the house of Jacob;
And I ^q will hope in Him.
- 18 ^r Here am I and the children whom the LORD has given me!
We ^s are for signs and wonders in Israel
From the LORD of hosts,
Who dwells in Mount Zion.
- 19 And when they say to you, ^t “Seek those who are mediums and wizards, ^u who whisper and mutter,” should not a people seek their God? *Should they* ^v seek the dead on behalf of the living? ²⁰ ^w To

flowed through an aqueduct (7:3) to carry the water from the spring Gihon on Jerusalem's east side (2 Chr. 32:30) to the Pool of Siloam (Neh. 3:15) in the lower or southern end of the city. **rejoice:** The Judeans rejoiced because they thought they were going to defeat the kings of Israel and Syria through Ahaz's strategy of hiring the armies of Assyria. They looked for the salvation that a mere king could offer instead of appealing to the King of kings for protection. **8:7, 8 The River** refers to the Euphrates, but also conveys the image of pagan gods. **neck:** Assyria would devastate Judah, but not completely annihilate it (ch. 37). **wings:** In the middle of v. 8 the image of Assyria as mighty waters changes to the image of a bird of prey. Isaiah bestows the name of the promised Child, **Immanuel** (7:14), on Judah, because it would be preserved only because God was with that nation (see v. 10).

8:9 Far countries refers to the many nations that made up Assyria's international army (5:26; 7:18). **Gird yourselves . . . be broken:** The nations would do the will of God, but in turn would be destroyed.

8:10 It will not stand: The Lord would defeat the purposes of Judah's enemies; all their counsels would come to nothing. This promise concludes the prophecies of 7:1–8:10. The Child whose name would mean **God is with us** (v. 8; 7:14), was a sign not only of the destruction of Syria and Israel (7:17), but of all of God's enemies, including Assyria.

8:11–9:1 After an introductory summary (v. 11), this prophecy consists of two cycles: (1) Judah is commanded to trust in the Lord or perish, a command reinforced by Isaiah and his children, who serve as signs to Judah (vv. 12–18). (2) Judah is commanded to walk in the light of Isaiah's prophecies or be thrown into utter darkness (8:19–9:1).

8:11 Strong hand signifies a powerful sense of the Lord's inspiration (Ezek. 1:3).

8:12 Do not say: The commands in vv. 12, 13, 15, 19 are in the plural. Perhaps Isaiah's adversaries were labeling his rejection of an alliance with Assyria a **conspiracy**.

8:13 Hallow means to treat as holy. **Your fear** indicates a sense of reverence, awe, and wonder. **Your dread** indicates fright and terror. If the people want to be frightened, they should be frightened of God. If they want to respond to God correctly, they should treat His name with awe and fear Him (Ex. 20:20).

8:14 God is a **sanctuary** for believers, but a **stone of stumbling** for unbelievers (Ps. 118:22; Luke 20:17, 18; Rom. 9:33; 1 Pet. 2:6–8). **Both the houses** designates both the northern and the southern kingdom, that is, both Israel and Judah.

8:15 stumble . . . broken: The wicked will not prevail for long (v. 10).

8:16 Testimony refers to a legal transaction. **Law** refers to God's instruction revealed through Isaiah. Isaiah's disciples put his prophecies in the form of a legal transaction probably to prove their authenticity when they were fulfilled (see vv. 1, 2; compare Jer. 28:9; 32:12–14).

8:17 wait . . . hope: These words indicate a confident expectation that God would meet the needs of His people and deliver them from disaster (40:31; Ps. 40:1). Ultimately, the hope of Isaiah would be fulfilled in the Savior Jesus (Heb. 2:12, 13).

8:18 children: Isaiah, whose name speaks of the salvation of God, and his two sons, whose names speak of the impending judgment of God, were **signs and wonders in Israel**—that is, they were symbols (20:3). **Mount Zion:** The place of the holy temple was a mirror of God's dwelling in the highest heaven.

8:19 In the fertility religions of Canaan **mediums and wizards** would deliver divine revelations. **who whisper and mutter:** But the best one could get from these perverted “prophets” was garbled

the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, *it is because* ^xthere⁶ is no light in them.

²¹ They will pass through it hard-pressed and hungry; and it shall happen, when they are hungry, that they will be enraged and ^ycurse⁷ their king and their God, and look upward. ²² Then they will look to the earth, and see trouble and darkness, gloom of anguish; and *they will* be driven into darkness.

The Government of the Promised Son

9 Nevertheless ^athe gloom *will* not be upon her who *is* distressed, As when at ^bfirst He lightly esteemed The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, And ^cafterward more heavily oppressed *her*, By the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, In Galilee of the Gentiles. ² ^dThe people who walked in darkness Have seen a great light; Those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, Upon them a light has shined.

³ You have multiplied the nation And ⁱincreased its joy; They rejoice before You

²⁰ ^xIs. 8:22; Mic. 3:6 ⁶ Or *they have no dawn*
²¹ ^yRev. 16:11 ⁷ Or *by their king and by their God*

CHAPTER 9

¹ ^aIs. 8:22 ^b2 Kin. 15:29; 2 Chr. 16:4
^cMatt. 4:13-16 ☆
² ^dMatt. 4:16; Luke 1:79 ☆; 2 Cor. 4:6; Eph. 5:8
³ ⁱSo with Qr., Tg.; Kt., Vg. *not increased joy*; LXX *Most of the people You brought down in Your joy*

^e Judg. 5:30
⁴ ^fJudg. 7:22
⁵ ^gIs. 66:15 ²boot ³for the fire
⁶ ^h[Is. 7:14; Luke 2:11] ☆; John 1:45
ⁱLuke 2:7; [John 3:16; 1 John 4:9]
^j[Matt. 28:18; 1 Cor. 15:25]; Rev. 12:5
^kJudg. 13:18 ^lTitus 2:13 ^mEph. 2:14
⁷ ⁿDan. 2:44; Matt. 1:1, 6; Luke 1:32, 33 ☆; John 7:42
^oIs. 37:32

According to the joy of harvest, As *men* rejoice ^ewhen they divide the spoil.

⁴ For You have broken the yoke of his burden And the staff of his shoulder, The rod of his oppressor, As in the day of ^fMidian.
⁵ For every warrior's ²sandal from the noisy battle, And garments rolled in blood, ^gWill be used for burning and fuel ³of fire.

⁶ ^hFor unto us a Child is born, Unto us a ⁱSon is given; And ^jthe government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called ^kWonderful, Counselor, ^lMighty God, Everlasting Father, ^mPrince of Peace.
⁷ Of the increase of *His* government and peace ⁿThere will be no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The ^ozeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

muttering. **Seek the dead** indicates that the people were involved in necromancy, the practice of conjuring up the spirits of the dead in order to influence events (29:4; 65:4).

8:21 They refers to the wicked who refuse to revere God (v. 13). **It** refers perhaps to the implied darkness of v. 20. **curse**: For similar usage, see Ex. 22:28; Lev. 24:15, 16.

8:22 The prophets commonly used the imagery of **darkness** to indicate judgment (5:30). The synonyms for **darkness** in this verse describe not only moral and spiritual blight, but also the invasion of Assyria that took away liberty and brought foreign oppression.

9:1 Nevertheless the gloom: This line completes the thought of 8:22 and promises a dramatic change to come. That change would be the explosion of light found in the Good News: Jesus can free us from the darkness that comes from our sin (see Eph. 5:8). The ancient tribal allotments of **Zebulun** and **Naphtali** (Josh. 19:10–16, 32–39), which included **Galilee**, were the first to feel the brunt of the Assyrian invasions (2 Kin. 15:29). The three phrases at the end of the verse—the **way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles** or “nations”—indicate administrative districts of the Assyrian conqueror Tiglath-Pileser III as a result of the three campaigns he waged in the west around 733 B.C.

9:2–7 This seventh prophecy in the context of the Syro-Ephraimite war is climactic: An ideal monarch will come who will bring an end to war and usher in universal peace. The light that will replace the darkness of Assyrian oppression will be a Child, God incarnate (7:14). His four compounded throne names (v. 6) depict His divine-human nature as well as His universal program of salvation.

9:2 Have seen: The future event is described by the prophet, under the impulse of the Spirit, as having already occurred. **Light** stands for God's blessings, presence, and revelation (2:5), that is incarnate in Jesus (58:8; 59:9; 60:1, 2, 19, 20; John 8:12). **Shadow of death** means “deep darkness” (compare 60:2; Ps. 23:4). Here this Hebrew word complements the more commonly used word for **darkness**.

9:3 joy of harvest . . . divide the spoil: The agricultural society

knows no greater joy than that of harvest. A soldier knows no greater joy than that of a finished battle when his side has won, he is still alive, and there is now booty to divide. Contrast the joy of harvest in this verse with the lack of joy at harvest in 16:10.

9:4 yoke . . . staff . . . rod: These three images of oppression emphasize the suffering of the people during the period of foreign domination. The pronoun **his** refers to Assyria, which boasted of the heavy yokes it imposed on its captive peoples (10:27). **The day of Midian** refers to the defeat of Midian (10:26; Judg. 6–8).

9:5 warrior's sandal: Assyrian armies were marked by the noise of the marching of many feet. **Garments rolled in blood** from past battles was a deliberate scare tactic to frighten enemies in an impending battle. All of these emblems of warfare were to be burned in the coming day of the reign of the divine Child (v. 6).

9:6 Born speaks of the Child's humanity and **given** of His deity. **Wonderful, Counselor** is one name, meaning “wonderful divine Counselor” (11:1–5). **Mighty God** indicates that the Lord is a powerful Warrior (10:21). **Everlasting Father** describes a King and Father who provides for and protects His people forever (40:9–11; Matt. 11:27–30). Thus the word Father is used here of the Savior's role as an ideal king. **Prince of Peace** is the climactic title (2:4; 11:6–9; 53:5; Luke 2:14; Rom. 5:1). The Child is the true Prince—the one who has the right to reign and who will usher in peace. The four double names combine aspects of Jesus' deity and His humanity. Together, these four double names assert the dual nature of the Savior: He is God become man.

9:7 Of the increase may be translated “to Him will increase.” **Government and peace** may be rephrased as “peaceful reign.” The risen Lord Jesus brings His rule of peace to the believer's heart in the present age. Moreover, He will establish the kingdom of God which will be His reign of peace. The fact that this coming Child will occupy **the throne of David** forever fulfills God's promise to David (2 Sam. 7:8–16; Ps. 89:19–37; Luke 1:32, 33).

The Punishment of Samaria

⁸ The Lord sent a word against ⁷Jacob,
And it has fallen on Israel.
⁹ All the people will know—
Ephraim and the inhabitant of
Samaria—
Who say in pride and arrogance of
heart:
¹⁰ “The bricks have fallen down,
But we will rebuild with hewn
stones;
The sycamores are cut down,
But we will replace *them* with
cedars.”
¹¹ Therefore the LORD shall set up
The adversaries of Rezin against him,
And spur his enemies on,
¹² The Syrians before and the
Philistines behind;
And they shall devour Israel with an
open mouth.

For all this His anger is not turned
away,
But His hand *is* ⁴stretched out still.

¹³ For the people do not turn to Him
who strikes them,
Nor do they seek the LORD of hosts.
¹⁴ Therefore the LORD will cut off head
and tail from Israel,
Palm branch and bulrush ⁹in one
day.
¹⁵ The elder and honorable, he *is* the
head;
The prophet who teaches lies, he *is*
the tail.
¹⁶ For ⁷the leaders of this people cause
them to err,
And *those who are* led by them are
destroyed.
¹⁷ Therefore the Lord ⁵will have no joy
in their young men,
Nor have mercy on their fatherless
and widows;

⁸ ⁷ Gen. 32:28
¹² ⁴ In judgment
¹⁴ ⁹ Rev. 18:8
¹⁶ ⁷ Is. 3:12; Mic. 3:1,
5, 9; Matt. 15:14
¹⁷ ⁵ Ps. 147:10

⁴ Is. 5:25
⁵ foolishness
¹⁸ ⁷ Ps. 83:14; [Is.
1:7; 10:17]; Nah.
1:10; Mal. 4:1
¹⁹ ⁷ Is. 8:22 ⁷ Mic.
7:2, 6
²⁰ ⁷ Lev. 26:26
⁷ Jer. 19:9 ⁶ slice off
or tear
²¹ ⁷ 2 Chr. 28:6, 8;
Is. 11:13 ⁹ Is. 9:12, 17

CHAPTER 10

¹ ⁹ Ps. 58:2

For everyone *is* a hypocrite and an
evildoer,
And every mouth speaks ⁵folly.

⁴ For all this His anger is not turned
away,
But His hand *is* stretched out still.

¹⁸ For wickedness ⁷burns as the fire;
It shall devour the briers and
thorns,
And kindle in the thickets of the
forest;
They shall mount up *like* rising
smoke.

¹⁹ Through the wrath of the LORD of
hosts

⁷ The land is burned up,
And the people shall be as fuel for
the fire;

¹⁰ No man shall spare his brother.

²⁰ And he shall ⁶sneak on the right
hand
And be hungry;
He shall devour on the left hand
³ And not be satisfied;
⁷ Every man shall eat the flesh of his
own arm.

²¹ Manasseh *shall devour* Ephraim, and
Ephraim Manasseh;
Together they *shall be* ²against Judah.

⁴ For all this His anger is not turned
away,
But His hand *is* stretched out still.

10 “Woe to those who ⁴decree
unrighteous decrees,
Who write misfortune,
Which they have prescribed
² To rob the needy of justice,
And to take what is right from the
poor of My people,
That widows may be their prey,
And *that* they may rob the fatherless.

9:8—10:4 This passage contains a judgment against the northern kingdom: the Lord will destroy it and its capital Samaria. The accusations and judicial sentences in this section indicate that the Lord is both Judge and Punisher (9:11, 14, 19; 10:4).

9:10 Bricks refers to the mud brick walls common in ancient Israel. The people were planning to make their buildings more grandiose, not taking into account the fact that the Lord was about to destroy the buildings completely because of His judgment on their sins.

9:11 The adversaries refers to the Assyrians who were used by the LORD to punish the northern kingdom.

9:12 The Syrians were to the east of Israel and the Philistines to the west.

9:13 Turn indicates repentance and a desire for restoration.

9:14 Head and tail is a figure of speech for all leaders.

9:16 cause them to err: For a similar usage, see 3:12.

9:17 Young men . . . widows denotes every person. Everyone had turned from the faithful worship of God. All of Israel had been contaminated with evil, hypocrisy, and foolishness (see 1 Cor. 5:6 for an exhortation not to let wickedness corrupt the church).

9:18, 19 The fire of wickedness is matched by the fire of the wrath of the LORD.

9:18 Wickedness refers both to the sin itself and to its destructive consequences.

9:19, 20 No man shall spare his brother refers to anarchy (3:4, 5). right hand . . . left hand: These figures of speech indicate an insatiable hunger and the consequent ruin that would occur in the day of judgment.

9:21 Manasseh fought Ephraim (see Judg. 12:4); then together they fought Judah (but see 11:13).

10:1 Woe is a chilling word when spoken by God (5:8–23; 10:5; 18:1); here the Lord condemns the leaders who write laws that perpetuate evil in the community.

10:2 The needy are regularly seen in Scripture as those to whom the righteous should show true piety. When godly people reach out to help those who cannot help themselves, they display pure, biblical religion (James 1:27). Conversely, the mark of the ungodly can be seen in their oppressive actions against people who cannot help themselves. They set themselves up for the sure judgment of God (v. 3).

- 3 ^b What will you do in ^c the day of punishment,
And in the desolation *which* will come from ^d afar?
To whom will you flee for help?
And where will you leave your glory?
- 4 Without Me they shall bow down among the ^e prisoners,
And they shall fall ^f among the slain.”
- ^f For all this His anger is not turned away,
But His hand *is* stretched out still.

Arrogant Assyria Also Judged

- 5 “Woe to Assyria, ^g the rod of My anger
And the staff in whose hand is My indignation.
- 6 I will send him against ^h an ungodly nation,
And against the people of My wrath
I will ⁱ give him charge,
To seize the spoil, to take the prey,
And to tread them down like the mire of the streets.
- 7 ^j Yet he does not mean so,
Nor does his heart think so;
But *it is* in his heart to destroy,
And cut off not a few nations.
- 8 ^k For he says,
‘Are not my princes altogether kings?’
- 9 *Is not* ^l Calno ^m like Carchemish?
Is not Hamath like Arpad?
Is not Samaria ⁿ like Damascus?
- 10 As my hand has found the kingdoms of the idols,
Whose carved images excelled those of Jerusalem and Samaria,
- 11 As I have done to Samaria and her idols,
Shall I not do also to Jerusalem and her idols?”

3 ^b Job 31:14 ^c Is. 13:6; Jer. 9:9; Hos. 9:7; Luke 19:44
^d Is. 5:26
4 ^e Is. 24:22 ^f Is. 5:25 ^g Lit. *under*
5 ^h Jer. 51:20
6 ⁱ Is. 9:17 ^j 2 Kin. 17:6; Jer. 34:22
7 ^k Gen. 50:20; Mic. 4:11, 12; Acts 2:23, 24
8 ^l 2 Kin. 19:10
9 ^m Gen. 10:10; Amos 6:2 ⁿ 2 Chr. 35:20 ^o 2 Kin. 16:9

12 ^o 2 Kin. 19:31; Is. 28:21 ^p 2 Kin. 19:35; 2 Chr. 32:21; Jer. 50:18 ^q *completed*
13 ^r [2 Kin. 19:22-24]; Is. 37:24-27; Ezek. 28:4; Dan. 4:30 ^s *mighty*
14 ^t Job 31:25
15 ^u Jer. 51:20
16 ^v *So with Bg.; MT, DSS YHWH (the Lord)*
17 ^w Is. 9:18

12 Therefore it shall come to pass, when the Lord has ² performed all His work ^o on Mount Zion and on Jerusalem, *that He will say*, ^p “I will punish the fruit of the arrogant heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his haughty looks.”

13 ^q For he says:

“By the strength of my hand I have done *it*,
And by my wisdom, for I am prudent;
Also I have removed the boundaries of the people,
And have robbed their treasuries;
So I have put down the inhabitants like a ³ valiant *man*.

14 ^r My hand has found like a nest the riches of the people,
And as one gathers eggs *that are* left, I have gathered all the earth;
And there was no one who moved *his* wing,
Nor opened *his* mouth with even a peep.”

15 Shall ^s the ax boast itself against him who chops with it?
Or shall the saw exalt itself against him who saws with it?
As if a rod could wield *itself* against those who lift it up,
Or as if a staff could lift up, *as if it were* not wood!

16 Therefore the Lord, the ⁴ Lord of hosts,
Will send leanness among his fat ones;
And under his glory
He will kindle a burning
Like the burning of a fire.

17 So the Light of Israel will be for a fire,
And his Holy One for a flame;
^t It will burn and devour
His thorns and his briars in one day.

10:3 From afar refers to Assyria. **To whom:** The wicked could not turn to God, for they had refused to do so before and had ignored God's warnings (see 8:6).

10:4 Prisoners refers to the Israelites being led away into exile.

10:5–34 This salvation oracle has two major sections: (1) Assyria's doom (vv. 5–19); (2) the remnant's salvation (vv. 20–34).

10:5 And . . . indignation may also be translated “even the staff in My indignant hand.” **rod of My anger:** Though God sovereignly uses sinners as instruments of His will (7:17; 13:5), they will be held accountable for their own wickedness. Thus God shows that He is just in all His ways (Hab. 1–3).

10:6 The ungodly nation is Judah (vv. 11, 12).

10:7 in his heart: The purpose of the arrogant Assyrians was to continue their path of uninterrupted conquest. But God had different plans for them (see v. 12).

10:9 Calno . . . Damascus: This is a list of cities that had already fallen to the Assyrians.

10:10, 11 idols . . . images: The Assyrians had conquered the na-

tions who had false gods; surely, they believed, they would also have an easy time against Jerusalem and her idols. Although only the living God was to be worshiped by the Israelites, they had repeatedly broken that command (Ex. 20:4–6; Judg. 2:19).

10:12 The fruit is the king's speech cited in vv. 13, 14. **arrogant heart . . . haughty looks:** For a similar idea, see 2:11; 3:9; 9:9.

10:13 By the strength of my hand: The wicked are quick to take credit for their successes. The righteous correctly give praise to God for their accomplishments.

10:15 An implement in the hand of its user has no reason for boasting; Assyria was merely a tool in the hand of God. It had no reason to boast.

10:16 leanness . . . burning: These words describe the coming judgment of the Assyrians, who had become fat because of their acts of conquest.

10:17, 18 The Light of Israel is a wonderful title for God (see 9:2; 58:8; 60:1, 19, 20). The Lord Jesus is described as a “Light” of Israel as well (see John 1:1–13). **His thorns . . . his forest** refers to all persons

18 And it will consume the glory of his forest and of ^uhis fruitful field, Both soul and body; And they will be as when a sick man wastes away.
19 Then the rest of the trees of his forest Will be so few in number That a child may write them.

The Returning Remnant of Israel

20 And it shall come to pass in that day That the remnant of Israel, And such as have escaped of the house of Jacob, ^vWill never again depend on him who ⁵defeated them, But will depend on the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, in truth.
21 The remnant will return, the remnant of Jacob, To the ^wMighty God.
22 ^xFor though your people, O Israel, be as the sand of the sea, ^yA remnant of them will return; The destruction decreed shall overflow with righteousness.
23 ^zFor the Lord God of hosts Will make a determined end In the midst of all the land.

24 Therefore thus says the Lord God of hosts: “O My people, who dwell in Zion, ^ado not be afraid of the Assyrian. He shall strike you with a rod and lift up his staff against you, in the manner of ^bEgypt. 25 For yet a very little while

18 ^u 2 Kin. 19:23
20 ^v 2 Kin. 16:7
⁵ Lit. *struck*
21 ^w [Is. 9:6]
22 ^x Rom. 9:27, 28
^y Is. 6:13
23 ^z Is. 28:22; Dan. 9:27; Rom. 9:28
24 ^a Is. 7:4; 12:2
^b Ex. 14

25 ^c Is. 10:5; 26:20; Dan. 11:36
26 ^d 2 Kin. 19:35
^e Judg. 7:25; Is. 9:4
^f Ex. 14:26, 27
⁶ *arouse*
27 ^g Ps. 105:15; [1 John 2:20]
29 ^h 1 Sam. 13:23
ⁱ 1 Sam. 11:4 ⁷ Or *over the pass*
30 ^j 1 Sam. 25:44
^k Judg. 18:7 ⁸ Or *Cry shrilly* ⁹ So with MT, Tg., Vg.; LXX, Syr. *Listen to her, O Anathoth*
31 ^j Josh. 15:31
32 ^m 1 Sam. 21:1; Neh. 11:32 ⁿ Is. 13:2
^o Is. 37:22

^cand the indignation will cease, as will My anger in their destruction.” 26 And the LORD of hosts will ⁶stir up ^da scourge for him like the slaughter of ^eMidian at the rock of Oreb; ^fas His rod was on the sea, so will He lift it up in the manner of Egypt.

27 It shall come to pass in that day That his burden will be taken away from your shoulder, And his yoke from your neck, And the yoke will be destroyed because of ^gthe anointing oil.
28 He has come to Aiath, He has passed Migron; At Michmash he has attended to his equipment.
29 They have gone ⁷along ^hthe ridge, They have taken up lodging at Geba. Ramah is afraid, ⁱGibeah of Saul has fled.
30 ⁸Lift up your voice, O daughter ^jof Gallim! Cause it to be heard as far as ^kLaish—
⁹O poor Anathoth!
31 ^lMadmenah has fled, The inhabitants of Gebim seek refuge.
32 As yet he will remain ^mat Nob that day; He will ⁿshake his fist at the mount of ^othe daughter of Zion, The hill of Jerusalem.

and possessions in the Assyrian Empire. What people count as honorable or despicable will mean little before God’s burning judgment. **10:20 The remnant** is the portion of Abraham’s offspring that God preserved. The Hebrew word used here for *remnant* is different from the words used in 1:9; 6:13. **depend:** Finally there will be a people whose trust will be unchangeably in the Lord.

hosts

(Heb. *tseba’ot*) (10:16; Gen. 2:1; Ps. 103:21; 148:2) Strong’s #6635

This word comes from a verb meaning “to fight” or “to serve.” Angels are said to be *hosts* because they serve God (1 Kin. 22:19; Ps. 103:20, 21; compare Luke 2:13). The heavens are under the command of God and render Him worship, thus they are also called *host* (45:12; Neh. 9:6; Ps. 33:6). The term also commonly refers to combat troops (2 Kin. 5:1; 1 Chr. 7:11, 40). “The armies of the LORD” is an expression used once for the children of Israel, and twice for God’s army of angels (Ex. 12:41; Josh. 5:14, 15). Of the nearly five hundred uses of this word, almost three hundred are in an expression such as “the LORD of hosts” (1 Sam. 17:45), a title describing God’s power. On two occasions, the NT writers transliterated this Hebrew title as “the Lord of Sabaoth” to describe the awesome might of God (see Rom. 9:29; James 5:4).

10:22 as the sand . . . A remnant: Most of the people of the northern kingdom were carried off into captivity. But some Israelites made their way to Judah and became part of the southern kingdom. These people and their descendants would act as a remnant by preserving the names of the northern tribes among the people of God.
10:24 Lord God of hosts: For a similar usage, see 1:9. **O My people:** The language here expresses the loving care of the Lord for His people. They need not fear the armies of the Assyrians.
10:25 a very little while: From the viewpoint of eternity, the period of trial is exceedingly brief.
10:26 On the sea refers to God’s great triumph over Pharaoh at the Exodus (Ex. 14; 15).
10:27 in that day: For a similar idea, see 2:12. The meaning of **anointing oil** here is uncertain. If it means “fat,” the image may be of a strong, fattened ox breaking its yoke.
10:28–32 These verses depict Isaiah’s vision of the king of Assyria’s relentless march south over difficult terrain from **Aiath**—that is, Ai. Ai was ten miles north of Jerusalem on a point overlooking the city.
10:28, 29 The cities as listed in these verses are closer and closer to the capital at Jerusalem. Each town conquered was another step toward the impending defeat of the holy city.
10:30, 31 Lift up your voice: The language turns to that of panic. The actions are those of a frightened people facing defeat and disaster.
10:32 daughter of Zion: The army was near **Jerusalem** itself. The pronoun **he** refers to Assyria, the enemy.

- 33 Behold, the Lord,
The LORD of hosts,
Will lop off the bough with terror;
^pThose of high stature *will be* hewn
down,
And the haughty will be humbled.
34 He will cut down the thickets of the
forest with iron,
And Lebanon will fall by the Mighty
One.

The Reign of Jesse's Offspring

- 11 There ^ashall come forth a ¹Rod
from the ²stem of ^bJesse,
And ^ca Branch shall ³grow out of his
roots.
2 ^dThe Spirit of the LORD shall rest
upon Him,
The Spirit of wisdom and
understanding,
The Spirit of counsel and might,
The Spirit of knowledge and of the
fear of the LORD.
3 His delight *is* in the fear of the LORD,
And He shall not judge by the sight
of His eyes,
Nor decide by the hearing of His
ears;
4 But ^ewith righteousness He shall
judge the poor,
And decide with equity for the meek
of the earth;
He shall ^fstrike the earth with the
rod of His mouth,

33 ^p Is. 37:24,
36-38; Ezek. 31:3;
Amos 2:9

CHAPTER 11

1 ^a [Zech. 6:12]; Rev.
5:5 ^b [Is. 9:7; 11:10];
Matt. 1:5; [Acts
13:23] ☆ ^c Is. 4:2
¹ Shoot ² stock or
trunk ³ be fruitful
2 ^d [Is. 42:1; 48:16;
61:1; Matt. 3:16];
Mark 1:10; Luke
3:22; [John 1:32] ☆
4 ^e Rev. 19:11 ☆
^f Job 4:9; Is. 30:28,
33; Mal. 4:6;
2 Thess. 2:8

6 ^g Hos. 2:18
9 ^h Job 5:23; Is.
65:25; Ezek. 34:25;
Hos. 2:18 ⁱ Ps. 98:2,
3; Is. 45:6; Hab. 2:14
10 ^j Is. 2:11 ^k Is.
11:1 ☆; Rom. 15:12
^l Is. 27:12, 13 ^m Rom.
15:10

- And with the breath of His lips He
shall slay the wicked.
5 Righteousness shall be the belt of His
loins,
And faithfulness the belt of His waist.
6 “The ^gwolf also shall dwell with the
lamb,
The leopard shall lie down with the
young goat,
The calf and the young lion and the
fatling together;
And a little child shall lead them.
7 The cow and the bear shall graze;
Their young ones shall lie down
together;
And the lion shall eat straw like
the ox.
8 The nursing child shall play by the
cobra’s hole,
And the weaned child shall put his
hand in the viper’s den.
9 ^hThey shall not hurt nor destroy in all
My holy mountain,
For ⁱthe earth shall be full of the
knowledge of the LORD
As the waters cover the sea.
10 “And ^jin that day ^kthere shall be a
Root of Jesse,
Who shall stand as a ^lbanner to the
people;
For the ^mGentiles shall seek Him,
And His resting place shall be
glorious.”

10:33, 34 The **bough** is the king of Assyria and the **thickets** are his army. The point is that God will bring judgment on the instruments He used to judge Israel.

11:1–9 This celebrated salvation oracle about the King of Peace (4:2; 7:14; 9:6) consists of three sections: (1) His endowment (vv. 1, 2); (2) His righteous rule (vv. 3–5); (3) His kingdom of peace (vv. 6–9).

11:1 A Rod from the stem of Jesse (see 1 Sam. 16:10–13) represents the new and greater David. As David inaugurated a kingdom of righteousness and peace, the new David, the “rod” or “root” from David’s line (53:2), will establish an incomparably greater kingdom. The words Rod and Branch are messianic terms. They are figurative words for the great descendant of the household of David, the Seed of the woman promised in Gen. 3:15, Jesus Christ Himself (see Matt. 1:17).

11:2 Spirit: As in the case of David (1 Sam. 16:13), the Messiah would be empowered by the Holy Spirit (4:4; 42:1; 48:16; 59:21; 61:1; Luke 3:22), the Agent for establishing God’s kingdom (Gen. 1:1, 2; Judg. 3:10; 6:34; 1 Sam. 10:6). The first readers of the Hebrew Scriptures likely thought that the term Spirit was just another way of speaking of God with awe or wonder. In the NT, we learn that the term refers to the third Person of the Trinity (see Matt. 28:19). Solomon prayed for **wisdom and understanding** (1 Kin. 3:9), the administrative skill to govern the people according to the principles of righteousness and justice (Deut. 1:15–17). The Messiah will embody all this; He will be the ideal King (33:6). The Holy Spirit’s **counsel** is not advice, but authoritative plans and decisions. **the fear of the Lord:** The Messiah would demonstrate in all His life the correct response to God: He would honor and obey Him (Ex. 20:20). The people of God in all ages are under orders to respond to Him with reverential awe (Lev. 19:14; Prov. 19:23).

11:3 Delight refers to the sense of smell. There may be an allusion to

the incense burned at a coronation ceremony. Whereas “fear of God” usually means a standard of moral conduct known and accepted by humankind in general, **the fear of the Lord** in this case may refer to the standard of moral conduct known through special revelation and accepted by the faithful.

11:4 In this context, **judge** does not mean to bring people to account, but to act on their behalf. As the judge of His people, God sentences the wicked and offers protection and defense for the innocent and oppressed. **rod of His mouth:** The Messiah will conquer by His speech (49:2; Heb. 4:12; Rev. 19:15).

11:6–9 This picture of cruel beasts miraculously regenerated with a new nature that makes them protect their natural prey portrays a reign of peace and security. This can only be realized in the return of the Messiah to establish the kingdom of God (65:17–25). In God’s peaceful kingdom, carnivores will become herbivores; natural enemies will become companions; and little children will play safely near the dwellings of formerly venomous snakes.

11:6 a little child shall lead them: In the coming kingdom, a youngster will be able to lead formerly wild animals. This is a way of emphasizing the end of terror, fright, and danger in the coming kingdom.

11:9 In ancient times, **the knowledge of the Lord** was limited and spotty; there is coming a glorious age in which there will be no limit to access to divine truth. **As the waters cover the sea** means “thoroughly.” God will make Himself known throughout the earth.

11:10 in that day: This verse forms a single prophetic vision. The exalted **Root of Jesse** will attract the **Gentiles to His resting place** (2:3). This is a prophecy of the coming of people of all nations to the knowledge of God. Thus in the OT, the Lord expresses His concern for the salvation of other nations (see Gen. 12:1–3). World mission was not a new idea with the Great Commission (Matt. 28:18–20).

- ¹¹ It shall come to pass in that day
That the Lord shall set His hand
 again the second time
 To recover the remnant of His people
 who are left,
^aFrom Assyria and Egypt,
 From Pathros and Cush,
 From Elam and Shinar,
 From Hamath and the ^dislands of
 the sea.
- ¹² He will set up a banner for the
 nations,
 And will ^sassemble the outcasts of
 Israel,
 And gather together ^ethe dispersed
 of Judah
 From the four ^ecorners of the earth.
- ¹³ Also ^pthe envy of Ephraim shall
 depart,
 And the adversaries of Judah shall be
 cut off;
 Ephraim shall not envy Judah,
 And Judah shall not harass Ephraim.
- ¹⁴ But they shall fly down upon the
 shoulder of the Philistines
 toward the west;
 Together they shall plunder the
⁷people of the East;
^qThey shall lay their hand on Edom
 and Moab;
 And the people of Ammon shall obey
 them.
- ¹⁵ The LORD ^rwill utterly ^sdestroy the
 tongue of the Sea of Egypt;
 With His mighty wind He will shake
 His fist over ⁹the River,

¹¹ ^a Is. 19:23-25; Hos. 11:11; Zech. 10:10 ^d Or coastlands ¹² ^e John 7:35 ^s gather ⁶ Lit. wings ¹³ ^p Is. 9:21; Jer. 3:18; Ezek. 37:16, 17, 22; Hos. 1:11 ¹⁴ ^q Is. 63:1; Dan. 11:41; Joel 3:19; Amos 9:12 ⁷ Lit. sons ¹⁵ ^r Is. 50:2; 51:10, 11; Zech. 10:10, 11 ⁸ So with MT, Vg.; LXX, Syr., Tg. dry up ⁹ The Euphrates

¹ Lit. in sandals ¹⁶ ^s Is. 19:23 ^t Ex. 14:29

CHAPTER 12

¹ ^a Is. 2:11 ² ^b Ps. 83:18 ^c Ex. 15:2; Ps. 118:14 ³ ^d [John 4:10, 14; 7:37, 38] ⁴ ^e 1 Chr. 16:8; Ps. 105:1 ^f Ps. 145:4-6 ⁹ Ps. 34:3 ⁵ ^h Ex. 15:1; Ps. 98:1; Is. 24:14; 42:10, 11; 44:23

- And strike it in the seven streams,
 And make *men* cross over ¹dry-shod.
¹⁶ ^sThere will be a highway for the
 remnant of His people
 Who will be left from Assyria,
^tAs it was for Israel
 In the day that he came up from the
 land of Egypt.

A Hymn of Praise

- 12** And ^ain that day you will say:
 “O LORD, I will praise You;
 Though You were angry with me,
 Your anger is turned away, and You
 comfort me.
² Behold, God *is* my salvation,
 I will trust and not be afraid;
^bFor ^cYAH, the LORD, *is* my strength
 and song;
 He also has become my salvation.”
- ³ Therefore with joy you will draw
^dwater
 From the wells of salvation.
- ⁴ And in that day you will say:
^e“Praise the LORD, call upon His name;
^fDeclare His deeds among the
 peoples,
 Make mention that His ^gname is
 exalted.
⁵ ^hSing to the LORD,
 For He has done excellent things;
 This *is* known in all the earth.

Banner is a rallying symbol. Jesus the Messiah is the *banner* for the gathering of peoples from all over the earth.

11:11–16 This prophecy concerning the second Exodus (51:9–11) consists of the regathering of the exiles (vv. 11, 12), their unity in opposition to God’s enemies (vv. 13, 14), and an allusion to the first Exodus to show how much greater is the second one (vv. 15, 16).

11:11 The **second time** may refer to the remnant coming back to the land in 538 B.C., in contrast to the first Exodus from Egypt. Beyond that, it could also refer to the remnant’s coming to Christ in the present age (Rom. 11:5), or to its future return to Christ (Rom. 11:11–27). **From Assyria . . . and the islands of the sea** indicates the whole earth (v. 12).

11:12 the four corners of the earth: This figurative expression is similar to the words of Acts 1:8: “to the end of the earth.” The Messiah will gather disciples from all over the world.

11:13 Ephraim . . . Judah: Not only will God destroy the enemies of the Israelites and Judeans, but He will also remove their ancient enmities (9:20, 21).

11:14 upon the shoulder: The image is that of a bird of prey attacking another bird. **The Philistines, Edom, Moab, and Ammon,** Israel’s traditional enemies, may represent the adversaries of the Messiah’s kingdom (see Mic. 5:6 for a similar use of the word Assyria).

11:15 Mighty wind is an allusion to Ex. 14:21–27. **The River** refers to the Euphrates. **dryshod:** As God had provided a dry passage across the Red Sea in the first Exodus, so in the second Exodus He would remove any physical barrier that would hinder the return of His people.

11:16 A highway symbolizes the certainty of the return, for no obstacles would hinder the Lord’s returning exiles (35:8–10; 40:3,

4; 57:14; 62:10). **In the day:** The reference here is to the first Exodus (v. 11).

12:1–6 This hymn of praise for God’s salvation by the restored remnant after the second Exodus (11:12–16) resembles Moses and Miriam’s hymn of praise after the first Exodus from Egypt (Ex. 15).

12:1 in that day: For a similar idea, see 2:12. The first **you** is singular, representing the remnant as an individual. **angry:** The anger of God had caused the people to be dispersed among the nations (5:25; 9:12); His grace would lead to their regathering.

12:2 God is my salvation: This psalm of redemption is based on the first psalm of redemption in Exodus (Ex. 15:2; Ps. 118:14). **YAH, the LORD,** by its repetition, emphasizes that Israel’s covenant-keeping God—and not the nations—brings salvation (26:4). **My strength and song** may be rephrased as “my strong song” or “my song of strength” (Ex. 15:2).

12:3 You in vv. 3–5 is plural. The Hebrew poets often associate the concept of **water** with salvation (Ex. 17:1–7). In an arid land, the provision of **wells** and springs was regarded as a divine gift (55:1).

12:4 As in the Psalms, this hymn uses several terms for the praise of God. **Praise** means “to give public acknowledgment” or “to declare aloud in public.” **Call upon His name** may be rephrased as “proclaim in His name.” **Declare** means “to make known.” **Make mention** means “to cause to remember.” Each of these verbs designates public, vocal acknowledgment of the wonders and works of God. **among the peoples:** Like Ps. 117, this is a poem of international evangelism.

12:5 Sing to the Lord: The principal audience of sacred songs is God Himself (Ps. 33:1). **excellent things:** In Ex. 15:1, the root of this term is translated “triumphed gloriously.” **all the earth:** This emphasis fits the same line of thought found in Ps. 19:1.

- 6 ⁱ Cry out and shout, O inhabitant of Zion,
For great *is* ^j the Holy One of Israel in your midst!”

Proclamation Against Babylon

13 The ^aburden¹ against Babylon which Isaiah the son of Amoz saw.

- 2 “Lift^b up a banner ^con the high mountain,
Raise your voice to them;
^dWave your hand, that they may enter the gates of the nobles.
- 3 I have commanded My ²sanctified ones;
I have also called ^eMy mighty ones for My anger—
Those who ^frejoice in My exaltation.”
- 4 The ^gnoise of a multitude in the mountains,
Like that of many people!
A tumultuous noise of the kingdoms of nations gathered together!
The LORD of hosts musters
The army for battle.
- 5 They come from a far country,
From the end of heaven—
The ^hLORD and His ³weapons of indignation,
To destroy the whole ⁱland.
- 6 Wail, ^jfor the day of the LORD *is* at hand!
^kIt will come as destruction from the Almighty.
- 7 Therefore all hands will be limp,
Every man’s heart will melt,

BIBLE TIMES & CULTURE NOTES



The Festivals of Babylon

The Babylonians observed moon festivals on fixed days of the month: the first, seventh, fifteenth, and twenty-eighth. In addition, they had special “seventh” days—the seventh, fourteenth, twenty-first, and twenty-eighth of each month. They did not work at all on the fifteenth day of the month because they believed there was no chance for good fortune on that day.

The greatest festival in Babylon was the *akitu* (the New Year Feast). The Babylonians celebrated *akitu* in March and April. They spent the first four days making prayers to Marduk, the chief god of Babylon. In the evening of the fourth day they recited the creation story (the *Enuma Elish*). On the fifth day, the king appeared before Marduk’s statue and declared his innocence from faults and his fulfillment of his obligations. On the ninth and tenth days they held a banquet. On the eleventh day soothsayers divined the destinies of the coming year.



The battle between the Babylonian god Marduk and Tiamat, Neo-Assyrian cylinder seal

Photo Researchers, Inc./Science Source

6 ⁱ Is. 52:9; 54:1; Zeph. 3:14, 15 / Ps. 89:18

CHAPTER 13 1 ^a Jer. 50: 51; Matt. 1:1; Rev. 14:8 1 *oracle, prophecy* 2 ^b Is. 18:3 ^c Jer. 51:25 ^d Is. 10:32 3 ^e Joel 3:11 ^f Ps. 149:2 2 *consecrated or set apart* 4 ^g Is. 17:12; Joel 3:14 5 ^h Is. 42:13 ⁱ Is. 24:1; 34:2 3 *Or instruments* 6 ^j Is. 2:12; Ezek. 30:3; Amos 5:18; Zeph. 1:7; Rev. 6:17 ^k Is. 10:25; Job 31:23; Joel 1:15

12:6 Cry out and shout may be rephrased as “shout aloud in great joy.” **Inhabitant of Zion** refers to the people who returned from captivity in Babylon.

13:1–27:13 The Book of Isaiah takes a major turn at 13:1. The focus in this extended section is first on the Lord’s judgments against the nations (chs. 13–23): Babylon and Assyria (13:1–14:27), Philistia (14:28–32), Moab (15:1–16:14), Damascus (17:1–14), Ethiopia (18:1–7), Egypt (19:1–20:6), Babylon (21:1–10), Edom (21:11, 12), Arabia (21:13–17), Jerusalem (22:1–25), and Tyre (23:1–18). This prophecy of judgment is followed by an end-time prophecy that is sometimes called “the little apocalypse of Isaiah” (chs. 24–27).

13:1–14:27 The oracle against Babylon consists of seven sections: (1) the assembly of the army of the Lord of Hosts (13:1–5); (2) the announcement of the day of the Lord (13:6–18); (3) the annihilation of Babylon (13:19–22); (4) the salvation of Israel (14:1, 2); (5) Israel’s mocking dirge for the king of Babylon (14:3–21); (6) the destruction of Babylon (14:22, 23); (7) the destruction of Assyria (14:24–27).

13:1 The word **burden** comes from the root meaning “to lift up” or “to bear.” It is as though the prophet were heavily laden with a message from God that he must deliver due to its sheer weight (Nah. 1:1; Hab. 1:1). **Babylon** was the crown jewel of the Assyrian empire. This oracle may refer to its destruction around 689 B.C. when Sennacherib quelled a rebellion there. Yet the Lord’s overthrow of **Babylon**, “the glory of kingdoms” (v. 19), symbolizes His triumph over the world

(v. 11). Babylon is the epitome of religion and culture in the ancient Middle East. Thus the oracle is indirectly against all nations, especially Assyria (14:24–27). Peter uses the term Babylon symbolically in the NT (1 Pet. 5:13) as does John (Rev. 14:8; 18:2, 10–21) to refer to any enemy of God’s kingdom.

13:3, 4 Sanctified ones refers to the victorious armies of the earth **who rejoice**, wittingly or unwittingly, in the Lord’s **exaltation** (45:1–7; Joel 2:11). **Many people** represent all nations, who will be instruments in God’s hands for judging sinful nations, though they themselves are sinners.

13:5 Far country . . . end of heaven refers to the whole earth (11:11, 12). **His weapons of indignation:** The nations are the tools God will use to vent His wrath against Babylon.

13:6 The day of the Lord refers to a time of unusual activity of God in the lives of people, for judgment or for mercy. **At hand** is also translated *near*. The basic idea of the term is not that of approaching a fixed date, but that the day of the Lord is about to burst into one’s world. The day of the Lord is imminent—able to happen at any time—not because people have almost reached it as a destination, but because it may burst in upon people without further warning. The title **the Almighty** is the Hebrew name Shaddai (Ex. 6:3; Ps. 91:1).

13:7, 8 limp . . . melt . . . afraid: These images describe the depth of the people’s fear. **a woman in childbirth:** This is a familiar image of stress in the poetry of the Bible.

- ⁸ And they will be afraid.
¹ Pangs⁴ and sorrows will take hold of them;
 They will be in pain as a woman in childbirth;
 They will be amazed at one another;
 Their faces *will be like flames*.
- ⁹ Behold, ^mthe day of the LORD comes,
 Cruel, with both wrath and fierce anger,
 To lay the land desolate;
 And He will destroy ⁿits sinners from it.
- ¹⁰ For the stars of heaven and their constellations
 Will not give their light;
 The sun will be ^odarkened in its going forth,
 And the moon will not cause its light to shine.
- ¹¹ “I will ^ppunish the world for *its* evil,
 And the wicked for their iniquity;
^qI will halt the arrogance of the proud,
 And will lay low the haughtiness of the ⁵terrible.
- ¹² I will make a mortal more rare than fine gold,
 A man more than the golden wedge of Ophir.
- ¹³ ^rTherefore I will shake the heavens,
 And the earth will move out of her place,
 In the wrath of the LORD of hosts
 And in ^sthe day of His fierce anger.
- ¹⁴ It shall be as the hunted gazelle,
 And as a sheep that no man ⁶takes up;
^tEvery man will turn to his own people,
 And everyone will flee to his own land.
- ¹⁵ Everyone who is found will be thrust through,

⁸ ¹Ps. 48:6 ⁴Sharp pains
⁹ ^mMal. 4:1 ⁿPs. 104:35; Prov. 2:22
¹⁰ ^oIs. 24:21-23; Ezek. 32:7; Joel 2:31; Matt. 24:29; Mark 13:24; Luke 21:25
¹¹ ^pIs. 26:21 ^q[Is. 2:17] ⁵Or tyrants
¹³ ^rIs. 34:4; 51:6; Hag. 2:6 ^sPs. 110:5; Lam. 1:12
¹⁴ ^tJer. 50:16; 51:9
⁶gathers

¹⁶ ^uPs. 137:8, 9; Is. 13:18; 14:21; Hos. 10:14; Nah. 3:10
^vZech. 14:2
¹⁷ ^wIs. 21:2; Jer. 51:11, 28; Dan. 5:28, 31 ⁷esteem
¹⁹ ^xIs. 14:4; Dan. 4:30; Rev. 18:11-16, 19, 21 ^yGen. 19:24; Deut. 29:23; Jer. 50:40; Amos 4:11
²⁰ ^zJer. 50:3
²¹ ^aIs. 34:11-15; Zeph. 2:14; Rev. 18:2 ⁸Or howling creatures
²² ^bJer. 51:33

CHAPTER 14

¹ ^aPs. 102:13; Is. 49:13, 15; 54:7, 8
^bIs. 41:8, 9; Zech. 1:17; 2:12 ^cIs. 60:4, 5, 10

And everyone who is captured will fall by the sword.

- ¹⁶ Their children also will be ^udashed to pieces before their eyes;
 Their houses will be plundered
 And their wives ^vravished.
- ¹⁷ “Behold, ^wI will stir up the Medes against them,
 Who will not ⁷regard silver;
 And *as for* gold, they will not delight in it.
- ¹⁸ Also *their* bows will dash the young men to pieces,
 And they will have no pity on the fruit of the womb;
 Their eye will not spare children.
- ¹⁹ ^xAnd Babylon, the glory of kingdoms,
 The beauty of the Chaldeans’ pride,
 Will be as when God overthrew ^ySodom and Gomorrah.
- ²⁰ ^zIt will never be inhabited,
 Nor will it be settled from generation to generation;
 Nor will the Arabian pitch tents there,
 Nor will the shepherds make their sheepfolds there.
- ²¹ ^aBut wild beasts of the desert will lie there,
 And their houses will be full of ⁸owls;
 Ostriches will dwell there,
 And wild goats will caper there.
- ²² The hyenas will howl in their citadels,
 And jackals in their pleasant palaces.
^bHer time *is* near to come,
 And her days will not be prolonged.”

Mercy on Jacob

14 For the LORD ^awill have mercy on Jacob, and ^bwill still choose Israel, and settle them in their own land.
^cThe strangers will be joined with them,

13:11 iniquity . . . arrogance . . . proud . . . haughtiness . . . terrible: The common element is pride, which brings the nations down (2:6–22).

13:12 mortal: The Hebrew word speaks of the inherent weakness of humanity (Ps. 8:4).

13:13 heavens . . . earth: The shaking of the cosmos, including the sun, moon, and stars—which were worshiped by the pagans—symbolizes the overthrow of all that unbelieving humans exalt as rivals to God (2:12–18).

13:15, 16 Everyone . . . children . . . houses . . . wives: In the ancient Middle East, the brutality of war extended to everyone, regardless of age, gender, or station.

13:17 The Medes, who lived in what is today northwest Iran, were fierce enemies of the Israelites. Significant for dating this prophecy is the fact that Persia, which conquered the Medes in 550 B.C. and in conjunction with the Medes conquered Babylon in 539 B.C., is not mentioned. **silver . . . gold:** The point is that the Medes will not be bought off with bribes.

13:19 In 4:2, the same Hebrew word translated **glory** here is trans-

lated “beautiful” to describe the Branch of the Lord. The ascriptions of beauty to Babylon are not exaggerations; the city of Babylon at its zenith must have been spellbinding.

13:20 It will never be inhabited: The fulfillment of this prophecy should not be sought in a specific event, but in the general principle that the kingdoms of this world would not endure. Places that once were fabled for their great structures will become so desolate that even desert peoples would not **pitch tents there**.

13:21, 22 The language of these verses is that of the ancient Middle Eastern curse. The animals named in these verses ominously represent that which is unclean, unholy, uncivilized, and unsettled (34:14, 15; Rev. 18:2). The godly people of ancient Israel would have no associations with such animals.

14:1 Still may also be translated “again,” in which case it refers to the second Exodus, the return of the remnant from Babylonian captivity (see 11:15, 16). **choose:** The Lord will make His choice in Israel. **Strangers** will join the returning Israelites as they did in the first Exodus (Ex. 12:38). But in this case, the strangers will be loyal adherents of the Lord.

and they will cling to the house of Jacob.
²Then people will take them ^dand bring them to their place, and the house of Israel will possess them for servants and maids in the land of the LORD; they will take them captive whose captives they were, ^eand rule over their oppressors.

Fall of the King of Babylon

³It shall come to pass in the day the LORD gives you rest from your sorrow, and from your fear and the hard bondage in which you were made to serve, ⁴that you ^fwill take up this proverb against the king of Babylon, and say:

- “How the oppressor has ceased,
 The ^ggolden ¹city ceased!
⁵The LORD has broken ^hthe staff of the wicked,
 The scepter of the rulers;
⁶He who struck the people in wrath with a continual stroke,
 He who ruled the nations in anger,
 Is persecuted *and* no one hinders.
⁷The whole earth is at rest *and* quiet;
 They break forth into singing.
⁸ⁱIndeed the cypress trees rejoice over you,
 And the cedars of Lebanon,
 Saying, ‘Since you ²were cut down,
 No woodsman has come up against us.’
⁹“Hell^j ³from beneath is excited about you,
 To meet *you* at your coming;
 It stirs up the dead for you,

² ^dIs. 49:22; 60:9; 66:20 ^eIs. 60:14
⁴ ^fIs. 13:19; Hab. 2:6
^gRev. 18:16 ¹Or insolent
⁵ ^hPs. 125:3
⁸ ⁱIs. 55:12; Ezek. 31:16 ²have lain down
⁹ ^jEzek. 32:21 ³Or Sheol

¹⁰ ^kEzek. 32:21
¹² ¹Is. 34:4; Luke 10:18; [Rev. 12:7-9]
⁴ ^lLit. Day Star
¹³ ^mEzek. 28:2; Matt. 11:23 ⁿDan. 8:10; 2 Thess. 2:4
^oEzek. 28:14 ^pPs. 48:2
¹⁴ ^qIs. 47:8; 2 Thess. 2:4
¹⁵ ^rEzek. 28:8; Matt. 11:23; Luke 10:15 ⁵Lit. recesses

All the chief ones of the earth;
 It has raised up from their thrones
 All the kings of the nations.

- ¹⁰They all shall ^kspeak and say to you:
 ‘Have you also become as weak as we?
 Have you become like us?
¹¹Your pomp is brought down to Sheol,
 And the sound of your stringed instruments;
 The maggot is spread under you,
 And worms cover you.’

The Fall of Lucifer

- ¹²“How! you are fallen from heaven,
 O ⁴Lucifer, son of the morning!
 How you are cut down to the ground,
 You who weakened the nations!
¹³For you have said in your heart:
^m‘I will ascend into heaven,
ⁿI will exalt my throne above the stars of God;
 I will also sit on the ^omount of the congregation
^pOn the farthest sides of the north;
¹⁴I will ascend above the heights of the clouds,
^qI will be like the Most High.’
¹⁵Yet you ^rshall be brought down to Sheol,
 To the ⁵lowest depths of the Pit.
¹⁶“Those who see you will gaze at you,
 And consider you, *saying*:
 ‘Is this the man who made the earth tremble,
 Who shook kingdoms,

14:2 people will take them: For the development of this idea, see Ezra 1:1–8. **captive:** For the development of this theme, see Eph. 4:8.

14:3 Hard bondage is an allusion to the first Exodus (ch. 12). **Rest** recalls the freedom from Egyptian servitude (Deut. 5:12–15).

14:4 the king of Babylon: No particular king of Babylon is indicated (13:1). **Proverb** refers to a highly figurative poem. **oppressor:** This is the same term used in 9:4 of an unnamed Assyrian tyrant.

14:5, 6 The staff and the scepter were symbols of authority and power in the ancient Middle East (9:4). **struck:** The Babylonian kings had paraded their tyranny in order to intimidate any who dared to oppose them. But now the Lord in judgment was breaking their instruments of oppression.

14:7, 8 At rest and quiet may be rephrased as “utterly quiet.” This is the security that comes after the tyrant is dead. **cypress trees rejoice:** The trees are personified, describing the joy of the formerly oppressed people (35:1; 44:23; 55:12). **No woodsman:** The trees would no longer be cut down to construct machines of war.

14:9–11 excited: The commotion in hell when the king of Babylon arrives contrasts sharply with the rest on earth when he is gone. The Hebrew word for **the dead** is similar in connotation to our word *ghost*: it speaks of the dead in a frightening manner (see Prov. 9:18). The defeated subjects of the Babylonian tyrants are pictured as sitting on **thrones**, while the king is given a blanket of **worms**.

14:12 Fallen from heaven is a figure of speech meaning cast down from an exalted political position. Jesus said, “And you, Capernaum, who are exalted to heaven, will be brought down to Hades” (Luke 10:15), and apparently with the same meaning, “I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven” (Luke 10:18). The name for **Lucifer** in Hebrew

literally means “Day Star,” or the planet Venus. The poetic language of this verse describes the aspiration of this brightest star to climb to the zenith of the heavens and its extinction before the rising sun. This is an apt summary of the failed goal of the king of Babylon (v. 4) who wanted to grasp universal and eternal domination. Tertullian, Milton, and others have linked this passage to the career of Satan on the basis of Luke 10:18, but the text does not specifically make this connection.

14:13 above the stars of God: The description is of a star that wanted to be grander than other stars. In this highly poetic language, Isaiah describes a king whose longing for glory was unlimited. **Mount of the congregation** is an allusion to a mythological mountain where the heavenly deities were thought to assemble. **Farthest sides of the north** probably refers to Mt. Casius in northern Syria, the mountain believed by the Canaanites to be the realm of the gods (Ps. 48:1, 2).

14:14 I will be like the Most High is the most outrageous of the arrogant desires of this Assyrian or Babylonian king. He wanted to surpass the Most High, a term for the Lord that is often used in connection with the nations of the world (see Ps. 87:5; 91:1, 9; 92:1).

14:15 Sheol: See the reference to hell in v. 9. The word **lowest depths** renders the same Hebrew word translated “farthest sides” (in v. 13). This is an example of comic justice for this king who wished to ascend to the heights of the gods and even the Most High Himself. **The Pit** is a synonym for Sheol often used together with it (see Jon. 2:2, 6).

14:16 man . . . tremble: Isaiah compares this king to the One who can truly shake the earth (see 13:13).

17 Who made the world as a wilderness
And destroyed its cities,
Who ⁶did not open the house of his
prisoners?"

18 "All the kings of the nations,
All of them, sleep in glory,
Everyone in his own house;
19 But you are cast out of your grave
Like an ⁷abominable branch,
Like the garment of those who are
slain,

⁸ Thrust through with a sword,
Who go down to the stones of the
pit,
Like a corpse trodden underfoot.
20 You will not be joined with them in
burial,
Because you have destroyed your
land
And slain your people.

⁹ The brood of evildoers shall never be
named.

21 Prepare slaughter for his children
¹ Because of the iniquity of their
fathers,
Lest they rise up and possess the
land,

17 ⁶ Would not
relese
19 ⁷ despised
⁸ Pierced
20 ⁹ Job 18:19; Ps.
21:10; 109:13; Is.
1:4; 31:2
21 ¹ Ex. 20:5; Lev.
26:39; Is. 13:16;
Matt. 23:35

22 ¹⁰ Prov. 10:7; Is.
26:14; Jer. 51:62
¹¹ 1 Kin. 14:10 ¹² Job
18:19; Is. 47:9
23 ¹³ Is. 34:11; Zeph.
2:14
24 ¹⁴ Is. 43:13
25 ¹⁵ Mic. 5:5, 6;
Zeph. 2:13

And fill the face of the world with
cities."

Babylon Destroyed

22 "For I will rise up against them," says
the LORD of hosts,
"And cut off from Babylon ¹⁴the name
and ¹⁵remnant,
¹⁶And offspring and posterity," says
the LORD.
23 "I will also make it a possession for
the ¹⁷porcupine,
And marshes of muddy water;
I will sweep it with the broom of
destruction," says the LORD of
hosts.

Assyria Destroyed

24 The LORD of hosts has sworn, saying,
"Surely, as I have thought, so it shall
come to pass,
And as I have purposed, so it shall
¹⁸stand:
25 That I will break the ¹⁹Assyrian in
My land,
And on My mountains tread him
underfoot.

14:17 The house of his prisoners refers to exile. Unlike Cyrus, who sent the exiles home, the king of Babylon kept them captive.

14:19 out of your grave: The ancients believed that a proper burial was exceedingly important. The king's memory would be trampled by the people whom he abused in life. **abominable branch:** Contrast this with the Beautiful Branch, the Messiah (11:1). This is an "anti-Messiah" figure.

14:20 The brood . . . shall never be named: This evil king's posterity will not be remembered.

14:22 I will rise: The Lord Himself is behind the destruction of this arrogant king (v. 5).

14:23 porcupine . . . marshes: The former beautiful city of Babylon (13:19) would become a wild, inhospitable place.

14:25 My land . . . My mountains: The Lord asserts His sov-

Son of the Morning

The reference to "Lucifer, son of the morning" is most certainly to Satan himself. The real issue of interpretation in this passage is whether Satan is to be viewed literally as the referent of the prophecy in these verses, or whether he is to be viewed as the power behind the throne of the Babylonian king. In either case, we are given a clear picture of the certain destruction that always follows pride.

It seems most likely that Isaiah is using the fall of Satan, which is an assumed fact, to illustrate the fall of the Babylonian king (who is simply a prototype and not necessarily a specific such as Belshazzar). Tertullian seems to have been the first to interpret this passage as referring to the fall of Satan (cf. Luke 10:18). Since the fall of Satan is actually yet future (see Rev. 9:1), it would seem that the prophet is again speaking in the present tense with the sure assurance of the future fulfillment of his prediction. He sees the rise of Babylon to a point of prominence that it had not yet achieved in his own day; yet beyond that he sees the demise of this same nation. He views her kings as attempting to ascend into heaven by the divine claims that they would make for themselves and their kingdom; then he pictures them as falling from heaven just as certainly as Lucifer himself shall one day fall under the judgment of God. Therefore, it is not inappropriate to understand the words of verses 13 and 14 as the attitude of Satan himself. Five times the personal pronoun "I" is used to emphasize the selfish determination of both Satan and Satan-empowered men to replace God Himself as the rightful ruler of this world.

The name Lucifer is actually the Roman designation for the morning star. The Hebrew (*helel*) means "the bright one." This reference illustrates the fact that the morning star speedily disappears before the far greater splendor of the rising sun. Hence, though Satan may appear as an "angel of light" (2 Cor. 11:14), he shall be banished to outer darkness by the coming of the Son of God. Certainly, such claims were parallel to and inspired by the ultimate claim of Satan himself! He, too, will be brought down to hell in the final judgment of God (see Rev. 20:10).

In the meantime, the king of Babylon will no longer be a threat to the nations of the earth. Instead of fearing him, they shall cast him out like an abominable branch. The tragedy of national judgment is that it falls upon every generation, including the children. For those who rise up in defiance against God, there is nothing ahead for them but disaster, because "I will rise up against them" is the promise of the Lord (Is. 14:22). He will cut off Babylon. Thus it is that this once mighty nation which caused the kings of the earth to tremble is now but a dusty reminder of a bygone kingdom of another era.



- Then ^ahis yoke shall be removed
from them,
And his burden removed from their
shoulders.
- 26 This is the ^bpurpose that is purposed
against the whole earth,
And this is the hand that is stretched
out over all the nations.
- 27 For the LORD of hosts has ^cpurposed,
And who will annul it?
His hand is stretched out,
And who will turn it back?"

Philistia Destroyed

²⁸This is the ⁹burden which came in
the year that ^dKing Ahaz died.

- 29 "Do not rejoice, all you of Philistia,
^eBecause the rod that struck you is
broken;
For out of the serpent's roots will
come forth a viper,
^fAnd its offspring *will be* a fiery flying
serpent.
- 30 The firstborn of the poor will feed,
And the needy will lie down in safety;
I will kill your roots with famine,
And it will slay your remnant.
- 31 Wail, O gate! Cry, O city!
All you of Philistia *are* dissolved;
For smoke will come from the north,
And no one *will be* alone in his
¹appointed times."
- 32 What will they answer the
messengers of the nation?
That ^gthe LORD has founded Zion,
And ^hthe poor of His people shall
take refuge in it.

Proclamation Against Moab

15 The ^aburden ¹against Moab.

Because in the night ^bAr of ^cMoab is
laid waste

25 ^aIs. 10:27; Nah.
1:13
26 ^bIs. 23:9; Zeph.
3:6, 8
27 ^c2 Chr. 20:6;
Job 9:12; 23:13; Ps.
33:11; Prov. 19:21;
21:30; Is. 43:13; Dan.
4:31, 35
28 ^d2 Kin. 16:20;
2 Chr. 28:27
⁹oracle, prophecy
29 ^e2 Chr. 26:6
^f2 Kin. 18:8
31 ¹Or ranks
32 ^gPs. 87:1, 5
^hZech. 11:11

CHAPTER 15

1 ^e2 Kin. 3:4
^bDeut. 2:9; Num.
21:28 ^cIs. 15:1–
16:14; Jer. 25:21;
48:1–47; Amos
2:1–3; Zeph. 2:8–11
¹oracle, prophecy

2 ^dLev. 21:5; Jer.
48:37 ²Heb. bayith,
lit. house
3 ^eJer. 48:38
4 ^fNum. 21:28; 32:3;
Jer. 48:34

BIBLE TIMES & CULTURE NOTES



Moab

Moab was a son of Lot by incest (Gen. 19:30–38). Moab was annexed by the Amorite kingdom shortly before the Israelite conquest of Canaan (Num. 21:17–29). After the Israelites defeated the Amorites, Balak, king of the Moabites, joined with the Midianites in hiring the prophet-magician Balaam to curse Israel (Num. 22:1–20). Balaam's mission failed, but when the Israelites camped in Moab, the women of Moab enticed the Israelites into a form of idolatry that involved ritual sexual immorality. This resulted in God's judgment against Israel (Num. 25:1–9).

The Assyrians conquered Moab about 735 B.C., and invading Arabs conquered it about 650 B.C. The prophet Isaiah lamented over Moab's defeat (Is. 15; 16), and Jeremiah predicted Moab's destruction at the end of the seventh century B.C. (Jer. 48). When Jerusalem was destroyed by the Babylonians in 586 B.C., some of the Jews fled to Moab to escape being taken into captivity (Jer. 40:11, 12).

- And destroyed,
Because in the night Kir of Moab is
laid waste
And destroyed,
2 He has gone up to the ²temple and
Dibon,
To the high places to weep.
Moab will wail over Nebo and over
Medeba;
^dOn all their heads *will be* baldness,
And every beard cut off.
3 In their streets they will clothe
themselves with sackcloth;
On the tops of their houses
And in their streets
Everyone will wail, ^eweeping bitterly.
4 Heshbon and Elealeh will cry out,
Their voice shall be heard as far as
^fJahaz;

eighty. **yoke . . . his burden:** In 9:4, these same terms are used of the Assyrian menace.

14:28–32 After an introduction (v. 28), the oracle against Philistia falls roughly into two cycles: (1) the annihilation of the Philistines and the preservation of God's poor and needy (vv. 29, 30); (2) the destruction of Philistine cities and the founding of Zion (vv. 31, 32).

14:28 King Ahaz died in 720 B.C.

14:29 Rod is probably a metaphor for the Assyrian king (10:5). **its offspring will be . . . serpent:** More trouble would come upon Philistia; it would have nothing for which to rejoice.

14:30 Like Babylon (v. 22)—but unlike Israel—Philistia would have no future, because it would have no remnant.

14:31 The **gate** of a walled city was its weakest point. When the gate fell, the city could be taken. The Assyrian army would come from the north. **No one will be alone** speaks of the close ranks of the Assyrian army.

14:32 founded Zion: The destruction of Philistia would leave no refuge for the Philistines. The only place they could go to be saved would be Jerusalem, the city built by God. That would be the place

to which the **poor** of all nations could come, becoming God's **people** (Ps. 87).

15:1–16:14 The oracle against Moab has five parts: (1) an editorial superscript (15:1); (2) the sudden, devastating destruction of Moab (15:2–9); (3) a plea from Moab for shelter in Zion (16:1–5); (4) a reflection contrasting Moab's former pride with its fallen state (16:6–12); (5) a postscript (16:13, 14).

15:1 For the origin of the people of **Moab**, see the story of Lot and his daughters in Gen. 19:30–38 (see also Num. 22–25; Deut. 1:5). **burden:** For similar phrasing, see 13:1. **Ar** and **Kir** were cities of Moab (16:7, 11; Deut. 2:9; 2 Kin. 3:25).

15:2 He refers collectively to **Moab**. **High places** were sites of pagan worship (16:12). **weep . . . wail:** This refers to the mourning over the destruction of the cities of Moab. **Baldness** and having one's **beard cut off** were aspects of mourning rituals.

15:3 Sackcloth and weeping were part of Middle Eastern mourning rites (Gen. 23:2; 37:34; 2 Sam. 1:11, 12).

15:4 Heshbon, Elealeh, and Jahaz were cities in Moab. **armed soldiers:** The weeping would extend even to hardened fighting men.

Therefore the ³armed soldiers of
Moab will cry out;
His life will be burdensome to him.

- ⁵ “My^g heart will cry out for Moab;
His fugitives *shall flee* to Zoar,
Like ⁴a three-year-old heifer.
For ^hby the Ascent of Luhith
They will go up with weeping;
For in the way of Horonaim
They will raise up a cry of destruction,
⁶ For the waters ⁱof Nimrim will be
desolate,
For the green grass has withered
away;
The grass fails, there is nothing green.
⁷ Therefore the abundance they have
gained,
And what they have laid up,
They will carry away to the Brook of
the Willows.
⁸ For the cry has gone all around the
borders of Moab,
Its wailing to Eglaim
And its wailing to Beer Elim.
⁹ For the waters of ⁵Dimon will be full
of blood;
Because I will bring more upon
⁵Dimon,
^jLions upon him who escapes from
Moab,
And on the remnant of the land.”

Moab Destroyed

- 16** Send ^athe lamb to the ruler of the
land,
^bFrom ¹Sela to the wilderness,
To the mount of the daughter of Zion.
² For it shall be as a ^cwandering bird
thrown out of the nest;
So shall be the daughters of Moab at
the fords of the ^dArnon.
³ “Take counsel, execute judgment;
Make your shadow like the night in
the middle of the day;
Hide the outcasts,
Do not betray him who escapes.

⁴ ³ So with MT, Tg.,
Vg.; LXX, Syr. *Ioins*
⁵ ^g Is. 16:11;
Jer. 48:31 ^h Jer.
48:5 ⁴ Or *The*
Third Eglath, an
unknown city, Jer.
48:34
⁶ ⁱ Num. 32:36
⁹ ² Kin. 17:25; Jer.
50:17 ⁵ So with MT,
Tg.; DSS, Vg. *Dibon*;
LXX *Rimon*

CHAPTER 16

¹ ^a 2 Kin. 3:4; Ezra
7:17 ^b 2 Kin. 14:7; Is.
42:11 ¹ Lit. *Rock*
² ^c Prov. 27:8
^d Num. 21:13

- ⁴ Let My outcasts dwell with you,
O Moab;
Be a shelter to them from the face of
the ²spoiler.
For the extortioner is at an end,
Devastation ceases,
The oppressors are consumed out of
the land.
⁵ In mercy ^ethe throne will be
established;
And One will sit on it in truth, in
the tabernacle of David,
^fJudging and seeking justice and
hastening ^grighteousness.”
⁶ We have heard of the ^hpride of
Moab—
He is very proud—
Of his haughtiness and his pride and
his wrath;
ⁱBut his ³lies *shall not be* so.
⁷ Therefore Moab shall ^jwail for Moab;
Everyone shall wail.
For the foundations ^kof Kir Hareseth
you shall mourn;
Surely *they are* stricken.
⁸ For ^lthe fields of Heshbon languish,
And ^mthe vine of Sibmah;
The lords of the nations have broken
down its choice plants,
Which have reached to Jazer
And wandered through the
wilderness.
Her branches are stretched out,
They are gone over the ⁿsea.
⁹ Therefore I will bewail the vine of
Sibmah,
With the weeping of Jazer;
I will drench you with my tears,
^oO Heshbon and Elealeh;
For ^dbattle cries have fallen
Over your summer fruits and your
harvest.
¹⁰ ^pGladness is taken away,
And joy from the plentiful field;
In the vineyards there will be no
singing,

⁴ ² devastator
⁵ ^e [Is. 9:6, 7; 32:1;
55:4; Dan. 7:14; Mic.
4:7; Luke 1:33; Rev.
11:15] ^f Ps. 72:2
^g Is. 9:7
⁶ ^h Jer. 48:29; Amos
2:1; Obad. 3, 4;
Zeph. 2:8, 10 ⁱ Is.
28:15 ³ Lit. *vain talk*
⁷ Jer. 48:20 ^k 2 Kin.
3:25; Jer. 48:31
⁸ ^l Is. 24:7 ^m Is. 16:9
ⁿ Jer. 48:32
⁹ ^o Is. 15:4 ⁴ Or
shouting has
¹⁰ ^p Is. 24:8; Jer.
48:33

15:5 My heart refers to Isaiah, who felt sympathy for Moab (16:9–11). Zoar was a southwestern border city of Moab on the south end of the Dead Sea. The Ascent of Luhith is also mentioned by Jeremiah in his lament over Moab (Jer. 48:5).

15:6 The waters and green grass of the oasis could not survive the numerous refugees.

15:9 The term Dimon sounds like blood in Hebrew. Lions: Fleeing from one tragedy after another in their flight southward, the refugees turn to Judah in the west for asylum (16:1–5). As would be the case with Israel (1:9; 6:13; 10:20; 11:16)—but not with Assyria (14:22) and Philistia (14:30)—a remnant would survive in Moab.

16:2 Wandering bird is a sad description of the hopeless condition of the daughters of Moab, the women of the nation.

16:3 Take counsel may also be translated “make plans.” Moab would find salvation in the shadow of Zion (2:2–4).

16:4, 5 Moab’s salvation ultimately lies in the coming One, Jesus the Messiah, whose throne will be established (9:1–7; 11:1–5; Amos 9:11, 12; Acts 15:16, 17).

16:6 Pride is a regular target of the Lord’s judgment (2:5–22; 13:11).

16:7 Kir Hareseth is another name for Kir (15:1).

16:8 Vine is a figure of speech for Moab (compare Israel’s description as a vine in 5:1–7). Sea may refer to the Dead Sea because it is the nearest large body of water to Moab.

16:9 Heshbon and Elealeh were among the principal settlements in ancient Moab (15:4).

16:10 Contrast the lack of gladness in this verse with the ecstatic joy of 9:3.



Damascus

Damascus is the oldest continually-inhabited city in the world and capital of Syria (7:8), located northeast of the Sea of Galilee. The Bible first mentions the city as the hometown of Eliezer, Abraham's servant (Gen. 15:2). Damascus was situated on the border of the desert at the intersection of three major caravan routes. Major roads extended from the city to the southwest into Canaan and Egypt, straight south to Edom and the Red Sea, and east to Babylonia. Because of its ideal location, the city became a trade center.

The Assyrian King Tiglath-Pileser conquered Syria, overthrowing the Aramean dynasty and destroying Damascus (732 B.C.), just as the prophets Amos and Isaiah had prophesied (Is. 17:1; Amos 1:4, 5). This marked the end of Syria as an independent nation. The city of Damascus was also reduced to a fraction of its former glory.



Panoramic view of modern Damascus

Wikimedia Commons

Nor will there be shouting;
No treaders will tread out wine in
the presses;
I have made their shouting cease.
11 Therefore ^qmy ⁵heart shall resound
like a harp for Moab,
And my inner being for ⁶Kir Heres.

12 And it shall come to pass,
When it is seen that Moab is weary
on ^rthe high place,
That he will come to his sanctuary
to pray;
But he will not prevail.

13 This *is* the word which the LORD
has spoken concerning Moab since that
time. 14 But now the LORD has spoken,
saying, "Within three years, ^sas the years

11 ^qIs. 15:5; 63:15;
Jer. 48:36; Hos. 11:8;
Phil. 2:1 ⁵Lit. belly
⁶Kir Hareseth, v. 7
12 ^rIs. 15:2
14 ^sJob 7:1; 14:6;
Is. 21:16

CHAPTER 17

1 ^aGen. 14:15; 15:2;
2 Kin. 16:9; Jer.
49:23; Amos 1:3-5;
Zech. 9:1; Acts 9:2
¹oracle, prophecy
2 ^bNum. 32:34
^cJer. 7:33 ²So with
MT, Vg.; LXX *It shall
be forsaken forever*;
Tg. *Its cities shall
be forsaken and
desolate*
3 ^dIs. 7:16; 8:4

of a hired man, the glory of Moab will
be despised with all that great multitude,
and the remnant *will be* very small *and*
feeble."

Proclamation Against Syria and Israel

17 The ^aburden ¹ against Damascus.

"Behold, Damascus will cease from
being a city,
And it will be a ruinous heap.
2 The cities of ^bAroer *are* forsaken;
They will be for flocks
Which lie down, and ^cno one will
make *them* afraid.
3 ^dThe fortress also will cease from
Ephraim,
The kingdom from Damascus,
And the remnant of Syria;

16:11 Kir Heres is an alternative spelling for Kir Hareseth (v. 7) or Kir (15:1). Isaiah the prophet expresses his determination to one day rejoice over Moab. This is a promise of its future restoration.

16:12 high place . . . sanctuary: As long as the people worshiped false gods, they would be doomed to pain, judgment, and recurring trouble (15:2).

16:13, 14 A former prophecy against Moab (see 15:1) would be realized **within three years**, perhaps referring to the quelling of a rebellion against Sargon in 715 B.C. However, a **remnant** would remain (15:9). Moab had far more hope for salvation than did either Babylon or Philistia.

17:1–18:7 The oracle against Damascus falls into seven parts: (1) an editorial superscription (17:1); (2) the desolate ruin of Damascus

(17:2, 3); (3) the ruin of Israel, which is left only a remnant (17:4–6); (4) the anticipation that in the future, people will trust Israel's God (17:7, 8); (5) the accusation that Damascus replaced God with pagan deities (17:9–11); (6) a proclamation of doom upon the nations "who plunder us" (17:12–14); (7) a prediction that a powerful nation will bring tribute to the Lord (18:1–7).

17:1, 2 burden: For similar phrasing, see 13:1. **cities . . . flocks:** Where people once lived, conditions would be suitable only for flocks (14:23).

17:3 Fortress may refer to Samaria, the capital city. **Ephraim** designates northern Israel. Since **Damascus**, the capital of Syria, was allied with Ephraim, the oracle of God's judgment was against both nations.

They will be as the glory of the
children of Israel,”
Says the LORD of hosts.

4 “In that day it shall come to pass
That the glory of Jacob will ³wane,
And ⁴the fatness of his flesh grow
lean.

5 ⁵It shall be as when the harvester
gathers the grain,
And reaps the heads with his arm;
It shall be as he who gathers heads
of grain
In the Valley of Rephaim.

6 ⁶Yet gleaning grapes will be left in it,
Like the shaking of an olive tree,
Two or three olives at the top of the
uppermost bough,
Four or five in its most fruitful
branches,”
Says the LORD God of Israel.

7 In that day a man will ⁷look to his
Maker,
And his eyes will have respect for the
Holy One of Israel.

8 He will not look to the altars,
The work of his hands;
He will not respect what his ⁸ fingers
have made,
Nor the ⁹wooden images nor the
incense altars.

9 In that day his strong cities will be as
a forsaken ⁹bough
And ¹⁰an uppermost branch,
Which they left because of the
children of Israel;
And there will be desolation.

10 Because you have forgotten ¹⁰the God
of your salvation,

4 ⁴ Is. 10:16 ³ fade
5 ⁵ Is. 17:11; Jer.
51:33; Joel 3:13;
Matt. 13:30
6 ⁶ Deut. 4:27; Is.
24:13; Obad. 5
7 ⁷ Is. 10:20; Hos.
3:5; Mic. 7:7
8 ⁸ Is. 2:8; 31:7
9 ⁹ Heb. *Asherim*,
Canaanite deities
10 ¹⁰ LXX *Hivites*; Tg.
laid waste; Vg. *as*
the plows ⁶ LXX
Amorites; Tg. *in*
ruins; Vg. *corn*
11 ¹¹ Ps. 68:19; Is.
51:13

⁷ *refuge*
12 ¹² Is. 5:30; Jer.
6:23; Ezek. 43:2;
Luke 21:25
13 ¹³ Ps. 9:5; Is. 41:11
¹⁴ Ps. 83:13; Hos.
13:3

CHAPTER 18

1 ¹ 2 Kin. 19:9; Is.
20:4, 5; Ezek. 30:4,
5, 9; Zeph. 2:12; 3:10
⁷ Heb. *Cush*

And have not been mindful of the
Rock of your ⁷stronghold,
Therefore you will plant pleasant
plants
And set out foreign seedlings;
11 In the day you will make your plant
to grow,
And in the morning you will make
your seed to flourish;
But the harvest will be a heap of ruins
In the day of grief and desperate
sorrow.

12 Woe to the multitude of many people
Who make a noise ¹²like the roar of
the seas,
And to the rushing of nations
That make a rushing like the rushing
of mighty waters!

13 The nations will rush like the
rushing of many waters;
But *God* will ¹³rebuke them and they
will flee far away,
And ¹⁴be chased like the chaff of the
mountains before the wind,
Like a rolling thing before the
whirlwind.

14 Then behold, at eventide, trouble!
And before the morning, he is no
more.
This is the portion of those who
plunder us,
And the lot of those who rob us.

Proclamation Against Ethiopia

18 Woe ¹⁸“to the land shadowed with
buzzing wings,
Which is beyond the rivers of
¹⁹Ethiopia,
2 Which sends ambassadors by sea,
Even in vessels of reed on the
waters, *saying,*

17:4 In that day: For a similar phrase, see 2:12.
17:5 harvests: The nation of Syria would be “harvested” of its people. The word **Rephaim** is the Hebrew word for “shades” or “ghosts.” Thus the Valley of Rephaim is the Valley of Death.
17:6 A remnant would be **left** (10:20) even though it would be pitifully small.
17:7 The verb translated **look** means “to look with interest” or “to look with favor.” **Holy One:** For a similar idea, see 6:3.
17:8 Altars refers to pagan worship. **work of his hands:** For similar wording, see 2:8; 31:7. **Asherah** was represented by **wooden images** (27:9), which were part of the sexual cults of Baal worship among the Canaanite peoples.
17:9 In that day: For a similar phrase, see 2:11. **His strong cities** (contrast the “Rock” in v. 10) will become as fragile as a little **branch**.
17:10 You refers to the northern kingdom. **forgotten:** For background, see Deut. 8:11–20. The people had committed the very sin that God warned them not to: they had forgotten the God who had saved them from slavery. The language recalls the first Exodus; the Lord is called **the God of your salvation** and **the Rock** (compare Ex. 15:2; Deut. 32:4).
17:11 Make your plant to grow may allude to the ancient practice of force-blooming potted plants and allowing them to die. Pagans

believed that this reenactment of the life cycle would secure fertile fields. But even after performing this rite, **the harvest** would be in ruin. Just as the choice vines of the Lord’s vineyard disappointed Him (5:1–7), so His errant people would find their harvest hopes shattered.
17:12 Many people refers to the nations that plunder Israel (v. 14). **Seas** and **mighty waters** speak of chaos and death (8:7; Ps. 46:3).
17:13 Chaff, which lacks life, value, and stability, was threshed and winnowed on windy **mountains** or hilltops. When God judges the unrelenting, roaring seas—the nations that plundered God’s people—they will become mere tumbleweed **rolling** before **the whirlwind** of God’s judgment.
17:14 Sennacherib’s army would be destroyed between **eventide** and **morning** (37:36–38). **us:** Isaiah identifies himself with his plundered people.
18:1 Ethiopia, called Cush in the Bible, was at the southern end of Isaiah’s world. A Cushite dynasty took over Egypt in 715 B.C. and probably sent ambassadors to Jerusalem. Cush may have been a Hebrew term for black African peoples (Num. 12:1; Ps. 87:4).
18:2 Sea may refer to the Nile River, from which small **rivers** branched. **Tall and smooth** (v. 7) probably designates the peoples along the entire stretch of the Nile River. Perhaps the term **smooth** refers to the ancient Egyptian custom of shaving the whole body.

“Go, swift messengers, to a nation tall
and smooth *of skin*,
To a people terrible from their
beginning onward,
A nation powerful and treading
down,
Whose land the rivers divide.”

- ³ All inhabitants of the world and
dwellers on the earth:
^bWhen he lifts up a banner on the
mountains, you see *it*;
And when he blows a trumpet, you
hear *it*.
⁴ For so the LORD said to me,
“I will take My rest,
And I will ²look from My dwelling
place
Like clear heat in sunshine,
Like a cloud of dew in the heat of
harvest.”
⁵ For before the harvest, when the bud
is perfect
And the sour grape is ripening in the
flower,

³ ^b Is. 5:26
⁴ ² watch

⁷ ^c Ps. 68:31; 72:10;
Is. 16:1; Zeph. 3:10;
Mal. 1:11; Acts 8:27-
38 ³ So with DSS,
LXX, Vg.; MT omits
From; Tg. To

- He will both cut off the sprigs with
pruning hooks
And take away *and* cut down the
branches.
⁶ They will be left together for the
mountain birds of prey
And for the beasts of the
earth;
The birds of prey will summer on
them,
And all the beasts of the earth will
winter on them.
⁷ In that time ^ca present will be
brought to the LORD of hosts
³ From a people tall and smooth *of*
skin,
And from a people terrible from their
beginning onward,
A nation powerful and treading
down,
Whose land the rivers divide—
To the place of the name of the LORD
of hosts,
To Mount Zion.

18:3 banner: For the use of this word to refer to salvation instead of judgment, see 11:10, 12.

18:4, 5 The figure of God working in **rest** speaks of His indescribable power and unlimited sovereignty. God is steady in His work. His judgment will be felt **like clear heat in sunshine**. This is another example of a bad **harvest** (17:10, 11).

18:6 God’s judgment will be so extensive that the carcasses of His victims will be devoured in the **summer** and **winter**.

18:7 the place of the name: Note how closely the Lord identifies with Mt. Zion. This was the one place for the true worship of God.

Nations and Cities Mentioned in Isaiah



Proclamation Against Egypt

19 The ^aburden¹ against Egypt.

Behold, the LORD ^brides on a swift cloud,
And will come into Egypt;
^cThe idols of Egypt will ²totter at His presence,
And the heart of Egypt will melt in its midst.

² “I will ^dset Egyptians against Egyptians;
Everyone will fight against his brother,
And everyone against his neighbor,
City against city, kingdom against kingdom.

³ The spirit of Egypt will fail in its midst;
I will destroy their counsel,
And they will ^econsult the idols and the charmers,
The mediums and the sorcerers.

⁴ And the Egyptians I will give
^fInto the hand of a cruel master,
And a fierce king will rule over them,”
Says the Lord, the LORD of hosts.

⁵ ^gThe waters will fail from the sea,
And the river will be wasted and dried up.

⁶ The rivers will turn foul;
The brooks ^hof defense will be emptied and dried up;
The reeds and rushes will wither.

⁷ The papyrus reeds by ³the River, by the mouth of the River,
And everything sown by the River, Will wither, be driven away, and be no more.

⁸ The fishermen also will mourn;
All those will lament who cast hooks into the River,
And they will languish who spread nets on the waters.

⁹ Moreover those who work in ⁱfine flax
And those who weave fine fabric will be ashamed;

CHAPTER 19

1 ^a Jer. 9:25, 26; Ezek. 29:1–30:19; Joel 3:19 ^b Ps. 18:10; 104:3; Matt. 26:64; Rev. 1:7 ^c Ex. 12:12; Jer. 43:12 ¹ *oracle, prophecy* ² Lit. *shake* ² d Judg. 7:22; 1 Sam. 14:16, 20; 2 Chr. 20:23; Matt. 10:21, 36 ³ ^e 1 Chr. 10:13; Is. 8:19; 47:12; Dan. 2:2 ⁴ ^f Is. 20:4; Jer. 46:26; Ezek. 29:19 ⁵ ^g Is. 50:2; Jer. 51:36; Ezek. 30:12 ⁶ ^h 2 Kin. 19:24 ⁷ ³ The Nile ⁹ ⁱ 1 Kin. 10:28; Prov. 7:16; Ezek. 27:7

11 ^j Num. 13:22; Ps. 78:12, 43; Is. 30:4 ^k Gen. 41:38, 39; 1 Kin. 4:29, 30; Acts 7:22 ¹² ^l 1 Cor. 1:20 ^m Ps. 33:11 ¹³ ⁿ Jer. 2:16; Ezek. 30:13 ⁴ Ancient Memphis ⁵ Lit. *caused to stagger* ⁶ *cornerstone* ¹⁴ ^o 1 Kin. 22:22; Is. 29:10 ¹⁵ ^p Is. 9:14–16 ¹⁶ ^q Jer. 51:30; Nah. 3:13 ^r Is. 11:15 ¹⁷ ^s Is. 14:24; Dan. 4:35 ¹⁸ ^t Zeph. 3:9

¹⁰ And its foundations will be broken.
All who make wages *will be* troubled of soul.

¹¹ Surely the princes of ^jZoan *are* fools;
Pharaoh’s wise counselors give foolish counsel.

^k How do you say to Pharaoh, “I am the son of the wise,
The son of ancient kings?”

¹² ^l Where *are* they?
Where are your wise men?
Let them tell you now,
And let them know what the LORD of hosts has ^mpurposed against Egypt.

¹³ The princes of Zoan have become fools;
ⁿ The princes of ⁴Noph are deceived;
They have also ⁵deluded Egypt,
Those who are the ⁶mainstay of its tribes.

¹⁴ The LORD has mingled ^oa perverse spirit in her midst;
And they have caused Egypt to err in all her work,
As a drunken man staggers in his vomit.

¹⁵ Neither will there be *any* work for Egypt,
Which ^pthe head or tail,
Palm branch or bulrush, may do.

¹⁶ In that day Egypt will ^qbe like women, and will be afraid and fear because of the waving of the hand of the LORD of hosts, ^rwhich He waves over it.

¹⁷ And the land of Judah will be a terror to Egypt; everyone who makes mention of it will be afraid in himself, because of the counsel of the LORD of hosts which He has ^sdetermined against it.

Egypt, Assyria, and Israel Blessed

¹⁸ In that day five cities in the land of Egypt will ^tspeak the language of Canaan

19:1–20:6 The oracle against Egypt falls into three parts after the historical superscription (19:1): (1) the collapse of Egypt before the Lord (19:2–15); (2) the salvation of Egypt in the Lord (19:16–25); (3) a specific historic fulfillment of the collapse of Egypt at the time of Sargon (20:1–6).

19:1 the LORD rides on a swift cloud: For similar imagery, see Ps. 18:10; 68:4; Matt. 26:64.

19:2 The political anarchy of **Egyptians against Egyptians** has religious roots; their many gods failed them.

19:3 The spirit of Egypt: The principal key for understanding the world of ancient Egypt is the concept of *ma’at*, an Egyptian word for “order.” When God brought Moses to confront Pharaoh (Ex. 5–14), it was *ma’at* that was under attack. God would attack the Egyptians in the future as He had in the past.

19:4 Cruel master may be an allusion to Pharaoh’s tyranny against Israel (Ex. 6:9).

19:5–10 The disruption of the **waters** and all that is related to them marks God’s attack on the nation.

19:10 The **foundations** and those **who make wages** together may be a figure for the whole economic spectrum, from wealthy managers to day laborers.

19:11 Zoan was the capital of Egypt at this time. **Son** here refers to a member of a guild. Egypt was famous for its **wise men** (1 Kin. 4:30), who, as disciples, learned the wisdom of **ancient kings**.

19:12 Where are your wise men: The Lord taunts those who consider themselves wise and learned. True knowledge comes from the fear of the Lord (Prov. 1:7). For a similar idea, see 1 Cor. 1:20.

19:13 Noph or Memphis was Egypt’s ancient capital.

19:18 Five cities will speak the language of Canaan and swear by—take an oath of allegiance to—the **LORD of hosts** (1:9). These new habits spring from the miracle of regeneration—a radical transformation of their nature. With the words **City of Destruction**,

and “swear by the LORD of hosts; one will be called the City of ⁷Destruction.

¹⁹In that day ^vthere will be an altar to the LORD in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar to the ^wLORD at its border. ²⁰And ^xit will be for a sign and for a witness to the LORD of hosts in the land of Egypt; for they will cry to the LORD because of the oppressors, and He will send them a ^ySavior and a Mighty One, and He will deliver them. ²¹Then the LORD will be known to Egypt, and the Egyptians will ^zknow the LORD in that day, and ^awill make sacrifice and offering; yes, they will make a vow to the LORD and perform *it*. ²²And the LORD will strike Egypt, He will strike and ^bheal *it*; they will return to the LORD, and He will be entreated by them and heal them.

²³In that day ^ethere will be a highway from Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrian will come into Egypt and the Egyptian into Assyria, and the Egyptians will ^dserve with the Assyrians.

²⁴In that day Israel will be one of three with Egypt and Assyria—a blessing in the midst of the land, ²⁵whom the LORD of hosts shall bless, saying, “Blessed is Egypt My people, and Assyria ^ethe work of My hands, and Israel My inheritance.”

Isaiah: A Bible in Miniature?

The Book of Isaiah has been described as the Bible in miniature, for it exhibits remarkable similarities to the Bible as a whole—in both its structure and its message.

The Book of Isaiah	The Bible
• 66 chapters	• 66 books
• Two sections: chs. 1–39 and chs. 40–66	• Two parts: 39 Old Testament books and 27 New Testament books
• Stress in chs. 1–39 is on God’s righteousness, holiness, and justice.	• Stress in 39 Old Testament books is on God’s righteousness, holiness, and justice.
• Emphasis in chs. 40–66 is on God’s glory, compassion, and grace.	• Emphasis in 27 New Testament books is on God’s glory, compassion, and grace.
• Chapters 1–39 depict Israel’s need for restoration.	• The Old Testament depicts humanity’s need for salvation.
• Chapters 40–66 predict God’s future provision of salvation in the Servant.	• The New Testament describes God’s provision of salvation in the Messiah.
• Isaiah begins with a description of Israel’s rebellion and ends with predictions of restoration.	• The Bible begins with a description of humanity’s rebellion and ends with a depiction of salvation in Jesus Christ.
• Message: A holy God will gain glory by judging sin and restoring His people.	• Message: A holy God will gain glory by judging sin and saving those who call on the name of His Son Jesus.

The Sign Against Egypt and Ethiopia

20 In the year that ^aTartan¹ came to Ashdod, when Sargon the king of Assyria sent him, and he fought against Ashdod and took it, ²at the same time the LORD spoke by Isaiah the son of Amoz, saying, “Go, and remove ^bthe sackcloth from your ²body, and take your sandals off your feet.” And he did so, ^cwalking naked and barefoot.

³Then the LORD said, “Just as My servant Isaiah has walked naked and bare-

18 ^vIs. 45:23
⁷Some Heb. mss., Arab., DSS, Tg., Vg. Sun; LXX Asedek, lit. Righteousness
19 ^vGen. 28:18; Ex. 24:4; Josh. 22:10, 26, 27; Is. 56:7; 60:7
^wPs. 68:31
20 ^xJosh. 4:20; 22:27 ^yIs. 43:11
21 ^z[Is. 2:3, 4; 11:9]
^aIs. 56:7; 60:7; Zech. 14:16–18; Mal. 1:11
22 ^bDeut. 32:39;

foot three years ^dfor a sign and a wonder against Egypt and Ethiopia, ⁴so shall the ^eking of Assyria lead away the Egyptians as prisoners and the Ethiopians as captives, young and old, naked and barefoot, ^fwith their buttocks uncovered, to

Is. 30:26; 57:18; [Heb. 12:11] **23** ^cIs. 11:16; 35:8; 49:11; 62:10
^dIs. 27:13 **25** ^eDeut. 14:2; Ps. 100:3; Is. 29:23; Hos. 2:23; [Eph. 2:10]
CHAPTER 20 **1** ^o2 Kin. 18:17 ¹Or the Commander in Chief
2 ^bZech. 13:4; Matt. 3:4 ^c1 Sam. 19:24; Mic. 1:8 ²Lit. loins
3 ^dIs. 8:18 **4** ^eIs. 19:4 ^f2 Sam. 10:4; Is. 3:17; Jer. 13:22; Mic. 1:11

Jewish scribes were probably belittling the “City of the Sun,” known by its Greek name Heliopolis, by deliberately changing the word meaning “sun” to the word meaning “destruction.” This is similar to the deliberate change of the name of Ahab’s wife to the name Jezebel (see 1 Kin. 16:31).

19:19 Altar and pillar may allude to the patriarchs Abraham and Jacob respectively (Gen. 12:8; 28:22).

19:21 The Egyptians will know probably alludes to Israel’s experience in the Exodus (Ex. 6:7; 7:5).

19:23 A highway signifies the removal of alienation and separation (11:16). Historically, **Egypt and Assyria** were enemies.

19:25 My people and the work of My hands, titles for Israel (10:24; 60:21), are applied here to the converted Gentiles, symbolized by Egypt and Assyria (56:7; 65:1).

20:1 Tartan was one of the three chief officers of the Assyrian Empire (2 Kin. 18:17).

20:2, 3 Isaiah replaced wearing **sackcloth**, the garb of spiritual mourning, with walking **naked and barefoot**, signs of being exiled into captivity. **servant**: For a similar usage, see 41:8. **Three years** means “involving three years,” a minimum of 14 months. **a sign and a wonder**: For a similar usage, see 8:18.

20:4 Esarhaddon, king of Assyria, conquered Egypt and fulfilled this prophecy in 671 B.C.

blessing

(Heb. *berakah*) (19:24; 65:8; Deut. 11:27; 33:1) Strong’s #1293

The significant Hebrew word translated *blessing* expresses several ideas, namely to fill with potency, to make fruitful, or to secure victory. In the present passage, the word alludes to God’s promise to bless all nations through Abraham’s descendants (Gen. 12:3). When people offer a blessing, they wish well or offer a prayer on behalf of themselves or someone else (Gen. 49; Deut. 33:1). Old Testament patriarchs are often remembered for the blessing they gave to their children. When God gives a blessing He gives it to those who faithfully follow Him (Deut. 11:27), providing them with salvation (Ps. 3:8), life (Ps. 133:3), and success (2 Sam. 7:29).

the shame of Egypt. ^{5g}Then they shall be afraid and ashamed of Ethiopia their expectation and Egypt their glory. ⁶And the inhabitant of this territory will say in that day, ‘Surely such *is* our expectation, wherever we flee for ^hhelp to be delivered from the king of Assyria; and how shall we escape?’”

The Fall of Babylon Proclaimed

21 The ¹burden against the Wilderness of the Sea.

- As ^awhirlwinds in the South pass through,
So it comes from the desert, from a terrible land.
- ² A distressing vision is declared to me;
^bThe treacherous dealer deals treacherously,
And the plunderer plunders.
- ^cGo up, O Elam!
Besiege, O Media!
All its sighing I have made to cease.
- ³ Therefore ^dmy loins are filled with pain;
^ePangs have taken hold of me, like the pangs of a woman in labor.
I was ²distressed when I heard it;
I was dismayed when I saw it.
- ⁴ My heart wavered, fearfulness frightened me;
^fThe night for which I longed He turned into fear for me.
- ⁵ ^gPrepare the table,
Set a watchman in the tower,
Eat and drink.
Arise, you princes,
Anoint the shield!

⁵ ^g 2 Kin. 18:21; Is. 30:3-5; 31:1; Ezek. 29:6, 7
⁶ ^h Is. 30:5, 7

CHAPTER 21

¹ ^a Zech. 9:14
² ^b Is. 33:1 ^c Is. 13:17; 22:6; Jer. 49:34
³ ^d Is. 15:5; 16:11
^e Is. 13:8 ² Lit. bowed
⁴ ^f Deut. 28:67
⁵ ^g Jer. 51:39; Dan. 5:5

⁸ ^h Hab. 2:1 ³ DSS
Then the observer cried, “My Lord!”
⁹ ⁱ Is. 13:19; 47:5, 9; 48:14; Jer. 51:8; Dan. 5:28, 31; Rev. 14:8; 18:2 ^j Is. 46:1; Jer. 50:2; 51:44
¹⁰ ^k Jer. 51:33; Mic. 4:13
¹¹ ^l Gen. 25:14; 1 Chr. 1:30; Josh. 15:52 ^m Gen. 32:3; Jer. 49:7; Ezek. 35:2; Obad. 1 ⁴ oracle, prophecy

- ⁶ For thus has the Lord said to me:
“Go, set a watchman,
Let him declare what he sees.”
- ⁷ And he saw a chariot *with* a pair of horsemen,
A chariot of donkeys, *and* a chariot of camels,
And he listened earnestly with great care.
- ⁸ ³ Then he cried, “A lion, my Lord!
I stand continually on the ^hwatchtower in the daytime;
I have sat at my post every night.
- ⁹ And look, here comes a chariot of men *with* a pair of horsemen!”
Then he answered and said,
ⁱ“Babylon is fallen, is fallen!
And ^jall the carved images of her gods
He has broken to the ground.”
- ¹⁰ ^k Oh, my threshing and the grain of my floor!
That which I have heard from the LORD of hosts,
The God of Israel,
I have declared to you.

Proclamation Against Edom

- ¹¹ The ⁴burden against Dumah.
- He calls to me out of ^mSeir,
“Watchman, what of the night?
Watchman, what of the night?”
- ¹² The watchman said,
“The morning comes, and also the night.
If you will inquire, inquire;
Return! Come back!”

20:5, 6 They and this territory probably refer to the nations bordering the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea, who looked to Egypt to save them from Assyria. This would include Judah.

21:1–10 The oracle against Babylon, after an enigmatic superscription (v. 1), consists of a dreamlike vision of Babylon’s fall (vv. 2–9) and its significance to Judah (v. 10).

21:1 Wilderness means “desert.” The phrase Wilderness of the Sea may be a sarcastic parody of Babylon, whose southern region on the Persian Gulf was called the “Land of the Sea.”

21:2 Elam, a major part of Persia, and Media were allied in 700 B.C. Perhaps as part of the Assyrian army (5:26) they helped bring about the fall of Babylon in 689 B.C., since they certainly did so in 539 B.C. (11:11; 13:17). Its sighing may refer to the sighing Babylon inflicted on others, or to its own sighing under Assyrian oppression.

21:3 Perhaps Isaiah was distressed by the report of Babylon’s fall because it meant that Babylon could not save Judah from the Assyrians.

21:4 Although Isaiah longed for the fall of Babylon, he feared its consequences to Judah.

21:5 Having summoned Babylon’s princes to eat and drink, Isaiah summoned them again to anoint the shield in preparation for battle (Dan. 5).

21:6 Lord here means “Master.” The watchman is probably Isaiah.

21:7 A chariot of donkeys probably means “donkey riders” and

a chariot of camels probably means “camel riders.” The Persian army used donkeys and camels.

21:8 in the daytime . . . every night suggests “continually”—a display of Isaiah’s faithfulness to His calling.

21:10 My threshing is a metaphor for the punishment coming on Judah.

21:11, 12 This brief oracle against Dumah, an oasis in northern Arabia, consists of an editorial superscription (v. 11), a question by sleepless Edom to Isaiah about how much of the night is left (v. 11), and Isaiah’s enigmatic response that night accompanies the new day (v. 12).

21:11 Dumah was located at the intersection of the east-west trade route between Babylon and Edom and the north-south route between Palmyra and Edom. Dumah played a vital military and economic role in the relationship between Mesopotamia and Edom, and its fate greatly affected Edom. Seir is Edom (34:5–17; Gen. 32:3). Watchman refers to the night patrol who kept watch on the city. The metaphor refers to the prophet Isaiah, who as a guard on the walls could see the dawn—the light of salvation—in the east before others. What of the night may be rephrased as: “What is left of the night?”

21:12 and also the night: Dumah’s future was grim. Relief from Assyrian domination would be followed quickly by Babylonian domination.

Proclamation Against Arabia

¹³n The ⁵burden against Arabia.

In the forest in Arabia you will lodge,
O you traveling companies ^o of
Dedanites.

- ¹⁴ O inhabitants of the land of Tema,
Bring water to him who is thirsty;
With their bread they met him who
fled.
¹⁵ For they fled from the swords, from
the drawn sword,
From the bent bow, and from the
distress of war.

¹⁶For thus the LORD has said to me:
“Within a year, ^paccording to the year of
a hired man, all the glory of ^qKedar will
fail; ¹⁷and the remainder of the number
of archers, the mighty men of the people
of Kedar, will be diminished; for the LORD
God of Israel has spoken *it*.”

Proclamation Against Jerusalem

22 The ¹burden against the Valley of
Vision.

What ails you now, that you have all
gone up to the housetops,

- ² You who are full of noise,
A ²tumultuous city, ^aa joyous city?
Your slain *men* are not slain with the
sword,
Nor dead in battle.
³ All your rulers have fled together;
They are captured by the archers.
All who are found in you are bound
together;
They have fled from afar.
⁴ Therefore I said, “Look away from me,
^bI will weep bitterly;

¹³ n Jer. 25:24;
49:28 o Gen. 10:7;
1 Chr. 1:9, 32; Jer.
25:23; Ezek. 27:15
⁵ oracle, prophecy
¹⁶ p Is. 16:14 q Ps.
120:5; Song 1:5; Is.
42:11; 60:7; Ezek.
27:21

CHAPTER 22

¹ i oracle, prophecy
² a Is. 32:13
² boisterous
⁴ b Jer. 4:19

⁵ c Is. 37:3 d Lam.
1:5; 2:2
⁶ e Jer. 49:35 f Is.
15:1
⁸ g 2 Kin. 18:15, 16
^h 1 Kin. 7:2; 10:17
³ Lit. covering
⁹ i 2 Kin. 20:20;
2 Chr. 32:4; Neh.
3:16 ⁴ Lit. breaches
in the city walls
¹¹ j Neh. 3:16
^k 2 Kin. 20:20; 2 Chr.
32:3, 4
¹² l Is. 32:11; Joel
1:13; 2:17 m Ezra 9:3;
Is. 15:2; Mic. 1:16

Do not labor to comfort me
Because of the plundering of the
daughter of my people.”

- ⁵ c For *it* is a day of trouble and treading
down and perplexity
^d By the Lord God of hosts
In the Valley of Vision—
Breaking down the walls
And of crying to the mountain.
⁶ e Elam bore the quiver
With chariots of men *and* horsemen,
And ^fKir uncovered the shield.
⁷ It shall come to pass *that* your
choicest valleys
Shall be full of chariots,
And the horsemen shall set
themselves in array at the gate.
⁸ g He removed the ³protection of Judah.
You looked in that day to the armor
^h of the House of the Forest;
⁹ i You also saw the ⁴damage to the city
of David,
That it was great;
And you gathered together the
waters of the lower pool.
¹⁰ You numbered the houses of
Jerusalem,
And the houses you broke down
To fortify the wall.
¹¹ j You also made a reservoir between
the two walls
For the water of the old ^kpool.
But you did not look to its Maker,
Nor did you have respect for Him
who fashioned it long ago.
¹² And in that day the Lord God of hosts
^l Called for weeping and for mourning,
^m For baldness and for girding with
sackcloth.

21:13–17 The oracle against Arabia, after the superscription (v. 13), has three parts: (1) an address by Isaiah to Teman to provide for Arabian refugees fleeing from battle (vv. 13–15); (2) an address by the Lord to Isaiah confirming and elaborating upon Arabia's defeat (vv. 16, 17); (3) an epilogue guaranteeing the prophecy (v. 17).

21:13 Dedanites may be the refugees described in v. 15. Dedan was about 90 miles southeast of Tema (v. 14).

21:14 Tema was about two hundred miles southeast of Dumah (v. 11).

21:15 The drawn swords are those of the Assyrians and Babylonians.

21:16 Kedar was a relatively fertile region in the northwestern part of the Arabian desert in which Dedan and Tema were located (60:7). Its refugees would be driven deeper into the desert.

22:1–25 After the superscription (v. 1), the oracle against Jerusalem consists of five parts: (1) a contrast between Jerusalem's blind revelry and Isaiah's appalling vision of its selfish rulers having fled the city, leaving it to be plundered (vv. 1–4); (2) Isaiah's detailed vision of the city's fall (vv. 5–8); (3) Isaiah's indictment of Jerusalem for its misplaced confidence in its defenses instead of in the Lord (vv. 8–11); (4) Isaiah's indictment for its response of merrymaking instead of repenting (vv. 12, 13); (5) a final vision confirming that this last apostasy sealed Jerusalem's doom (v. 14). The vision is followed by

an example of Jerusalem's blindness in Shebna, the city's steward (vv. 15–19), whose weakness is contrasted with the ability of his successor Eliakim (vv. 20–25).

22:1 burden: For similar phrasing, see 13:1. **Valley of Vision** sarcastically describes Jerusalem. Mount Zion is ironically personified in its valleys from which it could see nothing. Instead of partying on **housetops**, the ailing city should have been in its prayer closets.

22:2, 3 In the prophet's vision, the rulers are **not slain with the sword** while heroically defending the city, but are **captured** while fleeing to save their own skins (2 Kin. 25:4–6).

22:4 daughter of my people: For a similar reference, see 1:8.

22:6, 7 Kir is Elam. The Elamites may have been part of the Assyrian army (5:26). **gate:** The same army that plundered Babylon (21:2) will arrive at Jerusalem's gates.

22:8 The House of the Forest is the nation's armory (39:2).

22:9–11 The defense of the city depended upon the availability of **water** within its **walls**. Hezekiah addressed this need by digging a tunnel beneath the city, connecting the **lower pool** in Jerusalem's southwestern valley with the **old pool**, the source of water in the eastern valley.

22:12, 13 Called for weeping and for mourning . . . But instead, joy and gladness: God demanded repentance and renewal; the people instead turned to pleasure and parties. **eat and drink:**

13 But instead, joy and gladness,
Slaying oxen and killing sheep,
Eating meat and ⁿdrinking wine:
^o“Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow
we die!”

14 ^pThen it was revealed in my hearing
by the LORD of hosts,
“Surely for this iniquity there ^qwill be
no atonement for you,
Even to your death,” says the Lord
God of hosts.

The Judgment on Shebna

15 Thus says the Lord God of hosts:

“Go, proceed to this steward,
To ^rShebna, who *is* over the house,
and say:

16 ‘What have you here, and whom have
you here,
That you have hewn a sepulcher here,
As he ^swho hews himself a sepulcher
on high,
Who carves a tomb for himself in a
rock?’

17 Indeed, the LORD will throw you
away violently,
O mighty man,

^tAnd will surely seize you.

18 He will surely turn violently and toss
you like a ball
Into a large country;
There you shall die, and there ^uyour
glorious chariots
Shall be the shame of your master’s
house.

19 So I will drive you out of your office,
And from your position ⁵he will pull
you down.

20 ‘Then it shall be in that day,
That I will call My servant ^vEliakim
the son of Hilkiah;

13 ^aIs. 5:11, 22; 28:7,
8; Luke 17:26–29
^oIs. 56:12; 1 Cor.
15:32

14 ^pIs. 5:9 ^q1 Sam.
3:14; Ezek. 24:13
15 ^r2 Kin. 18:37;
Is. 36:3

16 ^s2 Sam. 18:18;
2 Chr. 16:14; Matt.
27:60

17 ^tEsth. 7:8

18 ^uIs. 2:7

19 ⁵LXX omits *he
will pull you down*;
Syr., Tg., Vg. *I will
pull you down*

20 ^v2 Kin. 18:18; Is.
36:3, 22; 37:2

22 ^wIs. 9:6 ^xJob
12:14; Rev. 3:7
23 ^yEzra 9:8; Zech.
10:4

CHAPTER 23

1 ^aJer. 25:22; 47:4;
Ezek. 26–28; Amos
1:9; Zech. 9:2, 4

¹ oracle, prophecy
² Heb. Kittim,
western lands,
especially Cyprus
2 ³ So with MT, Vg.;
LXX, Tg. *Passing
over the water*; DSS
*Your messengers
passing over the sea*

21 I will clothe him with your robe
And strengthen him with your belt;
I will commit your responsibility into
his hand.

He shall be a father to the
inhabitants of Jerusalem
And to the house of Judah.

22 The key of the house of David
I will lay on his ^wshoulder;
So he shall ^xopen, and no one shall
shut;
And he shall shut, and no one shall
open.

23 I will fasten him *as* ^ya peg in a secure
place,
And he will become a glorious
throne to his father’s house.

24 ‘They will hang on him all the glory
of his father’s house, the offspring and
the posterity, all vessels of small quanti-
ty, from the cups to all the pitchers. ²⁵In
that day,’ says the LORD of hosts, ‘the peg
that is fastened in the secure place will be
removed and be cut down and fall, and
the burden that *was* on it will be cut off;
for the LORD has spoken.’”

Proclamation Against Tyre

23 The ^aburden ¹against Tyre.

Wail, you ships of Tarshish!
For it is laid waste,
So that there is no house, no
harbor;
From the land of ²Cyprus it is
revealed to them.

2 Be still, you inhabitants of the
coastland,

You merchants of Sidon,

³ Whom those who cross the sea have
filled.

At times, this is a proper response to adversity (Eccl. 2:24; 3:13); but to use food, drink, and sensual pleasures as a means of shielding oneself from righteousness before the Lord is disastrous (Luke 17:26–29).

22:15 Steward refers to a high government official who was responsible for caring for the king and his dominion.

22:16 Here refers to Silwan, on the eastern side of the Kidron valley, overlooking the City of David. By hewing himself **a sepulcher on high**, Shebna rivaled the king (2 Chr. 16:14), to whom he should have been a father (v. 21).

22:17 throw you away: An impressive grave is no defense against God.

22:18, 19 The **large country** refers to Assyria. **drive you out:** Shebna was demoted to a secretary by the time of the Assyrian siege (36:3, 22).

22:20 Eliakim was an official whom God would honor in place of the arrogant Shebna (v. 15).

22:21 The pronoun **your** refers to Shebna (v. 15). The word **father** suggests the self-sacrificing love of Eliakim for citizens of Jerusalem.

22:22 The steward had the **key** that gave him an audience with the king (Matt. 16:19; Rev. 3:7).

22:23 A peg suggests one who is firmly in place, a reliable person (but see 22:25). **Glorious throne** suggests that Eliakim will bring honor to the memory of his **father’s house** in contrast to the shame Shebna had brought to his master (see v. 18).

22:24 All vessels is a metaphor for all of the inhabitants, both the influential and the insignificant.

22:25 the peg that is fastened in the secure place: The reference here appears to be Eliakim (v. 20). Even the noble Eliakim could not sustain the **burden** of government. Only Immanuel could do that (9:6, 7).

23:1–18 The oracle against Tyre consists of two main parts (following the superscription in v. 1): the fall of Tyre (vv. 1–14) and the restoration of it (vv. 15–18). As in ch. 13, the language is stylized, general, and symbolic, not historically specific.

23:1 burden: For similar phrasing, see 13:1. Tyre was besieged several times over a period of about four hundred years before it was finally **laid waste** by Alexander the Great in 332 B.C. **Cyprus** had close commercial ties with Tyre (Ezek. 27:6), as did Solomon (1 Kin. 5:1, 8–11). The pronoun **it** refers to the report that Tyre had fallen.

- 3 And on great waters the grain of Shihor,
The harvest of ^dthe River, is her revenue;
And ^bshe is a marketplace for the nations.
- 4 Be ashamed, O Sidon;
For the sea has spoken,
The strength of the sea, saying,
“I do not labor, nor bring forth children;
Neither do I rear young men,
Nor bring up virgins.”
- 5 ^cWhen the report *reaches* Egypt,
They also will be in agony at the report of Tyre.
- 6 Cross over to Tarshish;
Wail, you inhabitants of the coastland!
- 7 Is this your ^djoyous city,
Whose antiquity *is* from ancient days,
Whose feet carried her far off to dwell?
- 8 Who has taken this counsel against Tyre, ^ethe crowning city,
Whose merchants *are* princes,
Whose traders *are* the honorable of the earth?
- 9 The LORD of hosts has ^fpurposed it,
To ^gbring to dishonor the ^gpride of all glory,
To bring into contempt all the honorable of the earth.
- 10 Overflow through your land like ^hthe River,
O daughter of Tarshish;
There is no more ^hstrength.

3 ^b Ezek. 27:3-23
4 The Nile
5 ^c Is. 19:16
7 ^d Is. 22:2; 32:13
8 ^e Ezek. 28:2, 12
9 ^f Is. 14:26 ^g Job 40:11, 12; Is. 13:11; 24:4; Dan. 4:37
5 ^g pollute
10 ^h The Nile
7 ^h restraint, lit. belt

11 ^h Zech. 9:2-4
12 ⁱ Ezek. 26:13, 14; Rev. 18:22
13 ^j Is. 47:1 ^k Ps. 72:9
14 ^j Ezek. 27:25-30
17 ^m Rev. 17:2
18 ⁿ Ex. 28:36; Zech. 14:20, 21

- 11 He stretched out His hand over the sea,
He shook the kingdoms;
The LORD has given a commandment ^hagainst Canaan
To destroy its strongholds.
- 12 And He said, “You will rejoice no more,
O you oppressed virgin daughter of Sidon.
Arise, ⁱcross over to Cyprus;
There also you will have no rest.”
- 13 Behold, the land of the ^jChaldeans,
This people *which* was not;
Assyria founded it for ^kwild beasts of the desert.
They set up its towers,
They raised up its palaces,
And brought it to ruin.
- 14 ^lWail, you ships of Tarshish!
For your strength is laid waste.
- 15 Now it shall come to pass in that day that Tyre will be forgotten seventy years, according to the days of one king. At the end of seventy years it will happen to Tyre as *in* the song of the harlot:
- 16 “Take a harp, go about the city,
You forgotten harlot;
Make sweet melody, sing many songs,
That you may be remembered.”

17 And it shall be, at the end of seventy years, that the LORD will deal with Tyre. She will return to her hire, and ^mcommit fornication with all the kingdoms of the world on the face of the earth. ⁿHer gain and her pay ⁿwill be set apart for the

23:3, 4 Shihor, a synonym for Egypt (see Jer. 2:18), brought its coveted **grain** to Phoenicia, bringing **revenue** to Tyre, the **marketplace for the nations**. **Sidon**, the other prominent city along with Tyre, depended on the Mediterranean **sea** for its livelihood, which is personified here as a bereft father.

23:5 Egypt would be in **agony** because its profitable trading partner was gone.

23:6, 7 Tarshish is Tartessus in Spain and represents the most distant place to the ancient Israelites (2:16). **Whose feet . . . to dwell** is a personification of Tyre's colonies. Tyre's large merchant fleet traversed the Mediterranean Sea. Their colonies were sprinkled throughout the Mediterranean world in support of their shipping empire.

23:8 crowning: Tyre crowned its trading merchants with wealth and prestige.

23:9 dishonor the pride: For a similar idea, see 2:12–19.

23:12 Oppressed suggests “crushed” in war. **virgin daughter of Sidon**: It is possible that this phrase is used as a parody. Jerusalem is the Lord's daughter; Tyre is merely a pretender.

23:13 Since the **Chaldeans** had not escaped the siege **towers** of the Assyrians who **raised up** or laid bare the foundations of Babylon's **palaces**, neither would Tyre.

23:15 Seventy years symbolizes a full measure of time, a lifetime.

23:16 The **forgotten harlot** who, in her old age, sings **songs** to be **remembered** is a metaphor for the restoration of Tyre.

23:17 Will deal is a translation of the Hebrew verb “to visit.” Although the verb can express God's merciful visitation on His people, here the verb is used to express God's judgment (24:21). **Commit fornication** is a metaphor for Tyre's forming economic alliances with anyone that enriched her, regardless of ethics.

23:18 Tyre's pay would be **set apart**, or “regarded as holy,” **for the**

burden

(Heb. *massa'*) (23:1; 2 Kin. 9:25; Jer. 23:33) Strong's #4853

This noun is a derivative of the verb *nasa'* which means “to lift up” or “to carry away.” *Massa'* refers to something that is taken or carried such as a present, tribute, or message. It is also translated *oracle* (Jer. 23:33) when God uses His prophets to convey judgment against someone or some nation. Isaiah frequently used this term in what are commonly known as the “oracles against the nations,” where he spoke of God's judgment on different kingdoms (13:1; 15:1; 17:1; 19:1; 21:1, 11). Translating the word as *burden* emphasizes that Isaiah carried and delivered God's indictments against the nations.

LORD; it will not be treasured nor laid up, for her gain will be for those who dwell before the LORD, to eat sufficiently, and for ⁸fine clothing.

Impending Judgment on the Earth

- 24** Behold, the LORD makes the earth empty and makes it waste,
Distorts its surface
And scatters abroad its inhabitants.
- ² And it shall be:
As with the people, so with the ^apriest;
As with the servant, so with his master;
As with the maid, so with her mistress;
^bAs with the buyer, so with the seller;
As with the lender, so with the borrower;
As with the creditor, so with the debtor.
- ³ The land shall be entirely emptied and utterly plundered,
For the LORD has spoken this word.
- ⁴ The earth mourns and fades away,
The world languishes and fades away;
The ^chaughty ¹ people of the earth languish.
- ⁵ ^dThe earth is also defiled under its inhabitants,
Because they have ^etransgressed the laws,
Changed the ordinance,
Broken the ^feverlasting covenant.
- ⁶ Therefore ^gthe curse has devoured the earth,
And those who dwell in it are ²desolate.
Therefore the inhabitants of the earth are ^hburned,
And few men are left.

18 ⁸ choice

CHAPTER 24

² ^a Hos. 4:9 ^b Ezek. 7:12, 13
⁴ ^c Is. 25:11 ¹ proud
⁵ ^d Gen. 3:17; Num. 35:33; Is. 9:17; 10:6
^e Is. 59:12 ^f 1 Chr. 16:14-19; Ps. 105:7-12
⁶ ^g Mal. 4:6 ^h Is. 9:19 ² Or held guilty

⁷ ⁱ Is. 16:8-10; Joel 1:10, 12
⁸ ^j Is. 5:12, 14; Jer. 7:34; 16:9; 25:10; Ezek. 26:13; Hos. 2:11; Rev. 18:22
¹³ ^k [Is. 17:5, 6; 27:12]
¹⁵ ^l Is. 25:3 ^m Mal. 1:11
¹⁶ ⁿ Is. 21:2; 33:1; Jer. 3:20; 5:11 ³ Lit. Leanness to me, leanness to me

- ⁷ ⁱ The new wine fails, the vine languishes,
All the merry-hearted sigh.
- ⁸ The mirth ^j of the tambourine ceases,
The noise of the jubilant ends,
The joy of the harp ceases.
- ⁹ They shall not drink wine with a song;
Strong drink is bitter to those who drink it.
- ¹⁰ The city of confusion is broken down;
Every house is shut up, so that none may go in.
- ¹¹ There is a cry for wine in the streets,
All joy is darkened,
The mirth of the land is gone.
- ¹² In the city desolation is left,
And the gate is stricken with destruction.
- ¹³ When it shall be thus in the midst of the land among the people,
^k It shall be like the shaking of an olive tree,
Like the gleaning of grapes when the vintage is done.
- ¹⁴ They shall lift up their voice, they shall sing;
For the majesty of the LORD
They shall cry aloud from the sea.
- ¹⁵ Therefore ^l glorify the LORD in the dawning light,
^m The name of the LORD God of Israel in the coastlands of the sea.
- ¹⁶ From the ends of the earth we have heard songs:
“Glory to the righteous!”
But I said, ³ “I am ruined, ruined! Woe to me!”
ⁿ The treacherous dealers have dealt treacherously,
Indeed, the treacherous dealers have dealt very treacherously.”

LORD (18:7; 60:5–11). This was not a violation of Deut. 23:18, which forbade bringing a harlot's pay to the temple. Tyre's destruction was part of the Lord's war against the unrighteous. The spoils would belong to Him as the Victor (Deut. 2:35; Josh. 6:17, 19).

24:1–27:13 The section describing the Lord's “burdens” against particular nations (chs. 13–23) is now placed in a larger framework that depicts God's triumph over the entire earth for His elect. Chapter 24 focuses on God's overthrow of the corrupted earth; ch. 25 focuses on the responsive praise to His actions. Chapters 26 and 27 focus on God's efforts for His people.

24:1–23 Chapter 24 consists of five stanzas: (1) the desolation of the earth because of sin (vv. 1–6); (2) the end of revelry in the city (vv. 7–13); (3) glory to God, but grief over the earth (vv. 14–16); (4) the hopelessness of flight, for the whole earth shakes (vv. 17–20); (5) the vision of God reigning on Mt. Zion over the cosmos (vv. 21–23).

24:1 Scatters is an allusion to Gen. 11:9. The Lord had scattered the inhabitants of the earth in the past at the tower of Babel; He would do so again.

24:2 As . . . debtor: Wealth and power will make no difference. Both will suffer for wickedness before God.

24:4 The earth mourns: For a similar idea, see Rom. 8:22.

24:5 laws . . . ordinance . . . everlasting covenant: The usual language concerning a breach of the covenant is applied more generally to the wicked nations. Perhaps these words speak of that innate sense of right and wrong—the conscience—that God has given to all humankind, but which everyone violates (Rom. 1:18–32; compare Acts 24:16).

24:6 Left may also be translated “remnant” (10:20, 21).

24:7 New wine is simply a synonym of the standard word for wine.

24:8 Mirth and joy represent the same Hebrew word.

24:10 Confusion is translated “without form” in Gen. 1:2.

24:11 cry for wine: For a similar image, see Zeph. 1:13.

24:13 shaking . . . gleaning: People in desperation continue to seek for a single olive or for grapes.

24:14 They refers to those who love God's law and who have suffered for righteousness.

24:15 dawning light . . . the sea: The imagery suggests the east (the dawn) and west (the Mediterranean Sea). From east to west, everyone should give the Lord the praise that is due to Him.

24:16 But I said: The prophet could not join the oppressed's hymn of praise because he saw the awful treachery that would precede the rejoicing (33:1; Dan. 7:28; 8:27).

¹⁷ ^o Fear and the pit and the snare
 Are upon you, O inhabitant of the
 earth.
¹⁸ And it shall be
 That he who flees from the noise of
 the fear
 Shall fall into the pit,
 And he who comes up from the
 midst of the pit
 Shall be ^d caught in the snare;
 For ^p the windows from on high are
 open,
 And ^q the foundations of the earth
 are shaken.

¹⁹ ^r The earth is violently broken,
 The earth is split open,
 The earth is shaken exceedingly.
²⁰ The earth shall ^s reel ⁵ to and fro like
 a drunkard,
 And shall totter like a hut;
 Its transgression shall be heavy
 upon it,
 And it will fall, and not rise again.

²¹ It shall come to pass in that day
 That the LORD will punish on high
 the host of exalted ones,
 And on the earth ^t the kings of the
 earth.

²² They will be gathered together,
 As prisoners are gathered in the ⁶ pit,
 And will be shut up in the prison;
 After many days they will be
 punished.

²³ Then the ^u moon will be disgraced
 And the sun ashamed;
 For the LORD of hosts will ^v reign
 On ^w Mount Zion and in Jerusalem
 And before His elders, gloriously.

Praise to God

25 O LORD, You *are* my God.
^a I will exalt You,
 I will praise Your name,

¹⁷ ^o Jer. 48:43;
 Amos 5:19
¹⁸ ^p Gen. 7:11 ^q Ps.
 18:7; 46:2; Is. 2:19,
 21; 13:13 ⁴ Lit. *taken*
¹⁹ ^r Jer. 4:23
²⁰ ^s Is. 19:14; 24:1;
 28:7 ⁵ *stagger*
²¹ ^t Ps. 76:12
²² ⁶ *dungeon*
²³ ^u Is. 13:10; 60:19;
 Ezek. 32:7; Joel 2:31;
 3:15 ^v Rev. 19:4, 6
^w [Heb. 12:22]

CHAPTER 25

¹ ^a Ex. 15:2

^b Ps. 98:1 ^c Num.
 23:19
² ^d Is. 21:9; 23:13;
 Jer. 51:37
³ ^e Is. 24:15; Rev.
 11:13 ¹ *terrifying*
⁴ ^f Is. 4:6
⁵ ² *humbled*
⁶ ^g [Is. 2:2-4; 56:7]
^h Prov. 9:2; Matt.
 22:4 ⁱ [Dan. 7:14;
 Matt. 8:11] ³ Lit.
fat things ⁴ *wines*
matured on the
sediment
 7 ^j 2 Cor. 3:15; [Eph.
 4:18]
⁸ ^k [Hos. 13:14;
 1 Cor. 15:54; Rev.
 20:14] ^l Is. 30:19;
 Rev. 7:17; 21:4

^b For You have done wonderful *things*;
^c Your counsels of old *are* faithfulness
 and truth.
² For You have made ^d a city a ruin,
 A fortified city a ruin,
 A palace of foreigners to be a city no
 more;
 It will never be rebuilt.
³ Therefore the strong people will
^e glorify You;
 The city of the ¹ terrible nations will
 fear You.
⁴ For You have been a strength to the
 poor,
 A strength to the needy in his
 distress,
^f A refuge from the storm,
 A shade from the heat;
 For the blast of the terrible ones *is* as
 a storm *against* the wall.
⁵ You will reduce the noise of aliens,
 As heat in a dry place;
 As heat in the shadow of a cloud,
 The song of the terrible ones will be
² diminished.
⁶ And in ^g this mountain
^h The LORD of hosts will make for ⁱ all
 people
 A feast of ³ choice pieces,
 A feast of ⁴ wines on the lees,
 Of fat things full of marrow,
 Of well-refined wines on the lees.
⁷ And He will destroy on this
 mountain
 The surface of the covering cast over
 all people,
 And ^j the veil that is spread over all
 nations.
⁸ He will ^k swallow up death forever,
 And the Lord God will ^l wipe away
 tears from all faces;
 The rebuke of His people
 He will take away from all the earth;
 For the LORD has spoken.

24:17, 18 Windows may be an allusion to the Flood (Gen. 7:11). In the OT the word means “openings.”

24:21 The Hebrew word to **punish** means “to visit” (23:17). The **host** of stars (Jer. 33:22) is identified with fallen angels (Matt. 24:29; Rev. 12:4, 9).

24:22 prisoners: For a similar idea see 2 Pet. 2:4.

24:23 His elders may be a reference to angelic beings who attend God’s majesty.

25:1–12 This poem celebrating God’s destruction of the sinful earth falls into three parts: (1) a hymn of praise by Isaiah (vv. 1–5); (2) the Lord’s feast on Mt. Zion celebrating His destruction of death (vv. 6–8); (3) a hymn of praise by the congregation (vv. 9–12).

25:1 Wonderful things refers to the wonders only God can do. **Faithfulness and truth** may be rephrased as “absolute truth.”

25:2 Any proud **city** is in view here (24:10). **never be rebuilt:** For a similar idea, see 24:20.

25:3 The terrible nations are those addressed in chs. 13–23. The pairing of **glorify** (24:15) and **fear** speaks of the absolute submission to God of all people (Phil. 2:10).

25:4 The repetition of the word **strength** and the use of the terms **refuge** (57:13) and **shade** is similar to the listing of terms for protection in Ps. 91:1–3.

25:5 The use of the term **terrible ones**, or nations, three times in vv. 3–5 emphasizes divine judgment on the nations represented.

25:6 mountain: For a similar usage, see 2:2. **A feast of wines on the lees** refers to the best wine. **Fat things full of marrow** refers to the choicest food. The feast is similar to the one prepared by Wisdom in Prov. 9:1–6.

25:7 The surface of the covering and **veil** refer to a “shroud.” This is a promise of the end of death (v. 8).

25:8 Death is often pictured as an “enlarged mouth” by the poets of the Bible. Paradoxically, the Lord **will swallow up death**. **Lord** is the title meaning Sovereign or Master; the word **God** represents the divine name Yahweh, ordinarily translated Lord. **wipe away tears:** This promise is given anew in Rev. 7:17; 21:4. **the Lord has spoken:** The promises are as sure as the eternal character of God (1:20).

9 And it will be said in that day:
“Behold, this is our God;
We have waited for Him, and He will save us.
This is the LORD;
We have waited for Him;
We will be glad and rejoice in His salvation.”

10 For on this mountain the hand of the LORD will rest,
And Moab shall be trampled down under Him,
As straw is trampled down for the refuse heap.

11 And He will spread out His hands in their midst
As a swimmer reaches out to swim,
And He will bring down their pride
Together with the trickery of their hands.

12 The fortress of the high fort of your walls
He will bring down, lay low,
And bring to the ground, down to the dust.

A Song of Salvation

26 In that day this song will be sung in the land of Judah:

“We have a strong city;
God will appoint salvation for walls and bulwarks.

Open the gates,
That the righteous nation which keeps the truth may enter in.

You will keep him in perfect peace,
Whose mind is stayed on You,
Because he trusts in You.

Trust in the LORD forever,
For in YAH, the LORD, is everlasting strength.

For He brings down those who dwell on high,

9 ^m Gen. 49:18; Is. 8:17; 26:8; [Titus 2:13] ⁿ Ps. 20:5
10 ^o Is. 16:14; Jer. 48:1-47; Ezek. 25:8-11; Amos 2:1-3; Zeph. 2:9
11 ^p Is. 24:4; 26:5
12 ^q Is. 26:5

CHAPTER 26

1 ^a Is. 2:11; 12:1 ^b Is. 60:18
2 ^c Ps. 118:19, 20
3 ^d Or remains faithful
3 ^d Is. 57:19; [Phil. 4:6, 7]
4 ^e Is. 12:2; 45:17
2 ^{Or} Rock of Ages
5 ³ low

^f Is. 25:11, 12
6 ⁴ trample
7 ^g Ps. 37:23 ⁵ Or make level
8 ^h Is. 64:5 ⁱ Is. 25:9; 33:2
9 ^j Ps. 63:6; Song 3:1; Is. 50:10; Luke 6:12
10 ^k Eccl. 8:12; [Rom. 2:4] ^j Ps. 143:10
11 ^m Job 34:27; Ps. 28:5; Is. 5:12 ⁶ Or Your zeal for the people
12 ⁷ Or for us
13 ⁿ 2 Chr. 12:8

The lofty city;
He lays it low,
He lays it low to the ground,
He brings it down to the dust.

6 The foot shall tread it down—
The feet of the poor
And the steps of the needy.”

7 The way of the just is uprightness;
O Most Upright,
You weigh the path of the just.

8 Yes, in the way of Your judgments,
O LORD, we have waited for You;
The desire of our soul is for Your name
And for the remembrance of You.

9 With my soul I have desired You in the night,
Yes, by my spirit within me I will seek You early;
For when Your judgments are in the earth,
The inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.

10 Let grace be shown to the wicked,
Yet he will not learn righteousness;
In the land of uprightness he will deal unjustly,
And will not behold the majesty of the LORD.

11 LORD, when Your hand is lifted up,
they will not see.
But they will see and be ashamed
For their envy of people;
Yes, the fire of Your enemies shall devour them.

12 LORD, You will establish peace for us,
For You have also done all our works in us.

13 O LORD our God, masters besides You
Have had dominion over us;
But by You only we make mention of Your name.

25:9 Note the change from “my God” (v. 1) to **our God**. This verse is the faithful’s song of praise. **Be glad and rejoice** may be rephrased as “be exceedingly happy.” **Salvation** is deliverance from constraint, whether it is falling into a pit (Ps. 40:2) or the constraint of sin and death.

25:10 **Moab** symbolizes the proud. **for the refuse heap**: This phrase refers to water mixed with dung—a very unpleasant image.

25:12 **He will bring down**: This will be the work of the Lord.

26:1–27:1 This poem consists of three sections: (1) a pilgrim’s song celebrating the city of God (26:1–6); (2) a song of trust in God (26:7–19); (3) an encouraging promise that God will punish evil (26:20–27:1).

26:1 **In that day**: For a similar phrase, see 2:12. The pilgrim’s **strong city** presumably is Mt. Zion (2:2; 60:14).

26:2 **Open the gates** is the language of a pilgrim song (Ps. 118:19, 20).

26:3 The Hebrew expression translated **perfect peace** is literally “peace, peace”; compare the word *holy* in 6:3. Immanuel will inaugurate this superior kind of peace (9:6; 11:6–9).

26:4 **Trust** means “to commit oneself fully to.” **YAH, the LORD** is an emphatic designation of God (see 12:2).

26:5, 6 Line after line asserts the destruction of the **lofty city** (v. 1) by the power of God.

26:7 **uprightness; O Most Upright**: The relative uprightness of the righteous is put into the context of the absolute uprightness of the Holy One.

26:8 **waited**: For a similar idea, see 40:31 (compare Ps. 40:1).

26:9 **in the night . . . early**: The prophet describes his relentless search for God.

26:10 **The wicked** show contempt for God’s **grace** (Rom. 2:4). **Majesty** is translated “excellent things” in 12:5.

26:11 **Your hand**: The works of God are ignored by the wicked (5:12). **The fire of** may also be translated “the fire upon.”

26:12 True **peace** comes only from the Lord (26:3; John 14:27).

26:13 Other **masters** included rulers of Egypt in the past, rulers of Assyria in the present, and rulers of Babylon in the future. **Make mention of Your name** refers to God’s character as learned through past experience.

- 14 *They are dead, they will not live; They are deceased, they will not rise.* Therefore You have punished and destroyed them, And made all their memory to ^operish.
- 15 You have increased the nation, O LORD, You have ^pincreased the nation; You are glorified; You have expanded all the ^sborders of the land.
- 16 LORD, ^qin trouble they have visited You, They poured out a prayer *when* Your chastening *was* upon them.
- 17 As ^ra woman with child Is in pain and cries out in her ⁹pangs, *When* she draws near the time of her delivery, So have we been in Your sight, O LORD.
- 18 We have been with child, we have been in pain; We have, as it were, ^tbrought forth wind; We have not accomplished any deliverance in the earth, Nor have ^sthe inhabitants of the world fallen.
- 19 ^rYour dead shall live; *Together with* ²my dead body they shall arise.
- ^uAwake and sing, you who dwell in dust; For your dew *is like* the dew of herbs, And the earth shall cast out the dead.

Take Refuge from the Coming Judgment

- 20 Come, my people, ^venter your chambers,

14 ^o Eccl. 9:5; Is. 14:22
 15 ^p Is. 9:3 ⁸ Or ends
 16 ^q Is. 37:3; Hos. 5:15
 17 ^r Is. 13:8; [John 16:21] ⁹ sharp pains
 18 ^s Ps. 17:14
^t given birth to
 19 ^t Is. 25:8; [Ezek. 37:1-14] ^u [Dan. 12:2]; Hos. 13:14
² So with MT, Vg.; Syr., Tg. *their dead bodies*; LXX *those in the tombs*
 20 ^v Ex. 12:22, 23; [Ps. 91:1, 4]

^w [Ps. 30:5; Is. 54:7, 8; 2 Cor. 4:17]
 21 ^x Mic. 1:3; [Jude 14] ³ Or *bloodshed*

CHAPTER 27

1 ^a Gen. 3:1; Ps. 74:13, 14; Rev. 12:9, 15 ^b Is. 51:9; Ezek. 29:3; 32:2
 2 ^c Is. 5:1 ^d Ps. 80:8; Is. 5:7; Jer. 2:21 ^e So with MT (Kittel's *Biblia Hebraica*), Bg., Vg.; MT (*Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*), some Heb. mss., LXX *delight*; Tg. *choice vineyard*
 3 ^f 1 Sam. 2:9; Ps. 121:4, 5; Is. 31:5; [John 10:28]
 4 ^f 2 Sam. 23:6; Is. 9:18
 5 ^g Is. 25:4 ^h Job 22:21; Is. 26:3, 12; [Rom. 5:1; 2 Cor. 5:20]
 6 ⁱ Is. 37:31; Hos. 14:5, 6

- And shut your doors behind you; Hide yourself, as it were, ^wfor a little moment, Until the indignation is past.
- 21 For behold, the LORD ^xcomes out of His place To punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity; The earth will also disclose her ³blood, And will no more cover her slain.

27 In that day the LORD with His severe sword, great and strong, Will punish Leviathan the fleeing serpent, ^aLeviathan that twisted serpent; And He will slay ^bthe reptile that is in the sea.

The Restoration of Israel

- 2 In that day ^csing to her, ^d*"A vineyard of ^lred wine!"*
- 3 ^eI, the LORD, keep it, I water it every moment; Lest any hurt it, I keep it night and day.
- 4 Fury is not in Me. Who would set ^fbriers and thorns Against Me in battle? I would go through them, I would burn them together.
- 5 Or let him take hold ^gof My strength, That he may ^hmake peace with Me; And he shall make peace with Me."
- 6 Those who come He shall cause ⁱto take root in Jacob; Israel shall blossom and bud, And fill the face of the world with fruit.

26:14 They are dead: The prophet saw the future demise of the enemies of God's people. In contrast to the faithful (v. 19), these people **will not rise**.

26:15 You have increased the nation: The repetition of this expression emphasizes both its certainty and its magnitude.

26:16 The pronoun **they** refers to the faithful nation.

26:17, 18 a woman with child: A woman can endure labor pains for the sake of the joy that follows. The faithful remnant of Isaiah's time endured oppression, but **brought forth wind**, a metaphor for meaningless labor.

26:19 Isaiah, addressing his faithful peers, assures them that their **dead** will rise in resurrection (Job 19:26; Dan. 12:2). **Dew** is a picture of new life and blessing (Ps. 133:3; Hos. 14:5).

26:20 My people refers to the faithful, righteous remnant. Their sufferings under the Assyrian tyrants were but **for a little moment**, and were not worthy to be compared to the eternal joy that would follow (26:19; 54:7; Ps. 30:5; 2 Cor. 4:17).

26:21 Comes can also be translated "is about to come." When **the earth** discloses the **blood** of the poor and needy that it has swallowed from the hands of ruthless tyrants, it will bear testimony against those evil people; the Lord will avenge them (Gen. 4:10).

27:1 Punish links this verse with 26:21; this verse is the climax of the

preceding section. As in the case of the serpent Lotan in the Ugaritic myths, **Leviathan** was a mythological, dragon-like deity who symbolized chaos and who battled unsuccessfully against God (see Job 3:8; 41:1; Ps. 74:14). **serpent . . . reptile:** Isaiah borrows the imagery of this battle myth to teach that God will triumph over all who oppose Him. **in the sea:** See Ps. 93 for a development of this theme.

27:2-13 This prophecy is a song about the Lord's restoration of His vineyard, Israel (vv. 2-6); a contrast of the Lord's discipline of Israel (vv. 7-9) with His annihilation of its oppressors (vv. 10, 11); and a promise that the Lord will regather the exiles to Mt. Zion (vv. 12, 13).

27:2 The **vineyard** is Israel (5:7; 27:6). **Red wine** contrasts with "wild grapes" (5:2). This was God's intention for His people—He wanted them to produce, as it were, delectable wine.

27:3 I . . . keep it contrasts with "I will lay it waste" (5:6). **Water it every moment** contrasts with "no rain on it" (5:6). **Lest any hurt it** contrasts with "I will take away its hedge" (5:5). This passage is a complete reversal of the judgment recorded in ch. 5.

27:4 Fury is not in Me contrasts with "For all this His anger is not turned away" (5:25). **Who would set briers and thorns** contrasts with "there shall come up briers and thorns" (5:6).

27:5 peace: For a development of this theme, see 9:6; 11:1-16; 26:3.

27:6 Those who come refers to the regathered exiles (v. 13).

- 7 ^jHas He struck ²Israel as He struck those who struck him?
Or has He been slain according to the slaughter of those who were slain by Him?
- 8 ^kIn measure, by sending it away,
You contended with it.
^lHe removes *it* by His rough wind
In the day of the east wind.
- 9 Therefore by this the iniquity of Jacob will be covered;
And this *is* all the fruit of taking away his sin:
When he makes all the stones of the altar
Like chalkstones that are beaten to dust,
³ Wooden images and incense altars shall not stand.
- 10 Yet the fortified city *will be*
^mdesolate,
The habitation forsaken and left like a wilderness;
There the calf will feed, and there it will lie down
And consume its branches.
- 11 When its boughs are withered, they will be broken off;
The women come *and* set them on fire.
For ⁿ*it is* a people of no understanding;
Therefore He who made them will ^onot have mercy on them,
And ^pHe who formed them will show them no favor.
- 12 And it shall come to pass in that day
That the LORD will thresh,
From the channel of ⁴the River to the Brook of Egypt;
And you will be ^qgathered one by one,
O you children of Israel.

7 ^jIs. 10:12, 17;
30:30-33 ² Lit. *him*
8 ^k Job 23:6; Ps. 6:1;
Jer. 10:24; 30:11;
46:28; [1 Cor. 10:13]
^l [Ps. 78:38]
9 ³ Heb. *Asherim*,
Canaanite deities
10 ^m Is. 5:6, 17;
32:14; Jer. 26:18
11 ⁿ Deut. 32:28; Is.
1:3 ^o Is. 9:17 ^p Deut.
32:18; Is. 43:1, 7;
44:2, 21, 24
12 ^q [Is. 11:11; 56:8]
⁴ The Euphrates

13 ^r Is. 2:11 ^s Lev.
25:9; 1 Chr. 15:24;
Matt. 24:31; Rev.
11:15 ^t Is. 19:21,
22 ^u [Is. 2:3]; Zech.
14:16; [Heb. 12:22]

CHAPTER 28

1 ¹ Lit. *valleys of fatness*
2 ^a Is. 30:30; Ezek.
13:11
4 ² Lit. *valley of fatness*

- 13 ^r So it shall be in that day:
^s The great trumpet will be blown;
They will come, who are about to
perish in the land of Assyria,
And they who are outcasts in the
land of ^tEgypt,
And shall ^uworship the LORD in the
holy mount at Jerusalem.

Woe to Ephraim and Jerusalem

- 28 Woe to the crown of pride, to the
drunkards of Ephraim,
Whose glorious beauty *is* a fading
flower
Which *is* at the head of the ¹verdant
valleys,
To those who are overcome with
wine!
- 2 Behold, the Lord has a mighty and
strong one,
^a Like a tempest of hail and a
destroying storm,
Like a flood of mighty waters
overflowing,
Who will bring *them* down to the
earth with *His* hand.
- 3 The crown of pride, the drunkards of
Ephraim,
Will be trampled underfoot;
4 And the glorious beauty is a fading
flower
Which *is* at the head of the ²verdant
valley,
Like the first fruit before the summer,
Which an observer sees;
He eats it up while it is still in his hand.
- 5 In that day the LORD of hosts will be
For a crown of glory and a diadem of
beauty
To the remnant of His people,
6 For a spirit of justice to him who sits
in judgment,
And for strength to those who turn
back the battle at the gate.

27:7 Has He: The two questions that begin with these words expect a negative answer. **struck Israel:** The Lord struck the nations fatally (14:22, 30), but not Israel (10:24–26).

27:8 Sending it away refers to the Exile (v. 13).

27:9 iniquity . . . covered: See 40:2 for another statement that Israel's punishment atoned for its guilt. **Wooden images:** For a similar usage, see 17:8.

27:10 the fortified city will be desolate: For a similar idea, see 25:2, 10–12; 26:5, 6.

27:12 Thresh refers to harvesting a crop by flailing, such as beating an olive tree. **the River to the Brook of Egypt:** These geographical references mark out Israel's ideal homeland—from the Euphrates to the Wadi el-Arish (Gen. 15:18).

27:13 The great trumpet is a figure of speech for assembling troops (Ex. 19:16, 19; 1 Sam. 13:3; 2 Sam. 6:15; Matt. 24:31; 1 Cor. 15:52; 1 Thess. 4:16).

28:1–35:10 This section consists of six woes (28:1; 29:1, 15; 30:1; 31:1; 33:1), including woes to future rulers (28:1–29:24); woes for accepting foolish counsel (30:1–31:9), with an appendix promising

salvation in God the King (32:1–20); and woes against Assyria, which give promise of Zion's future glory (33:1–35:10).

28:1–29 The woe oracle against the northern kingdom's rulers (vv. 1–13) was to serve as an example to Judah's rulers (vv. 14–29). Note the word *therefore* in v. 14.

28:1 The crown of pride refers to Samaria. **drunkards:** The biblical writers regularly condemn the abuse of wine, drunkenness, and debauchery (5:11, 12). **Ephraim:** This name sometimes refers to all of Israel (see 7:2–9).

28:2 The strong one refers to Assyria, which is likened to **hail** that strips a plant of its leaves and **mighty waters** that sweep away the stalks (8:7, 8; 17:12, 13).

28:3 crown of pride: This phrase is repeated from v. 1.

28:5 In that day: For a similar phrase, see 2:12. The true **crown of glory** (29:17–24; 30:18–33; 32:1–33:24) stands in contrast to the false one (vv. 1–4). **remnant:** For similar references, see 1:9; 10:19–23.

28:6 The spirit of justice will prevail in the messianic age (11:1–5; 42:1–4).

- 7 But they also ^bhave erred through wine,
And through intoxicating drink are out of the way;
^cThe priest and the prophet have erred through intoxicating drink,
They are swallowed up by wine,
They are out of the way through intoxicating drink;
They err in vision, they stumble *in* judgment.
- 8 For all tables are full of vomit *and* filth;
No place *is clean*.
- 9 “Whom ^d will he teach knowledge?
And whom will he make to understand the message?
Those *just* weaned from milk?
Those *just* drawn from the breasts?”
- 10 ^eFor precept *must be* upon precept,
precept upon precept,
Line upon line, line upon line,
Here a little, there a little.”
- 11 For with ^fstammering lips and another tongue
He will speak to this people,
12 To whom He said, “This *is the rest with which*
You may cause the weary to rest,”
And, “This *is the refreshing*”;
Yet they would not hear.
- 13 But the word of the LORD was to them,
“Precept upon precept, precept upon precept,
Line upon line, line upon line,
Here a little, there a little,”
That they might go and fall backward, and be broken
And snared and caught.
- 14 Therefore hear the word of the LORD,
you scornful men,
Who rule this people who *are* in Jerusalem,

7 ^b Prov. 20:1; Is. 5:11, 22; Hos. 4:11
^c Is. 56:10, 12
9 ^d Jer. 6:10
10 ^e [2 Chr. 36:15; Neh. 9:30; Jer. 25:3, 4; 35:15; 44:4]
11 ^f Is. 33:19; 1 Cor. 14:21
12 ^g Is. 30:15; Jer. 6:16; [Matt. 11:28, 29]

15 ^h Is. 9:15; Ezek. 13:22; Amos 2:4
16 ⁱ Gen. 49:24; Ps. 118:22; Is. 8:14, 15; Matt. 21:42; Mark 12:10; Luke 20:17; Acts 4:11; Rom. 9:33; 10:11; Eph. 2:20; 1 Pet. 2:6-8 ☆
21 ^j 2 Sam. 5:20; 1 Chr. 14:11

- 15 Because you have said, “We have made a covenant with death,
And with Sheol we are in agreement.
When the overflowing scourge passes through,
It will not come to us,
^hFor we have made lies our refuge,
And under falsehood we have hidden ourselves.”

A Cornerstone in Zion

- 16 Therefore thus says the Lord God:
“Behold, I lay in Zion ⁱa stone for a foundation,
A tried stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation;
Whoever believes will not act hastily.”
- 17 Also I will make justice the measuring line,
And righteousness the plummet;
The hail will sweep away the refuge of lies,
And the waters will overflow the hiding place.
- 18 Your covenant with death will be annulled,
And your agreement with Sheol will not stand;
When the overflowing scourge passes through,
Then you will be trampled down by it.
- 19 As often as it goes out it will take you;
For morning by morning it will pass over,
And by day and by night;
It will be a terror just to understand the report.”
- 20 For the bed is too short to stretch out *on*,
And the covering so narrow that one cannot wrap himself *in it*.
- 21 For the LORD will rise up as *at* Mount ^jPerazim,

28:7 They also refers to the religious leaders, **the priest and the prophet**.

28:9, 10 Will he teach was spoken by the hardened leaders against Isaiah.

28:9 A child was **weaned** between the ages of three and five, the time for elementary moral education, which is described in v. 10.

28:11 The **stammering lips** were those of the Assyrians, who would become the teachers of Israel because of Israel's own failed leadership (33:19).

28:12 In place of the **rest** that comes from faith, Israel's oppressors would teach with a rod.

28:13 The word of the LORD would take the shape of discipline in the form of foreigners with stammering lips teaching their morals to Israel, who should have learned from God.

28:14 **Scornful men** are worse than “fools”; beyond choosing what is bad, they despise what is good (Ps. 1:1).

28:15 **covenant with death . . . lies . . . falsehood**: These phrases

are probably Isaiah's way of describing the people's covenant with Egypt. **Overflowing scourge** is likely the prophet's way of describing the Assyrian reprisals (10:26; 28:2). The scorners have sarcastically thrown Isaiah's warnings back in his face.

28:16, 17 **Therefore**: In response to the people's scoffing, **the Lord God** promises to establish His future kingdom on the **sure foundation** of justice and faith. **I lay** refers to the future, “I will lay.” The apostles identified the **stone for a foundation** as Jesus Christ (1 Pet. 2:4–6). **hail . . . waters**: For similar descriptions, see v. 2. **28:19** **As often as**: The Assyrian army trampled through Israel many times.

28:20 The too-short **bed** and the too-narrow **covering** give a false promise of security and comfort, an apt figure for the people's ill-advised, obstinate alliance with Egypt.

28:21 **At Mount Perazim**, God broke forth like a mighty flood (2 Sam. 5:20; 1 Chr. 14:11; compare vv. 2, 15, 17, 18). In the **Valley of Gibeon**, He brought forth hail (Josh. 10:10, 11; compare vv. 2,

He will be angry as in the Valley of ^kGibeon—
 That He may do His work, ^lHis
 awesome work,
 And bring to pass His act, His
³unusual act.
²² Now therefore, do not be mockers,
 Lest your bonds be made
 strong;
 For I have heard from the Lord God
 of hosts,
^m A ⁴destruction determined even
 upon the whole earth.

Listen to the Teaching of God

²³ Give ear and hear my voice,
 Listen and hear my speech.
²⁴ Does the plowman keep plowing all
 day to sow?
 Does he keep turning his soil and
 breaking the clods?
²⁵ When he has leveled its surface,
 Does he not sow the black cummin
 And scatter the cummin,
 Plant the wheat in rows,
 The barley in the appointed place,
 And the ⁵spelt in its place?
²⁶ For He instructs him in right
 judgment,
 His God teaches him.
²⁷ For the black cummin is not threshed
 with a threshing sledge,
 Nor is a cartwheel rolled over the
 cummin;
 But the black cummin is beaten out
 with a stick,
 And the cummin with a rod.
²⁸ Bread *flour* must be ground;
 Therefore he does not thresh it
 forever,
 Break *it with* his cartwheel,
 Or crush it *with* his horsemen.

²¹ ^k Josh. 10:10, 12;
 2 Sam. 5:25; 1 Chr.
 14:16 ^l [Lam. 3:33;
 Luke 19:41–44]
³ Lit. *foreign*
²² ^m Is. 10:22; Dan.
 9:27 ⁴ Lit. *complete*
end
²⁵ ⁵ *rye*

²⁹ ⁿ Ps. 92:5; Is. 9:6;
 Jer. 32:19 ⁶ *sound*
wisdom

CHAPTER 29

¹ ^a Ezek. 24:6, 9
² 2 Sam. 5:9
¹ Jerusalem, lit. *Lion*
of God
⁴ ^c Is. 8:19
⁵ ^d Is. 25:5; ^e Job
 21:18; Is. 17:13
^f Is. 30:13; 47:11;
 1 Thess. 5:3
⁶ ^g Is. 28:2; 30:30
^h 1 Sam. 2:10; Zech.
 14:4; Matt. 24:7;
 Mark 13:8; Luke
 21:11; Rev. 16:18, 19
⁷ ⁱ Is. 37:36; Mic.
 4:11, 12; Zech. 12:9
² Jerusalem

²⁹ This also comes from the LORD of
 hosts,
ⁿ Who is wonderful in counsel *and*
 excellent in ⁶guidance.

Woe to Jerusalem

29 “Woe ^ato ¹Ariel, to Ariel, the city
^bwhere David dwelt!
 Add year to year;
 Let feasts come around.
² Yet I will distress Ariel;
 There shall be heaviness and sorrow,
 And it shall be to Me as Ariel.
³ I will encamp against you all around,
 I will lay siege against you with a
 mound,
 And I will raise siegeworks against
 you.
⁴ You shall be brought down,
 You shall speak out of the ground;
 Your speech shall be low, out of the
 dust;
 Your voice shall be like a medium’s,
^cout of the ground;
 And your speech shall whisper out of
 the dust.
⁵ “Moreover the multitude of your ^dfoes
 Shall be like fine dust,
 And the multitude of the terrible ones
 Like ^echaff that passes away;
 Yes, it shall be ^fin an instant,
 suddenly.
⁶ ^gYou will be punished by the LORD of
 hosts
 With thunder and ^hearthquake and
 great noise,
 With storm and tempest
 And the flame of devouring fire.
⁷ ⁱThe multitude of all the nations who
 fight against ²Ariel,
 Even all who fight against her and
 her fortress,

17). God’s judgment on Israel was **unusual**, or “alien,” in that He rarely struck out in wrath against His own sinful people. The Hebrew Scripture is not a record of the wrath of God, but of His long patience toward His erring people, whom He still desires to call “My people” (Ex. 6:2–8).
28:22 Mockers comes from the same Hebrew root as “scornful men” in v. 14. **Lord God of hosts:** For a similar usage, see 1:9. **upon the whole earth:** For a similar idea, see 24:1–23.
28:27, 28 A threshing sledge would have been too large a tool for such a finely ground product as cummin.
28:29 wonderful in counsel: For a similar idea, see 9:6. The wisdom that the farmer uses in vv. 24–28 to tend his crops comes from God, the source of all good counsel.
29:1–14 The second woe is against Jerusalem for its hypocritical religion—specifically its empty worship (vv. 1–8) and its blind prophets (vv. 9–14).
29:1 Ariel probably means “altar hearth” (Ezek. 43:15, 16). The destruction and bloodshed in Jerusalem would make the city appear like an altar. The repetition of the term Ariel indicates the Lord’s sorrow over the sorry state to which His city had fallen. **where David dwelt:** David made Jerusalem his capital and planned the temple

that Solomon would later build in that city. These words show God’s continuing love for His servant David, the prototype of the coming King Jesus. **Add year to year** is a sarcastic reference to repetitious, empty ritual (1:10–17).
29:2 Heaviness and sorrow may be rephrased as “grievous sorrow.”
29:3 Siege refers to the Assyrian siege of the city in 701 B.C.
29:4 Voice . . . like a medium’s refers to the forbidden, deceptive “voices” for which the medium supposedly served as a channel. The strong voice of the city of Jerusalem would become merely a **whisper** (8:19).
29:6 Punished is literally “visited,” a word sometimes used for bringing salvation. **thunder and earthquake and great noise . . . storm and tempest . . . fire:** The Lord’s coming to His people is described using the imagery of the elements that accompanied Him at Sinai (Ex. 19:16–19) and when He fought for Israel (19:1; 30:27; Judg. 5:4; Ps. 18:7–15; Hab. 3:3–7).
29:7 all the nations: For a similar usage, see 5:26. **Ariel:** The term is also used in v. 1 for the city of Jerusalem. **As a dream** means “quickly passing,” almost “unreal.”

And distress her,
 Shall be *j* as a dream of a night vision.
 8 *k* It shall even be as when a hungry
 man dreams,
 And look—he eats;
 But he awakes, and his soul is still
 empty;
 Or as when a thirsty man dreams,
 And look—he drinks;
 But he awakes, and indeed *he is*
 faint,
 And his soul still craves:
 So the multitude of all the nations
 shall be,
 Who fight against Mount Zion.”

The Blindness of Disobedience

9 Pause and wonder!
 Blind yourselves and be blind!
 1 They are drunk, *m* but not with wine;
 They stagger, but not with
 intoxicating drink.
 10 For *n* the LORD has poured out on you
 The spirit of deep sleep,
 And has *o* closed your eyes, namely,
 the prophets;
 And He has covered your heads,
 namely, p the seers.

11 The whole vision has become to you
 like the words of a *3* book *q* that is sealed,
 which *men* deliver to one who is literate,
 saying, “Read this, please.”

r And he says, “I cannot, for it is
 sealed.”

12 Then the book is delivered to one
 who *4* is illiterate, saying, “Read this,
 please.”

And he says, “I am not literate.”

13 Therefore the Lord said:

14 “Inasmuch as these people draw near
 with their mouths
 And honor Me *5* with their lips,
 But have removed their hearts far
 from Me,
 And their fear toward Me is taught
 by the commandment of men,

7 / Job 20:8
 8 *4* Ps. 73:20
 9 / Is. 28:7, 8 *m* Is.
 51:21
 10 *n* Ps. 69:23; Is.
 6:9, 10; Mic. 3:6;
 Rom. 11:8 *o* Ps.
 69:23; Is. 6:10
p 1 Sam. 9:9; Is.
 44:18; Mic. 3:6;
 [2 Thess. 2:9-12]
 11 *q* Is. 8:16 *r* Dan.
 12:4, 9; [Matt. 13:11-
 16]; Rev. 5:1-5, 9
3 scroll
 12 *4* Lit. *does not*
know books
 13 *5* Ps. 78:36; Ezek.
 33:31; Matt. 15:8,
 9; Mark 7:6, 7 *6* Col.
 2:22

14 *u* Therefore, behold, I will again do a
 marvelous work
 Among this people,
 A marvelous work and a wonder;
 15 *v* For the wisdom of their wise *men*
 shall perish,
 And the understanding of their
 prudent *men* shall be hidden.”

15 *w* Woe to those who seek deep to
 hide their counsel far from the
 LORD,
 And their works are in the
 dark;
x They say, “Who sees us?” and,
 “Who knows us?”
 16 Surely you have things turned
 around!
 Shall the potter be esteemed as the
 clay;
 For shall the *y* thing made say of him
 who made it,
 “He did not make me”?
 Or shall the thing formed say of him
 who formed it,
 “He has no understanding”?

Future Recovery of Wisdom

17 Is it not yet a very little while
 Till *z* Lebanon shall be turned into a
 fruitful field,
 And the fruitful field be esteemed as
 a forest?

18 *a* In that day the deaf shall hear the
 words of the book,
 And the eyes of the blind shall see
 out of obscurity and out of
 darkness.

19 *b* The humble also shall increase *their*
 joy in the LORD,
 And *c* the poor among men shall
 rejoice
 In the Holy One of Israel.

20 For the *5* terrible one is brought to
 nothing,

d The scornful one is consumed,
 And all who *e* watch for iniquity are
 cut off—

14 *u* Is. 6:9, 10;
 28:21; Hab. 1:5 *v* Is.
 44:25; Jer. 49:7;
 Obad. 8; 1 Cor. 1:19
 15 *w* Is. 30:1 *x* Ps.
 10:11; 94:7; Is. 47:10;
 Ezek. 8:12; Mal. 2:17
 16 *y* Is. 45:9; Jer.
 18:1-6; [Rom.
 9:19-21]
 17 *z* Is. 32:15
 18 *a* Is. 35:5; Matt.
 11:5; Mark 7:37
 19 *b* [Ps. 25:9; 37:11;
 Is. 11:4; 61:1; Matt.
 5:5; 11:29] *c* Is.
 14:30; [Matt. 5:3;
 11:5; James 2:5]
 20 *d* Is. 28:14 *e* Is.
 59:4; Mic. 2:1
5 terrifying

29:9, 10 Pause . . . Blind: Whereas the religious leaders of Israel were physically **drunk** (28:7), those of Jerusalem **stagger** not from intoxicating drinks, but from ignorance of the Lord and His ways. **Deep sleep** is from a word used also of Adam’s sleep (Gen. 2:21), a supernatural stupor. **prophets . . . seers:** The visions that God had given were not appreciated or obeyed.

29:11, 12 The **literate** represent the religious leaders who found Isaiah’s prophecies **sealed** due to their own spiritual blindness (Rev. 5:1). The **illiterate** represent the common people.

29:13 The people’s **mouths** and **lips** spoke the right things, but their inner nature was far from God.

29:14 God’s **marvelous work** includes both judgment on the proud and salvation for the lowly (vv. 17–24). **wisdom . . . shall perish:** For a similar idea, see 1 Cor. 1:18–31.

29:15–24 The third woe oracle, directed against Israel’s unbelieving

counselors, consists of an accusation that the counselors had turned the religious world upside down by seeking to manipulate God rather than submitting to Him (vv. 15, 16), and the promise that God would turn the counselor’s social world upside down by deflating the pretentious and elevating the lowly (vv. 17–24).

29:15 The word **counsel** refers to making alliances instead of running to God for assistance.

29:16 potter . . . clay: For a similar idea, see 45:9.

29:17 Lebanon is a symbol of the earth’s might (2:13; 10:34; 33:9). **Fruitful field**, or “garden,” is the opposite of Lebanon, a forest.

29:18 Those who were once **deaf** and **blind** to the words of the book will miraculously understand it (vv. 9–12).

29:19 poor: For a similar usage, see 61:1.

29:20 terrible one: For similar references, see 13:11; 25:3, 4; 49:24.

scornful: For a similar reference, see 28:14.

21 Who make a man an offender by a word,
And ^flay a snare for him who
reproves in the gate,
And turn aside the just ^gby empty words.

22 Therefore thus says the LORD, ^hwho redeemed Abraham, concerning the house of Jacob:

“Jacob shall not now be ⁱashamed,
Nor shall his face now grow pale;
23 But when he sees his children,
^jThe work of My hands, in his midst,
They will hallow My name,
And hallow the Holy One of Jacob,
And fear the God of Israel.
24 These also ^kwho erred in spirit will come to understanding,
And those who complained will learn doctrine.”

Futile Confidence in Egypt

30 “Woe to the rebellious children,”
says the LORD,
“Who take counsel, but not of Me,
And who ^ldevise plans, but not of My Spirit,
^bThat they may add sin to sin;
2 “Who walk to go down to Egypt,
And ^dhave not asked My advice,
To strengthen themselves in the strength of Pharaoh,
And to trust in the shadow of Egypt!
3 “Therefore the strength of Pharaoh
Shall be your shame,
And trust in the shadow of Egypt
Shall be *your* humiliation.
4 For his princes were at ^fZoan,
And his ambassadors came to Hanes.
5 ^gThey were all ashamed of a people
who could not benefit them,
Or be help or benefit,
But a shame and also a reproach.”

21 ^f Amos 5:10, 12
9 Prov. 28:21
22 ^h Josh. 24:3 ⁱ Is. 45:17
23 ^j [Is. 45:11; 49:20-26; Eph. 2:10]
24 ^k Is. 28:7

CHAPTER 30

1 ^a Is. 29:15 ^b Deut. 29:19 ^l Lit. *weave a web*
2 ^c Is. 31:1; Jer. 43:7
^d Num. 27:21; Josh. 9:14; 1 Kin. 22:7; Jer. 21:2; 42:2, 20
3 ^e Is. 20:5; Jer. 37:5, 7
4 ^f Is. 19:11
5 ^g Jer. 2:36

6 ^h Is. 57:9; Hos. 8:9; 12:1 ⁱ Deut. 8:15; Is. 14:29 ² *oracle, prophecy*
7 ^j Jer. 37:7 ³ Lit. *Rahab Sits Idle*
8 ^k Hab. 2:2
9 ^j Deut. 32:20; Is. 1:2, 4; 65:2
10 ^m Is. 5:20; Jer. 11:21; Amos 2:12; Mic. 2:6 ⁿ 1 Kin. 22:8, 13; Jer. 6:14; 23:17, 26; Ezek. 13:7; Mic. 2:11; Rom. 16:18; 2 Tim. 4:3, 4
12 ^o Lev. 26:43; Num. 15:31; Prov. 1:30; 13:13; Is. 5:24; Ezek. 20:13, 16, 24; Amos 2:4

6^h The ²burden against the beasts of the South.

Through a land of trouble and anguish,
From which *came* the lioness and lion,

ⁱ The viper and fiery flying serpent,
They will carry their riches on the backs of young donkeys,
And their treasures on the humps of camels,

To a people *who* shall not profit;

7 ^j For the Egyptians shall help in vain and to no purpose.

Therefore I have called her

3 Rahab-Hem-Shebeth.

A Rebellious People

8 Now go, ^kwrite it before them on a tablet,

And note it on a scroll,
That it may be for time to come,
Forever and ever:

9 That ^lthis is a rebellious people,
Lying children,
Children *who* will not hear the law of the LORD;

10^m Who say to the seers, “Do not see,”
And to the prophets, “Do not prophesy to us right things;

ⁿ Speak to us smooth things, prophesy deceits.

11 Get out of the way,
Turn aside from the path,
Cause the Holy One of Israel
To cease from before us.”

12 Therefore thus says the Holy One of Israel:

“Because you ^odespise this word,
And trust in oppression and perversity,
And rely on them,

29:21 By a word refers to false testimony. Lay a snare may include the miscarriage of justice through legal technicalities. By empty words refers to winning a case through lies or clever arguments.

29:22 Redeemed Abraham: For additional information, see Acts 7:2–4. Jacob shall not now be ashamed: Based on God’s covenant with the patriarchs, the Lord gave a renewed promise of deliverance and blessing to the Israelites.

29:23 My hands: God Himself will bring about the redemption of His people. Holy One of Jacob refers to the One whom Jacob regarded as holy; it is a variant of the expression “Holy One of Israel.”

30:1–33 In the previous chapter, Isaiah denounces those who seek human support, instead of depending on the Lord. In chs. 30 and 31, Isaiah addresses the specific folly of depending on Egypt. This word oracle consists of a condemnation of dependence on Egypt (vv. 1–17) and a promise that the Lord will save Israel and destroy Assyria (vv. 18–33).

30:1 This is the fourth woe in 28:1–35:10. The rebellious children are Hezekiah’s advisers. To the sin of injustice they add the sin of devising plans independently of God. My Spirit is another way of speaking of God (11:2).

30:2 the shadow of Egypt: The contrast, of course, would be trusting in the “shadow of the Almighty” (Ps. 91:1).

30:3 Shame refers to deep humiliation.

30:4 His ambassadors may be the people from Judah who went from Zoan (19:11–13) in the Delta to Hanes, some 50 miles south of Cairo.

30:5 Shame and reproach speak of an intolerable humiliation.

30:6 The burden against the beasts was due to the fact that they vainly carried Judah’s gifts through the wilderness to Egypt (vv. 7–11).

30:7 Rahab, which literally means “Storm” or “Arrogant,” was a dragon from pagan mythology who was pictured as resisting creation. Both Rahab and Leviathan are symbolic of the forces of evil in the universe that God will destroy (51:9).

30:9 That can mean “because.” Law refers to the prophet’s instruction, which is from the Lord Himself (see v. 15).

30:10 Do not see: For a similar usage, see Mic. 2:6.

30:11 To cease: This was the most flagrant of the people’s wicked words.

30:12 To not choose to obey the Lord is to reject Him, even to

- 13 Therefore this iniquity shall be to you
^pLike a breach ready to fall,
 A bulge in a high wall,
 Whose breaking ^qcomes suddenly, in
 an instant.
- 14 And ^rHe shall break it like the
 breaking of the potter's vessel,
 Which is broken in pieces;
 He shall not spare.
 So there shall not be found among its
 fragments
- ⁴ A shard to take fire from the hearth,
 Or to take water from the cistern."

15 For thus says the Lord God, the Holy
 One of Israel:

- ^s"In returning and rest you shall be
 saved;
 In quietness and confidence shall be
 your strength."
^tBut you would not,
- 16 And you said, "No, for we will flee
 on horses"—
 Therefore you shall flee!
 And, "We will ride on swift horses"—
 Therefore those who pursue you
 shall be swift!

- 17 ^uOne thousand *shall flee* at the threat
 of one,
 At the threat of five you shall flee,
 Till you are left as a ⁵pole on top of a
 mountain
 And as a banner on a hill.

God Will Be Gracious

- 18 Therefore the LORD will wait, that
 He may be ^vgracious to you;
 And therefore He will be exalted,
 that He may have mercy on you.
 For the LORD *is* a God of justice;
^wBlessed are all those who ^xwait for
 Him.

13 ^p 1 Kin. 20:30;
 Ps. 62:3, 4; Is. 58:12
^q Is. 29:5
 14 ^r Ps. 2:9; Jer.
 19:11 ⁴ A piece of
 broken pottery
 15 ^s Ps. 116:7; Is. 7:4;
 28:12 ^t Matt. 23:37
 17 ^u Lev. 26:36;
 Deut. 28:25;
 32:30; Josh. 23:10;
 [Prov. 28:1] ⁵ A
 tree stripped of
 branches
 18 ^v Is. 33:2 ^w Ps.
 2:12; 34:8; Prov.
 16:20; Jer. 17:7 ^x Is.
 26:8

19 ^y Is. 65:9; [Ezek.
 37:25, 28] ^z Is. 25:8
^a Ps. 50:15; Is. 65:24;
 [Matt. 7:7-11]
 20 ^b 1 Kin. 22:27;
 Ps. 127:2 ^c Ps.
 74:9; Amos 8:11
⁶ oppression
 21 ^d Josh. 1:7
 22 ^e 2 Chr. 31:1; Is.
 2:20; 31:7 ^f Hos.
 14:8
 23 ^g [Matt. 6:33];
 1 Tim. 6:8 ⁷ rich
 25 ^h Is. 2:14, 15 ⁱ Is.
 2:10-21; 34:2

- 19 For the people ^hshall dwell in Zion at
 Jerusalem;
 You shall ^eweep no more.
 He will be very gracious to you at the
 sound of your cry;
 When He hears it, He will ^aanswer
 you.
- 20 And *though* the Lord gives you
^bThe bread of adversity and the water
 of ⁶affliction,
 Yet ^cyour teachers will not be moved
 into a corner anymore,
 But your eyes shall see your teachers.
- 21 Your ears shall hear a word behind
 you, saying,
 "This *is* the way, walk in it,"
 Whenever you ^dturn to the right
 hand
 Or whenever you turn to the left.
- 22 ^eYou will also defile the covering of
 your images of silver,
 And the ornament of your molded
 images of gold.
 You will throw them away as an
 unclean thing;
^fYou will say to them, "Get away!"
- 23 ^gThen He will give the rain for your
 seed
 With which you sow the ground,
 And bread of the increase of the earth;
 It will be ⁷fat and plentiful.
 In that day your cattle will feed
 In large pastures.
- 24 Likewise the oxen and the young
 donkeys that work the ground
 Will eat cured fodder,
 Which has been winnowed with the
 shovel and fan.
- 25 There will be ^hon every high
 mountain
 And on every high hill
 Rivers *and* streams of waters,
 In the day of the ⁱgreat slaughter,
 When the towers fall.

despise His message. **trust in oppression:** For a similar idea, see 1:15–17; 29:20, 21.

30:13, 14 A bulge in a high wall and the breaking of the potter's vessel signify that judgment would come **suddenly** and completely. **A shard** is a piece of broken pottery.

30:15 Returning entails repentance. **rest:** For a similar idea, see 28:12. **Quietness and confidence** may be rephrased as "utter trust." Trusting in God's strength instead of our own is the only way we can find true rest.

30:16 Instead of trusting in the Lord, the people were depending on Egypt for **horses** and chariots to defend the land (31:1).

30:17 One thousand shall flee: The point is that the nation will be utterly routed (Deut. 32:30).

30:18 God's **justice** demands that the Assyrian oppressors be punished (Judg. 2:16). God's **gracious** character and His **mercy** are balanced; they interact with His justice and the fact that He will be **exalted**.

30:19 You shall weep no more: A similar promise is given in 25:8. **the sound of your cry:** For a similar idea, see Judg. 2:18.

30:20 bread of adversity: The Lord was giving the Israelites meager rations as though they were in prison (1 Kin. 22:27). But after judgment the Lord would provide salvation: Israel's **eyes would see** (29:24). **Teachers** probably refers to the prophets (v. 10).

30:21 Walk in it contrasts with "turn aside" in v. 11. The people had been living in such a way that they were oblivious to their spiritual teachers (v. 20); now they would be taught by the Spirit of the living God.

30:22 Defile means "to desecrate by destruction" (2 Kin. 23:4–14). **Unclean thing** refers to something soiled by menstruation; the idea is to get rid of it.

30:23, 24 The promises that were part of the original Mosaic covenant were in force again. **rain:** Blessing would extend from field to flock (Deut. 28:11, 12).

30:25, 26 on every high mountain . . . light of the sun will be sevenfold: These phrases emphasize the magnitude of the coming salvation. **waters:** The coming of ample rainfall and strong streams are associated with the blessing that comes from trust in God (32:2; 41:17, 18). **When the towers fall** is associated with the collapse of human pride (2:12–17).

26 Moreover ^jthe light of the moon will be as the light of the sun,
And the light of the sun will be sevenfold,
As the light of seven days,
In the day that the LORD binds up the bruise of His people
And heals the stroke of their wound.

Judgment on Assyria

27 Behold, the name of the LORD comes from afar,
Burning ^{with} His anger,
And ^{His} burden ^{is} heavy;
His lips are full of indignation,
And His tongue like a devouring fire.
28 ^kHis breath is like an overflowing stream,
^lWhich reaches up to the neck,
To sift the nations with the sieve of futility;
And ^{there shall be} ^ma bridle in the jaws of the people,
Causing ^{them} to err.

29 You shall have a song
As in the night ^{when} a holy festival is kept,
And gladness of heart as when one goes with a flute,
To come into ⁿthe mountain of the LORD,
To ^othe Mighty One of Israel.

30 ^oThe LORD will cause His glorious voice to be heard,
And show the descent of His arm,
With the indignation of ^{His} anger
And the flame of a devouring fire,
With scattering, tempest, ^pand hailstones.

31 For ^qthrough the voice of the LORD Assyria will be ^qbeaten down,
As He strikes with the ^rrod.

32 And ⁱⁿ every place where the staff of punishment passes,
Which the LORD lays on him,

26 ^j[Is. 60:19, 20; Rev. 21:23; 22:5]
28 ^kIs. 11:4; 2 Thess. 2:8 ^lIs. 8:8 ^m2 Kin. 19:28; Is. 37:29
29 ⁿ[Is. 2:3] ^oLit. the Rock
30 ^oIs. 29:6 ^pIs. 28:2
31 ^qIs. 14:25; 37:36
^rIs. 10:5, 24 ^sLit. shattered

32 ^sIs. 11:15
33 ^t2 Kin. 23:10;
Jer. 7:31

CHAPTER 31

1 ^aIs. 30:1, 2
^bDeut. 17:16; Ps. 20:7; Is. 2:7; 30:16
^cIs. 9:13; Dan. 9:13;
Amos 5:4-8
2 ^dNum. 23:19; Jer. 44:29 ^eretract
3 ^eIs. 20:6
4 ^fNum. 24:9; Hos. 11:10; Amos 3:8

It will be with tambourines and harps;
And in battles of ^sbrandishing He will fight with it.

33 ^rFor Tophet ^{was} established of old,
Yes, for the king it is prepared.
He has made ^{it} deep and large;
Its pyre ^{is} fire with much wood;
The breath of the LORD, like a stream of brimstone,
Kindles it.

The Folly of Not Trusting God

31 Woe to those ^awho go down to Egypt for help,
And ^brely on horses,
Who trust in chariots because ^{they} are many,
And in horsemen because they are very strong,
But who do not look to the Holy One of Israel,
^cNor seek the LORD!
2 Yet He also is wise and will bring disaster,
And ^dwill not ^lcall back His words,
But will arise against the house of evildoers,
And against the help of those who work iniquity.
3 Now the Egyptians ^{are} men, and not God;
And their horses are flesh, and not spirit.
When the LORD stretches out His hand,
Both he who helps will fall,
And he who is helped will fall down;
They all will perish ^etogether.

God Will Deliver Jerusalem

^fFor thus the LORD has spoken to me:

^f“As a lion roars,
And a young lion over his prey

30:27 The name of the LORD refers to His character, as memorialized in His saving acts throughout history. **Comes** refers to the Lord's coming in a storm (29:6).

30:28 His breath describes the sound of the Lord's voice as a roaring, overflowing river. **neck:** For a similar image, see 8:8.

30:29 song . . . in the night: In times of festivals, singing would extend long into the evening. **The Mighty One** literally means “Rock” (Ps. 144:1).

30:30, 31 Here God's **voice** is compared to the thunder (Ps. 29:3, 4; contrast v. 28). **descent of His arm:** The strong arm of God had delivered the Israelites from Egypt; now His arm would descend in judgment (see Ex. 6:6). **Assyria:** Only here in this section is the enemy nation mentioned by name.

30:32 tambourines: For additional references to this instrument, see Ex. 15:20; 1 Sam. 18:6. **And in battles:** These were soldier-musicians; they were to be ready to fight or to play music as the occasion demanded.

30:33 Tophet, located south of Jerusalem, was the place where the

valleys of Hinnom and Kidron met. It was probably a deep, wide pit containing a bonfire of blazing wood, where children had at times been burned to death as offerings to pagan deities (2 Kin. 23:10; Jer. 7:31, 32; 19:6, 11–14). The area has filled in significantly through the centuries. **Brimstone** is a reminder of the fiery destruction of Sodom (34:9, 10; Gen. 19:24).

31:1–9 The fifth woe oracle reaffirms the fourth oracle (30:1–33); it too was addressed to those who replaced faith in the Lord with reliance on Egypt. This oracle consists of a condemnation of dependence on Egypt (vv. 1–3), and a promise that the Lord will save Mt. Zion (vv. 4, 5) and destroy Assyria (vv. 6–9).

31:1 Woe to those who go down to Egypt: For a similar idea, see 30:2. **Look** means “to look with interest” or “to look with respect.” **Seek the LORD** here entails consulting His prophets for direction (29:9, 10; 30:1).

31:2, 3 The house of evildoers refers to Judah. Their **help** refers to Egypt. Both Egypt and Judah **will perish together**.

31:4, 5 Lion connotes **the LORD of hosts** (1:9) and His resolve to

(When a multitude of shepherds is summoned against him,
He will not be afraid of their voice
 Nor be disturbed by their noise),
 So the LORD of hosts will come
 down
 To fight for Mount Zion and for its
 hill.

- ⁵ ^g Like birds flying about,
 So will the LORD of hosts defend
 Jerusalem.
 Defending, He will also deliver *it*;
 Passing over, He will preserve *it*.”

⁶ Return *to Him* against whom the
 children of Israel have ^h deeply revolted.
⁷ For in that day every man shall ⁱ throw
 away his idols of silver and his idols of
 gold—^j sin, which your own hands have
 made for yourselves.

- ⁸ “Then Assyria shall ^k fall by a sword
 not of man,
 And a sword not of mankind shall
^l devour him.
 But he shall flee from the sword,
 And his young men shall become
 forced labor.
⁹ ^m He shall cross over to his stronghold
 for fear,
 And his princes shall be afraid of the
 banner,”
 Says the LORD,
 Whose fire *is* in Zion
 And whose furnace *is* in Jerusalem.

A Reign of Righteousness

- 32** Behold, ^a a king will reign in
 righteousness,
 And princes will rule with justice.
² A man will be as a hiding place from
 the wind,
 And ^b a ^j cover from the tempest,
 As rivers of water in a dry place,

⁵ ^g Deut. 32:11;
 Ps. 91:4
⁶ ^h Hos. 9:9
⁷ ⁱ Is. 2:20; 30:22
^j 1 Kin. 12:30
⁸ ^k 2 Kin. 19:35, 36
^l Is. 37:36
⁹ ^m Is. 37:37

CHAPTER 32

¹ ^a Ps. 45:1
² ^b Is. 4:6 ¹ *shelter*

³ ^c Is. 29:18; 35:5
⁴ ^d Is. 29:24 ² *hasty*
⁵ ³ *noble*
⁶ ^e Prov. 24:7-9
⁷ ^f Jer. 5:26-28;
 Mic. 7:3
⁸ ⁴ *noble*
⁹ ^g Is. 47:8; Amos
 6:1; Zeph. 2:15

As the shadow of a great rock in a
 weary land.

- ³ ^e The eyes of those who see will not be
 dim,
 And the ears of those who hear will
 listen.
⁴ Also the heart of the ² rash will
^d understand knowledge,
 And the tongue of the stammerers
 will be ready to speak plainly.
⁵ The foolish person will no longer be
 called ³ generous,
 Nor the miser said *to be* bountiful;
⁶ For the foolish person will speak
 foolishness,
 And his heart will work ^e iniquity:
 To practice ungodliness,
 To utter error against the LORD,
 To keep the hungry unsatisfied,
 And he will cause the drink of the
 thirsty to fail.
⁷ Also the schemes of the schemer *are*
 evil;
 He devises wicked plans
 To destroy the poor with ^f lying
 words,
 Even when the needy speaks
 justice.
⁸ But a ⁴ generous man devises
 generous things,
 And by generosity he shall stand.

Consequences of Complacency

- ⁹ Rise up, you women ^g who are at
 ease,
 Hear my voice;
 You complacent daughters,
 Give ear to my speech.
¹⁰ In a year and *some* days
 You will be troubled, you complacent
 women;
 For the vintage will fail,
 The gathering will not come.

fight the enemy. The **multitude of shepherds** refers to the Assyrian officers. **Mount Zion** and **hill** are synonyms. **Birds flying about** pictures the Lord's passionate commitment to **defend Jerusalem**. **Passing over** is a technical term used for the destroying angel who "passed over" Israel in destroying the Egyptians and defending Israel (Ex. 12:13, 23).

31:6, 7 revolted: For an explanation of the rebellion, see 30:1. **throw away:** For a similar idea, see 30:22. **your own hands have made:** For similar wording, see 2:8; 17:8.

31:8 Not of man refers to the death angel that destroyed Sennacherib's vaunted army (37:36).

31:9 A banner was a rallying point for a battle. The **princes** would be too dispirited to rally for the cause. **fire:** For similar imagery, see 10:17, 18; 30:27, 30, 33.

32:1–20 The fifth woe (ch. 31) concludes with a prophecy about leadership (vv. 1–8) and its effects (vv. 9–20). Paradoxically, generous leaders (vv. 1–5) produce abundance and permanent security (vv. 16–20), whereas the miserly (vv. 6, 7) produce false security and desolation (vv. 9–14).

32:1 The prophecy concerning this **king** is fulfilled in the Lord Jesus

Christ (7:14; 9:1–7; 11:1–5; 28:16; John 10:11, 16). The **princes** are His "undershepherds" (1 Pet. 5:2–4).

32:2 The four similes for the future King's protection and provision of His people contrast with Israel's present incompetent leadership (28:7; 29:9, 10; 30:1, 2; 31:1, 2).

32:3, 4 Clear **eyes** and listening **ears** are figures for the future sensible leadership, in contrast to the present senseless, foolish leadership. The people's eyes and ears would also be opened (6:9, 10; 29:18, 24; 35:5; 42:7); similarly, they would have a **heart** that is understanding and a **tongue** that speaks **plainly**.

32:6, 7 The contrast between the way the noble and foolish **speak** comes from the person's **heart** (v. 4). If a person meditates on evil, that person will speak and act treacherously. **destroy the poor with lying words:** For a similar idea see 29:20, 21.

32:9 The term **complacent** is used three times of these women (vv. 9, 10, 12); it is derived from the verb meaning "to trust." Thus the word can also be rendered as "assured" and "secure" (see also vv. 17, 19). Although the wicked erroneously relied on Egypt for their security (see 31:1), the righteous placed their trust in the Lord and obtained true security.

- 11 Tremble, you *women* who are at ease;
Be troubled, you complacent ones;
Strip yourselves, make yourselves
bare,
And gird *sackcloth* on *your* waists.
- 12 People shall mourn upon their breasts
For the pleasant fields, for the
fruitful vine.
- 13^h On the land of my people will come
up thorns *and* briers,
Yes, on all the happy homes *in* ⁱ the
joyous city;
- 14^j Because the palaces will be forsaken,
The bustling city will be deserted.
The forts and towers will become
lairs forever,
A joy of wild donkeys, a pasture of
flocks—
- 15 Until ^k the Spirit is poured upon us
from on high,
And ^l the wilderness becomes a
fruitful field,
And the fruitful field is counted as a
forest.

The Peace of God's Reign

- 16 Then justice will dwell in the
wilderness,
And righteousness remain in the
fruitful field.
- 17^m The work of righteousness will be
peace,
And the effect of righteousness,
quietness and assurance forever.
- 18 My people will dwell in a peaceful
habitation,
In secure dwellings, and in quiet
ⁿ resting places,
- 19^o Though hail comes down ^p on the
forest,
And the city is brought low in
humiliation.

13 ^h Is. 7:23-25; Hos.
9:6 ⁱ Is. 22:2
14 ^j Is. 27:10
15 ^k [Is. 11:2]; Ezek.
39:29; [Joel 2:28]
^l Ps. 107:35; Is. 29:17
17 ^m Ps. 119:165;
Is. 2:4; Rom. 14:17;
James 3:18
18 ⁿ Is. 11:10; 14:3;
30:15; [Hos. 2:18-23;
Zech. 2:5; 3:10]
19 ^o Is. 30:30
^p Zech. 11:2

20 ^q [Eccl. 11:1]; Is.
30:23, 24

CHAPTER 33

1 ^a Is. 21:2; Hab.
2:8 ^b Rev. 13:10 ^c Is.
10:12; 14:25; 31:8
2 ^d Is. 25:9; 26:8
^e LXX omits *their*;
Syr., Tg., Vg. *our*
3 ^e Is. 17:13
5 ^f Ps. 97:9

- 20 Blessed *are* you who sow beside all
waters,
Who send out freely the feet of *a* the
ox and the donkey.

A Prayer in Deep Distress

- 33 Woe to you *a* who plunder,
though you *have* not *been*
plundered;
And you who deal treacherously,
though they have not dealt
treacherously with you!
- ^b When you cease plundering,
You will be ^c plundered;
When you make an end of dealing
treacherously,
They will deal treacherously with
you.
- 2 O LORD, be gracious to us;
^d We have waited for You.
Be ^e their arm every morning,
Our salvation also in the time of
trouble.
- 3 At the noise of the tumult the people
^e shall flee;
When You lift Yourself up, the
nations shall be scattered;
- 4 And Your plunder shall be gathered
Like the gathering of the
caterpillar;
As the running to and fro of locusts,
He shall run upon them.
- 5 ^f The LORD is exalted, for He dwells on
high;
He has filled Zion with justice and
righteousness.
- 6 Wisdom and knowledge will be the
stability of your times,
And the strength of salvation;
The fear of the LORD *is* His treasure.

32:11, 12 Mourning women in the ancient Middle East removed their clothing and wore **sackcloth** around their **waists** (Gen. 37:34).

32:13, 14 thorns and briers: For similar usage, see 5:6; 7:23. **palaces . . . pasture:** These images speak of the complete ruin of Jerusalem in the day of God's judgment.

32:15 The new age depends on the creative work of the **Spirit** (11:2; 42:1; 61:1; Ezek. 36:26, 27; Joel 2:28, 29) who originates **on high**, in God's dwelling (33:5). This is in contrast to going "down to Egypt" (31:1).

32:16 fruitful field: This is a reversal of the judgment predicted in 29:17.

32:17, 18 The Hebrew words translated **assurance** and **secure** are related to the Hebrew word translated "complacent" in v. 9.

32:19 Hail may refer to Assyria (28:2).

33:1-24 The sixth woe differs from the others in that it is addressed to Assyria, not to Judah. By focusing exclusively on Assyria's defeat and Judah's salvation, the prophecy magnifies Judah's exalted King (vv. 3, 5, 10). This woe oracle consists of an introduction of the main themes of the oracle (vv. 1-6); an emphasis on Judah's need for salvation and the Lord's provision of that need (vv. 7-13), and its spiritual impact on sinners (vv. 14-16); and a conclusion showing the majestic King in His beauty (vv. 17-24).

33:1 You refers to Assyria, who **treacherously** (21:2; 24:16) broke its treaties (2 Kin. 18:13-37).

33:2 be gracious: For a similar idea, see 30:18. The besieged remnant, including Isaiah, had **waited** for the Lord in prayer (37:14-20) and in confident expectation (40:31). **salvation:** For a similar reference to God as the only place to find salvation, see 12:2.

33:3 When You lift Yourself up speaks of an exaltation of the heavenly King (vv. 5, 10) as He rises to demonstrate His glory and vindicate His justice. **Scattered** is an allusion to Moses' song of praise (see Num. 10:35).

33:4 The **plunder** of God's war with His enemies belongs to the Lord, the true Victor (23:18; 34:2). It will be **gathered** as swiftly and completely as **the caterpillar** and **locusts** can strip a field, since the Lord's judgment will come quickly without warning (1 Thess. 5:2).

33:5 exalted . . . on high: This chapter presents the "rising glory" of the Savior King over His people, defending them against Assyria and all others. **Justice and righteousness** may be rephrased as "true justice."

33:6 Wisdom and knowledge . . . fear of the LORD: The Messiah's characteristics (11:2) will also characterize His city.

- 7 Surely their valiant ones shall cry outside,
 8 The ambassadors of peace shall weep bitterly.
 9 The highways lie waste,
 The traveling man ceases.
 He has broken the covenant,
 He has despised the ³cities,
 He regards no man.
 10 The earth mourns *and* languishes,
 Lebanon is shamed *and* shriveled;
 Sharon is like a wilderness,
 And Bashan and Carmel shake off
their fruits.

Impending Judgment on Zion

- 10 “Now ^k I will rise,” says the LORD;
 “Now I will be exalted,
 Now I will lift Myself up.
 11 You shall conceive chaff,
 You shall bring forth stubble;
 Your breath, *as* fire, shall devour you.
 12 And the people shall be *like* the
 burnings of lime;
^mLike thorns cut up they shall be
 burned in the fire.
 13 Hear, ⁿyou *who are* afar off, what I
 have done;
 And you *who are* near, acknowledge
 My might.”
 14 The sinners in Zion are afraid;
 Fearfulness has seized the hypocrites:
 “Who among us shall dwell with the
 devouring ^o fire?
 Who among us shall dwell with
 everlasting burnings?”
 15 He who ^pwalks righteously and
 speaks uprightly,
 He who despises the gain of
 oppressions,
 Who gestures with his hands,
 refusing bribes,

7 ^q 2 Kin. 18:18, 37
 8 ^r Judg. 5:6 ¹ 2 Kin.
 18:13-17 ² Tg. *They
 have been removed
 from their cities*
³ So with MT, Vg.;
 DSS witnesses; LXX
 omits *cities*
 9 ^s Is. 24:4
 10 ^k Ps. 12:5; Is.
 2:19, 21
 11 ^t [Ps. 7:14; Is.
 26:18; 59:4; James
 1:15]
 12 ^m Is. 9:18
 13 ⁿ Ps. 48:10;
 Is. 49:1
 14 ^o Is. 30:27, 30;
 Heb. 12:29
 15 ^p Ps. 15:2; 24:3, 4;
 Is. 58:6-11

^q Ps. 119:37
 16 ⁴ Lit. *heights*
 17 ^r Ps. 27:4
 18 ^s 1 Cor. 1:20
 19 ^t 2 Kin. 19:32
^u Deut. 28:49, 50;
 Is. 28:11; Jer. 5:15
^v Unintelligible
 speech
 20 ^v Ps. 48:12 ^w Ps.
 46:5; 125:1; Is. 32:18
^x Is. 37:33 ^y Is. 54:2
 21 ⁶ *ship*
 22 ^z [Acts 10:42]
^a Is. 1:10; 51:4, 7;
 James 4:12 ^b Ps.
 89:18; Is. 25:9; 35:4;
 Zech. 9:9

- Who stops his ears from hearing of
 bloodshed,
 And ^u shuts his eyes from seeing evil:
 16 He will dwell on ⁴high;
 His place of defense *will be* the
 fortress of rocks;
 Bread will be given him,
 His water *will be* sure.

The Land of the Majestic King

- 17 Your eyes will see the King in His
^rbeauty;
 They will see the land that is very
 far off.
 18 Your heart will meditate on terror:
^s“Where *is* the scribe?
 Where *is* he who weighs?
 Where *is* he who counts the towers?”
 19 ^t You will not see a fierce people,
^u“A people of obscure speech, beyond
 perception,
 Of a ⁵stammering tongue *that you*
 cannot understand.”
 20 ^v Look upon Zion, the city of our
 appointed feasts;
 Your eyes will see ^wJerusalem, a
 quiet home,
 A tabernacle *that* will not be taken
 down;
^xNot one of ^yits stakes will ever be
 removed,
 Nor will any of its cords be broken.
 21 But there the majestic LORD *will be*
 for us
 A place of broad rivers *and* streams,
 In which no ⁶galley with oars will
 sail,
 Nor majestic ships pass by
 22 (For the LORD *is* our ^zJudge,
 The LORD *is* our ^aLawgiver,
^bThe LORD *is* our King;
 He will save us);

33:7, 8 Valiant ones may sarcastically refer to three officials of Judah who conferred with the Assyrians (36:3, 22). Judah's **ambassadors** wept **bitterly** because Assyria took their gifts, but continued to besiege Jerusalem (v. 1). With the treaty between Assyria and Judah broken, the **highways** were not safe.

33:9 Sharon was on the western coastal plain. **Bashan** was on the east side of the Jordan.

33:10 Now . . . Now . . . Now: The King is about to assert His authority (vv. 5, 16).

33:11 You refers to Assyria (v. 1). **chaff . . . stubble . . . fire:** The grandeur of Assyria would be consumed quickly.

33:12 The burnings of lime—all that is left from burning lime is dust—and **thorns . . . in the fire** indicate the thoroughness and swiftness of Assyria's destruction (27:4).

33:13 Hear: For a similar call for all to acknowledge the Lord as Sovereign, see 34:1.

33:14 Who among us shall dwell: This is the language of a pilgrimage psalm (see Ps. 15:1; 24:3). **burnings:** For a description of God as a consuming fire, see Deut. 4:24; 9:3; Heb. 12:29.

33:15, 16 walks righteously: For a similar description of the person who can approach the Holy One, see Ps. 1:1, 2; 15:2; Gal. 5:22–25; Eph. 5:1, 2. **Who stops . . . shuts:** These words do not advocate

ignoring social evil, but refusing to take part in it. **On high** refers to God's dwelling (v. 5)—the place the righteous will go to live with God forever.

33:17 The King is the Lord (v. 22). The **land** of the Lord's dominion will stretch **very far off** (26:15).

33:18 The scribe . . . who weighs refers to those who took the tribute (2 Kin. 18:14).

33:19 stammering tongue: For a similar idea concerning Israel's enemies, see Deut. 28:49.

33:20 The feasts were celebrated from the heart (30:29), and not perfunctorily (29:1). **Not be taken down** implies that the Exile is over. Judah's immediate salvation merges with its ultimate deliverance.

33:21 Judah would be protected figuratively by **broad rivers**, like those at Tyre (23:1–3) and Thebes (Nah. 3:8). However, no intimidating ship would be on the rivers, because God Himself would defend Judah.

33:22 Note that the **Lawgiver** is associated with other acts of mercy (Deut. 6:1–3; John 1:14–18); the giving of the Law was God's way to point out the correct path for the Israelites to follow. This was merely another expression of His mercy.

23 Your tackle is loosed,
They could not strengthen their
mast,
They could not spread the sail.

Then the prey of great plunder is
divided;

The lame take the prey.

24 And the inhabitant will not say, “I
am sick”;

^cThe people who dwell in it *will be*
forgiven *their* iniquity.

Judgment on the Nations

34 Come ^anear, you nations, to hear;
And heed, you people!

^bLet the earth hear, and all that is
in it,

The world and all things that come
forth from it.

2 For the indignation of the LORD is
against all nations,
And His fury against all their armies;
He has utterly destroyed them,
He has given them over to the
^cslaughter.

3 Also their slain shall be thrown out;
^dTheir stench shall rise from their
corpses,
And the mountains shall be melted
with their blood.

4 ^eAll the host of heaven shall be
dissolved,
And the heavens shall be rolled up
like a scroll;

^fAll their host shall fall down
As the leaf falls from the vine,
And as ^gfruit falling from a fig tree.

5 “For ^hMy sword shall be bathed in
heaven;
Indeed it ⁱshall come down on Edom,
And on the people of My curse, for
judgment.

24 ^cIs. 40:2; Jer.
50:20; Mic. 7:18, 19;
1 John 1:7-9

CHAPTER 34

1 ^aPs. 49:1; Is. 41:1;
43:9 ^bDeut. 32:1;
Is. 1:2

2 ^cIs. 13:5

3 ^dJoel 2:20; Amos
4:10

4 ^ePs. 102:26; Is.
13:13; Ezek. 32:7;
8; Joel 2:31; Matt.
24:29; 2 Pet. 3:10

^fIs. 14:12 ^gRev.
6:12-14

5 ^hDeut. 32:41, 42;
Jer. 46:10; Ezek.
21:3-5 ⁱIs. 63:1; Jer.
49:7, 8, 20; Ezek.
25:12-14; 35:1-15;

Obad. 1:11, 12;

Obad. 1:14; Mal. 1:4

6 ^jIs. 66:16 ^kZeph.

1:7 ^lLit. *fat*

7 ²Lit. *made fat*

8 ^mIs. 63:4

9 ⁿDeut. 29:23; Ps.

11:6; Is. 30:33

10 ^oRev. 14:11;

18:18; 19:3 ^pIs.

13:20-22; 24:1;

34:10-15; Mal. 1:3, 4

11 ^qIs. 14:23; Zeph.

2:14; Rev. 18:2

^r2 Kin. 21:13; Lam.

2:8 ³Or owl ⁴Or

hedgehog

6 The ^jsword of the LORD is filled with
blood,
It is made ^loverflowing with fatness,
With the blood of lambs and goats,
With the fat of the kidneys of rams.
For ^kthe LORD has a sacrifice in

Bozrah,
And a great slaughter in the land of
Edom.

7 The wild oxen shall come down with
them,
And the young bulls with the mighty
bulls;
Their land shall be soaked with
blood,
And their dust ²saturated with
fatness.”

8 For *it is* the day of the LORD’s
^lvengeance,
The year of recompense for the cause
of Zion.

9 ^mIts streams shall be turned into
pitch,
And its dust into brimstone;
Its land shall become burning pitch.

10 It shall not be quenched night or
day;
ⁿIts smoke shall ascend forever.
^oFrom generation to generation it
shall lie waste;

No one shall pass through it forever
and ever.

11 ^pBut the ³pelican and the ⁴porcupine
shall possess it,
Also the owl and the raven shall
dwell in it.

And ^qHe shall stretch out over it
The line of confusion and the stones
of emptiness.

12 They shall call its nobles to the
kingdom,
But none *shall be* there, and all its
princes shall be nothing.

33:24 Sickness and sin will be removed in the coming kingdom of the glorious Savior.

34:1—35:10 Two prophecies form an appendix to the sixth woe (ch. 33): (1) the fertile land of the plundering nations will be transformed into a desert (ch. 34); (2) the desert will be transformed into fertile land (ch. 35).

34:1 **nations:** For a similar reference, see 5:26. **Let the earth hear:** For similar calls for all the world to listen to Isaiah’s prophecy, see 1:2; 33:13.

34:2 **Indignation** is a strong term used to describe the wrath of God. **Destroyed** means “to devote to destruction.” Because the Lord had defeated His enemy, the spoils were to be devoted totally to Him by burning them (23:18).

34:3 The **blood** of the slain would be so great that it would create mudslides.

34:4 The **host of heaven** here refers to pagan deities (24:21; 2 Kin. 17:16). **be dissolved:** See the similar language of 13:10, 13. **heavens . . . rolled up like a scroll:** The old cosmos will give way to the new (51:6; Matt. 24:29; Rev. 6:13, 14; 21:1).

34:5 The Lord’s avenging **sword** moves from demolishing the pan-

theon of **heaven** (v. 4) to **Edom** (63:1) in particular. **Curse** comes from the same root translated “destroyed” in v. 2. Edom is “devoted to destruction.”

34:6 **Blood and slaughter** link Edom’s destruction with that of the nations (vv. 2, 3). Sin must be atoned for by **sacrifice**, either of the sinner himself as here (Ezek. 33:10), or by the substitutionary sacrifice of Christ (52:13–15).

34:7 **Oxen and bulls** may represent Edom’s troops or leaders.

34:8 **vengeance:** The Lord secures His sovereignty and keeps His community whole by saving His wronged subjects and punishing their guilty oppressors.

34:9 **Brimstone and burning pitch** may be allusions to Sodom and Gomorrah (30:33; see Gen. 19:24; Ezek. 38:22).

34:11 The **pelican, porcupine, owl, and raven** are all unclean creatures of remote, uninhabited places (see Deut. 14:14–17). In the day of God’s judgment, Edom would become a wasteland. The Hebrew words translated **confusion and . . . emptiness** are translated “without form and void” in Gen. 1:2. Edom will be returned to chaos.

34:12 There will be no **nobles or princes** in the desert.

- 13 And ^rthorns shall come up in its palaces,
 Nettles and brambles in its fortresses;
^sIt shall be a habitation of jackals,
 A courtyard for ostriches.
- 14 The wild beasts of the desert shall also meet with the ^sjackals,
 And the wild goat shall bleat to its companion;
 Also ⁶the night creature shall rest there,
 And find for herself a place of rest.
- 15 There the arrow snake shall make her nest and lay *eggs*
 And hatch, and gather *them* under her shadow;
 There also shall the hawks be gathered,
 Every one with her mate.
- 16 “Search from ^tthe book of the LORD, and read:
 Not one of these shall fail;
 Not one shall lack her mate.
 For My mouth has commanded it, and His Spirit has gathered them.
- 17 He has cast the lot for them,
 And His hand has divided it among them with a measuring line.
 They shall possess it forever;
 From generation to generation they shall dwell in it.”

The Future Glory of Zion

- 35** The ^awilderness and the ¹wasteland shall be glad for them,
 And the ^bdesert² shall rejoice and blossom as the rose;
² ^cIt shall blossom abundantly and rejoice,
 Even with joy and singing.
 The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,
 The excellence of Carmel and Sharon.

13 ^r Is. 32:13; Hos. 9:6 ^s Is. 13:21
 14 ^s Lit. *howling creatures* ⁶ Heb. *lilith*
 16 ^t [Mal. 3:16]

CHAPTER 35

1 ^a Is. 32:15; 55:12
^b Is. 41:19; 51:3
¹ desert ² Heb. *arabah*
 2 ^c Is. 32:15

^d Is. 40:5
 3 ^e Job 4:3, 4; Heb. 12:12 ³ Lit. *sinking*
⁴ tottering or stumbling
 4 ^f Is. 34:8 ^g Ps. 145:19; Is. 33:22 ☆
 5 ^h Is. 29:18; Matt. 9:27; John 9:6, 7 ☆
 6 [Matt. 11:5; 15:30 ☆; John 5:8, 9; Acts 8:7 ^k Is. 32:4; Matt. 9:32; 12:22 ^l Is. 41:18; [John 7:38]
 7 ^m Is. 34:13
 8 ⁿ Is. 19:23 ^o Is. 52:1; Joel 3:17; [Matt. 7:13, 14]; 1 Pet. 1:15, 16; Rev. 21:27
 9 ^p Lev. 26:6; [Is. 11:7, 9]; Ezek. 34:25

They shall see the ^dglory of the LORD,
 The excellency of our God.

- 3 ^eStrengthen the ³weak hands,
 And make firm the ⁴feeble knees.
- 4 Say to those *who are* fearful-hearted,
 “Be strong, do not fear!
 Behold, your God will come *with* ^fvengeance,
 With the recompense of God;
 He will come and ^gsave you.”
- 5 Then the ^heyes of the blind shall be opened,
 And ⁱthe ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.
- 6 Then the ^jlame shall leap like a deer,
 And the ^ktongue of the dumb shall sing.
 For ^lwaters shall burst forth in the wilderness,
 And streams in the desert.
- 7 The parched ground shall become a pool,
 And the thirsty land springs of water;
 In ^mthe habitation of jackals, where each lay,
There shall be grass with reeds and rushes.
- 8 A ⁿhighway shall be there, and a road,
 And it shall be called the Highway of Holiness.
^oThe unclean shall not pass over it,
 But it *shall be* for others.
 Whoever walks the road, although a fool,
 Shall not go astray.
- 9 ^pNo lion shall be there,
 Nor shall *any* ravenous beast go up on it;
 It shall not be found there.
 But the redeemed shall walk *there*,

34:13–15 For a similar description of these unclean desert creatures, see 13:21, 22.

34:16 The book of the LORD may refer to the prophecy found in vv. 1–15.

34:17 As God gave Israel the Promised Land by **lot** in the sacred assembly (Josh. 18:10), so in His judgment He **divided** Edom among the unclean animals.

35:1 wilderness . . . desert: The Spirit of God will make the earth fruitful again (32:15). **rejoice:** The joy of the elements of creation is a reflection of the joy of God’s people at the arrival of His salvation (14:7, 8; 44:23; 55:12).

35:2 glory of Lebanon . . . Sharon: This is a reversal of the judgment of 33:9. **The glory of the LORD** would be seen in the return of the captives from Babylon (40:5).

35:3 Strengthen the weak hands: This phrase is cited in Heb. 12:12 (see also Josh. 1:6, 7, 9, 18). We can reassure ourselves with

the knowledge that our Savior is coming. In that day, justice will be restored.

35:4 save you: When the Lord comes, He will offer salvation (see Luke 19:10). **vengeance:** See the use of this word in 34:8.

35:5, 6 eyes . . . ears . . . lame . . . tongue: This prophecy of healings was fulfilled in the physical and spiritual healings of Jesus (61:1; see Matt. 12:22; Luke 4:18; 7:22). **opened . . . unstopped:** For similar usage, see 29:18; 32:3.

35:7 The habitation of jackals speaks of the coming reversal of the devastation God had brought on the land (see 34:14). **Reeds and rushes** speaks of the reversal of the destruction described in 19:5, 6.

35:8 The promise of a safe **highway** is a reversal of the judgment in 33:8; 34:10 (see also 11:16; 40:3, 4; 57:14; 62:10). **ravenous beast:** Ferocious animals could make traveling dangerous in the ancient world.

¹⁰ And the ^aransomed of the LORD shall return,
And come to Zion with singing,
With everlasting joy on their heads.
They shall obtain joy and gladness,
And ^rsorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Sennacherib Boasts Against the LORD

36 Now ^ait came to pass in the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah that Sennacherib king of Assyria came up against all the fortified cities of Judah and took them. ²Then the king of Assyria sent *the* ¹Rabshakeh with a great army from Lachish to King Hezekiah at Jerusalem. And he stood by the aqueduct from the upper pool, on the highway to the Fuller's Field. ³And ^bEliakim the son of Hilkiah, who was over the household, ^cShebna the scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph, the recorder, came out to him.

^{4d}Then *the* Rabshakeh said to them, "Say now to Hezekiah, 'Thus says the great king, the king of Assyria: "What confidence is this in which you trust? ⁵I say you speak of having plans and power for war; but *they are* ²mere words. Now in whom do you trust, that you rebel against me? ⁶Look! You are trusting in the "staff of this broken reed, Egypt, on which if a man leans, it will go into his hand and pierce it. So is Pharaoh king of Egypt to all who ^ftrust in him.

⁷"But if you say to me, 'We trust in the LORD our God,' *is it* not He whose high places and whose altars Hezekiah has taken away, and said to Judah and Jerusalem, 'You shall worship before this altar'?"' ⁸Now therefore, I urge you, give

¹⁰ ^aIs. 51:11 ^rIs. 25:8; 30:19; 65:19; [Rev. 7:17; 21:4]

CHAPTER 36

¹ ^a2 Kin. 18:13, 17;
2 Chr. 32:1
² ¹A title, probably
Chief of Staff or
Governor
³ ^bIs. 22:20 ^cIs. 22:15
⁴ ^d2 Kin. 18:19
⁵ ²Lit. *a word of
the lips*
⁶ ^eEzek. 29:6 ^fPs.
146:3; Is. 30:3, 5, 7

¹¹ ³Lit. *Judean*
¹⁶ ^g1 Kin. 4:25; Mic.
4:4; Zech. 3:10

a pledge to my master the king of Assyria, and I will give you two thousand horses—if you are able on your part to put riders on them! ⁹How then will you repel one captain of the least of my master's servants, and put your trust in Egypt for chariots and horsemen? ¹⁰Have I now come up without the LORD against this land to destroy it? The LORD said to me, 'Go up against this land, and destroy it.'"

¹¹Then Eliakim, Shebna, and Joah said to *the* Rabshakeh, "Please speak to your servants in Aramaic, for we understand *it*; and do not speak to us in ³Hebrew in the hearing of the people who *are* on the wall."

¹²But *the* Rabshakeh said, "Has my master sent me to your master and to you to speak these words, and not to the men who sit on the wall, who will eat and drink their own waste with you?"

¹³Then *the* Rabshakeh stood and called out with a loud voice in Hebrew, and said, "Hear the words of the great king, the king of Assyria! ¹⁴Thus says the king: 'Do not let Hezekiah deceive you, for he will not be able to deliver you; ¹⁵nor let Hezekiah make you trust in the LORD, saying, "The LORD will surely deliver us; this city will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria.'"

¹⁶Do not listen to Hezekiah; for thus says the king of Assyria: 'Make *peace* with me *by* a present and come out to me; ^gand every one of you eat from his own vine and every one from his own fig tree, and every one of you drink the waters of his own cistern; ¹⁷until I come and take you away to a land like your own land, a land of grain and new wine, a land of bread

35:10 the ransomed: The restored Babylonian exiles symbolize political and spiritual exiles and the physically and spiritually blind, deaf, and lame of all times and places. The Lord would come to rescue them from their tragic predicaments. **come to Zion with singing:** For a description of this scene, see 12:1 (compare Ps. 126:1–6). **sorrow and sighing:** For more detail, see 25:7, 8.

36:1–39:8 This historical bridge between chs. 1–35 and 40–66 consists of two parts: (1) Hezekiah's faith in the face of an Assyrian threat (chs. 36; 37); (2) Hezekiah's mixed faith in the face of illness (chs. 38; 39).

36:1–37:38 This section validates Isaiah's predictions that the Lord would (1) destroy Judah through Assyria (36:1), (2) besiege Jerusalem (36:2–22), (3) deliver the faithful remnant (37:1–35), and destroy the Assyrians (37:36–38). Isaiah proclaims that sin compounded with misplaced confidence brings defeat; conversely, repentance and faith in the Lord brings deliverance (2 Kin. 18:13–19:37; 2 Chr. 32:1–23).

36:1 The **fourteenth year** of King Hezekiah's sole reign was 701 B.C. **all:** In his annals, Sennacherib mentions 46 cities that he attacked.

36:2 The Rabshakeh may have been the king's personal advisor. **great army:** For the defeat of this fighting force, see 37:36. **aqueduct:** For a similar reference, see 7:3.

36:3 Eliakim. . . Shebna: For further details, see 22:15–23.

36:4 Only the Assyrian leader is referred to here as **king**, not **Hezekiah**. This is an indication of the Assyrians' perspective on their own status.

36:6 Judah had refused to listen to Isaiah's insistence that reliance on **Egypt** was worthless (19:14–16; 30:3, 7; 31:3). Here they were given the same warning from their enemy.

36:7 taken away: Hezekiah had destroyed the idolatrous high places and altars that his father Ahaz had built (see 2 Kin. 18:1–5; 2 Chr. 31:1–3).

36:8 riders: Micah referred to Jerusalem's soldiers as merely a "troop" (Mic. 5:1) compared to the enormous international army of Assyria (Mic. 4:11).

36:9 one captain of the least: Judah had no hope of defeating the force that surrounded him.

36:10 The Lord said to me: Ancient Middle Eastern conquerors liked to claim that the gods of their defeated enemies had joined their side (2 Chr. 35:21). These words about the Lord were no more than a boast.

36:11 Aramaic was the language of international diplomacy during this period.

36:13, 14 The Rabshakeh spoke in Hebrew to be deliberately provocative: he wanted his words to be understood by the citizens of Jerusalem. **deceive you:** The Rabshakeh structured his speech so that he would quickly discourage those who heard it.

36:17 take you away: The Assyrians commonly exiled the people groups they conquered (see 2 Kin. 15:29; 17:6).

and vineyards. ¹⁸*Beware* lest Hezekiah persuade you, saying, “The LORD will deliver us.” Has any one of the ^hgods of the nations delivered its land from the hand of the king of Assyria? ¹⁹Where *are* the gods of Hamath and Arpad? Where *are* the gods of Sepharvaim? Indeed, have they delivered ⁱSamaria from my hand? ²⁰Who among all the gods of these lands have delivered their countries from my hand, that the LORD should deliver Jerusalem from my hand?”

²¹But they ⁴held their peace and answered him not a word; for the king’s commandment was, “Do not answer him.” ²²Then Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, who *was* over the household, Shebna the scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph, the recorder, came to Hezekiah with *their* clothes torn, and told him the words of *the* Rabshakeh.

Isaiah Assures Deliverance

37 And ^aso it was, when King Hezekiah heard *it*, that he tore his clothes, covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the house of the LORD. ²Then he sent Eliakim, who *was* over the household, Shebna the scribe, and the elders of the priests, covered with sackcloth, to Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz. ³And they said to him, “Thus says Hezekiah: ‘This day *is* a day of ^btrouble and rebuke and ¹blasphemy; for the children have come to birth, but *there is* no strength to bring them forth. ⁴It may be that the LORD your God will hear the words of *the* Rabshakeh, whom his master the king of Assyria has sent to ^creproach the living God, and will rebuke the words which the LORD your God has heard. Therefore lift up *your* prayer for the remnant that is left.’”

⁵So the servants of King Hezekiah came to Isaiah. ⁶And Isaiah said to them, “Thus you shall say to your master, ‘Thus says the LORD: “Do not be afraid of the words which you have heard, with which the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed Me. ⁷Surely I will send a spirit upon him, and he shall hear a

¹⁸ ^h 2 Kin. 19:12; Is. 37:12
¹⁹ ² 2 Kin. 17:6
²¹ ⁴ were silent

CHAPTER 37

¹ ^a 2 Kin. 19:1-37; Is. 37:1-38
³ ^b Is. 22:5; 26:16; 33:2 ¹ contempt
⁴ ^c Is. 36:15, 18, 20

rumor and return to his own land; and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land.””

Sennacherib’s Threat and Hezekiah’s Prayer

⁸Then *the* Rabshakeh returned, and found the king of Assyria warring against Libnah, for he heard that he had departed from Lachish. ⁹And the king heard concerning Tirhakah king of Ethiopia, “He has come out to make war with you.” So when he heard *it*, he sent messengers to Hezekiah, saying, ¹⁰“Thus you shall speak to Hezekiah king of Judah, saying: ‘Do not let your God in whom you trust deceive you, saying, “Jerusalem shall not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria.”’ ¹¹Look! You have heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all lands by utterly destroying them; and shall you be delivered? ¹²Have the ^dgods of the nations delivered those whom my fathers have destroyed, Gozan and Haran and Rezeph, and the people of Eden who *were* in Telassar? ¹³Where *is* the king of ^eHamath, the king of Arpad, and the king of the city of Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivah?”

¹⁴And Hezekiah received the letter from the hand of the messengers, and read it; and Hezekiah went up to the house of the LORD, and spread it before the LORD. ¹⁵Then Hezekiah prayed to the LORD, saying: ¹⁶“O LORD of hosts, God of Israel, *the One* who dwells *between* the cherubim, You *are* God, You *1*alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth. You have made heaven and earth. ¹⁷^gIncline Your ear, O LORD, and hear; open Your eyes, O LORD, and see; and ^hhear all the words of Sennacherib, which he has sent to reproach the living God. ¹⁸Truly, LORD, the kings of Assyria have laid waste all the nations and their ⁱlands, ¹⁹and have cast their gods into the fire; for they *were* ^jnot gods, but the work of men’s hands—wood and stone. Therefore they destroyed them. ²⁰Now therefore, O LORD our God, ^ksave us from his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may ^lknow that You *are* the LORD, You alone.”

¹² ^d Is. 36:18, 19
¹³ ^e Is. 49:23
¹⁶ ^f Is. 43:10, 11
¹⁷ ^g 2 Chr. 6:40; Ps. 17:6; Dan. 9:18 ^h Ps. 74:22
¹⁸ ² 2 Kin. 15:29; 16:9; 17:6, 24; 1 Chr. 5:26
¹⁹ ⁱ Is. 40:19, 20
²⁰ ^k Is. 33:22 ^l Ps. 83:18

36:18–20 The Rabshakeh assumed that different gods were worshiped in **Samaria** than in Jerusalem, so he repeated some of the same sentiments articulated by the Assyrian king in 10:10, 11.

36:22 The words of the enemy would not bring pleasure to **Hezekiah**. The torn **clothes** indicated that the messengers were bearing bad news (37:1).

37:1 Sackcloth was a sign of mourning, repentance, and humiliation (20:2, 3; 1 Kin. 20:31; Neh. 9:1; Dan. 9:3). **went into the house of the LORD**: For a related passage, see 1 Kin. 8:33, 34.

37:2 Eliakim . . . Shebna: One of Isaiah’s prophecies condemns Shebna for his arrogance (see 22:15–23).

37:4 For more references to the **remnant**, see 1:9; 10:20.

37:6 The Lord commonly reassured His servants with the words: **Do not be afraid** (see 7:4; 35:4; Gen. 15:1; Josh. 1:9). We have no reason to fear if our trust is in the all-powerful God (see Heb. 13:6).

37:11 utterly destroying: See 34:2 for another use of this term.

37:15 Hezekiah prayed: Hezekiah had learned to turn to God for help in his times of need (see 30:1). For another of Hezekiah’s prayers, see 38:2, 3.

The Word of the LORD Concerning Sennacherib

²¹ Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent to Hezekiah, saying, “Thus says the LORD God of Israel, ‘Because you have prayed to Me against Sennacherib king of Assyria, ²² this is the word which the LORD has spoken concerning him:

“The virgin, the daughter of Zion,
Has despised you, laughed you to scorn;
The daughter of Jerusalem
Has shaken *her* head behind your back!

²³ “Whom have you reproached and blasphemed?
Against whom have you raised *your* voice,
And lifted up your eyes on high?
Against the Holy One of Israel.

²⁴ By your servants you have reproached the Lord,
And said, ‘By the multitude of my chariots
I have come up to the height of the mountains,
To the limits of Lebanon;
I will cut down its tall cedars
And its choice cypress trees;
I will enter its farthest height,
To its fruitful forest.

²⁵ I have dug and drunk water,
And with the soles of my feet I have dried up
All the brooks of ² defense.’

²⁶ “Did you not hear ^m long ago
How I made it,
From ancient times that I formed it?
Now I have brought it to pass,
That you should be
For crushing fortified cities *into*
heaps of ruins.

²⁵ ² Or perhaps Egypt
²⁶ ^m Is. 25:1; 40:21; 45:21

²⁷ Therefore their inhabitants *had* little power;
They were dismayed and confounded;
They were *as* the grass of the field
And the green herb,
As the grass on the housetops
And *grain* blighted before it is grown.

²⁸ “But I know your dwelling place,
Your going out and your coming in,
And your rage against Me.

²⁹ Because your rage against Me and your tumult
Have come up to My ears,
Therefore ⁿ I will put My hook in your nose
And My bridle in your lips,
And I will ^o turn you back
By the way which you came.”’

³⁰ “This *shall be* a sign to you:

You shall eat this year such as grows of itself,
And the second year what springs from the same;
Also in the third year sow and reap,
Plant vineyards and eat the fruit of them.

³¹ And the remnant who have escaped of the house of Judah
Shall again take root downward,
And bear fruit upward.

³² For out of Jerusalem shall go a remnant,
And those who escape from Mount Zion.
The ^p zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

³³ “Therefore thus says the LORD concerning the king of Assyria:

‘He shall not come into this city,
Nor shoot an arrow there,

²⁹ ⁿ 2 Kin. 19:35-37; 2 Chr. 32:21; Is. 30:28; Ezek. 38:4; 39:2
³² ^p 2 Kin. 19:31; Is. 9:7; 59:17; Joel 2:18; Zech. 1:14

37:21 Because you have prayed to Me: God’s gracious response was a direct answer to the prayer of a godly king. Although God can certainly work His will without our prayers, He has chosen to faithfully answer the prayers of His people.

37:22 virgin: Cities are often personified as female in the Scriptures. This imagery speaks of Jerusalem as a “daughter” being threatened by an attacker. Yet Jerusalem prevails and overcomes her assailant. **Daughter of Zion** is an endearing term for the city of Jerusalem. Just as the Lord called Israel His “son” (see Ex. 4:22), so He looked upon Jerusalem as His daughter (1:8).

37:23 reproached and blasphemed . . . raised your voice . . . lifted up your eyes on high: The folly of the wicked of all ages is epitomized here. Anyone who lifts himself or herself up against the living God deserves the same strong words from the Almighty (see vv. 28, 29). **Holy One of Israel:** The Lord embodies perfect holiness: He is completely different or set apart from all of creation (40:25); He alone is entirely sinless (6:4–7). Yet God chooses to enter into a relationship with His people, the Israelites (Ps. 40:1).

37:24 Chariots were the most prized military hardware of the time. **height of the mountains:** See 2:12–16; 14:13, 14 for other occurrences of these arrogant words.

37:25 dug and drunk water: Deserts cannot stop Assyria’s king; he presents himself as invincible. The king boasts that he has **dried up** Egyptian streams. But the Lord will dry up the Egyptian sea (see 11:15; 44:27).

37:28, 29 your rage against Me: This accusation picks up the point of the indictment in vv. 23, 24. The Assyrians dragged prisoners away with a **hook in the nose**; soon they would get the hook! The Lord’s judgment was coming. For another use of the image of a hook, see Ezek. 38:4.

37:30 Assyria had promised to feed the Judeans; but only God could guarantee that the people would **eat** (36:16, 17). The **third year** could have been as early as 13 to 15 months from that time; any part of a year was counted as a year.

37:33 thus says the LORD: God gives His final sentence against the Assyrian tyrant.

- Nor come before it with shield,
Nor build a siege mound against it.
34 By the way that he came,
By the same shall he return;
And he shall not come into this
city,
Says the LORD.
35 'For I will ^adefend this city, to save it
For My own sake and for My servant
^rDavid's sake.'

Sennacherib's Defeat and Death

36 Then the ^aangel³ of the LORD went out, and ⁴killed in the camp of the Assyrians one hundred and eighty-five thousand; and when *people* arose early in the morning, there were the corpses—all dead. 37 So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed and went away, returned *home*, and remained at Nineveh. 38 Now it came to pass, as he was worshipping in the house of Nisroch his god, that his sons Adrammelech and Sharezer struck him down with the sword; and they escaped into the land of Ararat. Then ¹Esarhaddon his son reigned in his place.

Hezekiah's Life Extended

38 In ^athose days Hezekiah was sick and near death. And Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, went to him and said to him, "Thus says the LORD: ^b'Set your house in order, for you shall die and not live.'"

²Then Hezekiah turned his face toward the wall, and prayed to the LORD, ³and said, ^c"Remember now, O LORD, I pray, how I have walked before You in

35 ^a 2 Kin. 20:6; Is. 31:5; 38:6 ^r 1 Kin. 11:13
36 ^s 2 Kin. 19:35; Is. 10:12, 33, 34 ³ Or Angel ⁴ Lit. struck
38 ^t Ezra 4:2

CHAPTER 38

1 ^a 2 Kin. 20:1-6, 9-11; 2 Chr. 32:24; Is. 38:1-8 ^b 2 Sam. 17:23
3 ^c Neh. 13:14

^d 2 Kin. 18:5, 6; Ps. 26:3 ¹ whole or peaceful
6 ^e 2 Kin. 19:35-37; 2 Chr. 32:21; Is. 31:5; 37:35
7 ^f Judg. 6:17, 21, 36-40; 2 Kin. 20:8; Is. 7:11
11 ^g Ps. 27:13; 116:9
² Heb. YAH, YAH
³ LXX omits among the inhabitants of the world ⁴ So with some Heb. mss.; MT, Vg. rest; Tg. land
12 ^h Job 7:6

truth and with a ¹loyal heart, and have done *what* is good in Your ^dsight." And Hezekiah wept bitterly.

⁴And the word of the LORD came to Isaiah, saying, ⁵"Go and tell Hezekiah, 'Thus says the LORD, the God of David your father: "I have heard your prayer, I have seen your tears; surely I will add to your days fifteen years. ⁶I will deliver you and this city from the hand of the king of Assyria, and ⁱI will defend this city."⁷ And this *is* ^fthe sign to you from the LORD, that the LORD will do this thing which He has spoken: ⁸Behold, I will bring the shadow on the sundial, which has gone down with the sun on the sundial of Ahaz, ten degrees backward." So the sun returned ten degrees on the dial by which it had gone down.

⁹This is the writing of Hezekiah king of Judah, when he had been sick and had recovered from his sickness:

- 10 I said,
"In the prime of my life
I shall go to the gates of Sheol;
I am deprived of the remainder of my
years."
11 I said,
"I shall not see ²YAH,
The LORD ^gin the land of the
living;
I shall observe man no more ³among
the inhabitants of ⁴the world.
12 ^hMy life span is gone,
Taken from me like a shepherd's
tent;
I have cut off my life like a weaver.
He cuts me off from the loom;

37:35 defend: For similar expressions of the Lord's protection of Jerusalem, see 27:3; 31:5. **For My own sake:** The Lord would save and protect the city for His own honor, for He had established the city for the worship of His holy name. For similar wording, see 43:25; 48:9, 11; contrast 42:21. **for My servant David's sake:** God maintained His promises to David (9:7; 49:8; 2 Sam. 7:8-16; 1 Kin. 8:17-20; Ps. 89:19-37).

37:36 This verse is the fulfillment of God's promise to take vengeance on those who trouble His people (34:8). **the angel of the LORD:** Often a visitation from the angel of the Lord brought deliverance to God's people, as in the incident with Balaam (Num. 22) and the appearances to Gideon (Judg. 6:11, 12) and Manoah (see Judg. 13). At other times the angel of the Lord came in judgment (see 2 Sam. 24:10-25). Here the angel of the Lord delivers His people by fighting for them (see Ex. 15:3).

37:38 Death in the house of Nisroch contrasts with life in the house of the Lord (37:14; 38:20). **Esarhaddon** began his reign in 681 B.C.

38:1-39:8 Although Hezekiah trusted in God to heal him (38:1-22), he failed when the Babylonian envoys visited him. After his recovery, he paraded his own glory, not the Lord's (39:1, 2). Thus he implicitly placed his confidence in military strength and political alliances instead of the strength of the Almighty God. Because of his unbelief, Judah would go into exile (39:3-8).

38:1 In those days refers to a time before the events recorded in chs. 36; 37 (v. 6). These earlier events are presented after Jerusalem's

deliverance from Assyria because that deliverance was not the last word for either Hezekiah or Jerusalem.

38:2 prayed: For another prayer of Hezekiah see 37:15.

38:3 loyal heart: For similar descriptions see 2 Kin. 18:3-5. **Hezekiah wept bitterly** because apparently at that time he had no male heirs. Hezekiah lived an additional 15 years (v. 5); Manasseh, the successor to his throne, was 12 when Hezekiah died (2 Kin. 20:21-21:1).

38:7 sign: For a related reference see 7:11-14.

38:8 Bringing the shadow on the sundial . . . backward symbolized the divine extension of Hezekiah's life.

38:9-20 Hezekiah's thanksgiving song celebrating his healing consists of (1) a report of his lament (vv. 10-14), and (2) a report of the Lord's deliverance (vv. 15-20). His personal deliverance modeled the future national deliverance (see 41:8-11).

38:9 the writing of Hezekiah: Scriptures attest to King Hezekiah's interest in devotional literature. Apparently he instructed his scribes to compile some of the proverbs of Solomon (see Prov. 25:1). Furthermore, he ordered the Levites to worship God with the psalms of David and Asaph. The following song of praise (vv. 10-20) has some affinities with those psalms (see 2 Chr. 29:30).

38:10 Sheol: For additional references to Sheol see 5:14; 14:9, 11; 38:18. Hezekiah was mourning the fact that he was dying at an early age.

38:12 Pulling up a **tent** represented impermanence (33:20; 2 Cor. 5:1). Hezekiah's life was quickly passing away.

- From day until night You make an end of me.
- 13 I have considered until morning—
Like a lion,
So He breaks all my bones;
From day until night You make an end of me.
- 14 Like a crane or a swallow, so I chattered;
ⁱ I mourned like a dove;
My eyes fail *from looking* upward.
O ⁵ LORD, I am oppressed;
⁶ Undertake for me!
- 15 “What shall I say?
⁷ He has both spoken to me,
And He Himself has done *it*.
I shall walk carefully all my years
^j In the bitterness of my soul.
- 16 O Lord, by these *things men* live;
And in all these *things is* the life of my spirit;
So You will restore me and make me live.
- 17 Indeed *it was* for *my own* peace
That I had great bitterness;
But You have lovingly *delivered* my soul from the pit of corruption,
For You have cast all my sins behind Your back.
- 18 For ^k Sheol cannot thank You,
Death cannot praise You;
Those who go down to the pit cannot hope for Your truth.
- 19 The living, the living man, he shall praise You,
As I *do* this day;
^l The father shall make known Your truth to the children.
- 20 “The LORD *was ready* to save me;
Therefore we will sing my songs with stringed instruments
All the days of our life, in the house of the LORD.”

14 ⁱ Is. 59:11; Ezek. 7:16; Nah. 2:7 ⁵ So with Bg.; MT, DSS Lord ⁶ Be my surety 15 / Job 7:11; 10:1; Is. 38:17 ⁷ So with MT, Vg.; DSS, Tg. And shall I say to Him; LXX omits first half of this verse 18 ^k Ps. 6:5; 30:9; 88:11; 115:17; [Eccl. 9:10] 19 ^l Deut. 4:9; 6:7; Ps. 78:3, 4

21 ^m 2 Kin. 20:7
22 ⁿ 2 Kin. 20:8

CHAPTER 39

1 ^a 2 Kin. 20:12–19; 2 Chr. 32:31; Is. 39:1–8 ¹ Berodach-Baladan, 2 Kin. 20:12
2 ^b 2 Chr. 32:25, 31; Job 31:25
3 ^c Deut. 28:49; Jer. 5:15
6 ^d 2 Kin. 24:13; 25:13–15; Jer. 20:5
7 ^e Dan. 1:1–7
8 ^f 1 Sam. 3:18

²¹ Now ^m Isaiah had said, “Let them take a lump of figs, and apply *it* as a poultice on the boil, and he shall recover.”

²² And ⁿ Hezekiah had said, “What *is* the sign that I shall go up to the house of the LORD?”

The Babylonian Envoys

39 At ^a that time ¹ Merodach-Baladan the son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent letters and a present to Hezekiah, for he heard that he had been sick and had recovered. ^{2b} And Hezekiah was pleased with them, and showed them the house of his treasures—the silver and gold, the spices and precious ointment, and all his armory—all that was found among his treasures. There was nothing in his house or in all his dominion that Hezekiah did not show them.

³ Then Isaiah the prophet went to King Hezekiah, and said to him, “What did these men say, and from where did they come to you?”

So Hezekiah said, “They came to me from a ‘far country, from Babylon.’”

⁴ And he said, “What have they seen in your house?”

So Hezekiah answered, “They have seen all that *is* in my house; there is nothing among my treasures that I have not shown them.”

⁵ Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah, “Hear the word of the LORD of hosts: ⁶ ‘Behold, the days are coming ^d when all that *is* in your house, and what your fathers have accumulated until this day, shall be carried to Babylon; nothing shall be left,’ says the LORD. ⁷ ‘And they shall take away *some* of your ‘sons who will descend from you, whom you will beget; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.’”

⁸ So Hezekiah said to Isaiah, ^f “The word of the LORD which you have spoken *is good!*” For he said, “At least there will be peace and truth in my days.”

38:17 for my own peace: Hezekiah models an exemplary attitude to hardship: he accepted trials as part of God’s good plan for him. For a development of this theme, see Rom. 8:28. **sins:** The forgiveness of sin and healing are two different aspects of God’s salvation (53:5; Matt. 8:14–17; Luke 5:17–26). Apparently Hezekiah’s poor health was connected to his sin. Yet not all sickness is due to one’s own sin (see Job 42:7–11; John 9:2, 3).

38:18 cannot thank: Praise for healing can only be offered while a person is alive (Ps. 6:5). **Hope** for temporal life cannot be extended beyond death, but hope for eternal life remains beyond death (Ps. 22:22–31; see 2 Tim. 1:10; Heb. 2:10–12; 1 John 5:11, 12).

38:19 father . . . children: For a similar idea of the righteous teaching their children of God’s faithfulness, see Ps. 22:30, 31.

38:20 sing: For a song of praise to God our Savior, see 12:1–6.

38:21 Them may refer to the court physicians. **poultice:** All healing is of God, who may and often does mediate it through medicine and the skills of health care professionals.

38:22 Depending on one’s attitude, the request for a **sign** may express either unbelief (Matt. 12:39; John 6:30) or faith (v. 7). The healing of a boil would be the sign that the Lord would save Hezekiah (see vv. 20, 21).

39:1 At that time . . . sick: For the background see ch. 38. The **letters** were probably about rebellion against Assyria. **recovered:** The miracle of the sundial (38:8) would have held special interest for the astronomy-minded Babylonians (2 Chr. 32:31).

39:2 The fact that Hezekiah showed **his treasures** instead of praising God suggests that he was trusting in his might and the armies of the nations like Babylon, instead of in the Lord.

39:5 Lord of hosts: This is the same title as used in 1:9. It describes the Lord as Commander in Chief of the angelic armies.

39:7 Eunuchs were royal officials or servants. In ancient times, these servants were often castrated to keep them from being a threat to the king’s harem. For further references to eunuchs, see 56:4; Dan. 1:3–6.



Merodach-Baladan

To the Assyrians, Merodach-Baladan was a persistent rebel king. He appeared on the political scene during the days of Tiglath-Pileser III of Assyria. After Sennacherib came to power, Merodach-Baladan returned to Babylon in 703 B.C., killed the ruler there, and prepared to fight Assyria. Sennacherib reacted energetically and drove Merodach-Baladan into exile once again.

Merodach-Baladan sent ambassadors to Jerusalem to visit King Hezekiah of Judah, who had just recovered miraculously from a serious illness. He sent letters and presents (2 Kin. 20:12; Is. 39:1). Hezekiah showed the Babylonian ambassadors his wealth and arsenal—an act that brought stiff rebuke from the prophet Isaiah (2 Kin. 20:13–18).

Merodach-Baladan was never successful in his bid for Babylonian independence. The task was left for Nabopolassar (626–605 B.C.), who was able to succeed where Merodach-Baladan had failed.

Merodach-Baladan (left) on a boundary stone
Kim Walton, courtesy of the Pergamon Museum, Berlin



God's People Are Comforted

40 “Comfort, yes, comfort My people!”

Says your God.

² “Speak ¹ comfort to Jerusalem, and cry out to her,
That her warfare is ended,
That her iniquity is pardoned;
“For she has received from the LORD’s hand
Double for all her sins.”

³ ^b The voice of one crying in the wilderness:

“Prepare the way of the LORD;
^d Make straight ² in the desert
A highway for our God.

CHAPTER 40

² ^a Is. 61:7 ¹ Lit. to the heart of
³ ^b Matt. 3:3 ☆;
Mark 1:3; Luke 3:4-6; John 1:23 c [Mal. 3:1; 4:5, 6] ^d Ps. 68:4
² So with MT, Tg., Vg.; LXX omits in the desert

⁴ ^a Is. 45:2 ³ Or a plain
⁵ ^f Is. 35:2
⁶ ^g Job 14:2; James 1:10; 1 Pet. 1:24, 25
⁴ So with MT, Tg.; DSS, LXX, Vg. ^l

- ⁴ Every valley shall be exalted
And every mountain and hill brought low;
“The crooked places shall be made ³ straight
And the rough places smooth;
⁵ The ^f glory of the LORD shall be revealed,
And all flesh shall see *it* together;
For the mouth of the LORD has spoken.”
- ⁶ The voice said, “Cry out!”
And ⁴ he said, “What shall I cry?”
- ^g “All flesh *is* grass,
And all its loveliness *is* like the flower of the field.

40:1—55:13 This section is addressed to the Babylonian exiles in a prophetic manner. This book of comfort, written about 150 years before the time of Cyrus, promised the exiles from Judah that they would return to Jerusalem (40:1, 2), where God would meet them in the form of the Suffering Servant (42:1–4)—the very One who would become a great King (7:14; 9:6, 7; 11:1–5). The restoration after the Exile pointed to the coming of the Lord’s kingdom. In Isaiah’s prophecy, this first taste of salvation merges with predictions of the full salvation that Jesus Christ would bring.

40:1–8 This prophecy consists of addresses by three heavenly heralds. The first calls upon the others to comfort the exiles because their time of servitude has ended (vv. 1, 2). The second calls for building a highway so that all may see the coming of the Lord (vv. 3–5). The third guarantees the vision (vv. 6–8).

40:1 Comfort is used to address all of the people of Zion (v. 9) with words of God’s mercy. This verb, repeated for emphasis, denotes the announcement of an end to the people’s suffering. The message reversed the exiles’ complaint (Lam. 1:2). This consolation was fulfilled in the birth of Christ (Luke 2:25). **My people . . . your God** evokes the covenantal relationship between God and Israel (Ex. 6:7).

40:2 Here the word **Jerusalem** represents the exiles. The Lord would end their period of exile and restore them to the city of Jerusalem. **Warfare** refers to Israel’s hard servitude in Babylon, from

which they were about to flee (48:20, 21). **Double** may mean “the equivalent” or “the right amount.”

40:3 crying in the wilderness: The voice is heard in the wilderness, calling the people there to ready themselves for the coming of the Lord. The analogy is based on the anticipated coming of a magnificent ruler from a distant land. The people who lived in the area of his intended visit would do everything possible to prepare the road for his arrival. **Prepare** means “clear away the obstacles” (57:14; 62:10). **Highway** represents the hearts of people who must be spiritually prepared by repentance for God’s glory to be revealed on the earth (Luke 3:3–20).

40:4 valley . . . mountain: For a similar description, see Zech. 14:1–11. While the highway of v. 3 was to be prepared by the people of the Lord, the changes required in v. 4 could be accomplished only by divine action.

40:5 The glory of the LORD began to be **revealed** in the restoration of the captives of Judah from the Exile (44:23). More grandly, the glory of the Lord would be displayed in the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ (4:2; Luke 2:29–32; John 1:14). The ultimate revelation of the glory of the Lord will be in His glorious kingdom (60:2; Zeph. 3:14–17), where the Savior King dwells in the presence of His people for all eternity (Rev. 22:1–5). **All flesh** refers to all mankind. **the mouth of the LORD has spoken:** The importance of this prophecy is underscored by the language of divine oath.

- 7 The grass withers, the flower fades,
Because the breath of the LORD blows
upon it;
Surely the people *are* grass.
- 8 The grass withers, the flower fades,
But ^hthe word of our God stands
forever.”

- 9 O Zion,
You who bring good tidings,
Get up into the high mountain;
O Jerusalem,
You who bring good tidings,
Lift up your voice with strength,
Lift *it* up, be not afraid;
Say to the cities of Judah, “Behold
your God!”

- 10 Behold, the Lord God shall come
⁵with a strong *hand*,
And ⁱHis arm shall rule for Him;
Behold, ^jHis reward *is* with Him,
And His ⁶work before Him.

- 11 He will ^kfeed His flock like a
shepherd;
He will gather the lambs with His arm,
And carry *them* in His bosom,
And gently lead those who are with
young.

- 12 ^lWho has measured the ⁷waters in
the hollow of His hand,
Measured heaven with a ⁸span
And calculated the dust of the earth
in a measure?
Weighed the mountains in scales
And the hills in a balance?

- 13^m Who has directed the Spirit of the
LORD,
Or *as* His counselor has taught Him?

8 ^h [John 12:34]
10 ⁱ Is. 59:16, 18
/ Is. 62:11; Rev.
22:12 ⁵ *in strength*
⁶ *recompense*
11 ^k Jer. 31:10;
[Ezek. 34:23, 31];
Mic. 5:4; [John
10:11, 14–16 ☆; Heb.
13:20; 1 Pet. 2:25]
12 ^j Prov. 30:4 ⁷ So
with MT, LXX, Vg.;
DSS adds of the
sea; Tg. adds of the
world ⁸ A span =
½ cubit, 9 inches;
or the width of His
hand
13 ^m Job 21:22;
Rom. 11:34; [1 Cor.
2:16]

14 ⁿ Job 36:22, 23
17 ^o Dan. 4:35 ^p Ps.
62:9
18 ^q Ex. 8:10; 15:11;
1 Sam. 2:2; Is. 46:5;
[Mic. 7:18]; Acts
17:29
19 ^r Ps. 115:4–8; Is.
41:7; 44:10; Hab.
2:18, 19
20 ^s 1 Sam. 5:3, 4; Is.
41:7; 46:7; Jer. 10:3
⁹ *an offering*

- 14 With whom did He take counsel, and
who instructed Him,
And ⁿtaught Him in the path of
justice?
Who taught Him knowledge,
And showed Him the way of
understanding?

- 15 Behold, the nations *are* as a drop in a
bucket,
And are counted as the small dust on
the scales;
Look, He lifts up the isles as a very
little thing.
- 16 And Lebanon *is* not sufficient to
burn,
Nor its beasts sufficient for a burnt
offering.
- 17 All nations before Him *are* as
^onothing,
And ^pthey are counted by Him
less than nothing and
worthless.

- 18 To whom then will you ^qliken
God?
Or what likeness will you compare
to Him?

- 19 ^rThe workman molds an image,
The goldsmith overspreads it with
gold,
And the silversmith casts silver
chains.

- 20 Whoever *is* too impoverished for *such*
⁹a contribution
Chooses a tree *that* will not rot;
He seeks for himself a skillful
workman
^sTo prepare a carved image *that* will
not totter.

40:7, 8 breath of the Lord: This phrase pictures God’s wrath on the wicked as the summer wind that blows on the grass and dries it up (40:24; Jer. 4:11). **But the word of our God stands forever:** These words offer full assurance of the reliability, stability, and eternal nature of the divine word. The Son of God fulfills the Word (Matt. 5:17, 18), *is* the Word (John 1:1–18), and lives forever.

40:9–11 Isaiah summons Zion to join the heavenly heralds (vv. 1–8) in proclaiming to the other cities of Judah the coming of the victorious Lord to shepherd His people.

40:9 In this section of Isaiah (40:1–55:13), **Zion** is an endearing term for the remnant who have remained faithful to God. The **good tidings** are that God has come to rescue His enslaved people. **Behold your God:** Compare John 1:36; 19:5.

40:10 The Lord God might be rephrased “the Lord, the Master.” The Lord’s **strong . . . arm** figuratively brings His mighty acts of judgment and deliverance (48:14; 51:5, 9; 52:10; 53:1). **Reward** describes the spoils of victory—namely, the delivered people. The rescued exiles merge with the messianic community (65:15, 16). **Work** is a synonym for “reward.”

40:11 In the ancient Middle East the ideal king was often depicted as a **shepherd** (Ps. 23; John 10). **Gather the lambs with His arm** is a description of the Father’s love for His people (Mic. 5:4).

40:12–31 This oracle, proclaiming the Lord as the only source of eternal strength, addresses five questions: (1) Who is the Creator? (vv. 12–17); (2) To whom may He be compared? (vv. 18–20); (3) Who

rules the kingdoms of this world? (vv. 21–24); (4) To whom may He be compared? (vv. 25, 26); (5) Why are you despondent, Jacob? (vv. 27–31).

40:12 Who: The answer is “God, Creator of the cosmos, and Israel’s Lord” (vv. 15–17). **A span** is the width of a stretched-out hand. The verse dramatically imposes images of God’s might.

40:13 directed: These questions are an attack against Marduk, a Babylonian deity, who needed the assistance of other gods in creating the world.

40:15 a drop in a bucket: Wicked nations have no power to thwart the purposes of God (Ps. 2:1–6). The word **scales** links the answer in this verse to the question in v. 12: Who has measured the dust of the earth? Its sovereign Creator has.

40:17 Worthless is the same term used to describe the primeval chaos (Gen. 1:2).

40:18 liken God: The God of Scripture is incomparable; there is no one else like Him (40:25; 46:5; Ps. 113:4–6).

40:19 goldsmith: Many idols were made with wood, then overlaid with gold (41:6, 7; 44:9–20; 46:6, 7). **Silver chains** kept the idol from moving or falling.

40:20 too impoverished: The poor had to choose the best wood available and then hope it was good enough. Note the satire in these words. What is the value of the prayer of a poor man to a plain idol? What is the value of the prayer of the rich to one covered with gold? To both questions, the answer is “none.”

- 21 ¹ Have you not known?
Have you not heard?
Has it not been told you from the
beginning?
Have you not understood from the
foundations of the earth?
- 22 *It is* He who sits above the circle of
the earth,
And its inhabitants *are* like
grasshoppers,
Who ^ustretches out the heavens like
a curtain,
And spreads them out like a ^vtent to
dwell in.
- 23 He ¹brings the ^uprinces to nothing;
He makes the judges of the earth
useless.
- 24 Scarcely shall they be planted,
Scarcely shall they be sown,
Scarcely shall their stock take root in
the earth,
When He will also blow on them,
And they will wither,
And the whirlwind will take them
away like stubble.
- 25⁴⁴ To ^xwhom then will you liken Me,
Or to *whom* shall I be equal?" says
the Holy One.
- 26 Lift up your eyes on high,
And see who has created these
things,
Who brings out their host by number;
^uHe calls them all by name,
By the greatness of His might

21 ¹ Is. 19:1; Is.
37:26; Acts 14:17;
Rom. 1:19
22 ^u Job 9:8; Ps.
104:2; Is. 42:5;
44:24; Jer. 10:12
^v Job 36:29; Ps. 19:4
23 ^w Job 12:21; Ps.
107:40; Is. 34:12;
[1 Cor. 1:26-29]
¹ reduces
25 ^x (Deut. 4:15); Is.
40:18; [John 14:9;
Col. 1:15]
26 ^y Ps. 147:4

27 ^z Is. 54:7, 8
28 ^a Ps. 147:5; Eccl.
11:5; Rom. 11:33
31 ^b Is. 30:15; 49:23
c [Job 17:9]; Ps.
103:5; [2 Cor. 4:8-
10, 16]

CHAPTER 41

1 ^a Hab. 2:20; Zech.
2:13 ^b Is. 1:18

And the strength of *His* power;
Not one is missing.

- 27 ^z Why do you say, O Jacob,
And speak, O Israel:
"My way is hidden from the LORD,
And my just claim is passed over by
my God?"
- 28 Have you not known?
Have you not heard?
The everlasting God, the LORD,
The Creator of the ends of the earth,
Neither faints nor is weary.
^a His understanding is unsearchable.
- 29 He gives power to the weak,
And to *those who have* no might He
increases strength.
- 30 Even the youths shall faint and be
weary,
And the young men shall utterly fall,
- 31 But those who ^bwait on the LORD
^c Shall renew *their* strength;
They shall mount up with wings like
eagles,
They shall run and not be weary,
They shall walk and not faint.

Israel Assured of God's Help

41 "Keep ^a silence before Me,
O coastlands,
And let the people renew *their*
strength!
Let them come near, then let them
speak;
Let us ^b come near together for
judgment.

40:21, 22 Have you not known: The questions here and in v. 28 express God's incredulity at worshipers of idols. Even though the worship of the Lord reached back to the **foundations of the earth** (Gen. 4:26; Rom. 1:19, 20), these people chose idols over the true worship of the living God. **The circle** refers either to the horizon or to the apparent hemisphere over the earth. The point is that God is not to be confused with His creation. **stretches out the heavens:** Creation is the work of the God of Israel: only He deserves our praise. **40:23, 24 nothing . . . useless:** For a similar expression of the insignificance of entire nations before the might of the living God, see v. 17. **planted . . . blow . . . wither:** This imagery describing God's judgment is similar to that in vv. 6–8.

40:25 To whom then will you liken Me: This and the following question in this verse form part of an important biblical theme, the incomparability of God (v. 18). Since God is **the Holy One**, He is distinct from all others.

40:26 Lift up: Human beings are responsible to discern the greatness of the Creator in His creation and are held guilty for suppressing such discernment (Rom. 1:18–32). **created:** For similar descriptions of God's creative work, see 4:5; 41:20; 43:1; 45:18; 65:17, 18. **These things** refers to the heavenly bodies. The Babylonian gods were identified with the heavenly bodies. The words here would have had particular relevance to Israel as they learned to say no to Babylon and yes to the Lord. **by number:** Each of the stars is known to the Creator; to each He has given a **name** (Ps. 147:4).

40:27 My way is hidden from the LORD does not question God's omniscience, but His good will. Would the Lord bless His people? The Israelites had a **just claim** because God had promised to make them a blessing to the nations (Gen. 12:3; 28:13–15).

40:28, 29 Have you not known: The Lord repeats this rhetorical question for emphasis (see v. 21). God is not only **everlasting**—transcendent over time—but also the **Creator of the ends of the earth**—transcendent over space. He is omnipotent and inscrutable. **Neither faints nor is weary** refers to how God meets the needs of His people: the Lord will never let His people down (Ps. 121:3, 4). **power to the weak:** Strength is a gift of God (Jer. 9:23).

40:30 youths: The point is that human strength cannot compare with the power of God.

40:31 To wait entails confident expectation and active hope in the Lord—never passive resignation (Ps. 40:1). **Mount up . . . run . . . walk** depicts the spiritual transformation that faith brings to a person. The Lord gives power to those who trust in Him. **eagles:** The eagle depicts the strength that comes from the Lord. The Lord describes His deliverance of the Israelites in Ex. 19:4 as similar to being lifted up on an eagle's strong wings. In Ps. 103:5, the strength of people who are nourished by God is compared to the strength of the eagle.

41:1–42:17 In this prophecy the Lord puts the nations on trial to show them that He alone is God because only He can predict the future. The trial consists of two cycles (41:1–20; 41:21–42:9), followed by a praise hymn (42:10–17). In each trial cycle, there are three elements: (1) a call of the nations to trial (41:1, 21–24); (2) a prediction of the coming of Cyrus (41:2–7, 25–29); (3) a celebration of the victories of the Servant (41:8–20; 42:1–9).

41:1 Keep silence: Divine calls for silence usually anticipate judgment (Zeph. 1:7). **Coastlands** includes Lydia in Asia Minor, which was conquered by Cyrus (51:5). **Renew their strength** contrasts strength that results from faith with unassisted human strength.

- 2 “Who raised up one ^cfrom the east?
Who in righteousness called him to
His feet?
Who ^dgave the nations before him,
And made *him* rule over kings?
Who gave *them* as the dust to his
sword,
As driven stubble to his bow?
- 3 Who pursued them, *and* passed
¹safely
By the way *that* he had not gone
with his feet?
- 4 ^eWho has performed and done *it*,
Calling the generations from the
beginning?
‘I, the LORD, am ^fthe first;
And with the last I *am* ^gHe.’”
- 5 The coastlands saw *it* and feared,
The ends of the earth were afraid;
They drew near and came.
- 6 ^hEveryone helped his neighbor,
And said to his brother,
²“Be of good courage!”
- 7 ⁱSo the craftsman encouraged the
^jgoldsmith;³
He who smooths *with* the hammer
inspired him who strikes the
anvil,
Saying, ⁴“It is ready for the soldering”;
Then he fastened it with pegs,
^k*That* it might not totter.
- 8 “But you, Israel, *are* My servant,
Jacob whom I have ^lchosen,
The descendants of Abraham My
^mfriend.
- 9 *You* whom I have taken from the
ends of the earth,

2 ^c Is. 46:11 ^d Gen.
14:14; Is. 45:1, 13
3 ¹ Lit. *in peace*
4 ^e Is. 41:26 ^f Rev.
1:8, 17; 22:13 ^g Is.
43:10; 44:6
6 ^h Is. 40:19 ² Lit. *Be
strong*
7 ⁱ Is. 44:13 ^j Is.
40:19 ^k Is. 40:20
3 ^{refiner} ⁴ Or *The
soldering is good*
8 ^l Deut. 7:6; 10:15;
Ps. 135:4; [Is. 43:1]
^m 2 Chr. 20:7; James
2:23

10 ⁿ Is. 41:13, 14;
43:5 ^o [Deut. 31:6]
11 ^p Ex. 23:22; Is.
45:24; 60:12; Zech.
12:3
12 ³ Lit. *Men of your
strife*
14 ^q Job 25:6; Ps.
22:6
15 ^r Mic. 4:13; Hab.
3:12; [2 Cor. 10:4]

- And called from its farthest regions,
And said to you,
‘You *are* My servant,
I have chosen you and have not cast
you away:
- 10 ⁿ Fear not, ^ofor I *am* with you;
Be not dismayed, for I *am* your God.
I will strengthen you,
Yes, I will help you,
I will uphold you with My righteous
right hand.’
- 11 “Behold, all those who were incensed
against you
Shall be ^pashamed and disgraced;
They shall be as nothing,
And those who strive with you shall
perish.
- 12 You shall seek them and not find
them—
⁵ Those who contended with you.
Those who war against you
Shall be as nothing,
As a nonexistent thing.
- 13 For I, the LORD your God, will hold
your right hand,
Saying to you, ‘Fear not, I will help
you.’
- 14 “Fear not, you ^qworm Jacob,
You men of Israel!
I will help you,” says the LORD
And your Redeemer, the Holy One
of Israel.
- 15 “Behold, ^rI will make you into a new
threshing sledge with sharp teeth;
You shall thresh the mountains and
beat *them* small,
And make the hills like chaff.

41:2 One from the east refers to Cyrus, king of Persia (559–530 B.C.; see 46:11). Since God had made a covenant between Himself and Abraham (v. 8), He delivered the exiles in **righteousness**, a synonym for salvation in Isaiah (45:8; 46:13; 51:6; 56:1). God, who has authority over the nations, **gave the nations** to Cyrus as a ransom for Israel (43:3).

41:3 Cyrus advanced so fast it was as though **his feet** did not touch the ground.

41:4 first . . . last: For similar references concerning God’s sovereignty over all of time, see 44:6, 10; Heb. 13:8; Rev. 1:8, 17. The Lord is eternal not only in that He is not bound by time, but also in that He is Master of time. **I am He:** For similar uses of this phrase, see 43:13; 46:4.

41:5 The pronoun **it** refers to the conquests of Cyrus (vv. 2, 3).

41:7 This verse satirizes assistance from idols in contrast to the sure help from the living God (vv. 10–16). The **goldsmith** was working on the idol that presumably could save the people. For a similar reference to this occupation, see 40:19. Here the pronoun **it** refers to an idol (2:8).

41:8 Servant refers to one highly honored by the Lord. There is no higher position to which a person can aspire. The term was bestowed on the person **chosen** to administer and advance God’s kingdom (Ex. 14:31; 2 Sam. 3:18). In chs. 40–55, the title of servant is bestowed implicitly on Cyrus (45:1–4) and explicitly on God’s prophets (44:26), the nation of Israel (44:21; 45:4) and particularly on the Lord Jesus Christ (42:1–4; 52:13). **Abraham:** The Lord calls him **friend** (see Gen. 18:17, 18; 2 Chr. 20:7; James 2:23).

41:9 The ends of the earth probably refers to Mesopotamia (Gen. 11:31; 12:1) and perhaps Egypt (Gen. 15:13). The term indicates God’s sovereign rule over the earth (v. 4). The Lord had punished Israel (42:18–25), but had **not cast them away** (29:22–24).

41:10 The Lord’s command to the Israelites to **fear not** contrasts with the fright of pagans in vv. 5, 6. God had bared His **right hand** at the first Exodus in order to destroy the power of Pharaoh (Ex. 15:6); the phrase indicates His sovereignty and strength over all who oppose Him (40:10).

41:11, 12 The people of God are given renewed assurance that their formidable enemies will be brought to **nothing** (40:17, 23).

41:13 The Lord will hold the exile’s **right hand** (42:6) just as He held the hand of Moses (63:12). The Lord is with them; they have nothing to fear.

41:14 Exiled Israel seemed as feeble and despicable as a **worm** (Job 25:6; Ps. 22:6). **Redeemer** refers to the family protector of distressed relatives, who would avenge murders (Num. 35:19) and redeem indentured slaves (Lev. 25:47–49). A redeemer could also purchase land for a relative or marry a widow whose first husband was childless (see the role of Boaz in the Book of Ruth). When the Lord is called the Redeemer the title highlights His zeal to defend, protect, and purchase back His people (49:26).

41:15 The lowly “worm” (v. 14) would be transformed into a **threshing sledge** (28:27) that removes **mountains**, the symbols of opposition and the location of pagan temples and palaces (Mic. 1:3–5).

16 You shall ^swinnow them, the wind
shall carry them away,
And the whirlwind shall scatter
them;
You shall rejoice in the LORD,
And ^tglory in the Holy One of Israel.

17“ The poor and needy seek water, but
there is none,
Their tongues fail for thirst.
I, the LORD, will hear them;
I, the God of Israel, will not ^uforsake
them.
18 I will open ^vrivers in desolate heights,
And fountains in the midst of the
valleys;
I will make the ^wwilderness a pool
of water,
And the dry land springs of water.
19 I will plant in the wilderness the
cedar and the acacia tree,
The myrtle and the oil tree;
I will set in the ^xdesert the cypress
tree *and* the pine
And the box tree together,
20^y That they may see and know,
And consider and understand
together,
That the hand of the LORD has done
this,
And the Holy One of Israel has
created it.

The Futility of Idols

21“ Present your case,” says the LORD.
“Bring forth your strong *reasons*,” says
the ^zKing of Jacob.
22“ Let^a them bring forth and show us
what will happen;
Let them show the ^bformer things,
what they *were*,
That we may ^cconsider them,
And know the latter end of them;
Or declare to us things to come.
23 ^cShow the things that are to come
hereafter,
That we may know that you *are* gods;
Yes, ^ddo good or do evil,

Threshing Sledge

The purpose of threshing was to separate usable grain from the waste straw or chaff. This was usually done by spreading the stalks of grain several inches deep on a smooth flat area that was on a high piece of ground open to the wind. Specially shod animals walked around on the stalks until the grain separated from the hulls.

Frequently threshing sledges (28:27) made of wood (2 Sam. 24:22) with stone or metal teeth embedded in the bottom side were dragged over the grain by these animals.

The city of Damascus was called under judgment because that nation “threshed Gilead with implements of iron” (Amos 1:3) or behaved with unnecessary cruelty against a conquered people.

God promised to make His people into “a new threshing sledge with sharp teeth” and use them to bring judgment on those who oppress the godly (Is. 41:15).



Threshing sledge

Baker Photo Archive, courtesy of the Eretz Israel Museum

16 ^s Jer. 51:2 ^t Is.
45:25
17 ^u Ps. 94:14; Rom.
11:2
18 ^v Is. 35:6, 7;
43:19; 44:3 ^w Ps.
107:35
19 ^x Is. 35:1
20 ^y Job 12:9; Is.
66:14
21 ^z Is. 43:15
22 ^a Is. 45:21

That we may be dismayed and see *it*
together.

24 Indeed ^eyou *are* nothing,
And your work *is* nothing;
He who chooses you is an
abomination.

^b Is. 43:9 ^c Lit. *set our heart on them* 23 ^c Is. 42:9; 44:7, 8; 45:3;
[John 13:19] ^d Jer. 10:5 24 ^e Ps. 115:8; Is. 44:9; [Rom. 3:10-20;
1 Cor. 8:4]

41:16 winnow: As threshed grain is tossed in the air to separate the chaff, so the victorious people of God would have complete control over their enemies.

41:17 The poor and needy refers to the exiles moving homeward across the desert. **thirst:** God will meet the people's most basic needs. For a related reference, see 44:3.

41:18 rivers . . . fountains . . . pool of water . . . springs of water: In the first Exodus, the people of Israel were often concerned about water (Ex. 17:1; Num. 20:2). The returning exiles would also need water in the second Exodus (v. 17), but God's provision would be bountiful.

41:19 in the wilderness . . . tree: The abundant water supply would also lead to the Lord's massive plantings of trees and vegetation (35:1, 2).

41:20 The people's reception of God's power and care is the primary

concern. **the hand:** God's hand indicates His power and strength (40:10; 41:10). **created:** Only God can truly create (4:5; 40:26).

41:21 King of Jacob: This title for God pictures His special relationship with His people (43:15).

41:22 The former things probably refers to prophecies of judgment by earlier prophets, and some prophecies spoken by Isaiah in chs. 1–35 (see also 42:9, 21–25; 43:9, 10; 46:8, 9; 48:3). **Latter end of them** may also be translated “their glorious future.” The phrase **things to come** may refer to the mighty acts God would do through Cyrus. Ultimately, *things to come* refers to the gathering of God's people and the establishment of Christ's kingdom on earth. The point is that idols cannot tell the past or the future, but the Lord God can.

41:23 that you are gods: This is part of the satire (vv. 21, 22). **Do good or do evil** is a way of saying “do anything.”

41:24 The word **indeed** assumes a period of silence between

25^a “I have raised up one from the north,
And he shall come;
From the ⁷rising of the sun ^fhe shall
call on My name;
^gAnd he shall come against princes as
though mortar,
As the potter treads clay.
26^h Who has declared from the
beginning, that we may know?
And former times, that we may say,
‘*He is righteous*?
Surely *there is* no one who shows,
Surely *there is* no one who declares,
Surely *there is* no one who hears
your words.
27 ⁱThe first time ^jI said to Zion,
‘Look, there they are!’
And I will give to Jerusalem one who
brings good tidings.
28^k For I looked, and *there was* no man;
I looked among them, but *there was*
no counselor,
Who, when I asked of them, could
answer a word.
29 ^lIndeed they *are* all ⁸worthless;
Their works *are* nothing;
Their molded images *are* wind and
confusion.

The Servant of the LORD

42 “Behold! ^aMy Servant whom I
uphold,

25 ^f Ezra 1:2 ^g Is.
41:2; Jer. 50:3 ⁷ East
26 ^h Is. 43:9
27 ⁱ Is. 41:4 / Is. 40:9;
Nah. 1:15
28 ^k Is. 63:5
29 ^j Is. 41:24 ⁸ So
with MT, Vg.; DSS,
Syr., Tg. nothing;
LXX omits first line

CHAPTER 42

1 ^a Is. 43:10; 49:3, 6;
Matt. 12:18; [Phil.
2:7]

^b Matt. 3:17; 17:5;
Mark 1:11; Luke
3:22 ☆; Eph. 1:6
^c [Is. 11:2]; Matt.
3:16; [Luke 4:18,
19, 21]; John 3:34
¹ Chosen
³ ² dimly burning
³ extinguish
⁴ ^d [Gen. 49:10] ☆
⁵ ^e Is. 44:24; Zech.
12:1 / Job 12:10;
33:4; Is. 57:16; Dan.
5:23; Acts 17:25 ☆
⁶ ^g Is. 43:1 ^h Is. 49:8
ⁱ Is. 49:6; Luke 2:32;
[Acts 10:45; 13:47;
Gal. 3:14]

My ¹Elect One *in whom* My soul
^bdelights!

^cI have put My Spirit upon Him;
He will bring forth justice to the
Gentiles.

2 He will not cry out, nor raise *His*
voice,
Nor cause His voice to be heard in
the street.

3 A bruised reed He will not break,
And ²smoking flax He will not
³quench;

4 He will bring forth justice for truth.
He will not fail nor be discouraged,
Till He has established justice in the
earth;

^dAnd the coastlands shall wait for His
law.”

5 Thus says God the LORD,
^eWho created the heavens and
stretched them out,
Who spread forth the earth and that
which comes from it,

^fWho gives breath to the people
on it,

And spirit to those who walk on it:

6 “I, ^gthe LORD, have called You in
righteousness,
And will hold Your hand;
I will keep You ^hand give You as a
covenant to the people,
As ⁱa light to the Gentiles,

v. 23 and v. 24. The supposed “gods” were mute. An **abomination** is something that causes revulsion.

41:25 from the north . . . From the rising of the sun: The conquest of Media by Cyrus (550 B.C.) made him master of the territories north of Babylon. Cyrus, who did not personally know God (45:4), nevertheless called on God’s **name** when he released the exiles (2 Chr. 36:23; Ezra 1:1–4).

41:27 The pronoun **they** refers to the “former things” and “things to come” (of v. 22). **One who brings good tidings** refers to the prophet Isaiah.

41:28, 29 These verses present the futility of the nations; they do not have any true understanding of reality—past, present, or future (41:26).

Servant

(Heb. ‘*ebed*) (20:3; 42:1; 2 Sam. 10:19; Jer. 7:25) Strong’s #5650

This word is derived from a verb meaning “to serve,” “to work,” or “to enslave.” While ‘*ebed* can mean slave (Gen. 43:18), slavery in Israel was different than in most places in the ancient Middle East. Slavery was regulated by the Law of Moses, which prohibited indefinite slavery and required that slaves be freed on the Sabbath (seventh) year (Ex. 21:2)—and the Year of Jubilee—the fiftieth year (Lev. 25:25–28). Sometimes the Hebrew word can refer to the subjects of a king (2 Sam. 10:19). But usually the word is best translated *servant*. God referred to His prophets as “My servants” (Jer. 7:25) and spoke of the coming Messiah as His Servant, the One who would perfectly obey His will (see 42:1–4; 49:1–6; 50:4–9; 52:13–53:12).

42:1 Behold: The Lord formally presents His Servant. The title **My Servant** is identified with Jesus Christ in the NT (Matt. 12:15–21). Isaiah may have foreshadowed Him, but only Christ brings universal justice (v. 4) and an everlasting covenant (v. 6). **uphold:** When God upholds a person, nothing can bring him down. For a similar idea, see 41:10. The Servant—that is, Jesus—possessed the Holy Spirit (4:4; 11:2; 48:16; 59:21; 61:1; Luke 3:22) which empowered Him to bring **justice** to the world.

42:2 The Hebrew word rendered **cry out** means “to cry out in distress.” The phrase **cause His voice to be heard in the street** suggests the same idea; the Servant’s rejection is heard for the first time (49:4; 50:5, 6; 53:4–9).

42:3 The phrase **a bruised reed** represents the poor and needy (41:17; 42:7). The phrase **not break** is an understatement for the positive equivalent: “mend” or “restore.” A **smoking flax** represents those who have almost lost their faith and hope in the Lord. The Servant will come to restore the poor and needy and encourage people in the faith (see Matt. 11:5).

42:4 law: The Servant will be more than another Moses (Deut. 18:15–18; Acts 3:22–26); He will mediate the New Covenant (2 Cor. 3:3; Heb. 8:7–13).

42:5 The Lord God introduces Himself as the source of all physical and spiritual life—**breath** and **spirit**—for He will enable the Servant to free people from death and spiritual darkness (vv. 6–9).

42:6 Called, hold, keep, and give are expressions parallel to the words of v. 1. In contrast to Cyrus, who brought political deliverance (41:2), the Servant in **righteousness** will deliver Israel from sin. The Servant will institute a new **covenant** binding Israel to the Lord (49:8). The prophets refer to this new covenant as a “covenant of peace” (54:10; Ezek. 34:25); an “everlasting covenant” (which is also associated with the Davidic covenant; 55:3); a “new covenant” (see Jer. 31:31–34); and most often simply as a “covenant.” **The people** refers to the **Gentiles** (60:3). Christ is the true **light** of the world (9:2;

- ⁷ ^jTo open blind eyes,
To ^kbring out prisoners from the
prison,
Those who sit in ^ldarkness from the
prison house.
- ⁸ I *am* the LORD, that *is* My
name;
And My ^mglory I will not give to
another,
Nor My praise to carved
images.
- ⁹ Behold, the former things have come
to pass,
And new things I declare;
Before they spring forth I tell you of
them.”

Praise to the LORD

- ¹⁰ ⁿSing to the LORD a new song,
And His praise from the ends of the
earth,

⁷ / Is. 35:5 ☆ ^k Is.
61:1; Luke 4:18;
[2 Tim. 2:26; Heb.
2:14] / Is. 9:2
⁸ ^m Ex. 20:3-5; Is.
48:11
¹⁰ ⁿ Ps. 33:3; 40:3;
98:1

° Ps. 107:23 ⁴ Lit. *its*
fullness
¹³ ^p Is. 31:4

- ° You who go down to the sea, and ⁴ all
that is in it,
You coastlands and you inhabitants
of them!
- ¹¹ Let the wilderness and its cities lift
up *their voice*,
The villages *that* Kedar inhabits.
Let the inhabitants of Sela
sing,
Let them shout from the top of the
mountains.
- ¹² Let them give glory to the LORD,
And declare His praise in the
coastlands.
- ¹³ The LORD shall go forth like a mighty
man;
He shall stir up *His* zeal like a man
of war.
He shall cry out, ^pyes, shout
aloud;
He shall prevail against His enemies.

49:6; 60:3; John 8:12; 9:5; Acts 26:17, 18, 23), and Christ's followers should reflect His light (Matt. 5:14).

42:7 To open . . . darkness is metaphorical language drawn from the Babylonian captivity; it indicates spiritual sight and salvation from sin's bondage (6:9, 10; 29:18, 24; 32:3; 35:5; 10; 61:1). Christ gave sight to the blind to show that He had the power to give everyone spiritual insight (v. 16).

42:8 My name: The fact that God reveals His name to His people is an indication of His wondrous grace (see Ex. 3:14, 15). **My glory:** Here and in 48:11 this phrase is parallel to God's name.

42:9 former . . . new: For a similar idea, see 41:22. The former prophecies had come to pass; God through Isaiah was announcing new prophecies, and these too would come to pass.

42:10, 11 You who go down to the sea . . . the wilderness and its cities: The command is for all people to **sing**. The **new song** celebrated the second Exodus from Babylon, just as Moses' song celebrated the first Exodus from Egypt (Ex. 15:1–21). **ends of the earth:** For a similar use of this phrase to describe the honor and praise God will receive from all the world, see 41:5.

42:12 Glory links this hymn with the Servant's Song (v. 8).

42:13 man of war: For a similar description of God as a Warrior, see Ex. 15:3. The Lord is completely sovereign: He will fight for His people even when they are exiles in a foreign land (vv. 14–17). The **zeal** of the Lord is also described in 9:7. **He shall prevail against His enemies:** A similar promise that the Lord will eventually triumph is found in 41:11, 12.

The Holy Spirit in the Old Testament



No clearer statement of the intimate interworking of the triune God—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—and especially of the Spirit's powerful role can be found in the Old Testament than in Isaiah's prophecy of the Servant of the Lord (Is. 42:1–9). The passage summarizes the redeeming work of all three Persons of the Trinity in the salvation of the lost. Thus it ties together in remarkable harmony both the Old Testament and New Testament understandings of God's grace. It also sheds light on our understanding of the Holy Spirit.

Some Bible readers assume that the Spirit's activity in Scripture is limited to the New Testament. But actually He is just as active in the Old Testament:

1. The Spirit participated in creation (Gen. 1:2; Job 26:13; Is. 32:15).
2. The Spirit gives life to humanity and the other creatures (Ps. 104:29, 30). It is interesting that when Genesis says God endows people with life by breathing into their nostrils the "breath of life" (Gen. 2:7), the word for "breath" is the same word translated elsewhere as "spirit."
3. The Spirit strives with sinners (Gen. 6:3), which is perhaps related to His work in convicting people of sin (John 16:8–11).
4. The Spirit came upon certain judges, warriors, and prophets in a way that gave them extraordinary power: for example, Joshua (Num. 27:18), Othniel (Judg. 3:10), Gideon (6:34), Samson (13:25; 14:6), and Saul (1 Sam. 10:9, 10). However, the Spirit later departed from Saul because of his disobedience (16:14).
5. The Spirit played a prominent role in the long span of Old Testament prophecy. David declared that "the Spirit of the LORD spoke by me, and His word was on my tongue" (2 Sam. 23:2). Likewise, Ezekiel reported that "the Spirit entered me when He spoke to me" (Ezek. 2:2).
6. The Spirit inspired holiness in Old Testament believers (Ps. 143:10). And Scripture promised that someday God would put His Spirit in His people in a way that would cause them to live according to His statutes (Ezek. 36:27).
7. The Spirit was crucial in helping God's people anticipate the ministry of the Messiah. For example, Isaiah 11:1–5 is a trinitarian preview of the working of the Father, the Spirit, and the Son, who is the Branch of Jesse. Looking forward to the ministry of Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit inspired Isaiah to prophesy: "The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him" (Is. 11:2), inspiring God's Chosen One with wisdom, understanding, counsel, might, knowledge, fear of the Lord, righteousness, and faithfulness. Thus we come full cycle to the New Testament, where Jesus claimed to be the fulfillment of this prophecy (Is. 61:1, 2; Luke 4:18, 19).

Promise of the LORD's Help

- ¹⁴ “I have held My peace a long time,
I have been still and restrained
Myself.
Now I will cry like a woman in
⁵labor,
I will pant and gasp at once.
¹⁵ I will lay waste the mountains and
hills,
And dry up all their vegetation;
I will make the rivers
coastlands,
And I will dry up the pools.
¹⁶ I will bring the blind by a way they
did not know;
I will lead them in paths they have
not known.
I will make darkness light before
them,
And crooked places straight.
These things I will do for them,
And not forsake them.
¹⁷ They shall be ^aturned back,
They shall be greatly ashamed,
Who trust in carved images,
Who say to the molded images,
‘You are our gods.’
¹⁸ “Hear, you deaf;
And look, you blind, that you may
see.
¹⁹ ^rWho is blind but My servant,
Or deaf as My messenger *whom* I
send?
Who is blind as *he who* is perfect,
And blind as the LORD’s
servant?
²⁰ Seeing many things, ^sbut you do not
observe;
Opening the ears, but he does not
hear.”

¹⁴ ^s childbirth
¹⁷ ^a Ps. 97:7; Is. 1:29;
44:11; 45:16
¹⁹ ^r Is. 43:8; Ezek.
12:2; [John 9:39, 41]
²⁰ ^s Rom. 2:21

²² ⁶ Or trapped in
caves
²⁴ ^t Is. 65:2
²⁵ ^u 2 Kin. 25:9 ^v Is.
1:3; 5:13; Hos. 7:9
^w Is. 29:13

CHAPTER 43

¹ ^a Is. 43:5; 44:6 ^b Is.
42:6; 45:4

Israel's Obstinate Disobedience

- ²¹ The LORD is well pleased for His
righteousness' sake;
He will exalt the law and make *it*
honorable.
²² But this *is* a people robbed and
plundered;
All of them are ⁶snared in holes,
And they are hidden in prison
houses;
They are for prey, and no one
delivers;
For plunder, and no one says,
“Restore!”
²³ Who among you will give ear to this?
Who will listen and hear for the time
to come?
²⁴ Who gave Jacob for plunder, and
Israel to the robbers?
Was it not the LORD,
He against whom we have sinned?
^t For they would not walk in His
ways,
Nor were they obedient to His law.
²⁵ Therefore He has poured on him the
fury of His anger
And the strength of battle;
^u It has set him on fire all around,
^v Yet he did not know;
And it burned him,
Yet he did not take *it* to ^wheart.

The Redeemer of Israel

- 43** But now, thus says the LORD, who
created you, O Jacob,
And He who formed you, O Israel:
“Fear not, ^afor I have redeemed you;
^bI have called *you* by your name;
You are Mine.

42:14 The phrase **held My peace** describes the Lord's patient delay in acting (48:9; 57:11). **A long time** most likely refers to the 70 years of captivity (2 Chr. 36:21). **Now** indicates the introduction of a new age (43:1; 44:1). **woman in labor**: The words not only speak of her **cry**, but of the timely bringing forth of the new age begun with the restoration.

42:15 mountains . . . rivers: These words refer to all obstacles in the way of returning to the land from Exile. The word **dry up** is an allusion to the Exodus through the Red Sea (Ex. 14:16–29; Ps. 66:6) and entrance into the land through the Jordan River (Josh. 3:14–17).

42:16 Blind refers to the state of the exiles, forming a link with the Servant's task (v. 7) and the Lord's accusation against Israel (v. 18). **Make darkness light** echoes the first Exodus (Ex. 13:21, 22). For similar references to darkness and light, see 58:8, 10; 59:9; 60:1, 2.

42:18–25 This prophecy, justifying the Exile as punishment, consists of (1) an address by the Lord to the exiles, accusing them of being blind and deaf to His mighty acts (vv. 18–22); and (2) an address by Isaiah accusing the exiles of sin (vv. 23–25).

42:18, 19 The people of Israel were **deaf** because they would not listen (vv. 23, 25) and **blind** because they would not see (vv. 7, 16). The Lord turned the exiles' implicit accusation that He was deaf and blind (40:27) against them (6:10). **My servant**: Isaiah uses the title **servant** for Israel (see 41:8) because that nation was supposed to be God's **messenger** (44:26) to the nations (see Gen. 12:3).

42:21 The LORD is well pleased: For a similar use of this phrase to express God's good will, see 53:10. **for His righteousness' sake**: In punishing Israel for its sin, the Lord exalted His **law**.

42:22 Israel was **robbed and plundered** first by the Assyrians (10:6) and then by the Babylonians (39:6). These words link the Lord's speech with Isaiah's in v. 24. No one said **Restore** until Cyrus commanded the exiles to return to Jerusalem (Ezra 1:2–4).

43:1 Thus says the LORD emphasizes the Author of the prophecy and the certainty that it will be fulfilled (49:8; 50:1; 56:1). The words **created** and **formed** allude to the creation of the human race in Gen. 1; 2. The Hebrew verb translated **created** means “to fashion anew”—a divine activity, and is the same key word used in Gen. 1:1 (40:26; 41:20; 45:12, 18; 57:19; 65:17, 18). The second verb **formed** means “to shape,” to fashion as a potter, and is used in Gen. 2:7 of God fashioning the body of the man from the dust of the earth. The use of these verbs here suggests that the Lord's creation of Israel as a people was as decisive an act as His creation of human beings at the beginning. In the same way, the NT describes Christians as new creations in Christ (2 Cor. 5:17; Eph. 2:10). **by your name**: The Lord's use of **name** demonstrates His intimate relationship with the Israelites. He had revealed His name to the people (Ex. 6:2–8) and declared their name to Pharaoh (Ex. 4:22).

- 2 ^c When you pass through the waters,
^d *I will be* with you;
 And through the rivers, they shall
 not overflow you.
 When you ^e walk through the fire,
 you shall not be burned,
 Nor shall the flame scorch you.
- 3 For *I am* the LORD your God,
 The Holy One of Israel, your Savior;
^f I gave Egypt for your ransom,
 Ethiopia and Seba in your place.
- 4 Since you were precious in My sight,
 You have been honored,
 And I have ^g loved you;
 Therefore I will give men for you,
 And people for your life.
- 5 ^h Fear not, for *I am* with you;
 I will bring your descendants from
 the east,
 And ⁱ gather you from the west;
- 6 I will say to the ^j north, ‘Give
 them up!’
 And to the south, ‘Do not keep them
 back!’
 Bring My sons from afar,
 And My daughters from the ends of
 the earth—
- 7 Everyone who is ^k called by My
 name,
 Whom ^l I have created for My glory;
 I have formed him, yes, I have made
 him.”
- 8 ^m Bring out the blind people who have
 eyes,
 And the ⁿ deaf who have ears.
- 9 Let all the nations be gathered
 together,
 And let the people be assembled.
^o Who among them can declare this,
 And show us former things?

2 ^c [Ps. 66:12; 91:3]
^d [Deut. 31:6]; Jer.
 30:11 ^e Dan. 3:25
 3 ^f [Prov. 11:8; 21:18]
 4 ^g Is. 63:9
 5 ^h Is. 41:10; 44:2;
 Jer. 30:10; 46:27, 28
ⁱ Is. 54:7
 6 ^j Is. 49:12
 7 ^k Is. 63:19; James
 2:7 ^l Ps. 100:3; Is.
 29:23; [John 3:2,
 3; 2 Cor. 5:17; Eph.
 2:10]
 8 ^m Is. 6:9; 42:19;
 Ezek. 12:2 ⁿ Is.
 29:18
 9 ^o Is. 41:21, 22, 26

10 ^p Is. 44:8 ^q Is.
 55:4 ^r Is. 41:4; 44:6
 11 ^s Is. 45:21; Hos.
 13:4
 12 ^t Deut. 32:16; Ps.
 81:9 ^u Is. 44:8
 13 ^v Ps. 90:2; Is.
 48:16 ^w Job 9:12;
 Is. 14:27
 15 ^x Is. 41:20, 21
 16 ^y Ex. 14:16, 21,
 22; Ps. 77:19; Is.
 51:10 ^z Josh. 3:13

- Let them bring out their witnesses,
 that they may be justified;
 Or let them hear and say, “*It is*
 truth.”
- 10 “You ^p are My witnesses,” says the
 LORD,
^q “And My servant whom I have
 chosen,
 That you may know and ^r believe Me,
 And understand that *I am* He.
 Before Me there was no God
 formed,
 Nor shall there be after Me.
- 11 I, *even* I, ^s *am* the LORD,
 And besides Me *there is* no savior.
- 12 I have declared and saved,
 I have proclaimed,
 And *there was* no ^t foreign god among
 you;
^u “Therefore you *are* My witnesses,”
 Says the LORD, “that *I am* God.
- 13 ^v Indeed before the day *was*, *I am* He;
 And *there is* no one who can deliver
 out of My hand;
 I work, and who will ^w reverse it?”
- 14 Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer,
 The Holy One of Israel:
 “For your sake I will send to
 Babylon,
 And bring them all down as
 fugitives—
 The Chaldeans, who rejoice in their
 ships.
- 15 *I am* the LORD, your Holy One,
 The Creator of Israel, your ^x King.”
- 16 Thus says the LORD, who ^y makes a
 way in the sea
 And a ^z path through the mighty
 waters,

43:2 Pass through the waters is an allusion to the crossing of the Red Sea (Ex. 14:21, 22) and the Jordan River (Josh. 3:14–17). **Walk through the fire** is a metaphor for protection in danger (Ps. 66:12); consider the Lord’s protection of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the fiery furnace (Dan. 3:25–27).

43:3 **LORD your God:** The God of all creation declares Himself to be the God of the Israelites; He had every right to be their God and to call them His people, because He had saved them from the Egyptians. For more on this divine title, see Ex. 6:2–8. **Holy One of Israel:** For a similar usage of this divine title, see 1:4. The Hebrew word for **Savior** comes from the verb meaning “to save,” the word from which the name Jesus is derived (Matt. 1:21).

43:4 Israel is considered **precious** because of God’s sovereign grace (Deut. 7:6–8).

43:5, 6 **Fear not:** God’s people are to *fear* Him—that is, hold Him in awe and reverence. Being sure of His presence, they need not be afraid of anything or anyone else. Israel’s **descendants** are called by the Lord **My sons** and **My daughters** (Hos. 11:1). **east . . . west . . . north . . . south:** For a similar idea, see 11:11. **ends of the earth:** For similar phrases, see 11:12; 24:14–16; 41:25. The Lord will gather all His people together—all those who praise His name and follow Him.

43:8 As a **blind** and **deaf** witness, the nation Israel did not fulfill the prophecy of restoration (42:18–20).

43:10 **You** is strongly contrasted by “I” at the beginning of v. 11.

witnesses: The people of Israel had witnessed the great works of God in their midst (Ex. 4).

43:11–13 These verses form a magnificent celebration of the sovereignty of God (see 14:24, 26, 27; compare Num. 23:19). **no foreign god:** The Hebrew text contains merely the word **foreign**; the word *god* is implied. The point is that only the living God was at work in the Israelites’ midst. **savior:** This same Hebrew term is used in v. 3. **before the day:** The Lord was always at work—saving, protecting, guiding, and disciplining His people. The concluding line of the song of praise—**there is no one . . . My hand**—is quoted from Deut. 32:39.

43:14 **Thus says the LORD:** The same phrase is used in v. 1 to emphasize the ultimate source of this prophecy: God Himself. The Lord is described as a **Redeemer** because He zealously defends, protects, and purchases back His people (49:26). In ancient Israel, a redeemer was a family protector of distressed relatives. For a similar use of this title, see 41:14. **Babylon:** For a description of Babylon’s destruction, see Jer. 51:1–44. **The Chaldeans** were a people who settled in lower Mesopotamia and founded the Neo-Babylonian Empire.

43:15 With the titles of **the LORD** (Ex. 3:14, 15), **Holy One** (1:4), **The Creator of Israel** (40:26; 41:20), and **your King** (41:21), the living God declared His intimate relationship with the Israelites. He was not only their God, but also the One who created their nation and ruled over them.

- 17 Who ^abrings forth the chariot and horse,
The army and the power
(They shall lie down together, they shall not rise;
They are extinguished, they are quenched like a wick):
- 18^a Do ^bnot remember the former things,
Nor consider the things of old.
- 19 Behold, I will do a ^cnew thing,
Now it shall spring forth;
Shall you not know it?
^dI will even make a road in the wilderness
And rivers in the desert.
- 20 The beast of the field will honor Me,
The jackals and the ostriches,
Because ^eI give waters in the wilderness
And rivers in the desert,
To give drink to My people, My chosen.
- 21 ^fThis people I have formed for Myself;
They shall declare My ^gpraise.

Pleading with Unfaithful Israel

- 22^a But you have not called upon Me, O Jacob;
And you ^bhave been weary of Me, O Israel.
- 23 ⁱYou have not brought Me the sheep for your burnt offerings,
Nor have you honored Me with your sacrifices.
I have not caused you to serve with grain offerings,
Nor wearied you with incense.

17 ^a Ex. 14:4-9, 25
18 ^b Jer. 16:14
19 ^c Is. 42:9; 48:6;
[2 Cor. 5:17; Rev. 21:5] ^d Ex. 17:6;
Num. 20:11; Deut. 8:15; Ps. 78:16; Is. 35:1, 6
20 ^e Is. 48:21
21 ^f Ps. 102:18; Is. 42:12; [Luke 1:74, 75; Eph. 1:5, 6; 1 Pet. 2:9] ^g Jer. 13:11
22 ^h Mic. 6:3; Mal. 1:13; 3:14
23 ⁱ Amos 5:25

24 ^j Ps. 95:10; Is. 1:14; 7:13; Ezek. 6:9; Mal. 2:17
25 ^k Is. 44:22; Jer. 50:20; [Acts 3:19]
^l Ezek. 36:22 ^m Is. 1:18; Jer. 31:34
26 ⁿ justified
27 ^o interpreters
28 ^p Ps. 79:4; Jer. 24:9; Dan. 9:11; Zech. 8:13

- 24 You have bought Me no sweet cane with money,
Nor have you satisfied Me with the fat of your sacrifices;
But you have burdened Me with your sins,
You have ^jwearied Me with your iniquities.
- 25^a I, even I, am He who ^kblots out your transgressions ^lfor My own sake;
^mAnd I will not remember your sins.
- 26 Put Me in remembrance;
Let us contend together;
State your *case*, that you may be ^lacquitted.
- 27 Your first father sinned,
And your ²mediators have transgressed against Me.
- 28 Therefore I will profane the princes of the sanctuary;
ⁿI will give Jacob to the curse,
And Israel to reproaches.

God's Blessing on Israel

- 44^a "Yet hear now, O Jacob My servant,
And Israel whom I have chosen.
- 2 Thus says the LORD who made you
And formed you from the womb, *who* will help you:
^bFear not, O Jacob My servant;
And you, Jeshurun, whom I have chosen.
- 3 For I will pour water on him who is thirsty,
And floods on the dry ground;
I will pour My Spirit on your descendants,

43:18 The Lord commanded the people not to **remember** the past (46:9, 10). The kingdom of Israel inaugurated at the first Exodus and the conquest of the Promised Land would be insignificant compared to the new kingdom God would establish. **former things** refers to the prophecies of judgment by Isaiah and other prophets (see 42:9, 21–25; 43:9, 10; 46:8, 9; 48:3). **the things of old**: For a related passage, see 65:16.

43:19, 20 A new thing refers to Cyrus's command for the exiles to return to Jerusalem; the fall of Babylon and Israel's restoration (see v. 20); and the restoration of all things (see 65:17–19). For a similar use of this phrase, see 48:6. **a road in the wilderness**: The Lord would give the exiles an unobstructed route back to the Promised Land (see 40:3–5). **rivers in the desert**: Even in desolate regions the Lord would refresh His people (see 41:18, 19).

43:22–28 In this trial scene (see 41:1–42:13; 43:8–13) the Lord finds Israel guilty of sinning against Him by not worshipping Him (vv. 22–24), and instead making Him weary with their sins (v. 24), treating His forgiveness with complacency (v. 25), and sinning against Him from the beginning (vv. 26, 27). The verdict is clear: His destruction of the temple's leaders was deserved (v. 28; see 42:18–25).

43:22 The Lord's accusation was that the people had not worshiped Him in the way He prescribed and with the motivation He demanded. **You** identifies the exiles with their fathers, since the exiles did not have any opportunity to offer sacrifices.

43:23, 24 The exiles' ingratitude—**Nor have you honored Me**—contrasts with the Lord's forbearance—**you have burdened Me**.

43:25 for My own sake: The Lord chooses to save and forgive. This arises out of His own character. For similar phrases, see 37:35; 42:21; 48:9, 11.

43:26 State your case: More than once through Isaiah, the Lord asks Israel to answer His charges (see 41:21; 45:21).

43:27, 28 First father refers to Abraham (51:2). Despite his many acts of faithfulness, Abraham also had **sinned** (Gen. 12:18, 19; 20:9). Israel's false religious leaders (Mic. 3:9, 10) are called **your mediators** in contrast to "My mediators." **Princes of the sanctuary** refers to the leaders of the priests in Jerusalem (1 Chr. 24:5).

44:1 Now: The call to listen immediately is featured in 42:14; 43:1. **servant**: For a similar usage of the title *servant* for the nation of Israel see 41:8.

44:2 Thus says the LORD: This emphatic statement emphasizes that God authored the prophecy and thus it is certain to come to pass (43:1). **made . . . formed**: The Lord demands an audience with Israel because He is their Creator, see 43:1, 7. **Fear not**: Since the Lord is the all-powerful One, Israel had nothing to fear. This same encouragement not to worry is found in 43:5. **Jeshurun**, meaning "Upright One," is a poetic word for the nation of Israel (Deut. 32:15).

44:3 Pour water may refer either to miracles during the exiles' journey home (43:19–21) or to blessings on those who had returned to the Promised Land (41:17; 55:1). **pour My Spirit**: Moses prayed for the Lord's Spirit to come on all Israel (Num. 11:29); the prophets foretold it (Joel 2:28–32), and Christ fulfilled it (32:15; Acts 2:14–36).

- And My blessing on your offspring;
 4 They will spring up among the grass
 Like willows by the watercourses.
 5 One will say, 'I *am* the LORD's';
 Another will call *himself* by the
 name of Jacob;
 Another will write *with* his hand,
 'The LORD's',
 And name *himself* by the name of
 Israel.

There Is No Other God

- 6 "Thus says the LORD, the King of
 Israel,
 And his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts:
^a 'I *am* the First and I *am* the Last;
 Besides Me *there is* no God.
 7 And ^bwho can proclaim as I do?
 Then let him declare it and set it in
 order for Me,
 Since I appointed the ancient people.
 And the things that are coming and
 shall come,
 Let them show these to them.
 8 Do not fear, nor be afraid;
^c Have I not told you from that time,
 and declared *it*?
^d You *are* My witnesses.
 Is there a God besides Me?
 Indeed ^e *there is* no other Rock;
 I know not *one*.'"

Idolatry Is Foolishness

- 9 ^f Those who make an image, all of
 them *are* useless,
 And their precious things shall not
 profit;
 They *are* their own witnesses;
^g They neither see nor know, that they
 may be ashamed.
 10 Who would form a god or mold an
 image
^h That profits him nothing?

CHAPTER 44

6 ^a Is. 41:4; [Rev. 1:8,
 17; 22:13]
 7 ^b Is. 41:4, 22, 26
 8 ^c Is. 41:22 ^d Is.
 43:10, 12 ^e Deut.
 4:35; 32:39; 1 Sam.
 2:2; 2 Sam. 22:32; Is.
 45:5; Joel 2:27
 9 ^f Is. 41:24 ^g Ps.
 115:4
 10 ^h Is. 41:29; Jer.
 10:5; Hab. 2:18; Acts
 19:26

- 11 Surely all his companions would be
ⁱ ashamed;
 And the workmen, they *are* mere men.
 Let them all be gathered together,
 Let them stand up;
 Yet they shall fear,
 They shall be ashamed together.
 12 ^j The blacksmith with the tongs works
 one in the coals,
 Fashions it with hammers,
 And works it with the strength of his
 arms.
 Even so, he is hungry, and his
 strength fails;
 He drinks no water and is faint.
 13 The craftsman stretches out *his* rule,
 He marks one out with chalk;
 He fashions it with a plane,
 He marks it out with the compass,
 And makes it like the figure of a
 man,
 According to the beauty of a man,
 that it may remain in the house.
 14 He cuts down cedars for himself,
 And takes the cypress and the oak;
 He ^k secures *it* for himself among the
 trees of the forest.
 He plants a pine, and the rain
 nourishes *it*.
 15 Then it shall be for a man to burn,
 For he will take some of it and warm
 himself;
 Yes, he kindles *it* and bakes bread;
 Indeed he makes a god and
 worships *it*;
 He makes it a carved image, and falls
 down to it.
 16 He burns half of it in the fire;
 With this half he eats meat;
 He roasts a roast, and is satisfied.

11 ⁱ Ps. 97:7; Is. 1:29;
 42:17
 12 ^j Is. 40:19; Jer.
 10:3-5
 14 ^k Lit.
 appropriates

44:5 The repatriated would proudly identify themselves with the Lord. **The name of Israel** would no longer be associated with a worm (41:14).

44:6-23 This passage describes another fact-finding trial like the one in 41:1—42:17; 43:8-13. Between the command not to fear (v. 8) and the command to remember (v. 21) and return (v. 22), there is an extended, biting satire on idolatry (vv. 9-20). An exhortation to nature to praise Israel's redeeming Lord concludes the oracle (v. 23), which contains many allusions to the Song of Moses (Deut. 31:30—32:43).

44:6 Thus says the Lord: This emphatic statement refers to the truthfulness of what follows (43:1). **King of Israel:** For background see Ps. 99. **Redeemer:** This term is also used in 41:14 and refers to the zeal with which the Lord acts to defend his people. **First . . . Last:** God is completely sovereign over time (41:4). **Besides Me there is no God:** For a similar idea see Deut. 32:39.

44:8 Do not fear: A similar command is given in 43:5. When God is on your side, you do not need to fear anything or anyone else. **You are My witnesses:** The people of Israel had already witnessed great miracles on their behalf (43:10). **Rock:** The image of a rock represents stability and protection (Ps. 62:2, 6, 7). For a similar description of God, see Deut. 32:4, 15, 31.

44:9-20 This satire against idolatry consists of (1) an introduction condemning idols and those who make them (vv. 9-12), (2) the main section showing the absurdity of idolatry by describing how metal and wooden idols are made (vv. 12-17), and (3) a didactic conclusion against idol makers (vv. 18-20). The prophet Isaiah was speaking to the future generation, warning them of the foolishness of worshipping idols (see 40:19, 20; 41:21-29; 42:17).

44:9 an image: This is the term used in the Second Commandment to describe an idol (Ex. 20:4). **Useless** is translated "without form" in Gen. 1:2.

44:10 The Hebrew has the words **god** and **image** together, stressing the absurdity of worshipping an image molded by human hands.

44:11 be ashamed: When all people come face to face with God, it will be a day of shame for those who rejected Him in this life.

44:13 While people were made in the image of God (Gen. 1:26-28), idolaters made gods in **the figure of a man** (Deut. 4:16; Rom. 1:23).

44:15 Isaiah was particularly struck by the absurdity of using one part of a log for burning and the other part of the very same log as an object of worship.

He even warms *himself* and says,
“Ah! I am warm,
I have seen the fire.”
17 And the rest of it he makes into a
god,
His carved image.
He falls down before it and
worships it,
Prays to it and says,
“Deliver me, for you *are* my god!”
18 ^kThey do not know nor understand;
For ^lHe has ²shut their eyes, so that
they cannot see,
And their hearts, so that they cannot
^munderstand.
19 And no one ⁿconsiders in his
heart,
Nor *is there* knowledge nor
understanding to say,
“I have burned half of it in the
fire,
Yes, I have also baked bread on its
coals;
I have roasted meat and eaten *it*;
And shall I make the rest of it an
abomination?
Shall I fall down before a block of
wood?”
20 He feeds on ashes;
^oA deceived heart has turned him
aside;
And he cannot deliver his soul,
Nor say, “*Is there* not a ^plie in my
right hand?”

18 ^k Is. 45:20 ^l [Ps. 81:12]; Is. 6:9, 10; 29:10; 2 Thess. 2:11
^m Jer. 10:14 ² Lit. smeared over
19 ⁿ Is. 46:8
20 ^o Job 15:31; Hos. 4:12; Rom. 1:21, 22; 2 Thess. 2:11; 2 Tim. 3:13 ^p Is. 57:11; 59:3, 4, 13; Rom. 1:25

Israel Is Not Forgotten

21 “Remember these, O Jacob,
And Israel, for you *are* My servant;
I have formed you, you *are* My
servant;
O Israel, you will not be ^qforgotten
by Me!
22 ^rI have blotted out, like a thick cloud,
your transgressions,
And like a cloud, your sins.
Return to Me, for ^sI have redeemed
you.”
23 ^tSing, O heavens, for the LORD has
done *it*!
Shout, you lower parts of the earth;
Break forth into singing, you
mountains,
O forest, and every tree in it!
For the LORD has redeemed Jacob,
And ^uglorified Himself in Israel.

Judah Will Be Restored

24 Thus says the LORD, ^vyour Redeemer,
And ^wHe who formed you from the
womb:
“I *am* the LORD, who makes all *things*,
^x Who stretches out the heavens ³all
alone,
Who spreads abroad the earth by
Myself;
25 Who ^yfrustrates the signs ^zof the
babblers,
And drives diviners mad;
Who turns wise men backward,

21 ^q Is. 49:15
22 ^r Is. 43:25 ^s Is. 43:1; 1 Cor. 6:20; [1 Pet. 1:18, 19]
23 ^t Ps. 69:34; Is. 42:10; 49:13; Jer. 51:48; Rev. 18:20
^u Is. 49:3; 60:21
24 ^v Is. 43:14 ^w Is. 43:1 ^x Job 9:8 ³ By Himself
25 ^y Is. 47:13 ^z Jer. 50:36

44:17 you are my god: This is a scene of complete hopelessness (see 57:13); an idolater prays for deliverance from a powerless piece of wood. Worshiping and depending on any object made by human hands—such as money—is just as hopeless.
44:19 abomination: For another use of this word communicating revulsion, see 41:24. **a block of wood:** The awful truth was that people were worshiping objects made from God’s creation instead of the Creator Himself.
44:20 He feeds on ashes: Compare the two banquets in Prov. 9:1–6, 13–18.

44:21 My servant: The nation of Israel is often described as God’s servant (see 41:8). **formed you:** This verb suggests that the formation of the nation was a decisive act on the part of God (43:1). **not be forgotten:** Although the exiles might have thought God had forgotten (see 49:14, 15), the Lord unambiguously declared that He would remember the nation He had created.
44:22 blotted out: The idea of total forgiveness of sins is also found in 40:2; 43:25. The word **redeemed** describes God as buying back His people. For the Lord as Redeemer, see 41:14.
44:23 The songs (12:1–6) of the **heavens and earth** (1:2; 49:13), the **forest** (35:1, 2) and **every tree** (14:7, 8; 55:12) mirror the joy of God’s people at the arrival of salvation. **glorified Himself:** The Lord honors Himself when He saves because it demonstrates to the world His mercy and His power (see 40:5; 42:8; 43:7).
44:24–45:13 This salvation oracle proclaiming Cyrus as the Lord’s anointed to save Israel consists of an expanded introduction concerning its Author (44:24–28), a direct address to Cyrus summoning him to service (45:1–7), and concluding commands to the heavens to rain the Lord’s blessings and to the earth to receive them (45:8). In a twofold epilogue, the Lord reproves anyone who faults His sovereignty (45:9, 10), and asserts His right as Sovereign to fashion His own tools.
44:24 Thus says the LORD: Because the Lord says this, it will come to pass (43:1, 14; 44:2, 6, 24). **Redeemer:** This same title is used in 41:14. It pictures the Lord’s zeal to defend, protect, and purchase back His people. **who formed you:** That God *formed* Israel pictures His desire for them as a nation and His constant loving care on their behalf. For a similar idea, see 43:1.
44:25 Babblers refers to the **diviners** (2:6, 8; 8:19; Deut. 18:10, 11). **wise:** These were people wise in their own eyes, but not wise toward the Lord. For a similar description, see 29:14.

diviners
(Heb. *qasam*) (44:25; 1 Sam. 6:2; Ezek. 21:23) Strong’s #7080

This term refers to people who attempt to foretell the future through occult practices. Diviners are often mentioned along with other practitioners of the occult—all of whom were forbidden in Israel (Deut. 18:10–22). False prophets, such as Balaam, practiced divination, and the penalty was death (Josh. 13:22; Jer. 27:9; 29:8; Ezek. 22:28). Diviners brought judgment on themselves but on their nations as well (Deut. 18:10; 2 Kin. 17:17, 18; Mic. 3:6, 7). Divining was practiced by several methods: calling up the spirits of the dead, casting arrows as lots, consulting images, looking at the organs of a dead animal, or interpreting dreams and visions (1 Sam. 28:8; Ezek. 13:23; 21:21, 29; 22:28; Mic. 3:6, 7; Zech. 10:2). Diviners charged fees for their services.

^a And makes their knowledge foolishness;
^{26 b} Who confirms the word of His servant,
 And performs the counsel of His messengers;
 Who says to Jerusalem, ‘You shall be inhabited;’
 To the cities of Judah, ‘You shall be built;’
 And I will raise up her waste places;
^{27 c} Who says to the deep, ‘Be dry!’
 And I will dry up your rivers;’
²⁸ Who says of ^d Cyrus, ‘*He is My shepherd,*
 And he shall perform all My pleasure,
 Saying to Jerusalem, ^e “You shall be built,”
 And to the temple, “Your foundation shall be laid.”’

Cyrus, God’s Instrument

45 “Thus says the LORD to His anointed,
 To ^a Cyrus, whose ^b right hand I have ⁱ held—
^c To subdue nations before him
 And ^d loose the armor of kings,
 To open before him the double doors,
 So that the gates will not be shut:
² ‘I will go before you
^e And ² make the ³ crooked places straight;
^f I will break in pieces the gates of bronze
 And cut the bars of iron.

25 ^a 2 Sam. 15:31;
 Job 5:12-14; Ps.
 33:10; Is. 29:14; Jer.
 51:57; 1 Cor. 1:20, 27
26 ^b Zech. 1:6; Matt.
 5:18
27 ^c Jer. 50:38;
 51:36
28 ^d 2 Chr. 36:22;
 Ezra 1:1; Is. 45:13
^e Ezra 6:7

CHAPTER 45

1 ^a Is. 44:28 ^b Ps.
 73:23; Is. 41:13
^c Dan. 5:30 ^d Job
 12:21; Is. 45:5
ⁱ strengthened or
 sustained
2 ^c Is. 40:4 ^f Ps.
 107:16 ² Tg. I will
 trample down
 the walls; Vg. I
 will humble the
 great ones of the
 earth ³ DSS, LXX
 mountains

3 ^a Is. 41:23 ^b Ex.
 33:12
4 ⁱ Is. 44:1
5 / Deut. 4:35; 32:39;
 Is. 44:8 ^k Is. 45:14,
 18 / Ps. 18:32
6 ^m Ps. 102:15; Is.
 37:20; Mal. 1:11
ⁿ [Is. 11:9; 52:10]
7 ^a Is. 31:2; 47:11;
 Amos 3:6
8 ^p Ps. 85:11
9 ^a Is. 64:8

³ I will give you the treasures of darkness
 And hidden riches of secret places,
^g That you may know that I, the LORD,
 Who ^h call *you* by your name,
 Am the God of Israel.
⁴ For ⁱ Jacob My servant’s sake,
 And Israel My elect,
 I have even called you by your name;
 I have named you, though you have
 not known Me.
⁵ I *am* the LORD, and ^k *there is no*
 other;
There is no God besides Me.
^l I will gird you, though you have not
 known Me,
^{6 m} That they may ⁿ know from the
 rising of the sun to its setting
 That *there is none besides Me.*
 I *am* the LORD, and *there is no* other;
⁷ I form the light and create darkness,
 I make peace and ^o create calamity;
 I, the LORD, do all these *things*.
⁸ “Rain^p down, you heavens, from above,
 And let the skies pour down
 righteousness;
 Let the earth open, let them bring
 forth salvation,
 And let righteousness spring up
 together.
 I, the LORD, have created it.
⁹ “Woe to him who strives with ^q his
 Maker!
Let the potsherd strive with the
potsherds of the earth!

44:26 performs the counsel: This idea is explored in more detail in 41:1–42:13; 43:8–13; 44:6–8. Israel was to be both the servant (41:8) of the Lord, and His messenger (42:19) to the nations (Gen. 12:3). **You shall be inhabited:** This same promise is found in Jer. 32:15. **built:** The rebuilding of the temple and the resettlement of the land after the devastation by Babylon inaugurated the new age (58:12; 61:4).

44:27 Deep refers either to the moat protecting Babylon or to the obstacles blocking the returning exiles (42:15). This may be an allusion to the chaotic waters resisting creation (see Gen. 1:2); the Red Sea blocking the first Exodus (43:16–19; 51:10); or the Jordan River opposing the entrance into the Promised Land (Josh. 3:14–17).

44:28 Cyrus: Here Isaiah mentions by name the king of Persia who would allow the Israelites to return to Jerusalem in 538 B.C. (see Ezra 1:1–4). For a less specific reference, see 41:2. **Shepherd** is a title for an ideal king (40:11; Mic. 5:4).

45:1 To be anointed, literally to be “Messiah,” indicates appointment to an office, usually as king (61:1). The bestowal of this unique and exalted title on the Persian king, after it had been used in Israel of such notables as the patriarchs (Ps. 105:15), David (Ps. 2:2), and the coming Messiah (Dan. 9:25), must have shocked Isaiah’s Israelite audience (vv. 9, 10). Why would the Lord appoint a foreign pagan to carry out His will? **The double doors,** which were part of the **gates** connected with Babylon’s defensive moat, were not **shut** when Cyrus captured Babylon (44:27).

45:2 I will go before you: This was the Lord’s promise to Cyrus, similar to His promise to His people of old. Babylon had one hundred **gates of bronze**.

45:3, 4 have not known Me: Cyrus knew that the Lord had appointed him, but he did not know the Lord God personally (see Ezra 1:2).

45:3 Treasures of darkness is an allusion to the fabled wealth of Sardis captured by Cyrus in 546 B.C. **Who call you by your name** refers to the specific naming of Cyrus by the Lord before Cyrus became king (compare 43:1). In this prophecy, the Lord had named Cyrus as both “shepherd” (40:11; 44:28) and “anointed” (v. 1).

45:4 For Jacob My servant’s sake: God anointed Cyrus to establish again the people whom He loved (43:1).

45:6 From the rising of the sun to its setting means everywhere (Ps. 113:3). No other person or object can compare to the holiness and power of our living Creator. He is sovereign over everything—both good and evil. The symbols of **light** and **darkness** (Ex. 10:21–23) are clarified by the words **peace** and **calamity** (47:11; Amos 3:6).

45:8 Righteousness and salvation are used as synonyms in the Book of Isaiah (46:13; 51:6; 56:1). In the Middle East people commonly believed that the fertility of the earth and the maintenance of the social order depended on the king’s right relationship with a deity. Because Cyrus was anointed by the true God, heaven would shower its blessings on earth.

45:9–13 The epilogue counters the objections against the Lord’s appointment of foreigner Cyrus as His anointed shepherd (see 44:28; 45:1). It develops in two parts: (1) from analogies of the sovereign rights of a creator over his creation and a father over his children (vv. 9, 10), (2) to the Lord’s sovereignty over Israel (v. 11), over all creation (v. 12), and finally over Cyrus (v. 13).

45:9 Woe: For a similar use of this word see 5:8. **Maker:** For similar

^rShall the clay say to him who forms it, 'What are you making?'
Or shall your handiwork *say*, 'He has no hands?'
¹⁰ Woe to him who says to *his* father, 'What are you begetting?'
Or to the woman, 'What have you brought forth?'"

¹¹ Thus says the LORD,
The Holy One of Israel, and his Maker:
^s"Ask Me of things to come concerning ^tMy sons;
And concerning ^uthe work of My hands, you command Me.
¹² ^vI have made the earth,
And ^wcreated man on it.
I—My hands—stretched out the heavens,
And ^xall their host I have commanded.
¹³ ^yI have raised him up in righteousness,
And I will ⁴direct all his ways;
He shall ^zbuild My city
And let My exiles go free,
^a"Not for price nor reward,"
Says the LORD of hosts.

The LORD, the Only Savior

¹⁴ Thus says the LORD:

^b"The labor of Egypt and merchandise of Cush
And of the Sabeans, men of stature,
Shall come over to you, and they shall be yours;

⁹ ^r Jer. 18:6; Rom. 9:20, 21
¹¹ ^s Is. 8:19 ^t Jer. 31:9 ^u Is. 29:23; 60:21; 64:8
¹² ^v Is. 42:5; Jer. 27:5 ^w Gen. 1:26
^x Gen. 2:1; Neh. 9:6
¹³ ^y Is. 41:2 ^z 2 Chr. 36:22; Is. 44:28
^a [Rom. 3:24] ⁴ Or *make all his ways straight*
¹⁴ ^b Ps. 68:31; 72:10, 11; Is. 14:1; 49:23; 60:9, 10, 14, 16; Zech. 8:22, 23

^c Ps. 149:8 ^d Jer. 16:19; Zech. 8:20-23; 1 Cor. 14:25
^e Is. 45:5
¹⁵ ^f Ps. 44:24; Is. 57:17
¹⁶ ^g Is. 44:11
¹⁷ ^h Is. 26:4; [Rom. 11:26] ⁱ Is. 51:6 ^j Is. 29:22
¹⁸ ^k Is. 42:5 ^l Gen. 1:26; Ps. 115:16; Acts 17:26 ^m Is. 45:5 ⁵ Or *empty, a waste*
¹⁹ ⁿ Deut. 30:11
^o Ps. 19:8; Is. 45:23; 63:1 ⁶ Or *in a waste place*

They shall walk behind you,
They shall come over ^cin chains;
And they shall bow down to you.
They will make supplication to you,
saying, ^d"Surely God is in you,
And *there is* no other;
^e"*There is no other God.*"

¹⁵ Truly You *are* God, ^fwho hide Yourself,
O God of Israel, the Savior!
¹⁶ They shall be ^gashamed
And also disgraced, all of them;
They shall go in confusion together,
Who are makers of idols.
¹⁷ ^hBut Israel shall be saved by the LORD
With an ⁱeverlasting salvation;
You shall not be ashamed or ^jdisgraced
Forever and ever.

¹⁸ For thus says the LORD,
^kWho created the heavens,
Who is God,
Who formed the earth and made it,
Who has established it,
Who did not create it ⁵in vain,
Who formed it to be ^linhabited:
^m"*I am the LORD, and there is no other.*
¹⁹ I have not spoken in ⁿsecret,
In a dark place of the earth;
I did not say to the seed of Jacob,
'Seek Me ⁶in vain';
^oI, the LORD, speak righteousness,
I declare things that are right.

references to God as Creator see 29:23; 43:1; 45:11. **potsherd**: Why should a created being question the Creator? A piece of pottery does not question the potter. For similar references see 29:16; Jer. 18:6.
45:11 Thus says the LORD: This emphatic statement points to the certainty of these words (43:1, 14; 44:2, 6, 24). **things to come**: For similar phrases, see 41:22, 23.
45:12 Created is the same verb used in Gen. 1:26–28 (see 43:1).
45:13 The pronoun **him** refers to Cyrus (44:28; 45:1). Although the

Lord gave Cyrus a handsome **reward** (vv. 3, 4) to ransom His people (43:3), this was not the reason Cyrus sent the captives home.
45:14–25 These prophecies predict worldwide salvation through Israel (14:1, 2; 19:23–25; 49:23; 54:3; 60:11). The nations of Africa will join Israel in worship (v. 14). Idolaters will be ashamed, but Israel will be saved forever (vv. 15–17). The Creator and Redeemer will not be thwarted in His purposes (vv. 18, 19); only He can predict the future, for only He controls it (v. 20, 21). All nations will eventually bow before Israel's God (vv. 22–25).
45:14 After the Lord handed over **Egypt, Cush, and the Sabeans** to Cyrus as a ransom (43:3, 4), they would hand themselves over to Israel and its Lord. **come over**: For a similar reference, see Ps. 68:31. **You and yours** are both feminine singular, referring to the Daughter of Zion (1:8; 40:9). **Bow down to you** indicates submission to the Lord and recognition of His presence with His people in Zion (2:2–4).
45:15 God hides Himself in His wrath (8:17; 54:8; 55:8, 9), but He reveals Himself in the Scriptures (48:5–8).
45:17 an everlasting salvation: These words of divine promise are echoed in 51:6.
45:18 Created and formed are used as synonyms as in the Book of Genesis (compare Gen. 1:27; 2:7). Both verbs identify the Lord as the Creator and do not focus on the way He accomplished His grand act of creation. **In vain** is the same term used in Gen. 1:2. The Lord created the earth **to be inhabited**, not to be desolate, as the Assyrians and Babylonians had left the land of Israel (6:11; 7:18, 19; 27:10, 11; 33:9; 44:26, 28).
45:19 Pagan diviners pronounced their mysterious and ambiguous oracles **in secret** and **dark** places. The Lord's prophets proclaimed the truth openly to all who would listen.

woe

(Heb. *hoy*) (5:8; 45:9; 55:1; Jer. 23:1) Strong's #1945

This interjection was primarily used by the prophets at the opening of a section where the evil practices of a particular person or group was denounced (Jer. 23:1). It is found at the beginning of judgment oracles against foreign nations, drawing attention to a threat by God (10:5). These judgment oracles frequently occur in a series, as in ch. 5 (see 5:8, 11, 18, 20, 21). A prophet could use the word *woe* to express personal feelings of despair or lament (24:16). Yet even then, the prophet was typically expressing God's lament and condemnation of wickedness (Jer. 22:13–17). Jesus used an equivalent expression (Gk. *ouai*) when he cursed Chorazin and Bethsaida (Matt. 11:21) and later the scribes and Pharisees (Luke 11:44).

20^a Assemble yourselves and come;
Draw near together,
You *who have* escaped from the
nations.
^pThey have no knowledge,
Who carry the wood of their carved
image,
And pray to a god *that* cannot save.
21 Tell and bring forth *your case*;
Yes, let them take counsel together.
^qWho has declared this from ancient
time?
Who has told it from that time?
Have not I, the LORD?
^rAnd *there is* no other God
besides Me,
A just God and a Savior;
There is none besides Me.

22^a Look to Me, and be saved,
^sAll you ends of the earth!
For I *am* God, and *there is* no
other.
23 ^tI have sworn by Myself;
The word has gone out of My mouth
in righteousness,
And shall not return,
That to Me every ^uknee shall bow,
^vEvery tongue shall take an oath.
24 He shall say,
^wSurely in the LORD I have
righteousness and strength.
To Him *men* shall come,
And ^xall shall be ashamed
Who are incensed against Him.
25 ^yIn the LORD all the descendants of
Israel
Shall be justified, and ^zshall glory.”

Dead Idols and the Living God

46 Bel ^abows down, Nebo stoops;
Their idols were on the beasts
and on the cattle.
Your carriages *were* heavily loaded,
^bA burden to the weary *beast*.

20 ^p Is. 44:9; 46:7;
Jer. 10:5
21 ^q Is. 41:22; 43:9
^r Is. 44:8
22 ^s Ps. 22:27; 65:5
23 ^t Gen. 22:16; Is.
62:8; [Heb. 6:13]
^u Rom. 14:11; [Phil.
2:10] ^v Deut. 6:13;
Ps. 63:11; Is. 19:18;
65:16
24 ^w Is. 54:17; [Jer.
23:5; 1 Cor. 1:30]
^x Is. 41:11 ^y Or Only
in the LORD are all
righteousness and
strength
25 ^z Is. 45:17
¹ 1 Cor. 1:31

CHAPTER 46

1 ^a Is. 21:9; Jer. 50:2
^b Jer. 10:5

2 ^c Judg. 18:17, 18,
24; 2 Sam. 5:21; Jer.
48:7; Hos. 10:5; 6
3 ^d Deut. 32:11; Ps.
71:6; Is. 63:9 ¹ Lit.
the belly
4 ^e Mal. 3:6 ^f Ps.
48:14
5 ^g Is. 40:18, 25
6 ^h Is. 40:19; 41:6;
Jer. 10:4 ⁱ Is. 44:12
7 ^j Is. 45:20; 46:1;
Jer. 10:5 ^k Is. 45:20
8 ^l Is. 44:19 ² be
men, take courage
9 ^m Deut. 32:7; Is.
42:9; 65:17 ⁿ Is.
45:5, 21

2 They stoop, they bow down
together;
They could not deliver the burden,
^cBut have themselves gone into
captivity.
3 “Listen to Me, O house of Jacob,
And all the remnant of the house of
Israel,
^dWho have been upheld *by Me* from
¹birth,
Who have been carried from the
womb:
4 Even to *your* old age, ^eI *am* He,
And *even* to gray hairs ^fI will carry
you!
I have made, and I will bear;
Even I will carry, and will deliver
you.
5 “To^g whom will you liken Me, and
make *Me* equal
And compare Me, that we should be
alike?
6 ^hThey lavish gold out of the bag,
And weigh silver on the scales;
They hire a ⁱgoldsmith, and he
makes it a god;
They prostrate themselves, yes, they
worship.
7 ^jThey bear it on the shoulder, they
carry it
And set it in its place, and it stands;
From its place it shall not move.
Though ^k*one* cries out to it, yet it
cannot answer
Nor save him out of his trouble.
8 “Remember this, and ²show
yourselves men;
^lRecall to mind, O you
transgressors.
9 ^mRemember the former things of old,
For I *am* God, and ⁿ*there is* no other;
I *am* God, and *there is* none like Me,

45:20 Draw near together: For similar ideas see 41:1, 21, 22; 43:9; 44:7.

45:21 The pronoun **this** refers to the universal salvation begun with Cyrus's decree that Israel return home (44:24—45:13).

45:22 no other: For additional references to God's incomparability see 40:25; 45:5.

45:23 I have sworn by Myself: The Lord's promise to Abraham was sworn by His own person (Gen. 22:16; Heb. 6:13). The certainty of the Word of the Lord is emphasized strongly in the Book of Isaiah (40:8). The Lord's promise **that to Me every knee shall bow** will be fulfilled in Jesus Christ (see Rom. 14:11; 1 Cor. 15:24, 25; Phil. 2:10, 11).

45:24 Those **who are incensed against** God will have no share in His eternal kingdom (50:11; 66:24).

46:1–13 This collection of salvation oracles are all spoken by the Lord, and all are addressed to the stubborn exiles. They begin with similar imperatives, “Listen” (v. 3); “Remember” (v. 8); “Listen” (v. 12); and they share the common theme that the Lord is truly God.

46:1, 2 Bel, meaning “Lord,” was a title of Marduk, Babylon's chief deity. **Nebo**, Marduk's son, was the god of fate, writing, and wisdom.

Ironically, each of these gods is said to **bow down**, to stoop along with their idols. In pagan thought, the idols and the gods that they embodied were inseparable. The heavy idols that were expected to bring deliverance were **themselves** dragged away into **captivity**.

46:3 An unbelieving **remnant** (1:9; 10:20) is likely being referred to here, judging by the parallel words, “transgressors” (v. 8) and “stubborn-hearted” (v. 12; see 1:2; 48:1–5; 57:4). **carried from the womb:** For a similar image of the Lord carrying the nation of Israel, see Deut. 1:31.

46:4, 5 Old age indicates the Lord's never-ceasing care. **I am He:** Note in this verse the emphasis God places on His activities on behalf of His people; the Lord Himself and no one else would save Israel (41:4). **liken Me:** This is the third time the incomparability of God is asserted in this section of Isaiah (40:18, 25).

46:6, 7 The pronoun they refers to the idol makers (40:19, 20; 41:6, 7; 44:9–20). **They bear it:** In contrast to the living God who carries and supports His people (see v. 4), idols have to be carried by those who worship them.

46:8 Transgressors refers to the unbelieving remnant (v. 3).

- ¹⁰ ^aDeclaring the end from the beginning,
And from ancient times *things* that
are not *yet* done,
Saying, ^p“My counsel shall stand,
And I will do all My pleasure,”
¹¹ Calling a bird of prey ^qfrom the east,
The man ^rwho executes My counsel,
from a far country.
Indeed ^sI have spoken *it*;
I will also bring it to pass.
I have purposed *it*;
I will also do it.
- ¹² “Listen to Me, you ^tstubborn-hearted,
^uWho *are* far from righteousness:
¹³ ^vI bring My righteousness near, it
shall not be far off;
My salvation ^wshall not ³linger.

¹⁰ ^a Is. 45:21; 48:3
^p Ps. 33:11; Prov.
19:21; 21:30; Is.
14:24; 25:1; Acts
5:39; Heb. 6:17
¹¹ ^q Is. 41:2, 25 ^r Is.
44:28 ^s Num. 23:19
¹² ^t Ps. 76:5; Is. 48:4;
Zech. 7:11, 12; Mal.
3:13 ^u [Rom. 10:3]
¹³ ^v [Rom. 1:17]
^w Hab. 2:3 ³ *delay*
^x Is. 62:11; Joel 3:17;
[1 Pet. 2:6]

CHAPTER 47

¹ ^a Jer. 48:18 ^b Is.
3:26 ^c Is. 14:18-23;
Jer. 25:12; 50:1-
51:64 ^d *dainty*
² ^d Ex. 11:5; Jer.
25:10
³ ^e Is. 3:17; 20:4
^f [Rom. 12:19]

And I will place ^xsalvation in Zion,
For Israel My glory.

The Humiliation of Babylon

- 47** “Come ^adown and ^bsit in the dust,
O virgin daughter of ^cBabylon;
Sit on the ground without a throne,
O daughter of the Chaldeans!
For you shall no more be called
Tender and ¹delicate.
² ^dTake the millstones and grind meal.
Remove your veil,
Take off the skirt,
Uncover the thigh,
Pass through the rivers.
³ ^eYour nakedness shall be uncovered,
Yes, your shame will be seen;
^fI will take vengeance,
And I will not arbitrate with a man.”

46:10 the end from the beginning: For a similar description see 41:4. As the Sovereign of the cosmos, God can do anything He desires. His **pleasure** (Ps. 147:10, 11) includes the salvation of His people (Zeph. 3:17) and the worship of their hearts (John 4:23, 24).

46:11 A bird of prey from the east refers to Cyrus (41:2) and to the speed and power of his conquests (41:3). The point is that God may use any tool He wants to accomplish His purposes on earth (Rom. 9:14-23).

46:12 As there were those in the first Exodus who longed to return to Egypt (Num. 14:3), so in the second Exodus there would be those who refused to leave the comfort and security of Babylon and Persia.

46:13 Righteousness is a synonym for **salvation** in Isaiah (41:2; 45:8; 51:6; 56:1). Salvation from the Exile was not only certain, but **near** (51:5). **Israel My glory:** In spite of the Israelites' long history of rebellion (Ex. 32), God loves His people Israel and has never utterly cast them aside (Rom. 11:1).

47:1-15 The humiliation and exile of Babylon's gods (ch. 46) left Babylon's inhabitants exposed to the same fate. Isaiah predicted Babylon's fall in a mocking funeral song aimed at discouraging Babylon and encouraging Israel. The poem has four stanzas (vv. 1-4, 5-7, 8-11, 12-15).

47:1 O virgin daughter of Babylon: The language is sarcastic. Babylon had acted as though she were “God's daughter.” She was about to discover that she was the **daughter of the Chaldeans**. No longer would she be thought of as a heavenly princess—**tender and delicate**.

47:2, 3 Grinding meal was usually work for female slaves (Ex. 11:5). **Uncover the thigh** suggests doing menial labor with overtones of the shame of indecent exposure. Babylon would lose its status and privilege. **Nakedness** indicates disgrace, impropriety, lack of dignity, and vulnerability (Gen. 9:22, 23).

Modern-day Idols



Perhaps you think of idols as objects of wood, stone, or metal worshiped by ancient civilizations or primitive peoples. That perception is accurate, but from the Bible's point of view, idolatry fundamentally involves allowing anything or anyone to stand in the place of God.

The ancient Babylonians fashioned many idols for both public and private worship (Is. 46:6, 7). But the Lord ridiculed this practice, for the gods of Babylon were impotent: they had to be hand-carried, as they were unable to move on their own, they were mute, and they were powerless.

Yet as we read the Lord's rebuke in Isaiah, it is worth considering the extent to which people practice forms of idolatry today. For example, modern society has come to rely so heavily on technology and government to solve its problems that many people no longer feel a need for God. They seem to place as much faith in human ingenuity as the ancients placed in their carved images.

Likewise, certain psychotherapies practically do away with any need for the God of the Scriptures. Instead, they rely on their own principles and methods to deal with guilt and sin, and to make people healthy and whole. They hold out the promise that people can become all that they were meant to be apart from God.

A third form of modern idolatry is actually a relic of ancient idolatry. Many people today dabble in occult practices using physical objects such as Ouija boards, Tarot cards, and crystals to tell fortunes and receive supernatural messages. Likewise, horoscopes are as popular as ever, and those who promote them even boast in the fact that astrology, on which horoscopes are based, was heavily practiced in ancient Babylon.

Forms of idolatry such as these may be more sophisticated than the shrines set up by the ancient pagans, but they are idolatry just the same. They have been made to stand in the place of God.

The Lord will not allow those who practice these things to go unpunished. Consider His judgment on the Babylonians (Is. 47:10-15). Is there any reason why He would not pour out just as much wrath on idolaters today? He still hates idolatry (Deut. 7:25, 26). The first and second commandments are still there (Ex. 20:2-6). And the Lord is still who He declared Himself to be to the ancients: “I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me” (Is. 46:9).

- 4 As for ^aour Redeemer, the LORD of hosts is His name,
The Holy One of Israel.
- 5 “Sit in ^bsilence, and go into darkness,
O daughter of the Chaldeans;
ⁱFor you shall no longer be called
The Lady of Kingdoms.
- 6 ^jI was angry with My people;
^kI have profaned My inheritance,
And given them into your hand.
You showed them no mercy;
^lOn the elderly you laid your yoke
very heavily.
- 7 And you said, ‘I shall be ^ma lady
forever,’
So that you did not ⁿtake these *things*
to heart,
^oNor remember the latter end of
them.
- 8 “Therefore hear this now, *you who are*
given to pleasures,
Who dwell securely,
Who say in your heart, ‘I am, and
there is no one else besides me;
I shall not sit as a widow,
Nor shall I know the loss of
children’;
- 9 But these two *things* shall come to
you
^pIn a moment, in one day:
The loss of children, and
widowhood.
They shall come upon you in their
fullness
Because of the multitude of your
sorceries,
For the great abundance of your
enchantments.
- 10 “For you have trusted in your
wickedness;
You have said, ‘No one ^qsees me’;

4 ^a Jer. 50:34
5 ^b 1 Sam. 2:9 ⁱ Is.
13:19; [Dan. 2:37];
Rev. 17:18
6 ^j 2 Sam. 24:14
^k Is. 43:28 ^l Deut.
28:49, 50
7 ^m Rev. 18:7 ⁿ Is.
42:25; 46:8 ^o Deut.
32:29; Jer. 5:31;
Ezek. 7:2, 3
9 ^p Ps. 73:19;
1 Thess. 5:3; Rev.
18:8
10 ^q Is. 29:15; Ezek.
8:12; 9:9

² led you astray
11 ^r Is. 13:6; Jer.
51:8, 43; Luke 17:27;
1 Thess. 5:3 ^s Is.
29:5 ³ Lit. to cover it
or atone for it
13 ^t Is. 57:10 ^u Is.
8:19; 44:25; 47:9;
Dan. 2:2, 10 ⁴ Lit.
viewers of the
heavens ⁵ Lit. those
giving knowledge
for new moons
14 ^v Is. 5:24; Nah.
1:10; Mal. 4:1 ^w [Is.
10:17]; Jer. 51:58
15 ^x Rev. 18:11
⁶ own side or way

- Your wisdom and your knowledge
have ²warped you;
And you have said in your heart,
‘I am, and *there is no one else*
besides me.’
- 11 Therefore evil shall come upon you;
You shall not know from where it
arises.
And trouble shall fall upon you;
You will not be able ³to put it off.
And ⁴desolation shall come upon you
⁵suddenly,
Which you shall not know.
- 12 “Stand now with your enchantments
And the multitude of your sorceries,
In which you have labored from your
youth—
Perhaps you will be able to profit,
Perhaps you will prevail.
- 13 ⁶You are wearied in the multitude of
your counsels;
Let now ^uthe ⁴astrologers, the
stargazers,
And ⁵the monthly prognosticators
Stand up and save you
From what shall come upon you.
- 14 Behold, they shall be ^vas stubble,
The fire shall ^wburn them;
They shall not deliver themselves
From the power of the flame;
It shall not be a coal to be warmed by,
Nor a fire to sit before!
- 15 Thus shall they be to you
With whom you have labored,
^xYour merchants from your youth;
They shall wander each one to his
⁶quarter.
No one shall save you.

Israel Refined for God's Glory

48 “Hear this, O house of Jacob,
Who are called by the name of
Israel,

47:4 In contrast to the humiliated Babylon, Israel had a **Redeemer** (41:14). **The LORD of hosts** (1:9) would deliver the nation of Israel.

47:5 The similar structure of vv. 1, 5 link the first stanza (vv. 1–4) with the second stanza (vv. 5–8).

47:6, 7 Babylon’s cruel abuse of Israel when the Lord had **given them into Babylon’s hand** would be avenged, as in the case of the Assyrians (10:1–19; 49:25). **a lady forever**: Babylon was arrogantly boasting that it would remain an empire, “the Lady of Kingdoms” (see v. 5; compare Dan. 4:30), throughout all time. This amounted to blasphemy.

47:8 **Hear** is addressed to the wicked “daughter,” Babylon (vv. 1, 5; see 1:8). Babylon had deified itself with the statement **I am** (v. 10). They had tried to usurp the Lord’s unique attribute: Only the Almighty has an existence that is not dependent on another (45:5, 6, 18, 21, 22; 46:9). This wicked self-deification mirrors the boasting of the king of Tyre (Ezek. 28:11–19). Babylon is no longer considered a virgin (v. 1), but instead is a **widow**. The imagery of **the loss of children** suggests the loss of hope in the future. Contrast Babylon’s fate with that of Zion (49:21–23; 54:1–6).

47:10 **Wickedness, wisdom, and knowledge** refer to the same

idea as “sorceries” and “enchantments” in v. 9 (Dan. 2; 5; contrast with 11:2). **No one sees me**: The selfish pride of the wicked is based in part on believing that there is not an all-knowing, all-seeing God in the universe.

47:11 The word **therefore** links Babylon’s pretensions of “knowledge” (v. 10) with the just judgment that the nation did **not know**.

47:12 The command to **stand** matches the Lord’s introductory commands in vv. 1, 5. The word **sorceries** links the final stanza with the earlier ones (vv. 9, 10).

47:15 Babylon’s fate would also overtake those **with whom** it had **labored**, its ancient **merchants**, on whose trade it depended for its wealth. Compare the arrogance of the king of Tyre based on Tyre’s successful trading (Ezek. 28:16, 18).

48:1–11 This passage, addressed to all Israel, condemns the people for hypocrisy (v. 1), idolatry (v. 5), arrogance (v. 7), and treachery (v. 8). At the same time, the oracle promises the people salvation for the sake of the Lord’s name (vv. 9–11). The tone is similar to 42:18, 19; 43:22–25; 46:1–13. The oracle has four parts: (1) summoning Israel to hear the address (vv. 1, 2); (2) a charge that Israel’s unbelief is without excuse because the Lord had revealed that it was He who was

And have come forth from the
wellsprings of Judah;
Who swear by the name of the LORD,
And make mention of the God of
Israel,
But ^anot in truth or in righteousness;
² For they call themselves ^bafter the
holy city,
And ^clean on the God of Israel;
The LORD of hosts *is* His name:

³ “I have ^ddeclared the former things
from the beginning;
They went forth from My mouth,
and I caused them to hear it.
Suddenly I did *them*, ^eand they came
to pass.
⁴ Because I knew that you *were* ¹obstinate,
And ^fyour neck *was* an iron sinew,
And your brow bronze,
⁵ Even from the beginning I have
declared *it* to you;
Before it came to pass I proclaimed
it to you,
Lest you should say, ‘My idol has
done them,
And my carved image and my
molded image
Have commanded them.’

CHAPTER 48

1 ^a Is. 58:2; Jer.
4:2; 5:2
2 ^b Is. 52:1; 64:10
^c Is. 10:20; Jer. 7:4;
21:2; Mic. 3:11; Rom.
2:17
3 ^d Is. 44:7, 8; 46:10
^e Josh. 21:45; Is. 42:9
4 ^f Ex. 32:9; Deut.
31:27; Ezek. 2:4; 3:7
¹ Heb. *hard*

8 ^g Deut. 9:7, 24; Ps.
58:3; Is. 46:3, 8
9 ^h Ps. 79:9; 106:8;
Is. 43:25; Ezek. 20:9,
14, 22, 44 ⁱ [Neh.
9:30, 31]; Ps. 78:38;
Is. 30:18; 65:8
² *delay*
10 ^j Ps. 66:10;
Jer. 9:7

⁶ “You have heard;
See all this.
And will you not declare *it*?
I have made you hear new things
from this time,
Even hidden things, and you did not
know them.
⁷ They are created now and not from
the beginning;
And before this day you have not
heard them,
Lest you should say, ‘Of course I
knew them.’
⁸ Surely you did not hear,
Surely you did not know;
Surely from long ago your ear was
not opened.
For I knew that you would deal very
treacherously,
And were called ^ga transgressor from
the womb.
⁹ “For ^hMy name’s sake ⁱI will ²defer
My anger,
And *for* My praise I will restrain it
from you,
So that I do not cut you off.
¹⁰ Behold, ^jI have refined you, but not
as silver;

helping them (vv. 3–5); (3) a prediction of future salvation (vv. 6–8); and (4) a promise that the Lord will defer judgment for the sake of His name (vv. 9–11).

48:1 **Hear** is an urgent appeal to “deaf Israel” (6:9, 10; 48:6, 8). **Jacob ... Israel:** For a similar use of these names, see 41:8. **called by the name:** For related descriptions of Israel as called by God, see 43:1, 7; 63:8.

48:2 The **holy city** is Jerusalem. The citizens of Jerusalem professed to **lean on the God of Israel** (Rom. 9:6).

48:4 **Obstinate** means “hard” (46:12; Ex. 32:9; Deut. 9:6, 13). **Iron and bronze** here are metaphors for rebelliousness (Jer. 6:28).

48:5 Despite Israel’s knowledge that no **idol** had helped them, Isaiah anticipated that in the future they would attribute their salvation to some other god than the one Lord.

48:6 **New things** include the career of Cyrus (v. 14); the fall of Babylon and Israel’s restoration (v. 20), which inaugurated the messianic age (v. 16); and the restoration of all things (65:17–19). To be able to **declare ... hidden things**, the Lord must know and control the future.

48:7, 8 As God unfolded His plan of redemption, He **created** events that Israel had **not heard** about before. God knew that if the Israelites had possessed such knowledge, they would have acted **treacherously**, claiming “**Of course I knew them.**”

48:9 The Lord works out everything for His **praise** (42:8–12; 43:21). **Defer My anger** means to be “longsuffering” (Ex. 34:6).

48:10 **Refined**, a reference to judgment (1:25; 4:4), refers to the Babylonian captivity. **Furnace** is an allusion to Israel’s suffering in Egypt (Deut. 4:20; Jer. 11:4).

The Purpose of Prophecy

Perhaps you think of prophecy as having mainly to do with predictions about the future. That’s understandable, since prophets in Bible times sometimes foretold what would happen in the future (for example, Is. 7:14–17; 45:1–7; Jer. 28:12–17). However, the purpose of prophecy goes beyond merely informing people about things to come. There are at least two additional reasons why God spoke through the Old Testament prophets:

First, prophecy shows that the Lord is God. A god who cannot reveal himself to human beings is unlikely to command much respect. But through prophecy, the Lord has made Himself known in compelling ways. For example, He demonstrated His omniscience by revealing to the Israelites what would happen in the future, something no pagan idol could do (Is. 48:5). He also demonstrated His power through the prophets in ways that left no doubt about who He is (1 Kin. 18:36–39).

Second, prophecy announces God’s word. Closely related to God’s revelation of Himself through prophecy is His communication of truth that He wants people to know. Prophecy is often referred to as the “word of the LORD” (Is. 1:10; 28:14; 38:4); in fact, it is often prefaced by the words, “thus says the LORD God” (7:7; 10:24; 22:15). Thus prophecy is revelation from God. It brings to light truth that would otherwise remain unexpressed.

The point of these revelations is not merely to inform but to declare what is true, and then to tell people how they should live in light of what is true. Sometimes prophecy helps to warn people about the consequences of their actions, and sometimes it encourages them when circumstances appear to be desperate. But whatever its effect on people, the purpose of prophecy is to proclaim God and His word.



I have tested you in the ^kfurnace of affliction.

¹¹ For My own sake, for My own sake, I will do *it*;

For ^lhow should *My name* be profaned?

And ^mI will not give My glory to another.

God's Ancient Plan to Redeem Israel

¹²“Listen to Me, O Jacob,
And Israel, My called:
I *am* He, ⁿI *am* the ^oFirst,
I *am* also the Last.

¹³ Indeed ^pMy hand has laid the
foundation of the earth,
And My right hand has stretched out
the heavens;
When ^qI call to them,
They stand up together.

¹⁴“All of you, assemble yourselves, and
hear!
Who among them has declared these
things?

^rThe LORD loves him;

^sHe shall do His pleasure on
Babylon,
And His arm *shall be against* the
Chaldeans.

¹⁵ I, *even* I, have spoken;
Yes, ^tI have called him,
I have brought him, and his way will
prosper.

¹⁶“Come near to Me, hear this:
^uI have not spoken in secret from the
beginning;
From the time that it was, I *was*
there.

¹⁰ ^k Deut. 4:20;
1 Kin. 8:51; Jer. 11:4
¹¹ ^l Lev. 22:2, 32;
Deut. 32:26, 27;
Ezek. 20:9 ^m Is. 42:8
¹² ⁿ Deut. 32:39
^o Is. 44:6; [Rev.
22:13]
¹³ ^p Ex. 20:11; Ps.
102:25; Is. 42:5;
45:12, 18; Heb. 1:10-
12 ^q Is. 40:26
¹⁴ ^r Is. 45:1 ^s Is.
44:28; 47:1-15
¹⁵ ^t Is. 45:1, 2
¹⁶ ^u Is. 45:19

^v Is. 61:1; Zech. 2:8,
9, 11 ³ Heb. verb is
sing.; or *Has sent*
Me and His Spirit
¹⁷ ^w Is. 43:14 ^x Ps.
32:8; Is. 49:9, 10
¹⁸ ^y Deut. 5:29; Ps.
81:13 ^z Deut. 28:1-
14; Ps. 119:165; Is.
32:16-18; 66:12
¹⁹ ^a Gen. 22:17; Is.
10:22; 44:3, 4; 54:3;
Jer. 33:22; Hos. 1:10
²⁰ ^b Jer. 50:8; 51:6,
45; Zech. 2:6, 7; Rev.
18:4 ^c [Ex. 19:4-6]
²¹ ^d [Is. 41:17, 18]
^e Ex. 17:6; Ps. 105:41
²² ^f [Is. 57:21]

And now ^vthe Lord God and His
Spirit
³ Have sent Me.”

¹⁷ Thus says ^wthe LORD, your
Redeemer,
The Holy One of Israel:
“I *am* the LORD your God,
Who teaches you to profit,
^x Who leads you by the way you
should go.

¹⁸ ^y Oh, that you had heeded My
commandments!
^z Then your peace would have been
like a river,
And your righteousness like the
waves of the sea.
¹⁹ ^a Your descendants also would have
been like the sand,
And the offspring of your body like
the grains of sand;
His name would not have been cut off
Nor destroyed from before Me.”

²⁰ ^b Go forth from Babylon!
Flee from the Chaldeans!
With a voice of singing,
Declare, proclaim this,
Utter it to the end of the earth;
Say, “The LORD has ^credeemed
His servant Jacob!”

²¹ And they ^ddid not thirst
When He led them through the
deserts;
He ^ecaused the waters to flow from
the rock for them;
He also split the rock, and the waters
gushed out.

²²“*There^f is no peace,*” says the LORD,
“for the wicked.”

48:11 For My own sake: The Lord shows His settled will to maintain the integrity of His great name (v. 9). God’s acts of mercy are His own initiative, springing from the depths of His mercy (37:35; 42:21; 43:25). **My glory** is a parallel expression to “My name” (42:8), as is the expression “My praise” in v. 9. **profaned:** For descriptions of how Israel had desecrated God’s name, see Ezek. 20:8, 9; 36:21–23. **48:12–22** This section, directed to all Israel, encourages the unrighteous to participate in the Lord’s redemption of the nation from Babylon. The Lord (1) presents Himself as the sovereign Creator (vv. 12, 13), (2) shows that He alone predicted Israel’s salvation through Cyrus (vv. 14, 15), (3) promises to come to the people in the form of His Servant (v. 16), and (4) promises peace and posterity to those who obey Him (vv. 17–19). Isaiah follows the divine speech with an exhortation to flee Babylon (v. 20) and participate joyfully in the second Exodus (vv. 21, 22).

48:12 called: For a similar reference to God’s calling of Israel, see 42:6. **First . . . Last:** For a similar description of God’s sovereignty over all time, see 41:4.

48:13 Earth and heavens refer to the entire cosmos (13:13; 40:21, 22; 51:6, 13).

48:14 Assemble yourselves probably was addressed to the nations; the pronoun **them** likely refers to the idols of the nations (41:21–23; 43:9; 45:20, 21). The pronoun **him** refers to Cyrus (41:2, 25; 45:13; 46:11), a designation made explicit in 44:28—45:1.

48:15 I, even I draws attention to the source of this prophecy: the living God. **called:** For a similar reference to this calling, see 41:2.

48:16 Me refers to the Servant, Jesus (42:1–13; 61:1), who has **spoken** through His prophets (1 Pet. 1:10, 11). **Lord** here means “Master,” suggesting that the speaker is the Servant (50:4). For additional references to God’s **Spirit**, see 11:2; 30:1; 42:1; 59:21; 61:1; Luke 3:22.

48:17 The Lord **teaches** and **leads** through His servants (Deut. 5:27), His prophets, and His Son.

48:18 A river supplies abundant water to produce luxuriant growth (41:18; 66:12; Amos 5:24). **The waves of the sea** speak of power, constancy, and increase.

48:19 Sand recalls God’s promise to the patriarchs that the Israelites would become very numerous (Gen. 22:17; 32:12).

48:20 By putting the command **declare** into the present tense, the future salvation is brought vividly into the present (40:9–11; 44:23; 46:1–4). **Go forth:** The people are told to leave Babylon, forsaking its comforts (Gen. 12:1; Ex. 12:31). **proclaim:** For examples of proclamations, see 12:1; 44:23; 49:13.

48:21 They did not thirst is an allusion to God’s provision of water during the first Exodus (41:17–20; 43:16–21; Ex. 17:1–7; Num. 20:2–11). **waters . . . from the rock:** For a NT perspective on these miracles see 1 Cor. 10:4.

The Servant, the Light to the Gentiles

49 “Listen, ^aO coastlands, to Me,
And take heed, you peoples from afar!
^bThe LORD has called Me from the womb;
From the ⁱmatrix of My mother He has made mention of My name.
² And He has made ^cMy mouth like a sharp sword;
^dIn the shadow of His hand He has hidden Me,
And made Me ^ea polished shaft;
In His quiver He has hidden Me.”
³ “And He said to me,
^fYou *are* My servant, O Israel,
^gIn whom I will be glorified.’
⁴ ^hThen I said, ‘I have labored in vain,
I have spent my strength for nothing and in vain;
Yet surely my ²just reward *is* with the LORD,
And my ³work with my God.’”
⁵ “And now the LORD says,
Who formed Me from the womb *to be* His Servant,
To bring Jacob back to Him,
So that Israel ⁱis ⁴gathered to Him
(For I shall be glorious in the eyes of the LORD,
And My God shall be My strength),
⁶ Indeed He says,
‘It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant

CHAPTER 49

¹ ^a Is. 41:1 ^b Jer. 1:5; Matt. 1:20; Luke 1:35; John 1:14; 10:36 ¹ Lit. *inward parts*
² ^c Is. 11:4; Hos. 6:5; [Heb. 4:12]; Rev. 1:16; 2:12 ☆ ^d Is. 51:16 ^e Ps. 45:5; 3 ^f [Is. 41:8; 42:1; Zech. 3:8] ^g Is. 44:23; Matt. 12:18; [John 13:31, 32; 14:13; 15:8; 17:4; Eph. 1:6]
⁴ ^h [Ezek. 3:19] ² *justice recompense*
⁵ ⁱ Matt. 23:37 ☆; [Rom. 11:25-29] ⁴ Qr., DSS, LXX *gathered to Him; Kt. not gathered*

⁶ / Is. 42:6; 51:4; [Luke 2:32] ☆; Acts 13:47; [Gal. 3:14]
⁷ ^k [Ps. 22:6; Is. 53:3 ☆; Matt. 26:67; 27:41]; Mark 15:29; Luke 23:35 ¹ [Is. 52:15] ⁵ Lit. *his or its* ⁶ Lit. *who is despised of soul*
⁸ ^m Ps. 69:13; 2 Cor. 6:2 ☆ ⁿ Is. 42:6 ⁷ *favorable* ⁸ *keep inheritances*
⁹ ^o Is. 61:1; Zech. 9:12; Luke 4:18 ☆

To raise up the tribes of Jacob,
And to restore the preserved ones of Israel;
I will also give You as a ^jlight to the Gentiles,
That You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth.”

⁷ Thus says the LORD,
The Redeemer of Israel, ⁵their Holy One,
^kTo Him ⁶whom man despises,
To Him whom the nation abhors,
To the Servant of rulers:
^l“Kings shall see and arise,
Princes also shall worship,
Because of the LORD who is faithful,
The Holy One of Israel;
And He has chosen You.”

⁸ Thus says the LORD:

“In an ^macceptable ⁷time I have heard You,
And in the day of salvation I have helped You;
I will ⁸preserve You ⁿand give You As a covenant to the people,
To restore the earth,
To cause them to inherit the desolate ⁹heritages;
⁹ That You may say ^oto the prisoners, ‘Go forth,’
To those who *are* in darkness, ‘Show yourselves.’

49:1-13 This second song of the suffering Servant (see also 42:1-13) consists of two parts: the Servant’s soliloquy (vv. 1-6) and the Lord’s oracles to Him (vv. 7-9). The song is followed by Isaiah’s elaboration (vv. 9-12), and it concludes with a hymn of praise (v. 13).
49:1 coastlands: The Servant’s mission pertains to the whole earth (41:1). **Matrix** means “womb” (Gen. 25:23; Ruth 1:11).
49:2 Through the preaching of His **mouth**, the Servant will conquer the earth (11:4). **like a sharp sword:** For similar descriptions of Jesus’ speech, see Eph. 6:17; Heb. 4:12; Rev. 1:16. **Shadow** suggests protection (30:2, 3; 51:16). Because the Servant’s mission was **hidden** until He was sent, it would be more effective (48:6-8).

49:3 Israel may refer to the quintessential Israel—the Savior Jesus—who would come to redeem national Israel (v. 5). **In whom I will be glorified:** In partial fulfillment of this prophecy, Jesus prayed to His Father, “I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do” (John 17:4).
49:4 The Servant’s complaint that He **labored in vain** (26:17, 18) points to His rejection by the nation of Israel and His suffering (42:2). **reward:** The Servant will be vindicated (50:8) and will be rewarded after His death (53:8) and resurrection (53:10).
49:5 The political mission of Cyrus **to bring Jacob back** from Babylon (44:28; 45:13) foreshadows the spiritually redemptive mission of the Servant to free His people from their captivity to sin (42:7).
49:6 light to the Gentiles: The Servant fulfills the call of Abraham (Gen. 12:1-3) and the nation of Israel (Ex. 19:5, 6) to be a blessing to other nations. After Jesus’ death and resurrection, the great commission of global evangelism is carried on by His apostles (Acts 13:47; 26:23) and those who succeed them to the end of the age (Matt. 28:18-20).
49:7 Paradoxically, the King who humbles Himself to become the **servant of rulers** will Himself receive homage from them (see 4:2; 45:24; 52:15). Kings will also bow down to His people (see v. 23).
49:8 In an acceptable time, in contrast to the day of vengeance (34:8; 61:1; 2 Cor. 6:2), the Lord will hear the Servant’s complaint that His mission toward Israel was in vain (v. 4). The Lord will crown His Servant as King **to restore** blessing on the famished earth (45:8). The pronoun **them** refers to Israel.
49:9 Go forth is an allusion to Isaiah’s command for the exiles to leave Babylon (48:20). The imagery of feeding in pastures implies that the Servant would be Israel’s Shepherd-King (40:11).

salvation

(Heb. *yeshu'ah*) (49:6; Job 30:15; Ps. 67:2) Strong’s #3444

This word describes deliverance from distress and the resultant victory and well-being. The term occurs most often in Psalms and Isaiah where it is frequently used along with the word *righteousness*, indicating a connection between God’s righteousness and His saving acts (45:8; 51:6, 8; 56:1; 62:1; Ps. 98:2). This word can be used for a military victory (1 Sam. 14:45), but it is normally used of God’s deliverance (Ex. 15:2; Ps. 135:6). The expressions “the salvation of the LORD” and “the salvation of our God” speak of God’s work on behalf of His people. The expression “the God of my salvation” is more private in nature, referring to the deliverance of an individual (12:2; 52:10; Ex. 14:13; 2 Chr. 20:17; Ps. 88:1; 98:3).

- “They shall feed along the roads,
And their pastures *shall be* on all
desolate heights.
- 10 They shall neither ^phunger nor
thirst,
^qNeither heat nor sun shall strike
them;
For He who has mercy on them ^rwill
lead them,
Even by the springs of water He will
guide them.
- 11 ^sI will make each of My mountains a
road,
And My highways shall be elevated.
- 12 Surely ^tthese shall come from afar;
Look! Those from the north and the
west,
And these from the land of Sinim.”
- 13 ^uSing, O heavens!
Be joyful, O earth!
And break out in singing,
O mountains!
For the LORD has comforted His
people,
And will have mercy on His afflicted.

God Will Remember Zion

- 14 ^vBut Zion said, “The LORD has
forsaken me,
And my Lord has forgotten me.”
- 15 ^w“Can a woman forget her nursing
child,
^xAnd not have compassion on the son
of her womb?
Surely they may forget,
^yYet I will not forget you.
- 16 See, ^zI have inscribed you on the
palms of *My hands*;
Your walls *are* continually before Me.

10 ^p Is. 33:16; 48:21;
Rev. 7:16 ☆ ^q Ps.
121:6 ^r Ps. 23:2; Is.
40:11; 48:17
11 ^s Is. 40:4
12 ^t Is. 43:5, 6
13 ^u Is. 44:23
14 ^v Is. 40:27
15 ^w Ps. 103:13; Mal.
3:17 ^x Rom. 11:29
^y Lit. *From having
compassion*
16 ^z Ex. 13:9; Song
8:6; Hag. 2:23

- 17 Your ²sons shall make haste;
Your destroyers and those who laid
you waste
Shall go away from you.
- 18 ^zLift up your eyes, look around and see;
All these gather together *and* come
to you.
As I live,” says the LORD,
“You shall surely clothe yourselves
with them all ^aas an ornament,
And bind them *on you* as a bride *does*.
- 19 ^a“For your waste and desolate places,
And the land of your destruction,
^bWill even now be too small for the
inhabitants;
And those who swallowed you up
will be far away.
- 20 ^cThe children you will have,
^dAfter you have lost the others,
Will say again in your ears,
“The place is too small for me;
Give me a place where I may dwell.”
- 21 Then you will say in your heart,
“Who has begotten these for me,
Since I have lost my children and am
desolate,
A captive, and wandering to and fro?
And who has brought these up?
There I was, left alone;
But these, where *were* they?”
- 22 ^eThus says the Lord God:
- “Behold, I will lift My hand in an oath
to the nations,
And set up My ³standard for the
peoples;
They shall bring your sons in *their*
⁴arms,
And your daughters shall be carried
on *their* shoulders;

17 ² DSS, LXX, Tg.,
Vg. *builders*
18 ^z Is. 60:4; John
4:35 ^a Prov. 17:6
19 ^b Is. 54:1, 2; Zech.
10:10
20 ^c Is. 60:4 ^d [Matt.
3:9; Rom. 11:11]
22 ^e Is. 60:4
³ banner ⁴ Lit.
bosom

49:10 The word **thirst** is an allusion to 48:21. **Heat** and **sun** may be allusions to Ps. 121, a psalm of pilgrimage. The word **guide** may be an allusion to the first Exodus (42:16; 48:21; Ex. 15:13).

49:11 Mountains, which were once barriers (2:2, 13, 14; 42:15), will become **highways**, the means of salvation (vv. 22, 23). The pronoun **My** before both *mountains* and *highways* is significant: God the Creator is the sovereign Owner of all creation.

49:12 The north and the west indicates the universal salvation of all Israel (11:11, 12; 43:5, 6). These oracles are addressed to all Israel and all the earth (48:1; 49:1). **Sinim** was a district on the southern frontier of ancient Egypt.

49:13 Sing: The Lord is the Creator of music (12:1–6; 44:23).

49:14–26 This section consists of two complaints of Zion (vv. 14, 24), followed by the Lord’s reassuring responses to them (vv. 15–23; vv. 25, 26). The aim of the two sections is to cause Israel and the nations to know that Israel’s Lord is the eternal God (vv. 23, 26).

49:14 Zion represents the exiles (40:1, 9). The complaint **The LORD has forsaken me** resembles that in 40:27–31. The Lord disciplined the Israelites briefly because of their sin (54:7; Lam. 5:20–22).

49:15 The Lord says: **I will not forget you**. The nuance of the verb suggests an even stronger assurance, “As for Me, I am *unable* to forget you.”

49:16 inscribed: This may refer to the Lord’s command for the

names of the tribes of Israel to be inscribed on the stones of the priest’s ephod (see Ex. 28:9–12). When the priest was in the temple, the engraved names would remind God of His covenant with Israel.

Your walls are continually before Me: The Creator God has His thoughts focused on the welfare of His people (see Ps. 40:5).

49:17 Cyrus gave the edict to rebuild Jerusalem (44:28). The restored **sons** of Zion would carry out the decree. Zion’s would-be **destroyers** were the Babylonians (2 Kin. 25:8–10).

49:18 As I live: This is an oath formula. The Lord swears by His own eternal person (Gen. 22:16). Zion’s returning “sons” were a splendid **ornament**, like the jewels of a **bride** (61:10).

49:19 Desolate means “childless” (54:1).

49:20 The complaint that **the place is too small** is in fact a cause for rejoicing (54:1–3; Zech. 2:4, 5), because it means the Lord would cause His people to grow. This prophecy points to the return of the exiles to Jerusalem, for under Ezra and Nehemiah the exiles built a relatively small city (see Ezra 2; Neh. 7). Some view the ultimate fulfillment of this prophecy to be the gathering of the Lord’s people at the coming of Jesus’ kingdom.

49:22 I will lift My hand in an oath: God swears by His own character. **Standard** is often translated “banner” (11:12). The return of the Israelites from **the nations** and not only from Babylon shows that the future salvation of all Israel is in view (Rom. 11:26).

²³ *f*Kings shall be your foster fathers,
And their queens your nursing
mothers;
They shall bow down to you with
their faces to the earth,
And *g*lick up the dust of your feet.
Then you will know that I *am* the
LORD,
^hFor they shall not be ashamed who
wait for Me.”
²⁴ *i*Shall the prey be taken from the
mighty,
Or the captives ⁵of the righteous be
delivered?

²⁵ But thus says the LORD:

“Even the captives of the mighty shall
be taken away,
And the prey of the terrible be
delivered;
For I will contend with him who
contends with you,
And I will save your children.
²⁶ I will *j*feed those who oppress you
with their own flesh,
And they shall be drunk with
their own *k*blood as with sweet
wine.
All flesh *l*shall know
That I, the LORD, *am* your Savior,
And your Redeemer, the Mighty One
of Jacob.”

²³ *f* Ps. 72:11; Is.
52:15 ^g Ps. 72:9;
Mic. 7:17 ^h Ps.
34:22; [Rom. 5:5]
²⁴ *i* Matt. 12:29;
Luke 11:21, 22
⁵ So with MT, Tg.;
DSS, Syr., Vg. of
the mighty; LXX
unjustly
²⁶ *j* Is. 9:20 ^k Rev.
14:20 ^l Ps. 9:16; Is.
60:16

CHAPTER 50

1 ^a Deut. 24:1; Jer.
3:8 ^b Deut. 32:30;
2 Kin. 4:1; Neh. 5:5
^c Is. 52:3
2 ^d Ps. 106:9;
Nah. 1:4
3 ^e Ex. 10:21 ^f Is.
13:10; Rev. 6:12
4 ^g Ex. 4:11 ^h Matt.
11:28

The Servant, Israel's Hope

50

Thus says the LORD:

“Where is ^athe certificate of your
mother’s divorce,
Whom I have put away?
Or which of My ^bcreditors is it to
whom I have sold you?
For your iniquities ^cyou have sold
yourselves,
And for your transgressions your
mother has been put away.
² Why, when I came, *was there* no
man?
Why, when I called, *was there* none
to answer?
Is My hand shortened at all that it
cannot redeem?
Or have I no power to deliver?
Indeed with My ^drebuken I dry up the
sea,
I make the rivers a wilderness;
Their fish stink because *there is* no
water,
And die of thirst.
³ ^eI clothe the heavens with blackness,
^fAnd I make sackcloth their covering.”

⁴ “The ^gLord God has given Me
The tongue of the learned,
That I should know how to speak
A word in season to *him who is*
^hweary.

49:23 The nations that had enslaved Israel had served Israel as **foster fathers** and **nursing mothers** (14:2; 43:6; 60:9).

49:24, 25 Israel asks rhetorically: **Shall the prey**—captive Israel—**be taken from the mighty**—Babylon? Apparently Israel expects a negative answer to this question, but the Lord responds affirmatively. He would **contend** with the mighty, terrible Babylon (Jer 50:33, 34) and free His people.

49:26 oppress: Cannibalism was not unknown during the horrible famine of a siege (9:20; see Deut. 28:53–57; 2 Kin. 6:24–31; Lam. 4:10; Zech. 11:9). **I, the LORD . . . Mighty One of Jacob**: The last couplet is a celebration of the name and character of the living God. The Almighty asserts that He is the One who can powerfully save His people (Ex. 3:14, 15; 34:6, 7).

50:1–3 In this prophecy, the Lord defends Himself (42:18–25; 43:22–28) against the implied accusation brought by the unbelieving exiles of the second generation, that He was unwilling or unable to save them.

50:1 Though the Lord had put away Israel, as a husband might put away a wife, it was for only a short period of exile (see 54:5–7; 62:4) and not permanently. Permanent exile would have required a **certificate of divorce** (see Deut. 24:1–4). If the Lord had issued one, He could not have taken Israel back (see Deut. 24:1–4; Jer. 3:1, 8). No prophet suggested that God had completely broken His covenant; rather, they predicted God’s faithfulness to a remnant who would return (Mic. 4:9, 10). **Your mother** refers to Jerusalem, more specifically, the inhabitants of the preceding generation that had gone into exile. If the Lord had sold Israel to **creditors** (see Ex. 21:7; 2 Kin. 4:1; Neh. 5:5), He would not have any authority over their destiny. But the Israelites had sold themselves because of their own **iniquities** (see 42:23–25). Therefore God as their Redeemer could buy them back (see 41:14; 52:3).

50:2 God **came** to Israel at the time of the Exile through the prophets He sent. Later God came to this earth through His Servant and Son, Jesus (41:9). But no one answered Him (see 6:9, 10; 66:4). **Is My hand shortened**: For a variation of this rhetorical question, see Num. 11:23. **dry up the sea**: The Lord alluded to His parting of the Red Sea and the Jordan River to evoke images of His strength (see 43:16, 17; 44:27; 51:9–11).

50:3 Blackness may be an allusion to the ninth plague of Egypt, when the Lord made darkness cover the earth (see Ex. 10:21).

50:4–11 The third Servant song consists of a soliloquy by the Servant (vv. 4–9), and the prophet’s address to believing and unbelieving Israel (vv. 10, 11).

50:4 The title **Lord God** is emphasized in this section (vv. 5, 7, 9). The title Lord means “Master”; the word **God** represents the divine name (Yahweh). The Lord educated the Servant’s **tongue** through

sackcloth

(Heb. *sag*) (50:3; Gen. 37:34; 1 Kin. 20:31, 32; Neh. 9:1; Esth. 4:1–4) Strong’s #8242

Sackcloth is a rough, coarse cloth or a baglike garment made of this cloth. In the Bible, sackcloth was often used to symbolize certain actions. In the case of mourning, either over a death (Gen. 37:34; Joel 1:8) or another calamity (Esth. 4:1–4; Job 16:15), the Israelites showed their grief by wearing sackcloth and ashes. This was done also in instances of confession and grief over sin (1 Kin. 21:27). Sackcloth was often worn by prophets, perhaps to show their own brokenness in the face of their terrible message of judgment and doom (20:2; Rev. 11:3). The word for sackcloth in the Bible can also mean sack. Joseph ordered that the sacks of his brothers be filled with grain (Gen. 42:25).

- He awakens Me morning by morning,
 He awakens My ear
 To hear as the learned.
- 5 The Lord God ⁱhas opened My ear;
 And I was not ^jrebellious,
 Nor did I turn away.
- 6 ^kI gave My back to those who struck Me,
 And ^lMy cheeks to those who plucked out the beard;
 I did not hide My face from shame and ^mspitting.
- 7 “For the Lord God will help Me;
 Therefore I will not be disgraced;
 Therefore ⁿI have set My face like a flint,
 And I know that I will not be ashamed.
- 8 ^oHe is near who justifies Me;
 Who will contend with Me?
 Let us stand together.
 Who is ¹My adversary?
 Let him come near Me.
- 9 Surely the Lord God will help Me;
 Who is he *who* will condemn Me?
^pIndeed they will all grow old like a garment;
^qThe moth will eat them up.
- 10 “Who among you fears the LORD?
 Who obeys the voice of His Servant?
 Who ^rwalks in darkness
 And has no light?
^sLet him trust in the name of the LORD
 And rely upon his God.
- 11 Look, all you who kindle a fire,
 Who encircle *yourselves* with sparks:

5 ⁱ Ps. 40:6; Is. 35:5 / Matt. 26:39; Mark 14:36; Luke 22:42; John 8:29; 14:31 ☆; 15:10; Acts 26:19; [Phil. 2:8; Heb. 5:8; 10:7]
 6 ^k Matt. 27:26; John 18:22 / Matt. 26:67; 27:30 ☆; Mark 14:65; 15:19 ^m Lam. 3:30
 7 ^o Ezek. 3:8, 9; Luke 9:51 ☆
 8 ^o Acts 2:24; [Rom. 8:32-34]
¹ Lit. *master of My judgment*
 9 ^p Job 13:28; Ps. 102:26; Heb. 1:11
^q Is. 51:6, 8
 10 ^r Ps. 23:4 ^s 2 Chr. 20:20

11 ^t [John 9:39]
^u Ps. 16:4

CHAPTER 51

1 ^a [Rom. 9:30-32]
¹ *pursue*
 2 ^b Rom. 4:1-3; Heb. 11:11 ^c Gen. 12:1
^d Gen. 24:35; Deut. 1:10; Ezek. 33:24
 3 ^e Is. 40:1; 52:9; Ps. 102:13 ^f Gen. 13:10;
 Joel 2:3
 4 ^g Is. 2:3 ^h Is. 42:6
 5 ⁱ Is. 46:13 / Ps. 67:4
^k Is. 60:9 / [Rom. 1:16]
 6 ^m Is. 40:26

Walk in the light of your fire and in the sparks you have kindled—
 ‘This you shall have from My hand:
 You shall lie down ⁿin torment.

The LORD Comforts Zion

- 51 “Listen to Me, ^ayou who ¹follow after righteousness,
 You who seek the LORD:
 Look to the rock *from which* you were hewn,
 And to the hole of the pit *from which* you were dug.
- 2 ^b Look to Abraham your father,
 And to Sarah *who* bore you;
^c For I called him alone,
 And ^d blessed him and increased him.”
- 3 For the LORD will ^e comfort Zion,
 He will comfort all her waste places;
 He will make her wilderness like Eden,
 And her desert ^f like the garden of the LORD;
 Joy and gladness will be found in it,
 Thanksgiving and the voice of melody.
- 4 “Listen to Me, My people;
 And give ear to Me, O My nation:
^g For law will proceed from Me,
 And I will make My justice rest
^h As a light of the peoples.
- 5 ⁱ My righteousness is near,
 My salvation has gone forth,
^j And My arms will judge the peoples;
^k The coastlands will wait upon Me,
 And ^l on My arm they will trust.
- 6 ^m Lift up your eyes to the heavens,
 And look on the earth beneath.

suffering. The word **learned** is translated elsewhere as “disciple” (8:16). **weary**: Unlike unbelieving Israel (Jer. 31:25), the Lord **awakens** the Servant’s **ear to hear** (contrast 42:18, 19).

50:5 opened: The idea is the same as that in Ps. 40:6—the opening of the ear canal as a symbol for hearing and obeying. **not rebellious**: Contrast 1:2.

50:6 People sometimes **struck the back** of a fool (Prov. 10:13; 19:29; 26:3). Jesus Christ suffered this humiliation (42:2; 49:4; 53:12; Matt. 27:26; John 19:1). Pulling someone’s **beard** was a sign of contempt and disrespect (2 Sam. 10:4, 5; Neh. 13:25). **shame and spitting**: This prophecy was fulfilled in the suffering of Jesus Christ (Matt. 27:30).

50:7 The Lord is the Servant’s only source of **help** (41:10, 13, 14; 49:8). The phrase **not be disgraced** means to be honored (49:7; 52:13). **Like a flint** indicates determination in the face of opposition (Ezek. 3:8, 9). For this prophecy’s fulfillment in Jesus Christ, see Luke 9:51.

50:8 justifies: God would view this One as completely righteous. This prophecy was fulfilled in Jesus Christ (1 Tim. 3:16).

50:9 the Lord God will help Me: See the same voice of confidence in the Lord in Ps. 118:6–12, another prophecy of the suffering of the Savior Jesus.

50:10 Who . . . fears the LORD: The fear of the Lord—that is, the reverence or awe of God—is the beginning of true wisdom (see Prov. 1:7).

50:11 Those **who kindle a fire** means those who are self-reliant, instead of walking in the light of the Lord and His Servant (2:5; 42:6). When the Light comes into the world, some will choose darkness (John 3:17, 18). **Torment** indicates God’s punishment for unbelief.

51:1–8 Three oracles (vv. 1–3, 4–6, 7, 8) are linked by the same imperative, “Listen” (vv. 1, 4, 7); the same speaker, the Lord (except v. 3); the same addressees, the faithful exiles; and the common theme of comfort as a result of the coming salvation.

51:1, 2 Look links the metaphor of v. 1 with its interpretation in v. 2. The metaphors **rock** and **pit** are interpreted in v. 2 as referring to **Abraham** and **Sarah**.

51:3 Zion replaced **Eden**. Both were walled-in places of fellowship with God, free from sin, and guarded by cherubim so that only God’s people could enter (Gen. 3:24; 2 Chr. 3:7).

51:4 The Servant is the **light of the peoples** (42:6; 49:6; John 3:17, 18).

51:5 The day of the Lord is always **near** (2:12; 56:1; Zeph. 1:14; 1 Thess. 5:4–11; James 5:8); here the reference is to the restoration from Exile (46:13). **The coastlands** (41:1), like the exiles, **wait** for the Lord. The verb translated *wait* has to do with confident expectation and active hope (40:31; Ps. 40:1).

51:6 Heavens and **earth** suggest the entire cosmos (13:13; 40:21, 22; 48:13; 51:13). The old cosmos will **vanish away** and **grow old** (34:4; Heb. 1:10, 11), **and those who dwell in it will die** (v. 8). Only God’s

- For ⁿthe heavens will vanish away
like smoke,
^oThe earth will grow old like a garment,
And those who dwell in it will die in
like manner;
But My salvation will be ^pforever,
And My righteousness will not be
²abolished.
- 7 “Listen to Me, you who know
righteousness,
You people ^qin whose heart *is* My law:
^rDo not fear the reproach of men,
Nor be afraid of their insults.
- 8 For ^sthe moth will eat them up like a
garment,
And the worm will eat them like wool;
But My righteousness will be forever,
And My salvation from generation to
generation.”
- 9 ^tAwake, awake, ^uput on strength,
O arm of the LORD!
Awake ^vas in the ancient days,
In the generations of old.
^wAre You not *the arm* that cut ^xRahab
apart,
And wounded the ^yserpent?
- 10 Are You not *the One* who ^zdried up
the sea,
The waters of the great deep;
That made the depths of the sea a
road
For the redeemed to cross over?
- 11 So ^athe ransomed of the LORD shall
return,
And come to Zion with singing,
With everlasting joy on their heads.
They shall obtain joy and gladness;
Sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

6 ^a Ps. 102:25, 26;
Is. 13:13; 34:4; Matt.
24:35; Heb. 1:10-12;
2 Pet. 3:10 ^o Is.
24:19, 20; 50:9; Heb.
1:10-12 ^p Is. 45:17
² broken
7 ^q Ps. 37:31; Jer.
31:33; [Heb. 10:16]
^r Is. 25:8; 54:4;
[Matt. 5:11, 12;
10:28; Acts 5:41]
8 ^s Is. 50:9
9 ^t Ps. 44:23 ^u Ps.
93:1 ^v Ps. 44:1
^w Job 26:12; Ps.
89:10; Is. 30:7 ^x Ps.
87:4 ^y Ps. 74:13;
Is. 27:1
10 ^z Ex. 14:21; Is.
63:11-13
11 ^a Is. 35:10; Jer.
31:11, 12

12 ^b 2 Cor. 1:3 ^c Ps.
118:6; Is. 2:22 ^d Is.
40:6, 7; James 1:10;
1 Pet. 1:24
13 ^e Deut. 6:12; 8:11;
Is. 17:10; Jer. 2:32
^f Ps. 104:2 ^g Job
20:7
14 ^h Zech. 9:11
15 ⁱ Job 26:12
16 ^j Deut. 18:18; Is.
59:21; John 3:34
^k Ex. 33:22; Is. 49:2
^l Is. 65:17 ³ establish
17 ^m Is. 52:1 ⁿ Job
21:20; Is. 29:9; Jer.
25:15; Rev. 14:10;
16:19

- 12^a I, *even I, am* He ^bwho comforts you.
Who *are* you that you should be afraid
^cOf a man *who* will die,
And of the son of a man *who* will be
made ^dlike grass?
- 13 And ^eyou forget the LORD your
Maker,
^fWho stretched out the heavens
And laid the foundations of the earth;
You have feared continually every
day
Because of the fury of the oppressor,
When *he has* prepared to destroy.
^gAnd where *is* the fury of the
oppressor?
- 14 The captive exile hastens, that he
may be loosed,
^hThat he should not die in the pit,
And that his bread should not fail.
- 15 But I *am* the LORD your God,
Who ⁱdivided the sea whose waves
roared—
The LORD of hosts *is* His name.
- 16 And ^jI have put My words in your
mouth;
^kI have covered you with the shadow
of My hand,
^lThat I may ³plant the heavens,
Lay the foundations of the earth,
And say to Zion, ‘You *are* My
people.’”

God's Fury Removed

- 17^m Awake, awake!
Stand up, O Jerusalem,
You who ⁿhave drunk at the hand of
the LORD
The cup of His fury;
You have drunk the dregs of the cup
of trembling,
And drained it out.

people will inherit the new cosmos. **Righteousness**, a synonym for **salvation** in Isaiah (45:8; 46:13), will last forever (45:17; 56:1).

51:7 In whose heart is My law refers to those who are bound to God by the provisions of the New Covenant (42:6; Jer. 31:33). The **reproach** of the exiles anticipates the rejection of the Servant (50:4–11).

51:8 righteousness . . . forever . . . salvation: The interrelationship of salvation, righteousness, and eternity can also be seen in v. 6.

51:9–16 This oracle bases Israel's salvation on the Lord's past mighty acts at creation and the Exodus. It consists of three sections: (1) a call to the Lord to stir up His might as in days of old (vv. 9–11); (2) the Lord's response, recalling those acts and chiding the people for forgetting Him (vv. 12, 13); and (3) a recounting of His gift of prophecy (vv. 14–16).

51:9 Awake implies that the Lord appeared to be asleep (40:27; Ps. 44:23). The Lord's **strength** at creation in subduing the sea is the subject of Ps. 93. Isaiah's prayer is based on God's promise (50:2), and poetically addressed to God's strong **arm** (41:10; 51:5). **Rahab** was a mythical **serpent** that resisted God's creation of the universe (see Job 7:12; Ps. 74:13, 14). This imagery, possibly borrowed from Canaanite myths, also represents the Lord's defeat of Egypt—the nation that resisted the creation of Israel (30:7). The language here associates the Lord's creative work in the first Exodus and in the

second Exodus (the return of the exiles) with His creative act of transforming the chaos of Gen. 1:2 into the cosmos of Gen. 2:1 (see 27:1).

51:10 dried up: For similar references, see 42:15; 50:2. The Lord's victory at the Red Sea (Ex. 14:21, 22) is probably represented by the imagery of a pagan myth in which the **sea** opposed the creating deity. The probable allusion is supported by **the . . . deep**, a term used for the primeval chaotic waters of Gen. 1:2. The Exodus is placed within the broader framework of God's power over evil.

51:12 The Lord responds to the double imperative of v. 9, “Awake, awake,” with the doubled pronoun **I, even I**.

51:13 stretched out: For a similar description of creation, see 40:22. **oppressor:** For a graphic depiction of the punishment of Israel's oppressors, see 49:26.

51:14 Captive exile literally refers to the exiles in Babylon. The meaning extends to all who experience the darkness of sin and alienation from God (48:20; 49:9).

51:15 Who divided the sea . . . roared: The sea represents all that is evil and in opposition to the Lord (Ps. 93).

51:16 Your mouth refers to the words of the Servant (41:9; 44:26; 50:4). **shadow of My hand:** For a similar use of the phrase, see 49:2.

51:17–23 This salvation oracle urging Jerusalem to have faith in God consists of two parts: (1) Mother Jerusalem (see 49:20, 21; 50:1) must awaken herself from her staggering stupor (vv. 17–20), and (2) the prophet asks the people to hear the Lord's promise that He

- 18 *There is no one to guide her*
Among all the sons she has brought
forth;
Nor *is there any* who takes her by the
hand
Among all the sons she has
brought up.
- 19 ^o These two *things* have come to you;
Who will be sorry for you?—
Desolation and destruction, famine
and sword—
^p By whom will I comfort you?
- 20 ^q Your sons have faded,
They lie at the head of all the streets,
Like an antelope in a net;
They are full of the fury of the LORD,
The rebuke of your God.
- 21 Therefore please hear this, you
afflicted,
And drunk ^r but not with wine.
- 22 Thus says your Lord,
The LORD and your God,
Who ^s pleads the cause of His people:
“See, I have taken out of your hand
The cup of trembling,
The dregs of the cup of My fury;
You shall no longer drink it.
- 23 ^t But I will put it into the hand of
those who afflict you,
Who have said to ^u you,
“Lie down, that we may walk over
you.”
And you have laid your body like the
ground,
And as the street, for those who
walk over.”

God Redeems Jerusalem

- 52** Awake, awake!
Put on your strength, O Zion;
Put on your beautiful garments,
O Jerusalem, the holy city!

19 ^o Is. 47:9 ^p Amos 7:2
20 ^q Lam. 2:11
21 ^r Lam. 3:15
22 ^s Is. 3:12, 13; 49:25; Jer. 50:34
23 ^t Is. 14:2; Jer. 25:17, 26-28; Zech. 12:2 ^u Lit. *your soul*

CHAPTER 52

1 ^o Neh. 11:1; Is. 48:2; 64:10; Zech. 14:20, 21; Matt. 4:5; [Rev. 21:2-27]
2 ^p Is. 3:26 ^q Is. 9:4; 10:27; 14:25; Zech. 2:7
3 ^r Ps. 44:12; Jer. 15:13 ^s Is. 45:13
4 ^t Gen. 46:6 ^u As resident aliens
5 ^v Ezek. 36:20, 23; Rom. 2:24 ^w DSS *Mock; LXX Marvel and wail; Tg. Boast themselves; Vg. Treat them unjustly*
7 ^h Is. 40:9; 61:1; Nah. 1:15; Rom. 10:15; Eph. 6:15 ⁱ Ps. 93:1; Is. 24:23

- For the uncircumcised ^a and the
unclean
Shall no longer come to you.
- 2 ^b Shake yourself from the dust, arise;
Sit down, O Jerusalem!
^c Loose yourself from the bonds of
your neck,
O captive daughter of Zion!
- 3 For thus says the LORD:
- ^d “You have sold yourselves for nothing,
And you shall be redeemed ^e without
money.”
- 4 For thus says the Lord God:
- “My people went down at first
Into ^f Egypt to ^g dwell there;
Then the Assyrian oppressed them
without cause.
- 5 Now therefore, what have I here,”
says the LORD,
“That My people are taken away for
nothing?
Those who rule over them
^h Make them wail,” says the LORD,
“And My name is ⁱ blasphemed
continually every day.
- 6 Therefore My people shall know My
name;
Therefore *they shall know* in that day
That I *am* He who speaks:
“Behold, *it is I*.”
- 7 ^h How beautiful upon the mountains
Are the feet of him who brings good
news,
Who proclaims peace,
Who brings glad tidings of good
things,
Who proclaims salvation,
Who says to Zion,
ⁱ “Your God reigns!”

will transfer the cup of His anger from them into the hands of her enemies (vv. 21–23).

51:17 Awake, awake: The same double imperative is found in v. 9 (contrast 40:1). **drunk . . . the cup:** For similar imagery see Jer. 25:15–29; Lam. 4:21; Ezek. 23:31–34.

51:19, 20 These two things refers to the desolation of the land and the destruction of the people. **at the head of all the streets:** A similar image of destruction is used in Lam. 2:19.

51:21–23 The cause of drunkenness was not **wine**, but the **cup of trembling**, the terror of God’s judgment. **those who afflict you:** Israel’s oppressors would be made to drink “the cup of . . . fury” (v. 22).

52:1 The double call to the Lord to **Awake, awake** is also used in 51:9, 17. **Holy city** (48:2) contrasts with **uncircumcised** and **unclean** Babylon. **Jerusalem** (1:8; 40:1, 9) is commanded to awake because she is forever free of her despicable oppressors. **Zion:** The exiles are identified by their home city (40:1, 9). Zion’s **strength** is like **beautiful garments** that adorn a queen mother (61:10). The Babylonian hordes would not only be expelled (49:17), but would **no longer come** to Zion (Nah. 1:15; Rev. 21:27; 22:14, 15).

52:2 Arise . . . sit down evokes the image of a queen ascending

her throne. **Loose yourself:** For similar images of freed captives, see 42:7; 48:20; 51:14.

52:4 to dwell there: The wording suggests that Israel was dependent on Egypt’s hospitality; but the text assumes the Egyptians betrayed that trust. **Without cause** does not mean that Israel was without sin (42:23–25), but that Israel had not wronged either **Egypt** or Assyria.

52:5 Here refers to Babylon. God’s justice demands that those who make Israel **wail** will be punished and that Israel will be delivered.

My name is blasphemed: For a similar charge, see 37:23, 24.

52:6 My people refers to the redeemed exiles. **Know My name** is an allusion to Ex. 3:13, 14; 6:2. The Lord glorifies His name by predicting and fulfilling the promise of redemption pledged in v. 3.

52:7 The vision is of the **feet** of the one who runs from the scene of battle across **mountains** to the city waiting for news (2 Sam. 18:26). The glorious message of this runner is **salvation**, meaning “victorious deliverance” (49:8). This is **good news** or **glad tidings**. The idea appears in the NT as “to tell the Good News.” The message **Your God reigns** stands behind all history; the Lord controls every power on earth.

- 8 Your watchmen shall lift up *their* voices,
With their voices they shall sing together;
For they shall see eye to eye
When the LORD brings back Zion.
- 9 Break forth into joy, sing together,
You waste places of Jerusalem!
For the LORD has comforted His people,
He has redeemed Jerusalem.
- 10 ^jThe LORD has ³made bare His holy arm
In the eyes of ^kall the nations;
And all the ends of the earth shall see
The salvation of our God.
- 11 ^lDepart! Depart! Go out from there,
Touch no unclean *thing*;
Go out from the midst of her,
^mBe clean,
You who bear the vessels of the LORD.
- 12 For ⁿyou shall not go out with haste,
Nor go by flight;
^oFor the LORD will go before you,

10 ^j Ps. 98:1-3 ^k Luke 3:6
³ Revealed His power
11 ^l Is. 48:20; Jer. 50:8; Zech. 2:6, 7; 2 Cor. 6:17 ^m Lev. 22:2; [Is. 1:16]
12 ⁿ Ex. 12:11, 33; Deut. 16:3 ^o Mic. 2:13

^p Ex. 14:19, 20; Is. 58:8
13 ^q Is. 42:1 ^r Is. 57:15; Phil. 2:9 ^s
⁴ prosper ^t Lit. *be lifted up*
14 ^s Ps. 22:6, 7; Matt. 26:67; 27:30; John 19:3
⁶ appearance
15 ^t Num. 19:18-21; Ezek. 36:25 ^u Rom. 15:21 ^v; [Eph. 3:5, 9]; 1 Pet. 1:2 ^w ⁷ Or *startle*

CHAPTER 53

1 ^x John 12:38;
Rom. 10:16 ^y

^p And the God of Israel *will be* your rear guard.

The Sin-Bearing Servant

- 13 Behold, ^qMy Servant shall ⁴deal prudently;
^rHe shall be exalted and ⁵extolled and be very high.
- 14 Just as many were astonished at you,
So His ^svisage ⁶was marred more than any man,
And His form more than the sons of men;
- 15 ^tSo shall He ⁷sprinkle many nations.
Kings shall shut their mouths at Him;
For ^uwhat had not been told them they shall see,
And what they had not heard they shall consider.

53 Who ^ahas believed our report?
And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?

- 2 For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant,
And as a root out of dry ground.

52:10 The LORD has made bare His holy arm in order to fight majestically (40:10; 51:9; Ex. 6:6). **the ends of the earth:** For similar uses of this phrase, see 45:22; 48:20.

52:11 Depart! Depart: For another use of a double word, see 51:9, 17. **Touch no unclean thing:** For other passages concerning separation, see 2 Cor. 6:17; Heb. 12:14; 13:13; 1 Pet. 2:1-12; Rev. 18:4. In the first Exodus, Israel carried out silver and gold from Egypt; in the second Exodus, the priestly nation would **bear the vessels** made from those elements (2 Kin. 25:14, 15; Ezra 1:7-11; 5:14, 15).

52:12 Before and rear guard are allusions to the pillar of cloud and fire that protected Israel in its flight from Egypt (42:16; 49:10; 58:8; Ex. 13:21, 22; 14:19, 20). **the LORD . . . the God of Israel:** The pillar of cloud and fire actually stood for the Lord Himself (Ex. 33:9-11).

52:13—53:12 The fourth of the Servant Songs forms the central unit of chs. 40-66, predicting the Servant's death for the sins of His people. The passage consists of three sections: (1) The Father praises the work of the Servant (52:13-15); (2) Israel confesses that it has despised Him (53:1-9); (3) the prophecy expands on the significance of the Servant's death (53:10-12). This passage is cited many times

in the NT, where the Servant is identified with Jesus Christ (see Luke 22:37; 24:27, 46; 1 Cor. 15:3; 1 Pet. 1:11).

52:13 Exalted and extolled and be very high may refer to three successive events, describing the Servant's resurrection, ascension, and glorification (Rom. 4:24, 25). Or the three phrases might simply emphasize the great exaltation of the Lord's servant (Phil. 2:9-11).

52:14 So His visage was marred . . . more than the sons of men: People would be horrified at the Servant's appearance; He would be so disfigured that He would no longer look human.

52:15 The nations are represented by their kings. **Shut their mouths** is a token of stunned respect. **For what had not been told . . . they shall consider:** Romans 15:21 refers to this passage. **What** they are told is the report of ch. 53.

53:1 Who has believed: This rhetorical question, quoted in John 12:38 and Rom. 10:16, expects a negative answer. The word **report** is related to the verb "they heard" in 52:15. **Our** refers to the believing remnant in Israel. **Arm** refers to God's great work (40:10; 52:10; Ps. 118:22, 23).

53:2 Tender plant refers to a shoot rising from a plant's stem or

The Suffering Servant



Amidst a declaration of the Lord's coming salvation (see 52:7-12; 54:1-10), Isaiah places a portrait of the Suffering Servant (52:13—53:12). Despised and rejected (53:3), wounded and bruised (53:5), this unattractive Servant would know heartache and sorrow. What was the reason for His suffering? His life could not be the cause, for He was blameless, speaking only the truth (53:9). Yet the Servant would be led to prison and then to death for our sins (53:6-11).

Three other passages in Isaiah focus on the Servant and are called the "Servant Songs" (42:1-4; 49:1-6; 50:4-9). The first song celebrates the Servant as the One who will establish justice for all (42:4). The second highlights the deliverance that the Servant will provide. He will restore Israel and become a "light to the Gentiles." The third emphasizes the God-given wisdom of the Servant. All this culminates in the description of the suffering and death of the Servant in chapter 53, the final "Servant Song."

Although at times Isaiah refers to the nation Israel as a Servant (49:3), the preeminent Servant of the Lord was clearly a unique person, a suffering Messiah yet to come (53:6). New Testament authors such as Matthew understood Jesus' teaching and preaching as a direct fulfillment of Isaiah 42:1-4 (see Matt. 12:15-21). Philip used one of the Servant Songs as a starting point for evangelism (53:7, 8). The Ethiopian eunuch asked him to explain the passage "He was led as a lamb to the slaughter" (53:7, 8; Acts 8:31-34). Philip introduced him to Jesus, the One who was led to His death for the sins of all humanity.

He has no ¹form or ²comeliness;
And when we see Him,
There is no ³beauty that we should
desire Him.

- ³ ^bHe is despised and ⁴rejected by men,
A Man of ⁵sorrows and ^cacquainted
with ⁶grief.
And we hid, as it were, *our* faces
from Him;
He was despised, and ^dwe did not
esteem Him.

- ⁴ Surely ^eHe has borne our ⁷griefs
And carried our ⁸sorrows;
Yet we ⁹esteemed Him stricken,
¹Smitten by God, and afflicted.
⁵ But He *was* ^fwounded² for our
transgressions,
He was ³bruised for our iniquities;
The chastisement for our peace *was*
upon Him,
And by His ^gstripes⁴ we are healed.
⁶ All we like sheep have gone astray;
We have turned, every one, to his
own way;
And the LORD ⁵has laid on Him the
iniquity of us all.

- ⁷ He was oppressed and He was
afflicted,
Yet ^hHe opened not His mouth;
ⁱHe was led as a lamb to the slaughter,
And as a sheep before its shearers is
silent,
So He opened not His mouth.
⁸ He was ^jtaken from ⁶prison and
from judgment,
And who will declare His
generation?
For ^kHe was cut off from the land of
the living;

The Suffering Servant

Jesus fulfills Isaiah's prophecy of the Suffering Servant.

The Prophecy	The Fulfillment
He will be exalted (52:13)	Phil. 2:9
He will be disfigured by suffering (52:14; 53:2)	Mark 15:17, 19
He will be widely rejected (53:1, 3)	John 12:37, 38
He will bear our sins and sorrows (53:4)	Rom. 4:25; 1 Pet. 2:24, 25
He will make a blood atonement (53:5)	Rom. 3:25
He will be our substitute (53:6, 8)	2 Cor. 5:21
He will voluntarily accept our guilt and punishment (53:7)	John 10:11
He will be buried in a rich man's tomb (53:9)	John 19:38–42
He will justify many from their sin (53:10, 11)	Rom. 5:15–19
He will die with transgressors (53:12)	Mark 15:27, 28; Luke 22:37

² ¹ Stately form
² *splendor* ³ Lit.
appearance
³ ⁶ Ps. 22:6; [Is.
49:7 ☆; Matt. 27:30,
31; Luke 18:31–33;
23:18] ^c [Heb. 4:15]
^d [John 1:10, 11]
⁴ ^{Or forsaken} ⁵ Lit.
pains ⁶ Lit. *sickness*
⁴ ^e [Matt. 8:17 ☆;
Heb. 9:28; 1 Pet.
2:24] ⁷ Lit.
sicknesses ⁸ Lit.
pains ⁹ *reckoned*
¹ *Struck down*
⁵ ^f [Is. 53:10; Rom.
4:25 ☆; 1 Cor. 15:3,
4] ⁹ [1 Pet. 2:24,
25] ☆ ² ^{Or pierced}
^{through} ³ *crushed*
⁴ *Blows that cut in*
⁶ ⁵ Lit. *has caused*
to land on Him

For the transgressions of My people
He was stricken.

- ⁹ ¹And ⁷they made His grave with the
wicked—

But with the rich at His death,
Because He had done no violence,
Nor *was any* ^mdeceit in His mouth.

- ¹⁰ Yet it pleased the LORD to ⁸bruise
Him;
He has put *Him* to grief.
When You make His soul ⁿan
offering for sin,

⁷ ^h Matt. 26:63; 27:12–14; Mark 14:61; 15:5 ☆; Luke 23:9; John
19:9 ⁱ Acts 8:32, 33 ☆; Rev. 5:6 ⁸ / Matt. 27:11–26; Luke 23:1–
25 ^k [Dan. 9:26] ⁶ *confinement* ⁹ / Matt. 27:57–60 ☆; Luke
23:33 ^m 1 Pet. 2:22; 1 John 3:5 ⁷ Lit. *he or He* ¹⁰ ⁿ John 12:9;
Acts 2:24 ☆; [2 Cor. 5:21] ☆ ⁸ *crush*

root. **A root out of dry ground** suggests Christ's rejection by Israel (49:4; 50:6). **No form or comeliness** indicates that the Servant did not have a majestic manner.

53:3 He is despised and rejected: For related references describing the rejection of the Servant, see 42:2; 49:7; 50:6 (compare Mark 9:12). **Man of sorrows** does not indicate that the coming One would be humorless or dour, but He knew better than anyone the havoc that sin brings into human life. Because He is a "Man of sorrows," He is able to comfort those who experience sorrow.

53:4 He has borne: The Savior Jesus came to suffer and die for the sins of others (53:6, 11, 12; Matt. 8:17; Heb. 9:28; 1 Pet. 2:24). **Griefs**—or pain—and **sorrows**—or sickness—refer to the consequences of sin. The people considered Christ to have been **smitten by God** because the law said, "he who is hanged [on a tree] is accursed of God" (Deut. 21:22, 23; Gal. 3:13).

53:5 The repetition of the pronouns **He, Him, and His** for **our** and **we** underscores the fact that the Servant suffered in our place. **The chastisement . . . His stripes:** For a similar reference, see 1 Pet. 2:24. **Peace** sums up the Servant's ministry of reconciliation, justification, adoption, and glorification (2 Cor. 5:17–21). By saying that they were **healed** (v. 4), the remnant expressed its faith in what God had announced in 52:13.

53:6 All we like sheep have gone astray: For a NT perspective, see 1 Pet. 2:25.

53:7 Opened not His mouth speaks of the Servant's willingness to die for sinners; it also marks His dignity and authority (Matt. 26:67, 68; 27:12–14; 1 Pet. 2:23). **as a lamb to the slaughter:** For similar imagery, see John 1:29, 36; 1 Cor. 5:7; Rev. 5:6, 12; 13:8.

53:8 cut off from the land of the living: This language clearly indicates that the Servant would die.

53:9 Often in Hebrew poetry, the **rich** appear as synonymous with **the wicked**. Joseph of Arimathea was a rich man, but he was not wicked (Matt. 27:57–60). **at His death:** The Hebrew term *death* is in the plural, as a focus on the deep significance of Christ's death.

53:10 it pleased the LORD: The OT pointed to the doctrine of the atonement long before Jesus died for our sins (see 1 Cor. 15:3 where Paul speaks of the doctrine coming from "the Scriptures"). The atonement was part of God's eternal plan (Eph. 1:4–7). The Father was *pleased* that His Son should die because it would cover up the sins of many and reconcile them to Himself (see v. 11). **Offering** refers to the "trespass offering," the sacrifice of a ram in order to secure the Lord's atonement for sin (Lev. 5:6, 7, 15; 7:1; 14:12; 19:21). Here the prophet Isaiah describes the Servant Jesus as a trespass offering. **His seed** refers to the spiritual seed, born to the Servant after His death (see Gal. 3:26–29).

He shall see *His* seed, He shall
prolong *His* days,
And the pleasure of the LORD shall
prosper in His hand.
11⁹ He shall see the labor of His soul,
and be satisfied.
By His knowledge ^oMy righteous
^pServant shall ^qjustify many,
For He shall bear their iniquities.
12^r Therefore I will divide Him a portion
with the great,
^sAnd He shall divide the ^tspoils with
the strong,
Because He ^upoured out His soul
unto death,
And He was ^vnumbered with the
transgressors,
And He bore the sin of many,
And ^wmade intercession for the
transgressors.

A Perpetual Covenant of Peace

54 “Sing, O ^abarren,
You *who* have not borne!
Break forth into singing, and cry aloud,
You *who* have not labored with child!
For more *are* the children of the
desolate
Than the children of the married
woman,” says the LORD.
2 “Enlarge^b the place of your tent,
And let them stretch out the curtains
of your dwellings;
Do not spare;
Lengthen your cords,

11 ^o [1 John 2:1]
^p Is. 42:1 ^q [Acts
13:38, 39; Rom.
5:15–18] ^r ^s So
with MT, Tg., Vg.;
DSS, LXX From the
labor of His soul He
shall see light
12 ^t Ps. 2:8 ^u Col.
2:15 ^v Is. 50:6; [Rom.
3:25] ^w Matt. 27:38;
Mark 15:28; Luke
22:37 ^x 2 Cor.
5:21 ^y Luke 23:34 ^z
ⁱ plunder

CHAPTER 54

1 ^a Gal. 4:27
2 ^b Is. 49:19, 20

3 ^c Is. 14:2; 49:22,
23; 60:9
4 ^d Is. 41:10
5 ^e Jer. 3:14; Hos.
2:19 ^f Zech. 14:9;
Rom. 3:29
6 ^g Is. 62:4
7 ^h Ps. 30:5; Is.
26:20; 60:10; 2 Cor.
4:17 ⁱ [Is. 43:5; 56:8]
8 ^j Is. 55:3; Jer. 31:3

And strengthen your stakes.
3 For you shall expand to the right and
to the left,
And your descendants will ^einherit
the nations,
And make the desolate cities inhabited.
4 “Do^d not fear, for you will not be
ashamed;
Neither be disgraced, for you will not
be put to shame;
For you will forget the shame of your
youth,
And will not remember the reproach
of your widowhood anymore.
5 ^eFor your Maker *is* your husband,
The LORD of hosts *is* His name;
And your Redeemer *is* the Holy One
of Israel;
He is called ^fthe God of the whole
earth.
6 For the LORD ^ghas called you
Like a woman forsaken and grieved
in spirit,
Like a youthful wife when you were
refused,”
Says your God.
7 “For^h a mere moment I have forsaken
you,
But with great mercies ⁱI will gather
you.
8 With a little wrath I hid My face
from you for a moment;
^jBut with everlasting kindness I will
have mercy on you,”
Says the LORD, your Redeemer.

53:11 Knowledge means having insight into one’s mission (see 52:13). **Justify** means to acquit from guilt and to declare righteous (5:23).

53:12 As the great King, the Lord will **divide the spoils** of victory with His Servant (41:8; 52:13). **Great** and **strong** correspond to the Servant’s condition after His rejection, suffering, and death.

54:1–10 In this salvation oracle (see also 49:14–23), the Lord promises Zion that He has not forsaken her, but will give her many offspring. In vv. 1–3, Zion is a barren woman who gives birth to nu-

merous children. In vv. 4–10, Zion is a forsaken wife who receives an everlasting covenant of peace.

54:1 Sing: For similar commands to sing, see 12:6; 44:23; 49:13. Zion (1:8; 40:1, 9) had **not labored with child** because Cyrus returned the exiles without any pressure from the Israelites. The increase that began in the restoration from Exile (51:1–3) continues today, for the NT applies this verse to “the heavenly Jerusalem” (Heb. 12:22), “the mother of us all”—the church (Gal. 4:26, 27). Salvation depends on sovereign grace.

54:2 As a husband encourages his wife, the Lord encourages Zion, the mother of His people, to **enlarge** the family **tent** for her many children (49:19, 20).

54:3 Expand is an allusion to Gen. 28:14, where the same Hebrew word is translated “spread abroad.”

54:4 The shame of your youth refers to Israel’s infidelity, that led to the Egyptian and Assyrian oppression (52:4; Jer. 31:19; Ezek. 16:1–6). **The reproach of your widowhood** refers to the Babylonian exile (vv. 6–8).

54:5 The point of the titles **LORD of hosts** (1:9), **Redeemer** (41:14), and **God of the whole earth** is that God did not forsake Zion out of necessity or weakness (50:1–3). Neither did He forsake Israel permanently (v. 7).

54:6 The LORD calls Zion to be His wife (62:4, 5). **Like a woman forsaken . . . you were refused** refers to Zion’s experience in Exile (40:27; 49:14; 50:1).

54:7 God’s anger against His elect is **for a mere moment** (26:20; Ps. 30:5). **Great mercies** speaks of the affections of God in nurturing, maternal terms.

54:8 Kindness may also be translated “loyal love.” **I will have mercy:** That is, “I will love you as only a mother can love.”

inherit

(Heb. *yarash*) (54:3; Deut. 5:33; Josh. 12:1; 19:47) Strong’s #3423

The Hebrew word translated *inherit* means to “take something from someone else and possess it for yourself.” The word is frequently used to describe the Israelite conquest of Canaan (see Deut. 5:33; Josh. 12:1; 19:47). At times the word can be translated *dispossess* (see Num. 33:53) and may even mean “impoverish” (see 1 Sam. 2:7). In 54:3, the prophet Isaiah uses this word to describe Israel’s expansion. The nation would expand so much that they would take possession of the land of other nations (see 11:14). Isaiah was prophesying that Israel would increase in number so much that they would be like a nomad who has so many children that he has to expand his tents to accommodate them all (54:2).

- 9 “For this is like the waters of ^kNoah to Me;
For as I have sworn
That the waters of Noah would no longer cover the earth,
So have I sworn
That I would not be angry with ^lyou,
nor rebuke you.
10 For ^mthe mountains shall depart
And the hills be removed,
ⁿBut My kindness shall not depart from you,
Nor shall My covenant of peace be removed,”
Says the LORD, who has mercy on you.

- 11 “O you afflicted one,
Tossed with tempest, *and* not comforted,
Behold, I will lay your stones with ^ocolorful gems,
And lay your foundations with sapphires.
12 I will make your pinnacles of rubies,
Your gates of crystal,
And all your walls of precious stones.
13 All your children *shall be* ^ptaught by the LORD,
And ^qgreat *shall be* the peace of your children.
14 In righteousness you shall be established;
You shall be far from oppression, for you shall not fear;
And from terror, for it shall not come near you.
15 Indeed they shall surely assemble, *but* not because of Me.
Whoever assembles against you shall ^rfall for your sake.

9 ^k Gen. 8:21; 9:11; [2 Pet. 3:6, 7] ^l Is. 12:1; Ezek. 39:29
10 ^m Ps. 46:2; Is. 51:6; Matt. 5:18
ⁿ 2 Sam. 23:5; Ps. 89:33, 34; Is. 55:3; 59:21; 61:8
11 ^o 1 Chr. 29:2; Job 28:16; Rev. 21:18, 19
13 ^p Jer. 31:34; [John 6:45; 1 Cor. 2:10]; 1 Thess. 4:9; [1 John 2:20] ^q Ps. 119:165
15 ^r Is. 41:11-16

16 ¹ Or *weapon*
² *destroyer*
17 ^s Is. 17:12-14; 29:8 ^t Is. 45:24, 25; 54:14

CHAPTER 55

1 ^a [Matt. 5:6; John 4:14; 7:37; Rev. 21:6; 22:17] ^b [Matt. 13:44; Rev. 3:18]
2 ¹ Lit. *weigh out silver*
3 ^c Matt. 11:28 ^d Is. 54:8; 61:8; Jer. 32:40
^e 2 Sam. 7:8; Ps. 89:28; [Acts 13:34]
4 ^f [John 18:37; Rev. 1:5] ^g [Jer. 30:9; Ezek. 34:23; Dan. 9:25]

- 16 “Behold, I have created the blacksmith
Who blows the coals in the fire,
Who brings forth an ¹instrument for his work;
And I have created the ²spoiler to destroy.
17 No weapon formed against you shall ^sprosper,
And every tongue *which* rises against you in judgment
You shall condemn.
This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD,
^tAnd their righteousness *is* from Me,”
Says the LORD.

An Invitation to Abundant Life

- 55 “Ho! ^aEveryone who thirsts,
Come to the waters;
And you who have no money,
^bCome, buy and eat.
Yes, come, buy wine and milk
Without money and without price.
2 Why do you ¹spend money for *what*
is not bread,
And your wages for *what* does not satisfy?
Listen carefully to Me, and eat *what*
is good,
And let your soul delight itself in abundance.
3 Incline your ear, and ^ccome to Me.
Hear, and your soul shall live;
^dAnd I will make an everlasting covenant with you—
The ^esure mercies of David.
4 Indeed I have given him *as* ^fa witness to the people,
^gA leader and commander for the people.

54:9, 10 As the Lord had **sworn** to **Noah** that **the waters . . . would no longer cover the earth** (Gen. 9:11), so He swore to Zion after the Exile that His **covenant of peace** (42:6; Ezek. 34:25) would not **be removed**. Contrast this with the **mountains** and **hills**, symbols of strength and permanence, that had been **removed** from sight in the Flood (Gen. 7:19, 20).

54:11-17 In this salvation oracle, the Lord addresses devastated Zion, first promising the rebuilt city greater glory than before (vv. 11-13) and then protection (vv. 14-17).

54:11, 12 walls of precious stones: For a more detailed description of the New Jerusalem, see Rev. 21:18-21. The **afflicted one** is Zion or Jerusalem (51:21).

54:13 The children . . . taught by the LORD include those taught by Christ (Jer. 31:34; John 6:45), who had “the tongue of the learned” (50:4).

54:17 The tongue that speaks propaganda is one of the weapons of war (ch. 36). The Lord will **condemn** the accusers of His people even as He equipped His Servant (50:7-9; Luke 21:15; 1 Cor. 1:20). Throughout the rest of Isaiah, the word **servants** refers to *all* saints, Jews and Gentiles (56:6-8; 63:17; 65:8, 9, 13-15; 66:14), the offspring of the Servant.

55:1-13 Chapters 40-55 conclude with two related invitations: (1) to come to the Lord and participate in the Davidic kingdom (55:1-5); and (2) to seek the Lord and find pardon (vv. 6, 7). The promise is sure because God’s grace is unfathomable (vv. 8, 9) and His word will

certainly be fulfilled (vv. 10-13). The invitations, first addressed by the Lord to the exiles, are now held out to everyone (Rev. 21:6; 22:17).

55:1 Ho is an exclamation of pity. **Everyone:** The ones addressed at first are the covenant nation, the remnant who respond to God. But they will be the means for bringing the same message of God’s salvation to the nations (v. 5). **Thirsts** is a metaphor for desiring what satisfies a person’s spirit (41:17; 44:3; Ps. 42:1, 2; 63:1; Matt. 5:6). **Waters** is a metaphor for the enjoyment of salvation in God (John 4:10-14; 7:37). **Wine and milk** are symbols of complete satisfaction (v. 2). Not only does God’s salvation supply what is necessary for life, but it also provides what brings joy. **You who have no money . . . buy** expresses that salvation cannot be bought, but is a free gift for those who desire it (52:3; Deut. 8:3; Rom. 6:23).

55:3 Incline your ear and **Hear** are synonyms for **come to Me**. The **everlasting covenant** (54:10) refers to the Davidic covenant and to the New Covenant. **The sure mercies of David** are God’s promises of an eternal Offspring, throne, and kingdom (2 Sam. 7:12-16; 1 Kin. 8:23-26; Ps. 89:19-37). The pronoun **Me** includes the Servant of the Lord, Jesus the Messiah (48:16; 61:1). **you:** The promises of the Davidic covenant are extended to all who “come” to God; they are fulfilled in Jesus Christ (4:2; 7:14; 9:6; 11:1-5) and His church (Rom. 16:20).

55:4 God’s fulfillment of the promises to the house of David, climaxing in the resurrection of Christ, serves as a **witness** to the nations (43:10, 12; 44:8). Jesus Christ is a **leader . . . for the people** (42:6; 49:6; Dan. 9:25; Heb. 2:10; 12:2).

5 ^h Surely you shall call a nation you do not know,
ⁱ And nations *who* do not know you shall run to you,
Because of the LORD your God,
And the Holy One of Israel;
^j For He has glorified you.”

6 ^k Seek the LORD while He may be ^l found,
Call upon Him while He is near.

7 ^m Let the ² wicked forsake his way,
And the unrighteous man ⁿ his thoughts;
Let him return to the LORD,
^o And He will have mercy on him;
And to our God,
For He will abundantly pardon.

8 “For ^p My thoughts *are* not your thoughts,
Nor *are* your ways My ways,” says the LORD.

9 “For ^q *as* the heavens are higher than the earth,
So are My ways higher than your ways,
And My thoughts than your thoughts.

10 “For ^r *as* the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven,
And do not return there,
But water the earth,
And make it bring forth and bud,
That it may give seed to the sower
And bread to the eater,

5 ^h Is. 52:15; Eph. 2:11, 12 ☆ ⁱ Is. 60:5 / Is. 60:9
6 ^k Matt. 5:25; 25:11; John 7:34; 8:21; 2 Cor. 6:2; [Heb. 3:13] ^j Ps. 32:6; Is. 49:8
7 ^m Is. 1:16 ⁿ Is. 59:7; Zech. 8:17 ^o Ps. 130:7; Jer. 3:12 ² Lit. *man of iniquity*
8 ^p 2 Sam. 7:19
9 ^q Ps. 103:11
10 ^r Deut. 32:2

11 ^s Is. 45:23; Matt. 24:35 ^t Is. 46:9-11
³ *empty*, without fruit
12 ^u Is. 35:10 ^v Ps. 98:8 ^w 1 Chr. 16:33
13 ^x Is. 41:19 ^y Mic. 7:4 ^z Jer. 13:11

CHAPTER 56

1 ^a Is. 46:13; Matt. 3:2; 4:17; Rom. 13:11, 12
2 ^b Ex. 20:8-11; 31:13-17; Is. 58:13; Jer. 17:21, 22; Ezek. 20:12, 20
3 ^c Is. 14:1; [Eph. 2:12-19]

11 ^s So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth;
It shall not return to Me ³ void,
But it shall accomplish what I please,
And it shall ^t prosper *in the thing* for which I sent it.

12 “For ^u you shall go out with joy,
And be led out with peace;
The mountains and the hills
Shall ^v break forth into singing before you,
And ^w all the trees of the field shall clap *their* hands.

13 ^x Instead of ^y the thorn shall come up the cypress tree,
And instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree;
And it shall be to the LORD ^z for a name,
For an everlasting sign *that* shall not be cut off.”

Salvation for the Gentiles

56

Thus says the LORD:
“Keep justice, and do righteousness,
^a For My salvation *is* about to come,
And My righteousness to be revealed.

2 Blessed *is* the man *who* does this,
And the son of man *who* lays hold on it;
^b Who keeps from defiling the Sabbath,
And keeps his hand from doing any evil.”

3 Do not let ^c the son of the foreigner
Who has joined himself to the LORD

55:8, 9 God’s gracious **thoughts** exceed all human imagination (64:4; Rom. 11:33; 1 Cor. 2:9; Eph. 3:20). No one can fathom the depths of His wisdom.

55:10, 11 **bring forth**: For a similar reference, see 2 Cor. 9:10. God’s **word** is similar to rainfall; it produces fruit (Ps. 147:15–20). Just as water enlivens and strengthens a withering rose, God’s word produces life in the hearts of sinners.

55:12 The phrase **go out** refers historically to the Exodus from Bab-

ylon (48:20, 21; 52:11, 12). The **singing** of the elements of creation is a way of describing the singing of God’s people. The rejoicing of the people at the Lord’s salvation will be so full that it will seem that **mountains, hills, and trees** join in the chorus and applause (14:7, 8; 44:23).

55:13 **Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress tree**: This expression symbolizes the replacement of God’s judgments with salvation (compare 5:6; 32:13; 41:19). **Everlasting sign** recalls the rainbow after the Flood (19:20; Gen. 9:8–17).

56:1—66:24 The prophecies in these concluding chapters are addressed to those who returned to the land of Israel before the rebuilding of the temple in 520 B.C. The temple was still in ruins (63:18; 64:8–12), but its rebuilding was foreseen (56:6–8). The restored worshiping community faced the question of who would be admitted into the religious community (ch. 56). As before the Exile, Israel continued to struggle with idolatry (57:1–13), hypocrisy (ch. 58), injustice (59:1–8), and spiritual malaise (64:1–7).

56:1 about to come: God’s salvation is always near (51:5; Phil. 4:5). **My righteousness** is a synonym for **My salvation** (41:2; 45:8; 46:13; 51:6).

56:2 Keeps from defiling the Sabbath (Ex. 20:8–11) epitomizes righteousness, for the Sabbath was the sign of the covenant (Ex. 31:13–17; Jer. 17:21–27; Ezek. 20:20, 21). Since keeping the Sabbath revealed clear commitment to the Lord, it was closely associated with righteousness and justice.

56:3 In speaking of the proselyte **who has joined himself to the LORD**, Isaiah was not speaking of the foreign wives that returning

sign

(Heb. *ot*) (7:14; 19:20; 55:13; Gen. 1:14) Strong’s #226

The Hebrew word for **sign** refers to something which is marked off or made distinct. God gave circumcision to Israel as a sign of their covenant relationship with Him, the fact that they were set apart for Him (Gen. 17:11). The word was also used to call attention to a particular event and God’s promises surrounding that event. For instance, the rainbow is a reminder of the Flood and God’s promise to refrain from destroying the earth with a flood again (Gen. 9:13). God promised to provide a clear sign of the coming Messiah in His virgin birth (7:14). The counterpart of this word in the NT (Gk. *semeion*) is used widely by the gospel writers (Matt. 16:4; Mark 8:12; John 2:11) to refer to Jesus’ miraculous signs which confirmed His divinity.

- Speak, saying,
 “The LORD has utterly separated me
 from His people”;
 Nor let the ^deunuch say,
 “Here I am, a dry tree.”
⁴ For thus says the LORD:
 “To the eunuchs who keep My
 Sabbaths,
 And choose what pleases Me,
 And hold fast My covenant,
⁵ Even to them I will give in ^eMy house
 And within My walls a place ^fand a
 name
 Better than that of sons and
 daughters;
 I will give ¹ them an everlasting name
 That shall not be cut off.
- ⁶ “Also the sons of the foreigner
 Who join themselves to the LORD, to
 serve Him,
 And to love the name of the LORD, to
 be His servants—
 Everyone who keeps from defiling
 the Sabbath,
 And holds fast My covenant—
⁷ Even them I will ^gbring to My holy
 mountain,
 And make them joyful in My ^hhouse
 of prayer.
ⁱ Their burnt offerings and their
 sacrifices
 Will be ^jaccepted on My altar;
 For ^kMy house shall be called a
 house of prayer ^lfor all nations.”
⁸ The Lord God, ^mwho gathers the
 outcasts of Israel, says,
ⁿ“Yet I will gather to him
 Others besides those who are
 gathered to him.”

Israel's Irresponsible Leaders

- ⁹ ^o All you beasts of the field, come to
 devour,

³ ^d Deut. 23:1; Jer. 38:7; Acts 8:27
⁵ ^e 1 Tim. 3:15
^f [1 John 3:1, 2]
¹ Lit. *him*
⁷ ^g [Is. 2:2, 3; 60:11;
 Mic. 4:1, 2] ^h Matt.
 21:13; Mark 11:17;
 Luke 19:46 ⁱ [Rom.
 12:1; Heb. 13:15;
 1 Pet. 2:5] ^j Is. 60:7
^k Matt. 21:13 ^l [Mal.
 1:11]
⁸ ^m Ps. 147:2; Is.
 11:12; 27:12; 54:7
ⁿ Is. 60:3-11; 66:18-
 21; [John 10:16]
⁹ ^o Jer. 12:9

¹⁰ ^p Matt. 15:14
^q Phil. 3:2 ² Or
Dreaming
¹¹ ^r Is. 28:7; Ezek.
 13:19; [Mic. 3:5,
 11] ^s Ezek. 34:2-10
³ Lit. *strong of soul*
⁴ Lit. *do not know*
satisfaction
¹² ^t Is. 28:7 ^u Ps.
 10:6; Prov. 23:35;
 Is. 22:13; Luke
 12:19; 1 Cor. 15:32
^v 2 Pet. 3:4

CHAPTER 57

¹ ^a Ps. 12:1 ^b 1 Kin.
 14:13 ¹ Lit. *the face*
of evil
² ^c 2 Chr. 16:14
³ ^d Is. 1:4; Matt. 16:4
⁵ ^e 2 Kin. 16:4

- All you beasts in the forest.
¹⁰ His watchmen *are* ^pblind,
 They are all ignorant;
^q They are all dumb dogs,
 They cannot bark;
² Sleeping, lying down, loving to
 slumber.
¹¹ Yes, *they are* ^rgreedy ³ dogs
 Which ^snever ⁴ have enough.
 And they *are* shepherds
 Who cannot understand;
 They all look to their own way,
 Every one for his own gain,
 From his *own* territory.
¹² “Come,” *one says*, “I will bring wine,
 And we will fill ourselves with
 intoxicating ^tdrink;
^u Tomorrow will be ^vas today,
 And much more abundant.”

Israel's Futile Idolatry

- 57** The righteous perishes,
 And no man takes *it* to heart;
^a Merciful men *are* taken away,
^b While no one considers
 That the righteous is taken away
 from ¹evil.
² He shall enter into peace;
 They shall rest in ^ctheir beds,
 Each *one* walking in his uprightness.
- ³ “But come here,
^d You sons of the sorceress,
 You offspring of the adulterer and
 the harlot!
⁴ Whom do you ridicule?
 Against whom do you make a wide
 mouth
 And stick out the tongue?
 Are you not children of
 transgression,
 Offspring of falsehood,
⁵ Inflaming yourselves with gods
^eunder every green tree,

exiles married. Ezra and Nehemiah would have to purge the restored community of these unconverted pagans (see Ezra 9). Isaiah was prophesying of foreigners who would be converted to the worship of the true Lord (see 44:5). These were foreigners who would demonstrate saving faith and thus be counted among those “born in Zion” (see Ps. 87).

56:4, 5 eunuchs: Probably some of the male exiles were castrated so that they could serve in the Babylonian and Persian courts (39:7; Dan. 1:3). **A place and a name** may be rephrased as “a memorial monument.” For Isaiah, this memorial is **better than that of sons and daughters** because it symbolizes an **everlasting name**, or everlasting life, in the temple. **Not be cut off** is an idiom for preserving one’s name through one’s offspring. The phrase links this passage with 55:13.

56:7 house of prayer: Inclusion in the covenant community involves intimate communion with God (Ps. 15:1; Matt. 21:13). **for all nations:** People of other nations who came to a living faith in God were met with a **joyful** welcome (2:2-4; 1 Kin. 8:41-43). Jesus also spoke of joy in heaven over a repentant sinner (Luke 15:7).

56:8 Outcasts refers to the exiles (11:11, 12).

56:9 The unclean, ravenous **beasts** summoned to attack the ungodly community are hostile nations (18:6; Jer. 12:8, 9; Ezek. 34:5, 8, 25; 1 Cor 15:32). In ancient Eastern religions, demons and spirits were often believed to appear as animals.

56:10 The pronoun **His** refers to the Lord. **Watchmen**, those who ought to warn the city of approaching danger, refers to prophets (21:6; Jer. 6:17; Ezek. 3:17; 33:2-7) who do not fear God. The ungodly watchmen leave the people defenseless.

56:11 greedy dogs: The dog was not highly regarded in biblical culture, and to the Jews they were unclean. **Shepherds** is a metaphor for rulers (40:11; Ezek. 34:1-6).

57:2 Peace here refers to the final state of the righteous who **rest** in their deathbeds (3:10, 11; 53:5; Phil. 1:21-23). No one understood that the righteous were being spared the judgment to come (2 Kin. 22:19, 20).

57:3 offspring: For similar references, see 1:4; Ezek. 16:3, 45. **Adulterer and harlot** allude to the perverse Canaanite fertility rites that threatened the culture of ancient Israel.

57:5 Green tree was associated with pagan fertility rites (1:29, 30; 1 Kin. 14:23; Jer. 2:20). **Slaying the children** was associated with

- ^fSlaying the children in the valleys,
Under the clefts of the rocks?
6 Among the smooth ^gstones of the
stream
Is your portion;
They, they, *are* your lot!
Even to them you have poured a
drink offering,
You have offered a grain offering.
Should I receive comfort in ^hthese?
- 7 “On ⁱa lofty and high mountain
You have set ^jyour bed;
Even there you went up
To offer sacrifice.
8 Also behind the doors and their posts
You have set up your remembrance;
For you have uncovered yourself to
those other than Me,
And have gone up to them;
You have enlarged your bed
And ²made a covenant with them;
^kYou have loved their bed,
Where you saw *their* ³nudity.
9 ^lYou went to the king with ointment,
And increased your perfumes;
You sent your ^mmessengers far off,
And *even* descended to Sheol.
10 You are wearied in the length of your
way;
ⁿYet you did not say, “There is no hope.”
You have found the life of your hand;
Therefore you were not grieved.
11 “And ^oof whom have you been afraid,
or feared,
That you have lied

5 ^f 2 Kin. 23:10; Ps.
106:37, 38; Jer. 7:31;
Ezek. 16:20
6 ^g Jer. 3:9; Hab.
2:19 ^h Jer. 5:9,
29; 9:9
7 ⁱ Jer. 3:6; Ezek.
16:16 ^j Ezek. 23:41
8 ^k Ezek. 16:26 ² Lit.
cut ³ Lit. *hand*, a
euphemism
9 ^l Hos. 7:11 ^m Ezek.
23:16, 40
10 ⁿ Jer. 2:25; 18:12
11 ^o Prov. 29:25; Is.
51:12, 13

^p Ps. 50:21; Eccl.
8:11; Is. 42:14
⁴ remained silent
14 ^q Is. 40:3; 62:10;
Jer. 18:15
15 ^r Job 6:10; Luke
1:49 ^s Ps. 68:35;
Zech. 2:13 ^t Ps.
34:18; 51:17; Is. 66:2
^u Ps. 147:3; Is. 61:1-3

And not remembered Me,
Nor taken *it* to your heart?
Is it not because ^pI have ⁴held My
peace from of old
That you do not fear Me?
12 I will declare your righteousness
And your works,
For they will not profit you.
13 When you cry out,
Let your collection of *idols* deliver
you.
But the wind will carry them all
away,
A breath will take *them*.
But he who puts his trust in Me shall
possess the land,
And shall inherit My holy
mountain.”

Healing for the Backslider

- 14 And one shall say,
^q“Heap it up! Heap it up!
Prepare the way,
Take the stumbling block out of the
way of My people.”
- 15 For thus says the High and Lofty
One
Who inhabits eternity, ^rwhose name
is Holy:
^s“I dwell in the high and holy place,
^tWith him *who* has a contrite and
humble spirit,
^u“To revive the spirit of the humble,
And to revive the heart of the
contrite ones.

the worship of Molech and with demon worship (30:33; 2 Kin. 23:10; Ps. 106:37, 38; Jer. 7:31).

57:6 Immoral idolatry was the people's **portion** or **lot**, instead of the Lord (Deut. 4:19, 20; Ps. 16:5; 142:5).

57:7 A **high mountain** refers to a place for idolatrous practices (Jer. 3:6; Ezek. 16:16; Mic. 1:3–5). The word **bed** is associated with sexual aspects of idolatry (Ezek. 23:17; Hos. 4:13). **sacrifice**: Animal and grain offerings were also part of pagan worship. There were enough similarities between true and false worship for people to be confused (compare “wisdom” and “folly” in Prov. 9).

57:8 **Remembrance** may refer to a pagan cultic symbol in the home. **made a covenant**: This phrase, which has so many associations with true religion, is here used in the context of obscene behavior associated with pagan worship. **nudity**: The Hebrew word is the regular term for “hand.” Here it appears to be a euphemism for the male genitals.

57:9 **King** probably refers to the Ammonite god Molech (1 Kin. 11:7), whose name means “king.” **Sheol** here alludes to the gods of the underworld, perhaps associated with necromancy.

57:10 **There is no hope**: The people persisted in worthless idolatry. The people's **way** is detailed in vv. 5–9. They found a counterfeit **life** in immorality and idolatry that would only lead to permanent death (Rom. 1:18–32).

57:11 **of whom have you been afraid . . . not remembered Me**: For a related passage, see 51:12, 13. **Lied** here refers to infidelity to the Lord. The Lord **held His peace** by not sending judgment immediately (42:14; 48:9; 2 Pet. 3:9).

57:12 **your righteousness**: Here this phrase is stated in sarcasm or irony (58:2, 3; 64:6).

57:13 **Let your . . . idols deliver you**: The thought is pitiful (44:17). The worshiper of idols was appealing to a work of his own hands for deliverance. **the wind will carry them all away**: The idols are like worthless chaff (Ps. 1:4). **But**: This word shows that there is an appeal in the denunciation. Each judgment text is a call for repentance. **puts his trust**: This verb is used of a little chick finding shelter under its mother's wings (4:6; 25:4; Ruth 2:12).

57:14 This verse is based on 40:1–4. The phrase **one shall say** resembles “The voice of one crying” (40:2). **Heap it up** resembles “Every valley shall be exalted” (40:4). **Prepare the way** repeats the appeal of 40:3 (see also 11:16; 35:8–10; 62:10). **Stumbling block** probably refers to the idolatry described in vv. 3–13.

57:15 This verse matches Ex. 34:6 as a defining passage for understanding the biblical view of God: Although God is completely unapproachable, He reaches down to lift up those who humble themselves before Him. **High and Lofty** may be rephrased as “Exceedingly Lofty” (2:11; 6:1; 52:13). This is one of the ways in which Isaiah describes the transcendence and holiness of God. He is above everyone—perfect and holy. **inhabits eternity**: Not only is God eternal, without beginning or ending, He transcends time itself. In this way He is able to give all of His time to each of His people; He is not bound by the succession of moments that limits our experience. **High and holy** may be rephrased as “unsearchably high” (32:15; 33:5, 16). **Contrite and humble** may be rephrased as “genuinely humble,” referring to those who submit and repent under God's judgment (Ps. 34:17, 18; 51:17; 1 Pet. 5:6).

- 16 ^vFor I will not contend forever,
Nor will I always be angry;
For the spirit would fail before Me,
And the souls ^wwhich I have made.
- 17 For the iniquity of ^xhis
covetousness
I was angry and struck him;
^yI hid and was angry,
^zAnd he went on ⁵backsliding in the
way of his heart.
- 18 I have seen his ways, and ^awill heal
him;
I will also lead him,
And restore comforts to him
And to ^bhis mourners.
- 19 “I create ^cthe fruit of the lips:
Peace, peace ^dto *him who is far off*
and to *him who is near*,”
Says the LORD,
“And I will heal him.”
- 20 ^eBut the wicked *are* like the troubled
sea,
When it cannot rest,
Whose waters cast up mire and dirt.
- 21 “*There^f is no peace*,”
Says my God, “for the wicked.”

Fasting that Pleases God

- 58 ^gCry aloud, ¹spare not;
Lift up your voice like a
trumpet;
^hTell My people their transgression,
And the house of Jacob their sins.
- 2 Yet they seek Me daily,
And delight to know My ways,
As a nation that did righteousness,
And did not forsake the ordinance of
their God.

16 ^vPs. 85:5; 103:9;
[Mic. 7:18] ^wNum.
16:22; Job 34:14;
Heb. 12:9
17 ^xIs. 2:7; 56:11;
Jer. 6:13 ^yIs. 8:17;
45:15; 59:2 ^zIs. 9:13
⁵Or turning back
18 ^aJer. 3:22 ^bIs.
61:2
19 ^cIs. 6:7; 51:16;
59:21; Heb. 13:15
^dActs 2:39; Eph.
2:17
20 ^eJob 15:20; Prov.
4:16; Jude 13
21 ^fIs. 48:22

CHAPTER 58

1 ^aMic. 3:8 1 ^{do not}
^{hold back}

3 ^bMal. 3:13-18;
Luke 18:12 ^cLev.
16:29; 23:27 ²Lit.
^{drive hard}
4 ^d1 Kin. 21:9
5 ^eZech. 7:5 ^fLev.
16:29 ^gEsth. 4:3;
Job 2:8; Dan. 9:3
6 ^hLuke 4:18, 19
ⁱNeh. 5:10-12 ^jJer.
34:9 ³Lit. ^{bonds of}
^{the yoke}
7 ^kEzek. 18:7; Matt.
25:35 ^jJob 31:19-
22; James 2:14-17
^mGen. 29:14; Neh.
5:5 ⁴wandering

- They ask of Me the ordinances of
justice;
They take delight in approaching
God.
- 3 ‘Why ^bhave we fasted,’ *they say*, ‘and
You have not seen?’
Why have we ‘afflicted our souls,
and You take no notice?’
- “In fact, in the day of your fast you
find pleasure,
And ²exploit all your laborers.
- 4 ^dIndeed you fast for strife and
debate,
And to strike with the fist of
wickedness.
You will not fast as *you do* this day,
To make your voice heard on high.
- 5 Is ^eit a fast that I have chosen,
^fA day for a man to afflict his soul?
Is it to bow down his head like a
bulrush,
And ^gto spread out sackcloth and
ashes?
Would you call this a fast,
And an acceptable day to the LORD?
- 6 “Is this not the fast that I have chosen:
To ^hloose the bonds of wickedness,
ⁱTo undo the ³heavy burdens,
^jTo let the oppressed go free,
And that you break every yoke?
7 *Is it* not ^kto share your bread with
the hungry,
And that you bring to your house the
poor who are ⁴cast out;
^lWhen you see the naked, that you
cover him,
And not hide yourself from ^myour
own flesh?

57:16 God **will not contend forever** because humans will always **fail**. Therefore, in His sovereign grace, the Lord “created” salvation (54:9; 57:19; Gen. 8:21, 22; Ps. 130:3, 4).

57:17 **I hid**: For a related reference, see 1:15. **I was angry**: For a similar reference to the Lord’s anger, see 54:7, 8. **Covetousness** violates God’s covenant (56:11; Ps. 119:36; Jer. 22:17).

57:18 **I . . . will heal**: The Lord is the Physician (30:26). **I will . . . lead him**: For similar imagery describing the Lord’s guidance, see 40:11; 42:16. **Mourners** refers to those who lament the destruction of Jerusalem (66:10).

57:19 **fruit of the lips**: For an explanation of the fruit, see Heb. 13:15. **Peace, peace** indicates “genuine peace.” Contrast the false use of this phrase in Jer. 6:13, 14; 8:10, 11. **far off . . . near**: For a similar reference, see 56:7, 8 (compare Acts 2:39; Eph. 2:13, 17).

57:20 **cannot rest**: Contrast v. 2. The fate of **the wicked** is also described in 56:9–12; 57:3–13. **troubled sea**: For a similar analogy comparing the wicked to turbulent waters, see Jude 13.

57:21 **There is no peace . . . for the wicked**: This phrase is also found in 48:22.

58:1 Isaiah was to alert the people as loudly and clearly as a **trumpet** (Ex. 19:19; 20:18; Hos. 8:1; 1 Cor. 14:8). **Transgression** is related to the verb translated “rebelled” in 1:2.

58:2 **They seek Me daily** contrasts with the seeking called for in 55:6. **Ordinance** is translated “justice” in 56:1. The hypocritical religionists **delight in approaching God** in ritual worship (29:13).

58:3, 4 Formerly, the nation **fasted** in times of national calamity (Jer. 36:9; Joel 1:14); later, fasting became part of the liturgical calendar (Zech. 7:2, 3; 8:19; Luke 18:12). This sermon may have been delivered on the Day of Atonement when the people of Israel **afflicted their souls** (v. 10; Lev. 16:29). **You take no notice**: A similar attitude is expressed in Mal. 3:14. Paradoxically, Israel finds **pleasure** in fasting, but not in keeping the Sabbath (vv. 13, 14). The accusations, **you . . . exploit all your laborers** and **you fast for strife and debate**, expose the hypocrisy of the people’s worship. Instead of ceasing their normal pursuits and setting the day aside to fast and pray, they **strike with the fist** the laborer who does not work. **Will not** may also be translated “cannot.”

58:5 **Is it a fast that I have chosen**: For related passages, see 1:10–15; Amos 5:21–23; Mic. 6:7. The people’s fast was not an **acceptable day to the Lord** because it focused on self-righteousness and not on justice for others. **Bow down** and **spread out** refer to the mourning ceremonies which accompanied fasting (2 Sam. 12:16; Joel 1:13, 14). **Like a bulrush** is meant to signify humility (42:3).

58:6 **To loose, to undo, to let . . . go free**, and **break every yoke** are synonyms of genuine righteousness (Ezek. 18:16–18). **Yoke** is a metaphor for social oppression.

58:7 **The hungry . . . the naked**: For similar expressions of the duty to take care of the poor, see Job 31:16–23; Matt. 25:35, 36. **The poor who are cast out** refers to those whose lands and houses were expropriated in payment of debts.

- 8 ^aThen your light shall break forth like the morning,
Your healing shall spring forth speedily,
And your righteousness shall go before you;
^oThe glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard.
- 9 Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer;
You shall cry, and He will say, ‘Here I am.’
- “If you take away the yoke from your midst,
The ⁵pointing of the finger, and
^pspeaking wickedness,
10 If you extend your soul to the hungry
And satisfy the afflicted soul,
Then your light shall dawn in the darkness,
And your ⁶darkness shall be as the noonday.
- 11 The LORD will guide you continually,
And satisfy your soul in drought,
And strengthen your bones;
You shall be like a watered garden,
And like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail.
- 12 Those from among you
^qShall build the old waste places;
You shall raise up the foundations of many generations;
And you shall be called the Repairer of the Breach,
The Restorer of ⁷Streets to Dwell In.
- 13 ^rIf you turn away your foot from the Sabbath,
From doing your pleasure on My holy day,
And call the Sabbath a delight,
The holy *day* of the LORD honorable,
And shall honor Him, not doing your own ways,
Nor finding your own pleasure,
Nor speaking *your own* words,

8 ^a Job 11:17 ^o Ex. 14:19; Is. 52:12
9 ^p Ps. 12:2; Is. 59:13
⁵ Lit. *sending out of*
10 ⁶ Or *gloom*
12 ^q Is. 61:4 ⁷ Lit. *Paths*
13 ^r Ex. 31:16, 17; 35:2, 3; Is. 56:2, 4, 6; Jer. 17:21-27

14 ^s Job 22:26; Is. 61:10 ^t Deut. 32:13; 33:29; Is. 33:16; Hab. 3:19 ^u Is. 1:20; 40:5; Mic. 4:4

CHAPTER 59

1 ^a Num. 11:23; Is. 50:2; Jer. 32:17
2 ^b Is. 1:15
3 ^c Is. 1:15, 21; Jer. 2:30, 34; Ezek. 7:23; Hos. 4:2
¹ *bloodshed*
4 ^d Is. 30:12; Jer. 7:4
^e Job 15:35; Ps. 7:14; Is. 33:11 ² *trouble*
6 ^f Job 8:14

- 14 ^sThen you shall delight yourself in the LORD;
And I will cause you to ride on the high hills of the earth,
And feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father.
“The mouth of the LORD has spoken.”

Separated from God

- 59 Behold, the LORD’s hand is not ^ashortened,
That it cannot save;
Nor His ear heavy,
That it cannot hear.
- 2 But your iniquities have separated you from your God;
And your sins have hidden His face from you,
So that He will ^bnot hear.
- 3 For ^cyour hands are defiled with ¹blood,
And your fingers with iniquity;
Your lips have spoken lies,
Your tongue has muttered perversity.
- 4 No one calls for justice,
Nor does *any* plead for truth.
They trust in ^dempty words and speak lies;
^eThey conceive ²evil and bring forth iniquity.
- 5 They hatch vipers’ eggs and weave the spider’s web;
He who eats of their eggs dies,
And *from* that which is crushed a viper breaks out.
- 6 ^fTheir webs will not become garments,
Nor will they cover themselves with their works;
Their works *are* works of iniquity,
And the act of violence *is* in their hands.

58:8 The **light** dawned with the advent of Christ (v. 10; 9:2; 10:17; 59:9; 60:1–3; Luke 1:78, 79). **Righteousness** refers to salvation (56:1). **The glory of the LORD** probably alludes to the pillar of cloud and fire in the desert (4:5, 6; Ex. 13:21; 14:20). **rear guard**: A marching army needs an alert rear defense (see also 52:12).

58:9 The **pointing of the finger** was a sinister gesture (Prov. 6:13).

58:10 The **afflicted soul** here contrasts with the hypocritical affliction described in v. 3.

58:11 A **watered garden** and a perennial **spring** are similes for prosperity and the blessings of God’s salvation.

58:12 **Build the old waste places** presupposes that the restored exiles had not found the spiritual and economic resources to rebuild Judah (44:26, 28; 61:2, 4; Ezek. 36:10; Hag. 1:2–9). The coming of Christ rebuilt the house of David (Amos 9:11, 12; Acts 15:15–17).

58:13 **Doing your pleasure** probably refers to commerce (vv. 3, 4; Amos 8:5). **Holy day** clearly indicates that in vv. 2–9 the Lord was not rejecting ritual altogether (see 66:23).

58:14 This blessing is based on the Song of Moses in Deut. 32:9, 13.

59:1 the LORD’s hand is not shortened: For related passages, see 40:10; 50:2. The Lord’s **ear**, unlike Israel’s (6:10), is able to **hear**.

59:3 your hands are defiled with blood: For similar passages on the people’s guilt, see 1:15; 59:7; Ezek. 7:23. **Your lips have spoken lies**: For related passages, see 33:15; 59:13; Mark 7:21–23; Rom. 3:10–18; Gal. 5:19–21.

59:4 Calls for justice probably means to help the poor in the law courts (Job 9:16; 13:22). No one would **plead** the case of the poor fairly (1:17; 5:23; 59:14). **Conceive evil and bring forth iniquity** is translated “conceive trouble and bring forth futility” in Job 15:35.

59:5 Hatch . . . eggs and weave the . . . web signify the deliberate, calculated wickedness in the courts (32:7; 59:4).

59:6 Their webs will not become garments illustrates the futility depicted in v. 4 and the ultimate failure of the schemes depicted in v. 5. The wicked power structures would prove worthless (Job 8:14, 15).

- ⁷ *g* Their feet run to evil,
And they make haste to shed
^h innocent blood;
ⁱ Their thoughts are thoughts of
iniquity;
Wasting and ^j destruction are in their
paths.
⁸ The way of ^k peace they have not
known,
And *there is* no justice in their ways;
^l They have made themselves crooked
paths;
Whoever takes that way shall not
know peace.

Sin Confessed

- ⁹ Therefore justice is far from us,
Nor does righteousness overtake us;
^m We look for light, but there is
darkness!
For brightness, *but* we walk in
blackness!
¹⁰ ⁿ We grope for the wall like the blind,
And we grope as if *we had* no eyes;
We stumble at noonday as at
twilight;
We are as dead *men* in desolate places.
¹¹ We all growl like bears,
And ^o moan sadly like doves;
We look for justice, but *there is* none;
For salvation, *but* it is far from us.
¹² For our ^p transgressions are
multiplied before You,
And our sins testify against us;
For our transgressions are *with* us,
And *as for* our iniquities, we know
them:
¹³ In transgressing and lying against the
LORD,
And departing from our God,
Speaking oppression and revolt,
Conceiving and uttering ^q from the
heart words of falsehood.

⁷ ^g Prov. 1:16; Rom.
3:15 ^h Prov. 6:17 ⁱ Is.
55:7 ^j Rom. 3:16, 17
⁸ ^k Is. 57:20, 21 ^l Ps.
125:5; Prov. 2:15
⁹ ^m Jer. 8:15
¹⁰ ⁿ Deut. 28:29;
Job 5:14; Amos 8:9
¹¹ ^o Is. 38:14; Ezek.
7:16
¹² ^p Is. 24:5; 58:1
¹³ ^q Matt. 12:34

¹⁵ ^r Is. 5:23; 10:2;
29:21; 32:7 ^s Lit. *it*
was evil in His eyes
¹⁶ ^t Is. 41:28; 63:5;
64:7; Ezek. 22:30
¹⁷ ^u Mark 6:6 ^v Ps. 98:1;
Is. 63:5
¹⁸ ^w Eph. 6:14, 17;
1 Thess. 5:8
¹⁹ ^x Is. 63:6; Rom.
2:6
²⁰ ^y Ps. 113:3; Mal.
1:11 ^z Rev. 12:15
²⁰ ^z Rom. 11:26 ☆

- ¹⁴ Justice is turned back,
And righteousness stands afar off;
For truth is fallen in the street,
And equity cannot enter.
¹⁵ So truth fails,
And he *who* departs from evil makes
himself a ^r prey.

The Redeemer of Zion

- Then the LORD saw *it*, and ³ *it*
displeased Him
That *there was* no justice.
¹⁶ ^s He saw that *there was* no man,
And ^t wondered that *there was* no
intercessor;
^u Therefore His own arm brought
salvation for Him;
And His own righteousness, it
sustained Him.
¹⁷ ^v For He put on righteousness as a
breastplate,
And a helmet of salvation on His
head;
He put on the garments of vengeance
for clothing,
And was clad with zeal as a cloak.
¹⁸ ^w According to *their* deeds, accordingly
He will repay,
Fury to His adversaries,
Recompense to His enemies;
The coastlands He will fully repay.
¹⁹ ^x So shall they fear
The name of the LORD from the west,
And His glory from the rising of the
sun;
When the enemy comes in ^y like a flood,
The Spirit of the LORD will lift up a
standard against him.
²⁰ ^z The Redeemer will come to Zion,
And to those who turn from
transgression in Jacob,
Says the LORD.

59:7, 8 This passage is cited in Rom. 3:15–17 to document the universality of sin. **Their feet . . . make haste to shed innocent blood:** The people *run* without forethought into evil (Prov. 1:16). **thoughts of iniquity:** Contrast 55:7–9. Those who deny *peace* to others will themselves not know peace (57:21). **crooked paths:** For similar images of the wicked person's way of life, see Prov. 2:15; 10:9; 28:18. **59:9** *Therefore* links Israel's repentance with the prophet's reprimand. With the pronoun *us*, Isaiah identified himself with his people's sins (Ezra 9:6, 7; Dan. 9:5). The words **justice** and **righteousness** refer to God's salvation (46:13). **Light** and **darkness** refer to salvation and doom respectively (9:2; 42:16; 58:8, 10; 60:1–3). The Book of Isaiah, like the Gospel of John, makes much use of the words *light* and *darkness* as a way to contrast eternal life and death, truth and falsehood (John 1:4–9; 3:19–21; 8:12; 9:5; 12:35, 36). **59:10** The people **grobe . . . like the blind** in fulfillment of the covenant curse on those who were disobedient (Deut. 28:29). **59:11** The people **growl** out of frustration. **moan:** For related images of the people's despair involving doves, see 38:14; Ezek. 7:16. **59:14** **Justice** and **righteousness** speak here of ethical conduct (v. 4). **59:15, 16** **Justice** refers here to **salvation** (vv. 9, 10). The Lord,

using the first person, expresses the thought of this passage in 63:5. **no man:** God's salvation does not depend on humans (Ezek. 22:30). **no intercessor:** Contrast the intercession of the Servant in 53:12. **His own arm** figuratively represents the Lord as a warrior (42:13; 49:24, 25; 51:9; 52:10). **Righteousness** refers to the Lord's victorious salvation (46:13; 51:6, 8; 56:1). **59:17** The Lord's **breastplate** and **helmet** are taken up by His saints in their battle against the devil (Eph. 6:14–17). **garments of vengeance:** For a more detailed description of the Lord who comes to judge but also to save, see 63:1–3. **59:18** **Recompense to His enemies** is translated “fully repays His enemies” in 66:6. **Coastlands** indicates that the Lord's adversaries were distant nations (41:1). However, He judged wicked Israelites as well (65:6, 7). Only the repentant will be blessed (vv. 9–15, 20). **59:19** **From the west . . . from the rising of the sun** is another way of saying everywhere. **When the enemy comes** could also mean “when He comes as an enemy” (35:4). **59:20** **The Redeemer will come** in the person of Jesus Christ. For other prophecies of the Redeemer see 41:14. **turn from transgression:** For similar appeals to turn from sin in the prophecies of Isaiah see 1:17–19; 30:15; 31:6; 59:9–15.



Standard

A standard was a symbol carried on a pole and raised high in the air, much like a flag, to rally a tribe or a group of warriors in battle (Num. 2:10; Is. 59:19). These standards or ensigns were probably carvings or likenesses of animals raised on a spear or pole (Num. 21:8, 9). These were usually set on a hill and often were accompanied by the sound of a trumpet.



The eagle was one of the earliest known standards. In fact, it became the official standard or symbol of the Roman Empire. Other popular animal standards were stags, steers, horses, lions, unicorns, serpents, and wolves. Assyrian armies carried the moon sickle mounted on a spear in honor of their god, Ashur.

The eagle standard of the Romans

Baker Photo Archive. Istanbul Archaeological Museums.

²¹“As^a for Me,” says the LORD, “this is My covenant with them: My Spirit who is upon you, and My words which I have put in your mouth, shall not depart from your mouth, nor from the mouth of your descendants, nor from the mouth of your descendants’ descendants,” says the LORD, “from this time and forevermore.”

The Gentiles Bless Zion

60 Arise, ^ashine;
For your light has come!
And ^bthe glory of the LORD is risen upon you.
² For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth,

21 ^a [Heb. 8:10; 10:16]

CHAPTER 60

¹ ^a Eph. 5:14 ^b Mal. 4:2

³ ^c Is. 49:6, 23; Rev. 21:24 ☆
⁴ ^d Is. 49:18 ^e Is. 49:20-22

⁵ ^f [Rom. 11:25-27]
⁶ ^g Gen. 25:4 ^h Gen. 25:3; Ps. 72:10 ⁱ Is. 61:6; Matt. 2:11
⁷ / Gen. 25:13 ^k Is. 56:7 ^l Is. 60:13; Hag. 2:7, 9
⁹ ^m Ps. 72:10

And deep darkness the people;
But the LORD will arise over you,
And His glory will be seen upon you.
³ The ^eGentiles shall come to your light,
And kings to the brightness of your rising.
⁴ “Lift^d up your eyes all around, and see:
They all gather together, ^ethey come to you;
Your sons shall come from afar,
And your daughters shall be nursed at *your* side.
⁵ Then you shall see and become radiant,
And your heart shall swell with joy;
Because ^fthe abundance of the sea shall be turned to you,
The wealth of the Gentiles shall come to you.
⁶ The multitude of camels shall cover your *land*,
The dromedaries of Midian and ^gEphah;
All those from ^hSheba shall come;
They shall bring ⁱgold and incense,
And they shall proclaim the praises of the LORD.
⁷ All the flocks of ^jKedar shall be gathered together to you,
The rams of Nebaioth shall minister to you;
They shall ascend with ^kacceptance on My altar,
And ^lI will glorify the house of My glory.
⁸ “Who *are* these *who* fly like a cloud,
And like doves to their roosts?
⁹ ^mSurely the coastlands shall wait for Me;
And the ships of Tarshish *will come* first,

59:21 Them refers to the repentant (v. 20). **My Spirit:** For similar references see 11:2; 30:1; 42:1; 48:16; 61:1; Luke 3:22. **You and your** in this verse are singular, probably with reference to Isaiah. God’s Spirit and **words** would be given to all Israel so that all would become prophets of the living God (44:3).

60:1 Arise is addressed to Zion (v. 14). **shine:** Zion is both the recipient of God’s light and the reflector of it. **light:** Isaiah’s prophecies often emphasize the contrast between light and darkness to symbolize the contrast between eternal life and death, salvation and judgment (see 9:2; 10:17; 58:8; 59:9; 60:19, 20).

60:2 As was the case during the Exodus from Egypt, **darkness** is on the wicked while God’s light is on His people (Ex. 10:23). **Deep darkness** elsewhere describes a cloud enfolding the glory of God (Ex. 20:21), and serves as a warning of His impending judgment (Jer. 13:16).

60:3 Gentiles is translated “nations” in 2:2–4. In the earlier passage, they come to heavenly Zion to be taught of God; here they come to bring tribute (vv. 5, 11, 13). Isaiah foresaw a day when not only would the righteous remnant in Israel be devoted to God, but so would the redeemed from all peoples. Christ is the **light to kings** (42:6; 49:6).

60:4 Lift up your eyes . . . they come to you is cited from 49:18. **Your sons . . . your daughters** is cited from 49:22. Those verses were addressed to exiles and primarily concerned their return to the land, while this verse is addressed to the few restored exiles and looks to a greater return that is still in the future (11:11).

60:5 become radiant: See “shine” in v. 1. **wealth of the Gentiles:** For similar phrases, see Hag. 2:7; Zech. 14:14.

60:6 Camels, animals of burden, carried **gold and incense**. **Midian** was famous as a caravan leader and trader (Gen. 37:28, 36). **Ephah** was one of Midian’s sons (Gen. 25:4). The allusion to **Sheba**, renowned for its wealth, links this city with Solomon’s (1 Kin. 10:1–13; Ps. 72:10). **proclaim the praises:** The nations would not bring just their wealth; they would accompany their gifts with public, vocal acknowledgment of the wonder of God (1 Kin. 10:9; Heb. 13:14, 15).

60:8 The ships’ sails resemble a fast-moving **cloud** and **doves** returning to their roosts.

60:9 The reference to **the ships of Tarshish** (2:16) alludes to the wealth of King Solomon (1 Kin. 10:22).

ⁿTo bring your sons from afar,
^oTheir silver and their gold with them,
 To the name of the LORD your God,
 And to the Holy One of Israel,
^pBecause He has glorified you.

10^q “The ^q sons of foreigners shall build
 up your walls,
^r And their kings shall minister to you;
 For ^sin My wrath I struck you,
^tBut in My favor I have had mercy on
 you.
 11 Therefore your gates ^ushall be open
 continually;
 They shall not be shut day or night,
 That *men* may bring to you the
 wealth of the Gentiles,
 And their kings in procession.
 12 ^vFor the nation and kingdom which
 will not serve you shall perish,
 And *those* nations shall be utterly
 ruined.

13^w “The ^w glory of Lebanon shall come to
 you,
 The cypress, the pine, and the box
 tree together,
 To beautify the place of My
 sanctuary;
 And I will make ^xthe place of My
 feet glorious.
 14 Also the sons of those who afflicted
 you
 Shall come ^ybowing to you,
 And all those who despised you shall
^zfall prostrate at the soles of
 your feet;

9 ⁿ [Gal. 4:26] ^o Jer.
 3:17 ^p Is. 55:5
 10 ^q Is. 14:1, 2; 61:5;
 Zech. 6:15 ^r Is.
 49:23; Rev. 21:24
^s Is. 57:17 ^t Is. 54:7, 8
 11 ^u Is. 26:2; 60:18;
 62:10; Rev. 21:25, 26
 12 ^v Is. 14:2; Zech.
 14:17; Matt. 21:44
 13 ^w Is. 35:2 ^x 1 Chr.
 28:2; Ps. 132:7
 14 ^y Is. 45:14 ^z Is.
 49:23; Rev. 3:9

^o [Heb. 12:22; Rev.
 14:1]
 16 ^b Is. 49:23 ^c Is.
 43:3
 18 ^d Is. 26:1
ⁱ devastation
 19 ^e Rev. 21:23; 22:5

And they shall call you The City of
 the LORD,
^aZion of the Holy One of Israel.

15^a “Whereas you have been forsaken and
 hated,
 So that no one went through *you*,
 I will make you an eternal excellence,
 A joy of many generations.
 16 You shall drink the milk of the
 Gentiles,
^bAnd milk the breast of kings;
 You shall know that ^cI, the LORD, *am*
 your Savior
 And your Redeemer, the Mighty One
 of Jacob.
 17^a “Instead of bronze I will bring gold,
 Instead of iron I will bring silver,
 Instead of wood, bronze,
 And instead of stones, iron.
 I will also make your officers peace,
 And your magistrates righteousness.
 18 Violence shall no longer be heard in
 your land,
 Neither ⁱwasting nor destruction
 within your borders;
 But you shall call ^dyour walls
 Salvation,
 And your gates Praise.

God the Glory of His People

19^a “The ^esun shall no longer be your
 light by day,
 Nor for brightness shall the moon
 give light to you;
 But the LORD will be to you an
 everlasting light,

60:10 Foreigners, such as Hiram king of Tyre, helped build the first temple (1 Kin. 5); today Gentiles are building up the church, the temple of the Lord (Eph. 2:11–22). **Wrath** is translated “indignation” in 34:2.

60:11 Zion’s **gates shall be open continually** both because the city is secure and because the doors must be open in order to accommodate the great influx of the **wealth of the Gentiles** (v. 5). For the “gates of Zion,” see Ps. 87:1–3. This verse is alluded to in Rev. 21:24, 25.

60:12 The nation and kingdom that does not serve Zion, where Christ now reigns (Acts 2:29–36), **shall perish** (John 3:18; Heb. 2:3; 9:27; 10:27). In the coming kingdom, there will be no opposition to the reign of the Savior-King.

60:13 As **the glory of Lebanon**—its luxurious **cypress, pine,** and **box tree**—glorified the first temple (1 Kin. 5:10, 18) so it will **beautify** the temple again (vv. 5–7). Formerly, the **place of the Lord’s feet** was the ark of the covenant (1 Chr. 28:2); later it was the temple (Ezek. 43:7), and then the whole earth (66:1).

60:15 The new sanctuary will be greater than the old one because it is **eternal**, rich, and spiritual (vv. 17, 18). **you have been forsaken:** For related ideas, see 49:14, 21; 50:1; 54:6.

60:16 This verse is modeled on 49:26. In the earlier verse, the nations serve Israel; here they enrich it. **milk the breast of kings:** This line, representing great wealth, demonstrates clearly that the prophet was using figurative language.

60:17 The new temple will be made of better-than-necessary metals—**gold, silver, bronze,** and **iron**—symbolizing by exaggeration its exceedingly great and enduring wealth. **Peace** and **righteousness** are personified as **officers** and **magistrates** respectively (26:3; 48:18).

60:18 Judging from the figurative language in vv. 15–22, especially v. 17, God’s **Salvation** and Israel’s **Praise** will be the city’s defense (Zech. 2:4, 5).

60:19, 20 These verses form the basis for the description of the New Jerusalem in the new heaven and earth (Rev. 21:1, 23; 22:5). See also 65:17; 66:22.

everlasting

(Heb. *’olam*) (30:8; 60:19, 20; Ps. 89:2; Amos 9:11) Strong’s #5769

This word is likely related to the one that means “to hide”; thus this term connotes “hidden, unknown time,” usually referring to the future but sometimes to the past. The word may speak of time that is limited by a single life, that reaches through several generations (Gen. 6:3, 4; Deut. 15:17; Neh. 2:3; Mal. 3:4), or that extends to the beginning of the created order (64:4; Gen. 49:26). Sometimes the word refers to a period of time beyond death (45:17; Prov. 8:23; Eccl. 12:5; Dan. 12:2). Thus the term is quite naturally used of God, who is eternal and hidden (40:28; Gen. 21:33; Ps. 90:2). It refers to God’s never-ending covenants, statutes, salvation, and love (Gen. 9:12; Lev. 16:29–31; Jer. 31:3). The Bible also describes the coming Messiah, His kingdom, and His priesthood as eternal (9:7; Ps. 45:6, 7; 110:4).

- And ^fyour God your glory.
^{20 g}Your sun shall no longer go down,
 Nor shall your moon withdraw itself;
 For the LORD will be your everlasting
 light,
 And the days of your mourning shall
 be ended.
^{21 h}Also your people *shall* all be
 righteous;
ⁱThey shall inherit the land forever,
^jThe branch of My planting,
^kThe work of My hands,
 That I may be glorified.
^{22 l}A little one shall become a thousand,
 And a small one a strong nation.
 I, the LORD, will hasten it in its
 time.”

The Good News of Salvation

- 61** “The ^aSpirit of the Lord God is
 upon Me,
 Because the LORD ^bhas anointed Me
 To preach good tidings to the poor;
 He has sent Me ^cto ¹heal the
 brokenhearted,
 To proclaim ^dliberty to the captives,
 And the opening of the prison to
those who are bound;
^{2 e}To proclaim the acceptable year of
 the LORD,
 And ^fthe day of vengeance of our God;
^gTo comfort all who mourn,
³ To ²console those who mourn in
 Zion,
^hTo give them beauty for ashes,
 The oil of joy for mourning,
 The garment of praise for the spirit
 of heaviness;
 That they may be called trees of
 righteousness,

19 ^fIs. 41:16; 45:25;
 Zech. 2:5
 20 ^gAmos 8:9
 21 ^hIs. 52:1; Rev.
 21:27 ⁱPs. 37:11;
 Matt. 5:5 / Is. 61:3;
 [Matt. 15:13; John
 15:2] ^kIs. 29:23;
 [Eph. 2:10]
 22 ^lMatt. 13:31, 32

CHAPTER 61

1 ^aIs. 11:2; Matt.
 3:17; Luke 4:18,
 19 ☆; John 1:32;
 3:34 ^bPs. 45:7;
 Matt. 11:5; Luke
 7:22 ^cPs. 147:3 ^dIs.
 42:7 ☆; [Acts 10:43]
¹Lit. *bind up*
 2 ^eLev. 25:9 ^fIs.
 34:8; Mal. 4:1, 3;
 [2 Thess. 1:7] ^gIs.
 57:18; Jer. 31:13;
 Matt. 5:4
 3 ^hPs. 30:11
²Lit. *appoint*

ⁱIs. 60:21; [Jer. 17:7,
 8] / [John 15:8]
 4 ^kIs. 49:8; 58:12;
 Ezek. 36:33; Amos
 9:14
 5 ^l[Eph. 2:12]
 6 ^mEx. 19:6 ^aIs.
 60:5, 11
 7 ^aIs. 40:2; Zech.
 9:12
 8 ^pPs. 117: ^qIs. 1:11,
 13 ^rGen. 17:7; Ps.
 105:10; Is. 55:3; Jer.
 32:40 ³Or *in*
 9 ^sIs. 65:23

ⁱThe planting of the LORD, ^jthat He
 may be glorified.”

- 4 And they shall ^krebuild the old ruins,
 They shall raise up the former
 desolations,
 And they shall repair the ruined
 cities,
 The desolations of many generations.
 5 ^lStrangers shall stand and feed your
 flocks,
 And the sons of the foreigner
Shall be your plowmen and your
 vinedressers.
 6 ^mBut you shall be named the priests of
 the LORD,
 They shall call you the servants of
 our God.
ⁿYou shall eat the riches of the
 Gentiles,
 And in their glory you shall boast.
 7 ^oInstead of your shame *you shall have*
double honor;
 And *instead of* confusion they shall
 rejoice in their portion.
 Therefore in their land they shall
 possess double;
 Everlasting joy shall be theirs.
 8 ^pFor ^rI, the LORD, love justice;
^qI hate robbery ³for burnt offering;
 I will direct their work in truth,
^rAnd will make with them an
 everlasting covenant.
 9 Their descendants shall be known
 among the Gentiles,
 And their offspring among the people.
 All who see them shall acknowledge
 them,
^sThat they *are* the posterity *whom* the
 LORD has blessed.”

60:21 In the new Zion, **people shall all be righteous** (4:3; Rev. 21:27). Though the exiles were back in the land (49:8; 54:3), they looked to a new Zion, when Israel would **inherit the land forever**. **The branch of My planting:** For similar references to God's people as a branch, see 4:2; 5:1–7; 61:3.

60:22 A little one shall become a thousand: The inhabitants of the new Zion will be prolific (54:3; Lev. 26:8).

61:1–11 This is the fifth of the Servant songs. In this song, the emphasis is on the Servant's mission.

61:1 The Spirit: For similar references, see 11:2; 30:1; 42:1; 48:16; 59:21; Luke 3:22. The **Me** featured so prominently here is the same Servant as in 42:1; 49:1; 50:4; 52:13. Several reasons point to this identification: (1) The Servant refers to God as His Master, the **“LORD God”** (compare 50:4); (2) He has received the Lord's Spirit (compare 42:1); (3) He brings a word of healing and liberation (compare vv. 1–3 with 42:7; 49:9; 50:4); (4) He proclaims the “year of the LORD” (compare v. 2 with 49:8); (5) He is associated with an everlasting covenant (compare v. 8 with 42:6; 49:8); (6) Jesus Christ inaugurated His ministry by identifying Himself as this Servant (Luke 4:17–21). **the LORD has anointed:** This phrase signifies that the Servant is more than a prophet, since only kings and high priests—with the exception of Elisha (1 Kin. 19:16)—were anointed (45:1). The name Messiah, or Christ in Greek, means the “Anointed One.” **Poor** also means “humble,” which like **brokenhearted**, indicates those who

confidently hope in God in spite of their present distress (11:4; Ps. 34:18; 51:17). **Proclaim liberty** probably alludes to the official inauguration of the “Year of Release” or Jubilee (Lev. 25:10). **Captives** refers to those in bondage to the wicked (58:6) or to wickedness in general—not to the exiles as in 51:14. **Those who are bound** is translated “prisoners” in 49:9, where it refers in part to the exiles; here it means “captives.”

61:2 The acceptable year of the LORD corresponds to “the day of salvation” (49:8) and “the year of My redeemed” (63:4). **our God:** For a similar use of this term see 25:9. **To comfort all who mourn:** For related passages see 12:1; 49:13; Matt. 5:4.

61:3 A host lavished on a guest the oil of joy (Ps. 23:5; 45:7; Luke 7:46). **He may be glorified:** For similar references see 44:23; 49:5.

61:4 They refers to Jews (58:12) and Gentiles (60:10). **desolations of many generations:** See 58:12; 60:10.

61:6 priests of the LORD: With Christ, they will make intercession for sinners (53:12; Ex. 19:6; 1 Pet. 2:9; Rev. 1:6). **Servants** here means “ministers,” a synonym for “priests” (1 Kin. 8:11).

61:7 Everlasting joy: For other references to eternal joy see 35:10; 51:11; 60:19, 20.

61:9 Shall be known has the sense of “shall be renowned.” **among the Gentiles . . . whom the LORD has blessed:** This section alludes to the fulfillment of the promises made to Abraham (41:8; 51:2; Gen. 12:3).

- ¹⁰ ¹ I will greatly rejoice in the LORD,
My soul shall be joyful in my God;
For ² He has clothed me with the
garments of salvation,
He has covered me with the robe of
righteousness,
^v As a bridegroom decks *himself* with
ornaments,
And as a bride adorns *herself* with
her jewels.
¹¹ For as the earth brings forth its bud,
As the garden causes the things that
are sown in it to spring forth,
So the Lord God will cause
^w righteousness and ^x praise
to spring forth before all the
nations.

Assurance of Zion's Salvation

- 62** For Zion's sake I will not ¹ hold
My peace,
And for Jerusalem's sake I will not
rest,
Until her righteousness goes forth as
brightness,
And her salvation as a lamp *that*
burns.
² ^a The Gentiles shall see your
righteousness,
And all ^b kings your glory.
^c You shall be called by a new name,
Which the mouth of the LORD will
name.
³ You shall also be ^d a crown of glory
In the hand of the LORD,
And a royal diadem
In the hand of your God.
⁴ ^e You shall no longer be termed
^f Forsaken,²
Nor shall your land any more be
termed ^g Desolate;³

¹⁰ ¹ Hab. 3:18 ² Ps.
132:9, 16 ³ Is. 49:18;
Rev. 21:2
¹¹ ^w Ps. 72:3; 85:11
^x Is. 60:18; 62:7

CHAPTER 62

¹ ¹ keep silent
² ^a Is. 60:3 ^b Ps.
102:15, 16; 138:4, 5;
148:11, 13 ^c Is. 62:4,
12; 65:15
³ ^d Is. 28:5; Zech.
9:16; 1 Thess. 2:19
⁴ ^e Hos. 1:10; 1 Pet.
2:10 ^f Is. 49:14; 54:6,
7 ^g Is. 54:1 ² Heb.
Azubah ³ Heb.
Shemamah

⁴ Lit. *My Delight Is in*
Her ⁵ Lit. *Married*
⁵ ^b Is. 65:19
⁶ ¹ Is. 52:8; Jer.
6:17; Ezek. 3:17;
33:7 ⁶ *not be silent*
⁷ *remember*
⁷ ¹ Is. 60:18; 61:11;
Jer. 33:9; Zeph.
3:19, 20

BIBLE TIMES & CULTURE NOTES



Watchmen

Watchmen guarded or watched over a city or harvest field. Because of the danger of being raided, every Palestinian city or village had a watchman, especially at night. These watchmen were stationed on the city walls (2 Sam. 18:24), a watchtower (2 Kin. 9:17), or a hilltop (Jer. 31:6). Watchmen were responsible for reporting any hostile action or approaching suspicious person. These watchmen sometimes patrolled the city, called out the hours of the night, and especially looked forward to dawn (Is. 21:11, 12). At harvest times watchmen guarded the crops at night. Israel's prophets were responsible for watching for impending divine judgment or blessing (Is. 21:6; 52:8; 62:6; Jer. 6:17) and bringing the news to the people.

- But you shall be called ⁴ Hephzibah,
and your land ⁵ Beulah;
For the LORD delights in you,
And your land shall be married.
⁵ For *as* a young man marries a virgin,
So shall your sons marry you;
And *as* the bridegroom rejoices over
the bride,
^h So shall your God rejoice over you.
⁶ ⁱ I have set watchmen on your walls,
O Jerusalem;
They shall ⁶ never hold their peace
day or night.
You who ⁷ make mention of the
LORD, do not keep silent,
⁷ And give Him no rest till He
establishes
And till He makes Jerusalem ^j a
praise in the earth.

61:10 I and the parallel **My soul** refer to personified Zion. **Rejoice** is translated "joy" in v. 3 (see also 65:18). **Clothed** signifies the Servant's new glorified status or condition (47:2; 52:1; 59:17). **Ornaments** is translated "beauty" in v. 3. **bride**: For a similar image see 49:18.

61:11 spring forth: This phrase is also found in 42:9; 43:19; 45:8 to describe the coming of God's salvation. **Righteousness** here means "deliverance" (54:17). **before all the nations**: For related passages see 52:10; 60:2, 3.

62:2 The repetition of **righteousness** (v. 1) shows that the divine oracle and the prophet's comment are linked. **A new name**, like new clothing (61:10), signifies a new status (Gen. 17:5, 15; 32:28; Rev. 2:17). For the new names see vv. 4, 12.

62:3 Zion does not **receive** a crown of glory, or royal diadem, but is one **in the hand of the LORD**.

62:4 The name **Forsaken** is a symbolic name for Jerusalem (see the symbolic name Immanuel in 7:14). It appears as the name of a person in 1 Kin. 22:42. For related references see 54:6; 60:15. **Desolate**: The term is also found in 49:8, 19; 54:1. **Hephzibah** and **Beulah** are symbolic names, although Hephzibah does appear as a personal name at 2 Kin. 21:1. The names are explained in the end of the verse.

62:6, 7 I refers to the Lord (vv. 1, 8). **Watchmen** refers to prophets (56:10). **You who make mention of the LORD** is Isaiah's synonym

for "watchmen" and shows that the prophets were intercessors. The phrases **do not keep silent** and **give Him no rest** relate the prophets' prayer to the Lord's promises in v. 1 (see 64:12; 65:6).

righteousness

(Heb. *tsedeq*) (62:1; Ps. 45:7; 85:10; 132:9; Prov. 1:3) Strong's #6664

This term denotes conformity to an ethical or moral standard. It occurs in reference to honorable business dealings (Gen. 30:33; Lev. 19:36; Deut. 25:15) and proper speech (Ps. 52:3; Prov. 8:8). The term is used most often in relation to one's standing with legal authorities, either human or divine. The word is frequently found in the context of other legal terms such as judgment or justice (Lev. 19:15; Ps. 23:3; 72:2; 119:6–8). Righteousness, judgment, and justice are declared to be the foundation of God's throne (Ps. 89:14; 97:2). God's righteousness is associated with deliverance. It is in this context that one of the divine names of God is revealed: "The Lord Our Righteousness" (41:10; 51:5; Jer. 23:6; 33:16).

- 8 The LORD has sworn by His right hand
And by the arm of His strength:
“Surely I will no longer ^kgive your grain
As food for your enemies;
And the sons of the foreigner shall
not drink your new wine,
For which you have labored.
- 9 But those who have gathered it shall eat it,
And praise the LORD;
Those who have brought it together
shall drink it ^lin My holy courts.”
- 10 Go through,
Go through the gates!
^mPrepare the way for the people;
Build up,
Build up the highway!
Take out the stones,
ⁿLift up a banner for the peoples!
- 11 Indeed the LORD has proclaimed
To the end of the world:
^o“Say to the daughter of Zion,
‘Surely your salvation is coming;
Behold, His ^preward is with Him,
And His ^qwork before Him.’”
- 12 And they shall call them The Holy People,
The Redeemed of the LORD;
And you shall be called Sought Out,
A City Not Forsaken.

The LORD in Judgment and Salvation

63 Who is this who comes from Edom,
With dyed garments from Bozrah,
This *One who is* ¹glorious in His apparel,
Traveling in the greatness of His strength?—

8 ^k Lev. 26:16; Deut. 28:31, 33; Judg. 6:3-6; Is. 1:7; Jer. 5:17
9 ^l Deut. 12:12; 14:23, 26
10 ^m Is. 40:3; 57:14
ⁿ Is. 11:12
11 ^o Zech. 9:9 ☆; Matt. 21:5; John 12:15 ^p Is. 40:10; [Rev. 22:12]
^q recompense

CHAPTER 63

1 ¹ Or adorned

2 ^a [Rev. 19:13, 15] ☆
3 ^b Lam. 1:15; Rev. 14:19, 20; 19:15 ☆
4 ^c Is. 34:8; 35:4; 61:2; Jer. 51:6
5 ^d Is. 41:28; 59:16
^e [John 16:32] ^f Ps. 98:1; Is. 59:16

- “I who speak in righteousness, mighty to save.”
- 2 Why ^ais Your apparel red,
And Your garments like one who treads in the winepress?
- 3 “I have ^btrodden the winepress alone,
And from the peoples no one *was* with Me.
For I have trodden them in My anger,
And trampled them in My fury;
Their blood is sprinkled upon My garments,
And I have stained all My robes.
- 4 For the ^cday of vengeance *is* in My heart,
And the year of My redeemed has come.
- 5 ^dI looked, but ^e*there was* no one to help,
And I wondered
That *there was* no one to uphold;
Therefore My own ^farm brought salvation for Me;
And My own fury, it sustained Me.
- 6 I have trodden down the peoples in My anger,
Made them drunk in My fury,
And brought down their strength to the earth.”

God's Mercy Remembered

- 7 I will mention the lovingkindnesses of the LORD
And the praises of the LORD,
According to all that the LORD has bestowed on us,
And the great goodness toward the house of Israel,
Which He has bestowed on them according to His mercies,

62:8 The LORD has sworn: For other examples see 14:24; 45:23; 54:9. **no longer:** This phrase gives assurance that the covenantal blessings will outlast the curses.

62:9 in My holy courts: This phrase anticipates the rebuilding of the temple (Lev. 23:39, 40; Deut. 12:17, 18; 14:22–27; 16:9–17).

62:10 For the double imperatives **go through** and **build up** see 40:1; 51:17; 52:11. The prophets not only prayed for the people (vv. 6, 7), they encouraged them to worship. **Gates** probably refers to those in the “holy courts” (v. 9). The prophet commanded the worshipers of v. 9 to pass through the gates in order to praise the Lord. **Prepare the way** means to encourage the people to come to the temple for worship (40:3, 4; 57:14). **Stones** refers to any impediment to worship (57:14). **Lift up a banner** (5:26; 11:10) is an encouragement to all **peoples** to worship God.

62:11 Proclaimed to the end of the world links this verse with “a banner for the peoples” in v. 10. The verb **say** is plural, indicating that a number of people will declare this announcement of salvation to Jerusalem. **your salvation is coming:** For similar references to the coming of the Lord’s salvation see 40:9; Zech. 9:9; Matt. 21:5.

62:12 The pronoun **they** refers to the Gentiles (v. 2). **The Holy People:** For similar descriptions of the redeemed see 4:3; Ex. 19:6.

63:1 The word **comes** links this verse with 62:11. **Edom** epitomized Israel’s enemies (Ps. 137:7; Lam. 4:21, 22; Ezek. 25:12; 35:1–15; Obad. 13, 14); it was famous for its wine-making (see v. 3 for a reference to wine). Note that the text does not say God vanquished Edom, but rather the “peoples” (vv. 3, 6). **garments:** See the warrior’s garments in 59:17. **Bozrah** was the chief town of Edom (34:6; Jer. 49:13). The pronoun **I** refers to the Lord.

63:2 The **apparel** will be **red** from bloodstains.

63:3 The pronoun **I** is applied to Christ in Rev. 19:15. **trodden:** For this figure of judgment see Lam. 1:15; Rev. 14:17–20. **The winepress** represents the battle.

63:4 year of My redeemed: This phrase alludes to the “law of redemption” of slaves and property (61:2; Lev. 25). A close relative of a slave had the right and duty to buy back the slave and rescue a family member from destitution.

63:7 I will mention: Isaiah, representing the people, publicly proclaims God’s saving mercies (Ps. 77:12; 89:1). The plural words **lovingkindnesses** and **praises** refer to the Lord’s many acts of love and loyalty to His people. The word *lovingkindnesses* is translated “sure mercies” in 55:3 (see also Ps. 89:1).

- According to the multitude of His lovingkindnesses.
- 8 For He said, “Surely they *are* My people,
Children *who* will not lie.”
So He became their Savior.
- 9 *In* all their affliction He was ²afflicted,
h And the Angel of His Presence saved them;
i In His love and in His pity He redeemed them;
And *J* He bore them and carried them
All the days of old.
- 10 But they ^krebelled and ^lgrieved His Holy Spirit;
m So He turned Himself against them
as an enemy,
And He fought against them.
- 11 Then he ⁿremembered the days of old,
Moses *and* his people, *saying*:
“Where *is* He who ^obrought them up
out of the sea
With the ³shepherd of His flock?
p Where *is* He who put His Holy Spirit
within them,
- 12 Who led *them* by the right hand of Moses,
q With His glorious arm,
r Dividing the water before them
To make for Himself an everlasting
name,
- 13 ^s Who led them through the deep,
As a horse in the wilderness,
That they might not stumble?”
- 14 As a beast goes down into the valley,
And the Spirit of the LORD causes
him to rest,

9 ^a Judg. 10:16 ^b Ex. 14:19 ^c Deut. 7:7 / Ex. 19:4 ² Kt., LXX, Syr. not afflicted
10 ^k Ex. 15:24 / Num. 14:11; Ps. 78:40; Acts 7:51; 1 Cor. 10:1-11 ^m Ex. 23:21; Ps. 106:40
11 ⁿ Ps. 106:44, 45 ^o Ex. 14:30 ^p Num. 11:17, 25, 29; Hag. 2:5 ³ MT, Vg. *shepherds*
12 ^q Ex. 15:6 ^r Ex. 14:21, 22; Josh. 3:16; Is. 11:15; 51:10
13 ^s Ps. 106:9

14 ^t 2 Sam. 7:23
15 ^u Deut. 26:15; Ps. 80:14 ^v Ps. 33:14 ^w Jer. 31:20; Hos. 11:8
16 ^x Deut. 32:6
^y Job 14:21
17 ^z Is. 6:9, 10; John 12:40
18 ^a Deut. 7:6 ^b Ps. 74:3-7; Is. 64:11

CHAPTER 64

1 ^a Ex. 19:18; Ps. 18:9; 144:5; Mic. 1:3, 4; [Hab. 3:13] ⁱ *tear open*

So You lead Your people,
ⁱ To make Yourself a glorious name.

A Prayer of Penitence

- 15 ^a Look down from heaven,
And see ^v from Your habitation, holy
and glorious.
Where *are* Your zeal and Your
strength,
The yearning ^w of Your heart and
Your mercies toward me?
Are they restrained?
- 16 ^x Doubtless You *are* our Father,
Though Abraham ^y was ignorant
of us,
And Israel does not
acknowledge us.
You, O LORD, *are* our Father;
Our Redeemer from Everlasting *is*
Your name.
- 17 O LORD, why have You ^z made us
stray from Your ways,
And hardened our heart from Your
fear?
Return for Your servants' sake,
The tribes of Your inheritance.
- 18 ^a Your holy people have possessed *it*
but a little while;
^b Our adversaries have trodden down
Your sanctuary.
- 19 We have become *like* those of old,
over whom You never ruled,
Those who were never called by
Your name.

64 Oh, that You would ⁱ rend the
heavens!
That You would come down!
That the mountains might shake at
Your ^a presence—

63:8 In the Hebrew Bible, the term **My people** is used in two ways: (1) for those who were united nationally to God by blood and history through Abraham's flesh (48:1; Ex. 3:7), and (2) for those who were united to Him inwardly through Abraham's faith and obedience (Lev. 26:12; Deut. 29:13). The nation is in view here. **Lie** means "to deal falsely." Israel's rebellion was unexpected (1:2, 3). Just as godly parents expect godly children (Prov. 22:6), so God Himself expected godly children.

63:9 Their affliction probably refers to God's sympathy for His people in Egypt (Ex. 2:25; 3:7) and at the time of the judges (Judg. 10:16). **He was afflicted**: God shares the hurt of His people (Ex. 2:23-25). Paul's persecution of the members of the early church caused Christ to be afflicted (Acts 9:4). **Bore** and **carried** are allusions to Ex. 19:4 (see Deut. 1:31; 32:10-12).

63:10 rebelled: This verb means "to be contentious" (Num. 20:10; Ps. 78:40; 106:33, 43). The **Holy Spirit** is referred to from time to time in the Hebrew Scriptures, and several times in the Book of Isaiah (11:2; 42:1).

63:11 Days of old refers to the period of the Exodus and the Wilderness. **The sea** is an allusion to the Red Sea (50:2; Ex. 14:21-29). **Shepherd**, referring to Moses, is plural. Christ is the greater Shepherd (John 10:11; Heb. 13:20; 1 Pet. 5:4). **Put His Holy Spirit within them** is an allusion to Num. 11:17, 25.

63:12 Glorious arm is an allusion to Ex. 15:6 (see also 41:13; 51:9). **Dividing the water** is a reference to Ex. 14:16, 21 (see Ps. 78:13).

63:13, 14 The account of the Exodus and settlement of the land is concluded with two images. The first is **a horse** moving surefootedly across the sea bottom as through a **wilderness**—that is, a "desert"; the second is **a beast**, meaning "a domesticated herd," returning from grazing on mountainsides **into the valley . . . to rest** (Deut. 12:9; Josh. 1:13; 11:23; 21:44).

63:15 Heaven refers to God's universal rule over space and time (Ps. 11:4-6). The pronoun **me** is a personified Israel (59:9-15).

63:16 The people of Israel are the Lord's children (v. 8). He is their **Father** because He created them as a nation (Deut. 32:6; Jer. 3:4, 19). It is rare in the pages of the Hebrew Bible to find the explicit statement of the Fatherhood of God, although it is often presented implicitly. **Abraham and Israel**, the people's human fathers (51:2), were limited in their knowledge by time and space—in contrast to the Lord, the people's **Father** and **Redeemer from Everlasting** (41:14).

63:17 us: Isaiah identifies himself with his people (59:9-15). The Lord, confirming the people in their sin, **hardened** their hearts (6:10; Ex. 4:21; Ps. 95:8).

63:19 Called by Your name signifies the Lord's ownership of the people (Deut. 28:10; Jer. 14:9).

64:1, 2 Oh, that . . . You would come down: This appeal for the Lord to appear and strike terror in the enemy is based on His appearances at Sinai (Ex. 19:16-18) and for David (Ps. 18:7-15). The image of **fire** often symbolizes God's presence (10:17; 31:9; Ex. 19:18; Heb. 12:18), especially in judgment (Heb. 12:29).

2 As fire burns brushwood,
As fire causes water to boil—
To make Your name known to Your
adversaries,
That the nations may tremble at
Your presence!
3 When ^bYou did awesome things for
which we did not look,
You came down,
The mountains shook at Your
presence.
4 For since the beginning of the world
^cMen have not heard nor perceived by
the ear,
Nor has the eye seen any God
besides You,
Who acts for the one who waits for
Him.
5 You meet him who rejoices and does
righteousness,
Who remembers You in Your ways.
You are indeed angry, for we have
sinned—
^dIn these ways we continue;
And we need to be saved.
6 But we are all like an unclean thing,
And all ^eour righteousnesses are like
²filthy rags;
We all ^ffade as a leaf,
And our iniquities, like the wind,
Have taken us away.
7 And there is no one who calls on
Your name,
Who stirs himself up to take hold of
You;
For You have hidden Your face
from us,

3 ^b Ex. 34:10
4 ^c Ps. 31:19
5 ^d Mal. 3:6
6 ^e [Phil. 3:9] ^f Ps.
90:5, 6; Is. 1:30 ² Lit.
a filthy garment

7 ³ Lit. caused us
to melt
8 ^g Is. 29:16; 45:9;
Jer. 18:6; [Rom.
9:20, 21]
11 ^h Ezek. 24:21
⁴ Lit. house ⁵ have
become a ruin
12 ⁱ Is. 42:14 / Ps.
83:1 ⁶ keep silent

CHAPTER 65

1 ^a Rom. 9:24; 10:20
^b Is. 63:19
2 ^c Rom. 10:21 ☆
^d Is. 1:2, 23 ^e Is.
42:24

And have ³consumed us because of
our iniquities.
8 But now, O LORD,
You are our Father;
We are the clay, and You our
^gpotter;
And all we are the work of Your
hand.
9 Do not be furious, O LORD,
Nor remember iniquity forever;
Indeed, please look—we all are Your
people!
10 Your holy cities are a wilderness,
Zion is a wilderness,
Jerusalem a desolation.
11 Our holy and beautiful ⁴temple,
Where our fathers praised You,
Is burned up with fire;
And all ^hour pleasant things ⁵are laid
waste.
12 ⁱ Will You restrain Yourself because of
these things, O LORD?
^j Will You ⁶hold Your peace, and
afflict us very severely?

The Righteousness of God's Judgment

65 “I was ^asought by those who did
not ask for Me;
I was found by those who did not
seek Me.
I said, ‘Here I am, here I am,’
To a nation that ^bwas not called by
My name.
2 ^c I have stretched out My hands all day
long to a ^drebellious people,
Who ^ewalk in a way that is not good,
According to their own thoughts;

64:3 awesome things: The appearance of God is a fearsome event (Ex. 19:16–21; Deut. 10:21; 2 Sam. 7:23; Ps. 106:22). **for which we did not look:** God’s saving acts surpass human expectations (Eph. 3:20). **The mountains shook:** For a similar description see Ex. 19:18. **64:4** Paul cites this verse with some changes in 1 Cor. 2:9. **Nor . . . seen any God besides You:** For similar ideas see 43:11; Deut. 4:35. **64:5 You meet him . . . Who remembers You in Your ways:** These words reinforce the idea of v. 4. **does righteousness:** For a similar phrase see 56:1. The word **indeed** provides a transition from the petition (63:15—64:5) to the confession of sin (64:5–7). **64:6 Unclean** means the people were unfit for God’s presence. **Filthy rags** refers to garments stained during menstruation (see also “sins . . . like scarlet” in 1:18), making a woman unclean (Lev. 15:19–24; Ezek. 36:17). **As a leaf** signifies the people’s worthlessness and separation from God. **64:7 No one who calls** is an exaggerated phrase calling attention to the people’s apathy. **hidden:** God is never really “in hiding,” but He does obscure His presence because of human sin (1:15). **64:8 But now, O LORD:** These words serve as a contrast to the preceding section, the confession of sin. **our Father:** For similar references to God as Father see 63:8, 16. **We are the clay:** For similar imagery of human beings as clay in the Potter’s hands, see Job 10:9; Rom. 9:20, 21. **64:9 Do not be furious** claims God’s promise in 54:7, 8. **Nor remember** claims God’s promise in 43:25. **Please look** refers to God’s “hiding” of Himself in v. 7. **64:10 cities . . . Zion . . . Jerusalem:** The prophetic picture of the

devastation of the land following the Babylonian invasion is used as a means of appeal to the heart of God. **64:11 Holy and beautiful** may be rephrased as “exquisite beauty.” **Our fathers praised You** suggests that the speakers are at least a generation removed from the fall of the temple. **64:12 Will You restrain Yourself:** The people use the language of love, of remembrance, of family, and of shared values in this section (vv. 8–12) to implore God to act again on their behalf. **65:1 I was sought** literally means “I allowed Myself to be sought.” **I was found** literally means “I allowed Myself to be found.” This promise links this oracle with Isaiah’s lament (64:7). **Here I am** (58:9) is repeated for emphasis (see the repetition of the word *comfort* in 40:1). The Lord’s glorious presence assures salvation. **A nation that was not called by My name** includes the Gentiles (42:1; 49:6, 22; 52:15) and the remnant who “sought” God (v. 10). Together they are the servants who will be called “by another name” (v. 15). Paul saw his ministry to the Gentiles as a fulfillment of this promise (Rom. 10:20, 21). Peter calls the church “a holy nation” (1 Pet. 2:9). **65:2 I have stretched out My hands** pictures God beckoning Israel to respond to Him. **All day long** suggests the Lord’s long-suffering patience. **Rebellious** describes Israel (63:10). **Who**, repeated six times in vv. 2–5, introduces a sorry catalogue of Israel’s abominable religious practices: arrogance (v. 2), open defiance (v. 3), idolatrous fertility rites (v. 3), divination (v. 4), eating unclean foods (v. 4), and blasphemous self-righteousness (v. 5). **their own thoughts:** Contrast the Lord’s thoughts in 55:8, 9.

- ³ A people ^fwho provoke Me to anger continually to My face;
^gWho sacrifice in gardens,
 And burn incense on altars of brick;
⁴ ^hWho sit among the graves,
 And spend the night in the tombs;
ⁱWho eat swine's flesh,
 And the broth of ^jabominable things
 is *in* their vessels;
⁵ ^jWho say, 'Keep to yourself,
 Do not come near me,
 For I am holier than you!'
 These ²are smoke in My nostrils,
 A fire that burns all the day.
- ⁶ "Behold, ^kit is written before Me:
^lI will not keep silence, ^mbut will
 repay—
 Even repay into their bosom—
⁷ Your iniquities and ⁿthe iniquities of
 your fathers together,"
 Says the LORD,
^o"Who have burned incense on the
 mountains
^pAnd blasphemed Me on the hills;
 Therefore I will measure their
 former work into their bosom."
- ⁸ Thus says the LORD:
- "As the new wine is found in the
 cluster,
 And *one* says, 'Do not destroy it,
 For ^qa blessing is in it,'
 So will I do for My servants' sake,
 That I may not destroy them ^rall.
⁹ I will bring forth descendants from
 Jacob,
 And from Judah an heir of My
 mountains;

³ ^fDeut. 32:21
^gIs. 1:29
⁴ ^hDeut. 18:11
ⁱLev. 11:7; Is. 66:17
^jUnclean meats,
 Lev. 7:18; 19:7
⁵ ^jMatt. 9:11;
 Luke 7:39; 18:9-12
² Cause My wrath
 to smoke
⁶ ^kDeut. 32:34 ^lPs.
 50:3 ^mPs. 79:12
⁷ ⁿEx. 20:5 ^oEzek.
 18:6 ^pIs. 57:7; Ezek.
 20:27, 28
⁸ ^qJoel 2:14 ^rIs. 1:9;
 Amos 9:8, 9

⁹ ^sMatt. 24:22
¹⁰ ^tIs. 33:9 ^uJosh.
 7:24; Hos. 2:15 ^vIs.
 55:6
¹¹ ^wIs. 56:7 ^xEzek.
 23:41; [1 Cor. 10:21]
³ Lit. *Troop* or
Fortune; a pagan
 deity ⁴ Lit. *Number*
 or *Destiny*; a pagan
 deity
¹² ^y2 Chr. 36:15, 16;
 Prov. 1:24; Is. 41:28;
 50:2; 66:4; Jer. 7:13
¹⁴ ^zMatt. 8:12; Luke
 13:28 ⁵ Or a *broken*
spirit
¹⁵ ^a Jer. 29:22;
 Zech. 8:13 ^bIs.
 65:9, 22

- My ^select shall inherit it,
 And My servants shall dwell there.
¹⁰ ^tSharon shall be a fold of flocks,
 And ^uthe Valley of Achor a place for
 herds to lie down,
 For My people who have ^vsought Me.
- ¹¹ "But you *are* those who forsake the
 LORD,
 Who forget ^wMy holy mountain,
 Who prepare ^xa table for ³Gad,
 And who furnish a drink offering for
⁴Meni.
- ¹² Therefore I will number you for the
 sword,
 And you shall all bow down to the
 slaughter;
^yBecause, when I called, you did not
 answer;
 When I spoke, you did not hear,
 But did evil before My eyes,
 And chose *that* in which I do not
 delight."
- ¹³ Therefore thus says the Lord God:
- "Behold, My servants shall eat,
 But you shall be hungry;
 Behold, My servants shall drink,
 But you shall be thirsty;
 Behold, My servants shall rejoice,
 But you shall be ashamed;
¹⁴ Behold, My servants shall sing for
 joy of heart,
 But you shall cry for sorrow of heart,
 And ^zwail for ⁵grief of spirit.
¹⁵ You shall leave your name ^aas a
 curse to ^bMy chosen;
 For the Lord God will slay you,

65:3 To My face means "openly." The people did not hide their shameful practices or restrain their evil habits. The Babylonians would commonly offer incense to the "host of heaven" on the **brick** or tile roofs of houses (2 Kin. 23:12; Jer. 19:13; Zeph. 1:5).

65:4 Spend the night in the tombs may refer to the practice of seeking an oracle from a god or from the dead. The Law prohibited eating **swine's flesh** (66:17; Lev. 11:7; Deut. 14:8). **Abominable things** refers to other foods that were prohibited to Israel (Lev. 11). When the people of Israel ate the same foods as their neighbors, they ceased to be *holy* or distinct.

65:5 I am holier than you: The idolaters were like the worst of the Pharisees in the NT times. Jesus called the Pharisees children of the devil (John 8:44), but they regarded themselves as better than others (Luke 18:9–14). **Smoke** and **fire** stand for things that provoke God's anger.

65:6 It is written refers to the heavenly book that records sin. Royal courts in the ancient world recorded unpunished crimes. **I will not keep silence:** For a similar phrase, see 62:1. **repay:** For similar references to the Lord's vengeance see 33:10–14; 34:8; 59:18.

65:7 the iniquities of your fathers: For related passages see Ex. 20:5; Ezek. 18:20. **blasphemed Me:** The Israelites rejected and offended God by offering sacrifices to the false gods of other nations on the hilltops (see Ezek. 20:27, 28). **Therefore:** The punishment matches the crime (47:11).

65:8 New wine represents the **servants** (54:17); the otherwise unproductive **cluster** represents all Israel (5:1, 2). The association

of wine and **blessing** here is common in the Scriptures. *Servants* include "the remnant," as well as foreigners (56:6). **not destroy them all:** For a related passage see 1:8, 9.

65:9 I will bring forth descendants is fulfilled in Christ and in all those who are found in Him (Gal. 3:16, 26–29). **Jacob** and **Judah** represent all Israel. **An heir** involves the Messiah (Gen. 49:10; Matt. 21:38; Gal. 3:16). **My elect:** For a related passage see 41:8, 9 (compare Gal. 3:26–29).

65:10 Sharon, the coastal plain in the west, and **the Valley of Achor**, near Jericho in the east, represent the whole land.

65:11 The word **who** occurs four times in this verse, introducing more (vv. 2–5) of Israel's sins. These sins involved forsaking the Lord, forgetting His place of worship, worshipping **Gad**, a god of good luck, and worshipping **Meni**, a god of fate.

65:12 When I called, you did not answer contrasts with "Before they call, I will answer" in v. 24.

65:13 Therefore logically connects this stanza with the first two, vv. 1–7, 8–12. **Behold. . . But:** The pattern here recalls the blessings and curses on Mt. Gerizim and Mt. Ebal (Deut. 27), in the Beatitudes (Luke 6:20–26), and in Christ's picture of the Last Judgment (Matt. 25:31–46). **eat** and **drink:** This is a festive meal accompanied by rejoicing.

65:14 Sing here develops the idea of rejoicing in v. 13 (see also 12:1–6; 35:10; 61:7).

65:15 The chosen (v. 9) will use the apostates' **name as a curse** by invoking the terrible fate of the apostates upon others. The cho-

And ^ccall His servants by another name;
16 ^dSo that he who blesses himself in the earth
Shall bless himself in the God of truth;
And ^ehe who swears in the earth
Shall swear by the God of truth;
Because the former troubles are forgotten,
And because they are hidden from My eyes.

The Glorious New Creation

17 ^f“For behold, I create ^gnew heavens and a new earth;
And the former shall not be remembered or ^hcome to mind.
18 But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create;
For behold, I create Jerusalem *as* a rejoicing,
And her people a joy.
19 ⁱI will rejoice in Jerusalem,
And joy in My people;
The ^jvoice of weeping shall no longer be heard in her,
Nor the voice of crying.
20 ^k“No more shall an infant from there *live but a few days*,
Nor an old man who has not fulfilled his days;
For the child shall die one hundred years old,
^lBut the sinner *being* one hundred years old shall be accursed.

15 ^c [Acts 11:26]
16 ^d Ps. 72:17; Jer. 4:2 ^e Deut. 6:13; Zeph. 1:5
17 ^f Is. 51:16; 66:22; [2 Pet. 3:13]; Rev. 21:1 ^g Lit. *come upon the heart*
19 ^h Is. 62:4, 5 ⁱ Is. 35:10; 51:11; Rev. 7:17; 21:4
20 ^j Eccl. 8:12, 13; Is. 3:11; 22:14

21 / Ezek. 28:26; 45:4; Hos. 11:11; Amos 9:14
22 ^k Is. 62:8, 9 ^l Ps. 92:12 ^m Is. 65:9, 15
23 ⁿ Hos. 9:12 ^o Is. 61:9; [Jer. 32:38, 39; Acts 2:39]
24 ^p Ps. 91:15; Is. 58:9 ^q Is. 30:19; Dan. 9:20-23
25 ^r Is. 11:6-9 ^s Gen. 3:14; Mic. 7:17

CHAPTER 66

1 ^a 1 Kin. 8:27;
2 Chr. 6:18; Ps. 11:4;
Matt. 5:34; Acts 17:24

21 ^jThey shall build houses and inhabit *them*;
They shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit.
22 They shall not build and another inhabit;
They shall not plant and ^kanother eat;
For ^las the days of a tree, *so shall be* the days of My people,
And ^mMy elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands.
23 They shall not labor in vain,
ⁿNor bring forth children for trouble;
For ^othey *shall be* the descendants of the blessed of the LORD,
And their offspring with them.
24 ^p“It shall come to pass
That ^qbefore they call, I will answer;
And while they are still speaking, I will ^rhear.
25 The ^swolf and the lamb shall feed together,
The lion shall eat straw like the ox,
^tAnd dust *shall be* the serpent’s food.
They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain,”
Says the LORD.

True Worship and False

66 Thus says the LORD:
^a“Heaven is My throne,
And earth is My footstool.
Where *is* the house that you will build Me?
And where *is* the place of My rest?”

sen will say, “The Lord make you like apostate Israel.” See Jer. 29:22 for an example of how the Babylonian captives used the names of Zedekiah and Ahab as a curse. **Another name** signifies the launching of a new era (62:2); this name would be associated with blessing (v. 16), not with a curse.

65:16 He who blesses himself in the earth—Jew or Gentile—will invoke the Lord’s name, because He is the **God of truth**.

65:17, 18 I create may also be translated “I am creating” or “I am about to create.” **new heavens and a new earth**: As God fashioned the existing heavens and earth, so He will fashion a new cosmos that will be ready for His presence and for the enjoyment of His people. **Former** encompasses everything up to the creation of the new cosmos (Rev. 21:4). **Be glad and rejoice** means “to be openly, delightfully happy.” Saints are called upon to celebrate by faith the coming glorious salvation (66:10). **Create Jerusalem** signifies that it will be entirely new, with no resemblance to the old city (62:7). John also links the “new heaven and new earth” with the New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:1, 2).

65:19 My people: This title for the citizens of Jerusalem is also used in 63:8. **weeping shall no longer be heard**: For similar ideas concerning God’s coming salvation see 25:8; 35:10; 51:11.

65:20 the child shall die one hundred years old: On one level, these words indicate a return in the coming kingdom to the extended life spans that are noted before the Flood (Gen. 5). It appears that people will not be affected by disease and aging in the same way as in our present world. **Sinner** can also mean “the one who fails” to live a long life.

65:21, 22 These verses imply meaningful work in both the coming kingdom as well as in the new cosmos, along with a reverse of the curse (Deut. 28:49–52). **houses . . . vineyards**: The life of blessing in the coming kingdom is presented in terms that would have been readily understood by the people of Isaiah’s day (Mic. 4:4). Industry will not be limited to these twin pursuits, but the happy, blessed life is indicated by them. **As the days of a tree** indicates longevity and stability (v. 20). The words **long enjoy** reinforces the idea of longevity.

65:23 They shall not labor in vain: These words speak of God reversing the curse on this cosmos (Gen. 3:17–22) and removing the curse that came in the time of Moses (Deut. 28:30). The word *vain* means “empty.”

65:24 Before they call, I will answer expresses the truth that there will be no sorrow between petition and praise (30:19; 58:9). Praise will be continuous.

65:25 This verse condenses the promises of 11:6–9. The figures represent the reversal of nature and the coming of universal peace.

Dust shall be the serpent’s food is an allusion to Gen. 3:14 to indicate that this specific curse will be consummated.

66:1 The Lord has no need for a man-made temple because **heaven and earth**—the whole cosmos—is His sanctuary (40:22). **footstool**: The resting place for the “feet” of the Lord is extended beyond the ark of the covenant (60:13) to the whole earth. **Where is the house**: No place on earth can accommodate the transcendent God (1 Kin. 8:27). **The place of My rest** refers to the temple (1 Chr. 28:2; Ps. 132:8, 14).

- 2 For all those *things* My hand has made,
And all those *things* exist,”
Says the LORD.
- ^b“But on this *one* will I look:
^cOn *him who* is poor and of a contrite
spirit,
And who trembles at My word.
- 3 “He^d who kills a bull *is as if* he slays a
man;
He who sacrifices a lamb, *as if* he
^ebreaks a dog’s neck;
He who offers a grain offering, *as if*
he offers swine’s blood;
He who burns incense, *as if* he
blesses an idol.
Just as they have chosen their own
ways,
And their soul delights in their
abominations,
- 4 So will I choose their delusions,
And bring their fears on them;
^fBecause, when I called, no one
answered,
When I spoke they did not hear;
But they did evil before My eyes,
And chose *that in* which I do not
delight.”

² ^b Ps. 34:18; [Is. 57:15; 61:1; Matt. 5:3, 4; Luke 18:13, 14] ^c Ps. 34:18; 51:17
³ ^d [Is. 1:10-17; 58:1-7; Mic. 6:7, 8]
^e Deut. 23:18
⁴ ^f Prov. 1:24; Is. 65:12; Jer. 7:13
⁵ ^g Ps. 38:20; Is. 60:15; [Luke 6:22, 23] ^h Is. 5:19
ⁱ [2 Thess. 1:10; Titus 2:13]

The LORD Vindicates Zion

- 5 Hear the word of the LORD,
You who tremble at His word:
“Your brethren who ^ghated you,
Who cast you out for My name’s
sake, said,
^h“Let the LORD be glorified,
That ⁱwe may see your joy;
But they shall be ashamed.”
- 6 The sound of noise from the city!
A voice from the temple!

¹² / Is. 48:18; 60:5
^k Is. 60:16 / Is. 49:22;
60:4
¹³ ^m Is. 51:3; [2 Cor. 1:3, 4]

The voice of the LORD,
Who fully repays His enemies!

- 7 “Before she was in labor, she gave birth;
Before her pain came,
She delivered a male child.
- 8 Who has heard such a thing?
Who has seen such things?
Shall the earth be made to give birth
in one day?
Or shall a nation be born at once?
For as soon as Zion was in labor,
She gave birth to her children.
- 9 Shall I bring to the time of birth, and
not cause delivery?” says the
LORD.
- “Shall I who cause delivery shut up
the womb?” says your God.
- 10 “Rejoice with Jerusalem,
And be glad with her, all you who
love her;
Rejoice for joy with her, all you who
mourn for her;
- 11 That you may feed and be satisfied
With the consolation of her bosom,
That you may drink deeply and be
delighted
With the abundance of her glory.”
- 12 For thus says the LORD:
- “Behold, ^jI will extend peace to her
like a river,
And the glory of the Gentiles like a
flowing stream.
Then you shall ^kfeed;
On *her* sides shall you be ^lcarried,
And be dandled on *her* knees.
- 13 As one whom his mother comforts,
So I will ^mcomfort you;
And you shall be comforted in
Jerusalem.”

66:2 Those things refers to everything in the universe. I look: God seeks true worshipers (John 4:24). **Contrite spirit . . . trembles at My word** is similar to Jesus’ phrase “in spirit and truth” (John 4:24).

66:3 The term **He who**, used four times in this verse, refers to those who worship according to the letter but not the spirit of the Law. Their worship in God’s estimation is as unacceptable **as if** it consisted of abominable pagan practices (1:11–14; 65:3–5). God’s harsh criticism of false liturgy is tempered with His promise of the coming true liturgy (vv. 20, 23). **Slays a man** may refer to child sacrifice (57:5). **Breaks a dog’s neck** may refer to a pagan practice; in any case, the dog was regarded as an unclean animal, a detestable scavenger. The sacrifice of a **bull**, a **lamb**, a **grain offering**, and **incense** was considered to be **their own ways** because the worshipers lacked a contrite spirit. It was as if **their soul** delighted in **their abominations**.

66:4 **So will I choose their delusions**: For a related passage see 63:17. **their fears**: This is the judgment spelled out in vv. 15, 16, 24. **when I called . . . I do not delight**: This passage echoes 65:12.

66:5 **You who tremble at His word**: These words link vv. 5–11 with vv. 1–4. **Your brethren who hated you**: These words intensify the opposition encountered in ch. 65. **Let the LORD be glorified** represents the false worshiper’s hypocritical righteousness (v. 17). **Cast . . . out** of the temple, the true worshipers went into the

world and brought back Gentiles (v. 18). **Joy** is spoken sarcastically (Ps. 22:8). The persecutors **shall be ashamed** and the persecuted shall “rejoice” (v. 10).

66:6 Isaiah heard the **sound of battle noise** proceeding from the **city** and the **temple** (13:4). **His enemies** refers to the self-righteous idolaters persecuting God’s servants. This prophecy may find its fulfillment in the fall of the temple in **A.D. 70** (Matt. 24:1, 2) or at the Lord’s Second Coming (66:17; 2 Thess. 1:7–10).

66:7, 8 **Before she . . . gave birth** represents the birth of the community from the cast-out worshipers as coming so quickly that it will be without pain. At times, Zion is pictured as the daughter of the Lord (1:8); here she is the mother of His people. **The male child** and **her children** may refer to Christ and His Church.

66:9 The rhetorical questions introduced by the words **shall I** guarantee the prophecy of vv. 7, 8. God finishes what He begins (Phil. 1:6).

66:11 Through the joyful faith of v. 10, saints before Christ’s coming ate figuratively at a banquet (65:13).

66:12 **For** links vv. 12–24 with vv. 5–11. The pronoun **her** refers to Mother Jerusalem (vv. 7, 8). **You** refers to true worshipers and their offspring (v. 22), the beloved children of Mother Jerusalem. **On her sides . . . carried**: For similar images see 49:22; 60:4.

66:13 **I will comfort you**: Here God Himself is the comforting “Mother” (2 Cor. 1:3, 4).

The Reign and Indignation of God

- ¹⁴ When you see *this*, your heart shall rejoice,
And ⁿyour bones shall flourish like grass;
The hand of the LORD shall be known to His servants,
And His indignation to His enemies.
- ¹⁵ ^oFor behold, the LORD will come with fire
And with His chariots, like a whirlwind,
To render His anger with fury,
And His rebuke with flames of fire.
- ¹⁶ For by fire and by ^pHis sword
The LORD will judge all flesh;
And the slain of the LORD shall be ^qmany.
- ¹⁷ “Those ^rwho sanctify themselves and purify themselves,
To go to the gardens
¹ After an *idol* in the midst,
Eating swine’s flesh and the abomination and the mouse,
Shall ²be consumed together,” says the LORD.

¹⁸ “For I *know* their works and their ^sthoughts. It shall be that I will ^tgather all nations and tongues; and they shall come and see My glory. ¹⁹ ^uI will set a sign among them; and those among them who escape I will send to the nations: *to Tarshish* and ³Pul and Lud, who draw

¹⁴ ⁿ Ezek. 37:1
¹⁵ ^o Is. 9:5; [2 Thess. 1:8]
¹⁶ ^p Is. 27:1 ^q Is. 34:6
¹⁷ ^r Is. 65:3-8 ¹ Lit. After one ² come to an end
¹⁸ ^s Is. 59:7 ^t Is. 45:22-25; Jer. 3:17
¹⁹ ^u Luke 2:34
³ So with MT, Tg.; LXX Put (cf. Jer. 46:9)

^v Mal. 1:11
²⁰ ^w Is. 49:22 ^x Is. 18:7; [Rom. 15:16]
²¹ ^y Ex. 19:6; Is. 61:6; 1 Pet. 2:9; Rev. 1:6
²² ^z Is. 65:17; Heb. 12:26, 27; 2 Pet. 3:13; Rev. 21:1
²³ ^a Zech. 14:16
^b Zech. 14:17-21
²⁴ ^c Is. 14:11; Mark 9:44, 46, 48

the bow, and Tubal and Javan, *to* the coastlands afar off who have not heard My fame nor seen My glory. ^v And they shall declare My glory among the Gentiles. ²⁰ Then they shall ^wbring all your brethren ^xfor an offering to the LORD out of all nations, on horses and in chariots and in litters, on mules and on camels, to My holy mountain Jerusalem,” says the LORD, “as the children of Israel bring an offering in a clean vessel into the house of the LORD. ²¹ And I will also take some of them for ^ypriests *and* Levites,” says the LORD.

- ²² “For as ^zthe new heavens and the new earth
Which I will make shall remain before Me,” says the LORD,
“So shall your descendants and your name remain.
- ²³ And ^ait shall come to pass
That from one New Moon to another,
And from one Sabbath to another,
^b All flesh shall come to worship before Me,” says the LORD.
- ²⁴ “And they shall go forth and look Upon the corpses of the men Who have transgressed against Me. For their ^cworm does not die, And their fire is not quenched. They shall be an abhorrence to all flesh.”

66:14 **Heart** and **bones** refer to mental and physical health (Ps. 6:2; 109:18).

66:15 **For** links the judgment with **rebuke**. This verse is a picture of God’s judgment. The Lord’s coming corresponds to Isaiah’s prayer (64:1–3). **Fire** is the lightning; **His chariots** are the storm clouds (Deut. 33:26; Ps. 18:10). **Like a whirlwind** depicts the speed and strength of the Lord’s coming (Jer. 4:13).

66:16 The Divine Warrior comes with **fire** (v. 15) and **sword** (27:1; 31:8; Luke 21:24; Rev. 19:11–15). **All flesh** refers to all of the false worshipers described in this chapter (Jer. 9:2).

66:17 This section summarizes the abominable practices of the false worshipers (65:2–5; 66:3).

66:18 **Their works and their thoughts** probably refers to the right acts and spirit of the true worshipers, on whom God looks with favor (v. 2), since reference is made to bringing salvation to the Gentiles (v. 19). **My glory** probably refers to God’s presence in His temple (Ezek. 11:22, 23; 44:4).

66:19 The **sign** may be the deliverance of the true worshipers as judgment falls on the false. **Those . . . who escape** may refer to those who escape God’s slaughter (vv. 16, 17), but more likely to those who escape persecution (Matt. 24:9–14). Those who escaped would bring God’s glory to the nations (v. 18) and then give birth to the new age (vv. 7–11). **to Tarshish . . . the coastlands**: For

similar references see 23:6; 60:9. **declare My glory among the Gentiles**: For another prophecy by Isaiah of the spread of God’s glory throughout the world, see 24:14–16.


66:20 an offering to the LORD: For a related reference see Deut. 12:5–7. **horses . . . camels**: Animals represent the diverse countries from which they come. The Gentiles are likened to a **clean vessel** (56:6, 7; Acts 10:28), a striking reversal of the dominant attitude towards Gentiles in the OT (52:1).

66:22 A prediction of the coming of **the new heavens and the new earth** also occurs in 65:17. **Your descendants . . . remain** guarantees the continuity of true Israel (65:9; Rom. 11:1–36).

66:23 From one New Moon to another refers to all time. **All flesh** refers to the blessed—Jew and Gentile—in contrast to the rejected (vv. 16, 24). Through all time and from all the earth, true **worship** will be offered to God.

66:24 Corpses refers to the rebels (5:25; 34:3). The word for **transgressed** is related to the word for **rebelled** in 1:2. **Their worm . . . is not quenched** depicts eternal punishment (48:22; 57:20). The imagery derives from the Valley of Hinnom that was Jerusalem’s garbage dump, where unclean corpses decomposed and were burned. This verse is cited by Jesus in Mark 9:44, 46, 48. Although the Book of Isaiah depicts God’s coming salvation, it closes with a strong statement of the judgment of the wicked.

THE BOOK OF JEREMIAH



THE BOOK OF JEREMIAH, perhaps more vividly than any other book of the Bible, reveals the inner struggles of a prophet of God. In “confessions” such as those in 15:10–21; 20:7–18, Jeremiah candidly reveals his inner turmoil concerning his call to prophetic ministry. Indeed, the prophet’s anguish over the message of judgment upon his people and the coming destruction of the land was at times overwhelming (4:19–22). Yet despite his anguish, Jeremiah fulfilled his ministry of proclaiming God’s judgment against the people of Judah for their idolatry, their unfaithfulness to the covenant, and their obstinate disobedience of His will. Long acknowledged as one of the great prophets of the Old Testament, Jeremiah serves to this day as an example of someone who remained faithful to the word of God despite countless hardships.

Author and Date Jeremiah was born in Anathoth, just three miles northeast of Jerusalem in the hill country of Benjamin. His father was Hilkiah. Jeremiah’s ministry extended from 626 to 586 B.C., making him a contemporary of Zephaniah, Ezekiel, and Habakkuk. The prophet’s writing ministry began in the fourth year of Jehoiakim’s reign in 605 B.C. (see 36:1, 2), though portions of the book may have been written earlier. The book was completed sometime after the fall of Jerusalem in 586 B.C.

Historical Setting Jeremiah’s ministry covered a very critical time in the history of the ancient Middle East. When Josiah king of Judah died at the hands of the Egyptian army, Judah became subject to Egypt and its ruler Pharaoh Necho. The people of Judah chose Jehoahaz to succeed Josiah. However, three months later Necho appointed Jehoiakim (Eliakim) to rule as his vassal on the throne in Jerusalem. Having lost their freedom, the people of Judah turned not to God but to the idols they had worshiped in the days of Manasseh and Amon. This idolatry was the reason for Jeremiah’s proclamations of God’s judgment.

In 605 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar defeated Pharaoh Necho at Carchemish, and Jehoiakim immediately submitted to the Babylonian king, who permitted him to remain on the throne as a vassal. Three years later, Jehoiakim rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar and was deposed (see 2 Kin. 24:1, 2). Jehoiachin replaced Jehoiakim on the throne for a short time, but he was then exiled to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar. Thousands of political and religious leaders were carried to Babylon with Jehoiachin in 597 B.C. (see 2 Kin. 24:14–16).

Nebuchadnezzar made Jehoiakim’s brother Zedekiah the new ruler of Judah. In 589 B.C., Zedekiah led a rebellion against Babylon, and Nebuchadnezzar’s reprisal was swift. His army entered Judah and destroyed all resisting fortified settlements. Nebuchadnezzar’s army turned aside from besieging Jerusalem when the Egyptian army appeared in southwest Palestine in the summer of 588 B.C. But the Egyptians soon withdrew, and Nebuchadnezzar resumed his siege. Several times during the siege of Jerusalem, Zedekiah came to Jeremiah for counsel from the Lord. The prophet advised him to surrender, but Zedekiah would not listen.

Jerusalem’s walls were breached in the fourth month of 586 B.C. One month later, the temple was burned, along with the palaces, houses, and other administrative buildings. An additional 4,600 Jerusalemites were

deported to Babylon. Gedaliah was appointed governor of Judah at Riblah. Jeremiah, who had been imprisoned by Zedekiah, was released and sent to serve under Gedaliah. Gedaliah was assassinated and his supporters fled to Egypt, fearful of Nebuchadnezzar's revenge. Jeremiah went with them to Egypt against his will, and there he continued to confront the Jews for their idolatry and unfaithfulness.

Structure The structure and organization of the Book of Jeremiah have perplexed interpreters for generations. A brief examination of passages with explicit historical notes proves that the material is not ordered chronologically. Instead, the organization of the oracles, prose sermons, and other material is based on content, audience, and connective links. The division is as follows: (1) the call of Jeremiah (ch. 1); (2) the judgment of Judah and Jerusalem (chs. 2–24); (3) Jeremiah's ministry to the nations (chs. 25–51); (4) an historical appendix recounting the fall of Jerusalem (ch. 52). This arrangement gives balance and unity to the lengthy prophetic text.

Message Jeremiah's prayers, confessions, laments, and dialogues reveal the depth of the prophet's understanding of the character of God and the nature of His relationship to people. For Jeremiah, the God of Israel was the incomparable God of all creation, the Lord over nature and history. He reigned not only over Judah and Israel but over all nations (25:13).



Sistine Chapel painting of the prophet Jeremiah by Michelangelo

Wikimedia Commons

The thread that wove together Jeremiah's knowledge of God was his understanding of the word of God. It permeated the prophet's life and speech, for God Himself promised to touch Jeremiah's mouth and infuse His words into Jeremiah's mind and speech (1:9). From then on, God's words were like an unquenchable fire burning within the prophet's soul (20:9).

Jeremiah was keenly aware of the provisions of the covenant between God and Israel. The covenant bound Israel to God in a special relationship of love, faithfulness, and hope. But the covenant had two sides. Faithfulness to the Lord and the covenant would bring blessing; disobedience would result in punishment, destruction, and exile (see Deut. 27:14–28:68). Jeremiah called the people to obey the words of the covenant and to turn from their idolatry and their unjust treatment of one another (11:6, 7).

Jeremiah's message of judgment also contained a word of hope: a righteous remnant would be restored. The land had been defiled by the people's idolatry. The leaders had brought the nation to the brink of disaster and the people were exiled. But based on His everlasting love for Israel, God promised to bring the people back from captivity and restore them to blessing (30:18–31:6). Israel's enemies would be defeated (30:16), and the people would sing joyfully of God's goodness (31:12).

CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

Although Jeremiah's references to Jesus are not as numerous as Isaiah's, they are equally as strong. He paints a word picture of the Messiah in 23:1–8 in which we see Him as the coming Shepherd, righteous Branch, and

722 B.C.

Israel is conquered by the Assyrians

640 B.C.

Josiah becomes king in Judah

626 B.C.

Jeremiah is called to prophesy

612 B.C.

Assyria falls to the Babylonians and Medes

609 B.C.

Jehoahaz's reign begins in Judah

608 B.C.

Jehoiakim's reign begins in Judah

605 B.C.

Nebuchadnezzar's reign begins in Babylon

598 B.C.

Jehoiachin becomes king in Judah

598 B.C.

Zedekiah becomes Judah's last king

586 B.C.

Jerusalem falls to the Babylonians

585 B.C.

Jeremiah is taken to Egypt

a King who “shall reign and prosper, and execute judgment and righteousness in the earth . . . now this is His name by which He will be called: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS” (23:5, 6).

But Jeremiah doesn’t stop there. He writes of one who “will make a new covenant” (31:31–34). This is the same one who will fulfill God’s covenants with Abraham (Gen. 12:1–3; 17:1–8), with Moses and the people (Deut. 28–30), and with David (2 Sam. 7:1–17).

JEREMIAH OUTLINE

- I. Superscription: date of Jeremiah’s prophetic ministry 1:1–3
- II. The call of Jeremiah 1:4–19
- III. The covenant lawsuit: judgment on Judah and Jerusalem 2:1–24:10
 - A. The basis of the lawsuit: the sins of Judah and Jerusalem 2:1–3:5
 - B. A summons to repentance 3:6–4:4
 - C. The imminent destruction of Judah and Jerusalem 4:5–6:30
 - D. False religion and its judgment 7:1–10:25
 - E. The broken covenant 11:1–12:17
 - F. Judgment in symbolic acts 13:1–27
 - G. Jeremiah’s lament over the nation 14:1–15:21
 - H. Jeremiah’s life mirrors Judah’s judgment 16:1–21
 - I. Judah’s indelible sin and Jeremiah’s imprecatory prayer 17:1–18
 - J. The sanctity of the Sabbath 17:19–27
 - K. Pashhur’s plot and the imagery of the potter 18:1–20:18
 - L. Messages to the royal household and court 21:1–23:40
 - M. A sign of two baskets of figs 24:1–10
- IV. Jeremiah as the prophet to the nations 25:1–51:64
 - A. Introduction: Judah and the nations 25:1–38
 - B. Contention with false prophets of Jerusalem 26:1–29:32
 - C. A book of hope and the restoration of Israel 30:1–33:26
 - D. Jeremiah and the last days of Jerusalem 34:1–39:18
 - E. Jeremiah after the fall of Jerusalem 40:1–45:5
 - F. Oracles against the nations 46:1–51:64
- V. Appendix: the fall of Jerusalem 52:1–34
 - A. Zedekiah and the fall of Jerusalem 52:1–11
 - B. The destruction of the temple 52:12–23
 - C. Captives taken to Babylon 52:24–30
 - D. Jehoiachin released in Babylon 52:31–34

A brick of Nebuchadnezzar II, king of the Neo-Babylonian Empire (605 B.C.–562 B.C.), who conquered Judah and Jerusalem and sent the Jews into exile in 586 B.C.

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The words of Jeremiah the son of Hilkiah, of the priests who were ^ain Anathoth in the land of Benjamin, ²to whom the word of the LORD came in the days of ^bJosiah the son of Amon, king of Judah, ^cin the thirteenth year of his reign. ³It came also in the days of ^dJehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, ^euntil the end of the eleventh year of Zedekiah the son of Josiah, king of Judah, ^funtil the carrying away of Jerusalem captive ^gin the fifth month.

The Prophet Is Called

⁴Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying:

⁵ “Before I ^hformed you in the womb I ⁱknew you;
Before you were born I ^jsanctified ^lyou;
I ²ordained you a prophet to the nations.”

⁶Then said I:

CHAPTER 1
¹ ^a Josh. 21:18;
1 Kin. 2:26; 1 Chr. 6:60; Is. 10:30; Jer. 29:27
² ^b 1 Kin. 13:2; 2 Kin. 21:24; 2 Chr. 34:1; Jer. 3:6; 36:2 ^c Jer. 25:3
³ ^d 2 Kin. 23:34;
1 Chr. 3:15; 2 Chr. 36:5-8; Jer. 25:1
^e 2 Kin. 24:17; 1 Chr. 3:15; 2 Chr. 36:11-13; Jer. 39:2 ^f Jer. 52:12
^g 2 Kin. 25:8
^h Is. 49:1, 5 ⁱ Ex. 33:12 / [Luke 1:15]; Gal. 1:15 ^j set you apart ² appointed
⁶ ^k Ex. 4:10; 6:12, 30
⁷ / Num. 22:20; 38; Jer. 1:17; Matt. 28:20
⁸ ^m Ezek. 2:6; 3:9
⁹ Ex. 3:12; Deut. 31:6; Josh. 1:5; Jer. 15:20; Heb. 13:6
⁹ ^o Is. 6:7; Mark 7:33-35 ^p Ex. 4:11-16; Deut. 18:18; Is. 51:16
¹⁰ ^q 1 Kin. 19:17
^r Jer. 18:7-10; Ezek. 22:18; [2 Cor. 10:4, 5]

^k“ Ah, Lord God!
Behold, I cannot speak, for I *am* a youth.”
⁷ But the LORD said to me:
“Do not say, ‘I *am* a youth,’
For you shall go to all to whom I send you,
And ^l whatever I command you, you shall speak.
⁸ ^m Do not be afraid of their faces,
For ⁿ I *am* with you to deliver you,” says the LORD.
⁹ Then the LORD put forth His hand and ^o touched my mouth, and the LORD said to me:
“Behold, I have ^p put My words in your mouth.
¹⁰ ^q See, I have this day set you over the nations and over the kingdoms,
To ^r root out and to pull down,
To destroy and to throw down,
To build and to plant.”

1:1 The name **Jeremiah** probably means either “The Lord Exalts” or “The Lord Establishes.”

1:2 The word of the LORD came literally to Jeremiah. He did not speak out of his own imagination, as did false prophets like Hana-niah (28:1, 2). Jeremiah spoke as God revealed His word and will. Jeremiah’s call to ministry came in the thirteenth year of Josiah, who reigned 31 years.

1:3 Jeremiah’s ministry as a prophet lasted from the beginning of the reign of **Jehoiakim** (608 B.C.) to the eleventh year of **Zedekiah** and the fall of Jerusalem (586 B.C.). Gedaliah was appointed governor over the peasant-populated Judah after the Babylonians, under Nebuchadnezzar, had deported the leading citizens of Jerusalem. Jeremiah continued ministering until he was taken unwillingly to Egypt following the assassination of Gedaliah.

1:4 the word of the LORD came: A standard way of introducing a divine oracle at the beginning of a prophetic book (see Ezek. 1:3; Hos. 1:1; Joel 1:1; Jon. 1:1; Mic. 1:1; Zeph. 1:1; Hag. 1:1; Zech. 1:1).

1:5 Jeremiah was keenly aware that the call of God in his life had been determined by God from before his conception. As God’s word became a reality in his life, the prophet understood that God **knew** him and had called him to proclaim a critical message at a crucial point in the history of the nation. The word *knew* refers to an intimate knowledge that comes from relationship

and personal commitment. That intimate relationship was made apparent in God’s sanctifying work, whereby Jeremiah was “set apart” (made holy) for special service. Jeremiah’s role was to be a **prophet** to the nation of Judah as well as a messenger of God for all **nations**.

1:6 Like Moses, who was called to **speak** to the Pharaoh of Egypt at a decisive point in Israel’s history, Jeremiah was called to address the kings of Judah and leaders of Babylon. Jeremiah’s doubts concerning his power to speak before the nations’ leaders were due to his **youth**. The word *youth* can refer to a wide range of ages—from infancy up to the teen years. The term can also refer to a servant of any age.

1:7, 8 Jeremiah would not **go** and **speak** alone or of his own accord, but according to the word of the Lord and with His powerful presence. The term **deliver** is used in Jeremiah to indicate the saving of the people from their captors (15:20, 21), the deliverance of the poor from their oppressors (20:13), and the safety of the prophet from possible harm before national leaders. **I am with you:** Twice in his call (see also v. 19), God reassured Jeremiah of His presence and protection. In moments of personal crisis, Jeremiah prayed these words back to God (20:11).

1:9 Jeremiah is commissioned for his task and the essence of his message is outlined. **I have put My words in your mouth:** The source of Jeremiah’s message was clearly the Lord, but the message would be expressed through the personality, experience, and artistry of the prophet. This verse gives us an understanding of the dual nature of Scripture. The message is the Lord’s; its expression is accomplished through His servants the prophets (see Heb. 1:1).

1:10 I have . . . set you over the nations: The nations were instruments in God’s purpose of revealing Himself. The Lord would use Babylon to punish Judah, and then He would use the Persians to punish Babylon. The phrasing here suggests the official appointment of a person to an authoritative position, as when Nebuchadnezzar appointed Gedaliah governor of Judah. With God’s words in his mouth, Jeremiah had the authority to stand before any ruler. **To root out and to pull down . . . To build and to plant:** Judgment and restoration were the two messages of the prophet of God. The words *root out*, *pull down*, **destroy**, **throw down**, *build*, and *plant* are repeated at key points in the Book of Jeremiah to reaffirm Jeremiah’s call (18:7; 24:6; 31:28; 42:10; 45:4).

build

(Heb. *banah*) (1:10; 24:6; Gen. 22:9; Is. 45:13) Strong’s #1129

Things described as built using this word are “a new house” in Deut. 20:5, “the altar” in Deut. 27:6, and “the house of the LORD” in 1 Kin. 6:1. The expression “build a house” can also refer to establishing a family (Ruth 4:11) or a dynasty (Ps. 89:4). The word may also be used in the sense of “rebuilding” or “restoring” something that has been destroyed or is in disrepair (Neh. 2:17). Jeremiah’s commission as God’s prophet included the task of building and planting (1:10). In the present context the term is used figuratively of the prophetic ministry of restoring the people of God, or spiritually rebuilding Israel as the people of God, after the Exile (31:4).

¹¹ Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying, “Jeremiah, what do you see?” And I said, “I see a ³branch of an almond tree.”

¹² Then the LORD said to me, “You have seen well, for I am ⁴ready to perform My word.”

¹³ And the word of the LORD came to me the second time, saying, “What do you see?”

And I said, “I see ⁵a boiling pot, and it is facing away from the north.”

¹⁴ Then the LORD said to me:

“Out of the ⁶north calamity shall break forth

On all the inhabitants of the land.

¹⁵ For behold, I am ⁷calling All the families of the kingdoms of the north,” says the LORD;

“They shall come and ⁸each one set his throne

At the entrance of the gates of Jerusalem,

Against all its walls all around, And against all the cities of Judah.

¹¹ ³ Lit. *rod*
¹² ⁴ Lit. *watching*
¹³ ⁵ Ezek. 11:3; 24:3
¹⁴ ⁶ Jer. 6:1
¹⁵ ⁷ Jer. 6:22; 25:9
¹⁶ ⁸ Is. 22:7; Jer. 39:3

¹⁶ ⁹ Deut. 28:20;
 Jer. 17:13 ¹⁰ Is. 65:3,
 4; Jer. 7:9 ¹¹ Is. 37:19;
 Jer. 2:28
¹⁷ ¹² 1 Kin. 18:46;
 2 Kin. 4:29; Job
 38:3; Luke 12:35;
 [1 Pet. 1:13] ¹³ Ezek.
 2:6
¹⁸ ¹⁴ Is. 50:7; Jer.
 6:27; 15:20

¹⁶ I will utter My judgments Against them concerning all their wickedness, Because ¹⁰they have forsaken Me, Burned ¹¹incense to other gods, And worshiped the works of their own ¹²hands.

¹⁷ “Therefore ¹³prepare yourself and arise, And speak to them all that I command you.

¹⁴ Do not be dismayed before their faces, Lest I dismay you before them.

¹⁸ For behold, I have made you this day ¹⁵A fortified city and an iron pillar, And bronze walls against the whole land—

Against the kings of Judah, Against its princes, Against its priests, And against the people of the land.

¹⁹ They will fight against you, But they shall not prevail against you.

For I am with you,” says the LORD, “to deliver you.”

1:11, 12 God confirmed His call to Jeremiah with two visions. The first vision involved an **almond tree**, which blossoms when other trees are still dormant. The almond tree served as a harbinger of spring, as though it “watched over” the beginning of the season. In a similar fashion, God was “watching over” His word, ready to bring judgment on Israel.

1:13, 14 The second vision God used to confirm Jeremiah’s call involved a **boiling pot** that was tilted toward the south, indicating the direction in which the pot’s contents would be spilled. The **calamity** suggested by this vision was an enemy attack on Judah and Jerusalem from **the north**. In 20:4, Jeremiah finally identifies this enemy as Babylon. Babylon itself was east of Jerusalem, but the road went around the desert and approached from the north.

1:15 The calamity from the north (v. 14) would involve a siege of **Jerusalem and all the cities of Judah**. **I am calling**: The use of the first-person pronoun indicates that it was God Himself who was at war with His people.

1:16 One of the main reasons for God’s judgment on Judah and Jerusalem was Israel’s worship of **other gods**. God is not one among many; He alone is God of Israel (see Deut. 6:4). **Burned incense**:

The Hebrew term meaning “to burn” or “to make smoke” is used 19 times in Jeremiah, all in the context of burning sacrifices to other gods. **worshiped**: The term means “to cause oneself to bow down” in honor or service of God or man. The first and foremost commandment (see Ex. 20:3) had been broken.

1:17 Prepare yourself is literally “gird up your loins,” or tuck your robe in your belt so you can run (see 1 Sam. 2:4). **Do not be dismayed**: If Jeremiah shrank back in terror before the men God had commanded him to confront, God Himself would bring terror into the prophet’s life.

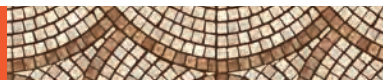
1:18 Jeremiah’s position is phrased in military language, emphasizing the certainty that God would fight for him. God **made** Jeremiah an impregnable **fortified city** with **bronze walls**. Jeremiah’s defense system could not be battered down or tunneled under by men and armies. **kings . . . princes . . . priests . . . people**: This list of the various types of people in Israel suggests that the entire nation would be against Jeremiah.

1:19 The people and their leaders would **fight** against Jeremiah and his message, but they would not overcome because God Himself protects and fights for the faithful.

Jeremiah’s Faith

Some might consider Jeremiah the model of faithfulness, while others might think of him as an example of failure and futility. He served as God’s prophet for over 40 years, yet the rulers and the people of Judah did not listen to his warnings. Jeremiah was put in prison, thrown into a well, and taken to Egypt against his will. He was not allowed to marry. He was rejected by his friends, neighbors, family, false priests and prophets, and kings. Jeremiah stood alone in his call for the people to repent and turn to God. He warned them time and time again of their impending punishment. And even though much of what he prophesied came true during his ministry, the people and the leaders continued to ignore him.

Yet through all the hardship and humiliation he was forced to endure, Jeremiah remained obedient and faithful to God. Although at first he questioned God’s calling, once he accepted his position he became a model of perseverance and devotion. After enduring decades of abuse, threats, and outright indifference, Jeremiah could easily have turned his back and walked away. But he knew that was exactly the problem God had told him to warn the people about. The people had turned away from God’s will, and Jeremiah was not about to do the same. Some may look back at his ministry and consider it a failure because the people did not respond to his call. In reality, his life was a glorious success because Jeremiah remained faithful to his God. He may not have seen immediate results, but his struggle to obey God in a world that had turned wholesale away from its Creator has inspired generations of believers.



God's Case Against Israel

2 Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying, ²“Go and cry in the hearing of Jerusalem, saying, ‘Thus says the LORD:

“I remember you,
The kindness of your ^ayouth,
The love of your betrothal,
^bWhen you ¹went after Me in the wilderness,
In a land not sown.

³ ^cIsrael was holiness to the LORD,
^dThe firstfruits of His increase.
^eAll that devour him will offend;
Disaster will ^fcome upon them,” says the LORD.”

⁴Hear the word of the LORD, O house of Jacob and all the families of the house of Israel. ⁵Thus says the LORD:

⁶“What injustice have your fathers found in Me,
That they have gone far from Me,
^hHave followed ²idols,
And have become idolaters?
⁷Neither did they say, ‘Where is the LORD,
Who ^{brought} us up out of the land of Egypt,
Who led us through ^jthe wilderness,
Through a land of deserts and pits,
Through a land of drought and the shadow of death,
Through a land that no one crossed
And where no one dwelt?’
⁷ I brought you into ^ka bountiful country,
To eat its fruit and its goodness.
But when you entered, you ^ldefiled My land

CHAPTER 2

² ^a Ezek. 16:8; Hos. 2:15 ^b Deut. 2:7; Jer. 2:6 ¹ followed
³ ^c [Ex. 19:5, 6; Deut. 7:6; 14:2]
^d James 1:18; Rev. 14:4 ^e Jer. 12:14
^f Gen. 12:3; Is. 41:11; Jer. 30:15, 16; 50:7
⁵ ^g Is. 5:4; Mic. 6:3
^h ² Kin. 17:15; Jer. 8:19; [Jon. 2:8]; Rom. 1:21 ² vanities or futilities
⁶ ¹ Ex. 20:2; Is. 63:11
^j Deut. 8:15; 32:10
⁷ ^k Num. 13:27
^l Num. 35:33; Is. 24:5; Hos. 4:3

⁸ ^m Rom. 2:20 ⁿ Jer. 23:13
⁹ ^o Jer. 2:35; Ezek. 20:35, 36; Mic. 6:2
³ contend with
¹⁰ ^p Jer. 18:13
⁴ Heb. Kittim, representative of western cultures
⁵ In northern Arabian desert, representative of eastern cultures
¹¹ ^q Mic. 4:5 ^r Ps. 115:4; Is. 37:19 ^s Ps. 106:20; Rom. 1:23
¹³ ^t Ps. 36:9; Jer. 17:13; [John 4:14]
¹⁴ ^u [Ex. 4:22]
¹⁵ ^v Is. 1:7; Jer. 50:17

And made My heritage an abomination.

⁸ The priests did not say, ‘Where is the LORD?’

And those who handle the ^mlaw did not know Me;

The rulers also transgressed against Me;

ⁿThe prophets prophesied by Baal,
And walked after *things that* do not profit.

⁹ “Therefore ^oI will yet ³bring charges against you,” says the LORD,
“And against your children’s children I will bring charges.

¹⁰ For pass beyond the coasts of ⁴Cyprus and see,
Send to ⁵Kedar and consider diligently,
And see if there has been such *a*

^pthing.
¹¹ ^qHas a nation changed *its* gods,
Which *are* ^rnot gods?

^sBut My people have changed their Glory
For *what* does not profit.

¹² Be astonished, O heavens, at this,
And be horribly afraid;
Be very desolate,” says the LORD.

¹³“For My people have committed two evils:

They have forsaken Me, the ^tfountain of living waters,
And hewn themselves cisterns—
broken cisterns that can hold no water.

¹⁴“Is Israel ^ua servant?
Is he a homeborn *slave*?
Why is he plundered?

¹⁵ ^vThe young lions roared at him, *and* growled;

2:1–3 Chapter 2 is presented in the form of a covenant lawsuit, an indictment brought by God against His people (2:1–3:5). Jeremiah challenged the people of Judah to remember God. The **betrothal** period between God and Israel in the **wilderness** was a time when Israel **went after**, or worshiped, the Lord. The nation of Israel is referred to as the **firstfruits**, which rightfully belonged to God (see Deut. 26:1–11) and **holiness**, something set apart for God’s glory. In the time of Jeremiah, the people of Judah no longer remembered the days when their grandfathers and grandmothers had worshiped and obeyed God.

2:5 **Idols** means “futility,” “vapor,” or “worthlessness.” The Hebrew word translated **followed** is used in the books of Jeremiah and Deuteronomy to describe the worship of idols and other gods. **they . . . have become idolaters**: Those who serve idols, which are only vapor, become like vapor themselves.

2:6 In pursuing other gods, the people of Israel lost sight of their identity as the elect of God. They forgot how God had delivered them from oppression in Egypt and had given them food, water, and protection in the **wilderness** for 40 years.

2:7 God’s guiding hand had **brought** Israel out of the desert and into a **bountiful country**, the region of Carmel, with its luxurious trees and vineyards. Israel had enjoyed the bounty of the land flow-

ing with milk and honey, but then turned God’s beautiful **heritage** into a polluted **abomination**. The word *heritage* refers to God’s possession of the land that He bestowed upon the nation.

2:8 The people had not sought the Lord, nor had the **priests, rulers, or prophets**. Those who should have known God most intimately **did not know** Him at all. The rulers **transgressed against** God and His covenant. The prophets prophesied in the name of Baal rather than God.

2:9 **Charges** of apostasy and idolatry are formally presented in 2:9–13.

2:10, 11 The only nation whose god was truly God, was at the same time the only nation that exchanged its God for others.

2:13 God’s **people** had **forsaken** (1:16) Him and served worthless deities. God, the **fountain of living waters**, offered a limitless supply of fresh, life-giving sustenance. Instead the people chose **broken cisterns**, which were useless for storing water and useless for sustaining life.

2:14 Israel was not founded to be a **servant** or **homeborn slave**. Yet the nation that God set free from slavery and oppression had placed itself in the position of a servant, enslaved by Assyria and Egypt.

2:15 Assyria—the **young lions**—laid waste to Israel and Judah during several invasions between 734 and 701 B.C.



Dromedary (Camel)

To the Hebrews, camels (*gamal*) were predominantly a beast of burden. Camels are bad-tempered, a bit dense, and complain when they have to carry a load, but they can cope with a hot, harsh environment. Long legs keep the camel's belly comfortably away from the blazing sands. The camel conserves water. Its thick wool coat provides natural insulation as it maintains an even body temperature and hardly perspires. A thirsty camel may gulp 25 gallons of water but can go for long periods without food or water. The dromedary camel has one hump—a mass of muscle and fat that serves as its reserve fuel tank. After an arduous journey, the hump may become floppy and soft and have to be built up again.

Camel

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- They made his land waste;
His cities are burned, without inhabitant.
- 16 Also the people of ⁶Noph and
^wTahpanhes
Have ⁷broken the crown of your head.
- 17 ^xHave you not brought this on
yourself,
In that you have forsaken the LORD
your God
When ^yHe led you in the way?
- 18 And now why take ^zthe road to
Egypt,
To drink the waters of ^aSihor?
Or why take the road to ^bAssyria,
To drink the waters of ^sthe River?
- 19 Your own wickedness will ^ccorrect
you,
And your backslidings will rebuke
you.
Know therefore and see that *it is an*
evil and bitter thing
That you have forsaken the LORD
your God,
And the ⁹fear of Me *is not in you,*
Says the Lord God of hosts.

16 ^w 2 Kin. 23:29-37; Jer. 43:7-9
⁶ Memphis in ancient Egypt ⁷ Or grazed
17 ^x Jer. 4:18 ^y Deut. 32:10
18 ^z Is. 30:1-3 ^a Josh. 13:3
^b Hos. 5:13 ^s The Euphrates
19 ^c Is. 3:9; Jer. 4:18; Hos. 5:5 ^d dread

20 ^d Lev. 26:13 ^e Ex. 19:8; Josh. 24:18; Judg. 10:16; 1 Sam. 12:10 ^f Deut. 12:2; Is. 57:5; 7; Jer. 3:6
^g Ex. 34:15 ^h Kt. serve
21 ^h Ex. 15:17; Ps. 44:2; 80:8; Is. 5:2
ⁱ Deut. 32:32; Is. 5:4
22 ^j Job 14:16, 17; Jer. 17:1, 2; Hos. 13:12 ² stained
23 ^k Prov. 30:12
³ defiled

- 20^a For of old I have ^dbroken your yoke
and burst your bonds;
And ^eyou said, 'I will not
¹transgress,'
When ^fon every high hill and under
every green tree
You lay down, ^gplaying the
harlot.
- 21 Yet I had ^hplanted you a noble vine, a
seed of highest quality.
How then have you turned before
Me
Into ⁱthe degenerate plant of an alien
vine?
- 22 For though you wash yourself with
lye, and use much soap,
Yet your iniquity is ^jmarked ² before
Me," says the Lord God.
- 23^a How^k can you say, 'I am not
³polluted,
I have not gone after the Baals'?
See your way in the valley;
Know what you have done:
*You are a swift dromedary breaking
loose in her ways,*

2:16 Egypt forced Judah into a vassal relationship. The Egyptians had **broken the crown of Israel's head** by killing Josiah. **Noph** is Memphis, the capital of Lower Egypt. **Tahpanhes** was in the eastern Nile delta.

2:18 **Sihor** means "Black" and refers to the Nile River. The word **River** refers to the Euphrates, which is associated with Assyria. Tragically, the people of Judah had left the everlasting fountain of God for the broken cisterns of Assyria and Egypt (v. 13).

2:19 **Backslidings** means "turnings." Israel had turned in every direction for help except to the true source of safety and security. The phrase **says the Lord God of hosts** confirms the severity of the crime and the certainty of the punishment about to befall the people of God.

2:20 Israel had **broken its yoke** like a beast, even though the peo-

ple had promised to be faithful when they came into the land (see Josh. 24:24). Instead, idolatrous abandonment of God had pervaded the land: **on every high hill and under every green tree**. The term **harlot** is a figurative way of referring to unfaithfulness to God, and in addition it may refer to the ritual prostitution of Canaanite and Phoenician fertility cults.

2:21 **Noble vine** refers to the lush vines of the Sorek valley, which runs from Jerusalem to the Mediterranean through some of the richest farmland in the country. Judah became an **alien** vine, fertilized by foreign gods (see Is. 5).

2:23-25 The picture of the wild dromedary, a female camel in heat, and a wild donkey mad with lust vividly portrays the craving of Israel for foreign gods.

- 24 A wild donkey used to the wilderness,
That sniffs at the wind in her desire;
In her time of mating, who can turn her away?
All those who seek her will not weary themselves;
In her month they will find her.
- 25 Withhold your foot from being unshod, and your throat from thirst.
But you said, ¹“There is no hope.
No! For I have loved ^maliens, and after them I will go.”
- 26 “As the thief is ashamed when he is found out,
So is the house of Israel ashamed;
They and their kings and their princes, and their priests and their ⁿprophets,
- 27 Saying to a tree, ‘You *are* my father,’
And to a ^ostone, ‘You gave birth to me.’
For they have turned *their* back to Me, and not *their* face.
But in the time of their ^ptrouble
They will say, ‘Arise and save us.’
- 28 But ^qwhere *are* your gods that you have made for yourselves?
Let them arise,
If they ^rcan save you in the time of your ⁴trouble;
For ^saccording to the number of your cities
Are your gods, O Judah.
- 29 “Why will you plead with Me?
You all have transgressed against Me,” says the LORD.
- 30 “In vain I have ^tchastened your children;
They ^ureceived no correction.
Your sword has ^vdevoured your prophets
Like a destroying lion.
- 31 “O generation, see the word of the LORD!

25 ¹Is. 57:10; Jer. 18:12 ^mJer. 3:13
26 ^aIs. 28:7; Jer. 5:31
27 ^oJer. 3:9 ^pJudg. 10:10; Is. 26:16; Hos. 5:15
28 ^qDeut. 32:37; Judg. 10:14 ^rIs. 45:20 ^s2 Kin. 17:30, 31; Jer. 11:13
⁴Ore vil
30 ^tIs. 9:13 ^uIs. 1:5; Jer. 5:3; 7:28 ^vNeh. 9:26; Jer. 26:20–24; Acts 7:52; 1 Thess. 2:15

31 ^wDeut. 32:15; Jer. 2:20, 25 ^shave dominion
32 ^xPs. 106:21; Is. 17:10; Jer. 3:21; 13:25; Hos. 8:14
33 ^y2 Kin. 21:16; 24:4; Ps. 106:38; Jer. 7:6; 19:4 ⁶digging
35 ^zJer. 2:23, 29; Mal. 2:17; 3:8 ^aJer. 2:9 ^b[Prov. 28:13; 1 John 1:8, 10]
36 ^cJer. 31:22; Hos. 5:13; 12:1 ^dIs. 30:3
^e2 Chr. 28:16
37 ^f2 Sam. 13:19; Jer. 14:3, 4 ^gJer. 37:7–10

CHAPTER 3

¹a Deut. 24:1–4
^bJer. 2:7 ^cJer. 2:20; Ezek. 16:26 ^dJer. 4:1; [Zech. 1:3]
²e Deut. 12:2; Jer. 2:20; 3:21; 7:29 ^fKt. been violated

Have I been a wilderness to Israel,
Or a land of darkness?
Why do My people say, ‘We ⁵are lords;
^wWe will come no more to You’?
32 Can a virgin forget her ornaments,
Or a bride her attire?
Yet My people ^xhave forgotten Me
days without number.

- 33 “Why do you beautify your way to seek love?
Therefore you have also taught
The wicked women your ways.
34 Also on your skirts is found
^yThe blood of the lives of the poor innocents.
I have not found it by ⁶secret search,
But plainly on all these things.
35 ^zYet you say, ‘Because I am innocent,
Surely His anger shall turn from me.’
Behold, ^aI will plead My case against you,
^bBecause you say, ‘I have not sinned.’
36 ^cWhy do you gad about so much to change your way?
Also ^dyou shall be ashamed of
Egypt ^eas you were ashamed of Assyria.
37 Indeed you will go forth from him
With your hands on ^fyour head;
For the LORD has rejected your
trusted allies,
And you will ^gnot prosper by them.

Israel Is Shameless

- 3 “They say, ‘If a man divorces his wife,
And she goes from him
And becomes another man’s,
^aMay he return to her again?’
Would not that ^bland be greatly polluted?
But you have ^cplayed the harlot with many lovers;
^dYet return to Me,” says the LORD.
- 2 “Lift up your eyes to ^ethe desolate heights and see:
Where have you not ^flain *with men*?

2:29, 30 The term **plead** recalls the charges made by God against Israel in v. 9. The people tried to *plead* their case, but Jeremiah repeated God’s charge of rebellion (v. 8). God, the Sovereign Lord, **chastened** His **children** repeatedly, but they **devoured** His spokesmen the **prophets** like hungry mountain lions.

2:31, 32 A virgin bride could hardly forget the wedding sash that was the sign of her new status. Yet God’s bride Israel had forgotten her wedding adornment—God Himself.

2:33 **taught the wicked women:** This phrase implies that Judah had become so skilled in adulterous ways that they could have instructed prostitutes in new methods of seduction.

2:34, 35 **The blood . . . of the poor innocents:** Provision for the poor was specifically commanded in the Law (see Deut. 15:7–11).

2:36, 37 Israel turned every direction but to the Lord. Appealing to

Egypt would have been as fruitless as appealing to **Assyria** had been in the past. **With your hands on your head:** This was a gesture of grief and remorse—in this case, over Israel’s futile pursuits.

3:1 Deuteronomy 24:1–4 forbids a man to remarry his divorced wife if she has remarried and been divorced in the meantime. The implication is that the woman has been defiled by the second marriage. After forsaking God, Israel had taken many other **lovers**—that is, the nation worshiped many other gods. Yet the Lord in His mercy still extended His loving hand to His unfaithful bride. The word **return** implies repentance (5:3).

3:2 **desolate heights:** This term parallels the high hills of 2:20. Upon these barren heights Israel committed physical and spiritual adultery. The word **lain** has strong sexual connotations. Like Arabs who were known for ambushing caravans, Israel lustily sought other gods.

- ^fBy the road you have sat for them
Like an Arabian in the wilderness;
^gAnd you have polluted the land
With your harlotries and your
wickedness.
- ³ Therefore the ^hshowers have been
withheld,
And there has been no latter rain.
You have had a ⁱharlot's forehead;
You refuse to be ashamed.
- ⁴ Will you not from this time cry to
Me,
'My Father, You *are* ^jthe guide of ^kmy
youth?
- ⁵ ^lWill He remain angry forever?
Will He keep it to the end?"
Behold, you have spoken and done
evil things,
As you were able."

A Call to Repentance

⁶The LORD said also to me in the days
of Josiah the king: "Have you seen what
my backsliding Israel has done? She has
ⁿgone up on every high mountain and
under every green tree, and there played
the harlot. ^{7o} And I said, after she had
done all these *things*, 'Return to Me.' But
she did not return. And her treacherous
^psister Judah saw it. ⁸Then I saw that
^qfor all the causes for which backsliding
Israel had committed adultery, I had ^rput
her away and given her a certificate of
divorce; ^syet her treacherous sister Judah
did not fear, but went and played the har-
lot also. ⁹So it came to pass, through her

² ^fProv. 23:28
^gJer. 2:7
³ ^hLev. 26:19; Jer.
14:3-6 ⁱZeph. 3:5
⁴ ^jPs. 71:17; Prov.
2:17 ^kJer. 2:2; Hos.
2:15
⁵ ^lPs. 103:9; [Is.
57:16]; Jer. 3:12
⁶ ^mJer. 7:24 ⁿJer.
2:20
⁷ ^o2 Kin. 17:13
^pJer. 3:11; Ezek.
16:47, 48
⁸ ^qEzek. 23:9
^r2 Kin. 17:6; Is. 50:1
^sEzek. 23:11

⁹ ^tJer. 2:7 ^uIs. 57:6;
Jer. 2:27
¹⁰ ^vJer. 12:2; Hos.
7:14
¹¹ ^wEzek. 16:51, 52
¹² ^x2 Kin. 17:6 ^yPs.
86:15; Jer. 12:15;
31:20; 33:26
¹³ ^zLev. 26:40;
Deut. 30:1, 2; [Prov.
28:13; 1 John 1:9]
^aEzek. 16:15 ^bJer.
2:25 ^cDeut. 12:2
² Lit. *ways*
¹⁴ ^dJer. 31:32; Hos.
2:19, 20 ^eJer. 31:6
^f[Rom. 11:5]
¹⁵ ^gJer. 23:4; 31:10;
[Ezek. 34:23]; Eph.
4:11 ^hActs 20:28
¹⁶ ⁱIs. 49:19; Jer.
23:3

casual harlotry, that she ^tdefiled the land
and committed adultery with ^ustones and
trees. ¹⁰And yet for all this her treach-
erous sister Judah has not turned to Me
^vwith her whole heart, but in pretense,"
says the LORD.

¹¹Then the LORD said to me, ^w"Back-
sliding Israel has shown herself more
righteous than treacherous Judah. ¹²Go
and proclaim these words toward ^xthe
north, and say:

'Return, backsliding Israel,' says the
LORD;

'I will not cause My anger to fall on
you.

For I *am* ^ymerciful,' says the LORD;

'I will not remain angry forever.

¹³ ^zOnly acknowledge your iniquity,
That you have transgressed against
the LORD your God,

And have ^ascattered your ²charms
To ^balien deities ^cunder every green
tree,

And you have not obeyed My voice,'
says the LORD.

¹⁴"Return, O backsliding children,"
says the LORD; ^d"for I am married to you.
I will take you, ^eone from a city and two
from a family, and I will bring you to
^fZion. ¹⁵And I will give you ^gshepherds
according to My heart, who will ^hfeed
you with knowledge and understanding.

¹⁶"Then it shall come to pass, when
you are multiplied and ⁱincreased in the

3:3 Showers and latter rain refer to the two types of rain that fall in Israel in the spring, from March to early April. These rains are vital in the dry land. Even the punishment of drought did not soften Israel's **harlot's forehead**. This term may refer to a distinguishing mark of slaves, or it may describe a person's character (see Ezek. 3:8). Israel was like a prostitute who was totally unashamed.

3:6 The reign of **Josiah** (640–609 B.C.) followed the idolatrous reigns of Manasseh (697–642 B.C.) and Amon (642–640 B.C.). **On every high mountain and under every green tree** echoes the words of 2:20 (see also v. 2).

3:7 Return means to "return" to God in faith (5:3). Judah had witnessed Israel's refusal to repent.

3:8 Adultery is forbidden by one of the Ten Commandments (see Deut. 5:18), the heart of the covenant. Because of Israel's adultery, the Lord presented her with a **certificate of divorce** based on Deut. 24:1–4. As a consequence, in 722 B.C. Israel was taken captive by Assyria, and Samaria was destroyed. Judah looked on but did not learn from Israel's example.

3:10 Judah pretended to repent in times of distress, but did not actually turn with its **heart** to the Lord (see Deut. 6:5; 10:16). The *heart* means the people's will, mind, and emotion.

3:11 Because it had not learned from Israel's example, Judah was considered more **treacherous** than Israel.

3:12 The cry **toward the north** may indicate a summons for the northern kingdom in the days of Josiah to repent. **Return, backsliding Israel**: If the people turned in repentance (3:1, 7; 5:3), God's **anger** would not come upon them. The basis of this appeal is that God is **merciful**, faithful to His covenant promise.

3:13 Iniquity refers to the breaking of the covenant command-

ments. Israel's rebellious iniquity is identified as the pursuit of **alien** gods, idolatry committed throughout the land.

3:14 To *marry* in this context means to become lord or master. In other words **married** describes the covenant relation between God and Israel. **take you . . . bring you**: The remnant of Israel would be united with the remnant of Judah on Mt. Zion in Jerusalem.

3:15 shepherds: Throughout the Bible the image of the *shepherd* is an important one. God provides shepherds for His people to watch over them, guide them, care for them, and lead them. From Moses in the OT to Jesus in the New, God provides faithful, devoted leaders after His own heart. God rules with a heart of **knowledge and understanding**, not falsehood and deceit.

3:16 God ordained that His shepherds would lead Israel through a time of blessing, increase in numbers, and material prosperity. In that future time, the highest symbol of God's presence, the **ark of the covenant**, would no longer be central to the true religion of Israel. God Himself would be central to Jewish worship.

guide

(Heb. *'alluph*) (3:4; Prov. 2:17; 16:28; Mic. 7:5) Strong's #441

The Hebrew word translated as *guide* here means "friend." Israel's appeal based on God's friendship with them will avail them nothing due to their hardness of heart (v. 3). This word is translated *companion* in Prov. 2:17; Mic. 7:5, where the subjects are human. In Ps. 55:13 the treachery of a false friend is reproached.

land in those days,” says the LORD, “that they will say no more, ‘The ark of the covenant of the LORD.’ ^jIt shall not come to mind, nor shall they remember it, nor shall they visit *it*, nor shall it be made anymore.

¹⁷“At that time Jerusalem shall be called The Throne of the LORD, and all the nations shall be gathered to it, ^kto the name of the LORD, to Jerusalem. No more shall they ^lfollow ³ the dictates of their evil hearts.

¹⁸“In those days ^mthe house of Judah shall walk with the house of Israel, and they shall come together out of the land of ⁿthe north to ^othe land that I have given as an inheritance to your fathers.

¹⁹“But I said:

‘How can I put you among the children
And give you ^pa pleasant land,
A beautiful heritage of the hosts of nations?’

“And I said:

‘You shall call Me, ^q“My Father,”
And not turn away from Me.’

²⁰ Surely, as a wife treacherously
departs from her ⁴husband,
So ^rhave you dealt treacherously
with Me,
O house of Israel,” says the LORD.

²¹ A voice was heard on ^sthe desolate heights,
Weeping *and* supplications of the children of Israel.
For they have perverted their way;
They have forgotten the LORD their God.

16 ^jIs. 65:17
17 ^kIs. 60:9 ^lDeut. 29:19; Jer. 7:24
³ *walk after the stubbornness or imagination*
18 ^mIs. 11:13; Jer. 50:4; Ezek. 37:16-22; Hos. 1:11 ⁿJer. 31:8
^oAmos 9:15
19 ^pPs. 106:24 ^qIs. 63:16; Jer. 3:4
20 ^rIs. 48:8 ⁴Lit. companion
21 ^sIs. 15:2

22 ^tJer. 30:17; 33:6; Hos. 6:1; 14:4
23 ^uPs. 121:1, 2
^vPs. 3:8; Prov. 21:31; Jer. 17:14; 31:7; Jon. 2:9
24 ^wIs. 11:13; 14:20; Hos. 9:10
25 ^xEzra 9:6; 7 ^yJer. 22:21
⁵ *disgrace*

CHAPTER 4

1 ^aJer. 3:1, 22; 15:19; Joel 2:12
2 ^bDeut. 10:20; Is. 45:23; 65:16; Jer. 12:16 ^cIs. 48:1; Zech. 8:8 ^d[Gen. 22:18]; Ps. 72:18; Is. 65:16; Jer. 3:17; [Gal. 3:8] ^eIs. 45:25; Jer. 9:24; 1 Cor. 1:31; 2 Cor. 10:17
¹ *justice*

²²“Return, you backsliding children,
And I will ‘heal your backslidings.”

“Indeed we do come to You,
For You are the LORD our God.

²³ ^uTruly, in vain *is salvation hoped for*
from the hills,
And from the multitude of mountains;

^vTruly, in the LORD our God
Is the salvation of Israel.

²⁴ ^wFor shame has devoured
The labor of our fathers from our youth—
Their flocks and their herds,
Their sons and their daughters.

²⁵ We lie down in our shame,
And our ⁵reproach covers us.

^xFor we have sinned against the LORD our God,
We and our fathers,
From our youth even to this day,
And ^yhave not obeyed the voice of the LORD our God.”

4 “If you will return, O Israel,” says the LORD,

^a“Return to Me;
And if you will put away your abominations out of My sight,
Then you shall not be moved.

² ^bAnd you shall swear, ‘The LORD lives,’

^cIn truth, in ¹judgment, and in righteousness;

^dThe nations shall bless themselves in Him,
And in Him they shall ^eglory.”

³For thus says the LORD to the men of Judah and Jerusalem:

3:17 Jerusalem, not the ark of the covenant, would be **The Throne of the LORD** and the focal point of the world’s religion. **The name of the LORD** summarizes the essence of His character and His relationship with His people (see Ex. 3: 14; 15).

3:18 Restoration and reunification of Israel, unknown since the days of David and Solomon, would be brought about by God Himself. From the **north**, the direction from which Israel’s enemies typically came, God would bring back His people and bless them in the **land** of promise, under the Lord’s chosen Shepherd—the Messiah.

3:19 The possession of the **land** was always dependent on the covenant faithfulness of Israel to their God. The Lord’s desire has always been to bless His people.

3:21 The confessions and prayers of the people are voiced in the midst of their idolatry. Their cries were but idle words, because they had **forgotten** their God.

3:22 The call to repentance of v. 14 is reiterated in words strongly reminiscent of Hos. 14:1–4. The confession begins with acknowledgment of the Lord as God in accordance with the First Commandment (Ex. 20:2, 3).

3:23 The term **vain**, meaning “falsehood,” is found 37 times in Jeremiah, often in reference to idolatry and false prophecy (see 5:2; 7:4, 9). The mountains were centers of idol worship and thus were

strongholds of falsehood. True **salvation** or deliverance could be found only in the true God of Israel.

3:24 **Shame** is a euphemism for idolatry, which had consumed Israel’s thoughts, their flocks and fields, and even their children. The reference to children recalls the human sacrifices in the Valley of Hinnom in the days of Manasseh.

3:25 The people acknowledged the **shame** and **reproach** that they had brought upon themselves. They had **sinned against** God since their days of **youth** in the wilderness.

4:1 The term **abominations** or “detestable objects” is usually used in the context of idolatry in the OT (7:30). **You shall not be moved** implies that repentant Israel would be unwavering in its faith in God.

4:2 **The LORD lives:** This phrase was regularly used in oaths. When spoken by those faithful to the covenant it should have been a sign of **truth, judgment, and righteousness**. These three terms summarize the ultimate and ideal demands of the covenant. They are the standards by which all men, from kings to slaves, were and will be judged. **bless themselves:** The results of Israel’s justice and righteousness would have international consequences. See God’s promise to Abraham in Gen. 12:1–3, that other nations would be blessed through his descendants.

4:3 **fallow ground:** This is unused soil, not a regularly plowed field.

- ^f“Break up your ²fallow ground,
And ^gdo not sow among thorns.
⁴ ^hCircumcise yourselves to the LORD,
And take away the foreskins of your
hearts,
You men of Judah and inhabitants of
Jerusalem,
Lest My fury come forth like fire,
And burn so that no one can
quench *it*,
Because of the evil of your doings.”

An Imminent Invasion

⁵Declare in Judah and proclaim in Jerusalem, and say:

- ⁱ“Blow the trumpet in the land;
Cry, ‘Gather together,’
And say, ^j‘Assemble yourselves,
And let us go into the fortified
cities.’
⁶ Set up the ³standard toward Zion.
Take refuge! Do not delay!
For I will bring disaster from the
^knorth,
And great destruction.”
⁷ ^lThe lion has come up from his
thicket,
And ^mthe destroyer of nations is on
his way.
He has gone forth from his place
ⁿTo make your land desolate.
Your cities will be laid waste,
Without inhabitant.
⁸ For this, ^oclothe yourself with
sackcloth,
Lament and wail.
For the fierce anger of the LORD
Has not turned back from us.

³ ^fHos. 10:12
^gMatt. 13:7
² *untilled*
⁴ ^hDeut. 10:16;
30:6; Jer. 9:25, 26;
[Rom. 2:28, 29; Col.
2:11]
⁵ ⁱJer. 6:1; Hos.
8:1 / Josh. 10:20;
Jer. 8:14
⁶ ^kJer. 1:13-15; 6:1,
22; 50:17 ³ *banner*
⁷ / 2 Kin. 24:1; Dan.
7:4 ^mJer. 25:9;
Ezek. 26:7-10 ⁿIs.
1:7; 6:11; Jer. 2:15
⁸ ^oIs. 22:12; Jer.
6:26

- ⁹ “And it shall come to pass in that
day,” says the LORD,
“*That* the heart of the king shall
perish,
And the heart of the princes;
The priests shall be astonished,
And the prophets shall wonder.”
¹⁰ Then I said, “Ah, Lord God!
^p Surely You have greatly deceived this
people and Jerusalem,
^q Saying, ‘You shall have peace,’
Whereas the sword reaches to the
⁴ heart.”
¹¹ At that time it will be said
To this people and to Jerusalem,
^r “A dry wind of the desolate heights
blows in the wilderness
Toward the daughter of My people—
Not to fan or to cleanse—
¹² A wind too strong for these will
come for Me;
Now ^s I will also speak judgment
against them.”
¹³ “Behold, he shall come up like
clouds,
And ^this chariots like a whirlwind.
^u His horses are swifter than eagles.
Woe to us, for we are plundered!”
¹⁴ O Jerusalem, ^vwash your heart from
wickedness,
That you may be saved.
How long shall your evil thoughts
lodge within you?
¹⁵ For a voice declares ^wfrom Dan
And proclaims ⁵affliction from
Mount Ephraim:

¹⁰ ^p 2 Kin. 25:10-12;
Ezek. 14:9; 2 Thess.
2:11 ^q Jer. 5:12;
14:13 ⁴ *Lit. soul*
¹¹ ^r Jer. 51:1; Ezek.
17:10; Hos. 13:15
¹² ^s Jer. 1:16
¹³ ^t Is. 5:28 ^v Deut.
28:49; Lam. 4:19;
Hos. 8:1; Hab. 1:8
¹⁴ ^v Prov. 1:22; Is.
1:16; Jer. 13:27;
James 4:8
¹⁵ ^w Jer. 8:16; 50:17
⁵ *Or wickedness*

Israel needed a new field in which to sow its seed of faithfulness, a radical departure from its ways of sin and idolatry.

4:4 Circumcise: Circumcision was a sign of the covenant relationship between Israel and God (see Gen. 17:10–14). The intent of God was always that the outward symbol should be a sign of an inward reality of total devotion to Him (see Deut. 10:12–21). **fury:** Jeremiah’s stern warning of judgment is given with the picture of an unquenchable fire (see Joel 2:3). If the people did not repent of **evil**, destruction would come.

4:5 Jeremiah announced the judgment of Judah and Jerusalem with the alarming sound of a **trumpet**, literally a shofar made of a ram’s horn. This was the instrument used to sound the alarm when an enemy attacked a city.

4:6 Standard may refer to signal fires that connected Jerusalem with the perimeter fortresses of Judah. Since the foe **from the north** was yet unidentified by Jeremiah, this prophecy probably dates from between 622 and 609 B.C. All of Israel’s enemies except Egypt came from the north. Later on, Jeremiah identified this enemy as Babylon.

4:7 Destruction would come as a terrible surprise, like a **lion . . . from his thicket** pouncing suddenly upon its prey. The desolation of the land and the deportation of the people would be the result.

4:8 Sackcloth was a rough-textured fabric worn as a sign of mourning or distress (6:26). **fierce anger:** The burning wrath of God would come as an inextinguishable fire.

4:10 Even Jeremiah was overwhelmed at what God was about to bring upon Jerusalem. This passage indicates the deep inner struggle Jeremiah faced in his proclamation of the divine message. Jeremiah challenged God’s dealings with His people, claiming that God had **deceived** the people with a message of **peace**. False prophets like Hananiah foretold a time of peace when in reality despair was more in order.

4:11, 12 The **sirocco wind** comes from the deserts east and south of Israel, bringing scorching heat and whirling dust. The divine winds of judgment would bring destruction to Jerusalem, the **daughter** of God. This last phrase is particularly touching; Jacob is God’s “son,” and Jerusalem is His “daughter” (see 4:31; 6:2).

4:13 Judah had become the foe of God, and He would use the nation’s international foes to discipline them. The imagery of **clouds** and **chariots like a whirlwind** portray the thoroughness and swiftness of God’s judgment. The people would respond in horror to their fate.

4:14 The word **wash** is used in Leviticus and Numbers to describe the cleansing of garments that had become defiled through contact with unclean objects or diseases. Cleansing of the **heart** is foundational to salvation (see Is. 1:18–20).

4:15 Dan: The most northern city of Israel proper. Dan was conquered by Tiglath-Pileser III in 733 B.C. and was incorporated as part of an Assyrian province. The city continued to be occupied through the Assyrian period by remnants of the northern kingdom and by



The Desert Winds

Wind is both a boon and a bane to Palestine. The hot climate is eased by cool Mediterranean winds during the day. Chill evenings provide a welcome change from the day's heat in desert and hill country. The moisture-laden sea winds combine with cool air at night to give Palestine its vital dew. A southeasterly wind marks the change of seasons in Palestine, from spring to summer and from summer to fall. Jeremiah 4:11 mentions "a dry wind of the desolate heights [that] blows in the wilderness." This dry wind loaded with dust makes the people very uncomfortable.

The Bible's "east wind" (Jer. 18:17) may be what the Arabs call a *khamsin*. This wind leaves people irritable and feeling like doing nothing because of the oppressive heat. Jonah may have experienced this: "God prepared a vehement east wind; and the sun beat on Jonah's head" (Jon. 4:8).



Jerusalem during a *khamsin* (sandstorm)
www.HolyLandPhotos.org

16“ Make mention to the nations,
Yes, proclaim against Jerusalem,
That watchers come from a ^xfar
country
And raise their voice against the
cities of Judah.
17^y Like keepers of a field they are
against her all around,
Because she has been rebellious
against Me,” says the LORD.

16 ^x Is. 39:3; Jer. 5:15
17 ^y 2 Kin. 25:1, 4
18 ^z Ps. 107:17; Is.
50:1; Jer. 2:17, 19
19 ^a 2 Kin. 25:11;
2 Chr. 36:20; Is. 15:5;
16:11; 21:3; 22:4; Jer.
9:1, 10; 20:9
20 ^b Ps. 42:7; Ezek.
7:26 ^c Jer. 10:20
21 ^d banner
22 ^d Jer. 9:3; 13:23;

18“ Your^z ways and your doings
Have procured these *things* for you.
This is your wickedness,
Because it is bitter,
Because it reaches to your heart.”

Sorrow for the Doomed Nation

19 O my ^asoul, my soul!
I am pained in my very heart!
My heart makes a noise in me;
I cannot hold my peace,
Because you have heard, O my soul,
The sound of the trumpet,
The alarm of war.

20^b Destruction upon destruction is
cried,
For the whole land is plundered.
Suddenly ^cmy tents are plundered,
And my curtains in a moment.

21 How long will I see the ^estandard,
And hear the sound of the trumpet?

22“ For My people *are* foolish,
They have not known Me.
They *are* ⁷silly children,
And they have no understanding.

^d They *are* wise to do evil,
But to do good they have no
knowledge.”

23 ^e I beheld the earth, and indeed *it was*
^fwithout form, and void;
And the heavens, they *had* no light.

24^g I beheld the mountains, and indeed
they trembled,
And all the hills moved back and
forth.

25 I beheld, and indeed *there was* no
man,
And ^hall the birds of the heavens had
fled.

26 I beheld, and indeed the fruitful land
was a ⁱwilderness,

Rom. 16:19; 1 Cor. 14:20 ⁷ foolish 23 ^e Is. 24:19 ^f Gen. 1:2
24 ^g Is. 5:25; Jer. 10:10; Ezek. 38:20 25 ^h Jer. 9:10; 12:4; Zeph.
1:3 26 ⁱ Jer. 9:10

foreigners who had been settled there. **Ephraim** was in the southernmost region of the northern kingdom of Israel. The message is clear. Just as Israel had been subjugated, Judah was also in danger. **4:16, 17** Jeremiah, the prophet to the **nations**, announced the attack of foreign enemies who would raise their battle cries against Judah.

4:19, 20 **Soul** here means “bowels” or “belly,” a reference to the internal organs. In ancient Middle Eastern thought, the internal organs were the seat of emotions and feelings. The term describes Jeremiah’s inward anguish over the coming destruction of Jerusalem. The phrase **makes a noise** depicts the “groaning” of the prophet’s **heart** at the sound of the trumpet announcing Judah’s destruction (v. 5). The **destruction** of Judah extended to the entire land, even to Jeremiah’s own dwelling place, adding to his misery.

4:22 **Foolish** describes the character of the people. The terms **foolish** and **silly** are contrary to the terms **knowledge** and **understanding**. God described His people as impudent children. They

were **wise** in the ways of **evil**, but totally deficient in knowing how to **do good**.

4:23 without form, and void: This Hebrew phrase is the same one used in Gen. 1:2 to describe the chaos before the ordering of the cosmos. **no light:** The prophets spoke of darkness as part of God’s judgment on the world. Here the lack of light describes the disastrous effects of sin on creation, particularly on the land of Judah.

4:24, 25 The symbols of stability and of strength would be shaken as by an earthquake. **Birds** would disappear as Hosea had proclaimed (see Hos. 4:3). In Gen. 1, the creation of the birds of the heavens depicts the fulfillment of the creative process. In Jeremiah and Hosea, the removal of the birds symbolizes the reversal of creation.

4:26 The term **fruitful** refers to the region of Mt. Carmel, where there were productive vineyards, olive groves, and oak trees. The term is used figuratively to symbolize the productivity of the land as a “garden of God.” Yet this also would be turned to desert—desolate and unproductive land.

And all its cities were broken
down
At the presence of the LORD,
By His fierce anger.

27 For thus says the LORD:

“The whole land shall be desolate;
^jYet I will not make a full end.

28 For this ^kshall the earth mourn,
And ^lthe heavens above be
black,
Because I have spoken.
I have ^mpurposed and ⁿwill not
relent,
Nor will I turn back from it.
29 The whole city shall flee from the
noise of the horsemen and
bowmen.
They shall go into thickets and climb
up on the rocks.
Every city *shall be* forsaken,
And not a man shall dwell in it.

30 “And *when you are* plundered,
What will you do?
Though you clothe yourself with
crimson,
Though you adorn *yourself* with
ornaments of gold,
^oThough you enlarge your eyes with
paint,
In vain you will make yourself
fair;
^pYour lovers will despise you;
They will seek your life.

27 / Jer. 5:10, 18;
30:11; 46:28
28 ^k Jer. 12:4, 11;
14:2; Hos. 4:3 / Is.
5:30; 50:3; Joel 2:30,
31 ^m Is. 46:10, 11;
[Dan. 4:35] ⁿ [Num.
23:19]; Jer. 7:16;
23:30; 30:24
30 ^o 2 Kin. 9:30;
Ezek. 23:40 ^p Jer.
22:20, 22; Lam.
1:2, 19; Ezek. 23:9,
10, 22

31 ^q Is. 1:15; Lam.
1:17 ^r childbirth
^s faint

CHAPTER 5

1 ^a Ezek. 22:30
^b Gen. 18:23–
32 ^c Gen. 18:26
^d justice
2 ^d Is. 48:1; Titus
1:16 ^e Jer. 4:2
^f Jer. 7:9
3 ^g 2 Kin. 25:1;
[2 Chr. 16:9; Jer.
16:17] ^h Is. 1:5; 9:13;
Jer. 2:30 / Is. 9:13;
Jer. 7:28; Zeph. 3:2

31 “For I have heard a voice as of a
woman in ^slabor,
The anguish as of her who brings
forth her first child,
The voice of the daughter of Zion
bemoaning herself;
She ^qspreads her hands, *saying*,
“Woe is me now, for my soul is
^rweary
Because of murderers!”

The Justice of God's Judgment

5 “Run to and fro through the streets
of Jerusalem;
See now and know;
And seek in her open places
^aIf you can find a man,
^bIf there is *anyone* who executes
¹judgment,
Who seeks the truth,
^cAnd I will pardon her.
2 ^dThough they say, ‘As ^ethe LORD
lives,’
Surely they ^fswear falsely.”

3 O LORD, *are* not ^gYour eyes on the
truth?
You have ^hstricken them,
But they have not grieved;
You have consumed them,
But ⁱthey have refused to receive
correction.
They have made their faces harder
than rock;
They have refused to return.

4:27 **Desolate** refers to the uninhabitable devastation of Judah as a result of its unfaithfulness. Yet the land would not see total destruction. A slim ray of future hope still existed. God remembers His mercy in His wrath.

4:28 The **black** skies associate darkness with God's judgment. The term **relent**, meaning “to repent” or “to be sorry,” parallels the term **turn back**. God's judgment on sin and rebellion is inescapable (see Num. 23:19).

4:30 Instead of turning to the Lord in its time of despair, Judah would turn to the idolatrous activity which had caused its dismal plight. To **adorn** oneself in **crimson**, **gold**, and **eye paint** depicts the seduction of clients by a prostitute. The word **lovers** describes Judah and Israel's history of physical and spiritual prostitution.

4:31 The voice of God called for repentance; but the **voice** of the people cried out in anguish and despair, but not to the Lord their Savior. **daughter of Zion**: The term is an endearing way of describing Jerusalem as God's beloved daughter (see 4:11; 6:2). The use of this warm phrase in such a terrible context heightens our appreciation of the horror of the moment. **spreads her hands**: This phrase portrays the agony of the impending death of Jerusalem. **My soul is weary** suggests dying words of agony and despair. Judah's lovers had become her **murderers**.

5:1 Similar to Abraham's plea that Sodom be saved on account of the few faithful people among its inhabitants (see Gen. 18:16–33), so Jeremiah summoned the people to search the city of Jerusalem for one just and righteous person. **Judgment** describes one who has done what is right and just before God and man.

5:2 Used at times by the prophets of Jeremiah's day to introduce divine oracles or by people in swearing oaths (4:2), the phrase **as the Lord lives** invokes God's name and character in the proclamation.

5:3 God always looks for **truth** (v. 1) and faithfulness. When truth was found lacking in Judah, God punished the people of Jerusalem through foreign invasion. But rather than responding with remorse and repentance, the people reacted in rebellion. The Hebrew term translated **correction** means “chastisement” or “discipline.” Sometimes it means “instruction.” In the prophets it generally refers to God's attempt to teach His children faithfulness by means of discipline or punishment (7:28). But despite the words of Jeremiah and other prophets, Israel refused “correction” and continued down the path of self-destruction. The illustration of **faces harder than rock** emphasizes the rebellious attitudes of the people.

mourn

(Heb. *abal*) (4:28; 12:4, Job 14:22) Strong's #56

This verb is one of several Hebrew verbs which refers to the outward acts involved in ancient mourning rites for the dead. Mourning often involved the appearance of an individual: a mourner would frequently wear sackcloth and ashes as a symbol of mourning (6:26)—sometimes even the head would be shaved (Amos 8:10). In the Bible, this Hebrew word is also translated *lament* (Lam. 2:8). Often the word is used figuratively of objects which cannot really mourn. Here Jeremiah uses the word to describe the earth as mourning in reaction to the broken covenant. God's people had neglected their obligations to the Lord's covenant.

- 4 Therefore I said, “Surely these *are* poor.
They are foolish;
For ^jthey do not know the way of the LORD,
The judgment of their God.
5 I will go to the great men and speak to them,
For ^kthey have known the way of the LORD,
The judgment of their God.”

But these have altogether ^lbroken the yoke
And burst the bonds.

- 6 Therefore ^ma lion from the forest shall slay them,
ⁿA wolf of the deserts shall destroy them;
^oA leopard will watch over their cities.
Everyone who goes out from there shall be torn in pieces,
Because their transgressions are many;
Their backslidings have increased.

- 7 “How shall I pardon you for this?
Your children have forsaken Me
And ^psworn by *those* ^qthat are not gods.
^rWhen I had fed them to the full,
Then they committed adultery
And assembled themselves by troops
in the harlots’ houses.
8 ^sThey were *like* well-fed lusty stallions;
Every one neighed after his neighbor’s wife.

4 ⁱIs. 27:11; Jer. 8:7; Hos. 4:6
5 ^kMic. 3:1 ^lEx. 32:25; Ps. 2:3; Jer. 2:20
6 ^mJer. 4:7 ⁿPs. 104:20; Ezek. 22:27; Hab. 1:8; Zeph. 3:3
^oHos. 13:7
7 ^pJosh. 23:7; Jer. 12:16; Zeph. 1:5
^qDeut. 32:21; Jer. 2:11; Gal. 4:8 ^rDeut. 32:15
8 ^sJer. 13:27; 29:23; Ezek. 22:11

9 ^tJer. 9:9
10 ^uJer. 4:27
^vcompletely destroy
11 ^vJer. 3:6, 7, 20
12 ^w2 Chr. 36:16; Jer. 4:10 ^xIs. 28:15; 47:8; Jer. 23:17 ^yJer. 14:13 ^zdisaster
14 ^zIs. 24:6; Jer. 1:9; 23:29; Hos. 6:5; Zech. 1:6
15 ^aDeut. 28:49; Is. 5:26; Jer. 1:15; 6:22
^bIs. 39:3; Jer. 4:16

- 9 Shall I not punish *them* for these *things*?” says the LORD.
“And shall I not ^tavenge Myself on such a nation as this?”

- 10 “Go up on her walls and destroy,
But do not ²make a “complete end.
Take away her branches,
For they *are* not the LORD’s.

- 11 For ^vthe house of Israel and the house of Judah
Have dealt very treacherously with Me,” says the LORD.

- 12 ^wThey have lied about the LORD,
And said, ^x“It is not He.
^yNeither will ³evil come upon us,
Nor shall we see sword or famine.
13 And the prophets become wind,
For the word *is* not in them.
Thus shall it be done to them.”

- 14 Therefore thus says the LORD God of hosts:

- “Because you speak this word,
^zBehold, I will make My words in your mouth fire,
And this people wood,
And it shall devour them.

- 15 Behold, I will bring a ^anation against you ^bfrom afar,
O house of Israel,” says the LORD.
“It is a mighty nation,
It is an ancient nation,
A nation whose language you do not know,

5:4 Here the term **poor** is paralleled by the word **foolish**, a rare term used by Isaiah (19:13) to refer to the nation as deluded and deceived. Thus the word *poor* refers to those who lack knowledge of God and are insensitive to His instruction and inattentive to His will.

5:5, 6 Greatness is achieved not by wealth and power but by the knowledge of God and obedience to Him. **known:** The word refers to intimate and practical knowledge. Here the knowledge is of the **way of the Lord**—the path characterized by truth, justice, and righteousness. Jeremiah paints a picture of Judah as oxen that have **broken** their **yoke**, wandering aimlessly through the field, guided by their own desires. Because they have broken the yoke, they are exposed to the elements and the wild animals of the forest and desert. The animals symbolize the foreign nations who would lay siege to their cities. The cause of the devastation is the many **transgressions**, meaning “rebellions,” and **backslidings**, or “turnings,” of Judah.

5:7 The message is still addressed to the leaders of Judah (v. 5). The word **pardon** means forgiveness that cannot be granted where there is no repentance, but only continual abandoning of the ways of the Lord. **not gods:** The use of this phrase, found also in 2:11 and 16:20, is tantamount to declaring the nonexistence of the foreign deities that Judah worshiped. The words **your children** refers to the children of the leaders, who are the leaders’ children and not God’s. **I had fed:** The term means God had satisfied their every need. **adultery . . . harlots’ houses:** These terms refer to physical adultery, though the source of this immoral sexual conduct may have been the presence of pagan cultic prostitutes. The prophets generally referred to cultic prostitution as adultery.

5:8 In the context of Josiah’s reforms, the men may have turned from cultic prostitutes, whom the king had eradicated, to ordinary prostitutes. From the brothels they turned to one another’s wives. Like **stallions**, their lust was uncontrollable.

5:9 The Hebrew word translated **punish**, literally meaning “to visit,” can be used of the visitation of God in mercy (see Ps. 65:9) or in wrath. Here it clearly refers to wrath.

5:10 An unidentified adversary is called upon by the Lord to attack Jerusalem, but not to utterly destroy her. **her branches:** The degenerate, unfaithful limbs would be pruned because they were not His.

5:12 The people **lied** about the Lord, denying that **He** was about to inflict a horrible defeat. They had deceived themselves into thinking that God would not punish His own city and people, forgetting the negative effects of disobedience to the covenant (see Deut. 27:28).

5:13 False **prophets** like Hananiah (28:11) had foretold a time of peace and deliverance from the domination and destructiveness of their enemies. But their **word** was like an empty breeze. The very **sword** (v. 12) they denied would seal their fate.

5:14 Lord God of hosts: This phrase reminds the hearer that the true God of Israel controls all of the forces of heaven and earth. **this word:** This refers to the proclamation of Jeremiah, who voices the words of the Lord with the intensity of a blazing fire.

5:15 The true prophet Jeremiah announces the imminent coming of a **mighty nation** from distant lands who will carry out the divine purpose. The nation is not named, indicating that the oracle predates the advent of Babylon under Nabopolassar and Nebuchadnezzar. The only identification is that the enemy speaks a tongue unknown to the people in Jerusalem.

Nor can you understand what they say.

- 16 Their quiver *is* like an open tomb;
They *are* all mighty men.
17 And they shall eat up your ^charvest
and your bread,
Which your sons and daughters
should eat.
They shall eat up your flocks and
your herds;
They shall eat up your vines and
your fig trees;
They shall destroy your fortified
cities,
In which you trust, with the sword.

18 “Nevertheless in those days,” says the LORD, “I ^dwill not ^emake a complete end of you. 19 And it will be when you say, ‘Why does the LORD our God do all these *things* to us?’ then you shall answer them, ‘Just as you have ^fforsaken Me and served foreign gods in your land, so ^gyou shall serve aliens in a land *that is* not yours.’

- 20 “Declare this in the house of Jacob
And proclaim it in Judah, saying,
21 ‘Hear this now, O ^hfoolish people,
Without ⁱunderstanding,
Who have eyes and see not,
And who have ears and hear not:
22 ^jDo you not fear Me?’ says the LORD.
‘Will you not tremble at My presence,
Who have placed the sand as the
^kbound of the sea,
By a perpetual decree, that it cannot
pass beyond it?
And though its waves toss to and fro,
Yet they cannot prevail;
Though they roar, yet they cannot
pass over it.

17 ^c Lev. 26:16;
Deut. 28:31, 33; Jer.
8:16; 50:7, 17
18 ^d Jer. 30:11;
Amos 9:8
^e *completely destroy*
19 ^e Deut. 29:24-29;
1 Kin. 9:8, 9; Jer.
13:22; 16:10-13 ^f Jer.
1:16; 2:13 ^g Deut.
28:48; Jer. 16:13
21 ^h Is. 6:9; Jer. 6:10;
Ezek. 12:2; Matt.
13:14; John 12:40;
Acts 28:26; Rom.
11:8 ⁱ Lit. *heart*
22 ^j Deut. 28:58; Ps.
119:120; Jer. 2:19;
10:7; [Rev. 15:4]
/ Job 26:10

24 ^k Ps. 147:8; Jer.
14:22; [Matt. 5:45];
Acts 14:17 ^l Deut.
11:14; Joel 2:23;
James 5:7 ^m [Gen.
8:22]
25 ⁿ Jer. 3:3
26 ^o Ps. 10:9; Prov.
1:11; Jer. 18:22;
Hab. 1:15
28 ^p Deut. 32:15
^q Is. 1:23; Jer. 7:6;
22:3; Zech. 7:10
^r Job 12:6; Ps. 73:12
^s *Or pass over or
overlook*
29 ^s Jer. 5:9; Mal. 3:5
30 ^t Jer. 23:14; Hos.
6:10; 2 Tim. 4:3
31 ^u Jer. 14:14; Ezek.
13:6

- 23 But this people has a defiant and
rebellious heart;
They have revolted and departed.
24 They do not say in their heart,
“Let us now fear the LORD our God,
^k Who gives rain, both the ^lformer and
the latter, in its season.
^m He reserves for us the appointed
weeks of the harvest.”
25 ⁿ Your iniquities have turned these
things away,
And your sins have withheld good
from you.
26 ‘For among My people are found
wicked *men*;
They ^olie in wait as one who sets
snares;
They set a trap;
They catch men.
27 As a cage is full of birds,
So their houses *are* full of deceit.
Therefore they have become great
and grown rich.
28 They have grown ^pfat, they are sleek;
Yes, they ^qsurpass the deeds of the
wicked;
They do not plead ^rthe cause,
The cause of the fatherless;
^s Yet they prosper,
And the right of the needy they do
not defend.
29 ^s Shall I not punish *them* for these
things?’ says the LORD.
‘Shall I not avenge Myself on such a
nation as this?’
30 “An astonishing and ^thorrible thing
Has been committed in the land:
31 The prophets prophesy ^ufalsely,
And the priests rule by their *own*
power;

5:17 The word **eat** is used four times in this verse to paint an image of the enemy as consuming field, flock, and fortifications.

5:18 In the middle of a prophecy of judgment, Jeremiah includes a word of hope. The phrase **in those days** is indicative of the judgment God would visit upon His people. God would not destroy His people, but He would make them suffer greatly.

5:19 In summary, Jeremiah repeats two key words describing the sins of Judah and Israel: **forsaken** (abandonment) and **foreign gods** (idolatry; see 1:16; 2:13). Since Judah persisted in worshiping gods from foreign lands, God would allow them to be deported and serve their enemies.

5:20 house of Jacob: Even after the northern kingdom had been destroyed, the prophets still spoke of Israel. There was not a complete destruction of the northern tribes, as is commonly assumed.

5:21 foolish: This term emphasizes the people's ignorance of the ways of God. The parallel phrase **without understanding** shows the waywardness of the mind of the nation. Judah's blind eyes and deaf ears were a fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy more than one hundred years earlier (see Is. 6:10).

5:22 To fear God is to acknowledge His majesty and to submit to His will. The negative rhetorical questions highlight Judah's refusal to submit to and to serve God. Instead, they bowed to the many foreign gods who were entirely powerless. God controls the sea,

the realm of the mythological Canaanite gods Yamm and Lotan (see Is. 27:1).

5:24 The fear of the LORD is associated here with His creation of the natural world. **our God:** This title indicates the covenant affinity between the Lord and His people which was sadly lacking in their **heart** and mind. **Who gives rain:** In the Canaanite fertility cult, Baal was viewed as the provider of the rains that enriched the soil and brought productivity (see 1 Kin. 17:1). Elijah's victory over Baal and Asherah on Mt. Carmel demonstrated that the God of Israel was the true provider (see 1 Kin. 18).

5:26-28 the wicked: Those responsible for the welfare of the whole populace had abused their positions by exploiting the lesser elements of Israelite society. The picture presented is one of **birds**, or the poor, being ensnared by **great** men who were building wealth at the expense of orphans and the **needy** (see Deut. 10:18).

5:30, 31 Jeremiah describes the moral depravity of Judah's leaders as **an astonishing and horrible thing**. The deterioration of the leadership of the land reached to the **prophets** and **priests**, the very people who were to be the mainstays of righteousness among the people. Both offices had succumbed to the temptation of abusing their power, rejecting their responsible roles as messengers and servants of God.

And My people ^vlove to have it so.
But what will you do in the end?

Impending Destruction from the North

6 “O you children of Benjamin,
Gather yourselves to flee from the
midst of Jerusalem!

Blow the trumpet in Tekoa,
And set up a signal-fire in ^aBeth
Haccerem;

^bFor disaster appears out of the north,
And great destruction.

² I have likened the daughter of Zion
To a lovely and delicate woman.

³ The ^cshepherds with their flocks
shall come to her.
They shall pitch *their* tents against
her all around.
Each one shall pasture in his own
place.”

⁴ “Prepare ^dwar against her;
Arise, and let us go up ^eat noon.
Woe to us, for the day goes away,
For the shadows of the evening are
lengthening.

⁵ Arise, and let us go by night,
And let us destroy her palaces.”

⁶For thus has the LORD of hosts said:

“Cut down trees,
And build a mound against
Jerusalem.
This is the city to be punished.
She is full of oppression in her midst.
⁷ ^fAs a fountain ^gwells up with water,
So she wells up with her wickedness.

31 ^v Mic. 2:11

CHAPTER 6

1 ^a Neh. 3:14 ^b Jer.
4:6
3 ^c 2 Kin. 25:1–4; Jer.
4:17; 12:10
4 ^d Jer. 51:27; Joel
3:9 ^e Jer. 15:8;
Zeph. 2:4
7 ^f Is. 57:20 ^g gushes

⁹ Ps. 55:9 ² sickness
8 ^h Ezek. 23:18;
Hos. 9:12
10 ⁱ Ex. 6:12; Jer.
5:21; 7:26; [Acts
7:51] / Jer. 8:9; 20:8
11 ^k Jer. 20:9 ^l Jer.
9:21
12 ^m Deut. 28:30;
Jer. 8:10; 38:22

⁹ Violence and plundering are heard in
her.

Before Me continually *are* ²grief and
wounds.

⁸ Be instructed, O Jerusalem,
Lest ^hMy soul depart from you;
Lest I make you desolate,
A land not inhabited.”

⁹Thus says the LORD of hosts:

“They shall thoroughly glean as a vine
the remnant of Israel;
As a grape-gatherer, put your hand
back into the branches.”

¹⁰ To whom shall I speak and give
warning,
That they may hear?
Indeed their ⁱear is uncircumcised,
And they cannot give heed.
Behold, ^jthe word of the LORD is a
reproach to them;
They have no delight in it.

¹¹ Therefore I am full of the fury of the
LORD.

^kI am weary of holding *it* in.
“I will pour it out ^lon the children
outside,
And on the assembly of young men
together;
For even the husband shall be taken
with the wife,
The aged with *him who is* full of
days.

¹² And ^mtheir houses shall be turned
over to others,
Fields and wives together;

6:1 The siege alarm was sounded to the cities surrounding Jerusalem. Jeremiah called his own tribe of **Benjamin** in the north to abandon the city for more secure territory. To the south in **Tekoa**, the watchman's **trumpet** was blown; to the west in the **Beth Haccerem** region, communication signal fires were sent. The offensives of Sennacherib in 701 **B.C.** and of Nebuchadnezzar in 586 **B.C.** brought siege forces from both the north and the south. The origin of the **disaster** is the north, the direction from which most of Israel's enemies approached Jerusalem.

6:4, 5 **Prepare** or “make holy” speaks of ritual sanctification performed in preparation for battle. The words are overheard in the camps of the enemies who are about to come against Jerusalem. Sorcerers and diviners were called upon to perform sacrifices to determine the will of the gods and assure a successful outcome in battle.

6:6 The terminology implies that God Himself was the true combatant against Jerusalem. Though the enemies were calling on their supposed deities for help in their siege against Jerusalem, it was the Lord who would fight for them and assure the defeat of Jerusalem. **Cut down trees . . . build a mound:** A siege mound was a ramp of wood, stone, and sand that sloped toward the wall of a city. Armored siege machines could go up the ramp and attack the city walls. The reason for the assault was the **oppression** within the city. The leaders were abusing their power, especially against the poor, widows, and orphans (see Deut. 14:29).

6:7 Jerusalem had become a well of bitter and polluted waters rather than fresh and pure **water**. **Violence and plundering** char-

acterized the city that was once overflowing with peace, justice, and righteousness. **Grief and wounds** describe the sickness and injury that would continually plague the inhabitants. The horrors of the siege of Jerusalem by the Babylonians in 588–586 **B.C.** were unspeakable (see the Book of Lamentations).

6:8 **Instructed** can also mean “disciplined” or “chastened.” Jerusalem was advised to heed the discipline of the Lord or face imminent desolation as a result of His departure.

6:9 **The Lord of hosts** may also be translated “The Lord of armies” (2:19; 5:14). **Thoroughly glean** indicates the intensity and thoroughness of the punishment. Every person among the **remnant** of Israel would know God's judgment. **put your hand back:** Jeremiah had to return to his proclamation so that no one would be unaware.

6:10 Because their ears were **uncircumcised**, meaning that their lives were not devoted to the Lord, the citizens of Jerusalem were incapable of keeping the covenant. Furthermore, their rebellion had become so ingrained that the **word of the Lord** had become a disgrace to them. The revelation of God's divine will was no longer a **delight** to them.

6:11 Jeremiah's own emotions reveal his identification with God's feelings about Judah. The prophet was both angry and **weary** with the entire nation, from the youngest of **children** to the oldest of the **aged** men.

6:12 The entire **land** and its contents would be given to others by the power of the **hand** of God. God's hand had saved the people; it would also bring about their judgment.

For I will stretch out My hand
Against the inhabitants of the land,”
says the LORD.

13^a “Because from the least of them even
to the greatest of them,

Everyone *is* given to ⁿcovetousness;
And from the prophet even to the
^opriest,

Everyone deals falsely.

14 They have also ⁿhealed the ³hurt of
My people ⁴slightly,

^qSaying, ‘Peace, peace!’
When *there is* no peace.

15 Were they ^rashamed when they had
committed abomination?
No! They were not at all ashamed;
Nor did they know how to blush.
Therefore they shall fall among those
who fall;
At the time I punish them,
They shall be cast down,” says the
LORD.

16 Thus says the LORD:

“Stand in the ways and see,
And ask for the ^sold paths, where
the good way *is*,
And walk in it;
Then you will find ^trest for your
souls.

But they said, ‘We will not walk *in it*.’

17 Also, I set ^uwatchmen over you,
saying,

^v“Listen to the sound of the trumpet!”
But they said, ‘We will not listen.’

18 Therefore hear, you nations,
And know, O congregation, what *is*
among them.

19^w Hear, O earth!

Behold, I will certainly bring
^xcalamity on this people—

^y“The fruit of their thoughts,
Because they have not heeded My
words
Nor My law, but rejected it.

13 ^aIs. 56:11; Jer. 8:10; 22:17 ^oJer. 5:31; 23:11; Mic. 3:5, 11
14 ^pJer. 8:11-15; Ezek. 13:10
^qJer. 4:10; 23:17
³Lit. *crushing*
⁴Superficially
15 ^rJer. 3:3; 8:12
16 ^sIs. 8:20; Jer. 18:15; Mal. 4:4; Luke 16:29 ^tMatt. 11:29
17 ^uIs. 21:11; 58:1; Jer. 25:4; Ezek. 3:17; Hab. 2:1 ^vDeut. 4:1
19 ^wIs. 1:2 ^xJer. 19:3, 15 ^yProv. 1:31

20^z For what purpose to Me
Comes frankincense ^afrom Sheba,
And ^bsweet cane from a far country?
^cYour burnt offerings *are* not
acceptable,
Nor your sacrifices sweet to Me.”

21 Therefore thus says the LORD:

“Behold, I will lay stumbling blocks
before this people,
And the fathers and the sons
together shall fall on them.
The neighbor and his friend shall
perish.”

22 Thus says the LORD:

“Behold, a people comes from the
^dnorth country,
And a great nation will be raised
from the farthest parts of the
earth.

23 They will lay hold on bow and
spear;
They *are* cruel and have no mercy;
Their voice ^eroars like the sea;
And they ride on horses,
As men of war set in array against
you, O daughter of Zion.”

24 We have heard the report of it;
Our hands grow feeble.

^fAnguish has taken hold of us,
Pain as of a woman in ⁵labor.

25 Do not go out into the field,
Nor walk by the way.
Because of the sword of the enemy,
Fear *is* on every side.

26 O daughter of my people,
^gDress in sackcloth

^hAnd roll about in ashes!

ⁱMake mourning *as for* an only son,
most bitter lamentation;

For the plunderer will suddenly come
upon us.

20 ^zPs. 40:6; 50:7-9;
Is. 1:11; 66:3; Amos 5:21; Mic. 6:6, 7
^aIs. 60:6 ^bIs. 43:24
^cJer. 7:21-23
22 ^dJer. 1:15; 10:22;
50:41-43
23 ^eIs. 5:30
24 ^fJer. 4:31; 13:21;
49:24 ⁵childbirth
26 ^gJer. 4:8 ^hJer. 25:34; Mic. 1:10
ⁱAmos 8:10; [Zech. 12:10]

6:13 The accusation of **covetousness** suggests monetary gain by means of deception and fraud. Even those called to guide the nation in its covenant relationship had defrauded God and man.

6:14 The religious leaders sought to comfort the people with a message of hope and **peace**. But such words were not the word of God. *Peace* describes the wholeness of life, the safety, security, and tranquility of heart and mind that come from living by faith according to God's word.

6:15 **Nor did they know how to blush**: The people had lost all sense of what was right before God. **they shall fall**: Everyone would experience the harsh hand of God's judgment.

6:16, 17 **Old paths** probably refers to the Sinai covenant and the Book of Deuteronomy, as Jeremiah called the people back to former days of steadfast devotion. The people obstinately refused to **walk** rightly and **find rest**. They also refused to **listen** to the alarming **sound of the trumpet**, denying that any danger existed.

6:18, 19 The **nations** and the **earth** are called to witness the stubborn character of Judah (see Is. 1:2; Mic. 1:2). **My words . . . My law**:

The revelation of God through Moses and the prophets was rejected by the people for whom it was prepared and given.

6:20 Even if the people used the most expensive offerings available in the markets of that day, their sacrifices were still neither **acceptable** nor **sweet**. The **burnt offerings** were the “holocaust” offerings, in which the entire animal was consumed by fire. The **sacrifices** were those that were partially consumed by the offerers. The people performed these sacrifices incorrectly, making themselves the primary beneficiaries of their own worship.

6:24, 25 **Anguish** or distress overwhelmed the people. Their **pain** is compared to childbirth. The people were prisoners in their own city.

6:26 **Daughter of my people** may be rendered “O Daughter, My people” (see 4:11, 31; 6:2, 23). Jeremiah used an endearing word for Jerusalem even in the middle of this warning of coming judgment. The most dreaded loss for an ancient Israelite family was that of an **only son**. **Sackcloth** was a dark, coarse fabric of goat or camel hair (4:8). To **roll about in ashes** symbolically expressed sorrow and despair.

27^a “I have set you *as* an assayer *and* ¹*a* fortress among My people,
That you may know and test their way.
28^k They *are* all stubborn rebels,
¹walking as slanderers.
They *are* ^mbronze and iron,
They *are* all corrupters;
29 The bellows blow fiercely,
The lead is consumed by the fire;
The smelter refines in vain,
For the wicked are not drawn off.
30 People will call them ⁿrejected silver,
Because the LORD has rejected them.”

Trusting in Lying Words

7 The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, ^{2a}“Stand in the gate of the LORD’s house, and proclaim there this word, and say, ‘Hear the word of the LORD, all *you* of Judah who enter in at these gates to worship the LORD!’”
³Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: ^b“Amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place. ^{4c}Do not trust in these lying words, saying, ‘The temple of the LORD,

27^j Jer. 1:18
28^k Jer. 5:23^j Jer.
9:4^m Ezek. 22:18
30ⁿ Is. 1:22; Jer.
7:29

CHAPTER 7

2^a Jer. 17:19; 26:2
3^b Jer. 4:1; 18:11;
26:13
4^c Jer. 7:8; Mic. 3:11

5^d 1 Kin. 6:12; Jer.
21:12; 22:3ⁱ justice
6^e Deut. 6:14, 15;
Jer. 13:10
7^f Deut. 4:40^g Jer.
3:18
8^h Jer. 5:31;
14:13, 14
9ⁱ 1 Kin. 18:21;
Hos. 4:1, 2; Zeph.
1:5 / Ex. 20:3; Jer.
7:6; 19:4
10^k Ezek. 23:39
1^j Jer. 7:11, 14; 32:34;
34:15
11^m Is. 56:7ⁿ Matt.
21:13; Mark 11:17;
Luke 19:46
12^o Josh. 18:1;
Judg. 18:31^p Deut.
12:11

the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD *are* these.’

⁵“For if you thoroughly amend your ways and your doings, if you thoroughly ^dexecute ¹judgment between a man and his neighbor, ⁶*if* you do not oppress the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, and do not shed innocent blood in this place, ^eor walk after other gods to your hurt, ⁷*then* I will cause you to dwell in this place, in ^gthe land that I gave to your fathers forever and ever.

⁸“Behold, you trust in ^hlying words that cannot profit. ⁹*i*Will you steal, murder, commit adultery, swear falsely, burn incense to Baal, and ^jwalk after other gods whom you do not know, ¹⁰*k*and *then* come and stand before Me in this house ^lwhich is called by My name, and say, ‘We are delivered to do all these abominations?’ ¹¹Has ^mthis house, which is called by My name, become a ⁿden of thieves in your eyes? Behold, I, even I, have seen *it*,” says the LORD.

¹²“But go now to ^oMy place which *was* in Shiloh, ^pwhere I set My name at the

6:27 The Lord describes Jeremiah’s role. Jeremiah would act as the nation’s **assayer**, the one who tests or evaluates quality or purity. **fortress**: An alternative translation of this term is *tester* or *assessor*, which might fit this context better as a synonym for *assayer*.

6:28 Jeremiah gives his assessment of the people. **Rebels** speaks of their defiant attitudes. **Slanderers** refers to those who tell tales. **Corrupters** refers to those who destroy.

6:29, 30 Jeremiah assesses Judah as a refiner purifies **silver**, using **lead** to remove impurities (9:7). The lead is consumed, so the dross in the silver ore cannot be purged. This results in the refiner discarding the ore because it is so impure that the smelting process is not worth the energy it takes. Similarly God rejects those whose wickedness cannot be refined.

7:1, 2 The word that came to Jeremiah was a direct message from God in His temple courts. **Stand in the gate**: The parallel in 26:12 suggests the proclamation was made in the outer court of the temple, where Jeremiah would have been guaranteed a large audience. **Worship** suggests bowing prostrate in service and obedience to a god, king, or priest. In bowing down, the worshiper pledged himself or herself to obedience in adhering to the demands of the one being honored (22:9).

7:3 The LORD of hosts can also be translated “God of armies” (2:19; 5:14; 6:9). **Amend**: The call to repentance here uses a different term (26:13) from the usual word translated “return” (3:1). A complete transformation of the people’s **ways** and **doings**, lifestyle and beliefs, was necessary.

7:4 **Trust** conveys the sense of security and confidence that the people had in their holy place. They believed that since God had chosen Jerusalem as His dwelling, had promised that a Davidic king would remain on the throne forever, and had delivered the city from attack in the days of Hezekiah and Isaiah, He would never allow the city or the temple to be destroyed. **Lying words** may refer to the unfounded reliance on the temple as an idolatrous symbol or to the worship of foreign gods. **The temple of the LORD** had become a talisman to the Israelites. They believed the building guaranteed their security whether or not they obeyed the provisions of the covenant. This false hope was a lie (3:23; 7:9; 8:8).

7:5, 6 The only true hope for dwelling in the context of the temple was a radical restructuring of Judah’s society. **Thoroughly amend**, or “make good” or “do good,” emphasizes the necessary transformation of Jerusalem’s inhabitants. **thoroughly execute judg-**

ment: The emphatic phrase form implies the depth of corruption that existed in the land; there was no justice. **Stranger** refers to resident aliens who were dwelling in the land. **The fatherless and the widow** were accorded special treatment in the Law, but they had been abused by the leaders of Jerusalem. **Innocent blood** refers to those convicted of capital crimes on false charges, such as Urijah the prophet (26:23). Humanitarian concern for all persons was a central element of the covenant. To **walk after other gods** is to serve and worship them.

7:7 **I will cause you to dwell**: This phrase emphasizes the will and work of God to establish the nation of Israel in the land. In order for the nation to dwell in the land, it had to be faithful to God (see Deut. 7:6–11).

7:8 The refrain of v. 4 is complemented here by the phrase **cannot profit** (2:8, 11). The idea that the temple was inviolable was as profitless as the powerless gods that Israel idolized.

7:9 The covenant stipulations that Jerusalem’s inhabitants had violated are listed here (see Ex. 20:1–17). **burn incense**: Jeremiah uses this phrase 19 times in the context of worshiping deities other than God (1:16). **Know** refers to an intimate, purposeful relationship—like that between husband and wife.

7:10 **Stand before** means “to place (oneself) in submissive service to someone.” Entering the temple of God in such a manner while worshiping other gods was incomprehensible. Furthermore, for the people to think that they were secure (**delivered**) enough to perform perverted **abominations** (2:7) was the ultimate hypocrisy. Paul builds on this concept in Rom. 6:12–16.

7:11 **den of thieves**: Like robbers hiding in a cave for safety, Judah attempted to hide behind the sanctuary of the temple for protection from the divine hand of judgment. But the Lord had **seen** the hypocrisy of Israel’s ways. Jesus quoted this verse when He cleansed the second temple (see Matt. 21:13).

7:12 **Shiloh** was the site of the tent of meeting and ark of the covenant in the days of the judges. Leaders in the family of Eli had abused their priestly position for personal gain, and idolatry was rampant in the land. When the Israelites attempted to use the ark as a victory-giving talisman, the ark was captured (see 1 Sam. 4) and the sanctuary was destroyed by the Philistines. The Philistines were instruments of divine punishment for the **wickedness** of God’s **people**. God’s love for His people does not prevent Him from chastising them for their wickedness.

first, and see ^qwhat I did to it because of the wickedness of My people Israel. ¹³And now, because you have done all these works,” says the LORD, “and I spoke to you, ^rrising up early and speaking, but you did not hear, and I ^scalled you, but you did not answer, ¹⁴therefore I will do to the house which is called by My name, in which you trust, and to this place which I gave to you and your fathers, as I have done to ^tShiloh. ¹⁵And I will cast you out of My sight, ^vas I have cast out all your brethren—the whole posterity of Ephraim.

¹⁶“Therefore ^w do not pray for this people, nor lift up a cry or prayer for them, nor make intercession to Me; ^xfor I will

¹² ^q 1 Sam. 4:10; Ps. 78:60; Jer. 26:6
¹³ ^r 2 Chr. 36:15; Jer. 11:7 ^s Prov. 1:24; Is. 65:12; 66:4
¹⁴ ^t 1 Sam. 4:10; 11; Ps. 78:60; Jer. 26:6, 9
¹⁵ ^u 2 Kin. 17:23
^v Ps. 78:67; Hos. 7:13; 9:13; 12:1
^w Ex. 32:10; Deut. 9:14; Jer. 11:14
^x Jer. 15:1

¹⁸ ^y Jer. 44:17 ^z Jer. 19:13
¹⁹ ^a Deut. 32:16, 21

not hear you. ¹⁷Do you not see what they do in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem? ¹⁸^yThe children gather wood, the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead dough, to make cakes for the queen of heaven; and *they* ^zpour out drink offerings to other gods, that they may provoke Me to anger. ¹⁹^aDo they provoke Me to anger?” says the LORD. “Do *they* not *provoke* themselves, to the shame of their own faces?”

²⁰Therefore thus says the Lord God: “Behold, My anger and My fury will be poured out on this place—on man and on beast, on the trees of the field and on the fruit of the ground. And it will burn and not be quenched.”

7:13 All these works are the sins listed in vv. 6, 8, 9.

7:14, 15 The earlier dwelling place of the ark of God, **Shiloh**, served as an example of the impending destruction of Jerusalem. The temple had to be destroyed to vindicate the name of God; the people had to be removed from the land in order to purge it of wickedness.

7:16 God’s instruction to Jeremiah, **do not pray for this people**, indicates the extreme depravity of Jerusalem’s inhabitants (see also 11:14; 14:11). No manner of **intercession** was to be made on behalf of Judah. God would **not hear** Jeremiah’s appeals.

7:17, 18 The **queen of heaven** refers to the goddess Ishtar (As-tarte), who was worshiped in open-air cultic centers throughout the eastern Mediterranean region and Mesopotamia. Worship of Ishtar

involved the preparation of special **cakes** that bore the goddess’s image, as well as **drink offerings** (44:19). The family cooperation in the idolatrous worship of Ishtar stood in direct opposition to the covenant demands that a father instruct his children in the ways of the Lord (see Deut. 6:4–9).

7:19 **Provoke**, which means “to vex or irritate,” describes the effects of Israel’s continual unfaithfulness on God. Furthermore, they were bringing harm upon themselves.

7:20 God’s judgment on the abominable idolatry of Ishtar worship is described in terms of a fire that cannot be **quenched**. The devastation of the fire would extend to **man, beast, field, and fruit**.

A Sobering Object Lesson

Shiloh was a sobering object lesson for Judah. Once the center of Israel’s religious life and the site of the tabernacle (see 1 Sam. 1:3), Shiloh lay in ruins in Jeremiah’s day, and its people had been taken captive by the Assyrians. Why? Because the northern kingdom of Israel had turned away from the Lord to idols. Jeremiah warned that the same outcome awaited the people of Jerusalem—and for the same reason (Jer. 7:12–15).

Jeremiah’s message of judgment must have sounded incredible. Jerusalem was the site of the temple, the magnificent house of worship that David had envisioned and Solomon had built to the glory of God (see 2 Chr. 5:1). How could God allow His temple and its city to be destroyed? Yet if anyone doubted Jeremiah’s warning, all they had to do was travel a little more than 20 miles north to Shiloh.

Apparently, few people heeded the prophet’s word, because Jerusalem fell to the Babylonians within a few short years. The temple was burned and most of the people were either killed or deported.

This tragic outcome challenges us to consider whether idols exist in our own lives. We don’t bow down to images of wood and stone, but if we allow anything to take the place of God, then we are practicing idolatry. This can happen in our work, in our relationships, and, like the people of ancient Judah, even in our houses of worship. In that case, God may take away the thing that we hold so dear in order to redirect our attention and affection to where they belong—on Him. The first commandment is still in effect: “You shall have no other gods before Me” (Ex. 20:3).



Part of the Iron Age ruins of Shiloh

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²¹ Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: ^b“Add your burnt offerings to your sacrifices and eat meat. ^{22c} For I did not speak to your fathers, or command them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices. ²³ But this is what I commanded them, saying, ^d“Obey My voice, and ^e I will be your God, and you shall be My people. And walk in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well with you.” ^{24f} Yet they did not obey or incline their ear, but ^g followed ² the counsels and the ³ dictates of their evil hearts, and ^h went ⁴ backward and not forward. ²⁵ Since the day that your fathers came out of the land of Egypt until this day, I have even ⁱ sent to you all My servants the prophets, daily rising up early and sending them. ^{26j} Yet they did not obey Me or incline their ear, but ^k stiffened their neck. ^l They did worse than their fathers.

²⁷ “Therefore ^m you shall speak all these words to them, but they will not obey you. You shall also call to them, but they will not answer you.

Judgment on Obscene Religion

²⁸ “So you shall say to them, ‘This is a nation that does not obey the voice of the LORD their God ⁿ nor receive correction. ^o Truth has perished and has been cut off from their mouth. ^{29p} Cut off your hair and cast it away, and take up a lamenta-

²¹ ^b Is. 1:11; Jer. 6:20; Hos. 8:13; Amos 5:21, 22
²² ^c 1 Sam. 15:22; Ps. 51:16; [Hos. 6:6]
²³ ^d Ex. 15:26; 16:32; Deut. 6:3
^e [Ex. 19:5, 6]; Lev. 26:12; [Jer. 11:4; 13:11]
²⁴ ^f Ps. 81:11; Jer. 11:8 ^g Deut. 29:19; Jer. 9:14 ^h Jer. 32:33 ² walked in ³ stubbornness or ⁴ imagination ⁴ Lit. they were
²⁵ ⁱ 2 Chr. 36:15; Jer. 25:4; 29:19; Mark 12:1-10; Luke 11:47-49
²⁶ ^j Jer. 11:8 ^k Neh. 9:17 ^l Jer. 16:12; Matt. 23:32
²⁷ ^m Jer. 1:7; 26:2; 37:14, 15; 43:1-4; Ezek. 2:7
²⁸ ⁿ Jer. 5:3 ^o Jer. 9:3
²⁹ ^p Job 1:20; Is. 15:2; Jer. 48:37; Mic. 1:16
³⁰ ^q 2 Kin. 21:4; 2 Chr. 33:3-5, 7; Jer. 32:34, 35; Ezek. 7:20; Dan. 9:27; 11:31 ⁵ defile
³¹ ^r 2 Kin. 23:10; Jer. 19:5; 32:35 ⁵ Lev. 18:21; 2 Kin. 17:17; Ps. 106:38 ⁶ Deut. 17:3
³² ^u Jer. 19:6
³³ ^v 2 Kin. 23:10; Jer. 19:11
³³ ^w Jer. 9:22; 19:11;

tion on the desolate heights; for the LORD has rejected and forsaken the generation of His wrath.’ ³⁰ For the children of Judah have done evil in My sight,” says the LORD. ^q “They have set their abominations in the house which is called by My name, to ⁵ pollute it. ³¹ And they have built the ^r high places of Tophet, which is in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, to ^s burn their sons and their daughters in the fire, ^t which I did not command, nor did it come into My heart.

³² “Therefore behold, ^u the days are coming,” says the LORD, “when it will no more be called Tophet, or the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, but the Valley of Slaughter; ^v for they will bury in Tophet until there is no room. ³³ The ^w corpses of this people will be food for the birds of the heaven and for the beasts of the earth. And no one will frighten them away. ³⁴ Then I will cause to ^x cease from the cities of Judah and from the streets of Jerusalem the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride. For ^y the land shall be desolate.

8 “At that time,” says the LORD, “they shall bring out the bones of the kings of Judah, and the bones of its princes, and the bones of the priests, and the bones of the prophets, and the bones of the inhab-

Ezek. 6:5 ³⁴ ^x Is. 24:7, 8; Jer. 16:9; 25:10; Ezek. 26:13; Hos. 2:11; Rev. 18:23 ^y Lev. 26:33; Is. 1:7; Jer. 4:27

7:21 Add your burnt offerings to your sacrifices: Because the people had missed the true meaning of the Lord’s worship, they could multiply their offerings as much as they liked and it would do them no good. The Lord cared for none of their sacrifices. To Him they were simply **meat**.

7:22 All sacrifices were not rejected, only those offered without true repentance and a commitment to obey the Lord.

7:23 God required that His people obey His voice. that it may be well with you: Obedience would bring blessing. When the prophets lashed out against sacrifice, it was not against the sacrificial system as God had established it, but against the corruption of that system as the people practiced it. The same thing is found in the NT passages that seemingly speak against the Law. Both the NT writers and the Hebrew prophets denounce the abuses of divine systems in human hands.

7:24 The history of Israel is seen in terms of disobedience rather than faithfulness to the covenant, reflecting the people’s **evil hearts** (4:14). The result was a worsening or **backward** direction rather than an improving or **forward** walk.

7:25 From the days of Moses, God sent His **servants the prophets** to call the nation of Israel to obedience based upon the covenant. **Daily rising up early and sending them** indicates the persistence and urgency of God’s message through His prophets.

7:26, 27 Incline their ear suggests eager listening and readiness to obey. **Stiffened their neck** suggests a cold rebuff to the will and work of God. Jeremiah, like Isaiah before him (see Is. 6:9, 10), was told that the people would not respond to his message.

7:28 The people were stubborn, rejecting the laws of the covenant. They were persistently disobedient to the **voice of the LORD** revealed through His prophets. **Correction** refers to the instruction of the Law and the prophets (5:3). **Truth** refers to the faithfulness

and fidelity that was characteristic of God but absent among His people.

7:29 To cut off one’s hair was a way of expressing mourning and grief. The act may also have symbolized that Judah had rejected the covenant relationship just as if they had broken a Nazirite vow, a sign of personal devotion that required the hair not to be cut (see Num. 6:1–21). **desolate heights:** The place of **lamentation** was the very place where Judah carried on its idolatrous practices (3:2). The Lord had **rejected this generation**, even as they had rejected His Law (6:19) and had been rejected by their “lovers” (4:30).

7:30, 31 The **evil** doings of this generation, which had continued since the days of Manasseh, included the placing of **abominations** or “detestable objects” such as idols and pagan altars in the temple of God. The **Tophet** sacrifices, adopted from Phoenician and Canaanite practices, involved the ritual sacrifice of children in times of national crisis or disaster. **burn . . . in the fire:** This took place in the Valley of Hinnom southwest of Jerusalem (also called Gehenna). **7:32 days are coming:** This phrase signifies the advent of a divine intervention in history, usually in judgment. With the phrase **Valley of Slaughter**, Jeremiah uses the prophetic device of changing a name to express the Lord’s assessment of the Valley of Hinnom.

7:33 Unburied corpses left to the elements and animals were regarded as a horrible desecration in the ancient Middle East.

7:34 Prayer would avail Judah nothing on account of its great sin. The nation would be devoid of all joy and **gladness**. The **land** would **be desolate**. The word *desolate* is used extensively in Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel to refer to the devastation in Jerusalem.

8:1–3 In the day when Jerusalem’s judgment was fulfilled at the hands of its enemies, the **bones** of its people and their leaders would be desecrated by being removed from their graves. **the sun and the moon and all the host of heaven:** The gods and

itants of Jerusalem, out of their graves.
 2 They shall spread them before the sun and the moon and all the host of heaven, which they have loved and which they have served and after which they have walked, which they have sought and ^awhich they have worshiped. They shall not be gathered ^bnor buried; they shall be like refuse on the face of the earth.
 3 Then ^cdeath shall be chosen rather than life by all the ¹residue of those who remain of this evil family, who remain in all the places where I have driven them,” says the LORD of hosts.

The Peril of False Teaching

4 “Moreover you shall say to them,
 ‘Thus says the LORD:

“Will they fall and not rise?
 Will one turn away and not return?
 5 Why has this people ^dslidden back, Jerusalem, in a perpetual backsliding?
^eThey hold fast to deceit,
^fThey refuse to return.
 6 ^gI listened and heard,
 But they do not speak aright.
^hNo man repented of his wickedness,
 Saying, ‘What have I done?’
 Everyone turned to his own course,
 As the horse rushes into the battle.

7 “Even ⁱthe stork in the heavens
 Knows her appointed times;
 And the turtledove, the swift, and the swallow
 Observe the time of their coming.
 But ^jMy people do not know the judgment of the LORD.

CHAPTER 8

2 ^a 2 Kin. 23:5; Jer. 19:13; Ezek. 8:16;
 Zeph. 1:5; Acts 7:42
^b Jer. 22:19
 3 ^c Job 3:21, 22;
 7:15, 16; Jon. 4:3;
 Rev. 9:6 ^d remnant
 5 ^d Jer. 7:24 ^e Jer.
 9:6 ^f Jer. 5:3
 6 ^g Ps. 14:2; [Is.
 30:18; Mal. 3:16;
 2 Pet. 3:9] ^h Ezek.
 22:30; Mic. 7:2;
 Rev. 9:20
 7 ⁱ Prov. 6:8-9; Song
 2:12; Is. 1:3; Matt.
 16:2, 3 ^j Jer. 5:4; 9:3

8 ^k Rom. 2:17
 9 ^l Is. 19:11; Jer. 6:15;
 [1 Cor. 1:27] ^m Is.
 44:25; Jer. 4:22
 10 ⁿ Deut. 28:30;
 Amos 5:11; Zeph.
 1:13 ^o Is. 56:11;
 57:17; Jer. 6:13
 11 ^p Jer. 6:14
^q Ezek. 13:10
^r Superficially
 12 ^r Ps. 52:1, 7; Is.
 3:9; Jer. 3:3; 6:15;
 Zeph. 3:5
 13 ^s Jer. 5:17; 7:20;
 Joel 1:17 ^t Matt.
 21:19; Luke 13:6
^u Deut. 28:39, 40
^v Or take them away

8 “How can you say, ‘We are wise,
^kAnd the law of the LORD is
 with us’?
 Look, the false pen of the scribe
 certainly works falsehood.
 9 ^lThe wise men are ashamed,
 They are dismayed and taken.
 Behold, they have rejected the word
 of the LORD;
 So ^mwhat wisdom do they have?
 10 Therefore ⁿI will give their wives to
 others,
 And their fields to those who will
 inherit them;
 Because from the least even to the
 greatest
 Everyone is given to ^ocovetousness;
 From the prophet even to the priest
 Everyone deals falsely.
 11 For they have ^phealed the hurt of
 the daughter of My people
²slightly,
 Saying, ^q‘Peace, peace!’
 When there is no peace.
 12 Were they ^rashamed when they had
 committed abomination?
 No! They were not at all ashamed,
 Nor did they know how to blush.
 Therefore they shall fall among those
 who fall;
 In the time of their punishment
 They shall be cast down,” says the
 LORD.
 13 “I will surely ³consume them,” says
 the LORD.
 “No grapes shall be ^son the vine,
 Nor figs on the ^tfig tree,
 And the leaf shall fade;
 And the things I have given them
 shall ^upass away from them.””

goddesses to whom Jerusalem looked for deliverance would stand over the people's desecrated corpses, which are pictured here as **refuse** or “dung” (9:22). Those who survived the siege and attack as exiles and slaves would prefer **death** over **life**.

8:4, 5 The questions in these verses emphasize the absurdity of Judah's lifestyle. Instead of correcting their erroneous behavior, the people were engaged in **perpetual backsliding**, falling deeper and deeper into sin and despair. **hold fast**: In stubborn defiance, the people clung to their lives of **deceit** or “treachery.”

8:6 No righteous or repentant person could be found in the city of Jerusalem. Rather than turning from sin, every person pursued his or her **own course**, a lifestyle leading to destruction.

8:7 Jeremiah contrasts the citizens of Jerusalem with the birds **in the heavens** who understand the approach of the seasons and **appointed times**. Whereas the birds follow their instincts to migrate, the people of Israel refused to follow God's promptings to obey His covenant. Note that God still refers to the people of Judah as **My people** even though they continued to rebel against Him. **do not know**: Like his northern counterpart Hosea (see Hos. 4:6), Jeremiah identified the people's major deficiency as their lack of knowledge of the Lord and His **judgment**.

8:8, 9 Jeremiah contended with fraudulent scribes and **wise men** whose understanding of the Law Jeremiah deemed **falsehood**.

False pen describes the idolatry and errant beliefs of Jerusalem's leadership. The wisdom of the scribes and wise men was folly and shame because it was not founded on a true knowledge of God's word and law.

8:10–12 The people had interpreted the Law unwisely, believing that **peace** and prosperity would be granted to them. They were grossly mistaken (6:12–15).

falsehood

(Heb. *sheqer*) (8:8; 23:25; Prov. 6:17; 31:30) Strong's #8267

This word refers to all actions meant to deceive others, such as fraud, lying, betrayal, and unfaithfulness. It is sometimes translated *lying* (7:4), *vain* (3:23), or *deceitful* (Prov. 31:30). One of Jeremiah's greatest tasks as a prophet was to speak out against the deceitful schemes of lying prophets (23:9–40). These prophets were prophesying relief for Judah from suffering when God was actually handing Judah over to the Babylonians for judgment (23:17–19). Their deceptive ways made them enemies to the truth, the truth of God's Word (see Ps. 119:20, 30).

14“ Why do we sit still?
^v Assemble yourselves,
And let us enter the fortified cities,
And let us be silent there.
For the LORD our God has put us to
silence
And given us ^w water^d of gall to
drink,
Because we have sinned against the
LORD.

15“ We ^x looked for peace, but no good
came;
And for a time of health, and there
was trouble!
16 The snorting of His horses was heard
from ^y Dan.
The whole land trembled at the
sound of the neighing of His
^z strong ones;
For they have come and devoured the
land and all that is in it,
The city and those who dwell in it.”

17“ For behold, I will send serpents
among you,
Vipers which cannot be ^a charmed,
And they shall bite you,” says the
LORD.

The Prophet Mourns for the People

18 I would comfort myself in sorrow;
My heart is faint in me.
19 Listen! The voice,
The cry of the daughter of my
people
From ^b a far country:
“Is not the LORD in Zion?
Is not her King in her?”

14 ^v Jer. 4:5 ^w Deut.
29:18; Ps. 69:21;
Jer. 9:15; Lam. 3:19;
Matt. 27:34 ^d Bitter
or poisonous water
15 ^x Jer. 14:19
16 ^y Judg. 18:29;
Jer. 4:15 ^z Jer. 47:3
17 ^a Ps. 58:4, 5
19 ^b Is. 39:3; Jer.
5:15

21 ^c Jer. 9:1 ^d Jer.
14:2; Joel 2:6; Nah.
2:10
22 ^e Gen. 37:25; Jer.
46:11

CHAPTER 9

1 ^a Is. 22:4; Jer.
10:19; Lam. 2:18
2 ^b Jer. 5:7, 8; 23:10;
Hos. 4:2
3 ^c Ps. 64:3; Is. 59:4;
Jer. 9:8; Hos. 4:1,
2 ^d Jer. 4:22; 13:23
^e Judg. 2:10; 1 Sam.
2:12; Jer. 4:22; Hos.
4:1; 1 Cor. 15:34
4 ^f Ps. 12:2; Prov.
26:24, 25; Jer. 9:8;
Mic. 7:5, 6 ¹ friend

“Why have they provoked Me to anger
With their carved images—
With foreign idols?”

20“ The harvest is past,
The summer is ended,
And we are not saved!”

21 ^c For the hurt of the daughter of my
people I am hurt.
I am ^d mourning;
Astonishment has taken hold of me.

22 Is there no ^e balm in Gilead,
Is there no physician there?
Why then is there no recovery
For the health of the daughter of my
people?

9 Oh, ^a that my head were waters,
And my eyes a fountain of tears,
That I might weep day and night
For the slain of the daughter of my
people!

2 Oh, that I had in the wilderness
A lodging place for travelers;
That I might leave my people,
And go from them!
For ^b they are all adulterers,
An assembly of treacherous men.

3 “And ^c like their bow ^c they have bent
their tongues ^d for lies.
They are not valiant for the truth on
the earth.
For they proceed from ^d evil to evil,
And they ^e do not know Me,” says
the LORD.

4 “Everyone^f take heed to his
¹ neighbor,

8:14 Assemble . . . enter: Judah’s inhabitants would gather within the citadel and walls of Jerusalem for protection from an oncoming army. **Silent** can also be translated “perish.” The people believed that God was judging them with bitter, poisoned **water**, by which they would surely die.

8:15 The search for **peace** and **health** was hopeless and full of **trouble**—“terror” or “dismay.” God’s hand of judgment strikes terror in the hearts and minds of those who continue in sin and rebellion.

8:16 Dan lies at the northern border of Israel. In 1:14, 15, Jeremiah warned that calamity would come from the north. The **snorting** of enemy horses would sound the fury of the impending invasion. **His horses:** The enemy’s horses were instruments of divine judgment.

8:17 serpents . . . Vipers: Judgment by means of poisonous snakes is described in Num. 21:6.

8:18 The hopelessness of Judah was so overwhelming to Jeremiah that his **heart** was **faint**. The word *faint* describes an illness or sickness that results from great **sorrow**.

8:19 Cry refers to great grief resulting from God’s rejection, or foreign oppression (see Ps. 18:6). **Far country** or “far places” probably refers to the outer reaches of the land of Judah. **Is not the LORD in Zion? Is not her King in her:** These rhetorical questions expect an affirmative response. God, the King, had not abandoned His people; it was the Israelites who had rejected the living God for other gods. **Provoked** vividly describes the defiant attitudes of the people toward the pure worship of God. **Carved images** generally refers to stone idols. The phrase **foreign idols** in Hebrew is “foreign

futilities.” The people were looking for deliverance in useless and motionless images. Excavations in Jerusalem dating back to Jeremiah’s time have uncovered numerous images and household idols.

8:20–22 This proverb reflects the sense of helplessness in the early fall. The **harvest** was meager and the oppression persisted. Even Jeremiah was deeply **hurt**—this translates a Hebrew word derived from the verb meaning “to break,” “to shatter”; in other words, the prophet’s spirit was broken over the fate of his people. **Is there no balm in Gilead:** The region of Gilead was known for its balsam ointment (see Gen. 37:25). There is no healing, physical or spiritual, for a people intent on rebelling against God.

9:1 my eyes a fountain of tears: Jeremiah, who is known as the “weeping prophet,” identified personally with the suffering of his people. Here he expresses his desire for a reserve of tears that would flow without stopping.

9:2 Jeremiah desired a **wilderness** refuge where he would be free from the agony, sorrow, bitterness, and degradation of Jerusalem. The word **adulterers** refers literally to unfaithful husbands or wives, but here to idolaters as those who are spiritually faithless.

9:4 take heed to his neighbor . . . do not trust any brother: The personal affairs of the people were characterized by deceit, slander, and mistrust. Ethical standards had collapsed. **Supplant**, which means “to defraud,” is the basis of the name Jacob. As Jacob deceived his brother Esau, so the people of Judah defrauded their brethren (see Gen. 27).

- And do not trust any brother;
For every brother will utterly
supplant,
And every neighbor will ^awalk with
slanderers.
- 5 Everyone will ^bdeceive his neighbor,
And will not speak the truth;
They have taught their tongue to
speak lies;
They weary themselves to commit
iniquity.
- 6 Your dwelling place *is* in the midst of
deceit;
Through deceit they refuse to know
Me,” says the LORD.
- 7 Therefore thus says the LORD of hosts:
- “Behold, ⁱI will refine them and ²try
them;
^jFor how shall I deal with the
daughter of My people?
- 8 Their tongue *is* an arrow shot out;
It speaks ^kdeceit;
One speaks ^lpeaceably to his
neighbor with his mouth,
But ³in his heart he ⁴lies in wait.
- 9 ^mShall I not punish them for these
things?” says the LORD.
“Shall I not avenge Myself on such a
nation as this?”
- 10 I will take up a weeping and wailing
for the mountains,
And ⁿfor the ⁵dwelling places of the
wilderness a lamentation,
Because they are burned up,
So that no one can pass through;
Nor can *men* hear the voice of the
cattle.
- ^oBoth the birds of the heavens and the
beasts have fled;
They are gone.

4 ^a Ps. 15:3; Prov.
10:18; Jer. 6:28
5 ^b Ps. 36:3, 4;
Is. 59:4
7 ^c Is. 1:25; Jer. 6:27;
Mal. 3:3 / Hos. 11:8
2 test
8 ^d Ps. 12:2 / Ps.
55:21 ³ Inwardly he
⁴ sets his ambush
9 ^e Is. 1:24; Jer.
5:9, 29
10 ^f Jer. 4:26; Hos.
4:3 ^o Jer. 4:25; Hos.
4:3 ⁵ Or *pastures*

11 ^p Is. 25:2; Jer.
19:3, 8; 26:9 ^q Is.
13:22; 34:13
12 ^r Ps. 107:43; Is.
42:23; Hos. 14:9
13 ^s Jer. 3:25; 7:24
14 ^t Jer. 7:24; 11:8;
Rom. 1:21–24 ^u Gal.
1:14; 1 Pet. 1:18
⁶ stubbornness or
imagination
15 ^v Ps. 80:5
^w Deut. 29:18; Jer.
8:14; 23:15; Lam.
3:15 ⁷ Bitter or
poisonous water
16 ^x Lev. 26:33;
Deut. 28:64; Jer.
15:2–4 ^y Lev. 26:33;
Jer. 44:27; Ezek. 5:2
17 ^z 2 Chr. 35:25;
Job 3:8; Eccl. 12:5;
Amos 5:16; Matt.
9:23
18 ^o Is. 22:4; Jer. 9:1;
14:17

- 11 “I will make Jerusalem ^pa heap of
ruins, ^qa den of jackals.
I will make the cities of Judah
desolate, without an inhabitant.”

12 ^rWho *is* the wise man who may un-
derstand this? And *who is he* to whom the
mouth of the LORD has spoken, that he
may declare it? Why does the land perish
and burn up like a wilderness, so that no
one can pass through?

13 And the LORD said, “Because they
have forsaken My law which I set be-
fore them, and have ^snot obeyed My
voice, nor walked according to it, ¹⁴but
they have ^twalked according to the ⁶dic-
tates of their own hearts and after the
Baals, “which their fathers taught them,”
¹⁵therefore thus says the LORD of hosts,
the God of Israel: “Behold, I will ^vfeed
them, this people, ^wwith wormwood, and
give them ⁷water of gall to drink. ¹⁶I will
^xscatter them also among the Gentiles,
whom neither they nor their fathers have
known. ^yAnd I will send a sword after
them until I have consumed them.”

The People Mourn in Judgment

17 Thus says the LORD of hosts:

- “Consider and call for ^zthe mourning
women,
That they may come;
And send for skillful *wailing* women,
That they may come.
- 18 Let them make haste
And take up a wailing for us,
That ^aour eyes may run with tears,
And our eyelids gush with water.
- 19 For a voice of wailing is heard from
Zion:
^bHow we are plundered!
We are greatly ashamed,

9:5, 6 They weary themselves to commit iniquity: The people had literally worn themselves out with perversions. **Deceit** here is the same term used of Jacob’s trickery toward Esau (see Gen. 27:35). The term refers to swindling by false speech or false scales. **they refuse to know Me:** The essence of Judah’s problem was its lack of knowledge of God.

9:7 Jeremiah returns to the imagery of metallurgical refining (6:28–30). God would **refine** and **try** the people by fire to see if any were faithful to Him.

9:8, 9 Jeremiah returns to the imagery of bow and **arrow** to depict Judah’s deceit (v. 3). The picture is of a person speaking **peaceably** to his neighbor while lying in wait to ambush him.

9:10, 11 weeping and wailing for the mountains: The entire land would be laid waste by destruction. Even the animals would abandon the land because not a crumb of food would remain for the **birds** and **beasts**. The holy city of Jerusalem would become a **den of jackals** where no man or woman lived. Jackals are desert creatures who live far from people. The only way Jerusalem could become home for jackals was for it to be no longer inhabited by God’s people.

9:12 The wise man observes and understands the natural order and the working of God in the world He has made. No wise person could be found among the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem.

9:13, 14 The people’s lack of adherence to the covenant they had **forsaken** is indicated by the phrase **have not obeyed . . . nor walked**. The word *obey*, which comes from the Hebrew word meaning “to hear,” implies an active response to the hearing of God’s word. Instead of walking according to God’s law, the people walked according to the **dictates** or “stubbornness” of their own hearts.

9:15, 16 Water of gall, used in 8:14 to describe God’s judgment, refers to some kind of poisonous or salty drink. **scatter them . . . send a sword:** The people of Judah would be exiled from their promised homeland and even killed as they ran away because they rejected God.

9:17 Skillful wailing women refers to professional mourners, women who attended funerals to express the emotions of those in sorrow. Women were called by Jeremiah to sing laments when Josiah died (see 2 Chr. 35:25). Here they are called to weep over the collapse of Jerusalem.

9:18 make haste: There is urgency in summoning the skilled mourners to lead the people in tearful lament over the imminent destruction of Judah.

9:19 plundered: This term, which means “to devastate,” is used frequently in Jeremiah to refer to the impending devastation of Jerusalem.

Because we have forsaken the land,
Because we have been cast out of
^bour dwellings.”

20 Yet hear the word of the LORD,
O women,
And let your ear receive the word of
His mouth;
Teach your daughters wailing,
And everyone her neighbor a
lamentation.

21 For death has come through our
windows,
Has entered our palaces,
To kill off ^cthe children—^d*no longer
to be outside!*
And the young men—^e*no longer on
the streets!*

22 Speak, “Thus says the LORD:

‘Even the carcasses of men shall fall
^das refuse on the open field,
Like cuttings after the harvester,
And no one shall gather *them*.’”

23 Thus says the LORD:

“Let not the wise *man* glory in his
wisdom,

19 ^b Lev. 18:28
21 ^c 2 Chr. 36:17;
Jer. 6:11; 18:21;
Ezek. 9:5, 6 ^d Lit.
from outside ^e Lit.
from the square
22 ^d Ps. 83:10; Is.
5:25; Jer. 8:1, 2
23 ^e [Eccl. 9:11; Is.
47:10]; Ezek. 28:3-7

^f Ps. 33:16-18
24 ^g Ps. 20:7; 44:8;
Is. 41:16; Jer. 4:2;
1 Cor. 1:31; 2 Cor.
10:17; [Gal. 6:14]
^h Is. 61:8; Mic. 7:18
ⁱ justice
25 ⁱ [Jer. 4:4; Rom.
2:28, 29]
26 ^j Jer. 25:23 ^k Lev.
26:41; Jer. 4:4; 6:10;
Ezek. 44:7; [Rom.
2:28]

CHAPTER 10

2 ^a [Lev. 18:3; 20:23;
Deut. 12:30]

Let not the mighty *man* glory in his
^fmight,
Nor let the rich *man* glory in his
riches;
24 But ^glet him who glories glory in this,
That he understands and knows Me,
That *I am* the LORD, exercising
lovingkindness, ⁱjudgment, and
righteousness in the earth.
^hFor in these I delight,” says the LORD.

25 “Behold, the days are coming,” says
the LORD, “that ⁱI will punish all *who are*
circumcised with the uncircumcised—
26 Egypt, Judah, Edom, the people of
Ammon, Moab, and all *who are* in the
^jfarthest corners, who dwell in the wil-
derness. For all *these* nations are un-
circumcised, and all the house of Israel *are*
^kuncircumcised in the heart.”

Idols and the True God

10 Hear the word which the LORD
speaks to you, O house of Israel.
2 Thus says the LORD:

“Do not learn the way of the Gentiles;
Do not be dismayed at the signs of
heaven,
For the Gentiles are dismayed at them.

9:20–22 Teach your daughters wailing: The impending disaster in Jerusalem would be so great and the dead would be so numerous that multitudes of trained mourners would be needed. **Death has come** like the Canaanite god of death Mot, who was believed to enter a household through an open window to bring adversity, destruction, and death. **children . . . young men . . . men:** Death claims its victims without respect to sex or age. Corpses would remain in **the open field** like **refuse** or dung (8:2), or like **cuttings** left in the field to decompose.

9:23, 24 wise . . . mighty . . . rich: The people with whom Jeremiah contended were depending on their own capabilities rather than on God. **Glory** may also be translated *boast*, meaning “to praise oneself.” The idea is that people should find their real meaning and true worth in the fact that they know God and may celebrate His attributes. True knowledge of God resulting from an intimate relationship with Him will be demonstrated in a person’s character. Three attributes of God that He demands of people called by

His Name are **lovingkindness**, meaning “loyal love”; **judgment**, meaning “justice”; and **righteousness**, meaning “uprightness.”

9:25, 26 God would punish or “visit” Judah, along with its uncircumcised neighboring nations. Circumcision, the sign of God’s covenant with Abraham, was meaningless without a **heart** faithfully devoted to God. Here Judah is listed as just another nation. In fact, it is not even at the head of the list. The point of this text is similar to the concept of temple inviolability (ch. 7). Just as God would destroy even the temple (7:12–14), so He would ignore even circumcision when it was merely an outward symbol (see Deut. 10:12–22).

10:2 The way of the Gentiles was worshiping natural phenomena by means of handmade icons and symbolic imagery. **The signs of heaven** were the astral deities (8:1–3) worshiped in the days of Manasseh and reinstituted following the death of Josiah and the collapse of his reforms. **dismayed:** The heavenly realms held a certain awe or terror for the nations, but Israel was to worship God who held the heavenly realm under His control.

“Sin Is Sin”

Jeremiah presents a sobering message, both to the people of his day as well as to people today: God is against all sin. His judgment of wrath falls on the sin of all individuals and all nations, without exception (Jer. 9:25, 26). It doesn’t matter whether one is Jew (“circumcised”) or Gentile (“uncircumcised”). No group is exempt. No one has special privileges. As Paul put it, “The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men” (Rom. 1:18). All have sinned and stand under God’s judgment (Rom. 3:10–18, 23).

Jeremiah leaves no room for bargaining. He says that God will punish Egypt, Judah, Edom, Ammon, Moab, and every other nation, even those living in the farthest corners of the earth. That includes all the nations that have ever existed or will exist. Apparently the Lord sees no difference between the sins of Judah and the sins of Egypt, the sins of ancient cultures or the sins of modern culture. Sin is sin. There are no good sins. The sins of one people are as evil as the sins of another.

This is the “bad news” that makes the message of Christ’s work on the Cross good news indeed. Yet even the bad news shows that God is as evenhanded in His judgment as He is in His mercy and grace (Rom. 3:29, 30). He warns of judgment on all, but He also offers life to all. No one can hide from the all-seeing eyes of the Lord. But no one needs to lose out on His salvation unless that person rejects God’s provision, Christ.



- 3 For the customs of the peoples *are* ¹futile;
For ^b*one* cuts a tree from the forest,
The work of the hands of the
workman, with the ax.
- 4 They decorate it with silver and gold;
They ^cfasten it with nails and
hammers
So that it will not topple.
- 5 They *are* upright, like a palm tree,
And ^dthey cannot speak;
They must be ^ecarried,
Because they cannot go *by themselves*.
Do not be afraid of them,
For ^fthey cannot do evil,
Nor can they do any good.”
- 6 Inasmuch as *there is* none ^glike You,
O LORD
(You *are* great, and Your name *is*
great in might),
- 7 ^hWho would not fear You, O King of
the nations?
For this is Your rightful due.
For ⁱamong all the wise *men* of the
nations,
And in all their kingdoms,
There is none like You.
- 8 But they are altogether ^jdull-hearted
and foolish;
A wooden idol *is* a ²worthless
doctrine.
- 9 Silver is beaten into plates;
It is brought from Tarshish,
And ^kgold from Uphaz,
The work of the craftsman
And of the hands of the metalsmith;
Blue and purple *are* their clothing;
They *are* all ^lthe work of skillful
men.
- 10 But the LORD *is* the true God;
He *is* ^mthe living God and the
ⁿeverlasting King.

3 ^b Is. 40:19; 45:20
¹ Lit. *vanity*
4 ^c Is. 41:7
5 ^d Ps. 115:5; Is. 46:7;
Jer. 10:5; 1 Cor. 12:2
^e Ps. 115:7; Is. 46:1, 7
^f Is. 41:23, 24
6 ^g Ex. 15:11; Deut.
33:26; Ps. 86:8, 10;
Is. 46:5-9; Jer. 10:16
7 ^h Jer. 5:22; Rev.
15:4 ⁱ Ps. 89:6
8 ^j Ps. 115:8; Hab.
2:18 ² *vain teaching*
9 ^k Dan. 10:5 ^l Ps.
115:4
10 ^m 1 Tim. 6:17
ⁿ Ps. 10:16

11 ^o Ps. 96:5 ^p Is.
2:18; Zeph. 2:11
12 ^q Gen. 1:1, 6, 7;
Jer. 51:15 ^r Ps. 93:1
^s Job 9:8; Ps. 104:2;
Is. 40:22
13 ^t Job 38:34 ^u Ps.
135:7 ³ Or *noise*
14 ^v Jer. 51:17
^w Prov. 30:2 ^x Is.
42:17; 44:11 ^y Hab.
2:18
16 ^z Ps. 16:5; Jer.
51:19; Lam. 3:24
^o Deut. 32:9; Ps.
74:2 ^b Is. 47:4
17 ^c Jer. 6:1 ⁴ Or *you*
who dwell under
siege

At His wrath the earth will tremble,
And the nations will not be able to
endure His indignation.

11 Thus you shall say to them: “The
gods that have not made the heavens and
the earth ^pshall perish from the earth and
from under these heavens.”

12 He ^qhas made the earth by His
power,
He has ^restablished the world by His
wisdom,
And ^shas stretched out the heavens
at His discretion.

13 ^tWhen He utters His voice,
There is a ³multitude of waters in the
heavens:

““And He causes the vapors to ascend
from the ends of the earth.
He makes lightning for the rain,
He brings the wind out of His
treasuries.”

14 ^vEveryone is ^wdull-hearted, without
knowledge;
^xEvery metalsmith is put to shame by
an image;

^yFor his molded image *is* falsehood,
And *there is* no breath in them.

15 They *are* futile, a work of errors;
In the time of their punishment they
shall perish.

16 ^zThe Portion of Jacob *is* not like them,
For He *is* the Maker of all *things*,
And ^aIsrael *is* the tribe of His
inheritance;

^bThe LORD of hosts *is* His name.

The Coming Captivity of Judah

17 ^cGather up your wares from the land,
O ⁴inhabitant of the fortress!

10:3, 4 Customs refers to the practice of constructing deities for worship. **Futile**, which means “vapor,” “vanity,” or “worthlessness,” describes the utter uselessness of idol worship.

10:5 The **upright** idols were dumb and motionless; they required attendants to care for them and carry them from place to place.

Do not be afraid: There is no reason to fear—let alone worship—things that are completely powerless, unable to do **good** or **evil**.

10:6, 7 there is none like You, O LORD: This phrase expresses one of the great teachings of the prophets—the “incomparability of God.” God is not simply “better” than other gods; He alone is the living God.

10:8 Dull-hearted can mean “brutish,” “stupid,” or “unreceptive.” The idea here is that instruction received from idolaters is as worthless as the idols themselves.

10:9, 10 Silver came from **Tarshish**, which some scholars have identified with Tartessus in southern Spain. The wooden and metallic idol was adorned with **blue and purple** fabrics, whose dye probably originated with the Phoenicians. However, even the most **skillful** or “wise” craftsmen could not manufacture true gods, for there is but **one true, living, and everlasting God**. The fabricated icons were lifeless, deteriorating, false gods who were no more powerful or wise than their makers.

10:11 This verse was originally written in Aramaic rather than Hebrew, the usual language of the OT, but the reason for this change of language is not known. (Aramaic also occurs in Ezra and Daniel.) The message is clear that the helpless so-called **gods** would be destroyed.

10:12, 13 Jeremiah emphasizes the creative power of God, drawing from the imagery of Job 38 and Ps. 8. By God’s **power, wisdom, and discretion** or “understanding,” **the earth and the heavens** were brought into orderly existence. By the command of **His voice**, at Creation (see Gen. 1:1–2:4), the **waters, lightning, and wind** are summoned. Jeremiah reminded the people of Judah that their God not only created the universe but also governs its ongoing life.

10:14, 15 True knowledge is found only in relationship to God. **metalsmith:** The craftsmen who used silver and gold for the images they constructed were **put to shame** by their handiwork. The lifeless and useless objects that they fashioned showed that their efforts were **futile**.

10:16 The Portion of Jacob: The Lord is the *portion* or “share” of His people, sufficient for their every need. **His inheritance:** Israel belonged to God; God is the sufficiency of His people.

10:17, 18 Gather up your wares: The Assyrian stone reliefs of Shalmaneser III depict captives transporting household goods on

¹⁸For thus says the LORD:

“Behold, I will ^dthrow out at this time
The inhabitants of the land,
And will distress them,
^eThat they may find *it so*.”

¹⁹^fWoe is me for my hurt!
My wound is severe.
But I say, ^g“Truly this *is* an infirmity,
And ^hI must bear it.”

²⁰ⁱMy tent is plundered,
And all my cords are broken;
My children have gone from me,
And they *are* ^jno more.
*There is no one to pitch my tent
anymore,
Or set up my curtains.*

²¹For the shepherds have become
dull-hearted,
And have not sought the LORD;
Therefore they shall not prosper,
And all their flocks shall be
^kscattered.

²²Behold, the noise of the report has
come,
And a great commotion out of the
^lnorth country,
To make the cities of Judah desolate,
a ^mden of jackals.

²³O LORD, I know the ⁿway of man *is*
not in himself;
*It is not in man who walks to direct
his own steps.*

²⁴O LORD, ^ocorrect me, but with justice;
Not in Your anger, lest You bring me
to nothing.

¹⁸ ^d1 Sam. 25:29;
2 Chr. 36:20 ^e Ezek.
6:10
¹⁹ ^f Jer. 8:21 ^g Ps.
77:10 ^h Mic. 7:9
²⁰ ⁱ Jer. 4:20; Lam.
2:4 ^j Jer. 31:15;
Lam. 1:5
²¹ ^k Jer. 23:2
²² ^l Jer. 5:15 ^m Jer.
9:11
²³ ⁿ Prov. 16:1;
20:24
²⁴ ^o Ps. 6:1; 38:1;
Jer. 30:11

²⁵ ^p Ps. 79:6, 7;
Zeph. 3:8 ^q Job
18:21; 1 Thess. 4:5;
[2 Thess. 1:8] ^r Jer.
8:16

CHAPTER 11

³ ^a Deut. 27:26; [Jer.
17:5]; Gal. 3:10
⁴ ^b Deut. 4:20;
1 Kin. 8:51 ^c Lev.
26:3; Deut. 11:27;
Jer. 7:23
⁵ ^d Ex. 13:5; Deut.
7:12; Ps. 105:9; Jer.
32:22 ^e Ex. 3:8
¹ Heb. *Amen*
⁶ ^f Deut. 17:19;
[Rom. 2:13]; James
1:22
⁷ ^g Jer. 35:15
⁸ ^h Jer. 7:26

²⁵ ^p Pour out Your fury on the Gentiles,
^qwho do not know You,
And on the families who do not call
on Your name;
For they have eaten up Jacob,
^rDevoured him and consumed him,
And made his dwelling place
desolate.

The Broken Covenant

11 The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, ²“Hear the words of this covenant, and speak to the men of Judah and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem; ³and say to them, ‘Thus says the LORD God of Israel: ^a“Cursed *is* the man who does not obey the words of this covenant ⁴which I commanded your fathers in the day I brought them out of the land of Egypt, ^bfrom the iron furnace, saying, ^c“Obey My voice, and do according to all that I command you; so shall you be My people, and I will be your God,’ ⁵that I may establish the ^doath which I have sworn to your fathers, to give them ^e“a land flowing with milk and honey,’ *as it is this day.*””

And I answered and said, ¹“So be it, LORD.”

⁶Then the LORD said to me, “Proclaim all these words in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem, saying: ‘Hear the words of this covenant ^fand do them.

⁷For I earnestly exhorted your fathers in the day I brought them up out of the land of Egypt, until this day, ^grising early and exhorting, saying, “Obey My voice.”

⁸^hYet they did not obey or incline their

their heads as they go into exile in the eastern reaches of the empire. Soon, this would be the fate of the people of Judah.

10:19 Woe is me: Jeremiah personally identified with Judah and the destruction of Jerusalem. **my hurt . . . My wound:** The injuries inflicted upon Judah were **severe**; the Hebrew text suggests “incurable wounds.” **infirmity:** Supplementing the words *hurt* and *wounds*, the word *infirmity* completes the threefold imagery of the damage done to Judah. Writing in triplets was a Hebrew technique to symbolize fullness.

10:20 Like the bedouin whose tent had been destroyed by marauding bandits, Judah lay **plundered** while its **children** were murdered or deported. No one remained to **pitch** the **tent** and reestablish the nation.

10:21 In the Book of Jeremiah, **shepherds** usually refers to the national leaders to whom God gave the responsibility of maintaining justice. Judah’s leaders had become **dull-hearted**, dumbfounded by the chastisement that God had brought upon them. Because the leaders had not **sought** God with a whole heart, they would not **prosper** with the growth of their **flocks**. Instead the shepherds would lose their flocks. The people would be **scattered** like sheep.

10:22 The advance of the foe from the **north** is announced (1:14, 15; 8:16). The armies of this foe would destroy the towns of **Judah**, reducing it to a **desolate . . . den of jackals** (9:11).

10:24 The verb **correct**, which means “to discipline” or “to instruct,” has as its goal conformity to the word and will of God. Jeremiah pleaded with the Lord to deal with the nation according to His **justice**, but to withhold His **anger**.

10:25 The passage ends with a prayer to God to bring judgment upon those who destroyed Judah. Even though the Gentile nations were not heirs to God’s covenant, they would be judged according to God’s ethical standards.

11:1, 2 Jeremiah’s message from the Lord here is strongly associated with the Book of Deuteronomy. The term **words** is the Hebrew name of the Book of Deuteronomy; it is also used to refer to the terms of the **covenant**. A *covenant* is a legal treaty or relationship between individuals, between nations, or—in the case of Israel—between a nation and its God. The covenant specified rights, obligations, and responsibilities of the parties entering into the agreement.

11:3 Cursed suggests the negative provisions of the covenant as summarized in Deut. 27:26 (see all of Deut. 27; 28).

11:4 iron furnace: This terminology comes directly from Deut. 4:20, which is set in a context of a warning against worshipping idols.

Obey: Obedience is the key to blessing (see Deut. 27:10; 28:1–14).

11:5, 6 that I may establish the oath: The blessing of the land, as promised to Abraham, was dependent upon the covenant loyalty of the people. The words **Judah** and **Jerusalem** are a standard way of referring to the entire nation of Israel. **Hear . . . and do:** These terms set forth the correct response to God’s law.

11:7, 8 The emphatic form of the Hebrew phrase **earnestly exhorted** highlights the history of God’s continual urgent—**rising early**—pleas for loyalty from His nation, from the Exodus until the present. The message had been the same from the beginning: **obey**. **Incline their ear** also means “obey.” The Hebrew word translated **dictates** means stubbornness or obstinacy.

ear, but ⁱeveryone ²followed the dictates of his evil heart; therefore I will bring upon them all the words of this covenant, which I commanded *them* to do, but *which* they have not done.”

⁹And the LORD said to me, ^j“A conspiracy has been found among the men of Judah and among the inhabitants of Jerusalem. ¹⁰They have turned back to ^kthe iniquities of their forefathers who refused to hear My words, and they have gone after other gods to serve them; the house of Israel and the house of Judah have broken My covenant which I made with their fathers.”

¹¹Therefore thus says the LORD: “Behold, I will surely bring calamity on them which they will not be able to ³escape; and ^lthough they cry out to Me, I will not listen to them. ¹²Then the cities of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem will go and ^mcry out to the gods to whom they offer incense, but they will not save them at all in the time of their trouble. ¹³For according to the number of your ⁿcities were your gods, O Judah; and according to the number of the streets of Jerusalem you have set up altars to *that* shameful thing, altars to burn incense to Baal.

¹⁴“So ^odo not pray for this people, or lift up a cry or prayer for them; for I will not hear *them* in the time that they cry out to Me because of their trouble.

¹⁵“What ^phas My beloved to do in My house,
Having ^qdone lewd deeds with many?
And ^rthe holy flesh has passed from you.

When you do evil, then you ^srejoice.

¹⁶ The LORD called your name,

⁸ ⁱ Jer. 13:10
² walked in the stubbornness or imagination
⁹ ^j Ezek. 22:25; Hos. 6:9
¹⁰ ^k 1 Sam. 15:11; Jer. 3:10, 11; Ezek. 20:18
¹¹ ^l Ps. 18:41; Prov. 1:28; Is. 1:15; Jer. 14:12; Ezek. 8:18; Mic. 3:4; Zech. 7:13
³ Lit. go out
¹² ^m Deut. 32:37; Jer. 44:17
¹³ ⁿ 2 Kin. 23:13; Jer. 2:28
¹⁴ ^o Ex. 32:10; Jer. 7:16; 14:11; [1 John 5:16]
¹⁵ ^p Ps. 50:16
^q Ezek. 16:25
^r [Titus 1:15] ^s Prov. 2:14

¹⁶ ^t Ps. 52:8; [Rom. 11:17]
¹⁷ ^u Is. 5:2; Jer. 2:21; 12:2
¹⁹ ^v Ps. 83:4; Jer. 18:18 ^w Ps. 27:13
²⁰ ^x 1 Sam. 16:7; 1 Chr. 28:9; Ps. 7:9
^y Jer. 15:15 ⁴ Most secret parts, lit. kidneys
²¹ ^z Jer. 1:1; 12:5, 6 ^a Is. 30:10; Amos 2:12; Mic. 2:6
²² ^b Jer. 9:21
²³ ^c Jer. 23:12; Hos. 9:7; Mic. 7:4

¹Green Olive Tree, Lovely and of Good Fruit.

With the noise of a great tumult
He has kindled fire on it,
And its branches are broken.

¹⁷“For the LORD of hosts, ^uwho planted you, has pronounced doom against you for the evil of the house of Israel and of the house of Judah, which they have done against themselves to provoke Me to anger in offering incense to Baal.”

Jeremiah's Life Threatened

¹⁸Now the LORD gave me knowledge of it, and I know it; for You showed me their doings. ¹⁹But I *was* like a docile lamb brought to the slaughter; and I did not know that they had devised schemes against me, *saying*, “Let us destroy the tree with its fruit, ^vand let us cut him off from ^wthe land of the living, that his name may be remembered no more.”

²⁰ But, O LORD of hosts,
You who judge righteously,
^xTesting the ⁴mind and the heart,
Let me see Your ^yvengeance on them,
For to You I have revealed my cause.

²¹“Therefore thus says the LORD concerning the men of ^zAnathoth who seek your life, *saying*, ^a“Do not prophesy in the name of the LORD, lest you die by our hand”— ²²therefore thus says the LORD of hosts: ‘Behold, I will punish them. The young men shall die by the sword, their sons and their daughters shall ^bdie by famine; ²³and there shall be no remnant of them, for I will bring catastrophe on the men of Anathoth, *even* ^cthe year of their punishment.’”

11:9, 10 A conspiracy is a plot with treacherous intent. **turned back**: The people had returned to the ways of **their forefathers**, who had rebelled against God and the covenant. **Gone after** means “to serve” or “to worship.” Both the northern and southern kingdoms had practiced idolatry and broken the first of the Ten Commandments.

11:11 Because the heart of the nation was evil, God would **bring calamity** upon the people. God’s justice is inescapable when sin is intrinsic to one’s character. Even if the people were to **cry out** in distress, God would **not listen**.

11:12, 13 Rather than accept God’s punishment and repent of their evil ways, the nation preferred to **cry out** to other **gods** for deliverance. The **altars** of their **incense** (1:16; 7:9) and sacrifices would become **shameful** objects.

11:14 Judah’s status was decided. Jeremiah’s **prayer** would be to no avail (7:16; 14:11).

11:15 **My house**: The nation had no right to worship in God’s temple while paying homage to other gods.

11:16 **The LORD** called Judah the **Green Olive Tree**, indicating its beauty and His blessing on the nation. But **the noise of a great tumult** or tempest would accompany the attacking army that would ravage and destroy the tree with **fire**.

11:17 The term **planted** recalls the theme of 2:21, the idea that God had established Israel as His choicest vine. However, here the context is the impending **doom** that would result from the **evil** done by the Lord’s people.

11:18, 19 **the LORD gave me knowledge**: God revealed to Jeremiah a plot against the prophet’s life. **a docile lamb brought to the slaughter**: This imagery is reminiscent of Is. 53:7 and the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ.

11:20 Jeremiah appealed for vindication to God, as the one true righteous Judge. **Mind** is literally the internal organs of the body, and is a way of referring to the seat of human emotion. **Heart** refers to the seat of the intellect and will. **Vengeance** describes God’s fury and anger against sin that demands punishment.

11:21–23 **The men of Anathoth** insisted that Jeremiah **not prophesy in the name of the LORD**. If Jeremiah had yielded to their demand, he would have repudiated his calling, his person, and his God. The threat of death to Jeremiah was answered by punishment of the **young men** as well as their children. The prediction of death by **famine** was fulfilled when the city was besieged by the Babylonians in the days of Zedekiah.

Jeremiah's Question

- 12** Righteous ^aare You, O LORD,
when I plead with You;
Yet let me talk with You about Your
judgments.
- ^bWhy does the way of the wicked
prosper?
Why are those happy who deal so
treacherously?
- ² You have planted them, yes, they
have taken root;
They grow, yes, they bear fruit.
^cYou are near in their mouth
But far from their ¹mind.
- ³ But You, O LORD, ^dknow me;
You have seen me,
And You have ^etested my heart
toward You.
Pull them out like sheep for the
slaughter,
And prepare them for ^fthe day of
slaughter.
- ⁴ How long will ^gthe land mourn,
And the herbs of every field wither?
^hThe beasts and birds are consumed,
ⁱFor the wickedness of those who
dwell there,
Because they said, "He will not see
our final end."

The LORD Answers Jeremiah

- ⁵ "If you have run with the footmen,
and they have wearied you,
Then how can you contend with
horses?
And if in the land of peace,

CHAPTER 12

¹ ^a Ezra 9:15; Ps. 51:4; Jer. 11:20
^b Job 12:6; Jer. 5:27, 28; Hab. 1:4; Mal. 3:15
² ^c Is. 29:13; Ezek. 33:31; Matt. 15:8; Mark 7:6 ¹ Most secret parts, lit. kidneys
³ ^d Ps. 17:3 ^e Ps. 7:9; 11:5; Jer. 11:20
^f Jer. 17:18; 50:27; James 5:5
⁴ ^g Jer. 23:10; Hos. 4:3 ^h Jer. 9:10; Hos. 4:3; Hab. 3:17 ⁱ Ps. 107:34

⁵ ^j Josh. 3:15; 1 Chr. 12:15 ² Or *thicket*
⁶ ^k Gen. 37:4-11; Job 6:15; Ps. 69:8; Jer. 9:4, 5 ¹ Ps. 12:2; Prov. 26:25 ³ Or *abundantly* ⁴ Lit. *good*
⁸ ^m Hos. 9:15; Amos 6:8
⁹ ⁿ Lev. 26:22
⁵ *inheritance*
¹⁰ ^o Jer. 6:3; 23:1
^p Ps. 80:8-16; Is. 5:1-7 ^q Is. 63:18
⁶ Lit. *shepherds* or *pastors* ⁷ *desired portion* of land

In which you trusted, they wearied
you,

- Then how will you do in ^jthe
²floodplain of the Jordan?
- ⁶ For even ^kyour brothers, the house of
your father,
Even they have dealt treacherously
with you;
Yes, they have called ³a multitude
after you.
- ¹Do not believe them,
Even though they speak ⁴smooth
words to you.
- ⁷ "I have forsaken My house, I have left
My heritage;
I have given the dearly beloved of
My soul into the hand of her
enemies.
- ⁸ My heritage is to Me like a lion in
the forest;
It cries out against Me;
Therefore I have ^mhated it.
- ⁹ My ⁵heritage is to Me *like* a speckled
vulture;
The vultures all around *are* against
her.
Come, assemble all the beasts of the
field,
ⁿBring them to devour!
- ¹⁰ "Many ^orulers ⁶have destroyed ^pMy
vineyard,
They have ^qtrodden My portion
underfoot;
They have made My ⁷pleasant
portion a desolate wilderness.

12:1 Plead means "contend legally." While no legal grievance can be brought against God, Jeremiah could pose legal questions to the righteous Judge.

12:2 The theme of God's establishing the nation of Israel is also found in 2:21; 11:17. The plant had **taken root**, but was producing bad **fruit**. **near in their mouth . . . far from their mind**: Pious phrases, such as "as the Lord lives," were often spoken by the rebellious leaders of Israel, but without a commitment of their mind (11:20).

12:3 You, O LORD, know me: God's intimate relationship with Jeremiah is evidenced here. The prophet had faced becoming like a **sheep for the slaughter** (11:19); here he calls for his enemies to be judged in the same way.

forsaken

(Heb. *azab*) (2:13; 12:7; Is. 1:4; 54:7) Strong's #5800

The prophets frequently used this term to describe the people's relationship to the covenant God made with them. Israel is described as "forsaking" God and His covenant by turning to idols (22:9; Ezek. 20:8). Moses warned the Hebrews about breaking God's covenant and forsaking Him. Because of their unfaithfulness, God would in turn forsake His own people (see Deut. 31:16, 17). Here the prophet Jeremiah indicates that this divine threat had become a reality for the nation of Judah (12:7).

12:4 How long: Jeremiah's question related to God's delay of judgment on the people of the land. **land mourn . . . herbs of every field wither . . . beasts and birds are consumed**: These three elements are recurring themes in Jeremiah and other prophetic texts (see 4:28; Is. 40:7; Zeph. 1:3). In spite of past chastisement, the people believed that God would not bring their country to an end.

12:5, 6 God's response to Jeremiah's question (v. 4) comes in the form of two metaphorical questions. The first metaphor, of foot racing, was designed to teach Jeremiah that the obstacles he faced in his hometown were meager compared to those he would encounter before the kings of Judah and Babylon (the **horses**). The second metaphor, of **peace**, was designed to remind the prophet of the impending turmoil he would have to endure in proclaiming the message of judgment to an unrepentant leadership. The relatively peaceful setting of Anathoth, with its minor opposition from treacherous family members, served to prepare Jeremiah to struggle against greater antagonists.

12:7-13 The precise setting of this lament is unknown. Yet the context would fit the period after Nebuchadnezzar seized control of Palestine and the vassal kingdom of Jehoiakim. Edomites, Moabites, and others attacked the perimeters of Judah, plundering towns and fortresses and taking captives.

12:7 dearly beloved: God's love and concern for His people does not preclude discipline when their sin makes it necessary.

12:8, 9 Judah had become like a **lion** roaring against God, resulting in His beloved becoming His **hated**.

12:10, 11 Rulers here refers to the foreign kings who had come as agents of God to judge Judah. The repetition of the word **desolate**

- 11 They have made it ^rdesolate;
Desolate, it mourns to Me;
The whole land is made desolate,
Because ^sno one takes *it* to
heart.
- 12 The plunderers have come
On all the desolate heights in the
wilderness,
For the sword of the LORD shall
devour
From *one* end of the land to the *other*
end of the land;
No flesh shall have peace.
- 13 ^tThey have sown wheat but reaped
thorns;
They have ⁸put themselves to pain
but do not profit.
But be ashamed of your
harvest
Because of the fierce anger of the
LORD.”

14 Thus says the LORD: “Against all My evil neighbors who ^utouch the inheritance which I have caused My people Israel to inherit—behold, I will ^vpluck them out of their land and pluck out the house of Judah from among them. ^{15 w}Then it shall be, after I have plucked them out, that I will return and have compassion on them ^xand bring them back, everyone to his heritage and everyone to his land. ¹⁶And it shall be, if they will learn carefully the ways of My people, ^yto swear by My name, ‘As the LORD lives,’ as they taught My people to swear by Baal, then they shall be ^zestablished in the midst of My people. ¹⁷But if they do not ^aobey, I will utterly pluck up and destroy that nation,” says the LORD.

11 ^r Jer. 10:22; 22:6
^s Is. 42:25
13 ^t Lev. 26:16;
Deut. 28:38; Mic.
6:15; Hag. 1:6 ^u Or
strained
14 ^w Jer. 2:3; 50:11,
12; Zech. 2:8
^v Deut. 30:3; Ps.
106:47; Is. 11:11-16;
Jer. 32:37
15 ^w Jer. 31:20; Lam.
3:32; Ezek. 28:25
^x Amos 9:14
16 ^y [Jer. 4:2]; Zeph.
1:5 ^z [Eph. 2:20, 21;
1 Pet. 2:5]
17 ^a Ps. 2:8-12; Is.
60:12

CHAPTER 13

1 ^r Lit. *upon your loins*
2 ^s waistband
3 ^t waistband 4 Lit.
upon your loins
5 Heb. *Perath*
6 ^u waistband
9 ^a Lev. 26:19 ^b [Is.
2:10-17; 23:9]; Zeph.
3:11
10 ^c Jer. 16:12 ^d Jer.
7:24; 16:12 ^e *walk in the stubbornness or imagination*
11 ^e [Ex. 19:5, 6;
Deut. 32:10, 11]
^f Jer. 33:9 ^g Is. 43:21
^h Ps. 81:11; Jer. 7:13,
24, 26

Symbol of the Linen Sash

13 Thus the LORD said to me: “Go and put ¹get yourself a linen sash, and put it ¹around your waist, but do not put it in water.” ²So I got a ²sash according to the word of the LORD, and put *it* around my waist.

³And the word of the LORD came to me the second time, saying, ⁴“Take the ³sash that you acquired, which *is* ⁴around your waist, and arise, go to the ⁵Euphrates, and hide it there in a hole in the rock.” ⁵So I went and hid it by the Euphrates, as the LORD commanded me.

⁶Now it came to pass after many days that the LORD said to me, “Arise, go to the Euphrates, and take from there the sash which I commanded you to hide there.” ⁷Then I went to the Euphrates and dug, and I took the ⁶sash from the place where I had hidden it; and there was the sash, ruined. It was profitable for nothing.

⁸Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying, ⁹“Thus says the LORD: ‘In this manner ^aI will ruin the pride of Judah and the great ^bpride of Jerusalem. ¹⁰This evil people, who ^crefuse to hear My words, who ^dfollow ⁷the dictates of their hearts, and walk after other gods to serve them and worship them, shall be just like this sash which is profitable for nothing. ¹¹For as the sash clings to the waist of a man, so I have caused the whole house of Israel and the whole house of Judah to cling to Me,’ says the LORD, ‘that ^ethey may become My people, ^ffor renown, for praise, and for ^gglory; but they would ^hnot hear.’

Symbol of the Wine Bottles

12 “Therefore you shall speak to them

three times in v. 11 describes the complete devastation of Judah (see Is. 6:11). Because of sin, the land that once saw God’s bounteous blessing would experience His devastating judgment.

12:12 Destruction would come to the **desolate heights** where Israel and Judah performed their idolatrous deeds (3:2; 3:21; 4:11).

12:13 The imagery turns to the fields, which the Israelites believed were endowed with fertility by Baal. Because of the people’s idolatry, their fields were overgrown with **thorns**.

12:14 **Evil neighbors** included the powerful nations of Babylon and Assyria, as well as opportunistic kingdoms like Edom, Moab, and Ammon. These latter kingdoms seized land, crops, and hostages when Judah was weakened by invasion. **The inheritance** refers to the **land** that God gave His people under specific conditions.

Pluck . . . out, which means “to root out, destroy,” is often used in the Book of Jeremiah in the context of God’s retribution on evil nations. **Judah** would be “plucked out” from among those who were plucked out.

12:15 This verse offers a glimmer of hope in the middle of a prophecy of judgment. In the midst of His judgment, God would remember His covenant with Abraham. Eventually He would **return and have compassion** on His people. **Land** portions would revert to their original owners.

12:16 The nations are given a stern condition regarding their survival and blessing. They are advised to **learn** the **ways** of Israel more diligently than they had **taught** Israel their own ways of Baal wor-

ship. **If** the nations would do this and place themselves under His covenant—**swear by His name**, they would **be established**. This is a call for the nations to share in Israel’s salvation.

13:1, 2 linen sash: This article of clothing was like a short skirt or kilt worn by men. Jeremiah was not supposed to wash it.

13:3–5 Jeremiah was commanded to take his linen **sash** to the **Euphrates** River and **hide** it between the rocks. Since this would have meant a round-trip journey of some seven hundred miles—a trip that would have taken two to three months—some scholars have suggested that the river, generally translated as Euphrates, was within Palestine, perhaps the springs at the head of the Wadi Farah.

13:6, 7 Because Jeremiah’s sash was dirty and then was exposed to the elements, it was **ruined** and **profitable for nothing**.

13:8–11 As Jeremiah’s waistcloth was ruined (v. 7), so Judah’s **pride** would be reduced to **ruin**. **Pride** describes the self-exalting conduct that characterized Israel in its love for idols. This pride is explained in a triplet of verbal phrases: **refuse to hear . . . follow the dictates of their hearts . . . walk after other gods**. Jeremiah’s undefiled waistcloth in v. 1 symbolized unspoiled Judah in its early days of devotion to God, tightly bound to Him in covenant faithfulness. But as the waistcloth became ruined near the Euphrates, so Judah defiled itself by its allegiances to Assyria, Babylon, and their national deities.

13:12 Jeremiah’s quotation of a well-known proverb on the blessing of plentiful **wine** would be met with a derogatory response. The **bottle** was a clay storage jar used for wine, water, and oil.

this word: “Thus says the LORD God of Israel: “Every bottle shall be filled with wine.””

“And they will say to you, ‘Do we not certainly know that every bottle will be filled with wine?’”

¹³ “Then you shall say to them, ‘Thus says the LORD: “Behold, I will fill all the inhabitants of this land—even the kings who sit on David’s throne, the priests, the prophets, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem—with drunkenness! ¹⁴ And I will dash them ⁸ one against another, even the fathers and the sons together,” says the LORD. “I will not pity nor spare nor have mercy, but will destroy them.”’”

Pride Precedes Captivity

¹⁵ Hear and give ear:

Do not be proud,

For the LORD has spoken.

¹⁶ ^k Give glory to the LORD your God

Before He causes ^l darkness,

And before your feet stumble

On the dark mountains,

And while you are ^m looking for light,
He turns it into ⁿ the shadow of death

And makes it dense darkness.

¹⁷ But if you will not hear it,

My soul will ^o weep in secret for *your*

pride;

My eyes will weep bitterly

And run down with tears,

Because the LORD’s flock has been

taken captive.

¹⁸ Say to ^p the king and to the queen

mother,

“Humble yourselves;

Sit down,

For your rule shall collapse, the

crown of your glory.”

¹³ / Ps. 60:3; 75:8; Is. 51:17; 63:6; Jer. 25:27; 51:7, 57
¹⁴ / 2 Chr. 36:17; Ps. 2:9; Is. 9:20, 21; Jer. 19:9-11 ⁸ Lit. *a man against his brother*
¹⁶ ^k Josh. 7:19; Ps. 96:8; Mal. 2:2 / Is. 5:30; 8:22; Amos 8:9 ^m Is. 59:9 ⁿ Ps. 44:19; Jer. 2:6
¹⁷ ^o Ps. 119:136; Jer. 9:1; 14:17; Luke 19:41, 42
¹⁸ ^p 2 Kin. 24:12; Jer. 22:26

²⁰ ^q Jer. 10:22; 46:20
²¹ ^r Jer. 6:24
⁹ childbirth
²² ^s Jer. 16:10 / Is. 47:2; Ezek. 16:37; Nah. 3:5 ¹ Lit. *suffer violence*
²⁴ ^w Lev. 26:33; Jer. 9:16; Ezek. 5:2, 12
^v Ps. 1:4; Hos. 13:3
²⁵ ^w Job 20:29; Ps. 11:6; Matt. 24:51
^x Jer. 10:14
²⁶ ^y Lam. 1:8; Ezek. 16:37; Hos. 2:10

¹⁹ The cities of the South shall be shut up,

And no one shall open *them*;

Judah shall be carried away captive,
all of it;

It shall be wholly carried away
captive.

²⁰ Lift up your eyes and see

Those who come from the ^q north.

Where is the flock *that* was given to
you,

Your beautiful sheep?

²¹ What will you say when He punishes
you?

For you have taught them

To be chieftains, to be head over you.

Will not ^r pangs seize you,

Like a woman in ^s labor?

²² And if you say in your heart,

“Why have these things come upon
me?”

For the greatness of your iniquity

^t Your skirts have been uncovered,

Your heels ¹ made bare.

²³ Can the Ethiopian change his skin or
the leopard its spots?

Then may you also do good who are
accustomed to do evil.

²⁴ “Therefore I will ^u scatter them ^v like
stubble

That passes away by the wind of the
wilderness.

²⁵ ^w This is your lot,

The portion of your measures from
Me,” says the LORD,

“Because you have forgotten Me
And trusted in ^x falsehood.

²⁶ Therefore ^y I will uncover your skirts
over your face,

That your shame may appear.

13:13 Blessing turned to debauchery among the leaders and citizens of Jerusalem. The listing of **kings, priests, prophets, and inhabitants** is a means of depicting the entire religious and political nation by listing the different parts.

13:14 The wine jars of God’s wrath would be smashed and broken together, a picture of a devastated nation. The triplet of synonyms for compassion—**pity, spare, and have mercy**—heightens the effect of hopelessness in Judah’s situation.

13:15 **Proud** here refers to self-exaltation and contempt for the **spoken** or revealed word of God.

13:16 **To give glory** to God is to exalt and worship Him. This verse warns of the consequences of failing to glorify God. Four Hebrew synonyms for darkness are found in this verse, deepening the impression of divine displeasure meted out against God’s people. In the rugged **mountains** that dominate the landscape of Judah, where walking in the **dark** is hazardous, no hope or **light** would be discerned.

13:17 Jeremiah had been told not to pray for the rebellious and unresponsive people of Judah (7:16; 11:14; 14:11), but here he expresses **in secret** his deep lament for the **LORD’s flock**, who had been carried away into exile.

13:18, 19 **The king and the queen mother** are Jehoiachin and his mother Nehushta, who were exiled by Nebuchadnezzar (see

2 Kin. 24:8–12) after only three months on the throne in Jerusalem.

Humble yourselves: Jeremiah advised the royal household to submit to Babylon. Judah had established a series of fortresses in the **South** that were an important line of defense from the days of Solomon to Zedekiah. They were a source of pride for the military but were destroyed by the Assyrians and again by the Babylonians.

13:20 **Those who come from the north** refers to the Babylonians.

13:21 **you have taught them . . . to be head over you:** This verse seems to indicate that Judah had cooperated with its enemies as they began to dominate the nation. The metaphor of childbirth portrays Judah reaping the fruits of its labors in pain and anguish.

13:22 **Your skirts have been uncovered:** Judah would be shamed by its conquerors in the same way that a prostitute was publicly disgraced.

13:23 The negative rhetorical question confirmed Judah’s inability to change its own ways. The nation had reinforced its habit of doing **evil** (4:22) for so long that it did not know how to **do good**.

13:24, 25 The consequence of Judah’s continual rebellion would be the scattering of its inhabitants like chaff or **stubble** driven by the desert **wind**. The word **falsehood** is one of the key terms Jeremiah uses to refer to the fraudulent worship of foreign deities.

13:26, 27 **Uncover your skirts** refers to public exposure (v. 22). Since Judah had lustfully sought adulterous relationships with for-

- 27 I have seen your adulteries
And your *lustful* ^zneighings,
The lewdness of your harlotry,
Your abominations ^aon the hills in
the fields.
Woe to you, O Jerusalem!
Will you still not be made clean?"

Sword, Famine, and Pestilence

14 The word of the LORD that came to
Jeremiah concerning the droughts.

- 2 "Judah mourns,
And ^aher gates languish;
They ^bmourn for the land,
And ^cthe cry of Jerusalem has
gone up.
3 Their nobles have sent their lads for
water;
They went to the cisterns and found
no water.
They returned with their vessels
empty;
They were ^dashamed and confounded
^eAnd covered their heads.
4 Because the ground is parched,
For there was ^fno rain in the land,
The plowmen were ashamed;
They covered their heads.
5 Yes, the deer also gave birth in the
field,
But ¹left because there was no grass.
6 And ^gthe wild donkeys stood in the
desolate heights;
They sniffed at the wind like jackals;
Their eyes failed because *there was*
no grass."
7 O LORD, though our iniquities testify
against us,

27 ^z Jer. 5:7, 8 ^a Is.
65:7; Jer. 2:20; Ezek.
6:13

CHAPTER 14

2 ^a 2 Kin. 25:3; Is.
3:26 ^b Jer. 8:21
^c 1 Sam. 5:12; Jer.
11:11; 46:12; Zech.
7:13
3 ^d Job 6:20; Ps.
40:14 ^e 2 Sam.
15:30
4 ^f Jer. 3:3; Ezek.
22:24
5 ¹ abandoned her
young
6 ^g Job 39:5, 6;
Jer. 2:24

7 ^h Ps. 25:11; Jer.
14:21
8 ⁱ Jer. 17:13
9 ^j Is. 59:1 ^k Ex.
29:45; Lev. 26:11; Ps.
46:5; Jer. 8:19
10 ^l Jer. 22:23-25
^m [Jer. 44:21-23];
Hos. 8:13
11 ⁿ Ex. 32:10; Jer.
7:16; 11:14
12 ^o Prov. 1:28; [Is.
1:15; 58:3-6]; Ezek.
8:18; Mic. 3:4; Zech.
7:13 ^p Jer. 6:20
^q Jer. 9:16
13 ^r Jer. 4:10 ^s Jer.
8:11; 23:17 ^t true
14 ^u Jer. 27:10 ^v Jer.
29:8, 9

- Do it ^hfor Your name's sake;
For our backslidings are many,
We have sinned against You.
8 ⁱO the Hope of Israel, his Savior in
time of trouble,
Why should You be like a stranger in
the land,
And like a traveler *who* turns aside to
tarry for a night?
9 Why should You be like a man
astonished,
Like a mighty one ^j*who* cannot save?
Yet You, O LORD, ^k*are* in our midst,
And we are called by Your name;
Do not leave us!
10 Thus says the LORD to this people:
14 "Thus they have loved to wander;
They have not restrained their feet.
Therefore the LORD does not accept
them;
15 He will remember their iniquity now,
And punish their sins."

- 11 Then the LORD said to me, ⁿ"Do
not pray for this people, for *their* good.
12 ^oWhen they fast, I will not hear their
cry; and ^pwhen they offer burnt offering
and grain offering, I will not accept them.
But ^qI will consume them by the sword,
by the famine, and by the pestilence."
13 ^rThen I said, "Ah, Lord God! Behold,
the prophets say to them, 'You shall not
see the sword, nor shall you have famine,
but I will give you ^sassured ^speace in this
place."
14 And the LORD said to me, ^t"The
prophets prophesy lies in My name. ^uI
have not sent them, commanded them,

eign gods and goddesses, God would expose and bring to **shame** its actions. **Adulteries** are literally sins against marriage. Applied to Israel the term means involvement with another nation's gods. **Neighings** refers to animals in heat pursuing mates. **The lewdness of your harlotry** describes both physical and spiritual prostitution. **14:1 Droughts** were viewed as indicators of divine displeasure, as in the idolatrous days of Ahab, Jezebel, and Elijah.

14:2 Four short clauses using four words for lament profile the mourning of the country. The Hebrew word translated **mourns** is a general word for grief over the dead. **Languish** means "to wither" or "to shrink back." The Hebrew word for **mourn** describes the dark gloom of weeping and wailing. Finally, **cry** describes a clamoring cry of joy or sorrow.

14:3, 4 nobles: The men of renown, who could have afforded any price for water, sent out servants to search in all the normal locations for water, but **no water** could be **found**. The rain-starved farmlands were scorched by the sun, and the farmers **covered their heads** in mourning.

14:5, 6 The drought of Judah affected even the wild animals. The doe abandoned its fawn for lack of forage. **Wild donkeys stood** on barren hills, sniffing the wind for the scent of moisture—to no avail.

14:7 Jeremiah echoes the sentiments of his people in his plea for forgiveness and deliverance for the nation. The word **iniquities** refers to the accountable guilt that results from continual unconfessed sin.

14:8 Jeremiah pleaded with God on the basis of God's name and

character, particularly His role as the **Hope** and **Savior** of His people. Instead of having an intimate relationship with Judah, God had become like **a stranger or a traveler** in the land, because the people worshiped other gods.

14:10 Unlike the troubled Jeremiah, the **people** were unrepentant and in need of correction. Jeremiah realized that judgment was inevitable because God offered no hint of deliverance. **they have loved to wander:** *Loved* describes voluntary desire. *Wander* describes a repetitive back and forth movement—in this case, of seeking every possible occasion for sin. Because no one displayed any restraint from sin, God could not violate His holy character and **accept** the people of Judah.

14:11, 12 Because divine discipline was inevitable, Jeremiah was instructed **not to pray** for the **good** of Jerusalem. **fast . . . offer burnt offering:** These methods of expressing penitence and establishing communion with God were ineffective because of the people's disobedience. The doom of Judah was sealed.

14:13 Jeremiah complained to the Lord about false **prophets** who were proclaiming a message of **peace** instead of war and pestilence. These pretentious prophets presumed upon God's mercy and promise of deliverance as demonstrated in the days of Hezekiah and Isaiah, when Jerusalem was miraculously rescued from the siege of Sennacherib's army.

14:14 The prophet who truly speaks in the **name** of God will see his words come to pass. The false prophets who promised peace

nor spoken to them; they prophesy to you a false vision, ³divination, a worthless thing, and the ^vdeceit of their heart. ¹⁵Therefore thus says the LORD concerning the prophets who prophesy in My name, whom I did not send, ^wand who say, ‘Sword and famine shall not be in this land’—‘By sword and famine those prophets shall be consumed!’ ¹⁶And the people to whom they prophesy shall be cast out in the streets of Jerusalem because of the famine and the sword; ^xthey will have no one to bury them—they nor their wives, their sons nor their daughters—for I will pour their wickedness on them.’

¹⁷“Therefore you shall say this word to them:

^y“Let my eyes flow with tears night and day,

And let them not cease;

^zFor the virgin daughter of my people Has been broken with a mighty stroke, with a very severe blow.

¹⁸ If I go out to ^athe field, Then behold, those slain with the sword!

And if I enter the city, Then behold, those sick from famine! Yes, both prophet and ^bpriest go about in a land they do not know.”

The People Plead for Mercy

¹⁹“Have You utterly rejected Judah? Has Your soul loathed Zion?

Why have You stricken us so that ^dthere is no healing for us?

^eWe looked for peace, but *there was* no good;

And for the time of healing, and there was trouble.

²⁰ We acknowledge, O LORD, our wickedness

And the iniquity of our ^ffathers, For ^gwe have sinned against You.

¹⁴ ^v Jer. 23:16; Ezek. 12:24 ³ Telling the future by signs and omens
¹⁵ ^w Jer. 5:12; Ezek. 14:10
¹⁶ ^a Ps. 79:2, 3; Jer. 7:32; 15:2, 3
¹⁷ ^y Jer. 9:1; 13:17; Lam. 1:16 ^z Is. 37:22; Jer. 8:21; Lam. 1:15; 2:13
¹⁸ ^a Jer. 6:25; Lam. 1:20; Ezek. 7:15
^b Jer. 23:11
¹⁹ ^c Jer. 6:30; 7:29; 12:7; Lam. 5:22
^d Jer. 15:18 ^e Job 30:26; Jer. 8:15; 1 Thess. 5:3
²⁰ ^f Neh. 9:2; Ps. 32:5; Jer. 3:25 ^g Ps. 106:6; Jer. 8:14; 14:7; Dan. 9:8

²¹ ^h Ps. 106:45
²² ⁱ Zech. 10:1
^j Deut. 32:21
^k 1 Kin. 17:1; Jer. 5:24 ^l Ps. 135:7

CHAPTER 15

¹ ^a Ps. 99:6; Ezek. 14:14 ^b Ex. 32:11-14; Num. 14:13-20; Ps. 99:6 ^c 1 Sam. 7:9
¹ ⁱ Lit. *soul was not toward*
² ^d Jer. 43:11; Ezek. 5:2, 12; Zech. 11:9; [Rev. 13:10] ^e Jer. 9:16; 16:13
³ ^f Lev. 26:16, 21, 25; Jer. 12:3; Ezek. 14:21 ^g Jer. 7:33
⁴ ^h Deut. 28:25
ⁱ 2 Kin. 24:3, 4

²¹ Do not abhor *us*, for Your name’s sake;
Do not disgrace the throne of Your glory.

^h Remember, do not break Your covenant with us.

²² ⁱ Are there any among ^jthe idols of the nations that can cause ^krain?
Or can the heavens give showers?

^l Are You not He, O LORD our God?
Therefore we will wait for You,
Since You have made all these.

The LORD Will Not Relent

15 Then the LORD said to me, ^a“*Even* if ^bMoses and ^cSamuel stood before Me, My ¹mind *would not be* favorable toward this people. Cast *them* out of My sight, and let them go forth. ²And it shall be, if they say to you, ‘Where should we go?’ then you shall tell them, ‘Thus says the LORD:

^d“Such as *are* for death, to death;

And such as *are* for the sword, to the sword;

And such as *are* for the famine, to the famine;

And such as *are* for the ^ecaptivity, to the captivity.”

³“And I will ^fappoint over them four forms of *destruction*,” says the LORD: “the sword to slay, the dogs to drag, ^gthe birds of the heavens and the beasts of the earth to devour and destroy. ⁴I will hand them over to ^htrouble, to all kingdoms of the earth, because of ⁱManasseh the son of Hezekiah, king of Judah, for what he did in Jerusalem.

⁵ “For who will have pity on you, O Jerusalem?

Or who will bemoan you?

Or who will turn aside to ask how you are doing?

(v. 13) spoke **lies** of their own device (see 2 Pet. 1:19–21). **Divination** is prohibited in Deut. 18:14. **Worthless thing** is a degrading description of the idols that were worshiped in the days of Isaiah (see Is. 2:8) but condemned by the Law (see Lev. 19:4).

14:15, 16 God’s condemnation would fall first on the false prophets because of their prophecies of peace (v. 13). Next in line for judgment would be the inhabitants of the city who had been deceived by the false prophets.

14:17, 18 The setting for this lament over the desecrated city may be either 597 B.C., when Judah was invaded, or 588–586 B.C., when Jerusalem fell.

14:20 The people of Judah acknowledged their **wickedness**, meaning “rebellion,” their **iniquity**, meaning “perversity,” and the fact that they had **sinned**. This triplet of terms indicates the pervasiveness of sin in the land.

14:21, 22 The people’s plea for God’s mercy was based on His character—His **name’s sake**, His **glory**, His **covenant** relationship with

Israel, and His power over creation. Entreaties based on divine character and attributes are common in the Psalms. At stake was God’s reputation and the blessing that would come to the people, but here the obligations of the people to the Lord are disregarded.

15:1 When **Moses** and **Samuel** interceded with God on behalf of the nation, God responded favorably. However, not even these men of God could alter the Lord’s intended purpose for the people of Judah—namely, that they should be driven from the land.

15:2 **Death**, **sword**, **famine**, and **captivity** would be the outcome of God’s judgment. He would use foreign armies as instruments of judgment (14:11, 12).

15:3, 4 The **four forms of destruction** describe the complete judgment of Judah. The imagery of **dogs**, **birds**, and **beasts** devouring human flesh vividly illustrates not only death, but desecration. The basis for this desecration is the defilement of Jerusalem that took place during the reign of **Manasseh**, when idolatry reigned in the temple courts and children were sacrificed to Molech (7:31).

- 6 ^j You have forsaken Me,” says the LORD,
 “You have ^k gone backward.
 Therefore I will stretch out My
 hand against you and destroy
 you;
^l I am ² weary of relenting!
 7 And I will winnow them with a
 winnowing fan in the gates of
 the land;
 I will ^m bereave them of children;
 I will destroy My people,
 Since they ⁿ do not return from their
 ways.
 8 Their widows will be increased to
 Me more than the sand of the
 seas;
 I will bring against them,
 Against the mother of the young
 men,
 A plunderer at noonday;
 I will cause anguish and terror to fall
 on them ^o suddenly.
 9 “She ^p languishes who has borne
 seven;
 She has breathed her last;
^q Her sun has gone down
 While *it was* yet day;
 She has been ashamed and
 confounded.
 And the remnant of them I will
 deliver to the sword
 Before their enemies,” says the LORD.

Jeremiah's Dejection

- 10 ^r Woe is me, my mother,
 That you have borne me,
 A man of strife and a man of
 contention to the whole ³ earth!
 I have neither lent for interest,
 Nor have men lent to me for interest.
 Every one of them curses me.

6 ^j Jer. 2:13 ^k Is. 1:4;
 Jer. 7:24 ^l Jer. 20:16;
 Zech. 8:14 ² tired
 7 ^m Jer. 18:21; Hos.
 9:12-16 ⁿ Is. 9:13;
 Jer. 5:3; Amos
 4:10, 11
 8 ^o Is. 29:5
 9 ^p 1 Sam. 2:5;
 Is. 47:9 ^q Jer. 6:4;
 Amos 8:9
 10 ^r Job 3:1; Jer.
 20:14 ³ Or land

11 ^s Jer. 40:4, 5
 13 ^t Ps. 44:12; Is.
 52:3
 14 ^u Deut. 28:36,
 64; Jer. 16:13
^v Deut. 32:22; Ps.
 21:9; Jer. 17:4 ⁴ So
 with MT, Vg.; LXX,
 Syr., Tg. *cause you
 to serve* (cf. 17:4)
 15 ^w Jer. 12:3 ^x Jer.
 20:12 ^y Ps. 69:7-9;
 Jer. 20:8 ⁵ attend to
 16 ^z Ezek. 3:1, 3;
 Rev. 10:9 ^a [Job
 23:12; Ps. 119:72]
 17 ^b Ps. 26:4, 5
 18 ^c Job 34:6;
 Jer. 10:19; 30:15;
 Mic. 1:9

- 11 The LORD said:
 “Surely it will be well with your
 remnant;
 Surely I will cause ^s the enemy to
 intercede with you
 In the time of adversity and in the
 time of affliction.
 12 Can anyone break iron,
 The northern iron and the bronze?
 13 Your wealth and your treasures
 I will give as ^t plunder without price,
 Because of all your sins,
 Throughout your territories.
 14 And I will ⁴ make *you* cross over with
 your enemies
^u Into a land *which* you do not know;
 For a ^v fire is kindled in My anger,
 Which shall burn upon you.”
 15 O LORD, ^w You know;
 Remember me and ⁵ visit me,
 And ^x take vengeance for me on my
 persecutors.
 In Your enduring patience, do not
 take me away.
 Know that ^y for Your sake I have
 suffered rebuke.
 16 Your words were found, and I ^z ate
 them,
 And ^a Your word was to me the joy
 and rejoicing of my heart;
 For I am called by Your name,
 O LORD God of hosts.
 17 ^b I did not sit in the assembly of the
 mockers,
 Nor did I rejoice;
 I sat alone because of Your hand,
 For You have filled me with
 indignation.
 18 Why is my ^c pain perpetual
 And my wound incurable,
 Which refuses to be healed?

15:6 Forsaken means “cast down” or “rejected.” The people threw off the yoke of the covenant and went **backward** instead of forward in obedience. **My hand** indicates the active power of God in accomplishing His will for His people (see Deut. 26:8). **I am weary of relenting:** *Relenting* refers to God’s restraining from totally demolishing Israel and Judah. For hundreds of years, the Lord had refrained from fully punishing Israel for its idolatry and unfaithfulness. **15:7, 8** Like wheat chaff that is scattered by the **winnowing** fork and the wind, the people of Judah would be dispersed. The population would be decimated. The further ravaging of the land is revealed in the numerous **widows** who would be left in the wake of the death of the men of Judah.

15:9 The blessing of **seven** sons was the ultimate hope for ancient mothers and fathers. But the utmost horror was to lose all seven in death, resulting in the loss of an heir.

15:10 Jeremiah’s faithfulness to his call to be a prophet had caused only **strife** and **contention**. **Every one of them curses me:** To curse someone in ancient Israel was to invoke condemnation on that person with a prescribed formula.

15:12 Iron here may symbolize Jeremiah, who was called an “iron pillar” in his call in 1:18. The iron of the north could then refer to

the high quality iron from Asia Minor or the Balkans. Otherwise the imagery is that of a powerful foe from the north.

15:13, 14 Judah would be taken captive and exiled to an unknown **land**, as had happened to Israel a century before. **Fire** is often used in the books of the prophets as a symbol of divine wrath and judgment (4:4; 11:16).

15:15 God’s **patience** was shown in the way He endured for a long time the sin of His people. Jeremiah requested God to be patient with him and not **take . . . away** his life because of his own rebellion (see Jeremiah’s lament in v. 10).

15:16 Eating the **words** of the Lord means to internalize them and allow their meaning to become a reality in one’s life. Inner **joy** and **rejoicing**, or “abundant joy,” are the endowment of the one who knows and is known by the Lord. To be **called by** the Lord’s **name** is to be recognized as belonging to Him as a servant.

15:17 Jeremiah’s isolation and **indignation** were the results of his obedience to the word and calling of God.

15:18 **My pain** refers to Jeremiah’s internal agonizing over his prophetic role. The **unreliable stream** is a vivid picture of the arid regions of the Middle East, where water is at a premium and streams can run dry without warning.

Will You surely be to me ^dlike an
unreliable stream,
As waters *that* ⁶fail?

The LORD Reassures Jeremiah

¹⁹Therefore thus says the LORD:

¹⁹“If you return,
Then I will bring you back;
You shall ^fstand before Me;
If you ^gtake out the precious from
the vile,
You shall be as My mouth.
Let them return to you,
But you must not return to them.
²⁰ And I will make you to this people a
fortified bronze ^hwall;
And they will fight against you,
But ⁱthey shall not prevail against
you;
For I *am* with you to save you
And deliver you,” says the LORD.
²¹“I will deliver you from the hand of
the wicked,
And I will redeem you from the grip
of the terrible.”

Jeremiah's Life-Style and Message

16 The word of the LORD also came to me, saying, ²“You shall not take a wife, nor shall you have sons or daughters in this place.” ³For thus says the LORD concerning the sons and daughters who are born in this place, and concerning their mothers who bore them and their fathers who begot them in this land: ⁴“They shall die ^agruesome deaths; they shall not be ^blamented nor shall they be ^cburied, *but* they shall be ^dlike refuse on the face of the earth. They shall be consumed by the sword and by famine, and

¹⁸ ^d Job 6:15 ⁶ Or cannot be trusted
¹⁹ Jer. 4:1; Zech. 3:7 ^f 1 Kin. 17:1;
Jer. 15:1 ^g Jer. 6:29;
Ezek. 22:26; 44:23
²⁰ ^h Jer. 1:18; 6:27;
Ezek. 3:9 ⁱ Ps. 46:7;
Is. 41:10; Jer. 1:8, 19;
20:11; 37:21; 38:13;
39:11, 12

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⁴ Jer. 15:2 ^b Jer. 22:18; 25:33 ^c Jer. 14:16; 19:11 ^d Ps. 83:10; Jer. 8:2; 9:22

^e Ps. 79:2; Is. 18:6;
Jer. 7:33; 34:20
⁵ ^f Ezek. 24:17,
22, 23
⁶ ^g Jer. 22:18 ^h Lev. 19:28; Deut. 14:1;
Jer. 41:5; 47:5 ⁱ Is. 22:12; Jer. 7:29
⁷ ^j Prov. 31:6
⁹ ^k Is. 24:7, 8;
Jer. 7:34; 25:10;
Ezek. 26:13; Hos. 2:11; Rev. 18:23
¹ ^l rejoicing
¹⁰ ^m Deut. 29:24;
1 Kin. 9:8; Jer. 5:19
¹¹ ⁿ Deut. 29:25;
1 Kin. 9:9; 2 Chr. 7:22; Neh. 9:26-29;
Jer. 22:9
¹² ^o Jer. 7:26
^o Jer. 3:17; 18:12
² ^p walks after the stubbornness or imagination
¹³ ^p Deut. 4:26;
28:36, 63 ^q Jer. 15:14

their ^ecorpses shall be meat for the birds of heaven and for the beasts of the earth.”

⁵For thus says the LORD: ^f“Do not enter the house of mourning, nor go to lament or bemoan them; for I have taken away My peace from this people,” says the LORD, “lovingkindness and mercies. ⁶Both the great and the small shall die in this land. They shall not be buried; ^gneither shall men lament for them, ^hcut themselves, nor ⁱmake themselves bald for them. ⁷Nor shall *men* break *bread* in mourning for them, to comfort them for the dead; nor shall *men* give them the cup of consolation to ^jdrink for their father or their mother. ⁸Also you shall not go into the house of feasting to sit with them, to eat and drink.”

⁹For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: “Behold, ^kI will cause to cease from this place, before your eyes and in your days, the voice of ^lmirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride.

¹⁰“And it shall be, when you show this people all these words, and they say to you, ^l“Why has the LORD pronounced all this great disaster against us? Or what is our iniquity? Or what is our sin that we have committed against the LORD our God?” ¹¹then you shall say to them, ^m“Because your fathers have forsaken Me,” says the LORD; “they have walked after other gods and have served them and worshiped them, and have forsaken Me and not kept My law. ¹²And you have done ⁿworse than your fathers, for behold, ^oeach one ²follows the dictates of his own evil heart, so that no one listens to Me. ¹³^pTherefore I will cast you out of this land ^qinto a land that you do not know, neither you nor your fathers; and

15:19 The Lord responded to Jeremiah's impassioned inquiry (vv. 15–18) with a message of repentance and reassurance of Jeremiah's call. **return:** Jeremiah is admonished to “repent” (3:1, 7, 12), after which God would restore him to his prophetic position as God's spokesman. **Stand before** means “to serve”; repentance and divine appointment are necessary for genuine prophetic service.

15:20, 21 I will make you . . . a fortified bronze wall . . . they shall not prevail: Jeremiah was recommissioned with words similar to those of his original calling (1:18, 19). The term **deliver** suggests bringing out from danger, bondage, and oppression. **Redeem** means to rescue from danger. **The wicked** refers to people such as Jehoiakim and the men of Anathoth who had opposed Jeremiah so vehemently (11:18–23). God promises His presence in times of opposition, persecution, and imprisonment for His sake.

16:1, 2 In the case of Jeremiah, the prohibition against marriage was both a sign to the nation and a blight against his name among the people. Celibacy was abnormal; large families were indicative of God's blessing upon a household. Jeremiah faced life with God as his sole comfort and support.

16:5 God's prohibition against participating in the customary grief process reveals the abnormal nature of Jeremiah's life. The trio of terms for sorrow—**mourning**, **lament**, and **bemoan**—is followed by a trio of terms referring to God's faithful care—**peace**, **loving-**

kindness, and **mercies**—from which Judah had been removed.

16:6, 7 The pagan mourning practices of cutting oneself and shaving oneself **bald** were strictly forbidden in the Law of Moses (see Lev. 19:28; 21:5; Deut. 14:1). The **bread of mourning** and **cup of consolation** probably refer to food and drink brought for the family of the deceased.

16:8, 9 The **house of feasting** was a banquet hall often used for wedding celebrations. Jeremiah was restricted from participating in all meaningful family ceremonies. Jeremiah's life was symbolic of the state of Israel and the estrangement between God and Judah.

16:10 The trio of questions posed by the people indicates their lack of understanding of God's word. The people of Judah had missed the purpose for which they were chosen, to manifest to the world the nature and character of God by living as the people of God.

16:11, 12 Judah had **forsaken** its covenant **LORD** and pursued other deities. Abandoning God and His **law** or “instruction” led to disaster. **listens:** This term is foundational to the nation's existence; it recalls Deut. 6:4, the central creed of Israel's biblical faith.

16:13 The blessing of devotion to God was freedom, prosperity, and large families in the land. Blessing was dependent on obedience; the consequence of disobedience was a dreaded life **out of the land**, in a world the people did **not know**.

there you shall serve other gods day and night, where I will not show you favor.’

God Will Restore Israel

¹⁴“Therefore behold, the ^rdays are coming,” says the LORD, “that it shall no more be said, ‘The LORD lives who brought up the children of Israel from the land of Egypt,’ ¹⁵but, ‘The LORD lives who brought up the children of Israel from the land of the ^snorth and from all the lands where He had driven them.’ For ‘I will bring them back into their land which I gave to their fathers.

¹⁶“Behold, I will send for many ^ufishermen,” says the LORD, “and they shall fish them; and afterward I will send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain and every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks. ¹⁷For My ^veyes are on all their ways; they are not hidden from My face, nor is their iniquity hidden from My eyes. ¹⁸And first I will repay ^wdouble for their iniquity and their sin, because ^xthey have defiled My land; they have filled My inheritance with the carcasses of their detestable and abominable idols.”

- ¹⁹ O LORD, ^ymy strength and my fortress,
^zMy refuge in the day of affliction,
 The Gentiles shall come to You
 From the ends of the earth and say,
 “Surely our fathers have inherited lies,
 Worthlessness and ^aunprofitable things.”
²⁰ Will a man make gods for himself,
^bWhich are not gods?
²¹“Therefore behold, I will this once cause them to know,

¹⁴ ^rIs. 43:18; Jer. 23:7, 8; [Ezek. 37:21-25]
¹⁵ ^sJer. 3:18 ^rJer. 24:6; 30:3; 32:37
¹⁶ ^uAmos 4:2; Hab. 1:15
¹⁷ ^v2 Chr. 16:9; Job 34:21; Ps. 90:8; Prov. 5:21; Jer. 23:24; 32:19; Zech. 4:10; [Luke 12:2; 1 Cor. 4:5]; Heb. 4:13
¹⁸ ^wIs. 40:2; Jer. 17:18; Rev. 18:6
^x[Ezek. 43:7]
¹⁹ ^yPs. 18:1, 2; Is. 25:4 ^zJer. 17:17 ^aIs. 44:10
²⁰ ^bPs. 115:4-8; Is. 37:19; Jer. 2:11; 5:7; Hos. 8:4-6; Gal. 4:8

²¹ ^cEx. 15:3; Ps. 83:18; Is. 43:3; Jer. 33:2; Amos 5:8

CHAPTER 17

¹ ^aJer. 2:22 ^bJob 19:24 ^cProv. 3:3; 7:3; Is. 49:16; 2 Cor. 3:3
² ^dJudg. 3:7 ¹Heb. Asherim, Canaanite deities
⁴ ^eJer. 16:13 ^fIs. 5:25; Jer. 15:14
⁵ ^gPs. 146:3; Is. 30:1, 2; 31:1 ^hIs. 31:3 ²Lit. arm
⁶ ⁱJer. 48:6 ^jJob 20:17 ^kDeut. 29:23; Job 39:6
⁷ ^lPs. 2:12; 34:8; 125:1; 146:5; Prov. 16:20; [Is. 30:18]; Jer. 39:18

I will cause them to know
 My hand and My might;
 And they shall know that ^cMy name is the LORD.

Judah's Sin and Punishment

- ¹⁷“The sin of Judah is ^awritten with a ^bpen of iron;
 With the point of a diamond *it is* ^cengraved
 On the tablet of their heart,
 And on the horns of your altars,
² While their children remember
 Their altars and their ^dwooden ⁱimages
 By the green trees on the high hills.
³ O My mountain in the field,
 I will give as plunder your wealth, all your treasures,
 And your high places of sin within all your borders.
⁴ And you, even yourself,
 Shall let go of your heritage which I gave you;
 And I will cause you to serve your enemies
 In ^ethe land which you do not know;
 For ^fyou have kindled a fire in My anger *which shall burn forever.*”

⁵Thus says the LORD:

- ^g“Cursed is the man who trusts in man
 And makes ^hflesh his ²strength,
 Whose heart departs from the LORD.
⁶ For he shall be ⁱlike a shrub in the desert,
 And ^jshall not see when good comes,
 But shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness,
^kIn a salt land *which is not inhabited.*
⁷ “Blessed ^lis the man who trusts in the LORD,
 And whose hope is the LORD.

16:14, 15 the days are coming: The future restoration of Israel would surpass the ancient deliverance from Egypt (23:7, 8).

16:16 The fishermen and hunters refer to the Babylonian armies that would scour the land for Judah's rebels. Hunting and fishing imagery as a metaphor for deportation is also found in Ezek. 12:13; Amos 4:2.

16:18 Defiled is used sometimes to refer to combined ethical, physical, and spiritual uncleanness. God's **land** or **inheritance** had been profaned by numerous cultic objects, which Jeremiah scathingly refers to as **the carcasses of their detestable and abominable idols**.

16:19, 20 A message of hope begins with a trio of honorific terms for God: **strength**, **fortress**, and **refuge**. *Strength* and *fortress* are related words in Hebrew, like the English “strength” and “stronghold.” A *refuge* is a place of safety from danger. Jeremiah knew that His only place of strength and safety was in God. The scope of Jeremiah's hope is universal. The Gentiles, among whom the people of Judah would be exiled, would come to the God of Israel in fulfillment of the promise of Gen. 12:1-3.

17:1 Judah's **sin** had become so deeply **engraved** that it could not be removed. The **point of a diamond** on a **pen of iron** indicates

the permanence of the engraving. The **heart** of the people, the center of their spiritual, emotional, and mental well-being, was inextricably entangled in stubborn rebellion against God.

17:3 Jerusalem and the other cities of Judah were demolished and plundered by the Babylonians. The remaining **treasures** of the temple of God were carried by Nebuchadnezzar's army to Babylon. Even the idolatrous cultic centers were destroyed (15:13, 14).

17:4 let go: This phrase, when used in the context of land, usually refers to letting the land lie fallow during the sabbatical year (see Ex. 23:10, 11). Judah's captivity would provide rest for the land from the idolatrous activities of its people.

17:5, 6 cursed: This term is used extensively in Deuteronomy. Two different words for **man** are used in this passage. The first refers to a strong and capable male; the second is a generic term for humankind as made in the image of God (see Gen. 1:26-28). One cannot trust in both God and humankind; to turn one's **heart** toward people is to turn away from God.

17:7 The term **blessed** is used often in the Psalms and Deuteronomy to describe the benefits that accrue to one who is devoted to the Lord and His Word. The words translated **trusts** and **hope** are related in Hebrew.

- 8 For he shall be ^mlike a tree planted by the waters,
Which spreads out its roots by the river,
And will not ³fear when heat comes;
But its leaf will be green,
And will not be anxious in the year of drought,
Nor will cease from yielding fruit.
- 9 “The ⁿheart is deceitful above all things,
And ⁴desperately wicked;
Who can know it?
- 10 I, the LORD, ^osearch the heart,
I test the ⁵mind,
^pEven to give every man according to his ways,
According to the fruit of his doings.
- 11 “As a partridge that ⁶broods but does not hatch,
So is he who gets riches, but not by right;
It will leave him in the midst of his days,
And at his end he will be ^ra fool.”
- 12 A glorious high throne from the beginning
Is the place of our sanctuary.
- 13 O LORD, ^sthe hope of Israel,
^tAll who forsake You shall be ashamed.
- “Those who depart from Me
Shall be ^uwritten in the earth,

8 ^m Job 8:16; [Ps. 1:3; Ezek. 31:3-9]
³ Qr., Tg. see
9 ⁿ [Eccl. 9:3]; Matt. 15:19; [Mark 7:21, 22] ⁴ Or incurably sick
10 ^o 1 Sam. 16:7; 1 Chr. 28:9; Ps. 7:9; 139:23, 24; Prov. 17:3; Jer. 11:20; 20:12; Rom. 8:27; Rev. 2:23 ^p Ps. 62:12; Jer. 32:19; Rom. 2:6 ^s Most secret parts, lit. kidneys
11 ^o Ps. 55:23 ^r Luke 12:20 ⁶ Sits on eggs
13 ^s Jer. 14:8 ^t [Ps. 73:27; Is. 1:28]
^u Luke 10:20

^v Jer. 2:13
14 ^w Deut. 10:21; Ps. 109:1
15 ^x Is. 5:19; Ezek. 12:22; 2 Pet. 3:4
16 ^y Jer. 1:4-12
17 ^z Jer. 16:19; Nah. 1:7
18 ^a Ps. 35:4; 70:2; Jer. 15:10; 18:18
^b Ps. 25:2 ^c Jer. 11:20 ⁷ Lit. crush
20 ^d Ps. 49:1, 2; Jer. 19:3, 4

Because they have forsaken the LORD,
The ^vfountain of living waters.”

Jeremiah Prays for Deliverance

- 14 Heal me, O LORD, and I shall be healed;
Save me, and I shall be saved,
For ^wYou are my praise.
- 15 Indeed they say to me,
^x“Where is the word of the LORD?
Let it come now!”
- 16 As for me, ^yI have not hurried away from being a shepherd who follows You,
Nor have I desired the woeful day;
You know what came out of my lips;
It was right there before You.
- 17 Do not be a terror to me;
^zYou are my hope in the day of doom.
- 18 ^aLet them be ashamed who persecute me,
But ^bdo not let me be put to shame;
Let them be dismayed,
But do not let me be dismayed.
Bring on them the day of doom,
And ^cdestroy ⁷them with double destruction!

Hallow the Sabbath Day

- ¹⁹Thus the LORD said to me: “Go and stand in the gate of the children of the people, by which the kings of Judah come in and by which they go out, and in all the gates of Jerusalem; ²⁰and say to them, ^d“Hear the word of the LORD, you kings of

17:8 planted: The imagery of a fruitful tree derives directly from Ps. 1:3. This verse teaches that one who trusts in God will not be free from trials and adversity, but that God will bring fruit and blessing in and through those difficulties (14:1-9; 15:19-21).

17:9 The heart refers to the mind, the source of thinking, feeling, and action.

17:11 The teaching of 17:1-10 is supported by a proverb based on the common belief that the **partridge** hatched eggs other than its own. When the young birds recognized that the partridge was not their mother, they would leave her. Similarly, a man who unjustly gains wealth will be abandoned by that wealth and then be known

as a **fool**. *Fool* here refers to a person without moral, ethical, or spiritual character.

17:12, 13 A glorious high throne refers to the temple in Jerusalem and the ark of the covenant, the symbol of God's presence and sovereignty over the nation. **The hope of Israel** refers to the expectation of deliverance and the restoration of the faithful (14:8). Judah had nowhere to turn because it had **forsaken** God and His lordship. There is only one source of life and hope for Israel and all nations—**the LORD, the fountain of living waters**.

17:14 Though Jeremiah struggled with difficulties, including persecution and loneliness, he continually turned in **praise** to the Lord who can **heal** and **save**. Likewise, the only hope of healing and salvation for the nation of Judah was divine intervention.

17:15, 16 Some scoffers dared to defy God and the word revealed through Jeremiah, taunting the Lord to bring the judgment threatened by His spokesman. Jeremiah pointed out that he took no pleasure in proclaiming judgment. He remained a devoted **shepherd** who was intimately concerned for his own people.

17:17 Terror may refer to physical, emotional, or mental horror. The word **hope**, meaning “refuge” or “shelter,” refers to a position of safety and security in the face of danger and helplessness, such as Jeremiah faced in Judah and Jerusalem.

17:18 Jeremiah called for his persecutors to be **ashamed** and **dismayed**, to be dishonored and demoralized. The prophet also called upon the Lord to confirm the message of judgment in the **day of doom** and **double destruction**.

17:19, 20 The particular **gate** is not mentioned, though the description would place it in the area of the Davidic citadel. Jeremiah's message was to be proclaimed throughout the city. From **kings**

heal

(Heb. *apha'*) (17:14; 2 Chr. 7:14; Is. 19:22; 53:5; 57:18) Strong's #7495

This word applies literally to the work of a physician. Occasionally it refers to inanimate objects and can be best translated *repair* (1 Kin. 18:30). But more commonly this word connotes the idea of restoring to normal, as in 2 Chr. 7:14, where God promises to restore the land if His people pray. In the psalms, God is praised for His role in healing disease (Ps. 103:3), healing the brokenhearted (Ps. 147:3), and healing the soul by providing salvation (Ps. 30:2; 107:20). Isaiah declared that the healing of God's people results from the sacrificial wounds of His Son (Is. 53:5-12).

Judah, and all Judah, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, who enter by these gates. ²¹Thus says the LORD: “Take heed to yourselves, and bear no burden on the Sabbath day, nor bring *it* in by the gates of Jerusalem; ²²nor carry a burden out of your houses on the Sabbath day, nor do any work, but hallow the Sabbath day, as I ^fcommanded your fathers. ²³But they did not obey nor incline their ear, but ⁸made their neck stiff, that they might not hear nor receive instruction.

²⁴“And it shall be, ^hif you heed Me carefully,” says the LORD, “to bring no burden through the gates of this city on the ⁱSabbath day, but hallow the Sabbath day, to do no work in it, ²⁵then shall enter the gates of this city kings and princes sitting on the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses, they and their princes, accompanied by the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and this city shall remain forever. ²⁶And they shall come from the cities of Judah and from ^kthe places around Jerusalem, from the land of Benjamin and from ^lthe ⁹lowland, from the mountains and from ^mthe ¹South, bringing burnt offerings and sacrifices, grain offerings and incense, bringing ⁿsacrifices of praise to the house of the LORD.

²⁷“But if you will not heed Me to hallow the Sabbath day, such as not carrying a burden when entering the gates of Jerusalem on the Sabbath day, then ^oI will kindle a fire in its gates, ^pand it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem, and it shall not be ^qquenched.””

The Potter and the Clay

18 The word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying: ²“Arise and go down to the potter’s house, and there I will cause you to hear My words.” ³Then I went down to the potter’s house, and there he was, making something at the ¹wheel. ⁴And the vessel that he ²made

The Potter’s Wheel

The potter’s wheel was used by potters to make their pottery even and symmetrical. Before its invention, pottery was built up of coils of clay smoothed and shaped by hand. The “slow wheel”



was a small flat disk on a spindle, with a larger stone disk on the other end. It was spun by hand as the potter alternated between keeping the wheel in motion and shaping the clay. The “fast wheel” was really two wheels, one above the other, with an axle joining them. The potter sat on a bench and turned the lower wheel with his feet. This way, he could keep it going rapidly, yet still have both hands free to shape the clay on the upper wheel.

Jeremiah visited a potter at his wheel and compared the potter who molds his clay to God who has the power to mold the nation of Israel (18:2–8).

Ancient Egyptian potter at his wheel. Note how he has to use one hand on the wheel, and one on the pottery.

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²¹ ^e Num. 15:32; Neh. 13:19; [John 5:9–12, 17; 7:22–24]
²² ^f Ex. 20:8; 31:13; Ezek. 20:12
²³ ^g Jer. 7:24, 26
⁸ Were stubborn
²⁴ ^h Jer. 11:4; 26:3
¹ Ex. 16:23–30; 20:8–10; Num. 15:32–36; Deut. 5:12–14; Neh. 13:15; [Is. 58:13]
²⁵ ⁱ Jer. 22:4
²⁶ ^k Jer. 33:13
¹ Zech. 7:7 ^m Judg. 1:9 ⁿ Ps. 107:22; 116:17; Jer. 33:11
⁹ Heb. *shephelah*
¹ Heb. *Negev*
²⁷ ^o Jer. 21:14; Lam. 4:11; Amos 1:4, 7, 10,

of clay was ³marred in the hand of the potter; so he made it again into another vessel, as it seemed good to the potter to make.

⁵Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying: ⁶“O house of Israel, ^acan I not do with you as this potter?” says the LORD. “Look, ^bas the clay *is* in the potter’s hand, so *are* you in My hand, O house of Israel! ⁷The instant I speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom, to ^cpluck up, to pull down, and to destroy *it*,

12 ^p 2 Kin. 25:9; 2 Chr. 36:19; Jer. 39:8; 52:13; Amos 2:5 ^q Jer. 7:20; Ezek. 20:47
CHAPTER 18 ³ ¹ Potter’s wheel ⁴ ² was making ³ ruined
⁶ ^a Is. 45:9; Rom. 9:20, 21 ^b Is. 64:8 ⁷ ^c Jer. 1:10

to peasants, all of the **inhabitants** of the city were to **hear**—and obey—the word of the Lord.

17:21, 22 Take heed: This same phrasing is used in Deut. 4:15 in a warning against idolatry. The sanctity of the Sabbath was a most serious matter. The Sabbath stood as a sign of creation and the covenant relationship between God and Israel. To **hallow** it is to set it apart, to distinguish it from other days.

17:23 Abuse of the Sabbath was apparently commonplace throughout the history of the nation.

17:24, 25 If the **Sabbath** was kept holy, signifying the covenant faithfulness of Israel, the nation would retain its sovereign **kings and princes**. In other words, the promise of unending Davidic succession in kingship would be fulfilled (see 2 Sam. 7:16).

17:26 If the stipulations of v. 21 were followed, the temple would once again become the center of worship for the nation. People would travel from throughout the land to Jerusalem to worship God with their **sacrifices**.

17:27 The consequence of disobedience would be total destruction of the city. If the stipulations of 17:21 were not followed, the Lord of the covenant would bring an unquenchable, destructive **fire** against the city and its **palaces** (see 4:4; Hos. 8:14; Amos 1:4—2:5).

18:2 Arise and go down is a common formula for divinely directed service.

18:4–6 The potter’s **vessel** was **marred** and thus unsuitable for its intended purpose. The potter’s remodeling of the clay into an acceptable and unblemished work symbolized God’s action in reforming Israel. The people had become marred and defiled and had to be reformed into a vessel fit to be identified with the Lord.

18:7, 8 If a **nation** threatened with destruction would turn **from its evil**, God would **relent** of the promised **disaster**. God the Potter was more than willing to forgive the iniquity and stubborn rebellion of Judah. Unfortunately, the people continued in their stiffnecked ways. In Gal. 4:19, Paul uses this imagery to depict the formation of the image of Christ in the obedient Christian.

⁸if that nation against whom I have spoken turns from its evil, ^eI will relent of the disaster that I thought to bring upon it. ⁹And the instant I speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant *it*, ¹⁰if it does evil in My sight so that it does not obey My voice, then I will relent concerning the good with which I said I would benefit it. ¹¹“Now therefore, speak to the men of Judah and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying, “Thus says the LORD: “Behold, I am fashioning a disaster and devising a plan against you. ^fReturn now every one from his evil way, and make your ways and your doings ^ggood.””

God’s Warning Rejected

¹²And they said, ^h“That is hopeless! So we will walk according to our own plans, and we will every one ⁴obey the ⁱdictates⁵ of his evil heart.” ¹³Therefore thus says the LORD:

- ^j“Ask now among the Gentiles,
Who has heard such things?
The virgin of Israel has done ^ka very
horrible thing.
- ¹⁴Will *a man* ⁶leave the snow water of
Lebanon,
Which comes from the rock of the
field?
Will the cold flowing waters
be forsaken for strange
waters?
- ¹⁵“Because My people have forgotten
^lMe,
They have burned incense to
worthless idols.

⁸ ^d Jer. 7:3-7; 12:16; [Ezek. 18:21; 33:11]
^e [Ps. 106:45]; Jer. 26:3; [Hos. 11:8; Joel 2:13]; Jon. 3:10
¹¹ ² Kin. 17:13; Is. 1:16-19; Jer. 4:1; Acts 26:20 ^g Jer. 7:3-7
¹² ^h Is. 57:10; Jer. 2:25 ¹ Jer. 3:17; 23:17 ⁴ Lit. *do*
⁵ *stubbornness or imagination*
¹³ ⁱ Is. 66:8; Jer. 2:10, 11; 1 Cor. 5:1 ^k Jer. 5:30; Hos. 6:10
¹⁴ ⁶ *forsake*
¹⁵ ¹ Jer. 2:13, 32

^m Jer. 6:16
¹⁶ ⁿ Jer. 19:8
^o 1 Kin. 9:8; Lam. 2:15; Mic. 6:16
¹⁷ ^p Jer. 13:24 ^q Ps. 48:7 ¹ Jer. 2:27 ² So with LXX, Syr., Tg., Vg.; MT *look them in*
¹⁸ ^r Jer. 11:19 ¹ Lev. 10:11; Mal. 2:7; [John 7:48]
²⁰ ^s Ps. 109:4 ^v Ps. 35:7; 57:6; Jer. 5:26
^w Jer. 14:7-15:1
⁸ *concerning*
²¹ ^x Ps. 109:9-20; Jer. 11:22; 14:16
^y Jer. 15:7, 8; Ezek. 22:25

And they have caused themselves to
stumble in their ways,
From the ^mancient paths,
To walk in pathways and not on a
highway,
¹⁶ To make their land ⁿdesolate *and* a
perpetual ^ohissing;
Everyone who passes by it will be
astonished
And shake his head.
¹⁷ ^pI will scatter them ^qas with an east
wind before the enemy;
^r I will ⁷show them the back and not
the face
In the day of their calamity.”

Jeremiah Persecuted

- ¹⁸Then they said, ^s“Come and let us
devise plans against Jeremiah; ^tfor the
law shall not perish from the priest, nor
counsel from the wise, nor the word from
the prophet. Come and let us attack him
with the tongue, and let us not give heed
to any of his words.”
- ¹⁹ Give heed to me, O LORD,
And listen to the voice of those who
contend with me!
- ²⁰ ^u“Shall evil be repaid for good?
For they have ^vdug a pit for my life.
Remember that I ^wstood before You
To speak good ⁸for them,
To turn away Your wrath from them.
- ²¹ Therefore ^xdeliver up their children
to the famine,
And pour out their *blood*
By the force of the sword;
Let their wives *become* widows
And ^ybereaved of their children.
Let their men be put to death,

18:9, 10 A nation to whom God has promised His blessing may forfeit its preferred status through disobedience. In such a case, God would **relent** of the **good** He had promised and bring calamity upon the rebellious people.

18:11 God was **fashioning a disaster**, a calamity, for **Judah** if it did not repent or **return** to Him and change its actions from **evil** to **good**.

18:12 The people’s response to God’s warning (v. 11) is similar to that in 17:23: They rebelliously pursued their own ways. **Hopeless** describes the despair the people felt concerning obedience to God. These feelings were the direct result of the **evil heart** that is characteristic of people who continually turn away from the Lord and His ways.

18:13, 14 Negative rhetorical questions show the absurdity of Israel’s rebellion. **The snow water of Lebanon** describes the Mt. Hermon watershed that erupts in numerous springs, providing most of the water for the Jordan River. God’s blessing was often demonstrated in the provision of water from rocks in arid regions (see Ex. 17:6). No one would trade cool spring water for **strange** or “alien” **waters**.

18:15 The principal indictment brought against Judah was idolatry, which had resulted in the people’s wayward lives and the humiliating destruction of the land. **forgotten**: This term is used in the same way in 3:21; 13:25. **worthless idols**: Foreign deities such as Baal and Asherah were represented by empty and ineffective cultic

figurines. **they have caused themselves to stumble**: The people had brought upon themselves the droughts and disaster that they faced because they had strayed **from the ancient paths**, the way of the Law and the covenant relationship to God.

18:16 **make their land desolate**: For similar descriptions of the destruction of Judah, see 4:27; 6:8; 9:11.

18:17 **An east wind** refers to the scorching, late-spring sirocco wind from the northern Arabian desert. **I will show them the back and not the face**: This graphic expression depicts God withholding His assistance from the nation in its day of despair (2:27).

18:18 Similar to the situation in 11:18–23, the people devised **plans** to counter the words of **Jeremiah**. They reasoned that with their own priests, wise men, and prophets in Jerusalem, they did not need to listen to Jeremiah.

18:19, 20 Jeremiah reminded the Lord how he had interceded for the people and had asked God to **turn away His wrath** and judgment. But instead of showing their appreciation for Jeremiah’s intervention, the people **dug a pit** in anticipation of his demise.

18:21, 22 Jeremiah’s cry for personal revenge may not be as easily justified as those of the psalmists (see Ps. 137). Nonetheless, he had been falsely charged with misrepresenting the truth of God. All the imprecations, or calls for divine cursing, in the Bible have one element in common: Though strongly worded, they await the work of God rather than speaking of initiating revenge. **Famine** was one of the curses of breaking the covenant (see Deut. 28:48).

Their young men *be* slain
By the sword in battle.
22 Let a cry be heard from their houses,
When You bring a troop suddenly
upon them;
For they have dug a pit to take me,
And hidden snares for my feet.
23 Yet, LORD, You know all their counsel
Which is against me, to slay *me*.
²Provide no atonement for their
iniquity,
Nor blot out their sin from Your
sight;
But let them be overthrown before
You.
Deal *thus* with them
In the time of Your ^aanger.

The Sign of the Broken Flask

19 Thus says the LORD: “Go and get a potter’s earthen flask, and *take* some of the elders of the people and some of the elders of the priests. ²And go out to ^athe Valley of the Son of Hinnom, which is by the entry of the Potsherd Gate; and proclaim there the words that I will tell you, ^{3b}and say, ‘Hear the word of the LORD, O kings of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem. Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: “Behold, I will bring such a catastrophe on this place, that whoever hears of it, his ears will ^ctingle.

⁴“Because they ^dhave forsaken Me and made this an alien place, because they have burned incense in it to other gods whom neither they, their fathers, nor the kings of Judah have known, and have filled this place with ^ethe blood of the innocents ^{5f}(they have also built the high

23 ² Neh. 4:5; Ps. 35:14; 109:14; Is. 2:9; Jer. 11:20 ^a Jer. 7:20

CHAPTER 19

2 ^a Josh. 15:8; 2 Kin. 23:10; Jer. 7:31; 32:35
3 ^b Jer. 17:20
4 ^c 1 Sam. 3:11; 2 Kin. 21:12
5 ^d Deut. 28:20; Is. 65:11; Jer. 2:13, 17, 19; 15:6; 17:13
6 ^e 2 Kin. 21:12; Jer. 2:34; 7:6
7 ^f Num. 22:41; Jer. 7:31; 32:35

^g Lev. 18:21; 2 Kin. 17:17; Ps. 106:37, 38
8 ^h Josh. 15:8; Jer. 7:32
9 ⁱ Lev. 26:17; Deut. 28:25; Jer. 15:2, 9
10 ^j Ps. 79:2; Jer. 7:33; 16:4; 34:20
11 ^k Jer. 18:16; 49:13; 50:13
12 ^l Lev. 26:29; Deut. 28:53, 55; Is. 9:20; Lam. 4:10; Ezek. 5:10
13 ^m Jer. 51:63, 64
14 ⁿ Ps. 2:9; Is. 30:14; Jer. 13:14; Lam. 4:2; Rev. 2:27
15 ^o Jer. 7:32 ¹ restored
16 ^p 2 Kin. 23:10; Jer. 7:32; 79:1; Jer. 52:13; Ezek. 7:21, 22
17 ^q 2 Kin. 23:12; Jer. 32:29; Zeph. 1:5
18 ^r Jer. 7:18; Ezek. 20:28

places of Baal, to burn their sons with fire *for* burnt offerings to Baal, ^gwhich I did not command or speak, nor did it come into My mind), ⁶therefore behold, the days are coming,” says the LORD, “that this place shall no more be called Tophet or ^hthe Valley of the Son of Hinnom, but the Valley of Slaughter. ⁷And I will make void the counsel of Judah and Jerusalem in this place, ⁱand I will cause them to fall by the sword before their enemies and by the hands of those who seek their lives; their ^jcorpses I will give as meat for the birds of the heaven and for the beasts of the earth. ⁸I will make this city ^kdesolate and a hissing; everyone who passes by it will be astonished and hiss because of all its plagues. ⁹And I will cause them to eat the ^lflesh of their sons and the flesh of their daughters, and everyone shall eat the flesh of his friend in the siege and in the desperation with which their enemies and those who seek their lives shall drive them to despair.”

^{10m}“Then you shall break the flask in the sight of the men who go with you, ¹¹and say to them, ‘Thus says the LORD of hosts: “Even so I will break this people and this city, as *one* breaks a potter’s vessel, which cannot be ¹made whole again; and they shall ^obury them in Tophet till *there is* no place to bury. ¹²Thus I will do to this place,” says the LORD, “and to its inhabitants, and make this city like Tophet. ¹³And the houses of Jerusalem and the houses of the kings of Judah shall be defiled ¹like the place of Tophet, because of all the houses on whose ^qroofs they have burned incense to all the host of heaven, and ^rpoured out drink offerings to other gods.”’”

18:23 You know: As God had known Jeremiah’s heart (12:3; 15:15), so He was keenly aware of the people’s plots against the prophet. The word translated **atonement** is the same Hebrew word used in Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement. The word emphasizes total cleansing and removal of sin and its effects. The word **blot out** is also used to refer to the removal of sin and guilt by God. Jeremiah’s appeal was for God to condemn in **anger** rather than to forgive his enemies.

19:1, 2 A flask was a small, narrow-necked water bottle made of clay, six to ten inches tall. **The elders** were summoned to follow Jeremiah to the **Valley of the Son of Hinnom** (7:31, 32), a dumping area where children were ritually sacrificed in the days of Manasseh.

19:3 Hear: This key word of the Deuteronomic code (see Deut. 6:4) calls for a decision regarding the content of the message. **his ears will tingle:** This expression is used to refer to a harsh, ringing judgment announcement (see 1 Sam. 3:11).

19:4, 5 made this an alien place: The people, through their idolatry, had prevented the once-holy city of Jerusalem from being the place where God chose His name to dwell. The city had become a place of alien gods and goddesses. **neither they . . . nor the kings of Judah have known:** The word *know* speaks of an intimate, personal knowledge that it is impossible to have with inanimate physical objects. **The blood of the innocents** refers to the murderous act of child sacrifice (7:31). Human sacrifice was known among the

Phoenicians, Moabites, and Canaanites. This abominable practice, performed in the name of religious worship, was explicitly forbidden in the covenant (see Deut. 12:31).

19:7 Babylon was the agent who would **make void**, or “lay waste,” **the counsel** of the elders who rebutted the Lord’s message through Jeremiah and continued in idolatry.

19:8 God would allow Jerusalem to be made an object of derision and humiliation in order to vindicate His name (18:16). **Plagues** would strike the city according to the covenant curse of Deut. 28:58–61 (see Lam. 2:15; Zeph. 2:15).

19:9 The gruesome practice of cannibalism appears, recalling the words of Deut. 28:53. After years of siege resulting in severe famine, the people would resort to eating human **flesh** in order to survive. This prophecy was literally fulfilled in 586 B.C. when Nebuchadnezzar invaded Judah, and again in A.D. 70 when Titus destroyed Jerusalem.

19:11 As pottery **breaks** into pieces when it is thrown on the hard ground, so God’s judgment would shatter the city and scatter those dwelling there. Restoration would be impossible. The number of corpses would outnumber possible burial sites (7:32, 33).

19:12, 13 As the **inhabitants** of Jerusalem had made the Valley of the Son of Hinnom a place of death, so the Lord would make the entire city of Jerusalem a place of death (vv. 4–6).

¹⁴Then Jeremiah came from Tophet, where the LORD had sent him to prophesy; and he stood in ^sthe court of the LORD's house and said to all the people, ¹⁵“Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: ‘Behold, I will bring on this city and on all her towns all the doom that I have pronounced against it, because ^tthey have stiffened their necks that they might not hear My words.’”

The Word of God to Pashhur

20 Now ^aPashhur the son of ^bImmer, the priest who *was* also chief governor in the house of the LORD, heard that Jeremiah prophesied these things. ²Then Pashhur struck Jeremiah the prophet,

14 ^s 2 Chr. 20:5; Jer. 26:2-8
15 ^t Neh. 9:17, 29; Jer. 7:26; 17:23

CHAPTER 20

1 ^a Ezra 2:37, 38
^b 1 Chr. 24:14

2 ^c Jer. 37:13; Zech. 14:10
3 ⁱ Lit. *Fear on Every Side*
4 ^d Jer. 21:4-10
5 ^e 2 Kin. 20:17; 2 Chr. 36:10; Jer. 3:24; 27:21, 22

and put him in the stocks that *were* in the high ^egate of Benjamin, which *was* by the house of the LORD.

³And it happened on the next day that Pashhur brought Jeremiah out of the stocks. Then Jeremiah said to him, “The LORD has not called your name Pashhur, but ⁱMagor-Missabib. ⁴For thus says the LORD: ‘Behold, I will make you a terror to yourself and to all your friends; and they shall fall by the sword of their enemies, and your eyes shall see *it*. I will ^dgive all Judah into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall carry them captive to Babylon and slay them with the sword. ⁵Moreover I ^ewill deliver all the wealth of this city, all its produce, and all its precious things; all the treasures of the kings

20:1 Pashhur . . . chief governor: A person in this position had to be a priest. He had oversight of the temple, the temple guards, entry into the courts, and so on. Jeremiah's proclamations against the city and the temple were of grave concern to Pashhur because of the threat to the continuation of the cult in which he was involved. **20:2** Jeremiah was beaten and confined to a stockade by **Pashhur**. This was not a normal prison or dungeon, but a holding cell for those who might defile the area by uncleanness or aberrant behavior. **The high gate of Benjamin** was also called the Upper Gate, to distinguish it from another city gate of the same name. This portal

provided access into the temple courtyards from the north, the direction of Benjamin's territory. **20:3, 4** The name **Magor-Missabib** means “Terror on Every Side.” As Pashhur had been a **terror** to Jeremiah, so he would become a terror to himself, his family, and his associates. The foe from the north described in earlier passages (1:13–15) is here identified as **Babylon**. **20:5** The four resources of Jerusalem that would be transported with the exiles to Babylon were **wealth, produce, precious things, and treasures**. This list is balanced by four terms for the

The Valley of Slaughter



A deep, narrow ravine south of Jebus (later Jerusalem), called the Valley of Hinnom or the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, was the boundary between the territories of Benjamin and Judah (Josh. 15:8; 18:16). The location was unremarkable in Joshua's day, but came to have great significance later in Israelite history.

In the period of the divided monarchy, this valley was the site of a pagan altar (see Deut. 12:2) known as Tophet (“fireplace”; Jer. 7:31, 32; 19:6, 11–14). Parents sacrificed their children there to the god Molech. The Bible singles out Ahaz and Manasseh, kings of Judah, as having led the way in this grotesque ritual (2 Chr. 28:3; 33:6). But Scripture praises King Josiah for destroying this idolatrous altar during his reforms (2 Kin. 23:10).



The Valley of Hinnom
Dror Feitelson Pikiwiki Israel/Wikimedia Commons, CC-BY 2.5

Jeremiah, who was called as a prophet during Josiah's reign, foretold that God would judge the Israelites for committing the awful abomination of human sacrifice, among other evils. The Lord would cause such destruction that the Valley of Hinnom would become a cemetery known as the Valley of Slaughter (Jer. 7:32; 19:6).

This prophecy began to be fulfilled when Jerusalem was destroyed by the Babylonians in 586 B.C. Later, the valley became the city dump for Jerusalem. Fires continually smoldered there, as the site was used as a burning ground for refuse and the dead bodies of criminals and animals.

In time, the valley became so noxious that its name became a synonym for hell. The Hebrew phrase *ge* (“valley of”) *hinnom* eventually became the Greek *gehenna*, translated as “hell fire” (Matt. 5:22; Mark 9:43, 45, 47). At one time, Jewish tradition even held that the entrance to hell began at that valley.

of Judah I will give into the hand of their enemies, who will plunder them, seize them, and ^fcarry them to Babylon. ⁶ And you, Pashhur, and all who dwell in your house, shall go into captivity. You shall go to Babylon, and there you shall die, and be buried there, you and all your friends, to whom you have ^gprophesied lies.”

Jeremiah's Unpopular Ministry

- ⁷ O LORD, You ²induced me, and I was persuaded;
^hYou are stronger than I, and have prevailed.
ⁱI am ³in derision daily;
 Everyone mocks me.
⁸ For when I spoke, I cried out;
^jI shouted, “Violence and plunder!”
 Because the word of the LORD was made to me
 A reproach and a derision daily.
⁹ Then I said, “I will not make mention of Him,
 Nor speak anymore in His name.”
 But *His word* was in my heart like a ^kburning fire
 Shut up in my bones;
 I was weary of holding *it* back,
 And ^lI could not.
^{10m}For I heard many ⁴mocking:
 “Fear on every side!”
 “Report,” *they say*, “and we will report it!”

⁵ ^fIs. 39:6
⁶ ^gJer. 14:13-15;
 Lam. 2:14
⁷ ^hJer. 1:6, 7
ⁱJob 12:4; Lam.
 3:14 ²enticed or
 persuaded ³Lit. *a*
laughingstock all
the day
⁸ ^jJer. 6:7
⁹ ^kJob 32:18-20; Ps.
 39:3; Jer. 4:19; 23:9;
 [Ezek. 3:14]; Acts
 4:20 ^lJob 32:18; Jer.
 6:11; Acts 18:5
¹⁰ ^mPs. 31:13
⁴slandering

ⁿJob 19:19; Ps.
 41:9; 55:13, 14; Luke
 11:53, 54
¹¹ ^oJer. 1:18, 19
^pJer. 15:20; 17:18
^qJer. 23:40
¹² ^rPs. 7:9; 11:5;
 17:3; 139:23; [Jer.
 11:20; 17:10] ^sPs.
 54:7; 59:10; Jer.
 15:15 ⁵Most secret
 parts, lit. *kidneys*
¹³ ^tPs. 35:9, 10;
 109:30, 31
¹⁴ ^uJob 3:3; Jer.
 15:10

ⁿAll my acquaintances watched for
 my stumbling, *saying*,
 “Perhaps he can be induced;
 Then we will prevail against him,
 And we will take our revenge on him.”

- ¹¹ But the LORD *is* ^owith me as a mighty,
 awesome One.
 Therefore my persecutors will
 stumble, and will not ^pprevail.
 They will be greatly ashamed, for
 they will not prosper.
 Their ^qeverlasting confusion will
 never be forgotten.
¹² But, O LORD of hosts,
 You who ^rtest the righteous,
 And see the ⁵mind and heart,
^sLet me see Your vengeance on them;
 For I have pleaded my cause before
 You.
¹³ Sing to the LORD! Praise the LORD!
 For ^tHe has delivered the life of the
 poor
 From the hand of evildoers.
¹⁴ ^uCursed *be* the day in which I was
 born!
 Let the day not be blessed in which
 my mother bore me!
¹⁵ Let the man *be* cursed
 Who brought news to my father,
 saying,

confiscation of Jerusalem's valuables: **give, plunder, seize, and carry**. The use of these terms for both the plunder and the confiscation indicates comprehensiveness.

20:6 Pashhur, his family, and his close associates who had opposed Jeremiah would be deported to **Babylon** because Pashhur had **prophesied lies**. Pashhur apparently had announced that Jerusalem would not suffer destruction.

20:7 induced . . . persuaded: A play on words is intended by using two forms of the same word, which means “to entice.” Jeremiah claimed that the Lord had seduced him and that he had succumbed to the temptation.

20:8 Jeremiah had faithfully proclaimed the Lord's **word** of judgment and destruction, but the prophecy had not been fulfilled, thus opening the prophet up to **reproach and derision**.

20:9 Jeremiah decided to refrain from declaring God's word or speaking **in His name**. But the divine message could not be held within or in any way hindered from accomplishing God's purpose (see Is. 46:10, 11; 55:11). God's **word** was like a consuming **fire** in Jeremiah's **heart** and **bones**; unless the word was unleashed, the prophet would perish. Unlike the heart of the people, Jeremiah's mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual life was overwhelmed by God's word and will for His people.

20:10 Jeremiah was mocked with his own words, **fear on every side** (v. 3, 4). **Report . . . and we will report it:** Whatever Jeremiah announced or denounced, the leaders of Judah turned back against him until he was devastated and demoralized.

20:11 Most psalms of individual lament contain a confession of trust in God (see Ps. 13). Jeremiah turned to God in prayer and praise in his hour of deepest need. **with me:** In his call, Jeremiah was promised God's presence to deliver him (1:8, 19). **mighty, awesome One:** God was Jeremiah's powerful warrior. Jeremiah's enemies would **not prevail** (vv. 7, 10), but would **stumble** and fall before God. Their punishment would be shame and **everlasting confusion** (23:40).

20:12 You who test: God tests (6:27; 17:10) and judges **the righteous**, those who walk uprightly in His ways and truth. **see the mind and heart:** God can see the innermost being of a person and discern his or her attitude and spirit. **vengeance:** Jeremiah cried for the Lord's promised judgment and destruction to be fulfilled without delay.

20:13 Jeremiah's confession of trust turns to praise as he quotes or paraphrases a psalm or hymn. The context and content of the psalm closely parallel Ps. 35:9, 10 (see also Ps. 109:30, 31).

20:14, 15 In ancient Israel, to curse God or one's parents was an offense punishable by death. Jeremiah avoided committing a capital offense by cursing his conception and birth, and hence his call from God.

word

(Heb. *dabar*) (1:2, 13; 7:2; 20:8; 26:5; Deut. 24:5) Strong's #1697

This Hebrew word is derived from the verb “to speak,” and it signifies the word or thing spoken. Often it refers to the idea or content of what is said, and is translated *matter* (2 Sam. 11:19), *thing* (Ex. 16:16), or *business* (Deut. 24:5). The phrase “word of the LORD” is used by the prophets at the beginning of a divine message (see 1:13). In the case of prophetic literature, *word* can be a technical term for a prophecy. In the Bible, the word of revelation is associated with prophets (26:5), just as wisdom is associated with wise men and the law with priests (18:18). Jeremiah used *dabar* more than any other prophet in order to clarify the authority given to him by God.

“A male child has been born to you!”
Making him very glad.
16 And let that man be like the cities
Which the LORD ^voverthrew, and did
not relent;
Let him ^whear the cry in the morning
And the shouting at noon,
17 ^xBecause he did not kill me from the
womb,
That my mother might have been my
grave,
And her womb always enlarged
with me.
18 ^yWhy did I come forth from the womb
to ^zsee ⁶labor and sorrow,
That my days should be consumed
with shame?

Jerusalem's Doom Is Sealed

21 The word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD when ^aKing Zedekiah sent to him ^bPashhur the son of Melchiah, and ^cZephaniah the son of Maaseiah, the priest, saying, ^{2d}“Please inquire of the LORD for us, for ¹Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon makes war against us. Perhaps the LORD will deal with us according to all His wonderful works, that *the king* may go away from us.”

³Then Jeremiah said to them, “Thus you shall say to Zedekiah, ⁴“Thus says the LORD God of Israel: “Behold, I will turn back the weapons of war that *are* in your hands, with which you fight against the king of Babylon and the ²Chaldeans who besiege you outside the walls; and ^eI will assemble them in the midst of this city. ⁵I ^fMyself will fight against you with an ^goutstretched hand and with a strong arm, even in anger and fury and great wrath. ⁶I will strike the inhabitants of this city, both man and beast; they shall die of a great pestilence. ⁷And afterward,” says the LORD, ^h“I will deliver

16 ^v Gen. 19:25
^w Jer. 18:22
17 ^x Job 3:10, 11
18 ^y Job 3:20; Jer.
15:10 ^z Lam. 3:1
⁶ *toil*

CHAPTER 21

1 ^a 2 Kin. 24:17, 18;
Jer. 32:1-3; 37:1;
52:1-3 ^b 1 Chr. 9:12;
Jer. 38:1 ^c 2 Kin.
25:18; Jer. 29:25;
37:3
2 ^d Ex. 9:28;
1 Sam. 9:9; Jer.
37:3, 7; Ezek. 14:7;
20:1-3 ¹ Heb.
Nebuchadnezzar,
and so elsewhere
in the book
4 ^e Is. 13:4; Jer.
39:3; Lam. 2:5, 7;
Zech. 14:2 ² Or
Babylonians, and
so elsewhere in the
book
5 ^f Jer. 32:24; 33:5;
Is. 63:10 ^g Ex. 6:6;
Deut. 4:34; Jer. 6:12
7 ^h 2 Kin. 25:5-7,
18-21; Jer. 37:17;
39:5; 52:9

ⁱ Deut. 28:50; 2 Chr.
36:17; Jer. 13:14;
Ezek. 7:9; Hab.
1:6-10
8 ^j Deut. 30:15, 19;
Is. 1:19, 20
9 ^k Jer. 38:2 ¹ Jer.
39:18 ³ Lit. *falls
away* to
10 ^m Lev. 17:10; Jer.
44:11, 27; Amos 9:4

BIBLE TIMES & CULTURE NOTES



Chaldeans

The Chaldeans were one of the ancient peoples that formed the dominant population in Babylonia, especially beginning with the empire of Nebuchadnezzar II (king of Babylonia from 605 to 562 B.C.).

In the Bible, the term Chaldeans is first mentioned in connection with Haran—the son of Terah and brother of Abram. Abram lived in Ur of the Chaldeans before the Chaldeans dominated Babylonia (Gen. 11:28–31). Most references to Chaldeans appear in the Book of Jeremiah (21:4, 9; 35:11; 51:4, 54). Jeremiah identified the Chaldeans with the Babylonians who besieged the city of Jerusalem during the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, looted the temple, and carried the Israelites into captivity.

The term also was used by ancient authors to denote those educated in classical Babylonian literature, especially astronomy and astrology (Dan. 2:2, 4, 5, 10). Some believe the “wise men from the East” (Matt. 2:1) may have been Chaldean astrologers.

Zedekiah king of Judah, his servants and the people, and such as are left in this city from the pestilence and the sword and the famine, into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of those who seek their life; and he shall strike them with the edge of the sword. ⁱHe shall not spare them, or have pity or mercy.”

⁸“Now you shall say to this people, ‘Thus says the LORD: “Behold, ^jI set before you the way of life and the way of death. ⁹He who ^kremains in this city shall die by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence; but he who goes out and ³defects to the Chaldeans who besiege you, he shall ^llive, and his life shall be as a prize to him. ¹⁰For I have ^mset My face

20:16, 17 Jeremiah’s intense dejection caused him to call for the death of the man who told Jeremiah’s father the good news of his son’s birth. **did not relent:** Jeremiah, in his distress, thought it would have been more merciful for him to die before birth than to endure the hardship of rejection, persecution, and imprisonment that he faced.

21:1 Pashhur the son of Melchiah had Jeremiah cast into a dungeon for the prophet’s alleged disloyalty to the kingdom (38:1–6). **Zephaniah the son of Maaseiah** was a temple officer who, with others, sought divine guidance through Jeremiah’s counsel (37:3, 4).

21:2 To inquire of the Lord means to seek His will. **Nebuchadnezzar** was king of Babylon from 605–562 B.C. **wonderful works:** This phrase is primarily used of God in His cosmic activity and mighty acts in history on behalf of Israel (see Ps. 40:5). God had delivered Jerusalem from destruction during the siege of Sennacherib of Assyria in 701 B.C.; King Zedekiah was hoping for a similar divine deliverance.

21:3, 4 Jeremiah’s response to **Zedekiah** was demoralizing. Instead of turning back the forces of the Babylonians, God would thwart what little strength Jerusalem could muster against them.

21:5 Because the people of Judah had become God’s enemies, God would **fight against** them. **outstretched hand . . . strong arm:** The divine instruments by which Israel had gained freedom from Egypt (see Ex. 15:6; Deut. 6:21) and deliverance from their enemies would be used against them.

21:6, 7 The **pestilence** that would strike **man and beast** recalls one of God’s plagues on the Egyptians prior to the Exodus (see Ex. 9:1–7). **Nebuchadnezzar . . . enemies . . . those who seek their life:** Not only did the Babylonians inflict damage upon Judah, so did constant enemies like the Edomites, who raided and then settled in the dry regions to the south. God would not **spare** or **have pity** on the stubborn and rebellious inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem.

21:8, 9 way of life . . . way of death: *Death* would come to those who attempted to survive the siege of Jerusalem; *life* was possible through surrender to the **Chaldeans** (Babylonians). **Prize** usually refers to the booty and spoils of war. Those who submitted to the Babylonians were on the side of God, and their “booty” would be their lives (38:2).

21:10 I have set My face: This phrase describes the fixed inten-

against this city for adversity and not for good,” says the LORD. ⁿ“It shall be given into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall ^oburn it with fire.””

Message to the House of David

¹¹“And concerning the house of the king of Judah, *say*, ‘Hear the word of the LORD, ¹²O house of David! Thus says the LORD:

^p“Execute ⁴ judgment ^qin the morning;
And deliver *him who is plundered*
Out of the hand of the oppressor,
Lest My fury go forth like fire
And burn so that no one can
quench it,
Because of the evil of your doings.

¹³“Behold, ^r*I am* against you,
O ⁵inhabitant of the valley,
And rock of the plain,” says the LORD,
“Who say, ^s‘Who shall come down
against us?

Or who shall enter our dwellings?”

¹⁴ But I will punish you according to
the ‘fruit of your ⁶doings,” says
the LORD;

“I will kindle a fire in its forest,
And “it shall devour all things
around it.””

22 Thus says the LORD: “Go down to the house of the king of Judah, and there speak this word, ²and say, ^a‘Hear the word of the LORD, O king of Judah, you who sit on the throne of David, you and your servants and your people who enter these gates! ³Thus says the LORD: ^b“Execute ¹ judgment and righteousness, and deliver the plundered out of the hand of the oppressor. Do no wrong and do no

¹⁰ ⁿ Jer. 38:3
^o 2 Kin. 25:9; 2 Chr. 36:19; Jer. 34:2, 22; 37:10
¹² ^p Ps. 72:1; Is. 1:17; Jer. 22:3; Zech. 7:9
^q Ps. 101:8; Zeph. 3:5
⁴ *Dispense justice*
¹³ ^r [Jer. 23:30–32; Ezek. 13:8] ^s 2 Sam. 5:6, 7; Jer. 49:4; Lam. 4:12; Obad. 3, 4
⁵ *dweller*
¹⁴ ^t Prov. 1:31; Is. 3:10, 11; Jer. 17:10; 32:19
^u 2 Chr. 36:19; Is. 10:16, 18; Jer. 11:16; 17:27; 52:13; Ezek. 20:47, 48
⁶ *deeds*

CHAPTER 22

² ^a Jer. 17:20
³ ^b Is. 58:6; Jer. 21:12; [Mic. 6:8]; Zech. 7:9; 8:16; Matt. 23:23
¹ *Dispense justice*

^c Jer. 7:6; Zech. 7:10
⁴ ^d Jer. 17:25
⁵ ^e Matt. 23:38; Heb. 6:13, 17
² *Obeys*
⁶ ^f Gen. 37:25; Num. 32:1; Song 4:1
⁷ ^g Is. 37:24
^h Jer. 21:14
⁸ ⁱ Deut. 29:24–26; 1 Kin. 9:8, 9; 2 Chr. 7:20–22; Jer. 16:10
⁹ ^j 2 Kin. 22:17; 2 Chr. 34:25; Jer. 11:3
¹⁰ ^k 2 Kin. 22:20
¹ ^l Jer. 14:17; 22:11; Lam. 3:48
¹¹ ^m 1 Chr. 3:15
³ Or *Jehoahaz*

violence to the stranger, the ^cfatherless, or the widow, nor shed innocent blood in this place. ⁴For if you indeed do this thing, ^dthen shall enter the gates of this house, riding on horses and in chariots, accompanied by servants and people, kings who sit on the throne of David. ⁵But if you will not ²hear these words, ^e*I swear by Myself*,” says the LORD, “that this house shall become a desolation.””

⁶For thus says the LORD to the house of the king of Judah:

“You *are* ^fGilead to Me,
The head of Lebanon;
Yet I surely will make you a
wilderness,
Cities *which* are not inhabited.

⁷ I will prepare destroyers against you,
Everyone with his weapons;
They shall cut down ^gyour choice
cedars

^hAnd cast *them* into the fire.

⁸And many nations will pass by this city; and everyone will say to his neighbor, ⁱ“Why has the LORD done so to this great city?” ⁹Then they will answer, ^j“Because they have forsaken the covenant of the LORD their God, and worshiped other gods and served them.”

¹⁰ Weep not for ^kthe dead, nor bemoan him;
Weep bitterly for him ^lwho goes
away,
For he shall return no more,
Nor see his native country.

Message to the Sons of Josiah

¹¹For thus says the LORD concerning ^mShallum ³the son of Josiah, king of Ju-

tion of God, which in this context was against Jerusalem. The result would be **adversity** rather than **good**.

21:11–14 This oracle in language reminiscent of 7:6 and Deut. 17:18–20 establishes the basis for judgments against the kings of Judah in subsequent chapters. The **king** was to be devoted to the commandments of God and was to mete out **judgment**, or justice. The ultimate test of the king was measured in his judicial response to those who were oppressed and **plundered** (see Is. 1:17; Amos 4:1–3).

21:13, 14 inhabitant of the valley . . . rock of the plain: These phrases refer to Jerusalem. **come down:** Attacking armies generally approached Jerusalem from the north along an elevated ridge. **Punish** means “to visit in judgment” in this context.

22:1 One goes **down** to Jerusalem by coming from the north in Anathoth and descending slightly in elevation. **The house of the king** was the royal palace located just south of the temple courtyards.

22:2 Jeremiah’s prophecy was addressed to three groups: kings who sit upon the **throne of David** and thus are of David’s lineage, the kings’ **servants** (royal officials and attendants), and the **people who enter these gates**. The last phrase may refer to the citizens in general or to personnel who regularly entered the palace gates.

22:3 According to Is. 11:1–5, the ideal Davidic king would **execute judgment**, or justice, **and righteousness**, or uprightness, fairness,

and conformity to standard. This description anticipates the “Branch of righteousness” in 23:5. The wisdom and prophetic writers echoed the same sentiment concerning the righteousness of kingdoms—that they must be measured according to their protection of the three segments of society who were unable to defend themselves: the **stranger**, the **fatherless**, and the **widow**.

22:4, 5 If justice and righteousness characterized the leadership of the land, the continued prosperity of the Davidic dynasty would be assured. However, if the Lord’s **words** were not heeded, the house of David would be made a **desolation**—that is, a ruin or waste.

22:6, 7 Gilead and Lebanon were sources for timber for the royal palaces. These luxurious residences would be reduced to deserted **wilderness** and set ablaze if the kings disobeyed the covenant.

22:8 Even the **nations**—the Gentiles—would recognize that the punishment described in vv. 5–7 was the work of the Lord, the result of His displeasure with His people.

22:9 The pagan nations would recognize that the destruction of Jerusalem was the result of Judah’s violation of its **covenant** with God. The people of Judah had exchanged their God for alien deities, whom they **worshiped and served**.

22:11, 12 This is the first of three messages directed at specific kings of Judah. **Josiah** died at Megiddo in 609 B.C. while attempting to

dah, who reigned instead of Josiah his father, ⁿwho went from this place: “He shall not return here anymore, ¹²but he shall die in the place where they have led him captive, and shall see this land no more.

13 “Woe ^o to him who builds his house by unrighteousness
And his ⁴chambers by injustice,
^pWho uses his neighbor’s service
without wages
And gives him nothing for his work,
14 Who says, ‘I will build myself a wide
house with spacious ⁵chambers,
And cut out windows for it,
Paneling it with cedar
And painting it with vermilion.’

15 “Shall you reign because you enclose
yourself in cedar?
Did not your father eat and drink,
And do justice and righteousness?
Then ^qit was well with him.
16 He ⁶judged the cause of the poor and
needy;
Then it was well.
Was not this knowing Me?” says the
LORD.

17 “Yet ^ryour eyes and your heart are for
nothing but your covetousness,
For shedding innocent blood,
And practicing oppression and
violence.”

18 Therefore thus says the LORD concerning Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah:

11 ^a 2 Kin. 23:34;
2 Chr. 36:4; Ezek.
19:4
13 ^a 2 Kin. 23:35;
Jer. 17:11; Ezek.
22:13 ^p Lev. 19:13;
Deut. 24:14, 15;
Mic. 3:10; Hab. 2:9;
James 5:4 ⁴ Lit. roof
chambers, upper
chambers
14 ⁵ Lit. roof
chambers, upper
chambers
15 ^a 2 Kin. 23:25; Ps.
128:2; Is. 3:10; Jer.
7:23; 42:6
16 ^o Defended
17 ^r Jer. 6:13; 8:10;
Ezek. 19:6; [Luke
12:15-20]

18 ^s Jer. 16:4, 6
^t 1 Kin. 13:30
19 ^u 1 Kin. 21:23,
24; 2 Chr. 36:6; Jer.
36:30; Dan. 1:2
21 ^v Jer. 3:24, 25;
32:30
22 ^w Jer. 23:1 ⁷ Lit.
shepherds
23 ^x Jer. 6:24
⁸ childbirth
24 ^y 2 Kin. 24:6;
8; 1 Chr. 3:16;
2 Chr. 36:9; Jer.
37:1 ^z Song 8:6; Is.
49:16; Hag. 2:23
⁹ Or Jehoniah or
Jehoiachin ¹ signet
ring
25 ^a 2 Kin. 24:15, 16;
Jer. 34:20

^s “They shall not lament for him,
Saying, ‘Alas, my brother!’ or ‘Alas,
my sister!’
They shall not lament for him,
Saying, ‘Alas, master!’ or ‘Alas, his
glory!’

19 ^u He shall be buried with the burial of
a donkey,
Dragged and cast out beyond the
gates of Jerusalem.

20 “Go up to Lebanon, and cry out,
And lift up your voice in Bashan;
Cry from Abarim,
For all your lovers are destroyed.

21 I spoke to you in your prosperity,
But you said, ‘I will not hear.’
^v This has been your manner from
your youth,

That you did not obey My voice.
22 The wind shall eat up all ^w your
⁷ rulers,

And your lovers shall go into
captivity;
Surely then you will be ashamed and
humiliated
For all your wickedness.

23 O inhabitant of Lebanon,
Making your nest in the cedars,
How gracious will you be when
pangs come upon you,
Like ^x the pain of a woman in ⁸ labor?

Message to Coniah

24 “As I live,” says the LORD, ^y “though
⁹ Coniah the son of Jehoiakim, king of
Judah, ^z were the ¹ signet on My right
hand, yet I would pluck you off; ²⁵ ^a and I

block Pharaoh Necho of Egypt from coming to the aid of Assyria. **who went from this place:** This is a reference to Jehoahaz, also called Shallum. This fourth son of Josiah was placed on the throne by the people of Judah, but he was dethroned after three months by Pharaoh Necho. Shallum was imprisoned and taken captive to Egypt (see 2 Chr. 36:1–4). Eliakim (Jehoiakim), Shallum’s brother, was placed on the throne as an Egyptian vassal. Necho maintained control of Palestine until Nebuchadnezzar defeated Egypt at the Battle of Carchemish in 605 B.C. Shallum (Jehoahaz) died without returning from Egypt, in fulfillment of Jeremiah’s words (2 Kin. 23:34).

22:13, 14 unrighteousness . . . injustice: The key terms for true, biblical leadership quality—righteousness and justice—were negated by the king’s actions. **uses his neighbor’s service without wages:** The king was supposed to be the guardian of his people, but Jehoiakim enslaved his fellow Israelites to build his self-aggrandizing palaces.

22:15, 16 Did not your father . . . do justice and righteousness: This rhetorical question identifies Josiah, father of Jehoiakim, as a model king. **knowing Me:** Israel perished because of its lack of knowledge of God (see Hos. 4:6). Knowledge of God here is related to concern for the **poor and needy** (20:13).

22:17 Jehoiakim did not follow in the footsteps of Josiah. **covetousness . . . shedding innocent blood . . . practicing oppression and violence:** This triad of sins characterizing the reign of Jehoiakim would hammer home a resounding message to Judah concerning the collapse of its kingship. Covenant violations would not go unpunished.

22:18, 19 A king of such despicable character as **Jehoiakim** deserved no **lament**. **burial of a donkey:** Instead of proper funeral rites due a king, Jehoiakim would receive an ignoble burial, like an animal, alone and unlamented.

22:20 Jerusalem was called upon to mourn its destruction in the mountainous regions of the north—**Lebanon**, in the northeast—**Bashan**, and in the mountainous regions of the southeast—**Abarim**. **Lovers** here probably refers to Judah’s past and present political allies, such as Phoenicia, Aram, Moab, and Egypt.

22:21 God had spoken to Israel and Judah in times of **prosperity**, as in the days of Azariah, Jeroboam II, and Josiah, but the people would not **hear** and **obey** the words of the prophets, righteous kings, priests, and other leaders.

22:22, 23 The wind shall eat up: The winds of adversity and invasion would carry off Judah’s leaders and allies alike. The nation would be **ashamed** that it had entered into such futile associations. **Lebanon** refers to Jerusalem here (in contrast to v. 20). **Cedars** refers to the luxuriant royal palaces in the city (see Ezek. 17:1–10).

22:24–27 Coniah, also known as Jehoiachin, succeeded his father in 598 B.C. under the threat of siege from Babylon as a result of Jehoiakim’s rebellion. The king’s **signet** ring, a symbol of his power and authority, was used to seal official court documents. Jehoiachin could not serve God in such a capacity because of his evil reign (see 2 Kin. 24:9). Jehoiachin reigned for three months until he and his family were exiled to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar (see 2 Kin. 24:6–16). **Your mother** refers to Nehushta, the queen mother of

will give you into the hand of those who seek your life, and into the hand of *those* whose face you fear—the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and the hand of the ²Chaldeans. ^{26b}So I will cast you out, and your mother who bore you, into another country where you were not born; and there you shall die. ²⁷But to the land to which they desire to return, there they shall not return.

- ^{28a}“Is this man ³Coniah a despised, broken idol—
^c A vessel in which is no pleasure?
 Why are they cast out, he and his descendants,
 And cast into a land which they do not know?
^{29d} O earth, earth, earth,
 Hear the word of the LORD!
³⁰ Thus says the LORD:
 ‘Write this man down as ^echildless,
 A man *who* shall not prosper in his days;
 For ^fnone of his descendants shall prosper,
 Sitting on the throne of David,
 And ruling anymore in Judah.’”

The Branch of Righteousness

23 “Woe ^ato the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of My pasture!” says the LORD. ²Therefore thus says the LORD God of Israel against the shepherds who feed My people: “You have scattered My flock, driven them away, and not attended to them. ^bBehold, I will attend to you for the evil of your doings,” says the LORD. ³“But ^cI will gather the remnant of My flock out of all countries where I have driven them, and

²⁵ ²Or *Babylonians*
²⁶ ^b 2 Kin. 24:15;
 Jer. 10:18; 16:13
²⁸ ^c Ps. 31:12; Jer.
 48:38; Hos. 8:8
³ See note at v. 24
²⁹ ^d Deut. 32:1; Is.
 1:2; 34:1; Mic. 1:2
³⁰ ^e 1 Chr. 3:16,
 17; Matt. 1:12 ^f Ps.
 94:20; Jer. 36:30

CHAPTER 23

¹ ^a Is. 56:9-12; Jer.
 10:21
² ^b Ex. 32:34
³ ^c Is. 11:11, 12, 16;
 Jer. 32:37

⁴ ^d Jer. 3:15; [Ezek.
 34:23]
⁵ ^e Is. 4:2; 11:1;
 40:10, 11; Jer. 33:14;
 [Dan. 9:24; Zech.
 6:12]; Matt. 1:1, 6 ☆;
 Luke 3:31; [John
 1:45; 7:42] ^f Ps.
 72:2; Is. 9:7; 32:1,
 18; [Dan. 9:24] ¹ act
 wisely ² justice
³ land
⁶ ^g Deut. 33:28;
 Jer. 30:10; Zech.
 14:11 ^h Jer. 32:37
⁷ ⁱ Is. 45:24; Jer. 33:16;
 [Dan. 9:24; Rom.
 3:22; 1 Cor. 1:30] ☆
⁴ Heb. YHWH
 Tsidkenu
⁷ ^j Is. 43:18, 19; Jer.
 16:14
⁸ ^k Is. 43:5, 6; Ezek.
 34:13; Amos 9:14,
 15 ^l Gen. 12:7; Jer.
 16:14, 15; 31:8
⁹ ^m Jer. 8:18; Hab.
 3:16

bring them back to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase. ⁴I will set up ^dshepherds over them who will feed them; and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, nor shall they be lacking,” says the LORD.

- ⁵ “Behold, ^ethe days are coming,” says the LORD,
 “That I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness;
 A King shall reign and ¹prosper,
 And execute ²judgment and righteousness in the ³earth.
⁶ In His days Judah will be saved,
 And Israel ^hwill dwell safely;
 Now ⁱthis is His name by which He will be called:

⁴THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

⁷“Therefore, behold, ^jthe days are coming,” says the LORD, “that they shall no longer say, ‘As the LORD lives who brought up the children of Israel from the land of Egypt,’ ⁸but, ‘As the LORD lives who brought up and led the descendants of the house of Israel from the north country ^hand from all the countries where I had driven them.’ And they shall dwell in their own ^lland.”

False Prophets and Empty Oracles

- ⁹ My heart within me is broken
 Because of the prophets;
^m All my bones shake.
 I am like a drunken man,
 And like a man whom wine has overcome,
 Because of the LORD,
 And because of His holy words.

the 18-year-old Jehoiachin. Eventually Jehoiachin was released from prison, after the death of Nebuchadnezzar (see 2 Kin. 25:27).

22:28–30 childless: The king had seven sons (see 1 Chr. 3:17, 18), but the Davidic lineage of kingship would not extend to his heirs.

A man who shall not prosper: Jehoiachin remained in prison throughout the reign of Nebuchadnezzar from 598 to 562 B.C. **23:1, 2** Woe usually introduces a harsh message of judgment. **shepherds:** In the ancient Middle East, the ideal of kingship was often presented in the imagery of a shepherd. For Israel, the ideal of the Good Shepherd was found in its Great King (see Ps. 23) and was reflected in the reign of David, the shepherd-king. But instead of protecting and nurturing the nation, the shepherd kings of Israel had **scattered and not attended to** or “visited” the people.

23:3 The kings of Israel had caused the dispersion of the nation; but the Lord would mercifully bring about the restoration of the **remnant**. The concept of a reestablished *remnant* is prominent in the prophets (see Is. 1:9; 10:20–23; 11:16; 46:3). The blessing of restoration and prosperity as a consequence of repentance is outlined in Deut. 30:1–10.

23:4 God would raise up a new generation of kings who would place the people’s welfare and God’s will above all other considerations.

23:5 Branch: Beginning with Is. 4:2, this term is used of the promised Messiah (see 33:15; Zech. 3:8; 6:12). This great king will reign with **judgment**, or justice, and **righteousness**. This ideal was founded

on God’s promise to David (2 Sam. 7:16). The necessity for the Lord to send His own king is based on the failure of Israel’s monarchs to live up to the standards of kingship (21:11, 12; 22:1–4).

23:6 The **days** of the Messiah’s reign would bring salvation. Both **Judah and Israel** would be restored. The **name** that characterizes this ideal king is **THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS**. Contrast that to the name Zedekiah, which means “The Lord Is My Righteousness” (21:1). Zedekiah’s name was a gross misnomer compared to the One who would establish the true, righteous rule—God’s appointed king (see also Is. 9:7; 11:1–10). This verse is one of the texts in the Hebrew Bible that speaks specifically and surely of the coming of the glorious Savior and King.

23:7, 8 the days are coming: The future restoration of Israel would exceed anything in the past; it would surpass even the first Exodus, the deliverance from Egypt. A similar text is found in 16:14, 15, following a judgment oracle.

23:9, 10 Heart here refers to the mind more than the emotions. Jeremiah’s dismay over the false **prophets** weakened him mentally and physically, so much so that he felt **drunken** from the inner turmoil. The prophet also felt unrest from his being consumed by the **holy words of God. adulterers:** This term could apply to those who practiced immoral sexual behavior, those who committed spiritual adultery by pursuing other gods, and those who were involved in cultic prostitution. The effects of the adultery reached

- ¹⁰ For ⁿthe land is full of adulterers;
For ^obecause of a curse the land
mourns.
^pThe pleasant places of the wilderness
are dried up.
Their course of life is evil,
And their might *is* not right.
- ¹¹ “For ^qboth prophet and priest are
profane;
Yes, ^rin My house I have found their
wickedness,” says the LORD.
- ¹² “Therefore ^stheir way shall be to them
Like slippery *ways*;
In the darkness they shall be driven on
And fall in them;
For I ^twill bring disaster on them,
The year of their punishment,” says
the LORD.
- ¹³ “And I have seen ⁵folly in the
prophets of Samaria:
“They prophesied by Baal
And ^vcaused My people Israel to err.
- ¹⁴ Also I have seen a horrible thing in
the prophets of Jerusalem:
^wThey commit adultery and walk in
lies;
They also ^xstrengthen the hands of
evildoers,
So that no one turns back from his
wickedness.
All of them are like ^ySodom to Me,
And her inhabitants like Gomorrah.
- ¹⁵ “Therefore thus says the LORD of
hosts concerning the prophets:

‘Behold, I will feed them with
^zwormwood,
And make them drink the water of
gall;
For from the prophets of Jerusalem

¹⁰ ⁿ Jer. 9:2 ^o Hos. 4:2; Mal. 3:5 ^p Ps. 107:34; Jer. 9:10
¹¹ ^q Jer. 6:13; Zeph. 3:4 ^r Jer. 7:30; 32:34; Ezek. 8:11; 23:39
¹² ^s Ps. 35:6; [Prov. 4:19]; Jer. 13:16
^t Jer. 11:23
¹³ ^u 1 Kin. 18:18-21; Jer. 2:8 ^v Is. 9:16
⁵ Lit. *distastefulness*
¹⁴ ^w Jer. 29:23 ^x Jer. 23:22; Ezek. 13:22, 23 ^y Gen. 18:20; Deut. 32:32; Is. 1:9, 10
¹⁵ ^z Deut. 29:18; Jer. 9:15

⁶ Or *Pollution*
¹⁶ ^a Jer. 14:14; Ezek. 13:3, 6
¹⁷ ^b Jer. 8:11; Ezek. 13:10; Zech. 10:2
^c Deut. 29:19; Jer. 3:17 ^d Jer. 5:12; Amos 9:10; Mic. 3:11 ^e *stubbornness or imagination*
¹⁸ ^e Job 15:8, 9; [Jer. 23:22; 1 Cor. 2:16]
¹⁹ ^f Jer. 25:32; 30:23; Amos 1:14
²⁰ ^g 2 Kin. 23:26, 27; Jer. 30:24 ^h Gen. 49:1
²¹ ⁱ Jer. 14:14; 23:32; 27:15

- ⁶ Profaneness has gone out into all the
land.”
- ¹⁶ Thus says the LORD of hosts:

“Do not listen to the words of the
prophets who prophesy to you.
They make you worthless;
^a They speak a vision of their own
heart,
Not from the mouth of the LORD.
¹⁷ They continually say to those who
despise Me,
“The LORD has said, ^b“You shall have
peace””;
And *to* everyone who ^cwalks
according to the ⁷dictates of his
own heart, they say,
^d“No evil shall come upon you.”
- ¹⁸ For ^ewho has stood in the counsel of
the LORD,
And has perceived and heard His
word?
Who has marked His word and
heard *it*?
- ¹⁹ Behold, a ^fwhirlwind of the LORD has
gone forth in fury—
A violent whirlwind!
It will fall violently on the head of
the wicked.
- ²⁰ The ^ganger of the LORD will not turn
back
Until He has executed and performed
the thoughts of His heart.
^h In the latter days you will
understand it perfectly.
- ²¹ “I ⁱ have not sent these prophets, yet
they ran.
I have not spoken to them, yet they
prophesied.

to the **land**. Instead of experiencing the God-given fertility and productivity of crops, the **pleasant places** were **dried up**. **Wilderness** refers not to the desert in this context, but to pasture land. **Might** here refers to royal power.

23:11 Prophets were to be spokesmen for God in directing the nation. Priests were to teach the Law, to distinguish between the clean and the unclean, and to oversee religious ceremonies (see Lev. 10:8–20). **Profane** means “unclean” or “corrupt.” **My house**: Like the **prophet and priest**, the temple of God had become polluted by the **wickedness** of the spiritual leaders.

23:13, 14 The **prophets of Samaria**, rather than speaking in the name of God, **prophesied by Baal**. They **caused** the **people of Israel to err**—that is, to stray morally, mentally, and spiritually from God’s norms. **Horrible thing** here refers to “something utterly disgusting” (5:30). God found that the **prophets of Jerusalem** were committing **adultery** (v. 10) and walking **in lies**. The term *lie* is used commonly by Jeremiah to refer to idolatry. The leaders of Judah had supported **evildoers** who, like the kings, had abused the power of their position. The nation had become like **Sodom and Gomorrah** and thus deserved the same judgment those cities suffered (see Gen. 19:12–29).

23:15 **Wormwood** and **water of gall** refer to bitterness and death

by poison. According to Deut. 18:20, the consequence of false prophecy was death.

23:16 **Worthless** is used to describe the futility of listening to those who **speak a vision of their own heart**. Visions were commonly understood to be a means of receiving a message from God (or the gods). The term *vision* used here and in 14:14 is also found in Daniel (Dan. 1:17; 8:1); plus it is used in other prophetic books to describe a divine revelation (see Is. 1:1; Mic. 3:6).

23:17 The false prophets proclaimed a false hope of **peace** and security to those who despised Jeremiah. However God’s intention was to bring **evil**, or calamity (6:14).

23:18 God’s **counsel** is available to one who walks in the fear of the Lord according to **His word**, who understands God’s working in nature and history.

23:19, 20 God’s counsel to Jeremiah’s audience was not peace but harsh judgment. **Whirlwind** is used as a symbol of God’s judgment (see Is. 29:6). **thoughts of His heart**: This phrase denotes God’s plans and purposes by which He was bringing punishment (contrast Ps. 40:5).

23:21, 22 A true prophet must be **sent** by God with a word from God. A true prophet of God calls people to repentance of sin or **evil** and to renewed faith.

22 But if they had stood in My counsel,
And had caused My people to hear
My words,
Then they would have ^jturned them
from their evil way
And from the evil of their doings.

23 “Am I a God near at hand,” says the
LORD,

“And not a God afar off?”

24 Can anyone ^khide himself in secret
places,
So I shall not see him?” says the
LORD;

14 “Do I not fill heaven and earth?” says
the LORD.

25 “I have heard what the prophets
have said who prophesy lies in My name,
saying, ‘I have dreamed, I have dreamed!’
26 How long will *this* be in the heart of
the prophets who prophesy lies? Indeed
they are prophets of the deceit of their
own heart, 27 who try to make My people
forget My name by their dreams which
everyone tells his neighbor, ^mas their fa-
thers forgot My name for Baal.

28 “The prophet who has a dream, let
him tell a dream;
And he who has My word, let him
speak My word faithfully.
What *is* the chaff to the wheat?” says
the LORD.

29 “Is not My word like a ⁿfire?” says the
LORD,
“And like a hammer *that* breaks the
rock in pieces?”

30 “Therefore behold, ^oI *am* against
the prophets,” says the LORD, “who steal
My words every one from his neighbor.
31 Behold, I *am* ^pagainst the prophets,”
says the LORD, “who use their tongues
and say, ‘He says.’ 32 Behold, I *am* against
those who prophesy false dreams,” says
the LORD, “and tell them, and cause My

22 ^j Jer. 25:5
24 ^k [Ps. 139:7];
Amos 9:2, 3 ^l [1 Kin.
8:27]; Ps. 139:7
27 ^m Judg. 3:7
29 ⁿ Jer. 5:14
30 ^o Deut. 18:20; Ps.
34:16; Jer. 14:14, 15;
Ezek. 13:8, 9
31 ^p Ezek. 13:9

32 ^q Jer. 20:6; 27:10;
Lam. 2:14; 3:37
^r Zeph. 3:4 ^s Jer. 7:8;
Lam. 2:14
33 ^t Is. 13:1; Nah. 1:1;
Hab. 1:1; Zech. 9:1;
Mal. 1:1 ^u *burden,*
prophecy ^v LXX,
Tg., Vg. ‘You are the
burden.’

34 ¹ *burden,*
prophecy
36 ^u Deut. 4:2
² *burden, prophecy*
38 ³ *burden,*
prophecy
39 ^v Hos. 4:6
40 ^w Jer. 20:11;
Ezek. 5:14, 15 ^x Mic.
3:5-7

CHAPTER 24

1 ^a Amos 7:1, 4; 8:1
^b 2 Kin. 24:12-16;
2 Chr. 36:10 ^c Jer.
22:24-28; 29:2

people to err by their ^qlies and by ^rtheir
recklessness. Yet I did not send them or
command them; therefore they shall not
^sprofit this people at all,” says the LORD.

33 “So when these people or the proph-
et or the priest ask you, saying, ‘What is
‘the ⁸oracle of the LORD?’ you shall then
say to them, ⁹‘What oracle?’ I will even
forsake you,” says the LORD. 34 “And
as for the prophet and the priest and
the people who say, ‘The ¹oracle of the
LORD!’ I will even punish that man and
his house. 35 Thus every one of you shall
say to his neighbor, and every one to his
brother, ‘What has the LORD answered?’
and, ‘What has the LORD spoken?’ 36 And
the ²oracle of the LORD you shall mention
no more. For every man’s word will be his
oracle, for you have ^uperverted the words
of the living God, the LORD of hosts, our
God. 37 Thus you shall say to the prophet,
‘What has the LORD answered you?’ and,
‘What has the LORD spoken?’ 38 But since
you say, ‘The ³oracle of the LORD!’ there-
fore thus says the LORD: ‘Because you say
this word, “The oracle of the LORD!” and
I have sent to you, saying, “Do not say,
‘The oracle of the LORD!’” 39 therefore
behold, I, even I, ^vwill utterly forget you
and forsake you, and the city that I gave
you and your fathers, and *will cast you*
out of My presence. 40 And I will bring
^wan everlasting reproach upon you, and
a perpetual ^xshame, which shall not be
forgotten.’”

The Sign of Two Baskets of Figs

24 The ^aLORD showed me, and there
were two baskets of figs set be-
fore the temple of the LORD, after Nebu-
chadnezzar ^bking of Babylon had carried
away captive ^cJecooniah the son of Jehoia-
kim, king of Judah, and the princes of Ju-
dah with the craftsmen and smiths, from
Jerusalem, and had brought them to Bab-
ylon. 2 One basket *had* very good figs, like

23:25–27 Lies here is singular, referring to the quality of the word the false prophets spoke. I **have dreamed**: Dreams were prized among the Assyrians, Egyptians, and Babylonians as a means of divine revelation. But in Israelite law and tradition, dreams were received cautiously. **the heart of the prophets**: The character of the false prophets was based on **lies** and **deceit**. Their deception was apparent because their goal was to draw the people into idolatry with their fanciful dreams, leading people to **forget** God and follow **Baal** (2:8).

23:28, 29 This poetic interlude compares **dream** and **word**. A dream is fleeting, like **chaff** in the wind. God’s word has the force of **fire** and a **hammer**.

23:30, 31 steal My words: Lacking true knowledge and a word from God, the false prophets repeated false hopes and twisted God’s words. **use their tongues and say, “He says”**: The false prophets spoke on their own, lacking a true word from God.

23:32 The counterfeit spokesmen of God prophesied **false**

dreams, deluding the people. **Recklessness** further indicates the perverse character of the false prophets.

23:34–36 No true **oracle** would come from the false prophets. The sharing of oracles among neighbors (v. 27) would involve perverting **the words of the living God**. **Perverted** means “overturned.” The false prophets turned God’s words around to their own desired benefit.

23:38–40 Speaking **the oracle of the LORD** was forbidden for the false prophets. **everlasting reproach . . . perpetual shame**: The disgrace that resulted from the false prophets would last for an extended period of time; its memory would endure forever (20:11).

24:1 The LORD showed me: This phrase suggests a visionary experience like those of Amos and Joel. The historical setting is the 597 B.C. exile of **Jecooniah** (Jehoiachin).

24:2 The observation of **good**, or newly ripened, **figs** in the temple would place this account in the context of the fall festival of first-fruits (see Deut. 26:1–11).

the figs *that are* first ripe; and the other basket *had* very bad figs which could not be eaten, they were so ^abad. ³Then the LORD said to me, “What do you see, Jeremiah?”

And I said, “Figs, the good figs, very good; and the bad, very bad, which cannot be eaten, they are so bad.”

⁴Again the word of the LORD came to me, saying, ⁵“Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: ‘Like these good figs, so will I ¹acknowledge those who are carried away captive from Judah, whom I have sent out of this place for *their own* good, into the land of the Chaldeans. ⁶For I will set My eyes on them for good, and ^eI will bring them back to this land; ^fI will build them and not pull *them* down, and I will plant them and not pluck *them* up. ⁷Then I will give them ^ga heart to know Me, that I *am* the LORD; and they shall be ^hMy people, and I will be their God, for they shall return to Me ⁱwith their whole heart.

⁸‘And as the bad ^jfigs which cannot be eaten, they are so bad’—surely thus says the LORD—‘so will I give up Zedekiah the king of Judah, his princes, the ^kresidue of

² ^dIs. 5:4, 7; Jer. 29:17
⁵ ¹ *regard*
⁶ ^e Jer. 12:15; 29:10; Ezek. 11:17 ^f Jer. 32:41; 33:7; 42:10
⁷ ^g [Deut. 30:6; Jer. 32:39; Ezek. 11:19; 36:26, 27] ^h Is. 51:16; Jer. 30:22; 31:33; 32:38; Ezek. 14:11; Zech. 8:8; [Heb. 8:10] ⁱ 1 Sam. 7:3; Ps. 119:2; Jer. 29:13
⁸ / Jer. 29:17 ^k Jer. 39:9

¹ Jer. 44:1, 26–30
⁹ ^m Deut. 28:25, 37; 1 Kin. 9:7; 2 Chr. 7:20; Jer. 15:4; 29:18; 34:17 ⁿ Ps. 44:13, 14
¹⁰ ² *destroyed*

CHAPTER 25

¹ ^a Jer. 36:1 ^b 2 Kin. 24:1, 2; 2 Chr. 36:4–6; Dan. 1:1, 2
³ ^c Jer. 1:2 ^d Jer. 7:13; 11:7, 8, 10
⁴ ^e Jer. 7:13, 25

Jerusalem who remain in this land, and ¹those who dwell in the land of Egypt. ⁹I will deliver them to ^mtrouble into all the kingdoms of the earth, for *their* harm, ⁿto be a reproach and a byword, a taunt and a curse, in all places where I shall drive them. ¹⁰And I will send the sword, the famine, and the pestilence among them, till they are ²consumed from the land that I gave to them and their fathers.’”

Seventy Years of Desolation

25 The word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the people of Judah, ^ain the fourth year of ^bJehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah (which was the first year of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon), ²which Jeremiah the prophet spoke to all the people of Judah and to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying: ³^c“From the thirteenth year of Josiah the son of Amon, king of Judah, even to this day, this *is* the twenty-third year in which the word of the LORD has come to me; and I have spoken to you, rising early and speaking, ^dbut you have not listened. ⁴And the LORD has sent to you all His servants the prophets, ^erising

24:4–7 The **good figs** are identified with the deported exiles, including Jeconiah’s royal household, whom God set apart **for good**. God would **bring . . . back** the captives, establish them in the **land**, and multiply their crops. Above all, God would **give them a heart to know** Him. This verse anticipates the new covenant message of 31:31–34.

24:8–10 According to chs. 28; 36–38, the people who remained in **Jerusalem** treated Jeremiah harshly, subjecting him to beating and imprisonment. **Zedekiah** and his entourage, along with Jews who fled to Egypt, would see the **trouble**, meaning “trembling fear” or “horror,” and **harm**, meaning “calamity,” from the Lord.

25:1 the **first year of Nebuchadnezzar**: In 605 B.C., Nebuchadnezzar succeeded his father on the throne of Babylon. He quickly

moved his army to Carchemish and then defeated the Egyptians and some Assyrians. The following year Nebuchadnezzar’s forces gained control of all of Palestine, reaching southward to the Brook of Egypt.

25:3 Starting from the time he was called in 626 B.C., Jeremiah faithfully proclaimed the word of the Lord for 23 years. The idiom **rising early and speaking** describes Jeremiah’s diligence and persistence.

25:4, 5 Other **prophets**, such as Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Urijah (26:20), and those of previous centuries, had persistently proclaimed the message of repentance so that the nation might remain **in the land**. Security, prosperity, and long life *in the land* were directly related to the nation’s covenant faithfulness to God (see Deut. 28; 29).

The Object Lessons and Parables of a Prophet		
Since the people were not responding to Jeremiah's messages of warning and judgment, God had the prophet perform object lessons in order to arouse curiosity and effectively communicate the Lord's message to the people.		
Passage	Sign	Meaning
13:1–11	The ruined waistband	A linen sash was buried and later dug up. Its ruined state symbolized how the nation—which was intended to be close to God—had become corrupt and useless through idolatry.
13:12–27	The wine jugs	Jeremiah's prophecies concerning the broken wine jugs symbolized the coming judgment.
16:1–9	Jeremiah's celibacy	Jeremiah was forbidden to marry or participate in Jewish feasts to demonstrate how imminent God's judgment was.
18:1–23	The potter	Jeremiah was sent to watch a potter make a vessel and then remake it into something else. This functioned as a reminder to the people of God's sovereignty.
19:1–15	The broken jar	Jeremiah purchased a flask and then gathered the nation's leaders near the Valley of Hinnom—Jerusalem's "landfill." There Jeremiah broke the flask as a sign of God's coming judgment on His people because of their idolatrous ways.
24:1–10	The baskets of figs	Jeremiah spoke of a vision in which he saw two baskets of figs before the temple—one filled with good, ripe figs and the other with rotten figs. The good figs represented the Jews taken into Babylonian exile, while the bad figs represented the Jews who fled to Egypt.

early and sending *them*, but you have not listened nor inclined your ear to hear. ⁵They said, ^f“Repent now everyone of his evil way and his evil doings, and dwell in the land that the LORD has given to you and your fathers forever and ever. ⁶Do not go after other gods to serve them and worship them, and do not provoke Me to anger with the works of your hands; and I will not harm you.” ⁷Yet you have not listened to Me,” says the LORD, “that you might ^gprovoke Me to anger with the works of your hands to your own hurt.

⁸“Therefore thus says the LORD of hosts: ‘Because you have not heard My words, ⁹behold, I will send and take ^hall the families of the north,’ says the LORD, ‘and Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, ⁱMy servant, and will bring them against this land, against its inhabitants, and against these nations all around, and will utterly destroy them, and ^jmake them an astonishment, a hissing, and perpetual desolations. ¹⁰Moreover I will ¹take from them the ^kvoice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, ^lthe sound of the millstones and the light of the lamp. ¹¹And this whole land shall be a desolation and an astonishment, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy ^myears.

¹²“Then it will come to pass, ⁿwhen ²seventy years are completed, *that* I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation, the land of the Chaldeans, for their iniquity,” says the LORD; ^o“and I will make it a perpetual desolation. ¹³So I will bring on that land all My words which I have pronounced against it, all that is written in this book, which Jeremiah has prophesied concerning all the nations. ¹⁴*p* (For

⁵ ² Kin. 17:13; [Is. 55:6, 7]; Jer. 18:11; Ezek. 18:30; [Jon. 3:8–10]

⁷ ^g Deut. 32:21; Jer. 7:19; 32:30

⁹ ^h Jer. 1:15 ¹ Is. 45:1; Jer. 27:6 ^j Jer. 18:16

¹⁰ ^k Is. 24:7–11; Jer. 7:34; 16:9; Ezek.

26:13; Hos. 2:11; Rev. 18:23 ^l Eccl.

12:4; Is. 47:2 ¹ Lit.

cause to perish from them

¹¹ ^m 2 Chr. 36:21; Jer. 29:10; Dan. 9:2;

Zech. 7:5

¹² ⁿ 2 Chr. 36:21;

22; Ezra 1:1; Jer.

29:10; Dan. 9:2 ^o Is.

13:20; Jer. 50:3

² Beginning circa

605 B.C. (2 Kin. 24:1)

and ending circa

536 B.C. (Ezra 1:1)

¹⁴ ^p Jer. 50:9;

51:27, 28

^q Jer. 51:27 ^r Jer.

27:7 ^s Jer. 50:29;

51:6, 24

¹⁵ ^t Job 21:20; Ps.

75:8; Is. 51:17; Rev.

14:10 ³ *wrath*

¹⁶ ^u Jer. 51:7; Ezek.

23:34; Nah. 3:11

¹⁸ ^v Jer. 25:9, 11

^w Jer. 24:9

²⁰ ^x Job 11:1; Lam.

4:21 ^y Jer. 47:1–7;

Ezek. 25:16, 17

^z Is. 20:1

²¹ ^a Jer. 49:7

²² ^b Jer. 47:4; Zech.

9:2–4 ^c Jer. 49:23

²³ ^d Is. 21:13; Jer.

49:7, 8

²⁴ ^e Jer. 25:20;

50:37; Ezek. 30:5

²⁵ ^f Gen. 10:22; Is.

11:11; Jer. 49:34 ^g Is.

13:17; Jer. 51:11, 28

²⁶ ^h Jer. 50:9 ⁴ A

code word for

Babylon, Jer. 51:41

many nations ^q and great kings shall ^rbe served by them also; ^sand I will repay them according to their deeds and according to the works of their own hands.)”

Judgment on the Nations

¹⁵For thus says the LORD God of Israel to me: “Take this ^twine cup of ³fury from My hand, and cause all the nations, to whom I send you, to drink it. ¹⁶And ^uthey will drink and stagger and go mad because of the sword that I will send among them.”

¹⁷Then I took the cup from the LORD’s hand, and made all the nations drink, to whom the LORD had sent me: ¹⁸Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, its kings and its princes, to make them ^va desolation, an astonishment, a hissing, and ^wa curse, as *it is this day*; ¹⁹Pharaoh king of Egypt, his servants, his princes, and all his people; ²⁰all the mixed multitude, all the kings of ^xthe land of Uz, all the kings of the land of the ^yPhilistines (namely, Ashkelon, Gaza, Ekron, and ^zthe remnant of Ashdod); ²¹^aEdom, Moab, and the people of Ammon; ²²all the kings of ^bTyre, all the kings of Sidon, and the kings of the coastlands which *are* across the ^csea; ²³^dDedan, Tema, Buz, and all *who are* in the farthest corners; ²⁴all the kings of Arabia and all the kings of the ^emixed multitude who dwell in the desert; ²⁵all the kings of Zimri, all the kings of ^fElam, and all the kings of the ^gMedes; ²⁶^hall the kings of the north, far and near, one with another; and all the kingdoms of the world which *are* on the face of the earth. Also the king of ⁴Sheshach shall drink after them.

²⁷“Therefore you shall say to them, ‘Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God

25:6, 7 The phrase **go after** is used throughout Jeremiah to mean resorting to **other gods** in worship. **The works of your hands** refers to the manmade idols used in pagan worship, a breach of the covenant (see Ex. 20:3–5) that provoked God to anger.

25:8, 9 behold, I: The Lord was the One bringing judgment; the Babylonians and tribes from the north were merely agents of His destruction. **families of the north:** The Babylonian army employed Scythian and Cimmerian mercenaries from Asia Minor. **Nebuchadnezzar . . . My servant:** This expression does not imply that the Babylonian monarch worshiped Israel’s God, but simply that he was used by God to fulfill His purposes (as in the case of Cyrus, who is called the Lord’s “anointed” in Is. 45:1).

25:10, 11 take: This term means “cause to perish” and indicates harsh judgment. Life as they knew it would cease. **These nations** refers to Judah and the surrounding nations, such as Moab and Phoenicia, who would be subjected to enslavement and captivity. **Seventy years** is the approximate length of the Babylonian captivity.

25:15–17 The triad sequence **drink . . . stagger . . . go mad** depicts the judgment process by which the **sword** of the Lord subdues those opposed to Him. The state of drunkenness was condemned in the OT; to drink the cup and stagger was to display one’s guilt (see

Num. 5:19–28). **Then I took the cup:** Jeremiah responded faithfully to God’s commands.

25:18 The list of nations that would be made to drink from the cup of the Lord’s judgment begins with **Judah** and **Jerusalem**, which would be made a source of derision (19:8; 25:9).

25:19 The first foreign nation condemned by God through Jeremiah was **Egypt**. The expanded oracle is found in ch. 46.

25:20 The **land of Uz** is generally interpreted as the region of Edom or northern Arabia. **Ashkelon** was captured by Nebuchadnezzar in 604 B.C. **Gaza** and **Ashdod** are also mentioned in Nebuchadnezzar’s Babylonian chronicles (see ch. 47).

25:21, 22 The states of **Edom**, **Moab**, and **Ammon**, and the Phoenician coastal territories of **Tyre** and **Sidon**, suffered heavily under Nebuchadnezzar’s attacks (see 48:1–49:22; Ezek. 27; 28).

25:23, 24 The Arabian desert kingdoms of **Dedan**, **Tema**, and **Buz** were condemned. Dedan and Tema were in Edomite territory (49:7, 8). The location of Buz is unknown.

25:25, 26 Elam and Media were located east of Babylon (49:34–39).

25:27, 28 The triad of terms for progressive inebriation—**drink**, **be drunk**, and **vomit**—emphasizes the extent of judgment that would flow from God’s cup of wrath. Those who refused the cup would be forced to **drink**.

of Israel: ⁱ“Drink, ^jbe drunk, and vomit! Fall and rise no more, because of the sword which I will send among you.””
²⁸And it shall be, if they refuse to take the cup from your hand to drink, then you shall say to them, “Thus says the LORD of hosts: “You shall certainly drink!
²⁹For behold, ^kI begin to bring calamity on the city ^lwhich is called by My name, and should you be utterly unpunished? You shall not be unpunished, for ^mI will call for a sword on all the inhabitants of the earth,” says the LORD of hosts.”
³⁰“Therefore prophesy against them all these words, and say to them:

‘The LORD will ⁿroar from on high,
And utter His voice from ^oHis holy habitation;
He will roar mightily against ^pHis fold.
He will give ^qa shout, as those who tread *the grapes*,
Against all the inhabitants of the earth.
³¹ A noise will come to the ends of the earth—
For the LORD has ^ra controversy with the nations;
^sHe will plead His case with all flesh.
He will give those *who are* wicked to the sword;” says the LORD.”

³²Thus says the LORD of hosts:

“Behold, disaster shall go forth
From nation to nation,
And ^ta great whirlwind shall be raised up
From the farthest parts of the earth.

²⁷ ⁱ Jer. 25:16; Hab. 2:16 ^j Is. 63:6
²⁹ ^k [Prov. 11:31]; Is. 10:12; Jer. 13:13; Ezek. 9:6; [Luke 23:31; 1 Pet. 4:17] ^l Dan. 9:18 ^m Ezek. 38:21
³⁰ ⁿ Is. 42:13; Joel 3:16; Amos 1:2 ^o Ps. 11:4 ^p 1 Kin. 9:3; Ps. 132:14 ^q Is. 16:9; Jer. 48:33
³¹ ^r Hos. 4:1; Mic. 6:2 ^s Is. 66:16; Joel 3:2
³² ^t Jer. 23:19; 30:23

³³ ^u Is. 34:2, 3; 66:16
^v Jer. 16:4, 6; Ezek. 39:4, 17 ^w Ps. 79:3; Jer. 8:2; Rev. 11:9
³⁴ ^x Jer. 4:8; 6:26; Ezek. 27:30
³⁵ ^y Or *refuge*

CHAPTER 26

² ^a 2 Chr. 24:20, 21; Jer. 19:14

³³“And at that day the slain of the LORD shall be from *one* end of the earth even to the *other* end of the earth. They shall not be ^vlamented, ^wor gathered, or buried; they shall become refuse on the ground.

³⁴“Wail,^x shepherds, and cry!
Roll about *in the ashes*,
You leaders of the flock!
For the days of your slaughter and your dispersions are fulfilled;
You shall fall like a precious vessel.
³⁵ And the shepherds will have no ^yway to flee,
Nor the leaders of the flock to escape.
³⁶ A voice of the cry of the shepherds,
And a wailing of the leaders to the flock *will be heard*.
For the LORD has plundered their pasture,
³⁷ And the peaceful dwellings are cut down
Because of the fierce anger of the LORD.
³⁸ He has left His lair like the lion;
For their land is desolate
Because of the fierceness of the Oppressor,
And because of His fierce anger.”

Jeremiah Saved from Death

26 In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, this word came from the LORD, saying, ²“Thus says the LORD: ‘Stand in ^athe court of the LORD’s house, and speak to all the cities of Judah, which come

25:29 God’s judgment would **begin** with His own people and their holy city. God would **bring calamity** on the city that was called by His **name**. In doing so, God would vindicate His name and His holiness. From Jerusalem, God’s **sword** of judgment would go forth to the ends of the earth.
25:30 on high . . . from His holy habitation: Generally these phrases refer to God’s abode on Mt. Zion (see Joel 3:16; Amos 1:2).

shepherd

(Heb. *ra'ah*) (23:1; 25:34; 31:10; Gen. 49:24; Ps. 23:1) Strong’s #7462

The Hebrew noun for *shepherd* refers to someone who feeds and tends domestic animals. David spoke of God as his shepherd because God provided, sustained, and guided him (Ps. 23). Kings and other leaders were also seen as shepherds of their people, and the title “shepherd” was frequently applied to kings in the ancient Middle East. David was a true shepherd-king, responsibly leading and protecting his people (2 Sam. 5:1, 2). Jeremiah rebuked the leaders of Israel who were false shepherds and failed in their responsibility of caring for the spiritual well-being of God’s people (23:1–4).

25:31 A **noise** refers to a thunderous judgment resulting from God’s **controversy** or “covenant lawsuit” against the nations. Though they had not received the Law like Judah and Israel, the Gentiles would be judged because they were **wicked**. The word *wicked* refers to the guilt associated with the breach of ethical standards, including violating the poor and needy and abusing the oppressed.
25:32, 33 As with Judah’s horrifying calamity of unburied corpses (7:33), the nations would experience massive death and extensive destruction. The neglect of the dead is described in a triad of terms: **not be lamented . . . (not be) gathered . . . (not be) buried**. This desecration would be finalized by the decay of bodies into **refuse** or “dung” (8:2; 9:22; 16:4).
25:37, 38 Homes and pastures that once were **peaceful** and secure would be devastated. **The Oppressor** is a surprising designation for the Lord.
26:1 In the beginning: This expression technically refers to the part of the year between the day the king ascended to the throne and the beginning of his first full year of reign, which began in the spring month of Nisan (March–April), 608 B.C.
26:2 The **court** of the temple may refer to one of the inner courts connected by the gate mentioned in 7:2. **Come to worship** describes the normal worship there or perhaps more specifically the pilgrimages to Jerusalem for festival and fast days. **Do not diminish:** Jeremiah was told to speak unsparingly with unwavering boldness.

to worship *in* the LORD's house, ^ball the words that I command you to speak to them. ^cDo not diminish a word. ^{3d}Perhaps everyone will listen and turn from his evil way, that I may ^erelent concerning the calamity which I purpose to bring on them because of the evil of their doings.⁷ ⁴And you shall say to them, "Thus says the LORD: ^f"If you will not listen to Me, to walk in My law which I have set before you, ⁵to heed the words of My servants the prophets ^gwhom I sent to you, both rising up early and sending *them* (but you have not heeded), ⁶then I will make this house like ^hShiloh, and will make this city ⁱa curse to all the nations of the earth."'"

⁷So the priests and the prophets and all the people heard Jeremiah speaking these words in the house of the LORD. ⁸Now it happened, when Jeremiah had made an end of speaking all that the LORD had commanded *him* to speak to all the people, that the priests and the prophets and all the people seized him, saying, "You will surely die! ⁹Why have you prophesied in the name of the LORD, saying, 'This house shall be like Shiloh, and this city shall be ^jdesolate, without an inhabitant?'" And all the people were gathered against Jeremiah in the house of the LORD.

¹⁰When the princes of Judah heard these things, they came up from the king's house to the house of the LORD and sat down in the entry of the New Gate of the LORD's house. ¹¹And the priests and the prophets spoke to the princes and all the people, saying, ¹"This man deserves to ^kdie! For he has prophesied against this city, as you have heard with your ears."

¹²Then Jeremiah spoke to all the princes and all the people, saying: "The LORD

² ^b Deut. 4:2; Jer. 43:1; Ezek. 3:10; Matt. 28:20; [Rev. 22:19] ^c Acts 20:27
³ ^d Is. 1:16-19; Jer. 36:3-7 ^e Jer. 18:8; Jon. 3:9
⁴ ^f Lev. 26:14, 15; Deut. 28:15; 1 Kin. 9:6; Is. 1:20; Jer. 17:27; 22:5
⁵ ^g Jer. 25:4; 29:19
⁶ ^h 1 Sam. 4:10, 11; Ps. 78:60; Jer. 7:12, 14 ⁱ 2 Kin. 22:19; Is. 65:15; Jer. 24:9
⁹ ^j Jer. 9:11
¹¹ ^k Jer. 38:4 ¹ Lit. A judgment of death to this man

¹³ ^l Jer. 7:3; [Joel 2:13]; Jon. 3:8
¹⁴ ^m Jer. 38:5
² right
¹⁷ ⁿ Acts 5:34
¹⁸ ^o Mic. 1:1 ^p Mic. 3:12 ^q Neh. 4:2; Ps. 79:1; Jer. 9:11 ³ Lit. house ⁴ Lit. high places
¹⁹ ^r 2 Chr. 32:26; Is. 37:1, 4, 15-20
² 2 Kin. 20:1-19 ^t Ex. 32:14; 2 Sam. 24:16; Jer. 18:8 ^u [Acts 5:39]

sent me to prophesy against this house and against this city with all the words that you have heard. ¹³Now therefore, ^lamend your ways and your doings, and obey the voice of the LORD your God; then the LORD will relent concerning the doom that He has pronounced against you. ¹⁴As for me, here ^mI am, in your hand; do with me as seems good and ²proper to you. ¹⁵But know for certain that if you put me to death, you will surely bring innocent blood on yourselves, on this city, and on its inhabitants; for truly the LORD has sent me to you to speak all these words in your hearing."

¹⁶So the princes and all the people said to the priests and the prophets, "This man does not deserve to die. For he has spoken to us in the name of the LORD our God."

¹⁷ⁿThen certain of the elders of the land rose up and spoke to all the assembly of the people, saying: ^{18o}"Micah of Moresheth prophesied in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah, and spoke to all the people of Judah, saying, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts:

^p"Zion shall be plowed *like* a field,
Jerusalem shall become ^qheaps of ruins,
And the mountain of the ³temple
Like the ⁴bare hills of the forest.'"

¹⁹Did Hezekiah king of Judah and all Judah ever put him to death? ^rDid he not fear the LORD and ^sseek the LORD's favor? And the LORD ^trelented concerning the doom which He had pronounced against them. ^uBut we are doing great evil against ourselves."

²⁰Now there was also a man who prophesied in the name of the LORD, Urijah the

26:3 The introduction to the judgment oracle is expressed in conditional terms. If the people repented of **evil** the Lord would relent from the **calamity** He was threatening to bring on them.

26:6 **Shiloh** was not far from Jerusalem. The people could see the effects of its destruction by the Philistines in 1050 B.C.—a destruction that overtook it even though it was the first resting place of the ark of the covenant. Jeremiah uses Shiloh as an illustration of the coming judgment of Jerusalem even though the temple of God had been built there.

26:8, 9 **The priests and the prophets and all the people** refers to the collective worship assembly. The religious leaders responsible for overseeing the temple considered Jeremiah's words blasphemy, for he spoke of the destruction of the temple itself. The people rejected Jeremiah's prophecy and tried to kill him (see John 8:59 for the similar rejection suffered by Jesus).

26:10, 11 Jeremiah's words were reported to the **princes**, the royal administrators and kingdom officials, who came to the **New Gate** to carry out an official inquiry. The prophets and priests presented an accusation against Jeremiah, calling for the death sentence for speaking **against** Jerusalem.

26:12, 13 Jeremiah called the assembly to **amend**, or make good,

their evil **ways** and to **obey** God's **voice**, here referring to the covenant and the words proclaimed by Jeremiah.

26:14, 15 Held captive by the hostile crowd, Jeremiah pointed to the potential sin of shedding **innocent blood**. Jeremiah had already accused the leaders of Jerusalem of shedding *innocent blood* with child sacrifices in the Hinnom valley (2:34; 19:4). **truly the Lord has sent me**: Sentencing God's prophet to death would result in greater judgment, in addition to the people's other offenses against heaven.

26:16 **This man does not deserve to die**: Jeremiah's self-defense gained acceptance from the crowd, against the objections of the wicked religious leaders.

26:17-19 After Jeremiah's hearing, one of the **elders** from the people cited the precedent of the eighth century prophet **Micah of Moresheth**. In the reign of **Hezekiah**, Micah had announced the impending destruction of Jerusalem by the Assyrians (see Mic. 3:12). Yet because of the repentance of Hezekiah and the inhabitants, the city was spared from the onslaught of the Assyrian army under Sennacherib (701 B.C.).

26:20-23 **Urijah**, whose name means "My Light Is the Lord," was from Kirjath Jearim, about 15 miles west of Jerusalem (see 1 Sam. 7:1, 2). Like Jeremiah, Urijah had **prophesied in the name of the**

son of Shemaiah of Kirjath Jearim, who prophesied against this city and against this land according to all the words of Jeremiah. ²¹And when Jehoiakim the king, with all his mighty men and all the princes, heard his words, the king sought to put him to death; but when Urijah heard *it*, he was afraid and fled, and went to Egypt. ²²Then Jehoiakim the king sent men to Egypt: Elnathan the son of Achbor, and *other men who went with him to Egypt*. ²³And they brought Urijah from Egypt and brought him to Jehoiakim the king, who killed him with the sword and cast his dead body into the graves of the ⁵common people.

²⁴Nevertheless ^vthe hand of Ahikam the son of Shaphan was with Jeremiah, so that they should not give him into the hand of the people to put him to death.

Symbol of the Bonds and Yokes

27 ^{In} the beginning of the reign of ²Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, ^aking of Judah, this word came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, ²“Thus says the LORD to me: ‘Make for yourselves bonds and yokes, ^band put them on your neck, ³and send them to the king of Edom, the king of Moab, the king of the Ammonites, the king of Tyre, and the king of Sidon, by the hand of the messengers who come to Jerusalem to Zedekiah king of Judah. ⁴And command them to say to their masters, “Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel—thus you shall say to your masters: ^{5c}‘I have made the earth, the man and the beast that *are*

23 ⁵ Lit. *sons of the people*
24 ^v 2 Kin. 22:12-14; Jer. 39:14; 40:5-7

CHAPTER 27

¹ ^a Jer. 27:3, 12, 20; 28:1 ¹ LXX omits v. 1. ² So with MT, Tg., Vg.; some Heb. mss., Arab., Syr. *Zedekiah* (cf. 27:3, 12; 28:1)
² ^b Jer. 28:10, 12; Ezek. 4:1; 12:3; 24:3
⁵ ^c Ps. 115:15; 146:6; Is. 45:12

^d Deut. 9:29; Ps. 115:16; Jer. 32:17; Dan. 4:17, 25, 32
⁶ ^a Jer. 28:14 ¹ Jer. 25:9; 43:10; Ezek. 29:18, 20 ^a Jer. 28:14; Dan. 2:38
⁷ ^b 2 Chr. 36:20
¹ Jer. 25:12; 50:27; [Dan. 5:26]; Zech. 2:8, 9 ¹ Jer. 25:14
⁹ ³ Lit. *dreams*
¹⁰ ^k Jer. 23:16, 32; 28:15
¹² ¹ Jer. 28:1; 38:17
¹³ ^m [Prov. 8:36]; Jer. 27:8; 38:23; [Ezek. 18:31]

on the ground, by My great power and by My outstretched arm, and ^dhave given it to whom it seemed proper to Me. ^{6e}And now I have given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, ^fMy servant; and ^gthe beasts of the field I have also given him to serve him. ^{7h}So all nations shall serve him and his son and his son's son, ⁱuntil the time of his land comes; ^jand then many nations and great kings shall make him serve them. ⁸And it shall be, *that* the nation and kingdom which will not serve Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, and which will not put its neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, that nation I will punish,' says the LORD, 'with the sword, the famine, and the pestilence, until I have consumed them by his hand. ⁹Therefore do not listen to your prophets, your diviners, your ³dreamers, your soothsayers, or your sorcerers, who speak to you, saying, "You shall not serve the king of Babylon." ¹⁰For they prophesy a ^klie to you, to remove you far from your land; and I will drive you out, and you will perish. ¹¹But the nations that bring their necks under the yoke of the king of Babylon and serve him, I will let them remain in their own land,' says the LORD, 'and they shall till it and dwell in it.'”

¹²I also spoke to ¹Zedekiah king of Judah according to all these words, saying, “Bring your necks under the yoke of the king of Babylon, and serve him and his people, and live! ^{13m}Why will you die, you and your people, by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence, as the LORD

LORD about judgment against Jerusalem. When **Jehoiakim** and his administrators heard of Urijah's declarations, they sought to seize the “blasphemous” prophet, who escaped by fleeing to **Egypt**. Since Jehoiakim was a vassal to Necho of Egypt, Urijah was extradited and executed. **Elnathan the son of Achbor** was among the princes in Jehoiakim's court who heard the reading of Jeremiah's first scroll of oracles (36:11–19) and protested Jehoiakim's burning of the scroll (36:20–26).

26:24 Jeremiah was sheltered by **Ahikam the son of Shaphan** who, along with his father, served as a scribe under Josiah when the Book of the Law was found in the temple (see 2 Kin. 22:8–14). Ahikam's brother Gemariah also opposed Jehoiakim's burning of Jeremiah's original scroll (36:25). This faithful family was supportive of Jeremiah and was instrumental in saving his life.

27:2, 3 Bonds and yokes are wooden bars or beams that attach to a pair of oxen with leather bands. The symbolic act of wearing the yoke would communicate bondage, restraint, and enslavement. The **messengers** were foreign ambassadors in Jerusalem.

27:4, 5 The foreign ambassadors were to announce to their **masters** that the God of Israel is the true sovereign Lord over creation and the affairs of humans. The whole of creation is summed up in the triad **earth . . . man . . . beast**. Unlike the gods of the nations, whose power was often believed to be geographically limited, the God of Israel reigned over all the earth, granting territorial rights and power to nations and kings as **it seemed proper** to Him.

27:6, 7 My servant: With all of his military might and conquests, the king of Babylon was still a servant of the God of Israel, carrying

out the Lord's purposes—namely the judgment of Judah. **son's son . . . time of his land:** Following the death of Nebuchadnezzar in 562 B.C., his heirs and successors retained control of Babylon for only 24 years. Babylon fell without a battle to Cyrus and the Persian armies in 539 B.C., and later to Alexander the Great of Greece.

27:8 The symbol of the **yoke** is explained to the foreign ambassadors. Those who would not submit as vassals to Babylon would be punished.

27:9, 10 The way kings summoned various prophet-diviners to give them direction is well known from the Book of Daniel (see Dan. 2:2; 5:7). Besides **prophets**, there were **diviners**, like Balaam (see Num. 22–24), who were prohibited from practicing their craft in Israel (see Deut. 18:9–14); **dreamers**, a class of fortune-tellers prohibited by the Law (see Deut. 13:1–5); as well as **soothsayers** and **sorcerers**, both common among the nations but forbidden to practice their trades in Israel (see Deut. 18:9–14). The collective effort of these diviners to determine the fate of their nations failed. Like the false prophets of Judah, they heralded a message of rebellion and resistance against Babylon. Only Jeremiah stood for the truth: the Lord would punish Judah through Nebuchadnezzar.

27:11 bring their necks under the yoke: To submit to Babylon was to submit to the will and purposes of God.

27:12, 13 Jeremiah's message to **Zedekiah** was the same as his message to the foreign ambassadors (vv. 4–11): submit to Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonians and **live**, or rebel against Nebuchadnezzar—and God—and **die**.

has spoken against the nation that will not serve the king of Babylon? ¹⁴Therefore ^ado not listen to the words of the prophets who speak to you, saying, ‘You shall not serve the king of Babylon,’ for they prophesy ^aa lie to you; ¹⁵for I have ^bnot sent them,” says the LORD, “yet they prophesy a lie in My name, that I may drive you out, and that you may perish, you and the prophets who prophesy to you.”

¹⁶Also I spoke to the priests and to all this people, saying, “Thus says the LORD: ‘Do not listen to the words of your prophets who prophesy to you, saying, “Behold, ^cthe vessels of the LORD’s house will now shortly be brought back from Babylon”; for they prophesy a lie to you. ¹⁷Do not listen to them; serve the king of Babylon, and live! Why should this city be laid waste? ¹⁸But if they *are* prophets, and if the word of the LORD is with them, let them now make intercession to the LORD of hosts, that the vessels which are left in the house of the LORD, *in* the house of the king of Judah, and at Jerusalem, do not go to Babylon.’

¹⁹“For thus says the LORD of hosts ^cconcerning the pillars, concerning the Sea, concerning the carts, and concerning the remainder of the vessels that remain in this city, ²⁰which Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon did not take, when he carried away ^dcaptive Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, from Jerusalem to Babylon, and all the nobles of Judah and Jerusalem— ²¹yes, thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, concerning the ‘vessels that remain in the house of the LORD, and in the house of the king of Judah and of Jerusalem: ²²‘They shall be

¹⁴ ^a Jer. 23:16 ^a Jer. 14:14; 23:21; 29:8, 9; Ezek. 13:22
¹⁵ ^b Jer. 23:21; 29:9
¹⁶ ^c 2 Kin. 24:13;
2 Chr. 36:7, 10; Jer. 28:3; Dan. 1:2
¹⁹ ^c 1 Kin. 7:15;
2 Kin. 25:13-17; Jer. 52:17, 20, 21
²⁰ ^d 2 Kin. 24:14,
15; 2 Chr. 36:10, 18;
Jer. 24:1
²¹ ^c Jer. 20:5

²² ^a 2 Kin. 25:13;
2 Chr. 36:18 ^a 2 Chr. 36:21; Jer. 29:10;
32:5 ^a Ezra 1:7; 7:19

CHAPTER 28

¹ ^a Jer. 27:1 ^b Jer. 51:59 ^c Ezek. 11:1
² ^d Jer. 27:12
³ ^a Jer. 27:16 ^b 2 Kin. 24:13; Dan. 1:2
⁴ ^c *Jehoiachin*, 2 Kin. 24:12
⁶ ^d 1 Kin. 1:36; Ps. 41:13; Jer. 11:5

“carried to Babylon, and there they shall be until the day that I ^evisit them,” says the LORD. “Then ^eI will bring them up and restore them to this place.”

Hananiah’s Falsehood and Doom

28 And ^ait happened in the same year, at the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah king of Judah, in the ^bfourth year and in the fifth month, *that* Hananiah the son of ^cAzur the prophet, who *was* from Gibeon, spoke to me in the house of the LORD in the presence of the priests and of all the people, saying, ²“Thus speaks the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, saying: ‘I have broken ^dthe yoke of the king of Babylon. ³^eWithin two full years I will bring back to this place all the vessels of the LORD’s house, that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon ^ftook away from this place and carried to Babylon. ⁴And I will bring back to this place ¹Jecooniah the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, with all the captives of Judah who went to Babylon,’ says the LORD, ‘for I will break the yoke of the king of Babylon.’”

⁵Then the prophet Jeremiah spoke to the prophet Hananiah in the presence of the priests and in the presence of all the people who stood in the house of the LORD, ⁶and the prophet Jeremiah said, ⁷“Amen! The LORD do so; the LORD perform your words which you have prophesied, to bring back the vessels of the LORD’s house and all who were carried away captive, from Babylon to this place. ⁷Nevertheless hear now this word that I speak in your hearing and in the hearing of all the people: ⁸The prophets who have been before me and before you of

27:15 I have not sent them: Divine call and commission are prerequisites to fulfilling a true prophetic role.

27:16, 17 Do not listen: For the priests to *listen* to the false words of the prophets concerning the inviolability of the temple was to seal their own doom and that of the temple. Many **vessels** (v. 19) had been carried off by Nebuchadnezzar in the exile of Jeconiah (Jehoiachin). The false prophets said that Babylon would be defeated and the temple furnishings would be returned.

27:18 Jeremiah proposed a test to verify the words of the contentious prophets. **if the word of the LORD is with them:** If the prophets truly spoke for the Lord, their **intercession**—the survival of the remaining temple implements—would come to pass. **vessels which are left:** Many of the furnishings of the temple of the Lord were transported to Babylon in the exile of Jehoiachin and his entourage (see 2 Kin. 24:13). According to Jeremiah, the vessels that remained would be taken in the final destruction of the city. Events would demonstrate whose word was from the Lord.

27:21, 22 Jeremiah’s message from the Lord is presented in detail. The remaining **vessels** in the temple, as well as in the king’s palace, would be **carried to Babylon** until the Lord restored His people. In the midst of a prophetic message against the false prophets, Jeremiah spoke a message of hope and restoration. Destruction was imminent, but God does not forget His people. He would **restore** the righteous remnant.

28:1 The same year refers to the time of ch. 27 (593 B.C.). **The fifth month** was the month of Ab (July–August). **Hananiah** was from **Gibeon**, six miles northwest of Jerusalem and about five miles west of Jeremiah’s hometown, Anathoth. Hananiah’s name means “The Lord Is Gracious.”

28:2–4 Hananiah spoke in the name of the **LORD of hosts**, using the name of God as Jeremiah did to introduce a solemn message of judgment against Babylon. Building on Jeremiah’s imagery of the **yoke** (ch. 27), Hananiah proclaimed the contradictory message that the **yoke of . . . Babylon** would be **broken** by God. Hananiah believed that God’s message for Judah was one of imminent deliverance—**within two full years**—from servitude to the king of Babylon. Hananiah also prophesied the return of the holy **vessels** taken by **Nebuchadnezzar** from the temple of God. Furthermore, Hananiah espoused the popular belief that the kingship of Zedekiah was illegitimate and that God would restore **Jecooniah** (Jehoiachin) to the throne in Jerusalem.

28:7–9 war and disaster and pestilence: Hananiah’s message of peace and prosperity ran contrary to the long tradition of the genuine Hebrew prophets. Amos, Hosea, Micah, Joel, and Nahum spoke words of judgment and destruction against **great kingdoms** like Assyria and Egypt. **Peace** in this context refers to the well-being and wholeness resulting from God’s restoration of the nation.

old prophesied against many countries and great kingdoms—of war and disaster and pestilence.⁹ As for^h the prophet who prophesies ofⁱ peace, when the word of the prophet comes to pass, the prophet will be known as one whom the LORD has truly sent.”

¹⁰ Then Hananiah the prophet took the yoke off the prophet Jeremiah’s neck and broke it. ¹¹ And Hananiah spoke in the presence of all the people, saying, “Thus says the LORD: ‘Even so I will break the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon^k from the neck of all nations within the space of two full years.’” And the prophet Jeremiah went his way.

¹² Now the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah, after Hananiah the prophet had broken the yoke from the neck of the prophet Jeremiah, saying, ¹³ “Go and tell Hananiah, saying, ‘Thus says the LORD: “You have broken the yokes of wood, but you have made in their place yokes of iron.”’ ¹⁴ For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: ^{14a} “I have put a yoke of iron on the neck of all these nations, that they may serve Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon; and they shall serve him. ^m I have given him the beasts of the field also.”’”

¹⁵ Then the prophet Jeremiah said to Hananiah the prophet, “Hear now, Hananiah, the LORD has not sent you, butⁿ you make this people trust in a^o lie. ¹⁶ Therefore thus says the LORD: ‘Behold, I will cast you from the face of the earth. This year you shall^p die, because you have taught^q rebellion against the LORD.’”

¹⁷ So Hananiah the prophet died the same year in the seventh month.

⁹ ^h Deut. 18:22

¹ Jer. 23:17; Ezek.

13:10, 16

¹⁰ / Jer. 27:2

¹¹ ^k Jer. 27:7

¹⁴ / Deut. 28:48; Jer.

27:7, 8 ^m Jer. 27:6

¹⁵ ⁿ Jer. 20:6; 29:31;

Lam. 2:14; Ezek.

13:22; Zech. 13:3

^o Jer. 27:10; 29:9

¹⁶ ^p Jer. 20:6

^q Deut. 13:5; Jer.

29:32

CHAPTER 29

¹ ^a Jer. 27:20

² ^b 2 Kin. 24:12–16;

2 Chr. 36:9, 10; Jer.

22:24–28 ^c 2 Kin.

24:12, 15; Jer. 13:18

¹ Jehoiachin, 2 Kin.

24:12; 2 Chr. 36:10

² Or officers

³ ^d 2 Chr. 34:8

⁷ ^e Ezra 6:10; Neh.

1:4–11; Dan. 9:16;

1 Tim. 2:2

Jeremiah's Letter to the Captives

29 Now these *are* the words of the letter that Jeremiah the prophet sent from Jerusalem to the remainder of the elders who were ^acarried away captive—to the priests, the prophets, and all the people whom Nebuchadnezzar had carried away captive from Jerusalem to Babylon. ² (This happened after ^bJeconiah¹ the king, the ^cqueen mother, the ²eunuchs, the princes of Judah and Jerusalem, the craftsmen, and the smiths had departed from Jerusalem.) ³ *The letter was sent* by the hand of Elasah the son of ^dShaphan, and Gemariah the son of Hilkiah, whom Zedekiah king of Judah sent to Babylon, to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, saying,

⁴ Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, to all who were carried away captive, whom I have caused to be carried away from Jerusalem to Babylon:

⁵ Build houses and dwell *in them*; plant gardens and eat their fruit. ⁶ Take wives and beget sons and daughters; and take wives for your sons and give your daughters to husbands, so that they may bear sons and daughters—that you may be increased there, and not diminished. ⁷ And seek the peace of the city where I have caused you to be carried away captive, ^eand pray to the LORD for it; for in its peace you will have peace. ⁸ For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Do not let your prophets and your diviners who are in your

28:10, 11 Seizing the **yoke** from Jeremiah’s **neck** (ch. 27) and breaking it before the people, Hananiah made a resounding proclamation: **Even so I will break the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar . . . from the neck of all nations within the space of two full years.** This announcement reversed every statement by Jeremiah and advanced the cause of rebellion against Babylon by Judah and the surrounding nations, something King Zedekiah had desired all along.

28:12, 13 After an indefinite period of time, the **word of the LORD came to Jeremiah.** God’s prophet was instructed to return to Hananiah with a new interpretation of the yoke motif. Because Hananiah had broken the original **yokes of wood**, God would replace them with **yokes of iron** that could not be broken.

28:14 **All these nations** against which Jeremiah originally had spoken (in 27:1–11) would serve Nebuchadnezzar.

28:15, 16 **Hananiah** had not been **sent** by God, but he had led the people astray with a **lie**. As a result, Hananiah would be **cast . . . from the face of the earth** and **die** that very year.

28:17 **the seventh month:** Two months after Hananiah prophesied about Judah’s captivity (v. 1), the false prophet was dead.

29:1 **words of the letter:** A written document was carried from Jerusalem to the Jews in Babylon. **remainder:** This may imply that some of the **elders** were executed in the 594 B.C. revolt alluded to in vv. 21–23.

29:2 This parenthetical passage provides background from 2 Kin.

24:12–16 concerning the deportation of Jeconiah (Jehoiachin), the royal family, and chief artisans of Judah to Babylon in 597 B.C. This method of eliminating leaders and leaving the peasant population to pay taxes to the kingdom was learned from the Assyrians and was designed to reduce the likelihood of rebellion.

29:3 The messengers were **Elasah the son of Shaphan**, perhaps a brother of the sympathetic Ahikam (26:24), and **Gemariah the son of Hilkiah**, a member of Jehoiakim’s administration (36:10).

29:4 Jeremiah reminded the exiled community that ultimately it was **God**, not Nebuchadnezzar, who had caused them to be **carried away captive . . . to Babylon.**

29:5, 6 Jeremiah had proclaimed a period of 70 years (25:12) of Babylonian exile. For the meantime, he counseled the people to settle in and carry on their normal daily activities. The terms **build** and **plant** are significant because they fulfill the particulars of Jeremiah’s call (1:10). Exile did not necessarily mean imprisonment or enslavement, but displacement and resettlement in unknown lands. **be increased . . . not diminished:** If the people were faithful in the circumstances of captivity, God would cause them to prosper with children and with fertile crops.

29:7 The exiles were instructed to **seek** and **pray** for the **peace**, or well-being, of Babylon and the other towns where they were deported. As a result, they themselves would live in peace as beneficiaries of God’s gracious sovereignty over the nations (27:5, 6).

29:8, 9 Jeremiah issued a warning against following the advice of

midst ^fdeceive you, nor listen to your dreams which you cause to be dreamed. ⁹ For they prophesy ^gfalsely to you in My name; I have not sent them, says the LORD.

¹⁰ For thus says the LORD: After ^hseventy years are completed at Babylon, I will visit you and perform My good word toward you, and cause you to ⁱreturn to this place. ¹¹ For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope. ¹² Then you will ^jcall upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will ^klisten to you. ¹³ And ^lyou will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me ^mwith all your heart. ¹⁴ ⁿI will be found by you, says the LORD, and I will bring you back from your captivity; ^oI will gather you from all the nations and from all the places where I have driven you, says the LORD, and I will bring you to the place from which I cause you to be carried away captive.

¹⁵ Because you have said, “The LORD has raised up prophets for us in Babylon”—¹⁶ ^ptherefore thus says the LORD concerning the king who sits on the throne of David, concerning all the people who dwell in this city, and concerning your brethren who have not gone out with you into

⁸ ^f Jer. 14:14; 23:21; 27:14, 15; Eph. 5:6
⁹ ^g Jer. 28:15; 37:19
¹⁰ ^h 2 Chr. 36:21-23; Ezra 1:1-4; Jer. 25:12; 27:22; Dan. 9:2; Zech. 7:5 ⁱ [Jer. 24:6, 7]; Zeph. 2:7
¹² ^j Ps. 50:15; Jer. 33:3; Dan. 9:3 ^k Ps. 145:19
¹³ ^l Lev. 26:39-42; Deut. 30:1-3
^m 1 Chr. 22:19; 2 Chr. 22:9; Jer. 24:7
¹⁴ ⁿ [Deut. 4:7]; Ps. 32:6; 46:1; [Is. 55:6, 7]; Jer. 24:7 ^o Is. 43:5, 6; Jer. 23:8; 32:37
¹⁶ ^p Jer. 38:2, 3, 17-23

¹⁷ ^q Jer. 24:3, 8-10
¹⁸ ^r Deut. 28:25; 2 Chr. 29:8; Jer. 15:4; 24:9; 34:17; Ezek. 12:15 ^s Jer. 26:6; 42:18
¹⁹ ^t Jer. 25:4; 26:5; 35:15
²¹ ^u Jer. 14:14, 15; Lam. 2:14; 2 Pet. 2:1
²² ^v Gen. 48:20; Is. 65:15 ^w Dan. 3:6, 21

captivity—¹⁷ thus says the LORD of hosts: Behold, I will send on them the sword, the famine, and the pestilence, and will make them like ^qrotten figs that cannot be eaten, they are so bad. ¹⁸ And I will pursue them with the sword, with famine, and with pestilence; and I ^rwill deliver them to trouble among all the kingdoms of the earth—to be ^sa curse, an astonishment, a hissing, and a reproach among all the nations where I have driven them, ¹⁹ because they have not heeded My words, says the LORD, which ^tI sent to them by My servants the prophets, rising up early and sending ^{them}; neither would you heed, says the LORD. ²⁰ Therefore hear the word of the LORD, all you of the captivity, whom I have sent from Jerusalem to Babylon.

²¹ Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, concerning Ahab the son of Kolaiah, and Zedekiah the son of Maaseiah, who prophesy a ^u“lie to you in My name: Behold, I will deliver them into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and he shall slay them before your eyes. ²² ^v And because of them a curse shall be taken up by all the captivity of Judah who ^{are} in Babylon, saying, “The LORD make you like Zedekiah and Ahab, ^wwhom the king of Babylon roasted in the fire”;

prophets, diviners, and dreams. A similar warning was issued to the nations surrounding Judah in 27:9, 10 and to Judah in 27:14, 17. **29:10** The concept of the **seventy years** of Babylon captivity is reiterated from 25:12. The number 70 symbolizes completion and fulfillment of God’s sovereign plans for creation and human history. The completion of the years of the kingdom of Babylon would also be the completion of Judah’s exile.

29:11 I know the thoughts that I think: The Lord here places considerable emphasis on His unchangeable plan to bring **peace** and not **evil**. **a future . . . a hope:** God had not terminated His relationship with Judah; He remembered His covenant promises of restoration (see Deut. 30:1-10).

29:12, 13 The promised response of the Lord to the people’s prayers stands in contrast to His refusal to hear in 7:16. **all your heart:** The picture here differs greatly from the usual depiction of the heart of the people of Judah as stubborn and wicked (3:10; 4:14; 7:24). God would search the people’s heart and reveal its true character (11:20).

29:14 I will be found: Those who seek God with a whole heart will find Him and experience His renewal. **I will bring you back . . . gather you . . . bring you to the place:** God was the captor, and He would restore His people from captivity.

29:19 The cause of Jerusalem’s shame was its failure to heed the **words** of God, revealed through the covenant stipulations and the diligent—**rising up early**—proclamation of the prophets (25:3; 26:5).

29:21 Ahab the son of Kolaiah, and Zedekiah the son of Maaseiah were the prophets spoken of in 29:15. The two were accused by Jeremiah of a deplorable crime: prophesying a **lie** in God’s **name**. Their **lie** was prophesying the imminent collapse of

Babylon and the restoration of the captives to Jerusalem. Such false prophecy urging rebellion against God was a capital offense (see Deut. 13:5-10). The prophetic punishment of Ahab and Zedekiah was death by command of **Nebuchadnezzar**.

29:22, 23 This term **curse** may be a play on the name Kolaiah (“called of the Lord”; v. 21). He claimed to be called of God, but was cursed along with those who supported his position. These Jewish leaders had compounded their sin by doing **disgraceful things** (see Deut. 22:21).

hissing

(Heb. *shereqah*) (29:18; 2 Chr. 29:8; Mic. 6:16) Strong’s #8322

The Hebrew word translated *hissing* is from a verb meaning “to whistle” (Is. 5:26) or “to play a pipe” as a signal for flocks (see Judg. 5:16). This word may refer to a superstitious practice among ancients: They would shake their head and whistle when passing by the ruins of a village or a deserted city, as a charm against suffering the same fate. The OT prophets used this word to warn the Israelites of the ridicule and scorn they would endure as part of God’s judgment on their sins (Lam. 2:15, 16; Zeph. 2:15). Jeremiah often used this word in connection with “astonishment” over a calamity (19:8; 29:18; 51:37). Zechariah used the same word to describe God’s gracious regathering of the Israelites from the Exile (Zech. 10:8), using the image of a shepherd whistling for his sheep.

²³because ^xthey have done disgraceful things in Israel, have committed adultery with their neighbors' wives, and have spoken lying words in My name, which I have not commanded them. Indeed I ^yknow, and *am* a witness, says the LORD.

²⁴You shall also speak to Shemaiah the Nehelamite, saying, ²⁵Thus speaks the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, saying: You have sent letters in your name to all the people who *are* at Jerusalem, ^zto Zephaniah the son of Maaseiah the priest, and to all the priests, saying, ²⁶"The LORD has made you priest instead of Jehoiada the priest, so that there should be ^aofficers *in* the house of the LORD over every man *who* is ^bdemented and considers himself a prophet, that you should ^cput him in prison and in the stocks. ²⁷Now therefore, why have you not rebuked Jeremiah of Anathoth who makes himself a prophet to you? ²⁸For he has sent to us *in* Babylon, saying, 'This *captivity* is long; build houses and dwell *in* them, and plant gardens and eat their fruit.'"

²⁹Now Zephaniah the priest read this letter in the hearing of Jeremiah the prophet. ³⁰Then the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah, saying: ³¹Send to all those in captivity, saying, Thus says the LORD concerning Shemaiah the Nehelamite: Because Shemaiah has prophesied to you, ^dand I have not sent him, and he has caused you to trust in a ^elie— ³²therefore thus says the LORD: Behold, I will punish Shemaiah the Nehelamite and his ³family: he shall not have anyone to dwell among this people, nor shall he see the good that I will do for My

²³ ^x Jer. 23:14
^y [Prov. 5:21; Jer. 16:17]; Mal. 3:5;
 [Heb. 4:13]
²⁵ ^z 2 Kin. 25:18;
 Jer. 21:1
²⁶ ^a Jer. 20:1
^b 2 Kin. 9:11; Hos. 9:7; Mark 3:21; John 10:20; Acts 26:24;
 [2 Cor. 5:13] ^c Jer. 20:1, 2; Acts 16:24
³¹ ^d Jer. 28:15
^e Ezek. 13:8-16,
 22, 23
³² ³ descendants,
 lit. seed

^f Jer. 28:16

CHAPTER 30

³ ^a Ps. 53:6; Jer. 29:14; 30:18; 32:44;
 Ezek. 39:25; Amos 9:14; Zeph. 3:20
^b Jer. 16:15; Ezek. 20:42; 36:24
⁵ ¹ dread
⁶ ^c Jer. 4:31; 6:24
² Lit. male can give birth ³ childbirth
⁷ ^d [Is. 2:12]; Hos. 1:11; Joel 2:11; Amos 5:18; Zeph. 1:14
^e Lam. 1:12; Dan. 9:12; 12:1
⁹ ^f Is. 55:3; Ezek. 34:23; 37:24; Hos. 3:5 ^g [Luke 1:69 ☆;
 Acts 2:30; 13:23]

people, says the LORD, ^fbecause he has taught rebellion against the LORD.

Restoration of Israel and Judah

30 The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, ²"Thus speaks the LORD God of Israel, saying: 'Write in a book for yourself all the words that I have spoken to you. ³For behold, the days are coming,' says the LORD, 'that ^aI will bring back from captivity My people Israel and Judah,' says the LORD. ^b'And I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it.'"

⁴Now these *are* the words that the LORD spoke concerning Israel and Judah.

⁵"For thus says the LORD:

'We have heard a voice of trembling,
 Of ¹fear, and not of peace.

⁶ Ask now, and see,
 Whether a ²man is ever in ³labor
 with child?

So why do I see every man *with* his
 hands on his loins

^cLike a woman in labor,
 And all faces turned pale?

⁷ ^dAlas! For that day *is* great,

^eSo that none *is* like it;
 And it *is* the time of Jacob's
 trouble,

But he shall be saved out of it.

⁸ 'For it shall come to pass in that
 day,

Says the LORD of hosts,

'That I will break his yoke from your
 neck,
 And will burst your bonds;
 Foreigners shall no more enslave
 them.

⁹ But they shall serve the LORD their
 God,

And ^fDavid their king,
 Whom I will ^graise up for them.

29:24–28 Jeremiah addressed **Shemaiah the Nehelamite** concerning his correspondence with **Zephaniah the son of Maaseiah** and the Jerusalem priesthood. Shemaiah had challenged Zephaniah's apparent leniency in dealing with the problem of Jeremiah's prophecies about the exiles' immediate future.

29:29, 30 When **Zephaniah** received the **letter** from Shemaiah, he read it to Jeremiah, who then received a word of judgment from God against Shemaiah and his family.

29:31, 32 **prophesied . . . caused you to trust in a lie**: The accusation against Shemaiah parallels that of numerous judgment oracles in Jeremiah (5:31; 14:14; 23:16; 27:10). The ensuing sentence against Shemaiah is like those against Pashhur (20:6), Jehoiachin or Coniah (22:30), and Hananiah (28:16).

30:2 The oracles of Jeremiah were recorded by the scribe Baruch (ch. 36). **Book** refers to any type of writing medium, from a clay tablet to a parchment scroll. Jeremiah's oracles were recorded on a scroll (36:2).

30:3 **they shall possess it**: Possession of the land, as in the original

possession under Joshua's leadership, would be the responsibility of the faithful remnant living according to the covenant relationship.

30:5, 6 **voice of trembling . . . fear . . . not of peace**: Jeremiah's audience was the whole nation of Israel and Judah, which had experienced the dread and horror of the day of the Lord (see Joel 1:1–2:11; Amos 5:18–20). **Hands on his loins** symbolizes the agony of God's people, who had become like defenseless pregnant women in the midst of delivery before their enemies (4:31; 6:24).

30:7–9 The incomparable **day** of God was an ordained time of horror and distress for Israel and Judah, out of which the Lord would save them. Jeremiah expressed the hope of release from the bondage of the **yoke** of Babylon according to the Lord's timing (25:12) and not that of men (28:11). Then Israel would no longer serve foreigners in foreign lands or in their own. Instead, the people of God would **serve the Lord their God, and David their king**. God would **raise up** a messianic king from David's line to rule over the nation (see Is. 9:7; 11:1; Hos. 3:5).

- 10 ‘Therefore ^hdo not fear, O My servant Jacob,’ says the LORD,
 ‘Nor be dismayed, O Israel;
 For behold, I will save you from afar,
 And your seed ⁱfrom the land of their captivity.
 Jacob shall return, have rest and be quiet,
 And no one shall make *him* afraid.
 11 For I *am* with ^jyou,’ says the LORD,
 ‘to save you;
^kThough I make a full end of all nations where I have scattered you,
^lYet I will not make a complete end of you.
 But I will correct you ^min justice,
 And will not let you go altogether unpunished.’

12 “For thus says the LORD:

- ⁿ‘Your affliction *is* incurable,
 Your wound *is* severe.
 13 *There is* no one to plead your cause,
 That you may be bound up;
^oYou have no healing medicines.
 14 ^pAll your lovers have forgotten you;
 They do not seek you;
 For I have wounded you with the wound ^qof an enemy,
 With the chastisement ^rof a cruel one,
 For the multitude of your iniquities,
^s*Because* your sins have increased.
 15 Why ^tdo you cry about your affliction?
 Your sorrow *is* incurable.
 Because of the multitude of your iniquities,
Because your sins have increased,
 I have done these things to you.

10 ^hIs. 41:13; 43:5; 44:2; Jer. 46:27, 28
ⁱJer. 3:18
 11 ^j[Is. 43:2-5]
^kAmos 9:8 ^lJer. 4:27; 46:27, 28 ^mPs. 6:1; Is. 27:8; Jer. 10:24; 46:28
 12 ⁿ2 Chr. 36:16; Jer. 15:18
 13 ^oJer. 8:22
 14 ^pJer. 22:20, 22; Lam. 1:2 ^qJob 13:24; 16:9; 19:11
^rJob 30:21 ^sJer. 5:6
 15 ^tJer. 15:18

16 ^uEx. 23:22; Is. 41:11; Jer. 10:25 ^vIs. 14:2; Joel 3:8 ^wIs. 33:1; Ezek. 39:10
^xJer. 2:3
 17 ^yEx. 15:26; Ps. 107:20; Is. 30:26; Jer. 33:6
 18 ^zPs. 102:13
^aruins
 19 ^aPs. 126:1, 2; Is. 51:11; Jer. 31:4; Zeph. 3:14 ^bIs. 49:19-21; Jer. 23:3; 33:22; Zech. 10:8
 20 ^cIs. 1:26
 21 ^dGen. 49:10

- 16 ‘Therefore all those who devour you
^ushall be devoured;
 And all your adversaries, every one of them, shall go into ^vcaptivity;
 Those who plunder you shall become ^wplunder,
 And all who prey upon you I will make a ^xprey.
 17 ^yFor I will restore health to you
 And heal you of your wounds,’ says the LORD,
 ‘Because they called you an outcast *saying*:
 “This *is* Zion;
 No one seeks her.”’
 18 “Thus says the LORD:
 ‘Behold, I will bring back the captivity of Jacob’s tents,
 And ^zhave mercy on his dwelling places;
 The city shall be built upon its own ^amound,
 And the palace shall remain according to its own plan.
 19 Then ^aout of them shall proceed thanksgiving
 And the voice of those who make merry;
^bI will multiply them, and they shall not diminish;
 I will also glorify them, and they shall not be small.
 20 Their children also shall be ^cas before,
 And their congregation shall be established before Me;
 And I will punish all who oppress them.
 21 Their nobles shall be from among them,
^dAnd their governor shall come from their midst;

30:10 My servant: The use of this terminology for Israel and Judah parallels that of Is. 42:1; 44:1. The hope of the nation was **rest**, tranquility in the absence of external and internal distress, and **quiet**, security and ease resulting from trust in the Lord.

30:12 Your affliction is incurable, Your wound is severe: God’s hand of judgment had brought serious harm to the nation, a mortal wound unless God intervened.

30:13 Healing here refers to the growth of new skin over an open wound.

30:14 Israel’s **lovers** were nations like Assyria, Egypt, Phoenicia, Ammon, and Edom, with whom it had made political and religious alliances. These nations had quickly **forgotten** Judah; they shrank back or were defeated by Nebuchadnezzar. Egypt, for example, had supported Zedekiah’s rebellion, but was defeated in 588 B.C. by Nebuchadnezzar. When the Egyptian army retreated beyond the Brook of Egypt, the army of Babylon laid siege to Jerusalem and destroyed it, in 586 B.C. (37:1–5).

30:15 iniquities . . . sins: These terms are repeated from v. 14, emphasizing the character of the people and echoing the reasons for harsh judgment. The lament applied to both the sin and its results.

30:16, 17 Restoration and healing of Israel came in two forms, retribution against its enemies and healing of its wounds. Four sets of terms designate God’s retributive justice: **those who devour would be devoured**; **adversaries would go into captivity**; **those who plunder would become plunder**; and **all who prey would become prey**. Healing was promised in response to the people’s repentance (3:22; 33:6), a reversal of their incurable position (8:22; 30:12).

30:18 Jacob’s tents . . . dwelling places . . . city . . . palace: These phrases emphasize God’s work in rebuilding the homes and cities of His returning exiles, from the peasant population to the administration.

30:19 Instead of the voice of lament, fear, and trembling echoing throughout the land (4:31; 30:5), the sound of **thanksgiving** and merrymaking would reverberate. The word *thanksgiving* refers to a manner of appreciative praise. **Merry** suggests the joy of laughter and play.

30:21 Israel’s leaders would no longer be appointed by foreign kings, and foreign rulers would not preside over Israel’s lands.

Then I will ^ecause him to draw near,
And he shall approach Me;
For who is this who pledged his
heart to approach Me?" says the
LORD.
22 ^c You shall be ^fMy people,
And I will be your God."
23 Behold, the ^gwhirlwind of the LORD
Goes forth with fury,
A ⁵continuing whirlwind;
It will fall violently on the head of
the wicked.
24 The fierce anger of the LORD will not
return until He has done it,
And until He has performed the
intents of His heart.

^hIn the latter days you will consider it.

The Remnant of Israel Saved

31 "At ^athe same time," says the
LORD, ^b"I will be the God of all the
families of Israel, and they shall be My
people."

²Thus says the LORD:

"The people who survived the
sword
Found grace in the wilderness—
Israel, when ^cI went to give him rest."

³ The LORD has appeared ¹of old to me,
saying:
"Yes, ^dI have loved you with ^ean
everlasting love;
Therefore with lovingkindness I have
^fdrawn you.

21 ^e Num. 16:5;
Ps. 65:4
22 ^f Ex. 6:7; Jer.
32:38; Ezek. 36:28;
Hos. 2:23; Zech.
13:9
23 ^g Jer. 23:19;
20; 25:32 ⁵ Or
sweeping
24 ^h Gen. 49:1

CHAPTER 31

1 ^a Jer. 30:24 ^b Jer.
30:22
2 ^c Ex. 33:14; Num.
10:33; Deut. 1:33;
Josh. 1:13; Ps. 95:11;
Is. 63:14
3 ^d Deut. 4:37; 7:8;
Mal. 1:2 ^e Is. 43:4;
Rom. 11:28 ^f Hos.
11:4 ¹ Lit. *from afar*

4 ^g Jer. 33:7 ^h Ex.
15:20; Judg. 11:34;
Ps. 149:3
5 ⁱ Ps. 107:37; Is.
65:21; Ezek. 28:26;
Amos 9:14 ² Lit.
treat them as
common
6 ^j [Is. 2:3; Jer. 31:12;
50:4; 5; Mic. 4:2]
7 ^k Is. 12:5, 6
8 ^l Jer. 31:12, 18; 23:8
^m Deut. 30:4; Is.
43:6; Ezek. 20:34,
41; 34:13
9 ⁿ [Ps. 126:5; Jer.
50:4] ^o Is. 35:8;
43:19; 49:10, 11

4 Again ^oI will build you, and you
shall be rebuilt,
O virgin of Israel!
You shall again be adorned with your
^htambourines,
And shall go forth in the dances of
those who rejoice.
5 ⁱ You shall yet plant vines on the
mountains of Samaria;
The planters shall plant and ²eat
them as ordinary food.
6 For there shall be a day
When the watchmen will cry on
Mount Ephraim,
^jArise, and let us go up *to* Zion,
To the LORD our God."
7 For thus says the LORD:
^k"Sing with gladness for Jacob,
And shout among the chief of the
nations;
Proclaim, give praise, and say,
^cO LORD, save Your people,
The remnant of Israel!"
8 Behold, I will bring them ¹from the
north country,
And ^mgather them from the ends of
the earth,
Among them the blind and the lame,
The woman with child
And the one who labors with child,
together;
A great throng shall return there.
9 ⁿ They shall come with weeping,
And with supplications I will lead
them.
I will cause them to walk ^oby the
rivers of waters,

30:23, 24 These verses are essentially a reiteration of 23:19, 20. In this context, they attest to Israel's new understanding of its God and assure the people of God's judgment on their enemies and oppressors. **31:1** Coinciding with the restoration of the nation to its land would be the fulfillment of the covenant between God and His people, **all the families of Israel**. **31:2** **survived the sword . . . found grace in the wilderness . . . give him rest**: These phrases describe Israel's deliverance from Egypt and God's victory over the army of Pharaoh. God's *grace*, or favor, was manifest in the desert as He provided sustenance, shelter, and rest for His people. **31:3** **Of old**, which may also be translated "from afar," may refer to the betrothal days of Israel in the wilderness (2:1–3) or to the distant lands of Assyria and Babylon to which Israel and Judah had been exiled. The phrase **everlasting love** is paralleled with **loving-kindness**, which means "loyal love" or "covenant loyalty." Out of His faithfulness to the covenants He established with Abraham and Moses, and out of His great love, God established the nation Israel for His glory and for hers. The Lord would also deliver His people from captivity and reestablish them by His love. **31:4** There will be rejoicing as village life is restored. **I will build**: In Ps. 127:1, the psalmist says that unless God builds a house, the labor is in vain. **O virgin of Israel**: Earlier in Jeremiah, this expression was used sadly in depicting the departure of Israel from faith in God (2:32; 14:17). Here the image is reversed; Israel is rebuilt in the manner of her former betrothal (2:2), having become again like a virgin bride to God. **adorned . . . go forth in the dances**: Joyful

celebration of marriage and festival throughout villages is in view here (v. 13). **31:5** **The mountains of Samaria**, which were ravaged by the Assyrians in 733–722 B.C., would be replanted with vineyards. The hills would produce fruit for consumption rather than tribute for foreign powers. The plantings would be for regular, normal enjoyment—a gift of God in the lives of His people. **31:6** The **day** would come when the nation would be united once again, with northern kingdom Israelites making pilgrimages to **Zion** (Jerusalem) for worship, instead of continuing to visit the rival sanctuaries of Dan and Bethel (see 1 Kin. 12:27–29). The purpose of the **watchmen** would be not to warn the people about oncoming armies but to call them to come with joy to the holy city. **31:7** **The chief of the nations** would be **Jacob**, meaning Israel. In 15:9 the **remnant** is described as all but vanquished. Here the restored community shouts for joy. **31:9** **weeping . . . supplications**: Phrases from the Songs of Ascents (Ps. 120–134) are found here. In Ps. 126, those who are weeping are filled with gladness at the Lord's return of exiles from captivity. **rivers of waters**: This imagery of God's provision of life-sustaining water through the desert is like Is. 35:5–7. The reference to the **straight way** parallels Is. 40:3–5. **Father**: This text is one of the few cases in the OT where the fatherhood of God is portrayed directly (see Deut. 32:6; Is. 63:16). Israel was familiar with the idea of God as Father, but it was not until the teaching of Jesus that the phrase took on the importance that we understand it to have in our lives today. **Firstborn** conveys the concept of preeminence (31:7; Deut. 32:9).

In a straight way in which they shall
not stumble;
For I am a Father to Israel,
And Ephraim is My ^pfirstborn.

- 10^a Hear the word of the LORD,
O nations,
And declare *it* in the ³isles afar off,
and say,
‘He who scattered Israel ^qwill gather
him,
And keep him as a shepherd *does* his
flock.’
11 For ^rthe LORD has redeemed Jacob,
And ransomed him ^sfrom the hand
of one stronger than he.
12 Therefore they shall come and sing
in ^tthe height of Zion,
Streaming to ^uthe goodness of the
LORD—
For wheat and new wine and oil,
For the young of the flock and the
herd;
Their souls shall be like a
^vwell-watered garden,
^wAnd they shall sorrow no more at all.

- 13^a “Then shall the virgin rejoice in the
dance,
And the young men and the old,
together;
For I will turn their mourning to joy,
Will comfort them,
And make them rejoice rather than
sorrow.
14 I will ⁴satisfy the soul of the priests
with abundance,
And My people shall be satisfied
with My goodness, says the
LORD.”

Mercy on Ephraim

15 Thus says the LORD:

- ^x“A voice was heard in ^yRamah,
Lamentation and bitter ^zweeping,

9 ^p Ex. 4:22
10 ^q Is. 40:11; Ezek.
34:12-14. ³ Or
coastlands
11 ^r Is. 44:23; 48:20;
Jer. 15:21; 50:19. ^s Is.
49:24
12 ^t Ezek. 17:23
^u Hos. 3:5. ^v Is. 58:11
[John 16:22; Rev.
21:4]
14 ⁴ Fill to the full
15 ^x Matt. 2:17, 18. ☆
^y Josh. 18:25; Judg.
4:5; Is. 10:29; Jer.
40:1. ^z Gen. 37:35

^a Jer. 10:20
16 ^b [Is. 25:8; 30:19]
17 ^c Jer. 29:11
18 ^d Job 5:17; Ps.
94:12. ^e Ps. 80:3, 7,
19; Jer. 17:4; Lam.
5:21; [Acts 3:26]
19 ^f Deut. 30:2
^g Ezek. 36:31; [Zech.
12:10]
20 ^h Gen. 43:30;
Deut. 32:36; Judg.
10:16; Is. 63:15; Hos.
11:8. ⁱ Is. 57:18; Jer.
3:12; 12:15; [Hos.
14:4]; Mic. 7:18. ⁵ Lit.
inward parts
21 ^j Jer. 50:5. ⁶ Or
Return
22 ^k Jer. 2:18, 23, 36
^l Jer. 3:6, 8, 11, 12,
14, 22

Rachel weeping for her children,
Refusing to be comforted for her
children,
Because “they *are* no more.”

16 Thus says the LORD:

- “Refrain your voice from ^bweeping,
And your eyes from tears;
For your work shall be rewarded,
says the LORD,
And they shall come back from the
land of the enemy.
17 There is ^chope in your future, says
the LORD,
That *your* children shall come back
to their own border.
18^a “I have surely heard Ephraim
bemoaning himself:
‘You have ^dchastised me, and I was
chastised,
Like an untrained bull;
^eRestore me, and I will return,
For You *are* the LORD my God.
19 Surely, ^fafter my turning, I repented;
And after I was instructed, I struck
myself on the thigh;
I was ^gashamed, yes, even humiliated,
Because I bore the reproach of my
youth.’
20 *Is Ephraim My dear son?
Is he a pleasant child?*
For though I spoke against him,
I earnestly remember him still;
^hTherefore My ⁵heart yearns for him;
ⁱI will surely have mercy on him, says
the LORD.
21^a “Set up signposts,
Make landmarks;
^jSet your heart toward the highway,
The way in *which* you went.
⁶ Turn back, O virgin of Israel,
Turn back to these your cities.
22 How long will you ^kgad about,
O you ^lbacksliding daughter?”

31:10, 11 God would be the people’s good **shepherd**, unlike past kings (23:1–4). **redeemed . . . ransomed**: These two terms for redemption describe the transfer of ownership of Israel from the mighty Babylon to the incomparable God. Israel’s freedom was gained by God, its great “kinsman redeemer” (see Is. 51:10, 11).

31:12 The blessings of the goodness of the Lord are bountiful crops, flocks, and vineyards (see Ps. 65). **well-watered garden**: This expression of blessing upon the crops is also found in Is. 58:11.

31:14 The theme of joy is summarized in God’s intention to fill the **priests** and the **people** with **abundance**. Jeremiah gave the people hope and comfort in facing the poverty and oppression of exile and captivity.

31:15 According to 1 Sam. 10:2, 3, Rachel’s tomb was near Zelzah, which was near **Ramah** in Benjamin. This may have been a memorial for Rachel, located in the tribal allotment of the descendants of her son Benjamin (see Gen. 35:16–20). Genesis says that Rachel was buried in Ephrath, near Bethlehem (Gen. 35:19; 48:7). Rachel was

the mother of the northern Israelite tribes of Benjamin and Joseph, whose sons were Ephraim and Manasseh. Rachel’s **bitter weeping** was caused by the exile and captivity of her children. She refused **to be comforted** in her sorrow and loss.

31:17 **Hope** describes a faith that waits expectantly for God’s redemptive and eternal blessing. **their own border**: Ephraim would be restored to its God-ordained territories.

31:18, 19 struck . . . on the thigh: This indicates an outward demonstration of remorse over sin and change of life (see Ezek. 21:12).

31:20 My heart yearns: This phrase describes the Lord’s deep love and concern for the welfare of His children.

31:21 The **signposts** and **landmarks** would point out the way to the people’s homeland. More importantly, Israel was instructed to **set its heart** toward the **way** that is the path of faith in its God.

31:22 Backsliding was a major theme in 3:6–4:4, describing the continual waywardness of the nation. Here the Lord was bringing

For the LORD has created a new thing
in the earth—
A woman shall encompass a man.”

Future Prosperity of Judah

²³ Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: “They shall again use this speech in the land of Judah and in its cities, when I bring back their captivity: ^m“The LORD bless you, O home of justice, and ⁿmountain of holiness!” ²⁴ And there shall dwell in Judah itself, and ^oin all its cities together, farmers and those going out with flocks. ²⁵ For I have ^rsatiated the weary soul, and I have replenished every sorrowful soul.”

²⁶ After this I awoke and looked around, and my sleep was ^psweet to me.

²⁷ “Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, that ^qI will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of man and the seed of beast. ²⁸ And it shall come to pass, *that* as I have ^rwatched over them ^sto pluck up, to break down, to throw down, to destroy, and to afflict, so I will watch over them ^tto build and to plant, says the LORD. ²⁹ ^uIn those days they shall say no more:

‘The fathers have eaten sour grapes,
And the children’s teeth are set on
edge.’

²³ ^m Ps. 122:5-8; Is. 1:26 ⁿ [Zech. 8:3]
²⁴ ^o Jer. 33:12
²⁵ ^r *fully satisfied*
²⁶ ^p Prov. 3:24
²⁷ ^q Ezek. 36:9-11; Hos. 2:23
²⁸ ^r Jer. 44:27; Dan. 9:14 ^s Jer. 1:10; 18:7
^t Jer. 24:6
²⁹ ^u Lam. 5:7; Ezek. 18:2, 3
³⁰ ^v Deut. 24:16; 2 Chr. 25:4; Is. 3:11; [Ezek. 18:4, 20; Gal. 6:5, 7]
³¹ ^w Jer. 32:40; 33:14; Ezek. 37:26; Heb. 8:8-12;
10:16, 17
³² ^x Deut. 1:31; Is. 63:12 ^y So with MT, Tg., Vg.; LXX, Syr. and I turned away from them
³³ ^z Jer. 32:40; Heb. 10:16 ^{aa} Ps. 40:8; [Ezek. 11:19; 36:26, 27; 2 Cor. 3:3] ^{ab} Jer. 24:7; 30:22; 32:38
³⁴ ^b Is. 11:9; 54:13; Jer. 24:7; Hab. 2:14; [John 6:45; 1 Cor. 2:10; 1 John 2:20]
^c Jer. 33:8; 50:20; Mic. 7:18; [Acts 10:43; 13:39; Rom. 11:27]
³⁵ ^d Gen. 1:14-18; Deut. 4:19; Ps. 72:5, 17; 89:2, 36; 119:91

³⁰ ^v But every one shall die for his own iniquity; every man who eats the sour grapes, his teeth shall be set on edge.

A New Covenant

³¹ “Behold, the ^wdays are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah— ³² not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day *that* ^xI took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, ^ythough I was a husband to them, says the LORD. ³³ ^zBut this *is* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: ^{aa} I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their ^{ab} hearts; ^{ac} and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. ³⁴ No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ for ^bthey all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the LORD. For ^cI will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.”

³⁵ Thus says the LORD,

^d Who gives the sun for a light by day,
The ordinances of the moon and the
stars for a light by night,

about the re-creation of His people. **A new thing** probably refers to the fact that virgin Israel would **encompass** or cling to her divine Bridegroom.

31:23–26 Mountain of holiness refers to the ideal city of Jerusalem, the holy mountain home of God, the Righteous One, and Judah, His righteous remnant. As with Israel, Judah’s reestablishment would see renewed productivity of its crops and flocks (31:5, 12). The people would be **satiated** (31:14).

31:27, 28 sow: God would plant and multiply the **seed of man** and animal in the land of Judah. **To build and to plant** are the same terms used in Jeremiah’s call (1:10).

31:29, 30 The proverb in this passage is also found in Ezek. 18:2. The contexts in both books indicate that this proverb is not original to Jeremiah or Ezekiel. In Israel and other ancient Middle Eastern communities, corporate responsibility was emphasized in legal and moral matters (see Deut. 5:9), though individual accountability was not overlooked (see Deut. 24:16; 2 Sam. 12:1–15). In Jeremiah and Ezekiel, focus is placed on the responsibility of the individual for his or her **own iniquity**.

31:31 days are coming: In Jeremiah, this phrase usually introduces

a special occasion of divine intervention in history. **new covenant:** As contrasted with the Mosaic and Deuteronomic covenant. **house of Israel . . . house of Judah:** According to 11:10, both kingdoms had broken God’s covenant by rejecting His words and by worshiping other gods.

31:32 The old **covenant** demanded adherence to stipulations (see Ex. 19:1–23:33) which the people were unable to keep. Above all other commandments, the people were commanded to love and serve God and abandon all others (see Ex. 23:33; Deut. 6:4, 5). This they did not do. **fathers:** From the wilderness period (see Ex. 32:1–10; Num. 25:1–9) until the days of Manasseh, the history of Israel was permeated with idolatrous activity, only occasionally broken by periods of true faithfulness to God. The people seemed incapable of acting in sustained obedience to the covenant. **husband:** As Hosea was to Gomer, the Lord had been a faithful and devoted *husband* to Israel. **31:33 I will make:** The new **covenant** would be initiated by God Himself, assuring its effectiveness. **after those days:** This expression looks forward to the time of fulfillment of the new covenant, which found fruition in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. **put My law in their minds . . . write it on their hearts:** Together the *mind* and *heart* describe the total inner motivations of mind, will, emotion, and spirit.

31:34 No more shall every man teach: No longer would intermediaries like priests or prophets be needed to show the people how to **know the LORD**. From youngest to oldest, from peasant farmer to kings and princes, all would know God. Knowledge of God is a major theme of Jeremiah (2:8; 4:22; 5:4; 8:7) as well as of other prophets (see Hos. 5:4). This knowledge is an intimate relationship with God evidenced by faith, obedience, and devotion. God will **forgive** and will purposefully **not remember the sin and iniquity** of His people who come to Him in repentance and faith. Jesus the Messiah fulfilled this promised New Covenant through His work on the Cross (see Matt. 26:26–28; Mark 14:22–24; 1 Cor. 11:25).

31:35 sun . . . moon . . . stars: God, the Creator of all things, entered

plant

(Heb. *nata'*) (1:10; 18:9; 31:28; 2 Sam. 7:10) Strong’s #5193

Aside from references to the planting of crops (Gen. 9:20), this verb is used to describe the placement of tents and other objects on the ground (Dan. 11:45). Jeremiah uses this word to testify of God’s sovereignty not only over Israel but over the establishment and eventual overthrow of all powers great and small on earth (12:2). Since God planted and established every nation, He could also uproot them whenever He wished (1:10).

Who disturbs ^ethe sea,
And its waves roar
^f(The LORD of hosts *is* His name):

36“ If ^gthose ordinances depart
From before Me, says the LORD,
Then the seed of Israel shall also
cease
From being a nation before Me
forever.”

37Thus says the LORD:

^h“ If heaven above can be measured,
And the foundations of the earth
searched out beneath,
I will also ⁱcast off all the seed of Israel
For all that they have done, says the
LORD.

38“ Behold, the days are coming, says
the LORD, that the city shall be built for

35 ^eIs. 51:15 ^fJer.
10:16
36 ^gPs. 148:6; Is.
54:9, 10; Jer. 33:20
37 ^hIs. 40:12; Jer.
33:22 ⁱJer. 33:24–
26; [Rom. 11:2–5,
26, 27]

38 ^jNeh. 3:1; 12:39;
Zech. 14:10
39 ^kEzek. 40:8;
Zech. 2:1, 2
40 ^l2 Kin. 11:16;
2 Chr. 23:15; Neh.
3:28 ^m[Joel 3:17];
Zech. 14:20

CHAPTER 32

1 ^a2 Kin. 25:1, 2; Jer.
39:1, 2
2 ^bNeh. 3:25; Jer.
33:1; 37:21; 39:14

the LORD ^jfrom the Tower of Hananel to
the Corner Gate. 39^kThe surveyor’s line
shall again extend straight forward over
the hill Gareb; then it shall turn toward
Goath. 40 And the whole valley of the
dead bodies and of the ashes, and all
the fields as far as the Brook Kidron, ^lto
the corner of the Horse Gate toward the
east, ^mshall be holy to the LORD. It shall
not be plucked up or thrown down any-
more forever.”

Jeremiah Buys a Field

32 The word that came to Jeremiah
from the LORD ^ain the tenth year
of Zedekiah king of Judah, which was the
eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar. 2 For
then the king of Babylon’s army besieged
Jerusalem, and Jeremiah the prophet was
shut up ^bin the court of the prison, which
was *in* the king of Judah’s house. 3 For
Zedekiah king of Judah had shut him up,

into covenant with His people. **sea . . . waves:** The Hebrew people learned from their Canaanite neighbors to fear the sea (see Ps. 93). But God is Master of the sea, as He is Master of all things (see Is. 51:15). **31:36, 37 Ordinances** here are the natural laws that govern creation. The foundation of the New Covenant is as sure as the God who maintains creation. **measured . . . searched out:** At the peak of Judah’s apostasy, shortly before the destruction of the nation by Babylon in divine judgment, the Lord emphatically reaffirmed His covenant relationship with the Jewish people in such strong terms that the promise was unbreakable, even by Him. When we observe the sun, moon, or stars in the sky (v. 35), we should remember God’s promise to the Jewish people, even as God does.

31:38–40 days are coming: This expression introduces a new era in the history of God’s dealing with His people. A survey is made of the environs of the new Jerusalem, a city **built for the LORD** in its entirety. The **Tower of Hananel** (see Neh. 3:1) was located at the

northeast corner of the city. The **Corner Gate** (see 2 Kin. 14:13) was to the northwest. Expansion of the northwest side of the city took place under Uzziah and Hezekiah. The **valley of the dead bodies** is probably a reference to the Valley of Hinnom, where children had been sacrificed in times of terrible apostasy (7:32). **The fields as far as the Brook Kidron** are the slopes of Mt. Zion bordered by the Valley of Hinnom. **plucked up . . . thrown down:** The destructive terms of Jeremiah’s call are employed again (1:10). No longer would the city see devastation, for it would be **holy to the LORD**.

32:1, 2 This verse relates the chronologies of Israel and Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar’s **eighteenth year** was 588 B.C., at the beginning of the siege of Jerusalem. The siege resulted from Zedekiah’s revolt against Babylonian rule.

32:3–5 Jeremiah was imprisoned for his declaration that Jerusalem would fall to the **Chaldeans** and **Zedekiah** would be taken captive. **face to face . . . eye to eye:** The one-on-one confrontation

The New Covenant

Jeremiah is the only Old Testament prophet who speaks of the New Covenant that Jesus inaugurated (see Matt. 26:28). Some readers, desiring to celebrate what is “new” in the “New Covenant,” might be tempted to disparage the former covenant, the Mosaic covenant. But we should be careful to avoid any implication that there was something wrong in the covenant God had graciously bestowed on Israel. God had never designed the Law of Moses as a means to obtain salvation. Instead, forgiveness of sins has always been God’s gracious gift to those who have humbled themselves before Him in faith (see Gen. 15:6; Mic. 6:6–8; Rom. 4:1—5:2; 7:13–25). The Law was God’s way of pointing out the pathway that believers should walk. Thus the problem with the covenant at Mount Sinai was not in God’s provision, but in Israel’s response. The Israelites had continually broken the covenant. Time and again through priests and prophets God called His people to repent, but any change of heart they underwent they soon abandoned. In the days of Jeremiah, King Josiah destroyed the idols that were in the land. But soon after this godly king died, the people turned back to worshipping the idols of the neighboring countries. The *hearts* of the people remained unchanged. Only God Himself could change hearts and minds: thus a New Covenant was needed.

The announcement of a New Covenant by the prophet Jeremiah would have been alarming to godly Israelites. After all, the old covenant had come from the very hand of God and had been accompanied by miracles and wonders. But the New Covenant would also be accompanied by the miracle of changed hearts and lives. The very Spirit of God would enter people’s lives in order to assure their adherence to the covenant (31:34; see Acts 2). No longer would intermediaries like priests or prophets have to stand between the people and God. The Spirit would teach the people the knowledge of God—a knowledge that would be evidenced by faith, obedience, and devotion to the Lord. Jesus fulfilled Jeremiah’s prediction of the coming of a New Covenant through His work on the Cross. By His death, the giving of His lifeblood for many, redemption and forgiveness of sins were attained (31:34). While Jesus was on earth, He instructed His disciples in His Father’s ways (Luke 24:13–27). But after Jesus ascended to heaven, the Spirit of God was poured out on the believers gathered in Jerusalem, fulfilling the promise spoken by Jeremiah.

saying, “Why do you ^cprophesy and say, ‘Thus says the LORD: ^d“Behold, I will give this city into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall take it; ⁴and Zedekiah king of Judah ^eshall not escape from the hand of the Chaldeans, but shall surely be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon, and shall speak with him ^fface to face, and see him ^geye to eye; ⁵then he shall ^hlead Zedekiah to Babylon, and there he shall be ⁱuntil I visit him,” says the LORD; ^j“though you fight with the Chaldeans, you shall not succeed”?”

⁶And Jeremiah said, “The word of the LORD came to me, saying, ⁷“Behold, Hanamel the son of Shallum your uncle will come to you, saying, “Buy my field which *is* in Anathoth, for the ^jright of redemption *is* yours to buy it.”” ⁸Then Hanamel my uncle’s son came to me in the court of the prison according to the word of the LORD, and said to me, “Please buy my field that *is* in Anathoth, which *is* in the country of Benjamin; for the right of inheritance *is* yours, and the redemption yours; buy *it* for yourself.” Then I knew that this was the word of the LORD. ⁹So I bought the field from Hanamel, the son of my uncle who *was* in Anathoth, and ^kweighed out to him the money—seventeen shekels of silver. ¹⁰And I signed the ²deed and sealed *it*, took witnesses, and weighed the money on the scales. ¹¹So I took the purchase deed, *both* that which was sealed *according* to the law and custom, and that which was open; ¹²and I gave the purchase deed to ¹Baruch the son of Neriah, son of Mahseiah, in the presence of Hanamel my uncle’s *son*, and in the presence of the ^mwitnesses who signed the purchase deed, before all the Jews who sat in the court of the prison.

3 ^c Jer. 26:8, 9 ^d Jer. 21:3-7; 34:2
4 ^e 2 Kin. 25:4-7; Jer. 34:3; 38:18, 23; 39:5; 52:9 ^f Jer. 39:5 ^g Lit. *mouth to mouth*
5 ^h Jer. 27:22; 39:7; Ezek. 12:12, 13 ⁱ Jer. 27:22 ^j Jer. 21:4; 33:5
7 ^k Lev. 25:24, 25, 32; Ruth 4:4
9 ^k Gen. 23:16; Zech. 11:12
10 ² Lit. *book*
12 ^j Jer. 36:4 ^m Is. 8:2

13 ⁿ Jer. 36:4
15 ^o Ezra 2:1; [Jer. 31:5, 12, 14]; Amos 9:14, 15; Zech. 3:10
17 ^p 2 Kin. 19:15; Ps. 102:25; Is. 40:26-29; Jer. 27:5
^q Gen. 18:14; Jer. 32:27; Zech. 8:6; Matt. 19:26; Mark 10:27; Luke 18:27
³ difficult
18 ^r Ex. 20:6; 34:7; Deut. 5:9, 10 ^s Ps. 50:1; [Is. 9:6]; Jer. 20:11 ^t Jer. 10:16
19 ^u Is. 28:29 ^v Job 34:21; Ps. 33:13; Prov. 5:21; Jer. 16:17
^w Ps. 62:12; Jer. 17:10; [Matt. 16:27; John 5:29] ⁴ deed
20 ^x Ex. 9:16; 1 Chr. 17:21; Is. 63:12; Jer. 13:11; Dan. 9:15
21 ^y Ex. 6:6; 2 Sam. 7:23; 1 Chr. 17:21; Ps. 136:11, 12
22 ^z Ex. 3:8, 17; Deut. 1:8; Ps. 105:9-11; Jer. 11:5
23 ^a [Neh. 9:26]; Jer. 11:8; [Dan. 9:10-14]

¹³“Then I charged ⁿBaruch before them, saying, ¹⁴“Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: “Take these deeds, both this purchase deed which is sealed and this deed which is open, and put them in an earthen vessel, that they may last many days.” ¹⁵For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: “Houses and fields and vineyards shall be ^opossessed again in this land.””

Jeremiah Prays for Understanding

¹⁶“Now when I had delivered the purchase deed to Baruch the son of Neriah, I prayed to the LORD, saying: ¹⁷“Ah, Lord God! Behold, ^pYou have made the heavens and the earth by Your great power and outstretched arm. ^qThere is nothing too ³hard for You. ¹⁸You show ^rlovingkindness to thousands, and repay the iniquity of the fathers into the bosom of their children after them—the Great, ^sthe Mighty God, whose name *is* ‘the LORD of hosts. ¹⁹You are ^ugreat in counsel and mighty in ⁴work, for Your ^veyes are open to all the ways of the sons of men, ^wto give everyone according to his ways and according to the fruit of his doings. ²⁰You have set signs and wonders in the land of Egypt, to this day, and in Israel and among *other* men; and You have made Yourself ^xa name, as it is this day. ²¹You ^yhave brought Your people Israel out of the land of Egypt with signs and wonders, with a strong hand and an outstretched arm, and with great terror; ²²You have given them this land, of which You swore to their fathers to give them—^z“a land flowing with milk and honey.”” ²³And they came in and took possession of it, but ^athey have not

with Nebuchadnezzar would result in the removal of Zedekiah’s eyes (39:5-7).

32:6-8 The Lord instructed Jeremiah to purchase a field in his hometown of **Anathoth**, three miles north of Jerusalem, when Jeremiah’s cousin **Hanamel** came to visit. **right of redemption**: According to Lev. 25:25-30, a man had the right to redeem property when a relative found it necessary to sell land because of debt or financial failure.

32:9 The land transaction was conducted according to the legal customs of the day. The price of **seventeen shekels** would amount to about seven ounces of **silver**.

32:10, 11 According to custom, one copy of a **deed** was **sealed** for safekeeping; a second copy was left open for future consultation.

32:12 Baruch the son of Neriah: This friend of Jeremiah is first mentioned here (see ch. 36); he may have brought the silver for the land to Jeremiah in prison.

32:13-15 earthen vessel: Examples of storage jars that served as safety-deposit vessels have been excavated in Judah. The Dead Sea Scrolls were also stored in ceramic vessels, aiding their preservation for almost two thousand years. The illustrated message of the purchase was assurance and confirmation that restoration of the land was certain. **shall be possessed again**: Jeremiah realized that the end of the city was near (v. 2); his action in purchasing land was a

remarkable demonstration of faith in God that the people of Judah would return one day to their land.

32:17 There is nothing too hard for You: Affirming God’s power in creation (27:5) bolstered Jeremiah’s faith in God’s ability to deal with the siege of Jerusalem.

32:18, 19 The Lord’s mercy and devotion to His people was demonstrated in His extending **lovingkindness**, or loyal love, to **thousands** (see Deut. 5:9, 10). The Lord’s faithful love far outweighs His punishing judgment, but the seriousness of sin is not to be overlooked (see Ex. 20:5, 6; 34:7). **everyone according to his ways**: Each man and woman will be judged individually on the basis of his or her own actions (17:10).

32:20, 21 The great historical demonstration of God’s loyal love was the exodus of Israel from **Egypt**. This was accomplished **with signs and wonders** (see Ps. 78:43) by which the name of God was made known among nations such as Moab (see Num. 22-24), and peoples such as those in Jericho (see Josh. 2:8-14). **strong hand . . . outstretched arm**: These expressions are found in Israel’s confessional statement regarding the Exodus (Deut. 26:8). The addition of **great terror** indicates the mighty acts done against the Egyptians.

32:22, 23 The final step in this rehearsal of history was the gift of the Promised Land. **not obeyed**: The nation responded to God’s grace with disobedience and breaking of the covenant, resulting in

obeyed Your voice or walked in Your law. They have done nothing of all that You commanded them to do; therefore You have caused all this calamity to come upon them.

²⁴Look, the siege mounds! They have come to the city to take it; and the city has been given into the hand of the Chaldeans who fight against it, because of ^bthe sword and famine and pestilence. What You have spoken has happened; there You see *it*! ²⁵And You have said to me, O Lord God, “Buy the field for money, and take witnesses!”—yet the city has been given into the hand of the Chaldeans.”

God’s Assurance of the People’s Return

²⁶Then the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah, saying, ²⁷“Behold, I *am* the LORD, the ^cGod of all flesh. Is there anything too hard for Me? ²⁸Therefore thus says the LORD: ‘Behold, I will give this city into the hand of the Chaldeans, into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and he shall take it. ²⁹And the Chaldeans who fight against this city shall come and ^dset fire to this city and burn it, with the houses ^eon whose roofs they have offered incense to Baal and poured out drink offerings to other gods, to provoke Me to anger; ³⁰because the children of Israel and the children of Judah ^fhave done only evil before Me from their youth. For the children of Israel have provoked Me only to anger with the work of their hands,’ says the LORD. ³¹‘For this city has been to Me a *provocation* of My anger and My fury from the day that they built it, even to this day; ^gso I will remove it from before My face ³²because of all the evil of the children of Israel and the children of Ju-

²⁴ ^b Jer. 14:12; Ezek. 14:21
²⁷ ^c [Num. 16:22]
²⁹ ^d 2 Chr. 36:19; Jer. 21:10; 37:8, 10; 52:13 ^e Jer. 19:13
³⁰ ^f Deut. 9:7-12; Is. 63:10; Jer. 2:7; 3:25; 7:22-26; Ezek. 20:28
³¹ ^g 2 Kin. 23:27; 24:3; Jer. 27:10

³² ^h Ezra 9:7; Is. 1:4; 6; Dan. 9:8 ⁱ Jer. 23:14
³³ ^j Jer. 2:27; 7:24 ^k Jer. 7:13
³⁴ ^l 2 Kin. 21:1-7; Jer. 7:10-12, 30; 23:11; Ezek. 8:5, 6
³⁵ ^m The temple
³⁵ ⁿ 2 Chr. 28:2, 3; 33:6; Jer. 7:31; 19:5
³⁶ ^o Lev. 18:21; 1 Kin. 11:33; 2 Kin. 23:10; Acts 7:43 ^p Jer. 7:31
³⁷ ^q Deut. 30:3; Jer. 23:3; 29:14; 31:10; 50:19; Ezek. 37:21
³⁸ ^r Jer. 33:16
³⁸ ^s Jer. 24:7; 30:22; 31:33
³⁹ ^t Jer. 24:7; Ezek. 11:19
⁴⁰ ^u Is. 55:3; Jer. 31:31; Ezek. 37:26
⁴¹ ^v Deut. 31:6, 8; [Ezek. 39:29; Jer. 31:33]
⁴¹ ^w Deut. 30:9; Is. 62:5; 65:19; Zeph. 3:17 ^x Jer. 24:6; 31:28; Amos 9:15
⁴² ^y truly
⁴² ^z Jer. 31:28; Zech. 8:14, 15

dah, which they have done to provoke Me to anger—^hthey, their kings, their princes, their priests, ⁱtheir prophets, the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. ³³And they have turned to Me the ^jback, and not the face; though I taught them, ^krising up early and teaching *them*, yet they have not listened to receive instruction. ³⁴But they ^lset their abominations in ⁵the house which is called by My name, to defile it. ³⁵And they built the high places of Baal which *are* in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, to ^mcause their sons and their daughters to pass through *the fire* to ⁿMolech, ^owhich I did not command them, nor did it come into My mind that they should do this abomination, to cause Judah to sin.”

³⁶“Now therefore, thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, concerning this city of which you say, ‘It shall be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence: ³⁷Behold, I will ^pgather them out of all countries where I have driven them in My anger, in My fury, and in great wrath; I will bring them back to this place, and I will cause them ^qto dwell safely. ³⁸They shall be ^rMy people, and I will be their God; ³⁹then I will ^sgive them one heart and one way, that they may fear Me forever, for the good of them and their children after them. ⁴⁰And ^tI will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from doing them good; but ^uI will put My fear in their hearts so that they will not depart from Me. ⁴¹Yes, ^vI will rejoice over them to do them good, and ^wI will ⁶assuredly plant them in this land, with all My heart and with all My soul.’

⁴²“For thus says the LORD: ^x‘Just as

the **calamity** of the Babylonian siege and the eventual destruction of Jerusalem.

32:24, 25 You see it: What Jeremiah had prophesied in the name of God, the attack of the Babylonian foe from the north and the ensuing **sword, famine, and pestilence** (21:7), was now being fulfilled. Buying a field in a disintegrating land seemed out of line with Jeremiah’s previous messages of destruction. Why buy land in a region overrun by Babylonians?

32:26, 27 God of all flesh: God was Lord over Israel and Judah, and Lord over the nations (27:1-11)—including mighty Babylon (25:15-26).

32:32 kings . . . princes . . . priests . . . prophets . . . men of Judah . . . inhabitants of Jerusalem: This exhaustive list indicates the rebellion of the entire nation against God.

32:36 This verse serves as a summary of the situation in Jerusalem, described by the regular triad of devastation: **sword . . . famine . . . pestilence**.

32:39 one heart . . . one way: Because the Lord had written on the *heart* of the people a New Covenant (31:33), no longer would they worship other deities and turn to foreign nations for help. The word *way* is often used in Jeremiah to denote the character of a

person’s life, whether evil (4:18; 7:3, 5; 10:2; 18:11) or good (7:23). **fear Me:** To fear God is to submit to His sovereign majesty and walk according to His way.

32:40 The expression **everlasting covenant** is also found in Is. 55:3; Ezek. 16:60; 37:26. In Ezekiel it is equated with a “covenant of peace” that God will establish with His people. This covenant will be everlasting, unlike the Sinai covenant which had been broken and ignored for so long. **My fear in their hearts:** This phrasing closely parallels in meaning and purpose that of the New Covenant of 31:31-34.

32:41 plant: This term from Jeremiah’s call (1:10) depicts God establishing His people back in their homeland with a restoration of peace and prosperity. **My heart . . . My soul:** These terms describe God’s total devotion of heart, will, and emotions to His faithful children.

32:42-44 calamity . . . good: God would act to reverse the manner in which He dealt with His people after they had been punished by the Babylonians. **Men will buy fields:** Final assurance is given to Jeremiah, who had purchased a field in perilous and disastrous times. Fields would be bought and sold again throughout the land when the **captives** had been brought home.

I have brought all this great calamity on this people, so I will bring on them all the good that I have promised them.⁴³ And fields will be bought in this land^y of which you say, “It is desolate, without man or beast; it has been given into the hand of the Chaldeans.”⁴⁴ Men will buy fields for money, sign deeds and seal *them*, and take witnesses, in ^zthe land of Benjamin, in the places around Jerusalem, in the cities of Judah, in the cities of the mountains, in the cities of the ⁷lowland, and in the cities of the ⁸South; for ^aI will cause their captives to return,’ says the LORD.”

Excellence of the Restored Nation

33 Moreover the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah a second time, while he was still ^ashut up in the court of the prison, saying, ²“Thus says the LORD ^bwho made it, the LORD who formed it to establish it ^c(the ¹LORD is His name): ^{3d}‘Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and ²mighty things, which you do not know.’

⁴“For thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, concerning the houses of this city and the houses of the kings of Judah, which have been pulled down *to fortify* against ^ethe siege mounds and the sword: ⁵‘They come to fight with the Chaldeans, but *only* to ^ffill their places with the dead bodies of men whom I will slay in My anger and My fury, all for whose wickedness I have hidden My face from this city. ⁶Behold, ^gI will bring it health and healing; I will heal them and reveal to them the abundance of peace and truth. ⁷And ^hI will cause the captives of Judah and the captives of Israel to return, and will rebuild those places ⁱas at the first. ⁸I will ^jcleanse them from all their iniquity by which they have sinned against Me, and

⁴³ ^y Jer. 33:10
⁴⁴ ^z Jer. 17:26 ^a Jer. 33:7, 11 ⁷ Heb. *shephelah* ⁸ Heb. *Negev*

CHAPTER 33

¹ ^a Jer. 32:2, 3
² ^b Is. 37:26 ^c Ex. 15:3; [Jer. 10:16]; Amos 5:8; 9:6
¹ Heb. *YHWH*
³ ^d Ps. 91:15; [Is. 55:6, 7]; Jer. 29:12
² *inaccessible*
⁴ ^e Is. 22:10; Jer. 32:24; Ezek. 4:2; 21:22; Hab. 1:10
⁵ ^f 2 Kin. 23:14; Jer. 21:4-7; 32:5
⁶ ^g Jer. 30:17; Hos. 6:1
⁷ ^h Ps. 85:1; Jer. 30:3; 32:44; Amos 9:14 / Is. 1:26; Jer. 24:6; 30:20; 31:4, 28; 42:10; Amos 9:14, 15
⁸ / Ps. 51:2; Is. 44:22; Jer. 50:20; Ezek. 36:25, 33; Mic. 7:18, 19; Zech. 13:1; [Heb. 9:11-14]

⁹ ^k Is. 62:7; Jer. 13:11 / Is. 60:5
¹⁰ ^m Jer. 32:43
¹¹ ⁿ Jer. 7:34; 16:9; 25:10; Rev. 18:23
^o 1 Chr. 16:8; 2 Chr. 5:13; Ezra 3:11; Ps. 136:1; Is. 12:4 ^p Lev. 7:12; Ps. 107:22; 116:17; Heb. 13:15
¹² ^q Is. 65:10; Jer. 31:24; 50:19; Ezek. 34:12-15; Zeph. 2:6, 7
¹³ ^r Jer. 17:26; 32:44
¹⁴ ^s Lev. 27:32; [Luke 15:4]
¹⁴ ^t Jer. 23:5; 31:27, 31 ^u Is. 32:1; Jer. 29:10; 32:42; Ezek. 34:23-25; Hag. 2:6-9

I will pardon all their iniquities by which they have sinned and by which they have transgressed against Me. ^{9k} Then it shall be to Me a name of joy, a praise, and an honor before all nations of the earth, who shall hear all the good that I do to them; they shall ^lfear and tremble for all the goodness and all the prosperity that I provide for it.’

¹⁰ “Thus says the LORD: ‘Again there shall be heard in this place—^m of which you say, “It is desolate, without man and without beast”—in the cities of Judah, in the streets of Jerusalem that are desolate, without man and without inhabitant and without beast, ¹¹ the ⁿvoice of joy and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the voice of those who will say:

^o “Praise the LORD of hosts,
For the LORD is good,
For His mercy *endures* forever”—

and of those *who will* bring ^pthe sacrifice of praise into the house of the LORD. For I will cause the captives of the land to return as at the first,’ says the LORD.

¹² “Thus says the LORD of hosts: ^q ‘In this place which is desolate, without man and without beast, and in all its cities, there shall again be a dwelling place of shepherds causing *their* flocks to lie down. ¹³ ‘In the cities of the mountains, in the cities of the lowland, in the cities of the South, in the land of Benjamin, in the places around Jerusalem, and in the cities of Judah, the flocks shall again ^spass under the hands of him who counts *them*,’ says the LORD.

¹⁴ ‘Behold, the days are coming,’ says the LORD, ‘that ^uI will perform that good thing which I have promised to the house of Israel and to the house of Judah:

33:1 while he was still shut up: A chronological tie is made to 32:2 (588 B.C.). Jeremiah had been placed under palace **court** guard because of what his enemies regarded as “seditious speeches,” announcing the fall of Jerusalem and giving advice to Zedekiah to surrender to Nebuchadnezzar.

33:3 Jeremiah urged the people to call out to the Lord, pointing out that this time the Lord would hear and **answer** (7:16) their cries. **Mighty things** has the abstract meaning of “inaccessible” or “unfathomable.” God had done **great** things in creation; here the people were invited to observe anew the unfathomable greatness of God’s work on their behalf.

33:4, 5 Houses that were built along the city walls could be torn down and filled with rubble to produce a wider, more solid wall. This was one means of combating the sloping earthen siege ramparts that armies constructed opposite domestic quarters rather than at heavily fortified towers or gates.

33:6 Judah and Jerusalem in their idolatry and rebellion were without peace and **health** (8:15, 22). The Lord promised **healing** in response to their repentance (3:22; 30:17).

33:8 Forgiveness is described with two terms, **cleanse** and **pardon**.

The word *cleanse* describes ritual purification of what is physically or spiritually unclean or defiled, like Israel and Judah (2:23; 7:30). *Pardon* means “to forgive,” and in the OT is used only with God as the subject as He forgives man. This fact helps us understand the reaction of the scribes when they heard Jesus forgiving sins (see Mark 2:7).

33:9 As the citizens of Moab (see Num. 22:1–6) and Jericho (see Josh. 2:8–14) were full of fear and trembling before the nation that had benefited from the Lord’s mighty works, so all would **fear and tremble** in amazement at God’s new masterwork.

33:12, 13 The focus turns to the regions within the nation of Judah that would experience God’s mighty restoration. **desolate**: Note the parallel judgment in 7:34; 25:9. The regions listed are similar to those in 17:26. The six locations are organized around two triads: one introduced by the words **mountains** (the hill country), **lowland** (the Shephelah), and **South** (the Negev); and the second moving in a north-south direction: **Benjamin, around Jerusalem, Judah**. The term **flocks** is used to depict the Israelites as they returned from captivity into the fold of the holy city of Jerusalem.

- 15 ‘In those days and at that time
I will cause to grow up to David
A ^vBranch of righteousness;
He shall execute judgment and
righteousness in the earth.
16 In those days Judah will be saved,
And Jerusalem will dwell safely.
And this is the name by which she
will be called:

3 THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

17 “For thus says the LORD: ‘David shall never ^wlack a man to sit on the throne of the house of Israel; ¹⁸nor shall the ^xpriests, the Levites, lack a man to ^yoffer burnt offerings before Me, to ⁴kindle grain offerings, and to sacrifice continually.”

The Permanence of God’s Covenant

19 And the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah, saying, ²⁰“Thus says the LORD: ‘If you can break My covenant with the day and My covenant with the night, so that there will not be day and night in their season, ²¹then ^zMy covenant may also be broken with David My servant, so that he shall not have a son to reign on his throne, and with the Levites, the priests, My ministers. ²²As ^athe host of heaven cannot be numbered, nor the sand of the sea measured, so will I ^bmultiply the descendants of David My servant and the ^cLevites who minister to Me.’”

²³Moreover the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah, saying, ²⁴“Have you not considered what these people have spoken, saying, ‘The two families which the LORD has chosen, He has also cast them off’? Thus they have ^ddespised My peo-

15 ^vIs. 4:2; 11:1; Jer. 23:5; Zech. 3:8; 6:12, 13
☆

16 ³ Heb. YHWH
Tsidkenu; cf. Jer. 23:5, 6

17 ^w 2 Sam. 7:16;
1 Kin. 2:4; Ps. 89:29;
[Luke 1:32]

18 ^x Num. 3:5-10;
Deut. 18:1; 24:8;
Josh. 3:3; Ezek. 44:15 ^y [Rom. 12:1;
15:16; 1 Pet. 2:5, 9;
Rev. 1:6] ⁴ burn
21 ^z 2 Sam. 23:5;
2 Chr. 7:18; 21:7; Ps.
89:34

22 ^a Gen. 15:5;
22:17; Jer. 31:37
^b Jer. 30:19; Ezek.
36:10, 11 ^c Is. 66:21;
Jer. 33:18
24 ^d Neh. 4:2-4;
Esth. 3:6-8; Ps.
44:13, 14; 83:4;
Ezek. 36:2

25 ^e Gen. 8:22; Jer.
33:20 ^f Ps. 74:16;
104:19
26 ^g Jer. 31:37
^h Rom. 11:1, 2

CHAPTER 34

1 ^a 2 Kin. 25:1; Jer.
32:1, 2; 39:1; 52:4
^b Jer. 1:15; 25:9;
Dan. 2:37, 38
2 ^c 2 Chr. 36:11, 12;
Jer. 22:1, 2; 37:1,
2 ^d 2 Kin. 25:9; Jer.
21:10; 32:3, 28
3 ^e 2 Kin. 25:4, 5;
Jer. 21:7; 52:7-11
^f 2 Kin. 25:6, 7; Jer.
32:4; 39:5, 6 ¹ Lit.
mouth to mouth
5 ^g 2 Chr. 16:14;
21:19 ^h Dan. 2:46
ⁱ Jer. 22:18

ple, as if they should no more be a nation before them.

²⁵ “Thus says the LORD: ‘If ^eMy covenant is not with day and night, and if I have not ^fappointed the ordinances of heaven and earth, ^{26g} then I will ^hcast away the descendants of Jacob and David My servant, so that I will not take *any* of his descendants to be rulers over the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. For I will cause their captives to return, and will have mercy on them.’”

Zedekiah Warned by God

34 The word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD, ^awhen Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and all his army, ^ball the kingdoms of the earth under his dominion, and all the people, fought against Jerusalem and all its cities, saying, ² “Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: ‘Go and ^cspeak to Zedekiah king of Judah and tell him, “Thus says the LORD: ‘Behold, ^dI will give this city into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall burn it with fire. ³ And ^eyou shall not escape from his hand, but shall surely be taken and delivered into his hand; your eyes shall see the eyes of the king of Babylon, he shall speak with you ^fface¹ to face, and you shall go to Babylon.”’”
⁴ Yet hear the word of the LORD, O Zedekiah king of Judah! Thus says the LORD concerning you: ‘You shall not die by the sword. ⁵ You shall die in peace; as in ^gthe ceremonies of your fathers, the former kings who were before you, ^hso they shall burn *incense* for you and ⁱlament for you, saying, “Alas, lord!” For I have pronounced the word, says the LORD.’”

⁶ Then Jeremiah the prophet spoke all

33:15, 16 These verses closely parallel 23:5, 6, which has as its focus the royal leadership of the nation, the combined restored Israel and Judah. **Branch of righteousness:** God would raise up a messianic king of Davidic lineage who would rule according to the divine ideal, with **judgment**, meaning justice, and **righteousness**. **saved . . . dwell safely:** Following the devastation of the Babylonian onslaught, Jerusalem would exist under divine protection.

33:17, 18 The Davidic covenant of divine succession is reiterated (see 2 Sam. 7:12-16). The Levitical priesthood would likewise be heirs to a divine succession in overseeing the sacrificial system in the Jerusalem temple. Jesus, as Priest and King, fulfills both offices in the New Covenant.

33:23, 24 The two families in this context are the houses of David and Levi (see Zech. 12:12, 13). Because of their sins of rebellion against the covenant and their idolatry, Israel and Judah were **despised** (6:30; 7:29) by God and ridiculed among the nations.

33:25, 26 Ordinances refers to the laws which govern the divine order of the cosmos (5:22; 31:35, 36). If day and night should cease, only then would God **cast away** the great multitude of **the descendants of Jacob**. The promise of leadership succession is extended to the nation in terms of its existence as the people of God. The evidence of that promise and God’s **mercy** would be the **return** and restoration of the exiles to the land of God’s inheritance.

34:1 all his army . . . all the kingdoms . . . all the people: Jere-

miah pictured all the armed forces of Babylon and its vassals arrayed simultaneously against Judah and Jerusalem.

34:2, 3 you shall not escape: Though Zedekiah attempted to flee to Jericho, Nebuchadnezzar’s forces captured him and brought him to Riblah for a **face to face** meeting with Nebuchadnezzar (32:3, 4).

34:4, 5 In 21:4-7, Jeremiah proclaimed the destruction of Jerusalem and the death of its inhabitants by sword, pestilence, and famine. The particular implications for **Zedekiah** are outlined here. The

cast away

(Heb. *ma’as*) (8:9; 33:26; Lev. 26:43) Strong’s #3988

This Hebrew verb means “to despise,” “to hold without regard,” or “to refuse, reject” (Lev. 26:43; Job 30:1; 1 Sam. 16:10). Like the Hebrew verb *‘azab* (meaning “to abandon”), this term has reciprocal connotations when used in covenant contexts. When the people of Judah rejected God’s law (6:19), the Lord rejected that generation (7:29). As part of the New Covenant, the Lord promised that He would never again reject His people, but would forgive their sin and remember it no more (31:34, 37).



Lachish

Lachish was a walled city in the lowlands of Judah captured by Joshua and the Israelites (Josh. 10:32). The city is mentioned in early Egyptian sources as an important military stronghold. Archaeologists have excavated Lachish (modern Tell ed-Duweir), and it has become one of the most significant sites in the Holy Land. A small temple with an altar for burnt offerings was discovered here, along with a deep well that probably provided water for the city when it was under siege. Other important finds consisted of early Hebrew writings on bowls, seals, a stone altar, and 21 pottery sherds on which were written letters about the attack on Lachish and Jerusalem by Babylon in 586 B.C. One of the letters states that signals from Azekah could no longer be seen. It was written shortly after the events noted in Jer. 34:7, which observe that Lachish and Azekah were the only fortified cities left in Judah.



Some of the Lachish letters about the attack on Lachish

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these words to Zedekiah king of Judah in Jerusalem, ⁷when the king of Babylon's army fought against Jerusalem and all the cities of Judah that were left, against Lachish and Azekah; for *only*^j these fortified cities remained of the cities of Judah.

Treacherous Treatment of Slaves

⁸*This is the word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, after King Zedekiah had made a covenant with all the people who were at Jerusalem to proclaim^k liberty to them: ⁹that every man should set free his male and female slave—a Hebrew man or woman—^mthat no one should keep a Jewish brother in bondage. ¹⁰Now when all the princes and all the people, who had entered into the covenant, heard that everyone should set free his male and female slaves, that no one should keep them in bondage anymore,*

7 / 2 Kin. 18:13; 19:8;
2 Chr. 11:5, 9
8 ^k Ex. 21:2; Lev. 25:10; Neh. 5:1-13; Is. 58:6; Jer. 34:14, 17
9 / Neh. 5:11 ^m Lev. 25:39-46

13 ⁿ Ex. 24:3, 7, 8; Deut. 5:2, 3, 27; Jer. 31:32
14 ^o Ex. 21:2; 23:10; Deut. 15:12; 1 Kin. 9:22 ² Or sold himself
15 ^p 2 Kin. 23:3; Neh. 10:29 ^q Jer. 7:10 ³ Lit. today

they obeyed and let *them* go. ¹¹But afterward they changed their minds and made the male and female slaves return, whom they had set free, and brought them into subjection as male and female slaves.

¹²Therefore the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, ¹³“Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: ‘I made a ⁿcovenant with your fathers in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage, saying, ¹⁴“At the end of ^oseven years let every man set free his Hebrew brother, who ²has been sold to him; and when he has served you six years, you shall let him go free from you.” But your fathers did not obey Me nor incline their ear. ¹⁵Then you ³recently turned and did what was right in My sight—every man proclaiming liberty to his neighbor; and you ^pmade a covenant before Me ^qin

king would **die in peace** in Babylon, meaning that he would not be executed by the **sword**. According to 2 Kin. 25:6, 7, his sons were killed before his eyes and then his eyes were put out.

34:7 The background of the siege of Judah and Jerusalem is outlined. The fortifications at **Azekah** and **Lachish** in the lowlands were the avenue through which possible aid from Egypt would have come. They were the last to fall before Jerusalem was destroyed.

34:8, 9 covenant: A legal agreement was made between Zedekiah and the people of Jerusalem during the Babylonian siege to release from bondage all Hebrew slaves. **Liberty** is a technical word for the release of Hebrew slaves every 50 years in the Year of Jubilee (see Lev. 25:8–10), when slaves were freed and indebted land was returned to its original owners. In Deut. 15:1, 12–15, a similar release during the sabbatical year is outlined.

34:10, 11 The **princes** concurred with the king's covenant (vv. 8, 9) and released Jews in bondage to them, but then reversed their

decision when the siege was briefly withdrawn (vv. 21, 22). This opportunism in a moment of crisis demonstrated the leaders' contempt of the covenant.

34:12–14 Jeremiah, a faithful steward of the **word** of God, began his attack against Judah's leaders by recounting the teaching of the Law on the matter of emancipating slaves (see Ex. 21:2–6; Deut. 15:12–15). He reminded the people that their forefathers were slaves in **Egypt**, and that God had freed them from slavery and oppression.

34:15, 16 When the princes of Judah emancipated their Hebrew slaves, it demonstrated their covenant faithfulness and devotion to God (v. 10). But when the righteous decision was reversed (v. 11), the **name** of God was **profaned**. The **name** of God sums up and represents His attributes, character, and work. That name had been defiled by the breach of covenant in the same way that the people had defiled the land with their idolatry (16:18).

the house which is called by My name. ¹⁶Then you turned around and ¹⁷profaned My name, and every one of you brought back his male and female slaves, whom you had set at liberty, at their pleasure, and brought them back into subjection, to be your male and female slaves.’

¹⁷“Therefore thus says the LORD: ‘You have not obeyed Me in proclaiming liberty, every one to his brother and every one to his neighbor. ¹⁸Behold, I proclaim liberty to you,’ says the LORD—‘to the sword, to pestilence, and to famine! And I will deliver you to ¹⁹trouble among all the kingdoms of the earth. ²⁰And I will give the men who have transgressed My covenant, who have not performed the words of the covenant which they made before Me, when ²¹they cut the calf in two and passed between the parts of it— ²²the princes of Judah, the princes of Jerusalem, the ²³eunuchs, the priests, and all the people of the land who passed between the parts of the calf— ²⁴I will ²⁵give them into the hand of their enemies and into the hand of those who seek their life. Their ²⁶dead bodies shall be for meat for the birds of the heaven and the beasts of the earth. ²⁷And I will give Zedekiah king of Judah and his princes into the hand of their enemies, into the hand of those who seek their life, and into the hand of the king of Babylon’s army ²⁸which has gone back from you. ²⁹Behold, I will command,’ says the LORD, ‘and cause them to return to this city. They will fight against it ³⁰and take it and burn it with fire; and ³¹I will make the cities of Judah a desolation without inhabitant.’”

The Obedient Rechabites

35 The word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD in the days of Je-

¹⁶ ¹Ex. 20:7; Lev. 19:12
¹⁷ ¹Lev. 26:34, 35; Esth. 7:10; Dan. 6:24; [Matt. 7:2; Gal. 6:7]; James 2:13 ¹Jer. 32:24, 36
¹⁸ Deut. 28:25, 64; Jer. 29:18
¹⁹ ¹Gen. 15:10, 17
²⁰ ¹Or *officers*
²¹ ¹2 Kin. 25:19–21; Jer. 22:25 ¹Deut. 28:26; 1 Sam. 17:44, 46; 1 Kin. 14:11; 16:4; Ps. 79:2; Jer. 7:33; 16:4; 19:7
²² ¹Jer. 37:5–11; 39:4–7
²³ ¹Jer. 37:8, 10
²⁴ ¹Jer. 38:3; 39:1, 2, 8; 52:7, 13 ¹Jer. 9:11; 44:2, 6

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² ¹2 Sam. 4:2; 2 Kin. 10:15; 1 Chr. 2:55 ¹1 Kin. 6:5, 8; 1 Chr. 9:26, 33
⁴ ¹2 Kin. 12:9; 25:18; 1 Chr. 9:18, 19
¹ Lit. *threshold*

BIBLE TIMES & CULTURE NOTES



The Rechabites

The Rechabites were a Kenite tribe founded by Jonadab, the son of Rechab. They were convinced it was easier to live a godly life as nomads than in the settled life of the cities, where they would be tempted with idolatry and immorality. They did not drink wine or other intoxicating drink; they chose to live in tents rather than houses.

When Nebuchadnezzar’s army attacked Judah, the Rechabites sought refuge in Jerusalem. At God’s command, Jeremiah tested them to see if they would live up to their vows. He set wine before them and encouraged them to drink, but they refused. Jeremiah praised them and held them up as an object lesson to the people of Judah who had disobeyed the laws of God.

Because of their faithfulness, Jeremiah promised that the Rechabites would never cease to exist. Followers of this group still live in the Middle East—in Iraq and Yemen.

hoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, saying, ²“Go to the house of the ³Rechabites, speak to them, and bring them into the house of the LORD, into one of ⁴the chambers, and give them wine to drink.”

³Then I took Jaazaniah the son of Jeremiah, the son of Habazziniah, his brothers and all his sons, and the whole house of the Rechabites, ⁴and I brought them into the house of the LORD, into the chamber of the sons of God, which *was* by the chamber of the princes, above the chamber of Maaseiah the son of Shallum, ⁵the keeper of the ⁶door. ⁷Then I set before the sons of the house of the Rechabites bowls full of wine, and cups; and I said to them, “Drink wine.”

34:17 Because the leaders of Judah had disobeyed the covenant by revoking the **liberty** granted to Hebrew slaves (v. 11), the Lord declared that He would grant *liberty* to the leaders—liberty from their disobedience and liberty **to the sword, to pestilence, and to famine**.

34:18, 19 The covenant ceremony is outlined. The main ritual of the two-party covenant began with cutting the sacrificial animal in half, after which the two participants would walk together between the **parts** (see Gen. 15). The divided animal portrayed the potential fate of one who broke the covenant stipulations.

34:20 **I will give them into the hand of their enemies:** The slaves who had been wronged by the leaders of Judah would be vindicated by God, using the Babylonian army as His instrument.

34:21, 22 **gone back:** Nebuchadnezzar had withdrawn from Jerusalem to meet the Egyptian army of Pharaoh Hophra. **Zedekiah** had hoped that Hophra would be successful in delivering Israel from its impending doom. However, Nebuchadnezzar soon renewed the siege of Jerusalem and destroyed the city.

35:1 **in the days of Jehoiakim:** Jehoiakim reigned from 609 to 598 B.C.

35:2 **The Rechabites** were a tightly knit group of descendants of the Kenites (see Judg. 1:16; 1 Chr. 2:55). This group is known first from the story of Jehonadab the son of Rechab, who assisted Jehu in purging the Baal prophets from Samaria (see 2 Kin. 10:15–28). The Rechabites lived as nomads, rejecting all forms of urban and agrarian life. They refused to drink wine or strong drink and would not cultivate vineyards. They also would not plant any other crops. Many scholars believe that they were a clan of metalsmiths. The Rechabites were invited by Jeremiah into one of the **chambers** surrounding the courtyard of the temple of God for a symbolic demonstration.

35:3–5 **Man of God** refers to a number of named and unnamed prophets, emissaries from God who delivered specific messages (see 1 Sam. 2:27; 1 Kin. 12:22; 13:1; 2 Kin. 1:9). **Hanan** was apparently sympathetic to Jeremiah’s preaching. In the temple and in the presence of leading temple personnel, Jeremiah tested the Rechabites’ faithfulness to their tradition by putting **wine** in front of them and telling them to drink.

⁶But they said, “We will drink no wine, for ^dJonadab the son of Rechab, our father, commanded us, saying, ‘You shall drink ^eno wine, you nor your sons, forever. ⁷You shall not build a house, sow seed, plant a vineyard, nor have *any of these*; but all your days you shall dwell in tents, ^fthat you may live many days in the land where you are sojourners.’ ⁸Thus we have ^gobeyed the voice of Jonadab the son of Rechab, our father, in all that he charged us, to drink no wine all our days, we, our wives, our sons, or our daughters, ⁹nor to build ourselves houses to dwell in; nor do we have vineyard, field, or seed. ¹⁰But we have dwelt in tents, and have obeyed and done according to all that Jonadab our father commanded us. ¹¹But it came to pass, when Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up into the land, that we said, ‘Come, let us ^hgo to Jerusalem for fear of the army of the Chaldeans and for fear of the army of the Syrians.’ So we dwell at Jerusalem.”

¹²Then came the word of the LORD to Jeremiah, saying, ¹³“Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: ‘Go and tell the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, “Will you not ⁱreceive instruction to ²obey My words?”’ says the LORD. ¹⁴“The words of Jonadab the son of Rechab, which he commanded his sons, not to drink wine, are performed; for to this day they drink none, and obey their father’s commandment. ^jBut although I have spoken to you, ^krising early and speaking, you did not ³obey Me. ¹⁵I have also sent to you all My ^lservants the prophets, rising up early and sending them, saying, ^m“Turn now everyone from his evil way, amend your doings, and do not go after other gods to serve them; then you will ⁿdwell in the land which I have given you and your fathers.’ But you have not inclined your ear, nor

⁶ ^d 2 Kin. 10:15, 23
^e Lev. 10:9; Num. 6:2-4; Judg. 13:7, 14; Prov. 31:4; Ezek. 44:21; Luke 1:15
⁷ Ex. 20:12; Eph. 6:2, 3
⁸ ^g [Prov. 1:8, 9; 4:1, 2, 10; 6:20; Eph. 6:1; Col. 3:20]
¹¹ ^h Jer. 4:5-7; 8:14
¹³ ⁱ [Is. 28:9-12]; Jer. 6:10; 17:23; 32:33
² listen to
¹⁴ ^j 2 Chr. 36:15
^k Jer. 7:13; 25:3
³ listen to
¹⁵ ^l Jer. 26:4, 5; 29:19 ^m [Is. 11:6, 17]; Jer. 18:11; 25:5, 6; [Ezek. 18:30-32]; Acts 26:20 ⁿ Jer. 7:7; 25:5, 6

obeyed Me. ¹⁶Surely the sons of Jonadab the son of Rechab have performed the commandment of their ^ofather, which he commanded them, but this people has not obeyed Me.”’

¹⁷“Therefore thus says the LORD God of hosts, the God of Israel: ‘Behold, I will bring on Judah and on all the inhabitants of Jerusalem all the doom that I have pronounced against them; ^pbecause I have spoken to them but they have not heard, and I have called to them but they have not answered.”’

¹⁸And Jeremiah said to the house of the Rechabites, “Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: ‘Because you have obeyed the commandment of Jonadab your father, and kept all his precepts and done according to all that he commanded you, ¹⁹therefore thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: “Jonadab the son of Rechab shall not lack a man to ^qstand before Me forever.”’”

The Scroll Read in the Temple

36 Now it came to pass in the ^afourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, *that* this word came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying: ²“Take a ^bscroll of a book and ^cwrite on it all the words that I have spoken to you against Israel, against Judah, and against ^dall the nations, from the day I spoke to you, from the days of ^eJosiah even to this day. ³It ^fmay be that the house of Judah will hear all the adversities which I purpose to bring upon them, that everyone may ^gturn from his evil way, that I may forgive their iniquity and their sin.”

⁴Then Jeremiah ^hcalled Baruch the son of Neriah; and ⁱBaruch wrote on a scroll of a book, ¹at the instruction of Jeremiah, all the words of the LORD which He had spoken to him. ⁵And Jeremiah commanded Baruch, saying, “I *am* con-

¹⁶ ^o [Heb. 12:9]
¹⁷ ^p Prov. 1:24; Is. 65:12, 66:4; Jer. 7:13
¹⁹ ^q [Ex. 20:12]; Jer. 15:19; [Luke 21:36; Eph. 6:2, 3]

CHAPTER 36

¹ ^a 2 Kin. 24:1; 2 Chr. 36:5-7; Jer. 25:1, 3; 45:1; Dan. 1:1
² ^b Is. 8:1; Ezek. 2:9; Zech. 5:1 ^c Jer. 30:2; Hab. 2:2 ^d Jer. 25:15
^e Jer. 25:3
³ ^f Jer. 26:3; Ezek. 12:3 ^g [Deut. 30:2, 8; 1 Sam. 7:3]; Is. 55:7; Jer. 18:8; Jon. 3:8
⁴ ^h Jer. 32:12 ⁱ Jer. 45:1 ^j Lit. from Jeremiah’s mouth

35:6–10 The faithful Rechabites refused to drink wine, on the basis of the teaching of **Jonadab** their forefather. **obeyed the voice:** This is the language of faithfulness, often used in the negative by Jeremiah to refer to Judah’s failure to obey the covenant (3:13; 7:23, 24).

35:13–15 receive instruction . . . obey My words: This phrasing comes from the words of the Rechabites (v. 8) and from Jeremiah’s oracle in 7:28. The Rechabites had obeyed the instructions of their forefather Jonadab. In the case of Judah, though God Himself had instructed the Israelites in the covenant and had presented His message repeatedly through many faithful prophets, the people had not obeyed Him. **Rising early and speaking . . . sending** describes the persistence of the many prophets in Israel’s history.

35:16 The Rechabites had not wavered in keeping the **commandment** of Jonadab, but the Israelites had continually rebelled against the teaching of God.

35:18, 19 Blessing is pronounced over the faithful household of the Rechabites. Their complete obedience is outlined in a triad of verbs: **obeyed . . . kept . . . done.**

36:1 The narrative recounts the interaction with Jehoiakim concerning the word of God during the king’s fourth year, 605–604 B.C. In late spring as the year began and the river was “at flood stage,” Nebuchadnezzar crossed the Euphrates and defeated the Egyptians at Carchemish. **it came to pass:** The original scroll of Jeremiah’s oracles, which had been prepared with the scribal assistance of Baruch, was read in the temple in the ninth month of the fourth year of Jehoiakim in November–December 604 B.C. (see v. 9). This was at the same time as the attack of the Babylonians on Ashkelon. **36:2 scroll of a book:** The usual material for a scroll was parchment (a kind of leather), though Egyptian papyrus was also available. The contents of the scroll were the oracles dating from the **days of Josiah**, at the advent of Jeremiah’s ministry (626 B.C.), **to this day** (604 B.C.).

36:4 Baruch the son of Neriah was a trained scribe and close friend of Jeremiah (32:12). **at the instruction:** This phrase refers to the process of dictation from Jeremiah to Baruch.

36:5 Confined can refer to physical imprisonment, being placed under guard (33:1; 39:15); a mental or spiritual constraint; or some

fined, I cannot go into the house of the LORD. ⁶You go, therefore, and read from the scroll which you have written ²at my instruction, the words of the LORD, in the hearing of the people in the LORD's house on ¹the day of fasting. And you shall also read them in the hearing of all Judah who come from their cities. ⁷It may be that they will present their supplication before the LORD, and everyone will turn from his evil way. For great *is* the anger and the fury that the LORD has pronounced against this people." ⁸And Baruch the son of Neriah did according to all that Jeremiah the prophet commanded him, reading from the book the words of the LORD in the LORD's house.

⁹Now it came to pass in the fifth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, in the ninth month, *that* they proclaimed a fast before the LORD to all the people in Jerusalem, and to all the people who came from the cities of Judah to Jerusalem. ¹⁰Then Baruch read from the book the words of Jeremiah in the house of the LORD, in the chamber of Gemariah the son of Shaphan the scribe, in the upper court at the ^kentry of the New Gate of the LORD's house, in the ³hearing of all the people.

The Scroll Read in the Palace

¹¹When Michaiah the son of Gemariah, the son of Shaphan, heard all the words of the LORD from the book, ¹²he then went down to the king's house, into the scribe's chamber; and there all the princes were sitting—¹Elishama the scribe, Delaiah the son of Shemaiah, ^mElnathan the son of Achbor, Gemariah the son of Shaphan, Zedekiah the son of Hananiah, and all the princes. ¹³Then Michaiah declared to them all the words that he had heard when Baruch read the book in the

⁶ / Lev. 16:29; 23:27-32; Acts 27:9 ² Lit. *from my mouth*
¹⁰ ^k Jer. 26:10 ³ Lit. *ears*
¹² ¹ Jer. 41:1 ^m Jer. 26:22

hearing of the people. ¹⁴Therefore all the princes sent Jehudi the son of Nethaniah, the son of Shelemiah, the son of Cushi, to Baruch, saying, "Take in your hand the scroll from which you have read in the hearing of the people, and come." So Baruch the son of Neriah took the scroll in his hand and came to them. ¹⁵And they said to him, "Sit down now, and read it in our hearing." So Baruch read *it* in their hearing.

¹⁶Now it happened, when they had heard all the words, that they looked in fear from one to another, and said to Baruch, "We will surely tell the king of all these words." ¹⁷And they asked Baruch, saying, "Tell us now, how did you write all these words—⁴at his instruction?"

¹⁸So Baruch answered them, "He proclaimed with his mouth all these words to me, and I wrote *them* with ink in the book."

¹⁹Then the princes said to Baruch, "Go and hide, you and Jeremiah; and let no one know where you are."

The King Destroys Jeremiah's Scroll

²⁰And they went to the king, into the court; but they stored the scroll in the chamber of Elishama the scribe, and told all the words in the hearing of the king. ²¹So the king sent Jehudi to bring the scroll, and he took it from Elishama the scribe's chamber. And Jehudi read it in the hearing of the king and in the hearing of all the princes who stood beside the king. ²²Now the king was sitting in ⁿthe winter house in the ninth month, with *a fire* burning on the hearth before him. ²³And it happened, when Jehudi had read three or four columns, *that the king* cut it with the scribe's knife and cast *it* into the fire that *was* on the hearth, until all the scroll was consumed in the fire

¹⁷ ⁴ Lit. *with his mouth*
²² ⁿ Judg. 3:20; Amos 3:15

other form of restriction. No prison is mentioned in this chapter. It is possible that Jeremiah was somehow prohibited from entering the temple courts, perhaps after his temple sermon (7:1–15; 26:1–19). **36:6, 7** The **scroll** of Jeremiah's early oracles against Israel and Judah was to be read on a **day of fasting**, a time aside by official declaration of the king or priests (v. 9) in a period of national crisis. **36:8** **Baruch**, a faithful disciple like Jeremiah, read from the **book** of God's words in the temple of the Lord. This act closely parallels the reading of the Book of the Law in the temple of God, after it was discovered there (see 2 Kin. 22; 23). **36:9, 10** The official proclamation of the **fast** came in November–December of 604 B.C. People from all over Judah assembled in the temple of the Lord for the fast, providing Baruch and Jeremiah a sizable audience. **Gemariah** was **the son of Shaphan**, the scribe who read the scroll found during Josiah's reign (see 2 Kin. 22:1–20). It seems Gemariah was sympathetic toward Jeremiah, allowing the use of the room in the **upper court**, a room overlooking the temple courts and giving access to those gathered for the fast. **36:11–13** Gemariah's son **Micaiah** reported the occasion and words to the royal **princes**, including **Gemariah** and **Elnathan**. Elna-

than's father **Achbor** also played a role in the reading of the scroll in the days of Josiah's reform. The parallels between Josiah's reform and Jeremiah's desire for national revival were included by Baruch deliberately, to remind the people of the earlier event.

36:14 Jehudi: The list of three ancestors is unusual. The last name **Cushi** may indicate that Jehudi was a Cushite, thus of foreign ancestry. Jehudi was the messenger appointed to summon Baruch to the court of the princes.

36:15–19 looked in fear: Alarmed at the words of the scroll, the princes felt impelled to inform the king. **wrote them with ink**: Baruch told the princes how and when the scroll was written. The leaders told Baruch to **go** with Jeremiah and **hide** until the matter could be investigated.

36:20–24 Baruch and Jeremiah would have learned later that the original scroll was destroyed, since they were in hiding when it happened. **winter house**: The royal palace had rooms with fireplaces for use in the winter. As the scroll was read, Jehoiakim showed no signs of fear or lamentation, unlike Josiah when the Book of the Law was read in his hearing (see 2 Kin. 22:11–13).

that *was* on the hearth. ²⁴ Yet they were ^o not afraid, nor did they ^p tear their garments, the king nor any of his servants who heard all these words. ²⁵ Nevertheless Elnathan, Delaiah, and Gemariah implored the king not to burn the scroll; but he would not listen to them. ²⁶ And the king commanded Jerahmeel ⁵ the king's son, Seraiah the son of Azriel, and Shelemiah the son of Abdeel, to seize Baruch the scribe and Jeremiah the prophet, but the LORD hid them.

Jeremiah Rewrites the Scroll

²⁷ Now after the king had burned the scroll with the words which Baruch had written ⁶ at the instruction of Jeremiah, the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah, saying: ²⁸ "Take yet another scroll, and write on it all the former words that were in the first scroll which Jehoiakim the king of Judah has burned. ²⁹ And you shall say to Jehoiakim king of Judah, 'Thus says the LORD: "You have burned this scroll, saying, ^q "Why have you written in it that the king of Babylon will certainly come and destroy this land, and cause man and beast to ^r cease from here?"' " ³⁰ Therefore thus says the LORD concerning Jehoiakim king of Judah: ^s "He shall have no one to sit on the throne of David, and his dead body shall be ^t cast out to the heat of the day and the frost of the night. ³¹ I will punish him, his ⁷ family, and his servants for their iniquity; and I will bring on them, on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and on

²⁴ ^o [Ps. 36:1]; Jer. 36:16 ^p Gen. 37:29, 34; 2 Sam. 1:11; 1 Kin. 21:27; 2 Kin. 19:1, 2; 22:11; Is. 36:22; 37:1; Jon. 3:6 ²⁶ ⁵ Or son of Hammelech ²⁷ ⁶ Lit. from Jeremiah's mouth ²⁹ ^q Jer. 32:3 ^r Jer. 25:9-11; 26:9 ³⁰ ^r Jer. 22:30 ^t Jer. 22:19 ³¹ ⁷ Lit. seed

³² ⁸ Lit. from Jeremiah's mouth

CHAPTER 37

¹ ² 2 Kin. 24:17; 1 Chr. 3:15; 2 Chr. 36:10; Jer. 22:24 ² ² 2 Kin. 24:19, 20; 2 Chr. 36:12-16; [Prov. 29:12] ³ ^c Jer. 21:1, 2; 29:25; 52:24 ^d 1 Kin. 13:6; Jer. 42:2; Acts 8:24 ⁵ ^e 2 Kin. 24:7; Jer. 37:7; Ezek. 17:15 ⁷ ^f Is. 36:6; Jer. 21:2; Ezek. 17:17

the men of Judah all the doom that I have pronounced against them; but they did not heed." " "

³² Then Jeremiah took another scroll and gave it to Baruch the scribe, the son of Neriah, who wrote on it ⁸ at the instruction of Jeremiah all the words of the book which Jehoiakim king of Judah had burned in the fire. And besides, there were added to them many similar words.

Zedekiah's Vain Hope

37 Now King ^a Zedekiah the son of Josiah reigned instead of Coniah the son of Jehoiakim, whom Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon made king in the land of Judah. ^{2b} But neither he nor his servants nor the people of the land gave heed to the words of the LORD which He spoke by the prophet Jeremiah.

³ And Zedekiah the king sent Jehucal the son of Shelemiah, and ^c Zephaniah the son of Maaseiah, the priest, to the prophet Jeremiah, saying, ^d "Pray now to the LORD our God for us." ⁴ Now Jeremiah was coming and going among the people, for they had not *yet* put him in prison. ⁵ Then ^e Pharaoh's army came up from Egypt; and when the Chaldeans who were besieging Jerusalem heard news of them, they departed from Jerusalem.

⁶ Then the word of the LORD came to the prophet Jeremiah, saying, ⁷ "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, 'Thus you shall say to the king of Judah, ^f who sent you to Me to inquire of Me: "Behold, Pharaoh's army which has come up

36:25, 26 The king's son could mean: (1) the literal son of Jehoiakim; (2) the son of a man named *Hamelech*, which means "the king"; (3) or an office title for a person with the function of a deputy or policeman. The third view seems to be indicated in this context.

36:27, 28 The Lord told Jeremiah and Baruch to prepare a second **scroll** of the earlier oracles. Verse 32 notes that additional material was included.

36:29-31 Indictment and judgment against Jehoiakim is pronounced. The indictment was declared because he destroyed the

scroll of the word of the Lord. First, the Davidic lineage would not continue through him. His son would rule for only three months before Nebuchadnezzar deported Jehoiachin to **Babylon**, where he died. Second, the king's body would be treated disgracefully after his death. As the king had **cast** the scroll into the fire, so his body would be cast from the royal palace. Third, the royal household would experience the destructive judgment that had been proclaimed in the words of the original scroll.

37:1, 2 **Zedekiah**, like **Jehoiakim** and so many other kings before him in Israel and Judah, had rejected the word of God and its warnings of judgment, although it was communicated tirelessly and faithfully by God's messengers the prophets. The end of rebellion was in sight. Jerusalem would soon fall to the Babylonian armies, the instruments of divine discipline.

37:3, 4 **Jehucal** was a friend of Pashhur (21:1). Together they eventually called for Jeremiah to be executed (38:1). **Zephaniah the son of Maaseiah** was a member of the delegation who had sought a word from God at the beginning of the Babylonian siege (21:1-10). He was sympathetic toward Jeremiah, as reflected in the letter from Shemaiah (29:24-28).

37:5 In late spring or early summer 588 B.C., Pharaoh Hophra led the Egyptian **army** into southern Palestine. The Babylonian forces withdrew their siege of Judah and Jerusalem to confront the Egyptians. Zedekiah hoped the Babylonians would be defeated, but his hopes proved to be in vain.

37:6-8 Jeremiah's response to Jehucal and Zephaniah (vv. 3, 4) was the same unchanging **word** from **the LORD** he had always proclaimed. The Babylonians would soon return to destroy Jerusalem.

prophet

(Heb. *nabi'*) (37:6; Deut. 13:1; 1 Sam. 3:20; 2 Kin. 19:2) Strong's #5030

The probable root word for *nabi'* means "to announce" or "to proclaim" (19:14; Ezek. 37:4). Another possible derivation is from a Hebrew word meaning "to bubble up" or "to pour forth." Prophecy can be compared to the "bubbling up" of the Holy Spirit in a person who delivers a divine message (compare Amos 3:8; Mic. 3:8). In OT times, prophets were heralds or spokesmen who delivered a message for someone else (see 1:5; 2:8; 2 Kin. 17:13; Ezek. 37:7). In the case of the Hebrew prophets, they spoke for God Himself. This is the reason the prophets introduced their messages with "thus says the LORD of hosts" on countless occasions (see 9:7, 17).

to help you will return to Egypt, to their own land. ^{8g} And the Chaldeans shall come back and fight against this city, and take it and burn it with fire.” ⁹ Thus says the LORD: “Do not deceive yourselves, saying, “The Chaldeans will surely depart from us,” for they will not depart. ^{10h} For though you had defeated the whole army of the Chaldeans who fight against you, and there remained *only* wounded men among them, they would rise up, every man in his tent, and burn the city with fire.”

Jeremiah Imprisoned

¹¹ And it happened, when the army of the Chaldeans left *the siege* of Jerusalem for fear of Pharaoh’s army, ¹² that Jeremiah went out of Jerusalem to go into the land of Benjamin to claim his property there among the people. ¹³ And when he was in the Gate of Benjamin, a captain of the guard *was* there whose name *was* Irijah the son of Shelemiah, the son of Hananiah; and he seized Jeremiah the prophet, saying, “You are defecting to the Chaldeans!”

¹⁴ Then Jeremiah said, ¹ “False! I am not defecting to the Chaldeans.” But he did not listen to him.

So Irijah seized Jeremiah and brought him to the princes. ¹⁵ Therefore the princes were angry with Jeremiah, and they struck him ⁱ and put him in prison in the ^j house of Jonathan the scribe. For they had made that the prison.

¹⁶ When Jeremiah entered ^k the dungeon and the cells, and Jeremiah had remained there many days, ¹⁷ then Zedekiah the king sent and took him *out*. The king asked him secretly in his house, and said, “Is there *any* word from the LORD?”

^{8 g} 2 Chr. 36:19; Jer. 34:22
^{10 h} Lev. 26:36-38; Is. 30:17; Jer. 21:4, 5
^{14 i} *a lie*
^{15 j} Jer. 20:2; [Matt. 21:35] / Gen. 39:20; 2 Chr. 16:10; 18:26; Jer. 38:26; Acts 5:18
^{16 k} Jer. 38:6

^{17 j} 2 Kin. 25:4-7; Jer. 21:7; Ezek. 12:12, 13; 17:19-21
^{21 m} Jer. 32:2; 38:13;
^{28 n} 2 Kin. 25:3; Jer. 38:9; 52:6

CHAPTER 38

^{1 a} Jer. 37:3 ^b Jer. 21:1 ^c Jer. 21:8
¹ Jehucal, Jer. 37:3
^{2 d} Jer. 21:9
^{3 e} Jer. 21:10; 32:3
^f Jer. 34:2
^{4 g} Jer. 26:11 ² Is discouraging

And Jeremiah said, “There is.” Then he said, “You shall be ^l delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon!”

¹⁸ Moreover Jeremiah said to King Zedekiah, “What offense have I committed against you, against your servants, or against this people, that you have put me in prison? ¹⁹ Where now *are* your prophets who prophesied to you, saying, “The king of Babylon will not come against you or against this land?” ²⁰ Therefore please hear now, O my lord the king. Please, let my petition be accepted before you, and do not make me return to the house of Jonathan the scribe, lest I die there.”

²¹ Then Zedekiah the king commanded that they should commit Jeremiah ^m to the court of the prison, and that they should give him daily a piece of bread from the bakers’ street, ⁿ until all the bread in the city was gone. Thus Jeremiah remained in the court of the prison.

Jeremiah in the Dungeon

38 Now Shephatiah the son of Matatan, Gedaliah the son of Pashhur, ^a Jucal ¹ the son of Shelemiah, and ^b Pashhur the son of Malchiah ^c heard the words that Jeremiah had spoken to all the people, saying, ² “Thus says the LORD: ^d “He who remains in this city shall die by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence; but he who goes over to the Chaldeans shall live; his life shall be as a prize to him, and he shall live.” ³ Thus says the LORD: ^e “This city shall surely be ^f given into the hand of the king of Babylon’s army, which shall take it.”

⁴ Therefore the princes said to the king, “Please, ^g let this man be put to death, for thus he ² weakens the hands of the men of war who remain in this city, and the hands of all the people, by speaking such

37:9, 10 Do not deceive yourselves: To think that the brief respite caused by the Egyptian appearance in the southern coastal plain was proof of imminent deliverance, as the false prophets declared, was an exercise in self-deception and futile imagination.

37:11, 12 The lifting of the **siege** by the Babylonians afforded the people in Jerusalem some opportunity for movement outside the city.

37:13 Irijah, a captain of the guard and a royal military official, arrested Jeremiah at the **Gate of Benjamin** on the north side of the city. The charge of defection was not unreasonable. Jeremiah had advised the people of Jerusalem to defect to the Chaldeans so that their lives would be spared (21:9). A number of them followed his advice (38:19).

37:14-16 Jeremiah denied the accusation of defection but to no avail. Irijah arrested the prophet and arraigned him before the court of **princes**. Prison space was lacking in Jerusalem due to the crowded conditions of the siege, so a prison was devised **in the house of Jonathan the scribe, the dungeon and the cells:** Jeremiah’s prison seems to have been a cistern with vaulted ceilings in Jonathan’s house.

37:17-19 Fearing possible exposure and opposition from his cour-

tiers, Zedekiah **secretly** summoned Jeremiah and asked of him a word from the Lord. The several encounters between Jeremiah and Zedekiah indicate the weak character of Zedekiah. He seems to have earnestly desired a word from God but could not come to grips with the reality and respond appropriately.

37:20, 21 Jeremiah appealed to Zedekiah’s sense of justice and decency and asked to be released from prison. Zedekiah consented and committed the prophet to the **court of the prison**, a place near the royal palace where limited mobility was possible, such as in the transaction to purchase the field (see 32:1-15; Neh. 3:25).

38:1 Jucal (Jehucal) was one of the emissaries sent by Zedekiah to Jeremiah in 37:3. **Pashhur** came to Jeremiah with a group when the Babylonian siege began in January 588 B.C.

38:2, 3 Verse 2 is almost an exact duplicate of 21:9. Jeremiah said the choice was between **life** under the Babylonians and death among the ruins of Jerusalem. Such a statement was treasonous, as was the statement that Jerusalem must fall.

38:4 The **princes** accused Jeremiah of demoralizing Judah and seeking the harm of Jerusalem. **weakens the hands:** This expression describes the discouragement or demoralization of soldiers (see Ezra 4:4).

words to them. For this man does not seek the ³welfare of this people, but their harm.”

⁵Then Zedekiah the king said, “Look, he *is* in your hand. For the king can *do* nothing against you.” ^{6h}So they took Jeremiah and cast him into the dungeon of Malchiah ⁴the king’s son, which *was* in the court of the prison, and they let Jeremiah down with ropes. And in the dungeon *there was* no water, but mire. So Jeremiah sank in the mire.

⁷ⁱNow Ebed-Melech the Ethiopian, one of the ⁵eunuchs, who was in the king’s house, heard that they had put Jeremiah in the dungeon. When the king was sitting at the Gate of Benjamin, ⁸Ebed-Melech went out of the king’s house and spoke to the king, saying: ⁹“My lord the king, these men have done evil in all that they have done to Jeremiah the prophet, whom they have cast into the dungeon, and he is likely to die from hunger in the place where he is. For *there is* ^jno more bread in the city.”

¹⁰Then the king commanded Ebed-Melech the Ethiopian, saying, “Take from here thirty men with you, and lift Jeremiah the prophet out of the dungeon before he dies.” ¹¹So Ebed-Melech took the men with him and went into the house of the king under the treasury, and took from there old clothes and old rags, and let them down by ropes into the dungeon to Jeremiah. ¹²Then Ebed-Melech the Ethiopian said to Jeremiah, “Please put these old clothes and rags under your armpits, under the ropes.” And Jeremiah did so. ¹³So they pulled Jeremiah up with ropes and lifted him out of the dungeon. And Jeremiah remained ^kin the court of the prison.

⁴ ³ Well-being; lit. peace
⁶ ^h Jer. 37:21; Lam. 3:55 ⁴ Or son of Hammelech
⁷ ⁱ Jer. 39:16 ⁵ Or officers
⁹ ^j Jer. 37:21
¹³ ^k Neh. 3:25; Jer. 37:21; Acts 23:35; 24:27; 28:16, 30

¹⁴ ^l Jer. 21:1, 2; 37:17
¹⁶ ^m Num. 16:22; Is. 57:16; Zech. 12:1; [Acts 17:25, 28]
¹⁷ ⁿ 2 Kin. 24:12
^o Jer. 39:3 ⁶ Lit. go out
¹⁸ ^p Jer. 32:4; 34:3
⁷ Lit. go out
¹⁹ ^q Jer. 39:9
^r 1 Sam. 31:4
²⁰ ^s Jer. 40:9
²¹ ⁸ Lit. go out
²² ^t Jer. 8:10

Zedekiah’s Fears and Jeremiah’s Advice

¹⁴Then Zedekiah the king sent and had Jeremiah the prophet brought to him at the third entrance of the house of the LORD. And the king said to Jeremiah, “I will ^lask you something. Hide nothing from me.”

¹⁵Jeremiah said to Zedekiah, “If I declare *it* to you, will you not surely put me to death? And if I give you advice, you will not listen to me.”

¹⁶So Zedekiah the king swore secretly to Jeremiah, saying, “As the LORD lives, ^mwho made our very souls, I will not put you to death, nor will I give you into the hand of these men who seek your life.”

¹⁷Then Jeremiah said to Zedekiah, “Thus says the LORD, the God of hosts, the God of Israel: ‘If you surely ⁿsurrender ⁶ ^oto the king of Babylon’s princes, then your soul shall live; this city shall not be burned with fire, and you and your house shall live. ¹⁸But if you do not ⁷surrender to the king of Babylon’s princes, then this city shall be given into the hand of the Chaldeans; they shall burn it with fire, and ^pyou shall not escape from their hand.’”

¹⁹And Zedekiah the king said to Jeremiah, “I am afraid of the Jews who have ^qdefected to the Chaldeans, lest they deliver me into their hand, and they ^rabuse me.”

²⁰But Jeremiah said, “They shall not deliver *you*. Please, obey the voice of the LORD which I speak to you. So it shall be ^swell with you, and your soul shall live.

²¹But if you refuse to ⁸surrender, this *is* the word that the LORD has shown me: ²²‘Now behold, all the ^twomen who are left in the king of Judah’s house *shall*

38:5 the king can do nothing: Zedekiah was powerless before the court of princes. The fate of Jeremiah was placed in their hands.

38:6 Jeremiah was imprisoned in the basement cistern of Malchiah the king’s son. Probably due to the length of the Babylonian siege, the cistern had no water sufficient for drinking, only **mire** of muddy lime clay. This particular cistern had a narrow circular opening, and could be entered and exited only by means of ropes. The court princes probably expected Jeremiah to die a slow and quiet death in a very unpleasant environment.

38:7–9 Ebed-Melech the Ethiopian: The name means “Servant of the King.” **Gate of Benjamin:** Jeremiah had entered and left the city many times through this northern gate. The king was likely performing his normal function of mediating disputes and settling legal questions. **no more bread:** A siege cut off water and food supplies from a city, hoping starvation would force a surrender.

38:11–13 Ebed-Melech took special care to obtain **rags** for Jeremiah to cushion his armpits, preventing the **ropes** from cutting his skin. A foreigner, a once-despised Cushite, cared more for the prophet of God than did the king and princes of Jeremiah’s own people.

38:14 This meeting between Jeremiah and Zedekiah is parallel to the account in 37:17–21. The location of the **third entrance** is unknown. The secrecy of the meeting may indicate that it was a private

access for the king from the royal palace into the temple courts. Zedekiah’s request to ask Jeremiah **something** is asked with sincerity. He wanted the prophet to be honest and open in his answer.

38:15, 16 will you not: Jeremiah was fearful of being returned to the dungeon, of being turned over to the Egyptian courtiers who would do him further harm, or of being executed for speaking boldly against the king. Zedekiah swore by the name of God that no harm would come to the prophet from any source.

38:17, 18 Jeremiah repeated to the king the message recorded in vv. 2, 3. **Surrender** would spare the life of the king and the city; failure to surrender would bring death and destruction.

38:19 I am afraid: Zedekiah revealed he was afraid to surrender to the Babylonians because he feared retaliation by early deserters (21:9; 39:9; 52:15) from Jerusalem. His unfitnes to be king is proven by his concern for his personal safety above that of the city and its inhabitants.

38:20–23 Jeremiah tried to settle Zedekiah’s fears and to resolve his moral and ethical dilemma by reassuring him that surrender would result in his personal safety. But if the king refused to **surrender** to Nebuchadnezzar, the **word** of judgment would fall. **Women and children** would be handed over to Nebuchadnezzar, and Jerusalem would be destroyed.

be surrendered to the king of Babylon's princes, and those women shall say:

"Your close friends have ⁹set upon you
And prevailed against you;
Your feet have sunk in the mire,
And they have ¹turned away again."

²³So they shall surrender all your wives and ²⁴children to the Chaldeans. ²⁵You shall not escape from their hand, but shall be taken by the hand of the king of Babylon. And you shall cause this city to be burned with fire."

²⁴Then Zedekiah said to Jeremiah, "Let no one know of these words, and you shall not die. ²⁵But if the princes hear that I have talked with you, and they come to you and say to you, 'Declare to us now what you have said to the king, and also what the king said to you; do not hide it from us, and we will not put you to death,' ²⁶then you shall say to them, 'I presented my request before the king, that he would not make me return ²⁷to Jonathan's house to die there.'"

²⁷Then all the princes came to Jeremiah and asked him. And he told them according to all these words that the king had commanded. So they stopped speaking with him, for the conversation had not been heard. ²⁸Now ²⁹Jeremiah remained in the court of the prison until the day that Jerusalem was taken. And he was *there* when Jerusalem was taken.

The Fall of Jerusalem

39 In the ^aninth year of Zedekiah king of Judah, in the tenth month, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and all his army came against Jerusalem, and besieged it. ²In the ^beleventh year of Zedekiah, in

²² ⁹Or misled
¹Deserted you
²³ ²⁴Jer. 39:6; 41:10
²⁵Jer. 39:5
²⁶ ²⁷Jer. 37:20 ²⁸Jer. 37:15
²⁸ ²⁹[Ps. 23:4]; Jer. 37:21; 39:14

CHAPTER 39

¹ ²Kin. 25:1-12;
Jer. 52:4; Ezek.
24:1, 2
² ⁹Jer. 1:3

¹ city wall was
breached

³ ⁴Jer. 1:15; 38:17

² A title, probably
Chief Officer; also
v. 13 ³ A title,
probably Troop
Commander; also
v. 13

⁴ ² Kin. 25:4; Is.
30:16; Jer. 52:7;
Amos 2:14 ⁴ Or
Arabah; the Jordan
Valley

⁵ ⁶Jer. 21:7; 32:4;
38:18; ²³ ² Kin.
23:33; Jer. 52:9,
26, 27

⁶ ⁹Deut. 28:34
⁷ Jer. 34:19-21
⁷ ² Kin. 25:7; Jer.
52:11; Ezek. 12:13

³ chains
⁸ ² Kin. 25:9; Jer.
38:18; 52:13 ⁸ Jer.
21:10 ² Kin. 25:10;

Neh. 1:3; Jer. 52:14
⁹ ² Kin. 25:8, 11,
12, 20 ⁹ Jer. 38:19
¹⁰ ⁹ Jer. 40:7 ⁶ Lit.
on that day

the fourth month, on the ninth day of the month, the ¹city was penetrated.

³Then all the princes of the king of Babylon came in and sat in the Middle Gate: Nergal-Sharezzer, Samgar-Nebo, Sarsechim, ²Rabsaris, Nergal-Sarezzer, ³Rabmag, with the rest of the princes of the king of Babylon.

⁴So it was, when Zedekiah the king of Judah and all the men of war saw them, that they fled and went out of the city by night, by way of the king's garden, by the gate between the two walls. And he went out by way of the ⁴plain. ⁵But the Chaldean army pursued them and ⁶overtook Zedekiah in the plains of Jericho. And when they had captured him, they brought him up to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, to ⁷Riblah in the land of Hamath, where he pronounced judgment on him. ⁶Then the king of Babylon killed the sons of Zedekiah before his ⁸eyes in Riblah; the king of Babylon also killed all the ⁹nobles of Judah. ⁷Moreover ¹he put out Zedekiah's eyes, and bound him with bronze ⁵fetters to carry him off to Babylon. ⁸And the Chaldeans burned the king's house and the houses of the people with ⁸fire, and broke down the ¹walls of Jerusalem. ⁹Then Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carried away captive to Babylon the remnant of the people who remained in the city and those who ⁹defected to him, with the rest of the people who remained. ¹⁰But Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard left in the land of Judah the ⁹poor people, who had nothing, and gave them vineyards and fields ⁶at the same time.

Jeremiah Goes Free

¹¹Now Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon gave charge concerning Jeremiah to

38:24–26 Zedekiah instructed Jeremiah not to tell the pro-Egyptian princes about their conversation lest the prophet be executed. Together they constructed an account of their meeting that might be used if Jeremiah was questioned about what had been said. It is clear that Zedekiah was afraid of a revolt from within his royal court. **38:27, 28** As expected, the princes questioned Jeremiah. The answer he and Zedekiah had prepared proved satisfactory.

39:1 The Babylonian siege began in the tenth month of the ninth year of Zedekiah's reign, that is, in December 589 or January 588 B.C. Today the tenth of Tebeth is a fast day in the Jewish calendar.

39:2 eleventh year of Zedekiah . . . fourth month . . . ninth day: The walls of Jerusalem were breached about the time food supplies were exhausted, in June or July 586 B.C.

39:3 sat in the Middle Gate: The Middle Gate was probably in the north wall of Jerusalem, the direction from which the city was taken. The Babylonian princes sat in the gate to assert their authority in the conquered city. Nergal-Sharezzer ruled Babylon from 560 to 556 B.C. Nebo may be a short form of Nebushasban. When combined with Sarsechim, the resulting name is probably a variation of the name Nebushasban Rabsaris (v. 13). Rabmag and Rabsaris are titles.

39:4 When Zedekiah saw the Babylonian officers enter the gate on the north side of Jerusalem, he and his men left at night through a gate between the two walls, probably near the union of the Kidron and Tyropoeon valleys on the south side of the city. Plain refers to the Jordan valley.

39:5–7 Zedekiah and his military escort were captured near Jericho and taken to Riblah, a city in Aram. Hamath was a region of Aram. There Zedekiah met Nebuchadnezzar face to face, as Jeremiah had prophesied (34:3). Zedekiah's sons and his men were killed before his eyes just before he was blinded. Bronze fetters refers to the pairs of shackles placed on his wrists and ankles. Zedekiah died in prison in Babylon (52:11).

39:8–10 In addition to the royal palace and homes of the inhabitants, 52:13 includes the "house of the Lord" among the buildings burned in Jerusalem. poor: Typically the Babylonians deported the upper classes, such as court officials, merchants, artisans, and craftsmen, and left behind peasants to work the fields.

39:11 Nebuchadnezzar had given special instructions to Nebuzaradan regarding the treatment of Jeremiah. The positive teaching of the prophet regarding the king of Babylon had come to his attention in some way, perhaps through deserters or spies.

Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard, saying, ¹²“Take him and look after him, and do him no ^pharm; but do to him just as he says to you.” ¹³So Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard sent Nebushasban, Rabсарis, Nergal-Sharezzer, Rabmag, and all the king of Babylon’s chief officers; ¹⁴then they sent *someone* ^qto take Jeremiah from the court of the prison, and committed him ^rto Gedaliah the son of ^sAhikam, the son of Shaphan, that he should take him home. So he dwelt among the people.

¹⁵Meanwhile the word of the LORD had come to Jeremiah while he was shut up in the court of the prison, saying, ¹⁶“Go and speak to ^tEbed-Melech the Ethiopian, saying, ‘Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: “Behold, “I will bring My words upon this city for adversity and not for good, and they shall be *performed* in that day before you. ¹⁷But I will deliver you in that day,” says the LORD, “and you shall not be given into the hand of the men of whom you *are* afraid. ¹⁸For I will surely deliver you, and you shall not fall by the sword; but ^vyour life shall be as a prize to you, ^wbecause you have put your trust in Me,” says the LORD.’”

Jeremiah with Gedaliah the Governor

40 The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD ^aafter Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard had let him go from Ramah, when he had taken him bound in chains among all who were carried away captive from Jerusalem and Judah, who were carried away captive to Babylon.

²And the captain of the guard took Jeremiah and ^bsaid to him: “The LORD your God has pronounced this doom on this place. ³Now the LORD has brought *it*, and has done just as He said. ^cBecause you *people* have sinned against the LORD, and

¹² ^p Jer. 1:18, 19; 15:20, 21
¹⁴ ^q Jer. 38:28 ^r Jer. 40:5 ^s 2 Kin. 22:12, 14; 2 Chr. 34:20; Jer. 26:24
¹⁶ ^t Jer. 38:7, 12
^u Jer. 21:10; [Dan. 9:12; Zech. 1:6]
¹⁸ ^v Jer. 21:9; 45:5
^w 1 Chr. 5:20; Ps. 37:40; [Jer. 17:7, 8]

CHAPTER 40

¹ ^a Jer. 39:9, 11
² ^b Jer. 50:7
³ ^c Deut. 29:24, 25; Jer. 50:7; Dan. 9:11; [Rom. 2:5]

⁴ ^d Jer. 39:12 ^e Gen. 20:15 ^f Or *are*
⁵ ^f Jer. 39:14 ^g 2 Kin. 25:22; Jer. 41:10
⁶ ^h Jer. 39:14 ⁱ Judg. 20:1; 1 Sam. 7:5; 2 Chr. 16:6
⁷ ^j 2 Kin. 25:23, 24
^k Jer. 39:10
⁸ ^j Jer. 41:1-10 ^m Jer. 41:11; 43:2 ⁿ Jer. 42:1 ^o Deut. 3:14; Josh. 12:5; 2 Sam. 10:6 ² Jaazaniah, 2 Kin. 25:23
⁹ ^p Jer. 27:11; 38:17-20

not obeyed His voice, therefore this thing has come upon you. ⁴And now look, I free you this day from the chains that ¹*were* on your hand. ^dIf it seems good to you to come with me to Babylon, come, and I will look after you. But if it seems wrong for you to come with me to Babylon, remain here. See, ^eall the land *is* before you; wherever it seems good and convenient for you to go, go there.”

⁵Now while Jeremiah had not yet gone back, *Nebuzaradan said*, “Go back to ^fGedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, ^gwhom the king of Babylon has made governor over the cities of Judah, and dwell with him among the people. Or go wherever it seems convenient for you to go.” So the captain of the guard gave him rations and a gift and let him go. ⁶^hThen Jeremiah went to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, to ⁱMizpah, and dwelt with him among the people who were left in the land.

⁷^jAnd when all the captains of the armies who *were* in the fields, they and their men, heard that the king of Babylon had made Gedaliah the son of Ahikam governor in the land, and had committed to him men, women, children, and ^kthe poorest of the land who had not been carried away captive to Babylon, ⁸then they came to Gedaliah at Mizpah—^lIshmael the son of Nethaniah, ^mJohanan and Jonathan the sons of Kareah, Seraiah the son of Tanhumeth, the sons of Ephai the Netophathite, and ⁿJezaniah ²the son of a ^oMaacathite, they and their men. ⁹And Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, took an oath before them and their men, saying, “Do not be afraid to serve the Chaldeans. Dwell in the land and serve the king of Babylon, and it shall be ^pwell with you. ¹⁰As for me, I will indeed dwell at Mizpah and serve the Chaldeans who come to us. But you, gather wine and summer fruit and oil,

39:12–14 During the destruction of Jerusalem, Jeremiah was released from the court of the prison and brought to Mizpah to be under charge of **Gedaliah**, whom Nebuchadnezzar had appointed governor over the peasant population of Judah and Benjamin. A more detailed account of Jeremiah’s trip from Jerusalem to Ramah to Mizpah is found in 40:1–6.

39:15–18 Ebed-Melech, who had carefully rescued Jeremiah from the muddy cistern in the prison court (38:11–13), was promised safety and deliverance by the Lord because of his assistance to Jeremiah and because he had **put his trust in God**.

40:1 Ramah was about five miles north of Jerusalem, along the ancient road leading from Jerusalem to Shechem. With the destruction of Jerusalem still in process, Ramah served as a way station for captives going to the eastern provinces of the Babylonian Empire.

40:2, 3 Nebuzaradan knew of Jeremiah’s predictions regarding the demise of Jerusalem and the victories of the armies of Babylon. Prophets whose words were deemed verified were generally treated well by peoples of the ancient Middle East. **The Lord your God**

has pronounced this doom: Consider the irony of a foreigner stating the truth concerning the reason for Jerusalem’s destruction.

40:4, 5 Jeremiah was released from bondage and given three options: (1) to go with Nebuzaradan to Babylon and enjoy special treatment and protection there; (2) to **remain** in the care of Gedaliah, the district governor at Mizpah; (3) to live in the land as he chose. Nebuzaradan gave Jeremiah rations and gifts because of the prophet’s proclamations about Babylon and Nebuchadnezzar (25:9; 27:6).

40:6 Jeremiah chose to go to **Mizpah** to serve under **Gedaliah the son of Ahikam**, staying with his people not far from his hometown and the property he had purchased while in the court of the prison (32:1–15). Mizpah was about eight miles north of Jerusalem.

40:7–10 The captains of the armies refers to the surviving Jewish commanders of the armies in the towns throughout Judah who had fled into the rugged hill country. Among the list of escaped leaders was **Ishmael**, a member of the royal family and a court officer (41:1); **Johanan**, who would become the leader of the assembly (vv. 13–16); and **Jezaniah** (Jaazaniah) whose father was a **Maacathite**.

put *them* in your vessels, and dwell in your cities that you have taken.” ¹¹Like-wise, when all the Jews who *were* in Moab, among the Ammonites, in Edom, and who *were* in all the countries, heard that the king of Babylon had left a remnant of Judah, and that he had set over them Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, ¹²then all the Jews ^q returned out of all places where they had been driven, and came to the land of Judah, to Gedaliah at Mizpah, and gathered wine and summer fruit in abundance.

¹³Moreover Johanan the son of Kareah and all the captains of the forces that *were* in the fields came to Gedaliah at Mizpah, ¹⁴and said to him, ³“Do you certainly know that ^rBaalis the king of the Ammonites has sent Ishmael the son of Nethaniah to murder you?” But Gedaliah the son of Ahikam did not believe them.

¹⁵Then Johanan the son of Kareah spoke secretly to Gedaliah in Mizpah, saying, “Let me go, please, and I will kill Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and no one will know *it*. Why should he murder you, so that all the Jews who are gathered to you would be scattered, and the ^sremnant in Judah perish?”

¹⁶But Gedaliah the son of Ahikam said to Johanan the son of Kareah, “You shall not do this thing, for you speak falsely concerning Ishmael.”

Insurrection Against Gedaliah

41 Now it came to pass in the seventh month ^athat Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, the son of Elishama, of the royal ¹family and of the officers of the king, came with ten men to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, at ^bMizpah. And there they ate bread together in Mizpah. ²Then Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and the ten men who were with him, arose and ^cstruck Gedaliah the son of ^dAhikam, the son of Shaphan, with the sword, and killed him whom the king of

12 ^q Jer. 43:5
14 ^r Jer. 41:10 ³ Or
Certainly you know
that
15 ^s Jer. 42:2

CHAPTER 41

1 ^a 2 Kin. 25:25
^b Jer. 40:6, 10 ¹ Lit.
seed
2 ^c 2 Sam. 3:27;
20:9, 10; 2 Kin.
25:25; Ps. 41:9;
109:5; John 13:18
^d Jer. 26:24

Babylon had made ^egovernor over the land. ³Ishmael also struck down all the Jews who were with him, *that is*, with Gedaliah at Mizpah, and the Chaldeans who were found there, the men of war.

⁴And it happened, on the second day after he had killed Gedaliah, when as yet no one knew *it*, ⁵that certain men came from Shechem, from Shiloh, and from Samaria, eighty men ^fwith their beards shaved and their clothes torn, having cut themselves, with offerings and incense in their hand, to bring *them* to ^gthe house of the LORD. ⁶Now Ishmael the son of Nethaniah went out from Mizpah to meet them, weeping as he went along; and it happened as he met them that he said to them, “Come to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam!” ⁷So it was, when they came into the midst of the city, that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah ^hkilled them *and cast them* into the midst of a ²pit, he and the men who were with him. ⁸But ten men were found among them who said to Ishmael, “Do not kill us, for we have treasures of wheat, barley, oil, and honey in the field.” So he desisted and did not kill them among their brethren. ⁹Now the ³pit into which Ishmael had cast all the dead bodies of the men whom he had slain, because of Gedaliah, *was* ⁱthe same one Asa the king had made for fear of Baasha king of Israel. Ishmael the son of Nethaniah filled it with *the* slain. ¹⁰Then Ishmael carried away captive all the ^jrest of the people who *were* in Mizpah, ^kthe king’s daughters and all the people who remained in Mizpah, ^lwhom Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard had committed to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam. And Ishmael the son of Nethaniah carried them away captive and departed to go over to ^mthe Ammonites.

¹¹But when ⁿJohanan the son of Kareah and all the captains of the forces that *were* with him heard of all the evil that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah had done, ¹²they took all the men and went

^e Jer. 40:5
⁵ ^f Lev. 19:27, 28;
Deut. 14:1; Is. 15:2
^g 1 Sam. 1:7; 2 Kin.
25:9; Neh. 10:34, 35
⁷ ^h Ps. 55:23; Is.
59:7; Ezek. 22:27;
33:24, 26 ² Or
cistern
⁹ ⁱ 1 Kin. 15:22;
2 Chr. 16:6 ³ Or
cistern
¹⁰ ^j Jer. 40:11, 12
^k Jer. 43:6 ^l Jer. 40:7
^m Jer. 40:14
¹¹ ⁿ Jer. 40:7, 8,
13-16

40:11, 12 The Jews who had escaped the Babylonian onslaught into neighboring states returned home and began working the fields, vineyards, and orchards.

40:13, 14 Johanan led a group of leaders to Gedaliah to warn him of a plot by Ishmael and the Ammonite king Baalis to assassinate the governor.

40:15, 16 Johanan secretly asked Gedaliah permission to kill Ishmael quietly, fearing reprisal from Babylon that would surely destroy the reconstruction efforts and lead to further bloodshed. Unfortunately, Gedaliah was far too trusting of Ishmael, the royal descendant who seems to have coveted Gedaliah’s position.

41:1, 2 The year of the assassination of Gedaliah is not given, only the month—the seventh month or Tishri, September-October. The murder of the governor could have taken place as soon as three months after the fall of Jerusalem. Others associate the third

deportation of 582 B.C. with this rebellion. Ishmael’s act was especially despicable since it took place during a banquet.

41:4–7 Two days after Gedaliah’s death a group of faithful pilgrims were on their way to Jerusalem, probably with grain rather than animal offerings. Ishmael and his followers falsely led the worshipers aside, massacred them, and cast their bodies into a pit.

41:10 carried away: Ishmael took captives from Mizpah for future use. He then fled into Ammonite territory, no doubt to join forces with his ally Baalis.

41:11, 12 When Johanan, who had warned Gedaliah about the assassination plot (40:13–16), heard of the atrocities of Ishmael, he mustered his captains and forces and confronted the rebel army at Gibeon. The pool, six miles northwest of Jerusalem and three miles from Mizpah, was the site of the famous battle between Joab and Abner’s men (see 2 Sam. 2:12–29).

to fight with Ishmael the son of Nethaniah; and they found him by ^othe great pool that is in Gibeon. ¹³So it was, when all the people who *were* with Ishmael saw Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces who *were* with him, that they were glad. ¹⁴Then all the people whom Ishmael had carried away captive from Mizpah turned around and came back, and went to Johanan the son of Kareah. ¹⁵But Ishmael the son of Nethaniah escaped from Johanan with eight men and went to the Ammonites.

¹⁶Then Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces that were with him, took from Mizpah all the ^prest of the people whom he had recovered from Ishmael the son of Nethaniah after he had murdered Gedaliah the son of Ahikam—the mighty men of war and the women and the children and the eunuchs, whom he had brought back from Gibeon. ¹⁷And they departed and dwelt in the habitation of ^qChimham, which is near Bethlehem, as they went on their way to ^rEgypt, ¹⁸because of the Chaldeans; for they were afraid of them, because Ishmael the son of Nethaniah had murdered Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, ^swhom the king of Babylon had made governor in the land.

The Flight to Egypt Forbidden

42 Now all the captains of the forces, ^aJohanan the son of Kareah, Jezaniah the son of Hoshaiiah, and all the people, from the least to the greatest, came near ²and said to Jeremiah the prophet, ^b“Please, let our petition be acceptable to you, and ^cpray for us to the LORD your God, for all this remnant (since we are left *but* ^da few of many, as you can see), ³that the LORD your God may show us ^ethe way in which we should walk and the thing we should do.”

12 ^o 2 Sam. 2:13
16 ^p Jer. 40:11, 12;
43:4-7
17 ^q 2 Sam. 19:37;
38 ^r Jer. 43:7
18 ^s Jer. 40:5

CHAPTER 42

1 ^a Jer. 40:8, 13;
41:11
2 ^b Jer. 15:11 ^c Ex.
8:28; 1 Sam. 7:8;
12:19; 1 Kin. 13:6;
Is. 37:4; Jer. 37:3;
Acts 8:24; [James
5:16] ^d Lev. 26:22;
Deut. 28:62; Is. 1:9;
Lam. 1:1
3 ^e Ezra 8:21

4 ^f 1 Kin. 22:14; Jer.
23:28 ^g 1 Sam. 3:17;
18; Ps. 40:10; Acts
20:20
5 ^h Gen. 31:50;
Judg. 11:10; Jer.
43:2; Mic. 1:2; Mal.
2:14; 3:5
6 ⁱ Ex. 24:7; Deut.
5:27; Josh. 24:24
7 ^j Deut. 5:29, 33; 6:3;
Jer. 7:23 ^k Lit. good
2 Lit. evil
10 ^k Jer. 24:6; 31:28;
33:7; Ezek. 36:36
11 ^m Num. 14:9;
2 Chr. 32:7, 8; Is. 8:9;
10; 43:2, 5; Jer. 1:19;
15:20; Rom. 8:31
12 ⁿ Neh. 1:11; Ps.
106:46; Prov. 16:7
13 ^p Jer. 44:16
14 ^p Is. 31:1; Jer.
41:17; 43:7

⁴Then Jeremiah the prophet said to them, “I have heard. Indeed, I will pray to the LORD your God according to your words, and it shall be, *that* ^fwhatever the LORD answers you, I will declare *it* to you. I will ^gkeep nothing back from you.”

⁵So they said to Jeremiah, ^h“Let the LORD be a true and faithful witness between us, if we do not do according to everything which the LORD your God sends us by you. ⁶Whether *it is* ⁱpleasing or ²displeasing, we will ⁱobey the voice of the LORD our God to whom we send you, ^jthat it may be well with us when we obey the voice of the LORD our God.”

⁷And it happened after ten days that the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah. ⁸Then he called Johanan the son of Kareah, all the captains of the forces which *were* with him, and all the people from the least even to the greatest, ⁹and said to them, “Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, to whom you sent me to present your petition before Him: ¹⁰‘If you will still remain in this land, then ^kI will build you and not pull *you* down, and I will plant you and not pluck *you* up. For I ^lre-lent concerning the disaster that I have brought upon you. ¹¹Do not be afraid of the king of Babylon, of whom you are afraid; do not be afraid of him,’ says the LORD, ^m‘for I *am* with you, to save you and deliver you from his hand. ¹²And ⁿI will show you mercy, that he may have mercy on you and cause you to return to your own land.’

¹³“But if ^oyou say, ‘We will not dwell in this land,’ disobeying the voice of the LORD your God, ¹⁴saying, ‘No, but we will go to the land of ^pEgypt where we shall see no war, nor hear the sound of the trumpet, nor be hungry for bread, and there we will dwell’— ¹⁵Then hear now the word of the LORD, O remnant of Judah! Thus says the LORD of hosts,

41:13–15 When they saw **Johanan**, the captives Ishmael had taken from Mizpah ran over to join his forces. **Ishmael** and **eight** of his men escaped to Ammon.

41:16–18 Fearing imminent reprisal from the Babylonians on account of the rebellion, Johanan gathered the inhabitants of Mizpah, including Jeremiah, together with those he had rescued and began a trek toward **Egypt**, seeking a place of safety. Egypt was the only country in the region that was free from Babylonian control. Johanan and his group went south toward Bethlehem, camping at **Chimham**.

42:1–3 **said to Jeremiah**: The people asked Jeremiah to intercede with the Lord on their behalf.

42:4–6 **I will pray**: Jeremiah cautiously agreed to pray to God. He asked the people to agree to abide by the answer he received. The people responded with an oath of obedience, calling upon the Lord as witness.

42:7–10 **after ten days**: God’s response to Jeremiah’s prayer on behalf of the people did not come immediately. Jeremiah convened the assembly and declared the answer from God in terms reminis-

cent of his call: **build you . . . not pull you down . . . plant you . . . not pluck you up** (1:10).

42:11, 12 Jeremiah assured the people with the same words the Lord had used to give him assurance in his call: **I am with you, to save you and deliver you** (1:8). God’s promise to bring His people through a time of trial to experience His restorative power would show His great **mercy**. God had promised this restoration in earlier oracles (12:15).

42:13, 14 If the people disobeyed God and fled to Egypt, they would suffer the consequences. The people’s hope for safety in Egypt is presented in a triad of phrases: **see no war, nor hear the sound of the trumpet, nor be hungry**. The people seem to have had their minds made up before they sought the word from the Lord (vv. 2, 3).

42:15–17 **set their faces**: This expression indicates the fixed intentions of the people. The announcement of judgment against the disobedient evacuees echoes Jeremiah’s earlier pronouncements against Judah. The very thing they were trying to escape from would meet them in Egypt: **sword . . . famine . . . pestilence**:

the God of Israel: 'If you ^qwholly³ set your faces to enter Egypt, and go to dwell there, ¹⁶then it shall be *that* the ^ssword which you feared shall overtake you there in the land of Egypt; the famine of which you were afraid shall follow close after you there *in* Egypt; and there you shall die. ¹⁷So shall it be with all the men who set their faces to go to Egypt to dwell there. They shall die by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence. And ^tnone of them shall remain or escape from the disaster that I will bring upon them.'

¹⁸"For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: 'As My anger and My fury have been "poured out on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so will My fury be poured out on you when you enter Egypt. And ^vyou shall be an oath, an astonishment, a curse, and a reproach; and you shall see this place no more.'

¹⁹"The LORD has said concerning you, O remnant of Judah, ^w'Do not go to Egypt!' Know certainly that I have ⁴admonished you this day. ²⁰For you ⁵were hypocrites in your hearts when you sent me to the LORD your God, saying, 'Pray for us to the LORD our God, and according to all that the LORD your God says, so declare to us and we will do *it*.' ²¹And I have this day declared *it* to you, but you have ^xnot obeyed the voice of the LORD your God, or anything which He has sent you by me. ²²Now therefore, know certainly that you ^yshall die by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence in the place where you desire to go to dwell."

Jeremiah Taken to Egypt

43 Now it happened, when Jeremiah had stopped speaking to all the people all the ^awords of the LORD their God, for which the LORD their God had sent him to them, all these words, ^{2b}that Azariah the son of Hoshaiiah, Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the proud men spoke, saying to Jeremiah, "You speak falsely! The LORD our God has not sent you to say, 'Do not go to Egypt to dwell there.' ³But ^c'Baruch the son of Neriah has ¹set you against us, to deliver us into the hand of the Chaldeans, that they may

15 ^q Deut. 17:16; Jer. 44:12-14 ^r Luke 9:51 ³ Or *surely*
16 ^s Jer. 44:13, 27; Ezek. 11:8; Amos 9:1-4
17 ^t Jer. 44:14, 28
18 ^u 2 Chr. 36:16-19; Jer. 7:20 ^v Deut. 29:21; Is. 65:15; Jer. 18:16; 24:9; 26:6; 29:18, 22; 44:12
19 ^w Deut. 17:16; Is. 30:1-7 ⁴ warned
20 ^x Lit. *used deceit against your souls*
21 ^y Is. 30:1-7
22 ^v Jer. 42:17; Ezek. 6:11

CHAPTER 43

1 ^a Jer. 42:9-18
2 ^b Jer. 42:1
3 ^c Jer. 36:4; 45:1
¹ Or *incited*

4 ^d 2 Kin. 25:26
5 ^e Jer. 40:11, 12
6 ^f Jer. 41:10 ^g Jer. 39:10; 40:7
7 ^h Jer. 42:19 ⁱ Jer. 2:16; 44:1
8 ^j Jer. 44:1-30
9 ^k Or *mortar*
10 ^k Jer. 25:9; 27:6; Ezek. 29:18, 20
11 ^l Is. 19:1-25; Jer. 25:15-19; 44:13; 46:1, 2, 13-26; Ezek. 29:19, 20 ^m Jer. 15:2; Zech. 11:9
12 ⁿ Ex. 12:12; Is. 19:1; Jer. 46:25; Ezek. 30:13 ³ So with MT, Tg.; LXX, Syr., Vg. He
13 ⁴ Lit. *House of the Sun*, ancient On, later called Heliopolis

put us to death or carry us away captive to Babylon." ⁴So Johanan the son of Kareah, all the captains of the forces, and all the people would ^dnot obey the voice of the LORD, to remain in the land of Judah. ⁵But Johanan the son of Kareah and all the captains of the forces took ^eall the remnant of Judah who had returned to dwell in the land of Judah, from all nations where they had been driven—⁶men, women, children, ^fthe king's daughters, ^gand every person whom Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard had left with Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, and Jeremiah the prophet and Baruch the son of Neriah. ^{7h}So they went to the land of Egypt, for they did not obey the voice of the LORD. And they went as far as ⁱTahpanhes.

⁸Then the ^jword of the LORD came to Jeremiah in Tahpanhes, saying, ⁹"Take large stones in your hand, and hide them in the sight of the men of Judah, in the ²clay in the brick courtyard which is at the entrance to Pharaoh's house in Tahpanhes; ¹⁰and say to them, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: "Behold, I will send and bring Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, ^kMy servant, and will set his throne above these stones that I have hidden. And he will spread his royal pavilion over them. ^{11l}When he comes, he shall strike the land of Egypt and deliver to death ^mthose appointed for death, and to captivity ⁿthose appointed for the sword. ¹²³I will kindle a fire in the houses of ⁿthe gods of Egypt, and he shall burn them and carry them away captive. And he shall array himself with the land of Egypt, as a shepherd puts on his garment, and he shall go out from there in peace. ¹³He shall also break the *sacred* pillars of ⁴Beth Shemesh that are in the land of Egypt; and the houses of the gods of the Egyptians he shall burn with fire.'"

Israelites Will Be Punished in Egypt

44 The word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the Jews who dwell in the land of Egypt, who dwell

This common triad indicates the completeness of God's judgment upon the disobedient.

43:1-3 The people had already intended to go to Egypt to escape the perceived danger of Babylon. **Azariah** and **Johanan** spoke out against the counsel given by Jeremiah in 42:9-22.

43:4-7 **Johanan** led the migration to Egypt, against the direction of the Lord through Jeremiah. The caravan journeyed **as far as Tahpanhes**, a city on the eastern edge of the Nile Delta (2:16).

43:10, 11 This judgment oracle echoes earlier pronouncements against Judah, with Nebuchadnezzar identified as the **servant** of God (25:9; 27:6). The **stones** symbolized the strong foundation of

Nebuchadnezzar's empire, the point from which he would spread his **royal pavilion** (tent, or canopy), **death . . . captivity . . . sword**: Severe judgment is pronounced on Egypt, including judgment on the disobedient people of Judah.

43:12, 13 The destructive judgment was extended to the temples of Egyptian gods and goddesses. Destruction of Egyptian temples was carried out by Esarhaddon of Assyria in the seventh century B.C., and again by Cambyses of Persia in the sixth century B.C. **Beth Shemesh** ("House of the Sun") was the temple of the sun god Re. The temple was known for its two rows of **pillars**, or inscribed obelisks.

44:1 Migdol is a common Semitic term meaning "Watchtower."

BIBLE TIMES & CULTURE NOTES



Tahpanhes

Tahpanhes was a city on the eastern frontier of lower Egypt, in the area of the Nile delta (2:16). This city was probably named for a powerful general who brought the surrounding area under firm Egyptian control in the eleventh century **B.C.** Tahpanhes became a place of refuge for Jews who fled their homeland after the assassination of Gedaliah, the governor of Judah placed in power by the Babylonians. Jeremiah warned the Jews against this move (42:16). He dramatically visualized this for them by hiding stones at Tahpanhes for the foundation of the throne of Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon (43:9, 10).

Tahpanhes is identified with the modern Tell Defneh, a small mound bordering Lake Menzaleh in northern Egypt.

CHAPTER 44

1 ^a Ex. 14:2; Jer. 46:14 ^b Jer. 43:7; Ezek. 30:18 ^c Is. 19:13; Jer. 2:16; 46:14; Ezek. 30:13, 16; Hos. 9:6 ^d Is. 11:11; Jer. 29:14; 30:14 ^e Ancient Memphis
2 ^e Is. 6:11; Jer. 4:7; 9:11; 34:22; Mic. 3:12
3 ^f Jer. 19:4 ^g Deut. 13:6; 32:17
4 ^h 2 Chr. 36:15; Jer. 7:25; 25:4; 26:5; 29:19; Zech. 7:7
6 ² Or became a ruin
7 ⁱ Num. 16:38; Jer. 7:19; [Ezek. 33:11]; Hab. 2:10

8 / 2 Kin. 17:15-17; Jer. 25:6, 7; 44:3;
1 Cor. 10:21, 22
1 ^k 1 Kin. 9:7, 8; 2 Chr. 7:20; Jer. 42:18
10 ^l 2 Chr. 36:12; Jer. 6:15; 8:12; Dan. 5:22
^m [Prov. 28:14] ³ Lit. crushed
11 ⁿ Lev. 17:10; 20:5, 6; Jer. 21:10; Amos 9:4 ⁴ destroying
12 ^o Jer. 42:15-17, 22 ^p Is. 65:15; Jer. 42:18
13 ^q Jer. 43:11
14 ^r Jer. 22:26, 27
^s [Is. 4:2; 10:20]; Jer. 44:28; [Rom. 9:27]
⁵ Lit. lift up their soul

at ^a Migdol, at ^b Tahpanhes, at ^c Noph,¹ and in the country of ^d Pathros, saying,² “Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: ‘You have seen all the calamity that I have brought on Jerusalem and on all the cities of Judah; and behold, this day they *are* ^e a desolation, and no one dwells in them,³ because of their wickedness which they have committed to provoke Me to anger, in that they went ^f to burn incense *and* to ^g serve other gods whom they did not know, they nor you nor your fathers.⁴ However ^h I have sent to you all My servants the prophets, rising early and sending *them*, saying, “Oh, do not do this abominable thing that I hate!”⁵ But they did not listen or incline their ear to turn from their wickedness, to burn no incense to other gods.⁶ So My fury and My anger were poured out and kindled in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem; and they ² are wasted *and* desolate, as it is this day.’

⁷ “Now therefore, thus says the LORD, the God of hosts, the God of Israel: ‘Why do you commit *this* great evil ⁱ against

yourselves, to cut off from you man and woman, child and infant, out of Judah, leaving none to remain,⁸ in that you ^j provoke Me to wrath with the works of your hands, burning incense to other gods in the land of Egypt where you have gone to dwell, that you may cut yourselves off and be ^k a curse and a reproach among all the nations of the earth?’⁹ Have you forgotten the wickedness of your fathers, the wickedness of the kings of Judah, the wickedness of their wives, your own wickedness, and the wickedness of your wives, which they committed in the land of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem?¹⁰ They have not been ^l humbled,³ to this day, nor have they ^m feared; they have not walked in My law or in My statutes that I set before you and your fathers.’

¹¹ “Therefore thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: ‘Behold, ⁿ I will set My face against you for catastrophe and for ⁴ cutting off all Judah.¹² And I will take the remnant of Judah who have set their faces to go into the land of Egypt to dwell there, and ^o they shall all be consumed *and* fall in the land of Egypt. They shall be consumed by the sword *and* by famine. They shall die, from the least to the greatest, by the sword and by famine; and ^p they shall be an oath, an astonishment, a curse and a reproach!’¹³ ^q For I will punish those who dwell in the land of Egypt, as I have punished Jerusalem, by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence,¹⁴ so that none of the remnant of Judah who have gone into the land of Egypt to dwell there shall escape or survive, lest they return to the land of Judah, to which they ^r desire⁵ to return and dwell. For ^s none shall return except those who escape.’”

¹⁵ Then all the men who knew that their wives had burned incense to other gods, with all the women who stood by, a great multitude, and all the people who dwelt in the land of Egypt, in Pathros, answered Jeremiah, saying:¹⁶ “As for the

Here the term is identified with a small fortress 25 miles east of Tahpanhes. **Noph** is another name for Memphis, the capital of Lower Egypt. **Pathros** is Upper Egypt. Since Jehoahaz had been deported to Egypt in 609 **B.C.**, a number of Jews had settled there in the fertile lands along the Nile.

44:2, 3 Jerusalem was brought to **desolation** because the people broke God’s covenant by worshiping other gods, rejecting the lordship of God, and thus provoking Him to anger.

44:4, 5 **prophets, rising early and sending:** Jerusalem had been warned time and again by faithful and tireless messengers from God (7:25; 25:4; 26:5). **they did not listen or incline their ear:** The reference here is to the people’s disobedience in continually worshiping foreign deities.

44:8 **provoke:** This term indicates willful, stubborn rebellion against God, which roused His anger.

44:9, 10 **They have not been humbled . . . nor have they feared:** The present generation of Jews had learned nothing from the past failures of the nation. The people were not broken in heart, only more stubborn.

44:11, 12 **I will set My face against you:** This expression describes the will of God, here pronouncing judgment upon the rebellious Jews in Egypt. **set their faces:** God had set His face against the remnant of Judah because they had set their face to enter Egypt against His will (43:7).

44:13, 14 The Jews in Egypt would suffer the same judgment as those in Jerusalem. Only a small **remnant** would survive to tell their story.

44:16, 17 The people countered Jeremiah’s words with an argument from experience. They rejected God by saying that when they worshiped the **queen of heaven**—that is, the goddess Ishtar or

word that you have spoken to us in the name of the LORD, ‘we will not listen to you!’¹⁷ But we will certainly do “whatever has gone out of our own mouth, to burn incense to the ^vqueen of heaven and pour out drink offerings to her, as we have done, we and our fathers, our kings and our princes, in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem. For *then* we had plenty of ⁶food, were well-off, and saw no trouble.¹⁸ But since we stopped burning incense to the queen of heaven and pouring out drink offerings to her, we have lacked everything and have been consumed by the sword and by famine.”

¹⁹*The women also said,* ^w“And when we burned incense to the queen of heaven and poured out drink offerings to her, did we make cakes for her, to worship her, and pour out drink offerings to her without our husbands’ *permission*?”

²⁰Then Jeremiah spoke to all the people—the men, the women, and all the people who had given him *that* answer—saying: ²¹“The incense that you burned in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem, you and your fathers, your kings and your princes, and the people of the land, did not the LORD remember them, and did it *not* come into His mind? ²²So the LORD could no longer bear it, because of the evil of your doings and because of the abominations which you committed. Therefore your land is a desolation, an astonishment, a curse, and without an inhabitant, ^xas it is this day. ²³Because you have burned incense and because you have sinned against the LORD, and have not obeyed the voice of the LORD or walked in His law, in His statutes or in His testimonies, ^ytherefore this calamity has happened to you, as *at* this day.”

²⁴Moreover Jeremiah said to all the

16 ^t Jer. 6:16
17 ^v Num. 30:12;
Deut. 23:23; Judg.
11:36 ^v 2 Kin. 17:16;
Jer. 7:18 ⁶ Lit. *bread*
19 ^w Jer. 7:18
22 ^x Jer. 25:11,
18, 38
23 ^y 1 Kin. 9:9; Neh.
13:18; Jer. 44:2;
Dan. 9:11, 12

26 ^z Gen. 22:16;
Deut. 32:40, 41;
Jer. 22:5; Amos 6:8;
Heb. 6:13 ^a Jer. 10:6
^b Neh. 9:5; Ps. 50:16;
Ezek. 20:39
27 ^c Jer. 1:10; 31:28;
Ezek. 7:6
28 ^d Is. 10:19;
27:12, 13
29 ^e [Ps. 33:11]
30 ^f Jer. 46:25, 26;
Ezek. 29:3; 30:21
^g 2 Kin. 25:4-7; Jer.
39:5

CHAPTER 45

1 ^a Jer. 36:1, 4, 32
^b Jer. 32:12, 16; 43:3

people and to all the women, “Hear the word of the LORD, all Judah who *are* in the land of Egypt!²⁵ Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, saying: ‘You and your wives have spoken with your mouths and fulfilled with your hands, saying, “We will surely keep our vows that we have made, to burn incense to the queen of heaven and pour out drink offerings to her.” You will surely keep your vows and perform your vows!’²⁶ Therefore hear the word of the LORD, all Judah who dwell in the land of Egypt: ‘Behold, ^zI have sworn by My ^agreat name,’ says the LORD, ‘that ^bMy name shall no more be named in the mouth of any man of Judah in all the land of Egypt, saying, “The Lord God lives.”’²⁷ Behold, I will watch over them for adversity and not for good. And all the men of Judah who *are* in the land of Egypt ^cshall be consumed by the sword and by famine, until there is an end to them.²⁸ Yet ^da small number who escape the sword shall return from the land of Egypt to the land of Judah; and all the remnant of Judah, who have gone to the land of Egypt to dwell there, shall know whose words will stand, Mine or theirs.²⁹ And this *shall be* a sign to you,’ says the LORD, ‘that I will punish you in this place, that you may know that My words will surely ^estand against you for adversity.’

³⁰“Thus says the LORD: ‘Behold, ^fI will give Pharaoh Hophra king of Egypt into the hand of his enemies and into the hand of those who seek his life, as I gave ^gZedekiah king of Judah into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, his enemy who sought his life.’”

Assurance to Baruch

45 The ^aword that Jeremiah the prophet spoke to ^bBaruch the son of Neriah, when he had written these

Astarte, they **had plenty of food, were well off, and saw no trouble.**

44:18 Queen of heaven refers to Ishtar, a goddess of war and fertility who was worshiped with explicit sexual activity. The people reasoned that when they stopped worshiping the queen of heaven in the days of Josiah’s reform, their king was killed and their land was overrun and destroyed.

44:19 Women were leaders in the Ishtar rites, which included incense burning, drink offerings, and special ceremonial **cakes** marked with the symbol of the goddess (7:18).

44:21 remember: This term is often used in contexts describing the basis for God’s judgment.

44:22, 23 no longer bear it: The long-suffering of the Lord had reached its end. The cause of the judgment was the people’s **evil . . . doings and abominations.** When the covenant was broken, the covenant curses came to bear.

44:24, 25 The focus here is on the stubbornness of the **women** who persisted in their idolatry. Nothing could make them abandon their **vows** to worship Ishtar.

44:26, 27 The **name** of God reveals His quality and character in dealing with humankind.

44:28, 29 A small **remnant** would survive and see the fulfillment of God’s word as revealed through Jeremiah. Their own hopes of prosperity in Egypt would vanish, and the sign of God’s work against them would be the fall of Pharaoh Hophra of Egypt. In 570 B.C. Hophra was overthrown in a military coup by his own general Amasis. Three years later he was executed in fulfillment of Jeremiah’s prophecy.

45:1 Baruch assisted and encouraged Jeremiah when he was imprisoned. In this passage Jeremiah replies with a personal word of encouragement from the Lord for his scribal friend. The date of the passage, 604 B.C., identifies it with the circumstances of ch. 36. Baruch had read Jeremiah’s oracles before the temple crowd and the princes of Judah, before Jehoiakim burned the original scroll. A second scroll was prepared by Baruch, and he remained an assistant to Jeremiah throughout his ministry, including the journey to Egypt.

words in a book ¹ at the instruction of Jeremiah, in the ^cfourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, saying, ²“Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, to you, O Baruch: ³‘You said, “Woe is me now! For the LORD has added grief to my sorrow. I ^dfainted in my sighing, and I find no rest.”’”

⁴“Thus you shall say to him, ‘Thus says the LORD: “Behold, ^ewhat I have built I will break down, and what I have planted I will pluck up, that is, this whole land. ⁵And do you seek great things for yourself? Do not seek *them*; for behold, ^fI will bring adversity on all flesh,” says the LORD. “But I will give your ^glife to you as a prize in all places, wherever you go.”’”

Judgment on Egypt

46 The word of the LORD which came to Jeremiah the prophet against ^athe nations. ²Against ^bEgypt.

^cConcerning the army of Pharaoh Necho, king of Egypt, which was by the River Euphrates in Carchemish, and which Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon ^ddefeated in the ^efourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah:

- ³ “Order ¹ the ²buckler and shield,
And draw near to battle!
⁴ Harness the horses,
And mount up, you horsemen!
Stand forth with *your* helmets,
Polish the spears,
^fPut on the armor!
⁵ Why have I seen them dismayed *and*
turned back?
Their mighty ones are beaten down;
They have speedily fled,
And did not look back,
For ^gfear was all around,” says the
LORD.

¹ ^c Jer. 25:1; 36:1;
46:2 ¹ Lit. from
Jeremiah's mouth
³ ^d Ps. 6:6; 69:3;
[2 Cor. 4:1, 16;
Gal. 6:9]
⁴ ^e Is. 5:5; Jer. 1:10;
11:17; 18:7-10; 31:28
⁵ ^f Jer. 25:17-26
^g Jer. 21:9; 38:2;
39:18

CHAPTER 46

¹ ^a Jer. 25:15
² ^b Jer. 25:17-19;
Ezek. 29:2-32:32
^c 2 Kin. 23:33-35
^d 2 Kin. 23:29; 24:7;
2 Chr. 35:20 ^e Jer.
45:1
³ ¹ Set in order ² A
small shield
⁴ ^f Is. 21:5; Jer. 51:11;
12; Joel 3:9; Nah.
2:1; 3:14
⁵ ^g Jer. 49:29

⁶ ^h Jer. 46:12, 16;
Dan. 11:19
⁷ ⁱ Is. 8:7, 8; Jer. 47:2;
Dan. 11:22
⁹ ^j Is. 66:19 ³ Heb.
Cush ⁴ Heb. Put
¹⁰ ^k Is. 13:6; Joel
1:15 ¹ Deut. 32:42;
Is. 31:8; Jer. 12:12
^m Is. 34:6; Zeph. 1:7;
Ezek. 39:17 ⁵ Filled
to the full
¹¹ ⁿ Jer. 8:22 ^o Is.
47:1; Jer. 31:4, 21
^p Ezek. 30:21
¹² ^q Jer. 2:36; Nah.
3:8-10

- ⁶ “Do not let the swift flee away,
Nor the mighty man escape;
They will ^hstumble and fall
Toward the north, by the River
Euphrates.

- ⁷ “Who is this coming up ⁱlike a flood,
Whose waters move like the rivers?

- ⁸ Egypt rises up like a flood,
And *its* waters move like the rivers;
And he says, ‘I will go up *and* cover
the earth,
I will destroy the city and its
inhabitants.’

- ⁹ Come up, O horses, and rage,
O chariots!
And let the mighty men come forth:
³ The Ethiopians and ⁴ the Libyans
who handle the shield,
And the Lydians ^jwho handle *and*
bend the bow.

- ¹⁰ For this is ^kthe day of the Lord God
of hosts,
A day of vengeance,
That He may avenge Himself on His
adversaries.

- ^lThe sword shall devour;
It shall be ⁵satiated and made drunk
with their blood;
For the Lord God of hosts ^mhas a
sacrifice
In the north country by the River
Euphrates.

- ¹¹ “Go ⁿ up to Gilead and take balm,
^oO virgin, the daughter of Egypt;
In vain you will use many medicines;
^pYou shall not be cured.
¹² The nations have heard of your
^qshame,
And your cry has filled the land;
For the mighty man has stumbled
against the mighty;
They both have fallen together.”

45:2, 3 Jeremiah addressed Baruch in light of the scribe's sorrow. **Woe:** Baruch lamented his plight in the same manner that Jeremiah had done (15:10). **added grief to my sorrow:** Baruch suffered mental anguish and personal rejection from his people due to his association with Jeremiah (36:15–19; 43:3).

45:5 great things: Baruch apparently had hopes for position, honor, and distinction. However, these dreams were lost through his association with Jeremiah. Yet Baruch would be spared the judgment that would befall the land, for the Lord would give him his life as a **prize**, or booty (21:9; 38:2).

46:1 This verse introduces a collection of oracles **against the nations**. The text moves generally from the west—Egypt—to the east—Elam and Babylon. Scattered throughout the oracles are brief messages of the restoration of Israel and Judah. Internal evidence indicates a date prior to the fall of Jerusalem for most of the material. In v. 2, the first oracle is dated specifically to 605 B.C. In other oracles, the contents reflect events dating from Nebuchadnezzar's southern campaigns (604 B.C.) to his subsequent campaigns in 586 or even 582 B.C. The main message of these oracles is the sovereignty of God over all the nations of the earth.

46:2 Against Egypt: The background here is Nebuchadnezzar's defeat of Pharaoh Necho at Carchemish in 605 B.C. Jeremiah's proclamations concerning the future Babylonian invasion were no doubt based in part on this battle, which firmly established Nebuchadnezzar as the great imperial monarch of his generation.

46:3, 4 Buckler and shield are two different sizes of shields (see 1 Kin. 10:16, 17).

46:5, 6 The strong Egyptian army was overpowered suddenly by the mightier Babylonians. **fear . . . all around:** This expression was also the name given to Pashhur by Jeremiah in 20:3, 4, and to Jeremiah's persecutors in 20:10.

46:7–9 Egypt had been weak for three hundred years (see 1 Kin. 14:25), but was still known for producing and exporting chariots. **Ethiopians, Libyans, and Lydians** were apparently mercenaries under Necho.

46:10–12 The day of the Lord God is described here as a **day of vengeance** in which Egypt is punished for the death of Josiah. The imagery of a devouring sword is also found in 2:30. Egypt's demise is pictured as a sacrificial feast. As there was no healing **balm** for sinful Judah, so now Egypt was mortally wounded, stumbling to its death.

Babylonia Will Strike Egypt

¹³The word that the LORD spoke to Jeremiah the prophet, how Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon would come *and* ^rstrike the land of Egypt.

- ¹⁴“Declare in Egypt, and proclaim in ^sMigdol;
Proclaim in ⁶Noph and in
^tTahpanhes;
Say, ‘Stand fast and prepare
yourselves,
For the sword devours all around
you.’
¹⁵ Why are your valiant *men* swept
away?
They did not stand
Because the LORD drove them
away.
¹⁶ He made many fall;
Yes, ^uone fell upon another.
And they said, ‘Arise!
^vLet us go back to our own people
And to the land of our nativity
From the oppressing sword.’
¹⁷ They cried there,
‘Pharaoh, king of Egypt, *is but* a
noise.
He has passed by the appointed
time!’
¹⁸“As I live,” says the King,
^wWhose name *is* the LORD of hosts,
“Surely as Tabor is among the
mountains
And as Carmel by the sea, *so* he shall
come.
¹⁹ O ^xyou daughter dwelling in
Egypt,
Prepare yourself ^yto go into
captivity!
For ⁷Noph shall be waste and
desolate, without inhabitant.
²⁰“Egypt *is* a very pretty ^zheifer,
But destruction comes, it comes
^afrom the north.
²¹ Also her mercenaries are in her
midst like ⁸fat bulls,
For they also are turned back,
They have fled away together.
They did not stand,

Mount Tabor

Tabor is a mountain of limestone in the northeastern part of the Valley of Jezreel (Josh. 19:22). Now called Jebel et-Tur, Mt. Tabor rises some 1,350 feet above the plain. Because of its strategic location and commanding height, Mt. Tabor frequently was fortified with protective walls. It played an important role in Israel's history. Here Barak gathered ten thousand men and attacked the Canaanite armies of Sisera (Judg. 4:6, 12, 14). Here the Midianite kings Zebah and Zalmunna killed Gideon's brothers (Judg. 8:18, 19). During the time of the prophets, the top of the mountain was a sanctuary for idolatry (Hos. 5:1). In fact, the mountain may have been the site of a pagan sanctuary from ancient times (Deut. 33:19). In 218 B.C. Antiochus III captured a town on the summit and fortified it. As a Jewish general, Josephus added a defensive rampart to the fortress in A.D. 66. The remains of this structure can still be seen today.



Mount Tabor

Eliot from The Negev/Wikimedia Commons, CC-BY 2.0

¹³ ^rIs. 19:1; Jer. 43:10, 11; Ezek. 29:1-21
¹⁴ ^sJer. 44:1 ^tEzek. 30:18 ⁶Ancient Memphis
¹⁶ ^uLev. 26:36, 37; Jer. 46:6 ^vJer. 51:9
¹⁸ ^wIs. 47:4; Jer. 48:15; Mal. 1:14
¹⁹ ^xJer. 48:18 ^yIs. 20:4 ⁷Ancient Memphis
²⁰ ^zHos. 10:11
^aJer. 1:14
²¹ ⁸Lit. *calves of the stall*

^b[Ps. 37:13]; Jer. 50:27
²² ^c[Is. 29:4]
²³ ^dIs. 10:34
^eJudg. 6:5; 7:12; Joel 2:25
²⁴ ^fJer. 1:15

- For ^bthe day of their calamity had
come upon them,
The time of their punishment.
²² ^eHer noise shall go like a serpent,
For they shall march with an
army
And come against her with axes,
Like those who chop wood.
²³“They shall ^dcut down her forest,”
says the LORD,
“Though it cannot be searched,
Because they *are* innumerable,
And more numerous than
^egrasshoppers.
²⁴ The daughter of Egypt shall be
ashamed;
She shall be delivered into the hand
Of ^fthe people of the north.”

46:13 This verse is a prose introduction to a poetic description of Nebuchadnezzar's attack on **Egypt**. After the battle at Carchemish, the Babylonian march through Palestine was resumed in 604 B.C. They attacked Ashkelon and then pursued the Egyptians.

46:14-17 **Why are your valiant men swept away:** The fall of the gods before God in judgment is a prominent theme in the oracles against the nations (v. 25). **the LORD drove them:** Babylon is depicted as the instrument of God's judgment.

46:18, 19 **King . . . LORD of hosts:** The term *hosts* can also be translated “armies.” God is the true and sovereign King over all the armies

of heaven and earth. **Tabor . . . Carmel:** The mountains stand for the certainty of God's kingship. Like Judah, Egypt would face God's destructive judgment.

46:20-24 Egypt's destroyer invaded **from the north**, the same direction from which Judah's adversary attacked. **fat bulls:** Egypt's well-paid **mercenaries** were frail before God and the Babylonians, who came like lumberjacks cutting down the forest and chopping the fleeing serpents, the Egyptians. Egypt's demise is parallel to Israel's; the virgin daughter had been violated and stood **ashamed** (2:26), soon to be taken captive by Babylon.

²⁵ The LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, says: “Behold, I will bring punishment on ⁹ Amon of ⁹ No, ¹ and Pharaoh and Egypt, ^h with their gods and their kings—Pharaoh and those who ⁱ trust in him. ^{26j} And I will deliver them into the hand of those who seek their lives, into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and the hand of his servants. ^k Afterward it shall be inhabited as in the days of old,” says the LORD.

God Will Preserve Israel

^{27a} “But ^l do not fear, O My servant Jacob, And do not be dismayed, O Israel! For behold, I will ^m save you from afar, And your offspring from the land of their captivity; Jacob shall return, have rest and be at ease; No one shall make ^{him} afraid. ²⁸ Do not fear, O Jacob My servant,” says the LORD, “For I ^{am} with you; For I will make a complete end of all the nations To which I have driven you, But I will not make ⁿ a complete end of you. I will rightly ^o correct you, For I will not leave you wholly unpunished.”

Judgment on Philistia

47 The word of the LORD that came to Jeremiah the prophet ^a against the Philistines, ^b before Pharaoh attacked Gaza.

² Thus says the LORD:

“Behold, ^c waters rise ^d out of the north, And shall be an overflowing flood; They shall overflow the land and all that is in it, The city and those who dwell within; Then the men shall cry, And all the inhabitants of the land shall wail.

²⁵ ⁹ Ezek. 30:14-16; Nah. 3:8 ⁹ Ex. 12:12; Jer. 43:12, 13; Ezek. 30:13; Zeph. 2:11 ¹ Is. 30:1-5; 31:1-3 ⁹ A sun god ¹ Ancient Thebes ²⁶ ¹ Jer. 44:30; Ezek. 32:11 ^k Ezek. 29:8-14 ²⁷ ¹ Is. 41:13, 14; 43:5; 44:2; Jer. 30:10, 11 ^m Is. 11:11; Jer. 23:3, 4; Mic. 7:12 ²⁸ ⁿ Jer. 10:24; Amos 9:8, 9 ^o Jer. 30:11

CHAPTER 47

¹ ^o Is. 14:29-31; Ezek. 25:15-17; Zeph. 2:4, 5; Zech. 9:6 ^b Amos 1:6 ² ^c Is. 8:7, 8; Jer. 46:7, 8 ^d Jer. 1:14

³ ^e Judg. 5:22; Jer. 8:16; Nah. 3:2 ¹ Lit. From sinking hands ⁴ ^f Is. 14:29-31 ⁹ Is. 23:1-18; Jer. 25:22; Ezek. 26:1-21; 28:20-24; Amos 1:9, 10; Zech. 9:2-4 ^h Ezek. 25:16; Amos 1:8 ¹ Gen. 10:14; Deut. 2:23; Amos 9:7 ² Cappadocia in Asia Minor ⁵ ⁱ Jer. 48:37; Mic. 1:16; Zeph. 2:4 ^k Judg. 1:18; Jer. 25:20; Amos 1:7, 8; Zech. 9:5 ⁶ ¹ Deut. 32:41; Judg. 7:20; Jer. 12:12; Ezek. 21:3-5 ⁷ ^m Is. 10:6; Ezek. 14:17 ⁿ Mic. 6:9 ³ Lit. you

CHAPTER 48

¹ ^o Is. 15:1-16:14; 25:10; Ezek. 25:8-11; Amos 2:1-3; Zeph. 2:8-11 ^b Is. 15:2 ^c Num. 32:37; Jer. 48:23; Ezek. 25:9 ¹ Heb. *Misgab* ² ^d Is. 16:14 ^e Is. 15:4; Jer. 49:3 ^f Is. 10:31 ² A city of Moab

³ At the ^e noise of the stamping hooves of his strong horses, At the rushing of his chariots, At the rumbling of his wheels, The fathers will not look back for ^{their} children, ¹ Lacking courage, ⁴ Because of the day that comes to plunder all the ¹ Philistines, To cut off from ⁹ Tyre and Sidon every helper who remains; For the LORD shall plunder the Philistines, ^h The remnant of the country of ⁱ Caphtor. ² ⁵ ^j Baldness has come upon Gaza, ^k Ashkelon is cut off With the remnant of their valley. How long will you cut yourself? ⁶ “O you ^l sword of the LORD, How long until you are quiet? Put yourself up into your scabbard, Rest and be still! ⁷ How can ³ it be quiet, Seeing the LORD has ^m given it a charge Against Ashkelon and against the seashore? There He has ⁿ appointed it.”

Judgment on Moab

48 Against ^a Moab. Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel:

“Woe to ^b Nebo! For it is plundered, ^c Kirjathaim is shamed *and* taken; ¹ The high stronghold is shamed and dismayed— ² ^d No more praise of Moab. In ^e Heshbon they have devised evil against her: ‘Come, and let us cut her off as a nation.’ You also shall be cut down, O ^f Madmen! ² The sword shall pursue you;

46:25, 26 The **gods** and goddesses of Egypt were punished in the defeat of the people who worshiped them. **days of old:** After the Babylonian invasion and exile, normal life in Egypt would be restored.

46:27, 28 do not be dismayed: Israel would be preserved. These verses are like 30:10, 11 with only slight variation.

47:2 The metaphor of rising **waters** is found in Is. 8:7, 8; 28:17 in reference to the Assyrian army; here the foe is Babylon (1:13; 4:6; 6:1, 22; 25:9). The destructive **overflowing** of the river is more typical of the Euphrates River in the north than of the Nile floods, which bring beneficial nourishment to the fertile valley.

47:3 Lacking courage is literally “from weakness of hands,” describing the paralyzing terror felt by parents as they abandon their children in flight.

47:4, 5 Philistines and Phoenicians are associated through their origins among the sea peoples who came from the northern Mediterranean and Aegean islands to the coastlands of Palestine in the twelfth century B.C. **Caphtor** is identified with Crete. **Tyre and Sidon** were the largest Phoenician ports. **Gaza and Ashkelon** were the last of the Philistine strongholds to fall, along with Ashdod, which is not mentioned. **Baldness . . . cut yourself:** Shaving the head and self-inflicted wounds were mourning customs forbidden in Israel (16:6).

47:6, 7 The image of the **sword of the LORD** is often used to portray divine judgment (12:12; 46:10, 14, 16). **quiet . . . Rest . . . be still:** The judgment had long been withheld; the long-suffering of the LORD had reached its end.

- ³ A voice of crying *shall be* from
^gHoronaim:
 ‘Plundering and great destruction!’
- ⁴ “Moab is destroyed;
³ Her little ones have caused a cry to
 be heard;
- ⁵ ^hFor in the Ascent of Luhith they
 ascend with continual weeping;
 For in the descent of Horonaim the
 enemies have heard a cry of
 destruction.
- ⁶ “Flee, save your lives!
 And be like ⁴the ⁱjuniper in the
 wilderness.
- ⁷ For because you have trusted in your
 works and your ^jtreasures,
 You also shall be taken.
 And ^kChemosh shall go forth into
 captivity,
 His ^lpriests and his princes together.
- ⁸ And ^mthe plunderer shall come
 against every city;
 No one shall escape.
 The valley also shall perish,
 And the plain shall be destroyed,
 As the LORD has spoken.
- ⁹ “Give ⁿwings to Moab,
 That she may flee and get away;
 For her cities shall be desolate,
 Without any to dwell in them.
- ¹⁰ ^oCursed *is* he who does the work of
 the LORD deceitfully,
 And cursed *is* he who keeps back his
 sword from blood.
- ¹¹ “Moab has been at ease from ⁵his
 youth;
 He ^phas settled on his dregs,
 And has not been emptied from
 vessel to vessel,
 Nor has he gone into captivity.
 Therefore his taste remained in him,
 And his scent has not changed.
- ¹² “Therefore behold, the days are
 coming,” says the LORD,
 “That I shall send him ⁶wine-workers

³ ^g Is. 15:5; Jer. 48:5, 34
⁴ ³ So with MT, Tg., Vg.; LXX Proclaim it in Zoar
⁵ ^h Is. 15:5
⁶ ⁱ Jer. 17:6 ⁴ Or Aroer, a city of Moab
⁷ ^j Ps. 52:7; Is. 59:4; Jer. 9:23; [1 Tim. 6:17] ^k Num. 21:29; Judg. 11:24; Jer. 48:13 ^l Jer. 49:3
⁸ ^m Jer. 6:26
⁹ ⁿ Ps. 55:6
¹⁰ ^o Judg. 5:23; 1 Sam. 15:3, 9; 1 Kin. 20:42
¹¹ ^p Zeph. 1:12
⁵ Heb. uses masc. and fem. pronouns interchangeably in this chapter.
¹² ⁶ Lit. *tipplers of wine bottles*

¹³ ^q 1 Kin. 11:7
^r Hos. 10:6 ^s 1 Kin. 12:29; 13:32-34; Hos. 8:5, 6
¹⁴ ^t Is. 16:6
¹⁵ ^u [Is. 40:30, 31]; Jer. 50:27 ^v Jer. 46:18; 51:57; Mal. 1:14
¹⁷ ^w Is. 9:4; 14:4, 5
¹⁸ ^x Is. 47:1 ^y Num. 21:30; Josh. 13:9, 17; Is. 15:2; Jer. 48:22
¹⁹ ^z Deut. 2:36; Josh. 12:2; Is. 17:2
²⁰ ^a 1 Sam. 4:13, 14, 16
²⁰ ^b Is. 16:7 ^c Num. 21:13

- Who will tip him over
 And empty his vessels
 And break the bottles.
- ¹³ Moab shall be ashamed of
^qChemosh,
 As the house of Israel ^rwas ashamed
 of ^sBethel, their confidence.
- ¹⁴ “How can you say, ‘We *are* mighty
 And strong men for the war?’
- ¹⁵ Moab is plundered and gone up *from*
 her cities;
 Her chosen young men have ^ugone
 down to the slaughter,” says ^vthe
 King,
 Whose name *is* the LORD of hosts.
- ¹⁶ “The calamity of Moab *is* near at
 hand,
 And his affliction comes quickly.
- ¹⁷ Bemoan him, all you who are around
 him;
 And all you who know his name,
 Say, ^w“How the strong staff is
 broken,
 The beautiful rod!”
- ¹⁸ “O ^xdaughter inhabiting ^yDibon,
 Come down from *your* glory,
 And sit in thirst;
 For the plunderer of Moab has come
 against you,
 He has destroyed your strongholds.
- ¹⁹ O inhabitant of ^zAroer,
^aStand by the way and watch;
 Ask him who flees
 And her who escapes;
 Say, ‘What has happened?’
- ²⁰ Moab is shamed, for he is broken
 down.
^bWail and cry!
 Tell it in ^cArnon, that Moab is
 plundered.
- ²¹ “And judgment has come on the plain
 country:
 On Holon and Jahzah and Mephaath,
- ²² On Dibon and Nebo and Beth
 Diblathaim,

48:6–8 The juniper ekes out its stunted growth in the wilderness, hiding in crevasses of rock. As the apostate people of Judah trusted in the queen of heaven (44:17, 18), Moab trusted in its patron deity **Chemosh**, a god of fertility and storm. **captivity**: Taking a deity captive was a well-known Middle Eastern custom. The national statue of the patron deity was seized and it was believed that the captured god could no longer protect its people.

48:11–13 **not been emptied from vessel to vessel**: Though Moab was subject to Israel in the ninth century B.C., it had never experienced exile and had become complacent in its security. God would **empty** Moab’s **vessels**, causing the Moabites to be taken captive. **break the bottles**: Moab’s cities would be destroyed. **Chemosh** (v. 7), the great protector of Moab, would become powerless before God, as **Bethel** fell with **Israel** (Amos 3:14).

48:14–17 Jeremiah assured Moab that there is but one true **King**, **Whose name is the LORD of hosts**, the all-powerful “God of armies.” **Bemoan**: A note of sarcasm is communicated. The nations around Moab, like Judah, who was attacked by Moab’s mercenaries, were called upon to lament Moab’s destruction.

48:18–20 **Dibon** was the capital from which King Mesha ruled (see 2 Kin. 3:4–27). The haughty **Moab** was **shamed** by the destruction of its mighty fortresses.

48:21–25 **Mephaath** was one of the Levitical cities (see Josh. 21:37). **Bozrah** refers not to the capital of Edom, but to Bezer, one of the cities of refuge (see Josh. 20:8). **Kerioth** is mentioned in Amos 2:2. **Horn** and **arm** are symbols of the power and strength that was broken.

- 23 On Kirjathaim and Beth Gamul and Beth Meon,
 24 On ^dKerioth and Bozrah,
 On all the cities of the land of Moab,
 Far or near.
 25 ^eThe ⁷horn of Moab is cut off,
 And his ^farm is broken,” says the LORD.
 26 “Make ^ghim drunk,
 Because he exalted *himself* against the LORD.
 Moab shall wallow in his vomit,
 And he shall also be in derision.
 27 For ^hwas not Israel a derision to you?
ⁱWas he found among thieves?
 For whenever you speak of him,
 You shake *your head in scorn*.
 28 You who dwell in Moab,
 Leave the cities and ^kdwell in the rock,
 And be like ^lthe dove *which* makes her nest
 In the sides of the cave’s mouth.
 29 “We have heard the ^mpride of Moab
 (He *is* exceedingly proud),
 Of his loftiness and arrogance and ⁿpride,
 And of the haughtiness of his heart.”
 30 “I know his wrath,” says the LORD,
 “But it *is* not right;
^oHis ⁸lies have made nothing right.
 31 Therefore ^pI will wail for Moab,
 And I will cry out for all Moab;
^qI will mourn for the men of Kir Heres.
 32 ^qO vine of Sibmah! I will weep for
 you with the weeping of ^rJazer.
 Your plants have gone over the sea,
 They reach to the sea of Jazer.
 The plunderer has fallen on your
 summer fruit and your vintage.
 33 ^sJoy and gladness are taken
 From the plentiful field
 And from the land of Moab;
 I have caused wine to ^tfail from the
 winepresses;
 No one will tread with joyous
 shouting—
 Not joyous shouting!

24 ^d Jer. 48:41;
 Amos 2:2
 25 ^e Ps. 75:10; Zech.
 1:19-21 ^f Ezek.
 30:21 ⁷ Strength
 26 ^g Jer. 25:15
 27 ^h Zeph. 2:8 ⁱ Jer.
 2:26 ^j Lam. 2:15;
 [Mic. 7:8-10]
 28 ^k Ps. 55:6, 7
^l Song 2:14
 29 ^m Is. 16:6; Zeph.
 2:8, 10 ⁿ Jer. 49:16
 30 ^o Is. 16:6; Jer.
 50:36 ⁸ idle talk
 31 ^p Is. 15:5; 16:7, 11
^q So with DSS, LXX,
 Vg.; MT *He*
 32 ^r Is. 16:8, 9
^s Num. 21:32; Is.
 16:10
 33 ^t Is. 16:10; Jer.
 25:10; Joel 1:12
^l cease

34 ¹ Is. 15:4-6
^u Num. 32:3, 37
^v Is. 15:5, 6 ² Or
The Third Eglati,
 an unknown city,
 Is. 15:5
 35 ^w Is. 15:2; 16:12
³ Places for pagan
 worship
 36 ^x Is. 15:5; 16:11
^y Is. 15:7
 37 ^z Is. 15:2, 3; Jer.
 16:6; 41:5; 47:5
^a Gen. 37:34; Is.
 15:3; 20:2
 38 ^b Is. 15:3 ^c Jer.
 22:28
 40 ^d Deut. 28:49;
 Jer. 49:22; Hos. 8:1;
 Hab. 1:8 ^e Is. 8:8
 41 ^f Is. 13:8; 21:3;
 Jer. 30:6; Mic.
 4:9, 10
 42 ^g Ps. 83:4; Jer.
 48:2

- 34 “From ^tthe cry of Heshbon to
^uElealeh and to Jahaz
 They have uttered their voice,
^vFrom Zoar to Horonaim,
Like ²a three-year-old heifer;
 For the waters of Nimrim also shall
 be desolate.
 35 “Moreover,” says the LORD,
 “I will cause to cease in Moab
^wThe one who offers *sacrifices* in the
³high places
 And burns incense to his gods.
 36 Therefore ^xMy heart shall wail like
 flutes for Moab,
 And like flutes My heart shall wail
 For the men of Kir Heres.
 Therefore ^ythe riches they have
 acquired have perished.
 37 “For ^zevery head *shall be* bald, and
 every beard clipped;
 On all the hands *shall be* cuts, and
^aon the loins sackcloth—
 38 A general lamentation
 On all the ^bhousetops of Moab,
 And in its streets;
 For I have ^cbroken Moab like a vessel
 in which *is* no pleasure,” says
 the LORD.
 39 “They shall wail:
 ‘How she is broken down!
 How Moab has turned her back with
 shame!’
 So Moab shall be a derision
 And a dismay to all those about her.”
 40 For thus says the LORD:
 “Behold, ^done shall fly like an eagle,
 And ^espread his wings over Moab.
 41 Kerioth is taken,
 And the strongholds are surprised;
^fThe mighty men’s hearts in Moab on
 that day shall be
 Like the heart of a woman in birth
 pangs.
 42 And Moab shall be destroyed ^gas a
 people,
 Because he exalted *himself* against
 the LORD.

48:26–29 Make him drunk: Judgment is portrayed in the form of drunkenness to the point of vomiting, the result of Moab’s mockery of Israel (25:15–29). **Pride** refers to the self-indulging, self-honoring haughtiness by which one thinks of oneself as greater than others. **48:30–33** The scene in Moab turns to mourning and intense lamentation over the failure of the crops and vineyards. **Kir Heres**, also called Kir Haraseth, (see 2 Kin. 3:25; Is. 16:11), may be a name for the capital city of Moab (Kir of Moab; see Is. 15:1). The **joy** once heard echoing from the vineyards and winepresses had vanished before the horrifying sound of horses’ hoofbeats and clashing weapons. **48:34 The waters of Nimrim** empty into the Jordan opposite Jericho. A lament from **Heshbon** and **Elealeh** to **Horonaim** and **Zoar**

would cover all the Moabite plateau from north to south, from the Dead Sea to the desert.

48:35–39 offers sacrifices . . . burns incense: Idolatry would end; the people could no longer worship Chemosh and other deities. **head . . . beard . . . hands . . . loins:** Every kind of lament would be used to mourn for Moab, as the proud Moab became **a derision and a dismay** like Judah.

48:40–44 The imagery is that of Babylon spreading its ravaging armies over Moab like an **eagle** spreading its **wings** (49:22; Deut. 32:11; Ezek. 17:7). **exalted himself:** Moab’s chief sin was pride, considering itself greater than the God of Israel. Its pride would be turned to fear and terror, and then the nation would be taken captive.

43^h Fear and the pit and the snare *shall*
be upon you,
O inhabitant of Moab,” says the
LORD.

44^a “He who flees from the fear shall fall
into the pit,
And he who gets out of the pit shall
be caught in the ⁱsnare.
For upon Moab, upon it ^jI will
bring
The year of their punishment,” says
the LORD.

45^a “Those who fled stood under the
shadow of Heshbon
Because of exhaustion.
But ^ka fire shall come out of
Heshbon,
A flame from the midst of ^lSihon,
And ^mshall devour the brow of
Moab,
The crown of the head of the sons of
tumult.

46ⁿ Woe to you, O Moab!
The people of Chemosh perish;
For your sons have been taken
captive,
And your daughters captive.

47^a “Yet I will bring back the captives of
Moab
^oIn the latter days,” says the LORD.

Thus far *is* the judgment of Moab.

Judgment on Ammon

49^a Against the ^aAmmonites.
Thus says the LORD:

“Has Israel no sons?
Has he no heir?
Why *then* does ^lMilcom inherit
^bGad,
And his people dwell in its cities?

2^c “Therefore behold, the days are
coming,” says the LORD,
“That I will cause to be heard an
alarm of war
In ^dRabbah of the Ammonites;
It shall be a desolate mound,

43^h Is. 24:17, 18;
Lam. 3:47
44^a 1 Kin. 19:17; Is.
24:18; Amos 5:19
^j Jer. 11:23
45^k Num. 21:28,
29 ^l Num. 21:21, 26;
Ps. 135:11 ^m Num.
24:17
46ⁿ Num. 21:29
47^o Jer. 49:6, 39

CHAPTER 49

1^a Deut. 23:3, 4;
2 Chr. 20:1; Jer.
25:21; Ezek. 21:28-
32; 25:1-7 ^b Amos
1:13-15; Zeph. 2:8-
11 ^l Heb. *Malcam*,
lit. *their king*; an
Ammonite god,
1 Kin. 11:5; *Molech*,
Lev. 18:21
2^c Amos 1:13-15
^d Ezek. 25:5

² Lit. *daughters*
3^e Jer. 48:2 ^f Is.
32:11; Jer. 48:37
^g Jer. 48:7 ³ See v. 1
4^h Jer. 9:23 ⁱ Jer.
3:14 ^j Jer. 48:7 ^k Jer.
21:13 ⁴ Lit. *Your
valley is flowing*
6^l Jer. 48:47
7^m Gen. 25:30;
32:3; Is. 34:5, 6;
Jer. 25:21; Ezek.
25:12-14; 35:1-15;
Joel 3:19; Amos
1:11, 12; Obad. 1-9,
15, 16 ⁿ Gen. 36:11;
Job 2:11 ^o Is. 19:11
^p Jer. 8:9
8^q Is. 21:13; Jer.
25:23
9^r Obad. 5, 6

And her ²villages shall be burned
with fire.
Then Israel shall take possession of
his inheritance,” says the LORD.

- 3^a “Wail, O ^aHeshbon, for Ai is
plundered!
Cry, you daughters of Rabbah,
^fGird yourselves with sackcloth!
Lament and run to and fro by the
walls;
For ³Milcom shall go into captivity
With his ^gpriests and his princes
together.
4^b Why ^hdo you boast in the valleys,
⁴Your flowing valley, O ⁱbacksliding
daughter?
Who trusted in her ^jtreasures,
^ksaying,
“Who will come against me?”
5^c Behold, I will bring fear upon you,”
Says the Lord God of hosts,
“From all those who are around you;
You shall be driven out, everyone
headlong,
And no one will gather those who
wander off.
6^d But ^lafterward I will bring back
The captives of the people of
Ammon,” says the LORD.

Judgment on Edom

7^m Against Edom.

Thus says the LORD of hosts:

- ⁿ“Is wisdom no more in Teman?
^oHas counsel perished from the
prudent?
Has their wisdom ^pvanished?
8^b Flee, turn back, dwell in the depths,
O inhabitants of ^qDedan!
For I will bring the calamity of Esau
upon him,
The time *that* I will punish him.
9^r If grape-gatherers came to you,
Would they not leave *some* gleaning
grapes?
If thieves by night,
Would they not destroy until they
have enough?

48:47 Bring back means “restore the fortunes of.” Moab would see its people restored to their homeland. Their crops and vineyards would once again be productive. Moab, Judah, and Israel returned home in 538 B.C., during the reign of Cyrus.

49:1, 2 Milcom, the patron deity of the Ammonites, is pictured as taking **possession** of the land formerly belonging to the Gadites, a process that began in the days of the judges.

49:3 Heshbon (48:2) was at one time possessed by the Ammonites, but later lost to the Moabites. **Ai** is not the Israelite city of the same name. **Rabbah** was the capital city of the Ammonites. The **captivity** of the patron deity **Milcom** was tantamount to his defeat, visible in the exile of leaders and people, together with his statue, from their homeland.

49:4 Valleys . . . flowing valley may be a reference to the Jabbok valley on the northern border of Ammon.

49:5 no one will gather those who wander off: Those who fell by the wayside during the flight from Ammon would be abandoned.

49:7 Edom was known in the Bible for its wisdom (Obad. 8). **Teman** was the name of a city or district of Edom in which the capital city Bozrah was located.

49:9–11 grape-gatherers: This imagery derives from 6:9, but there was no real remnant left in Edom. The nation had been totally ravaged and stripped bare, with only women and children left alive to work the land. These workers were invited to **trust** in God.

¹⁰ ^sBut I have made Esau bare;
I have uncovered his secret places,
And he shall not be able to hide
himself.

His descendants are plundered,
His brethren and his neighbors,
And ^the is no more.

¹¹ Leave your fatherless children,
I will preserve *them* alive;
And let your widows trust in Me.”

¹² For thus says the LORD: “Behold,
*u*those whose judgment *was* not to drink
of the cup have assuredly drunk. And
are you the one who will altogether go
unpunished? You shall not go unpun-
ished, but you shall surely drink *of* it.
¹³ For ^vI have sworn by Myself,” says
the LORD, “that ^wBozrah shall become a
desolation, a reproach, a ⁵waste, and a
curse. And all its cities shall be perpetual
⁶wastes.”

¹⁴ ^xI have heard a message from the
LORD,
And an ambassador has been sent to
the nations:
“Gather together, come against her,
And rise up to battle!

¹⁵ “For indeed, I will make you small
among nations,
Despised among men.

¹⁶ Your fierceness has deceived you,
The ^ypride of your heart,
O you who dwell in the clefts of the
rock,
Who hold the height of the hill!
^zThough you make your ^anest as high
as the eagle,
^bI will bring you down from there,”
says the LORD.

¹⁷ “Edom also shall be an astonishment;
^cEveryone who goes by it will be
astonished

¹⁰ ^s Obad. 5, 6; Mal.
1:3 ^t Is. 17:14
¹² ^u Jer. 25:29;
Obad. 16
¹³ ^v Gen. 22:16; Is.
45:23; Jer. 44:26;
Amos 6:8 ^w Gen.
36:33; 1 Chr. 1:44;
Is. 34:6; 63:1; Amos
1:12 ⁵ ruin ⁶ ruins
¹⁴ ^x Obad. 1-4
¹⁶ ^y Jer. 48:29
^z Obad. 3, 4 ^a Job
39:27; Is. 14:13-15
^b Amos 9:2
¹⁷ ^c Jer. 18:16;
49:13; 50:13; Ezek.
35:7

¹⁸ ^d Gen. 19:24, 25;
Deut. 29:23; Jer.
50:40; Amos 4:11;
Zeph. 2:9
¹⁹ ^e Jer. 50:44
^f Josh. 3:15; Jer. 12:5
^g Ex. 15:11; Is. 46:9
^h Job 41:10 ⁷ Or
thicket
²⁰ ⁱ Is. 14:24, 27;
Jer. 50:45 ⁸ Or *drag*
them away
²¹ ^j Jer. 50:46; Ezek.
26:15, 18
²² ^k Jer. 48:40, 41

And will hiss at all its plagues.
¹⁸ ^d As in the overthrow of Sodom and
Gomorrah
And their neighbors,” says the
LORD,
“No one shall remain there,
Nor shall a son of man dwell
in it.

¹⁹ “Behold, ^e he shall come up like a
lion from ^fthe ⁷floodplain of
the Jordan
Against the dwelling place of the
strong;
But I will suddenly make him run
away from her.
And who *is* a chosen *man* *that* I
may appoint over her?
For ^gwho *is* like Me?
Who will arraign Me?
And ^hwho *is* that shepherd
Who will withstand Me?”

²⁰ ⁱ Therefore hear the counsel of the
LORD that He has taken against
Edom,
And His purposes that He has
proposed against the inhabitants
of Teman:
Surely the least of the flock shall
⁸draw them out;
Surely He shall make their
dwelling places desolate
with them.

²¹ ^j The earth shakes at the noise of
their fall;
At the cry its noise is heard at the
Red Sea.

²² Behold, ^k He shall come up and fly
like the eagle,
And spread His wings over
Bozrah;
The heart of the mighty men of
Edom in that day shall be
Like the heart of a woman in birth
pangs.

cup

(Heb. *kos*) (25:15; 49:12; Ps. 23:5; Is. 51:22) Strong's #3563

The Hebrew word translated *cup* refers to a drinking goblet. In the OT prophetic books, the word is usually associated with imagery of God's wrath, such as the “wine cup of fury” or “the cup of horror” (25:15; Ezek. 23:33). In other places the cup can have a positive significance: it indicates a close relationship with a powerful person (see “Pharaoh's cup” in Gen. 40:11). Moreover in both the OT and NT, the cup can be symbolic of fellowship because of the cup's association with togetherness. The cup is an important image in the NT, especially in the celebration of the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 11:25–28).

49:12, 13 drink of the cup: The imagery of the cup of divine wrath is found in 25:15–29. Here it is particularly applied to Edom and more specifically to its capital city, **Bozrah**.

49:14–16 The imagery in these verses is that of **the nations** being mustered by God to besiege Edom. Edom would be reduced from a proud people of mighty mountain fortresses to one that was **small among** the nations.

49:17–19 an astonishment . . . hiss: Like Israel, Judah, Egypt, Moab, and Ammon, Edom would be destroyed and would become an object of derision. Like the **lion** that emerges from the thickets along the lower Jordan and seizes its prey, God would attack the Edomites through His appointed instrument.

49:20–22 The two things on which Edom most prided itself, its wisdom and its fortresses, would vanish before the judgment of the Lord. As the strongholds collapsed, the earth would quake; its tremors would be felt all the way to the Red Sea. The imagery of the broad wings of the **eagle**, representing the all-encompassing power of God and His agents of destruction, is also found in 48:40, 41.



The Lower Jordan Valley

The Lower Jordan Valley contains three distinct levels known as the *zor*, the *qattara*, and the *ghor*. The *zor* is a narrow strip of land one or two miles wide, which the Bible calls the “floodplain of the Jordan” (49:19). Thanks to seasonal floods, the *zor* is a jungle of dense brush, shrubs, and tamarisk trees. The sons of the prophets were cutting down trees here when Elisha recovered an ax head (2 Kings 6:1–7).

Away from the river is the *qattara*. This territory is covered by ancient deposits of sediment from the lake that once filled the Jordan Valley. Seasonal streams carve deep crevices. No one grew crops there because the soil was salty. Modern Israeli scientists are reclaiming the soil by washing it with river water.

The *ghor* is a steep but fertile terrace between the *qattara* and the mountains. Farmers irrigate and cultivate these fields.



Aerial view of the Lower Jordan Valley. Note the *zor*, the *qattara*, and the *ghor*.

Todd Bolen/www.
BiblePlaces.com

Judgment on Damascus

²³Against Damascus.

- ^m“Hamath and Arpad are shamed,
For they have heard bad news.
They are fainthearted;
ⁿThere is ⁹trouble on the sea;
It cannot be quiet.
²⁴ Damascus has grown feeble;
She turns to flee,
And fear has seized *her*.
^oAnguish and sorrows have taken her
like a woman in ¹labor.
²⁵ Why is ⁿthe city of praise not
deserted, the city of My joy?
²⁶ ^qTherefore her young men shall fall in
her streets,
And all the men of war shall be cut
off in that day,” says the LORD
of hosts.

²³ ¹Is. 17:1–3; Amos 1:3, 5; Zech. 9:1, 2
^m Jer. 39:5; Zech. 9:2 ⁿ [Is. 57:20]
⁹ anxiety
²⁴ ^o Is. 13:8; Jer. 4:31; 6:24; 48:21
¹ childbirth
²⁵ ^p Jer. 33:9
²⁶ ^q Jer. 50:30; Amos 4:10

²⁷ ^r Amos 1:4
²⁸ ^s Gen. 25:13;
Ps. 120:5; Is. 21:16,
17; Jer. 2:10; Ezek. 27:21 ^t Judg. 6:3;
Job 1:3
²⁹ ^u Ps. 120:5 ^v Jer. 46:5

- ²⁷“^r I will kindle a fire in the wall of
Damascus,
And it shall consume the palaces of
Ben-Hadad.”

Judgment on Kedar and Hazor

²⁸Against Kedar and against the kingdoms of Hazor, which Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon shall strike.
Thus says the LORD:

- “Arise, go up to Kedar,
And devastate ^tthe men of the East!
²⁹ Their ^utents and their flocks they
shall take away.
They shall take for themselves their
curtains,
All their vessels and their camels;
And they shall cry out to them,
^v“Fear is on every side!”

49:23–25 Hamath and Arpad were major towns located west and north of the capital of Damascus.

49:28 The region of **Kedar** was the most important Arab tribal group in the biblical period. Kedar was in northern Arabia and was known for its sheepherding and merchant caravans (see 2:10; Is. 60:7; Ezek. 27:21). The phrase **men of the East** is associated with

the Arameans, Midianites, Amalekites, and other nomadic desert tribes (see Gen. 29:1; Judg. 7:12).

49:29 The various items listed in this verse are typically those of nomadic peoples. The panic-filled shout, **fear is on every side**, is common in Jeremiah’s oracles (6:25; 20:10; 46:5; 49:5).

- 30^a “Flee, get far away! Dwell in the depths,
O inhabitants of Hazor!” says the LORD.
“For Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon has taken counsel against you,
And has conceived a plan against you.
- 31^a “Arise, go up to ^wthe wealthy nation that dwells securely,” says the LORD,
“Which has neither gates nor bars,
^xDwelling alone.
- 32 Their camels shall be for booty,
And the multitude of their cattle for plunder.
I will ^yscatter to all winds those ^zin the farthest corners,
And I will bring their calamity from all its sides,” says the LORD.
- 33^a “Hazor ^zshall be a dwelling for jackals, a desolation forever;
No one shall reside there,
Nor son of man dwell in it.”

Judgment on Elam

³⁴The word of the LORD that came to Jeremiah the prophet against ^aElam, in the ^bbeginning of the reign of Zedekiah king of Judah, saying, ³⁵“Thus says the LORD of hosts:

- ‘Behold, I will break ^cthe ³bow of Elam,
The foremost of their might.
36 Against Elam I will bring the four winds
From the four quarters of heaven,
And scatter them toward all those winds;
There shall be no nations where the outcasts of Elam will not go.
37 For I will cause Elam to be dismayed before their enemies
And before those who seek their life.

31 ^w Ezek. 38:11
^x Num. 23:9; Deut. 33:28; Mic. 7:16
32 ^y Ezek. 5:10 ^z Lit. cut off at the corner, Jer. 9:26; 25:23
33 ^a Jer. 9:11; 10:22; Zeph. 2:9, 12-15; Mal. 1:3
34 ^a Gen. 10:22; Jer. 25:25; Ezek. 32:24; Dan. 8:2 ^b 2 Kin. 24:17, 18; Jer. 28:1
35 ^c Ps. 46:9; Is. 22:6
³ Power

37 ^d Jer. 9:16
38 ^e Jer. 43:10
39 ^f Jer. 48:47

CHAPTER 50

1 ^a Gen. 10:10; 11:9; 2 Kin. 17:24; Is. 13:1; 47:1; Dan. 1:1; Rev. 14:8
2 ^b Is. 21:9 ^c Is. 46:1; Jer. 51:44
^d Jer. 43:12, 13 ¹ lift
² Or Marduk; a Babylonian god
3 ^e Jer. 51:48; Dan. 5:30, 31 ^f Is. 13:17, 18, 20 ³ Or wander
4 ^g Ezra 2:1; Is. 11:12, 13; Jer. 3:18; 31:31; 33:7; Hos. 1:11 ^h Ezra 3:12, 13; [Ps. 126:5]; Jer. 31:9; [Zech. 12:10]
ⁱ Hos. 3:5

- ^dI will bring disaster upon them,
My fierce anger,’ says the LORD;
‘And I will send the sword after them
Until I have consumed them.
38 I will ^eset My throne in Elam,
And will destroy from there the king
and the princes,’ says the LORD.
39 ‘But it shall come to pass ^fin the latter days:
I will bring back the captives of
Elam,’ says the LORD.”

Judgment on Babylon and Babylonia

50 The word that the LORD spoke ^aagainst Babylon and against the land of the Chaldeans by Jeremiah the prophet.

- 2 “Declare among the nations,
Proclaim, and ⁱset up a standard;
Proclaim—do not conceal it—
Say, ‘Babylon is ^btaken, ^cBel is shamed.
² Merodach is broken in pieces;
^dHer idols are humiliated,
Her images are broken in pieces.’
3 ^eFor out of the north ^fa nation comes
up against her,
Which shall make her land desolate,
And no one shall dwell therein.
They shall ³move, they shall depart,
Both man and beast.
4 “In those days and in that time,” says the LORD,
“The children of Israel shall come,
^gThey and the children of Judah together;
^hWith continual weeping they shall come,
ⁱAnd seek the LORD their God.
5 They shall ask the way to Zion,
With their faces toward it, *saying*,
‘Come and let us join ourselves to the LORD

49:30–33 Nebuchadnezzar’s destructive army would attack the tent villages of Kedar and **Hazor**. The oases would be left to the **jackals** for habitation (9:11; 10:22). The bedouin peoples would be scattered afar, as if by the hot desert winds.

49:34–36 break the bow: The Elamites were famous for their skilled archers (see Is. 22:6), who became an important part of the Persian army under Cyrus. The expression **four winds** indicates the military might that the Lord musters against His enemies (see Ezek. 37:9; Dan. 8:8).

49:37–39 I will set My throne: This expression depicts the establishment of the kingdom of the God of Israel, the great conquering King in the land of the Elamites (1:15; 43:10). Elam would experience the restorative power of God, as its people were returned and its fortunes restored (48:47; 49:6).

50:1 The Chaldeans, or Babylonians, were vassals of Assyria until the revolt of Nabopolassar, who gained control of Babylon in 626 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar, the son of Nabopolassar who succeeded

his father to the throne in 605 B.C., was the strongest and longest-reigning Chaldean monarch. After Nebuchadnezzar died, the nation declined steadily. In 539 B.C. it was conquered by Cyrus, apparently with little effort.

50:2, 3 Bel was a title like Baal, meaning “Lord,” for **Merodach**, another name for Babylon’s patron deity Marduk. **idols . . . images:** The oracle begins with a defamation of the gods of Babylon. The term translated *images* means animal droppings. The Hebrew prophets are openly contemptuous of idols and speak of them with ridicule. **out of the north:** The invading nation is not defined, yet from historical records it is known that Cyrus attacked Babylon from the north after defeating the city of Sippar.

50:4, 5 Israel and Judah would be restored as they sought the Lord in mournful repentance, looking for help to return home. They would enter into a **perpetual covenant** with the Lord that they would not forget or reject (see Ezek. 16:60).

In ^ja perpetual covenant
That will not be forgotten.⁷

- 6 “My people have been ^klost sheep.
Their shepherds have led them
^lastray;
They have turned them away *on*
^mthe mountains.
They have gone from mountain to
hill;
They have forgotten their resting
place.
7 All who found them have ⁿdevoured
them;
And ^otheir adversaries said, ^p“We
have not offended,
Because they have sinned against the
LORD, ^qthe habitation of justice,
The LORD, ^rthe hope of their fathers.”
- 8 “Move ^sfrom the midst of Babylon,
Go out of the land of the Chaldeans;
And be like the ^trams before the
flocks.
9 ^uFor behold, I will raise and cause to
come up against Babylon
An assembly of great nations from
the north country,

5 / Jer. 31:31
6 ^k Is. 53:6; [Ezek.
34:15, 16]; Matt.
9:36; 10:6; 1 Pet.
2:25 / Jer. 23:1;
Ezek. 34:2 ^m [Jer.
2:20; 3:6, 23]
7 ⁿ Ps. 79:7 ^o Jer.
40:2, 3; Zech. 11:5
^p Jer. 2:3; Dan. 9:16
^q [Ps. 90:1; 91:1] ^r Ps.
22:4; Jer. 14:8; 17:13
8 ^t Is. 48:20; Jer.
51:6, 45; Zech. 2:6,
7; [Rev. 18:4] ^u male
goats
9 ^u Jer. 15:14; 51:27

^u 2 Sam. 1:22
^s So with some
Heb. mss., LXX,
Syr.; MT, Tg., Vg. *a*
warrior who makes
childless
10 ^v [Rev. 17:16]
11 ^w Is. 47:6 ^x Hos.
10:11 ^y Or *neigh like*
steeds
12 ^z Jer. 51:43
13 ^z Jer. 25:12 ^a Jer.
49:17

And they shall array themselves
against her;
From there she shall be captured.
Their arrows *shall be* like *those of*
⁵an expert warrior;

- ^uNone shall return in vain.
10 And Chaldea shall become plunder;
^vAll who plunder her shall be
satisfied,” says the LORD.
- 11 “Because ^wyou were glad, because you
rejoiced,
You destroyers of My heritage,
Because you have grown fat ^xlike a
heifer threshing grain,
And you ^ybellow like bulls,
12 Your mother shall be deeply
ashamed;
She who bore you shall be ashamed.
Behold, the least of the nations *shall*
be a ^ywilderness,
A dry land and a desert.
13 Because of the wrath of the LORD
She shall not be inhabited,
^zBut she shall be wholly desolate.
^aEveryone who goes by Babylon shall
be horrified
And hiss at all her plagues.

50:6, 7 **Shepherds** refers to the national princes, priests, and prophets who led the people to sin against the Lord, their true source of hope and sustenance (23:1–4).

50:8–10 The train of thought turns to the Jews, who should flee from Babylon like **rams** of a flock.

50:11–13 Babylon’s plunder would be its punishment for gloating over Judah’s demise and the abuse of God’s **heritage**. Great Babylon would be reduced to the **least of the nations**. Defamation, drought, desertion, desolation, and derision were Babylon’s destiny (18:16; 19:8; 49:17).

Nations and Cities Under Judgment in Jeremiah



- 14^a Put^b yourselves in array against
Babylon all around,
All you who bend the bow;
Shoot at her, spare no arrows,
For she has sinned against the
LORD.
- 15 Shout against her all around;
She has ^cgiven her hand,
Her foundations have fallen,
^dHer walls are thrown down;
For ^eit is the vengeance of the LORD.
Take vengeance on her.
As she has done, so do to her.
- 16 Cut off the sower from Babylon,
And him who handles the sickle at
harvest time.
For fear of the oppressing sword
^fEveryone shall turn to his own
people,
And everyone shall flee to his own
land.
- 17^a Israel is like ^gscattered sheep;
^hThe lions have driven *him* away.
First ⁱthe king of Assyria devoured
him;
Now at last this ^jNebuchadnezzar
king of Babylon has broken his
bones.”
- 18 Therefore thus says the LORD of
hosts, the God of Israel:
- “Behold, I will punish the king of
Babylon and his land,
As I have punished the king of
^kAssyria.
- 19 ^lBut I will bring back Israel to his
home,
And he shall feed on Carmel and
Bashan;
His soul shall be satisfied on Mount
Ephraim and Gilead.
- 20 In those days and in that time,” says
the LORD,
^m“The iniquity of Israel shall be sought,
but *there shall be none*;
And the sins of Judah, but they shall
not be found;
For I will pardon those ⁿwhom I
preserve.
- 21^a “Go up against the land of Merathaim,
against it,
And against the inhabitants of
^oPekod.

14 ^b Jer. 51:2
15 ^c 1 Chr. 29:24;
2 Chr. 30:8; Lam.
5:6; Ezek. 17:18
^d Jer. 51:58 ^e Jer.
51:6, 11
16 ^f Is. 13:14; Jer.
51:9
17 ^g 2 Kin. 24:10, 14
^h Jer. 2:15 ⁱ 2 Kin.
15:29; 17:6; 18:9-13
^j 2 Kin. 24:10-14;
25:1-7
18 ^k Is. 10:12; Ezek.
31:3, 11, 12; Nah.
3:7, 18, 19
19 ^l Is. 65:10; Jer.
33:12; Ezek. 34:13
20 ^m Num. 23:21;
Is. 43:25; [Jer. 31:34;
Mic. 7:19] ⁿ Is. 1:9
21 ^o Ezek. 23:23

^p 2 Sam. 16:11;
2 Kin. 18:25; 2 Chr.
36:23; Is. 10:6;
44:28; 48:14
^q Or Attack with the
sword
22 ^q Jer. 51:54
23 ^r Is. 14:6; Jer.
51:20-24
24 ^s Jer. 51:8, 31;
Dan. 5:30 ^t [Is. 45:9]
25 ^u Is. 13:5
27 ^v Ps. 22:12; Is.
34:7; Jer. 46:21 ^w Ps.
37:13; Jer. 48:44;
Ezek. 7:7
28 ^x Ps. 149:6-9;
Jer. 51:10
29 ^y Ps. 137:8; Jer.
51:56; [2 Thess.
1:6]; Rev. 18:6 ^z [Is.
47:10] ⁸ Qr., some
Heb. mss., LXX, Tg.
add to her
30 ^a Is. 13:18; Jer.
49:26; 51:4

- ⁷ Waste and utterly destroy them,”
says the LORD,
“And do ^paccording to all that I have
commanded you.
- 22 ^q A sound of battle is in the land,
And of great destruction.
- 23 How ^rthe hammer of the whole earth
has been cut apart and broken!
How Babylon has become a
desolation among the nations!
- 24 I have laid a snare for you;
You have indeed been ^strapped,
O Babylon,
And you were not aware;
You have been found and also
caught,
Because you have ^tcontended against
the LORD.
- 25 The LORD has opened His armory,
And has brought out ^uthe weapons
of His indignation;
For this is the work of the Lord God
of hosts
In the land of the Chaldeans.
- 26 Come against her from the farthest
border;
Open her storehouses;
Cast her up as heaps of ruins,
And destroy her utterly;
Let nothing of her be left.
- 27 Slay all her ^vbulls,
Let them go down to the slaughter.
Woe to them!
For their day has come, the time of
^wtheir punishment.
- 28 The voice of those who flee and
escape from the land of Babylon
^xDeclares in Zion the vengeance of
the LORD our God,
The vengeance of His temple.
- 29^a “Call together the archers against
Babylon.
All you who bend the bow, encamp
against it all around;
Let none of them ⁸escape.
^yRepay her according to her work;
According to all she has done, do to
her;
^zFor she has been proud against the
LORD,
Against the Holy One of Israel.
- 30 ^a Therefore her young men shall fall in
the streets,
And all her men of war shall be cut
off in that day,” says the LORD.

50:14–16 against her all around: Assault forces would press hard on every side, as what had been the instrument of God became the object of His wrath.

50:17–20 The Lord had used Babylon to punish **Assyria** for deporting Israel; He would use another foe from the north to inflict punishment on **Babylon**. The result would be the restoration of

Israel and Judah and the pardoning of their iniquities and sins, the very reason for their demise (5:25; 16:10, 18; 31:34; 33:8).

50:21–28 utterly destroy: The tables would be turned on Babylon, the soon-to-be-broken **hammer** and future **heaps of ruins**. The **Lord God of hosts** had launched His vengeful weapons upon the city through His anointed servant Cyrus (see 2 Chr. 36:22, 23; Is. 45:1).

- 31^a “Behold, I *am* against you,
O most haughty one!” says the Lord
God of hosts;
“For your day has come,
⁹ The time *that* I will punish you.
32 The most ^b proud shall stumble and
fall,
And no one will raise him up;
“I will kindle a fire in his cities,
And it will devour all around him.”
33 Thus says the LORD of hosts:
“The children of Israel *were*
oppressed,
Along with the children of Judah;
All who took them captive have held
them fast;
They have refused to let them go.
34^d Their Redeemer *is* strong;
“The LORD of hosts *is* His name.
He will thoroughly plead their ^f case,
That He may give rest to the land,
And disquiet the inhabitants of
Babylon.
35 “A sword *is* against the Chaldeans,”
says the LORD,
“Against the inhabitants of Babylon,
And ^g against her princes and ^h her
wise men.
36 A sword *is* ⁱ against the soothsayers,
and they will be fools.
A sword *is* against her mighty men,
and they will be dismayed.

31 ⁹ So with MT, Tg.; LXX, Vg. *The time of your punishment*
32 ^b Is. 26:5; Mal. 4:1
34 ^d Prov. 23:11; Is. 43:14; Jer. 15:21; 31:11; Rev. 18:8 ^e Is. 47:4 ^f Jer. 51:36; Mic. 7:9
35 ^g Dan. 5:30 ^h Is. 47:13; Jer. 51:57
36 ⁱ Is. 44:25; Jer. 48:30

37 ^j Jer. 25:20; Ezek. 30:5 ^k Jer. 51:30; Nah. 3:13
38 ^l Is. 44:27; Jer. 51:36; Rev. 16:12
^l So with MT, Tg., Vg.; Syr. *sword*; LXX omits *A drought is*
39 ^m Is. 13:21, 22; 34:14; Jer. 51:37; Rev. 18:2 ⁿ Is. 13:20; Jer. 25:12
40 ^o Gen. 19:24, 25; Is. 13:19; Jer. 49:18; [Luke 17:28–30]; 2 Pet. 2:6; Jude 7
^p Is. 13:20
41 ^q Is. 13:2–5; Jer. 6:22; 25:14; 51:27
42 ^r Jer. 6:23 ^s Is. 13:18 ^t Is. 5:30

- 37 A sword *is* against their horses,
Against their chariots,
And against all ^j the mixed peoples
who *are* in her midst;
And ^k they will become like women.
A sword *is* against her treasures, and
they will be robbed.
38 ^l A ^l drought *is* against her waters, and
they will be dried up.
For it *is* the land of carved images,
And they are insane with *their* idols.
39^a “Therefore ^m the wild desert beasts
shall dwell *there* with the jackals,
And the ostriches shall dwell in it.
ⁿ It shall be inhabited no more forever,
Nor shall it be dwelt in from
generation to generation.
40^o As God overthrew Sodom and
Gomorrah
And their neighbors,” says the LORD,
“So no one shall reside there,
Nor son of man ^p dwell in it.
41 “Behold, ^q a people shall come from
the north,
And a great nation and many kings
Shall be raised up from the ends of
the earth.
42^r They shall hold the bow and the lance;
^s They *are* cruel and shall not show
mercy.
^t Their voice shall roar like the sea;
They shall ride on horses,
Set in array, like a man for the battle,
Against you, O daughter of Babylon.

50:33, 34 The wise and righteous Ruler would **plead** the **case** of the oppressed children of Judah and obtain their redemption. A *redeemer* was one who secured the freedom of a kinsman, protecting family rights. Here God, the **Redeemer** of Israel (see Is. 47:4), offers to obtain the legal freedom of His people from captivity.

50:35–38 The **sword** of God would overturn all elements of

Babylon’s greatness—its leaders, its weapons, and its wealth. **A drought is against her waters:** Babylon was built on both sides of the Euphrates River, and the region of southern Mesopotamia was networked with irrigation canals. The Lord would carry out His judgment against Babylon as He had in the days of Elijah.

Contemporary Pagans

Today’s increasingly secular society may seem to have little in common with the world of Jeremiah’s day. Yet the truth is that many people who disavow the traditional idea of God or gods nevertheless have a very similar mind-set to the pagan idol worshippers, or “Gentiles” (10:2), of ancient times.

Jeremiah lived in a world of cultures based on idolatry (10:3–10). His own nation, Judah, was quite given over to idols during the reigns of Manasseh and Amon, probably the period when Jeremiah was a boy (2 Kin. 21). In fact, the prophet observed that Judah had as many gods as it had cities (Jer. 2:28). Likewise, each society surrounding Judah worshiped its pantheon of gods. The Babylonians, for example, were said to be “insane with their idols” (50:38). Looking back on these religions from today’s perspective, our tendency may be to think of an idol merely as an object crafted from wood or metal to whom superstitious, benighted pagans bowed down in hopes of receiving good fortune or avoiding misfortune. But that would be a superficial understanding. An idol is anything that is sacred to a person, in that it defines self-worth, becomes the controlling center of life, and takes priority over all other loyalties.

In light of that definition, what are some of the idols that people worship today? Certainly work and possessions would have to qualify for many people, especially given the addictive way in which they pursue them. What would be an idol for you? What do you hold “sacred” in the sense that it defines who you are, controls your life, and is the last thing that you would ever let go?

Jeremiah recognized the idols of his day for what they were—futile customs that supplanted the true God (10:3, 10). Are you pursuing futility at the cost of knowing the living Lord?



43^a “The king of Babylon has ^aheard the report about them,
And his hands grow feeble;
Anguish has taken hold of him,
Pangs as of a woman in ^vchildbirth.

44^a “Behold, ^w he shall come up like a lion from the ²floodplain of the Jordan
Against the dwelling place of the strong;
But I will make them suddenly run away from her.
And who *is* a chosen *man* that I may appoint over her?
For who *is* like Me?
Who will arraign Me?
And ^xwho *is* that shepherd
Who will withstand Me?”

45 Therefore hear ^ythe counsel of the LORD that He has taken against Babylon,
And His ^zpurposes that He has proposed against the land of the Chaldeans:

^a Surely the least of the flock shall draw them out;
Surely He will make their dwelling place desolate with them.

46^b At the noise of the taking of Babylon
The earth trembles,
And the cry is heard among the nations.

The Utter Destruction of Babylon

51 Thus says the LORD:

“Behold, I will raise up against ^aBabylon,
Against those who dwell in ¹Leb Kamai,

^b A destroying wind.

² And I will send ^cwinnowers to Babylon,
Who shall winnow her and empty her land.

^d For in the day of doom
They shall be against her all around.

³ Against *her* ^elet the archer bend his bow,
And lift himself up against *her* in his armor.
Do not spare her young men;
^f Utterly destroy all her army.

43 ^v Jer. 51:31 ^v Jer. 6:24

44 ^w Jer. 49:19-21

^x Job 41:10; Jer. 49:19 ² Or *thicket*

45 ^y [Ps. 33:11; Is. 14:24]; Jer. 51:10,

11 ^z Jer. 51:29 ^a Jer. 49:19, 20

46 ^b Rev. 18:9

CHAPTER 51

1 ^a Is. 47:1; Jer. 50:1

^b 2 Kin. 19:7; Jer. 4:11; Hos. 13:15

¹ Lit. *The Midst of Those Who Rise Up Against Me*; a code word for Chaldea, Babylonia

2 ^c Is. 41:16; Jer. 15:7; Matt. 3:12

^d Jer. 50:14

3 ^e Jer. 50:14, 29

^f Jer. 50:21

4 ^g Jer. 49:26;

50:30, 37

5 ^h [Is. 54:7, 8; Jer. 33:24-26; 46:28]

6 ⁱ Jer. 50:8; Rev. 18:4 ^j Jer. 50:15

^k Jer. 25:14

7 ^l Jer. 25:15; Hab. 2:16; Rev. 17:4

^m Rev. 14:8 ⁿ Jer. 25:16

8 ^o Is. 21:9; Jer. 50:2;

Rev. 14:8; 18:2 ^p [Is. 48:20]; Rev. 18:9, 11,

19 ^q Jer. 46:11

9 ^r Is. 13:14; Jer. 46:16; 50:16 ^s Ezra 9:6; Rev. 18:5

10 ^t Ps. 37:6; Mic. 7:9 ^u [Is. 40:2]; Jer. 50:28

11 ^v Jer. 46:4, 9; Joel 3:9, 10 ^w Is. 13:17

^x Jer. 50:45 ^y Jer. 50:28 ^z Polish the arrows!

12 ^z Nah. 2:1; 3:14

4 Thus the slain shall fall in the land of the Chaldeans,

^g And *those* thrust through in her streets.

5 For Israel is ^hnot forsaken, nor Judah, By his God, the LORD of hosts, Though their land was filled with sin against the Holy One of Israel.”

6 ⁱ Flee from the midst of Babylon, And every one save his life!

Do not be cut off in her iniquity, For ^jthis *is* the time of the LORD's vengeance;

^k He shall recompense her.

7 ^l Babylon *was* a golden cup in the LORD's hand,

That made all the earth drunk.

^m The nations drank her wine; Therefore the nations ⁿare deranged.

8 Babylon has suddenly ^ofallen and been destroyed.

^p Wail for her!

^q Take balm for her pain; Perhaps she may be healed.

9 We would have healed Babylon, But she is not healed.

Forsake her, and ^rlet us go everyone to his own country;

^s For her judgment reaches to heaven and is lifted up to the skies.

10 The LORD has ^trevealed our righteousness.

Come and let us ^udeclare in Zion the work of the LORD our God.

11 ^v Make ² the arrows bright!

Gather the shields!

^w The LORD has raised up the spirit of the kings of the Medes.

^x For His plan *is* against Babylon to destroy it,

Because it *is* ^ythe vengeance of the LORD,

The vengeance for His temple.

12 ^z Set up the standard on the walls of Babylon;

Make the guard strong,

Set up the watchmen,

Prepare the ambushes.

For the LORD has both devised and done

What He spoke against the inhabitants of Babylon.

51:1, 2 destroying wind: The imagery of a scorching desert wind is found in 4:11, 12; 18:17. The imagery of winnowing or scattering is found in 13:24.

51:5 Though **Israel** and **Judah** had **forsaken** the lordship of God, He had not forsaken His sinful people.

51:6–10 The imagery of Babylon's **cup** of fury from 25:15–29 is reversed. Here Babylon's cup is broken by the Lord. **balm:** As in the case of Judah (8:22), decadent Babylon was beyond healing and

had to be abandoned. The destruction of Babylon was the vindication of the justice of God. Jeremiah's prediction (25:12–14) would be realized: Israel would be made righteous through God's work.

51:11–14 vengeance: The Lord would avenge Babylon's fierce abuse of Israel and other conquered nations. The **covetousness** of Babylon is typified in the taking of temple treasures from Jerusalem (see 2 Kin. 25:13–17). **locusts:** The locust plague depicts the swarm of enemy soldiers pouring into the magnificent city.

- 13^a O you who dwell by many waters,
Abundant in treasures,
Your end has come,
The measure of your covetousness.
- 14^b The LORD of hosts has sworn by
Himself:
“Surely I will fill you with men, ^cas
with locusts,
And they shall lift ^dup a shout
against you.”
- 15^e He has made the earth by His power;
He has established the world by His
wisdom,
And ^fstretched out the heaven by His
understanding.
- 16 When He utters *His* voice—
There is a multitude of waters in the
heavens:
^g“He causes the vapors to ascend from
the ends of the earth;
He makes lightnings for the rain;
He brings the wind out of His
treasuries.”
- 17^h Everyone is dull-hearted, without
knowledge;
Every metalsmith is put to shame by
the carved image;
ⁱFor his molded image *is* falsehood,
And *there is* no breath in them.
- 18 They *are* futile, a work of errors;
In the time of their punishment they
shall perish.
- 19 The Portion of Jacob *is* not like them,
For He *is* the Maker of all things;
And *Israel is* the tribe of His
inheritance.
The LORD of hosts *is* His name.
- 20^j “You *are* My battle-ax *and* weapons
of war:
For with you I will break the nation
in pieces;
With you I will destroy kingdoms;
- 21 With you I will break in pieces the
horse and its rider;
With you I will break in pieces the
chariot and its rider;
- 22 With you also I will break in pieces
man and woman;
With you I will break in pieces ^kold
and young;
With you I will break in pieces the
young man and the maiden;

13^a Rev. 17:1, 15
14^b Jer. 49:13;
Amos 6:8 ^c Jer.
51:27; Nah. 3:15
^d Jer. 50:15
15^e Gen. 1:1, 6; Jer.
10:12-16 ^f Job 9:8;
Ps. 104:2; Is. 40:22
16^g Ps. 135:7; Jer.
10:13
17^h [Is. 44:18-20];
Jer. 10:14 ⁱ Jer. 50:2
20^j Is. 10:5, 15; Jer.
50:23
22^k 2 Chr. 36:17; Is.
13:15, 16

24^j Jer. 50:15, 29
25^m Is. 13:2; Zech.
4:7 ⁿ Rev. 8:8
26^o Jer. 50:26, 40
27^p Is. 13:2; Jer.
50:2; 51:12 ^q Jer.
25:14 ^r Jer. 50:41, 42
29^s Jer. 50:45 ^t Is.
13:19, 20; 47:11; Jer.
50:13; 51:26, 43
30^u Is. 19:16; Jer.
48:41 ^v Is. 45:1, 2;
Lam. 2:9; Amos 1:5;
Nah. 3:13

- 23 With you also I will break in pieces
the shepherd and his flock;
With you I will break in pieces the
farmer and his yoke of oxen;
And with you I will break in pieces
governors and rulers.
- 24^u And ^vI will repay Babylon
And all the inhabitants of Chaldea
For all the evil they have done
In Zion in your sight,” says the LORD.
- 25^w Behold, I *am* against you,
^mO destroying mountain,
Who destroys all the earth,” says the
LORD.
“And I will stretch out My hand
against you,
Roll you down from the rocks,
ⁿAnd make you a burnt mountain.
- 26 They shall not take from you a stone
for a corner
Nor a stone for a foundation,
^oBut you shall be desolate forever,”
says the LORD.
- 27^p Set up a banner in the land,
Blow the trumpet among the nations!
^qPrepare the nations against her,
Call ^rthe kingdoms together against
her:
Ararat, Minni, and Ashkenaz.
Appoint a general against her;
Cause the horses to come up like the
bristling locusts.
- 28 Prepare against her the nations,
With the kings of the Medes,
Its governors and all its rulers,
All the land of his dominion.
- 29 And the land will tremble and
sorrow;
For every ^spurpose of the LORD shall
be performed against Babylon,
^tTo make the land of Babylon a
desolation without inhabitant.
- 30 The mighty men of Babylon have
ceased fighting,
They have remained in their
strongholds;
Their might has failed,
^uThey became *like* women;
They have burned her dwelling
places,
^vThe bars of her *gate* are broken.

51:20–26 Babylon had been God’s **battle-ax** for judgment against the nations, and Judah in particular. **I will repay:** Babylon would experience God’s battle-ax of punishment for the **evil** it inflicted on Jerusalem. The seemingly invincible **mountain** of Babylon would be crumbled by the power of God’s outstretched arm.

51:27, 28 Ararat, Minni, and Ashkenaz were mountain tribes from what is today eastern Turkey and Armenia. **The Medes** were from the Zagros mountain region in present-day central Iran.

51:29–32 The mighty men of Babylon have ceased fighting: The Nabonidus Chronicle, a text describing the fall of Babylon, reports that “Cyrus entered Babylon without a battle.” By the time Cyrus reached Babylon, he had conquered all of Babylonia except for the capital city, cutting off roads and supply routes.

³¹ ^wOne runner will run to meet another,
And one messenger to meet another,
To show the king of Babylon that his
city is taken on *all* sides;
³² ^xThe passages are blocked,
The reeds they have burned with
fire,
And the men of war are terrified.

³³ For thus says the LORD of hosts, the
God of Israel:

“The daughter of Babylon is ^ylike a
threshing floor
When ^zit is time to thresh her;
Yet a little while
^aAnd the time of her harvest will
come.”

³⁴ “Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon
Has ^bdevoured me, he has
crushed me;
He has made me an ^cempty vessel,
He has swallowed me up like a
monster;
He has filled his stomach with my
delicacies,
He has spit me out.
³⁵ Let the violence *done* to me and my
flesh *be* upon Babylon,”
The inhabitant of Zion will say;
“And my blood be upon the
inhabitants of Chaldea!”
Jerusalem will say.

³⁶ Therefore thus says the LORD:

“Behold, ^dI will plead your case and
take vengeance for you.
^eI will dry up her sea and make her
springs dry.

³⁷ ^fBabylon shall become a heap,
A dwelling place for jackals,
^gAn astonishment and a hissing,
Without an inhabitant.
³⁸ They shall roar together like lions,
They shall growl like lions’ whelps.
³⁹ In their excitement I will prepare
their feasts;
^hI will make them drunk,
That they may rejoice,

³¹ ^w Jer. 50:24
³² ^x Jer. 50:38
³³ ^y Is. 21:10; Dan.
2:35; Amos 1:3; Mic.
4:13 ^z Is. 41:15; Hab.
3:12 ^a Is. 17:15; Hos.
6:11; Joel 3:13; Rev.
14:15
³⁴ ^b Jer. 50:17 ^c Is.
24:1-3
³⁶ ^d [Ps. 140:12];
Jer. 50:34 ^e Jer.
50:38
³⁷ ^f Is. 13:22; Jer.
50:39; [Rev. 18:2]
^g Jer. 25:9, 11
³⁹ ^h Jer. 51:57

⁴¹ ⁱ Jer. 25:26 / Is.
13:19; Jer. 49:25;
[Dan. 4:30] ³ A
code word for
Babylon, Jer. 25:26
⁴² ^k Is. 8:7, 8; Jer.
51:55; Dan. 9:26
⁴³ ^j Jer. 50:39, 40
^m Is. 13:20
⁴⁴ ⁿ Jer. 50:2; Is.
46:1 ^o Jer. 50:15 ⁴ A
Babylonian god
⁴⁵ ^p Is. 48:20; [Jer.
50:8, 28; 51:6; Rev.
18:4] ⁵ Lit. *his soul*
⁴⁶ ^q 2 Kin. 19:7; Is.
13:3-5
⁴⁸ ^r Is. 44:23; 48:20;
49:13; Rev. 18:20
^s Jer. 50:3, 41

And sleep a perpetual sleep
And not awake,” says the LORD.
⁴⁰ “I will bring them down
Like lambs to the slaughter,
Like rams with male goats.

⁴¹ “Oh, how ⁱSheshach ³ is taken!
Oh, how ^jthe praise of the whole
earth is seized!
How Babylon has become desolate
among the nations!

⁴² ^kThe sea has come up over Babylon;
She is covered with the multitude of
its waves.

⁴³ ^lHer cities are a desolation,
A dry land and a wilderness,
A land where ^mno one dwells,
Through which no son of man
passes.

⁴⁴ I will punish ⁿBel ⁴ in Babylon,
And I will bring out of his mouth
what he has swallowed;
And the nations shall not stream to
him anymore.
Yes, ^othe wall of Babylon shall fall.

⁴⁵ “My ^ppeople, go out of the midst of
her!
And let everyone deliver ⁵himself
from the fierce anger of the
LORD.

⁴⁶ And lest your heart faint,
And you fear ^qfor the rumor that
will be heard in the land
(A rumor will come *one* year,
And after that, in *another* year
A rumor *will come*,
And violence in the land,
Ruler against ruler),

⁴⁷ Therefore behold, the days are
coming
That I will bring judgment on the
carved images of Babylon;
Her whole land shall be ashamed,
And all her slain shall fall in her
midst.

⁴⁸ Then ^rthe heavens and the earth and
all that *is* in them
Shall sing joyously over Babylon;
^sFor the plunderers shall come to her
from the north,” says the LORD.

51:33 The harvest **threshing floor** depicts the punishment of Babylon.

51:36–40 **plead your case:** The imagery here involves a legal proceeding. Babylon had been arraigned, indicted, and convicted. Here it is sentenced to punishment by the Lord. The **lions** of Babylon would be slaughtered like **lambs**.

51:41–44 The primeval **sea**, conquered by Marduk according to the Babylonian creation myth, would overflow Babylon in the form of enemy nations. **Bel** is an honorary title for Marduk, the patron deity of Babylon. **I will bring out . . . what he has swallowed:** Nebuchadnezzar had swallowed up nations like a glutton (v. 34); those very same nations would be returned.

51:45–48 The release of Israel from captivity is foreseen. The people would be called upon to flee the city because of its impending destruction. In Jeremiah, the expression **days are coming** usually introduces a message of divine intervention into history. **carved images:** Babylon was known for its thousands of images of its numerous gods and goddesses. As the king claimed to conquer nations in the name of his patron deity, so the gods of the defeated would be punished along with their worshippers. The devastation of decadent Babylon would be no cause for mourning among the nations. Instead, the nations would sing joyfully of Babylon’s fall.

- 49 As Babylon *has caused* the slain of Israel to fall,
So at Babylon the slain of all the earth shall fall.
- 50 ^tYou who have escaped the sword,
Get away! Do not stand still!
^uRemember the LORD afar off,
And let Jerusalem come to your mind.
- 51 ^vWe are ashamed because we have heard reproach.
Shame has covered our faces,
For strangers ^whave come into the ⁶sanctuaries of the LORD's house.
- 52 "Therefore behold, the days are coming," says the LORD,
"That I will bring judgment on her carved images,
And throughout all her land the wounded shall groan.
- 53 ^xThough Babylon were to ⁷mount up to heaven,
And though she were to fortify the height of her strength,
Yet from Me plunderers would come to her," says the LORD.
- 54 ^yThe sound of a cry *comes* from Babylon,
And great destruction from the land of the Chaldeans,
- 55 Because the LORD is plundering Babylon
And silencing her loud voice,
Though her waves roar like great waters,
And the noise of their voice is uttered,
- 56 Because the plunderer comes against her, against Babylon,
And her mighty men are taken.
Every one of their bows is broken;
^zFor the LORD is the God of recompense,
He will surely repay.
- 57 "And I will make drunk
Her princes and ^awise men,
Her governors, her deputies, and her mighty men.
And they shall sleep a perpetual sleep
And not awake," says ^bthe King,
Whose name is the LORD of hosts.

50 ^t Jer. 44:28
^u [Deut. 4:29-31]; Ezek. 6:9
51 ^v Ps. 44:15; 79:4
^w Ps. 74:3-8; Jer. 52:13; Lam. 1:10
⁶ *holy places*
53 ^x Gen. 11:4; Job 20:6; [Ps. 139:8-10; Is. 14:12-14]; Jer. 49:16; Amos 9:2; Obad. 4 ⁷ *ascend*
54 ^y Jer. 50:22
56 ^z Ps. 94:1; Jer. 50:29
57 ^a Jer. 50:35 ^b Jer. 46:18; 48:15

58 Thus says the LORD of hosts:

- "The broad walls of Babylon shall be utterly ^cbroken,⁸
And her high gates shall be burned with fire;
^dThe people will labor in vain,
And the nations, because of the fire;
And they shall be weary."

Jeremiah's Command to Seraiah

⁵⁹ The word which Jeremiah the prophet commanded Seraiah the son of ^eNeriaah, the son of Mahseiah, when he went with Zedekiah the king of Judah to Babylon in the fourth year of his reign. And Seraiah ^fwrote in a book all the evil that would come upon Babylon, all these words that are written against Babylon. ⁶¹ And Jeremiah said to Seraiah, "When you arrive in Babylon and see it, and read all these words, ⁶² then you shall say, 'O LORD, You have spoken against this place to cut it off, so that ^gnone shall remain in it, neither man nor beast, but it shall be desolate forever.' ⁶³ Now it shall be, when you have finished reading this book, ^hthat you shall tie a stone to it and throw it out into the Euphrates. ⁶⁴ Then you shall say, 'Thus Babylon shall sink and not rise from the catastrophe that I will bring upon her. And they shall be weary.'"
Thus far *are* the words of Jeremiah.

The Fall of Jerusalem Reviewed

52 Zedekiah *was* ^atwenty-one years old when he became king, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. His mother's name *was* Hamutal the daughter of Jeremiah of ^bLibnah. ² He also did evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that Jehoiakim had done. ³ For because of the anger of the LORD *this* happened in Jerusalem and Judah, till He finally cast them out from His presence. Then Zedekiah ^crebelled against the king of Babylon.

⁴ Now it came to pass in the ^dninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, on the tenth *day* of the month, *that* Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and all his army came against Jerusalem and encamped against it; and *they* built a siege

58 ^c Jer. 50:15
^d Hab. 2:13 ⁸ Lit. *laid utterly bare*
59 ^e Jer. 32:12
60 ^f Is. 30:8; Jer. 36:2
62 ^g Is. 13:20; 14:22, 23; Jer. 50:3, 39
63 ^h Jer. 19:10, 11; Rev. 18:21

CHAPTER 52

1 ^a 2 Kin. 24:18;
2 Chr. 36:11 ^b Josh. 10:29; 2 Kin. 8:22; Is. 37:8
3 ^c 2 Chr. 36:13
4 ^d 2 Kin. 25:1; Jer. 39:1; Ezek. 24:1, 2; Zech. 8:19

51:49, 50 slain of Israel: Babylon would be destroyed for killing so many in Israel. The remnant of Israel would be called upon to **remember** their God and how He delivered them from afar.

51:59–64 Jeremiah instructed **Seraiah**, a brother of Baruch who was about to be taken captive to Babylon, to read a scroll within the walls of Babylon. The scroll that Jeremiah gave to Seraiah contained a list of the various evils that would befall Babylon as a result of God's judgment.

52:1–3 Zedekiah reigned as king of Judah from 598 to 586 B.C., until God finally cast him out of Jerusalem for doing **evil in the sight of the LORD** (23:1–4).

52:4–6 The siege of Jerusalem began on the **tenth day of the tenth month** (Tebeth)—probably in December 589 B.C. The siege of Jerusalem lasted over two years. In June–July 586 B.C., as food supplies were exhausted, the walls of Jerusalem were breached (39:2).

wall against it all around. ⁵So the city was besieged until the eleventh year of King Zedekiah. ⁶By the fourth month, on the ninth day of the month, the famine had become so severe in the city that there was no food for the people of the land. ⁷Then the city wall was broken through, and all the men of war fled and went out of the city at night by way of the gate between the two walls, which was by the king's garden, even though the Chaldeans were near the city all around. And they went by way of the ¹plain.

⁸But the army of the Chaldeans pursued the king, and they overtook Zedekiah in the plains of Jericho. All his army was scattered from him. ⁹^eSo they took the king and brought him up to the king of Babylon at Riblah in the land of Hamath, and he pronounced judgment on him. ¹⁰Then the king of Babylon killed the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes. And he killed all the princes of Judah in Riblah. ¹¹He also ^gput out the eyes of Zedekiah; and the king of Babylon bound him in ²bronze fetters, took him to Babylon, and put him in prison till the day of his death.

The Temple and City Plundered and Burned

¹²^hNow in the fifth month, on the tenth day of the month (ⁱwhich was the nineteenth year of King Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon), ^jNebuzaradan, the captain of the guard, who served the king of Babylon, came to Jerusalem. ¹³He burned the house of the LORD and the king's house; all the houses of Jerusalem, that is, all the houses of the great, he burned with fire. ¹⁴And all the army of the Chaldeans who were with the captain of the guard broke down all the walls of Jerusalem all around. ¹⁵^kThen Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carried away captive some of the poor people, the rest of the people who remained in the city, the defectors who had deserted to the king of Babylon, and the rest of the craftsmen. ¹⁶But Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard left some of the poor of the land as vinedressers and farmers.

¹⁷^lThe ^mbronze pillars that were in

⁷ ¹ Or *Arabah*; the Jordan Valley
⁹ ^e 2 Kin. 25:6; Jer. 32:4; 39:5
¹⁰ ^f Ezek. 12:13
¹¹ ^g Ezek. 12:13
² shackles
¹² ^h 2 Kin. 25:8-21
ⁱ Jer. 52:29 ^j Jer. 39:9
¹⁵ ^k Jer. 39:9
¹⁷ ^l Jer. 27:19
^m 1 Kin. 7:15, 23, 27, 50

the house of the LORD, and the carts and the bronze Sea that were in the house of the LORD, the Chaldeans broke in pieces, and carried all their bronze to Babylon. ¹⁸They also took away ⁿthe pots, the shovels, the trimmers, the ³bowls, the spoons, and all the bronze utensils with which the priests ministered. ¹⁹The basins, the firepans, the bowls, the pots, the lampstands, the spoons, and the cups, whatever was solid gold and whatever was solid silver, the captain of the guard took away. ²⁰The two pillars, one Sea, the twelve bronze bulls which were under it, and the carts, which King Solomon had made for the house of the LORD—^othe bronze of all these articles was beyond measure. ²¹Now concerning the ^ppillars: the height of one pillar was eighteen ⁴cubits, a measuring line of twelve cubits could measure its circumference, and its thickness was ⁵four fingers; it was hollow. ²²A capital of bronze was on it; and the height of one capital was five cubits, with a network and pomegranates all around the capital, all of bronze. The second pillar, with pomegranates was the same. ²³There were ninety-six pomegranates on the sides; ^qall the pomegranates, all around on the network, were one hundred.

The People Taken Captive to Babylonia

²⁴^rThe captain of the guard took Seraiah the chief priest, ^sZephaniah the second priest, and the three doorkeepers. ²⁵He also took out of the city an ⁶officer who had charge of the men of war, seven men of the king's close associates who were found in the city, the principal scribe of the army who mustered the people of the land, and sixty men of the people of the land who were found in the midst of the city. ²⁶And Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard took these and brought them to the king of Babylon at Riblah. ²⁷Then the king of Babylon struck them and put them to death at Riblah in the land of Hamath. Thus Judah was carried away captive from its own land.

²⁸^tThese are the people whom Nebuchadnezzar carried away captive: ^uin the

¹⁸ ⁿ Ex. 27:3; 1 Kin. 7:40, 45; 2 Kin. 25:14
³ basins
²⁰ ^o 1 Kin. 7:47; 2 Kin. 25:16
²¹ ^p 1 Kin. 7:15; 2 Kin. 25:17; 2 Chr. 3:15 ⁴ 18 inches each ⁵ 3 inches
²³ ^q 1 Kin. 7:20
²⁴ ^r 2 Kin. 25:18; 1 Chr. 6:14; Ezra 7:1
²⁵ ^s Jer. 21:1; 29:25
²⁵ ^t Lit. *eunuch*
²⁸ ^t 2 Kin. 24:2
^u 2 Kin. 24:12

52:7-11 The attempted escape, capture, and ultimate fate of Zedekiah are also described in 39:1-10.

52:13-16 The entire city of Jerusalem was burned, from the temple to the royal palace to the houses. The city walls were demolished. Leading citizens and some of the poor were deported under Nebuzaradan's command, leaving only a remnant of peasant farmers to work the fields, vineyards, and orchards.

52:17-23 Sacred implements and furniture from the temple of God were taken as booty to Babylon. Most of these items are described

in 1 Kin. 7:15-51. The bronze bulls had been removed by Ahaz and presented to Tiglath-Pileser III (see 2 Kin. 16:10-18), but apparently had been returned or remade.

52:24-27 Certain persons were chosen for execution. Seraiah was the grandson of Hilkiah, the faithful priest under Josiah. Zephaniah is possibly the person of the same name in 29:25. Doorkeepers were key temple personnel. Leaders of Judah's forces were executed.

seventh year,^v three thousand and twenty-three Jews;^{29 w} in the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar he carried away captive from Jerusalem eight hundred and thirty-two persons;³⁰ in the twenty-third year of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carried away captive of the Jews seven hundred and forty-five persons. All the persons *were* four thousand six hundred.

Jehoiachin Released from Prison

^{31 x} Now it came to pass in the thirty-seventh year of the captivity of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the twelfth month,

28 ^v 2 Kin. 24:14
29 ^w 2 Kin. 25:11;
Jer. 39:9
31 ^x 2 Kin. 25:27-30

^y Gen. 40:13, 20;
Ps. 3:3; 27:6 ^z Or
Awil- Marduk; lit.
The Man of Marduk
⁸ Showed favor to
33 ^z 2 Sam. 9:7, 13;
1 Kin. 2:7 ⁹ Lit. *he*

on the twenty-fifth *day* of the month, *that* ⁷ Evil-Merodach king of Babylon, in the *first* year of his reign, ^u lifted⁸ up the head of Jehoiachin king of Judah and brought him out of prison. ³² And he spoke kindly to him and gave him a more prominent seat than those of the kings who *were* with him in Babylon. ³³ So ⁹ Jehoiachin changed from his prison garments, ^z and he ate bread regularly before the *king* all the days of his life. ³⁴ And as for his provisions, there was a regular ration given him by the king of Babylon, a portion for each day until the day of his death, all the days of his life.

52:31–34 Jehoiachin was released from prison soon after Nebuchadnezzar died in 562 **B.C.** Nebuchadnezzar's son **Evil-Merodach** became king but reigned only two years (562–560 **B.C.**). **lifted up the head:** Jehoiachin was pardoned by the king of Babylon.

Jehoiachin was provided food and given a seat of honor in Babylon. This restoration was symbolic of the future restoration of Israel and Judah to their homeland.

THE BOOK OF

LAMENTATIONS



THE BOOK OF LAMENTATIONS reveals the broken heart of the prophet Jeremiah. In forceful poetry, Jeremiah expresses his grief over the national tragedy that had unfolded before his eyes: Jerusalem, God's city, had fallen to the Babylonians. Jeremiah's sorrow and tears were not for his own personal loss, however, but for the sinfulness of the Israelites. The people of Israel had chosen to reject God. Yet even in this time of suffering there was hope. The Lord would not discipline His people forever; He would eventually restore those who waited on Him.

Author Although no author is named in the book, the prophet Jeremiah has been traditionally identified as the writer of Lamentations. In fact, some copies of the ancient Greek Septuagint translation begin the book with these words: "And it came to pass, after Israel had been carried captive, and Jerusalem became desolate, that Jeremiah sat weeping, and lamented this lamentation over Jerusalem." Crediting Lamentations to Jeremiah is based on the following considerations: (1) Jeremiah was known as a composer of laments (see 2 Chr. 35:25). (2) Jeremiah was the prophet who mourned, "Oh, that my head were waters, and my eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!" (see Jer. 9:1). (3) In 3:1, the author seems to identify himself with Jeremiah when he says, "I am the man who has seen affliction by the rod of His wrath." (4) There are many linguistic similarities between Lamentations and Jeremiah.

Literary Structure The five chapters of Lamentations are five poems with chapter 3 as the midpoint or climax. Accordingly, the first two chapters build an "ascent," or crescendo, to the climax, the grand confession in 3:23, 24: "Great is Your faithfulness. The LORD is my portion." The last two chapters are a "descent," or decrescendo, from the pinnacle of chapter 3.

Chapters 1 and 5 provide summaries of the siege and fall of Jerusalem while chapters 2 and 4 offer more detailed and explicit descriptions of the devastation. Chapter 3 moves from a mixture of lament and hope in verses 1–24 to colorful praise of the compassionate and faithful Lord in verses 25–39. This is followed by the confession of verses 40–54 and the accompanying prayer of verses 55–66. Then chapter 4 relaxes the emotional intensity of the earlier chapters, dispassionately describing how suffering affected all classes of the populace of Jerusalem. The final chapter



The sarcophagus of Ahiiram, King of Byblos shows women wearing sackcloth, c. 1000 B.C. Shaving your head, tearing your clothes, and wearing sackcloth were all signs of mourning and lamenting.

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is a prayer that begins with “Remember, O LORD” (5:1) and ends with “Turn us back to You, O LORD” (5:21). In this way, Jeremiah’s lament moves from mourning to praise and then from praise to a prayer for restoration.

The poetry of the book enhances its purpose and structure. Chapters 1 through 4 are composed as acrostics of the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet. Each verse or group of verses begins with a word whose initial letter carries on the sequence of letters in the Hebrew alphabet. This would be similar to an English poem in which the first line begins with A; the second line begins with B, and so on. One purpose of this device was probably to aid in memorization of the passage. The acrostic also suggests that the writer has thought things through and is giving a complete account of the subject.



Jews still pray and weep over their holy city at the “Wailing Wall” in Jerusalem. The “Wailing Wall,” or Western Wall, is a remnant of the ancient wall that surrounded the Jewish temple’s courtyard, dating back to the Second Temple period.

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Theological Significance Like the Book of Job, the Book of Lamentations addresses human suffering. Unlike Job, Lamentations focuses on national suffering—specifically, the suffering of Judah. Along the way, the book tackles some of the toughest questions faced by God’s people: How can God’s love and justice be reconciled with our pain? If God is in control of history, how could a nation suffer so much so soon after it had been led by such godly leaders as King Josiah and those involved in that revival? Where was God during His people’s unhappiest hour?

The Book of Lamentations offers some very practical theological reflections on the purposes and results of suffering. Rather than explaining away pain, the book helps us face pain. By avoiding cheery clichés, the Book of Lamentations provides companionship for those who are suffering and plants seeds of hope for rebuilding after the suffering is over.

In fact, the anger of God is a sign that He cares. The Lord’s anger is never capricious or unreasonable. His discipline is a sign that He has not abandoned us. Even in His display of anger, God is still full of mercy and grace. The beacon light in the midst of disintegration is found in 3:22–24. Come what may, God remains faithful. His faithfulness is the greatest comfort to those who suffer; His compassions are new every morning.

CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

In his mournful lyrics Jeremiah does more than focus on his feelings. His vulnerable grief focuses our attention on the One who is to come. This weeping prophet is a type of Jesus. Six centuries later, the Son of God weeps over the same city. “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing! See! Your house is left to you desolate” (Matt. 23:37, 38).

This tear-stained prophet also provides an accurate description of the one Isaiah called “a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief” (Is. 53:3). Jeremiah speaks of the Messiah being afflicted (1:12; 3:19), despised, and derided by His enemies (2:15, 16; 3:14, 30).

LAMENTATIONS OUTLINE

- I. Grief after the destruction of Jerusalem 1:1–22
- II. Personal suffering after the destruction of Jerusalem 2:1–22
- III. Hope in the face of adversity 3:1–66
- IV. The pain of the destruction of Jerusalem 4:1–22
- V. Remembering that God still reigns 5:1–22

Jerusalem in Affliction

How lonely sits the city
That was full of people!
^aHow like a widow is she,
Who ^{was} great among the
nations!

The ^bprincess among the provinces
Has become a ⁱslave!

² She ^eweeps bitterly in the ^dnight,
Her tears ^{are} on her cheeks;
Among all her lovers
She has none to comfort ^{her}.
All her friends have dealt
treacherously with her;
They have become her enemies.

³ ^eJudah has gone into captivity,
Under affliction and hard servitude;
^fShe dwells among the ²nations,
She finds no ^grest;
All her persecutors overtake her in
dire straits.

⁴ The roads to Zion mourn
Because no one comes to the ³set
feasts.
All her gates are ^hdesolate;
Her priests sigh,
Her virgins are afflicted,
And she ^{is} in bitterness.

⁵ Her adversaries ⁱhave become ⁴the
master,

CHAPTER 1

1 ^a Is. 47:9-9 ^b 1 Kin. 4:21; Ezra 4:20; Jer. 31:7 ⁱ Lit. *forced laborer*
2 ^c Jer. 13:17 ^d Job 7:3
3 ^e Jer. 52:27 ^f Lam. 2:9 ^g Deut. 28:65
2 ^g Gentiles
4 ^h Is. 27:10
3 ^h appointed
5 ⁱ Deut. 28:43
4 ⁱ Lit. *her head*

^f Jer. 30:14, 15; Dan. 9:7, 16 ^k Jer. 52:28
6 ^j Lit. *are gone*
7 ⁱ Ps. 137:1 ^e Vg. *Sabbaths*
8 ^m [1 Kin. 8:46]
ⁿ Jer. 13:22; Ezek. 16:37; Hos. 2:10
7 ^{lxx} Vg. *moved or removed*
9 ^o Deut. 32:29; Is. 47:7; Jer. 5:31

Her enemies prosper;
For the LORD has afflicted her
^jBecause of the multitude of her
transgressions.
Her ^kchildren have gone into
captivity before the enemy.

⁶ And from the daughter of Zion
All her splendor has departed.
Her princes have become like deer
That find no pasture,
That ⁵flee without strength
Before the pursuer.

⁷ In the days of her affliction and
roaming,
Jerusalem ^lremembers all her
pleasant things
That she had in the days of old.
When her people fell into the hand
of the enemy,
With no one to help her,
The adversaries saw her
And mocked at her ⁶downfall.

⁸ ^mJerusalem has sinned gravely,
Therefore she has become ⁷vile.
All who honored her despise her
Because ⁿthey have seen her
nakedness;
Yes, she sighs and turns away.

⁹ Her uncleanness ^{is} in her skirts;
She ^odid not consider her destiny;

1:1 How: This exclamatory word is used frequently in laments and funeral songs. It expresses astonishment, sorrow, and dismay (see 2:1; 4:1; Is. 1:21; 14:4; Jer. 9:19; 48:17; Ezek. 26:17). **lonely:** This is a stranded individual, one who is **like a widow**. Jerusalem is personified, or portrayed as a person (see Is. 1:21). Beginning in v. 12, Jerusalem “speaks” of her own troubles in the first person. **princess ... slave:** This is a terrible reversal of fortune.

1:2 Among all her lovers (v. 19) describes Judah’s sin of turning away from God and toward the gods of Canaan (see Jer. 3:1–6). Also, the sins of Judah often involved the sexual forms of pagan worship that characterized the Canaanite people.

1:3 The southern kingdom **Judah** is personified here as Jerusalem was in v. 1. **captivity:** The implications of v. 1 are made clear. The reference here is to the Babylonian captivity suffered by Judah following the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C.

1:4 When the temple was built, **Zion** was used to describe the hill on which the temple was located. Later the name came to stand for the whole city. **mourn:** The roads “mourned” because there would no longer be throngs of pilgrims traveling to Jerusalem to worship at the temple. **her gates:** The image of sad gates is also found in Ps. 24:7–10, which indicates that the gates would not always mourn. **priests ... virgins:** These two words indicate people from all elements of the city; everyone in the city experienced **bitterness**.

1:5 the LORD has afflicted her: God punished Jerusalem because of the people’s **transgressions**. The suffering described in the Book of Lamentations was fully deserved (v. 1). **Her children have gone into captivity:** God had warned Israel in Lev. 26:41 that captivity in a foreign land would be the result of continued sinning (see Deut. 32:23–27). The foreign nation was God’s instrument of punishment.

1:6 Daughter of Zion is an endearing term for Jerusalem that speaks of God’s extraordinary love for the city (see Ps. 87:2). **All her splendor has departed:** Israel’s glory was found in the presence of the Lord (see Ps. 96:8). But that glory had been removed from the Most Holy Place (see Ezek. 9:3; 10:19; 11:22).

1:7 In this verse the name **Jerusalem** is a comprehensive term that alludes to the “widowed” city of Jerusalem in v. 1; the nation “Judah” in v. 3; and the center of worship on “Mount Zion” in v. 4. The nation, the city, and the temple were loved by the invading Babylonian armies in 586 B.C. The emphasis is on Jerusalem’s utter helplessness as her enemies ridiculed her miseries (v. 21). **Her pleasant things** refers to objects of value in the temple (v. 10), and perhaps objects in the people’s homes as well (v. 11).

1:8 they have seen her nakedness: It was an extreme humiliation for a woman to be stripped of all her clothing in public. Such exposure was reserved for prostitutes (see Ezek. 16:35–39; 23:29), which Judah had become in a spiritual sense (vv. 2, 8, 9).

1:9 Judah is pictured as a “dirty harlot” because of her involvement

weeps

(Heb. *bakah*) (1:2, 16; Job 30:31) Strong’s #1058

This verb describes the act of wailing, which expresses emotions ranging from grief to happiness. While the word is often associated with lamentation, the “bitter wailing” of ancient people who were mourning their dead (2 Sam. 1:12), it is also used with expressions of joy (Gen. 29:11). The ancients wept when saying farewell (Ruth 1:9), over impending doom (Jer. 9:1), to express their joy over the rebuilt temple (Ezra 3:12), and at the burial of an individual (Gen. 50:1). In Lamentations, Jeremiah weeps over the sins of the people, the sins that would eventually result in the destruction of Jerusalem (1:1, 16).

Therefore her collapse was awesome;
She had no comforter.
“O LORD, behold my affliction,
For *the* enemy is exalted!”

- 10 The adversary has spread his hand
Over all her ⁸pleasant things;
For she has seen ⁷the nations enter
her ⁹sanctuary,
Those whom You commanded
⁹Not to enter Your assembly.

- 11 All her people sigh,
⁷They ¹seek bread;
They have given their ²valuables for
food to restore life.
“See, O LORD, and consider,
For I am scorned.”

- 12“*Is it* nothing to you, all you who
³pass by?
Behold and see
³If there is any sorrow like my sorrow,
Which has been brought on me,
Which the LORD has inflicted
In the day of His fierce anger.

- 13“From above He has sent fire into my
bones,
And it overpowered them;
He has ¹spread a net for my feet
And turned me back;
He has made me desolate
And faint all the day.

- 14“*The* ⁴yoke of my transgressions was
⁴bound;
They were woven together by His
hands,
And thrust upon my neck.

10 ^p Ps. 74:4-8; Is. 64:10, 11; Jer. 51:51
^q Deut. 23:3; Neh. 13:1 ⁸ *desirable*
⁹ *holy place, the temple*
11 ^r Jer. 38:9; 52:6 ¹ *hunt food*
² *desirable things*
12 ^s Dan. 9:12 ³ Lit. *pass by this way*
13 ^t Ezek. 12:13; 17:20
14 ^u Deut. 28:48
⁴ So with MT, Tg.; LXX, Syr., Vg. *watched over*

15 ^v Is. 63:3; [Rev. 14:19]
16 ^w Ps. 69:20; Eccl. 4:1; Jer. 13:17; Lam. 2:18
17 ^x [Is. 1:15]; Jer. 4:31 ^y 2 Kin. 24:2-4; Jer. 12:9 ⁵ Prays
18 ^z Neh. 9:33; Ps. 119:75; Dan. 9:7, 14 ^a 1 Sam. 12:14, 15; Jer. 4:17 ⁶ Lit. *mouth*

He made my strength fail;
The Lord delivered me into the
hands of *those whom* I am not
able to withstand.

- 15“ The Lord has trampled underfoot
all my mighty *men* in my
midst;

He has called an assembly
against me

To crush my young men;

- ^v The Lord trampled *as* in a
winepress

The virgin daughter of Judah.

- 16“ For these *things* I weep;
My eye, ^w my eye overflows with
water;
Because the comforter, who should
restore my life,
Is far from me.
My children are desolate
Because the enemy prevailed.”

- 17 ^z Zion ⁵ spreads out her hands,
But no one comforts her;
The LORD has commanded
concerning Jacob
That those ⁹ around him *become* his
adversaries;
Jerusalem has become an unclean
thing among them.

- 18“ The LORD is ^z righteous,
For I ^a rebelled against His
⁶ commandment.
Hear now, all peoples,
And behold my sorrow;
My virgins and my young men
Have gone into captivity.

with the sins of Canaanite worship. In fact, Judah was so engaged in dishonorable behavior that she had lost her sense of decorum and would not clean **her skirts**. **She did not consider her destiny** despite Moses' warning, "Oh, that they were wise, that . . . they would consider their latter end!" (Deut. 32:29).

1:10 Since God's people had not preserved the **sanctuary** of their hearts from pollution, they had no reason to be amazed when their enemies desecrated the earthly sanctuary. As a rule, Gentiles were forbidden to enter the congregation of the Lord (Ammon and Moab are mentioned specifically in Deut. 23:3, 4; the command was extended to all nations in Neh. 13:3; Ezek. 44:7, 9).

1:11 **They seek bread:** Moses had predicted a famine in Deut. 28:17, 38–42. **See, O LORD:** The call for God to pay attention is very similar to those found in the Psalms of Lament (see Ps. 142:4).

1:12 Passersby are asked rhetorically to look, listen, and compare Jerusalem's grief to any other grief experienced by mortals. God's **fierce anger** is put in the context of the day of the Lord (see Joel 2:1–11; Zeph. 1:14–18).

1:13 Jerusalem's suffering is portrayed, using several metaphors: (1) **fire** from heaven, (2) a hunter's **net** spread to trap animals, (3) an animal yoke fastened about the head of a person (v. 14), and (4) the crushing of grapes in a winepress (v. 15). **turned me back:** The purpose of Jerusalem's suffering was to bring about a turning or repentance.

1:14 **yoke of my transgressions:** The idea here is sinful patterns

of life becoming compulsive, burdening people like a yoke on a beast of burden. **woven together by His hands . . . He made my strength fail:** God imposed a yoke until all of Zion's strength failed. With no power of their own left, weary people are more likely to listen to God. **Those whom I am not able to withstand** refers to the Babylonians.

1:15 **The virgin daughter of Judah:** Jerusalem (Judah) was supposed to be the chaste bride of God. Instead she had become a polluted harlot because her people worshiped other gods than the God with whom they covenanted (vv. 2, 8, 9).

1:16 The people of Jerusalem wept because the very fate Jeremiah had prophesied had come to pass. **comforter . . . Is far from me:** The real Comforter of Judah is God. But because of Judah's sin, God would not come to their assistance.

1:17 **Spreads out her hands** is a reference to prayer (2:19). **an unclean thing:** The Israelites were supposed to be God's holy people (see Deut. 7:6). However, they had become worse than their pagan neighbors.

1:18 **The Lord is righteous:** Verses 5 and 17 establish that ultimately it was the Lord who permitted Jerusalem's collapse. Yet God remained just and right in what He did (see Ex. 9:27; Ezra 9:15; Neh. 9:33; Jer. 12:1). **virgins . . . young men:** Pairs of opposites usually indicate totality in Hebrew (see "priests . . . virgins" in v. 4); these particular groupings suggest the "best of the nation" (2:4, 21).

¹⁹“I called for my lovers,
But they deceived me;
My priests and my elders
Breathed their last in the city,
While they sought food
To restore their life.

²⁰“See, O LORD, that I *am* in distress;
My ^bsoul⁷ is troubled;
My heart is overturned within me,
For I have been very rebellious.

^cOutside the sword bereaves,
At home *it is* like death.

²¹“They have heard that I sigh,
But no one comforts me.
All my enemies have heard of my
trouble;
They are ^dglad that You have done *it*.
Bring on ^ethe day You have
⁸announced,
That they may become like me.

²²“Let^f all their wickedness come before
You,
And do to them as You have done to me
For all my transgressions;
For my sighs *are* many,
And my heart *is* faint.”

God's Anger with Jerusalem

2 How the Lord has covered the
daughter of Zion

With a ^acloud in His anger!

^bHe cast down from heaven to the
earth

^cThe beauty of Israel,
And did not remember ^dHis footstool
In the day of His anger.

² The Lord has swallowed up and has
^enot pitied
All the dwelling places of Jacob.
He has thrown down in His wrath

20 ^b Job 30:27;
Is. 16:11; Jer. 4:19;
Lam. 2:11; Hos. 11:8
^c Deut. 32:25; Ezek.
7:15 ⁷ Lit. *inward*
parts
21 ^d Ps. 35:15;
Jer. 48:27; 50:11;
Lam. 2:15; Obad.
12 ^e Is. 13; [Jer. 46]
⁸ *proclaimed*
22 ^f Neh. 4:4, 5; Ps.
109:15; 137:7, 8; Jer.
30:16

CHAPTER 2

1 ^a [Lam. 3:44]
^b Matt. 11:23
^c 2 Sam. 1:19
^d 1 Chr. 28:2; Ps.
99:5; Ezek. 43:7
2 ^e Ps. 21:9; Lam.
3:43

^f Ps. 89:39, 40; Is.
43:28
3 ^g Ps. 74:11; Jer.
21:4, 5 ^h Ps. 89:46
⁷ Strength
4 ⁱ Is. 63:10 / Ezek.
24:25
5 ^k Jer. 30:14 / 2 Kin.
25:9; Jer. 52:13;
Lam. 2:2
6 ^m Ps. 80:12; 89:40;
Is. 5:5; Jer. 7:14 ⁿ Is.
1:8; Jer. 52:13 ^o Is.
43:28 ² Lit. *booth*

The strongholds of the daughter of
Judah;
He has brought *them* down to the
ground;
^fHe has profaned the kingdom and its
princes.

³ He has cut off in fierce anger
Every ¹horn of Israel;
^gHe has drawn back His right hand
From before the enemy.

^hHe has blazed against Jacob like a
flaming fire
Devouring all around.

⁴ ⁱStanding like an enemy, He has bent
His bow;
With His right hand, like an
adversary,
He has slain ^jall *who were* pleasing to
His eye;
On the tent of the daughter of
Zion,
He has poured out His fury like fire.

⁵ ^kThe Lord was like an enemy.
He has swallowed up Israel,
He has swallowed up all her
palaces;

^lHe has destroyed her strongholds,
And has increased mourning and
lamentation
In the daughter of Judah.

⁶ He has done violence ^mto His
²tabernacle,

ⁿAs *if it were* a garden;
He has destroyed His place of
assembly;

The LORD has caused
The appointed feasts and Sabbaths to
be forgotten in Zion.

In His burning indignation He has
^ospurned the king and the priest.

1:19 priests . . . elders: The people who should have been a help
were themselves in trouble.

1:20 While the roads leading to Jerusalem “mourned” because there
would be no more pilgrims traveling to the city (v. 4), the **sword** of
Judah’s enemies mourned because there were no more Jews to kill.

1:21 All my enemies: Those who previously had been friends of
Judah (v. 2) became Judah’s enemies. **Bring on the day:** Several
times the “day” of God’s wrath is mentioned in the Book of Lamen-
tations (2:1, 21, 22). The term is used to refer not only to the time of
Jerusalem’s fall in the past, but also to a future day when God would
rectify all of the wrongs that the nations had committed against
Israel and God.

2:1 His anger is a firm expression of God’s displeasure with wicked-
ness and sin. Yet God’s anger never shuts us off from His compassion
(see Ps. 77:9). **The beauty of Israel** was found in its temple (see
Is. 64:11) and its ark of the covenant (see 1 Sam. 4:21, 22; Ps. 78:60,
61). In 1 Chr. 28:2 God’s **footstool** is identified with the ark of the
covenant. Occasionally God was pictured as enthroned and seated
between the cherubim that were over the ark (see 1 Sam. 4:4; 2 Sam.
6:2; Ps. 80:1; 99:1, 5; 132:7).

2:3 The horn was a symbol of strength and power (see 1 Sam. 2:1;
Ps. 75:5; 92:10; 148:14; Jer. 48:25). **drawn back His right hand:** Us-
ually the right hand of God is understood as the instrument of help
for God’s people stretched out against their enemies (see Ex. 15:6;
Ps. 20:6). Here God’s hand is withdrawn from the enemies, leaving
the people of God at their mercy.

2:4 like an enemy: The Lord did not simply relax His protection
of Judah (v. 3). He purposely worked against His people **with His
right hand**. **All who were pleasing to His eye** refers to virgins
and young men—the pride of the nation (1:18).

2:5 swallowed up: Sheol, or death, is sometimes portrayed as
“swallowing up” people (see Prov. 1:12; 27:20; 30:16); here God is
described as doing the swallowing (v. 2).

2:6, 7 Tabernacle means “booth” or “hut,” a structure found in a
garden. The point seems to be that the glorious temple of God had
become similar to the dilapidated house of David (Amos 9:11). The
temple of God had become a booth of branches similar to those
used for the Feast of Booths (Succoth). **altar . . . sanctuary . . . walls
. . . house:** Each of these terms refers to the holy temple (v. 6).

- 7 The Lord has spurned His altar,
He has ^pabandoned His sanctuary;
He has ³given up the walls of her
palaces
Into the hand of the enemy.
^qThey have made a noise in the house
of the LORD
As on the day of a set feast.
- 8 The LORD has ⁴purposed to destroy
The ^rwall of the daughter of Zion.
^sHe has stretched out a line;
He has not withdrawn His hand
from destroying;
Therefore He has caused the rampart
and wall to lament;
They languished together.
- 9 Her gates have sunk into the ground;
He has destroyed and ^tbroken her
bars.
^uHer king and her princes *are* among
the ⁵nations;
^vThe Law *is no more*,
And her ^wprophets find no ⁶vision
from the LORD.
- 10 The elders of the daughter of Zion
^xSit on the ground *and* keep silence;
^yThey ^zthrow dust on their heads
And ^zgird themselves with sackcloth.
The virgins of Jerusalem
Bow their heads to the ground.
- 11 ^aMy eyes fail with tears,
My ⁸heart is troubled;
^bMy ⁹bile is poured on the ground
Because of the destruction of the
daughter of my people,
Because ^cthe children and the infants
Faint in the streets of the city.
- 12 They say to their mothers,
“Where *is* grain and wine?”

7 ^p Ezek. 24:21 ^q Ps.
74:3-8 ³ delivered
8 ^r Jer. 52:14
^s [2 Kin. 21:13; Is.
34:11; Amos 7:7-9]
⁴ determined
9 ^t Jer. 51:30
^u Deut. 28:36; 2 Kin.
24:15; 25:7; Lam.
1:3; 4:20 ^v 2 Chr.
15:3 ^w Ps. 74:9;
Mic. 3:6 ⁵ Gentiles
⁶ Prophetic
revelation
10 ^x Job 2:13; Is.
3:26 ^y Job 2:12;
Ezek. 27:30 ^z Is.
15:3; Jon. 3:6-8 ⁷ A
sign of mourning
11 ^a Ps. 6:7; Lam.
3:48 ^b Job 16:13;
Ps. 22:14 ^c Lam. 4:4
⁸ Lit. *inward parts*
⁹ Lit. *liver*

13 ^d Lam. 1:12;
Dan. 9:12 ¹ Or *bear
witness to*
14 ^e Jer. 2:8; 23:25-
29; 29:8, 9; 37:19;
Ezek. 13:2 ^f Is. 58:1;
Ezek. 23:36; Mic.
3:8 ^g Jer. 23:33-36;
Ezek. 22:25, 28
15 ^h 1 Kin. 9:8; Job
27:23; Jer. 18:16;
Ezek. 25:6; Nah.
3:19 ² 2 Kin. 19:21;
Ps. 44:14 ⁱ [Ps.
48:2; 50:2]; Ezek.
16:14 ² Lit. *pass by
this way*
16 ^k Job 16:9, 10;
Ps. 22:13; Lam. 3:46
^j Ps. 56:2; 124:3; Jer.
51:34 ^m Lam. 1:21;
[Obad. 12-15] ⁿ Ps.
35:21
17 ^o Lev. 26:16

As they swoon like the wounded
In the streets of the city,
As their life is poured out
In their mothers' bosom.

- 13 How shall I ^dconsole ¹ you?
To what shall I liken you,
O daughter of Jerusalem?
What shall I compare with you, that
I may comfort you,
O virgin daughter of Zion?
For your ruin *is* spread wide as the
sea;
Who can heal you?
- 14 Your ^eprophets have seen for you
False and deceptive visions;
They have not ^funcovered your
iniquity,
To bring back your captives,
But have envisioned for you false
^gprophecies and delusions.
- 15 All who ²pass by ^hclap *their* hands at
you;
They hiss ⁱand shake their heads
At the daughter of Jerusalem:
“*Is this the city that is called*
^j*The perfection of beauty,*
The joy of the whole earth’?”
- 16 ^kAll your enemies have opened their
mouth against you;
They hiss and gnash *their* teeth.
They say, ^l“We have swallowed
her up!
Surely this *is* the ^mday we have
waited for;
We have found *it*, ⁿwe have seen *it!*”
- 17 The LORD has done what He
^opurposed;
He has fulfilled His word
Which He commanded in days of old.

2:8 Four weeks after the capture of Jerusalem, Nebuchadnezzar had destroyed the temple, the palace, the homes of the people, and the city wall (see 2 Kin. 25:9, 10; Jer. 52:13, 14).

2:9 The Law is no more: These words do not suggest the end of the Law, but rather the ceasing of the work of the Law in the lives of the people for their blessing (see Deut. 6:1–3). **her prophets find no vision:** Divinely appointed instruction ceased for both the nation and the individual. This is not to say that the Law or prophecy were no longer available. God spoke to Jeremiah ten days after the prophet requested a word from God (see Jer. 42:4–7); furthermore Ezekiel and Daniel prophesied during the 70 years of the Exile.

2:10 Throwing dust on the head (see Job 16:15; Is. 29:4; Mic. 1:10) was a common sign of mourning in Israel and in other countries of the ancient world. **virgins of Jerusalem:** Their sadness was increased by the knowledge that this was not a time for marriage and family. Even though their lives had been spared, they had lost their futures.

2:11 My eyes fail with tears: This is the response of the author Jeremiah who suffered with the afflicted (1:2). **Bile** is literally “liver,” a symbol of deep emotion.

2:12 Grain and wine are used here merely as a synonym for food.

2:13 How shall I console you: Jeremiah had no words to help the grieving women of Jerusalem as they looked helplessly on their dying babies.

2:14 false and deceptive visions: False prophets spewed forth their “utterly valueless” lies.

2:15 Shake their heads was a common expression of derision (see Ps. 22:7; 109:25; Jer. 18:16; see also 1 Kin. 9:8; Job 27:23; Jer. 19:8; 49:17; 50:13; Ezek. 27:36; Zeph. 2:15). Losing face in the ancient Middle East was a terrible evil. In the Psalms (see Ps. 48:2; 50:2), Jerusalem was **the joy of the whole earth**, the source of spiritual blessings for all the nations of the earth (see Gen. 12:3). Now Jerusalem was profaned (v. 2) and unclean (1:17).

2:17 The LORD has done what He purposed: God had promised Moses that He would judge sin (see Deut. 28:15, 16). The destruction of Jerusalem was a fulfillment of that promise. Jeremiah used the same language to affirm that God had planned to deal with Babylon as well (see Jer. 51:12).

He has thrown down and has not pitied,
And He has caused an enemy to
^prejoice over you;
He has exalted the ³horn of your
adversaries.

18 Their heart cried out to the Lord,
“O wall of the daughter of Zion,
^qLet tears run down like a river day
and night;
Give yourself no relief;
Give ⁴your eyes no rest.

19“ Arise, ^rcry out in the night,
At the beginning of the watches;
^sPour out your heart like water before
the face of the Lord.
Lift your hands toward Him
For the life of your young
children,
Who faint from hunger ^tat the head
of every street.”

20“ See, O LORD, and consider!
To whom have You done this?
^uShould the women eat their
offspring,
The children ⁵they have cuddled?
Should the priest and prophet be
slain
In the sanctuary of the Lord?

17 ^p Ps. 38:16
³ Strength
18 ^q Jer. 14:17;
Lam. 1:16 ⁴ Lit.
*the daughter of
your eye*
19 ^r Ps. 119:147
^s 1 Sam. 1:15; Ps.
42:4; 62:8 ^t Is. 51:20
20 ^u Lev. 26:29;
Deut. 28:53; Jer.
19:9; Lam. 4:10;
Ezek. 5:10 ⁵ Vg. *a
span long*

21 ^v 2 Chr. 36:17;
Jer. 6:11 ^w Jer. 18:21
22 ^x Ps. 31:13; Is.
24:17; Jer. 6:25
^y Hos. 9:12 ^z Jer.
16:2-4; 44:7

CHAPTER 3

4 ^a Job 16:8 ^b Ps.
51:8; Is. 38:13
5 ¹ *hardship or
weariness*

21“ Young ^v and old lie
On the ground in the streets;
My virgins and my young men
Have fallen by the ^wsword;
You have slain *them* in the day of
Your anger,
You have slaughtered *and* not pitied.

22“ You have invited as to a feast day
^xThe terrors that surround me.
In the day of the LORD’s anger
There was no refugee or survivor.
^yThose whom I have borne and
brought up
My enemies have ^zdestroyed.”

The Prophet’s Anguish and Hope

3 I *am* the man *who* has seen affliction
by the rod of His wrath.
2 He has led me and made *me* walk
In darkness and not in light.
3 Surely He has turned His hand
against me
Time and time again throughout the
day.
4 He has aged ^amy flesh and my
skin,
And ^bbroken my bones.
5 He has besieged me
And surrounded *me* with bitterness
and ¹woe.

2:18 The **wall** of the people’s hearts was more impenetrable than the wall of the city of Jerusalem (2:7, 8).

2:19 Arise: The call is for people to awaken and scream for mercy from the Lord. **Lift your hands** refers to a posture of prayer (see 1:17; Ps. 134:2).

2:20 Should the women eat their offspring: So desperate were the scenes of starvation in Jerusalem that women actually fought over whose deceased child would be eaten next (4:10). **priest and prophet:** Many godly people in Jerusalem perished.

2:21 Young and old: The punishment of Jerusalem affected everyone. **virgins . . . young men:** The punishment of Jerusalem extended even to the “pride of the city” (1:18; 2:4).

2:22 The terrors that surround me: The people mocked Jeremiah with the slogan “terror on every side,” for in the people’s eyes he saw catastrophe everywhere.

3:1 I am the man: Jeremiah’s personal testimony paralleled the experience of the city of Jerusalem as a whole (2:11). **The rod of His wrath** here refers to the Babylonians as instruments of God’s judgment (see 2 Sam. 7:14; Job 9:34; 21:9; Ps. 89:32; Prov. 22:8). In Is. 10:5, Assyria is referred to as “the rod of [God’s] anger.”

3:2 The imagery of **darkness** in this verse represents adversity and God’s judgment (see Job 12:25; Is. 9:2; Amos 5:18).

3:4 He has aged my flesh: This imagery suggests the ebbing and wasting away of Jeremiah’s life and that of the nation.

Light-bearers

Today’s world is full of pain and bitterness. So many groups feel deep disappointment. So many problems seem to defy solutions. A glance at the daily headlines reveals a tide of distrust, discord, and disharmony sweeping the planet. Can Christians be effective in such an environment? Not unless they recognize the pain and perplexities that abound wherever real people encounter the real struggles of everyday existence.

Jeremiah serves as a model for how to make a sober, realistic appraisal of human need. As he witnessed the devastation left in the aftermath of Jerusalem’s fall, he reflected on the darkness and despair that covered the city (Lam. 3:1–18). Yet having looked that harsh reality in the eye, he then turned an eye toward God. He recognized that God was the only hope that remained for his people—hope in God’s mercy, compassion, faithfulness, and goodness (vv. 22–24).

Like Jeremiah, Christians today have a message of hope to offer the world—the hope that is in Jesus Christ. We do not have all the answers to today’s needs and problems, but we have the Lord. He is the light of the world, and we are called to bring His light into this dark world (Matt. 5:14–16; John 1:4, 5; 1 John 1:5).

God could have used angels or miracles or numerous other means to announce His message. Instead, He has chosen everyday people to carry His message. Working through ordinary people facing the ordinary issues of day-to-day life, God intends to let the world know that there is hope beyond the problems and frustrations of the here and now.

Are you fulfilling this calling in your life?



- 6 ^cHe has set me in dark places
Like the dead of long ago.
- 7 ^dHe has hedged me in so that I cannot
get out;
He has made my chain heavy.
- 8 Even ^ewhen I cry and shout,
He shuts out my prayer.
- 9 He has blocked my ways with hewn
stone;
He has made my paths crooked.
- 10 ^fHe *has been* to me a bear lying in wait,
Like a lion in ²ambush.
- 11 He has turned aside my ways and
^gtorn me in pieces;
He has made me desolate.
- 12 He has bent His bow
And ^hset me up as a target for the
arrow.
- 13 He has caused ⁱthe ³arrows of His
quiver
To pierce my ⁴loins.
- 14 I have become the ^jridicule of all my
people—
^kTheir taunting song all the day.
- 15 ^lHe has filled me with bitterness,
He has made me drink wormwood.
- 16 He has also broken my teeth ^mwith
gravel,
And ⁵covered me with ashes.

6 ^c [Ps. 88:5, 6;
143:3]
7 ^d Job 3:23; 19:8;
Hos. 2:6
8 ^e Job 30:20; Ps.
22:2
10 ^f Is. 38:13 ² Lit.
secret places
11 ^g Job 16:12, 13;
Jer. 15:3; Hos. 6:1
12 ^h Job 7:20; 16:12;
Ps. 38:2
13 ⁱ Job 6:4 ³ Lit.
sons of ⁴ Lit.
kidneys
14 ^j Ps. 22:6, 7;
123:4; Jer. 20:7
^k Job 30:9; Ps. 69:12;
Lam. 3:63
15 ^l Jer. 9:15
16 ^m [Prov. 20:17]
⁵ Lit. *bent me*
down in
17 ⁶ Lit. *good*
18 ⁿ Ps. 31:22
19 ^o Jer. 9:15; Lam.
3:5, 15 ⁷ *bitterness*
20 ⁸ Lit. *bowed*
down
21 ^p Ps. 130:7
22 ^q [Mal. 3:6] ⁹ Ps.
78:38; [Jer. 3:12;
30:11]
23 ^r Is. 33:2; Zeph.
3:5
24 ^t Ps. 16:5; 73:26;
119:57; Jer. 10:16
^u Jer. 17:17; Mic. 7:7
25 ^v Ps. 130:6; Is.
30:18
26 ^w [Rom. 4:16-18]
^x Ex. 14:13; Ps. 37:7;
Is. 7:4
27 ^y Ps. 94:12

- 17 You have moved my soul far from
peace;
I have forgotten ⁶prosperity.
- 18 ⁿ And I said, "My strength and my
hope
Have perished from the LORD."
- 19 Remember my affliction and
roaming,
^oThe wormwood and the ⁷gall.
- 20 My soul still remembers
And ⁸sinks within me.
- 21 This I recall to my mind,
Therefore I have ^phope.
- 22 ^qThrough the LORD's mercies we are
not consumed,
Because His compassions ^rfail
not.
- 23 *They are* new ^severy morning;
Great is Your faithfulness.
- 24 ^aThe LORD *is* my ^tportion," says my
soul,
"Therefore I ^uhope in Him!"
- 25 The LORD *is* good to those who ^vwait
for Him,
To the soul *who* seeks Him.
- 26 *It is* good that *one* should ^whope ^xand
wait quietly
For the salvation of the LORD.
- 27 ^y*It is* good for a man to bear
The yoke in his youth.

3:6 like the dead of long ago: So hopeless did the situation seem that he felt like he had died long ago. **Dark places** may imply the grip of death itself (see Ps. 88:6 where the same Hebrew word is used in parallel to the word *pit*).

3:7 He has hedged me in: Jeremiah felt as though there was no way out of his predicament.

3:8 He shuts out my prayer: On occasion, God had forbidden Jeremiah to pray for the deliverance of Judah (see Jer. 11:14; 14:11).

3:9 He has blocked my ways with hewn stone: A common practice of the Assyrians was to wall up prisoners in extremely confined places and leave them to die.

3:10, 11 Jeremiah compared God to a bear or lion waiting to ambush (see Hos. 13:8; Amos 5:19). God had permitted Judah to be attacked and mangled.

3:12, 13 He has bent His bow: This verse echoes Job 16:12, 13, in which Job compares God to an archer who makes human beings His target (2:4).

3:14 I have become the ridicule of all my people: Jeremiah was made the butt of scoffing and mockery (see Jer. 20:7).

3:15 Wormwood was a bitter herb used to flavor some drinks.

3:16 He has also broken my teeth with gravel: The people had sensed that they were so associated with dust and sackcloth—symbols of mourning—that it was as though they fed on dirt. The dust became gravel which broke the people's teeth. The people were also **covered with ashes**, another symbol of mourning (see Jer. 6:26).

3:19, 20 Remember: Jeremiah attempted to change his mood by recalling his past experiences. However, what he remembered only made him feel worse.

3:21 This I recall to my mind: Jeremiah's remembrance of God's faithfulness brought about a change in the prophet's emotions. As long as we contemplate our troubles, the more convinced we will become of our isolation, our hopelessness, our inability to extricate ourselves from the present trouble. But when we focus on the

Lord, we are able finally to rise above, rather than to suffer under, our troubles.

3:22 This verse seems to contradict all that had been written up to this point (see 2:1–5). Yet the very fact that there was a prophet left to write these words and a remnant left to read them show that not every person in Jerusalem had been **consumed**. The fact that there was a remnant at all was due to the **mercies and compassions** of God. Even in His wrath (2:1–4), God remembers to be merciful.

3:23 new every morning: Every day presents us with a new opportunity to discover and experience more of God's love. Even in the midst of terrible sorrow, Jeremiah looked for signs of mercy. **Great is Your faithfulness:** Here is the heart of the Book of Lamentations. The comforting, compassionate character of God dominates the wreckage of every other institution and office. God remains "full of grace and truth" in every situation (see Ex. 34:6, 7; John 1:14).

3:24 The LORD is my portion: This expression is based on Num. 18:20, in which Aaron was denied an inheritance in the land but was told instead that the Lord Himself was his portion and inheritance. The same idea is also found in Ps. 16:5; 73:26; 119:57; 142:5. **I hope in Him:** Hope is not a wishful thought, but a confident expectation in the Lord. The verb *hope* suggests the idea of a "waiting attitude" (v. 21).

3:25 those who wait: The idea here is the acceptance of God's will and His timing (see Ps. 40:1; Is. 40:31). The Hebrew word for *hope* here translates another verb meaning "to hope" or "to wait," not the same as the one in v. 24 (see Ps. 40:1; Is. 40:31).

3:26 good: Not only is God good to those who wait and hope on Him (v. 25), but it was also good for the people. **hope and wait quietly:** A quiet confidence in the **salvation of the LORD** is always in order. Verses 22–26 focus on the renewal of hope in the midst of terrible distress.

3:27 Youth here refers not to age, but the sense of still-unbroken strength, as opposed to diminished vitality.

- 28 ^z Let him sit alone and keep silent,
Because *God* has laid *it* on him;
- 29 ^a Let him put his mouth in the dust—
There may yet be hope.
- 30 ^b Let him give *his* cheek to the one
who strikes him,
And be full of reproach.
- 31 ^c For the Lord will not cast off forever.
- 32 Though He causes grief,
Yet He will show compassion
According to the multitude of His
mercies.
- 33 For ^d He does not afflict ⁹ willingly,
Nor grieve the children of men.
- 34 To crush under one's feet
All the prisoners of the earth,
- 35 To turn aside the justice *due* a man
Before the face of the Most High,
- 36 Or subvert a man in his cause—
^e The Lord does not approve.
- 37 Who *is* he ^f *who* speaks and it comes
to pass,
When the Lord has not
commanded *it*?
- 38 *Is it* not from the mouth of the Most
High
That ^g woe and well-being proceed?
- 39 ^h Why should a living man ⁱ complain,
ⁱ A man for the punishment of his
sins?
- 40 Let us search out and examine our
ways,
And turn back to the LORD;
- 41 ^j Let us lift our hearts and hands
To God in heaven.
- 42 ^k We have transgressed and rebelled;
You have not pardoned.
- 43 You have covered *Yourself* with anger
And pursued us;
You have slain *and* not pitied.

28 ^z Jer. 15:17
29 ^a Job 42:6
30 ^b Job 16:10; Is. 50:6; [Matt. 5:39; 26:67]; Mark 14:65; Luke 22:63
31 ^c Ps. 77:7; 94:14; [Is. 54:7-10]
32 ^d [Ps. 119:67, 71, 75; Is. 28:21; Ezek. 33:11; Heb. 12:10]
33 ^e Lit. *from His heart*
34 ^f [Jer. 22:3; Hab. 1:13]
35 ^g [Ps. 33:9-11]
36 ^h Job 2:10; [Is. 45:7]; Jer. 32:42; Amos 3:6; [James 3:10, 11]
37 ⁱ Prov. 19:3 ^j Jer. 30:15; Mic. 7:9; [Heb. 12:5, 6] ^k Or *murmur*
41 ^j Ps. 86:4
42 ^k Neh. 9:26; Jer. 14:20; Dan. 9:5
43 ^l 1 Cor. 4:13
44 ^m Job 30:9, 10; Ps. 22:6-8; Lam. 2:16
45 ⁿ Is. 24:17, 18; Jer. 48:43, 44 ^o Is. 51:19
46 ^p Jer. 4:19; 14:17; Lam. 2:11
47 ^q Ps. 77:2; Jer. 14:17
48 ^r Ps. 80:14; Is. 63:15; Lam. 5:1
49 ^s Ps. 35:7, 19
50 ^t Jer. 37:16
51 ^u Dan. 6:17 ^v LXX *put to death* ^w Lit. *a stone on*
52 ^x Ps. 69:2; Jon. 2:3-5 ^y Is. 38:10
53 ^z Ps. 130:1; Jon. 2:2 ^{aa} Jer. 38:6-13
54 ^{ab} Jer. 3:4
55 ^{ac} James 4:8 ^{ad} Is. 41:10, 14; Dan. 10:12
56 ^{ae} Ps. 35:1; Jer. 51:36 ^{af} Jer. 71:23

- 44 You have covered Yourself with a
cloud,
That prayer should not pass through.
- 45 You have made us an ^l offscouring
and refuse
In the midst of the peoples.
- 46 ^m All our enemies
Have opened their mouths
against us.
- 47 ⁿ Fear and a snare have come upon us,
^o Desolation and destruction.
- 48 ^p My eyes overflow with rivers of
water
For the destruction of the daughter
of my people.
- 49 ^q My eyes flow and do not cease,
Without interruption,
- 50 Till the LORD from heaven
^r Looks down and sees.
- 51 My eyes bring suffering to my soul
Because of all the daughters of my
city.
- 52 My enemies ^s without cause
Hunted me down like a bird.
- 53 They ^t silenced my life ^u in the pit
And ^v threw ³ stones at me.
- 54 ^v The waters flowed over my head;
^w I said, "I am cut off!"
- 55 ^x I called on Your name, O LORD,
From the lowest ^y pit.
- 56 ^z You have heard my voice:
"Do not hide Your ear
From my sighing, from my cry for
help."
- 57 You ^a drew near on the day I called
on You,
And said, ^b "Do not fear!"
- 58 O Lord, You have ^c pleaded the case
for my soul;
^d You have redeemed my life.

3:29 Put his mouth in the dust is a figure of speech for conquest. The phrase pictures a captive lying face down with the conqueror's foot on his back. **Hope** refers to the confident expectation that the Lord will deliver (v. 26).

3:31, 32 The promises that God made to the patriarchs (see Gen. 12:1-3; 15:13-21; 22:15-18) were not **cast off**, but were still in force. The wickedness of God's people delayed but could not frustrate the complete fulfillment of His promises.

3:34-36 before the face of the Most High: God is offended when a person deprives another human being of his or her rights. God is omniscient and notices everything.

3:40-42 These verses present a plan for repentance and renewal. **turn back:** Repentance in the OT prophets is often expressed by the verb meaning "to turn" (see 5:21; Jer. 3:1). **lift our hearts and hands:** Lifting hands was a common posture in prayer (2:19).

3:44 So long as sin festered, God's wrath was a **cloud** (2:1) or veil through which no prayer could penetrate—including the prayers of the people (see Jer. 14:12) and the prayers of Jeremiah (see Jer. 7:16; 11:14; 14:11).

3:47 Desolation and destruction may be rephrased as "utter devastation."

3:49-51 The imagery of weeping continues from v. 48 (see also 1:2; 2:11). **Daughters of my city** refers to the people of Jerusalem.

3:52-54 silenced my life in the pit: Jeremiah speaks not only of his own experience of being cast into a pit (see Jer. 38:4-6), but also of his pain and grief over the wretched condition of his fellow countrymen. The *pit* is a metaphor for the grave or extreme danger (see Ps. 28:1; 30:3; 40:2). **The waters** is another danger symbol (see Ps. 69:2).

3:55-57 The Lord's **name** is the term by which He delights to reveal His mercies to His people (see Ex. 3:14, 15).

3:58-60 pleaded the case: Jeremiah used the terms of God's formal accusation (see Jer. 2:1-3:5); however, here the words are used for the people rather than *against* them. **You have redeemed my life:** Here is a hint of the light of the NT gospel in the dark pages of the Book of Lamentations. The only way that God would be able to *plead the case* of His people was if He Himself paid for—or redeemed them from—their sinfulness.

- 59 O LORD, You have seen ⁴*how* I am wronged;
^eJudge my case.
- 60 You have seen all their vengeance,
 All their ^fschemes against me.
- 61 You have heard their reproach,
 O LORD,
 All their schemes against me,
- 62 The lips of my enemies
 And their whispering against me all the day.
- 63 Look at their ^gsitting down and their rising up;
 I *am* their taunting song.
- 64 ^hRepay them, O LORD,
 According to the work of their hands.
- 65 Give them ⁵a veiled heart;
 Your curse *be* upon them!
- 66 In Your anger,
 Pursue and destroy them
ⁱFrom under the heavens of the
^jLORD.

The Degradation of Zion

- 4** How the gold has become dim!
How changed the fine gold!
 The stones of the sanctuary are
¹scattered
 At the head of every street.
- 2 The precious sons of Zion,
²Valuable as fine gold,
 How they are ³regarded ^aas clay
 pots,
 The work of the hands of the potter!
- 3 Even the jackals present their breasts
 To nurse their young;
But the daughter of my people *is*
 cruel,
^bLike ostriches in the wilderness.
- 4 The tongue of the infant clings
 To the roof of its mouth for thirst;

59 ^e Ps. 9:4 ⁴ Lit. *my wrong*
 60 ^f Jer. 11:19
 63 ^g Ps. 139:2
 64 ^h Ps. 28:4; Jer. 11:20; 2 Tim. 4:14
 65 ⁵ A Jewish tradition *sorrow of*
 66 ⁱ Deut. 25:19; Jer. 10:11 ^j Ps. 8:3

CHAPTER 4

1 ¹ Lit. *poured out*
 2 ^a Is. 30:14; Jer. 19:11; [2 Cor. 4:7]
 2 Lit. *Weighed against* ³ *reckoned*
 3 ^b Job 39:14-17

4 ^c Ps. 22:15
 5 ^d Job 24:8
 6 ^e Ezek. 16:48
 7 Gen. 19:25; Jer. 20:16
 7 ⁴ Or *nobles*
 5 Or *purer* ⁶ Lit. *polishing*
 8 ^g Job 19:20; Ps. 102:5
 9 ^h Lev. 26:39; Ezek. 24:23 ⁱ Jer. 16:4
 10 ^j Lev. 26:29; Deut. 28:57; 2 Kin. 6:29; Jer. 19:9; Lam. 2:20; Ezek. 5:10 ^k Is. 49:15 ^l Deut. 28:57
 7 *boiled*
 11 ^m Jer. 7:20; Lam. 2:17; Ezek. 22:31
 n Deut. 32:22; Jer. 21:14

- ^cThe young children ask for bread,
But no one breaks *it* for them.
- 5 Those who ate delicacies
 Are desolate in the streets;
 Those who were brought up in
 scarlet
^dEmbrace ash heaps.
- 6 The punishment of the iniquity of
 the daughter of my people
 Is greater than the punishment of the
^esin of Sodom,
 Which was ^foverthrown in a
 moment,
 With no hand to help her!
- 7 Her ⁴Nazirites were ⁵brighter than
 snow
 And whiter than milk;
 They were more ruddy in body than
 rubies,
Like sapphire in their ⁶appearance.
- 8 *Now* their appearance is blacker than
 soot;
 They go unrecognized in the streets;
^gTheir skin clings to their bones,
 It has become as dry as wood.
- 9 *Those* slain by the sword are better off
 Than *those* who die of hunger;
 For these ^hpine away,
 Stricken *for lack* of the fruits of the
ⁱfield.
- 10 The hands of the ^jcompassionate
 women
 Have ⁷cooked their ^kown children;
 They became ^lfood for them
 In the destruction of the daughter of
 my people.
- 11 The LORD has fulfilled His fury,
^mHe has poured out His fierce anger.
ⁿHe kindled a fire in Zion,
 And it has devoured its foundations.

3:61–63 Jeremiah here turns to the **enemies** who treated God's people so poorly during their weakened state (1:21).

3:64–66 Repay them, O LORD: The request for divine vindication is an expression of a longing for God's righteousness and the success of His kingdom and His truth.

4:1, 2 The Babylonian army looted the temple and overturned all its huge **stones**. **precious sons:** The people of Jerusalem were of more value than the temple. Elsewhere these people are referred to as "My son, My firstborn" (Ex. 4:22) and "a special treasure to Me . . . a kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (Ex. 19:5, 6). The bodies of the brave defenders of Jerusalem were thrown out like broken pieces of **clay pots**.

4:3 Jackals were the dogs of the desert, disreputable beasts. However, even these animals cared for their young. **Ostriches**, on the other hand, seem to care very little for their young.

4:4 The tongue of the infant: The theme of thirsting and starving children is revisited (see 2:11–13).

4:5 People who formerly could have eaten any **delicacies** they wanted groveled in refuse **heaps** during the terrible days of the Babylonian siege of Jerusalem.

4:7, 8 Nazirites were men and women who specifically committed themselves to God for periods of special devotion (see Num. 6:1–21). **Like sapphire . . . soot:** The siege of Jerusalem was so terrible that no one was exempt, not even the truly godly people like the Nazirites.

4:9 Dying early in the siege was perhaps **better** than living through all of its horrors.

4:10 This verse describes the horrible effects of the long siege that were alluded to in 2:20. The women who were forced to eat their own children began as **compassionate women**. **cooked their own children:** This unimaginable horror could only have occurred in the most inhumane conditions of human suffering.

12 The kings of the earth,
And all inhabitants of the world,
Would not have believed
That the adversary and the enemy
Could ^oenter the gates of Jerusalem—

13^p Because of the sins of her prophets
And the iniquities of her priests,
^qWho shed in her midst
The blood of the just.

14 They wandered blind in the streets;
^rThey have defiled themselves with
blood,
^sSo that no one would touch their
garments.

15 They cried out to them,
“Go away, ^tunclean!
Go away, go away,
Do not touch us!”
When they fled and wandered,
Those among the nations said,
“They shall no longer dwell *here*.”

16 The ⁸face of the LORD scattered
them;
He no longer regards them.
^u*The people* do not respect the priests
Nor show favor to the elders.

17 Still ^vour eyes failed us,
Watching vainly for our help;
In our watching we watched
For a nation *that* could not save us.

18^w They ⁹tracked our steps
So that we could not walk in our
streets.
^xOur end was near;
Our days were over,
For our end had come.

19 Our pursuers were [#]swifter
Than the eagles of the heavens.
They pursued us on the mountains
And lay in wait for us in the
wilderness.

12 ^o Jer. 21:13
13 ^p Jer. 5:31; Ezek.
22:26, 28; Zeph. 3:4
^q Jer. 2:30; 26:8, 9;
Matt. 23:31
14 ^r Jer. 2:34 ^s Num.
19:16
15 ^t Lev. 13:45, 46
16 ^u Lam. 5:12 ^a Tg.
anger
17 ^v 2 Kin. 24:7
18 ^w 2 Kin. 25:4
^x Ezek. 7:2, 3, 6;
Amos 8:2 ^y Lit.
hunted
19 ^y Deut. 28:49

20 ^z Gen. 2:7 ^a Jer.
52:9; Ezek. 12:13
21 ^b Ps. 83:3-6 ^c Jer.
25:15; Obad. 10
22 ^d [Is. 40:2;
Jer. 33:7, 8] ^e Ps.
137:7 ¹ *has been*
completed

CHAPTER 5

1 ^a Ps. 89:50 ^b Ps.
79:4; Lam. 2:15
2 ^c Ps. 79:1
3 ^d Ex. 22:24; Jer.
15:8; 18:21
5 ^e Deut. 28:48; Jer.
28:14 ¹ Lit. *necks*
6 ^f Gen. 24:2 ^g Hos.
9:3; 12:1 ^h Jer. 2:18;
Hos. 5:13
7 ⁱ Jer. 31:29

20 The ^zbreath of our nostrils, the
anointed of the LORD,
^aWas caught in their pits,
Of whom we said, “Under his
shadow
We shall live among the nations.”

21 Rejoice and be glad, O daughter of
^bEdom,
You who dwell in the land of Uz!
^cThe cup shall also pass over to you
And you shall become drunk and
make yourself naked.

22^d *The punishment of* your iniquity ¹is
accomplished,
O daughter of Zion;
He will no longer send you into
captivity.
^eHe will punish your iniquity,
O daughter of Edom;
He will uncover your sins!

A Prayer for Restoration

5 Remember, ^aO LORD, what has come
upon us;

Look, and behold ^bour reproach!

2 ^cOur inheritance has been turned
over to aliens,
And our houses to foreigners.

3 We have become orphans and
waifs,
Our mothers *are* like ^dwidows.

4 We pay for the water we drink,
And our wood comes at a price.

5 ^e*They* pursue at our ¹heels;
We labor *and* have no rest.

6 ^fWe have given our hand ^gto the
Egyptians
And the ^hAssyrians, to be satisfied
with bread.

7 ⁱOur fathers sinned *and are* no more,
But we bear their iniquities.

8 Servants rule over us;
There is none to deliver *us* from their
hand.

4:13, 14 The very people who should have been agents of righteousness became agents of sin (see Jer. 8:10; 14:18).

4:15, 16 Wherever the wicked wandered, they were treated as lepers, people who were not welcome in any place. **the LORD scattered them:** The priests and prophets were separated from **the face of the LORD** because they had helped cause the people of Judah to stumble.

4:17–19 **a nation that could not save us:** After the fall of Jerusalem in 586 B.C., the survivors in Judah turned to Pharaoh Hophra of Egypt to deliver them, thereby breaking covenant with Nebuchadnezzar and the specific word of God (see Jer. 42–44; Ezek. 29:16).

4:20 The heir to the Davidic line was “**the breath of life**” to the nation. But King Zedekiah was captured while trying to escape, put in chains, blinded after watching his sons massacred, and marched off to Babylon to die.

4:21, 22 It is possible that the phrase **daughter of Edom** is a sarcastic, judgmental phrase. Edom may have thought so highly of herself (see Obad. 3) that she believed she could assume the place of privilege her father Esau had lost, once Judah was destroyed.

5:2, 3 The Promised Land had been a gift from the Lord to Abraham. This **inheritance** was a kind of “down payment” on the future reign of God that would include the restoration of His people to that land. God demonstrated that He owned all nations and that Israel was to be His instrument for blessing all the nations on the earth. Yet in their present condition, the people of Israel seemed to be the most helpless of all peoples.

5:4–6 The survivors of the Babylonian siege were reduced to servitude, caught between **the Egyptians and the Assyrians** (4:17–19).

5:8, 9 The small harvests that were obtained from the land after the destruction of Jerusalem were vulnerable to nomads from

- 9 We get our bread *at the risk* of our lives,
Because of the sword in the wilderness.
- 10 Our skin is hot as an oven,
Because of the fever of famine.
- 11 They ^jravished the women in Zion,
The maidens in the cities of Judah.
- 12 Princes were hung up by their hands,
And elders were not respected.
- 13 Young men ^kground at the millstones;
Boys staggered under *loads* of wood.
- 14 The elders have ceased *gathering* at the gate,
And the young men from their ^lmusic.
- 15 The joy of our heart has ceased;
Our dance has turned into ^mmourning.

11 ^j / Is. 13:16; Zech. 14:2
13 ^k Judg. 16:21
14 ^l Is. 24:8; Jer. 7:34
15 ^m Jer. 25:10;
Amos 8:10

16 ⁿ Job 19:9; Ps. 89:39; Jer. 13:18
17 ^o Ps. 6:7
18 ^p Is. 27:10
19 ^q Ps. 9:7; Hab. 1:12 ^r Ps. 45:6
20 ^s Ps. 13:1; 44:24
21 ^t Ps. 80:3; 7, 19;
Jer. 31:18 ² returned

- 16 ⁿ The crown has fallen *from* our head.
Woe to us, for we have sinned!
- 17 Because of this our heart is faint;
^oBecause of these *things* our eyes grow dim;
- 18 Because of Mount Zion which is ^pdesolate,
With foxes walking about on it.
- 19 You, O LORD, ^qremain forever;
^rYour throne from generation to generation.
- 20 ^sWhy do You forget us forever,
And forsake us for so long a time?
- 21 ^tTurn us back to You, O LORD, and we will be ²restored;
Renew our days as of old,
- 22 Unless You have utterly rejected us,
And are very angry with us!

the desert who occasionally took the **lives** of the people of Judah as well.

5:10 Our skin is hot: Disease would have been rampant during the siege.

5:11–13 The suffering of Jerusalem left no one unscathed—**women, princes, elders, and young men.**

5:14 gate . . . music: Ordinary events and pleasures were no longer appropriate or even possible for the people of Jerusalem.

5:15 joy . . . dance: This verse illustrates Eccl. 3:4. This was a time to weep and mourn, not to laugh and dance.

5:16 The crown has fallen from our head expresses the loss of Judah's position of honor.

5:17 our heart is faint . . . our eyes grow dim: The normal zest for life was gone. Death would be better than a horrible existence during the siege of Jerusalem.

5:18 foxes: The idea of wild animals roaming the holy city where the people of God once came in glad worship was the final indignity.

5:19 You, O LORD, remain forever: God's eternal rule and reign are a hope and support during the bleakest moments of suffering and despair (see Ps. 80:1, 2; 89:3, 4; 103:19).

5:21 The one word **turn** (1:13; 3:40) can summarize God's message to His rebellious people. In one of Jeremiah's earlier messages, he

had exhorted the people to **turn** to God no less than seven times (see Jer. 3:1, 7, 12, 14, 22; 4:1).

5:21, 22 Unless You have utterly rejected us: What is stated as a possibility actually emphasizes that the occurrence is completely out of the question: The Lord cannot reject His own people forever. The same literary technique is found in Jer. 14:19.

renew

(Heb. *chadash*) (5:21; 2 Chr. 24:4; Ps. 103:5) Strong's #2318

As a verb, the term can mean "to renew" (Ps. 51:10) or "to repair" (Is. 61:4). As an adjective, the word identifies something new in contrast to something old (such as the "old harvest" versus the "new harvest"; see Lev. 26:10), or something different when compared to the status quo (such as "a new spirit"; see Ezek. 11:19; 18:31). The Bible teaches that God alone is the One who makes things new, whether a new song in the heart of the faithful (Ps. 40:3), a new phase in His plan of redemption (Is. 42:9; 43:19), a new name (Is. 62:2), or a new heavens and earth (Is. 65:17).

THE BOOK OF

EZEKIEL

THE PROPHET EZEKIEL had the thankless job of proclaiming God's message on the crowded and hostile streets of Babylon. At the same time that Jeremiah was warning the citizens of Jerusalem of the coming destruction of that holy city, Ezekiel was preaching the same message to the exiles in Babylon. Even though these exiles were hundreds of miles away from the Promised Land and the temple, God would not leave them in the dark. Instead He sent Ezekiel to warn, exhort, and comfort the weary exiles.

Author Ezekiel received and reported revelations from the living God as an exile in Babylon during 593–571 B.C. All that is known of this solitary prophet comes from his written prophecy, and no compelling data exist for the acceptance of any author other than the one named in the book itself: Ezekiel, son of Buzi (a priest), who was taken captive with Jehoiachin and other Hebrews in 597 B.C.

Since he was from a priestly family, Ezekiel was a priest as well as a prophet. Therefore he was well acquainted with the Levitical laws and rituals as well as the temple and its regulations. This becomes evident when he writes of his apocalyptic vision of the future messianic temple. Furthermore, he had a detailed knowledge of the Mosaic covenant, including the ethical, moral, and spiritual requirements of God's revelation and the inevitable results of obedience or disobedience to God's law. Even though his exiled audience was cut off from the temple, the priesthood, and the related ceremonies and feasts, the prophet Ezekiel informed the exiles not only of these details, but also of the importance of obeying God's law and seeking after Him.

The Book of Ezekiel reveals that the prophet was married (see 24:15–18) and had a house (see 3:24; 8:1). Overall, he enjoyed a large measure of freedom in captivity. The Babylonians had not captured the Jews in order to make them slaves in Babylon; instead they wanted to displace the population of Israel, especially its leadership and nobility, and settle their own citizens and other foreigners in the land. As for his personality and abilities, Ezekiel appears to have been articulate, intelligent, and dramatic. He was a person that could withstand great opposition in order to obey the demands God placed on his life.

Chronology Unlike most biblical prophetic books, Ezekiel gives considerable attention to chronology and exact dates throughout his book. No other prophet provides so many dates (13). By utilizing the data from archaeology and the most recent research into the calendar systems of the ancient Middle East, a precise dating of many events in Ezekiel is possible.

The key to dating the opening chronological notice and the other specific dates in Ezekiel is the reference in 1:2 to the "fifth year of King Jehoiachin's captivity." In 2 Kings 24:12, this deportation is equated with the "eighth year of (Nebuchadnezzar's) reign" or 597 B.C. Ezekiel began prophesying in 593 B.C. calling attention to the Babylonian captivity of Judah. He ended in 571 B.C. with a message on God's coming judgment upon Egypt at the hand of the same Babylonian monarch. Ezekiel prophesied during four different periods: 593–588 B.C. (1:1–25:17); 587–585 B.C. (26:1–29:16; 30:20–39:29); 573 B.C. (40:1–48:35); and 571 B.C. (29:17–30:19). In all, Ezekiel prophesied from 593 to 571 B.C., a period of 22 years surrounding the climactic fall of Jerusalem in 586 B.C.

Religious and Literary Context During Ezekiel's life and ministry, Israel (the northern kingdom) was corrupt politically and spiritually. Their idolatry led to captivity by Assyria in 722 B.C. The leadership of Judah (the southern kingdom) at that time was righteous; but eventually they too, although experiencing brief revivals at times, fell into the idolatry of the neighboring nations. The people refused to heed the prophets' reminders about the curses and blessings promised by God in the Mosaic covenant.

Ezekiel prophesied that there would come catastrophe and captivity for Judah and Jerusalem. Yet he also had a message from God concerning eventual restoration and renewal, based on God's faithfulness to the promises of all the covenants made with His people since the Abrahamic covenant.

In speaking to his fellow exiles in Babylon, Ezekiel experienced and then employed visions (chs. 1–3; 8–11; 37; 40–48). These visions are similar in structure to “dream visions” known from Mesopotamian literature of the seventh and sixth centuries B.C. These texts have two main sections: (1) an introduction to the setting and general situation, including time, place, circumstances, and the person involved; and (2) a description of the vision. In chs. 37; 40–48, Ezekiel uses such a format to introduce apocalyptic visions—revelations that symbolically describe the end times. Living in Babylon, both Ezekiel and his audience were familiar with this type of literature.

Elsewhere, Ezekiel employs themes and illustrations from the religious life and literature of the societies whose judgment he predicts. Typically the nations under God's judgment were those that had mistreated Israel or had led them into idol worship. The exiles and those Israelites still living in Judah knew the religious behavior and beliefs of their neighbors and would not be puzzled by the prophet's language.

In addition to visions and religious themes, Ezekiel uses many literary techniques to communicate God's message to the exiles: both prose and poetry, parables and proverbs, lamentations and dirges, allegories and puns.

Historical Setting Ezekiel ministered in Babylon, at Tel Abib near the Chebar River. This is in the southeastern section of modern Iraq, northwest of the Persian Gulf. The Babylonians settled the Jewish exiles in this region to colonize them.

Ezekiel's ministry was primarily to those Jews deported from Judah by the Babylonians and any Israelites that remained in exile from previous deportations by the Assyrians. Still his messages had great instructional and practical significance for the Hebrews remaining in Israel and for the surrounding pagan nations, whose fate he foretold. Although Ezekiel was transported in visions to Jerusalem (see chs. 8; 11), those revelations were always for the benefit of him and those to whom he was speaking in exile.

Ezekiel's warnings of national calamity include warnings of disease, death, destruction, and deportation. Yet because of God's unconditional promises and through the people's repentance, God's spiritual and material blessings would return to the people. Ezekiel's purpose was to remind His people of their spiritual unfaithfulness (ch. 16) and of God's faithfulness to His own promises. Ezekiel showed the people how judgment was a natural outcome of a holy God's wrath against sin. It was also a loving God's means of disciplining His people: to correct their beliefs, redirect their behavior, and restore intimate fellowship between Himself and them. Thus Ezekiel preached to the exiles the imminence of God's judgment and the need for individual and national repentance.

Themes The Book of Ezekiel stresses the ultimate aim of God's charity and chastisement: that “they shall know that I am the LORD.” This refrain is repeated 65 times in the book and emphasizes that the purpose of God's actions is always to bring about the spiritual renewal of all people.

Ezekiel teaches both individual and corporate responsibility for sin before God (chs. 18; 23). While themes of idolatry, social injustice, public and private immorality, imminent judgment, and future blessings of restoration and redemption are not unique to Ezekiel, his prophecies relate these themes to the centrality of the temple and the influence of the sacrificial system in the life of Israel. Past defilement and disobedience by the priests and people had led to the present dispersion and would lead to further judgment (chs. 4–32). The people's behavior was intrinsically connected to how they approached their God in worship. Insincere worship would lead to immoral behavior

640 B.C.
Josiah's reign
begins in Judah

609 B.C.
Jehoahaz
becomes king in
Judah

608 B.C.
Jehoiakim's reign
begins in Judah

605 B.C.
Some Judeans are
taken captive to
Babylon

598 B.C.
Jehoiachin
becomes king in
Judah

598 B.C.
Zedekiah's reign in
Judah begins

597 B.C.
Ezekiel is deported
to Babylon

c. 593–571 B.C.
Ezekiel's prophetic
ministry

586 B.C.
The Babylonians
destroy Jerusalem

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and judgment; proper worship of the living God would lead to moral behavior and blessings. Yet in the end, Ezekiel concludes with the comforting news that a day would come when God's rule and practical righteousness would return with a new temple and city and a renewed land and nation (chs. 33–48).

CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

For Ezekiel, the One who is coming to be Israel's ultimate King will have the lone right to rule over the people God has chosen to be His. A unique people can only be led by a unique individual. And until He appears, the prophet demands that those who would attempt to mount the throne prematurely "remove the turban, and take off the crown" (21:26).

Ezekiel is confident that day will come. His confidence is reflected in the additional metaphor that he uses to call attention to that hope. Describing a field far from the palace, he pictures God's Anointed as the true Shepherd who will deliver and feed His flock (34:11–31).



Ramesseum in Luxor (ancient Thebes). Ezekiel 30:14 warns of the destruction of Thebes by Nebuchadnezzar.

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EZEKIEL OUTLINE

- I. Prophecies against Judah and Jerusalem 1:1—24:27
 - A. The call of Ezekiel 1:1—3:27
 - B. Overthrow of city and state predicted 4:1—7:27
 - C. The sin and fate of Jerusalem 8:1—11:25
 - D. Moral necessity of the captivity 12:1—19:14
 - E. The inevitable downfall of Israel 20:1—24:27
- II. Oracles against foreign nations 25:1—32:32
 - A. Ammon 25:1–7
 - B. Moab 25:8–11
 - C. Edom 25:12–14
 - D. Philistia 25:15–17
 - E. Tyre 26:1—28:19
 - F. Sidon 28:20–26
 - G. Egypt 29:1—32:32
- III. Prophecies concerning Israel 33:1—39:29
 - A. The prophet's role in the new age 33:1–33
 - B. The selfish shepherds and the Good Shepherd 34:1–31
 - C. A fruitful Israel 35:1—36:38
 - D. The vision of dry bones 37:1–28
 - E. Peace: the Lord will defend Israel against Gog 38:1—39:29
- IV. Vision of the future: the new temple and the new law 40:1—48:35
 - A. Description of the new temple 40:1—43:27
 - B. A new service of worship 44:1—46:24
 - C. Israel reorganized according to tribal divisions 47:1—48:35

Ezekiel's Vision of God

Now it came to pass in the thirtieth year, in the fourth month, on the fifth day of the month, as I was among the captives by the River Chebar, that the heavens were opened and I saw visions of God. On the fifth day of the month, which was in the fifth year of King Jehoiachin's captivity, the word of the LORD came expressly to Ezekiel the priest, the son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the River Chebar; and the hand of the LORD was upon him there.

Then I looked, and behold, a whirlwind was coming out of the north, a great cloud with raging fire engulfing itself; and brightness was all around it and radiating out of its midst like the color of amber, out of the midst of the fire. Also from within it came the likeness of four living creatures. And this was their appearance: they had the likeness of a man. Each one had four faces, and each one had four wings. Their legs were straight, and the soles of their feet were like the soles of calves' feet. They sparkled like the color of burnished bronze. The hands of a man were under their wings on their four sides; and each of the four had faces and wings. Their wings touched one another. The creatures did not turn when they went, but each one went straight forward.

CHAPTER 1

1 ^a Ezek. 3:15, 23; 10:15 ^b Matt. 3:16; Mark 1:10; Luke 3:21; Acts 7:56; 10:11; Rev. 4:1; 19:11 ^c Ex. 24:10; Num. 12:6; Is. 1:1; 6:1; Ezek. 8:3; Dan. 8:1, 2 ^d So with MT, LXX, Vg.; Syr., Tg. *a vision*
3 ^d 1 Kin. 18:46; 2 Kin. 3:15; Ezek. 3:14, 22 ^e Or *Babylonians*, and so elsewhere in the book
4 ^e Is. 21:1; Jer. 23:19; 25:32; Ezek. 13:11, 13 ^f Jer. 1:14
5 ^f Ezek. 10:15, 17, 20; Rev. 4:6-8
^h Ezek. 10:8 ⁱ Ezek. 10:14
7 ⁱ Dan. 10:6; Rev. 1:15 ^j Lit. *feet*
8 ^k Ezek. 10:8, 21
9 ^k Ezek. 1:12; 10:20-22
10 ^m Ezek. 10:14; Rev. 4:7 ⁿ Num. 2:10
^o Num. 2:3 ^p Num. 2:18 ^q Num. 2:25
11 ^r Is. 6:2; Ezek. 1:23
12 ^s Ezek. 10:11, 22
13 ^t Ps. 104:4; Rev. 4:5
14 ^u Zech. 4:10; [Matt. 24:27; Luke 17:24]
15 ^v Ezek. 10:9
16 ^w Ezek. 10:9, 10

As for the likeness of their faces, each had the face of a man; each of the four had the face of a lion on the right side, each of the four had the face of an ox on the left side, and each of the four had the face of an eagle. Thus were their faces. Their wings stretched upward; two wings of each one touched one another, and two covered their bodies. And each one went straight forward; they went wherever the spirit wanted to go, and they did not turn when they went.

As for the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance was like burning coals of fire, like the appearance of torches going back and forth among the living creatures. The fire was bright, and out of the fire went lightning. And the living creatures ran back and forth, in appearance like a flash of lightning.

Now as I looked at the living creatures, behold, a wheel was on the earth beside each living creature with its four faces. The appearance of the wheels and their workings was like the color of beryl, and all four had the same likeness. The appearance of their workings was, as it were, a wheel in the middle of a wheel. When they moved, they went toward any one of four directions; they did not turn aside when they went.

^x Dan. 10:6

1:1 Ezekiel was preparing to become a priest when the Babylonians attacked Judah in 597 B.C. and carried him and many others into captivity (2 Kin. 24:10–14). The **thirtieth year** most likely refers to Ezekiel's age. At that age, a man could become a priest (v. 3) and begin serving in the temple (Num. 4:1–3). In this case, it was the time when God called him to be a prophet. **as I:** Of all the writing prophets, Ezekiel alone refers to himself at first with a pronoun ("I"), not using his name until v. 3 (see Is. 1:1; Jer. 1:1; Hos. 1:1; Jon. 1:1; Zeph. 1:1). **River Chebar:** A branch of the Euphrates flowing southeast from Babylon. **heavens were opened:** As with all the true prophets of ancient Israel, the visitation of God was at His initiative, calling certain people to special responsibilities (see Jer. 1:1–9). **visions of God:** The word *vision* is derived from the common Hebrew verb meaning "to see," rather than from the specific verb used for prophetic vision as in Is. 1. The plural of this word also calls attention to Ezekiel's visions, which were unparalleled both in nature and quantity.

1:2 This was the **fifth day** of the fourth month (v. 1). Ezekiel's "thirtieth year" was 597 B.C., when King Jehoiachin was deported to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kin. 24). The year 593 as the **fifth year of . . . captivity** is arrived at by using the Babylonian calendar, which begins in March.

1:3 Ezekiel uses the introductory phrase **the word of the LORD** came 50 times in this book. It always introduces a divine message and sometimes a new section. The name **Ezekiel** comes from the verb meaning "to seize," "to hold fast," coupled with the term meaning "God." Thus Ezekiel's name indicates that he was a man whom God had seized. See also 3:8 for another dimension of meaning in this name, "the one whom God has strengthened." **the hand of the LORD was upon him:** The divine origin of Ezekiel's message is emphasized in these first few verses.

1:4 whirlwind . . . great cloud . . . raging fire: Compare the descriptions of divine appearance in Ex. 19:16–20; Ps. 18:7–15; Mic.

1:2–4. See also v. 13 below. The term translated **amber** may also be understood as something like "glowing metal" (v. 27).

1:5 In ch. 10, these **living creatures** are related to the cherubim—celestial beings associated with God's holiness and glory and sometimes poetically with storm winds upon which God travels (see Ps. 18:10). There are two basic approaches to understanding the *four living creatures*: as a highly symbolic representation of deity, or as highly symbolic representations of angelic beings who serve in God's presence. Probably they are angels, since God Himself is not revealed until the end of the section (v. 26). These stunning angelic creatures are dazzling attendants to God's majesty.

1:6 four faces: This image may suggest complete awareness; nothing is "behind" or "beside" these creatures. See vv. 8, 10. **four wings:** Contrast the six wings of the seraphim in Is. 6:2; the wings are further described in vv. 9, 11.

1:7 legs . . . feet: The imagery portrays strength and beauty.

1:8 The "humanlike" representation includes **hands** and presumably arms.

1:9 did not turn: This seems to follow from the four faces (v. 6).

1:10 man . . . lion . . . ox . . . eagle: Composite fantastic figures in these classic combinations have been found in Mesopotamian and Egyptian iconography. The idealized strengths of each figure were thus presumed to reside in the living creature so described.

1:11 One pair of **wings** was stretched upwards, as if in reverence; the other pair was used to cover the body as if in submission. Compare the description of the seraphim in Is. 6:2.

1:13 fire . . . lightning: These phenomena regularly attend descriptions of the appearances of God to His people (see Ex. 19:16–20). See also v. 4.

1:16, 17 beryl: This may be chrysolite, a yellow or gold-colored stone. **wheel in the middle of a wheel:** The composite wheels were able to go in any direction without pivoting.

¹⁸As for their rims, they were so high they were awesome; and their rims *were* ¹⁹full of eyes, all around the four of them. ¹⁹²When the living creatures went, the wheels went beside them; and when the living creatures were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up. ²⁰Wherever the spirit wanted to go, they went, *because* there the spirit went; and the wheels were lifted together with them, ^afor the spirit of the ⁴living creatures *was* in the wheels. ²¹When those went, *these* went; when those stood, *these* stood; and when those were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up together with them, for the spirit of the ⁵living creatures *was* in the wheels. ²²^bThe likeness of the ⁶firmament above the heads of the ⁷living creatures *was* like the color of an awesome ^ccrystal, stretched out ^dover their heads. ²³And under the firmament their wings *spread out* straight, one toward another. Each one had two which covered one side, and each one had two which covered the other side of the body. ²⁴^eWhen they went, I heard the noise of their wings, ^flike the noise of many waters, like ^gthe voice of the Almighty, a tumult like the

¹⁸ ^v Ezek. 10:12; [Zech. 4:10]; Rev. 4:6, 8
¹⁹ ^z Ezek. 10:16, 17
²⁰ ^a Ezek. 10:17
⁴ Lit. *living creature*; LXX, Vg. *spirit of life*; Tg. *creatures*
²¹ ⁵ See note at v. 20
²² ^b Ezek. 10:1
^c Rev. 4:6 ^d Ezek. 10:1 ^e Or *expanse*
⁷ So with LXX, Tg., Vg.; MT *living creature*
²⁴ ^e Ezek. 3:13; 10:5 ^f Ezek. 43:2; Dan. 10:6; Rev. 1:15 ^g Job 37:4, 5; Ps. 29:3, 4; 68:33
²⁶ ^h Ezek. 10:1 ⁱ Ex. 24:10, 16; Ezek. 8:4; 11:22, 23; 43:4, 5
²⁷ ^k Ezek. 8:2
²⁸ ^j [Gen. 9:13]; Rev. 4:3; 10:1 ^m Ezek. 3:23; 8:4 ⁿ Gen. 17:3; Ezek. 3:23; Dan. 8:17; Acts 9:4; Rev. 1:17

CHAPTER 2

¹ ^a Dan. 10:11; Acts 9:6
² ^b Ezek. 3:24; Dan. 8:18

noise of an army; and when they stood still, they let down their wings. ²⁵A voice came from above the firmament that *was* over their heads; whenever they stood, they let down their wings. ²⁶^hAnd above the firmament over their heads *was* the likeness of a throne, ⁱin appearance like a sapphire stone; on the likeness of the throne *was* a likeness with the appearance of a man high above ^jit. ²⁷Also from the appearance of His waist and upward ^kI saw, as it were, the color of amber with the appearance of fire all around within it; and from the appearance of His waist and downward I saw, as it were, the appearance of fire with brightness all around. ²⁸^lLike the appearance of a rainbow in a cloud on a rainy day, so *was* the appearance of the brightness all around it. ^mThis *was* the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD.

Ezekiel Sent to Rebellious Israel

So when I saw *it*, ⁿI fell on my face, and I heard a voice of One speaking. **2** And He said to me, “Son of man, ^astand on your feet, and I will speak to you.” ²Then ^bthe Spirit entered me

1:18 rims . . . full of eyes: The wheels had an exquisite beauty and an animate intelligence. **awesome:** The word means “compelling wonder.”
1:19–21 The prophet stresses the association of the wheels with the living creatures, as well as the creatures’ ability to travel wherever they wished. The mysterious phrase **the spirit . . . in the wheels** emphasizes the significance of the wheels. It appears that the wheels represented the flexibility and mobility of the living creatures. This is a pictorial representation of God’s omnipresence.
1:22 firmament: The same word is used in Gen. 1:6. It means an “expanse” or “platform.” Compare also the “sea of glass, like crystal” of Rev. 4:6.
1:24 Almighty: This is the divine name *Shaddai*, most likely based on a word meaning “mountain,” to suggest God’s omnipotence and majesty (see 10:5).

1:25 This **voice** connects with the “man” of v. 26. In Gen. 1 the voice of God summons light from the darkness (Gen. 1:3). Here above the din of angels’ wings there is a *voice*. In John 1:1 is revealed the apostle’s term for the Savior: the Word.
1:26 While Isaiah describes the elevation of the Lord’s **throne** (see Is. 6:1), Ezekiel focuses on its beauty. **sapphire:** This is precious lapis lazuli, a deep blue stone with golden specks. The same stone appears in Rev. 21:19. The enthroned figure with **the appearance of a man** is the culmination of this vision.
1:27, 28 Fire like burning metal (**amber**, v. 4) and rainbow-like **brightness** surrounded the One on the throne (v. 26). **the likeness of the glory of the LORD:** Human *likeness* here may reflect the personal nature of God’s revelation of Himself. Further, it points forward to the plan of a more personal revelation of God coming as the Messiah (see John 1:1–18). The *glory* indicates the wonder, majesty, and worthiness of the living God. Amid the wheels, the creatures, the colors, and the dazzling light was a figure who appeared like a man (v. 26). Compare the vision of Daniel who saw One “like the Son of Man” (Dan. 7:13). **I fell on my face:** The prophet’s response was to fall down in worship and submission. All believers should recognize God’s great glory and fall down in humble submission before Him (Phil. 2:10, 11).
2:1 Son of man: Ezekiel uses this phrase more than 90 times to refer to himself. It emphasizes his humanity in his God-given role as a spokesman for God. The meaning of the phrase is “human one.” In the OT, only Dan. 7:13 and 8:17 also employ this phrase. In the NT, *Son of Man* is used frequently by Jesus for Himself. With this phrase Jesus was calling Himself “the Human One,” the long-awaited Messiah who came as God in the flesh (Luke 21:27; John 1:14; 2 John 7). Thus the expression *Son of Man* is not a contradiction of Jesus’ divinity, as is sometimes alleged. **stand on your feet:** Ezekiel had been bowing before the glorious One (1:28). Perhaps his initial thoughts were similar to those of Isaiah (Is. 6:5). The commandment to *stand* suggests that he had no reason to be afraid.
2:2 the Spirit: This reference to the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in God’s prophet is of great importance. The visions and messages of Ezekiel were revelations from the living God.

son of man

(Heb. *ben ‘adam*) (2:1; 3:1; 17:2; 24:16) Strong’s #1121; 120

The expression *son of man* is used nearly one hundred times as a title for Ezekiel (2:1). It serves both to emphasize the difference between God the Creator and His creatures, and to mark the prophet Ezekiel as a representative member of the human race. Ezekiel’s life was a living parable or object lesson to the Hebrew captives in Babylon (compare 1:3; 3:4–7). In word and deed, Ezekiel was a “sign” to the house of Israel (12:6). Jesus adopted the title Son of Man because He too is a representative person—the “last Adam” who became a life-giving spirit (see Matt. 8:20; 1 Cor. 15:45). The title Son of Man for Jesus also alludes to Daniel’s vision of the heavenly being who is “like the Son of Man” (Dan. 7:13). Thus the title Son of Man for Jesus highlights the mystery of the Incarnation, the fact that Christ is both divine and human. As the God-man, Jesus became a glorious sign for all of sinful humanity (Luke 2:34).

when He spoke to me, and set me on my feet; and I heard Him who spoke to me. ³And He said to me: “Son of man, I am sending you to the children of Israel, to a rebellious nation that has ^crebelled against Me; ^dthey and their fathers have transgressed against Me to this very day. ^{4e}For *they are* ¹impudent and stubborn children. I am sending you to them, and you shall say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord God.’ ^{5f}As for them, whether they hear or whether they refuse—for *they are* a ^grebellious house—yet they ^hwill know that a prophet has been among them.

⁶“And you, son of man, ⁱdo not be afraid of them nor be afraid of their words, though ^jbriers and thorns *are* with you and you dwell among scorpions; ^kdo not be afraid of their words or dismayed by their looks, ^lthough they *are* a rebellious house. ^{7m}You shall speak My words to them, whether they hear or whether they refuse, for *they are* rebellious. ⁸But you, son of man, hear what I say to you. Do not be rebellious like that rebellious house; open your mouth and ⁿeat what I give you.”

⁹Now when I looked, there was ^oa hand stretched out to me; and behold, ^pa scroll of a book *was* in it. ¹⁰Then He spread it before me; and *there was* writing on the inside and on the outside, and written on it *were* lamentations and mourning and woe.

3 Moreover He said to me, “Son of man, eat what you find; ^aeat this scroll, and go, speak to the house of Israel.” ²So I opened my mouth, and He caused me to eat that scroll.

³And He said to me, “Son of man, feed your belly, and fill your stomach with this scroll that I give you.” So I ^bate,

³ ^c Ezek. 5:6; 20:8, 13, 18 ^d 1 Sam. 8:7, 8; Jer. 3:25; Ezek. 20:18, 21, 30
⁴ ^e Ps. 95:8; Is. 48:4; Jer. 5:3; 6:15; Ezek. 3:7 ¹ Lit. *stiff-faced and hard-hearted sons*
⁵ ^f Is. 6:9, 10; Ezek. 3:11, 26, 27; [Matt. 10:12-15; Acts 13:46] ^g Ezek. 3:26
^h Ezek. 33:33; [Luke 10:10, 11; John 15:22]
⁶ ⁱ Is. 51:12; Jer. 1:8, 17; Ezek. 3:9; Luke 12:4 / [2 Sam. 23:6, 7; Is. 9:18]; Jer. 6:28; Ezek. 28:24; Mic. 7:4
^k Ezek. 3:9; [1 Pet. 3:14] ^l Ezek. 3:9, 26, 27
⁷ ^m Jer. 1:7, 17; [Ezek. 3:10, 17]
⁸ ⁿ Ezek. 3:1-3; Rev. 10:9
⁹ ^o Jer. 1:9; [Ezek. 8:3] ^p Jer. 36:2; Ezek. 3:1; Rev. 5:1-5; 10:8-11

CHAPTER 3

¹ ^a Ezek. 2:8, 9
³ ^b Jer. 15:16; Rev. 10:9

^c Ps. 19:10; 119:103
⁶ ^d Jon. 3:5-10; Matt. 11:21
⁷ ^e John 15:20, 21
^f Ezek. 2:4 ¹ Lit. *strong of forehead*
⁹ ⁱ Is. 50:7; Jer. 1:18; Mic. 3:8 ^h Jer. 1:8, 17; Ezek. 2:6

BIBLE TIMES & CULTURE NOTES



Adamant Stone

Adamant is a hard stone of superior strength. The exact identity of this substance is unknown, but it is believed to be corundum, the hardest of all minerals next to the diamond. Pure corundum is colorless; it is the source of such gems as rubies and sapphires. Because of its hardness, the prophet Ezekiel used adamant stone as a symbol of the stubborn will of the rebellious Israelites. God strengthened the prophet, saying, “Like adamant stone, harder than flint, I have made your forehead; do not be afraid of them, nor be dismayed at their looks, though they are a rebellious house” (3:9). Other English translations render the Hebrew word for adamant as diamond or flint.

and it was in my mouth ^clike honey in sweetness.

⁴Then He said to me: “Son of man, go to the house of Israel and speak with My words to them. ⁵For you *are* not sent to a people of unfamiliar speech and of hard language, *but* to the house of Israel, ⁶not to many people of unfamiliar speech and of hard language, whose words you cannot understand. Surely, ^dhad I sent you to them, they would have listened to you. ⁷But the house of Israel will not listen to you, ^ebecause they will not listen to Me; ^ffor all the house of Israel *are* ¹impudent and hard-hearted. ⁸Behold, I have made your face strong against their faces, and your forehead strong against their foreheads. ^{9g}Like adamant stone, harder than flint, I have made your forehead; ^hdo not be afraid of them, nor be dismayed at their looks, though they *are* a rebellious house.”

2:3, 4 Ezekiel was called to speak God’s message to the **children of Israel**. God describes them as a **rebellious nation** and more specifically **impudent and stubborn**—literally “stiff-of-face and hard-of-heart children” (see 3:7). The Hebrew term for *rebellious* indicates a breaking of the covenant relationship. **Thus says the Lord God**: God told Ezekiel to emphasize the divine origin of his messages by using these words. Like Moses (Ex. 3:4), Ezekiel would speak in God’s name only what God commanded him. The term *Lord God* combines a title indicating God’s sovereignty (*Adonai*) and His personal name (*Yahweh*, conventionally translated with **GOD** or **LORD** in small capital letters).

2:5 If the rebellious people refused to listen to Ezekiel’s message, Ezekiel would still prove himself a true **prophet** of God by continuing to proclaim God’s messages (see also v. 7). Read 2 Kin. 21 for an example of the nature of the rebellion that had led to their captivity.

2:6 briers and thorns . . . scorpions: These images vividly portray the nature of the rebellious opponents of Ezekiel’s warnings. God told Ezekiel not to allow fear to hinder his message, whether or not the message was wanted (v. 7).

2:8, 9 eat: In contrast to rebellious Israel, Ezekiel was to set an example by being receptive and listening to God’s message. **hand . . . scroll**: Compare Jer. 1:9.

2:10 The unusual feature of writing on both sides of a scroll indicates the magnitude of the nation’s transgressions and its need for lengthy **lamentations** (see Zech. 5:3; Rev. 5:1). Although Ezekiel would later bring words of comfort and consolation (see chs. 33–48), his first prophecies from God contained only sorrow and sadness.

3:1–3 eat: The symbolic act of eating the scroll demonstrated that Ezekiel internalized the message in preparation for speaking to the people.

3:5–7 Although no linguistic barrier existed between Ezekiel and the nation, Israel would pay less attention to the prophet than foreigners would. Israel’s rejection of the prophet’s message was the symptom of a prior and more fundamental revolt against God’s rule (see 1 Sam. 8:7). All Israel was characterized as **impudent**—literally “hard-of-head”—and **hard-hearted** (see 2:4). Those who have had generous exposure to the truth and reject it can be harder than those who hear it for the first time.

3:8, 9 I have made your face strong: There may have been an intentional pun on Ezekiel’s name, which means “strongly seized by God” (see 1:3) or “God strengthens.” Double meanings in biblical names are common (see Cain; Gen. 4:1). The prophet was adequately equipped by God for his calling.

¹⁰Moreover He said to me: “Son of man, receive into your heart all My words that I speak to you, and hear with your ears. ¹¹And go, get to the captives, to the children of your people, and speak to them and tell them, ⁱ“Thus says the Lord God,” whether they hear, or whether they refuse.”

¹²Then ^jthe Spirit lifted me up, and I heard behind me a great thunderous voice: “Blessed is the ^kglory of the LORD from His place!” ¹³I also *heard* the ^lnoise of the wings of the living creatures that touched one another, and the noise of the wheels beside them, and a great thunderous noise. ¹⁴So the Spirit lifted me up and took me away, and I went in bitterness, in the ²heat of my spirit; but ^mthe hand of the LORD was strong upon me. ¹⁵Then I came to the captives at Tel Abib, who dwelt by the River Chebar; and ⁿI sat where they sat, and remained there astonished among them seven days.

Ezekiel Is a Watchman

¹⁶Now it ^ocame to pass at the end of seven days that the word of the LORD came to me, saying, ¹⁷^p“Son of man, I have made you ^qa watchman for the house of Israel; therefore hear a word from My mouth, and give them ^rwarning from Me: ¹⁸When I say to the wicked, ‘You shall surely die,’ and you give him no warning, nor speak to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life, that same wicked *man* ^sshall die in his iniquity; but his blood I will require at your

¹¹ ⁱ Ezek. 2:5, 7
¹² ^j 1 Kin. 18:12;
 Ezek. 8:3; Acts 8:39
^k Ezek. 1:28; 8:4
¹³ ^l Ezek. 1:24; 10:5
¹⁴ ^m 2 Kin. 3:15;
 Ezek. 1:3; 8:1 ² Or
 anger
¹⁵ ⁿ Job 2:13; Ps.
 137:1
¹⁶ ^o Jer. 42:7
¹⁷ ^p Ezek. 33:7-9
^q Is. 52:8; 56:10; Jer.
 6:17 ^r [Lev. 19:17;
 Prov. 14:25]; Is. 58:1
¹⁸ ^s Ezek. 33:6;
 [John 8:21, 24]

¹⁹ ^t Is. 49:4, 5; Ezek.
 14:14, 20; Acts 18:6;
 20:26; 1 Tim. 4:16
²⁰ ^u Ps. 125:5;
 Ezek. 18:24; 33:18;
 Zeph. 1:6
²² ^v Ezek. 1:3
^w Ezek. 8:4
²³ ^x Ezek. 1:28; Acts
 7:55 ^y Ezek. 1:1
² Ezek. 1:28
²⁴ ^a Ezek. 2:2
²⁵ ^b Ezek. 4:8
²⁶ ^c Ezek. 24:27;
 Luke 1:20, 22 ^d Hos.
 4:17; Amos 8:11
^e Ezek. 2:5-7 ³ Lit.
 one who rebukes
²⁷ ^f Ex. 4:11, 12;
 Ezek. 24:27; 33:22

hand. ¹⁹Yet, if you warn the wicked, and he does not turn from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; ^tbut you have delivered your soul.

²⁰“Again, when a ^urighteous *man* turns from his righteousness and commits iniquity, and I lay a stumbling block before him, he shall die; because you did not give him warning, he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness which he has done shall not be remembered; but his blood I will require at your hand. ²¹Nevertheless if you warn the righteous *man* that the righteous should not sin, and he does not sin, he shall surely live because he took warning; also you will have delivered your soul.”

²²^vThen the hand of the LORD was upon me there, and He said to me, “Arise, go out ^winto the plain, and there I shall talk with you.”

²³So I arose and went out into the plain, and behold, ^xthe glory of the LORD stood there, like the glory which I ^ysaw by the River Chebar; ^zand I fell on my face. ²⁴Then ^athe Spirit entered me and set me on my feet, and spoke with me and said to me: “Go, shut yourself inside your house. ²⁵And you, O son of man, surely ^bthey will put ropes on you and bind you with them, so that you cannot go out among them. ²⁶^cI will make your tongue cling to the roof of your mouth, so that you shall be mute and ^dnot be ³one to rebuke them, ^efor they *are* a rebellious house. ²⁷^fBut when I speak with you, I

3:10, 11 A necessary prerequisite to God sending Ezekiel as His messenger was Ezekiel's reception of all God's words. God told Ezekiel that he was to make it clear that his message and authority came from the Lord, and that he must continue to **speak** regardless of his audience's responses and reactions.

3:12, 13 Blessed . . . from His place: This **thunderous** acclaim in praise of the living God came from His myriad of angelic armies (compare Is. 6:3). **glory:** The word suggests “weight” or “significance,” indicating the wonder, majesty, and worthiness of the living God.

3:14 Bitterness means “distress” and “anguish.” Ezekiel's human perspective caused him to focus on the distasteful calling of delivering a message no one would listen to. The prophet was angry—**heat of my spirit**—and appalled. But the **hand of the LORD** was present to help him deal with these feelings and then move him on to live and work among the captives (see v. 15).

3:15 The Israelites who had been exiled to Babylon lived in **Tel Abib**, meaning “hill of flood.” **Seven days** is the time normally taken for mourning the dead, as well as the time set aside for a priest's consecration (Gen. 50:10; Lev. 8:33). Ezekiel sat **astonished** with these captives for seven days as evidence that he had experienced a unique encounter with God (see Job 2:13). At the end of the seven days Ezekiel would be ordained for the priesthood and would be ready to proclaim mourning for Israel.

3:17 The watchman stood on the city wall guarding against any external or internal threat. He would sound an alarm upon sighting impending danger (see 2 Sam. 18:24). God made Ezekiel a spiritual watchman over His people.

3:18, 19 his blood: Doubtless, this severe warning given to Ezekiel was similar to that given to a military watchman in ancient times. If the watchman failed to give the alarm to the city in a time of peril, the blood of the city would be required of him. But if the watchman sounded the alarm and the city did not respond, the watchman could hardly be blamed. **delivered your soul:** As a faithful watchman, Ezekiel would not have placed his own life in jeopardy by failing in his critical duty. A watchman who was “asleep at the switch” would forfeit his life. The word *soul* often merely means “life” in Hebrew. See also v. 21.

3:20, 21 The stumbling block is interpreted by some as a death sentence. If the person continued repeatedly in sin, then death would result. The reference to “life” and “death” in this section is to physical, not eternal, realities. **delivered your soul:** See v. 19.

3:23 The word **glory** suggests “weight” or “significance.” The emphasis is on the central significance and awesome wonder of the living God.

3:24 Ezekiel wrote more of the indwelling of God's **Spirit** than any of the prophets (see 2:2).

3:26 The phrase **not be one to rebuke them** qualified what was meant by Ezekiel's being **mute**. The idea may be better stated as “not be a legal mediator.” During his “mute” period, Ezekiel would not be allowed to speak as a mediator on behalf of the people before God, their Judge.

3:27 He who hears, let him hear: Jesus used this warning often in His teaching (see Mark 4:23). The phrasing emphasizes individual responsibility and readiness to accept the divine message.

will open your mouth, and you shall say to them, ^g“Thus says the Lord God.’ He who hears, let him hear; and he who refuses, let him refuse; for they *are* a rebellious house.

The Siege of Jerusalem Portrayed

4 “You also, son of man, take a clay tablet and lay it before you, and portray on it a city, Jerusalem. ^{2a} Lay siege against it, build a ^b siege wall against it, and heap up a mound against it; set camps against it also, and place battering rams against it all around. ³ Moreover take for yourself an iron plate, and set it *as* an iron wall between you and the city. Set your face against it, and it shall be ^c besieged, and you shall lay siege against it. ^d This *will* be a sign to the house of Israel.

⁴ “Lie also on your left side, and lay the iniquity of the house of Israel upon it. *According* to the number of the days that you lie on it, you shall bear their iniquity. ⁵ For I have laid on you the years of their iniquity, according to the number of the days, three hundred and ninety days; ^e so you shall bear the iniquity of the house of Israel. ⁶ And when you have completed them, lie again on your right side; then you shall bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days. I have laid on you a day for each year.

⁷ “Therefore you shall set your face toward the siege of Jerusalem; your arm *shall be* uncovered, and you shall proph-

27 ^g Ezek. 3:11

CHAPTER 4

2 ^a Jer. 6:6; Ezek. 21:22 ^b 2 Kin. 25:1
3 ^c Jer. 39:1, 2; Ezek. 5:2 ^d Ezek. 12:6, 11;
24:24, 27
5 ^e Num. 14:34

8 ^f Ezek. 3:25 ¹ Lit. put ropes on
13 ^g Dan. 1:8; Hos. 9:3
14 ^h Acts 10:14 ¹ Ex. 22:31; Lev. 17:15; 22:8; Ezek. 44:31 / Deut. 14:3; Is. 65:4; 66:17 ² Ritually unclean flesh, Lev. 7:18
16 ^k Lev. 26:26; Ps. 105:16; Is. 3:1; Ezek. 5:16; 14:13 ¹ Ezek. 4:10, 11; 12:19

sy against it. ^{8f} And surely I will ¹ restrain you so that you cannot turn from one side to another till you have ended the days of your siege.

⁹ “Also take for yourself wheat, barley, beans, lentils, millet, and spelt; put them into one vessel, and make bread of them for yourself. *During* the number of days that you lie on your side, three hundred and ninety days, you shall eat it. ¹⁰ And your food which you eat *shall be* by weight, twenty shekels a day; from time to time you shall eat it. ¹¹ You shall also drink water by measure, one-sixth of a hin; from time to time you shall drink. ¹² And you shall eat it *as* barley cakes; and bake it using fuel of human waste in their sight.”

¹³ Then the Lord said, “So ^g shall the children of Israel eat their defiled bread among the Gentiles, where I will drive them.”

¹⁴ So I said, ^h “Ah, Lord God! Indeed I have never defiled myself from my youth till now; I have never eaten ⁱ what died of itself or was torn by beasts, nor has ^j abominable ² flesh ever come into my mouth.”

¹⁵ Then He said to me, “See, I am giving you cow dung instead of human waste, and you shall prepare your bread over it.”

¹⁶ Moreover He said to me, “Son of man, surely I will cut off the ^k supply of bread in Jerusalem; they shall ^l eat bread by weight and with anxiety, and shall

4:1 The **clay tablet** was unfired mud or clay soft enough to be inscribed with a stylus. The term translated **portray** means to scratch or mark on the tablet.

4:2 Lay siege: The city of Jerusalem would come under *siege*, meaning that the Babylonians would surround the city and cut off its outside supplies. The purpose was to starve the inhabitants into submission (see vv. 9–12, 16, 17). By his symbolic drawing, Ezekiel may have been commanded to do what other “prophets” of the nations might do. That is, the hired “prophets” of the pagan nations might use such a drawing as a device for invoking the gods to bring about the event graphically described. In Ezekiel’s case, the drawing showed the people the horrible truth of what God already had sovereignly ordained.

4:3 The **iron plate** or pan was a utensil that Ezekiel possessed as a priest; it was for baking grain for the cereal offerings (Lev. 2:5; 6:21; 7:9). Here its purpose was to represent a wall between Ezekiel and the city. The first three verses of the chapter dramatize **to the house of Israel** the inevitable and inescapable siege that would come against the holy city.

4:4–6 bear their iniquity: The prophet represented Israel—the northern kingdom—and Judah—the southern kingdom—and the length of time each was going to be punished for its sin. Since Ezekiel set the deportation of Jehoiachin (597 B.C.) as his chronological reference point (see 1:2), the most straightforward interpretation of vv. 4–8 pictures the punishment of exile and Gentile rule inflicted upon the Hebrew nation over a 430-year period as extending from 597 to approximately 167 B.C. This was the time Jewish rule returned to Judah, through the Maccabean revolt.

4:7 The **arm . . . uncovered**, used in connection with God’s command that Ezekiel **set his face toward the siege** (see 4:3), most likely refers to the siege as a set and certain event (see Is. 52:10, and

the modern idiom of “rolling up one’s sleeves”). As horrible as it was, the siege ultimately showed God’s faithfulness to His covenant established in the days of Moses: that idolatry and disobedience would bring curses, which would include being conquered, captured, and removed from the land (Deut. 28:15–68).

4:8 Restrain you more literally reads “place ropes on you.” Ezekiel was bound while lying on either side for the entire 430 days; but the activities described in 4:9–17 show that his lying down and being tied up occurred only during parts of each day.

4:9–11 The recipe of six mixed grains for the bread indicates the limited and unusual food supply while in bondage in a foreign land. The small amounts of these grains vividly picture the short supply of food in a city under siege. Because a city under siege was cut off from outside supplies, the people had to ration their **food** and **water**. If it ran out, they would be forced to surrender. In Jerusalem, the people would be allowed daily only a half pound of bread (**twenty shekels**) and less than a quart of water (**one-sixth of a hin**).

4:12–15 The bread is called **defiled** (v. 13) in light of what is said in v. 12. In order to portray the fate of the unfaithful nation, God wanted Ezekiel to temporarily eat food made unclean by being cooked over a fire fueled by **human waste** (Deut. 23:12–14). God at first commanded Ezekiel to use human excrement because it would most accurately and forcefully symbolize the horror of the coming siege of the city. But **cow dung**, a common fuel then as now, was allowed as a substitute in light of Ezekiel’s prayerful insistence and practical faithfulness to the ceremonial law (Deut. 12:15–19; 14:3–21).

4:16, 17 The terrible conditions of the siege of Jerusalem would fulfill Ezekiel’s symbolic acts (vv. 9–12). Both **water** and **bread** would be rationed. **Anxiety** and **dread** (see 12:19) would be rampant. The Hebrew term for *dread* could also be rendered “horror”

^mdrink water by measure and with dread,
¹⁷that they may lack bread and water,
 and be dismayed with one another, and
ⁿwaste away because of their iniquity.

A Sword Against Jerusalem

5 “And you, son of man, take a sharp sword, take it as a barber’s razor,^a and pass it over your head and your beard; then take scales to weigh and divide the hair.^{2b} You shall burn with fire one-third in the midst of ^cthe city, when ^dthe days of the siege are finished; then you shall take one-third and strike around it with the sword, and one-third you shall scatter in the wind: I will draw out a sword after ^ethem.^{3f} You shall also take a small number of them and bind them in the edge of your garment.⁴ Then take some of them again and ^gthrow them into the midst of the fire, and burn them in the fire. From there a fire will go out into all the house of Israel.

⁵ “Thus says the Lord God: ‘This is Jerusalem; I have set her in the midst of the nations and the countries all around her. ⁶She has rebelled against My judgments by doing wickedness more than the nations, and against My statutes more than the countries that are all around her; for they have refused My judgments, and they have not walked in My statutes.’ ⁷Therefore thus says the Lord God: ‘Because you have ¹multiplied disobedience more than the nations that are all around you, have not walked in My statutes ^hnor kept My judgments, ²nor even done according to the judgments of the nations that are all around you’— ⁸therefore thus says the Lord God: ‘Indeed I, even

16 ^m Ezek. 4:11
 17 ⁿ Lev. 26:39;
 Ezek. 24:23

CHAPTER 5

1 ^a Lev. 21:5; Is.
 7:20; Ezek. 44:20
 2 ^b Ezek. 5:12
^c Ezek. 4:1 ^d Ezek.
 4:8, 9 ^e Lev. 26:25;
 Lam. 1:20
 3 ^f Jer. 40:6; 52:16
 4 ^g Jer. 41:1, 2; 44:14
 7 ^h 2 Kin. 21:9–11;
 2 Chr. 33:9; Jer. 2:10,
 11; Ezek. 16:47 ⁱ Or
 raged ² So with
 MT, LXX, Tg., Vg.;
 many Heb. mss.,
 Syr. but have done
 (cf. 11:12)
 9 ^j Lam. 4:6; Dan.
 9:12; [Amos 3:2];
 Matt. 24:21
 10 ^k Lev. 26:29;
 Deut. 28:53; 2 Kin.
 6:29; Jer. 19:9; Lam.
 2:20; 4:10 ^k Lev.
 26:33; Deut. 28:64;
 Ps. 44:11; Ezek. 5:2,
 12; 6:8; 12:14; Amos
 9:9; Zech. 2:6; 7:14
 11 ^l 2 Chr. 36:14;
 [Jer. 7:9–11]; Ezek.
 8:5, 6, 16 ^m Ezek.
 11:21 ⁿ Ezek. 7:4, 9;
 8:18; 9:10
 12 ^o Jer. 15:2; 21:9;
 Ezek. 6:12 ^p Jer.
 9:16; [Ezek. 6:8]
^q Jer. 43:10, 11;
 44:27; Ezek. 5:2;
 12:14
 13 ^r Lam. 4:11; Ezek.
 6:12; 7:8 ^s Ezek.
 21:17 ^t [Deut.
 32:36]; Is. 1:24 ^u Is.
 59:17; Ezek. 36:6;
 38:19
 14 ^v Lev. 26:31;
 Neh. 2:17
 15 ^w Deut. 28:37;

I, am against you and will execute judgments in your midst in the sight of the nations.⁹ⁱ And I will do among you what I have never done, and the like of which I will never do again, because of all your abominations.¹⁰ Therefore fathers ^jshall eat their sons in your midst, and sons shall eat their fathers; and I will execute judgments among you, and all of you who remain I will ^kscatter to all the winds.

¹¹ “Therefore, as I live,” says the Lord God, “surely, because you have ^ldefiled My sanctuary with all your ^mdetestable things and with all your abominations, therefore I will also diminish you; ⁿMy eye will not spare, nor will I have any pity.^{12o} One-third of you shall die of the pestilence, and be consumed with famine in your midst; and one-third shall fall by the sword all around you; and ^pI will scatter another third to all the winds, and I will draw out a sword after ^qthem.

¹³ “Thus shall My anger ^rbe spent, and I will ^scause My fury to rest upon them, ^tand I will be avenged; ^uand they shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken it in My zeal, when I have spent My fury upon them.¹⁴ Moreover ^vI will make you a waste and a reproach among the nations that are all around you, in the sight of all who pass by.

¹⁵ “So ³it shall be a ^wreproach, a taunt, a ^xlesson, and an astonishment to the nations that are all around you, when I execute judgments among you in anger and in fury and in ^yfurios rebukes. I,

1 Kin. 9:7; Ps. 79:4; Jer. 24:9; Lam. 2:15 ^x [Is. 26:9]; Jer. 22:8,
 9; 1 Cor. 10:11 ^y Is. 66:15, 16; Ezek. 5:8; 25:17 ³ LXX, Syr., Tg.,
 Vg. you

or “shuddering.” All this would occur because of Judah’s **iniquity**. The people had broken their covenant with God, and He had no choice but to bring upon them the promised consequences of their disobedience (see Lev. 26:14–29; Deut. 28:47–53; 2 Kin. 25:1–3).

5:1 Shaving the **head** was an act showing shame or disgrace in Hebrew culture (see 7:18; 2 Sam. 10:4). It also represented a type of pagan mourning forbidden by the Law (see 27:31; Deut. 14:1; Is. 15:2; 22:12). Shaving the head was a mark of defilement, making a priest like Ezekiel ritually unclean, and so unable to perform his duties in the temple (Lev. 21:5). This message was telling the people that they were about to be humiliated and defiled.

5:2 Each citizen of Jerusalem would suffer one of the three fates depicted by each of the three mounds of the equally measured shorn hair: (1) Some would be burned along with the city or would die from plague, famine, or other **siege** conditions (5:12; 2 Kin. 25:9); (2) some would be murdered by the **sword** during the attack (5:12; 2 Kin. 25:18–21); and (3) some would be scattered in the **wind**—referring to the Exile (5:12; 2 Kin. 25:11–17, 21).

5:3, 4 a fire will go out: A remnant from the group sent into exile would be saved from death and merged into the foreign culture. Other exiles would be killed.

5:5–7 This is Jerusalem: The words were being said in anguish. The personal God of the Hebrews had given them the city as an inheritance. God loved it and established it as the center of the world, because His temple was there. Here, however, He describes the ex-

tent of its people’s abominations. **She has rebelled** refers to the people of the favored city who had not only stubbornly refused to keep the Law, but whose sin was even worse than that of the nations around them—they had failed to follow even the moral laws that were common among the pagans.

5:8 therefore: Here is the solemn announcement of the sovereign Judge. **I, even I, am against you:** The solemn, emphatic pronoun is sad indeed.

5:9–17 The elements in God’s judgment on the people for their sins can be enumerated in this way: (1) a judgment that will be worse in extent than ever before; (2) a terrible famine that will lead to cannibalism; (3) **pestilence**, meaning plagues and diseases associated with famine; (4) violent death by sword or wild beasts; and (5) the scattering and killing of a remnant. These punishments would come as the result of the people’s idolatry—they had **defiled** God’s temple with **detestable things and abominations** (v. 11), evidencing their complete disregard for the Law (see vv. 6, 7; see 11:18). The Ten Commandments prohibited idolatry (see Ex. 20:3). Further, these judgments would be accomplished: (1) without pity and with no hope of escape (v. 11), (2) with a full expenditure of God’s wrath (v. 13), and (3) with the result of making God’s people an object lesson of warning among the onlooking neighbor nations (v. 15). In His covenant with His people, God had promised to send these curses if the people chose to rebel against Him (Deut. 28:15–68).

the LORD, have spoken. ¹⁶When I ^zsend against them the terrible arrows of famine which shall be for destruction, which I will send to destroy you, I will increase the famine upon you and cut off your ^asupply of bread. ¹⁷So I will send against you famine and ^bwild beasts, and they will bereave you. ^cPestilence and blood shall pass through you, and I will bring the sword against you. I, the LORD, have spoken.”

Judgment on Idolatrous Israel

6 Now the word of the LORD came to me, saying: ²“Son of man, ^aset your face toward the ^bmountains of Israel, and prophesy against them, ³and say, ‘O mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord God! Thus says the Lord God to the mountains, to the hills, to the ravines, and to the valleys: “Indeed I, *even* I, will bring a sword against you, and ^cI will destroy your ¹high places. ⁴Then your altars shall be desolate, your incense altars shall be broken, and ^dI will cast down your slain *men* before your idols. ⁵And I will lay the corpses of the children of Israel before their idols, and I will scatter your bones all around your altars. ⁶In all your dwelling places the cities shall be laid waste, and the ²high places shall be desolate, so that your altars may be laid waste and made desolate, your idols may be broken and made to cease, your incense altars may be cut down, and your works may be abolished. ⁷The slain shall

¹⁶ ^z Deut. 32:23
^a Lev. 26:26; Ezek. 4:16; 14:13
¹⁷ ^b Lev. 26:22;
Deut. 32:24; Ezek. 14:21; 33:27; 34:25;
Rev. 6:8 ^c Ezek. 38:22

CHAPTER 6

² ^a Ezek. 20:46;
21:2; 25:2 ^b Ezek. 36:1
³ ^c Lev. 26:30
¹ Places for pagan worship
⁴ ^d Lev. 26:30
⁶ ² Places for pagan worship

⁷ ^e Ezek. 7:4, 9
⁸ ^f Jer. 44:28; Ezek. 5:2, 12; 12:16; 14:22
⁹ Ezek. 5:12
⁹ ^h [Deut. 4:29]; Ps. 137; Jer. 51:50 ⁱ Ps. 78:40; Is. 7:13; 43:24;
Hos. 11:8 / Num. 15:39; Ezek. 20:7,
24 ^k Lev. 26:39; Job 42:6; Ezek. 20:43;
36:31
¹¹ ^j Ezek. 21:14
^m Ezek. 5:12 ³ Lit.
Strike your hands
¹² ⁿ Lam. 4:11, 22;
Ezek. 5:13
¹³ ^o Jer. 2:20; 3:6
^p 1 Kin. 14:23; 2 Kin. 16:4; Ezek. 20:28;
Hos. 4:13 ^q Is. 57:5
¹⁴ ^r Is. 5:25; Ezek. 14:13; 20:33, 34
^s Num. 33:46

fall in your midst, and ^eyou shall know that I *am* the LORD.

⁸“Yet I will leave a remnant, so that you may have *some* who escape the sword among the nations, when you are ^gscattered through the countries. ⁹Then those of you who escape will ^hremember Me among the nations where they are carried captive, because ⁱI was crushed by their adulterous heart which has departed from Me, and ^jby their eyes which play the harlot after their idols; ^kthey will loathe themselves for the evils which they committed in all their abominations. ¹⁰And they shall know that I *am* the LORD; I have not said in vain that I would bring this calamity upon them.”

¹¹Thus says the Lord God: ^l“Pound ³your fists and stamp your feet, and say, ‘Alas, for all the evil abominations of the house of Israel!’ ^mFor they shall fall by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence. ¹²He who is far off shall die by the pestilence, he who is near shall fall by the sword, and he who remains and is besieged shall die by the famine. ⁿThus will I spend My fury upon them. ¹³Then you shall know that I *am* the LORD, when their slain are among their idols all around their altars, ^oon every high hill, ^pon all the mountaintops, ^qunder every green tree, and under every thick oak, wherever they offered sweet incense to all their idols. ¹⁴So I will ^rstretch out My hand against them and make the land desolate, yes, more desolate than the wilderness toward ^sDiblah,

6:2, 3 The **mountains of Israel** may signify the land in general (see 36:1–6); however, the **hills** could be especially condemned because in their wooded areas the people had built altars and shrines to Canaanite idols (v. 13). **High places** were originally elevated locations for the worship of the god Baal and other deities of the Canaanite pantheon. The term *high place* could be used of any location, whether hilltop or valley (see v. 6; Jer. 7:31) where Canaanite gods were worshiped (1 Kin. 11:4–10). The Israelites adopted the use of these and associated worship practices including sexual misconduct, sorcery, spiritism, snake worship, and child sacrifice. Before entering the Promised Land, the Hebrews had been commanded to abolish all the high places where idols were worshiped (Num. 33:52).

6:4–6 The phrases **cast down your slain, lay the corpses, and scatter your bones** refer to God’s judgment. Dead people lying unburied and bones scattered around signify the ultimate defilement of the land. God would bring this upon them because they had defiled and desecrated themselves by worshiping in the pagan high places (see 2 Kin. 23:20; Ps. 53:5).

6:7 **you shall know that I am the LORD:** Ordinarily, one would come to *know* or to experience the reality of the living God through encounters with His mercy. But because of the evil path that the people of Judah had taken, they would experience His reality in a dreadful manner—through His judgment (Is. 28:21).

6:8–10 Not only would God prove His justice and faithfulness to His past promises and warnings about the consequences of idolatry (see 5:13), but He would **leave a remnant** of His people so they would **remember** the One true God **among the nations**. God had promised that, despite any future destruction of the nation that might occur because of sin, He would always preserve a por-

tion from annihilation (see Deut. 28:61–64). The chief purpose of even calamitous punishment was the production of a repentant and spiritually restored remnant.

6:11 **Alas:** This word, also translated “Ah!” (21:15) and “Aha!” (25:3), is meant sarcastically. Either God was displaying His delight over the destruction of idolatrous places and practices (vv. 1–7, 13) or He was having Ezekiel enact the mocking role of a jealous neighbor nation, such as Ammon (25:1–7).

6:13 **Then you shall know that I am the LORD:** As in vv. 7, 10, the Lord states the purpose of the coming destruction of His city and many of its people. The use of God’s personal name further emphasizes the intent to bring His people back to a personal, intimate relationship with Himself.

idols

(Heb. *gillulim*) (6:4; 20:16; 30:13; 2 Kin. 23:24) Strong’s #1544

This Hebrew noun is related to a verb which means “to roll” (Gen. 29:3; Josh. 10:18). The word refers to “shapeless things” like stones or tree logs of which idols were made (6:9; 20:39; 22:3; 1 Kin. 21:26). The prophet Ezekiel uses this Hebrew term for *idols* nearly 40 times, always contemptuously, for these false gods had led Israel away from the true God (14:5). The word *gillulim* may be related to a similar Hebrew expression meaning “dung pellets.” Later Jewish commentators mocked the *gillulim* as the “dung idols,” idols as worthless as dung.

in all their dwelling places. Then they shall know that I *am* the LORD.””

Judgment on Israel Is Near

7 Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying, ²“And you, son of man, thus says the Lord God to the land of Israel:

- ^a“An end! The end has come upon the four corners of the land.
- ³ Now the end *has come* upon you, And I will send My anger against you;
I will judge you ^baccording to your ways,
And I will repay you for all your abominations.
- ⁴ ^cMy eye will not spare you,
Nor will I have pity;
But I will repay your ways,
And your abominations will be in your midst;
- ^dThen you shall know that I *am* the LORD!”
- ⁵“Thus says the Lord God:
- ‘A disaster, a singular ^edisaster;
Behold, it has come!
- ⁶ An end has come,
The end has come;
It has dawned for you;
Behold, it has come!
- ⁷ ^fDoom has come to you, you who dwell in the land;
^gThe time has come,
A day of trouble *is* near,
And not of rejoicing in the mountains.
- ⁸ Now upon you I will soon ^hpour out My fury,
And spend My anger upon you;
I will judge you according to your ways,
And I will repay you for all your abominations.
- ⁹ ‘My eye will not spare,
Nor will I have pity;

CHAPTER 7

² ^a Ezek. 7:3, 5, 6;
11:13; Amos 8:2, 10;
[Matt. 24:6, 13, 14]
³ ^b [Rom. 2:6]
⁴ ^c Ezek. 5:11
^d Ezek. 12:20
⁵ ^e 2 Kin. 21:12, 13;
Nah. 1:9
⁷ ^f Ezek. 7:10
⁹ Zeph. 1:14, 15
⁸ ^h Ezek. 20:8, 21

⁹ ⁱ Lit. give
¹⁰ ^j Ezek. 7:7
¹¹ ^k Jer. 6:7
16:5, 6; Ezek. 24:16,
22
¹² ^l Prov. 20:14;
1 Cor. 7:30
^m Is. 24:2
¹⁵ ⁿ Deut. 32:25;
Jer. 14:18; Lam.
1:20; Ezek. 5:12

I will ^lrepay you according to your ways,
And your abominations will be in your midst.
Then you shall know that I *am* the LORD who strikes.

- ¹⁰ ‘Behold, the day!
Behold, it has come!
ⁱ Doom has gone out;
The rod has blossomed,
Pride has budded.
- ¹¹ ^j Violence has risen up into a rod of wickedness;
None of them *shall remain*,
None of their multitude,
None of ² them;
- ^k Nor *shall there be* wailing for them.
- ¹² The time has come,
The day draws near.
- ‘Let not the buyer ^lrejoice,
Nor the seller ^mmourn,
For wrath *is* on their whole multitude.
- ¹³ For the seller shall not return to what has been sold,
Though he may still be alive;
For the vision concerns the whole multitude,
And it shall not turn back;
No one will strengthen himself
Who lives in iniquity.
- ¹⁴ ‘They have blown the trumpet and made everyone ready,
But no one goes to battle;
For My wrath *is* on all their multitude.
- ¹⁵ ⁿ The sword *is* outside,
And the pestilence and famine within.
Whoever *is* in the field
Will die by the sword;
And whoever *is* in the city,
Famine and pestilence will devour him.

7:2, 3 The three uses of the key word **end** stresses that the fulfillment of the prophecy was at hand. The phrase **has come** denotes certitude. **The four corners of the land** suggests that all the people of Judah would be affected, not just those in Jerusalem.

7:5–7 As in vv. 2, 3, key words in these verses include **end** (used two times), in parallel with **doom**. There now is an added stress on **disaster** (used two times); the coming disaster will be unlike any other (5:9). The word **doom** is a rare term and may be better explained as “mourning.”

7:9 Again at the end of this oracle (see vv. 4, 27), God states His purpose in disciplining Israel: to cultivate in His people a better understanding of Himself.

7:10–12 The flowering of the **rod** and **pride** indicates that the time to bring judgment was ripe. These words describe one whose time

had come, a person marked by arrogance. In this case, it pictures the chosen instrument of God (Num. 17:5) with whom He would discipline Jerusalem and Judah—namely, Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon and the characteristic representative of the arrogant and evil Babylonians (see v. 21). **Rod of wickedness** refers to a stick or club (see Ex. 4:20; Is. 10:5) used for punishing wickedness.

7:12, 13 **Let not the buyer rejoice:** The fact of coming judgment was so certain, and its effects would be so lasting and devastating, that transactions of buying and selling would be concluded improperly or not at all.

7:14, 15 **No one goes to battle** for Judah because the nation and land would be so devastated by death and diseases brought on by warfare and famine (5:8–17).

- 16 ‘Those who ^osurvive will escape and
be on the mountains
Like doves of the valleys,
All of them mourning,
Each for his iniquity.
- 17 Every ^phand will be feeble,
And every knee will be *as weak as*
water.
- 18 They will also ^qbe girded with
sackcloth;
Horror will cover them;
Shame *will be* on every face,
Baldness on all their heads.
- 19 ‘They will throw their silver into the
streets,
And their gold will be like refuse;
Their ^rsilver and their gold will not
be able to deliver them
In the day of the wrath of the LORD;
They will not satisfy their souls,
Nor fill their stomachs,
Because it became their stumbling
block of iniquity.
- 20 ‘As for the beauty of his ornaments,
He set it in majesty;
^sBut they made from it
The images of their abominations—
Their detestable things;
Therefore I have made it
Like refuse to them.
- 21 I will give it as ^tplunder
Into the hands of strangers,
And to the wicked of the earth as
spoil;
And they shall defile it.
- 22 I will turn My face from them,
And they will defile My secret place;
For robbers shall enter it and
defile it.
- 23 ‘Make a chain,
For ^uthe land is filled with crimes of
blood,
And the city is full of violence.
- 24 Therefore I will bring the ^vworst of
the Gentiles,

16 ^o Ezra 9:15; Is. 37:31; Ezek. 6:8; 14:22
17 ^p Is. 13:7; Jer. 6:24; Ezek. 21:7; Heb. 12:12
18 ^q Is. 3:24; 15:2, 3; Jer. 48:37; Ezek. 27:31; Amos 8:10
19 ^r Prov. 11:4; Jer. 15:13; Zeph. 1:18
20 ^s Jer. 7:30
21 ^t 2 Kin. 24:13; Jer. 20:5
22 ^u 2 Kin. 21:16
23 ^v Ezek. 21:31; 28:7

^w 2 Chr. 7:20; Ezek. 24:21
25 ³ Lit. *Shuddering*
26 ^x Deut. 32:23; Is. 47:11; Jer. 4:20 ^y Ps. 74:9; Lam. 2:9; Ezek. 20:1, 3; Mic. 3:6

CHAPTER 8

1 ^a Ezek. 14:1; 20:1; 33:31 ^b Ezek. 1:3; 3:22
2 ^c Ezek. 1:26, 27
^d Ezek. 1:4, 27
3 ^e Dan. 5:5 ^f Ezek. 3:14; Acts 8:39
^g Ezek. 11:1, 24; 40:2
^h Jer. 7:30; 32:34; Ezek. 5:11 ⁱ Ex. 20:4; Deut. 32:16, 21
^j Arouses the LORD's jealousy

- And they will possess their houses;
I will cause the pomp of the strong
to cease,
And their holy places shall be
^wdefiled.
- 25 ³ Destruction comes;
They will seek peace, but *there shall*
be none.
- 26 ^x Disaster will come upon disaster,
And rumor will be upon rumor.
^y Then they will seek a vision from a
prophet;
But the law will perish from the
priest,
And counsel from the elders.
- 27 ‘The king will mourn,
The prince will be clothed with
desolation,
And the hands of the common
people will tremble.
I will do to them according to their
way,
And according to what they deserve I
will judge them;
Then they shall know that I *am* the
LORD!’”

Abominations in the Temple

8 And it came to pass in the sixth
year, in the sixth *month*, on the fifth
day of the month, as I sat in my house
with ^athe elders of Judah sitting before
me, that ^bthe hand of the Lord God fell
upon me there. ^{2c} Then I looked, and
there was a likeness, like the appear-
ance of fire—from the appearance of His
waist and downward, fire; and from His
waist and upward, like the appearance
of brightness, ^dlike the color of amber.
³ He ^estretched out the form of a hand,
and took me by a lock of my hair; and
^fthe Spirit lifted me up between earth
and heaven, and ^gbrought me in visions
of God to Jerusalem, to the door of the
north gate of the inner *court*, ^hwhere the
seat of the image of jealousy *was*, which
ⁱprovokes ¹to jealousy. ⁴ And behold, the

7:16–19 Those left alive would hide in the hills and be characterized by four things: (1) **mourning**—moaning **like doves** in **shame**, displaying their humiliation over sin by wearing **sackcloth** and shaving their heads (see Is. 15:2, 3); (2) weakness; (3) **horror**; and (4) disgust and disillusionment over wealth.

7:20–22 This section describes the judgment that would come on the people for taking the treasures of the temple to make pagan images. **Beauty of his ornaments** and **My secret place** both refer to Jerusalem and its temple. The people had sinned horribly when they crafted idols out of the temple treasures and then worshiped what their hands had made (Rom. 1:25).

7:23–27 The punishment will fit the crime—God promised to **do to them according to . . . what they deserve**. Because Judah had been so bloodthirsty, God would send **the worst of the Gentiles** to **possess their houses**, defile the temple, and bring **violence**

to the land. This section predicts Nebuchadnezzar's desecration of the Jerusalem temple in 586 B.C. As a last resort, peace at any price would be fervently sought from false prophets, priests, and politicians, but without success. The deadline for decisive action would have passed.

8:1 sixth year: This second exact date given in Ezekiel is 592 B.C., when Ezekiel was acting out the siege of Jerusalem (see 1:1; 4:1–8).

8:2 The first word translated **fire** may also be read in Hebrew as the word meaning “man.” In the second instance **fire** is the expected meaning. This description parallels 1:26, 27.

8:3, 4 The north gate of the inner court, called the “altar gate” in v. 5, was near the sacrificial altar (Lev. 1:11). There Ezekiel saw the **image . . . which provokes to jealousy**. All idolatry was forbidden, and any idol represented a violation of the loyalty that belonged to Israel's God. **the glory of the God of Israel:** See 3:12.

glory of the God of Israel *was* there, like the vision that I ^hsaw in the plain.

⁵Then He said to me, “Son of man, lift your eyes now toward the north.” So I lifted my eyes toward the north, and there, north of the altar gate, was this image of jealousy in the entrance.

⁶Furthermore He said to me, “Son of man, do you see what they are doing, the great ^labominations that the house of Israel commits here, to make Me go far away from My sanctuary? Now turn again, you will see greater abominations.” ⁷So He brought me to the door of the court; and when I looked, there was a hole in the wall. ⁸Then He said to me, “Son of man, dig into the wall”; and when I dug into the wall, there was a door.

⁹And He said to me, “Go in, and see the wicked abominations which they are doing there.” ¹⁰So I went in and saw, and there—every ^msort of ⁿcreeping thing, abominable beasts, and all the idols of the house of Israel, ²portrayed all around on the walls. ¹¹And there stood before them ^oseventy men of the elders of the house of Israel, and in their midst stood Jaazaniah the son of Shaphan. Each man had a censer in his hand, and a thick cloud of incense went up. ¹²Then He said to me, “Son of man, have you seen what the elders of the house of Israel do in the dark, every man in the room of his idols? For they say, ^p“The LORD does not see us, the LORD has forsaken the land.”

¹³And He said to me, “Turn again, *and* you will see greater abominations that

4 / Ezek. 3:12; 9:3
^h Ezek. 1:28; 3:22, 23
 6 / 2 Kin. 23:4, 5;
 Ezek. 5:11; 8:9, 17
 10 ^m Ex. 20:4; Deut.
 4:16–18 ^o Rom. 1:23
² Or carved
 11 ^o Num. 11:16, 25;
 Luke 10:1
 12 ^p Ps. 14:1; Is.
 29:15; Ezek. 9:9

14 ³ A Sumerian fertility god similar to the Gr. god Adonis
 16 ^q Joel 2:17
^r Ezek. 11:1 ^s 2 Chr. 29:6; Jer. 2:27; 32:33; Ezek. 23:39
^t Deut. 4:19; 2 Kin. 23:5, 11; Job 31:26; Jer. 44:17
 17 ^u Ezek. 9:9; Amos 3:10; Mic. 2:2
 18 ^v Ezek. 5:13; 16:42; 24:13 ^w Ezek. 5:11; 7:4, 9; 9:5, 10
^x Prov. 1:28; Is. 1:15; Jer. 11:11; 14:12; Mic. 3:4; Zech. 7:13

CHAPTER 9

1 ¹ Or destroying
 2 ^a Lev. 16:4; Ezek. 10:2; Rev. 15:6 ² Lit. shattering weapon
³ Lit. upon his loins

they are doing.” ¹⁴So He brought me to the door of the north gate of the LORD’s house; and to my dismay, women were sitting there weeping for ³Tammuz.

¹⁵Then He said to me, “Have you seen *this*, O son of man? Turn again, you will see greater abominations than these.”

¹⁶So He brought me into the inner court of the LORD’s house; and there, at the door of the temple of the LORD, ^qbetween the porch and the altar, ^rwere about twenty-five men ^swith their backs toward the temple of the LORD and their faces toward the east, and they were worshipping ^tthe sun toward the east.

¹⁷And He said to me, “Have you seen *this*, O son of man? Is it a trivial thing to the house of Judah to commit the abominations which they commit here? For they have ^ufilled the land with violence; then they have returned to provoke Me to anger. Indeed they put the branch to their nose. ¹⁸^vTherefore I also will act in fury. My ^weye will not spare nor will I have pity; and though they ^xcry in My ears with a loud voice, I will not hear them.”

The Wicked Are Slain

9 Then He called out in my hearing with a loud voice, saying, “Let those who have charge over the city draw near, each *with* a ¹deadly weapon in his hand.”

²And suddenly six men came from the direction of the upper gate, which faces north, each with his ²battle-ax in his hand. ^aOne man among them *was* clothed with linen and had a writer’s inkhorn ³at

8:5, 6 to make Me go: The people thought that just because the temple stood among them, whatever wrong they might do could not bring ultimate disaster. They thought the temple guaranteed their security. They did not realize that their evil had actually caused God to leave His temple, which would then no longer be their protection. See ch. 10.

8:7–9 A view through a **hole** in the temple **wall**, this next scene of the vision gives a glimpse of even worse idolatrous acts. The people’s **abominations** (vv. 6, 9, 10, 13, 15, 17) were not limited to a periphery. They extended deeply into the hierarchy of Israel’s religious leadership.

8:10 all around on the walls: In conformity with surrounding pagan nations (primarily Egypt), God’s people were worshipping images of clean and unclean creatures that represented various gods. Polytheistic idolatry was being practiced in Israel.

8:11 The **seventy** elders represented the nation’s leaders (Num. 11:16–25). The **censer** each man carried (a vessel for holding burning incense) and the burning **incense** would not necessarily be evil, but here they were being used to worship idols. **Jaazaniah:** Nothing more is known about this person.

8:12 The emphasis is on the elders’ pagan beliefs as well as their resultant secret behavior—in **the dark**. Ironically and inconsistently, they thought of God in limited, human terms, much as their neighbors viewed the gods of the nations. They thought He was not omniscient and omnipresent.

8:13, 14 Tammuz was a fertility god. The women were crying out to the idol because they had no children or because the crops were failing. In the sixth month, August–September, Tammuz was thought to

“die” with the scorched land. Worshipers would wail over his death and cry for his resurgence.

8:15, 16 The location for the sun worship was in the **inner court . . . between the porch and the altar**. These 25 men must have been Levites if temple regulations were being followed; otherwise, the area was forbidden (see Num. 3:7, 8; 18:1–7; 2 Chr. 4:9; Joel 2:17). Whether priests or not, they were turned in the wrong direction—their backs were to God’s temple and they were **worshipping the sun**.

8:17, 18 trivial thing: There is similar wording in the Lord’s condemnation of Ahab (see 1 Kin. 16:31). **put the branch to their nose:** This action is not mentioned elsewhere. In the context it appears to be (1) a ritualistic gesture used in idol worship, or (2) an action indicative of the extensive violence which was occurring in Judah as a result of idolatry.

9:1 He is the God of Israel, who has been speaking since Ezekiel saw the glory of God (see 8:5). **those who have charge over:** This is the sense given to a Hebrew word that is frequently used of a vengeful visitation (Is. 10:3).

9:2 One man among them was probably one in addition to the six, making six men equipped as executioners and one representing the presence and purity of the holy God, who is worthy to mark out some for judgment and to omit others (see vv. 3–7; Ex. 12:1–13; Rom. 9:14–29; Rev. 7:3; 9:4). **his battle-ax:** Literally, “the implement of his shattering” (compare Jer. 51:20). The **upper gate** from which these seven came was equivalent to the north gate of the inner court (see 8:3; 2 Kin. 15:35). The **bronze altar** was the sacrificial altar.

his side. They went in and stood beside the bronze altar.

³Now ^bthe glory of the God of Israel had gone up from the cherub, where it had been, to the threshold of the ⁴temple. And He called to the man clothed with linen, who *had* the writer's inkhorn at his side; ⁴and the LORD said to him, "Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and put ^ca mark on the foreheads of the men ^dwho sigh and cry over all the abominations that are done within it."

⁵To the others He said in my ⁵hearing, "Go after him through the city and ^ekill; ⁶^fdo not let your eye spare, nor have any pity. ^{6g}Utterly ⁷slay old and young men, maidens and little children and women; but ^hdo not come near anyone on whom *is* the mark; and ⁱbegin at My sanctuary." ^jSo they began with the elders who *were* before the ⁸temple. ⁷Then He said to them, "Defile the ⁹temple, and fill the courts with the slain. Go out!" And they went out and killed in the city.

⁸So it was, that while they were killing them, I was left *alone*; and I ^kfell on my face and cried out, and said, ^l"Ah, Lord God! Will You destroy all the remnant of Israel in pouring out Your fury on Jerusalem?"

⁹Then He said to me, "The iniquity of the house of Israel and Judah *is* exceedingly great, and ^mthe land is full of bloodshed, and the city full of perversity; for they say, ⁿ"The LORD has forsaken the land, and ^othe LORD does not see!" ¹⁰And as for Me also, My ^peye will neither spare, nor will I have pity, *but* ^qI will recompense their deeds on their own head."

³ ^b Ezek. 3:23; 8:4; 10:4, 18; 11:22, 23
⁴ Lit. house

⁴ ^c Ex. 12:7, 13; Ezek. 9:6; 12 Cor. 1:22; 2 Tim. 2:19; Rev. 7:2, 3; 9:4; 14:1
^d Ps. 119:53, 136; Jer. 13:17; Ezek. 6:11; 21:6; 2 Cor. 12:21; 2 Pet. 2:8

⁵ ^e Ezek. 7:9 ^f Ezek. 5:11 ⁵ Lit. ears ⁶ Lit. strike

⁶ ^g 2 Chr. 36:17

^h Ex. 12:23; Rev. 9:4

ⁱ Jer. 25:29; Amos 3:2; [Luke 12:42;

1 Pet. 4:17] / Ezek. 8:11, 12, 16 ¹ Lit.

Slay to destruction

⁸ Lit. house

⁷ ¹ Lit. house

⁸ ^k Num. 14:5; 16:4,

22, 45; Josh. 7:6

^l Ezek. 11:13; Amos 7:2-6

⁹ ^m 2 Kin. 21:16; Jer. 2:34; Ezek. 8:17

ⁿ Job 22:13; Ezek. 8:12

^o Ps. 10:11; Is. 29:15

¹⁰ ^p Is. 65:6; Ezek. 5:11; 7:4;

8:18 ^q Ezek. 11:21; Hos. 9:7

CHAPTER 10

¹ ^a Ezek. 1:22, 26

¹ ^b expanse

² ^b Ezek. 9:2, 3; Dan. 10:5

^c Ps. 18:10-13; Is. 6:6; Ezek. 1:13

^d Rev. 8:5

³ ^e 1 Kin. 8:10, 11

² Lit. right ³ Lit. house

⁴ ^f Ezek. 1:28

^g 1 Kin. 8:10; Ezek. 43:5

^h Ezek. 11:22, 23

⁴ Lit. house

⁵ ⁱ [Job 40:9];

¹¹Just then, the man clothed with linen, who *had* the inkhorn at his side, reported back and said, "I have done as You commanded me."

The Glory Departs from the Temple

10 And I looked, and there in the ^afirmament¹ that was above the head of the cherubim, there appeared something like a sapphire stone, having the appearance of the likeness of a throne. ^{2b}Then He spoke to the man clothed with linen, and said, "Go in among the wheels, under the cherub, fill your hands with ^ccoals of fire from among the cherubim, and ^dscatter *them* over the city." And he went in as I watched.

³Now the cherubim were standing on the ²south side of the ³temple when the man went in, and the ^ecloud filled the inner court. ^{4f}Then the glory of the LORD went up from the cherub, and *paused* over the threshold of the ⁴temple; and ^gthe house was filled with the cloud, and the court was full of the brightness of the LORD's ^hglory. ⁵And the ⁱsound of the wings of the cherubim was heard *even* in the outer court, like ^jthe voice of Almighty God when He speaks.

⁶Then it happened, when He commanded the man clothed in linen, saying, "Take fire from among the wheels, from among the cherubim," that he went in and stood beside the wheels. ⁷And the cherub stretched out his hand from among the cherubim to the fire that *was* among the cherubim, and took *some of*

Ezek. 1:24; [Rev. 10:3] / [Ps. 29:3]

9:3 It is not clear whether the term **cherub** here indicates (1) the cherubim on the ark of the covenant in the Most Holy Place or (2) the cherubim of the throne with wheels in 10:1-5, 18. Either way, this pictures the departure of God's glory from the temple, then from Jerusalem, and then from Judah, as seen in chs. 9-11. The **threshold** refers to the entryway.

9:4 **Mark** translates the Hebrew name for the last letter of the Hebrew alphabet, which in Ezekiel's time looked like an X. Those so marked are people who **sigh and cry** over the abominations of idolatry so far mentioned. Those who demonstrated a righteous attitude through true repentance and remorse were marked out from the hardened rebels. These would be the remnant (see v. 8), the ones who continued to follow God's commands (see Rev. 7:2-4; 9:4; 14:1).

9:5, 6 **Go after him:** The universality of this judgment is shocking to us; but this is in line with divine judgments from the time of the Flood in Genesis to the final judgment described in Revelation.

9:6, 7 **My sanctuary:** The corrupt spiritual leaders had been practicing idolatry and immorality in the temple itself (8:3-16). Judgment would begin with them because they had led the nation astray (1 Pet. 4:17). **Defile the temple:** This means to carry out the execution and leave dead bodies in the temple environs (see Lev. 21:1; Num. 19:11).

9:8 The prophet was horrified by what he saw. The word **Ah** was sarcastic in 6:11; here it is a sincere gasp of pain (as in 11:13). **The remnant,** a group chosen and saved from destruction by a sover-

eign God, is a recurring theme in the Bible (see 2 Kin. 19:31; Ezra 9:8; Is. 1:9; 10:20-23; Amos 5:15; Rom. 9:27-29; 11:1-8).

9:9 Three reasons are given as to why the nation deserved this terrible outpouring of God's wrath—serious and undeniable (1) **iniquity**, or guilt of sinful offenses (see 4:4-8); (2) **bloodshed**, or violence (see 8:17); and (3) **perversity**, or more precisely injustice. The people and especially rich rulers willfully chose to believe that God did not see or care what injustices went on.

9:11 **I have done:** The report of judgment was brought by one man (vv. 3, 4) appearing as a righteous accountant.

10:1 See ch. 1 for an understanding of the several terms in this verse. **The cherubim** here are the living creatures of 1:5.

10:2 **Coals of fire** (see 1:13) are sometimes related to a chastisement for cleansing (Is. 6) and at other times to judgment by fiery catastrophe (Gen. 19:24, 25).

10:3-5 **The cloud** represented God's glory (as in 1:4), which was seen moving from the **inner court** to the **threshold** of the temple. From there it filled the temple (**house**). **glory:** See 3:12, 23. **sound . . . Almighty:** See 1:24.

10:6 **when He commanded . . . he went in:** These words display the man's unquestioning obedience to God (see v. 5; 1:24; 8:2-5).

10:7, 8 A particular **cherub** handed the coals to the man in linen (v. 2). Though not stated explicitly, it is implied that all the directives of v. 2 were now carried out. The coals were then scattered on Jerusalem.

it and put it into the hands of the man clothed with linen, who took it and went out.^{8k} The cherubim appeared to have the form of a man's hand under their wings.

^{9l} And when I looked, there were four wheels by the cherubim, one wheel by one cherub and another wheel by each other cherub; the wheels appeared to have the color of a ^mberyl stone.¹⁰ As for their appearance, all four looked alike—as it were, a wheel in the middle of a wheel.¹¹ When they went, they went toward any of their four directions; they did not turn aside when they went, but followed in the direction the head was facing. They did not turn aside when they went.¹² And their whole body, with their back, their hands, their wings, and the wheels that the four had, were ^ofull of eyes all around.¹³ As for the wheels, they were called in my ⁵hearing, “Wheel.”

^{14p} Each one had four faces: the first face was the face of a cherub, the second face the face of a man, the third the face of a lion, and the fourth the face of an eagle.¹⁵ And the cherubim were lifted up. This was ^qthe living creature I saw by the River Chebar.^{16r} When the cherubim went, the wheels went beside them; and when the cherubim lifted their wings to mount up from the earth, the same wheels also did not turn from beside them.^{17s} When ⁶the cherubim stood still, the wheels stood still, and when ⁷one was lifted up, ⁸the other lifted itself up, for the spirit of the living creature was in them.

¹⁸ Then ^tthe glory of the LORD ^udeparted from the threshold of the ⁹temple and stood over the cherubim.¹⁹ And ^vthe cherubim lifted their wings and mounted up from the earth in my sight. When they

⁸ ^k Ezek. 1:8; 10:21
⁹ ^l Ezek. 1:15
^m Ezek. 1:16
¹¹ ⁿ Ezek. 1:17
¹² ^o Rev. 4:6, 8
¹³ ⁵ Lit. ears
¹⁴ ^p 1 Kin. 7:29, 36;
Ezek. 1:6, 10, 11;
Rev. 4:7
¹⁵ ^q Ezek. 1:3, 5
¹⁶ ^r Ezek. 1:19
¹⁷ ^s Ezek. 1:12, 20,
21 ⁶ Lit. they ⁷ Lit.
they were ⁸ Lit. they
lifted them
¹⁸ ^t Ezek. 10:4
^u Hos. 9:12 ⁹ Lit.
house
¹⁹ ^v Ezek. 11:22

^w Ezek. 11:1
²⁰ ^x Ezek. 1:22
^y Ezek. 1:1
²¹ ^z Ezek. 1:6, 8;
10:14; 41:18, 19
²² ^a Ezek. 1:10
^b Ezek. 1:9, 12

CHAPTER 11

¹ ^a Ezek. 3:12, 14
^b Ezek. 10:19 ^c Ezek.
8:16
² ^d Advice
³ ^d Ezek. 12:22, 27;
² Pet. 3:4 ^e Jer. 1:13;
Ezek. 11:7, 11; 24:3,
6 ² Pot
⁵ ^f Ezek. 2:2; 3:24
^g [Jer. 16:17; 17:10]
⁶ ^h Is. 1:15; Ezek.
7:23; 22:2-6, 9,
12, 27
⁷ ⁱ Ezek. 24:3, 6;
Mic. 3:2, 3 / 2 Kin.
25:18-22; Jer. 52:24-
27; Ezek. 11:9

went out, the wheels were beside them; and they stood at the door of the ^weast gate of the LORD's house, and the glory of the God of Israel was above them.

^{20x} This is the living creature I saw under the God of Israel ^yby the River Chebar, and I knew they were cherubim.^{21z} Each one had four faces and each one four wings, and the likeness of the hands of a man was under their wings.²² And ^athe likeness of their faces was the same as the faces which I had seen by the River Chebar, their appearance and their persons.^b They each went straight forward.

Judgment on Wicked Counselors

11 Then ^athe Spirit lifted me up and brought me to ^bthe East Gate of the LORD's house, which faces eastward; and there ^cat the door of the gate were twenty-five men, among whom I saw Jaazaniah the son of Azzur, and Pelatiah the son of Benaiah, princes of the people.² And He said to me: “Son of man, these are the men who devise iniquity and give wicked ¹counsel in this city, ³who say, ‘The time is not ^dnear to build houses; ^ethis city is the ²caldron, and we are the meat.’ ⁴Therefore prophesy against them, prophesy, O son of man!”

⁵ Then ^fthe Spirit of the LORD fell upon me, and said to me, “Speak! ‘Thus says the LORD: “Thus you have said, O house of Israel; for ^gI know the things that come into your mind. ⁶^h You have multiplied your slain in this city, and you have filled its streets with the slain.” ⁷Therefore thus says the Lord God: “Your slain whom you have laid in its midst, they are the meat, and this city is the caldron; ⁱbut I shall bring you out of the midst of

10:9–17 Ezekiel describes the **wheels** (vv. 9–14) and then the **cherubim** (vv. 15–17). See ch. 1 for details in this vision. Only in v. 14 is something different from the description in ch. 1. Whereas one of the four faces in 1:10 is an ox, here it is a **cherub**. There are ancient sculptures with animal bodies and wings but human faces, sometimes called “cherubs.” The difference of the faces between 1:10 and 10:14 should not be called an error; it is possible that the images that Ezekiel saw were changing from time to time.

10:18, 19 God's **glory** continued moving gradually but progressively away from the temple (vv. 3, 4): from the entrance door of the temple to the wheeled cherubim throne, and then with the throne to the **east gate** of the temple.

10:20–22 The cherubim sometimes serve as guardians (see Gen. 3:24). They are associated with God's throne and presence (the mercy seat on the ark; Ex. 25:18–22; 1 Chr. 13:6). They are also associated with God's chariot-like throne (v. 1; 1:20–26; Ps. 18:10).

11:1, 2 Ezekiel saw **twenty-five** civic leaders at the temple. **Princes of the people** denotes public and political officials often serving in judicial, military, or royal posts (see 2 Sam. 8:15–18; 20:23–26). **Jaazaniah**: Son of Azzur, and not the same Jaazaniah as in 8:11 (son of Shaphan). These men had been giving **wicked counsel**, and even stooped so low as to **devise iniquity** against their own people. Because they were trying to combine Hebrew and heathen

religions, these leaders had deceived themselves and their followers into thinking that they were speaking for the true God. On **Pelatiah**, meaning “The One Delivered by the Lord,” see v. 13.

11:3 The time is not near to build houses can be rephrased, “Is it not now time to build houses?” These officials were proclaiming that the inhabitants of Jerusalem were as secure behind the city's walls as meat was safe in its cooking pot (**caldron**). There was no impending doom, they said; therefore, new construction projects were encouraged.

11:4 **prophecy . . . prophecy**: The repetition is for emphasis, a literary technique common in Hebrew style. **Son of man** means “human one.” This phrase appears 90 times in Ezekiel and emphasizes Ezekiel's humanity in his role as a spokesman for God. In the OT the phrase is used also for Daniel (Dan. 8:17) and for the coming Messiah (Dan. 7:13). In the NT the phrase *Son of Man* is used frequently by Jesus for Himself (see 2:1).

11:6 **slain**: Jerusalem's official leaders had been accused of wicked activities and giving unrighteous advice (v. 2); here we discover that they had killed fellow countrymen.

11:7–11 The verdict of a death penalty is announced. Contrary to the leaders' false beliefs, the ones they killed were the godly people whose presence might have offered protection in the **caldron**—that is, Jerusalem. Those who had gained power by the sword,

it. ⁸You have ^kfeared the sword; and I will bring a sword upon you,” says the Lord God. ⁹“And I will bring you out of its midst, and deliver you into the hands of strangers, and ^lexecute judgments on you. ¹⁰^mYou shall fall by the sword. I will judge you at ⁿthe border of Israel. ^oThen you shall know that I *am* the LORD. ¹¹^pThis *city* shall not be your ³caldron, nor shall you be the meat in its midst. I will judge you at the border of Israel. ¹²And you shall know that I *am* the LORD; for you have not walked in My statutes nor executed My judgments, but ^qhave done according to the customs of the Gentiles which *are* all around you.””

¹³Now it happened, while I was prophesying, that ^rPelatiah the son of Benaiah died. Then ^sI fell on my face and cried with a loud voice, and said, “Ah, Lord God! Will You make a complete end of the remnant of Israel?”

God Will Restore Israel

¹⁴Again the word of the LORD came to me, saying, ¹⁵“Son of man, your brethren, your relatives, your countrymen, and all the house of Israel in its entirety, *are* those about whom the inhabitants of Jerusalem have said, ‘Get far away from the LORD; this land has been given to us as a possession.’ ¹⁶Therefore say, ‘Thus says the Lord God: “Although I have cast them far off among the Gentiles, and although I have scattered them among the countries, ^tyet I shall be a little ⁴sanctuary for them in the countries where they have gone.”’ ¹⁷Therefore say, ‘Thus says the Lord God: ^u“I will gather you from the peoples, assemble you from the coun-

⁸ ^k Jer. 42:16
⁹ ^f Ezek. 5:8
¹⁰ ^m 2 Kin. 25:19-21; Jer. 39:6; 52:10
ⁿ 1 Kin. 8:65; 2 Kin. 14:25
^o Ps. 9:16; Ezek. 6:7; 13:9, 14, 21, 23
¹¹ ^p Ezek. 11:3, 7
³ Pot
¹² ^q Lev. 18:3, 24; Deut. 12:30, 31; Ezek. 8:10, 14, 16
¹³ ^r Acts 5:5
^s Ezek. 9:8
¹⁶ ^t Ps. 90:1; 91:9; Is. 8:14; Jer. 29:7, 11
⁴ ^{holy place}
¹⁷ ^u Is. 11:11-16; Jer. 3:12, 18; 24:5; Ezek. 20:41, 42; 28:5
¹⁸ ^v Ezek. 37:23
¹⁹ ^w Jer. 32:39; Ezek. 36:26; Zeph. 3:9
^x Ps. 51:10; [Jer. 31:33]; Ezek. 18:31
^y Zech. 7:12; [Rom. 2:4, 5]
⁵ Lit. you (pl.)
²⁰ ^z Ps. 105:45
^o Jer. 24:7; Ezek. 14:11; 36:28; 37:27
²¹ ^b Ezek. 9:10
²² ^c Ezek. 1:19
²³ ^d Ezek. 8:4; 9:3
^e Zech. 14:4
^f Ezek. 43:2
²⁴ ^g Ezek. 8:3; 2 Cor. 12:2-4
⁶ Or *Babylon*, and so elsewhere in the book

CHAPTER 12

² ^a Is. 1:23; Ezek. 2:3, 6-8
^b Is. 6:9; 42:20; Jer. 5:21; Matt. 13:13, 14; Mark 4:12; 8:18; [Luke 8:10; John 9:39-41; 12:40]; Acts 28:26; Rom.

tries where you have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel.”” ¹⁸And they will go there, and they will take away all its ^vdetestable things and all its abominations from there. ¹⁹Then ^wI will give them one heart, and I will put ^xa new spirit within ⁵them, and take ^ythe stony heart out of their flesh, and give them a heart of flesh, ²⁰^zthat they may walk in My statutes and keep My judgments and do them; ^aand they shall be My people, and I will be their God. ²¹But *as for those* whose hearts follow the desire for their detestable things and their abominations, ^bI will recompense their deeds on their own heads,” says the Lord God.

²²So the cherubim ^clifted up their wings, with the wheels beside them, and the glory of the God of Israel *was* high above them. ²³And ^dthe glory of the LORD went up from the midst of the city and stood ^eon the mountain, ^fwhich *is* on the east side of the city.

²⁴Then ^gthe Spirit took me up and brought me in a vision by the Spirit of God into ⁶Chaldea, to those in captivity. And the vision that I had seen went up from me. ²⁵So I spoke to those in captivity of all the things the LORD had shown me.

Judah's Captivity Portrayed

12 Now the word of the LORD came to me, saying: ²“Son of man, you dwell in the midst of ^aa rebellious house, which ^bhas eyes to see but does not see, and ears to hear but does not hear; ^cfor they *are* a rebellious house.

11:8 ^c Ezek. 2:5

knowing the dread of such force, would experience defeat and death the same way. They would be dragged out of the city and slain by **strangers**, referring to the Babylonians.

11:13 Ezekiel's reaction showed that **Pelatiah**, one of the corrupt city leaders (v. 1), was struck dead by God as undeniable proof that the prophet's message would come true. Ezekiel himself was awestruck and asked if this meant that God would not after all preserve a **remnant** (see 9:8).

11:15 Ezekiel's **brethren** were those in exile with him. The people in Jerusalem (representative of Judah) regarded the exiles as sinners because they had been deported to Babylon.

11:16 God explained to Ezekiel that the Hebrews taken captive and spread among foreign lands were actually the remnant whom God was protecting. God himself would continue as their **sanctuary**—a word in Hebrew that literally means a “holy place” or a “set-apart place.”

11:17 I will give you the land: God promises that Israel will be restored to the Promised Land. This is in keeping with the unilateral and unconditional nature of the covenant made with Abraham (Gen. 12:1-3; 15:13-21; Deut. 30:1-6), and renewed with David (2 Sam. 7:12-16) and Jeremiah (Jer. 31:31-34).

11:18-20 When the remnant returned to the land, they would abolish idolatry. At that time, God would establish a new covenant with them (Jer. 31:31-34). Then God would pour out His Spirit (see 36:26, 27; Joel 2:28, 29) so that His people would become united in purpose and empowered to maintain their righteousness—**walk**

in My statutes. They would finally and truly become His people (see Ex. 6:6-8).

11:21 As with Pelatiah, God promised to continue judging idolaters whose affections were for **detestable** objects—that is, idols. Such **recompense** was fully deserved because ample warning had been given; the people were personally responsible for their choices. From His giving of the Law at Mt. Sinai, the Lord had continually expressed His abhorrence of idolatry (see Ex. 20:1-6). Praise and worship belonged only to the Lord—their Creator and Deliverer.

11:22, 23 God's glory continued to move away from **the city** to the Mount of Olives—the **mountain**. See 10:3, 4, 18, 19. The Hebrew term for **glory** literally means “weight” or “significance” and refers to the wonder and majesty of the living God.

11:24, 25 the Spirit: Ezekiel's visions are not merely dreams; they were inspired by God Himself and thus were prophetic. **Chaldea**: This is an alternate term for Babylon. **So I spoke**: Presumably the telling and retelling of Ezekiel's visions (8:2—11:23) led to the more permanent record that makes up his book.

12:2 The exiled community among whom Ezekiel was ministering was described twice as a **rebellious house**. This is further defined by the phrases: **eyes to see . . . and ears to hear** (Is. 6:10). The Israelites' hardness of heart was sustained for over a year (see 1:1, 2; 8:1). They would not listen to the prophet's words or his dramatizations of coming judgment (chs. 4-6).

3“Therefore, son of man, prepare your belongings for captivity, and go into captivity by day in their sight. You shall go from your place into captivity to another place in their sight. It may be that they will consider, though they *are* a rebellious house. 4By day you shall bring out your belongings in their sight, as though going into captivity; and at evening you shall go in their sight, like those who go into captivity. 5Dig through the wall in their sight, and carry *your belongings* out through it. 6In their sight you shall bear *them* on *your* shoulders and carry *them* out at twilight; you shall cover your face, so that you cannot see the ground, 7for I have made you a sign to the house of Israel.”

7So I did as I was commanded. I brought out my belongings by day, as though going into captivity, and at evening I dug through the wall with my hand. I brought *them* out at twilight, and I bore *them* on *my* shoulder in their sight.

8And in the morning the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 9“Son of man, has not the house of Israel, 10the rebellious house, said to you, 11‘What are you doing?’ 12Say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord God: “This 13burden 14concerns the prince in Jerusalem and all the house of Israel who are among them.”’ 15Say, 16‘I *am* a sign to you. As I have done, so shall it be done to them; 17they shall be carried away into captivity.’ 18And 19the prince who *is* among them shall bear *his belongings* on *his* shoulder at twilight and go out. They shall dig through the wall

6 ^d Is. 8:18; Ezek. 4:3; 24:24
9 ^e Ezek. 2:5 ^f Ezek. 17:12; 24:19
10 ^g Mal. 1:1
1 ^h oracle, prophecy
11 ⁱ Ezek. 12:6
12 ^j Kin. 25:4, 5, 7
12 ^k 2 Kin. 25:4; Jer. 39:4; 52:7; Ezek. 12:6

13 ^k Job 19:6; Jer. 52:9; Lam. 1:13; Ezek. 17:20 ^l 2 Kin. 25:7; Jer. 52:11; Ezek. 17:16
14 ^m 2 Kin. 25:4; Ezek. 5:10 ⁿ Ezek. 5:2, 12
15 ^o [Ps. 9:16]; Ezek. 6:7, 14; 12:16, 20
16 ^p 2 Kin. 25:11, 22; Ezek. 6:8-10
18 ^q Lam. 5:9; Ezek. 4:16 ^r shaking
19 ^r Jer. 10:22; Ezek. 6:6, 7, 14; Mic. 7:13; Zech. 7:14 ^s Ps. 107:34

to carry *them* out through it. He shall cover his face, so that he cannot see the ground with *his* eyes. 13I will also spread My ^hnet over him, and he shall be caught in My snare. 14I will bring him to Babylon, ⁱto the land of the Chaldeans; yet he shall not see it, though he shall die there. 14^mI will scatter to every wind all who ^jare around him to help him, and all his troops; and 15I will draw out the sword after them.

15^o“Then they shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I scatter them among the nations and disperse them throughout the countries. 16^pBut I will spare a few of their men from the sword, from famine, and from pestilence, that they may declare all their abominations among the Gentiles wherever they go. Then they shall know that I *am* the LORD.”

Judgment Not Postponed

17Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 18“Son of man, 19eat your bread with 20quaking, and drink your water with trembling and anxiety. 19And say to the people of the land, ‘Thus says the Lord God to the inhabitants of Jerusalem *and* to the land of Israel: “They shall eat their bread with anxiety, and drink their water with dread, so that her land may 21be emptied of all who are in it, 22because of the violence of all those who dwell in it. 20Then the cities that are inhabited shall be laid waste, and the land shall become desolate; and you shall know that I *am* the LORD.”’”

12:3–7 Ezekiel’s next visual demonstration warned the captives already in Babylon that they should not expect a quick return to Jerusalem. **a sign:** The term here does not mean a miracle but a visible symbol (see v. 11; 24:24, 27). **I did as I was commanded:** In contrast to the inattention and disobedience of the people, God’s prophet Ezekiel was always obedient to Him (see chs. 2–5). **12:9, 10** Ezekiel’s audience was composed of people who had already experienced exile; but the people were so rebellious and so resistant to the message they continued disdainfully to ask the prophet, **What are you doing? The prince in Jerusalem** was Zedekiah (vv. 12–14), the ruler of Judah (2 Kin. 24:17–20). **burden:**

The message a prophet proclaimed is often called a burden (see Is. 13:1; 15:1).

12:11–14 Speaking in 592 B.C., Ezekiel predicted the deportation of Jerusalem’s population to Babylon six years later, and prophesied exactly what would happen to their leader Zedekiah. The king would attempt to escape by night, secretly and in disguise (**cover his face**); but he would be caught and blinded by the Babylonians, then carried off to Babylon where he would die (see 2 Kin. 25:1–7; Jer. 52:1–11). Ezekiel was a **sign** to his audience already in exile as he symbolically and verbally foretold the fate of the Jews still living in Jerusalem. **The land of the Chaldeans** is Babylonia.

12:15, 16 **The LORD** translates God’s personal name. It appears in this prophecy to indicate God’s special relationship to the Israelites. Ezekiel instructed the exiles that their difficult situation did have a purpose. God would use it to demonstrate that He was a personal, caring Lord. Its aim was corrective and instructive: **Then they shall know.** Furthermore the Exile would be a testimony or sign **to the Gentiles.** The defeat of God’s people would not indicate the Lord’s lack of strength, but the serious consequences of sin against Him. Through the difficult experience, His people would learn that their God was both holy and loving. Sin offended Him, but He still would reach out to restore the sinner.

12:18, 19 To the **people of the land** (that is, his fellow exiles), Ezekiel was to demonstrate and declare God’s warning about the devastating conditions that would befall the people in Judah and Jerusalem.

12:20 For the fulfillment of the prophecy that Jerusalem and Judah would be **laid waste**, see 2 Kin. 25:8–21; Jer. 39:8–10; 44:1–6; 52:1–30; Lam. 1:3, 4.

rebellious

(Heb. *meriy*) (2:5–8; 3:9; 12:2; Is. 30:9) Strong’s #4805

This noun is derived from a verbal root that means “to resist authority” or “to be contentious” (Deut. 1:26; Jer. 4:17; Neh. 9:26). It depicts someone opposing an authority figure out of stubborn pride (Deut. 21:18) and commonly describes disobedience (1 Kin. 13:21). Ezekiel identified Israel as a “rebellious house” a dozen times, meaning they were willfully disobedient, refusing to listen to the word of God (2:5–8). Ezekiel was addressing an audience chafing under God’s authority (3:9). Samuel equated this kind of rebellion with witchcraft (1 Sam. 15:23).

²¹ And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, ²² “Son of man, what is this proverb *that you people* have about the land of Israel, which says, ‘The days are prolonged, and every vision fails’? ²³ Tell them therefore, ‘Thus says the Lord God: “I will lay this proverb to rest, and they shall no more use it as a proverb in Israel.”’ But say to them, ²⁴ “The days are at hand, and the ³ fulfillment of every vision. ²⁴ For ^v no more shall there be any ^w false ⁴ vision or flattering divination within the house of Israel. ²⁵ For I *am* the LORD. I speak, and ^x the word which I speak will come to pass; it will no more be postponed; for in your days, O rebellious house, I will say the word and ^y perform it,” says the Lord God.’”

²⁶ Again the word of the LORD came to me, saying, ²⁷ ^z “Son of man, look, the house of Israel is saying, ‘The vision that he sees is ^a for many days *from now*, and he prophesies of times far off.’ ²⁸ ^b Therefore say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord God: “None of My words will be postponed any more, but the word which I speak ^c will be done,” says the Lord God.’”

Woe to Foolish Prophets

13 And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, ² “Son of man, prophesy ^a against the prophets of Israel who prophesy, and say to ^b those who prophesy out of their own ^c heart, ¹ ‘Hear the word of the LORD!’”

²² ¹ Jer. 5:12; Ezek. 11:3; 12:27; Amos 6:3; 2 Pet. 3:4
²³ ^u Ps. 37:13; Joel 2:1; Zeph. 1:14 ³ Lit. word
²⁴ ^v Jer. 14:13-16; Ezek. 13:6; Zech. 13:2-4 ^w Lam. 2:14
⁴ Lit. vain
²⁵ ^x [Is. 55:11]; Dan. 9:12; [Luke 21:33]
^y Num. 23:19; [Is. 14:24]
²⁷ ^z Ezek. 12:22
^a Dan. 10:14
²⁸ ^b Ezek. 12:23, 25
^c Jer. 4:7

CHAPTER 13

² ^a Is. 28:7; Jer. 23:1-40; Lam. 2:14; Ezek. 22:25-28
^b Ezek. 13:17 ^c Jer. 14:14; 23:16, 26
¹ Inspiration

³ ² No vision
⁴ ^d Song 2:15
⁵ ^e Ps. 106:23; [Jer. 23:22]; Ezek. 22:30
³ ^f *breaches*
⁶ ^f Jer. 29:8; Ezek. 22:28 ^g Jer. 27:8-15
⁴ Come true
⁹ ^h Jer. 23:30 ⁱ Jer. 20:3-6 / Ezra 2:59, 62; Neh. 7:5; [Ps. 69:28] ^k Jer. 20:3-6
¹ Ezek. 11:10, 12
¹⁰ ^m Jer. 6:14; 8:11
ⁿ Ezek. 22:28 ^o Or whitewash
¹¹ ^o Ezek. 38:22

³ Thus says the Lord God: “Woe to the foolish prophets, who follow their own spirit and have seen ² nothing! ⁴ O Israel, your prophets are ^d like foxes in the deserts. ⁵ You ^e have not gone up into the ³ gaps to build a wall for the house of Israel to stand in battle on the day of the LORD. ⁶ ^f They have envisioned futility and false divination, saying, ‘Thus says the LORD!’ But the LORD has ^g not sent them; yet they hope that the word may ⁴ be confirmed. ⁷ Have you not seen a futile vision, and have you not spoken false divination? You say, ‘The LORD says,’ but I have not spoken.”

⁸ Therefore thus says the Lord God: “Because you have spoken nonsense and envisioned lies, therefore I *am* indeed against you,” says the Lord God. ⁹ “My hand will be ^h against the prophets who envision futility and who ⁱ divine lies; they shall not be in the assembly of My people, ^j nor be written in the record of the house of Israel, ^k nor shall they enter into the land of Israel. ^l Then you shall know that I *am* the Lord God.

¹⁰ “Because, indeed, because they have seduced My people, saying, ^m ‘Peace!’ when *there is* no peace—and one builds a wall, and they ⁿ plaster ⁵ it with untempered mortar—¹¹ say to those who plaster *it* with untempered mortar, that it will fall. ^o There will be flooding rain, and you, O great hailstones, shall fall; and a stormy wind shall tear *it* down. ¹² Surely, when the wall has fallen, will it not be

12:22 The **proverb** or popular saying among the exiles indicates how hardened they were to Ezekiel’s prophecies. **The days are prolonged, and every vision fails:** Although already captive, the people were cynical and apathetic, mistakenly thinking that a delay in judgment meant no judgment, at least in their lifetime (vv. 25, 27, 28; see 2 Pet. 3:3, 4).

12:23–25 **The days are at hand, and the fulfillment of every vision:** An antithetical proverb would replace the old one (v. 22), and false prophets opposing Ezekiel would cease to speak. **in your days:** The exiles would live to see the judgment on Jerusalem fulfilled.

12:26–28 The people still thought that judgment would be delayed; Ezekiel was told to assure them a second time that the judgment would not be postponed any more.

13:1–23 In this passage, Ezekiel prophesies judgment against false prophets, both male (vv. 1–16) and female (vv. 17–23). In each case he first vividly characterizes their sin (vv. 1–7, 17–19) and then gives God’s verdict of condemnation (vv. 8–16, 20–23).

13:2–4 The false prophets were **foolish** and like **foxes in the deserts**. The word translated *deserts* conveys the idea of open, desolate places. In the immediate context (v. 5), the foxes are pictured roaming amid the rubble of ruined city walls. The prophets were fools because they confused their own thoughts with God’s. They were like foxes among the ruins because they scavenged for themselves while causing, ignoring, and profiting from the human wreckage surrounding them. They were racketeers instead of reformers.

13:5 **The day of the LORD** refers to times when God triumphs (see 7:19; 30:3). The phrase is particularly used by the prophets to describe those periods in which God is unusually active in the affairs of His people, either for deliverance or for judgment (see Joel 2:1; Zeph.

1:7). In that day, God will actively bring about His purposes for the world: He will rescue the righteous and judge evildoers.

13:6, 7 The false prophets, such as Balaam, practiced **divination** (see Josh. 13:22). This was the pagan art of finding “divine” guidance through such means as astrology, reading sheep livers and other animal organs, and consulting spiritists or witches to communicate with the dead (see 1 Sam. 28:3–19). By prefacing their predictions with **the LORD says**, these false prophets were deceitfully claiming that God had spoken to them when in fact He had not. God’s prophets never sought visions through the methods of divination (see Deut. 18:10; Mic. 3:6), instead they received their visions and prophecies through the Spirit of the Lord.

13:8 The divine judgment on all false prophecy and knowledge is given in this verse; it is **nonsense**. The Hebrew word for *nonsense* is translated “in vain” in Ex. 20:7.

13:9 Because these false prophets had prophesied messages that contradicted God’s truth (v. 10), they were condemned. The Lord would separate them from God’s people, from membership in the nation of Israel, and from life in the land. **enter into the land:** The false prophets would not participate in the future restoration of the people to the Promised Land.

13:10–16 These prophets would experience God’s wrath—just as the walls of Jerusalem which were being constructed at that time would be destroyed. Jerusalem would be conquered and captured for the sins of its inhabitants. The preaching of a false **peace** had prompted people to build for a “certain” future; but only the opposite was certain. The false prophets had deceived the people with false hopes of comfort and prosperity (v. 10). Their deception placed them not only at odds with God’s truth, but also with God Himself. Their destruction was certain.

said to you, ‘Where *is* the mortar with which you plastered *it*?’”

¹³Therefore thus says the Lord God: “I will cause a stormy wind to break forth in My fury; and there shall be a flooding rain in My anger, and great hailstones in fury to consume *it*. ¹⁴So I will break down the wall you have plastered with untempered *mortar*, and bring it down to the ground, so that its foundation will be uncovered; it will fall, and you shall be consumed in the midst of it. ¹⁵Then you shall know that I *am* the LORD.”

¹⁵“Thus will I accomplish My wrath on the wall and on those who have plastered it with untempered *mortar*; and I will say to you, ‘The wall *is* no *more*, nor those who plastered it, ¹⁶*that is*, the prophets of Israel who prophesy concerning Jerusalem, and who ¹⁷*see* visions of peace for her when *there is* no peace,’” says the Lord God.

¹⁷“Likewise, son of man, ¹⁸set your face against the daughters of your people, ¹⁹who prophesy out of their own ²⁰heart; prophesy against them, ²¹and say, ‘Thus says the Lord God: “Woe to the *women* who sew *magic* charms ²²on their sleeves and make *veils* for the heads of people of every height to hunt souls! Will you ²³hunt the souls of My people, and keep yourselves alive? ²⁴And will you profane Me among My people ²⁵for handfuls of barley and for pieces of bread, killing people who should not die, and keeping

¹⁴ ¹⁵ Ezek. 13:9, 21, 23; 14:8

¹⁶ ¹⁷ Jer. 6:14; 8:11;

28:9; Ezek. 13:10

¹⁷ ¹⁸ Ezek. 20:46;

21:2 ¹⁹ Ezek.

13:2; Rev. 2:20

²⁰ Inspiration

²¹ ²² [2 Pet. 2:14]

²³ Lit. *over all the*

joints of My hands;

Vg. *under every*

elbow; LXX, Tg. *on*

all elbows of the

hands

¹⁹ ²⁰ 1 Sam. 2:15-17;

Prov. 28:21; Mic.

3:5; Rom. 16:18;

1 Pet. 5:2

people alive who should not live, by your lying to My people who listen to lies?”

²⁰Therefore thus says the Lord God: “Behold, I *am* against your *magic* charms by which you hunt souls there like ²¹birds. I will tear them from your arms, and let the souls go, the souls you hunt like birds. ²²I will also tear off your veils and deliver My people out of your hand, and they shall no longer be as prey in your hand. ²³Then you shall know that I *am* the LORD.”

²²“Because with ²⁴lies you have made the heart of the righteous sad, whom I have not made sad; and you have ²⁵strengthened the hands of the wicked, so that he does not turn from his wicked way to save his life. ²⁶Therefore ²⁷you shall no longer envision futility nor practice divination; for I will deliver My people out of your hand, and you shall know that I *am* the LORD.””

Idolatry Will Be Punished

14 Now ¹some of the elders of Israel came to me and sat before me. ²And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, ³“Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their hearts, and put before them ⁴that which causes them to stumble into iniquity. ⁵Should I let Myself be inquired of at all by them?”

⁴“Therefore speak to them, and say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord God: “Every-one of the house of Israel who sets up his

²⁰ ²¹ Lit. *flying ones*

²¹ ²² Ezek. 13:9

²² ²³ Jer. 28:15 ²⁴ Jer.

23:14

²³ ²⁴ Ezek. 12:24;

13:6; Mic. 3:5, 6;

Zech. 13:3

CHAPTER 14

¹ ² 2 Kin. 6:32; Ezek.

8:1; 20:1; 33:31

³ ⁴ Ezek. 7:19; Zeph.

1:3 ⁵ 2 Kin. 3:13; Is.

1:15; Jer. 11:11; Ezek.

20:3, 31

13:17–19 the daughters: The Hebrew women who were false prophetesses were confusing their own ideas with God’s and casting magic death spells through sorcery or witchcraft (Lev. 19:26). The **charms** and **veils** were elements used in occult rituals in the ancient Middle East.

13:20–23 These prophetesses were sowing discouragement and doubt among those not involved in demonic divination and were offering encouragement to those already initiated: **the righteous . . . the wicked.** They would be stopped through the same judgment that was to come on the rest of the false prophets.

14:1–3 God revealed to Ezekiel that this group of **the elders of Israel** consisted of double-minded men (see 1 Kin. 18:21; Matt.

6:24; James 1:5–8). Outwardly, they came to seek a word from God through His true prophet Ezekiel, but in their hearts they harbored loyalties to other gods. **let Myself be inquired:** God knows all hearts and minds (Ps. 139:1–6), and He asks Ezekiel a rhetorical question about whether He ought to give revelatory guidance to such religious hypocrites (see vv. 4, 5).

14:4 answer . . . according to the multitude of his idols: God responded to these hypocrites by allowing them to experience the practical consequences of disbelief and disobedience. Their idolatry consisted not only of the theological error of worshipping other gods, but also the immorality that was a natural result of a heart turned away from the living God. Evil is never caused by God (see Ps. 5:4),

Idolatry of the Heart

Perhaps you tend to think of an idol as a figure made from wood or stone to which primitive people pray and offer sacrifices. But the Lord defined what an idol is when he told Ezekiel that it is something that a person puts before himself in a way that causes him to stumble into iniquity (14:4). Idols are not just the carved objects that sit in pagan temples; they are the godless cravings and commitments that rule in our hearts.

The people of Ezekiel’s day set up these “idols of the heart,” even as they continued to practice their religious rituals. Having committed themselves to ungodly purposes, they came to the prophets expecting to find out what the Lord had to say. God promised to confound these hypocrites by telling them whatever they wanted to hear. Ultimately their idols would fail and judgment would come (14:4, 5).

This is a sobering condemnation. Apparently it is possible to commit ourselves to things that are utterly opposed to God, and then expect God to bless us in our pursuit of those things! The worst thing that could happen would be for Him to bless us, for then we would be ensnared by our own worthless gods rather than liberated to find genuine goodness in the living God.



idols in his heart, and puts before him what causes him to stumble into iniquity, and then comes to the prophet, I the LORD will answer him who comes, according to the multitude of his idols, ⁵that I may seize the house of Israel by their heart, because they are all estranged from Me by their idols.”

⁶“Therefore say to the house of Israel, ‘Thus says the Lord God: “Repent, turn away from your idols, and ^dturn your faces away from all your abominations. ⁷For anyone of the house of Israel, or of the strangers who dwell in Israel, who separates himself from Me and sets up his idols in his heart and puts before him what causes him to stumble into iniquity, then comes to a prophet to inquire of him concerning Me, I the LORD will answer him by Myself. ^{8e}I will set My face against that man and make him a ^fsign and a proverb, and I will cut him off from the midst of My people. ^gThen you shall know that I *am* the LORD.”

⁹“And if the prophet is induced to speak anything, I the LORD ^hhave induced that prophet, and I will stretch out My hand against him and destroy him from among My people Israel. ¹⁰And they shall bear their iniquity; the punishment of the prophet shall be the same as the punishment of the one who inquired, ¹¹that the house of Israel may ⁱno longer stray from Me, nor be profaned anymore with all their transgressions, ^jbut that they may be My people and I may be their God,” says the Lord God.”

^{6 d} 1 Sam. 7:3; Neh. 1:9; Is. 2:20; 30:22; 55:6, 7; Ezek. 18:30
^{8 e} Lev. 17:10; 20:3, 5, 6; Jer. 44:11; Ezek. 15:7
^f Num. 26:10; Deut. 28:37; Ezek. 5:15
^g Ezek. 6:7; 13:14

^{9 h} 1 Kin. 22:23; Job 12:16; Is. 66:4; Jer. 4:10; 2 Thess. 2:11
¹¹ Ps. 119:67, 71; Jer. 31:18, 19; [Heb. 12:11]; 2 Pet. 2:15
^j Ezek. 11:20; 37:27

^{13 k} Lev. 26:26; 2 Kin. 25:3; Is. 3:1; Jer. 52:6; Ezek. 4:16; 5:16

^{14 l} Jer. 15:1
^m [Prov. 11:4]

^{15 n} Lev. 26:22; Num. 21:16; Ezek. 5:17; 14:21
¹ Lit. *bereave it of children*

^{16 o} Ezek. 14:14, 18, 20
^p Ezek. 15:8; 33:28, 29
² Lit. *in the midst of it*

^{17 q} Lev. 26:25; Ezek. 5:12; 21:3, 4; 29:8; 38:21
^r Ezek. 25:13; Zeph. 1:3
^{18 s} Ezek. 14:14
^{19 t} 2 Sam. 24:15; Ezek. 38:22
^u Ezek. 7:8
^{20 v} Ezek. 14:14

Judgment on Persistent Unfaithfulness

¹²The word of the LORD came again to me, saying: ¹³“Son of man, when a land sins against Me by persistent unfaithfulness, I will stretch out My hand against it; I will cut off its ^ksupply of bread, send famine on it, and cut off man and beast from it. ^{14l}Even if these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they would deliver *only* themselves ^mby their righteousness,” says the Lord God.

¹⁵“If I cause ⁿwild beasts to pass through the land, and they ¹empty it, and make it so desolate that no man may pass through because of the beasts, ¹⁶*even though* these three men *were* ²in it, as I live,” says the Lord God, “they would deliver neither sons nor daughters; only they would be delivered, and the land would be ^pdesolate.

¹⁷“Or if ^qI bring a sword on that land, and say, ‘Sword, go through the land;’ and I ^rcut off man and beast from it, ¹⁸*even though* these three men *were* in it, as I live,” says the Lord God, “they would deliver neither sons nor daughters, but only they themselves would be delivered.

¹⁹“Or if I send ^{1a}a pestilence into that land and “pour out My fury on it in blood, and cut off from it man and beast, ²⁰*even though* Noah, Daniel, and Job *were* in it, as I live,” says the Lord God, “they would deliver neither son nor daughter; they would deliver *only* themselves by their righteousness.”

²¹For thus says the Lord God: “How

but He permits the suffering it brings to the world (see Job 1; Rom. 6:23). This process punishes the unrepentant, encourages sinners to repent (see v. 5), and purifies the righteous (see James 1:2–4).

14:5 seize the house of Israel by their heart: These words announced God’s restorative purpose (see Prov. 3:12; Rev. 3:19) in allowing sin to run its course.

14:7 Idolatry was condemned whether practiced by an Israelite (one of God’s chosen people) or by **strangers** (Gentiles) spending time in Israel. Anyone from any culture who had come into contact with specific revelation about the Hebrew God was held responsible for his or her response to the truth.

14:8 The unrepentant idolater would be separated not only from God but also from God’s people (13:9). This experience would be a strong visual warning—**sign**—and an international example—**proverb**—of God’s absolute honoring of His promise to punish disobedience with cursing (Lev. 20:1–7).

14:9–11 The relationship between God’s sovereignty and human responsibility is implicit in these verses. God allows false preaching for His own inscrutable purposes, but the preacher is held accountable for the content of the message. These were Israelite false prophets who deliberately ignored the truth and mixed it with falsehood. Their punishment would be the same as the **one who inquired** (the elders; see vv. 1–3). But they would also have the same redemptive plan (see v. 5).

14:12–20 Jerusalem’s “persistent unfaithfulness” was so offensive to God that the presence of spiritual giants could not stay judgment by famine, wild beasts, military invasion (**sword**), or disease (**pestilence**). **Noah, Daniel, and Job:** Compare Jer. 15:1, where the

names Moses and Samuel are invoked in a similar manner to these names. In this list, Daniel seems out of place among the other two men of faith, Noah and Job. Daniel was a younger contemporary of Ezekiel in Babylon (see Dan. 1), whose greatest exploits were likely still to come. The Hebrew spelling of the name in Ezekiel is *dan-el*, rather than Daniel, raising the question whether a different person is meant than the biblical Daniel. There are some stories preserved about an ancient hero named Dan-El, but he was a worshiper of Baal, and would not have had the **righteousness** Ezekiel speaks of.

14:21 These **judgments**, though stated hypothetically so far, would actually come on **Jerusalem** (see Lev. 26:22–26).

repent

(Heb. *shub*) (14:6; 18:30; Gen. 8:3; Ps. 85:4) Strong’s #7725

The Hebrew word translated *repent* means “to turn back” or “turn around.” The word refers to a reversal or a change of direction, as when the word is used of the receding floodwaters (Gen. 8:3). The prophets commonly used this word to call the Israelites to a radical, conscious rejection of their past sin. A psalmist used the word to describe God’s restoration of a believer (see Ps. 85:4). When used as a theological term, repentance implies not only sorrow but a complete turnaround: to change one’s mind about sin, receive God’s provision of salvation, and return wholeheartedly to Him.

much more it shall be when ^wI send My four ³severe judgments on Jerusalem—the sword and famine and wild beasts and pestilence—to cut off man and beast from it? ^{22x}Yet behold, there shall be left in it a remnant who will be ^ybrought out, both sons and daughters; surely they will come out to you, and ^zyou will see their ways and their doings. Then you will be comforted concerning the disaster that I have brought upon Jerusalem, all that I have brought upon it. ²³And they will comfort you, when you see their ways and their doings; and you shall know that I have done nothing ^awithout cause that I have done in it,” says the Lord God.

The Outcast Vine

15 Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying: ²“Son of man, how is the wood of the vine *better* than any other wood, the vine branch which is among the trees of the forest? ³Is wood taken from it to make any object? Or can *men* make a peg from it to hang any vessel on? ⁴Instead, ^ait is thrown into the fire for fuel; the fire devours both ends of it, and its middle is burned. Is it useful for *any* work? ⁵Indeed, when it was whole, no object could be made from it. How much less will it be useful for *any* work when the fire has devoured it, and it is burned?

⁶“Therefore thus says the Lord God: ‘Like the wood of the vine among the trees of the forest, which I have given to the fire for fuel, so I will give up the inhabitants of Jerusalem; ⁷and ^bI will set My face against them. ^cThey will go out from *one* fire, but *another* fire shall

²¹ ^w Ezek. 5:17; 33:27; Amos 4:6-10; Rev. 6:8 ³ Lit. *evil*
²² ^x 2 Kin. 25:11, 12; Ezra 2:1; Ezek. 12:16; 36:20 ^y Ezek. 6:8
²² Ezek. 20:43
²³ ^a Jer. 22:8, 9

CHAPTER 15

⁴ ^a [John 15:6]
⁷ ^b Lev. 26:17; [Ps. 34:16]; Jer. 21:10; Ezek. 14:8 ^c Is. 24:18

^d Ezek. 7:4

CHAPTER 16

² ^a Is. 58:1; Ezek. 20:4; 22:2
³ ^b Ezek. 21:30
^c Gen. 15:16; Deut. 7:1; Josh. 24:15; Ezek. 16:45 ¹ *origin and your birth*
⁴ ^d Hos. 2:3
⁵ ² *abhorred*
⁷ ^e Ex. 1:7; Deut. 1:10 ³ Lit. *a myriad*
⁸ ^f Ruth 3:9; Jer. 2:2 ⁹ Gen. 22:16-18
^h Ex. 24:6-8 ¹ [Ex. 19:5]; Jer. 2:2; Ezek. 20:5; [Hos. 2:19, 20]
⁴ ^{Or the corner of My garment}

devour them. ^dThen you shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I set My face against them. ⁸Thus I will make the land desolate, because they have persisted in unfaithfulness,” says the Lord God.”

God's Love for Jerusalem

16 Again the word of the LORD came to me, saying, ²“Son of man, ^acause Jerusalem to know her abominations, ³and say, ‘Thus says the Lord God to Jerusalem: “Your ¹birth ^band your nativity *are* from the land of Canaan; ^cyour father *was* an Amorite and your mother a Hittite. ⁴As for your nativity, ^don the day you were born your navel cord was not cut, nor were you washed in water to cleanse *you*; you were not rubbed with salt nor wrapped in swaddling cloths. ⁵No eye pitied you, to do any of these things for you, to have compassion on you; but you were thrown out into the open field, when you yourself were ²loathed on the day you were born.

⁶“And when I passed by you and saw you struggling in your own blood, I said to you in your blood, ‘Live!’ Yes, I said to you in your blood, ‘Live!’ ⁷^eI made you ³thrive like a plant in the field; and you grew, matured, and became very beautiful. Your breasts were formed, your hair grew, but you *were* naked and bare.

⁸“When I passed by you again and looked upon you, indeed your time *was* the time of love; ^fso I spread ⁴My wing over you and covered your nakedness. Yes, I ^gswore an oath to you and entered into a ^hcovenant with you, and ⁱyou became Mine,” says the Lord God.

⁹“Then I washed you in water; yes, I

14:22, 23 A remnant would be brought out from Jerusalem. When the exiles observe **their ways and their doings**—that is, their wicked actions, they will be reminded of God’s justice and grace. This is a remarkable use of the term *remnant*. Ordinarily the term is used of the righteous. Here it is used as a sample of the wicked people, whose deeds justified the actions of God in sovereign judgment: **I have done nothing without cause.**

15:1–5 The wood of the vine is depicted as useless. Unlike an olive tree, whose wood is also useful, the vine has only one use, to bear grapes. The regular use of vine imagery in the Bible (see Ps. 80:8–19; Is. 5:1–7; John 15) demonstrates the importance of grapevine cultivation in Israel.

15:6–8 In this instance the vine is symbolic of the Israelites still in Jerusalem (see Ps. 80:8–19; Is. 5:1–7). God had designed the people of Israel for a particular purpose, to bring glory to His name by living faithfully to His covenant and by bringing the nations to the knowledge of the Lord. Instead, Israel had become like the pagan nations around them. Israel had **persisted in unfaithfulness** and had failed to trust in God’s power. Jerusalem, and by implication the entire nation, had not faced exile before but now would be disciplined with **another fire**. This refers to additional destruction and deportation to be brought by Nebuchadnezzar, whose armies burned Jerusalem in 586 B.C. (see 7:23–27). The Judeans had already endured two deportations to Babylon, in 605 and 597 B.C.

16:2 to know her abominations: What follows is an animated

development of the dreary story, designed to teach errant Jerusalem the real nature of her character in the eyes of God. The word *abominations* describes that which makes one physically ill.

16:3 your father was an Amorite and your mother a Hittite: These shocking words refer to the cultural and moral origins of Jerusalem. Ancient Canaan was inhabited by Semitic and non-Semitic peoples. The Amorites and Hittites are associated in Scripture with the southern hill country, where Jerusalem is (Num. 13:29). The point is that non-Israelites founded this city. Jebusites controlled it when the Israelites entered the land under Joshua (Josh. 15:8, 63). Israel did not fully control the city until David conquered it (2 Sam. 5:6, 7).

16:4, 5 God reminds Jerusalem that He had rescued them from being like an abandoned newborn child, unwashed, unsanitary (not rubbed with salt), and exposed to the elements to die. God alone had given her glory.

16:6 In contrast to Israel’s apathetic disdain—which led to disobedience including idolatry (see Judg. 1, 2)—God had wanted Israel to **live**, having purposed and planned to impart His life and glory to them.

16:7–9 breasts were formed: The city is compared to a young woman, mature and lovely. Yet the city was **naked and bare** until God covered it with a relationship of covenantal love. This began when David moved the ark of the covenant there and God established the covenant with David (2 Sam. 6:1–7:17; see Ps. 132). Jerusalem became God’s dwelling place (2 Sam. 7:12–17; 1 Kin. 5:6).



Silk

Ezekiel 16:10, 13 describes silk as a fabric of great value. The Hebrew words for this cloth were *sheshi* and *meshi*. Some scholars think the term found in Prov. 31:22 (*sheshi*) actually refers to fine linen. We do not know if the Egyptians used silk, but the Chinese and other Asiatics used it in OT times. Silk certainly reached the Bible lands after the conquest of Alexander the Great (ca. 325 B.C.). But it may have come to Palestine earlier, since Solomon traded with surrounding countries that might have produced this fabric.

The fineness and vivid color of fabrics increased their value, so silk held an important position in the ancient world. The luxury lovers of NT “Babylon” treasured silk (Rev. 18:12). As late as A.D. 275, unmixed silk goods were sold for their weight in gold.



Silk scarves at a market in Israel

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thoroughly washed off your blood, and I anointed you with oil. ¹⁰I clothed you in embroidered cloth and gave you sandals of ⁵badger skin; I clothed you with fine linen and covered you with silk. ¹¹I adorned you with ornaments, ^jput bracelets on your wrists, ^kand a chain on your neck. ¹²And I put a ⁶jewel in your nose, earrings in your ears, and a beautiful crown on your head. ¹³Thus you were adorned with gold and silver, and your clothing *was of* fine linen, silk, and embroidered cloth. ^lYou ate *pastry of* fine flour, honey, and oil. You were exceedingly ^mbeautiful, and succeeded to royalty. ¹⁴ⁿYour fame went out among the nations because of your beauty, for it *was* perfect through My splendor which I had bestowed on you,” says the Lord God.

Jerusalem's Harlotry

^{15o}“But you trusted in your own beauty, ^pplayed the harlot because of your fame, and poured out your harlotry on

¹⁰ ⁵ Or *dolphin or dugong*

¹¹ ^j Gen. 24:22, 47; Is. 3:19; Ezek. 23:42 ^k Gen. 41:42; Prov. 1:9

¹² ⁶ Lit. *ring*
¹³ ^l Deut. 32:13, 14
^m Ps. 48:2

¹⁴ ⁿ Ps. 50:2; Lam. 2:15

¹⁵ ^o Deut. 32:15; Jer. 7:4; Mic. 3:11
^p Is. 1:21; 57:8; Jer. 2:20; 3:2, 6, 20; Ezek. 23:11-20; Hos. 1:2

¹⁶ ^q 2 Kin. 23:7; Ezek. 7:20; Hos. 2:8

⁷ Places for pagan worship

¹⁹ ^r Hos. 2:8 ⁸ Or *a sweet aroma*

²⁰ ^s 2 Kin. 16:3; Ps. 106:37; Is. 57:5; Jer. 7:31; Ezek. 20:26

²¹ ^t 2 Kin. 17:17; Jer. 19:5; Ezek. 20:31; 23:37

everyone passing by who *would have* it. ^{16q}You took some of your garments and adorned multicolored ⁷high places for yourself, and played the harlot on them. *Such* things should not happen, nor be. ¹⁷You have also taken your beautiful jewelry from My gold and My silver, which I had given you, and made for yourself male images and played the harlot with them. ¹⁸You took your embroidered garments and covered them, and you set My oil and My incense before them. ¹⁹Also ^rMy food which I gave you—the pastry of fine flour, oil, and honey *which* I fed you—you set it before them as ⁸sweet incense; and *so* it was,” says the Lord God.

^{20s}“Moreover you took your sons and your daughters, whom you bore to Me, and these you sacrificed to them to be devoured. *Were* your *acts* of harlotry a small matter, ²¹that you have slain My children and offered them up to them by causing them to pass through *the* ^tfire? ²²And in all your abominations and acts of

16:10–14 The adornments listed here are gifts from a groom to his bride. Figuratively they express the beauty and bounty God gave to Jerusalem under Solomon. **badger skin:** The exact meaning of this Hebrew term is unknown, but it refers to a kind of fine leather. One suggestion is “dolphin skin.” The idea is that God clothed Jerusalem in the finest materials available. During the reigns of David and Solomon, Jerusalem achieved significant status as the capital of a nation rich in wisdom and wealth (1 Kin. 10:23). But this was only because God **bestowed** it. **perfect:** This does not mean perfect in a moral sense, but complete, finished.

16:15 trusted in your own beauty: These words indict God's people for forgetting that their fame and fortune were God's gifts and not their own doing (v. 14). They relied on themselves and their gifts instead of on God. They came to believe that their material health and wealth as a nation absolutely demonstrated God's approval of their spiritual life, even though they were becoming spiritually corrupt. **played the harlot:** This phrase refers to spiritual prosti-

tution—idolatry, trusting in false gods. The metaphor works in a powerful way, however, because the worship of these gods often involved literal sexual misconduct (v. 16; Hos. 4:11–19) and other immoral acts (vv. 20–22).

16:16–21 These verses list the particular acts of idolatry engaged in by the spiritually unfaithful in Jerusalem and Judah. Mesopotamian and Canaanite pagan rituals are featured. The people's unfaithfulness to God consisted of: (1) building altars to idols and decorating the **high places** with their **garments** (1 Kin. 11:7, 8); (2) fashioning **male images** (phallic or sexually perverse statues) from **gold** and **silver** that God had provided; (3) giving what belonged to the true God to these false gods; and (4) practicing human sacrifice to appease these gods (2 Kin. 16:1–4).

16:22 The Israelites **did not remember** how much God had done for them since rescuing them from a dirty, destitute, and dying condition (vv. 1–14).

harlotry you did not remember the days of your ^ayouth, ^vwhen you were naked and bare, struggling in your blood.

²³“Then it was so, after all your wickedness—‘Woe, woe to you!’ says the Lord God—²⁴that ^wyou also built for yourself a shrine, and ^xmade a ⁹high place for yourself in every street. ²⁵You built your high places ^yat the head of every road, and made your beauty to be abhorred. You offered yourself to everyone who passed by, and multiplied your acts of harlotry. ²⁶You also committed harlotry with ^zthe Egyptians, your very fleshly neighbors, and increased your acts of harlotry to ^aprovoke Me to anger.

²⁷“Behold, therefore, I stretched out My hand against you, diminished your ¹allotment, and gave you up to the will of those who hate you, ^bthe daughters of the Philistines, who were ashamed of your lewd behavior. ²⁸You also played the harlot with the ^cAssyrians, because you were insatiable; indeed you played the harlot with them and still were not satisfied. ²⁹Moreover you multiplied your acts of harlotry as far as the land of the trader, ^dChaldea; and even then you were not satisfied.

³⁰“How degenerate is your heart!” says the Lord God, “seeing you do all these *things*, the deeds of a brazen harlot.

Jerusalem's Adultery

³¹^e“You erected your shrine at the head of every road, and built your ²high place in every street. Yet you were not like a harlot, because you scorned ^fpayment. ³²You are an adulterous wife, *who* takes strangers instead of her husband. ³³Men make payment to all harlots, but ^gyou made your payments to all your lovers, and ³hired them to come to you from all around for your harlotry. ³⁴You are the opposite of *other* women in your harlotry, because no one solicited you to

²² ^v Jer. 2:2; Hos. 11:1 ^v Ezek. 16:4-6
²⁴ ^w Jer. 11:13; Ezek. 16:31, 39; 20:28, 29
^x Ps. 78:58; Is. 57:7; Jer. 2:20; 3:2 ⁹ Place for pagan worship
²⁵ ^y Prov. 9:14
²⁶ ^z Ezek. 16:26; 20:7, 8 ^c Deut. 31:20
²⁷ ^b 2 Chr. 28:18; Is. 9:12; Ezek. 16:57
¹ Allowance of food
²⁸ ^c 2 Kin. 16:7, 10-18; 2 Chr. 28:16, 20-23; Jer. 2:18, 36; Ezek. 23:12; Hos. 10:6
²⁹ ^d Ezek. 23:14-17
³¹ ^e Ezek. 16:24, 39
^f Is. 52:3 ² Place for pagan worship
³³ ^g Is. 30:6; 57:9; Ezek. 16:41; Hos. 8:9, 10 ³ Or *bribed*

³⁶ ^h Jer. 2:34; Ezek. 16:20
³⁷ ⁱ Jer. 13:22, 26; Lam. 1:8; Ezek. 23:9, 10, 22, 29; Hos. 2:10; 8:10; Nah. 3:5
³⁸ ^j Lev. 20:10; Deut. 22:22; Ezek. 23:45 ^k Gen. 9:6; Ex. 21:12; Ezek. 16:20, 36
³⁹ ⁱ Ezek. 16:24, 31
^m Ezek. 23:26; Hos. 2:3
⁴ Places for pagan worship
⁴⁰ ⁿ Ezek. 23:45-47; Hab. 1:6-10 ^o John 8:5, 7
⁴¹ ^p Deut. 13:16; 2 Kin. 25:9; Jer. 39:8; 52:13 ^q Ezek. 5:8; 23:10, 48 ^r Ezek. 23:27
⁴² ^s 2 Sam. 24:25; Ezek. 5:13; 21:17; Zech. 6:8
⁴³ ^t Ps. 78:42; Ezek. 16:22 ^u Ezek. 9:10; 11:21; 22:31 ^v So with LXX, Syr., Tg., Vg.; MT *were agitated with Me*
⁶ Lit. way

be a harlot. In that you gave payment but no payment was given you, therefore you are the opposite.”

Jerusalem's Lovers Will Abuse Her

³⁵“Now then, O harlot, hear the word of the LORD! ³⁶Thus says the Lord God: “Because your filthiness was poured out and your nakedness uncovered in your harlotry with your lovers, and with all your abominable idols, and because of ^hthe blood of your children which you gave to them, ³⁷surely, therefore, ⁱI will gather all your lovers with whom you took pleasure, all those you loved, and all those you hated; I will gather them from all around against you and will uncover your nakedness to them, that they may see all your nakedness. ³⁸And I will judge you as ^jwomen who break wedlock or ^kshed blood are judged; I will bring blood upon you in fury and jealousy. ³⁹I will also give you into their hand, and they shall throw down your shrines and break down ^lyour ⁴high places. ^mThey shall also strip you of your clothes, take your beautiful jewelry, and leave you naked and bare.

⁴⁰ⁿ“They shall also bring up an assembly against you, ^oand they shall stone you with stones and thrust you through with their swords. ⁴¹They shall ^pburn your houses with fire, and ^qexecute judgments on you in the sight of many women; and I will make you ^rcease playing the harlot, and you shall no longer hire lovers. ⁴²So ^sI will lay to rest My fury toward you, and My jealousy shall depart from you. I will be quiet, and be angry no more. ⁴³Because ^tyou did not remember the days of your youth, but ⁵agitated Me with all these *things*, surely ^uI will also recompense your ⁶deeds on *your own head*,” says the Lord God. “And you shall not commit lewdness in addition to all your abominations.

16:26 Egypt is called a **fleshly** neighbor because that nation wanted alliances with Israel, who **committed harlotry** by eventually reciprocating (1 Kin. 10:28; 2 Kin. 17:4; 18:21; Hos. 7:11).

16:27-29 Jerusalem's kings had sought political alliances with Assyria (2 Kin. 15:17-20) and Babylon (2 Kin. 20:12-19) instead of relying on their God for security. Probably a part of the treaty-making ceremonies was to worship the other nation's gods. For Israel to do this would be a violation of the First Commandment. In fact, King Ahaz dared to replace the bronze altar of the temple at Jerusalem with a copy of an Assyrian altar (2 Kin. 16:5-18). In this way, foreign alliances led the Israelites away from God. The Lord judged the city for this: He allowed Sennacherib to give some of Jerusalem's lands to the Philistines (see also 2 Chr. 21:16, 17).

16:31-34 Jerusalem was denounced as being less like a prostitute and more like **an adulterous wife**. She was deemed worse than the typical prostitute because instead of receiving payment for services rendered, she sought out **strangers** (foreign nations) and **hired** them for the privilege.

16:36 Jerusalem was filthy spiritually because the city had soiled itself by worshipping foreign idols and practicing infanticide (vv. 20, 21; Deut. 12:29-32).

16:37-43 As a result of its sin (compared to harlotry, vv. 25-30), Jerusalem would be punished. God would use her foreign **lovers** to expose Jerusalem's hypocrisy and bring international shame (**uncover your nakedness**). According to the Law, adultery was punishable by death (Lev. 20:10). The people deserved death because they had committed spiritual adultery and had murdered their own children through child sacrifice. The city would be looted and burned, and its people slain. The tangible material riches gained as a result of God's favor (v. 8) would be lost. All this would culminate in the Babylonian invasion of 586 B.C. led by Nebuchadnezzar. During the ensuing captivity, Israel would abandon idolatry and polytheism, as Ezekiel predicted. God's anger over the people's sin would be satisfied. **My jealousy**: God's covenantal love and loyalty to His people would continue even though they had been unfaithful and forgetful of God's grace in their lives.

More Wicked than Samaria and Sodom

⁴⁴“Indeed everyone who quotes proverbs will use *this* proverb against you: ‘Like mother, like daughter!’ ⁴⁵You are your mother’s daughter, ⁷loathing husband and children; and you *are* the ⁹sister of your sisters, who loathed their husbands and children; ¹⁰your mother *was* a Hittite and your father an Amorite.

⁴⁶“Your elder sister *is* Samaria, who dwells with her daughters to the north of you; and ^xyour younger sister, who dwells to the south of you, *is* Sodom and her daughters. ⁴⁷You did not walk in their ways nor act according to their abominations; but, as *if that were* too little, ¹¹you became more corrupt than they in all your ways.

⁴⁸“As I live,” says the Lord God, “neither ²your sister Sodom nor her daughters have done as you and your daughters have done. ⁴⁹Look, this was the iniquity of your sister Sodom: She and her daughter had pride, ^afullness of food, and abundance of idleness; neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy. ⁵⁰And they were haughty and ^bcommitted abomination before Me; therefore ^cI took them away as ⁸I saw fit.

⁵¹“Samaria did not commit ^dhalf of your sins; but you have multiplied your abominations more than they, and ^ehave justified your sisters by all the abominations which you have done. ⁵²You who judged your sisters, bear your own shame also, because the sins which you commit-

⁴⁵ ^v Ezek. 23:2-4

^w Ezek. 16:3 ⁷ Or *despising*

⁴⁶ ^x Deut. 32:32; Is. 1:10

⁴⁷ ^v 2 Kin. 21:9; Ezek. 5:6, 7

⁴⁸ ^z Is. 3:9; Lam. 4:6; Matt. 10:15; 11:24; Rev. 11:8

⁴⁹ ^a Gen. 13:10; Is. 22:13; Amos 6:4-6

⁵⁰ ^b Gen. 13:13; 18:20; 19:5 ^c Gen. 19:24 ⁸ Vg. *you saw*;

LXX he saw; Tg. *as was revealed to Me*

⁵¹ ^d Ezek. 23:11 ^e Jer. 3:8-11; Matt. 12:41

⁵³ ^f Is. 1:9; [Ezek. 16:60] ^g Jer. 20:16

⁵⁴ ^h Ezek. 14:22 ⁵⁷ ² Kin. 16:5; 2 Chr. 28:18; Is. 7:1; Ezek. 5:14, 15; 22:4

[Ezek. 16:27 ⁹ Heb. *Aram*; so with MT, LXX, Tg., Vg.; many Heb. mss., Syr. *Edom*

⁵⁸ ^k Ezek. 23:49 ⁵⁹ ^l Ezek. 17:13 ^m Deut. 29:12

⁶⁰ ⁿ Lev. 26:42-45; Ps. 106:45 ^o Is. 55:3; Jer. 32:40; 50:5; Ezek. 37:26

⁶¹ ^p Jer. 50:4, 5; Ezek. 20:43; 36:31

ted were more abominable than theirs; they are more righteous than you. Yes, be disgraced also, and bear your own shame, because you justified your sisters.

^{53f}“When I bring back their captives, the captives of Sodom and her daughters, and the captives of Samaria and her daughters, then *I will also bring back* ^gthe captives of your captivity among them, ⁵⁴that you may bear your own shame and be disgraced by all that you did when ^hyou comforted them. ⁵⁵When your sisters, Sodom and her daughters, return to their former state, and Samaria and her daughters return to their former state, then you and your daughters will return to your former state. ⁵⁶For your sister Sodom was not a byword in your mouth in the days of your pride, ⁵⁷before your wickedness was uncovered. It was like the time of the ⁱreproach of the daughters of ⁹Syria and all *those* around her, and of ^jthe daughters of the Philistines, who despise you everywhere. ^{58k}You have paid for your lewdness and your abominations,” says the LORD. ⁵⁹For thus says the Lord God: “I will deal with you as you have done, who ^ldespised ^mthe oath by breaking the covenant.

An Everlasting Covenant

⁶⁰“Nevertheless I will ⁿremember My covenant with you in the days of your youth, and I will establish ^oan everlasting covenant with you. ⁶¹Then ^pyou will remember your ways and be ashamed, when you receive your older and your

16:44–47 This allegory describes Jerusalem as the sister of two cities—**Samaria** and **Sodom**. All three were presented as the characteristic offspring of the religiously and morally corrupt cultures in Canaan (v. 3). Thus the proverb **Like mother, like daughter** applied to Jerusalem. The condemnation of the mother—that is, the Hittites—and the sisters—Samaria and Sodom—for **loathing husband and children** is difficult to explain. It probably refers to idolatry—God being the hated husband (see Hos. 2:16)—and infanticide. Sodom no longer existed at this time—its evil had been so great that God had wiped the city off the face of the earth (Gen. 19:24, 25). Samaria, the capital of the northern kingdom, had already faced destruction and exile (2 Kin. 17:5, 6). Jerusalem, the very city of God, had become “more corrupt” than even Sodom and Samaria. Clearly this passage emphasizes the people’s great sinfulness and the certainty of their punishment. **sister of your sisters**: This is a superlative statement like “King of kings” meaning “the greatest king.” Thus with this phrase, Jerusalem is described as the “sister” most conformed to Canaanite corruption.

16:48–52 Ezekiel names the sins for which the cities of Sodom and Samaria were renowned. Jerusalem was pronounced even more guilty—the other evil cities **did not commit half** of Jerusalem’s sins. Spiritual, moral, and social sins are all listed. Jerusalem **justified** the other cities because when they compared themselves to Jerusalem, they were more righteous than her.

16:53–59 As Jerusalem had arrogantly poked fun at Sodom, so Jerusalem would be despised by Syria and Philistia. Although restoration was promised, the people still had to pay for their sins by living in exile. This punishment was consistent with God’s past and persistent

promises to repay disobedience with specific curses (see 4:16, 17; 5:8–17). **Syria** is translated Edom in some translations because this alternative exists in the Syriac version and in many Hebrew manuscripts. Historically Syria (or more literally the ancient nation of Aram) no longer existed. Therefore that nation could not ridicule the exiles in Ezekiel’s day. The people had **despised the oath by breaking the covenant** that God had made with Moses; thus they would receive the punishments for disobedience that were written in that covenant (see Ex. 24; Lev. 26; Deut. 28, 29). Blessings or curses were dependent on Israel’s obedience or disobedience.

16:60–63 Nevertheless: Despite Jerusalem’s disobedience to the Mosaic covenant and the resulting punishment (v. 59), the covenant with Abraham—**My covenant**—would still be honored: **I will remember**. Fulfillment of the covenant with Abraham did not depend on the people’s faithfulness; God had made the promise and He would keep it (see Gen. 15; 17:7, 8; Lev. 26:40–45; Ps. 145:13; Phil. 1:6). The **everlasting covenant** had been made with Abraham before the Hebrew nation even existed. This covenant would be remembered and reestablished with the exiled Judeans. At that time, God’s people would be ashamed by the contrast between their faithlessness and God’s faithfulness and the fact that they were being exalted over those who were less sinful—Sodom and Samaria. The people of these other sinful nations would also inherit land, but only by God’s grace, because no such covenant was made with them. Further, God would provide **atonement** through the New Covenant (Jer. 31:31–40), which pointed ultimately to the Cross of Christ.

younger sisters; for I will give them to you for ^adaughters, ^rbut not because of My covenant with you. ^{62s}And I will establish My covenant with you. Then you shall know that I *am* the LORD, ⁶³that you may ^rremember and be ashamed, ^uand never open your mouth anymore because of your shame, when I provide you an atonement for all you have done,” says the Lord God.”

The Eagles and the Vine

17 And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, ²“Son of man, pose a riddle, and speak a ^aparable to the house of Israel, ³and say, ‘Thus says the Lord God:

- ^b“A great eagle with large wings and long pinions,
Full of feathers of various colors,
Came to Lebanon
And ^ctook from the cedar the highest branch.
⁴ He cropped off its topmost young twig
And carried it to a land of trade;
He set it in a city of merchants.
⁵ Then he took some of the seed of the land
And planted it in ^da fertile field;
He placed *it* by abundant waters
And set it ^elike a willow tree.
⁶ And it grew and became a spreading vine ^fof low stature;
Its branches turned toward him,
But its roots were under it.
So it became a vine,
Brought forth branches,
And put forth shoots.
⁷ “But there was ^lanother great eagle with large wings and many feathers;
And behold, ^othis vine bent its roots toward him,

⁶¹ ^aIs. 54:1; 60:4; [Gal. 4:26] ^rJer. 31:31
⁶² ^sHos. 2:19, 20
⁶³ ^rEzek. 36:31, 32; Dan. 9:7, 8 ^uPs. 39:9; [Rom. 3:19]

CHAPTER 17

² ^aEzek. 20:49; 24:3
³ ^bJer. 48:40; Ezek. 17:12; Hos. 8:1
^c2 Kin. 24:12
⁵ ^dDeut. 8:7-9 ^eIs. 44:4
⁶ ^fEzek. 17:14
⁷ ^gEzek. 17:15 ^lSo with LXX, Syr., Vg.; MT, Tg. *one*

⁸ ² Lit. *a good field*
⁹ ^h2 Kin. 25:7
¹⁰ ⁱEzek. 19:12; Hos. 13:15
¹² ^jEzek. 2:3-5; 12:9
^k2 Kin. 24:11-16; Ezek. 1:2; 17:3
¹³ ^l2 Kin. 24:17; Jer. 37:1; Ezek. 17:5
^m2 Chr. 36:13
¹⁴ ⁿEzek. 29:14
¹⁵ ^o2 Kin. 24:20; 2 Chr. 36:13; Jer. 52:3; Ezek. 17:7
^pDeut. 17:16; Is. 31:1, 3; 36:6, 9
^qEzek. 17:9

And stretched its branches toward him,
From the garden terrace where it had been planted,
That he might water it.
⁸ It was planted in ²good soil by many waters,
To bring forth branches, bear fruit,
And become a majestic vine.”

⁹“Say, ‘Thus says the Lord God:

- “Will it thrive?
^hWill he not pull up its roots,
Cut off its fruit,
And leave it to wither?
All of its spring leaves will wither,
And no great power or many people
Will be needed to pluck it up by its roots.
¹⁰ Behold, *it is* planted,
Will it thrive?
ⁱWill it not utterly wither when the east wind touches it?
It will wither in the garden terrace where it grew.””

¹¹Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying, ¹²“Say now to ^jthe rebellious house: ‘Do you not know what these *things mean*?’ Tell *them*, ‘Indeed ^kthe king of Babylon went to Jerusalem and took its king and princes, and led them with him to Babylon. ¹³^lAnd he took the king’s offspring, made a covenant with him, ^mand put him under oath. He also took away the mighty of the land, ¹⁴that the kingdom might be ⁿbrought low and not lift itself up, *but* that by keeping his covenant it might stand. ¹⁵But ^ohe rebelled against him by sending his ambassadors to Egypt, ^pthat they might give him horses and many people. ^qWill he prosper? Will he who does such *things* escape? Can he break a covenant and still be delivered?’

17:2 The Hebrew words translated **riddle** and **parable** can both be used to refer to allegory. The *parable* primarily refers to a comparison between two things. A *riddle* was sometimes used as political contests of mental competition between kings, in which the loser would submit to the winner and be killed. Some take the following riddle as a contest posed by God to Zedekiah, Judah’s king.

17:3–10 This allegory is focused around a main point and is followed by an explanation to guide the reader (vv. 11–21). In light of vv. 11–21, the **great eagle** is the king of Babylon (v. 12); **Lebanon** symbolizes Canaan, of which Jerusalem (v. 12) is the major city; the **highest branch** is the king of Jerusalem and Judah (v. 12); the **topmost young twig** refers to the nobility of Judah (v. 12); the **land of trade** is Babylon (v. 12); the **seed** is a member of the royal family (v. 13); the **fertile field** is the land where this royal offspring would rule (vv. 13, 14); the other **great eagle** is the king of Egypt (v. 15); and the **vine** is the remnant and ruler left in Judah. This remnant failed to prosper because they made a treaty with the Egyptian pharaoh. As a result, even the remnant was slain and scattered by Babylon’s army (vv. 15–21).

17:11–21 Since Ezekiel had preached earlier about Jerusalem’s past abominations (ch. 16), the people were likely charging God with unfairness in punishing the present population. Ezekiel points out that present and past sins make God’s actions just and fair. In this section, **the LORD** explains His grounds for using Babylon to judge Judah. The prophecy predicts that (1) Nebuchadnezzar will capture Jehoiachin and the princes of Jerusalem and take them to Babylon (v. 12); (2) Zedekiah, Jehoiachin’s uncle, will be made ruler of the Judean remnant as a result of a political alliance with Nebuchadnezzar, but this will stifle growth (vv. 13, 14); (3) Zedekiah will rebel against Babylon and God by making a treaty with Egypt (588 B.C.) leading to his unexpected defeat and death (vv. 15, 16; Is. 30:1–5); and (4) Zedekiah will not be protected by Egypt but will be punished through Babylon according to the stipulations of the Mosaic covenant: death, destruction, and dispersion (vv. 17–21; 12:13, 14). The historical background of this story is found in 2 Kin. 24; 2 Chr. 36; and Jer. 37; 52.

¹⁶“As I live,” says the Lord God, “surely *in the place where the king dwells* who made him king, whose oath he despised and whose covenant he broke—with him in the midst of Babylon he shall die. ¹⁷“Nor will Pharaoh with *his* mighty army and great company do anything in the war, ¹⁸when they heap up a siege mound and build a ³wall to cut off many persons. ¹⁸Since he despised the oath by breaking the covenant, and in fact “gave”^d his hand and still did all these *things*, he shall not escape.”

¹⁹Therefore thus says the Lord God: “As I live, surely My oath which he despised, and My covenant which he broke, I will recompense on his own head. ²⁰I will ^vspread My net over him, and he shall be taken in My snare. I will bring him to Babylon and ^wtry him there for the ⁵treason which he committed against Me. ²¹^x All his ⁶fugitives with all his troops shall fall by the sword, and those who remain shall be ^yscattered to every wind; and you shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken.”

Israel Exalted at Last

²²Thus says the Lord God: “I will take

¹⁶ ^r Jer. 52:11; Ezek. 12:13
¹⁷ ^s Jer. 37:7; Ezek. 29:6 ^t Jer. 52:4; Ezek. 4:2 ³ Or *siege wall*
¹⁸ ^u 1 Chr. 29:24; Lam. 5:6 ⁴ Took an oath
²⁰ ^v Ezek. 12:13 ^w Jer. 2:35; Ezek. 20:36 ⁵ Lit. *unfaithful act*
²¹ ^x Ezek. 12:14 ^y Ezek. 12:15; 22:15 ⁶ So with MT, Vg.; many Heb. mss., Syr. *choice men*; Tg. *mighty men*; LXX omits *All his fugitives*

²² ^z [Is. 11:1; Jer. 23:5; Zech. 3:8] ^a Is. 53:2 ^b [Ps. 2:6]
²³ ^c [Is. 2:2, 3]; Ezek. 20:40; [Mic. 4:1] ^d Ezek. 31:6; Dan. 4:12
²⁴ ^e Ezek. 37:3; Amos 9:11; Luke 1:52; [Rom. 11:23, 24] ^f Ezek. 22:14

CHAPTER 18

² ^a Jer. 31:29; Lam. 5:7

also *one* of the highest ^abranches of the high cedar and set *it* out. I will crop off from the topmost of its young twigs ^aa tender one, and will ^bplant *it* on a high and prominent mountain. ²³^c On the mountain height of Israel I will plant it; and it will bring forth boughs, and bear fruit, and be a majestic cedar. ^d Under it will dwell birds of every sort; in the shadow of its branches they will dwell. ²⁴ And all the trees of the field shall know that I, the LORD, ^e have brought down the high tree and exalted the low tree, dried up the green tree and made the dry tree flourish; ^f I, the LORD, have spoken and have done *it*.”

A False Proverb Refuted

18 The word of the LORD came to me again, saying, ²“What do you mean when you use this proverb concerning the land of Israel, saying:

‘The ^afathers have eaten sour grapes, And the children’s teeth are set on edge?’

³“As I live,” says the Lord God, “you shall no longer use this proverb in Israel.

17:22 I will take: The Hebrew is emphatic: “I Myself will take” In contrast to human kings, God declared that He personally would pick out, plant, and make prominent a **tender one**—that is, a twig or a sprig. Cedar branches are symbolic of rulers on the Davidic throne (see 17:3, 4, 12, 13), and elsewhere of a line of David’s descendants prophesied to produce the Messiah (see 2 Sam. 7:16; Is. 11:1–5; Jer. 22:24–30; 23:1–6; Zech. 6:9–13; Matt. 1:1–17). If not directly messianic in intention, vv. 22–24 at least have strong messianic implications. Thus, with reference to His humanity, we discover a new title for the Savior Jesus. He is the Tender One.

17:23, 24 What was accomplished in the restoration under Zerubabel was a fulfillment of this promise. But as is often the case in biblical prophecy, the greater fulfillment is still to come in the reign

of the Savior King. The establishment of the cedar twig, the Messiah, over Israel will make the nation a fruitful and **majestic cedar** where diverse people will live in unity and harmony. **all the trees of the field:** All nations will realize that the **LORD** is their sovereign God and that He has accomplished what He said He would do.

18:2, 3 The Hebrew word (see Eccl. 10:10) rendered **set on edge** is literally “made dull” but can refer to a sour sensation. The main idea of the **proverb** is clear: children are affected by their parents’ behavioral choices just as eating sour grapes produces a bitter taste. However, the people were interpreting and applying this proverb incorrectly; therefore, God said they should not use it any longer.

Accountability

Sometimes warnings get twisted into excuses. The people of Ezekiel’s day, suffering from the consequences of a history of rebellion against God, found it easier to blame their ancestors for sin than to take responsibility for their own offenses. We can understand their predicament. Their immediate circumstances held little hope. News had reached Babylon of the fall and destruction of Jerusalem. Plans to return to the Promised Land would be marred by descriptions of devastation. The wreckage of God’s judgment seemed too great to be restored. It was easier to sink into pessimism. The bitter proverb about sour grapes and teeth set on edge (18:2) became a slogan of resentment for the people. Instead of examining their own behavior before God, they excused their sin by blaming their parents.

The law of cause and effect may be obvious, but the exact connections sometimes elude us. Sin always has consequences. The second commandment (Ex. 20:4–6; Deut. 5:8–10) points out that the sin of idolatry (a sin from which flow many others) causes effects that can last generations. But Ezekiel had to remind the people that experiencing hardship as a consequence of the sins of ancestors was not the same as judgment for one’s own sins. Suffering caused by another’s sins does not excuse willfully sinful behavior.

God made it clear to the Israelites and also to us: We may suffer for someone else’s misdeeds, but we will be judged for our own. “I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways” (18:30). What should be our response? “Repent, and turn from all your transgressions” (18:30). This will lead to “a new heart and a new spirit” (18:31). Perhaps the clearest evidence of our fallen human nature can be heard in our quickness to blame others when we ought to examine ourselves and remember that we are accountable to God. His message to us is persistent: “Therefore turn and live!” (18:32).



- 4 “Behold, all souls are ^bMine;
The soul of the father
As well as the soul of the son is
Mine;
^cThe soul who sins shall die.
5 But if a man is just
And does what is lawful and right;
6 ^dIf he has not eaten ¹on the
mountains,
Nor lifted up his eyes to the idols of
the house of Israel,
Nor ^edefiled his neighbor’s wife,
Nor approached ^fa woman during
her impurity;
7 If he has not ^goppressed anyone,
But has restored to the debtor his
^hpledge;
Has robbed no one by violence,
But has ⁱgiven his bread to the
hungry
And covered the naked with ^jclothing;
8 If he has not ²exacted ^kusury
Nor taken any increase,
But has withdrawn his hand from
iniquity
And ^lexecuted true ³judgment
between man and man;
9 If he has walked in My statutes
And kept My judgments faithfully—
He is just;
He shall surely ^mlive!”
Says the Lord God.
- 10 “If he begets a son *who is a robber*
Or ⁿa shedder of blood,
Who does any of these things
11 And does none of those *duties*,
But has eaten ⁴on the mountains
Or defiled his neighbor’s wife;
12 If he has oppressed the poor and
needy,
Robbed by violence,
Not restored the pledge,
Lifted his eyes to the idols,
Or ^ocommitted abomination;

4 ^b Num. 16:22;
27:16; Is. 42:5; 57:16
^c Ezek. 18:20; [Rom.
6:23]

6 ^d Ezek. 22:9 ^e Lev.
18:20; 20:10 ^f Lev.
18:19; 20:18 ¹ At the
mountain shrines
7 ^g Ex. 22:21; Lev.
19:15; 25:14 ^h Ex.
22:26; Deut. 24:12
ⁱ Deut. 15:7, 11;
Ezek. 18:16; [Matt.
25:35–40]; Luke 3:11
^j Is. 58:7

8 ^k Ex. 22:25; Lev.
25:36; Deut. 23:19;
Neh. 5:7; Ps. 15:5
^l Deut. 1:16; Zech.
8:16 ² Lent money
at interest ³ justice
9 ^m Ezek. 20:11;
Amos 5:4; [Hab. 2:4;
Rom. 1:17]

10 ⁿ Gen. 9:6; Ex.
21:12; Num. 35:31
11 ⁴ At the
mountain shrines
12 ^o 2 Kin. 21:11;
Ezek. 8:6, 17

13 ^p Lev. 20:9, 11–13,
16, 27; Ezek. 3:18;
Acts 18:6

15 ^q Ezek. 18:6
⁵ At the mountain
shrines
17 ^o So with MT,
Tg., Vg.; LXX
iniquity (cf. v. 8)

18 ^r Ezek. 3:18
19 ^s Ex. 20:5; Deut.
5:9; 2 Kin. 23:26;
24:3, 4

- 13 If he has exacted usury
Or taken increase—
Shall he then live?
He shall not live!
If he has done any of these
abominations,
He shall surely die;
^pHis blood shall be upon him.

- 14 “If, however, he begets a son
Who sees all the sins which his
father has done,
And considers but does not do
likewise;
15 ^qWho has not eaten ⁵on the
mountains,
Nor lifted his eyes to the idols of the
house of Israel,
Nor defiled his neighbor’s wife;
16 Has not oppressed anyone,
Nor withheld a pledge,
Nor robbed by violence,
But has given his bread to the hungry
And covered the naked with
clothing;
17 ^rWho has withdrawn his hand from
⁶the poor
And not received usury or increase,
But has executed My judgments
And walked in My statutes—
He shall not die for the iniquity of
his father;
He shall surely live!

- 18 “As for his father,
Because he cruelly oppressed,
Robbed his brother by violence,
And did what is not good among his
people,
Behold, ^rhe shall die for his iniquity.

Turn and Live

- 19 “Yet you say, ‘Why ^sshould the son
not bear the guilt of the father?’ Be-
cause the son has done what is lawful

18:4 The exiles’ problematic doctrines and attitudes became evident from God’s corrective teaching. Apparently the exiles were filled with despair and had a fatalistic approach to such truisms as the proverb quoted in v. 2 (as also in 16:44) and to related Scriptures (see Ex. 20:5; 34:6, 7; Deut. 5:9). Their false belief was that they were being punished for the sins of previous generations. Their sin was that of becoming insensitive and irresponsible, since they thought judgment would come regardless of what they might do. God’s reply reminded them that it had always been otherwise: only the individual person **who sins** will die. In this verse, the physical, earthly consequences of sinful behavior are being addressed (see 3:16–21; 33:12–20; Deut. 30:15–20).

18:5–9 A righteous man—a father or the first generation—is **lawful**. He does what is morally right according to the Law of Moses. He does not participate in the following sins: (1) idolatrous ceremonial meals, (2) sexual misconduct, (3) mistreatment of the poor, (4) theft, or (5) **usury**, charging interest on debts owed by fellow Hebrews (Deut. 23:20). His reward is life (Ex. 20; Lev. 18:1–5; Deut. 5; 11). **during her impurity**: In ancient Israel, intimacy during the woman’s men-

strual period was prohibited. The OT does not explain the reason for this, but it may be tied to the special role of blood for the atoning of sin (Lev. 15:19–33). The principal point in this passage is that the person was observing the standards laid down by the Law.

18:10–13 The unrighteous son of the righteous man of vv. 5–9 (the second generation) breaks and rejects the laws and ethics that defined his father’s lifestyle. His punishment is death (vv. 13, 18; see Rom. 6:23) and **his blood shall be upon him**. Clearly the point of this passage is personal responsibility for sin.

18:14–17 The grandson of the righteous man of vv. 5–9 (third generation) purposely chooses to live by God’s laws, imitating his righteous grandfather and not his sinful father. The grandson, like the grandfather, **shall surely live** as a result of his own righteousness; but the father dies due to his own disobedience and depravity (see vv. 9, 13, 18).

18:19–32 In this passage, Ezekiel further clarifies his teaching on individual responsibility for sin by answering certain questions that reflect what his audience might be thinking in response to his previous message. God’s response to their questions through

and right, and has kept all My statutes and observed them, he shall surely live. ²⁰ The soul who sins shall die. "The son shall not bear the guilt of the father, nor the father bear the guilt of the son." The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, ²¹ and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself.

²¹ "But ^a if a wicked man turns from all his sins which he has committed, keeps all My statutes, and does what is lawful and right, he shall surely live; he shall not die. ²² None of the transgressions which he has committed shall be remembered against him; because of the righteousness which he has done, he shall ²³ live. ²³ Do I have any pleasure at all that the wicked should die?" says the Lord God, "and not that he should turn from his ways and live?"

²⁴ "But ^b when a righteous man turns away from his righteousness and commits iniquity, and does according to all the abominations that the wicked *man* does, shall he live? ^c All the righteousness which he has done shall not be remembered; because of the unfaithfulness of which he is guilty and the sin which he has committed, because of them he shall die.

²⁵ "Yet you say, ^d 'The way of the Lord is not fair.' Hear now, O house of Israel, is it not My way which is fair, and your ways which are not fair? ²⁶ When a righteous *man* turns away from his righteousness, commits iniquity, and dies in it, it is because of the iniquity which he has done that he dies. ²⁷ Again, ^e when a wicked *man* turns away from the wickedness which he committed, and does what is lawful and right, he preserves himself alive. ²⁸ Because he ^f considers and turns away from all the transgressions which he committed, he shall surely live; he shall not die. ²⁹ Yet the house of Israel says, 'The way of the Lord is not fair.' O

²⁰ ^a 2 Kin. 14:6; 22:18-20; Ezek. 18:4 ^b Deut. 24:16; 2 Kin. 14:6; 2 Chr. 25:4; Jer. 31:29, 30 ^c 1 Kin. 8:32; Is. 3:10, 11; [Matt. 16:27] ^d Rom. 2:6-9 ^e 21 ^x Ezek. 18:27; 33:12, 19 ^f 22 ^y Is. 43:25; Jer. 50:20; Ezek. 18:24; 33:16; Mic. 7:19 ^g [Ps. 18:20-24] ^h 23 ^o Lam. 3:33; [Ezek. 18:32; 33:11; 1 Tim. 2:4; 2 Pet. 3:9] ⁱ 24 ^b 1 Sam. 15:11; 2 Chr. 24:2, 17-22; Ezek. 3:20; 18:26; 33:18 ^c [2 Pet. 2:20] ^d 25 ^a Ezek. 18:29; 33:17, 20; Mal. 2:17; 3:13-15 ^e 26 ^e Ezek. 18:24 ^f 27 ^f Ezek. 18:21 ^g 28 ^g Ezek. 18:14 ^h 29 ^h Ezek. 18:25

³⁰ ⁱ Ezek. 7:3; 33:20 ^j [Matt. 3:2; Rev. 2:5] ^k 31 ^k Is. 1:16; 55:7; Eph. 4:22, 23 ^l Ps. 51:10; Jer. 32:39; Ezek. 11:19; 36:26 ^m 32 ^m Lam. 3:33; Ezek. 33:11; [2 Pet. 3:9] ⁿ [Prov. 4:2, 5, 6]

CHAPTER 19

¹ ^a Ezek. 26:17; 27:2 ^b 3 ^b Ezek. 19:2; 2 Kin. 23:31, 32 ^c 4 ^c 2 Kin. 23:33, 34; 2 Chr. 36:4 ^d 5 ^d 2 Kin. 23:34 ^e 6 ^e 2 Kin. 24:8, 9 ^f Ezek. 19:3 ^g 7 ^g LXX He stood in insolence; Tg. He destroyed its palaces; Vg. He learned to make widows

house of Israel, is it not My ways which are fair, and your ways which are not fair?"

³⁰ "Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways," says the Lord God. ³¹ "Repent, and turn from all your transgressions, so that iniquity will not be your ruin. ³¹ ^k Cast away from you all the transgressions which you have committed, and get yourselves a ^l new heart and a new spirit. For why should you die, O house of Israel? ³² For ^m I have no pleasure in the death of one who dies," says the Lord God. "Therefore turn and ⁿ live!"

Israel Degraded

19 "Moreover ^a take up a lamentation for the princes of Israel, ² and say:

- ^a What is your mother? A lioness:
She lay down among the lions;
Among the young lions she
nourished her cubs.
- ³ She brought up one of her cubs,
And ^b he became a young lion;
He learned to catch prey,
And he devoured men.
- ⁴ The nations also heard of him;
He was trapped in their pit,
And they brought him with chains to
the land of ^c Egypt.
- ⁵ 'When she saw that she waited, *that*
her hope was lost,
She took ^d another of her cubs *and*
made him a young lion.
- ⁶ ^e He roved among the lions,
And ^f became a young lion;
He learned to catch prey;
He devoured men.
- ⁷ ¹ He knew their desolate places,
And laid waste their cities;
The land with its fullness was
desolated
By the noise of his roaring.

Ezekiel is in part also composed of questions. **Live** and **die** refer to physical death and not eternal death, since this passage relates to the standards and stipulations of the Mosaic covenant (16:6; see also Lev. 18:5; Deut. 30:15-20; 2 Pet. 3:9). **turn . . . and live:** Everyone is judged equitably and individually. God never enjoys condemning a person, but is just and righteous in dispensing His judgments.

19:1 The **princes** were Judah's kings. Ezekiel likely turned his attention to these kings because he had just spoken (in ch. 18) of the relationship between fathers (leaders) and children (followers), and of the sins committed in Judah by powerful people.

19:2-10 Most likely the **lioness** and the **vine in your bloodline** (v. 10) both represented the nation of Israel since each was a "mother" of kings—the **cubs** and the **branches**. The vine and lion images are common symbols for Hebrew royalty and nationality (see 15:1-6; 17:1-10; Gen. 49:9; Num. 23:24; Ps. 80:8-16; Is. 5:1-7; Mic. 5:8). The first cub **brought . . . with chains to the land of Egypt** was Jehoahaz, who was captured and imprisoned by Pharaoh Necho in 609 B.C. (2 Kin. 23:31-34; 2 Chr. 36:1-4). The second cub that was **trapped in**

their pit was the destructive Jehoiachin, who gave out false hopes of revival and was taken captive by **the king of Babylon** (Nebuchadnezzar) in 597 B.C. (2 Kin. 25:27-30; 2 Chr. 36:9, 10).

Lamentation

(Heb. *qinyah*) (19:1, 14; 2 Sam. 1:17; Jer. 9:10) Strong's #7015

This noun refers to a type of poetic song with a distinctive meter, a dirge which was sung to express grief over someone's death. It is derived from a Hebrew verb that means "to sing a song of lament" (2 Sam. 1:17). Such songs would be sung during funeral rites. The prophets' use of the word was intended to suggest the coming death of Israel and other nations because of the inescapable condemnation they had incurred for their sin (Amos 5:1).

- ⁸ Then the nations set against him
from the provinces on every
side,
And spread their net over him;
^h He was trapped in their pit.
⁹ They put him in a cage with ² chains,
And brought him to the king of
Babylon;
They brought him in nets,
That his voice should no longer be
heard on ^j the mountains of
Israel.
- ¹⁰ Your mother was ^k like a vine in your
³ bloodline,
Planted by the waters,
^l Fruitful and full of branches
Because of many waters.
- ¹¹ She had strong branches for scepters
of rulers.
^m She towered in stature above the
thick branches,
And was seen in her height amid the
⁴ dense foliage.
- ¹² But she was ⁿ plucked up in fury,
She was cast down to the ground,
And the ^o east wind dried her fruit.
Her strong branches were broken
and withered;
The fire consumed them.
- ¹³ And now she is planted in the
wilderness,
In a dry and thirsty land.
- ¹⁴ Fire has come out from a rod of her
branches

⁸ 2 Kin. 24:2, 11
^h Ezek. 19:4
⁹ 2 Chr. 36:6; Jer.
22:18 / Ezek. 6:2
² Or hooks
¹⁰ ^k Ezek. 17:6
^l Deut. 8:7-9 ³ Lit.
blood, so with
MT, Syr., Vg.; LXX
like a flower on a
pomegranate tree;
Tg. in your likeness
¹¹ ^m Ezek. 31:3;
Dan. 4:11 ⁴ Or many
branches
¹² ⁿ Jer. 31:27, 28
^o Ezek. 17:10; Hos.
13:5
¹⁴ ^p Judg. 9:15;
2 Kin. 24:20; Ezek.
17:18

^q Lam. 2:5

CHAPTER 20

¹ ^a Ezek. 8:1, 11,
12; 14:1
³ ^b Ezek. 7:26; 14:3
⁴ ^c Ezek. 16:2; 22:2;
Matt. 23:32
⁵ ^d Ex. 6:6-8; Deut.
7:6 ^e Ex. 3:8; 4:31;
Deut. 4:34 ^f Ex.
20:2
⁶ ^e Ex. 3:8, 17; Deut.
8:7-9; Jer. 32:22
^h Ex. 3:8 ⁱ Ex. 3:8, 17;
13:5; 33:3; Ps. 48:2;
Jer. 11:5; 32:22;
Ezek. 20:15; Dan.
8:9; Zech. 7:14
⁷ / Ezek. 18:31
^k 2 Chr. 15:8

And devoured her fruit,
So that she has no strong branch—
a scepter for ruling.⁷

^q This is a lamentation, and has become
a lamentation.

The Rebellions of Israel

20 It came to pass in the seventh
year, in the fifth month, on the
tenth day of the month, that ^a certain of
the elders of Israel came to inquire of the
LORD, and sat before me. ² Then the word
of the LORD came to me, saying, ³ “Son of
man, speak to the elders of Israel, and say
to them, ‘Thus says the Lord God: “Have
you come to inquire of Me? As I live,”
says the Lord God, ^b “I will not be in-
quired of by you.”’ ⁴ Will you judge them,
son of man, will you judge *them*? Then
^c make known to them the abominations
of their fathers.

⁵ “Say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord
God: “On the day when ^d I chose Israel
and raised My hand in an oath to the
descendants of the house of Jacob, and
made Myself ^e known to them in the land
of Egypt, I raised My hand in an oath to
them, saying, ^f “I am the LORD your God.”
⁶ On that day I raised My hand in an oath
to them, ^g to bring them out of the land
of Egypt into a land that I had searched
out for them, ^h “flowing with milk and
honey,” ⁱ the glory of all lands. ⁷ Then I said
to them, ‘Each of you, ^j throw away ^k the
abominations which are before his eyes,

19:10–14 These verses mention the fruitful monarchical period of the past, but the focus was on the present distress and promised judgment. At this time, Judah had already experienced two invasions by Babylon, called the **east wind** (see 15:1–8; 19:5–9). Ezekiel and the other exiles were presently living in that desert land. Neither the current king Zedekiah (the **rod of her branches**) nor any other leaders were fit to rule. Judah’s rulers were responsible for the nation’s horrible condition (see Jer. 22:10–13). The immediate source of rebellion and the cause of imminent judgment was Zedekiah, who would be deported when Jerusalem was destroyed in 586 B.C. (2 Kin. 24; 25). **wilderness . . . dry and thirsty land**: To anyone who loved the covenantal promises focused on God’s worship in Jerusalem, any alternative to Jerusalem was akin to living in the desert.

abomination

(Heb. *shiqquts*) (20:7, 30; Dan. 12:11; Hos. 9:10) Strong’s #8251

The Hebrew noun translated *abomination* is from the verb meaning “to detest” (compare Lev. 7:21; 11:11). Typically it refers to ceremonially unclean foods and animals (8:10; Lev. 11:23; Is. 66:17). But it may also describe the detestable practices associated with pagan idol worship, including child sacrifice and ritual prostitution (1 Kin. 11:5–7; 2 Kin. 23:13; Jer. 7:30; 13:27). Hosea rightly observed that those who love abominations become like the unclean practices they love (Hos. 9:10). But the Lord had called the Israelites to a different and higher purpose: they were to remain pure and holy because their God was holy (Lev. 11:45).

20:1 The chronological note suggests a date of July–August 591 B.C. and the start of a new section and series of messages (see 8:1, which was 11 months earlier). The political context of this prophecy was Zedekiah’s foolish and sinful alignment with Egypt against Babylon in hopes of deliverance from Nebuchadnezzar’s attacks. The social context was that of exiled elders coming to Ezekiel to obtain a divine explanation of current events. They wanted to know if Egypt would save Judah from the Babylonians.

20:2–4 God explains to Ezekiel that the elders of Israel (v. 1) had forfeited any right to inquire of Him due to the **abominations of their fathers**. All people are responsible for their own sins, and this does not mean that these Hebrews were paying for sins their ancestors had committed. Instead, the present generation of Hebrews in exile had clearly shown their failure to learn practical lessons from history, and thus had condemned themselves to repeat many mistakes. These leaders came to God with questions, but the questions were foolish and demonstrated the people’s sinfulness. They showed that they were oblivious to the inconsistencies between what they were asking, their past practices, and God’s revealed promises and principles. In this chapter God gives a remedial review of their past.

20:5 I chose Israel: Here is the only use of this elective verb in Ezekiel. It signifies Israel’s sovereign selection for God’s eternal and temporal purposes. **raised My hand**: This image refers to the unconditional vows made by God to Abraham and later renewed with the nation He formed in Egypt from Abraham’s descendants (v. 9). That God “raised His hand” reveals His determination to maintain His covenant promise.

20:7 abominations: Elsewhere in Ezekiel this term is translated “detestable things.” See vv. 8, 30; 11:18.

and do not defile yourselves with ^lthe idols of Egypt. *I am the LORD your God.*⁸ But they rebelled against Me and would not ¹obey Me. They did not all cast away the abominations which were before their eyes, nor did they forsake the idols of Egypt. Then I said, ‘I will ^mpour out My fury on them and fulfill My anger against them in the midst of the land of Egypt.’⁹ But I acted for My name’s sake, that it should not be profaned before the Gentiles among whom they *were*, in whose sight I had made Myself ^oknown to them, to bring them out of the land of Egypt.

¹⁰“Therefore I ⁿmade them go out of the land of Egypt and brought them into the wilderness. ¹¹^q And I gave them My statutes and ²showed them My judgments, ^r“which, *if a man does, he shall live by them.*” ¹²Moreover I also gave them My ^sSabbaths, to be a sign between them and Me, that they might know that *I am the LORD who sanctifies them.* ¹³Yet the house of Israel ^trebelled against Me in the wilderness; they did not walk in My statutes; they ^udespised My judgments, ^v“which, *if a man does, he shall live by them;*” and they greatly ^wdefiled My Sabbaths. Then I said I would pour out My fury on them in the ^xwilderness, to consume them. ¹⁴^y But I acted for My name’s sake, that it should not be profaned before the Gentiles, in whose sight I had brought them out. ¹⁵So ^zI also raised My hand in an oath to them in the wilderness, that I would not bring them into the land which I had given *them*, ^a“flowing with milk and honey,” ^bthe glory of all lands, ¹⁶^cbecause they despised My judgments and did not walk in My statutes, but profaned My Sabbaths; for ^dtheir heart went after their idols. ¹⁷^e Nevertheless My eye spared them from destruction. I did not make an end of them in the wilderness.

⁷ ^f Lev. 18:3; Deut. 29:16; Josh. 24:14
⁸ ^g Deut. 7:8 ¹ Lit. listen to
⁹ ^h Num. 14:13
¹⁰ ⁱ Josh. 2:10; 9:9, 10
¹¹ ^j Ex. 13:18
¹² ^k Deut. 4:8; Neh. 9:13; Ps. 147:19
¹³ ^l Lev. 18:5; Ezek. 20:13; Rom. 10:5; [Gal. 3:12] ² Lit. made known to
¹⁴ ^m Ex. 20:8; Deut. 5:12; Neh. 9:14
¹⁵ ⁿ Num. 14:22; Ps. 78:40; Ezek. 20:8
¹⁶ ^o Prov. 1:25 ^p Lev. 18:5 ^q Ex. 16:27
¹⁷ ^r Num. 14:29; Ps. 106:23
¹⁸ ^s Ezek. 20:9, 20
¹⁹ ^t Num. 14:28; Ps. 95:11; 106:26 ^u Ex. 3:8 ^v Ezek. 20:6
²⁰ ^w Ezek. 20:13, 24
²¹ ^x Num. 15:39; Ps. 78:37; Amos 5:25; Acts 7:42
²² ^y [Ps. 78:38]

¹⁹ ^f Deut. 5:32
²⁰ ^g Is. 58:13, 14; Jer. 17:22
²¹ ^h Num. 25:1; Deut. 9:23 ⁱ Lev. 18:5
²² ^j Refrained from judgment
²³ ^k Lev. 26:33; Deut. 28:64; Ps. 106:27; Jer. 15:4
²⁴ ^l Ezek. 20:13, 16
²⁵ ^m Ezek. 6:9
²⁶ ⁿ Ps. 81:12; Rom. 1:24; 2 Thess. 2:11
²⁷ ^o 2 Kin. 17:17; 2 Chr. 28:3; Jer. 32:35; Ezek. 16:20
²⁸ ^p Ezek. 6:7; 20:12, 20
²⁹ ^q Lit. that open the womb
³⁰ ^r Num. 15:30; Is. 65:7; Rom. 2:24

¹⁸“But I said to their children in the wilderness, ‘Do not walk in the statutes of your fathers, nor observe their judgments, nor defile yourselves with their idols. ¹⁹*I am the LORD your God: Walk in My statutes, keep My judgments, and do them;*’ ²⁰^g hallow My Sabbaths, and they will be a sign between Me and you, that you may know that *I am the LORD your God.*”

²¹“Notwithstanding, ^hthe children rebelled against Me; they did not walk in My statutes, and were not careful to observe My judgments, ⁱ“which, *if a man does, he shall live by them;*” but they profaned My Sabbaths. Then I said I would pour out My fury on them and fulfill My anger against them in the wilderness. ²²Nevertheless I ³withdrew My hand and acted for My name’s sake, that it should not be profaned in the sight of the Gentiles, in whose sight I had brought them out. ²³Also I raised My hand in an oath to those in the wilderness, that ^jI would scatter them among the Gentiles and disperse them throughout the countries, ²⁴^kbecause they had not executed My judgments, but had despised My statutes, profaned My Sabbaths, and ^ltheir eyes were fixed on their fathers’ idols.

²⁵“Therefore ^mI also gave them up to statutes *that were* not good, and judgments by which they could not live; ²⁶and I pronounced them unclean because of their ritual gifts, in that they caused all ⁴their firstborn to pass ⁿthrough *the fire*, that I might make them desolate and that they ^omight know that *I am the LORD.*”

²⁷“Therefore, son of man, speak to the house of Israel, and say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord God: “In this too your fathers have ^pblasphemed Me, by being unfaithful to Me. ²⁸When I brought them into the land *concerning* which I had

20:8 the idols of Egypt . . . in the midst of the land of Egypt:

Here God spoke of something not explained in the Book of Exodus; that is, the Israelites had engaged in the idolatry of the Egyptians during their sojourn there. Thus, though not mentioned elsewhere, there was the threat of divine retribution against the people before the time of the Exodus (which is mentioned in v. 10).

20:9 acted for My name’s sake: God vindicated His grace, power, and trustworthiness before the Egyptians by fulfilling His promises to defeat Egypt and deliver even His disobedient people (His people who were supposed to worship God). On God acting for the sake of His name and honor, see also Is. 48:9–11 (compare 2 Tim. 2:13).

20:10, 11 Following their exodus from slavery in Egypt, God began to sanctify the Israelites by revealing to them a code of Law and entering a covenant relationship with them on a Creator-creature basis. **if a man does, he shall live:** This does not teach that eternal salvation can be earned by good works, but that the quality of the believer’s physical and spiritual life on earth are related to his or her obedience to the living God. God’s **statutes** and **judgments** were given to His people as a means of maintaining their walk with the living God, not as the basis for establishing their salvation.

20:12 My Sabbaths: This is an important verse (emphasized again in v. 20) for understanding the Sabbath (see Ex. 20:8–11; Deut. 5:12–15). Sabbath means “rest.” That is, the Sabbath was a day to cease all ordinary work or labor, as clearly emphasized in Ex. 20:8–11; Deut. 5:12–15. This verse explains the purpose of the Sabbath; it was to serve as a **sign** or a potent symbol of God’s covenantal relationship with His people Israel.

20:20 hallow: This word means “to treat as holy,” “to observe as distinct,” and “to consecrate.” God commands that His **Sabbaths** be continually maintained by His people as sacred—distinct and separate from all ordinary days.

20:27 During the conquest and settlement of Canaan (the period described in Joshua and Judges), Israel inherited the Promised Land. Yet again God’s people were obstinate and guilty of blasphemous disloyalty because they served false gods (Num. 15:30, 31).

20:28, 29 high hills . . . thick trees: These phrases refer to the locations of altars in Canaan for idol worship. Many of the exiles had visited such places in the past, and many in Judah were still doing so. **high place:** The name **Bamah** is a transliteration of the Hebrew word for *high place* (see 16:15–34).

raised My hand in an oath to give them, and ^athey saw all the high hills and all the thick trees, there they offered their sacrifices and provoked Me with their offerings. There they also sent up their ^rsweet aroma and poured out their drink offerings. ²⁹ Then I said to them, ‘What is this ⁵high place to which you go?’ So its name is called ⁶Bamah to this day.’’
³⁰ Therefore say to the house of Israel, ‘Thus says the Lord God: “Are you defiling yourselves in the manner of your ^sfathers, and committing harlotry according to their ‘abominations?’ ³¹ For when you offer ^uyour gifts and make your sons pass through the fire, you defile yourselves with all your idols, even to this day. So shall I be inquired of by you, O house of Israel? As I live,” says the Lord God, “I will ^vnot be inquired of by you. ³² ^wWhat you have in your mind shall never be, when you say, ‘We will be like the Gentiles, like the families in other countries, serving wood and stone.’

God Will Restore Israel

³³ “As I live,” says the Lord God, “surely with a mighty hand, ^xwith an outstretched arm, and with fury poured out, I will rule over you. ³⁴ I will bring you out from the peoples and gather you out of the countries where you are scattered, with a mighty hand, with an outstretched arm, and with fury poured out. ³⁵ And I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples, and there ^yI will plead My case with you face to face. ³⁶ ^zJust as I pleaded My case with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so I will plead My case with you,” says the Lord God.

³⁷ “I will make you ^apass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of

²⁸ ^q 1 Kin. 14:23; Ps. 78:58; Is. 57:5-7; Jer. 3:6; Ezek. 6:13
^r Ezek. 16:19
²⁹ ^s Place for pagan worship
⁶ Lit. High Place
³⁰ ^t Judg. 2:19 ¹ Jer. 7:26; 16:12
³¹ ^u Ps. 106:37-39; Jer. 7:31; Ezek. 16:20; 20:26 ^v Ezek. 20:3
³² ^w Ezek. 11:5
³³ ^x Jer. 21:5
³⁵ ^y Jer. 2:9, 35; Ezek. 17:20
³⁶ ^z Num. 14:21-23, 28
³⁷ ^a Lev. 27:32; Jer. 33:13

^b Ps. 89:30-34; Ezek. 16:60, 62
³⁸ ^c Ezek. 34:17; Amos 9:9, 10; Zech. 13:8, 9; [Mal. 3:3; 4:1-3; Matt. 25:32]
^d Jer. 44:14
³⁹ ^e Judg. 10:14; Ps. 81:12; Amos 4:4 ^f Is. 1:13-15; Ezek. 23:38
⁴⁰ ^g Is. 2:2, 3; Ezek. 17:23; Mic. 4:1
^h Ezek. 37:22 ⁱ Is. 56:7; 60:7; Ezek. 43:27; Zech. 8:20-22; Mal. 3:4; [Rom. 12:1] ^j offerings
⁴¹ ^k Eph. 5:2; Phil. 4:18
⁴² ^l Ezek. 36:23; 38:23 ^m Ezek. 11:17; 34:13; 36:24
⁴³ ⁿ Ezek. 16:61
⁴⁴ ^o Lev. 26:39; Ezek. 6:9; Hos. 5:15 ^p Or despise
⁴⁴ ^o Ezek. 24:24
^p Ezek. 36:22
⁴⁶ ^q Ezek. 21:2; Amos 7:16

the ^bcovenant; ³⁸ ^cI will purge the rebels from among you, and those who transgress against Me; I will bring them out of the country where they dwell, but ^dthey shall not enter the land of Israel. Then you will know that I *am* the LORD.

³⁹ “As for you, O house of Israel,” thus says the Lord God: ^e“Go, serve every one of you his idols—and hereafter—if you will not obey Me; ^fbut profane My holy name no more with your gifts and your idols. ⁴⁰ For ^gon My holy mountain, on the mountain height of Israel,” says the Lord God, “there ^hall the house of Israel, all of them in the land, shall serve Me; there ⁱI will accept them, and there I will require your offerings and the firstfruits of your ^jsacrifices, together with all your holy things. ⁴¹ I will accept you as a ^ksweet aroma when I bring you out from the peoples and gather you out of the countries where you have been scattered; and I will be hallowed in you before the Gentiles. ⁴² ^kThen you shall know that I *am* the LORD, ^lwhen I bring you into the land of Israel, into the country for which I raised My hand in an oath to give to your fathers. ⁴³ And ^mthere you shall remember your ways and all your doings with which you were defiled; and ⁿyou shall ^oloathe yourselves in your own sight because of all the evils that you have committed. ⁴⁴ ^oThen you shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I have dealt with you ^pfor My name’s sake, not according to your wicked ways nor according to your corrupt doings, O house of Israel,” says the Lord God.’”

Fire in the Forest

⁴⁵ Furthermore the word of the LORD came to me, saying, ⁴⁶ ^q“Son of man, set

20:30 defiling . . . committing: These particples stressed the continual, ongoing nature of Israel’s disobedient disloyalty.

20:32 like the Gentiles: Chosen to be a nation separate from sin and secular ways—a special instrument to reveal God’s glory—Israel’s consistent tendency was to identify with the neighboring, ungodly nations and to take on their idolatry (see Ex. 19:5, 6; Deut. 17:14; 26:16–19; 31:21; 1 Sam. 8:5; Ps. 135:4).

20:33–36 The judgment of captivity in Babylon had begun in the deportations of 605 and 597 B.C. and would be continued with Jerusalem’s fall in 586 B.C. However, God also promised to restore Judah and to judge her enemies with fury (see Deut. 4:34). This refers to the Persian conquest of Babylon in 539 B.C. and to the three returns of the Jews to their land and the rebuilding of their homeland (538—c. 330 B.C.; see the books of Ezra and Nehemiah). Yet Israel would again be taken captive and made to wander throughout the nations: **wilderness of the peoples.** This section refers to the time of Roman domination, which began with Pompey taking Jerusalem in 63 B.C. **mighty hand . . . outstretched arm:** The language repeats the phrasings used in the Exodus from Egypt (see Ex. 7:5; 15:6). **I will bring you out:** Leaving Babylon would be a second Exodus, celebrated prophetically by Isaiah as well (see Is. 40:1).

20:37, 38 pass under the rod: This is the way a shepherd counts and controls his sheep (see Lev. 27:32; Jer. 33:13). A rod sometimes

speaks of discipline (Ps. 89:32), but here it is parallel to the idea of **bring you into the bond of the covenant.** God’s lordship of His people for personal, purposeful relationship is in view. This future bonding with God will be a time when Israel is cleansed of spiritual idolaters (see v. 39; 16:15–34). At that time, the people will finally **know that God is the LORD** (see 16:63; 36:25–38; Jer. 31:31–34; Dan. 12:10).

20:39 The command **Go, serve every one of you his idols** is an ironic command; the rest of the verse indicates that God was giving the stubborn people over to what they had decided. God grants each one a destiny consistent with his or her decisions. Then God looks to an unspecified future time when Israel will glorify His name, meaning “His reputation” among the nations (vv. 40–44).

20:40–44 The future repentant, renewed, and regathered Israel will be characterized by: (1) a return to the land of Israel and an acceptable, sacrificial system of worship (see chs. 40–48); (2) a revived, personal knowledge of its sovereign and faithful Lord; (3) a renunciation of former sins; and (4) a recognition that God’s grace governs the nation’s history of sin and salvation. **My holy mountain:** Reference is made to the glorious central location for worship in Israel—Mt. Zion in Jerusalem (Ps. 2:6; 78:68; Is. 35:10; 60:14).

20:46, 47 The **forest land, the South** refers to the land of Judah—the southern kingdom—which had more trees than than now. **from**

your face toward the south; ⁹preach against the south and prophesy against the forest land, the ¹South, ⁴⁷and say to the forest of the South, ‘Hear the word of the LORD! Thus says the Lord God: “Behold, ¹I will kindle a fire in you, and it shall devour ^severy green tree and every dry tree in you; the blazing flame shall not be quenched, and all faces ^tfrom the south to the north shall be scorched by it. ⁴⁸All flesh shall see that I, the LORD, have kindled it; it shall not be quenched.”’”

⁴⁹Then I said, “Ah, Lord God! They say of me, ‘Does he not speak ^uparables?’”

Babylon, the Sword of God

21 And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, ^{2a}“Son of man, set your face toward Jerusalem, ^bpreach ¹against the holy places, and prophesy against the land of Israel; ³and say to the land of Israel, ‘Thus says the LORD: “Behold, I *am* ^cagainst you, and I will draw My sword out of its sheath and cut off both ^drighteous and wicked from you. ⁴Because I will cut off both righteous and wicked from you, therefore My sword shall go out of its sheath against all flesh ^efrom south *to* north, ⁵that all flesh may know that I, the LORD, have drawn My sword out of its sheath; it ^fshall not return anymore.”’” ^{6g}Sigh therefore, son of man, with ^{2a}a breaking heart, and sigh with bitterness before their eyes. ⁷And it shall be when they say to you, ‘Why are you sighing?’ that you shall answer, ‘Because of the news; when it comes, every heart will melt, ^hall hands will be feeble, every spirit will faint, and all knees will be weak *as* water. Behold, it is coming and shall be brought to pass,’ says the Lord God.”

⁸Again the word of the LORD came to me, saying, ⁹“Son of man, prophesy and say, ‘Thus says the LORD! Say:

⁴⁶ ⁹proclaim, lit. drop ¹ Heb. Negev
⁴⁷ ¹ Is. 9:18, 19; Jer. 21:14 ⁵ Luke 23:31
¹ Ezek. 21:4
⁴⁹ ^u Ezek. 12:9; 17:2; Matt. 13:13; John 16:25

CHAPTER 21

² ^a Ezek. 20:46
^b Amos 7:16
¹ proclaim, lit. drop
³ ^c Jer. 21:13; Ezek. 5:8; Nah. 2:13; 3:5
^d Job 9:22
⁴ ^e Jer. 12:12; Ezek. 20:47
⁵ ^f [Is. 45:23; 55:11]
⁶ ^g Is. 22:4; Jer. 4:19; Luke 19:41
² Emotional distress, lit. the breaking of your loins
⁷ ^h Ezek. 7:17

⁹ ¹ Deut. 32:41; Ezek. 5:1; 21:15, 28
¹¹ ¹ Ezek. 21:19
¹² ^k Jer. 31:19
¹³ ¹ Job 9:23; 2 Cor. 8:2 ^m Ezek. 21:27
¹⁴ ⁿ Num. 24:10; Ezek. 6:11 ^o 1 Kin. 20:30
¹⁵ ^p Ezek. 21:10, 28
¹⁶ ^q Ezek. 14:17
³ Lit. Sharpen yourself! or Unite yourself!

- ⁱ“A sword, a sword is sharpened
And also polished!
¹⁰ Sharpened to make a dreadful slaughter,
Polished to flash like lightning!
Should we then make mirth?
It despises the scepter of My son,
As it *does* all wood.
¹¹ And He has given it to be polished,
That it may be handled;
This sword is sharpened, and it is polished
To be given into the hand of ^jthe slayer.’
¹²“Cry and wail, son of man;
For it will be against My people,
Against all the princes of Israel.
Terrors including the sword will be against My people;
Therefore ^kstrike *your* thigh.
¹³“Because it *is* ^la testing,
And what if *the sword* despises even the scepter?
^m*The scepter* shall be no *more*,”
says the Lord God.
¹⁴“You therefore, son of man, prophesy,
And ⁿstrike *your* hands together.
The third time let the sword do double damage.
It is the sword *that* slays,
The sword that slays the great *men*,
That enters their ^oprivate chambers.
¹⁵ I have set the point of the sword against all their gates,
That the heart may melt and many may stumble.
Ah! ^p*It is* made bright;
It is grasped for slaughter:
¹⁶“Swords^q ³at the ready!
Thrust right!
Set your blade!

the south to the north: This figure of speech expresses totality, meaning “everywhere.”

21:3–5 both righteous and wicked: This pairing shows that God was going to allow the dreadful temporal consequences of sin to affect everyone in the land, both faithful and unfaithful.

21:6 breaking heart: The phrase translates words that literally mean “breaking loins,” suggesting great emotional upheaval.

21:7 when they say: This means “when they ask” (see 12:9).

21:9–11 The Babylonian army led by Nebuchadnezzar—the sword—is pictured as ready and moving swiftly. While vv. 9–17 are written as Hebrew poetry, the lines actually meant to be sung may have been limited to these in vv. 9–11. **My son:** In this context, the words refer to Judah (see “My people” in v. 12). If the people reacted with **mirth**, it would show that they mistakenly believed that such judgment would never come on God’s people and must therefore be meant for an enemy nation.

21:12 Cry and wail . . . strike your thigh: Ezekiel was told to add verbal groans and a physical gesture to his musical message.

In that culture, these actions displayed great grief and sorrow (Jer. 31:19).

21:13 Israel failed a test. The **sword** would strike God’s people, specifically the nation’s rulers (the meaning of the word **scepter**). These words drew upon the messianic implications of Gen. 49:9, 10 and the promises of the Davidic covenant in 2 Sam. 7. The Jews had misinterpreted these promises to mean that their nation would never fall. Because of their sin, however, the Davidic line of kings would be interrupted. False messianic hopes related to Judah were corrected when Jerusalem was overthrown in 586 B.C. by Nebuchadnezzar (see vv. 25–27).

21:14–17 Ezekiel was commanded to clap (see 6:11). The order **the third time let the sword do double damage** was a numeric device (see Prov. 6:16) used here to emphasize the extent and effectiveness of the sword’s (or Babylon’s) employment against Judah. **I also will beat My fists** pictures God clapping along with Ezekiel. God would applaud the fact that even evil events can be made to serve His purposes and plans (see Jer. 27:5).

Thrust left—
Wherever your ⁴edge is ordered!

¹⁷“I also will ^rbeat My fists together,
And ^sI will cause My fury to rest;
I, the LORD, have spoken.”

¹⁸The word of the LORD came to me again, saying: ¹⁹“And son of man, appoint for yourself two ways for the sword of the king of Babylon to go; both of them shall go from the same land. Make a sign; put *it* at the head of the road to the city. ²⁰Appoint a road for the sword to go to ^tRabbah of the Ammonites, and to Judah, into fortified Jerusalem. ²¹For the king of Babylon stands at the parting of the road, at the fork of the two roads, to use divination: he shakes the arrows, he consults the ⁵images, he looks at the liver. ²²In his right hand is the divination for Jerusalem: to set up battering rams, to call for a slaughter, to ^ulift the voice with shouting, ^vto set battering rams against the gates, to heap up a *siege* mound, and to build a wall. ²³And it will be to them like a false divination in the eyes of those who ^whave sworn oaths with them; but he will bring their iniquity to remembrance, that they may be taken.

²⁴“Therefore thus says the Lord God: ‘Because you have made your iniquity to be remembered, in that your transgressions are uncovered, so that in all your doings your sins appear—because you have come to remembrance, you shall be taken in hand.

²⁵“Now to you, O ^xprofane, wicked

¹⁶ ⁴Lit. *face*
¹⁷ ^rEzek. 22:13
^s Ezek. 5:13; 16:42;
24:13
²⁰ ^tDeut. 3:11; Jer.
49:2; Ezek. 25:5;
Amos 1:14
²¹ ⁵Heb. *teraphim*
²² ^wJer. 51:14
^v Ezek. 4:2
²³ ^uEzek. 17:16, 18
²⁵ ^x2 Chr. 36:13;
Jer. 52:2; Ezek.
12:10; 17:19

^y Ezek. 21:29
²⁶ ^zLuke 1:52
²⁷ ^aGen. 49:10;
[Luke 1:32, 33; John
1:49] ^bPs. 2:6; 72:7,
10; [Jer. 23:5, 6;
Ezek. 34:24; 37:24]
^cOr *distortion, Ruin*
²⁸ ^cJer. 25:21;
49:1-6; Ezek. 25:1-7;
Amos 1:13; Zeph.
2:8-11
²⁹ ^dJer. 27:9; Ezek.
12:24; 13:6-9; 22:28
^e Job 18:20; Ps.
37:17; Is. 10:3; Ezek.
7:2, 3, 7
³⁰ ^fJer. 47:6, 7
^g Gen. 15:14 ^hEzek.
16:3 ⁷Or *origin*
³¹ ⁱEzek. 7:8

prince of Israel, ^ywhose day has come, whose iniquity *shall* end, ²⁶thus says the Lord God:

“Remove the turban, and take off the crown;
Nothing *shall remain* the same.
²⁷Exalt the humble, and humble the exalted.

²⁷ ⁶Overthrown, overthrown,
I will make it overthrown!
^aIt shall be no *longer*,
Until He comes whose right it is,
And I will give it to ^bHim.”

A Sword Against the Ammonites

²⁸“And you, son of man, prophesy and say, ‘Thus says the Lord God ^cconcerning the Ammonites and concerning their reproach,’ and say:

‘A sword, a sword *is* drawn,
Polished for slaughter,
For consuming, for flashing—
²⁹While they ^dsee false visions for you,
While they divine a lie to you,
To bring you on the necks of the wicked, the slain
^eWhose day has come,
Whose iniquity *shall* end.

³⁰ ^fReturn *it* to its sheath.
^gI will judge you
In the place where you were created,
^hIn the land of your ⁷nativity.
³¹ I will ⁱpour out My indignation on you;

21:19, 20 Ezekiel was instructed to draw a map to depict the path of the coming conquerors. The **king of Babylon** is Nebuchadnezzar; the **same land** is Babylon. **Make a sign:** Ezekiel was to place a signpost at a fork in the road leading to the capital cities of Ammon—**Rabbah**—and Judah—**Jerusalem**.

21:21 Three ancient pagan arts for seeking divine guidance would be used by Nebuchadnezzar to determine which city to attack. **shakes the arrows:** This was a method of casting lots using arrows inscribed with names. They were shaken about in the quiver and then dropped to the ground like throwing dice. **consults the images:** This refers to the teraphim or household idols (see Gen. 31:19; Judg. 18:14; 1 Sam. 19:13; Hos. 3:4). **looks at the liver:** Sheep livers from sacrificed animals were studied. The shades and shapes of various sections of the organ were the basis for a positive or negative prediction.

21:22 That Nebuchadnezzar’s answer coincided with God’s promises and predictions for Jerusalem did not mean that his **divination** was acceptable. It merely demonstrated that God is sovereign while individuals remain responsible for all choices, good or bad (Gen. 45:4–8; 50:20; Dan. 2:20–23; 4:34–37; Rom. 8:28).

21:23, 24 The Judeans in their pride and false sense of security in the treaties (**sworn oaths**) would conclude that the king received a **false divination** (see vv. 21, 22; 2 Kin. 24:20). However, the verdict had been pronounced: Jerusalem would be **taken**. Nebuchadnezzar would be God’s instrument to punish the people’s rebellion (see 7:3, 4).

21:25 The **prince of Israel** Zedekiah would come to its **end** by being captured in 586 B.C. (see 7:27; 12:9, 10, 11–14).

21:26, 27 The **turban** (see Ex. 28:4, 37–39) and the **crown** stand for the priesthood and the kingship. Both would be removed from Judah. **overthrown:** This word means “wrecked” or “ruined” and is used three times consecutively in the Hebrew text to underscore the comprehensive and intensive nature of the destruction. The priestly and kingly offices would not return until the coming of Him **whose right it is**—the Messiah (see Gen. 49:10; Heb. 5–7).

21:28 Ammon was east of Judah between the Jabbok to the north and the Arnon to the south. While Jehoikim was king (608–598 B.C.; 2 Kin. 24:2), the **Ammonites** joined other nations east of the Jordan in raiding Judean territory, in return for protection from Nebuchadnezzar. Later, during the reign of Zedekiah (c. 593 B.C.), Ammon, Moab, Edom, and others conspired against Babylon, but with false hopes of help from Egypt (Jer. 27:3–11). **their reproach:** This was the Ammonites’ ridicule of Judah and delight over the destruction of Jerusalem, especially the temple (see 25:3, 6; 36:15; Obad. 10–14; Zeph. 2:8). The **sword** bringing judgment was either Nebuchadnezzar’s army (see vv. 9, 10, 19, 20; 25:4) or the Ammonites who had been led to believe they would be involved in Judah’s defeat (see v. 29).

21:29 Ezekiel pronounced that Ammonite prophecies of victory and security from a fate similar to Judah’s were **false visions**. The slain Judeans would be joined by Ammonite corpses.

21:30 I will judge you: This is God’s prediction for Ammon and the Ammonites. How it would be done is the subject of vv. 31, 32.

21:31, 32 The **brutal men** are defined as “the men of the East” in 25:4. The fall of Jerusalem meant only that Judah would be judged first. Some Judeans took refuge in Ammon (see Jer. 41:1–3). God

I will ^jblow against you with the fire of My wrath,
And deliver you into the hands of
brutal men *who are* skillful to
^kdestroy.

³² You shall be fuel for the fire;
Your blood shall be in the midst of
the land.

^lYou shall not be remembered,
For I the LORD have spoken.’”

Sins of Jerusalem

22 Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying, ²“Now, son of man, ^awill you judge, will you judge ^bthe bloody city? Yes, show her all her abominations! ³Then say, ‘Thus says the Lord God: “The city sheds ^cblood in her own midst, that her time may come; and she makes idols within herself to defile herself. ⁴You have become guilty by the blood which you have ^dshed, and have defiled yourself with the idols which you have made. You have caused your days to draw near, and have come to the end of your years; ^etherefore I have made you a reproach to the nations, and a mockery to all countries. ⁵Those near and those far from you will mock you as ^finfamous and full of tumult.

⁶“Look, ^fthe princes of Israel: each one has used his ²power to shed blood in you. ⁷In you they have ^gmade light of father and mother; in your midst they have ^hoppressed the stranger; in you they have mistreated the ³fatherless and the widow. ⁸You have despised My holy things and ⁱprofaned My Sabbaths. ⁹In you are ^jmen who slander to cause bloodshed; ^kin you are those who eat on the mountains; in your midst they commit lewdness. ¹⁰In you men ^luncover their fathers’ nakedness; in you they violate women who are ^mset apart during their impurity. ¹¹One commits abomination ⁿwith his neighbor’s wife; ^oanother lewd-

³¹ / Ps. 18:15; Is. 30:33; Ezek. 22:20, 21; Hag. 1:9 ^k Jer. 6:22, 23; 51:20, 21; Hab. 1:6-10
³² ^l Ezek. 25:10

CHAPTER 22

² ^a Ezek. 20:4
^b Nah. 3:1
³ ^c Ezek. 24:6, 7
⁴ ^d 2 Kin. 21:16; Ezek. 24:7, 8 ^e Deut. 28:37; 1 Kin. 9:7; Ezek. 5:14; Dan. 9:16
⁵ ^f ¹ Lit. *defiled of name*
⁶ ^g Is. 1:23; Ezek. 22:27; Mic. 3:1-3; Zeph. 3:3 ² ^h Lit. *arm*
⁷ ^h Ex. 20:12; Lev. 20:9; Deut. 5:16; 27:16 ^h Ex. 22:22; Jer. 5:28; Ezek. 22:25; Mal. 3:5 ³ ⁱ Lit. *orphan*
⁸ ⁱ Lev. 19:30
⁹ ^j Lev. 19:16; Jer. 9:4 ^k Ezek. 18:6, 11
¹⁰ ^j Lev. 18:7, 8
^m Lev. 18:19; 20:18; Ezek. 18:6
¹¹ ⁿ Lev. 18:20; Jer. 5:8; Ezek. 18:11
^o Lev. 18:15

^p Lev. 18:9
¹² ^q Ex. 23:8; Deut. 16:19; 22:25; Mic. 7:2, 3 ^r Ex. 22:25
¹³ Deut. 32:18; Ps. 106:21; Jer. 3:21; Ezek. 23:35
¹⁴ ^r Ezek. 21:17
¹⁵ ^s Ezek. 21:7
¹⁶ ^t Ezek. 17:24
¹⁷ ^u Deut. 4:27; Neh. 1:8; Ezek. 20:23; Zech. 7:14
¹⁸ ^v Ezek. 23:27, 48
¹⁹ ^v Ps. 9:16
²⁰ ^z Ps. 119:119; Is. 1:22; Jer. 6:23; Lam. 4:1 ^a Prov. 17:3; Is. 48:10
²¹ ^b Is. 1:25; Jer. 9:7
²² ^c Ezek. 20:8, 33; Hos. 5:10

ly defiles his daughter-in-law; and another in you violates his sister, his father’s ^pdaughter. ¹²In you ^qthey take bribes to shed blood; ^ryou take usury and increase; you have made profit from your neighbors by extortion, and ^shave forgotten Me,” says the Lord God.

¹³“Behold, therefore, I ^tbeat My fists at the dishonest profit which you have made, and at the bloodshed which has been in your midst. ¹⁴“Can your heart endure, or can your hands remain strong, in the days when I shall deal with you? ^vI, the LORD, have spoken, and will do it. ¹⁵“I will scatter you among the nations, disperse you throughout the countries, and ^xremove your filthiness completely from you. ¹⁶You shall defile yourself in the sight of the nations; then ^yyou shall know that I *am* the LORD.”’”

Israel in the Furnace

¹⁷The word of the LORD came to me, saying, ¹⁸“Son of man, ^zthe house of Israel has become dross to Me; they *are* all bronze, tin, iron, and lead, in the midst of a ^afurnace; they have become dross from silver. ¹⁹Therefore thus says the Lord God: ‘Because you have all become dross, therefore behold, I will gather you into the midst of Jerusalem. ²⁰As men gather silver, bronze, iron, lead, and tin into the midst of a furnace, to blow fire on it, to ^bmelt it; so I will gather you in My anger and in My fury, and I will leave you there and melt you. ²¹Yes, I will gather you and blow on you with the fire of My wrath, and you shall be melted in its midst. ²²As silver is melted in the midst of a furnace, so shall you be melted in its midst; then you shall know that I, the LORD, have ^cpoured out My fury on you.’”

Israel’s Wicked Leaders

²³And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, ²⁴“Son of man, say to her:

remembered Ammon’s animosity and foretold its future as a place that **shall not be remembered**. The events of Jer. 41 led to a Babylonian expedition against Ammon in which the capital city Rabbah was sacked and many inhabitants deported (see 25:1-7). Ammon was later invaded by Arabs and its autonomy ceased. Eventually it was absorbed into the Persian Empire.

22:1-5 These verses focus on the sins of Jerusalem, principally bloodshed (social sin) as a result of idolatry (spiritual sin). A problem in the vertical relationship with God inevitably leads to some degree of injustice and injury in horizontal, human affairs. **You have caused your days to draw near**: The city was ripe for judgment. When such hypocrisy is exposed and punishment is executed before the world, God’s people become lasting objects of ridicule.

22:6-12 Jerusalem’s **princes** had shed the blood of innocent people (see 7:27; 11:1; 12:10; 19:1; 21:13; see also 2 Kin. 21:16; 23:36, 37; 24:1-4, 18, 19). These evil leaders had been: (1) taking advantage of parents and the weak (see Ex. 20:12; 22:21-24; 23:9; Lev. 19:3; Deut. 24:17); (2) rejecting God and His covenant, leading to ungodliness

and inhumanity (see Ex. 20:8); (3) murdering the innocent by slandering them (see Lev. 19:16); (4) preferring idolatrous religion and its immoral rituals (see 22:1-5; Deut. 12:1, 2; 16:21, 22); (5) engaging in sexual immorality with **neighbors**, family, and relatives (see Lev. 18:6-23; 20:10-21); and (6) loving money and using it to get ahead of fellow citizens (see 18:5-9; Ex. 23:8; Deut. 23:19, 20; 24:6, 10-12; Matt. 6:24; 1 Tim. 6:5-10).

22:13-16 God reveals His planned actions against Jerusalem and Judah. The expression **beat My fists** (see 21:14-17) shows great anger. **Defile yourself** refers to the desecration and destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians (2 Kin. 24:13; 25:9, 13-21).

22:17-22 These verses are primarily about God’s chastisement of His sinful people through the burning of Jerusalem by the Babylonians (2 Kin. 25:9). Yet the verses also point to the fiery ordeals and trials that force all of us into a more perfect relationship with our Lord (see v. 22; Ps. 66:10; Jer. 9:7; Dan. 11:35; 12:10; Zech. 13:9; Mal. 3:1-3; James 1:2-4).

22:24 This verse echoes the promises of Deut. 28:12, 24, where the



Iron

This mineral is actually a metal obtained from certain rocks or ores. Iron occurs in a great variety of minerals. Much of the color of other minerals is due to the presence of iron, which has a steel-gray color with a metallic luster.

When the Philistines learned the secret of smelting iron (about 1200 B.C.), iron became widely used throughout the ancient world. Iron had definitely been in use during the Israelite conquest of the land of Canaan (Josh. 6:24; Judg. 1:19; 4:3). The Philistines became skilled ironsmiths, eventually controlling most of Canaan and later conquering Israel, prohibiting their use of iron (1 Sam. 13:19; 22). After the Israelites' victory over the Philistines, iron became widespread in Palestine (Ezek. 22:18, 20; 27:12).

Iron ore was plentiful in Palestine, Syria, Cyprus, and Asia Minor. Iron gradually replaced copper and bronze for farming implements, weapons, armor, and tools.



Iron Ax Head, Megiddo, 975–925 B.C.

Baker Photo Archive, courtesy of the Oriental Institute Museum, University of Chicago

‘You *are* a land that is ^dnot ^acleansed or rained on in the day of indignation.’ ^{25e}The conspiracy of her ⁵prophets in her midst is like a roaring lion tearing the prey; they ^fhave devoured ⁶people; ^gthey have taken treasure and precious things; they have made many widows in her midst. ^{26h}Her priests have ⁷violated My law and ⁱprofaned My holy things; they have not ^jdistinguished between the holy and unholy, nor have they made known *the difference* between the unclean and the clean; and they have hidden their eyes from My Sabbaths, so that I am pro-

^{24 d} Is. 9:13; Jer. 2:30; Ezek. 24:13; Zeph. 3:2 ^a So with MT, Syr., Vg.; LXX showered upon ^{25 e} Jer. 11:9; Hos. 6:9 ^f Matt. 23:14 ^g Mic. 3:11; Zeph. 3:3, 4 ⁵ So with MT, Vg.; LXX princes; Tg. scribes ⁶ Lit. souls ^{26 h} Jer. 32:32; Lam. 4:3; Mal. 2:8 ⁱ 1 Sam. 2:29 ^j Lev. 10:10 ⁷ Lit. done violence to ^{27 k} Is. 1:23;

fanned among them. ²⁷Her ^kprinces in her midst *are* like wolves tearing the prey, to shed blood, to destroy ⁸people, and to get dishonest gain. ^{28l}Her prophets plastered them with untempered mortar, ^mseeing false visions, and divining ⁿlies for them, saying, ‘Thus says the Lord God,’ when the LORD had not spoken. ²⁹The people of the land have used oppressions, committed robbery, and mistreated the poor and needy; and they wrongfully ^ooppress the stranger. ^{30p}So I sought for a man among them who would ^qmake a wall, and ^rstand in the gap before Me on behalf of the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found no one. ³¹Therefore I have ^spoured out My indignation on them; I have consumed them with the fire of My wrath; and I have recompensed ^ttheir deeds on their own heads,” says the Lord God.

Two Harlot Sisters

23 The word of the LORD came again to me, saying:

- ² “Son of man, there were ^atwo women, The daughters of one mother.
^{3 b} They committed harlotry in Egypt, They committed harlotry in ^ctheir youth;
 Their breasts were there embraced, Their virgin bosom was there pressed.
⁴ Their names: ¹Oholah the elder and ²Oholibah ^dher sister;
^eThey were Mine, And they bore sons and daughters.

Ezek. 22:6; Mic. 3:1–3, 9–11; Zeph. 3:3 ^a Lit. souls ^{28 l} Ezek. 13:10 ^m Ezek. 13:6, 7 ⁿ Jer. 23:25–32; Ezek. 21:29 ^{29 o} Ex. 23:9; Lev. 19:33 ^{30 p} Is. 59:16; 63:5; Jer. 5:1 ^q Ezek. 13:5 ^r Ps. 106:23; Jer. 15:1 ^{31 s} Ezek. 22:22 ^t Ezek. 9:10; [Rom. 2:8, 9] **CHAPTER 23** ^{2 a} Jer. 3:7, 8; Ezek. 16:44–46 ^{3 b} Lev. 17:7; Josh. 24:14; Jer. 3:9 ^e Ezek. 16:22 ^{4 d} Jer. 3:6, 7 ^e Ezek. 16:8, 20 ¹ Lit. Her own Tabernacle ² Lit. My Tabernacle Is in Her

abundance or absence of rain in the **land** is associated with obedience or disobedience to the Law.

22:26 The **priests** were not examples of separation from worldly ways (see Ex. 19:6; Lev. 11:44; 22:32). Some at least were motivated by monetary gain (see Mic. 3:11).

22:28 plastered them: This probably refers to the prophets themselves. **untempered mortar:** The Hebrew word means “mud-plaster” or “whitewash.” These prophets were involved in “whitewashing” the sins of the nation’s leaders (see Matt. 23:27; Luke 11:39). If the proper antecedent for **them** is “princes” (v. 27), then the priests were also guilty of approving murder. **divining:** The false prophets used sheep livers in the hope of finding the will of the gods (see 13:7; 21:21).

22:29 As go the leaders so go the followers (see 12:18, 19). The **people of the land** were average citizens or commoners.

22:30 sought for: God could not find a spiritual leader to guide the people in godliness. Why not Ezekiel? (See 3:17–21; 33:1–6.) A qualified leader is useless if people refuse to be led.

23:2 The **one mother** of the two **daughters** was the Hebrew nation—Israel. The two daughters are the northern kingdom—Israel,

or Samaria—and the southern kingdom—Judah. Though they did not split apart until after the death of Solomon, the allegory speaks from that later time and perspective as it presents a pictorial review of Israel’s past.

23:3 It was during the formative years of the Hebrew nation in Egypt (its **youth**) that the Israelites began practicing political and spiritual prostitution by conforming themselves to the ways of the world, worshipping idols, and trusting in an earthly instead of heavenly power (see 16:26; 20:7, 8).

23:4 In Hebrew, the names **Oholah**, meaning “Her Own Tabernacle,” and **Oholibah**, meaning “My Tabernacle Is in Her,” seem to refer to God’s sanctuaries in each land or, in a distinct usage, to the tent shrines for Canaanite idols as opposed to God’s true temple (see 2 Sam. 6:17). **Samaria** is the **elder** (literally the “greater”) because she first made political and idolatrous alliances with foreign nations and was the first to be punished by foreign captivity. **They were Mine:** The Lord identified both cities as a part of His chosen nation. **sons and daughters:** This phrase refers to the growth of the nation of Israel. They would become a powerful nation, but with pagan allies and a proliferation of idolaters.

As for their names,
Samaria is Oholah, and Jerusalem is
Oholibah.

The Older Sister, Samaria

- ⁵ “Oholah played the harlot even though she was Mine;
And she lusted for her lovers, the neighboring ^fAssyrians,
⁶ Who were clothed in purple,
Captains and rulers,
All of them desirable young men,
Horsemen riding on horses.
⁷ Thus she committed her harlotry with them,
All of them choice men of Assyria;
And with all for whom she lusted,
With all their idols, she defiled herself.
⁸ She has never given up her harlotry brought ^gfrom Egypt,
For in her youth they had lain with her,
Pressed her virgin bosom,
And poured out their immorality upon her.
⁹ “Therefore I have delivered her
Into the hand of her lovers,
Into the hand of the ^hAssyrians,
For whom she lusted.
¹⁰ They uncovered her nakedness,
Took away her sons and daughters,
And slew her with the sword;
She became a byword among women,
For they had executed judgment on her.

The Younger Sister, Jerusalem

¹¹ “Now ⁱalthough her sister Oholibah saw *this*, ^jshe became more corrupt in her lust than she, and in her harlotry more corrupt than her sister’s harlotry.

- ¹² “She lusted for the neighboring ^kAssyrians,
^lCaptains and rulers,
Clothed most gorgeously,
Horsemen riding on horses,
All of them desirable young men.

⁵ ² Kin. 15:19; 16:7; 17:3; Ezek. 16:28; Hos. 5:13; 8:9, 10
⁸ ^g Ex. 32:4; 1 Kin. 12:28; 2 Kin. 10:29; 17:16; Ezek. 23:3, 19
⁹ ^h 2 Kin. 17:3
¹¹ ⁱ Jer. 3:8 / Jer. 3:8-11; Ezek. 16:51, 52
¹² ^k 2 Kin. 16:7, 8; Ezek. 16:28 / Ezek. 23:6, 23

- ¹³ Then I saw that she was defiled;
Both *took* the same way.
¹⁴ But she increased her harlotry;
She looked at men portrayed on the wall,
Images of ^mChaldeans portrayed in vermilion,
¹⁵ Girded with belts around their waists,
Flowing turbans on their heads,
All of them looking like captains,
In the manner of the Babylonians of Chaldea,
The land of their nativity.
¹⁶ “As soon as her eyes saw them,
She lusted for them
And sent ⁿmessengers to them in Chaldea.
¹⁷ “Then the ³Babylonians came to her,
into the bed of love,
And they defiled her with their immorality;
So she was defiled by them, ⁿand alienated herself from them.
¹⁸ She revealed her harlotry and uncovered her nakedness.
Then ^qI ^ralienated Myself from her,
As I had alienated Myself from her sister.
¹⁹ “Yet she multiplied her harlotry
In calling to remembrance the days of her youth,
^sWhen she had played the harlot in the land of Egypt.
²⁰ For she lusted for her ⁴paramours,
Whose flesh *is like* the flesh of donkeys,
And whose issue *is like* the issue of horses.
²¹ Thus you called to remembrance the lewdness of your youth,
When the ^tEgyptians pressed your bosom
Because of your youthful breasts.

¹⁴ ^m Jer. 50:2; Ezek. 8:10; 16:29
¹⁶ ⁿ 2 Kin. 24:1
^o Is. 57:9
¹⁷ ^p Ezek. 23:22, 28
³ Lit. sons of Babel
¹⁸ ^q Jer. 6:8 / Ps. 78:59; 106:40; Jer. 12:8
¹⁹ ^s Lev. 18:3; Ezek. 23:2
²⁰ ^t Illicit lovers
²¹ ^r Ezek. 16:26

Judgment on Jerusalem

²² “Therefore, Oholibah, thus says the Lord God:

23:5 played the harlot: This word may be used for any immoral sexual acts. Here it refers to the nation placing its faith in and seeking strength and security from alliances with political powers instead of God (2 Kin. 15:17–20; 17:1–4; Hos. 12:1, 2).

23:9, 10 Ezekiel reminds his audience of how God already had judged Samaria through Assyrian conquest and captivity in 722 B.C. (2 Kin. 17:5–41). **Uncovered her nakedness** means to be stripped bare and so put to great shame. **Became a byword** means people began using the name “Samaria” as a synonym for “immoral nation.”

23:14 Judah **increased her harlotry** by engaging in political and spiritual intercourse with first the Assyrians (vv. 12, 13; see 2 Kin. 16:7–9) and then the **Chaldeans** (a regional term used for the entire

Babylonian Empire; see vv. 15, 17, 23). The last two lines tell how Judean envoys to Babylon became enamored of Babylonian rulers and their power through pictures (see Jer. 22:14) on their palace and temple walls. Vermilion is a red color.

23:17, 18 alienated herself: This is an allusion to Judah’s turning in disappointment and disgust from relying on Babylon to relying on Egypt (see 2 Kin. 23:28–24:1). God’s alienation from Jerusalem is an allusion to the city’s coming defeat by Nebuchadnezzar in 586 B.C.

23:20 Judah renewed its alliance with Egypt (Jer. 37:5–7) which is strikingly symbolized in this verse as a lustful, illicit lover (see v. 3; 16:26).

23:22–27 God’s verdict was that He would judge Jerusalem through

- ^u “Behold, I will stir up your lovers
against you,
From whom you have alienated
yourself,
And I will bring them against you
from every side:
- ²³ The Babylonians,
All the Chaldeans,
^v Pekod, Shoa, Koa,
^w All the Assyrians with them,
All of them desirable young men,
Governors and rulers,
Captains and men of renown,
All of them riding on horses.
- ²⁴ And they shall come against you
With chariots, wagons, and
war-horses,
With a horde of people.
They shall array against you
Buckler, shield, and helmet all
around.
- ‘I will delegate judgment to them,
And they shall judge you according
to their judgments.
- ²⁵ I will set My ^x jealousy against you,
And they shall deal furiously with
you;
They shall remove your nose and
your ears,
And your remnant shall fall by the
sword;
They shall take your sons and your
daughters,
And your remnant shall be devoured
by fire.
- ²⁶ ^y They shall also strip you of your
clothes
And take away your beautiful
jewelry.
- ²⁷ ‘Thus ^z I will make you cease your
lewdness and your ^a harlotry
Brought from the land of Egypt,
So that you will not lift your eyes to
them,
Nor remember Egypt anymore.’
- ²⁸ “For thus says the Lord God: ‘Surely
I will deliver you into the hand of ^b those
you hate, into the hand of *those* ^c from

²² ^u Ezek. 16:37-41;
23:28
²³ ^v Jer. 50:21
^w Ezek. 23:12
²⁵ ^x Ex. 34:14; Ezek.
5:13; 8:17, 18; Zeph.
1:18
²⁶ ^y Is. 3:18-23;
Ezek. 16:39
²⁷ ^z Ezek. 16:41;
22:15 ^a Ezek.
23:3, 19
²⁸ ^b Jer. 21:7-10;
Ezek. 16:37-41
^c Ezek. 23:17

²⁹ ^d Deut. 28:48;
Ezek. 23:25, 26,
45-47 ^e Ezek. 16:39
³⁰ ^f Ezek. 6:9
³¹ ^g 2 Kin. 21:13; Jer.
7:14, 15; 25:15; Ezek.
23:33
³² ^h Ezek. 22:4, 5
³⁴ ⁱ Ps. 75:8;
Is. 51:17
⁴ Earthenware
fragments
³⁵ ^j Is. 17:10; Jer.
3:21; Ezek. 22:12;
Hos. 8:14; 13:6
^k 1 Kin. 14:9; Jer.
2:27; 32:33; Neh.
9:26
³⁶ ^j Jer. 1:10; Ezek.
20:4; 22:2 ^m Is. 58:1;
Ezek. 16:2; Mic. 3:8
³⁷ ⁿ Ezek. 16:38
^o Ezek. 16:20, 21, 36,
45; 20:26, 31
³⁸ ^p 2 Kin. 21:4,
7; Ezek. 5:11; 7:20
^q Ezek. 22:8

whom you alienated yourself. ²⁹ ^d They
will deal hatefully with you, take away
all you have worked for, and ^e leave you
naked and bare. The nakedness of your
harlotry shall be uncovered, both your
lewdness and your harlotry. ³⁰ I will do
these *things* to you because you have
^f gone as a harlot after the Gentiles, be-
cause you have become defiled by their
idols. ³¹ You have walked in the way of
your sister; therefore I will put her ^g cup
in your hand.’

³² “Thus says the Lord God:

‘You shall drink of your sister’s cup,
The deep and wide one;
^h You shall be laughed to scorn
And held in derision;
It contains much.

³³ You will be filled with drunkenness
and sorrow,

The cup of horror and desolation,
The cup of your sister Samaria.

³⁴ You shall ⁱ drink and drain it,
You shall break its ⁵ shards,
And tear at your own breasts;
For I have spoken,’
Says the Lord God.

³⁵ “Therefore thus says the Lord God:

‘Because you ^j have forgotten Me and
^k cast Me behind your back,
Therefore you shall bear the *penalty*
Of your lewdness and your
harlotry.’”

Both Sisters Judged

³⁶ The LORD also said to me: “Son
of man, will you ^l judge Oholah and
Oholibah? Then ^m declare to them their
abominations. ³⁷ For they have com-
mitted adultery, and ⁿ blood is on their
hands. They have committed adultery
with their idols, and even *sacrificed* their
sons ^o whom they bore to Me, passing
them through the fire, to devour *them*.
³⁸ Moreover they have done this to Me:
They have ^p defiled My sanctuary on the
same day and ^q profaned My Sabbaths.
³⁹ For after they had slain their children

Babylon, formerly an ally but now an enemy. **Pekod, Shoa, Koa, . . . the Assyrians with them:** These were tribal vassals of Babylon that would join the assault on Judah. A **buckler** was a large rectangular shield. Removing the **nose** and **ears** was an ancient punishment for adultery.

23:28–31 This “lover” was one whom the Judeans came to **hate** as an enemy. God explains that He would use the Babylonians as an instrument of His wrath: (1) to expose the extreme unfaithfulness of Judah and (2) to punish Judah for its idolatry that had resulted from forbidden political alliances (see Ex. 20:1–6; 34:10–17; Deut. 18:9–14). The **sister** is Samaria (see vv. 4, 33) with whom Jerusalem would share a similar destiny of destruction—**her cup**.

23:32–34 The **cup** is often symbolic of God’s judgment (see Ps. 75:7, 8; Jer. 25:15–29; Matt. 20:22; Rev. 14:10). **break its shards:** The phrase vividly portrays how completely Judah would drink the cup of wrath, breaking what was already broken. **Tear at your own breasts** pictures the resultant agony and anguish.

23:35 This verse summarizes why God was going to punish Jerusalem with such vengeance: **you have forgotten Me**. The people had intentionally ignored God, pictured by the parallel phrase **cast Me behind your back**.

23:37–39 **adultery . . . defiled . . . slain:** These themes have been developed previously (see v. 8; 16:20, 21; Ex. 20:3–13, 22–26; 22:20; Lev. 18:21; 19:30; 20:1–5; Deut. 4:15–40).

for their idols, on the same day they came into My sanctuary to profane it; and indeed ^rthus they have done in the midst of My house.

⁴⁰“Furthermore you sent for men to come from afar, ^sto whom a messenger was sent; and there they came. And you ^twashed yourself for them, ^u“painted your eyes, and adorned yourself with ornaments. ⁴¹You sat on a stately ^vcouch, with a table prepared before it, ^w“on which you had set My incense and My oil. ⁴²The sound of a carefree multitude was with her, and ⁶Sabeans were brought from the wilderness with men of the common sort, who put bracelets on their ⁷wrists and beautiful crowns on their heads. ⁴³Then I said concerning *her who had grown old* in adulteries, ‘Will they commit harlotry with her now, and she *with them*?’ ⁴⁴Yet they went in to her, as men go in to a woman who plays the harlot; thus they went in to Oholah and Oholibah, the lewd women. ⁴⁵But righteous men will ^xjudge them after the manner of adulteresses, and after the manner of women who shed blood, because they *are* adulteresses, and ^yblood is on their hands.

⁴⁶“For thus says the Lord God: ^z“Bring up an assembly against them, give them up to trouble and plunder. ^{47a}“The assembly shall stone them with stones and ⁸execute them with their swords; ^bthey shall slay their sons and their daughters, and burn their houses with fire. ⁴⁸Thus ^cI will cause lewdness to cease from the land, ^dthat all women may be taught not to practice your lewdness. ⁴⁹They shall repay you for your lewdness, and you shall ^epay for your idolatrous sins. ^fThen you shall know that I *am* the Lord God.”

Symbol of the Cooking Pot

24 Again, in the ninth year, in the tenth month, on the tenth *day* of the month, the word of the LORD came

39 ^r 2 Kin. 21:2-8
40 ^s Is. 57:9 ^r Ruth 3:3 ^u 2 Kin. 9:30; Jer. 4:30
41 ^t Esth. 1:6; Is. 57:7; Amos 2:8; 6:4
^w Prov. 7:17; Ezek. 16:18, 19; Hos. 2:8
42 ⁶ Or drunkards
⁷ Lit. hands
45 ^x Ezek. 16:38
^y Ezek. 23:37
46 ^z Ezek. 16:40
47 ^a Lev. 20:10; Ezek. 16:40 ^b 2 Chr. 36:17, 19; Ezek. 24:21 ^c Lit. cut down
48 ^c Ezek. 22:15
^d Deut. 13:11; Ezek. 22:15; 2 Pet. 2:6
49 ^e Is. 59:18; Ezek. 23:35 ^f Ezek. 20:38, 42, 44; 25:5

CHAPTER 24

2 ^a 2 Kin. 25:1; Jer. 39:1; 52:4
3 ^b Ezek. 17:12 ^c Jer. 1:13; Ezek. 11:3
4 ^d Lit. bones
6 ^d 2 Kin. 24:3, 4; Ezek. 22:2, 3, 27; Mic. 7:2; Nah. 3:1
^e 2 Sam. 8:2; Joel 3:3; Obad. 11; Nah. 3:10
7 ^f Lev. 17:13; Deut. 12:16
8 ^g [Matt. 7:2]
9 ^h Ezek. 24:6; Nah. 3:1; Hab. 2:12
10 ⁱ Lit. bones

to me, saying, ²“Son of man, write down the name of the day, this very day—the king of Babylon started his siege against Jerusalem ^athis very day. ^{3b}And utter a parable to the rebellious house, and say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord God:

^c“Put on a pot, set *it* on,
And also pour water into it.
⁴ Gather pieces *of meat* in it,
Every good piece,
The thigh and the shoulder.
Fill *it* with choice ¹cuts;
⁵ That the choice of the flock.
Also pile *fuel* bones under it,
Make it boil well,
And let the cuts simmer in it.”

⁶“Therefore thus says the Lord God:

“Woe to ^dthe bloody city,
To the pot whose scum *is* in it,
And whose scum is not gone from it!
Bring it out piece by piece,
On which no ^elot has fallen.
⁷ For her blood is in her midst;
She set it on top of a rock;
^fShe did not pour it on the ground,
To cover it with dust.
⁸ That it may raise up fury and take vengeance,
^gI have set her blood on top of a rock,
That it may not be covered.”

⁹“Therefore thus says the Lord God:

^h“Woe to the bloody city!
I too will make the pyre great.
¹⁰ Heap on the wood,
Kindle the fire;
Cook the meat well,
Mix in the spices,
And let the ²cuts be burned up.

¹¹“Then set the pot empty on the coals,
That it may become hot and its bronze may burn,

23:42 Sabeans: This Hebrew word may also be read as “drunkards.” The nomadic peoples east and south of Israel were considered uncivilized and repugnant by the Hebrews.

23:45 Alarmingly, those God would use to judge Samaria and Jerusalem (Assyria and Babylon respectively) are here called **righteous**. Obviously this does not describe their standing before God or their way of life. Instead, it underlines their role as instruments of God’s just judgment (see vv. 46, 47; Deut. 22:13–30).

24:1, 2 This is the fourth chronological reference given by Ezekiel (see 1:2, 3; 8:1; 20:1). The date is January 588 **B.C.**, the **very day** that Nebuchadnezzar—**king of Babylon**—began his attack on Jerusalem (see 2 Kin. 25:1–3; Jer. 39:1, 2; 52:1–6). Ezekiel was commanded to **write down the name of the day**. This would be a bitter reminder of God’s trustworthiness to do what He promised through the prophets. Nebuchadnezzar’s siege was God’s judgment on Jerusalem.

24:3–5 The subject of this **parable** is explained in v. 2. The audience was again **the rebellious house** (see 2:3–8; 3:5–7; 11:3–12; 12:2, 22–28). **Flock** was symbolic of God’s chosen people (see ch. 34). **Bones** were sometimes used as a fuel for fire.

24:6 Bloody city explains why Jerusalem—the **pot**—must experience the heat of God’s wrath (see v. 9; 22:2–12) through the Babylonian siege that had now begun. The remainder of this verse announces the verdict: exile. **Bring it out piece by piece** refers to individual inhabitants, the “choice cuts” of meat in vv. 4, 5. **no lot has fallen:** God does not play favorites; His judgment would fall equally on all inhabitants of the city, for they all had sinned.

24:7, 8 These verses elaborate on the city’s sin of bloodshed (see also v. 6). The people failed to deal with the sin, so God declares that it would remain exposed to His judgment (see Gen. 4:10; Lev. 17:13; Is. 26:21).

- That ⁱits filthiness may be melted in it,
 That its scum may be consumed.
 12 She has ³grown weary with ⁴lies,
 And her great scum has not gone from her.
 Let her scum be in the fire!
 13 In your ^jfilthiness is lewdness.
 Because I have cleansed you, and you were not cleansed,
 You will ^knot be cleansed of your filthiness anymore,
^lTill I have caused My fury to rest upon you.
 14^mI, the LORD, have spoken it;
ⁿIt shall come to pass, and I will do it;
 I will not hold back,
^oNor will I spare,
 Nor will I relent;
 According to your ways
 And according to your deeds
⁵They will judge you,”
 Says the Lord God.”

The Prophet's Wife Dies

¹⁵Also the word of the LORD came to me, saying, ¹⁶“Son of man, behold, I take away from you the desire of your eyes with one stroke; yet you shall ^pneither mourn nor weep, nor shall your tears run down. ¹⁷Sigh in silence, ^qmake no mourning for the dead; ^rbind your turban on your head, and ^sput your sandals on your feet; ^tdo not cover *your* ⁶lips, and do not eat man's bread *of sorrow*.”

¹⁸So I spoke to the people in the morning, and at evening my wife died; and the next morning I did as I was commanded.

11 ⁱ Ezek. 22:15
 12 ³ Or *wearied Me*
 4 Or *toil*
 13 ⁱ Ezek. 23:36-48
 k Jer. 6:28-30; Ezek. 22:24 ⁱ Ezek. 5:13; 8:18; 16:42
 14 ^m [1 Sam. 15:29]
 n Num. 23:19;
 Ps. 33:9; Is. 55:11
 o Ezek. 5:11 ⁵ LXX, Syr., Tg., Vg. /
 16 ^p Jer. 16:5
 17 ^q Jer. 16:5 ^r Lev. 10:6; 21:10 ^s 2 Sam. 15:30 ^t Mic. 3:7
 6 Lit. *moustache*
 19 ^u Ezek. 12:9; 37:18
 21 ^v Jer. 7:14; Lam. 2:7; Ezek. 7:20, 24
 w Jer. 6:11; 16:3, 4; Ezek. 23:25, 47
 7 Lit. *the pride of your strength* ⁸ Lit. *compassion*
 22 ^x Jer. 16:6, 7
 9 Lit. *moustache*
 23 ^y Job 27:15; Ps. 78:64 ^z Lev. 26:39; Ezek. 33:10
 24 ^a Is. 20:3; Ezek. 4:3; 12:6, 11; Luke 11:29, 30 ^b Jer. 17:15; John 13:19; 14:29 ^c Ezek. 6:7; 25:5
 25 ^d Ps. 48:2; 50:2; Ezek. 24:21 ¹ Lit. *the lifting up of their soul*
 26 ^e Ezek. 33:21
 27 ^f Ezek. 3:26; 33:22

CHAPTER 25

2 ^a Ezek. 35:2 ^b Jer. 49:1; Ezek. 21:28; Amos 1:13-15; Zeph. 2:9

¹⁹And the people said to me, “Will you not tell us what these *things signify* to us, that you behave so?”

²⁰Then I answered them, “The word of the LORD came to me, saying, ²¹‘Speak to the house of Israel, “Thus says the Lord God: ‘Behold, ^vI will profane My sanctuary, ⁷your arrogant boast, the desire of your eyes, the ⁸delight of your soul; ^wand your sons and daughters whom you left behind shall fall by the sword. ²²And you shall do as I have done; ^xyou shall not cover *your* ⁹lips nor eat man's bread *of sorrow*. ²³Your turbans shall be on your heads and your sandals on your feet; ^yyou shall neither mourn nor weep, but ^zyou shall pine away in your iniquities and mourn with one another. ²⁴Thus ^aEzekiel is a sign to you; according to all that he has done you shall do; ^band when this comes, ^cyou shall know that I *am* the Lord God.’”

²⁵‘And you, son of man—*will it not be* in the day when I take from them ^dtheir stronghold, their joy and their glory, the desire of their eyes, and ¹that on which they set their minds, their sons and their daughters: ²⁶*that* on that day ^eone who escapes will come to you to let *you* hear *it* with *your* ears? ²⁷^fOn that day your mouth will be opened to him who has escaped; you shall speak and no longer be mute. Thus you will be a sign to them, and they shall know that I *am* the LORD.’”

Proclamation Against Ammon

25 The word of the LORD came to me, saying, ²“Son of man, ^aset your face ^bagainst the Ammonites, and proph-

24:13, 14 have cleansed you, and you were not cleansed: This probably refers to the deportations of 605 and 597 B.C., whose cleansing effects were incomplete.

24:16, 17 the desire of your eyes: This refers to Ezekiel's wife (see vv. 18, 21, 25). **one stroke:** This phrase is used elsewhere of a plague reflecting God's wrath (see Ex. 9:14; Num. 14:37; 16:46). **you shall neither mourn nor weep:** The picture of Ezekiel's wife dying and Ezekiel not being allowed to grieve illustrated God's pain over the death of His wife—Jerusalem—and His inability to mourn because the nation deserved the punishment. Ezekiel was called by God to “be a sign to the exiles” by demonstrating what they should do (see vv. 21–23) in response to the “death” (destruction) of their desire and delight—their nation and its capital city. A long period of mourning was the normal, ritual response to the death of a loved one in the ancient Middle East (see 1 Sam. 4:12; 2 Sam. 1:12, 17; 3:31, 35; 15:30; 19:4; Is. 58:5; Jer. 16:7; Mic. 1:8, 10). The expression of those in mourning was not to **bind the turban**, but to remove it and replace it with dust. **cover your lips:** This alluded to the practice of covering the lower half of the face with a veil. The **bread of sorrow** was food given to a mourner after fasting.

24:18 did as I was commanded: Ezekiel had been given a revelatory command that was extremely hard for him personally. He faithfully communicated it to the people. His absolute obedience to the harshest of God's commands contrasted with the disobedience of his fellow countrymen.

24:19 tell us: When obedience to God demanded unusual actions, the people's curiosity about the reasons for such behavior was

aroused, creating an opportunity for verbal witness about God's revelation (see 12:9; 21:7 for the two previous times of similar response).

24:21 the delight of your soul: The meaning “affection” is likely intended here. The entire phrase means something like the “object of your affections.” The Judeans had the wrong kind of pride about the temple. Instead of the temple being a place of worship and house of God—**My sanctuary**—the Judeans took pride in the building as a sign of their importance. Therefore, God was going to **profane** it by allowing the Babylonians to capture the city and destroy the temple (see v. 25; 2 Chr. 36:15–21; Lam. 1:10, 11). With no city or temple to boast about, the humbled Israelites could boast only in God's mercy.

24:22–24 The Judeans should or would respond to the death of the nation as Ezekiel had been told to respond to the death of his wife (vv. 15–18); they would not mourn their loss. The consistent purpose of divine discipline is seen again: **you shall know that I am the Lord God** (see 6:8–10; 12:15, 16). The trials would prompt the Israelites to depend on the Lord and know that He is holy. **sign:** See 12:3–7; 24:16, 17. When Jerusalem fell, God would prove Himself as trustworthy and righteous, and Ezekiel as His true prophet (see v. 27).

24:25–27 When the **one who escapes** on the day Jerusalem falls (586 B.C.) arrives to give Ezekiel the news (perhaps about three months later), Ezekiel would be relieved of his inability to speak anything except judgment, and would be allowed to preach hope (see vv. 1, 2, 24; 3:25–27; 33:21—39:29; 2 Kin. 25:8, 9).

25:2 On **Ammonites**, see 21:20, 28. Ammon corresponds roughly to the present-day country of Jordan with its capital Amman.

esy against them. ³Say to the Ammonites, ‘Hear the word of the Lord God! Thus says the Lord God: ^c“Because you said, ‘Aha!’ against My sanctuary when it was profaned, and against the land of Israel when it was desolate, and against the house of Judah when they went into captivity, ⁴indeed, therefore, I will deliver you as a possession to the ¹men of the East, and they shall set their encampments among you and make their dwellings among you; they shall eat your fruit, and they shall drink your milk. ⁵And I will make ^dRabbah ^ea stable for camels and Ammon a resting place for flocks. ^fThen you shall know that I *am* the LORD.”

³ c Ps. 70:2, 3; [Prov. 17:5]; Ezek. 26:2
⁴ ¹ Lit. sons
⁵ ^d Deut. 3:11;
 2 Sam. 12:26; Jer. 49:2; Ezek. 21:20
^e Is. 17:2 ^f Ezek. 24:24

⁶ ^g Job 27:23; Lam. 2:15; Nah. 3:19; Zeph. 2:15 ^h Ezek. 36:5
⁷ ⁱ Ezek. 35:3
⁸ ^j Is. 15:6; Jer. 48:1; Amos 2:1, 2 ^k Ezek. 35:2, 5

⁶For thus says the Lord God: “Because you ^gclapped *your* hands, stamped your feet, and ^hrejoiced in heart with all your disdain for the land of Israel, ⁷indeed, therefore, I will ⁱstretch out My hand against you, and give you as plunder to the nations; I will cut you off from the peoples, and I will cause you to perish from the countries; I will destroy you, and you shall know that I *am* the LORD.”

Proclamation Against Moab

⁸Thus says the Lord God: “Because ^jMoab and ^kSeir say, ‘Look! The house of Judah is like all the nations,’ ⁹therefore, behold, I will clear the territory of Moab of cities, of the cities on its frontier,

25:3 For further background on the Ammonites and Ammon, see 6:11; 21:15; 26:2; 36:2; Neh. 4:7–9; Ps. 35:19–21; Jer. 49:1–6; Amos 1:13–15; Zeph. 2:8–11.

25:4, 5 Men of the East is another title for the Babylonians (see 21:31). Ancient historical records mention Ammon’s subjugation by Nebuchadnezzar five years after the fall of Jerusalem. Arab invaders came to dominate the territory, and Persian control began about 530 B.C.

25:6, 7 The Ammonites rejoiced at the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple; therefore, they would also be punished. The Ammonites were eventually to perish as a people.

25:8 Moab was south of Ammon, east of the Dead Sea and between the Arnon and Zered rivers. The Moabites descended from

the incestuous relationship between Lot and his first daughter (Gen. 19:30–38). **Seir** (Edom) is mentioned because it was guilty of accusing Israel of being **like all the nations** (see 35:15; 36:5; Gen. 32:3; 36:8, 9). This accusation reflects Moab and Edom’s malicious misinterpretation of Judah’s misfortune as a proof that God was powerless (see Gen. 12:1–3; Ex. 19:5, 6; Num. 22:12; Deut. 7:6–8; Jer. 48:27; Zeph. 2:8, 9).

25:9 the territory: This expression, literally meaning “shoulder” or “side,” describes the northwest corner of Moab, the area most difficult to conquer due to its topography (a mountain plateau high above the Jordan valley). Apparently the attack would culminate in the ruin of Moab’s **glory**, its frontier cities.

Unforgettable Sermons

God asked the prophet Ezekiel to perform some strange object lessons in order to get the attention of the Israelite exiles. The following chart shows the meanings of these unusual “sermon illustrations.”

Passage	Ezekiel's Activity	Explanation
4:1–3	Writing on a clay tablet	Ezekiel used a clay tablet to sketch out or build a model depicting how Babylon would lay siege to Jerusalem.
4:4–8	Lying on his side	Ezekiel lay on his side to demonstrate that the length of Babylon’s siege would correspond to the number of years Israel had sinned against their God.
4:9–17	Baking bread over dung	Ezekiel baked his bread with a fire fueled by dung, which was offensive to the Jews. Ezekiel was illustrating that their impending captivity would force them to eat polluted food that would mirror the filthiness of their sin.
5:1–4	Shaving his head	Ezekiel shaved his head as a sign of mourning. The burning of a third of his hair symbolized the fires that would destroy Jerusalem; the chopped hair stood for the people who would die by the sword; and the hair scattered in the wind represented those Jews who would be taken away into captivity.
12:1–16	Packing his bags	Ezekiel pantomimed leaving Jerusalem to prepare the watching crowds for the coming exile of the citizens of Jerusalem.
12:17–28	Quivering	Trembling and shuddering while he ate, Ezekiel acted out the awful fear the Jews would face when their enemies swept through the land.
20:45–49	Facing south and preaching to the forest	Ezekiel preached toward the south in order to show that God would send judgment on Judah, the southern kingdom.
21:1–32	Preaching about a sword while sighing	Facing Jerusalem, Ezekiel used, instead of fire, the picture of a sword to prophesy destruction. His deep sighs were intended to demonstrate the heavy hearts the people would have.
24:15–27	Refusing to mourn for his wife	God took Ezekiel’s wife as a sign of the overwhelming sadness the nation would feel when Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed.
37:15–28	Holding two sticks together	Ezekiel pictured the restoration of Israel by writing on one stick the name of Judah and on the other the name of Joseph, and then holding them together.

the glory of the country, Beth Jeshimoth, Baal Meon, and ¹Kirjathaim. ¹⁰^mTo the men of the East I will give it as a possession, together with the Ammonites, that the Ammonites ⁿmay not be remembered among the nations. ¹¹And I will execute judgments upon Moab, and they shall know that I *am* the LORD.”

Proclamation Against Edom

¹²“Thus says the Lord God: ^o“Because of what Edom did against the house of Judah by taking vengeance, and has greatly offended by avenging itself on them,” ¹³therefore thus says the Lord God: “I will also stretch out My hand against Edom, cut off man and beast from it, and

⁹ ¹Num. 32:3, 38; Josh. 13:17; 1 Chr. 5:8; Jer. 48:23
¹⁰ ^m Ezek. 25:4
ⁿ Ezek. 21:32
¹² ^o 2 Chr. 28:17; Ps. 137:7; Jer. 49:7, 8; Amos 1:11; Obad. 10-14

¹³ ² Or even to dedan they shall fall
¹⁴ ^p Is. 11:14
¹⁵ ^q Jer. 25:20; Amos 1-6 ^r 2 Chr. 28:18 ³ Lit. spite in soul ⁴ Or perpetual
¹⁶ ^s Zeph. 2:4
^t 1 Sam. 30:14 ^u Jer. 47:4

make it desolate from Teman; ²Dedan shall fall by the sword. ¹⁴^pI will lay My vengeance on Edom by the hand of My people Israel, that they may do in Edom according to My anger and according to My fury; and they shall know My vengeance,” says the Lord God.

Proclamation Against Philistia

¹⁵“Thus says the Lord God: ^q“Because ^rthe Philistines dealt vengefully and took vengeance with ³a spiteful heart, to destroy because of the ⁴old hatred,” ¹⁶therefore thus says the Lord God: ^s“I will stretch out My hand against the Philistines, and I will cut off the ^tCherethites ^uand destroy the remnant of the sea-

25:12 Edom was located south of Moab, from the Zered River south to the Gulf of Aqaba. The Edomites descended from Esau. On this **vengeance** of Edom see 35:10; 36:1-7 (compare Gen. 36:6, 7; Ps. 137:7; Lam. 4:21, 22; Amos 1:11, 12). The transgressions most characteristic of Edom were its perpetual animosity and repeated, vindictive acts of violence against Israel. The Hebrew words rendered **greatly offended** (“be guilty”) may indicate continuous or repeated rather than intensive behavior.

25:13 The precise locations of **Teman** and **Dedan** are not known, but they probably are mentioned to convey the idea of Edom from one end to the other (see Joel 3:19).

25:14 Since Edom had taken their revenge on the Judeans and showed them hostility when they needed help, God would show Edom His **vengeance**.

25:15 The **Philistines** were in southwest Palestine along the Mediterranean coast. They had a long history (**the old hatred**) of constant competition for control of Judah (see Judg. 13-16; 1 Sam. 4; 13; 31; 2 Sam. 5:17-21). The Hebrew root meaning “to take revenge” is found three times in this verse, indicating the great vengeance of which Philistia was guilty.

25:16 Cherethites: This term (probably meaning “Cretans”) was used here as a substitute term for some or all of the Philistines, who



coast. ¹⁷I will ^vexecute great vengeance on them with furious rebukes; ^wand they shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I lay My vengeance upon them.””

Proclamation Against Tyre

26 And it came to pass in the eleventh year, on the first *day* of the month, *that* the word of the LORD came to me, saying, ²“Son of man, ^abecause Tyre has said against Jerusalem, ^b‘Aha! She is broken who *was* the gateway of the peoples; now she is turned over to me; I shall be filled; she is laid waste.’

³“Therefore thus says the Lord God: ‘Behold, I *am* against you, O Tyre, and will cause many nations to come up against you, as the sea causes its waves to come up. ⁴And they shall destroy the walls of Tyre and break down her towers; I will also scrape her dust from her, and ^cmake her like the top of a rock. ⁵It shall be *a place* for spreading nets ^din the midst of the sea, for I have spoken,’ says the Lord God; ‘it shall become plunder for the nations. ⁶Also her daughter *villages* which *are* in the fields shall be slain by the sword. ^eThen they shall know that I *am* the LORD.’

⁷“For thus says the Lord God: ‘Behold, I will bring against Tyre from the north ^fNebuchadnezzar ¹king of Babylon, ^gking of kings, with horses, with chariots, and with horsemen, and an army with many people. ⁸He will slay with the sword your daughter *villages* in the fields; he will ^hheap up a siege mound against you, build a wall against you, and raise a ²defense against you. ⁹He will direct his battering rams against your walls, and with his axes he will break down your towers. ¹⁰Because of the abundance of his horses, their dust will cover you; your walls will shake at the noise of the horsemen, the

¹⁷ ^v Ezek. 5:15 ^w Ps. 9:16

CHAPTER 26

² ^a 2 Sam. 5:11; Is. 23:1; Jer. 25:22; Amos 1:9; Zech. 9:2
^b Ezek. 25:3
⁴ ^c Ezek. 26:14
⁵ ^d Ezek. 27:32
⁶ ^e Ezek. 25:5
⁷ ^f Jer. 27:3-6; Ezek. 29:18 ^g Ezra 7:12; Is. 10:8; Jer. 52:32; Dan. 2:37, 47 ¹ Heb. Nebuchadnezzar, and so elsewhere in the book
⁸ ^h Jer. 52:4; Ezek. 21:22 ² Lit. *a large shield*

¹¹ ⁱ Hab. 1:8
¹² ^j Ezek. 27:27, 32
¹³ ^k Is. 14:11; 24:8; Jer. 7:34; 25:10; Amos 6:5 ¹ Is. 23:16; Ezek. 28:13; Rev. 18:22
¹⁴ ^m Ezek. 26:4, 5
¹⁵ ⁿ Jer. 49:21; Ezek. 27:28
¹⁶ ^o Is. 23:8 ^p Jon. 3:6 ^q Job 2:13
¹⁷ ^r Ezek. 32:10; Hos. 11:10 ^s Ezek. 27:35
¹⁸ ^t Ezek. 27:2-36; Rev. 18:9 ^u Josh. 19:29; Is. 23:4
¹⁸ ^v Ezek. 26:15

wagons, and the chariots, when he enters your gates, as men enter a city that has been breached. ¹¹With the hooves of his ⁱhorses he will trample all your streets; he will slay your people by the sword, and your strong pillars will fall to the ground. ¹²They will plunder your riches and pillage your merchandise; they will break down your walls and destroy your pleasant houses; they will lay your stones, your timber, and your soil in the ^jmidst of the water. ¹³^kI will put an end to the sound of ^lyour songs, and the sound of your harps shall be heard no more. ¹⁴^mI will make you like the top of a rock; you shall be *a place* for spreading nets, and you shall never be rebuilt, for I the LORD have spoken,’ says the Lord God.

¹⁵“Thus says the Lord God to Tyre: ‘Will the coastlands not ⁿshake at the sound of your fall, when the wounded cry, when slaughter is made in the midst of you? ¹⁶Then all the ^oprinces of the sea will ^pcome down from their thrones, lay aside their robes, and take off their embroidered garments; they will clothe themselves with trembling; ^qthey will sit on the ground, ^rtremble *every* moment, and ^sbe astonished at you. ¹⁷And they will take up a ^tlamentation for you, and say to you:

“How you have perished,
O one inhabited by seafaring men,
O renowned city,
Who was ^ustrong at sea,
She and her inhabitants,
Who caused their terror *to be* on all
her inhabitants!

¹⁸ Now ^vthe coastlands tremble on the day of your fall;
Yes, the coastlands by the sea are
troubled at your departure.”’

¹⁹“For thus says the Lord God: ‘When I make you a desolate city, like cities that

migrated from Caphtor (understood to be Crete). Their more remote ancestors were Aegeans. See 1 Sam. 30:14; 2 Sam. 8:18; 15:18; Jer. 47:4; Amos 9:7; Zeph. 2:5.

26:1 The date places the prophetic pronouncements against Tyre, the Tyrian monarch, and Sidon somewhere in March or April of 587–586 B.C. (the eleventh year). This was at or just after the fall of Jerusalem (see v. 2).

26:2 Tyre, in competition with Sidon (see 1 Kin. 16:31; Is. 23:2, 12), was a major seaport and leading city in Phoenicia (present-day Lebanon). **has said:** The past tense could refer to an event that had not yet taken place, using a Hebrew idiom which describes a future event as so certain that it can be expressed as having already been accomplished (see Is. 9:6, 7; 52:13—53:12). **I shall be filled** was evidence of Tyre’s greed and materialism, desiring any wealth of Jerusalem that could be found in its ruins after the Babylonian conquest.

26:3 The armies (**many nations**; see vv. 4, 7–14) that would attack Tyre are appropriately compared to waves of the sea, because the city of Tyre was an island fortress.

26:7–14 The fulfillment of this prophecy of Tyre’s fate began with the long siege of the city by the Babylonian army under **Nebuchad-**

nezzar (c. 580–570 B.C.). Nebuchadnezzar ruled the Neo-Babylonian (Chaldean) Empire from 605–562 B.C. The second phase came with the Persian conquest in about 525 B.C., followed by the final and famous siege of 332 B.C. by the Greeks under Alexander, which completed the predictions of this passage (especially vv. 5, 14; see 47:10). Note the switch from **he** to **they** (v. 12; see v. 4) as well as the use of the pronoun “I” by God, which explains His sovereign control over all the nations (see 28:7; 29:8). Alexander literally fulfilled the words **break down your walls** (see v. 5) when his army built a causeway half a mile long between the shore and the city on its island. He tore down defensive walls to build the causeway.

26:16 The **princes of the sea** (see 27:35) were the rulers of various settlements in Phoenicia that were connected with Tyre. They would surrender and submit to Babylonian rule when they saw what happened to Tyre: **be astonished at you**. They would mourn in song (see vv. 17, 18) after they took off their **robes** and **embroidered garments** (see Jon. 3:6).

26:19 The **deep** is the same Hebrew word as in Gen. 1:2. Imagery of the chaotic waters of creation picture the coming catastrophe.

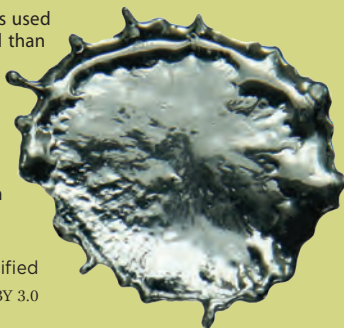


Tin

A soft, bluish-white metal smelted from cassiterite, its principal ore. Tin was used chiefly as an alloy with copper to produce bronze, a much harder material than either copper or tin. The Hebrew word for tin means “a substitute or alloy.”

Phoenicia supplied the ancient Mediterranean world with tin obtained from Spain, its chief colony. Some scholars believe the Phoenicians sailed the Atlantic to Cornwall, England, the principal supplier of tin. Tyre received tin from Tarshish (Ezek. 27:12). Some think Persia and Armenia exported tin also.

Tin was among the spoils the Israelites took from the Midianites (Num. 31:22). The prophet Ezekiel pictured Jerusalem as being smelted as tin cast in a furnace (Ezek. 22:18–20).



Smelted tin that has solidified

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are not inhabited, when I bring the deep upon you, and great waters cover you, ²⁰then I will bring you down ^w with those who descend into the Pit, to the people of old, and I will make you dwell in the lowest part of the earth, in places desolate from antiquity, with those who go down to the Pit, so that you may never be inhabited; and I shall establish glory ^x in the land of the living. ^{21y}I will make you a terror, and you *shall be no more*; ^zthough you are sought for, you will never be found again,’ says the Lord God.”

Lamentation for Tyre

27 The word of the LORD came again to me, saying, ²“Now, son of man, ^atake up a lamentation for Tyre, ³and say to Tyre, ^b‘You who ¹are situated at the entrance of the sea, ^cmerchant of the peoples on many coastlands, thus says the Lord God:

- “O Tyre, you have said,
^d*I am perfect in beauty.*’
- ⁴ Your borders *are* in the midst of the seas.
Your builders have perfected your beauty.
- ⁵ They ²made all *your* planks of fir trees from ^eSenir;
They took a cedar from Lebanon to make you a mast.

²⁰ ^w Ezek. 32:18
^x Ezek. 32:23
²¹ ^y Ezek. 27:36;
28:19 ^z Ps. 37:10, 36;
Ezek. 28:19

CHAPTER 27

² ^a Ezek. 26:17
³ ^b Ezek. 26:17; 28:2
^c Is. 23:3 ^d Ezek.
28:12 ¹ Lit. *sit or dwell*
⁵ ^e Deut. 3:9; 1 Chr.
5:23; Song 4:8
² ^{built}

- ⁶ *Off* oaks from Bashan they made your oars;
The company of Ashurites have inlaid your planks
With ivory from ^gthe coasts of ³Cyprus.
- ⁷ Fine embroidered linen from Egypt was what you spread for your sail;
Blue and purple from the coasts of Elishah was what covered you.
- ⁸ “Inhabitants of Sidon and Arvad were your oarsmen;
Your wise men, O Tyre, were in you; They became your pilots.
- ⁹ Elders of ^hGebal and its wise men Were in you to caulk your seams;
All the ships of the sea
And their oarsmen were in you To market your merchandise.
- ¹⁰ “Those from Persia, ⁴Lydia, and ⁵Libya
Were in your army as men of war; They hung shield and helmet in you;
They gave splendor to you.
- ¹¹ Men of Arvad with your army *were* on your walls *all* around,
And the men of Gammad were in your towers;

⁶ ^f Is. 2:12, 13; Zech. 11:2 ^g Gen. 10:4; Is. 23:1, 12; Jer. 2:10 ³ Heb. *Kittim*, western lands, especially Cyprus
⁹ ^h Josh. 13:5; 1 Kin. 5:18; Ps. 83:7
¹⁰ ⁴ Heb. *Lud*
⁵ Heb. *Put*

26:20 The **Pit** is probably a synonym for hell (see Is. 14:15; 38:18). **never be inhabited:** Ancient Tyre would cease to exist.

27:3 perfect: The proud citizens of Tyre saw themselves as the finest example of a merchant “ship” in the ancient world.

27:5 Senir is an Amorite term used for Mt. Hermon or another peak in its range. **Fir** is rendered elsewhere “pine,” “cypress,” or “juniper.”

27:6 Bashan (see 39:18) was the broad and fertile plateau east of the Sea of Galilee and the upper Jordan.

27:7 Elishah has coasts and is associated here with Egypt; therefore it may be Italy or Sicily.

27:8 Sidon was a Phoenician seaport about 30 miles north of Tyre. The two cities were rivals, but Tyre tended to dominate Sidon (see 28:21, 22; Gen. 10:15, 19; Judg. 18:28; Is. 23:2; Matt. 11:21, 22). Like Tyre, the city of **Arvad** was on an island off the coast of Phoenicia. It was Phoenicia’s northernmost town (see 28:11; Gen. 10:18; 1 Chr. 1:16).

27:9 Gebal was another successful Phoenician port, between Sidon and Arvad (see Josh. 13:5; 1 Kin. 5:18). It was called Byblos by the Greeks and Romans, and Gubla by the Assyrians and Babylonians.

27:10, 11 Lydia and **Libya** are literally Lud and Put, usually understood to be in western Asia Minor (Lud) and Africa (Put).

They hung their shields on your walls *all* around;
They made *i* your beauty perfect.

¹²*j*“Tarshish was your merchant because of your many luxury goods. They gave you silver, iron, tin, and lead for your goods. ¹³*k*Javan, Tubal, and Meshech were your traders. They bartered ^lhuman lives and vessels of bronze for your merchandise. ¹⁴Those from the house of *m*Togarmah traded for your wares with horses, steeds, and mules. ¹⁵The men of *n*Dedan were your traders; many isles were the market of your hand. They brought you ivory tusks and ebony as payment. ¹⁶Syria was your merchant because of the abundance of goods you made. They gave you for your wares emeralds, purple, embroidery, fine linen, corals, and rubies. ¹⁷Judah and the land of Israel were your traders. They traded for your merchandise wheat of *o*Minnith, millet, honey, oil, and *p*balm. ¹⁸Damascus was your merchant because of the abundance of goods you made, because of your many luxury items, with the wine of Helbon and with white wool. ¹⁹Dan and Javan paid for your wares, *q*traversing back and forth. Wrought iron, cassia, and cane were among your merchandise. ²⁰*q*Dedan was your merchant in saddlecloths for riding. ²¹Arabia and all the princes of *r*Kedar were your regular merchants. They traded with you in lambs, rams, and goats. ²²The merchants of *s*Sheba and Raamah were your merchants. They traded for your wares the choicest spices, all kinds of precious stones, and gold. ²³*t*Haran, Canneh, Eden, the merchants of *u*Sheba, Assyria, and Chilmad were your merchants. ²⁴These were your merchants in choice

¹¹ *i* Ezek. 27:3
¹² *j* Gen. 10:4;
2 Chr. 20:36; Ezek.
38:13
¹³ *k* Gen. 10:2; Is.
66:19; Ezek. 27:19
j Joel 3:3–6; Rev.
18:13
¹⁴ *m* Gen. 10:3;
Ezek. 38:6
¹⁵ *n* Gen. 10:7; Is.
21:13
¹⁷ *o* Judg. 11:33;
1 Kin. 5:9, 11; Ezra
3:7; Acts 12:20 *p* Jer.
8:22
¹⁹ *q* LXX, Syr. from
Uzal
²⁰ *q* Gen. 25:3
²¹ *r* Gen. 25:13; Is.
60:7; Jer. 49:28
²² *s* Gen. 10:7;
1 Kin. 10:1, 2; Ps.
72:10; Is. 60:6; Ezek.
38:13
²³ *t* Gen. 11:31;
2 Kin. 19:12; Is. 37:12
u Gen. 25:3

²⁵ *v* Ps. 48:7; Is. 2:16
w Ezek. 27:4
²⁶ *x* Ps. 48:7; Jer.
18:17; Acts 27:14
²⁷ *y* [Prov. 11:4]
²⁸ *z* Ezek. 26:15
z open lands or
pasturelands
²⁹ *a* Rev. 18:17 *8* Lit.
land
³⁰ *b* 1 Sam. 4:12;
2 Sam. 1:2; Job
2:12; Lam. 2:10; Rev.
18:19 *c* Esth. 4:1, 3;
Jer. 6:26; Jon. 3:6
³¹ *d* Is. 15:2; Jer.
16:6; Ezek. 29:18

items—in purple clothes, in embroidered garments, in chests of multicolored apparel, in sturdy woven cords, which were in your marketplace.

- ²⁵“The *v*ships of Tarshish were carriers of your merchandise.
You were filled and very glorious *w*in the midst of the seas.
²⁶ Your oarsmen brought you into many waters,
But *x*the east wind broke you in the midst of the seas.
²⁷“Your *y*riches, wares, and merchandise,
Your mariners and pilots,
Your caulkers and merchandisers,
All your men of war who *are* in you,
And the entire company which *is* in your midst,
Will fall into the midst of the seas on the day of your ruin.
²⁸ The *z*common-land *z*will shake at the sound of the cry of your pilots.
²⁹“All *a*who handle the oar,
The mariners,
All the pilots of the sea
Will come down from their ships *and* stand on the *s*shore.
³⁰ They will make their voice heard because of you;
They will cry bitterly and *b*cast dust on their heads;
They *c*will roll about in ashes;
³¹ They will *d*shave themselves completely bald because of you,
Gird themselves with sackcloth,
And weep for you
With bitterness of heart *and* bitter wailing.

27:12 Tarshish was possibly in Spain.

27:13 Javan is Greece (see Gen. 10:4). Tubal and Meshech are thought to have been in eastern Asia Minor (modern Turkey).

27:14 On the house of Togarmah, see Gen. 10:3. This phrase may refer to the people of Armenia in eastern Asia Minor (see 38:6).

27:15 Dedan may perhaps be understood as “Redan” (Rhodes), because the written forms of the Hebrew letters for *d* and *r* are easily confused. Rhodes was a major trading center in the southern Aegean Sea.

27:16 The Hebrew term for emeralds may also be translated “turquoise.”

27:17 Minnith was in Ammon (see 21:28) and presumably was famous for its fine wheat. Millet translates a Hebrew word that apparently stands for some type of food, but exactly what kind is not known today. Balm was an aromatic resin or other gummy substance that may have had medicinal value (see Jer. 8:22).

27:18 Damascus was and is the capital of Syria (v. 16). Helbon is north of Damascus, a region still recognized for its wine production. The phrase rendered white wool is understood by some to mean “wool from Zachar,” a place possibly associated with modern Sachra, also north of Damascus, where goat and sheep are common.

27:19 Dan seems out of place in this context, so some transliterate the Hebrew as Wedan. Others argue that the name Dan is another title for Greece. Cassia (see Ex. 30:24; Ps. 45:8; Song 4:14) was either a type of cinnamon tree or a plant from which perfume and incense were made. Cane refers to an oil-producing reed found in swamps.

27:21 Kedar was a nomadic tribe in Arabia.

27:22 Sheba and Raamah were located near Arabia (see Gen. 10:6, 7).

27:23 Ancient Haran was a merchant city along the important Euphrates trade route (see Gen. 11:27–32), in what is now eastern Turkey. Canneh (see Is. 10:9), Eden, and Chilmad were probably in Mesopotamia, most likely south of Haran (see 2 Kin. 19:12). The verse seems concerned with cities, so Assyria is better translated “Asshur,” a city south of Nineveh; but the term could stand for the citizens of Assyria. On Sheba, see v. 22.

27:26 The east wind was often powerful and potentially destructive (see Gen. 41:6; Job 27:21; Ps. 48:7; Is. 27:8). Thus it symbolizes the destruction the Babylonian army would bring on Tyre. In 26:7, Babylon would come from the “north.” This was the direction from which the army would invade Phoenicia.

27:28 The common-land was the pastureland controlled by a city.

32 In their wailing for you
They will ^etake up a lamentation,
And lament for you:
^fWhat *city* is like Tyre,
Destroyed in the midst of the sea?

33 ^aWhen ^gyour wares went out by sea,
You satisfied many people;
You enriched the kings of the earth
With your many luxury goods and
your merchandise.

34 But ^hyou are broken by the seas in
the depths of the waters;
ⁱYour merchandise and the entire
company will fall in your midst.

35 ^jAll the inhabitants of the isles will be
astounded at you;
Their kings will be greatly afraid,
And *their* countenance will be
troubled.

36 The merchants among the peoples
^kwill hiss at you;
^lYou will become a horror, and *be* no
^mmore forever.’”’”

**Proclamation Against the King
of Tyre**

28 The word of the LORD came to me
again, saying, ²“Son of man, say
to the prince of Tyre, ‘Thus says the Lord
God:

“Because your heart is ^alifted ^l up,
And ^byou say, ‘I *am* a god,
I sit *in* the seat of gods,
^cIn the midst of the seas,’
^dYet you *are* a man, and not a god,
Though you set your heart as the
heart of a god

3 (Behold, ^eyou *are* wiser than
Daniel!
There is no secret that can be hidden
from you!

4 With your wisdom and your
understanding
You have gained ^friches for yourself,
And gathered gold and silver into
your treasures;

5 ^gBy your great wisdom in trade you
have increased your riches,

32 ^e Ezek. 26:17
^f Ezek. 26:4, 5; Rev.
18:18
33 ^g Rev. 18:19
34 ^h Ezek. 26:19
ⁱ Ezek. 27:27
35 / Is. 23:6; Ezek.
26:15, 16
36 ^k Jer. 18:16;
Zeph. 2:15 / Ezek.
26:2 ^m Ps. 37:10, 36;
Ezek. 28:19

CHAPTER 28

2 ^a Jer. 49:16; Ezek.
31:10 ^b Is. 14:14;
47:8; Ezek. 28:9;
2 Thess. 2:4 ^c Ezek.
27:3, 4 ^d Is. 31:3;
Ezek. 28:9 ^f Proud
3 ^e Ezek. 14:14; Dan.
1:20; 2:20-23, 28;
5:11, 12; Zech. 9:3
4 ^f Ezek. 27:33;
Zech. 9:1-3
5 ^g Ps. 62:10; Zech.
9:3

And your heart is lifted up because
of your riches),”

6 “Therefore thus says the Lord God:

“Because you have set your heart as
the heart of a god,

7 Behold, therefore, I will bring
^hstrangers against you,

ⁱThe most terrible of the nations;
And they shall draw their swords

against the beauty of your
wisdom,
And defile your splendor.

8 They shall throw you down into the
^jPit,

And you shall die the death of the
slain

In the midst of the seas.

9 “Will you still ^ksay before him who
slays you,

‘I *am* a god’?”

But you *shall be* a man, and not a
god,

In the hand of him who slays you.

10 You shall die the death of ^lthe
uncircumcised

By the hand of aliens;

For I have spoken,” says the Lord
God.’”

Lamentation for the King of Tyre

¹¹Moreover the word of the LORD came
to me, saying, ¹²“Son of man, ^mtake up a
lamentation for the king of Tyre, and say
to him, ‘Thus says the Lord God:

ⁿ“You *were* the seal of perfection,
Full of wisdom and perfect in beauty.

13 You were in ^oEden, the garden of
God;

Every precious stone *was* your
covering:

The sardius, topaz, and diamond,
Beryl, onyx, and jasper,
Sapphire, turquoise, and emerald
with gold.

The workmanship of ^pyour timbrels
and pipes

7 ^h Ezek. 26:7
ⁱ Ezek. 7:24; 21:31;
30:11; Hab. 1:6-8
8 / Is. 14:15
9 ^k Ezek. 28:2
10 ^l 1 Sam. 17:26;
36; Ezek. 31:18;
32:19, 21, 25, 27
12 ^m Ezek. 27:2
ⁿ Ezek. 27:3; 28:3
13 ^o Gen. 2:8; Is.
51:3; Ezek. 31:8, 9;
36:35 ^p Ezek. 26:13

27:32–36 The final verses of the chapter present a remorseful and
revengeful lament to be chanted, perhaps over and over, by Tyre’s
trade partners. Tyre’s nearest neighbors (see 26:16–18) would be
greatly troubled by Tyre’s defeat, but soon they would turn against
Tyre themselves in the vain hope of escaping a similar fate at the
hands of the Babylonians.

28:3 you are wiser than Daniel: The Hebrew name Daniel is
spelled here the same way as in 14:14: *dan-El*. It might refer to a
different person otherwise unknown in Israel’s ancient history.

28:7 The strangers are the Babylonians (see 7:17–19; 23:23; 30:11;
31:12; 32:12).

28:8 The phrase **midst of the seas** parallels the word *Pit* and
reinforces its meaning, for it too signifies the place and fact of death.

28:10 the death of the uncircumcised: This term denotes a dis-
graceful death (see 31:18; 32:19).

28:12 Seal of perfection is more literally “the one sealing a plan”
(the same Hebrew word for “plan” or “pattern” appears once more
at 43:10). In effect, the king affixed the official seal of his signet ring
to the plans that made Tyre one of the leading centers of commerce
in that day. **wisdom . . . beauty:** These descriptions mark out the
king of Tyre as an exceptional ruler, displaying the ideals of kingship
in the ancient Middle East.

28:13 in Eden, the garden of God: This is possibly an exagger-
ated comparison: this king invaded a place like Eden in its beauty.

created: The Hebrew verb for *created* is the same as the one used
in Gen. 1:1. Just as in Genesis, the word emphasizes God’s active

Was prepared for you on the day you were created.

- 14^a You *were* the anointed ^acherub who covers;
I established you;
You were on ^rthe holy mountain of God;
You walked back and forth in the midst of fiery stones.
- 15 You *were* perfect in your ways from the day you were created,
Till ^siniquity was found in you.
- 16^a By the abundance of your trading
You became filled with violence within,
And you sinned;
Therefore I cast you as a profane thing
Out of the mountain of God;
And I destroyed you, ^tO covering cherub,
From the midst of the fiery stones.
- 17^a Your ^uheart was ²lifted up because of your beauty;
You corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor;
I cast you to the ground,
I laid you before kings,
That they might gaze at you.
- 18^a You defiled your sanctuaries
By the multitude of your iniquities,
By the iniquity of your trading;
Therefore I brought fire from your midst;
It devoured you,
And I turned you to ashes upon the earth
In the sight of all who saw you.
- 19 All who knew you among the peoples are astonished at you;

14 ^a Ex. 25:20; Ezek. 28:16 ^r Is. 14:13; Ezek. 20:40
15 ^s [Is. 14:12]
16 ^a Ezek. 28:14
17 ^u Ezek. 28:2, 5
² Proud

^v You have become a horror,
And *shall be* no ^wmore forever.””

Proclamation Against Sidon

²⁰ Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying, ²¹ “Son of man, ^xset your face ^ytoward Sidon, and prophesy against her, ²² and say, ‘Thus says the Lord God:

^z “Behold, I *am* against you, O Sidon;
I will be glorified in your midst;
And ^athey shall know that I *am* the LORD,
When I execute judgments in her
and am ^bhallowed in her.
²³ ^cFor I will send pestilence upon her,
And blood in her streets;
The wounded shall be judged in her midst
By the sword against her on every side;
Then they shall know that I *am* the LORD.

²⁴ “And there shall no longer be a pricking brier or ^da painful thorn for the house of Israel from among all *who are* around them, who ^edespise them. Then they shall know that I *am* the Lord God.”

Israel's Future Blessing

²⁵ Thus says the Lord God: “When I have ^fgathered the house of Israel from the peoples among whom they are scattered, and am ^ghallowed in them in the sight of the Gentiles, then they will dwell in their own land which I gave to My servant Jacob. ²⁶ And they will ^hdwell ³securely there, ⁱbuild houses, and ^jplant vineyards; yes, they will dwell securely, when I execute judgments on all those around them who despise them. Then they shall know that I *am* the LORD their God.””

19 ^v Ezek. 26:21
^w Ezek. 27:36
21 ^x Ezek. 6:2; 25:2;
29:2 ^y Gen. 10:15,
19; Is. 23:2, 4, 12;
Ezek. 27:8; 32:30
22 ^z Ex. 14:4, 17;
Ezek. 39:13 ^a Ps.
9:16 ^b Ezek. 28:25
23 ^c Ezek. 38:22
24 ^d Num. 33:55;
Josh. 23:13; Is. 55:13;
Ezek. 2:6 ^e Ezek.
16:57; 25:6, 7
25 ^f Ps. 106:47; Is.
11:12, 13; Jer. 32:37;
Ezek. 11:17; 20:41;
34:13; 37:21 ^g Ezek.
28:22
26 ^h Jer. 23:6; Ezek.
36:28 ⁱ Is. 65:21;
Jer. 32:15, 43, 44;
Amos 9:13, 14 ^j Jer.
31:5; Amos 9:14
³ securely

work in history. It was God's sovereign plan and purpose to allow this man to become king.

28:14 The holy mountain of God could be “the holy mountain of gods.” According to Canaanite beliefs, the “seat of the gods” was in the “mountains,” or the “mountains of the north” (see Ps. 48:2). The focus here seems to be on the king of Tyre's attempt to enter into the council of the gods. So instead of the verse referring to the king's presence in Jerusalem, it could refer more logically to a Phoenician ritual, the celebration of their patron god Melqart's fiery resurrection. This king wanted to imitate Melqart.

28:15 The term **perfect** does not mean sinless, but complete or flawless. The king of Tyre had been in complete control and was unchallenged until he was filled with prideful **iniquity**.

28:16–19 The king's pride led to materialism, violence, and sinfulness in business and religion. **abundance of your trading**: The expression is most easily and appropriately applied to the human king who was the driving force behind the development of Tyre's commercial empire. The true God—the pronoun **I**—dethroned the king, derailed his unholy ambitions, and destroyed the source of his pride in order to make his example a deterrent to others. The king's

commercial empire collapsed and his machinations to resemble a god were crushed in the sight of local rulers who would gaze in astonishment.

28:20–23 Sidon was Tyre's sister city, but its lesser importance may explain the brevity of treatment here (see 27:8). As commercial “sisters,” the cities had similar characters and concerns, so they shared similar crimes. The **LORD** displayed justice through deserved judgment so the people would recognize that He is the true and righteous God.

28:24 God would free Israel. The **brier** and **thorn** refer to the nations around Israel who had been enemies and evil influences. When the judgments were executed fully, these nations would no longer be able to harass and oppress Israel.

28:25, 26 God promised that Israel will someday be gathered from its dispersion among the nations to return and **dwell in their own land**, the land that God had given to **Jacob** (the land of Canaan; 11:17; 20:41, 42; ch. 33–39; see Gen. 12:7; 26:3; 28:10–13; 35:12; Jer. 30:10). The end of the foreign nations' ability to attack Israel will lead to a time of peace, prosperity, and protection.

Proclamation Against Egypt

29 In the tenth year, in the tenth month, on the twelfth day of the month, the word of the LORD came to me, saying, ²“Son of man, ^aset your face against Pharaoh king of Egypt, and prophesy against him, and ^bagainst all Egypt. ³Speak, and say, ‘Thus says the Lord God:

- “Behold, I *am* against you,
O Pharaoh king of Egypt,
O great ^dmonster who lies in the
midst of his rivers,
“Who has said, ‘My ¹River *is* my
own;
I have made *it* for myself.’
⁴ But ¹I will put hooks in your jaws,
And cause the fish of your rivers to
stick to your scales;
I will bring you up out of the midst
of your rivers,
And all the fish in your rivers will
stick to your scales.
⁵ I will leave you in the wilderness,
You and all the fish of your
rivers;
You shall fall on the ²open ^gfield;
^hYou shall not be picked up or
³gathered.
ⁱI have given you as food
To the beasts of the field
And to the birds of the heavens.
⁶ “Then all the inhabitants of Egypt
Shall know that I *am* the LORD,
Because they have been a ^jstaff of
reed to the house of Israel.
⁷ ^kWhen they took hold of you with the
hand,
You broke and tore all their
⁴shoulders;

CHAPTER 29

² ^a Ezek. 28:21 ^b Is. 19:1; Jer. 25:19; 46:2, 25; Ezek. 30:1–32:32; Joel 3:19
³ ^c Jer. 44:30; Ezek. 28:22; 29:10 ^d Ps. 74:13, 14; Is. 37:1; 51:9; Ezek. 32:2
^e Ezek. 28:2 ¹ The Nile
⁴ ^f 2 Kin. 19:28; Is. 37:29; Ezek. 38:4
⁵ ^g Ezek. 32:4–6
^h Jer. 8:2; 16:4; 25:33
ⁱ Jer. 7:33; 34:20; Ezek. 39:4 ² Lit. *face of the field* ³ So with MT, LXX, Vg.; some Heb. mss., Tg. *buried*
⁶ ^j 2 Kin. 18:21; Is. 36:6; Ezek. 17:15
⁷ ^k Jer. 37:5, 7, 11; Ezek. 17:17 ⁴ So with MT, Vg.; LXX, Syr. *hand*

⁸ ¹ Jer. 46:13; Ezek. 14:17; 32:11–13
⁹ ^m Ezek. 30:7, 8
¹⁰ ⁿ Ezek. 30:12
^o Ezek. 30:6 ⁵ Or the *tower*
¹¹ ^p Jer. 43:11, 12; 46:19; Ezek. 32:13
¹² ^q Jer. 25:15–19; 27:6–11; Ezek. 30:7, 26 ^r Jer. 46:19; Ezek. 30:23, 26
¹³ ^s Is. 19:23; Jer. 46:26
¹⁴ ^t Ezek. 17:6, 14
¹⁶ ^u Is. 30:2, 3; 36:4, 6; Lam. 4:17; Ezek. 17:15; 29:6

When they leaned on you,
You broke and made all their backs
quiver.”

⁸ “Therefore thus says the Lord God: “Surely I will bring ¹a sword upon you and cut off from you man and beast. ⁹ And the land of Egypt shall become ^mdesolate and waste; then they will know that I *am* the LORD, because he said, ‘The River *is* mine, and I have made *it*.’ ¹⁰ Indeed, therefore, I *am* against you and against your rivers,” and I will make the land of Egypt utterly waste and desolate, ^ofrom ⁵Migdol to Syene, as far as the border of Ethiopia. ¹¹ Neither foot of man shall pass through it nor foot of beast pass through it, and it shall be uninhabited forty years. ¹² ^qI will make the land of Egypt desolate in the midst of the countries *that are* desolate; and among the cities *that are* laid waste, her cities shall be desolate forty years; and I will ^rscatter the Egyptians among the nations and disperse them throughout the countries.”

¹³ Yet, thus says the Lord God: “At the ^send of forty years I will gather the Egyptians from the peoples among whom they were scattered. ¹⁴ I will bring back the captives of Egypt and cause them to return to the land of Pathros, to the land of their origin, and there they shall be a ^tlowly kingdom. ¹⁵ It shall be the lowliest of kingdoms; it shall never again exalt itself above the nations, for I will diminish them so that they will not rule over the nations anymore. ¹⁶ No longer shall it be ^uthe confidence of the house of Israel, but will remind them of *their* iniquity when they turned to follow them. Then they shall know that I *am* the Lord God.””

29:1 tenth year . . . tenth month: This is December 588 or January 587 B.C. This introduction of another date by Ezekiel (his sixth) is a chronological break, but not a thematic break, with 26:1–28:26 (see 1:2; 8:1; 20:1; 24:1; 26:1).

29:2 The Pharaoh was Hophra (c. 589–570 B.C.; see Jer. 44:30). The prophecy against him was also a prophecy against all Egypt (see 30:22; 32:2), like the previous prophecy against Tyre and its king (see 28:1–19). The context suggests that literal, human kings were meant in chs. 28; 29.

29:3 O great monster: The Pharaoh is pictured here as a crocodile. **My River** refers to the Nile. Pharaoh’s arrogant pride is described by his words about the Nile River, **I have made it for myself** (compare with the words of the king of Tyre, 28:2). In the Egyptian religion the crocodile god Sebek was a protector (see 32:2).

29:4, 5 Whereas v. 3 explains why Pharaoh would be punished, these verses explain how the punishment would be accomplished. The imagery pictures a crocodile being caught, carried out of the water onto land, and left as carrion. The **fish** represent the Egyptians, who would be judged along with Pharaoh (v. 2). Pharaoh’s destiny to be **food** may have been an intentional insult to the rulers famous for their burials and pyramids.

29:6, 7 God’s purpose for judging Egypt was to encourage the nations and individuals to come to know Him (see 6:14; 7:27; 12:20;

14:11; 22:16; 23:49; 25:7, 11, 17; 28:24). **Staff of reed** refers to the people of Egypt. This alludes to Egypt’s weakness as an ally and the worthlessness of that country’s protection (see Is. 36:6). Israel was foolish to rely on Egypt for protection. They should have turned to God for their security and strength.

29:8 sword: Here is another reference to the Babylonian army under Nebuchadnezzar, the predicted human instrument of God’s coming wrath (see 21:1–7, 9–11, 19, 20; 26:7–14).

29:9 The nation was indicted as a result of what **he**—that is, Pharaoh—boasted. Often national monuments were inscribed in ancient times with the exaggerated and arrogant boasts of kings.

29:10 Migdol to Syene refers to places most likely near the northern and southern boundaries of ancient Egypt, indicating the totality of the land (see Judg. 20:1). The desolation would extend to the land south of Egypt—ancient Nubia which is modern Sudan.

29:11 The Egyptians would experience a scattering to other lands for **forty years** (see 4:4–8). A Babylonian chronicle suggests that Egypt was conquered around 568 B.C. Forty years after this date, the Persians instituted a policy of resettlement for many of the peoples who had been dispersed by Babylon.

29:14, 15 The **land of Pathros** is southern Egypt. This kingdom would thereafter be **lowly** and **the lowliest**, never again to dominate other nations.

Babylonia Will Plunder Egypt

¹⁷And it came to pass in the twenty-seventh year, in the first *month*, on the first *day* of the month, *that* the word of the LORD came to me, saying, ¹⁸“Son of man, ^vNebuchadnezzar king of Babylon caused his army to labor strenuously against Tyre; every head *was* made ^wbald, and every shoulder rubbed raw; yet neither he nor his army received wages from Tyre, for the labor which they expended on it. ¹⁹Therefore thus says the Lord God: ‘Surely I will give the land of Egypt to ^xNebuchadnezzar king of Babylon; he shall take away her wealth, carry off her spoil, and remove her pillage; and that will be the wages for his army. ²⁰I have given him the land of Egypt *for* his labor, because they ^yworked for Me,’ says the Lord God.

²¹‘In that day ^zI will cause the ⁶horn of the house of Israel to spring forth, and I will ^aopen your mouth to speak in their midst. Then they shall know that I *am* the LORD.’”

Egypt and Her Allies Will Fall

30 The word of the LORD came to me again, saying, ²“Son of man, prophesy and say, ‘Thus says the Lord God:

- ^a“Wail, ‘Woe to the day!’
³ For ^bthe day *is* near,
 Even the day of the LORD *is* near;
 It will be a day of clouds, the time of the Gentiles.
⁴ The sword shall come upon Egypt,
 And great anguish shall be in ¹Ethiopia,
 When the slain fall in Egypt,

¹⁸ ^v Jer. 25:9; 27:6; Ezek. 26:7-12 ^w Jer. 48:37; Ezek. 27:31
¹⁹ ^x Jer. 43:10-13; Ezek. 30:10
²⁰ ^y Is. 10:6, 7; 45:1-3; Jer. 25:9
²¹ ^z 1 Sam. 2:10; Ps. 92:10; 132:17
^a Ezek. 24:27; Amos 3:7, 8; [Luke 21:15]
^b Strength

CHAPTER 30

² ^a Is. 13:6; 15:2; Ezek. 21:12; Joel 1:5, 11, 13
³ ^b Ezek. 7:7, 12; Joel 2:1; Obad. 15; Zeph. 1:7
⁴ ¹ Heb. *Cush*

^c Ezek. 29:19 ^d Jer. 50:15
⁵ ^e Jer. 25:20, 24
² Heb. *Put* ³ Heb. *Lud*
⁶ ^f Ezek. 29:10 ⁴ Or *the tower*
⁷ ^g Jer. 25:18-26; Ezek. 29:12
⁹ ^h Is. 18:1; ² ⁵ Or *secure*
¹⁰ ⁱ Ezek. 29:19

And they ^ctake away her wealth,
 And ^dher foundations are broken down.

⁵“Ethiopia, ²Libya, ³Lydia, ^eall the mingled people, Chub, and the men of the lands who are allied, shall fall with them by the sword.”

⁶‘Thus says the LORD:

“Those who uphold Egypt shall fall,
 And the pride of her power shall come down.

^fFrom ⁴Migdol to Syene
 Those within her shall fall by the sword,^g
 Says the Lord God.

⁷ “They^g shall be desolate in the midst of the desolate countries,
 And her cities shall be in the midst of the cities *that are* laid waste.

⁸ Then they will know that I *am* the LORD,
 When I have set a fire in Egypt
 And all her helpers are destroyed.

⁹ On that day ^hmessengers shall go forth from Me in ships
 To make the ⁵careless Ethiopians afraid,
 And great anguish shall come upon them,
 As on the day of Egypt;
 For indeed it is coming!”

¹⁰‘Thus says the Lord God:

ⁱ“I will also make a multitude of Egypt to cease
 By the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon.

29:17 came to pass: Ezekiel received this oracle from God (vv. 17–21) and apparently the following message also (30:1–19) in March–April 571 B.C., the latest date in the book (see v. 1).

29:18 labor strenuously: This recalls the difficult siege of Tyre. Heads were **made bald** and shoulders **rubbed raw** in the protracted siege, which took 13 or more years. **yet neither:** The fact was that neither Nebuchadnezzar **nor his army received** much of a reward for their efforts.

29:19, 20 God affirms that He is sovereign over the coming fall of Egypt to Babylon to make up for the **wages** they had not received from their conquest of Tyre. God specifically named Nebuchadnezzar as his instrument (see Jer. 43:8–13). The Babylonian chronicles imply that Babylon invaded Egypt in approximately 568 B.C.

29:21 In that day: This refers to the day when Egypt would fall to Babylon, and a prophecy about the Messiah should not be read into this text. **Cause the horn . . . of Israel to spring forth** means that the nation would renew its strength. Renewal and encouragement would come to God’s people in exile when they heard about Egypt’s downfall orchestrated by the hand of God, who is holy and sovereign. **I will open your mouth** was God’s promise to restore Ezekiel’s speech (see 33:22) and therefore to magnify Himself and His ways: **know that I am the LORD**.

30:3 The phrase **the day of the LORD** here refers to the period of divine wrath on the nation of Egypt. This term suggests God’s personal

involvement in His judgmental work. In this context (see vv. 4–19) God would use Babylon under Nebuchadnezzar to punish Egypt and her allies (see Gen. 12:3; Jer. 25; 46). **the time of the Gentiles:** That is, the time of God’s wrath on the nations.

30:5 Ethiopia is the Hebrew Cush, and refers to the area south of Egypt toward modern Ethiopia, see 29:10. **Libya** and **Lydia** were in Africa and Asia Minor; see 27:10. **Mingled people** may be read as “all of Arabia.” **Chub** is an obscure term that was understood as the “Libyans” by the Septuagint translators of the Hebrew OT. The **allied** lands were lands to the south, east, and west of Egypt that would also fall to the Babylonian army.

30:6 Migdol to Syene means the whole land of Egypt, see 29:10.

30:8 Fire is often symbolic of judgment (see 20:47; Is. 4:4).

30:9 This day of Egypt—the day that Egypt and her allies would be conquered—was part of a larger period of God’s judgment on the nations outside Israel by means of Babylon; in fact, Ezekiel describes the Babylonians as **messengers** sent from God Himself. No one could prevent the coming day of judgment, for the Almighty had ordained it: **for indeed it is coming**.

30:10–12 These verses add extra details to the more general predictions about Egypt’s doom in the preceding verses (vv. 3–9). **Most terrible of the nations** was applied to the Babylonians because their cruelty was legendary (see 2 Kin. 25:7; 2 Chr. 33:11; 36:17; Jer. 39:4–10).



Ships

Merchant ships varied in size. The smaller coastal traders were from 50–60 feet long and 15–20 feet wide. The larger ones that sailed the open water were frequently well over 100 feet long and up to 50 feet wide. These ships were usually made of fir, pine, or cedar boards over a hardwood frame.

Cargo ships usually had little space for passengers. Occasionally they would carry voyagers on the open deck or in the hold with the cargo (Jon. 1:5). Merchant vessels were large enough to carry considerable cargo and sturdy enough to survive the open sea. The judgment on Tyre recorded in Ezek. 27 reflects the wealth that trade provided.

The fishing vessels used on the Sea of Galilee in Jesus' time were large enough to accommodate all the disciples (Matt. 8:23–27), but small enough to be in danger of sinking under the weight of a large catch of fish (Luke 5:7).



Merchant ship mosaics are part of the Square of the Corporations at Ostia Antica, first to third centuries A.D.

Kim Walton

- 11 He and his people with him, ^jthe most terrible of the nations, Shall be brought to destroy the land; They shall draw their swords against Egypt, And fill the land with the slain.
- 12 ^kI will make the rivers dry, And ^lsell the land into the hand of the wicked; I will make the land waste, and all that is in it, By the hand of aliens. I, the LORD, have spoken.”

11 / Ezek. 28:7; 31:12
12 ^k Is. 19:5, 6 / Is. 19:4
13 ^m Is. 19:1; Jer. 43:12; 46:25; Zech. 13:2 ⁿ Zech. 10:11
^o Is. 19:16 ^p Ancient Memphis
14 ^p Is. 11:11; Jer. 44:1, 15; Ezek. 29:14 ^q Ps. 78:12; 43; Is. 19:11, 13 ^r Jer. 46:25; Ezek. 30:15, 16; Nah. 3:8–10
^r Ancient Thebes
15 ^s Jer. 46:25

13 “Thus says the Lord God:

- “I will also ^mdestroy the idols, And cause the images to cease from ⁶Noph;
ⁿThere shall no longer be princes from the land of Egypt;
^oI will put fear in the land of Egypt.
14 I will make ^pPathros desolate, Set fire to ^qZoan,
^rAnd execute judgments in ⁷No.
15 I will pour My fury on ⁸Sin, the strength of Egypt;
^sI will cut off the multitude of ⁹No,
16 And ^tset a fire in Egypt; Sin shall have great pain, No shall be split open, And Noph shall be in distress daily.
17 The young men of ¹Aven and Pi Beseth shall fall by the sword, And these cities shall go into captivity.
18 ^uAt ²Tehaphnehes the day shall also be ³darkened, When I break the yokes of Egypt there. And her arrogant strength shall cease in her; As for her, a cloud shall cover her, And her daughters shall go into captivity.
19 Thus I will ^vexecute judgments on Egypt, Then they shall know that I am the LORD.” ” ”

Proclamation Against Pharaoh

²⁰ And it came to pass in the eleventh year, in the first month, on the seventh day of the month, that the word of the LORD came to me, saying, ²¹ “Son of man, I have ^wbroken the arm of Pharaoh king of Egypt; and see, ^xit has not been bandaged for healing, nor a ⁴splint put on to bind it, to make it strong enough to hold

⁸ Ancient Pelusium ⁹ Ancient Thebes 16 ^t Ezek. 30:8
17 ^r Ancient On, Heliopolis 18 ^u Jer. 2:16 ² Tahpanhes, Jer. 43:7 ³ So with many Heb. mss., Bg., LXX, Syr., Tg., Vg.; MT refrained 19 ^v [Ps. 9:16]; Ezek. 5:8; 25:11 21 ^w Jer. 48:25
^x Jer. 46:11 ⁴ Lit. bandage

30:13–19 In this fourth and final message, emphasis seems to be placed on the fall of major cities. **Noph** was ancient Memphis, a significant city in Egypt. It was capital of the Old Kingdom in the third century B.C. On **Pathros**, see 29:14, 15. **Zoan**, the classical Tanis, was a city in the northeastern delta. **No** was ancient Thebes, the capital of Upper or southern Egypt. Thebes was destroyed by the Assyrians in 661 B.C. **Sin** was ancient Pelusium, a fortress town on the northeastern border where the ruling Egyptian dynasty of Ezekiel's day had a residence: the **strength of Egypt**. **Aven** (or Heliopolis, “the City of the Sun”) was ancient On, a center for worship of the sun-god Re. Aven was north of Memphis at the southern tip of the delta. **Pi Beseth**, or Bubastis in Greek form, was once the capital of

Lower Egypt (the northern or Nile Delta area). **Tehaphnehes** was also a fortress town on the northeastern border, the place where the Babylonian army would enter Egypt to bring this dark day. **A cloud** would arise from burning the city, and its vassal villages—**her daughters**—would be attacked and set ablaze also.

30:20 first month: March–April 587 B.C. (see 29:1, 18–20). Ezekiel returns to a chronological sequence for the prophecies.

30:21 I have broken the arm of Pharaoh: The prophecy refers to Pharaoh Hophra's unsuccessful attempt to relieve the siege of Jerusalem just a few months earlier (see 29:2, 6, 7). God used Nebuchadnezzar to defeat the Egyptian army. A muscular **arm**, as a symbol of the king's (and thus the army's) strength, often appeared in

a sword. ²²Therefore thus says the Lord God: ‘Surely I *am* ^yagainst Pharaoh king of Egypt, and will ^zbreak his arms, both the strong one and the one that was broken; and I will make the sword fall out of his hand. ^{23a}I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations, and disperse them throughout the countries. ²⁴I will strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon and put My sword in his hand; but I will break Pharaoh’s arms, and he will groan before him with the groanings of a mortally wounded *man*. ²⁵Thus I will strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon, but the arms of Pharaoh shall fall down; ^bthey shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I put My sword into the hand of the king of Babylon and he stretches it out against the land of Egypt. ^{26c}I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations and disperse them throughout the countries. Then they shall know that I *am* the LORD.”

Egypt Cut Down Like a Great Tree

31 Now it came to pass in the ^aeleventh year, in the third *month*, on the first *day* of the month, *that* the word of the LORD came to me, saying, ²“Son of man, say to Pharaoh king of Egypt and to his multitude:

^b“Whom are you like in your greatness?

³ ^cIndeed Assyria *was* a cedar in Lebanon,
With fine branches that shaded the forest,
And of high stature;
And its top was among the thick boughs.

⁴ ^dThe waters made it grow;
Underground waters gave it height,
With their rivers running around the place where it was planted,
And sent out ⁱrivulets to all the trees of the field.

²² ^y Jer. 46:25;
Ezek. 29:3 ^z Ps.
37:17
²³ ^a Ezek. 29:12;
30:17, 18, 26
²⁵ ^b Ps. 9:16
²⁶ ^c Ezek. 29:12

CHAPTER 31

¹ ^a Jer. 52:5, 6; Ezek.
30:20; 32:1
² ^b Ezek. 31:18
³ ^c Is. 10:33, 34;
Ezek. 17:3, 4, 22;
31:16; Dan. 4:10,
20-23
⁴ ^d Jer. 51:36;
Ezek. 29:3-9 ⁱ Or
channels

⁵ ^e Dan. 4:11
⁶ ^f Ezek. 17:23;
31:13; Dan. 4:12, 21;
Matt. 13:32 ^g Lit.
dwelled
⁸ ^g Gen. 2:8, 9;
13:10; Is. 51:3; Ezek.
28:13; 31:16, 18 ^h Or
plane, Heb. *armon*
¹⁰ ^h 2 Chr. 32:25;
Is. 10:12; 14:13, 14;
Ezek. 28:17; Dan.
5:20 ⁱ Proud
¹¹ ⁱ Ezek. 30:10;
Dan. 5:18, 19
¹² ^j Ezek. 28:7;
30:11; 32:12 ^k Ezek.
32:5; 35:8 ^k Ezek.
30:24, 25

⁵ ‘Therefore ^eits height was exalted
above all the trees of the field;
Its boughs were multiplied,
And its branches became long
because of the abundance of
water,
As it sent them out.
⁶ All the ^fbirds of the heavens made
their nests in its boughs;
Under its branches all the beasts
of the field brought forth their
young;
And in its shadow all great nations
²made their home.
⁷ ‘Thus it was beautiful in greatness
and in the length of its branches,
Because its roots reached to
abundant waters.
⁸ The cedars in the ^ggarden of God
could not hide it;
The fir trees were not like its boughs,
And the ³chestnut trees were not
like its branches;
No tree in the garden of God was
like it in beauty.
⁹ I made it beautiful with a multitude
of branches,
So that all the trees of Eden
envied it,
That *were* in the garden of God.’

¹⁰“Therefore thus says the Lord God:
‘Because you have increased in height,
and it set its top among the thick boughs,
and ^hits heart was ⁴lifted up in its height,
¹¹therefore I will deliver it into the hand
of the ⁱmighty one of the nations, and he
shall surely deal with it; I have driven it out
for its wickedness. ¹²And aliens, ^jthe most
terrible of the nations, have cut it down
and left it; its branches have fallen ^kon the
mountains and in all the valleys; its boughs
lie ^lbroken by all the rivers of the land; and
all the peoples of the earth have gone from
under its shadow and left it.

Egyptian art and architecture. Even Hophra took the title “He Who Is Strong-Armed.” That God had broken Pharaoh’s arm symbolized his complete defeat.

30:22–26 I will scatter: These verses predict the continued weakness of Hophra against Nebuchadnezzar and the coming catastrophe for all Egypt when its cities would be defeated and the people deported (beginning c. 568 B.C.).

31:1 third month: May–June, 587 B.C. See 1:2; 8:1; 20:1; 24:1, 2; 26:1; 29:1, 17; 30:20.

31:3 Egypt was compared to Assyria in greatness and presumably in its great pride over its achievements. Ezekiel uses another allegory (see 15:1–8; 17:1–10): **Assyria as a cedar in Lebanon.** This image pictures the nations as trees in a forest in Lebanon (a country prized for its cedar trees; see vv. 15–18; 1 Kin. 5:7–10; 7:2, 3; Ps. 29:5). Assyria at one time was the highest tree, but it had been cut down. Its capital city Nineveh fell in 612 B.C., signaling the end of Assyrian domination and the beginning of neo-Babylonian control of the ancient Middle East.

31:4 The **waters** were the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. These mighty rivers brought agricultural fertility and fostered the development of great cities along trade routes (see vv. 8, 9, 15–18; Gen. 2:10–14).

31:5–9 The unparalleled greatness of Assyria is portrayed with vivid poetic images. There is both comparison and contrast with Egypt. Before turning to the mostly narrative explanation in vv. 10–18, the prophet indicates that although Egypt was great, it was not the greatest nation. If Assyria had fallen to Babylon, no hope would remain for Egypt (see 31:18).

31:10–14 Because Assyria gloated over her greatness, God sentenced this cruel nation to harsh treatment and subjection under Babylon, **the mighty one of the nations. I will deliver:** The past tense, “I delivered,” would be more accurate for this context. The meaning is that Babylon, the **terrible** nation, had **cut** Assyria down. The picturesque conclusion to this second message of ch. 31 indicates that all the other nations (**birds, beasts, and trees**) that observed Assyria’s **ruin** would share its destiny of **death, depths, and the Pit**, and would never attain its heights of power.

13 ^cOn ^mits ruin will remain all the birds of the heavens,
And all the beasts of the field will come to its branches—

14 “So that no trees by the waters may ever again exalt themselves for their height, nor set their tops among the thick boughs, that no tree which drinks water may ever be high enough to reach up to them.

‘For ⁿthey have all been delivered to death,
^oTo the depths of the earth,
Among the children of men who go down to the Pit.’

15 “Thus says the Lord God: ‘In the day when it ^pwent down to ⁵hell, I caused mourning. I covered the deep because of it. I restrained its rivers, and the great waters were held back. I caused Lebanon to ⁶mourn for it, and all the trees of the field wilted because of it. ¹⁶I made the nations ^qshake at the sound of its fall, when I ^rcast it down to ⁷hell together with those who descend into the Pit; and ^sall the trees of Eden, the choice and best of Lebanon, all that drink water, ^twere comforted in the depths of the earth. ¹⁷They also went down to hell with it, with those slain by the sword; and *those who were its strong arm* ^udwelt in its shadows among the nations.

¹⁸“To which of the trees in Eden will you then be likened in glory and greatness? Yet you shall be brought down with the trees of Eden to the depths of the earth; ^wyou shall lie in the midst of the uncircumcised, with *those* slain by the sword. This *is* Pharaoh and all his multitude,’ says the Lord God.”

Lamentation for Pharaoh and Egypt

32 And it came to pass in the twelfth year, in the ^atwelfth month, on the first day of the month, *that* the word of the Lord came to me, saying, ²“Son of

13 ^m Is. 18:6; Ezek. 32:4
14 ⁿ Ps. 82:7 ^o Ezek. 32:18
15 ^p Ezek. 32:22, 23
⁵ Or Sheol ⁶ Lit. *be darkened*
16 ^q Ezek. 26:15; Hag. 2:7 ^r Is. 14:15; Ezek. 32:18 ^s Is. 14:8; Hab. 2:17
^t Ezek. 32:31 ⁷ Or Sheol
17 ^u Lam. 4:20
18 ^v Ezek. 32:19
^w Jer. 9:25, 26; Ezek. 28:10; 32:19, 21

CHAPTER 32

1 ^o Ezek. 31:1; 33:21

2 ^b Ezek. 27:2 ^c Jer. 4:7; Ezek. 19:2-6; Nah. 2:11-13 ^d Is. 27:1; Ezek. 29:3
^e Jer. 46:7, 8 ^f Ezek. 34:18
3 ^g Ezek. 12:13; 17:20
4 ^h Ezek. 29:5 ⁱ Is. 18:6; Ezek. 31:13
^j Lit. *sit or dwell*
5 ^j Ezek. 31:12
7 ^k Is. 13:10; Joel 2:31; 3:15; Amos 8:9; Matt. 24:29; Mark 13:24; Luke 21:25; Rev. 6:12, 13; 8:12
8 ² Or *shining*

man, ^btake up a lamentation for Pharaoh king of Egypt, and say to him:

^c‘You are like a young lion among the nations,
And ^dyou *are* like a monster in the seas,
^eBursting forth in your rivers,
Troubling the waters with your feet,
And ^ffouling their rivers.

3 “Thus says the Lord God:

“I will therefore ^gspread My net over you with a company of many people,
And they will draw you up in My net.

4 Then ^hI will leave you on the land;
I will cast you out on the open fields,
ⁱAnd cause to ^jsettle on you all the birds of the heavens.
And with you I will fill the beasts of the whole earth.
5 I will lay your flesh ^jon the mountains,
And fill the valleys with your carcass.

6 “I will also water the land with the flow of your blood,
Even to the mountains;
And the riverbeds will be full of you.
7 When I put out your light,
^kI will cover the heavens, and make its stars dark;
I will cover the sun with a cloud,
And the moon shall not give her light.
8 All the ²bright lights of the heavens I will make dark over you,
And bring darkness upon your land,”
Says the Lord God.

⁹I will also trouble the hearts of many peoples, when I bring your destruction among the nations, into the countries which you have not known. ¹⁰Yes, I will make many peoples astonished at you,

31:15–17 Hell renders the Hebrew word sometimes transliterated as Sheol, which often merely speaks of the grave or death (see Gen. 37:35; Ps. 6:5; Jon. 2:2). God had dried up or devastated Assyria, and all the nations were caused to **mourn for it and shake** because of its death and burial, as it was cast into **hell, the Pit, and the depths of the earth**. Those nations, **the trees of Eden**, who were guilty of a similar, sinful pride in their achievements would receive the same punishment.

31:18 If Assyria, the greatest nation, had fallen to the Babylonians, surely a nation less great would also fall. This pointed to Egypt—**Pharaoh and all his multitude** (see vv. 2, 3, 5–9).

32:1 twelfth month: February–March 585 B.C. (see 31:1), after the fall of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. (see 2 Kin. 25:8), but about 20 years before the Babylonian invasion of Egypt (see 29:19, 20). However, the record

of the fall of Jerusalem is given in 33:21. This section (32:1—33:20) is placed before 33:21, although it reports events that follow the fall of Jerusalem. Ezekiel’s arrangement is thematic. He can first record his lament, and then explain the events that inspired it. Even though the Egyptians arrogantly thought that they, unlike Judah, would not fall to Babylon’s forces, they would eventually experience the same fate as the citizens of Jerusalem.

32:2 The words **lion** and **monster** depict Egypt as proud and powerful.

32:3–8 These poetic lines picture Egypt and its ruler, Hophra, as a crocodile who is going to experience the judgment ordained by God. Egypt will be caught, killed, and consigned to **darkness**—a recognizable element of the day of the Lord (see 30:1–5; Amos 5:18–20; Acts 2:20).

and their kings shall be horribly afraid of you when I brandish My sword before them; and ^lthey shall tremble *every* moment, every man for his own life, in the day of your fall.

^{11 m}For thus says the Lord God: “The sword of the king of Babylon shall come upon you. ¹²By the swords of the mighty warriors, all of them ⁿthe most terrible of the nations, I will cause your multitude to fall.

^o“They shall plunder the pomp of Egypt,
And all its multitude shall be destroyed.

¹³ Also I will destroy all its animals
From beside its great waters;
^pThe foot of man shall muddy them
no more,
Nor shall the hooves of animals
muddy them.

¹⁴ Then I will make their waters ³clear,
And make their rivers run like oil,”
Says the Lord God.

¹⁵“When I make the land of Egypt
desolate,
And the country is destitute of all
that once filled it,
When I strike all who dwell in it,
^qThen they shall know that I *am* the
LORD.

¹⁶“This *is* the ^rlamentation
With which they shall lament her;
The daughters of the nations shall
lament her;
They shall lament for her, for Egypt,
And for all her multitude,”
Says the Lord God.’”

Egypt and Others Consigned to the Pit

¹⁷It came to pass also in the twelfth year, on the fifteenth *day* of the month, ^sthat the word of the LORD came to me, saying:

¹⁸“Son of man, wail over the multitude of Egypt,

¹⁰ ^lEzek. 26:16
^{11 m} Jer. 46:26;
Ezek. 30:4
^{12 n} Ezek. 28:7;
30:11; 31:12 ^o Ezek.
29:19
^{13 p} Ezek. 29:11
¹⁴ ³ Lit. *sink*; settle,
grow clear
^{15 q} Ex. 7:5; 14:4, 18;
Ps. 9:16; Ezek. 6:7
^{16 r} 2 Sam. 1:17;
2 Chr. 35:25; Jer.
9:17; Ezek. 26:17
^{17 s} Ezek. 32:1;
33:21

^{18 t} Ezek. 26:20;
31:14
^{19 u} Jer. 9:25, 26;
Ezek. 31:2, 18
^v Ezek. 28:10
^{20 w} Ps. 28:3
^{21 x} Is. 1:31; 14:9, 10;
Ezek. 32:27 ^y Ezek.
32:19, 25
^{22 z} Ezek. 31:3, 16
^{23 a} Is. 14:15 ^b Ezek.
32:24–27, 32
^{24 c} Gen. 10:22;
14:1; Is. 11:11; Jer.
25:25; 49:34–39
^d Ezek. 32:21 ^e Ezek.
32:23
^{25 f} Ps. 139:8

And ^tcast them down to the depths
of the earth,
Her and the daughters of the famous
nations,
With those who go down to the
Pit:

¹⁹ ‘Whom ^udo you surpass in beauty?
^vGo down, be placed with the
uncircumcised.’

²⁰“They shall fall in the midst of *those*
slain by the sword;
She is delivered to the sword,
^wDrawing her and all her multitudes.
^{21 x}‘The strong among the mighty
Shall speak to him out of the midst
of hell
With those who help him:
‘They have ^ygone down,
They lie with the uncircumcised,
slain by the sword.’

²²“Assyria^z is there, and all her
company,
With their graves all around her,
All of them slain, fallen by the
sword.

^{23 a} Her graves are set in the recesses of
the Pit,
And her company is all around her
grave,
All of them slain, fallen by the
sword,
Who ^bcaused terror in the land of
the living.

²⁴“There is ^cElam and all her multitude,
All around her grave,
All of them slain, fallen by the
sword,
Who have ^dgone down
uncircumcised to the lower parts
of the earth,
^eWho caused their terror in the land
of the living;
Now they bear their shame with
those who go down to the Pit.
²⁵ They have set her ^fbed in the midst
of the slain,
With all her multitude,
With her graves all around it,

32:11–15 This section interrupts the flow of vv. 3–10. The **king of Babylon** was Nebuchadnezzar. **the most terrible of the nations:** That is, the Neo-Babylonian Empire (see 30:10–12). **rivers run like oil:** This phrase, not used elsewhere, pictures the time following massive killing when the Nile and its tributaries would experience a “deadly” calm. The **waters** will be **clear** because there will be no human or animal life.

32:16 Such a scene of judgment will produce mourning and great grief; but God is to be seen as just and doing what was necessary to stop the people’s arrogance. **The daughters of the nations:** These were among the “many peoples” in vv. 9, 10 who shall **lament** and be astonished over Egypt’s destruction.

32:17 This is 15 days later than v. 1, still in 585 B.C.

32:18–21 **Depths of the earth, the Pit, and hell** refer to the grave or death, not the place of eternal punishment for God’s enemies.

32:22 **Assyria** was the master of the ancient Middle Eastern world until the rise of the neo-Babylonians around 612 B.C., early in Jeremiah’s career and about 20 years before Ezekiel’s first vision.

32:24 **Elam** was east and southeast of Assyria, in what is now Iran. The people of Elam were descended from one of the sons of Shem (Gen. 10:22; 1 Chr. 1:17).

All of them uncircumcised, slain by the sword;
Though their terror was caused
In the land of the living,
Yet they bear their shame
With those who go down to the Pit;
It was put in the midst of the slain.

26“ There *are* ^g Meshech and Tubal and all their multitudes,
With all their graves around it,
All of them ^h uncircumcised, slain by the sword,
Though they caused their terror in the land of the living.

27 ⁱ They do not lie with the mighty
Who *are* fallen of the uncircumcised,
Who have gone down to hell with their weapons of war;
They have laid their swords under their heads,
But their iniquities will be on their bones,
Because of the terror of the mighty in the land of the living.

28 Yes, you shall be broken in the midst of the uncircumcised,
And lie with *those* slain by the sword.

29“ There *is* ^j Edom,
Her kings and all her princes,
Who despite their might
Are laid beside *those* slain by the sword;
They shall lie with the uncircumcised,
And with those who go down to the Pit.

30 ^k There *are* the princes of the north,
All of them, and all the ^l Sidonians,
Who have gone down with the slain
In shame at the terror which they caused by their might;
They lie uncircumcised with *those* slain by the sword,

26 ^g Gen. 10:2; Ezek. 27:13; 38:2, 3; 39:1 ^h Ezek. 32:19
27 ⁱ Is. 14:18, 19
29 ^j Is. 9:25, 26; 34:5, 6; Jer. 49:7-22; Ezek. 25:12-14
30 ^k Jer. 1:15; 25:26; Ezek. 38:6, 15; 39:2
^l Jer. 25:22; Ezek. 28:21-23

31 ^m Ezek. 14:22; 31:16

CHAPTER 33

2 ^a Ezek. 3:11
^b Ezek. 14:17
^c 2 Sam. 18:24, 25;
2 Kin. 9:17; Hos. 9:8
4 ^d 2 Chr. 25:16;
Jer. 6:17; Zech. 1:4
^e Ezek. 18:13; 35:9;
[Acts 18:6]
5 ^f Or *deliver his soul*
6 ^f Ezek. 33:8
7 ^g Is. 62:6; Ezek. 3:17-21

And bear their shame with those who go down to the Pit.

31“ Pharaoh will see them
And be ^m comforted over all his multitude,
Pharaoh and all his army,
Slain by the sword,”
Says the Lord God.

32“ For I have caused My terror in the land of the living;
And he shall be placed in the midst of the uncircumcised
With *those* slain by the sword,
Pharaoh and all his multitude,”
Says the Lord God.

The Watchman and His Message

33 Again the word of the LORD came to me, saying, ² “Son of man, speak to ^a the children of your people, and say to them: ^b “When I bring the sword upon a land, and the people of the land take a man from their territory and make him their ^c watchman, ³ when he sees the sword coming upon the land, if he blows the trumpet and warns the people, ⁴ then whoever hears the sound of the trumpet and does ^d not take warning, if the sword comes and takes him away, ^e his blood shall be on his *own* head. ⁵ He heard the sound of the trumpet, but did not take warning; his blood shall be upon himself. But he who takes warning will ^f save his life. ⁶ But if the watchman sees the sword coming and does not blow the trumpet, and the people are not warned, and the sword comes and takes *any* person from among them, ^f he is taken away in his iniquity; but his blood I will require at the watchman’s hand.”

^{7g} “So you, son of man: I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel; therefore you shall hear a word from My

watchman

(Heb. *tsaphah*) (3:17; 33:2; 1 Sam. 14:16; Hos. 9:8) Strong's #6822

This noun is derived from the verb meaning “to watch in anticipation.” This verb is used to describe the actions of individuals waiting in ambush as they watch for their prey (Ps. 37:32). Watchman was an official military position. They were stationed on the towers of a city and were responsible for spotting approaching armies and sounding the alarm to warn the city (1 Sam. 14:16). The imagery behind the watchman is much like that of the shepherd, though *watchman* as a symbolic title was limited to the office of a prophet (Hos. 9:8). A watchman’s failure was punishable by death. In the case of Ezekiel, punishment would come directly from God if he failed to report to the people the messages God gave him (33:8).

32:26 Meshech and Tubal: These peoples were located in ancient Anatolia or Asia Minor, present-day Turkey. These names are mentioned as sons of Japheth (Gen. 10:2; 1 Chr. 1:5).

32:28 Ezekiel switches suddenly to the second person singular—**you**—as a wake-up call or reminder to Pharaoh, the representative of Egypt. **Yes** is an emphatic use of the conjunction otherwise translated as “and.”

32:30 The princes of the north are lands north of Israel such as Tyre and Sidon in Phoenicia. The **Sidonians** were from Sidon, a seaport on the coast about 30 miles north of Tyre (see 27:8).

32:31, 32 Pharaoh: Now the message (vv. 17–32) comes full circle. The point is that Egypt and Pharaoh will die like the other nations at the hand of the living God, who judges every nation with justice.

33:2 The children of your people refers to fellow Israelites in exile with Ezekiel, now including the people of Judah deported to Babylon after Nebuchadnezzar’s third invasion.

33:7–9 Ezekiel’s duty as a **watchman** is defined. Compare also the responsibility of the elders of the church in the NT to “watch” (see Acts 20:31; Heb. 13:17; 1 Pet. 5:1–4).

mouth and warn them for Me. ⁸When I say to the wicked, ‘O wicked *man*, you shall surely die!’ and you do not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked *man* shall die in his iniquity; but his blood I will require at your hand. ⁹Nevertheless if you warn the wicked to turn from his way, and he does not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity; but you have ²delivered your soul.

¹⁰“Therefore you, O son of man, say to the house of Israel: ‘Thus you say, “If our transgressions and our sins *lie* upon us, and we ^hpine³ away in them, ⁱhow can we then live?”’ ¹¹Say to them: ‘As I live,’ says the Lord God, ^j‘I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked ^kturn from his way and live. Turn, turn from your evil ways! For ^lwhy should you die, O house of Israel?’

The Fairness of God’s Judgment

¹²“Therefore you, O son of man, say to the children of your people: ‘The ^mrighteousness of the righteous man shall not deliver him in the day of his transgression; as for the wickedness of the wicked, ⁿhe shall not fall because of it in the day that he turns from his wickedness; nor shall the righteous be able to live because of *his righteousness* in the day that he sins.’ ¹³When I say to the righteous *that* he shall surely live, ^obut he trusts in his own righteousness and commits iniquity, none of his righteous works shall be remembered; but because of the iniquity that he has committed, he shall die. ¹⁴Again, ^pwhen I say to the wicked, ‘You shall surely die,’ if he turns from his sin and does ⁴what is lawful and ⁵right, ¹⁵if the wicked ^qrestores the pledge, ^rgives back what he has stolen, and walks in ^sthe statutes of life without committing iniquity, he shall surely live; he shall not die. ¹⁶^tNone of his sins which he has

⁹ ²Or *saved your life*

¹⁰ ^hLev. 26:39; Ezek. 24:23 ⁱIs. 49:14; Ezek. 37:11

³Or *waste away*

¹¹ ^j[2 Sam. 14:14; Lam. 3:33]; Ezek. 18:23, 32; Hos. 11:8; [2 Pet. 3:9] ^kEzek. 18:21, 30; [Hos. 14:1, 4; Acts 3:19] ^l[Is. 55:6, 7]; Jer. 3:22; Ezek. 18:30, 31; Hos. 14:1; [Acts 3:19]

¹² ^mEzek. 3:20; 18:24, 26 ⁿ[2 Chr. 7:14]; Ezek. 8:21; 33:19

¹³ ^oEzek. 3:20; 18:24

¹⁴ ^p[Is. 55:7]; Jer. 18:7, 8; Ezek. 3:18, 19; 18:27; Hos. 14:1, 4 ^q*justice*

⁵ *righteousness*

¹⁵ ^qEzek. 18:7 ^rEx. 22:1-4; Lev. 6:2, 4, 5; Num. 5:6, 7; Luke 19:8 ^sLev. 18:5; Ps. 119:59; 143:8; Ezek. 20:11, 13, 21

¹⁶ ^t[Is. 1:18; 43:25]; Ezek. 18:22

¹⁷ ^uEzek. 18:25, 29 ⁶Or *equitable*

¹⁸ ^vEzek. 18:26

²⁰ ^wEzek. 18:25, 29 ⁷Or *equitable*

²¹ ^xEzek. 1:2 ^yEzek. 24:26

² 2 Kin. 25:4 ⁸Lit. *struck down*

²² ^zEzek. 1:3; 8:1; 37:1 ⁹Ezek. 24:27

²⁴ ^cEzek. 34:2 ¹⁰Ezek. 36:4 ⁱIs. 51:2; [Acts 7:5; Rom. 4:12] ¹¹Mic. 3:11; [Matt. 3:9; John 8:39] ¹²Ezek. 11:15

²⁵ ^hGen. 9:4; Lev. 3:17; 7:26; 17:10-14; 19:26; Deut. 12:16, 23; 15:23 ¹³Ezek. 18:6 ¹⁴Ezek. 22:6, 9

¹⁵ Deut. 29:28

¹⁶ ¹⁵Ezek. 18:6; 22:11

committed shall be remembered against him; he has done what is lawful and right; he shall surely live.

¹⁷ ^u“Yet the children of your people say, ‘The way of the Lord is not ⁶fair.’ But it is their way which is not fair!’ ¹⁸ ^vWhen the righteous turns from his righteousness and commits iniquity, he shall die because of it. ¹⁹But when the wicked turns from his wickedness and does what is lawful and right, he shall live because of it. ²⁰Yet you say, ^w“The way of the Lord is not ⁷fair.’ O house of Israel, I will judge every one of you according to his own ways.”

The Fall of Jerusalem

²¹And it came to pass in the twelfth year ^xof our captivity, in the tenth *month*, on the fifth *day* of the month, ^y*that* one who had escaped from Jerusalem came to me and said, ^z“The city has been ⁸captured!”

²²Now ^athe hand of the LORD had been upon me the evening before the man came who had escaped. And He had ^bopened my mouth; so when he came to me in the morning, my mouth was opened, and I was no longer mute.

The Cause of Judah’s Ruin

²³Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying: ²⁴“Son of man, ^cthey who inhabit those ^druins in the land of Israel are saying, ‘Abraham was only one, and he inherited the land. ^fBut we *are* many; the land has been given to us as a ^gpossession.’

²⁵“Therefore say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord God: ^h“You eat *meat* with blood, you ⁱlift up your eyes toward your idols, and ^jshed blood. Should you then possess the ^kland? ²⁶You rely on your sword, you commit abominations, and you ^ldefile

33:10 pine away: This phrase means to rot, waste, or dwindle.

33:12–20 In punishing Israel God was being faithful to the covenant stipulations. This covenant had been approved by the Israelites. They had agreed to its commands and accepted the consequences of breaking them, corporately and individually (see 5:8–17; 12:15, 16; 16:60, 61; 18:19–32; 20:5; Ex. 19:1–9; Deut. 27). God presents His rationale in these verses for deciding who would be rewarded with life and who would suffer death: He would save those who repent and turn to Him, but would condemn those who trust in themselves and do evil. After presenting His rationale, God declares that His judgment is just and fair—certainly more just than the practices of the Israelites.

33:21—48:35 The final, large collection of messages in Ezekiel communicates comfort and consolation to the exiles in Babylon following the shock of the destruction of Jerusalem.

33:21, 22 In January 585 B.C., Ezekiel received the news that Jerusalem had been taken. The city had been under siege by Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonians for two and a half years (2 Kin. 25:1–10). These two verses introduce six oracles (33:23—39:29).

Ezekiel received a message from **the LORD** and reported it to the exiles in Babylon.

33:23 Ezekiel’s introductory formula—identical or similar to this verse—marks the beginning of the messages received from **the LORD** in this section of the book (33:21—39:29).

33:24 they who inhabit those ruins: This refers to the people who had remained in Jerusalem. They thought they were the remnant—the faithful ones. But they experienced the final siege of the city by King Nebuchadnezzar, for reasons God will give in the following verses.

33:25, 26 Ezekiel confronted his people with specific examples of their past and present refusal to obey God’s revealed will for their lives (see 18:6, 10; 22:11; Ex. 20:4, 5, 13, 14; Lev. 7:26, 27; 17:10–14; 19:26; Deut. 12:16, 23). Was it not then reasonable that God would punish the present generation by removing them from the land, at least temporarily? The writer of Hebrews, after using the example of Israel’s failure to enter the land (ch. 3), admonished the church in a similar way (see Heb. 4:1).

one another's wives. Should you then possess the land?"

²⁷"Say thus to them, 'Thus says the Lord God: "As I live, surely ^mthose who are in the ruins shall fall by the sword, and the one who is in the open field ⁿI will give to the beasts to be devoured, and those who are in the strongholds and ^ocaves shall die of the pestilence. ²⁸^pFor I will make the land most desolate, ^qher ^qarrogant strength shall cease, and ^rthe mountains of Israel shall be so desolate that no one will pass through. ²⁹Then they shall know that I am the LORD, when I have made the land most desolate because of all their abominations which they have committed."

Hearing and Not Doing

³⁰"As for you, son of man, the children of your people are talking about you beside the walls and in the doors of the houses; and they ^sspeak to one another, everyone saying to his brother, 'Please come and hear what the word is that comes from the LORD.' ³¹So 'they come to you as people do, they ^usit before you as My people, and they ^vhear your words, but they do not do them; ^wfor with their mouth they show much love, but ^xtheir hearts pursue their own gain. ³²Indeed you are to them as a very lovely song of one who has a pleasant voice and can play well on an instrument; for they hear your words, but they do ^ynot do them. ³³^zAnd when this comes to pass—surely it will come—then ^athey will know that a prophet has been among them."

Irresponsible Shepherds

34 And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, ²"Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy and say to them, 'Thus says the Lord God to the shepherds: ^a"Woe to

²⁷ ^m Ezek. 33:24
ⁿ Ezek. 39:4 • Judg. 6:2; 1 Sam. 13:6; Is. 2:19
²⁸ ^p Jer. 44:2, 6, 22; Ezek. 36:34, 35
^q Ezek. 7:24; 24:21
^r Ezek. 6:2, 3, 6
^s Lit. *pride of her strength*
³⁰ ^t Is. 29:13; Ezek. 14:3; 20:3, 31
³¹ ^u Ezek. 14:1
^v Ezek. 8:1
^w Is. 58:2
^x Ps. 78:36, 37; Is. 29:13; Jer. 12:2;
^y John 3:18
^z [Matt. 13:22]
³² ^y [Matt. 7:21–28; James 1:22–25]
³³ ^z 1 Sam. 3:20
^a Ezek. 2:5

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² ^a Jer. 23:1; Ezek. 22:25; Mic. 3:1–3, 11; Zech. 11:17
³ ^b Is. 56:11; Zech. 11:16
^c Ezek. 33:25, 26; Mic. 3:1–3; Zech. 11:5
⁴ ^d Zech. 11:16
^e Matt. 9:36; 10:16; 18:12, 13; Luke 15:4
^f [1 Pet. 5:3]
⁵ ^g *harshness or rigor*
⁵ ^g Ezek. 33:21
⁶ ^h Num. 27:17; 1 Kin. 22:17; Jer. 10:21; Matt. 9:36; Mark 6:34
⁷ Is. 56:9; Jer. 12:9
⁸ ⁱ Jer. 40:11, 12; 50:6; Ezek. 7:16; 1 Pet. 2:25
⁸ ^k Ezek. 34:5, 6
⁹ Ezek. 34:2, 10
¹⁰ ^m Jer. 21:13; 52:24–27; Ezek. 5:8; 13:8; Zech. 10:3
¹¹ Ezek. 3:18; Heb. 13:17
¹² ^o Ezek. 34:2, 8
¹³ ^p Ps. 72:12–14; Ezek. 13:23
¹⁴ ^q Jer. 31:10
¹⁵ ^r Jer. 13:16; Ezek. 30:3; Joel 2:2
¹⁶ ^s Is. 65:9, 10; Jer. 23:3; Ezek. 11:17; 20:41; 28:25; 36:24; 37:21, 22

the shepherds of Israel who feed themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the flocks? ^{3b}You eat the fat and clothe yourselves with the wool; you ^cslaughter the fatlings, but you do not feed the flock. ^{4d}The weak you have not strengthened, nor have you healed those who were sick, nor bound up the broken, nor brought back what was driven away, nor ^esought what was lost; but with ^fforce and ⁱcrudelty you have ruled them. ^{5g}So they were ^hscattered because *there was no shepherd*; ⁱand they became food for all the beasts of the field when they were scattered. ⁶My sheep ^jwandered through all the mountains, and on every high hill; yes, My flock was scattered over the whole face of the earth, and no one was seeking or searching for them."

⁷"Therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the LORD: ⁸"As I live," says the Lord God, "surely because My flock became a prey, and My flock ^kbecame food for every beast of the field, because *there was no shepherd*, nor did My shepherds search for My flock, ^lbut the shepherds fed themselves and did not feed My flock"—⁹therefore, O shepherds, hear the word of the LORD! ¹⁰Thus says the Lord God: "Behold, I am ^magainst the shepherds, and ⁿI will require My flock at their hand; I will cause them to cease feeding the sheep, and the shepherds shall ^ofeed themselves no more; for I will ^pdeliver My flock from their mouths, that they may no longer be food for them."

God, the True Shepherd

¹¹"For thus says the Lord God: "Indeed I Myself will search for My sheep and seek them out. ¹²As a ^qshepherd seeks out his flock on the day he is among his scattered sheep, so will I seek out My sheep and deliver them from all the places where they were scattered on ^ra cloudy and dark day. ¹³And ^sI will bring them out from the

33:30–33 This section contrasts the actions and attitudes of the exiles with the life of God's prophet Ezekiel. The exiles had claimed to go to the prophet to receive God's revelation, but their behavior was inconsistent with their stated beliefs. Their true desire was for entertainment, not for divine enlightenment. If the fall of Jerusalem failed to awaken them spiritually, nothing would. Yet it certainly would open their eyes to the divine truth of Ezekiel's preaching. In these verses then, God also comforted and consoled Ezekiel. The musical terms may relate to the lyrical nature, and Ezekiel's singing or chanting, of some of these oracles (see 19:1; 21:9–12).

33:31 hear . . . do not do: See James 1:21–25 for another condemnation of those who hear God's word but do not put it into practice.

34:1–6 The **shepherds of Israel** is a metaphor for Israel's political rulers, but it could include spiritual leaders also (even kings were supposed to be spiritual examples). The shepherds were accused of forsaking the key feature of godly leadership: selfless, sacrificial service (see Is. 52:13–53:12; Matt. 23:11; Mark 10:45; Luke 22:24–30; Acts 20:17–38; Rom. 12:1–5; Phil. 2:1–11; 1 Tim. 3:1–7; 1 Pet. 2:18–25;

5:1–4). The results of self-serving leadership for Israel are seen in vv. 5, 6. **there was no shepherd:** This means that having leaders who seek to be served, rather than to serve, is tantamount to having no leader at all; therefore, the people of Israel were like sheep without a shepherd (Matt. 9:36). They were aimless—**wandered**—and easily attacked—**became food**. **Scattered** alluded to Israel's deportations and dispersion among the nations.

34:7–10 did not feed My flock: The crimes of Israel's leaders come under review before their punishment is pronounced.

34:11–16 Compare the Lord's persistent shepherding and guiding of His people with the faithlessness of Israel's leaders in v. 6 (see also vv. 25–31; Jer. 23:1–6; John 10:1–30). See also Ps. 23, where similar ideas pertain to God's shepherding of the individual rather than corporate Israel. The **cloudy and dark day** was the day Jerusalem fell (see 30:1–5; Zeph. 1:15). It may also speak of the future day of deliverance when God will **seek out His sheep** (see 36:16–36). Israel, though guilty and misguided, would eventually be rescued by the divine Good Shepherd and restored to the Promised Land (see chs. 33–39).

peoples and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land; I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, ²in the valleys and in all the inhabited places of the country. ¹⁴I will feed them in good pasture, and their fold shall be on the high mountains of Israel. ¹⁵There they shall lie down in a good fold and feed in rich pasture on the mountains of Israel. ¹⁵I will feed My flock, and I will make them lie down,” says the Lord God. ¹⁶“I will seek what was lost and bring back what was driven away, bind up the broken and strengthen what was sick; but I will destroy ¹⁷the fat and the strong, and feed them ¹⁸in judgment.”

¹⁷“And as for you, O My flock, thus says the Lord God: ¹⁸“Behold, I shall judge between sheep and sheep, between rams and goats. ¹⁸Is it too little for you to have eaten up the good pasture, that you must tread down with your feet the ¹⁹residue of your pasture—and to have drunk of the clear waters, that you must foul the residue with your feet? ¹⁹And as for My flock, they eat what you have trampled

¹³ ²Or by the streams

¹⁴ ¹Ps. 23:2; Jer. 3:15; [John 10:9] ¹⁵Jer. 33:12

¹⁶ ¹Is. 40:11; Mic. 4:6; [Matt. 18:11; Mark 2:17; Luke 5:32] ¹⁷Is. 10:16; Amos 4:1 ¹⁸Jer. 10:24

¹⁷ ¹Ezek. 20:37; Mal. 4:1; [Matt. 25:32]

¹⁸ ³remainder

²⁰ ²Ezek. 34:17

²³ ¹[Is. 40:11; Jer. 23:4, 5; Hos. 1:11; [John 10:11; Heb. 13:20; 1 Pet. 2:25; 5:4] ¹Jer. 30:9; Ezek. 37:24; Hos. 3:5

²⁴ ¹Ex. 29:45; Ezek. 37:25 ²Is. 55:3; Jer. 30:9; Ezek. 37:24, 25; Hos. 3:5

²⁵ ¹Ezek. 37:26

¹Lev. 26:6; Job 5:22, 23; Is. 11:6-9; Hos. 2:18 ²Jer. 23:6

²⁶ ¹Is. 56:7 ¹Gen. 12:2; Is. 19:24;

with your feet, and they drink what you have fouled with your feet.”

²⁰“Therefore thus says the Lord God to them: ²¹“Behold, I Myself will judge between the fat and the lean sheep. ²¹Because you have pushed with side and shoulder, butted all the weak ones with your horns, and scattered them abroad, ²²therefore I will save My flock, and they shall no longer be a prey; and I will judge between sheep and sheep. ²³I will establish one ²⁴shepherd over them, and he shall feed them—²⁵My servant David. He shall feed them and be their shepherd. ²⁴And ²⁶I, the Lord, will be their God, and My servant David ²⁷a prince among them; I, the Lord, have spoken.

²⁵“I will make a covenant of peace with them, and ²⁶cause wild beasts to cease from the land; and they ²⁷will dwell safely in the wilderness and sleep in the woods. ²⁶I will make them and the places all around ²⁸My hill ²⁹a blessing; and I will ³⁰cause showers to come down in their

Zech. 8:13 / Lev. 26:4

34:17–19 The **rams and goats** were the leaders of Israel who had failed to lead properly. They had used their positions of power to their own advantage and to the disadvantage of the people.

34:23, 24 The change from the pronoun **I** to **he** in this verse indicates that God would continue operating as the Chief Shepherd through this chosen future ruler from the Davidic line. He is the Messiah—God’s only Son and His **servant**.

34:25–31 The exiles were encouraged through this promise of a **covenant of peace** (see 37:26–28; 38:11–13; 39:25–29; Is. 54:10), characterized by these promises: (1) security from foreign aggressor nations, the **wild beasts**; (2) **showers of blessing**, meaning productivity and prosperity; and (3) the certainty that **the Lord** is Israel’s God and desires reunion with His people and a lasting relationship built on a new covenant (Jer. 31:31–34; Heb. 8:6).

Shepherds

Throughout the Bible, the image of the shepherd is very important. From David, the shepherd boy who became the first king of Israel, to Jesus Christ, who said of Himself, “I am the good shepherd” (John 10:11), the shepherd represents one who loves and cares for his flock just as a leader or ruler cares for those under his charge.

Some characteristics of a good shepherd include feeding the flock, tending the weak and sick, searching for the lost, guiding with love, gathering and protecting the sheep, and giving one’s best to them. On the other hand, a bad shepherd is more concerned about feeding himself, worrying about his own health, guiding with a heavy hand, abandoning or scattering his flock, and keeping the best for himself.

It is easy to see in these comparisons why the Scriptures often exhort leaders to be shepherds to their people. A good leader is concerned that the people’s physical needs are being met and that care is provided for the sick and injured. A true leader looks for those who have fallen away. He leads like a shepherd by providing direction and correction, not with a fist but with a loving hand. A good leader protects those under his care and does not leave them to the wolves—to those who lead them astray. And finally, a good leader gives of himself to those under his charge. He cares about them and their well-being. Because Jesus called Himself the Good Shepherd, it is clear that He is the One about whom Ezekiel prophesied. He is the One who searches after His followers (34:11), saves them (34:12), guides them (34:13), and supplies their needs (34:14; see John 10). Jesus’ self-sacrificing life provides the perfect blueprint for making a good shepherd and leader.



A good shepherd goes out of her way to search and find the weak and sick.

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season; there shall be ^kshowers of blessing. ²⁷Then ^lthe trees of the field shall yield their fruit, and the earth shall yield her increase. They shall be safe in their land; and they shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I have ^mbroken the bands of their yoke and delivered them from the hand of those who ⁿenslaved them. ²⁸And they shall no longer be a prey for the nations, nor shall beasts of the land devour them; but ^othey shall dwell safely, and no one shall make *them* afraid. ²⁹I will raise up for them a ^pgarden^d of renown, and they shall ^qno longer be consumed with hunger in the land, ^rnor bear the shame of the Gentiles anymore. ³⁰Thus they shall know that ^sI, the LORD their God, *am* with them, and they, the house of Israel, *are* ^tMy people,” says the LORD God.⁷

³¹“You are My ^uflock, the flock of My pasture; you *are* men, and I *am* your God,” says the LORD God.

Judgment on Mount Seir

35 Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying, ²“Son of man, set your face against ^aMount Seir and ^bprophesy against it, ³and say to it, “Thus says the LORD God:

“Behold, O Mount Seir, I *am* against you;

“I will stretch out My hand against you,

And make you ¹most desolate;

⁴ I shall lay your cities waste,
And you shall be desolate.
Then you shall know that I *am* the LORD.

^{5d}“Because you have had an ²ancient hatred, and have shed *the blood* of the children of Israel by the power of the sword at the time of their calamity, ^ewhen their iniquity *came to an end*, ⁶therefore, *as I live*,” says the LORD God, “I will prepare you for ^fblood, and blood shall pursue you; ^gsince you have not hated ³blood, therefore blood shall pursue you. ⁷Thus

²⁶ ^kPs. 68:9
²⁷ ^lLev. 26:4; Ps. 85:12; Is. 4:2 ^mLev. 26:13; Is. 52:2, 3; Jer. 2:20 ⁿJer. 25:14
²⁸ ^oJer. 30:10; Ezek. 39:26
²⁹ ^p[Is. 11:1] ^qEzek. 36:29 ^rEzek. 36:3, 6, 15 ⁴Lit. *planting place*
³⁰ ^sEzek. 34:24 ^tPs. 46:7, 11; Ezek. 14:11; 36:28
³¹ ^uPs. 100:3; Jer. 23:1; [John 10:11]

CHAPTER 35

² ^aGen. 36:8; Deut. 2:5; Jer. 25:21; 49:7-22; Ezek. 25:12-14; Joel 3:19; Amos 1:11, 12; Obad. 1-9, 15, 16 ^bAmos 1:11
³ ^cEzek. 6:14 ¹Lit. *a desolation and a waste*
⁵ ^dEzek. 25:12 ^ePs. 137:7; Dan. 9:24; Amos 1:11; Obad. 10 ² ^{Or everlasting}
⁶ ^fIs. 63:1-6; Ezek. 16:38; 32:6 ⁹Ps. 109:17 ³ ^{Or bloodshed}
⁷ ^hJudg. 5:6 ⁴Lit. *a waste and a desolation*
⁹ ⁱJer. 49:13; Ezek. 25:13 ^jEzek. 36:11 ⁵Lit. *desolated forever*
¹⁰ ^kPs. 83:4-12; Ezek. 36:2, 5 ^l[Ps. 48:1-3; 132:13, 14]; Is. 12:6; Ezek. 48:35; Zeph. 3:15
¹¹ ^m[Matt. 7:2; James 2:13]
¹² ^aPs. 9:16 ^oZeph. 2:8 ^pIs. 52:5
¹³ ^q[1 Sam. 2:3]
^rEzek. 36:3 ⁶Lit. *made yourself great*
¹⁴ ^sIs. 65:13, 14
¹⁵ ^tObad. 12, 15
^uJer. 50:11; Lam. 4:21

CHAPTER 36

¹ ^aEzek. 6:2, 3
² ^bJer. 33:24; Ezek. 25:3; 26:2 ^cDeut. 32:13; Ps. 78:69; Is. 58:14; Hab. 3:19

I will make Mount Seir ⁴most desolate, and cut off from it the ^hone who leaves and the one who returns. ⁸And I will fill its mountains with the slain; on your hills and in your valleys and in all your ravines those who are slain by the sword shall fall. ⁹ⁱI will make you ⁵perpetually desolate, and your cities shall be uninhabited; ^jthen you shall know that I *am* the LORD.

¹⁰“Because you have said, ‘These two nations and these two countries shall be mine, and we will ^kpossess them,’ although ^lthe LORD was there, ¹¹therefore, *as I live*,” says the LORD God, “I will do ^maccording to your anger and according to the envy which you showed in your hatred against them; and I will make Myself known among them when I judge you. ¹²ⁿThen you shall know that I *am* the LORD. I have ^oheard all your ^pblasphemies which you have spoken against the mountains of Israel, saying, ‘They are desolate; they are given to us to consume.’ ¹³Thus ^qwith your mouth you have ⁶boasted against Me and multiplied your ^rwords against Me; I have heard *them*.”

¹⁴“Thus says the LORD God: ^s“The whole earth will rejoice when I make you desolate. ^{15t}As you rejoiced because the inheritance of the house of Israel was desolate, ^uso I will do to you; you shall be desolate, O Mount Seir, as well as all of Edom—all of it! Then they shall know that I *am* the LORD.”

Blessing on Israel

36 “And you, son of man, prophesy to the ^amountains of Israel, and say, ‘O mountains of Israel, hear the word of the LORD! ²Thus says the LORD God: “Because ^bthe enemy has said of you, ‘Aha! ^cThe ¹ancient heights ^dhave become our possession,’”’ ³therefore prophesy, and say, ‘Thus says the LORD God: “Because they made *you* desolate and swallowed you up on every side, so that you became the possession of the

^d Ezek. 35:10 ¹ ^{Or everlasting}

35:2 Mount Seir is Edom (see v. 15; 25:8; Gen. 36:30; 2 Chr. 20:10). **35:3, 4** God reveals the nature and the purpose of His judgment on Edom (Seir, see v. 2). These verses are poetry and perhaps were used as a song.

35:5 at the time of their calamity: This refers to how Edom took advantage of the people of Judah during and after the Babylonian invasion (see Obad. 11–14).

35:6–9 Having stated why Edom deserved judgment, Ezekiel explained how the nation would be punished. The punishment would include widespread death and unrelieved destruction (see Is. 34:6–8; 63:1–6; Jer. 49:7–13; Obad. 18).

35:10 A second reason for God’s revenge on Edom is given, in addition to that in v. 5—Edom expected to take over Judah and Israel

after their destruction by the Babylonians. **These two nations** refers to Israel and Judah (see 37:15–28).

36:1–7 The land of Israel itself was addressed—the **mountains**—because the nations desired to own it and, in seeking possession, destroyed it physically and defamed it verbally. Israel was termed **the ancient heights** because of the hill country central to its geography. God is glorified and the exiles comforted by the following: (1) exposing the crimes of the enemies of His nation; (2) exonerating His land from false charges (see vv. 13–15); and (3) executing judgment and justice against the foreign nations. **Edom:** This nation was singled out because of its long history of animosity toward Israel (see 35:5). The **rest of the nations** were the others who in some way had mistreated Israel and thus received a sentence of judgment (see chs. 25–32).

rest of the nations, ^cand you are taken up by the lips of ^ftalkers and slandered by the people”— ⁴therefore, O mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord God! Thus says the Lord God to the mountains, the hills, the ²rivers, the valleys, the desolate wastes, and the cities that have been forsaken, which ^gbecame plunder and ^hmockery to the rest of the nations all around— ⁵therefore thus says the Lord God: ⁱ“Surely I have spoken in My burning jealousy against the rest of the nations and against all Edom, ^jwho gave My land to themselves as a possession, with wholehearted joy and ³spiteful minds, in order to plunder its open country.”

⁶“Therefore prophesy concerning the land of Israel, and say to the mountains, the hills, the rivers, and the valleys, ‘Thus says the Lord God: “Behold, I have spoken in My jealousy and My fury, because you have ^kborne the shame of the nations.”’ ⁷Therefore thus says the Lord God: “I have ^lraised My hand in an oath that surely the nations that *are* around you shall ^mbear their own shame. ⁸But you, O mountains of Israel, you shall shoot forth your branches and yield your fruit to My people Israel, for they are about to come. ⁹For indeed I *am* for you, and I will turn to you, and you shall be tilled and sown. ¹⁰I will multiply men upon you, all the house of Israel, all of it; and the cities shall be inhabited and ⁿthe ruins rebuilt. ¹¹^oI will multiply upon you man and beast; and they shall increase and ⁴bear young; I will make you inhabited as in former times, and do ^pbetter for you than at your beginnings. ^qThen you shall know that I *am* the LORD. ¹²Yes, I will cause men to walk on you, My peo-

³ ^c Deut. 28:37; 1 Kin. 9:7; Lam. 2:15; Dan. 9:16 ^f Ps. 44:13, 14; Jer. 18:16; Ezek. 35:13
⁴ ^g Ezek. 34:8, 28
^h Ps. 79:4; Jer. 48:27
² ⁱ Or ravines
⁵ ^j Deut. 4:24; Ezek. 38:19 ^k Ezek. 35:10, 12
³ ^l Lit. *scorning souls*
⁶ ^k Ps. 74:10; 123:3, 4; Ezek. 34:29
⁷ ^l Ezek. 20:5 ^m Jer. 25:9, 15, 29
¹⁰ ⁿ Is. 58:12; 61:4; Amos 9:14
¹¹ ^o Jer. 31:27; 33:12
^p Job 42:12; Is. 51:3
^q Ezek. 35:9; 37:6, 13
⁴ ^p Lit. *be fruitful*

¹² ^r Obad. 17 ^s Jer. 15:7; Ezek. 22:12, 27
¹³ ^t Num. 13:32
¹⁵ ^u Is. 60:14; Ezek. 34:29
¹⁷ ^v Lev. 18:25, 27, 28; Jer. 2:7 ^w Lev. 15:19
¹⁸ ^x Ezek. 16:36, 38; 23:37
¹⁹ ^y Deut. 28:64; Ezek. 5:12; 22:15; Amos 9:9 ^z Ezek. 7:3; 18:30; 39:24; [Rom. 2:6]
²⁰ ^a Is. 52:5; Ezek. 12:16; Rom. 2:24
²¹ ^b Ezek. 20:9, 14
²² ^c Ps. 106:8; Ezek. 20:44

ple Israel; ^rthey shall take possession of you, and you shall be their inheritance; no more shall you ^sbereave them of *children*.”

¹³“Thus says the Lord God: “Because they say to you, ⁱ‘You devour men and bereave your nation of *children*,’ ¹⁴therefore you shall devour men no more, nor bereave your nation anymore,” says the Lord God. ¹⁵^u“Nor will I let you hear the taunts of the nations anymore, nor bear the reproach of the peoples anymore, nor shall you cause your nation to stumble anymore,” says the Lord God.”

The Renewal of Israel

¹⁶Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying: ¹⁷“Son of man, when the house of Israel dwelt in their own land, ^vthey defiled it by their own ways and deeds; to Me their way was like ^wthe uncleanness of a woman in her customary impurity. ¹⁸Therefore I poured out My fury on them ^xfor the blood they had shed on the land, and for their idols *with which* they had defiled it. ¹⁹So I ^yscattered them among the nations, and they were dispersed throughout the countries; I judged them ^zaccording to their ways and their deeds. ²⁰When they came to the nations, wherever they went, they ^aprofaned My holy name—when they said of them, ‘These *are* the people of the LORD, and yet they have gone out of His land.’ ²¹But I had concern ^bfor My holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the nations wherever they went.

²²“Therefore say to the house of Israel, ‘Thus says the Lord God: “I do not do *this* for your sake, O house of Israel, ^cbut for My holy name’s sake, which you

36:8 they are about to come: This was spoken to the land, picturing it as eagerly awaiting the quick return of its rightful and most respectful owners. The first return from exile would come under the Persian king Cyrus, about 50 years later (538 B.C.).

36:10 This restoration would involve **all the house of Israel**.

36:12 My people Israel: Despite all their sinfulness, which the book has taken enormous pains to detail and describe, the nation was still referred to as the people of God. They would finally and forever take possession of their land, symbolized by the mountains and the central hills of Palestine, which are personified as **you** in this verse.

36:15 The mountains addressed as **you** would no longer **cause the nation to stumble**, for God would make the nation secure from foreign armies. God Himself would reestablish the nation and place His prince on its throne (see 34:24).

36:17 like the uncleanness of a woman: The uncleanness of the blood of menstruation (not the woman herself) was compared to the past behavior of Israel in Canaan (see 18:6; 22:10; Lev. 12:2–5; 15:19–30).

36:18 Israel had defiled God’s territorial gift in two main ways: (1) The nation had **shed** innocent people’s **blood**. (2) The nation had worshiped **idols** by mixing the true worship of the Lord God with involvement in the idolatrous and immoral practices of pagan religions.

36:19 God **judged them according to their ways**. Israel had been hypocritical and unholy; they had not separated themselves or made themselves distinct from the pagan world around them (see v. 18). God had given His people the Promised Land as a place where they could show the world the difference it makes to follow the true God (see Deut. 7:1–11). They failed to follow God, so He forced them out of the land. Through either their obedience or their disobedience, God would demonstrate to the watching world His personality, power, and plans.

36:20, 21 The most tragic outcome of Israel’s sin (see vv. 18, 19) was that the nation **profaned** God’s **holy name**. Defeat and dispersion, especially in the ancient world, were negative reflections on the character (or the *name*, see 20:9) of a nation’s god. God’s reputation as wholly set apart from other so-called gods in power and purpose was compromised by Israel’s refusal to trust in His ways, whether in their own land or in exile. To rescue His holy reputation and His rebellious people, God remained faithful to His promises in the Mosaic covenant.

36:22–24 The preview of the return to the **land** in the Mosaic covenant is related to the promise of perpetual—but not necessarily uninterrupted—possession of the land of Canaan in the Abrahamic covenant (Gen. 12:1–3; 13:14–18; 15:12–21; Hos. 3:4).

have profaned among the nations wherever you went. ²³ And I will sanctify My great name, which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned in their midst; and the nations shall know that I *am* the LORD,” says the Lord God, “when I am ^dhallowed in you before their eyes. ²⁴ For ^eI will take you from among the nations, gather you out of all countries, and bring you into your own land. ²⁵ Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you ^ffrom all your filthiness and from all your idols. ²⁶ I will give you a ^hnew heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷ I will put My ⁱSpirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do *them*. ^{28j} Then you shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; ^kyou shall be My people, and I will be your God. ²⁹ I will ^ldeliver you from all your uncleanness. ^mI will call for the grain and multiply it, and ⁿbring no famine upon you. ^{30o} And I will multiply the fruit of your trees and the increase of your fields, so that you need never again bear the reproach of famine among the nations. ³¹ Then ^pyou will remember your evil ways and your deeds that *were* not good; and you ^qwill ⁵loathe yourselves in your own sight, for your iniquities and your abominations. ^{32r} Not for your sake do I do *this*,” says the Lord God, “let it be known to you. Be ashamed and confounded for your own ways, O house of Israel!”

³³ “Thus says the Lord God: “On the day that I cleanse you from all your iniquities, I will also enable *you* to dwell in

²³ ^dIs. 5:16; Ezek. 20:41; 28:22
²⁴ ^eIs. 43:5, 6; Ezek. 34:13; 37:21
²⁵ ^fNum. 19:17-19; Ps. 51:7; Is. 52:15; Heb. 9:13, 19; 10:22
²⁶ ^hPs. 51:10; Jer. 32:39; Ezek. 11:19; [John 3:3]
²⁷ ⁱIs. 44:3; 59:21; Ezek. 11:19; 37:14; [Joel 2:28, 29]
²⁸ ^jEzek. 28:25; 37:25 ^kJer. 30:22; Ezek. 11:20; 37:27
²⁹ ^lZech. 13:1; [Matt. 1:21; Rom. 11:26] ^mPs. 105:16
³⁰ ^oEzek. 34:27, 29; Hos. 2:21-23
³¹ ^pLev. 26:4; Ezek. 34:27
³² ^rEzek. 16:61, 63
³³ ^qLev. 26:39; Ezek. 6:9; 20:43 ⁵despise
³² ^rDeut. 9:5

³³ ^sEzek. 36:10
³⁵ ^tIs. 51:3; Ezek. 28:13; Joel 2:3
³⁶ ^uEzek. 17:24; 22:14; 37:14; Hos. 14:4-9
³⁷ ^vEzek. 14:3; 20:3, 31 ^wEzek. 36:10
³⁸ ⁶Lit. *holy flock*
⁷appointed feasts

CHAPTER 37

¹ ^aEzek. 1:3 ^bEzek. 3:14; 8:3; 11:24; Acts 8:39
³ ^c[Deut. 32:39; 1 Sam. 2:6; John 5:21; Rom. 4:17; 2 Cor. 1:9]
⁵ ^dGen. 2:7; Ps. 104:29, 30; Ezek. 37:9, 10, 14

the cities, ^sand the ruins shall be rebuilt. ³⁴ The desolate land shall be tilled instead of lying desolate in the sight of all who pass by. ³⁵ So they will say, ‘This land that was desolate has become like the garden of Eden; and the wasted, desolate, and ruined cities *are now* fortified *and* inhabited.’ ³⁶ Then the nations which are left all around you shall know that I, the LORD, have rebuilt the ruined places *and* planted what was desolate. ^uI, the LORD, have spoken *it*, and I will do *it*.”

³⁷ “Thus says the Lord God: ^v“I will also let the house of Israel inquire of Me to do this for them: I will ^wincrease their men like a flock. ³⁸ Like a ⁶flock *offered as holy sacrifices*, like the flock at Jerusalem on its ⁷feast days, so shall the ruined cities be filled with flocks of men. Then they shall know that I *am* the LORD.””

The Dry Bones Live

37 The ^ahand of the LORD came upon me and brought me out ^bin the Spirit of the LORD, and set me down in the midst of the valley; and it *was* full of bones. ² Then He caused me to pass by them all around, and behold, *there were* very many in the open valley; and indeed *they were* very dry. ³ And He said to me, “Son of man, can these bones live?”

So I answered, “O Lord God, ^cYou know.”

⁴ Again He said to me, “Prophecy to these bones, and say to them, ‘O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD! ⁵ Thus says the Lord God to these bones: “Surely I will ^dcause breath to enter into you, and you shall live. ⁶ I will put sinews on you and bring flesh upon you, cover you with

36:25 Sprinkle clean water on you symbolizes cleansing from sin (see v. 17; 11:18; 37:23; Jer. 33:8). This is God’s forgiveness based on a blood atonement (see Ex. 12:22; Lev. 14:4–7, 51; Num. 19:14–22; Ps. 51:7; Zech. 13:1; 1 Cor. 6:11; Heb. 10:22).

36:26, 27 The ritual of purification from sin would be empty and meaningless apart from true repentance and the regenerating and empowering work of the Holy Spirit on the inner spirit of individuals. God would not only restore the people physically to the land, but would restore them spiritually, by giving them a **new heart and new spirit** to help them follow Him and do His will. (See 11:19–20; 18:31; 37:14; 39:29; Jer. 31:31–34; Joel 2:28, 29; Acts 2:17, 18; Rom. 7:7–8:11; 2 Cor. 3:3–18; Heb. 8:6–10:39.)

36:28–30 you shall be My people: See vv. 1–15; 34:29. The purpose of the Mosaic covenant would finally be realized (see Deut. 26:16–19; 29:13; 30:8). The Israelites would become a people dedicated to God’s ways.

36:31, 32 These verses restate the reasons for the planned restoration and renewal of God’s people. The restoration from the Exile would recover God’s glorious reputation among the nations and erase the guilt of the Israelite’s sin. This is all a product of God’s favor on the Israelites—even though they had done nothing to merit such mercy.

36:35 The garden of Eden is mentioned here to suggest beauty, fertility, and productivity so great that people would be reminded of the “garden eastward in Eden” (Gen. 2:8; contrast 28:13).

36:38 Like a flock . . . flocks of men: Animals offered for sacrifice had to be free from any observable impurity or disfigurement. The returned people of God will be living sacrifices (Rom. 12:1, 2), pure and unblemished. **I am the Lord:** This is the constant refrain of Ezekiel; God would make Himself known as the one true God in both His judgment and His restoration of His people.

37:1, 2 The wording recalls the past visionary experiences of Ezekiel (see 1:1, 3; 2:2; 3:12, 14; 8:1, 3, 7) although the word *vision* is not employed in these verses. **bones:** Not only do the bones speak of death, indeed of many deaths, but for bones to be left in the open was an indignity and indecency according to Jewish custom. To leave bodies unburied until the bones were exposed was unthinkable.

37:3 You know: The prophet placed his faith completely in the living God. Ordinarily, one would say “no” to the question God posed. But Ezekiel did not limit God; he knew the Almighty could make bones live.

37:4 Prophecy to these bones: Ezekiel’s prophecies had often been directed to people as deaf as these old, dry bones.

37:5 The word translated **breath** is translated in other places as *wind* or *Spirit*. The breath sent by God into the lifeless bodies symbolizes the Holy Spirit (see v. 14), who brings renewal, regeneration, and rebirth (see vv. 6, 9; John 3:5–8; 6:44; 7:37–39; 16:5–15; Rom. 8:9–11).

37:6 you shall live: This passage is not about resurrection from

skin and put breath in you; and you shall live. “Then you shall know that I *am* the LORD.””

⁷So I prophesied as I was commanded; and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and suddenly a rattling; and the bones came together, bone to bone. ⁸Indeed, as I looked, the sinews and the flesh came upon them, and the skin covered them over; but *there was* no breath in them.

⁹Also He said to me, “Prophesy to the breath, prophesy, son of man, and say to the ¹breath, ‘Thus says the Lord God: ^f“Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe on these slain, that they may live.”’” ¹⁰So I prophesied as He commanded me, ^gand ²breath came into them, and they lived, and stood upon their feet, an exceedingly great army.

¹¹Then He said to me, “Son of man, these bones are the ^hwhole house of Israel. They indeed say, ⁱ“Our bones are dry, our hope is lost, and we ourselves are cut off!” ¹²Therefore prophesy and say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord God: “Behold, ^jO My people, I will open your graves and cause you to come up from your graves, and ^kbring you into the land of Israel. ¹³Then you shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I have opened your

⁶ ^e Is. 49:23; Ezek.

6:7; 35:12; Joel

2:27; 3:17

⁹ ^f [Ps. 104:30]

¹ Breath of life

¹⁰ ^g Rev. 11:11

² Breath of life

¹¹ ^h Jer. 33:24; Ezek.

36:10 ⁱ Ps. 141:7;

Is. 49:14

¹² ^j Deut. 32:39;

¹ Sam. 2:6; Is. 26:19;

66:14; [Dan. 12:2];

Hos. 13:14 ^k Ezek.

36:24

¹⁴ ^l Is. 32:15; Ezek.

36:27; [Joel 2:28,

29]; Zech. 12:10

¹⁶ ^m Num. 17:2, 3

ⁿ 2 Chr. 11:12, 13, 16;

15:9; 30:11, 18

¹⁷ ^o Is. 11:13; Jer.

50:4; Ezek. 37:22–24;

Hos. 1:11; Zeph. 3:9

¹⁸ ^p Ezek. 12:9;

24:19

¹⁹ ^q Zech. 10:6

^r Ezek. 37:16, 17

²⁰ ^s Ezek. 12:3

graves, O My people, and brought you up from your graves. ¹⁴I ^lwill put My Spirit in you, and you shall live, and I will place you in your own land. Then you shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken *it* and performed *it*,” says the LORD.”

One Kingdom, One King

¹⁵Again the word of the LORD came to me, saying, ¹⁶“As for you, son of man, ^mtake a stick for yourself and write on it: ‘For Judah and for ⁿthe children of Israel, his companions.’ Then take another stick and write on it, ‘For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and ^{for} all the house of Israel, his companions.’ ¹⁷Then ^ojoin them one to another for yourself into one stick, and they will become one in your hand.

¹⁸“And when the children of your people speak to you, saying, ^p“Will you not show us what you *mean* by these?”—¹⁹^qsay to them, ‘Thus says the Lord God: “Surely I will take ^rthe stick of Joseph, which *is* in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel, his companions; and I will join them with it, with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they will be one in My hand.”’” ²⁰And the sticks on which you write will be in your hand ^sbefore their eyes.

physical death, but rebirth from spiritual death brought about by divine power. Psalm 87 is another text in the Hebrew Scriptures that speaks of spiritual rebirth. The point of Jesus’ words to Nicodemus in John 3:1–16 was that he should have known and understood the concept of a second birth.

37:7, 8 The dramatic **noise** and then coming **together** of the bones with new flesh must have been chilling and thrilling to the prophet. This was a prophetic portrayal of the rebirth of Israel (see Rom. 9–11).

37:9 The Hebrew word translated **breath** is the same as the one translated **winds**. It can also be translated *spirit*.

37:10 an **exceedingly great army**: The dead bones in the valley (vv. 1, 2) must have looked like the aftermath of a horrible military defeat in which there were no survivors even to bury the dead. But now the army **stood upon their feet**.

37:11–14 The **bones** symbolize the **whole house of Israel**. This identification picks up on imagery already used: (1) those identified as **dry** or spiritually dead (see vv. 2–5); (2) those identified as despondent and dejected, with no apparent **hope** of being “resurrected” as the people of the living God; and (3) those described as disassembled and dispersed before being rejoined and rebuilt (see vv. 6–10). The major thrust of this passage is the coming spiritual rebirth of God’s chosen people through the agency of His Spirit (see vv. 15–28; 36:22–32). The spiritual rebirth would miraculously revive and restore human beings to what God had intended them to be in the beginning. The same body-breath sequence occurs in the creation of Adam (see Gen. 2:7).

37:16 a **stick**: This is Ezekiel’s final symbolic drama employing an object (see 4:1, 3, 9; 5:1).

The Visions of Ezekiel

Vision	Reference	Significance
God	1:1–28	Ezekiel is called, commissioned, and empowered with an overwhelming vision of divine glory.
Abominations in the temple	8:1–18	Ezekiel is transported to Jerusalem where he sees pagan idols in the temple and Israelites worshiping these false gods. God reveals His anger to Ezekiel over such sinful behavior.
People slain in Jerusalem	9:1–11	Ezekiel witnesses a violent vision in which Israelites of all ages are judged and killed because of their rebelliousness and idolatry.
The temple and the cherubim	10:1–22	Ezekiel watches God’s glory and the mysterious cherubim depart from the temple because of the sinfulness of the people.
25 wicked rulers	11:1–12	Ezekiel is transported to the East Gate where he sees 25 Israelite leaders plotting evil. He condemns them for their evil ways.
Valley of the dry bones	37:1–14	Ezekiel is transported to a valley where he sees dry, bleached bones come together, recover flesh, and come to life. This vision depicts God’s power and promise to restore and revive a dead people.
The temple	40:1—43:10	Ezekiel sees a detailed vision of a new temple and the return of the Lord. This vision encourages the Israelites that God will return to bless His people.

²¹“Then say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord God: “Surely ¹I will take the children of Israel from among the nations, wherever they have gone, and will gather them from every side and bring them into their own land; ²²and ^uI will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel; and ^vone king shall be king over them all; they shall no longer be two nations, nor shall they ever be divided into two kingdoms again. ²³^wThey shall not defile themselves anymore with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions; but ^xI will deliver them from all their dwelling places in which they have sinned, and will cleanse them. Then they shall be My people, and I will be their God.

²⁴“^yDavid My servant *shall be* king over them, and ^zthey shall all have one shepherd; ^athey shall also walk in My judgments and observe My statutes, and do them. ²⁵^bThen they shall dwell in the land that I have given to Jacob My servant, where your fathers dwelt; and they shall dwell there, they, their children, and their children’s children, ^cforever; and ^dMy servant David *shall be* their prince forever. ²⁶Moreover I will ³make ^ea covenant of peace with them, and it shall be an everlasting covenant with them; I will establish them and ^fmultiply them, and

²¹ ¹Is. 43:5, 6; Jer. 32:37; Ezek. 36:24; Amos 9:14, 15
²² ^uIs. 11:13; Jer. 3:18; Hos. 1:11
^v Ezek. 34:23; John 10:16
²³ ^w Ezek. 36:25
^x Ezek. 36:28, 29
²⁴ ^v Is. 40:11; [Jer. 23:5; 30:9]; Ezek. 34:23, 24; Hos. 3:5; [Luke 1:32] ^z [John 10:16] ^a Ezek. 36:27
²⁵ ^b Ezek. 36:28
^c Is. 60:21; Joel 3:20; Amos 9:15
^d Ps. 89:3, 4; John 12:34 [☆]
²⁶ ^e Ps. 89:3; Is. 55:3; [Jer. 32:40]
^f Jer. 30:19; Ezek. 36:10 ^g [2 Cor. 6:16]
³ Lit. cut
²⁷ ^h Lev. 26:11; [John 1:14]; Rev. 21:3 ⁱ Ezek. 11:20
²⁸ ^j Ezek. 36:23
^k Ex. 31:13; Ezek. 20:12

CHAPTER 38

² ^a Ezek. 39:1
^b Ezek. 35:2, 3
^c Ezek. 38:1–39:24; Rev. 20:8 ^d Gen. 10:2; Ezek. 39:6; Rev. 20:8 ^e Ezek. 32:26 ¹ Tg., Vg., Aquila the chief prince of Meshech, also v. 3
⁴ ² Kin. 19:28;

I will set My ^gsanctuary in their midst forevermore. ²⁷^hMy tabernacle also shall be with them; indeed I will be ⁱtheir God, and they shall be My people. ²⁸^jThe nations also will know that I, the LORD, ^ksanctify Israel, when My sanctuary is in their midst forevermore.””

Gog and Allies Attack Israel

38 Now the word of the LORD came to me, saying, ^{2a}“Son of man, ^bset your face against ^cGog, of the land of ^dMagog, ¹the prince of Rosh, ^eMeshech, and Tubal, and prophesy against him, ³and say, ‘Thus says the Lord God: “Behold, I *am* against you, O Gog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal. ⁴/I will turn you around, put hooks into your jaws, and ^glead you out, with all your army, horses, and horsemen, ^hall splendidly clothed, a great company *with* bucklers and shields, all of them handling swords. ⁵Persia, ²Ethiopia, and ³Libya are with them, all of them *with* shield and helmet; ⁶ⁱGomer and all its troops; the house of ^jTogarmah *from* the far north and all its troops—many people *are* with you.

⁷^k“Prepare yourself and be ready, you and all your companies that are gathered about you; and be a guard for them.

Ezek. 29:4 ^g Is. 43:17 ^h Ezek. 23:12 ⁵ ² Heb. Cush ³ Heb. Put
⁶ ⁱ Gen. 10:2 ^j Gen. 10:3; Ezek. 27:14 ⁷ ^k Is. 8:9, 10; Jer. 46:3, 4

37:22 mountains of Israel: This phrase represents the Promised Land (see 36:1–7, 12). The **one king** refers to the future ruler, the promised Messiah, also called Shepherd, Servant, and Prince (see vv. 24, 25; 7:27; 34:11–31; John 10).

37:23 The Hebrew word translated **dwelling places** is *backsliding* in other ancient manuscripts. In Hebrew, the two words differ in the placement of one letter.

37:24, 25 The title **David My servant** refers to the Messiah and King who would come from David’s line to save Israel (v. 22; see 2 Sam. 7:8–16).

37:26–28 The Lord had made an **everlasting covenant** with Abraham, the nation of Israel, and David (see 16:60, 61; see Gen. 9:16; 17:7; Num. 25:12, 13; 2 Sam. 7:13, 16; 23:5; Jer. 32:40). **My sanctuary in their midst:** The sanctuary or holy place of the living God is His dwelling place among His people (see Zeph. 3:15–18). **My taberna-**

cle: This term meaning “dwelling place” is a synonym for *sanctuary*. Both can be used of God’s dwelling in the midst of His people in the wilderness. Here they point to the future dwelling of the living God in the midst of His people **forevermore**. We may also compare the use Paul makes of these verses in 2 Cor. 6:16.

38:2 Son of man is a title for Ezekiel emphasizing his humanity, even though his message was from God. The term **Gog** appears in only one other place in the OT (1 Chr. 5:4), but not in reference to the same person (compare Rev. 20:8). The term could be a name or a title. **Magog** (or the “land of Gog”; see Gen. 10:2; 1 Chr. 1:5) is usually understood to be an area near the Black Sea or the Caspian Sea. In Gen. 10:2, Magog is one of the sons of Japheth, whose descendants occupied lands from Spain to Asia Minor, the islands of the Mediterranean to southern Russia. Some connect Magog with the Scythians. **Rosh:** There have been some expositors in recent years who have argued that the word Rosh means “Russia.” However, this is highly unlikely, for usually the Hebrew word means “head” or “chief.” The phrase could be read “the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal.” Concerning **Meshech** and **Tubal** we also have no knowledge. Geographically, these last two are thought to be near Magog. All that is known is that Gog, from Magog, was the leader over two or three regions or countries located near the Caspian or Black seas.

38:4 God is sovereign over the invasion (see vv. 14–17). **hooks into your jaws:** Here Gog is portrayed as a huge animal, perhaps a crocodile, that will be controlled by hooks. **horses, and horsemen:** When the biblical prophets speak of battles in the distant future, they use descriptions of weaponry and tactics known to them (see “sword” in v. 8; “bow arrows” in 39:3).

38:5, 6 Nations will ally with Gog from all directions: from the east—**Persia**; south—**Ethiopia**; west—**Libya**; and north—**Gomer**. The people of Gomer were the Cimmerians, a people from what is now southern Russia. **Togarmah** was near the Black Sea (see Gen. 10:3; 1 Chr. 1:6).

Gog

(Heb. *gog*) (38:2; 39:1) Strong’s #1463

Ezekiel prophesied God’s judgment against “Gog, of the land of Magog” (38:2). The land of Magog is named with Meshech and Tubal, regions near Asia Minor (38:2; Gen. 10:2). But more than as a specific person and territory, Ezekiel uses Gog and Magog as a metaphor for vast armies invading Israel from the north in the end times (38:8). They oppose God and seek to destroy His people Israel, but God promises to deliver them (38:14–23). In the Book of Revelation, Gog and Magog become symbolic names for evil nations deceived by Satan and opposed to God and the kingdom of Christ (Rev. 20:8).

⁸After many days ^myou will be visited. In the latter years you will come into the land of those brought back from the sword ⁿand gathered from many people on ^othe mountains of Israel, which had long been desolate; they were brought out of the nations, and now all of them ^p dwell safely. ⁹ You will ascend, coming ^q like a storm, covering the ^r land like a cloud, you and all your troops and many peoples with you.”

¹⁰ Thus says the Lord God: “On that day it shall come to pass *that* thoughts will arise in your mind, and you will make an evil plan: ¹¹ You will say, ‘I will go up against a land of ^s unvalled villages; I will ^t go to a peaceful people, ^u who dwell ⁴ safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates’— ¹² to take plunder and to take booty, to stretch out your hand against the waste places *that are again* inhabited, ^v and against a people gathered from the nations, who have acquired livestock and goods, who dwell in the midst of the land. ¹³ ^w Sheba, ^x Dedan, the merchants ^y of Tarshish, and all ^z their young lions will say to you, ‘Have you come to take plunder? Have you gathered your army to take booty, to carry away silver and gold, to take away livestock and goods, to take great plunder?’”

¹⁴ “Therefore, son of man, prophecy and say to Gog, ‘Thus says the Lord God: ^a “On that day when My people Israel ^b dwell safely, will you not know it? ¹⁵ ^c Then you will come from your place out of the far north, you and many peoples with you, all of them riding on horses, a great company and a mighty army. ¹⁶ You will come up against My people Israel like a cloud, to cover the land. It will be in the latter days that I will bring you against My land, so that the nations

⁸ ^d Deut. 4:30; Is. 24:22 ^m Is. 29:6
ⁿ Ezek. 34:13 ^o Ezek. 36:1, 4 ^p Jer. 23:6; Ezek. 34:25; 39:26
⁹ ^q Is. 28:2 ^r Jer. 4:13
¹¹ ^s Zech. 2:4 ^t Jer. 49:31 ^u Ezek. 38:8
⁴ *securely*
¹² ^v Ezek. 38:8
¹³ ^w Ezek. 27:22
^x Ezek. 27:15, 20
^y Ezek. 27:12 ^z Ezek. 19:3, 5
¹⁴ ^a Is. 4:1 ^b Jer. 23:6; Ezek. 38:8, 11; [Zech. 2:5, 8]
¹⁵ ^c Ezek. 39:2

¹⁶ ^d Ezek. 35:11 ^e Is. 5:16; 8:13; 29:23; Ezek. 28:22
¹⁹ ^f Deut. 32:21, 22; Ps. 18:7, 8; Ezek. 36:5, 6; [Nah. 1:2]; Heb. 12:29 ^g Ps. 89:46 ^h Joel 3:16; Hag. 2:6, 7; Rev. 16:18 ⁱ Lit. *shaking*
²⁰ ^j Hos. 4:3 ^k Jer. 4:24; Nah. 1:5, 6
²¹ ^k Ps. 105:16
¹ Ezek. 14:17
^m Judg. 7:22; 1 Sam. 14:20; 2 Chr. 20:23; Hag. 2:22
²² ⁿ Is. 66:16; Jer. 25:31 ^o Ezek. 5:17
^p Ps. 11:6; Is. 30:30; Ezek. 13:11 ^q Rev. 16:21
²³ ^r Ezek. 36:23
^s Ps. 9:16; Ezek. 37:28; 38:16

CHAPTER 39

¹ ^a Ezek. 38:2, 3
¹ Tg., Vg., Aquila the chief prince of Meshech
² ^b Ezek. 38:8
^c Ezek. 38:15

may ^d know Me, when I am ^e hallowed in you, O Gog, before their eyes.” ¹⁷ Thus says the Lord God: “Are ^{you} he of whom I have spoken in former days by My servants the prophets of Israel, who prophesied for years in those days that I would bring you against them?”

Judgment on Gog

¹⁸ “And it will come to pass at the same time, when Gog comes against the land of Israel,” says the Lord God, “*that* My fury will show in My face. ¹⁹ For ^f in My jealousy ^g and in the fire of My wrath I have spoken: ^h ‘Surely in that day there shall be a great ⁵ earthquake in the land of Israel, ²⁰ so that ⁱ the fish of the sea, the birds of the heavens, the beasts of the field, all creeping things that creep on the earth, and all men who *are* on the face of the earth shall shake at My presence. ^j The mountains shall be thrown down, the steep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground.’ ²¹ I will ^k call for ¹ a sword against Gog throughout all My mountains,” says the Lord God. ^m “Every man’s sword will be against his brother. ²² And I will ⁿ bring him to judgment with ^o pestilence and bloodshed; ^p I will rain down on him, on his troops, and on the many peoples who *are* with him, flooding rain, ^q great hailstones, fire, and brimstone. ²³ Thus I will magnify Myself and ^r sanctify Myself, ^s and I will be known in the eyes of many nations. Then they shall know that I *am* the LORD.”

Gog’s Armies Destroyed

39 “And ^a you, son of man, prophesy against Gog, and say, ‘Thus says the Lord God: “Behold, I *am* against you, O Gog, ¹ the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal; ² and I will ^b turn you around and lead you on, ^c bringing you up from

38:8 dwell safely: This phrase (see vv. 11, 14) indicates that the Israel of this passage is secure; the nation is not safe from attack, but it is safe from defeat. The time of the invasion is suggested by two temporal phrases—**After many days . . . In the latter years**—and the overall context. The second phrase appears only here in the OT. The first phrase usually denotes an indefinite time period, sometimes extending into the distant future or the end times (see Dan. 8:26). See also v. 16, where “the latter days” is used, a phrase that frequently points to messianic times or to the times when Israel is regathered. From Ezekiel’s viewpoint, he was predicting a time in the very distant future—the *end times*. Unless the passage refers to spiritual warfare, the invasion of Israel and the subsequent time of confident and carefree peace are still future events.

38:10–13 Gog’s evil plan will be to attack an unsuspecting, unprepared, and peaceful people in **unvalled villages**. **I will go up** demonstrates that Gog will decide to attack Israel even though God foresees, predicts, and controls Gog’s evil actions. On **Sheba, Dedan . . . Tarshish**, see 25:13; 27:12, 15, 22. **Young lions** represent their rulers; however, a few ancient versions translate the Hebrew as “villages.”

38:14–17 On far north, see v. 2. **riding on horses:** In early biblical history, horses were not ridden in battle, but were used to pull chariots (v. 4). **may know Me, when I am hallowed in you, O Gog:** These words show that God is determined to bring glory to His name in this unusual battle and even in this evil person. The question **are you he** suggests that previous prophets had foretold Gog’s invasion. The prophecies in mind could be general references to a time when enemies of God and His people would be defeated (see v. 21; Deut. 30:7; Is. 26:20, 21; Jer. 30:18–24; Hag. 2:20–23; Zech. 14:12–15).

38:18–23 These verses speak of God defending His nation against Gog and his army with supernatural and earthshaking methods. Unusually strong language concerning the wrath of God is found in these verses. The piling up of intense phrases indicates more than an “ordinary” future battle. **fire . . . brimstone:** A rare phrase, reserved only for the greatest catastrophes (see Gen. 19:24 when a similar phrase is used for the destruction of Sodom). This judgment would rival the magnitude of the judgment Sodom experienced. **Then they shall know:** This terrible battle will reveal God’s might to the entire world and His concern for His people (see 39:6).

the far north, and bring you against the mountains of Israel. ³Then I will knock the bow out of your left hand, and cause the arrows to fall out of your right hand. ^{4d}You shall ²fall upon the mountains of Israel, you and all your troops and the peoples who *are* with you; ^eI will give you to birds of prey of every sort and to the beasts of the field to be devoured. ⁵You shall ³fall on ⁴the open field; for I have spoken,” says the Lord God. ^{6f}“And I will send fire on Magog and on those who live ⁵in security in ^gthe coastlands. Then they shall know that I *am* the Lord. ^{7h}So I will make My holy name known in the midst of My people Israel, and I will not *let them* ⁱprofane My holy name anymore. ^jThen the nations shall know that I *am* the Lord, the Holy One in Israel. ^{8k}Surely it is coming, and it shall be done,” says the Lord God. “This *is* the day ^lof which I have spoken.

⁹“Then those who dwell in the cities of Israel will go out and set on fire and burn the weapons, both the shields and bucklers, the bows and arrows, the ⁶javelins and spears; and they will make fires with them for seven years. ¹⁰They will not take wood from the field nor cut down *any* from the forests, because they will make fires with the weapons; ^mand they will plunder those who plundered them, and pillage those who pillaged them,” says the Lord God.

The Burial of Gog

¹¹“It will come to pass in that day *that* I will give Gog a burial place there in Israel, the valley of those who pass by east of the sea; and it will obstruct travelers, because there they will bury Gog and all his multitude. Therefore they will call *it* the Valley of ⁷Hamon Gog. ¹²For seven

^{4 d} Ezek. 38:4, 21
^e Ezek. 33:27 ² Be slain
^{5 3} Be slain ⁴ Lit. the face of the field
^{6 f} Ezek. 38:22; Amos 1:4, 7, 10; Nah. 1:6 ^g Ps. 72:10; Is. 66:19; Jer. 25:22 ⁵ securely or confidently
^{7 h} Ezek. 39:25
ⁱ Lev. 18:21; Ezek. 36:23 / Ezek. 38:16
^{8 k} Rev. 16:17; 21:6 / Ezek. 38:17
^{9 g} Lit. hand staffs
^{10 m} Is. 14:2; 33:1; Mic. 5:8; Hab. 2:8
^{11 7} Lit. The Multitude of Gog

^{12 n} Deut. 21:23; Ezek. 39:14, 16
^{13 o} Jer. 33:9; Zeph. 3:19, 20 ^p Ezek. 28:22
^{14 q} Ezek. 39:12
^r Lit. those who pass through
^{15 9} build
^{16 r} Ezek. 39:12
^l Lit. Multitude
^{17 s} Is. 56:9; Jer. 12:9; Ezek. 39:4; Rev. 19:17, 18 ^t Is. 18:6 ^u Is. 34:6, 7; Jer. 46:10; Zeph. 1:7
^v Ezek. 39:4
^{18 w} Ezek. 29:5; Rev. 19:18 ^x Deut. 32:14; Ps. 22:12

months the house of Israel will be burying them, ⁿin order to cleanse the land. ¹³Indeed all the people of the land will be burying, and they will gain ^orenown for it on the day that ^pI am glorified,” says the Lord God. ¹⁴“They will set apart men regularly employed, with the help of ^{8a}a search party, to pass through the land and bury those bodies remaining on the ground, in order ^qto cleanse it. At the end of seven months they will make a search. ¹⁵The search party will pass through the land; and *when anyone* sees a man’s bone, he shall ⁹set up a marker by it, till the buriers have buried it in the Valley of Hamon Gog. ¹⁶The name of the city will also be ¹Hamonah. Thus they shall ^rcleanse the land.”

A Triumphant Festival

¹⁷“And as for you, son of man, thus says the Lord God, ^s“Speak to every sort of bird and to every beast of the field:

^t“Assemble yourselves and come; Gather together from all sides to My ^usacrificial meal

Which I am sacrificing for you, A great sacrificial meal ^von the mountains of Israel, That you may eat flesh and drink blood.

^{18w} You shall eat the flesh of the mighty,

Drink the blood of the princes of the earth,

Of rams and lambs, Of goats and bulls, All of them ^xfatlings of Bashan.

¹⁹ You shall eat fat till you are full, And drink blood till you are drunk, At My sacrificial meal Which I am sacrificing for you.

39:3 I will knock . . . out: This pictures God fighting for His people (see 38:21).

39:4, 5 mountains . . . open field: The rout will be total; there will be no place for the enemies of God to flee for safety.

39:6 Fire from the Lord often refers to lightning bolts (see 1 Kin. 18:38). **they shall know:** There is a significant emphasis in chs. 38, 39 on God’s purpose in demonstrating the central truth that He is **the Lord** (see vv. 13, 21, 22, 28; 38:16, 23). God’s battle with Gog will demonstrate His sovereignty and majesty in His universe.

39:8 Surely it is coming . . . This is the day: The language throughout this section seems unusually grave, and the outcome is announced with unusual solemnity and certainty.

39:9, 10 The seven years could be, but does not have to be, equated with the “seven months” of vv. 12, 14. If symbolic, the number would suggest the completeness and finality of the war.

39:11 That day is the time after Gog’s defeat. Burial will be necessary for reasons of sanitation as well as consecration (see Lev. 5:2, 3; 21:1; Num. 6:6). **East of the sea** is unclear, but because the valley will **obstruct travelers**, a likely candidate is the area of southern Galilee that leads toward the Dead Sea (called the Valley of Jezreel in Josh. 17:16).

39:12 cleanse the land: The Law of Moses prescribed the sacrifice of a heifer to cleanse the land if a murdered person was found in a region (see Deut. 21:1–9).

39:13 gain renown: This verse implies that the burial of Gog would become a memorial day to glorify God. Consider the parallel in 1 Cor. 15:24–28, which speaks of the inauguration of the new heavens and the new earth after all of Christ’s enemies are defeated.

39:14–16 A complete purification is emphasized (see Lev. 11:45). **Hamonah** means “Horde,” indicating a multitude of corpses.

39:17–20 A poem or song is addressed to the scavenging birds and beasts who come to the multitude of dead bodies (vv. 14–16). Whether figurative or not, the passage powerfully pictures God’s sovereign control over the complete conquest of Israel’s future and most ferocious enemies (see Rev. 19:11–21). The meal would be a divinely prepared sacrifice served at God’s table—the land or **mountains of Israel**. The main course would be the mighty rulers of the earth. The **fatlings of Bashan** portray the might of these men. The herds of Bashan—**rams and lambs, . . . goats and bulls**—were the strongest and most important animals of ancient Israel, fed in the rich pasturelands east of Galilee.

20^a You shall be filled at My table
With horses and riders,
^aWith mighty men
And with all the men of war,” says
the Lord God.

Israel Restored to the Land

21^a “I will set My glory among the nations; all the nations shall see My judgment which I have executed, and ^bMy hand which I have laid on them. 22^c So the house of Israel shall know that I *am* the LORD their God from that day forward. 23^d The Gentiles shall know that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity; because they were unfaithful to Me, therefore ^eI hid My face from them. I ^fgave them into the hand of their enemies, and they all fell by the sword. 24^g According to their uncleanness and according to their transgressions I have dealt with them, and hidden My face from them.”

25 “Therefore thus says the Lord God: ^hNow I will bring back the captives of Jacob, and have mercy on the ⁱwhole house of Israel; and I will be jealous for My holy name— 26^j after they have borne their shame, and all their unfaithfulness in which they were unfaithful to Me, when they ^kdwelt safely in their *own* land and no one made *them* afraid. 27^l When I have brought them back from the peoples and gathered them out of their enemies’ lands, and I ^mam hallowed in them in the sight of many nations, 28ⁿ then they shall know that I *am* the LORD their God, who sent them into captivity among the nations, but also brought them back to their land, and left none of them ^ocaptives any longer. 29^o And I will not hide

20 ^a Ps. 76:5, 6; Ezek. 38:4; Hag. 2:22 ^b Rev. 19:18
21 ^a Ex. 9:16; Is. 37:20; Ezek. 36:23; 38:23 ^b Ex. 7:4
22 ^c Ex. 39:7, 28
23 ^d Jer. 22:8, 9; 44:22; Ezek. 36:18–20, 23 ^e Deut. 31:17; Is. 1:15; 59:2; Ezek. 39:29 ^f Lev. 26:25
24 ^g 2 Kin. 17:7; Jer. 2:17, 19; 4:18; Ezek. 36:19
25 ^h Is. 27:12, 13; Jer. 30:3, 18; Ezek. 34:13; 36:24 ⁱ Jer. 31:1; Ezek. 20:40; Hos. 1:11
26 ^j Dan. 9:16 ^k Lev. 26:5, 6
27 ^l Ezek. 28:25, 26
^m Ezek. 36:23, 24; 38:16
28 ⁿ Ezek. 34:30
^o Lit. *there*
29 ^o Is. 54:8, 9
^p Is. 32:15; Ezek. 36:27; 37:14; Joel 2:28; Zech. 12:10; Acts 2:17

CHAPTER 40

1 ^a 2 Kin. 25:1–4; Jer. 39:2, 3; 52:4–7; Ezek. 33:21 ^b Ezek. 1:3; 3:14, 22; 37:1 ^c Lit. *struck*
2 ^c Ezek. 1:1; 3:14; 8:3; 37:1; Dan. 7:1, 7 ^d [Is. 2:2, 3]; Ezek. 17:23; 20:40; 37:22; [Mic. 4:1]; Rev. 21:10
3 ^e Ezek. 1:7; Dan. 10:6; Rev. 1:15
^f Ezek. 47:3; Zech. 2:1, 2 ^g Rev. 11:1; 21:15
4 ^h Ezek. 44:5
ⁱ Ezek. 43:10 ^j Lit. *set your heart*
5 ^k [Is. 26:1]; Ezek. 42:20 ^l Lit. *house*

My face from them anymore; for I shall have ^ppoured out My Spirit on the house of Israel; says the Lord God.”

A New City, a New Temple

40 In the twenty-fifth year of our captivity, at the beginning of the year, on the tenth *day* of the month, in the fourteenth year after ^athe city was ¹captured, on the very same day ^bthe hand of the LORD was upon me; and He took me there. 2^c In the visions of God He took me into the land of Israel and ^dset me on a very high mountain; on it toward the south *was* something like the structure of a city. 3 He took me there, and behold, *there was* a man whose appearance *was* ^elike the appearance of bronze. ^fHe had a line of flax ^gand a measuring rod in his hand, and he stood in the gateway.

4 And the man said to me, ^h“Son of man, look with your eyes and hear with your ears, and ²fix your mind on everything I show you; for you *were* brought here so that I might show *them* to you. ⁱDeclare to the house of Israel everything you see.” 5 Now there *was* ^ja wall all around the outside of the ³temple. In the man’s hand was a measuring rod six ⁴cubits *long, each being* a cubit and a handbreadth; and he measured the width of the wall structure, one rod; and the height, one rod.

The Eastern Gateway of the Temple

6 Then he went to the gateway which faced ^keast; and he went up its stairs and measured the threshold of the gateway, *which was* one rod wide, and the other

⁴ A royal cubit of about 21 inches ⁶ Ezek. 43:1

39:21, 22 My glory among the nations: The universal knowledge of the living God of Israel will be based finally on the outcome of the battle described in chs. 38; 39. Ezekiel followed the great theme of biblical theology begun in Gen. 12:3 that the ultimate purpose of God in His choice of Abraham and Sarah was to make His blessings known to all the families of the earth. God will demonstrate His glory both among the nations and among His chosen people Israel.

39:25 The Hebrew term rendered **captives** (see Jer. 30:3) can also mean “fortunes” (see Deut. 30:3).

40:1 This date is about 573 B.C., 12 years since the six messages of hope delivered the year following the fall of Jerusalem (33:21—39:29) and 25 years after the deportation of Jehoiachin (see 1:2; 33:21, 22; chs. 33–39).

40:2 Ezekiel was taken in a vision to a **very high mountain** from which he could see a city to the south. The sight seems somewhat vague, **something like the structure of a city**. Since the temple is there (v. 5), Jerusalem is suggested; but neither the mountain nor the city is named. Such a high mountain north of Jerusalem does not correlate with the geography of Israel, then or now. Mount Hermon, north of Galilee, is possible if the boundaries of the land are understood as extending that far.

40:3–5 The special circumstances of these final visions are noteworthy. Ezekiel saw a messenger with a **bronze** appearance (see

1:27, 28) who was equipped with tools for measuring. Ezekiel was commissioned to minister the complete revelation to **the house of Israel**. A **cubit** was about 18 inches, or the distance from fingertips to elbow. A **handbreadth**, the width of the hand across the widest part, was approximately three inches. Both a long cubit (a cubit of about 21 inches) and a short cubit (the standard 18 inches) existed. Based on these measurements, the **measuring rod** was six long cubits in length, about 126 inches or 10.5 feet, the height and width of the wall around the temple.

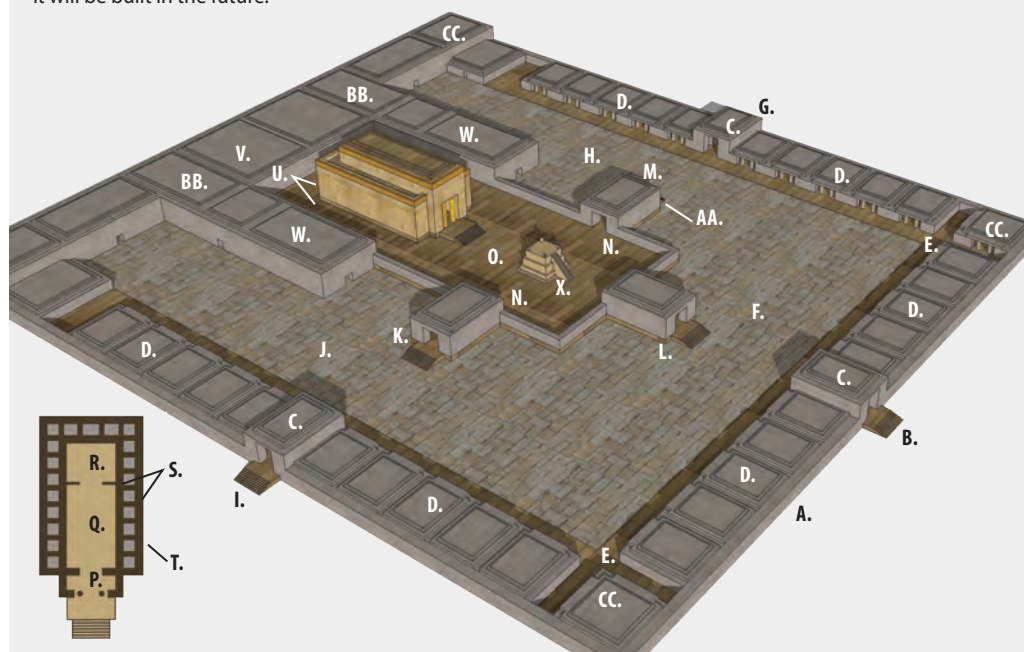
40:6–16 The thresholds of the eastern gate measure 10.5 feet wide; each gate-chamber or guard room is 10.5 by 10.5 feet, separated by a space 8.75 feet wide. The **stairs** apparently lead up to the outer threshold, and the rooms (three on each side) line a walkway to the inner threshold leading to a vestibule (or porch) that is 14 feet wide. The **gateposts** are 3.5 feet square; and the distance across the **gateway** of the outer threshold is 17.5 feet. The distance from the beginning of the gate through the outer threshold is 22.75 feet: 10.5 feet of this being the threshold. A space in front of each guardroom is 1.75 feet wide (21 inches or one long cubit). The overall dimensions of the east gate, and of the two identical north and south gates, are 43.75 by 87.5 feet. The gateposts are 105 feet high. These gates have some similarity to those excavated in Israel from the time of Solomon.

12 ⁵ Lit. *border*
16 ¹ Kin. 6:4; Ezek.
41:16, 26

the length of the gate, thirteen cubits. ¹²*There was* a ⁵space in front of the gate chambers, one cubit *on this side* and one cubit on that side; the gate chambers *were* six cubits on this side and six cubits on that side. ¹³Then he measured the gateway from the roof of *one* gate chamber to the roof of the other; the width *was* twenty-five cubits, as door faces door. ¹⁴He measured the gateposts, sixty cubits high, and the court all around the gateway *extended* to the gatepost. ¹⁵*From* the front of the entrance gate to the front of the vestibule of the inner gate *was* fifty cubits. ¹⁶*There were* ¹beveled window frames in the gate chambers and in their intervening archways on the inside of

Ezekiel uses a long or "royal" cubit, about 21 inches or 53 centimeters ("cubit and a handbreadth," Ezek. 40:5) as opposed to the standard Hebrew cubit of about 18 inches or 46 centimeters.

Scripture describes a floor plan but provides few height dimensions. This artwork shows an upward projection of the temple over the floor plan. This temple existed only in a vision of Ezekiel (Ezek. 40:2) and was never actually built as were the temples of Solomon, Zerubbabel, and Herod, but some premillennial interpreters believe that it will be built in the future.



- | | | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|--|
| A. Wall (40:5, 16–20) | H. North inner court (40:23) | O. Court (40:47) | V. West building (41:12) |
| B. East gate (40:6–14, 16) | I. South gate (40:24–26) | P. Temple portico (40:48, 49) | W. Priests' rooms (42:1–10) |
| C. Portico (40:8) | J. South inner court (40:27) | Q. Outer sanctuary (41:1, 2) | X. Altar (43:13–17) |
| D. Outer court (40:17) | K. Gateway (40:28–31) | R. Most Holy Place (41:3, 4) | AA. Rooms for preparing sacrifices (40:39–43) |
| E. Pavement (40:17) | L. Gateway (40:32–34) | S. Temple walls (41:5–7, 9, 11) | BB. Ovens (46:19, 20) |
| F. East inner court (40:19) | M. Gateway (40:35–38) | T. Base (41:8) | CC. Kitchens (46:21–24) |
| G. North gate (40:20–22) | N. Priests' rooms (40:44, 45) | U. Open area (41:10) | |

the gateway all around, and likewise in the vestibules. *There were* windows all around on the inside. And on each gatepost *were* ^mpalm trees.

The Outer Court

¹⁷Then he brought me into ⁿthe outer court; and *there were* ^ochambers and a pavement made all around the court; ^pthirty chambers faced the pavement. ¹⁸The pavement was by the side of the gateways, corresponding to the length of the gateways; *this was* the lower pavement. ¹⁹Then he measured the width from the front of the lower gateway to the front of the inner court exterior, one hundred cubits toward the east and the north.

The Northern Gateway

²⁰On the outer court was also a gateway facing north, and he measured its length and its width. ²¹Its gate chambers, three on this side and three on that side, its gateposts and its archways, had the same measurements as the first gate; its length *was* fifty cubits and its width twenty-five cubits. ²²Its windows and those of its archways, and also its palm trees, *had* the same measurements as the gateway facing east; it was ascended by seven steps, and its archway *was* in front of it. ²³A gate of the inner court was opposite the northern gateway, just as the eastern gateway; and he measured from gateway to gateway, one hundred cubits.

The Southern Gateway

²⁴After that he brought me toward the south, and there a gateway was facing south; and he measured its gateposts and archways according to these same measurements. ²⁵*There were* windows in it and in its archways all around like those windows; its length *was* fifty cubits and its width twenty-five cubits. ²⁶Seven steps led up to it, and its archway *was* in front of them; and it had palm trees on its gateposts, one on this side and one on that side. ²⁷*There was* also a gateway on the inner court, facing south; and he measured from gateway to gateway toward the south, one hundred cubits.

¹⁶ ^m 1 Kin. 6:29, 32, 35; 2 Chr. 3:5; Ezek. 40:22, 26, 31, 34, 37; 41:18–20, 25, 26
¹⁷ ⁿ Ezek. 10:5; 42:1; 46:21; Rev. 11:2
^o 1 Kin. 6:5; 2 Chr. 31:11; Ezek. 40:38
^p Ezek. 45:5

Gateways of the Inner Court

²⁸Then he brought me to the inner court through the southern gateway; he measured the southern gateway according to these same measurements. ²⁹Also its gate chambers, its gateposts, and its archways *were* according to these same measurements; *there were* windows in it and in its archways all around; *it was* fifty cubits long and twenty-five cubits wide. ³⁰*There were* archways all around, ^qtwenty-five cubits long and five cubits wide. ³¹Its archways faced the outer court, palm trees *were* on its gateposts, and going up to it *were* eight steps.

³²And he brought me into the inner court facing east; he measured the gateway according to these same measurements. ³³Also its gate chambers, its gateposts, and its archways *were* according to these same measurements; and *there were* windows in it and in its archways all around; *it was* fifty cubits long and twenty-five cubits wide. ³⁴Its archways faced the outer court, and palm trees *were* on its gateposts on this side and on that side; and going up to it *were* eight steps.

³⁵Then he brought me to the north gateway and measured *it* according to these same measurements—³⁶also its gate chambers, its gateposts, and its archways. It had windows all around; its length *was* fifty cubits and its width twenty-five cubits. ³⁷Its gateposts faced the outer court, palm trees *were* on its gateposts on this side and on that side, and going up to it *were* eight steps.

Where Sacrifices Were Prepared

³⁸*There was* a chamber and its entrance by the gateposts of the gateway, where they ^rwashed the burnt offering. ³⁹In the vestibule of the gateway *were* two tables on this side and two tables on that side, on which to slay the burnt offering, ^sthe sin offering, and ^tthe trespass offering. ⁴⁰At the outer side of the vestibule, as one goes up to the entrance of the northern gateway, *were* two tables; and on the other side of the vestibule of the gateway *were* two tables. ⁴¹Four tables *were* on this side and four tables on that side, by the

³⁰ ^q Ezek. 40:21, 25, 33, 36
³⁸ ^r 2 Chr. 4:6
³⁹ ^s Lev. 4:2, 3
^t Lev. 5:6; 6:6; 7:1

40:17–19 The lower pavement is equal in length to the gateway: 87.5 feet; and the distance between the outer gateway and the corresponding inner gateway (across the pavement) is 175 feet. **chambers:** Rooms, probably for storage or priests' quarters, line the inside of the northern, southern, and eastern walls. **40:28–37** The **archways** are 43.75 feet long by 8.75 feet wide (see vv. 8, 9, 14; apparently the porches of the gate systems in the inner court have different dimensions, although these gates are said to be like the others). Also in contrast to the outer gates, these have their

porches (vestibules) on the outward side (entrance), where seven steps go up (see vv. 22, 26).

40:38–43 Ezekiel observes a room near the entrance of the northern gate of the inner court where animals are slaughtered and washed for sacrificial offerings. These sacrifices point to the ultimate sacrifice: the sacrifice of God's only Son on the Cross once for all. Christ's sacrifice of His own life paid for our sins and provides salvation to all those who believe on Him (see Heb. 7:20–28; 9:23–28).

side of the gateway, eight tables on which they slaughtered *the sacrifices*. ⁴² *There were* also four tables of hewn stone for the burnt offering, one cubit and a half long, one cubit and a half wide, and one cubit high; on these they laid the instruments with which they slaughtered the burnt offering and the sacrifice. ⁴³ *Inside were* hooks, a handbreadth wide, fastened all around; and the flesh of the sacrifices *was* on the tables.

Chambers for Singers and Priests

⁴⁴ Outside the inner gate *were* the chambers for ^uthe singers in the inner court, one facing south at the side of the northern gateway, and the other facing north at the side of the ⁶southern gateway. ⁴⁵ Then he said to me, “This chamber which faces south *is* for ^vthe priests who have charge of the temple. ⁴⁶ The chamber which faces north *is* for the priests ^wwho have charge of the altar; these *are* the sons of ^xZadok, from the sons of Levi, who come near the LORD to minister to Him.”

Dimensions of the Inner Court and Vestibule

⁴⁷ And he measured the court, one hundred cubits long and one hundred cubits wide, foursquare. The altar *was* in front of the temple. ⁴⁸ Then he brought me to the ^yvestibule of the temple and measured the doorposts of the vestibule, five cubits on this side and five cubits on that side; and the width of the gateway *was* three cubits on this side and three cubits on that side. ⁴⁹ ^z The length of the vestibule *was* twenty cubits, and the width eleven cubits; and by the steps which led up to it *there were* ^apillars by the doorposts, one on this side and another on that side.

Dimensions of the Sanctuary

41 Then he ^abrought me into the ¹sanctuary and measured the

⁴⁴ ^u 1 Chr. 6:31, 32; 16:41–43; 25:1–7 ⁶So with LXX; MT, Vg. eastern

⁴⁵ ^v Lev. 8:35; Num. 3:27, 28, 32, 38; 18:5; 1 Chr. 9:23; 2 Chr. 13:11; Ps. 134:1

⁴⁶ ^w Lev. 6:12, 13; Num. 18:5; Ezek. 44:15 × 1 Kin. 2:35; Ezek. 43:19; 44:15, 16

⁴⁸ ^y 1 Kin. 6:3; 2 Chr. 3:4

⁴⁹ ^z 1 Kin. 6:3 ^a 1 Kin. 7:15–22; 2 Chr. 3:17; Jer. 52:17–23; [Rev. 3:12]

CHAPTER 41

¹ ^a Ezek. 40:2, 3, 17

¹ Heb. *heykal*; the main room in the temple, the holy place, Ex. 26:33

⁴ ^b 1 Kin. 6:20; 2 Chr. 3:8

⁵ ² Lit. *house*

⁶ ^c 1 Kin. 6:5–10 ^d 1 Kin. 6:6, 10 ³ Lit. the wall

⁷ ^e 1 Kin. 6:8

⁸ ^f Ezek. 40:5

⁹ ⁴ Lit. *house*

doorposts, six cubits wide on one side and six cubits wide on the other side—the width of the tabernacle. ² The width of the entryway *was* ten cubits, and the side walls of the entrance *were* five cubits on this side and five cubits on the other side; and he measured its length, forty cubits, and its width, twenty cubits.

³ Also he went inside and measured the doorposts, two cubits; and the entrance, six cubits *high*; and the width of the entrance, seven cubits. ⁴ ^b He measured the length, twenty cubits; and the width, twenty cubits, beyond the sanctuary; and he said to me, “This *is* the Most Holy Place.”

The Side Chambers on the Wall

⁵ Next, he measured the wall of the ²temple, six cubits. The width of each side chamber all around the temple *was* four cubits on every side. ⁶ ^c The side chambers *were* in three stories, one above the other, thirty chambers in each story; they rested on ³ledges which *were* for the side chambers all around, that they might be supported, but ^d not fastened to the wall of the temple. ⁷ As one went up from story to story, the side chambers ^e became wider all around, because their supporting ledges in the wall of the temple ascended like steps; therefore the width of the structure increased as one went up *from* the lowest *story* to the highest by way of the middle one. ⁸ I also saw an elevation all around the temple; it was the foundation of the side chambers, ^f a full rod, *that is*, six cubits *high*. ⁹ The thickness of the outer wall of the side chambers *was* five cubits, and so also the remaining terrace by the place of the side chambers of the ⁴temple. ¹⁰ And between *it* and the *wall* chambers was a width of twenty cubits all around the temple on every side. ¹¹ The doors of the side chambers opened on the terrace, one door toward the north and another toward the south; and the width of the terrace *was* five cubits all around.

40:44–46 On the inner side (facing the inner court) of the northern and southern inner gateways are rooms for priests whose principal work is singing (see 1 Chr. 16:4–6; 2 Chr. 29:25–30). Those housed at the northern gate serve at the sacrificial altar. These **sons of Zadok** would be the only Levites permitted to serve God directly (see 44:15–31). The priests of the southern (inner) gate minister in the temple.

40:47–49 The inner courtyard is 175 feet square. On **altar** and **temple** see chs. 41–43. The width of the entrance—**vestibule**—to the temple sanctuary can be determined: 20 cubits (35 feet) with a three-cubit (5.25 feet) extension of the five-cubit (8.75 feet) **doorposts** on each side, leaving an entrance with a width of 14 cubits (24.5 feet).

41:1–4 The outer area, the holy place (see Ex. 26:33) and the inner area, the **Most Holy Place** (see 1 Kin. 6:16–20) of the temple itself

are described. Overall, the outer room is 70 feet long by 35 feet wide and has an entrance 17.5 feet wide. The **inner sanctuary** is 35 feet square with an entrance 10.5 feet wide. **Doorposts** for the outer room are 10.5 feet square and for the inner sanctuary 3.5 feet square. Walls on each side of each entrance protrude from the side walls 8.75 and 12.25 feet. The height of the entrance to the inner room is 10.5 feet.

41:5–11 Next the dimensions are given for the **wall** surrounding the **temple**. Its width is 10.5 feet. Running along the inside of the western, northern, and southern walls (but not attached) are three levels of ten rooms (90 total; perhaps these are storerooms), each 7 feet square with an outer wall 8.75 feet thick. They sit on a foundation 10.5 feet high. A space of 35 feet is apparently between these rooms and the priests' **chambers** north and south of the temple (see 42:1–14). A **terrace** that is 8.75 feet wide is on all three sides.

The Building at the Western End

¹²The building that faced the separating courtyard at its western end *was* seventy cubits wide; the wall of the building *was* five cubits thick all around, and its length ninety cubits.

Dimensions and Design of the Temple Area

¹³So he measured the temple, one ^ghundred cubits long; and the separating courtyard with the building and its walls *was* one hundred cubits long; ¹⁴also the width of the eastern face of the temple, including the separating courtyard, *was* one hundred cubits. ¹⁵He measured the length of the building behind it, facing the separating courtyard, with its ^hgalleries on the one side and on the other side, one hundred cubits, as well as the inner ⁵temple and the porches of the court, ¹⁶their doorposts and ⁱthe beveled window frames. And the galleries all around their three stories opposite the threshold were paneled with ^jwood from the ground to the windows—the windows

¹³ ^g Ezek. 40:47
¹⁵ ^h Ezek. 42:3, 5
⁵ Or *sanctuary*
¹⁶ ⁱ 1 Kin. 6:4; Ezek. 40:16, 25 / 1 Kin. 6:15

¹⁷ ⁶ Lit. *house*; the Most Holy Place
¹⁸ ^k 1 Kin. 6:29;
 2 Chr. 3:7 / 2 Chr. 3:5; Ezek. 40:16
¹⁹ ^m Ezek. 1:10; 10:14
²¹ ⁿ 1 Kin. 6:33; Ezek. 40:9, 14, 16; 41:1
²² ^o Ex. 30:1-3; 1 Kin. 6:20; Rev. 8:3
^p Ex. 25:23, 30; Lev. 24:6; Ezek. 23:41; 44:16; Mal. 1:7, 12
^q Ex. 30:8
²³ ^r 1 Kin. 6:31-35
²⁴ ^s 1 Kin. 6:34

were covered— ¹⁷from the space above the door, even to the inner ⁶room, as well as outside, and on every wall all around, inside and outside, by measure.

¹⁸And *it was made* ^hwith cherubim and ^lpalm trees, a palm tree between cherub and cherub. *Each* cherub had two faces, ¹⁹*so* that the face of a man *was* toward a palm tree on one side, and the face of a young lion toward a palm tree on the other side; thus *it was made* throughout the temple all around. ²⁰From the floor to the space above the door, and on the wall of the sanctuary, cherubim and palm trees *were* carved.

²¹The ⁿdoorposts of the temple *were* square, *as was* the front of the sanctuary; their appearance *was* similar. ²²^oThe altar *was* of wood, three cubits high, and its length two cubits. Its corners, its length, and its sides *were* of wood; and he said to me, “This is ^pthe table that is ^qbefore the LORD.”

²³^rThe temple and the sanctuary had two doors. ²⁴The doors had two ^spanels *apiece*, two folding panels: two *panels* for

41:12 Behind the temple, between its western end and the western wall of the outer court is a **building** 122.5 feet wide and 157.5 feet long with walls 8.75 feet thick. Its purpose is not given.

41:13–26 Like the temple, the western building is 175 feet in total length (its inside length plus the width of the walls on each side plus 8.75 multiplied by 2; see v. 12). The full width of the eastern side of the temple proper is the same, as is that of the inner courtyard and the courtyard separating the temple and the western building. Vari-

ous decorations are described in vv. 16–20. Some likely have symbolic meanings (see 28:13, 14 regarding cherubs), but no explanations are given here. A wooden **altar** (v. 22), the only piece of furniture mentioned in this passage, is 5.25 feet high and 2 feet square (see the dimensions of the stone tables of 40:42 and the altar of sacrifice in 43:13–17). The purpose and position of this altar is not known; but it is called **the table that is before the LORD**, to which some compare the altar of incense in the tabernacle (see Ex. 37:25–28).

Measuring the Future

Ezekiel could be called one of the most visionary prophets. God showed him spiritual insights that still stir the imagination 25 centuries later. Like other prophets, Ezekiel’s ministry among his people had two distinct phases: condemnation and consolation.

The first 32 chapters of Ezekiel catalog the sure and future judgment of God on His own people and seven other nations. Incredibly, although Jerusalem had been defeated and many of her people had been deported, the exiles clung to the vain hope that God would never let His city and temple be destroyed. They missed the point that God’s ultimate commitment was to people—not places or buildings. In order to purify and preserve the people, God allowed the devastation of the Promised Land and the temple itself. Yet God also held responsible those nations that used their temporary domination of Israel as an opportunity to mock the living God. Ezekiel’s early messages focused on the coming of God’s judgment and the urgent need for repentance.

The last part of Ezekiel represents a sudden change of tone. With the fall of Jerusalem, God’s terrible judgment had finally come. The weary and disillusioned exiles had lost all hope. But God filled Ezekiel with a new message. Although all immediate evidence pointed to hopelessness and despair, God invited His people to return to Him and to place their confidence in Him. Whatever their temporary setbacks and suffering, God was still in control. His purposes would win out, and His plans were specific. In fact, His plans were so definite they could be measured. Ezekiel received a vision of the dimensions of a new temple (recorded in 40:1—48:35) to demonstrate that fact.

Many efforts have been made to understand the details of Ezekiel’s vision in such a way that the prophecy might be described as fulfilled. However, attempts to do this have failed. Those who eventually returned from exile did not use Ezekiel’s plans to rebuild Jerusalem. It is also difficult to interpret this prophecy as a symbolic description of the church in our age. The most confident statement we can make about the vision and its accompanying instructions is that it is a prophecy yet to be fulfilled. At the same time, we can apply these chapters to the present as examples of God’s planning, precision, and sovereignty. He maintains control of the events of history. When events seem chaotic, God reminds us to rest in His ability to bring order. Ezekiel’s vision of a new temple when the temple in Jerusalem had just been destroyed reassured the exiles: God would create beauty out of ashes. The people in Ezekiel’s day needed that vision of hope, and we still need it today.



one door and two panels for the other door.²⁵ Cherubim and palm trees *were* carved on the doors of the temple just as they *were* carved on the walls. A wooden canopy *was* on the front of the vestibule outside.²⁶ *There were* ¹beveled window frames and palm trees on one side and on the other, on the sides of the vestibule—also on the side chambers of the temple and on the canopies.

The Chambers for the Priests

42 Then he ^abrought me out into the outer court, by the way toward the ^bnorth; and he brought me into ^cthe chamber which *was* opposite the separating courtyard, and which *was* opposite the building toward the north.² Facing the length, *which was* one hundred cubits (the width was fifty cubits), was the north door.³ Opposite the inner court of twenty cubits, and opposite the ^dpavement of the outer court, *was* ^egallery against gallery in three stories.⁴ In front of the chambers, toward the inside, *was* a walk ten cubits wide, at a distance of one cubit; and their doors faced north.⁵ Now the upper chambers *were* shorter, because the galleries took away *space* from them more than from the lower and middle stories of the building.⁶ For they *were* in three stories and did not have pillars like the pillars of the courts; therefore *the upper level was* ¹shortened more than the lower and middle levels from the ground up.⁷ And a wall which *was* outside ran parallel to the chambers, at the front of the chambers, toward the outer court; its length *was* fifty cubits.⁸ The length of the chambers toward the outer court *was* fifty cubits, whereas that facing the temple *was* one ^fhundred cubits.⁹ At the lower chambers *was* the entrance on the east side, as one goes into them from the outer court.

¹⁰ Also *there were* chambers in the thickness of the wall of the court toward the east, opposite the separating courtyard and opposite the building.¹¹ ^g*There was* a walk in front of them also, and their appearance *was* like the chambers which *were* toward the north; they *were* as long

26 ¹ Ezek. 40:16

CHAPTER 42

1 ^a Ezek. 41:1
 b Ezek. 40:20
 c Ezek. 41:12, 15
 3 ^d Ezek. 40:17
 e Ezek. 41:15, 16;
 42:5
 6 ¹ Or *narrowed*
 8 ^f Ezek. 41:13, 14
 11 ^g Ezek. 42:4

13 ^h Lev. 6:16, 26;
 24:9; Ezek. 43:19
 i Lev. 2:3, 10; 6:14,
 17, 25
 14 ^j Ezek. 44:19
 15 ^k Ezek. 40:6; 43:1
 2 ^l Lit. *house*
 16 ³ About 10.5
 feet, Ezek. 40:5
 20 ^l [Is. 60:18]; Ezek.
 40:5; Zech. 2:5
 m Ezek. 45:2; Rev.
 21:16 ⁴ Or *profane*

CHAPTER 43

1 ^a Ezek. 10:19; 46:1
 2 ^b Ezek. 11:23
 c Ezek. 1:24; Rev.
 1:15; 14:2

and as wide as the others, and all their exits and entrances *were* according to plan.¹² And corresponding to the doors of the chambers that *were* facing south, as one enters them, *there was* a door in front of the walk, the way directly in front of the wall toward the east.

¹³ Then he said to me, “The north chambers *and* the south chambers, which *are* opposite the separating courtyard, *are* the holy chambers where the priests who approach the LORD ^hshall eat the most holy offerings. There they shall lay the most holy offerings—ⁱthe grain offering, the sin offering, and the trespass offering—for the place *is* holy.¹⁴ ^jWhen the priests enter them, they shall not go out of the holy chamber into the outer court; but there they shall leave their garments in which they minister, for they *are* holy. They shall put on other garments; then they may approach *that* which *is* for the people.”

Outer Dimensions of the Temple

¹⁵ Now when he had finished measuring the inner ²temple, he brought me out through the gateway that faces toward the ^keast, and measured it all around.¹⁶ He measured the east side with the ³measuring rod, five hundred rods by the measuring rod all around.¹⁷ He measured the north side, five hundred rods by the measuring rod all around.¹⁸ He measured the south side, five hundred rods by the measuring rod.¹⁹ He came around to the west side *and* measured five hundred rods by the measuring rod.²⁰ He measured it on the four sides; ^lit had a wall all around, ^mfive hundred cubits long and five hundred wide, to separate the holy areas from the ⁴common.

The Temple, the LORD's Dwelling Place

43 Afterward he brought me to the gate, the gate ^athat faces toward the east.² ^bAnd behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east. ^cHis voice *was* like the sound of

42:1–14 To the north and south of the courtyard separating the temple and the western building (see 41:12–14) is a building for the priests 175 feet long and 87.5 feet wide, with three stories (see vv. 5, 6) and a door along the length facing the outer courtyard. The entrance has a walk 17.5 by 1.75 feet. Mainly the northern building is described, but apparently the southern building is the same or very similar. Parallel to the eastern wall (the width) and its door is a wall 87.5 feet long (vv. 7–9). These are places for certain priests (see “sons of Zadok” in 40:46) to eat and change clothes, indicating that the rooms also provide storage facilities for the holy food offerings and priestly garments. **42:15–20 measured it all around:** Ezekiel was taken through the eastern gates outside the entire temple and courtyard structure and

shown the size of the land area prescribed for the temple complex. Whether rods in v. 16 is correct or whether “cubits” is meant is debated by many scholars. Five-hundred rods square is 5,250 feet per side, nearly a mile, which to some seems too large. The cubit is the most frequent measure used to this point, but the rod has been introduced as the standard for measuring the temple (in 40:5 the rod is equated with six cubits). It makes sense that the larger unit should be employed for the greatest dimensions. The large bordering area around the temple complex might be there in order to set it apart and to stress the temple’s holiness (43:12).

43:2 came from . . . the east: In 11:23, God’s glory had left the temple and gone east over the Mount of Olives as His presence left

many waters; ^dand the earth shone with His glory. ³*It was* ^elike the appearance of the vision which I saw—like the vision which I saw when ¹I came ^fto destroy the city. The visions *were* like the vision which I saw ^gby the River Chebar; and I fell on my face. ⁴^hAnd the glory of the LORD came into the ²temple by way of the gate which faces toward the east. ⁵ⁱThe Spirit lifted me up and brought me into the inner court; and behold, ^jthe glory of the LORD filled the ³temple.

⁶Then I heard *Him* speaking to me from the temple, while ^ka man stood beside me. ⁷And He said to me, “Son of man, *this is* ^lthe place of My throne and ^mthe place of the soles of My feet, ⁿwhere I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel forever. ^oNo more shall the house of Israel defile My holy name, they nor their kings, by their ^pharlotry or with ^qthe carcasses of their kings on their high places. ⁸^qWhen they set their threshold by My threshold, and their doorpost by My doorpost, with a wall between them and Me, they defiled My holy name by the abominations which they committed; therefore I have consumed them in My anger. ⁹Now let them put their harlotry and the carcasses of their kings far away from Me, and I will dwell in their midst forever.

¹⁰“Son of man, ^rdescribe the ⁵temple to the house of Israel, that they may be ashamed of their iniquities; and let them measure the pattern. ¹¹And if they are ashamed of all that they have done, make

² ^d Ezek. 10:4; Rev. 18:1
³ ^e Ezek. 1:4-28
^f Jer. 1:10; Ezek. 9:1, 5; 32:18 ^g Ezek. 1:28; 3:23 ¹ Some Heb. mss., Vg. He
⁴ ^h Ezek. 10:19;
 11:23 ² Lit. house
⁵ ⁱ Ezek. 3:12, 14;
 8:3; 2 Cor. 12:2-4
^j Ezek. 40:34; 1 Kin. 8:10, 11 ³ Lit. house
⁶ ^k Ezek. 1:26; 40:3
⁷ ^l Ps. 99:1; Is. 60:13
^m 1 Chr. 28:2; Ps. 99:5 ⁿ Ex. 29:45;
 Ps. 68:16; 132:14;
 Ezek. 37:26-28; Joel 3:17; [John 1:14;
 2 Cor. 6:16] ^o Ezek. 39:7 ^p Lev. 26:30;
 Jer. 16:18; Ezek. 6:5, 13 ⁴ Unfaithful idolatry
⁸ ^q 2 Kin. 16:14;
 21:4, 5, 7; Ezek. 8:3;
 23:39; 44:7
¹⁰ ^r Ezek. 40:4 ⁵ Lit. house

¹¹ ⁵ Ezek. 44:5
¹ Ezek. 11:20
⁶ Lit. house
¹² ^u Ezek. 40:2 ⁷ Lit. house
¹³ ^v Ex. 27:1-8;
 2 Chr. 4:1 ^w Ezek. 41:8 ⁸ A royal cubit of about 21 inches
¹⁵ ^x Ex. 27:2; Lev. 9:9; 1 Kin. 1:50
⁹ Heb. *ariel*
¹⁶ ^y Ex. 27:1
¹⁷ ^z Ex. 20:26

known to them the design of the ⁶temple and its arrangement, its exits and its entrances, its entire design and all its ^sordinances, all its forms and all its laws. Write *it* down in their sight, so that they may keep its whole design and all its ordinances, and ^tperform them. ¹²This is the law of the ⁷temple: The whole area surrounding ^uthe mountaintop *is* most holy. Behold, *this is* the law of the temple.

Dimensions of the Altar

¹³“These are the measurements of the ^valtar in cubits ^w(the ⁸cubit is one cubit and a handbreadth): the base one cubit high and one cubit wide, with a rim all around its edge of one span. This *is* the height of the altar: ¹⁴from the base on the ground to the lower ledge, two cubits; the width of the ledge, one cubit; from the smaller ledge to the larger ledge, four cubits; and the width of the ledge, *one* cubit. ¹⁵The altar hearth *is* four cubits high, with four ^xhorns extending upward from the ⁹hearth. ¹⁶The altar hearth *is* twelve *cubits* long, twelve wide, ^ysquare at its four corners; ¹⁷the ledge, fourteen *cubits* long and fourteen wide on its four sides, with a rim of half a cubit around it; its base, one cubit all around; and ^zits steps face toward the east.”

Consecrating the Altar

¹⁸And He said to me, “Son of man, thus says the Lord God: ‘These *are* the

the city. Here His presence is pictured as returning to the city from the east. See 1:24; 10:4 (compare Rev. 1:5; 14:2; 19:6; 21:1, 23).

43:3 *I came* is “He came” in a few Hebrew manuscripts, referring to God’s judgment on Jerusalem.

43:7 This temple is God’s residence from which He will rule and reign over **the children of Israel forever** (see 37:26–28). The second half of this verse appears to predict an absolute end of the idolatrous and immoral practices of the **house of Israel**, which had taken place around the temple (see 2 Kin. 23:1–20). **their harlotry**: This is either an allusion to their spiritual adultery in general or, more specifically and literally, to their participation in the religious prostitution of Baal worship (see 16:15). **carcasses**: This is taken by some as a metaphor (“lifeless idols,” see Lev. 26:30) because of the context, but it could refer to memorial graves of kings buried near the temple mount (see 2 Kin. 23:30), perhaps near the royal houses just outside the southern wall (see v. 8; 1 Kin. 7:1–12). **high places**: This phrase came to refer to any place of idolatrous worship, whether on a hilltop or not.

43:10–12 God explains to Ezekiel the purpose of revealing the detailed description of the future **temple** (see 8, 9; 42:15–20; Lev. 20:7; Ps. 11:4; Is. 6:3).

43:13–17 The cubit described here is the long cubit—a **cubit and a handbreadth**, or 21 inches. The altar has a base 1.75 feet (21 inches) wide and high. A rim around the edge of the base is **one span**, or about 9 inches, wide. On top of the base is a lower section 3.5 feet high, having a 1.75-foot ledge. The distance between the smaller and larger ledges is 7 feet. The **altar hearth**, the top section of the altar where the sacrifice is offered, is 7 feet high. The **four horns** are on top of the corners (see 1 Kin. 1:50, 51). Overall the hearth is 21 feet square. Apparently the middle section is 24.5 feet square with a rim about 10.5 inches wide; and the lower section extends

3.5 feet beyond the middle one, 28 feet square (see vv. 14, 16, 17 where—assuming the symmetry of the altar—the middle section extends two cubits beyond the top). The height of the altar is therefore about 11 cubits or 19.25 feet. Assuming an 18 cubit square (see hearth and middle section in vv. 16–17) and one-cubit-high base, the foundation is 31.5 feet square. **Steps**, previously forbidden for an altar (Ex. 20:26), are necessary for this altar because of the great size of the structure. The huge altar is positioned in the center of the inner court in front of the temple entrance.

43:18, 19 These **ordinances** relate to the cleansing and consecration of the altar. See Ex. 29:36–37; Lev. 8:14–17 regarding the tabernacle altar and 2 Chr. 7:9 for the temple altar.

glory

(Heb. *kabod*) (43:2; Ex. 24:16; 1 Kin. 8:11) Strong’s #3519

This word is derived from a Hebrew verb which is used to describe the weight or worthiness of something. It can refer to something negative: For example, in reference to Sodom, it depicts the severe degree of sin that had reached the point of making that city worthy of complete destruction (Gen. 18:20). But usually the word is used to depict greatness and splendor (Gen. 31:1). The noun form is translated *honor* in some instances (1 Kin. 3:13). God’s glory is described in the OT as taking the form of a cloud (Ex. 24:15–18) and filling the temple (1 Kin. 8:11). The appropriate response to God’s glory is to reverence Him by bowing before Him, as Ezekiel did (3:23; 43:3).

ordinances for the altar on the day when it is made, for sacrificing ^aburnt offerings on it, and for ^bsprinkling blood on it. ¹⁹You shall give ^ca young bull for a sin offering to ^dthe priests, the Levites, who are of the seed of ^eZadok, who approach Me to minister to Me,' says the Lord God. ²⁰'You shall take some of its blood and put it on the four horns of the altar, on the four corners of the ledge, and on the rim around it; thus you shall cleanse it and make atonement for it. ²¹Then you shall also take the bull of the sin offering, and ^fburn it in the appointed place of the ¹temple, ^goutside the sanctuary. ²²On the second day you shall offer a kid of the goats without blemish for a sin offering; and they shall cleanse the altar, as they cleansed it with the bull. ²³When you have finished cleansing it, you shall offer a young bull without blemish, and a ram from the flock without blemish. ²⁴When you offer them before the LORD, ^hthe priests shall throw salt on them, and they will offer them up as a burnt offering to the LORD. ²⁵Every day for ⁱseven days you shall prepare a goat for a sin offering; they shall also prepare a young bull and a ram from the flock, both without blemish. ²⁶Seven days they shall make atonement for the altar and purify it, and so ²consecrate ³it. ²⁷^jWhen these days are over it shall be, on the eighth day and thereafter, that the priests shall offer your burnt offerings and your peace offerings on the altar; and I will ^kaccept you,' says the Lord God."

The East Gate and the Prince

44 Then He brought me back to the outer gate of the sanctuary ^awhich faces toward the east, but it was shut. ²And the LORD said to me, "This gate shall be shut; it shall not be opened, and no man shall enter by it, ^bbecause

18 ^a Ex. 40:29
 b Lev. 1:5, 11; [Heb. 9:21, 22]
 19 ^c Ex. 29:10; Lev. 8:14; Ezek. 45:18;
 19 ^d Ezek. 44:15, 16
 e ¹ Kin. 2:35; Ezek. 40:46
 21 ^f Ex. 29:14; Lev. 4:12 ^g Heb. 13:11
 i Lit. house
 24 ^h Lev. 2:13; Num. 18:19; [Mark 9:49, 50; Col. 4:6]
 25 ⁱ Ex. 29:35; Lev. 8:33
 26 ^j Lit. fill its hands ³ LXX, Syr. themselves
 27 ^k Lev. 9:1-4
 k Ezek. 20:40, 41; [Rom. 12:1; 1 Pet. 2:5]

CHAPTER 44

1 ^a Ezek. 43:1
 2 ^b Ezek. 43:2-4
 3 ^c Gen. 31:54; Ex. 24:9-11; [1 Cor. 10:18] ^d Ezek. 46:2, 8
 4 ^e Is. 6:3; Ezek. 3:23; 43:5 ^f Ezek. 1:28; 43:3 ^g Lit. house
 5 ^g Deut. 32:46; Ezek. 40:4 ^h Deut. 12:32; Ezek. 43:10, 11
 6 ⁱ Lit. set your heart
 6 ^j Ezek. 2:5 ^k Ezek. 45:9; 1 Pet. 4:3
 7 ^k Ezek. 43:8; Acts 21:28 ^l Lev. 22:25
 m Lev. 26:41; Deut. 10:16; Jer. 4:4; 9:26; [Acts 7:51] ⁿ Lev. 21:17 ^o Lev. 3:16
 8 ^p Lev. 22:2; Num. 18:7
 9 ^q Ezek. 44:7; Joel 3:17; Zech. 14:21
 10 ^r 2 Kin. 23:8; Ezek. 48:11
 11 ^s 1 Chr. 26:1-19

the LORD God of Israel has entered by it; therefore it shall be shut. ³As for the ^cprince, *because he is the prince*, he may sit in it to ^deat bread before the LORD; he shall enter by way of the vestibule of the gateway, and go out the same way."

Those Admitted to the Temple

⁴Also He brought me by way of the north gate to the front of the ¹temple; so I looked, and ^ebehold, the glory of the LORD filled the house of the LORD; ^fand I fell on my face. ⁵And the LORD said to me, ^g"Son of man, ²mark well, see with your eyes and hear with your ears, all that I say to you concerning all the ^hordinances of the house of the LORD and all its laws. Mark well who may enter the house and all who go out from the sanctuary.

⁶"Now say to the ⁱrebellious, to the house of Israel, 'Thus says the Lord God: "O house of Israel, ^jlet Us have no more of all your abominations. ⁷^kWhen you brought in ^lforeigners, ^muncircumcised in heart and uncircumcised in flesh, to be in My sanctuary to defile it—My house—and when you offered ⁿMy food, ^othe fat and the blood, then they broke My covenant because of all your abominations. ⁸And you have not ^pkept charge of My holy things, but you have set ^{others} to keep charge of My sanctuary for you." ⁹Thus says the Lord God: ^q"No foreigner, uncircumcised in heart or uncircumcised in flesh, shall enter My sanctuary, including any foreigner who is among the children of Israel.

Laws Governing Priests

¹⁰^r"And the Levites who went far from Me, when Israel went astray, who strayed away from Me after their idols, they shall bear their iniquity. ¹¹Yet they shall be ministers in My sanctuary, ^sas gatekeepers of the house and ministers of the

43:20–23 Atonement and sin offering suggest purification and cleansing from sin. Because of the sinlessness—**without blemish**—of the sacrifice, the people for whom the sacrifice is made are declared acceptable before God (v. 27; Ex. 29:14, 16, 36, 37; Lev. 3:4; 12, 21; 5:9; 8:14–17; Heb. 13:10–13).

44:1–3 The **outer gate of the sanctuary** is the eastern gate of the outer court (see 40:6–16; 43:1) which must remain **shut**. The eastern gate known today as the "Golden Gate" dates from several centuries after Christ. It is walled shut today in accordance with an Islamic tradition. **the prince**: The identity of this prince is unknown. The Hebrew term does not always mean a king or a member of royalty (see Gen. 23:6). It is not the Messiah, since 45:22 indicates that this leader must make a sin offering for himself. He may be one of the Zadokite priests (see vv. 15, 16).

44:4–9 Ezekiel experiences another awe-inspiring vision of God's glory leading him to bow in worship (see 1:28–21). God demands that His renewed people follow His regulations exactly. He emphasizes the necessity of holiness and righteousness, especially in light of Israel's past **abominations** related to rules regulating

who was to enter the temple **sanctuary**. Specifically, they had allowed **foreigners** without evidence of faithfulness to God to serve in the sanctuary (see Josh. 9:23–27; Ezra 8:20): these people were **uncircumcised in heart and uncircumcised in flesh**. This was in disobedience to God's commands (see Ex. 19:8; Lev. 26:41; Num. 3:10; Deut. 10:16; 30:6; Neh. 13:8; Jer. 4:4; 9:25), but was in conformity with the practices of foreign pagan religions, which God's people had been forbidden to imitate (see Ex. 34:12; Deut. 18:9; compare Rom. 12:1, 2).

44:10 See Lev. 21; 22 for a description of the duties of the **Levites**. Unfortunately, during the history of Israel, Levites had not obeyed the commands Moses had given them and had even encouraged idolatry (compare ch. 8; 14:1–11; Deut. 33:8–11; Judg. 17–19).

44:11–14 God explains to Ezekiel why the Levites would be limited to certain types of temple ministry. The Levites (with the exception of the sons of Zadok, see v. 15) could not be priests but could be **ministers** (servants or attendants). They could not serve in the inner court or temple, where the **holy things** are located; but they could oversee the general operation of the temple complex.

house; ^tthey shall slay the burnt offering and the sacrifice for the people, and ^uthey shall stand before them to minister to them. ¹²Because they ministered to them before their idols and ^vcaused ³the house of Israel to fall into iniquity, therefore I have ^wraised My hand in an oath against them,” says the Lord God, “that they shall bear their iniquity. ¹³^x And they shall not come near Me to minister to Me as priest, nor come near any of My holy things, nor into the Most Holy Place; but they shall ^ybear their shame and their abominations which they have committed. ¹⁴Nevertheless I will make them ^zkeep charge of the temple, for all its work, and for all that has to be done in it.

¹⁵^a “But the priests, the Levites, ^bthe sons of Zadok, who kept charge of My sanctuary ^cwhen the children of Israel went astray from Me, they shall come near Me to minister to Me; and they ^dshall stand before Me to offer to Me the ^efat and the blood,” says the Lord God. ¹⁶“They shall ^fenter My sanctuary, and they shall come near ^gMy table to minister to Me, and they shall keep My charge. ¹⁷And it shall be, whenever they enter the gates of the inner court, that ^hthey shall put on linen garments; no wool shall come upon them while they minister within the gates of the inner court or within the house. ¹⁸ⁱ They shall have linen turbans on their heads and linen trousers on their bodies; they shall not clothe themselves with *anything that causes sweat*. ¹⁹When they go out to the

11 ^t 2 Chr. 29:34; 30:17 ^u Num. 16:9
12 ^v vs. 9:16; Mal. 2:8
^w Ps. 106:26 ³ Lit. *became a stumbling block of iniquity to the house of Israel*
13 ^x Num. 18:3; 2 Kin. 23:9 ^y Ezek. 32:30
14 ^z Num. 18:4; 1 Chr. 23:28–32; Ezek. 44:11
15 ^a Ezek. 40:46
^b [1 Sam. 2:35]; 2 Sam. 15:27; Ezek. 43:19; 48:11 ^c Ezek. 44:10 ^d Deut. 10:8
^e Lev. 3:16, 17; 17:5; 6; Ezek. 44:7
16 ^f Num. 18:5, 7, 8
^g Ezek. 41:22; Mal. 1:7, 12
17 ^h Ex. 28:39–43; 39:27–29; Rev. 19:8
18 ⁱ Ex. 28:40; 39:28; Is. 3:20; Ezek. 24:17, 23
19 ^j Lev. 6:10; 16:4, 23, 24; Ezek. 42:14
^k Ex. 30:29; Lev. 6:27; Ezek. 46:20; [Matt. 23:17]
20 ^l Lev. 21:5
^m Num. 6:5
21 ⁿ Lev. 10:9
22 ^o Lev. 21:7, 13, 14
23 ^p Lev. 10:10, 11; Ezek. 22:26; Hos. 4:6; Mic. 3:9–11; Zeph. 3:4; Hag. 2:11–13; Mal. 2:6–8
^q Lev. 20:25
24 ^r Deut. 17:8, 9; 1 Chr. 23:4; 2 Chr. 19:8–10 ^s Ezek. 22:26
26 ^t Num. 6:10; 19:11, 13–19

outer court, to the outer court to the people, ^jthey shall take off their garments in which they have ministered, leave them in the holy chambers, and put on other garments; and in their holy garments they shall ^knot sanctify the people.

²⁰^l “They shall neither shave their heads nor let their hair grow ^mlong, but they shall keep their hair well trimmed. ²¹ⁿ No priest shall drink wine when he enters the inner court. ²²They shall not take as wife a ^owidow or a divorced woman, but take virgins of the descendants of the house of Israel, or widows of priests.

²³“And ^pthey shall teach My people *the difference* between the holy and the unholy, and cause them to ^qdiscern between the unclean and the clean. ²⁴^r In controversy they shall stand as judges, and judge it according to My judgments. They shall keep My laws and My statutes in all My appointed meetings, ^sand they shall hallow My Sabbaths.

²⁵“They shall not defile *themselves* by coming near a dead person. Only for father or mother, for son or daughter, for brother or unmarried sister may they defile themselves. ²⁶^t After he is cleansed, they shall count seven days for him. ²⁷And on the day that he goes to the sanctuary to minister in the sanctuary, ^uhe must offer his sin offering ^vin the inner court,” says the Lord God.

²⁸“It shall be, in regard to their

27 ^v Lev. 5:3, 6; Num. 6:9–11 ^v Ezek. 44:17

44:15, 16 The **Levites, the sons of Zadok** were descendants of the priest Zadok in the Levitical line who remained faithful when others did not (see 1 Sam. 2:27–36; 2 Sam. 8:17; 15:24–29; 1 Kin. 2:26–35; 1 Chr. 6:7, 8, 50–53). While salvation is never earned (Rom. 3; 4; Gal. 2; 3; Eph. 2:8, 9), God does reward faithfulness and righteousness. Here He rewarded His faithful priests and Levites with the opportunity to minister before Him. Responsibility and recognition have to be deserved, but never demanded (see 1 Sam. 26:23; Matt. 5:12; 25:21–23; Rev. 2:10). Again there is an emphasis on holiness and righteousness. The Zadokites were honored for their special obedience. The **table** is not identified, but could be similar to the wooden altar of 41:22.

44:17–19 These verses speak of holiness as **linen garments** (see 42:14; Ex. 28:42; 29:37; 30:29; Lev. 6:11, 27; 16:4; 21:10; Hag. 2:12). Common things were to be kept distinct from what was consecrated.

44:20–22 These verses speak of holiness in conduct. These regulations continued practices already prescribed in the Law of Moses (Lev. 10:6, 9; 21:1–6, 7, 10, 14). Their aim was to help the priests avoid conformity to the immoral and idolatrous religious rituals and conduct among the pagan nations. The **priests**, then and in the future, have the responsibility of modeling and maintaining the highest standards of morality, self-control, self-denial, discipline, and obedience to God's will. In Israelite culture, shaving the head indicated mourning (see 7:16–19), and growing long hair could mean the taking of a special vow (sometimes connected with complete or controlled abstinence from wine; see Num. 6:3, 4). The point is the priests' clear separation from the rest of society.

44:23, 24 **they shall teach My people:** The priests were to demonstrate verbally and visually before the people how to dis-

tinguish between what is godly and ungodly. They also served as judges in disputes and debates (see 22:26; Lev. 10:10, 11; 11:47; Deut. 17:9; 19:7; 21:5; 33:10).

44:25–27 This section deals with holiness regarding death among the people (Lev. 21:1–3; Num. 19:11–19; Hag. 2:13). Contact with a dead body was forbidden; however, a partial exception was made for immediate family members. The act still defiled the person, causing ceremonial uncleanness for a certain time. God's concern over purity in practice and procedures is seen in that the priest was to submit to a cleansing ritual and then personally present a sin offering. He was to publicly declare and deal with his own uncleanness, although what he had done was not forbidden. The circumstances that allowed touching a dead body did not overturn its consequences according to the Law. God was preserving the sanctity of His temple and statutes.

44:28–31 These verses explain holiness in the priests' provisions (see Lev. 17:5; 22:8; Num. 18:10–13, 20, 23, 24; Deut. 10:9; 14:21; Mal. 3:8–12). **I am their possession:** God was to be the priests' possession in all respects; they were not to inherit land or cities. The **dedicated thing** (see Lev. 27:21, 28; Num. 18:14; Judg. 11:29–40) was something wholly and irrevocably devoted to God as a sacrificial gift. The giver would be blessed in giving (see also Acts 20:35). God's laws are governed by His love and goodness, and they are given as guides to holy and healthy living (see John 10:10). God is truthful and trustworthy; His codes of conduct are blessings, not burdens (see Matt. 11:28–30). They can be followed with confidence because of His revealed character, even though all the specific reasons for His rules are not spelled out.

inheritance, *that I w am* their inheritance. You shall give them no ^xpossession in Israel, for I *am* their possession. ^{29y}They shall eat the grain offering, the sin offering, and the trespass offering; ^zevery dedicated thing in Israel shall be theirs. ³⁰The ^abest⁴ of all firstfruits of any kind, and every sacrifice of any kind from all your sacrifices, shall be the priest's; also you ^bshall give to the priest the first of your ground meal, ^cto cause a blessing to rest on your house. ³¹The priests shall not eat anything, bird or beast, that ^ddied naturally or was torn *by wild beasts*.

The Holy District

45 “Moreover, when you ^adivide the land by lot into inheritance, you shall ^bset apart a district for the LORD, a holy section of the land; its length *shall be* twenty-five thousand *cubits*, and the width ten thousand. It *shall be* holy throughout its territory all around. ²Of this there shall be a square plot for the sanctuary, ^cfive hundred by five hundred *rods*, with fifty cubits around it for an open space. ³So this is the district you shall measure: twenty-five thousand *cubits* long and ten thousand wide; ^din it shall be the sanctuary, the Most Holy Place. ⁴It shall be ^ea holy *section* of the land, belonging to the priests, the ministers of the sanctuary, who come near to minister to the LORD; it shall be a place for their houses and a holy place for the sanctuary. ^{5f}*An area* twenty-five thousand *cubits* long and ten thousand wide shall belong to the Levites, the ministers of the ¹temple; they shall have ^gtwenty² chambers as a possession.

Properties of the City and the Prince

^{6h}“You shall appoint as the property of

^{28 w} Num. 18:20; Deut. 10:9; 18:1; 2; Josh. 13:14, 33
^x Ezek. 45:4
^{29 y} Lev. 7:6 ^z Lev. 27:21, 28; Num. 18:14
^{30 a} Ex. 13:2; 22:29; 23:19; Num. 3:13; 18:12 ^b Num. 15:20; Neh. 10:37 ^c Prov. 3:9; [Mal. 3:10]
⁴ Lit. *first*
^{31 d} Ex. 22:31; Lev. 22:8; Deut. 14:21; Ezek. 4:14

CHAPTER 45

^{1 a} Num. 26:52–56; Ezek. 47:22 ^b Ezek. 48:8, 9
^{2 c} Ezek. 42:20
^{3 d} Ezek. 48:10
^{4 e} Ezek. 48:10, 11
^{5 f} Ezek. 48:13
^{6 g} Ezek. 40:17 ¹ Lit. *house* ² So with MT, Tg., Vg.; LXX *a possession, cities of dwelling*
^{6 h} Ezek. 48:15

^{7 i} Ezek. 48:21
^{8 j} [Is. 11:3–5]; Jer. 22:17; Ezek. 22:27
^{9 k} Ezek. 44:6 ¹ Jer. 22:3; Zech. 8:16
^{10 m} Lev. 19:36; Deut. 25:15; Prov. 16:11; Amos 8:4–6; Mic. 6:10, 11
^{12 n} Ex. 30:13; Lev. 27:25; Num. 3:47

the city *an area* five thousand *cubits* wide and twenty-five thousand long, adjacent to the district of the holy *section*; it shall belong to the whole house of Israel.

⁷ⁱ“The prince shall have *a section* on one side and the other of the holy district and the city's property; and bordering on the holy district and the city's property, extending westward on the west side and eastward on the east side, the length *shall be* side by side with one of the *tribal* portions, from the west border to the east border. ⁸The land shall be his possession in Israel; and ^jMy princes shall no more oppress My people, but they shall give *the rest of the land* to the house of Israel, according to their tribes.”

Laws Governing the Prince

⁹“Thus says the Lord God: ^k“Enough, O princes of Israel! ^lRemove violence and plundering, execute justice and righteousness, and stop dispossessing My people,” says the Lord God. ¹⁰“You shall have ^mhonest scales, an honest ephah, and an honest bath. ¹¹The ephah and the bath shall be of the same measure, so that the bath contains one-tenth of a homer, and the ephah one-tenth of a homer; their measure shall be according to the homer. ¹²The ⁿshekel *shall be* twenty *gerahs*; twenty shekels, twenty-five shekels, and fifteen shekels shall be your mina.

¹³“This *is* the offering which you shall offer: you shall give one-sixth of an ephah from a homer of wheat, and one-sixth of an ephah from a homer of barley. ¹⁴The ordinance concerning oil, the bath of oil, *is* one-tenth of a bath from a kor. A *kor is* a homer or ten baths, for ten baths *are* a homer. ¹⁵And one lamb shall be given from a flock of two hundred, from the rich pastures of Israel. These shall

45:1–5 A distinct—**set apart, holy**—section was to be allocated for God. This area would be divided into two equal sections. One would be the portion for the Zadokites—**priests, the ministers of the sanctuary**. In the center of this part of the holy district is the holy square-mile environs for the temple—the **sanctuary, the Most Holy Place**. The other half of the holy district would be the portion given to the Levites. All this is holy; God owns it. The **twenty chambers** is read “towns to live in” in the Septuagint.

45:6 The **city** is not named, but Jerusalem is most likely. Its allotted property is 25,000 by 5,000 cubits. This area is located **adjacent** to and south of (according to 48:18) the Zadokite district—the **holy section**. See 48:15–19, 30–35.

45:7, 8 The identity of the **prince** is unknown (see 44:3). But his allotted area is on both sides (east and west) of the **holy district**. He will own this land bordering a tribal territory to the north and south, where the **west** and **east border** suggest respectively the Mediterranean Sea and the Dead Sea or Jordan River. The prince and God's **princes** of messianic period—in contrast to previous leaders of Israel (see 11:1–13; 14:1–11, 20–22; 34:1–10)—will not be greedy for riches and real estate but will give the land that remains to the people (see 48:1–29; contrast the descriptions of the evil behavior

of the rulers of Israel in 1 Sam. 8:10–18; 1 Kin. 20; 21; Is. 3:13–23; Mic. 3:1–4; 7:3; Zeph. 3:3).

45:10, 11 The merchants were exhorted to use accurate measures of the **ephah** (estimated to be around a bushel) and the **bath** (from six to nine gallons), both defined as **one-tenth of a homer** (five to ten bushels or 60 to 90 gallons). Merchants must not cheat anymore when weighing produce (see Lev. 19:35, 36; Amos 8:5; Mic. 6:10–12). God called for an end to dishonesty and deceit; a time is coming when all such scheming will end (vv. 16, 17; see 37:15–28).

45:12 Ezekiel also demanded fair weights. The **shekel** weighed about 11.5 grams or four-tenths of an ounce. In Babylon, 24 **gerahs** made one shekel while Ezekiel sets the standard at 20; but 60 shekels made one **mina**, which conforms to the standard prescribed in this verse. In Ezekiel's system this mina is thought to weigh about 1.5 pounds.

45:13–17 These verses describe an **offering** to be given to the prince (v. 7) who, unlike previous rulers, will be just and truthful (see v. 8). The prince, in turn, will make offerings to God in order to **make atonement for the house of Israel** (v. 17), symbolizing cleansing from sin (see 40:38–43). Instructions regarding the temple sacrifices can be found in Ex. 25:2–7; 30:13–15; 35:4–29; 36:2–7;

be for grain offerings, burnt offerings, and peace offerings, ^o to make atonement for them,” says the Lord God. ¹⁶ “All the people of the land shall give this offering for the prince in Israel. ¹⁷ Then it shall be the ^p prince’s part to give burnt offerings, grain offerings, and drink offerings, at the feasts, the New Moons, the Sabbaths, and at all the appointed seasons of the house of Israel. He shall prepare the sin offering, the grain offering, the burnt offering, and the peace offerings to make atonement for the house of Israel.”

Keeping the Feasts

¹⁸ “Thus says the Lord God: “In the first month, on the first day of the month, you shall take a young bull without blemish and ^q cleanse the sanctuary. ¹⁹ “The priest shall take some of the blood of the sin offering and put it on the doorposts of the ³ temple, on the four corners of the ledge of the altar, and on the gateposts of the gate of the inner court. ²⁰ And so you shall do on the seventh day of the month ^s for everyone who has sinned unintentionally or in ignorance. Thus you shall make atonement for the temple.

²¹ “In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, you shall observe the Passover, a feast of seven days; unleavened bread shall be eaten. ²² And on that day the prince shall prepare for himself and for all the people of the land ^u a bull for a sin offering. ²³ On the ^v seven days of the feast he shall prepare a burnt offering to the LORD, seven bulls and seven rams without blemish, daily for seven days, ^w and a kid of the goats daily for a sin offering. ²⁴ ^x And he shall prepare a grain offering of one ephah for each bull and one ephah for each ram, together with a hin of oil for each ephah.

²⁵ “In the seventh month, on the fifteenth day of the month, at the ^y feast, he shall do likewise for seven days, according to the sin offering, the burnt offering, the grain offering, and the oil.”

¹⁵ ^o Lev. 1:4; 6:30
¹⁷ ^p Ezek. 46:4-12
¹⁸ ^q Lev. 16:16, 33; Ezek. 43:22, 26
¹⁹ ^r Lev. 16:18-20; Ezek. 43:20 ³ Lit. house
²⁰ ^s Lev. 4:27; Ps. 19:12
²¹ ^t Ex. 12:18; Lev. 23:5, 6; Num. 9:2, 3; 28:16, 17; Deut. 16:1
²² ^u Lev. 4:14
²³ ^v Lev. 23:8
²⁴ ^w Num. 28:15, 22, 30; 29:5, 11, 16, 19
²⁵ ^x Num. 28:12-15; Ezek. 46:5, 7
²⁵ ^y Lev. 23:34; Num. 29:12; Deut. 16:13; 2 Chr. 5:3; 7:8, 10

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¹ ^o Ex. 20:9
² ^p Ezek. 44:3
⁴ ^q Ezek. 45:17
⁴ ^r Num. 28:9, 10
⁵ ^s Num. 28:12; Ezek. 45:24; 46:7
¹¹ ^t Lit. the gift of his hand
⁷ ² Lit. as much as his hand can reach
⁸ ^t Ezek. 44:3; 46:2
⁹ ^u Ex. 23:14-17; 34:23; Deut. 16:16, 17; Ps. 84:7; Mic. 6:6
^h Ezek. 48:31, 33

The Manner of Worship

46 “Thus says the Lord God: “The gateway of the inner court that faces toward the east shall be shut the six ^a working days; but on the Sabbath it shall be opened, and on the day of the New Moon it shall be opened. ² ^b The prince shall enter by way of the vestibule of the gateway from the outside, and stand by the gatepost. The priests shall prepare his burnt offering and his peace offerings. He shall worship at the threshold of the gate. Then he shall go out, but the gate shall not be shut until evening. ³ Likewise the people of the land shall worship at the entrance to this gateway before the LORD on the Sabbaths and the New Moons. ⁴ The burnt offering that ^c the prince offers to the LORD on the ^d Sabbath day shall be six lambs without blemish, and a ram without blemish; ⁵ ^e and the grain offering shall be one ephah for a ram, and the grain offering for the lambs, ^f as much as he wants to give, as well as a hin of oil with every ephah. ⁶ On the day of the New Moon it shall be a young bull without blemish, six lambs, and a ram; they shall be without blemish. ⁷ He shall prepare a grain offering of an ephah for a bull, an ephah for a ram, ² as much as he wants to give for the lambs, and a hin of oil with every ephah. ⁸ When the prince enters, he shall go in by way of the vestibule of the gateway, and go out the same way.

⁹ “But when the people of the land ^g come before the LORD on the appointed feast days, whoever enters by way of the north ^h gate to worship shall go out by way of the south gate; and whoever enters by way of the south gate shall go out by way of the north gate. He shall not return by way of the gate through which he came, but shall go out through the opposite gate. ¹⁰ The prince shall then be in their midst. When they go in, he shall go in; and when they go out, he shall go out. ¹¹ At the festivals and the appointed feast

Lev. 1:4; 9:7; 10:17. The Law of Moses also included extended instructions on **feasts** (see Lev. 23:1–44; Num. 28; 29).

45:18–20 This is an annual day of purifying the temple sanctuary. In the light of Jesus’ death on the cross, the actions of the prince symbolize and emphasize that God has made atonement for all through the sacrifice of the Messiah (see vv. 15–17; 18–22). The forgiveness of individual sins is illustrated through daily sin offerings (vv. 23–25). The pronoun *you* in **you shall take** and **you shall do** is singular, while the pronoun in **you shall make atonement** is plural. The prince represents the people in these actions of worship (see Lev. 16:15–17, 33, 34; 22:19–21; 2 Chr. 7:1–7; 29:20–24.) The way the **day** is specified suggests an act to be performed annually.

45:21–25 In this passage the feasts of **Passover** and **Tabernacles** are observed (see Ex. 12:1–14; Lev. 23:5–8, 33–43; Num. 28:16–25; 29:12–38). The dates are in relation to the Levitical calendar, the Jew-

ish religious year. The procedures as well as very similar to those of the Mosaic system. These feasts commemorate God’s faithfulness to His promises.

46:1–8 The prince shall enter: What the rituals signified under the Law was fulfilled by the Messiah. At the time of this prince, certain promises were being fulfilled and the covenants consummated in the messianic age (see 40:6–16, 28–37; 43:18–27; 44:1, 2; Ex. 20:8–11). **hin:** This was a liquid measure about one-sixth of a bath, approximately one gallon (see 4:11; Ex. 30:24; Lev. 19:36).

46:9 the people of the land: This phrase describes the citizens of the Promised Land during this messianic period (see v. 3; 12:18, 19; 22:29; 39:13; 45:16, 22). The prescribed protocol was probably to ensure an orderly procession and service. Such regulations would be needed on the special feast days due to the participation of large numbers of people.

days ⁱ the grain offering shall be an ephah for a bull, an ephah for a ram, as much as he wants to give for the lambs, and a hin of oil with every ephah.

¹² “Now when the prince makes a voluntary burnt offering or voluntary peace offering to the LORD, the gate that faces toward the east ^j shall then be opened for him; and he shall prepare his burnt offering and his peace offerings as he did on the Sabbath day. Then he shall go out, and after he goes out the gate shall be shut.

¹³ ^k “You shall daily make a burnt offering to the LORD of a lamb of the first year without blemish; you shall prepare it ³ every morning. ¹⁴ And you shall prepare a grain offering with it every morning, a sixth of an ephah, and a third of a hin of oil to moisten the fine flour. This grain offering is a perpetual ordinance, to be made regularly to the LORD. ¹⁵ Thus they

11 ⁱ Ezek. 46:5, 7
12 ^j Ezek. 44:3;
46:1, 2, 8
13 ^k Ex. 29:38;
Num. 28:3-5
³ Lit. morning by morning

15 ⁱ Ex. 29:42; Num.
28:6
17 ^m Lev. 25:10
18 ⁿ Ezek. 45:8

shall prepare the lamb, the grain offering, and the oil, as a ^l regular burnt offering every morning.”

The Prince and Inheritance Laws

¹⁶ “Thus says the Lord God: “If the prince gives a gift of *some* of his inheritance to any of his sons, it shall belong to his sons; it is their possession by inheritance. ¹⁷ But if he gives a gift of some of his inheritance to one of his servants, it shall be his until ^m the year of liberty, after which it shall return to the prince. But his inheritance shall belong to his sons; it shall become theirs. ¹⁸ Moreover ⁿ the prince shall not take any of the people’s inheritance by evicting them from their property; he shall provide an inheritance for his sons from his own property, so that none of My people may be scattered from his property.””

46:12 The preparation and presentation of this offering is the one exception to 44:1–3 (see vv. 1, 2). The **voluntary** or freewill offering was given beyond what was required (see Lev. 22:17–30).

46:13 shall daily make: This is a change from the provisions in the Law (see Num. 28:3–8; 2 Kin. 16:15).

46:14 perpetual ordinance: This is a change from the provisions in the Law (see Num. 28:5). God’s people cannot be reminded too often of God’s provisions for them; nor can they thank Him too much or too frequently.

46:16–18 The language of this passage speaks clearly and concretely about descendants, servants, and property, so a spiritual or allegorical meaning for this passage is difficult to defend (see 44:3). Likewise, the **prince** has sons and servants, so he cannot be the Messiah. Inheritance laws and family claims related to property continue as an important feature of life in Israel (see Lev. 25:8–15, 23–34; 27:24; Num. 27:1–11; 33:54; 34:18; Josh. 14–21; Mic. 2:1, 2). Again, the prince’s character is described in sharp contrast to many of Israel’s previous leaders (34:1–10).

Holy Places, Holy People



For many people, the word holy brings to mind special places such as cathedrals and temples. It would be easy to limit our concept of holiness to such concrete examples, especially when we see so many such cases in the Old Testament. Certain monuments, the tabernacle, the temple, and even certain mountains, along with some of the leaders, the priests, and the prophets were designated as “holy,” consecrated, or set apart to the Lord.

This pattern was continued in Ezekiel’s vision of the new temple, access to which was to be highly restricted (44:1–19). Likewise, a certain “holy district” was to be established in the restored land (45:1–5).

So holiness was attached to certain places, but we shouldn’t forget that the call to holy living is not confined to one place or another. All of life is to be holy, no matter where one is. Ezekiel pinpoints some very practical and even mundane dimensions of holiness:

- Stop the use of violence and oppression (45:9).
- Cease the pattern of evicting people (45:9).
- Restore honest dealing in business, using standards of value that have integrity and can be trusted (45:10–12).
- Donate a percentage of each business transaction to God, whether one is a prince or one of the common people (45:13–17).
- Mark all of life with monthly festivals and celebrations that include everyone (45:18–25).
- Restore the six-day work week, and protect the Sabbath rest, with the prince providing substantially for this observance (46:1–15).
- Follow careful guidelines in the matter of inheritances and boundaries, maintaining fair treatment of aliens and strangers (46:16–18; 47:13–23).
- Provide an area for the common people, for homes and common space (48:15–20).
- Name each of the commercial centers—the exits or gates of the city—after a portion of the citizenry (tribes) (48:30–35).
- Name the city itself “THE LORD IS THERE,” reflecting a very inclusive view of holiness: everything that goes on there pertains to the Lord (48:35).

All of life is to be holy. One might be more reverent in certain settings and on certain occasions, but one is made neither more nor less holy by entering or exiting a particular place. Christ has already invited us into the most holy place there is, so that we will live as His holy people in everything we do (Heb. 9:11–15; 10:19–25).

How the Offerings Were Prepared

¹⁹ Now he brought me through the entrance, which was at the side of the gate, into the holy ^ochambers of the priests which face toward the north; and there a place was situated at their extreme western end. ²⁰ And he said to me, “This is the place where the priests shall ^pboil the trespass offering and the sin offering, and where they shall ^qbake the grain offering, so that they do not bring *them* out into the outer court ^rto sanctify the people.”

²¹ Then he brought me out into the outer court and caused me to pass by the four corners of the court; and in fact, in every corner of the court *there was another* court. ²² In the four corners of the court were enclosed courts, forty cubits long and thirty wide; all four corners were the same size. ²³ There was a row of building stones all around in them, all around the four of them; and ⁴cooking hearths were made under the rows of stones all around. ²⁴ And he said to me, “These are the ⁵kitchens where the ministers of the ⁶temple shall ^sboil the sacrifices of the people.”

The Healing Waters and Trees

47 Then he brought me back to the door of the ¹temple; and there was ^awater, flowing from under the threshold of the temple toward the east, for the front of the temple faced east; the water was flowing from under the right side of the temple, south of the altar. ² He brought me out by way of the north gate, and led me around on the outside to the outer gateway that faces ^beast; and there was water, running out on the right side.

³ And when ^cthe man went out to the east with the line in his hand, he measured one thousand cubits, and he brought me through the waters; the water *came up to my ankles*. ⁴ Again he measured one thou-

¹⁹ ^o Ezek. 42:13

²⁰ ^p 2 Chr. 35:13

^q Lev. 2:4, 5, 7

^r Ezek. 44:19

²³ ⁴ Lit. boiling

places

²⁴ ⁵ Ezek. 46:20

⁵ Lit. house of those

who boil ⁶ Lit.

house

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¹ ^d Ps. 46:4; Is.

30:25; 55:1; [Jer.

2:13]; Joel 3:18;

Zech. 13:1; 14:8;

[Rev. 22:1, 17] ¹ Lit.

house

² ^b Ezek. 44:1, 2

³ ^c Ezek. 40:3

⁷ ^d [Is. 60:13, 21;

61:3; Ezek. 47:12;

Rev. 22:2]

⁸ ² Or Arabah, the

Jordan Valley

⁹ ³ Lit. two rivers

¹⁰ ^e Num. 34:3;

Josh. 23:4; Ezek.

48:28

¹² ^f Ezek. 47:7; [Rev.

22:2] ^g Job 18:16;

[Ps. 1:3; Jer. 17:8]

^h [Rev. 22:2] ⁴ Or

healing

¹³ ⁱ Num. 34:1-29

/ Gen. 48:5; 1 Chr.

5:1; Ezek. 48:4, 5

sand and brought me through the waters; the water *came up to my knees*. Again he measured one thousand and brought me through; the water *came up to my waist*. ⁵ Again he measured one thousand, and *it was* a river that I could not cross; for the water was too deep, water in which one must swim, a river that could not be crossed. ⁶ He said to me, “Son of man, have you seen *this*?” Then he brought me and returned me to the bank of the river.

⁷ When I returned, there, along the bank of the river, *were* very many ^dtrees on one side and the other. ⁸ Then he said to me: “This water flows toward the eastern region, goes down into the ²valley, and enters the sea. *When it reaches the sea, its waters are healed*. ⁹ And it shall be *that every living thing that moves, wherever* ³the rivers go, will live. There will be a very great multitude of fish, because these waters go there; for they will be healed, and everything will live wherever the river goes. ¹⁰ It shall be *that* fishermen will stand by it from En Gedi to En Eglaim; they will be *places* for spreading their nets. Their fish will be of the same kinds as the fish ^eof the Great Sea, exceedingly many. ¹¹ But its swamps and marshes will not be healed; they will be given over to salt. ¹² *Along the bank of the river, on this side and that, will grow all kinds of trees used for food; their leaves will not wither, and their fruit will not fail. They will bear fruit every month, because their water flows from the sanctuary. Their fruit will be for food, and their leaves for* ^hmedicine.”⁴

Borders of the Land

¹³ Thus says the Lord God: “These are the ⁱborders by which you shall divide the land as an inheritance among the twelve tribes of Israel. ^jJoseph shall have two portions. ¹⁴ You shall inherit it

46:19, 20 The setting is one of the two buildings for the priests on the western end of the temple complex (see 42:1–14). The **place** is something like a kitchen.

46:21–24 The setting switches to the **outer court** (see 40:17–19), where each of the four corners has an enclosed kitchen court. These kitchens are distinguished from those for the priests (see vv. 19, 20); these belong to the Levites: **ministers of the temple**, see 44:11–14.

47:1 He is the “man” of v. 3 (see 40:3; 46:19).

47:3–5 One thousand cubits is approximately 1,750 feet (see 40:3–5). Four times the man uses the measuring **line** to mark off this distance across the stream, which progressively gets deeper from ankle depth, to knees, to waist, and finally too deep and wide to cross except by swimming. The water flows eastward from the south side of the temple.

47:7–12 The water becomes a river of healing and the source of abundant life for everything and everyone (see Gen. 2:8–10; Zech. 14:8; John 4:13, 14; 10:10; Rev. 22:1, 2). It continues flowing southeast through the dry, rocky region between Jerusalem and the Dead Sea—that is, the Arabah or **eastern region**—and south along the

Jordan valley and the Jordan Rift, as far as to the Dead Sea. When it **reaches the sea** (the Dead Sea), the salty sea becomes fresh and able to sustain life so that fishermen can fish there: **its waters are healed**. This is an amazing picture—the Dead Sea is the saltiest body of water (approximately 25 percent saline content) and is presently unable to support life. It is also the lowest point on earth, with its surface 1,300 feet below sea level and the water itself 1,300 feet deep. The living water that God will provide has immeasurable power to renew, restore, and resurrect life. This sea which is dead will teem with life all along its shores—from **En Gedi to En Eglaim**. Great volumes and variety of vegetation, everlasting and perpetually productive, will result from this river which **flows from the sanctuary** (see v. 1). See John 7:37–39 for Jesus’ use of the image of living waters for the life that He gives to those who believe in Him. **47:13** The priestly tribe of Levi had already received a special area (see 45:1–8; 48:8–14). The tribe of **Joseph** was divided into two tribes to replace Levi and thus maintain twelve tribes.

47:14 Equality of inheritance is stressed. **raised My hand in an oath**: This phrase recalls 20:5; 36:28 (see Gen. 12:7; 15:7, 18–21; 17:8).



Salt along the shore of the Dead Sea

Gusjer/Flickr, CC-BY 2.0

The Dead Sea

The lowest body of water in the world is the Dead Sea. Fifty miles in length, it does not measure more than 11 miles at the widest. The water surface of the Dead Sea is about thirteen hundred feet below sea level. Its depth has been estimated at another thirteen hundred feet. Because the sea has no outlet and evaporation is high, the concentration of minerals is as much as 30 percent. The water abounds with salt, bromide, magnesium chloride, potassium chloride, and sulfur.

The Dead Sea region is aptly named. Even fish struggle against being carried into the sea, for its high mineral content brings immediate death. The prophet Ezekiel envisioned the restoration of the Dead Sea valley. In his vision, water poured forth from the temple altar and flowed into the Kidron through the Judean wilderness to the Dead Sea (47:8–12). Revelation 22:1–5 tells of a strikingly similar vision.

equally with one another; for I ^kraised My hand in an oath to give it to your fathers, and this land shall ^lfall to you as your inheritance.

¹⁵“This *shall be* the border of the land on the north: from the Great Sea, *by* ^mthe road to Hethlon, as one goes to ⁿZedad, ^oHamath, ^pBerothah, Sibraim (which is between the border of Damascus and the border of Hamath), to Hazar Hatticon (which is on the border of Hauran). ¹⁷Thus the boundary shall be from the Sea to ^qHazar Enan, the border of Damascus; and as for the north, northward, it is the border of Hamath. *This is the north side.*

¹⁸“On the east side you shall mark out the border from between Hauran and Damascus, and between Gilead and the land of Israel, along the Jordan, and along the eastern side of the sea. *This is the east side.*

¹⁴ ^k Gen. 12:7; 13:15; 15:7; 17:8; 26:3; 28:13; Deut. 1:8; Ezek. 20:5, 6, 28, 42 ^l Ezek. 48:29
¹⁵ ^m Ezek. 48:1
ⁿ Num. 34:7, 8
¹⁶ ^o Num. 34:8
^p 2 Sam. 8:8
¹⁷ ^q Num. 34:9; Ezek. 48:1

¹⁹ ^r Num. 20:13; Deut. 32:51; Ps. 81:7; Ezek. 48:28
⁵ Heb. Negev ⁶ Lit. Strife
²¹ ^s Ezek. 45:1
²² ^t Num. 26:55, 56
^u [Eph. 3:6; Rev. 7:9, 10] ^v [Acts 11:18; 15:9; Gal. 3:28; Eph. 2:12–14; Col. 3:11]

¹⁹“The south side, toward the ⁵South, *shall be* from Tamar to ^rthe waters of ⁶Meribah by Kadesh, along the brook to the Great Sea. *This is the south side, toward the South.*

²⁰“The west side *shall be* the Great Sea, from the *southern* boundary until one comes to a point opposite Hamath. This is the west side.

²¹“Thus you shall ^sdivide this land among yourselves according to the tribes of Israel. ²²It shall be that you will divide it by ^tlot as an inheritance for yourselves, ^uand for the strangers who dwell among you and who bear children among you. ^vThey shall be to you as native-born among the children of Israel; they shall have an inheritance with you among the tribes of Israel. ²³And it shall be *that* in whatever tribe the stranger dwells, there you shall give *him* his inheritance,” says the Lord God.

The unilateral and unconditional nature of the Abrahamic covenant is suggested; this inheritance is a free gift of God's grace which God's people did and could do nothing to deserve.

47:15–17 The northern boundary of the land extends from the Mediterranean Sea—the **Great Sea**—to a border north of Damascus. The other place names are not certainly known. **Damascus** is the capital of Aram (modern Syria). **Hamath** is thought to have been north of Damascus, about half the distance to Carchemish. **Zedad**: This is believed to have been east of Hamath and Hazar Enan (the eastern point of this border). **Hauran** appears to be an Israelite region east of the Jordan River and north of Gilead.

47:18 The eastern border runs from the Damascus region southwest through Hauran to and along the Jordan River (see Num. 34:10–12). **eastern . . . sea**: The Dead Sea.

47:19 The southern border goes from the eastern side of the Dead Sea to **Tamar** (a town to the southwest) to the **waters of Meribah by Kadesh** (Num. 20:13, 24; 27:14) **along the brook** (of Egypt; the Wadi el-Arish) and on to the Mediterranean Sea (see Num. 34:3–5; 1 Kin. 8:65). This line runs from the Dead Sea southwest across the Negev to the Brook of Egypt, a river bed in west Sinai.

47:20 The western border runs along the coastline of the **Great Sea** (the Mediterranean Sea) north to a point directly west of Hamath (see Num. 34:6; Rev. 21:1).

47:21–23 The treatment of **strangers** or aliens in the land is considered. Non-Israelites who married and settled within the Jewish communities were to be accepted as native Israelites, qualified to share in the territorial inheritance of whatever tribe they joined (see Lev. 19:34; Is. 56:1–8).

Boundaries of the Land in Ezekiel's Vision



Division of the Land

48 “Now these are the names of the tribes: ^aFrom the northern border along the road to Hethlon at the entrance of Hamath, to Hazar Enan, the border of Damascus northward, in the direction of Hamath, *there shall be one section for* ^bDan from its east to its west side; ²by the border of Dan, from the east side to the west, *one section for* ^cAsher; ³by the border of Asher, from the east side to the west, *one section for* ^dNaphtali; ⁴by the border of Naphtali, from the east side to the west, *one section for* ^eManasseh; ⁵by the border of Manasseh, from the east side to the west, *one section for* ^fEphraim; ⁶by the border of Ephraim, from the east side to the west, *one section for* ^gReuben; ⁷by the border of Reuben, from the east side to the west, *one section for* ^hJudah; ⁸by the border of Judah, from the east side to the west, shall be ⁱthe district which you shall set apart, twenty-five thousand *cubits* in width, and in length the same as one of the *other* portions, from the east side to the west, with the ^jsanctuary in the center.

⁹“The district that you shall set apart for the LORD *shall be* twenty-five thousand *cubits* in length and ten thousand in width. ¹⁰To these—to the priests—the holy district shall belong: on the north twenty-five thousand *cubits* in length, on the west ten thousand in width, on the east ten thousand in width, and on the south twenty-five thousand in length. The sanctuary of the LORD shall be in the center. ¹¹*It shall be* for the priests of the sons of Zadok, who are sanctified, who have kept My charge, who did not go astray when the children of Israel went astray, ¹as the Levites went astray. ¹²And *this* district of land that is set apart shall be to them a thing most ^mholy by the border of the Levites.

¹³“Opposite the border of the priests, the ⁿLevites *shall have an area* twenty-five thousand *cubits* in length and ten thousand in width; its entire length *shall be* twenty-five thousand and its width ten thousand. ¹⁴^oAnd they shall not sell or

CHAPTER 48

1 ^a Ezek. 47:15
 2 ^b Josh. 19:40-48
 3 ^c Josh. 19:24-31
 4 ^e Josh. 13:29-31;
 17:1-11, 17, 18
 5 ^f Josh. 16:5-10;
 17:8-10, 14-18
 6 ^g Josh. 13:15-23
 7 ^h Josh. 15:1-63;
 19:9
 8 ⁱ Ezek. 45:1-6 / [Is.
 12:6; 33:20-22];
 Ezek. 45:3, 4
 11 ^k Ezek. 40:46;
 44:15 ^l Ezek.
 44:10, 12
 12 ^m Ezek. 45:4
 13 ⁿ Ezek. 45:5
 14 ^o Ex. 22:29; Lev.
 27:10, 28, 33; Ezek.
 44:30

15 ^p Ezek. 45:6
^q Ezek. 42:20
 19 ^r Ezek. 45:6
 21 ^s Ezek. 34:24;
 45:7; 48:22 ^t Ezek.
 48:8, 10 ^u Lit. house
 22 ^v Josh. 18:21-28
 24 ^v Josh. 19:1-9

exchange any of it; they may not alienate this best *part* of the land, for *it is* holy to the LORD.

¹⁵^p“The five thousand *cubits* in width that remain, along the edge of the twenty-five thousand, shall be ^qfor general use by the city, for dwellings and common-land; and the city shall be in the center. ¹⁶These *shall be* its measurements: the north side four thousand five hundred *cubits*, the south side four thousand five hundred, the east side four thousand five hundred, and the west side four thousand five hundred. ¹⁷The common-land of the city shall be: to the north two hundred and fifty *cubits*, to the south two hundred and fifty, to the east two hundred and fifty, and to the west two hundred and fifty. ¹⁸The rest of the length, alongside the district of the holy *section*, *shall be* ten thousand *cubits* to the east and ten thousand to the west. It shall be adjacent to the district of the holy *section*, and its produce shall be food for the workers of the city. ¹⁹^rThe workers of the city, from all the tribes of Israel, shall cultivate it. ²⁰The entire district *shall be* twenty-five thousand *cubits* by twenty-five thousand *cubits*, foursquare. You shall set apart the holy district with the property of the city.

²¹^s“The rest *shall belong* to the prince, on one side and on the other of the holy district and of the city’s property, next to the twenty-five thousand *cubits* of the *holy* district as far as the eastern border, and westward next to the twenty-five thousand as far as the western border, adjacent to the *tribal* portions; *it shall belong* to the prince. It shall be the holy district, ^tand the sanctuary of the ¹temple *shall be* in the center. ²²Moreover, apart from the possession of the Levites and the possession of the city *which are* in the midst of what *belongs* to the prince, *the area* between the border of Judah and the border of ^uBenjamin shall belong to the prince.

²³“As for the rest of the tribes, from the east side to the west, Benjamin *shall have one section*; ²⁴by the border of Benjamin, from the east side to the west, ^vSimeon *shall have one section*; ²⁵by the

48:1-7 From the northern district south to the priestly portions, the tribes in order are **Dan, Asher, Naphtali, Manasseh, Ephraim, Reuben, and Judah**. Each district is bordered north and south by another tribe. The east-west borders for each are the same as in 47:18, 20. The tribes resulting from the offspring of Jacob and his wives’ servants are given lands farthest from the most holy areas (see 45:1-8), while the descendants of Jacob’s wives occupy a central position (see Gen. 35:23-26). The tribe of Judah is most favored, for it produced the Davidic and messianic line (see 37:18-28; Gen. 49:8-10; Is. 11). Historically, the tribe of Dan had occupied the northern limits of the land (see Judg. 20:1). Its idolatry was well known—Jeroboam had placed a golden calf there (2 Kin. 10:29).

48:15 The district has the **city** in its **center** surrounded by housing, farming, and grazing lands for general use.

48:21, 22 shall belong to the prince: See 45:7, 8. The tribal territories of Judah and Benjamin are immediately north and south of the **holy district** (see vv. 1-7, 20). **Benjamin** like Judah is favored (see Gen. 35:24).

48:23-29 Continuing southward in order are the tribal allotments for **Benjamin, Simeon, Issachar, Zebulun, and Gad**. Gad is the southern border of the land.

border of Simeon, from the east side to the west, ¹⁰Issachar *shall have one section*; ²⁶by the border of Issachar, from the east side to the west, ¹¹Zebulun *shall have one section*; ²⁷by the border of Zebulun, from the east side to the west, ¹²Gad *shall have one section*; ²⁸by the border of Gad, on the south side, toward the ²South, the border shall be from Tamar to ³the waters of ³Meribah by Kadesh, along the brook to the ⁴Great Sea. ²⁹^bThis is the land which you shall divide by lot as an inheritance among the tribes of Israel, and these *are* their portions,” says the Lord God.

The Gates of the City and Its Name

³⁰“These are the exits of the city. On the north side, measuring four thousand

²⁵ ^w Josh. 19:17-23
²⁶ ^x Josh. 19:10-16
²⁷ ^y Josh. 13:24-28
²⁸ ^z Gen. 14:7;
 2 Chr. 20:2; Ezek.
 47:19 ^a Ezek. 47:10,
 15, 19, 20 ² Heb.
 Negev ³ Lit. Strife
²⁹ ^b Ezek. 47:14,
 21, 22

³¹ ^c [Rev. 21:10-14]
³⁵ ^d Jer. 23:6; 33:16
^e Is. 12:6; 14:32;
 24:23; Jer. 3:17; 8:19;
 14:9; Ezek. 35:10;
 Joel 3:21; Zech.
 2:10; Rev. 21:3;
 22:3 ⁴ Heb. YHWH
 Shammah

five hundred *cubits* ³¹^c(the gates of the city *shall be* named after the tribes of Israel), the three gates northward: one gate for Reuben, one gate for Judah, and one gate for Levi; ³²on the east side, four thousand five hundred *cubits*, three gates: one gate for Joseph, one gate for Benjamin, and one gate for Dan; ³³on the south side, measuring four thousand five hundred *cubits*, three gates: one gate for Simeon, one gate for Issachar, and one gate for Zebulun; ³⁴on the west side, four thousand five hundred *cubits* with their three gates: one gate for Gad, one gate for Asher, and one gate for Naphtali. ³⁵All the way around *shall be* eighteen thousand *cubits*; ^dand the name of the city from *that day shall be*: ^eTHE⁴ LORD IS THERE.”

48:31 The gates are named after the original twelve **tribes** (see Rev. 21:12, 13). The gate for Joseph represents the two tribes of Manasseh and Ephraim (v. 32; 47:13). The northern gates are **Reuben** (the first-born), **Judah** (the tribe of the messianic line), and **Levi** (the priestly tribe)—all descendants of Jacob and Leah (Gen. 35:23).

48:32 On the eastern side the gates represent **Joseph, Benjamin, and Dan**. While the first two were children of Jacob and Rachel, the third was the child of Jacob and Rachel's servant Bilhah (Gen. 35:24, 25).

48:33 South of the city, the three other offspring of Jacob and Leah have gates named for them: **Simeon, Issachar, and Zebulun** (Gen. 35:23).

48:34 The three western gates are named after **Gad and Asher**—the sons of Jacob and Leah's maidservant Zilpah—and **Naphtali**—a son of Jacob and Bilhah (see Gen. 35:25, 26).

48:35 The designated name for this city from **that day** is **THE LORD IS THERE** (see Is. 60:14; 62:2-4, 12; Jer. 3:17; 33:15, 16). This return of the Lord and the regathering of His people is predicted by Ezekiel in 11:17; 20:33-44; 37:15-28; 39:21-29. The Lord was forced to depart from the city and the temple because of the wickedness of the Israelites (8:6; 10:18). But here, Ezekiel foresees the return of God in all His glory to His people, His temple, and His land.

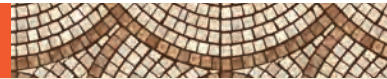
The Lord Is There—Forever!

Scripture gives us only the barest glimpses of what heaven will be like, but one feature that we know for sure is that God will be there, and we will never be separated from Him again. With this bright vision of eternity, Ezekiel's book of prophecy draws to a close (48:30-35).

Just as the apostle John saw the New Jerusalem descending from heaven (Rev. 21), so Ezekiel envisioned the day when the city of God would finally be made perfect and complete in every way. Both prophets saw twelve gates facing the four corners of the earth (Ezek. 48:31-34; Rev. 21:12, 13), an indication of accessibility for everyone. Inscribed with the names of the twelve tribes of Israel, the gates suggest inclusion, restoration, and fulfillment of all that God has promised His covenant people. In John's vision, this image is strengthened by the fact that these gates never shut (Rev. 21:25).

The name of this ideal city is “THE LORD IS THERE” (Ezek. 48:35). This is a fitting climax, not only to the Book of Ezekiel, but to John's Revelation and to the Bible itself. It shows that a reversal will occur during the course of history. Whereas Ezekiel had seen the Lord withdrawing from His temple because of the people's wickedness (Ezek. 10:18), John saw Him return to a new temple to live among His people forever. Likewise, whereas fellowship with God was cut off through the sin in Eden (Gen. 3:22-24), it is made permanent in the New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:3).

This is a strong hope we can look forward to with great anticipation. Right now, we may sometimes feel distant from God, perhaps alone and confused and wondering whether He even knows who we are. The assurance of Scripture is that someday we will no longer wonder where God is; we will be with Him—forever!



THE BOOK OF DANIEL



IN 626 B.C., Nabopolassar became king of Babylon and altered the course of ancient history. He quickly overthrew the domination of long-standing rival Assyria, and by the time of his death in 605 B.C. he had eliminated the Assyrian Empire and swallowed it into what became known as the Neo-Babylonian or Chaldean Empire. This course of events had significant implications for Judah, the surviving remnant of the nation of Israel. Judah had been largely under Assyrian domination from about 670 B.C., but now found itself serving a new master. In the same year as Nabopolassar's death, King Jehoiakim of Judah became a vassal of Nebuchadnezzar, the son of Nabopolassar (see 2 Kin. 24:1). Nebuchadnezzar brought his father's empire to even greater heights, eventually deporting many Jews to Babylon.

Daniel lived in the midst of all these momentous events. What direct impact he had on the community of exiles cannot be known, but he was a force for good as far as the Babylonians were concerned. Daniel was a close confidant of Nebuchadnezzar throughout the Babylonian king's reign (605–562 B.C.). Later Daniel served with equal distinction Cyrus, the enlightened Persian ruler who conquered Babylon. One of the first policies Cyrus implemented after subduing Babylon was to allow the Jews to return to their homeland and rebuild their way of life. It is more than likely that Daniel had some influence on Cyrus's decision. The Book of Daniel is a testimony to how God works out His purposes through His servants even in the courts of pagan rulers (see 2:21; 4:18).

Author Daniel claims to have written the book that bears his name (12:4) and uses the first person singular from 7:2 to the end of the book. The Jewish Talmud agrees with Daniel's testimony. Christ Himself mentions Daniel by name in His predictions concerning the last days (see Matt. 24:15). There is no reason to doubt either that Daniel was a historical person or that he wrote the book that bears his name. A well-educated Jew, chosen for special training in the palace in Babylon, Daniel possessed all the linguistic skills and the historical and cultural knowledge needed to write a book of this depth and complexity.

Date Since Daniel refers to the reign of Cyrus (6:28), a date of 530 B.C. or so is reasonable for the book's composition. Critical scholars, however, deny that this is possible mainly because the book appears to predict events that did not come to pass until the third and second centuries B.C. These predictions are so precise and detailed that some believe them not to have been prophecy at all but a record of the events after they transpired. Thus according to some, Daniel must date from the second century in order to account for at least those passages that predict later times.

If one concedes the possibility that Daniel was inspired to write prophetically of events two or three hundred

years in the future, there is no reason to deny Daniel's authorship of the book in the sixth century. The accuracy of its historical information, the form and style of its Hebrew and Aramaic passages, and the unanimous testimony of ancient tradition all confirm the witness of the book itself concerning its authorship and date.

Purpose Daniel wrote his book with two purposes in mind. First, he wanted to assert that the God of Israel was sovereign, even over the powerful nations that surrounded His people. God's chosen nation had been conquered and dispersed by a mighty empire that did not acknowledge God. What would happen now? Would Babylon's yoke remain forever on Israel's shoulders? Would God's people never see their homeland again? Had God forgotten His promises? Daniel's answer was that Babylon would fall to another empire, which in turn would fall to yet another great kingdom. History would continue in this pattern until God judged all Gentile nations and established His everlasting rule. Daniel's message was obviously meant to uplift and encourage the weary hearts of the exiled Jews.

Yet Daniel also looked forward to the day when God would restore and reward Israel. Israel was suffering punishment for its disobedience; but when would the punishment end? Daniel's message was both discouraging and encouraging. He predicted trouble ahead; Israel would suffer under Gentile powers for many years. But the encouraging news was that the time of trials would also pass away. The time was coming when God would gather His children to Him again. He would establish His messianic kingdom which would last forever. The God who directs the forces of history has not deserted His people. They must continue to trust Him. His promises of preservation and ultimate restoration are sure.

CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

Daniel pictures Jesus as the great Stone who will crush the kingdoms of this world (2:34, 35, 44). With his love of imagery, the prophet also describes the Messiah as the Son of Man who is given dominion by the Ancient of Days (7:13, 14). Jesus is also portrayed as Israel's Deliverer who will be cut off (9:25, 26).

Daniel's dreams and visions fill his book. It is quite likely that his vision in 10:5–9 is an appearance of Christ Himself (similar to what the apostle John describes in Revelation 1:12–16). Daniel's precise prediction is unlike any other biblical writer's. He pinpoints the birth of Jesus five hundred years beforehand. Based on what Nehemiah tells us (Neh. 2:1–8), the decree about which Daniel writes in 9:25 took place on March 4, 444 B.C.

612 B.C.

Nineveh falls to the Medes and Babylonians

605 B.C.

Nebuchadnezzar takes Daniel captive

603 B.C.

Daniel interprets the king's dream

586 B.C.

The Babylonians destroy Jerusalem

c. 580 B.C.

Daniel's three friends survive the fiery furnace

c. 550 B.C.

Belshazzar assumes the throne

539 B.C.

Belshazzar's kingdom falls to Cyrus of Persia

538 B.C.

The Jews are allowed to return to Jerusalem

c. 537 B.C.

Daniel is thrown into the lions' den



Cup with Daniel surrounded by lions with angels protecting him (sixth century B.C.)

Kim Walton, courtesy of the British Museum

DANIEL OUTLINE

- I. Introduction 1:1—2:3
- II. God's judgment on the Gentile nations 2:4—7:28
 - A. Nebuchadnezzar's dream 2:4–49
 - B. The image of gold 3:1–30
 - C. Nebuchadnezzar's second dream 4:1–37
 - D. Belshazzar's feast 5:1–31
 - E. The plot against Daniel 6:1–28
 - F. The vision of the four beasts 7:1–28
- III. God's ultimate restoration of Israel 8:1—12:13
 - A. The vision of the ram and the goat 8:1–27
 - B. The vision of the 70 weeks 9:1–27
 - C. The vision of a heavenly messenger 10:1—11:45
 - D. The end times 12:1–13

Daniel and His Friends Obey God

In the third year of the reign of ^aJehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. ²And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with ^bsome of the articles of ¹the house of God, which he carried ^cinto the land of Shinar to the house of his god; ^dand he brought the articles into the treasure house of his god.

³Then the king instructed Ashpenaz, the master of his eunuchs, to bring ^esome of the children of Israel and some of the king's descendants and some of the nobles, ⁴young men ^fin whom there was no blemish, but good-looking, gifted in all wisdom, possessing knowledge and quick to understand, who ^{had} ability to serve in the king's palace, and ^gwhom they might teach the language and ²literature of the Chaldeans. ⁵And the king appointed for them a daily provision of the king's delicacies and of the wine which he drank, and three years of training for them, so that at the end of *that time* they might ^hserve before the king. ⁶Now from among those of the sons of

CHAPTER 1

¹ ^a 2 Kin. 24:1, 2;
2 Chr. 36:5-7; Jer.
25:1; 52:12-30
² ^b 2 Chr. 36:7; Jer.
27:19, 20; Dan. 5:2
^c Gen. 10:10; 11:2;
Is. 11:11; Zech. 5:11
^d 2 Chr. 36:7 ¹ The
temple
³ ^c 2 Kin. 20:17, 18;
Is. 39:7
⁴ ^f Lev. 24:19, 20
^g Acts 7:22 ² Lit.
writing or book
⁵ ^e Gen. 41:46;
1 Sam. 16:22; 1 Kin.
10:8; Dan. 1:19

⁷ ^f Gen. 41:45; 2 Kin.
24:17 / Dan. 2:26;
4:8; 5:12
⁸ ^f Lev. 11:47; Deut.
32:38; Ezek. 4:13;
Hos. 9:3
⁹ ^f Gen. 39:21; 1 Kin.
8:50; [Job 5:15, 16];
Ps. 106:46; [Prov.
16:7]; Acts 7:10; 27:3
³ kindness
¹¹ ⁴ Or Melzar

Judah were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. ⁷ⁱTo them the chief of the eunuchs gave names: ^jhe gave Daniel the name Belteshazzar; to Hananiah, Shadrach; to Mishael, Meshach; and to Azariah, Abed-Nego.

⁸But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself ^kwith the portion of the king's delicacies, nor with the wine which he drank; therefore he requested of the chief of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself. ⁹Now ^lGod had brought Daniel into the favor and ³goodwill of the chief of the eunuchs. ¹⁰And the chief of the eunuchs said to Daniel, "I fear my lord the king, who has appointed your food and drink. For why should he see your faces looking worse than the young men who are your age? Then you would endanger my head before the king."

¹¹So Daniel said to ⁴the steward whom the chief of the eunuchs had set over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, ¹²"Please test your servants for ten days, and let them give us vegetables to eat and water to drink. ¹³Then let our appearance be examined before you, and

1:1 Jehoiakim king of Judah reigned from 608 to 598 B.C. The third year was 605 B.C., according to the chronological system used by Daniel in which only whole years were counted. Jeremiah, on the other hand, followed a system in which any part of a year was counted as a full year. Therefore, he designated 605 B.C. as the fourth year of Jehoiakim (see Jer. 25:1; 36:1; 46:2). Jehoiakim was an evil king who sided first with the Egyptians and then with the Babylonians until 602 B.C. when he rebelled. His independence was short-lived, however, and Jehoiakim remained under Babylonian domination until his death. The son of Nabopolassar, the founder of the Neo-Babylonian (Chaldean) Empire, was **Nebuchadnezzar**, who reigned from 605 to 562 B.C. In the summer of 605 B.C. when his father died, Nebuchadnezzar was leading the Babylonian armies. He returned to Babylon to secure the throne, but not before he besieged Jerusalem and seized loot and prisoners, including Daniel.

1:2 the Lord gave: The Book of Daniel emphasizes the sovereignty of God in the affairs of nations. Jerusalem did not fall merely because Nebuchadnezzar was strong, but because God had judged the people of Judah for their disobedience and idolatry. **some of the articles:** The remainder of the articles were removed later when Jehoiakim surrendered (see 2 Kin. 24:13; 2 Chr. 36:18). **Shinar**—that is, Babylon—was located on the Euphrates River, 50 miles south of present-day Baghdad in Iraq. **into the treasure house:** The articles taken from the house of God appear later, on the night of Belshazzar's feast (ch. 5). Eventually they were returned to Zerubbabel who brought them back to Israel (see Ezra 1:7).

1:3 eunuchs: In ancient Middle Eastern monarchies, royal harems were typically superintended by men who had been emasculated and were considered reliable to serve in that capacity. A eunuch was often regarded as a privileged official. He enjoyed the personal friendship of the king, and his advice was frequently sought. Some have speculated that Daniel and his friends were eunuchs or at least that they were set apart to advise the king (v. 9), but there is no specific statement in the book to this effect. **The children of Israel** refers to the general population of the nation of Israel.

1:4 Possessing knowledge refers to the young men's previous education. **the language and literature of the Chaldeans:** The language of most of Mesopotamia was Akkadian, which was written in cuneiform script, usually on clay tablets. Over the centuries the

Babylonians and Assyrians produced a massive body of literature of all types. Though Aramaic had begun to replace Akkadian by 600 B.C., Babylonian scholars continued to study and even write literature in their classical tongue. For Daniel and his friends to be truly educated required that they be familiar with these literary traditions. The term Chaldeans was commonly applied to the Babylonians in general, and also to the guild of astrologers, diviners, and other practitioners of wisdom to which Daniel was being introduced (1:17; 2:2, 4, 5, 10; 3:8).

1:6 According to the first-century Jewish historian Josephus, all four of these young men were members of Zedekiah's royal family. **1:7** The name **Daniel** means "God Is My Judge." Daniel's Babylonian name **Belteshazzar** means "Lady Protect the King," referring to the goddess Sarpanitu, wife of Marduk. The name **Hananiah** means "The Lord Is Gracious." Hananiah's Babylonian name **Shadrach** means "I Am Fearful of the God." The name **Mishael** means "Who Is What God Is?" Mishael's Babylonian name **Meshach** means "I Am of Little Account." The name **Azariah** means "The Lord Has Helped Me." Azariah's Babylonian name **Abed-Nego** means "Servant of (the god) Nebo."

1:8 defile himself: Daniel's refusal to eat the **king's delicacies** had nothing to do with the consumption of rich food or wine. There were two problems with the king's menu: (1) It no doubt included food forbidden by the Law and food not prepared according to Mosaic regulations (see Lev. 11). (2) The meat had probably been dedicated to idols, as was customary in Babylon. To partake of the food would have been to recognize the idols as deities.

1:9 This verse implies that **the chief of the eunuchs** was over Daniel, leading some scholars to conclude that Daniel himself was a eunuch.

1:10 In the Hebrew text, **your** is plural. Daniel's friends joined him in refusing to eat from the king's menu (vv. 7, 17, 19). **Endanger my head** suggests that the king might have had the chief of the eunuchs put to death for accommodating Daniel and his friends.

1:12 Vegetables means things grown from seed and includes vegetables and grains. The request for **water** indicates that Daniel and his friends did not want to drink wine, probably because, like the food, it was dedicated to idols (v. 8).

the appearance of the young men who eat the portion of the king's delicacies; and as you see fit, *so deal with your servants.*"
¹⁴So he consented with them in this matter, and tested them ten days.
¹⁵And at the end of ten days their features appeared better and fatter in flesh than all the young men who ate the

¹⁶ ⁵ Or *Melzar*
¹⁷ ^m 1 Kin. 3:12, 28; 2 Chr. 1:10-12; [Luke 21:15; James 1:5-7] ⁿ Acts 7:22
^o Num. 12:6; 2 Chr. 26:5; Dan. 5:11, 12, 14; 10:1

portion of the king's delicacies. ¹⁶Thus ⁵the steward took away their portion of delicacies and the wine that they were to drink, and gave them vegetables.
¹⁷As for these four young men, ^mGod gave them ⁿknowledge and skill in all literature and wisdom; and Daniel had ^ounderstanding in all visions and dreams.

1:15 Better and fatter indicates that Daniel and his friends were healthier than **the young men who ate . . . of the king's delicacies**.
1:17 God gave them knowledge and skill in all literature: As Moses was educated in the knowledge of Egypt, so Daniel and his friends acquired a Chaldean education. The **wisdom** of the

Chaldeans consisted of sciences current at the time, including the interpretation of omens communicated through astrology; the examination of livers, kidneys, and other animal entrails; and the examination of the organs and flight patterns of birds. **Daniel** had the additional advantage of understanding **visions and dreams**.

The Neo-Babylonian Empire 626–539 B.C.

The Babylonians, while continuing the militaristic tradition of Assyria, created an astonishing renaissance of Sumero-Akkadian civilization. Led by Nebuchadnezzar (605–562 B.C.), the Neo-Babylonian Empire carried out a building program of canals and monuments that was ambitious in the extreme.



1 Early Greek and Roman authors rhapsodized about the capital city astride the Euphrates. A four-horse chariot could turn atop the high hundred-gated walls. Babylon also boasted one of the world's seven wonders, the famed hanging gardens, as well as a stepped temple-tower 295 feet high and, according to Herodotus, several colossal gold statues weighing many tons.

2 Discoveries of inscriptions in clay have shown that the last king of Babylonia, Nabonidus, absented himself at Tema in Arabia while Belshazzar acted as regent in the capital.

¹⁸Now at the end of the days, when the king had said that they should be brought in, the chief of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar. ¹⁹Then the king ⁶interviewed them, and among them all none was found like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah; therefore ⁷they served before the king. ²⁰^qAnd in all matters of wisdom and understanding about which the king examined them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers who were in all his realm. ²¹^rThus Daniel continued until the first year of King Cyrus.

Nebuchadnezzar's Dream

2 Now in the second year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, Nebuchadnezzar had dreams; ^aand his spirit was so troubled that ^bhis sleep left him. ^{2c}Then the king gave the command to call the magicians, the astrologers, the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans to tell the king his dreams. So they came and stood before the king. ³And the king said to them, "I have had a dream, and my spirit is anxious to ¹know the dream."

⁴Then the Chaldeans spoke to the king in Aramaic, ^d"O ²king, live forever! Tell your servants the dream, and we will give the interpretation."

⁵The king answered and said to the Chaldeans, "My ³decision is firm: if you do not make known the dream to me, and its interpretation, you shall be ^ecut in pieces, and your houses shall be made an ash heap. ⁶However, if you tell the dream and its interpretation, you shall receive from me gifts, rewards, and great honor. Therefore tell me the dream and its interpretation."

⁷They answered again and said, "Let the king tell his servants the dream, and we will give its interpretation."

⁸The king answered and said, "I know for certain that you would gain time, be-

¹⁹ ^p Gen. 41:46; [Prov. 22:29]; Dan. 1:5 ⁶ Lit. *talked with them*
²⁰ ^q 1 Kin. 10:1
²¹ ^r Dan. 6:28; 10:1

CHAPTER 2

¹ ^a Gen. 40:5-8; 41:1, 8; Job 33:15-17; Dan. 2:3; 4:5 ^b Esth. 6:1; Dan. 6:18
² ^c Gen. 41:8; Ex. 7:11; Is. 47:12, 13; Dan. 1:20; 2:10, 27; 4:6; 5:7
³ ¹ Or *understand*
⁴ ^d 1 Kin. 1:31; Dan. 3:9; 5:10; 6:6, 21 ² The original language of Daniel 2:4b through 7:28 is Aramaic.
⁵ ^e 2 Kin. 10:27; Ezra 6:11; Dan. 3:29
³ The command
⁶ ^f Dan. 5:16

⁹ ⁴ Situation ⁵ Or *declare to me*
¹¹ ⁹ Gen. 41:39; Dan. 5:11 ⁶ Or *rare*
¹³ ^h Dan. 1:19, 20
¹⁵ ⁷ Or *harsh*
¹⁸ ⁱ [Dan. 9:9; Matt. 18:19]
¹⁹ / Num. 12:6; Job 33:15; [Prov. 3:32]; Amos 3:7

cause you see that my decision is firm: ⁹if you do not make known the dream to me, *there is only* one decree for you! For you have agreed to speak lying and corrupt words before me till the ⁴time has changed. Therefore tell me the dream, and I shall know that you can ⁵give me its interpretation."

¹⁰The Chaldeans answered the king, and said, "There is not a man on earth who can tell the king's matter; therefore no king, lord, or ruler has *ever* asked such things of any magician, astrologer, or Chaldean. ¹¹*It is a* ⁶difficult thing that the king requests, and there is no other who can tell it to the king ⁹except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh."

¹²For this reason the king was angry and very furious, and gave the command to destroy all the wise *men* of Babylon. ¹³So the decree went out, and they began killing the wise *men*; and they sought ^hDaniel and his companions, to kill *them*.

God Reveals Nebuchadnezzar's Dream

¹⁴Then with counsel and wisdom Daniel answered Arioch, the captain of the king's guard, who had gone out to kill the wise *men* of Babylon; ¹⁵he answered and said to Arioch the king's captain, "Why is the decree from the king so ⁷urgent?" Then Arioch made the decision known to Daniel.

¹⁶So Daniel went in and asked the king to give him time, that he might tell the king the interpretation. ¹⁷Then Daniel went to his house, and made the decision known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions, ¹⁸ⁱthat they might seek mercies from the God of heaven concerning this secret, so that Daniel and his companions might not perish with the rest of the wise *men* of Babylon. ¹⁹Then the secret was revealed to Daniel ^jin a night vision. So Daniel blessed the God of heaven.

1:18 The end of the days refers to the end of three years (v. 5). **The chief of the eunuchs** was Ashpenaz (v. 3).

2:1 Daniel served as counselor to the king from the completion of his training under Nebuchadnezzar (about 603 B.C., see v. 5) until the first year of King Cyrus (539 B.C.). Thus Daniel held his position until the very end of the Babylonian Empire.

2:1 second year: Nebuchadnezzar's reign commenced in 605 B.C., so this is likely 603 B.C., given Daniel's preference for a "full-year" chronological system (1:1). The king was **troubled** because he did not know the future of his kingdom (v. 29).

2:2 The word translated **magicians** refers to those who use the pen—most likely, those learned in the sacred writings of the Babylonians. **Astrologers** studied the stars. **Sorcerers** received power from evil spirits. **The Chaldeans** were probably a class of wise men.

2:4 The Chaldeans spoke to the king in Aramaic: Daniel 2:4—7:28 is written in Aramaic, the common language of the day.

2:5 Cut in pieces refers to the ancient practice of dismembering a body (see 3:29; 1 Sam. 15:33).

2:8, 9 tell me the dream: Nebuchadnezzar reasoned that if the wise men could supernaturally interpret his dream, they should first be able to tell him the content of it.

2:12 Babylon here probably refers to the city, not the whole province.

2:13 they began killing the wise men: Nebuchadnezzar's penalty was excessive and extreme (v. 15).

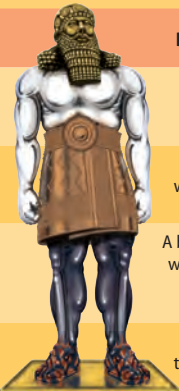
2:15 Urgent means sharp or severe (v. 13).

2:17, 18 Daniel, despite his education and expertise, still knew that prayer to the omniscient God was the first step in a crisis situation. **God of heaven** is a favorite title for the Lord in late OT literature (see vv. 37, 44; 2 Chr. 36:23; Ezra 1:2; 5:11, 12; 6:9, 10; 7:12, 21, 23; Neh. 1:4, 5; 2:4, 20). The title emphasizes the universality of God's dominion over all nations.

2:19 night vision: Normally visions occurred in the daytime (8:1–14) and dreams occurred at night.

Dreams and Visions in Daniel

Daniel's God-given ability to interpret "visions and dreams" (1:17) served him well in his role as advisor to King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, a man noted for his mysterious and troubling dreams. The following brief comparison of a dream of Nebuchadnezzar and a dream and vision of Daniel reveals a common theme in the Book of Daniel—the successive rise and fall of four kingdoms.

Nebuchadnezzar's Dream			
	Daniel's Dream	Daniel's Vision	Interpretation
An image with a head of fine gold (2:32)	A beast like a lion with eagle's wings (7:4)		Babylon would establish itself as the first world empire (2:38; 7:17).
An image with a chest and arms of silver (2:32)	A beast like a bear with three ribs in its mouth (7:5)	A ram with two horns, one of which was higher than the other (8:3)	Medo-Persia would defeat Babylon and establish itself as the second world empire (2:39; 7:17; 8:20).
An image with a belly and thighs of bronze (2:32)	A beast like a leopard with four wings (7:6)	A male goat with a large horn, later replaced by four horns and a little horn (8:5–9)	Greece would defeat Medo-Persia and establish itself as the third world empire (2:39; 7:17; 8:21).
An image with legs of iron and feet of iron and clay (2:32)	A beast with iron teeth and ten horns (7:7)		Rome would defeat Greece and establish itself as the fourth world empire (2:40–43; 7:17).

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20 Daniel answered and said:
 16“Blessed be the name of God forever and ever,
 17for wisdom and might are His.
 21 And He changes 18the times and the seasons;
 19He removes kings and raises up kings;
 20He gives wisdom to the wise
 And knowledge to those who have understanding.
 22 19He reveals deep and secret things;
 20He knows what is in the darkness,
 And 21light dwells with Him.
 23“I thank You and praise You,
 O God of my fathers;
 You have given me wisdom and might,
 And have now made known to me what we 22asked of You,
 For You have made known to us the king’s 23demand.”

Daniel Explains the Dream

24Therefore Daniel went to Arioch, whom the king had appointed to destroy the wise *men* of Babylon. He went and said thus to him: “Do not destroy the wise *men* of Babylon; take me before the king, and I will tell the king the interpretation.”

20 ^kPs. 113:2
^l[1 Chr. 29:11, 12; Job 12:13; Ps. 147:5; Jer. 32:19; Matt. 6:13; Rom. 11:33]
 21 ^mPs. 31:15; Esth. 1:13; Dan. 2:9; 7:25
ⁿJob 12:18; [Ps. 75:6, 7; Jer. 27:5; Dan. 4:35] ^o1 Kin. 3:9, 10; 4:29; [James 1:5]
 22 ^pJob 12:22; Ps. 25:14; [Prov. 3:22] ^qJob 26:6; Ps. 139:12; [Is. 45:7; Jer. 23:24; Heb. 4:13]
^r[Ps. 36:9; Dan. 5:11, 14; [1 Tim. 6:16; James 1:17; 1 John 1:5]
 23 ^sPs. 21:2, 4; Dan. 2:18, 29, 30 ^tLit. word

25 ^uLit. sons of the captivity
 28 ^vGen. 40:8; Amos 4:13 ^wGen. 49:1; Is. 2:2; Dan. 10:14; Mic. 4:1
 29 ^x[Dan. 2:22, 28]
 30 ^yActs 3:12
^zDan. 2:47
¹Understand

25Then Arioch quickly brought Daniel before the king, and said thus to him, “I have found a man of the 26captives of Judah, who will make known to the king the interpretation.”
 26The king answered and said to Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, “Are you able to make known to me the dream which I have seen, and its interpretation?”
 27Daniel answered in the presence of the king, and said, “The secret which the king has demanded, the wise *men*, the astrologers, the magicians, and the soothsayers cannot declare to the king. 28But there is a God in heaven who reveals secrets, and He has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar 29what will be in the latter days. Your dream, and the visions of your head upon your bed, were these:
 29As for you, O king, thoughts came to your *mind* while on your bed, about what would come to pass after this; 30and He who reveals secrets has made known to you what will be. 31But as for me, this secret has not been revealed to me because I have more wisdom than anyone living, but for *our* sakes who make known the interpretation to the king, 32and that you may 33know the thoughts of your heart.
 31“‘You, O king, were watching; and behold, a great image! This great image, whose splendor was excellent, stood

2:21 Seasons here refers to the events of history.
2:22 Deep refers to something inaccessible (see Ps. 92:5, 6). What is **in the darkness** is hidden from sight.
2:28 The latter days is an expression used frequently of the end times when God will intervene in human history to establish His eternal kingdom (see Is. 2:2; Hos. 3:5; Mic. 4:1–3).
2:31–33 Image here means statue, not idol. **gold . . . silver . . . bronze . . . iron:** The metals are listed in descending order of weight

before you; and its form *was* awesome.³² *y* This image's head *was* of fine gold, its chest and arms of silver, its belly and ²thighs of bronze, ³³its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of ³clay.³⁴ You watched while a stone was cut out ²without hands, which struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces.³⁵ *a* Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were crushed together, and became ^blike chaff from the summer threshing floors; the wind carried them away so that ^cno trace of them was found. And the stone that struck the image ^dbecame a great mountain ^eand filled the whole earth.

³⁶ “This *is* the dream. Now we will tell the interpretation of it before the king.³⁷ *f* You, O king, *are* a king of kings. ^gFor the God of heaven has given you a kingdom, power, strength, and glory; ³⁸*h* and wherever the children of men dwell, or the beasts of the field and the birds of the heaven, He has given *them* into your hand, and has made you ruler over them all—ⁱ*you are* this head of gold.³⁹ But after you shall arise ^janother kingdom ^kinferior to yours; then another, a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over all the earth.⁴⁰ And ^lthe fourth kingdom shall be as strong as iron, inasmuch as iron breaks in pieces and shatters everything; and like iron that crushes, *that kingdom* will break in pieces and crush all the others.⁴¹ Whereas you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; yet the strength of the iron shall be in it, just as you saw the iron mixed with ceramic clay.⁴² And *as* the toes of

³² *y* Dan. 2:38, 45

² *Or sides*

³³ *Or baked clay,*

also vv. 34, 35, 42

³⁴ *z* Dan. 8:25;

[Zech. 4:6]; 2 Cor.

5:1; Heb. 9:24

³⁵ *a* Dan. 7:23–27;

[Rev. 16:14] ^b Ps.

1:4; Is. 17:13; 41:15;

16; Hos. 13:3 ^c Ps.

37:10, 36 ^d [Is. 2:2,

3]; Mic. 4:1 ^e Ps.

80:9

³⁷ *f* Ezra 7:12; Is.

47:5; Jer. 27:6, 7;

Ezek. 26:7; Hos. 8:10

^g Ezra 1:2

³⁸ *h* Ps. 50:10, 11;

Jer. 27:6; Dan. 4:21,

22 ⁱ Dan. 2:32

³⁹ *j* Dan. 5:28, 31

^k Dan. 2:32

⁴⁰ *l* Dan. 7:7, 23

⁴² *m* Dan. 7:24 ⁴ *Or*

brittle

⁴⁴ *n* Dan. 2:28, 37

^o Is. 9:6, 7 ^s; Ezek.

37:25; Dan. 4:3, 34;

6:26; 7:14, 27; Mic.

4:7; [Luke 1:32, 33]

^p Ps. 2:9; Is. 60:12;

Dan. 2:34, 35;

[1 Cor. 15:24] ⁵ *Or*

crush ⁶ *Lit. put an*

end to

⁴⁵ *q* Dan. 2:35; Is.

28:16

⁴⁶ *r* Dan. 3:5, 7;

Acts 10:25; 14:13;

Rev. 19:10; 22:8

⁵ *Lev. 26:31; Ezra*

6:10

⁴⁷ *t* Dan. 3:28, 29;

4:34–37 ^u [Deut.

10:17]

⁴⁸ *v* [Prov. 14:35;

21:1] ^w Dan. 2:6

^x Dan. 4:9; 5:11

⁴⁹ *y* Dan. 1:7; 3:12

^z Esth. 2:19, 21; 3:2;

Amos 5:15 ⁷ *The*

king's court

the feet *were* partly of iron and partly of clay, ^m*so* the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly ⁴fragile.⁴³ As you saw iron mixed with ceramic clay, they will mingle with the seed of men; but they will not adhere to one another, just as iron does not mix with clay.⁴⁴ And in the days of these kings ⁿthe God of heaven will set up a kingdom ^owhich shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; ^pit shall ⁵break in pieces and ⁶consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.⁴⁵ ^qInasmuch as you saw that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold—the great God has made known to the king what will come to pass after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation is sure.”

Daniel and His Friends Promoted

⁴⁶ *r* Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell on his face, prostrate before Daniel, and commanded that they should present an offering ^sand incense to him.⁴⁷ The king answered Daniel, and said, “Truly ^tyour God *is* the God of ^ugods, the Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, since you could reveal this secret.”⁴⁸ *v* Then the king promoted Daniel ^wand gave him many great gifts; and he made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and ^xchief administrator over all the wise *men* of Babylon.⁴⁹ Also Daniel petitioned the king, ^yand he set Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego over the affairs of the province of Babylon; but Daniel ^z*sat* in ⁷the gate of the king.

and value. The strength of the metals, however, increases from head to legs.

2:34 Without hands signifies supernatural activity.

2:35 In biblical imagery, a **mountain** is often a metaphor for a kingdom (see Ps. 48:2; Is. 2:2; 11:9; Jer. 51:25; Ezek. 20:40; Zech. 8:3). The same is true in this case, as the later interpretation makes clear (v. 44).

2:37 God . . . has given you a kingdom: The God of Israel is the God of all nations. Although the rulers of those nations may not have recognized Him as Lord, that did not nullify God's ultimate sovereignty nor did it alleviate the rulers' responsibility to Him.

2:38 The head is a reference to the Babylonian Empire, personified in Nebuchadnezzar.

2:39, 40 The image that Nebuchadnezzar saw (vv. 31–35) represented four kingdoms that would **rule over all the earth**. The first worldwide empire—the head of gold (v. 32)—was Babylon (v. 38). The second empire—the chest and arms of silver (v. 32)—was Medo-Persia (5:28; 8:20; 11:2). The third empire—the belly and thighs of bronze (v. 32)—would be Greece (8:21). The **fourth** empire—the legs of iron (v. 33)—is the only one not identified within the Book of Daniel. Rome is the most likely choice, for it succeeded Greece.

Strong as iron: The focus shifts from the value of the metals to their comparative strength. The Roman Empire was marked by strength, but it was destructive strength.

2:41–45 The kingdom shall be divided may be a reference to the fourth kingdom, the Roman Empire (v. 40). Differences about what is meant by the ten toes (v. 42) and the kingdom that filled the earth (represented by the stone in v. 45) has resulted in widely varying interpretations. Some believe that vv. 41–45 point to future events that have not yet been fulfilled. In this scenario, the Roman Empire will one day be revived (v. 41), will be ruled over by ten rulers (the toes of v. 42), will feud over internal problems (v. 43), will witness the return of Jesus Christ (v. 44), and will be destroyed by Christ at the Second Coming (v. 45).

2:44 The kingdom which shall never be destroyed is the kingdom of God. There are at least two views as to what form this kingdom will take. Amillennialists suggest it is a spiritual kingdom introduced by Jesus Christ at His first coming. Premillennialists suggest that it is a literal kingdom to be established by Jesus Christ at the Second Coming, at which time He will destroy the kingdoms of this world (see Rev. 19:15).

2:47 your God is the God of gods: One should not conclude from Nebuchadnezzar's confession that he had been converted. Since the Lord had enabled Daniel to interpret the king's dream, Nebuchadnezzar was willing to admit that Daniel's God was supreme, at least in matters of divine knowledge. The king gladly promoted Daniel as a result (v. 48).

The Image of Gold

3 Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, whose height *was* ¹sixty cubits and its width six cubits. He set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon. ²And King Nebuchadnezzar sent word to gather together the satraps, the administrators, the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the judges, the magistrates, and all the officials of the provinces, to come to the dedication of the image which King Nebuchadnezzar had set up. ³So the satraps, the administrators, the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the judges, the magistrates, and all the officials of the provinces gathered together for the dedication of the image that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up; and they stood before the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up. ⁴Then a herald cried ²aloud: “To you it is commanded, ^aO peoples, nations, and languages, ⁵that at the time you hear the sound of the horn, flute, harp, lyre, and psaltery, in symphony with all kinds of music, you shall fall down and worship the gold image that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up; ⁶and whoever does not fall down and worship shall ^bbe cast immediately into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.”

⁷So at that time, when all the people heard the sound of the horn, flute, harp, and lyre, in symphony with all kinds of music, all the people, nations, and languages fell down and worshiped the gold image which King Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

Daniel's Friends Disobey the King

⁸Therefore at that time certain Chaldeans ^ccame forward and accused the Jews. ⁹They spoke and said to King Nebuchadnezzar, ^d“O king, live forever! ¹⁰You, O king, have made a decree that everyone who hears the sound of the horn, flute, harp, lyre, and psaltery, in sym-

CHAPTER 3

¹ ¹ About 90 feet
⁴ ^a Dan. 4:1; 6:25
² ² Lit. *with strength*
⁶ ^b Jer. 29:22; Ezek. 22:18–22; Matt. 13:42, 50; Rev. 9:2; 13:15; 14:11
⁸ ^c Ezra 4:12–16; Esth. 3:8, 9; Dan. 6:12, 13
⁹ ^d Dan. 2:4; 5:10; 6:6, 21

¹² ^e Dan. 2:49
^f Dan. 1:8; 6:12, 13
¹³ ^g Dan. 2:12; 3:19
¹⁵ ^h Ex. 32:32; Luke 13:9; Ex. 5:2; 2 Kin. 18:35; Is. 36:18–20; Dan. 2:47
¹⁶ ⁱ [Matt. 10:19]
¹⁷ ^j Job 5:19; [Ps. 27:1, 2; Is. 26:3, 4]; Jer. 1:8; 15:20, 21; Dan. 6:19–22
¹ ¹ Sam. 17:37; Jer. 1:8; 15:20, 21; 42:11; Dan. 6:16, 19–22; Mic. 7:7; 2 Cor. 1:10
¹⁸ ^m Job 13:15

phony with all kinds of music, shall fall down and worship the gold image; ¹¹and whoever does not fall down and worship shall be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. ¹²^eThere are certain Jews whom you have set over the affairs of the province of Babylon: Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego; these men, O king, have ^fnot paid due regard to you. They do not serve your gods or worship the gold image which you have set up.”

¹³Then Nebuchadnezzar, in ^grage and fury, gave the command to bring Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego. So they brought these men before the king. ¹⁴Nebuchadnezzar spoke, saying to them, “*Is it true*, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, *that you do not serve my gods or worship the gold image which I have set up?*” ¹⁵Now if you are ready at the time you hear the sound of the horn, flute, harp, lyre, and psaltery, in symphony with all kinds of music, and you fall down and worship the image which I have made, ^h*good!* But if you do not worship, you shall be cast immediately into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. ⁱAnd who *is* the god who will deliver you from my hands?”

¹⁶Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego answered and said to the king, “O Nebuchadnezzar, ^jwe have no need to answer you in this matter. ¹⁷If *that is the case*, our ^kGod whom we serve is able to ^ldeliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver *us* from your hand, O king. ¹⁸But if not, let it be known to you, O king, that we do not serve your gods, nor will we ^mworship the gold image which you have set up.”

Saved in Fiery Trial

¹⁹Then Nebuchadnezzar was full of fury, and the expression on his face changed toward Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego. He spoke and commanded that they heat the furnace seven times

3:1 sixty cubits . . . six cubits: A cubit in Israel was approximately 18 inches; in Babylon it was about 20 inches. Therefore Nebuchadnezzar's image was 90 to 100 feet tall. The 10:1 ratio of height to width, however, suggests that the image was standing on a high pedestal so that the proportions of the figure itself would be closer to the normal ratio of about 4:1. Since the state and its king could not be separated from its gods, however, to bow down before the image was to worship it (vv. 5, 12, 14, 18, 28). **The plain of Dura** was probably about six miles southeast of Babylon.

3:2, 3 The officials of the kingdom are listed in descending order of rank. **Satraps** were the chief officials of the provinces of the empire. Daniel was one of the **administrators** (2:48). In later times, Zerubabel (see Hag. 1:1) and Nehemiah (see Neh. 5:14) were appointed **governors**.

3:5 harp . . . psaltery . . . symphony: These three words appear to be Greek in origin. Greek words of a cultural or technical nature appeared throughout the ancient Middle East well before 600 B.C.

3:8 Accused means “ate the pieces of, devoured piecemeal.” The term suggests slander and malicious accusations which devour the accused piece by piece.

3:12 No explanation is given for Daniel's absence.

3:16 we have no need to answer you: Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego were not being arrogant; they were admitting their guilt.

3:17 God . . . is able: The response of the Jewish young men is a model of confidence in God and submission to His will. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego recognized God's sovereignty and power.

3:18 But if not: While the faithful men knew that God could deliver them (v. 17), they were also aware that God may have chosen not to do so. Faith in God may not translate into victory in every circumstance (see Heb. 11:32–39). To these men the outcome was irrelevant, for what was at stake was not God's ability or their own lives, but their faith and obedience to serve Him regardless of the cost.

more than it was usually heated. ²⁰ And he commanded certain mighty men of valor who *were* in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, *and* cast *them* into the burning fiery furnace. ²¹ Then these men were bound in their coats, their trousers, their turbans, and their *other* garments, and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. ²² Therefore, because the king's command was ³ urgent, and the furnace exceedingly hot, the flame of the fire killed those men who took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego. ²³ And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.

²⁴ Then King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished; and he rose in haste *and* spoke, saying to his ⁴ counselors, "Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?"

They answered and said to the king, "True, O king."

²⁵ "Look!" he answered, "I see four men loose, ⁿ walking in the midst of the fire; and they are not hurt, and the form of the fourth is like ^o the ⁵ Son of God."

²² ³ Or harsh
²⁴ ^a High officials
²⁵ ⁿ [Ps. 91:3-9];
Is. 43:2 ^o Job 1:6;
38:7; [Ps. 34:7]; Dan.
3:28 ⁵ Or a son of
the gods

²⁶ ^p [Dan. 4:2, 3, 17,
34, 35] ⁶ Lit. door
²⁷ ^q [Is. 43:2]; Heb.
11:34
²⁸ ^r [Ps. 34:7, 8]; Is.
37:36; Jer. 17:7];
Dan. 6:22, 23; Acts
5:19; 12:7 ⁷ Or angel
²⁹ ^s Dan. 6:26
^t Dan. 2:46, 47;
4:34-37 ^u Ezra 6:11;
Dan. 2:5

Nebuchadnezzar Praises God

²⁶ Then Nebuchadnezzar went near the ⁶ mouth of the burning fiery furnace *and* spoke, saying, "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, servants of the ⁿ Most High God, come out, and come *here*." Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego came from the midst of the fire. ²⁷ And the satraps, administrators, governors, and the king's counselors gathered together, and they saw these men ^q on whose bodies the fire had no power; the hair of their head was not singed nor were their garments affected, and the smell of fire was not on them.

²⁸ Nebuchadnezzar spoke, saying, "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, who sent His ^r Angel ⁷ and delivered His servants who trusted in Him, and they have frustrated the king's word, and yielded their bodies, that they should not serve nor worship any god except their own God! ²⁹ ^s Therefore I make a decree that any people, nation, or language which speaks anything amiss against the ^t God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego shall be ^u cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made an

3:20 The **mighty men of valor** were Nebuchadnezzar's personal bodyguards.

3:21 **bound in . . . garments:** Criminals were normally stripped before execution. The fact that the fine clothes of the Jewish men were not removed implies that the king's command was carried out with great haste (v. 22).

3:22 **killed those men:** The price of Nebuchadnezzar's rage was the loss of capable men.

3:25 **walking:** The enormous number of bricks demanded in Bab-

ylon required kilns large enough to permit people to walk in them. **The fire** burned off the men's bonds (v. 21), but did not **hurt** them.

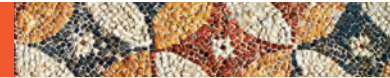
3:27 **the fire had no power:** The God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego saved them completely, so that there was not the slightest evidence that they had ever been in danger. The salvation offered by the Lord is so effective and complete that nothing of the lost condition remains.

3:29 **no other God:** Pagan cultures did not deny the existence of other gods, even those of other peoples. Nebuchadnezzar declared

Theophanies

When King Nebuchadnezzar exclaimed that the fourth man walking about in the fiery furnace with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego was "like the Son of God" (3:25), it may be an overstatement to say that he recognized Jesus. Yet even though he worshiped other gods, Nebuchadnezzar somehow knew that this mysterious fourth figure was divine (3:28).

Although the doctrine of the Triune God was not fully revealed until Jesus' time, we find clues that God was preparing humanity for this truth. In the Old Testament, such foreshadowings of God or the preincarnate Christ in a visible form are called *theophanies*, meaning "appearances of God." These theophanies include the Angel who comforted Hagar (see Gen. 16:7-13), the visitor who revealed to Abraham and Sarah that they would have a son (see Gen. 18:1-15), the Lord's appearance to Moses in the burning bush (see Ex. 3), the pillars of cloud and fire that led the Israelites from Egypt (see Ex. 14:19, 20), and Moses' glimpse of God on Sinai (see Ex. 33:11). Some people would also include as a theophany the appearance of Melchizedek, the priest-king of Salem, who gave wine and bread to Abram (see Gen. 14:18-20). The Old Testament contains nearly 80 references to the Spirit of God and anticipates the arrival of God's Son, the Messiah, who would deliver His people. Daniel also calls Christ the Son of Man (see Dan. 7:13). These theophanies were temporary, however. They were hints of the incarnation of Christ, fully human and fully divine, who would live among and redeem His people.



Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego in the fiery furnace

Wikimedia Commons

ash heap; ^vbecause there is no other God who can deliver like this.”

³⁰Then the king ^spromoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego in the province of Babylon.

Nebuchadnezzar’s Second Dream

4 Nebuchadnezzar the king,

^aTo all peoples, nations, and languages that dwell in all the earth:

Peace be multiplied to you.

² I thought it good to declare the signs and wonders ^bthat the Most High God has worked for me.

³ ^cHow great *are* His signs,
And how mighty His wonders!
His kingdom *is* ^dan everlasting kingdom,
And His dominion *is* from generation to generation.

⁴ I, Nebuchadnezzar, was at rest in my house, and flourishing in my palace.
⁵ I saw a dream which made me afraid,
^eand the thoughts on my bed and the visions of my head ^ftroubled me.
⁶Therefore I issued a decree to bring in all the wise *men* of Babylon before me, that they might make known to me the interpretation of the dream.
^{7g}Then the magicians, the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers came in, and I told them the dream; but they did not make known to me its interpretation. ⁸But at last Daniel came before me ^h(his name *is* Belteshazzar, according to the name of my god; ⁱin him *is* the Spirit of the Holy God), and I told the dream before him, *saying*: ⁹“Belteshazzar, ^jchief of the magicians, because I know that the Spirit of the Holy God *is* in you, and no secret troubles you, explain to me the visions of my dream that I have seen, and its interpretation.

29 ^v Dan. 6:27
30 ^s Lit. *caused to prosper*

CHAPTER 4

1 ^a Ezra 4:17; Dan. 3:4; 6:25
2 ^b Dan. 3:26
3 ^c 2 Sam. 7:16; Ps. 89:35-37; Dan. 6:27; 7:13, 14; [Luke 1:31-33] ^d [Dan. 2:44; 4:34; 6:26]
5 ^e Dan. 2:28, 29
^f Dan. 2:1
7 ^g Dan. 2:2
8 ^h Dan. 1:7 ⁱ Is. 63:11; Dan. 2:11; 4:18; 5:11, 14
9 ^j Dan. 2:48; 5:11

10 ^k Ezek. 31:3; Dan. 4:20
12 ^l Jer. 27:6; Ezek. 17:23; 31:6; Lam. 4:20
13 ^m [Dan. 4:17, 23] ⁿ Deut. 33:2; Ps. 89:7; Dan. 8:13; Zech. 14:5; Jude 14
14 ^o Ezek. 31:10-14; Dan. 4:23; [Matt. 3:10; 7:19; Luke 13:7-9] ^p Ezek. 31:12, 13; Dan. 4:12
^q Lit. *with strength*
16 ^r Dan. 11:13; 12:7
² Possibly years
17 ^s Ps. 9:16; 83:18
Dan. 2:21; 4:25, 32; 5:21

¹⁰“These *were* the visions of my head *while* on my bed:

I was looking, and behold,

^k A tree in the midst of the earth,
And its height was great.

¹¹ The tree grew and became strong;
Its height reached to the heavens,
And it could be seen to the ends of all the earth.

¹² Its leaves *were* lovely,
Its fruit abundant,
And in it *was* food for all.

^l The beasts of the field found shade under it,
The birds of the heavens dwelt in its branches,
And all flesh was fed from it.

¹³ “I saw in the visions of my head *while* on my bed, and there was ^ma watcher, ⁿa holy one, coming down from heaven. ¹⁴He cried ^laloud and said thus:

^o“Chop down the tree and cut off its branches,
Strip off its leaves and scatter its fruit.

^p Let the beasts get out from under it,
And the birds from its branches.

¹⁵ Nevertheless leave the stump and roots in the earth,
Bound with a band of iron and bronze,
In the tender grass of the field.
Let it be wet with the dew of heaven,
And *let* him graze with the beasts
On the grass of the earth.

¹⁶ Let his heart be changed from *that of* a man,
Let him be given the heart of a beast,
And let seven ^qtimes ² pass over him.

¹⁷ ‘This decision *is* by the decree of the watchers,
And the sentence by the word of the holy ones,
In order ^rthat the living may know
^sThat the Most High rules in the kingdom of men,

only that the God of the Jews was a god who is able to deliver; the king forbade others to despise Him.

4:1-3 These verses are a royal proclamation by Nebuchadnezzar concerning the God of Israel in which the king celebrated what God had done for him and extolled His power and universal dominion.

4:4 rest . . . and flourishing: Nebuchadnezzar had peace at home and prospered in his work.

4:5 This **dream** of Nebuchadnezzar occurred 30 years after the dream in ch. 2. **Troubled** means terrified.

4:7 I told them the dream: In ch. 2, Nebuchadnezzar did not tell his wise men the content of his dream (2:5).

4:8 My god refers to Marduk. Nebuchadnezzar was still a pagan at this point.

4:9 Daniel, also known as **Belteshazzar**, was **chief of the magicians**, a position given to him years earlier (2:48).

4:10-17 In ch. 2, Nebuchadnezzar dreamed of a great image, of which he was a part. His second dream involved a tree, which represented him (v. 22).

4:15 let him: At this point it becomes obvious that the tree is a symbol of a person.

4:16 Seven times could refer to years, months, weeks, days, or hours. Most take it to mean years, based on the usage of “times” elsewhere in Daniel (2:8; 3:5, 15; 7:25).

4:17 The point of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream is that **the Most High rules** supreme in the world.

¹Gives it to whomever He will,
And sets over it the ^alowest of men.²

- ¹⁸ “This dream I, King Nebuchadnezzar, have seen. Now you, Belteshazzar, declare its interpretation, ^vsince all the wise *men* of my kingdom are not able to make known to me the interpretation; but you *are* able, ^wfor the Spirit of the Holy God *is* in you.”

Daniel Explains the Second Dream

- ¹⁹ Then Daniel, ^xwhose name *was* Belteshazzar, *was* astonished for a time, and his thoughts ^ytroubled him. *So* the king spoke, and said, “Belteshazzar, do not let the dream or its interpretation trouble you.”
Belteshazzar answered and said, “My lord, *may* ^zthe dream ³concern those who hate you, and its interpretation ⁴concern your enemies!

- ²⁰ ^a“The tree that you saw, which grew and became strong, whose height reached to the heavens and which *could be* seen by all the earth, ²¹whose leaves *were* lovely and its fruit abundant, in which *was* food for all, under which the beasts of the field dwelt, and in whose branches the birds of the heaven had their home—²²^bit *is* you, O king, who have grown and become strong; for your greatness has grown and reaches to the heavens, ^cand your dominion to the end of the earth.

- ²³ ^d“And inasmuch as the king saw a watcher, a holy one, coming down from heaven and saying, ‘Chop down the tree and destroy it, but leave its stump and roots in the earth, *bound* with a band of iron and bronze in the tender grass of the field; let it be wet

¹⁷ ⁱ Jer. 27:5-7; Ezek. 29:18-20; Dan. 2:37; 5:18 ^v 1 Sam. 4:19; Dan. 11:21
¹⁸ ^v Gen. 41:8, 15; Dan. 5:8, 15 ^w Dan. 4:8, 9; 5:11, 14
¹⁹ ^x Dan. 4:8 ^y Jer. 4:19; Dan. 7:15, 28; 8:27 ^z 2 Sam. 18:32; Jer. 29:7; Dan. 4:24; 10:16 ³ *be for* ⁴ *for*
²⁰ ^a Dan. 4:10-12
²² ^b Dan. 2:37, 38
^c Jer. 27:6-8
²³ ^d Dan. 4:13-15

^e Dan. 5:21
⁵ Possibly years
²⁵ ^f Dan. 4:32; 5:21
⁹ Ps. 106:20 ^h Ps. 83:18; Dan. 4:2, 17, 32 ⁱ Jer. 27:5
⁶ Possibly years
²⁶ ^j Matt. 21:25; Luke 15:18 ⁷ God
²⁷ ^k [Prov. 28:13]; Is. 55:7; Ezek. 18:21, 22; [Rom. 2:9-11; 1 Pet. 4:8] ^l [Ps. 41:1-3]; Is. 58:6, 7, 10 ^m 1 Kin. 21:29
⁸ *prolonging*
²⁹ ^o Or *upon*
³⁰ ⁿ Prov. 16:18; Is. 13:19; Dan. 5:20
³¹ ^o Dan. 5:5; Luke 12:20 ^p Dan. 4:24
³² ^q [Dan. 4:25]

with the dew of heaven, ^eand let him graze with the beasts of the field, till seven ⁵times pass over him⁷; ²⁴this is the interpretation, O king, and this is the decree of the Most High, which has come upon my lord the king:
²⁵They shall ^fdrive you from men, your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make you ^geat grass like oxen. They shall wet you with the dew of heaven, and seven ⁶times shall pass over you, ^htill you know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and ⁱgives it to whomever He chooses.

- ²⁶ “And inasmuch as they gave the command to leave the stump *and* roots of the tree, your kingdom shall be assured to you, after you come to know that ^jHeaven ⁷rules.
²⁷Therefore, O king, let my advice be acceptable to you; ^kbreak off your sins by *being* righteous, and your iniquities by showing mercy to *the* poor.
^lPerhaps there may be ^ma ⁸lengthening of your prosperity.”

Nebuchadnezzar's Humiliation

- ²⁸ All *this* came upon King Nebuchadnezzar. ²⁹ At the end of the twelve months he was walking ⁹about the royal palace of Babylon. ³⁰ The king ⁿspoke, saying, “Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for a royal dwelling by my mighty power and for the honor of my majesty?”

- ³¹ ^oWhile the word *was still* in the king's mouth, ^pa voice fell from heaven: “King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is spoken: the kingdom has departed from you! ³² And ^qthey shall drive you from men, and your dwelling *shall be* with the beasts of the field. They shall

4:18 Spirit of the Holy God: The doctrine of the Triune God—the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—is evident in the OT (see Gen. 1:26; 11:7; Is. 48:16), but is not developed (3:25). Nebuchadnezzar was merely saying that Daniel's ability to interpret dreams was the result of God's giving Daniel the spirit of interpretation.

4:19 astonished . . . troubled: Having come to an understanding of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, Daniel was so upset by its content that he hesitated to divulge its meaning. **may the dream concern those who hate you:** Daniel wishes that the awful word of judgment were somehow intended for the king's enemies and not the king.

4:20 In the OT, a **tree** is a common symbol for a ruler (see Judg. 9:7–15; Ezek. 31:2–14; Zech. 11:1, 2). Since few trees were present in Babylon, a tree of the gigantic proportions described here would have been impressive and unique.

4:21 leaves were lovely . . . fruit abundant: Daniel indicates that Nebuchadnezzar was the source of abundant blessing for all. The **beasts** and **birds** represent the happy citizens of Nebuchadnezzar's realm.

4:22 heavens . . . e arth: These terms convey the idea of totality. Using deliberate exaggeration, Daniel says that Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom extended from heaven to the ends of the earth, and so was universal.

4:23 Watcher means “a waking one,” one who is constantly alert. The parallel **holy one** suggests that the watcher is either the Lord Himself or one of His angels (3:28; 6:22; 8:16; 10:13; 12:1). **stump and roots:** The tree—Nebuchadnezzar—would be cut down but not uprooted. The stump would produce suckers and the roots would produce new growth that would eventually give rise to a new tree, one as grand as before (v. 26). **Seven times** means seven years (7:12, 25).

4:29 twelve months: The reference here is to a “grace period” between the prediction of Nebuchadnezzar's madness and its occurrence. Perhaps Nebuchadnezzar was allowed a full year in the hope that he might repent and avert the judgment of God for his arrogant pride.

4:32 until you know: Nebuchadnezzar would become insane, animal-like in his habits and senses. Yet in that condition he would

make you eat grass like oxen; and seven ¹times shall pass over you, until you know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses.”

³³ That very hour the word was fulfilled concerning Nebuchadnezzar; he was driven from men and ate grass like oxen; his body was wet with the dew of heaven till his hair had grown like eagles' *feathers* and his nails like birds' *claws*.

Nebuchadnezzar Praises God

³⁴ And ¹at the end of the ²time I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my understanding returned to me; and I blessed the Most High and praised and honored Him ³who lives forever:

For His dominion is ¹an everlasting dominion,
And His kingdom is from generation to generation.

³⁵ ¹All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing;

¹He does according to His will in the army of heaven
And *among* the inhabitants of the earth.

¹⁰No one can restrain His hand
Or say to Him, ¹¹“What have You done?”

³⁶ At the same time my reason returned to me, ¹²and for the glory of my kingdom, my honor and splendor returned to me. My counselors and nobles resorted to me, I was ¹³restored to my kingdom, and excellent majesty was ¹⁴added to me. ³⁷Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, ¹⁵praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, ¹⁶all of whose works are truth, and His ways justice. ¹⁷And those who walk in pride He is able to put down.

³² ¹Possibly years
³⁴ ¹Dan. 4:26 ²Ps. 102:24-27; Dan. 6:26; 12:7; [Rev. 4:10] ³[Ps. 10:16]; Dan. 2:44; 7:14; Mic. 4:7; [Luke 1:33]
² Lit. *days*
³⁵ ¹Ps. 39:5; Is. 40:15, 17 ²Ps. 115:3; 135:6; Dan. 6:27 ³ Job 9:12; Is. 43:13 ⁴ Job 9:12; Is. 45:9; Jer. 18:6; Rom. 9:20; [1 Cor. 2:16]
³⁶ ¹Dan. 4:26
² 2 Chr. 20:20 ³ Job 42:12; [Prov. 22:4; Matt. 6:33]
³⁷ ¹Dan. 2:46, 47; 3:28, 29 ² Deut. 32:4; [Ps. 33:4]; Is. 5:16; [Rev. 15:3]
³ Ex. 18:11; Job 40:11, 12; Dan. 5:20

CHAPTER 5

¹ ¹Esth. 1:3; Is. 22:12-14
² ¹ 2 Kin. 24:13; 25:15; Ezra 1:7-11; Jer. 52:19; Dan. 1:2
³ ¹ Or *ancestor*
³ ¹ 2 Chr. 36:10
⁴ ¹ Is. 42:8; Dan. 5:23; Rev. 9:20
⁵ ¹ Dan. 4:31
⁶ ¹ Ezek. 7:17; 21:7
⁷ ¹ Dan. 4:6, 7; 5:11, 15 ² Is. 47:13 ³ Dan. 6:2, 3 ² Lit. *with strength*
⁸ ¹ Gen. 41:8; Dan. 2:27; 4:7; 5:15
⁹ ¹ Job 18:11; Is. 21:2-4; Jer. 6:24; Dan. 2:1; 5:6
³ ¹ perplexed
¹¹ ¹ Dan. 2:48; 4:8, 9, 18

Belshazzar's Feast

⁵ Belshazzar the king ¹made a great feast for a thousand of his lords, and drank wine in the presence of the thousand. ²While he tasted the wine, Belshazzar gave the command to bring the gold and silver vessels ³which his ¹father Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the temple which *had been* in Jerusalem, that the king and his lords, his wives, and his concubines might drink from them. ³Then they brought the gold ⁴vessels that had been taken from the temple of the house of God which *had been* in Jerusalem; and the king and his lords, his wives, and his concubines drank from them. ⁴They drank wine, ⁵and praised the gods of gold and silver, bronze and iron, wood and stone.

⁵ ¹In the same hour the fingers of a man's hand appeared and wrote opposite the lampstand on the plaster of the wall of the king's palace; and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote. ⁶Then the king's countenance changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his hips were loosened and his ⁷knees knocked against each other. ⁷⁸The king cried ²aloud to bring in ³the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers. The king spoke, saying to the wise *men* of Babylon, “Whoever reads this writing, and tells me its interpretation, shall be clothed with purple and *have* a chain of gold around his neck; ⁴and he shall be the third ruler in the kingdom.” ⁸Now all the king's wise *men* came, ⁵but they could not read the writing, or make known to the king its interpretation. ⁹Then King Belshazzar was greatly ⁶troubled, his countenance was changed, and his lords were ³astonished.

¹⁰The queen, because of the words of the king and his lords, came to the banquet hall. The queen spoke, saying, “O king, live forever! Do not let your thoughts trouble you, nor let your countenance change. ¹¹¹There is a man in

learn more of God than he ever had before. In fact, the purpose of the judgment was that Nebuchadnezzar might know who God is and how He sovereignly creates kingdoms and distributes them to whom He wills. Nebuchadnezzar had to be humbled before he could be exalted again. The chastisement of God is always for a holy and helpful purpose.

4:34 Nebuchadnezzar praises **the Most High**, recognizing that God **lives forever** and rules forever. The king unmistakably acknowledges Daniel's God as the omnipotent, eternal Sovereign of the universe.

5:1, 2 Belshazzar is called the **king** and the son of **Nebuchadnezzar** (v. 22). Other ancient records, however, seem to dispute both facts. These records indicate that Belshazzar was the son of Nabonidus, the last king of Babylon. Two possible explanations can reconcile these differing accounts: (1) Belshazzar served as vice-regent during his father's frequent absences from the capital. Thus

he would have been in charge when Nebuchadnezzar's insanity began. Note that Darius the Mede was also called king even though he served Cyrus (5:31; 6:6). (2) Belshazzar was the grandson of Nebuchadnezzar; hence, the term *father* in v. 2 indicates that Nebuchadnezzar was an ancestor of Belshazzar.

5:3, 4 **gold vessels . . . from the temple:** Belshazzar's use of the sacred vessels at a drunken orgy was a blasphemous act of sacrilege (v. 23). **praised the gods:** Belshazzar's actions demonstrated deliberate defiance of the true God (v. 23).

5:7 Nabonidus the king was in Arabia. Belshazzar was his vice-regent. **The third ruler** would have been next in line to the throne. **5:10** **The queen** was not Belshazzar's wife, but the queen mother. She was either the wife of Nebuchadnezzar or the daughter of Nebuchadnezzar who had married Nabonidus, the current king.

5:11 **The Spirit of the Holy God** is the same expression used by Nebuchadnezzar (4:8, 9, 18).

your kingdom in whom *is* the Spirit of the Holy God. And in the days of your ⁴father, light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, were found in him; and King Nebuchadnezzar your ⁴father—your father the king—made him chief of the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans, and soothsayers. ¹²Inasmuch as an excellent spirit, knowledge, understanding, interpreting dreams, solving riddles, and ⁵explaining enigmas were found in this Daniel, ^mwhom the king named Belteshazzar, now let Daniel be called, and he will give the interpretation.”

The Writing on the Wall Explained

¹³Then Daniel was brought in before the king. The king spoke, and said to Daniel, “Are you that Daniel ⁶who is one of the captives from Judah, whom my ⁷father the king brought from Judah? ¹⁴I have heard of you, that ⁿthe ⁸Spirit of God *is* in you, and *that* light and understanding and excellent wisdom are found in you. ¹⁵Now ^othe wise *men*, the astrologers, have been brought in before me, that they should read this writing and make known to me its interpretation, but they could not give the interpretation of the thing. ¹⁶And I have heard of you, that you can give interpretations and ⁹explain enigmas. ^pNow if you can read the writing and make known to me its interpretation, you shall be clothed with purple and *have* a chain of gold around your neck, and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom.”

¹⁷Then Daniel answered, and said before the king, “Let your gifts be for yourself, and give your rewards to another; yet I will read the writing to the king, and make known to him the interpretation. ¹⁸O king, ^qthe Most High God gave Nebuchadnezzar your ¹father a kingdom and majesty, glory and honor. ¹⁹And because of the majesty that He gave him, ^rall peoples, nations, and languages trembled and feared before him. Whomever he wished, he ^sexecuted; whomever

¹¹ ⁴Or ancestor
¹² ^m Dan. 1:7; 4:8
⁵ Lit. untying knots
¹³ ⁶ Lit. who is of the sons of the captivity ⁷Or ancestor
¹⁴ ⁿ Dan. 4:8, 9, 18; 5:11, 12 ⁸ Or spirit of the gods
¹⁵ ^o Dan. 5:7, 8
¹⁶ ^p Dan. 5:7, 29
⁹ Lit. untie knots
¹⁸ ^q Jer. 27:5-7; Dan. 2:37, 38; 4:17, 22, 25 ¹ Or: a great
¹⁹ ^r Jer. 27:7 ^s Dan. 2:12, 13; 3:6

²⁰ ^t Ex. 9:17; Job 15:25; Is. 14:13-15; Dan. 4:30, 37
²¹ ^u Job 30:3-7; Dan. 4:32, 33 ^v Ex. 9:14-16; Ps. 83:17, 18; Ezek. 17:24; [Dan. 4:17, 34, 35]
² Recognized
²² ^w Ex. 10:3; 2 Chr. 33:23; 36:12
²³ ^x Dan. 5:3, 4 ^y Ex. 40:9; Num. 18:3; Is. 52:11; Heb. 9:21
² Ps. 115:5, 6; Is. 37:19; Hab. 2:18, 19; Acts 17:24-26; Rom. 1:21 ^a Ps. 139:3; Prov. 20:24; [Jer. 10:23] ³ Exalted
⁴ The temple
²⁴ ⁵ Lit. palm
²⁵ ⁶ Lit. a mina (50 shekels) from the verb “to number”
⁷ Lit. a shekel from the verb “to weigh”
⁸ Lit. and half-shekels from the verb “to divide”; pl. of Peres, v. 28
²⁷ ^b Job 31:6; Ps. 62:9; Jer. 6:30
²⁸ ^c Is. 21:2; Dan. 5:31; 9:1 ^d Dan. 6:28; Acts 2:9
⁹ Aram. *Paras*, consonant with Peres
²⁹ ^e Dan. 5:7, 16

he wished, he kept alive; whomever he wished, he set up; and whomever he wished, he put down. ²⁰^tBut when his heart was lifted up, and his spirit was hardened in pride, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him. ²¹Then he was ^udriven from the sons of men, his heart was made like the beasts, and his dwelling *was* with the wild donkeys. They fed him with grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, ^vtill he ²knew that the Most High God rules in the kingdom of men, and appoints over it whomever He chooses.

²²“But you his son, Belshazzar, ^whave not humbled your heart, although you knew all this. ²³^xAnd you have ³lifted yourself up against the Lord of heaven. They have brought the ^yvessels of ⁴His house before you, and you and your lords, your wives and your concubines, have drunk wine from them. And you have praised the gods of silver and gold, bronze and iron, wood and stone, ^zwhich do not see or hear or know; and the God who *holds* your breath in His hand ^aand owns all your ways, you have not glorified. ²⁴Then the ⁵fingers of the hand were sent from Him, and this writing was written.

²⁵“And this is the inscription that was written:

⁶MENE, MENE, ⁷TEKEL,
⁸UPHARSIN.

²⁶This *is* the interpretation of *each* word. MENE: God has numbered your kingdom, and finished it; ²⁷TEKEL: ^bYou have been weighed in the balances, and found wanting; ²⁸PERES: Your kingdom has been divided, and given to the ^cMedes and ^dPersians.” ⁹²⁹Then Belshazzar gave the command, and they clothed Daniel with purple and *put* a chain of gold around his neck, and made a proclamation concerning him ^ethat he should be the third ruler in the kingdom.

5:13 This event took place in 539 B.C. (see v. 30). **Daniel** was an old man at this time, possibly 80 years old or older.

5:17 When Daniel refused Belshazzar's gifts and rewards, he was not being ungrateful or showing disrespect. He was simply saying that he would interpret the writing regardless of reward.

5:25–28 **MENE** means **numbered**. The repetition is for emphasis. God had numbered the days of Belshazzar's kingdom; its time was up. **TEKEL** means **weighed**. God had weighed Belshazzar, and the king did not measure up to God's standard of righteousness. **UPHARSIN**, the plural of **Peres** in v. 28, means **divided**. That very night (v. 30) Babylon would be divided and defeated by the **Medes and Persians**.

interpretation

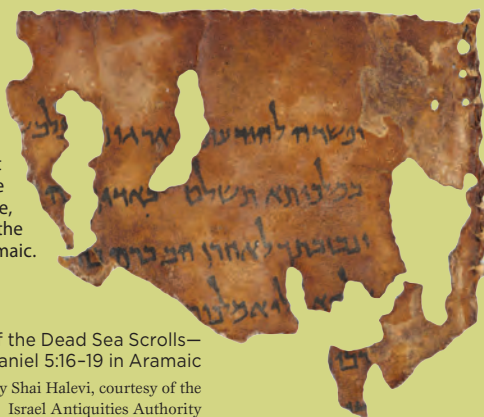
(Aram. *peshar*) (2:4; 4:6, 5:12, 16) Strong's #6591

This word literally means “to untie” or “to loose.” In other words, Daniel could unravel the mysteries of dreams and visions: he could explain or solve them. Yet he was always quick to give God the credit for his ability (2:28). By the time of Jesus, rabbinic Judaism had interpreted much of the OT allegorically. These “*peshar*” explanations of the Scriptures might have been what Jesus was addressing when He said, “you have heard that it was said” (Matt. 5:21, 27, 31, 38).



Aramaic

Aramaic words, phrases, and even whole passages frequently appear in the OT (Dan. 2–7; Ezra 4–7; Jer. 10:11). Outside of the Bible, the oldest fragments of Aramaic are relatively late—from 820 B.C. and later. Of all known Semitic languages, Aramaic was certainly the most like Hebrew. Among Jewish scholars, Aramaic has been held in higher esteem than Hebrew, simply because the primary works of Jewish tradition (the Talmud and its subsequent materials) were written in a dialect of Aramaic. No doubt the Persian Empire used Aramaic as its chief Semitic language, and it became the common language of the Jews after the Exile. From that time, they began translating the OT into Aramaic. These Aramaic translations are called the Targums.



A portion of the Dead Sea Scrolls—
Daniel 5:16–19 in Aramaic

Photo by Shai Halevi, courtesy of the
Israel Antiquities Authority

Belshazzar's Fall

³⁰ That very night Belshazzar, king of the Chaldeans, was slain. ³¹ And Darius the Mede received the kingdom, *being* about sixty-two years old.

The Plot Against Daniel

6 It pleased Darius to set over the kingdom one hundred and twenty satraps, to be over the whole kingdom; ² and over these, three governors, of whom Daniel *was* one, that the satraps might give account to them, so that the king would suffer no loss. ³ Then this Daniel distinguished himself above the governors and satraps, ⁴ because an excellent spirit *was* in him; and the king gave thought to setting him over the whole realm. ^{4b} So the governors and satraps sought to find *some* charge against Daniel concerning the kingdom; but they could find no charge or fault, because he *was* faithful; nor was there any error or fault found in him. ⁵ Then these men said, “We shall

30 ^f Jer. 51:31,
39, 57
31 ^g Dan. 2:39; 9:1

CHAPTER 6

3 ^a Dan. 5:12
4 ^b Eccl. 4:4

6 ^c Neh. 2:3; Dan.
2:4; 6:21
7 ^d Ps. 59:3; 62:4;
64:2–6
8 ^e Esth. 1:19; 8:8;
Dan. 6:12, 15 ^f Lit.
does not pass away
10 ^f 1 Kin. 8:29,
30, 46–48; Ps. 5:7;
Jon. 2:4

not find any charge against this Daniel unless we find *it* against him concerning the law of his God.”

⁶ So these governors and satraps thronged before the king, and said thus to him: ^c “King Darius, live forever! ⁷ All the governors of the kingdom, the administrators and satraps, the counselors and advisors, have ^d consulted together to establish a royal statute and to make a firm decree, that whoever petitions any god or man for thirty days, except you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions. ⁸ Now, O king, establish the decree and sign the writing, so that it cannot be changed, according to the ^e law of the Medes and Persians, which ^f does not alter.” ⁹ Therefore King Darius signed the written decree.

Daniel in the Lions' Den

¹⁰ Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went home. And in his upper room, with his windows open ^f toward Jerusalem, he knelt down

5:30 That very night (October 12, 539 B.C.) Babylon fell to the Persian army commanded by Gubaru.

5:31 Darius the Mede is mentioned by name only in the Book of Daniel (see 6:1, 6, 9; 9:1). He is not the famous Darius I Hystaspes because Darius I was not a Mede and he lived too late (522–486 B.C.) to be a contemporary of Daniel. There are two principal suggestions as to the identity of Darius the Mede: (1) He was Cyrus the king of Persia. However, it is unlikely that Cyrus would be called a “Mede” since he was in fact a Persian. (2) He was Gubaru, a governor appointed by Cyrus. Both Daniel and ancient literary sources indicate that a certain official (“Darius the Mede” in Daniel, “Gubaru” in Persian texts) took over immediately in Babylon until Cyrus appointed his own son Cambyses as coruler around 538 B.C. This figure is most likely identified with Darius. Why he is called Darius is uncertain, though ancient rulers often took other names for themselves.

6:2 Daniel had previously been appointed a governor in Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar (2:48). Here he was governor in the new Medo-Persian reign. **Suffer no loss** refers to taxes.

6:3 Excellent spirit probably refers to Daniel’s surpassing ability to do his job and perhaps includes a commendable attitude.

6:5 Daniel had been circumspect in obeying the laws of the land, but his enemies knew that when the law of the land conflicted with **the law of his God**, Daniel would break the former in favor of the latter.

6:8 the law of the Medes and Persians: Once a royal decree had been issued, it could not be revoked—even by the king himself. It remained in force until its time of expiration. The practice of creating an unchangeable law may follow from the idea that changing a decree was an admission that it had been faulty.

6:10 Undeterred by the royal proclamation (vv. 6–9), Daniel resumed praying by the windows of his house that opened **toward**

on his knees ⁹three times that day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as was his custom since early days.

¹¹Then these men assembled and found Daniel praying and making supplication before his God. ¹²^hAnd they went before the king, and spoke concerning the king's decree: "Have you not signed a decree that every man who petitions any god or man within thirty days, except you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions?"

The king answered and said, "The thing *is* true, ⁱaccording to the law of the Medes and Persians, which ²does not alter."

¹³So they answered and said before the king, "That Daniel, ^jwho is ³one of the captives from Judah, ^kdoes not show due regard for you, O king, or for the decree that you have signed, but makes his petition three times a day."

¹⁴And the king, when he heard *these* words, ^lwas greatly displeased with himself, and set *his* heart on Daniel to deliver him; and he ⁴labored till the going down of the sun to deliver him. ¹⁵Then these men ⁵approached the king, and said to the king, "Know, O king, that *it is* ^mthe law of the Medes and Persians that no decree or statute which the king establishes may be changed."

¹⁶So the king gave the command, and they brought Daniel and cast *him* into the den of lions. *But* the king spoke, saying to Daniel, "Your God, whom you serve continually, He will deliver you." ¹⁷ⁿThen a stone was brought and laid on the mouth of the den, ^oand the king sealed it with his own signet ring and with the signets of his lords, that the purpose concerning Daniel might not be changed.

Daniel Saved from the Lions

¹⁸Now the king went to his palace and spent the night fasting; and no ⁶musicians were brought before him. ¹⁹Also his sleep ⁷went from him. ¹⁹Then the ^qking

10 ⁹ Ps. 55:17; Acts 2:1, 2, 15; [Phil. 4:6]; 1 Thess. 5:17, 18
12 ^h Dan. 3:8-12; Acts 16:19-21
13 ⁱ Esth. 1:19; Dan. 6:8, 15
15 ² Lit. *does not pass away*
13 ^j Dan. 1:6; 5:13
14 ^k Esth. 3:8; Dan. 3:12; Acts 5:29
15 ³ Lit. *of the sons of the captivity*
14 ^l Mark 6:26
15 ⁴ strove
15 ^m Esth. 8:8; Ps. 94:20, 21; Dan. 6:8, 12
12 ⁵ Lit. *thronged before*
17 ⁿ Lam. 3:53
18 ^o Matt. 27:66
18 ^p Esth. 6:1; Ps. 77:4; Dan. 2:1
19 ^q Exact meaning unknown
19 ^r Or *fled*
19 ^q Dan. 3:24

20 ^r Gen. 18:14; Num. 11:23; Jer. 32:17; Dan. 3:17; [Luke 1:37]
21 ^s Or *grieved*
21 ^s Dan. 2:4; 6:6
22 ^t Num. 20:16; Is. 63:9; Dan. 3:28; Acts 12:11; [Heb. 1:14]
23 ^u Ps. 91:11-13; 2 Tim. 4:17; Heb. 11:33
23 ^v Heb. 11:33
24 ^w Deut. 19:18, 19; Esth. 7:10
24 ^x Deut. 24:16; 2 Kin. 14:6; Esth. 9:10
25 ^y Ezra 1:1, 2; Esth. 3:12; 8:9; Dan. 4:1
26 ^z Ezra 6:8-12; 7:13; Dan. 3:29
27 ^a Ps. 99:1
28 ^b Dan. 4:34; 6:20; Hos. 1:10; Rom. 9:26
29 ^c Dan. 2:44; 4:3; 7:14, 27; [Luke 1:33]

arose very early in the morning and went in haste to the den of lions. ²⁰And when he came to the den, he cried out with a ⁸lamenting voice to Daniel. The king spoke, saying to Daniel, "Daniel, servant of the living God, ^rhas your God, whom you serve continually, been able to deliver you from the lions?"

²¹Then Daniel said to the king, ^s"O king, live forever! ²²^tMy God sent His angel and ^ushut the lions' mouths, so that they have not hurt me, because I was found innocent before Him; and also, O king, I have done no wrong before you."

²³Now the king was exceedingly glad for him, and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no injury whatever was found on him, ^vbecause he believed in his God.

Darius Honors God

²⁴And the king gave the command, ^wand they brought those men who had accused Daniel, and they cast *them* into the den of lions—them, ^xtheir children, and their wives; and the lions overpowered them, and broke all their bones in pieces before they ever came to the bottom of the den.

²⁵^yThen King Darius wrote:

To all peoples, nations, and languages that dwell in all the earth:

Peace be multiplied to you.

²⁶^zI make a decree that in every dominion of my kingdom *men must* ^atremble and fear before the God of Daniel.

^bFor He *is* the living God, And steadfast forever; His kingdom *is the one* which shall not be ^cdestroyed, And His dominion *shall endure* to the end.

Jerusalem—that is, toward the west. His enemies were correct in assuming that if Daniel was forced to choose between the decree of an earthly king and the eternal word of the King of heaven, he would choose his God (v. 5).

6:13 Daniel's accusers did not describe him as governor (v. 2), but as **one of the captives from Judah**, in order to implicate him in a treasonous act.

6:16 The Aramaic word for **den** means "pit," implying that it was underground.

6:17 **sealed it**: To ensure that the den remained closed and that no effort could be made either by the king or his officials to intervene, the lid of the den was impressed with the royal seal and with the seals of the king's lords. The lid of the den could not be removed without breaking the seals.

6:21 Though this is a standard way of greeting a king (see 2:4; 3:9;

5:10; 6:6), it is ironic here because Daniel, who has just been made alive by the God whom even Darius confesses as "the living God" (v. 20), blesses the king with the wish that he should **live forever**. That is literally possible for the king, of course, only if he comes to know Daniel's God who is the source of life as the lion's den episode shows so clearly.

6:23 **because he believed in his God**: Daniel's faithfulness got him into trouble (v. 10); his faith got him out of it (see Heb. 11:33).

6:24 **children . . . wives**: The entire families of the wicked conspirators were destroyed because the Persians, like the Hebrews and other Semites, considered guilt a collective responsibility, especially in families. The examples of Korah (see Num. 16:1-35) and Achan (see Josh. 7) illustrate this principle well.

6:26 **I make a decree**: Darius's original 30-day decree (vv. 6-9) had probably expired.

²⁷ He delivers and rescues,
^d And He works signs and wonders
 in heaven and on earth,
 Who has delivered Daniel from the
⁹power of the lions.

²⁸ So this Daniel prospered in the reign
 of Darius ^e and in the reign of ^f Cyrus the
 Persian.

Vision of the Four Beasts

7 In the first year of Belshazzar king of
 Babylon, ^a Daniel ¹ had a dream and
^bvisions of his head *while* on his bed.
 Then he wrote down the dream, telling
²the main facts.

² Daniel spoke, saying, “I saw in my vi-
 sion by night, and behold, the four winds
 of heaven were stirring up the Great Sea.
³ And four great beasts ^c came up from
 the sea, each different from the other.
⁴ The first *was* ^dlike a lion, and had eagle’s
 wings. I watched till its wings were
 plucked off; and it was lifted up from
 the earth and made to stand on two feet
 like a man, and a ^eman’s heart was given
 to it.

^{5f} “And suddenly another beast, a second,
 like a bear. It was raised up on one
 side, and *had* three ribs in its mouth between
 its teeth. And they said thus to it:
 ‘Arise, devour much flesh!’”

⁶ “After this I looked, and there was
 another, like a leopard, which had on its
 back four wings of a bird. The beast also
 had ^gfour heads, and dominion was given
 to it.

²⁷ ^d Dan. 4:2, 3
⁹ Lit. *hand*
²⁸ ^e Dan. 1:21 ^f Ezra
 1:1, 2

CHAPTER 7

¹ ^a Num. 12:6;
 [Amos 3:7] ^b [Dan.
 2:28] ¹ Lit. *saw*
² Lit. *the head or*
chief of the words
³ ^c Dan. 7:17; Rev.
 13:1; 17:8
⁴ ^d Deut. 28:49;
 2 Sam. 1:23; Jer.
 48:40; Ezek. 17:3;
 Hab. 1:8 ^e Dan.
 4:16, 34
⁵ ^f Dan. 2:39
⁶ ^g Dan. 8:8, 22

⁷ ^h Dan. 2:40 ⁱ Dan.
 2:41; Rev. 12:3; 13:1
⁸ ⁱ Dan. 8:9 ^k Rev.
 9:7 ^j Ps. 12:3; Rev.
 13:5, 6 ³ Lit. *great*
things
⁹ ^m [Rev. 20:4] ⁿ Ps.
 90:2 ^o Ps. 104:2;
 Rev. 1:14 ^p Ezek.
 1:15 ⁴ Or *set up*
¹⁰ ^q Ps. 50:3; Is.
 30:33; 66:15 ^r Deut.
 33:2; 1 Kin. 22:19;
 Ps. 68:17; Rev. 5:11
⁵ ^s Dan. 12:1; [Rev.
 20:11–15] ⁴ Or
judgment
¹¹ ^t [Rev. 19:20;
 20:10] ⁶ Lit. *great*

⁷ “After this I saw in the night visions,
 and behold, ^ha fourth beast, dreadful and
 terrible, exceedingly strong. It had huge
 iron teeth; it was devouring, breaking in
 pieces, and trampling the residue with its
 feet. It *was* different from all the beasts
 that *were* before it, ⁱand it had ten horns.
⁸ I was considering the horns, and ^jthere
 was another horn, a little one, coming up
 among them, before whom three of the
 first horns were plucked out by the roots.
 And there, in this horn, *were* eyes like the
 eyes ^kof a man, ^land a mouth speaking
³pompous words.

Vision of the Ancient of Days

⁹ “I ^m watched till thrones were ⁴put in
 place,
 And ⁿthe Ancient of Days was
 seated;
^oHis garment *was* white as snow,
 And the hair of His head *was* like
 pure wool.
 His throne *was* a fiery flame,
^pIts wheels a burning fire;
¹⁰ ^qA fiery stream issued
 And came forth from before Him.
^rA thousand thousands ministered to
 Him;
 Ten thousand times ten thousand
 stood before Him.
^sThe ⁵court was seated,
 And the books were opened.

¹¹ “I watched then because of the
 sound of the ⁶pompous words which
 the horn was speaking; ^tI watched till the

6:28 Daniel prospered throughout the reign of Darius and in the reign of Cyrus. Gubar, or Darius, served Cyrus for about one year (539–538 B.C.), after which Cyrus appointed his son Cambyses as vice-regent over Babylon. Cyrus himself continued as king until 530 B.C.

7:1 the first year of Belshazzar: Chapter 5 records Belshazzar’s death, indicating that the Book of Daniel is not arranged chronologically. The date of Belshazzar’s first year cannot be stated precisely. However, since Nabonidus appears to have spent at least ten years in Arabia and since Belshazzar reigned for Nabonidus in Babylon during that time, a date of 550 B.C. for Belshazzar’s first year cannot be far off. This date coincides with the inauguration of the Medo-Persian Empire under Cyrus, an occasion that may have prompted Daniel’s vision.

7:2 Four winds seems to refer to winds from every direction, covering the whole earth. **The Great Sea** is probably a reference to the Mediterranean Sea (see Josh. 15:12; 23:4; Ezek. 47:10, 19), here used figuratively of the nations of the world (see Is. 57:20; Rev. 17:15). **7:3 the beasts** represent kings (v. 17) or kingdoms (vv. 18, 23).

7:4 lion . . . eagle’s wings: It is commonly recognized that these two animals are the king of the beasts and the king of the birds respectively, a fitting description of Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonian Empire (see Jer. 49:19, 22). There has been almost universal agreement from the early centuries until today that this beast represents Babylon. It is also agreed that the vision of ch. 7 and that of ch. 2 speak of the same four kingdoms. **Plucked off** is a reference to Nebuchadnezzar’s humiliation (4:28–33).

7:5 If the lion with eagle’s wings represents Babylon (v. 4), the

bear—in line with Nebuchadnezzar’s first dream—represents Babylon’s successor, the Medo-Persian Empire (2:38, 39). **Raised up on one side** suggests that the Persians were greater and more powerful than the Medes. The **three ribs** represent the three kingdoms that the Medo-Persians devoured—Babylon, Lydia, and Egypt. **7:6** If the second beast of Daniel’s dream represents the Medo-Persian Empire (v. 5), the **leopard** represents Greece (2:39). **Four** symbolizes universality (see “four winds,” v. 2); **wings** are synonymous with speed. The Greeks under the leadership of Alexander the Great rapidly conquered the known world. **Four heads** describes “heads” of government. After Alexander’s death, his empire was divided among his generals into four different parts (8:8, 22)—Macedonia, Egypt, Syria, and Thrace.

7:7 The fourth beast did not look like any known animal. Since this beast follows Greece (v. 6), it may represent Rome (2:40).

7:8 The horns here represent rulers. Even though the **little one** begins small, it would become the greatest of all (v. 20).

7:9 Ancient of Days is a reference to God the Father as certified by the submission of “the One like the Son of Man” to Him (vv. 13, 14) and His role in judgment (v. 22). **Fiery flame** symbolizes judgment. **Its wheels** refers to the chariot in which God rides to battle to exercise His sovereignty and to appear as Judge (see Ezek. 1:15–21; 10:1–22).

7:10 A thousand thousands . . . Ten thousand times ten thousand: The reference here is to innumerable servants. **The books** record the names and deeds of those who will be judged (see Rev. 20:12).

7:11 The horn here is the same as the one in v. 8. **the burning**

beast was slain, and its body destroyed and given to the burning flame.¹² As for the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away, yet their lives were prolonged for a season and a time.

¹³“I was watching in the night visions, And behold, *“One* like the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, And they brought Him near before Him.

¹⁴“Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, That all *“peoples, nations, and languages* should serve Him. His dominion is *“an everlasting dominion,* Which shall not pass away, And His kingdom *“the one* Which shall not be destroyed.

Daniel's Visions Interpreted

¹⁵“I, Daniel, was grieved in my spirit *“within my* body, and the visions of my head troubled me. ¹⁶I came near to one of those who stood by, and asked him the truth of all this. So he told me and made known to me the interpretation of these things: ¹⁷“Those great beasts, which are four, *“are four* ⁸kings *“which* arise out of the earth. ¹⁸But *“the* saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever.”

¹⁹“Then I wished to know the truth

¹³ ^u Ezek. 1:26; [Matt. 24:30; 26:64; Mark 13:26; 14:62; Luke 21:27; Rev. 1:7, 13; 14:14]

¹⁴ ^v Ps. 2:6-8; Dan. 7:27; [Matt. 28:18; John 3:35, 36; 1 Cor. 15:27; Eph. 1:22; Phil. 2:9-11; Rev. 1:6; 11:15] ^w Dan. 3:4 ^x Ps. 145:13; Mic. 4:7; [Luke 1:33] ^y; John 12:34; Heb. 12:28

¹⁵ ^z Lit. *in the midst of its sheath*

¹⁷ ^a Representing their kingdoms, v. 23

¹⁸ ^y Ps. 149:5-9; Is. 60:12-14; Dan. 7:14; [2 Tim. 2:11; Rev. 2:26, 27; 20:4; 22:5]

²⁰ ⁹ Lit. *great things*

²¹ ^z Rev. 11:7; 13:7; 17:14

²² ^a [Rev. 1:6]

²³ ^b Dan. 2:40

²⁴ ^c Dan. 7:7; Rev. 13:1; 17:12

²⁵ ^d Is. 37:23; Dan. 11:36; Rev. 13:1-6

^e Rev. 17:6 ^f Dan. 2:21

¹ Lit. *wear out*

about the fourth beast, which was different from all the others, exceedingly dreadful, *with* its teeth of iron and its nails of bronze, *which* devoured, broke in pieces, and trampled the residue with its feet; ²⁰and the ten horns that *were* on its head, and the other *horn* which came up, before which three fell, namely, that horn which had eyes and a mouth which spoke ⁹pompous words, whose appearance *was* greater than his fellows.

²¹“I was watching; ^zand the same horn was making war against the saints, and prevailing against them, ²²until the Ancient of Days came, ^aand a judgment was made *in favor* of the saints of the Most High, and the time came for the saints to possess the kingdom.

²³“Thus he said:

‘The fourth beast shall be

^bA fourth kingdom on earth, Which shall be different from all *other* kingdoms, And shall devour the whole earth, Trample it and break it in pieces.

²⁴ ^cThe ten horns *are* ten kings *Who* shall arise from this kingdom. And another shall rise after them; He shall be different from the first *ones,*

And shall subdue three kings.

²⁵ ^dHe shall speak *pompous* words against the Most High, Shall ^epersecute ¹ the saints of the Most High, And shall ^fintend to change times and law.

flame: The idea that the fate of the wicked is fiery destruction is apparent in the OT (see Gen. 19:24; Is. 66:24; Mal. 4:1, 3), but reaches its fullest expression in the NT teaching about hell (see Matt. 5:22, 29, 30; 10:28; 2 Pet. 2:4).

7:12 The rest of the beasts is a reference to the three beasts of vv. 3–6—Babylon, Medo-Persia, and Greece. **they had their dominion taken away:** Though these nations passed away, their “dominion” was inherited by their respective successors. **A season and a time** is an idiom for an indefinite period.

7:13 Son of Man is Semitic for “human being.” Daniel saw **One like** the “Son of Man,” indicating that He is not a man in the strict sense, but rather the perfect representation of humanity. Jewish and Christian expositors have identified this individual as the Messiah. Jesus Himself used this name to emphasize His humanity as the incarnate Son of God (see Matt. 9:6; 10:23; 11:19; 12:8, 32, 40; Mark 8:31; 9:12; Luke 6:5; 9:22; John 3:13, 14; 5:27). **Coming with . . . clouds:** John uses the same expression to speak of Jesus coming in judgment (see Rev. 1:7; see also Matt. 24:30).

7:14 Him refers to the Son of Man (v. 13), who will reign over all things as the regent of Almighty God (see 1 Cor. 15:27, 28; Eph. 1:20–23; Phil. 2:9–11; Rev. 17:14; 19:16). In contrast to the vanishing nature of the previous empires, **His dominion is . . . everlasting.** **7:16 One of those who stood by** refers to an angel standing by the throne of God (v. 10).

7:17 These kings represent kingdoms (8:21). Thus each beast represents both a king and a kingdom.

7:18 saints of the Most High: Saints means “holy ones,” a term that can refer either to angels (see Job 15:15; Ps. 89:5, 7; Zech. 14:5)

or to redeemed men and women (see Ps. 16:3; 30:4; 31:23; 37:28; Prov. 2:8; Rom. 1:7; 12:13; Rev. 5:8). The kingdom received and forever possessed by the saints must be the same as the dominion of the Son of Man, which is also everlasting (v. 14). The Son of Man thus rules through His saints, a fact proclaimed frequently in the NT (see Rev. 2:26, 27; 20:4–6).

7:21 Daniel’s vision reveals the hostility waged by the little horn **against the saints.** The little horn’s militaristic character is seen also in 11:38, 39 and particularly in Rev. 13:1–10. There, in the guise of a beast, this blasphemous enemy of the saints prevails for 42 months. The connection between Daniel’s “little horn” and John’s “beast from the sea” is unmistakable.

7:24, 25 There are three common interpretations as to the **ten kings who shall arise from this kingdom:** (1) The fourth beast is Greece and the ten horns are ten divisions of the Grecian Empire. (2) The fourth beast is Rome and the ten horns are the fragments of the Roman Empire. (3) The fourth beast is a revived Roman Empire and the ten kings are members of a future realm. **Another** refers to the little horn of v. 8 (see also vv. 20, 21). This king will **subdue three** others, blaspheme God (see 11:36; 2 Thess. 2:4; Rev. 13:5, 6), **persecute the saints** (see v. 21; Rev. 13:7), attempt to **change times and law**, and dominate the **saints** for a limited time. **time and times and half a time:** Time can refer to a year, times to two years, and half a time to one half of a year, for a total of three and one-half years. Some suggest that the expression does not indicate a specific number of years but instead a period of time that God in His mercy would shorten.

Then ^gthe saints shall be given into his hand
^hFor a time and times and half a time.

26 ⁱBut the court shall be seated,
And they shall ^jtake away his dominion,
To consume and destroy *it* forever.
27 Then the ^kkingdom and dominion,
And the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven,
Shall be given to the people, the saints of the Most High.
^lHis kingdom *is* an everlasting kingdom,
^mAnd all dominions shall serve and obey Him.⁷

28 “This *is* the end of the ²account. As for me, Daniel, ⁿmy thoughts greatly troubled me, and my countenance changed; but I ^okept the matter in my heart.”

Vision of a Ram and a Goat

8 In ¹the third year of the reign of King Belshazzar a vision appeared to me—to me, Daniel—after the one that appeared to me ^athe first time. ²I saw in the vision, and it so happened while I was looking, that I *was* in ^bShushan, ²the ³citadel, which *is* in the province of Elam; and I saw in the vision that I was by the River Ulai. ³Then I lifted my eyes and saw, and there, standing beside the river, was a ram which had two horns, and the two horns *were* high; but one *was*

25 ^g Rev. 13:7; 18:24
^h Dan. 12:7; Rev. 12:14
26 ⁱ [Dan. 2:35; 7:10, 22] / Rev. 19:20
27 ^k Is. 54:3; Dan. 7:14, 18, 22; Rev. 20:4 / 2 Sam. 7:16; Ps. 89:35-37; Is. 9:7; Dan. 2:44; 4:34; 7:14; [Luke 1:32, 33]; John 12:34; [Rev. 11:15; 22:5]
^m Ps. 2:6-12; 22:27; 72:11; 86:9; Is. 60:12; Rev. 11:1
28 ⁿ Dan. 8:27
^o Luke 2:19, 51 ² Lit. word

CHAPTER 8

1 ^a Dan. 7:1 ¹ The Hebrew language resumes in Dan. 8:1.
2 ^b Neh. 1:1; Esth. 1:2; 2:8 ² Or *Susa*
³ Or *fortified palace*

3 ^c Dan. 7:5
4 ^d Dan. 5:19 ⁴ Lit. stand before him
5 ^e Dan. 8:8, 21; 11:3
7 ⁵ Lit. struck
8 ^f Dan. 7:6; 8:22; 11:4
9 ^g Dan. 11:21
^h Dan. 11:25 / Ps. 48:2
10 ⁱ / Dan. 11:28 ^k Is. 14:13; Jer. 48:26
^j Rev. 12:4
11 ^m 2 Kin. 19:22; 23; 2 Chr. 32:15-17; Is. 37:23; Dan. 8:25; 11:36, 37 ⁿ Josh. 5:14 ^o Ezek. 46:14; Dan. 11:31; 12:11
^p Ex. 29:38

^chigher than the other, and the higher *one* came up last. ⁴I saw the ram pushing westward, northward, and southward, so that no animal could ⁴withstand him; nor *was there any* that could deliver from his hand, ^dbut he did according to his will and became great.
⁵And as I was considering, suddenly a male goat came from the west, across the surface of the whole earth, without touching the ground; and the goat *had* a notable ^ehorn between his eyes. ⁶Then he came to the ram that had two horns, which I had seen standing beside the river, and ran at him with furious power. ⁷And I saw him confronting the ram; he was moved with rage against him, ⁵attacked the ram, and broke his two horns. There was no power in the ram to withstand him, but he cast him down to the ground and trampled him; and there was no one that could deliver the ram from his hand.
⁸Therefore the male goat grew very great; but when he became strong, the large horn was broken, and in place of it ^ffour notable ones came up toward the four winds of heaven. ⁹^gAnd out of one of them came a little horn which grew exceedingly great toward the south, ^htoward the east, and toward the ⁱGlorious Land. ¹⁰^jAnd it grew up to ^kthe host of heaven; and ^lit cast down *some* of the host and *some* of the stars to the ground, and trampled them. ¹¹^mHe even exalted *himself* as high as ⁿthe Prince of the host; ^oand by him ^pthe daily sacrifices were

7:26 The **dominion** of the little horn will come to a violent end when he submits to the **court** of God (v. 10).
7:27 **the kingdom . . . to the people, the saints:** The kingdom of God, governed by His saints, will exercise rule over all the earth.
8:1 After writing in Aramaic from 2:4—7:28, Daniel returns to writing in Hebrew.
8:2 **Shushan** was about 230 miles east of Babylon. **Ulai** was an artificial canal located a few miles from Shushan.
8:3 The **ram** represents Medo-Persia (v. 20). The **two horns** symbolize the people of Media and the people of Persia.

8:4 Cyrus and his successors conquered **westward** including Babylon, Syria, and Asia Minor, **northward** including Armenia and the Caspian Sea region, and **southward** including Egypt and Ethiopia.
8:5 The **goat** represents Greece (v. 21). The **notable horn** symbolizes Alexander the Great (v. 21) who launched his attack against Persia in 334 B.C. By 332 B.C. he had essentially subdued the Persian Empire. **without touching the ground:** Alexander's conquest was so rapid that it seemed as if he flew across the earth.
8:7 The Persian forces outnumbered the Greeks. But in two decisive battles, the Medo-Persian Empire collapsed.
8:8 **the large horn was broken:** Alexander the Great died at the height of his career, before he was 33 years old. **four notable ones:** After Alexander's death, four of his generals carved up the Macedonian Empire. Antigonos ruled from northern Syria to central Asia; Cassander ruled over Macedonia; Ptolemy ruled in Egypt and southern Syria, including Palestine; Lysimachus ruled over Thrace.
8:9 The **little horn** here is not the same as the little horn of ch. 7. The former horn comes out of the fourth beast, Rome, whereas this one comes out of Greece. The **little horn** here refers to Antiochus Epiphanes, the eighth king of the Syrian dynasty who reigned from 175 to 164 B.C. Thus, this prophecy skips from 301 B.C., the time of the division of Alexander's empire, to 175 B.C., when Antiochus became king. **toward the south:** Antiochus invaded Egypt. **The east** is Parthia and **the Glorious Land** is Palestine.
8:10 **The host of heaven and the stars** both refer to God's people (see 12:3; Gen. 15:5). **Cast down some** describes Antiochus's conquest.
8:11 **The Prince of the host** refers to God Himself. The little horn, like Lucifer (see Is. 14:12), aspires to be like God. **sanctuary . . . cast**

vision
(Heb. *chazon*) (8:1; Is. 1:1; Prov. 29:18) Strong's #2377

The Hebrew word for a dream or a vision is derived from a common Hebrew verb meaning “to see.” Dreams and visions were often recognized by the ancients as revelations from the gods, or from God Himself in the case of the Hebrews (Is. 1:1). Daniel received a visionary message from God that spoke about the future of the kingdoms of Persia and Greece. His dream was encoded in symbols which required the interpretive assistance of the angel Gabriel (8:15–27). The author of Proverbs insists that revelation from God is essential to the well-being of a society. Without God's law revealed in Scripture, the foundation of a society crumbles (see Prov. 29:18).

taken away, and the place of ⁶His sanctuary was cast down. ¹²Because of transgression, ⁹an army was given over to the horn to oppose the daily sacrifices; and he cast ⁷truth down to the ground. He ⁵did all this and prospered.

¹³Then I heard ⁴a holy one speaking; and another holy one said to that certain one who was speaking, “How long will the vision be, concerning the daily sacrifices and the transgression ⁷of desolation, the giving of both the sanctuary and the host to be trampled underfoot?”

¹⁴And he said to me, “For two thousand three hundred ⁸days; then the sanctuary shall be cleansed.”

Gabriel Interprets the Vision

¹⁵Then it happened, when I, Daniel, had seen the vision and ¹²was seeking the meaning, that suddenly there stood before me ¹³one having the appearance of a man. ¹⁶And I heard a man’s voice ¹⁰between the banks of the Ulai, who called, and said, ¹⁴“Gabriel, make this man un-

¹¹ ⁶The temple
¹² ^aDan. 11:31 ^rPs. 119:43; Is. 59:14
⁵Dan. 8:4; 11:36
¹³ ^rDan. 4:13, 23;
1 Pet. 1:12 ⁷Or making desolate
¹⁴ ⁸Lit. evening-mornings
¹⁵ ^u1 Pet. 1:10
^vEzek. 1:26
¹⁶ ^wDan. 12:6, 7
^xDan. 9:21; Luke 1:19, 26

¹⁷ ^yEzek. 1:28; 44:4; Dan. 2:46; Rev. 1:17
¹⁸ ^zDan. 10:9; Luke 9:32 ^aEzek. 2:2; Dan. 10:10, 16, 18
¹⁹ ^bHab. 2:3
²¹ ^cDan. 11:3
⁹shaggy male ¹Lit. king, representing his kingdom, Dan. 7:17, 23
²² ^dDan. 11:4

derstand the vision.” ¹⁷So he came near where I stood, and when he came I was afraid and ⁹fell on my face; but he said to me, “Understand, son of man, that the vision refers to the time of the end.”

^{18z}Now, as he was speaking with me, I was in a deep sleep with my face to the ground; ^abut he touched me, and stood me upright. ¹⁹And he said, “Look, I am making known to you what shall happen in the latter time of the indignation; ^bfor at the appointed time the end shall be. ²⁰The ram which you saw, having the two horns—they are the kings of Media and Persia. ²¹And the ⁹male goat is the ¹kingdom of Greece. The large horn that is between its eyes ^cis the first king. ^{22d}As for the broken horn and the four that stood up in its place, four kingdoms shall arise out of that nation, but not with its power.

²³“And in the latter time of their kingdom,
When the transgressors have reached their fullness,

down: Antiochus desecrated the house of God by erecting a statue of Zeus on the bronze altar.

8:12 Truth is a reference to the Mosaic Law.

8:13 A holy one and another holy one both refer to angels (4:13, 23).

8:14 Two thousand three hundred days refers to the time between Antiochus’s pollution of the temple and the Maccabees’ cleansing of it.

8:16 This is the first mention of the messenger **Gabriel** in the Bible. The angel is mentioned three other times in Scripture (see 9:21; Luke 1:19, 26).

8:17 The time of the end is a reference to a time that may already be underway (see 1 John 2:18) in some respects, but will not find its fulfillment until the Second Coming of Christ (see Matt. 24:14).

8:19 The indignation is that of the Lord against those who have rebelled against His dominion. **The end** (see “the time of the end”

in v. 17) indicates that this judgment is against all those in rebellion against God, especially those living at the time just before the coming of Christ.

8:20 The two horns represent the two countries of **Media and Persia**. It is significant that the two are regarded as one empire, represented by **the ram**.

8:21 The first king of Greece was Alexander the Great.

8:22 not with its power: None of Alexander’s four generals ruled with the strength of Alexander (v. 8).

8:23 When the transgressors have reached their fullness means when the sinful actions of the Jews have reached the point where God cannot permit them to go any further without bringing punishment (see Gen. 15:16; Matt. 23:32; 1 Thess. 2:16). **A king** refers to Antiochus IV Epiphanes, the king of Syria who made his capital at Antioch.

Alexander’s Empire



A king shall arise,
^eHaving fierce ²features,
 Who understands sinister schemes.
 24 His power shall be mighty, ^fbut not
 by his own power;
 He shall destroy ³fearfully,
^gAnd shall prosper and thrive;
^hHe shall destroy the mighty, and *also*
 the holy people.

25 “Through ⁱhis cunning
 He shall cause deceit to prosper
 under his ⁴rule;
^jAnd he shall exalt *himself* in his
 heart.
 He shall destroy many in *their*
 prosperity.
^kHe shall even rise against the Prince
 of princes;
 But he shall be ^lbroken without
human ⁴means.

26 “And the vision of the evenings and
 mornings
 Which was told is true;
^mTherefore seal up the vision,
 For *it refers* to many days in *the*
future.”

27ⁿ And I, Daniel, fainted and was sick
 for days; afterward I arose and went about
 the king’s business. I was ⁵astonished by
 the vision, but no one understood it.

Daniel’s Prayer for the People

9 In the first year ^aof Darius the son
 of Ahasuerus, of the lineage of the
 Medes, who was made king over the
 realm of the Chaldeans— ²in the first
 year of his reign I, Daniel, understood by
 the books the number of the years *speci-*
fied by the word of the LORD through
^bJeremiah the prophet, that He would ac-
 complish seventy years in the desolations
 of Jerusalem.

23 ^cDeut. 28:50
²Lit. *countenance*
 24 ^fRev. 17:13
^gDan. 11:36
^hDan. 7:25 ³Or
extraordinarily
 25 ⁱDan. 11:21
^jDan. 8:11–13; 11:36;
 12:7 ^kDan. 11:36;
 Rev. 19:19, 20 ^lJob
 34:20; Lam. 4:6
⁴Lit. *hand*
 26 ^mEzek. 12:27;
 Dan. 12:4, 9; Rev.
 22:10
 27 ⁿDan. 7:28; 8:17;
 Hab. 3:16 ⁵*amazed*

CHAPTER 9

1 ^aDan. 1:21
 2 ^b2 Chr. 36:21;
 Ezra 1:1; Jer. 25:11,
 12; 29:10; Zech. 7:5

3 ^cNeh. 1:4; Dan.
 6:10; 10:15
 4 ^dEx. 20:6
 5 ^e1 Kin. 8:47, 48;
 Neh. 9:33; Ps. 106:6;
 Is. 64:5–7; Jer. 14:7
 6 ^f2 Chr. 36:15; Jer.
 44:4, 5
 7 ^gNeh. 9:33
 9 ^h[Neh. 9:17; Ps.
 130:4, 7]
 11 ⁱIs. 1:3–6; Jer.
 8:5–10 ^jLev. 26:14;
 Neh. 1:6; Ps. 106:6
 12 ^kIs. 44:26; Jer.
 44:2–6; Lam. 2:17;
 Zech. 1:6 ^lLam.
 1:12; 2:13; Ezek. 5:9;
 [Amos 3:2]

^{3c}Then I set my face toward the Lord
 God to make request by prayer and sup-
 plications, with fasting, sackcloth, and
 ashes. ⁴And I prayed to the LORD my
 God, and made confession, and said,
 “O ^dLord, great and awesome God, who
 keeps His covenant and mercy with those
 who love Him, and with those who keep
 His commandments, ^{5e}we have sinned
 and committed iniquity, we have done
 wickedly and rebelled, even by departing
 from Your precepts and Your judgments.
^{6f}Neither have we heeded Your servants
 the prophets, who spoke in Your name
 to our kings and our princes, to our fa-
 thers and all the people of the land.
⁷O Lord, ^grighteousness *belongs* to You,
 but to us shame of face, as *it is* this day—
 to the men of Judah, to the inhabitants
 of Jerusalem and all Israel, those near
 and those far off in all the countries to
 which You have driven them, because of
 the unfaithfulness which they have com-
 mitted against You.

⁸“O Lord, to us *belongs* shame of face,
 to our kings, our princes, and our fa-
 thers, because we have sinned against
 You. ^{9h}To the Lord our God *belong* mercy
 and forgiveness, though we have rebelled
 against Him. ¹⁰We have not obeyed
 the voice of the LORD our God, to walk
 in His laws, which He set before us by
 His servants the prophets. ¹¹Yes, ⁱall Is-
 rael has transgressed Your law, and has
 departed so as not to obey Your voice;
 therefore the curse and the oath written
 in the ^jLaw of Moses the servant of God
 have been poured out on us, because we
 have sinned against Him. ¹²And He has
^kconfirmed His words, which He spoke
 against us and against our judges who
 judged us, by bringing upon us a great dis-
 aster; ^lfor under the whole heaven such
 has never been done as what has been
 done to Jerusalem.

8:24 Not by his own power indicates that Antiochus would be energized by Satan, as will the Antichrist (see 2 Thess. 2:9).

8:25 Without human means: Antiochus died without human intervention. According to the apocryphal Book of 2 Maccabees, Antiochus (v. 23) died of a painful disease.

8:26 seal up the vision: Most documents of Daniel’s time were written on scrolls that could be rolled up and sealed to protect their contents. This document pertained to a time **many days in the future**.

8:27 I . . . fainted and was sick: Daniel suffered a severe emotional reaction to the vision of ch. 8, apparently even greater than the reaction he had experienced after his first vision (7:15, 28).

9:1 The first year of Darius was 539 B.C., the year he was appointed by Cyrus as administrator of Babylon.

9:2 The books refers to Scripture, specifically the Book of Jeremiah, which states that the desolation of Jerusalem would be fulfilled in 70 years (Jer. 25:11, 12; 29:10–14). Daniel’s own captivity occurred in 605 B.C. It was now 538 B.C., some 67 years after the conquest. The period of captivity was almost over. Zechariah refers to the 70-year

period as beginning with the destruction of the temple, which took place in 586 B.C. (see Zech. 7:5). The temple was rebuilt in 515 B.C. (see Ezra 6:15). Therefore, the **seventy years** has several beginnings and endings.

9:4–14 This is a prayer of repentance for Israel’s past sinfulness, but it is also a prayer of confidence because God was about to overthrow the Babylonians and allow the Jews to return to their homeland to rebuild it. The 70 years of captivity were almost up, and glorious things lay ahead. Daniel confessed that Israel had departed from the Word of God, had disregarded the prophets of God, and had despised the Lord Himself.

9:11, 12 the curse and the oath: Covenant documents typically contained statements concerning the penalties for covenant violation. In **the Law of Moses**, such sanctions are found particularly in Leviticus 26:3–45 and Deuteronomy 27 and 28. In both passages the most feared and devastating curse of all—deportation from the land of promise—is emphasized (see Lev. 26:33–39; Deut. 28:36–68). Daniel pointed out that the curse had come to pass.

¹³ *m* “As it is written in the Law of Moses, all this disaster has come upon us; ⁿ yet we have not made our prayer before the LORD our God, that we might turn from our iniquities and understand Your truth. ¹⁴ Therefore the LORD has ^o kept the disaster in mind, and brought it upon us; for ^p the LORD our God is righteous in all the works which He does, though we have not obeyed His voice. ¹⁵ And now, O Lord our God, ^q who brought Your people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand, and made Yourself ^r a name, as it is this day—we have sinned, we have done wickedly!

¹⁶ “O Lord, ^s according to all Your righteousness, I pray, let Your anger and Your fury be turned away from Your city Jerusalem, ^t Your holy mountain; because for our sins, ^u and for the iniquities of our fathers, ^v Jerusalem and Your peo-

¹³ *m* Lev. 26:14–45; Deut. 28:15–68; Lam. 2:17 ⁿ Job 36:13; Is. 9:13; Jer. 2:30; Hos. 7:7
¹⁴ *o* Jer. 31:28; 44:27 ^p Neh. 9:33
¹⁵ *q* Ex. 32:11; 1 Kin. 8:51; Neh. 1:10 ^r Ex. 14:18; Neh. 9:10; Jer. 32:20
¹⁶ *s* 1 Sam. 12:7; Ps. 31:1; Mic. 6:4, 5 ^t Ps. 87:1–3; Dan. 9:20; Joel 3:17; Zech. 8:3 ^u Ex. 20:5 ^v Ps. 122:6; Jer. 29:7; Lam. 2:16

^w Ps. 79:4
¹⁷ *x* Num. 6:24–26; Ps. 80:3, 7, 19 ^y Lam. 5:18
^z [John 16:24] ¹ Be gracious ² The temple
¹⁸ *a* Is. 37:17 ^b Ex. 3:7 ^c Jer. 25:29

ple ^w are a reproach to all *those* around us. ¹⁷ Now therefore, our God, hear the prayer of Your servant, and his supplications, ^x and ^y for the Lord’s sake ¹ cause Your face to shine on ² Your sanctuary, ^z which is desolate. ¹⁸ *a* O my God, incline Your ear and hear; open Your eyes ^b and see our desolations, and the city ^c which is called by Your name; for we do not present our supplications before You because of our righteous deeds, but because of Your great mercies. ¹⁹ O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, listen and act! Do not delay for Your own sake, my God, for Your city and Your people are called by Your name.”

The Seventy-Weeks Prophecy

²⁰ Now while I *was* speaking, praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my suppli-

9:15 brought Your people out of the land of Egypt: Daniel reflected on the greatest redemptive event of Israel’s history, the exodus from Egypt, and prayed that God would repeat what He had done long ago.

9:17 Your sanctuary is a reference to Solomon’s temple, which had lain in ruins since 586 B.C.

9:18 Your great mercies: It is important to note that the only basis for Daniel’s appeal was the grace of God.

9:19 Do not delay: These words must be understood in light of Daniel’s reference to the 70 years (v. 2). Daniel knew full well that

all of God’s promises had not come to pass, nor had the blessings been conferred on the regathered and restored people (see Lev. 26:40–45; Deut. 4:29–31).

9:20, 21 while I was speaking: The angel was sent at the beginning of Daniel’s prayer (v. 23). **The man Gabriel** is not a denial of Gabriel’s angelic nature; the title simply serves to identify Gabriel with the vision of 8:15, 16. **evening offering:** Because the temple was in ruins, regular daily sacrifices were impossible. Nevertheless, Daniel observed the ritual of worship by praying at the hour of the evening sacrifice. Daniel’s prayer was his evening offering.

God Answers Fervent Prayer



Do you ever feel as if your prayers bounce off the ceiling rather than reaching God? If so, consider carefully the prayer of Daniel for the release of his people from captivity (ch. 9). It is a testimony to the fact that God answers prayer—in His time and according to His purposes—as the angel Gabriel announced (9:24, 25).

However, God does not answer any and every prayer as the one praying would like. Why, then, did He respond to Daniel’s? Here are some observations:

1. *daniel’s prayer was the result of his study of Scripture.* The timing of Daniel’s prayer is highly significant. It came “in the first year of Darius,” around 539 B.C. (9:1). That was the year in which Babylon fell to the Persians, a truly astounding event that must have sent Daniel back to the Scriptures to search for understanding. As he studied the Law, he found the reasons for Judah’s exile (9:11–13; compare Lev. 26; Deut. 27; 28). He also found a promise of restoration—if the people repented of their sins (Lev. 26:40–45).

2. *daniel confessed and repented of his people’s sins.* By all appearances, Daniel was a man of faith who lived a life of utmost integrity, both before and after being deported to Babylon. Yet despite his own personal innocence, he confessed to numerous sins as a member of God’s wayward people. Four times he told the Lord, “We have sinned” (9:5, 8, 11, 15). This is a powerful example of corporate confession, in which one accepts personal responsibility for the sins of one’s people (see Lam. 1:18).

3. *daniel fasted and prayed for a period of time.* The Bible does not say exactly how long Daniel’s prayer of confession lasted, but it was probably more than a day, as he refers to fasting (9:3). He also demonstrated his remorse for sin in a very tangible way by wearing sackcloth and smearing himself with ashes. Clearly he wanted God to know that he was sorry for the sins of his people. Only after this prolonged period of confession did Daniel ask the Lord for mercy (9:16, 17). He did not even raise the possibility of restoration, despite God’s promise in the Law and his awareness of Jeremiah’s prophecies (9:2). He asked only that the Lord would act on behalf of His own interests (9:18, 19).

James said that “the effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much” (James 5:16). Daniel’s prayer seems to be a case in point. Not long after Daniel prayed, Cyrus issued a decree allowing the Jews to return to Jerusalem and begin rebuilding the temple (2 Chr. 36:22, 23). Was there a connection between Daniel’s prayer, Cyrus’s decree, and Jeremiah’s prophecies? Gabriel indicates that there was (9:23–25).

Prayer is not a gimmick by which we charm or coerce God into giving us what we want. Prayer is a sober-minded acknowledgment of our true situation before the Lord and an admission of our need for His divine help. Are you prepared to pray like Daniel?

cation before the LORD my God for the holy mountain of my God, ²¹yes, while I *was* speaking in prayer, the man ^dGabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, ³being caused to fly swiftly, reached me about the time of the evening offering. ²²And he informed *me*, and talked with me, and said, “O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you skill to understand. ²³At the beginning of your supplications the ⁴command went out, and I have come to tell *you*, for you *are* greatly ^ebeloved; therefore ^fconsider the matter, and understand the vision:

- ²⁴“Seventy ⁵weeks are determined
For your people and for your holy city,
To finish the transgression,
⁶To make an end of sins,
^gTo make reconciliation for iniquity,
^hTo bring in everlasting righteousness,
To seal up vision and prophecy,
ⁱAnd to anoint ⁷the Most Holy.
- ²⁵“Know therefore and understand,
That from the going forth of the command
To restore and build Jerusalem
Until ^jMessiah ^kthe Prince,
There shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks;
The ⁸street shall be built again, and the ⁹wall,
Even in troublesome times.

²¹ ^d Dan. 8:16; Luke 1:19, 26 ³ Or *being weary with weariness*
²³ ^e Dan. 10:11, 19 ^f Matt. 24:15 ⁴ Lit. *word*
²⁴ ⁵ Lit. *sevens*, and so throughout the chapter ^g 2 Chr. 29:24; [Is. 53:10]; Acts 10:43; [Rom. 5:10]; Heb. 9:12, 14 ^h Rev. 14:6 ⁱ Ps. 45:7 ⁶ So with Qr., LXX, Syr., Vg.; Kt., Theodotion *To seal up* ⁷ The Most Holy Place
²⁵ / Luke 2:1, 2; John 1:41; 4:25 ⁸ Is. 55:4 ⁸ Or *open square* ⁹ Or *moat*

²⁶ ^f [Is. 53:8]; Matt. 27:50 [☆]; Mark 9:12; 15:37; [Luke 23:46; 24:26]; John 19:30; Acts 8:32 ^m [1 Pet. 2:21] ⁿ Matt. 22:7
²⁷ ^o Matt. 24:2; Mark 13:2; Luke 19:43, 44
¹ Suffer the death penalty
²⁷ ^p Is. 42:6 ^q [Matt. 26:28] ¹ Dan. 11:36
² Or *treaty* ³ Or *desolator*

CHAPTER 10

¹ ^a Dan. 1:7 ¹ Or *and of great conflict*;
³ ² *desirable*
⁴ ³ Heb. *Hiddekel*

- ²⁶“And after the sixty-two weeks
¹Messiah shall ¹be cut off, ^mbut not for Himself;
And ⁿthe people of the prince who is to come
^oShall destroy the city and the sanctuary.
The end of it *shall be* with a flood,
And till the end of the war
desolations are determined.
²⁷ Then he shall confirm ^pa ²covenant
with ^qmany for one week;
But in the middle of the week
He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering.
And on the wing of abominations
shall be one who makes desolate,
^rEven until the consummation, which is determined,
Is poured out on the ³desolate.”

Vision of the Glorious Man

10 In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a message was revealed to Daniel, whose ^aname was called Belteshazzar. The message *was* true, ¹but the appointed time *was* long; and he understood the message, and had understanding of the vision. ²In those days I, Daniel, was mourning three full weeks. ³I ate no ²pleasant food, no meat or wine came into my mouth, nor did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled.
⁴Now on the twenty-fourth day of the first month, as I was by the side of the great river, that is, the ³Tigris, ⁵I

9:24 Seventy weeks may also be translated *seventy sevens*. Many scholars agree that the “sevens” are years, as the 70 years of captivity addressed in v. 2 implies. Leviticus 25:8 speaks of “seven sabbaths of years”; Lev. 26:18, 21 implies that Israel’s punishment would be multiplied sevenfold. Therefore, an exile of 70 “weeks” would be expected to last for seven times 70 years. Second Chronicles 36:21 suggests that the captivity was to last long enough to make up for 70 omissions of the sabbatical year, which occurred every seven years. This would amount to 490 years before God’s people would experience perfect reconciliation with their God. There are many different interpretations of how these years account for the eras of world history before the Second Coming of the Messiah. Some interpreters have suggested that the use of the number seven in this verse is symbolic representing completeness—that is, the completion of all of human history.

9:25 The command to restore and build Jerusalem may be a reference to (1) the decree of Cyrus in Ezra 1, (2) the decree of Darius in Ezra 6, (3) the decree of Artaxerxes in Ezra 7, or (4) the decree of Artaxerxes in Neh. 2.

9:26 One commonly held interpretation maintains that **the sixty-two weeks** can be added to the seven weeks of v. 25, resulting in a total of 69 weeks, or 483 years. If these years are added to the date of the decree of Artaxerxes in Neh. 2, 445 B.C., with an adjustment to allow for the use of a 360-day year, the end of the 69 weeks coincides with the date of the crucifixion of Jesus. Various other interpretations of the time periods indicated by the 62 weeks have been presented, including one that asserts that the Messiah in this verse refers to Cyrus, who was also called the Lord’s anointed (see Is. 45:1). **Messiah shall be cut off** may be a reference to the crucifixion

of Jesus Christ. The phrase *cut off* means “to destroy, to kill.” The fact that Jesus Christ died **not for Himself** but for the sins of the world may support the view that the Messiah in this verse refers to Jesus Himself. **The prince who is to come** may be a reference to the Antichrist (v. 27).

9:27 He may be a reference to the Antichrist, who will **confirm a covenant** with Israel. **In the middle of the week**—that is, three and one-half years later—he will break the covenant. **abominations . . . desolate**: Antiochus committed an abomination of desolation by setting up an altar to the god Zeus in the temple in Jerusalem (11:31). The Antichrist will also commit an abomination of desolation against the living God (see Matt. 24:15). **the consummation . . . is poured out on the desolate**: The fact that this abomination does not occur **until** the consummation suggests that this verse is describing the abomination of the Antichrist and not that of Antiochus.

10:1 The third year of Cyrus’s rule over Babylon was 536 B.C.

10:2 Daniel was mourning because he wanted to understand the vision (v. 12). **Three full weeks** refers to Daniel’s observance of the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which took place during the first month of the year (see Ex. 12:1–20). The Passover was kept on the fourteenth of the month, and the Feast of the Unleavened Bread for the next eight days, with the whole festival ending on the twenty-first day of the month.

10:4 The twenty-fourth day of the first month occurs three days after the Unleavened Bread festival (v. 2).

10:5 A certain man is either an appearance of the preincarnate Christ or an angel. The description that follows suggests that this individual is Christ (v. 6).

lifted my eyes and looked, and behold, a certain man clothed in ^blinen, whose waist was ^cgirded with gold of Uphaz! ⁶His body was like beryl, his face like the appearance of lightning, his eyes like torches of fire, his arms and feet like burnished bronze in color, ^dand the sound of his words like the voice of a multitude.

⁷And I, Daniel, alone saw the vision, for the men who were with me did not see the vision; but a great terror fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves. ⁸Therefore I was left alone when I saw this great vision, and no strength remained in me; for my ⁴vigor was turned to ⁵frailty in me, and I retained no strength. ⁹Yet I heard the sound of his words; and while I heard the sound of his words I was in a deep sleep on my face, with my face to the ground.

Prophecies Concerning Persia and Greece

¹⁰^eSuddenly, a hand touched me, which made me tremble on my knees and on the palms of my hands. ¹¹And he said to me, “O Daniel, ^fman greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak to you, and stand upright, for I have now been sent to you.” While he was speaking this word to me, I stood trembling.

¹²Then he said to me, ^g“Do not fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand, and to humble yourself before your God, ^hyour words were heard; and I have come because of your words. ¹³ⁱBut the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-

⁵ ^b Ezek. 9:2; 10:2
^c Rev. 1:13; 15:6
⁶ ^d [Rev. 1:15]
⁸ ^e Lit. *splendor*
⁵ Lit. *ruin*
¹⁰ ^e Dan. 9:21
¹¹ ^f Dan. 9:23
¹² ^g Rev. 1:17
^h Dan. 9:3, 4, 22, 23;
 Acts 10:4
¹³ ⁱ Dan. 10:20

^j Dan. 10:21; 12:1;
 Jude 9; [Rev. 12:7]
¹⁴ ^k Gen. 49:1;
 Deut. 31:29; Dan.
 2:28 ^l Dan. 8:26;
 10:1
¹⁵ ^m Dan. 8:18; 10:9
⁶ Lit. *set*
¹⁶ ⁿ Dan. 8:15
^o Jer. 1:9; Dan.
 10:10 ^p Dan. 10:8;
⁹ ⁷ Theodotion, Vg.
the son; LXX a hand
⁸ Or *turned upon*
¹⁹ ^q Dan. 10:11
^r Judg. 6:23; Is. 43:1;
 Dan. 10:12
²⁰ ^s Dan. 10:13
²¹ ^t Dan. 10:13;
 Jude 9; [Rev. 12:7]

CHAPTER 11

¹ ^e Dan. 9:1 ^b Dan.
 5:31

one days; and behold, ^jMichael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left alone there with the kings of Persia. ¹⁴Now I have come to make you understand what will happen to your people ^kin the latter days, ^lfor the vision refers to many days yet to come.”

¹⁵When he had spoken such words to me, ^mI ⁶turned my face toward the ground and became speechless. ¹⁶And suddenly, ⁿone having the likeness of the ⁷sons of men ^otouched my lips; then I opened my mouth and spoke, saying to him who stood before me, “My lord, because of the vision ^pmy sorrows have ⁸overwhelmed me, and I have retained no strength. ¹⁷For how can this servant of my lord talk with you, my lord? As for me, no strength remains in me now, nor is any breath left in me.”

¹⁸Then again, *the one* having the likeness of a man touched me and strengthened me. ¹⁹^qAnd he said, “O man greatly beloved, ^rfear not! Peace *be* to you; be strong, yes, be strong!”

So when he spoke to me I was strengthened, and said, “Let my lord speak, for you have strengthened me.”

²⁰Then he said, “Do you know why I have come to you? And now I must return to fight ^swith the prince of Persia; and when I have gone forth, indeed the prince of Greece will come. ²¹But I will tell you what is noted in the Scripture of Truth. (No one upholds me against these, ^texcept Michael your prince.

11 “Also ^ain the first year of ^bDarius the Mede, I, *even* I, stood up to confirm and strengthen him.) ²And now I

10:6 The description of the man here is very much like Ezekiel’s description of the glory of God (see Ezek. 1:4–28) and John’s description of the triumphant, risen Christ (see Rev. 1:9–20).

10:8 **Vigor** suggests majesty, splendor, or beauty. **turned to frailty ... no strength:** Humans are weak and frail in the presence of God.

10:11 **greatly beloved:** God loves everyone (see John 3:16); yet some, because of their special relationship to God, are objects of unusual divine love (see 1 Sam. 13:14; John 13:23; 14:21, 23; Acts 13:22).

10:13 **The prince of the kingdom of Persia** cannot be a human ruler because the conflict referred to here is in the spiritual, heavenly realm, as the allusion to **Michael** makes clear. The prince, therefore, must be understood as a satanic figure who was to supervise the affairs of Persia, inspiring its religious, social, and political structures to works of evil. The apostle Paul refers to principalities, powers, rulers of the darkness of this age, and “spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places” (see Eph. 6:12). The “man” here says he was detained for **twenty-one days**, which equals the time of Daniel’s mourning and fasting (vv. 2, 3). The wicked prince of Persia sought to detain the “man” so that Daniel would be prevented from hearing more of God’s revelation (vv. 12, 14). **Michael** seems to be one of the most powerful angels. He is mentioned three times in the OT, all in Daniel (see also v. 21; 12:1), and twice in the NT (see Jude 9; Rev. 12:7).

10:14 **latter days:** This expression is used throughout the books of prophecy to refer to the future (see Is. 2:2; Jer. 23:20; 49:39; Ezek. 38:16; Mic. 4:1). The messenger here is referring to the revelation of ch. 11.

10:16 **One having the likeness of the sons of men** may refer to the preincarnate Christ (v. 5) or to the angel of vv. 10–15.

10:18 For the third time in this chapter Daniel is supernaturally **strengthened** by one who **touched** him (see also vv. 10, 16). The first touch enabled him to arise from the ground, the second to speak, and the third to carry on a conversation.

10:20 Just as Persia was under the ultimate dominion of an evil spirit from Satan (vv. 13, 14), so also was Greece. Once the **prince of Persia** was overcome, the messenger would enter into conflict with the **prince of Greece**. The succession of world powers follows the pattern of Daniel’s second vision (8:20–22).

10:21 **your prince:** God chose Michael the archangel to be a prince in His kingdom on earth.

11:1 **the first year of Darius:** This is the same year as that of the revelation of the 70 weeks, 539 B.C. (9:1). At the beginning of the Persian administration, the divine messenger **stood up to confirm and strengthen** Darius. This suggests that though the kingdoms of the world are under demonic control, their human rulers can be delivered from that control and used for a higher purpose by God as He sees fit.

11:2 **three more kings will arise in Persia, and the fourth ... against the realm of Greece:** Darius (under Cyrus) was followed by Cambyes (530–522 B.C.); Gaumata (522 B.C.); Darius I (522–486 B.C.); and Xerxes (486–465 B.C.), who was the richest king of all due to his conquest and severe taxation.

will tell you the truth: Behold, three more kings will arise in Persia, and the fourth shall be far richer than *them* all; by his strength, through his riches, he shall stir up all against the realm of Greece. ³Then ^ea mighty king shall arise, who shall rule with great dominion, and ^ddo according to his will. ⁴And when he has arisen, ^ehis kingdom shall be broken up and divided toward the four winds of heaven, but not among his posterity ^fnor according to his dominion with which he ruled; for his kingdom shall be uprooted, even for others besides these.

3 ^c Dan. 7:6; 8:5
^d Dan. 8:4; 11:16, 36
4 ^e Jer. 49:36; Ezek. 37:9; Dan. 7:2; 8:8; Zech. 2:6; Rev. 7:1
^f Dan. 8:22

6 ¹ Lit. arm

Warring Kings of North and South
⁵“Also the king of the South shall become strong, as well as *one* of his princes; and he shall gain power over him and have dominion. His dominion *shall be* a great dominion. ⁶And at the end of *some* years they shall join forces, for the daughter of the king of the South shall go to the king of the North to make an agreement; but she shall not retain the power of her ¹authority, and neither he nor his ¹authority shall stand; but she shall be given up, with those who brought her, and with him who begot her, and with

11:3 The scene shifts to Greece (v. 2). The **mighty king** is Alexander the Great (v. 4).
11:4 The kingdom of Alexander was **divided** into **four** parts (8:22), **but not among his posterity**—that is, his heirs. **Others** refers to those outside Alexander’s family—his generals ruled the empire he had conquered (see 8:8, 22).
11:5 Having predicted that there would be four divisions of the Greek kingdom (v. 4), the angel here speaks of two of them, the

Syrian kingdom just north of Palestine and the Egyptian kingdom to the south. The first **king of the South**—that is, Egypt—was Ptolemy I Soter (323–285 B.C.). **One of his princes** refers to Seleucus Nicator (311–280 B.C.).
11:6 **At the end of some years** refers to the time period around 252 B.C. **The daughter** refers to Berenice, the daughter of Ptolemy Philadelphus (285–246 B.C.) of Egypt. **The king of the North** refers to Antiochus II Theos (261–246 B.C.) of Syria.



him who strengthened her in *those* times.
⁷But from a branch of her roots *one* shall arise in his place, who shall come with an army, enter the fortress of the king of the North, and deal with them and prevail. ⁸And he shall also carry their gods captive to Egypt, with their ²princes and their precious articles of silver and gold; and he shall continue *more* years than the king of the North.

⁹“Also *the king of the North* shall come to the kingdom of the king of the South, but shall return to his own land. ¹⁰However his sons shall stir up strife, and assemble a multitude of great forces; and *one* shall certainly come ⁹and overwhelm and pass through; then he shall return ^hto his fortress and stir up strife.

¹¹“And the king of the South shall be ⁱmoved with rage, and go out and fight with him, with the king of the North, who shall muster a great multitude; but the ^jmultitude shall be given into the hand of his *enemy*. ¹²When he has taken away the multitude, his heart will be ³lifted up; and he will cast down tens of thousands, but he will not prevail. ¹³For the king of the North will return and muster a multitude greater than the former, and shall certainly come at the end of some years with a great army and much equipment.

¹⁴“Now in those times many shall rise up against the king of the South. Also, ⁴violent men of your people shall exalt themselves ⁵in fulfillment of the vision, but they shall ^kfall. ¹⁵So the king of the North shall come and ^lbuild a siege mound, and take a fortified city; and the ⁶forces of the South shall not withstand *him*. Even his choice troops *shall have* no strength to resist. ¹⁶But he who comes

⁸ ² Or molded images

¹⁰ ⁹ Is. 8:8; Jer. 46:7, 8; 51:42; Dan. 9:26; 11:26, 40 ^h Dan. 11:7

¹¹ ⁱ Prov. 16:14 ^j [Ps. 33:10, 16]

¹² ³ Proud

¹⁴ ^k Job 9:13 ⁴ Or robbers, lit. sons of breakage ⁵ Lit. to establish

¹⁵ ^l Jer. 6:6; Ezek. 4:2; 17:17 ⁶ Lit. arms

¹⁶ ^m Dan. 8:4, 7

ⁿ Josh. 1:5 ⁷ Lit. hand

¹⁷ ^o 2 Kin. 12:17;

2 Chr. 20:3; Ezek.

4:3, 7 ^p Dan. 9:26

⁸ Or bring equitable terms

¹⁹ ^q Ps. 27:2; Jer.

46:6 ^r Job 20:8; Ps.

37:36; Ezek. 26:21

²¹ ^s Dan. 7:8

²² ^t Dan. 9:26

^u Dan. 8:10, 11 ⁹ Lit.

arms

²³ ^v Dan. 8:25

²⁴ ¹ booty

against him ^mshall do according to his own will, and ⁿno one shall stand against him. He shall stand in the Glorious Land with destruction in his ⁷power.

¹⁷“He shall also ^oset his face to enter with the strength of his whole kingdom, and ⁸upright ones with him; thus shall he do. And he shall give him the daughter of women to destroy it; but she shall not stand *with him*, ^por be for him. ¹⁸After this he shall turn his face to the coastlands, and shall take many. But a ruler shall bring the reproach against them to an end; and with the reproach removed, he shall turn back on him. ¹⁹Then he shall turn his face toward the fortress of his own land; but he shall ^qstumble and fall, ^rand not be found.

²⁰“There shall arise in his place one who imposes taxes *on* the glorious kingdom; but within a few days he shall be destroyed, but not in anger or in battle. ²¹And in his place ^sshall arise a vile person, to whom they will not give the honor of royalty; but he shall come in peaceably, and seize the kingdom by intrigue. ²²With the ⁹force of a ^tflood they shall be swept away from before him and be broken, ^uand also the prince of the covenant. ²³And after the league *is made* with him ^vhe shall act deceitfully, for he shall come up and become strong with a small *number* of people. ²⁴He shall enter peaceably, even into the richest places of the province; and he shall do *what* his fathers have not done, nor his forefathers: he shall disperse among them the plunder, ¹spoil, and riches; and he shall devise his plans against the strongholds, but *only* for a time.

²⁵“He shall stir up his power and his courage against the king of the South with

11:7–9 The **branch of her roots** refers to the brother of Berenice (v. 6), Ptolemy III Euergetes (246–221 B.C.), who conquered **the king of the North**, Seleucus Callinicus (246–226 B.C.) of Syria. Ptolemy III returned to **Egypt** with great booty and outlived Seleucus by six years. Seleucus attempted an attack on Egypt but returned to Syria without accomplishing his purpose.

11:10 The **sons** of Seleucus Callinicus were Seleucus III Ceraunus (227–223 B.C.) and Antiochus III the Great (223–186 B.C.).

11:11 **The king of the South**, Ptolemy IV Philopator (221–204 B.C.), defeated **the king of the North**, Antiochus III the Great, at Raphia in 217 B.C.

11:13 **The king of the North**, Antiochus III, assembled a great army and attacked Egypt in 201 B.C.

11:14 **Many shall rise up** indicates that others like Philip V of Macedonia helped Antiochus fight **against the king of the South**, Ptolemy V Epiphanes (203–181 B.C.) of Egypt. The **violent men of your people** refers to Jews who tried to help Antiochus bring to pass what had been predicted in the vision of ch. 8, but failed.

11:15 **The king of the North**, Antiochus, defeated the **fortified city** of Sidon in 198 B.C.

11:16 **The Glorious Land** refers to Israel. The control of Palestine passed from Egypt to Syria.

11:17 Antiochus III's **daughter** Cleopatra was given in marriage to

Ptolemy V Epiphanes of Egypt in order to **destroy** or undermine Egypt, but Cleopatra sided with her husband over her father.

11:18, 19 Antiochus III undertook a vigorous campaign into Asia Minor and the Aegean region. **A ruler**, the Roman Lucius Cornelius Scipio, defeated Antiochus. Having lost all that he had gained, Antiochus returned to **his own land**, where he was defeated and killed while trying to plunder a temple.

11:20 **arise in his place**: Seleucus IV Philopator (187–176 B.C.), Antiochus's son, took his father's place. **The glorious kingdom** refers to Israel. **within a few days**: Antiochus ruled for 37 years; Seleucus ruled for only 11 years.

11:21 **A vile person** refers to Antiochus IV Epiphanes (175–164 B.C.), who seized the throne through treachery.

11:22 **They shall be swept away** is probably a reference to the Egyptians. **The prince of the covenant** refers to Onias III, the high priest in Jerusalem who bore that title.

11:23, 24 **He** refers to Antiochus IV Epiphanes (v. 21). **shall disperse**: Antiochus took from the rich and gave to the poor.

11:25, 26 **The king of the South** at this time was Ptolemy Philometor (181–145 B.C.) of Egypt. **those who eat . . . his delicacies**: The trusted counselors of Ptolemy Philometor who ate at his table betrayed him.

a great army. And the king of the South shall be stirred up to battle with a very great and mighty army; but he shall not stand, for they shall devise plans against him. ²⁶Yes, those who eat of the portion of his delicacies shall destroy him; his army shall ²be swept away, and many shall fall down slain. ²⁷Both these kings' hearts shall be bent on evil, and they shall speak lies at the same table; but it shall not prosper, for the end will still be at the ¹⁰appointed time. ²⁸While returning to his land with great riches, his heart shall be moved against the holy covenant; so he shall do damage and return to his own land.

The Northern King's Blasphemies

²⁹“At the appointed time he shall return and go toward the south; but it shall not be like the former or the latter. ³⁰For ships from ³Cyprus shall come against him; therefore he shall be grieved, and return in rage against the holy covenant, and do damage.

“So he shall return and show regard for those who forsake the holy covenant. ³¹And ⁴forces shall be mustered by him, ¹⁰and they shall defile the sanctuary fortress; then they shall take away the daily sacrifices, and place there the abomination of desolation. ³²Those who do wickedly against the covenant he shall ⁵corrupt with flattery; but the people who know their God shall be strong, and carry out great exploits. ³³And those of the people who understand shall instruct many; yet for many days they shall fall by sword and flame, by captivity and plundering. ³⁴Now when they fall, they

²⁶ ²Or overflow
²⁷ ¹⁰Dan. 8:19; Hab. 2:3
³⁰ ³Gen. 10:4; Num. 24:24; Is. 23:1, 12; Jer. 2:10 ²Heb. Kittim, western lands, especially Cyprus
³¹ ³Y Dan. 8:11-13; 12:11 ⁴Lit. arms
³² ⁵pollute

³⁴ ⁶Or slipperiness, flattery

³⁵ ⁷[Deut. 8:16; Prov. 17:3]; Dan. 12:10; Zech. 13:9; Mal. 3:2, 3
³⁶ ⁸Dan. 7:8, 25
³⁷ ⁹Is. 14:13;
2 Thess. 2:4 ⁷Or gods

³⁹ ⁸profit
⁴⁰ ⁹Dan. 11:27, 35; 12:4, 9 ⁹Is. 21:1 ⁴Ezek. 38:4; Rev. 9:16
⁴¹ ¹⁰Is. 11:14 ⁹Lit. chief of the sons of Ammon

shall be aided with a little help; but many shall join with them by ⁶intrigue. ³⁵And some of those of understanding shall fall, ²to refine them, purify them, and make them white, until the time of the end; because it is still for the appointed time.

³⁶“Then the king shall do according to his own will: he shall ^aexalt and magnify himself above every god, shall speak blasphemies against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the wrath has been accomplished; for what has been determined shall be done. ³⁷He shall regard neither the ⁷God of his fathers nor the desire of women, ^bnor regard any god; for he shall exalt himself above them all. ³⁸But in their place he shall honor a god of fortresses; and a god which his fathers did not know he shall honor with gold and silver, with precious stones and pleasant things. ³⁹Thus he shall act against the strongest fortresses with a foreign god, which he shall acknowledge, and advance its glory; and he shall cause them to rule over many, and divide the land for ⁸gain.

The Northern King's Conquests

⁴⁰“At the ^ctime of the end the king of the South shall attack him; and the king of the North shall come against him ^dlike a whirlwind, with chariots, ^ehorsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter the countries, overwhelm them, and pass through. ⁴¹He shall also enter the Glorious Land, and many countries shall be overthrown; but these shall escape from his hand: ^fEdom, Moab, and the ⁹prominent people of Ammon. ⁴²He

11:27 Both . . . bent on evil: Both Antiochus and Ptolemy resorted to deceit and betrayal in working out truce arrangements.

11:28 The holy covenant refers to Israel. **do damage:** On his way back to Syria, Antiochus looted the temple in Jerusalem and killed many people.

11:29 return and go toward the south: After learning that Ptolemy VI and Ptolemy VII had formed a union against him, Antiochus returned to Egypt in 168 B.C.

11:30 Cyprus here refers to Rome. When the Romans forced Antiochus to depart from Egypt, he unleashed his frustration on the holy covenant—that is, Israel (v. 28). **Those who forsake the holy covenant** refers to the apostate Jews (v. 32) who cooperated with Antiochus.

11:31 defile the sanctuary: Antiochus polluted the altar by offering a sow upon it. He declared the daily sacrifices and other Mosaic ceremonies illegal and committed an abomination of desolation by erecting an image of Zeus in the holy place (9:27; 12:11). Jesus said a similar thing would happen just prior to His return (see Matt. 24:15).

11:32 the people who know their God shall be strong: Mattathias, father of five sons, refused to offer sacrifices in a profane manner and killed the king's agents. He and his sons then fled to the mountains and began the famous Maccabean revolt.

11:33 Many devoted Jews were killed in the Maccabean revolt (see Heb. 11:37, 38).

11:34 As some Jews were killed in the Maccabean revolt, others provided a little help. **Many joined by intrigue**—that is, insincerely.

11:35 Some of those of understanding refers to those who understood God's Word and were allowed to go through troubled times so that they could be refined and purified.

11:36 the king: Many ancient and modern interpreters have concluded that at this point a new person, the Antichrist, is introduced. This king is distinguished from the king of the North (v. 40); therefore he cannot be Antiochus Epiphanes.

11:37 The king of v. 36 will cast aside the God of his fathers, the worship of his ancestors. **The desire of women** is usually taken to be either a female goddess or the desire of every Jewish woman to be the mother of the Messiah.

11:38 god of fortresses: The king of v. 36 will not regard any god except the god of power. **A god which his fathers did not know** is probably a reference to self-worship (see v. 37; 2 Thess. 2:4).

11:40 The backdrop of this verse and the remainder of the chapter is the covenant the king of v. 36 will make with Israel. **The time of the end** refers to the period just before the return of Christ (see Matt. 24:14).

11:41–43 The king of v. 36 will enter the Glorious Land of Palestine. **Edom, Moab, and Ammon**, the traditional enemies of Israel, will not be invaded. The king will then conquer Egypt, Libya, and Ethiopia.

shall stretch out his hand against the countries, and the land of ^gEgypt shall not escape. ⁴³He shall have power over the treasures of gold and silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt; also the Libyans and Ethiopians *shall follow* ^hat his heels. ⁴⁴But news from the east and the north shall trouble him; therefore he shall go out with great fury to destroy and annihilate many. ⁴⁵And he shall plant the tents of his palace between the seas and ⁱthe glorious holy mountain; ^jyet he shall come to his end, and no one will help him.

Prophecy of the End Time

- 12** “At that time Michael shall stand up,
The great prince who stands *watch*
over the sons of your people;
^a And there shall be a time of
trouble,
Such as never was since there was a
nation,
Even to that time.
And at that time your people ^bshall
be delivered,
Every one who is found ^cwritten in
the book.
² And many of those who sleep in the
dust of the earth shall awake,
^dSome to everlasting life,
Some to shame ^eand everlasting
^fcontempt.
³ Those who are wise shall ^fshine

⁴² ^g Joel 3:19
⁴³ ^h Ex. 11:8
⁴⁵ ⁱ Ps. 48:2 / Rev. 19:20

CHAPTER 12

¹ ^a Is. 26:20; Jer. 30:7; Ezek. 5:9; Dan. 9:12; Matt. 24:21; Mark 13:19 ^b Rom. 11:26 ^c Ex. 32:32; Ps. 56:8
² ^d [Matt. 25:46; John 5:28, 29; Acts 24:15] ^e [Is. 66:24; Rom. 9:21] ^f Lit. *abhorrence*
³ ^f Prov. 3:35; Dan. 11:33, 35; Matt. 13:43

^g Prov. 11:30; [James 5:19, 20]
^h ⁱ 1 Cor. 15:41
⁴ ⁱ Is. 8:16; Dan. 12:9; Rev. 22:10 / Amos 8:12
⁵ ^k Dan. 10:4
⁶ ^j Ezek. 9:2; Dan. 10:5 ^m Dan. 8:13; 12:8; Matt. 24:3; Mark 13:4
⁷ ⁿ Deut. 32:40
^o Dan. 4:34 ^p Dan. 7:25; Rev. 12:14
^q Luke 21:24 ^r Dan. 8:24
¹⁰ ^s Zech. 13:9 ^t Is. 32:6, 7; Rev. 22:11
^u Dan. 12:3; Hos. 14:9; John 7:17; 8:47

Like the brightness of the firmament,
^g And those who turn many to
righteousness
^h Like the stars forever and ever.

⁴ “But you, Daniel, ⁱ shut up the words, and seal the book until the time of the end; many shall ^j run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase.”

⁵ Then I, Daniel, looked; and there stood two others, one on this riverbank and the other on that ^k riverbank. ⁶ And *one* said to the man clothed in ^l linen, who *was* above the waters of the river, ^m “How long shall the fulfillment of these wonders *be*?”

⁷ Then I heard the man clothed in linen, who *was* above the waters of the river, when he ⁿ held up his right hand and his left hand to heaven, and swore by Him ^o who lives forever, ^p that *it shall be* for a time, times, and half a time; ^q and when the power of ^r the holy people has been completely shattered, all these *things* shall be finished.

⁸ Although I heard, I did not understand. Then I said, “My lord, what *shall be* the end of these *things*?”

⁹ And he said, “Go *your way*, Daniel, for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end. ¹⁰ ^s Many shall be purified, made white, and refined, ^t but the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand, but ^u the wise shall understand.

11:44 The north here could be a reference to Palestine, a view which seems to be confirmed by v. 45.

11:45 The seas refers to the Mediterranean Sea and the Dead Sea.

The glorious holy mountain refers to Mt. Zion, the site of the temple. The end of the king of v. 36 is sealed at Christ's second coming (see Rev. 19:11–21).

12:1 At that time refers to the “time of the end” (11:40), the end of the evil king (11:36) at the Second Coming of Christ (11:45). A time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation refers to the period of tribulation just prior to the coming of Christ. Those who shall be delivered are those whose names are written in the book of life, God's record of those who have been justified by faith (see Ex. 32:32; Ps. 69:28; Luke 10:20; Rev. 20:12).

12:2 Sleep is a euphemism for death, as the context in the dust of the earth illustrates. Awake is a reference to resurrection. Though this passage appears to refer to a general resurrection, other passages suggest that there is more than one (see John 5:25). It is not unusual for prophecy in the OT to present events separated by a considerable span of time as if they occurred in immediate relationship to each other (see Is. 61:1, 2). Daniel is simply saying that after the tribulation, many—both righteous and wicked—will be raised. This resurrection of many of the righteous seems to be a reference to the resurrection of Israel (see “your people” in v. 1).

12:3 The wise not only understand salvation themselves (see 2 Tim. 3:15), they also turn many others to the way of righteousness.

12:4 Knowledge shall increase is a reference to knowledge that pertains to these prophecies.

12:5, 6 As Daniel stood beside the Tigris River, he saw three persons, one on each side of the river and one above the river. The two others refers to two angels, different from the ones Daniel had

already seen. The man clothed in linen may be the preincarnate Christ (10:6). How long refers to the duration of the trials. Daniel was not asking when the events would begin.

12:7 A time, times, and half a time, which adds up to three and one-half years (7:25), may refer to the period immediately preceding the Second Coming of Christ (7:27). Others have suggested that this expression does not refer to a specific number of years but instead a period of time that the Lord would shorten because of His mercy.

12:8 Daniel did not understand his own revelation (see v. 4).

12:10 Many will be purified, made white, and refined (11:35). Suffering will refine the righteous, but the wicked will continue in their evil.

sealed

(Heb. *chatham*) (12:9; Is. 29:11; Jer. 32:10) Strong's #2856

This word means “to affix a seal.” To authenticate a document and assure its integrity, a king or official would close it with an application of clay or wax, stamped with an impression of his seal. The document then carried his authority and could not be altered without breaking the seal. Letters (1 Kin. 21:8), land deeds (Jer. 32:10), covenants (Neh. 10:1), and royal decrees (Esth. 3:12) were all authenticated with seals. Daniel's prophetic announcements were symbolically sealed (12:9), indicating that they were authoritative and could not be altered, until the day of their fulfillment. In Revelation, a seal of the scroll of judgment is broken, indicating that the time of its fulfillment has come (Rev. 5:1–10).

¹¹“And from the time *that* the daily *sacrifice* is taken away, and the abomination of desolation is set up, *there shall be* one thousand two hundred and ninety days. ¹²Blessed *is* he who waits, and

¹³ ^v Is. 57:2; Rev. 14:13 ^w Ps. 1:5

comes to the one thousand three hundred and thirty-five days.
¹³“But you, go *your way* till the end; ^v for you shall rest, ^w and will arise to your inheritance at the end of the days.”

wait

(Heb. *chakah*) (12:12; 2 Kin. 7:9; Job 32:4; Ps. 33:20; 106:13; Is. 8:17; 30:18) Strong’s #2442

In Scripture, the word “wait” normally suggests the anxious, yet confident, expectation by God’s people that the Lord will intervene on their behalf. Such waiting may be for answers to prayer (Ps. 25:5), for the coming of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:4), for salvation (Gen. 49:18), or especially for the coming of the Messiah to bring salvation to His people and to establish His kingdom on earth (Ps. 37:34; Luke 12:36; Rom. 8:23; 1 Thess. 1:10). Waiting, therefore, is the working out of hope.

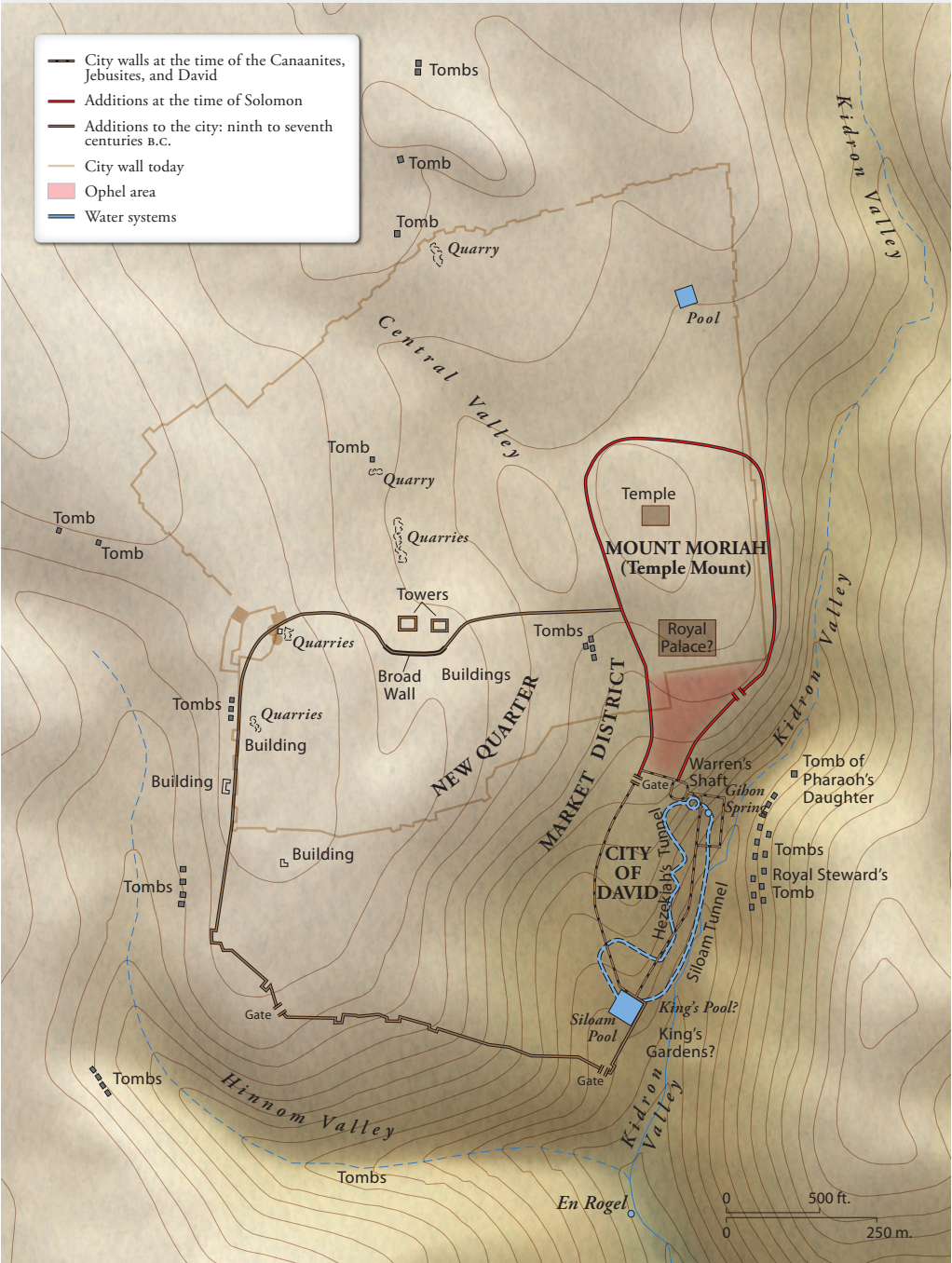
12:11 one thousand two hundred and ninety days: Various interpretations have been suggested for this number of days. One significant interpretation is that these days refer to the middle of a seven-year period of tribulation prior to the coming of Christ. At that time, the Antichrist will abolish the abominable and idolatrous sacrifices that he had established (9:27).

12:13 you shall rest, and will arise: Daniel would die and be resurrected.

Jerusalem During the Time of the Prophets

c. 750–586 B.C.

Refugees arrived in Jerusalem about the time of the fall of the northern kingdom (722 B.C.). Settlement spread to the western hill, and a new wall was added for protection. King Hezekiah's engineers carved an underground aqueduct out of solid rock to bring an ample water supply inside the city walls, enabling Jerusalem to survive the siege of Sennacherib in 701.



THE BOOK OF HOSEA



LIKE OTHERS BEFORE and after him, Hosea discovered that being a prophet had its occupational hazards. The Lord sometimes required His prophets to perform difficult and even humiliating object lessons to complement their messages. At the beginning of Hosea's prophetic ministry, the Lord told him to get married and announced that Hosea's chosen bride would be unfaithful to her marriage vows. Her adultery would vividly illustrate Israel's unfaithfulness to her covenant Lord.

Hosea chose Gomer, the daughter of Diblaim, as his wife and they had three children, each of whom received a symbolic name from the Lord. The firstborn son's name Jezreel was a reminder of the atrocities that had occurred at Jezreel. God would soon judge Israel for these sins, appropriately through a military defeat at this same city. Their daughter Lo-Ruhamah's name, meaning "Not Loved," announced that the Lord would temporarily withdraw His love from Israel. The third child's name Lo-Ammi, meaning "Not My People," anticipated the severe disruption of the Lord's covenantal relationship with His people.

Because of Gomer's adulteries, the marriage disintegrated, and she eventually became the slave or concubine of another man. However, the Lord instructed Hosea to buy back his wife. Hosea's act of mercy toward his wife was a striking picture of the Lord's great love for Israel.

Author and Date Hosea the son of Beeri prophesied during the eighth century B.C. His ministry began while Uzziah (Azariah) was king of Judah (792–740 B.C.) and Jeroboam II was king of Israel (792–753 B.C.). Hosea's prophetic career spanned the reigns of the Judean kings Jotham (752–736 B.C.) and Ahaz (736–720 B.C.) and ended during Hezekiah's rule (729–699 B.C.). Hosea also witnessed the reigns of the last six kings of Israel, although he did not name these kings in his prophecies.

Historical Setting Hosea began prophesying during a time of general prosperity. Jeroboam had extended Israel's borders through several military operations (see 2 Kin. 14:24–28). In the south, Uzziah had strengthened Judah's armed forces and defeated the nation's enemies (see 2 Chr. 26:1–15). But despite the outward success of the two nations, signs of trouble were on the horizon. As the Book of Hosea makes clear, idolatry—especially worship of the Canaanite god Baal—was widespread in the northern kingdom. The assassination of Zechariah, Jeroboam's son and successor, in 753 B.C. ended Jehu's dynasty and introduced a new era of political turmoil. Making matters worse, the mighty Assyrian Empire, after several decades of declining power, was once more flexing its muscles and looking westward. During the second half of the eighth century B.C., Assyria reduced Israel to a vassal state (required by treaty to pay regular tribute to Assyria), then a puppet state (ruled by a king chosen by Assyria), and finally a province (ruled by an Assyrian governor). Judah also declined spiritually and was torn by political dissension. King Ahaz rejected Isaiah's offer of divine protection and instead embarked

on a pro-Assyrian policy that facilitated the Assyrian takeover of the Palestinian states, reduced Judah to vassal status, and drained the nation's economic wealth.

Literary Structure The Book of Hosea fluctuates between judgment and salvation. Each of the book's five major sections begins on a sour note but concludes with a positive affirmation of God's commitment to His people and the expectation that He will restore them.

As a prophet and a poet, Hosea uses an arsenal of rhetorical and poetic techniques to communicate his message in a memorable and persuasive manner. He uses a variety of metaphors as he depicts a broad range of themes, including God's anger, judgment, devotion, and love, as well as Israel's waywardness and stubbornness. Hosea employs images that were familiar to his contemporaries, drawing extensively from agriculture and nature. Hosea paints some of the most moving, terrifying, and exhilarating word pictures in all of the Bible.

Purpose and Major Themes Hosea's purpose was to denounce sin, to warn of impending judgment, and to assure the faithful that God's love would win out in the end. Israel, the northern kingdom, is the primary focus of Hosea's prophecy. Hosea accused the nation of being unfaithful to its vows, just as his own adulterous wife had been unfaithful to her vows. By participating in the pagan fertility rites of Baalism, the people violated their covenant with the Lord. The Lord did not tolerate this rebellion and was prepared to bring against Israel the judgments threatened in the covenant (see Deut. 28:15–68). God's purpose, however, was not entirely punitive; He intended these severe judgments to bring the nation to its senses. Hosea proclaimed that the Lord would eventually restore His marriage with His people and again pour His blessings upon them.

Israel's covenant relationship with God is at the heart of Hosea's message. God delivered His people from slavery in Egypt, established them as a nation, and took great delight in them. He looked for a favorable response

to His love and obedience to the commandments. He had given to regulate the people's worship and daily activities. However, the people were ungrateful, turning to other gods, violating the religious and social standards of God's covenant, and forming alliances with surrounding nations.

When God establishes a binding relationship, He demands absolute loyalty. Through Hosea, God announced that He would use severe judgment to free His people from their spiritual stupor and get their attention. This judgment would take the forms of drought, invasion, and exile.

Though the severity of God's judgment might give the impression that Israel had been abandoned forever, God intended to restore His people. When they repented of their sins, He would return them to their land, reunite the north and south under an ideal Davidic king, and restore His rich blessings.

The Book of Hosea gives us a clear and balanced picture of God. He loves His people and desires an intimate and vibrant relationship with them. He is jealous of their affections and tolerates no rivals. When they sin, He will discipline them as severely as is necessary. While God's jealousy may seem inappropriate and His discipline



Subordinate status of a wife in the ancient Near East is depicted here in a statue of Rameses II and a miniature version of his wife.

may seem harsh, this divine reaction to His people’s sin is actually evidence of His love and commitment. He will allow nothing to ruin the relationship He has established and will do everything to preserve it. In the end, His devotion and mercy will win out, and His people will come to their senses, giving Him the love He fervently desires.

CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

After reading Hosea, it’s only natural to think of Jesus, the sinless Son of God, coming to a sin-prone planet. He demonstrated His love and commitment and yet was rejected and betrayed. Matthew applied Hosea 11:1 to the infant Jesus exiled in Egypt with His parents: “When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called My son” (compare Matt. 2:15). But by far the most compelling portrait of Jesus is Hosea’s marriage to Gomer, a woman who would be unfaithful to him. The picture is of our God who loves us even as we stray away from Him and into sin. As Hosea bought back his wife despite her adultery, so God, through His Son Jesus, identified with our plight and lovingly paid the cost of our freedom with His blood.

HOSEA OUTLINE

- I. A symbolic marriage and family 1:1—3:5
 - A. Children as signs 1:1—2:1
 - B. The punishment and restoration of God’s wife 2:2–23
 - C. Hosea’s illustration of God’s love 3:1–5
- II. The unfaithful nation and the faithful God 4:1—14:9
 - A. God’s formal charges against Israel 4:1—6:3
 - B. Israel’s punishment 6:4—10:15
 - C. The Lord’s faithful love 11:1—14:9

792 B.C.
Uzziah (Azariah) becomes king in Judah

792 B.C.
Jeroboam II begins his reign in Israel

c. 785 B.C.
Hosea begins to prophesy

752 B.C.
Jotham’s reign begins in Judah

c. 745 B.C.
The Assyrian Empire begins under Tiglath-Pileser

736 B.C.
Ahaz takes the throne in Judah

732 B.C.
The Syrians lose Damascus to Assyria

729 B.C.
Hezekiah becomes king in Judah

c. 725 B.C.
Hosea’s ministry comes to an end

722 B.C.
The Assyrians take Israel captive

The word of the LORD that came to Hosea the son of Beeri, in the days of ^aUzziah, ^bJotham, ^cAhaz, and ^dHezekiah, kings of Judah, and in the days of ^eJeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel.

The Family of Hosea

² When the LORD began to speak by Hosea, the LORD said to Hosea:

^f“Go, take yourself a wife of harlotry
And children of harlotry,
For ^gthe land has committed great
¹harlotry
By departing from the LORD.”

³ So he went and took Gomer the daughter of Diblaim, and she conceived and bore him a son. ⁴ Then the LORD said to him:

“Call his name Jezreel,
For in a little *while*
^hI will avenge the bloodshed of Jezreel
on the house of Jehu,
ⁱAnd bring an end to the kingdom of
the house of Israel.
^jIt shall come to pass in that day
That I will break the bow of Israel in
the Valley of Jezreel.”

⁶ And she conceived again and bore a daughter. Then God said to him:

“Call her name ²Lo-Ruhamah,
^kFor I will no longer have mercy on
the house of Israel,
³But I will utterly take them away.
⁷ ¹Yet I will have mercy on the house of
Judah,
Will save them by the LORD their God,
And ^mwill not save them by bow,
Nor by sword or battle,
By horses or horsemen.”

CHAPTER 1

¹ ^a 2 Chr. 26; Is. 1:1;
Amos 1:1 ^b 2 Kin.
15:5, 7, 32-38; 2 Chr.
27; Mic. 1:1 ^c 2 Kin.
16:1-20; 2 Chr.
28 ^d 2 Kin. 18-20;
2 Chr. 29:1-32:33;
Mic. 1:1 ^e 2 Kin.
13:13; 14:23-29;
Amos 1:1
² ^f Hos. 3:1 ^g Deut.
31:16; Judg. 2:17;
Ps. 73:27; Jer. 2:13;
Ezek. 16:1-59;
23:1-49 ¹ Spiritual
adultery
⁴ ^h 2 Kin. 10:11
ⁱ 2 Kin. 15:8-10; 17:6,
23; 18:11
⁵ ^j 2 Kin. 15:29
⁶ ^k 2 Kin. 17:6 ² Lit.
No-Mercy ³ Or That
I may forgive them
at all
⁷ ^l 2 Kin. 19:29-35;
Is. 30:18; 37:36, 37
^m Ps. 44:3-7; [Zech.
4:6]

⁹ ⁴ Lit. Not-My-
People
¹⁰ ⁿ Gen. 22:17;
32:12; Jer. 33:22
^o 1 Pet. 2:10 ^p Rom.
9:26 ^q Is. 63:16;
64:8; [John 1:12]
⁵ Heb. lo-ammi, v. 9
¹¹ ^r Is. 11:11-13; Jer.
3:18; 50:4; [Ezek.
34:23; 37:15-28]

CHAPTER 2

¹ ¹ Heb. Ammi,
Hos. 1:9, 10 ² Heb.
Ruhamah, Hos. 1:6
² ^a Is. 50:1 ^b Ezek.
16:25 ³ Or Contend
with ⁴ Or contend
³ ^c Jer. 13:22, 26;
Ezek. 16:37-39
^d Ezek. 16:4-7, 22

⁸ Now when she had weaned Lo-Ruhamah, she conceived and bore a son.
⁹ Then God said:

“Call his name ⁴Lo-Ammi,
For you *are* not My people,
And I will not be your God.

The Restoration of Israel

¹⁰ “Yet ⁿthe number of the children of Israel

Shall be as the sand of the sea,
Which cannot be measured or
numbered.

^o And it shall come to pass
In the place where it was said to
them,

‘You *are* ^pnot My ^ppeople,’
There it shall be said to them,
‘You *are* ^qsons of the living God.’

¹¹ ^r Then the children of Judah and the children of Israel

Shall be gathered together,
And appoint for themselves one
head;

And they shall come up out of the
land,

For great *will be* the day of Jezreel!

² Say to your brethren, ¹ ‘My people,’
And to your sisters, ² ‘Mercy is
shown.’

God's Unfaithful People

² “Bring ³ charges against your mother,
⁴bring charges;

For ^ashe is not My wife, nor *am* I
her Husband!

Let her put away her ^bharlotries
from her sight,
And her adulteries from between her
breasts;

³ Lest ^cI strip her naked
And expose her, as in the day she
was ^dborn,

1:2, 3 wife of harlotry: Gomer may have been a common prostitute at the time Hosea married her, or perhaps she had participated in a ritual sexual act as part of the Baal cult. However, it is more likely that the descriptive phrase anticipates what Gomer would become following her marriage to Hosea. **children of harlotry:** If Gomer was a prostitute when she married Hosea, this could refer to children that Gomer already had and that Hosea adopted at the time of marriage. A more likely possibility is that the title anticipates children born to a mother whose reputation and escapades would make their lineage suspect. Gomer's marital infidelity is a picture of Israel's idolatry and unfaithfulness to its covenant with God.

1:4 bloodshed of Jezreel: In 841 B.C. Jehu, with God's approval, destroyed the evil dynasty of Omri by slaughtering Jezebel, the sons of Ahab, and the prophets and priests of Baal (see 2 Kin. 9; 10).

1:5 To break the enemy's **bow** means to destroy his military strength (see 1 Sam. 2:4; Ps. 46:9; Jer. 49:35).

1:6 Lo-Ruhamah means “Not Loved,” foreshadowing the Lord's rejection of Israel.

1:7 Will save them: This prophecy looks ahead to the Lord's deliv-

erance of Jerusalem in 701 B.C., when He would miraculously destroy the Assyrian armies outside the city's walls (see 2 Kin. 19:32-36).

1:9 Lo-Ammi means “Not My People,” threatening the termination of the Lord's covenant relationship with His people (see Lev. 26:12).

1:10 The Lord would not reject His people forever. God would fulfill His promise to Abraham and make the Israelites as numerous as the **sand of the sea** (see Gen. 22:17; 32:12).

1:11 One head refers to the messianic king to come (3:5). **Jezreel** means “God Plants,” picturing God as sowing seed that would germinate and grow abundantly (2:23).

2:1 brethren . . . sisters: God would mercifully restore His covenant relationship with His people, reversing the judgment symbolized by the names Lo-Ruhamah and Lo-Ammi.

2:2 Bring charges: The Lord formally accused Israel of unfaithfulness to the covenant. **Your mother** refers to the sinful nation of Hosea's time, symbolized by Gomer (1:2, 3). **she is not My wife:** This may be a formal announcement of divorce or a realistic confession that the relationship between God and Israel had lost its vitality.

2:3 The Lord warned that He might publicly humiliate His unfaithful

- And make her like a wilderness,
And set her like a dry land,
And slay her with ^ethirst.
- 4 “I will not have mercy on her children,
For they *are* the ^fchildren of harlotry.
- 5 For their mother has played the harlot;
She who conceived them has behaved shamefully.
For she said, ‘I will go after my lovers,
^gWho give *me* my bread and my water,
My wool and my linen,
My oil and my drink.’
- 6 “Therefore, behold,
^hI will hedge up your way with thorns,
And ⁵wall her in,
So that she cannot find her paths.
- 7 She will ⁶chase her lovers,
But not overtake them;
Yes, she will seek them, but not find them.
Then she will say,
ⁱI will go and return to my ^jfirst husband,
For then *it was* better for me than now’
- 8 For she did not ^kknow
That I gave her grain, new wine, and oil,
And multiplied her silver and gold—
Which they prepared for Baal.
- 9 “Therefore I will return and take away
My grain in its time
And My new wine in its season,
And will take back My wool and My linen,
Given to cover her nakedness.

3 ^e Jer. 14:3; Amos 8:11-13
4 ^f John 8:41
5 ^g Ezek. 23:5; Hos. 2:8, 12
6 ^h Job 19:8; Lam. 3:7, 9 ⁵ Lit. *wall up her wall*
7 ⁱ Luke 15:17, 18
/ Is. 54:5-8; Jer. 2:2; 3:1; Ezek. 16:8; 23:4
8 ^k Or *pursue*
8 ^k Is. 1:3; Ezek. 16:19

10 ⁱ Ezek. 16:37
11 ^m Jer. 7:34; 16:9; Hos. 3:4; Amos 5:21; 8:10
14 ^j Lit. *to her heart*
15 ⁿ Josh. 7:26
^o Jer. 2:1-3; Ezek. 16:8-14 ^p Ex. 15:1
16 ^q Heb. *Ishi*
⁹ Heb. *Baali*

- 10 Now ^lI will uncover her lewdness in the sight of her lovers,
And no one shall deliver her from My hand.
- 11^m I will also cause all her mirth to cease,
Her feast days,
Her New Moons,
Her Sabbaths—
All her appointed feasts.
- 12ⁿ And I will destroy her vines and her fig trees,
Of which she has said,
‘These *are* my wages that my lovers have given me.’
So I will make them a forest,
And the beasts of the field shall eat them.
- 13 I will punish her
For the days of the Baals to which she burned incense.
She decked herself with her earrings and jewelry,
And went after her lovers;
But Me she forgot,” says the LORD.

God's Mercy on His People

- 14ⁿ Therefore, behold, I will allure her,
Will bring her into the wilderness,
And speak ⁷comfort to her.
- 15 I will give her her vineyards from there,
And ⁿthe Valley of Achor as a door of hope;
She shall sing there,
As in ^othe days of her youth,
^pAs in the day when she came up from the land of Egypt.
- 16ⁿ “And it shall be, in that day,”
Says the LORD,
“That you will call Me ⁸‘My Husband,’
And no longer call Me ⁹‘My Master,’

wife by stripping her **naked** (see Ezek. 16:35–43). **dry land:** This simile pictures the loss of fertility, an appropriate punishment for a nation that had sought fertility by worshiping another god.

2:4, 5 Her children refers to the Israelites who lived in the land. Though the **mother** (the land) and the children (the inhabitants of the land) are distinct in Hosea’s metaphor, both actually refer to the sinful nation. The Lord warned that He might disown the children because they were a reminder of their mother’s unfaithfulness.

2:6, 7 chase: This word draws attention to the strong passion the people of Israel felt for Baal. These verses anticipate the Exile, when Israel would be separated from the idols of Baal.

2:8, 9 Since Israel refused to acknowledge the Lord as her source of agricultural prosperity, the Lord would **take back** His blessings and no longer provide for the nation’s basic needs.

2:10 uncover her lewdness: The Lord would publicly expose Israel’s unfaithfulness through judgment. **in the sight of her lovers:** The Baal idols would be unable to help Israel, proving their unworthiness to be worshiped.

2:11 New Moons were monthly celebrations (see Num. 10:10; 1 Sam. 20:5, 18, 24). Sabbath celebrations were weekly.

2:12 The people of Israel believed that the Baal idols gave them agricultural prosperity in exchange for their worship. **forest . . . beasts of the field:** The Lord would break down the nation’s defenses and turn them into overgrown thickets inhabited by wild animals.

2:13 The word **earrings** may refer to rings worn in the ear (see Gen. 35:4; Ex. 32:2, 3) or nose (see Gen. 24:47; Is. 3:21; Ezek. 16:12).

2:14 Having separated Israel from her lovers, the Lord would seek to win her back by making romantic overtures and wooing her with tender words of love. **wilderness:** The coming Exile from the land is compared to the wilderness wanderings of Moses’ time.

2:15 Valley of Achor, meaning “Valley of Trouble,” was a reminder of the sin of Achan and God’s discipline of the nation of Israel for his sin (Josh. 7:24–26). This place would be transformed into a **door of hope** when the returning exiles passed through it on their return to the land.

2:16, 17 Israel would call the Lord her **Husband**, not her **Master**, because the latter title might have reminded the people of their former devotion to Baal. The word Baal can mean “Master.”

- 17 For ^qI will take from her mouth the names of the Baals, And they shall be remembered by their name no more.
- 18 In that day I will make a ^rcovenant for them
With the beasts of the field,
With the birds of the air,
And *with* the creeping things of the ground.
Bow and sword of battle ^sI will shatter from the earth,
To make them ^tlie down safely.
- 19 “I will betroth you to Me forever;
Yes, I will betroth you to Me
In righteousness and justice,
In lovingkindness and mercy;
- 20 I will betroth you to Me in faithfulness,
And ^uyou shall know the LORD.
- 21 “It shall come to pass in that day
That ^vI will answer,” says the LORD;
“I will answer the heavens,
And they shall answer the earth.
- 22 The earth shall answer
With grain,
With new wine,
And with oil;
They shall answer ¹Jezreel.
- 23 Then ^uI will sow her for Myself in the earth,
^xAnd I will have mercy on *her who had* ²not obtained mercy;
Then ^yI will say to *those who were* ³not My people,
“You *are* ⁴My people!”
And they shall say, “You *are* my God!””

Israel Will Return to God

3 Then the LORD said to me, “Go again, love a woman *who is* loved by a ^alover¹ and is committing adultery, just like the love of the LORD for the children

17 ^q Ex. 23:13; Josh. 23:7; Ps. 16:4
18 ^r Job 5:23; Is. 11:6-9; Ezek. 34:25
^s Is. 2:4; Ezek. 39:1-10
^t Lev. 26:5; Is. 32:18; Jer. 23:6; Ezek. 34:25
20 ^u [Jer. 31:33, 34]; Hos. 6:6; 13:4; [John 17:3]
21 ^v Is. 55:10; Zech. 8:12; [Mal. 3:10, 11]
22 ¹ Lit. *God Will Sow*
23 ^w Jer. 31:27; Amos 9:15 ^x Hos. 1:6
^y Hos. 1:10; Zech. 13:9; Rom. 9:25, 26; [Eph. 2:11-22]; 1 Pet. 2:10
² Heb. *lo-ruhamah*
³ Heb. *lo-ammi*
⁴ Heb. *ammi*

CHAPTER 3

1 ^a Jer. 3:20 ¹ Lit. *friend or husband*

3 ^b Deut. 21:13
4 ^c Hos. 10:3 ^d Ex. 28:4-12; 1 Sam. 23:9-12
^e Gen. 31:19, 34; Judg. 17:5; 18:14, 17; [1 Sam. 15:23]
5 ^f Jer. 50:4 ^g Jer. 30:9; Ezek. 34:24
^h [Is. 2:2, 3]; Jer. 31:9

CHAPTER 4

1 ^a Is. 1:18; Hos. 12:2; Mic. 6:2 ^b Jer. 4:22 ¹ A legal complaint
2 ² Lit. *touching*
3 ^c Is. 24:4; 33:9; Jer. 4:28; 12:4; Amos 5:16; 8:8 ^d Zeph. 1:3
4 ^e Deut. 17:12
5 ^f Jer. 15:8; Hos. 2:2, 5

of Israel, who look to other gods and love *the raisin cakes of the pagans.*”

²So I bought her for myself for fifteen *shekels* of silver, and one and one-half homers of barley. ³And I said to her, “You shall ^bstay with me many days; you shall not play the harlot, nor shall you have a man—so, too, *will I be* toward you.”

⁴For the children of Israel shall abide many days ^cwithout king or prince, without sacrifice or *sacred* pillar, without ^dephod or ^eteraphim. ⁵Afterward the children of Israel shall return and ^fseek the LORD their God and ^gDavid their king. They shall fear the LORD and His goodness in the ^hlatter days.

God's Charge Against Israel

4 Hear the word of the LORD,
You children of Israel,
For the LORD *brings a* ^acharge¹
against the inhabitants of the land:

- “There is no truth or mercy
Or ^bknowledge of God in the land.
- 2 *By* swearing and lying,
Killing and stealing and committing adultery,
They break all restraint,
With bloodshed ²upon bloodshed.
- 3 Therefore ^cthe land will mourn;
And ^deveryone who dwells there will waste away
With the beasts of the field
And the birds of the air;
Even the fish of the sea will be taken away.
- 4 “Now let no man contend, or rebuke another;
For your people *are* like those ^ewho contend with the priest.
- 5 Therefore you shall stumble ^fin the day;

2:19, 20 betroth: Betrothal was a binding commitment, the last step before the wedding and consummation. **forever:** The Lord emphasized that the new marriage between Himself and Israel would be permanent. **Lovingkindness** means “devotion, commitment.” **you shall know:** Israel would respond positively to the Lord’s love and acknowledge that He is her husband and benefactor (contrast vv. 8, 13; see Jer. 31:34).

2:21-23 The heavens would provide rain for the **earth**; the earth would produce its fruit in turn. Israel is called **Jezreel**, meaning “God Plants,” because the Lord would replant Israel in the land.

3:1, 2 To illustrate His intention to redeem Israel, the Lord instructed Hosea to reclaim Gomer, his unfaithful wife. **I bought her:** Gomer had become the property of another man. Hosea’s purchase of Gomer symbolized God’s great devotion, which moves Him to seek reconciliation even if it means subjecting Himself to humiliation (see Phil. 2:8).

3:3, 4 Gomer’s isolation symbolized Israel’s exile, when she lost her political independence and could no longer worship as she chose

(2:6, 7). **sacred pillar:** These were stone pillars used by the Canaanites in their worship of Baal and other gods (see 2 Kin. 3:2; 10:26, 27; 17:10). An **ephod** was a priestly garment (see Ex. 28); **teraphim** were idols (see 2 Kin. 23:24). Both were apparently used for divination.

3:5 seek: This word highlights the change that would occur in Israel’s attitude (2:7). **David:** This is likely a reference to David’s Son, the Messiah (see Is. 11:1-10; Jer. 23:5; 33:15). Other prophets also refer to the Messiah as David (see Jer. 30:9; Ezek. 34:23, 24; 37:24, 25).

4:1 charge: The Hebrew word refers to a formal complaint charging Israel with breaking the covenant. **Mercy** means “loyalty” or “devotion.” **knowledge:** This word does not refer to intellectual awareness, but to recognition of God’s authority as Israel’s covenant Lord.

4:2 This accusation mentions five of the Ten Commandments. **Swearing** refers to the misuse of the Lord’s name in oaths and curses (see Ex. 20:7).

4:5, 6 The failure of Israel’s religious leaders, including most of the prophets, would bring about their downfall. **lack of knowledge:** The priests had failed to teach God’s law to the people (see

Hosea's Heartbreak and God's Grief	
The tragic marriage of Hosea and Gomer painted a vivid portrait for the Israelites of how God viewed His relationship with them.	
Hosea and Gomer	God and Israel
• Hosea marries Gomer (1:3).	• God is betrothed to Israel (2:19).
• Hosea is a faithful husband (3:3).	• God is a faithful "Husband" (1:7).
• Hosea's love is unrequited (3:1).	• God's love is unrequited (3:1).
• The relationship disintegrates (3:1).	• The relationship disintegrates (2:2).
• Gomer pursues other men (3:1).	• Israel pursues other gods (4:1).
• Gomer is indifferent to the feelings of Hosea (3:1).	• Israel is indifferent to God's feelings (11:1).
• Hosea has a daughter whose name Lo-Ruhamah means "Not Loved" (1:6).	• God will not have pity on His wayward children in Israel (5:6).
• Hosea has a son whose name Lo-Ammi means "Not My People" (1:9).	• God declares that the Israelites are not His people (1:9).
• Hosea redeems and restores the adulterous Gomer (3:2).	• God redeems and restores the unfaithful nation, Israel (14:4–8).

The prophet also shall stumble with you in the night;
And I will destroy your mother.
⁶ *g* My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.
Because you have rejected knowledge,
I also will reject you from being priest for Me;
^h Because you have forgotten the law of your God,
I also will forget your children.
⁷ "The more they increased,
The more they sinned against Me;
ⁱ I ³ will change ⁴ their glory into shame.
⁸ They eat up the sin of My people;
They set their ⁵ heart on their iniquity.
⁹ And it shall be: ^j like people, like priest.
So I will punish them for their ways,
And ⁶ reward them for their deeds.

⁶ *g* Is. 5:13 ^h Ezek. 22:26
⁷ ¹ 1 Sam. 2:30; Mal. 2:9 ³ So with MT, LXX, Vg.; scribal tradition, Syr., Tg. *They will change*
⁴ So with MT, LXX, Syr., Tg., Vg.; scribal tradition *My glory*
⁸ ⁵ Desires
⁹ / Is. 24:2; Jer. 5:30, 31; 2 Tim. 4:3, 4
⁶ *repay*
¹⁰ ^h Lev. 26:26; Is. 65:13; Mic. 6:14; Hag. 1:6
¹¹ / Prov. 20:1; Is. 5:12; 28:7
¹² ^m Jer. 2:27 ⁿ Is. 44:19, 20 ⁷ Diviner's rod
¹³ ^o Is. 1:29; 57:5, 7; Jer. 2:20; Ezek. 6:13; 20:28 ^p Amos 7:17; [Rom. 1:28–32]
¹⁴ ^q Deut. 23:18
¹⁵ ^r Hos. 9:15; 12:11

¹⁰ For ^h they shall eat, but not have enough;
They shall commit harlotry, but not increase;
Because they have ceased obeying the LORD.

The Idolatry of Israel

¹¹ "Harlotry, wine, and new wine ^lenslave the heart.
¹² My people ask counsel from their ^m wooden idols,
And their ⁷ staff informs them.
For ⁿ the spirit of harlotry has caused ^{them} to stray,
And they have played the harlot against their God.
¹³ ^o They offer sacrifices on the mountaintops,
And burn incense on the hills,
Under oaks, poplars, and terebinths,
Because their shade *is* good.
^p Therefore your daughters commit harlotry,
And your brides commit adultery.
¹⁴ "I will not punish your daughters when they commit harlotry,
Nor your brides when they commit adultery;
For *the men* themselves go apart with harlots,
And offer sacrifices with a ^q ritual harlot.
Therefore people *who* do not understand will be trampled.

¹⁵ "Though you, Israel, play the harlot,
Let not Judah offend.
^r Do not come up to Gilgal,
Nor go up to ^s Beth ⁸ Aven,
^t Nor swear an oath, *saying*, 'As the LORD lives'—

⁵ 1 Kin. 12:29; Josh. 7:2; Hos. 10:8 ¹ Jer. 5:2; 44:26; Amos 8:14
⁸ Lit. *House of Idolatry or Wickedness*

stumble
(Heb. *kashal*) (4:5; 5:5; 1 Sam. 2:4; Is. 3:8) Strong's #3782
Literally this verb means "to totter," "to trip and fall," or "to stumble." The prophets frequently used this word to describe the spiritual life of the Hebrews. For example, Hosea likens both false prophets and their followers to those who stumble in the dark: they are stumbling over the sin of idolatry and falling to their ruin (4:5; 5:5; Is. 3:8). Isaiah warns that those who rely on their own strength will stumble and fall (Is. 40:30), but those who are led by the Lord will not stumble (Is. 63:13). In fact, the Lord will provide strength to those who have stumbled in the past and now call upon Him (1 Sam. 2:4).

Mal. 2:7). As a result, the priests would be the special object of God's judgment. He would terminate the priestly line.
4:7, 8 their glory: Great honor was attached to the priesthood. However, Israel's sinful priests would forfeit their prestige. **eat up the sin of My people:** The priests greedily accepted the meat from the people's hypocritical and empty sacrifices (6:6; 8:11–13).
4:10 The Israelites worshiped Baal in order to have good crops and many children, but they still would not have enough to eat, nor would they multiply in number. **Harlotry** here refers to religious prostitution associated with Baal worship, not to immorality in general.
4:11–14 Wine was apparently used in Baal worship, along with divination, sacrifices, and ritual sexual acts. **Their staff** refers to **wooden idols** that Baal worshipers consulted for guidance. **daughters . . . brides:** Many of Israel's young women had participated in the sexual rites of Baal worship, but **the men** were just as guilty.
4:15 Hosea warned the people of **Judah** not to follow in the sinful footsteps of the northern kingdom **Israel**. **Gilgal** was an important

16^a For Israel ^ais stubborn
Like a stubborn calf;
Now the LORD will let them
forage
Like a lamb in ⁹open country.

17^a Ephraim *is* joined to idols,
^vLet him alone.

18 Their drink ¹is rebellion,
They commit harlotry continually.
^wHer ²rulers ³dearly love
dishonor.

19^x The wind has wrapped her up in its
wings,
And ^ythey shall be ashamed because
of their sacrifices.

Impending Judgment on Israel and Judah

5 “Hear this, O priests!
Take heed, O house of Israel!
Give ear, O house of the king!
For ¹yours is the judgment,
Because ^ayou have been a snare to
Mizpah
And a net spread on Tabor.
2 The revolters are ^bdeeply involved in
slaughter,
Though I rebuke them all.
3 ^cI know Ephraim,
And Israel is not hidden from Me;
For now, O Ephraim, ^dyou commit
harlotry;
Israel is defiled.

16 ^a Jer. 3:6; 7:24;
8:5; Zech. 7:11 ⁹ Lit.
a large place
17 ^v Matt. 15:14
18 ^w Mic. 3:11 ¹ Or
has turned aside
² Lit. *shields* ³ Heb.
difficult; a Jewish
tradition *shame-*
fully love, ‘Givel’
19 ^x Jer. 51:1 ^y Is.
1:29

CHAPTER 5

1 ^a Hos. 6:9 ¹ Or to
you
2 ^b Is. 29:15; Hos.
4:2; 6:9
3 ^c Amos 3:2; 5:12
^d Hos. 4:17

4 ^e Hos. 4:12 ² Or
Their deeds will not
allow them to turn
5 ^f Hos. 7:10
6 ⁹ Prov. 1:28; Is.
1:15; Jer. 11:11; Ezek.
8:18; Mic. 3:4; John
7:34
7 ^h Is. 48:8; Jer.
3:20; Hos. 6:7 ³ Lit.
strange
8 ⁱ Hos. 8:1; Joel 2:1
^j Is. 10:30 ^k Josh. 7:2
10 ^l Deut. 19:14;
27:17

4 “They ²do not direct their deeds
Toward turning to their God,
For ^ethe spirit of harlotry is in their
midst,
And they do not know the LORD.
5 The ^fpride of Israel testifies to his
face;
Therefore Israel and Ephraim
stumble in their iniquity;
Judah also stumbles with them.

6 “With their flocks and herds
⁹They shall go to seek the LORD,
But they will not find *Him*;
He has withdrawn Himself from
them.
7 They have ^hdealt treacherously with
the LORD,
For they have begotten ³pagan
children.
Now a New Moon shall devour them
and their heritage.

8 “Blow ⁱthe ram’s horn in Gibeah,
The trumpet in Ramah!
^jCry aloud at ^kBeth Aven,
¹‘Look behind you, O Benjamin!’
9 Ephraim shall be desolate in the day
of rebuke;
Among the tribes of Israel I make
known what is sure.

10^a The princes of Judah are like those
who ^lremove a landmark;

religious center in the north, known in Hosea’s time for its hypocritical religious practices (see 9:15; 12:11; Amos 4:4). **Beth Aven**, which means “House of Iniquity,” is a sarcastic reference to the important religious center Bethel, which means “House of God” (see Amos 5:5). **4:17–19 Ephraim**, one of the largest tribes of Israel, is used here to represent the entire northern kingdom. **Let him alone**: These words have a tone of frustration and resignation, suggesting that Israel was hopelessly rebellious. **The wind** of divine judgment would sweep the Israelites away and leave them embarrassed by their idolatry.

5:1 Mizpah here is probably a reference to Mizpah of Gilead, located in Israelite territory east of the Jordan. **Tabor**: Mount Tabor was in the northern kingdom, southwest of the Sea of Galilee. **snare . . . net**: The leaders of Israel, especially the **priests**, had promoted pagan worship at Mizpah and Tabor and in this way led the people to destruction.

5:2 The revolters probably refers to the leaders and priests who had rebelled against God’s authority by rejecting His commandments. **Slaughter** may refer literally to acts of violence or to pagan sacrifices.

5:3 not hidden: God’s people could not hide their **harlotry**, for it had **defiled** them. According to the Law of Moses, adultery made a person spiritually unclean or *defiled* (see Lev. 18:20, 24; Num. 5:20, 27, 28).

5:4 spirit of harlotry: The people had an uncontrollable desire to worship other gods.

5:5 Israel’s arrogant attitude was self-incriminating and self-destructive. **Judah**, the southern kingdom, had followed Israel’s moral example and would experience the same consequences.

5:6, 7 Though Israel had rebelled against God, many Israelites still tried to maintain a semblance of outward devotion to Him. They had **dealt treacherously** with God by worshiping other gods and

participating in **pagan** fertility rites. **Their heritage**, or “portion,” refers to the people’s landed property and fields, which God would allow wild animals and invading armies to overrun and **devour** (2:12; 11:6).

5:8, 9 Blow the ram’s horn: This act signaled an emergency and mustered the fighting men to defend the land. The towns mentioned here were north of Jerusalem, within or near the borders of Benjamin. The implication is that the enemy army had already swept through the north and was ready to invade Judah. **what is sure**: The Lord affirmed that the announced judgment was an unalterable decree.

5:10 Stones were used to mark the boundaries of property. A thief could steal a part of someone’s land by moving the **landmark**.

commit harlotry

(Heb. *zanah*) (1:2; 5:3; Jer. 3:3; Ezek. 16:35) Strong’s #2181

The verb *zanah* refers to having illicit sexual relations, especially involving prostitution. Two forms of prostitution were practiced in the ancient world: common prostitution and ritual, or “sacred,” prostitution, which involved pagan fertility rites. Both forms were strictly forbidden in God’s law (Lev. 19:29; Deut. 23:17). The OT frequently uses prostitution as an image of the sin of idolatry. Israel was pledged to serve one God (Ex. 20:3), so idolatry was like marital unfaithfulness against the Lord. Jeremiah and Ezekiel develop this image in graphic detail (see Jer. 3; Ezek. 16; 23), and Hosea actually married a prostitute as a living symbol of God’s patience with Israel’s infidelities (see ch. 1).



The Morning Dew

Palestine's rainfall is directly related to the latitude and elevation of the land. The mountainous regions in northern Galilee receive the most rain (24 to 36 inches), while the southern plains get very little (4 to 8 inches). An estimated 60 to 70 percent of the precipitation is lost through evaporation because of the land's high temperatures and low humidity. Only 10 to 25 percent is absorbed for agricultural purposes. So the dew that falls approximately 250 nights of the year is very essential. Some vegetation depends entirely on the dew's moisture. It is an exhilarating experience to wake up in the Negev desert on a summer morning and see a thick fog! Yet the dew evaporates quickly, and it became proverbial to compare Israel's faithlessness to "a morning cloud . . . the early dew [that] goes away" (6:4).



Dew on stalks of wheat in the Golan Heights

© PhotoStock-Israel/Alamy

I will pour out My wrath on them like water.

¹¹ Ephraim is ^moppressed *and* broken in judgment,
Because he willingly walked by ⁿhuman precept.

¹² Therefore I *will be* to Ephraim like a moth,
And to the house of Judah ^olike rottenness.

¹³ "When Ephraim saw his sickness,
And Judah *saw* his ^pwound,
Then Ephraim went ^qto Assyria
And sent to King Jareb;
Yet he cannot cure you,
Nor heal you of your wound.

¹¹ ^m Deut. 28:33

ⁿ Mic. 6:16

¹² ^o Prov. 12:4

¹³ ^p Jer. 30:12-15

^q 2 Kin. 15:19; Hos.

7:11; 10:6

¹⁴ ^r Ps. 7:2; Lam.

3:10; Hos. 13:7, 8

^s Ps. 50:22

¹⁵ ^t Lit. *become*

guilty or bear

punishment

CHAPTER 6

¹ ^a Is. 1:18; Acts

10:43 ^b Deut. 32:39;

Hos. 5:14 ^c Jer.

30:17; Hos. 14:4

^d Bandage

² ^d Luke 24:46;

Acts 10:40; [1 Cor.

15:4] ☆

¹⁴ For ^rI *will be* like a lion to Ephraim,
And like a young lion to the house
of Judah.

^sI, *even* I, will tear *them* and go away;
I will take *them* away, and no one
shall rescue.

¹⁵ I will return again to My place
Till they ^tacknowledge their offense.
Then they will seek My face;
In their affliction they will earnestly
seek Me."

A Call to Repentance

6 Come, ^a and let us return to the
LORD;

For ^bHe has torn, but ^cHe will
heal us;

He has stricken, but He will ^dbind
us up.

² ^d After two days He will revive us;
On the third day He will raise us up,
That we may live in His sight.

³ ^e Let us know,
Let us pursue the knowledge of the
LORD.

His going forth is established ^fas the
morning;

^g He will come to us ^hlike the rain,
Like the latter *and* former rain to the
earth.

Impenitence of Israel and Judah

⁴ "O Ephraim, what shall I do to you?
O Judah, what shall I do to you?

For your faithfulness is like a
morning cloud,
And like the early dew it goes away.

⁵ Therefore I have hewn *them* by the
prophets,
I have slain them by ⁱthe words of
My mouth;
And ^jyour judgments *are like* light
that goes forth.

³ ^e Is. 54:13 ^f 2 Sam. 23:4 ^g Ps. 72:6; Joel 2:23 ^h Job 29:23

⁵ ⁱ [Jer. 23:29] ^j Or *the judgments on you*

The Law warned that altering a boundary in this way would bring a special judgment from God (see Deut. 19:14; 27:17; Prov. 22:28).

5:12 As a **moth** slowly destroys clothing, so the Lord would destroy Israel (see Job 13:28; Is. 50:9; 51:8). **Rottenness** elsewhere refers to bone or tooth decay (see Prov. 12:4; 14:30; Hab. 3:16).

5:13 Both Israel and Judah sought protection through alliances with Assyria, but the cruel Assyrians were more interested in exploiting God's people politically and economically. **King Jareb** probably refers to Tiglath-Pileser III, with whom both Israel and Judah formed alliances (see 2 Kin. 15:19, 20; 16:7–9).

5:14, 15 Attacking like a ferocious, invincible **lion**, God would scatter His people as judgment for their treachery. But the purpose of the Lord's discipline was to drive the people to **earnestly seek** Him. The Hebrew verb for *earnestly seek* suggests eager longing and desire (see Job 24:5; Ps. 63:1).

6:1 After being **torn** by the divine lion (5:14), the people would come to their senses and seek to renew their allegiance to the Lord.

6:2 two days . . . the third day: The reference here is to a short time period. When God's people truly repent, God is eager to restore His relationship with them. The people's hope for revival was consistent with God's ancient promises through Moses (see Deut. 30:1–3). **6:3** God's restored presence and blessings would be like **the rain** that waters and renews the **earth, latter and former rain:** The *latter* rains of Israel came in the spring and caused the plants to grow. The *former* rains came in the autumn and softened the ground for plowing and sowing.

6:4 Any apparent **faithfulness** that Hosea's generation displayed was short-lived and disappeared as quickly as fog or dew before sunlight.

6:5 words of My mouth: The **prophets** announced God's destructive judgments, which then fell on His unrepentant people. **your judgments are like light that goes forth:** This comparison suggests that God's judgment, like bright sunlight, was obvious to all; or that like a bolt of lightning or a blinding flash of light, it came swiftly.

- 6 For I desire ^jmercy³ and ^knot sacrifice,
And the ^lknowledge of God more than burnt offerings.
- 7 “But like ⁴men they transgressed the covenant;
There they dealt treacherously with Me.
- 8 ^mGilead is a city of evildoers
And ⁵defiled with blood.
- 9 As bands of robbers lie in wait for a man,
So the company of ⁿpriests ^omurder on the way to Shechem;
Surely they commit ^plewdness.
- 10 I have seen a horrible thing in the house of Israel:
There is the ⁶harlotry of Ephraim;
Israel is defiled.
- 11 Also, O Judah, a harvest is appointed for you,
When I return the captives of My people.
- 7 “When I would have healed Israel,
Then the iniquity of Ephraim was uncovered,
And the wickedness of Samaria.
For ^athey have committed fraud;
A thief comes in;
A band of robbers ^ltakes spoil outside.
- 2 They ²do not consider in their hearts
That ^bI remember all their wickedness;
Now their own deeds have surrounded them;
They are before My face.
- 3 They make a ^cking glad with their wickedness,
And princes ^dwith their lies.
- 4 “They^e are all adulterers.
Like an oven heated by a baker—

6 / Matt. 9:13; 12:7
^k Is. 1:12, 13; [Mic. 6:6-8] / [John 17:3]
³ Or faithfulness or loyalty
 7 ⁴ Or Adam
 8 ^m Hos. 12:11 ⁵ Lit. foot-tracked
 9 ⁿ Hos. 5:1 ^o Jer. 7:9, 10; Hos. 4:2
^p Ezek. 22:9; 23:27; Hos. 2:10
 10 ⁶ Spiritual adultery

CHAPTER 7

1 ¹ Ezek. 23:4-8; Hos. 5:1 ¹ plunders
 2 ² Ps. 25:7; Jer. 14:10; 17:1; Hos. 8:13; 9:9; Amos 8:7
² Lit. do not say to
 3 ^c Hos. 1:1 ^d Mic. 7:3; [Rom. 1:32]
 4 ^e Jer. 9:2; 23:10

5 ¹ Is. 28:1, 7 ³ Lit. with the heat of
 6 ⁴ So with MT, Vg.; Syr., Tg. Their anger; LXX Ephraim
 7 ⁵ Is. 64:7
 8 ^h Ps. 106:35
 9 ^h Is. 1:7; 42:25; Hos. 8:7
 10 ^l Hos. 5:5 ^k Is. 9:13
 11 ^l Hos. 11:11 ^m Is. 30:3 ⁿ Hos. 5:13; 8:9
³ Lit. heart
 12 ^o Ezek. 12:13
^p Lev. 26:14; Deut. 28:15; 2 Kin. 17:13

- He ceases stirring *the fire* after kneading the dough,
Until it is leavened.
- 5 In the day of our king
Princes have made *him* sick,
³inflamed with ^jwine;
He stretched out his hand with scoffers.
- 6 They prepare their heart like an oven,
While they lie in wait;
⁴Their baker sleeps all night;
In the morning it burns like a flaming fire.
- 7 They are all hot, like an oven,
And have devoured their judges;
All their kings have fallen.
⁸None among them calls upon Me.
- 8 “Ephraim ^hhas mixed himself among the peoples;
Ephraim is a cake unturned.
- 9 ⁱAliens have devoured his strength,
But he does not know *it*;
Yes, gray hairs are here and there on him,
Yet he does not know *it*.
- 10 And the ^jpride of Israel testifies to his face,
But ^kthey do not return to the LORD their God,
Nor seek Him for all this.

Futile Reliance on the Nations

- 11 “Ephraim^l also is like a silly dove,
without ⁵sense—
^mThey call to Egypt,
They go to ⁿAssyria.
- 12 Wherever they go, I will ^ospread My net on them;
I will bring them down like birds of the air;
I will chastise them
^pAccording to what their congregation has heard.

6:6 Mercy means “loyalty” or “devotion” (4:1). **Knowledge of God** does not refer to mere head knowledge, but to a genuine recognition of God’s authority that produces obedience to His commandments.

6:8, 9 Even Ramoth in **Gilead** and **Shechem**, which were cities of refuge where manslayers could find asylum, had been contaminated by bloodshed.

6:10 horrible thing: A related Hebrew word is used in Jer. 29:17 of rotten figs.

6:11 The comparison of God’s judgment to a **harvest** indicates that the judgment was inevitable and implies that it would be thorough in its destruction.

7:1, 2 Hardened sinners typically **do not consider** that God will hold them accountable for their deeds (see Ps. 73:11).

7:3 While kings should promote justice and be appalled by **wickedness** (see Ps. 101), Israel’s rulers approved of the people’s sin.

7:4-7 The background for these verses is the political turmoil of the northern kingdom. During a 20-year period (752-732 B.C.), four

Israelite kings were assassinated (see 2 Kin. 15). The dangerous, uncontrollable perpetrators of these crimes are described here. These conspirators were like a large baker’s **oven** that has been heating up for several hours while the bread dough rises. By morning, the **flaming fire** within can be quite destructive.

7:8 Instead of depending on the Lord for political stability, Israel formed alliances with surrounding nations. The destructive outcome of this policy is compared to a **cake** that has been placed over a fire and left **untuned**.

7:9, 10 gray hairs: Israel did not recognize that its power was declining and its freedom was slipping away, like an aging man who is gradually overtaken by the signs of old age.

7:11, 12 Israel was caught between the two superpowers, **Egypt** and **Assyria**. Israel tried to maintain its independence by playing one power against the other, but this vacillating policy was **without sense**. Israel was like a **silly dove**, flitting about from place to place. The Lord would trap them and **chastise** them for their spiritual unsteadiness.

13^a “Woe to them, for they have fled from Me!
Destruction to them,
Because they have transgressed against Me!
Though ^aI redeemed them,
Yet they have spoken lies against Me.
14^r They did not cry out to Me with their heart
When they wailed upon their beds.

“They ^bassemble together for grain and new ^swine,
7 They rebel against Me;
15 Though I disciplined *and* strengthened their arms,
Yet they devise evil against Me;
16 They return, *but* not ^dto the Most High;
^rThey are like a treacherous bow.
Their princes shall fall by the sword
For the ^ucursings of their tongue.
This *shall be* their derision ^vin the land of Egypt.

The Apostasy of Israel

8 “Set the ¹trumpet to your mouth!
He shall come ^alike an eagle against the house of the Lord,
Because they have transgressed My covenant
And rebelled against My law.
2 ^bIsrael will cry to Me,
‘My God, ^cwe know You!’
3 Israel has rejected the good;
The enemy will pursue him.

13 ^a Ex. 18:8; Mic. 6:4
14 ^r Job 35:9, 10; Ps. 78:36; Jer. 3:10; Zech. 7:5 ^s Judg. 9:27; Amos 2:8 ^b So with MT, Tg.; Vg. *thought upon*; LXX *slashed themselves for* (cf. 1 Kin. 18:28) ^r So with MT, Syr., Tg.; LXX omits *They rebel against Me*; Vg. *They departed from Me*
16 ^c Ps. 78:57 ^u Ps. 73:9; Dan. 7:25; Mal. 3:13, 14 ^v Deut. 28:68; Ezek. 23:32; Hos. 8:13; 9:3 ^d Or upward

CHAPTER 8

1 ^a Deut. 28:49; Jer. 4:13 ¹ *ram's horn*, Heb. *shophar*
2 ^b Ps. 78:34; Hos. 5:15; 7:14 ^c Titus 1:16
4 ^d 1 Kin. 12:20; 2 Kin. 15:23, 25; Hos. 13:10, 11
5 ^e Ps. 19:13; Jer. 13:27 ² Golden calf image ³ Or *has rejected you*
6 ^f Is. 40:19
7 ^g Prov. 22:8
^h Hos. 7:9
8 ¹ 2 Kin. 17:6; Jer. 51:34 ^j Jer. 22:28; 25:34
9 ^k Hos. 7:11; 12:1; Jer. 2:24 ^l Ezek. 16:33, 34
10 ^m Ezek. 16:37; 22:20 ⁿ Is. 10:8; Ezek. 26:7; Dan. 2:37 ⁴ Or *begin to diminish* ⁵ Or *oracle or proclamation*

4 “They ^d set up kings, but not by Me;
They made princes, but I did not acknowledge *them*.
From their silver and gold
They made idols for themselves—
That they might be cut off.
5 Your ² calf ³ is rejected, O Samaria!
My anger is aroused against them—
^e How long until they attain to innocence?
6 For from Israel *is* even this:
A ^f workman made it, and it *is* not God;
But the calf of Samaria shall be broken to pieces.
7 “They ^g sow the wind,
And reap the whirlwind.
The stalk has no bud;
It shall never produce meal.
If it should produce,
^h Aliens would swallow it up.
8 ⁱ Israel is swallowed up;
Now they are among the Gentiles
^j Like a vessel in which *is* no pleasure.
9 For they have gone up to Assyria,
Like ^k a wild donkey alone by itself;
Ephraim ^l has hired lovers.
10 Yes, though they have hired among the nations,
Now ^m I will gather them;
And they shall ⁴ sorrow a little,
Because of the ⁵ burden of ⁿ the king of princes.
11 “Because Ephraim has made many altars for sin,
They have become for him altars for sinning.

7:13 Like a bird that flies away when frightened (see Jer. 4:25), Israel fled from the Lord and His standards, despite His willingness to help the people.

7:14 God sent a drought that took away Israel's **grain and new wine**. Yet instead of turning to Him in repentance, the idolatrous Israelites demonstrated their devotion to Baal. According to Canaanite religious beliefs, prolonged drought was a signal that the storm god Baal had been temporarily defeated by the god of death and was imprisoned in the underworld. Baal's worshipers would mourn his death in hopes that their tears might facilitate his resurrection and the restoration of crops.

7:15 **Strengthened their arms** probably refers to God's past military help, especially during the reign of Jeroboam II earlier in the eighth century B.C. (see 2 Kin. 14:24, 25).

7:16 **A treacherous bow** is a bow that is damaged or flawed in its workmanship and does not shoot effectively. Such a bow would be unreliable and therefore worthless to a warrior or hunter. Though the Lord had been faithful to Israel, Israel had not been loyal to Him (see Ps. 78:57). **derision in the land of Egypt**: Note the irony in the fact that one of the nations to whom Israel had looked for help (v. 11) would make fun of Israel when judgment fell.

8:1–3 Just as an eagle swiftly swoops down and snatches its prey, so Assyria would invade Israel and take its people into captivity. **The house of the Lord** refers to the entire land of Israel. **we know You**: Though Israel claimed to acknowledge the Lord's authority, it had violated His covenant and rejected the qualities the Lord re-

garded as **good**, such as justice, loyalty, and humility (see Amos 5:14, 15; Mic. 6:8).

8:4 **They set up kings**: This phrase alludes to the political turmoil surrounding the throne of the northern kingdom during the eighth century B.C., when four kings were assassinated during a 20-year period (7:4–7).

8:5 If the capital city **Samaria** stands for the northern kingdom in general, the reference here may be to the calf idols made by Jeroboam I (see 1 Kin. 12:28–30).

8:6 **A workman made it**: Hosea reasoned that anything that is made with human hands cannot possibly qualify as a god.

8:7 In its original context, this well-known proverb emphasizes the futility of Israel's alliances with false gods and foreign nations. Morally speaking, Israel had planted **wind**, symbolizing its moral bankruptcy, and would **reap a whirlwind**, symbolizing the coming judgment.

8:8 **Swallowed up**: This image vividly depicts the effects of Israel's foreign alliances, which drained the nation economically.

8:9, 10 **Like a wild donkey**: This comparison draws attention to Israel's free-spirited attitude and desire to live unrestrained by God's standards. **King of princes** refers to the conquering Assyrian king.

8:11–13 **altars for sin**: The Lord regarded Israel's religious rituals as sinful because they were not supported by an obedient lifestyle. In fact, Israel treated God's **law** as if it were something **strange** or alien to them. **return to Egypt**: Egypt symbolizes exile and slavery. The people would actually be taken to Assyria (9:3; 11:5).

- 12 I have written for him ^othe great things of My law,
But they were considered a strange thing.
- 13 For the sacrifices of My offerings
^pthey sacrifice flesh and eat it,
^qBut the LORD does not accept them.
^rNow He will remember their iniquity and punish their sins.
They shall return to Egypt.
- 14^aFor ^sIsrael has forgotten ^this Maker,
And has built ⁶temples;
Judah also has multiplied ^ufortified cities;
But ^vI will send fire upon his cities,
And it shall devour his ⁷palaces.”

Judgment of Israel's Sin

- 9 Do ^anot rejoice, O Israel, with joy like ^{other} peoples,
For you have played the harlot against your God.
You have made love for ^bhire on every threshing floor.
- 2 The threshing floor and the winepress
Shall not feed them,
And the new wine shall fail in her.
- 3 They shall not dwell in ^cthe LORD's land,
^dBut Ephraim shall return to Egypt,
And ^eshall eat unclean *things* in Assyria.
- 4 They shall not offer wine *offerings* to the LORD,
Nor ^fshall their ^gsacrifices be pleasing to Him.
It shall be like bread of mourners to them;
All who eat it shall be defiled.

12 ^o [Deut. 4:6-8]; Ps. 119:18; 147:19, 20
13 ^p Zech. 7:6 ^q Jer. 14:10; Hos. 6:6; 9:4; 1 Cor. 4:5 ^r Hos. 9:9; Amos 8:7; Luke 12:2
14 ^s Deut. 32:18; [Hos. 2:13; 4:6; 13:6] ^t Is. 29:23
^u Num. 32:17; 2 Kin. 18:13 ^v Jer. 17:27
⁶ Or *palaces* ⁷ Or *citadels*

CHAPTER 9

1 ^a Is. 22:12, 13; Hos. 10:5 ^b Jer. 44:17
3 ^c [Lev. 25:23]; Jer. 2:7 ^d Hos. 7:16; 8:13
^e Ezek. 4:13
4 ^f Jer. 6:20 ^g Hos. 8:13; Amos 5:22

6 ^h Is. 5:6; 7:23; Hos. 10:8
7 ⁱ Is. 10:3; Jer. 10:15; Mic. 7:4; Luke 21:22 / Lam. 2:14; [Ezek. 13:3, 10]
^k Mic. 2:11
8 ^j Jer. 6:17; 31:6; Ezek. 3:17; 33:7
^l One who catches birds in a trap or snare
9 ^m Hos. 10:9
ⁿ Judg. 19:22
10 ^o Jer. 2:2 ^p Is. 28:4; Mic. 7:1
^q Num. 25:3; Ps. 106:28 ² Or *dedicated*

- For their bread *shall be* for their *own* life;
It shall not come into the house of the LORD.
- 5 What will you do in the appointed day,
And in the day of the feast of the LORD?
- 6 For indeed they are gone because of destruction.
Egypt shall gather them up;
Memphis shall bury them.
^h Nettles shall possess their valuables of silver;
Thorns *shall be* in their tents.
- 7 The ⁱdays of punishment have come;
The days of recompense have come.
Israel knows!
The prophet is a ^jfool,
^kThe spiritual man *is* insane,
Because of the greatness of your iniquity and great enmity.
- 8 The ^lwatchman of Ephraim *is* with my God;
But the prophet is a ^lfowler's snare in all his ways—
Enmity in the house of his God.
- 9 ^mThey are deeply corrupted,
As in the days of ⁿGibeah.
He will remember their iniquity;
He will punish their sins.
- 10^a I found Israel
Like grapes in the ^owilderness;
I saw your fathers
As the ^pfirstfruits on the fig tree in its first season.
But they went to ^qBaal Peor,
And ²separated themselves to *that* shame;

8:14 True security comes from the Creator, but God's people trusted instead in their own efforts, symbolized by their **temples** and **fortified cities**.

9:1, 2 Because of their association with the harvest, **threshing** floors were the site of agricultural festivals in which Israel offered up sacrifices to Baal. The Lord would take away the **joy** of the harvest by destroying the crops and leaving the threshing floors and **wine** vats empty.

9:3 the LORD's land: Israel had forgotten that their land belonged to the Lord. He alone decided who would or would not live in it (see Lev. 25:23).

9:4, 5 Because they had touched a dead body, **mourners** were ceremonially unclean and contaminated everything that came in contact with them (see Num. 19:14, 15, 22). Living in a foreign land, Israel would be ceremonially defiled and unable to worship the Lord with sacrifices and offerings.

9:6 Memphis: This Egyptian city, known for its great cemeteries, tombs, and pyramids, symbolized the unclean land of exile (Assyria) to which God's people would be taken captive. **Nettles . . . Thorns:** The land of Israel would be abandoned, leaving the people's possessions and homes to be overrun by weeds and briars.

9:7 Sinful Israel disdained God's true prophets, regarding them

as raving maniacs. The Hebrew word translated **insane** is used in 1 Sam. 21:15 of David when he pretended to be a madman before the Philistine king. **Enmity** refers to strong resentment that can give rise to violent behavior.

9:8 A watchman would look for approaching armies and then warn the people so that they could secure the city and prepare for battle (see Ezek. 33:6). The prophets were like watchmen because they were sent by God to warn the people of judgment and urge them to repent (see Ezek. 3:17).

9:9 As in the days of Gibeah: The reference here is to the rape and murder of a young woman by men of Gibeah, an event that started a civil war (see Judg. 19). Those who witnessed this violent deed remarked that it was the worst crime committed in Israel's history until that time (see Judg. 19:30). However, the sins of Hosea's generation rivaled the infamous Gibeah murder.

9:10 At the beginning of Israel's history, God found great delight in His people. **Grapes in the wilderness** would be a pleasant surprise; **the firstfruits on the fig tree** were an irresistible delicacy (see Is. 28:4; Jer. 24:2; Mic. 7:1). However, Israel had quickly fallen into sin. At **Baal Peor** the Israelites had participated in fertility rites with Moabite women, bringing God's judgment down upon the nation (see Num. 25).

^rThey became an abomination like the thing they loved.
11 *As for Ephraim, their glory shall fly away like a bird—*
No birth, no pregnancy, and no conception!
12 Though they bring up their children, Yet I will bereave them to the last man.
Yes, ^swoe to them when I depart from them!
13 Just ^tas I saw Ephraim like Tyre, planted in a pleasant place, So Ephraim will bring out his children to the murderer.”
14 Give them, O LORD— What will You give? Give them ^ua miscarrying womb And dry breasts!
15“ All their wickedness *is* in ^vGilgal, For there I hated them. Because of the evil of their deeds I will drive them from My house; I will love them no more.
^wAll their princes *are* rebellious.
16 Ephraim *is* ^xstricken, Their root is dried up; They shall bear no fruit. Yes, were they to bear children, I would kill the darlings of their womb.”
17 My God will ^ycast them away, Because they did not obey Him; And they shall be ^zwanderers among the nations.

Israel's Sin and Captivity

10 Israel ^aempties *his* vine; He brings forth fruit for himself. According to the multitude of his fruit

10 ^r Ps. 81:12
12 ^s Deut. 31:17; Hos. 7:13
13 ^t Ezek. 26–28
14 ^u Luke 23:29
15 ^v Hos. 4:15; 12:11
^w Is. 1:23; Hos. 5:2
16 ^x Hos. 5:11
17 ^y 2 Kin. 17:20; [Zech. 10:6] ^z Lev. 26:33

CHAPTER 10
1 ^a Nah. 2:2

^b Jer. 2:28; Hos. 8:11; 12:11
2 ^c 1 Kin. 18:21; Zeph. 1:5; [Matt. 6:24] ^d Divided in loyalty
4 ^d Deut. 31:16, 17; 2 Kin. 17:3, 4; Amos 5:7
5 ^e 1 Kin. 12:28, 29; Hos. 8:5, 6; 13:2
^f Hos. 9:11 ² Lit. calves, images
³ idolatrous priests
6 ^g Hos. 5:13
8 ^h Hos. 4:15 ⁱ Deut. 9:21; 1 Kin. 13:34
9:21; 1 Kin. 13:34
^j Is. 2:19; Luke 23:30; Rev. 6:16
^k Lit. Idolatry or Wickedness

^bHe has increased the altars; According to the bounty of his land They have embellished *his sacred* pillars.
2 Their heart is ^cdivided;¹ Now they are held guilty. He will break down their altars; He will ruin their *sacred* pillars.
3 For now they say, “We have no king, Because we did not fear the LORD. And as for a king, what would he do for us?”
4 They have spoken words, Swearing falsely in making a covenant. Thus judgment springs up ^dlike hemlock in the furrows of the field.
5 The inhabitants of Samaria fear Because of the ^ecalf² of Beth Aven. For its people mourn for it, And ³its priests shriek for it— Because its ^fglory has departed from it.
6 *The idol* also shall be carried to Assyria As a present for King ^gJareb. Ephraim shall receive shame, And Israel shall be ashamed of his own counsel.
7 *As for* Samaria, her king is cut off Like a twig on the water.
8 Also the ^hhigh places of ⁴Aven, ⁱthe sin of Israel, Shall be destroyed. The thorn and thistle shall grow on their altars; ^jThey shall say to the mountains, “Cover us!” And to the hills, “Fall on us!”

9:11 Their glory refers to Ephraim's (Israel's) population, especially its children. **like a bird**: Ephraim's population would dwindle as its women became barren. The punishment would be appropriate because this generation of Israelites, like an earlier generation at Baal Peor, promoted fertility by worshipping Baal.
9:12, 13 Any **children** who were born in Israel would be killed in the coming invasion. **Tyre** was an important economic center located at an advantageous spot on the Mediterranean coast.
9:14 **miscarrying womb**: Some women of Israel would be barren (v. 11); others would bear children, only to lose them to the invader's sword (vv. 12, 13). Still others would conceive, but miscarry.
9:15 **Gilgal** had become a center of idolatry (12:11; see Josh. 5). **hated**: Marriage and divorce provide the background for the language used here. The Lord would reject (hate) His unfaithful wife (see Deut. 22:13; 24:3), **drive** her from His **house** (the land), and remove His protective care (**love**) from her. There may also be an allusion here to Genesis 3:24 and 4:14, which tell how God drove away Adam and then Cain.
9:17 **Wanderers** may allude to the fate of Cain (see Gen. 4:12), who like Israel (v. 9) was guilty of murder.

10:1 **Israel empties his vine** refers to God's blessings upon the nation, which contrast with the nation's ingratitude and idolatry.
10:2 **divided**: This verb refers to Israel's deceitful and hypocritical ways.
10:3 **now they say**: This verse anticipates the people's response when God's judgment came to destroy Israel's political stability and independence (vv. 7, 15).
10:4 **like hemlock in the furrows of the field**: This analogy refers to poisonous weeds sprouting up in a field and choking out the crops. In the same way God's judgment would replace His blessings.
10:5, 6 The Assyrians often **carried** off the idols of their defeated foes. **His own counsel** probably refers to Israel's foreign alliances, which would prove disappointing.
10:7 The comparison in this verse depicts Israel's **king** being swept away like a piece of wood in a stream.
10:8 **thorn and thistle**: This phrase may allude to Gen. 3:18, the only other passage in the OT where this wording occurs.

- 9 “O Israel, you have sinned from the days of ^kGibeah;
There they stood.
The ^lbattle in Gibeah against the children of ⁵iniquity
Did not ⁶overtake them.
- 10 When *it is* My desire, I will chasten them.
^mPeoples shall be gathered against them
When I bind them ⁷for their two transgressions.
- 11 Ephraim *is* ⁿa trained heifer
That loves to thresh *grain*;
But I harnessed her fair neck,
I will make Ephraim ⁸pull a *plow*.
Judah shall plow;
Jacob shall break his clods.”
- 12 Sow for yourselves righteousness;
Reap in mercy;
^oBreak up your fallow ground,
For *it is* time to seek the LORD,
Till He ^pcomes and rains
righteousness on you.
- 13 ^qYou have plowed wickedness;
You have reaped iniquity.
You have eaten the fruit of lies,
Because you trusted in your own
way,
In the multitude of your mighty men.
- 14 Therefore tumult shall arise among
your people,
And all your fortresses shall be
plundered

9 ^a Hos. 9:9 ¹ Judg. 20 ⁵ So with many Heb. mss., LXX, Vg.; MT *unruliness* ⁶ Or *overcome*
10 ^m Jer. 16:16
⁷ Or *in their two habitations*
11 ⁿ [Jer. 50:11; Hos. 4:16; Mic. 4:13] ⁸ Lit. *to ride*
12 ^o Jer. 4:3 ^p Hos. 6:3
13 ^q [Job 4:8; Prov. 22:8; Gal. 6:7, 8]

CHAPTER 11

1 ^a Matt. 2:15 ^b Ex. 4:22, 23 ¹ Or *youth*
2 ^c 2 Kin. 17:13-15
² So with MT, Vg.; LXX *Just as I called them*; Tg. interprets as *I sent prophets to a thousand of them.* ³ So with MT, Tg., Vg.; LXX *from My face*
3 ^d Deut. 1:31; 32:10, 11 ^e Ex. 15:26
⁴ Some Heb. mss., LXX, Syr., Vg. *My arms*
4 ^f Lev. 26:13 ^g Ex. 16:32; Ps. 78:25
⁵ Lit. *cords of a man*
⁶ Lit. *jaws*

As Shalman plundered Beth Arbel in the day of battle—
A mother dashed in pieces upon *her* children.

- 15 Thus it shall be done to you, O Bethel,
Because of your great wickedness.
At dawn the king of Israel
Shall be cut off utterly.

God's Continuing Love for Israel

- 11 “When Israel *was* a ¹child, I loved him,
And out of Egypt ^aI called My ^bson.
² ² As they called them,
So they ^cwent ³from them;
They sacrificed to the Baals,
And burned incense to carved
images.
- 3 “^d taught Ephraim to walk,
Taking them by ⁴their arms;
But they did not know that ^eI healed them.
- 4 I drew them with ⁵gentle cords,
With bands of love,
And ^fI was to them as those who
take the yoke from their ⁶neck.
^gI stooped *and* fed them.
- 5 “He shall not return to the land of
Egypt;
But the Assyrian shall be his king,
Because they refused to repent.
- 6 And the sword shall slash in his
cities,
Devour his districts,

10:9 Israel had persisted in sin since the day when a young woman was raped and murdered by the men of **Gibeah** (9:9).

10:10 The imagery in this verse depicts the Lord binding His people, like oxen, to a yoke. The figurative yoke is comprised of **their two transgressions**, probably referring to the ancient crime at Gibeah (v. 9) and the collective sin of Hosea's generation. The yoke imagery suggests that the people could not escape the consequences of their deeds.

10:11 loves to thresh: Israel preferred to be unrestrained, like an unmuzzled heifer at the threshing floor that can simply lean down and eat the grain. **pull a plow:** Israel's rebellious spirit necessitated harsh treatment, compared here to a farmer binding his calf to the yoke and forcing it to do hard labor. Threshing in this context refers to Israel's service to the Lord; plowing refers to the discipline that Israel had to acquire through judgment and exile.

10:12 Hosea calls the people to repentance, reminding them that a decision could not be postponed, and that God's blessings could still be restored. In Israel's case, the people had to reestablish social justice—**righteousness**—and loyalty—**mercy**—in the land.

Break up your fallow ground: Plowing and planting are necessary preliminary steps for growing a crop, which eventually sprouts when the rain falls in season. In the same way, repentance would set the stage for restored blessing, which God would eventually rain down on His people.

10:13 The process of repentance and restored blessing outlined in v. 12 contrasts sharply with reality. Israel had planted the seeds of sin and reaped the inevitable consequences. **Fruit of lies** likely refers to the people's lack of loyalty to God (v. 4).

10:14 The identity of the conqueror **Shalman** and the location of

Beth Arbel are uncertain. At any rate, the **battle** referred to seems to have been well known to Hosea's audience because of its extreme violence.

10:15 Israel's defeat would be so swift that the nation's **king** would be **cut off** before the battle had scarcely begun.

11:1 The Lord regarded Israel as His **son** and treated the nation with special care, delivering the people from bondage in **Egypt** (see Matt. 2:15).

11:2 they called them: The plural subject probably refers to God's prophets (see 12:10; Jer. 7:25, 26).

11:3 Like a father teaching his child to walk, the Lord patiently gave the people of Israel direction and cared for them tenderly when they experienced pain or injury.

11:4 The image of v. 3 changes as God is compared to a farmer and Israel to a beast of burden. The Lord had placed restraints—**cords** and **bands**—on Israel, but His regulations, rather than being overly strict or harsh, reflected His concern for the people's well-being. God did not drive them mercilessly but provided for their needs, like a farmer who periodically removes **the yoke** from an animal's neck so that it can eat.

11:5 Repent is the same Hebrew word translated **return** earlier in the verse. Israel could not remain stationary. It had to return either to the Lord or to bondage. Israel's refusal to return to the Lord would result in a return to slavery.

11:6 Devour is the same Hebrew word translated *fed* in v. 4. The people of Israel had rejected the gentle Master who fed them and provided for their needs. As a result, they would be devoured by the swords of the invading Assyrians.

And consume *them*,
Because of their own counsels.
7 My people are bent on ^hbacksliding
from Me.
Though ⁷they call ⁸to the Most High,
None at all exalt *Him*.

8 “How ⁱ can I give you up, Ephraim?
How can I hand you over, Israel?
How can I make you like ^jAdmah?
How can I set you like Zeboiim?
My heart ⁹churns within Me;
My sympathy is stirred.

9 I will not execute the fierceness of
My anger;
I will not again destroy Ephraim.
^kFor I *am* God, and not man,
The Holy One in your midst;
And I will not ^lcome with terror.

10 “They shall walk after the LORD.
^lHe will roar like a lion.
When He roars,
Then *His* sons shall come trembling
from the west;

11 They shall come trembling like a bird
from Egypt,
^mLike a dove from the land of Assyria.
ⁿAnd I will let them dwell in their
houses,”
Says the LORD.

God's Charge Against Ephraim

12 “Ephraim has encircled Me with lies,
And the house of Israel with deceit;
But Judah still walks with God,
Even with the ²Holy One *who is*
faithful.

12 “Ephraim ^afeeds on the wind,
And pursues the east wind;

7 ^h Jer. 3:6, 7; 8:5
7 The prophets ⁸ Or
upward
8 ⁱ Jer. 9:7 ^j Gen.
14:8; 19:24, 25;
Deut. 29:23 ⁹ Lit.
turns over
9 ^k Num. 23:19 ^l Or
enter a city
10 ^l Is. 31:4; [Joel
3:16]; Amos 1:2
11 ^m Is. 11:11; 60:8;
Hos. 7:11 ⁿ Ezek.
28:25, 26; 34:27, 28
12 ² Or *holy ones*

CHAPTER 12

1 ^a Job 15:2, 3;
Hos. 8:7

b 2 Kin. 17:4; Hos.
8:9 c Is. 30:6 ¹ ruin
2 Or *treaty*
2 ^d Hos. 4:1; Mic. 6:2
3 A legal complaint
3 ^e Gen. 25:26
4 ^f Gen. 32:24-28
4 ^g [Gen. 28:12-19;
35:9-15]
5 ^h Ex. 3:15
6 ⁱ Hos. 14:1; Mic.
6:8
7 ^j Prov. 11:1; Amos
8:5; Mic. 6:11 ⁴ Or
merchant
8 ^k Ps. 62:10; Hos.
13:6; Rev. 3:17
9 ^l Lev. 23:42

He daily increases lies and
¹desolation.

^b Also they make a ²covenant with the
Assyrians,
And ^coil is carried to Egypt.

2 “The ^d LORD also *brings* a ³charge
against Judah,
And will punish Jacob according to
his ways;
According to his deeds He will
recompense him.

3 He took his brother ^eby the heel in
the womb,
And in his strength he ^fstruggled
with God.

4 Yes, he struggled with the Angel and
prevailed;
He wept, and sought favor from Him.
He found Him *in* ^gBethel,
And there He spoke to us—

5 That is, the LORD God of hosts.
The LORD *is* His ^hmemorable name.

6 ⁱ So you, by *the help* of your God,
return;
Observe mercy and justice,
And wait on your God continually.

7 “A cunning ⁴ Canaanite!
^jDeceitful scales *are* in his hand;
He loves to oppress.

8 And Ephraim said,
^k Surely I have become rich,
I have found wealth for myself;
In all my labors
They shall find in me no iniquity
that *is* sin.”

9 “But I *am* the LORD your God,
Ever since the land of Egypt;
^l I will again make you dwell in tents,
As in the days of the appointed feast.

11:8, 9 As the Lord contemplated the judgment of Israel, His **sympathy** moved Him to have compassion and stop short of totally annihilating the people. **Admah** and **Zeboiim**, sister cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, were destroyed by God's judgment (see Gen. 10:19; 14:2, 8; Deut. 29:23). **For I am God, and not man**: When human beings get angry, they are often incapable of tempering their anger with compassion, but God's emotions operate in perfect balance. 11:10, 11 In the coming judgment, God would tear Israel like a lion (5:14); in the future, God's lionlike **roar** would summon His people to return from exile. In the past, the people of Israel had flown back and forth between the nations like a dove (7:11); in the future, the people would speed back to their homeland **like a bird**.

11:12 **Ephraim has encircled Me**: The northern kingdom had surrounded God as if He were under siege.

12:1 The prophet focuses in the verse on the nation's social injustice and foreign alliances. Israel's wicked behavior would lead nowhere. **Oil** may have been used in a ritual ratifying a treaty or given as a sign of loyalty.

12:2 **according to his ways**: God judges people and nations according to their deeds.

12:3, 4 Hosea draws a lesson from the life of Jacob, the father of the nation. Jacob's greedy, self-reliant, and deceitful character was evident from birth when he grabbed **the heel of his brother** Esau

(see Gen. 25:26). The climactic event in Jacob's spiritual growth was his wrestling match with God the night before he was reunited with his brother. Jacob acknowledged his dependence on God, begged for divine favor, and received a blessing (see Gen. 32:24–30). **the Angel**: Making no mention of an angel, the Genesis account refers to Jacob's foe as “a Man” (Gen. 32:24 reflects Jacob's initial perspective), but then indicates that Jacob wrestled with God Himself (see Gen. 32:28, 30). Since vv. 4, 5 seem to place **God** and the Angel in parallel, some understand the Angel of the Lord to be in view here. This Angel is sometimes equated with God in the OT (see Gen. 16:9–13; Judg. 6:11–14; 13:20–22).

12:5, 6 Just as Jacob had come to his senses and recognized his dependence on God, so Israel was to repent (**return**), reestablish justice in society, and depend (**wait**) on the Lord.

12:7 The word **Canaanite** also means “merchant.” Here the word may allude to Israel's dishonest economic activities. **Deceitful scales**: In violation of the OT law (see Lev. 19:36), dishonest merchants sometimes rigged their scales so that they could give buyers less than what the buyers thought they were purchasing (see Prov. 11:1; 16:11; 20:23; Amos 8:5; Mic. 6:11).

12:9–11 The Lord had given Israel direction **by the prophets**, but the people had rejected the message. To teach Israel dependence, God would drive them from their homes and send them into exile.

^{10m} I have also spoken by the prophets,
And have multiplied visions;
I have given ^s symbols ⁶ through the
witness of the prophets.”

¹¹ Though ⁿ Gilead *has* idols—
Surely they are ⁷ vanity—
Though they sacrifice bulls in
^o Gilgal,
Indeed their altars *shall be* heaps in
the furrows of the field.

¹² Jacob ^p fled to the country of Syria;
^q Israel served for a spouse,
And for a wife he tended *sheep*.

^{13 r} By a prophet the LORD brought Israel
out of Egypt,
And by a prophet he was preserved.

¹⁴ Ephraim ^s provoked *Him* to anger
most bitterly;
Therefore his Lord will leave the
guilt of his bloodshed upon
him,

^t And return his reproach upon him.

^{10 m} 2 Kin. 17:13;
Jer. 7:25 ⁵ Or
parables ⁶ Lit. *by*
the hand
^{11 n} Hos. 6:8 ^o Hos.
9:15 ⁷ *worthless*
^{12 p} Gen. 28:5;
Deut. 26:5 ^q Gen.
29:20, 28
^{13 r} Ex. 12:50, 51;
13:3; Ps. 77:20; Is.
63:11, 12; Mic. 6:4
^{14 s} Ezek. 18:10-13
^t Dan. 11:18; Mic.
6:16

CHAPTER 13

^{2 i} Or *those who*
offer human
sacrifice ² Worship
with kisses
^{3 o} Ps. 1:4; Is. 17:13;
Dan. 2:35
^{4 b} Is. 43:11

Relentless Judgment on Israel

13 When Ephraim spoke, trembling,
He exalted *himself* in Israel;
But when he offended through Baal
worship, he died.
² Now they sin more and more,
And have made for themselves
molded images,
Idols of their silver, according to
their skill;
All of it *is* the work of craftsmen.
They say of them,
“Let ¹ the men who sacrifice ² kiss the
calves!”
³ Therefore they shall be like the
morning cloud
And like the early dew that passes
away,
⁴ Like chaff blown off from a threshing
floor
And like smoke from a chimney.
⁴ “Yet ^b *I am* the LORD your God
Ever since the land of Egypt,

This would be comparable to dwelling **in tents**, as the people did during **the appointed feast** of Tabernacles that commemorated the wilderness wandering (see Lev. 23:33–43). The towns that epitomized Israel’s sin, such as **Gilead** (6:8) and **Gilgal** (4:15; 9:15), would be destroyed. The **altars** of Gilgal would be turned into **heaps** of stone.

12:12–14 God had always protected His people. He protected Jacob when he had to flee for his life to a foreign land. He used Moses to bring **Israel out of Egypt** and preserve the people on their way to the Promised Land. Israel’s ingratitude, made evident by its sin, angered the Lord and made judgment inevitable.

13:1 The tribe of Ephraim had gained a prominent position in the northern kingdom and could strike fear into the hearts of the other tribes. **Trembling** probably refers to the effect that Ephraim’s speech had on the other tribes.

13:2 Kiss the calves refers to the idolatrous practice of kissing images as a sign of homage (see 1 Kin. 19:18).

13:3 God’s judgment would sweep Ephraim away quickly, just as the sun dispels fog and dries up the **dew**, or as the wind blows away **chaff** and **smoke**.

13:4, 5 The Lord reminded Israel of who He is, what He had accomplished for His people, and what He expected from them. Because

Back to Baal

By Hosea’s time Baalism had captured the minds and hearts of many Israelites. Baal was the most important deity in the Canaanite pantheon. Baal’s followers believed that his blessing guaranteed the continuation of human life and the preservation of social order. As a fertility deity, Baal was the provider of children, a prized possession in the culture of the ancient Middle East. As the god of the storm, Baal brought the rains and made the crops grow. Baal’s devotees trusted that with the elements of the storm at his disposal, he could defeat the enemies of his people. As the king of the divine realm under the ultimate authority of the high god El, Baal overcame the powerful and terrifying deities Yamm, the god of the chaotic sea, and Mot, the god of death and the underworld.

Recognizing the threat that Baalism posed for His people, the Lord actively opposed this false religious system from the very beginning of Israel’s history. He affirmed that He is the only living God (see Ex. 15:11; Deut. 33:26; 1 Sam. 2:2) and Israel’s rightful king (see Ex. 15:18; 20:2–6). The Lord revealed His sovereignty over the elements of the storm (see Ex. 9:23, 24; 19:16, 18; Deut. 33:26; 1 Sam. 7:10; 12:17, 18; 1 Kin. 17:1; 18:1, 45), demonstrated His authority over the chaotic sea (see Ex. 15:8, 10) and the realm of death (see Ex. 15:12; 1 Sam. 2:6; 1 Kin. 17:17–23), and proved that He alone could provide children to the infertile (see 1 Sam. 2:5). This attack on Baalism climaxed at Mount Carmel, where the Lord hurled a fiery lightning bolt down from heaven (see 1 Kin. 18:38, 39) to demonstrate beyond the shadow of a doubt that He is the living God. In contrast, Baal’s prophets with their frenzied mourning rites could not provoke any response (see 1 Kin. 18:26–29). When Jehu later purged the kingdom of Baalism (see 2 Kin. 10:18–28), the Lord’s victory seemed complete. However, less than a century later, Baalism had resurfaced as the religion of the people, forcing the Lord to confront Israel through Hosea the prophet.

How are we to explain Baalism’s success? The Lord demanded obedience to strict moral and ethical standards as a basis for blessing. In stark contrast, Baalism appealed to the sensual nature. Baal’s favor was gained through sympathetic magic in the form of ritual prostitution. Through these rites, young men and women supposedly could gain Baal’s favor and ensure their ability to produce and bear children (see 4:12–14). Because of Baalism’s attractions to the base side of human nature, it persisted in Israel. It promised an easy and even enjoyable road to prosperity, while God’s way, the way of true life, demanded selflessness.



- And you shall know no God
but Me;
For ^cthere is no savior besides Me.
5 ^dI ³knew you in the wilderness,
^eIn the land of ⁴great drought.
6 ^fWhen they had pasture, they were
filled;
They were filled and their heart was
exalted;
Therefore they forgot Me.
- 7 “So ^gI will be to them like a lion;
Like ^ha leopard by the road I will
lurk;
8 I will meet them ⁱlike a bear deprived
of her cubs;
I will tear open their rib cage,
And there I will devour them like a
lion.
The ⁵wild beast shall tear them.
- 9 “O Israel, ⁶you are destroyed,
But ⁷your help is from Me.
10 ⁸I will be your King;
^jWhere is ^{any other},
That he may save you in all your
cities?
And your judges to whom ^hyou said,
‘Give me a king and princes’?
11 ⁱI gave you a king in My anger,
And took ^{him} away in My wrath.
- 12 “The ^miniquity of Ephraim is bound
up;
His sin is stored up.
13 ⁿThe sorrows of a woman in
childbirth shall come upon him.
He is an unwise son,
For he should not stay long where
children are born.
- 14 “I will ransom them from the ⁹power
of ⁱthe grave;
I will redeem them from death.
^oO Death, ²I will be your plagues!

4 ^c Is. 43:11; 45:21,
22; [1 Tim. 2:5]
5 ^d Deut. 2:7; 32:10
^e Deut. 8:15 ³ Cared
for you ⁴ Lit.
droughts
6 ^f Deut. 8:12, 14;
32:13-15; Jer. 5:7
7 ^g Lam. 3:10; Hos.
5:14 ^h Jer. 5:6
8 ¹ 2 Sam. 17:8; Prov.
17:12 ⁵ Lit. *beast of
the field*
9 ⁶ Lit. *it or he
destroyed you* ⁷ Lit.
in your help
10 ⁱ Deut. 32:38
^k 1 Sam. 8:5, 6
⁸ LXX, Syr., Tg., Vg.
Where is your king?
11 ⁱ 1 Sam. 8:7;
10:17-24
12 ^m Deut. 32:34,
35; Job 14:17; [Rom.
2:5]
13 ⁿ Is. 13:8; Mic.
4:9, 10
14 ^o [1 Cor. 15:54,
55] ⁹ Lit. *hand* ¹ Or
Sheol ² LXX *where
is your punishment?*

^p Jer. 15:6 ³ Or
Sheol ⁴ LXX *where
is your sting?*
15 ^a Gen. 41:6; Jer.
4:11, 12; Ezek. 17:10;
19:12
16 ^r 2 Kin. 18:12
² Kin. 15:16 ⁵ LXX
shall be disfigured

CHAPTER 14

1 ^a Hos. 12:6; [Joel
2:13]
2 ^b [Ps. 51:16, 17;
Hos. 6:6; Heb. 13:15]
¹ Lit. *bull calves*;
LXX *fruit*
3 ^c Hos. 7:11; 10:13;
12:1 ^d [Ps. 33:17];
Is. 31:1 ^e Ps. 10:14;
68:5
4 ^f Jer. 14:7 ⁹ [Eph.
1:6]

O ³Grave, ⁴I will be your
destruction!
^pPity is hidden from My eyes.”

- 15 Though he is fruitful among his
brethren,
^qAn east wind shall come;
The wind of the LORD shall come up
from the wilderness.
Then his spring shall become dry,
And his fountain shall be dried up.
He shall plunder the treasury of
every desirable prize.
16 Samaria ⁵is held guilty,
For she has ^rrebelled against her
God.
They shall fall by the sword,
Their infants shall be dashed in
pieces,
And their women with child ^sripped
open.

Israel Restored at Last

- 14 O Israel, ^areturn to the LORD your
God,
For you have stumbled because of
your iniquity;
2 Take words with you,
And return to the LORD.
Say to Him,
“Take away all iniquity;
Receive ^{us} graciously,
For we will offer the ^bsacrifices ⁱof
our lips.
3 Assyria shall ^cnot save us,
^dWe will not ride on horses,
Nor will we say anymore to the work
of our hands, ‘You are our gods.’
^eFor in You the fatherless finds
mercy.”
- 4 “I will heal their ^fbacksliding,
I will ^glove them freely,
For My anger has turned away from
him.

He alone was Israel's **God** and **savior**, the Lord expected the people's undivided loyalty. **know . . . knew**: The repetition of the verb “to know” correlates God's demands with His grace. Because He *knew* (cared for) Israel in the wilderness, He had every right to expect them to *know* (be loyal to) Him.

13:6–9 God provided for Israel's needs and richly blessed the people, like a shepherd leading his flock to lush pasture lands. In return, Israel **forgot** the Lord. The Lord's relationship with Israel would change drastically from caring Shepherd to ravaging Predator. Ironically and tragically, Israel's rebellion had turned its Helper into a Destroyer.

13:10, 11 These verses recall how Israel demanded from Samuel a king like those of the nations around them (see 1 Sam. 8). Though offended by the people's request, which implied their rejection of divine authority (see 1 Sam. 8:7), the Lord granted their wish. Israel's king could not protect the people from divine judgment; in fact, he himself would be swept away.

13:12 bound up . . . stored up: God had kept a careful record of Israel's sins, to be revealed as evidence of guilt in the day of judgment.

13:13 This metaphor of childbirth illustrates Israel's spiritual insensitivity. When the crucial time of judgment arrived, Israel would respond unwisely, resulting in death. The nation's failure to repent is compared to a baby that is not positioned properly during labor and jeopardizes the life of both mother and child.

13:15, 16 Israel was like a fruitful, well-watered plant, but God's judgment would come like a scorching **east wind** and bring drought. **He shall plunder**: The reality behind the imagery of the wind is the Assyrian army, which would plunder Israel's riches and mercilessly kill the people, including helpless **infants** and pregnant **women**.

14:1–3 The final section of Hosea's prophecy begins with a call to repentance that includes a model prayer. The people of Israel were to pray for God's gracious forgiveness and renew their allegiance to Him by renouncing foreign alliances, their own military strength, and artificial **gods**.

14:4–8 The Lord anticipates a time when He would restore repentant Israel. The Lord's renewed blessing is compared to **dew**. Revived Israel is compared to a beautiful **lily**, a deep-rooted and

- 5 I will be like the ^hdew to Israel;
He shall ²grow like the lily,
And ³lengthen his roots like
Lebanon.
- 6 His branches shall ⁴spread;
ⁱHis beauty shall be like an olive tree,
And ^jhis fragrance like Lebanon.
- 7 ^kThose who dwell under his shadow
shall return;
They shall be revived *like* grain,
And ⁵grow like a vine.
Their ⁶scent *shall be* like the wine of
Lebanon.

5 ^h Job 29:19; Prov.
19:12; Is. 26:19 ² Lit.
bud or sprout ³ Lit.
strike
6 ⁱ Ps. 52:8; 128:3
/ Gen. 27:27 ⁴ Lit. *go*
7 ^k Dan. 4:12 ⁵ Lit.
bud or sprout ⁶ Lit.
remembrance

8 ^l [John 15:4]
9 ^m [Ps. 111:7, 8;
Prov. 10:29]; Zeph.
3:5

- 8 “Ephraim *shall say*, ‘What have I to do
anymore with idols?’
I have heard and observed him.
I *am* like a green cypress tree;
^lYour fruit is found in Me.”
- 9 Who *is* wise?
Let him understand these things.
Who is prudent?
Let him know them.
For ^mthe ways of the LORD *are* right;
The righteous walk in them,
But transgressors stumble in them.

aromatic cedar of **Lebanon**, an attractive **olive tree**, and a fruitful **vine**. The Lord Himself would be like a **green cypress tree** that provides protective shade. **I have . . . observed:** This affirmation of God's watchful care stands in stark contrast to His judgment, which was compared to a leopard stalking its prey (13:7).

14:9 The book concludes with advice for those who read Hosea's prophecy. God's **ways**, His demands and principles, are completely true. The wise person will choose to obey them, but the foolish person will ignore them and consequently **stumble** into judgment.

THE BOOK OF JOEL



NATURAL DISASTERS—from rising flood waters to violent earthquakes—provoke fear and dread. With all their ingenuity, people still cannot control these powerful and destructive forces. They can only watch in awe. Joel begins his book with a description of such a natural disaster—a plague of ravenous locusts. In the prophet’s hands, the destructiveness of this plague becomes a vivid warning of the power of God’s coming judgment and a clear appeal to run to the Lord for mercy.

Author The author of the book is Joel, the son of Pethuel (1:1) Very little is known about the author’s life or circumstances. His name means “The Lord Is God,” suggesting that he was reared in a home where God was honored. The references to Zion, Judah, and Jerusalem (2:15, 23, 32; 3:1) indicate that the prophet lived and prophesied in Judah and Jerusalem. His frequent references to the work of priests in the temple (1:9, 13, 14; 2:17) lead some to conclude that he was a priest. But Joel also displays considerable interest in agriculture in all of its forms. As a prophet of the Lord he could have been knowledgeable about the temple in Jerusalem without having been a priest.

Date Scholars have offered various dates for the writing of the Book of Joel, from early preexilic times to as late as 350 B.C. Some believe that internal evidence in the Book of Joel indicates that the book was written during the reign of Joash king of Judah (835–796 B.C.), and in the time of the high priest Jehoiada. This view is based on the following considerations: (1) The location of the book between Hosea and Amos in the Hebrew canon suggests a preexilic date of writing. (2) The allusion to the neighboring nations as Judah’s foes rather than Assyria, Babylon, or Persia points to an early date for the book. (3) The book does not mention any reigning king, which may suggest a time when the responsibility for ruling rested upon the priests and elders—as was the case during the early reign of young King Joash (see 2 Kin. 11:4–12:21).

Others believe that the Book of Joel is so close in tone and idea to the Book of Zephaniah that it is likely that the two prophets were contemporaries. The primary evidence for this is the fact that both books prominently feature the concept of the impending “day of the LORD” (compare 2:1, 2 with Zeph. 1:14–16). Since Zephaniah’s book dates from around 627 B.C., a number of scholars assign a date of about 600 B.C. for the Book of Joel.

Historical Setting If we assume that the book was written early in the reign of Joash, then we can refer to 2 Kings 11:1–12:21 for background on this period of Judean history. Joash inherited the throne of Judah as a boy. He had survived Athaliah’s murder of all potential claimants to the throne only through the heroic efforts of his aunt Jehosheba, who hid him in the temple. Joash was crowned king at the age of seven by Jehoiada the high priest, who had enlisted the captains of the royal guard to dispose of the wicked Athaliah. Jehoiada advised the young king during the early years of his reign. It is possible that during these years the nation of Judah was devastated by a great swarm of locusts. This catastrophe would have given the prophet Joel an occasion to call the people to repentance in view of an even greater judgment to come—the day of the Lord.

However, it is not unreasonable to place Joel’s ministry during the 25 years before the Babylonians destroyed Jerusalem in 586 B.C. If Joel was a contemporary of Zephaniah, then his message of impending national disaster,

using the natural calamity of a recent invasion of locusts, would have been a powerful announcement of the horrible events that soon were to come on Jerusalem.

Purpose Joel's prophecy had two purposes. First, Joel wrote to call the nation to repentance (2:12) on the basis of its experience of the recent locust plague. The recent disaster was but a token of a more devastating judgment to come. Yet that judgment could be averted by sincere and humble repentance (2:13, 14). In this, Joel shares a common message with other prophets. In the light of impending judgment, there is always a message of hope for those who will return in faith to God. Second, the prophecy was intended to comfort the godly with promises of future salvation and blessing (2:28–32; 3:18–21). Should the national disaster occur, Joel offered hope to the true believers that all was not over. God would keep His promise; the Savior would one day reign.



Joel tells of an invasion of locusts (Joel 1:4) and calls the people to repentance. Swarms of locusts were a significant agricultural threat in the ancient Near East, and remain so today.

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CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

Before Jesus ascended into heaven after His resurrection, He promised the disciples that He would send the Holy Spirit upon them (see John 16:7–15; Acts 1:8). When this was fulfilled on the Day of Pentecost, Peter said, “This is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: ‘And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, that I will pour out of My spirit on all flesh’” (Acts 2:16, 17). Peter attributed the fulfillment of Jesus’ promise directly to the prophecy in Joel 2:28–32.

JOEL OUTLINE

- I. The devastation of the locust plague 1:1–20
- II. The coming day of the Lord 2:1–32
 - A. The desolation of the day of the Lord 2:1–11
 - B. Exhortation to sincere repentance 2:12–17
 - C. Deliverance of the land 2:18–27
 - D. The promise of the pouring out of the Spirit 2:28–32
- III. Judgment on the nations 3:1–17
 - A. The time of the judgment 3:1
 - B. The place of the judgment 3:2
 - C. The basis of the judgment 3:3–8
 - D. The preparation for judgment 3:9–12
 - E. The execution of judgment 3:13–17
- IV. The promise of future blessings 3:18–21
 - A. The prosperity of the land 3:18
 - B. The desolation of the nations 3:19
 - C. The inhabitation of Judah and Jerusalem 3:20
 - D. The presence of the Lord in Zion 3:21

835 B.C.

Joash becomes king of Judah

c. 830 B.C.

An early option for Joel's ministry

722 B.C.

Israel is taken captive by the Assyrians

c. 600 B.C.

A later option for Joel's ministry

586 B.C.

Jerusalem is destroyed by the Babylonians

The word of the LORD that came to ^aJoel the son of Pethuel.

The Land Laid Waste

- ² Hear this, you elders,
And give ear, all you inhabitants of the land!
^bHas *anything like* this happened in your days,
Or even in the days of your fathers?
³ ^cTell your children about it,
Let your children *tell* their children,
And their children another generation.
- ⁴ ^dWhat the chewing ¹locust left, the
^eswarming locust has eaten;
What the swarming locust left, the
crawling locust has eaten;
And what the crawling locust left,
the consuming locust has eaten.
- ⁵ Awake, you ^fdrunkards, and weep;
And wail, all you drinkers of wine,
Because of the new wine,
^gFor it has been cut off from your mouth.
- ⁶ For ^ha nation has come up against My land,
Strong, and without number;
ⁱHis teeth *are* the teeth of a lion,
And he has the fangs of a ²fierce lion.
- ⁷ He has ^jlaid waste My vine,
And ³ruined My fig tree;
He has stripped it bare and thrown
it away;
Its branches are made white.
- ⁸ ^kLament like a virgin girded with sackcloth
For ^lthe husband of her youth.
- ⁹ ^mThe grain offering and the drink offering
Have been cut off from the house of the LORD;

CHAPTER 1

1 ^a Acts 2:16
2 ^b Jer. 30:7; Joel 2:2
3 ^c Ex. 10:2; Ps. 78:4;
Is. 38:19
4 ^d Deut. 28:38;
Joel 2:25; Amos 4:9
^e Is. 33:4 ¹ Exact
identity of these
locusts unknown
5 ^f Is. 5:11; 28:1; Hos.
7:5 ^g Is. 32:10
6 ^h Prov. 30:25; Joel
2:2, 11, 25 ⁱ Rev. 9:8
² Or *lioness*
7 ^j Is. 5:6; Amos 4:9
³ Or *splintered*
8 ^k Is. 22:12 ^l Prov.
2:17; Jer. 3:4
9 ^m Hos. 9:4; Joel
1:13; 2:14

ⁿ Joel 2:17
10 ^o Jer. 12:11; Hos.
3:4 ^p Is. 24:7
11 ^q Jer. 14:3, 4;
Amos 5:16
12 ^r Joel 1:10; Hab.
3:17 ^s Is. 16:10;
24:11; Jer. 48:33
13 ^t Jer. 4:8; Ezek.
7:18
14 ^u 2 Chr. 20:3;
Joel 2:15, 16 ^v Lev.
23:36 ^w 2 Chr. 20:13
15 ^x [Is. 13:9; Jer.
30:7]; Amos 5:16
^y Is. 13:6; Ezek.
7:2-12

The priests ⁿmourn, who minister to the LORD.

- ¹⁰ The field is wasted,
^oThe land mourns;
For the grain is ruined,
^pThe new wine is dried up,
The oil fails.
- ¹¹ ^qBe ashamed, you farmers,
Wail, you vinedressers,
For the wheat and the barley;
Because the harvest of the field has perished.
- ¹² ^rThe vine has dried up,
And the fig tree has withered;
The pomegranate tree,
The palm tree also,
And the apple tree—
All the trees of the field are withered;
Surely ^sjoy has withered away from the sons of men.

Mourning for the Land

- ¹³ ^tGird yourselves and lament, you priests;
Wail, you who minister before the altar;
Come, lie all night in sackcloth,
You who minister to my God;
For the grain offering and the drink offering
Are withheld from the house of your God.
- ¹⁴ ^uConsecrate a fast,
Call ^va sacred assembly;
Gather the elders
And ^wall the inhabitants of the land
Into the house of the LORD your God,
And cry out to the LORD.
- ¹⁵ ^xAlas for the day!
For ^ythe day of the LORD *is* at hand;
It shall come as destruction from the Almighty.

1:1 The word of the LORD . . . came attests to the divine origin of the prophet's message. The presentation of the message was the work of the prophet. **Joel** means "The Lord Is God."

1:2 Has anything like this happened: The calamity of recent days was unprecedented in the memory of the people.

1:4 Many interpreters have viewed this **locust** swarm as foreign armies that attacked Judah in successive waves—Assyria, Babylon, Greece, and Rome. Yet literal locust plagues were one of the judgments promised if the people disobeyed God and broke their covenant with Him (see Deut. 28:38, 39, 42). Further, Joel's description of the damage done by the locusts compares with eyewitness reports. The impression given is one of overwhelming devastation.

1:5 Awake, you drunkards: The vineyards had been destroyed, and the wine had been lost.

1:6 Nation may refer to a literal or figurative swarm of locusts. They came in such numbers that they were like a vast army.

1:7 Branches of trees stripped of bark by the rasping teeth of the locusts were left splintered and ghostly **white**.

1:8 The image here is of a young bride widowed on her wedding

day. **Sackcloth** was worn by those in mourning in ancient Israel.

1:9 The drink offering refers to the wine offerings that accompanied the priests' morning and evening sacrifices (see Ex. 29:38–41). The devastation of the locusts meant that no sacrifice could be offered.

1:10 The **land** is personified as mourning because the three principle crops it produced—grain, grapes, and olives—had been destroyed (see Deut. 7:13; Ps. 104:15).

1:11, 12 The people had anticipated the joy of harvest, but due to the disaster of the locust plague, their **joy has withered away**.

1:13–20 Joel reminds the nation's leaders that being restored to blessing requires repentance (see Deut. 30:1–5; 2 Chr. 7:14). God will not withhold His favor and blessing from those who are truly repentant.

1:15 The day of the LORD refers to a time of judgment and deliverance. Joel views the locust plague as a contemporary day of judgment that was serving as a token or forewarning of an even greater, future "day of the LORD."

- ¹⁶ Is not the food ^zcut off before our eyes,
^aJoy and gladness from the house of
 our God?
- ¹⁷ The seed shrivels under the clods,
 Storehouses are in shambles;
 Barns are broken down,
 For the grain has withered.
- ¹⁸ How ^bthe animals groan!
 The herds of cattle are restless,
 Because they have no pasture;
 Even the flocks of sheep ^dsuffer
 punishment.
- ¹⁹ O LORD, ^eto You I cry out;
 For ^dfire has devoured the ⁵open
 pastures,
 And a flame has burned all the trees
 of the field.
- ²⁰ The beasts of the field also ^ecry out
 to You,
 For ^fthe water brooks are dried up,
 And fire has devoured the ⁶open
 pastures.

¹⁶ ^zIs. 3:1; Amos 4:6 ^aDeut. 12:7; Ps. 43:4
¹⁸ ^b1 Kin. 8:5; Jer. 12:4; 14:5; 6; Hos. 4:3 ⁴LXX, Vg. are made desolate
¹⁹ ^c[Ps. 50:15]; Mic. 7:7 ^dJer. 9:10; Amos 7:4 ⁵Lit. pastures of the wilderness
²⁰ ^eJob 38:41; Ps. 104:21; 147:9; Joel 1:18 ^f1 Kin. 17:7; 18:5 ⁶Lit. pastures of the wilderness

CHAPTER 2

1 ^aJer. 4:5; Joel 2:15; Zeph. 1:16
^bNum. 10:5 ^cJoel 1:15; 2:11, 31; 3:14; [Obad. 15]; Zeph. 1:14 ¹ram's horn
² ^dJoel 2:10, 31; Amos 5:18; Zeph. 1:15 ^eJoel 1:6; 2:11, 25 ^fEx. 10:14;

The Day of the LORD

- 2** Blow ^athe ¹trumpet in Zion,
 And ^bsound an alarm in My holy
 mountain!
 Let all the inhabitants of the land
 tremble;
 For ^cthe day of the LORD is coming,
 For it is at hand:
- ² ^dA day of darkness and gloominess,
 A day of clouds and thick darkness,
 Like the morning *clouds* spread over
 the mountains.
^eA people *come*, great and strong,
^fThe like of whom has never been;
 Nor will there ever be any *such* after
 them,
 Even for many successive
 generations.
- ³ A fire devours before them,
 And behind them a flame burns;

Lam. 1:12; Dan. 9:12; Joel 1:2

1:16 **Is not the food cut off . . . Joy and gladness:** With the sudden loss of food, there was also a loss of joy at harvest (see Is. 9:3).

1:17 **The seed shrivels** indicates further devastation in the land and an inability to replant the following year.

1:18, 19 Not only did the people of Judah suffer from the drought, so did the **animals, cattle, and flocks**. Joel depicts the animals poetically as joining in the lament, groaning in their hunger and distress (see Rom. 8:22). **I cry out:** The prophet adds his own voice to the bellowing of beasts, the wailing of drunkards, and the mourning of priests. He was part of the suffering community, not an outsider looking on from a distance.

2:1 The **trumpet**, or ram's horn, was used in ancient times to signal danger or warn of a military attack (see Jer. 6:17; Amos 3:6). God

demonstrated His grace by warning His people beforehand and providing opportunity for repentance before He brought His judgment upon them. **Zion** refers to Jerusalem (see Ps. 133:3). **coming . . . at hand:** The Bible presents the day of the Lord as an imminent reality. It is not something that we are gradually moving toward; rather, it is ever ready to burst in on us. At any moment, the day that is "near" may become present.

2:2 **Darkness** is used as a figure for misery, distress, and judgment (see Is. 8:22; 60:2; Jer. 13:16).

2:3–5 The invasion that Joel prophetically envisioned was like a raging **fire** that transformed all that was beautiful into desolation. Joel compared the speed and strength of the invaders to galloping **horses**.

The Day of the LORD

One of the central themes of the Book of Joel is "the day of the LORD" (1:15; 2:1, 11, 31; 3:14). This language describes a period of time in which God "comes down" in a dramatic way to bring wrath and judgment on the wicked and salvation to the righteous. God is Lord of time. There is no period that is not "the day of the LORD" in a general sense. But at times God enters the space-time arena to assert in bold, dramatic ways that He is in control.

The day of the Lord is a major theme of Old Testament prophecy. Thirteen of the sixteen prophets address this subject. The concept of the day of the Lord probably originated with the conquest of Canaan—a conquest which was in fact the Lord's war (see Deut. 1:30; 3:22; Josh. 5:13–15; 6:2); that is, a day of judgment for the wicked Canaanites (see Lev. 18:25; Deut. 9:4, 5).

The day of the Lord is not an isolated phenomenon or a single event in human history. Periods in Israel's early history and latter history, the coming of Jesus, and His second advent are all called "the day of the LORD" in Scripture. The predictions of a coming day of the Lord can be fulfilled in a number of different events. The invasion of locusts in the historic events of the life of Joel was the day of the Lord (ch. 2). But the day of wrath and deliverance that soon fell on Judah in the Babylonian invasion was also the day of the Lord.

While most references speak of future events, five biblical texts describe the day of the Lord in terms of past judgments (see Is. 22:1–14; Jer. 46:2–12; Lam. 1:1—2:22; Ezek. 13:1–9). These texts reflect circumstances of military defeat, tragedy, and judgment. Such events may have stimulated the development of the prophetic concept of a future "day" or time of judgment for the disobedient of Israel and all of the nations (see 1:15; Is. 13:6, 9; Zeph. 1:14–18).

However, the day of the Lord is not just a day of wrath and judgment on the disobedient. In some contexts, it also includes deliverance and restoration for the righteous. The day of the Lord speaks not only of future judgment, but of future hope, prosperity, and blessing (see Is. 4:2–6; Hos. 2:18–23; Amos 9:11–15; Mic. 4:6–8). Joel reveals that this day is to be heralded by heavenly phenomena (2:30, 31) which will bring sudden darkness and gloom on the earth (2:2). It will be a day of divine destruction (1:15) on the nations that have persecuted Israel (3:12–14) and on the rebellious and disobedient of Israel (Amos 5:18–20). Yet it will also be a time of deliverance and unprecedented blessing for God's people (2:32; 3:16, 18–21; 1 Thess. 5:2–5).

- The land *is* like ^gthe Garden of Eden
before them,
^hAnd behind them a desolate
wilderness;
Surely nothing shall escape them.
⁴ ⁱTheir appearance is like the
appearance of horses;
And like ²swift steeds, so they run.
⁵ ^jWith a noise like chariots
Over mountaintops they leap,
Like the noise of a flaming fire that
devours the stubble,
Like a strong people set in battle
array.
- ⁶ Before them the people writhe in
pain;
^hAll faces ³are drained of color.
⁷ They run like mighty men,
They climb the wall like men of war;
Every one marches in formation,
And they do not break ^lranks.
⁸ They do not push one another;
Every one marches in his own
⁴column.
Though they lunge between the
weapons,
They are not ⁵cut down.
⁹ They run to and fro in the city,
They run on the wall;
They climb into the houses,
They ^menter at the windows ⁿlike a
thief.
- ¹⁰ ^oThe earth quakes before them,
The heavens tremble;
^pThe sun and moon grow dark,
And the stars diminish their
brightness.
¹¹ ^qThe LORD gives voice before His army,
For His camp is very great;
^rFor strong *is the One* who executes
His word.

³ ^g Gen. 2:8; Is. 51:3;
Ezek. 36:35 ^h Ex.
10:5, 15; Ps. 105:34;
35; Zech. 7:14
⁴ ⁱ Rev. 9:7 ² Or
horsemen
⁵ ^j Rev. 9:9
⁶ ^k Is. 13:8; Jer.
8:21; Lam. 4:8; Nah.
2:10 ³ LXX, Tg., Vg.
gather blackness
⁷ ^l Prov. 30:27
⁸ ⁴ Lit. *highway*
⁵ Halted by losses
⁹ ^m Jer. 9:21 ⁿ John
10:1
¹⁰ ^o Ps. 18:7; Joel
3:16; Nah. 1:5 ^p Is.
13:10; 34:4; Jer.
4:23; Ezek. 32:7, 8;
Joel 2:31; 3:15; Matt.
24:29; Rev. 8:12
¹¹ ^q Jer. 25:30; Joel
3:16; Amos 1:2 ^r Jer.
50:34; Rev. 18:8

⁵ Jer. 30:7; Amos
5:18; Zeph. 1:15
^l [Mal. 3:2]
¹² ^u [Deut. 4:29];
Jer. 4:1; Ezek. 33:11;
Hos. 12:6; 14:1
¹³ ^v [Ps. 34:18;
51:17; Is. 57:15]
^u Gen. 37:34; 2 Sam.
1:11; Job 1:20; Jer.
41:5 ^x [Ex. 34:6]
¹⁴ ^y Josh. 14:12;
2 Sam. 12:22; 2 Kin.
19:4; Jer. 26:3; Jon.
3:9 ^z Hag. 2:19
^a Joel 1:9, 13
¹⁵ ^b Num. 10:3;
2 Kin. 10:20 ^c Joel
1:14 ^e *ram's horn*
¹⁶ ^d Ex. 19:10 ^e Ps.
19:5
¹⁷ ^f Matt. 23:35
⁹ Ex. 32:11, 12; [Is.
37:20]; Amos 7:2, 5
⁷ Or *speak a proverb*
against them

For the ^sday of the LORD *is* great and
very terrible;
^tWho can endure it?

A Call to Repentance

- ¹² “Now, therefore,” says the LORD,
^u“Turn to Me with all your heart,
With fasting, with weeping, and with
mourning.”
¹³ So ^vrend your heart, and not ^wyour
garments;
Return to the LORD your God,
For He *is* ^xgracious and merciful,
Slow to anger, and of great kindness;
And He relents from doing harm.
¹⁴ ^yWho knows *if* He will turn and
relent,
And leave ^za blessing behind Him—
^aA grain offering and a drink offering
For the LORD your God?
- ¹⁵ ^bBlow the ⁶trumpet in Zion,
^cConsecrate a fast,
Call a sacred assembly;
¹⁶ Gather the people,
^dSanctify the congregation,
Assemble the elders,
Gather the children and nursing
babes;
^eLet the bridegroom go out from his
chamber,
And the bride from her dressing
room.
¹⁷ Let the priests, who minister to the
LORD,
Weep ^fbetween the porch and the
altar;
Let them say, ^g“Spare Your people,
O LORD,
And do not give Your heritage to
reproach,
That the nations should ⁷rule over
them.

2:6–9 writhe in pain: The invading armies were locustlike in number and in their ability to penetrate any defense; but like men of war, they bring fear and death with them. The imagery of locusts (ch. 1) is used in this section to describe the overwhelming power of a military invasion.

2:10, 11 References to the **sun, moon, and stars** growing dim allude to a future outpouring of divine wrath (see Is. 13:10; Matt. 24:29; Rev. 6:12, 13). **Who can endure:** Nothing will be able to withstand the wrath of God (see Matt. 24:21, 22).

2:12 Turn to Me: As in Zephaniah (see Zeph. 2:1–3), an opportunity for repentance, remorse, and renewal was offered to the people.

2:13 rend your heart: God is not satisfied with outward acts of repentance. Tearing one's garments was a customary way of expressing grief or remorse (see Josh. 7:6; 1 Sam. 4:12). However, like all outward acts, the tearing of a garment could be done without true sorrow or repentance. God required more than mere external words or actions; He wanted a change of heart and sorrow over sin. The attributes of God that provided the basis of Joel's appeal were first revealed to Moses in Ex. 34:6. **Slow to anger:** God is reluctant to punish. Judgment is God's "unusual" or "foreign" task, for He wants all to come to repentance (see Is. 28:21).

2:14 Who knows: These words suggest that even at the last moment, the Lord would withhold His wrath and display His grace if the people would truly repent. As a result, agriculture would be restored and productivity would return. There would be food and drink, for the people and for offerings to the Lord.

2:15 Blow the trumpet in Zion: The repetition of these words from 2:1 ties the chapter together and renews the urgent appeal for a proper response to God.

2:16 The urgency of the situation is apparent because all ages and classes of the population were summoned. According to Jewish tradition codified in the Mishnah, a **bridegroom** and **bride** could be excused from reciting daily prayers on their wedding day. But Joel excused no one from prayer at this time of spiritual emergency.

2:17 Spare Your people: If the leaders and the people would gather together with prayers of true repentance and genuine renewal, the horrible events that God was threatening might be averted.

Why should they say among the peoples: This rhetorical question was designed to move God to intervene. Failure to come to Judah's aid might encourage the nations to make a mockery of Judah's God.

^h Why should they say among the peoples,
 ‘Where *is* their God?’”

The Land Refreshed

(Acts 2:17)

- 18 Then the LORD will ⁱbe zealous for His land,
 And pity His people.
- 19 The LORD will answer and say to His people,
 “Behold, I will send you ^jgrain and new wine and oil,
 And you will be satisfied by them;
 I will no longer make you a reproach among the nations.
- 20^a But ^kI will remove far from you ^lthe northern *army*,
 And will drive him away into a barren and desolate land,
 With his face toward the eastern sea
 And his back ^mtoward the western sea;
 His stench will come up,
 And his foul odor will rise,
 Because he has done ^smonstrous things.”
- 21 Fear not, O land;
 Be glad and rejoice,
 For the LORD has done ^gmarvelous things!
- 22 Do not be afraid, you beasts of the field;
 For ⁿthe open pastures are springing up,
 And the tree bears its fruit;
 The fig tree and the vine yield their strength.

17 ^h Ps. 42:10
 18 ⁱ [Is. 60:10; 63:9, 15]
 19 ^j Jer. 31:12; Hos. 2:21, 22; Joel 1:10; [Mal. 3:10]
 20 ^k Ex. 10:19 ^j Jer. 1:14, 15 ^m Deut. 11:24 ^s Lit. *great*
 21 ^g Lit. *great*
 22 ^a Joel 1:19

23 ^o Deut. 11:14; Is. 41:16; Jer. 5:24; Hab. 3:18; Zech. 10:7
^p Lev. 26:4; Hos. 6:3; Zech. 10:1; James 5:7 ¹ Or *teacher of righteousness*
 25 ^q Joel 1:4-7; 2:2-11 ² Exact identity of these locusts unknown
 26 ^r Lev. 26:5; Deut. 11:15; Is. 62:9 ^s Is. 45:17
 27 ^t Lev. 26:11, 12; [Joel 3:17, 21] ^u [Is. 45:5, 6]
 28 ^v Ezek. 39:29; Acts 2:17-21
^w Zech. 12:10 ^x Is. 54:13 ^y Acts 2:19

- 23 Be glad then, you children of Zion,
 And ^orejoice in the LORD your God;
 For He has given you the ¹former rain faithfully,
 And He ^pwill cause the rain to come down for you—
 The former rain,
 And the latter rain in the first *month*.
- 24 The threshing floors shall be full of wheat,
 And the vats shall overflow with new wine and oil.
- 25^a So I will restore to you the years ^qthat the swarming ²locust has eaten,
 The crawling locust,
 The consuming locust,
 And the chewing locust,
 My great army which I sent among you.
- 26 You shall ^reat in plenty and be satisfied,
 And praise the name of the LORD your God,
 Who has dealt wondrously with you;
 And My people shall never be put to ^sshame.
- 27 Then you shall know that I *am* ^tin the midst of Israel:
 “I *am* the LORD your God
 And there is no other.
 My people shall never be put to shame.

God's Spirit Poured Out

- 28^a And ^vit shall come to pass afterward That ^wI will pour out My Spirit on all flesh;
^xYour sons and your ^ydaughters shall prophesy,

2:18, 19 zealous for His land: The deep love of God for the land of Israel is coupled with His abiding love (**pity**) for the people. On every occasion in which God brought judgment on the land, there was the hope that one day His zeal for the land would lead to a renewal of blessing. Genuine repentance is the prerequisite for God's blessing. In response to repentance, God would bring restoration and blessing.

2:20 The north was regarded as the direction from which misfortune generally came upon Israel. **The eastern sea** refers to the Dead Sea. **The western sea** refers to the Mediterranean Sea.

2:21 Fear not: There is coming a day (see Ps. 65) when God's restoration of the earth will be complete.

2:22 open pastures . . . tree bears its fruit: The renewal of agriculture would be a sign that God had renewed prosperity and peace to His land.

2:23, 24 The former rain softened the soil for planting winter wheat. **The latter rain** fell in the spring, causing the grain to swell and ensuring a good harvest. If the rains failed, the crops would not grow.

2:25, 26 The same God who brings judgment is pleased to restore blessing to those who repent. This does not mean that sin leaves no scar, but that God can restore people to usefulness in spite of past disobedience.

2:27 I am in the midst of Israel: Ultimately, this is the promise of

God's presence in the midst of His people in the coming reign of King Jesus (see Zeph. 3:14–20). However, God promises to be present at all times with the individual who is at peace with Him.

2:28–32 After describing the physical blessings that would come upon his generation if they would repent, Joel describes the spiritual

spirit

(Heb. *ruach*) (2:28; Gen. 6:3; 1 Kin. 22:23; Ps. 32:2; 146:4) Strong's #7307

The noun *spirit* is related to a verb meaning “to breathe” or “to blow.” It can signify breath (Job 9:18; 19:17), wind (Gen. 8:1; Ex. 10:13; Eccl. 1:14; Is. 26:18), the breath of life (whether animal or human, see Gen. 6:17; 7:15), disposition or mood (Gen. 41:8; Ezek. 21:7), an evil or distressing spirit (1 Sam. 16:14–16), or the Spirit of God (Gen. 1:2; Ps. 51:11). The spirit of life is the gift of God to all creatures (Job 12:10; 33:4; Eccl. 12:7). The endowment of God's Holy Spirit is a special gift to believers, which brings spiritual life (Ps. 51:10, 11; 143:10), power (Judg. 6:34), wisdom and understanding (Is. 11:2), and divine revelation which leads to a better understanding of God's Word and His perfect ways (2:28; Is. 61:1, 2).

Your old men shall dream dreams,
Your young men shall see visions.
29 And also on *My* ^z menservants and
on *My* maidservants
I will pour out My Spirit in those
days.
30 “And ^a I will show wonders in the
heavens and in the earth:
Blood and fire and pillars of smoke.
31 ^b The sun shall be turned into
darkness,
And the moon into blood,
^c Before the coming of the great and
awesome day of the LORD.
32 And it shall come to pass
That ^d whoever calls on the name of
the LORD
Shall be ³ saved.
For ^e in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem
there shall be ⁴ deliverance,
As the LORD has said,
Among ^f the remnant whom the LORD
calls.

God Judges the Nations

3 “For behold, ^a in those days and at
that time,
When I bring back the captives of
Judah and Jerusalem,
2 ^b I will also gather all nations,
And bring them down to the Valley
of Jehoshaphat;
And I ^c will enter into judgment with
them there
On account of My people, My
heritage Israel,
Whom they have scattered among
the nations;
They have also divided up My land.

29 ^z [1 Cor. 12:13;
Gal. 3:28]
30 ^a Matt. 24:29;
Mark 13:24, 25;
Luke 21:11, 25, 26;
Acts 2:19
31 ^b Is. 13:9, 10;
34:4; Joel 2:10; 3:15;
Matt. 24:29; Mark
13:24; Luke 21:25;
Acts 2:20; Rev.
6:12, 13 ^c Is. 13:9;
Zeph. 1:14-16; [Mal.
4:1, 5, 6]
32 ^d Jer. 33:3; Acts
2:21; Rom. 10:13
^e Is. 46:13; [Rom.
11:26] ^f Is. 11:11;
Jer. 31:7; [Mic. 4:7];
Rom. 9:27 ³ Or
delivered ⁴ Or
salvation

CHAPTER 3
1 ^a Jer. 30:3; Ezek.
38:14
2 ^b Is. 66:18; Mic.
4:12; Zech. 14:2 ^c Is.
66:16; Jer. 25:31;
Ezek. 38:22
3 ^d Obad. 11; Nah.
3:10
4 ^e Is. 14:29-31;
Jer. 47:1-7; Ezek.
25:15-17; Amos
1:6-8; Zech. 9:5-7
¹ Or *render Me
repayment* ² Or
repay Me ³ Or
repayment
5 ⁴ Lit. *precious
good things*
7 ^f Is. 43:5, 6; Jer.
23:8; Zech. 9:13
⁵ Or *repayment*
8 ^g Ezek. 23:42
^h Jer. 6:20 ⁶ Lit.
Shebaites, Is. 60:6;
Ezek. 27:22
9 ⁱ Jer. 6:4; Ezek.
38:7; Mic. 3:5

3 They have ^d cast lots for My people,
Have given a boy *as payment* for a
harlot,
And sold a girl for wine, that they
may drink.
4 “Indeed, what have you to do with
Me,
^e O Tyre and Sidon, and all the coasts
of Philistia?
Will you ¹ retaliate against Me?
But if you ² retaliate against Me,
Swiftly and speedily I will return
your ³ retaliation upon your own
head;
5 Because you have taken My silver
and My gold,
And have carried into your temples
My ⁴ prized possessions.
6 Also the people of Judah and the
people of Jerusalem
You have sold to the Greeks,
That you may remove them far from
their borders.
7 “Behold, ^f I will raise them
Out of the place to which you have
sold them,
And will return your ⁵ retaliation
upon your own head.
8 I will sell your sons and your
daughters
Into the hand of the people of Judah,
And they will sell them to the
^g Sabeans,⁶
To a people ^h far off;
For the LORD has spoken.”
9 ⁱ Proclaim this among the nations:
“Prepare for war!

blessings that God would bestow upon His people in the future. There are three main viewpoints regarding how Joel’s prophecy was later used by Peter in Acts 2:17–21: (1) Some interpreters see a complete fulfillment of Joel’s prophecy in the experience of the first believers on the Day of Pentecost. The outpouring of the Spirit ushered in the kingdom age. The wonders in the skies were fulfilled at the crucifixion, when darkness covered the land. (2) Some interpreters believe that Peter was simply using Joel’s prophecy as an illustration of what was happening. In effect, Peter was saying, “This is that same Holy Spirit which was spoken of by Joel.” According to this view, the prophecy will be fulfilled in the future when the remnant of Israel believes. (3) Some suggest that Joel’s prophecy was partially fulfilled on the Day of Pentecost. The gift of the Holy Spirit was given, but the signs mentioned in vv. 30–32 will be fulfilled later in connection with the return of Christ in great glory.
2:28, 29 **Afterward** indicates the prophetic future; this word is a signal that the text was pointing to the messianic age. **Pour out** is derived from the imagery of Israel’s heavy winter rains; it speaks here of abundant provision. **All flesh** anticipates the inclusion of both Jews and Gentiles in one body in Christ (see Eph. 2:11–3:6). The ministries of the Spirit mentioned here were experienced in the early church (see Acts 11:28; 21:9; 2 Cor. 12:1–4; Rev. 1:1–3). **Your sons and your daughters**: The outpouring of the Spirit and the ministries done through His power will be accomplished without regard to gender, age, or class.

2:30, 31 The heavenly wonders described here will take place before the **great and awesome day of the LORD**, an apparent reference to the end times. **Blood and fire** correspond with Rev. 8:7, 8. **Smoke** corresponds with Rev. 9:18. **Darkness** corresponds with Rev. 8:12. **Moon into blood** corresponds with Rev. 6:12.
2:32 Anyone who **calls on the name of the LORD**—that is, repents and believes—will be **saved** from the judgment that will fall on the wicked and unbelieving.
3:1 **In those days** indicates a time in the prophetic future (2:28). The judgment will take place after the Lord has restored His people to the land (see Matt. 25:31–46).
3:2 **Valley of Jehoshaphat**: The name Jehoshaphat means “The Lord Judges.” The location of this valley is not known. Perhaps this was merely a symbolic name for the location of the great battle in the end times.
3:4 **Tyre and Sidon** were Phoenician cities on the Mediterranean Sea, north of Galilee. **Philistia** was on the Mediterranean coast south of Joppa.
3:8 **Sabeans** were people of Semitic origin who lived in the southwest Arabian peninsula.
3:9, 10 The military weapons of the Gentile nations would not be sufficient to protect them against God’s judgment. Therefore, they are exhorted to beat their **plowshares into swords** and their **pruning hooks into spears**. For predictions of the reverse, see Is. 2:4; Mic. 4:3.

- Wake up the mighty men,
Let all the men of war draw near,
Let them come up.
- ¹⁰ ^j Beat your plowshares into swords
And your ⁷ pruning hooks into
spears;
^k Let the weak say, ‘I *am* strong.’”
- ¹¹ Assemble and come, all you nations,
And gather together all around.
Cause ^l Your mighty ones to go down
there, O LORD.
- ¹² “Let the nations be wakened, and
come up to the Valley of
Jehoshaphat;
For there I will sit to ^m judge all the
surrounding nations.
- ¹³ ⁿ Put in the sickle, for ^o the harvest is
ripe.
Come, go down;
For the ^p winepress is full,
The vats overflow—
For their wickedness *is* great.”
- ¹⁴ Multitudes, multitudes in the valley
of decision!
For ^q the day of the LORD *is* near in
the valley of decision.
- ¹⁵ The sun and moon will grow dark,
And the stars will diminish their
brightness.
- ¹⁶ The LORD also will roar from Zion,
And utter His voice from Jerusalem;
The heavens and earth will shake;
^r But the LORD will be a shelter for His
people,

¹⁰ ^j [Is. 2:4; Mic. 4:3] ^k Zech. 12:8
⁷ pruning knives
¹¹ ^l Ps. 103:20;
Is. 13:3
¹² ^m [Ps. 96:13];
Is. 2:4
¹³ ⁿ [Matt. 13:39];
Rev. 14:15 ^o Jer.
51:33; Hos. 6:11
^p [Is. 63:3]; Lam. 1:5;
Rev. 14:19
¹⁴ ^q Joel 2:1
¹⁶ ^r [Is. 51:5, 6]

And the strength of the children of
Israel.

- ¹⁷ “So you shall know that I *am* the
LORD your God,
Dwelling in Zion My ^s holy
mountain.
Then Jerusalem shall be holy,
And no aliens shall ever pass
through her again.”

God Blesses His People

- ¹⁸ And it will come to pass in that day
That the mountains shall drip with
new wine,
The hills shall flow with milk,
And all the brooks of Judah shall be
flooded with water;
A ^t fountain shall flow from the
house of the LORD
And water the Valley of ⁸ Acacias.
- ¹⁹ “Egypt shall be a desolation,
And Edom a desolate wilderness,
Because of violence *against* the
people of Judah,
For they have shed innocent blood in
their land.
- ²⁰ But Judah shall abide forever,
And Jerusalem from generation to
generation.
- ²¹ For I will ^u acquit them of the guilt
of bloodshed, whom I had not
acquitted;
For the LORD dwells in Zion.”

¹⁷ ^s Obad. 16;
Zech. 8:3
¹⁸ ^t Ps. 46:4; Ezek.
47:1; Zech. 14:8;
[Rev. 22:1] ⁸ Heb.
Shittim
²¹ ^u Is. 4:4

3:11 Joel saw two armies assembling for battle. The one is made up of the **nations**; the other is made up of the **mighty ones** of the Lord (see Mark 8:38; Rev. 19:14).

3:12, 13 The use of harvesting imagery in the Book of Joel is complex. It begins in terms of the great scarcity resulting from the locust plague (ch. 1). Then there is a promised renewal of agriculture with the return of God's blessing to His repentant people (2:18–27). Here, the riches of renewed agriculture serve as a mocking backdrop for a world in conflict. In 3:18–21, there is a final renewal of agriculture because of the blessing of the resident King.

3:14 The **valley of decision** may be a symbolic name for the Valley of Jehoshaphat (3:2), or it may refer to the option before the people to continue toward certain judgment or to turn to God in repentance (vv. 12, 13).

3:15, 16 These verses parallel 2:30–32 and describe the same heavenly phenomena (see Matt. 24:29). In the midst of calamity, God was offering a **shelter for His people** (see Zeph. 2:1–3).

3:17 Joel anticipates a day when strangers would no longer pass through Jerusalem to plunder and destroy. Instead, they would worship the Lord (see Zech. 8:20–23).

3:18 In **that day** indicates the prophetic future (2:28; 3:1). Joel uses poetic imagery to describe the productivity of the land in the messianic age. **The Valley of Acacias** was the location of the last encampment before the Israelites entered Canaan (see Num. 25:1; Josh. 3:1).

3:19, 20 **Egypt** and **Edom** are mentioned as representatives of the Gentile nations that God will judge before the establishment of the Messiah's kingdom. Note the stark contrast with the eternal destinies of **Judah** and **Jerusalem**.

3:21 **the LORD dwells in Zion**: The Lord's presence in Jerusalem is the key to the blessing of the whole land.

THE BOOK OF AMOS



THE BOOK OF AMOS is perhaps the most familiar of the minor prophets, not in detail, but in its theme of justice and in some of its striking metaphors. The figure of Amos, a Judean sheepbreeder with a strong message for Israel delivered in the shadow of Jeroboam's pagan temple at Bethel, both attracts us and commands our respect. In this book we can read, just as the ancient Israelites heard, a masterful literary creation given by God through a man of the people. But more importantly, we read and hear the Word of God, still ringing down the centuries with clarity and force.

Author and Date The Book of Amos is named after the prophet who delivered its oracles. Amos was from Tekoa, a town at the edge of the Judean wilderness, about five miles southeast of Bethlehem. Because of marginal and uncertain yearly rainfall, this area was suited more for raising sheep and goats than for cultivating crops. Amos specifically calls himself a sheepbreeder (1:1; 7:14, 15). The Hebrew term used indicates that Amos was not a hired shepherd, but the owner of one or more flocks of sheep.

Amos also describes himself as a "tender of sycamore fruit" (7:14). The sycamore fig tree bears thousands of figs very much like the common fig, but smaller and not as good. Before this fruit could ripen properly, a small hole had to be pierced in the bottom of its skin. This piercing was done by hand and was a tedious and time-consuming task. Why was Amos obliged to tend the sycamore? Western Judah, the oasis of Jericho, and lower Galilee were the regions where sycamore figs grew most abundantly. The shepherds needed to bring their flocks to one of these regions in late summer, after the desert pastures had dried up. Since this was the time for piercing the sycamore fruit, landowners would exchange grazing rights for labor. A shepherd could watch his flock while sitting on the broad limbs of the sycamore, piercing its fruit. Thus Amos was not a wealthy man. Wealthy sheepbreeders hired shepherds to tend their flocks. Amos followed his flock himself (7:15), and when that meant piercing sycamore fruit, he pierced sycamore fruit.

Amos prophesied during the reigns of Uzziah king of Judah and Jeroboam king of Israel. Uzziah was king of Judah from 792 to 740 B.C., though from about 752 on, he was stricken with leprosy and shared power with his son Jotham. Jeroboam II was king of Israel from 792 to 753 B.C. Uzziah and Jeroboam formed an alliance for much of their reigns and together ruled for a brief time an area nearly as large as the empire of David and Solomon.



Jasper seal bearing the inscription "Amos the Scribe," eighth to seventh century B.C.

Z. Radovan/www.BibleLandPictures.com

When it was written, Amos's prophecy was dated to a time "two years before the earthquake" (1:1). It is impossible to tell what earthquake is meant, since there are no other historical references to it. However, this dating, along with Amos's dialogue with Amaziah, the priest of Jeroboam's temple at Bethel (7:10–17), reveals that the period of Amos's prophetic activity was very short, unlike many of the other prophets. Amos went to Bethel from Tekoa, delivered his prophetic oracles, and returned home. He probably stayed in Bethel only a few days. Amos's spoken oracles should be dated around 755–754 B.C. Within two or three years after the prophet's appearance at Bethel, Jeroboam II died, and Israel's rapid decline began. Within 30 years, Israel was conquered by the Assyrians.

Theme and Purpose The main theme of the Book of Amos is God's passionate concern for justice. Justice is not an abstract issue with God. Instead, justice is relational; it promotes good relations between people and between groups of people. Injustice breaks down good relationships and breeds anger, hostility, and violence. God created the human race to enjoy good relations with Him and with each other; therefore, injustice that breeds alienation in all of its varieties breaks God's heart.

The renewed prosperity of Israel based on the successes of Jeroboam II brought new wealth to the upper classes. They used that wealth to enlarge their landholdings and to build great houses for themselves. They violated the rights of the poor and the landed peasants, throwing many off their ancestral lands. Through God's provisions in the Mosaic covenant, the landed peasant class had been the foundation of Israel's society. But under Jeroboam's rule, this class virtually disappeared. As the rich became richer, the poor became poorer and more numerous; many were sold into slavery. Israel's social structure became thoroughly unstable.

The immediate purpose of Amos's prophetic ministry was to call the leaders of ancient Israel to repent and reform. Amos warned them that if they did not heed his call, their injustice against the poor and the weak would destroy the nation. God would not allow them to continue in their unrighteous, unjust course. Repentance or retribution were the only alternatives. It is no accident that what we often remember from Amos is his stirring call, "Let justice run down like water, and righteousness like a mighty stream" (5:24).

CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

Though most of Amos's prophecy is about God's authority to judge an apathetic and ungrateful nation, he ends his book with the promise that God will restore His people and "raise up the tabernacle of David" (9:11). This obviously refers to more than just the kingdom of David and the temple his son Solomon built. It speaks of the fulfillment of the Davidic dynasty, which finds its focus in the Son of David—Jesus.



A view of Tekoa, located ten miles south of Jerusalem. Amos was a shepherd from Tekoa (Amos 1:1).

Kim Walton

AMOS OUTLINE

- I. Introduction 1:1, 2
- II. Oracles against the nations 1:3—2:16
 - A. Against Damascus (Aram) 1:3–5
 - B. Against Gaza (Philistia) 1:6–8
 - C. Against Tyre (Phoenicia) 1:9, 10
 - D. Against Edom 1:11, 12
 - E. Against Ammon 1:13–15
 - F. Against Moab 2:1–3
 - G. Against Judah 2:4, 5
 - H. Against Israel 2:6–16
- III. Israel's imminent judgment 3:1–15
- IV. Israel's willful stubbornness 4:1—5:27
 - A. Israel's privileged women 4:1–3
 - B. A sarcastic invitation to sin 4:4, 5
 - C. Five calamities from God 4:6–11
 - D. God's sovereignty over all 4:12, 13
 - E. A lamentation over Israel 5:1–3
 - F. An invitation to seek the sovereign God 5:4–9
 - G. An urgent plea to repent 5:10–15
 - H. The coming universal mourning 5:16, 17
 - I. The coming day of the Lord 5:18–20
 - J. Israel's insincere and unfaithful worship 5:21–27
- V. Woe to the frivolous and the unjust 6:1–14
- VI. Three visions of Israel's coming disaster 7:1–9
- VII. Amos's confrontation with Amaziah, priest of Bethel 7:10–17
- VIII. Amos's vision of Israel's end 8:1–14
- IX. A vision of the sovereign God at the altar 9:1–10
- X. A promise of future restoration 9:11–15

792 B.C.
The reign of
Uzziah (Azariah)
begins in Judah

792 B.C.
Jeroboam II
becomes king in
Israel

c. 755 B.C.
Amos delivers his
prophecies

753 B.C.
Jeroboam's reign
in Israel ends

752 B.C.
Jotham coreigns
in Judah with the
leprous Uzziah

722 B.C.
Israel is conquered
by the Assyrians

The words of Amos, who was among the ^asheepbreeders of ^bTekoa, which he saw concerning Israel in the days of ^cUzziah king of Judah, and in the days of ^dJeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel, two years before the ^eearthquake.

² And he said:

“The LORD ^froars from Zion,
And utters His voice from
Jerusalem;
The pastures of the shepherds
mourn,
And the top of ^gCarmel withers.”

Judgment on the Nations

³ Thus says the LORD:

“For three transgressions of
^hDamascus, and for four,
I will not turn away its *punishment*,
Because they have ⁱthreshed Gilead
with implements of iron.

⁴ ^j But I will send a fire into the house
of Hazael,
Which shall devour the palaces of
^k Ben-Hadad.

⁵ I will also break the *gate* ^lbar of
Damascus,
And cut off the inhabitant from the
Valley of Aven,
And the one who ¹ holds the scepter
from ² Beth Eden.
The people of Syria shall go captive
to Kir,”
Says the LORD.

Nations and Cities Mentioned in Amos



CHAPTER 1 ¹ ^a 2 Kin. 3:4; Amos 7:14 ^b 2 Sam. 14:2; Jer. 6:1 ^c 2 Kin. 15:1-7; 2 Chr. 26:1-23; Is. 1:1; Hos. 1:1 ^d 2 Kin. 14:23-29; Amos 7:10 ^e Zech. 14:5 ² ^f Is. 42:13; Jer. 25:30; Joel 3:16 ^g 1 Sam. 25:2; Is. 33:9 ³ ^h Is. 8:4; 17:1-3; Jer. 49:23-27; Zech. 9:1 ⁱ 2 Kin. 10:32, 33 ⁴ / Jer. 49:27; 51:30 ^k 1 Kin. 20:1; 2 Kin. 6:24 ⁵ ^j 2 Kin. 14:28; Is. 8:4; Jer. 51:30; Lam. 2:9 ^l Rules ² Lit. House of Eden

1:1—2:16 The Lord sent Amos, a Judean, to Bethel to prophesy of coming judgment on Israel. But in Bethel, Amos faced a hostile audience. Israel's first king, Jeroboam I, had made the town a center of pagan worship. Because the temple in Jerusalem was in Judah and not in the nation of Israel, Jeroboam had encouraged the Israelites to worship at Bethel instead of Jerusalem. Thus the Israelites who gathered at Bethel would regard Amos, a Judean, with suspicion. Yet Amos bravely condemned the sins of Israel's neighbors—the Syrians, Philistines, Phoenicians, Edomites, Ammonites, and Moabites. Then he went on to point out the iniquity of Judah and Israel: They had rejected the God who had covenanted with them. They too stood before God condemned by their own evil ways.

1:1 Tekoa was about ten miles south of Jerusalem, in a region well-suited for raising sheep and goats. **The earthquake**, mentioned again in Zech. 14:5, cannot be dated precisely.

1:2 The temple was on Mt. Zion, the oldest part of Jerusalem. When **the LORD** roared from there, the nation dried up at the heat of the fiery blast. The fact that **the top of Carmel**, a mountain on the coast of Israel in the north, **withers** indicates a great disaster. Mount Carmel was a garden spot, normally lush and flourishing year-round.

1:3 Thus says the LORD: There was no mistaking by whose authority these messages were spoken: this was the word of God Himself.

For three . . . and for four: This stylistic device indicated the exhaustion of God's patience—the Syrians had continued to sin. This device is repeated as Amos speaks God's words against nation after sinful nation. The **transgressions** of the neighbors of Israel and Judah were against the general revelation, or "law of nature," that all people recognize and acknowledge. Since the neighboring nations

had not received God's special revelation, as Israel had at Mt. Sinai, Amos's oracles did not call them to account by that standard, but by the standard they *had* received. **Damascus** was the capital of Syria (also called Aram), a powerful kingdom that had been a frequent adversary of Israel throughout its history. Israelites listening to Amos would have been glad to hear of God's punishment of Damascus. **Gilead** was the region on the east side of the Jordan from the Yarmuk River to the Dead Sea. It had belonged to Israel since they had taken over the land, but Aram often had fought Israel for possession of northern Gilead, gaining control there in Israel's times of military weakness. **Threshed . . . with implements of iron** indicates extreme cruelty and inhumanity in warfare.

1:4 I will send a fire . . . Which shall devour the palaces: Fire in an ancient city was a real threat. Cities were crowded with houses close together on very narrow streets; there was too little water to effectively fight raging fires. **Hazael** and **Ben-Hadad** were kings of Syria who had been particularly harsh in their treatment of Israel.

1:5 The gate bar was the large timber that barred the city gate from the inside. If it was broken, the city would lose its security and could be captured easily. **Aven . . . Beth Eden:** Amos may have intended a play on words here. Aven means "Sin" in Hebrew; Damascus was a verdant oasis city on the edge of the desert that could be compared to Eden. However, Amos may also have been referring to the Beth Eden region on the north bank of the Euphrates River. **Kir** is where the Assyrian king Tiglath-Pileser III exiled the Syrians of Damascus in 732 B.C. Amos later referred to Kir as the place from which the Syrians had originally come (9:7).

⁶Thus says the LORD:

“For three transgressions of ^mGaza,
and for four,
I will not turn away its *punishment*,
Because they took captive the whole
captivity

To deliver *them* up to Edom.

⁷ ⁿBut I will send a fire upon the wall
of Gaza,

Which shall devour its palaces.

⁸ I will cut off the inhabitant ^ofrom
Ashdod,

And the one who holds the scepter
from Ashkelon;

I will ^pturn My hand against Ekron,
And ^qthe remnant of the Philistines
shall perish,”

Says the Lord God.

⁹Thus says the LORD:

“For three transgressions of ^rTyre,
and for four,

I will not turn away its *punishment*,
Because they delivered up the whole
captivity to Edom,
And did not remember the covenant
of brotherhood.

¹⁰ But I will send a fire upon the wall
of Tyre,
Which shall devour its palaces.”

¹¹Thus says the LORD:

“For three transgressions of ^sEdom,
and for four,
I will not turn away its *punishment*,
Because he pursued his ^tbrother with
the sword,
And cast off all pity;
His anger tore perpetually,
And he kept his wrath forever.

¹² But ^uI will send a fire upon Teman,

⁶ ^m 1 Sam. 6:17; Jer. 47:1, 5; Zeph. 2:4
⁷ ⁿ Jer. 47:1
⁸ ^o Jer. 47:5; Zeph. 2:4; ^p Ps. 81:14; ^q Is. 14:29-31; Jer. 47:1-7; Ezek. 25:16; Joel 3:4-8; Zeph. 2:4-7; Zech. 9:5-7
⁹ ^r Is. 23:1-18; Jer. 25:22; Ezek. 26:2-4; Joel 3:4-8
¹¹ ^s Is. 21:11; Jer. 49:8; Ezek. 25:12-14; Mal. 1:2-5; ^t Num. 20:14-21; 2 Chr. 28:17; Obad. 10-12
¹² ^u Jer. 49:7, 20; Obad. 9, 10

¹³ ^v Jer. 49:1; Ezek. 25:2; Zeph. 2:8, 9
¹⁴ ^w Deut. 3:11; 1 Chr. 20:1; Jer. 49:2; ^x Ezek. 21:22; Amos 2:2
¹⁵ ^y Jer. 49:3

CHAPTER 2

¹ ^a Is. 15:1-16; Jer. 25:21; Ezek. 25:8-11; Zeph. 2:8-11
² ^b 2 Kin. 3:26, 27
³ ^c Jer. 48:24, 41
⁴ ^d Num. 24:17; Jer. 48:7
⁵ ^e 2 Kin. 17:19; Hos. 12:2; Amos 3:2

Which shall devour the palaces of
Bozrah.”

¹³Thus says the LORD:

“For three transgressions of ^vthe
people of Ammon, and for four,
I will not turn away its *punishment*,
Because they ripped open the women
with child in Gilead,
That they might enlarge their
territory.

¹⁴ But I will kindle a fire in the wall of
^wRabbah,

And it shall devour its palaces,
^xAmid shouting in the day of battle,
And a tempest in the day of the
whirlwind.

¹⁵ ^yTheir king shall go into captivity,
He and his princes together,”
Says the LORD.

2 Thus says the LORD:

^a“For three transgressions of Moab,
and for four,
I will not turn away its *punishment*,
Because he ^bburned the bones of the
king of Edom to lime.

² But I will send a fire upon Moab,
And it shall devour the palaces of
^cKerioth;

Moab shall die with tumult,
With shouting *and* trumpet sound.

³ And I will cut off ^dthe judge from its
midst,
And slay all its princes with him,”
Says the LORD.

Judgment on Judah

⁴Thus says the LORD:

“For three transgressions of ^eJudah,
and for four,

1:6 Gaza was one of the five principal cities of the Philistines, the traditional enemies of Israel who lived on the southwest coast of Canaan. **they took captive . . . to deliver:** The principal method of acquiring foreign slaves in the ancient Middle East was capturing them in war.

1:8 Ashdod and Ashkelon, coastal cities located north of Gaza, were two of the five major Philistine cities. **Ekron**, also one of the five major Philistine cities, was situated inland.

1:9 Tyre, the principal Phoenician city, was on the northwest coast of Canaan. The Phoenicians were master seafarers. Tyre and Israel had forged an alliance that was profitable for both. However, Tyre ignored the long-standing **covenant of brotherhood**, and sought commercial gain by selling Israelite slaves to **Edom**.

1:11 The nation of **Edom**, located southeast of the Dead Sea, controlled important caravan trade routes, and thus was deeply involved in commerce. **his brother:** The Edomites traced their ancestry to Esau, the brother of Jacob. But several times in the history of their stormy relationship, Edom took advantage of Israel's (or Judah's) misfortune to help others attack them.

1:12 Teman and Bozrah were principal Edomite cities.

1:13 The nation of **Ammon**, located east of Gilead on the edge of the desert, was descended from one of the sons of Lot, Abraham's nephew (see Gen. 19:36–38). Thus Ammon was related to Israel, although not as closely as Edom. **ripped open . . . enlarge their territory:** The Ammonites killed pregnant women in order to prevent the increase of the Israelite population in Gilead, which they were trying to wrest from Israel's control.

1:14 Rabbah was the capital of Ammon.

2:1 Like Ammon (1:13), **Moab** (located southeast of Israel) was descended from one of the sons of Lot. **burned the bones:** This act was believed to desecrate the remains of a deceased person, a heinous act in ancient times and a great dishonor to the person's memory.

2:2 Kerioth was a major town of Moab. It was the site of a temple of Chemosh, Moab's national god.

2:4 Judah was Israel's neighbor to the south. Israel and Judah shared a common heritage, a common language, a common faith, and a common covenant with the Lord. **the law of the Lord . . .**

His commandments: The basis of Judah and Israel's judgment was different from that of the nations Amos had just called to account

I will not turn away its *punishment*,
 f Because they have despised the law
 of the LORD,
 And have not kept His
 commandments.
 g Their lies lead them astray,
 Lies h which their fathers followed.
 i But I will send a fire upon Judah,
 And it shall devour the palaces of
 Jerusalem.”

Judgment on Israel

⁶ Thus says the LORD:

“For three transgressions of ^j Israel,
 and for four,
 I will not turn away its *punishment*,
 Because ^k they sell the righteous for
 silver,
 And the ^l poor for a pair of sandals.
⁷ They ¹ pant after the dust of the
 earth which is on the head of the
 poor,
 And ^m pervert the way of the humble.
ⁿ A man and his father go in to the
 same girl,
^o To defile My holy name.
⁸ They lie down ^p by every altar on
 clothes ^q taken in pledge,
 And drink the wine of ² the
 condemned in the house of
 their god.
⁹ “Yet *it was* I who destroyed the
^r Amorite before them,
 Whose height *was* like the ^s height of
 the cedars,

⁴ f Lev. 26:14 g Is.
 9:15, 16; 28:15; Jer.
 16:19; Hab. 2:18
^h Jer. 9:14; 16:11, 12;
 Ezek. 20:13, 16, 18
⁵ i Jer. 17:27; Hos.
 8:14
⁶ j Judg. 2:17-20;
 2 Kin. 17:7-18; 18:12;
 Ezek. 22:1-13, 23-29
^k Is. 29:21 ^l Joel 3:3;
 Amos 4:1; 5:11; 8:6;
 Mic. 2:2; 3:3
⁷ m Amos 5:12
ⁿ Lev. 18:6-8; Ezek.
 22:11 ^o Lev. 20:3;
 Ezek. 36:20-22 ¹ Or
 trample on
⁸ p 1 Cor. 8:10 ^q Ex.
 22:26 ² Or those
 punished by fines
⁹ r Gen. 15:16; Num.
 21:25; Deut. 2:31;
 Josh. 10:12 ^s Ezek.
 31:3

^t Is. 5:24; Ezek. 17:9;
 [Mal. 4:1]
^u Ex. 12:51; Amos
 3:1; 9:7 ^v Deut. 2:7
¹¹ w Num. 12:6
^x Num. 6:2, 3; Judg.
 13:5
¹² y Is. 30:10; Jer.
 11:21; Amos 7:13,
 16; Mic. 2:6
¹³ z Is. 1:14 ³ Or
 tottering under ⁴ Or
 totters
¹⁴ a Jer. 46:6 b Ps.
 33:16; Jer. 9:23 ⁵ Or
 the place of refuge
⁶ Lit. save his soul
 or life
¹⁵ 7 Or save
¹⁶ 8 Lit. strong of
 his heart among the
 mighty

And he *was as* strong as the oaks;
 Yet I ^t destroyed his fruit above
 And his roots beneath.
¹⁰ Also *it was* ^u I who brought you up
 from the land of Egypt,
 And ^v led you forty years through the
 wilderness,
 To possess the land of the Amorite.
¹¹ I raised up some of your sons as
^w prophets,
 And some of your young men as
^x Nazirites.
Is it not so, O you children of Israel?^u
 Says the LORD.
¹² But you gave the Nazirites wine to
 drink,
 And commanded the prophets
^y saying,
 ‘Do not prophesy!’
¹³ “Behold, ^z I am ³ weighed down by you,
 As a cart full of sheaves ⁴ is weighed
 down.
¹⁴ a Therefore ⁵ flight shall perish from
 the swift,
 The strong shall not strengthen his
 power,
^b Nor shall the mighty ⁶ deliver himself;
¹⁵ He shall not stand who handles the
 bow,
 The swift of foot shall not ⁷ escape,
 Nor shall he who rides a horse
 deliver himself.
¹⁶ The most ⁸ courageous men of might
 Shall flee naked in that day,”
 Says the LORD.

before them (1:3—2:3). Judah and Israel had received God’s special revelation at Sinai; they were in a special covenant relationship with Him and were held to a higher standard of accountability.

2:6 I will not turn away its punishment: Here the focus shifted to Amos’s audience. This was Israel, God’s people who had violated their covenant relationship with Him. God was calling them to account for violations of the covenant. **sell the righteous for silver:** In His law, God had instructed the Israelites to work off their debts through indentured service—administered humanely and for a strictly limited time (see Lev. 25:39–43; Deut. 15:12). By Amos’s day, those in power in Israel were taking advantage of the courts to sell debtors as slaves, termed **the righteous** here because they were the innocent victims of the corruption of the courts. **For a pair of sandals** means for little or nothing.

2:7 pant after the dust: Amos used deliberate exaggeration to portray the greed of those oppressing the poor. Not satisfied with gaining their victims’ farms and selling the people into slavery for money, the greedy rich would not let the poor go until they had shaken the very **dust** from their heads. The **humble**, those without power or influence, should have been able to depend on the justice due them. Instead, justice was denied them. As a result, their life was turned to poverty, oppression, and insecurity. **Go in to** means to have sexual intercourse with. **the same girl:** Several possibilities have been suggested: (1) Both father and son visited the same temple prostitute in their worship of pagan gods. (2) A man bought a slave girl, made her his concubine, then gave his son sexual rights to her. (3) A man married a woman, his father seduced her, and they became lovers. All of these practices were unlawful.

2:8 Clothes taken in pledge, as security for a loan, were to be returned in the evening, for clothes were the bedding of the poor (see Ex. 22:26, 27). The powerful in Israel were spreading the clothes out as beds for themselves beside the altars, in a show of empty, merciless piety.

2:9 Yet it was I: This emphatic statement underscores the fact that God had been Israel’s Champion, and the nation’s success had not been its own doing. **The Amorite** refers to the previous inhabitants of the land of Canaan. **Cedars** were proverbial for their height, **oaks** for their strength. **His fruit above and his roots beneath** means “totally, completely.”

2:11, 12 Prophets were especially privileged; God spoke to them and gave them messages for the people. **Nazirites** dedicated themselves to God with a vow that entailed specific responsibilities and prohibitions, either for life or for a specified period (see Num. 6:1–21). Total abstinence from **wine** was one of the prominent features of the Nazirite vow.

2:13 Weighed down by you is a powerful metaphor of the burden of Israel’s sin on the Lord. This is the same God Isaiah describes as measuring the waters of the earth in the hollow of His hand, measuring the heavens with the span of His hand, and weighing the mountains in His balance (see Is. 40:12).

2:14–16 No resources of personal strength, no skill with weapons of war, not even the help of the mighty war horse would suffice for the military **men of might** to save themselves **in that day**, when God would bring His judgment upon them. If the strong could not save themselves, what would become of the rest of the people?

Authority of the Prophet's Message

3 Hear this word that the LORD has spoken against you, O children of Israel, against the whole family which I brought up from the land of Egypt, saying:

- 2 “You^a only have I known of all the families of the earth;
^bTherefore I will punish you for all your iniquities.”
- 3 Can two walk together, unless they are agreed?
- 4 Will a lion roar in the forest, when he has no prey?
Will a young lion ¹cry out of his den, if he has caught nothing?
- 5 Will a bird fall into a snare on the earth, where there is no ²trap for it?
Will a snare spring up from the earth, if it has caught nothing at all?
- 6 If a ³trumpet is blown in a city, will not the people be afraid?
^cIf there is calamity in a city, will not the LORD have done *it*?
- 7 Surely the Lord God does nothing, Unless ^dHe reveals His secret to His servants the prophets.
- 8 A lion has roared!
Who will not fear?
The Lord God has spoken!
^eWho can but prophesy?

Punishment of Israel's Sins

- 9 “Proclaim in the palaces at ⁴Ashdod, And in the palaces in the land of Egypt, and say:

CHAPTER 3

2 ^a [Gen. 18:19; Ex. 19:5, 6; Deut. 7:6; Ps. 147:19] ^b Jer. 14:10; Ezek. 20:36; Dan. 9:12; Matt. 11:22; [Rom. 2:9]
4 ¹ Lit. *give his voice*
5 ² Or *bait or lure*
6 ^c Is. 45:7 ³ *ram's horn*
7 ^d Gen. 6:13; 18:17; [Jer. 23:22]; Dan. 9:22; [John 15:15]
8 ^e Jer. 20:9; [Mic. 3:8]; Acts 4:20; 1 Cor. 9:16
9 ^f So with MT; LXX *Assyria*

⁵ Or *oppression*
10 ^f Ps. 14:4; Jer. 4:22; Amos 5:7; 6:12
⁶ Or *devastation*
12 ⁷ Or *snatches*
⁸ Heb. uncertain, possibly on the cover
14 ^g 2 Kin. 23:15; Hos. 10:5-8, 14, 15; Amos 4:4
15 ^h Jer. 36:22
ⁱ Judg. 3:20 / 1 Kin. 22:39; Ps. 45:8 ⁹ Lit. *strike*

- ‘Assemble on the mountains of Samaria;
See great tumults in her midst, And the ⁵oppressed within her.
- 10 For they ^fdo not know to do right,’ Says the LORD,
‘Who store up violence and ⁶robbery in their palaces.’”
- 11 Therefore thus says the Lord God:
- “An adversary *shall be* all around the land;
He shall sap your strength from you, And your palaces shall be plundered.”
- 12 Thus says the LORD:
- “As a shepherd ⁷takes from the mouth of a lion
Two legs or a piece of an ear,
So shall the children of Israel be taken out
Who dwell in Samaria—
In the corner of a bed and ⁸on the edge of a couch!
- 13 Hear and testify against the house of Jacob,”
Says the Lord God, the God of hosts,
- 14 “That in the day I punish Israel for their transgressions,
I will also visit *destruction* on the altars of ⁹Bethel;
And the horns of the altar shall be cut off
And fall to the ground.
- 15 I will ⁹destroy ^hthe winter house along with ⁱthe summer house;
The ^jhouses of ivory shall perish, And the great houses shall have an end,”
Says the LORD.

3:1 The whole family which I brought up emphasizes the personal, intimate relationship that God had with Israel.

3:2 You only have I known, in this context, means “You only have I chosen.” God’s relationship with Israel was not only intimate, it was exclusive. God had been faithful to Israel; yet Israel had not been faithful to God. For this reason, the nation would be judged.

3:3–6 This series of rhetorical questions illustrates the seriousness, certainty, and righteousness of God’s impending action against Israel. Each question is framed so as to require a resounding “no” as its answer.

3:7 This parenthetical statement interrupts, yet underscores, Amos’s point that God is sovereign and does what He wills: therefore, Israel’s judgment was certain.

3:8 Two more rhetorical questions complete the group of nine (vv. 3–6). It would do Israel no good to forbid prophecy (2:12; 7:13, 16); the true prophet *must* prophesy, just as certainly as God’s judgment must come to pass.

3:9, 10 Ashdod, one of the five principal cities of the Philistines, was on the Mediterranean coast southwest of Israel. For God to call Philistia and Egypt to witness His judgment of Israel implies that these pagan nations were relatively more righteous than Israel. They had not received God’s revelation at Sinai; yet Israel, having received it, had violated it grossly and repeatedly.

3:11 This verse pictures a formal sentencing of Israel in the presence of the witnesses whom God had called (v. 9). Sapping Israel’s strength was exactly what Assyria did in the years following Amos’s prophecies, finally putting an end to the nation in 722 B.C.

3:12 The hired shepherd was responsible to the owner for the safety of the sheep. He had to make good any loss, unless he could prove it was unavoidable. A lion taking a sheep was an unavoidable loss, but the shepherd had to prove that the lion had taken it. A couple of small bones or a piece of an ear was sufficient; the owner would recognize the lion’s work. As complete as the destruction of a sheep by a lion would be the destruction of Israel that God would bring.

3:14 the altars of Bethel: Jeroboam I had erected sanctuaries in Bethel and Dan to prevent Israelites from traveling to Jerusalem to worship and possibly returning their political allegiance to the house of David. Those sanctuaries of false worship had tempted many Israelites to be unfaithful to God. Horns represent strength. If the horns of the altar were cut off, it would symbolize the altar’s weakness and signal its destruction.

3:15 The four houses mentioned here were all symbols of oppression. Many small inheritances had been stolen to form the large estates of the wealthy and powerful, where they built their opulent houses.

- 4** Hear this word, you ^a cows of Bashan, who *are* on the mountain of Samaria,
Who oppress the ^b poor,
Who crush the needy,
Who say to ¹ your husbands, “Bring wine, let us ^c drink!”
- 2** ^d The Lord God has sworn by His holiness:
“Behold, the days shall come upon you
When He will take you away ^e with fishhooks,
And your posterity with fishhooks.
- 3** ^f You will go out *through* broken walls,
Each one straight ahead of her,
And you will ² be cast into Harmon,”
Says the LORD.
- 4** “Come ^g to Bethel and transgress,
At ^h Gilgal multiply transgression;
ⁱ Bring your sacrifices every morning,
^j Your tithes every three ³ days.
- 5** ^k Offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving with leaven,
Proclaim *and* announce ^l the freewill offerings;
For this you love,
You children of Israel!”
Says the Lord God.

Israel Did Not Accept Correction

- 6** “Also I gave you ⁴ cleanness of teeth in all your cities,
And lack of bread in all your places;
^m Yet you have not returned to Me,”
Says the LORD.
- 7** “I also withheld rain from you,
When *there were* still three months to the harvest.

CHAPTER 4

¹ ^a Ps. 22:12; Ezek. 39:18 ^b Amos 2:6
^c Prov. 23:20 ¹ Lit. *their masters or lords*
² ^d Ps. 89:35 ^e Jer. 16:16; Ezek. 29:4; Hab. 1:15
³ ^f Ezek. 12:5 ² Or *cast them*
⁴ ^g Ezek. 20:39; Amos 3:14 ^h Hos. 4:15 ⁱ Num. 28:3; Amos 5:21, 22
^j Deut. 14:28 ³ Or *years*, Deut. 14:28
⁵ ^k Lev. 7:13 ^l Lev. 22:18; Deut. 12:6
⁶ ^m 2 Chr. 28:22; Is. 26:11; Jer. 5:3; Hag. 2:17 ⁴ Hunger

⁹ ⁿ Deut. 28:22; Hag. 2:17 ^o Joel 1:4; 7; Amos 7:1, 2
¹⁰ ^p Ex. 9:3, 6; Lev. 26:25; Deut. 28:27, 60; Ps. 78:50
¹¹ ^q Gen. 19:24, 25; Deut. 29:23; Is. 13:19; Jer. 49:18; Lam. 4:6
¹² ^r Jer. 5:22

- I made it rain on one city,
I withheld rain from another city.
One part was rained upon,
And where it did not rain the part withered.
- 8** So two *or* three cities wandered to another city to drink water,
But they were not satisfied;
Yet you have not returned to Me,”
Says the LORD.
- 9** “I ⁿ blasted you with blight and mildew.
When your gardens increased,
Your vineyards,
Your fig trees,
And your olive trees,
^o The locust devoured *them*;
Yet you have not returned to Me,”
Says the LORD.
- 10** “I sent among you a plague ^p after the manner of Egypt;
Your young men I killed with a sword,
Along with your captive horses;
I made the stench of your camps come up into your nostrils;
Yet you have not returned to Me,”
Says the LORD.
- 11** “I overthrew *some* of you,
As God overthrew ^q Sodom and Gomorrah,
And you were like a firebrand plucked from the burning;
Yet you have not returned to Me,”
Says the LORD.
- 12** “Therefore thus will I do to you, O Israel;
Because I will do this to you,
^r Prepare to meet your God, O Israel!”

4:1 Bashan, the region east and northeast of the Sea of Galilee, was (and is) a prime grassland area renowned for its cattle. **Cows of Bashan** refer to the sleek, fat, well-fed women of Samaria.

4:3 Broken walls were a symbol of the thoroughness of the destruction of the city and the homes that the people held so dear. In an undamaged city, the usual way in and out was the one main gate. But Samaria would be so ruined that the deportees would be driven straight through the breaches in the walls of their houses and their city.

4:4, 5 This passage is a bitterly sarcastic call to Israel to worship. **Bethel**, a city on the central ridge road just inside Israel's border with Judah, was the site of the most important shrine in southern Israel. **Gilgal** refers to a site in the Jordan valley where Israel had encamped before and after the taking of Jericho (see Josh. 5:10; 9:6). Thus, Gilgal had historical connections with Israel's early faith and early life in the land. **For this you love:** Ignoring God's desires, the Israelites did what they wanted. They loved the feasting that went with the festivals of sacrifice, but not God's calls for justice.

4:6–11 This passage describes a series of five calamities that God had already sent upon the Israelites in an effort to drive them to repentance. A striking feature of this narrative is God's emphatic claim that the Israelites had brought these disasters on themselves. Each stanza ends with the tragic refrain, “Yet you have not returned to Me.”

4:6 The first calamity was famine. **Cleanness of teeth . . . and lack of bread** indicated the exhaustion of all food supplies.

4:7, 8 The second calamity was drought. Lack of rain with **still three months to the harvest** meant the total ruin of the grain crops.

4:9 The third calamity was crop disease and locusts.

4:10 The fourth calamity was **plague** and warfare. **After the manner of Egypt** suggests that God was reminding Israel of the ten plagues that preceded their exodus from Egypt; these included epidemic diseases and other disasters. **The stench of your camps** resulted from lack of sanitation, from disease, from the putrefaction of wounds, and sometimes from corpses of men and of animals that could not be buried quickly enough.

4:11 The fifth calamity was the destruction of Israelite cities. The overthrow of **Sodom and Gomorrah** was the scale by which many subsequent disasters were measured. It meant total destruction, meted out in judgment by the hand of God Himself (see Gen. 19:24, 25). **A firebrand plucked from the burning** refers to a stick snatched from a fire with one end already ablaze. Here it was a vivid metaphor for God's last-minute rescue of most of Israel from the fate He brought upon some of its cities and territories.

4:12 Because Israel had not returned to God through these five calamities, it would have to meet God Himself. To be confronted—inescapably—by the God it had scorned and rejected would be a fate more terrible than Israel could imagine.

13 For behold,
He who forms mountains,
And creates the ⁵wind,
^sWho declares to man what ⁶his
thought is,
And makes the morning darkness,
^tWho treads the high places of the
earth—
“The LORD God of hosts is His name.

A Lament for Israel

5 Hear this word which I ^atake up
against you, a lamentation, O house
of Israel:

² The virgin of Israel has fallen;
She will rise no more.
She lies forsaken on her land;
There is no one to raise her up.

³For thus says the Lord God:

“The city that goes out by a thousand
Shall have a hundred left,
And that which goes out by a hundred
Shall have ten left to the house of
Israel.”

A Call to Repentance

⁴For thus says the LORD to the house
of Israel:

^b“Seek Me ^cand live;

⁵ But do not seek ^dBethel,

13 ^sPs. 139:2; Dan.
2:28 ^tMic. 1:3 ^uIs.
47:4; Jer. 10:16 ⁵Or
spirit ⁶Or His

CHAPTER 5

1 ^aJer. 7:29; 9:10,
17; Ezek. 19:1
4 ^b[Deut. 4:29;
2 Chr. 15:2; Jer.
29:13] ^c[Is. 55:3]
5 ^d1 Kin. 12:28, 29;
Amos 4:4

^eGen. 21:31-33;
Amos 8:14 ^fHos.
4:15
6 ^g[Is. 55:3, 6, 7;
Amos 5:14]
7 ^hAmos 6:12
8 ⁱJob 9:9; 38:31
/ Ps. 104:20 ^kJob
38:34 ^l[Amos 4:13]
9 ¹Or flashes forth
destruction
10 ^mIs. 29:21; 66:5;
Amos 5:15 ⁿ1 Kin.
22:8; Is. 59:15; Jer.
17:16-18
11 ^oAmos 2:6
^pDeut. 28:30,
38, 39; Mic. 6:15;
Zeph. 1:13; Hag.
1:6 ²trample ³Or
tribute

Nor enter Gilgal,
Nor pass over to ^eBeersheba;
For Gilgal shall surely go into
captivity,
And ^fBethel shall come to nothing.

⁶ ^gSeek the LORD and live,
Lest He break out like fire in the
house of Joseph,
And devour ^{it},
With no one to quench ^{it} in Bethel—
⁷ You who ^hturn justice to wormwood,
And lay righteousness to rest in the
earth!”

⁸ He made the ⁱPleiades and Orion;
He turns the shadow of death into
morning
^jAnd makes the day dark as night;
He ^kcalls for the waters of the sea
And pours them out on the face of
the earth;

^lThe LORD is His name.

⁹ He ¹rains ruin upon the strong,
So that fury comes upon the fortress.

^{10m}They hate the one who rebukes in
the gate,
And they ⁿabhor the one who speaks
uprightly.

¹¹ ^oTherefore, because you ²tread down
the poor
And take grain ³taxes from him,
Though ^pyou have built houses of
hewn stone,

4:13 Amos grounded God’s right to exercise judgment upon Israel on His character as Creator and Sustainer of all the earth, a more fundamental basis than His deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt. God is sovereign over all the earth; on that basis He called Israel, and can call any nation, to account. **forms mountains:** The Hebrew word *forms* is derived from the word often rendered “potter.” As easily as a potter forms vessels of clay, so God forms mountains. **Wind** also means “spirit.” The ambiguity in this word may be deliberate. God creates both the wind and the human spirit; therefore, He is sovereign over both.

5:2 The term **virgin of Israel** depicts the nation as a young maiden, cut off from her life before it had really begun. **On her land** is a reminder that the land had been God’s gift to Israel. By their

faithlessness, the people had turned God’s gift into the place of their death and burial.

5:3 The lamentation continues with a different image of Israel’s destruction: the troops Israel would send out to defend its territory. Rather than saving Israel, its armies would themselves be decimated. **5:5 Beersheba**, about 50 miles southwest of Bethel, was the site of a temple in Amos’s day.

5:6 The house of Joseph here refers to the whole nation.

5:7 Wormwood, a plant of the aster family with a very bitter taste, is used several times in the Bible as a metaphor for sorrow and bitterness.

5:8 Pleiades refers to a cluster of stars within the constellation Taurus, one of the 12 signs of the Zodiac. One of Israel’s idolatries was astral worship. Far from being deities, Amos asserted, the constellations also were God’s creations. **Orion** refers to a prominent constellation in the southern sky in the shape of a hunter, containing two stars of the first magnitude. **He turns the shadow . . . dark as night:** God designed and sustains the daily cycle of light and darkness through His own servant which is not a deity, the sun. **He calls . . . the earth:** God, not Baal, Tammuz, or any other fertility deity, designed and sustains the atmospheric water cycle by which the earth receives its necessary rainfall. **The LORD is His name** underscores the uniqueness of Israel’s God. He is not just a national God; He is the *only* God.

5:9 The God who created and sustains the processes of all the universe surely can bring His judgment to bear, even upon the strong of the earth and their fortresses.

5:10 The gate was the location of the town court, where justice was to be upheld in all legal proceedings, whether civil or criminal.

5:11 Taxes were collected in kind from those with few resources of silver and gold. **To take grain taxes** from the poor was to put

seek

(Heb. *darash*) (5:4; Ezra 6:21; 7:10; Ps. 119:10; Is. 34:16; 55:6) Strong’s #1875

This Hebrew verb can be correctly translated “to inquire of,” “to ask,” and “to seek.” The term conveys the idea of “going to see” in the sense of personally verifying something said, or “searching for,” in the sense of pressing for an answer to a question. Amos encourages his audience to seek life in the living God, not in the dead idols of Bethel and Gilgal (5:4). The psalmist found help in times of trouble by seeking the Lord (Ps. 34:4; 77:2). On several occasions, the Israelites were encouraged to seek God by preparing their hearts for God through humble repentance (see 1 Chr. 16:11; 2 Chr. 30:19).

- Yet you shall not dwell in them;
 You have planted ⁴pleasant
 vineyards,
 But you shall not drink wine from
 them.
- 12 For I ^qknow your manifold
 transgressions
 And your mighty sins:
^rAfflicting the just *and* taking bribes;
^sDiverting the poor *from justice* at the
 gate.
- 13 Therefore ^tthe prudent keep silent at
 that time,
 For *it is* an evil time.
- 14 Seek good and not evil,
 That you may live;
 So the LORD God of hosts will be
 with you,
^uAs you have spoken.
- 15 ^vHate evil, love good;
 Establish justice in the gate.
^wIt may be that the LORD God of hosts
 Will be gracious to the remnant of
 Joseph.

The Day of the LORD

16 Therefore the LORD God of hosts, the
 Lord, says this:

- “*There shall be* wailing in all streets,
 And they shall say in all the
 highways,
 ‘Alas! Alas!’
 They shall call the farmer to
 mourning,
^xAnd skillful lamenters to wailing.
- 17 In all vineyards *there shall be* wailing,
 For ^yI will pass through you,”
 Says the LORD.

11 ⁴ *desirable*
 12 ^q Hos. 5:3 ^r Is.
 1:23; 5:23; Amos 2:6
^s Is. 29:21
 13 ^t Amos 6:10
 14 ^u Mic. 3:11
 15 ^v Ps. 97:10; Rom.
 12:9 ^w Joel 2:14
 16 ^x 2 Chr. 35:25;
 Jer. 9:17
 17 ^y Ex. 12:12

18 ^z Is. 5:19; Jer.
 17:15; Joel 1:15; 2:1,
 11, 31 ^a Is. 5:30;
 Joel 2:2
 19 ^b Job 20:24; Is.
 24:17, 18; Jer. 48:44
 21 ^c Is. 1:11-16;
 Amos 4:4, 5; 8:10
^d Lev. 26:31; Jer.
 14:12; Hos. 5:6
 22 ^e Is. 66:3; Mic.
 6:6, 7
 24 ^f Jer. 22:3; Ezek.
 45:9; Hos. 6:6;
 Mic. 6:8
 25 ^g Deut. 32:17;
 Josh. 24:14; Neh.
 9:18-21;
 Acts 7:42, 43
 26 ^h 1 Kin.
 11:33 ⁱ LXX, Vg.
tabernacle of
Moloch ^j A pagan
 deity

- 18 ^z Woe to you who desire the day of the
 LORD!
 For what good *is* ^athe day of the
 LORD to you?
 It *will be* darkness, and not light.
- 19 It *will be* ^bas though a man fled from
 a lion,
 And a bear met him!
 Or *as though* he went into the house,
 Leaned his hand on the wall,
 And a serpent bit him!
- 20 *Is not* the day of the LORD darkness,
 and not light?
Is it not very dark, with no brightness
 in it?
- 21 ^cI hate, I despise your feast days,
 And ^dI do not savor your sacred
 assemblies.
- 22 ^eThough you offer Me burnt offerings
 and your grain offerings,
 I will not accept *them*,
 Nor will I regard your fattened peace
 offerings.
- 23 Take away from Me the noise of your
 songs,
 For I will not hear the melody of
 your stringed instruments.
- 24 ^fBut let justice run down like water,
 And righteousness like a mighty
 stream.
- 25 ^gDid ^hyou offer Me sacrifices and
 offerings
 In the wilderness forty years,
 O house of Israel?
- 26 You also carried ⁱSikkuth ^j ^hyour
 king
 And ^kChiun, your idols,
 The star of your gods,
 Which you made for yourselves.

them at risk of starvation if the harvest had not been bountiful. Yet the rich and powerful had sufficient resources to build luxurious **houses of hewn stone** for themselves. God promised that the rich would not enjoy their luxury stolen from the lifeblood of the poor and powerless.

5:12 manifold . . . sins: Israel's leaders did not sin incidentally or furtively; they sinned brazenly and habitually, as though God had never revealed Himself and His standards of justice and mercy.

5:14 Seek good: The prophet interrupted himself, as it were, to plead with Israel to return to God and avoid the judgment He otherwise would bring upon them. **As you have spoken:** Worshiping in the Lord's name, the Israelites invoked the Lord's presence with them in their spoken prayers and blessings. If they began to live as God had taught them in the Law, He would indeed be with them. **5:16, 17** God's purposed action was that He would **pass through** the nation. A visit from God is a dreaded and mournful event for anyone not ready to meet Him. **In all vineyards:** A vineyard was typically a place of rejoicing and gladness.

5:18 The popular theology of Amos's day apparently looked forward to **the day of the LORD** as the time of Israel's restoration to military, political, and economic greatness, perhaps to the greatness of the reigns of David and Solomon. Amos declared such hopes futile, even pitiable. What the people looked forward to as a day of light and triumph would rise upon them instead as a day of darkness and ruin.

5:19 The images of **a bear** and **a serpent** evoke the terror that follows when a person escapes a terrible danger and is exhausted and relieved only to find a worse danger so close at hand that it is inescapable.

5:21-23 God had promised that if the Israelites honored Him with their lives, He would **savor, accept, and regard** Israel's sacrifices and **hear** their words. By stating He would no longer accept Israel's sacrifices or listen to them, God was rejecting Israel's worship as hypocritical, dishonest, and meaningless. **Feast days** and **sacred assemblies** refer, in general, to all of Israel's worship of God. **burnt offerings . . . grain offerings . . . peace offerings:** For more details on the sacrificial system, see Lev. 1-3.

5:24 After dismissing Israel's empty worship as noisy and tumultuous, God called for the honest tumult of the rolling waters of **justice** and the perennial **stream of righteousness**, the only foundation for true praise and worship of the Lord.

5:25 This verse is a rhetorical question with "yes" as the expected answer; Israel *had* worshiped God **in the wilderness**.

5:26 Israel had not worshiped the Lord exclusively, even in the earliest wilderness days. **Sikkuth** and **Chiun** are pagan deities; apparently Israel had made images of foreign gods. The true believer in the Lord understood, without question, that any gods **made** by human hands were not gods at all.

Pagan Gods of Bible Times		
One of Amos's primary responsibilities as a prophet of God was to announce the "day of the LORD ," the time of God's judgment of wicked Israel. Idolatry, perhaps more than any other sin, was the reason for this impending punishment. The history of Israel is littered with apostasy, as the children of God pursued the false idols of their Canaanite neighbors. In 5:26, the prophet specifically identifies Chiun as the object of the people's worship. The following chart lists some of the pagan gods mentioned in the Old and New Testaments.		
Pagan God	Description	Reference
Old Testament		
Ashtoreths	Baal's wife or female counterpart.	Judg. 2:13
Bel	A god identified with Merodach (Marduk), chief Babylonian god.	Is. 46:1
Chemosh	God of the Moabites and Ammonites.	Jer. 48:7, 13
Chiun	A star-god, identified with Saturn.	Amos 5:26
Dagon	Chief Philistine god.	1 Sam. 5:2–7
Merodach	Chief Babylonian god, connected with war. Also known as Marduk.	Jer. 50:2
Molech	Ammonite god connected with child sacrifice.	Lev. 18:21
Nebo	Babylonian god of wisdom and arts.	Is. 46:1
Rimmon	Syrian god of rain.	2 Kin. 5:18
Tammuz	Babylonian fertility god.	Ezek. 8:14
New Testament		
Twin Brothers	Castor and Pollux, twin sons of Zeus, the chief Greek god.	Acts 28:11
Zeus	Chief Greek god.	Acts 14:12, 13
Hermes	The Greek god of commerce and speed.	Acts 14:12, 13

27 Therefore I will send you into captivity ⁱbeyond Damascus," Says the LORD, ^jwhose name is the God of hosts.

27 ⁱ 2 Kin. 17:6; Amos 7:11, 17; Mic. 4:10 / Amos 4:13

CHAPTER 6

1 ^a Luke 6:24 ^b Ps. 123:4; Is. 32:9–11; Zeph. 1:12 ^c Is. 31:1; Jer. 49:4 ^d Ex. 19:5; Amos 3:2

Warnings to Zion and Samaria

6 Woe ^ato you *who are* at ^bease in Zion, And ^ctrust in Mount Samaria,

Notable persons in the ^dchief nation,
To whom the house of Israel comes!
2 ^eGo over to ^fCalneh and see;
And from there go to ^gHamath the great;
Then go down to Gath of the Philistines.
^hAre you better than these kingdoms?
Or is their territory greater than your territory?
3 Woe to you who ⁱput far off the day of ^jdoom,
^kWho cause ^lthe seat of violence to come near;
4 Who lie on beds of ivory,
Stretch out on your couches,
Eat lambs from the flock
And calves from the midst of the stall;
5 ^mWho sing idly to the sound of stringed instruments,
And invent for yourselves ⁿmusical instruments ^olike David;
6 Who ^pdrink wine from bowls,
And anoint yourselves with the best ointments,
^qBut are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph.
7 Therefore they shall now go ^rcaptive as the first of the captives,
And those who recline at banquets shall be removed.
8 ^sThe Lord God has sworn by Himself,
The LORD God of hosts says:
"I abhor ^tthe pride of Jacob,
And hate his palaces;
Therefore I will deliver up *the* city
And all that is in it."

2 ^e Jer. 2:10 ^f Gen. 10:10; Is. 10:9 ^g 1 Kin. 8:65; 2 Kin. 18:34
^h Nah. 3:8 ⁱ Is. 56:12; Ezek. 12:27; Amos 9:10; Matt. 24:37–39
/ Amos 5:18 ^k Amos 5:12 ^l Ps. 94:20 ^m Is. 5:12; Amos 5:23
ⁿ 1 Chr. 15:16; 16:42 ^o 1 Chr. 23:5 ^p Amos 2:8; 4:1 ^q Gen. 37:25 ^r Amos 5:27 ^s Gen. 22:16; Jer. 51:14; Amos 4:2; 8:7; Heb. 6:13–17 ^t Ps. 47:4; Ezek. 24:21; Amos 8:7

5:27 Since Israel insisted on worshiping other gods, including astral deities, God would send them into exile to lands where these deities seemed to rule supreme. Israel was exiled **beyond Damascus**, Syria's capital, to regions of Assyria and beyond. **6:1** **Zion** refers to Jerusalem, the capital of Judah (the southern kingdom). **Samaria** was the capital of Israel (the northern kingdom). At the time of Amos's prophecy, Israel and Judah together had enjoyed about a generation of military might and economic prosperity. It became natural for officials in Jerusalem and Samaria to regard themselves as **notable persons**. **6:2** It was the boast of Israel's elite that no other nation was greater than they were. Their boast came back upon their own heads, for just as Calneh, Hamath, and Gath were subjected to Assyrian rule, so Israel would also be subjugated by the Assyrians. **Calneh**, a city in northern Syria, was the capital of a small kingdom. **Hamath**, an important city in central Syria, was located north of Damascus. **Gath**, one of the five principal Philistine cities, was southwest of Israel. **6:3** **You who put far off the day of doom** refers to those who

insisted that Israel was too strong for destruction to fall upon the nation any time soon. **6:4–6** This passage describes the extravagant living indulged in by the rich, and paid for with the wealth stolen from the poor. **lambs ... calves:** Meat was a luxury for most families of the ancient Middle East, consumed only on special occasions. Meat on a daily basis was the privilege only of the rich and powerful. The upper classes of Israel were so engrossed in their own privileges and luxuries that they cared nothing for the **affliction** of their fellow Israelites, though it was their transgressions that had caused it. **6:7** God's judgment would be both fitting and ironic. Those who had fancied themselves the leaders of the nation would lead their nation into exile. **6:8** If God takes an oath, He takes it **by Himself**, for there is none greater than He. In his oracles against the seven nations (chs. 1; 2), Amos had prophesied the destruction of their palaces. Now it was Israel's turn. Luxurious palace strongholds represented both the **pride of Jacob** in their own strength and the oppression of the

⁹Then it shall come to pass, that if ten men remain in one house, they shall die. ¹⁰And when ¹a relative of the dead, with one who will burn the bodies, picks up the ²bodies to take them out of the house, he will say to one inside the house, “Are there any more with you?”

Then someone will say, “None.”

And he will say, “Hold your tongue!”

^vFor we dare not mention the name of the LORD.”

¹¹ For behold, ^wthe LORD gives a command:

^xHe will break the great house into bits,
And the little house into pieces.

¹² Do horses run on rocks?
Does one plow there with oxen?
Yet ^yyou have turned justice into gall,
And the fruit of righteousness into wormwood,

¹³ You who rejoice over ³Lo Debar,
Who say, “Have we not taken ⁴Karnaim for ourselves
By our own strength?”

¹⁴“But, behold, ^zI will raise up a nation
against you,
O house of Israel,”
Says the LORD God of hosts;
“And they will afflict you from the
“entrance of Hamath
To the Valley of the Arabah.”

¹⁰ ^u Amos 5:13
^v Amos 8:3 ¹ Lit. his loved one or uncle
² Lit. bones
¹¹ ^w Is. 55:11
^x 2 Kin. 25:9; Amos 3:15
¹² ^y 1 Kin. 21:7-13; Is. 59:13, 14; Hos. 10:4; Amos 5:7, 11, 12
¹³ ³ Lit. Nothing
⁴ Lit. Horns, a symbol of strength
¹⁴ ^z Jer. 5:15 ^a Num. 34:7, 8; 1 Kin. 8:65; 2 Kin. 14:25

CHAPTER 7

¹ ¹ Lit. beginning of the sprouting of
² ^a Is. 51:19 ² Or How shall Jacob stand
³ ^b Deut. 32:36; Jer. 26:19; Hos. 11:8; Amos 5:15; Jon. 3:10; [James 5:16]
⁴ ³ to contend ⁴ Lit. portion
⁵ ^c Amos 7:2, 3

Vision of the Locusts

7 Thus the Lord God showed me: Behold, He formed locust swarms at the ¹beginning of the late crop; indeed it was the late crop after the king's mowings. ²And so it was, when they had finished eating the grass of the land, that I said:

“O Lord God, forgive, I pray!

“Oh, ² that Jacob may stand,
For he is small!”

³ So ^bthe LORD relented concerning this.
“It shall not be,” said the LORD.

Vision of the Fire

⁴Thus the Lord God showed me: Behold, the Lord God called ³for conflict by fire, and it consumed the great deep and devoured the ⁴territory. ⁵Then I said:

“O Lord God, cease, I pray!

“Oh, that Jacob may stand,
For he is small!”

⁶ So the LORD relented concerning this.
“This also shall not be,” said the Lord God.

Vision of the Plumb Line

⁷Thus He showed me: Behold, the Lord stood on a wall made with a plumb line, with a plumb line in His hand. ⁸And the LORD said to me, “Amos, what do you see?”

And I said, “A plumb line.”

Then the Lord said:

powerless, whose stolen wealth had financed the construction of these palaces. **I will deliver up the city:** God personally would see to the destruction of Samaria and its proud inhabitants.

6:10 This verse depicts the aftermath of God's judgment, when relatives came around to carry out the bodies. **One inside the house** may refer to the last survivor, sick but not yet dead himself. In this context, such a person might have been expected to invoke the name of God for help after answering, “None.” Before he could do so, however, the questioner would silence him, fearful of getting God's further attention by using His name. People who had not believed that God would come in judgment would now be afraid of what further disaster He might bring upon them.

6:12 By citing two obviously impossible actions in areas of life with which all Israelites would have been familiar, Amos hoped to get the people to see the moral impossibility of Israel's perversion of justice. As absurd and impossible in God's sight as horses running up vertical cliffs or oxen plowing the sea was Israel's—or any nation's—perversion of justice and righteousness. **Gall** is a bitter, poisonous herb.

6:13, 14 Israel's pride in its military strength would be its downfall. **Lo Debar** was a city east of the Jordan that Israel regained from Syria when Assyria crippled the strength of Damascus. **Karnaim**, a city east of the Jordan near the farthest limits of Israelite possession, was also regained when Assyria weakened Syria. God's punishment of Israel would fit its sin of pride. As the Israelites reckoned that they had extended their borders by their own military strength, God would allow them to be harassed and defeated from border to border. **The Valley of the Arabah** refers to the desert valley that was the southern limit of Israelite control. From north to south, from border to border, God would allow Israel to be defeated in battle; they would realize that their own strength was puny indeed.

7:1 locust swarms: Locusts are a kind of grasshopper. Joel 1:4—2:11 describes the devastation locusts bring to agriculture, stripping every green leaf and twig, and even killing trees. **The late crop** refers to the last growth of crops and pastures, evidently including hay, before the summer dry season. **The king's mowings** implies that the king took the first harvest of hay as a tax. Thus a swarm of locusts devouring the late crop would leave the people with nothing for themselves, inflicting a crippling economic blow.

7:2, 3 Oh, that Jacob may stand: If God carried out the threatened punishment, Jacob (the nation of Israel) might be destroyed. One function of the prophet was to serve as intercessor for the people before God. Amos prayed that the vision decreed in heaven might be halted before it was accomplished on earth. The basis of Amos's petition lay in the true assessment of Israel's position. They were not large and strong, as they thought; rather they were small and weak. In response to Amos's intercession, and out of His own love for Israel, God stayed His decree.

7:4–6 To call for conflict means to put on trial or to bring a lawsuit against Israel. To try by fire means that fire would have been both the instrument by which Israel's guilt would be judged and the instrument by which their punishment would be carried out. **The great deep** refers to the primordial waters that remained beneath the firmament after God fashioned it (see Gen. 1:6–8). These include the oceans and seas, and the subterranean waters that are the sources of springs and wells. For the deep to be dried up by fire means that the land would be devastated beyond hope. **The territory** refers either to the portion of the earth God had assigned to Israel or to Israel as God's portion among the nations of the earth. **7:7–9 A plumb line** is a string with a weight tied to one end, used to establish a vertical line so that a wall can be built straight. **what**

“Behold, ^dI am setting a plumb line
In the midst of My people Israel;
^eI will not pass by them anymore.
⁹ ^fThe ⁵high places of Isaac shall be
desolate,
And the ⁶sanctuaries of Israel shall
be laid waste.
^gI will rise with the sword against the
house of Jeroboam.”

Amaziah's Complaint

¹⁰ Then Amaziah the ^hpriest of ⁱBethel
sent to ^jJeroboam king of Israel, saying,
“Amos has conspired against you in the
midst of the house of Israel. The land is
not able to ⁷bear all his words. ¹¹ For thus
Amos has said:

‘Jeroboam shall die by the sword,
And Israel shall surely be led away
^kcaptive
From their own land.’”

¹² Then Amaziah said to Amos:

“Go, you seer!
Flee to the land of Judah.
There eat bread,
And there prophesy.

¹³ But ^lnever again prophesy at Bethel,
^mFor it is the king's ⁸sanctuary,
And it is the royal ⁹residence.”

¹⁴ Then Amos answered, and said to
Amaziah:

“I *was* no prophet,
Nor *was* I ⁿa son of a prophet,

⁸ ^d 2 Kin. 21:13; Is.
28:17; 34:11; Lam.
2:8 ^e Mic. 7:18
⁹ ^f Gen. 46:1; Hos.
10:8; Mic. 1:5
⁹ 2 Kin. 15:8-10;
Amos 7:11 ⁵ Places
of pagan worship
⁶ Or *holy places*
¹⁰ ^h 1 Kin. 12:31, 32;
13:33 ⁱ 1 Kin. 13:32;
Amos 4:4 ^j 2 Kin.
14:23 ⁷ Or *endure*
¹¹ ^k Amos 5:27; 6:7
¹³ ^l Amos 2:12; Acts
4:18 ^m 1 Kin. 12:29,
32; Amos 7:9 ⁸ Or
holy place ⁹ Lit.
house
¹⁴ ⁿ 1 Kin. 20:35;
2 Kin. 2:5; 2 Chr.
19:2

⁹ 2 Kin. 3:4; Amos
1:1; Zech. 13:5
¹⁵ ^p Amos 3:8 ¹ Lit.
from behind
¹⁶ ^q Deut. 32:2;
Ezek. 21:2; Mic. 2:6
² Lit. *drip*
¹⁷ ^r Jer. 28:12;
29:21, 32 ^s Is. 13:16;
Lam. 5:11; Hos. 4:13;
Zech. 14:2 ^t 2 Kin.
17:6; Ezek. 4:13;
Hos. 9:3

CHAPTER 8

² ^a Ezek. 7:2
^b Amos 7:8

But I *was* a ^osheepbreeder
And a tender of sycamore
fruit.

¹⁵ Then the LORD took me ¹ as I
followed the flock,
And the LORD said to me,
‘Go, ^pprophesy to My people
Israel.’

¹⁶ Now therefore, hear the word of the
LORD:
You say, ‘Do not prophesy against
Israel,
And ^qdo not ²spout against the
house of Isaac.’

¹⁷ “Therefore ^r thus says the LORD:

^s “Your wife shall be a harlot in the
city;
Your sons and daughters shall fall by
the sword;
Your land shall be divided by *survey*
line;
You shall die in a ^tdefiled land;
And Israel shall surely be led away
captive
From his own land.’”

Vision of the Summer Fruit

8 Thus the Lord God showed me: Be-
hold, a basket of summer fruit. ² And
He said, “Amos, what do you see?”
So I said, “A basket of summer fruit.”
Then the LORD said to me:

^a “The end has come upon My people
Israel;
^b I will not pass by them anymore.

do you see: God asked Amos what he saw, then explained the vision's meaning. Unlike the first two visions, God did not give Amos opportunity to intercede, nor did He relent. These judgments would be executed. The plumb line of God's revelation in the law had been set **in the midst of . . . Israel** for many generations. Now God would stretch a plumb line to demonstrate how “crooked” the people's observance of His commands had been. **The high places** refer to temples, groves, and other shrines dedicated mostly to pagan deities. **Isaac**, the father of Jacob, represented all Israel in Amos's day. **Jeroboam** may refer to Jeroboam I, the first king of Israel, who instituted idolatry in the northern kingdom (see 1 Kin. 12:25–33), or to Jeroboam II, the monarch during the time of these prophecies. If it is Jeroboam I, then **the house of Jeroboam** is a metaphor for the nation. If it is Jeroboam II, then the prophecy specifically concerns the royal household. In v. 10, the prophecy is taken by Amaziah to refer to the current king. Jeroboam II himself did not die by **the sword**, but his son Zechariah was assassinated after reigning only six months (see 2 Kin. 15:8–10).
7:10, 11 Amaziah, the priest in charge of the temple at Bethel, informed the king about the prophet who was making threats against the king's house. Amaziah was reacting to Amos's third vision which ended with God's promise to bring the sword against the house of Jeroboam. Amaziah regarded Amos's words as a political threat and reported them not as a prophecy from God, but as Amos's call to revolt.
7:12, 13 After sending his report to Jeroboam, Amaziah turned his attention to Amos himself. Since Amaziah was an official of the king, his command to Amos to return to Judah would have amounted

to making Amos officially unwelcome in Israel. Amaziah was not concerned at all that Amos had proclaimed a message from God, only that the king's interests should be protected from this seditious prophet.
7:14–17 Amos's answer to Amaziah came in two parts. First he denied being a prophet by profession. **Nor was I a son of a prophet** indicates not only that Amos's father was not a prophet, but also that Amos had not been trained in prophecy. **the LORD took me:** Amos made it clear that he had neither desired nor sought his prophetic task. The second part of Amos's answer was directed against Amaziah personally. **Your wife shall be a harlot:** The only way the spouse of an important official like Amaziah would be reduced to prostitution would be if all her family and all her resources were taken away and she were left to fend entirely for herself. The rest of Amos's oracle predicted that such a situation would happen to Amaziah's family. **Your land shall be divided** indicated that it would be assigned or sold to new owners. As a high official of the king, Amaziah certainly possessed large land holdings; he would retain none. **Defiled land** refers to the land of pagans.
8:1–3 summer fruit: The fruits that came at the end of the harvest in late summer included grapes, pomegranates, and figs. **The end has come:** Amos could not have discerned the meaning of this vision until God's pronouncement. Israel's wickedness was about to result in a harvest of judgment. Most good harvests are times of rejoicing. But in this one, **the songs of the temple**—the songs of thanksgiving—would be turned to **wailing** because the harvest would be death.

- 3 And ^cthe songs of the temple
Shall be wailing in that day,”
Says the Lord God—
“Many dead bodies everywhere,
^dThey shall be thrown out in silence.”
- 4 Hear this, you who ¹swallow up the
needy,
And make the poor of the land fail,
- ⁵Saying:
“When will the New Moon be past,
That we may sell grain?
And ^ethe Sabbath,
That we may ²trade wheat?
^fMaking the ephah small and the
shekel large,
Falsifying the scales by ^gdeceit,
6 That we may buy the poor for ^hsilver,
And the needy for a pair of sandals—
Even sell the bad wheat?”
- 7 The LORD has sworn by ⁱthe pride of
Jacob:
“Surely ^jI will never forget any of
their works.
- 8 ^kShall the land not tremble for this,
And everyone mourn who dwells
in it?
All of it shall swell like ³the River,
Heave and subside
^lLike the River of Egypt.
- 9 “And it shall come to pass in that
day,” says the Lord God,
^m“That I will make the sun go down at
noon,
And I will darken the earth in
⁴broad daylight;

3 ^c Amos 5:23
^d Amos 6:9, 10
4 ¹ Or *trample on*,
Amos 2:7
5 ^e Ex. 31:13-17;
Neh. 13:15 ^f Mic.
6:10, 11 ^g Lev. 19:35;
36; Deut. 25:13-15
² Lit. *open*
6 ^h Amos 2:6
7 ⁱ Deut. 33:26, 29;
Ps. 68:34; Amos
6:8 / Ps. 10:11; Hos.
7:2; 8:13
8 ^k Hos. 4:3 / Jer.
46:7, 8; Amos 9:5
³ The Nile; some
Heb. mss., LXX, Tg.,
Syr., Vg. *River* (cf.
9:5); MT *the light*
9 ^m Job 5:14; Is.
13:10; 59:9, 10; Jer.
15:9; [Mic. 3:6];
Matt. 27:45; Mark
15:32; Luke 23:44
⁴ Lit. *a day of light*

10 ⁿ Lam. 5:15;
Ezek. 7:18 ^o Is. 15:2,
3; Jer. 48:37; Ezek.
27:31 ^p Jer. 6:26;
[Zech. 12:10]
11 ^q 1 Sam. 3:1;
2 Chr. 15:3; Ps. 74:9;
Ezek. 7:26; Mic. 3:6
12 ^r Hos. 5:6
14 ^s Hos. 4:15
^t Deut. 9:21 ^u Amos
5:5 ⁵ Or *Ashima*, a
Syrian goddess

CHAPTER 9

1 ^v Capitals of the
pillars

- 10 I will turn your feasts into
“mourning,
^oAnd all your songs into lamentation;
^pI will bring sackcloth on every waist,
And baldness on every head;
I will make it like mourning for an
only *son*,
And its end like a bitter day.
- 11 “Behold, the days are coming,” says
the Lord God,
“That I will send a famine on the land,
Not a famine of bread,
Nor a thirst for water,
But ^qof hearing the words of the
LORD.
- 12 They shall wander from sea to sea,
And from north to east;
They shall run to and fro, seeking
the word of the LORD,
But shall ^rnot find it.
- 13 “In that day the fair virgins
And strong young men
Shall faint from thirst.
- 14 Those who ^sswear by ^tthe ⁵sin of
Samaria,
Who say,
‘As your god lives, O Dan!’
And, ‘As the way of “Beersheba
lives!”
They shall fall and never rise again.”

The Destruction of Israel

9 I saw the Lord standing by the altar,
and He said:

“Strike the ¹doorposts, that the
thresholds may shake,

8:4 Fail means essentially “to have no means of survival.”

8:5 The New Moon, the first day of the month on the Hebrew calendar, was a day of special sacrifices, a feast day, and a **Sabbath** day (see Num. 28:11–15; 1 Sam. 20:5). Rather than observing the New Moon and the weekly Sabbath with worship, thanksgiving, and rest, these people were impatient to resume their cheating and oppression of the poor. In biblical times, the ephah was the most common measure of dry volume. To make **the ephah small**, therefore, was to cheat the customer of value received for price paid. The shekel was a unit of money. To make **the shekel large** was to cheat the customer by taking too large a price (weight) of silver for value received.

8:6 Israel's system of indentured service for members of the covenant community was to be humane and limited in time (see Ex. 21:2, 3; Lev. 25:39–55). The rich and powerful of Amos's day were making slaves of Israel's poor, the people they had dispossessed of their lands. **the bad wheat**: The chaff and other refuse of the threshing floor, perhaps even moldy or mildewed wheat, were mixed in with the good wheat to stretch it further and make a greater profit.

8:7 The form of the Hebrew oath marks its seriousness: God will not forget. **Their works** refers to the economic injustices Amos spoke against in vv. 4–6, as well as other sins, including unfaithfulness to God.

8:8 The River and **the River of Egypt** refer to the Nile River. **Heave and subside**: The Nile rises and falls several feet in its annual flood. Amos may have intended to portray a severe earthquake in which

the land's rise and fall would be as dramatic as the rise and fall of the Nile. Though the Nile's flood usually was quite gentle in Egypt, an earthquake that reminded one of it would be violent indeed.

8:9, 10 God's judgment would be a great reversal—of light to darkness, and joy to mourning. **That day** probably refers to the “day of the LORD” (5:18). **Sackcloth**, a coarse cloth of goat or camel hair, was uncomfortable to wear. Thus it was worn next to the skin as a sign of mourning or great distress. Shaving the head to create temporary **baldness** was another mourning sign.

8:11 In 4:6, Amos reminds Israel that God had sent famine upon them, yet they had not returned to Him. Now the famine would be, not of food, **but of hearing the words of the LORD**.

8:12, 13 From sea to sea means from the Dead Sea to the Mediterranean. **to and fro**: Those in Israel searching for the word of God would have to circle all of Israel's territory, but in vain. **The fair virgins and strong young men** are those who are most vigorous and apt to survive.

8:14 Dan in the far north and **Beersheba** in the far south were the limits of significant Israelite settlement. In Amos's day, Beersheba was in the kingdom of Judah. Israel could swear oaths by the Lord, claiming they loyally worshiped Him from the extreme north to the extreme south of His land, but that would not relieve the famine of God's word.

9:1 The people would have expected a vision of God **by the altar** to mean that He intended good for them, blessing them with His

- And ^abreak them on the heads of them all.
I will slay the last of them with the sword.
^bHe who flees from them shall not get away,
And he who escapes from them shall not be delivered.
- 2 “Though ^c they dig into ²hell,
From there My hand shall take them;
^dThough they climb up to heaven,
From there I will bring them down;
3 And though they ^ehide themselves
on top of Carmel,
From there I will search and take them;
Though they hide from My sight at the bottom of the sea,
From there I will command the serpent, and it shall bite them;
4 Though they go into captivity before their enemies,
From there ^fI will command the sword,
And it shall slay them.
^gI will set My eyes on them for harm and not for good.”
- 5 The Lord God of hosts,
He who touches the earth and it ^hmelts,
ⁱAnd all who dwell there mourn;
All of it shall swell like ³the River,
And subside like the River of Egypt.
6 He who builds His ^jlayers ⁴ in the sky,
And has founded His strata in the earth;
Who ^kcalls for the waters of the sea,
And pours them out on the face of the earth—
^lThe LORD is His name.

1 ^a Ps. 68:21; Hab. 3:13 ^b Amos 2:14
2 ^c Ps. 139:8; Jer. 23:24 ^d Job 20:6; Jer. 51:53; Obad. 4; Matt. 11:23 ^e Or Sheol
3 ^e Jer. 23:24
4 ^f Lev. 26:33 ^g Lev. 17:10; Jer. 21:10; 39:16; 44:11
5 ^h Ps. 104:32; 144:5; Is. 64:1; Mic. 1:4 ⁱ Amos 8:8
3 The Nile
6 ^j Ps. 104:3, 13
4 Amos 5:8 ^k Amos 4:13; 5:27 ^l Or stairs

7 ^m Jer. 47:4 ⁿ Deut. 2:23 ^o Amos 1:5
5 Lit. sons of the Ethiopians ⁶ Crete
8 ^p Jer. 44:27; Amos 9:4 ^q Jer. 5:10; 30:11; [Joel 2:32]; Amos 3:12; [Obad. 16, 17]
9 ^r [Is. 65:8-16]
7 shake ⁸ Lit. pebble
10 ^s [Is. 28:15]; Jer. 5:12; Amos 6:3
11 ^t Acts 15:16-18 ⁹ Lit. booth; a figure of a deposed dynasty ¹ Lit. wall up its breaches
12 ^u Obad. 19
v Num. 24:18; Is. 11:14 ² LXX mankind
13 ^w Lev. 26:5

- 7 “Are you not like the ⁵people of Ethiopia to Me,
O children of Israel?” says the LORD.
“Did I not bring up Israel from the land of Egypt,
The ^mPhilistines from ⁿCaphtor,⁶
And the Syrians from ^oKir?”
- 8 “Behold, ^pthe eyes of the Lord God are on the sinful kingdom,
And I ^qwill destroy it from the face of the earth;
Yet I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob,”
Says the LORD.
- 9 “For surely I will command,
And will ⁷sift the house of Israel among all nations,
As grain is sifted in a sieve;
^rYet not the smallest ⁸grain shall fall to the ground.
10 All the sinners of My people shall die by the sword,
^sWho say, ‘The calamity shall not overtake nor confront us.’

Israel Will Be Restored

- 11 “On ^tthat day I will raise up
The ⁹tabernacle of David, which has fallen down,
And ¹repair its damages;
I will raise up its ruins,
And rebuild it as in the days of old;
12 ^uThat they may possess the remnant of ^vEdom,²
And all the Gentiles who are called by My name,”
Says the LORD who does this thing.
- 13 “Behold, ^wthe days are coming,” says the LORD,
“When the plowman shall overtake the reaper,

presence. Instead God would start at the altar, commanding that the destruction of the sinful nation begin there. **them all . . . the last of them:** The reference here is to faithless Israel.

9:2 hell . . . heaven: In this imagery, Israel’s fugitives from God’s judgment could escape neither up nor down; God would find them no matter where in the universe they fled.

9:3 If the universe could not hide the fugitives, neither could the earth. The **top of Carmel** represented the highest point on the earth. Whether as high as that, or as low as **the bottom of the sea**, the earth would provide no escape.

9:4 Even **captivity** in enemy lands would not provide a refuge from God’s further judgment upon Israel. **I will set My eyes on them** usually is a formula that expresses God’s blessing on Israel; here it alludes to the fulfillment of the curses for breaking the Mosaic covenant.

9:7 Ethiopia refers to the region near the southern horizon of Israel’s geographical knowledge, south of Egypt. God’s rhetorical question told Israel that they were not the only recipients of God’s attention and care. God loves all peoples, even **the Philistines** and **Syrians**. **Caphtor** refers to Crete, a large island in the Mediterranean Sea.

9:8 The sinful kingdom is Israel. **I will not utterly destroy:** This was a glimmer of hope in a long passage of judgment and doom. God’s judgment would be thorough, but a remnant would survive.

9:9 Sifting grain **in a sieve** was the final operation in cleaning grain before gathering it into storage. In winnowing, all the chaff was blown away; only pebbles and small clumps of mud remained with the grain. The sieve was constructed with holes that were sized so the grain fell through when it was shaken, but pebbles and other debris were retained in the sieve. Thus the **smallest grain** refers to the smallest pebble; it would not fall to the ground with the clean grain.

9:11, 12 The tabernacle of David: Amos pictures the royal house of David metaphorically as a “booth” fallen in disrepair. Judah was a fallen, ruined shelter, incapable of protecting its people from any significant storm. **As in the days of old** reflects the nostalgia of Israel’s people for the glory days of the kingdoms of David and Solomon, when they lived in strength, prosperity, and security. **Gentiles** refers to the peoples around Israel and Judah. **Called by My name** is a designation of sovereignty and ownership. **Says the LORD who does this thing:** God would take this task upon Himself.

9:13 Israelite farmers plowed at the beginning of the rainy season, from mid-October. They harvested the grain crop—first barley,

And the treader of grapes him who sows seed;
^xThe mountains shall drip with sweet wine,
 And all the hills shall flow *with it*.
^{14 y}I will bring back the captives of My people Israel;
^zThey shall build the waste cities and inhabit *them*;

^{13 x} Joel 3:18
^{14 y} Ps. 53:6; Is. 60:4; Jer. 30:3, 18
^z Is. 61:4

^{15 a} Is. 60:21; Ezek. 34:28; 37:25

They shall plant vineyards and drink wine from them;
 They shall also make gardens and eat fruit from them.
¹⁵ I will plant them in their land,
^a And no longer shall they be pulled up
 From the land I have given them,”
 Says the LORD your God.

then wheat—from late March to early June. For **the plowman to overtake the reaper** would mean such an abundant harvest that it would last all summer and would not be gathered until the plowing had started again. Grapes were harvested from midsummer to early fall. The grain crop was sown after the plowing in late fall. For **the treader of grapes to overtake him who sows seed** would mean the grape harvest would be so abundant that it would be extended for several weeks. The harvest of grapes would be so great that it would seem as though the **mountains** and **hills** themselves were flowing with rivers of **sweet wine**.

9:14 The promised restoration will be a total reversal of the punishment that God was bringing upon Israel.

9:15 As Israel planted vineyards, fields, and gardens, so God would **plant** the people **in their land**, never again to **be pulled up** in exile. **Says the LORD your God** are the final words of Amos's prophecy. God would do what He threatened through Amos—if Israel did not return to Him. God would also do what He promised through Amos in the last few verses of this book. God does not abandon His promises or His covenant, nor does He leave His people without hope. God's punishment is certain, but His restoration is just as certain. That word of hope for God's people of old is valid also for God's people of today.

THE BOOK OF

OBADIAH



THE BOOK OF OBADIAH is one of only two minor prophets that is addressed entirely to a nation other than Israel or Judah. It deals with the ancient feud between Israel and the nation of Edom, between the descendants of Jacob and those of his brother Esau. Through the prophet Obadiah, the Lord expressed His indignation at the nation of Edom. When they should have been helping their relatives, they were gloating over the Israelites' problems and raiding their homes. A day was coming—the day of the Lord—when all these wrongs would be righted. The Lord would bring justice to the world.

Author and Date The name Obadiah means “Servant of the Lord.” It is not known whether this was the prophet’s personal name or whether he used it as a title, preferring to remain anonymous. Nothing is known of Obadiah’s personal life or standing in Judean society.

Some scholars date the book very early, in the mid-ninth century **B.C.**, following raids by the Philistines and Arabian tribes during the period of King Jehoram of Judah (see 2 Chr. 21:16, 17). This would make the Book of Obadiah the earliest of the prophetic books. However, most scholars date the book immediately following the Babylonian destruction of Jerusalem in 586 **B.C.**

Historical Setting In 586 **B.C.** Nebuchadnezzar’s army crushed Judah and destroyed Jerusalem and Solomon’s temple, ending Judah’s existence as an independent nation. Edom, as a closely related nation, should have helped Judah’s refugees. But instead of offering sympathy and help, Edom handed Judeans over to the conquering Babylonians. The Edomites even murdered some of the refugees. Such treachery to a related nation could not be overlooked. God gave Obadiah a stern message for Edom, a warning of God’s judgment on them for their callous treatment of the fleeing Judeans.

The Edomites’ pride and presumed self-sufficiency became their downfall. Their fortress capital of Sela, which they considered impregnable, became their tomb. Their Arab neighbors turned on them, taking over their land and their livelihood. The Edomites were pushed into what had been southern Judah. In the second century **B.C.**, the resurgent Jewish kingdom under the Maccabees conquered the Edomites and forcibly converted them to Judaism. At that time they were called Idumeans.

Purpose While Obadiah’s short prophetic oracle was addressed to Edom, it is doubtful that Edomite leaders ever heard or read it. One purpose of the oracle was to comfort and encourage the surviving Judeans with the message that God had not abandoned them. Judah would be restored to its own land after the judgment of the Exile had been accomplished, and their enemies would be punished.

In the grand scheme of the biblical message of God’s redemption of fallen humanity, the Book of Obadiah may seem to be of little importance. But its portion of that message is tremendously vital. God is sovereign over all nations, whether they acknowledge His sovereignty or not. God desires that we show mercy and favor to our neighbors in their time of distress. Treachery against a relative is never justified and will be judged by the God of justice.



View of the mountains of Edom, southeast of the Dead Sea. Obadiah prophesied the coming destruction of Edom.
Todd Bolen/www.BiblePlaces.com

CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

Obadiah's name means "Servant of the Lord," and like Jesus, the supreme Servant of God, this prophet has his work cut out for him. Like Jesus, Obadiah has the difficult task of representing Yahweh to those who don't want to hear what he has to say.

Obadiah is the Lord's mouthpiece as he stands up for Israel and sounds off against Edom. In his prophecy, this little known prophet anticipates the One who will come to judge the nations (vv. 15, 16). He also makes reference to the Savior of Israel. "But on Mount Zion there shall be deliverance, and there shall be holiness" (v. 17).

848 B.C.
Jehoram becomes king in Judah

c. 845 B.C.
Edom revolts; one early option for Obadiah's activity

OBADIAH OUTLINE

- I. Edom's coming judgment vv. 1–9
 - A. God's summons to the nations v. 1
 - B. Edom's pride and disaster vv. 2–9
- II. Edom's sin: violence against Judah vv. 10–14
- III. Edom's judgment and Judah's restoration vv. 15–21
 - A. The day of the Lord against Edom vv. 15–18
 - B. God's restoration of Judah vv. 19–21

722 B.C.
Israel falls to the Assyrians

586 B.C.
The Babylonians take Judah captive

c. 585 B.C.
(Second option)
Obadiah rebukes the Edomites' treachery

The Coming Judgment on Edom

The vision of Obadiah.

Thus says the Lord God
^aconcerning Edom

^b(We have heard a report from
 the LORD,

And a messenger has been sent
 among the nations, *saying*,

“Arise, and let us rise up against her
 for battle”):

² “Behold, I will make you small among
 the nations;

You shall be greatly despised.

³ The ^cpride of your heart has
 deceived you,
 You who dwell in the clefts of the
 rock,

Whose habitation is high;

^dYou who say in your heart, ‘Who will
 bring me down to the ground?’

⁴ ^eThough you ascend as high as the
 eagle,

And though you ^fset your nest
 among the stars,

From there I will bring you down,”
 says the LORD.

⁵ “If ^gthieves had come to you,
 If robbers by night—

Oh, how you will be cut off!—

Would they not have stolen till they
 had enough?

¹ ^a Is. 21:11; Ezek.
 25:12; Joel 3:19;
 Mal. 1:3 ^b Jer. 49:14-
 16; Obad. 1-4
³ ^c Is. 16:6; Jer.
 49:16 ^d Is. 14:13-15;
 Rev. 18:7
⁴ ^e Job 20:6 ^f Hab.
 2:9; Mal. 1:4
⁵ ^g Jer. 49:9

^h Deut. 24:21
⁷ ⁱ Jer. 38:22 ^j Is.
 19:11; Jer. 49:7
ⁱ Or wound or
 plot ² Or There is
 no understanding
 in him
⁸ ^k [Job 5:12-14];
 Is. 29:14
⁹ ^l Ps. 76:5 ^m Gen.
 36:11; 1 Chr. 1:45;
 Job 2:11; Jer. 49:7
¹⁰ ⁿ Gen. 27:41;
 Ezek. 25:12; Amos
 1:11 ^o Ezek. 35:9;
 Joel 3:19
¹¹ ^p Ps. 83:5-8;
 Amos 1:6, 9

If grape-gatherers had come to you,
^hWould they not have left *some*
 gleanings?

⁶ “Oh, how Esau shall be searched out!
How his hidden treasures shall be
 sought after!

⁷ All the men in your confederacy
 Shall force you to the border;

ⁱThe men at peace with you
 Shall deceive you *and* prevail against
 you.

Those who eat your bread shall lay a
¹trap for you.

^jNo ²one is aware of it.

⁸ “Will ^kI not in that day,” says the LORD,
 “Even destroy the wise *men* from

Edom,
 And understanding from the
 mountains of Esau?”

⁹ Then your ^lmighty men, O ^mTeman,
 shall be dismayed,

To the end that everyone from the
 mountains of Esau

May be cut off by slaughter.

Edom Mistreated His Brother

¹⁰ “For ⁿviolence against your brother
 Jacob,

Shame shall cover you,

And ^oyou shall be cut off forever.

¹¹ In the day that you ^pstood on the
 other side—

1 Vision, a word common in the prophets (see Is. 1:1; Nah. 1:1) indicates that the prophet “saw” the revelation. **Obadiah** means “The Servant of the Lord.” **Thus says the Lord God**: This phrasing is a strong affirmation that the prophetic oracle did not originate in the prophet’s own thinking; God was and is the Initiator. A national oracle is directed against **Edom**, a country east of the Dead Sea and south of Moab. **The nations** is the standard biblical term for the larger national entities of western Asia and northeast Africa. See Jer. 49:7–22 for a passage with many similarities to the Book of Obadiah. Ezekiel also contains prophecies against Edom that are similar to the message of Obadiah (see Ezek. 25:12–14; 35:1–15).

2 I will make you small: God would bring about a reversal of Edom’s inflated self-importance.

pride

(Heb. *zadon*) (v. 3; Prov. 11:2; 13:10; Jer. 49:16) Strong’s #2087

The Hebrew noun is related to a verb that means “to boil up.” In the OT, the noun has the meaning of “acting proudly or presumptuously” (Deut. 18:22; 1 Sam. 17:28). The defining characteristic of the nation of Edom was pride (v. 3; Jer. 49:16). Interestingly, Jeremiah uses the word *pride* symbolically as a synonym for Babylon (Jer. 50:31, 32). Pride incites insolence and rebellion toward God, and it brings shame (Prov. 11:2) and destruction (Ezek. 7:10–12). The “pride of your heart” of which Jeremiah speaks is “presumptuous godlessness,” the arrogance of those who think that they can thrive without their Creator (see Prov. 11:2; 13:10; Jer. 49:16).

3 habitation is high: Some of the mountain peaks of Edom reach over six thousand feet; Jerusalem is about 2,300 feet above sea level.

Who will bring me down: Edom’s presumed physical safety led the Edomites to become haughty; this would be their downfall.

4 as high as the eagle . . . among the stars: Edom’s physical location became a metaphor for the proud and haughty spirit that the nation had displayed at the time of Judah’s distress. Trusting in its high places and mountainous strongholds, Edom reckoned that no one could bring it to account for its actions.

5, 6 If thieves had come: The implication is that Edom would be stripped of everything. The nation would have been better off if thieves and robbers had come. **searched out**: Rather than being robbed randomly, the nation would be systematically pillaged (see Jer. 49:7–10).

7 In your confederacy referred to the nations who were allied with Edom in a covenant relationship, **at peace** and eating **bread** with them.

8 Edom had a reputation for having many **wise men** among its citizens (see Jer. 49:7).

9 The name **Teman** comes from a son of Eliphaz, who was the first-born son of Esau (see Gen. 36:9–11). The word is often used as a synonym for Edom (see Jer. 49:7; Amos 1:12), and is thought to have been one of its principal cities. One of Job’s friends, also named Eliphaz, came from Teman (Job 2:11).

10 your brother Jacob: Esau and Jacob were brothers, the sons of Isaac and Rebekah (see Gen. 25:24–26). Edom was descended from Esau; Judah was descended from Jacob.

11 In the day refers to the time of Judah’s distress. **strangers . . . foreigners**: These words, used to describe Judah’s principal enemies, contrast with the words of v. 10, “your brother.” It was one thing for the Babylonians to attack Judah; for a nation like Edom to join the Babylonians against their own brothers was unthinkable.

In the day that strangers carried
captive his forces,
When foreigners entered his gates
And ^qcast lots for Jerusalem—
Even you *were* as one of them.

12^a But you should not have ^rgazed ³ on
the day of your brother

⁴ In the day of his captivity;
Nor should you have ^srejoiced over
the children of Judah

In the day of their destruction;
Nor should you have spoken
proudly

In the day of distress.

13 You should not have entered the gate
of My people

In the day of their calamity.
Indeed, you should not have ⁵gazed
on their affliction

In the day of their calamity,
Nor laid *hands* on their substance
In the day of their calamity.

14 You should not have stood at the
crossroads
To cut off those among them who
escaped;

Nor should you have ⁶delivered
up those among them who
remained

In the day of distress.

15^a For ^tthe day of the LORD upon all the
nations *is* near;

^uAs you have done, it shall be done to
you;

11 ^q Joel 3:3; Nah.
3:10

12 ^r Mic. 4:11;
7:10 ^s [Prov. 17:5];
Ezek. 35:15; 36:5

³ Gloated over
⁴ Lit. *on the day he
became a foreigner*

13 ⁵ Gloated over
14 ⁶ Handed over
to the enemy

15 ^t Ezek. 30:3;
[Joel 1:15; 2:1, 11,
31; Amos 5:18, 20]

^u Jer. 50:29; 51:56;
Hab. 2:8

⁷ Or *reward*
16 ^v Joel 3:17

17 ^w Is. 14:1, 2; Joel
2:32; Amos 9:8 ⁸ Or
salvation

18 ^x Is. 5:24; 9:18,
19; Zech. 12:6

19 ^y Is. 11:14; Amos
9:12 ^z Zeph. 2:7

⁹ Heb. *Negev*

Your ⁷reprisal shall return upon your
own head.

16 ^v For as you drank on My holy
mountain,

So shall all the nations drink
continually;

Yes, they shall drink, and swallow,
And they shall be as though they had
never been.

Israel's Final Triumph

17^a But on Mount Zion there ^wshall be
⁸deliverance,

And there shall be holiness;
The house of Jacob shall possess
their possessions.

18 The house of Jacob shall be a fire,
And the house of Joseph ^aa flame;
But the house of Esau *shall be*
stubble;

They shall kindle them and devour
them,

And no survivor shall *remain* of the
house of Esau,⁷
For the LORD has spoken.

19 The ⁹South ^yshall possess the
mountains of Esau,

^zAnd the Lowland shall possess
Philistia.

They shall possess the fields of
Ephraim

And the fields of Samaria.

Benjamin *shall possess* Gilead.

20 And the captives of this host of the
children of Israel

12 Judah's defeat and destruction should have brought sorrow to its neighbors. Instead, Judah's brother nation had laughed aloud. More than that, Edom had helped to complete Judah's destruction, taking spoil, capturing those who were trying to escape the Babylonian onslaught, and turning them over to Nebuchadnezzar's soldiers.

Nor should you have spoken proudly: A literal translation would be, "You should not have made big your mouth."

13 The day of their calamity, repeated three times in this verse, refers to the day of God's judgment upon Judah, carried out by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar.

14 stood at the crossroads: The phrasing suggests deliberate actions on Edom's part. **day of distress:** This phrase, repeated from v. 12, is a synonym of "day of their calamity" in v. 13. **delivered up those . . . who remained:** The Edomites had captured those who were attempting to escape the Babylonian army and then had turned them over to their pursuers.

15 The day of the LORD is a technical term used by the prophets to indicate the day of God's judgment (see Amos 5:18–20). Here the term likely refers to the time when God would judge **all the nations**, including Edom, that had participated in Judah's destruction.

As you have done: The nature of God's judgment always reflects the nature of the sin being judged.

16 as you drank: The reference here is to the "cup of God's wrath" that was passed from Samaria to Judah, and finally to the nations—including Edom (see Jer. 25:27, 32, 33). The Lord still viewed Jerusalem as His **holy mountain** because He intended to reestablish His presence there (see Zech. 1:16).

17 Mount Zion and "My holy mountain" (v. 16) refer to the same place: Jerusalem.

18 The references to **the house of Jacob** and **the house of Joseph** signify a unified Israel. God intends to rejoin the kingdoms of Israel and Judah as one people again. **For the LORD has spoken:** These words add a dramatic certainty to the announcement of judgment (see Jer. 49:13).

19 The South refers to the Negev, the dry region around Beersheba, in the territory of Simeon and southern Judah. The Negev bordered on Edom to the east. According to this verse, southern Judah was going to possess the land of the Edomites. **The Lowland**, or Shephelah, is the lower hills in Judah between the central hill country to the east and the coastal plain to the west. Judah and Philistia fought fiercely over this region in the early part of Israel's history. But Judah would eventually prevail over the lands contested with Philistia (see Zeph. 2:4–7). **Ephraim, Samaria**, and **Gilead** were parts of Israel during the period of the judges and most of the monarchy. Ephraim and Samaria were the heartland of the northern kingdom of Israel during the time of the divided monarchy. But at the time of Obadiah's prophecy, all three regions had passed under foreign domination and had experienced a significant influx of foreign population. In the day of the Lord of which Obadiah prophesied, these regions again would come into the possession of the Israelites. The land of Israel would be restored to its rightful inhabitants.


20 Zarephath was a Phoenician city 14 miles north of Tyre (see 1 Kin. 17:8–24). **Sepharad** was a city to which some Judeans were exiled. The restoration of Judah from exile which these verses predict was a sign to Judah and all nations that the God of Israel was not just a local God. He had not been defeated by the Babylonian god Marduk. The fact that He could allow His people to be carried into captivity in a foreign land and then bring them back to

<p> <i>Shall possess the land of the</i> <i>Canaanites</i> <i>As ^a far as Zarephath.</i> <i>The captives of Jerusalem who are in</i> <i>Sepharad</i> <i>^b Shall possess the cities of the ¹ South.</i> </p>	<p> 20 ^a 1 Kin. 17:9; Luke 4:26 ^b Jer. 32:44 ¹ Heb. <i>Negev</i> 21 ^c [James 5:20] ^d Ps. 22:28; [Dan. 2:44; 7:14; Zech. 14:9; Rev. 11:15] </p>	<p> 21 Then ^c saviors² shall come to Mount Zion To judge the mountains of Esau, And the ^d kingdom shall be the Lord's. </p>
		<p>² deliverers</p>

their own land was proof of His power and sovereignty over all the earth.

21 Saviors means “deliverers” or “those who will bring about salvation” (see Neh. 9:27). The Judeans who had been taken into captivity would come back as deliverers, and they would reign over the people of Edom. **the kingdom shall be the Lord’s:** These were

Obadiah’s last words against all human arrogance, pride, and rebellion. Edom had thought itself indestructible; but the Lord humbled that nation and restored the fallen Judah. Many people are tempted to consider themselves beyond the reach of God. But God will bring them low, just as He will lift those who humble themselves before Him. And one great day, He will establish His just rule over all.



THE BOOK OF JONAH

THIS HIGH-PROFILE BOOK has been described as a parable, an allegory, and a satire. The famous story of the “great fish” (often erroneously thought of as a whale) has led many to dismiss the book as merely a biblical “fish story.”

It is a mistake (based in part on the difficulty some readers have in coming to terms with the miraculous character of the story line) to assume that the events and actions of the book are not historical in nature. While the story line is unusual, it is presented as normal history. Further, Jesus used the story of Jonah as an analogy of His own impending death and resurrection (see Matt. 12:39–41). Jesus’ analogy depends on the recognition of two historical realities: (1) the historical experience of Jonah in the belly of the great fish, and (2) the historical experience of the repentance of the people of Nineveh based on the preaching of Jonah (see also Luke 11:29–32). Indeed, the phrase “the sign of the prophet Jonah” must have been a recurring phrase in the teaching of Christ, as it is found on more than one occasion in Matthew’s account of Christ’s ministry (see Matt. 16:4). Thus any view of the Book of Jonah that does not assume it describes historical events is obliged to explain away the clear words of Jesus to the contrary.

Author and Date The book does not specifically state who wrote it. But the tradition that it was written by Jonah as his own report of his foolish behavior and his final statement of coming to terms with the divine will is a likely possibility.

The prophet Jonah lived in the eighth century B.C., but we know very little about him apart from this book. He is mentioned in only one other passage in the Old Testament apart from the book that bears his name. Second Kings 14:25 announces the fulfillment of a prophecy of the living God that came through “Jonah the son of Amittai, the prophet who was from Gath Hepher.” This passage locates Jonah’s ministry in the northern kingdom of Israel during the reign of King Jeroboam II (792–753 B.C.). The text suggests that through Jonah’s ministry the Lord encouraged Israel and gave the nation a period of prosperity under Jeroboam. Yet we also know that during this period of political, geographical, and economic expansion, Israel forgot its past troubles, did not return to the Lord, and did not worry about Assyria’s growing power. Clearly, the historical passage presents Jonah in a positive manner. The Book of Jonah, however, presents the prophet in a negative light as it highlights his disobedience to the Lord, leading the reader to reject Jonah’s attitudes and actions.

The prophet Jonah was from Gath Hepher, a town in the territory of Zebulun (see Josh. 19:10, 13; 2 Kin. 14:25), several miles northeast of Nazareth. Nothing is known of his father Amittai. The name Jonah means “Dove.” We associate the dove with peace and purity; however, this positive meaning is not the only possible



Marble sarcophagus (c. A.D. 300) with scenes from the life of Jonah

Kim Walton, courtesy of the British Museum

association. A “dove” could also be a symbol of silliness (see Hos. 7:11), a description that sadly applies to this tragicomical prophet.

Historical Setting By the time of the ministry of Jonah, Assyria was preoccupied with the mountain tribes of Urartu, and did not continue its westward campaigns until Tiglath-Pileser III came to power in 745 B.C. Israel rejoiced at this preoccupation of Assyria, and they aggressively pursued a policy of defense by strengthening their fortified cities, building up the army, and developing international relations.

Principal Message The Book of Jonah challenges God’s people not to exalt themselves over others. The Lord, the great King, is free to bless, to be gracious, and to be patient with all the nations of the earth. More than that, He may show compassion even on the wicked. Indeed, His mercy extends even to animals (4:11).

Jonah’s view of God was too restrictive. He believed that God was the Creator of everything, but that He was compassionate only toward the elect of Israel. Jonah believed that since God had chosen Israel from among the wicked nations, He had to show mercy to Israel, even if the people were rebellious. Jonah had failed to appreciate that the Lord may be equally forbearing with other nations as He was with Israel.

The Book of Jonah affirms God’s freedom, sovereignty, and power. God is sovereign because He is the Creator of everything (1:9). His power extends over all creation (the storm, the fish, the vine, the worm). God is free and He can never be bound by human misconceptions.

The self-righteous make the grave mistake of rejoicing only in their own deliverance (2:9) and in God’s answers to prayer (4:6). They miss out by narrowing God’s grace and mercy to themselves. Like Jonah, they cannot share in God’s delight in saving the sailors and the city of Nineveh, including infants and even animals (4:11). They confess that God is Creator and King of the whole cosmos, but restrict His involvement to judgment, justice, and retribution. In this manner they do not see His acts of compassion, righteousness, and forbearance. The Lord’s final proclamation to Jonah (4:10, 11) sums up the prophetic message of the book: God is free to bestow His mercy on anyone and anywhere He wills. His concern and mercy extend to all creation.

Jonah’s story contains a strong warning to all godly people. The elect may miss the blessing of seeing God’s grace extended outside their own sphere because of their imposition of limits on God. While Jonah was praying anxiously for his personal deliverance, the sailors had already been experiencing the love of God for three days. Likewise, the people of Nineveh who repented of their sin rejoiced that the impending judgment had not come. Jonah, however, was miserable. As we laugh at him, we may need to wince at ourselves. Jonah’s silly sin is finally no laughing matter. We are condemned along with him if we share in his provincial folly.

Literary Form As already noted, the literary form of the Book of Jonah differs from that of other prophetic books. It has no prophecies. Instead, the book is largely narrative. Chapter 2 is a song of deliverance, a lovely, vibrant lyric prayer like many in the Book of Psalms.

It is best to understand the book as a prophetic parable. The events in the book are historical, but its place

among the prophets leads us to interpret it as a prophetic writing. As a prophetic book, it is unique in that the message of the book centers on the negative interaction between the Lord and His prophet. As a parable, the book draws attention to the grace of God and to the folly of Jonah. The prophet's folly encourages the godly reader to avoid Jonah's negative example and to be a messenger of God's mercy and judgment to the nations.

CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

Like Jesus, Jonah proclaims the need to repent. The book also illustrates that God is merciful and withholds His punishment when people respond to Him. Jesus taught the same.

Could that be why Jonah is the only prophet Jesus identified as a symbol of Himself? Jesus said, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah" (Matt. 12:39). And then we see how much Jonah's story is a type of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. "For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth . . . and indeed a greater than Jonah is here" (Matt. 12:40, 41).

JONAH OUTLINE

- I. The prophet's flight from his commission to go to Nineveh 1:1—2:10
 - A. The commission to go to Nineveh 1:1, 2
 - B. The flight to Tarshish 1:3
 - C. Jonah in a storm 1:4–8
 - D. Jonah's proclamation of faith in the Lord 1:9
 - E. Jonah thrown into the sea 1:10–16
 - F. Jonah in the great fish 1:17—2:1
 - G. Jonah's prayer of praise 2:2–9
 - H. Jonah's deliverance from the great fish 2:10
- II. The prophet's obedience to his commission to go to Nineveh 3:1—4:11
 - A. A new commission to go to Nineveh 3:1, 2
 - B. Jonah's proclamation in Nineveh 3:3, 4
 - C. The deliverance of Nineveh 3:5–10
 - D. Jonah's sorrow over Nineveh's deliverance 4:1–8
 - E. Jonah's debate with the Lord 4:9
 - F. The proclamation of the Lord to Jonah 4:10, 11

792 B.C.

Jeroboam II begins to reign in Israel

c. 770 B.C.

Approximate time of Jonah

c. 745 B.C.

Assyrian Empire pushes westward under Tiglath-Pileser

722 B.C.

Israel is taken captive by Assyria

612 B.C.

Nineveh falls to the Medes and Babylonians



Model of a Philistine ship—similar to what Jonah may have boarded in Joppa

Z. Radovan/www.BibleLandPictures.com

Jonah's Disobedience

Now the word of the LORD came to ^aJonah the son of Amittai, saying, ²“Arise, go to ^bNineveh, that ^cgreat city, and cry out against it; for ^dtheir wickedness has come up before Me.” ³But Jonah arose to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the LORD. He went down to ^eJoppa, and found a ship going to Tarshish; so he paid the fare, and went down into it, to go with them to ^fTarshish ^gfrom the presence of the LORD.

The Storm at Sea

⁴But ^hthe LORD ⁱsent out a great wind on the sea, and there was a mighty tempest on the sea, so that the ship was about to be broken up.

⁵Then the mariners were afraid; and every man cried out to his god, and threw the cargo that *was* in the ship into the

CHAPTER 1

1 ^a 2 Kin. 14:25;
Matt. 12:39-41;
16:4; Luke 11:29,
30, 32
2 ^b Is. 37:37 ^c Gen.
10:11, 12; 2 Kin.
19:36; Jon. 4:11;
Nah. 1:1; Zeph.
2:13 ^d Gen. 18:20;
Hos. 7:2
3 ^e Josh. 19:46;
2 Chr. 2:16; Ezra 3:7;
Acts 9:36, 43 ^f Is.
23:1 ^g Gen. 4:16;
Job 1:12; 2:7
4 ^h Ps. 107:25 ⁱ Lit.
hurled
5 ⁱ 1 Sam. 24:3 ² Lit.
from upon them
6 ^j Ps. 107:28 ^k Joel
2:14
7 ^j Josh. 7:14;
1 Sam. 14:41, 42;
Prov. 16:33
8 ^m Josh. 7:19;
1 Sam. 14:43
9 ⁿ [Neh. 9:6]; Ps.
146:6; Acts 17:24

sea, to lighten ²the load. But Jonah had gone down ⁱinto the lowest parts of the ship, had lain down, and was fast asleep.

⁶So the captain came to him, and said to him, “What do you mean, sleeper? Arise, ^jcall on your God; ^kperhaps your God will consider us, so that we may not perish.”

⁷And they said to one another, “Come, let us ^lcast lots, that we may know for whose cause this trouble *has come* upon us.” So they cast lots, and the lot fell on Jonah. ⁸Then they said to him, ^m“Please tell us! For whose cause *is* this trouble upon us? What is your occupation? And where do you come from? What is your country? And of what people are you?”

⁹So he said to them, “*I am a Hebrew; and I fear ³the LORD, the God of heaven, ⁿwho made the sea and the dry land.*”

³ Heb. YHWH

1:1 the word of the LORD came: This phrase affirms the divine source of the message to Jonah (see also 1 Kin. 17:8; Jer. 1:4; Hos. 1:1; Joel 1:1; Mic. 1:1; Zeph. 1:1; Hag. 1:3). The name **Jonah** means “dove.”

1:2 Nineveh, located on the Tigris River (see Gen. 10:11, 12), was the capital of ancient Assyria (see 2 Kin. 19:36) for about a century (Zeph. 2:13–15; see also the Book of Nahum). Nineveh was over five hundred miles from Gath Hepher, Jonah’s home near Nazareth in Israel. **Their wickedness** refers to Nineveh’s pride, greed, brutality, and adultery (see 3:8; Nah. 2:11, 12; 3:1–4). **has come up before Me:** This figurative language pictures evil swelling up to confront the Lord (see Gen. 18:21; compare Lam. 1:22).

1:3 flee to Tarshish: The location of this port city is uncertain, but it could be Tartessus on the southeast coast of Spain. The city represents the most distant place known to the Israelites. **Joppa,** a non-Israelite port town, was west of Jerusalem and about 50 miles southwest of Jonah’s hometown of Gath Hepher.

1:4, 5 But the LORD sent out a great wind: Throughout the Book of Jonah, the Lord shows Himself sovereign over every aspect of creation. In this case, the storm at sea was so ferocious that even

the experienced **mariners were afraid**. The Phoenicians were the primary mariners of the ancient Middle East, so this was probably a Phoenician ship. Jonah was so sure he had averted God’s will that he **was fast asleep** in the ship’s hold.

1:6 your God: The ship’s captain, a pagan, urged Jonah to pray to whatever god he might believe in. Of course, Jonah’s “god” was the true God, who had caused the storm in the first place (v. 4).

1:7 cast lots: The sailors turned to practices common among them in an attempt to find the will of the gods. **the lot fell on Jonah:** Jonah was singled out as the guilty party (see Josh. 7:12–18; 1 Sam. 14:40–42).

1:8 The sailors fired a series of questions at Jonah, seeking to discern the reason for the storm. In regard to Jonah’s **occupation**, the sailors may have wanted to know the prophet’s reason for being on board the ship.

1:9 I am a Hebrew: With these words, Jonah identified himself with the people of the Lord’s covenant (see Gen. 14:13). **I fear the LORD:** *Fear* here indicates an ongoing activity of awe before the Lord, of piety in His presence, of obedience to His word, and of sav-

Jonah: A Reluctant Missionary

Sometimes the prophets of the Lord tried to challenge His wisdom in calling them for divine service (see Moses in Ex. 4; Jeremiah in Jer. 1). However, Jonah is the only case in the record of Scripture where a true prophet of the Lord (see 2 Kin. 14:25) tried hard to thwart the will of God by fleeing from the task that God had given him (1:3). In contrast to Elijah’s obedience to the Lord (see 1 Kin. 17:8–10), Jonah tried to go as far as he could in the opposite direction from where God had commanded him. Jonah hoped that Nineveh would get just what it deserved. He was afraid that if he announced judgment the people of Nineveh might respond in a manner that would prompt God to change His mind (4:2). So, in an attempt to restrain God from being merciful to his national enemies, Jonah ran away.

There is something humorous in this account. How could a prophet of God hide from the Creator of the universe? The location of Tarshish may have been the southeast coast of Spain. In any case it represents the farthest place known to the people of ancient Israel. It is similar to going “to the ends of the earth.”

Yet there is also something frightening here: Were a prophet of God directly to disobey the Sovereign God, he might place not only himself, but others connected with him, in dire jeopardy. Sadly, Jonah was not on a mission of mercy, even if he had achieved his goal. He was, in a way, an antimissionary; one who resisted God’s call to go to the nations. The repetition of the words “from the presence of the LORD” emphasizes Jonah’s attempt to remove himself as far as possible from his service to the Lord. When we remember that the people of Israel were not a maritime people, but rather had a great fear of the sea (see Ps. 93), we are all the more amazed at Jonah’s risky action. Jonah’s natural aversion to the ocean was overcome by his greater distaste for the thought that Nineveh might escape God’s threatened doom.

Thankfully, God did not allow Jonah to succeed, so there is something reassuring here as well. God accomplished His work despite the resistance of His reluctant worker.



Jonah Thrown into the Sea

¹⁰ Then the men were exceedingly afraid, and said to him, “Why have you done this?” For the men knew that he fled from the presence of the LORD, because he had told them. ¹¹ Then they said to him, “What shall we do to you that the sea may be calm for us?”—for the sea was growing more tempestuous.

¹² And he said to them, ^a“Pick me up and ⁴throw me into the sea; then the sea will become calm for you. For I know that this great tempest *is* because of me.”

¹³ Nevertheless the men rowed hard to return to land, ^bbut they could not, for the sea continued to grow more tempestuous against them. ¹⁴ Therefore they cried out to the LORD and said, “We pray, O LORD, please do not let us perish for this man’s life, and ^qdo not charge us with innocent blood; for You, O LORD, ^rhave done as it pleased You.” ¹⁵ So they picked up Jonah and threw him into the sea, ^sand the sea ceased from its raging. ¹⁶ Then the men ^tfeared the LORD exceedingly, and offered a sacrifice to the LORD and took vows.

¹² ^o John 11:50
⁴ Lit. hurl
¹³ ^p [Prov. 21:30]
¹⁴ ^q Deut. 21:8 ^r Ps. 115:3; [Dan. 4:35]
¹⁵ ^s [Ps. 89:9; 107:29]; Luke 8:24
¹⁶ ^t Mark 4:41; Acts 5:11

¹⁷ ^u [Matt. 12:40; Luke 11:30]

CHAPTER 2

² ^o 1 Sam. 30:6; Ps. 120:1; Lam. 3:55
^b Ps. 65:2
³ ^c Ps. 88:6 ^d Ps. 42:7
⁴ ^e Ps. 31:22; Jer. 7:15 ^f 1 Kin. 8:38;
 2 Chr. 6:38; Ps. 5:7

Jonah’s Prayer and Deliverance

¹⁷ Now the LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah. And ^uJonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

2 Then Jonah prayed to the LORD his God from the fish’s belly. ² And he said:

“^a I cried out to the LORD because of my affliction,
^b And He answered me.

“Out of the belly of Sheol I cried,
 And You heard my voice.

³ ^c For You cast me into the deep,
 Into the heart of the seas,
 And the floods surrounded me;
^d All Your billows and Your waves passed over me.
⁴ ^e Then I said, ‘I have been cast out of Your sight;
 Yet I will look again ^ftoward Your holy temple.’

ing faith (see Gen. 22:12; Ex. 20:20; Prov. 1:7). Yet Jonah’s actions contradicted his words. **God of heaven:** The Lord is not merely a local deity worshiped by an obscure people; He is the Supreme Ruler over all people and all creation (see 2 Chr. 36:23; Ezra 1:2; Neh. 1:4, 5; compare also Gen. 24:3, 7; Deut. 10:14). Jonah may have intended to distinguish God from Baal, the Canaanite “god of the sky” whom so many Israelites worshiped (see 1 Kin. 18:20–29; 2 Kin. 21:3; 2 Chr. 17:3). **who made the sea and the dry land:** In the midst of the storm, Jonah proclaimed that his God is Lord over the sea (see Ex. 15:1–8; Ps. 89:9; 93:3, 4; 95:5).

1:10 exceedingly afraid: This is the same term for *fear* that Jonah used in his statement of piety (v. 9). But here the word means to be in terror; it refers to overwhelming dread (v. 16). God, the Creator of the universe, was after Jonah. And because God was after Jonah, He was after the sailors as well. They had every right to be afraid (see Gen. 12:18; Judg. 15:11).

1:12 throw me into the sea: Jonah knew that the only way for the storm to abate was for the sailors to toss him overboard. Jonah was ready to die (see 4:3, 8; 1 Kin. 19:4; Job 3:1; 7:16). His words, **because of me**, are an admission of guilt and show a sense of resignation.

1:14 they cried out to the LORD: Ironically, the pagan sailors prayed to the Lord on behalf of the Lord’s rebellious prophet. Jonah needed God’s grace as much as Nineveh did. **as it pleased You:** The narrator skillfully uses the sailors’ words to express one of the book’s themes: the Lord is free to act as He wills.

1:15 The sailors did as Jonah had said (v. 12), but only when they saw there was no other option (vv. 13, 14). With a sense of permission from the God of heaven and Creator of the seas (v. 9), the sailors **threw Jonah into the sea**.

1:16 Then the men feared the LORD exceedingly: In the Hebrew text, the words of this part of v. 16 are precisely the same as in v. 10, with one exception: the object of the sailors’ fear. In v. 10 these words described the sailors’ overwhelming dread of the raging sea; in this verse they *feared the LORD*, indicating piety and believing faith. The sailors had the same reverential awe of God that Jonah had claimed to have (v. 9). In spite of Jonah’s failure, the sailors became converts (see Ps. 103:11, 13, 17). **offered a sacrifice:** The text does not say where this happened, but it may have been after the ship reached land. The important point is that their sacrifice was made to the God of Israel.

1:17 the LORD had prepared a great fish: God sent the fish—not

a whale, as is commonly thought—to rescue Jonah from drowning, not to punish him (ch. 2). **Three days and three nights** may refer to one full day and portions of two more (see 3:3; Gen. 30:36; Ex. 3:18; 1 Sam. 30:12; Esth. 4:16; Luke 2:46; 24:21). Jesus Christ said His death and resurrection were foreshadowed by Jonah’s experience (see Matt. 12:39, 40; 16:4; Luke 11:29; 1 Cor. 15:4).

2:1 Jonah prayed to the LORD his God: In his psalm (vv. 2–9), Jonah acknowledges God’s help and thanks him for it. The phrase *the LORD his God* shows that Jonah, even though he was disobedient, was a true believer in God.

2:2 I cried . . . I cried: These terms come from two different verbs. The first is a more general term meaning “to call aloud,” with a wide range of usage in the Bible. The second is a term that means a “cry for help,” particularly as a scream to God (see Ps. 5:2; 18:6, 41; 22:24; 28:1; 30:2; 31:22; 88:13; 119:146). Jonah was terrified. **Out of the belly of Sheol:** When the sailors threw Jonah into the sea, he seemed to be “as good as dead.” Thus for Jonah, the sea became like Sheol, the place of death (see Gen. 37:35; Ps. 16:10; 88:4, 5; Prov. 9:18; Is. 28:15).

2:3 Jonah’s use of the pronouns **You** and **Your** in this verse are not accusations, but acknowledgments of the Lord’s sovereign control of his life (see Ps. 88:6–18).

2:4 I will look again toward Your holy temple: The man who had run from God’s presence (1:3) was alone, yet he clung to the

prepared

(Heb. *manah*) (1:17; 4:6–8; Ps. 147:4) Strong’s #4487

This Hebrew verb basically means “to count” or “to assign.” The psalmist uses this verb to praise God for knowing the number of stars and naming each one (see Ps. 147:4). In the Book of Jonah, it signifies “to appoint” or “to ordain,” and describes God’s intervention in natural events to bring about His will. By *preparing* the fish, the plant, and the worm, God made sure that Jonah’s mission was not left to chance. God exercised sovereignty not only over the plant and animal world, but also over Jonah’s life, using animals as small as a worm to teach Jonah about His great mercy (4:6–8).



Nineveh

No one knows the precise age of Nineveh, but the city is mentioned in Babylonian records that extend back to the twenty-first century B.C. Nineveh was also mentioned in the records of Hammurabi, who lived between 1792 and 1750 B.C. From 1100 B.C., Nineveh was a royal residence. During the reign of Sargon II (722–705 B.C.), it served as the capital of Assyria. Sennacherib (705–681 B.C.) made it the chief city of his empire. It had massive walls and an aqueduct that brought water from the mountains 35 miles away.

Nineveh was destroyed in August 612 B.C. It fell after a two-month siege carried out by an alliance among Medes, Babylonians, and Scythians. The attackers destroyed Nineveh by releasing the Khoser River into the city, where it dissolved the buildings' sun-dried brick. This was a remarkable fulfillment of Nahum's prophecy (Nah. 2:6).



Stone relief of Nineveh shows an aqueduct on the right hand side bringing water to the city

A stone relief from the palace of Ashurbanipal at Nineveh/Werner Forman Archive/The Bridgeman Art Library

- 5 The ^gwaters surrounded me, *even* to my soul;
The deep closed around me;
Weeds were wrapped around my head.
- 6 I went down to the ¹moorings of the mountains;
The earth with its bars *closed* behind me forever;
Yet You have brought up my ^hlife from the pit,
O LORD, my God.
- 7 “When my soul fainted within me,
I remembered the LORD;
ⁱAnd my prayer went *up* to You,
Into Your holy temple.

5 ^g Ps. 69:1; Lam. 3:54

6 ^h Job 33:28; [Ps. 16:10; Is. 38:17]

¹ foundations or bases

7 ¹ 2 Chr. 30:27; Ps. 18:6

- 8 “Those who regard ^jworthless idols
Forsake their own ²Mercy.
- 9 But I will ^ksacrifice to You
With the voice of thanksgiving;
I will pay what I have ^lvowed.
^mSalvation is of the ⁿLORD.”

¹⁰So the LORD spoke to the fish, and it vomited Jonah onto dry *land*.

Jonah Preaches at Nineveh

3 Now the word of the LORD came to Jonah the second time, saying,
²“Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and preach to it the message that I tell you.” ³So Jonah arose and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly great

8 ² Kin. 17:15; Ps. 31:6; Jer. 10:8 ² Or Lovingkindness
9 ^k Ps. 50:14, 23; Jer. 33:11; Hos. 14:2
^l Job 22:27; [Eccl. 5:4, 5] ^m Ps. 3:8; [Is. 45:17] ⁿ [Jer. 3:23]

hope that God would not abandon him. The temple, the sanctuary in Jerusalem (see v. 7; Deut. 12:5–7; Ps. 48; 79:1; 132; Heb. 9:24), was the symbol of God's presence.

2:5 The deep: This is the same term used in Gen. 1:2 to describe the mysterious and terrifying sea. In the Bible, the sea is described as a part of God's creation (see Gen. 1:10) that brings Him joy (see Ps. 104:24–26), but it also appears as a symbol for hostile forces (see Ps. 74:12–15; Is. 27:1) which the Lord nevertheless holds in His firm control (see Ps. 93).

2:6 Jonah pictures himself so deep in the sea that it is as if he had found **the moorings of the mountains**. **pit:** This term, along with *Sheol* (v. 2), is used to describe the realm of the dead (see Job 33:24; Ps. 30:9; 49:9).

2:7 I remembered: Jonah reaffirms his faith in the Lord and renews his commitment to Him (see Ps. 22:27; 63:6; 106:7).

2:8 worthless idols: This phrase (also found in Ps. 31:6) condemns every alternative to God. *Idols* here means “vapor,” that which passes away quickly. These vaporous gods (see Ps. 86:8–10; Jer. 10:15; 51:18) were without value. **Mercy** (loyal love), the term that so often describes God's faithfulness to His covenant and to His people (see Ps. 13:5; 59:10, 17; 89:1–3) is used as a name for the Lord (4:2).

2:9 I will sacrifice to You with the voice of thanksgiving: This vow of praise is common in the Psalms (see Ps. 13:6; 142:7). **I will pay**

what I have vowed: Jonah declares that he will keep his promise, a pledge both to sacrifice and to acknowledge God's help (see Job 22:27; Ps. 22:25; 50:14; 66:13; 116:14, 17; see also Rom. 6:13, 19; 12:1; 1 Pet. 2:5). **Salvation:** It is the Lord who delivers His people. God acts on behalf of His creation and the redeemed community to insure a relationship with them (see Ex. 15:2, 17, 18; Ps. 88:1; 89:26; 140:7; Is. 12:2). Chapters 1 and 2 both end with vows of sacrifice and thanksgiving.

2:10 the Lord spoke to the fish: The focus in the story of Jonah is on the Lord's sovereign control over creation to bring about His purpose.

3:1, 2 Jonah's new commission was essentially the same as the one he had received in 1:1, 2.

3:3 In contrast to 1:3, Jonah obeyed the command of the Lord the second time and made the journey to Nineveh. **a three-day journey in extent:** The city wall of Nineveh had a circumference of about eight miles, indicating that Nineveh was an exceedingly large city for the times. But the reference to “three days” likely refers to the larger administrative district of Nineveh, made up of several cities, with a circumference of about 55 miles.

city, ¹a three-day journey *in extent*. ⁴And Jonah began to enter the city on the first day's walk. Then ^ahe cried out and said, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!"

The People of Nineveh Believe

⁵So the ^bpeople of Nineveh believed God, proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest to the least of them. ⁶Then word came to the king of Nineveh; and he arose from his throne and laid aside his robe, covered *himself* with sackcloth ^cand sat in ashes. ^{7d}And he caused *it* to be proclaimed and published throughout Nineveh by the decree of the king and his ²nobles, saying,

Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything; do not let them

CHAPTER 3

³ ¹ Exact meaning unknown

⁴ ^e [Deut. 18:22]

⁵ ^b [Matt. 12:41; Luke 11:32]

⁶ ^c Job 2:8

⁷ ^d 2 Chr. 20:3; Dan.

3:29; Joel 2:15 ² Lit.

great ones

⁸ ^e Is. 58:6 ^f Is. 59:6

⁹ ^g 2 Sam. 12:22;

Joel 2:14; Amos 5:15

¹⁰ ^h Ex. 32:14; Jer.

18:8; Amos 7:3, 6

eat, or drink water. ⁸But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily to God; yes, ^elet every one turn from his evil way and from ^fthe violence that is in his hands.

^{9g}Who can tell *if* God will turn and relent, and turn away from His fierce anger, so that we may not perish?

^{10h}Then God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God relented from the disaster that He had said He would bring upon them, and He did not do it.

Jonah's Anger and God's Kindness

4 But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he became angry. ²So he prayed to the LORD, and said, "Ah, LORD, was not this what I said when I was still in my

3:4 Jonah proclaimed that there were only **forty days** before the destruction of Nineveh. Both the announcement and the specified delay show God's mercy. It was this mercy that bothered Jonah (4:1–3).

3:5 **believed God:** The term used for God here is the general term for deity. In contrast, the sailors in ch. 1 proclaimed faith in the Lord, using the personal, covenant name for God (1:16). The fact that the writer does not use the personal name for God here may suggest that the Ninevites had a short-lived or imperfect understanding of God's message. History bears this out: We have no historical record of a lasting period of belief in Nineveh. Eventually the city was destroyed, in 612 B.C.

3:5, 6 **fast ... sackcloth ... ashes:** These are expressions of mourning and lamentation (see 2 Kin. 19:1; 2 Chr. 20:3; Is. 58:5–9; Jer. 36:6–9; Joel 1:13, 14; 2:12–18).

3:7 **proclaimed and published:** The king's edict reached all of Nineveh.

3:9 **God will turn and relent:** The reversal of the threat to destroy Nineveh depended solely on the grace and mercy of the Lord. At times, the announced judgment of God is *not* His real intent (see 4:2; Jer. 18:7, 8; Amos 7:3). Such announcements usually include offers of mercy and forgiveness (see Zeph. 2:1–3).

3:10 **God relented:** The Ninevites' repentance moved the Lord to extend grace and mercy to them.

4:1 **Jonah ... became angry:** In contrast to God, Jonah had no compassion on the people of Nineveh. **displeased:** Jonah's irritation belied the good news that the city would be spared. Jonah himself had just been spared God's fair judgment, but he was unable to appreciate the parallel.

4:2 **I know:** Jonah himself had experienced the excellencies of

The Book of Jonah

Nineveh and Tarshish represented opposite ends of the Mediterranean commercial sphere in ancient times. The story of Jonah extends to the boundaries of OT geographic knowledge and provides a rare glimpse of seafaring life in the Iron Age. Inscriptions and pottery from Spain demonstrate that Phoenician trade linked the far distant ends of the Mediterranean, perhaps as early as the twelfth century B.C.



country? Therefore I ^afled previously to Tarshish; for I know that You *are* a ^bgracious and merciful God, slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness, One who relents from doing harm. ^{3c}Therefore now, O LORD, please take my life from me, for ^d*it is better for me to die than to live!*"

⁴Then the LORD said, "*Is it right for you to be angry?*"

⁵So Jonah went out of the city and sat on the east side of the city. There he made himself a shelter and sat under it in the shade, till he might see what would become of the city. ⁶And the LORD God prepared a ¹plant and made it come up over Jonah, that it might be shade for his head to deliver him from his misery. So Jonah ²was very grateful for the plant. ⁷But as morning dawned the next day God pre-

CHAPTER 4

2 ^a Jon. 1:3 ^b Ex. 34:6; Num. 14:18; Ps. 86:5, 15; Joel 2:13
3 ^c 1 Kin. 19:4; Job 6:8, 9 ^d Jon. 4:8
6 ¹ Heb. *kikayon*, exact identity unknown ² Lit. *rejoiced with great joy*

8 ^e Jon. 4:3
10 ³ Lit. *was a son of a night*
11 ^f Jon. 1:2; 3:2, 3
9 Deut. 1:39; Is. 7:16

pared a worm, and it *so* damaged the plant that it withered. ⁸And it happened, when the sun arose, that God prepared a vehement east wind; and the sun beat on Jonah's head, so that he grew faint. Then he wished death for himself, and said, ^e"*It is better for me to die than to live.*"

⁹Then God said to Jonah, "*Is it right for you to be angry about the plant?*"

And he said, "*It is right for me to be angry, even to death!*"

¹⁰But the LORD said, "You have had pity on the plant for which you have not labored, nor made it grow, which ³came up in a night and perished in a night. ¹¹And should I not pity Nineveh, ^fthat great city, in which are more than one hundred and twenty thousand persons ^gwho cannot discern between their right hand and their left—and much livestock?"

God. **Gracious and merciful** may be rephrased as "marvelously gracious." **Lovingkindness** can also mean "loyal love." This is the same word that Jonah had used in his praise of God in 2:8. **One who relents from doing harm:** In this recital of God's blessed character, Jonah built on the revelation of the Lord to Moses (see Ex. 34:6, 7).

4:3, 4 please take my life: Contrast Jonah and Elijah: Jonah's death wish came from disgust at the people's repentance; Elijah's came from a yearning for the people's repentance (see 1 Kin. 19:4). Only a few days before Jonah had screamed for God to keep him alive.

4:5 till he might see what would become of the city: In his continuing stubbornness and lack of compassion, Jonah held out hope that God would judge Nineveh. This was God's chief complaint against him (see Ps. 58).

4:6 the LORD God prepared: The same verb was used in 1:17 to describe the Lord's preparation of the great fish. The term is also used in v. 7 regarding the worm and in v. 8 regarding the east wind. The repeated use of *prepared* is a subtle reference to the sovereignty

of God. **a plant:** The nature of this plant is unknown. Some have speculated that it was a castor-oil tree or a bottle-gourd vine. It may have been a species that grew especially fast. **to deliver him:** The Lord had rescued Jonah from drowning (1:17); now He wished to relieve His prophet from the misery of the sun. The reach of God's mercy to the undeserving is a theme that continued to elude Jonah even as he experienced it.

4:7 God prepared a worm: The Book of Jonah depicts the Lord as both sovereign and free to act in creation. God placed the worm in the plant to serve as His agent in Jonah's life.

4:8 vehement east wind: The scorching sirocco wind that blows in from the desert draws moisture from plants, causing them to wither (see Is. 40:7, 8).

4:9 The word translated **is it right** comes from the verb meaning "to be good," "to do well," or "to be pleasing." Here, as in Gen. 4:4, the expression has to do with ethical behavior (see also Lev. 5:4; Ps. 36:3; Is. 1:17; Jer. 4:22; 13:23). Jonah's anger (v. 1) did not arise from a desire for justice but from his own selfishness. He continued to justify his rebellious attitude. And again, God was merciful.

4:10 Pity describes an expression of deeply felt compassion (see Ps. 72:13; Ezek. 20:17; Joel 2:13, 14). However, Jonah pitied himself more than the plant.


4:11 pity: The same word used to describe Jonah's feeling toward the plant in v. 10 is used of God's feeling toward the people of Nineveh. People are of more value than animals, and animals of more value than plants, but the Lord has a concern that extends to all of His creation. The Lord's pity comes from His character (v. 2; compare Joel 2:13, 14). **livestock:** If Jonah could take pity on a plant, which is even less important than an animal, it only made sense that God would take pity on human beings, who are made in God's image. The Book of Jonah ends on this note of contrast between Jonah's ungracious heart and the kind heart of the Lord.

slow to anger

(Heb. *'arek; 'aph*) (4:2; Num. 14:18; Prov. 14:29) Strong's #750; 639

The idiom for *anger* in the OT translated literally is "the nose burns" or "the nose becomes hot" (see Gen. 30:2; Ex. 4:14). The Hebrew idiom for "patient" or "slow to anger" is literally "long of nose" (Ps. 86:15; 103:8). The nose is symbolic of anger because an angry person breathes heavily or noisily. The Hebrew idiom for *slow to anger* is frequently applied to God to describe His great mercy and kindness (Ps. 145:8; Joel 2:13).

THE BOOK OF MICAH



OLD TESTAMENT PROPHETS are often thought of as providing not much more than “doom and gloom” predictions, but the Book of Micah presents an impassioned and artistic interplay between oracles of impending judgment and promises of future blessing on Israel and Judah. The peoples of both nations had broken covenant with their Lord. Through His messenger Micah, the Lord confronted His people, but He also promised to bring future blessing through the One who would be coming. This One would be the true Shepherd of God’s flock.

Author and Date Little is known about the prophet Micah beyond his name, his place of origin, and the personal tone of his book. Micah was born in the rural village of Moresheth Gath in the lowlands of Judah, near the region of Philistia, setting him apart from his more illustrious contemporary Isaiah, who was from Jerusalem.

The Book of Micah has numerous points of similarity with the much longer Book of Isaiah. In fact, virtually the same passage is found in both books (compare 4:1–3 with Is. 2:2–4). Some attribute this unusual phenomenon to one prophet borrowing from the other, but it is difficult to argue for the priority of either Micah or Isaiah from the texts. More likely both prophets made use of the same source, perhaps a psalm of confidence.

It is often asserted that the Book of Micah was written by his disciples and followers many years after his ministry. However, the tone of Micah’s prophecies against Jerusalem indicates that they had not yet come to pass. It appears that Micah prophesied that the Assyrians would destroy Jerusalem in the same way they had already destroyed the city of Samaria (compare 1:6 with 3:12). While the Assyrians under Sennacherib did lay siege against Jerusalem in the campaign of 701 B.C., they did not finally destroy the city. Jerusalem was not destroyed until over a century later by the Babylonians (586 B.C.). It is almost inconceivable that disciples of Micah would collect, record, and promote his prophecies long after the fact if those prophecies had not come to pass as anticipated. It is far more likely that the prophecies of Micah were compiled by the prophet as an anthology of his own lengthy preaching career.

Historical Setting The career of Micah extended over the last third of the eighth century B.C., during the reigns of Jotham (752–736 B.C.), Ahaz (736–720 B.C.), and Hezekiah (729–699 B.C.). The Book of Micah centers on the threat of the Assyrian invasions that occurred throughout this period, beginning around 730 B.C. against Israel and culminating in 701 B.C. against Judah. Much of Micah’s preaching warned Judah about an impending national disaster. Yet the religious leaders of Jerusalem were falsely confident that no evil would come to them because of the inviolable presence of the holy temple in their midst. Micah sternly confronted their arrogance and their mistaken notions of God: not even the temple on Mount Zion would be spared the onslaught of God’s wrath (3:12).

The lengthy delay in Micah’s prophecies against Jerusalem may be attributed to several causes. First, God may have decided to spare the city, even though it was He who had condemned it (see Jer. 26:16–19; compare God’s judgment on Nineveh in the Book of Jonah). The significant delay in the judgment against Jerusalem may be attributed to the mercy of the Lord, much as the delay of the judgment of God against Nineveh is attributed

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to His mercy by the prophet Jonah (see Jon. 4:1–3). Second, although the judgment of Jerusalem was postponed, it was finally realized in the destruction of the city by the Babylonians in 586 B.C.

Themes The interplay of texts of wrath and mercy in the Book of Micah mirrors the character of God, for even in His wrath He remembers mercy. In the darkest days of impending judgment on the nations of Israel and Judah, there was always the possibility of a remnant being spared. Although the Lord was determined to maintain His holiness, He was equally intent on fulfilling His loving promises to Abraham (see Gen. 12; 15; 22). The Lord would balance His judgment with mercy. Consequently Micah also balances his oracles of judgment with oracles of promise.

In doing so, Micah points back to the covenant and also forward to the coming One. The book begins with the language of a court. Micah calls the peoples of earth to come to hear the Lord's case against Israel, for the nation had broken the covenant (3:1; 6:1–3). The language recalls the language of the covenant or contract the Lord established with His people. The Lord was judging His people according to the terms of the covenant. But in the middle of the oracles of judgment, Micah reveals the Lord's wonderful promises of a glorious future. There would be a time when the coming King would gather His people together (2:12, 13), when He would establish peace (4:3), and when He would bring justice to the earth (4:2, 3). Remarkably, Micah prophesies that this coming Messiah would be born in Bethlehem (5:2). The fulfillment of this prophecy in Jesus' birth in Bethlehem gives us confidence that the prophecies of Jesus' glorious future will also be fulfilled (see Matt. 2:1).

CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

Unlike the Book of Jonah, which took the burial and resurrection of Jesus for Israel to make sense out of what had occurred, Micah's reference to the Messiah was quite explicit. From the time he verbalized God's rebuke at the way the Jews were treating the poor until the time a poor carpenter and his fiancée arrived in Bethlehem, devout Jews knew that King David's birthplace was where the Messiah would also be born.

Micah wrote the following about the town of Bethlehem seven hundred years before Jesus was born: "Though you are little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall come forth to Me the One to be Ruler in Israel, whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting" (5:2). And of that Ruler, he prophesied, "He will teach us His ways, and we shall walk in His paths. . . . Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore" (4:2, 3).



The Church of the Nativity, built on the traditional location of the birth of Christ. Micah prophesied that the Messiah would come from Bethlehem (Mic. 5:2).

MICAHA OUTLINE

- I. The first cycle of oracles 1:1—2:13
 - A. The first set of oracles of judgment 1:1—2:11
 - B. The first promise of blessing: the Lord will restore His remnant 2:12, 13
- II. The second cycle of oracles 3:1—5:15
 - A. The second set of oracles of judgment 3:1—12
 - B. The second set of promises of blessing 4:1—5:15
- III. The third cycle of oracles 6:1—7:20
 - A. The third set of oracles of judgment 6:1—7:7
 - B. The third set of promises of blessing 7:8—20

752 B.C.
Jotham's reign in Judah begins

c. 740–710 B.C.
Approximate years of Micah's ministry

736 B.C.
Ahaz begins to reign in Judah

729 B.C.
Hezekiah's reign begins in Judah

722 B.C.
Assyria takes Israel captive

701 B.C.
Assyria lays siege against Jerusalem



Aerial view of Moresheth Gath, Micah's hometown (Mic. 1:1, 14)

Todd Bolen/www.BiblePlaces.com

The word of the LORD that came to ^aMicah of Moresheth in the days of ^bJotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, which he saw concerning Samaria and Jerusalem.

The Coming Judgment on Israel

- ² Hear, all you peoples!
Listen, O earth, and all that is in it!
Let the Lord God be a witness
against you,
The Lord from ^cHis holy temple.
- ³ For behold, the LORD is coming out of
His place;
He will come down
And tread on the high places of the
earth.
- ⁴ ^dThe mountains will melt under Him,
And the valleys will split
Like wax before the fire,
Like waters poured down a steep
place.
- ⁵ All this is for the transgression of
Jacob
And for the sins of the house of
Israel.
What is the transgression of Jacob?
Is it not Samaria?
And what are the ^ehigh places of
Judah?
Are they not Jerusalem?
- ⁶ “Therefore I will make Samaria ^fa
heap of ruins in the field,

CHAPTER 1

1 ^a [2 Pet. 1:21]; Jer. 26:18 ^b 2 Kin. 15:5, 7, 32-38; 2 Chr. 27:1-9; Is. 1:1; Hos. 1:1
2 ^c [Ps. 11:4]
4 ^d Amos 9:5
5 ^e Deut. 32:13; 33:29; Amos 4:13
6 ^f 2 Kin. 19:25; Mic. 3:12

⁹ Ezek. 13:14
7 ^h Hos. 2:5 / Deut. 23:18; Is. 23:17
8 / Ps. 102:6
9 ^k 2 Kin. 18:13; Is. 8:7, 8
10 ^j 2 Sam. 1:20
1 ⁱ Lit. *House of dust*
11 ² Lit. *Beautiful*
3 Lit. *Going out*

Places for planting a vineyard;
I will pour down her stones into the
valley,
And I will ^guncover her foundations.
7 All her carved images shall be beaten
to pieces,
And all her ^hpay as a harlot shall be
burned with the fire;
All her idols I will lay desolate,
For she gathered *it* from the pay of a
harlot,
And they shall return to the ⁱpay of
a harlot.”

Mourning for Israel and Judah

- ⁸ Therefore I will wail and howl,
I will go stripped and naked;
^jI will make a wailing like the jackals
And a mourning like the ostriches,
- ⁹ For her wounds *are* incurable.
For ^kit has come to Judah;
It has come to the gate of My
people—
To Jerusalem.
- ¹⁰ ^lTell *it* not in Gath,
Weep not at all;
In ¹Beth Aphrah
Roll yourself in the dust.
- ¹¹ Pass by in naked shame, you
inhabitant of ²Shaphir;
The inhabitant of ³Zaanan does not
go out.
Beth Ezel mourns;
Its place to stand is taken away from
you.

1:1 Micah means “Who Is Like the Lord?” The question presents a major biblical theme, the idea that God is incomparable (see 7:18; Deut. 4:32-40; Ps. 113:4-6). Micah’s ministry centered on the Assyrian threat to **Samaria**, the capital of Israel that was destroyed in 722 B.C., and **Jerusalem**, the capital of Judah.

1:2 all you peoples: All the earth was to know that God was witnessing **against** His people. This announcement of judgment is based on the people’s breach of covenant. The faithlessness of the people provoked **the Lord God** to enter into a judicial dispute with them.

1:3 the Lord is coming: This is the language of epiphany, the dramatic coming of God to earth, here in a solemn procession of judgment. In other texts the language of epiphany is used to describe God’s dramatic acts of deliverance (see Ps. 18:7-19). The expression **high places** is ironic. Jerusalem and Samaria were the “high places,” or elevated capitals, of Judah and Israel; but “high places” were also sites of idolatrous worship.

1:5 Jacob is used to refer to the northern kingdom Israel, whose **transgression** was centered in its capital, Samaria. Judah’s sins were centered in its capital, Jerusalem. In this verse, the intent of the term **high places** (v. 3) is made plain. Jerusalem, which was once “beautiful in elevation” (see Ps. 48:2), was nothing more than another platform of pagan worship, like the “high places” of the Canaanites.

1:6 a heap of ruins: God’s judicial decision was to destroy Samaria so thoroughly that it would be a place fit only for vineyards among the rubble.

1:7 Idolatry is often described in the Hebrew Bible as spiritual adultery (see Jer. 3:1; Hos. 4:15). Israel is pictured as a wife who is unfaithful to her husband (see Jer. 2:20). This is not just a metaphor,

however; the worship system of Canaan was sexual in nature. The word **idols** here has the sense of “disgusting images,” probably referring to the explicit sexual nature of these idols. But there is comic justice at the end of the verse. The pagan symbols of Israel’s worship would be reused by the nation’s conquerors (Assyria) in their own debased temples.

1:8 I will wail . . . I will go stripped: Micah’s immediate response to God’s message was an overwhelming sense of dread (7:1). **naked:** Micah’s words describe mourning rites in which outer garments were laid aside in deep humility. The mourning person thought no longer about himself but only about the calamity that had overcome his senses.

1:9 her wounds: At first the reference is to the wounds of Israel, the northern kingdom. But the disease spread **to Judah**. **My people:** The pronoun *My* refers to both the prophet and His Lord. The distress of the prophet is a mirror of the distress of God.

1:10 in Gath: The reference here is to the lament of David in his mourning over the death of Saul and Jonathan (see 2 Sam. 1:20). Just as it was unseemly then to have the bad news of God’s people profaned in a foreign city, so it would be in the present circumstance. The Hebrew word translated **tell** in this verse sounds like the Hebrew place name Gath. **Beth Aphrah** means “House of Dust”; appropriately, the inhabitants would **roll** themselves **in the dust**, an act of extreme mourning.

1:11 The name **Shaphir** means “Beautiful.” Ironically, its inhabitants would be shamed by their nakedness. **Zaanah:** This name speaks of “sheep” who “go out on their own.” However, this would no longer be the case for the citizens of Zaanah, who would no longer go out because of their fear.

- 12 For the inhabitant of ⁴Maroth ⁵pined for good,
But ^mdisaster came down from the LORD
To the gate of Jerusalem.
- 13 O inhabitant of ⁿLachish,
Harness the chariot to the swift steeds
(She *was* the beginning of sin to the daughter of Zion),
For the transgressions of Israel were ^ofound in you.
- 14 Therefore you shall ^pgive presents to ⁶Moresbeth Gath;
The houses of ^qAchzib ⁷shall be a lie to the kings of Israel.
- 15 I will yet bring an heir to you,
O inhabitant of ^rMareshah;⁸
The glory of Israel shall come to ^sAdullam.⁹
- 16 Make yourself ^tbald and cut off your hair,
Because of your ^uprecious children;
Enlarge your baldness like an eagle,
For they shall go from you into ^vcaptivity.

Woe to Evildoers

- 2** Woe to those who devise iniquity,
And ¹work out evil on their beds!
At ^amorning light they practice it,
Because it is in the power of their hand.
- 2** They ^bcovet fields and take *them* by violence,
Also houses, and seize *them*.
So they oppress a man and his house,
A man and his inheritance.
- 3** Therefore thus says the LORD:
“Behold, against this ^cfamily I am devising ^ddisaster,

12 ^m Is. 59:9-11; Jer. 14:19; Amos 3:6
⁴ Lit. Bitterness ⁵ Lit. was sick
13 ⁿ Josh. 10:3;
2 Kin. 14:19; 18:14;
Is. 36:2 ^o Ezek. 23:11
14 ^p 2 Sam. 8:2
^q Josh. 15:44 ⁶ Lit. Possession of Gath
⁷ Lit. Lie
15 ^r Josh. 15:44
^s 2 Chr. 11:7 ⁸ Lit. Inheritance ⁹ Lit. Refuge
16 ^t Job 1:20 ^u Lam. 4:5 ^v 2 Kin. 17:6; Amos 7:11, 17; [Mic. 4:10]

CHAPTER 2

1 ^a Hos. 7:6, 7
¹ Plan
2 ^b Is. 5:8
3 ^c Ex. 20:5; Jer. 8:3;
Amos 3:1, 2 ^d Amos 5:13

4 ^a 2 Sam. 1:17 ² Lit. portion ³ Lit. one turning back, an apostate
5 ^d Lit. one casting a surveyor's line
6 ^s Or preach, lit. drip words ⁶ Lit. to these ⁷ Vg. He shall not take shame

- From which you cannot remove your necks;
Nor shall you walk haughtily,
For this *is* an evil time.
- 4** In that day *one* shall take up a proverb against you,
And ⁴lament with a bitter lamentation, saying:
⁴‘We are utterly destroyed!
He has changed the ²heritage of my people;
How He has removed *it* from me!
To ³a turncoat He has divided our fields.’”
- 5** Therefore you will have no ⁴one to determine boundaries by lot
In the assembly of the LORD.

Lying Prophets

- 6** “Do not prattle,” *you say to those who* ⁵prophesy.
So they shall not prophesy ⁶to you;
⁷They shall not return insult for insult.
- 7** *You who are* named the house of Jacob:
“Is the Spirit of the LORD restricted?
Are these His doings?
Do not My words do good
To him who walks uprightly?”
- 8** “Lately My people have risen up as an enemy—
You pull off the robe with the garment
From those who trust *you*, as they pass by,
Like men returned from war.
- 9** The women of My people you cast out
From their pleasant houses;
From their children
You have taken away My glory forever.

1:12 **Maroth** means “Bitterness.” The name **Jerusalem** suggests “Peace.” Thus the inhabitants of the *town of bitterness* would be sickened with dread, and the inhabitants of the *town of peace* would experience God’s judgment.

1:13 **Lachish**: This famous guard city to Jerusalem was judged as being among the first places in Judah to adopt the sins of Baal worship. **daughter of Zion**: Jerusalem is the daughter of the Lord.

1:14 **Moresbeth Gath**, which means “The Possession of Gath,” was Micah’s hometown (v. 1). The **presents** were farewell gifts; the city was soon to be lost.

1:15 The words **heir** and **the glory of Israel** might lead one to assume that this is a messianic verse, a promise of hope in the midst of despair. Yet the context is judgment (v. 16). The point here may be that the situation would be so bad that the proper *heir* and *glory* of the nation—the members of the royal family—would have to flee in terror to remote hiding places. **Mareshah** is an alternative spelling for Moresbeth Gath of v. 14.

1:16 In a culture in which a man’s hair was highly valued, to **cut off** one’s **hair** was the ultimate sign of mourning.

2:1, 2 **devise iniquity . . . covet**: The ethical teaching of the prophets regularly included oracles of judgment against greed, theft, and oppression, actions of the powerful in attacking the weak. To *covet* is not just to have a passing thought; it is a determination to seize what is not one’s own.

2:3 **devising disaster**: While the wicked devised iniquity (v. 1), God made some plans of His own. **your necks**: The idea here is that the disaster of God would be inescapable.

2:4 **A proverb** was a taunt song. **To a turncoat**: God would take the property rights from those who had seized them illegally and give them to people who were even more reprobate than they were.

2:5, 6 **no one to determine boundaries**: Land-grabbers would no longer have a legitimate claim among God’s people. God would dispossess them even as they had dispossessed others. **Do not prattle**: These words may have been a strong warning to Micah not to be like the lying prophets who counseled that all was well in the land.

2:7 The **words** of God were different from the words of the lying prophets (v. 6). The words of God bring **good** to the righteous even as they bring judgment against the wicked.

Micah: A Picture of the Gospel		
The essential message of the Bible remains the same no matter whether we are reading about the patriarch Abraham or the apostle Paul, Deborah the judge or Mary the mother of Jesus. Like a spotlight, the Scripture reveals the stain of sin in our lives. But it does not leave us exposed; it offers a way to become clean. Even Micah, a prophet who spent most of his time warning the Israelites of coming judgment, spoke of God's salvation.		
God's Standard	The People's Sin	God's Salvation
"He has shown you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?" (6:8)	Idolatry (1:7; 5:13, 14); evil plans (2:1); coveting, violence, oppression (2:2); hating good and loving evil (3:2); greedy priests and prophets (3:11); deceit (6:11, 12); unfaithfulness (7:2); family friction (7:6)	"Who is a God like You, pardoning iniquity and passing over the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He does not retain His anger forever, because He delights in mercy. He will again have compassion on us, and will subdue our iniquities. You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea." (7:18, 19)
"Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect." (Matt. 5:48)	"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." (Rom. 3:23)	"In [Christ] we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace." (Eph. 1:7)

10“ Arise and depart,
For this *is not your* ^frest;
Because it is ^gdefiled, it shall destroy,
Yes, with utter destruction.
11 If a man should walk in a false spirit
And speak a lie, *saying*,
‘I will ^hprophesy to you ^gof wine and drink,’
Even he would be the ^hprattler of
this people.

Israel Restored

12“ I ⁱwill surely assemble all of you,
O Jacob,
I will surely gather the remnant of
Israel;
I will put them together ^jlike sheep
of ⁱthe fold,
Like a flock in the midst of their
pasture;
^kThey shall make a loud noise because
of *so many* people.
13 The one who breaks open will come
up before them;
They will break out,
Pass through the gate,
And go out by it;
^lTheir king will pass before them,
^mWith the LORD at their head.”

10 ^fDeut. 12:9
^g Lev. 18:25
11 ^h Is. 30:10; Jer. 5:30, 31; 2 Tim. 4:3, 4
^g Or *preach*, lit. *drip*
^h ^g concerning 12 ⁱ [Mic. 4:6, 7]
^j Jer. 31:10 ^k Ezek. 33:22; 36:37 ^l Heb. *Bozrah*
13 ⁱ [Hos. 3:5] ^m Is. 52:12

CHAPTER 3
1 ^a Ezek. 22:27 ^b Ps. 82:1-5; Jer. 5:4, 5
2 ⁱ Lit. *them*
3 ^c Ps. 14:4; 27:2; Zeph. 3:3 ^d Ezek. 11:3, 6, 7
4 ^e Ps. 18:41; Prov. 1:28; Is. 1:15; Jer. 11:11
5 ^f Is. 56:10, 11; Jer. 6:13; Ezek. 13:10, 19
^g Matt. 7:15 ^h Ezek. 13:18 ² All is well
³ For those who feed them

Wicked Rulers and Prophets

3 And I said:
“Hear now, O heads of Jacob,
And you ^arulers of the house of Israel:
^bIs it not for you to know justice?
2 You who hate good and love evil;
Who strip the skin from ⁱMy people,
And the flesh from their bones;
3 Who also ^ceat the flesh of My people,
Flay their skin from them,
Break their bones,
And chop *them* in pieces
Like *meat* for the pot,
^dLike flesh in the caldron.”
4 Then ^ethey will cry to the LORD,
But He will not hear them;
He will even hide His face from them
at that time,
Because they have been evil in their
deeds.
5 Thus says the LORD ^fconcerning the
prophets
Who make my people stray;
Who chant ²“Peace”
³ While they ^gchew with their teeth,
But who prepare war against him
^h Who puts nothing into their mouths:

2:10, 11 The lying prophets (v. 6) spoke of **rest** when **utter destruction** was decreed by the Lord. They spoke of **wine and drink** at a time of disaster. It is also possible that the words of v. 11 speak of false prophets who were willing to prophesy “good words” in exchange for wine and beer.
2:12, 13 **assemble . . . gather . . . put them together**: The verbs are emphatic, demonstrating the certainty of God’s determination to bring to pass His good pleasure on His people (see Deut. 30:1–6).
breaks open . . . break out: These phrases speak of regathering Israel from wherever the people may have been scattered.
3:1 **Is it not for you to know justice**: The idea here is that one might not expect justice from pagan leaders in a faraway place. But the **rulers** of the people of God were expected to emphasize justice. Justice is one of the key concepts of the Law (see Deut. 10:18; 32:4; 33:21). Perverting justice was strongly prohibited by God (see Deut.

16:19; 24:17). Yet this was precisely what the leaders of Judah were doing. They had used their authority to destroy justice rather than to establish it among the people.
3:2, 3 Micah used an image of barbaric cannibalism to describe the horrendous actions of the leaders against the people. It was as if the leaders were eating **the flesh** from the people’s **bones**.
3:4 **He will not hear them**: The wickedness of the people was so great that last-minute repentance would not suffice (see Jer. 11:11).
3:5–7 This oracle of judgment was presented against the false **prophets** who proclaimed **peace**, causing the people to be unprepared for trouble. These prophets would have neither true prophetic insight (**vision**), nor help from the forbidden arts of **divination**. Finally they would have nothing to say, for there would be **no answer from God**.

- 6 “Thereforeⁱ you shall have night without⁴ vision,
And you shall have darkness without divination;
The sun shall go down on the prophets,
And the day shall be dark for^j them.
- 7 So the seers shall be ashamed,
And the diviners abashed;
Indeed they shall all cover their lips;
^kFor *there is* no answer from God.”
- 8 But truly I am full of power by the Spirit of the LORD,
And of justice and might,
^lTo declare to Jacob his transgression
And to Israel his sin.
- 9 Now hear this,
You heads of the house of Jacob
And rulers of the house of Israel,
Who abhor justice
And ⁵pervert all equity,
- 10^m Who build up Zion with ⁿbloodshed
And Jerusalem with iniquity:
- 11 ^oHer heads judge for a bribe,
^pHer priests teach for pay,
And her prophets divine for ⁶money.
^qYet they lean on the LORD, and say,
“Is not the LORD among us?
No harm can come upon us.”
- 12 Therefore because of you
Zion shall be ^rplowed *like* a field,
^sJerusalem shall become heaps of ruins,
And ^tthe mountain of the ⁷temple
Like the bare hills of the forest.

6 ⁱ Is. 8:20–22; 29:10–12 / Is. 29:10; Jer. 23:33–40; Ezek. 13:23 ⁴ Prophetic revelation
7 ^k Amos 8:11
8 ^j Is. 58:1
9 ⁵ Lit. *twist*
10 ^m Jer. 22:13;
17 ⁿ Ezek. 22:27; Hab. 2:12
11 ^o Is. 1:23; Mic. 7:3
^p Jer. 6:13 ^q Is. 48:2; Jer. 7:4 ⁶ Lit. *silver*
12 ^r Jer. 26:18 ^s Ps. 79:1; Jer. 9:11 ^t Mic. 4:1, 2 ⁷ Lit. *house*

CHAPTER 4

1 ^o Is. 2:2–4; Ezek. 17:22; Dan. 2:28;
10:14; Hos. 3:5

3 ^b Is. 2:4; Joel 3:10
^c Ps. 72:7 ¹ *pruning knives*
4 ^d 1 Kin. 4:25;
Zech. 3:10
5 ^e Zech. 10:12
6 ^f Ezek. 34:16 ⁹ Ps. 147:2

- Shall be established on the top of the mountains,
And shall be exalted above the hills;
And peoples shall flow to it.
- 2 Many nations shall come and say,
“Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD,
To the house of the God of Jacob;
He will teach us His ways,
And we shall walk in His paths.”
For out of Zion the law shall go forth,
And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.
- 3 He shall judge between many peoples,
And rebuke strong nations afar off;
They shall beat their swords into ^bplowshares,
And their spears into ¹pruning hooks;
Nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
^cNeither shall they learn war anymore.
- 4 ^d But everyone shall sit under his vine and under his fig tree,
And no one shall make *them* afraid;
For the mouth of the LORD of hosts has spoken.
- 5 For all people walk each in the name of his god,
But ^ewe will walk in the name of the LORD our God
Forever and ever.

Zion's Future Triumph

- 6 “In that day,” says the LORD,
^f“I will assemble the lame,
^gI will gather the outcast
And those whom I have afflicted;

The LORD's Reign in Zion

- 4 Now ^ait shall come to pass in the latter days
That the mountain of the LORD's house

3:8 full of power: Unlike the silenced false prophets (vv. 5–7), Micah was divinely empowered (see 1 Cor. 2:13; 2 Pet. 1:21). **Justice and might** may be rephrased as “powerful justice,” a contrast to the ineffective leaders of Israel (v. 1).

3:11 bribe . . . pay . . . money: The wicked leaders and prophets of Israel “worked” only when they could gain something from it. Needless to say, if justice had to be paid for, it would not be justice. **Is not the LORD among us:** Many people of Jerusalem believed that they would not be affected by God's judgment because God Himself dwelled in the holy temple in Jerusalem. They reasoned that despite their evils, as long as God was in His temple, they were safe—even from divine judgment. What the people refused to believe was that God might *leave* His temple because of the sinfulness of the people. The Book of Ezekiel describes a vision of the glory of God leaving the temple as a prelude to His judgment on the city (see Ezek. 10).

3:12 This verse was quoted by Jeremiah (see Jer. 26:18). While the false prophets and the wicked rulers believed that they were untouchable and that Mt. Zion was inviolable, the prophet Micah announced that **Zion** (Jerusalem) would be **plowed like a field**, indicating complete devastation of the city.

4:1 The phrase **in the latter days** is an indication of a prophecy of end times. **The mountain of the LORD's house** describes the temple in Jerusalem. The text projects a future change in the

topography of Jerusalem. Originally the temple site in Jerusalem was located on one of several hills that make up the general area. In the *latter days* the temple site will be elevated **above the hills** (see Zech. 8:1–3; 14:1–11).

4:2 Many nations: When non-Israelites came to true faith, it would be in **the God of Jacob**. **He will teach:** As God spoke to Moses on Mt. Sinai (see Ex. 19; 20) so He will speak to all from Jerusalem. **we shall walk:** Unlike the people of Micah's generation who were strangers to justice (3:1), the peoples of the coming kingdom will be obedient to God.

4:3 judge . . . rebuke: These are actions of the Savior King who will rule with a rod of iron (see Ps. 2; 110). **swords . . . spears:** All weapons of destruction will be recycled into tools of production. There will finally be an end to conflict. **War** will not even be a subject for study anymore.

4:4 The vine and fig tree are symbols of peace and prosperity (see Zech. 3:10). **no one shall make them afraid:** Fear, like war (v. 3), will become a thing of the past.

4:6, 7 In that day: This wording connects this section with the end times referred to in v. 1. **lame . . . outcast:** Those who were abused by the wicked leaders of Israel would be exalted by the Lord. **afflicted:** Those whom God had driven from the land would be the people of His new kingdom. This is a remarkable surprise—a surprise of

- 7 I will make the lame ^ha remnant,
And the outcast a strong nation;
So the LORD ⁱwill reign over them in
Mount Zion
From now on, even forever.
- 8 And you, O tower of the flock,
The stronghold of the daughter of
Zion,
To you shall it come,
Even the former dominion shall come,
The kingdom of the daughter of
Jerusalem.”
- 9 Now why do you cry aloud?
^j*Is there* no king in your midst?
Has your counselor perished?
For ^kpangs have seized you like a
woman in ^llabor.
- 10 Be in pain, and labor to bring forth,
O daughter of Zion,
Like a woman in birth pangs.
For now you shall go forth from the
city,
You shall dwell in the field,
And to ^lBabylon you shall go.
There you shall be delivered;
There the ^mLORD will ⁿredeem you
From the hand of your enemies.
- 11 ^oNow also many nations have
gathered against you,
Who say, “Let her be defiled,
And let our eye ^plook upon Zion.”
- 12 But they do not know ^qthe thoughts
of the LORD,
Nor do they understand His counsel;
For He will gather them ^rlike sheaves
to the threshing floor.
- 13 “Arise ^s and ^tthresh, O daughter of
Zion;
For I will make your horn iron,

7 ^h Mic. 2:12 ⁱ [Is. 9:6; 24:23; Luke 1:33; Rev. 11:15]
9 ^j Jer. 8:19 ^k Is. 13:8; Jer. 30:6
^l *childbirth*
10 ^l 2 Chr. 36:20; Amos 5:27 ^m [Is. 45:13; Mic. 7:8-12]
ⁿ Ezra 1:1-3; 2:1; Ps. 18:17
11 ^o Lam. 2:16
^p Obad. 12
12 ^q [Is. 55:8, 9] ^r Is. 21:10
13 ^s Jer. 51:33; [Zech. 12:1-8; 14:14]
^t Is. 41:15

^u Dan. 2:44 ^v Is. 18:7
^w Zech. 4:14

CHAPTER 5

1 ^a 1 Kin. 22:24; Job 16:10; Lam. 3:30; Matt. 27:30; Mark 15:19 ☆
2 ^b Is. 11:1; Matt. 2:6; Luke 2:4, 11 ☆; John 7:42 ^c Gen. 35:19; 48:7; Ruth 4:11 ^d 1 Sam. 23:23
^e Ex. 18:25 ^f [Gen. 49:10; Is. 9:6] ^g Ps. 90:2; [John 1:1]
^h Lit. *the days of eternity*
3 ^h Hos. 11:8; Mic. 4:10 ⁱ Mic. 4:7; 7:18
4 ^j [Is. 40:11; 49:9; Ezek. 34:13-15, 23, 24]; Mic. 7:14 ^k Ps. 72:8; Is. 52:13; Zech. 9:10; [Luke 1:32]
^l *shepherd*
5 ⁱ [Is. 9:6; Luke 2:14; [Eph. 2:14; Col. 1:20]

And I will make your hooves bronze;
You shall ^ubeat in pieces many
peoples;
^vI will consecrate their gain to the
LORD,
And their substance to ^wthe Lord of
the whole earth.”

5 Now gather yourself in troops,
O daughter of troops;
He has laid siege against us;
They will ^astrike the judge of Israel
with a rod on the cheek.

The Coming Messiah

2 “But you, ^bBethlehem ^cEphrathah,
Though you are little ^damong the
^e“thousands of Judah,
Yet out of you shall come forth to Me
The One to be ^fRuler in Israel,
^gWhose goings forth *are* from of old,
From ^heverlasting.”

3 Therefore He shall give them up,
Until the time *that* ^hshe who is in
labor has given birth;
Then ⁱthe remnant of His brethren
Shall return to the children of Israel.

4 And He shall stand and ^jfeed ²His
flock
In the strength of the LORD,
In the majesty of the name of the
LORD His God;
And they shall abide,
For now He ^kshall be great
To the ends of the earth;
5 And this *One* ^lshall be peace.

Judgment on Israel's Enemies

When the Assyrian comes into our
land,

grace. **remnant:** The majority of people in Israel did not live their lives in faith and dedication to the Lord. However, true faith never really died out in Israel, even in the worst of times.

4:8 Tower of the flock is a description of Jerusalem in the ideal sense. A tower was a vantage point for protecting a flock of sheep. Likewise, Jerusalem is the **stronghold** or defense point for the flock of God (2:12).

4:9, 10 Micah addressed the city of **Zion** (Jerusalem) as though it were a **woman in labor**. The troubles of the present moment would lead finally to the birth of a deliverer. **To Babylon you shall go** refers to the Exile.

4:13 Arise and thresh: The nations would be gathered by the Lord like sheaves on the threshing floor (v. 12). This is a way of speaking of the final victory over all of Israel's foes.

5:1 gather yourself in troops: The reference here seems to be to the assaults of the enemies of Judah on the people of God before their final defeat. **strike . . . on the cheek:** One day the enemies of the Savior would strike Him (see Mark 15:19); but on a still-future day, He will strike all of His enemies (see Rev. 19).

5:2 Bethlehem means “House of Bread” (see Ruth 1:1). **Ephrathah** locates the village in a known region in Judah (see Gen. 35:16). This prophecy figures significantly in the NT story of the visit of the wise men to the Christ child (see Matt. 2:1-12). Governments would be

overturned to make it necessary for Mary while still pregnant to make the journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem. The specific detail of this oracle about Bethlehem is similar to the Lord's prophetic announcements of the name of Josiah to Jeroboam I (see 1 Kin. 13:2), and of Cyrus to Isaiah (see Is. 44:28—45:7). **goings forth:** The birth of this Savior King would be unlike the birth of any other, because He was preexistent. He is **from everlasting**.

5:3 The future of Israel is pictured here in terms of the birth, life, and ministry of the Savior King. The two advents of the Savior are seen as one event by Micah. Whereas v. 2 speaks of the birth of the Savior in His First Coming, vv. 3-5 speak of the time of the rule of Jesus in the Second Coming. **She who is in labor** probably refers to Zion (4:10). The metaphor refers to the deliverance in the end time of those who will be able to delight in the coming of God's kingdom (4:9—5:1). **the remnant:** This minority will never be forgotten by the Lord.

5:5, 6 And this One shall be peace: Isaiah 9:6 refers to this One as the Prince of Peace. **When the Assyrian comes:** The principal threat against Israel and Judah at the time of Micah was Assyria. Micah used the nation as a symbol of all of Israel's enemies and of God's final victory over each of them. **Seven shepherds and eight princely men:** These are in contrast to the wicked rulers that Micah condemned in ch. 3.

- And when he treads in our palaces,
Then we will raise against him
Seven shepherds and eight princely
men.
- 6 They shall ³waste with the sword the
land of Assyria,
And the land of ^mNimrod at its
entrances;
Thus He shall ⁿdeliver *us* from the
Assyrian,
When he comes into our land
And when he treads within our
borders.
- 7 Then ^othe remnant of Jacob
Shall be in the midst of many
peoples,
ⁿLike dew from the LORD,
Like showers on the grass,
That ⁴tarry for no man
Nor ⁵wait for the sons of men.
- 8 And the remnant of Jacob
Shall be among the Gentiles,
In the midst of many peoples,
Like a ^qlion among the beasts of the
forest,
Like a young lion among flocks of
sheep,

6 ^m Gen. 10:8-11
ⁿ Is. 14:25; Luke 1:71
³ devastate
7 ^o Mic. 5:3 ^p Gen.
27:28; Deut. 32:2;
Ps. 72:6; Hos. 14:5
⁴ wait ⁵ delay
8 ^q Gen. 49:9; Num.
24:9

9 ⁶ destroyed
10 ^r Zech. 9:10
^s Deut. 17:16 ^t Is.
2:7; 22:18; Hos. 14:3
⁷ destroy
12 ^u Deut. 18:10-12;
Is. 2:6
13 ^v Zech. 13:2
^w Is. 2:8
14 ⁸ Heb. *Asherim*,
Canaanite deities
15 ^x [2 Thess. 1:8]
⁹ obeyed

- Who, if he passes through,
Both treads down and tears in pieces,
And none can deliver.
- 9 Your hand shall be lifted against your
adversaries,
And all your enemies shall be ⁶cut off.
- 10 “And it shall be in that day,” says the
LORD,
“That I will ^rcut ⁷off your ^shorses
from your midst
And destroy your ^tchariots.
- 11 I will cut off the cities of your land
And throw down all your
strongholds.
- 12 I will cut off sorceries from your hand,
And you shall have no ^usoothsayers.
- 13 ^vYour carved images I will also cut off,
And your *sacred* pillars from your
midst;
You shall ^wno more worship the
work of your hands;
- 14 I will pluck your ⁸wooden images
from your midst;
Thus I will destroy your cities.
- 15 And I will ^xexecute vengeance in
anger and fury
On the nations that have not ⁹heard.”

5:7–9 This section concerns God’s blessing on **the remnant of Jacob**. The wickedness of the people would bring about God’s judgment, but He would not cast them off completely. **In the midst of many peoples** describes the spread of the Jewish people throughout the earth in the time of God’s judgment. Twin images are used to describe the effect of the Jewish people on the nations in which they lived. Verse 7 describes the Jewish people as **dew** and **showers**—that is, blessings from God on their neighbors. Verse 8 describes the Jewish people as a **lion**—that is, a powerful force that eventually would triumph.

5:10 I will cut off: It was God’s intention to destroy the evils in

Israel’s society. **Horses** and **chariots** represent the pride of Israel’s military power. Israel’s tendency was to rely on its own military power rather than on the Lord.

5:12 Sorcery and soothsaying had been strongly condemned by God (see Deut. 18:10).

5:13, 14 The second commandment had forbidden the use of **carved images** in Israel (see Ex. 20:4). **Sacred pillars** refers to phallic poles used in Canaanite sexual worship rites. **Wooden images** refers to the Asherah groves. Both of these items had been condemned strongly in the Law (see Deut. 16:21, 22).

The King’s Hometown

Almost two years after Jesus was born, a dusty and majestic caravan made its way into Jerusalem. The members of the caravan stopped for directions. Their simple question shook the city: “Where is He who has been born King of the Jews?” (Matt. 2:2). A strange star had announced the birth.

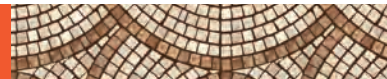
King Herod knew the wise men had no interest in him. But he also realized that if their quest was legitimate, his own reign was about to be eclipsed by the arrival of another King, the long-awaited Messiah. He was not going to give up his throne without a fight.

Among the prophecies of the Old Testament, God had clearly revealed the birthplace of the Messiah. The Jewish religious leaders that Herod gathered to answer the strangers’ question pointed immediately to Micah 5:2 for the location of the Savior’s hometown, Bethlehem. They knew. Micah had left written directions hundreds of years before. But they were not ready to believe. Curiously, no one volunteered to go with the wise men to look for the Messiah.

God offered a clear invitation to His people through Micah: Watch Bethlehem! The people remembered the invitation, but failed to take it seriously. Given an opportunity to discover truth, the people of Jerusalem let someone else take the risk of disappointment. Herod even killed the children of Bethlehem in a vain attempt to eliminate his rival.

Other prophecies of Micah surround the passage pinpointing Bethlehem as the Messiah’s hometown. Some of the prophecies were fulfilled by the return of the Israelites from Babylon (4:10). Others have yet to be fulfilled (4:1–5). But Bethlehem remains a symbol of God’s working out of His purposes in history.

Micah’s invitation still rings true. But our response must be different from that of the people of Jerusalem. The people in Jesus’ time were waiting for something to happen, but they missed it because of unbelief. We can look back at Jesus’ death and miss it just as seriously through our own unbelief. A crucial chapter in God’s story of salvation begins in Bethlehem. God gave more than a hint of that salvation in Micah.





God Pleads with Israel

6 Hear now what the LORD says:

“Arise, plead your case before the mountains,
And let the hills hear your voice.

² *a* Hear, O you mountains, ^bthe LORD’s complaint,
And you strong foundations of the earth;
For ^cthe LORD has a complaint against His people,
And He will ^dcontend with Israel.

CHAPTER 6

² ^a Ps. 50:1, 4 ^b [Is. 1:18]; Hos. 12:2
^c [Is. 1:18] ¹ bring charges against
³ ^a Is. 5:4; Jer. 2:5, 31 ^c Is. 43:22, 23; Mal. 1:13
⁴ ^f [Deut. 4:20]
⁵ ^g Num. 22:5, 6; Josh. 24:9 ^h Judg. 5:11 ² Heb. *Shittim*, Num. 25:1; Josh. 2:1; 3:1
⁷ ⁱ Ps. 50:9; Is. 1:11 / Job 29:6 ^k Lev. 18:21; 20:1-5;

³ “O My people, what ^dhave I done to you?
And how have I ^ewearied you?
Testify against Me.
⁴ ^fFor I brought you up from the land of Egypt,
I redeemed you from the house of bondage;
And I sent before you Moses, Aaron, and Miriam.
⁵ O My people, remember now
What ^gBalak king of Moab counseled,
And what Balaam the son of Beor answered him,
From ²Acacia Grove to Gilgal,
That you may know ^hthe righteousness of the LORD.”
⁶ With what shall I come before the LORD,
And bow myself before the High God?
Shall I come before Him with burnt offerings,
With calves a year old?
⁷ ⁱ Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams,
Ten thousand ^jrivers of oil?
^k Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression,
³ The fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?
⁸ He has ^lshown you, O man, what is good;
And what does the LORD require of you
But ^mto do justly,
To love ⁴mercy,
And to walk humbly with your God?

Punishment of Israel's Injustice

⁹ The LORD's voice cries to the city—
Wisdom shall see Your name:

² Kin. 16:3; Jer. 7:31; Ezek. 23:37 ³ My own child ⁸ ^f [Deut. 10:12; 1 Sam. 15:22]; Hos. 6:6; 12:6 ^m Gen. 18:19; Is. 1:17 ⁴ Or lovingkindness

6:1, 2 God (the Judge) calls for the people (the defendants) to **plead** their **case**. **The mountains and hills** were among the witnesses to the covenant that God made with His people (see Deut. 4:26; 32:1; Is. 1:2). **He will contend**: If the people were silent before the **mountains**, the Lord Himself would speak against their sin.
6:3 what have I done: The Lord was entirely innocent of misbehavior against His people (see Jer. 2:5).
6:4, 5 The Lord summarized His great mercies to Israel, including His saving works in bringing the people from **Egypt** in the Exodus and His deliverance of Israel from the evils that **Balak** and **Balaam** had planned (see Num. 22–24).
6:6, 7 Come before means “to make an approach in true worship” (see Ps. 15). **burnt offerings . . . calves a year old**: These were among the divinely prescribed sacrifices of true biblical worship (see Lev. 1:3; 9:3). The words of v. 7 go far beyond any demand of the Law, and even go *against* the Law in the suggestion that God may not be satisfied except by an offering of one’s own child. Micah uses

hyperbole (deliberate exaggeration) to emphasize the necessity of a right attitude in the true worship of God. **be pleased**: The idea of bringing pleasure to God through sacrifice is found elsewhere in the Bible. God is pleased with those who do as He commands (see Gen. 4:1–8).
6:8 This verse speaks of the underlying attitudes that must accompany all true worship. **what does the LORD require of you**: The idea here is that God seeks certain characteristics of true worship from His people. **do justly . . . love mercy . . . walk humbly**: These phrases summarize biblical piety in true worship. The majority of the people of Israel had violated each of these standards repeatedly. The rulers did not know *justice* (3:1), had no interest in *mercy* (3:2, 3), and demonstrated no *humility* (3:11). **with your God**: It is the Lord who ultimately gives a person strength, courage, and ability to exercise the virtues of godly living.
6:9 The rod is a messianic image. It is possible that this verse is based on Ps. 2 (see Ps. 2:9, 11, 12).

- “Hear the rod!
Who has appointed it?
10 Are there yet the treasures of
wickedness
In the house of the wicked,
And the short measure *that is an*
abomination?
11 Shall I count pure *those* with ⁿthe
wicked scales,
And with the bag of deceitful
weights?
12 For her rich men are full of
^oviolence,
Her inhabitants have spoken lies,
And ^ptheir tongue is deceitful in
their mouth.
13 “Therefore I will also ^qmake *you* sick
by striking you,
By making *you* desolate because of
your sins.
14 ^rYou shall eat, but not be satisfied;
⁵Hunger *shall be* in your midst.
⁶You may carry *some* away, but shall
not save *them*;
And what you do rescue I will give
over to the sword.
15 “You shall ^ssow, but not reap;
You shall tread the olives, but not
anoint yourselves with oil;
And *make* sweet wine, but not drink
wine.
16 For the statutes of ^tOmri are
^ukept;
All the works of Ahab’s house *are*
done;
And you walk in their counsels,
That I may make you a ⁷desolation,
And your inhabitants a hissing.
Therefore you shall bear the
^vreproach of ⁸My people.”

11 ⁿ Lev. 19:36;
Hos. 12:7
12 ^o Is. 1:23; 5:7;
Amos 6:3; 4; Mic.
2:1, 2 ^p Jer. 9:2-6, 8;
Hos. 7:13; Amos 2:4
13 ^q Lev. 26:16; Ps.
107:17
14 ^r Lev. 26:26
⁵ Or *Emptiness* or
Humiliation ⁶ Tg.,
Vg. *You shall take*
hold
15 ^s Deut. 28:38-40;
Amos 5:11; Zeph.
1:13; Hag. 1:6
16 ^t 1 Kin. 16:25, 26
^u 1 Kin. 16:30; 21:25,
26; 2 Kin. 21:3; Hos.
5:11 ^v Is. 25:8 ⁷ Or
object of horror
⁸ So with MT, Tg.,
Vg.; LXX *nations*

CHAPTER 7

1 ^a Is. 17:6 ^b Is. 28:4;
Hos. 9:10
2 ^c Ps. 12:1; Is. 57:1
^d Hab. 1:15 ¹ Or
loyal
3 ^e Amos 5:12;
Mic. 3:11
4 ^f Is. 55:13; Ezek.
2:6
5 ^g Jer. 9:4 ^h Deut.
28:56
6 ⁱ Matt. 10:36;
Mark 3:21; Luke
8:19; John 7:5

Sorrow for Israel's Sins

- 7 Woe is me!
For I am like those who gather
summer fruits,
Like those who ^aglean vintage
grapes;
There is no cluster to eat
Of the first-ripe fruit *which* ^bmy soul
desires.
2 The ^cfaithful ¹man has perished
from the earth,
And *there is no* one upright among
men.
They all lie in wait for blood;
^dEvery man hunts his brother with a
net.
3 That they may successfully do evil
with both hands—
The prince asks *for gifts*,
The judge *seeks* a ^ebribe,
And the great man utters his evil
desire;
So they scheme together.
4 The best of them *is* ^flike a brier;
The most upright *is sharper* than a
thorn hedge;
The day of your watchman and your
punishment comes;
Now shall be their perplexity.
5 ^gDo not trust in a friend;
Do not put your confidence in a
companion;
Guard the doors of your mouth
From her who lies in your ^hbosom.
6 For ⁱson dishonors father,
Daughter rises against her mother,
Daughter-in-law against her
mother-in-law;
A man's enemies *are* the men of his
own household.

6:10–12 The people of Judah were abusing others with false measures, with **violence**, and with **lies**. Such practices were far removed from the description of true worship in v. 8. This is the divine vindication of the Lord's determination to bring judgment on Jerusalem, despite the fact that His holy temple was there (3:11, 12). The worship that was being offered, although it followed the form of the Law, did not come from true biblical attitudes and practices of piety.

6:16 The spiritual history of the northern kingdom reached its lowest point under the rules of **Omri** and **Ahab**. Whereas Jeroboam I had combined the worship of God with the nature and sexual worship rites of Baal (see 1 Kin. 12:25–33), Ahab and his wife Jezebel (in a marriage arranged by Omri) brought about the state worship of Baal and Asherah (see 1 Kin. 16:21–34). For these reasons, and despite the presence of the temple, God was about to bring utter shame on His people.

7:1, 2 Micah was moved by the oracles of judgment that God delivered through him (1:8). **no cluster**: For Micah, the harvest was over. There was nothing around him but undesirable fruit. **The faithful man has perished**: The norms of society had broken down; everyone was out to destroy someone else.

7:3, 4 with both hands: The people were pursuing **evil** with gusto. The leaders of the state were leading the way in evil (3:11). **The day**

of your watchman refers to a time when people needed to be alert for the approach of an enemy army. In this context, judgment was imminent.

complaint

(Heb. *rib*) (6:2; Judg. 12:2; Prov. 17:14; 18:6; Jer. 11:20) Strong's #7379

This word can mean “dispute” or “quarrel” in the sense of a feud (Judg. 12:2), “controversy” or “strife” (Prov. 17:14; 18:6) prompted by a rebellious spirit (Num. 20:13; Prov. 17:14; 18:6), or even a “legal case” or “lawsuit” (Job 31:13, 35; Jer. 11:20). The prophets frequently used this word as a technical, legal term in contexts pertaining to the Lord's covenant relationship with Israel (Jer. 25:31; Hos. 4:1; 12:2). In this chapter, Micah was informing Judah that God had registered a formal, legal complaint against His people. He was ordering them to stand trial for violating covenant stipulations forbidding idolatry and requiring social justice (6:2–16).

7 Therefore I will look to the LORD;
I will ^jwait for the God of my
salvation;
My God will hear me.

Israel's Confession and Comfort

8 ^kDo not rejoice over me, my enemy;
^lWhen I fall, I will arise;
When I sit in darkness,
The LORD *will be* a light to me.
9 ^mI will bear the indignation of the
LORD,
Because I have sinned against Him,
Until He pleads my ⁿcase
And executes justice for me.
He will bring me forth to the light;
I will see His righteousness.
10 Then *she who is* my enemy will see,
And ^oshame will cover her who said
to me,
^p“Where is the LORD your God?”
My eyes will see her;
Now she will be trampled down
Like mud in the streets.
11 In the day when your ^qwalls are to
be built,
In that day ²the decree shall go far
and wide.
12 In that day ^rthey³ shall come to you
From Assyria and the ⁴fortified
cities,
From the ⁵fortress to ⁶the River,
From sea to sea,
And mountain to mountain.
13 Yet the land shall be desolate
Because of those who dwell in it,
And ^sfor the fruit of their deeds.

7 / Ps. 130:5; Is. 25:9;
Lam. 3:24, 25
8 ^k Prov. 24:17;
Obad. 12; [Acts
10:43] ^l Ps. 37:24;
[Prov. 24:16]; 2 Cor.
4:9
9 ^m Lam. 3:39, 40;
[2 Cor. 5:21] ⁿ Jer.
50:34
10 ^o Ps. 35:26 ^p Ps.
42:3
11 ^q Is. 54:11; [Amos
9:11] ² Or the
boundary shall be
extended
12 ^r [Is. 11:16;
19:23-25] ³ Lit.
he, collective
of the captives
⁴ Heb. *arey mazor*,
possibly cities of
Egypt ⁵ Heb. *mazor*,
possibly Egypt
⁶ The Euphrates
13 ^s Jer. 21:14

14 ^t Is. 37:24
⁷ Alone
15 ^u Ps. 68:22; 78:12
^v Ex. 34:10 ⁸ Lit.
him, collective for
the captives
16 ^w Is. 26:11 ^x Job
21:5
17 ^y Ps. 72:9; [Is.
49:23] ² Ps. 18:45
^a Jer. 33:9 ⁹ Lit.
crawlers
18 ^b Ex. 15:11 ^c Ex.
34:6, 7, 9; Is. 43:25;
Jer. 50:20 ^d Mic. 4:7
^e Ps. 103:8, 9, 13; [Is.
57:16] ^f [Ezek. 33:11]
¹ Or lovingkindness
19 ² Lit. *their*
20 ^g Luke 1:72, 73 ☆
^h Ps. 105:9 ³ Or
lovingkindness

God Will Forgive Israel

14 Shepherd Your people with Your staff,
The flock of Your heritage,
Who dwell ⁷solitarily in a ^twoodland,
In the midst of Carmel;
Let them feed in Bashan and Gilead,
As in days of old.
15^u As ^u in the days when you came out
of the land of Egypt,
I will show ^sthem ^vwonders.”
16 The nations ^wshall see and be
ashamed of all their might;
^xThey shall put *their* hand over *their*
mouth;
Their ears shall be deaf.
17 They shall lick the ^ydust like a serpent;
^zThey shall crawl from their holes like
⁹snakes of the earth.
^aThey shall be afraid of the LORD our
God,
And shall fear because of You.
18 ^bWho is a God like You,
^cPardoning iniquity
And passing over the transgression
of ^dthe remnant of His heritage?
^eHe does not retain His anger forever,
Because He delights in ^fmercy.¹
19 He will again have compassion on us,
And will subdue our iniquities.
You will cast all ²our sins
Into the depths of the sea.
20 ^gYou will give truth to Jacob
And ³mercy to Abraham,
^hWhich You have sworn to our fathers
From days of old.

7:7 Therefore I will look: These words are a pun on the words of v. 4. While there would need to be a *watchman* for the coming of an enemy army, Micah was going to be a *watchman* for the advent of **the LORD**.

7:8, 9 The speaker in these verses is the nation Israel after it comes to repentance. **I have sinned** is the confession of the people in saving faith. **He pleads my case:** Here the Lord is speaking on *behalf* of the people (compare ch. 6). As God had delivered Israel in the past

because of **His righteousness**, so He would deliver a repentant Israel in the future.

7:10 The people of Israel knew that they would suffer indignities at the hands of their enemies in the period of divine judgment. However, God's judgment of His people was designed to bring about their repentance.

7:11, 12 In the day: These words call attention to a future day, the time of the end. **You** here is Zion (Jerusalem). This is a prophecy of the return of the remnant (2:12, 13; 4:1-4, 6-8; 5:3, 7, 8). **The River** is the Euphrates. The idea of these verses is a universal regathering of God's people in His land (see Deut. 30:1-6).

7:14, 15 Micah prayed that God the **Shepherd** would care for His **flock**. Micah requested that the greatest wonders of the relationship between God and His people at the time of the Exodus would be realized anew.

7:16, 17 The response of the wicked **nations** to the renewed mercies of God on His people would be terror. The nations would be humiliated because they had taunted Israel in the day of its trouble (vv. 8-10).

7:18 Who is a God like You: These words speak of the incomparability of God. There is nothing in all of creation to compare with God (see Is. 40:25). **Pardoning iniquity:** These words come from the revelation of God to Moses in Ex. 34:6-9.

7:20 This last verse is reminiscent of God's promise to Abraham in Gen. 12; 15; 22 and His promises to Jacob in Gen. 32. The Lord had sworn to fulfill His promises to the patriarchs. He would not—He could not—leave His promise unfulfilled (see Ps. 89:33).

compassion

(Heb. *racham*) (7:19; Ex. 33:19; Prov. 28:13) Strong's #7355

The Hebrew word translated here as *compassion* means “to love from the womb” and is frequently translated *mercy* (Is. 14:1). The noun form of this verb means “womb,” and consequently this verb depicts the tender love of a mother for her own helpless child (1 Kin. 3:26). “From the womb” speaks of the depth of emotion associated with this expression of love. God loves His people with a deep compassion and love that is almost beyond description. God used a form of this Hebrew word to reveal His character and name to Moses: “And the LORD passed before him and proclaimed, ‘The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth’” (see Ex. 34:6).

THE BOOK OF NAHUM



THIS IS THE SECOND of two books of the minor prophets that centers on Nineveh, the capital city of Assyria. In the Book of Jonah, written in the eighth century B.C., we behold a man of God who was called to preach to Nineveh. He was one of the few prophets who despaired when his listeners heeded his warning. The people of Nineveh repented, and God demonstrated His great compassion by not judging the city. In the Book of Nahum, written in the seventh century B.C., we find another prophet called by God to preach to Nineveh. Evil again reigned in the capital. Tragically, the people of Nineveh this time ignored Nahum's warning.

Author and Date Nahum, the author of this book, is not known apart from the three chapters of this prophecy. Even the location of the place of his birth, Elkosh (1:1), is in doubt. However, since Nahum wrote considerably after the destruction of Israel in 722 B.C., we may assume that Elkosh was in Judah.

The fall of Thebes in 663 B.C. (3:8) determines the limit for the earliest date of the book. The fall of Nineveh, which the book predicts, took place in 612 B.C., not long before the final destruction of the Assyrian Empire in 609 B.C. This means the Book of Nahum was composed sometime before 612 B.C. perhaps under the reform of Josiah in 622 B.C.

Historical Context The people of the northern kingdom of Israel had been sinning grievously against God and ignoring the warnings of punishment given through God's prophets. Finally God used the nation of Assyria, with its capital city in Nineveh, to destroy the nation and carry the people into captivity. A century after the fall of Samaria in 722 B.C., the Book of Nahum was written to express a major truth of the prophets. Even when God uses a nation for His own purposes of judgment, this does not excuse that nation from its own guilt before the Lord. It was Nineveh's turn to feel the wrath of God. The last great emperor of Assyria was Ashurbanipal (669–627 B.C.). After his death, the nation did not last much longer, for the Lord was against it (2:13; 3:3).

Theology How does the mood of the Book of Nahum accord with the sentiment of the Sermon on the Mount? Although the Lord Jesus certainly spoke of loving one's enemies (see Matt. 5:43–48), He strongly warned of the inevitability of judgment (see Matt. 5:21, 29, 30; 7:13, 23). He said that "all who take the sword will perish by the sword" (see Matt. 26:52). If ever the words of Jesus concerning the sure destruction of those who live by violence had a direct application, it was to Nineveh. In the conquest of the ancient world, the Assyrians were merciless and cruel. Their atrocities included everything from burning children to death to chopping off hands. In many ways, the Book of Nahum is a theology of the maxim of the sword. Nineveh had an international reputation for bloodthirsty acts of repression, destruction, and wantonness. God could not be good if He failed to call such an evil nation to account. The theology of the Book of Nahum is a theology of the goodness of God in bringing about the final destruction of those who oppose His will and abuse His people.

Nineveh was not only a city in the ancient world that received the promised judgment of God, it is also a prototype for the coming judgment of God on all workers of wickedness. Those who know that the Lord is good may rejoice in the fact that He avenges aggressive acts against His people (1:7, 8).

The seriousness of coming judgment is never a call for complacency among God's people. Implicit in any announcement of doom is a call for holy living on the part of God's people and an urgent call for them to bring the message of salvation to those who, apart from salvation, will experience the wrath of God. Judgment is God's "unusual act" (see Is. 28:21), but it ultimately arises out of the goodness and justice of God.

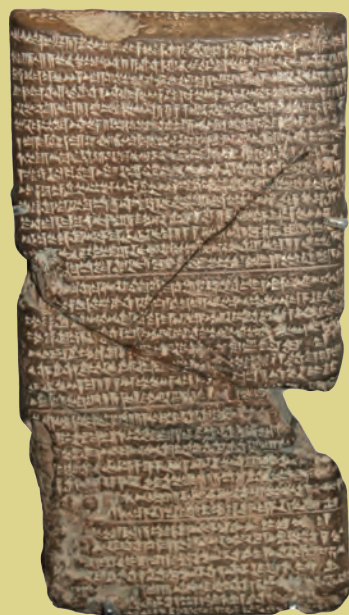
CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

Nahum himself is a type of Christ. His name means "comfort," yet this one called a comforter does not offer soft love. Nahum, like Jesus, expects responsible action on the part of those who are loved by God. Such action is a way to prove that they acknowledge His love.

Because Nahum's name means "comfort," it is legitimate to say he pictures the Holy Spirit's subsequent ministry of instruction and comfort that Jesus promised His followers. Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit "will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you" (John 14:26). But sadly, similar to the rejection Jesus faced at the hand of the scribes and Pharisees, the Ninevites do not act on what Nahum teaches them.

NAHUM OUTLINE

- I. A psalm of praise for the avenging wrath of the Lord 1:1—2:2
 - A. God's vengeance on His enemies as a sign of His goodness to Judah 1:1—11
 - B. God's restoration of Judah dependent on His judgment of its enemies 1:12—2:2
- II. Prophecies concerning the coming judgment of Nineveh 2:3—3:19
 - A. The siege of the city 2:3—13
 - B. A woe oracle concerning the siege 3:1—19



The Babylonian Chronicles describe the years 615–609 B.C., including the destruction of Nineveh in 612 B.C. Nahum predicts the destruction of Nineveh in great detail.

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722 B.C.

Israel is taken captive by the Assyrians

669 B.C.

Ashurbanipal's reign begins in Assyria

663–654 B.C.

Assyria occupies Egypt's capital Thebes (No Amon)

622 B.C.

Revival in Jerusalem under Josiah

612 B.C.

Nineveh falls to the Medes and Babylonians

605 B.C.

Nebuchadnezzar's reign begins in Babylon

The ¹burden ^aagainst Nineveh.
The book of the vision of Nahum the Elkoshite.

God's Wrath on His Enemies

- ² God is ^bjealous, and the LORD avenges;
The LORD avenges and is furious.
The LORD will take vengeance on His adversaries,
And He reserves *wrath* for His enemies;
³ The LORD is ^cslow to anger and ^dgreat in power,
And will not at all acquit *the wicked*.

^eThe LORD has His way
In the whirlwind and in the storm,
And the clouds *are* the dust of His feet.

- ⁴ ^fHe rebukes the sea and makes it dry,
And dries up all the rivers.
^gBashan and Carmel wither,
And the flower of Lebanon wilts.
⁵ The mountains quake before Him,
The hills melt,
And the earth ²heaves at His presence,
Yes, the world and all who dwell in it.
⁶ Who can stand before His indignation?
And ^hwho can endure the fierceness of His anger?

CHAPTER 1

¹ ^a 2 Kin. 19:36;
Jon. 1:2; Nah. 2:8;
Zeph. 2:13 ¹ *oracle, prophecy*
² ^b Ex. 20:5; Josh. 24:19
³ ^c Ex. 34:6, 7; Neh. 9:17; Ps. 103:8
^d [Job 9:4] ^e Ps. 18:17
⁴ ^f Josh. 3:15, 16; Ps. 106:9; Is. 50:2; Matt. 8:26 ^g Is. 33:9
⁵ ² Tg. *burns*
⁶ ^h Jer. 10:10; [Mal. 3:2]

⁷ ⁱ Ps. 25:8; 37:39, 40; 100:5; [Jer. 33:11]; Lam. 3:25
⁸ ^j Ps. 1:6; John 10:14; 2 Tim. 2:19
⁹ ^k Ps. 2:1; Nah. 1:11
¹⁰ ^l 1 Sam. 3:12 ³ *Or devise*
¹¹ ^m 2 Sam. 23:6; Mic. 7:4 ⁿ Is. 56:12; Nah. 3:11 ^o Is. 5:24; 10:17; Mal. 4:1
¹² ^p [Is. 10:16-19, 33, 34] ⁴ *Or at peace or complete*

His fury is poured out like fire,
And the rocks are thrown down by Him.

- ⁷ ⁱ The LORD is good,
A stronghold in the day of trouble;
And ^jHe knows those who trust in Him.
⁸ But with an overflowing flood
He will make an utter end of its place,
And darkness will pursue His enemies.
⁹ ^kWhat do you ³conspire against the LORD?
^lHe will make an utter end of it.
Affliction will not rise up a second time.
¹⁰ For while tangled ^m*like* thorns,
ⁿAnd while drunken *like* drunkards,
^oThey shall be devoured like stubble fully dried.
¹¹ From you comes forth *one*
Who plots evil against the LORD,
A ⁴wicked counselor.
¹² Thus says the LORD:
“Though *they are* ⁵safe, and likewise many,
Yet in this manner they will be ^pcut down

1:1 Most of the biblical prophets directed their judgment oracles against the sinning peoples of Israel and Judah. **Nahum**, however, brought the word of God's judgment **against Nineveh**. The term **burden** was sometimes used by the prophets (see Hab. 1:1; Mal. 1:1) to describe the “heaviness” of their message of judgment.

1:2 avenges . . . furious: The repetition of words and the use of parallel terms are typical devices in Hebrew poetry for intensifying and sharpening the poet's message.

1:3 Slow to anger indicates the patience of the Lord (see Ex. 34:6, 7). However, God's patience is not a reason to disbelieve His final judgment (see Ps. 10). **whirlwind . . . storm . . . clouds:** The peoples of the ancient Middle East worshiped nature gods, particularly deities associated with storms, clouds, and rainfall. In Canaan, this fixation on storms was centered in the worship of Baal and his consorts Anat and Asherah. The Scriptures testify that there are no gods but the Lord; it is He who rules and is above all creation.

1:4 sea . . . rivers: The Lord's control extends to all bodies of water and to places of lush vegetation—including **Bashan, Carmel, and Lebanon**.

1:5, 6 quake . . . melt . . . heaves: The people of God had experienced such demonstrations of God's presence at the foot of Mt. Sinai when the Lord descended with His law (see Ex. 19). **indignation . . . anger . . . fury:** Grouping these three terms causes the force of the words to be felt more deeply. In other words, God's anger burned intensely against the sinful people of Nineveh.

1:7 The LORD is good: For the righteous, this is the best news of all. Because we know that the Lord is good, we can endure the tribulations of life.

1:8 flood . . . end . . . darkness: The judgment of the Lord will be inescapable. The word *flood* is both a poetic term for overwhelming devastation and a specific reference to the actual manner of Nineveh's fall. It is believed that the invaders of Nineveh entered the city through its flooded waterways (2:6).

1:9, 10 What do you conspire against the Lord: Who is wise enough, experienced enough, and strong enough to fight the power of God? No one, of course. At their very best, the enemies of God will be comic figures. Their best plans will be merely a tangle of **thorns**; their finest moves will be only the sloppy walk of **drunkards**.

1:11 Wicked is one of the harshest terms in biblical language, nearly a curse word. The term speaks of someone who is utterly worthless.

1:12, 13 Thus says the Lord: Here is an oracle of deliverance from God to His people. The present sense of safety and power that the enemy felt would not last; the past judgments of God on His nation would not continue. The Lord promised to **break off** the **yoke** that the enemy had placed on His people (see Is. 9:4).

jealous

(Heb. *qanno'*) (1:2; Josh. 24:19) Strong's #7072

This Hebrew term is related to a root word that can mean “to be eager, zealous for” (1 Kin. 19:10, 14), or even “to be furious” (Zech. 8:2). One of God's names is Jealous (Ex. 34:14). When the expression “the LORD your God is a jealous God” is used in the OT, it is usually associated with an injunction against idol worship (Ex. 20:5; Deut. 4:24; 5:9; 6:15). God's jealousy for His people is a claim for exclusive allegiance rooted in His holiness (Josh. 24:19) and His role as their Creator and Redeemer (Ps. 95:6, 7; 96:2-5). We tend to associate jealousy with a self-serving emotion that usually results from feelings of inadequacy. God's jealousy, in contrast, proceeds from His holiness. Because He alone is the Holy One (see Is. 6:3; 40:25), He will tolerate no rival (Ex. 20:5).

- When he passes through.
Though I have afflicted you,
I will afflict you no more;
13 For now I will break off his yoke
from you,
And burst your bonds apart.”
- 14 The LORD has given a command
concerning you:
6 “Your name shall be perpetuated no
longer.
Out of the house of your gods
I will cut off the carved image and
the molded image.
I will dig your ^agrave,
For you are ^rvile.”⁷
- 15 Behold, on the mountains
The ^sfeet of him who brings good
tidings,
Who proclaims peace!
O Judah, keep your appointed feasts,
Perform your vows.
For the ^swicked one shall no more
pass through you;
He is ^tutterly cut off.

The Destruction of Nineveh

2 He ¹ who scatters has come up
before your face.

Man the fort!
Watch the road!
Strengthen *your* flanks!
Fortify *your* power mightily.

- 2 For the LORD will restore the
excellence of Jacob
Like the excellence of Israel,

14 ^a Ezek. 32:22, 23
^r Nah. 3:6 ^s Lit. *No
more of your name
shall be fruitful* ⁷ Or
contemptible
15 ^s Is. 40:9; 52:7;
Rom. 10:15 ^t Is.
29:7, 8 ^s Lit. *one of
Belial*

CHAPTER 2

1 ¹ Vg. *He who
destroys*

3 ² Lit. *the cypresses
are shaken*; LXX,
Syr. *the horses
rush about*; Vg. *the
drivers are stupefied*
7 ³ Heb. *Huzzab*
8 ⁴ Lit. *Stand*
9 ^a Ezek. 7:19; Zeph.
1:18 ^s *Plunder*

For the emptiers have emptied them
out
And ruined their vine branches.

- 3 The shields of his mighty men *are*
made red,
The valiant men *are* in scarlet.
The chariots *come* with flaming
torches
In the day of his preparation,
And ² the spears are brandished.
4 The chariots rage in the streets,
They jostle one another in the broad
roads;
They seem like torches,
They run like lightning.
- 5 He remembers his nobles;
They stumble in their walk;
They make haste to her walls,
And the defense is prepared.
6 The gates of the rivers are opened,
And the palace is dissolved.
7 ³ It is decreed:
She shall be led away captive,
She shall be brought up;
And her maidservants shall lead *her*
as with the voice of doves,
Beating their breasts.
- 8 Though Nineveh of old *was* like a
pool of water,
Now they flee away.
4 “Halt! Halt!” *they cry*;
But no one turns back.
9 ⁵ Take spoil of silver!
Take spoil of ^a gold!

1:14 Here God spoke to His people's enemy—the nation of Assyria typified by its capital city Nineveh (v. 1). In destroying the nation's **name**, God would remove its power. Further, the Lord swore to destroy their false religious system, with its pagan temples, idols, and disgusting practices. **You are vile**: The only thing to be done with Nineveh was to **dig a grave** and bury it. This prophecy came true literally—the city was destroyed so completely that its very existence was questioned until its discovery by archaeologists in the nineteenth century (3:13–15).

1:15 Behold . . . The feet: The image is that of a herald of **peace** (see Is. 52:7). **O Judah**: With the promise of future deliverance from oppression, the prophet called for the people to live in righteousness and expectation. There is nothing better for the people of God in any age than to live in obedience to Him and in anticipation of His coming deliverance.

2:1 Man the fort: These were sarcastic words to the people of Nineveh and its leaders, as if they would be able to protect themselves against the wrath of the Lord.

2:2 The Lord will restore: The wrath of God against the enemies of His people means that one day the enemies will be destroyed and the people of God will be restored. **Excellence** means “majesty,” “beauty,” or “wonder” (see Is. 4:2). The ruin of Israel would not last forever.

2:3–13 This passage presents a description of the siege of Nineveh. The fall of Nineveh predicted by Nahum took place only a few years after this prophecy—in 612 B.C., followed by the final destruction of the Assyrian Empire in 609 B.C.

2:3 red . . . scarlet . . . flaming torches: These images speak of

blood, violence, and warfare. Isaiah refers to the custom the Assyrians had of rolling their outer garments in blood before a battle (see Is. 9:5) to strike terror in the hearts of their opponents. Here the tables would be turned. While others would have **shields**, **chariots**, and **spears**, the people of Nineveh would be bathed in blood—their own blood.

2:4 The chariots rage: The Assyrians used chariots as formidable war machines. The proficiency of the chariot drivers underlies the imagery of this verse. But as in the case of the shields and spears of v. 3, the chariots of Nineveh would not prevail no matter how fast they drove.

2:5 stumble: The people within the city would be so stunned to be under attack that they would appear helpless in their actions. **Nobles** may be used with sarcasm here; these people do not seem very impressive.

2:6 gates of the rivers: The destruction of Nineveh is believed to have taken place when the besiegers entered the city through its flooded waterways. The attack came at flood time, when rivers undermined the walls and defenses of the city. Archaeologists have found evidence of flood debris that may be associated with the destruction of the city. Thus the words of Nahum were fulfilled exactly. **2:7, 8 She shall be led away**: The nation that had made so much of taking captives would be made a captive by others. **Halt! Halt!**: No one would listen to their shouts of panic.

2:9, 10 spoil: Assyria had despoiled many nations, including Samaria and the cities of Israel. There seemed to be no end to the loot that could be found within its walls. Nonetheless, even Nineveh was exhausted of its treasures. At long last, it was **empty**.

There is no end of treasure,
Or wealth of every desirable prize.
10 She is empty, desolate, and waste!
The heart melts, and the knees shake;
Much pain is in every side,
And all their faces ^eare drained of color.

11 Where is the dwelling of the ^blions,
And the feeding place of the young lions,
Where the lion walked, the lioness and lion's cub,
And no one made them afraid?
12 The lion tore in pieces enough for his cubs,
⁷Killed for his lionesses,
^cFilled his caves with prey,
And his dens with ^dflesh.

13 "Behold, ^dI am against you," says the LORD of hosts, "I will burn ^gyour chariots in smoke, and the sword shall devour your young lions; I will cut off your prey from the earth, and the voice of your ^emessengers shall be heard no more."

The Woe of Nineveh

3 Woe to the ^abloody city!
It is all full of lies and robbery.
Its ¹victim never departs.
2 The noise of a whip
And the noise of rattling wheels,
Of galloping horses,
Of ²clattering chariots!
3 Horsemen charge with bright sword and glittering spear.
There is a multitude of slain,
A great number of bodies,
Countless corpses—
They stumble over the corpses—
4 Because of the multitude of ³harlotries of the ⁴seductive harlot,

10 ^e LXX, Tg., Vg. gather blackness; Joel 2:6
11 ^b Job 4:10, 11; Ezek. 19:2-7
12 ^c Is. 10:6; Jer. 51:34 ⁷ Lit. Strangled ⁸ Torn flesh
13 ^d Jer. 21:13; Ezek. 5:8; Nah. 3:5 ^e 2 Kin. 18:17-25; 19:9-13, 23
⁹ Lit. her

CHAPTER 3

1 ^e Ezek. 22:2, 3; 24:6-9; Hab. 2:12
¹ Lit. prey
2 ² bounding or jolting
4 ³ Spiritual unfaithfulness
⁴ Lit. goodly charm, in a bad sense

^b Is. 47:9-12; Rev. 18:2, 3
5 ^c Jer. 50:31; Ezek. 26:3; Nah. 2:13 ^d Is. 47:2, 3; Jer. 13:26
6 ^e Nah. 1:14 ^f Heb. 10:33 ⁵ despicable
7 ^g Rev. 18:10 ^h Jon. 3:3; 4:11 ⁱ Is. 51:19; Jer. 15:5
8 / Amos 6:2
^k Jer. 46:25; Ezek. 30:14-16 ⁶ Ancient Thebes; Tg., Vg. populous Alexandria ⁷ Lit. rivers, the Nile and the surrounding canals
9 ¹ Gen. 10:6; Jer. 46:9; Ezek. 27:10
⁸ LXX her
10 ^m Ps. 137:9; Is. 13:16; Hos. 13:16
ⁿ Lam. 2:19 ^o Joel 3:3; Obad. 11
11 ^p Is. 49:26; Jer. 25:27; Nah. 1:10

^bThe mistress of sorceries,
Who sells nations through her harlotries,
And families through her sorceries.
5 "Behold, I am ^cagainst you," says the LORD of hosts;
^d"I will lift your skirts over your face,
I will show the nations your nakedness,
And the kingdoms your shame.
6 I will cast abominable filth upon you,
Make you ^evile,⁵
And make you ^fa spectacle.
7 It shall come to pass that all who look upon you
^gWill flee from you, and say,
^h"Nineveh is laid waste!
ⁱWho will bemoan her?"
Where shall I seek comforters for you?"
8 ^jAre you better than ^kNo ⁶Amon That was situated by the ⁷River,
That had the waters around her,
Whose rampart was the sea,
Whose wall was the sea?
9 Ethiopia and Egypt were her strength,
And it was boundless;
^lPut and Lubim were ⁸your helpers.
10 Yet she was carried away,
She went into captivity;
^mHer young children also were dashed to pieces
ⁿAt the head of every street;
They ^ocast lots for her honorable men,
And all her great men were bound in chains.
11 You also will be ^pdrunk;
You will be hidden;
You also will seek refuge from the enemy.

2:11, 12 Nineveh was the city of lions (v. 13). Yet despite all the horrors that the lion of Nineveh had brought to other nations, it would no longer need to be feared by anyone.

2:13 Although the Babylonians conquered the city, they were only God's instruments. Nineveh's greatest foe was the Lord of hosts Himself.

3:1-19 Chapter three of Nahum is a woe oracle explaining the reasons for the siege and destruction of Nineveh.

3:1 the bloody city: Nineveh was known throughout the Middle East as a city that excelled in violence and bloodshed.

3:2, 3 Horses and chariots were instruments of war. Verse 3 describes the horrors of the nation's war machine, which resulted in countless corpses.

3:4 Harlotries refers to paganism. Any worship of gods other than the God of Scripture is an act of spiritual prostitution. Nineveh was so adept at pagan practices that the city earned the descriptive title, the mistress of sorceries.

3:5 I am against you: This repetition of this phrase from 2:13 is more chilling each time it is heard. Who could survive the Lord's opposition? lift your skirts: The Lord would publicly humiliate Nineveh.

3:6, 7 The Lord described the fate of Nineveh as comparable to a person on whom unspeakable filth was cast. When Nineveh lay in ruins, no one would bemoan her. The nations would be glad that the city was gone.

3:8 No Amon . . . the River: The destruction of the city of Thebes near the Nile River in 663 B.C. was going to be a template for the destruction of Nineveh. No Amon is the Hebrew name for Thebes, derived from the Egyptian name meaning "City of [the god] Amon." The argument seems to suggest that before its destruction, no one would have even dreamed of the fall of Thebes. But the destruction had happened—not long before the writing of the Book of Nahum. The city of Thebes was rebuilt only to be destroyed later during the Roman period (29 B.C.). Nineveh, however, would never be rebuilt.

3:9, 10 The city of No Amon had many powerful allies, but they were not sufficient to protect her in her hour of need. Who would ally with Nineveh to fight off the Lord's attack?

3:11 drunk . . . hidden . . . seek refuge: Nineveh would be like a helpless drunk hoping for refuge but finding nowhere to turn for it.

12 All your strongholds *are* ^qfig trees
with ripened figs:
If they are shaken,
They fall into the mouth of the eater.
13 Surely, ^ryour people in your midst
are women!
The gates of your land are wide open
for your enemies;
Fire shall devour the ^sbars of your
gates.
14 Draw your water for the siege!
^tFortify your strongholds!
Go into the clay and tread the
mortar!
Make strong the brick kiln!
15 There the fire will devour you,
The sword will cut you off;
It will eat you up like a ^ulocust.

Make yourself many—like the locust!
Make yourself many— like the
swarming locusts!
16 You have multiplied your ^vmerchants
more than the stars of heaven.

12 ^q Rev. 6:12, 13
13 ^r Is. 19:16; Jer.
50:37; 51:30 ^s Ps.
147:13; Jer. 51:30
14 ^t Nah. 2:1
15 ^u Joel 1:4
16 ^v Rev. 18:3, 11-19

17 ^w Rev. 9:7
18 ^x Ex. 15:16; Ps.
76:5, 6; Is. 56:10; Jer.
51:57 ^y Jer. 50:18;
Ezek. 31:3 ^z 1 Kin.
22:17; Is. 13:14
19 ^a Jer. 46:11; Mic.
1:9 ^b Job 27:23;
Lam. 2:15; Zeph.
2:15

The locust plunders and flies
away.
17^w Your commanders *are* like *swarming*
locusts,
And your generals like great
grasshoppers,
Which camp in the hedges on a cold
day;
When the sun rises they flee
away,
And the place where they *are* is not
known.

18^x Your shepherds slumber, O ^yking of
Assyria;
Your nobles rest *in the dust*.
Your people are ^zscattered on the
mountains,
And no one gathers them.
19 Your injury *has* no healing,
^a Your wound is severe.
^b All who hear news of you
Will clap *their* hands over you,
For upon whom has not your
wickedness passed continually?

3:12 Nahum satirically describes the **strongholds** of Nineveh as being so easily defeated that they would be like fruit trees that drop their **figs** into waiting mouths.
3:14, 15 Nahum taunted Nineveh by telling the people to prepare for their siege. The actual siege of Nineveh continued over two years.
3:16, 17 Despite the great economic and military strength of Nineveh, there was nothing lasting in the city's power. **When the**

sun rises: The people of Nineveh would be like nocturnal insects that disappear at daylight.
3:18 Your shepherds slumber: When the shepherds are not alert, the sheep cannot be saved from danger.
3:19 All who hear: Every nation and people that had suffered under the abusive power of Nineveh would shout and **clap** upon hearing of the city's destruction. There would be no mourning for Nineveh.

THE BOOK OF HABAKKUK



“O LORD, how long shall I cry, and You will not hear?” (1:2). Habakkuk was unique among the prophets in that he asked questions of God. Most prophets were filled with messages: “Hear the word of the Lord.” Even if everyone doubted the Lord’s word, the prophet would still believe. And if the prophet did have any misgivings, he kept them to himself.

But again, Habakkuk was different. To raise these questions was—for our sake—part of his message. His questions were, “Why does evil in Judah go unpunished?” “How can a just God use a wicked nation like Babylon to punish His chosen people?” Habakkuk wanted to know, just as we do, what God was doing and why. There seemed to be too much evil among the “righteous” and too much freewheeling power among the wicked.

God did not strike Habakkuk down for these questions. He answered. The Lord Himself will establish His kingdom. He will hold all people and nations accountable. The present may be filled with wickedness and chaos, but the future belongs to the righteous—the truly righteous. God will bring in His kingdom, give rest and salvation to His children, and judge His people’s adversaries.

Author and Date We know very little about the prophet Habakkuk. The reference to music (see 3:1, 19; 1 Chr. 25:1–8) may mean that he was a Levite associated with the temple singers. The designation *the prophet* is an official title, showing that others recognized him as a prophet of the Lord. His name Habakkuk appears twice in the book (1:1; 3:1). Some scholars have associated the name with the Hebrew word for *embraced*. Thus his name may mean “Embraced by God.”

Habakkuk prophesied during the fall of Nineveh in 612 B.C. and the rise of Babylon as the Neo-Babylonian Empire. By 605 B.C., Assyria and Egypt had been defeated by Babylon at Carchemish. Judah’s days were numbered, and Babylon’s power was rapidly expanding. In addition, the death of King Josiah in 609 B.C. brought an end to an era of religious reform in Judah. It seemed that the wicked were prevailing both inside and outside Judah. Habakkuk cried out against the violence, lawlessness, and injustice he saw all around him.

Structure The Book of Habakkuk contains two prophetic laments (1:2–4, 12–17) in which Habakkuk questions God’s righteousness. The Lord responds by explaining His plans to judge (1:5–11; 2:1–4). This is followed by five woes that taunt those who have committed evil with their certain doom (2:6–20), as if to say, “Don’t worry, Habakkuk—God is righteous; He will judge.” The book ends with the prophet’s prayer of praise and his acknowledgment of God’s sovereignty over all outcomes.

Theology Nations are given to greed, power, idolatry, and to immorality. People treat one another in an inhumane fashion. Often it seems as if power and success come to those who break God’s laws and reject His legitimate claims on creation. Yet according to Habakkuk, the Lord remains sovereign; He sits in His holy temple



Assyrian officials recording the loot taken from a conquered city. Habakkuk warns the Babylonian armies, which have plundered goods from the people of Judah, that the tables will soon turn (Hab. 2:6–8).

Z. Radovan/www.BibleLandPictures.com

watching the earth. He will eventually judge each person for his or her life (2:20). While people may be seduced into wickedness by the allure of power and success (2:6–20), a glorious future awaits those who submit to God (2:4). Habakkuk’s prophetic vision (2:2) and prayer (3:1) provide a proper perspective for viewing the injustices of this world. The Almighty is in control. He will establish His righteous kingdom in the end. In that day, all wrongs will be made right: The wicked will be judged for their sinfulness, and the righteous will be saved. Believers look forward to this day with great joy (3:18, 19).

CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

But Habakkuk’s name is also appropriate because he calls attention to the salvation by which God embraces those who “live by faith.” The word “salvation” appears three times in reference to his prediction of the Anointed One. “You went forth for the salvation of Your people, for salvation with Your Anointed. . . . I will joy in the God of my salvation” (3:13, 18).

Interestingly enough, that Hebrew word for “salvation” is the root word from which the name “Jesus” comes (Matt. 1:21). Whether the prophet sees the full extent to which Jesus will accomplish the world’s salvation is uncertain. But he definitely sees an artist’s rendering of the reign of Christ. He writes, “The earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea” (2:14).

612 B.C.
Nineveh falls to the Medes and Babylonians

609 B.C.
Death of Josiah king of Judah

605 B.C.
Nebuchadnezzar’s reign begins

HABAKKUK OUTLINE

- I. Habakkuk’s first complaint 1:1–4
- II. God’s first response 1:5–11
- III. Habakkuk’s second complaint 1:12–2:1
- IV. God’s second response 2:2–20
- V. Habakkuk’s prayer 3:1–19

605 B.C.
Some Judeans are taken captive to Babylon

586 B.C.
Jerusalem falls to the Babylonians

The ¹burden which the prophet Habakkuk saw.

The Prophet's Question

- ² O LORD, how long shall I cry,
^a And You will not hear?
 Even cry out to You, ^b“Violence!”
 And You will ^cnot save.
- ³ Why do You show me iniquity,
 And cause *me* to see ²trouble?
 For plundering and violence *are*
 before me;
 There is strife, and contention arises.
- ⁴ Therefore the law is powerless,
 And justice never goes forth.
 For the ^dwicked surround the
 righteous;
 Therefore perverse judgment
 proceeds.

The LORD's Reply

- ⁵ “Look ^e among the nations and
 watch—
 Be utterly astounded!
 For *I will* work a work in your days
 Which you would not believe, though
 it were told *you*.
- ⁶ For indeed I am ^fraising up the
 Chaldeans,
 A bitter and hasty ^gnation
 Which marches through the breadth
 of the earth,
 To possess dwelling places *that are*
 not theirs.
- ⁷ They are terrible and dreadful;

CHAPTER 1

¹ ¹ oracle, prophecy
² ^a Lam. 3:8 ^b Mic. 2:1, 2; 3:1-3 ^c [Job 21:5-16]
³ ² Or toil
⁴ ^d Jer. 12:1
⁵ ^e Is. 29:14; Ezek. 12:22-28
⁶ ^f Deut. 28:49, 50; 2 Kin. 24:2; 2 Chr. 36:17; Jer. 4:11-13; Mic. 4:10 ^g Ezek. 7:24; 21:31

⁸ ^h Jer. 4:13 ⁱ Job 9:26; 39:29, 30; Lam. 4:19; Ezek. 17:3; Hos. 8:1; Matt. 24:28; Luke 17:37
³ Lit. horsemen
⁴ Lit. spring about
¹¹ / Dan. 5:4 ⁵ Lit. spirit or wind
¹² ^k Deut. 33:27; Ps. 90:2; 93:2; Mal. 3:6
¹³ Is. 10:5-7; Mal. 3:5
^m Jer. 25:9

- Their judgment and their dignity
 proceed from themselves.
- ⁸ Their horses also are ^hswifter than
 leopards,
 And more fierce than evening wolves.
 Their ³chargers ⁴charge ahead;
 Their cavalry comes from afar;
 They fly as the ⁱeagle *that* hastens
 to eat.
- ⁹ “They all come for violence;
 Their faces are set *like* the east wind.
 They gather captives like sand.
- ¹⁰ They scoff at kings,
 And princes are scorned by them.
 They deride every stronghold,
 For they heap up earthen *mounds*
 and seize it.
- ¹¹ Then *his* ⁵mind changes, and he
 transgresses;
 He commits offense,
^jAscribing this power to his god.”

The Prophet's Second Question

- ¹² Are You not ^kfrom everlasting,
 O LORD my God, my Holy One?
 We shall not die.
 O LORD, ¹You have appointed them
 for judgment;
 O Rock, You have marked them for
^mcorrection.
- ¹³ *You are* of purer eyes than to behold
 evil,
 And cannot look on wickedness.
 Why do You look on those who deal
 treacherously,

1:1 A **burden** refers to a prophetic oracle, usually addressed to a foreign nation (see Is. 13:1).

1:2 Habakkuk spoke to God using His covenant name **LORD** (see Ex. 3:14, 15). **how long**: This question is phrased as a formal complaint (see Ps. 13:1, 2).

1:3 iniquity . . . trouble: The deterioration of society had become a cause of frustration and disappointment for the godly. **plundering and violence**: Abuse of power, acts of injustice, and oppressive deeds were common in Judah. **strife . . . contention**: The people of Judah argued with each other and were involved in destructive litigation.

1:4 the law is powerless: The revelation of God given at Mt. Sinai had little impact on the hearts of people whose lives were focused on material success. These people had little interest in living by God's definition of what is fair and humane. **wicked**: God's chosen people committed and tolerated heinous acts through corruption of the courts. **righteous**: There were always people who were faithful to the Lord, a righteous remnant. Here the godly were restricted in what they could say and do because of the evil that surrounded them. **perverse judgment**: The powerful people of Israel corrupted justice.

1:5 Look among the nations: The international scene during Habakkuk's lifetime was full of turmoil, with Assyria on the decline and Babylonia on the rise. **work a work**: The Hebrew words suggest that something ominous and impressive was about to occur.

1:6 I am raising up: God controls the nations for His own purposes (see Dan. 2:21), sometimes indirectly and at other times directly. **Chaldeans** is another word for Babylonians. **bitter**: The Babylonians were harsh and oppressive in their rule. **hasty**: Under Neb-

uchadnezzar, Babylon quickly had become the dominant power of the day.

1:7 terrible and dreadful: Far from being humane, the Babylonians prided themselves on their arrogant use of raw power. **Their judgment and their dignity proceed from themselves**: The Babylonian system of law and order had no regard for other legal systems.

1:8 The Babylonians' use of **horses** and chariots made them fearsome in the ancient world. **fierce . . . wolves**: The Babylonians were powerful and tyrannical. **eagle**: The Palestinian eagle is a bird of prey, a vulture. These images from the animal kingdom present a vivid picture of the ferocious nature of this world power.

1:9 Habakkuk had observed **violence** in Judah (v. 2), but Babylon *relished* violence. **gather captives like sand**: The Babylonians resettled numerous conquered peoples with little regard for them as individuals.

1:10 scoff . . . scorned: The Babylonians did not respect authorities and powers other than their own. **deride every stronghold**: The Babylonians mocked human systems of fortification, bursting through any defense they encountered.

1:12 Are You not . . . my Holy One: Habakkuk's point seems to be that God's holiness should have prohibited Him from using a “dirty” instrument like Babylon to accomplish His purposes in judging and reproving His own people.

1:13 purer eyes: Habakkuk wondered how God could look on as the wicked Babylonians perverted justice. **A person more righteous than he**: This was the ethical dilemma that faced Habakkuk: The Judeans were less corrupt and idolatrous than the Babylonians, who were being used to judge them for their sins.

- And hold Your tongue when the wicked devours
A person more righteous than he?
14 Why do You make men like fish of the sea,
Like creeping things *that have* no ruler over them?
- 15 They take up all of them with a hook,
They catch them in their net,
And gather them in their dragnet.
Therefore they rejoice and are glad.
16 Therefore ⁿthey sacrifice to their net,
And burn incense to their dragnet;
Because by them their share *is*
⁶sumptuous
And their food plentiful.
17 Shall they therefore empty their net,
And continue to slay nations without pity?

2 I will ^astand my watch
And set myself on the rampart,
And watch to see what He will say to me,
And what I will answer when I am corrected.

The Just Live by Faith

- ²Then the LORD answered me and said:

^b“Write the vision
And make *it* plain on tablets,
That he may run who reads it.
3 For ^cthe vision is yet for an appointed time;
But at the end it will speak, and it will ^dnot lie.

16 ^a Deut. 8:17
⁶ Lit. *fat*

CHAPTER 2

1 ^a Is. 21:8, 11
2 ^b Is. 8:1
3 ^c Dan. 8:17, 19;
10:14 ^d Ezek.
12:24, 25

^e [Heb. 10:37,
38] ^f Ps. 27:13, 14;
[James 5:7, 8; 2 Pet.
3:9]
4 ^g [John 3:36];
Rom. 1:17; Heb.
10:38
5 ^h Prov. 27:20;
30:16; Is. 51:11-15
1 ⁱ Or *Sheol*
6 ^j Mic. 2:4 2 Syr.,
Vg., *thick clay*
7 ^k Lit. *those who*
bite you
8 ^l Is. 33:1; Jer. 27:7;
Ezek. 39:10; Zech.
2:8 4 ^m Or *bloodshed*

Though it tarries, ^ewait for it;
Because it will ^fsurely come,
It will not tarry.

- 4 “Behold the proud,
His soul is not upright in him;
But the ^gjust shall live by his faith.

Woe to the Wicked

- 5 “Indeed, because he transgresses by wine,
He is a proud man,
And he does not stay at home.
Because he ^henlarges his desire as
ⁱhell,
And he *is* like death, and cannot be satisfied,
He gathers to himself all nations
And heaps up for himself all peoples.
- 6 “Will not all these ⁱtake up a proverb against him,
And a taunting riddle against him,
and say,
‘Woe to him who increases
What is not his—how long?
And to him who loads himself with
²many pledges’?”
- 7 Will not ³your creditors rise up suddenly?
Will they not awaken who oppress you?
And you will become their booty.
- 8 ^jBecause you have plundered many nations,
All the remnant of the people shall plunder you,
Because of men’s ⁴blood

1:14 Habakkuk’s charges against the Lord became even more daring. The prophet charged the Lord with reducing humans to the level of **fish** or insects and with causing chaos among the nations.

1:16 they sacrifice to their net: This phrase speaks of the contemptuous pride of the Babylonians in their devices of destruction.

1:17 Habakkuk wanted to know how God could allow the brazen activity of the Babylonians to **continue** unabated. The prophet reasoned that God surely had a desire to punish the Babylonians for their pride.

2:1 my watch . . . on the rampart: Habakkuk stationed himself as a watchman to look at the nations, as God had commanded him (1:5). The prophet also waited expectantly for God’s response to his three charges in 1:12–17. **what He will say to me:** Habakkuk’s faith is seen in his anticipation of a response from God. **when I am corrected:** This phrase indicates the prophet’s submission to God.

2:2 The command to **write** the revelation is unusual. Generally prophets *spoke* the word of the Lord first. The term **vision** here is related to the verb translated “saw” in 1:1. The noun speaks of a prophetic revelation (see Is. 1:1). **he may run who reads it:** Messengers would proclaim the divine oracle.

2:3 An appointed time speaks of a determined time in God’s eyes. **Though it tarries, wait for it:** God knows His plan and the outworking of all things in accordance with His purposes. The godly are responsible to study and proclaim His revelation while awaiting its fulfillment. **it will surely come:** The assurance of fulfillment lies in God Himself. **It will not tarry:** The fulfillment of the vision would not take any longer than God had planned.

2:4 The proud refers to the Babylonians, who exalted themselves and boasted of their conquests and power. **His soul is not upright in him:** The Babylonians had no regard for God, His commandments, or His people. **the just shall live by his faith:** True righteousness before God is linked to genuine faith in God. A proud person relies on self, power, position, and accomplishment; a righteous person relies on the Lord.

2:5 proud man: This arrogant and boastful person is a personification of Babylon (v. 4). The term **hell** is used here as a personification of death which, like a greedy person, is never satisfied (see Prov. 30:15, 16). **all nations . . . all peoples:** These peoples of the earth should have been gathered together before the Lord in holy worship (see Ps. 117:1); instead, they became morsels for the rapacious appetite of Babylon.

2:6 A woe oracle is an oracle of judgment consisting of two parts: a declaration of the wrong and a notice of impending judgment. The judgment usually applies the principle of the law of retaliation: a wrong would come back to haunt the wrongdoer. **increases . . . what is not his:** The Law prohibited lending for the purpose of charging interest (see Deut. 23:19). **pledges:** The practice of pledging something as a guarantee for repayment was permitted under the Law, but with limitations to ensure the humane treatment of people (see Ex. 22:26, 27; Deut. 24:10–13).

2:7 The Hebrew term for **creditors** has the idea of “those who bite,” suggesting sudden, hurtful attacks (see Mic. 3:5).

And the violence of the land *and* the city,
And of all who dwell in it.

9 “Woe to him who covets evil gain for his house,
That he may ^kset his nest on high,
That he may be delivered from the ⁵power of disaster!

10 You give shameful counsel to your house,
Cutting off many peoples,
And sin *against* your soul.

11 For the stone will cry out from the wall,
And the beam from the timbers will answer it.

12 “Woe to him who builds a town with bloodshed,
Who establishes a city by iniquity!

13 Behold, *is it* not of the LORD of hosts
That the peoples labor ⁶to feed the fire,
And nations weary themselves in vain?

14 For the earth will be filled
With the knowledge of the glory of the LORD,
As the waters cover the sea.

15 “Woe to him who gives drink to his neighbor,
⁷Pressing *him* to your ^lbottle,
Even to make *him* drunk,

9 ⁴ Jer. 49:16; Obad.
4 ⁵ Lit. *hand of evil*
13 ⁶ Lit. *for what satisfies fire*, for what is of no lasting value
15 ¹ Hos. 7:5 ⁷ Lit. *Attaching or Joining*

⁸ Lit. *their*
16 ⁹ DSS, LXX *reell*;
Syr., Vg. *fall fast asleep!*
20 ^m Zeph. 1:7;
Zech. 2:13

That you may look on ⁸his nakedness!

16 You are filled with shame instead of glory.

You also—drink!
And ⁹be exposed as uncircumcised!
The cup of the LORD’s right hand *will* be turned against you,
And utter shame will be on your glory.

17 For the violence *done to* Lebanon will cover you,
And the plunder of beasts *which* made them afraid,
Because of men’s blood
And the violence of the land *and* the city,
And of all who dwell in it.

18 “What profit is the image, that its maker should carve it,
The molded image, a teacher of lies,
That the maker of its mold should trust in it,
To make mute idols?

19 Woe to him who says to wood, ‘Awake!’
To silent stone, ‘Arise! It shall teach!’
Behold, it is overlaid with gold and silver,
Yet in it there is no breath at all.

20 “But ^mthe LORD is in His holy temple.
Let all the earth keep silence before Him.”

2:9 evil gain: Gaining property through extortion and the abuse of power was strictly prohibited in the Law of Moses (see Deut. 16:19). **his nest:** As a bird builds a nest far away from people and wild animals, so the rich work hard at avoiding threats to their fortune.

2:11 the stone will cry out . . . the timbers will answer it: The whole structure of Israel’s society called out for justice; every part reverberated with the need for righting wrongs.

2:12 Micah also spoke against the leaders of Judah, who were developing the **city** and kingdom at the expense of humane treatment of others, and of justice (see Mic. 3:10).

2:13 LORD of hosts speaks of God as the commander of the armies of the heavens (see Hag. 1:5).

2:14 God’s future kingdom on earth will feature a reign of righteousness (see Is. 2:1–4; Mic. 4:1–5). All humanity on the renewed earth will know the Lord and live in accordance with His will. The structures of human systems, adequate as they are for the present, will fall under God’s judgment because they encourage a spirit of independence from Him. **knowledge:** What Satan fraudulently promised in Gen. 3:5, God will deliver. **The glory of the LORD** speaks of the full manifestation of His person, significance, presence, and wonder. The true knowledge of God in the time of His kingdom on earth will be like **the waters**—all-embracing, inescapable, and fully enveloping.

2:16 Only God’s kingdom is glorious. The **glory** of human kingdoms, such as Babylon, will be transformed into disgrace. **be exposed:** In their nakedness the Babylonians would expose themselves as being **uncircumcised**, not part of God’s people nor recipients of His mercy. **The cup of the LORD’s right hand** represents the wrath of God (see Is. 51:17, 22; Rev. 14:10; 16:19).

2:18 teacher of lies . . . trust in it: Idolatry begins with deception,

encourages deception, and calls for a commitment to deception (see Is. 44:20).

2:20 the LORD is in His holy temple: These words are not set in a context of worship of God by His people. The Lord is sovereign and holy. He looks at the nations and holds them accountable. **keep silence before Him:** The call to silence is not an invitation to worship, but a command to reflect on the terrible state of all who fall into the hands of the angry God (see Zeph. 1:7).

image

(Heb. *pesel*) (2:18; Lev. 26:1; Deut. 5:8; 2 Kin. 21:7; Is. 42:17) Strong’s #6459

This term is related to a verbal root meaning “to hew out stone” or “to cut or carve wood” (see Ex. 34:4). A *pesel* is an image or idol in the likeness of a human being or animal made from stone, wood, or metal. God prohibited the Hebrews from making such idols at Mt. Sinai (Ex. 20:4). God intended the lack of images among the Hebrews to be one distinguishing feature of their true religion. Tragically, Israel followed the example of their pagan neighbors and worshiped carved images (Judg. 18:30; 2 Chr. 33:7). The psalmist describes such images as worthless and those who worship them as shameful (Ps. 97:7). Both Isaiah (Is. 40:19, 20; 44:9–20) and Habakkuk (2:18, 19) mock those who would put their trust in images made with mere human hands. They have no capacity to see, hear, speak, or do anything for their devotees.

The Prophet's Prayer

3 A prayer of Habakkuk the prophet,
on ¹ Shigionoth.

2 O LORD, I have heard Your speech
and was afraid;

O LORD, revive Your work in the
midst of the years!

In the midst of the years make it
known;

In wrath remember mercy.

3 God came from Teman,
The Holy One from Mount Paran.

Selah

His glory covered the heavens,
And the earth was full of His praise.

4 His brightness was like the light;
He had rays *flashing* from His hand,
And there His power *was* hidden.

5 Before Him went pestilence,
And fever followed at His feet.

6 He stood and measured the earth;
He looked and startled the nations.
^aAnd the everlasting mountains were
scattered,

The perpetual hills bowed.
His ways *are* everlasting.

7 I saw the tents of Cushan in
affliction;
The curtains of the land of Midian
trembled.

8 O LORD, were *You* displeased with
the rivers,
Was Your anger against the rivers,
Was Your wrath against the sea,
That *You* rode on Your horses,
Your chariots of salvation?

9 Your bow was made quite ready;
Oaths were sworn over *Your*
²arrows.

Selah

CHAPTER 3

¹ ¹ Exact meaning
unknown

⁶ ^a Nah. 1:5

⁹ ² Lit. *tribes* or

rods, cf. v. 14

¹⁰ ^b Ex. 14:22

¹¹ ^c Josh. 10:12-14

¹² ³ Or *threshed*

¹⁵ ^d Ps. 77:19;

Hab. 3:8

¹⁶ ^e Ps. 119:120

You divided the earth with rivers.

10 The mountains saw *You* and
trembled;

The overflowing of the water
passed by.

The deep uttered its voice,
And ^blifted its hands on high.

11 The ^csun and moon stood still in
their habitation;

At the light of Your arrows they
went,

At the shining of Your glittering
spear.

12 You marched through the land in
indignation;

You ³trampled the nations in anger.

13 You went forth for the salvation of
Your people,

For salvation with Your Anointed.

You struck the head from the house
of the wicked,

By laying bare from foundation to
neck.

Selah

14 You thrust through with his own
arrows

The head of his villages.

They came out like a whirlwind to
scatter me;

Their rejoicing was like feasting on
the poor in secret.

15 ^dYou walked through the sea with
Your horses,

Through the heap of great waters.

16 When I heard, ^emy body trembled;

My lips quivered at *the* voice;
Rottenness entered my bones;

And I trembled in myself,

That I might rest in the day of
trouble.

When he comes up to the people,
He will invade them with his troops.

3:2 I have heard: Habakkuk knew the stories of God's mighty acts as celebrated in song and in the feasts and festivals of Israel. These mighty acts included the Exodus from Egypt, the miracles by the Red Sea, and the conquest of the land. **Speech** here signifies the message of God's great acts, rather than the communication process. **afraid:** As he meditated on God's work in human affairs, Habakkuk was overcome with an awe-inspiring sense of the greatness of the Lord. **revive . . . make it known:** Habakkuk prayed for God's renewed involvement in Israel. **In the midst of the years:** This was a way of calling for a quick response.

3:3 Teman is a poetic reference to God's appearance at Sinai (see Deut. 33:2). **Selah** is probably a musical term, but its exact meaning is unknown. It may indicate a sudden shouting of "Amen," a moment of silence, or a musical chord.

3:4 Habakkuk compared the appearance of God at Sinai (v. 3) to a thunderstorm, with its darkness and flashing lights (see Ps. 18:9-14). **His power was hidden:** While God reveals evidence of His power, its totality and greatness remain hidden.

3:5 pestilence . . . fever: These plagues are personified as messengers of judgment (see Deut. 28:21, 22).

3:6 everlasting mountains . . . perpetual hills: The prophets

often portrayed nature quaking, mountains shaking, and creation in turmoil at the coming of God (see Is. 24:1-3; Jer. 4:24-26; Mic. 1:3, 4; Nah. 1:5).

3:7 Cushan . . . Midian: These tribes are representative of the quaking nations.

3:8 rivers . . . sea: The Lord had divided the Red Sea and the Jordan River for His people to cross (see Ex. 14:26-15:5; Josh. 3:14-17). **chariots of salvation:** The appearance of the Lord was for the purpose of bringing deliverance to His people.

3:11 The sun and moon stood still: This is an allusion to the battle of Gibeon (see Josh. 10:12, 13). Habakkuk portrayed God as a Warrior armed with a bow, **arrows**, and a **spear** (see Ex. 15:3; Ps. 18:14; 77:17).

3:13 The Lord's acts of vengeance against the nations would comfort His people, because those acts would lead to Israel's **salvation** (see 2 Thess. 1:7). The people of God as a nation were **anointed** (see Ex. 19:6; Ps. 114:2). **The house of the wicked** is an allusion to Israel's redemption from Egypt.

3:16 Habakkuk was overcome with a sense of awe at God, as well as a sense of his own weakness. **rest in the day of trouble:** The prophet encouraged the godly not to be anxious in adversity.

A Hymn of Faith

17 Though the fig tree may not
blossom,
Nor fruit be on the vines;
Though the labor of the olive may
fail,
And the fields yield no food;
Though the flock may be cut off
from the fold,
And there be no herd in the
stalls—

18 ^fIs. 41:16; 61:10
19 ^g2 Sam. 22:34;
Ps. 18:33 ^hDeut.
32:13; 33:29 ⁴Heb.
YHWH Adonai

18 Yet I will ^frejoice in the LORD,
I will joy in the God of my salvation.
19⁴ The LORD God is my strength;
He will make my feet like ^gdeer's
^{feet},
And He will make me ^hwalk on my
high hills.
To the Chief Musician. With my
stringed instruments.

3:19 The LORD God: Here the divine name *Yahweh* is tied to the term *Adonai*, which means "Lord." **my strength:** God will strengthen those who trust in Him (see Ps. 18:32, 39). He will give those who live by faith the same confidence that a surefooted **deer** has in climbing mountains (see Mal. 4:2). Like a victorious army, the righteous with God's strength will occupy the **high hills**.

THE BOOK OF ZEPHANIAH



WE HAVE A WORD for people who predict terrible times ahead: doomsayer. It's an unflattering word, meant to poke fun at the bearers of bad news. We don't really want to believe their predictions of doom, so we caricature them. Maybe they will feel ashamed and go away. Sometimes it helps a little when the prophet of doom offers a solution. The unspoken question "Is there any hope?" is on everyone's mind.

Zephaniah's message had both halves of the bad-news-good-news equation. His first words were bad news indeed: The day of the Lord was coming and that meant terrible judgment. The Israelites had acted like their pagan neighbors—they had scorned God's law, worshiped false gods, and sinned without remorse long enough. Now it was time to repent: They had to turn back to their God or face the consequences.

It was the "turn back to God" part of Zephaniah's message that offered a ray of hope. And to those who listened and responded to his call, the good news wiped out every line of bad. God would restore those who sought Him.

History tells us that it worked. The Book of Zephaniah tells about events that took place in the city of Jerusalem in the late seventh century B.C., when Josiah was king. The northern kingdom Israel had been destroyed nearly a century earlier by the Assyrians. The southern kingdom Judah had suffered under the extraordinarily wicked rules of Manasseh (697–642 B.C.) and Amon (642–640 B.C.). The evils of their reigns had made doom appear certain. But the godly King Josiah led an important revival that affected all Judah. Scripture reports that this revival, though short-lived, delayed God's judgment, the invasion by Babylon (2 Chr. 34:27, 28).

Zephaniah's message announced the day of the Lord—a coming day of doom—in the darkest of terms, but it also promised the blessing of future glory in a picture as bright as the doom was dark.

Author and Date The prophet Zephaniah traced his ancestry back four generations to Hezekiah, most likely Judah's famous king. After the long and evil reign of Manasseh (697–642 B.C.) and his son Amon (642–640 B.C.), Josiah began his rule of Judah. Zephaniah began ministering as prophet in Jerusalem in the same year as the great prophet Jeremiah (627 B.C.). They and Hulda the prophetess (see 2 Chr. 34:14–28) witnessed the religious reform that Josiah started, a reform that unfortunately did not last. After Josiah's death, the people returned to their errant ways; less than 50 years later (around 586 B.C.), God used Babylon to discipline them.

Themes Many books of prophecy in the Bible speak of “the day of the Lord” (especially the Book of Joel). This day is a time of judgment that includes both God’s people (Israel and Judah) and the surrounding nations. The prophet Zephaniah scolded Judah’s leaders for countless acts of wickedness (3:1–7). His prophecies against the nations included Philistia (2:4–7), Moab and Ammon (2:8–11), Ethiopia (2:12), and Assyria (2:13–15). These nations were judged because of pride and arrogance against God’s people and because of their continuing idolatry.

But the last section of Zephaniah’s prophecy contains words of hope (3:8–20): promises of protection for the remnant and promises for the future of those who know Him truly. In a future day, peoples of all nations will come to worship the Lord (2:11; 3:9). His own people will be renewed in righteousness (3:11–13). And the King of kings Himself will rule in their midst (3:15; see Rev. 21:1–6). That day of the Lord’s return will be a day of song and gladness. Even God will burst out in joyful singing (3:16, 17). The raging anger of the Lord (1:1, 2) will be replaced by His happy singing, for salvation will finally have come to His people.



Ashkelon tell. A tell is a hill formed by the accumulated debris of many ancient settlements one above the other. Ashkelon is one of the towns that Zephaniah predicted would be destroyed (Zeph. 2:4).

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CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

Jesus seized on Zephaniah’s picture of the day of the Lord. On one occasion He referred to Zephaniah 1:3, when He spoke of His second coming and gathering “out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness” (Matt. 13:41). On another occasion, Jesus no doubt envisioned Zephaniah’s description of “a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of devastation and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, a day of trumpet and alarm” (Zeph. 1:15, 16).

Although Zephaniah doesn’t specifically name the Messiah as the subject of these scenarios, it is assumed. Who else could, as the prophet foretells, gather His people and reign in victory?

640–609 B.C.

Josiah reigns in Jerusalem

627 B.C.

Zephaniah’s ministry begins

612 B.C.

Nineveh falls to the Medes and Babylonians

605 B.C.

Nebuchadnezzar’s reign begins in Babylon

586 B.C.

The Babylonians destroy Jerusalem

ZEPHANIAH OUTLINE

- I. A warning of impending judgment 1:1–18
 - A. The judgment announced 1:2–6
 - B. The judgment defined 1:7–13
 - C. The judgment described 1:14–18
- II. A call to repentance 2:1–3:8
 - A. An invitation to repentance 2:1–3
 - B. A detailed warning of judgment 2:4–3:8
- III. A promise of future blessing 3:9–20
 - A. The promise of conversion 3:9–13
 - B. The promise of restoration 3:14–20

The word of the LORD which came to Zephaniah the son of Cushi, the son of Gedaliah, the son of Amariah, the son of Hezekiah, in the days of ^aJosiah the son of Amon, king of Judah.

The Great Day of the LORD

- 2 “I will ¹utterly consume everything
From the face of the land,”
Says the LORD;
- 3 “I^b will consume man and beast;
I will consume the birds of the heavens,
The fish of the sea,
And the ²stumbling blocks along
with the wicked.
I will cut off man from the face of
the ³land,”
Says the LORD.
- 4 “I will stretch out My hand against
Judah,
And against all the inhabitants of
Jerusalem.
⁴I will cut off every trace of Baal from
this place,
The names of the ^cidoltrous⁵ priests
with the *pagan* priests—
- 5 Those ^dwho worship the host of
heaven on the housetops;
Those who worship and swear *oaths*
by the LORD,
But who *also* swear ^eby ⁶Milcom;
- 6 ^fThose who have turned back from
following the LORD,
And ^ghave not sought the LORD, nor
inquired of Him.”

CHAPTER 1

1 ^a 2 Kin. 22:1, 2;
2 Chr. 34:1-33; Jer.
1:2; 22:11
2 ¹ Lit. *make a
complete end of*,
Jer. 8:13
3 ^b Hos. 4:3 ² Idols
³ *ground*
4 ^c 2 Kin. 23:5; Hos.
10:5 ⁴ Fulfilled in
2 Kin. 23:4, 5 ⁵ Heb.
chemarim
5 ^d 2 Kin. 23:12; Jer.
19:13 ^e Josh. 23:7
6 Or *Malcam*, an
Ammonite god;
1 Kin. 11:5; Jer. 49:1;
Molech, Lev. 18:21
6 ^f Is. 1:4; Jer. 2:13
9 Hos. 7:7

7 ^h Hab. 2:20; Zech.
2:13 ⁱ Is. 13:6 ^j Deut.
28:26; Is. 34:6; Jer.
46:10; Ezek. 39:17-
19 ⁷ Lit. *set apart*,
consecrated
8 ^k Jer. 39:6
9 ¹ 1 Sam. 5:5
10 ^m 2 Chr. 33:14;
Neh. 3:3; 12:39
11 ⁿ James 5:1 ⁸ A
market district of
Jerusalem, lit.
Mortar
12 ^o Jer. 48:11;
Amos 6:1 ^p Ps.
94:7 ⁹ Lit. *on their
lees*; like the dregs
of wine

- 7 ^h Be silent in the presence of the Lord
God;
ⁱ For the day of the LORD *is* at hand,
For ^j the LORD has prepared a
sacrifice;
He has ⁷ invited His guests.
- 8 “And it shall be,
In the day of the LORD’s sacrifice,
That I will punish ^k the princes and
the king’s children,
And all such as are clothed with
foreign apparel.
- 9 In the same day I will punish
All those who ^l leap over the
threshold,
Who fill their masters’ houses with
violence and deceit.
- 10 “And there shall be on that day,” says
the LORD,
“The sound of a mournful cry from
^m the Fish Gate,
A wailing from the Second Quarter,
And a loud crashing from the hills.
- 11 ⁿ Wail, you inhabitants of ⁸ Maktesh!
For all the merchant people are cut
down;
All those who handle money are cut
off.
- 12 “And it shall come to pass at that time
That I will search Jerusalem with
lamps,
And punish the men
Who are ^o settled ⁹ in complacency,
^p Who say in their heart,

1:1 The word of the LORD which came: The messages of the OT prophets did not arise from the prophets’ own will, but from God Himself (see 2 Pet. 1:20, 21). **Zephaniah** means “Hidden in the Lord,” a name that relates to the principal message the prophet presented (2:3). The names of the prophets were often significantly associated with the message that God gave them to present to the people. **Hezekiah** most likely refers to the notable king of Judah (see 2 Kin. 18–20). Thus Zephaniah the prophet was related to King Josiah.

1:2, 3 utterly consume: The message of Zephaniah begins with a pronouncement of universal judgment (see Gen. 6–8). These words not only introduce the particular judgment that would be pronounced upon Judah (v. 4), but they also speak of the final judgment that will usher in the kingdom of God on earth (see Rev. 19). **Stumbling blocks** here refers to idolatry, or substitutes for God in the life and affections of a person. Because there is nothing in the universe that really may be compared to the Creator (see Is. 40:25), God abhors all forms of idolatry. **Says the LORD:** This phrase added gravity to the prophetic oracle and assured the hearer of the source of the message.

1:4–6 The message of God’s impending judgment on the nation of Judah and its capital city **Jerusalem** must have been startling to those who believed that God would never destroy the site of His holy temple (v. 12). **every trace of Baal:** Baal worship and its evils had led to the destruction of Israel and its capital Samaria in 722 B.C. Likewise, Baal worship and its associations would lead to the destruction of Judah and its capital Jerusalem in 586 B.C. **Milcom** is a reference to an Ammonite deity whose worship included acts of infant sacrifice (see 2 Kin. 23:10; Jer. 32:35). **turned back:** The people had experienced God and then turned away from Him.

1:7 Be silent: This prophetic call for silence was for solemn preparation for the horror of divine wrath (see Hab. 2:20; Zech. 2:13). **The day of the LORD** describes a period of unusual activity on the part of God in the affairs of His people. **sacrifice:** The people of God were expected to prepare sacrifices for the Lord as acts of contrition and celebration. But rebels, scofflaws, idolaters, and apostates would themselves become God’s sacrifice. **His guests** may be the birds of the heavens—vultures and buzzards who feed on carrion (see Rev. 19:21).

1:8, 9 Foreign apparel here suggests two things: (1) acts of greed and extortion against the populace, amassing funds for exotic clothing; (2) participation in foreign religious rites associated with exotic clothing. **Leap over the threshold** may refer to a pagan practice like the one mentioned in 1 Sam. 5:5. The priests of Dagon would not step on the doorway of the temple to Dagon because the hands and the head of Dagon had fallen there.

1:10, 11 On that day is a common way of referring to the coming time of judgment (or blessing) on the day of the Lord. **Maktesh:** Zephaniah shows his familiarity with the various quarters of Jerusalem as he mentions certain gates, sections, and districts of the city. Maktesh refers to a market district. Every area of the city would be affected by God’s judgment.

1:12, 13 The LORD will not do good, nor will He do evil: The complacency of the wicked people led them to believe that God is similarly complacent. Foolishly these people believed that the Lord would be inactive, neither blessing nor cursing, neither benefiting nor punishing His people.

‘The LORD will not do good,
Nor will He do evil.’
13 Therefore their goods shall become
booty,
And their houses a desolation;
They shall build houses, but not
inhabit *them*;
They shall plant vineyards, but ^anot
drink their wine.”

14 ^rThe great day of the LORD *is* near;
It is near and hastens quickly.
The noise of the day of the LORD is
bitter;

There the mighty men shall cry out.
15 ^sThat day *is* a day of wrath,
A day of trouble and distress,
A day of devastation and desolation,
A day of darkness and gloominess,
A day of clouds and thick darkness,
16 A day of ^ttrumpet and alarm
Against the fortified cities
And against the high towers.

17 “I will bring distress upon men,
And they shall ^uwalk like blind men,
Because they have sinned against the
LORD;
Their blood shall be poured out like
dust,
And their flesh like refuse.”

18 ^vNeither their silver nor their gold
Shall be able to deliver them
In the day of the LORD’s wrath;
But the whole land shall be devoured
By the fire of His jealousy,
For He will make speedy riddance
Of all those who dwell in the land.

13 ^a Deut. 28:39
14 ^r Jer. 30:7; Joel
2:1, 11
15 ^s Is. 22:5
16 ^t Is. 27:13; Jer.
4:19
17 ^u Deut. 28:29
18 ^v Ezek. 7:19

CHAPTER 2

1 ^a 2 Chr. 20:4;
Joel 1:14; 2:16 ⁱ Or
shameless
3 ^b Ps. 105:4; Amos
5:6 ^c Ps. 76:9 ^d Joel
2:14; Amos 5:14, 15
4 ^e Jer. 47:1, 5; Amos
1:7, 8; Zech. 9:5
^f Jer. 6:4
5 ^g Ezek. 25:15-17
^h Josh. 13:3
6 ⁱ Is. 17:2
² Underground
huts or cisterns, lit.
excavations
7 ^j [Mic. 5:7, 8]

A Call to Repentance

2 Gather^a yourselves together, yes,
gather together,
O ¹undesirable nation,
2 Before the decree is issued,
Or the day passes like chaff,
Before the LORD’s fierce anger comes
upon you,
Before the day of the LORD’s anger
comes upon you!
3 ^bSeek the LORD, ^call you meek of the
earth,
Who have upheld His justice.
Seek righteousness, seek humility.
^dIt may be that you will be hidden
In the day of the LORD’s anger.

Judgment on Nations

4 For ^eGaza shall be forsaken,
And Ashkelon desolate;
They shall drive out Ashdod ^fat
noonday,
And Ekron shall be uprooted.
5 Woe to the inhabitants of ^gthe
seacoast,
The nation of the Cherethites!
The word of the LORD *is* against you,
O ^hCanaan, land of the Philistines:
“I will destroy you;
So there shall be no inhabitant.”
6 The seacoast shall be pastures,
With ²shelters for shepherds ⁱand
folds for flocks.
7 The coast shall be for ^jthe remnant
of the house of Judah;
They shall feed *their* flocks there;
In the houses of Ashkelon they shall
lie down at evening.

1:14–16 The language of this passage is quite similar to Joel 2:1–11, on which it may be based in part. **Near** describes the imminence of the coming judgment. The references to **clouds** and **darkness** resemble Canaanite poetry in which clouds and thunder are associated with the false god Baal. The poets of the Bible used this language to describe the true God, who would send forth His judgments like lightning bolts from a dark mass of clouds (see Ps. 97:2–6). The references to **fortified cities** and **high towers** speak of the extent of God’s judgment. There would be no adequate defense against the Lord’s searing judgments.

1:17, 18 like blind men: God’s judgment would be so sudden and so overwhelming that the survivors would be in a state of shock, stumbling around in the dark.

2:1–3 The people doomed for judgment in the day of the Lord (1:14–18) were commanded to **gather together**, perhaps in repentance.

Seek the LORD: This is the language of true repentance, renewal, and regeneration. **you will be hidden:** Zephaniah used a play on words with the meaning of his own name, “Hidden in the Lord.” Even in the midst of the most calamitous of judgment scenes, the mercy and grace of the Lord is still available to a repentant people.

2:4, 5 The focus of the book moves from the description of God’s judgment on Judah and Jerusalem to a description of divine judgment on the surrounding nations. The judgment begins with the nation to the west, Philistia, and its major cities and seafaring industries. The five main cities of the Philistines were **Gaza, Ashkelon, Ashdod, Ekron**, and Gath. All but Gath are mentioned

here. **Cherethites** is another name for the Philistines. **Canaan** is the ancient name for the land of the people of Israel, derived from its prior inhabitants. A later name of the land was Palestine, a term derived from Philistine.

2:6, 7 The seacoast shall be pastures: The coastal cities of Philistia and the coastal plain that the Philistines dominated for so long would one day become the possession of the Hebrews. The same God who brought destruction upon the people of Judah (1:14–18) would restore their fortunes.

meek

(Heb. *ʾanav*) (2:3; Ps. 22:26; Is. 11:4) Strong’s #6035

This Hebrew word may be translated *humble* (Ps. 34:2) or *meek* (Ps. 37:11; see also Matt. 5:5) and is derived from a verb meaning “to be afflicted” or “to be bowed down” (Ps. 116:10). Forms of this word occur twice in 2:3: first translated as *meek* and then as *humility*. The word frequently refers to the poor or oppressed (see Prov. 14:21; Amos 2:7). But it also signifies strength of character in enduring suffering without resentment. Such character is rooted in a strong faith in God and His goodness and a steadfast submission to the will of God.

For the LORD their God will
^kintervene³ for them,
 And ^lreturn their captives.

8 “^mI have heard the reproach of Moab,
 And ⁿthe insults of the people of
 Ammon,
 With which they have reproached
 My people,
 And ^omade arrogant threats against
 their borders.

9 Therefore, as I live,”
 Says the LORD of hosts, the God of
 Israel,
 “Surely ^pMoab shall be like Sodom,
 And ^qthe people of Ammon like
 Gomorrah—
^rOverrun⁴ with weeds and saltpits,
 And a ⁵perpetual desolation.
 The residue of My people shall
 plunder them,
 And the remnant of My people shall
 possess them.”

10 This they shall have ^sfor their pride,
 Because they have reproached and
 made arrogant threats
 Against the people of the LORD of
 hosts.

11 The LORD *will be* awesome to them,
 For He will reduce to nothing all the
 gods of the earth;
^tPeople shall worship Him,
 Each one from his place,
 Indeed all ^uthe shores of the nations.

12 “You ^vEthiopians also,
 You shall be slain by ^wMy sword.”

13 And He will stretch out His hand
 against the north,
^xDestroy Assyria,
 And make Nineveh a desolation,
 As dry as the wilderness.

14 The herds shall lie down in her
 midst,
^yEvery beast of the nation.
 Both the ^zpelican and the bittern

7 ^k Luke 1:68 ^l Jer.
 29:14 ³ Lit. visit
 them
 8 ^m Jer. 48:27; Amos
 2:1-3 ⁿ Ezek. 25:3;
 Amos 1:13 ^o Jer.
 49:1
 9 ^p Is. 15:1-9; Jer.
 48:1-47 ^q Amos 1:13
^r Deut. 29:23 ⁴ Lit.
 Possessed by nettles
⁵ Or permanent ruin
 10 ^s Is. 16:6
 11 ^t Mal. 1:11 ^u Gen.
 10:5
 12 ^v Is. 18:1-7; Ezek.
 30:4, 5 ^w Ps. 17:13
 13 ^x Is. 10:5-27;
 14:24-27; Mic. 5:5, 6
 14 ^y Is. 13:21 ^z Is.
 14:23; 34:11

Shall lodge on the capitals *of* her
pillars;
 Their voice shall sing in the
 windows;
 Desolation *shall be* at the threshold;
 For He will lay bare the ^acedar work.

15 This is the rejoicing city
^bThat dwelt securely,
^cThat said in her heart,
 “I am it, and *there is* none besides
 me.”
 How has she become a desolation,
 A place for beasts to lie down!
 Everyone who passes by her
^dShall hiss and ^eshake his fist.

The Wickedness of Jerusalem

3 Woe to her who is rebellious and
 polluted,
 To the oppressing city!

2 She has not obeyed *His* voice,
 She has not received correction;
 She has not trusted in the LORD,
 She has not drawn near to her God.

3 ^aHer princes in her midst *are* roaring
 lions;
 Her judges *are* ^bevening wolves
 That leave not a bone till morning.

4 Her ^cprophets are insolent,
 treacherous people;
 Her priests have ¹polluted the
 sanctuary,
 They have done ^dviolence to the law.

5 The LORD *is* righteous in her midst,
 He will do no unrighteousness.

2 Every morning He brings His justice
 to light;
 He never fails,
 But ^ethe unjust knows no shame.

6 “I have cut off nations,
 Their fortresses are devastated;
 I have made their streets desolate,
 With none passing by.
 Their cities are destroyed;
There is no one, no inhabitant.

^a Jer. 22:14
¹⁵ ^b Is. 47:8 ^c Rev.
 18:7 ^d Lam. 2:15
^e Nah. 3:19

CHAPTER 3

3 ^a Ezek. 22:27
^b Jer. 5:6; Hab. 1:8
 4 ^c Hos. 9:7 ^d Ezek.
 22:26; Mal. 2:7, 8
¹ Or profaned
 5 ^e Jer. 3:3 ² Lit.
 Morning by
 morning

2:8, 9 The peoples of **Moab** and **Ammon** to the east of Judah were hostile to the Hebrews from the earliest times. **Moab shall be like Sodom:** Here is God’s promise of retribution (see Gen. 19:12–29). **2:10, 11 The LORD will be awesome to them:** There may be a double meaning in these words. For the righteous people of Judah and Jerusalem, there would be a response of awe and wonder before God, who had responded to the prayer of His servant. But for the wicked there would be quite another response, one of terror and dread. **People shall worship Him:** Not only would there be a righteous remnant in Judah, there would also be people coming to God from the nations of the earth. **2:13–15 Assyria** was to the east. But the ancient armies could not march across the desert. Therefore they went around the desert and entered the land of the Hebrews from the **north**. **The pelican and the bittern** were birds found in remote areas (see Is. 34:11). Their presence in the ruins of Nineveh attest to the severity of the

destruction announced on these people. **the rejoicing city:** The rejoicing here is ironic, seen as an act of the city’s complacency. Soon the judgment of God would descend suddenly, and the region would be useful only for herding animals. **3:1–4** The addressee of the prophetic word here is Jerusalem, the **city** of David. Jerusalem had become a center of oppression, rebellion, and apostasy. It would soon be marked by destruction. The expression of grief is reflective of God’s own heart. The **princes, judges, prophets, and priests**, whom God had especially designated to work for righteousness, were more wicked than the “regular” citizens of Jerusalem. These leaders were destroying and defrauding the weak, the needy, and the helpless. **3:5–7** Because He is absolutely **righteous**, God had no place in the midst of such an evil people. **cut off nations:** God’s punishment of Judah’s neighbors should have brought the people to their senses.

7 ^fI said, ‘Surely you will fear Me,
You will receive instruction’—
So that her dwelling would not be
cut off,
Despite everything for which I
punished her.
But ³they rose early and ^gcorrupted
all their deeds.

A Faithful Remnant

8 “Therefore ^hwait for Me,” says the
LORD,
“Until the day I rise up ⁴for plunder;
My determination *is* to ⁱgather the
nations
To My assembly of kingdoms,
To pour on them My indignation,
All My fierce anger;
All the earth ^jshall be devoured
With the fire of My jealousy.

7 ^f Jer. 8:6 ^g Gen.
6:12 ³ They were
eager
8 ^h Prov. 20:22; Mic.
7:7; Hab. 2:3 ⁱ Is.
66:18; Ezek. 38:14-
23; Joel 3:2; Mic.
4:12; Matt. 25:32
/ Zeph. 1:18 ⁴ LXX,
Syr. for witness;
Tg. for the day of
My revelation for
judgment; Vg.
for the day of My
resurrection that is
to come

9 ^k Is. 19:18; 57:19
⁵ Lit. lip
10 ^l Ps. 68:31; Is.
18:1; Acts 8:27
11 ^m Is. 2:12; 5:15;
Matt. 3:9
12 ⁿ Is. 14:32; Zech.
13:8, 9

9 “For then I will restore to the peoples
^ka pure ⁵language,
That they all may call on the name of
the LORD,
To serve Him with one accord.
10 From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia
My worshipers,
The daughter of My dispersed ones,
Shall bring My offering.
11 In that day you shall not be shamed
for any of your deeds
In which you transgress
against Me;
For then I will take away from your
midst
Those who ^mrejoice in your pride,
And you shall no longer be haughty
In my holy mountain.
12 I will leave in your midst
ⁿA meek and humble people,

3:8 the fire of My jealousy: God’s response to the wickedness of Jerusalem was to declare His judgment. He would use other nations to punish the city for its rebellion.
3:9–13 The focus of the text moves to a time of national regener-

ation and restoration. **Pure language** refers to language used in the pure worship of God. One day human language will become a unifying element in the true worship of God. **My worshipers:** God’s people would come from all nations to worship Him.

Beyond the Rivers of Ethiopia

Christians of African descent may be interested in Zephaniah’s prophecy that the Lord would restore His “dispersed ones” from “beyond the rivers of Ethiopia” (3:10). This was a remarkable promise, given the map of the world in Zephaniah’s day. As far as we know, Ethiopia represented the southwestern limits of Judah’s knowledge of the world. The interior of Africa, “beyond the rivers of Ethiopia,” was literally “off the map” for the ancient Israelites. It was uncharted territory for them.

To what, then, was Zephaniah referring? The context shows that he was anticipating the day when the Lord would bring people from the ends of the earth to form a holy people who would worship and serve Him with true hearts (3:9, 12, 13). Among them would be people from “beyond the rivers of Ethiopia.”

The prophet called this new people “the daughter of My dispersed ones” (3:10) and “the remnant of Israel” (3:13). Thus Zephaniah’s vision seems to tie in with Jeremiah’s predictions of a scattering of the Jews throughout the world, followed by an eventual restoration (Jer. 30:10, 11, 18–22; 31:1–40).

Beginning in the sixth century, many Jewish colonies were established along the Nile and the Mediterranean coast of Africa. In fact, some have suggested that Zephaniah’s prophecy pertains to the Jewish community in northern Abyssinia. However, the prophecy may look beyond a strictly Jewish restoration. It seems to correspond with a prediction by David that Ethiopians would someday “stretch out [their] hands to God” (Ps. 68:31).

As far as we know, Zephaniah himself had no idea of the vast tribes of people living “beyond the rivers of Ethiopia.” But every time one of their descendants turns to faith in Christ, Africa adds one more member to the “peoples [of] a pure language” who are called to serve the Lord “with one accord” (Zeph. 3:9).



A sixteenth-century map showing Jerusalem at its center. Zephaniah knew even less about the world, and “beyond the rivers of Ethiopia” was literally “off the map.”
Wikimedia Commons

And they shall trust in the name of the LORD.
13 ^o The remnant of Israel ^p shall do no unrighteousness
^q And speak no lies,
Nor shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth;
For ^r they shall feed *their* flocks and lie down,
And no one shall make *them* afraid.”

Joy in God's Faithfulness

14 ^s Sing, O daughter of Zion!
Shout, O Israel!
Be glad and rejoice with all *your* heart,
O daughter of Jerusalem!
15 The LORD has taken away your judgments,
He has cast out your enemy.
^t The King of Israel, the LORD, ^u is in your midst;
You shall ^v see disaster no more.
16 In that day ^v it shall be said to Jerusalem:
“Do not fear;
Zion, ^w let not your hands be weak.

13 ^o Is. 10:20-22; [Mic. 4:7] ^p Is. 60:21
^q Zech. 8:3, 16; Rev. 14:5 ^r Ezek. 34:13-15, 28
14 ^s Is. 12:6
15 ^t [John 1:49]
^u Ezek. 48:35; [Rev. 7:15] ^v So with Heb. mss., LXX, Bg.; MT, Vg. *fear*
16 ^v Is. 35:3, 4 ^w Job 4:3; Heb. 12:12

17 ^x Zeph. 3:5, 15
^y Deut. 30:9; Is. 62:5; 65:19; Jer. 32:41
18 ^z Lam. 2:6
19 ^a [Ezek. 34:16; Mic. 4:6, 7]
20 ^b Is. 11:12; Ezek. 28:25; Amos 9:14
^c Lit. *a name*

17 The LORD your God ^x in your midst,
The Mighty One, will save;
^y He will rejoice over you with gladness,
He will quiet *you* with His love,
He will rejoice over you with singing.”
18 “I will gather those who ^z sorrow over the appointed assembly,
Who are among you,
To whom its reproach is a burden.
19 Behold, at that time
I will deal with all who afflict you;
I will save the ^a lame,
And gather those who were driven out;
I will appoint them for praise and fame
In every land where they were put to shame.
20 At that time ^b I will bring you back,
Even at the time I gather you;
For I will give you ^c fame and praise
Among all the peoples of the earth,
When I return your captives before your eyes,”
Says the LORD.

3:14–17 The people of God would be called to **sing** because their deliverance had come. **Daughter of Zion** is an affectionate title for the city of Jerusalem. **In that day:** The people are first commanded to abstain from fear, to keep from hanging their arms in a posture of resignation. Instead, they were to take encouragement and strength from the new reality that their God lived among them.
3:18–20 those who sorrow: God is going to make all things right. Those who are enemies of God's truth will be gathered and removed; those who are disenfranchised, God will restore. **I will**

give you fame and praise: Ordinarily Scripture speaks of the praise that should be brought to God. Here we find the praise that God will bring to His people. As in the beginning of His dealings with Abraham and Sarah (see Gen. 12:1–3), where God promised blessing, honor, and a renowned name, so here God promises *fame and praise* to each individual in His family. **Says the LORD:** This is a solemn vow of God to do what He has promised. Zephaniah begins and ends with the strong assertion that the Lord is speaking. The implication is clear: “Listen and live!”

THE BOOK OF HAGGAI



HAGGAI was a prophet to the Jews who had returned from the Exile in Babylon. His first task was to force them to see where their hearts and priorities really lay. He urged them to do what they should have done from the start: to rebuild the temple with a willing heart. To these admonitions he added the promise of God to be with them. With this promise, the people could return to their first enthusiasm and carry out God's purposes for them. Then their worship would be joyful and sincere.

Author and Date Little is known of the prophet Haggai except what is in the book that bears his name. Ezra mentions him briefly in association with the prophet Zechariah (see Ezra 5:1; 6:14) and the rebuilding of the temple. The name Haggai means "Festival," an appropriate meaning given the prophet's work in restoring temple worship. But what is most remarkable about Haggai's ministry is its brevity; his messages were given in the span of only four months in 520 B.C.

Historical Setting When some of the Israelites returned from the Babylonian captivity beginning in 538 B.C., they determined to restore the worship of God to its rightful place at the center of their lives. They planned to build a new temple in Jerusalem (see Ezra 1). Sadly, however, their resolve seems to have vanished shortly after their arrival in Jerusalem. They built an altar on the original temple site and later laid the foundations for the new temple. But when enemies who lived in the vicinity applied pressure, the Persian king ordered the work on the temple to cease. A later emperor of Persia, Darius I, lifted the restrictions that had been placed on the rebuilding of the temple and told them to proceed. But even when the barriers were lifted, the people lapsed into spiritual lethargy. They were not the idolaters that their ancestors had been, but they had lost their early passion for the worship of the living God. They explained their behavior by advancing the time-honored excuse of procrastination: It just doesn't seem to be the right time (see 1:2).

When Haggai confronted the people, he addressed the problems of his day: the infertility of the land and the hard economic times (1:6). But he did not blame these problems on poor fiscal planning. Instead, he exhorted the people to focus on their spiritual condition. They were focusing on insignificant matters like the decoration of their homes, while every day they ignored God's temple lying in ruins. The temple was more than a building. It was the site of the people's meeting with the living God, the symbol of the abiding presence of the Creator of the universe. If the people ignored the physical ruin of the temple, they were ignoring the spiritual wreckage in their souls as well.

Zerubbabel the governor and Joshua the high priest, along with the people of God, responded quickly to the message of Haggai (1:12). Three weeks after Haggai gave his first message, they began their work on the temple (520 B.C.). Anticipating a positive response, Haggai came with another message. This was a simple one, but it had profound implications: Haggai assured them that the Lord was with them (1:13). This was the same message that Moses had brought to the Israelites in Egypt (Ex. 3:8). Indeed this would be the name of the coming Messiah—Immanuel, God with us (Is. 7:14). When the people chose to make God the center of their lives, the Lord could Himself remain in their midst even without a physical building.

Theology To emphasize some key points about the people's attitude towards God, Haggai posed a couple of questions. One of these was about the laws concerning what was clean and unclean (2:10–14). These laws had several purposes: (1) they protected people from diseases; (2) they taught certain spiritual lessons; (3) they created in the people an instinctive sense of right and wrong. In other words, they underscored the message that the Lord, and not any person, determines what is good or evil. Haggai asked the priests if cleanness or holiness might be transmitted through touch. The priests answered that it could not. Then the prophet asked if uncleanness could be transmitted through touch. The answer was yes. Haggai applied this principle to the nation. An indifferent attitude toward the construction of the temple had polluted everything the people touched. Their attitude made the work of their hands unacceptable to the Lord. Even though the temple work had begun, the people's hearts left them unclean in the eyes of the Lord. Even so, God in His great grace would still bless His people.

In a question-and-answer format (2:15–19), Haggai also encouraged the people to think about their circumstances before they started to build the temple. None of their past work had resulted in success: "Is the seed still in the barn?" (2:19). But from that day God would bless His people, because they had reordered their priorities. They had put the worship of the Lord before their own welfare (1:4, 14). Out of the bounty that the Lord would provide, the Israelites would be able to bring the proper sacrifices of true worship into the new temple.

CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

When Haggai writes "The glory of this latter temple shall be greater than the former" (2:9), he is certainly referring to the reconstructed temple Herod would enlarge. When Jesus set foot inside, the presence of the incarnate God filled that "latter temple" with the glory of which Haggai spoke.

Beyond this prophet's words, we also see the Messiah represented in one of Haggai's peers whom we meet in the book. Zerubbabel is the governor of Judah after the exiles return. Based on what the Lord has told him to say, Haggai declares that Zerubbabel will become the signet ring of the Most High. In other words, he will be the proof of God's authority. Although Jesus will be the eventual Signet, Zerubbabel becomes the center of the Messianic line for a time. Like a king's ring, he seals both the preexilic and postexilic branch of David's lineage together.

586 B.C.
Jerusalem falls to the Babylonians

539 B.C.
Cyrus of Persia conquers Babylon

538 B.C.
The return of the Jews to Judea begins

536–534 B.C.
The temple rebuilding begins then stops

520 B.C.
Haggai preaches; the temple rebuilding resumes

515 B.C.
The temple is completed

HAGGAI OUTLINE

- I. The call to rebuild the temple 1:1–15
 - A. The people's indifference 1:1–11
 - B. The people's repentance 1:12–15
- II. God's greater temple and blessings 2:1–23
 - A. Encouragement from God 2:1–9
 - B. Holiness and the worship of God 2:10–19
 - C. God's blessing on Zerubbabel 2:20–23



Signet rings were used in the ancient Near East to sign one's name. The impression of the ring would be pressed into wax or clay to sign legal documents. In Haggai 2:23, the Lord tells Zerubbabel, "I will make you like a signet ring, for I have chosen you."

Z. Radovan/www.BibleLandPictures.com

The Command to Build God's House

In ^athe second year of King Darius, in the sixth month, on the first day of the month, the word of the LORD came by ^bHaggai the prophet to ^cZerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to ^dJoshua the son of ^eJehozadak, the high priest, saying, ²“Thus speaks the LORD of hosts, saying: “This people says, “The time has not come, the time that the LORD’s house should be built.””

³Then the word of the LORD ^fcame by Haggai the prophet, saying, ⁴“*Is it ^gtime for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled houses, and this ¹temple to lie in ruins?*” ⁵Now therefore, thus says the LORD of hosts: ^h“Consider your ways!

⁶ “You have ⁱsown much, and bring in little;
You eat, but do not have enough;
You drink, but you are not filled with drink;
You clothe yourselves, but no one is warm;
And ^jhe who earns wages,
Earns wages to *put* into a bag with holes.”

⁷Thus says the LORD of hosts: “Consider your ways! ⁸Go up to the ^kmountains and bring wood and build the ²temple, that I may take pleasure in it and be glorified,” says the LORD. ⁹“You looked for much, but indeed *it came to little*; and when you brought it home, ^mI blew

CHAPTER 1

¹ ^a Ezra 4:24; Hag. 2:10; Zech. 1:1,
⁷ ^b Ezra 5:1; 6:14
^c 1 Chr. 3:19; Ezra 2:2; Neh. 7:7; Zech. 4:6; Matt. 1:12, 13
^d Ezra 5:2, 3; Zech. 6:11
^e 1 Chr. 6:15
³ ^f Ezra 5:1
⁴ ^g 2 Sam. 7:2 ¹ Lit. house
⁵ ^h Lam. 3:40
⁶ ⁱ Deut. 28:38-40; Hos. 8:7; Hag. 1:9, 10; 2:16, 17 ^j Zech. 8:10
⁸ ^k Ezra 3:7 ² Lit. house
⁹ ^l Hag. 2:16 ^m Hag. 2:17

¹⁰ ⁿ Lev. 26:19; Deut. 28:23; 1 Kin. 8:35; Joel 1:18-20
¹¹ ^o 1 Kin. 17:1;
² Kin. 8:1 ^p Hag. 2:17
¹² ^q Ezra 5:2
¹³ ^r [Matt. 28:20; Rom. 8:31]
¹⁴ ^s 2 Chr. 36:22; Ezra 1:1 ^t Hag. 2:21
^u Ezra 5:2, 8; Neh. 4:6

CHAPTER 2

¹ ^v Lit. by the hand of

it away. Why?” says the LORD of hosts. “Because of My house that *is in ruins*, while every one of you runs to his own house. ¹⁰Therefore ⁿthe heavens above you withhold the dew, and the earth withholds its fruit. ¹¹For I ^ocalled for a drought on the land and the mountains, on the grain and the new wine and the oil, on whatever the ground brings forth, on men and livestock, and on ^pall the labor of *your hands*.”

The People's Obedience

¹²^qThen Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, with all the remnant of the people, obeyed the voice of the LORD their God, and the words of Haggai the prophet, as the LORD their God had sent him; and the people feared the presence of the LORD. ¹³Then Haggai, the LORD’s messenger, spoke the LORD’s message to the people, saying, ^r“*I am with you, says the LORD.*” ¹⁴So ^sthe LORD stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, ^tgovernor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people; ^uand they came and worked on the house of the LORD of hosts, their God, ¹⁵on the twenty-fourth day of the sixth month, in the second year of King Darius.

The Coming Glory of God's House

² In the seventh month, on the twenty-first of the month, the word of the LORD came ¹by Haggai the prophet,

1:1 second year . . . sixth month . . . first day: The date for this first message of God through Haggai is August 29, 520 B.C. The prophecies of Haggai are among the most precisely dated in the OT. **Zerubbabel** was the governor of Jerusalem at the time of Haggai’s ministry and the **governor** of the first group of returning exiles from Babylon (see Ezra 3:2; Neh. 7:7).

1:2 The time has not come: The people had decided that rebuilding the Lord’s dwelling among His people was not important.

1:4 The principal building material in Jerusalem was stone. Those who wanted to make their **houses** elaborate installed wood panels. The people of Haggai’s time were making their homes elegant, rivaling royal residences and the holy temple itself. But they still did not feel that the “time was right” to begin working on the renewed temple. While this verse is not a blanket condemnation of elegant living among God’s people, it certainly calls for a reevaluation of priorities.

1:5 Consider your ways: The people were asked to mull over their habits and activities and to ask whether their attitude was sensible before the Lord.

1:6 God asked the people to take stock of their lives. Though they ate and drank, they never seemed satisfied. Though they put on clothes, they never felt **warm**. Wage earners constantly felt as though their pockets had holes in them through which their money was lost.

1:8 The people were instructed to go to great lengths to get **wood** for paneling the temple of the Lord (v. 4). **that I may take pleasure in it:** God’s joy in the temple is related to His pleasure in the people who would worship Him there. **be glorified:** Clearly God does not need to receive more glory (see Ps. 24:7–10); however, He gladly receives the adoration of His people.

1:9 runs to his own house: Because of their preoccupation with personal comfort, the people were ignoring the central spiritual concerns of their lives. Their faulty principle of life was being shaken by the Lord. The Savior Jesus later proclaimed the true and abiding principle for the life of faith: “But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you” (see Matt. 6:33).

1:10 The blessing and cursing formula of the Lord’s covenant with His people comes into play here (see Deut. 28). **Dew** is a poetic way of speaking of rainfall.

1:12 The remnant of the people were literally those who had made the trek back to Judah from their place of captivity in Babylon; it also refers to those within a larger population who are faithful to the Lord.

1:13 I am with you: God’s promise to Moses was, “I will certainly be with you” (see Ex. 3:12). God’s promise to the people of Judah was that the name of the Coming One would be Immanuel, meaning “God is with us” (see Is. 7:14). Here God repeated the same message of comfort and encouragement.

1:14 This verse bears witness to the work of God’s Spirit on the human **spirit** of His leaders and His people to accomplish His tasks. It is reminiscent of God’s work in stirring up the people to build the original tabernacle (see Ex. 35:29; 36:2). **remnant:** Always within Israel a remnant existed. Paul stated there was such a remnant in Elijah’s time (see Rom. 11:2–4; compare 1 Kin. 19:18).

2:1 twenty-first of the month: By our calendar this would be October 17, 520 B.C. In the ancient Jewish calendar this day was the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles or Succoth (see Lev. 23:33–44).

saying: ²“Speak now to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and to the remnant of the people, saying: ^{3a}‘Who is left among you who saw this ²temple in its former glory? And how do you see it now? In comparison with it, ^bis this not in your eyes as nothing?’ ⁴Yet now ^cbe strong, Zerubbabel,’ says the LORD; ‘and be strong, Joshua, son of Jehozadak, the high priest; and be strong, all you people of the land,’ says the LORD, ‘and work; for I *am* with you,’ says the LORD of hosts. ^{5d}‘According to the word that I covenanted with you when you came out of Egypt, so ^eMy Spirit remains among you; do not fear!’

⁶“For thus says the LORD of hosts: ^f“Once more (it is a little while) ^gI will shake heaven and earth, the sea and dry land; ⁷and I will shake all nations, and they shall come to ^hthe ³Desire of All Nations, and I will fill this ⁴temple with ⁱglory,’ says the LORD of hosts. ⁸‘The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine,’ says the LORD of hosts. ^{9j}‘The glory of this latter ⁵temple shall be greater than the former,’ says the LORD of hosts. ‘And in this place I will give ^kpeace,’ says the LORD of hosts.”

The People Are Defiled

¹⁰On the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, in the second year of Darius, the word of the LORD came by Haggai the prophet, saying, ¹¹“Thus says the

3 ^a Ezra 3:12, 13
b Zech. 4:10 ² Lit. house
4 ^c Deut. 31:23;
1 Chr. 22:13; 28:20;
Zech. 8:9; Eph. 6:10
5 ^d Ex. 29:45, 46
^e [Neh. 9:20]; Is. 63:11, 14
6 ^f Heb. 12:26
g [Joel 3:16]
7 ^h Gen. 49:10; Mal. 3:1 ¹ 1 Kin. 8:11; Is. 60:7; Zech. 2:5 ³ Or desire of all nations
4 Lit. house
9 ^j [John 1:14] ^k Ps. 85:8, 9; Luke 2:14; [Eph. 2:14] ⁵ Lit. house

11 ⁱ Lev. 10:10, 11; Deut. 33:10; Mal. 2:7
13 ^m Lev. 22:4-6; Num. 19:11, 22
14 ⁿ [Titus 1:15]
15 ^o Hag. 1:5, 7; 2:18
16 ^p Hag. 1:6, 9; Zech. 8:10
17 ^q Deut. 28:22; 1 Kin. 8:37; Amos 4:9 ^r Hag. 1:11 ^s Jer. 5:3; Amos 4:6-11
18 ^t Ezra 5:1, 2, 16; Zech. 8:9
19 ^u Zech. 8:12

LORD of hosts: ‘Now, ^lask the priests concerning the law, saying, ¹²“If one carries holy meat in the fold of his garment, and with the edge he touches bread or stew, wine or oil, or any food, will it become holy?”’”

Then the priests answered and said, “No.”

¹³ And Haggai said, “If one who is ^munclean because of a dead body touches any of these, will it be unclean?”

So the priests answered and said, “It shall be unclean.”

¹⁴ Then Haggai answered and said, ⁿ“‘So is this people, and so is this nation before Me,’ says the LORD, ‘and so is every work of their hands; and what they offer there is unclean.”

Promised Blessing

¹⁵ And now, carefully ^oconsider from this day forward: from before stone was laid upon stone in the temple of the LORD— ¹⁶since those days, ^pwhen one came to a heap of twenty ephahs, there were *but* ten; when one came to the wine vat to draw out fifty baths from the press, there were *but* twenty. ^{17q}I struck you with blight and mildew and hail ^rin all the labors of your hands; ^syet you did not *turn* to Me,’ says the LORD. ¹⁸Consider now from this day forward, from the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, from ^tthe day that the foundation of the LORD’s temple was laid—consider it: ^{19u}Is the seed still in the barn? As yet

During this holiday the people of Israel lived in booths, or temporary shelters, commemorating their departure from Egypt when they lived in temporary shelters in the wilderness.

2:2 Speak now: Haggai was called again to address the leaders Zerubbabel and Joshua (1:1) and the true people of God (1:12).

2:3 The temple of Solomon was one of the wonders of the ancient world (see 1 Kin. 6). The older temple would have loomed large and magnificent, far outstripping the present structure. So even though the building was completed, there may have been the sense among some of the people that it was **as nothing**.

2:4 I am with you: The Lord’s words to the people (1:13) were the same as His great words to Moses (see Ex. 3:12). The words of this verse draw a comparison between the events of this period and the events of the first Exodus. God brought the people back from Babylon as He had brought them back from Egypt. The message to the first set of leaders, Moses and Aaron, and to the second, Zerubbabel and Joshua, was the same: God would be present with them. Finally, the mission in the Promised Land was the same, to build a place for the true worship of God.

2:5 According to the word: The same covenant that related the people to God in their departure from Egypt bound them still. The events surrounding the decline of the nation and the people’s captivity in Babylon had not rescinded the covenant relationship that insured God’s presence with His people (see Ex. 29:42–46).

2:6 I will shake: This is another way of speaking of the day of the Lord. The purpose of the day of the Lord is to prepare the earth for the glorious reign of Jesus Christ on earth (see Matt. 24:29; Rev. 6:12–17).

2:7 Desire of All Nations: Some interpret these words as a messianic title that speaks of the joy of the redeemed of the nations at

the time of the rule of King Jesus. Others observe that the Hebrew word meaning *desire* is used principally for objects (as in 2 Chr. 32:27; Hos. 13:15; Nah. 2:9) rather than persons. However, the word is used occasionally for persons (see 1 Sam. 9:20).

2:8 silver . . . gold: God owns the cattle on a thousand hills, the gold in all coffers, and the wealth of all nations.

2:9 Peace includes good health, well-being, and an abundant life. The term speaks of everything being as it ought to be.

2:10 The twenty-fourth day of the ninth month corresponds to December 18, 520 B.C. on our calendar.

2:11 The responsibilities of the **priests** included leading public worship and instructing the people in the nature and meaning of God’s **law**.

2:12 will it become holy: Since the role of the priest was to interpret God’s law, it was reasonable that questions on holiness should be addressed to them. Haggai asked whether holiness could be transferred by contact. The answer was no.

2:13, 14 It shall be unclean: The priests were asked if a religiously unclean person, someone who had touched a corpse, could contaminate someone else by touch. The answer was yes (see Num. 19:11–13). The **people** had worked hard to rebuild the temple, only to be told that their worship would be unacceptable in the new temple. The existence of the temple itself guaranteed nothing. The hearts of the people had to be in harmony with the sacrifices being made.

2:16, 17 you did not turn to Me: Despite God’s acts of withholding His blessing, the people still had not turned fully back to Him.

2:18, 19 from this day: God determined to bring His blessing on His people, but He demanded that they recognize Him as the source of their great productivity.

the vine, the fig tree, the pomegranate, and the olive tree have not yielded *fruit*. But from this day I will *“bless you.”*”

Zerubbabel Chosen as a Signet

²⁰ And again the word of the LORD came to Haggai on the twenty-fourth day of the month, saying, ²¹ “Speak to Zerubbabel, ¹⁰ governor of Judah, saying:

^x “I will shake heaven and earth.
²² ^y I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms;

¹⁹ ^v Ps. 128:1-6; Jer. 31:12, 14; [Mal. 3:10]
²¹ ^w Ezra 5:2; Hag. 1:1, 14; Zech. 4:6-10
^x Hag. 2:6, 7; [Heb. 12:26, 27]
²² ^y [Dan. 2:44; Rev. 19:11-21]

^z Ps. 46:9; Ezek. 39:20; Mic. 5:10; Zech. 9:10
²³ ^a Song 8:6; Jer. 22:24 ^b Is. 42:1; 43:10

I will destroy the strength of the Gentile kingdoms.
^a I will overthrow the chariots And those who ride in them; The horses and their riders shall come down,
Every one by the sword of his brother.

²³ ‘In that day,’ says the LORD of hosts, ‘I will take you, Zerubbabel My servant, the son of Shealtiel,’ says the LORD, ^a ‘and will make you like a signet *ring*; for ^b I have chosen you,’ says the LORD of hosts.”

2:22 I will overthrow: Haggai focused on the power of God to do as He wills among the nations (see Dan. 2:21). These words speak both in a general way of the sovereignty of God over the nations throughout history, as well as more specifically of God’s final judgment on the wicked nations at the time He institutes the rule of His Son as King of kings (see Ps. 2; 110; Rev. 19).

2:23 A signet ring was an item of great value in the ancient world. The owner used it much like we use our personal signature on checks or other important documents. God used this imagery to indicate that **Zerubbabel** was in His hand, that he was highly valued, and that he represented God’s authority in his leadership of the people. Even though the people had been told they were still unclean in God’s eyes (see 2:10–14), their leader Zerubbabel was encouraged to guide them through those spiritually trying times.

signet ring

(Heb. *chotham*) (2:23; Gen. 38:18; 1 Kin. 21:8; Jer. 22:24) Strong’s #2368

The Hebrew noun *signet ring* is derived from a verbal root meaning “to affix a seal,” “to seal up,” or “to fasten by sealing.” The signet in OT times was an engraved stone set in a gold or silver finger ring, bracelet, or armband (see Song 8:6). When pressed upon wax or soft clay, the ring left the impression of the personal insignia of the bearer (see Ex. 28:11, 21, 36; 39:6, 14, 30). The signet ring was like an identification card or badge in the ancient world (Gen. 38:18). It symbolized status or position and the binding nature of the authority attached to items sealed by the ring (1 Kin. 21:8; Job 38:14). Haggai’s comparison of Zerubbabel to a signet ring (2:23) has messianic implications, since Zerubbabel would overturn the curse of Jeremiah on King Jehoiachin’s dynasty and restore royal authority to the line of King David (Jer. 22:24–30).

THE BOOK OF

ZECHARIAH

ENCOURAGEMENT and hope are the underlying themes of the prophecies of Zechariah. The prophet Zechariah was one of the three prophets, along with Haggai and Malachi, who ministered to the exiles returning to Jerusalem. These exiles faced the ruins of what had once been a splendid city and a glorious temple. There was much to be sad about, but Zechariah encouraged the exiles with visions of judgment on Israel's enemies and of the complete restoration of the city of Jerusalem. Yet the most thrilling vision of all was the prediction of a coming King—the Messiah who would bring eternal salvation and the promised eternal kingdom.

Author and Date The name Zechariah means “Yahweh Remembers.” This powerful phrase communicates a message of hope: The God of Israel will mercifully remember His people. The prophet is identified as “the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo.” Iddo was among the heads of the priestly families that returned from Babylon to Judah. Zechariah, then, was a member of the tribe of Levi and probably served as both a priest and a prophet. He entered his prophetic ministry two months after his contemporary Haggai had concluded his first oracle.

Those who question the unity and single authorship of Zechariah usually argue that chapters 9–14 date from the Hellenistic period (331–167 B.C.) or the Maccabean period (167–73 B.C.). The reference to “Greece” in 9:13 has often been cited as evidence for a late date, after Alexander's conquests (c. 330 B.C.). However, Greek influence was strong in the ancient Middle East as early as the seventh century B.C. Greece is mentioned by the eighth-century prophet Isaiah (see Is. 66:19, where Greece is referred to as Javan) and the sixth-century prophet Ezekiel (see Ezek. 27:13, 19 for Javan). Those who hold to the unity of the book generally date its completion between 500 and 470 B.C. Zechariah began his prophetic ministry in the second year of the Persian king Darius (522–486 B.C.) and his last dated prophecy was delivered two years later, in 518 B.C.

Historical Setting Zechariah lived and prophesied during the period following the Babylonian captivity (597–538 B.C.). Jeremiah had predicted that the Israelites would return to the Promised Land after 70 years of discipline in exile. God began fulfilling this promise when He raised up Cyrus king of Persia, whose military exploits brought about the capture of Babylon in 539 B.C. Following his victory, Cyrus decreed that all exiled peoples could return to their homelands. The people of Judah were among those who benefited from this reversal of Babylonian policy. The first group of Jews returned under the leadership of Sheshbazzar (Ezra 1:8) in 537 B.C. The altar for the temple was erected in the fall of that year, but construction of the temple itself did not begin until the spring of 536 B.C.

Opposition to the temple rebuilding by enemies of the Jews living in and around Judah resulted in the abandonment of the work until 520 B.C. During these 16 years of neglect the people of Judah lost their vision and sense of spiritual purpose. Their procrastination resulted in divine chastening (Hag. 1:11; 2:17). Although the crops failed and the people languished, they did not repent until God raised up two prophets to turn the people back to Himself. In 520 B.C., Haggai called for the Israelites to recognize their spiritual priorities and rebuild the temple. Zechariah began his prophetic ministry just two months after Haggai (compare 1:1 with Hag. 1:1).

The ministries of Haggai and Zechariah did not cease when work began in earnest on the temple. The prophets continued to encourage the people. Haggai's messages were delivered in 520 B.C.; Zechariah's last dated prophecy was given in 518 B.C. (7:1). With the people committed to restoring the worship of the Lord and the temple, God poured out His blessing on a repentant and spiritually revitalized people. The temple was completed in 515 B.C. and rededicated with great rejoicing.

Purpose and Themes Zechariah's prophecies had two purposes. First, they challenged the returning exiles to turn to the Lord, to be cleansed from their sins and to experience again the Lord's blessing (see 1:3). Second, Zechariah's words comforted and encouraged the people regarding the rebuilding of the temple and God's future work among His people (1:16, 17; 2:12; 3:2; 4:9; 6:14, 15).

In the first several chapters, Zechariah encourages the people by focusing on God's choice of Jerusalem (1:17; 2:12; 3:2). The Lord had not set aside His ancient covenant people. Through Zechariah, God not only reaffirmed Jerusalem's divine election, but promised to come among His returning people and live in their midst (see 2:10, 11; 8:3, 23). It was through His personal presence among His people that God would accomplish a miraculous work. In the second half of the book, Zechariah details God's future dealings with His chosen people, revealing the overthrow of Israel's enemies, the future glories of Zion, and the universal reign of the Messiah. This is the overarching theme of the book: The complete restoration of God's people would occur in the redeeming and delivering work of the coming Messiah.

Theology Zechariah teaches a great deal concerning the First and Second Comings of Jesus the Messiah. He refers to the Messiah as the "BRANCH" (3:8), God's "Servant" (3:8), and God's "Shepherd" (13:7). There is also an allusion to the Messiah's ministry as a Priest-King in 6:13 (see Heb. 6:20—7:1). Furthermore, he prophesied the Messiah's entrance into Jerusalem on a colt (9:9; see Matt. 21:4, 5; John 12:14–16), His betrayal for 30 pieces of silver (11:12, 13; see Matt. 27:9, 10), the piercing of His hands and feet (12:10; see John 19:37), and the cleansing from sin provided by His death (13:1; see John 1:29; Titus 3:5). In fact, chapters 9–14 of Zechariah are the most quoted section of the Prophets in the narratives of the Gospels.

Concerning the Messiah's Second Coming, Zechariah prophesied such future events as the conversion of Israel (12:10—13:1, 9; see Rom. 11:26), the destruction of Israel's enemies (14:3, 12–15; see Rev. 19:11–16), and the reign of Christ in a new Jerusalem (14:9, 16; see Rev. 20:4–6).

Along with his emphasis on the Messiah, Zechariah appropriately gives an important message about God's plan for salvation. The importance of repentance and returning to the Lord of Hosts is emphasized in the introduction (1:3–6). And then in 3:1–5, Zechariah provides a striking illustration of the removal of sin and the imputation of righteousness. The removal of the high priest's filthy garments and the provision of clean festal



Christ's entry into Jerusalem. Zechariah 9:9 prophesies that the messianic King would ride into Jerusalem on a donkey (see Matt. 21:5; John 12:15).

robes illustrates the work of Christ. Through His atoning death, Christ strips us of our filthy sins and clothes us with His own righteousness. In this way we can approach our holy God.

True religion, according to Zechariah, is not found merely in external acts of religious piety, but is based upon a personal relationship with God (7:5–7). Such a relationship with God should change one’s attitude to one’s neighbors. Like the prophets before him, Zechariah condemned the oppression of the widow, the orphan, the stranger, and the poor (7:10). As a preacher of righteousness, he called God’s people back to the virtues of justice, kindness, compassion, and truth (7:9; 8:16).

CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

Zechariah includes clear passages that point to God’s Anointed One. Jesus is portrayed in His first and second comings as both Servant/King and Man/God respectively. He appears as the Angel of the Lord (3:1, 2), the Branch (3:8; 6:12), and the King–Priest (6:13).

Predictions about Jesus are found in several places—9:9, 10 anticipates the Savior’s Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem on that first Palm Sunday; 11:11–13 describe Jesus betrayed for 30 shekels of silver; 12:10 predicts the Messiah’s piercing (12:10) and 13:7 his abandonment. Chapter 14 prophesies Jesus as the coming Judge and righteous King.

ZECHARIAH OUTLINE

- I. A call to repent 1:1–6
- II. The visions of Zechariah 1:7—6:15
 - A. A vision of horses 1:7–17
 - B. A vision of horns 1:18–21
 - C. A vision of a surveyor 2:1–13
 - D. A vision of the high priest 3:1–10
 - E. A vision of a lampstand and olive trees 4:1–14
 - F. A vision of a flying scroll 5:1–4
 - G. A vision of a woman in a basket 5:5–11
 - H. A vision of four chariots 6:1–8
 - I. The crowning of Joshua 6:9–15
- III. A question about fasting 7:1—8:23
 - A. An inquiry by a delegation from Bethel 7:1–3
 - B. The Lord’s rebuke of empty ritualism 7:4–14
 - C. The future restoration of Zion 8:1–23
- IV. An oracle concerning the nations and Israel 9:1—11:17
 - A. A divine warrior hymn 9:1–17
 - B. A plan for restoration 10:1–12
 - C. The rejection of the Good Shepherd 11:1–17
- V. An oracle concerning Israel’s future 12:1—14:21
 - A. The physical deliverance of the nation 12:1–9
 - B. The spiritual renewal of the nation 12:10—13:6
 - C. The fate of the shepherd and the flock 13:7–9
 - D. The Second Coming of the Messiah 14:1–7
 - E. The kingdom of the Messiah 14:8–11
 - F. The judgment of Israel’s enemies 14:12–15
 - G. Worship in the Messiah’s kingdom 14:16–21

605 B.C.
Nebuchadnezzar begins to reign in Babylon

605 B.C.
Some Judeans are taken captive

586 B.C.
Jerusalem falls to the Babylonians

539 B.C.
Cyrus of Persia conquers Babylon

538 B.C.
The return of the Jews to Judea begins

520 B.C.
Temple rebuilding resumes after a 14-year lapse

515 B.C.
The temple is completed

A Call to Repentance

In the eighth month ^a of the second year of Darius, the word of the LORD came ^b to Zechariah the son of Berechiah, the son of ^cIddo the prophet, saying, ²“The LORD has been very angry with your fathers. ³Therefore say to them, ‘Thus says the LORD of hosts: “Return ^d to Me,” says the LORD of hosts, “and I will return to you,” says the LORD of hosts. ⁴“Do not be like your fathers, ^eto whom the former prophets preached, saying, ‘Thus says the LORD of hosts: ^f“Turn now from your evil ways and your evil deeds.”’ But they did not hear nor heed Me,” says the LORD.

- ⁵ “Your fathers, where *are* they?
And the prophets, do they live
forever?
⁶ Yet surely ^gMy words and My
statutes,
Which I commanded My servants
the prophets,
Did they not overtake your fathers?

“So they returned and said:

- ^h“Just as the LORD of hosts determined
to do to us,
According to our ways and according
to our deeds,
So He has dealt with us.’ ”

Vision of the Horses

⁷On the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month, which is the month Shebat, in the second year of Darius, the word of the LORD came to Zechariah the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo the prophet: ⁸I saw by night, and behold, ⁱa man riding

CHAPTER 1

¹ ^a Ezra 4:24; 6:15; Hag. 1:1; Zech. 7:1 ^b Ezra 5:1; 6:14; Zech. 7:1; Matt. 23:35; Luke 11:51 ^c Neh. 12:4, 16 ³ ^d Is. 31:6; 44:22; [Mic. 7:19; Mal. 3:7-10; Luke 15:20; James 4:8] ⁴ ^e 2 Chr. 36:15, 16 ^f Is. 31:6; Jer. 3:12; 18:11; Ezek. 18:30; [Hos. 14:1] ⁶ ^g [Is. 55:11] ^h Lam. 1:18; 2:17 ⁸ ⁱ Is. 55:13; Zech. 6:2; [Rev. 6:4]

^j [Zech. 6:2-7; Rev. 6:2] ⁹ ^k Zech. 4:4, 5, 13; 6:4 ¹⁰ ^l [Heb. 1:14] ¹¹ ^m [Ps. 103:20, 21] ¹ Lit. *sitting and quiet* ¹² ⁿ Ps. 74:10; Jer. 12:4; Hab. 1:2 ² 2 Chr. 36:21; Jer. 25:11, 12; 29:10; Dan. 9:2; Zech. 7:5 ¹³ ^p Jer. 29:10 ¹⁴ ^q Joel 2:18; Zech. 8:2 ² Lit. *Cry out* ³ Or *jealous* ⁴ Or *jealousy* ¹⁵ ^r Is. 47:6 ¹⁶ ^s [Is. 12:1; 54:8; Zech. 2:10; 8:3]

on a red horse, and it stood among the myrtle trees in the hollow; and behind him *were* ^jhorses: red, sorrel, and white. ⁹Then I said, ^k“My lord, what *are* these?” So the angel who talked with me said to me, “I will show you what they *are*.”

¹⁰And the man who stood among the myrtle trees answered and said, ^l“These *are the ones* whom the LORD has sent to walk to and fro throughout the earth.”

¹¹^mSo they answered the Angel of the LORD, who stood among the myrtle trees, and said, “We have walked to and fro throughout the earth, and behold, all the earth is ¹resting quietly.”

The LORD Will Comfort Zion

¹²Then the Angel of the LORD answered and said, “O LORD of hosts, ⁿhow long will You not have mercy on Jerusalem and on the cities of Judah, against which You were angry ^othese seventy years?”

¹³And the LORD answered the angel who talked to me, *with* ^pgood and comforting words. ¹⁴So the angel who spoke with me said to me, ²“Proclaim, saying, ‘Thus says the LORD of hosts:

- “I am ^qzealous ³ for Jerusalem
And for Zion with great ⁴zeal.
¹⁵ I am exceedingly angry with the
nations at ease;
For ^rI was a little angry,
And they helped—*but* with evil
intent.”

¹⁶“Therefore thus says the LORD:

- ^s“I am returning to Jerusalem with
mercy;

1:1 The **eighth month** corresponds to October–November on our calendar. **Darius** ruled Persia from 522 to 486 B.C. Thus his **second year** was 520 B.C. The name **Zechariah** means “Yahweh Remembers,” emphasizing God’s faithfulness to His covenant promises and to His people.

1:2 The **fathers** refers to the ancestors of the present generation who had disobeyed God and come under His judgment (see 2 Chr. 36:15, 16).

1:3 The words **return to Me** remind us of the depth of God’s unconditional love. **says the LORD of hosts:** The personal name translated “LORD” speaks of God’s gracious nature as He relates to His people (see Ex. 3:15); the *hosts* are the angelic armies that await His every command.

1:4 The **former prophets** refers to men like Habakkuk, Zephaniah, and Jeremiah, who had lived during the last years of the Judean monarchy and had warned of coming judgment.

1:5, 6 Their **fathers** had been killed or exiled and even the **prophets** had perished. The previous generation had been overtaken by God’s judgment (see Deut. 28:15–68).

1:7–6:15 This section contains a sequence of eight night visions concerning Israel’s future, followed by the symbolic crowning of the high priest Joshua. Here Zechariah pursues the same end as Haggai, rebuilding the temple as the center of worship and world rule, and as a place of pilgrimage for the nations (8:20–23; Hag. 2:7–9). The eight

night visions follow a general pattern. Zechariah describes what he sees, then asks the question, “What does this mean?” Finally he is given an explanation by an accompanying angel.

1:7 The **eleventh month (Shebat)** is the Babylonian name) corresponds to January–February, 519 B.C. **the word of the LORD:** Here the phrase refers to a prophetic vision.

1:8 **Myrtle** is an evergreen tree that was once very common in the vicinity of Jerusalem (Neh. 8:15).

1:12, 13 The prophet overhears a conversation between **the Angel of the LORD** and God. This may be a conversation between the pre-incarnate Jesus and the first Person of the Trinity, God the Father (see Ps. 110). It is certainly an allusion to Jesus’ role as Intercessor. As the author of Hebrews states, Jesus lives to make intercession for us (Heb. 7:25) at the right hand of the Father. The **seventy years** refers to the period of exile during which the temple lay in ruins (586–515 B.C.; see Jer. 25:7–14).

1:14 **the angel who spoke with me:** This is the interpreting angel in the dramatic vision, not the Angel of the Lord (v. 11). **I am zealous:** The passion of the Lord can be seen in His defense of His special relationship with Israel and Jerusalem.

1:15 **I am exceedingly angry:** Here the anger of God was against the nations that He had used to punish His unrepentant people.

1:16 God promised to show compassion on His people and to rebuild the Jerusalem temple (**My house**). **A surveyor’s line** was

My 'house "shall be built in it," says the LORD of hosts,
"And 'a *surveyor's* line shall be stretched out over Jerusalem."

¹⁷"Again proclaim, saying, "Thus says the LORD of hosts:

"My cities shall again ⁵spread out through prosperity;
¹⁰The LORD will again comfort Zion,
And ^xwill again choose Jerusalem."

Vision of the Horns

¹⁸Then I raised my eyes and looked, and there *were* four ^yhorns. ¹⁹And I said to the angel who talked with me, "What are these?"

So he answered me, ^z"These *are* the ⁶horns that have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem."

²⁰Then the LORD showed me four craftsmen. ²¹And I said, "What are these coming to do?"

So he said, "These *are* the ^ahorns that scattered Judah, so that no one could lift up his head; but ⁷the craftsmen are coming to terrify them, to cast out the horns of the nations that ^blifted up *their* horn against the land of Judah to scatter it."

Vision of the Measuring Line

2 Then I raised my eyes and looked, and behold, ^aa man with a measuring line in his hand. ²So I said, "Where are you going?"

And he said to me, ^b"To measure Jerusalem, to see what *is* its width and what *is* its length."

16 ^t Ezra 6:14, 15; Hag. 1:4; Zech. 4:9 ^u 2 Chr. 36:23; Ezra 1:2, 3; Is. 44:28 ^v Zech. 2:1-3
17 ^w [Is. 40:1, 2; 51:3] ^x Is. 14:1; Zech. 2:12 ^y Or *overflow with good*
18 ^y [Lam. 2:17]
19 ^z Ezra 4:1, 4, 7 ^a Kingdoms or powers
21 ^a [Ps. 75:10] ^b Ps. 75:4, 5 ^z Lit. *these*

CHAPTER 2

1 ^a Jer. 31:39; Ezek. 40:3; 47:3; Zech. 1:16
2 ^b Rev. 11:1

4 ^c Jer. 31:27
5 ^d [Is. 26:1] ^e [Is. 60:19]
6 ^f Is. 48:20 ^g Deut. 28:64
7 ^h Is. 48:20; Jer. 51:6; [Rev. 18:4]
8 ⁱ Deut. 32:10; Ps. 17:8 ^j Lit. *pupil*
9 ^k Is. 19:16 ^k Zech. 4:9 ^z *booty* or *plunder*
10 ^l Is. 12:6 ^m [Lev. 26:12]
11 ⁿ [Is. 2:2, 3]
^o Zech. 3:10 ^p Ex. 12:49 ^q Ezek. 33:33
12 ^r [Deut. 32:9]; Ps. 33:12; Jer. 10:16
13 ^s Hab. 2:20;
Zeph. 1:7 ^t Ps. 68:5

³And there *was* the angel who talked with me, going out; and another angel was coming out to meet him, ⁴who said to him, "Run, speak to this young man, saying: ^c'Jerusalem shall be inhabited *as* towns without walls, because of the multitude of men and livestock in it. ⁵For I,' says the LORD, 'will be ^da wall of fire all around her, ^eand I will be the glory in her midst.'"

Future Joy of Zion and Many Nations

⁶"Up, up! Flee ^ffrom the land of the north," says the LORD; "for I have ^gspread you abroad like the four winds of heaven," says the LORD. ⁷"Up, Zion! ^hEscape, you who dwell with the daughter of Babylon."

⁸For thus says the LORD of hosts: "He sent Me after glory, to the nations which plunder you; for he who ⁱtouches you touches the ¹apple of His eye. ⁹For surely I will ^jshake My hand against them, and they shall become ²spoil for their servants. Then ^kyou will know that the LORD of hosts has sent Me.

¹⁰^l"Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion! For behold, I am coming and I ^mwill dwell in your midst," says the LORD. ¹¹ⁿ"Many nations shall be joined to the LORD ^oin that day, and they shall become ^pMy people. And I will dwell in your midst. Then ^qyou will know that the LORD of hosts has sent Me to you. ¹²And the LORD will ^rtake possession of Judah as His inheritance in the Holy Land, and will again choose Jerusalem. ¹³^sBe silent, all flesh, before the LORD, for He is aroused ^tfrom His holy habitation!"

used to make measurements in preparation for new construction. The stretching of the line was a promise that the work would begin and that the completion of the task would follow.

1:17 again choose Jerusalem: Jerusalem's election is a prominent emphasis in Zechariah (2:12; 3:2). The word **Zion** describes Jerusalem in an affectionate way (see Zeph. 3:14).

1:18 Animal horns were often used by poets and prophets as symbols of powerful nations and their kings (see Dan. 7:7, 8, 24). The horns that persecuted Israel and Judah included Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, and later Greece.

1:20, 21 four craftsmen: The craftsmen or "smiths" destroyed the **horns** (v. 19). Historically, Babylon destroyed Assyria, Medo-Persia conquered Babylon, Greece conquered Medo-Persia, and Rome overcame Greece. These are dominant themes in the prophecies of Daniel (see Dan. 2, 7).

2:4, 5 This young man refers to Zechariah. Here the words may indicate that Zechariah was young when he began his prophetic ministry (see Jer. 1:6). **towns without walls:** Jerusalem will have no need for defensive fortifications because God's presence will guarantee its safety and security. These words refer ultimately to the future Jerusalem under the rule of its glorious king (see Zeph. 3:15–19). **I will be the glory:** These words drive us to the vision of the New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:1–3, 10, 11, 22, 23).

2:6 Although Babylon was east of Israel, travelers typically followed the Euphrates River and approached Israel from **the north**.

2:7 The name **Zion** may have first applied to the Jebusite stronghold captured by David (2 Sam. 5:7). It was later used for the temple mount (Ps. 78:68, 69) and became a synonym for Jerusalem (Is. 40:9; Mic. 3:12). **Daughter of Babylon** signified the people living in the city of Babylon.

2:8, 9 The word **touches** refers to a touch that produces harm. The **apple of His eye** refers to the pupil—this is an endearing expression, suggesting how enormously important the Hebrew people are to God because of His covenant with them. Just as we protect our eyes from even the smallest particles of dust, so God protects and cares for His people. **Then you will know:** The fulfillment of this prophecy would authenticate Zechariah's commission as God's spokesman (see Deut. 18:21, 22).

2:10 daughter of Zion: As elsewhere, we may think of this phrase as a particularly affectionate manner of addressing Jerusalem and its people as the daughter of the Lord (see Zeph. 3:14).

2:11 Many nations refer to Gentiles who will enter into a relationship with God and become His people (Gen. 12:3; Joel 2:28; Amos 9:12; Rev. 21:24). The words **My people** are used elsewhere in the context of the renewal of God's covenant with His believing people (Jer. 31:33; 32:38; Hos. 2:23; see also Ex. 3:7; Deut. 4:20; 14:2; 26:19).

2:12 Surprisingly, the familiar phrase **the Holy Land** occurs in the OT only here. The land is *holy* because of the presence of God among His believing people.

2:13 God had **aroused** Himself from His heavenly sanctuary and

Vision of the High Priest

3 Then he showed me ^aJoshua the high priest standing before the Angel of the LORD, and ^bSatan¹ standing at his right hand to oppose him. ²And the LORD said to Satan, ^c“The LORD rebuke you, Satan! The LORD who ^dhas chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! ^eIs this not a brand plucked from the fire?”

³Now Joshua was clothed with ^ffilthy garments, and was standing before the Angel.

⁴Then He answered and spoke to those who stood before Him, saying, “Take away the filthy garments from him.” And to him He said, “See, I have removed your iniquity from you, ^gand I will clothe you with rich robes.”

⁵And I said, “Let them put a clean ^hturban on his head.”

So they put a clean turban on his head, and they put the clothes on him. And the Angel of the LORD stood by.

The Coming Branch

⁶Then the Angel of the LORD admonished Joshua, saying, ⁷“Thus says the LORD of hosts:

‘If you will walk in My ways,
And if you will ⁱkeep My command,

CHAPTER 3

¹ ^a Ezra 5:2; Hag. 1:1; Zech. 6:11
² ^b 1 Chr. 21:1; Job 1:6; Ps. 109:6; [Rev. 12:9, 10] ^c Lit. the Adversary
³ ^c Mark 9:25; [Jude 9] ^d [Rom. 8:33] ^e Amos 4:11; Jude 23
⁴ ^f Ezra 9:15; Is. 64:6
⁵ ^g Gen. 3:21; Is. 61:10
⁶ ^h Ex. 29:6
⁷ ⁱ Lev. 8:35; Ezek. 44:16

^j Deut. 17:9, 12
^k Zech. 3:4
⁸ ^l Ps. 71:7 ^m Is. 42:1 ☆ ⁿ Is. 11:1; 53:2; Jer. 23:5; 33:15; Zech. 6:12 ² Lit. men of a sign or wonder
⁹ ^o [Zech. 4:10; Rev. 5:6] ^p Ps. 118:22
¹⁰ ^q Jer. 31:34; 50:20; Zech. 3:4
¹¹ ^r Zech. 2:11
¹² ^s 1 Kin. 4:25; Is. 36:16; Mic. 4:4

CHAPTER 4

¹ ^a Zech. 1:9; 2:3
² ^b Dan. 8:18
³ ^c Rev. 1:12

Then you shall also ^jjudge My house,
And likewise have charge of My courts;

I will give you places to walk
Among these who ^kstand here.

- ⁸ ‘Hear, O Joshua, the high priest,
You and your companions who sit before you,
For they are ^la ²wondrous sign;
For behold, I am bringing forth ^mMy Servant the ⁿBRANCH.
⁹ For behold, the stone
That I have laid before Joshua:
^oUpon the stone are ^pseven eyes.
Behold, I will engrave its inscription,
Says the LORD of hosts,
‘And ^qI will remove the iniquity of that land in one day.
¹⁰ ^rIn that day,’ says the LORD of hosts,
‘Everyone will invite his neighbor
^sUnder his vine and under his fig tree.’”

Vision of the Lampstand and Olive Trees

4 Now ^athe angel who talked with me came back and wakened me, ^bas a man who is wakened out of his sleep. ²And he said to me, “What do you see?” So I said, “I am looking, and there is ^ca

was about to intervene on behalf of His people. Hence **be silent** was not an anticipation of worship, but calls for terror at the judgment that was about to be unleashed from God’s glory (see Zeph. 1:7).

3:1 Zechariah saw a heavenly courtroom where **Joshua**, representing the people of Judah, was standing before the **Angel of the LORD** and was being accused by **Satan**. This is not the Joshua who succeeded Moses, but the high priest who returned to Jerusalem with the exiles (Ezra 3:2). **Satan**: The Hebrew is literally “the Satan,” meaning “the Accuser.” The picture is not unlike that of Job 1, where Satan stands before the Lord making accusations against people who follow God.

3:2 **The LORD rebuke you, Satan**: These words presuppose an earlier conversation in which Satan made accusations against the people and their priest. We are reminded that Satan is not sovereign; He is subject to the Sovereign Lord who will handle him. The **brand plucked from the fire** refers to Judah, delivered from the *fire* of Babylonian captivity. Joshua, their priest, represented the nation, a people of God’s favor.

3:3 The high priest represented the people before God (see Ex. 28:29) and under no circumstances was to become defiled or unclean (Ex. 28:2; Lev. 21:10–15). Joshua’s **filthy garments** were literally “befouled with excrement.”

3:4, 5 The cleansing of Joshua was not complete with the removal of his sin-soiled garments. God replaced the dirty clothes, dressing Joshua in clean garments that represented the gift of God’s righteousness. As sin is removed by the work of Christ, so His righteousness is placed in the believer’s account (see Rom. 5:18, 19; 2 Cor. 5:21). We are clothed in the garments of Christ’s righteousness. The fact that Joshua had no part in his cleansing indicates that this work was totally by God’s grace.

3:7 Joshua was recommissioned as the nation’s high priest. For his faithfulness he was promised the privilege of exercising authority over God’s temple—**My house**—and its courts.

3:8 The coming Messiah is depicted as God’s **Servant** (Is. 53:11). He is also referred to as **the BRANCH**. Isaiah used this word and a

similar one to describe the Messiah who will grow out of the root of the family of Jesse as a tender sprout shoots up from the ground (see 6:12; Is. 4:2; 11:1; 53:2). Joshua and his companions were a **sign** because the reinstitution of the priesthood made public God’s continuing intention to fulfill His promises to His people.

3:9 **stone**: Like the priest Aaron, who possessed a jeweled ephod (see Ex. 25:7; 35:9), so the new priest possessed a lustrous stone, a symbol of the authority of his office. The **eyes** may be symbolic of wisdom and of the endowment of the Holy Spirit (see 4:10; Is. 11:2).

3:10 Sitting **under the vine** and **under the fig tree** is an image of peace and tranquility characteristic of the messianic kingdom (Mic. 4:4).

4:1 **wakened me**: It appears that these night visions came in the course of a single night.

4:2, 3 The **lampstand of solid gold** would remind the people of the lampstand in the tabernacle and the temple.

angel

(Heb. *mal'ak*) (4:1; 2 Sam. 2:5; 24:16; Ps. 34:7; Is. 37:9) Strong’s #4397

This noun may refer to angelic beings (4:1, 5; Gen. 19:1; Ps. 91:11), human messengers (Gen. 32:3; Deut. 2:26), or ambassadors (Is. 30:4; Ezek. 17:15). A special use is the manifestation of the Godhead known as the Angel of God in the OT (2:6; see Gen. 21:17; Ex. 14:19). In the OT, prophets (Hag. 1:13) and priests (Mal. 2:7) function as messengers from God. In Zechariah, angels bring revelations from God about the future and interpret the meaning of dreams and visions (1:14; 6:4, 5). Jesus identified the messenger who prepared the way for the day of the Lord, forecast in Mal. 3:1, as John the Baptist (Matt. 11:10, 11).

lampstand of solid gold with a bowl on top of it, ^dand on the *stand* seven lamps with seven pipes to the seven lamps. ^{3e}Two olive trees *are* by it, one at the right of the bowl and the other at its left.”

⁴So I answered and spoke to the angel who talked with me, saying, “What *are* these, my lord?”

⁵Then the angel who talked with me answered and said to me, “Do you not know what these *are*?”

And I said, “No, my lord.”

⁶So he answered and said to me:

“This *is* the word of the LORD to ^fZerubbabel:

^g“Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,”

Says the LORD of hosts.

⁷“Who *are* you, ^hO great mountain? Before Zerubbabel *you shall become* a plain!

And he shall bring forth ⁱthe capstone ^jWith shouts of “Grace, grace to it!””

⁸Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying:

⁹“The hands of Zerubbabel ^kHave laid the foundation of this ^ltemple;

His hands ^lshall also finish *it*.

Then ^myou will know

That the ⁿLORD of hosts has sent Me to you.

¹⁰For who has despised the day of ^osmall things?

For these seven rejoice to see The ²plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel.

^pThey are the eyes of the LORD, Which scan to and fro throughout the whole earth.”

¹¹Then I answered and said to him, “What *are* these ^qtwo olive trees—at the

² ^d Ex. 25:37; [Rev. 4:5]

³ ^e Rev. 11:3, 4

⁶ ^f Hag. 1:1 ^g Is.

^{30:1}; Hos. 1:7; Hag.

^{2:4, 5}

⁷ ^h Ps. 114:4, 6; Is.

^{40:4}; Jer. 51:25;

Nah. 1:5; Zech. 14:4,

⁵; [Matt. 21:21] ⁱ Ps.

^{118:22} / Ezra 3:10,

^{11, 13}; Ps. 84:11

⁹ ^k Ezra 3:8-10; 5:16;

Hag. 2:18 / Ezra

^{6:14, 15}; Zech. 6:12,

¹³ ^m Zech. 2:9, 11;

^{6:15} ⁿ [Is. 43:16];

Zech. 2:8 ^l Lit.

^{house}

¹⁰ ^o Neh. 4:2-4;

Amos 7:2, 5; Hag.

^{2:3} ^p 2 Chr. 16:9;

Prov. 15:3; Zech.

^{3:9} ² Lit. ^{plummet}

^{stone}

¹¹ ^q Zech. 4:3;

Rev. 11:4

¹² ³ Lit. ^{into the}

^{hands of}

¹⁴ ^r Rev. 11:4

³ Zech. 3:1-7 ⁴ Lit.

^{sons of fresh oil}

CHAPTER 5

¹ ^a Jer. 36:2; Ezek.

^{2:9}; Rev. 5:1

³ ^b Mal. 4:6

⁴ ^c Ex. 20:15; Lev.

^{19:11} ^d Ex. 20:7; Lev.

^{19:12}; Is. 48:1; Jer.

^{5:2}; Zech. 8:17; Mal.

^{3:5} ^e Lev. 14:34, 35;

Job 18:15

⁶ ^f Heb. ^{ephah},

a measuring

container, and so

elsewhere

right of the lampstand and at its left?”
¹²And I further answered and said to him, “What *are* these two olive branches that *drip* ³into the receptacles of the two gold pipes from which the golden *oil* drains?”

¹³Then he answered me and said, “Do you not know what these *are*?”

And I said, “No, my lord.”

¹⁴So he said, ^r“These *are* the two ⁴anointed ones, ^swho stand beside the Lord of the whole earth.”

Vision of the Flying Scroll

⁵Then I turned and raised my eyes, and saw there a flying ^ascroll.

²And he said to me, “What do you see?”

So I answered, “I see a flying scroll. Its length *is* twenty cubits and its width ten cubits.”

³Then he said to me, “This *is* the ^bcurse that goes out over the face of the whole earth: ‘Every thief shall be expelled,’ according to this side of the *scroll*; and, ‘Every perjurer shall be expelled,’ according to that side of it.”

⁴“I will send out *the curse*,” says the LORD of hosts;

“It shall enter the house of the ^cthief

And the house of ^dthe one who

swears falsely by My name.

It shall remain in the midst of his

house

And consume ^eit, with its timber and stones.”

Vision of the Woman in a Basket

⁵Then the angel who talked with me came out and said to me, “Lift your eyes now, and see what this *is* that goes forth.”

⁶So I asked, “What *is* it?” And he said, “It *is* a ^fbasket that is going forth.”

He also said, “This *is* their resem-

4:6 The rebuilding of the temple, which had at last begun in earnest (Ezra 5:1, 2; Hag. 1:14), would be accomplished not by human strength or resources, but by the power of God’s **Spirit**.

4:7 The **great mountain** was a figurative reference to the great obstacles the people faced in rebuilding the temple (Ezra 5:3–17). The setting of the **capstone** would mark the completion of the project. The words **Grace, grace to it** may be understood as a prayer for God’s favor, or as a cry of admiration over the grace and beauty of the newly built temple.

4:9 **His hands**: The promise concerning **Zerubbabel** is significant; the task that he began he would also complete.

4:10 **the day of small things**: There is nothing wrong with a small work. Little can indeed be much if God is in it. **These seven**, a number used symbolically to represent the idea of completeness, are identified as **the eyes of the Lord** (see “eyes” in 3:9). The fact that these eyes will **rejoice** at the plumb line in Zerubbabel’s hand suggests the delight of God over the rebuilding of the temple.

4:11–14 The **two olive branches** are identified as **two anointed**

ones, representatives of the religious and political offices in Israel, or of priest and king. Many identify the two branches with the high priest Joshua and the governor Zerubbabel.

5:2 A **scroll** was made of rolled parchment or leather and was the ancient equivalent of a book (see Jer. 36:1–8). A **cubit** was about 18 inches. The scroll, approximately the size of a billboard, measured about 15 by 30 feet.

5:3 The writing on the scroll was a message of judgment. **The curse** refers to the judgments spoken of in the Mosaic covenant (Deut. 30:7). The message on the scroll warned that the curses described in the covenant as a result of the people’s disobedience would be executed upon the whole land.

5:4 **And consume it**: God’s great love does not preclude the exercise of His judgment on those who violate His will. The judgment upon the disobedient would be certain and severe.

5:6 The word translated **basket** is literally *ephah*, a unit of dry measure of about half a bushel. The word translated **resemblance** was understood as *iniquity* in some ancient versions.

blance throughout the earth: ⁷Here is a lead disc lifted up, and this is a woman sitting inside the basket"; ⁸then he said, "This is Wickedness!" And he thrust her down into the basket, and threw the lead ²cover over its mouth. ⁹Then I raised my eyes and looked, and there were two women, coming with the wind in their wings; for they had wings like the wings of a ¹stork, and they lifted up the basket between earth and heaven.

¹⁰So I said to the ⁹angel who talked with me, "Where are they carrying the basket?"

¹¹And he said to me, "To ^hbuild a house for it in ⁱthe land of ³Shinar; when it is ready, the basket will be set there on its base."

Vision of the Four Chariots

6 Then I turned and raised my eyes and looked, and behold, four chariots were coming from between two mountains, and the mountains were mountains of bronze. ²With the first chariot were ^ared horses, with the second chariot ^bblack horses, ³with the third chariot white horses, and with the fourth chariot dappled horses—strong steeds. ⁴Then I answered ^cand said to the angel who talked with me, "What are these, my lord?"

⁵And the angel answered and said to me, ^d"These are four spirits of heaven, who go out from their ^estation before the Lord of all the earth. ⁶¹The one with the black horses is going to ^fthe north country, the white are going after them, and the dappled are going toward the south

⁸ ² Lit. stone
⁹ / Lev. 11:13, 19; Ps. 104:17; Jer. 8:7
¹⁰ ⁹ Zech. 5:5
¹¹ ^h Jer. 29:5,
²⁸ / Gen. 10:10;
 Is. 11:11; Dan. 1:2
³ Babylon

CHAPTER 6

² ^a Zech. 1:8; Rev. 6:4 ^b Rev. 6:5
⁴ ^c Zech. 5:10
⁵ ^d [Ps. 104:4; Heb. 1:7, 14] ^e 1 Kin. 22:19; Dan. 7:10; Zech. 4:14; Luke 1:19
⁶ ^f Jer. 1:14; Ezek. 1:4 ¹ The chariot

⁷ ⁹ Gen. 13:17; Zech. 1:10
⁸ ^h Eccl. 10:4
¹¹ ⁱ Ex. 29:6 / Ezra 3:2; Hag. 1:1; Zech. 3:1 ² Lit. crowns
¹² ^k John 1:45 / Is. 4:2; 11:1 ☆; Jer. 23:5; 33:15; Zech. 3:8
^m [Matt. 16:18; Eph. 2:20; Heb. 3:3] ³ Lit. sprout up
¹³ ⁿ Is. 22:24 ^o Ps. 110:4; [Heb. 3:1]
⁴ Both offices

country." ⁷Then the strong steeds went out, eager to go, that they might ⁹walk to and fro throughout the earth. And He said, "Go, walk to and fro throughout the earth." So they walked to and fro throughout the earth. ⁸And He called to me, and spoke to me, saying, "See, those who go toward the north country have given rest to My ^hSpirit in the north country."

The Command to Crown Joshua

⁹Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying: ¹⁰"Receive the gift from the captives—from Heldai, Tobijah, and Jedaiah, who have come from Babylon—and go the same day and enter the house of Josiah the son of Zephaniah. ¹¹Take the silver and gold, make ⁱan ²elaborate crown, and set it on the head of ^jJoshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest. ¹²Then speak to him, saying, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts, saying:

"Behold, ^kthe Man whose name is the ¹BRANCH!

From His place He shall ³branch out,

^mAnd He shall build the temple of the LORD;

¹³ Yes, He shall build the temple of the LORD.

He ⁿshall bear the glory,
 And shall sit and rule on His throne;
 So ^oHe shall be a priest on His throne,

And the counsel of peace shall be between ⁴them both."

5:7, 8 The woman sitting inside the basket is **Wickedness**, a personification of sin.

5:9 Next Zechariah saw **two women**, God's agents, disposing of the wicked woman in the basket. **the wings of a stork:** The stork is a migratory bird frequently seen traveling north along the Jordan valley in the spring of the year.

5:11 **Shinar** was an ancient name for the district in which the cities of Babylon (Babel), Erech, Accad, and Calneh were located (Gen. 10:10; 11:2). The fact that a **house** was built for the woman suggests that the removal of wickedness (v. 8) from Israel was permanent.

6:1 **chariots:** In ancient times two-wheeled and four-wheeled horse-drawn carts served as vehicles for transportation and for warfare. The war chariots usually had a crew of two or three men including a driver, an archer, and a defender who used a shield to protect the others.

6:5 These chariots and their teams represented **four spirits of heaven**, probably angels.

6:6, 7 The **horses** were **eager** to take the four spirits on their mission to bring divine judgment on the peoples of the earth.

6:8 The activity of the chariot teams would give **rest** to God's **Spirit** because His agents would be executing His judgment on the nations that threatened Israel. Cyrus's overthrow of Babylon in 539 **B.C.** may well have been a part of this judgment (Is. 13:1–22; 45:1–6).

6:10, 11 The **captives** refer to the new arrivals from Babylon, who brought gifts of **silver and gold** to help the restored community of Israelites. The **elaborate crown** was possibly a composite crown

made up of several circlets. The crown was to be placed on the head of Joshua the high priest.

6:12 The Messiah Himself will **build the temple of the Lord**. Since the restoration temple (the second temple) was already being built and would be completed by Zerubbabel (see 4:9), the temple referred to here may be the future temple of the messianic kingdom (see Is. 2:2–4; Ezek. 40–42; Mic. 4:1–5; Hag. 2:7–9). The temple of Zerubbabel was a prophetic symbol of the temple that is still to come.

6:13 He will **sit and rule** and **be a priest**. In the Messiah the two offices of king and priest will be united (John 1:49; Heb. 3:1).

BRANCH

(Heb. *tsemach*) (3:8; 6:12; Is. 4:2; Jer. 23:5) Strong's #6780

The Hebrew term translated as BRANCH here means "Shoot" or "Twig." This is one title for the coming Messiah, the "Branch" who would "shoot" up from the royal stock of David, a dynasty that had been interrupted with the Babylonian exile (Is. 11:1). Many of the prophets promised that a King from David's line would reign in righteousness (Jer. 23:5, 6) and as a priest would reestablish true worship of the Lord (6:12, 13). In His ministry, Jesus Christ fulfilled these predictions by taking on both a royal (see John 12:13–15; 1 Tim. 6:13–16) and a priestly role (see Heb. 4:14).

¹⁴“Now the ⁵elaborate crown shall be ^pfor a memorial in the temple of the LORD ⁶for Helem, Tobijah, Jedaiah, and Hen the son of Zephaniah. ¹⁵Even ^qthose from afar shall come and build the temple of the LORD. Then you shall know that the LORD of hosts has sent Me to you. And *this* shall come to pass if you diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God.”

Obedience Better than Fasting

7 Now in the fourth year of King Darius it came to pass *that* the word of the LORD came to Zechariah, on the fourth *day* of the ninth month, Chislev, ²when ¹the people sent ²Sherezzer, with Regem-Melech and his men, to ³the house of God, ⁴to pray before the LORD, ³and to ^aask the priests who were in the house of the LORD of hosts, and the prophets, saying, “Should I weep in ^bthe fifth month and ⁵fast as I have done for so many years?”

⁴Then the word of the LORD of hosts came to me, saying, ⁵“Say to all the people of the land, and to the priests: ‘When you ^cfasted and mourned in the fifth ^dand seventh *months* ^eduring those seventy years, did you really fast ^ffor Me—for Me? ^{6g}When you eat and when you drink, do you not eat and drink *for yourselves*? ⁷Should you not *have obeyed* the words which the LORD proclaimed through the ^hformer prophets when Jerusalem and the cities around it were inhabited and prosperous, and ⁱthe ⁶South and the Lowland were inhabited?’”

¹⁴ ^p Ex. 12:14; Mark 14:9 ⁵ Lit. *crowns*
⁶ So with MT, Tg., Vg.; Syr. for *Heldai* (cf. v. 10); LXX for *the patient ones*
¹⁵ ^q Is. 57:19; [Eph. 2:13]

CHAPTER 7

² ¹ Lit. *they*, cf. v. 5
² Or *Sar-Ezer* ³ Heb. *Bethel* ⁴ Or to *entreat the favor of*
³ ^a Deut. 17:9; Mal. 2:7 ^b Zech. 8:19
⁵ Lit. *consecrate myself*
⁵ ^c [Is. 58:1-9] ^d Jer. 41:1 ^e Zech. 1:12
^f [Rom. 14:6]
⁶ ^g Deut. 12:7;
14:26; 1 Chr. 29:22
⁷ ^h Is. 1:16-20; Jer. 7:5, 23; Zech. 1:4
ⁱ Jer. 17:26 ⁶ Heb. *Negev*
⁹ ⁱ Is. 58:6, 7; Jer. 7:28 ⁷ Or *lovingkindness*
¹⁰ ^k Ex. 22:22; Ps. 72:4; Is. 1:17; Jer. 5:28 ¹ Ps. 36:4; Ezek. 38:10; 45:9; Mic. 2:1; Zech. 8:16, 17
¹¹ ^m Neh. 9:29
ⁿ Jer. 17:23; Acts 7:57 ⁸ Lit. *gave a stubborn or rebellious shoulder*
⁹ Lit. *made their ears heavy*
¹² ^o Ezek. 11:19
^p Neh. 9:29, 30
^q 2 Chr. 36:16; Dan. 9:11, 12
¹³ ^r Prov. 1:24-28; Is. 1:15; Jer. 11:11; Mic. 3:4
¹⁴ ^s Lev. 26:33;

Disobedience Resulted in Captivity

⁸Then the word of the LORD came to Zechariah, saying, ⁹“Thus says the LORD of hosts:

^j Execute true justice,
Show ⁷mercy and compassion
Everyone to his brother.
¹⁰ ^k Do not oppress the widow or the fatherless,
The alien or the poor.
^l Let none of you plan evil in his heart
Against his brother.’

¹¹ “But they refused to heed, ^mshrugged ⁸ their shoulders, and ⁿstopped ⁹ their ears so that they could not hear. ¹² Yes, they made their ^o hearts like flint, ^p refusing to hear the law and the words which the LORD of hosts had sent by His Spirit through the former prophets. ^q Thus great wrath came from the LORD of hosts. ¹³ Therefore it happened, *that* just as He proclaimed and they would not hear, so ^r they called out and I would not listen,” says the LORD of hosts. ¹⁴ “But ^s I scattered them with a whirlwind among all the nations which they had not known. Thus the land became desolate after them, so that no one passed through or returned; for they made the pleasant land desolate.”

Jerusalem, Holy City of the Future

8 Again the word of the LORD of hosts came, saying, ²“Thus says the LORD of hosts:

Deut. 4:27; 28:64; Neh. 1:8

6:15 Those from afar include Gentile peoples (see 8:22; see Hag. 2:7-9; Eph. 2:13).

7:1 The fourth year of Darius was 518 B.C. The ninth month or Chislev (the Babylonian name) corresponds to November-December.

7:2 The words translated house of God may also mean “Bethel,” a town 12 miles north of Jerusalem. Over two hundred Jews from Bethel returned from Babylon in 538 B.C. (Ezra 2:28; Neh. 7:32), and the city was reoccupied during the restoration period (Neh. 11:31). It seems most likely that the people of Bethel sent a delegation to ask a question of the priests in Jerusalem.

7:3 The house of the LORD of hosts refers to the temple in Jerusalem. The fast in the fifth month (July-August) commemorated the destruction of the temple in 586 B.C. (2 Kin. 25:8). The delegation from Bethel wanted to know if it was necessary to continue this annual fast as it had been observed during the Babylonian captivity.

7:5, 6 did you really fast for Me—for Me: The rhetorical question was designed to confront the people and priests with the selfish motives of their self-righteous fasting. Biblical fasting is meant to be time taken from the normal routines of preparing and eating food to express humility and dependence on God during a time of prayer. There was only one required fast in the Law of Moses, the fast on the Day of Atonement (see Lev. 16:29). The fast during the seventh month lamented the slaying of Gedaliah (2 Kin. 25:25). The seventy years (see 1:12; Jer. 25:11; 29:10) refer to the period of time while the people were in exile and the temple lay in ruins. **for**

yourselves: Their fasting and their feasting were both motivated by self-interest rather than a desire to honor God.

7:7 The former prophets were those who ministered before the Exile (1:4; see 2 Chr. 36:15, 16). The South is the Negev, the dry region of Judah around Beersheba. The Lowland is the transitional region between the hill country of Judah and the coastal plain.

7:9, 10 Zechariah’s four admonitions highlight the practical social concerns that many of the prophets emphasized (Is. 1:11-17; Hos. 6:6; Mic. 6:6-8). **Execute true justice:** Judicial decisions must be made without partiality or bias. **Show mercy and compassion:** Loving commitment and concern should guide our relationships with others. **Do not oppress:** No advantage is to be taken of the helpless and less fortunate. **Let none of you plan evil:** Evil scheming against others is prohibited. Sacrifices and worship are of little interest to God if they are not accompanied by practical piety.

7:11-14 Zechariah describes the response of the disobedient Judeans living in the land before the Babylonian exile. The consequence was God’s judgment—they were scattered.

8:1-3 The Lord again states that He is zealous for Jerusalem (1:14; see Nah. 1:2). This theme in Zechariah emphasizes the Lord’s great passion for His people. He longed to bless them with His presence and in turn desired their worship. **Zion** is the poetic equivalent of **Jerusalem** (see 2:7). The label **City of Truth** will be valid only when the Messiah brings His righteous reign to that city. Then the land will be holy (see 2:12).

^a“I am ¹zealous for Zion with great ²zeal;
With great ³fervor I am zealous for her.”

³“Thus says the LORD:

^b“I will return to Zion,
And ^cdwell in the midst of Jerusalem.
Jerusalem ^dshall be called the City of Truth,
^eThe Mountain of the LORD of hosts,
^fThe Holy Mountain.”

⁴“Thus says the LORD of hosts:

^g“Old men and old women shall again sit
In the streets of Jerusalem,
Each one with his staff in his hand
Because of ⁴great age.
⁵ The streets of the city
Shall be ^hfull of boys and girls
Playing in its streets.”

⁶“Thus says the LORD of hosts:

“If it is ⁵marvelous in the eyes of the remnant of this people in these days,
ⁱWill it also be marvelous in My eyes?
Says the LORD of hosts.

⁷“Thus says the LORD of hosts:

“Behold, ^jI will save My people from the land of the ⁶east
And from the land of the ⁷west;
⁸ I will ^kbring them back,
And they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem.
^lThey shall be My people
And I will be their God,
^mIn truth and righteousness.”

⁹“Thus says the LORD of hosts:

ⁿ“Let your hands be strong,
You who have been hearing in these days

CHAPTER 8

² ^a Joel 2:18; Nah. 1:2; Zech. 1:14
¹ Or *jealous* ² Or *jealousy* ³ Lit. *heat or rage*
³ ^b Zech. 1:16
^c Zech. 2:10, 11 ^d Is. 1:21 ^e [Is. 2:2, 3] ^f Jer. 31:23
⁴ ^g 1 Sam. 2:31; Is. 65:20 ⁴ Lit. *many days*
⁵ ^h Jer. 30:19, 20
⁶ ⁱ [Gen. 18:14; Luke 1:37] ⁵ Or *wonderful*
⁷ ^j Ps. 107:3; Is. 11:11; Ezek. 37:21
⁶ Lit. *rising sun* ⁷ Lit. *setting sun*
⁸ ^k Zeph. 3:20; Zech. 10:10 ^l [Jer. 30:22; 31:1, 33; Zech. 13:9] ^m Jer. 4:2
⁹ ⁿ 1 Chr. 22:13; Is. 35:4; Hag. 2:4

^a Ezra 5:1, 2; 6:14; Zech. 4:9
^b Hag. 2:18
¹⁰ ^g Hag. 1:6, 9
¹¹ ⁱ [Ps. 103:9]; Is. 12:1; Hag. 2:15-19
¹² ^j Joel 2:22 ^j Ps. 67:6 ^k Hag. 1:10
⁸ Lit. *seed of peace*
¹³ ^l Jer. 42:18
¹⁴ ^m Gen. 12:2; Ruth 4:11, 12; Is. 19:24, 25; Ezek. 34:26; [Zeph. 3:20]
¹⁴ ^x Jer. 31:28
^y [2 Chr. 36:16] ⁹ Lit. *bring calamity to you*
¹⁶ ^z Zech. 7:9, 10
^a Ps. 15:2; [Prov. 12:17-19]; Zech. 8:3; [Eph. 4:25]

These words by the mouth of ^othe prophets,
Who *spoke* in ^pthe day the foundation was laid
For the house of the LORD of hosts,
That the temple might be built.
¹⁰ For before these days
There were no ^qwages for man nor any hire for beast;
There was no peace from the enemy for whoever went out or came in;
For I set all men, everyone, against his neighbor.

¹¹ But now I *will* not *treat* the remnant of this people as in the former days,’ says the LORD of hosts.

¹² ‘For ^sthe ⁸seed *shall be* prosperous,
The vine shall give its fruit,
‘The ground shall give her increase,
And ^uthe heavens shall give their dew—
I will cause the remnant of this people
To possess all these.
¹³ And it shall come to pass
That just as you were ^va curse among the nations,
O house of Judah and house of Israel,
So I will save you, and ^wyou shall be a blessing.
Do not fear,
Let your hands be strong.”

¹⁴“For thus says the LORD of hosts:

^x“Just as I determined to ⁹punish you
When your fathers provoked Me to wrath,’
Says the LORD of hosts,
^y“And I would not relent,
¹⁵ So again in these days
I am determined to do good
To Jerusalem and to the house of Judah.
Do not fear.
¹⁶ These *are* the things you shall ^zdo:
^a Speak each man the truth to his neighbor;

8:4, 5 Zechariah predicts that in the future messianic era, Jerusalem will be inhabited and secure. The longevity of the citizens and the presence of children at play **in its streets** suggests the city’s future prosperity and divine blessing.

8:6 The rhetorical question implies that nothing is too **marvelous** or difficult for God.

8:7, 8 The terms **east** and **west** represent all parts of the earth. The expressions **My people** and **their God** (see 2:11) occur in the descriptions of God’s covenant relationship with His people (Ex. 19:5; 29:45; Lev. 26:12; Hos. 2:23). With these words, Zechariah anticipates a renewal of God’s covenant with His people (see Jer. 31:31–34).

8:9 The **foundation** of the second temple was laid in 536 B.C. (see Ezra 3:8–13).

8:10 no wages . . . no peace: Zechariah recounts the desperate situation in Judea before the work on the temple resumed in 520 B.C. (see Hag. 1:1, 6, 10, 11; 2:16, 17).

8:11–13 In the past, the people had been subject to God’s discipline. In view of their recent obedience with regard to rebuilding the temple, they could now anticipate His blessing. **Let your hands be strong:** In view of God’s gracious purposes and future plans for His people, they were called to be diligent in their present efforts to serve Him with sincere hearts (see 1 Cor. 15:58).

8:16, 17 Zechariah set forth the ethical obligations of a life of faith. He upheld the positive values of **truth** and **justice** and condemned evil plans and false oaths. The words **speak each man the truth** are quoted by Paul in Eph. 4:25.

The Coming King

- ⁹ “Rejoice ^m greatly, O daughter of Zion!
Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem!
Behold, ⁿ your King is coming to you;
He is just and having salvation,
Lowly and riding on a donkey,
A colt, the foal of a donkey.
¹⁰ I ^o will cut off the chariot from
Ephraim
And the horse from Jerusalem;
The ^p battle bow shall be cut off.
He shall speak peace to the nations;
His dominion *shall be* ^q from sea to
sea,
And from the River to the ends of
the earth.”

God Will Save His People

- ¹¹ “As for you also,

⁹ ^m Zeph. 3:14, 15;
Zech. 2:10 ⁿ [Ps.
110:1; Is. 9:6, 7;
Jer. 23:5, 6]; Matt.
21:5 ☆; Mark 11:7;
9; Luke 19:38; John
12:15
¹⁰ ^o Hos. 1:7; Mic.
5:10 ^p Ps. 46:9; Is.
2:4; Hos. 2:18; Mic.
4:3 ☆ ^q Ps. 72:8

¹¹ ^r Is. 42:7
¹² ^s Is. 49:9; Jer.
17:13; Heb. 6:18-20
^t Is. 61:7
¹⁴ ^u Ps. 18:14; Hab.
3:11

- Because of the blood of your
covenant,
I will set your ^r prisoners free from
the waterless pit.
¹² Return to the stronghold,
^s You prisoners of hope.
Even today I declare
That I will restore ^t double to you.
¹³ For I have bent Judah, My *bow*,
Fitted the bow with Ephraim,
And raised up your sons, O Zion,
Against your sons, O Greece,
And made you like the sword of a
mighty man.”
¹⁴ Then the LORD will be seen over
them,
And “His arrow will go forth like
lightning.

9:9 This prophecy was fulfilled on the day of the Triumphal Entry, when Jesus rode into Jerusalem on the colt of a donkey (Matt. 21:2–7; John 12:12–15). The **donkey** was the mount of princes (Judg. 5:10; 10:4; 12:14) and kings (2 Sam. 16:1, 2).

9:10 Instruments of warfare—the **chariot** and the **battle bow**—will be destroyed and universal peace will be established. **Ephraim** refers to the northern tribes of Israel. **The River** refers to the Euphrates, the northeast boundary of the Promised Land (Gen. 15:18).

9:11, 12 The release of **prisoners** announced here would serve

as a great encouragement for the Jewish people still in exile. Even though the prisoners were living in a well-watered place in Persia (see Ezek. 1:1), they were in a place akin to a **waterless pit** in terms of their opportunity for spiritual nourishment. They were exhorted to **return to the stronghold** Jerusalem.

9:13 Zechariah used a bold metaphor likening Judah and Ephraim to a **bow** and arrow prepared by the Lord to be used against **Greece**, literally Javan (see Is. 66:19).

9:14 **whirlwinds**: This description, patterned after God’s appear-

The Coming King

Luke tells us that after Jesus ascended to heaven, the disciples returned to Jerusalem (Luke 24:52). They also went back to the Scriptures. The Old Testament suddenly blossomed with good news. Everywhere they looked they found evidence that pointed toward the specifics of Jesus’ life and ministry. When they wondered why they had missed the connections before, they must have also remembered Jesus’ promise, “When He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth” (John 16:13).

When the Gospel writers recorded the details of Jesus’ life, they often used references from the Old Testament to illustrate how clearly Jesus fulfilled the character of the promised Savior and the prophecies regarding His ministry. They particularly enjoyed quoting Old Testament passages that clearly predicted the suffering and rejection aspects of the Messiah’s role. For them, it was the central theme that set Jesus apart from the popular ideas of a conquering and powerful political messiah.

Zechariah 9:9, 10 presents a prophecy whose fulfillment was clearly set in motion (although not completed) by Jesus’ arrival in Jerusalem on a colt, the well-known Triumphal Entry. Both Matthew and John mention this passage. John even notes that the disciples saw no immediate connection between Jesus riding on the colt and His identity as the Messiah prophesied in Zechariah. After Jesus was glorified, “then they remembered that these things were written about Him” (John 12:16).

These verses in Zechariah include an important transition. The arrival of the saving King is followed immediately by a description of the effects of His long-term reign. This is an example of “prophetic compression.” Viewed from the broader context of prophecy, Zechariah was mentioning together two stages in God’s plan which are actually separated in time. The coming King would arrive twice. Jesus came first as a humble King of peace and salvation, accomplished in Jesus’ earthly ministry and His death on the Cross. Second, Jesus will come as a victorious Ruler over all the world who will “speak peace to the nations.” We should rejoice over Jesus’ first coming and anticipate the complete fulfillment of Zechariah’s prophecy at Christ’s glorious return.



Zechariah 9:9, 10 presents a prophecy whose fulfillment was clearly set in motion by Jesus’ arrival in Jerusalem on a colt.

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The Lord God will blow the trumpet,
And go ^v with whirlwinds from the south.

15 The LORD of hosts will ^w defend them;
They shall devour and subdue with slingstones.
They shall drink *and* roar as if with wine;
They shall be filled *with blood* like ³basins,
Like the corners of the altar.

16 The LORD their God will ^xsave them in that day,
As the flock of His people.
For ^ythey *shall be like* the ⁴jewels of a crown,
^zLifted like a banner over His land—

17 For ^ahow great is ⁵its goodness
And how great ⁵its ^bbeauty!
^cGrain shall make the young men thrive,
And new wine the young women.

Restoration of Judah and Israel

10 Ask ^athe LORD for ^brain
In ^cthe time of the ¹latter rain.
The LORD will make ²flashing clouds;
He will give them showers of rain,
Grass in the field for everyone.

2 For the ^didols ³speak delusion;
The diviners envision ^clies,
And tell false dreams;
They ^fcomfort in vain.
Therefore *the people* wend their way
like ^gsheep;
They are ⁴in trouble ^hbecause *there is*
no shepherd.

3 “My anger is kindled against the
ⁱshepherds,

14 ^v Is. 21:1
15 ^w Is. 37:35; Zech.
12:8 ² Sacrificial basins
16 ^x Jer. 31:10,
11 ^y Is. 62:3; Mal.
3:17 ^z Is. 11:12 ⁴ Lit. stones
17 ^a [Ps. 31:19] ^b [Ps. 45:1-16] ^c Joel 3:18
⁵ Lit. His

CHAPTER 10

1 ^a [Jer. 14:22]
^b [Deut. 11:13,
14] ^c [Joel 2:23]
¹ Spring rain ² Or lightning flashes
² ^d Jer. 10:8 ^e Jer. 27:9; [Ezek. 13]
^f Job 13:4 ^g Jer. 50:6, 17 ^h Ezek. 34:5-8; Matt. 9:36;
Mark 6:34 ³ Heb. teraphim ⁴ afflicted
³ ⁱ Jer. 25:34-36;
Ezek. 34:2; Zech. 11:17

ⁱ Ezek. 34:17 ^k Luke 1:68 ¹ Song 1:9
² Leaders
⁴ ^m Is. 28:16 ⁿ Is. 22:23 ^o Or despot
⁵ ^o Ps. 18:42
⁶ ^p Jer. 3:18; Ezek. 37:21 ^q Hos. 1:7;
Zech. 1:16 ^r Zech. 13:9
⁷ ^s Ps. 104:15
⁸ ^t Is. 5:26 ^u Is. 49:19; Ezek. 36:37;
Zech. 2:4
⁹ ^v Hos. 2:23
^w Deut. 30:1 ⁷ Or scatter

^j And I will punish the ⁵goatherds.
For the LORD of hosts ^kwill visit His flock,
The house of Judah,
And ^lwill make them as His royal horse in the battle.

4 From him comes ^mthe cornerstone,
From him ⁿthe tent peg,
From him the battle bow,
From him every ⁶ruler together.

5 They shall be like mighty men,
Who ^otread down *their enemies*
In the mire of the streets in the battle.
They shall fight because the LORD is with them,
And the riders on horses shall be put to shame.

6 “I will strengthen the house of Judah,
And I will save the house of Joseph.
^pI will bring them back,
Because I ^qhave mercy on them.
They shall be as though I had not cast them aside;
For I *am* the LORD their God,
And I ^rwill hear them.

7 *Those of Ephraim* shall be like a mighty man,
And their ^sheart shall rejoice as if with wine.
Yes, their children shall see *it* and be glad;
Their heart shall rejoice in the LORD.

8 I will ^twhistle for them and gather them,
For I will redeem them;
^uAnd they shall increase as they once increased.

9 “I ^vwill ⁷sow them among the peoples,
And they shall ^wremember Me in far countries;

ance at Sinai (Ex. 19), reveals God's sovereignty and power to protect His own.

9:15 Zechariah describes the victory banquet of God's people in celebration of His victory over the nations and securing of Jerusalem. The people will **be filled** with drink like sacrificial basins were filled with blood, and they will be filled with meat like the corners of a sacrificial altar (see Ps. 110).

9:17 The abundance of **grain** and **new wine** suggests the prosperity and blessing of this future day (see 3:10; 8:4, 5; see also Amos 9:13).

10:1 The **latter rain** (Deut. 11:14) refers to the rain that comes in late spring and is essential for an abundant grain harvest.

10:2 **Idols** refers to household gods (see Gen. 31:19). **Diviners**, like Balaam, interpreted omens as a means of foretelling the future (Josh. 13:22; 1 Sam. 6:2). **no shepherd**: The metaphor of *shepherd* was often used in the ancient Middle East to represent a king or ruler (see Ezek. 34:6–8, 23, 24). Here the emphasis was on the lack of spiritual leadership.

10:3 While Israel lacked national leadership, there were plenty of tyrants seeking to rule God's people. These **goatherds** will be judged. By way of contrast, God will strengthen **the house of Judah** as an instrument to overthrow these oppressors.

10:4, 5 The poetic metaphors in these verses reflect the strength,

stability, and victory that God will impart to His people (vv. 3, 6).

Cornerstone is an image of steadfast strength or stability, coupled with beauty and honor (Is. 28:16; see also Ps. 118:22). **tent peg**: A peg firmly in place suggests permanence and endurance (Is. 22:23). **battle bow**: This image pictures the strength necessary for military conquest (2 Kin. 13:17).

10:6 The **house of Judah** indicates Israel's southern territory. The **house of Joseph** is Israel's northern territory, dominated by Ephraim (v. 7) and Manasseh, tribes named after Joseph's sons (Gen. 41:51, 52). The promise **I will bring them back** is a promise of restoration. The dispersed remnant of Israel would return to the Promised Land (see Matt. 24:31).

10:7 What was promised to Judah in v. 5 is here promised to **Ephraim, as if with wine**: Wine is used here as a symbol of abundant joy (Ps. 104:15; see Amos 9:13; John 2:1–11).

10:8 As a shepherd signals his sheep, so the Lord will **whistle** for His people to return to the land. **For I will redeem them**: God will deliver them from sin (3:4, 9) and from the bondage of captivity (Matt. 24:31).

10:9 Being sown **among the peoples** was God's punishment of the exiles for their disobedience (Deut. 28:63, 64). The words **they shall remember Me** anticipate their turning to the Lord in repentance.

They shall live, together with their children,
And they shall return.

¹⁰ ^s I will also bring them back from the land of Egypt,
And gather them from Assyria.
I will bring them into the land of Gilead and Lebanon,

^u Until no *more room* is found for them.

¹¹ ^z He shall pass through the sea with affliction,
And strike the waves of the sea:
All the depths of ⁸ the River shall dry up.

Then ^a the pride of Assyria shall be brought down,
And ^b the scepter of Egypt shall depart.

¹² ^c So I will strengthen them in the LORD,
And ^c they shall walk up and down in His name,”
Says the LORD.

Desolation of Israel

11 Open ^a your doors, O Lebanon,
That fire may devour your cedars.

² Wail, O cypress, for the ^b cedar has fallen,
Because the mighty *trees* are ruined.
Wail, O oaks of Bashan,

^c For the thick forest has come down.

³ *There is the sound of wailing*
^d shepherds!

For their glory is in ruins.
There is the sound of roaring lions!

¹⁰ ^s Is. 11:11; Hos. 11:11 ^y Is. 49:19, 20
¹¹ ^z Is. 11:15 ^a Is. 14:25; Zeph. 2:13
^b Ezek. 30:13 ⁸ The Nile
¹² ^c Mic. 4:5

CHAPTER 11

¹ ^a Zech. 10:10
² ^b Ezek. 31:3 ^c Is. 32:19
³ ^d Jer. 25:34-36

¹ Or floodplain, thicket
⁵ ^e [Jer. 2:3]; 50:7
⁷ Deut. 29:19; Hos. 12:8; 1 Tim. 6:9
⁹ Ezek. 34:2, 3
⁶ ² Lit. *strike*
⁷ ^h Jer. 39:10; Zeph. 3:12; Matt. 11:5
³ So with MT, Tg., Vg.; LXX for the Canaanites ⁴ Or Grace ⁵ Or Unity
⁸ ⁱ Hos. 5:7 ⁶ Or destroyed, lit. cut off
⁹ ^j Jer. 15:2
¹⁰ ⁷ Or Grace
¹¹ ^k Zeph. 3:12; Matt. 27:50; Mark 15:37; Luke 23:46; Acts 8:32 ⁸ So with MT, Tg., Vg.; LXX the Canaanites
¹² ^l Gen. 37:28; Ex. 21:32; Matt. 26:15; 27:9, 10 ⁹ ^u *good in your sight*

For the ¹ pride of the Jordan is in ruins.

Prophecy of the Shepherds

⁴ Thus says the LORD my God, “Feed the flock for slaughter, ⁵ whose owners slaughter them and ^c feel no guilt; those who sell them ^f say, ‘Blessed be the LORD, for I am rich’; and their shepherds do ^g not pity them. ⁶ For I will no longer pity the inhabitants of the land,” says the LORD. “But indeed I will give everyone into his neighbor’s hand and into the hand of his king. They shall ² attack the land, and I will not deliver *them* from their hand.”

⁷ So I fed the flock for slaughter, ³ in particular ^h the poor of the flock. I took for myself two staffs: the one I called ⁴ Beauty, and the other I called ⁵ Bonds; and I fed the flock. ⁸ I ⁶ dismissed the three shepherds ⁱ in one month. My soul loathed them, and their soul also abhorred me. ⁹ Then I said, “I will not feed you. ^j Let what is dying die, and what is perishing perish. Let those that are left eat each other’s flesh.” ¹⁰ And I took my staff, ⁷ Beauty, and cut it in two, that I might break the covenant which I had made with all the peoples. ¹¹ So it was broken on that day. Thus ^k the ⁸ poor of the flock, who were watching me, knew that it *was* the word of the LORD. ¹² Then I said to them, “If it is ⁹ agreeable to you, give *me* my wages; and if not, refrain.” So they ^l weighed out for my wages thirty *pieces* of silver.

¹³ And the LORD said to me, “Throw it

Shall live implies more than mere survival. God promises spiritual life and blessing to the repentant.

10:10 Assyria is the region of northern Mesopotamia. **Egypt** and **Assyria** had been lands where Israel was captive. **Gilead** is the territory east of the Jordan and southeast of the Sea of Galilee. **Lebanon** is the region north of Galilee. The future restoration will be so complete that the land will be filled with people.

10:11 God would remove any impediment to Israel’s return. Zechariah used imagery from the Exodus—the **sea**, the **River**—to illustrate the kinds of obstacles God would overcome (see Ex. 14:21–31; Josh. 3:14–17).

10:12 I will strengthen them: The regathering will be accomplished by God’s power as He gives strength to His people. **they shall walk . . . in His name:** In the last days, Israel will return to the land as a believing nation (v. 8; 12:10—13:1; Rom. 11:26).

11:1 Lebanon was known for its beautiful and fragrant cedars, trees used by Solomon in building his palace and the temple.

11:2, 3 The cypress, or juniper, will **wail** for the cedars of Lebanon. The **shepherds** will wail because the grazing lands will be ruined. The **lions** will roar because of the destruction of the **pride of the Jordan**, the jungle thicket that was their shelter.

11:4 Zechariah was commanded to **feed** or pasture the **flock** of God’s people Israel, knowing it was destined **for slaughter**.

11:6 The petty tyrants and oppressors (v. 5) will fall victim to foreign kings who **attack the land**.

11:7 In obedience to God’s command (v. 4), Zechariah pastured the flock doomed for slaughter. As shepherds carried implements to guide and protect the sheep (Ps. 23:4), so Zechariah had **two staffs**.

Their names **Beauty** and **Bonds** suggest that he wanted the flock to enjoy God’s favor and to experience national unity. According to Canaanite legend, the god Baal was given the two clubs named Driver and Chaser to battle the dark deities of the sea. It is appropriate that God’s messenger Zechariah is given shepherd’s staffs to guide the people, instead of clubs for fighting.

11:8 three shepherds: Some have suggested that the three shepherds represent classes of rulers in Israel: kings, priests, and prophets. Others suggest that they refer to the last three kings of Judah or to certain high priests of the Maccabean era.

11:9 Let what is dying die: The judgment which God has decreed should be accepted, not resisted. **eat each other’s flesh:** Cannibalism was one of the horrors of famine that resulted from siege warfare (Deut. 28:54–57; Lam. 4:10).

11:10 The breaking of the staff **Beauty** symbolizes the end of God’s protection of His people. **break the covenant:** God’s unconditional promise to Abraham (Gen. 12:1–3) or to David (2 Sam. 7:12–16) would never be broken. Like Ezekiel’s covenant of peace (Ezek. 34:25), the *covenant* here may refer to an agreement with the Gentile nation on Israel’s behalf.

11:12 Zechariah, taking the role of the messianic shepherd, requested his wages for service rendered. His wage was calculated as **thirty pieces of silver**, the price of a slave (Ex. 21:32). This was the price paid to Judas for betraying Jesus (see Matt. 27:6–10).

11:13 The command **throw it to the potter** is further illuminated by Zechariah’s action. He **threw them into the house of the LORD for the potter**. Potters may have been connected with the temple because of the continual need for sacred vessels (Lev. 6:28).

to the ^mpotter”—that princely price they set on me. So I took the thirty *pieces* of silver and threw them into the house of the LORD for the potter. ¹⁴Then I cut in two my other staff, ¹Bonds, that I might break the brotherhood between Judah and Israel.

¹⁵And the LORD said to me, “Next, take for yourself the implements of a foolish shepherd. ¹⁶For indeed I will raise up a shepherd in the land *who* will not care for those who are cut off, nor seek the young, nor heal those that are broken, nor feed those that still stand. But he will eat the flesh of the fat and tear their hooves in ^opieces.

¹⁷“Woe^p to the worthless shepherd,
Who leaves the flock!
A sword *shall be* against his arm
And against his right eye;
His arm shall completely wither,
And his right eye shall be totally
blinded.”

The Coming Deliverance of Judah

12 The ¹burden of the word of the LORD against Israel. Thus says the LORD, ^awho stretches out the heavens, lays the foundation of the earth, and ^bforms the spirit of man within him: ²“Behold, I will make Jerusalem ^ea cup of ²drunkenness to all the surrounding peoples, when they lay siege against Judah and Jerusalem. ^{3d}And it shall happen in that day that I will make Jerusalem ^ea very heavy stone for all peoples; all who would heave it away will surely be cut in pieces, though all nations of the earth are gathered against it. ⁴In

13 ^m Matt. 27:3-10 ☆; Acts 1:18, 19
14 ¹ Or Unity
15 ⁿ Is. 56:11; Ezek. 34:2
16 ^o Ezek. 34:1-10; Mic. 3:1-3
17 ^p Jer. 23:1; Ezek. 34:2; Zech. 10:2; 11:15; John 10:12, 13

CHAPTER 12

1 ^o Is. 42:5; 44:24
2 Num. 16:22; [Eccl. 12:7; Is. 57:16]; Heb. 12:9 ¹ oracle, prophecy
2 ^c Is. 51:17 ² Lit. reeling
3 ^d Zech. 12:4, 6, 8; 13:1 ^e Matt. 21:44

4 ^f Ps. 76:6; Ezek. 38:4
6 ^g Is. 10:17, 18; Obad. 18; Zech. 11:1
9 ^h Hag. 2:22
10 ⁱ Jer. 31:9; 50:4; Ezek. 39:29; Joel 2:28, 29] ^j John 19:34, 37; 20:27 ☆; [Rev. 1:7] ^k Jer. 6:26; Amos 8:10
11 ^j [Matt. 24:30]; Acts 2:37; [Rev. 1:7] ^m 2 Kin. 23:29

that day,” says the LORD, ^f“I will strike every horse with confusion, and its rider with madness; I will open My eyes on the house of Judah, and will strike every horse of the peoples with blindness. ⁵And the governors of Judah shall say in their heart, ‘The inhabitants of Jerusalem *are* my strength in the LORD of hosts, their God.’ ⁶In that day I will make the governors of Judah ^glike a firepan in the woodpile, and like a fiery torch in the sheaves; they shall devour all the surrounding peoples on the right hand and on the left, but Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place—Jerusalem.

⁷“The LORD will save the tents of Judah first, so that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem shall not become greater than that of Judah. ⁸In that day the LORD will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; the one who is feeble among them in that day shall be like David, and the house of David *shall be* like God, like the Angel of the LORD before them. ⁹It shall be in that day *that* I will seek to ^hdestroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.

Mourning for the Pierced One

¹⁰ⁱ“And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will ^jlook on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him ^kas one mourns for *his* only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn. ¹¹In that day there shall be a great ^lmourning in Jerusalem, ^mlike the mourning at Hadad Rimmon in the

11:14 The rejection of the messianic shepherd, represented by Zechariah, meant that the national unity the Israelites hoped for would not be achieved at this time. But one day the two nations **Judah and Israel** will be united (Ezek. 37:16–28).

11:15, 16 To take the **implements of a foolish shepherd** means to behave like one. **Eat the flesh** and **tear their hooves** expresses the savagery of a foolish shepherd.

11:17 The **worthless shepherd** will be judged. His **arm**, which should have been used to protect the sheep, will wither. **His right eye**, which should have watched over the sheep, will be blinded.

12:1 As in 9:1, the **burden** is a weighty judgment that the prophet must discharge. Three phrases are used here in describing the greatness of God as Creator of the **heavens, the earth, and the spirit of man**.

12:2 Jerusalem is depicted as a **cup** of wine or strong drink which causes **drunkenness**. The *cup* is a common metaphor for God’s wrath (see Is. 51:17; Jer. 25:15; Ezek. 23:33; Rev. 14:10; 16:19). **Siege** warfare involved encircling a city to prevent the inhabitants from fleeing and to cut off all supplies of food and water.

12:3 Jerusalem is compared to a **heavy stone** that brings injury to anyone who tries to remove it from its place.

12:5 The **governors** or leaders of Judah would affirm God’s power to deliver through His people. The people’s **strength** would be in **the LORD** (see Phil. 4:13).

12:6 Judah is likened to (1) a **firepan** used to carry hot coals for the

purpose of starting a fire, and (2) a **fiery torch** that could quickly ignite a field of cut grain.

12:7 **Tents of Judah** alludes to Jews living outside Jerusalem in the rural districts of the land. The **house of David** means David’s descendants.

12:8 With bold analogy, Zechariah likens David’s descendants to God. The **Angel of the LORD** is clearly a divine being (Ex. 23:20; Num. 22:22; Judg. 2:1; 13:15–22).

12:9 **All the nations** that have attacked Jerusalem (v. 2) will be judged and destroyed (Matt. 25:31–46).

12:10 **pour**: This metaphor is derived from the deluge of winter rains and speaks of abundant provision (Job 36:28; Is. 44:3; Lam. 2:19). **Spirit of grace** refers to the gracious working of the Holy Spirit that leads to conviction and repentance (John 16:8–11). **supplication**: The Spirit will stimulate an attitude of repentance and prayer for God’s mercy. There are many significant ministries of the Holy Spirit in the period of the Hebrew kingdom. **Me whom they pierced**: Jewish commentators often regard this as a corporate reference to the Jews killed in the defense of Jerusalem (12:1–9). The Jewish Talmud views the text as referring to the Messiah who will be pierced in battle. The messianic view is favored by the fact that Jesus was pierced with a spear after His death on the Cross (John 19:34). **12:11** **Hadad Rimmon** may have been the site of some tragedy whose grief was still vividly remembered. Or the place may have been associated with religious rites involving mourning.

plain of ³Megiddo. ¹²ⁿ And the land shall mourn, every family by itself: the family of the house of David by itself, and their wives by themselves; the family of the house of ^oNathan by itself, and their wives by themselves; ¹³ the family of the house of Levi by itself, and their wives by themselves; the family of Shimei by itself, and their wives by themselves; ¹⁴ all the families that remain, every family by itself, and their wives by themselves.

Idolatry Cut Off

13 “In that ^aday ^ba fountain shall be opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for ^cuncleanness.

² “It shall be in that day,” says the LORD of hosts, “that I will ^dcut off the names of the idols from the land, and they shall no longer be remembered. I will also cause ^ethe prophets and the unclean spirit to depart from the land. ³ It shall come to pass that if anyone still prophesies, then his father and mother who begot him will say to him, ‘You shall ^fnot live, because you have spoken lies in the name of the LORD.’ And his father and mother who begot him ^gshall thrust him through when he prophesies.

⁴ “And it shall be in that day that ^hevery prophet will be ashamed of his vision when he prophesies; they will not wear ⁱa robe of coarse hair to deceive. ^{5j} But he will say, ‘I am no prophet, I am a farmer; for a man taught me to keep cattle from my youth.’ ⁶ And *one* will say to him,

¹¹ ³ Heb. *Megiddon*
¹² ⁿ [Matt. 24:30;
Rev. 1:7] ^o Luke
3:31

CHAPTER 13

¹ ^o Acts 10:43; [Rev. 21:6, 7] ^b Ps. 36:9; [Heb. 9:14; 1 John 1:7] ^c Num. 19:17; Is. 4:4; Ezek. 36:25
² ^d Ex. 23:13; Hos. 2:17 ^e Jer. 23:14, 15; 2 Pet. 2:1
³ ^f Deut. 18:20; [Ezek. 14:9] ^g Deut. 13:6-11; [Matt. 10:37]
⁴ ^h Jer. 6:15; 8:9; [Mic. 3:6, 7] ⁱ 2 Kin. 1:8; Is. 20:2; Matt. 3:4
⁵ ^j Amos 7:14

⁶ ¹ Or *hands*
⁷ ^k Is. 40:11; Ezek. 34:23, 24; 37:24; Mic. 5:2, 4 ^l [John 10:30] ^m Matt. 26:31, 56, 67 ⁿ ☆; Mark 14:27; 1 Pet. 5:4; Rev. 7:16, 17
^o Luke 12:32
⁸ ^o Is. 6:13; Ezek. 5:2, 4, 12 ^p [Rom. 11:5]
⁹ ^q Is. 48:10; Ezek. 20:38; Mal. 3:3
^r 1 Pet. 1:6, 7 ^s Ps. 50:15; Zeph. 3:9; [Zech. 12:10] ^t Jer. 30:22; Hos. 2:23

CHAPTER 14

¹ ^o [Is. 13:6, 9; Joel 2:1; Mal. 4:1]
¹ *plunder or booty*

“What are these wounds between your ¹arms?” Then he will answer, “*Those* with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.”

The Shepherd Savior

⁷ “Awake, O sword, against ^kMy Shepherd,

Against the Man ^lwho is My Companion,”

Says the LORD of hosts.

^m “Strike the Shepherd,
And the sheep will be scattered;
Then I will turn My hand against
ⁿthe little ones.

⁸ And it shall come to pass in all the land,”

Says the LORD,

“That ^otwo-thirds in it shall be cut off and die,

^pBut *one-third* shall be left in it:

⁹ I will bring the *one-third* ^qthrough the fire,

Will ^rrefine them as silver is refined,
And test them as gold is tested.

^sThey will call on My name,
And I will answer them.

^tI will say, ‘This is My people’;

And each one will say, ‘The LORD is my God.’”

The Day of the LORD

14 Behold, ^athe day of the LORD is coming,

And your ¹spoil will be divided in your midst.

12:12-14 All of Israel will mourn for the Messiah, including members of the royal family and the priests, **the house of David** and **the house of Levi. wives by themselves:** These words are quoted in the Talmud as an argument for separating men and women in worship. But the verse seems to indicate that each mourner will face his or her sorrow alone, without the comfort of companionship. **Shimei** was Levi’s grandson (Num. 3:18, 21).

13:1 The **fountain** is an image of abundant, overflowing provision. Cleansing from the impurity of sin was made available by Christ at the Cross. At the time of Christ’s second coming, the repentant and believing remnant of Israel will appropriate that provision and enter into the benefits of the New Covenant (Jer. 31:31-34; Ezek. 36:25-28). Paul anticipated this great day in Rom. 11:26.

13:2 **cut off the names of the idols:** In ancient times, a person’s name reflected his or her reputation. Zechariah anticipated the complete removal of the reputation and acknowledgment of false gods.

13:3 According to the Law of Moses (Deut. 13:5; 18:20), a false prophet must be put to death. The startling thing here is that the false prophet’s parents must confront the offender and carry out the penalty.

13:4 False prophets will deny that they are prophets for fear of punishment and will refuse to wear **a robe of coarse hair**, the traditional prophet’s clothing (2 Kin. 1:8; Matt. 3:4).

13:5 Instead of laying claim to prophetic office, they will say they have been farmers from their **youth**. This seems to be a parody of Amos 7:14.

13:6 It is likely that the **wounds** betrayed the profession of an ecstatic prophet who slashed himself on the back or breast. The words **between your arms** refer to the body, either the back or

the chest. Self-inflicted wounds were thought to gain the attention and blessing of the gods (see 1 Kin. 18:28). Under questioning, the man declares that the wounds were received from **friends** so that he will not be found out as a false prophet and be put to death (v. 3).

13:7 The **sword**, an instrument of death, is likened to a warrior being roused for action. The Lord commands the sword to strike the Messiah, **My Shepherd**. This clearly indicates that the death of Jesus was no accident, but was divinely determined. **My Companion:** This term is used elsewhere of one who is a near neighbor or close companion (Lev. 6:2; 18:20; 19:15). It suggests a relationship of equality. The **little ones** may be first-century disciples, unbelieving Jews of all ages, or a faithful remnant of the future. Since Jewish people have suffered throughout history (the Crusades, the Spanish Inquisition, the Nazi Holocaust), this passage may be taken as a general prophecy of persecution and suffering for the shepherdless people of Israel.

13:8 Zechariah revealed the devastating result of God’s dealing with His errant flock. The scattered flock will face a great judgment in which only **one-third** will survive.

13:9 The remnant that survives will be purged, purified, and re-established in a covenant relationship with God. **refined:** The smelting pot uses intense heat to separate the dross from pure metal. **tested:** Once refined, precious metal must be analyzed to determine its value. The expressions **this is My people** and **the LORD is my God** recall the covenant (Lev. 26:12) and speak here of a covenant renewal to a spiritually revitalized Israel (Ezek. 36:28; Hos. 2:23; Rom. 11:26, 27).

14:1 Some have suggested that this **spoil** refers to what is seized from Israel’s enemies, apparently anticipating the victory mentioned

- 2 For ^bI will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem;
The city shall be taken,
The houses ²rifled,
And the women ravished.
Half of the city shall go into captivity,
But the remnant of the people shall not be cut off from the city.
- 3 Then the LORD will go forth
And fight against those nations,
As He fights in the day of battle.
- 4 And in that day His feet will stand ^con the Mount of Olives,
Which faces Jerusalem on the east.
And the Mount of Olives shall be split in two,
From east to west,
^dMaking a very large valley;
Half of the mountain shall move toward the north
And half of it toward the south.
- 5 Then you shall flee *through* My mountain valley,
For the mountain valley shall reach to Azal.
Yes, you shall flee
As you fled from the ^eearthquake
In the days of Uzziah king of Judah.
- ^fThus the LORD my God will come,
And ^gall the saints with ³You.
- 6 It shall come to pass in that day
That there will be no light;
The ⁴lights will diminish.

² ^b Joel 3:2;
Zech. 12:2; ³ ² Or
plundered
⁴ ^c Ezek. 11:23; Acts
1:9-12 ^d Joel 3:12
⁵ ^e Is. 29:6; Amos
1:1 ^f [Ps. 96:13];
Is. 66:15, 16; Matt.
24:30, 31; 25:31;
Jude 14 ^g Joel 3:11
³ Or you; LXX, Tg.,
Vg. *Him*
⁶ ⁴ Lit. *glorious ones*

⁷ ^h Matt. 24:36 ⁱ Is.
30:26
⁸ / Ezek. 47:1-
12; Joel 3:18;
[John 7:38; Rev.
22:1, 2] ^j The
Dead Sea ^k The
Mediterranean Sea
⁹ ^k [Jer. 23:5, 6; Rev.
11:15] ^l [Eph. 4:5, 6];
Deut. 6:4
¹⁰ ^m Jer. 30:18;
Zech. 12:6 ⁿ Neh.
3:1; Jer. 31:38 ^o Lit.
She
¹¹ ^o Jer. 31:40 ^p Jer.
23:6; Ezek. 34:25-
28; Hos. 2:18

- 7 It shall be one day
^hWhich is known to the LORD—
Neither day nor night.
But at ⁱevening time it shall happen
That it will be light.
- 8 And in that day it shall be
That living ^jwaters shall flow from Jerusalem,
Half of them toward ⁵the eastern sea
And half of them toward ⁶the western sea;
In both summer and winter it shall occur.
- 9 And the LORD shall be ^kKing over all the earth.
In that day it shall be—
^l“The LORD is one,”
And His name one.
- ¹⁰All the land shall be turned into a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem. ⁷Jerusalem shall be raised up and ^minhabited in her place from Benjamin’s Gate to the place of the First Gate and the Corner Gate, ⁿand *from* the Tower of Hananel to the king’s winepresses.
- ¹¹ *The people* shall dwell in it;
And ^ono longer shall there be utter destruction,
^pBut Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited.
- ¹²And this shall be the plague with which the LORD will strike all the people who fought against Jerusalem:

in v. 14. The immediate context, however, indicates that the *spoil* was taken from Jerusalem by her enemies (v. 2).

14:2 The **remnant of the people** who survive the attack are evidently the one-third that will be brought through the refiner’s fire (13:8, 9).

14:3 The **LORD** will turn Jerusalem’s defeat into a victory. God the Warrior (Ex. 15:3) will intervene on Israel’s behalf against the attacking nations.

14:4 Zechariah provides further details about how Jerusalem’s deliverance will come about. The **Mount of Olives**, located east of Jerusalem and the Kidron Valley, is a north-south hill about 2,700 feet in elevation. The Messiah will return to the Mount of Olives, the very mountain from which He will have ascended after His time on earth (Acts 1:10, 11). On the day of Messiah’s return, the mount will be split by a deep east-west valley.

14:5 The splitting of the Mount of Olives will provide a way of escape for the besieged and defeated people in Jerusalem. The site of **Azal** has not been identified but must be somewhere in the desert east of Jerusalem. The flight of the surviving remnant from Jerusalem is likened to what took place following the **earthquake in the days of Uzziah**. The **saints** are literally the “holy ones,” angels who will accompany Jesus at His return (Mark 8:38; 2 Thess. 1:7).

14:6, 7 Cosmic upheaval is associated with the Second Coming. The glory of the Messiah’s kingdom is preceded by dark days of judgment. **there will be no light**: The imagery of darkness as a portent of judgment is common in the prophets (Is. 5:30; 8:22; 13:9, 10; Ezek. 32:7, 8; Amos 5:18, 20; Zeph. 1:14, 15).

14:8 The term **living waters** describes running water from a spring or river, in contrast to the stale and stagnant water of a cistern (Jer. 2:13). The water will flow from Jerusalem toward the **eastern sea** (the Dead Sea) and the **western sea** (the Mediterranean). In contrast with the seasonal streams that flow only during the rainy season, these streams will irrigate the land **both summer and winter**.

14:9 Zechariah anticipates the glorious day when the **LORD** will reestablish His reign on this earth, where it was first challenged by Satan (see Rev. 20:1-3; also Ps. 93:1; 97:1; 99:1). This will be the answer to the prayers of all those who pray Jesus’ words, “Your kingdom come” (Matt. 6:10). The words **the LORD is one** speak of His unity and His uniqueness (see Deut. 6:4).

14:10 **Geba** was 6 miles northeast of Jerusalem. **Rimmon** was about 35 miles southwest of Jerusalem. **Benjamin’s Gate** was most likely the gate in the north wall of the city. The **First Gate** has not yet been identified. The **Corner Gate** probably marked the northwest limit of Jerusalem. The **Tower of Hananel** was probably a defensive fortification on the north wall.

14:11 **people shall dwell in it**: This is a contrast to the time of Nehemiah when the population of Jerusalem was sparse (Neh. 7:4; 11:1). In the Lord’s coming kingdom, the city will be inhabited and its citizens secure.

14:12 **plague**: This word was used to describe the judgments of God upon the Egyptians (Ex. 7:17—12:30).

Their flesh shall ⁸dissolve while they
stand on their feet,
Their eyes shall dissolve in their
sockets,
And their tongues shall dissolve in
their mouths.

- ¹³ It shall come to pass in that day
That ^aa great panic from the
LORD will be among
them.
Everyone will seize the hand of his
neighbor,
And raise ^rhis hand against his
neighbor's hand;
¹⁴ Judah also will fight at
Jerusalem.
^s And the wealth of all the
surrounding nations
Shall be gathered together:
Gold, silver, and apparel in great
abundance.
¹⁵ ^tSuch also shall be the plague
On the horse *and* the mule,
On the camel and the donkey,
And on all the cattle that will be in
those camps.
So *shall* this plague *be*.

¹² ⁸ Lit. *decay*
¹³ ^a 1 Sam. 14:15;
²⁰ ^r Judg. 7:22;
² Chr. 20:23; Ezek.
38:21
¹⁴ ^s Ezek. 39:10, 17
¹⁵ ^t Zech. 14:12

¹⁶ ^u [Is. 2:2, 3; 60:6-
9; 66:18-21; Mic. 4:1,
2] ^v Is. 27:13 ^w Lev.
23:34-44; Neh. 8:14;
Hos. 12:9; John 7:2
¹⁷ ^x Is. 60:12
¹⁸ ^y Is. 19:21
² Deut. 11:10
¹⁹ ⁹ Lit. *sin*
²⁰ ^a Ex. 28:36;
39:30; Is. 23:18; Jer.
2:3 ^b Ezek. 46:20
²¹ ^c Is. 35:8; Ezek.
44:9; Joel 3:17;
Rev. 21:27; 22:15
^d [Eph. 2:19-22] ¹ Or
on every pot . . .
shall be engraved
"Ho LINESS To THE
Lo Rd o F Ho STS"

The Nations Worship the King

¹⁶ And it shall come to pass *that* every-
one who is left of all the nations which
came against Jerusalem shall ^ugo up from
year to year to ^vworship the King, the
LORD of hosts, and to keep ^wthe Feast
of Tabernacles. ¹⁷^x And it shall be *that*
whichever of the families of the earth do
not come up to Jerusalem to worship the
King, the LORD of hosts, on them there
will be no rain. ¹⁸ If the family of ^yEgypt
will not come up and enter in, ^zthey *shall*
have no rain; they shall receive the plague
with which the LORD strikes the nations
who do not come up to keep the Feast of
Tabernacles. ¹⁹ This shall be the ⁹punish-
ment of Egypt and the punishment of all
the nations that do not come up to keep
the Feast of Tabernacles.

²⁰ In that day ^a“**HOLINESS TO THE
LORD**” shall be *engraved* on the bells of
the horses. The ^bpots in the LORD’s house
shall be like the bowls before the altar.
²¹ Yes, ¹every pot in Jerusalem and Judah
shall be holiness to the LORD of hosts.
Everyone who sacrifices shall come and
take them and cook in them. In that day
there shall no longer be a ^cCanaanite ^din
the house of the LORD of hosts.

14:14 As the attackers are destroyed, the people of **Judah** will join the citizens of **Jerusalem** in recovering the spoil taken by the enemy (v. 1) and capturing additional booty (see Hag. 2:7, 8).

14:16 Repentant and believing people among those nations that had attacked Jerusalem (vv. 1, 2) will **worship the King** (Jesus the Messiah) and celebrate **the Feast of Tabernacles**, a fall harvest festival that commemorated the wilderness experience of Israel (Lev. 23:33–43). This feast of thanksgiving is the only one of the many feasts that will still be appropriate in the new kingdom—the others will have been fulfilled, but thanksgiving will be a continual theme in Messiah’s kingdom.

14:17–19 The nations that are unwilling to come to Jerusalem to worship King Messiah and celebrate the feast will be subject to

divine judgment. **Egypt** is used as an example, since it was a tradi-
tional enemy of Israel.

14:20, 21 In Messiah’s kingdom, the people of Judah and Jerusalem will fulfill their destiny as a holy, priestly nation (Ex. 19:6). The words **HOLINESS TO THE LORD** will be inscribed on the gold headband worn by the high priest (Ex. 28:36). Holiness will so permeate Mes-
siah’s kingdom that even the lowly cooking pots will be holy. The name **Canaanite** here refers to the merchants who frequented Jerusalem and the temple courts with their wares (see Neh. 13:19–22; Matt. 21:12; John 2:14). None will profiteer in the worship of God in the coming age. God’s search for true worshipers will be realized in a company of devoted, holy people.

THE BOOK OF

MALACHI



THIS FINAL BOOK of the Old Testament is about the error of forgetting the love of God. When people forget God's love, it affects their attitudes, home, and worship. With God's love and loyalty in doubt, sacred commitments no longer remain sacred. God sent Malachi to rouse the people from their spiritual stupor and to exhort them to return to the living God. But the Book of Malachi reveals a people who question the reality of their sin and the faithfulness of God, a people hardened through and through. Thus the book ends on a poignant note, a confrontation between a disappointed God and a disappointed people. In a sense, the Book of Malachi shows that the Old Testament comes to a chasm, with the bickering voices of the people on one side and the stern warnings of God on the other. Only the Lord Himself could provide a way out of this impasse. Malachi looks forward to this deliverance, for he speaks of the one who would prepare the way for the Messiah. The promised Messiah was the only One who could bridge that widening chasm between the people and their God.

Author Nothing is known of the prophet Malachi apart from this book. We are not even sure that Malachi was the name of the prophet. The word means "My Messenger," and it is possible that the first verse should be translated, "The burden of the word of the LORD to Israel by My Messenger." In any case, Malachi's name identifying him as a messenger of God highlights one of the major themes of the book. Malachi prophesies that God would send a "messenger," a prophecy of John the Baptist, and "the Messenger of the covenant," a prophecy of Jesus (3:1).

In 2:7 the role of a priest is described as "messenger of the LORD of hosts." Based on that description, a priest-prophet in the temple might have used the designation "My Messenger" for himself. Because of the writer's apparent concern with the priesthood, it may be argued that the author of the book was a priest to whom God also gave a prophetic message.

Date Wide agreement exists that the Book of Malachi was written during the last half of the fifth century B.C. Some even pinpoint the date between 420 and 415 B.C. This would place the Book of Malachi about one hundred years after the ministries of Haggai and Zechariah. There are numerous ties in the book to the concerns of Nehemiah, who was governor in Judah around 440 B.C. These include marriages with foreign women (Neh. 13:23–27), not paying tithes (Neh. 13:10–14), neglecting the Sabbath (Neh. 13:15–22), a corrupt priesthood (Neh. 13:7–9), and injustice (Neh. 5:1–13).

Historical Setting After the great turmoil of the wars of the Assyrians, Babylonians, and the Medes and Persians, a period of comparative peace came to Israel's part of the ancient world. The books of the preexilic prophets were formed in the flaming crucible of international wars and catastrophes. But under Persian rule the people were allowed to return to the land in peace. The constant threat of international conflict did not

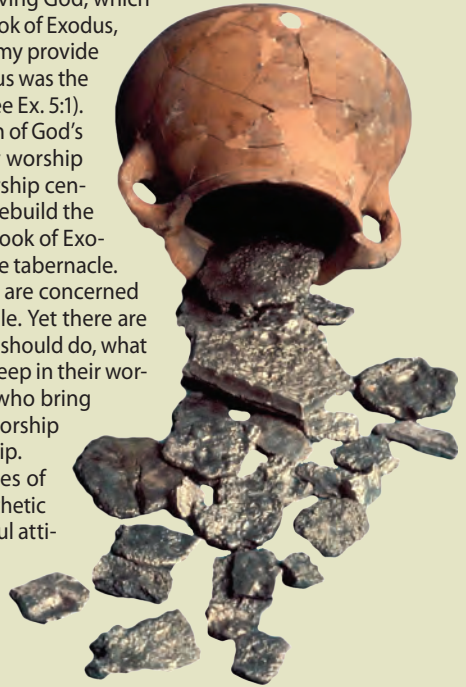
loom over their heads. The Persians collected taxes, but otherwise they were content to leave the Jews alone. Yet economic shortages were still common during this period.

Themes The history of the Jewish people is a story of a recurring pattern of captivity, exodus, and restoration into which Malachi also falls. There are two captivities in the Old Testament story, and two accounts of an exodus of the Jewish people from captivity. The first captivity and the great Exodus is Israel's experience with Egypt at the beginning of Israel's history; the second is Israel's experience with Babylon.

In the account of the first Exodus, Moses and Aaron occupy themselves to a significant degree with the issue of the proper worship of the living God, which was centered in the tabernacle. A significant portion of the Book of Exodus, the whole of Leviticus, and parts of Numbers and Deuteronomy provide guidance for worship at the tabernacle. The point of the Exodus was the creation of the people of God as a worshiping community (see Ex. 5:1).

Similarly, two of the books of the second exodus, the return of God's people from Babylon, concern themselves with the proper worship of God. These two books, Haggai and Malachi, focus on worship centered on the rebuilt temple. Haggai exhorted the people to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem in 520 B.C. Thus this book parallels the Book of Exodus in which God gave instructions for the construction of the tabernacle. Similarly, Malachi parallels the Book of Leviticus in that both are concerned with how the people and the priests should act in the temple. Yet there are significant differences. Leviticus emphasizes what the people should do, what offerings they should bring, and what calendar they should keep in their worship of God. Malachi's emphasis is on the attitude of those who bring their worship to God. In Leviticus one reads about *how* to worship God; in Malachi the focus is on the *heart* of those who worship.

The priests of Malachi's time were indifferent to the rules of worship (1:6–14), and the people themselves had become apathetic about their offerings to God (3:6–12). Where did this neglectful attitude come from? In a critical introductory verse, God said to the people, "I have loved you." The response of the people was, "In what way have You loved us?" (1:2). The people's suspicion about the motives of God toward them resulted in their halfhearted response to Him. Their apathy toward God was also reflected in their relations with other people—especially their spouses. It had become common at this time for men to divorce their wives. Such men ignored the fact that the Lord was a witness to their marriages, and as a result God ignored their offerings. The prophecy of Malachi is God's response to this "loveless" condition.



Silver ingots found in a clay jar at En Gedi (ninth–eighth century B.C.). Malachi 3:2, 3 uses the metaphor of the Lord putting His people through the refiner's fire so that they may be pure and refined like gold and silver.

Z. Radovan/www.BibleLandPictures.com

CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

Malachi's name means "My Messenger." His life's calling from God was to clarify the message the priests had bumbled. But he also predicts the coming of another messenger whose ministry will precede the Messiah and clear the way for His coming: "Behold, I send My messenger, and he will prepare the way before Me" (3:1). In his mind, this messenger would be someone like Elijah—one who would call parents to repent and turn the hearts of the children to their fathers (4:5, 6). From our perspective we know that he was referring to Jesus' cousin John (who resembled Elijah).

Still, Malachi is not only referring to the first appearance of Jesus. He also gives us a glimpse of Jesus' encore performance as the returning and reigning king. "But who can endure the day of His coming? And who can stand when He appears? For He is like a refiner's fire and like launderers' soap" (3:2). We see specific references to Jesus as the Sun of Righteousness rising "with healing in His wings" (4:2).

MALACHI OUTLINE

- I. A dispute over the love of God 1:1–5
- II. A dispute over God’s honor with the priests 1:6—2:9
- III. A dispute over the people’s unfaithfulness 2:10–16
- IV. A dispute over God’s judgment 2:17—3:6
- V. A dispute over returning to God 3:7–12
- VI. A dispute over rebellion against God 3:13–18
- VII. Warnings relative to the coming of the great day of the Lord 4:1–6
 - A. The certainty of the coming day 4:1–3
 - B. The promise of Elijah in the coming day 4:4–6

536–515 B.C.

The temple is rebuilt in Jerusalem

464–424 B.C.

Artaxerxes Longimanus reigns in Persia

458 B.C.

Ezra leads a group of returnees

444 B.C.

Nehemiah leads a group of returnees

c. 443 B.C.

Jerusalem’s wall is reconstructed

c. 420 B.C.

Malachi’s ministry



In Malachi 3, God challenges the people, promising them that if they bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, He will prevent their vines from dropping their fruit.

Todd Bolen/www.BiblePlaces.com

The ¹burden of the word of the LORD to Israel ²by Malachi.

Israel Beloved of God

- ² “I^a have loved you,” says the LORD.
 “Yet you say, ‘In what way have You loved us?’
 Was not Esau Jacob’s brother?”
 Says the LORD.
 “Yet ^bJacob I have loved;
³ But Esau I have hated,
 And ^claid waste his mountains and
 his heritage
 For the jackals of the wilderness.”
⁴ Even though Edom has said,
 “We have been impoverished,
 But we will return and build the
 desolate places,”

Thus says the LORD of hosts:

- “They may build, but I will ^dthrow
 down;
 They shall be called the Territory of
 Wickedness,
 And the people against whom the
 LORD will have indignation
 forever.
⁵ Your eyes shall see,
 And you shall say,
^e “The LORD is magnified beyond the
 border of Israel.”

Polluted Offerings

- ⁶ “A son ^fhonors his father,
 And a servant his master.
^gIf then I am the Father,
 Where is My honor?”

CHAPTER 1

¹ ¹ oracle, prophecy
² Lit. by the hand of
³ Deut. 4:37; 7:8;
 23:5; Is. 41:8, 9; [Jer.
 31:3]; John 15:12
⁴ Rom. 9:13
⁵ Jer. 49:18; Ezek.
 35:9, 15
⁶ Jer. 49:16-18
⁷ Ps. 35:27;
 Mic. 5:4
⁸ [Ex. 20:12]; Prov.
 30:11, 17; [Matt.
 15:4-8; Eph. 6:2, 3]
⁹ [Is. 63:16; 64:8];
 Jer. 31:9; Luke 6:46

^h Mal. 2:14
⁷ Deut. 15:21
 / Ezek. 41:22 ³ Or to
 be despised
⁸ Lev. 22:22; Deut.
 15:19-23 / [Job
 42:8] ⁴ Lit. lift up
 your face
⁹ Hos. 13:9
¹⁰ 1 Cor. 9:13
¹¹ Is. 1:11
¹² Is. 59:19

And if I *am* a Master,
 Where is My reverence?
 Says the LORD of hosts
 To you priests who despise My
 name.

^h Yet you say, ‘In what way have we
 despised Your name?’

⁷ “You offer ⁱdefiled food on My altar,
 But say,
 ‘In what way have we defiled You?’
 By saying,

^j “The table of the LORD is
³contemptible.”

⁸ And ^kwhen you offer the blind as a
 sacrifice,
 Is it not evil?
 And when you offer the lame and
 sick,
 Is it not evil?
 Offer it then to your governor!
 Would he be pleased with you?
 Would he ^laccept⁴ you favorably?”
 Says the LORD of hosts.

⁹ “But now entreat God’s favor,
 That He may be gracious to us.
^m While this is being *done* by your hands,
 Will He accept you favorably?”
 Says the LORD of hosts.

¹⁰ “Who *is there* even among you who
 would shut the doors,
 “So that you would not kindle fire on
 My altar in vain?
 I have no pleasure in you,”

Says the LORD of hosts,
^o “Nor will I accept an offering from
 your hands.

¹¹ For ^pfrom the rising of the sun, even
 to its going down,

1:1 As in the case of Nahum (see Nah. 1:1), the prophetic message of Malachi was like a **burden** from which he needed deliverance (see also Is. 13:1; Jer. 23:33–38; Hab. 1:1). **to Israel:** In the postexilic period, the use of the word Israel for the people of Judah expresses the hope that the Lord was in the process of reasserting the fullness of His original promises to His people. The name **Malachi** means “My Messenger.”

1:2 I have loved you: God is like a loving parent who speaks with fatherly affection. However, His chosen people were like rebellious children who challenged His words of love for them.

1:3 But Esau I have hated: The contrast between the words *love* and *hate* here and in v. 2 seems much too strong. But on many occasions in the OT, the verb *hate* has the basic meaning “not to choose.” God’s love for Jacob was expressed in His electing grace in extending His covenant to Jacob and to his descendants (see Gen. 25:21–26; Is. 44:1–5). In His sovereign purpose, God set His love on the one and not the other. The term *hate* may carry the idea of indifference as well.

1:4, 5 Edom has said . . . we will return: Edom was a nation descended from Esau, and they shared Esau’s unbelief and self-confidence. Destruction made Israel reexamine her relationship to God. But destruction for Edom resulted only in continued pride and self-effort. **LORD of hosts:** This expression describes God as the supreme commander of the universe. The *hosts* are His heavenly armies.

1:6 A son honors his father: Here the Lord uses truisms: A father

and a master can expect honor from those beneath them, but God was not receiving the honor due Him. **I am the Father:** The image of God as Father is common in the NT but less frequent in the OT (see Is. 63:16; 64:8). **who despise My name:** In ancient Israel, a name was a symbol of a person’s character, works, and reputation. Therefore, this charge was most serious. But the people dare to ask: **In what way have we despised Your name?**

1:7 God’s answer to the question posed in v. 6 was in terms of **defiled food**. The word *defiled* describes bread that was not prepared properly. The bread (see Ex. 25:23–30) and the **table** on which it was displayed were holy symbols, but the priests were treating them like ordinary things.

1:8 the blind . . . lame and sick: The demands of holy worship of God had been made clear in the Law. Only the very best should be presented as an offering to the Lord (see Lev. 1:3); no one was to come with an offering that was blemished or unclear (see Lev. 7:19–21).

1:10 shut the doors: In a choice between service without gratitude and no service at all, God chose the second. **pleasure:** The word describes the desire of God to smile, even to laugh with joy at true worship from a godly people (see Ps. 40:6–8; 147:10, 11).

1:11 great among the Gentiles: God would one day receive praise from all the nations. Even the despised Gentiles would offer praise, while God’s own people were profaning His holy name (see Ps. 87:117).

My name *shall be* great ^aamong the
Gentiles;
^rIn every place ^sincense *shall be*
offered to My name,
And a pure offering;
^tFor My name shall be great among
the nations,”
Says the LORD of hosts.

12“ But you profane it,
In that you say,
^u“The table of the ⁵LORD is defiled;
And its fruit, its food, is
contemptible.”
13 You also say,
“Oh, what a ^vweariness!”
And you sneer at it,”
Says the LORD of hosts.
“And you bring the stolen, the lame,
and the sick;
Thus you bring an offering!”
^wShould I accept this from your
hand?”
Says the LORD.
14“ But cursed *be* ^xthe deceiver
Who has in his flock a male,
And takes a vow,
But sacrifices to the Lord ^ywhat is
blemished—
For ^zI *am* a great King,”

11 ^aIs. 60:3, 5
^r1 Tim. 2:8 ^sRev.
8:3 ^tIs. 66:18, 19
12 ^uMal. 1:7 ^sSo
with Bg.; MT Lord
13 ^vIs. 43:22 ^wLev.
22:20
14 ^xMal. 1:8 ^yLev.
22:18-20 ^zPs. 47:2

CHAPTER 2
1 ^aMal. 1:6
2 ^b[Lev. 26:14,
15; Deut. 28:15]
^cMal. 3:9
3 ^dEx. 29:14 ^e1 Kin.
14:10 ^fLit. to it
5 ^fNum. 25:12;
Ezek. 34:25 ^gDeut.
33:9

Says the LORD of hosts,
“And My name *is to be* feared among
the nations.

Corrupt Priests

2 “And now, O ^apriests, this
commandment is for you.
² ^bIf you will not hear,
And if you will not take *it* to heart,
To give glory to My name,”
Says the LORD of hosts,
“I will send a curse upon you,
And I will curse your blessings.
Yes, I have cursed them ^calready,
Because you do not take *it* to heart.

3 “Behold, I will rebuke your
descendants
And spread ^drefuse on your faces,
The refuse of your solemn feasts;
And *one* will ^etake you away ¹with it.
4 Then you shall know that I have sent
this commandment to you,
That My covenant with Levi may
continue,”
Says the LORD of hosts.
5 “My ^fcovenant was with him, *one* of
life and peace,
And I gave them to him ^gthat *he*
might fear Me;

1:12 you profane it: The people were treating God with contempt by their careless attitudes concerning their offerings.
1:13 The demands of God were neither understood nor appreciated; they seemed to be mere busywork. **stolen . . . lame . . . sick:** The gifts of the priests were not presentable; some were stolen goods, and others were animals that were useless. To sacrifice something of no value was not a sacrifice at all.
1:14 Can anyone really deceive the Lord? The deception is only in the eyes of the **deceiver**. **I am a great King:** The reputation of the Lord among His people was to have been the means whereby all the nations would be drawn to worship Him as well.
2:1 The address to the **priests** shows that the section begun in 1:8 continues in this chapter.

2:2 If you will not . . . give glory: The behavior of the priests was defiling the name of God. **I will send a curse:** At the passage of the people into the Promised Land, the Levites spread before the people the blessings of obedience and the curses on disobedience (Deut. 27; 28). But the priests were not obeying the Law that they were supposed to uphold. They would therefore receive the curses.
2:3 Refuse was the dung in the sacrificed animal that should have been removed when the animal was prepared for sacrifice to the Lord.
2:4 My covenant with Levi: The Levites had been given the privilege of serving the tabernacle (Deut. 33:8–11).
2:5 The **covenant** of God was with Phinehas, a descendant of the tribe of Levi (Num. 25:1–14). **life and peace:** The basic meaning of

Blemished Sacrifices



Why should the condition of a sacrifice matter to God? He created all things, defective animals as well as the healthy ones. Why would He not accept gifts that were flawed? And why did God care about this enough to have his messenger Malachi speak so strongly?

The imperfect sacrifices of the priests and people demonstrated the content of their hearts. The people were not sincere. To sacrifice a perfect, healthy animal looked to them like a waste, and they considered the work of preparing their gifts properly to be a foolish use of time and energy. Malachi confronted this attitude with the Law of God, which clearly demanded unblemished sacrifices and sincere hearts (see Lev. 1:3; 3:1; Deut. 17:1). Malachi also confronted the people with God’s judgment of their actions. God was perfectly aware of what they were doing and the condition of their hearts. No sacrifices at all would have been better than second-rate and insincere ones. The people were not giving “sacrifices”; they were merely doing what was convenient, just enough to appear to obey God. Then they would turn around and pat themselves on the back for being righteous.

But even though God’s people had broken their covenant with Him, God remained true to His promises (see Is. 53). He did not shrink from sending His only Son to a cruel death on the Cross. Jesus was the true, unblemished sacrifice to which the Old Testament sacrifices pointed (Heb. 7:26–28). He was perfect—free from all sin. And through Jesus’ sacrificial death the Lord provided salvation for all of our sins. In doing this, the Lord demonstrated His sincere love for us because He sacrificed the very best to save us (see John 3:16).

- So he feared Me
And was reverent before My name.
- 6 ^h The ² law of truth was in his mouth,
And ³ injustice was not found on his
lips.
He walked with Me in peace and
equity,
And ⁱ turned many away from
iniquity.
- 7 “For ^j the lips of a priest should keep
knowledge,
And ^k people should seek the law from
his mouth;
^k For he is the messenger of the LORD
of hosts.
- 8 But you have departed from the way;
You ^l have caused many to stumble at
the law.
^m You have corrupted the covenant of
Levi,”
Says the LORD of hosts.
- 9 “Therefore ⁿ I also have made you
contemptible and base
Before all the people,
Because you have not kept My ways
But have shown ^o partiality in the
law.”

Treachery of Infidelity

- 10 ^p Have we not all one Father?
^q Has not one God created us?
Why do we deal treacherously with
one another
By profaning the covenant of the
fathers?

6 ^p Deut. 33:10
/ Jer. 23:22; [James
5:20] ² Or True
instruction ³ Or
unrighteousness
7 / Num. 27:21;
Deut. 17:8-11; Jer.
18:18 ^k [Gal. 4:14]
8 / Jer. 18:15
^m Num. 25:12, 13;
Neh. 13:29; Ezek.
44:10
9 ⁿ 1 Sam. 2:30
o Deut. 17:17; Mic.
3:11; 1 Tim. 5:21
10 ^p Jer. 31:9; 1 Cor.
8:6; [Eph. 4:6] ^q Job
31:15

11 ^r Ezra 9:1, 2; Neh.
13:23
12 ^s Neh. 13:29
^t Talmud, Vg.
teacher and student
14 ^u Prov. 5:18; Jer.
9:2; Mal. 3:5 ^v Prov.
2:17
15 ^v Gen. 2:24;
Matt. 19:4, 5 ^w Ezra
9:2; [1 Cor. 7:14]

- 11 Judah has dealt treacherously,
And an abomination has been
committed in Israel and in
Jerusalem,
For Judah has ^r profaned
The LORD's holy *institution* which He
loves:
He has married the daughter of a
foreign god.
- 12 May the LORD cut off from the tents
of Jacob
The man who does this, being
⁴ awake and aware,
Yet ^s who brings an offering to the
LORD of hosts!
- 13 And this is the second thing you do:
You cover the altar of the LORD with
tears,
With weeping and crying;
So He does not regard the offering
anymore,
Nor receive *it* with goodwill from
your hands.
- 14 Yet you say, “For what reason?”
Because the LORD has been witness
Between you and ^t the wife of your
youth,
With whom you have dealt
treacherously;
^u Yet she is your companion
And your wife by covenant.
- 15 But ^v did He not make *them* one,
Having a remnant of the Spirit?
And why one?
He seeks ^w godly offspring.

the word *peace* is fullness, completeness, things as they really ought to be. **that he might fear Me:** The context here means holding God in reverential awe, responding properly to His wonder, and worshiping Him in spirit and in truth (see 3:5, 16; 4:2).

2:6 the law of truth: The priests of the OT period had a twofold responsibility—they were to represent the people in holy worship before the living God, and they were to teach and apply God's law to the people. **in peace and equity:** This refers to complete moral virtue in all things before the Lord.

2:7 In the OT, a prophet was commonly called a “messenger of the Lord.” But this is apparently the only time in the OT that priests are specifically called the messengers of the Lord (see also 3:1).

2:8 departed . . . caused many to stumble: The judgment on the departed religious leader would be more strict because of the ripple effect of that one person's sin. **the covenant of Levi:** God made this covenant with the tribe of Levi and specifically with Phinehas (see v. 4). Other passages also presuppose a covenant (Neh. 13:29; Jer. 33:20, 21).

2:9 The priests had the truth but had not **kept** it or practiced it. When they acted as judges, they showed partiality, making their sin even worse (see Deut. 17:9–11; 19:17).

2:10 one God created us: The use of the term *create* calls to mind the great creation text in Gen. 1:26–28. **deal treacherously:** Because God is the Creator of all humanity (Gen. 1:27), He requires that humans deal equitably with one another.

2:11 The term **abomination** is a strong word indicating a stomach revulsion; the people had done something so awful as to make one ill. **institution which He loves:** The term *institution* is supplied by the translation; a more literal translation might be, “God's holy thing, that He loves.” The text presents the ideas of affection and

revulsion which we usually think of in the verbs *to love* and *to hate*. Marriage is something God loves; divorce is something He hates (v. 16). The Lord's people had polluted something in which God takes great pleasure. **daughter of a foreign god:** The question of intermarriage in ancient Israel was not racial nor ethnic but spiritual: lack of faithfulness to God Himself.

2:12 cut off: The phrase may refer to banishment or even death. **being awake and aware:** The phrase is difficult but may refer to a deliberate offense against the Lord (see Lev. 10:1–3).

2:13 the second thing: The prophets at times spoke of the compounding sins of the people (see Jer. 2:13). **Tears** here seem to be judged as hypocritical acts of insincere repentance (see Is. 1:10–15).

He does not regard the offering: When right things are done for the wrong reasons or with the wrong attitudes, God does not accept them (see Ps. 40:6–8). **goodwill:** The Hebrew suggests God's pleasure and enjoyment. God's pleasure is in sacrifices offered with attitudes of humility, faithfulness, and joy.

2:14 For what reason: The feigned surprise of the people fooled no one, certainly not the Lord. **witness:** There are some whose witness may be challenged, but the Lord is not among them (see also 3:5). **wife of your youth:** These men had not only married pagan wives, but they had divorced their first wives to make room for their new ones. **Companion** describes a permanent partnership.

by covenant: The union of a marriage is formal, public, legal, and sacred, a binding contract.

2:15 make them one: Here the prophet recalls the words from Gen. 2:24, “one flesh.” **a remnant of the Spirit:** This somewhat difficult phrase most likely indicates the work of God's Holy Spirit in the life of the married couple. God has joined them, and by His Spirit He has worked on their behalf to strengthen them. **godly offspring:** God

Therefore take heed to your spirit,
And let none deal treacherously with
the wife of his youth.

16^a “For ^xthe LORD God of Israel says
That He hates divorce,
For it covers one’s garment with
violence,”
Says the LORD of hosts.
“Therefore take heed to your spirit,
That you do not deal treacherously.”

17^y You have wearied the LORD with your
words;
Yet you say,
“In what way have we wearied *Him*?”
In that you say,
^z“Everyone who does evil
Is good in the sight of the LORD,

16 ^x Deut. 24:1;
[Matt. 5:31; 19:6-8]
17 ^y Is. 43:22, 24
^z Is. 5:20; Zeph. 1:12

CHAPTER 3

1 ^a Matt. 11:10 ☆;
Mark 1:2; Luke 1:76;
7:27; John 1:23;
2:14, 15 ^b [Is. 40:3]
^c Is. 63:9 ^d Hag. 2:7
2 ^e Jer. 10:10; Joel
2:11; Nah. 1:6; [Mal.
4:1] ^f Is. 33:14;
Ezek. 22:14; Rev.
6:17 ^g Is. 4:4; Zech.
13:9; [Matt. 3:10-12;
1 Cor. 3:13-15]

And He delights in them,”
Or, “Where *is* the God of justice?”

The Coming Messenger

3 “Behold, ^aI send My messenger,
And he will ^bprepare the way
before Me.
And the Lord, whom you seek,
Will suddenly come to His temple,
^cEven the Messenger of the covenant,
In whom you delight.
Behold, ^dHe is coming,”
Says the LORD of hosts.

2 “But who can endure ^ethe day of His
coming?
And ^fwho can stand when He appears?
For ^gHe *is* like a refiner’s fire
And like launderers’ soap.

seeks godly children even as He seeks for true worshipers (see John 4:23, 24). **take heed to your spirit:** We must control our attitudes so that they will be in line with those of God’s Spirit.

2:16 treacherously: To the Lord, attitudes of indifference to marriage vows and duties are the actions of a traitor.

2:17 God is **wearied** by people who do not submit to Him but who argue their points against His revelation. When **justice** comes, they will be sorry they asked (see 3:5).

3:1 prepare the way: This verse resembles the prophecy of Mic. 5:2 concerning the birthplace of the Messiah. Matthew and Mark identify the messenger of this verse as John the Baptist (see 4:5; Matt. 11:10; Mark 1:2, 3). **The Lord** refers here to Jesus Christ (as is the case in Ps. 110:1). There are three persons in view in this verse: The Father (the Lord) speaks of sending a messenger (John the Baptist)

who will prepare the way for the coming of the Lord (Jesus). **suddenly . . . His temple:** Both the righteous and the wicked will be surprised when the Messiah arrives. **Messenger of the covenant:** This is a messianic title, referring to the One who will initiate the New Covenant (see Jer. 31:33, 34; Matt. 26:28; Heb. 12:24). **He is coming:** As in Ps. 96:13, this dramatic wording indicates something that was just about to occur. However, it would be four hundred years before these words would be fulfilled.

3:2 In this verse Malachi turns to the second coming of the Messiah. This second advent will be one of judgment and purification (Joel 2:11; Amos 5:18; Luke 21:36; Rev. 19:11–21). **refiner’s fire . . . launderers’ soap:** These two images are vivid illustrations of the purifying process. The Savior King Himself will sift all people to prepare for His reign.

Malachi: A Portrait of Spiritual Indifference		
When the prophet Malachi began preaching to the Israelites, he found that the people had cold hearts. They were indifferent and apathetic. When he confronted them with their sin, they asked a series of questions that reveal volumes about their spiritual condition.		
Question	Significance	Application
"In what way have You loved us?" (1:2)	This question reveals an alarming lack of trust in God. The Israelites were implying that God had been unfaithful to His covenant. "If You really love us, why are we still under foreign oppressors, waiting for the promised kingdom?"	Do we demand proof of God's love for us?
"In what way have we despised Your name?" (1:6); "In what way have we defiled You?" (1:7)	This question shows the halfheartedness and the rationalizations of the nation's religious leaders. They were saying, in effect: "We've been making the required sacrifices. What more do you want?" But as Malachi pointed out, the sacrifices offered to God were unfit animals (1:8–10).	Do we offer God our best in worship, or do we just go through the motions?
"In what way shall we return?" (3:7)	This question reveals an appalling blindness to sin and an arrogant attempt to floss over wrongdoing. "We don't know what You want us to do, because we don't see what we have done wrong."	When faced with our sin, do we make excuses?
"In what way have we robbed You?" (3:8)	This question underscores the people's greed. They did not view their possessions as God's possessions to be used for His glory.	Do we gladly give to God?
"What have we spoken against You?" (3:13)	This question displays the Israelites' callousness. They had said it was "useless to serve God" (3:14). But they continued to think that their external observance of religious ceremonies would satisfy God's demands on their lives.	Do we wholeheartedly serve God?

- 3 ^h He will sit as a refiner and a purifier
of silver;
He will purify the sons of Levi,
And ⁱ purge them as gold and silver,
That they may ⁱ offer to the LORD
An offering in righteousness.
- 4 “Then ^j the offering of Judah and
Jerusalem
Will be ² pleasant to the LORD,
As in the days of old,
As in former years.
- 5 And I will come near you for
judgment;
I will be a swift witness
Against sorcerers,
Against adulterers,
^k Against perjurers,
Against those who ^l exploit wage
earners and ^m widows and
orphans,
And against those who turn away an
alien—
Because they do not fear Me,”
Says the LORD of hosts.
- 6 “For I *am* the LORD, ⁿ I do not change;
^o Therefore you are not consumed,
O sons of Jacob.
- 7 Yet from the days of ^p your fathers
You have gone away from My
ordinances
And have not kept *them*.
^q Return to Me, and I will return to
you,”
Says the LORD of hosts.

3 ^h Is. 1:25; Dan.
12:10; Zech. 13:9
ⁱ [1 Pet. 2:5] ¹ Or
refine
4 ^j Mal. 1:11
² pleasing
5 ^k Lev. 19:12; Zech.
5:4; [James 5:12]
^l Lev. 19:13; James
5:4 ^m Ex. 22:22
6 ⁿ [Num. 23:19;
Rom. 11:29; James
1:17] ^o [Lam. 3:22]
7 ^p Acts 7:51
^q Zech. 1:3

^r Mal. 1:6
8 ^s Neh. 13:10-12
10 ^t Prov. 3:9,
10 ^u 1 Chr. 26:20
^v Gen. 7:11 ^w 2 Chr.
31:10
11 ^x Amos 4:9
12 ^y Dan. 8:9

- ^r “But you said,
‘In what way shall we return?’”

Do Not Rob God

- 8 “Will a man rob God?
Yet you have robbed Me!
But you say,
‘In what way have we robbed You?’
^s In tithes and offerings.
- 9 You are cursed with a curse,
For you have robbed Me,
Even this whole nation.
- 10 “Bring all the tithes into the
“storehouse,
That there may be food in My
house,
And try Me now in this,”
Says the LORD of hosts,
“If I will not open for you the
^v windows of heaven
And ^w pour out for you *such*
blessing
That *there will not be room enough to*
receive it.
- 11 “And I will rebuke ^x the devourer for
your sakes,
So that he will not destroy the fruit
of your ground,
Nor shall the vine fail to bear fruit
for you in the field,”
Says the LORD of hosts;
- 12 “And all nations will call you blessed,
For you will be ^y a delightful land,”
Says the LORD of hosts.

3:3 purify the sons of Levi: Since the priests had come under such strong censure in this book (1:6–2:9), and since the prophet himself was likely a priest, these words would have had a special significance for him.

3:4 The Hebrew word translated **pleasant** refers to things that are sweet and pleasing. God derives joy from the end result of His work.

3:5 judgment: The same word may be translated *justice* (see 2:17). The people had wondered where the God of justice was; now they will know. **Sorcerers** were people who made potions. **fear Me:** Holding God in reverence and awe also means obeying Him (see 2:5; 3:16; 4:2).

3:6 I do not change: We might expect these opening words to ensure the nation’s doom; instead, they give assurance of God’s continuing mercy.

3:7 The history of Israel is not a record of ever-increasing obedience. Instead, it is a long, sad story of recurring departure from God. **Return:** This is the key term in the Hebrew prophets for repentance, renewal, and restoration (see Is. 55:11; Jer. 4:1; Zech. 1:3).

3:8 The **tithes** were the gifts to the Lord that the Law required. There were three: two that were annual and one that came every three years. The tithe supported the priests and Levites, and also widows, orphans, and foreigners (Deut. 14:28, 29).

3:9–11 The people were **cursed** with poor production from their land and animals. A key verse from the Law of Moses reads that the curse will come “because you did not serve the **LORD** your God with joy and gladness of heart, for the abundance of everything” (Deut. 28:47). The forces that caused loss of production are pictured collectively as **the devourer**.

3:12 One of the ways in which **all nations** would be drawn to the worship of the Lord was by seeing how the people of Israel fared

with the Lord as their God. **a delightful land:** The adjective indicates enjoyment, life that is genuinely pleasurable (see 1:10; see also the related verb in 3:1). Faithfulness to God would lead to fruitfulness in the land.

try

(Heb. *bachan*) (3:10; Gen. 42:15, 16; Ps. 26:2; Jer. 9:7) Strong’s #974

This Hebrew verb means “to try,” or “to put to the test” (Job 23:10; Ps. 139:23; Zech. 13:9). The word can mean “to test” in the sense of separating or discriminating one thing from another (Job 34:3). When this word is used to depict God’s “testing” of people, it means the proving of individuals in such a way that their faith becomes more established (see Ps. 66:10–12; Jer. 17:10; 20:12). Malachi’s challenge to the Israelites to *try* God is a rare instance in which people are encouraged to test the faithfulness of the Lord (3:10). This word for *try* can be contrasted with another Hebrew verb for testing, *nasah*. That latter word is frequently used in a negative sense, to describe the way Israel was testing God with their unbelief (Ex. 17:7; Ps. 78:18; 95:9). The Law of Moses warned the Israelites not to tempt God (Deut. 6:16; Ps. 95:9); it was a mark of spiritual adultery (Matt. 12:38, 39). According to James, God tests people in order to grant them the crown of life—but He tempts no one (James 1:12–14).

The People Complain Harshly

13^a “Your² words have been ³harsh
against Me,”
Says the LORD,
“Yet you say,
‘What have we spoken against You?’
14^a You have said,
‘It is useless to serve God;
What profit *is it* that we have kept
His ordinance,
And that we have walked as
mourners
Before the LORD of hosts?
15 So now ^bwe call the proud
blessed,
For those who do wickedness are
⁴raised up;
They even ^ctempt God and go
free.’”

A Book of Remembrance

16 Then those ^dwho feared the LORD
^espoke to one another,
And the LORD listened and heard
them;
So ^fa book of remembrance was
written before Him
For those who fear the LORD
And who ⁵meditate on His name.
17^a “They^g shall be Mine,” says the LORD
of hosts,
“On the day that I make them My
^hjewels.⁶
And ⁱI will spare them

13 ² Mal. 2:17 ³ Lit. strong
14 ^a Job 21:14
15 ^b Ps. 73:12 ^c Ps. 95:9 ^d Lit. built
16 ^d Ps. 66:16
^e Heb. 3:13 ^f Ps. 56:8
⁵ Or esteem
17 ^g Ex. 19:5; Deut. 7:6; Is. 43:21; [1 Pet. 2:9] ^h Is. 62:3 ⁱ Ps. 103:13 ⁶ Lit. special treasure

18 ^j [Ps. 58:11]

CHAPTER 4

1 ^a Ps. 21:9; [Nah. 1:5; 6; Mal. 3:2, 3; 2 Pet. 3:7] ^b Mal. 3:18 ^c Is. 5:24; Obad. 18 ^d Amos 2:9
² ^e Mal. 3:16 ^f Matt. 4:16; Luke 1:78; Acts 10:43; 2 Cor. 4:6; Eph. 5:14
3 ^g Mic. 7:10
4 ^h Ex. 20:3

As a man spares his own son who
serves him.”
18 ^j Then you shall again discern
Between the righteous and the
wicked,
Between one who serves God
And one who does not serve Him.

The Great Day of God

4 “For behold, ^athe day is coming,
Burning like an oven,
And all ^bthe proud, yes, all who do
wickedly will be ^cstubble.
And the day which is coming shall
burn them up,”
Says the LORD of hosts,
“That will ^dleave them neither root
nor branch.
2 But to you who ^efear My name
The ^fSun of Righteousness shall
arise
With healing in His wings;
And you shall go out
And grow fat like stall-fed
calves.
3 ^g You shall trample the wicked,
For they shall be ashes under the
soles of your feet
On the day that I do *this*,”
Says the LORD of hosts.
4 “Remember the ^hLaw of Moses, My
servant,
Which I commanded him in Horeb
for all Israel,

3:13 In this verse God addresses not just their **words** but the thoughts that prompted them.

3:14 **What profit:** The people secretly entertained doubts about the value of following the Lord. In fact, they had not really **kept His ordinance** anyway. The proper attitude is encouraged in 4:4.

3:15 **the proud:** This word refers to godless, rebellious people (see 4:1; compare Ps. 119:21; Prov. 21:24; Jer. 43:2).

3:16 There were other voices, those of people who did place themselves under the Law, those **who feared the LORD**. God did not ignore those who were faithful to Him. **a book of remembrance:** God never forgets His promises. God teaches us to remember and

value the good that people do (Phil. 4:8); He does the same as He commands us. Those **who meditate** fear the Lord, think highly of Him, and ponder His significance as it relates to their lives.

3:17 The excitement of these words is that we can sense the pride God has in His children. The Hebrew word translated **jewels** could be rendered “special treasure.” It is a wonderfully endearing term that is used in the OT only of the people of Israel as they are valued by the living God (see Ex. 19:5; Deut. 7:6; Ps. 135:4).

3:18 **one who serves God:** Serving God means putting Him first, obeying His commands, and finding one’s chief joy in life as the advancement of the glory of His name.

4:1 Scripture consistently describes a **coming** day when God will arrive as a Judge and will deal with the wicked (see v. 5; compare Is. 13:6–10; Joel 1:15; 2:1–11; Zeph. 1:2–2:3; Zech. 14). **the proud:** What some people thought about the “blessedness of the proud” is exposed as a grave error (3:15).

4:2 **you who fear My name:** This is the righteous remnant who held God in wonder and awe, responded to Him in obedience, and lived for Him with constant faith. **With healing in His wings:** The prophet compares the Savior to a bird whose comforting wings bring healing to the chicks that gather underneath (see Ps. 91:1–4).

4:3 **trample the wicked:** The victory of the righteous over the wicked is a promise of the living God that transcends the two testaments (see Ps. 110:4–6; compare Rev. 19:11–21). **On the day that I do this:** The identity of the Victor is already known.

4:4 **Remember:** This word means more than simply “to recall.” The command is to act on the teaching that had come from the living God. **the Law of Moses:** The Law had its origin in the Lord, and Moses was the divinely appointed transmitter of God’s will and word to the people (see John 1:17).

day

(Heb. *yom*) (4:5; Gen. 7:11; Prov. 25:13; Amos 5:8, 18) Strong’s #3117

The Hebrew noun *yom* has a variety of uses in the OT. It can refer to the daylight hours in contrast to the night (Amos 5:8), or to a 24-hour day, such as a certain day of the month (Gen. 7:11). It may also refer to a time period, such as the “time” of harvest (Prov. 25:13), or even to a year (2 Sam. 13:23). The word is used in the significant phrase “the day of the LORD” (see Is. 2:12; Ezek. 13:5; Joel 1:15; Zeph. 1:14). For the prophets, the day of the Lord was the future day when God would decisively triumph over all His foes. That day will be a day of great rejoicing and blessing for God’s faithful servants (Is. 2), whereas for God’s enemies it will be a day of “darkness” (Amos 5:18).

- With ⁱthe statutes and judgments.
 5 Behold, I will send you ^jElijah the prophet
^kBefore the coming of the great and
 dreadful day of the LORD.
 6 And he will turn

4 ⁱ Deut. 4:10
 5 ^j [Matt. 11:14;
 17:10–13 ☆; Mark
 9:11–13; Luke 1:17];
 John 1:21 ^k Joel 2:31
 6 ^j Zech. 14:12
^m Zech. 5:3

The hearts of the fathers to the
 children,
 And the hearts of the children to
 their fathers,
 Lest I come and ^lstrike the earth
 with ^ma curse.”

4:5 Elijah the prophet: The story of the prophet Elijah is found in 1 Kin. 17–2 Kin. 2. The NT identifies John the Baptist as this Elijah (see Matt. 11:14; 17:10; Mark 9:11–13; Luke 1:17). There are three ways in which this prophecy might be fulfilled: (1) John the Baptist, whom Malachi had already prophesied (see 3:1), was the first to fulfill the promise of the Elijah figure. John, like Elijah, was a minister of the Lord calling people to repent and prepare for the coming of the Messiah (see Matt. 11:14). (2) Elijah appeared in person along with Moses at the Transfiguration, a stunning vindication of the messi-

anic role of Jesus (see Matt. 16:28—17:8). (3) An Elijah-like figure will appear at the end times; he will call fire down from heaven just as Elijah did (see 1 Kin. 18:36–40; Rev. 11:1–7).

4:6 Malachi ends with both a promise and a warning. **fathers to the children . . . children to their fathers:** As in every act of God announcing judgment, there is also an offer of His mercy (see Jon. 4:2). **a curse:** The term is one of the harshest in Scripture. The Hebrew word suggests complete annihilation. This is the term translated *doomed* in the account of the destruction of Jericho (see Josh. 6:17).

The **NEW** **TESTAMENT**

Harmony of the Gospels						
Date	Event	Location	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
INTRODUCTIONS TO JESUS CHRIST						
	(1) Luke's Introduction				1:1–4	
	(2) Pre-fleshly state of Christ					1:1–18
	(3) Genealogy of Jesus Christ		1:1–17		3:23–38	
BIRTH, INFANCY, AND ADOLESCENCE OF JESUS AND JOHN THE BAPTIST						
7 B.C.	(1) Announcement of Birth of John	Jerusalem (temple)			1:5–25	
7 or 6 B.C.	(2) Announcement of Birth of Jesus to the Virgin	Nazareth			1:26–38	
c. 5 B.C.	(3) Song of Elizabeth to Mary	Hill Country of Judea			1:39–45	
	(4) Mary's Song of Praise				1:46–56	
5 B.C.	(5) Birth, Infancy, and Purpose for Future of John the Baptist	Judea			1:57–80	
	(6) Announcement of Jesus' Birth to Joseph	Nazareth	1:18–25			
5–4 B.C.	(7) Birth of Jesus Christ	Bethlehem	1:24, 25		2:1–7	
	(8) Proclamation by the Angels	Near Bethlehem			2:8–14	
	(9) The Visit of Homage by Shepherds	Bethlehem			2:15–20	
	(10) Jesus' Circumcision	Bethlehem			2:21	
4 B.C.	(11) First Temple Visit with Acknowledgments by Simeon and Anna	Jerusalem			2:22–38	
	(12) Visit of the Wise Men	Jerusalem & Bethlehem	2:1–12			
	(13) Flight into Egypt and Massacre of Innocents	Bethlehem, Jerusalem & Egypt	2:13–18			
	(14) From Egypt to Nazareth with Jesus		2:19–23		2:39	
Afterward A.D. 7–8	(15) Childhood of Jesus	Nazareth			2:40, 51	
	(16) Jesus, 12 Years Old, Visits the Temple	Jerusalem			2:41–50	
Afterward	(17) 18-Year Account of Jesus' Adolescence and Adulthood	Nazareth			2:51, 52	
TRUTHS ABOUT JOHN THE BAPTIST						
c. A.D. 25–27	(1) John's Ministry Begins	Judean Wilderness	3:1	1:1–4	3:1, 2	1:19–28
	(2) Man and Message		3:2–12	1:2–8	3:3–14	
	(3) His Picture of Jesus		3:11, 12	1:7, 8	3:15–18	1:26, 27
	(4) His Courage		14:4–12		3:19, 20	
BEGINNING OF JESUS' MINISTRY						
c. A.D. 27	(1) Jesus Baptized	Jordan River	3:13–17	1:9–11	3:21–23	1:29–34
	(2) Jesus Tempted	Wilderness	4:1–11	1:12, 13	4:1–13	
	(3) Calls First Disciples	Beyond Jordan				1:35–51
	(4) The First Miracle	Cana in Galilee				2:1–11

Date	Event	Location	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
BEGINNING OF JESUS' MINISTRY (cont.)						
A.D. 27	(5) First Stay in Capernaum	(Capernaum is "His" city)				2:12
	(6) First Cleansing of the Temple	Jerusalem				2:13–22
	(7) Received at Jerusalem	Judea				2:23–25
	(8) Teaches Nicodemus about Second Birth	Judea				3:1–21
	(9) Co-Ministry with John	Judea				3:22–30
	(10) Leaves for Galilee	Judea	4:12	1:14	4:14	4:1–4
	(11) Samaritan Woman at Jacob's Well	Samaria				4:5–42
	(12) Returns to Galilee			1:15	4:15	4:43–45
THE GALILEAN MINISTRY OF JESUS						
A.D. 27–29						
A.D. 27	(1) Healing of the Nobleman's Son	Cana				4:46–54
	(2) Rejected at Nazareth	Nazareth			4:16–30	
	(3) Moved to Capernaum	Capernaum	4:13–17			
	(4) Four Become Fishers of Men	Sea of Galilee	4:18–22	1:16–20	5:1–11	
	(5) Demoniac Healed on the Sabbath Day	Capernaum		1:21–28	4:31–37	
	(6) Peter's Mother-in-Law Cured, Plus Others	Capernaum	8:14–17	1:29–34	4:38–41	
c. A.D. 27	(7) First Preaching Tour of Galilee	Galilee	4:23–25	1:35–39	4:42–44	
	(8) Leper Healed and Response Recorded	Galilee	8:1–4	1:40–45	5:12–16	
	(9) Paralytic Healed	Capernaum	9:1–8	2:1–12	5:17–26	
	(10) Matthew's Call and Reception Held	Capernaum	9:9–13	2:13–17	5:27–32	
	(11) Disciples Defended via a Parable	Capernaum	9:14–17	2:18–22	5:33–39	
A.D. 28	(12) Goes to Jerusalem for Second Passover; Heals Lame Man	Jerusalem				5:1–47
	(13) Plucked Grain Precipitates Sabbath Controversy	En Route to Galilee	12:1–8	2:23–28	6:1–5	
	(14) Withered Hand Healed Causes Another Sabbath Controversy	Galilee	12:9–14	3:1–6	6:6–11	
	(15) Multitudes Healed	Sea of Galilee	12:15–21	3:7–12	6:17–19	
	(16) Twelve Apostles Selected After a Night of Prayer	Near Capernaum		3:13–19	6:12–16	
	(17) Sermon on the Mount	Near Capernaum	5:1—7:29		6:20–49	
	(18) Centurion's Servant Healed	Capernaum	8:5–13		7:1–10	
	(19) Raises Widow's Son from Dead	Nain			7:11–17	

Date	Event	Location	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
THE GALILEAN MINISTRY OF JESUS (cont.)						
A.D. 28	(20) Jesus Allays John's Doubts	Galilee	11:2–19		7:18–35	
	(21) Woes Upon the Privileged		11:20–30			
	(22) A Sinful Woman Anoints Jesus	Simon's House, Capernaum			7:36–50	
	(23) Another Tour of Galilee	Galilee			8:1–3	
	(24) Jesus Accused of Blasphemy	Capernaum	12:22–37	3:20–30	11:14–23	
	(25) Jesus' Answer to a Demand for a Sign	Capernaum	12:38–45		11:24–26, 29–36	
	(26) Mother, Brothers Seek Audience	Capernaum	12:46–50	3:31–35	8:19–21	
	(27) Famous Parables of Sower, Seed, Tares, Mustard Seed, Leaven, Treasure, Pearl, Dragnet, Lamp Told	By Sea of Galilee	13:1–52	4:1–34	8:4–18	
	(28) Sea Made Serene	Sea of Galilee	8:23–27	4:35–41	8:22–25	
	(29) Gadarene Demoniac Healed	E. Shore of Galilee	8:28–34	5:1–20	8:26–39	
	(30) Jairus's Daughter Raised and Woman with Hemorrhage Healed		9:18–26	5:21–43	8:40–56	
	(31) Two Blind Men's Sight Restored		9:27–31			
	(32) Mute Demoniac Healed		9:32–34			
	(33) Nazareth's Second Rejection of Christ	Nazareth	13:53–58	6:1–6		
	(34) Twelve Sent Out		9:35—11:1	6:7–13	9:1–6	
	(35) Fearful Herod Beheads John	Galilee	14:1–12	6:14–29	9:7–9	
Spring A.D. 29	(36) Return of 12, Jesus Withdraws, 5,000 Fed	Near Bethsaida	14:13–21	6:30–44	9:10–17	6:1–14 6:15–21
	(37) Walks on the Water	Sea of Galilee	14:22–33	6:45–52		
	(38) Sick of Gennesaret Healed	Gennesaret	14:34–36	6:53–56		6:22–71
	(39) Peak of Popularity Passes in Galilee	Capernaum				7:1
A.D. 29	(40) Traditions Attacked		15:1–20	7:1–23		
	(41) Aborted Retirement in Phoenicia: Syro-Phoenician Healed	Phoenicia	15:21–28	7:24–30		
	(42) Afflicted Healed	Decapolis	15:29–31	7:31–37		
	(43) 4,000 Fed	Decapolis	15:32–39	8:1–9		
	(44) Pharisees Increase Attack	Magdala	16:1–4	8:10–13		
	(45) Disciples' Carelessness Condemned; Blind Man Healed		16:5–12	8:14–26		
	(46) Peter Confesses Jesus Is the Christ	Near Caesarea Philippi	16:13–20	8:27–30	9:18–21	

Date	Event	Location	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
THE GALILEAN MINISTRY OF JESUS (cont.)						
A.D. 29	(47) Jesus Foretells His Death	Caesarea Philippi	16:21–26	8:31–38	9:22–25	
	(48) Kingdom Promised		16:27, 28	9:1	9:26, 27	
	(49) The Transfiguration	Mountain Unnamed	17:1–13	9:2–13	9:28–36	
	(50) Epileptic Healed	Mount of Transfiguration	17:14–21	9:14–29	9:37–42	
	(51) Again Tells of Death, Resurrection	Galilee	17:22, 23	9:30–32	9:43–45	
	(52) Taxes Paid	Capernaum	17:24–27			
	(53) Disciples Contend About Greatness; Jesus Defines; also Patience, Loyalty, Forgiveness	Capernaum	18:1–35	9:33–50	9:46–62	
	(54) Jesus Rejects Brothers' Advice	Galilee				7:2–9
Fall A.D. 29	(55) Galilee Departure and Samaritan Rejection		19:1		9:51–56	7:10
	(56) Cost of Discipleship		8:18–22		9:57–62	
LAST JUDEAN AND PEREAN MINISTRY OF JESUS						
A.D. 29–30						
Fall A.D. 29	(1) Feast of Tabernacles	Jerusalem				7:2, 10–52
A.D. 29	(2) Forgiveness of Adulteress	Jerusalem				7:53—8:11
	(3) Christ—the Light of the World	Jerusalem				8:12–20
	(4) Pharisees Can't Meet the Prophecy Thus Try to Destroy the Prophet	Jerusalem—Temple				8:12–59
	(5) Man Born Blind Healed; Following Consequences	Jerusalem				9:1–41
	(6) Parable of the Good Shepherd	Jerusalem				10:1–21
	(7) The Service of the Seventy	Probably Judea			10:1–24	
	(8) Lawyer Hears the Story of the Good Samaritan	Judea (?)			10:25–37	
	(9) The Hospitality of Martha and Mary	Bethany			10:38–42	
	(10) Another Lesson on Prayer	Judea (?)			11:1–13	
	(11) Accused of Connection with Beelzebub				11:14–36	
	(12) Judgment Against Lawyers and Pharisees				11:37–54	
	(13) Jesus Deals with Hypocrisy, Covetousness, Worry, and Alertness				12:1–59	
	(14) Repent or Perish				13:1–5	
	(15) Barren Fig Tree				13:6–9	
	(16) Crippled Woman Healed on Sabbath				13:10–17	

Date	Event	Location	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
LAST JUDEAN AND PEREAN MINISTRY OF JESUS (cont.)						
	(17) Parables of Mustard Seed and Leaven	Probably Perea			13:18–21	
Winter A.D. 29	(18) Feast of Dedication	Jerusalem				10:22–39
	(19) Withdrawal Beyond Jordan					10:40–42
	(20) Begins Teaching Return to Jerusalem with Special Words About Herod	Perea			13:22–35	
	(21) Meal with a Pharisee Ruler Occasions Healing Man with Dropsy; Parables of Ox, Best Places, and Great Supper				14:1–24	
	(22) Demands of Discipleship	Perea			14:25–35	
	(23) Parables of Lost Sheep, Coin, Son				15:1–32	
	(24) Parables of Unjust Steward, Rich Man and Lazarus				16:1–31	
	(25) Lessons on Service, Faith, Influence				17:1–10	
	(26) Resurrection of Lazarus	Perea to Bethany				11:1–44
	(27) Reaction to It: Withdrawal of Jesus					11:45–54
A.D. 30	(28) Begins Last Journey to Jerusalem via Samaria & Galilee	Samaria, Galilee			17:11	
	(29) Heals Ten Lepers				17:12–19	
	(30) Lessons on the Coming Kingdom				17:20–37	
	(31) Parables: Persistent Widow, Pharisee and Tax Collector				18:1–14	
	(32) Doctrine on Divorce		19:1–12	10:1–12		
	(33) Jesus Blesses Children: Objections	Perea	19:13–15	10:13–16	18:15–17	
	(34) Rich Young Ruler	Perea	19:16–30	10:17–31	18:18–30	
	(35) Laborers of the 11th Hour		20:1–16			
	(36) Foretells Death and Resurrection	Near Jordan	20:17–19	10:32–34	18:31–34	
	(37) Ambition of James and John		20:20–28	10:35–45		
	(38) Blind Bartimaeus Healed	Jericho		10:46–52	18:35–43	
	(39) Interview with Zacchaeus	Jericho			19:1–10	
	(40) Parable: the Minas	Jericho			19:11–27	
	(41) Returns to Home of Mary and Martha	Bethany				11:55—12:1
	(42) Plot to Kill Lazarus	Bethany				12:9–11

Date	Event	Location	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
JESUS' FINAL WEEK OF WORK AT JERUSALEM						
Spring A.D. 30						
Sunday	(1) Triumphal Entry	Bethany, Jerusalem, Bethany	21:1–9	11:1–11	19:28–44	12:12–19
Monday	(2) Fig Tree Cursed and Temple Cleansed	Bethany to Jerusalem	21:10–19	11:12–18	19:45–48	
	(3) The Attraction of Sacrifice	Jerusalem				12:20–50
Tuesday	(4) Withered Fig Tree Testifies	Bethany to Jerusalem	21:20–22	11:19–26		
	(5) Sanhedrin Challenges Jesus. Answered by Parables: Two Sons, Wicked Vinedressers and Marriage Feast	Jerusalem	21:23—22:14	11:27—12:12	20:1–19	
	(6) Tribute to Caesar	Jerusalem	22:15–22	12:13–17	20:20–26	
	(7) Sadducees Question the Resurrection	Jerusalem	22:23–33	12:18–27	20:27–40	
	(8) Pharisees Question Commandments	Jerusalem	22:34–40	12:28–34		
	(9) Jesus and David	Jerusalem	22:41–46	12:35–37	20:41–44	
	(10) Jesus' Last Sermon	Jerusalem	23:1–39	12:38–40	20:45–47	
	(11) Widow's Mite	Jerusalem		12:41–44	21:1–4	
	(12) Jesus Tells of the Future	Mount of Olives	24:1–51	13:1–37	21:5–36	
	(13) Parables: Ten Virgins, Talents, The Day of Judgment	Mount of Olives	25:1–46			
	(14) Jesus Tells Date of Crucifixion		26:1–5	14:1, 2	22:1, 2	
	(15) Anointing by Mary at Simon's Feast	Bethany	26:6–13	14:3–9		12:2–8
	(16) Judas Contracts the Betrayal		26:14–16	14:10, 11	22:3–6	
Thursday	(17) Preparation for the Passover	Jerusalem	26:17–19	14:12–16	22:7–13	
Thursday P.M.	(18) Passover Eaten, Jealousy Rebuked	Jerusalem	26:20	14:17	22:14–16, 24–30	
	(19) Feet Washed	Upper Room				13:1–20
	(20) Judas Revealed, Defects	Upper Room	26:21–25	14:18–21	22:21–23	13:21–30
	(21) Jesus Warns About Further Desertion; Cries of Loyalty	Upper Room	26:31–35	14:27–31	22:31–38	13:31–38
	(22) Institution of the Lord's Supper	Upper Room	26:26–29	14:22–25	22:17–20	
	(23) Last Speech to the Apostles and Intercessory Prayer	Jerusalem				14:1—17:26
Thursday-Friday	(24) The Grief of Gethsemane	Mount of Olives	26:30, 36–46	14:26, 32–42	22:39–46	18:1
Friday	(25) Betrayal, Arrest, Desertion	Gethsemane	26:47–56	14:43–52	22:47–53	18:2–12
	(26) First Examined by Annas	Jerusalem				18:12–14, 19–23
	(27) Trial by Caiaphas and Council; Following Indignities	Jerusalem	26:57, 59–68	14:53, 55–65	22:54, 63–65	18:24

Date	Event	Location	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
JESUS' FINAL WEEK OF WORK AT JERUSALEM (cont.)						
Friday	(28) Peter's Triple Denial	Jerusalem	26:58, 69–75	14:54, 66–72	22:54–62	18:15–18, 25–27
	(29) Condemnation by the Council	Jerusalem	27:1	15:1	22:66–71	
	(30) Suicide of Judas	Jerusalem	27:3–10			
	(31) First Appearance Before Pilate	Jerusalem	27:2, 11–14	15:1–5	23:1–7	18:28–38
	(32) Jesus Before Herod	Jerusalem			23:6–12	
	(33) Second Appearance Before Pilate	Jerusalem	27:15–26	15:6–15	23:13–25	18:39—19:16
	(34) Mockery by Roman Soldiers	Jerusalem	27:27–30	15:16–19		
	(35) Led to Golgotha	Jerusalem	27:31–34	15:20–23	23:26–33	19:16, 17
	(36) 6 Events of First 3 Hours on Cross	Calvary	27:35–44	15:24–32	23:33–43	19:18–27
	(37) Last 3 Hours on Cross	Calvary	27:45–50	15:33–37	23:44–46	19:28–30
	(38) Events Attending Jesus' Death		27:51–56	15:38–41	23:45, 47–49	
	(39) Burial of Jesus	Jerusalem	27:57–60	15:42–46	23:50–54	19:31–42
Friday-Saturday	(40) Tomb Sealed	Jerusalem	27:61–66		23:55, 56	
	(41) Women Watch	Jerusalem		15:47		
THE RESURRECTION THROUGH THE ASCENSION						
A.D. 30						
Dawn of First Day (Sunday, "Lord's Day")	(1) Women Visit the Tomb	Near Jerusalem	28:1–8	16:1–8	24:1–11	
	(2) Peter and John See the Empty Tomb				24:12	20:1–10
	(3) Jesus' Appearance to Mary Magdalene	Jerusalem		16:9–11		20:11–18
	(4) Jesus' Appearance to the Other Women	Jerusalem	28:9, 10			
	(5) Guards' Report of the Resurrection		28:11–15			
Sunday Afternoon	(6) Jesus' Appearance to Two Disciples on Way to Emmaus			16:12, 13	24:13–35	
Late Sunday	(7) Jesus' Appearance to Ten Disciples Without Thomas	Jerusalem			24:36–43	20:19–25
One Week Later	(8) Appearance to Disciples with Thomas	Jerusalem				20:26–31
During 40 Days until Ascension	(9) Jesus' Appearance to Seven Disciples by Sea of Galilee	Galilee				21:1–25
	(10) Great Commission		28:16–20	16:14–18	24:44–49	
	(11) The Ascension	Mount Olivet		16:19, 20	24:50–53	

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW



SUCCESSION TO A THRONE is often a time of conflict and uncertainty. David's son Absalom tried to usurp the throne (2 Sam. 15:1—18:18). Solomon's choice of successor lost more than half the kingdom to a traitor (1 Kin. 12:20). Menahem assassinated his predecessor in Israel (2 Kin. 15:14). Royalty is a dangerous business.

This is no less true when the heir is the King of kings. If ever there was a high-stakes succession, this was it. A Man claims to be Israel's own Messiah; *of course* all Israel sits up and takes notice. Of course He must prove His credentials: Who wants an impostor? The Book of Matthew presents Jesus' credentials. It presents Jesus as the King, but King of a totally different kingdom—the kingdom of heaven.

Author and Date This Gospel does not name its author, but it does contain clues. The author knew the geography of Palestine well (2:1; 8:5; 20:29; 26:6). He was familiar with Jewish history, customs, ideas, and classes of people (1:18, 19; 2:1; 14:1; 26:3; 27:2). He was well acquainted with the Old Testament (1:2–16, 22, 23; 2:6; 4:14–16; 12:17–21; 13:35; 21:4; 27:9). And the terminology of the book suggests that the author was a Palestinian Jew (2:20; 4:5; 5:35; 10:6; 15:24; 17:24–27; 18:17; 27:53).

Other details point specifically to Jesus' disciple Matthew as the writer of this Gospel. As a tax collector, Matthew would have been literate and familiar with keeping records of money. Appropriately, this Gospel contains more references to money than any of the others. Furthermore, Matthew's hometown was Capernaum, a village that is given special attention in this Gospel. When Capernaum is mentioned, some special description is usually attached to it (4:13; 11:23).

Matthew wrote the Gospel before the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. He describes Jerusalem in the book as the "holy city" and as though it was still standing (4:5; 27:53), and he speaks of the customs of the Jews as continuing until "this day" (27:8; 28:15). Furthermore, Jesus' prophecy (recorded in 24:2) of Jerusalem's destruction includes no indication that it had already occurred when Matthew wrote Jesus' words. In light of all of this, it is reasonable to conclude that the book was written sometime between A.D. 50 and 60.

Emphases The Gospel of Matthew has many Jewish overtones. For example, the term "kingdom of heaven" appears 33 times and the term "kingdom of God" four times. No other Gospel lays such stress on the kingdom; the restoration of the glories of David's kingdom was a burning hope for many Jews at the time. Matthew clearly identifies Jesus with that hope by using the Jewish royal title "Son of David" nine times in his Gospel. Furthermore he calls Jerusalem "the holy city" (4:5; 27:53) and the "city of the great King" (5:35), both uniquely Jewish ways of referring to it. First-century Jews emphasized righteousness, and Matthew uses the words "righteous" and "righteousness" more often than the Gospels of Mark, Luke, and John combined.

Matthew also discusses the law, ceremonial cleanness, the Sabbath, the temple, David, the Messiah, the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies, and Moses—all from a Jewish point of view. He has 53 Old Testament citations and more than 70 allusions to the Hebrew Scriptures. Thirteen times, the book emphasizes that Jesus'



Aerial view of Capernaum, along the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee. Matthew was a tax collector in Capernaum, and was met there and called by Jesus (Matt. 9:9).

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actions were a direct fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies. The genealogy of chapter 1 is recognizably Jewish, tracing the lineage of Jesus back through David to Abraham, the father of the Jewish people. Furthermore the Gospel mentions Jewish rulers (see 2:1, 22; 14:1) and customs such as ceremonial washing (see 15:2) without explanation, indicating that Matthew expected his predominantly Jewish audience to be familiar with such practices.

Purposes Matthew's Gospel serves several purposes beyond presenting a mere biography of Jesus. One purpose is to prove to Jewish readers that Jesus is their Messiah and promised King. The genealogy in chapter 1 points to Christ as the One who inherited God's promises to David of an eternal dynasty. Jesus' use of a familiar messianic psalm in Matthew 22:41–44 would have clearly implied to any Jew that He was the heir of the Davidic throne. Even though many Jews of Jesus' time were blind to Jesus' identity, Gentiles (such as the wise men) identified Him as Israel's promised King when He was a baby. Finally, the charge that hung above Jesus' head on the Cross clearly highlights His royalty: THIS IS JESUS, THE KING OF THE JEWS (27:37). But most important, the Book of Matthew proves Jesus' legitimate authority by highlighting His wise teaching and righteous life (7:28, 29).

Another purpose of the book is to outline the characteristics of the kingdom of God, both for Israel and the church. Orthodox Jews would typically scoff at any assertion that Jesus is their Messiah, let alone their King. They would retort, "If Jesus is King, where is the promised restoration of the kingdom of Israel?" Many Jews of Jesus' day rejected Him as Messiah, even though both Jesus and John the Baptist continually preached that the kingdom was "at hand" (3:2; 4:17; 10:7). This rejection of Jesus by the Jews is a dominant theme of Matthew (11:12–24; 12:28–45; 21:33–22:14). Because of this rejection, God postponed the fulfillment of His promises to Israel and subsequently extended His blessings to both Jew and Gentile in the church.

Matthew is the only Gospel writer who speaks directly of the *church* (16:18; 18:17). He points to the Gentile composition of this church by including several stories of the Gentiles' faith in Jesus: the wise men, the centurion, and the Canaanite woman. He records Jesus' prediction that the gospel will be preached to all nations (24:14), and the commission to the disciples to "make disciples of all the nations" (28:19). Jesus' teaching pointed to the blessings of the kingdom being extended to Gentiles. But one day, Israel will be restored to its place of blessing (see Rom. 11:25–27; 15:8, 9).

A final purpose of Matthew is to instruct the church. An obvious clue to this is in the Great Commission: "teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you" (28:20). The discipling process involves instruction in the words of Christ, and the Gospel of Matthew revolves around five of Jesus' discourses (5:1–7:28;

10:5—11:1; 13:3—53; 18:2—19:1; 24:4—26:1). Instead of emphasizing a narrative of Jesus' life as Mark does, Matthew uses the narrative elements in his Gospel as a setting for Jesus' sermons.

CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

Matthew, as a Jew, unashamedly shapes his account about Jesus' life so it is understood by a Jewish audience. His goal is to convince his peers that the King of kings has come. With this in mind, he uses terms and names that Jews will resonate with. By quoting more passages from the Old Testament than any other New Testament writer, he attempts to validate that Jesus is indeed the promised Messiah. No less than 12 times Matthew presents Jesus as Israel's Messianic King (1:23; 2:2, 6; 3:17; 4:15—17; 21:5, 9; 22:44, 45; 26:64; 27:11, 27—37).

Also unique to Matthew is the expression, "that it might be fulfilled" which was spoken by various prophets. By footnoting familiar passages the Jews accepted as God's inspired Word, Matthew builds his case for Christ with the precision of a former tax collector. Examine for yourself how he substantiates the prophecies that pointed to Jesus' miraculous and obscure birth, His birthplace, His exile to Egypt and return to Israel, and His rejection and suffering. No wonder Matthew begins his book with an impressive genealogy of Jesus' link to King David.

MATTHEW OUTLINE

- I. Jesus' birth and preparation 1:1—4:11
 - A. Jesus' birth and childhood 1:1—2:23
 - B. Jesus' preparation 3:1—4:11
- II. The declaration of Jesus' principles 4:12—7:29
 - A. The beginning of Jesus' ministry 4:12—25
 - B. Jesus' principles: the Sermon on the Mount 5:1—7:29



An aerial view of Tabgha and the western shore of the Sea of Galilee where much of Jesus' ministry occurred

37–4 B.C.

Herod the Great is king in Jerusalem

31 B.C.–A.D. 14

Augustus Caesar is Roman emperor

c. 5 B.C.

Jesus is born in Bethlehem

4 B.C.–A.D. 39

Herod Antipas rules in Galilee and Perea

A.D. 14–37

Tiberius Caesar is Roman emperor

c. A.D. 25–27

John the Baptist's ministry

A.D. 26–36

Pontius Pilate is procurator of Judea

c. A.D. 27

Jesus' first Judean ministry

c. A.D. 27–29

Jesus' Galilean ministry

c. A.D. 30

Second Judean ministry; Crucifixion; Resurrection

- III. The manifestation of Jesus: His miracles and commissioning 8:1—11:1
 - A. Demonstration of Jesus' power: a collection of miracles 8:1—9:34
 - B. Declaration of Jesus' presence: the commissioning of the disciples 9:35—11:1
- IV. Opposition to Jesus 11:2—13:53
 - A. Evidence of the rejection of Jesus 11:2—30
 - B. Illustrations of opposition to Jesus 12:1—50
 - C. Jesus' adaptation to His opposition: parables of the kingdom 13:1—53
- V. Jesus' reaction to opposition 13:54—19:2
 - A. Jesus' withdrawal 13:54—16:12
 - B. Jesus' instruction to His disciples 16:13—19:2
- VI. Formal presentation and rejection of the King 19:3—25:46
 - A. Continued instruction of the disciples 19:3—20:34
 - B. Formal presentation of the King: the Triumphal Entry 21:1—7
 - C. The nation's rejection of the King 21:18—22:46
 - D. The King's rejection of the nation 23:1—39
 - E. Predictions of the rejected King: the Olivet Discourse 24:1—25:46
- VII. Crucifixion and resurrection 26:1—28:20

Genealogy of Christ

Ruth 4:18-22; 1 Chr. 1:34, 2:1-15; Luke 3:31-34

The book of the ^agenealogy¹ of Jesus Christ, ^bthe Son of David, ^cthe Son of Abraham:

^{2d} Abraham begot Isaac, ^eIsaac begot Jacob, and Jacob begot ^fJudah and his brothers. ^{3g}Judah begot Perez and Zerah by Tamar, ^hPerez begot Hezron, and Hezron begot Ram. ⁴Ram begot Aminadab, Amminadab begot Nahshon, and Nahshon begot Salmon. ⁵Salmon begot ⁱBoaz by Rahab, Boaz begot Obed by Ruth, Obed begot Jesse, ⁶and ^jJesse begot David the king.

^kDavid the king begot Solomon by her ²who had been the wife of Uriah. ^{7l}Solomon begot Rehoboam, Rehoboam begot ^mAbijah, and Abijah begot ³Asa. ⁸Asa begot ⁿJehoshaphat, Jehoshaphat begot Joram, and Joram begot ^oUzziah. ⁹Uzziah begot Jotham, Jotham begot ^pAhaz, and Ahaz begot Hezekiah. ^{10q}Hezekiah begot Manasseh, Manasseh begot ⁴Amon, and Amon begot ^rJosiah. ^{11s}Josiah begot ⁵Jeconiah and his brothers about the time they were ^tcarried away to Babylon.

¹²And after they were brought to Babylon, ^uJeconiah begot Shealtiel, and Shealtiel begot ^vZerubbabel. ¹³Zerubbabel begot Abiud, Abiud begot Eliakim, and

CHAPTER 1

¹ ^a Luke 3:23
² ^b 2 Sam. 7:12-16; Ps. 132:11; Is. 9:6; 11:1; Jer. 23:5 ★; [Matt. 1:18; Luke 3:23, 31]; John 7:42; Acts 2:30; [Rom. 1:3]; Rev. 22:16
³ ^c Gen. 12:3; 22:18 ★; [Gal. 3:16] ¹ Lit. generation
² ^d Gen. 21:2, 12
^e Gen. 25:26; 28:14
^f Gen. 29:35
³ ^g Gen. 38:27; 49:10 ^h Ruth 4:18-22; 1 Chr. 2:1-15; Matt. 1:3-6
⁵ ⁱ Ruth 2:1; 4:1-13
⁶ ^j 1 Sam. 16:1; Is. 11:1, 10 ★ ^k 2 Sam. 7:12; 12:24; Is. 9:7
² Words in italic type have been added for clarity. They are not found in the original Greek.
⁷ ^l 1 Kin. 11:43; 1 Chr. 3:10 ^m 2 Chr. 11:20 ³ NU *Asaph*
⁸ ⁿ 1 Chr. 3:10
⁹ ² Kin. 15:13
⁹ ^p 2 Kin. 15:38
¹⁰ ^q 2 Kin. 20:21
^r 1 Kin. 13:2 ⁴ NU
Amos
¹¹ ^s 1 Chr. 3:15, 16
^t 2 Kin. 24:14-16; Jer. 27:20; Matt. 1:17

Eliakim begot Azor. ¹⁴Azor begot Zadok, Zadok begot Achim, and Achim begot Eliud. ¹⁵Eliud begot Eleazar, Eleazar begot Matthan, and Matthan begot Jacob. ¹⁶And Jacob begot Joseph the husband of ^wMary, of whom was born Jesus who is called Christ.

¹⁷So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations, from David until the captivity in Babylon are fourteen generations, and from the captivity in Babylon until the Christ are fourteen generations.

Birth of Christ

¹⁸Now the ^xbirth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child ^yof the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹Then Joseph her husband, being ⁶a just *man*, and not wanting ^zto make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly. ²⁰But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your

⁵ Or *Coniah* or *Jehoiachin* ¹² ^u 1 Chr. 3:17 ^v Ezra 3:2; Neh. 12:1; Hag. 1:1 ¹⁶ ^w Matt. 13:55; Mark 6:3 ¹⁸ ^x Matt. 12:46; Luke 1:27 ^y Is. 7:14; 49:5 ★; Luke 1:35 ¹⁹ ^z Deut. 24:1; John 8:4, 5 ⁶ ^a an upright

1:1 Genealogy means “origin.” Genealogies were very important to first-century Jews. A genealogy (1) proved that a person was indeed an Israelite, (2) identified the tribe to which he or she belonged, and (3) qualified certain Jews for religious duties such as Levitical and priestly service (see Ezra 2:61, 62). Christ’s genealogy is crucial to historic Christianity. Matthew traced the lineage of Christ Jesus back to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to show that He was a Jew, but also back through David to inform the readers that Jesus is qualified to rule on the throne of David (see 2 Sam. 7:12), an event still in the future (19:28).

1:3-6 The mention of women in a Jewish genealogy is unusual. But in addition to Mary, four women are listed in this catalog of names. The extraordinary emphasis is underscored by the *kind* of women Matthew mentions: **Tamar**, who was involved in a scandal with Judah (Gen. 38); **Rahab**, the Canaanite harlot of Jericho (Josh. 2); **Ruth**, who was not an Israelite, but a Moabite (Ruth 1:4); and Bathsheba, **the wife of Uriah**, a woman involved in a sin of horrendous proportions (2 Sam. 11:1—12:23), and who may have been a Hittite. At the beginning of his Gospel, Matthew shows how God’s grace forgives the darkest of sins and reaches beyond the nation of Israel to the world. He also points out that God can lift the lowest and place them in royal lineage.

1:16 Joseph the husband of Mary was a direct descendant of David. Matthew, however, was careful not to identify Jesus as the physical son of Joseph. The Greek pronoun translated **of whom** is feminine and refers to Mary. **Christ** and the word *messiah* both mean “Anointed One”; the first term is from Greek; the second is from Hebrew. In the OT, anointing signified two things: God’s choice and His empowerment for a task. Israelites were traditionally anointed to three different offices: prophet, priest, or king. Although the Lord Jesus was God’s Anointed for all three, Matthew places the most stress on Jesus’ royalty.

1:17 Abraham . . . Christ: The genealogy is broken down into three groups of names with **fourteen** generations in each list. The name

David in Hebrew has a numerical value of 14. Because the heading of the list is “Son of David” (v. 1), Matthew may have been drawing attention to the Davidic emphasis in these names. In the first group, the Davidic throne is established; in the second group, the throne is cast down and deported to Babylon; in the third group, the throne is confirmed in the coming of the Messiah. Further, a basic covenant is set forth in each of these three periods: the Abrahamic covenant in the first (vv. 2–5); the Davidic covenant in the second (vv. 6–11), and the New Covenant in the third (vv. 12–16).

1:18 betrothed: Universally, the basic element of marriage is a contract (see Mal. 2:14). In Jewish culture, this covenant was made about a year before the consummation of the marriage. It was during the one-year period of betrothal that Mary was found to be pregnant. The fact that Mary was a virgin at this time is clearly implied by the phrase **before they came together**, and by the righteous character of Joseph and his desire to divorce Mary when her pregnancy became known (v. 19). The virgin birth, which can be deduced from Matthew’s account, is stated clearly in Luke 1:34, 35.

1:19 In agreement with the popular Jewish understanding of Deut. 24:1 (5:27–32; 19:3–9; see also Jer. 3:1, 8), Joseph wanted to divorce Mary on the grounds of infidelity. A divorce would be necessary because they had already made a marriage covenant, even though they had not yet known each other physically. Joseph could have made the divorce a public matter, or he could have gone through a private ceremony before two witnesses. Being a gracious and **just man**, Joseph decided to keep it private.

1:20 conceived . . . of the Holy Spirit: Verses 1–17 establish Jesus as a legal son of Joseph; vv. 18–25 deny that Joseph was Jesus’ physical father. The first was necessary to establish Jesus’ lineage to David and His royal right to be King. The second was necessary to establish His qualifications to be the Savior of all people: Jesus was God’s Son and not merely Joseph’s. Matthew elaborated on Jesus’ kingship while Luke detailed His miraculous conception by the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:26–56).

wife, ^afor that which is ⁷conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. ^{21b}And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name ⁸Jesus, ^cfor He will save His people from their sins.”

²²So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: ^{23d}“*Be-hold,⁹ the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,*” which is translated, “God with us.”

²⁴Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife, ²⁵and ¹did not know her till she had brought forth ^eher ²firstborn Son. And he called His name Jesus.

Visit of Wise Men

2 Now after ^aJesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, ¹wise men ^bfrom the East came to Jerusalem, ²saying, ^c“Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen ^dHis star in the East and have come to worship Him.”

³When Herod the king heard *this*, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. ⁴And when he had gathered all ^ethe

20 ^a Luke 1:35 ⁷ Lit. begotten
21 ^b [Is. 7:14; 9:6, 7]; Luke 1:31; 2:21
^c Luke 2:11; John 1:29; [Acts 4:12; 5:31; 13:23, 38; Rom. 5:18, 19 ☆; Col. 1:20–23] ⁸ Lit. Savior
23 ^d Is. 7:14 ★
⁹ Words in oblique type in the New Testament are quoted from the Old Testament.
25 ^e Ex. 13:2; Luke 2:7, 21 ★ ¹ Kept her a virgin ² NU a Son

CHAPTER 2

1 ^a Mic. 5:2 ★; Luke 2:4–7 ^b Gen. 25:6; 1 Kin. 4:30 ¹ Gr. magoi
2 ^c Luke 2:11
^d [Num. 24:17 ★; Is. 60:3]
4 ^e 2 Chr. 36:14

^f 2 Chr. 34:13 ⁹ Mal. 2:7

BIBLE TIMES & CULTURE NOTES



The Wise Men

The Greek word for wise men in this account (*magoi*) is rendered as “astrologers” where it occurs in the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the OT (Dan. 1:20; 2:2) and as “sorcerer” in its other occurrences in the NT (Acts 13:6, 8). The Greek historian Herodotus, writing in the fifth century B.C., identified the magi as a caste of Medes who had a priestly function in the Persian Empire. In the Book of Daniel the “astrologers” (*magoi*) are grouped with magicians, sorcerers, and Chaldeans as advisers to the court of Babylon with responsibility for interpreting dreams.

The role of the star in Matthew 2 suggests a connection with astrology. These astrologers, pursuing their observations of the stars in the heavens, encountered a sign of God, who broke through their misguided system to make the great event known.

chief priests and ^fscribes of the people together, ^ghe inquired of them where the Christ was to be born.

⁵So they said to him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it is written by the prophet:

1:23 Behold . . . Immanuel: This is a quotation from Is. 7:14. In this verse, the prophet Isaiah consoles King Ahaz of Judah. A coalition of two kings, King Rezin of Aram and King Pekah of Israel, was opposing Ahaz. Isaiah tells Ahaz not to fear, for the plans of his enemies would not succeed. As a sign to Ahaz, a son would be born of a woman, and before that boy reached the age where he could tell right from wrong, the two kings would no longer be a threat to Ahaz. Some interpretations view Isaiah’s prophecy as directly prophetic of Jesus’ birth and nothing else. According to this view, only the miraculous birth of Jesus can be considered a sign. Since the Hebrew noun translated *virgin* in Is. 7:14 can also mean “young woman,” some have suggested that Isaiah was prophesying about a son born during the lifetime of Ahaz—perhaps Isaiah’s son Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz (Is. 8:3). Others have interpreted Isaiah’s prophecy as a prediction that a virgin, a contemporary of Isaiah, would marry and have a child. The sign to Ahaz was the sudden dissolution of Rezin and Pekah in the face of Assyria. Even though uncertainty surrounds how this prophecy was fulfilled during Isaiah’s lifetime, Matthew makes it clear that Isaiah’s words find their ultimate ful-

fillment in the virgin birth of Jesus, a sign to people of all ages that God was with them.

1:25 Joseph did not know Mary physically until **she** gave birth to Jesus. The clear implication of this verse is that Mary was a virgin only until the birth of Jesus. The brothers and sisters of Jesus were probably younger siblings born to Joseph and Mary after Jesus’ birth (13:55, 56). Joseph could not have had children by a previous marriage, as some suppose, for then Jesus would not have been heir to the Davidic throne as the oldest son of Joseph.

2:1 The events of ch. 2 probably took place some months after Jesus’ birth. Several reasons may be offered to support this conclusion: (1) Joseph and Mary were living in a house (v. 11); (2) Jesus is referred to as a child, not an infant (v. 11); (3) Herod murdered all the male children *two years old and under* (v. 16); and (4) it would have been strange for Joseph and Mary to offer the sacrifice of the poor, a pair of turtledoves or pigeons (see Lev. 12:8; Luke 2:24), if the wise men had just given them gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Thus the wise men must have arrived after the ritual sacrifice described in Luke 2:22–24, 39. **Herod the king** is Herod the Great, who reigned over Palestine from 37 B.C. until his death in 4 B.C. A crafty ruler and lavish builder, Herod had a reign marked by cruelty and bloodshed. The word translated **wise men** can refer either to fraudulent sorcerers (see Acts 8:9, 11; 13:6, 8) or, as here, to a more honorable class of astrologers.

2:2 born King of the Jews: These words would have struck both terror and fury into the heart of Herod. **His star in the East** may refer to a star supernaturally introduced into the heavens, discernible only to students of the sky. The star reappeared to guide the wise men to where Christ was (v. 9). The fact that it was called “His star” indicates that the wise men identified the star with the arrival of the King of the Jews.

2:4 chief priests: This first mention of the Jewish council—“all the chief priests and scribes of the people”—reveals that the Jewish leaders were alerted early to the coming of the Messiah. Their quick recital of Mic. 5:2 showed their prophetic astuteness concerning the messianic prophecies (v. 6).

2:5 Matthew clearly records how the Jewish religious authorities, who became Christ’s enemies later, unintentionally affirmed that

Jesus

(Gk. *Iêsous*) (1:21; Luke 1:31; Acts 2:36; 4:18; 13:23; 17:3) Strong’s #2424

The Greek name *Iêsous* is the equivalent of the Hebrew name *Yeshua*, meaning “The Lord Shall Save.” Although a common name among the Jews (see Luke 3:29; Col. 4:11), the name expresses Jesus’ work on earth—to save and to deliver. This is affirmed by the explanation the angel gives Joseph after telling him to name the virgin-born child Jesus: “for He will save His people from their sins” (1:21). After Jesus was crucified for the sins of His people and raised from the dead, the early apostles proclaimed Jesus as the one and only Savior (Acts 5:31; 13:23).

The Prophecies of Jesus’ Birth

Jesus fulfilled hundreds of Old Testament prophecies. Many of these prophecies involved the circumstances surrounding His birth. Below is a list of several such prophecies. Note the irrefutable similarities between the Old Testament predictions and their New Testament fulfillment.

Prophecy	Old Testament Prediction	New Testament Fulfillment
The Messiah would be the seed of a woman.	Gen. 3:15	Gal. 4:4
The Messiah would be a descendant of Abraham.	Gen. 12:3	Matt. 1:1
The Messiah would be a descendant of Isaac.	Gen. 17:19	Luke 3:34
The Messiah would be a descendant of Jacob.	Num. 24:17	Matt. 1:2; 2:2
The Messiah would be from the tribe of Judah.	Gen. 49:10	Luke 3:33
The Messiah would be an heir to the throne of David.	Is. 9:7	Luke 1:32, 33
The Messiah would be anointed and eternal.	Ps. 45:6, 7; 102:25–27	Heb. 1:8–12
The Messiah would be born in Bethlehem.	Mic. 5:2	Luke 2:4, 5, 7
The Messiah would be born of a virgin.	Is. 7:14	Luke 1:26, 27, 30, 31
The Messiah’s birth would trigger a slaughter of children.	Jer. 31:15	Matt. 2:16–18
The Messiah would also come from Egypt.	Hos. 11:1	Matt. 2:14, 15

6 *‘But^h you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
Are not the least among the rulers of Judah;
For out of you shall come a Rulerⁱ
Who will shepherd My people Israel.’”*

7 Then Herod, when he had secretly called the ²wise men, determined from them what time the ^jstar appeared. ⁸ And he sent them to Bethlehem and said, “Go and search carefully for the young Child, and when you have found *Him*, bring back word to me, that I may come and worship Him also.”

⁹ When they heard the king, they departed; and behold, the star which they had seen in the East went before them, till it came and stood over where the young Child was. ¹⁰ When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceedingly great joy. ¹¹ And when they had come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshiped Him. And when they had opened

6 ^h Mic. 5:2; John 7:42 ★ ⁱ Gen. 49:10; [Rev. 2:27]
7 ^j Num. 24:17 ² Gr. *magoi*

11 ^k Ps. 72:10; Is. 60:6
12 ^l [Job 33:15, 16]; Matt. 1:20
15 ^m Num. 24:8; Hos. 11:1 ★

their treasures, ^kthey presented gifts to Him: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

¹² Then, being divinely warned ^lin a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed for their own country another way.

Flight into Egypt

¹³ Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, “Arise, take the young Child and His mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I bring you word; for Herod will seek the young Child to destroy Him.”

¹⁴ When he arose, he took the young Child and His mother by night and departed for Egypt, ¹⁵ and was there until the death of Herod, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, ^m“*Out of Egypt I called My Son.*”

Herod Kills the Children

¹⁶ Then Herod, when he saw that he was deceived by the wise men, was exceedingly

Jesus had fulfilled a messianic prophecy in His birth. God sometimes uses the words of His opponents to speak the truth (see John 11:49–52).

2:10 The wise men undoubtedly would have been discouraged by their failure to find the King in Jerusalem, by the lack of knowledge concerning the birth of the Messiah among the leaders, by the disinterest among Israel, and by the weariness from the long journey. The reappearance of the star must have brought great joy and encouragement to them.

2:11 Gold symbolized royalty; **frankincense** was a fragrance; **myrrh** was the ointment of death. These gifts provided the financial resources for Mary and Joseph’s flight to Egypt.

2:12 warned in a dream: Five dreams of divine guidance emphasize God’s orchestration of these perilous events (1:20; 2:12, 13, 19, 22).

2:15 fulfilled: This is the second fulfillment of prophecy recorded in ch. 2. The first, in v. 6, is a direct fulfillment of Micah’s prophecy about the birthplace of Jesus; this is a typological fulfillment. The prophecy quoted here, from Hos. 11:1, refers to the nation of Israel as God’s son coming out of Egypt in the Exodus. Jesus is the genuine Son of God, and, as Israel’s Messiah, is the true Israel (see John 15:1); therefore, He gives fuller meaning to the prophecy of Hos. 11:1.

angry; and he sent forth and put to death all the male children who were in Bethlehem and in all its districts, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had determined from the wise men. ¹⁷Then was fulfilled what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying:

¹⁸ “*Aⁿ voice was heard in Ramah,
Lamentation, weeping, and great
mourning,
Rachel weeping for her children,
Refusing to be comforted,
Because they are no more.*”

Jesus Returns to Nazareth

Luke 2:39

¹⁹ Now when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, ²⁰saying, “Arise, take the young Child and His mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who ^psought the young Child’s life are dead.” ²¹ Then he arose, took the young Child and His mother, and came into the land of Israel.

²² But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea instead of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And being warned by God in a ^qdream, he turned aside ^rinto the region of Galilee. ²³ And he came and dwelt in a city called ^sNazareth, that it might be fulfilled ^twhich was spoken by the prophets, “He shall be called a Nazarene.”

¹⁸ ⁿ Jer. 31:15 ★
²⁰ ^o Luke 2:39
^p Matt. 2:16
²² ^q Matt. 2:12,
13, 19 ^r Matt. 3:13;
Luke 2:39
²³ ^s Luke 1:26;
2:39; John 1:45, 46
^t Judg. 13:5 ★

CHAPTER 3

¹ ^a Matt. 3:1-12;
Mark 1:3-8; Luke
3:2-17; John 1:6-8,
19-28 ^b Josh. 14:10
² ^c Dan. 2:44; Mal.
4:6 ★; Matt. 4:17;
Mark 1:15; Luke
1:17; 10:9; 11:20;
21:31
³ ^d Is. 40:3 ★; Luke
3:4; John 1:23
^e Luke 1:76
⁴ ^f 2 Kin. 1:8; Zech.
13:4; Matt. 11:8;
Mark 1:6 ^g Lev.
11:22 ^h 1 Sam.
14:25, 26
⁵ ⁱ Mark 1:5
⁶ ^j Acts 19:4, 18
⁷ ^k Matt. 12:34;
Luke 3:7-9 ^l (Rom.
5:9; 1 Thess. 1:10)
⁹ ^m John 8:33; Acts
13:26; [Rom. 4:1, 11,
16; Gal. 3:29]
¹⁰ ⁿ [Ps. 92:12-14];
Matt. 7:19; Luke
13:7, 9; [John 15:6]

The Person of John the Baptist

Mark 1:2-6; Luke 3:3-6

3 In those days ^aJohn the Baptist came preaching ^bin the wilderness of Judea, ²and saying, “Repent, for ^cthe kingdom of heaven is at hand!” ³For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah, saying:

^d “*The voice of one crying in the
wilderness:
^e ‘Prepare the way of the LORD;
Make His paths straight.’*”

⁴ Now ^fJohn himself was clothed in camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist; and his food was ^glocusts and ^hwild honey. ⁵ ⁱThen Jerusalem, all Judea, and all the region around the Jordan went out to him ⁶^jand were baptized by him in the Jordan, confessing their sins.

The Preaching of John the Baptist

Mark 1:7-9; Luke 3:7-9, 16, 17

⁷ But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, ^k“Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from ^lthe wrath to come? ⁸Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance, ⁹and do not think to say to yourselves, ^m“We have Abraham as *our* father.’ For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones. ¹⁰And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. ⁿTherefore every

2:18 This prophecy comes from Jer. 31:15, in which Rachel, who had been entombed near Bethlehem some 13 centuries before the Babylonian captivity, is seen weeping for her children as they were led away to Babylon in 586 B.C. In the slaughter of the male infants at the time of Christ’s birth, Rachel once again is pictured as mourning the violent loss of her sons.

2:22 When Herod died, his kingdom was parceled out to his three sons: **Archelaus**, who ruled over Judea where Bethlehem was; Antipas, who became tetrarch of Galilee, Perea, Samaria, and Idumea; and Philip, who was tetrarch of Iturea and Trachonitis (see Luke 3:1). Like his father, Archelaus was violent and cruel. The Romans tolerated his savagery for ten years and finally deposed him in A.D. 6, after a Jewish delegation took their protest to Rome. Joseph, aware of Herod Archelaus’s reputation and guided by God in a dream, turned north to Galilee.

2:23 **Nazareth** was the location of the Roman garrison in northern Galilee. Those who lived there were suspected of compromise with the enemy.

3:1 As Christ’s forerunner, **John the Baptist** preceded the Lord Jesus in birth, ministry, and death. Luke describes John’s birth (see Luke 1), but Matthew jumps directly into the account of John’s proclamation of the coming of the kingdom of heaven. John is called “the Baptist” because he baptized people. Unlike the common practice of proselytes and Jews administering ceremonial cleansings to themselves, John baptized those who came to him professing repentance and identifying with his message.

3:2 The Greek verb translated **repent** indicates a change of attitude and outlook which well may result in sorrow for sins. But the basic idea is a reversal of thinking which changes one’s life (see v. 8). **The kingdom of heaven** is most likely synonymous with “the kingdom

of God.” Both terms seem to be used consistently throughout the NT to refer to God’s heavenly kingdom coming to earth in the person of Jesus Christ. This kingdom begins with the incarnation of Christ, continues with the inception of the church, and will be fully manifested when Christ returns. The kingdom was **at hand** because it was being offered to Israel in the person of the Messiah. John’s preaching assumed that judgment would precede the coming of the kingdom, a fact that was taught by the OT prophets (see Is. 4:4, 5; 5:15, 16; 42:1; Jer. 33:14–16; Ezek. 20:33–38; Dan. 7:26, 27; Joel 1:14, 15; 3:12–17; Zeph. 1:2–18; 3:8–13; Zech. 13:2, 9; Mal. 3:1–5; 4:1–6). At this point, John assumed that the nation of Israel would repent and the kingdom would come.

3:3 As roads were repaired, smoothed, straightened, and leveled before a king came, so John was preparing a spiritual road for the Messiah before His arrival. The quotation is from Is. 40:3, where the prophet announces the need to prepare a highway for the return of the Jewish exiles from captivity to their homeland, Israel.

3:7 **The Pharisees and Sadducees** were two prominent groups in Judaism during the time of Christ. Both groups claimed to be true followers of Judaism, but their beliefs were considerably different. The Pharisees were primarily associated with the laymen of Israel. In doctrine, they held not only to the Law of Moses and Scriptures, but also to a whole body of oral tradition. Their activities were centered in the synagogue. On the other hand, the Sadducees were associated with the priestly caste, for whom worship was centered in the temple. Extremely conservative, they based their beliefs essentially on the Pentateuch—the books of Genesis through Deuteronomy (see Acts 23:6–10).

3:10 **the ax is laid to the root of the trees:** John likened his ministry to God’s ax, clearing His orchard of dead wood—especially that which did not bear the fruit of repentance.

tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. ¹¹ I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. ¹² He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit ¹ and fire. ¹² His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather His wheat into the barn; but He will ¹ burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.”

Baptism of Jesus

Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21-23

¹³ Then Jesus came ¹ from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him.

¹¹ ^o Mark 1:4, 8; Luke 3:16; John 1:26; Acts 1:5 ^p [Is. 4:4; John 20:22; Acts 2:3, 4 ^q; 1 Cor. 12:13] ^r M omits and fire
¹² ^q Mal. 3:3 ^r Mal. 4:1; Matt. 13:30
¹³ ^s Matt. 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21, 22; John 1:31-34 ^t Matt. 2:22
¹⁶ ^u Mark 1:10 ^v [Is. 11:2]; Luke 3:22; John 1:32; Acts 7:56
² Or he
¹⁷ ^w John 12:28
^x Ps. 2:7; Is. 42:1; Mark 1:11; Luke 1:35; 9:35; Col. 1:13

¹⁴ And John *tried* to prevent Him, saying, “I need to be baptized by You, and are You coming to me?”

¹⁵ But Jesus answered and said to him, “Permit *it to be so* now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.” Then he allowed Him.

¹⁶ When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and ² He saw ^v the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. ¹⁷ And suddenly a voice *came* from heaven, saying, ^x “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”

3:11 He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit: John identified people with himself and his message of repentance by water baptism; the One coming after him was so much greater that He would unite people to Himself by means of the Holy Spirit. John knew that the kingdom to come would be characterized by a great display of the Holy Spirit in the lives of God’s people (see Is. 32:15; 44:3; Ezek. 11:19; 36:26; 39:29; Joel 2:28; Zech. 12:10). It would be the work of the Messiah to accomplish this, to baptize His people in the Spirit. But those who rejected Him the Messiah would baptize with **fire**, which is probably a figure for God’s judgment (vv. 10, 12). In His first advent, Christ baptized in the Spirit. When He comes again, He will baptize with fire.

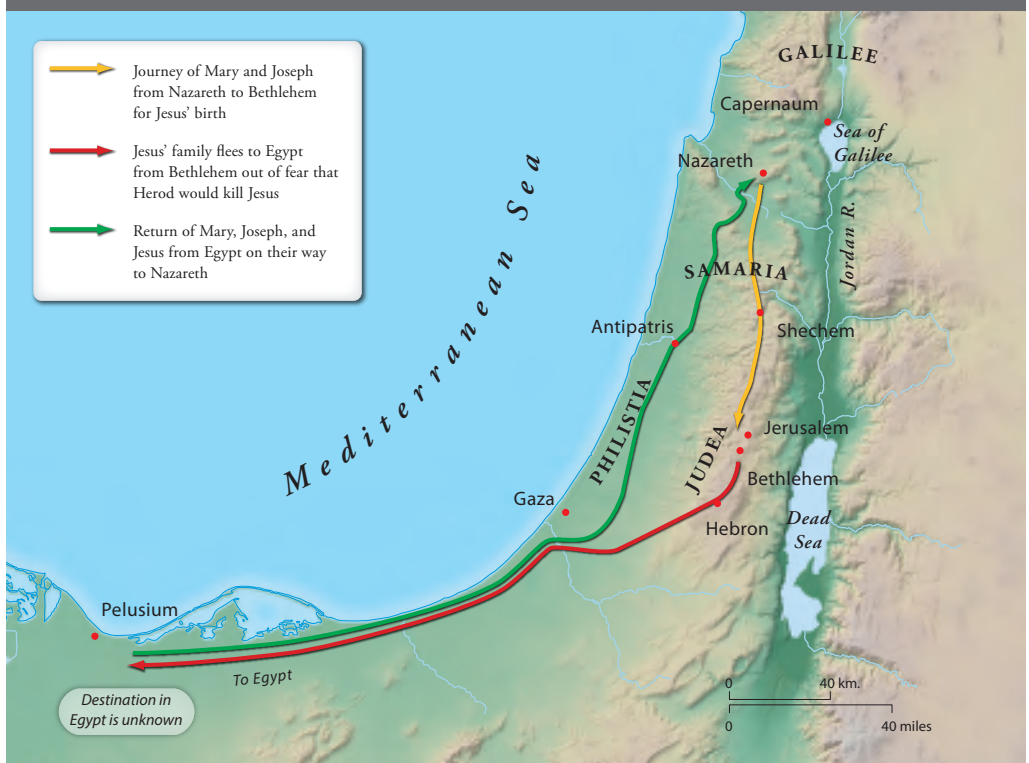
3:15 to fulfill all righteousness: This phrase does not suggest that

Jesus came for baptism because He had sinned; the Lord Jesus was without sin (see 2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 4:15; 7:26). Jesus’ baptism probably served several purposes: (1) Jesus joined with the believing remnant of Israel who had been baptized by John; (2) He confirmed the ministry of John; and (3) He fulfilled the Father’s will.

3:16 the Spirit of God descending: This was God’s official recognition of Jesus as the Messiah.

3:17 This is My beloved Son, a reference to Ps. 2:7, implies that others heard the voice of the Father. **In whom I am well pleased** recalls the prophecy of Is. 42:1. Matthew 3:16, 17 demonstrates the simultaneous existence of all three Persons of the Godhead. This passage also points to the Son’s voluntary humiliation, the Father’s delight in Him, and the Spirit’s desire to glorify Christ.

Jesus’ Early Life



House of Herod

1ST GENERATION

2ND GENERATION

Herod the Great King of Judea, Galilee, Iturea, Trachonitis (37–4 B.C.)

birth of Jesus (Matt. 2:1–19; Luke 1:5)

KEY:

King	
Ethnarch/Tetrarch	

BERNICE italic capitals denote females

Antipater bold type: bloodline of Herod the Great

Felix light type: non-bloodline

Herod Philip II (MOTHER: CLEOPATRA) Tetrarch of Iturea and Trachonitis (4 B.C.–A.D. 34) (Luke 3:1)

Archelaus (MOTHER: MALTHACE) Ethnarch of Judea, Idumea, and Samaria (4 B.C.–A.D. 6); when Mary and Joseph left Egypt, they avoided Judea and settled in Nazareth (Matt. 2:19–23)

Aristobulus (MOTHER: MARIAMNE) (died 10 B.C.)

Herod Antipas (MOTHER: MALTHACE) Tetrarch of Galilee and Perea (4 B.C.–A.D. 39) (Luke 3:1); second husband of Herodias; he put John the baptist to death (Matt. 14:1–12; Mark 6:14–29); Pilate sent Jesus to him (Luke 23:7–12)

Herod Philip I (MOTHER: MARIAMNE) He did not rule; first husband of Herodias (Matt. 14:3; Mark 6:17) (died c. A.D. 34)

Antipater (MOTHER: DORIS)

First Temptation

Mark 1:12, 13; Luke 4:1-4

4 Then ^aJesus was led up by ^bthe Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. ² And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterward He was hungry. ³ Now when the tempter came

CHAPTER 4

1 ^a Matt. 4:1-11; Mark 1:12; Luke 4:1 ^b Ezek. 3:14; Acts 8:39

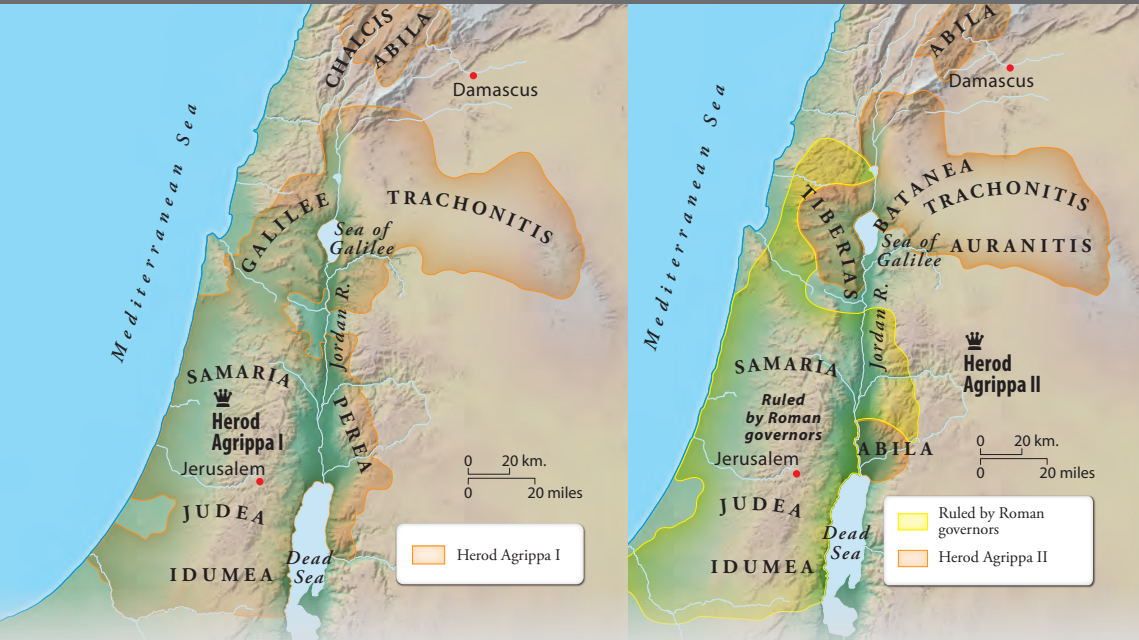
4 ^c Deut. 8:3

to Him, he said, “If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.”

⁴ But He answered and said, “It is written, ^c ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.’”

4:1 Satan did not lead Jesus to the temptation; the Holy Spirit did. This temptation took place immediately after Jesus’ baptism (see Mark 1:12). Spiritual victories are often followed by testing (see 1 Kin. 19).

4:3, 4 It is written: Jesus’ response to all three temptations was to quote the Word of God, showing His followers the power of Scripture in battling the Evil One (see Deut. 6:13; 8:3; Ps. 91:11, 12). There was nothing morally wrong with turning stones to bread; Satan



3RD GENERATION

Herod of Chalcis

👑 **Herod Agrippa I** King of Judea (A.D. 37–44); killed James; put Peter into prison; struck down by an angel (acts 12:1–24)

HERODIAS Married her uncle Herod Philip I, and then a second uncle, Herod antipas (Matt. 14:3; Mark 6:17)

..... denotes Herodias's marriage to Herod antipas
— denotes Herodias's marriage to Herod Philip I and daughter of that marriage

4TH GENERATION

Felix (Governor of Judea)

DRUSILLA
Married Felix, governor of Judea (A.D. 52–59); Felix tried Paul (acts 24:24)

👑 **Herod Agrippa II**
King of Judea; Paul makes a legal defense before him (acts 25:13—26:32)

BERNICE
With her brother at the time of Paul's defense (acts 25:13)

SALOME
daughter of Herodias and Herod Philip I; danced in exchange for the head of John the baptist (Matt. 14:1–12; Mark 6:14–29)

Second Temptation

Luke 4:9-12

⁵Then the devil took Him up ^dinto the holy city, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple, ⁶and said to Him, “If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down. For it is written:

5 ^d Neh. 11:1, 18; Dan. 9:24; Matt. 27:53

6 ^e Ps. 91:11 ★ ^f Ps. 91:12 ★

“He shall give His angels charge over you,”

and,

“In their hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone.””

was tempting Jesus to do a miracle outside of the Father's will. This explains why Jesus quotes Deut. 8:3. Bread alone does not sustain life; ultimately God is the One who sustains all life. Thus it is our responsibility to trust God and remain in His will.

4:6 throw Yourself down: In quoting the protective promise of Ps. 91:11, 12 to Jesus, Satan omitted the words “to keep you in all your ways.” Satan tempted Jesus to gain public attention through spectacle rather than through His righteous life and message.

⁷Jesus said to him, “It is written again, ^g*‘You shall not ¹tempt the LORD your God.’*”

Third Temptation

Mark 1:13; Luke 4:5-8, 13

⁸Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and ^hshowed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. ⁹And he said to Him, “All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me.”

¹⁰Then Jesus said to him, ²“Away with you, Satan! For it is written, ⁱ*‘You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.’*”

¹¹Then the devil ^jleft Him, and behold, ^kangels came and ministered to Him.

Jesus Begins His Ministry

Mark 1:14, 15; Luke 4:14, 31

¹²Now when Jesus heard that John had been put in prison, He departed to Galilee. ¹³And leaving Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the regions of Zebulun and Naphtali, ¹⁴that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying:

¹⁵“*The^m land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali,
By the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan,
Galilee of the Gentiles:*

⁷ ^g Deut. 6:16 ¹ test
⁸ ^h [Matt. 16:26;
1 John 2:15-17]
¹⁰ ⁱ Deut. 6:13;
10:20; Josh. 24:14
² M Get behind Me
11 ^j [James 4:7]
^k Matt. 26:53; Luke
22:43; [Heb. 1:14]
¹² ^l Matt. 14:3;
Mark 1:14; Luke
3:20; John 4:43
¹⁵ ^m Is. 9:1, 2 ★

¹⁶ ⁿ Is. 42:7; Luke
2:32
¹⁷ ^o Mark 1:14, 15
^p Matt. 3:2; 10:7
³ has drawn near
¹⁸ ^q Matt. 4:18-22;
Mark 1:16-20; Luke
5:2-11; John 1:40-42
^r Matt. 10:2; 16:18;
John 1:40-42
¹⁹ ^s Luke 5:10
²⁰ ^t Matt. 19:27;
Mark 10:28
²¹ ^u Mark 1:19
²³ ^v Ps. 22:22 ★;
Matt. 9:35; Mark
1:21; 6:2; 10:1; Luke
4:15; 6:6; 13:10;
John 6:59; 18:20
^w [Matt. 24:14];
Mark 1:14; Luke
4:43; 8:1; 16:16
^x Mark 1:34; Luke
4:40; 7:21; Acts
10:38
²⁴ ^d Lit. the report
of Him

¹⁶ ⁿ *The people who sat in darkness have
seen a great light,
And upon those who sat in the
region and shadow of death
Light has dawned.*”

¹⁷ ^o From that time Jesus began to
preach and to say, ^p“Repent, for the king-
dom of heaven ³is at hand.”

Jesus Calls His First Disciples

Mark 1:16-20

¹⁸ ^q And Jesus, walking by the Sea of Galilee, saw two brothers, Simon ^rcalled Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. ¹⁹Then He said to them, “Follow Me, and ^sI will make you fishers of men.” ²⁰ ^t They immediately left *their* nets and followed Him.

²¹ ^u Going on from there, He saw two other brothers, James *the son of* Zebedee, and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets. He called them, ²²and immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed Him.

Jesus Ministers in Galilee

Mark 1:39; Luke 4:44

²³ And Jesus went about all Galilee, ^vteaching in their synagogues, preaching ^wthe gospel of the kingdom, ^xand healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people. ²⁴Then ^dHis fame went throughout all Syria; and they

4:7 Deuteronomy 6:16 emphasizes that one should not test God. The Lord asked the Israelites to put Him to the test in only one area: tithing. By giving to Him they could test whether He would fulfill His promises to bless them (Mal. 3:10).

4:10 Christ rebuked the devil for asking for worship, a temptation to do exactly the opposite of what every Israelite was called upon to do (see Deut. 6:13, 15). Specifically in reference to Jesus, Satan was

tempted

(Gk. *peirazō*) (4:1; Luke 4:2; Mark 1:13; Heb. 4:15) Strong's #3985

The word means “to try” or “to make proof of,” and when ascribed to God in His dealings with people, it means no more than this (see Gen. 22:1). But for the most part in Scripture, the word is used in a negative sense, and means to entice, solicit, or provoke to sin. Hence the name given to the wicked one in this passage is “the tempter” (4:3). Accordingly “to be tempted” here is to be understood both ways. The Spirit conducted Jesus into the wilderness to try His faith; but the agent in this trial was the wicked one, whose object was to seduce Jesus away from His allegiance to God. This was temptation in the bad sense of the term. Yet Jesus did not give in to temptation; He passed the test (see 2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 7:26).

offering a crown without the cross. Jesus’ experience serves as a pattern in spiritual warfare today: Jesus *resisted* Satan (see Eph. 6:11, 13, 14; James 4:7; 1 Pet. 5:9), then He *defeated* Satan with consistent, meaningful use of the Scriptures (see Eph. 6:17).

4:11 angels came and ministered: Having rejected Satan’s offer of bread, assistance from angels, and earthly kingdoms, Jesus was immediately visited by angels who helped Him.

4:13 Matthew omits the incident reported in Luke 4:16–30 of Jesus’ rejection in His hometown. Matthew simply indicates that **Capernaum**, located at the northern end of the Sea of Galilee, became Jesus’ home and base of operation.

4:15, 16 The passage quoted here, Is. 9:1, 2, foretells the reign of the Messiah in the coming kingdom. The ministry of Jesus in **Galilee** was a preview of what was yet to come. Galilee was a fertile, populous area with two major trade routes. **The way of the sea** was one of those routes.

4:17 The phrase **from that time Jesus began** occurs twice in the Book of Matthew (see 16:21). Each reference marks a crucial direction in the book. This one looks to the beginning of His earthly ministry, while 16:21 anticipates His crucifixion and resurrection. Jesus’ exhortation was identical to that of John the Baptist (3:2).

4:18–20 I will make you fishers of men: This allusion to Jer. 16:16 was used to call Peter and Andrew to discipleship and a life of ministry.

4:23 Teaching ... preaching ... healing summarizes Jesus’ earthly ministry. His *teaching* is illustrated by His discourses; His *preaching* is illustrated by the announcement in v. 17; His *healing* is illustrated by His many miracles.

Herod's Temple

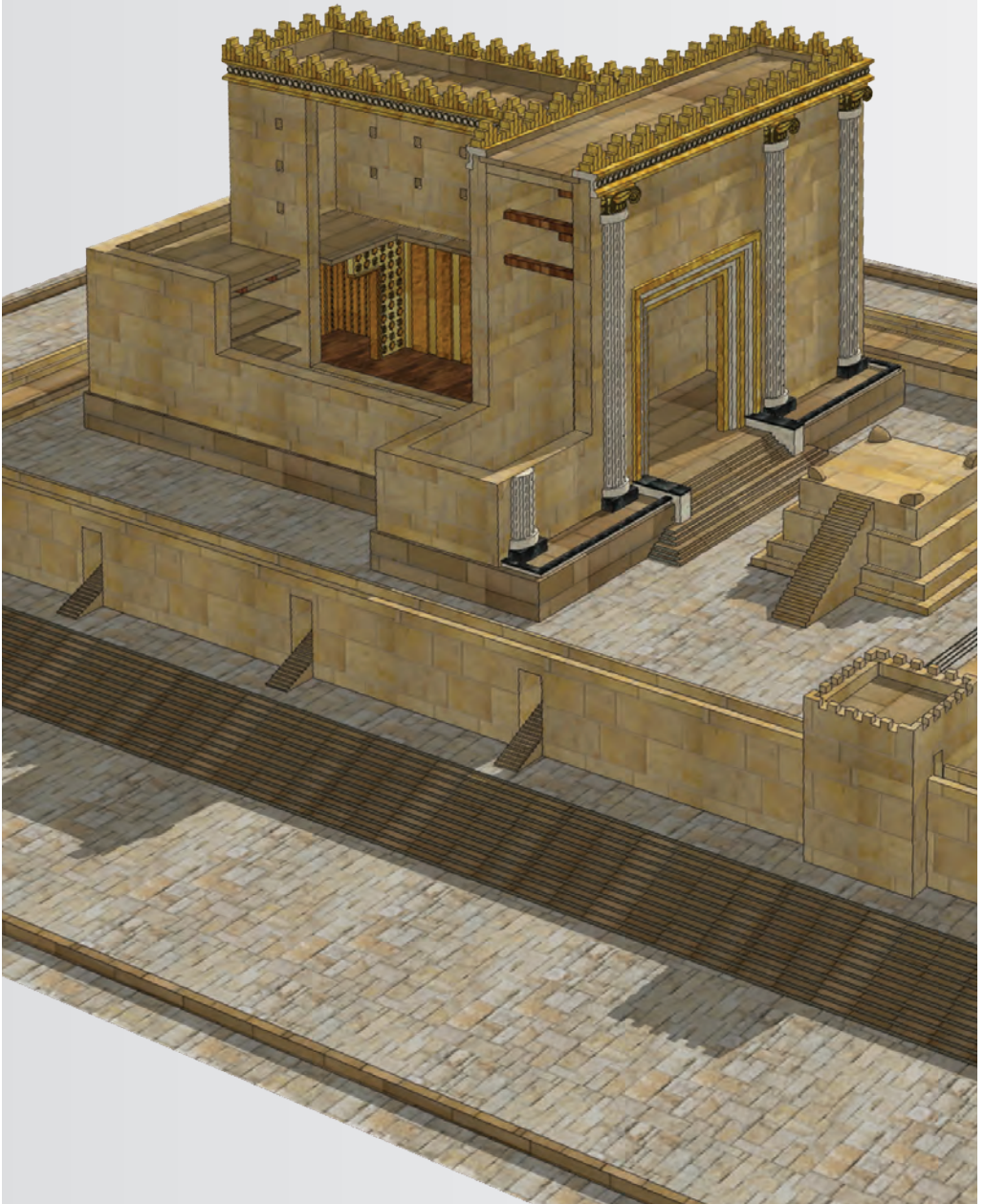
20 B.C.–A.D. 70

Begun in 20 B.C., Herod's new structure towered 15 stories high, following the floor dimensions of the former temples in the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place. The high sanctuary shown here was built on the site of the former temples of Solomon and Zerubbabel.

The outer courts surrounding the temple mount were not completed until A.D. 64. The entire structure was demolished by the Romans in A.D. 70.

Dimensions of rooms, steps, doorways, cornices, and exterior measurements are mentioned in history (Josephus and the Mishnah) but are subject to interpretation.

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^ybrought to Him all sick people who were afflicted with various diseases and torments, and those who were demon-possessed, epileptics, and paralytics; and He healed them. ^{25z}Great multitudes followed Him—from Galilee, and from ⁵Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and beyond the Jordan.

The Beatitudes

Luke 6:20-26

5 And seeing the multitudes, ^aHe went up on a mountain, and when He was

24 ^y Mark 1:32, 33; Luke 4:40
25 ^z Matt. 5:1; 8:1, 18; Mark 3:7, 8 ⁵ Lit. Ten Cities

CHAPTER 5

1 ^a Matt. 14:23; 15:29; 17:1; Mark 3:13; Luke 6:17; 9:28; John 6:3, 15
2 ^b [Matt. 7:29]; Mark 10:1; 12:35; John 8:2
3 ^c Prov. 16:19;

seated His disciples came to Him. ²Then He opened His mouth and ^btaught them, saying:

- 3 “Blessed^c are the poor in spirit, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
4 ^dBlessed are those who mourn, For they shall be comforted.

Is. 66:2; Luke 6:20-23 4 ^d Is. 61:2, 3; Luke 6:21; [John 16:20]; Acts 16:34; [2 Cor. 1:7]; Rev. 21:4

5:1 The multitudes were found at the beginning and end of Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount (the term is translated *the people* in 7:28). Yet this verse implies that Jesus *left* the multitude. Evidently He went away from the crowds so that He could instruct the disciples. As He taught the disciples, the crowds came to where He was. **when He was seated:** It was normal for a teacher or rabbi to sit while he taught, with his audience gathered around. The **mountain**, probably a high hill on the northwest shore of the Sea of Galilee, would have served as a natural amphitheater. **disciples:** Jesus had many disciples in addition to the crowds who followed Him and listened to His teaching. From the many disciples, He selected 12 to receive special instruction and power.

5:2 He . . . taught them: This Sermon on the Mount recorded by

Matthew (chs. 5–7) is slightly different from the sermon preached to the multitude in Luke 6. The essence of this sermon was probably preached many times during Jesus’ early ministry. The Sermon on the Mount was not given as the way of salvation for the lost, but as the way of life for true children of the kingdom. It was instruction for those who had responded to Jesus’ invitation to “repent” (4:17). These disciples were probably confused as to the true nature of righteousness and God’s kingdom. In this address, Jesus clarified both the heart of the law and the nature of true religion in God’s kingdom (see Mic. 6:8). In a sense, Jesus turned the law, which was mainly negative, inside out to show its positive core (v. 17).

5:3–12 The Beatitudes are comprised of three elements: a pronouncement of blessing, a quality of life, and a reason why the

Jesus' Baptism and Temptation

Events surrounding Jesus’ baptism reveal the intense religious excitement and social ferment of the early days of John the Baptist’s ministry. Herod had been cruel and rapacious; Roman military occupation was harsh. Some agitation centered around the change of governors from Gratus to Pilate in A.D. 26. Most of the people hoped for a religious solution to their intolerable political situation, and when they heard of a new prophet, they flocked out into the desert to hear him. The religious sect (Essenes) from Qumran professed similar doctrines of repentance and baptism. Jesus was baptized at Bethany on the other side of the Jordan (see John 1:28). John also baptized at “Aenon near Salim” (John 3:23).

For Jesus’ temptation, see notes on Matt. 4:1–11; Luke 4:1–13.

Many interpreters place John’s baptismal ministry at a point on the middle reaches of the Jordan River, where trade routes converge at a natural ford not far from the modern site of Tel Shalem.

- 5 ^e Blessed *are* the meek,
For ^f they shall inherit the ¹ earth.
6 Blessed *are* those who ^g hunger and
thirst for righteousness,
^h For they shall be filled.
7 Blessed *are* the merciful,
ⁱ For they shall obtain mercy.
8 ^j Blessed *are* the pure in heart,
For ^k they shall see God.
9 Blessed *are* the peacemakers,
For they shall be called sons of
God.
10 ^l Blessed *are* those who are persecuted
for righteousness' sake,
For theirs is the kingdom of
heaven.

11 ^m “Blessed are you when they revile
and persecute you, and say all kinds of
ⁿ evil against you falsely for My sake.
12 ^o Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for
great *is* your reward in heaven, for ^p so
they persecuted the prophets who were
before you.

The Similitudes

13 “You are the salt of the earth; ^q but
if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be
seasoned? It is then good for nothing but
to be thrown out and trampled underfoot
by men.

5 ^e Ps. 37:11; Is.
29:19 ^f [Rom. 4:13]
¹ Or *land*
6 ^g Luke 1:53; Acts
2:4 ^h [Is. 55:1; 65:13;
John 4:14; 6:48;
7:37]
7 ⁱ Ps. 41:1; Mark
11:25
8 ^j Ps. 15:2; 24:4;
Heb. 12:14 ^k Acts
7:55, 56; 1 Cor. 13:12
10 ^l [2 Cor. 4:17];
1 Pet. 3:14
11 ^m Luke 6:22
ⁿ 1 Pet. 4:14
12 ^o Luke 6:23; Acts
5:41; 1 Pet. 4:13, 14
^p 2 Chr. 36:16; Neh.
9:26; Matt. 23:37;
Acts 7:52; 1 Thess.
2:15; Heb. 11:35–37;
James 5:10
13 ^q Mark 9:50;
Luke 14:34
14 ^r [Prov. 4:18;
John 8:12]; Phil. 2:15
15 ^s Mark 4:21; Luke
8:16; Phil. 2:15
16 ^t 1 Pet. 2:12
^u [John 15:8]; 1 Cor.
14:25
17 ^v Rom. 10:4
18 ^w Matt. 24:35;
Luke 16:17 ^x Gr.
iota, Heb. *yod*, the
smallest letter
^y The smallest
stroke in a Heb.
letter 19 ^x [James
2:10]

14 ^r “You are the light of the world. A
city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden.
15 Nor do they ^s light a lamp and put it
under a basket, but on a lampstand, and
it gives light to all *who are* in the house.
16 Let your light so shine before men,
^t that they may see your good works and
^u glorify your Father in heaven.

Jesus Fulfills the Law

17 ^v “Do not think that I came to destroy
the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to
destroy but to fulfill. 18 For assuredly, I say
to you, ^w till heaven and earth pass away,
one ^z jot or one ³ tittle will by no means pass
from the law till all is fulfilled. 19 ^x Whoever
therefore breaks one of the least of these
commandments, and teaches men so, shall
be called least in the kingdom of heav-
en; but whoever does and teaches *them*,
he shall be called great in the kingdom
of heaven. 20 For I say to you, that unless
your righteousness exceeds ^y the *righteous-*
ness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will
by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.

Murder

21 “You have heard that it was said to
those ⁴ of old, ^z *“You shall not murder; and*

20 ^y [Rom. 10:3] 21 ^z Ex. 20:13; Deut. 5:17 ⁴ in ancient times

recipient should be considered blessed. The first element is found
in the word *Blessed* (see Ps. 1:1), which introduces each beatitude.
The second element does not describe different groups of peo-
ple, but a composite picture of the kind of person who will inherit
Christ’s kingdom. The third element looks ahead to some aspect of
the coming kingdom.

5:3 Blessed are the poor in spirit: The idea of God blessing the
humble and resisting the proud can also be found in Prov. 3:34;
James 4:6.

5:5 Earth can also be translated *land* (see Ps. 37:3, 9, 11, 29; Prov. 2:21).

5:13 Pure salt maintains its flavor. In Israel, some salt was mixed
with other ingredients. When it was exposed to the elements, the
salt would be “leached out.” Such leached-out salt was used for
coating pathways.

5:16 Let your light so shine: The believer does not have inherent
light; rather we have *reflective* light. As we behold the glory of the
Lord, we reflect it. Therefore, we need to make sure that nothing
comes between us and the Lord’s light (see 2 Cor. 3:18; Phil. 2:14–16).

5:17, 18 Do not think that I came to destroy: Jesus rejected the
Pharisees’ charge that He was nullifying the law. The law was both

temporary (see Gal. 3:19; Eph. 2:15; Heb. 7:12) and eternal (see 5:18;
Rom. 3:31; 8:4). The word *fulfill* means “to fill out, expand, or com-
plete.” It does not mean to bring to an end. Jesus fulfills the law
in several ways: (1) He obeyed it perfectly and taught its correct
meaning (vv. 19, 20); (2) He will one day fulfill all of the OT types and
prophecies; and (3) He provides a way of salvation that meets all the
requirements of the law (Rom. 3:21, 31). **one jot or one tittle will
by no means pass:** This statement of Jesus provides us with one of
the strongest affirmations in the Bible of the inerrancy of Scripture.
It is absolutely trustworthy.

5:20 The righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees was
essentially external adherence to rules. God demands more than
this. Jesus’ words must have shaken His disciples, since the meticu-
lously righteous deeds of the scribes and Pharisees were regarded
as being far above those of the average person. However the only
righteousness that satisfies God’s standard is faith in Jesus Christ
(see Rom. 3:21, 22).

5:21 You have heard refers to the teaching of various rabbis rather
than to that of Moses. Jesus was questioning the interpretation of
the Jewish scholars, not the OT itself.

blessed

(Gk. *makarios*) (5:3; Luke 6:20–22; Rom. 4:7, 8; James 1:12,
25) Strong’s #3107

This Greek word is derived from the root *mak*, which means
“large” or “lengthy,” and means “fortunate” or “happy.” The
Greek word was used in Greek literature, in the Septuagint
(the Greek translation of the OT), and in the NT to describe
the kind of happiness that comes from receiving divine
favor. The word can be rendered *happy*. In the NT it is usu-
ally passive; God is the One who is blessing or favoring the
person.

tittle

(Gk. *kerasia*) (5:18; Luke 16:17) Strong’s #2762

In Hebrew, sometimes the smallest stroke or mark distin-
guished a letter from a similar one. Matthew uses the Greek
word that literally means “horn,” or one hook of a letter, to
refer to this stroke. The rabbis had defended the impor-
tance of retaining even the slightest stroke and the smallest
letter—*yodh* in Hebrew and *iota* in Greek—in the Law of
Moses. Jesus made it clear that He heartily concurred with
the rabbis’ respect for the Law. Not even the smallest dot
over an “i” would disappear until the Law was fulfilled.

whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment.²² But I say to you that ^awhoever is angry with his brother ⁵without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. And whoever says to his brother, ^b“Raca!”⁶ shall be in danger of the council. But whoever says, ⁷“You fool!” shall be in danger of ⁸hell fire. ²³Therefore ^cif you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, ^{24d}leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. ^{25e}Agree with your adversary quickly, ^fwhile you are on the way with him, lest your adversary deliver you to the judge, the judge hand you over to the officer, and you be thrown into prison. ²⁶Assuredly, I say to you, you will by no means get out of there till you have paid the last penny.

Adultery

²⁷“You have heard that it was said ⁹to those of old, ⁹“You shall not commit adultery.”²⁸ But I say to you that whoever ^hlooks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. ²⁹ⁱIf your right eye causes you to ¹sin, ^jpluck it out and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell. ³⁰And if your right hand causes you to ²sin, cut it off and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell.

Divorce

³¹“Furthermore it has been said, ^k“Whoever divorces his wife, let him give

²² ^a[1 John 3:15]
^b[James 2:20; 3:6]
⁵NU omits *without a cause* ⁶Lit., in Aram., *Empty head*
⁷Gr. *More* ⁸Gr. *Gehenna*

²³ ^cMatt. 8:4
²⁴ ^d[Job 42:8; 1 Tim. 2:8; 1 Pet. 3:7]
²⁵ ^e[Prov. 25:8; Luke 12:58, 59 ^f[Ps. 32:6; Is. 55:6]
²⁷ ^gEx. 20:14; Deut. 5:18 ⁹NU, M omit *to those of old*
²⁸ ^h2 Sam. 11:2-5; Job 31:1; Prov. 6:25; [Matt. 15:19; James 1:14, 15]

²⁹ ⁱMark 9:43
^j[Col. 3:5] ¹Lit. *stumble or offend*
³⁰ ²Lit. *stumble or offend*

³¹ ^kDeut. 24:1; [Jer. 3:1]; Mark 10:2
³² ^l[Matt. 19:9; Mark 10:11; Luke 16:18; Rom. 7:3]; 1 Cor. 7:11 ³Or *fornication*

³³ ^mMatt. 23:16
ⁿ[Ex. 20:7; Lev. 19:12; Num. 30:2
^oDeut. 23:23
⁴ancient times

³⁴ ^pMatt. 23:16; James 5:12 ^qIs. 66:1
³⁵ ^rPs. 48:2; [Matt. 5:2, 19; 6:10]
³⁷ ^s[Col. 4:6]; James 5:12 ⁵Lit. *your word be yes yes*

³⁸ ^tEx. 21:24; Lev. 24:20; Deut. 19:21
³⁹ ^u[Prov. 20:22]; Luke 6:29; [Rom. 12:17; 1 Cor. 6:7; 1 Pet. 3:9] ^vIs. 50:6; Lam. 3:30
⁴¹ ^wMatt. 27:32
⁴² ^xDeut. 15:7-11; Luke 6:30-34;

her a certificate of divorce.’³² But I say to you that ^lwhoever divorces his wife for any reason except ³sexual immorality causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a woman who is divorced commits adultery.

Oaths

³³“Again you have heard that ^mit was said to those of ⁴old, ⁿ“You shall not swear falsely, but ^oshall perform your oaths to the Lord.’³⁴ But I say to you, ^pdo not swear at all: neither by heaven, for it is ^qGod’s throne; ³⁵nor by the earth, for it is His footstool; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of ^rthe great King. ³⁶Nor shall you swear by your head, because you cannot make one hair white or black. ^{37s}But let ⁵your ‘Yes’ be ‘Yes,’ and your ‘No,’ ‘No.’ For whatever is more than these is from the evil one.

Retaliation

³⁸“You have heard that it was said, ^t“An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.”³⁹ But I tell you not to resist an evil person. ^vBut whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also. ⁴⁰If anyone wants to sue you and take away your tunic, let him have *your* cloak also. ⁴¹And whoever ^wcompels you to go one mile, go with him two. ⁴²Give to him who asks you, and ^xfrom him who wants to borrow from you do not turn away.

Love

Luke 6:27, 32

⁴³“You have heard that it was said, ^y“You shall love your neighbor ^zand hate

1 Tim. 6:18 ⁴³ ^yLev. 19:18 ^zDeut. 23:6-6; Ps. 41:10

5:22 The scribes and Pharisees said that a person who referred to another as **Raca**, meaning “empty head,” was in danger of being sued for libel before **the council** (or the Sanhedrin). On the other hand, Jesus said that whoever calls another a **fool** will have to answer to God. That is not to say that calling someone a fool will condemn a believer to eternal punishment in hell. Rather Jesus was saying that to utter such words is to place oneself in a worse condition at the time of judgment (see 1 Cor. 3:12–15).

5:25 It is wise not to have enemies. One should make peace as soon as possible because enemies are capable of doing great damage.

5:28 to lust for her: A man who gazes at a woman with the purpose of wanting her sexually has mentally committed adultery.

5:29, 30 The hyperbole (exaggerated saying) about tearing out one’s eye is similar to the phrase in Prov. 23:2, “Put a knife to your throat if you are a man given to appetite.” In striking overstatement, Jesus advises removing every temptation to evil, no matter what the cost. The warning of **hell** (v. 22) indicates that those whose lifestyle is characterized by uncontrolled immorality are not heirs of the kingdom (see 1 Cor. 6:9, 10).

5:31, 32 Sexual immorality is a general term that includes premarital sex, extramarital infidelity, homosexuality, and bestiality (19:3–12).

5:33, 34 Do not swear at all: This does not forbid solemn, official

oaths (see Gen. 22:16; Ps. 110:4; 2 Cor. 1:23), but only oaths made in common speech. Such oath-taking suggests that a person’s normal words cannot be trusted. God’s law says, “Do not lie under oath” (see Lev. 19:12; Num. 30:2); Jesus was telling His followers not to lie under *any* circumstances. The phrase **to the Lord** could be used as a cover-up for falsehood. Any oath with God’s name in it was legally binding; however, an oath without God’s name was not legally binding. This explains the emphasis of vv. 34–37.

5:38 This important OT law (see Ex. 21:24, 25; Lev. 24:20; Deut. 19:21), known as the *lex talionis* (the law of retaliation), covered what type of punishment should be meted out to transgressors. It limited the retribution that an offender would have to endure.

5:39–42 The Lord seems to be speaking in hyperbolic terms to teach the lesson of non-retaliation. Generally He commands us to have a generous and compassionate attitude toward the needy. He makes this application in four areas: physical attacks (v. 39), legal suits (v. 40), government demands (v. 41), and financial requests (v. 42).

5:41 Compels is a technical term that refers to the law of impressment. The Roman government could press anyone into its service to carry a load as far as one mile. Matthew records a Roman officer doing this to Simon of Cyrene in 27:32.

5:43 Hate your enemy is not found in Moses’ writings. This was a principle drawn by the scribes and Pharisees from Lev. 19:18.

your enemy.⁴⁴ But I say to you, ^alove your enemies, bless those who curse you, ^bdo good to those who hate you, and pray ^cfor those who spitefully use you and persecute you, ⁴⁵that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for ^dHe makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. ⁴⁶For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? ⁴⁷And if you greet your ⁷brethren only, what do you do more *than others*? Do not even the ⁸tax collectors do so? ⁴⁸Therefore you shall be perfect, just ⁹as your Father in heaven is perfect.

Charitable Deeds

6 “Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be seen by them. Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in heaven. ²Therefore, ^awhen you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory from men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. ³But when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, ⁴that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret ^bwill Himself reward you ¹openly.

Prayer

Luke 11:2-4

⁵ “And when you pray, you shall not be like the ²hypocrites. For they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. ⁶But you, when you pray, ^cgo into your room, and when

⁴⁴ ^a Luke 6:27; Rom. 12:14 ^b [Rom. 12:20] ^c Luke 23:34; Acts 7:60; 1 Cor. 4:12; 1 Pet. 2:23
⁴⁵ ^a NU But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you
⁴⁶ ^a Job 25:3; Ps. 65:9-13; Luke 12:16, 17; Acts 14:17
⁴⁷ ^a Luke 6:32
⁴⁸ ^a M friends ^b NU Gentiles
⁴⁹ ^a Gen. 17:1; Lev. 11:44; 19:2; Luke 6:36; [Col. 1:28; 4:12]; James 1:4; 1 Pet. 1:15 ^b Eph. 5:1

CHAPTER 6

² ^a Rom. 12:8
⁴ ^a Luke 14:12-14
¹ NU omits openly
⁵ ^a pretenders
⁶ ^c 2 Kin. 4:33 ³ NU omits openly
⁷ ^a Eccl. 5:2 ^c 1 Kin. 18:26
⁸ ^a [Rom. 8:26, 27]
⁹ ^a Matt. 6:9-13; Luke 11:2-4; [John 16:24; Eph. 6:18; Jude 20] ^b [Matt. 5:9, 16] ^c Mal. 1:11
¹⁰ ^a Matt. 26:42; Luke 22:42; Acts 21:14 ^b Ps. 103:20
¹¹ ^a [Job 23:12]; Prov. 30:8; Is. 33:16; Luke 11:3
¹² ^a [Matt. 18:21, 22]
¹³ ^a [Matt. 26:41; 1 Cor. 10:31; 2 Pet. 2:9; Rev. 3:10] ^b John 17:15; [2 Thess. 3:3]; 2 Tim. 4:18; [1 John 5:18]
⁴ NU omits the rest of v. 13.
¹⁴ ^a [Matt. 7:2]; Mark 11:25; [Eph. 4:32; Col. 3:13]
¹⁵ ^a Matt. 18:35; James 2:13
¹⁶ ^a Is. 58:3-7;

you have shut your door, pray to your Father who *is* in the secret *place*; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you ³openly. ⁷And when you pray, ^ddo not use vain repetitions as the heathen *do*. ^eFor they think that they will be heard for their many words.

⁸ “Therefore do not be like them. For your Father ^fknows the things you have need of before you ask Him. ⁹In this ^gmanner, therefore, pray:

^h Our Father in heaven,
Hallowed be Your ⁱname.

¹⁰ Your kingdom come.

^j Your will be done

On earth ^kas it is in heaven.

¹¹ Give us this day our ^ldaily bread.

¹² And ^mforgive us our debts,
As we forgive our debtors.

¹³ And do not lead us into temptation,
But ^odeliver us from the evil one.

⁴ For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever.
Amen.

¹⁴ “For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. ¹⁵But ^qif you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

Fasting

¹⁶ “Moreover, ^rwhen you fast, do not be like the ⁵hypocrites, with a sad countenance. For they disfigure their faces that they may appear to men to be fasting. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. ¹⁷But you, when you fast, ^sanoint your head and wash your face, ¹⁸so that you do not appear to men to be

Luke 18:12 ⁵ pretenders ¹⁷ ^s Ruth 3:3; 2 Sam. 12:20; Dan. 10:3

5:45 To be a “son of” was to be like someone or something. **That you may be sons of your Father in heaven** means “that you may be like the Heavenly Father who displays His love without discrimination.”

5:48 This verse, which comes from Deut. 18:13, refers to completeness. In the context of 5:43–48, it seems to mean that Jesus’ followers are to be as perfect as God in the ways that they love. God does not lower the standard to accommodate our sinfulness. He gives us the power to keep His righteous standard.

6:2 they have their reward: The verb translated *have* was used in receipts and is similar to “paid in full.” The only reward the hypocrites will ever receive is **glory from men** (vv. 5, 16). Contrast that with the heavenly rewards of Christ given to His followers (see 2 Cor. 5:10; Rev. 22:12).

6:5–8 Those who pray with improper motives **have their reward**—like those who do charitable deeds with improper motives (v. 2).

6:7 From the motives for praying (vv. 1–6), Jesus turned to *methods* of praying. *Why* one prays determines *how* one prays. Nothing is wrong with repeating prayers (26:39, 42, 44). Here Jesus was referring to the empty recitation of words.

6:9 In this manner does not mean to pray using only these words, but to pray in this way. People often reduce this prayer to empty recitation—exactly what the Lord said *not* to do (v. 7). The prayer is composed of six requests. The first three ask for the kingdom to come (vv. 9, 10) and the last three are for God to meet the needs of His people until the kingdom arrives (vv. 11–13). **Hallowed be Your name** is not an ascription of praise to the Father. The verb is an imperative and means “May Your name be hallowed.” This recalls Ezekiel’s prophecy in Ezek. 36:25–32, where the prophet says Israel has profaned God’s name among the nations. One day God will gather His people from the nations, cleanse them, and by this means vindicate the holiness of His great name. The hallowing of the Father’s name means the arrival of God’s kingdom.

6:11 Daily bread is a reminder of God’s daily supply of manna to Israel in the wilderness.

6:13 The doxology at the end of the prayer is from 1 Chr. 29:11. Some ancient manuscripts of the Scriptures omit this doxology.

fasting, but to your Father who *is* in the secret *place*; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you ⁶openly.

Wealth

Luke 11:34-36; 12:22-34

¹⁹“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; ²⁰but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

²²“The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is ⁷good, your whole body will be full of light. ²³But if your eye is ⁸bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great *is* that darkness!

²⁴“No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. ^xYou cannot serve God and ⁹mammon.

²⁵“Therefore I say to you, ^ydo not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? ²⁶Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? ²⁷Which of you by worrying can add one ¹cubit to his ²stature?

²⁸“So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; ²⁹and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not ³arrayed like one of these. ³⁰Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, *will He* not much more *clothe* you, O you of little faith?

¹⁸ ⁶NU, M omit *openly*

¹⁹ ¹Prov. 23:4; [1 Tim. 6:17; Heb. 13:5]; James 5:1

²⁰ ^uMatt. 19:21; Luke 12:33; 18:22; 1 Tim. 6:19; 1 Pet. 1:4

²² ^vLuke 11:34, 35

⁷Clear, or healthy

²³ ⁸Evil, or unhealthy

²⁴ ^wLuke 16:9;

11, 13 ^x[Gal. 1:10;

1 Tim. 6:17; James

4:4; 1 John 2:15]

⁹Lit., in Aram., riches

²⁵ ^y[Ps. 55:22];

Luke 12:22; [Phil.

4:6; 1 Pet. 5:7]

²⁶ ^zJob 38:41; Ps.

147:9; Matt. 10:29;

Luke 12:24

²⁷ ¹About 18

inches ²height

²⁹ ³dressed

³³ ^a1 Kin. 3:13; Luke 12:31; [1 Tim. 4:8]

CHAPTER 7

¹ ^aMatt. 7:1-5;

Luke 6:37; Rom.

14:3; [1 Cor. 4:3, 4]

¹Condemn

² ^bMark 4:24;

Luke 6:38

²Condemnation

³ ^cLuke 6:41

⁶ ^dProv. 9:7, 8; Acts

13:45

⁷ ^e[Matt. 21:22;

Mark 11:24]; Luke

11:9-13; 18:1-8;

[John 15:7; James

1:5, 6; 1 John 3:22]

⁸ ^fProv. 8:17; Jer.

29:12

⁹ ^gLuke 11:11

¹¹ ^hGen. 6:5; 8:21;

Ps. 84:11; Is. 63:7;

[Rom. 8:32; James

1:17]; 1 John 3:1

³¹“Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ ³²For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. ³³But ^aseek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. ³⁴Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

Judging

Luke 6:37-42

⁷“Judge ¹*a* not, that you be not judged. ²For with what ²judgment you judge, you will be judged; ^band with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you. ³*c* And why do you look at the speck in your brother’s eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eye? ⁴Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me remove the speck from your eye’; and look, a plank *is* in your own eye? ⁵Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye.

⁶*d*“Do not give what is holy to the dogs; nor cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you in pieces.

“Ask, and It Will Be Given”

Luke 11:9-13

⁷*e*“Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. ⁸For ^feveryone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. ⁹*g*Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? ¹⁰Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? ¹¹If you then, ^hbeing evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your

6:19, 20 Do not lay up . . . but lay up may be rephrased as “Do not give priority to this, but give priority to that.” This passage does not mean that it is sinful to have such assets as insurance, retirement plans, and savings accounts. After all, parents are to save for their children (see Prov. 13:22; 2 Cor. 12:14).

6:24 Mammon refers to wealth, money, or property. No one can serve two masters because a time will come when they make opposing demands. Jesus advises us to invest in our future with Him by giving of ourselves; mammon encourages us to collect material objects for our present enjoyment.

6:27 Stature here probably means “length of life,” or age. Cubit then means a “length” of time, not a distance.

6:32 Gentiles refers to non-Jews or to the heathen—those who do not know God (see 3 John 7). The Jewish people, because of God’s revelation to them, were supposed to think differently than the Gentiles.

6:33 To seek . . . the kingdom of God and His righteousness means to desire God’s righteous rule on this earth (vv. 9, 10).

7:1 This restriction does not mean that a disciple never judges. After all, some kind of judgment is required in order to obey the command in v. 6. The point of this verse is that a Christian should not have a spirit of carping criticism and fault-finding.

7:2 Every judgment that a person makes becomes a basis for his or her own judgment (see James 3:1, 2).

7:6 Dogs and swine refer to people who are enemies of the gospel, as opposed to those who are merely unbelievers. Such enemies are to be left alone (see 15:14; 2 Cor. 6:14–18). One example of such a person was Herod Antipas, who heard John gladly (see Mark 6:20), but then beheaded him (see 14:1–12; Mark 6:14–28; Luke 9:7–9). Later when Christ stood before Herod, He said nothing (see Luke 23:8, 9). In the context of this verse, Herod had become a “dog” or a “pig.”

Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!

Golden Rule

Luke 6:31

¹²Therefore, ⁱwhatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for ^jthis is the Law and the Prophets.

Two Ways of Life

¹³^k“Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. ¹⁴³Because narrow is the gate and ⁴difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.

False and True Teaching

Luke 6:43-45

¹⁵^l“Beware of false prophets, ^mwho come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. ¹⁶ⁿYou will know them by their fruits. ^oDo men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles? ¹⁷Even so, ^pevery good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. ¹⁸A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor *can* a bad tree bear good fruit. ¹⁹^qEvery tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. ²⁰Therefore by their fruits you will know them.

True Way into the Kingdom

Luke 6:46

²¹“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who ^sdoes the will of My Father in heaven. ²²Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we ^tnot prophesied in Your name, cast out

¹² ⁱ Luke 6:31 / Matt. 22:40; Rom. 13:8; Gal. 5:14; [1 Tim. 1:5]
¹³ ^k Luke 13:24
¹⁴ ³ NU, M How narrow...!
⁴ ^{confined}

¹⁵ ⁱ Deut. 13:3; Jer. 23:16; Ezek. 22:28; Mark 13:22; [Luke 6:26]; Rom. 16:17; Eph. 5:6; [Col. 2:8; 2 Pet. 2:1; 1 John 4:1-3] ^m Mic. 3:5
¹⁶ ⁿ Matt. 7:20; 12:33; Luke 6:44; James 3:12 ^o Luke 6:43
¹⁷ ^p Jer. 11:19; Matt. 12:33
¹⁹ ^q Matt. 3:10; Luke 3:9; [John 15:2, 6]
²¹ ^r Hos. 8:2; Matt. 25:11; Luke 6:46; Acts 19:13 ^s Rom. 2:13; James 1:22
²² ^t Num. 24:4

²³ ^u Matt. 25:12; Luke 13:25; [2 Tim. 2:19] ^v Ps. 5:5; 6:8 ^w; [Matt. 25:41]; Luke 13:27
²⁴ ^w Matt. 7:24-27; Luke 6:47-49
²⁸ ^x Matt. 13:54; Mark 1:22; 6:2; Luke 4:32; John 7:46
²⁹ ^y [John 7:46]

CHAPTER 8

² ^a Matt. 8:2-4; Mark 1:40-45; Luke 5:12-14 ^b Matt. 2:11; 9:18; 15:25; John 9:38; Acts 10:25
³ ^c Matt. 11:5; Luke 4:27
⁴ ^d Matt. 9:30; Mark 5:43; Luke 4:41; 8:56; 9:21

demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ ²³And “then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; ^vdepart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’

Parable of the Two Builders

Luke 6:47-49

²⁴“Therefore ^wwhoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: ²⁵and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock.

²⁶“But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: ²⁷and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall.”

Response to the Sermon

²⁸And so it was, when Jesus had ended these sayings, that ^xthe people were astonished at His teaching, ²⁹^yfor He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.

The Leper Is Cleansed

Mark 1:40-44; Luke 5:12-14

8 When He had come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed Him. ²^aAnd behold, a leper came and ^bworshiped Him, saying, “Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean.”

³Then Jesus put out His hand and touched him, saying, “I am willing; be cleansed.” Immediately his leprosy ^cwas cleansed.

⁴And Jesus said to him, ^d“See that you

7:12 The phrase **the Law and the Prophets** echoes 5:17. This so-called “Golden Rule” is the practical application of Lev. 19:18: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

7:15–20 Beware of false prophets: Deuteronomy 13:1–11; 18:20–22 provide information on discerning and responding to false prophets. The way to tell false teachers from teachers of truth is **by their fruits**. *Fruits* here refers to more than their deeds; it includes their doctrine (see 16:12; 1 John 4:1–3). A person speaking in the name of God is to be tested by the doctrines of Scripture. The same principle still holds true today. Speakers and teachers should be tested against the truths in God’s Word (see Jude 3; Rev. 22:18, 19).

7:21–23 Because so **many** people teach the wrong way, there is a tendency to ask how so many people could be wrong. Such doubts are especially strong when false teachers prophesy, cast out demons, and perform wonders in Jesus’ **name**. However, it is important to remember that the Word of God is superior to any miracle.

7:24–27 The key difference in the two houses is not their external appearance. Pharisees and scribes may seem to be as righteous as the heirs of the kingdom. The key in the story is the foundations. The **house on the rock** pictures a life founded on a proper relationship to Christ (16:18; 1 Cor. 10:4; 1 Pet. 2:4–8). It will stand the

test of Christ’s judgment, but the **house on the sand** will fail the test (see 1 Cor. 3:12–15).

7:29 not as the scribes: Scribes would often cite authorities in order to lend credence to their statements. Jesus’ words were self-authenticating. Note His phrase “I say to you” in 5:20, 22, 26, 28, 32.

8:2, 3 Before this miracle, the only record of an Israelite being healed of leprosy was the case of Miriam in Num. 12:10–15. The phrase **if You are willing** is important because it indicates genuine faith. It does not necessarily mean that if one simply believes, God *will* do something, but that He *can* do it (see Dan. 3:17, 18). Normally, touching a leper would result in ceremonial defilement (see Lev. 14:45, 46; Num. 5:2, 3; Deut. 24:8). In this case, Jesus touched the leper, and the leper became clean.

8:4 See that you tell no one: Perhaps Jesus gave this command so that the healed person would first obey the Law before he became preoccupied with telling others about his healing. Jesus’ command to **show yourself to the priest** involved no small undertaking for the cleansed leper. He would need to make the journey from near the Sea of Galilee to Jerusalem, and there offer the sacrifice required by Moses (see Lev. 14:4–32). The purpose of Christ’s command was

tell no one; but go your way, show yourself to the priest, and offer the gift that ^eMoses ^fcommanded, as a testimony to them.”

The Centurion's Servant Is Healed

Luke 7:1-10

^{5g}Now when Jesus had entered Capernaum, a ^hcenturion came to Him, pleading with Him, ⁶saying, “Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed, dreadfully tormented.”

⁷And Jesus said to him, “I will come and heal him.”

⁸The centurion answered and said, “Lord, ⁱI am not worthy that You should come under my roof. But only ^jspeak a word, and my servant will be healed. ⁹For I also am a man under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to this *one*, ‘Go,’ and he goes; and to another, ‘Come,’ and he comes; and to my servant, ‘Do this,’ and he does *it*.”

¹⁰When Jesus heard *it*, He marveled, and said to those who followed, “Assuredly, I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel! ¹¹And I say to you that ^kmany will come from east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. ¹²But ^lthe sons of the kingdom ^mwill be cast out into outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” ¹³Then Jesus said to the centurion, “Go your way; and as you have believed, ⁿso let it be done for you.” And his servant was healed that same hour.

Peter's Mother-in-Law Is Healed

Mark 1:29-34; Luke 4:38-41

¹⁴ⁿNow when Jesus had come into Peter's house, He saw ^ohis wife's mother

⁴ ^e Lev. 14:3, 4, 10; Mark 1:44; Luke 5:14 / ^f Lev. 14:4-32; Deut. 24:8
⁵ ^g Luke 7:1-3
^h Matt. 27:54; Acts 10:1
⁸ ⁱ Luke 15:19, 21 / Ps. 107:20
¹¹ ^k [Gen. 12:3; Is. 2:2, 3; 11:10]; Mal. 1:11 ⁿ; Luke 13:29; [Acts 10:45; 11:18; 14:27; Rom. 15:9-13; Eph. 3:6]
¹² ^l [Matt. 21:43]
^m Matt. 13:42, 50; 22:13; 24:51; 25:30; Luke 13:28; 2 Pet. 2:17; Jude 13
¹⁴ ⁿ Matt. 8:14-16; Mark 1:29-31; Luke 4:38, 39 ^o 1 Cor. 9:5

lying sick with a fever. ¹⁵So He touched her hand, and the fever left her. And she arose and served ¹them.

¹⁶^pWhen evening had come, they brought to Him many who were demon-possessed. And He cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were sick, ¹⁷that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying:

*^q“He Himself took our infirmities
And bore our sicknesses.”*

Demands of Discipleship

Luke 9:57-62

¹⁸And when Jesus saw great multitudes about Him, He gave a command to depart to the other side. ¹⁹^rThen a certain scribe came and said to Him, “Teacher, I will follow You wherever You go.”

²⁰And Jesus said to him, “Foxes have holes and birds of the air *have* nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay *His* head.”

²¹^sThen another of His disciples said to Him, “Lord, ^tlet me first go and bury my father.”

²²But Jesus said to him, “Follow Me, and let the dead bury their own dead.”

The Sea Is Stilled

Mark 4:35-41; Luke 8:22-25

²³Now when He got into a boat, His disciples followed Him. ²⁴^uAnd suddenly a great tempest arose on the sea, so that the boat was covered with the waves. But He was asleep. ²⁵Then His disciples came to *Him* and awoke Him, saying, “Lord, save us! We are perishing!”

²⁶But He said to them, “Why are you fearful, O you of little faith?” Then ^vHe arose and rebuked the winds and the

¹⁵ ⁱ NU, M Him
¹⁶ ^p Mark 1:32-34; Luke 4:40, 41
¹⁷ ^q Is. 53:4; 1 Pet. 2:24 [★]
¹⁹ ^r Matt. 8:19-22; Luke 9:57, 58
²¹ ^s Luke 9:59, 60
^t 1 Kin. 19:20
²⁴ ^u Mark 4:37; Luke 8:23-25
²⁶ ^v Ps. 65:7; 89:9; 107:29

not only to obey the Law of Moses, but also to be a testimony to the religious authorities in Jerusalem that the Messiah had arrived. Jesus also commanded the man to keep quiet because He did not want the Jewish people to act too hastily on preconceived, erroneous ideas of the Messiah and His kingdom (see John 6:14, 15).

8:5-9 In the NT, centurions (officers in charge of one hundred soldiers) are consistently looked upon in a favorable light. These soldiers were the equivalent of a present-day sergeant. The centurion's response to Jesus indicated his clear understanding of **authority**. **8:10 He marveled:** Only one other time does Scripture say Jesus marveled: when His own townspeople rejected Him (Mark 6:6). **I have not found . . . not even in Israel:** This commendation of the faith of the Gentile centurion was a strong rebuke of the Jewish people. The Israelites thought that they would have priority in the coming kingdom (see Is. 45:14; Zech. 8:23; Rom. 9:3-5; Eph. 2:11, 12). Jesus made it clear that just being a physical descendant of Abraham did not guarantee entrance into His kingdom.

8:11 Sit down literally means “recline,” as at a banquet table. The coming kingdom is commonly portrayed in terms of a feast, particularly a wedding feast (see 22:1-14; Is. 25:6; Rev. 19:7-10).

8:12 Sons of the kingdom refers to the Jews who had the cov-

enants and the promises, and who should have been heirs of the kingdom. The idea that Gentiles would take their place in the coming kingdom was unthinkable to the Jews. **Outer darkness,** meaning “the darkness outside,” speaks of the experience of those who do not endure and so will not reign in the kingdom (see 22:13; Rom. 8:17; 2 Tim. 2:12, 13; 2 John 8; Rev. 3:11).

8:17 This verse quotes Is. 53:4. **took our infirmities . . . bore our sicknesses:** Jesus healed because He had compassion on the people (see 9:36; 14:14; 20:34; Mark 1:41; 5:19; Luke 7:13). Our physical infirmities are ultimately the result of the Fall with its impact on our lives through the Curse. Jesus *took our infirmities and bore our sicknesses* by suffering and dying for our sins on the Cross.

8:20 Son of Man: Jesus used this messianic title (drawn from Dan. 7:13, 14) over 80 times to refer to Himself.

8:21, 22 This passage most likely describes a follower whose father was still alive, because by Levitical law the man would not be out in public if his father had just died. His father was aged, so the man wanted to go to his home, wait for his father to die, and then follow Christ. Jesus' answer means that we must never make excuses for refusing to follow Him. There is no better time than the present.

sea, and there was a great calm. ²⁷So the men marveled, saying, ²⁸“Who can this be, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?”

Demons Are Cast into Swine

Mark 5:1-17; Luke 8:26-37

²⁸When He had come to the other side, to the country of the ³Gergesenes, there met Him two demon-possessed *men*, coming out of the tombs, exceedingly fierce, so that no one could pass that way. ²⁹And suddenly they cried out, saying, “What have we to do with You, Jesus, You Son of God? Have You come here to torment us before the time?”

³⁰Now a good way off from them there was a herd of many swine feeding. ³¹So the demons begged Him, saying, “If You cast us out, ⁴permit us to go away into the herd of swine.”

³²And He said to them, “Go.” So when they had come out, they went into the herd of swine. And suddenly the whole herd of swine ran violently down the steep place into the sea, and perished in the water.

³³Then those who kept *them* fled; and they went away into the city and told everything, including what *had happened* to the demon-possessed *men*. ³⁴And behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus. And when they saw Him, ^xthey begged Him to depart from their region.

The Paralytic Is Forgiven

Mark 2:1-12; Luke 5:17-26

⁹So He got into a boat, crossed over, ^aand came to His own city. ²^bThen behold, they brought to Him a paralytic lying on a bed. ^cWhen Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, “Son, be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven you.”

³And at once some of the scribes said within themselves, “This Man blasphemes!”

⁴But Jesus, ^dknowing their thoughts, said, “Why do you think evil in your hearts? ⁵For which is easier, to say, ‘Your

Tax Collectors

In Jesus’ day, the Roman government collected several different taxes from the people of Palestine. Tolls for transporting goods by land or sea were collected by private tax collectors, who paid a fee to the Roman government for the right to assess these levies. The tax collectors made their profits by charging a higher toll than the law required. The licensed collectors often hired minor officials called publicans to do the actual work of collecting the tolls. The publicans extracted their own wages by charging a fraction more than their employer required. The disciple Matthew was a publican who collected tolls on the road between Damascus and Acco; his booth was located just outside the city of Capernaum. Matthew also collected taxes from fishermen who worked along the Sea of Galilee and boatmen who brought their goods from cities on the other side of the lake.



A Roman relief of a tax collector
CM Dixon/Glow Images

²⁷ ² Lit. *What sort of man is this*
²⁸ ^w Mark 5:1-4;
Luke 8:26-33 ³ NU
Gadarenes
³¹ ⁴ NU *send us*
into
³⁴ ^x Deut. 5:25;
1 Kin. 17:18; Amos
7:12; Luke 5:8; Acts
16:39

CHAPTER 9

¹ ^a Matt. 4:13; 11:23;
Mark 5:21
² ^b Mark 2:3-12;
Luke 5:18-26
^c Matt. 8:10
⁴ ^d Ps. 139:2; Matt.
12:25; Mark 12:15;
Luke 5:22; 6:8; 9:47;
11:17
⁸ ^e Matt. 8:27; John
7:15 ¹ NU *were*
afraid

sins are forgiven you,’ or to say, ‘Arise and walk’? ⁶But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins”—then He said to the paralytic, “Arise, take up your bed, and go to your house.” ⁷And he arose and departed to his house.

⁸Now when the multitudes saw *it*, they ^emarveled ¹ and glorified God, who had given such power to men.

Matthew Is Called

Mark 2:14; Luke 5:27, 28

⁹^fAs Jesus passed on from there, He saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax office. And He said to him, “Follow Me.” So he arose and followed Him.

⁹ ^f Mark 2:14; Luke 5:27

8:28 The country of the Gergesenes may refer to (1) the village of Khersa, near the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee; (2) Gerasa, about 30 miles southeast of the Sea of Galilee; or (3) Gadara, about six miles away. This was Gentile territory.

8:29 We learn several things about demons in this passage: (1) they recognize the deity of Christ; (2) they are limited in their knowledge; (3) they know they will ultimately be judged by Christ (see 25:41; James 2:19; 2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6; Rev. 12:7-12); (4) they cannot act without the permission of a higher authority—Christ.

9:2 Their faith refers to the faith of the paralytic as well as that of the men who were carrying him.

9:5, 6 Jesus’ tactic caught the leaders off guard. Though these leaders might deny His ability, or right, to forgive sins, the outward

physical healing could not be denied. It was far easier to say **Your sins are forgiven you** because there would be no visible proof that the sins were forgiven. The healing of the paralytic, however, was proof that forgiveness of sins had occurred as well. Neither physical nor spiritual healing pose any difficulty for God’s Son.

9:9 Matthew is called Levi in Mark 2:14; Luke 5:27. The tax office was a toll booth set up alongside a highway to levy taxes on merchandise transported on that road. Matthew probably worked for Herod Antipas, tetrarch of Galilee. Tax collectors were considered traitors by the Jews. They were despised because they generally collected more than necessary and pocketed the difference, vastly enriching themselves.

The Disciples Eat with Sinners

Mark 2:15-17; Luke 5:29-32

¹⁰ Now it happened, as Jesus sat at the table in the house, *that* behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and sat down with Him and His disciples. ¹¹ And when the Pharisees saw *it*, they said to His disciples, “Why does your Teacher eat with ^h tax collectors and ⁱ sinners?”

¹² When Jesus heard *that*, He said to them, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. ¹³ But go and learn what *this* means: ^j *I desire mercy and not sacrifice*.’ For I did not come to call the righteous, ^k but sinners, ² to repentance.”

The Disciples Do Not Fast

Mark 2:18-22; Luke 5:33-39

¹⁴ Then the disciples of John came to Him, saying, ^l “Why do we and the Pharisees fast ³ often, but Your disciples do not fast?”

¹⁵ And Jesus said to them, “Can ^m the ⁴ friends of the bridegroom mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and ⁿ then they will fast. ¹⁶ No one puts a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old garment; for ⁵ the patch pulls away from the garment, and the tear is made worse. ¹⁷ Nor do they put new wine into old wineskins, or else the wineskins ⁶ break, the wine is spilled, and the wineskins are ruined. But they put new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved.”

Life Is Restored

Mark 5:21-43; Luke 8:40-56

¹⁸ While He spoke these things to them, behold, a ruler came and worshiped Him, saying, “My daughter has just died, but come and lay Your hand on her and she will live.” ¹⁹ So Jesus arose and followed him, and so *did* His ⁿ disciples.

²⁰ And suddenly, a woman who had a flow of blood for twelve years came from behind and ^r touched the hem of His garment. ²¹ For she said to herself, “If only I may touch His garment, I shall be made

¹⁰ ^g Mark 2:15; Luke 5:29

¹¹ ^h Matt. 11:19; Mark 2:16; Luke 5:30; 1 Tim. 1:15

¹³ ⁱ Hos. 6:6; [Mic. 6:6-8]; Matt. 12:7

^k Mark 2:17; Luke 5:32; 1 Tim. 1:15

² NU omits to repentance

¹⁴ ⁱ Mark 2:18; Luke 5:33-35; 18:12 ^j NU brackets often as disputed.

¹⁵ ^m Mark 3:29

ⁿ Acts 13:2, 3; 14:23

^l Lit. sons of the bridechamber

¹⁶ ³ Lit. that which is put on

¹⁷ ⁶ burst

¹⁸ ^g Mark 5:22-43; Luke 8:41-56

¹⁹ ^g Matt. 10:2-4

²⁰ ^g Mark 5:25; Luke 8:43 ⁷ Num. 15:38; Deut. 22:12; Matt. 14:36; 23:5; Mark 6:56

²¹ ^g Mark 5:25; Luke 8:43 ⁷ Num. 15:38; Deut. 22:12; Matt. 14:36; 23:5; Mark 6:56

²² ³ Matt. 9:29; 15:28; Mark 5:34; 10:52; Luke 7:50; 8:48; 17:19; 18:42

²³ ⁷ Mark 5:38; Luke 8:51 ² Chr. 35:25; Jer. 9:17; 16:6; Ezek. 24:17

²⁴ ^v John 11:3; Acts 20:10

²⁵ ^w Matt. 8:3, 15; Mark 1:31

²⁶ ^x Matt. 4:24; Mark 1:28, 45; Luke 4:14, 37; 5:15; 7:17

²⁷ ^y Matt. 20:29-34 ^z Matt. 15:22; Mark 10:47; Luke 18:38, 39

³⁰ ^g Matt. 8:4; Luke 5:14

³¹ ^g Mark 7:36 ⁷ Lit. made Him known

⁸ Lit. land

³² ^c Matt. 12:22, 24; Luke 11:14

³⁴ ^g Matt. 12:24; Mark 3:22; Luke 11:15; John 7:20

³⁵ ^e Matt. 4:23

⁹ NU omits among the people

³⁶ ^f Mark 6:34

⁷ NU, M harassed

well.” ²² But Jesus turned around, and when He saw her He said, “Be of good cheer, daughter; ^s your faith has made you well.” And the woman was made well from that hour.

²³ When Jesus came into the ruler’s house, and saw ^u the flute players and the noisy crowd wailing, ²⁴ He said to them, ^v “Make room, for the girl is not dead, but sleeping.” And they ridiculed Him. ²⁵ But when the crowd was put outside, He went in and ^w took her by the hand, and the girl arose. ²⁶ And the ^x report of this went out into all that land.

Sight Is Restored

²⁷ When Jesus departed from there, ^y two blind men followed Him, crying out and saying, ^z “Son of David, have mercy on us!”

²⁸ And when He had come into the house, the blind men came to Him. And Jesus said to them, “Do you believe that I am able to do this?”

They said to Him, “Yes, Lord.”

²⁹ Then He touched their eyes, saying, “According to your faith let it be to you.”

³⁰ And their eyes were opened. And Jesus sternly warned them, saying, ^a “See that no one knows *it*.” ³¹ But when they had departed, they ⁷ spread the news about Him in all that ⁸ country.

Speech Is Restored

³² As they went out, behold, they brought to Him a man, mute and demon-possessed. ³³ And when the demon was cast out, the mute spoke. And the multitudes marveled, saying, “It was never seen like this in Israel!”

³⁴ But the Pharisees said, ^d “He casts out demons by the ruler of the demons.”

The Need for Delegation of Power

³⁵ Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, ^e teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease ⁹ among the people. ³⁶ But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were ⁱ weary and scattered,

9:13 Jesus quoted Hos. 6:6 (and again in 12:7) to make the point that God is more interested in a person’s loyal love than in the observance of external rituals. Jesus refers ironically to the Pharisees as **the righteous**. They were not righteous; that was only how they perceived themselves because of their pious and scrupulous law-keeping (see Phil. 3:6). But Jesus explained, quoting from the familiar words of an OT prophet, that God had already judged sacrifices without mercy as worthless.

9:15 Jesus used the picture of marriage to illustrate God’s relationship with Israel (see Is. 54:1–8; Jer. 3:1–20; Hos. 2:1–3:5). In referring

to Himself as a **bridegroom**, Jesus was describing Himself as the Messiah. **Will be taken away from them** anticipates the violent death the Lord would experience.

9:30 See that no one knows it: Jesus wanted to discourage the masses from coming to Him for physical healing alone, because His primary purpose was spiritual healing. Physical healing simply served to authenticate His claim to be the promised Messiah.

9:34 The Pharisees could not deny the reality of the miracles, so they attributed them to **the ruler of the demons**. The same rationalization is found in 12:24.

^glike sheep having no shepherd. ³⁷Then He said to His disciples, ^h“The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. ³⁸Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.”

The Twelve Apostles Are Sent

Mark 6:7; Luke 9:1

10 And ^awhen He had called His twelve disciples to *Him*, He gave them power *over* unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease. ²Now the names of the twelve apostles are these: first, Simon, ^bwho is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the *son* of Zebedee, and John his brother; ³Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the *son* of Alphaeus, and ¹Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus; ^{4c}Simon the ²Cananite, and Judas ^dIschariot, who also betrayed Him.

The Twelve Apostles Are Instructed

Mark 6:8-13; Luke 9:2-6, 12:2-10

⁵These twelve Jesus sent out and commanded them, saying: ^e“Do not go into the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter a city of ^fthe Samaritans. ^{6g}But go rather to the ^hlost sheep of the house of Israel. ⁷ⁱAnd as you go, preach, saying, ^j“The kingdom of heaven ³is at hand.” ⁸Heal the sick, ⁴cleanse the lepers, ⁵raise the dead, cast out demons. ^kFreely you have received, freely give. ^{9l}Provide neither gold nor silver nor ^mcopper in your money belts, ¹⁰nor bag for *your* journey, nor two tunics, nor sandals, nor staffs; ⁿfor a worker is worthy of his food.

^{11o}“Now whatever city or town you enter, inquire who in it is worthy, and stay there till you go out. ¹²And when you go into a household, greet it. ^{13p}If the household is worthy, let your peace

³⁶ ^gNum. 27:17; 1 Kin. 22:17; Ezek. 34:5; Zech. 10:2; Mark 6:34
³⁷ ^hLuke 10:2; John 4:35
³⁸ ⁱ[Matt. 28:19, 20; Eph. 4:11, 12]; 2 Thess. 3:1

CHAPTER 10

¹ ^a Mark 3:13; Luke 6:13
² ^b John 1:42
³ ⁱ NU omits *Lebbaeus, whose surname was*
⁴ ^c Luke 6:15; Acts 1:13 ^d Matt. 26:14; Luke 22:3; John 13:2, 26 ² NU *Cananaean*
⁵ ^e Matt. 4:15
⁶ ^f 2 Kin. 17:24; Luke 9:52; 10:33; 17:16; John 4:9
⁷ ^g Matt. 15:24; Acts 13:46 ^h Is. 53:6; Jer. 50:6
⁸ ⁱ Luke 9:2 / Matt. 3:2; Luke 10:9 ³ *has drawn near*
⁹ ^j [Acts 8:18] ⁴ NU *raise the dead, cleanse the lepers*
⁵ ^k M omits *raise the dead*
⁹ ^l 1 Sam. 9:7; Mark 6:8 ^m Mark 6:8
¹⁰ ⁿ Luke 10:7; [1 Cor. 9:4-14]; 1 Tim. 5:18
¹¹ ^o Luke 10:8
¹³ ^p Luke 10:5 ^q Ps. 35:13
¹⁴ ^r Mark 6:11; Luke 9:5 ^s Neh. 5:13; Luke 10:10, 11; Acts 13:51
¹⁵ ^t Matt. 11:22, 24
¹⁶ ^u Luke 10:3
^v 2 Cor. 12:16; Eph. 5:15; Col. 4:5 ^w [Phil. 2:14-16] ⁶ *innocent*
¹⁷ ^x Matt. 23:34; Mark 13:9; Luke 12:11 ^y Acts 5:40; 22:19; 26:11
¹⁸ ^z Acts 12:1;

come upon it. ^qBut if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you. ^{14r}And whoever will not receive you nor hear your words, when you depart from that house or city, ^sshake off the dust from your feet. ¹⁵Assuredly, I say to you, ^tit will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city!

^{16u}“Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves. ^vTherefore be wise as serpents and ^wharmless ⁶as doves. ¹⁷But beware of men, for ^xthey will deliver you up to councils and ^yscourge you in their synagogues. ^{18z}You will be brought before governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles. ^{19a}But when they deliver you up, do not worry about how or what you should speak. For ^bit will be given to you in that hour what you should speak; ^{20c}for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you.

^{21d}“Now brother will deliver up brother to death, and a father *his* child; and children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death. ²²And ^eyou will be hated by all for My name’s sake. ^fBut he who endures to the end will be saved. ^{23g}When they persecute you in this city, flee to another. For assuredly, I say to you, you will not have ^hgone through the cities of Israel ⁱbefore the Son of Man comes.

^{24j}“A disciple is not above *his* teacher, nor a servant above his master. ²⁵It is enough for a disciple that he be like his teacher, and a servant like his master. If ^kthey have called the master of the house

2 Tim. 4:16 ¹⁹ ^a Mark 13:11; Luke 12:11, 12; 21:14, 15 ^b Ex. 4:12; Jer. 1:7 ²⁰ ^c 2 Sam. 23:2; [2 Tim. 4:17] ²¹ ^d Mic. 7:6; Luke 21:16 ²² ^e Matt. 24:9; Luke 21:17; John 15:18 ^f [Dan. 12:12]; Matt. 24:13; Mark 13:13 ²³ ^g Matt. 2:13; Acts 8:1 ^h [Matt. 24:14; Mark 13:10] ⁱ Matt. 16:28 ²⁴ ^j Luke 6:40; John 15:20 ²⁵ ^k Mark 3:22; Luke 11:15, 18, 19; John 8:48, 52

9:37, 38 The harvest will mark the beginning of the kingdom age. For the lost it will mean doom; for the saved it will mean blessing.

10:2 The twelve are called “disciples” in v. 1; here they are called **apostles**. The word *apostle* emphasizes delegated authority (see 1 Thess. 2:6); the term *disciple* emphasizes learning and following. Because the disciples had been given authority, they were now called apostles.

10:2-4 The disciples are named in pairs and probably were sent out that way (see Mark 6:7).

10:5, 6 While He was on earth, Jesus focused His ministry on the Jews. After His resurrection, He commanded His disciples to take the Good News to all the world. Paul used the same strategy. In every city he visited, he preached first to Jews and then to the Gentiles (see Rom. 1:16).

10:9, 10 The disciples’ mission was short-term. In essence, they were to do a national religious survey to determine the people’s response to Jesus as Messiah. For the Twelve to cover an area that is at most 75 miles by 125 miles would not take very long. Thus they did not need extensive provisions.

10:11 Because the testimony of the apostles was at stake, they were to seek out homes with good reputations. Furthermore, they were not to be constantly trying to find a more desirable residence.

10:12, 13 To greet a household was to pronounce a blessing on it, “Peace to you.” These messengers were to assume the best of their hosts when they arrived; however, if the home proved to be unworthy (the occupants rejected the message of the apostles), the apostles were to remove the pronouncement of blessing.

10:15 This verse, together with 11:22, 24, implies that there will be degrees of judgment and torment for the lost.

10:16 Snakes are commonly thought of as **wise**, perhaps because they are silent and dangerous, or because of the way they move (see also Gen. 3:1). **In the midst of wolves** meant that the apostles would be exposed to hatred and violence from men. **Harmless** literally means “unmixed,” which may also indicate purity and innocence.

10:18 God would use Jewish rejection and persecution of the messengers to bring the gospel message to Gentiles. This occurred with Paul in Acts 21:26-36; 24:1-21; 25:13-26:32.

⁷Beelzebub, how much more *will they call* those of his household! ²⁶Therefore do not fear them. ¹For there is nothing covered that will not be revealed, and hidden that will not be known.

²⁷“Whatever I tell you in the dark, ^m speak in the light; and what you hear in the ear, preach on the housetops. ²⁸” And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather ^o fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in ⁸hell. ²⁹Are not two ^p sparrows sold for a ⁹ copper coin? And not one of them falls to the ground apart from your Father’s will. ³⁰” But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. ³¹Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows.

³²” “Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, ^s him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. ³³” But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven.

³⁴” “Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword. ³⁵For I have come to ^v ‘*set¹ a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law*’; ³⁶and ^w ‘*a man’s enemies will be those of his own household*’.” ³⁷” He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me.

²⁵ ⁷ NU, M *Beelzebul*; a Philistine deity, 2 Kin. 1:2, 3
²⁶ ¹ Mark 4:22; Luke 8:17; 12:2, 3; [1 Cor. 4:5]
²⁷ ^m Luke 12:3; Acts 5:20
²⁸ ⁿ Luke 12:4; [1 Pet. 3:14] ^o Is. 8:13; Matt. 5:22; Luke 12:5 ⁸ Gr. *Gehenna*
²⁹ ^p Luke 12:6, 7
³⁰ ⁹ Gr. *assarion*, a coin worth about 1/16 of a denarius
³⁰ ⁹ 1 Sam. 14:45; 2 Sam. 14:11; 1 Kin. 1:52; Luke 21:18; Acts 27:34
³² ^r Ps. 119:46; Luke 12:8; [Rom. 10:9]
³ [Rev. 3:5]
³³ ⁱ [Mark 8:38; Luke 9:26]; 2 Tim. 2:12
³⁴ ^u [Luke 12:49]
³⁵ ^v Mic. 7:6 [☆]; Matt. 10:21; Luke 12:53 ¹ *alienate a man from*
³⁶ ^w Ps. 41:9; 55:13; John 13:18 [☆]
³⁷ ^x Deut. 33:9; Luke 14:26
³⁸ ^y [Matt. 16:24; Mark 8:34; Luke 9:23; 14:27]
³⁹ ^z Matt. 16:25; Mark 8:35; Luke 9:24; 17:33; John 12:25

And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. ³⁸” And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. ³⁹” He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it.

⁴⁰ ^a “He who receives you receives Me, and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me. ⁴¹” He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet’s reward. And he who receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man’s reward. ⁴²” And whoever gives one of these little ones only a cup of cold *water* in the name of a disciple, assuredly, I say to you, he shall by no means lose his reward.”

11 Now it came to pass, when Jesus finished commanding His twelve disciples, that He departed from there to ^a teach and to preach in their cities.

Rejection of John the Baptist
Luke 7:19-30

² ^b And when John had heard ^c in prison about the works of Christ, he ¹ sent two

⁴⁰ ^a Mark 9:37; Luke 9:48; John 12:44; Gal. 4:14 ⁴¹ ^b 1 Kin. 17:10; 2 Kin. 4:8 ⁴² ^c [Matt. 25:40]; Mark 9:41; Heb. 6:10
CHAPTER 11 ¹ ^a Matt. 9:35; Luke 23:5 ² ^b Luke 7:18-35
^c Matt. 4:12; 14:3; Mark 6:17; Luke 9:7 ¹ NU sent by his

10:28 Fear Him refers not to Satan, but to God. **Destroy** does not indicate annihilation, but ruination. The same verb is used in 9:17 of wineskins being ruined.

10:32, 33 Every act of our lives will be evaluated at the judgment seat of Christ (see 2 Cor. 5:10). To refuse to speak up for Christ because of intimidation or persecution will result in the believer’s loss of reward and consequent loss of glory in the kingdom (see Rom. 8:17; 2 Tim. 2:12).

10:34–36 To the disappointment of many Christians throughout the ages, it has often been those closest to them who have rejected them and their message, even to the point of betrayal. The Lord Himself experienced these feelings with the betrayal of Judas and the denial of Peter.

10:37 not worthy of Me: Those who will be glorified with Christ in His kingdom reign are those who have suffered for Him (see Rom. 8:17; 2 Tim. 2:12). Those who refuse that kind of discipleship will experience great loss (see 1 Cor. 3:15; 2 Cor. 5:10; Rev. 3:11, 12).

10:38 Taking up a **cross** here stands for commitment to the extent of being willing to die for something.

10:42 These little ones refers to the disciples. **reward:** Jesus does not want His disciples to lose the joys of the next life by focusing on the pleasures of this world.

11:2 John probably expected the Messiah immediately to judge Israel and establish His kingdom (3:2–12). Christ’s failure to do what John anticipated may have planted seeds of doubt in John’s mind about whether Jesus was the Messiah.

Beelzebub	Christ
(Gk. <i>Beelzeboul</i>) (10:25; 12:24–27; Mark 3:22; Luke 11:15–19) Strong’s #954	(Gk. <i>Christos</i>) (11:2; 16:16; John 1:41; Acts 2:36; 2 Cor. 1:21) Strong’s #5547
Most of the Greek manuscripts read <i>Beelzeboul</i> , which is probably the right form of this word. The other reading probably came from the OT word Baal-Zebub—an idol, the god of Ekron (see 2 Kin. 1:2). All idolatry was regarded as devil worship (Lev. 17:7; Deut. 32:17; Ps. 106:37; 1 Cor. 10:20), so there seems to have been something peculiarly satanic about the worship of this hateful god, which caused his name to be a synonym of Satan. Though we nowhere read that Jesus was actually called Beelzebub, He was charged with being in league with Satan under that hateful name (12:24, 26), and more than once was charged with being possessed by “an unclean spirit” or “demon” (Mark 3:30; John 7:20; 8:48).	Many speak of Jesus Christ, but do not realize that the title Christ is in essence a confession of faith. The word literally means “the Anointed One.” In the OT, forms of its Hebrew equivalent <i>messiah</i> were applied to prophets (1 Kin. 19:16), priests (Lev. 4:5, 16), and kings (1 Sam. 24:6, 10), in the sense that all of them were anointed with oil, the symbol that God had set them aside for their respective offices. But the preeminent Anointed One would be the promised Messiah, for He would be anointed by God’s Spirit to be the ultimate Prophet, Priest, and King (Is. 61:1; John 3:34). With his dramatic confession, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God” (16:16), Peter plainly identified Jesus as the promised Messiah.

of his disciples ³ and said to Him, “Are You ^d the Coming One, or do we look for another?”

⁴ Jesus answered and said to them, “Go and tell John the things which you hear and see: ^{5e} *The blind see and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up and ^f the poor have the gospel preached to them.* ⁶ And blessed is he who is not ^g offended because of Me.”

^{7h} As they departed, Jesus began to say to the multitudes concerning John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to see? ⁱ A reed shaken by the wind? ⁸ But what did you go out to see? A man clothed in soft garments? Indeed, those who wear soft *clothing* are in kings’ houses. ⁹ But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I say to you, ^j and more than a prophet. ¹⁰ For this is *he* of whom it is written:

*^k Behold, I send My messenger before
Your face,
Who will prepare Your way before
You.*

¹¹ “Assuredly, I say to you, among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. ^{12l} And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force. ^{13m} For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. ¹⁴ And if you are willing to receive *it*, he is ⁿ Elijah who is to come. ^{15o} He who has ears to hear, let him hear!

Rejection by Jesus’ Generation

Luke 7:31-35

^{16p} “But to what shall I liken this generation? It is like children sitting in the

^{3 d} Gen. 49:10; Num. 24:17; Deut. 18:15, 18; Dan. 9:24; John 6:14
^{5 e} Is. 29:18; 35:4-6; John 2:23 ^f Ps. 22:26; Is. 61:1; Luke 4:18; James 2:5
^{6 g} Is. 8:14, 15; [Rom. 9:32]; 1 Pet. 2:8
^{7 h} Luke 7:24 ⁱ [Eph. 4:14]
^{9 j} Matt. 14:5; 21:26; Luke 1:76; 20:6
^{10 k} Mal. 3:1 ★;
Mark 1:2; Luke 1:76
^{12 l} Luke 16:16
^{13 m} Mal. 4:4-6
^{14 n} Mal. 4:5; Matt. 17:10-13; Mark 9:11-13; Luke 1:17; John 1:21
^{15 o} Matt. 13:9; Luke 8:8; Rev. 2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13
^{16 p} Luke 7:31

^{17 2} Lit. *beat your breast*
^{19 q} Matt. 9:10
^r Luke 7:35; John 2:1-11 ³ *wine drinker* ⁴ *NU works*
^{20 s} Luke 10:13-15, 18
^{21 t} Jon. 3:6-8
^{22 u} Matt. 10:15; 11:24
^{23 v} Is. 14:13; Lam. 2:1; Ezek. 26:20; 31:14; 32:18, 24
⁵ *NU will you be exalted to heaven?*
No, you will be
^{24 w} Matt. 10:15
^{25 x} Luke 10:21, 22
^y Ps. 8:2; 1 Cor. 1:19; [2 Cor. 3:14] ^z Matt. 16:17

marketplaces and calling to their companions, ¹⁷ and saying:

*‘We played the flute for you,
And you did not dance;
We mourned to you,
And you did not ^{2l} lament.’*

¹⁸ For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, ‘He has a demon.’ ¹⁹ The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, ‘Look, a glutton and a ³ winebibber, ^q a friend of tax collectors and sinners!’ ^r But wisdom is justified by her ⁴ children.”

Rejection of Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum

Luke 10:12-15

^{20s} Then He began to rebuke the cities in which most of His mighty works had been done, because they did not repent: ²¹ “Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago ^t in sackcloth and ashes. ²² But I say to you, ^u it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you. ²³ And you, Capernaum, ^v who ⁵ are exalted to heaven, will be brought down to Hades; for if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. ²⁴ But I say to you ^w that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for you.”

Invitation to Come to Jesus

^{25x} At that time Jesus answered and said, “I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that ^y You have hidden these things from *the* wise and prudent ^z and have revealed them to babes. ²⁶ Even

11:3 The Coming One is a title for the Messiah (see Ps. 118:26; Mark 11:9; Luke 13:35; 19:38; Heb. 10:37).

11:7–15 In the light of John’s question, some may have questioned his commitment to the Messiah. This may have prompted Jesus’ supportive statements about John.

11:9, 10 John was **more than a prophet** in that he alone was the forerunner who announced the coming and presence of the Messiah. In doing so, he fulfilled Mal. 3:1.

11:11 Born of women means that John had a human mother. A very similar expression is used of the Lord Jesus in Gal. 4:4. The **least in the kingdom** refers to those who will be living in the coming kingdom. As great as John was during Jesus’ day, his position as forerunner was inferior to that of the least person in the kingdom of heaven, because that person will have seen and understood the finished work of Christ on the Cross and through His resurrection—events that John would not live to see. Little wonder that Jesus gave such strong exhortations in 10:32–42 not to miss out on His future reign.

11:12 The violent take it by force in this context probably means that violent people forcibly oppose the kingdom with their hostility (23:13). As Christ’s kingdom advances, so do the attacks against it.

11:13 The prophets and the law refers to the OT, which anticipated the coming of the Messiah. Because John the Baptist was the forerunner of Christ, the OT anticipated John’s ministry as well.

11:16–19 Because of their hardness of heart, Israel failed to accept either the ministry of John the Baptist or that of the Lord Jesus Christ.

11:21 Woe: Jesus pronounced a direct judgment on Israel. **Chorazin** was a village about two and a half miles north of Capernaum; **Bethsaida** was about three miles east. Both of these cities were in Galilee and both had witnessed Jesus’ ministry firsthand. They would be judged for seeing the Messiah and then rejecting Him.

11:23 Capernaum, on the north shore of the Sea of Galilee, was the base of operations for Christ’s ministry. In 9:1, Capernaum is called “His own city.”

so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight. ^{27a}All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father. ^bNor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and *the one* to whom the Son wills to reveal *Him*. ²⁸Come to ^cMe, all *you* who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹Take My yoke upon you ^dand learn from Me, for I am ^egentle and ^flowly in heart, ^gand you will find rest for your souls. ^{30g}For My yoke *is* easy and My burden *is* light.”

Controversy over Sabbath-Labor

Mark 2:23-28; Luke 6:1-5

12 At that time ^aJesus went through the grainfields on the Sabbath. And His disciples were hungry, and began to ^bpluck heads of grain and to eat. ²And when the Pharisees saw *it*, they said to Him, “Look, Your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath!” ³But He said to them, “Have you not read ^cwhat David did when he was hungry, he and those who were with him: ^dhow he entered the house of God and ate ^dthe showbread which was not lawful for him to eat, nor for those who were with him, ^ebut only for the priests? ⁵Or have you not read in the ^flaw that on the Sabbath the priests in the temple ¹profane the Sabbath, and are blameless? ⁶Yet I say to you that in this place there is ^g*One* greater than the temple. ⁷But if you had known what *this* means, ^h*‘I desire mercy and not sacrifice,’* you would not have condemned the guiltless. ⁸For the Son of Man is Lord ²even of the Sabbath.”

Controversy over Sabbath-Healing

Mark 3:1-5; Luke 6:6-10

⁹ⁱNow when He had departed from there, He went into their synagogue. ¹⁰And behold, there was a man who had a withered hand. And they asked Him,

27 ^a Matt. 28:18; Luke 10:22; John 3:35; 13:3; 1 Cor. 15:27 ^b John 1:18; 6:46; 10:15
28 ^c [John 6:35-37]
29 ^d [John 13:15]; Eph. 4:2; [Phil. 2:5; 1 Pet. 2:21; 1 John 2:6] ^e Zech. 9:9; [Phil. 2:7, 8] ^f Jer. 6:16 ^g meek
30 ^g [1 John 5:3]

CHAPTER 12

1 ^a Mark 2:23; Luke 6:1-5 ^b Deut. 23:25
3 ^c Ex. 31:15; 35:2; 1 Sam. 21:6
4 ^d Ex. 25:30; Lev. 24:5 ^e Ex. 29:32; Lev. 8:31; 24:9
5 ^f Num. 28:9; [John 7:22] ¹ desecrate
6 ^g [2 Chr. 6:18; Is. 66:1, 2; Mal. 3:1]; Matt. 12:41, 42
7 ^h [1 Sam. 15:22; Hos. 6:6; Mic. 6:6-8]; Matt. 9:13
8 ² NU, M omit *even*
9 ⁱ Mark 3:1-6; Luke 6:6-11

10 ⁱ Luke 13:14; 14:3; John 9:16
14 ^k Ps. 2:2; Matt. 27:1; Mark 3:6; [Luke 6:11]; John 5:18; 10:39; 11:53
15 ¹ Matt. 10:23; Mark 3:7 ^m Matt. 19:2 ³ NU brackets *multitudes* as disputed.
16 ⁿ Matt. 8:4; 9:30; 17:9
18 ^o Is. 42:1-4; 49:3
^p Matt. 3:17; 17:5
22 ^q Matt. 9:32; [Mark 3:11]; Luke 11:14, 15

saying, ^j“Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?”—that they might accuse Him.

¹¹Then He said to them, “What man is there among you who has one sheep, and if it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will not lay hold of it and lift *it* out? ¹²Of how much more value then is a man than a sheep? Therefore it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath.” ¹³Then He said to the man, “Stretch out your hand.” And he stretched *it* out, and it was restored as whole as the other.

Pharisees Plan to Destroy Christ

Mark 3:6-12; Luke 6:11

¹⁴Then ^kthe Pharisees went out and plotted against Him, how they might destroy Him.

¹⁵But when Jesus knew *it*, ^lHe withdrew from there. ^mAnd great ³multitudes followed Him, and He healed them all. ¹⁶Yet He ⁿwarned them not to make Him known, ¹⁷that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying:

18 “Behold!^o My Servant whom I have chosen,
My Beloved^p in whom My soul is well pleased!
I will put My Spirit upon Him,
And He will declare justice to the Gentiles.
19 He will not quarrel nor cry out,
Nor will anyone hear His voice in the streets.
20 A bruised reed He will not break,
And smoking flax He will not quench,
Till He sends forth justice to victory;
21 And in His name Gentiles will trust.”

Pharisees Blaspheme the Holy Spirit

Mark 3:22-27; Luke 11:17-23

^{22q}Then one was brought to Him who was demon-possessed, blind and mute;

11:28 You who labor and are heavy laden describes the Jews as suffering under a load of religious responsibilities laid on them by priests, rabbis, scribes, and Pharisees (see 23:4; Acts 15:10). **Rest** is relief from this burden.

12:2 The way Jesus observed the Sabbath was a primary point of contention between Himself and the religious authorities. The Pharisees and scribes recognized that the Sabbath was the sign of the Mosaic covenant. Therefore, to desecrate the Sabbath was to flaunt disobedience to the entire Law of Moses (see Num. 15:30–36). While reaping was forbidden on the Sabbath (Ex. 34:21), the disciples were picking grain to eat, not for profit. They were not breaking God’s law. The Pharisees had established 39 categories of actions to be forbidden on the Sabbath, and according to them, the disciples were “harvesting” and therefore breaking the Sabbath. The Pharisees were trying to make Jesus into a lawbreaker and accuse Him of wrongdoing.

12:5 profane the Sabbath: On the Sabbath the priests carried out their work of ministry, showing that their official service had priority over the normal Sabbath observance.

12:7 For a similar use of Hos. 6:6, see 9:13.

12:14 Because of Jesus’ view of the Sabbath, the Pharisees concluded that He was trying to overthrow the entire Mosaic system, and therefore had to be destroyed. Their antagonism toward Jesus was growing.

12:15 withdrew: From this point on, the Lord’s ministry was characterized by opposition, withdrawal from that opposition, and continued ministry to His followers.

12:18–21 This quotation of Is. 42:1–4 shows that the Messiah’s quiet withdrawal was in keeping with the prophet’s portrayal of Him. The most significant aspect of this prophecy is that Jesus’ reserve in the face of Jewish opposition would lead to blessings on the Gentiles.

and He healed him, so that the ⁴blind and mute man both spoke and saw. ²³And all the multitudes were amazed and said, “Could this be the ⁷Son of David?”

²⁴sNow when the Pharisees heard *it* they said, “This *fellow* does not cast out demons except by ⁵Beelzebul, the ruler of the demons.”

²⁵But Jesus ¹knew their thoughts, and said to them: “Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself will not stand. ²⁶If Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then will his kingdom stand? ²⁷And if I cast out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your sons cast *them* out? Therefore they shall be your judges. ²⁸But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, ^usurely the kingdom of God has come upon you. ²⁹vOr how can one enter a strong man’s house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man? And then he will plunder his house. ³⁰He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters abroad.

Pharisees Commit the Unpardonable Sin

Mark 3:28, 29

³¹“Therefore I say to you, ^wevery sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, ^xbut the blasphemy *against* the Spirit will not be forgiven men. ³²Anyone who ^yspeaks a word against the Son of Man, ^zit will be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the *age* to come.

³³“Either make the tree good and ^aits fruit good, or else make the tree bad and its fruit bad; for a tree is known by *its* fruit. ³⁴bBrood ⁶of vipers! How can you, being evil, speak good things? ^cFor out of the abundance of the heart the mouth

²² ⁴NU omits *blind and*

²³ ^rMatt. 9:27; 21:9

²⁴ ^sMatt. 9:34;

Mark 3:22; Luke

11:15 ⁵NU, M

Beelzebul, a

Philistine deity

²⁵ ^tMatt. 9:4; John

2:25; Rev. 2:23

²⁸ ^u[Dan. 2:44;

7:14; Luke 1:33];

11:20; [17:20, 21;

1 John 3:8]

²⁹ ^vIs. 49:24; [Luke

11:21–23]

³¹ ^wMark 3:28–30;

Luke 12:10; [Heb.

6:4–6; 10:26, 29;

1 John 5:16] ^xActs

7:51

³² ^yMatt. 11:19;

13:55; John 7:12, 52

^z1 Tim. 1:13

³³ ^aMatt. 7:16–18;

Luke 6:43, 44; [John

15:4–7]

³⁴ ^bMatt. 3:7;

23:33; Luke 3:7

^c1 Sam. 2:4; 13; Is.

32:6; [Matt. 15:18];

Luke 6:45; Eph.

4:29; [James 3:2–12]

⁶*Offspring*

³⁵ ⁷NU, M omit of

his heart

³⁸ ^dMatt. 16:1;

Mark 8:11; Luke

11:16; John 2:18;

1 Cor. 1:22

³⁹ ^eIs. 57:3; Matt.

16:4; Mark 8:38;

[Luke 11:29–32];

John 4:48

⁴⁰ ^fJohn 1:17 [☆];

Luke 24:46; Acts

10:40; 1 Cor. 15:4

⁴¹ ^gJohn 3:5; Luke

11:32 ^hJer. 3:11;

Ezek. 16:51; [Rom.

2:27] ⁱJohn 3:5

⁴² ^j1 Kin. 10:1–13;

2 Chr. 9:1; Luke

11:31

⁴³ ^kLuke 11:24–26

^l[Job 1:7; 1 Pet. 5:8]

⁴⁵ ^mMark 5:9;

Luke 11:26; [Heb.

6:4–8; 10:26; 2 Pet.

2:20–22]

speaks. ³⁵A good man out of the good treasure ⁷of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things. ³⁶But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment. ³⁷For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.”

Pharisees Demand a Sign

Luke 11:24–26, 29–32

³⁸dThen some of the scribes and Pharisees answered, saying, “Teacher, we want to see a sign from You.”

³⁹But He answered and said to them, “An evil and ^eadulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. ⁴⁰fFor as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. ⁴¹gThe men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and ^hcondemn it, ⁱbecause they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah *is* here. ⁴²jThe queen of the South will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and indeed a greater than Solomon *is* here.

⁴³k“When an unclean spirit goes out of a man, ^lhe goes through dry places, seeking rest, and finds none. ⁴⁴Then he says, ‘I will return to my house from which I came.’ And when he comes, he finds *it* empty, swept, and put in order. ⁴⁵Then he goes and takes with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter and dwell there; ^mand the last *state* of that man is worse than the first. So shall it also be with this wicked generation.”

12:23 Could this be the Son of David may also be translated “This one can’t be the Son of David, can he?” The question expected a negative answer.

12:25–28 Jesus’ defense was in three parts. First, a kingdom, city, or even a family cannot continue to exist if it is divided against itself. Second, when the followers of the Pharisees exorcised demons, the Pharisees claimed it was accomplished by the power of God. Third, the casting out of demons by the Messiah indicated the nearness of the kingdom.

12:29 This verse shows how Jesus the King was confronting the kingdom of Satan. In His exorcisms, Jesus was binding Satan bit by bit; when He comes suddenly to establish His kingdom, He will bind Satan quickly and completely (see Rev. 20:1–10).

12:31, 32 The **sin** which **will not be forgiven** is the stubborn refusal to heed the Holy Spirit’s conviction and accept the forgiveness that Christ offers. Particularly in reference to the leaders of Israel, Jesus had offered them all the proof that could be expected—the ministry of John, the testimony of the Father, the prophecies of the

OT, His own testimony, and the substantiation of the Holy Spirit. Because the leaders rejected all proofs regarding Jesus as Messiah, nothing else would be given.

12:39 The demand for signs is evidence of unbelief rather than faith. The sign of the prophet Jonah is explained in v. 40 as the Resurrection.

12:40 Three days and three nights does not necessarily indicate three full days. In ancient Israel, a part of a day was considered a whole day (see Esth. 4:16; 5:1); so a period of 26 hours could be called “three days.”

12:41, 42 The men of Nineveh and the queen of the South represent Gentiles who came to faith because of the words of God’s prophets and kings, lesser people than Jesus Christ, God’s only Son. **12:43–45** This difficult analogy most likely describes the moral reformation that took place in Israel as a result of the ministries of John the Baptist and Jesus. The reformation, however, was not genuine (3:7–10); therefore, Israel’s unbelief and hardness of heart were worse than before.

*Jesus and the True Brethren**Mark 3:31-35*

⁴⁶While He was still talking to the multitudes, ^ahehold, His mother and ^bbrothers stood outside, seeking to speak with Him. ⁴⁷Then one said to Him, “Look, ^pYour mother and Your brothers are standing outside, seeking to speak with You.”

⁴⁸But He answered and said to the one who told Him, “Who is My mother and who are My brothers?” ⁴⁹And He stretched out His hand toward His disciples and said, “Here are My mother and My ^qbrothers!” ⁵⁰For ^rwhoever does the will of My Father in heaven is My brother and sister and mother.”

*Parable of the Soils**Mark 4:1-20; Luke 8:4-15*

13 On the same day Jesus went out of the house ^aand sat by the sea. ^{2b}And great multitudes were gathered together to Him, so that ^cHe got into a boat and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore.

³Then He spoke many things to them in parables, saying: ^d“Behold, a sower went out to sow. ⁴And as he sowed, some *seed* fell by the wayside; and the birds came and devoured them. ⁵Some fell on stony places, where they did not have much earth; and they immediately sprang up because they had no depth of earth. ⁶But when the sun was up they were scorched, and because they had no root they withered away. ⁷And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up and choked them. ⁸But others fell on good ground and yielded a crop: some ^ea hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. ^{9f}He who has ears to hear, let him hear!”

¹⁰And the disciples came and said to Him, “Why do You speak to them in parables?”

¹¹He answered and said to them, “Because ^git has been given to you to know

⁴⁶ ^a Mark 3:31-35; Luke 8:19-21
^a Matt. 13:55; Mark 6:3; John 2:12; 7:3, 5; Acts 1:14; 1 Cor. 9:5; Gal. 1:19
⁴⁷ ^p Matt. 13:55, 56; John 2:12; Acts 1:14
⁴⁹ ^q John 20:17; [Rom. 8:29]
⁵⁰ ^r John 15:14; [Gal. 5:6; 6:15; Col. 3:11; Heb. 2:11]

CHAPTER 13

¹ ^a Matt. 13:1-15; Mark 4:1-12; Luke 8:4-10
² ^b Luke 8:4 ^c Luke 5:3
³ ^d Luke 8:5
⁸ ^e Gen. 26:12; Matt. 13:23
⁹ ^f Matt. 11:15; Mark 4:9; Rev. 2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22
¹¹ ^g [Matt. 11:25; 16:17]; Mark 4:10, 11; [John 6:65; 1 Cor. 2:10; Col. 1:27; 1 John 2:20, 27] ¹ secret or hidden truths
¹² ^h Matt. 25:29; Mark 4:25; Luke 8:18; 19:26
¹⁴ ⁱ Is. 6:9, 10 ★; Ezek. 12:2; Mark 4:12; Luke 8:10; John 12:40; Acts 28:26, 27; Rom. 11:8; [2 Cor. 3:14, 15] / [John 3:36]
¹⁵ ^j Ps. 119:70; Zech. 7:11; 2 Tim. 4:4; Heb. 5:11 ¹ Luke 19:42 ^m Acts 28:26, 27 ² NU, M would
¹⁶ ⁿ [Prov. 20:12; Matt. 16:17]; Luke 10:23, 24; [John 20:29]
¹⁷ ^o John 8:56; Heb. 11:13; 1 Pet. 1:10, 11
¹⁸ ^p Mark 4:13-20; Luke 8:11-15
¹⁹ ^q Matt. 4:23
²⁰ ^r Is. 58:2; Ezek. 33:31, 32; John 5:35
²¹ ^s [Acts 14:22]
¹ Matt. 11:6; 2 Tim. 1:15
²² ^t Matt. 19:23; Mark 10:23;

the ¹ mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. ^{12h}For whoever has, to him more will be given, and he will have abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him. ¹³Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. ¹⁴And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says:

ⁱ“Hearing you will hear and shall not understand,

And seeing you will see and not ^jperceive;

¹⁵ *For the hearts of this people have grown dull.*

Their ears ^kare hard of hearing,

And their eyes they have ^lclosed,

Lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears,

Lest they should understand with their hearts and turn,

So that I ²should ^mheal them.”

¹⁶But ⁿblessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear; ¹⁷for assuredly, I say to you ^othat many prophets and righteous *men* desired to see what you see, and did not see *it*, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear *it*.

^{18p}“Therefore hear the parable of the sower: ¹⁹When anyone hears the word ^qof the kingdom, and does not understand *it*, then the wicked *one* comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside. ²⁰But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately ^rreceives it with joy; ²¹yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when ^stribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately ^the stumbles. ²²Now ^uhe who received seed ^vamong the

Luke 18:24; 1 Tim. 6:9; 2 Tim. 4:10 ^v Jer. 4:3

13:3 He spoke many things to them in parables: This teaching method, often used by the rabbis, utilized common scenes from everyday life to teach new truths about the kingdom.

13:4 Some seed fell by the wayside speaks of soil hardened by much human and animal traffic, that failed to allow penetration of the seed, leaving it fair game for the birds.

13:5 Stony places refers to shallow soil resting on a shelf of rock. The thin layer of dust or dirt accelerated the seed’s growth under the hot sun, but the plant could only live a short time because of the shallow soil.

13:7 Among thorns suggests good soil occupied with wild growth.

13:8 Good ground refers to prepared or tilled soil that allows prosperous growth.

13:11–15 It has been given to you: The purpose of this parable was both to reveal (v. 11) and to conceal the truth (v. 13). This hiding

of the truth was a judgment for unbelief, as happened during Isaiah’s ministry (see Is. 6:9, 10).

13:11 The mysteries of the kingdom of heaven refers to new truths about the promised kingdom.

13:12 whoever has, to him more will be given: Just as the failure to respond to truth brings blindness, so a positive response is rewarded with further understanding (see Luke 8:16–18). This principle is applied to the leaders of Israel in fulfillment of many OT prophecies—especially Is. 6:9, 10. The leaders’ rejection of the message of Jesus further blinded them to the spiritual nature of Christ’s kingdom. Parables then became Jesus’ effective tools for both revealing truth to the faithful and concealing it from those who would reject it. As emphasized by Mark 4:11, 12, Jesus’ parables revealed the truths of His kingdom as well as the unbelief of many.

thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful. ²³ But he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears ²⁴ fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.”

Parable of the Wheat and Tares

²⁴ Another parable He put forth to them, saying: “The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field; ²⁵ but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way. ²⁶ But when the grain had sprouted and produced a crop, then the tares also appeared. ²⁷ So the servants of the owner came and said to him, ‘Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?’ ²⁸ He said to them, ‘An enemy has done this.’ The servants said to him, ‘Do you want us then to go and gather them up?’ ²⁹ But he said, ‘No, lest while you gather up the tares you also uproot the wheat with them. ³⁰ Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, “First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but ³¹ gather the wheat into my barn.”’”

Parable of the Mustard Seed

Mark 4:30-32; Luke 13:18, 19

³¹ Another parable He put forth to them, saying: ³² “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field, ³³ which indeed is the least of all the seeds; but when it is grown it is greater than the herbs and

²³ ^w [John 15:5]; Phil. 1:11; Col. 1:6
³⁰ ^x Matt. 3:12
³¹ ^y [Is. 2:2, 3; Mic. 4:1]; Mark 4:30; Luke 13:18, 19

³² ^z Ps. 104:12; Ezek. 17:22-24; 31:3-9; Dan. 4:12
³³ ^a Luke 13:20, 21
^b [1 Cor. 5:6; Gal. 5:9] ³ Gr. *sata*, same as a Heb. *seah*; approximately 2 pecks in all
³⁴ ^c Mark 4:33, 34; John 10:6; 16:25
³⁵ ^d Ps. 78:2 ★
^e Rom. 16:25, 26; 1 Cor. 2:7; Eph. 3:9; Col. 1:26
³⁸ ^f Matt. 24:14; 28:19; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:47; Rom. 10:18; Col. 1:6
³⁹ ^g Gen. 3:15; John 8:44; Acts 13:10
³⁹ ^h Joel 3:13; Rev. 14:15
⁴¹ ⁱ Matt. 18:7; 2 Pet. 2:1, 2
⁴² ^j Matt. 3:12; Rev. 19:20; 20:10 ^k Matt. 8:12; 13:50

becomes a ² tree, so that the birds of the air come and nest in its branches.”

Parable of the Leaven

Luke 13:20, 21

^{33a} Another parable He spoke to them: “The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three ³ measures of meal till ^b it was all leavened.”

^{34c} All these things Jesus spoke to the multitude in parables; and without a parable He did not speak to them, ³⁵ that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying:

^d “*I will open My mouth in parables;
I will utter things kept secret from
the foundation of the world.*”

Parable of the Tares Explained

³⁶ Then Jesus sent the multitude away and went into the house. And His disciples came to Him, saying, “Explain to us the parable of the tares of the field.”

³⁷ He answered and said to them: “He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. ³⁸ The field is the world, the good seeds are the sons of the kingdom, but the tares are ⁹ the sons of the wicked one. ³⁹ The enemy who sowed them is the devil, ^h the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels. ⁴⁰ Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age. ⁴¹ The Son of Man will send out His angels, ⁱ and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, ^{42j} and will cast them into the furnace of fire. ^k There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

13:24 The kingdom of heaven is like: This phrase introduces new truth regarding God’s coming kingdom. The introductory formula does not mean that the kingdom is to be exactly identified with a man, or a mustard seed (v. 31), or leaven (v. 33). It simply means that some truth regarding the kingdom is found in the story. A parable was primarily intended to teach one point, not to be picked apart to find meaning in all of its details.

13:25 his enemy came and sowed tares: Tares closely resemble wheat, but are poisonous to human beings. They are indistinguishable from wheat until the final fruit appears. Farmers would weed out tares just before the wheat harvest. Until Christ returns, both genuine believers and counterfeits will be allowed to remain together.

13:31, 32 The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed: The parable of the wheat and tares (vv. 24–30) reveals that the kingdom of heaven will be preceded by an age in which good and evil coexist. The parable of the mustard seed affirms that during that time period, the number of people who will inherit the kingdom will be very small at first. But though it begins like the smallest of seeds, the nucleus will enjoy growth completely out of proportion to its initial size. **The birds of the air** do not represent evil as they do in the parable of the soils (vv. 4, 19). In the OT, a tree large enough to support nesting birds was considered prosperous and healthy

(see Ps. 104:12; Ezek. 17:23; 31:6; Dan. 4:12, 21). The kingdom, though having only a small number of people at the beginning of the age, will ultimately be large and prosperous.

13:33 The kingdom of heaven is like leaven: Although leaven sometimes symbolizes evil, here the kingdom of heaven is being compared to the dynamic character of yeast. When yeast is kneaded into the dough, it expands by itself. Rather than being powered by outward armies or organizations, the kingdom of God will grow by an internal dynamic, the Holy Spirit, overcoming all opposition. As the parable of the mustard seed (vv. 31, 32) addresses the extent of the kingdom’s growth, this parable concerns the power and process of its growth.

13:35 The quotation of Asaph in Ps. 78:2 serves as a prophecy of Jesus’ use of parables.

13:36 Jesus sent the multitude away: The parables of vv. 1–35 were addressed to the multitude. The phrase **went into the house** indicates that the parables of vv. 44–52 were for the disciples only. During this “private instruction,” Jesus explained His previous stories and added four more.

13:38 Sons of the kingdom refers to heirs of the kingdom.

13:39 The end of the age speaks of the time when the Son of Man will come to set up His righteous kingdom.



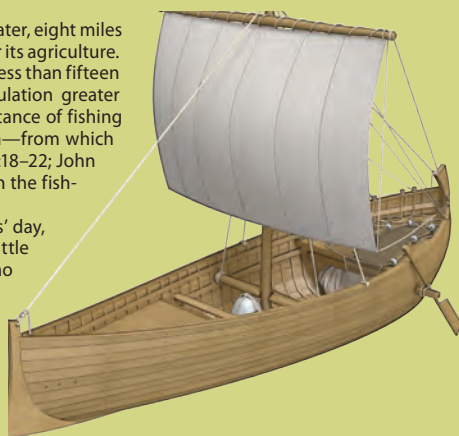
The World of the Fishermen

Fishing on the Sea of Galilee was big business. This body of water, eight miles wide and 13 miles long, lay beside a fertile plain renowned for its agriculture. In Jesus' day, nine cities crowded its shorelines, each with no less than fifteen thousand citizens, possibly making the region's total population greater than Jerusalem's. The names of the towns reflect the importance of fishing to the life and economy of the area. For example, Bethsaida—from which at least four fishermen left their nets to follow Jesus (Matt. 4:18–22; John 1:44)—means “fish town”; most of the town was employed in the fishing industry.

Shoals just offshore were a fisherman's paradise. In Jesus' day, hundreds of fishing boats trawled the lake. Galileans ate little meat besides fish. It came highly salted because there was no other way to preserve the “catch of the day.”

A reconstruction of a first-century fishing boat

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⁴³Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. ^mHe who has ears to hear, let him hear!

Parable of the Hidden Treasure

⁴⁴“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and ⁿsells all that he has and ^obuys that field.

Parable of the Pearl of Great Price

⁴⁵“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, ⁴⁶who, when he had found ^pone pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it.

Parable of the Dragnet

⁴⁷“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet that was cast into the

⁴³ ^l[Dan. 12:3; 1 Cor. 15:42, 43, 58] ^m Matt. 13:9 ⁴⁴ ⁿ Phil. 3:7, 8 ^o [Is. 55:1; Rev. 3:18] ⁴⁶ ^p Prov. 2:4; 3:14, 15; 8:10, 19

⁴⁷ ^q Matt. 22:9, 10 ⁴⁹ ^r Matt. 25:32 ⁵¹ ⁴ NU omits Jesus said to them ⁵ NU omits Lord ⁵² ^s Song 7:13 ⁶ A scholar of the Old Testament ⁷ Or for

sea and ^qgathered some of every kind, ⁴⁸which, when it was full, they drew to shore; and they sat down and gathered the good into vessels, but threw the bad away. ⁴⁹So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come forth, ^rseparate the wicked from among the just, ⁵⁰and cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth.”

Parable of the Householder

⁵¹⁴Jesus said to them, “Have you understood all these things?”

They said to Him, “Yes, ⁵Lord.”

⁵²Then He said to them, “Therefore every ⁶scribe instructed ⁷concerning the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings out of his treasure ^sthings new and old.”

⁵³Now it came to pass, when Jesus had finished these parables, that He departed from there.

13:44 the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field: The parables of vv. 44–52 concern kingdom values and responsibilities. They are especially directed at believers. The first two are recorded by Matthew alone and appear to belong together.

Stripped of their grand dreams of an immediate, powerful kingdom of David and facing the prospect of much opposition on all sides, the disciples were forced to count the cost. In the first story a man stumbles on a treasure trove, which he makes every effort to obtain. The central truth being taught is the immense value of the kingdom, which far outweighs any sacrifice or inconvenience one might encounter on earth.

13:45, 46 the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls: This second parable on kingdom values was evidently given to further underscore Jesus' optimism for the despondent disciples. His double encouragement indicates their great need at that time. This parable has a slightly different emphasis. Though the first individual found his treasure by accident, the sec-

ond found his by diligent search. No matter how a person is led to Christ's kingdom, its values and delights will be beyond estimation.

13:47–50 the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet: The last two parables speak of kingdom responsibilities for disciples. First, Jesus describes a large seine net, which would encircle a large area and drag the bottom of a lake. Such a net gathers fish **of every kind**, without discrimination. Similarly, the responsibility of disciples would be to catch as many “fish”—of every kind—as possible. The work of judging or ferreting out the false catch, however, is a job that disciples are neither called nor equipped to do. That work is assigned to **angels** at Christ's return.

13:51, 52 Things new and old refers to truths about the kingdom that were found in the OT and those that were freshly revealed in these parables. This parable calls for action on the part of the disciples in view of what they had learned. They were to be responsible stewards and dispensers of these kingdom treasures.

Rejection at Nazareth

Mark 6:1-6

⁵⁴ When He had come to His own country, He taught them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished and said, “Where did this *Man* get this wisdom and *these* mighty works? ⁵⁵ “Is this not the carpenter’s son? Is not His mother called Mary? And ^v His brothers ^w James, ⁸ Josés, Simon, and Judas? ⁵⁶ And His sisters, are they not all with us? Where then did this *Man* get all these things?” ⁵⁷ So they ^x were offended at Him.

But Jesus said to them, ^y “A prophet is not without honor except in his own country and in his own house.” ⁵⁸ Now ^z He did not do many mighty works there because of their unbelief.

Present Response to Jesus

Mark 6:14-16; Luke 9:7-9

14 At that time ^a Herod the tetrarch heard the report about Jesus ² and said to his servants, “This is John the Baptist; he is risen from the dead, and therefore these powers are at work in him.”

Recount of the Murder of John the Baptist

Mark 6:17-29

^{3b} For Herod had laid hold of John and bound him, and put *him* in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip’s wife. ⁴ Because John had said to him, ^c “It is not lawful for you to have her.” ⁵ And although he wanted to put him to death, he feared the multitude, ^d because they counted him as a prophet.

⁶ But when Herod’s birthday was celebrated, the daughter of Herodias danced before them and pleased Herod. ⁷ Therefore he promised with an oath to give her whatever she might ask.

⁸ So she, having been prompted by her mother, said, “Give me John the Baptist’s head here on a platter.”

⁹ And the king was sorry; nevertheless, because of the oaths and because of those

⁵⁴ ^t Ps. 22:22 ★; Matt. 2:23; Mark 6:1; Luke 4:16; John 7:15

⁵⁵ ^u Is. 49:7; Mark 6:3; [Luke 3:23]; John 6:42 ^v Matt. 12:46 ^w Mark 15:40

⁸ NU Joseph
⁵⁷ ^x Matt. 11:6; Mark 6:3, 4 ^y Luke 4:24; John 4:44

⁵⁸ ^z Mark 6:5, 6; John 5:44, 46, 47

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¹ ^e Mark 6:14-29; Luke 9:7-9

³ ⁹ Matt. 4:12; Mark 6:17; Luke 3:19, 20

⁴ ^c Lev. 18:16; 20:21

⁵ ^d Matt. 21:26;

Luke 20:6

¹³ ^e Matt. 10:23; 12:15; Mark 6:32-44; Luke 9:10-17; John 6:1, 2

¹⁴ ^f Matt. 9:36; Mark 6:34

¹⁵ ^g Mark 6:35; Luke 9:12

¹⁹ ^h 1 Sam. 9:13; Matt. 15:36; 26:26; Mark 6:41; 8:7;

14:22; Luke 24:30; Acts 27:35; [Rom. 14:6]

²² ⁱ invited, strongly urged

²³ ^j Mark 6:46; Luke 9:28; John 6:15

who sat with him, he commanded *it* to be given to *her*. ¹⁰ So he sent and had John beheaded in prison. ¹¹ And his head was brought on a platter and given to the girl, and she brought *it* to her mother. ¹² Then his disciples came and took away the body and buried it, and went and told Jesus.

Jesus Feeds 5,000

Mark 6:31-44; Luke 9:11-17; John 6:1-13

^{13e} When Jesus heard *it*, He departed from there by boat to a deserted place by Himself. But when the multitudes heard it, they followed Him on foot from the cities. ¹⁴ And when Jesus went out He saw a great multitude; and He ^f was moved with compassion for them, and healed their sick. ^{15g} When it was evening, His disciples came to Him, saying, “This is a deserted place, and the hour is already late. Send the multitudes away, that they may go into the villages and buy themselves food.”

¹⁶ But Jesus said to them, “They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat.”

¹⁷ And they said to Him, “We have here only five loaves and two fish.”

¹⁸ He said, “Bring them here to Me.”

¹⁹ Then He commanded the multitudes to sit down on the grass. And He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, ^h He blessed and broke and gave the loaves to the disciples; and the disciples gave to the multitudes. ²⁰ So they all ate and were filled, and they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments that remained. ²¹ Now those who had eaten were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

Jesus Walks on Water

Mark 6:45-52; John 6:15-21

²² Immediately Jesus ⁱ made His disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side, while He sent the multitudes away. ^{23j} And when He had sent the multitudes away, He went up on

13:55 carpenter’s son: Carpenter basically means skilled worker. Joseph may have been a stonemason or some other type of craftsman.

13:57, 58 A prophet is not without honor except in his own country: In this second mission of Jesus to Nazareth, His hometown, He found that the people’s unbelief had not abated (see Luke 4:16–30). Because of their familiarity with Jesus, the people failed to recognize Him for who He is; their eyes were blinded by unbelief.

14:1, 2 John the Baptist had already been beheaded (how that happened is recorded in the following verses). According to Herod, the miracles of Christ were so wonderful that they could only be explained as the work of a resurrected prophet, perhaps John the Baptist.

14:3, 4 Herod had gone to Rome where he met Herodias, the wife of his half brother Philip. After seducing Herodias, Herod divorced his own wife and married her. John had rebuked the king for his moral transgression.

14:20 Jesus’ miraculous feeding of the crowd indicates a number of things: (1) He fulfills the expectations of those looking forward to a new Moses, based on Deut. 18:15 (see John 1:21; Acts 3:22; 7:37); (2) He can supply the daily bread requested in 6:11; and (3) He is the Messiah who will provide the messianic banquet (see 22:1–14; 26:29; Ps. 132:15; Is. 25:6). This miracle is so significant that it is the only pre-crucifixion sign recorded in all four Gospels.

the mountain by Himself to pray. ^jNow when evening came, He was alone there. ²⁴But the boat was now ²in the middle of the sea, tossed by the waves, for the wind was contrary.

²⁵Now in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went to them, walking on the sea. ²⁶And when the disciples saw Him ^kwalking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, “It is a ghost!” And they cried out for fear.

²⁷But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, ³“Be of good ^lcheer! ⁴It is I; do not be afraid.”

²⁸And Peter answered Him and said, “Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water.”

²⁹So He said, “Come.” And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus. ³⁰But when he saw ⁵that the wind *was* boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, “Lord, save me!”

³¹And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him, and said to him, “O you of ^mlittle faith, why did you doubt?” ³²And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased.

³³Then those who were in the boat ⁶came and worshiped Him, saying, “Truly ⁿYou are the Son of God.”

Jesus Heals Many

Mark 6:53-56

³⁴^oWhen they had crossed over, they came ⁷to the land of Gennesaret. ³⁵And when the men of that place recognized Him, they sent out into all that surrounding region, brought to Him all who were sick, ³⁶and begged Him that they might only ^ptouch the hem of His garment. And ^qas many as touched *it* were made perfectly well.

Debate over Tradition

Mark 7:1-23

15 Then ^athe scribes and Pharisees who were from Jerusalem came to

²³ ^j John 6:16
²⁴ ² NU many furlongs away from the land
²⁶ ^k Job 9:8
²⁷ ¹ Acts 23:11;
 27:22, 25, 36 ³ Take courage ⁴ Lit. I am
³⁰ ⁵ NU brackets that and boisterous as disputed.
³¹ ^m Matt. 6:30;
 8:26
³³ ^o Ps. 2:7; Matt. 16:16; 26:63; Mark 1:1; Luke 4:41; John 1:49; 6:69; 11:27; Acts 8:37; Rom. 1:4
⁶ NU omits came and
³⁴ ^o Mark 6:53;
 Luke 5:1 ⁷ NU to land at
³⁶ ^p [Mark 5:24-34]
^q Matt. 9:20; Mark 3:10; [Luke 6:19]; Acts 19:12

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¹ ^o Mark 7:1; John 1:19; Acts 25:7
² ^b Mark 7:5
⁴ ^c Ex. 20:1, 12; Lev. 19:3; [Deut. 5:16]; Prov. 23:22; [Eph. 6:2, 3] ^d Ex. 21:17; Lev. 20:9; Deut. 27:16; Prov. 20:20; 30:17
⁵ ^e Mark 7:11, 12
⁶ ¹ NU omits or mother ² NU word
⁷ ^f Mark 7:6
⁸ ^g Ps. 78:36; Is. 29:13; Ezek. 33:31
³ NU omits draw near to Me with their mouth, And
⁹ ^h Is. 29:13; [Col. 2:18-22]; Titus 1:14
¹⁰ ⁱ Mark 7:14
¹¹ ^j [Acts 10:15; Rom. 14:14, 17, 20; 1 Tim. 4:4; Titus 1:15]
¹³ ^k [Is. 60:21; 61:3; John 15:2; 1 Cor. 3:12, 13]
¹⁴ ^l Is. 9:16; Mal. 2:8; Matt. 23:16, 24; Luke 6:39;

Jesus, saying, ^{2b}“Why do Your disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat bread.”

³He answered and said to them, “Why do you also transgress the commandment of God because of your tradition? ⁴For God commanded, saying, ^c‘Honor your father and your mother’; and, ^d‘He who curses father or mother, let him be put to death.’ ⁵But you say, ‘Whoever says to his father or mother, ^e“Whatever profit you might have received from me is a gift to God”— ⁶then he need not honor his father ¹or mother.’ Thus you have made the ²commandment of God of no effect by your tradition. ^{7f}Hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy about you, saying:

⁸ ‘These^g people ³draw near to Me with their mouth,
 And honor Me with their lips,
 But their heart is far from Me.
⁹ And in vain they worship Me,
^h Teaching as doctrines the
 commandments of men.’”

¹⁰ⁱWhen He had called the multitude to Himself, He said to them, “Hear and understand: ^{11j}Not what goes into the mouth defiles a man; but what comes out of the mouth, this defiles a man.”

¹²Then His disciples came and said to Him, “Do You know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this saying?”

¹³But He answered and said, ^k“Every plant which My heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted. ¹⁴Let them alone. ^lThey are blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind leads the blind, both will fall into a ditch.”

^{15m}Then Peter answered and said to Him, “Explain this parable to us.”

Rom. 2:19 ¹⁵ ^m Mark 7:17

14:25 The fourth watch would be between 3:00 and 6:00 A.M.

14:27 It is I may also be translated “I am.” Some interpret this as a claim to deity (see Ex. 3:14).

14:28–31 Only the Gospel of Matthew records the miracle of Peter walking on the water. This was a valuable lesson for the disciples to learn: They could do the impossible with the power of Christ.

15:1 The fact that the scribes and Pharisees had traveled from Jerusalem to Galilee to see Jesus indicates that Jesus’ reputation was becoming widespread.

15:2 The tradition of the elders was not the Law of Moses; it was the oral tradition based on interpretations of the law. They washed their hands ceremonially to remove defilement, not for hygienic purposes (see Mark 7:2–4).

15:3 In typical rabbinical style, Jesus answered the accusations of the scribes and Pharisees with a question. Whereas they challenged Jesus for His disciples’ violation of the teachings of former rabbis, Jesus challenged them for violating the commandment of God.

The scribes and Pharisees were placing their own views above the revelation of God, and yet claimed to be following Him.

15:4–6 Jesus was referring to a practice whereby people would dedicate their possessions to God so that they could use their finances for themselves and not for others. For example, if parents needed money, the children could excuse themselves from helping because their resources were already “dedicated” to God. This ruse kept people from honoring their parents by taking care of them in their old age.

15:10, 11 In vv. 3–9, Jesus rebuked the scribes and Pharisees for being so obsessed with traditions that they failed to observe basic commandments. Here He chided them for being so concerned with external ceremonial washings and dietary regulations that they failed to deal with character. Both of these charges were an outgrowth of the accusations of the scribes and Pharisees recorded in v. 2.

¹⁶So Jesus said, “Are you also still without understanding? ¹⁷Do you not yet understand that ^owhatever enters the mouth goes into the stomach and is eliminated? ¹⁸But ^pthose things which proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and they defile a man. ¹⁹^qFor out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies. ²⁰These are *the things* which defile a man, but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile a man.”

Jesus Heals the Gentile Woman's Daughter

Mark 7:24-30

²¹^rThen Jesus went out from there and departed to the region of Tyre and Sidon. ²²And behold, a woman of Canaan came from that region and cried out to Him, saying, “Have mercy on me, O Lord, ^sSon of David! My daughter is severely demon-possessed.”

²³But He answered her not a word.

And His disciples came and urged Him, saying, “Send her away, for she cries out after us.”

²⁴But He answered and said, ^t“I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”

²⁵Then she came and worshiped Him, saying, “Lord, help me!”

²⁶But He answered and said, “It is not good to take the children's bread and throw *it* to the little ‘dogs.’”

²⁷And she said, “Yes, Lord, yet even the little dogs eat the crumbs which fall from their masters' table.”

²⁸Then Jesus answered and said to her, “O woman, ^vgreat is your faith! Let it be to you as you desire.” And her daughter was healed from that very hour.

Jesus Heals Many

Mark 7:31-37

²⁹^wJesus departed from there, ^xskirted the Sea of Galilee, and went up on the mountain and sat down there. ³⁰^yThen

¹⁶ ^a Matt. 16:9; Mark 7:18
¹⁷ ^o [1 Cor. 6:13]
¹⁸ ^p [Matt. 12:34]; Mark 7:20; [James 3:6]
¹⁹ ^q Gen. 6:5; 8:21; Prov. 6:14; Jer. 17:9; Mark 7:21; [Rom. 1:29-32; Gal. 5:19-21]
²¹ ^r Mark 7:24-30
²² ^s Matt. 1:1; 22:41, 42
²⁴ ^t Matt. 10:5, 6; [Rom. 15:8]
²⁶ ^u Matt. 7:6; Phil. 3:2
²⁸ ^v Luke 7:9
²⁹ ^w Mark 15:29-31; Mark 7:31-37
³⁰ ^x Matt. 4:18
³⁰ ^y Is. 35:5, 6; Matt. 11:5; Luke 7:22

² Mark 7:25; Luke 7:38; 8:41; 10:39
⁴ *crippled*
³¹ ^a Luke 5:25, 26; 19:37, 38 ^s *crippled*
³² ^b Mark 8:1-10
³³ ^c 2 Kin. 4:43
³⁶ ^d Matt. 14:19; 26:27; Luke 22:17, 19; John 6:11, 23; Acts 27:35; [Rom. 14:6] ^e 1 Sam. 9:13; Luke 22:19
³⁹ ^f Mark 8:10 ^g NU Magdalan

CHAPTER 16

¹ ^a Matt. 12:38; Mark 8:11; Luke 11:16; 12:54-56; 1 Cor. 1:22

great multitudes came to Him, having with them *the* lame, blind, mute, ⁴maimed, and many others; and they laid them down at Jesus' ^zfeet, and He healed them. ³¹So the multitude marveled when they saw *the* mute speaking, *the* ⁵maimed made whole, *the* lame walking, and *the* blind seeing; and they ^aglorified the God of Israel.

Jesus Feeds 4,000

Mark 8:1-10

³²^bNow Jesus called His disciples to *Himself* and said, “I have compassion on the multitude, because they have now continued with Me three days and have nothing to eat. And I do not want to send them away hungry, lest they faint on the way.”

³³^cThen His disciples said to Him, “Where could we get enough bread in the wilderness to fill such a great multitude?”

³⁴Jesus said to them, “How many loaves do you have?”

And they said, “Seven, and a few little fish.”

³⁵So He commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground. ³⁶And ^dHe took the seven loaves and the fish and ^egave thanks, broke *them* and gave *them* to His disciples; and the disciples *gave* to the multitude. ³⁷So they all ate and were filled, and they took up seven large baskets full of the fragments that were left.

³⁸Now those who ate were four thousand men, besides women and children.

³⁹^fAnd He sent away the multitude, got into the boat, and came to the region of ⁶Magdala.

Debate over a Sign from Heaven

Mark 8:11, 12

16 Then the ^aPharisees and Sadducees came, and testing Him asked that He would show them a sign from heaven. ²He answered and said to them, “When it is evening you say, ‘*It will be fair weather, for the sky is red*’; ³and

15:16–20 As a person thinks in his **heart**, so is he. How do thoughts get into the heart, the seat of reflection? Through the eyes, ears, and other senses. The raw material of our actions is what we take into our mind and allow to settle in our heart. David put it this way: “Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You” (Ps. 119:11). The other side is in Ps 101:3: “I will set nothing wicked before my eyes.” Paul pictured the believer as “bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ” (see 2 Cor. 10:5). **15:22** The woman was a Gentile who would have had no natural claims on a Jewish Messiah.

15:24 This verse demonstrates Christ's commitment to **Israel**, whom He called **lost sheep**. Jesus would always give the Jews the first opportunity to accept Him as their Messiah.

15:26 The “children” that Jesus referred to were the people of Israel. **The little dogs** refer to Gentiles.

15:29–31 The scene changes from the region of Tyre and Sidon to a mountain near **the Sea of Galilee** but still in Gentile territory. Mark 7:31 identifies this region as the Decapolis. **they glorified the God of Israel**: The Gentiles believed and glorified Israel's God, while many in Israel remained blind to their Messiah.

15:32–38 This is not the same miracle recorded in 14:14–21. Jesus Himself identified two distinct feedings of multitudes (16:9, 10). This was a supernatural supply of food for Gentiles. The **seven** baskets of leftovers here contrasts with the 12 baskets that were gathered in ch. 14. Further, the word for **large baskets** in v. 37 is different from the word for “baskets” in 14:20.

16:1 sign from heaven: Perhaps the scribes and Pharisees were thinking of signs such as the fire from heaven that answered Elijah's prayer (see 1 Kin. 18:36–38), the plagues on Egypt (see Ex. 7–12), or the sun standing still (see Josh. 10:12–14).

in the morning, *‘It will be foul weather today, for the sky is red and threatening.’*¹ Hypocrites! You know how to discern the face of the sky, but you cannot *discern* the signs of the times.^{4b} A wicked and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign shall be given to it except the sign of ²the prophet Jonah.” And He left them and departed.

Withdrawal of Jesus

Mark 8:13-21

⁵Now ^cwhen His disciples had come to the other side, they had forgotten to take bread. ⁶Then Jesus said to them, ^d“Take heed and beware of the ³leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees.”
⁷And they reasoned among themselves, saying, *“It is because we have taken no bread.”*
⁸But Jesus, being aware of *it*, said to them, “O you of little faith, why do you reason among yourselves because you ⁴have brought no bread? ^{9e}Do you not yet understand, or remember the five loaves of the five thousand and how many baskets you took up? ^{10f}Nor the seven loaves of the four thousand and how many large baskets you took up? ¹¹How is it you do not understand that I did not speak to you concerning bread?—*but* to beware of the ⁵leaven of the Pharisees and Saddu-

³ ¹ NU omits *Hypocrites*
⁴ ^b Prov. 30:12; Matt. 12:39; Luke 11:29; 24:46 ² NU omits *the prophet*
⁵ ^c Mark 8:14
⁶ ^d Mark 8:15; Luke 12:1 ³ yeast
⁸ ⁴ NU have *no bread*
⁹ ^e Matt. 14:15-21; Mark 6:30-44; Luke 9:10-17; John 6:1-14
¹⁰ ^f Matt. 15:32-38; Mark 8:1-9
¹¹ ⁵ yeast
¹² ^g *teaching*
¹³ ^g Mark 8:27; Luke 9:18
¹⁴ ^h Matt. 14:2; Luke 9:7-9 ¹ Matt. 21:11
¹⁵ ⁱ John 6:67
¹⁶ ^k Matt. 14:33; Mark 8:29; Luke 9:20; John 6:69; 11:27; Acts 8:37; 9:20; Heb. 1:2, 5; 1 John 4:15
¹⁷ ^l [Eph. 2:8]
^m [Matt. 11:27; 1 Cor. 2:10]; Gal. 1:16
¹⁸ ⁿ John 1:42
^o Acts 2:41 ☆; [Eph. 2:20; Rev. 21:14] ^p Job 33:17; Ps. 9:13; 107:18; Is. 38:10 ⁷ *be victorious*
¹⁹ ^q Matt. 18:18;

cees.”¹² Then they understood that He did not tell *them* to beware of the leaven of bread, but of the ⁶doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

Revelation of the Person of the King

Mark 8:27-30; Luke 9:18-21

¹³When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, ^g“Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?”
¹⁴So they said, ^h“Some *say* John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or ¹one of the prophets.”
¹⁵He said to them, “But who do ^jyou say that I am?”
¹⁶Simon Peter answered and said, ^k“You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”
¹⁷Jesus answered and said to him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, ^lfor flesh and blood has not revealed *this* to you, but ^mMy Father who is in heaven.

Revelation of the Church

¹⁸And I also say to you that ⁿyou are Peter, and ^oon this rock I will build My church, and ^pthe gates of Hades shall not ⁷prevail against it. ^{19q}And I will give

John 20:23

16:4 And He left them: Previously Jesus had withdrawn in the face of opposition (12:15; 14:13; 15:21); here He left the Pharisees and Sadducees, meaning that He abandoned or forsook them. Jesus deserted these religious leaders as reprobates.
16:5 The other side refers to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, where the Gentiles lived.
16:11, 12 In Scripture, **leaven** is often used as a symbol of evil. The doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees was hypocrisy, legalism, political opportunism, and spiritual hardness. Jesus’ warning here was a result of the Pharisees’ request for a sign in vv. 1–4.
16:13 Caesarea Philippi was located north of the Sea of Galilee,

at the base of the southwest slope of Mt. Hermon. The place had long been associated with idol worship. The site for pagan worship centered on a massive stone facade, which Jesus referred to in His play on words concerning “rock” in v. 18. **Who do men say that I ... am:** In the face of the surrounding idols, Christ led His disciples into a proclamation of His deity by first soliciting from them what other people said. In the end, however, what mattered was the apostles’ own beliefs concerning Jesus.
16:16 The Spirit of grace revealed to Peter the true identity of the Lord Jesus. **Son of the living God** refers to Jesus’ deity. Several factors point to this conclusion: (1) He was born of a virgin (1:18–20); (2) He was called Immanuel, meaning “God with us” (1:23); (3) the title in Greek is emphatic: “the Son of the God, the living One”; and (4) later passages describe Christ as God (see John 20:27–29).
16:17 has not revealed: People do not come to faith in Jesus Christ by scrutiny or searching, but by the Father’s revelation of the Son to them (see John 6:65).
16:18 The words **I will build My church** indicate that the church had not yet been started. Obviously the disciples did not at this point understand the doctrine of the NT church with its equality of Jew and Gentile (see Eph. 2:11–3:7). They simply understood it to be the Lord’s followers. **the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it:** Jesus may have been saying simply that death would not vanquish the church. One day, by the power of Christ’s resurrection, the church and all the redeemed will be resurrected. Others suggest that the phrase means that the forces of evil will not be able to conquer the people of God.
16:19 You in this passage is singular. **The keys of the kingdom** may refer to Peter’s opening the kingdom to various groups of people (Jews in Acts 2; 3; Samaritans in Acts 8:14–17; Gentiles in Acts 10). The keys would open doors to lost people. However, this term may have further significance. The keys seem to be explained by the binding and loosing discussed in the last part of the verse. In rabbinical literature, *binding* and *loosing* refers to what was

Peter
(Gk. *petros*) (16:18; John 1:42) Strong’s #4074

rock
(Gk. *petra*) (16:18; Rom. 9:33; 1 Cor. 10:4; 1 Pet. 2:8) Strong’s #4073

As *Peter* and *rock* are one word in the language spoken by Jesus (Aramaic), the wordplay in this verse can be duplicated only in languages that also have one word for both. In Greek, the word for Peter is *petros* (meaning “stone”); the word for *rock* is *petra*. Some commentators have indicated that, though the two words are nearly synonymous, Jesus intended a distinction—Peter is but a fragment of the whole, while Christ Himself is the entire rock. Thus it could be said that the church would be built on Christ, the Rock. Be that as it may, at least it can be said that the context allows that the rock upon which the church is built is Peter’s confession that Jesus is the Son of God.

you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth ⁸will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”

²⁰r Then He commanded His disciples that they should tell no one that He was Jesus the Christ.

Revelation of Jesus' Death

Mark 8:31-33; Luke 9:22

²¹ From that time Jesus began ^s to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day.

²² Then Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, ⁹“Far be it from You, Lord; this shall not happen to You!”

²³ But He turned and said to Peter, “Get behind Me, ^tSatan! ^uYou are ¹an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men.”

Revelation of Jesus' Reward

Mark 8:34-37; Luke 9:23-25

²⁴v Then Jesus said to His disciples, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and ^wfollow Me. ²⁵For ^xwhoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. ²⁶For what ^yprofit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or ^zwhat will a man give in exchange for his soul?

The Prophecy of the Second Coming

Mark 8:38-9:1; Luke 9:26, 27

²⁷ For ^athe Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father ^bwith His angels,

¹⁹ ⁸ Or *will have been bound . . . will have been loosed*
²⁰ ^t Matt. 17:9;
Mark 8:30; Luke 9:21

²¹ ^s Matt. 20:17;
Mark 8:31; 9:31;
Luke 9:22; 18:31;
24:46; John 2:19

²² ⁹ Lit. *Merciful to You* (May God be merciful)

²³ ^t Matt. 4:10

^u [Rom. 8:7] ¹ *a*

stumbling block

²⁴ ^v Mark 8:34;

Luke 9:23; [Acts

14:22; 2 Cor.

4:10, 11; 1 Thess.

3:3; 2 Tim. 3:12]

^w [1 Pet. 2:21]

²⁵ ^x Luke 17:33;

John 12:25

²⁶ ^y Luke 12:20, 21

^z Ps. 49:7, 8

²⁷ ^a Matt. 26:64;

Mark 8:38; Luke

9:26 ^b [Dan. 7:10];

Zech. 14:5 ^c Job

34:11; Ps. 62:12;

Prov. 24:12; Rom.

2:6; 2 Cor. 5:10;

1 Pet. 1:17; Rev. 2:23

²⁸ ^d Mark 9:1; Luke

9:27; Acts 7:55, 56;

Rev. 19:11

CHAPTER 17

¹ ^a Matt. 17:1-8;

Mark 9:2-8; Luke

9:28-36

⁴ ¹ NU *I will make*

⁵ ^b 2 Pet. 1:17 [★]

^c Ps. 2:7; Matt. 3:17;

Mark 1:11; Luke

1:35; 3:22; [John

12:28-30] ^d [Is. 42:1;

Matt. 3:17; 12:18;

2 Pet. 1:17 ^e [Deut.

18:15, 19; Acts

3:22, 23]

⁶ ^f 2 Pet. 1:18

^c and then He will reward each according to his works. ²⁸ Assuredly, I say to you, ^d there are some standing here who shall not taste death till they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom.”

The Transfiguration

Mark 9:2-13; Luke 9:28-36; 2 Pet. 1:17, 18

17 Now ^a after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, led them up on a high mountain by themselves; ² and He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light. ³ And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him. ⁴ Then Peter answered and said to Jesus, “Lord, it is good for us to be here; if You wish, ¹ let us make here three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.”

⁵ ^b While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, ^c “This is My beloved Son, ^d in whom I am well pleased. ^e Hear Him!” ⁶ ^f And when the disciples heard *it*, they fell on their faces and were greatly afraid. ⁷ But Jesus came and ^g touched them and said, “Arise, and do not be afraid.” ⁸ When they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus only.

⁹ Now as they came down from the mountain, Jesus commanded them, saying, “Tell the vision to no one until the Son of Man is risen from the dead.”

¹⁰ And His disciples asked Him, saying,

⁷ ^g Dan. 8:18

permitted or not permitted. So this passage may refer to judgments that Peter would make about what would be permitted or forbidden in the church, the body of believers.

16:20 Because the public did not understand the concept of the suffering Messiah, they were not to be told **that He was Jesus the Christ**. Furthermore, the nation had already turned away from Christ. They had crossed the point of no return (12:31, 32).

16:21 The phrase **from that time** marks a new direction in Jesus' ministry. The expression occurs twice in the Book of Matthew, here and in 4:17. In 4:17, it introduces the beginning of Jesus' ministry in announcing the nearness of the kingdom. Here it introduces the Cross and the ultimate rejection of the Messiah. **Elders and chief priests and scribes** refer to the makeup of the Jewish council, also called the Sanhedrin. Together with the mention of **Jerusalem**, this indicates that Jesus' rejection would be an official one. **Be killed** is the first of three predictions in Matthew concerning Christ's death (see 17:22, 23; 20:18, 19).

16:22 rebuke Him: Peter had confessed Jesus' deity earlier (v. 16). Now he was attempting to correct Jesus.

16:23 To call Peter **Satan** was a very serious thing. But Peter was standing in the way of the plan of God, and so he was speaking for Satan.

16:28 coming in His kingdom: This verse anticipates the Transfiguration in ch. 17. Several reasons point to this conclusion: (1) It is

Peter's interpretation in 2 Pet. 1:16-18; (2) the three synoptic Gospels (John omits the account of the Transfiguration) all place the Transfiguration immediately after this prediction; and (3) some—not all—of the apostles saw the Transfiguration (19:27-30). In the Transfiguration, Peter, James, and John saw a preview of the kingdom.

17:1 The **high mountain** was probably a spur of Mt. Hermon, which rises to about 9,400 feet above sea level.

17:3 Moses and Elijah represented the OT, personifying the Law and the Prophets. Their presence indicated that the OT Scriptures had been looking forward to the Messiah and His kingdom.

17:5 This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased were the identical words spoken at Jesus' baptism in 3:17 (see Ps. 2:7; Is. 42:1). **Hear Him** seems to refer to Deut. 18:15.

17:9 Tell the vision to no one: The command for silence was due to the fact that the masses of Israel had an incorrect concept of the Messiah (8:4; 12:16). They expected a conquering king, not a Suffering Servant.

17:10 The three disciples evidently did not comprehend the reference to Christ's death in v. 9. The problem they raised concerned the Transfiguration. They had just seen Elijah on the mountain. If the scribes were correct that Elijah must come before the kingdom would arrive, why should the disciples not inform everyone that Elijah had appeared on the mountain?

^h“Why then do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?”

¹¹Jesus answered and said to them, “Indeed, Elijah is coming ²first and will ⁱrestore all things. ¹²But I say to you that Elijah has come already, and they ^kdid not know him but did to him whatever they wished. Likewise ^lthe Son of Man is also about to suffer at their hands.” ¹³^mThen the disciples understood that He spoke to them of John the Baptist.

Instruction About Faith

Mark 9:14-29; Luke 9:37-42

¹⁴ⁿAnd when they had come to the multitude, a man came to Him, kneeling down to Him and saying, ¹⁵“Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is ³an epileptic and suffers severely; for he often falls into the fire and often into the water. ¹⁶So I brought him to Your disciples, but they could not cure him.”

¹⁷Then Jesus answered and said, “O ⁴faithless and ^operverse generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him here to Me.” ¹⁸And Jesus ^prebuked the demon, and it came out of him; and the child was cured from that very hour.

¹⁹Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, “Why could we not cast it out?”

²⁰So Jesus said to them, “Because of your ⁵unbelief; for assuredly, I say to you, ^qif you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you. ²¹⁶However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting.”

10 ^h Mal. 4:5; Matt. 11:14; 16:14; Mark 9:11
11 ⁱ [Mal. 4:6]; Luke 1:17 ² NU omits first
12 ^j Matt. 11:14;
Mark 9:12, 13
^k Matt. 14:3, 10
^l Matt. 16:21
13 ^m Matt. 11:14
14 ⁿ Matt. 17:14-19;
Mark 9:14-28; Luke 9:37-42
15 ³ Lit. moonstruck
17 ^o Deut. 32:5; Phil. 2:15 ⁴ unbelieving
18 ^p Luke 4:41
20 ^q Matt. 21:21;
Mark 11:23; Luke 17:6; [1 Cor. 12:9]
⁵ NU little faith
21 ⁶ NU omits v. 21.

22 ^r Matt. 16:21;
26:57; Mark 8:31;
Luke 9:22, 44;
John 18:12 ⁷ NU
gathering together
23 ^s Matt. 26:22;
27:50; Luke 23:46;
24:46; John 16:6;
19:30; Acts 10:40 ☆
24 ^t Mark 9:33 ⁸ NU
Capharnaum, here
and elsewhere
⁹ Lit. double
drachma
25 ^u [Is. 60:10-17]
27 ¹ Gr. stater, the
exact temple tax
for two

CHAPTER 18

1 ^a Mark 9:33-37;
Luke 9:46-48;
22:24-27
2 ^b Matt. 19:14;
Mark 10:14; Luke
18:14-17
3 ^c Ps. 131:2; Matt.
19:14; Mark 10:15;
Luke 18:16; [1 Cor.
14:20; 1 Pet. 2:2]
4 ^d [Matt. 20:27;
23:11]

Instruction About Jesus' Death

Mark 9:30-32; Luke 9:43-45

²²^rNow while they were ⁷staying in Galilee, Jesus said to them, “The Son of Man is about to be betrayed into the hands of men, ²³and they will kill Him, and the third day He will be raised up.” And they were exceedingly ^ssorrowful.

Instruction About Taxes

²⁴^tWhen they had come to ⁸Capernaum, those who received the ⁹temple tax came to Peter and said, “Does your Teacher not pay the temple tax?”

²⁵He said, “Yes.”

And when he had come into the house, Jesus anticipated him, saying, “What do you think, Simon? From whom do the kings of the earth take customs or taxes, from their sons or from ^ustrangers?”

²⁶Peter said to Him, “From strangers.”

Jesus said to him, “Then the sons are free. ²⁷Nevertheless, lest we offend them, go to the sea, cast in a hook, and take the fish that comes up first. And when you have opened its mouth, you will find a ¹piece of money; take that and give it to them for Me and you.”

Instruction About Humility

Mark 9:33-37; Luke 9:46-48

18 At ^athat time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, “Who then is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?”

²Then Jesus called a little ^bchild to Him, set him in the midst of them, ³and said, “Assuredly, I say to you, ^cunless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. ⁴^dTherefore who-

17:11 The Lord informed His three apostles that the scribes were right in their interpretation of Mal. 3:1; 4:5, 6. The fact that Christ used the phrase **will restore all things** indicates that the prophecy still has a future fulfillment.

17:12, 13 Jesus indicates that the prophecies concerning **Elijah** had their fulfillment in **John the Baptist**. Yet because the restoration is not complete, some conclude that the role of Elijah will be taken up by one of the two witnesses of Rev. 11:3-6.

17:15 In this case, the epilepsy was caused by a demon (v. 18).

17:20 The disciples could not exorcise the demon because they failed in faith. The power was there, but they had failed to appropriate it.

17:22, 23 Jesus and the disciples began what would be Jesus' final journey to Jerusalem. Once again Jesus predicted His death and resurrection (see also 16:21; 20:18, 19). Once again the disciples failed to understand the Resurrection; they seemed to have heard only His words about His coming death, because they became **exceedingly sorrowful**.

17:24 The **temple tax** was a tax given annually by every adult Jewish male over 20 years of age for maintaining the temple. This tax was based on Ex. 30:13, and amounted to two day's wages for a common laborer. Evidently Jesus had not yet paid the tax, and the temple tax collector was following up on it.

17:25 Peter, desiring to maintain the best reputation and also assuming the best of his Master, replied to the tax collector (v. 24) that Jesus had paid the temple tax. **Anticipated** implies that Peter was about to speak, evidently about the matter of Christ paying the temple tax, when Jesus spoke first. **Their sons** may refer to citizens of a country as opposed to conquered peoples or **strangers**. However, citizens often pay customs and taxes. More likely the contrast is between the imperial family and the common people.

17:26 In this verse, Jesus demonstrates that, as God's Son, He was free from the obligation to pay the temple tax. In fact, the temple belonged to Him (see Mal. 3:1). The fact that He used the plural **sons** implies that Peter and the other disciples were also free from that obligation.

18:1 Matthew 18 contains the fourth of five discourses in Matthew's Gospel (compare 5:1-7:27; 10:1-42; 13:1-53; 24:1-25:46). The theme of this discourse is humility. Jesus outlines five reasons that humility is essential: (1) for entrance into the kingdom (vv. 2, 3); (2) for greatness in the kingdom (v. 4); (3) to prevent offenses (vv. 5-11); (4) to carry on proper discipline in the church (vv. 5-20); and (5) for forgiving one another (vv. 21-35). **Greatest in the kingdom** implies rank, a concept implied by Jesus Himself in 5:19.

18:3, 4 **Converted** means to turn around (see Luke 22:32).

ever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.^{5e} Whoever receives one little child like this in My name receives Me.

Punishment of Offenders

Mark 9:42-48

^{6f}“Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea. ⁷Woe to the world because of ¹offenses! For ^goffenses must come, but ^hwoe to that man by whom the offense comes!

⁸ⁱ“If your hand or foot causes you to sin, cut it off and cast *it* from you. It is better for you to enter into life lame or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet, to be cast into the everlasting fire. ⁹And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast *it* from you. It is better for you to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into ²hell fire.

¹⁰“Take heed that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that in heaven ^jtheir angels always ^ksee the face of My Father who is in heaven. ^{11l}For ³the Son of Man has come to save that which was lost.

Parable of the Lost Sheep

Luke 15:4-7

^{12m}“What do you think? If a man has a hundred sheep, and one of them goes astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine and go to the mountains to seek the one that is straying? ¹³And if he should find

^{5 e} [Matt. 10:42]; Luke 9:48
^{6 f} Mark 9:42; Luke 17:2; [1 Cor. 8:12]
^{7 g} Luke 17:1; [1 Cor. 11:19]; 1 Tim. 4:1
^h Matt. 26:24; 27:4,
^{5 i} enticements to sin
^{8 i} Matt. 5:29, 30; Mark 9:43, 45
^{9 j} Gr. *Gehenna*
^{10 k} [Ps. 34:7]; Zech. 13:7; [Heb. 1:14]
^k Esth. 1:14; Luke 1:19; Acts 12:15; [Rev. 8:2]
^{11 l} Luke 9:56; John 3:17 ³ NU omits v. 11.
^{12 m} Matt. 18:12-14; Luke 15:4-7

^{14 n} [1 Tim. 2:4]
^{15 o} Lev. 19:17; [Luke 17:3, 4; Gal. 6:1]; 2 Thess. 3:15; [James 5:19]
^p [James 5:20]; 1 Pet. 3:1
^{16 q} Deut. 17:6; 19:15; John 8:17; 2 Cor. 13:1; 1 Tim. 5:19; Heb. 10:28
^{17 r} Rom. 16:17;
¹ Cor. 5:9; [2 Thess. 3:6, 14; 2 John 10]
^{18 s} Matt. 16:19; [John 20:22, 23; 1 Cor. 5:4]
^{19 t} [1 Cor. 1:10]
^u [1 John 3:22; 5:14]
⁴ NU, *M Again, assuredly, I say*
^{20 v} Acts 20:7;
¹ Cor. 14:26
^{21 w} Luke 17:4
^{22 x} [Matt. 6:14; Mark 11:25]; Col. 3:13

it, assuredly, I say to you, he rejoices more over that *sheep* than over the ninety-nine that did not go astray. ¹⁴Even so it is not the ⁿwill of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish.

The Offended Brother

¹⁵“Moreover ^oif your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, ^pyou have gained your brother. ¹⁶But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, that ^q*‘by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.’* ¹⁷And if he refuses to hear them, tell *it* to the church. But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a ^rheathen and a tax collector.

¹⁸“Assuredly, I say to you, ^swhatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.

^{19t}“Again ⁴I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, ^uit will be done for them by My Father in heaven. ²⁰For where two or three are gathered ^vtogether in My name, I am there in the midst of them.”

Instruction About Forgiveness

²¹Then Peter came to Him and said, “Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? ^wUp to seven times?”

²²Jesus said to him, “I do not say to you, ^xup to seven times, but up to seventy times seven. ²³Therefore the kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who

18:6 Causes . . . to sin literally means to put a snare, trap, or stumbling block in someone’s way. A **millstone** was a heavy grinding stone so large that it had to be turned by a donkey.

18:8, 9 This same basic statement is found in reverse order in 5:29, 30. One of the keys to understanding this assertion is to recognize the present tense of **causes you to sin**. Although the warning was addressed to the disciples, it describes a person who has a lifestyle of sinning and needs drastic measures in order to change it (see 1 John 3:7–10).

18:10 One of these little ones describes either a little child or a believer. Verses 12–14 seem to indicate a believer. Here Jesus implies that angels watch over and serve His followers on earth (see Heb. 1:14).

18:14 These little ones probably refers back to those who believe (v. 6). The Father watches over each of His little ones.

18:15–17 Jesus teaches His disciples about the process of restoring an erring believer. First, there should be a loving personal confrontation. The second step outlined in v. 16 is not as clear. The principle of witnesses is taken from Deut. 19:15, but what is it the witnesses attest? Evidently they witness that the offended brother is acting in good faith and the right spirit in attempting to work out a reconciliation. They also would be witnesses to any agreement. If this does not bring peace, the offended brother is to report it to the assembly. The church then is to do everything possible to convince the believer who has sinned to be reconciled or to right the wrong. If the erring

one will not respond, that person is to be disciplined by being cut off from the fellowship. Such a loss would be extremely painful to the offender (1 Cor. 5:11; 2 Thess. 3:6, 14, 15).

18:18 bind: Binding refers to things that are not permitted; loosing refers to things that are permitted (16:19). As in 16:19, the tenses imply that what is loosed or bound on earth will have been determined already in heaven. In other words, this is a promise of divine direction for each local church.

18:19, 20 This passage specifically refers to church discipline. It is a promise for guidance for the two or three who confront, and a promise for the church to claim wisdom and restoration for the erring brother.

18:21 Peter’s question was a logical outgrowth of the teachings of vv. 15–20. Actually Peter was being very generous in his willingness to forgive **up to seven times**. The traditional limit was three times, possibly because of the refrain in Amos 1:3, 6, 9, 11, 13; 2:1, 4, 6.

18:22 Seventy times seven may also mean “seventy-seven times.” The point is not to keep count at all, but to always be willing to forgive.

18:23–31 Ten thousand talents was an enormous sum. A denarius was one day’s wage for a laborer (20:2). A talent was worth about six thousand denarii. Ten thousand talents would be sixty million day’s wages, a sum that would be impossible to repay. Thus Jesus graphically portrayed this man’s hopeless predicament.

wanted to settle accounts with his servants. ²⁴ And when he had begun to settle accounts, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. ²⁵ But as he was not able to pay, his master commanded ²⁶ that he be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and that payment be made. ²⁶ The servant therefore fell down before him, saying, ‘Master, have patience with me, and I will pay you all.’ ²⁷ Then the master of that servant was moved with compassion, released him, and forgave him the debt.

²⁸ “But that servant went out and found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii; and he laid hands on him and took *him* by the throat, saying, ‘Pay me what you owe!’ ²⁹ So his fellow servant fell down ³⁰ at his feet and begged him, saying, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you ³¹ all.’ ³⁰ And he would not, but went and threw him into prison till he should pay the debt. ³¹ So when his fellow servants saw what had been done, they were very grieved, and came and told their master all that had been done. ³² Then his master, after he had called him, said to him, ‘You wicked servant! I forgave you ³³ all that debt because you begged me. ³³ Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had pity on you?’ ³⁴ And his master was angry, and delivered him to the torturers until he should pay all that was due to him.

³⁵ ^a “So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother ⁷ his trespasses.”

²⁵ ^v Ex. 21:2; Lev. 25:39; 2 Kin. 4:1; Neh. 5:5, 8
²⁹ ³ NU omits *at his feet* ⁶ NU, M omit *all*
³² ² Luke 7:41–43
³⁵ ^a Prov. 21:13; Matt. 6:12; Mark 11:26; James 2:13
⁷ NU omits *his trespasses*

CHAPTER 19

¹ ^a Matt. 19:1–9; Mark 10:1–12; John 10:40
² ^b Matt. 12:15
⁴ ^c Gen. 1:27; 5:2; [Mal. 2:15] ¹ NU created
⁵ ^d Gen. 2:24; Mark 10:5–9; Eph. 5:31
⁶ [1 Cor. 6:16; 7:2]
⁷ ^e Deut. 24:1–4; Matt. 5:31
⁸ ^g Heb. 3:15 ^h Mal. 2:16
⁹ [Matt. 5:32]; Mark 10:11; Luke 16:18; 1 Cor. 7:10
² ⁱ Or *fornication*
¹⁰ [Prov. 21:19]
¹¹ ^k [1 Cor. 7:2, 9, 17]

Instruction About Divorce

Mark 10:1–12

19 Now it came to pass, ^a when Jesus had finished these sayings, *that* He departed from Galilee and came to the region of Judea beyond the Jordan. ^{2b} And great multitudes followed Him, and He healed them there.

³ The Pharisees also came to Him, testing Him, and saying to Him, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for *just* any reason?”

⁴ And He answered and said to them, “Have you not read that He who ¹ made *them* at the beginning ^c *made them male and female*,” ⁵ and said, ^d *For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and ^e the two shall become one flesh*”? ⁶ So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate.”

⁷ They said to Him, ^f “Why then did Moses command to give a certificate of divorce, and to put her away?”

⁸ He said to them, “Moses, because of the ^g hardness of your hearts, permitted you to divorce your ^h wives, but from the beginning it was not so. ⁹ⁱ And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for ² sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery.”

¹⁰ His disciples said to Him, ^j “If such is the case of the man with *his* wife, it is better not to marry.”

¹¹ But He said to them, ^k “All cannot accept this saying, but only *those* to whom it has been given: ¹² For there are

18:32, 33 This parable reiterates the principle that we should forgive others because God forgives us (see the Lord’s Prayer in 6:12).

18:35 This verse is a warning about the penalty for not forgiving others (see 1 Cor. 11:30–32; Heb. 12:5–11). All of a Christian’s sins are forgiven and forgotten forever (see Ps. 103:12; Jer. 31:34; Heb. 8:12). But this parable illustrates the Christian duty to forgive others (see 6:12, 14, 15; 2 Cor. 2:10; Eph. 4:32). If our forgiveness should be in direct proportion to the incredible amount that we have been forgiven (v. 22), then we must always be willing to forgive.

19:3 The Pharisees’ question about divorce was dangerous. John the Baptist’s answer had resulted in imprisonment and ultimately execution (14:3–11). The use of the word **testing** indicates the malicious intent of the query. The rabbis had been arguing about when it was permissible according to the Law to divorce. Specifically, they wanted to know the meaning of the expression “uncleanness” in Deut. 24:1, which evidently referred to some kind of indecency. One rabbinical school held that the only grounds for divorce was immorality. Another school believed that anything that displeased the husband was sufficient to obtain a divorce. These Pharisees wanted Jesus to take one side on this controversy, thus giving them evidence to use against Him.

19:4–6 Jesus avoided the controversy over divorce (v. 3) by giving three reasons for why married people should remain married: (1) God made one male and one female. If God had intended more than one wife for Adam, He would have created more. The same would be true of husbands for Eve. **He who made them** is literally

“the One who created” or “the Creator.” The implication is that the Creator is Lord and is the One who determines what is the ideal in marriage. (2) God ordained marriage as the strongest bond in all human relationships. A man leaves his parents and is **joined to his wife**. The language is very strong here. **Leave** means “to abandon”; **joined to** means “to be glued to.” The most permanent relationship in society is not between parent and child, but between husband and wife. (3) The two become **one flesh**. The basic element in marriage is a contract or covenant (see Mal. 2:14); part of that covenant is physical intimacy.

19:8 Jesus pointed out that Moses never **commanded** divorce, he only **permitted** it. God’s original ideal was that married couples would not divorce.

19:9 Defining the term **wife** is vital to understanding the principle of this verse. Some believe that the divorce decree was valid only during the engagement period, as with Mary and Joseph in ch. 1. There the **wife** is the woman to whom a man is engaged. However, Deut. 24:1 indicates that the couple is living together, suggesting an actual marriage. **Immorality** may refer to any kind of sexual immorality—premarital sex, extramarital sex, prostitution, homosexuality, and even bestiality. **Whoever marries her who is divorced** probably refers to a man who marries a woman who has been divorced because of her immorality.

19:11 Jesus indicates that remaining unmarried is only for a few people.

19:12 Some people do not marry because they were born with no

³eunuchs who were born thus from *their* mother's womb, and ¹there are eunuchs who were made eunuchs by men, and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He who is able to accept *it*, let him accept *it*."

¹³^m Then little children were brought to Him that He might put *His* hands on them and pray, but the disciples rebuked them. ¹⁴ But Jesus said, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for ⁿof such is the kingdom of heaven." ¹⁵ And He laid *His* hands on them and departed from there.

Rich Young Ruler

Mark 10:17-27; Luke 18:18-27

¹⁶^o Now behold, one came and said to Him, ^p"Good ⁴Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?"

¹⁷ So He said to him, ⁵"Why do you call Me good? ⁶No one is ^qgood but One, *that is*, God. But if you want to enter into life, ^rkeep the commandments."

¹⁸ He said to Him, "Which ones?"

Jesus said, ^s"*You shall not murder; 'You shall not commit adultery; 'You shall not steal; 'You shall not bear false witness;* ¹⁹^t *'Honor your father and your mother;* and, ^u"*You shall love your neighbor as yourself.*"

²⁰ The young man said to Him, "All these things I have ^vkept ⁷from my youth. What do I still lack?"

²¹ Jesus said to him, "If you want to be perfect, ^wgo, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me."

²² But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

²³ Then Jesus said to His disciples, "Assuredly, I say to you that ^xit is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven.

¹² ¹[1 Cor. 7:32]

³ Emasculated men

¹³ ^m Matt. 20:31;

Mark 10:13; Luke

18:15

¹⁴ ⁿ Matt. 18:3, 4;

Mark 10:15; Luke

18:17; [1 Cor. 14:20;

1 Pet. 2:2]

¹⁶ ^o Matt. 19:16-29;

Mark 10:17-30; Luke

18:18-30 ^p Luke

10:25 ⁴ NU omits

Good

¹⁷ ^q Ps. 25:8; 34:8;

Nah. 1:7; [Rom. 2:4]

^r Lev. 18:5; Deut.

4:40; 6:17; 7:11;

11:22; 28:9; Neh.

9:29; Ezek. 20:21;

[Gal. 3:10] ⁵ NU

Why do you ask Me

about what is

good? ⁶ NU *There*

is One who is good.

But

¹⁸ ^s Ex. 20:13-16;

Deut. 5:17-20

¹⁹ ^t Ex. 20:12-16;

Deut. 5:16-20; Matt.

15:4 ^u Lev. 19:18;

Matt. 22:39; [Rom.

13:9; Gal. 5:14;

James 2:8]

²⁰ ^v [Phil. 3:6, 7]

⁷ NU omits *from my*

youth

²¹ ^w Matt. 6:20;

Luke 12:33; Acts

2:45; 4:34, 35; 1 Tim.

6:18, 19

²³ ^x [Matt. 13:22];

Mark 10:24; 1 Cor.

1:26; [1 Tim. 6:9]

²⁶ ^y Gen. 18:14;

Num. 11:23; Job

42:2; Is. 59:1; Jer.

32:17; Zech. 8:6;

Luke 1:37

²⁷ ^z Deut. 33:9;

Matt. 4:20; Luke

5:11

²⁸ ^o Matt. 20:21;

Luke 22:28-30;

[1 Cor. 6:2; Rev.

2:26]

²⁹ ^b [Matt. 6:33];

Mark 10:29, 30;

Luke 18:29, 30 ⁸ NU

omits *or wife* ⁹ Lit.

fields

²⁴ And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."

²⁵ When His disciples heard *it*, they were greatly astonished, saying, "Who then can be saved?"

²⁶ But Jesus looked at *them* and said to them, "With men this is impossible, but ^ywith God all things are possible."

The Apostles' Reward

Mark 10:28-30; Luke 18:28-30

²⁷ Then Peter answered and said to Him, "See, ^zwe have left all and followed You. Therefore what shall we have?"

²⁸ So Jesus said to them, "Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, ^ayou who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. ²⁹^b And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother ⁸or wife or children or ⁹lands, for My name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life. ³⁰^c But many *who are* first will be last, and the last first.

Parable of the Laborers

Mark 10:31

20 "For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. ² Now when he had agreed with the laborers for a denarius a day, he sent them into his vineyard. ³ And he went out about the third hour and saw others standing idle in the marketplace, ⁴ and said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right I will give you.' So they went. ⁵ Again he went

³⁰ ^c [Matt. 20:16; 21:31, 32]; Mark 10:31; Luke 13:30

sex drive. Others do not marry because they are castrated. Still others forgo marriage for the sake of serving God. Some have been given the spiritual gift of celibacy in order to do this (see 1 Cor. 7:7). **19:17** Why do you call Me good may be rephrased as "Why are you asking me concerning what is good?" The only One who can ultimately answer the question about goodness is God. The fact that Jesus went on to answer the question is a quiet claim to deity. **19:21** This verse does not teach salvation by works (see Rom. 3:23, 24; Eph. 2:8, 9). Rather Jesus was proving the error of the man's claim to have fulfilled God's law (v. 20). If the young man loved his neighbor to the extent required by the Law of Moses (v. 19; Lev. 19:18), he would have had no difficulty in giving away his wealth to needy people.

19:23, 24 Jesus' comment about a rich man's salvation would have been difficult for some Jewish people in this period to accept because they held to a form of "prosperity theology." If people prospered, it was evidence of God's blessing on them. Whereas v. 23 says it is hard for a rich man to become saved, v. 24 implies that it is as

impossible as passing a camel **through the eye of a needle** (see Mark 10:25; Luke 18:25).

19:27 we have left all: The instruction Jesus gave to the rich man was precisely what Peter and the other disciples had done (4:18-22). The natural question then was **what shall we have?** Rather than upbraid Peter for what may seem like a selfish request, Jesus assured him that the life investment he and the other disciples had made (16:24-28) would have dividends "a hundredfold" (v. 29).

19:28 The apostles never forgot Jesus' promise about their place in His kingdom; it was still in their minds in Acts 1:15-26. **In the regeneration** looks ahead to the coming kingdom promised in Dan. 7:13, 14. **throne of His glory:** Christ is today seated at the right hand of the eternal throne of the Father. In the future kingdom, He will occupy the Davidic throne (see Rev. 3:21). In that kingdom, the twelve apostles will **sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.**

20:3 The third hour was about 9:00 A.M.

20:5 The sixth hour was about noon. The ninth hour was 3:00 P.M.

out about the sixth and the ninth hour, and did likewise. ⁶And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing ¹idle, and said to them, ‘Why have you been standing here idle all day?’ ⁷They said to him, ‘Because no one hired us.’ He said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard, ²and whatever is right you will receive.’

⁸“So when evening had come, the owner of the vineyard said to his steward, ‘Call the laborers and give them *their* wages, beginning with the last to the first.’ ⁹And when those came who *were hired* about the eleventh hour, they each received a denarius. ¹⁰But when the first came, they supposed that they would receive more; and they likewise received each a denarius. ¹¹And when they had received *it*, they ³complained against the landowner, ¹²saying, ‘These last *men* have worked *only* one hour, and you made them equal to us who have borne the burden and the heat of the day.’ ¹³But he answered one of them and said, ‘Friend, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not agree with me for a denarius?’ ¹⁴Take *what* is yours and go your way. I wish to give to this last man *the same* as to you. ¹⁵^aIs it not lawful for me to do what I wish with my own things? Or ^bis your eye evil because I am good?’ ¹⁶^cSo the last will be first, and the first last. ^dFor ⁴many are called, but few chosen.”

Instruction About Jesus’ Death

Mark 10:32-34; Luke 18:31-34

¹⁷^eNow Jesus, going up to Jerusalem, took the twelve disciples aside on the road and said to them, ¹⁸^f“Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death, ¹⁹^gand deliver Him to the Gentiles to ^hmock and to ⁱscourge and to ^jcrucify. And the third day He will ^krise again.”

CHAPTER 20

⁶ ¹ NU omits *idle*
⁷ ² NU omits the rest of v. 7.
¹¹ ³ *grumbled*
¹⁵ ^a [Rom. 9:20, 21]
^b Deut. 15:9; Prov. 23:6; [Matt. 6:23]; Mark 7:22
¹⁶ ^c Matt. 19:30; Mark 10:31; Luke 13:30 ^d Matt. 22:14
⁴ NU omits the rest of v. 16.
¹⁷ ^e Matt. 20:17-19; Mark 10:32-34; Luke 18:31-33; John 12:12
¹⁸ ^f Matt. 16:21; 26:47-57 [☆]; Mark 14:42, 64; John 18:5; 19:7
¹⁹ ^g Matt. 27:2; Mark 15:1, 16; Luke 23:1; John 18:28; Acts 3:13 ^h Matt. 26:67, 68; 27:29, 41; Mark 15:20, 31
ⁱ Matt. 27:26; Mark 15:15; John 19:1
^j Matt. 27:35; Luke 23:33; Acts 3:13-15
^k Matt. 28:5, 6; Mark 16:6, 9; Luke 24:5-8, 46; Acts 10:40; 1 Cor. 15:4
²⁰ ¹ Mark 10:35-45
^m Matt. 4:21; 10:2
²¹ ⁿ [Matt. 19:28]
²² ^o Is. 51:17, 22; Jer. 49:12; Matt. 26:39, 42; Mark 14:36; Luke 22:42; John 18:11 ^p Luke 12:50
⁵ NU omits *and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with*
²³ ^q [Acts 12:2; Rom. 8:17; 2 Cor. 1:7; Rev. 1:9] ⁶ NU omits *and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with*
²⁴ ^r Mark 10:41; Luke 22:24, 25
²⁶ ^s [1 Pet. 5:3]
^t Matt. 23:11; Mark 9:35; 10:43; Luke 22:26
²⁷ ^u [Matt. 18:4]
²⁸ ^v John 13:4
^w [Matt. 26:28; John 13:13; 2 Cor. 8:9;

Instruction About Ambition

Mark 10:35-45

²⁰¹Then the mother of ^mZebedee’s sons came to Him with her sons, kneeling down and asking something from Him.

²¹And He said to her, “What do you wish?”

She said to Him, “Grant that these two sons of mine ⁿmay sit, one on Your right hand and the other on the left, in Your kingdom.”

²²But Jesus answered and said, “You do not know what you ask. Are you able to drink ^othe cup that I am about to drink, ⁵and be baptized with ^pthe baptism that I am baptized with?”

They said to Him, “We are able.”

²³So He said to them, ^q“You will indeed drink My cup, ⁶and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with; but to sit on My right hand and on My left is not Mine to give, but *it is for those* for whom it is prepared by My Father.”

²⁴^rAnd when the ten heard *it*, they were greatly displeased with the two brothers. ²⁵But Jesus called them to *Himself* and said, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those who are great exercise authority over them. ²⁶Yet ^sit shall not be so among you; but ‘whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant. ²⁷^uAnd whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave—²⁸^v just as the ^wSon of Man did not come to be served, ^xbut to serve, and ^yto give His life a ransom ^zfor many.”

The Blind Men Recognize the King

Mark 10:46-52; Luke 18:35-43

²⁹^aNow as they went out of Jericho, a great multitude followed Him. ³⁰And be-

Phil. 2:6, 7; 1 Tim. 2:5, 6; Titus 2:14; Heb. 9:28; Rev. 1:5] ^a Luke 22:27; John 13:14 ^y [Is. 53:10, 11 [☆]; Dan. 9:24, 26; John 11:51, 52; 1 Pet. 1:18, 19] ^z [Rom. 5:15, 19; Heb. 9:28] ²⁹ ^a Mark 10:46-52; Luke 18:35-43

20:6 The eleventh hour was about 5:00 P.M. There would have been only one hour left in the working day.

20:13-15 The first workers complained that their wages were the same as those who had been hired late in the day. However, the owner had not cheated them; everyone received the agreed-upon sum for his work. The early workers grumbled because they were evil in their outlook; their master, however, was sovereignly generous.

20:16 In the context of Matthew, the workers with the contract represent Israel; they had the promises and the covenants (see Rom. 3:1, 2; 9:4; Eph. 2:11, 12). Those without an agreement represent the Gentiles, who would be made equal with the Jewish people when salvation became available to all through faith in Jesus Christ (see Rom. 11:16, 17; Eph. 2:13-15; 3:6).

20:17-19 Once again the Lord Jesus anticipated His death and res-

urrection (see 16:21; 17:9, 22, 23). For the first time He referred to the way He would die—crucifixion.

20:24 The indignation of the other ten apostles was probably due to their own desire for these lofty positions. Jesus’ response was addressed to all of them (vv. 25-28).

20:26, 27 The measure of greatness is not position, power, or prestige; it is service.

20:30 Only Matthew mentions two blind men; Mark and Luke refer to one, probably the one who spoke. The fact that Matthew records that there were actually two men especially suits his Gospel, which was written primarily for Jews who would have desired two witnesses (see Deut. 17:6). **Son of David**, a messianic title (see 2 Sam. 7:12-16), identifies Jesus as the heir to David’s throne. This cry, repeated in v. 31, shows the spiritual insight of these blind men.

hold, ^btwo blind men sitting by the road, when they heard that Jesus was passing by, cried out, saying, “Have mercy on us, O Lord, ‘Son of David!’”

³¹Then the multitude ^dwarned them that they should be quiet; but they cried out all the more, saying, “Have mercy on us, O Lord, Son of David!”

³²So Jesus stood still and called them, and said, “What do you want Me to do for you?”

³³They said to Him, “Lord, that our eyes may be opened.” ³⁴So Jesus had ‘compassion and touched their eyes. And immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed Him.

The Triumphal Entry

Mark 11:1-10; Luke 19:29-38; John 12:12-15

21 Now ^awhen they drew near Jerusalem, and came to ¹Bethphage, at ^bthe Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, ²saying to them, “Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her. Loose *them* and bring *them* to Me. ³And if anyone says anything to you, you shall say, ‘The Lord has need of them,’ and immediately he will send them.”

^{4,2}All this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying:

⁵ “*Tell^c the daughter of Zion,
‘Behold, your King is coming to
you,
Lowly, and sitting on a donkey,
A colt, the foal of a donkey.’*”

^{6,d}So the disciples went and did as Jesus commanded them. ⁷They brought the donkey and the colt, ^elaid their clothes on them, ³and set *Him* on them. ⁸And a

30 ^bMatt. 9:27
^c[2 Sam. 7:14-17;
Ps. 89:3-5, 19-37;
Is. 11:10-12; Ezek.
37:21-25]; Matt. 1:1;
Luke 1:31, 32; [Acts
15:14-17]
31 ^dMatt. 19:13
34 ^eMatt. 9:36;
14:14; 15:32; 18:27

CHAPTER 21

1 ^aMark 11:1-10;
Luke 19:29-38
^b[Zech. 14:4] ¹M
Bethphage
4 ²NU omits All
5 ^cIs. 62:11; Zech.
9:9 ★; John 12:15
6 ^dMark 11:4
7 ^e2 Kin. 9:13 ³NU
and He sat

8 ^fLev. 23:40; John
12:13
9 ^gPs. 118:26 ★;
Matt. 23:39
10 ^hJohn 2:13, 15
11 ⁱ[Deut. 18:15,
18]; Matt. 2:23;
16:14; Luke 4:16-29;
John 6:14; 7:40;
9:17; [Acts 3:22, 23]
12 ^jMal. 3:1 ★;
Mark 11:15-18; Luke
19:45-47; John 2:13-
16 ^kDeut. 14:25
⁴NU omits of God
13 ^lIs. 56:7 ^mJer.
7:11
15 ⁿMatt. 1:1; John
7:42 ⁵angry
16 ^oPs. 8:2 ★; Matt.
11:25

very great multitude spread their clothes on the road; ^fothers cut down branches from the trees and spread *them* on the road. ⁹Then the multitudes who went before and those who followed cried out, saying:

“Hosanna to the Son of David!
^g*‘Blessed is He who comes in the name
of the Lord!’*
Hosanna in the highest!”

^{10,h}And when He had come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, “Who is this?”

¹¹So the multitudes said, “This is Jesus, ⁱthe prophet from Nazareth of Galilee.”

The Cleansing of the Temple

Mark 11:15-17; Luke 19:45, 46

^{12,j}Then Jesus went into the temple ⁴of God and drove out all those who bought and sold in the temple, and overturned the tables of the ^kmoney changers and the seats of those who sold doves. ¹³And He said to them, “It is written, ^l*‘My house shall be called a house of prayer,’* but you have made it a ^m*‘den of thieves.’*”

¹⁴Then *the* blind and *the* lame came to Him in the temple, and He healed them. ¹⁵But when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that He did, and the children crying out in the temple and saying, “Hosanna to the ⁿSon of David!” they were ⁵indignant ¹⁶and said to Him, “Do You hear what these are saying?”

And Jesus said to them, “Yes. Have you never read,

^o*‘Out of the mouth of babes and
nursing infants
You have perfected praise?’*”

21:1 The Mount of Olives was directly east of Jerusalem, across the deep ravine of the Kidron valley. **Bethphage** was on the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives.

21:3 The Lord is Jesus. The owner of the animals was likely a follower, or at least an admirer, of Jesus.

21:4, 5 These actions fulfill Is. 62:11; Zech. 9:9. The emphasis in these prophecies and Jesus’ actions is on Jesus’ humility.

21:7 The disciples **laid their clothes** on both animals so that Christ could ride either one. Perhaps the mother donkey walked in front, followed by the colt on which Jesus was seated.

21:8 This **great multitude** refers not to the inhabitants of Jerusalem (v. 10), but to the large crowd that had accompanied Jesus from Jericho (20:29). The scene was a royal procession (see 2 Kin. 9:13). Prior to this time, the Lord Jesus had steadfastly avoided such a display (8:4; 9:30; 12:16; 17:9). Now He was publicly presenting Himself to Israel as the nation’s Messiah and King.

21:9 **Hosanna** literally means “save now” (as in Ps. 118:25), but it was used as an exclamation of joyous praise. **Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord** is a quotation of Ps. 118:26.

21:10 The city was moved is literally “the city was shaken.” The

same verb is used in 2:3 of Herod’s reaction to the wise men who were asking about the birth of Israel’s King.

21:12 Two cleansings of the temple are recorded in the Gospels—one in John 2:14–17 at the beginning of Jesus’ ministry, and one in the synoptic Gospels at the end of His ministry (see Mark 11:15–17; Luke 19:45, 46). **bought and sold:** Financial corruption ran rampant in the outer courts of the temple. Some of the gains that were realized from this profiteering probably went to the family of the high priest. **The money changers** exchanged coins with pagan symbols on them for acceptable coins to be used in the temple. They charged a premium for this “service.” **Those who sold doves** sold them at top prices.

21:13 **My house shall be called a house of prayer** is quoted from Is. 56:7. **den of thieves:** The temple had become a garrison for bandits. Jeremiah 7:9, 10 says that the Jewish people, after committing all sorts of sins, would plead deliverance from the consequences of those sins based simply on the fact that they came to the temple. Thus in Jeremiah’s day, it became a den for robbers—just as it was in Jesus’ day.

21:16 In Ps. 8:2, which is quoted here, the infants expressed praise in the face of enemies.

¹⁷Then He left them and ^pwent out of the city to Bethany, and He lodged there.

Cursing of the Fig Tree

Mark 11:11-14, 20-24

^{18q}Now in the morning, as He returned to the city, He was hungry. ^{19r}And seeing a fig tree by the road, He came to it and found nothing on it but leaves, and said to it, "Let no fruit grow on you ever again." Immediately the fig tree withered away.

^{20s}And when the disciples saw *it*, they marveled, saying, "How did the fig tree wither away so soon?"

²¹So Jesus answered and said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you, ^tif you have faith and ^udo not doubt, you will not only do what was done to the fig tree, ^vbut also if you say to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' it will be done. ²²And ^wwhatever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive."

Question of Jesus' Authority

Mark 11:27-33; Luke 20:1-18

^{23x}Now when He came into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people confronted Him as He was teaching, and ^ysaid, "By what authority are you doing these things? And who gave You this authority?"

²⁴But Jesus answered and said to them, "I also will ask you one thing, which if you tell Me, I likewise will tell you by what authority I do these things: ²⁵The ^zbaptism of ^aJohn—where was it from? From heaven or from men?"

¹⁷ ^p Matt. 26:6; Mark 11:1, 11, 12; 14:3; Luke 19:29; 24:50; John 11:1, 18; 12:1
¹⁸ ^q Mark 11:12-14, 20-24
¹⁹ ^r Mark 11:13
²⁰ ^s Mark 11:20
²¹ ^t Matt. 17:20
^u James 1:6 ^v 1 Cor. 13:2
²² ^w Matt. 7:7-11; Mark 11:24; Luke 11:9; [John 15:7; James 5:16; 1 John 3:22; 5:14]
²³ ^x Mark 11:27-33; Luke 20:1-8 ^y Ex. 2:14; Acts 4:7; 7:27
²⁵ ^z [John 1:29-34]
^a John 1:15-28

²⁶ ^b Matt. 14:5; 21:46; Luke 20:6
^c Matt. 14:5; Mark 6:20
²⁸ ^d Matt. 20:1; 21:33
³¹ ^e Luke 7:29, 37-50
³² ^f Luke 3:1-12; 7:29 ^g Luke 3:12, 13
⁶ regret it
³³ ^h Ps. 80:9; Mark 12:1-12; Luke 20:9-19 ⁱ Matt. 25:14

And they reasoned among themselves, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven,' He will say to us, 'Why then did you not believe him?' ²⁶But if we say, 'From men,' we ^bfear the multitude, ^cfor all count John as a prophet." ²⁷So they answered Jesus and said, "We do not know."

And He said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things.

Parable of the Two Sons

²⁸"But what do you think? A man had two sons, and he came to the first and said, 'Son, go, work today in my ^dvineyard.' ²⁹He answered and said, 'I will not,' but afterward he regretted it and went. ³⁰Then he came to the second and said likewise. And he answered and said, 'I go, sir,' but he did not go. ³¹Which of the two did the will of *his* father?"

They said to Him, "The first."

Jesus said to them, ^e"Assuredly, I say to you that tax collectors and harlots enter the kingdom of God before you. ³²For ^fJohn came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him; ^gbut tax collectors and harlots believed him; and when you saw *it*, you did not afterward ⁶relent and believe him.

Parable of the Landowner

Mark 12:1-12; Luke 20:9-19

³³"Hear another parable: There was a certain landowner ^hwho planted a vineyard and set a hedge around it, dug a winepress in it and built a tower. And he leased it to vinedressers and ⁱwent into

21:17 The idea here is that Jesus abandoned the chief priests and scribes, the temple, and the city of Jerusalem. Instead of welcoming their Messiah, the religious authorities had rejected and opposed Him.

21:18, 19 He was hungry: Jesus desired to eat of the fruit of the fig tree one more time before He died, but could not. Fig trees do not bear their fruit in the spring, during Passover, but in the fall of the year. However, fig trees do have a small, edible fruit that appears in the spring before the sprouting of the leaves. This tree was full of leaves, but had no fruit. It looked full of promise, but was empty—just like the city of Jerusalem and its beautiful temple. **Immediately** does not necessarily mean instantly; it may have the idea of "very soon" as in Luke 19:11 (see Mark 11:12-14, 20-24). This miracle—the only recorded miracle of Jesus that involved judgment—illustrates God's judgment on the Israelites, who professed adherence to God but produced no fruit or spiritual reality.

21:20-22 The withering of the fig tree illustrates God's judgment on unbelieving Israel, but it also became a means for Jesus to teach His disciples that faith works miracles and is the basis for answered prayer.

21:23 The mention of **these things** refers to the Triumphal Entry, the cleansing of the temple, and the accepting of the praise of children. The fact that **the chief priests and the elders** opposed the Lord Jesus illustrates the unified antagonism of the Sanhedrin. Priests, elders, and scribes were the three representative groups in that body.

21:24 It was a common rabbinic method to answer a question with a question.

21:27 We do not know: The religious leaders' response not only released the Lord from having to answer their question, it also disqualified them as spiritual leaders.

21:31, 32 Tax collectors and harlots is a proverbial phrase for moral reprobates. Jesus' phrase **enter . . . before you** not only established that these repentant sinners would enter the future kingdom, it also left the door open for the religious leaders to repent. But even though the self-righteous leaders saw the example of repentant tax collectors and prostitutes, they refused to believe. This parable condemned the leaders' conduct. Clearly God delights in the brokenness of sinners but also in the humble faith of the morally upright.

21:33-40 The beginning of the parable of the wicked vinedressers is presented in the language of Is. 5:1, 2. However, there is a difference. In Is. 5, the vineyard and its provisions represented Israel; here the **vineyard** illustrates God's kingdom (compare v. 43 with Is. 5:7). The detailed description of the vineyard indicates that the **landowner** provided for its well-being with the utmost care. The owner of that vineyard was God; the **vinedressers** were the nation of Israel. As God's people, Israel was to bring forth fruits in anticipation of God's coming kingdom. The **servants** represent God's messengers, the prophets, who were so shamefully treated by the Jewish leaders (see 1 Kin. 18:4; 19:10; 22:24; 2 Chr. 24:20, 21; Neh. 9:26; Jer. 2:30; 20:1, 2; 26:20-23; 37:15; 38:6). The **son** is Jesus, the Messiah.

a far country. ³⁴Now when vintage-time drew near, he sent his servants to the vinedressers, that they might receive its fruit. ³⁵*j* And the vinedressers took his servants, beat one, killed one, and stoned another. ³⁶Again he sent other servants, more than the first, and they did likewise to them. ³⁷Then last of all he sent his *k* son to them, saying, "They will respect my son." ³⁸But when the vinedressers saw the son, they said among themselves, "This is the heir. *m* Come, let us kill him and seize his inheritance." ³⁹*n* So they took him and cast *him* out of the vineyard and killed *him*.

⁴⁰"Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vinedressers?"

⁴¹*o* They said to Him, *p* "He will destroy those wicked men miserably, *q* and lease his vineyard to other vinedressers who will *r* render to him the fruits in their seasons."

⁴²Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures:

*"The stone which the builders
rejected
Has become the chief cornerstone.
This was the LORD's doing,
And it is marvelous in our eyes?"*

⁴³"Therefore I say to you, *s* the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it. ⁴⁴And *t* whoever falls on this stone will be broken; but on whomever it falls, *u* it will grind him to powder."

³⁵ / 2 Chr. 24:21;
36:16; [Matt. 23:34;
37; Acts 7:52;
1 Thess. 2:15]; Heb.
11:36, 37

³⁷ *k* [John 3:16]

³⁸ *l* [Ps. 2:8; Heb.

1:2] *m* [Ps. 2:2];

John 11:53; Acts

4:27

³⁹ *n* [Matt. 26:50];

Mark 14:46; Luke

22:54; John 18:12;

[Acts 2:23]

⁴¹ *o* Luke 20:16

p [Luke 21:24]

q [Matt. 8:11; Acts

13:46; Rom. 9; 10]

r give

⁴² *s* Ps. 118:22;

23 *t*; Is. 28:16; Mark

12:10; Luke 20:17;

Acts 4:11; [Rom.

9:33]; Eph. 2:20;

[1 Pet. 2:6, 7]

⁴³ *u* [Matt. 8:12];

Acts 13:46

⁴⁴ *v* Is. 8:14, 15 *w*;

Zech. 12:3; Luke

20:18; [Rom. 9:33];

1 Pet. 2:8 *x* [Is.

60:12; Dan. 2:44]

⁴⁵ *y* knew

⁴⁶ *v* Matt. 21:26;

Mark 11:18, 32

w Matt. 21:11; Luke

7:16; John 7:40

CHAPTER 22

¹ *o* Luke 14:16; [Rev.
19:7-9]

⁴ *o* Prov. 9:2

⁶ *l* insolently

⁷ *c* [Dan. 9:26]

⁸ *d* Matt. 10:11

¹⁰ *e* Matt. 13:38, 47;

48; [Acts 28:28]

⁴⁵Now when the chief priests and Pharisees heard His parables, they ⁸perceived that He was speaking of them. ⁴⁶But when they sought to lay hands on Him, they ^vfeared the multitudes, because ^wthey took Him for a prophet.

Parable of the Marriage Feast

22 And Jesus answered ^aand spoke to them again by parables and said: ²"The kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who arranged a marriage for his son, ³and sent out his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding; and they were not willing to come. ⁴Again, he sent out other servants, saying, "Tell those who are invited, "See, I have prepared my dinner; ^bmy oxen and fatted cattle *are* killed, and all things *are* ready. Come to the wedding." ⁵But they made light of it and went their ways, one to his own farm, another to his business. ⁶And the rest seized his servants, treated *them* ¹spitefully, and killed *them*. ⁷But when the king heard *about* it, he was furious. And he sent out ^chis armies, destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city. ⁸Then he said to his servants, "The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not ^dworthy. ⁹Therefore go into the highways, and as many as you find, invite to the wedding? ¹⁰So those servants went out into the highways and ^egathered together all whom they found, both bad and good. And the wedding *hall* was filled with guests.

21:42 This verse explains that the rejection of the son (vv. 38, 39) was predicted in Ps. 118:22, 23. The rejected **stone** is the Messiah, who became the **chief cornerstone** (see Mark 12:10, 11; Luke 20:17; Acts 4:11; Eph. 2:20; 1 Pet. 2:7).

21:43 In our time, **nation** refers to the church (see Rom. 10:19; 1 Pet. 2:9). This does not mean, however, that the kingdom has been forever removed from Israel (see Rom. 11:26, 27).

21:44 This paradoxical saying indicates that people can give two responses to Christ, the **stone**. A person may be broken with repentance as a result of falling on Christ. If however a person refuses to repent, the result is judgment. The reference to **powder** seems to look back to Dan. 2:35, 44, 45.

22:1 The plural **parables** refers to the parable of the two sons (21:28–32), the wicked vinedressers (21:33–44), and the wedding feast (vv. 1–14). This story is not the same one related in Luke 14:15–24. The occasion is different in Luke and some details vary.

22:2 The kingdom of heaven is like indicates that the story contains principles or truths that relate to the kingdom of God. **Marriage** refers to a wedding feast (see Rev. 19:6–10). Jewish weddings in biblical times involved a number of steps. First, the couple made a marriage contract, which was the basis of the marriage (see Mal. 2:14). About a year later, the groom went to the bride's house, where the bride was presented to him. This was followed by a nighttime wedding procession to the groom's home (25:1–13), where a festive wedding banquet was held (see John 2:1–11). The banquet could last up to a week, depending on the resources of the groom's family. A feast, especially a wedding feast, is often used in Scripture to portray God's kingdom on earth (see 8:11; 25:10; Is. 25:6; Luke 14:15–24; John

2:1–11; Rev. 19:7–9). In this parable, the **king** is God the Father and the **son** is Jesus.

22:3 Two invitations were sent out. The first was sent long before the celebration so that people would have plenty of time to prepare themselves for the banquet. **Those who were invited** had received this original announcement. A second invitation was sent to them to announce that the banquet was ready and they should come right away.

22:4 The plea of this verse undoubtedly portrays the ministry of John the Baptist (3:1–12), Jesus (4:17), and the disciples (10:5–42).

22:5 They made light of it means "they did not care about it." They were so preoccupied with the here and now that they had no concern for God's kingdom.

22:6 The indifferent response in v. 5 describes Israel at the time of Jesus' earthly ministry; the actions in this verse may be attributed to the religious authorities. These leaders approved John the Baptist's death at the hands of Herod Antipas (21:25); they instigated Jesus' crucifixion (26:3–5, 14–16; 27:1, 2); and they initiated the persecution of the early church (see Acts 4:1–22; 5:17–40; 6:12–15).

22:7 The burning of the **city** refers to the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 under Titus. A parallel prediction of the same event is found in 21:41.

22:10 Both bad and good probably refers to Jews and Gentiles. Both groups include some who are morally evil and others who are morally good. Whatever their condition, people need to respond to the gospel. The important point to recognize is that this group responded to the invitation, while those who had received special invitations had spurned the king's bidding.

BIBLE TIMES & CULTURE NOTES



The Sadducees

Because their writings have not survived through the ages, little is known about the Sadducees today except what rival groups said about them. They were an aristocratic group in Israel that dominated the higher echelons of the priesthood. As landowners, they achieved their power and status from their class and their position as priests, while the Pharisees derived their status mostly from their learning. The Sadducees based their beliefs solely on the Pentateuch, the first five books of the OT. They did not accept the authority of any other OT books and did not find a basis in the Pentateuch for a belief in angels, demons, or an afterlife (see Acts 23:8). Many of their beliefs may have been derived from a concern over their power and status. With no afterlife and no resurrection, there was no need to worry about rewards or punishment in the life to come.

¹¹ “But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man there ^fwho did not have on a wedding garment. ¹² So he said to him, ‘Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?’ And he was ^gspeechless. ¹³ Then the king said to the servants, ‘Bind him hand and foot, ² take him away, and cast him ^hinto outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’

¹¹ ^f [2 Cor. 5:3; Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10, 12; Rev. 3:4; 16:15; 19:8]
¹² ^g [Rom. 3:19]
¹³ ^h Matt. 8:12; 25:30; Luke 13:28
² NU omits *take him away, and*

¹⁴ ⁱ Matt. 20:16
¹⁵ ^j Mark 12:13-17; Luke 20:20-26
¹⁶ ^k Mark 3:6; 8:15; 12:13 ³ Lit. *look at the face of*
¹⁸ ⁴ *knew*
²¹ ^l Matt. 17:25
^m [Rom. 13:1-7; 1 Pet. 2:13-15]
ⁿ [1 Cor. 3:23; 6:19; 20; 12:27] ⁵ *Pay*
²³ ^o Mark 12:18-27; Luke 20:27-40
^p Acts 23:8

¹⁴ⁱ “For many are called, but few are chosen.”

Conflict with Pharisees and Herodians

Mark 12:13-17; Luke 20:20-26

^{15j} Then the Pharisees went and plotted how they might entangle Him in His talk. ¹⁶ And they sent to Him their disciples with the ^k Herodians, saying, “Teacher, we know that You are true, and teach the way of God in truth; nor do You care about anyone, for You do not ³ regard the person of men. ¹⁷ Tell us, therefore, what do You think? Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?”

¹⁸ But Jesus ⁴ perceived their wickedness, and said, “Why do you test Me, *you* hypocrites? ¹⁹ Show Me the tax money.” So they brought Him a denarius.

²⁰ And He said to them, “Whose image and inscription is this?”

²¹ They said to Him, “Caesar’s.” And He said to them, ¹ “Render ⁵ therefore to Caesar the things that are ^m Caesar’s, and to God the things that are ⁿ God’s.” ²² When they had heard *these words*, they marveled, and left Him and went their way.

Conflict with Sadducees

Mark 12:18-27; Luke 20:27-40

^{23o} The same day the Sadducees, ^p who say there is no resurrection, came to

22:11 did not have on a wedding garment: Like the others, this visitor had been invited to the wedding, but he failed to prepare himself for it (see Rev. 3:18). In Revelation, the garment of fine linen worn by the bride of the Lamb is said to be the righteous deeds of the saints (Rev. 19:8). The **man** had ignored a basic obligation placed on him when he accepted the king’s gracious invitation to the feast—he was supposed to wear clean clothes. To come to a wedding banquet unprepared or in soiled clothing would have been insulting. In this parable, the garment may refer to the righteousness of Christ graciously provided for us through His death. To refuse to put it on would mean a refusal of Christ’s sacrifice or arrogance in believing that the “garment” was somehow not needed. If we want to enter Christ’s banquet, we must “put on” the righteousness He gives us (Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10). Because this man was unprepared, the king declared him unworthy. His refusal resulted in the man being sent out of the banquet hall.

22:13 Bind him hand and foot is a vivid picture of the man’s inability to participate in Christ’s kingdom. Someone claiming to belong at the wedding while refusing to wear the correct garments was similar to the Israelites who claimed to be God’s people while refusing to obey Him. This man was an impostor, and when he was discovered (as all impostors will be), he was **cast . . . into outer darkness**, referring to the judgment (8:12; 25:30).

22:14 many are called, but few are chosen: The word *called* in this instance refers to being “invited,” not to the call of God as Paul used the word (Rom. 8:28, 29). All Israel had been invited, but only a few would accept and follow Jesus. Not all those invited will be among the chosen of God, for not all will believe.

22:15 Entangle means “to snare,” like a trapper catching his prey.

22:16 Nothing is known of the **Herodians** outside of the Gospels. Judging from their name, they were supporters of the Herodian

dynasty in its collaboration with the Roman government. This would put them at the opposite end of the political spectrum from the Pharisees. Yet their common hatred of Christ was great enough that the Pharisees and Herodians joined forces against Him. **we know that You . . . teach the way of God in truth:** In a way, the Herodians and Pharisees were saying, “You truly teach God’s word, no matter what people think of you.”

22:17 The dilemma is obvious: to side with the Pharisees and risk being accused of insurrection against the Roman government, or to side with the Herodians and lose the favor of the masses. **Taxes** included an annual tax paid by every Jewish adult to the Roman government. The Jews despised paying this tax to their hated oppressors.

22:18 Test here means “to solicit to evil.” The Lord called the Herodians and Pharisees **hypocrites** because they falsely pretended to have good intentions.

22:19, 20 The **tax money** was a **denarius**, a silver coin with an image of the emperor and the inscription calling him “divine.” The **image and inscription** were repugnant to the Jews because they hated their Roman overlords and worshiped only the God of Israel.

22:21 In responding to His opponents, the Lord changed the verb they used from “pay” (v. 17) to **render**, which literally means “to pay back.” Christ’s followers have an obligation to earthly governments and to God. Believers today are citizens of a heavenly kingdom and strangers and sojourners on the earth (see 1 Pet. 1:1; 2:11). It is the believers’ responsibility to obey the law of the land until it becomes sinful to do so (see Rom. 13:1-7; 1 Pet. 2:13-17). When the two realms are in conflict, Christians are to follow God (see Acts 4:18-20; 5:29).

22:23 Some of the beliefs of the **Sadducees** are explained in Acts 23:8. These men looked on the first five books of Moses as their authoritative Scripture. To them, any religious argument had to come from the Pentateuch.

Him and asked Him, ²⁴saying: “Teacher, ^qMoses said that if a man dies, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife and raise up offspring for his brother. ²⁵Now there were with us seven brothers. The first died after he had married, and having no offspring, left his wife to his brother. ²⁶Likewise the second also, and the third, even to the seventh. ²⁷Last of all the woman died also. ²⁸Therefore, in the resurrection, whose wife of the seven will she be? For they all had her.”

²⁹Jesus answered and said to them, “You are ⁶mistaken, ^rnot knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God. ³⁰For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but ^sare like angels ⁷of God in heaven. ³¹But concerning the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was spoken to you by God, saying, ³²*‘I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob’*? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.” ³³And when the multitudes heard *this*, ^uthey were astonished at His teaching.

²⁴ ^q Deut. 25:5
²⁹ ^r John 20:9
⁶ *deceived*
³⁰ ^s [1 John 3:2]
⁷ NU omits of God
³² ^t Gen. 17:7;
 26:24; 28:21; Ex.
 3:6, 15; Mark 12:26;
 Luke 20:37; Acts
 7:32; [Heb. 11:16]
³³ ^u Matt. 7:28

³⁴ ^v Mark 12:28–31;
 Luke 10:25–37
³⁵ ^w Luke 7:30;
 10:25; 11:45, 46, 52;
 14:3; Titus 3:13
³⁷ ^x Deut. 6:5;
 10:12; 30:6
³⁹ ^y Lev. 19:18;
 Matt. 19:19; Mark
 12:31; Luke 10:27;
 [Rom. 13:9; Gal.
 5:14; James 2:8]
⁴⁰ ^z [Matt. 7:12;
 Rom. 13:10; 1 Tim.
 1:5]
⁴¹ ^a Mark 12:35–37;
 Luke 20:41–44
⁴² ^b Matt. 1:1; 21:9

The Greatest Commandment

Mark 12:28–34

³⁴^v But when the Pharisees heard that He had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together. ³⁵Then one of them, ^wa lawyer, asked *Him a question*, testing Him, and saying, ³⁶“Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?”

³⁷Jesus said to him, ^x“*You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.*” ³⁸This is the first and great commandment. ³⁹And the second is like it: ^y“*You shall love your neighbor as yourself.*” ⁴⁰^z On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.”

The Son of David

Mark 12:35–37; Luke 20:41–44

⁴¹^a While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, ⁴²saying, “What do you think about the Christ? Whose Son is He?”

They said to Him, “*The ^bSon of David.*”

⁴³He said to them, “How then does David in the Spirit call Him ‘*Lord*,’ saying:

22:24 The law that is the basis of the Sadducees’ question is found in Deut. 25:5, 6. It is known as the law of the levirate marriage (see Gen. 38:1–26).

22:25–28 This theological riddle had probably been used by the Sadducees to confound the Pharisees on more than one occasion.

22:29 Mistaken: Christ rebuked the Sadducees for denying the resurrection.

22:32 Jesus quoted from the Pentateuch, Ex. 3:6, 15, to prove the doctrine of the resurrection. The Lord is **the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob**, a title that recalls that God is the One who gave the promises to the patriarchs. In particular, God promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob the land of Canaan (see Gen. 13:14–17; 15:7–21; 17:8; 26:2–5; 28:13–15; Deut. 30:1–5). Of course, the patriarchs did not receive the land in their lifetimes. They must be resurrected in order to receive God’s promises in full. That God is called **the God . . . of the living** indicates that there is a present spirit world over which God presides and that will one day be revealed.

22:33 Jesus taught something that no one had seen clearly be-

fore—that the patriarchs are still living. The crowds were **astonished**, and may also have been surprised that Jesus did not teach like the scribes and Pharisees, who appealed to rabbinic authority or prefaced their teachings with “Thus saith the Lord.” Jesus appealed to His own authority when He taught them.

22:34 Undoubtedly the Pharisees were delighted to see their theological rivals muzzled; yet they were still intent on snaring Christ in some way (v. 15).

22:35, 36 The **lawyer** was a student of the Law of Moses. He put the Lord to a test with a question designed to reveal how much Christ knew about the Law.

22:37 To answer the lawyer’s question, Jesus quoted from the great Jewish confession of faith called the Shema. The confession is called this because it begins with the Hebrew word *shema* meaning “hear:” “Hear, O Israel: The **LORD** our God, the **LORD** is one!” (see Deut. 6:4, 5; 11:13–21). The **heart**, **soul**, and **mind** represent the whole person.

22:39 This command from Lev. 19:18 is not an imperative to love one’s self. People naturally love themselves and are at least somewhat self-centered. Because we love ourselves, we want the best for ourselves; likewise, we should be concerned for the welfare of others.

22:40 The Ten Commandments can be divided into two categories: those dealing with love for God (the first four Commandments) and those dealing with responsibilities toward other people (the last six Commandments). The same may be said for **all the Law and the Prophets**.

22:41–45 After answering three questions posed by Israel’s religious leaders (vv. 15–22, 23–33, 34–40), Jesus turned to the Pharisees with a question of His own. The question had two parts, a first about the identity of the Messiah and a second about the interpretation of Ps. 110.

22:42 The answer to Jesus’ question about the identity of the Messiah was in a number of OT passages (see 2 Sam. 7:12–16; Ps. 89:3, 4, 34–36; Is. 9:7; 16:5; 55:3, 4). The Messiah would come from David’s royal line.

22:43 This verse affirms that **David** wrote Ps. 110. Furthermore, it declares that David wrote the psalm under the inspiration of **the Spirit**.

mind

(Gk. *dianoia*, *nous*) (22:37; Rom. 12:2; Eph. 4:23) Strong’s #1271; 3563

Four separate Greek words account for nearly all instances of “mind” in the NT. They all mean much the same thing: understanding, thought, mind, reason. While today we think of a person’s mind in a morally neutral way, in the NT the mind was clearly thought of as either good or evil. Negatively, the mind may be “blinded” (2 Cor. 3:14; 4:4), “corrupt” (2 Tim. 3:8), and “debased” (Rom. 1:28). On the positive side, humans may have minds that are renewed (Rom. 12:2) and pure (2 Pet. 3:1). They may love God with all their minds (22:37; Mark 12:30; Luke 10:27) and have God’s laws implanted in their minds (Heb. 8:10). Since Christians have “the mind of Christ” (1 Cor. 2:16), they are instructed to be united in mind (Rom. 12:16; 1 Pet. 3:8).



Outer Garment

Hebrew men wore an “outer garment” (John 21:7) consisting of a square or oblong strip of cloth, six to ten feet wide. It was wrapped around the body as a protective covering, with two corners of the material being in front. The outer garment was drawn in close to the body by a girdle. The rich often had a finely woven linen outer garment, while the poor had a coarsely woven garment of goat’s hair. Jewish men wore fringes with blue ribbons on the “border” of this outer garment to remind them of the constant presence of the Lord’s commandments. Jesus referred to these “borders” of the garments in Matt. 23:5; apparently, the scribes and Pharisees made these fringes very large so that people could see how faithful they were in following the Lord’s commandments.



The Israelites on the Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser is one of the few depictions of Hebrew clothing.

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answer Him a word,^e nor from that day on did anyone dare question Him anymore.

Jesus Characterizes the Pharisees

Mark 12:38-40; Luke 20:45-47

23 Then Jesus spoke to the multitudes and to His disciples,² saying: ^a“The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat.³ Therefore whatever they tell you ¹to observe, *that* observe and do, but do not do according to their works; for ^bthey say, and do not do.^{4c} For they bind heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay *them* on men’s shoulders; but they *themselves* will not move them with one of their fingers.⁵ But all their works they do to ^dbe seen by men. They make their phylacteries broad and enlarge the borders of their garments.^{6e} They love the ²best places at feasts, the best seats in the synagogues, ⁷greetings in the marketplaces, and to be called by men, ‘Rabbi, Rabbi.’^{8f} But you, do not be called ‘Rabbi’; for One is your ³Teacher, ⁴the Christ, and you are all brethren.⁹ Do not call anyone on earth your father; ^gfor One is your Father, He who is in heaven.¹⁰ And do not be called teachers; for One is your Teacher, the Christ.¹¹ But ^hhe who is greatest among you shall be your servant.¹²ⁱ And whoever exalts himself will be ⁵humbled, and he who humbles himself will be ⁶exalted.

⁴⁴ “*The^c Lord said to my Lord,
“Sit at My right hand,
Till I make Your enemies Your
footstool”*”? ”

⁴⁵ If David then calls Him ‘Lord,’ how is He his Son?” ^{46d} And no one was able to

⁴⁴ c Ps. 110:1; [Matt. 26:64]; Mark 16:19; Acts 2:34; 1 Cor. 15:25; Heb. 1:13; 10:13

⁴⁶ d Luke 14:6 e Mark 12:34; Luke 20:40

CHAPTER 23 ² d Deut. 33:3; Ezra 7:6, 25; Neh. 8:4, 8; [Mal. 2:7]; Mark 12:38; Luke 20:45 ³ b [Rom. 2:19] ¹ NU omits to observe ⁴ c [Matt. 11:29, 30]; Luke 11:46; Acts 15:10; Rom. 2:17-24; [Gal. 5:1; 6:13; Col. 2:16, 17] ⁵ d [Matt. 6:1-6, 16-18] ⁶ e Mark 12:38, 39; Luke 11:43; 20:46; 3 John 9 ² Or place of honor ⁸ f [2 Cor. 1:24; James 3:1; 1 Pet. 5:3] ³ Leader ⁴ NU omits the Christ ⁹ g [Mal. 1:6]; Matt. 5:16, 48; 6:1, 9, 14, 26, 32; 7:11 ¹¹ h Matt. 20:26, 27 ¹² i Job 22:29; Prov. 15:33; 29:23; Luke 14:11; 18:14; James 4:6; 1 Pet. 5:5 ⁵ put down ⁶ lifted up

22:44 This verse, which quotes Ps. 110:1, describes Christ’s presence in heaven until He comes to reign on earth (see Heb. 10:11–13; Rev. 3:21). Other messianic psalms are built on the experiences of the psalmist (see Ps. 2; 16; 22; 45), but Ps. 110 seems to be completely prophetic and messianic.

22:44, 45 Psalm 110:1 uses two different Hebrew words for God. The first, translated **LORD**, is the name Yahweh, the proper name of Israel’s God. The second **LORD** means “Master.” David, the great king of Israel, calls one of his offspring “Lord” or “Master,” a title for deity. The implication is that Jesus, the Son of David, is God. He is a descendant of David and therefore human, but He is also divine.

23:2 The synagogues had an official chair called **Moses’ seat** (see Luke 4:20). **The scribes** were official copiers of the OT Scriptures and were also teachers of the Law (7:29; 8:19).

23:3 The Pharisees and scribes took the Scriptures at face value, so their instructions were to be followed. However, Jesus warned the people of the Pharisees’ legalism, their tendency to value their own rules and regulations over the Scriptures. They followed their external laws meticulously and appeared to be righteous. Yet the people were not to imitate their actions, for although they appeared righteous, their hearts were filled with all kinds of envy, hatred, and malice.

23:4 Contrast the Pharisees’ actions with Jesus’ call to the people in 11:28–30.

23:5 One key aspect of hypocrisy is doing good deeds to attract applause from those who see them (6:1–18). **Phylacteries** were small boxes containing Bible passages that were worn on the forehead

or arm. This custom was based on Ex. 13:9, 16; Deut. 6:8; 11:18. But from such passages as Prov. 3:3; 6:21; 7:3, the scribes should have known that the Lord intended more than merely outward adornment. **Borders**, translated *hem* in 9:20, refers to the tassels that were worn on the corners of garments in order to remind the Israelites of God’s laws (see Num. 15:38; Deut. 22:12). In order to be seen as especially righteous, some hypocrites would make their phylacteries conspicuously large and their tassels unusually long.

23:6 **The best places** were the positions of honor at banquets. **The best seats** or “first seats” were a row of seats in the front of the synagogue, facing the congregation.

23:7 **Greetings** in this context meant more than a passing “hello”; it was a respectful salutation given to a superior. **Rabbi** means “teacher.”

23:8–10 This principle is not to be applied universally because these titles are used elsewhere in Scripture with no qualification or admonishment (see 15:4–6; 19:5, 29; 2 Kin. 2:12; 1 Cor. 4:15; Gal. 4:2; Heb. 12:9). The hypocrites sought these titles for the prestige and power that went with them, and not for the purpose of using the positions to serve others. **Teachers** may also mean “leaders.”

23:11 Hierarchies of authority are not to be done away with in this world (see 1 Thess. 5:12, 13; 1 Tim. 5:17; Heb. 13:17); however, all leadership is to be carried out humbly in a spirit of servanthood.

23:12 Exaltation will be carried out in the future reign of Christ (see Rom. 8:17; 2 Tim. 2:12).

Jesus Condemns the Pharisees

¹³“But ^jwoe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for you neither go in *yourselves*, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in. ¹⁴⁷Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! ^kFor you devour widows’ houses, and for a pretense make long prayers. Therefore you will receive greater condemnation.

¹⁵“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel land and sea to win one proselyte, and when he is won, you make him twice as much a son of ⁸hell as yourselves.

¹⁶“Woe to you, ^lblind guides, who say, ^m‘Whoever swears by the temple, it is nothing; but whoever swears by the gold of the temple, he is obliged to perform it.’ ¹⁷Fools and blind! For which is greater, the gold ⁿor the temple that ⁹sanctifies the gold? ¹⁸And, ‘Whoever swears by the altar, it is nothing; but whoever swears by the gift that is on it, he is obliged to perform it.’ ¹⁹Fools and blind! For which is greater, the gift ^oor the altar that sanctifies the gift? ²⁰Therefore he who ¹swears by the altar, swears by it and by all things on it. ²¹He who swears by the temple, swears by it and by ^pHim who ²dwells in it. ²²And he who swears by heaven, swears by ^qthe throne of God and by Him who sits on it.

²³“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! ^rFor you pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and ^shave neglected the weightier *matters* of the law: justice and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone. ²⁴Blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel!

¹³ ^j Luke 11:52
¹⁴ ^k Mark 12:40; Luke 20:47; [2 Tim. 3:6; Titus 1:10, 11]
⁷ NU omits v. 14.
¹⁵ ⁸ Gr. *Gehenna*
¹⁶ ^m Matt. 15:14; 23:24 ⁿ [Matt. 5:33, 34]
¹⁷ ⁿ Ex. 30:29 ⁹ NU sanctified
¹⁹ ^o Ex. 29:37
²⁰ ^p Swears an oath
²¹ ^p 1 Kin. 8:13; 2 Chr. 6:2; Ps. 26:8; 132:14 ² ^m *dwelt*
²² ^q Ps. 11:4; Is. 66:1; Matt. 5:34; Acts 7:49
²³ ^r Matt. 23:13; Luke 11:42; 18:12
^s [1 Sam. 15:22; Hos. 6:6; Mic. 6:8]; Matt. 9:13; 12:7

²⁵ ^t Mark 7:4; Luke 11:39 ³ ^m *unrighteousness*
²⁷ ^u Luke 11:44; Acts 23:3
²⁹ ^v Luke 11:47, 48 ⁴ *decorate*
³¹ ^w Matt. 23:34, 37; [Acts 7:51, 52]; 1 Thess. 2:15
³² ^x Gen. 15:16; [1 Thess. 2:16]
³³ ^y Matt. 3:7; 12:34; Luke 3:7 ⁵ *offspring*
³⁴ ^z Matt. 21:34, 35; Luke 11:49 ^a John 16:2; Acts 7:54–60; 22:19 ^b Matt. 10:17; Acts 5:40; 2 Cor. 11:24, 25
³⁵ ^c Rev. 18:24
^d Gen. 4:8; Heb. 11:4; 1 John 3:12
^e 2 Chr. 24:20, 21

²⁵“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cleanse the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of extortion and ³self-indulgence. ²⁶Blind Pharisee, first cleanse the inside of the cup and dish, that the outside of them may be clean also.

²⁷“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! ^uFor you are like white-washed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead *men’s* bones and all uncleanness. ²⁸Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.

²⁹^v“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! Because you build the tombs of the prophets and ⁴adorn the monuments of the righteous, ³⁰and say, ‘If we had lived in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.’

³¹“Therefore you are witnesses against yourselves that ^wyou are sons of those who murdered the prophets. ³²^xFill up, then, the measure of your fathers’ *guilt*. ³³Serpents, ^ybrood⁵ of vipers! How can you escape the condemnation of hell? ³⁴^zTherefore, indeed, I send you prophets, wise men, and scribes: ^a*some* of them you will kill and crucify, and ^b*some* of them you will scourge in your synagogues and persecute from city to city, ³⁵^cthat on you may come all the righteous blood shed on the earth, ^dfrom the blood of righteous Abel to ^ethe blood of Zechariah, son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. ³⁶Assuredly, I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation.

23:13 Jesus proclaimed **woe** on the scribes and Pharisees because of their outright opposition to the truth.

23:15 **you travel land and sea:** The Pharisees and scribes could never fairly be accused of being lazy, but they were clearly misdirected and dangerous to the cause of God.

23:16–22 The religious authorities taught that oaths based on **the temple, the altar, and heaven** were not binding; however, oaths sworn by **the gold of the temple, the gift** on the altar, or **God** were binding. Jesus pointed out the absurdity of such teaching, and called the leaders **blind guides**.

23:23 **Mint and anise** were spices. **Cummin** was a tiny fruit. The **scribes and Pharisees** were meticulous about tithing tiny seeds, but they failed to be obedient in more significant matters such as ensuring that all their actions were governed by **justice and mercy and faith** (see Mic. 6:8). Jesus was not saying that tithing is unimportant; He was pointing out that the scribes and Pharisees were emphasizing one area at the expense of another. Similarly, we can become so preoccupied with external rules and regulations in the church that we forget the principles behind them.

23:24 Leviticus 11:41–43 contains a prohibition against eating anything that swarms, crawls on its belly, walks on all fours, or has many feet. The Pharisees would meticulously **strain out** the smallest unclean insect—the **gnat**—with a cloth filter before drinking liquids, especially wine. However, Jesus said they would easily **swallow** a

large unclean animal—a **camel**. Jesus was exaggerating a point to illustrate how much the Pharisees had neglected justice, mercy, and faith (v. 23). He used a similar exaggeration in 19:24 to portray the difficulty a rich man has in obtaining salvation.

23:25, 26 The **inside** of the cup represents a person’s character. Sometimes those who most loudly protest the sins of others are secretly guilty of those or worse sins themselves.

23:31, 32 The generation of scribes, Pharisees, and hypocrites living at the time of Jesus had inherited all the guilt of their forefathers.

23:34 The present tense **I send** refers to the **prophets, wise men, and scribes** sent by God to the apostolic church. The Book of Acts testifies to the accuracy of this prediction: the Israelites persecuted the early preachers and teachers of the Good News (see Acts 7:51–60).

23:35 **Abel** was the first person murdered in the OT (see Gen. 4:8); **Zechariah** was the last. Zechariah’s death is recorded in 2 Chr. 24:20–22, the last book in the Hebrew canon. Jesus was saying that from the beginning of the Bible until the end, true followers of God had often been treated in this manner. **son of Berechiah:** In 2 Chr. 24:20, Zechariah is called the son of Jehoiada. Zechariah the prophet is called the son of Berechiah in Zech. 1:1. It is possible that Jehoiada was the grandfather of the murdered Zechariah and Berechiah was his father. It is less probable, although possible, that Zechariah’s father had two names: Jehoiada and Berechiah.

Jesus Laments over Jerusalem

^{37f}“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets ^gand stones those who are sent to her! How often ^hI wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks ⁱunder her wings, but you were not willing! ³⁸See! Your house is left to you desolate; ³⁹for I say to you, you shall see Me no more till you say, ^j*‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!’*”

The Temple to Be Destroyed

Mark 13:1, 2; Luke 21:5, 6

24 Then ^aJesus went out and departed from the temple, and His disciples came up to show Him the buildings of the temple. ²And Jesus said to them, “Do you not see all these things? Assuredly, I say to you, ^bnot one stone shall be left here upon another, that shall not be thrown down.”

The Disciples’ Two Questions

Mark 13:3, 4; Luke 21:7

³Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, ^cthe disciples came to Him privately, say-

^{37 f} Luke 13:34, 35 ^{g 2} Chr. 24:20, 21; 36:15, 16; Neh. 9:26; Matt. 21:35, 36 ^h Deut. 32:11, 12; Matt. 11:28-30 ⁱ Ps. 17:8; 91:4; Is. 49:5 [★] ³⁹ / Ps. 118:26; Matt. 21:9

CHAPTER 24

1 ^a Mark 13:1; Luke 21:5-36
2 ^{b 1} Kin. 9:7; Mic. 3:12; Luke 19:44
3 ^c Mark 13:3
4 [Matt. 24:27, 37; 39; Luke 17:20-37; 1 Thess. 5:1-3]
4 ^e Eph. 5:6; [Col. 2:8, 18; 2 Thess. 2:3; 1 John 4:1-3]
5 ^f Jer. 14:14; John 5:43; Acts 5:36; [1 John 2:18; 4:3]
9 Matt. 24:11
6 ^h [Rev. 6:2-4] ¹ NU omits all
7 ² Chr. 15:6; Is. 19:2; Hag. 2:22; Zech. 14:13 / Acts 11:28; Rev. 6:5, 6 ² NU omits
pestilences
9 [★] Matt. 10:17;

ing, ^d“Tell us, when will these things be? And what *will be* the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?”

The Tribulation

Mark 13:5-23; Luke 21:5-24

⁴And Jesus answered and said to them: ^e“Take heed that no one deceives you. ⁵For ^fmany will come in My name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ ^gand will deceive many. ⁶And you will hear of ^hwars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for ⁱall these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. ⁷For ^j‘nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be ^kfamines, ²pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. ⁸All these are the beginning of sorrows.

⁹^h“Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name’s sake. ¹⁰And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another. ¹¹Then ⁱmany false prophets

Luke 21:12; [John 16:2]; Acts 4:2, 3; Rev. 2:10 11 / Acts 20:29; 2 Pet. 2:1; Rev. 13:11; 19:20

23:37 Calling a name twice, as in **Jerusalem, Jerusalem**, indicates strong emotion (see 27:46; 2 Sam. 18:33; Acts 9:4). The phrases **I wanted** and **you were not willing** illustrate the opposition of Israel to Christ’s will (see Ps. 91:4 for another image of a mother hen). **23:38 Your house** may refer to the temple, but more likely to the Davidic dynasty (see 2 Sam. 7:16).

24:1 The discourse of ch. 23 had evidently been given in the **temple** precincts. The first temple, built by Solomon, was destroyed by the Babylonians in 586 B.C. The second temple, built under the encouragement of Haggai and Zechariah and the leadership of Zerubbabel and Joshua (see Hag. 1:1), was completed after considerable delay in 516 B.C. This second temple was completely and lavishly renovated by Herod the Great. He began the work around 20 B.C., but the renovations were not completed during the lifetime of Christ (see John 2:20). The work was finally finished in A.D. 64, and the temple stood completed for only six years before it was reduced to rubble by the Romans.

24:2 The devastation of the temple by the Romans in A.D. 70 was so thorough that the precise location of the sanctuary is still unknown today.

hen

(Gk. *ornis*) (23:37; Luke 13:34) Strong’s #3733

The Greek term simply means “bird.” The English word *ornithology* (the study of birds) is a derivative of it. Throughout the OT there are references to God exercising His care for His people in the same way a mother bird cares for her young (see Deut. 32:10-12; Ruth 2:12; Ps. 17:8; 36:7; 61:4; 63:7; 91:4; Is. 31:5; Mal. 4:2). Many of these references speak of God’s protective wings, under whose shelter the frightened could find refuge. The later rabbis had a beautiful expression for proselytes from the Gentiles—they had “come under the wings of the Shekinah” (see Ruth 2:12). Jesus came to His people wanting to give them the same kind of motherly care, but they rejected that care and tender affection again and again.

24:3 Undoubtedly the disciples were immediately confounded by the Lord’s prophecy (v. 2); however, they held their tongues until they had crossed the Kidron valley and come to the **Mount of Olives**. When Jesus **sat**, as Jewish teachers did (5:1), the disciples finally questioned Him about His statement regarding the destruction of the temple. Some say that this verse contains two questions: (1) **When will these things be?** That is, “When will the temple be destroyed?” and (2) **What will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?** Others believe that one basic question was in the disciples’ minds. To the disciples, the devastation of the city and the coming of the Messiah were part of one event. The disciple’s questions should probably be taken as one question, though the fulfillment would come in stages.

24:4 Jesus’ warning about being deceived was especially appropriate for the disciples. The destruction of Jerusalem did not necessarily mean the nearness of the end of the age. This principle was a point of confusion for them (see Luke 19:11-27; Acts 1:6, 7).

24:6 Three indicators of time are given in vv. 6-14. The first is found in v. 6, **the end is not yet**. The second is found in v. 8, “All these are the beginning of sorrows.” The third is found in v. 14, “then the end will come.” Verses 4-6 may describe the first part of Daniel’s seventieth week (see Dan. 9:25-27), but possibly they present a general picture of the present age. False messiahs and **wars and rumors of wars** are characteristic of the fallen world in which we live. When the Lord said **all these things must come to pass**, He used a word for *must* that indicates a divine or logical necessity. Such activities are necessary because of the people’s sin. False messiahs had existed before (see Acts 5:36, 37; 21:38), and false preachers would come in the future (see Acts 20:29, 30; 2 Cor. 11:13-15).

24:7, 8 This passage describes characteristics of the end times. **Nation . . . against nation, and kingdom against kingdom** seems to indicate wars on a broad or worldwide scale. The **famines, pestilences, and earthquakes** are more fully described in Rev. 6:1-8; 8:5-13; 9:13-21; 16:2-21. **Sorrows** literally means “birth pangs.” The earth continually has birth pangs today (see Rom. 8:22); during the tribulation, these “sorrows” will increase in intensity and frequency until Jesus returns in glory (see 19:28; Acts 3:21).

will rise up and ^mdeceive many. ¹²And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow ⁿcold. ¹³^oBut he who endures to the end shall be saved. ¹⁴And this ^pgospel of the kingdom ^qwill be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.

¹⁵^r“Therefore when you see the ^s‘abomination of desolation,’ spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place” ^t(whoever reads, let him understand), ¹⁶“then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. ¹⁷Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house. ¹⁸And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes. ¹⁹But ^uwoe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! ²⁰And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath. ²¹For ^vthen there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. ²²And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; ^wbut for the ³elect’s sake those days will be shortened.

²³^x“Then if anyone says to you, ‘Look, here *is* the Christ!’ or ‘There!’ do not believe *it*. ²⁴For ^yfalse christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, ^zif possible, even the elect. ²⁵See, I have told you beforehand.

²⁶“Therefore if they say to you, ‘Look, He is in the desert!’ do not go out; or

¹¹ ^m [1 Tim. 4:1]
¹² ⁿ [2 Thess. 2:3;
 2 Tim. 3:1–3]
¹³ ^o Matt. 10:22;
 Mark 13:13
¹⁴ ^p Matt. 4:23
^q Rom. 10:18; Col.
 1:6, 23
¹⁵ ^r Mark 13:14;
 Luke 21:20; [John
 11:48]; Acts 6:13;
 21:28 ^s Dan. 9:27;
 11:31; 12:11 ^t Dan.
 9:23
¹⁹ ^u Luke 23:29
²¹ ^v Dan. 9:26
²² ^w Is. 65:8;
 9; [Zech. 14:2]
³ *chosen ones*
²³ ^x Mark 13:21;
 Luke 17:23
²⁴ ^y Deut. 13:1;
 John 4:48; [2 Thess.
 2:9]; Rev. 13:13
^z [John 6:37; Rom.
 8:28; 2 Tim. 2:19]
²⁷ ^a Luke 17:24
²⁸ ^b Job 39:30; Ezek.
 39:17; Hab. 1:8; Luke
 17:37
²⁹ ^c [Dan. 7:11] ^d Is.
 13:10; 24:23; Ezek.
 32:7; Joel 2:10, 31;
 3:15; Amos 5:20;
 8:9; Zeph. 1:15;
 Matt. 24:29–35;
 Acts 2:20; Rev. 6:12–
 17; 8:12
³⁰ ^e [Dan. 7:13, 14;
 Matt. 16:27; 24:3,
 37, 39] ^f Zech. 12:12
³¹ ^g Ex. 19:16; Deut.
 30:4; Is. 27:13; Zech.
 9:14; [1 Cor. 15:52;
 1 Thess. 4:16]; Heb.
 12:19; Rev. 8:2; 11:15
⁴ *chosen ones*
³² ^h Luke 21:29

‘Look, *He is* in the inner rooms!’ do not believe *it*.

The Second Coming

Mark 13:24–27; Luke 21:25–28

²⁷^aFor as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. ²⁸^bFor wherever the carcass is, there the eagles will be gathered together.

²⁹^c“Immediately after the tribulation of those days ^dthe sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. ³⁰^eThen the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, ^fand then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. ³¹^gAnd He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His ⁴elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

Parable of the Fig Tree

Mark 13:28–31; Luke 21:29–33

³²“Now learn ^hthis parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer *is* near. ³³So you also, when you see all these things, know ⁱthat ⁵it

³³ ⁱ [James 5:9; Rev. 3:20] ⁵ Or He

24:13 End here refers to the “end of the age.”

24:14 **this gospel of the kingdom:** The final evidence of the end times will be the universal proclamation of the gospel. The antecedent of “this” must be v. 13. The good news is that the final battle of the tribulation known as Armageddon will not result in the destruction of all people. The Lord Jesus Christ will intervene, bringing an end to the destruction and preserving a people for His kingdom.

24:15 The **abomination of desolation** literally means “the abomination that makes desolate.” This prophecy comes from Daniel, specifically Dan. 9:27; 11:31; 12:11. Daniel 11:31 refers to Antiochus IV, who desecrated the temple and set up an idol to Zeus in it. His actions were a prelude to what the ultimate “man of sin” will do. In A.D. 70, Titus destroyed Jerusalem, burned the temple, and set up an idol to mock the Jews. Significantly, Paul speaks of the Antichrist at the end times setting himself up as god also (see 2 Thess. 2:3, 4; Rev. 13:14, 15).

24:16 At the time of the war ending in the destruction of the temple in A.D. 70, many of the Christians did **flee**, hiding in the clefts of Petra. Some believe the final fulfillment of this prophecy will occur in the future desecration of the temple (see Dan. 9:27) and the subsequent setting up of an image of the “man of sin” in the Most Holy Place. When that occurs, everyone **in Judea** must **flee to the mountains**.

24:22 **Those days will be shortened** means that God will place a limit on the tribulation; Christians will not have to endure persecution forever. Note the meaning of the “good news” of the kingdom in vv. 13, 14 (see Zech. 14:2–4). Christ will intervene and prevent complete genocide.

24:24 Miracles by themselves do not prove that something is of

God (see 7:21–23; 2 Thess. 2:9; Rev. 13:13–15). The teaching of those who perform **signs and wonders** must be tested against correct doctrine (Deut. 13:1–5; 1 John 4:1–3), and by the witness of God’s Spirit (see John 10:3–5, 27).

24:26, 27 Christ’s return will not be confined to a **desert** or to some **inner rooms**. When Christ returns, His coming will be so spectacular that everyone will know He has arrived.

24:28 **wherever the carcass is, there the eagles will be gathered:** This sweeping statement conveys an image of the horrible carnage that will take place in the judgment at the coming of the Son of Man (see Luke 17:37).

24:29 **Immediately after:** This verse moves chronologically to the close of the tribulation, a period that will be marked by monumental cosmic disturbances (see Is. 13:10; 34:4; Ezek. 32:7, 8; Joel 2:30, 31; 3:15; Hag. 2:6; Zech. 14:6; Rev. 6:12–14).

24:30 **The sign of the Son of Man** probably refers to Christ Himself appearing **in heaven** (see 16:1; Acts 1:11). **The tribes of the earth** probably refers to Israel. The context here is the national repentance of Israel predicted in Zech. 12:10, 12. **The Son of Man coming on the clouds** will be a fulfillment of Dan. 7:13, 14.

24:31 **Gather** refers to the gathering of the **elect** (God’s people, both Jews and Gentiles) that will gloriously begin Christ’s reign (see Deut. 30:1–6; Is. 11:11, 12; 43:5, 6; 49:12; Jer. 16:14, 15; Ezek. 34:13; 36:24; 37:21–23).

24:32 **The fig tree** does not necessarily indicate Israel here (see 21:18–22; Luke 21:29). We can predict the coming of summer from certain signs: The branches of trees **become tender** and produce **leaves**. In the same way, we will know the end is coming when we see the signs Jesus described in this passage.

is near—at the doors! ³⁴Assuredly, I say to you, ^jthis generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place. ³⁵^kHeaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.

Illustration of the Days of Noah

Mark 13:32-37; Luke 21:34-36

³⁶“But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of ⁶heaven, ^mbut My Father only. ³⁷But as the days of Noah *were*, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. ³⁸For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, ³⁹and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. ⁴⁰^oThen two *men* will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left. ⁴¹Two *women* will be grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left. ⁴²^pWatch therefore, for you do not know what ⁷hour your Lord is coming. ⁴³^qBut know this, that if the master of the house had known what ⁸hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. ⁴⁴^rTherefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

Illustration of the Two Servants

Luke 12:41-48

⁴⁵^s“Who then is a faithful and wise

³⁴ ^j [Matt. 10:23; 16:28; 23:36]
³⁵ ^k Ps. 102:25, 26; Is. 51:6; Mark 13:31; Luke 21:33; [1 Pet. 1:23-25; 2 Pet. 3:10]
³⁶ ^m Mark 13:32; Acts 1:7; 1 Thess. 5:2; 2 Pet. 3:10
³⁷ ⁿ Zech. 14:7 ⁶ NU adds *nor the Son*
³⁸ ^o [Gen. 6:3-5]; Luke 17:26; [1 Pet. 3:20]
³⁹ ^p Luke 17:34
⁴⁰ ^q Matt. 25:13; Luke 21:36; 1 Thess. 5:6
⁴¹ ^r NU day
⁴² ^s Luke 12:39; 1 Thess. 5:2; Rev. 3:3
⁴³ ^t Lit. *watch of the night*
⁴⁴ ^u Luke 12:35-40; [1 Thess. 5:6]
⁴⁵ ^v Luke 12:42-46; [Acts 20:28] ⁹ *at the right time*
⁴⁶ ^w Rev. 16:15
⁴⁷ ^x Matt. 25:21, 23; Luke 22:29
⁴⁸ ^y [2 Pet. 3:4-9]
¹ ^z NU omits *his coming*
⁵⁰ ^{aa} Mark 13:32
⁵¹ ^{ab} Matt. 8:12; 25:30

CHAPTER 25

¹ ^{ac} [Eph. 5:29, 30; Rev. 19:7; 21:2, 9]
² ^{ad} Matt. 13:47; 22:10
⁵ ^{ae} 1 Thess. 5:6
⁶ ^{af} [Matt. 24:31; 1 Thess. 4:16] ¹ NU omits *is coming*

servant, whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them food ⁹in due season? ⁴⁶^tBlessed *is* that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing. ⁴⁷Assuredly, I say to you that ^uhe will make him ruler over all his goods. ⁴⁸But if that evil servant says in his heart, ‘My master ^vis delaying ¹his coming,’ ⁴⁹and begins to beat *his* fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunkards, ⁵⁰the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for *him* and at an hour that he is ^wnot aware of, ⁵¹and will cut him in two and appoint *him* his portion with the hypocrites. ^xThere shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Parable of the Ten Virgins

25 “Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet ^athe bridegroom. ²^bNow five of them were wise, and five *were* foolish. ³Those who *were* foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them, ⁴but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. ⁵But while the bridegroom was delayed, ^cthey all slumbered and slept.

⁶“And at midnight ^da cry was *heard*: ‘Behold, the bridegroom ¹is coming; go out to meet him!’ ⁷Then all those virgins arose and ^etrimmed their lamps. ⁸And the

⁷ ^e Luke 12:35

24:34 **Generation** may mean “race,” indicating that Israel as a people will not cease to exist before God fulfills His promises to them. Another possibility is that the word describes a particular era in which people will see the end times. That is, the events will occur so rapidly that all will happen within one generation. Perhaps both interpretations are true. **All these things** includes the Antichrist, the tribulation, and most importantly the appearance of Christ in glory. **24:35** The words of Christ are more certain than the very existence of the universe.

24:36 Mark 13:32 indicates that even Jesus Himself did not know

the **day and hour** of His return. When the Lord Jesus was on earth, He voluntarily limited His use of His divine attributes (see John 17:4, 5; Phil. 2:5–8). Therefore He became hungry, thirsty, and tired. Luke records that Jesus grew in knowledge and wisdom (see Luke 2:52). In this instance, Jesus surrendered the use of His divine omniscience. **24:37–39 as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be:** Jesus was referring to the indifference of the people of that time to the coming disaster. There is nothing sinful about **eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage**. However, the people of the end times will be doing these things without any thought of God or the coming judgment.

24:42 This is the application of vv. 36–41. As Noah was vigilant in preparing for the Flood, so should people living in the tribulation be alert. They should prepare for the return of Christ.

24:45–51 These two servants (see Luke 19:11–26) illustrate two attitudes people will have to Christ’s return. The **faithful and wise** servant will be given more responsibilities in the Lord’s kingdom. The **evil** servant will be **cut . . . in two**, a form of judgment used in the ancient world. **Weeping and gnashing of teeth** indicates the remorse of those who have suffered great loss.

25:1 The **ten virgins** in this parable were waiting for the wedding procession that went from the bride’s home to the home of her husband. This nighttime procession would use lamps to light the way because ancient cities did not have streetlights.

25:2 The good servant of 24:45 is described as “faithful and wise.” The parable of the ten virgins explains the need for wisdom (vv. 1–13); the following parable of the talents (vv. 14–29) shows the need for faithfulness. The word translated **wise** here and in 24:45 means “prudent.”

25:8 Possessing **oil** illustrates the concept of being prepared; a lack of oil represents being unprepared for Christ’s return.

the kingdom of heaven

(Gk. *hē basileia tōn ouranōn*) (3:2; 4:17; 5:3, 10; 10:7; 25:1) Strong’s #932; 3772

This phrase, used almost exclusively in Matthew’s Gospel (33 times), is a Jewish way of saying “the kingdom of God.” The Jews avoided saying the name of God out of respect for Him. Therefore they often used the word *heaven* as an alternative way to refer to God. The word *heaven* also points to the heavenly nature of Jesus’ kingdom. His kingdom did not involve a political restoration of the nation of Israel as many Jews had hoped. Instead He brought a heavenly kingdom with a spiritual domain, the hearts of His people. Such a kingdom demanded internal repentance, not just external submission. It provided deliverance from sin rather than political deliverance.

foolish said to the wise, ‘Give us *some* of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’⁹ But the wise answered, saying, ‘No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.’¹⁰ And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and ¹¹the door was shut.

¹¹“Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, ¹²‘Lord, Lord, open to us!’¹² But he answered and said, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, ¹³I do not know you.’

¹³ⁱ“Watch therefore, for you ¹⁴know neither the day nor the hour ²in which the Son of Man is coming.

Parable of the Talents

¹⁴^k“For the kingdom of heaven is ¹like a man traveling to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them. ¹⁵And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, ¹⁶to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey. ¹⁶Then he who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five talents. ¹⁷And likewise he who *had received* two gained two more also. ¹⁸But he who had received one went and dug in the ground, and hid his lord’s money. ¹⁹After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them.

²⁰“So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, ‘Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them.’ ²¹His lord said to him, ‘Well *done*, good and faithful servant; you were ²²faithful over a few things, ²³I will make you ruler over many things. Enter

¹⁰ ^f [Matt. 7:21]; Luke 13:25
¹¹ ^g [Matt. 7:21-23; Luke 13:25-30]
¹² ^h [Ps. 55; Hab. 1:13; John 9:31]
¹³ ^a Mark 13:35; [Luke 21:36]; 1 Thess. 5:6 / Matt. 24:36, 42 ² NU omits the rest of v. 13.
¹⁴ ^k Luke 19:12-27 / Matt. 21:33
¹⁵ ^m [Rom. 12:6; 1 Cor. 12:7, 11, 29; Eph. 4:11]
²¹ ⁿ [Luke 16:10; 1 Cor. 4:2; 2 Tim. 4:7, 8] ^o [Matt. 24:47; 25:34, 46; Luke 12:44; 22:29, 30; Rev. 3:21; 21:7]

^p [2 Tim. 2:12; Heb. 12:2; 1 Pet. 1:8]
²³ ^q Matt. 24:45, 47; 25:21 ^r [Ps. 16:11; John 15:10, 11]
²⁶ ^s Matt. 18:32; Luke 19:22
²⁹ ^t Matt. 13:12; Mark 4:25; Luke 8:18; [John 15:2]
³⁰ ^u Matt. 8:12; 22:13; [Luke 13:28]
^v Matt. 7:23; 8:12; 24:51 ^w Ps. 112:10
³¹ ^x [Zech. 14:5]; Matt. 16:27; Mark 8:38; Acts 1:11; [1 Thess. 4:16]; 2 Thess. 1:7; [Jude 14]; Rev. 1:7 ³ NU omits *holy*
³² ^y [Rom. 14:10; 2 Cor. 5:10; Rev. 20:12] ^z Ezek. 20:38

into ²⁴the joy of your lord.’ ²²He also who had received two talents came and said, ‘Lord, you delivered to me two talents; look, I have gained two more talents besides them.’ ²³His lord said to him, ²⁴‘Well *done*, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into ²⁵the joy of your lord.’

²⁴“Then he who had received the one talent came and said, ‘Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed. ²⁵And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, *there* you have *what is* yours.’

²⁶“But his lord answered and said to him, ‘You ²⁷wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered seed. ²⁷So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest. ²⁸So take the talent from him, and give *it* to him who has ten talents.

²⁹^t“For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away. ³⁰And cast the unprofitable servant ³¹into the outer darkness. ³²There will be weeping and ³³gnashing of teeth.’

Judgment of the Gentiles

³¹^x“When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the ³²holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. ³²^yAll the nations will be gathered before Him, and ³³He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd

25:10 The door was shut speaks of being shut out of the kingdom. The unwise virgins were not ready when Christ returned. Compare the wedding feast of 22:1–14 and Rev. 19:7, 8.

25:11 Lord, Lord is reminiscent of a similar cry in 7:21–23, where the same scene is portrayed. The repetition of *Lord* indicates strong emotion.

25:14 The parable of the talents illustrates the faithfulness required of God’s servants. The fact that the master traveled to a **far country** indicates that there would be ample time to test the faithfulness of the servants.

25:15 A talent was a large sum of money, about six thousand denarii. A denarius represented the day’s wage for a typical working man (20:2).

25:18 It was believed that money hidden in the ground was as secure as it could be.

25:23 The first two servants received the same reward, even though they had received different amounts of money. The reward was based on faithfulness, not on the size of their responsibilities. The smallest task in God’s work may receive a great reward if we are faithful in performing it (10:42).

25:26, 27 The wicked servant was lazy and unfaithful, because if he really had feared his master, he would at least have deposited the

money with the bankers. Then the master would have **received back** the investment plus interest.

25:29 This proverb illustrates that a person must use what God has given or else lose it (see Heb. 5:11, 12). This includes abilities and spiritual gifts, as well as material possessions (see 1 Pet. 4:10).

25:30 The unprofitable servant is one who fails to be faithful to the tasks given by the master. This servant will not share in the rewards (8:12; 13:42, 50; 22:13).

25:31 The final section of this discourse involves judgment. Matthew has been called “the Gospel of judgment” because the subject occurs so often (vv. 1–12, 14–46; 3:12; 6:2, 5, 16; 7:24–27; 13:30, 48, 49; 18:23–34; 20:1–16; 21:33–41; 22:1–14; 24:45–51). This is to be expected, since Matthew emphasizes the coming of the kingdom and thus the judgment that accompanies it. In the previous two parables, Jesus had been speaking of the judgment on those Israelites who were unprepared for the coming of the Messiah. In the last parable of this discourse, Jesus focuses His attention on all the nations of the earth. **When the Son of Man comes in His glory** recalls the words of Dan. 7:13, 14, 27 and anticipates the future reign of Christ (see Rev. 5:9, 10; 19:11–18; 20:4–6).

25:32 Nations here means Gentiles. **Sheep and goats** were both clean animals according to the Levitical law; however, their natures

divides *his* sheep from the goats. ³³ And He will set the ^asheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. ³⁴ Then the King will say to those on His right hand, ‘Come, you blessed of My Father, ^binherit the kingdom ^cprepared for you from the foundation of the world: ^{35 d} for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; ^eI was a stranger and you took Me in; ^{36 f} I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; ^gI was in prison and you came to Me.’

³⁷ “Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? ³⁸ When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? ³⁹ Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?’ ⁴⁰ And the King will answer and say to them, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, ^hinasmuch as you did *it* to one of the least of these My brethren, you did *it* to Me.’

⁴¹ “Then He will also say to those on the left hand, ⁱDepart from Me, you cursed, ^jinto the everlasting fire prepared for ^kthe devil and his angels: ⁴² for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink; ⁴³ I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.’

⁴⁴ “Then they also will answer ⁴Him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?’

⁴⁵ Then He will answer them, saying, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, ^linasmuch as you did not do *it* to one of the least of these, you did not do *it* to Me.’ ⁴⁶ And ^mthese will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

³³ ^a Ps. 79:13; 100:3; [John 10:11, 27, 28]

³⁴ ^b [Rom. 8:17; 1 Pet. 1:4, 9; Rev. 21:7] ^c Matt. 20:23; Mark 10:40; 1 Cor. 2:9; Heb. 11:16

³⁵ ^d Is. 58:7; Ezek. 18:7, 16; [James 1:27; 2:15, 16] ^e Job 31:32; [Heb. 13:2]; 3 John 5

³⁶ ^f Is. 58:7; Ezek. 18:7, 16; [James 2:15, 16] ^g 2 Tim. 1:16

⁴⁰ ^h Prov. 14:31; Matt. 10:42; Mark 9:41; Heb. 6:10

⁴¹ ⁱ Ps. 6:8; Matt. 7:23; Luke 13:27

⁴² ^j Matt. 13:40, 42

⁴³ ^k [2 Pet. 2:4]; Jude 6

⁴⁴ ^l NU, *omit Him*

⁴⁵ ^m Prov. 14:31; Zech. 2:8; Acts 9:5

⁴⁶ ⁿ [Dan. 12:2; John 5:29; Acts 24:15; Rom. 2:7]

CHAPTER 26

² ^a Matt. 27:35; Mark 14:1, 2; Luke 22:1, 2; John 13:1; 19:18

³ ^b Ps. 2:2; John 11:47; Acts 4:25

¹ NU *omits the scribes*

⁴ ^c John 11:47; Acts 4:25-28 ² *deception*

⁵ ^d Matt. 21:26

⁶ ^e Matt. 8:2; Mark 14:3-9; Luke 7:37-39; John 11:1, 2; 12:1-8

⁸ ^f John 12:4

¹¹ ^g [Deut. 15:11; Mark 14:7]; John 12:8 ^h [Matt. 18:20; 28:20; John 13:33; 14:19; 16:5, 28; 17:11]

¹² ⁱ Matt. 27:60; Luke 23:53;

The Religious Leaders Plot to Kill Jesus

Mark 14:1, 2; Luke 22:1, 2

26 Now it came to pass, when Jesus had finished all these sayings, *that* He said to His disciples, ^{2a} “You know that after two days is the Passover, and the Son of Man will be delivered up to be crucified.”

^{3b} Then the chief priests, ¹ the scribes, and the elders of the people assembled at the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas, ⁴ and ^cplotted to take Jesus by ²trickery and kill Him. ⁵ But they said, “Not during the feast, lest there be an uproar among the ^dpeople.”

Mary Anoints Jesus for Burial

Mark 14:3-9; John 12:2-8

⁶ And when Jesus was in ^eBethany at the house of Simon the leper, ^{7a} a woman came to Him having an alabaster flask of very costly fragrant oil, and she poured *it* on His head as He sat *at the table*. ^{8f} But when His disciples saw *it*, they were indignant, saying, “Why this waste? ⁹ For this fragrant oil might have been sold for much and given to the poor.”

¹⁰ But when Jesus was aware of *it*, He said to them, “Why do you trouble the woman? For she has done a good work for Me. ^{11g} For you have the poor with you always, but ^hMe you do not have always. ¹² For in pouring this fragrant oil on My body, she did *it* for My ⁱburial. ¹³ Assuredly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her.”

John 19:38-42

are very different. Shepherds regularly herded their sheep and goats together, but there came a point when the two had to be separated. **25:34 The kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world** indicates that this kingdom has always been God’s goal for humans.

25:40 Three groups are referred to in vv. 31–46: sheep, goats, and **My brethren**. At the very least, these “brethren” are believers in Jesus Christ.

25:46 Everlasting and eternal are used to describe both torment and **life**, indicating that one will last as long as the other. In fact, “everlasting” is used of God in Rom. 16:26.

26:1 As is his style, Matthew brings the discourse of the Lord to a conclusion with the words, **Now it came to pass, when Jesus had finished** (see 7:28; 11:1; 13:53; 19:1).

26:3 The wicked **Caiaphas** was **high priest** from A.D. 18 to 37. However, Luke 3:2 says that both Annas (father-in-law of Caiaphas) and Caiaphas were high priests; Acts 4:6 calls Annas the high priest. Although Caiaphas was officially the high priest, Annas still had influence over that office. Annas was so despisable that the Roman government deposed him from office. However, he continued to work behind the scenes through his wicked son-in-law.

26:4 The religious leaders knew they could not take Christ by argu-

ment or logic (22:46), and they did not dare take Him by force (21:46). Their only recourse was **trickery**.

26:5 This verse is to be compared with v. 2, which speaks of Christ’s full knowledge of what was coming and His acceptance that it was part of God’s plan (see John 10:18). Despite whatever people plot, God still sovereignly controls all events.

26:6 Apparently Jesus spent His nights in the village of **Bethany**, just a few miles outside Jerusalem on the Mount of Olives. **Simon** was a **leper** who evidently had been cleansed by Jesus. He may have been the father of Lazarus, Mary, and Martha (see John 12:1, 2).

26:7 The **costly fragrant oil** (see Mark 14:3) was a perfume extracted from pure nard. The woman poured the costly perfume on both the head and feet of Jesus (see John 12:3). She could have opened the flask in such a way that it would have trickled out; instead, she broke the flask and poured out the oil to cover Jesus’ body (see Mark 14:3).

26:12 Jesus saw the pouring of the **fragrant oil** on His body as an anticipation of His death (see Mark 14:8). The perfumed ointment was placed on Jesus *before* His death; normally it would have been used after His death. The expensive oil points to (1) the value of Jesus’ death and (2) the high cost of devotion to Him.

Judas Agrees to Betray Jesus

Mark 14:10, 11; Luke 22:3-6

^{14j}Then one of the twelve, called ^kJudas Iscariot, went to the chief priests ¹⁵and said, ^l“What are you willing to give me if I deliver Him to you?” And they counted out to him thirty pieces of silver. ¹⁶So from that time he sought opportunity to betray Him.

The Passover Is Prepared

Mark 14:12-16; Luke 22:7-13

^{17m}Now on the first *day of the Feast* of Unleavened Bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying to Him, “Where do You want us to prepare for You to eat the Passover?”

¹⁸And He said, “Go into the city to a certain man, and say to him, ‘The Teacher says, “My time is at hand; I will keep the Passover at your house with My disciples.”’”

¹⁹So the disciples did as Jesus had directed them; and they prepared the Passover.

The Passover Is Celebrated

Mark 14:17-21; Luke 22:14, 21-23;

John 13:21, 22

^{20o}When evening had come, He sat down with the twelve. ²¹Now as they were eating, He said, “Assuredly, I say to you, one of you will ^pbetray Me.”

²²And they were exceedingly sorrowful, and each of them began to say to Him, “Lord, is it I?”

²³He answered and said, ^q“He who dipped *his* hand with Me in the dish will betray Me. ²⁴The Son of Man indeed goes just ^ras it is written of Him, but ^swoe to that man by whom the Son of Man is be-

^{14j} Mark 14:10, 11; Luke 22:3-6; John 13:2, 30 ^k Matt. 10:4 ¹⁵ Ex. 21:32; Zech. 11:12; Matt. 27:3 ^{17m} Ex. 12:6, 18-20 ¹⁸ Luke 9:51; John 12:23; 13:1; 17:1 ^{20o} Mark 14:17-21; Luke 22:14; John 13:21 ^{21p} Matt. 26:46; Mark 14:42; Luke 22:21-23; John 6:70, 71; 13:21 ^{23q} Ps. 41:9 ★; Luke 22:21; John 13:18 ^{24r} Ps. 22; Dan. 9:26; Mark 9:12; Luke 24:25, 26, 46; Acts 17:2, 3; 26:22, 23; 1 Cor. 15:3 ^{25s} Matt. 27:3-5; Luke 17:1; Acts 1:16-20 ^{26t} Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:17-20 ^{27u} 1 Cor. 11:23-25 ^{28v} [1 Pet. 2:24] ^{29w} M gave thanks for ^{30d} Mark 14:23 ^{31e} Matt. 26:56; Mark 14:27; John 16:32 ^{32h} Matt. 28:7, 10, 16 ★; Mark 14:28; 16:7; John 21:1 ^{33z} caused to take offense at You

trayed! ^tIt would have been good for that man if he had not been born.”

²⁵Then Judas, who was betraying Him, answered and said, “Rabbi, is it I?”

He said to him, “You have said it.”

The Lord's Supper Is Instituted

Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:19, 20; 1 Cor. 11:23-26

^{26u}And as they were eating, ^vJesus took bread, ³blessed and broke *it*, and gave *it* to the disciples and said, “Take, eat; ^wthis is My body.”

²⁷Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave *it* to them, saying, ^x“Drink from it, all of you. ²⁸For ^ythis is My blood ^zof the ⁴new covenant, which is shed ^afor many for the ⁵remission of sins. ²⁹But ^bI say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on ^cuntil that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom.”

Peter's Denial Is Predicted

Mark 14:26-31; Luke 22:34, 39; John 13:37, 38

^{30d}And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

³¹Then Jesus said to them, ^e“All of you will ^fbe ⁶made to stumble because of Me this night, for it is written:

g ‘I will strike the Shepherd,
And the sheep of the flock will be scattered.’

³²But after I have been raised, ^hI will go before you to Galilee.”

³³Peter answered and said to Him, “Even if all are ⁷made to stumble because of You, I will never be made to stumble.”

³⁴Jesus said to him, ⁱ“Assuredly, I say

^{34j} Matt. 26:74, 75 ★; Mark 14:30; Luke 22:34; John 13:38

26:14 The enormity of Judas's sin is seen in the words **one of the twelve**. Jesus was betrayed by one of His inner circle. **Judas** must have been considered a person of integrity or he would not have been trusted as treasurer.

26:15 **Thirty pieces of silver** was the price of a slave (see Ex. 21:32). Zechariah had foreshadowed this sum in his prophetic actions (in Zech. 11:12, 13). Note the contrast between the costly devotion of the woman (vv. 7-13) and the small price of Judas's betrayal.

26:17 **The first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread** is also the day of the Passover (v. 18). **The disciples** were Peter and John (see Luke 22:8).

26:21 **One of you will betray Me** indicates the Lord's omniscience. Repeatedly—in submission to the Father—Christ unveiled evidences of His deity to His disciples.

26:22 The disciples had already heard that Jesus was going to die in Jerusalem, but His revelation of betrayal was new (see v. 2; 16:21; 17:12, 22, 23; 20:18, 19). **Is it I?** expects a negative response. The meaning is “I'm not the one, am I?”

26:23 **The dish** was a bowl of broth in which the guests dipped pieces of bread.

26:26 **This is My body** means “This symbolizes My body” (see 1 Cor 10:4).

26:28 **This is My blood of the new covenant** refers to the covenant that had been promised in the OT (see Jer. 31:31-34; 32:37-44; Ezek. 34:25-31; 37:26-28). The Lord Jesus specifically said that His **blood . . . is shed for many for the remission of sins**. The word *many* looks back to 20:28 and anticipates the command to preach the Good News to all the world in 28:19, 20.

26:29 This verse anticipates God's kingdom when Christ will reign on the throne of David. Today He is seated with the Father on His throne and intercedes for us.

26:31 **All of you will . . . stumble**: All the disciples, not just Peter, would fall away. **I will strike the Shepherd . . . the flock will be scattered**: This OT prophecy is found in Zech. 13:7 (see Ps. 118).

26:32 Several reasons may be offered as to why Christ went to Galilee to meet His disciples: (1) They were all from Galilee; (2) He wanted to be away from Jerusalem, the center of opposition; (3) He wanted to take up the work of shepherding His flock where He had ministered to them before; or (4) the most effective setting for the Great Commission given in 28:19, 20 would be Galilee (4:12-16).

26:34 **The rooster** crow is usually thought to refer to the third Roman watch, from midnight to 3 A.M.

to you that this night, before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times.”

³⁵ Peter said to Him, “Even if I have to die with You, I will not deny You!”

And so said all the disciples.

Jesus' Three Prayers

Mark 14:32-42; Luke 22:40-46

³⁶ Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and said to the disciples, “Sit here while I go and pray over there.” ³⁷ And He took with Him Peter and ^kthe two sons of Zebedee, and He began to be sorrowful and deeply distressed. ³⁸ Then He said to them, ^l“My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch with Me.”

³⁹ He went a little farther and fell on His face, and ^mprayed, saying, ⁿ“O My Father, if it is possible, ^olet this cup pass

³⁶ / Mark 14:32-35; Luke 22:39, 40; John 18:1
³⁷ ^k Matt. 4:21; 17:1; Mark 5:37
³⁸ ^l John 12:27
³⁹ ^m Mark 14:36; Luke 22:42; [Heb. 5:7-9] ⁿ John 12:27
^o Matt. 20:22

^p Ps. 40:8; Is. 50:5; John 5:30; 6:38; Phil. 2:8
⁴¹ ^q Mark 13:33; 14:38; Luke 22:40, 46; [Eph. 6:18] ^r Ps. 103:14-16; [Rom. 7:15; 8:23; Gal. 5:17]
⁴² ⁸ NU if this may not pass away unless
⁴⁵ ^s Matt. 17:22, 23; 20:18, 19 ⁹ has drawn near

from Me; nevertheless, ^pnot as I will, but as You will.”

⁴⁰ Then He came to the disciples and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, “What! Could you not watch with Me one hour? ⁴¹ ^q Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. ^r The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.”

⁴² Again, a second time, He went away and prayed, saying, “O My Father, ⁸ if this cup cannot pass away from Me unless I drink it, Your will be done.” ⁴³ And He came and found them asleep again, for their eyes were heavy.

⁴⁴ So He left them, went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words. ⁴⁵ Then He came to His disciples and said to them, “Are *you* still sleeping and resting? Behold, the hour ⁹ is at hand, and the Son of Man is being ^s betrayed into the hands of sinners. ⁴⁶ Rise,

26:36 Judas had already gone (see John 13:21–30), so the Lord left eight of His disciples at this spot. **Gethsemane** (which means “Oil Press”) was east of Jerusalem on the Mount of Olives. In the place where olives were crushed and ground, the One anointed with oil was crushed and rent.

26:37 This was the third time that Jesus singled out Peter, James, and John to accompany Him for a specific purpose (see the Transfiguration in 17:1–13 and the raising of Jairus’s daughter in Luke 8:49–56).

26:38 **My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death** seems to look back to Ps. 42:5, 6, 11; 43:5. **Watch** literally means “stay awake.”

26:39 **let this cup pass from Me:** It was not the impending physical suffering, as terrible as it would be, that caused Jesus to pray this way; it was the reality of the sinless Son of God bearing the sins of the world and facing separation from His Father (see 2 Cor. 5:21; Gal. 3:13; Heb. 12:2; 1 Pet. 2:24). *Cup* is a figure of speech for wrath in the OT (see Ps. 75:8; Is. 51:17). Jesus became a curse for us and took the brunt of God’s righteous wrath against sin (see Gal. 3:13).

26:40 **Could you not watch with Me one hour:** Although addressed to Peter, the question was meant for all three disciples. Ear-

lier Peter had claimed that he would never forsake Jesus and that he would even die for Him (v. 35); yet Peter could not stay awake to pray with Jesus at the time of His greatest need.

26:41 The disciples needed to stay awake **and pray** because they were about to be tested themselves. Here the word **flesh** emphasizes human weakness. The contrast between the weakness of the disciples and the strength of the Lord is startling. Because the flesh is **weak**, every child of God needs supernatural empowerment (see Rom. 8:3, 4).

26:42–44 The fact that Jesus **prayed the same words** indicates that there is nothing wrong with repetition from a devout heart. In the first prayer, Jesus made a positive request: “Let this cup pass from Me.” In the second and third prayers, His request was negative. In obedience to His Father, Jesus committed Himself to **drink the cup**, whatever the cost.

26:45 **Are you still sleeping:** The disciples were resting while Jesus was sweating in prayer to the point of exhaustion (see Luke 22:43, 44).

26:46 This verse shows Jesus’ active submission to the Father’s will, as He stated in v. 42. Jesus did not go reluctantly, but with determination to do the Father’s will.

The Lord's Supper

When we ask how the Lord’s Supper should be meaningful to the Christian today, three concepts—relating to the past, present, and future—can be helpful.

First, the Lord’s Supper is a time of remembrance and Eucharist. Jesus said, “Do this in remembrance of Me” (Luke 22:19; 1 Cor. 11:24, 25). This is not to be so much our dwelling on the agonies of the crucifixion as it is to be our remembering the marvelous life and ministry of our Savior. The Eucharist is to be an occasion for expressing our deepest praise and appreciation for all Jesus Christ has done for us. Just as one step in the Jewish Passover meal was to proclaim the Hebrews’ deliverance from Egyptian bondage (Ex. 12:26, 27), so in the Lord’s Supper Christians proclaim their deliverance from sin and misery through the death of “Christ, our Passover” (1 Cor. 5:7; 11:26).

Second, the Supper is a time of refreshing and communion. As we participate in the benefits of Jesus’ death and resurrection life (Rom. 5:10; 1 Cor. 10:16), we are actually being nourished and empowered from the risen Christ through the Spirit. John Wesley knew of this strengthening. On the average, he received communion every four or five days throughout his long and fruitful ministerial career. It is not that God cannot empower us without the Lord’s Supper, but that He has instituted the Supper for us, even as He has designated prayer and the hearing of Scripture as means of communicating His grace. While the Bible does not tell us how often to observe the Eucharist, Wesley’s guideline—“as often as you can”—deserves our serious consideration.

Third, the Supper is a time of recommitment and anticipation. We are to examine (literally “prove” or “test”) ourselves and partake in a worthy manner (1 Cor. 11:28, 29). In so doing we renew our dedication to Christ and His people, in hopeful anticipation “till He comes” (1 Cor. 11:26). After Christ’s return we shall partake with Him—in His physical presence—in the kingdom (Matt. 26:29).



let us be going. See, My betrayer is at hand.”

Jesus' Betrayal and Arrest

Mark 14:43-52; Luke 22:47-53; John 18:1-11

⁴⁷And ¹while He was still speaking, behold, Judas, one of the twelve, with a great multitude with swords and clubs, came from the chief priests and elders of the people.

⁴⁸Now His betrayer had given them a sign, saying, “Whomever I kiss, He is the One; seize Him.” ⁴⁹Immediately he went up to Jesus and said, “Greetings, Rabbi!” ⁵⁰and kissed Him.

⁵⁰But Jesus said to him, ^v“Friend, why have you come?”

Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and took Him. ⁵¹And suddenly, ^wone of those *who were* with Jesus stretched out *his* hand and drew his sword, struck the servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear.

⁵²But Jesus said to him, “Put your sword in its place, ^xfor all who take the sword will ¹perish by the sword. ⁵³Or do you think that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He will provide Me with ^ymore than twelve legions of angels? ⁵⁴How then could the Scriptures be fulfilled, ^zthat it must happen thus?”

⁵⁵In that hour Jesus said to the multitudes, “Have you come out, as against a robber, with swords and clubs to take Me? I sat daily with you, teaching in the

⁴⁷ ^t Mark 14:43-50; Luke 22:47-53; John 18:3-11; Acts 1:16
⁴⁹ ^u 2 Sam. 20:9; [Prov. 27:6]
⁵⁰ ^v Ps. 41:9; 55:13
⁵¹ ^w Mark 14:47; Luke 22:50; John 18:10
⁵² ^x Gen. 9:6; Rev. 13:10 ¹ M die
⁵³ ^y 2 Kin. 6:17; Dan. 7:10
⁵⁴ ^z Is. 50:6; 53:2-11; Luke 24:25-27, 44-46; John 19:28; Acts 13:29; 17:3; 26:23
⁵⁶ ^a Lam. 4:20
^b Zech. 13:7; Matt. 26:31; Mark 14:27; John 18:15
⁵⁷ ^c Matt. 17:22; Mark 14:53-65; Luke 22:54; John 18:12, 19-24
⁵⁸ ^d John 18:15, 16
⁵⁹ ^e Ex. 20:16; Ps. 35:11 ² NU omits the elders
⁶⁰ ^f Ps. 27:12 [★]; 35:11; Mark 14:55; Acts 6:13 ^g Deut. 19:15 ³ NU but found none, even though many false witnesses came forward.
⁶¹ ^h Matt. 27:40; Mark 14:58; 15:29; John 2:19; Acts 6:14
⁶² ⁱ Mark 14:60
⁶³ ^j Ps. 38:13, 14; Is. 53:7 [★]; Matt. 27:12, 14; Acts 8:32

temple, and you did not seize Me. ⁵⁶But all this was done that the ^aScriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled.”

Then ^ball the disciples forsook Him and fled.

Two False Witnesses

Mark 14:53-65; Luke 22:54, 55, 63-65;

John 18:12, 18, 24

⁵⁷^cAnd those who had laid hold of Jesus led Him away to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were assembled. ⁵⁸But ^dPeter followed Him at a distance to the high priest's courtyard. And he went in and sat with the servants to see the end.

⁵⁹Now the chief priests, ²the elders, and all the council sought ^efalse testimony against Jesus to put Him to death, ⁶⁰³but found none. Even though ^fmany false witnesses came forward, they found none. But at last ^gtwo ⁴false witnesses came forward ⁶¹and said, “This *fellow* said, ^h‘I am able to destroy the temple of God and to build it in three days.’”

⁶²ⁱAnd the high priest arose and said to Him, “Do You answer nothing? What *is it* these men testify against You?” ⁶³But ^jJesus kept silent. And the high priest answered and said to Him, ^k“I put You under oath by the living God: Tell us if You are the Christ, the Son of God!”

⁶⁴Jesus said to him, “*It is as you said.*”

^k Lev. 5:1; 1 Sam. 14:24, 26; Luke 22:67-71

26:47 The fact that the multitude was armed **with swords and clubs** indicates that **Judas** did not really know the heart of Jesus. Christ went out to meet the multitude not to do battle, but to surrender.

26:49 The only person to address the Lord as **Rabbi** in the Book of Matthew was Judas (v. 25). **Kissed** means to kiss as a display of affection. The same verb form is used in the parable of the Lost Son in Luke 15:20.

26:50 **Friend**: Even though He knew Judas's wicked heart and actions, Jesus offered him friendship and an opportunity to change his mind. The words translated **Why have you come** may also mean “Do what you have come to do.”

26:51 John 18:10 informs us that the impetuous swordsman was Peter. This action was performed with one of the two swords that the disciples had (see Luke 22:38).

26:53 A legion in the Roman army was about six thousand men. When one considers the power of one angel, as seen in the OT (see Ex. 12:23; 2 Sam. 24:15-17; 2 Kings 19:35), the power of more than 72,000 angels is beyond comprehension. Jesus had all of heaven's power at His disposal, yet He refused to use it. His Father's will was for Him to go to the Cross.

26:54 If Jesus had called for angelic aid, the prophetic Scriptures foretelling His betrayal, His death, and His resurrection would not have been fulfilled. This point is so important that it is stated twice (v. 56).

26:56 **all the disciples forsook Him and fled**: Compare Peter's claim in v. 35 with Jesus' words in v. 41, “The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.”

26:57 The Lord Jesus was subjected to six trials—three Jewish trials and three Gentile trials. The first Jewish trial was before Annas, who was not the actual high priest, but was a powerful influence on the

high priest's office. This trial is mentioned only by John (see John 18:12-23). The second trial was before **Caiaphas** and the Jewish council. Clearly the council had been hastily called together in anticipation of passing judgment on Jesus. Matthew does not mention Jesus' trial before Herod Antipas (see Luke 23:6-12); he also combines the two trials before Pilate into one (27:2, 11-26). Jesus' opponents were trying desperately to find some legal basis for condemning Him to death.

26:58 John 18:15, 16 explains that Peter and John were both granted an entrance into the **courtyard** because John was known to the high priest. **The servants** were probably house servants, not members of the mob who arrested the Lord. Apparently, Peter had forgotten the words of Jesus concerning His resurrection. For Peter, this was **the end**.

26:61 This is a misquotation and misapplication of Christ's words (see John 2:19-21). At any rate, to say that Jesus had spoken against the temple was an action for which they could condemn Him (see Acts 6:13, 14).

26:62 **The high priest** must have recognized that the accusers had no case against Jesus. His outburst was the result of frustration and desperation. In maintaining His silence, Jesus fulfilled the prophecy of Is. 53:7.

26:63 **I put You under oath by the living God**: The high priest thought he needed to put Christ under oath in order to get a truthful confession. Christ needed no such oath; He had indicated His divine nature and unity with the Father on several occasions (see John 8:58; 10:30-33).

26:64 Jesus answered the high priest's request (v. 63) in the affirmative and then fortified His answer by applying two clearly messianic passages to Himself: Ps. 110:1 and Dan. 7:13.

Nevertheless, I say to you, ^lhereafter you will see the Son of Man ^msitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven.”

^{65 n}Then the high priest tore his clothes, saying, “He has spoken blasphemy! What further need do we have of witnesses? Look, now you have heard His ^oblasphemy! ⁶⁶What do you think?”

They answered and said, ^p“He is deserving of death.”

^{67 q}Then they spat in His face and beat Him; and ^rothers struck *Him* with ⁵the palms of their hands, ⁶⁸saying, ^s“Prophecy to us, Christ! Who is the one who struck You?”

Three Denials of Peter

Mark 14:66-72; Luke 22:55-62;

John 18:15-18, 25-27

^{69 t}Now Peter sat outside in the court-

64 ^l Dan. 7:13; Matt. 16:27; 24:30; 25:31; Luke 21:27; [John 1:51; Rom. 14:10; 1 Thess. 4:16]; Rev. 1:7 ^m Ps. 110:1; [Acts 7:55]
65 ⁿ 2 Kin. 18:37 ^o John 10:30-36
66 ^p Lev. 24:16; Matt. 20:18; John 19:7
67 ^q Job 16:10; Is. 50:6; 53:3 ^r Lam. 3:30; Matt. 27:30 ^s Mic. 5:1; Luke 22:63-65; John 19:3
68 ^t Or rods,
68 ^r Mark 14:65; Luke 22:64
69 ^t Mark 14:66-72; Luke 22:55-62; John 18:16-18, 25-27
73 ^r Mark 14:70; Luke 22:59; John 18:26

yard. And a servant girl came to him, saying, “You also were with Jesus of Galilee.”

⁷⁰But he denied it before *them* all, saying, “I do not know what you are saying.”

⁷¹And when he had gone out to the gateway, another *girl* saw him and said to those *who were* there, “This *fellow* also was with Jesus of Nazareth.”

⁷²But again he denied with an oath, “I do not know the Man!”

⁷³And a little later those who stood by came up and said to Peter, “Surely you also are *one* of them, for your *speech betrays* you.”

⁷⁴Then ^vhe began to ⁶curse and ⁷swear, *saying*, “I do not know the Man!”

74 ^v Matt. 26:34 [★]; Mark 14:71; Luke 22:34; John 13:38 ⁶ call down curses ⁷ Swear oaths

26:65 Jesus’ claim of sitting at the right hand of God (v. 64) was an assertion of deity and was, to this unbelieving high priest, a clear case of **blasphemy**.

26:74 swear: Peter swore under oath that he did not know Jesus. **immediately a rooster crowed:** Some have detected a contradiction between this passage, where the rooster is said to crow

(presumably once) after Peter denies Jesus three times, and the statement in Mark’s Gospel that the rooster would crow two times (see Mark 14:72). Others believe that to see a contradiction is simply a forced reading of the text. Matthew, Luke, and John make the simple statement that a rooster would crow (Luke 22:61; John 18:27) whereas Mark, which was based on Peter’s memories, emphasizes

The Meaning of Messiah	
Matthew wrote his Gospel to demonstrate to his Jewish audience that Jesus is indeed the long-awaited Messiah. Who is the Messiah and why were the Jews waiting for such a person?	
The Term	In Hebrew or Aramaic, the word Messiah means “anointed.” The Greek equivalent of the word is the title Christ.
Old Testament Background	In the Old Testament, prophets, priests and kings were literally anointed with oil to consecrate them for special service or to signify the endowment of the Spirit of God (Lev. 4:3; 8:12; 1 Sam. 10:1, 6; Ps. 105:15; Is. 61:1). These practices pointed to the promised arrival of God’s Anointed One, who would fulfill all three offices as the Prophet, the Priest, and the King.
Titles for the Messiah	Seed of Abraham (Ps. 105:6); Son of David (Matt. 1:1); Son of Man (Dan. 7:13); My Son (Ps. 2:7); My Servant (Matt. 12:18); My Elect One (Is. 42:1); The Branch (Zech. 3:8; 6:12); Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Prince of Peace (Is. 9:6)
Major Old Testament Prophecies of the Messiah	Gen. 3:15; 9:27; 12:3; 22:18; 49:8, 10; Deut. 18:18; 2 Sam. 7:11–16; 23:5; Ps. 2; 16; 22; 40; 110; Is. 2; 7; 9; 11; 40; 42; 49; 52; 53; Jer. 23:5, 6; Dan. 7:27; Hag. 2:9; Zech. 12:10–14; Mal. 3:1; 4:5, 6
Jewish Expectations for the Messiah	In the first century, the Jews looked for a Messiah who would deliver the nation from Roman domination, become their King, and rebuild the nation of Israel to its former glory. By looking for a military deliverer and a political Messiah, the Jews minimized the messianic roles of prophet and priest. Thus many Jews rejected Jesus as the Messiah because He came as a humble spiritual Savior and not a conquering political ruler.
The Messiah’s Rule	Jesus indicated that He was the King for whom the Jews were looking. However, His kingdom was not an earthly kingdom but a heavenly kingdom. In Matthew there are 32 references to the “kingdom of heaven.” This phrase, found in the New Testament only in Matthew’s Gospel, is probably derived from the description of the kingdom of the Son of Man in Dan. 7:13–18. The phrase indicates the rule of heaven over all of the earth (Matt. 6:10).
Jesus’ Claim	When asked specifically if He was the Christ, Jesus answered in the affirmative, incurring the wrath of the Jews (Matt. 26:63–65). In addition, Jesus praised Peter for recognizing Him as the Anointed One of God (Matt. 16:15–20).
Significance	The title Messiah implies the idea of deity. The great prophet Moses, the priest Melchizedek, and even the glorious King David pale in comparison to the messianic Prophet-Priest-King. In the words of Heb. 1, Jesus Christ is the “brightness of [God’s] glory and the express image of His person” (v. 3). In short, He is God (v. 8).

Immediately a rooster crowed. ⁷⁵ And Peter remembered the word of Jesus who had said to him, ^w “Before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times.” So he went out and wept bitterly.

Jesus Is Delivered to Pilate

Mark 15:1; Luke 22:66; 23:1; John 18:28

27 When morning came, ^a all the chief priests and elders of the people plotted against Jesus to put Him to death. ² And when they had bound Him, they led Him away and ^b delivered Him to ¹ Pontius Pilate the governor.

Judas Repents

Acts 1:18, 19

^{3c} Then Judas, His betrayer, seeing that He had been condemned, was remorseful and brought back the thirty ^d pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, ⁴ saying, “I have sinned by betraying innocent blood.”

And they said, “What *is that* to us? You see *to it!*”

⁵ Then he threw down the pieces of silver in the temple and ^e departed, and went and hanged himself.

⁶ But the chief priests took the silver pieces and said, “It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, because they are the price of blood.” ⁷ And they consulted together and bought with them the potter’s field, to bury strangers in. ⁸ Therefore that field has been called ^f the Field of Blood to this day.

⁹ Then was fulfilled what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying, ^g “*And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the value of Him who was priced, whom they*

⁷⁵ ^w Matt. 26:34; Luke 22:61; John 13:38

CHAPTER 27

¹ ^a Ps. 2:2; Mark 15:1; Luke 22:66; 23:1; John 18:28
² ^b Matt. 20:19; Luke 18:32; Acts 3:13 ★ ¹ NU omits Pontius
³ ^c Matt. 26:14
^d Matt. 26:15
⁵ ^e 2 Sam. 17:23; Matt. 18:7; 26:24 ★;
John 17:12; Acts 1:18
⁸ ^f Acts 1:19
⁹ ^g Zech. 11:12 ★

¹⁰ ^h Jer. 32:6-9; Zech. 11:12, 13 ★
¹¹ ⁱ Mark 15:2-5; Luke 23:2, 3; John 18:29-38 / John 18:37; 1 Tim. 6:13
¹² ^k Ps. 38:13, 14; Matt. 26:63; John 19:9
¹³ ^l Matt. 26:62; John 19:10
¹⁵ ^m Mark 15:6-15; Luke 23:17-25; John 18:39-19:16
¹⁶ ² NU Jesus Barabbas
¹⁸ ⁿ Matt. 21:38; [John 15:22-25]
²⁰ ^o Mark 15:11; Luke 23:18; John 18:40; Acts 3:14

of the children of Israel priced, ¹⁰ *and he gave them for the potter’s field, as the LORD directed me.*”

Jesus Is Examined

Mark 15:2-5; Luke 23:2-5; John 18:29-38

¹¹ Now Jesus stood before the governor. ⁱ And the governor asked Him, saying, “Are You the King of the Jews?”

Jesus said to him, ^j “*It is as you say.*” ¹² And while He was being accused by the chief priests and elders, ^k He answered nothing.

¹³ Then Pilate said to Him, ^l “Do You not hear how many things they testify against You?” ¹⁴ But He answered him not one word, so that the governor marveled greatly.

Barabbas Is Freed

Mark 15:6-14; Luke 23:17-23; John 18:39, 40

^{15m} Now at the feast the governor was accustomed to releasing to the multitude one prisoner whom they wished. ¹⁶ And at that time they had a notorious prisoner called ² Barabbas. ¹⁷ Therefore, when they had gathered together, Pilate said to them, “Whom do you want me to release to you? Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?” ¹⁸ For he knew that they had handed Him over because of ⁿ envy.

¹⁹ While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent to him, saying, “Have nothing to do with that just Man, for I have suffered many things today in a dream because of Him.”

^{20o} But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitudes that they should ask for Barabbas and destroy Jesus. ²¹ The governor answered and said to

the exact number of times the rooster would crow. The number of times would be sharp in Peter’s memory and interest. The other Gospel writers were concerned only with the sign in general.

26:75 He went out and wept bitterly indicates Peter’s genuine repentance. In His grace, the Lord later forgave Peter.

27:1 This was the third Jewish trial. The first two were illegal because they were held at night. This third meeting was held **when morning came** and was simply a “rubber stamp” of the one described in 26:57-68.

27:2 Pontius Pilate was **governor** of Judea, Samaria, and Idumea from A.D. 26-36. Because the Jews did not have authority to execute Jesus (see John 18:31), they brought Him to Pilate.

27:3 Judas felt remorse because he had not planned for this to happen; he may have betrayed Jesus in order to force Him to take action against His enemies and inaugurate His kingdom. But that was not God’s timing and plan.

27:5 Acts 1:18 says that the death of Judas was due to a headlong fall. The likely explanation is that Judas **hanged himself** on a tree, only to have the rope or branch break. If the tree was over a rocky precipice, the account in Acts can be correlated with this account.

27:6 The religious leaders, who had no problem condemning an innocent person to death, suddenly became very scrupulous about the Law. Because of Deut. 23:18, it was felt that blood money should not be used for religious purposes.

27:7 Originally this plot of ground was known as **the potter’s field**, a place where potters dug for clay. Consequently, it was full of holes, which would have made it easy to bury people who had no family tombs. It was purchased as a cemetery for strangers who died in Jerusalem. It is likely Gentiles were also buried there.

27:9, 10 This prophecy is found in Zech. 11:12, 13; however, Matthew states that the prophecy was made by Jeremiah. The best solution to the problem seems to be that the prophecy **was spoken by Jeremiah** and recorded by Zechariah. A second option is that the name Jeremiah stands for the collection of prophetic writings in which Zechariah is found. It may also be that in the days of Christ, the Book of Jeremiah headed the books of the prophets. The quotation is then identified with the name of the first book in the section and not the name of the specific book within the group.

27:11 The title **King of the Jews** has not been used in Matthew’s Gospel since 2:2. Clearly Pilate’s charge against the Lord Jesus was prompted by Jewish religious leaders.

27:16-18 Barabbas was **notorious** because he was an insurrectionist and a murderer (see Mark 15:7; Luke 23:19, 25). Evidently Pilate assumed the Jews would choose Jesus to be released over a murderer like Barabbas. Jesus had only gone about doing good.

27:19 Only Matthew records this incident concerning Pilate’s wife. It highlights Pilate’s sense of responsibility; he did not want to condemn an innocent man.

them, “Which of the two do you want me to release to you?”

They said, ^p“Barabbas!”

²² Pilate said to them, “What then shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?”

They all said to him, “Let Him be crucified!”

²³ Then the governor said, ^q“Why, what evil has He done?”

But they cried out all the more, saying, “Let Him be crucified!”

²⁴ When Pilate saw that he could not prevail at all, but rather *that* a ³ tumult was rising, he ^r took water and washed *his* hands before the multitude, saying, “I am innocent of the blood of this ⁴ just Person. You see to it.”

²⁵ And all the people answered and said, ^s“His blood *be* on us and on our children.”

Jesus Is Scourged

Mark 15:15-17; Luke 23:24, 25; John 19:16

²⁶ Then he released Barabbas to them; and when ^t he had ⁵ scourged Jesus, he delivered *Him* to be crucified.

²⁷ ^u Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the ⁶ Praetorium and gathered the whole ⁷ garrison around Him. ²⁸ And they ^v stripped Him and ^w put a scarlet robe on Him.

Jesus Is Led to Golgotha

Mark 15:18-22; Luke 23:26-33; John 19:17

²⁹ ^x When they had ⁸ twisted a crown of thorns, they put *it* on His head, and a reed in His right hand. And they bowed the knee before Him and mocked Him,

²¹ ^p Acts 3:14

²³ ^q Acts 3:13

²⁴ ^r Deut. 21:6-8

³ ^s *an uproar* ⁴ NU

omits *just*

²⁵ ^t Deut. 19:10;

Josh. 2:19; 2 Sam.

1:16; 1 Kin. 2:32;

Acts 5:28

²⁶ ^u [Is. 50:6;

53:5] ^v *★*; Matt.

20:19; Mark 15:15;

Luke 23:16, 24,

25; John 19:1, 16

⁵ *flogged with a*

Roman scourge

²⁷ ^w Mark 15:16-

20; John 19:2

⁶ The governor's

headquarters

⁷ *cohort*

²⁸ ^x Mark 15:17;

John 19:2 ^y Luke

23:11

²⁹ ^x Ps. 69:19; Is.

53:3 ^v *★*; Matt. 20:19;

Mark 10:34; Luke

18:32 ⁸ *Lit. woven*

³⁰ ^y Is. 50:6 ^v *★*;

52:14; Mic. 5:1; Matt.

26:67; Mark 10:34;

14:65; 15:19

³¹ ^z Is. 53:7; Matt.

20:19

³² ^a 1 Kin. 21:13;

Acts 7:58; Heb.

13:12 ^b Mark 15:21;

Luke 23:26; John

19:17

³³ ^c Mark 15:22-32;

Luke 23:33-43;

John 19:17

³⁴ ^d Ps. 69:21 ^v *★*;

Matt. 27:48 ⁹ NU

omits *sour*

³⁵ ^e Mark 15:24;

Luke 23:34; John

19:24 ^f Ps. 22:18 ^v *★*

¹ NU, M omit the

rest of v. 35.

³⁶ ⁹ Ps. 22:17; Matt.

saying, “Hail, King of the Jews!” ³⁰ Then ^y they spat on Him, and took the reed and struck Him on the head. ³¹ And when they had mocked Him, they took the robe off Him, put His *own* clothes on Him, ^z and led Him away to be crucified.

³² ^a Now as they came out, ^b they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name. Him they compelled to bear His cross. ³³ ^c And when they had come to a place called Golgotha, that is to say, Place of a Skull, ³⁴ ^d they gave Him ⁹ sour wine mingled with gall to drink. But when He had tasted *it*, He would not drink.

Jesus Is Crucified

Mark 15:23-32; Luke 23:33-43; John 19:18-24

³⁵ ^e Then they crucified Him, and divided His garments, casting lots, ^f that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet:

*“They divided My garments among them,
And for My clothing they cast lots.”*

³⁶ ^g Sitting down, they kept watch over Him there. ³⁷ And they ^h put up over His head the accusation written against Him:

THIS IS JESUS
THE KING OF THE JEWS.

³⁸ ⁱ Then two robbers were crucified with Him, one on the right and another on the left.

27:54 [★] 37 ^h Mark 15:26; Luke 23:38; John 19:19

38 ⁱ Is. 53:9, 12; Mark 15:27; Luke 23:32, 33; John 19:18

27:24 The religious authorities, who wanted to avoid a riot earlier, here used a **tumult** (the same Greek noun as in 26:5) to accomplish their goal. The tenure of Pilate had been rocked by conflicts with the Jews from the very beginning. He could scarcely have afforded another one on his record. Once again, Pilate pronounced Jesus to be innocent. The washing of **his hands** is recorded only by Matthew. The governor vainly attempted to rid himself of the guilt of condemning an innocent man to death (see Deut. 21:1-9; Ps. 73:13). **27:25 His blood be on us and on our children:** The destruction of Jerusalem was one of the results of this sin (23:32-39).

27:26 when he had scourged Jesus: Scourging was a life-threatening punishment. Evidently this was an attempt by Pilate to punish Jesus so severely that the people would have pity and say, “It is enough; release Him” (see John 19:4, 5). However, the mob cried out for Jesus to be crucified (John 19:6).

27:27 The Praetorium was the official residence of the governor when he was in Jerusalem. It was originally built as a palace for Herod the Great.

27:28-30 The soldiers mocked Jesus for claiming to be a king. Note the references to the **robe**, the **crown**, the scepter (**reed**), and the **praise**.

27:31 crucified: Crucifixion, a practice probably adopted from Persia, was considered by the Romans to be the cruelest form of execution. This punishment was reserved for the worst criminals; Roman citizens were not crucified. The victim usually died after two or three days of agonizing suffering, enduring thirst, exhaustion, and exposure. The victim's arms were nailed to a beam, which was

hoisted up and fixed to a post, to which the feet of the victim would be nailed. The body weight was supported by a peg on which the victim sat.

27:32 Compelled, the same verb used in 5:41, refers to the Roman government's right of impressment, the right of the Roman army to demand labor from a person. The scourging undoubtedly left Jesus weak and unable to carry His cross, so a Roman guard ordered Simon to carry it. **Simon** must have been (or later became) a Christian; it is unlikely that he would be referred to by name if he were a stranger to the Christian community. This Simon was the father of Alexander and Rufus (see Mark 15:21). **Cyrene**, located in North Africa, was home to a large number of Jews (see Acts 6:9).

27:33 The reason the site was called **Place of a Skull** is not known for certain; possibly the hill or mound looked something like a skull. **27:34 Sour wine mingled with gall** would have dulled Jesus' pain and consciousness. Jesus refused it; He wanted to drink His cup of suffering fully aware of all that was happening (see Ps. 69:21).

27:35 The executioners had the privilege of taking the victim's clothes. In **casting lots** for Jesus' **garments**, the soldiers fulfilled Ps. 22:18.

27:36 Perhaps the soldiers **kept watch** to prevent anyone from trying to rescue Jesus from the Cross.

27:37 Putting the Gospel accounts together, the **accusation** probably read “This is Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews” (see Mark 15:26; Luke 23:38; John 19:19).

27:38 two robbers were crucified with Him: This is in fulfillment of Is. 53:12, “He was numbered with the transgressors.” Luke record-

disciple of Jesus. ⁵⁸This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be given to him. ⁵⁹When Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, ⁶⁰and ^blaid it in his new tomb which he had hewn out of the rock; and he rolled a large stone against the door of the tomb, and departed. ⁶¹And Mary Magdalene was there, and the other Mary, sitting ⁶opposite the tomb.

⁶²On the next day, which followed the Day of Preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees gathered together to Pilate, ⁶³saying, “Sir, we remember, while He was still alive, how that deceiver said, ‘After three days I will rise.’ ⁶⁴Therefore command that the tomb be made secure until the third day, lest His disciples come ⁷by night and steal Him away, and say to the people, ‘He has risen from the dead.’ So the last deception will be worse than the first.”

⁶⁵Pilate said to them, “You have a guard; go your way, make it as secure as you know how.” ⁶⁶So they went and made the tomb secure, ^dsealing the stone and setting the guard.

The Empty Tomb

Mark 16:1-8; Luke 24:1-11

28 Now ^aafter the Sabbath, as the first day of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalene ^band the other Mary came to see the tomb. ²And behold, there was a great earthquake; for ^can angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone

60 ^bIs. 53:9 ★; Matt. 26:12
61 ^cin front of
63 ^cMatt. 16:21; 17:23; 20:19; 26:61; Mark 8:31; 10:34; Luke 9:22; 13:33; 24:6, 7; John 2:19
64 ⁷NU omits by night
66 ^dDan. 6:17

CHAPTER 28

1 ^aMark 16:1-8; Luke 24:1-10; John 20:1-8 ^bMatt. 27:56, 61
2 ^cMark 16:5; Luke 24:4; John 20:12

¹NU omits from the door
3 ^dDan. 7:9; 10:6; Mark 9:3; John 20:12; Acts 1:10
4 ^eRev. 1:17
6 ^fHos. 6:2; Ps. 16:10; 49:15; Matt. 12:40; 16:21 ★; 17:23; 20:19
7 ^gMatt. 26:32; 28:10, 16; Mark 16:7
9 ^hMark 16:9; John 20:14 ²NU omits as they went to tell His disciples
10 ⁱPs. 22:22; John 20:17; Rom. 8:29; [Heb. 2:11]

¹from the door, and sat on it. ³^dHis countenance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow. ⁴And the guards shook for fear of him, and became like ^edead men.

⁵But the angel answered and said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. ⁶He is not here; for He is risen, ^fas He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. ⁷And go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead, and indeed ^gHe is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him. Behold, I have told you.”

⁸So they went out quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to bring His disciples word.

The Appearance of Jesus to the Women

⁹And ²as they went to tell His disciples, behold, ^hJesus met them, saying, “Rejoice!” So they came and held Him by the feet and worshiped Him. ¹⁰Then Jesus said to them, “Do not be afraid. Go and tell ⁱMy brethren to go to Galilee, and there they will see Me.”

The Bribery of the Soldiers

¹¹Now while they were going, behold, some of the guard came into the city and reported to the chief priests all the things that had happened. ¹²When they had assembled with the elders and consulted together, they gave a large sum of money to the soldiers, ¹³saying, “Tell them, ‘His disciples came at night and

27:61 The two Marys are also mentioned in v. 56. These women were witnesses to the burial of Jesus.

27:62 The next day was the Sabbath. The chief priests were Sadducees. The Pharisees and the Sadducees’ common animosity toward Jesus united them.

27:63 The Sadducees and Pharisees described the Lord Jesus as that deceiver when, in reality, they were the deceivers (26:4) and hypocrites (23:13, 15, 23, 25, 27, 29).

27:64 For emphasis, the verb **secure** is used three times in vv. 64–66.

27:65 The noun translated **guard** is a Latin word, since the soldiers were Romans and not part of the temple guard.

27:66 To emphasize the impossibility of anyone stealing the body of Jesus, Matthew stressed that the tomb was sealed (see Dan. 6:17).

28:1–15 Although Matthew is brief in his discussion of the resurrection of Christ, he defends it very carefully. The Resurrection was attested by several witnesses, including an angel, various soldiers, and the women at the tomb (vv. 1–8). The tomb with Jesus’ body in it was sealed (27:66), but later the body was not found there (vv. 6, 8). The excuse of the soldiers was illogical (vv. 11–15). No Roman soldier would admit sleeping on the job, as the punishment for this was death. Finally, Jesus Himself appeared to many of His disciples, providing even more witnesses to His resurrection from the dead (vv. 16–20). Matthew presents the evidence for Jesus’ resurrection with precision because the doctrine is essential to the Christian faith. The Resurrection is a sign that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God (12:38, 39), and the Resurrection validates the Lord’s

own prophecies of it (16:21; 17:22, 23; 20:17–19). In 1 Cor. 15:12–19, Paul emphasizes the importance of the Resurrection by listing a series of consequences if the doctrine is denied.

28:1 after the Sabbath: The Sabbath ended at sundown on Saturday. The events of this verse took place at dawn on Sunday morning. The two Marys are those identified in 27:56, 61.

28:2 An earthquake marked the death of the Lord Jesus (27:51); here it evidenced His resurrection. The tomb was not opened to permit Christ to come out, but to allow others in so they could see that it was empty.

28:3 Brilliance is a characteristic of heavenly beings (see 17:2; Dan. 7:9; 10:5, 6; Acts 1:10; Rev. 3:4, 5; 4:4; 6:11; 7:9, 13; 19:14).

28:6 He is risen, as He said: For Jesus’ predictions of His resurrection, see 12:40; 16:21; 17:9, 23; 26:32.

28:7 The Lord Jesus made post-resurrection appearances first in Jerusalem and Judea, then in Galilee, and then again in Jerusalem. Both ch. 28 and John 21 emphasize the appearances in Galilee. Christ’s command to “come, see” (v. 6) is followed here by **go . . . tell**. This is always the divine order: to tell others the Good News about our Lord.

28:10 Galilee was the appointed location for Jesus’ rendezvous with His disciples (v. 7; 26:32) and was also the setting of the Great Commission (vv. 18–20). Note that the Lord referred to His disciples as His **brethren** (see 12:48–50; Ps. 22:22; Heb. 2:11, 12).

28:11 The Roman guards **reported to the chief priests** because they had been assigned for duty to the religious authorities (27:65).

28:13 His disciples . . . stole Him away while we slept: Besides

stole Him *away* while we slept.’ ¹⁴ And if this comes to the governor’s ears, we will appease him and make you secure.” ¹⁵ So they took the money and did as they were instructed; and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day.

The Appearance of Jesus to the Disciples

¹⁶ Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, to the mountain ^j which Jesus had appointed for them. ¹⁷ When they saw Him, they worshiped Him; but some ^k doubted.

¹⁶ / Matt. 26:32; 28:7, 10; Mark 14:28; 15:41; 16:7
¹⁷ ^k John 20:24-29
¹⁸ ^j [Dan. 7:13, 14]; Matt. 11:27; Luke 1:32; 10:22; John 3:35; Acts 2:36; Rom. 14:9; 1 Cor. 15:27; [Eph. 1:10, 21]; Phil. 2:9, 10; [Heb. 1:2]; 1 Pet. 3:22
¹⁹ ^m Mark 16:15
ⁿ Is. 52:10; Luke 24:47; [Acts 2:38, 39]; Rom. 10:18; Col. 1:23
³ M omits

The Great Commission

¹⁸ And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, ^l “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹ ^m Go ³ therefore and ⁿ make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ ^o teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am ^p with you always, *even* to the end of the age.” ⁴ Amen.

therefore ²⁰ ^o [Acts 2:42] ^p [Acts 4:31; 18:10; 23:11] ⁴ NU omits Amen.

being a lie, this was a very weak explanation. If a guard was found sleeping at his post or if a prisoner escaped, the guard would be put to death (see Acts 12:19; 16:27, 28; 27:42). It may have been possible for one soldier to sleep, but it is highly improbable that all of them slept at the same time. Also, sleeping people do not make good witnesses: If they were asleep, how did they know what happened? **28:15 Until this day** refers specifically to the time of the writing of Matthew’s Gospel; however, this explanation is current even today. **28:16, 17** When **the eleven disciples went away into Galilee** they were probably accompanied by many more people. This may be the appearance to more than five hundred people mentioned by Paul in 1 Cor. 15:6. This may explain why **some doubted**; after all, the Eleven were confirmed believers in the resurrected Christ by this time (see John 20:19–28).

28:18 All authority has been given to Jesus, although He is not yet exercising all of it (see Phil. 2:9–11; Heb. 2:5–9; 10:12, 13; Rev. 3:21). He will manifest this power when He returns in all His glory (see 19:28; 1 Cor. 15:27, 28; Eph. 1:10). The word *authority* normally

refers to delegated authority (as in 8:9; 9:6, 8; 10:1; 21:23, 24, 27). The Father would give this authority to the Son (Phil. 2:9–11). Here the Lord Jesus may have been recalling the prophecy recorded in Dan. 7:13, 14.

28:19, 20 Therefore shows that the Great Commission rests on the authority of Christ. Because He has authority over all, everyone needs to hear His gospel. While vv. 18–20 are commonly known as the Great Commission, they should not be thought of as the first call for world evangelism. See Gen. 12:1–3 for God’s command that Abraham and his descendants should be a blessing to all nations. **make disciples:** Making *disciples* involves three steps: going, baptizing, and teaching. It was assumed that when a person trusted in the Lord Jesus, he or she would be baptized. The word **name** is singular, although it is the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit together. This verse is another indication that God is one in three Persons. **I am with you always** demonstrates that Jesus is the true Immanuel, “God with us” (see 1:23; Heb. 13:5, 6; Rev. 21:3).

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MARK



MARK'S GOSPEL is unique. It is not a biography of Jesus, like Matthew or Luke, for it does not dwell on Jesus' family history or career. Instead, this Gospel is a record of Jesus' actions and achievements. It presents Jesus as a Savior-King, who conquers demons, disease, and death.

The emphasis on Jesus' mighty and miraculous works makes this Gospel action-packed, fresh, and vivid. Mark constantly uses the present tense to create the impression of an eye-witness account—the kind presented by an on-the-spot reporter. And just like a reporter, he speaks directly to the reader. He uses rhetorical questions that readers would likely ask themselves, such as, “Who can this be, that even the wind and the sea obey Him!” (4:41). Sometimes he even addresses his audience with Jesus' words, “And what I say to you, I say to all: Watch!” (13:37). Mark wants to transform believers with his report, not merely inform them.

Moreover, his eyewitness accounts provide considerable detail—the emotional responses of Jesus and others, the sizes and reactions of crowds, and the appearance of men and women. The account of the Gadarene demoniac is an example of Mark's attention to detail. He uses 20 verses to tell that story, while Luke uses 14 and Matthew writes a mere seven. Yet Mark's Gospel is the most concise of all of the Gospels, because he omits Jesus' longer discourses. In general, Mark presents the miracle-working Jesus, not the teaching Jesus.

Author The Gospel of Mark does not identify its author. However, numerous documents from the early church unanimously point to Mark as the author. Papias, bishop of Hierapolis (A.D. 140), claimed that Mark, as Peter's interpreter, wrote an accurate Gospel. The Roman Prologue to Mark, dating from A.D. 160–180, also named Mark as the author, and Irenaeus, in France around A.D. 180, claimed that Mark wrote down Peter's preaching. This is repeated by Tertullian and Clement of Alexandria, both in North Africa around A.D. 200.

Mark is mentioned ten times in the New Testament. His Jewish name was John (Acts 13:5, 13), but his Roman name was Mark (Acts 12:12, 25; 15:37). He lived in Jerusalem and was a cousin of Barnabas (Col. 4:10). He might have been the youth wearing a linen cloth at Jesus' arrest (14:51, 52), because only his Gospel mentions this incident, which occurred after all the disciples had already fled. The fact that Peter announced his miraculous jail escape at the home of Mary, Mark's widowed mother (Acts 12:12), indicates Mark had significant contact with Peter and the other leaders of the Jerusalem church.

In A.D. 46, Mark spent time with Barnabas and Saul in the Antioch Church before he accompanied them as a helper on the first missionary journey. His unexpected departure from that expedition, however, caused Paul to lose confidence in him (Acts 15:37–39). Yet Mark later continued his missionary activity with Barnabas on Cyprus.

By A.D. 60–62, Paul again had placed his confidence in Mark and had complimented him as a fellow worker

(Col. 4:10, 11; Philem. 24). In addition to helping Paul and Barnabas, Mark assisted Peter in “Babylon” (1 Pet. 5:13). Finally, Paul asked Mark to come to Rome to assist him while he was confined (2 Tim. 4:11). These short, positive references to Mark in the New Testament indicate that he faithfully and successfully served God as a missionary and apostolic helper throughout the period.

Composition Peter was Mark’s primary informant. In fact, the outline of events in Mark’s Gospel follows precisely the outline of Peter’s sermon to Cornelius at Caesarea (Acts 10:34–43; compare Acts 13:23–33). Oral preaching at that time, such as Peter’s sermon, used established styles and rhetorical techniques to aid both instruction and recall; Mark’s Gospel reflects these oral styles. Furthermore, Justin Martyr, writing at about A.D. 150 in Rome, confirmed that Mark wrote down Peter’s recollection of events. He quoted Mark 3:17 as being in “the Memoirs of Peter.” In addition to recording Peter’s memories, Mark may have added his own memories and consulted other documents.

Most agree that Mark wrote his Gospel in Rome under Peter’s supervision. A second-century document, called the Prologue to Mark, states that the Gospel was composed in Italy. Furthermore, Irenaeus, writing about A.D. 180, specifically stated Rome. Since Mark was with Paul in Rome around A.D. 60–62 and may have returned around A.D. 65 at Paul’s request (2 Tim. 4:11), there is little reason to doubt this evidence.

Several important early sources, including the Anti-Marcionite Prologue and Irenaeus, stated that Mark composed his Gospel after Peter’s death. In fact, Irenaeus dated its composition after both Peter and Paul’s death around A.D. 67.

However Clement of Alexandria and Origen, writing a few years after Irenaeus, insisted that Peter was still alive during Mark’s writing of the book. Moreover, a later tradition, recorded by Eusebius about A.D. 340, stated that it was written earlier, during the reign of Claudius (A.D. 41–54). Finally, an inscription on later manuscripts dated Mark’s composition at an even earlier date around A.D. 39–42. These early dates, however, seem doubtful because (1) Mark probably would not have written the Gospel before his first failed missionary journey, (2) Peter most likely was not in Rome until after A.D. 60, and (3) Paul’s Epistle to the Romans (about A.D. 56–57) greets many believers, but mentions neither Mark nor Peter.

The most thoughtful estimate would place Mark’s work sometime after Peter’s death in A.D. 64 or 65, yet prior to A.D. 70, when Jerusalem was destroyed. In any event, the Gospel of Mark was penned within only three or four decades after the events it records.

Intended Readers Mark wrote for Gentile Christians, especially Romans. This conclusion is based on several facts: (1) Mark assumes some prior knowledge of the Christian faith on the part of his readers. John (the Baptist), baptism, and the Holy Spirit (1:4, 5, 8) are all mentioned without comment. (2) He does not assume a familiarity with Jewish Scripture. He directly quotes only one Old Testament passage

(1:2, 3). (3) Furthermore, he regularly explains Jewish customs and geography (7:2–4; 13:3; 14:12). (4) Finally, Mark purposely omits Jesus’ prohibition of preaching to the Samaritans and Gentiles (6:7–11; compare Matt. 10:5, 6).

Mark’s Gentile readers faced persecution and martyrdom. He wrote his Gospel to strengthen and guide Roman believers through Nero’s terrible persecutions. First of all, his readers needed to know that Jesus had also suffered. But, they also needed to know that Jesus, after his suffering, had triumphed over both suffering and death. The suffering Jesus was also the Son of God (1:1, 11; 14:61; 15:39), the Son of Man (2:10; 8:31; 13:26), the Christ (Messiah) (8:29), and the Lord (1:3; 7:28). After the death of Peter and other eyewitnesses to Jesus’ life, this gospel message needed to be written down. Mark wrote the story down in order to verify these truths and to provide a way to pass them on to new generations of believers.

4 B.C.–A.D. 39

Herod Antipas rules in Galilee and Perea

A.D. 14–37

Tiberius Caesar is Roman emperor

C. A.D. 25–27

John the Baptist’s ministry

A.D. 26–36

Pontius Pilate is procurator of Judea

C. A.D. 27

Jesus’ first Judean ministry

C. A.D. 27–29

Jesus’ Galilean ministry

C. A.D. 30

Second Judean ministry;
Crucifixion;
Resurrection



First-century fishing boat found in the shallows of the Sea of Galilee in 1986. Several of the apostles were fishermen before Jesus sent them out to “become fishers of men” (Mark 1:17).

Content Mark introduces the main character of his action-packed narrative, Jesus, in 13 quick verses. He weaves in this introduction both expectation (“Prepare the way of the LORD,” 1:3) and conflict (Satan tempts Christ in v. 13). The large section that follows (1:14—8:30) heightens the conflict, as in a Greek tragedy. There are successes for Jesus, but there is also growing hostility. Triumph and conflict appear side by side.



View looking north along the shore of the Sea of Galilee from Kursi, the traditional location of Jesus healing a demon-possessed man (Mark 5:1–20)

Jennifer Kintner/www.BiblePlaces.com

This long section culminates in Peter and the other disciples recognizing Jesus as the promised Messiah (8:29).

In the next section (8:31—15:47), Mark describes the final outcome for the Messiah—Jesus’ passion and death. First, Jesus announces His coming death to His disciples (8:31; 9:31; 10:33) and prepares them for it. Then, He journeys to Jerusalem and is tried and put to death. But in the epilogue (16:1–20), the purpose of His death becomes clear. The drama comes to a rousing conclusion as Christ rises from the dead and encourages His followers. This is the Gospel of Mark—the Good News of Jesus Christ.

CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

Mark leaves no doubt that he is documenting a unique account of a unique man. He’s spotlighting the Son of Man who came from heaven to serve, not to be served, and to give His life as a ransom (10:45). So in Mark we see Jesus the obedient Servant of God actively and compassionately coming alongside hurting people. But it’s not just the physical hurts that haunt Him. Jesus is moved by the spiritual disease He sees all around Him.

If Mark’s intent is to present Jesus as a humble Servant, there is no need for an impressive family tree (like Matthew and Luke include). That is why the author begins with Jesus’ public ministry. Mark’s frequent use of the word “immediately” (used more in this compact book than all the rest of the New Testament) reminds us that Jesus is continually on the move. Even though He knows He has a limited time to fulfill the purpose for which He came to earth, others don’t. What they do come to understand is that Jesus viewed Himself as the Son of God. Mark attests to that frequently (see 1:1, 11; 3:1; 5:7; 9:7; 13:32; 14:61; 15:39).

MARK OUTLINE

- I. Prologue: Identity of the Servant Son of God 1:1–13
- II. The Servant Son’s initial message and ministry 1:14—8:30
 - A. Fame and popularity 1:14–45
 - B. Opposition and conflict 2:1—3:35
 - C. Explanation of opposition 4:1–41
 - D. Belief and unbelief 5:1—8:30
- III. The Servant Son’s approach to the cross 8:31—10:52
 - A. Jesus’ announcement of His coming death and resurrection 8:31—10:34
 - B. Jesus’ teaching and practice of servanthood 10:35–52
- IV. The Servant Son’s ministry and death in Jerusalem 11:1—15:47
 - A. Jesus’ initial ministry in Jerusalem 11:1–33
 - B. Rising opposition to Jesus 12:1–44
 - C. The Olivet Discourse 13:1–37
 - D. Jesus’ preparation for His death 14:1–42
 - E. Jesus’ rejection by disciples, people, and His Father 14:43—15:47
- V. Epilogue: The living and victorious Servant Son 16:1–20

The Forerunner of the Servant

Matt. 3:1-11; Luke 3:3-16; John 1:19-34

The ^abeginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, ^bthe Son of God. ²As it is written in ¹the Prophets:

c “Behold, I send My messenger before Your face,
Who will prepare Your way before You.”

³ “The ^dvoice of one crying in the wilderness:

*‘Prepare the way of the LORD;
Make His paths straight.’ ”*

^{4e}John came baptizing in the wilderness and preaching a baptism of repentance ²for the remission of sins. ^{5f}Then all the land of Judea, and those from Jerusalem, went out to him and were all baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins.

CHAPTER 1

1 ^a Matt. 1:1; 3:1;
Luke 3:22 ^b Ps. 2:7;
Matt. 14:33; Luke
1:35
2 ^c Mal. 3:1 ★;
Matt. 11:10; Luke
7:27 ¹ NU *Isaiah the prophet*
3 ^d Is. 40:3 ★; Matt.
3:3; Luke 3:4; John
1:23
4 ^e Mal. 4:6 ★;
Matt. 3:1; Luke 3:3
5 ^f Or *because of forgiveness*
6 ^g Matt. 3:5
7 ^h Matt. 3:11; John
1:27; Acts 13:25
8 ⁱ Acts 1:5; 11:16
/ Is. 44:3; John
20:22; [Acts 2:4;
10:45, 46; 1 Cor.
12:13]
9 ^k Matt. 3:13-17;
Luke 3:21, 22
10 ^l Ezek. 1:1; Matt.
3:16; John 1:32 ^m Is.
11:2; 61:1
Acts 10:38 ³ NU
out of

⁶Now John was ^gclothed with camel’s hair and with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷And he preached, saying, ^h“There comes One after me who is mightier than I, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to stoop down and loose. ⁸ⁱI indeed baptized you with water, but He will baptize you ^jwith the Holy Spirit.”

The Baptism of the Servant

Matt. 3:13-17; Luke 3:21-23

^{9k}It came to pass in those days *that* Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ^{10l}And immediately, coming up ³from the water, He saw the heavens ⁴parting and the Spirit ^mdescending upon Him like a dove. ¹¹Then a voice came from heaven, ⁿ“You are My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”

⁴ torn open 11 ^a [Ps. 2:7]; Is. 42:1 ★; Matt. 3:17; 12:18; Mark 9:7; Luke 3:22

1:1 Writing three decades after the Resurrection of Christ, Mark starts his narrative with a simple declaration of the Good News about God’s Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. As Luke notes in Acts 1:1, the Gospel stories describe what “Jesus began both to do and teach.” The **gospel** refers to the basic story of the Good News to be found in Christ’s life, ministry, death, and Resurrection. **Jesus**, meaning “Yahweh saves,” is the earthly name Jesus received at birth, whereas **Christ** is an OT title that designates Him as God’s chosen servant. **Son of God** makes clear Jesus’ deity and demonstrates His unique relationship to God.

1:2, 3 Other than by quoting Jesus, Mark makes only one reference to the OT. In this quotation from **the Prophets**, the Gospel writer retells the work of Christ’s forerunner, John the Baptist. **Messenger** and **make His paths straight** call forth the image of a king visiting his realm. In ancient times, a messenger was sent ahead to announce the coming of the king. Local communities would often repair rough roads to ensure the comfort of the king as he traveled. The quartet of Isaiah, Malachi, John the Baptist, and the writer Mark proclaims the coming of the King of all kings, Jesus Christ.

1:4 The mention of **John** without any introduction presupposes some knowledge of the Christian faith on the part of Mark’s readers (see Introduction). John’s **baptism of repentance** should not be confused with Christian baptism. The latter always follows conversion and symbolizes the spiritual death, burial, and Resurrection with Christ that is accomplished in a believer’s salvation experience (Acts 19:1-5; Rom. 6:3-6). It is performed in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. John’s baptism, on the other hand, prepared his followers to receive the new message about Christ and His kingdom. **For the remission of sins** does not mean that one is baptized in order to receive forgiveness of sins. The Greek preposition translated of in English probably means “with a view to,” signifying that baptism looks to the forgiveness that God gives through the gift of repentance.

1:5 John’s baptizing was a recurring popular event that attracted large crowds. Mark vividly portrays the continuous stream of followers who flocked to John. One may visualize throngs making the trek to the wilderness, with people waiting in line to be baptized. As each person was baptized by John, he or she would admit to individual sin and the need for the Messiah.

1:6 The angel Gabriel (the name means “mighty one of God”) announced to Zacharias that his son John would “go before Him [Christ] in the spirit and power of Elijah” (Mal. 4:5; Matt. 17:10-13; Luke 1:13-17).

1:7 The tense of the verb **preached** indicates continuous action in past time. John’s characteristic message was to promote expectancy and acceptance of the Lord Jesus Christ. He said he was **not worthy** to loosen the Messiah’s **sandal strap**. Students often performed menial tasks for their rabbis, but even they were not expected to remove someone’s sandals. That task was left to slaves. John humbly understood and accepted his own role in the coming Kingdom.

1:8 The prediction that Christ **will baptize you with the Holy Spirit** appears in each Gospel (Matt. 3:11; Luke 3:16; John 1:33) and was repeated by Christ in Acts 1:5 as being “not many days from now.” Though many English translations use the preposition *with* (*with water and with the Holy Spirit*), it is also acceptable to substitute the word *in*. The water is a physical representation of the future life in the Spirit that people who followed the Messiah would have. Presumably the Day of Pentecost marked the fulfillment of this promise.

1:9 Because He had no sins to repent, Jesus’ baptism was unique. It showed His identity with John’s work and with the sinner for whom He would die. It also foreshadowed His own death, burial, and resurrection for sinners.

1:10 **Immediately** occurs 41 times in Mark’s Gospel to indicate the swift action required of a servant (vv. 10, 12, 18, 20, 21).

1:11 Three times during Christ’s earthly ministry **a voice came from heaven**. It was the Father’s testimony to Christ’s unique and divine Sonship. The other two confirming incidents were at the Transfiguration (9:7) and on the day of Christ’s triumphal entry into Jerusalem (John 12:28).

repentance

(Gk. *metanoia*) (1:4; Matt. 3:8; Acts 5:31; 11:18) Strong’s #3341

This Greek word is a compound word derived from *meta*, meaning “after” and suggesting some type of change, and *nous*, meaning “mind.” Thus the word strictly denotes “a change of mind.” But it also connotes remorse for sin, accompanied by a desire to turn away from one’s sin, to God, for salvation. Both John the Baptist and Jesus began their ministries with a call to repentance (see Matt. 3:2; 4:17)—a call that many of the social outcasts and “sinners” of that day answered (see Luke 19:1-10), but that the religious people rejected (Luke 11:39-44; 18:9-14).

The Temptation of the Servant

Matt. 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-13

¹²*o* Immediately the Spirit ⁵drove Him into the wilderness. ¹³ And He was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan, and was with the wild beasts; ^p and the angels ministered to Him.

The Work of the Servant

Matt. 4:12-17; Luke 4:14, 15

¹⁴*q* Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, ^rpreaching the gospel ⁶of the kingdom of God, ¹⁵ and saying, ^s“The time is fulfilled, and ^tthe kingdom of God ⁷is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel.”

The First Disciples Are Called

Matt. 4:18-22

¹⁶*u* And as He walked by the Sea of Galilee, He saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. ¹⁷ Then Jesus said to them, “Follow Me, and I will make you become ^vfishers of men.” ¹⁸*w* They immediately left their nets and followed Him.

¹⁹ When He had gone a little farther from there, He saw James the *son* of Zebedee, and John his brother, who also *were* in the boat mending their nets. ²⁰ And immediately He called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants, and went after Him.

¹² *o* Matt. 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-13 ⁵ sent Him out
¹³ *p* Matt. 4:10, 11
¹⁴ *q* Matt. 4:12
^r Matt. 4:23 ⁶ NU omits of the kingdom
¹⁵ *s* Dan. 9:25; [Gal. 4:4; Eph. 1:10; 1 Tim. 2:6]; Titus 1:3 ^t Matt. 3:2; 4:17; [Acts 20:21] ⁷ has drawn near
¹⁶ *u* Matt. 4:18-22; Luke 5:2-11; John 1:40-42
¹⁷ *v* Matt. 13:47, 48
¹⁸ *w* Matt. 19:27; [Luke 14:26]

²¹ *x* Matt. 4:13; Luke 4:31-37 ^y Ps. 22:22; Matt. 4:23; Luke 4:16; 13:10
²² *z* Matt. 7:28, 29; 13:54
²³ *a* [Matt. 12:43]; Mark 5:2; 7:25; Luke 4:33
²⁴ *b* Matt. 8:28, 29; Mark 5:7, 8; Luke 8:28 ^c Mark 3:11; Luke 4:41; James 2:19 ^d Ps. 16:10
²⁵ *e* [Luke 4:39]
²⁶ *f* Lit. Be muzzled
²⁷ *g* Mark 9:20
²⁸ *h* NU What is this? A new doctrine with authority! He ⁱ teaching
²⁹ *j* Matt. 4:24; 9:31
²⁹ *k* Matt. 8:14, 15; Luke 4:38, 39

Demons Are Cast Out

Luke 4:31-37

²¹*x* Then they went into Capernaum, and immediately on the Sabbath He entered the ^ysynagogue and taught. ²²*z* And they were astonished at His teaching, for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.

²³ Now there was a man in their synagogue with an ^aunclean spirit. And he cried out, ²⁴ saying, “Let *us* alone! ^b What have we to do with You, Jesus of Nazareth? Did You come to destroy us? I ^c know who You are—the ^d Holy One of God!”

²⁵ But Jesus ^e rebuked him, saying, ⁸ “Be quiet, and come out of him!” ²⁶ And when the unclean spirit ^f had convulsed him and cried out with a loud voice, he came out of him. ²⁷ Then they were all amazed, so that they questioned among themselves, saying, ⁹ “What is this? What new ⁱ doctrine is this? For with authority He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him.” ²⁸ And immediately His ^j fame spread throughout all the region around Galilee.

Peter's Mother-in-Law Is Healed

Matt. 8:14, 15; Luke 4:38, 39

²⁹*h* Now as soon as they had come out of the synagogue, they entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. ³⁰ But Simon's wife's mother lay sick with a fever, and they told Him

1:12 Mark declares that **the Spirit drove** Christ into the wilderness. The verb used for **drove** was frequently used to describe Christ's expulsion of demons and appears two other times in this chapter (vv. 34, 39).

1:13 Mark introduces an event of conflict to seize his readers' attention. Being **tempted by Satan** is something that all believers face, but Jesus triumphed completely over his adversary. Mark alone mentions the **angels** who were ministering to Christ through the 40 days.

1:14 Mark begins his account of Christ's ministry with events **after John was put in prison**, as do the other synoptic Gospel writers. John is the only writer who informs us of a number of events that took place *before* John the Baptist's imprisonment (John 3:24).

1:15 Jesus proclaimed **the kingdom of God**. It was the subject of much OT prophecy, and the theme was familiar to Jesus' listeners. **Repent, and believe** are both acts of faith. When a person accepts the only true and worthy object of faith, that person readily turns from inferior substitutes.

1:16 **Simon and Andrew** had been disciples of John the Baptist. They had known Jesus (see John 1:35–42), but were now being called to a lifetime of service.

1:17 Jesus called fishermen, hardworking and industrious people, to perform the most important task on earth: being **fishers of men**. Jesus characteristically used figures of speech that his listeners would readily understand.

1:19 **James . . . John**: The scenes of vv. 16–20 are very colorful. Simon and Andrew are fishing when we encounter them; James and John are mending their nets. Such details indicate the testimony of an eyewitness, probably Peter.

1:21 **Capernaum**, now in ruins, sits beside the northern edge of the

Sea of Galilee, a pear-shaped freshwater lake eight miles wide and 12 miles long. The town's name means “Village of Nahum,” but it was not the Nahum of the OT. Capernaum was Christ's ministry “headquarters” and is mentioned 22 times in the Gospels. By contrast, only one recorded event during Christ's ministry occurred at Nazareth (Luke 4:16). The ruins of a **synagogue** at Capernaum, just a few feet from the water's edge, date from the second to fourth century **A.D.**

1:22 Forty-two percent of Mark's verses contain some mention of teaching. Mark, however, omits most of Jesus' main discourses to emphasize His mighty works as the Servant Son of God. **astonished at His teaching**: Christ's teaching differed from that of scribes and Pharisees because He did not lean on the wisdom of other teachers and rabbis. His authority came from Himself.

1:24, 25 The demon cried out **let us alone**, not because it was speaking for other demons in the man (as was the case in 5:1–20), but because Jesus was a threat to *all* demons. Jesus constantly confronted demons and about 20 percent of the approximately 35 miracles recorded about Jesus involved helping those troubled by demons. The demon acknowledged Jesus as **the Holy One of God**, but Jesus refused the testimony from such a disreputable source.

1:26, 27 **unclean spirit**: This is another term for demon.

1:28 Mark notes the extent of recognition this great miracle brought Jesus by saying **His fame spread throughout all the region**. Mark creates suspense by contrasting the people who received Christ with the Pharisees and rulers who worked to bring about His death. The sad truth remains that often the religious of the world do more to keep people from Jesus Christ than most worldly atheists. But the gospel is not religion. It is Good News that can free even the most horrible sinner.

about her at once. ³¹ So He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up, and immediately the fever left her. And she served them.

Many Healings

Matt. 8:16, 17; 4:23; Luke 4:40-44

³²ⁱ At evening, when the sun had set, they brought to Him all who were sick and those who were demon-possessed. ³³ And the whole city was gathered together at the door. ³⁴ Then He healed many who were sick with various diseases, and ^j cast out many demons; and He ^k did not allow the demons to speak, because they knew Him.

³⁵ Now ^l in the morning, having risen a long while before daylight, He went out and departed to a ² solitary place; and there He ^m prayed. ³⁶ And Simon and those *who were* with Him searched for Him. ³⁷ When they found Him, they said to Him, ⁿ “Everyone ^o is looking for You.”

³² ⁱ Matt. 8:16, 17; Luke 4:40, 41
³⁴ ^j Matt. 9:33; Luke 13:32 ^k Mark 3:12; Luke 4:41; Acts 16:17, 18
³⁵ ^l Luke 4:42, 43
^m Matt. 26:39, 44; Mark 6:46; Luke 5:16; 6:12; 9:28, 29; Heb. 5:7 ² deserted
³⁷ ⁿ Matt. 4:25; John 3:26; 12:19
^o [Heb. 11:6]

³⁸ ^p Luke 4:43 ^q [Is. 61:1, 2; Mark 10:45; John 16:28; 17:4, 8]
³⁹ ^r Ps. 22:22; Matt. 4:23; 9:35; Mark 1:21; 3:1; Luke 4:44 ^s Mark 5:8, 13; 7:29, 30
⁴⁰ ^t Matt. 8:2-4; Luke 5:12-14
⁴¹ ^u Luke 7:13
⁴² ^v Matt. 15:28; Mark 5:29

³⁸ But He said to them, ^p “Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also, because ^q for this purpose I have come forth.”

^{39r} And He was preaching in their synagogues throughout all Galilee, and ^s casting out demons.

A Leper Is Cleansed

Matt. 8:1-4; Luke 5:12-16

^{40t} Now a leper came to Him, imploring Him, kneeling down to Him and saying to Him, “If You are willing, You can make me clean.”

⁴¹ Then Jesus, moved with ^u compassion, stretched out *His* hand and touched him, and said to him, “I am willing; be cleansed.” ⁴² As soon as He had spoken, ^v immediately the leprosy left him, and he was cleansed. ⁴³ And He strictly warned him and sent him away at once, ⁴⁴ and said to him, “See that you say nothing to anyone; but go your way, show yourself

1:31 Jesus completely healed Simon Peter’s mother-in-law. Not only did the **fever** leave, but her strength was renewed so that she **served** Jesus and His followers.

1:35 The tense of the verb **prayed** indicates a continued action, not just a brief moment. Jesus’ prayer life was successful because it was planned, private, and prolonged. He got up early enough, got far enough away, and stayed at it long enough.

1:37, 38 Jesus’ fame spread quickly, and the disciples’ concern is evident in the statement **everyone is looking for You**. Refusing a comfortable existence, Jesus took seriously his mission to reach **the**

next towns. He came to **preach** and to proclaim God’s message. **for this purpose**: Christ modeled singleness of purpose. He would not let anything distract Him.

1:41 Jesus was **moved with compassion**. He not only healed but touched the leper. How often do we see the need but remain unmoved and uninvolved? Scripture has over 400 passages admonishing us to care for the poor (see 8:2; Deut. 15:7–11).

1:44 After healing the leper, Jesus commanded him to **say nothing to anyone**. His demand for silence has several plausible explanations. (1) The report of Jesus’ healing the man may have prejudiced

Baptism in the Bible

Mark begins his account of Jesus’ ministry by describing devout Israelites streaming out to the Jordan River to be baptized by John. Here is a summary of the subject of baptism in the Scriptures:

Etymology	The word <i>baptism</i> comes from the Greek verb <i>baptizo</i> meaning “to dip, immerse, submerge.”
Definition	Baptism is a sacred rite that signifies purification, initiation, or identification of an individual with a leader, group, or teaching.
The Different Types of Baptism in the Scriptures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jewish baptism: a ceremonial cleansing prescribed for both people and articles (7:3; see Ex. 19:10–14; Lev. 8:6; Heb. 9:10). • John’s baptism: a preparatory act in which Jews expressed their belief in the imminent coming of the Messiah and their desire to turn away from sin and live righteous lives (1:4–8). • Jesus’ baptism: an act of ceremonial righteousness. By being baptized, Christ was not admitting His sinfulness, as those who submitted to John’s baptism were. Instead through baptism, Christ was consecrating Himself to His ministry (1:9–11). • Spirit baptism: the supernatural work of the Holy Spirit by which believers are joined to the body of Christ (Rom. 6:3, 4; 1 Cor. 12:13; Gal. 3:26, 27; Eph. 4:5; Col. 2:9–12). • Christian baptism: a ceremonial act instituted by Christ (Matt. 28:19) and practiced by the apostles (Acts 2:38) that depicts a believer’s union and identification with Christ in his death, burial, and resurrection. • Baptism by fire: a possible reference either to the judgment at the Second Coming or to the coming of the Spirit at Pentecost (Matt. 3:9–12; Luke 3:16, 17).
Old Testament Types	<p>The New Testament writers point to several events in the Old Testament that foreshadow baptism as commanded by Christ.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noah coming through the waters of the Flood (1 Pet. 3:17–22). • The Israelites’ crossing of the Red Sea (1 Cor. 10:1, 2).

to the priest, and offer for your cleansing those things ^wwhich Moses commanded, as a testimony to them.”

^{45x} However, he went out and began to proclaim *it* freely, and to spread the matter, so that Jesus could no longer openly enter the city, but was outside in deserted places; ^yand they came to Him from every direction.

A Paralytic Is Healed

Matt. 9:1-8; Luke 5:17-26

2 And again ^aHe entered Capernaum after *some* days, and it was heard that He was in the house. ²¹ Immediately many gathered together, so that there was no longer room to receive *them*, not even near the door. And He preached the word to them. ³ Then they came to Him, bringing a ^bparalytic who was carried by four *men*. ⁴ And when they could not come near Him because of the crowd, they uncovered the roof where He was. So when they had broken through, they let down the bed on which the paralytic was lying.

⁵ When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, “Son, your sins are forgiven you.”

⁶ And some of the scribes were sitting there and reasoning in their hearts, ⁷ “Why does this *Man* speak blasphemies like this? ^cWho can forgive sins but God alone?”

⁸ But immediately, when Jesus perceived in His spirit that they reasoned thus within themselves, He said to them,

44 ^w Lev. 14:1-32
45 ^x Matt. 28:15;
Luke 5:15 / Mark
2:2, 13; 3:7; Luke
5:17; John 6:2

CHAPTER 2

1 ^a Matt. 9:1
2 ¹ NU omits
Immediately
3 ^b Matt. 4:24; 8:6;
Acts 8:7; 9:33
7 ^c Job 14:4; Is.
43:25; Dan. 9:9

9 ^d Matt. 9:5
10 ² *authority*
12 ^e Matt. 15:31;
[Phil. 2:11]
13 ^f Matt. 9:9
14 ^g Matt. 9:9-13;
Luke 5:27-32
14 ^g Matt. 4:19; 8:22;
19:21; John 1:43;
12:26; 21:22 / Luke
18:28
15 ^f Matt. 9:10
16 ³ NU of the
17 ³ Matt. 9:12, 13;
18:11; Luke 5:31, 32;
19:10 ⁴ NU omits to
repentance

“Why do you reason about these things in your hearts? ^{9d} Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, ‘*Your* sins are forgiven you,’ or to say, ‘*Arise*, take up your bed and walk’?” ¹⁰ But that you may know that the Son of Man has ²power on earth to forgive sins”—He said to the paralytic, ¹¹ “I say to you, *arise*, take up your bed, and go to your house.” ¹² Immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went out in the presence of them all, so that all were amazed and ^eglorified God, saying, “We never saw *anything* like this!”

Call of Matthew

Matt. 9:9-13; Luke 5:27-32

^{13f} Then He went out again by the sea; and all the multitude came to Him, and He taught them. ^{14g} As He passed by, He saw Levi the *son* of Alphaeus sitting at the tax office. And He said to him, ^h “Follow Me.” So he arose and ⁱfollowed Him.

^{15j} Now it happened, as He was dining in *Levi’s* house, that many tax collectors and sinners also sat together with Jesus and His disciples; for there were many, and they followed Him. ¹⁶ And when the scribes ³and Pharisees saw Him eating with the tax collectors and sinners, they said to His disciples, “How *is it* that He eats and drinks with tax collectors and sinners?”

¹⁷ When Jesus heard *it*, He said to them, ^k “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I did not come to call *the* righteous, but sinners, ⁴to repentance.”

the priest who needed to pronounce him clean. (2) Jesus did not want to be known primarily as a miracle worker, so He often commanded those who received His healing to remain quiet. (3) The man’s testimony would possibly have hastened the confrontation between Jesus and the religious leaders.

1:45 The cleansed leper did not obey Jesus’ simple injunction to keep quiet. As a result, Jesus had to remain in **deserted places** because the crowds swarmed to Him.

2:1–28 Mark’s first chapter establishes Jesus as a popular figure who experiences great success. Chapters 2 and 3 demonstrate rising opposition to His mission and teaching and suggest more drama and suspense to come.

2:2 Mark is largely a record of Christ’s actions, but what Jesus said is not neglected. Here he describes how Jesus **preached the word**, the message of the coming kingdom.

2:4 Many in the crowd may have come expecting to see healings and miracles. The throng blocked entrance into the already packed room. The determination of the men is seen in the fact that **they uncovered the roof** over the room where Jesus was preaching. The roof was probably flat and constructed of tiles laid one on another.

2:5 their faith: Not only did the four men have faith, but the paralytic himself had it too. When Jesus announced to him, **your sins are forgiven**, He was implicitly acknowledging the paralytic’s trust that He was the Messiah.

2:6, 7 Mark notes the opposition of **the scribes**, who under their breath accused Jesus of blasphemy. In Christ’s day the scribes were commonly called lawyers.

2:9–11 Jesus asked the **which is easier** question to demonstrate

the truth of His claim to forgive the man’s sins—something only God can accomplish. Anyone could assert the ability to forgive sins, since there was no earthly way of confirming the statement. But to say **arise, take up your bed and walk** to a paralytic could be tested immediately by whether he walked or not. By healing the paralytic, Jesus made His pronouncement of forgiveness far more credible. **Son of Man** is a term regularly used for the Messiah (see 8:31; Dan. 7:13; Mark 8:31).

2:12 all were amazed and glorified God: The crowd’s reaction showed that they understood the significance of Jesus’ miracle. It is possible that some scribes and Pharisees joined in the acclamation. But permanent, life-changing faith is what Christ sought, not temporary adoration from the crowd.

2:13 Jesus regularly taught the multitudes in retreat settings. This is indicated by the continuous tense of the verbs used here: They kept on coming, and Jesus kept on teaching.

2:14 Levi, also called Matthew (Matt. 9:9; 10:3), was Jewish, but he collected taxes for Rome. The Jews hated tax collectors. They had a reputation for taking more than they needed in order to add to their own wealth.

2:17 In this instance Jesus was speaking tongue-in-cheek when He used the word **righteous**. None are righteous, though some, such as the Pharisees, fancied themselves as such. Instead, Christ came to call **sinners to repentance**. Jesus did not condone the activities of sinners, but required repentance—a change of mind that recognizes the need of a Savior and recognizes Jesus Christ as the only Savior.

Parable of Cloth and Wineskins

Matt. 9:14-17; Luke 5:33-39

¹⁸The disciples of John and of the Pharisees were fasting. Then they came and said to Him, “Why do the disciples of John and of the Pharisees fast, but Your disciples do not fast?”

¹⁹And Jesus said to them, “Can the ⁵friends of the bridegroom fast while the bridegroom is with them? As long as they have the bridegroom with them they cannot fast. ²⁰But the days will come when the bridegroom will be ^mtaken away from them, and then they will fast in those days. ²¹No one sews a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old garment; or else the new piece pulls away from the old, and the tear is made worse. ²²And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; or else the new wine bursts the wineskins, the wine is spilled, and the wineskins are ruined. But new wine must be put into new wineskins.”

Controversy over Sabbath-Work

Matt. 12:1-8; Luke 6:1-5

²³Now it happened that He went through the grainfields on the Sabbath; and as they went His disciples began ^oto pluck the heads of grain. ²⁴And the Pharisees said to Him, “Look, why do they do what is ^pnot lawful on the Sabbath?”

²⁵But He said to them, “Have you never read ^qwhat David did when he was in need and hungry, he and those with him: ²⁶how he went into the house of God *in the days* of Abiathar the high priest, and ate the showbread, ^rwhich is

¹⁸ ¹ Matt. 9:14-17; Luke 5:33-38

¹⁹ ⁵ Lit. *sons of the bridechamber*

²⁰ ^m Acts 1:9; 13:2, 3; 14:23

²³ ^a Matt. 12:1-8;

Luke 6:1-5 ^o Deut.

23:25

²⁴ ^p Ex. 20:10; 31:15

²⁵ ^q 1 Sam. 21:1-6

²⁶ ^r Ex. 29:32, 33;

Lev. 24:5-9

²⁷ ^s Gen. 2:3; Ex.

23:12; Deut. 5:14;

Neh. 9:14; Ezek.

20:12

²⁸ ^t Matt. 12:8

not lawful to eat except for the priests, and also gave some to those who were with him?”

²⁷And He said to them, “The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the ^sSabbath. ²⁸Therefore ^tthe Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath.”

Controversy over Sabbath-Healing

Matt 12:9-13; Luke 6:6-10

³And ^uHe entered the synagogue again, and a man was there who had a withered hand. ²So they ^bwatched Him closely, whether He would ^cheal him on the Sabbath, so that they might ¹accuse Him. ³And He said to the man who had the withered hand, ²“Step forward.” ⁴Then He said to them, “Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill?” But they kept silent. ⁵And when He had looked around at them with anger, being grieved by the ^dhardness of their hearts, He said to the man, “Stretch out your hand.” And he stretched ⁱit out, and his hand was restored ³as whole as the other.

Pharisees Counsel to Destroy Jesus

Matt. 12:14-16; Luke 6:11

⁶Then the Pharisees went out and immediately plotted with ^fthe Herodians against Him, how they might destroy Him.

⁷But Jesus withdrew with His disciples to the sea. And a great multitude from Galilee followed Him, ^gand from Judea ⁸and Jerusalem and Idumea and beyond the Jordan; and those from Tyre

2:18 fast: Jesus was not against fasting, if properly observed. He gave guidelines for fasting in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 6:16–18). Here, the Pharisees’ fasting, perhaps twice each week (Luke 18:12), is contrasted with Jesus’ feasting, probably at Levi’s house.

2:20 Taken away from them may be a hint of Jesus’ coming departure (John 14:19, 20; 16:5). After His crucifixion, Jesus’ disciples **will fast**, perhaps figuratively in the sense of sorrowing over His loss.

2:21, 22 Mark records only four of Jesus’ parables—two of which he includes here. The comparison implies that the newness of His message, and of the new covenant to follow, cannot fit into the old molds of Judaism. The OT was preparation for the NT (Gal. 3:19–25).

2:23 Ripe grain can be eaten whole and is both tasty and nutritious. Plucking bits of grain from another’s field for sustenance was permitted under Mosaic law (Deut. 23:25).

2:24 The point to the Pharisees’ accusation against Jesus and His disciples was that they had performed work **on the Sabbath**, but their charge was dubious. The act of plucking grain should not be confused with Sabbath work condemned in the law (see Ex. 31:15). This incident is further proof of rising opposition to Jesus’ ministry. **2:25, 26** Part of Jesus’ defense was to recall the story of David’s eating the **showbread** from the tabernacle. Since that bread was intended for the priests, it was **not lawful** for others to eat.

2:27, 28 Jesus does not declare directly the innocence of either David or His disciples, but instead reminds His critics of the meaning of the Sabbath for humans and His own Lordship over it.

3:2 The **Sabbath** controversy continued as Jesus visited the syna-

gogue. The Pharisees (see 3:6), **watched Him closely**, not to hear the words of life but to **accuse Him**.

3:4 Christ put the meaning of the Sabbath to the test. Certainly it was more consistent with the intention of the law to restore this man’s afflicted hand, even on the Sabbath, than to destroy his hopes for the sake of keeping human tradition. The Pharisees did not respond, for they knew that they would condemn themselves.

3:5 It is possible, as Paul exhorts, to be angry and not sin (Eph. 4:26). Jesus demonstrated this righteous **anger**. He was grieved with sin but did not sin Himself by retaliating or losing control of His emotions.

3:6 The Pharisees were religious experts who should have led the people in righteousness. Instead, they **plotted** Jesus’ death **with the Herodians**, their bitter enemies. They were willing to set aside differences to destroy a common foe. The Herodians were Jews who supported Rome and the Herods in particular. Herod Antipas, a son of Herod the Great, ruled Galilee during the same time that Pilate served as Roman governor over Judea and Samaria.

3:7 Because of this plot against His life, Jesus withdrew with the disciples from the area. Still crowds flocked to Him from north (Galilee), south (Judea), and beyond.

3:8 Idumea (the Edom of the OT), the birthplace of Herod the Great, was south of Judea. **Beyond the Jordan** refers to the cities on the east side of the Jordan River (10:1). **Tyre and Sidon** (Phoenicia in the OT), both on the Lebanese coast, were also cities Jesus visited during His earthly ministry (7:24) and mentioned in His teachings (Matt. 11:21, 22).

Jerusalem During the Ministry of Jesus

Herod the Great (reigned 37–4 B.C.) rebuilt the temple and its surrounding walls and also built a palace, a fortress, a theater, and a hippodrome (stadium) for horse and chariot races. He brought the city to the zenith of its architectural beauty and Roman cultural expression. This became Jerusalem in the time of Jesus.



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1 The **"FIRST WALL,"** so named by Josephus, encircled the city during the Hasmonean period, which began in 167 B.C. After the revolt led by Judas Maccabeus in 167, Jerusalem expanded steadily in a period of independence under its own Jewish kings.

2 The **"SECOND WALL"** was built by Herod the Great or by earlier Hasmonean kings. Precise location is difficult to determine. This wall was put up around a market area in a valley, protecting it from raiding and looting, but was of questionable military value. At its eastern end, however, Herod built a military barracks (Antonia Fortress).

3 The **"THIRD WALL"** (shown with red line) was begun by Herod Agrippa I between A.D. 41 and 44 to enclose the growing northern suburbs, but the work was apparently stopped. Its construction was resumed, in haste, only after the First Jewish Revolt broke out in A.D. 66.

4 House of Caiaphas the high priest,* identified here with today's Church of St. Peter in Gallicantu.

5 Deep valleys on the east, south, and west permitted urban expansion only to the north.

6 Maximum city growth within walls by A.D. 70.

7 Archaeological excavations have revealed a monumental stairway and the continuation of Tyropoeon Street,*** which lies along the valley called "Valley of the Cheesemon-gers" by Josephus.

8 The Siloam aqueduct-tunnel, 1,749' long, was cut through solid bedrock, was 5'11" high (average) and followed an "S" shaped course made necessary by engineering difficulties. It was dug by King Hezekiah and provided water during King Sennacherib's threat to lay siege to the city in 701 B.C. (2 Chr. 32:30). Water flows through it to this very day.

* Location generally known, but style of architecture is unknown; artist's concept only, and Roman architecture is assumed.

** Location and architecture unknown, but referred to in written history; shown here for illustrative purposes.

*** ancient feature has remained, or appearance has been determined from evidence.

and Sidon, a great multitude, when they heard how ^hmany things He was doing, came to Him. ⁹So He told His disciples that a small boat should be kept ready for Him because of the multitude, lest they should crush Him. ¹⁰For He healed ⁱmany, so that as many as had afflictions pressed about Him to ^jtouch Him. ¹¹^kAnd the unclean spirits, whenever they saw Him, fell down before Him and cried out, saying, ^l“You are the Son of God.” ¹²But ^mHe sternly warned them that they should not make Him known.

⁸ ⁿ Mark 5:19 ⁱ Mark 5:29, 34; Luke 7:21
¹⁰ / Matt. 9:21;
14:36; Mark 6:56;
8:22
¹¹ ^k Mark 1:23,
24; Luke 4:41
ⁱ Matt. 8:29; 14:33;
Mark 1:1; 5:7; Luke
8:28
¹² ^m Matt. 12:16;
Mark 1:25, 34
¹³ ⁿ Matt. 10:1;
Mark 6:7; Luke 9:1
¹⁴ ^{NU} adds *whom
He also named
apostles*
¹⁵ ^s authority

Selection of the Twelve

Luke 6:12-16

¹³ⁿ And He went up on the mountain and called to *Him* those He Himself wanted. And they came to Him. ¹⁴Then He appointed twelve, ⁴that they might be with Him and that He might send them out to preach, ¹⁵and to have ⁵power ⁶to heal sicknesses and to cast out demons: ¹⁶⁷Simon, ^oto whom He gave the name Peter; ¹⁷James the *son* of Zebedee and

⁶ NU omits *to heal sicknesses and* ¹⁶ ^o Matt. 16:18; John 1:42
⁷ NU and *He appointed the twelve: Simon ...*

3:11, 12 Some unfortunate persons who met Christ were possessed by **unclean spirits**, or demons. These spirit beings have no bodily existence but frequently seek to inhabit humans or even animals. Mark says they **fell down before Him**, most likely by forcing to the ground the person they possessed. Jesus rebuked the demons who proclaimed **You are the Son of God** not because the demons incorrectly identified Jesus, but because their testimony was untrustworthy.
3:13 Jesus had a large group of followers. John 6:66 indicates that even after the Twelve were appointed, He still had a large and continual following. Luke 10:1 notes that later Jesus sent out an additional 70 disciples.
3:14 These **twelve** were Jesus’ apostles—a chosen group sent out to fulfill a particular mission.
3:15 Christ gave **power** or authority to these twelve apostles (Matt.

10:1–4). The apostle Paul called this authority “the signs of an apostle” (2 Cor. 12:12). Christ and the apostles authenticated their ministry through signs, miracles, and wonders (Heb. 2:3, 4).
3:16–19 Jesus **gave** Peter a new **name** because it was the Jewish custom to rename someone who had experienced a life-changing event. This renaming of the disciples has similarities to the renaming of Abram (Gen. 17:3–5) and of Saul (Acts 9). Jesus no doubt sent out His apostles in pairs as He did the 70 disciples (6:7–13; Matt. 10:5–15; Luke 9:1–6). This explains the listing of the apostles’ names in groups of two. The coupling is especially evident in Matt. 10:1–4: Peter and Andrew, James and John, Philip and Bartholomew (Nathanael), Matthew and Thomas, James (son of Alphaeus) and Thaddaeus, and Simon the Cananite and Judas. Even though Judas Iscariot had a close partner in the work for three years, no one yet suspected he would be the one **who also betrayed Him**.

The Twelve Apostles

Jesus fulfilled hundreds of Old Testament prophecies. Many of these prophecies involved the circumstances surrounding His birth. Below is a list of several such prophecies. Note the irrefutable similarities between the Old Testament predictions and their New Testament fulfillment.

Matthew 10:2–4	Mark 3:16–19	Luke 6:14–16	Acts 1:13
Simon Peter	Simon Peter	Simon Peter	Simon Peter
Andrew	James	Andrew	John
James	John	James	James
John	Andrew	John	Andrew
Philip	Philip	Philip	Philip
Bartholomew	Bartholomew	Bartholomew	Thomas
Thomas	Matthew	Matthew	Bartholomew
Matthew	Thomas	Thomas	Matthew
James (of Alphaeus)	James (of Alphaeus)	James (of Alphaeus)	James (of Alphaeus)
Thaddaeus ¹	Thaddaeus	Simon (the Zealot)	Simon (the Zealot)
Simon (the Cananite) ²	Simon (the Cananite)	Judas (of James)	Judas (of James)
Judas Iscariot	Judas Iscariot	Judas Iscariot

¹ Matthew and Mark have the name Thaddaeus while Luke, in his two lists (Luke 6 and Acts 1), has Judas (of James). Some think Judas may have been his original name and that it was changed later to Thaddaeus (meaning perhaps “warm-hearted”) in order to avoid the stigma attached to the name Judas Iscariot.
² “The Cananite” is a transliteration which probably represents an Aramaic word meaning “Zealous.”
It is interesting that all four lists begin with Simon Peter and end with Judas Iscariot (except the Acts 1 list, for Judas had already killed himself). Also, the names would appear to be in groups of four. Peter, Andrew, James, and John are always in the first group—though not always in that order—and Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, and Matthew are in the second group in all four lists.
In all four lists, Peter’s name heads the first group, Philip heads the second, and James (of Alphaeus) heads the third. John’s Gospel does not contain a listing of the apostles.

John the brother of James, to whom He gave the name Boanerges, that is, “Sons of Thunder”; ¹⁸ Andrew, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, Simon the Cananite; ¹⁹ and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Him. And they went into a house.

Opposition of His Friends

²⁰ Then the multitude came together again, ²¹ so that they could not so much as eat bread. ²² But when His own people heard about this, they went out to lay hold of Him, ²³ for they said, “He is out of His mind.”

Scribes Commit the Unpardonable Sin

Matt. 12:24-32; Luke 11:17-23

²² And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem said, ²³ “He has Beelzebub,” and, “By the ruler of the demons He casts out demons.”

²⁴ “So He called them to Himself and said to them in parables: “How can Satan cast out Satan? ²⁵ If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. ²⁶ And if Satan has risen up against himself, and is divided, he cannot stand, but has an end. ²⁷ No one can enter a strong man’s house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man. And then he will plunder his house.

²⁸ “Assuredly, I say to you, all sins will be forgiven the sons of men, and whatever blasphemies they may utter; ²⁹ but he who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is subject to

²⁰ ^p Mark 6:31
²¹ ^q Ps. 69:8; Matt. 13:55; Mark 6:3; John 2:12 ^r John 7:5; 10:20; Acts 26:24; [2 Cor. 5:13]
²² ^s Matt. 9:34; 10:25; Luke 11:15; John 7:20; 8:48, 52; 10:20 ^t [John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11; Eph. 2:2]
²³ ^v Matt. 12:25-29; Luke 11:17-22
²⁷ ^v [Is. 49:24, 25]; Matt. 12:29
²⁸ ^w Matt. 12:31, 32; Luke 12:10; [1 John 5:16]

³⁰ ^x Matt. 9:34; John 7:20; 8:48, 52; 10:20
³¹ ^y Matt. 12:46-50; Luke 8:19-21
³² ^z NU, M add and Your sisters
³⁵ ^z Eph. 6:6; Heb. 10:36; 1 Pet. 4:2; [1 John 2:17]

CHAPTER 4

¹ ^a Matt. 13:1-15; Luke 8:4-10
² ^b Mark 12:38
⁴ ¹ NU, M omit of the air

eternal condemnation”— ³⁰ because they ^x said, “He has an unclean spirit.”

New Relationships Are Defined

Matt. 12:46-50; Luke 8:19-21

³¹ ^y Then His brothers and His mother came, and standing outside they sent to Him, calling Him. ³² And a multitude was sitting around Him; and they said to Him, “Look, Your mother and Your brothers ^z are outside seeking You.”

³³ But He answered them, saying, “Who is My mother, or My brothers?” ³⁴ And He looked around in a circle at those who sat about Him, and said, “Here are My mother and My brothers! ³⁵ For whoever does the ^z will of God is My brother and My sister and mother.”

Parable of the Soils

Matt. 13:1-23; Luke 8:4-15

4 And ^a again He began to teach by the sea. And a great multitude was gathered to Him, so that He got into a boat and sat in it on the sea; and the whole multitude was on the land facing the sea. ² Then He taught them many things by parables, ^b and said to them in His teaching:

³ “Listen! Behold, a sower went out to sow. ⁴ And it happened, as he sowed, that some seed fell by the wayside, and the birds ¹ of the air came and devoured it. ⁵ Some fell on stony ground, where it did not have much earth; and immediately it sprang up because it had no depth of earth. ⁶ But when the sun was up it was scorched, and because it had no root it withered away. ⁷ And some seed fell among thorns; and the thorns grew up

3:21 Opposition to Jesus came not only from His enemies. Jesus’ own people, no doubt close friends and perhaps even relatives (see vv. 31–35), heard of His teaching and assumed that He was out of His mind.

3:22 The scribes, or teachers of the Jewish law, were more harsh and direct in their assessment of Jesus. They accused Him of being possessed by Beelzebub (literally “Lord of the Flies,” 2 Kin. 1:3), another name for Satan. This false charge demonstrates a hardness of heart and is akin to blaspheming against the Holy Spirit (vv. 28–30). **3:23–26** Jesus’ reply in parables was actually a threefold message that contrasted unity and disunity. Nothing—including Satan’s kingdom—can stand if it is divided.

3:27 Whoever defeats Satan must be stronger than he. Jesus implies that He Himself has come to enter the house of the strong man, Satan, to seize his goods (1 John 3:8).

3:28–30 Assuredly (Gk. *amen*) indicates the solemnity of Jesus’ declaration. While the prophets cited the authority of the Lord, Christ’s words rest on His own authority. While Jesus does not say that anyone in the crowd has actually committed the sin He describes, He nonetheless stresses the hopelessness of such a condition. Anyone who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit places himself or herself outside the redeeming grace of God. It is apparently not a single act of defiant behavior, but a continued state of opposition entered into willfully. The tense of they said indicates

a continued action, not a onetime event. The words and works of Christ were spoken and performed by the power of the Holy Spirit. To attribute them to Satan is to call the work of heaven a work of hell. For such perverse belief there is no remedy.

3:31 Opposition arose from Jesus’ own immediate family, His brothers and His mother. We are not told precisely what they wanted to say, but it likely involved a concern for Jesus’ safety or reputation, since He was becoming widely known as a preaching prophet (1:14, 15) and a worker of miracles (1:31; 2:12).

3:35 Whoever does the will of God expresses a spiritual allegiance that goes beyond loyalty to one’s biological family. Spiritual kinship is determined not by blood or race but by obedience to God.

4:2 Parables go beyond mere entertainment or moralizing; they teach vital spiritual truths about the kingdom of God.

4:3–8 The story Jesus told was easy enough to comprehend. During the planting season, it was common to see men scattering seed by hand over their small fields. They cast the seeds over the kinds of soil Jesus describes—smooth pathways running through fields, rough terrain that hid large rocks just beneath the surface, fields overgrown with weeds, and excellent, rich soil here and there. The point of the parable is that the condition of the soil determines the potential for growth. The principle is true for Christians and non-Christians alike. Those who have become complacent and lackadaisical are not likely to receive the Word with benefit (James 1:22–25).

and choked it, and it yielded no ²crop. ⁸But other *seed* fell on good ground and yielded a crop that sprang up, increased and produced: some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some a hundred.”

⁹And He said ³to them, “He who has ears to hear, let him hear!”

^{10c}But when He was alone, those around Him with the twelve asked Him about the parable. ¹¹And He said to them, “To you it has been given to ^dknow the ⁴mystery of the kingdom of God; but to ^ethose who are outside, all things come in parables, ¹²so that

f“Seeing they may see and not perceive,
And hearing they may hear and not understand;
Lest they should turn,
And their sins be forgiven them.”

⁷ ² Lit. *fruit*
⁹ ³ NU, M omit to them
¹⁰ ^c Matt. 13:10; Luke 8:9
¹¹ ^d [Matt. 11:25; 1 Cor. 2:10–16; 2 Cor. 4:6] ^e [1 Cor. 5:12, 13; Col. 4:5; 1 Thess. 4:12; 1 Tim. 3:7] ⁴ *secret or hidden truths*
¹² ^f Is. 6:9, 10; 43:8; Jer. 5:21; Ezek. 12:2; Matt. 13:14; Luke 8:10; John 12:40; Rom. 11:8

¹⁴ ^g Matt. 13:18–23; Luke 8:11–15
¹⁹ ^h Luke 21:34
ⁱ Prov. 23:5; Eccl. 5:13; Luke 18:24; 1 Tim. 6:9, 10, 17

¹³And He said to them, “Do you not understand this parable? How then will you understand all the parables? ^{14g}The sower sows the word. ¹⁵And these are the ones by the wayside where the word is sown. When they hear, Satan comes immediately and takes away the word that was sown in their hearts. ¹⁶These likewise are the ones sown on stony ground who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with gladness; ¹⁷and they have no root in themselves, and so endure only for a time. Afterward, when tribulation or persecution arises for the word’s sake, immediately they stumble. ¹⁸Now these are the ones sown among thorns; *they are* the ones who hear the word, ¹⁹and the ^hcares of this world, ⁱthe deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things entering in choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful. ²⁰But these

4:11 A **mystery** in Scripture is a truth God has revealed or will reveal at the proper time (Rom. 16:25, 26). Jesus apparently used parables for several reasons. First, they are interesting and grab the listener’s attention. Second, such stories are easily remembered. Third, they reveal truth to those who are ready spiritually to receive it. Fourth, they conceal truth from those who oppose Christ’s message. Frequently, Jesus’ opponents failed to understand the lessons because of their own spiritual blindness. See, for example, Matt. 21:45, 46.

4:12 Not all will understand the teaching of the kingdom. Compare this statement of Jesus with Is. 6:9, 10; 43:8.

4:15 The pathway soil is trampled, hard, and unresponsive. The birds (v. 4) represent Satan who quickly **takes away the word that was sown in their hearts**. Elsewhere we are told that Satan can blind the minds of those who do not believe (2 Cor. 4:4). The fuller rendering of Jesus’ explanation in Matthew’s parallel account (Matt. 13:19)

says that this person “does not understand” and then the “wicked one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart.”

4:16, 17 The shallow soil overlaying the **stony ground** represents those who seem eager to receive Christ’s message but whose commitment is superficial.

4:18, 19 The thorn-infested soil represents those **who hear the word** but lack single-mindedness and become completely unproductive. Worry (the normal **cares of this world**) and pleasure-seeking (**deceitfulness of riches** and the pursuit of **other things**) are both capable of producing a deadly spiritual apathy.

4:20 Only one soil produces fruit. Christ emphasizes the necessity to **hear the word, accept it, and bear fruit**. Such a person recognizes God’s call, determines to follow it, and experiences a profound transformation.

Parables: More than Stories



Although Jesus lived among a story-telling people, His approach to instruction was still unusual. His stories were memorable, but they were not transparent. People heard them but did not necessarily understand them. They are clearer to us because of the apostle Paul’s writings, but few of the first hearers of the parables understood them. Even though “with many such parables He spoke the word” (4:33), at one point the disciples asked in frustration, “Why do You speak to [the people] in parables?” (Matt. 13:10). The disciples did not grasp the stories any better than the rest of the crowd.

Jesus’ answer to the disciples reveals much about the purpose of His teaching. He quoted Isaiah 6:9, 10 to demonstrate that those with physical sight and hearing may still not be able to perceive the truths presented to them. For Isaiah, the “dullness” or hardness of the human heart directly affects spiritual insight and understanding. People need to soften their hearts, humble themselves before God, and honestly seek the truth in order to find it.

Jesus’ stories are like wrapped gifts. The packaging of the story can either distract or captivate. But unless the package is opened, the gift itself remains unseen. Likewise unless one seeks the core of the parable—its truth and application—the lessons will remain hidden. Yet when discovered, these lessons prove extremely valuable. The testimony of millions of changed lives over two thousand years attests to this fact.

When unwrapped, Jesus’ stories include powerful multiple applications. The same parable can strike people in different ways. For example, the parable of the Soils (Mark 4:1–20) may be “heard” by at least four distinct people depending on their identification with one of the soils. The parable of the Lost Son (Luke 15:11–32) will affect a father in quite a different way than it does a rebellious younger son or a jealous older brother.

When Jesus taught in Jerusalem during His last week, His parables focused on the acceptance or rejection of Him. This time even the priests and the Pharisees “perceived that He was speaking of them” (Matt. 21:45). They were stung by Jesus’ parables, and they despised Him and His message. But they were unwilling to give up their pride, learn at Jesus’ feet, and seek the forgiveness they so desperately needed. They sensed they would not appreciate what they found if they unwrapped the parables, so they refused to seek the truth any further. In doing this, they perfectly conformed to Isaiah’s description of a people with dull hearts, hardness of hearing, and closed eyes. These religious leaders who should have been leading the people into the truth were the very ones who were the most blind to it.

are the ones sown on good ground, those who hear the word, ⁵accept *it*, and bear *fruit*: some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some a hundred.”

Parable of the Lamp

Luke 8:16-18

²¹ ^k Also He said to them, “Is a lamp brought to be put under a basket or under a bed? Is it not to be set on a lampstand? ²² ^l For there is nothing hidden which will not be revealed, nor has anything been kept secret but that it should come to light. ²³ ^m If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear.”

²⁴ Then He said to them, “Take heed what you hear. ⁿ With the same measure you use, it will be measured to you; and to you who hear, more will be given. ²⁵ ^o For whoever has, to him more will be given; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him.”

Parable of the Growing Seed

²⁶ And He said, ^p “The kingdom of God is as if a man should ^q scatter seed on the ground, ²⁷ and should sleep by night and rise by day, and the seed should sprout and ^r grow, he himself does not know how. ²⁸ For the earth ^r yields crops by itself: first the blade, then the head, after that the full grain in the head. ²⁹ But when the grain ripens, immediately ^s he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come.”

Parable of the Mustard Seed

Matt. 13:31-35

³⁰ Then He said, ^t “To what shall we

²⁰ ^j [John 15:2, 5; Rom. 7:4] ⁵ receive
²¹ ^k Matt. 5:15;
Luke 8:16; 11:33
²² ^l Eccl. 12:14;
Matt. 10:26, 27;
Luke 12:3; [1 Cor. 4:5]

²³ ^m Matt. 11:15;
13:9, 43; Mark 4:9;
Luke 8:8; 14:35; Rev. 3:6, 13, 22; 13:9
²⁴ ⁿ Matt. 7:2; Luke 6:38; 2 Cor. 9:6
²⁵ ^o Matt. 13:12;
25:29; Luke 8:18;
19:26

²⁶ ^p [Matt. 13:24-30, 36-43]; Luke 8:1
⁶ sow

²⁷ ^q [2 Cor. 3:18;
2 Pet. 3:18]

²⁸ ^r [John 12:24]

²⁹ ^s [Mark 13:30,
39]; Rev. 14:15

³⁰ ^t Matt. 13:31,
32; Luke 13:18, 19;
[Acts 2:41; 4:4; 5:14;
19:20]

³³ ^u Matt. 13:34, 35;
[John 16:12]
³⁴ ^v Luke 24:27, 45
³⁵ ^w Matt. 8:18,
23-27; Luke 8:22, 25
³⁸ ^x [Matt. 23:8-10]
^y Ps. 44:23
³⁹ ^z Mark 9:25;
Luke 4:39 ^a Ps. 65:7;
89:9; 93:4; 104:6,
7; Matt. 8:26; Luke 8:24 ⁷ Lit. *Be quiet*
⁴⁰ ^b Matt. 14:31,
32; Luke 8:25 ⁸ NU
Have you still no faith?

liken the kingdom of God? Or with what parable shall we picture it? ³¹ *It is* like a mustard seed which, when it is sown on the ground, is smaller than all the seeds on earth; ³² but when it is sown, it grows up and becomes greater than all herbs, and shoots out large branches, so that the birds of the air may nest under its shade.”

³³ ^u And with many such parables He spoke the word to them as they were able to hear *it*. ³⁴ But without a parable He did not speak to them. And when they were alone, ^v He explained all things to His disciples.

The Sea Is Stilled

Matt. 8:23-27; Luke 8:22-25

³⁵ ^w On the same day, when evening had come, He said to them, “Let us cross over to the other side.” ³⁶ Now when they had left the multitude, they took Him along in the boat as He was. And other little boats were also with Him. ³⁷ And a great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that it was already filling. ³⁸ But He was in the stern, asleep on a pillow. And they awoke Him and said to Him, ^x “Teacher, ^y do You not care that we are perishing?”

³⁹ Then He arose and ^z rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, ^a “Peace, ⁷ be still!” And the wind ceased and there was a great calm. ⁴⁰ But He said to them, “Why are you so fearful? ^b How ⁸ *is it* that you have no faith?” ⁴¹ And they feared exceedingly, and said to one another, “Who can this be, that even the wind and the sea obey Him!”

4:21–23 Jesus’ lesson of the **lamp**, a small clay vessel that burned a wick set in olive oil, is that light reveals what it glows on. Like the lamp, Jesus’ teachings reveal the motives of the human heart.

4:24 To those **who hear**—who receive God’s Good News—**more** spiritual truth **will be given**. A growing believer must be receptive and teachable.

4:25 **Whoever has**, meaning those who possess spiritual life, will continue to learn and grow. **Whoever does not have** spiritual life will lose even what little desire for God he or she seems to have.

4:26–29 Plants develop in a complex, intricate process that humans still do not fully understand even two thousand years after Jesus spoke these words. Yet plants grow and bear fruit and seeds just the same. God’s kingdom likewise is growing, although we do not understand all that is happening. This parable, which appears only in Mark’s Gospel, presents God’s kingdom in brief, from first sowing to final reaping.

4:30–32 A mustard seed is much smaller than a kernel of corn or a grain of wheat, yet its growth is more spectacular, reaching a height of ten to twelve feet. The point is the comparatively large result from such a humble and insignificant beginning. The kingdom that Jesus came to announce drew little support during His life but will find complete fulfillment when He returns. The mention of **birds** making their **nest under its shade** (v. 32) should not be confused with the birds in the parable of the sower (4:4).

Most likely, these birds illustrate how large the mustard plant has become.

4:35 To **cross over** the Sea of Galilee, a lake only eight miles wide, would not seem difficult at first glance. Yet its unique geography produces a greatly varying climate. The lake is situated seven hundred feet below sea level and is surrounded by mountains that rise three to four thousand feet above sea level on the west, north, and east. Tropical conditions prevail around the lake’s surface, where even bananas are grown today. Yet the higher elevations can produce chilling night air.

4:37 It is not unusual even today for a sudden **great windstorm** to appear on the Sea of Galilee during the evening hours. The warm tropical air from the lake’s surface rises and meets the colder air from the nearby hills. The resulting turbulence stirs up great **waves** which make boating extremely treacherous.

4:38 The mention of Jesus being **asleep on a pillow** shows His true humanity. He was fully human and needed food and rest just as all people do.

4:39 Jesus’ command over the wind and the sea demonstrates His full and complete deity. Only God the Creator can calm wind and sea.

4:41 Mark uses the disciples’ question “**Who can this be?**” to evoke a similar response in the minds of his readers. Mark relates the works and words of the one he calls “Jesus Christ, the Son of God” (1:1).

Demons Are Cast into Swine

Matt. 8:28-34; Luke 8:26-39

5 Then ^athey came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the ¹Gadarenes. ²And when He had come out of the boat, immediately there met Him out of the tombs a man with an ^bunclean spirit, ³who had *his* dwelling among the tombs; and no one could bind ²him, not even with chains, ⁴because he had often been bound with shackles and chains. And the chains had been pulled apart by him, and the shackles broken in pieces; neither could anyone tame him. ⁵And always, night and day, he was in the mountains and in the tombs, crying out and cutting himself with stones.

⁶When he saw Jesus from afar, he ran and worshiped Him. ⁷And he cried out with a loud voice and said, “What have I to do with You, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I ^cimplore³ You by God that You do not torment me.”

⁸For He said to him, ^d“Come out of the man, unclean spirit!” ⁹Then He asked him, “What is your name?”

And he answered, saying, “My name is Legion; for we are many.” ¹⁰Also he begged Him earnestly that He would not send them out of the country.

¹¹Now a large herd of ^eswine was feeding there near the mountains. ¹²So all the demons begged Him, saying, “Send us to the swine, that we may enter them.” ¹³And ⁴at once Jesus gave them permission. Then the unclean spirits went out and entered the swine (there were about two thousand); and the herd ran violently down the steep place into the sea, and drowned in the sea.

¹⁴So those who fed the swine fled, and

CHAPTER 5

1 ^a Matt. 8:28-34; Luke 8:26-37 ¹ NU *Gerasenes*
2 ^b Mark 1:23; 7:25; [Rev. 16:13, 14]
3 ² NU adds *anymore*
7 ^c Matt. 26:63; Mark 1:24; Acts 19:13 ³ *adjure*
8 ^d Mark 1:25; 9:25; [Acts 16:18]
11 ^e Lev. 11:7, 8; Deut. 14:8; Luke 15:15, 16
13 ⁴ NU *He gave*

15 ^f Matt. 4:24; 8:16; Mark 1:32 ^g Luke 10:39 ^h [Is. 61:10]
17 ⁱ Matt. 8:34; Acts 16:39
18 ^j Luke 8:38, 39
20 ^k Ex. 15:2; Ps. 66:16 ¹ Matt. 9:8, 33; John 5:20; 7:21; Acts 3:12; 4:13 ⁵ Lit. *Ten Cities*
21 ^m Matt. 9:1; Luke 8:40
22 ⁿ Matt. 9:18-26; Luke 8:41-56; Acts 13:15
23 ^o Matt. 8:15; Mark 6:5; 7:32; 8:23, 25; 16:18; Luke 4:40; Acts 9:17; 28:8
25 ^p Lev. 15:19, 25; Matt. 9:20

they told *it* in the city and in the country. And they went out to see what it was that had happened. ¹⁵Then they came to Jesus, and saw the one *who had been* ^fdemon-possessed and had the legion, ^gsitting and ^hclothed and in his right mind. And they were afraid. ¹⁶And those who saw it told them how it happened to him *who had been* demon-possessed, and about the swine. ¹⁷Then ⁱthey began to plead with Him to depart from their region.

¹⁸And when He got into the boat, ^jhe who had been demon-possessed begged Him that he might be with Him. ¹⁹However, Jesus did not permit him, but said to him, “Go home to your friends, and tell them what great things the Lord has done for you, and how He has had compassion on you.” ²⁰And he departed and began to ^kproclaim in ⁵Decapolis all that Jesus had done for him; and all ^lmarveled.

Jairus Pleads for His Daughter

Matt. 9:18, 19; Luke 8:41, 42

²¹^mNow when Jesus had crossed over again by boat to the other side, a great multitude gathered to Him; and He was by the sea. ²²ⁿAnd behold, one of the rulers of the synagogue came, Jairus by name. And when he saw Him, he fell at His feet ²³and begged Him earnestly, saying, “My little daughter lies at the point of death. Come and ^olay Your hands on her, that she may be healed, and she will live.” ²⁴So *Jesus* went with him, and a great multitude followed Him and thronged Him.

A Woman with Issue Is Healed

Matt. 9:20-22; Luke 8:43-48

²⁵Now a certain woman ^phad a flow

5:1—8:30 In the major section which begins here, Mark relates incidents of belief and unbelief, climaxing with Peter’s confession of Jesus’ deity.

5:1 The country of the Gadarenes is on the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee. The form of the name varies; see the textual notes at 5:1; Matt. 8:28; Luke 8:26, 37.

5:2 Apparently, right after leaving the boat and perhaps before ascending the nearby hills, Jesus was encountered by a man with an unclean spirit (1:23). The man was demon possessed, as v. 15 clearly states.

5:12, 13 It is not certain that the demons needed permission to leave the man and enter the swine, but they may have been trying to forestall permanent bondage by Christ. (The bottomless pit of Rev. 9:1 may be such a place of imprisonment.) Jesus bears no responsibility for the action the demons took; He did not direct them to run the swine into the sea. Even today, two thousand hogs is a very large herd. Their monetary value could easily have been worth a quarter of a million dollars in today’s economy—a sizable loss for the owners.

5:14 The OT forbade Jews to have any contact with swine (Lev. 11:7, 8). However, the owners of these swine might not have been Jewish, since this area was inhabited largely by Gentiles (see 5:20).

5:17–20 Jesus was not well received in this region. His presence

had cost financial loss to some, although it meant liberation to the demoniac. Jesus could have healed and saved in that region, but He was turned away by their fearful citizens. Yet He left a solid witness behind. All the people marveled when they heard what Jesus had done for him. Jesus later made an excursion through the Decapolis region (7:31). Decapolis literally means “ten cities.” This largely Gentile, Greek-speaking area was an important strategic link in Rome’s military defense.

5:21 Jesus’ crossing by boat to the other side brought Him to Capernaum, although Mark does not mention that here.

5:22 Jairus, one of the rulers of the synagogue, was a lay leader charged with supervising services at the synagogue.

5:23 Aware of Jesus’ miraculous powers, Jairus approached Jesus with perhaps the greatest need he had ever faced. He knew that Jesus could meet his need. However, he believed—falsely, it turned out—that Jesus had to actually touch his desperately ill daughter before she could be healed. Yet his faith was unshakable.

5:24–34 Intertwined with the incident of Jairus’s daughter is the story of the woman with a persistent blood flow, perhaps a severe menstrual disorder. As a result, she was considered unclean, and anyone she touched would become unclean ceremonially for one day (Lev. 15:25–27). Still, she entered the crowd to touch Jesus.

of blood for twelve years, ²⁶and had suffered many things from many physicians. She had spent all that she had and was no better, but rather grew worse. ²⁷When she heard about Jesus, she came behind *Him* in the crowd and ^qtouched His gar-

27 ^q Matt. 14:35, 36; Mark 3:10; 6:56

29 ⁶ suffering

ment. ²⁸For she said, “If only I may touch His clothes, I shall be made well.” ²⁹Immediately the fountain of her blood was dried up, and she felt in *her* body that she was healed of the ⁶affliction. ³⁰And Jesus, immediately knowing

5:26 Mark is not complimentary toward the **physicians** who had treated the woman, noting that **she had spent all that she had**. Luke, a physician himself, omits Mark’s added detail that her condition actually **grew worse**.
5:27 The woman **touched His garment**. Perhaps she had heard of another who was healed in a similar way. She must have feared having her embarrassing condition revealed to the crowd.
5:28 Her faith motivates her to act.

5:29, 30 The word **immediately** is used twice in this context. Both the woman and Jesus simultaneously knew what had happened. The woman had no idea that Jesus had consciously healed her. While she sought to disappear into the crowd, Jesus turned and asked **Who touched My clothes?** He wanted to correct any mistaken notion she may have had about her healing. It was not any magical quality of His clothing, but His divine will that had made her well.

Jesus’ Miracles in Mark			
Mark dedicates more of his account to Jesus’ miracles than any of the other Gospel writers. For Mark, these miracles were demonstrations of Jesus’ power—His power over disease, the forces of evil, even over nature. Many flocked to Him to be healed and fed. Some wondered who Jesus was. But others followed Him.			
Miracle	Reference	What the Miracle Demonstrated	Response
Casting out an unclean spirit	1:23–28	Jesus’ power over the forces of evil	The people of Capernaum were amazed and asked, “What new doctrine is this?”
Healing Peter’s mother-in-law	1:29–34	Jesus’ power over sickness	The people brought the sick and demon-possessed to be healed.
Cleansing a leper	1:40–45	Jesus’ compassion and His power over sickness	The leper told everyone about Jesus and the people came from every direction to be healed.
Healing a paralyzed man	2:1–12	Jesus’ power over sickness and His authority to forgive	The Pharisees questioned Jesus’ authority to forgive, but the people glorified God.
Healing a man with a withered hand	3:1–6	Jesus’ power over sickness and His authority to do good on the Sabbath	The Pharisees wanted to accuse Jesus of breaking the Sabbath and began to plot against Him.
Calming a storm	4:35–41	Jesus’ power over nature	The disciples were afraid and asked, “Who can this be?”
Casting out demons	5:1–20	Jesus’ compassion and His power over the forces of evil	The demon-possessed man told everyone what Jesus had done for him. Yet the people of Gadarenes pleaded with Jesus to leave the region.
Raising Jairus’s daughter	5:21–24, 35–43	Jesus’ power over death	The family of Jairus is overcome with amazement.
Healing a woman with a hemorrhage	5:25–34	Jesus’ power over sickness	
Feeding the five thousand	6:30–44	Jesus’ power to provide food	The disciples hearts were hardened, and they did not understand what the miracle meant (v. 52).
Walking on the sea	6:45–52	Jesus’ power over nature	The disciples were greatly amazed.
Casting out the demon from the Greek woman’s daughter	7:24–30	Jesus’ power over evil forces not in His immediate proximity	
Healing a deaf-mute	7:31–37	Jesus’ power over the ability to hear and speak	The people spread the news of Jesus and were astonished.
Feeding the four thousand	8:1–10	Jesus’ power to provide food	
Healing a blind man	8:22–26	Jesus’ power over sight	
Casting out a deaf and dumb spirit	9:14–29	Jesus’ power over the forces of evil, and the source of His power: prayer	The disciples asked Jesus what was the source of His power.
Healing blind Bartimaeus	10:46–52	Jesus’ power over sight	Bartimaeus followed Jesus.
Withering a fig tree	11:12–14, 20–24	Jesus’ power over nature, and the source of His power: prayer	Peter was amazed.

in Himself that ^rpower had gone out of Him, turned around in the crowd and said, “Who touched My clothes?”

³¹But His disciples said to Him, “You see the multitude thronging You, and You say, ‘Who touched Me?’”

³²And He looked around to see her who had done this thing. ³³But the woman, ^sfearing and trembling, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell down before Him and told Him the whole truth. ³⁴And He said to her, “Daughter, ^tyour faith has made you well. ^uGo in peace, and be healed of your affliction.”

Jairus's Daughter Is Healed

Matt. 9:23-26; Luke 8:49-56

³⁵^v While He was still speaking, *some* came from the ruler of the synagogue's house who said, “Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the Teacher any further?”

³⁶As soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, He said to the ruler of the synagogue, “Do not be afraid; only ^wbelieve.” ³⁷And He permitted no one to follow Him except Peter, James, and John the brother of James. ³⁸Then He came to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, and saw ⁷a tumult and those who ^xwept and wailed loudly. ³⁹When He came in, He said to them, “Why make this commo-

³⁰ ^r Luke 6:19; 8:46
³³ ^s [Ps. 89:7]
³⁴ ^t Matt. 9:22; Mark 10:52; Acts 14:9 ^u 1 Sam. 1:17; 20:42; 2 Kin. 5:19; Luke 7:50; 8:48; Acts 16:36; James 2:16]
³⁵ ^v Luke 8:49
³⁶ ^w [Mark 9:23; John 11:40]
³⁸ ^x Mark 16:10;
 Acts 9:39 ⁷ *an uproar*

³⁹ ^v John 11:4, 11
⁴⁰ ^z Acts 9:40
⁴² ^a Mark 1:27; 7:37
⁴³ ^b [Matt. 8:4; 12:16-19; 17:9]; Mark 3:12

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¹ ^a Matt. 13:54; Luke 4:16
² ^b Matt. 7:28; Luke 4:32; Acts 4:13
^c John 6:42
³ ^d Matt. 12:46; Gal. 1:19 ^e [Matt. 11:6]

tion and weep? The child is not dead, but ^ysleeping.”

⁴⁰And they ridiculed Him. ^zBut when He had put them all outside, He took the father and the mother of the child, and those *who were* with Him, and entered where the child was lying. ⁴¹Then He took the child by the hand, and said to her, “Talitha, cumi,” which is translated, “Little girl, I say to you, arise.” ⁴²Immediately the girl arose and walked, for she was twelve years *of age*. And they were ^aovercome with great amazement. ⁴³But ^bHe commanded them strictly that no one should know it, and said that *something* should be given her to eat.

Jesus Is Rejected at Nazareth

Matt. 13:54-58

6 Then ^aHe went out from there and came to His own country, and His disciples followed Him. ²And when the Sabbath had come, He began to teach in the synagogue. And many hearing *Him* were ^bastonished, saying, ^c“Where *did* this Man *get* these things? And what wisdom *is* this which is given to Him, that such mighty works are performed by His hands! ³Is this not the carpenter, the Son of Mary, and ^dbrother of James, Joses, Judas, and Simon? And are not His sisters here with us?” So they ^ewere offended at Him.

5:31 No one else was aware that the healing had happened. The disciples became dismayed, perhaps because they were anxious to reach Jairus's home.

5:32 He looked around, or literally, kept on looking around, gazing on the people crowded near Him.

5:33 Jesus' kind manner and tender words must have eased the fear this woman had of being revealed. She stepped forward **and told Him the whole truth**. Naturally, the time that Jesus took to care for the woman must have worried the already tense disciples.

5:34 Jesus used a tender word, **daughter**, to address this woman, and He noted that her **faith** made the difference, for it was correctly placed in Him. Faith itself does not heal; rather, it is the proper object of that faith, Jesus, who heals.

5:35, 36 The implication of the girl's reported death is that her condition is now irreversible and without remedy. Jesus immediately corrects this thought by insisting that Jairus stop being **afraid** and continue to **believe**.

5:37 He permits only three disciples to join Him—**Peter, James, and John**. Note that these same three were the ones permitted to see the Transfiguration (9:2) and who accompanied Jesus for prayer in Gethsemane (14:32, 33).

5:38 Public mourning was loud and boisterous.

5:41 **Talitha, cumi** is Aramaic.

5:42 That **the girl arose** indicates that her life had been restored, just as in the case of the dead son of the widow of Nain (Luke 7:15) and of Lazarus who had been dead for four days (John 11:44). All three would die again. Jesus' resurrection, however, was unique. Not only was He restored to life, but His body was transformed so that He would never again have to face death.

5:43 The command to keep the miracle a secret was a temporary measure, for certainly the girl's reappearance could not be hidden very long. Such orders would, however, allow Jesus to exit quietly. Jesus did not want to be known primarily as a miracle worker lest people seek Him for the wrong reasons.

6:1 Jesus now went to minister in **His own country**, the area where He grew up, around Nazareth.

6:2 The people readily acknowledged both Jesus' **wisdom** and His **mighty works**, but with insensitive hearts and spiritual callousness they rejected Jesus' message.

6:3 The fact that Joseph is not mentioned here may indicate that he had died. Mark mentions Jesus' four brothers by name as well as His **sisters**. One brother, **James**, did not trust Christ prior to His crucifixion (John 7:5), but seems to have come to faith after Jesus' resurrection (Acts 1:14; 1 Cor. 15:7). He later became the leader of the church in Jerusalem (Acts 15:13; Gal. 1:19) and wrote the Epistle of James. **Judas** later authored the Book of Jude (Jude 1).

faith

(Gk. *pistis*) (5:34; 10:52; Matt. 8:10; 15:28; Luke 7:50; 8:48) Strong's #4102

The Greek term means “trust,” or “firm persuasion.” The corresponding verb means “to believe,” as is illustrated by Jesus' word in 5:36 to Jairus: “Do not be afraid; only believe.” To have faith is to relinquish trust in oneself and to put that trust in another. The woman who had the hemorrhage had put her trust in physicians but to no avail. Now she put all her trust in Jesus, believing He could cure her. According to Jesus, it was her faith that made her well. This was a proclamation Jesus made many times (Matt. 8:10; 9:22, 29; 15:28; Luke 7:50; 8:48). The writers of the epistles sometimes use the word *pistis* to refer to what one believes, the content of faith, God's revelation in the Scripture (see Gal. 1:23).



Sandals

In its simplest form, the sandal was a sole of wood fastened with straps of leather. This is what the disciples wore when they were sent out by Jesus (6:9), and what Peter was told to put on when the angel rescued him from prison (Acts 12:8). All classes of people in Palestine wore sandals—from the very poor to the wealthy. Jews did not wear their sandals indoors; they removed them upon entering the house, and then their feet were washed. Removing one's sandals was also a sign of reverence: Moses was told to do it when God spoke to him from the burning bush (Ex. 3:5). The Jews considered it a very lowly task to carry or to unlouse another person's sandals (John 1:27). Going without sandals was a mark of poverty (Luke 15:22) or a sign of mourning (2 Sam. 13:30; Is. 20:2–4; Ezek. 24:17, 23).



Ionian vase in shape of a foot and sandal

Kim Walton, courtesy of the Archaeological Museum of Olympia, Greece

⁴But Jesus said to them, ^f“A prophet is not without honor except in his own country, among his own relatives, and in his own house.” ^{5g}Now He could do no mighty work there, except that He laid His hands on a few sick people and healed them. ⁶And ^hHe marveled because of their unbelief. ⁱThen He went about the villages in a circuit, teaching.

⁴ ^f Matt. 13:57; Luke 4:24; John 4:44
⁵ ^g Gen. 19:22; 32:25; Matt. 13:58; [Mark 9:23]
⁶ ^h Is. 59:16; Matt. 17:17, 20; [Heb. 3:18, 19; 4:2] ⁱ Matt. 9:35; Luke 13:22; Acts 10:38; Eph. 2:17
⁷ ^j Matt. 10:1; 28:19, 20; Mark 3:13, 14; Luke 9:1 ^k [Eccl. 4:9, 10]
⁹ ^l [Eph. 6:15]
¹⁰ ^m Matt. 10:11; Luke 9:4; 10:7, 8
¹¹ ⁿ Matt. 10:14; Luke 10:10 ^o Acts 13:51; 18:6

Twelve Are Sent to Serve

Matt. 10:1–42; Luke 9:1–6

^{7j}And He called the twelve to Himself, and began to send them out ^ktwo *by* two, and gave them power over unclean spir-

its. ⁸He commanded them to take nothing for the journey except a staff—no bag, no bread, no copper in *their* money belts—⁹but ^lto wear sandals, and not to put on two tunics.

^{10m}Also He said to them, “In whatever place you enter a house, stay there till you depart from that place. ¹¹ⁿAnd ^lwhoever will not receive you nor hear you, when you depart from there, ^oshake off the dust under your feet as a testimony against them. ²Assuredly, I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city!”

¹²So they went out and preached that *people* should repent. ¹³And they cast out many demons, ^pand anointed with oil many who were sick, and healed them.

John the Baptist Is Murdered

Matt. 14:1–12; Luke 9:7–9

^{14q}Now King Herod heard of *Him*, for His name had become well known. And he said, “John the Baptist is risen from the dead, and therefore ^rthese powers are at work in him.”

^{15s}Others said, “It is Elijah.” And others said, “It is ³the Prophet, ^tor like one of the prophets.”

^{16u}But when Herod heard, he said, “This is John, whom I beheaded; he has been raised from the dead!” ¹⁷For Herod himself had sent and laid hold of John, and bound him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip’s wife; for he had married her. ¹⁸Because John had

¹ NU *whatever place* ² NU omits the rest of v. 11. ¹³ ^p [James 5:14] ¹⁴ ^q Matt. 14:1–12; Mark 6:14–16; Luke 9:7–9 ^r Luke 19:37 ¹⁵ ^s Matt. 16:14; Mark 8:28; Luke 9:19 ^t Matt. 21:11
³ NU, M *a prophet, like one* ¹⁶ ^u Matt. 14:2; Luke 3:19

6:4 A prophet is not without honor except in his own country is a maxim still repeated and still true today. Perhaps others were jealous of Jesus’ popularity and huge following. Their envy even took the form of violence against Christ (see Luke 4:29).

6:8–10 These instructions accompanied the Twelve on their assigned journey, the results of which are reported in Mark 6:30. These rules made for easier travel and encouraged the disciples to trust God for their food and shelter, which faithful Jewish hearers who heeded their teaching would provide.

6:12 That people should repent was part of the apostles’ primary message. Repentance was necessary to cultivate the new life Christ offered.

6:13 Casting out demons and healing the sick would add authority to the apostles’ message (2 Cor. 12:12; Heb. 2:3, 4).

6:14–29 These verses break from the narrative to describe the death of John the Baptist. So alarming was Jesus’ sudden fame that Herod feared that John had risen from the dead. The disciples Jesus had sent out (6:7–13) undoubtedly added to Herod’s worry. It appears that one of Mark’s purposes in describing John’s death was to foreshadow the violent death of Christ Himself and even of some who would follow Him.

6:14 King Herod is Herod Antipas, one of the sons of Herod the

Great, the king who tried to kill the baby Jesus (see Matt. 2:1–18). After Herod the Great’s death in 4 B.C., his kingdom was divided between Archelaus, who received Judea and Samaria; Philip, who ruled Iturea and Trachonitis, north and east of Galilee; and Antipas, who controlled Galilee and Perea from 4 B.C. to A.D. 39. Jesus ministered largely in the territory ruled by Antipas.

6:15 This verse demonstrates the contrast in expectations that Israel had for its coming Messiah. It is clear that many did not recognize the divine mission that Jesus was fulfilling.

6:17 The prison where John was kept was at Machaerus, in the hills which overlook the Dead Sea. A complete palace and fortress occupied that site. Herodias was a granddaughter of Herod the Great and the sister of Herod Agrippa I (Acts 12:1–23). She was married to Philip, a half brother of Herod Antipas, but not the Philip of Luke 3:1. Herodias’s first husband was never a ruler. She divorced this Philip in order to marry Herod Antipas. Herod likewise divorced his first wife, the daughter of Aretas IV, king of Arabia (see 2 Cor. 11:32).

6:18 John’s message to Herod was that his divorce was **not lawful** as grounds for remarriage. John’s declaration could be based on Jesus’ stern words about divorce (10:11, 12) or on Lev. 20:21, which prohibits a man from taking his brother’s wife.

said to Herod, ^v“It is not lawful for you to have your brother’s wife.”

¹⁹Therefore Herodias ⁴held it against him and wanted to kill him, but she could not; ²⁰for Herod ^wfeared John, knowing that he *was* a just and holy man, and he protected him. And when he heard him, he ⁵did many things, and heard him gladly.

^{21x}Then an opportune day came when Herod ^yon his birthday gave a feast for his nobles, the high officers, and the chief *men* of Galilee. ²²And when Herodias’ daughter herself came in and danced, and pleased Herod and those who sat with him, the king said to the girl, “Ask me whatever you want, and I will give it to you.” ²³He also swore to her, ^z“Whatever you ask me, I will give you, up to half my kingdom.”

²⁴So she went out and said to her mother, “What shall I ask?”

And she said, “The head of John the Baptist!”

²⁵Immediately she came in with haste to the king and asked, saying, “I want you to give me at once the head of John the Baptist on a platter.”

^{26a} And the king was exceedingly sorry; *yet*, because of the oaths and because of those who sat with him, he did not want to refuse her. ²⁷Immediately the king sent an executioner and commanded his head to be brought. And he went and beheaded him in prison, ²⁸brought his head on a platter, and gave it to the girl; and the girl gave it to her mother. ²⁹When his disciples heard *of it*, they came and ^btook away his corpse and laid it in a tomb.

Twelve Return

Luke 9:10

^{30c}Then the apostles gathered to Jesus and told Him all things, both what they had done and what they had taught.

¹⁸ ^v Lev. 18:16; 20:21

¹⁹ ⁴ held a grudge

²⁰ ^w Matt. 14:5;

²¹⁻²⁶ ⁵ NU was very

perplexed, yet

²¹ ^x Matt. 14:6

^y Gen. 40:20

²³ ^z Esth. 5:3, 6; 7:2

²⁶ ^a Matt. 14:9

²⁹ ^b 1 Kin. 13:29;

³⁰; Matt. 27:58-61;

Acts 8:2

³⁰ ^c Luke 9:10

³¹ ^d Matt. 14:13

^e Mark 3:20

³² ^f Matt. 14:13-21;

Luke 9:10-17; John

6:5-13

³³ ^g [Col. 1:6] ⁶ NU,

M they

³⁴ ^h Matt. 9:36;

14:14; [Heb. 5:2]

ⁱ Num. 27:17; 1 Kin.

22:17; 2 Chr. 18:16;

Zech. 10:2 ^j [Is.

48:17; 61:1-3]; Luke

9:11

³⁵ ^k Matt. 14:15;

Luke 9:12

³⁶ ⁷ NU *something*

to eat and omits

the rest of v. 36.

³⁷ ^l Num. 11:13, 22;

2 Kin. 4:43

³⁸ ^m Matt. 14:17;

Luke 9:13; John 6:9

³⁹ ⁿ Matt. 15:35;

Mark 8:6

⁴¹ ^o John 11:41, 42

^p 1 Sam. 9:13; Matt.

15:36; 26:26; Mark

8:7; Luke 24:30

^{31d} And He said to them, “Come aside by yourselves to a deserted place and rest a while.” For ^ethere were many coming and going, and they did not even have time to eat.

Five Thousand Are Fed

Matt. 14:13-21; Luke 9:11-17; John 6:1-14

^{32/} So they departed to a deserted place in the boat by themselves.

³³ But ⁶the multitudes saw them departing, and many ^gknew Him and ran there on foot from all the cities. They arrived before them and came together to Him. ^{34h} And Jesus, when He came out, saw a great multitude and was moved with compassion for them, because they were like ⁱsheep not having a shepherd. So ^jHe began to teach them many things. ^{35k} When the day was now far spent, His disciples came to Him and said, “This is a deserted place, and already the hour *is* late. ³⁶Send them away, that they may go into the surrounding country and villages and buy themselves ⁷bread; for they have nothing to eat.”

³⁷ But He answered and said to them, “You give them something to eat.”

And they said to Him, ^l“Shall we go and buy two hundred denarii worth of bread and give them *something* to eat?”

³⁸ But He said to them, “How many loaves do you have? Go and see.”

And when they found out they said, ^m“Five, and two fish.”

³⁹ Then He ⁿcommanded them to make them all sit down in groups on the green grass. ⁴⁰ So they sat down in ranks, in hundreds and in fifties. ⁴¹ And when He had taken the five loaves and the two fish, He ^olooked up to heaven, ^pblessed and broke the loaves, and gave *them* to His disciples to set before them; and the two fish He divided among *them* all. ⁴² So they all ate and were filled. ⁴³ And they

6:22 Herodias’ daughter, named Salome, was still unmarried at this point and danced seductively to please Herod Antipas. She later married Philip the Tetrarch, who ruled Iturea and Trachonitis and is mentioned in Luke 3:1.

6:23 Because she pleased him, Herod Antipas **swore to** Salome a solemn oath to give her **up to half of his kingdom** (an expression meaning a large amount but with limits), words that remind us of Xerxes’ promise to Esther (Esth. 5:3, 6). This gesture was no doubt exaggerated, yet Salome seized the opportunity for her mother, Herodias, who hated John the Baptist.

6:27 To keep his oath, Herod dispatched **an executioner**. Here Mark uses a Latin word, *spekoulatora*, easily understood by his Roman readers.

6:34 The Gospels record several times that when Jesus saw a need **He was moved with compassion** (1:41; Ex. 34:6). That compassion led to action, despite an obvious lack of food in this instance.

6:36, 37 The disciples sought to avoid responsibility for the hungry multitude, saying **send them away**. No doubt they thought they were showing compassion. But Jesus’ reply, **You give them some-**

thing to eat, must have startled them. The Latin word **denarii** is the plural of *denarius*, a commonly used silver coin. It was the sum typically paid to a laborer for a day’s work. Thomas calculated it would take the wages of two hundred days’ labor to provide for that multitude.

6:39, 40 Details such as sitting **on the green grass**, which is possible only in late winter and early spring, and the fact that the groups were counted in **hundreds and in fifties** are indications that an eyewitness, probably Peter, recounted this story to Mark. John 6:4 informs us that this event occurred prior to the approaching Passover, always celebrated in March or April.

6:41 The tense of the verb **gave**, used by Mark and Luke (Luke 9:16), suggests that the multiplication of the loaves took place in Jesus’ hands as He *continued* or *kept on giving* the bread and fish to the disciples.

6:43 The **twelve baskets full of fragments** were small baskets commonly carried by travelers (contrast the baskets described in 8:8, which are larger). It is possible to conclude that the leftovers gave each disciple enough food for his own use. When we put the

took up twelve baskets full of fragments and of the fish. ⁴⁴Now those who had eaten the loaves were ⁸about five thousand men.

Jesus Walks on Water

Matt. 14:22-33; John 6:15-21

⁴⁵ ⁹Immediately He ⁹made His disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side, to Bethsaida, while He sent the multitude away. ⁴⁶And when He had sent them away, He ^rdeparted to the mountain to pray. ⁴⁷Now when evening came, the boat was in the middle of the sea; and He *was* alone on the land. ⁴⁸Then He saw them straining at rowing, for the wind was against them. Now about the fourth watch of the night He came to them, walking on the sea, and ^swould have passed them by. ⁴⁹And when they saw Him walking on the sea, they supposed it was a ^tghost, and cried out; ⁵⁰for they all saw Him and were troubled. But immediately He talked with them and said to them, “^u“Be ¹of good cheer! It is I; do not be ^vafraid.” ⁵¹Then He went up into the boat to them, and the wind ^wceased. And they were greatly ^xamazed in themselves beyond measure, and marveled. ⁵²For ^ythey had not understood about the loaves, because their ^zheart was hardened.

Jesus Heals at Gennesaret

Matt. 14:34-36

⁵³ ^aWhen they had crossed over, they came to the land of Gennesaret and an-

⁴⁴ ⁸ NU, M omit about

⁴⁵ ^a Matt. 14:22-32; John 6:15-21

⁹ invited, strongly urged

⁴⁶ ^r Mark 1:35; Luke 5:16

⁴⁸ ^s Luke 24:28

⁴⁹ ^t Matt. 14:26; Luke 24:37

⁵⁰ ^u Matt. 9:2; John 16:33 ^v Is. 41:10

¹ Take courage

⁵¹ ^w Ps. 107:29

^x Mark 1:27; 2:12; 5:42; 7:37

⁵² ^y Matt. 16:9-11; Mark 8:17, 18 ^z Is. 63:17; Mark 3:5; 16:14

⁵³ ^a Matt. 14:34-36; John 6:24, 25

⁵⁴ ² Lit. they

⁵⁶ ^b Matt. 9:20;

Mark 5:27, 28;

[Acts 19:12] ^c Num. 15:38, 39

CHAPTER 7

¹ ^a Matt. 15:1-20

² ^b Matt. 15:20 ¹ NU omits when ² NU omits they found fault

³ ^c Mark 7:5, 8, 9, 13; Gal. 1:14; 1 Pet. 1:18

³ Lit. with the first

⁵ ^d Matt. 15:2

⁶ ^e Matt. 23:13-29

^f Is. 29:13 ★

chored there. ⁵⁴And when they came out of the boat, immediately ²the people recognized Him, ⁵⁵ran through that whole surrounding region, and began to carry about on beds those who were sick to wherever they heard He was. ⁵⁶Wherever He entered, into villages, cities, or the country, they laid the sick in the marketplaces, and begged Him that ^bthey might just touch the ^chem of His garment. And as many as touched Him were made well.

Pharisees and Defilement

Matt. 15:1-20

⁷ Then ^athe Pharisees and some of the scribes came together to Him, having come from Jerusalem. ²Now ¹when they saw some of His disciples eat bread with defiled, that is, with ^bunwashed hands, ²they found fault. ³For the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they wash *their* hands ³in a special way, holding the ^ctradition of the elders. ⁴When they come from the marketplace, they do not eat unless they wash. And there are many other things which they have received and hold, *like* the washing of cups, pitchers, copper vessels, and couches.

⁵ ^dThen the Pharisees and scribes asked Him, “Why do Your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashed hands?”

⁶He answered and said to them, “Well did Isaiah prophesy of you ^ehypocrites, as it is written:

^f“This people honors Me with their lips, But their heart is far from Me.

will of God first, He will care for our needs (Matt. 6:33; Phil. 4:19) and provide our daily bread.

6:46 Jesus spent several nights in prayer during His ministry. Prayer was a vital part of Christ’s communion with the Father and always preceded and accompanied especially difficult situations. This particular night followed a busy day when solitude was sought but not found.

6:47 In the middle of the sea does not mean the very center of the lake but simply out in the water. They were probably closest to the northern shore.

6:48 The fourth watch lasted from 3 A.M. until 6 A.M. That Jesus **would have passed them by** does not indicate that He was on His way to somewhere else. He intended to reveal Himself to His disciples in a miraculous manner. He could easily have calmed the waves from shore, but He wanted His disciples to understand His deity and mastery over all nature.

6:49 When the disciples saw Jesus they thought they saw a **ghost** (an apparition), a sign often interpreted as a foreshadowing of evil, even death.

6:50 Mark omits the added detail of Peter walking on the water to meet Jesus (see Matt. 14:28–31). Mark almost certainly knew of the incident but chose not to describe it for his readers, perhaps to avoid distracting his readers from the central role Christ plays in the account.

6:51 Three miracles are contained in this brief account (vv. 47–51). (1) In the darkness Jesus saw the disciples out in the storm miles away. (2) Jesus walked on the water. (3) Jesus showed complete control over His creation when **the wind ceased**.

6:53 They had set out for Bethsaida (v. 45) on the northeastern shore, but the storm apparently changed their course. The **land of Gennesaret** was on the northwest shore of the Sea of Galilee, just west of Capernaum. It was and still is a fertile agricultural area.

6:56 Mark summarizes Jesus’ healing ministry, noting how widespread it was. The hem of a garment was significant, for it was often woven with tassels that reminded the wearer of God’s commandments (see 5:27; Num. 15:37–41).

7:1–23 In this chapter, the scribes and Pharisees become more vocal in their opposition to Jesus. The breach between true spirituality and man-made tradition widens considerably.

7:1 Jerusalem was the central city of the Jewish faith. The Pharisees (see Matt. 5:20) and scribes (teachers of the law) were no doubt sent by the Jewish religious authorities to ascertain Jesus’ position on the issues they counted important.

7:3, 4 These two verses explain the tradition of handwashing and various kinds of ceremonial uncleanness. Mark’s intended readers in Rome likely needed more background on the Jewish faith to understand this controversy.

7:5 The tradition of the elders (see Matt. 15:2) was a series of rules meant to bolster the ceremonial law of the Jews. Its authority was not supported by Scripture. The question indirectly challenged Jesus, for as the disciples’ teacher He was judged responsible for their actions.

7:6, 7 Jesus did not directly answer the question but instead addressed two more significant issues: (1) the superiority of God’s law over man-made tradition (vv. 6–13) and (2) the difference between ceremonial and true moral defilement (vv. 14–23). Jesus enters into

⁷ *And in vain they worship Me,
Teaching as doctrines the
commandments of men.'*

⁸For laying aside the commandment of God, you hold the tradition of men—⁴the washing of pitchers and cups, and many other such things you do.”

⁹He said to them, “*All too well* ⁹you ⁵reject the commandment of God, that you may keep your tradition. ¹⁰For Moses said, ^h‘Honor your father and your mother’; and, ⁱ‘He who curses father or mother, let him be put to death.’ ¹¹But you say, ‘If a man says to his father or mother, ^j“Whatever profit you might have received from me is Corban”—’ (that is, a gift to God), ¹²then you no lon-

⁸ ⁴ NU omits the rest of v. 8.

⁹ ⁹ Prov. 1:25; Is. 24:5; Jer. 7:23, 24 ⁵ set aside

¹⁰ ^h Ex. 20:12; Deut. 5:16; Matt. 15:4 ⁱ Ex. 21:17; Lev. 20:9; Prov. 20:20

¹¹ / Matt. 15:5; 23:18

¹⁴ ^k Matt. 15:10 ⁱ Matt. 16:9, 11, 12 ¹⁵ ^m Is. 59:3; [Heb. 12:15]

¹⁶ ⁿ Matt. 11:15 ⁶ NU omits v. 16.

¹⁷ ^o Matt. 15:15 ¹⁸ ^p [Is. 28:9-11; 1 Cor. 3:2; Heb. 5:11-14]

ger let him do anything for his father or his mother, ¹³making the word of God of no effect through your tradition which you have handed down. And many such things you do.”

¹⁴^k When He had called all the multitude to *Himself*, He said to them, “Hear Me, everyone, and ^lunderstand: ¹⁵There is nothing that enters a man from outside which can defile him; but the things which come out of him, those are the things that ^mdefile a man. ¹⁶ⁿ If ⁶ anyone has ears to hear, let him hear!”

¹⁷^o When He had entered a house away from the crowd, His disciples asked Him concerning the parable. ¹⁸So He said to them, ^p“Are you thus without understanding also? Do you not perceive that what-

the argument by calling His adversaries **hypocrites**. The term originally referred to actors who wore masks on stage as they played different characters. Thus the Pharisees were not genuinely religious; they were merely playing a part for all to see.

7:8, 9 In earlier times the Hebrews held the written law of God, the Torah, in such esteem that they would not write down their reflections on it, lest they should tempt later generations to consider their words as important as God’s law. But as time went on, written commentaries on the law, collected in the Talmud, assumed greater authority than the Torah itself.

7:11-13 But you say shows the absolute contrast between God’s will and man’s empty tradition. The **Corban** was evidently a pious-sounding evasion of the requirement of honoring one’s parents by supporting them financially.

7:14 A private question at mealtime bloomed into a controversy that now met the ears of **all the multitude** whom Jesus summoned. Jesus made a bold public statement that must have liberated His listeners and infuriated the Pharisees.

The Territories of Tyre and Sidon

In a unique excursion into pagan and semipagan areas, Jesus visited the districts of Tyre and Sidon and the confederation of free cities called the Decapolis. He was called to minister to “the lost sheep of the house of Israel” (Matt. 15:24), but the phenomenal public attention in Galilee was intense. Even here His fame had spread, and He could not keep His presence secret. The commercially magnificent cities of Tyre and Sidon had been a source of cultural seductiveness and religious heterodoxy since the time of Jezebel. The cities had been heavily influenced by Hellenism; the sophistication of Greek culture was apparent in their coinage and architecture. Each was also a proud, historic center of Canaanite paganism, with tombs of ancient kings and temples to Melqart/Heracles, Astarte, and various other deities.



ever enters a man from outside cannot defile him, ¹⁹because it does not enter his heart but his stomach, and is eliminated, ⁷thus purifying all foods?" ²⁰And He said, ^q"What comes out of a man, that defiles a man. ²¹For from within, out of the heart of men, ^sproceed evil thoughts, ^tadulteries, ^ufornications, murders, ²²thefts, ^vcovetousness, wickedness, ^wdeceit, ^xlewdness, an evil eye, ^yblasphemy, ^zpride, foolishness. ²³All these evil things come from within and defile a man."

Syro-Phoenician's Daughter Is Healed

Matt. 15:21-28

^{24a}From there He arose and went to the region of Tyre ^sand Sidon. And He entered a house and wanted no one to know *it*, but He could not be ^bhidden. ²⁵For a woman whose young daughter had an unclean spirit heard about Him, and she came and ^cfell at His feet. ²⁶The woman was a ⁹Greek, a ¹Syro-Phoenician by birth, and she kept ²asking Him to cast the demon out of her daughter. ²⁷But Jesus said to her, "Let the children be filled first, for it is not good to take the children's bread and throw *it* to the little dogs."

²⁸And she answered and said to Him, "Yes, Lord, yet even the little dogs under the table eat from the children's crumbs."

²⁹Then He said to her, "For this saying go your way; the demon has gone out of your daughter."

³⁰And when she had come to her house, she found the demon gone out, and her daughter lying on the bed.

Deaf and Mute Man Is Healed

^{31d}Again, departing from the region of Tyre and Sidon, He came through the

¹⁹ ⁷NU sets off the final phrase as Mark's comment that Jesus has declared all foods clean.

²⁰ ^qPs. 39:1; [Matt. 12:34-37; James 3:6]

²¹ ^rGen. 6:5; 8:21; Prov. 6:18; Jer. 17:9; Matt. 15:19 ^s[Gal. 5:19-21] ²2 Pet. 2:14

^u1 Thess. 4:3

²² ^vLuke 12:15

^wRom. 1:28; 29

^x1 Pet. 4:3 ^yRev. 2:9 ^z1 John 2:16

²⁴ ^aMatt. 15:21

^bMark 2:1, 2 ⁹NU

omits *and Sidon*

²⁵ ^cMark 5:22; John 11:32; Rev. 1:17

²⁶ ⁹Gentile ¹A Syrian of Phoenicia

² *begging*

³¹ ^dMatt. 15:29; Mark 15:37; Luke 23:46; 24:46; Acts 10:40; 1 Cor. 15:4

³² ^eMatt. 9:32; Luke 11:14

³³ ^fMark 8:23; John 9:6

³⁴ ^gMark 6:41; John 11:41; 17:1

^hJohn 11:33, 38

³⁵ ⁱIs. 35:5, 6 ³Lit.

bond

³⁶ ^jMark 5:43

³⁷ ^kMark 6:51; 10:26 ^lMatt. 12:22

CHAPTER 8

¹ ^aMatt. 15:32-39; Mark 6:34-44; Luke 9:12

² ^bMatt. 9:36; 14:14; Mark 1:41; 6:34

⁵ ^cMatt. 15:34; Mark 6:38; John 6:9

midst of the region of Decapolis to the Sea of Galilee. ³²Then ^ethey brought to Him one who was deaf and had an impediment in his speech, and they begged Him to put His hand on him. ³³And He took him aside from the multitude, and put His fingers in his ears, and ^fHe spat and touched his tongue. ³⁴Then, ^glooking up to heaven, ^hHe sighed, and said to him, "Ephphatha," that is, "Be opened."

³⁵ⁱImmediately his ears were opened, and the ³impediment of his tongue was loosed, and he spoke plainly. ³⁶Then ^jHe commanded them that they should tell no one; but the more He commanded them, the more widely they proclaimed *it*. ³⁷And they were ^kastonished beyond measure, saying, "He has done all things well. He ^lmakes both the deaf to hear and the mute to speak."

Four Thousand Are Fed

Matt. 15:32-38

⁸In those days, ^athe multitude being very great and having nothing to eat, Jesus called His disciples *to Him* and said to them, ²"I have ^bcompassion on the multitude, because they have now continued with Me three days and have nothing to eat. ³And if I send them away hungry to their own houses, they will faint on the way; for some of them have come from afar."

⁴Then His disciples answered Him, "How can one satisfy these people with bread here in the wilderness?"

⁵^cHe asked them, "How many loaves do you have?"

And they said, "Seven."

⁶So He commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground. And He took the seven loaves and gave thanks, broke *them*

7:24—8:26 After a forceful public confrontation with the Jewish authorities, Jesus withdrew to rest and to instruct His own disciples.

7:24 Jesus' travels to the region of Tyre and Sidon are the farthest beyond Israel He is reported to have gone during His public ministry. Sidon is about 50 miles northeast of Capernaum.

7:25 Even in a house in faraway Sidon, Jesus could not find privacy.

7:26 The woman who approached Jesus was a Gentile, as the word Greek signifies here. She was a native of that area. Syro-Phoenician (see 1 Kin. 17:8-24 for the story of the widow at Zarephath) reflects the political situation of the Middle East at that time. Phoenicia (modern Lebanon) was part of the Roman province of Syria, which also included all of Palestine—Galilee, Samaria, Perea, Judea, Idumea, and other regions.

7:27 Jesus was in the midst of teaching or feeding His disciples, called figuratively His children. During a meal one does not stop to feed the house pets, the little dogs. Jesus is not attempting to insult the woman by using this metaphor. In fact, He is testing her faith. Matthew records Jesus' reaction to her reply, "O woman, great is your faith" (Matt. 15:28).

7:28 The woman understood Jesus' test and persistently replied that even during the meal the little dogs consume the children's crumbs that fall from the table.

7:29 Rewarding her persistence, Jesus granted her request. He cast the demons out, although the girl was not in His presence.

7:31 Jesus' route to Israel bypassed Galilee itself. Instead Jesus went east into the Decapolis region and then turned south past Mt. Hermon until He reached the Sea of Galilee.

7:32-35 The healing of this deaf man (who also had a speech impediment) is one of the two miracles recorded by Mark only. (The other is the healing of the blind man recorded in 8:22-26.) Those who have never heard also frequently have problems pronouncing words.

7:34 Ephphatha is an Aramaic word. Mark provides an interpretation for his largely non-Jewish audience.

7:36 Jesus' command to tell no one, though unheeded, was meant to allow Him to move freely in the area. He knew that curiosity seekers could hamper His ministry.

8:4 Jesus desired to feed the multitude, but His disciples questioned how. They had witnessed the feeding of the five thousand a few days earlier but could not imagine Jesus duplicating this miracle.

8:6 The verb tenses for the words translated took, gave thanks, and broke specify action at a fixed moment in the past. Yet the verb translated gave is in the imperfect tense, which shows a continuing action. Thus we may conclude that the miracle of multiplication was a continuing process that took place, at least initially, in Jesus' hands.

and gave *them* to His disciples to set before *them*; and they set *them* before the multitude. ⁷They also had a few small fish; and ^dhaving blessed them, He said to set them also before *them*. ⁸So they ate and were filled, and they took up seven large baskets of leftover fragments. ⁹Now those who had eaten were about four thousand. And He sent them away, ^{10e}immediately got into the boat with His disciples, and came to the region of Dalmanutha.

Pharisees Seek a Sign

Matt. 15:39–16:4

^{11f}Then the Pharisees came out and began to dispute with Him, seeking from Him a sign from heaven, testing Him. ¹²But He ^gsighed deeply in His spirit, and said, “Why does this generation seek a sign? Assuredly, I say to you, ^hno sign shall be given to this generation.”

¹³And He left them, and getting into the boat again, departed to the other side.

Disciples Do Not Understand

Matt. 16:5–12

¹⁴ⁱNow ¹the disciples had forgotten to take bread, and they did not have more than one loaf with them in the boat. ^{15j}Then He charged them, saying, “Take heed, beware of the ²leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod.”

¹⁶And they reasoned among themselves, saying, “*It is* because we have no bread.”

¹⁷But Jesus, being aware of *it*, said to them, “Why do you reason because you

^{7 d} Matt. 14:19; Mark 6:41
^{10 e} Matt. 15:39
^{11 f} Matt. 12:38; 16:1; Luke 11:16; John 2:18; 6:30; 1 Cor. 1:22
^{12 g} Mark 7:34
^h Matt. 12:39
^{14 i} Matt. 16:5 ¹ NU, M they
^{15 j} Matt. 16:6; Luke 12:1 ² yeast

^{17 k} Mark 6:52; 16:14 ³ NU omits still
^{19 l} Matt. 14:20; Mark 6:43; Luke 9:17; John 6:13
^{20 m} Matt. 15:37
^{21 n} [Mark 6:52]
^{22 o} Matt. 9:27; John 9:1 ^p Luke 18:15
^{23 q} Mark 7:33
^{26 r} Matt. 8:4; Mark 5:43; 7:36 ⁴ NU “Do not even go into the town.”
^{27 s} Matt. 16:13–16; Luke 9:18–20

have no bread? ^kDo you not yet perceive nor understand? Is your heart ³still hardened? ¹⁸Having eyes, do you not see? And having ears, do you not hear? And do you not remember? ^{19l}When I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many baskets full of fragments did you take up?”

They said to Him, “Twelve.”

²⁰“Also, ^mwhen I broke the seven for the four thousand, how many large baskets full of fragments did you take up?”

And they said, “Seven.”

²¹So He said to them, “How *is it* ⁿyou do not understand?”

A Blind Man Is Healed

²²Then He came to Bethsaida; and they brought a ^oblind man to Him, and begged Him to ^ptouch him. ²³So He took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the town. And when ^qHe had spit on his eyes and put His hands on him, He asked him if he saw anything.

²⁴And he looked up and said, “I see men like trees, walking.”

²⁵Then He put *His* hands on his eyes again and made him look up. And he was restored and saw everyone clearly. ²⁶Then He sent him away to his house, saying, ⁴“Neither go into the town, ^rnor tell anyone in the town.”

Peter's Confession of Christ

Matt. 16:13–23; Luke 9:18–22

^{27s}Now Jesus and His disciples went out to the towns of Caesarea Philippi; and on the road He asked His disciples,

8:8 The **seven large baskets** contained leftovers—one basket from each original loaf. These baskets were much larger than the 12 small personal baskets mentioned in 6:43. It was this kind of larger basket that was used to lower Paul over the wall of Damascus (Acts 9:25).

8:10 Apparently **Dalmanutha** and Magdala (Matt. 15:39) are different names for the same region. Both are mentioned only once in the NT. Dalmanutha was probably on the western side of the Sea of Galilee, about three miles north of modern Tiberias and about five miles southwest of Capernaum.

8:11 The Pharisees' testing of Jesus was crafty and devious. Obviously these men did not heed the many signs and wonders that Jesus had already performed. John 20:30, 31 indicates that the signs were meant to produce faith. It is doubtful that the Pharisees would have changed their minds even if they had seen another miracle.

8:13 Having fed the four thousand on the western side of the lake, Jesus led His disciples by boat **to the other side**, near Bethsaida (v. 22).

8:15 Jesus repeatedly commanded His disciples to **beware of the leaven**, the growing corruption of the Pharisees and of Herod Antipas which was spreading throughout Israel.

8:17–21 The disciples continued to show a lack of spiritual discernment despite the miracles they had witnessed. Jesus' rebuke was intended to make them recall what God had done for them.

8:22–26 Jesus' healing of the blind man in stages paralleled the disciples' imperfect perception of Jesus. Like the man, they were

no longer blind, but they could not see clearly either. Only the Holy Spirit could clear their vision.

8:27 **Caesarea Philippi** is about 25 miles north of Bethsaida and the Sea of Galilee. It stands on the southern edge of Mt. Hermon and is today called Banias. One of the sources of the Jordan River

leaven

(Gk. *zumē*) (8:15; Matt. 13:33; 16:6, 12; 1 Cor. 5:6–8; Gal. 5:9) Strong's #2219

Leaven was a common Jewish metaphor for an invisible, pervasive influence. Its use here as a corrupting influence was an appropriate image to use in describing the subtle but pervasive control the religious leaders had on society. Like leaven that works its way into fresh dough, spreading out through the bread until its effects are evident in the entire batch, so their ideas were gradually infiltrating men's minds until they had penetrated and permeated every part of their thinking. In this context, the leaven of the Pharisees must be linked with their desire to see a sign, because they did not believe in Jesus' identity. Herod also wanted a sign (Luke 23:8). This unbelieving attitude, like leaven, had started to permeate the general population.

The Decapolis and the Lands Beyond the Jordan



1 Place east of the Jordan River where John the Baptist was baptizing (John 1:28). Here at Bethany on the other side of the Jordan John saw Jesus and called Him the “Lamb of God” (John 1:29, 35).

2 Philip, Andrew, and Peter were from Bethsaida (see John 1:44; 12:21). Jesus healed a blind man here (Mark 8:22). Feeding of the 5,000 took place near here (Luke 9:10).

3 Jesus and His disciples withdrew to Caesarea Philippi (Matt. 16:13; Mark 8:27), and here Peter confessed that Jesus was the Messiah (Matt. 16:15, 16).

4 Paul was converted near Damascus and was brought blinded into the city (Acts 9:3, 8; 22:6, 11).

saying to them, “Who do men say that I am?”

²⁸So they answered, ^t“John the Baptist; but some *say*, “Elijah; and others, one of the prophets.”

²⁹He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?”

Peter answered and said to Him, ^v“You are the Christ.”

³⁰^wThen He strictly warned them that they should tell no one about Him.

³¹And ^xHe began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things, and be ^yrejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be ^zkilled, and after three days rise again. ³²He spoke this word openly. Then Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him. ³³But when He had turned around and looked at His disciples, He ^arebuked Peter, saying, “Get behind Me, Satan! For you are not ⁵mindful of the things of God, but the things of men.”

Cost of Discipleship

Matt. 16:24-27; Luke 9:23-26

³⁴When He had called the people to *Himself*, with His disciples also, He said to them, ^b“Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. ³⁵For ^cwhoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake

²⁸ ^t Matt. 14:2
^u Mark 6:14, 15;
 Luke 9:7, 8
²⁹ ^v John 1:41; 4:42;
 6:69; 11:27; Acts
 2:36; 8:37; 9:20
³⁰ ^w Matt. 8:4;
 16:20; Luke 9:21
³¹ ^x [Is. 53:3-11];
 Matt. 16:21; 20:19;
 Luke 18:31-33;
 1 Pet. 1:11 ^y Mark
 10:33 ^z Mark 9:31;
 10:34
³³ ^a Mark 16:14;
 [Rev. 3:19] ⁵ setting
 your mind on
³⁴ ^b [Matt. 10:38];
 Luke 14:27
³⁵ ^c Matt. 10:39;
 Luke 17:33; John
 12:25

³⁸ ^d Matt. 10:33;
 Luke 9:26; 12:9
^e Rom. 1:16; 2 Tim.
 1:8, 9; 2:12

CHAPTER 9

1 ^e Matt. 16:28;
 Mark 13:26; Luke
 9:27; Acts 7:55, 56;
 Rev. 20:4 ^b [Matt.
 24:30] ¹ having
 come
 2 ^c Matt. 17:1-8;
 Luke 9:28-36
 3 ^d Dan. 7:9; Matt.
 28:3
 7 ^e Ex. 40:34; 1 Kin.
 8:10; Acts 1:9;
 Rev. 1:7

and the gospel’s will save it. ³⁶For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? ³⁷Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? ³⁸^dFor whoever ^eis ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.”

The Transfiguration

Matt. 16:28-17:3; Luke 9:27-36

9 And He said to them, ^a“Assuredly, I say to you that there are some standing here who will not taste death till they see ^bthe kingdom of God ¹present with power.”

²^cNow after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John, and led them up on a high mountain apart by themselves; and He was transfigured before them. ³His clothes became shining, exceedingly ^dwhite, like snow, such as no launderer on earth can whiten them. ⁴And Elijah appeared to them with Moses, and they were talking with Jesus. ⁵Then Peter answered and said to Jesus, “Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; and let us make three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah”—⁶because he did not know what to say, for they were greatly afraid.

⁷And ^ea cloud came and overshadowed

springs forth from under a large rocky cliff that rises a hundred or more feet above the village. Many idols were carved into the rock facade. The contrast between Jesus Christ and these local gods was striking—a perfect place for Christ to ask the question of v. 29. The name Philippi distinguishes this town from Caesarea by the sea.

8:28 The disciples’ answers to Jesus’ question about His identity restate popular misconceptions. They recall the statements made by Herod and others in 6:14, 15.

8:29 Jesus then emphatically asks His disciples for their understanding. The word **you** is prominent in Jesus’ question. Peter answers for the group when he says **You are the Christ**. Jesus wants His disciples to grasp firmly His true identity before He reveals to them the necessity of His coming death and Resurrection. In Mark’s Gospel, only the disciples come to understand who Jesus is. The opposition of the religious leaders and the disciples’ dullness is suddenly overshadowed by Peter’s wonderful confession.

8:30 Jesus’ warning to **tell no one about Him** may seem strange. Its explanation lies in the fact that the Jews expected the Messiah to be a political liberator. Jesus’ first coming was meant to accomplish another kind of liberation—release from sin. Hence Jesus was careful not to use the name Messiah publicly, for it was misunderstood by the Jewish people, their leaders, and the Roman authorities.

8:31 This is the first of several clear predictions Jesus makes about His coming death and resurrection (9:31; 10:33, 34). **He began to teach them** signals this new disclosure of His death, burial, and resurrection to His apostles. The **Son of Man** is a title that only Jesus uses of Himself. The **elders and chief priests**, former high priests, **and scribes** made up the Jewish ruling council, the Sanhedrin. These men would condemn Jesus to death (for the fulfillment of Jesus’ prediction, see 14:53, 64).

8:32 Jesus **spoke . . . openly**, that is plainly, not in parables. Peter understood clearly Jesus’ prediction of death and could not accept or understand it, and so he **began to rebuke Him**.

8:33 Peter’s thoughts, born of fear and concern, were probably well-intended, but they did not take in God’s eternal purposes and plan. Peter was not indwelt by **Satan**, but Satan had certainly suggested his thoughts. If Peter had his way, Jesus’ mission would not have been accomplished.

8:35 To preserve one’s life eternally, one must surrender earthly possessions and relationships held so dearly (see Matt. 16:24-27).

8:38 When He comes in the glory of His Father is the key of this address to the disciples (vv. 34-38). It is the first glimpse of the fulfillment of all history (1 Cor. 15:24-28). Those who will reign with Christ invest their lives in that which will last (v. 35). Those who are willing to confess Him today will be rewarded before the Father in heaven (Matt. 5:10-12; 2 Tim. 2:11-13; Rev. 2:26-28).

9:1 After Jesus predicted His own death, Peter and the other disciples needed reassurance that Jesus would ultimately triumph. His prediction that some of them would see **the kingdom of God present with power** must have alleviated their fears.

9:2 After six days links Jesus’ prediction of v. 1 with the events of vv. 2-8. The **high mountain** was most likely one of the foothills surrounding Mt. Hermon. They probably did not stand on Mt. Hermon itself, a snowy peak which rises to 9,232 feet. It is the highest point in all of Palestine. These mountains overlook Caesarea Philippi, where Peter’s confession was made (8:27-29). Jesus’ transfiguration deeply affected John and Peter, who mention it in their writings (see John 1:14; 2 Pet. 1:16-18).

9:4 Elijah is mentioned in Mal. 4:5, 6 in connection with the future coming of Christ. This is why people asked John the Baptist if he were Elijah (John 1:21). **Moses** was the lawgiver and liberator, while Elijah was the first of the great prophets. Their presence confirmed the reality that Jesus is the Messiah of Peter’s confession.

9:7 The voice of God the Father was heard audibly three times during the life of Christ. The other two occasions were at Jesus’ baptism (1:11) and during His triumphal entry into Jerusalem (John 12:28).

them; and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, “This is ^fMy beloved Son. ^gHear Him!” ⁸Suddenly, when they had looked around, they saw no one anymore, but only Jesus with themselves.

^{9h}Now as they came down from the mountain, He commanded them that they should tell no one the things they had seen, till the Son of Man had risen from the dead. ¹⁰So they kept this word to themselves, questioning ⁱwhat the rising from the dead meant.

¹¹And they asked Him, saying, “Why do the scribes say ^jthat Elijah must come first?”

¹²Then He answered and told them, “Indeed, Elijah is coming first and restores all things. And ^khow is it written concerning the Son of Man, that He must suffer many things and ^lbe treated with contempt? ¹³But I say to you that ^mElijah has also come, and they did to him whatever they wished, as it is written of him.”

Demon-Possessed Son Is Delivered

Matt. 17:14-21; Luke 9:37-42

¹⁴ⁿAnd when He came to the disciples, He saw a great multitude around them, and scribes disputing with them. ¹⁵Immediately, when they saw Him, all the people were greatly amazed, and running to *Him*, greeted Him. ¹⁶And He asked the scribes, “What are you discussing with them?”

¹⁷Then ^oone of the crowd answered and said, “Teacher, I brought You my son, who has a mute spirit. ¹⁸And wherever it seizes him, it throws him down; he foams at the mouth, gnashes his teeth, and becomes rigid. So I spoke to Your disciples, that they should cast it out, but they could not.”

¹⁹He answered him and said, “O ^pfaithless ²generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I ³bear with you? Bring him to Me.” ²⁰Then they brought him to Him. And ^qwhen he saw Him, immediately the spirit convulsed him, and he fell on the ground and wallowed, foaming at the mouth.

⁷ ^fPs. 2:7; [Is. 42:1]; Matt. 3:17; Mark 1:11; Luke 1:35 ^g; 3:22; 2 Pet. 1:17 ^g Acts 3:22

⁹ ^h Matt. 17:9-13; Mark 16:6; Luke 24:6, 7, 46

¹⁰ ⁱ John 2:19-22 ¹¹ ^j Mal. 4:5; Matt. 17:10

¹² ^k Ps. 22:6; Is. 53:3 ^l; Dan. 9:26

¹³ ^m Luke 23:11; Phil. 2:7

¹⁴ ⁿ Mal. 4:5; Matt. 11:14; 17:12; Luke 1:17

¹⁵ ^o Matt. 17:14-19; Luke 9:37-42

¹⁶ ^p Matt. 17:14; Luke 9:38

¹⁷ ^q John 4:48

² ^r unbelieving ³ ^s put up with

²⁰ ^t Mark 1:26; Luke 9:42

²³ ^u Matt. 17:20; Mark 11:23; Luke 17:6; John 11:40

⁴ ^v NU “If You can!”

⁵ ^w All things

²⁴ ^x Luke 17:5

²⁵ ^y Mark 1:25

²⁸ ^z Matt. 17:19

²⁹ ^{aa} [James 5:16]

⁵ ^{ab} NU omits and fasting

³¹ ^{ac} Matt. 17:22; Luke 9:44 ^{ad} Matt. 16:21; 27:50; Luke 18:33; 23:46; Acts 2:23 ^{ae} Matt. 20:19; Luke 24:46 ^{af}; Acts 10:40; 1 Cor. 15:4

³² ^{ag} Luke 2:50;

^{18:34} John 12:16

³³ ^{ah} Matt. 18:1-5;

Mark 14:53, 64;

Luke 9:46-48;

22:24; John 18:12;

19:7 ^{ai} discussed

³⁴ ^{aj} [Prov. 13:10];

Mark 15:20, 31

²¹So He asked his father, “How long has this been happening to him?”

And he said, “From childhood. ²²And often he has thrown him both into the fire and into the water to destroy him. But if You can do anything, have compassion on us and help us.”

²³Jesus said to him, ^r“If ⁴ you can believe, all things *are* possible to him who believes.”

²⁴Immediately the father of the child cried out and said with tears, “Lord, I believe; ^shelp my unbelief!”

²⁵When Jesus saw that the people came running together, He ^trebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, “Deaf and dumb spirit, I command you, come out of him and enter him no more!” ²⁶Then *the spirit* cried out, convulsed him greatly, and came out of him. And he became as one dead, so that many said, “He is dead.” ²⁷But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he arose.

^{28u}And when He had come into the house, His disciples asked Him privately, “Why could we not cast it out?”

²⁹So He said to them, “This kind can come out by nothing but ^vprayer ⁵and fasting.”

Jesus Foretells His Death

Matt. 17:22, 23; Luke 9:43-45

³⁰Then they departed from there and passed through Galilee, and He did not want anyone to know *it*. ^{31w}For He taught His disciples and said to them, “The Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of men, and they will ^xkill Him. And after He is killed, He will ^yrise the third day.” ³²But they ^zdid not understand this saying, and were afraid to ask Him.

Attitude of Servanthood

Matt. 18:1-5; Luke 9:46-50

^{33a}Then He came to Capernaum. And when He was in the house He asked them, “What was it you ⁶disputed among yourselves on the road?” ³⁴But they kept silent, for on the road they had ^bdisputed

9:11, 12 This question is based on the words of Mal. 4:5, 6.

9:13 Jesus’ comment that **Elijah has also come** is a reference to John the Baptist. John was not a reincarnation of Elijah, but one who ministered “in the spirit and power of Elijah” (Luke 1:17) in preparing the way for Christ. **They did to him whatever they wished** refers to the ruthless way John the Baptist was imprisoned and murdered.

9:17–20 The boy had several problems. The **mute spirit** was a demon that kept the boy from speaking, but the demon also produced seizures. Verse 20 says **the spirit convulsed him**.

9:24 **I believe; help my unbelief** expresses the dilemma that even those who believe can be nagged by doubt and hopelessness. This man took the correct course by appealing to Jesus for help.

9:29 Jesus said that **prayer and fasting** were required to prevail in some difficult instances. Fasting may help focus one’s energies on the resources available in our great God.

9:31 For the second time (see 8:31), Jesus tells plainly of His coming death and resurrection.

9:34, 35 The disciples **kept silent**, refusing to tell Jesus about their discussion. But Jesus once again challenged their assumptions. He presented them with another paradox—that to be great in God’s kingdom, one must be a servant. The example was modeled by Christ Himself.

among themselves who *would be the* ^cgreatest. ³⁵ And He sat down, called the twelve, and said to them, ^d “If anyone desires to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all.” ³⁶ Then ^e He took a little child and set him in the midst of them. And when He had taken him in His arms, He said to them, ³⁷ “Whoever receives one of these little children in My name receives Me; and ^f whoever receives Me, receives not Me but Him who sent Me.”

^{38g} Now John answered Him, saying, “Teacher, we saw someone who does not follow us casting out demons in Your name, and we forbade him because he does not follow us.”

³⁹ But Jesus said, “Do not forbid him, ^h for no one who works a miracle in My name can soon afterward speak evil of Me. ⁴⁰ For ⁱ he who is not against ^j us is on ^k our side. ^{41j} For whoever gives you a cup of water to drink in My name, because you belong to Christ, assuredly, I say to you, he will by no means lose his reward.

Warning About Hell

Matt. 18:6-9

^{42k} “But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me ^l to stumble, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were thrown into the sea. ^{43l} If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life ^m maimed, rather than having two hands, to go to ⁿ hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched— ⁴⁴ⁿ where

*^m ‘Their worm does not die
And the fire is not quenched.’*

³⁴ ^c Matt. 18:4; [Mark 9:50]; 14:65; 15:15, 37; Luke 22:24; 23:46; 24:46
³⁵ ^d Matt. 20:26, 27; 23:11; Mark 10:43, 44; Luke 22:26, 27
³⁶ ^e Mark 10:13-16
³⁷ ^f Matt. 10:40; Luke 10:16; John 13:20
³⁸ ^g Num. 11:27-29; Luke 9:49
³⁹ ^h 1 Cor. 12:3
⁴⁰ ⁱ [Matt. 12:30]; Luke 11:23 ^j M. you
⁴¹ ^j M. your
⁴² ^k Matt. 10:42
⁴³ ^l Matt. 18:6; Luke 17:1, 2; [1 Cor. 8:12] ⁹ To fall into sin
⁴⁴ ^m [Deut. 13:6]; Matt. 5:29, 30; 18:8, 9 ¹ crippled ² Gr. Gehenna
⁴⁴ ⁿ Is. 66:24 ³ NU omits v. 44.
⁴⁵ ⁴ Gr. Gehenna ⁵ NU omits the rest of v. 45 and all of v. 46.
⁴⁶ ⁿ Is. 66:24
⁴⁷ ⁶ Gr. Gehenna
⁴⁸ ^o Is. 66:24 ^p Jer. 7:20; [Rev. 21:8]
⁴⁹ ^q [Matt. 3:11] ^r Lev. 2:13; Ezek. 43:24 ⁷ NU omits the rest of v. 49.
⁵⁰ ^s Matt. 5:13; Luke 14:34 ^t [Eph. 4:29]; Col. 4:6 ^u Rom. 12:18; 14:19; 2 Cor. 13:11; 1 Thess. 5:13; Heb. 12:14

CHAPTER 10

¹ ^a Matt. 19:1-9; John 10:40; 11:7
² ^b Matt. 19:3
⁴ ^c Deut. 24:1-4; Mark 5:31; 19:7

⁴⁵ And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life lame, rather than having two feet, to be cast into ⁴ hell, ⁵ into the fire that shall never be quenched— ⁴⁶ where

*ⁿ ‘Their worm does not die
And the fire is not quenched.’*

⁴⁷ And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into ⁶ hell fire— ⁴⁸ where

*^o ‘Their worm does not die
And the ^p fire is not quenched.’*

⁴⁹ “For everyone will be ^q seasoned with fire, ^r and ⁷ every sacrifice will be seasoned with salt. ^{50s} Salt is good, but if the salt loses its flavor, how will you season it? ^t Have salt in yourselves, and ^u have peace with one another.”

Marriage and Divorce

Matt. 19:1-9

10 Then ^a He arose from there and came to the region of Judea by the other side of the Jordan. And multitudes gathered to Him again, and as He was accustomed, He taught them again.

^{2b} The Pharisees came and asked Him, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce *his* wife?” testing Him.

³ And He answered and said to them, “What did Moses command you?”

⁴ They said, ^c “Moses permitted *a man* to write a certificate of divorce, and to dismiss *her*.”

9:40 Jesus is not endorsing all who claim to follow Him. Rather, this statement was meant to remind the disciples that God’s work was not necessarily restricted to their small group.

9:42 Jesus uses hyperbole, exaggeration for an effect, to state the seriousness of causing spiritual injury to others. A **millstone** is an extremely heavy circular stone, three to four feet across and about a foot thick, used to grind grain into meal.

9:43 **Cut it off** should be taken figuratively; it means to take whatever drastic action is necessary to avoid sin. The imagery of **hell** (frequently called *gehenna*) comes from a garbage dump outside the walls of Jerusalem. Jesus’ hearers were familiar with the smoldering fires that always burned there. Obedience and self-control (vv. 41, 47) are necessary to overcome sin. The longing of the disciples for greatness (vv. 33–37) needed to be reshaped according to God’s purposes.

9:49 The word **for** shows that Mark intended his readers to apply the preceding verses to their own lives. **Everyone will be seasoned with fire** may refer to the trials and judgments that all will face—believers with trials that purify faith, unbelievers with the eternal fire of God’s judgment.

10:1 Jesus, now on His final journey to Jerusalem, comes to Capernaum (9:33). His Galilean ministry will head south to Judea and even into Perea on the eastern side of the Jordan River.

10:2 The Pharisees’ question about divorce was a trap. Perhaps they

hoped He would contradict Moses (Deut. 24:1–4) or offend Herod Antipas as John the Baptist had (see 6:18). The only possibility for divorce under Jewish law was **for a man to divorce his wife**.

10:4 A **certificate of divorce** was a document signed before witnesses. Its intent was to limit frivolous divorces. In Jesus’ day, the

hell

(Gk. *gehenna*) (9:43, 45; Matt. 5:22, 29, 30; Luke 12:5; James 3:6) Strong’s #1067

The word *hell* in this passage translates the word *gehenna*, which is an allusion to the “Valley of the Son of Hinnom” (Josh. 18:16). In this valley, the Israelites had gone so far as to offer their children as burnt sacrifices to Molech. Josiah defiled this site in order to prevent the repetition of such abominations (see 2 Kin. 23:10), and then a fire was kept burning there to consume the carrion and refuse that were collected around Jerusalem. The final punishment of the wicked is described in the OT by allusions to this valley (Is. 66:24). By using the word *gehenna*, Jesus was recalling the same place and that kind of punishment for sin.

⁵ And Jesus answered and said to them, “Because of the hardness of your heart he wrote you this ¹ precept. ⁶ But from the beginning of the creation, God ^d *‘made them male and female.’* ^{7 e} *‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, ⁸ and the two shall become one flesh’*; so then they are no longer two, but one flesh. ⁹ Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate.”

¹⁰ In the house His disciples also asked Him again about the same *matter*. ¹¹ So He said to them, ^f “Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her. ¹² And if a woman divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery.”

Children and the Kingdom

Matt. 19:13-15; Luke 18:15-17

^{13 g} Then they brought little children to Him, that He might touch them; but the disciples rebuked those who brought them. ¹⁴ But when Jesus saw it, He was greatly displeased and said to them, “Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for ^h of such is the kingdom of God. ¹⁵ Assuredly, I say to you, ⁱ whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will ^j by no means enter it.” ¹⁶ And He took them up in His arms, laid His hands on them, and blessed them.

Rich Young Ruler

Matt. 19:16-22; Luke 18:18-23

^{17 k} Now as He was going out on the road, one came running, knelt before Him, and asked Him, “Good Teacher, what shall I ^l do that I may inherit eternal life?”

¹⁸ So Jesus said to him, “Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One,

⁵ ¹ command
⁶ ^d Gen. 1:27; 5:2
⁷ ^e Gen. 2:24; [1 Cor. 6:16]; Eph. 5:31
¹¹ ^f Ex. 20:14; [Matt. 5:32; 19:9]; Luke 16:18; [Rom. 7:3]; 1 Cor. 7:10, 11
¹³ ^g Matt. 19:13-15; Luke 18:15-17
¹⁴ ^h [1 Cor. 14:20; 1 Pet. 2:2]
¹⁵ ⁱ Matt. 18:3, 4; 19:14; Luke 18:17
^j Luke 13:28
¹⁷ ^k Matt. 19:16-30; Luke 18:18-30
¹⁸ John 6:28; Acts 2:37

that is, ^m God. ¹⁹ You know the commandments: ⁿ *‘Do not commit adultery,’ ‘Do not murder,’ ‘Do not steal,’ ‘Do not bear false witness,’ ‘Do not defraud,’ ‘Honor your father and your mother.’*”

²⁰ And he answered and said to Him, “Teacher, all these things I have ^o kept from my youth.”

²¹ Then Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, “One thing you lack: Go your way, ^p sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have ^q treasure in heaven; and come, ^r take up the cross, and follow Me.”

²² But he was sad at this word, and went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

Difficulty of Riches

Matt. 19:23-26; Luke 18:24-27

^{23 s} Then Jesus looked around and said to His disciples, “How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God!” ²⁴ And the disciples were astonished at His words. But Jesus answered again and said to them, “Children, how hard it is ² for those ^t who trust in riches to enter the kingdom of God! ²⁵ It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a ^u rich man to enter the kingdom of God.”

²⁶ And they were greatly astonished, saying among themselves, “Who then can be saved?”

²⁷ But Jesus looked at them and said, “With men *it is* impossible, but not ^v with God; for with God all things are possible.”

Eternal Reward

Matt. 19:27-30; Luke 18:28-30

^{28 w} Then Peter began to say to Him, “See, we have left all and followed You.”

interpretation of this custom varied widely. The disciples of Hillel allowed divorce for almost any reason, but the followers of Shammai permitted divorce only for sexual impurity.

10:5, 6 Jesus declares that divorce was a concession to the **hardness of your heart** and then turns the argument to God’s original intentions for marriage as seen in Gen. 2:21–25. God’s design of **male and female** shows that He held each to be equal in value and worth, but that they fulfilled a different function and role in His design.

10:7, 8 A man is to **leave** his parents, cleave to his wife, then weave a life of beauty with her. Jesus quotes almost verbatim from the text of Gen. 2:24. The two become **one flesh**, and this bond is comparable to that of a blood relationship.

10:9 Jesus indicated that God’s original purpose for marriage was that the union should not be broken.

10:11 **Whoever divorces his wife:** Mark includes no exception to Christ’s prohibition of divorce, nor is any exception listed in Luke 16:18; Rom. 7:1, 2; 1 Cor. 7:10, 11. Compare Matt. 5:32; 19:9, where an exception is made.

10:12 In Jewish society, it was not possible for a **woman** to divorce **her husband**, but Mark is presenting Jesus’ words in a way his Roman audience would understand.

10:15 Children exhibit sincerity, eagerness, a trusting attitude, and total dependence on their parents. Thus childlikeness is a fitting comparison for the qualities a disciple should have.

10:17 In addressing Jesus as **Good Teacher**, the rich young ruler (Matt. 19:22; Luke 18:18) meant no more than to issue a respectful formal greeting to a religious teacher.

10:18 The reply that **no one is good but One, that is, God** is Jesus’ claim to deity, which He asks the young ruler to recognize.

10:19 Jesus recounts the seventh, sixth, eighth, ninth, and fifth commandments with the phrase **do not defraud** inserted just before the fifth commandment. All of these commands concern the fair and ethical treatment of other people (Ex. 20:12–17).

10:23, 24 **Those who have riches** frequently also are **those who trust in riches**, a dangerous condition for one seeking spiritual life.

10:25–27 This comparison of a **camel** going through a **needle** is a literal one (Matt. 19:24). In human terms, it is not just difficult, but totally impossible, for a rich man to be saved. But it is also impossible for anyone at all to be saved apart from God’s grace and power. God provides the means of salvation, enlightens the sinner’s understanding, and regenerates the believing soul.

²⁹ So Jesus answered and said, “Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother ³ or wife or children or ⁴ lands, for My sake and the gospel’s, ³⁰ who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time—houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with ⁵ persecutions—and in the age to come, eternal life. ³¹ But many *who are* first will be last, and the last first.”

Coming Crucifixion

Matt. 20:17-19; Luke 18:31-34

³² Now they were on the road, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was going before them; and they were amazed. And as they followed they were afraid. ^b Then He took the twelve aside again and began to tell them the things that would happen to Him: ³³ “Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death and deliver Him to the Gentiles; ³⁴ and they will mock Him, and ⁵ scourge Him, and spit on Him, and kill Him. And the third day He will rise again.”

“Whoever Desires to Become Great”

Matt. 20:20-28

³⁵ Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to Him, saying, “Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask.”

³⁶ And He said to them, “What do you want Me to do for you?”

²⁹ ³ NU omits or wife ⁴ Lit. fields
³⁰ ^x 2 Chr. 25:9;
Luke 18:29, 30
^y 1 Thess. 3:3; 2 Tim. 3:12; [1 Pet. 4:12, 13]
³¹ ^z Matt. 19:30;
20:16; Luke 13:30
³² ^a Matt. 20:17-19; Luke 18:31-33
^b Mark 8:31; 9:31; Luke 9:22; 18:31
³⁴ ⁵ flog Him with a Roman scourge
³⁵ ^c [James 4:3]

³⁸ ^d Matt. 26:39, 42; Mark 14:36; Luke 22:42; John 18:11
^e Luke 12:50
³⁹ ^f Matt. 10:17, 18, 21, 22; 24:9; John 16:33; Acts 12:2; Rev. 1:9
⁴⁰ ^g [Matt. 25:34; John 17:2, 6, 24; Rom. 8:30; Heb. 11:16]
⁴¹ ^h Matt. 20:24
⁴² ⁱ Luke 22:25
⁴³ ^j Matt. 20:26, 28; Mark 9:35; Luke 9:48
⁴⁵ ^k Luke 22:27; John 13:14; [Phil. 2:7, 8] / Matt. 20:28; [2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Tim. 2:5, 6; Titus 2:14]
⁴⁶ ^m Matt. 20:29-34; Luke 18:35-43

³⁷ They said to Him, “Grant us that we may sit, one on Your right hand and the other on Your left, in Your glory.”

³⁸ But Jesus said to them, “You do not know what you ask. Are you able to drink the ^d cup that I drink, and be baptized with the ^e baptism that I am baptized with?”

³⁹ They said to Him, “We are able.”

So Jesus said to them, ^f “You will indeed drink the cup that I drink, and with the baptism I am baptized with you will be baptized; ⁴⁰ but to sit on My right hand and on My left is not Mine to give, but *it is for those* ^g for whom it is prepared.”

⁴¹ And when the ten heard *it*, they began to be greatly displeased with James and John. ⁴² But Jesus called them to *Himself* and said to them, ⁱ “You know that those who are considered rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. ⁴³ Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant. ⁴⁴ And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all. ⁴⁵ For even ^k the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and ^l to give His life a ransom for many.”

Blind Bartimaeus Is Healed

Matt. 20:29-34; Luke 18:35-43

⁴⁶ Now they came to Jericho. As He went out of Jericho with His disciples and a great multitude, blind Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, sat by the road begging. ⁴⁷ And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out

10:29 The **one who has left** all these things has not necessarily renounced them but has certainly reordered his priorities (see Matt. 19:29). Peter still had his wife some 25 years later, as did the other apostles and Jesus’ own brothers (1 Cor. 9:5). Many times, however, they made heavy sacrifices for the **sake of Christ and the gospel**.

10:30 Spiritual rewards await those who follow Christ **in this time**, meaning during this age between Christ’s first and second comings. Mark alone mentions that **persecutions** will follow as well—a point his Roman readers may have already known. After Christ’s return, **in the age to come**, the incomparable reward will be **eternal life** in God’s presence.

10:31 Worldly esteem, which is measured by wealth, social standing, nobility, birth, and personal achievement, will count for nothing in the world to come. Only humility and servanthood lead to greatness in God’s kingdom. Matthew follows this saying with an illustrative parable (see Matt. 20:1–16).

10:32–34 Jesus revealed for the third time His imminent death and resurrection as the disciples walked the road toward Jerusalem for Passover. See 8:31; 9:31 for His previous teaching on this subject.

10:35 According to Matt 20:20, it was the mother of **James and John** who sought Jesus, but it is likely that the sons themselves encouraged her to do it.

10:37 To be seated at a king’s **right hand** was to take the position of most prominence; the person seated at the **left hand** ranked just below that (Luke 22:24–30). Jesus had to remind the disciples again about the price of greatness in God’s kingdom. As they journeyed toward Jerusalem, “they thought the kingdom of God would appear

immediately” (Luke 19:11), so they may have wanted to secure their power and authority as soon as possible.

10:38 To **drink the cup** and **be baptized** are references to the suffering and death that awaited Jesus (14:36). Jesus wanted His disciples to understand the mocking, scourging, beating, and torture He would have to endure.

10:39 Jesus agreed with their response, though they had not yet understood the cost of their commitment. Although not suffering the same level of spiritual agony that Jesus did, James would soon be executed by Herod Agrippa I in A.D. 44 (see Acts 12:1, 2). John was the last apostle to die, being exiled for a while on the island of Patmos (Rev. 1:9). He was persecuted greatly and had to witness the deaths of more Christians than probably any of the other apostles.

10:42–44 The point here is not the fact that Gentile rulers **lord it over them**, but the very idea that they seek to **exercise authority**. Jesus wants each of His followers to be a **servant**—one who as an attendant waits on others. The word **slave** signifies subjection, but not necessarily bondage.

10:45 This verse is the dividing point of the Book of Mark. The first section of the book has emphasized Jesus’ servanthood, whereas the second section recounts the details of His death and resurrection. Having three times predicted His coming death, Jesus now explains its purpose. A **ransom** is the price paid to free slaves or hostages. The word is found only here and in Matt. 20:28, although it appears frequently in other documents of that time. Christ’s life is given **for** others, in place of their lives. The word **many** is used for contrast, see 2 Cor. 5:14; 1 Tim. 2:6; 1 John 2:2.

10:47 **Son of David** is a messianic title. Mark shows us the irony

and say, “Jesus, ⁿSon of David, ^ohave mercy on me!”

⁴⁸Then many warned him to be quiet; but he cried out all the more, “Son of David, have mercy on me!”

⁴⁹So Jesus stood still and commanded him to be called.

Then they called the blind man, saying to him, “Be of good cheer. Rise, He is calling you.”

⁵⁰And throwing aside his garment, he rose and came to Jesus.

⁵¹So Jesus answered and said to him, “What do you want Me to do for you?”

The blind man said to Him, ⁶“Rabboni, that I may receive my sight.”

⁵²Then Jesus said to him, “Go your way; ^pyour faith has ⁷made you well.” And immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus on the road.

The Triumphal Entry

Matt. 21:1-11; Luke 19:29-40

11 Now ^awhen they drew near Jerusalem, to ¹Bethphage and Bethany, at the Mount of Olives, He sent two of His disciples; ²and He said to them, “Go into the village opposite you; and as soon as you have entered it you will find a colt tied, on which no one has sat. Loose it and bring it. ³And if anyone says to you, ‘Why are you doing this?’ say, ‘The Lord has need of it,’ and immediately he will send it here.”

⁴So they went their way, and found ²the colt tied by the door outside on the street, and they loosed it. ⁵But some of those who stood there said to them, “What are you doing, loosing the colt?”

⁶And they spoke to them just as Jesus had commanded. So they let them go.

⁷Then they brought the colt to Jesus and

47 ⁿ Jer. 23:5; Matt. 22:42; Rom. 1:3, 4; Rev. 22:16 ^o Matt. 15:22; Luke 17:13
51 ⁶ Lit. My Great One
52 ^p Matt. 9:22; Mark 5:34 ⁷ Lit. saved you

CHAPTER 11

1 ^a Matt. 21:1-9; Luke 19:29; John 2:13 ¹ M Bethphage
4 ² NU, M a

threw their clothes on it, and He sat on it. ^{8b}And many spread their clothes on the road, and others cut down leafy branches from the trees and spread *them* on the road. ⁹Then those who went before and those who followed cried out, saying:

“Hosanna!

^c*Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!*”

¹⁰ Blessed is the kingdom of our father David

That comes ³in the name of the Lord!

^dHosanna in the highest!”

^{11e}And Jesus went into Jerusalem and into the temple. So when He had looked around at all things, as the hour was already late, He went out to Bethany with the twelve.

A Fig Tree Is Cursed

Matt. 21:18, 19

¹²Now the next day, when they had come out from Bethany, He was hungry. ^{13g}And seeing from afar a fig tree having leaves, He went to see if perhaps He would find something on it. When He came to it, He found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs. ¹⁴In response Jesus said to it, “Let no one eat fruit from you ever again.”

And His disciples heard *it*.

The Temple Is Cleansed

Matt. 21:12, 13; Luke 19:45, 46

^{15h}So they came to Jerusalem. Then Jesus went into the temple and began to drive out those who bought and sold in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of

8 ^b Matt. 21:8
9 ^c Ps. 118:25, 26 ^g;
Matt. 21:9
10 ^d Ps. 148:1 ³ NU
omits in the name
of the Lord
11 ^e Matt. 21:12
12 ^f Matt. 21:18-22
13 ^g Matt. 21:19
15 ^h Mal. 3:1; Matt.
21:12-16; Luke
19:45-47; John
2:13-16

of a blind man who had spiritual insight, while many who could see—including the religious leaders—were spiritually blind.

10:49, 50 Mark’s account has all the graphic details of an eyewitness account—Jesus **stood still**; then Bartimaeus was suddenly **throwing aside his garment** to rise and meet Jesus. Mark also notes the changed attitude of the crowd—they began by deriding Bartimaeus but later encouraged him.

10:51 **Rabboni** is a very tender Aramaic form of address meaning “master” or “teacher” (see John 20:16).

10:52 We know that Bartimaeus **followed Jesus** for at least a short time **on the road**. He went along with the surging crowd at Jericho. Did he, however, become a disciple of note? Mark’s mention of his name may indicate that he was known in the early church.

11:1–15:47 More than one-third of Mark’s narrative takes place during a seven-day period—the Passover week when Jesus is finally put to death. Mark’s Gospel has been called a Passion story with a long introduction. His emphasis on the Passion Week is appropriate. Without this week, Jesus would not have fulfilled his purpose for coming to the earth.

11:1 **Bethphage and Bethany** are just east of the Mount of Olives, about two miles from the gates of Jerusalem. Lazarus was raised to life at Bethany (John 12:1).

11:2–7 Christ’s deity is evident in this passage. **You will find** demonstrates His omniscience. It is possible for a donkey **on which no one has sat** to be very calm and accommodating, but Jesus is also master of all nature and all creatures.

11:8–11 This was the triumphal entry on Palm Sunday. The crowd recognized Jesus’ lordship by repeating a messianic psalm (Ps. 118:25, 26). Jesus retired **to Bethany** each night, perhaps staying in a friend’s home (maybe Lazarus’s or Simon’s, see 14:3). But in view of the fact that Jesus appears to have had no breakfast the next day (see v. 12), He and the Twelve may have camped outside this night.

11:12 **The next day** would be Monday, and Mark devotes only eight verses to this day. Tuesday begins with v. 20, but the events of Tuesday and Wednesday are combined into one long section that ends at 13:37. A new chronological reference begins with 14:1, “after two days.”

11:13 Mark informs his readers that **it was not the season for figs**. Passover always comes in March or April, and fig season is not until May or June. However, fig trees generally produce a number of buds in March, leaves in April, and ripe fruit later on. Jesus was looking for the edible buds, the lack of which indicated that the tree would be fruitless that year.

those who sold ⁱdoves. ¹⁶And He would not allow anyone to carry wares through the temple. ¹⁷Then He taught, saying to them, “Is it not written, ^j‘My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations’? But you have made it a ^k‘den of thieves.’”

¹⁸And ^lthe scribes and chief priests heard it and sought how they might destroy Him; for they feared Him, because ^mall the people were astonished at His teaching. ¹⁹When evening had come, He went out of the city.

Power of Faith

Matt. 21:20-22

²⁰ⁿ Now in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots. ²¹And Peter, remembering, said to Him, “Rabbi, look! The fig tree which You cursed has withered away.”

²²So Jesus answered and said to them, “Have faith in God. ²³For ^oassuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, ‘Be removed and be cast into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says. ²⁴Therefore I say to you, ^pwhatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them.

Necessity of Forgiveness

²⁵“And whenever you stand praying, ^qif you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses.

¹⁵ ⁱ Lev. 14:22
¹⁷ ^j Is. 56:7 ^k Jer. 7:11
¹⁸ ^l Ps. 2:2; Matt. 21:45, 46; Luke 19:47 ^m Matt. 7:28; Mark 1:22; 6:2; Luke 4:32
²⁰ ⁿ Matt. 21:19-22
²³ ^o Matt. 17:20; 21:21; Luke 17:6
²⁴ ^p Matt. 7:7; Luke 11:9; [John 14:13; 15:7; 16:24; James 1:5, 6]
²⁵ ^q Matt. 6:14; 18:23-35; Eph. 4:32; [Col. 3:13]

²⁶ ^r Matt. 6:15; 18:35 ^s NU omits v. 26.
²⁷ ^s Matt. 21:23-27; Luke 20:1-8
²⁸ ^t John 5:27
³⁰ ^u [Mark 1:4, 5, 8]; Luke 7:29, 30
³² ^v Matt. 3:5; 14:5; Mark 6:20

CHAPTER 12

¹ ^o Matt. 21:33-46; Luke 20:9-19

^{26,4} But ^rif you do not forgive, neither will your Father in heaven forgive your trespasses.”

Question of Authority

Matt. 21:23-27; Luke 20:1-8

²⁷ Then they came again to Jerusalem. ^s And as He was walking in the temple, the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders came to Him. ²⁸ And they said to Him, “By what ^tauthority are You doing these things? And who gave You this authority to do these things?”

²⁹ But Jesus answered and said to them, “I also will ask you one question; then answer Me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things: ³⁰ The “baptism of John—was it from heaven or from men? Answer Me.”

³¹ And they reasoned among themselves, saying, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ He will say, ‘Why then did you not believe him?’” ³² But if we say, ‘From men’”—they feared the people, for ^vall counted John to have been a prophet indeed. ³³ So they answered and said to Jesus, “We do not know.”

And Jesus answered and said to them, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things.”

Parable of the Vineyard Owner

Matt. 21:33-46; Luke 20:9-19

12 Then ^aHe began to speak to them in parables: “A man planted a vineyard and set a hedge around it, dug a place for the wine vat and built a tower.

11:17 Jesus quoted from the prophets Isaiah and Jeremiah (Is. 56:7; Jer. 7:11) to make His point about the despicable conduct of those who bought and sold in the temple. **Den of thieves** refers to the practice of cheating people, both Israelites and those of other nations, either through a crooked exchange of money or by selling inferior products.

11:18 The suspense of Mark’s drama increases with the contrasting reactions to Christ. The religious leaders **sought to destroy Him** by plotting His death, while **the people** had just welcomed Him with a triumphal procession and **were astonished at His teaching**.

11:19, 20 Mark clearly indicates the transition from **evening** (Monday) to the **morning** (Tuesday).

11:21 Why was the **fig tree** both **cursed** and **withered**? The passage emphasizes the power of true faith. Some have suggested that the fig tree represented Israel, which bore no fruit and would soon face the judgment of God.

11:22, 23 The illustration of casting an enormous mountain into the sea is an extreme example of the absolutely impossible. That is the point. Having **faith in God** can accomplish the impossible. Mark had previously emphasized Jesus’ insistence on simply believing (see 9:23, 24).

11:25, 26 It is doubtful that a person who cannot forgive another has ever experienced the forgiveness of his own sins by God.

11:28 The religious leaders (v. 27), who were now plotting Jesus’ death (v. 18), asked Jesus about the (1) nature and (2) source of His authority, perhaps because He had not openly declared that He was the Messiah. **These things** refer to the authority Jesus used in cleaning out the temple (see vv. 15–17).

11:29, 30 The intent of Jesus’ question was to expose once again the insincerity of His detractors. The **baptism of John** refers to the authority of John’s baptism. Was it **from heaven**—that is, ordained by God and worthy of obedience? Or was it merely **from men**—that is, of human contrivance and void of any spiritual authority and reality?

11:33 **We do not know** was a dishonest reply, but perhaps the only one possible for men who wished only to save their reputation.

12:1 **He began to speak to them in parables**. Mark records only one parable here, but Matthew presents an additional one (Matt. 22:1–14). This parable represents God as carefully preparing the nation of Israel (**a vineyard**) and leaving it in the care of others (the **vinedressers**; Is. 5:1–7). Great care was taken to fence the vineyard,

rabbi

(Gk. *rabbi*) (9:5; 10:51; 11:21; 14:45) Strong’s #4461

In NT times, *rabbi* was a respectful title for a teacher well versed in the Mosaic Law. The title, which derives from a Hebrew word meaning “great,” is often translated “master.” *Rabboni*, an Aramaic form of this word, expresses affectionate respect for a teacher (John 20:16). Both the disciples and the teachers of the law honored Jesus with this title. But Jesus warned His disciples not to covet such a title for themselves, for there is only one true teacher, Christ Himself (see Matt. 23:6–10).



Property Protection

Israelite farmers enclosed their gardens and vineyards with hedges or walls (Is. 5:5), but it was not possible to build walls around large fields. To prevent border disputes in the fields, the Law placed severe punishment upon anyone who removed the boundary stones used as landmarks (Deut. 27:17). The Hebrew landowner seldom visited his fields during the growing season. Instead he hired watchmen to stay in crude lodgings (also called “towers”—Mark 12:1), where they protected the crop from beasts, birds, and marauders.



An agricultural watchtower in Samaria
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And he leased it to ¹ vinedressers and went into a far country. ² Now at vintage-time he sent a servant to the vinedressers, that he might receive some of the fruit of the vineyard from the vinedressers. ³ And they took *him* and beat him and sent *him* away empty-handed. ⁴ Again

¹ ¹ tenant farmers
⁴ ² NU omits and at him they threw stones
⁵ ^b 2 Chr. 36:16
⁷ ³ tenant farmers
⁸ ^c [Acts 2:23]

he sent them another servant, ² and at him they threw stones, wounded *him* in the head, and sent *him* away shamefully treated. ⁵ And again he sent another, and him they killed; and many others, ^b beating some and killing some. ⁶ Therefore still having one son, his beloved, he also sent him to them last, saying, ‘They will respect my son.’ ⁷ But those ³ vinedressers said among themselves, ‘This is the heir. Come, let us kill him, and the inheritance will be ours.’ ⁸ So they took him and ^c killed *him* and cast *him* out of the vineyard.

⁹ “Therefore what will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy the vinedressers, and give the vineyard to others. ¹⁰ Have you not even read this Scripture:

^d ‘The stone which the builders rejected
Has become the chief cornerstone.
¹¹ This was the LORD’s doing,
And it is marvelous in our eyes’?”

^{12e} And they sought to lay hands on Him, but feared the multitude, for they knew He had spoken the parable against them. So they left Him and went away.

Question of Taxes

Matt. 22:15-22; Luke 20:20-26

¹³ Then they sent to Him some of the Pharisees and the Herodians, to catch Him in *His* words. ¹⁴ When they had

¹⁰ ^d Ps. 118:22, 23 ★ ¹² ^e Matt. 21:45, 46; Mark 11:18; John 7:25, 30, 44 ¹³ ^f Matt. 22:15-22; Luke 20:20-26

to prepare a **wine vat** for crushing the grapes, and to build a **tower** in order to keep watch and protect the property from thieves. **12:2–5** The **servants**, including the **many others** that were sent, represent the prophets who had gone before Jesus, perhaps cul-

minating with John the Baptist, whose baptism Jesus had just mentioned (11:30).

12:6 Parables usually get across a significant truth, but the details are not meant to correspond exactly with particular spiritual realities. In this parable, the owner of the vineyard represents God, but God Himself was never so mistaken as to assume they would respect His Son. God is omniscient, whereas the vineyard owner in the parable is not. This story illustrates the immense patience God had with Israel.

12:9 Jesus answered His own rhetorical question. The destruction of **the vinedressers**, the Israelites who rejected the Son of God, took place in A.D. 70 when the Romans smashed a revolt in Jerusalem and destroyed the temple. Giving **the vineyard to others** refers to the importance the Gentiles would assume in the growth of Christianity.

12:12 The chief priests, scribes, and elders **sought to lay hands on Him**, to arrest Jesus, and to carry out their plot to destroy Him (see 11:18). Only as the final points of the parable were made did these evil men realize that Jesus **had spoken the parable against them**.

12:13 The **Herodians** are mentioned in the NT three times, all in conjunction with the Pharisees. The Herodians wanted to kill Jesus because He threatened their authority (3:16; Matt. 22:16). Their attempt to **catch Him in His words** was their hope that Jesus would say something that could be grounds for His arrest.

12:14 **You . . . care about no one** was intended as a compliment.

cornerstone

(Gk. *gōnia*, *akrogōniaios*) (12:10; Matt. 21:42; Acts 4:11; Eph. 2:20; 1 Pet. 2:6, 7) *Strong’s* #1137; 204

In biblical times, buildings were often made of cut, squared stone. By uniting two intersecting walls, a cornerstone helped align the whole building and tie it together. In his address before the Jewish Sanhedrin, the apostle Peter quoted Ps. 118:22 and boldly proclaimed that “Jesus Christ of Nazareth,” crucified and raised from the dead, was the stone rejected by the builders “which has become the chief cornerstone” (Acts 4:10, 11; Eph. 2:20). This chief cornerstone, Jesus Christ, is the foundation of the church, because “there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12). In Him “the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord” (Eph. 2:21).

come, they said to Him, “Teacher, we know that You are true, and ⁴care about no one; for You do not ⁵regard the person of men, but teach the ⁶way of God in truth. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not? ¹⁵Shall we pay, or shall we not pay?”

But He, knowing their ^hhypocrisy, said to them, “Why do you test Me? Bring Me a denarius that I may see *it*.” ¹⁶So they brought *it*.

And He said to them, “Whose image and inscription *is this*?” They said to Him, “Caesar’s.”

¹⁷And Jesus answered and said to them, ⁶“Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to ⁱGod the things that are God’s.”

And they marveled at Him.

Question of the Resurrection

Matt. 22:23-33; Luke 20:27-40

^{18j}Then *some* Sadducees, ^kwho say there is no resurrection, came to Him; and they asked Him, saying: ¹⁹“Teacher, ^lMoses wrote to us that if a man’s brother dies, and leaves *his* wife behind, and leaves no children, his brother should take his wife and raise up offspring for his brother. ²⁰Now there were seven brothers. The first took a wife; and dying, he left no offspring. ²¹And the second took her, and he died; nor did he leave any offspring. And the third likewise. ²²So the seven had her and left no offspring. Last of all the woman died also. ²³Therefore, in the resurrection, when they rise, whose wife will she be? For all seven had her as wife.”

²⁴Jesus answered and said to them, “Are you not therefore ⁷mistaken, because you do not know the Scriptures nor the power of God? ²⁵For when they rise from the dead, they neither marry

¹⁴ ^gActs 18:26
⁴ Court no man’s favor ⁵ Lit. *look at the face of men*
¹⁵ ^h Matt. 23:28;
Luke 12:1
¹⁷ ⁱ [Eccl. 5:4, 5]
⁶ Pay
¹⁸ / Matt. 22:23-33; Luke 20:27-38
^k Acts 23:8
¹⁹ / Deut. 25:5
²⁴ ⁷ Or *deceived*

²⁵ ^m [1 Cor. 15:42, 49, 52]
²⁶ ⁿ [John 5:25, 28, 29]; Acts 26:8; Rom. 4:17; [Rev. 20:12, 13]
^o Ex. 3:6, 15
²⁷ ⁸ Or *deceived*
²⁸ ^p Matt. 22:34-40; Luke 10:25-28; 20:39 ⁹ NU *seeing*
¹ *foremost*
²⁹ ^q Deut. 6:4, 5; Is. 44:8; 45:22; 46:9; 1 Cor. 8:6
² *foremost*
³⁰ ^r [Deut. 10:12; 30:6]; Luke 10:27
³¹ ^u NU omits the rest of v. 30.
³¹ ^s Lev. 19:18; Matt. 22:39; Gal. 5:14; James 2:8
^t [Rom. 13:9]
³² ^u Deut. 4:39; Is. 45:6, 14; 46:9; [John 1:14, 17; 14:6]
³³ ^v [1 Sam. 15:22; Hos. 6:6; Mic. 6:6-8; Matt. 9:13; 12:7]
⁴ NU omits *with all the soul*
³⁴ ^w Matt. 22:46

nor are given in marriage, but ^mare like angels in heaven. ²⁶But concerning the dead, that they ⁿrise, have you not read in the book of Moses, in the *burning bush passage*, how God spoke to him, saying, ^o*‘I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob’*? ²⁷He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living. You are therefore greatly ⁸mistaken.”

Question of the Greatest Commandment

Matt. 22:34-40

^{28p}Then one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, ⁹perceiving that He had answered them well, asked Him, “Which is the ¹first commandment of all?”

²⁹Jesus answered him, “The ²first of all the commandments *is*: ^q*‘Hear, O Israel, the LORD our God, the LORD is one. And you shall ^rlove the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.’* ³This is the first commandment. ³¹And the second, like *it*, is this: ^s*‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’* There is no other commandment greater than ^tthese.”

³²So the scribe said to Him, “Well *said*, Teacher. You have spoken the truth, for there is one God, ^uand there is no other but He. ³³And to love Him with all the heart, with all the understanding, ⁴with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love one’s neighbor as oneself, ^vis more than all the whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.”

³⁴Now when Jesus saw that he answered wisely, He said to him, “You are not far from the kingdom of God.”

^wBut after that no one dared question Him.

The teachers recognized that Jesus was partial to no one. The question, however, was a lose-lose proposition: a *yes* answer would alienate Jews who opposed Rome, while a *no* answer could be taken as treason against the state. The ruling emperor from A.D. 14 to 37 was Caesar Tiberius (Luke 3:1), the adopted son of Caesar Augustus (Luke 2:1). Here Mark uses a Latin word for **taxes** in order to communicate clearly to his Roman readers.

12:15 A **denarius** was worth an entire day’s wages.

12:16 The **image and inscription** on the coin was **Caesar’s**. His head faces to the right with the words **T(IBERIUS) CAESAR DIVI** on the right and the words **AUG(USTI) AUGUSTUS** continuing on the left side. These words mean “Tiberius Caesar, Son of the Divine Augustus.” On the reverse side appear the words **PONTIFEX MAXIMUS**, meaning “High Priest.”

12:18 The **Sadducees** were an elite group of religious leaders who denied the existence of angels, the immortality of the soul, and the resurrection. They rejected the oral traditions and accepted only the validity of the Pentateuch, the first five books of the OT.

12:19-22 The custom of marrying the widow of one’s brother was supported by Deut. 25:5, 6, but it was not absolutely binding (Deut. 25:7-10).

12:23 The purpose of this story was to discredit the doctrine of resurrection.

12:24 Two categories support the resurrection—the **Scriptures** and God’s **power**. The Sadducees undoubtedly did know the Scriptures, but lacked spiritual insight to understand God’s purposes.

12:25 **Angels** neither marry nor procreate. Luke 20:36 applies these restrictions to all angels without distinction.

12:26, 27 Jesus quotes from the Law—the Book of Exodus—to make His point. God said **I am** the God of the three patriarchs mentioned, not “I was their God, but now they are dead.” He still is their God because they are still alive. Their souls not only live after death, but their bodies will be raised anew as well.

12:29 The **Hear, O Israel** verse of Deut. 6:4 is commonly called the Shema (from a Hebrew word meaning “to hear”) and is repeated by Jews the world over as expressing the essence of their faith in God.

12:30, 31 The **first commandment** summarizes the first four of the Ten Commandments. The **second** is the essence of commandments five through ten, which relate to the treatment of other people.



Silver Coins

In NT times, the silver coin of Tyre and Sidon was called the “temple coin.” It was widely known for its pure metal. But the Roman *denarius* quickly superseded all silver coins of the same value. A *denarius* was a soldier’s daily wage and worth about 44 cents today. The Greek word for *silver* was frequently used for money. Jesus told His disciples to take no “money” (silver) with them when He sent them out two by two (Luke 9:3) and Judas was paid 30 “pieces of silver” to betray Jesus (Matt. 26:15). One of the most famous givers in the NT was the poor widow (Mark 12:41–44). She gave two *lepta*, which equaled the value of a *kodrantēs*, to the temple treasury. The *kodrantēs* was worth less than a penny. Yet the widow’s gift prompted Jesus’ highest praise.



Tyrian shekel coin, the “temple coin”

Kim Walton, courtesy of the British Museum

³⁷Therefore David himself calls Him ‘Lord’; how is He *then* his “Son?”

And the common people heard Him gladly.

Jesus Condemns the Leaders

Matt. 23:1-14; Luke 20:45-21:4

³⁸Then ^bHe said to them in His teaching, ^c“Beware of the scribes, who desire to go around in long robes, ^d*love* greetings in the marketplaces, ³⁹the ^ebest seats in the synagogues, and the best places at feasts, ⁴⁰*f*who devour widows’ houses, and ⁵for a pretense make long prayers. These will receive greater condemnation.”

⁴¹^gNow Jesus sat opposite the treasury and saw how the people put money ^hinto the treasury. And many *who were* rich put in much. ⁴²Then one poor widow came and threw in two ⁶mites, which make a ⁷quadrans. ⁴³So He called His disciples to *Himself* and said to them, “Assuredly, I say to you that ⁱthis poor widow has put in more than all those who have given to the treasury; ⁴⁴for they all put in out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all that she had, ^jher whole livelihood.”

Jesus Questions the Leaders

Matt. 22:41-45; Luke 20:41-44

³⁵^xThen Jesus answered and said, while He taught in the temple, “How *is it* that the scribes say that the Christ is the Son of David? ³⁶For David himself said ^yby the Holy Spirit:

^z“The LORD said to my Lord,
“Sit at My right hand,
Till I make Your enemies Your
footstool.””

35 ^x Matt. 22:41-46;

Luke 20:41-44

36 ^y 2 Sam. 23:2

^z Ps. 110:1

37 ^a [Acts 2:29-31]

38 ^b Mark 4:2

^c Matt. 23:1-7; Luke

20:45-47 ^d Matt.

23:7; Luke 11:43

39 ^e Luke 14:7

40 ^f Matt. 23:14

⁵ for appearance’

sake

41 ^g Luke 21:1-4

^h 2 Kin. 12:9

Questions from the Disciples

Matt. 24:1-3; Luke 21:5-7

13 Then ^aas He went out of the temple, one of His disciples said to Him, “Teacher, see what manner of stones and what buildings *are here!*”

²And Jesus answered and said to him,

42 ⁶ Gr. *lepta*, very small copper coins ⁷ A Roman coin

43 ¹ [2 Cor. 8:12] 44 ¹ Deut. 24:6; [1 John 3:17]

CHAPTER 13 1 ^a Matt. 24:1; Luke 21:5-36

12:35 In the temple does not refer to the sanctuary itself, where only the priests were allowed to minister. The temple environs included a number of porticos and courts. One was designated especially for women (and included the treasury, 12:41), another for men. Gentiles could view the temple from an outer area. Actually, even Jesus could not enter the sanctuary because He was not an Aaronic priest.

12:36, 37 David himself said by the Holy Spirit is Jesus’ clear affirmation of the doctrine of inspiration (see 2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:21). Jesus’ argument about the Messiah being Lord as well as Son showed that the Messiah, even though a descendant of David, would be superior to him. In fact, He would be his Lord. He was both man and God at the same time.

12:38-40 The **scribes** of Jesus’ day were teachers of the law, often dependent on people’s gifts for their support. Some, however, overstepped the bounds of humility, piety, and dignity by flaunting their position of respect and trust. They sought the glory that belonged to God and even took advantage of widows who helped feed and support them.

12:42 By contrast, the widow worshiped God out of deep humility and genuine devotion. Mark notes for his Roman readers that her **two mites** make a **quadrans**, a Roman monetary unit mentioned by Mark and Matthew (Matt. 5:26) only once. It was worth just a few cents.

12:43, 44 Jesus’ comparison of the percentages contributed by the rich and the poor reminds us that God measures not how much we give, but how much we retain. Those with greater income have an obligation to return a larger percentage of it to God’s work.

13:1-37 Jesus continued His last week of ministry in Jerusalem by teaching His apostles about future events. This speech is known as the Olivet Discourse, so named because Jesus sat on the Mount of Olives while speaking (v. 3).

13:1, 2 The disciples’ excitement over the temple’s tremendous **manner of stones** was a natural reaction to splendid and majestic architecture; each stone weighed several tons. Josephus (*Antiq.* 15.11.3-7) described its magnificence. There was nothing like it in all the world. Begun by Herod the Great in 20 B.C., the temple was later completed by Herod’s descendants some time before A.D. 66. Its beautiful white marble stones with gold ornamentation reached one hundred feet high. Surrounding it were colonnaded walkways, courtyards, and stairways that filled 20 acres of the most prominent landscape in all Jerusalem. Thus Jesus’ remark that **not one stone shall be left upon another** unquestionably stunned His listeners. This prophecy was fulfilled in A.D. 70 when the Roman General Titus destroyed much of Jerusalem, including the temple.

“Do you see these great buildings? ^bNot one stone shall be left upon another, that shall not be thrown down.”

³ Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, ^cPeter, ^dJames, ^eJohn, and ^fAndrew asked Him privately, ^{4g} “Tell us, when will these things be? And what *will be* the sign when all these things will be fulfilled?”

The Tribulation

Matt. 24:4-26; Luke 21:8-24

⁵ And Jesus, answering them, began to say: ^h “Take heed that no one deceives you. ⁶ For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am *He*,’ and will deceive many. ⁷ But when you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be troubled; for *such things* must happen, but the end *is* not yet. ⁸ For nation will rise against nation, and ⁱ kingdom against kingdom. And there will be earthquakes in various places, and there will be famines ^j and troubles. ^j These *are* the beginnings of ² sorrows.

⁹ “But ^k watch out for yourselves, for they will deliver you up to councils, and you will be beaten in the synagogues. You will ³ be brought before rulers and kings for My sake, for a testimony to them. ¹⁰ And ^l the gospel must first be preached to all the nations. ^{11m} But when they arrest you and deliver you up, do not worry beforehand, ⁴ or premeditate what you will speak. But whatever is given you in that hour, speak that; for it is not you who speak, ⁿ but the Holy Spirit. ¹² Now ^o brother will betray brother to death, and a father *his* child; and children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death. ^{13p} And you will be hated by

² ^b Luke 19:44
³ ^c Matt. 16:18;
 Mark 1:16 ^d Mark 1:19 ^e Mark 1:19
^f John 1:40
⁴ ^g Matt. 24:3; Luke 21:7
⁵ ^h Jer. 29:8; Eph. 5:6; [Col. 2:8]; 1 Thess. 2:3; 2 Thess. 2:3
⁸ ⁱ Hag. 2:22 / Matt. 24:8 ^j NU omits and troubles ² Lit. birth pangs
⁹ ^k Matt. 10:17, 18; 24:9; Acts 12:4; [Rev. 2:10] ³ NU, M stand
¹⁰ ^l Matt. 24:14
¹¹ ^m Matt. 10:19-22; Luke 12:11; 21:12-17 ⁿ Acts 2:4; 4:8, 31 ⁴ NU omits or premeditate
¹² ^o Mic. 7:6; Matt. 10:21; 24:10; Luke 21:16
¹³ ^p Matt. 24:9; Luke 21:17; John 15:21 ^q Dan. 12:12; Matt. 10:22; 24:13; [Rev. 2:10] ⁵ bears patiently
¹⁴ ^r Matt. 24:15
¹⁵ ^s Dan. 9:27; 11:31; 12:11 ^t Luke 21:21
⁶ NU omits spoken of by Daniel the prophet
¹⁷ ^u Luke 21:23
¹⁹ ^v Dan. 9:26; 12:1; Joel 2:2; Matt. 24:21; Mark 10:6
²¹ ^w Matt. 24:23; Luke 17:23; 21:8
²² ^x Deut. 13:1-3; Rev. 13:13, 14
⁷ chosen ones
²³ ^y John 16:1-4; [2 Pet. 3:17]
²⁴ ^z Zeph. 1:15; Matt. 24:29
²⁵ ^a Is. 13:10; 34:4; Heb. 12:26;
 Rev. 6:13 ²⁶ ^b [Dan. 7:13, 14; Matt. 16:27 ☆; 24:30]; Mark 14:62; Acts 1:11; [1 Thess. 4:16; 2 Thess. 1:7, 10]; Rev. 1:7

all for My name’s sake. But ^q he who ⁵ endures to the end shall be saved.

^{14r} “So when you see the ^s *‘abomination of desolation,’* ⁶ spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not” (let the reader understand), “then ¹ let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. ¹⁵ Let him who is on the housetop not go down into the house, nor enter to take anything out of his house. ¹⁶ And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes. ^{17u} But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! ¹⁸ And pray that your flight may not be in winter. ^{19v} For *in* those days there will be tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the creation which God created until this time, nor ever shall be. ²⁰ And unless the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect’s sake, whom He chose, He shortened the days.

^{21w} “Then if anyone says to you, ‘Look, here is the Christ!’ or, ‘Look, *He is* there!’ do not believe it. ²² For false christs and false prophets will rise and show signs and ^x wonders to deceive, if possible, even the ⁷ elect. ²³ But ^y take heed; see, I have told you all things beforehand.

The Second Coming

Matt. 24:29-31; Luke 21:25-28

^{24z} “But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; ²⁵ the stars of heaven will fall, and the powers in the heavens will be ^a shaken. ^{26b} Then they

13:3, 4 Only Mark, given to detail, mentions the names of the four disciples who questioned Jesus. They wanted to know about (1) chronology—the time of the prophecy’s fulfillment, and (2) circumstances—the sign of its fulfillment. Their questions assumed that the temple’s destruction would signal the end of the present age and the inauguration of the Messiah’s reign. They wondered how near that event was.

13:5-12 The last days will include religious deception, conflict between nations, earthquakes and famines, and persecution of Christians. In the midst of this chaos, the gospel will spread over the entire world.

13:7 The end is the end of the age (see Matt. 24:3, 6, 13, 14).

13:8 The beginnings of sorrows calls forth the imagery of birth pangs. Like labor contractions, these events, filled with great pain, will hasten the joyous birth of the Messiah’s kingdom.

13:11, 12 The promise that the Holy Spirit will guide one’s speech in the hour of trial applies first to the Twelve and only secondarily to others who will experience persecution. But this promise does not assure escape from persecution or even freedom from being put to death.

13:13 He who endures to the end shall be saved is not referring to regeneration or justification but to physical deliverance from tribulation (vv. 19, 20). The ones who physically endure will be delivered into Christ’s messianic kingdom.

13:14-23 These verses answer the disciples’ second question: “What will be the sign when all these things will be fulfilled?” (v. 4).

13:14 The appearance of the **abomination of desolation**, first described by Daniel (Dan. 9:27; 11:31; 12:11), signals the onslaught of persecution. **Standing where it ought not** refers to the presence of an idol standing in the temple. Daniel’s prediction primarily referred to Antiochus Epiphanes’ placement of sacrifices to Zeus on the temple’s altar. Some believe that the destruction of the Herodian temple in A.D. 70 fulfilled Jesus’ prediction. Others still await its fulfillment in the blasphemous actions of the Antichrist in the last days (see 2 Thess. 2:3, 4). **Let the reader understand** points Mark’s audience back to the Hebrew Scriptures, namely the Book of Daniel.

13:19 In those days there will be tribulation. The events of v. 14 signal an unparalleled time of suffering. Matt. 24:31 calls it a great tribulation, and Jer. 30:7 refers to it as “the time of Jacob’s trouble.” **13:22** To deceive, if possible, indicates that the deception will not overcome the elect.

13:24, 25 But points to a marked distinction between the false prophets of v. 22 and the true coming of Christ in v. 26. Great astronomical disturbances will accompany Christ’s glorious return.

13:26 Jesus described His return as the **Son of Man coming in the clouds**. This passage recalls Dan. 7:13, 14, in which the Son of Man receives the kingdom from God the Father. Dan. 7:27 shows the Son of Man sharing His rule with the saints (Rev. 2:26, 27).

Passion Week—Bethany, the Mount of Olives, and Jerusalem



The Roman road climbed steeply to the crest of the Mount of Olives, affording spectacular views of the Desert of Judea to the east and of Jerusalem across the Kidron Valley to the west.

1 Arrival in Bethany

FRIDAY (John 12:1)

Jesus arrived in Bethany six days before the Passover to spend some time with His friends, Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. On the following Tuesday evening, while Jesus was still in Bethany, Mary anointed His feet with costly perfume as an act of humility. This tender expression indicated Mary's devotion to Jesus and her willingness to serve Him.

2 Sabbath—day of rest

SATURDAY

Not mentioned in the Gospels.

The Lord spent the Sabbath day in traditional fashion with His friends.

3 The "Triumphal" Entry

SUNDAY (Matt. 21:1–11; Mark 11:1–11; Luke 19:28–44; John 12:12–19)

On the first day of the week Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey, fulfilling an ancient prophecy (Zech. 9:9). The crowd welcomed Him with the words of Psalm 118:25, 26, thus ascribing to Him a Messianic title as the agent of the Lord, the coming King of Israel.

4 Clearing of the temple

MONDAY (Matt. 21:12–17; Mark 11:15–18; Luke 19:45–48)

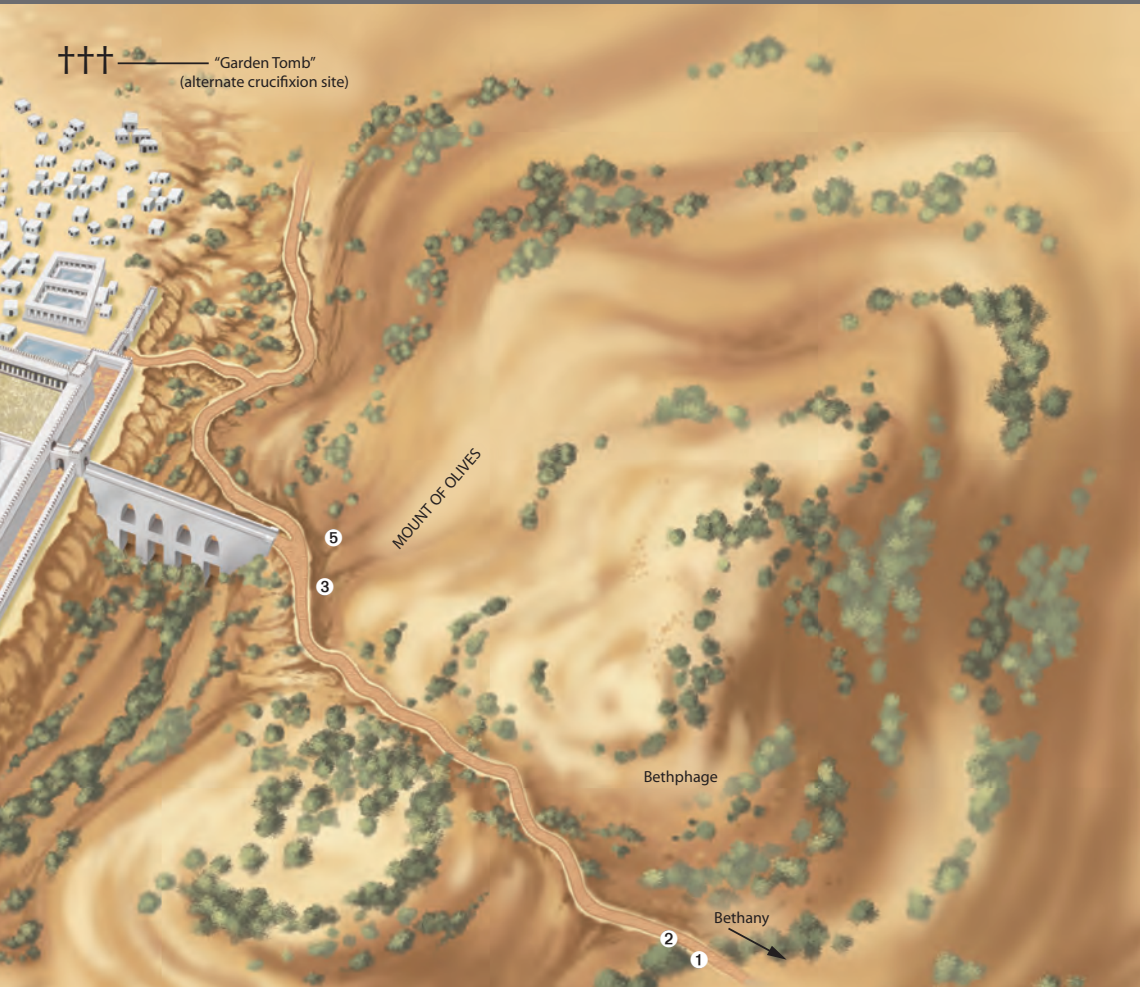
Jesus returned to the temple and found the court of the Gentiles full of traders and money changers making a large profit. Jesus drove them out and overturned their benches and tables.

5 Day of controversy and parables

TUESDAY (Matt. 21:23–24:51; Mark 11:27–13:37; Luke 20:1–21:36)

IN JERUSALEM

Jesus evaded the traps set by the priests.



ON THE MOUNT OF OLIVES OVERLOOKING JERUSALEM

(Tuesday afternoon, exact location unknown)

Jesus taught in parables and warned the people against the Pharisees. He predicted the destruction of Herod's great temple and told His disciples about future events, including His own return.

Day of rest

WEDNESDAY

Although the Gospels do not mention this day, the counting of the days (Mark 14:1; John 12:1) seems to indicate that there was another day about which the Gospels record nothing.

6 Passover, Last Supper

THURSDAY (Matt. 26:17–30; Mark 14:12–26; Luke 22:7–23)

In an upper room Jesus prepared both Himself and His disciples for His death. He gave the Passover meal a new meaning. The loaf of bread and cup of wine represented His body soon to be sacrificed and His blood soon to be shed. And so He instituted the "Lord's Supper." After singing a hymn they went to Gethsemane, where Jesus prayed in agony, knowing what lay ahead for Him.

7 Crucifixion

FRIDAY (Matt. 27; Mark 15; Luke 22:66—23:56; John 18:28—19:37)

Following betrayal, arrest, desertion, false trials, denial, condemnation, beatings, and mockery, Jesus was required to carry His cross to "the Place of a Skull" (Matt. 27:33), where He was crucified with two other prisoners.

8 In the tomb

Jesus' body was placed in the tomb before 6:00 P.M. Friday evening, when the Sabbath began and all work stopped, and it lay in the tomb throughout the Sabbath.

9 Resurrection

SUNDAY (Matt. 28:1–10; Mark 16:1–8; Luke 24:1–49; John 20)

Early in the morning, women went to the tomb and found that the stone closing the tomb's entrance had been rolled back. An angel told them Jesus was alive and gave them a message. Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalene in the garden, to Peter, to two disciples on the road to Emmaus, and later that day to all the disciples but Thomas.

will see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory.²⁷ And then He will send His angels, and gather together His ⁸elect from the four winds, from the farthest part of earth to the farthest part of heaven.

Parable of the Fig Tree

Matt. 24:32-35

²⁸“Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender, and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near.²⁹ So you also, when you see these things happening, know that ⁹it is near—at the doors!³⁰ Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place.³¹ Heaven and earth will pass away, but ^dMy words will by no means pass away.

Exhortation to Watch

Matt. 24:36-51; Luke 21:34-36

³²“But of that day and hour ^eno one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the ^fFather.³³ Take heed, watch and pray; for you do not know when the time is.³⁴ It is like a man going to a far country, who left his house and gave ⁱauthority to his servants, and to each his work, and commanded the doorkeeper to watch.³⁵ Watch therefore, for you do not know when the mas-

²⁷ ⁸ *chosen ones*
²⁸ ^c *Matt. 24:32; Luke 21:29*
²⁹ ⁹ *Or He*
³¹ ^d *Is. 40:8; [2 Pet. 3:7, 10, 12]*
³² ^e *Matt. 25:13*
^f *Matt. 24:36; Acts 1:7*
³³ ^g *Matt. 24:42; 25:13; Luke 12:40; 21:34; [Rom. 13:11]; 1 Thess. 5:6; 1 Pet. 4:7*
³⁴ ^h *Matt. 24:45; 25:14* ⁱ *[Matt. 16:19]*
³⁵ ^j *Matt. 24:42, 44*

CHAPTER 14

¹ ^a *Matt. 26:2-5; Luke 22:1, 2; John 11:55; 13:1* ^b *Ex. 12:1-27; Mark 14:12*
¹ *deception*
³ ^c *Matt. 26:6; Luke 7:37; John 12:1, 3*
² *Perfume of pure nard*
⁵ ^d *Matt. 18:28; Mark 12:15* ^e *Matt. 20:11; John 6:61*
³ *scolded*
⁷ ^f *Deut. 15:11; Matt. 26:11; John 12:8*

ter of the house is coming—in the evening, at midnight, at the crowing of the rooster, or in the morning—³⁶lest, coming suddenly, he find you sleeping.³⁷ And what I say to you, I say to all: Watch!”

Leaders Plot to Kill Jesus

Matt. 26:1-5; Luke 22:1, 2

14 After ^atwo days it was the Passover and ^bthe Feast of Unleavened Bread. And the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might take Him by ¹trickery and put Him to death.² But they said, “Not during the feast, lest there be an uproar of the people.”

Mary Anoints Jesus

Matt. 26:6-13; John 12:2-8

³And being in Bethany at the house of Simon the leper, as He sat at the table, a woman came having an alabaster flask of very costly ²oil of spikenard. Then she broke the flask and poured it on His head.⁴ But there were some who were indignant among themselves, and said, “Why was this fragrant oil wasted? ⁵For it might have been sold for more than three hundred ^ddenarii and given to the poor.” And they ^ecriticized³ her sharply.

⁶But Jesus said, “Let her alone. Why do you trouble her? She has done a good work for Me. ⁷For you have the poor with you always, and whenever you wish

13:28, 29 Jesus likened the signs of His second coming to the sprouts of growth and leaves on a fig tree. Both point to the glories to come—the full flowering of the earth and the return of Christ.

13:30 Some have argued that **this generation** refers to Jesus’ contemporaries; others have suggested it means a people, such as the Jews, who are related by blood (see Luke 21:32). Jesus’ statement here may have been intended to incorporate those who would see the initial destruction of Jerusalem as well as those who would be living at the time Jesus returns—those who see the final fulfillment of **all these things**.

13:31 Concerning what Jesus foretells here about **heaven and earth** passing away, see also Is. 65:17; 2 Pet. 3:10; Rev. 21:1. Jesus’ words, however, unlike this perishing planet, will never **pass away**.
13:32 As one who was fully God and at the same time fully man, Jesus possessed all the attributes of deity, including omnipotence and omniscience. He knew what was in people’s hearts (2:8) and He could still the waves (4:39). When Jesus became a man, however, He voluntarily placed certain knowledge in the hands of the Father (Phil. 2:5–8). Of course today, glorified in heaven, Jesus now knows the **day and hour** of His return.

13:34–36 Jesus’ parable of the absent master of the house is unique to Mark. The point of the parable is that the master could return at any time, so all servants must be vigilant and watchful (Luke 19:11–27). The Romans divided the night into four watches—the evening (6 to 9 P.M.), midnight (9 P.M. to midnight), rooster crowing (midnight to 3 A.M.), and dawn (3 to 6 A.M.).

14:1–42 In this section Mark portrays the preparations for Jesus’ death. The loving anointing at Bethany (vv. 3–9) is placed between the accounts of the treachery of Judas and the chief priests and scribes (vv. 1, 2, 10, 11).

14:1, 2 After two days is the next time designation given since the mention of the events of Tuesday and Wednesday (see 11:12, 20). If

the crucifixion occurred on Friday, then the events of this chapter took place on Wednesday evening and Thursday. The **Passover** was celebrated on the fourteenth day of Nisan (March–April), while the **Feast of Unleavened Bread** followed on the fifteenth through the twenty-first days of Nisan. The chief priests planned to **take** Jesus. In the Greek, this verb suggests physically grasping and laying hold of an object. They wanted to arrest Jesus, take Him away, and kill Him. They preferred to do it secretly, away from the crowd. **During the feast**, the population of Jerusalem would expand greatly as zealous Jews converged on the city in accord with the Law of Moses (Deut. 16:16). Many of Christ’s admirers were present too, so the religious leaders wanted to defer the arrest and avoid conflict. Some obviously feared a Roman reprisal if a public arrest of Jesus resulted in a civic disturbance.

14:3 **Simon the leper** had been healed at some point in Jesus’ ministry. Mark records a leper’s healing in 1:40–42. **Alabaster** is a translucent stone still used to make ornamented jewelry boxes and other items of value. **Spikenard**, a precious perfume imported from India, was made from plants that grow in the high elevations of the Himalayas. This perfume is mentioned in the Song of Solomon (1:12; 4:13, 14). Mark relates that the woman **poured it on His head**, while John identifies the woman as Mary, the sister of Martha and Lazarus, and notes that she anointed Jesus’ feet and used her hair as a towel (John 12:3).

14:4, 5 The **some who were indignant** were Jesus’ disciples (Matt. 26:8), but Judas Iscariot, a thief who despised real givers, was their mouthpiece on this occasion (John 12:4–6). A single denarius represented a day’s wages for a common laborer, so **three hundred denarii** was a considerable gift.

14:7 Jesus’ statement does not show callousness to **the poor** (Deut. 15:7–11). His compassion for those overwhelmed by sickness and poverty appears frequently in the Gospels, and He encouraged



Alabaster

This white mineral is easy to carve and polish, so Israelites used it to make beautiful jars and vases. Two varieties of alabaster are found in the Middle East: one is a pure form of gypsum; the other a reddish marble. The first kind crumbles too easily to be used for carving. The second kind has colorful markings and is partially transparent, so it appeals to the eye. Archaeologists have recovered alabaster jars from Greek, Kanan, Egyptian, and Assyrian ruins. Ancient traders often sealed costly perfume in an alabaster jar, allowing the scent to escape only gradually through the jar's porous shell over many years. The Greek poet Theocritus (third century B.C.) reports that the merchants of Palestine used alabaster jars in the same way. Shortly after Jesus' time, the Romans and Greeks called any thin-necked vial an *alabastron*, or "alabaster," because that was the familiar shape of alabaster perfume jars.



Alabaster jar

Baker Photo Archive, courtesy
of the Elephantine Museum

you may do them good; ⁸but Me you do not have always. ⁸She has done what she could. She has come beforehand to anoint My body for burial. ⁹Assuredly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is ^hpreached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her."

Judas Plans to Betray Jesus

Matt. 26:14; Luke 22:3-6

¹⁰*i* Then Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, went to the chief priests to betray Him to them. ¹¹And when they heard *it*, they were glad, and promised to give him money. So he sought how he might conveniently betray Him.

The Passover Is Prepared

Matt. 26:17-19; Luke 22:7-13

¹²*j* Now on the first day of Unleavened Bread, when they ⁴killed the Passover

⁷ *g* [John 7:33; 8:21; 14:2, 12; 16:10, 17, 28]
⁹ *h* Matt. 28:19, 20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:47
¹⁰ *i* Ps. 41:9; 55:12-14; Matt. 10:2-4
¹² / Ex. 12:8; Matt. 26:17-19; Luke 22:7-13
⁴ *sacrificed*

¹⁷ *k* Matt. 26:20-24; Luke 22:14, 21-23

lamb, His disciples said to Him, "Where do You want us to go and prepare, that You may eat the Passover?"

¹³And He sent out two of His disciples and said to them, "Go into the city, and a man will meet you carrying a pitcher of water; follow him. ¹⁴Wherever he goes in, say to the master of the house, 'The Teacher says, "Where is the guest room in which I may eat the Passover with My disciples?"'" ¹⁵Then he will show you a large upper room, furnished and prepared; there make ready for us."

¹⁶So His disciples went out, and came into the city, and found it just as He had said to them; and they prepared the Passover.

The Passover Is Celebrated

Matt. 26:20-25; Luke 22:14-16; John 13:21-30

¹⁷*k* In the evening He came with the twelve. ¹⁸Now as they sat and ate, Jesus

others to meet their needs (10:21). But He also wanted people to give freely and of their own volition. No one can coerce a gift from another; no one should criticize another's gift; and no one can read the heart of a giver. A giver's motive is known only to God.

14:8 Mary had tremendous spiritual insight when she anointed Jesus. She anointed His **body for burial**. She, unlike the disciples, understood that Jesus was soon to die.

14:10, 11 Judas Iscariot decided to profit even further from his association with Jesus by betraying Him. The **chief priests** changed their plans when Judas came knocking at their door.

14:12 The **first day of Unleavened Bread** was the fifteenth day of Nisan (Lev. 23:6). However, because the feasts of Passover and Unleavened Bread were so closely associated in the minds of many Jews, Mark clarified the precise time for his readers by adding **when they killed the Passover lamb**. The lamb was killed on the evening of the fourteenth of Nisan (March–April). Here, Mark is speaking of the events of Thursday.

14:13 Jesus had apparently already made arrangements for a place to eat. To divulge this location in an inconspicuous manner, Jesus

sent out two of His disciples, Peter and John (Luke 22:8). It was unusual for a man to be **carrying a pitcher of water**, since this was normally a woman's task. This man may have been a servant.

14:14, 15 Although the identity of the **master of the house** is not positively known, there is reason to suspect it may have been Mark's father. The **guest room** is familiarly described as a **large upper room, furnished and prepared**. Mark himself may have been the young man of vv. 51, 52. Acts 12:12 indicates that this house was later used as a gathering place for many believers who prayed together. Tradition has it that this was also "the upper room" of Acts 1:13 where over one hundred believers met on Pentecost.

14:18 Two memorial meals were observed **as they sat** (lit. reclined) **and ate**. First, they ate the regular Passover commemoration meal, during which time Jesus predicted His betrayal by one of the disciples. Second, after Judas had left (John 13:30), Jesus observed the Last Supper, which anticipated the imminent breaking of His body and shedding of His blood. The phrase **one of you who eats with Me will betray Me** recalls the messianic prophecy of Ps. 41:9.

said, “Assuredly, I say to you, ¹one of you who eats with Me will betray Me.”

¹⁹ And they began to be sorrowful, and to say to Him one by one, “Is it I?” ⁵ And another said, “Is it I?”

²⁰ He answered and said to them, “It is one of the twelve, who dips with Me in the dish. ^{21m} The Son of Man indeed goes just as it is written of Him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been good for that man if he had never been born.”

The Lord's Supper Is Instituted

Matt. 26:26-29; Luke 22:17-23

²²ⁿ And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them and said, “Take, ⁶eat; this is My ^obody.”

²³ Then He took the cup, and when He had given thanks He gave it to them, and they all drank from it. ²⁴ And He said to them, “This is My blood of the ⁷new covenant, which is shed for many. ²⁵ Assuredly, I say to you, I will no longer drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.”

Jesus Predicts Peter's Denial

Matt. 26:30-35; Luke 22:31-39; John 13:36-38

^{26p} And when they had sung ⁸a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

¹⁸ / Ps. 41:9 ☆;
Matt. 26:46; Mark
14:42; John 6:70,
71; 13:18

¹⁹ ⁵ NU omits the
rest of v. 19.

²¹ ^m Matt. 26:24;
Luke 22:22; Acts
1:16-20

²² ⁿ Matt. 26:26-
29; Luke 22:17-20;
1 Cor. 11:23-25
^o [1 Pet. 2:24] ⁶ NU
omits eat

²⁴ ⁷ NU omits new

²⁶ ^p Matt. 26:30

⁸ Or hymns

²⁷ ^q Matt. 26:31-35;
Mark 14:50; John
16:32 / [Is. 53:5, 10];
Zech. 13:7 ⁹ NU
omits because of
Me this night

²⁸ ^s Matt. 28:16;

Mark 16:7; John

21:1

²⁹ ⁱ Matt. 26:33,
34; Luke 22:33, 34;
John 13:37, 38 ⁱ fall
away

³² ^u Matt. 26:36-
46; Luke 22:40-46;
John 18:1

³³ ^v Mark 5:37;

9:2; 13:3

³⁴ ^w Is. 53:3, 4;

Matt. 26:38; John

12:27

^{27q} Then Jesus said to them, “All of you will be made to stumble ⁹because of Me this night, for it is written:

*“I will strike the Shepherd,
And the sheep will be
scattered.”*

²⁸ “But ^safter I have been raised, I will go before you to Galilee.”

²⁹ⁱ Peter said to Him, “Even if all are made to ¹stumble, yet I will not be.”

³⁰ Jesus said to him, “Assuredly, I say to you that today, *even* this night, before the rooster crows twice, you will deny Me three times.”

³¹ But he spoke more vehemently, “If I have to die with You, I will not deny You!”

And they all said likewise.

Jesus Prays in Gethsemane

Matt. 26:36-46; Luke 22:39-46

^{32u} Then they came to a place which was named Gethsemane; and He said to His disciples, “Sit here while I pray.”

³³ And He ^vtook Peter, James, and John with Him, and He began to be troubled and deeply distressed. ³⁴ Then He said to them, ^w“My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, *even* to death. Stay here and watch.”

14:19 In Greek, **Is it I?**, is actually a negative question that implies a negative answer. The phrase means “It is not I, is it?”

14:20, 21 Matthew and John both identify the culprit as Judas, even though Mark does not (Matt. 26:25; John 13:26). The statement that **it would have been good for Judas if he had never been born** points to the awful judgment that awaits him. Judas was wholly responsible for his actions even though he acted in accordance with what had long been **written of Christ**.

14:22 Judas left the room after receiving the dipped portion of bread, prior to Jesus’ act of breaking additional bread and explaining its significance (John 13:30). The Lord’s Supper is for believers only and should be observed solely by those who are in right relationship with Christ. **this is My body**: Some view the broken bread as representing Jesus’ body, which would soon be broken for their sins. Others interpret this statement more literally.

14:24 Some interpret **this is My blood** metaphorically, meaning that the contents of this cup represented Jesus’ blood that would be shed for our sins. Others give the statement a more literal interpretation. The sprinkling of blood was required to institute the Mosaic covenant in Ex. 29:12, 16, 20 (see Heb. 9:18–22). In the same way, Jesus’ blood shed on the cross initiated **the new covenant**: His blood was **shed for many**. He died on the cross in the place of many sinners from every nation. He paid the price for all of their sins. All those who believe in Him will receive eternal life.

14:25 Jesus came announcing the **kingdom of God** (1:14, 15), promised the disciples rulership in it (Matt. 19:28), and will receive and administer it with the saints (Dan. 7:13, 14, 27; 2 Tim. 2:11, 12; Rev. 20:4).

14:26 The **hymn** they sang was no doubt from the Psalms. Frequently Ps. 113–118 were used in connection with the Passover, including “I shall not die, but live, / And declare the works of the **LORD**” and “The stone which the builders rejected / Has become the chief cornerstone” (Ps. 118:17, 22). Leaving the Upper Room, they crossed the Kidron Valley to the base of **the Mount of Olives**. Gethsemane

(v. 32) is directly across from the eastern gate (sometimes called the golden gate) of Jerusalem.

14:28 This saying was repeated by one of the angels at the tomb shortly after Jesus’ resurrection (16:7). Nevertheless, the disciples remained in Jerusalem for more than a week before eventually following their risen Shepherd into Galilee (John 20:26; 21:1). Matthew mentions the disciples meeting Jesus at a mountain in Galilee (Matt. 28:16) prior to His ascension at Bethany (Luke 24:50, 51).

14:29 Overconfidence is deadly. Peter did not heed the words of Prov. 16:18, “Pride goes before destruction, / And a haughty spirit before a fall.” Pride was Satan’s downfall, and it can frequently be ours as well. Peter, so emphatic in his denial, soon realized the emptiness of his hasty declaration.

14:30 Only Mark mentions Christ’s prediction of Peter’s denial occurring **before the rooster crows twice**. The incident would have remained vivid in Peter’s mind when he related the story to Mark. And only Mark records the two crowings of the rooster (14:68, 72).

14:32–42 Sit here while I pray: Prayer consumed much time and energy in Jesus’ earthly work. It crowned both the beginning (Luke 3:21) and ending (Luke 24:50, 51) of His public ministry. When necessary, He would take extraordinary measures to ensure privacy in order to pray (6:46; Matt. 14:22, 23; John 6:14, 15). Though the Lord Jesus did praise God (Luke 10:21) and thank the Father (8:6, 7) in His praying, most of His recorded prayers were petitions and intercessions.

14:32 Gethsemane, though famous today, is mentioned by name only twice in the Bible (here and in Matthew). John, however, informs us that Jesus and the disciples “often met there” and that it was a garden (John 18:1, 2). The admonition to **sit here** was directed to all but Peter, James, and John (14:33).

14:33 Jesus wanted His closest disciples **with Him**, to support Him with their presence and their prayers. All of us need such an inner circle. We are meant to live in relation to others, not in isolation.

14:34 Exceedingly sorrowful: The crushing realization of having

³⁵He went a little farther, and fell on the ground, and prayed that if it were possible, the hour might pass from Him. ³⁶And He said, ^x“Abba, Father, ^yall things *are* possible for You. Take this cup away from Me; ^znevertheless, not what I will, but what You *will*.”

³⁷Then He came and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, “Simon, are you sleeping? Could you not watch one hour? ^{38a}Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. ^bThe spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.”

³⁹Again He went away and prayed, and spoke the same words. ⁴⁰And when He returned, He found them asleep again, for their eyes were heavy; and they did not know what to answer Him.

⁴¹Then He came the third time and said to them, “Are you still sleeping and resting? It is enough! ^cThe hour has come; behold, the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners. ^{42d}Rise, let us be going. See, My betrayer is at hand.”

³⁶ ^x Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:6 ^y [Heb. 5:7] ^z Is. 50:5 [★]; John 5:30; 6:38
³⁸ ^a Luke 21:36
^b [Rom. 7:18, 21–24; Gal. 5:17]
⁴¹ ^c John 13:1; 17:1
⁴² ^d Matt. 26:46; Mark 14:18; Luke 9:44; John 13:21; 18:1, 2

⁴³ ^e Ps. 3:1; Matt. 26:47–56; Luke 22:47–53; John 18:3–11
⁴⁴ ^f [Prov. 27:6]
⁴⁸ ^g Matt. 26:55; Luke 22:52
⁴⁹ ^h Matt. 21:23 ⁱ Ps. 22:6; Is. 53:7; Luke 22:37; 24:44
⁵⁰ ^j Ps. 88:8; Zech. 13:7; Matt. 26:31; Mark 14:27

Judas Betrays Jesus

Matt. 26:47–56; Luke 22:47–53; John 18:1–11

^{43e}And immediately, while He was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, with a great multitude with swords and clubs, came from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders. ⁴⁴Now His betrayer had given them a signal, saying, “Whomever I ^fkiss, He is the One; seize Him and lead Him away safely.”

⁴⁵As soon as he had come, immediately he went up to Him and said to Him, “Rabbi, Rabbi!” and kissed Him.

⁴⁶Then they laid their hands on Him and took Him. ⁴⁷And one of those who stood by drew his sword and struck the servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear.

^{48g}Then Jesus answered and said to them, “Have you come out, as against a robber, with swords and clubs to take Me? ⁴⁹I was daily with you in the temple ^hteaching, and you did not seize Me. But ⁱthe Scriptures must be fulfilled.”

^{50j}Then they all forsook Him and fled.

to bear the sin of the world and to lose, even temporarily, the fellowship of God the Father was nearly more than Jesus’ soul could bear. His extreme spiritual anguish must have affected His mental, emotional, and physical condition as well.

14:35 Jesus must have prayed for some time. Verse 37 mentions one hour. That was time enough for each of His accompanying disciples to be asleep when He returned. Mark records Jesus’ petition that **the hour might pass from Him**, a reference to the time Jesus would bear the punishment for the sin of the world in His own body, becoming, as it were, sin for all. John uses the expression “the hour” or “His hour” frequently in his Gospel (John 2:4; 7:30; 8:20; 12:23, 27; 13:1; 17:1). Mark uses it only here and in v. 41.

14:36 **Abba** was what a little child would call his father. Jesus’ relationship to His Father was close and tender. In addition to the term **hour** (v. 35), **this cup** foreshadows Christ’s impending death (10:38). The cup figuratively holds the judgment of God for the sin of the world. The wicked will someday drink of “the cup of His indignation” (Rev. 14:10) and of “the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God” (Rev. 19:15).

14:38 Avoiding temptation demands constant vigilance, so much so that Christ included this admonition in the prayer He taught the disciples (Matt. 6:13; Luke 11:4). The dichotomy between spirit and flesh is real. Our fallen human nature, even after conversion, wars against the work of God.

14:39–41 The three apostles were exhorted to watch and pray several times, and no doubt truly desired to uphold their Lord in His deepest hour of need. Yet physical fatigue overcame spiritual alertness.

14:43–15:47 Mark now describes Jesus’ complete rejection by His disciples, the religious leaders, and the people, and His time of separation from the Father.

14:43 Judas came with a **great multitude**, identified by John as a detachment of troops (John 18:3). It was one-tenth of a Roman legion, or roughly six hundred men. Although the size of such a detachment could vary somewhat, Mark’s mention of a multitude points to a sizable crowd.

14:44 A **kiss**, usually a sign of affection, was now the signal for betrayal. **Lead Him away safely** is not an expression of concern for Jesus’ safety, but rather an indication of how difficult it may have been to seize Jesus.

14:47 Only two of Jesus’ disciples had swords that evening (Luke 22:38) and John tells us that Peter carried one of them (John 18:10, 26). Mark graciously avoids identifying Peter as being guilty of this

well-meaning but pointless act. John, the eyewitness, identifies the servant as one named Malchus and says it was his right ear that was severed (John 18:10). Peter may have swung wildly, intending to cut off Malchus’s head but succeeding only in wounding him. Luke the physician mentions that Jesus restored Malchus’s ear.

14:48, 49 Jesus did not resist arrest but did shame His captors. The swarms of soldiers, the secluded location, the cover of night, and the **swords and clubs** all suggested that Jesus was some violent **robber** or revolutionary. Ironically, this same word is used to describe Barabbas (John 18:40) and the two who were crucified with Jesus (15:27). The cowardice of Jesus’ captors was evident—why else would they arrest a peaceful teacher with such brute force? In the midst of such turmoil, Jesus’ statement that **the Scriptures must be fulfilled** indicates great confidence and comfort because all was proceeding under God’s sovereign plan. Jesus may have had in mind Zech. 13:7 (“Strike the Shepherd, / And the sheep will be scattered”) in view of His earlier prediction in v. 27 and the context of v. 50. Or perhaps His being “numbered with the transgressors” (Is. 53:12) was in mind, considering His response to His captors in v. 48.

14:50–52 Jesus was abandoned. The 11 disciples were gone, but **a certain young man followed Him**. Only Mark tells of this incident, and many believe that this young man was Mark himself. How else would he have known this story, and why else should he have included it? If it was Mark, and if the Last Supper was at his home that evening, he could easily have risen from bed, pulled on a **linen cloth**, and followed Jesus and the disciples.

Abba, Father

(Gk. *abba ho patēr*) (14:36; Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:6) Strong’s #5; 3962

The term *abba* is the Aramaic word for *father*. The Greek term is added not to tell the reader what the Aramaic means, but to express Jesus’ dependence on His Father as He faced the sufferings of the crucifixion (14:36). No doubt Jesus loved to utter His Father’s name in both forms, first in His cherished mother tongue and then in the common language of His day. In this view the use of both words has a charming simplicity and warmth. Paul uses the phrase “Abba, Father” in Rom. 8:15 and Gal. 4:6 to express the intimate relationship the believer has with God.

⁵¹ Now a certain young man followed Him, having a linen cloth thrown around *his* naked *body*. And the young men laid hold of him, ⁵² and he left the linen cloth and fled from them naked.

The Sanhedrin Tries Jesus

Matt. 26:57-68; Luke 22:54, 55, 63-65;

John 18:12, 18, 24

⁵³ ^k And they led Jesus away to the high priest; and with him were ^l assembled all the ^m chief priests, the elders, and the scribes. ⁵⁴ But ⁿ Peter followed Him at a distance, right into the courtyard of the high priest. And he sat with the servants and warmed himself at the fire.

⁵⁵ ^o Now the chief priests and all the council sought testimony against Jesus to put Him to death, but found none. ⁵⁶ For many bore ^p false witness against Him, but their testimonies ² did not agree.

⁵⁷ Then some rose up and bore false witness against Him, saying, ⁵⁸ “We heard Him say, ^q ‘I will destroy this temple made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands.’” ⁵⁹ But not even then did their testimony agree.

⁶⁰ ^r And the high priest stood up in the midst and asked Jesus, saying, “Do You answer nothing? What *is it* these men testify against You?” ⁶¹ But ^s He kept silent and answered nothing.

^t Again the high priest asked Him, saying to Him, “Are You the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?”

⁶² Jesus said, “I am. ^u And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven.”

⁶³ Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, “What further need do we have of witnesses? ⁶⁴ You have heard the ^v blasphemy! What do you think?”

⁵³ ^k Matt. 26:57-68; Mark 10:33; Luke 22:54; John 18:12, 13, 19-24 / Mark 15:1 ^m Matt. 16:21; 27:12; Luke 9:22; 23:23; John 7:32; 18:3; 19:6
⁵⁴ ⁿ John 18:15
⁵⁵ ^o Matt. 26:59
⁵⁶ ^p Ex. 20:16; Ps. 27:12; 35:11; Prov. 6:16-19; 19:5 ² were not consistent
⁵⁸ ^q Matt. 26:61; Mark 15:29; John 2:19; [2 Cor. 5:1]
⁶⁰ ^r Matt. 26:62; Mark 15:3-5
⁶¹ ^s Is. 53:7; John 19:9; Acts 8:32; [1 Pet. 2:23] ^t Matt. 26:63; Luke 22:67-71
⁶² ^u Matt. 24:30; 26:64; Luke 22:69
⁶⁴ ^v John 10:33, 36
^w Matt. 20:18; Mark 10:33 [★]; John 19:7
⁶⁵ ^x Job 16:10; Is. 50:6; 52:14 [★]; Lam. 3:30; Mark 10:34; Luke 18:32 ³ NU received Him with slaps
⁶⁶ ^y Matt. 26:58, 69-75; Luke 22:55-62; John 18:16-18, 25-27
⁶⁷ ^z Mark 10:47; John 1:45; Acts 10:38
⁶⁹ ^a Matt. 26:71; Luke 22:58; John 18:25
⁷⁰ ^b Matt. 26:73; Luke 22:59; John 18:26 ^c Acts 2:7
⁴ NU omits the rest of v. 70. ⁵ accent
⁷² ^d Matt. 26:75; Mark 14:30; Luke 22:34; John 13:38

CHAPTER 15

¹ ^e Ps. 2:2; Matt. 27:1; Luke 22:66; 23:1; John 18:28; Acts 3:13; 4:26

And they all condemned Him to be *der-serving* of ^w death.

⁶⁵ Then some began to ^x spit on Him, and to blindfold Him, and to beat Him, and to say to Him, “Prophecy!” And the officers ³ struck Him with the palms of their hands.

Peter Denies Jesus

Matt. 26:69-75; Luke 22:55-62;

John 18:15-18, 25-27

⁶⁶ ^y Now as Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the servant girls of the high priest came. ⁶⁷ And when she saw Peter warming himself, she looked at him and said, “You also were with ^z Jesus of Nazareth.”

⁶⁸ But he denied it, saying, “I neither know nor understand what you are saying.” And he went out on the porch, and a rooster crowed.

⁶⁹ ^a And the servant girl saw him again, and began to say to those who stood by, “This *is one* of them.” ⁷⁰ But he denied it again.

^b And a little later those who stood by said to Peter again, “Surely you are *one* of them; ^c for you are a Galilean, ⁴ and your ⁵ speech shows *it*.”

⁷¹ Then he began to curse and swear, “I do not know this Man of whom you speak!”

⁷² ^d A second time *the* rooster crowed. Then Peter called to mind the word that Jesus had said to him, “Before the rooster crows twice, you will deny Me three times.” And when he thought about it, he wept.

Pilate Tries Jesus

Matt. 27:1, 2, 11-23; Luke 23:1-5, 13-23;

John 18:28-19:15

15 Immediately, ^a in the morning, the chief priests held a consulta-

14:53 **The high priest** at that time was Caiaphas (A.D. 18–37; John 18:13). The **chief priests** included others who had formerly been high priests, and the **elders** consisted of the heads of leading families in the community. The **scribes** were the Jewish experts and teachers of the commandments of God as well as the traditions of men (7:8, 9, 13). Together this group made up the Sanhedrin, always referred to in the Gospels and Acts as the Council (14:55; 15:1; Acts 5:27; 23:1). **14:55, 56** The Sanhedrin was supposed to administer justice, but this council **sought testimony against Jesus to put Him to death**. The Jewish authorities had lost to Rome the right to pronounce a death sentence. Thus they eventually had to appeal to Pilate (15:1). Because no real witnesses could testify to any grounds for Jesus’ death, **false witness** was heard, but it was contradictory. **14:57–59** Finally, some tried to accuse Jesus of plotting to destroy the **temple** (John 2:19–21), but even that testimony was too inconsistent. **14:61, 62** **He kept silent** in fulfillment of Is. 53:7. He remained silent before Pilate (15:3–5) and before Herod Antipas as well (Luke 23:9). Finally, when they could find nothing substantial with which to charge Him, Jesus affirmed that He was **the Christ, the Son of the Blessed**.

14:63, 64 The trial was over, and Jesus stood falsely condemned for **blasphemy**, which in this context means laying claim to deity. Naturally, this is the boast of a liar or a lunatic—unless He is the Almighty God in human flesh, as Jesus was (see John 1:1–3, 14; Phil. 2:5–8).

14:65 Those who **beat and struck** Jesus here were not applying the dreaded scourging, which could disembowel an individual. Compare 15:15 where the scourging itself is mentioned.

14:71, 72 **He began to curse and swear**. Peter may have told Mark to include this report. None of Peter’s actions were commendable, and his swearing illustrates the truth of Jer. 17:9, “The heart is deceitful above all things, / And desperately wicked; / Who can know it?” We are not told that Peter thought at all about Jesus’ words when the **rooster crowed** the first time. If he did, maybe he tried to conceal his identity more carefully, but to no avail. Each of the other Gospel writers tells us that the rooster crowed immediately upon Peter’s final denial (Matt. 26:74; Luke 22:60; John 18:27). This time **he thought about it, and he wept**.

15:1–47 Rejected by His disciples, condemned by the council, and denied by Peter, Jesus now faces the merciless Roman authorities and the hostile crowd.

tion with the elders and scribes and the whole council; and they bound Jesus, led Him away, and ^bdelivered Him to Pilate. ^{2c}Then Pilate asked Him, “Are You the King of the Jews?”

He answered and said to him, “*It is as you say.*”

³And the chief priests accused Him of many things, but He ^danswered nothing. ^{4e}Then Pilate asked Him again, saying, “Do You answer nothing? See how many things ¹they testify against You!” ^{5f}But Jesus still answered nothing, so that Pilate marveled.

⁶Now ^gat the feast he was accustomed to releasing one prisoner to them, whom-ever they requested. ⁷And there was one named Barabbas, *who was* chained with his fellow rebels; they had committed murder in the rebellion. ⁸Then the multitude, ²crying aloud, began to ask *him to do* just as he had always done for them. ⁹But Pilate answered them, saying, “Do you want me to release to you the King of the Jews?” ¹⁰For he knew that the chief priests had handed Him over because of envy.

¹¹But ^hthe chief priests stirred up the crowd, so that he should rather release Barabbas to them. ¹²Pilate answered and said to them again, “What then do you want me to do *with Him* whom you call the ⁱKing of the Jews?”

¹³So they cried out again, “Crucify Him!”

¹⁴Then Pilate said to them, “Why, ^jwhat evil has He done?”

But they cried out all the more, “Crucify Him!”

¹ ^p Luke 18:32; Acts 3:13
² ^c Matt. 27:11-14; Luke 23:2; 3; John 18:29-38
³ ^d Is. 53:7; John 19:9; Acts 8:32
⁴ ^e Matt. 27:13
¹ NU of which they accuse You
⁵ ^f Ps. 38:13, 14; Is. 53:7; John 19:9 ★
⁶ ^g Matt. 27:15-26; Luke 23:18-25; John 18:39-19:16
⁸ ² NU going up
¹¹ ^h Matt. 27:20; Acts 3:14
¹² ⁱ Ps. 2:6; [Is. 9:7]; Jer. 23:5; 33:15; Mic. 5:2
¹⁴ / Is. 53:9; John 8:46; 1 Pet. 2:21-23

¹⁵ ^k Is. 50:6; Matt. 27:26; Mark 10:34; John 19:1, 16 ⁱ [Is. 53:8]
¹⁶ ^m Matt. 27:27-31
³ The governor's headquarters
¹⁹ ⁿ [Is. 50:6; 52:14; 53:5]; Mic. 5:1 ★; Mark 14:65
²⁰ ^o Ps. 35:16; 69:19; Is. 53:3; Matt. 20:19; Mark 10:34; Luke 22:63; 23:11
²¹ ^p Matt. 27:32; Luke 23:26
²² ^q Matt. 27:33-44; Luke 23:33-43; John 19:17-24; Heb. 13:12
²³ ^r Ps. 69:21; Matt. 27:34
²⁴ ^s Ps. 22:18; Luke 23:34; John 19:23
²⁵ ^t Matt. 27:45; Luke 23:44; John 19:14

Jesus Is Beaten

Matt. 27:26-34; Luke 23:24-32; John 19:16-22

^{15k} So Pilate, wanting to gratify the crowd, released Barabbas to them; and he delivered Jesus, after he had scourged Him, to be ^lcrucified.

^{16m} Then the soldiers led Him away into the hall called ³Praetorium, and they called together the whole garrison. ¹⁷ And they clothed Him with purple; and they twisted a crown of thorns, put it on His *head*, ¹⁸ and began to salute Him, “Hail, King of the Jews!” ¹⁹ Then they ⁿ struck Him on the head with a reed and spat on Him; and bowing the knee, they worshiped Him. ²⁰ And when they had ^o mocked Him, they took the purple off Him, put His own clothes on Him, and led Him out to crucify Him.

^{21p} Then they compelled a certain man, Simon a Cyrenian, the father of Alexander and Rufus, as he was coming out of the country and passing by, to bear His cross. ^{22q} And they brought Him to the place Golgotha, which is translated, Place of a Skull. ^{23r} Then they gave Him wine mingled with myrrh to drink, but He did not take it.

Jesus Is Crucified

Matt. 27:35-56; Luke 23:33-49; John 19:18, 23-30

²⁴ And when they crucified Him, ^s they divided His garments, casting lots for them to *determine* what every man should take.

²⁵ Now ^t it was the third hour, and they

15:1-3 Rather than murdering Jesus privately, the Jewish politicians decided to seek Pilate's approval so they could execute the “blasphemer” legally. Their charges included **many things** but apparently centered on treason. Jesus claimed to be a king, thus defying Caesar (Luke 23:2). This crime was punishable in the Roman Empire by death.

15:6-8 Pilate must have concluded that the charges against Jesus were groundless, for Mark tells us he desired to release Jesus (v. 9). So his readers could understand the complexity of the situation, Mark parenthetically explains the local custom of releasing a prisoner during the feast as well as the facts about Barabbas. Although Matthew calls Barabbas a “notorious” prisoner, only Mark classifies him with **rebels who had committed murder**.

15:9, 10 Pilate attempted to release Jesus, for he **knew** the charges against Jesus were insubstantial. Pilate adeptly judged the Jewish leaders' **envy** of Jesus. He mocked them subtly by referring to Jesus as **the King of the Jews**.

15:15 Pilate had Jesus **scourged**: This word, used only twice in the NT (Matt. 27:26 and here), describes a punishment more severe than flogging or beating. The prisoner was beaten with a whip fashioned of numerous strips of leather attached to a handle. To the leather strips were tied sharp pieces of bone and metal, which could rip and tear one's skin to shreds.

15:16 **The hall called Praetorium** refers to the governor's official residence. *Praetorium* is a Latin word found eight times in the NT. The word is always transliterated in the **NKJV**, except in Phil. 1:13, where it

is translated *palace guard*. The **KJV** sometimes translates *Praetorium* as *judgment hall*. The **whole garrison**, a Roman cohort, consisted of up to six hundred men. Those who gathered on this occasion were probably only those nearby, though still a considerable number.

15:17 The **purple** robe mocked Jesus' claim to be a king. The **crown of thorns** was no doubt a twisted, dried vine with sharp thorns more than an inch in length. Any thorn prick is extremely painful.

15:18-21 They **led Him out to crucify Him** indicates that the place of crucifixion was outside the city itself (see Hebrews 13:12). All three synoptic Gospels identify Jesus' cross bearer as Simon of Cyrene, but only Mark adds that he was **the father of Alexander and Rufus**. These men may have been known to Mark's Roman audience, and it is interesting that Paul greets a Rufus in Rom. 16:13.

15:22 **Golgotha** is an Aramaic word meaning **Place of a Skull**. The hill may have resembled the bony features of a skull or was called this because it was a place of death. The name Calvary comes from the Latin word for skull. This place was very near the city wall (John 19:20).

15:23 This potion of **wine** (or vinegar) **mingled with myrrh** was intended to numb the pain. Jesus refused it, choosing to suffer the complete pain.

15:24 **Casting lots** for and dividing **His garments** fulfilled the prophecy of Ps. 22:18.

15:25 **The third hour** was 9 **A.M.**, using a common Jewish system of marking the day. Jesus suffered on the cross until at least 3 **P.M.**, the ninth hour of v. 34. **And they crucified Him** was a terse summary

crucified Him. ²⁶ And ^u the inscription of His ⁴ accusation was written above:

THE KING OF THE JEWS.

²⁷ ^v With Him they also crucified two robbers, one on His right and the other on His left. ²⁸ ⁵ So the Scripture was fulfilled which says, ^w “*And He was numbered with the transgressors.*”

²⁹ And ^x those who passed by blasphemed Him, ^y wagging their heads and saying, “Aha! ^z You who destroy the temple and build it in three days, ³⁰ save Yourself, and come down from the cross!”

³¹ Likewise the chief priests also, ^a mocking among themselves with the scribes, said, “He saved ^b others; Himself He cannot save. ³² Let the Christ, the King of Israel, descend now from the cross, that we may see and ⁶ believe.”

Even ^c those who were crucified with Him reviled Him.

³³ Now ^d when the sixth hour had come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. ³⁴ And at the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, “Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?” which is translated, ^e “*My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?*”

³⁵ Some of those who stood by, when they heard *that*, said, “Look, He is calling for Elijah!” ³⁶ Then ^f someone ran and filled a sponge full of sour wine, put it on

²⁶ ^u Matt. 27:37; John 19:19 ⁴ crime
²⁷ ^v Is. 53:9, 12; Matt. 27:38; Luke 22:37 ★
²⁸ ^w Is. 53:12; Luke 22:37 ★ ⁵ NU omits v. 28.
²⁹ ^x Ps. 22:6, 7; 69:7 ★ ^y Ps. 109:25
³⁰ Mark 14:58; John 2:19-21
³¹ ^a Luke 18:32
³² ^b Luke 7:14, 15; John 11:43, 44
³² ^c Matt. 27:44; Luke 23:39 ⁶ M believe Him
³³ ^d Amos 8:9 ★; Matt. 27:45-56; Luke 23:44-49
³⁴ ^e Ps. 22:1 ★; Matt. 27:46
³⁶ ^f Matt. 27:48; John 19:29 ⁹ Ps. 69:21 ★
³⁷ ^h Dan. 9:26; Zech. 11:10, 11; Matt. 27:50; Mark 8:31; Luke 23:46; John 19:30
³⁸ ⁱ Ex. 26:31-33; Matt. 27:51; Luke 23:45
³⁹ ^j Matt. 27:54; Luke 23:47 ⁷ NU He thus breathed His last
⁴⁰ ^k Matt. 27:55; Luke 23:49; John 19:25 ¹ Ps. 38:11
⁴¹ ^m Luke 8:2, 3
⁴² ⁿ Matt. 27:57-61; Luke 23:50-56; John 19:38-42

a reed, and ⁹ offered it to Him to drink, saying, “Let Him alone; let us see if Elijah will come to take Him down.”

³⁷ ^h And Jesus cried out with a loud voice, and breathed His last.

³⁸ Then ⁱ the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. ³⁹ So ^j when the centurion, who stood opposite Him, saw that ⁷ He cried out like this and breathed His last, he said, “Truly this Man was the Son of God!”

⁴⁰ ^k There were also women looking on ^l from afar, among whom were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James the Less and of Joses, and Salome, ⁴¹ who also ^m followed Him and ministered to Him when He was in Galilee, and many other women who came up with Him to Jerusalem.

Jesus Is Buried

Matt. 27:57-61; Luke 23:50-55;

John 19:38-42

⁴² ⁿ Now when evening had come, because it was the Preparation Day, that is, the day before the Sabbath, ⁴³ Joseph of Arimathea, a prominent council member, who ^o was himself waiting for the kingdom of God, coming and taking courage, went in to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. ⁴⁴ Pilate marveled that He was al-

⁴³ ^o Matt. 27:57; Luke 2:25, 38; 23:51; John 19:38

for Mark's Roman readers, for they knew quite well the horrors of crucifixion.

15:26 The inscription placed over Jesus' head appeared in three languages (John 19:20): Hebrew (Aramaic); Latin, the official language of government; and Greek, the common language spoken by many. If we piece together details from all four Gospels, the complete sign must have read, “This is Jesus the Nazarene, the King of the Jews.”

15:27-31 Jesus was mocked and forsaken by nearly everyone—Pilate, Herod, soldiers, Jewish leaders, the crowd, even the robbers on either side (v. 32).

15:32 Jesus was called mockingly **the Christ**, or Messiah, by the chief priests and scribes. Their offer to **believe** in Christ if He would **descend . . . from the cross** was empty mockery. True evidence alone does not turn a soul toward God. A sinful heart must be convicted of the need of God's salvation.

15:33 This **darkness** was a supernatural darkening of the skies.

15:34 Of the seven cries from the cross, this fourth one was the most passionate. Quoting Ps. 22:1, Jesus expressed the agony of being abandoned by His Father as He alone bore the sin of the world. Jesus' spiritual agony was intense, yet He still addressed His Father personally as **My God**.

15:35, 36 Those who mistook Jesus' words as a call for the prophet **Elijah** may have been unable to understand Him. The dehydration caused by crucifixion often made speech difficult. A sip from the **sponge full of sour wine** was supplied because Jesus said “I thirst” (John 19:28). This allowed Jesus to utter His final two sayings, “It is finished” (John 19:30) and “Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit” (Luke 23:46).

15:37 Jesus **breathed His last** after a **loud** conscious statement. Frequently, crucifixion produced a coma or unconsciousness prior to

death, but Jesus was in control of all His faculties until the moment when He voluntarily gave up His life (see John 10:17, 18).

15:38 The significance of the supernatural tearing of **the veil of the temple** is that access to God is now open to all. No longer through priests and the blood of bulls and goats do we approach God, but through the torn veil, which also symbolizes Jesus' broken and torn body (Heb. 10:20). **Top to bottom** reminds us that God Himself removed the barrier.

15:39 Only Mark uses (here and in vv. 44, 45) the Latin term **centurion**, a Roman captain in charge of one hundred men. The centurion's statement that Jesus **was the Son of God** can be construed as a confession of belief in Jesus' deity. But **the Son** could also be translated *a son*.

15:40, 41 These women were true disciples of Christ. They had ministered to Jesus' needs and would be the first witnesses of His resurrection. Mark does not name Jesus' mother here but includes other prominent women. Three Marys were present along with **many other women**, and **Salome**, whom only Mark mentions by name (see also 16:1). Salome was the wife of Zebedee and the mother of the disciples James and John (Matt. 27:56). She may have been the unnamed sister of Jesus' mother (John 19:25). If so, James and John were Jesus' first cousins.

15:42 Mark explains for his Roman audience, unacquainted with Jewish customs, that the crucifixion took place on **the Preparation Day**, that is, Friday.

15:43 **Joseph of Arimathea** (a town 20 miles northwest of Jerusalem) is identified as a **prominent council** (Sanhedrin) **member**. He, according to Luke 23:51, “had not consented to their decision and deed.” To ask Pilate **for the body of Jesus** was not just a gesture of kindness. It was an act of bravery, which placed Joseph in opposition to the Sanhedrin and identified him as a follower of Jesus.

15:44, 45 It was unusual for one to die so soon from crucifixion.

ready dead; and summoning the centurion, he asked him if He had been dead for some time. ⁴⁵ So when he found out from the centurion, he granted the body to Joseph. ⁴⁶ Then he bought fine linen, took Him down, and wrapped Him in the linen. And he laid Him in a tomb which had been hewn out of the rock, and rolled a stone against the door of the tomb. ⁴⁷ And Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joseph observed where He was laid.

The Resurrection of Jesus

Matt. 28:1-8; Luke 24:1-9

16 Now ^a when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome ^b bought spices, that they might come and anoint Him. ^{2c} Very early in the morning, on the first day of the week, they came to the tomb when the sun had risen. ³ And they said among themselves, “Who will roll away the stone from the door of the tomb for us?” ⁴ But when they looked up, they saw that the stone had been rolled away—for it was very large. ^{5d} And entering the tomb, they saw a young man clothed in a long white robe sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed.

^{6e} But he said to them, “Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who

⁴⁶ P Is. 53:9; Matt. 27:59, 60; Luke 23:53; John 19:40

CHAPTER 16

¹ c Matt. 28:1-8; Luke 24:1-10; John 20:1-8 ^b Luke 23:56; John 19:39
² c Luke 24:1; John 20:1
⁵ d Luke 24:3; John 20:11, 12
⁶ e Ps. 16:10; 49:15; Hos. 6:2 ★; Matt. 28:6; Mark 9:31; Luke 24:6
⁷ f Matt. 26:32; 28:16, 17; Mark 14:28 ¹ ahead of
⁸ g Matt. 28:8 ² NU, M omit quickly
⁹ h Luke 8:2
³ Vv. 9-20 are bracketed in NU as not in the original text. They are lacking in Codex Sinaiticus and Codex Vaticanus, although nearly all other mss. of Mark contain them.
¹⁰ i Luke 24:10
¹¹ j Matt. 28:17; Luke 24:11, 41; John 20:25
¹² k Luke 24:13-35
¹⁴ l Luke 24:36; John 20:19, 26;

was crucified. He is risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid Him. ⁷ But go, tell His disciples—and Peter—that He is going ¹ before you into Galilee; there you will see Him, ^f as He said to you.”

⁸ So they went out ² quickly and fled from the tomb, for they trembled and were amazed. ^g And they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

The Appearances of Jesus

Luke 24:13-48; John 20:1-10

⁹ ³ Now when He rose early on the first day of the week, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, ^h out of whom He had cast seven demons. ¹⁰ ⁱ She went and told those who had been with Him, as they mourned and wept. ¹¹ ^j And when they heard that He was alive and had been seen by her, they did not believe.

¹² After that, He appeared in another form ^k to two of them as they walked and went into the country. ¹³ And they went and told ^{it} to the rest, ^{but} they did not believe them either.

¹⁴ ^l Later He appeared to the eleven as they sat at the table; and He rebuked their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they did not believe those who had

1 Cor. 15:5

Frequently bodies remained on crosses for several days. Joseph's haste to remove the body could have been based on Deut. 21:23, which instructs that persons put to death on a tree should have their corpses removed and buried the same day.

15:46 Joseph, assisted by another formerly silent disciple, Nicodemus (John 19:39), wrapped Jesus' body in **fine linen**, apparently encased with a large amount (about one hundred pounds) of a gummy, sticky resinous mixture of myrrh and aloes to retard decay and to mask the stench of a decaying body. John notes that this was the Jewish custom of burial (John 19:40). The **stone** used to cover the opening of the tomb may not have been more than three or four feet in diameter, since tomb openings were not usually as tall as doorways.

16:1-20 Mark's readers, who acknowledged Jesus as the Son of God, have seen Him cruelly rejected and killed. Now His resurrection fills those readers with hope and joy.

16:1, 2 The Sabbath is Saturday. The next day is **the first day of the week**, Sunday. The **spices** would conceal the stench of decay and were a symbol of the care and concern these women had for their beloved Master.

16:3, 4 The women thought about how **large** the stone was and how difficult it would be to dislodge it from the entrance. They expressed no concern over the seal on the tomb or the presence of a Roman guard, apparently unaware of the precautions the Jews and Romans had taken (Matt. 27:62-66).

16:5, 6 Mark does not identify the **young man** who appeared in a long white robe as an angel, but clearly he is there to explain the mystery that confronts the women. The Greek voice of **He is risen**, which is passive, indicates that an act of God accomplished the raising up of Jesus.

16:7 Chosen by God as the first human witnesses to Christ's resurrection, these women were commanded to **go** and **tell**. The special mention of **Peter** signifies that Christ still accepted him, even though he had denied the Lord three times.

16:8 Initially, the women's fear caused them to say **nothing to anyone**. They recovered shortly, however, and brought word to the 11 disciples, including Peter (16:10; Matt. 28:8, 9; John 20:2).

16:9-20 The authenticity of these last 12 verses has been disputed. Those who doubt Mark's authorship of this passage point to two fourth-century manuscripts that omit these verses. Others believe that they should be included because even these two manuscripts leave space for all or some of these verses, indicating that their copyists knew of their existence. The difficulty is in knowing whether the space is for this longer version of Mark's ending or for one of the alternate endings found in the manuscripts. Practically all other manuscripts contain vv. 9-20, and this passage is endorsed by such early church fathers as Justin Martyr (A.D. 155), Tatian (A.D. 170), and Irenaeus (A.D. 180). It does not seem likely that Mark would end his story on a note of fear (v. 8).

16:9 Although the women had been commissioned to tell of Jesus' resurrection, none had actually seen Jesus until **He appeared first to Mary Magdalene**. Only this verse and Luke 8:2 mention Jesus' exorcism of **seven demons** from Mary, which would explain her strong devotion to Him.

16:11 Jesus' resurrection was evidently not expected by anyone in spite of His repeated predictions. The Resurrection itself resulted in faith, rather than the expectation thereof.

16:12 Jesus' appearance in **another form** may indicate that He appeared differently to the two on the road than He had appeared to Jesus' followers before. The identity of the **two** who **walked** is not entirely stated, either here or in the longer account in Luke 24:13-35. However, one is identified as Cleopas (Luke 24:18), and it has been suggested that he was accompanied by his wife.

16:14 After Judas' demise (Matt. 27:3-5; Acts 1:16-18), the disciples were known for a while as **the eleven**. Jesus upbraided these disciples for not believing the accounts of eyewitnesses, but He pronounced a blessing on "those who have not seen and yet have believed" (John 20:29).

seen Him after He had risen. ¹⁵*m* And He said to them, “Go into all the world ⁿand preach the gospel to every creature. ¹⁶*o* He who believes and is baptized will be saved; ^pbut he who does not believe will be condemned. ¹⁷And these ^qsigns will follow those who ^rbelieve: ^sIn My name they will cast out demons; ^tthey will speak with new tongues; ¹⁸^uthey will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; ^vthey will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.”

¹⁵ *m* Matt. 28:19; [John 15:16; Acts 1:8]; Col. 1:6 ⁿ [Col. 1:23]
¹⁶ *o* [John 3:18, 36; Acts 2:38; 16:30, 31; Rom. 10:8-10]
^p [John 12:48]
¹⁷ *q* Acts 5:12
^r Mark 9:38; Luke 10:17; Acts 5:16; 8:7; 16:18; 19:12 ^s [Acts 2:4; 1 Cor. 12:10]
^t *have believed*
¹⁸ ^u [Luke 10:19]; Acts 28:3-6 ^v [Acts 5:15]; James 5:14
³ NU and in their

The Ascension of Jesus

Luke 24:49-53; Acts 1:9

¹⁹So then, ^vafter the Lord had spoken to them, He was ^wreceived up into heaven, and ^xsat down at the right hand of God. ²⁰And they went out and preached everywhere, the Lord working with *them* ^yand confirming the word through the accompanying signs. Amen.

hands they will ¹⁹ *v* Acts 1:2, 3 ^w Ps. 68:18; Luke 9:51; 24:51; John 6:62; 20:17; Acts 1:2, 9-11; [1 Tim. 3:16; Rev. 4:2]
^x [Ps. 110:1]; Luke 22:69; [Acts 7:55]; 1 Pet. 3:22 ²⁰ *y* Acts 5:12; [1 Cor. 2:4, 5; Heb. 2:4]

gospel

(Gk. *euangelion*) (1:1, 14; 16:15; Matt. 4:23; Rom. 1:1; 1 Pet. 4:17) Strong's #2098

This Greek word was originally used to describe the “good news” of military victory brought from a messenger to his commander. It then came to mean simply a “good message.” In the NT it means the Good News of salvation: Jesus Christ came to earth to conquer the sin and evil which plague this world by living a sinless life and sacrificially offering Himself on the Cross. In obedience to Christ’s command (16:15), the apostles continued to share this Good News with the rest of the world because it is Christ’s life-giving message to a world that is dying in its sins.

16:15 The Great Commission is pronounced here and in each of the other three Gospels (Matt. 28:19, 20; Luke 24:47; John 20:21).
16:16 **He who does not believe will be condemned.** Those who believe in Christ will be saved.
16:17, 18 These signs were evident in the early church. Casting **out demons** demonstrated victory over Satan (Acts 16:18). Speaking with **new tongues** began at Pentecost (Acts 2:4–11). Healing **the sick** occurred in several instances, including Acts 28:8. Taking **up serpents** occurred in Paul’s encounter with a poisonous snake, which did not produce ill effects (Acts 28:1–6). The NT does not record Christians drinking **anything deadly** without harm.
16:19 The final sign that Jesus was the Son of God is that **He was received up into heaven to be seated at the right hand** (the position of authority and power) **of God**.
16:20 The obedience of Christ’s disciples who **went out and preached everywhere** challenges us to engage in that same endeavor. We can be confident that as the **Lord was working with them**, He will also work with us.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE



SOMETIMES WE NEED to take a step back to gain perspective. It is one thing for three of Jesus' twelve disciples to write about the life of Christ; it is quite another for someone who did not know Him to write about Him. Luke never met Jesus, yet chose to follow Him. An obviously educated man who, as Colossians 4:14 tells us, was a physician, Luke learned all that he could about Jesus and shared his findings with us. Thus his Gospel provides a "step back," a unique perspective on Jesus' birth, ministry, death, and resurrection.

Author Neither Luke nor Acts has a byline, so we are left to deduce the author's identity. The author writes that he was not an eyewitness to the events surrounding Jesus but had gathered the reports of others. On the other hand, the author was present with Paul at some of the events described in Acts, events that belong to the "we" sections of Acts (see Acts 16:10–17; 20:5–15; 21:1–18; 27:1—28:16). So the author must have been a lately converted Christian who knew Paul and sometimes traveled with him.

Early Christian writings, from the works of Justin Martyr to Tertullian, identify the author as Luke, an identification that was firmly in place by the third century A.D. Luke was an educated man by ancient standards. He was capable of writing in high Greek style, and Colossians 4:10–14 seems to indicate that Luke was not "of the circumcision," that is, not Jewish. If so, Luke would be the only Gentile author of a New Testament book. Tradition says that after accompanying Paul on some of his missionary journeys, Luke settled in Philippi, investing his life in the ministry of the Philippian church.

Date Neither Luke nor Acts indicates when they were written, so this too must be deduced. The last event recorded in the Book of Acts is the first Roman imprisonment of Paul; therefore, the earliest Acts could have been written is A.D. 62. Most scholars choose between two times for the Gospel: early to late sixties, or mid-seventies to late eighties. Two factors determine the choice: the date of the other Gospels and the portrayal of the fall of Jerusalem in Luke.

Almost everyone considers Luke the second or third Gospel to be written, though they debate whether Mark or Matthew was the first. The first Gospel, whether Matthew or Mark, is usually dated in the sixties. Those who place Matthew and Mark in the sixties often date Luke after A.D. 70, to allow time for the circulation of Matthew and Mark. Another reason given for dating Luke after A.D. 70 is the claim that Luke presents Jesus' predictions of the fall of Jerusalem (19:41–44; 21:20–24) in such a way as to indicate that the city had already fallen.

Neither of these arguments is decisive. Given that the major figures of the early church had contact with one another, there is no reason to assume that it took a decade for a major Gospel to get into circulation. The prediction of the fall of Jerusalem in Luke is unique among the Gospel accounts in focusing on the fall of the city and not merely the destruction of the temple. Thus what Jesus describes is a judgment which is the result of covenant unfaithfulness, similar to the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. The fact that Luke includes Jesus' prediction of a second fall of the city does not mean the city had already been destroyed when the book was written. Since the sequel to Luke, the Book of Acts, does not record either Peter's death, Paul's death, or even the fall of Jerusalem (in the face of Jesus' clear prediction of it), it is most likely that Luke was written in the early to mid-sixties. A date in the later sixties is also possible.

Characteristics The Gospel of Luke is unique in several ways. It is the only Gospel that has a sequel, Acts. Both Luke and Acts include an account of the Ascension, an event that only Luke describes in detail. Second, Luke is the longest of the four Gospels. Third, Luke records a wide variety of miracles, teaching, and parables, making it the fullest portrait of Jesus' ministry. Much of the material in chapters 9–19 appears only in Luke; in all, about one-third of the Gospel of Luke is unique. Fourth, Luke is the only Gospel addressed to an individual. Luke writes for Theophilus, who was probably a Gentile believer.

For Luke, Jesus is the promised Messiah (1:31–35), the Son of God (9:35), the Servant through whom God works (4:16–18), and the Lord who is called to sit at God's right hand exerting His authority and giving the Spirit to those who believe (compare 22:69 with Acts 2:30–36). Though aspects of God's plan are fulfilled in Jesus' First Coming, other parts of the plan remain to be fulfilled when Jesus returns (21:5–36; Acts 3:14–26).

Luke wrote his Gospel to reassure Theophilus, a Gentile and a new believer, that God was still at work in the Christian community founded by Jesus. Luke presents God's grace as revealed in Jesus' ministry on earth. He emphasizes that this grace is available to Gentiles, even though the promises relating to Jesus' ministry stretch back into Israel's history (1:1–4). For this reason Luke also concentrates on Jesus' relationship to the nation and leaders of Israel. The rejection of Israel does not mean the failure of God's plan. On the contrary, although they did not know it, their rejection was part of God's plan from the beginning (Acts 2:22–39). In fact, persecution of the Christian community would be the means by which the church would spread the Good News throughout the world. Jesus Himself had predicted that this would happen (24:45–48).

Structure and Overview The first two chapters of Luke emphasize the Old Testament and its promises of a Messiah, while 3:1—4:13 demonstrate that Jesus is the Messiah, who can resist the Evil One. Then, 4:14—9:50 introduce Jesus' power and teaching. In these chapters, Luke records Jesus' claims to authority and the numerous miracles that supported them. Even with these miracles as evidence, the people rejected Jesus while the disciples' faith in Him steadily grew. The growing rift between Jesus and the Jewish leadership is seen in 9:51—19:44. This breach is emphasized most in chapters 9–13, but in chapters 14–19 attention turns to Jesus' instruction of His disciples. The last section (19:45—24:53) portrays the final controversies, the trial, the death of Jesus, and the Resurrection and Ascension. The book ends with Jesus telling the disciples to wait for the coming of the Spirit. By now, they should have realized that everything that had taken place in Jesus' life was promised in the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms (24:43–49). Jesus is the promised Messiah. Forgiveness of sin can be obtained only through Him. The disciples were witnesses to this fact; their mission was to share this Good News with all



View overlooking the Sea of Galilee from the Mount of Beatitudes, where it is thought the Sermon on the Mount was preached (Matt. 5–7; cf. Luke's Sermon on the Plain in Luke 6:20–49)

nations, not merely the Jews. Jesus gave them this task, but He also provided them with the power to carry it out (24:47). Thus it is clear that Luke's Gospel centers on God's plan to provide salvation to the world. It closes anticipating the spread of the gospel that is recorded in its sequel, the Book of Acts.

CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

Just like we'd expect from a family doctor, Dr. Luke sensitively describes Jesus as One who reaches out personally and heals those who are mercilessly caged by devastating illnesses. As a person, He is concerned with people. Whereas Matthew likes to refer to Jesus as the Son of David and Mark refers to Him as the Son of God, Luke's favorite expression is "the Son of Man."

Jesus' humanity and compassion are repeatedly stressed by the author. This, coupled with Luke's portrayal of Jesus' sinless perfection, set up his logical conclusion. Because Jesus is the only perfect person born of a woman and because He identifies compassionately with the plight of suffering sinful people, He alone is qualified to carry our sorrows, bear our sin, and offer us the priceless gift of salvation.

LUKE OUTLINE

- I. Introduction to John the Baptist and Jesus 1:1—2:52
 - A. Preface 1:1–4
 - B. Birth and childhood of John the Baptist and Jesus 1:5—2:40
 - C. Jesus' childhood wisdom 2:41–52
- II. Preparation for the ministry 3:1—4:13
 - A. John the Baptist, the one who goes before 3:1–20
 - B. Jesus, the One who comes 3:21—4:13



The church at Nain, which commemorates Jesus raising the widow's son (Luke 7:11)

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- III. Galilean ministry: the revelation of Jesus 4:14—9:50
 - A. Overview of Jesus’ ministry 4:14–44
 - B. The gathering of disciples 5:1—6:16
 - C. The sermon on the plain 6:17–49
 - D. First movements to faith and questions about Jesus 7:1—8:3
 - E. The call to faith 8:4—9:17
 - F. Peter’s confession and instruction concerning discipleship 9:18–50
- IV. The journey to Jerusalem: Jewish rejection and the new Way 9:51—19:44
 - A. The rejection at Samaria and the mission of the Seventy 9:51—10:24
 - B. Discipleship: concerning one’s neighbors, Jesus, and God 10:25—11:13
 - C. Controversies with the Pharisees, corrections, and calls to trust 11:14–54
 - D. Discipleship: trusting God 12:1–48
 - E. Knowing the time: lessons on repentance and the kingdom 12:49—14:24
 - F. Discipleship in the face of rejection: commitment 14:25–35
 - G. God’s pursuit of sinners 15:1–32
 - H. Generosity with money and possessions 16:1–31
 - I. Lessons on false teaching, forgiveness, faith, and service 17:1–10
 - J. Faith in the King and the kingdom’s consummation 17:11—18:8
 - K. Humility and trusting all to the Father 18:9–30
 - L. Jesus’ approach to Jerusalem 18:31—19:44
- V. Jerusalem: the Innocent slain and raised 19:45—24:53
 - A. Controversy in Jerusalem 19:45—21:4
 - B. Jesus’ prediction of Jerusalem’s destruction 21:5–38
 - C. The Last Supper and the last discourse 22:1–38
 - D. Jesus’ betrayal, trial, and death 22:39—23:56
 - E. The Resurrection and the Ascension 24:1–53

37–4 B.C.
Herod the Great is king in Jerusalem

31 B.C.–A.D. 14
Augustus Caesar is Roman emperor

c. 5 B.C.
Jesus is born in Bethlehem

4 B.C.–A.D. 39
Herod Antipas rules in Galilee and Perea

A.D. 14–37
Tiberius Caesar is Roman emperor

c. A.D. 25–27
John the Baptist’s ministry

A.D. 26–36
Pontius Pilate is procurator of Judea

c. A.D. 27
Jesus’ first Judean ministry

c. A.D. 27–29
Jesus’ Galilean ministry

c. A.D. 29–30
Second Judean and Perea ministry

c. A.D. 30
Crucifixion; Resurrection

The Purpose and Method of Luke's Gospel

Inasmuch as many have taken in hand to set in order a narrative of those ^athings which ¹have been fulfilled among us, ²just as those who ^bfrom the beginning were ^ceyewitnesses and ministers of the word ^ddelivered them to us, ³it seemed good to me also, having ²had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write to you an orderly account, ^emost excellent Theophilus, ^{4f}that you may know the certainty of those things in which you were instructed.

Zacharias Ministers in the Temple

⁵There was ^gin the days of Herod, the king of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias, ^hof the division of ⁱAbijah. His ^jwife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. ⁶And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. ⁷But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and they were both well advanced in years.

CHAPTER 1

¹ ^a John 20:31 ¹ Or are most surely believed

² ^b Mark 1:1; John 15:27; Acts 1:21, 22

^c Acts 1:2 ^d Acts 1:3; 10:39; Heb. 2:3; 1 Pet. 5:1; 2 Pet. 1:16; 1 John 1:1

³ ^e Acts 1:1 ² Lit. accurately followed

⁴ ^f [John 20:31] ⁵ ^g Matt. 2:1

^h 1 Chr. 24:1, 10 ⁱ Neh. 12:4 / Lev. 21:13, 14

⁹ ^f Ex. 30:7, 8; 1 Chr. 23:13; 2 Chr. 29:11

³ he was chosen by lot

¹⁰ ^j Lev. 16:17 ¹¹ ^m Ex. 30:1

¹² ⁿ Judg. 6:22; Dan. 10:8; Luke 2:9; Acts 10:4; Rev. 1:17

¹³ ^o Luke 1:57, 60, 63

¹⁴ ^p Luke 1:58 ¹⁵ ^q [Luke 7:24-28]

^r Num. 6:3; Judg. 13:4; Matt. 11:18

^s Jer. 1:5; Gal. 1:15

⁸So it was, that while he was serving as priest before God in the order of his division, ⁹according to the custom of the priesthood, ³his lot fell ^kto burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord. ^{10l}And the whole multitude of the people was praying outside at the hour of incense.

An Angel Announces the Birth of John the Baptist

¹¹Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing on the right side of ^mthe altar of incense. ¹²And when Zacharias saw him, ⁿhe was troubled, and fear fell upon him.

¹³But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your prayer is heard; and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and ^oyou shall call his name John. ¹⁴And you will have joy and gladness, and ^pmany will rejoice at his birth. ¹⁵For he will be ^qgreat in the sight of the Lord, and ^rshall drink neither wine nor strong drink. He will also be filled with the Holy Spirit, ^seven from his mother's womb. ¹⁶And he will turn many of the

1:1, 2 many have taken in hand: Luke makes it clear that he was not the first to write a **narrative** of the ministry of Jesus. The theme of God's plan is introduced with the note that the subject of such narratives was the **things which have been fulfilled**. The sources for these narratives were **eyewitnesses** who **delivered** their testimony to the church. *Deliver* refers to the transmission of an authoritative account. These verses suggest that Luke was not an eyewitness to the events of Jesus' ministry, but that he had access to statements of those who were.

1:3 it seemed good to me also: Luke did not express dissatisfaction with previous narratives of Jesus' ministry, but he identified with those who went before him. **having had perfect understanding:** This phrase represents two of the four characteristics that describe Luke's work in this verse. Luke investigated his topic and he did it with care. He did not claim to know everything about Jesus, but what he described was studied and treated accurately. **of all things:** The third characteristic of Luke's work was its thoroughness. **from the very first:** The fourth characteristic of Luke was his interest in even the earliest events tied to Jesus' life. **an orderly account:** Luke gave his narrative a basic structure. Not every part is in chronological sequence, but the broad sequence is Christ's ministry in Galilee, His travel to Jerusalem, and His struggles in Jerusalem. The order of events shows how Jesus gradually revealed Himself and how the opposition to Him grew.

1:4 certainty: The purpose of this term was to give assurance to Theophilus, a young believer. It is likely that Theophilus was a Gentile, since so much of Luke and Acts is concerned with Jewish-Gentile relationships (Acts 10; 11; 15). He not only needed to know the truth and accuracy of what the church taught, but also needed to be reassured. He might well have been wondering what he as a Gentile was doing in a movement which was originally Jewish, especially when so many Israelites were rejecting the message. Luke assured Theophilus and his other readers that Jesus is the Messiah. He is worthy of everyone's worship because He is the Son of the living God.

1:5 King Herod, who was appointed by the Roman emperor, reigned from 37 to 4 B.C. over Judea, Samaria, Galilee, and much of Perea and Syria. The events of vv. 5-25 probably occurred around 6 B.C. **Abijah:** The priesthood of Israel was separated into 24 divisions, of which the family of Abijah was one (see 1 Chr. 24:10; Neh. 12:17).

1:6 righteous before God: This phrase indicates that the priest

and his wife were recognized by God as believers. They walked faithfully with God and kept His law (see Deut. 6:24, 25).

1:7 Being barren was a grave disappointment in ancient Israel (see 1 Sam. 1). The Scriptures record a number of times when God blessed a barren woman by giving her a son (see Gen. 18:11; 21:2, 3; 1 Sam. 1; 2).

1:8, 9 Zacharias served for one week twice a year at the temple, one of perhaps 18,000 priests who served in a year. Offering the incense was something a **priest** could do only once in his career. It was a great moment for Zacharias, all the more so because of the sovereign plan God had for him and his family.

1:10 The hour of incense came twice a day, at 9 A.M. and 3:30 P.M. Probably the afternoon offering is in view here.

1:12 fear fell upon him: To be afraid at the presence of God or His messenger (v. 11) is common in Scripture (see 1:29, 65; 2:9; 5:8-10, 26; 7:16; 8:37; 9:34; see also Ex. 15:16; Dan. 8:16, 17; Acts 5:5, 11; 19:17).

1:13 Do not be afraid: Angels often calmed the fears of those to whom they appeared (see v. 30; 2:10; Gen. 15:1; Dan. 10:12; Matt. 1:20; Acts 18:9; 27:24; Rev. 1:17). **your prayer is heard:** The angel was probably referring to the prayer for the redemption of Israel that Zacharias had recited in the Holy Place, or to his earlier prayers for a child. **you shall call his name John:** When God names a child, greatness usually follows (see Gen. 16:11; 1 Kin. 13:2; Is. 7:14).

1:14 Joy is a major theme throughout the writings of Luke (see vv. 44, 47, 58; 2:10; 10:20; 13:17; 15:5-7; 19:6; 24:52; Acts 5:41).

1:15 great in the sight of the Lord: John had a great place in the plan of God, but it was inferior to Jesus' own unique role. John was a prophet, and as such he was **filled with the Holy Spirit** from before birth (see Is. 49:1; Jer. 1:5). Being filled with the Spirit means being directed by Him and obedient to Him (see Eph. 5:18). **wine nor strong drink:** As with Samuel and Samson, a vow was imposed on the child that indicated his special consecration to the Lord. Unlike Samson and Samuel, this vow was imposed by God, not by his mother. It is not clear whether this was a Nazirite vow, since nothing is said about refraining from cutting his hair (see Num. 6:1-4; Judg. 13:5, 7).

1:16 The prophet John promised reconciliation to God for those who responded to his call to repent (3:1-14). **Turn** is a biblical term for conversion, indicating a change of orientation, a turning away from sin and towards God (see 1 Thess. 1:9, 10). John's mission was to prepare Israel for its Messiah.



children of Israel to the Lord their God.
¹⁷He will also go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, *‘to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children,’* and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.”

Zacharias Is Unable to Speak

¹⁸And Zacharias said to the angel, “How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is well advanced in years.”

¹⁹And the angel answered and said to him, “I am ^vGabriel, who stands in the presence of God, and was sent to speak to you and bring you ^dthese glad ^wtidings.
²⁰But behold, ^xyou will be mute and not able to speak until the day these things take place, because you did not believe my words which will be fulfilled in their own time.”

²¹And the people waited for Zacharias, and marveled that he lingered so long in the temple. ²²But when he came out, he could not speak to them; and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple, for he beckoned to them and remained speechless.

²³So it was, as soon as [#]the days of his service were completed, that he departed to his own house. ²⁴Now after those days his wife Elizabeth conceived; and she hid herself five months, saying, ²⁵“Thus the Lord has dealt with me, in the days when

¹⁷ ^t Mal. 4:5, 6; Matt. 3:2; 11:14; Mark 1:4; 9:12
¹⁸ ^u Gen. 17:17
¹⁹ ^v Dan. 8:16; [Matt. 18:10]; Heb. 1:4
²⁰ ^w Luke 2:10
²¹ ^x this good news
²² ^y Ezek. 3:26; 24:27
²³ ^z 2 Kin. 11:5; 1 Chr. 9:25

²⁵ ^z Gen. 30:23; Is. 41:54; 54:1, 4
²⁷ ^a Matt. 1:18; Luke 2:4, 5
²⁸ ^b Dan. 9:23
^c Judg. 6:12 ⁵ NU omits *blessed are you among women*
²⁹ ^d Luke 1:12 ⁶ NU omits *when she saw him*
³⁰ ^e Luke 2:52
³¹ ^f Is. 7:14 [★]; Matt. 1:21, 25; Gal. 4:4
³² ^g Luke 2:21 [☆]; [Phil. 2:9–11]
³² ^h Matt. 3:17; 17:5; Mark 5:7 [☆]; Luke 1:35, 76; 6:35; Acts 7:48 ² 2 Sam. 7:12, 13, 16; Ps. 132:11; [Is. 9:6, 7; 16:5; Jer. 23:5] ² 2 Sam. 7:14–17; Acts 2:33; 7:55
³³ ⁱ Matt. 1:1
³³ ^j [Dan. 2:44; Obad. 21; Mic. 4:7]; John 12:34; [Heb. 1:8]; 2 Pet. 1:11
³⁴ ^k Am. 1:9
³⁵ ^m Matt. 1:20

He looked on *me*, to ^ztake away my reproach among people.”

Gabriel Announces Christ's Birth

²⁶Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, ²⁷to a virgin ^abetrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸And having come in, the angel said to her, ^b“Rejoice, highly favored one, ^cthe Lord is with you; ⁵blessed are you among women!”

²⁹But ⁶when she saw *him*, ^dshe was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was. ³⁰Then the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found ^efavor with God. ³¹^fAnd behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and ^gshall call His name Jesus. ³²He will be great, ^hand will be called the Son of the Highest; and ⁱthe Lord God will give Him the ^jthrone of His ^kfather David. ³³^lAnd He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end.”

Mary Miraculously Conceives

³⁴Then Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I ⁷do not know a man?”

³⁵And the angel answered and said to her, ^m“The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will

1:17 in the spirit and power of Elijah: John was the forerunner of the Messiah. This description recalls Mal. 3:1; 4:5. John's ministry paralleled Elijah's, for both prophets called Israel to repentance (see 1 Kin. 17; 18). As with many elements in God's plan, there is an initial fulfillment and a later fulfillment yet to come, which are distinct but related. Both John and Jesus may suggest the return of an Elijah-like figure in the end times (see Matt. 17:11–13; John 1:21). **a people prepared:** The prepared people are those whom God has drawn to Himself for His special purposes.

1:18 How shall I know: Zacharias expressed his doubt and asked for a sign, a lack of faith that is addressed in vv. 64, 65. Zacharias completely ignored the divine source of the promise and the angelic messenger who delivered it.

1:19 One of two angels named in the Bible, **Gabriel** was often a messenger who communicated God's plan (see Dan. 8:16; 9:21). Michael is the other angel whose name is given (see Dan. 10:13, 21; Jude 9; Rev. 12:7).

1:20 mute: It seems that Zacharias was not only unable to speak, but unable to hear as well (vv. 62, 63). The arrival of the child would break Zacharias's silence. The priest would be filled with joy, praising God for His faithfulness (see Zacharias's song in vv. 68–79).

1:21 The people at the temple awaited the Aaronic blessing of the high priest (see Num. 6:24–26). The conclusion of the offering occurred only after the priests emerged from the Holy Place.

1:23 Zacharias's house was located in the hill country south of Jerusalem (v. 39).

1:24 Why Elizabeth hid herself is not clear. The most likely suggestion is that she withdrew to give praise to God, as v. 25 suggests, and to prepare privately for the coming of her special child.

1:25 my reproach: In ancient Israel barrenness was seen as a cause for shame. The “opening of the womb” indicated God's grace (see

Gen. 21:6; 30:23; 1 Sam. 1; 2; Ps. 128:3). In this verse, Elizabeth praises the Lord for mercifully blessing her even as He moved His plan for all of human history forward.

1:26–38 Luke's account of the announcement of Jesus' birth tells the story from Mary's perspective, while Matt. 1:18–25 focuses on Joseph and cites Is. 7:14. The announcement in Luke parallels similar announcements in the OT (see Gen. 16:7–14; 18:1–15; Judg. 13:3–23).

1:26 In the sixth month means six months after John the Baptist was conceived. **Nazareth** was a little village in Galilee, a region north of Jerusalem.

1:28 blessed are you among women: Mary was blessed because she received God's grace, not because she bestowed it.

1:32 The Highest is another way of referring to the majesty of God. **David:** Jesus fulfilled (and will fulfill) God's promise to David concerning an unending dynasty. The OT develops in detail this promise of an eternal Davidic kingdom (see 2 Sam. 7:8–16; 1 Kin. 2:24, 25; Ps. 2:1–12; 89:14, 19–29, 35–37; 110:1–7; 132:11, 12; Is. 9:6, 7; 11:1–5, 10; Jer. 23:5, 6). First-century Israelites based their hopes on these promises, but their focus was on a political and earthly kingdom.

1:34 How can this be: Mary did not ask for a sign, so this remark does not reflect unbelief. She accepts her role without question in v. 38, and thus is a model of faith even though she does not fully understand everything. The work of God in Mary introduces something unknown before or after: the birth into the human race of One who is both God and man.

1:35 The Holy Spirit will come upon you: This is a direct declaration of Jesus' divine conception. The association of the Spirit with **power** is frequent for Luke (v. 17; 4:14; Acts 1:8; 6:8–10; 10:38). The child's conception means He is uniquely set apart, the **Holy One**, a phrase which is here not so much a title as a description of Jesus' sinless nature.

overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called ⁿthe Son of God.³⁶ Now indeed, Elizabeth your relative has also conceived a son in her old age; and this is now the sixth month for her who was called barren.³⁷ For ^owith God nothing will be impossible.”

³⁸ Then Mary said, “Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word.” And the angel departed from her.

Mary Visits Elizabeth

³⁹ Now Mary arose in those days and went into the hill country with haste, ^pto a city of Judah, ⁴⁰and entered the house of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹ And it happened, when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, that the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was ^qfilled with the Holy Spirit. ⁴² Then she spoke out with a loud voice and said, ^r“Blessed *are* you among women, and blessed *is* the fruit of your womb! ⁴³ But why *is* this *granted* to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? ⁴⁴ For indeed, as soon as the voice of your greeting sounded in my ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. ⁴⁵ ^sBlessed *is* she who ^tbelieved, for there will be a fulfillment of those things which were told her from the Lord.”

³⁵ ^a Ps. 2:7; Matt. 3:17; 14:33; 17:5; Mark 1:1; John 1:34; 20:31; Acts 8:37; [Rom. 1:1-4; Heb. 1:2, 8]
³⁷ ^o Gen. 18:14; Jer. 32:17; Matt. 19:26; Mark 10:27; Rom. 4:21
³⁹ ^p Josh. 21:9
⁴¹ ^q Acts 6:3
⁴² ^r Judg. 5:24
⁴⁵ ^s John 20:29
^t Or *believed that there*
⁴⁶ ^r 1 Sam. 2:1-10; Ps. 34:2, 3; Hab. 3:18 ^q Declares the greatness of
⁴⁷ ^u Ps. 35:9; Hab. 3:18 ^v 1 Tim. 1:1; 2:3; Titus 1:3; 2:10; 3:4; Jude 25
⁴⁸ ^w 1 Sam. 1:11; Ps. 138:6 ^x Luke 11:27
⁴⁹ ^y Ps. 71:19; 126:2, 3 ^z Ps. 111:9; Rev. 4:8
⁵⁰ ^a Gen. 17:7; Ex. 20:6; 34:6, 7; Ps. 103:17
⁵¹ ^b Ps. 98:1; 118:15; Is. 40:10 ^c Ps. 33:10; [1 Pet. 5:5]
⁵² ^d 1 Sam. 2:7, 8
⁵³ ^e [Matt. 5:6]
⁵⁴ ^f Is. 41:8 ^g Ps. 98:3; [Jer. 31:3]
⁵⁵ ^h Gen. 17:19; Ps. 132:11; [Gal. 3:16]
ⁱ [Rom. 11:28] ^j Gen. 17:7

⁴⁶ And Mary said:

⁴⁶ “My soul ⁹magnifies the Lord,
⁴⁷ And my spirit has ^urejoiced in ^vGod my Savior.
⁴⁸ For ^wHe has regarded the lowly state of His maidservant;
For behold, henceforth ^xall generations will call me blessed.
⁴⁹ For He who is mighty ^yhas done great things for me,
And ^zholy *is* His name.
⁵⁰ And ^aHis mercy *is* on those who fear Him
From generation to generation.
⁵¹ ^bHe has shown strength with His arm;
^cHe has scattered *the* proud in the imagination of their hearts.
⁵² ^dHe has put down the mighty from *their* thrones,
And exalted *the* lowly.
⁵³ He has ^efilled *the* hungry with good things,
And *the* rich He has sent away empty.
⁵⁴ He has helped His ^fservant Israel,
^gIn remembrance of *His* mercy,
⁵⁵ ^hAs He spoke to our ⁱfathers,
To Abraham and to his ^jseed forever.”

1:37 nothing will be impossible: God keeps His promises regardless of how difficult the circumstances may seem. Gabriel’s statement about God should be our statement of faith: Nothing is impossible with God.

1:38 Maidservant suggests humility before the Lord and a readiness for faithful and obedient service, which should characterize every believer. Paul uses the masculine form of this word to describe himself (see Rom. 1:1).

1:41 the babe leaped in her womb: Mary’s coming brought a reaction from John in Elizabeth’s womb. The Messiah’s forerunner gave testimony to the Messiah even before he was born. The angel had predicted to Zacharias that his baby would be filled with the Holy Spirit even from the womb (v. 15).

1:43 why is this granted to me: Elizabeth marveled at the grace

that allowed her a role in God’s great plan. She knew God owed her nothing; but she also knew that God had mercifully given her much.

1:45 Mary’s faith contrasts with the doubt of Zacharias. **Blessed is she who believed:** Mary’s response of faith was exemplary. She was simply waiting on God to bring His promises to fulfillment.

1:46 The following hymn (vv. 46–55) gets its name, the “Magnificat,” from the Latin word for **magnifies**. One of four hymns in the first two chapters of Luke (vv. 67–79; 2:14; 2:29–32), Mary’s hymn is a recital of what God had done for her and for others in the past.

1:48 Henceforth means “from now on.” Things would never be the same again (see 5:10; 12:52; 22:69; Acts 18:6). **all generations will call me blessed:** Mary went from being a poor unknown Hebrew girl to the most honored woman in the history of the world.

1:49 He who is mighty: God is One who protects and fights for His children (see Ps. 45:3; 89:8; Zeph. 3:17). **holy is His name:** God is unique and set apart from all other beings (see Lev. 11:44, 45; Ps. 99:3; Is. 57:15).

1:50 The term **mercy** expresses the OT concept of God’s loyal, gracious, faithful love (see Ps. 103). **those who fear Him:** God’s mercy comes to those who look respectfully to Him.

1:51–53 These verses portray a “reversal” in the end times, when those who have abused power will be judged and those who have suffered persecution will be exalted. Mary was looking forward to the day when God’s people are no longer oppressed, but are instead blessed by the Lord. God’s **strength with His arm** figuratively describes His activity and power as Savior of His people (see v. 47; Deut. 4:34; Ps. 89:13; 118:15).

1:54, 55 His servant Israel: The idea of Israel as God’s servant is found frequently in the Book of Isaiah (see Is. 41:8, 9; 44:1, 2, 21; 48:20; 49:3). Israel has a special role in serving God and revealing Him. **He spoke to our fathers:** God’s actions in the life of Mary were based on commitments He made centuries before (see Gen. 12:1–3; 22:16–18).

Savior

(Gk. *sōtēr*) (1:47; 2:11; John 4:42; Phil. 3:20) Strong’s #4990

In addition to the obvious meaning, “one who provides salvation,” the word Savior often includes the related meanings of “Deliverer,” “Protector,” or “Preserver.” In ancient Greek society, the term was applied not only to gods but also to human beings whose significant actions brought some type of benefit to others. In 1:47, Mary rejoices in God her Savior, referring to the Lord’s mighty acts of protection and deliverance on behalf of Israel. In 2:11, the angel announces to the shepherds the birth of “a Savior, who is Christ the Lord,” One who would offer Himself as a sacrifice to provide redemption for all. Luke’s emphasis on Jesus as Savior can be seen in the summary of Jesus’ mission in 19:10: “to seek and to save that which was lost.”

⁵⁶ And Mary remained with her about three months, and returned to her house.

Elizabeth Gives Birth to John

⁵⁷ Now Elizabeth's full time came for her to be delivered, and she brought forth a son. ⁵⁸ When her neighbors and relatives heard how the Lord had shown great mercy to her, they ^k rejoiced with her.

⁵⁹ So it was, ^l on the eighth day, that they came to circumcise the child; and they would have called him by the name of his father, Zacharias. ⁶⁰ His mother answered and said, ^m "No; he shall be called John."

⁶¹ But they said to her, "There is no one among your relatives who is called by this name." ⁶² So they made signs to his father—what he would have him called.

⁶³ And he asked for a writing tablet, and wrote, saying, "His name is John." So they all marveled. ⁶⁴ Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue *loosed*, and he spoke, praising God. ⁶⁵ Then fear came on all who dwelt around them; and all these sayings were discussed throughout all the hill country of Judea. ⁶⁶ And all those who heard *them* ⁿ kept *them* in their hearts, saying, "What kind of child will this be?" And ^o the hand of the Lord was with him.

Zacharias Prophesies of John's Ministry

⁶⁷ Now his father Zacharias ^p was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied, saying:

⁶⁸ "Blessed ^q is the Lord God of Israel, For ^r He has visited and redeemed His people,

⁵⁸ ^k [Rom. 12:15]
⁵⁹ ^l Gen. 17:12; Lev. 12:3; Luke 2:21; Phil. 3:5
⁶⁰ ^m Luke 1:13, 63
⁶⁶ ⁿ Luke 2:19
^o Gen. 39:2; Acts 11:21
⁶⁷ ^p Joel 2:28
⁶⁸ ^q 1 Kin. 1:48; Ps. 106:48 ^r Ex. 3:16

⁶⁹ ^s 2 Sam. 22:3; Ps. 132:17; Ezek. 29:21
⁷⁰ ^t Jer. 23:5; Rom. 1:2 ^u Acts 3:21
⁷² ^v Lev. 26:42
⁷³ ^w Gen. 12:3; 22:16-18; [Heb. 6:13]
⁷⁴ ^x [Rom. 6:18; Heb. 9:14]
⁷⁵ ^y Jer. 32:39; [Eph. 4:24; 2 Thess. 2:13]
⁷⁶ ^z Matt. 3:3; 11:9; Mark 3:2, 3; Luke 3:4; John 1:23 ^a Is. 40:3; Mal. 3:1; Matt. 11:10
⁷⁷ ^b Jer. 31:34; Mark 1:4; Luke 3:3
⁷⁸ ⁱ Lit. *Dawn*; the Messiah ² NU shall visit
⁷⁹ ^c Is. 9:2; Matt. 4:16; [Acts 26:18; 2 Cor. 4:6; Eph. 5:14]
^d [John 10:4; 14:27; 16:33] ☆

⁶⁹ ^s And has raised up a horn of salvation for us
In the house of His servant David,
⁷⁰ ^t As He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets,
Who *have been* ^u since the world began,
⁷¹ That we should be saved from our enemies
And from the hand of all who hate us,
⁷² ^v To perform the mercy *promised* to our fathers
And to remember His holy covenant,
⁷³ ^w The oath which He swore to our father Abraham:
⁷⁴ To grant us that we,
Being delivered from the hand of our enemies,
Might ^x serve Him without fear,
⁷⁵ ^y In holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of our life.

⁷⁶ "And you, child, will be called the ^z prophet of the Highest;
For ^a you will go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways,
⁷⁷ To give ^b knowledge of salvation to His people
By the remission of their sins,
⁷⁸ Through the tender mercy of our God,
With which the ¹ Dayspring from on high ² has visited us;
⁷⁹ ^c To give light to those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death,
To ^d guide our feet into the way of peace."

1:59 they would have called him: It was an ancient custom to give the name of a family member to a newborn.

1:60 John was the name that the angel had told Zacharias to give the child (v. 13).

1:62, 63 The fact that the people **made signs** to Zacharias indicates that he was deaf as well as mute (v. 20). **A writing tablet** was a wood tablet covered with wax.

1:67 filled with the Holy Spirit: Here the presence of the Spirit enabled Zacharias to announce God's promise. Zacharias's hymn is called the "Benedictus" from its first word in the Latin Vulgate translation. **prophesied:** Though Zacharias was a priest, the Spirit enabled him to prophesy. There are three types of prophecy in the Bible: foretelling future events, forthtelling the Word of God, and praising God. Zacharias's prophecy includes all three.

1:68 He has visited and redeemed: As also in Mary's hymn, God the Savior is the object of Zacharias's praise. The salvation referred to by Zacharias is both national (vv. 71, 74) and spiritual (vv. 75, 77, 79).

1:69 The horn of an ox is a symbol of power (see Deut. 33:17; 1 Sam. 2:10; 2 Sam. 22:3; Ps. 75:4, 5, 10; 132:17; Ezek. 29:21). **David:** Jesus' royal ancestry is highlighted by Zacharias.

1:71 God had promised to deliver the Israelites from their **enemies**. In Luke these enemies include both human and spiritual forces (4:16-30; 11:14-26).

1:72 To perform the mercy . . . remember His holy covenant: God's actions represented His commitment to love the Israelites faithfully (v. 50) and to fulfill His promises to their ancestors (see vv. 54, 73; Lev. 26:42).

1:76 you will go before the face of the Lord: Finally able to speak, Zacharias proclaimed to those gathered what the angel had told him in the temple (vv. 16, 17). John was to prepare the way for the Lord, a reference to his role as forerunner of the Messiah (see Is. 40:3; Mal. 3:1).

1:77 To give knowledge of salvation: John's task was to prepare the people by informing them of their need to repent (3:1-14) and of the One who was coming (3:15-18).

1:78, 79 Dayspring is a reference to the coming of Messiah (see Num. 24:17; Mal. 4:2). This Greek word was also used to translate the Hebrew word for "branch" or "sprout," a concept with messianic overtones (see Is. 11:1-10; Jer. 23:5; 33:15; Zech. 3:8; 6:12). **To give light . . . To guide our feet:** As the Dayspring or the "Rising Sun," the Messiah will provide the light of truth and forgiveness to those blinded by the darkness of their sins. **Peace** describes a harmonious relationship with God.

⁸⁰ So ^e the child grew and became strong in spirit, and ^f was in the deserts till the day of his manifestation to Israel.

Christ Is Born

2 And it came to pass in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. ^{2a} This census first took place while Quirinius was governing Syria. ³ So all went to be registered, everyone to his own city.

⁴ Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to ^b the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, ^c because he was of the house and lineage of David, ⁵ to be registered with Mary, ^d his betrothed ¹ wife, who was with child. ⁶ So it was, that while they were there, the days were completed for her to be delivered. ⁷ And ^e she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a ² manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

The Angels Announce Jesus to the Shepherds

⁸ Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ And ³ behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, ^f and they were greatly afraid. ¹⁰ Then the angel said to them, ^g “Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy ^h which will be to all people. ¹¹ For there is born to you this day in the city of David ^j a Sav-

80 ^e Luke 2:40
^f Matt. 3:1

CHAPTER 2

2 ^a Dan. 9:25; Acts 5:37
4 ^b 1 Sam. 16:1; Mic. 5:2 ★ ^c Matt. 1:16
5 ^d [Matt. 1:18] ¹ NU omits wife
7 ^e Matt. 1:25; Luke 1:31 ² feed trough
9 ^f Luke 1:12 ³ NU omits behold
10 ^g Luke 1:13, 30
^h Gen. 12:3; Is. 49:6; [Matt. 28:19; Mark 1:15; Col. 1:23]
11 ⁱ Is. 9:6 ★ ^j Matt. 1:21; John 4:42; [Acts 5:31]

^k Matt. 1:16; 16:16; 20; John 11:27; Acts 2:36; Phil. 2:11
12 ⁴ feed trough
13 ⁵ Gen. 28:12; Ps. 103:20; 148:2; Dan. 7:10; [Heb. 1:14]; Rev. 5:11
14 ^m Matt. 21:9; Luke 19:38; Eph. 1:6
ⁿ Is. 57:19; [Rom. 5:1]; Eph. 2:17; [Col. 1:20] ^o [John 3:16; Eph. 2:4, 7; 2 Thess. 2:16; 1 John 4:9]
¹⁷ ^u NU toward men of goodwill
¹⁷ ^u NU omits widely
¹⁹ ^p Gen. 37:11; Luke 1:66
20 ^q Luke 19:37
21 ^r Gen. 17:12; Lev. 12:3 ★ [Matt. 1:21]
¹ Luke 1:31 ⁷ NU for His circumcision
22 ^v Lev. 12:2-8

ior, ^k who is Christ the Lord. ¹² And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a ⁴ manger.”

¹³ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying:

¹⁴ “Glory ^m to God in the highest,
And on earth ⁿ peace, ^o goodwill ⁵
toward men!”

The Shepherds Visit Jesus

¹⁵ So it was, when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds said to one another, “Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us.” ¹⁶ And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger. ¹⁷ Now when they had seen Him, they made ⁶ widely known the saying which was told them concerning this Child. ¹⁸ And all those who heard it marveled at those things which were told them by the shepherds. ¹⁹ But Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰ Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and ^q praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told them.

Christ Is Circumcised

²¹ And when eight days were completed ⁷ for the circumcision of the Child, His name was called ^s Jesus, the name given by the angel ^t before He was conceived in the womb.

²² Now when ^u the days of her purifica-

2:1, 2 Augustus was the Roman emperor from 31 B.C. to A.D. 14. **Quirinius** was the governor or administrator over a major census organized to facilitate the collection of taxes. Outside the Scripture, ancient records tie Quirinius to a **census** only in A.D. 6, but this is too late to be the one referred to here. So it may be that the census spanned the period from Varus to Quirinius and was referred to by the name of the one who completed it, sometime in the period immediately following Herod's death. It is also possible that Quirinius served as governor twice in his career, since there is a gap in the governorship records between 4 B.C. and A.D. 1, the period between Varus and Gaius Caesar. The problem here is that the gap follows Herod's death, rather than preceding it, as the timing of Jesus' birth requires (see Matt. 2). **2:3, 4** The registration, following Jewish custom, took place at a person's ancestral home (see 2 Sam. 24). The journey from **Nazareth to Bethlehem** was about 90 miles, at least a three-day trip. **2:5 his betrothed wife:** The fact that Mary made the journey with Joseph suggests that they were already married. However, the marriage had not yet been consummated (see Matt. 1:24, 25). **2:7 Swaddling cloths** were strips of cloth wrapped around a baby to keep its arms and legs straight. **Firstborn Son** implies that Mary had other children (see Matt. 1:25; 13:55; Mark 3:31–35). The **manger** was probably a feeding trough for animals. Jesus was probably born in a stable or in a cave that served as one. **The inn** was most likely a reception room in a private home or a space at a public shelter, not a large building with several individual rooms.

2:8 The night **watch** was kept to protect sheep from robbers and wild animals.

2:9 Glory refers to evidence of God's majestic presence, later associated with Jesus (see Acts 7:55). In this scene, the glory is the appearance of light in the midst of darkness.

2:11 The city of David here refers to Bethlehem. In other passages, the phrase means Jerusalem (see 2 Sam. 5:7). **Savior . . . Christ . . . Lord:** These three titles together summarize the saving work of Jesus and His sovereign position. What God was called in 1:47, Savior, Jesus is called here. The word Christ means “Anointed,” referring to Jesus' royal, messianic position. The word Lord was the title of a ruler. The meaning of the word is defined by Peter in Acts 2:30–36. Jesus is destined to sit and distribute salvation's benefits from God's side, ruling with the Father.

2:13 Heavenly host refers to an entourage of angels.

2:14 Glory here refers to praise given to God. **goodwill toward men:** The phrase means that people are the objects of God's goodwill. In ancient Judaism, this phrase described a limited group of people who were the objects of God's special grace. The promise of peace (1:79) and goodwill would come to those who welcome God's only Son.

2:21 eight days: According to the Law, a Jewish boy was to be circumcised on the eighth day (see Gen. 17:12; Lev. 12:3).

2:22 Her purification refers to a ceremony in which a new mother of a son was declared ceremonially clean again (see Lev. 12:6). The

tion according to the law of Moses were completed, they brought Him to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord ^{23v} (as it is written in the law of the Lord, ^w “*Every male who opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord*”), ²⁴ and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the law of the Lord, ^x “*A pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.*”

Simeon's Prophecy

²⁵ And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon, and this man was just and devout, ^y waiting for the Consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. ²⁶ And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not ^z see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. ²⁷ So he came ^a by the Spirit into the temple. And when the parents brought in the Child Jesus, to do for Him according to the custom of the law, ²⁸ he took Him up in his arms and blessed God and said:

- ²⁹ “Lord, ^b now You are letting Your servant depart in peace,
According to Your word;
³⁰ For my eyes ^c have seen Your salvation
³¹ Which You have prepared before the face of all peoples,
^{32d} A light to *bring* revelation to the Gentiles,
And the glory of Your people Israel.”

³³ ⁸ And Joseph and His mother marveled at those things which were spoken of Him. ³⁴ Then Simeon blessed them, and said to Mary His mother, “Behold, this *Child* is destined for the ^e fall and rising of many in Israel, and for ^f a sign which will be spoken against ³⁵ (yes, ^g a sword will pierce through your own soul

ceremony took place 40 days after the birth. At this ceremony, the mother could offer a lamb or two pigeons (see Lev. 12:8). Jesus' family chose the pigeons (v. 24), suggesting that they did not have and could not afford to buy an animal. The journey to Jerusalem from Bethlehem was only five miles. **Present Him to the Lord** refers to the normal presentation of a firstborn son to God (see Ex. 13:2, 12; Num. 18:6; 1 Sam. 1; 2). Luke shows that Jesus' parents were faithful Jews who kept the requirements of the Law.

2:25 Simeon was waiting for **the Consolation of Israel**, the Comforter of Israel, a hope that parallels the hope of national deliverance expressed in the two hymns of ch. 1. This deliverance would involve the work of Messiah, as v. 26 suggests. **Holy Spirit:** Luke highlights the presence of the Spirit at the beginning of God's work in Jesus.

2:27 into the temple: The location within the temple is not given, but Mary's presence suggests either the court of Gentiles or the court of women.

2:30 Simeon identified God's **salvation** as being personified in Jesus. For Jesus to come was for God's salvation to come.

2:32 A light to bring revelation to the Gentiles . . . the glory of Your people Israel: This is the first explicit statement in Luke

Childbirth

In biblical times an infant did not begin life in a sterile hospital setting. A child was usually born at home where the conditions were less than sanitary. The floors were probably dirt and farm animals sometimes shared the same living quarters. The water used to cleanse the child was often polluted; the clothing used to wrap the baby had been washed in the same impure water. The stable where Jesus was born may have been no worse than some of the homes in Bethlehem. Demographic studies of ancient cultures show that the infant mortality rate was often as high as 90 percent; the many infant burial sites uncovered at various archaeological sites in Israel support this assumption. The redemption ceremony of the firstborn male was not performed until the child was 30 days old. If he had survived the first month, his chances of growing to adulthood were good.



An Egyptian woman on a birthing stool

© Mike P Shepherd/Alamy

also), that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.”

Anna's Testimony

³⁶ Now there was one, Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of ^h Asher. She was of a great age, and had lived with a husband seven years from her virginity; ³⁷ and this woman *was* a widow ⁹ of about eighty-four years,

10:45; 13:47; 28:28; [Rom. 9:24; Gal. 3:14]

33 ⁸ NU And His father and mother **34** ^e Is. 8:14; Hos. 14:9; Matt. 21:44; [Rom. 9:32]; 1 Cor. 1:23; [2 Cor. 2:16; 1 Pet. 2:7, 8] ^f Matt. 28:12-15; Acts 4:2; 17:32; 28:22; [1 Pet. 2:12; 4:14] **35** ^g Ps. 42:10; John 19:25 **36** ^h Josh. 19:24 **37** ⁹ NU until she was eighty-four

that includes both Jew and Gentile. Salvation is portrayed as light (1:79). It would be a revelation to Gentiles because they would be able to participate in God's blessing with a fullness that had not been revealed in the OT (see Eph. 2:11-22; 3:1-7). Jesus is the glory of Israel because through Him the nation would see the fulfillment of God's promises; the nation's special role in God's plan would be vindicated (see Is. 46:13; 60:1-3; Rom. 9:1-5; 11:11-29).

2:35 a sword: The image here is of a large, broad sword striking Mary. She would suffer much pain in watching Jesus' rejection. **thoughts . . . revealed:** Jesus is a litmus test for where people stand before God. He is a Judge who will expose the thoughts of all people (see Acts 10:42, 43; 17:30, 31).

2:37 It is not clear whether **eighty-four years** was Anna's age, or how long she had been a widow. The testimony of this pious woman complements Simeon's testimony. Both men and women observed God's work early in Jesus' life. Anna's work as a prophetess in the temple court suggests that she addressed all who would listen to her, as did Miriam (see Ex. 15:20), Deborah (see Judg. 4:4), and Huldah (see 2 Kin. 22:14). Philip's daughters are another example of prophetesses in the NT (Acts 21:9).

who did not depart from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers ⁱnight and day. ³⁸ And coming in that instant she gave thanks to ¹the Lord, and spoke of Him to all those who ^jlooked for redemption in Jerusalem.

Jesus Returns to Nazareth

Matt. 2:19-23

³⁹ So when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their *own* city, Nazareth. ⁴⁰ And the Child grew and became strong ² in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him.

Jesus Celebrates the Passover

⁴¹ His parents went to ¹Jerusalem *every* year at the Feast of the Passover. ⁴² And when He was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem according to the *n* custom of the feast. ⁴³ When they had finished the *o* days, as they returned, the Boy Jesus lingered behind in Jerusalem. And ³ Joseph and His mother did not know *it*; ⁴⁴ but supposing Him to have been in the company, they went a day's journey, and sought Him among *their* relatives and acquaintances. ⁴⁵ So when they did not find Him, they returned to Jerusalem, seeking Him. ⁴⁶ Now so it was *that* after three days they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them and asking them questions. ⁴⁷ And *p* all who heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers. ⁴⁸ So when they saw Him, they were amazed; and His mother said to Him, "Son, why have

³⁷ ⁱ Acts 26:7; 1 Tim. 5:5
³⁸ ^j Lam. 3:25, 26; Mark 15:43; Luke 24:21 ¹ NU God
⁴⁰ ^k Luke 1:80; 2:52; [1 Cor. 1:24, 30]
² NU omits *in spirit*
⁴¹ ^j John 4:20 ^m Ex. 23:15, 17; 34:23; Deut. 16:1, 16; Luke 22:15
⁴² ⁿ Ex. 23:14, 15
⁴³ ^o Ex. 12:15 ³ NU His parents
⁴⁷ ^p Matt. 7:28; 13:54; 22:33; Mark 1:22; 6:2; 11:18; Luke 4:32; John 7:15

⁴⁹ ^q John 9:4
^r [Mark 1:22; Luke 4:22, 32; John 4:34; 5:17, 36]
⁵⁰ ^s Mark 9:32; Luke 9:45; 18:34; John 7:15, 46
⁵¹ ^t Dan. 7:28
⁴ obedient
⁵² ^u [Is. 11:2, 3; Col. 2:2, 3] ^v 1 Sam. 2:26; [Prov. 3:1-4]

CHAPTER 3

1 ^a Matt. 27:2
 2 ^b John 11:49; 18:13; Acts 4:6
 3 ^c Luke 1:13 ¹ NU, M in the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas
 3 ^d Matt. 3:1; Mark 1:4 ^e Luke 1:77 ★
 4 ^f Is. 40:3-5 ★; Matt. 3:3; Mark 1:3

You done this to us? Look, Your father and I have sought You anxiously."

⁴⁹ And He said to them, "Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be ^q about ^r My Father's business?" ⁵⁰ But ^s they did not understand the statement which He spoke to them.

Jesus Grows in Wisdom

⁵¹ Then He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was ⁴ subject to them, but His mother ¹ kept all these things in her heart. ⁵² And Jesus ^u increased in wisdom and stature, ^v and in favor with God and men.

The Ministry of John the Baptist

Matt. 3:1-12; Mark 1:2-8; John 1:19-31

3 Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, ^a Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, ² while ^b Annas and Caiaphas were high priests, the word of God came to ^c John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness. ³ And he went into all the region around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance ^e for the remission of sins, ⁴ as it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet, saying:

^f "The voice of one crying in the wilderness:

*^g "Prepare the way of the LORD;
 Make His paths straight.*

⁵ *Every valley shall be filled
 And every mountain and hill brought low;*

2:38 Redemption in Jerusalem is another way of speaking of the Consolation of Israel (v. 25).

2:40 The Child grew: With this note, the story of Jesus' infancy ends. The narrative picks up in v. 41 some 12 years later.

2:41 The annual pilgrimage to **Jerusalem** was customary for many who lived outside the city. The Law commanded three pilgrimages for the men each **year**: for Passover, Pentecost, and the Feast of Tabernacles (see Ex. 23:14-17; Deut. 16:16). By the first century, most Jewish men made annual pilgrimages to Jerusalem because of the distance many had to travel due to the dispersion of the Israelites across Asia Minor.

2:42 The teachers were Jewish rabbis. Note that Jesus was not lecturing, but engaging the rabbis in theological discussion (v. 47).

2:49 I must: Even at 12, Jesus knew that God had commissioned Him to accomplish certain tasks on this earth (4:43; 9:22; 13:33; 17:25; 19:5; 22:37; 24:7, 44). **about My Father's business:** This is the first indication in Luke's Gospel that Jesus knew He had a unique mission and a unique relationship to the Father. The Greek text is elliptical here and reads, "I must be in the . . . of my Father," without specifying a place or activity. Either Jesus must be about the work of God, as the translation suggests; or he must be in the house of God, discussing God's truth. In the end the two possibilities are not very different.

3:1 Tiberius Caesar began to rule after his stepfather Augustus

died, in **A.D. 14**. **Judea** was a senatorial province, ruled by a **governor** or procurator. **Pontius Pilate** held this position and was responsible for administering the region and collecting taxes for Rome. **Herod** is Herod Antipas, who ruled Galilee and Perea from **4 B.C.** to **A.D. 39**. Herod's brother Archelaus had control of Judea and Samaria until **A.D. 6**, when he was banished. Herod's other brother **Philip** ruled the northern area east of the Jordan River.

3:2 Annas the high priest (**A.D. 7-14**) was succeeded in office by **Caiaphas**, his son-in-law, around **A.D. 18**. Caiaphas served with brief breaks from then until **A.D. 37**. In addition to Caiaphas, all of Annas's five sons served as high priest at one point or another. It is clear that Annas retained the influence as well as the title of his former office. The various rulers that Luke lists show the complexity of the historical and political situation in Israel during Jesus' day. A first-century Israelite had to deal with the edicts of the Roman emperor, the regulations of the governor over Israel, and the judgments of the religious leaders of Israel.

3:3 Baptism figuratively means "to be identified with," as an unbleached cloth is identified with the color in a vat of dye when it is dipped. As John the Baptist preached and the people identified with his message, they were baptized as an outward sign of their inward **repentance** or "change of mind."

3:4-6 Prepare the way: This citation from Is. 40:3-5 declares the coming of God's deliverance. Luke cites the text more fully than

The crooked places shall be made straight

And the rough ways smooth;

6 *And^a all flesh shall see the salvation of God.^c”*

7 Then he said to the multitudes that came out to be baptized by him, ^h“Brood² of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ⁸Therefore bear fruits ⁱworthy of repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as *our* father.’ For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones. ⁹And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore ^jevery tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.”

¹⁰So the people asked him, saying, ^k“What shall we do then?”

¹¹He answered and said to them, ^l“He who has two tunics, let him give to him who has none; and he who has food, ^mlet him do likewise.”

¹²Then ⁿtax collectors also came to be baptized, and said to him, “Teacher, what shall we do?”

¹³And he said to them, ^o“Collect no more than what is appointed for you.”

¹⁴Likewise the soldiers asked him, saying, “And what shall we do?”

6 ^a Ps. 98:2; Is. 52:10; Luke 2:10; [Rom. 10:8–18]
7 ^b Matt. 3:7; 12:34; 23:33 ^c *Offspring*
8 ^d [2 Cor. 7:9–11]
9 ^e Matt. 7:19; Luke 13:6–9
10 ^f Luke 3:12, 14; [Acts 2:37, 38; 16:30, 31]
11 ^g Luke 11:41; 2 Cor. 8:14; James 2:15, 16; [1 John 3:17; 4:20] ^h Is. 58:7; [1 Tim. 6:17, 18]
12 ⁱ Matt. 21:32; Luke 7:29
13 ^j Luke 19:8

14 ^k Ex. 20:16; 23:1; Lev. 19:11 ^l Lit. *shake down for money*
15 ^m Matt. 3:11, 12; Mark 1:7, 8 ⁿ John 7:39; 20:22; Acts 2:1–4
16 ^o Mic. 4:12; Matt. 13:24–30
17 ^p Matt. 14:3; Mark 6:17 ^q NU *brother's wife*
18 ^r Matt. 3:13–17; John 1:32

So he said to them, “Do not ³intimidate anyone ⁴or accuse falsely, and be content with your wages.”

¹⁵Now as the people were in expectation, and all reasoned in their hearts about John, whether he was the Christ *or* not, ¹⁶John answered, saying to all, ^a“I indeed baptize you with water; but One mightier than I is coming, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose. He will ^bbaptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹⁷His winnowing fan *is* in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and ^cgather the wheat into His barn; but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire.”

¹⁸And with many other exhortations he preached to the people. ¹⁹^tBut Herod the tetrarch, being rebuked by him concerning Herodias, his ⁴brother Philip's wife, and for all the evils which Herod had done, ²⁰also added this, above all, that he shut John up in prison.

The Baptism of Christ

Matt. 3:13–17; Mark 1:9–11; John 1:32–34

²¹When all the people were baptized, ^u“it came to pass that Jesus also was baptized; and while He prayed, the heaven was opened. ²²And the Holy Spirit

Matthew or Mark. He carries the passage through to its mention of **salvation** being seen by **all flesh** (v. 6), thus highlighting that the gospel is for all people. The preparation for the arrival of a king typically meant that a road was prepared for his journey. This is what Isaiah compares to the arrival of God's salvation.

3:7 As the **multitudes** flocked to hear John the Baptist, many people went through the outward motions of baptism, but their actions did not truly represent their inward attitude. These people were not genuinely interested in the kind of King and kingdom that John was presenting.

3:8 John the Baptist warned that the fruits of repentance are necessary, not the claim of an ancestral connection to **Abraham**. External genealogical connections would not change one's attitude to God.

3:10–14 **What shall we do:** A genuine change of mind resulted in a change of action for the **people**, the **tax collectors**, and the **soldiers**. The repentant were instructed to give to those in need, to work at their jobs with integrity, to refrain from abusing their power, and to be content with earning a basic wage.

3:11 **two tunics:** One was an undergarment, and the other was an outer garment. A person did not need two when another person had none.

3:12 **Tax collectors** were Jewish agents employed by those who had purchased the right to collect taxes for the Roman state. Tax collectors often added interest to cover their own expenses and to pad their income. They were disliked both for their business practices and for their support of the occupying state.

3:16, 17 **One mightier than I:** This is the first direct mention of Jesus by John. John's baptism was minor compared to what was coming from Jesus, who would bring the **Holy Spirit and fire** (see Matt. 3:11). These two facets of Christ's work relate to His first and second comings. Baptism in the Holy Spirit is referred to seven times in the NT—four times in the Gospels (see Matt. 3:11; Mark 1:8; John 1:33), twice in Acts (see Acts 1:5; 11:16), and once in the epistles (see 1 Cor. 12:13). As a result of Christ's work at His first coming, believers are placed into one family (see 1 Cor. 12:13) and commended to the care of the Holy Spirit. When Christ comes a second time, He will

come with the fire of judgment. **Chaff** refers to useless shells of grain that were separated from the useful **wheat** by the **winnowing fan**, a wooden forklife shovel that lifted the grain in the air so that the wind could separate it. The chaff was burned, picturing those who will undergo judgment. The **unquenchable** fire indicates the thorough nature of the judgment.

3:19, 20 **he shut John up in prison:** This event is clearly not in chronological order (see Matt. 14:3–5; Mark 6:17–20), since John could not have baptized Jesus (vv. 21, 22) if he was in jail. John had **rebuked** Herod for divorcing his wife to marry his own niece Herodias, who already had been the wife of his brother Philip. Not only was the divorce a problem, so was marrying such a close relative (see Lev. 18:16; 20:21).

3:22 **a voice came from heaven:** This is one of two heavenly endorsements of Jesus' ministry. The other is found in 9:35. **You are My beloved Son; in You I am well pleased:** This statement combines two ideas. The idea of God's Son comes from Ps. 2:7, a

baptize

(Gk. *baptizō*) (3:7; Matt. 3:6; Mark 1:5; Acts 2:38; Rom. 6:3) Strong's #907

This Greek word means “to dip” or “to immerse.” The people were coming to John and being immersed by him in the Jordan River. The Jews were familiar with the baptism of Gentile proselytes to Judaism; but this kind of baptism for Jews was new and strange to them. John called upon them to be baptized as a way of showing that they wanted to renounce their old way of life and prepare their hearts for the coming of the Messiah. Paul used baptism to speak about the believers' identification with Christ. Just as a cloth dipped in dye absorbs the color of the dye, so a person immersed in Christ should take on the nature of Christ.

descended in bodily form like a dove upon Him, and a voice came from heaven which said, “You are My beloved Son; in You I am ^vwell pleased.”

The Genealogy of Christ Through Mary

Gen. 5:1-32; 11:10-26; Ruth 4:18-22;
1 Chr. 1:1-4, 24-27, 34; 2:1-15; Matt. 1:2-6

²³ Now Jesus Himself began *His ministry* at ^wabout thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) ^xthe son of Joseph, *the son of Heli*, ²⁴*the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, the son of Melchi, the son of Janna, the son of Joseph*, ²⁵*the son of Mattathiah, the son of Amos, the son of Nahum, the son of Esli, the son of Naggai*, ²⁶*the son of Maath, the son of Mattathiah, the son of Semei, the son of Joseph, the son of Judah, the son of Joannas, the son of Rhesa, the son of ^yZerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, the son of Neri*, ²⁸*the son of Melchi, the son of Addi, the son of Cosam, the son of Elmodam, the son of Er*, ²⁹*the son of Jose, the son of Eliezer, the son of Jorim, the son of Matthat, the son of Levi*, ³⁰*the son of Simeon, the son of Judah, the son of Joseph, the son of Jonan, the son of Eliakim*, ³¹*the son of Melea, the son of Menan, the son of Mattathah, the son of ^zNathan*, ^a*the son of David*, ^{32b}*the son of Jesse, the son of Obed, the son of Boaz, the son of Salmon, the son of Nahshon*, ³³*the son of Amminadab, the son of Ram, the son of Hezron, the son of Perez, the son of Judah*,

²² ^vPs. 2:7; [Is. 42:1]; Matt. 3:17; 17:5; Mark 1:11; Luke 1:35; 9:35; 2 Pet. 1:17
²³ ^w[Num. 4:3, 35, 39, 43, 47] ^xMatt. 13:55; John 6:42
²⁷ ^yEzra 2:2; 3:8
³¹ ^zZech. 12:12
^a 2 Sam. 5:14; 7:12; 1 Chr. 3:5; 17:11; Is. 9:7 [★]; Jer. 23:5
³² ^bRuth 4:18-22; 1 Chr. 2:10-12; Is. 11:1, 10 [★]

³⁴ ^cGen. 11:24, 26-30; 12:3; Num. 24:17; 1 Chr. 1:24-27
³⁶ ^dGen. 11:12
^eGen. 10:22, 24; 11:10-13; 1 Chr. 1:17, 18
^fGen. 5:6-32; 9:27; 11:10
³⁸ ^gGen. 5:1, 2

CHAPTER 4

¹ ^a[Is. 11:2; 61:1]; Matt. 4:1-11; Mark 1:12, 13 ^bEzek. 3:12; Luke 2:27 ¹ NU in ² ^cEx. 34:28; 1 Kin. 19:8 ² tested
³ ^dMark 3:11; John 20:31
⁴ ^eDeut. 8:3 ³ NU omits *but by every word of God*
⁵ ⁴ NU *And taking Him up, he showed Him*
⁶ ^f[John 12:31; 14:30; Rev. 13:2, 7]

³⁴ *the son of Jacob, the son of Isaac, the son of Abraham*, ^e*the son of Terah, the son of Nahor*, ³⁵*the son of Serug, the son of Reu, the son of Peleg, the son of Eber, the son of Shelah*, ^{36d}*the son of Cainan, the son of ^eArphaxad, ^fthe son of Shem, the son of Noah, the son of Lamech*, ³⁷*the son of Methuselah, the son of Enoch, the son of Jared, the son of Mahalalel, the son of Cainan*, ³⁸*the son of Enosh, the son of Seth, the son of Adam*, ^g*the son of God*.

The Temptation of Christ

Matt. 4:1-11; Mark 1:12, 13

⁴ Then ^aJesus, being filled with the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and ^bwas led by the Spirit ¹into the wilderness, ²being ²tempted for forty days by the devil. And ^cin those days He ate nothing, and afterward, when they had ended, He was hungry.
³ And the devil said to Him, “If You are ^dthe Son of God, command this stone to become bread.”
⁴ But Jesus answered him, saying, “It is written, ^e*‘Man shall not live by bread alone, ³but by every word of God.’*”
⁵ ⁴ Then the devil, taking Him up on a high mountain, showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.
⁶ And the devil said to Him, “All this authority I will give You, and their glory; for ^fthis has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish. ⁷Therefore, if You will worship before me, all will be Yours.”

psalm about God’s chosen King. The idea of God’s pleasure comes from the image of the Servant in Is. 42:1. This image depicts Jesus’ election by God, and the special favor He enjoyed. The fact that Jesus is both King and Servant is fundamental to Jesus’ identity.
3:23–38 as was supposed: People naturally assumed that Jesus was the physical son of both Joseph and Mary. Luke corrected this misunderstanding by emphasizing that Jesus was only apparently Joseph’s physical son. Luke’s genealogy is unlike Matthew’s, although both go back to David and Abraham. Luke traces Jesus’ line all the way back to Adam, showing Jesus’ significance for all people. Matthew provides the legal lineage from David through Joseph to Jesus, while Luke provides the physical lineage from David through Mary to Jesus.
4:1, 2 The order of the temptations differs between Matthew and Luke. Luke has the temptation about Jerusalem last, probably because Jerusalem is the place Jesus is headed for His decisive confrontation with Satan (13:32–35). In His temptation, Jesus demonstrated not only His ability to resist the **devil**, but also His allegiance to God. What Adam could not do, Jesus did. Where Israel had failed in the wilderness, Jesus succeeded.
4:3 If You are the Son of God: This is a conditional statement. In other words, Satan was saying: “Let’s assume for the sake of argument that You are the Son of God.” In fact, Satan was challenging Jesus’ identity and authority.
4:4 It is written: Jesus responded to Satan’s temptation by quoting Deut. 8:3. Jesus refused to operate

independently of God. The Spirit had led Him into the wilderness to prepare Him for His ministry, so eating at Satan’s instruction would have shown a lack of dependence on the Father.
4:5 all the kingdoms of the world: This temptation was an attempt to offer Jesus power by the wrong means. Satan’s method involved a detour around the Cross, an inducement to “take the easy way” to power.
4:6 this has been delivered to me: Satan’s claim here is exaggerated. He has great authority over the earth (see John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11; 2 Cor. 4:4; Eph. 2:2), but not the authority to deliver kingdoms.

Temptation: The Two Adams Contrasted		
Both Adam and Christ faced three aspects of temptation. Adam yielded, bringing upon humankind sin and death. Christ resisted, resulting in justification and life.		
1 John 2:16	Genesis 3:6 First Adam	Luke 4:1–13 Second Adam—Christ
“the lust of the flesh”	“the tree was good for food”	“command this stone to become bread”
“the lust of the eyes”	“it was pleasant to the eyes”	“the devil . . . showed Him all the kingdoms”
“the pride of life”	“a tree desirable to make one wise”	“throw Yourself down from here”

⁸ And Jesus answered and said to him, ⁵ “Get behind Me, Satan! ⁶ For it is written, ⁹ *‘You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.’*”

⁹ ^h Then he brought Him to Jerusalem, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him, “If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down from here. ¹⁰ For it is written:

*‘He shall give His angels charge over you,
To keep you,’*

¹¹ and,

*‘In their hands they shall bear you up,
Lest you dash your foot against a stone.’”*

¹² And Jesus answered and said to him, “It has been said, ^k *‘You shall not ⁷ tempt the LORD your God.’*”

¹³ Now when the devil had ended every ⁸ temptation, he departed from Him ^l until an opportune time.

Acceptance Throughout Galilee

Matt. 4:12; Mark 1:14

¹⁴ ^m Then Jesus returned ⁿ in the power of the Spirit to ^o Galilee, and ^p news of Him went out through all the surrounding region. ¹⁵ And He ^q taught in their synagogues, ^r being glorified by all.

Rejection at Nazareth

¹⁶ So He came to ^s Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, ^t He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read. ¹⁷ And He was handed the book of the proph-

⁸ ⁹ Deut. 6:13; 10:20; Matt. 4:10
⁵ NU omits *Get behind Me, Satan*
⁶ NU, M omit *For*

⁹ ^h Matt. 4:5-7
¹⁰ ⁱ Ps. 91:11 ★
¹¹ ^j Ps. 91:12

¹² ^k Deut. 6:16

⁷ test

¹³ ^l [John 14:30; Heb. 4:15; James 4:7] ⁸ testing

¹⁴ ^m Matt. 4:12

ⁿ John 4:43 ^o Acts

10:37 ^p Matt. 4:24

¹⁵ ^q Ps. 22:22; Matt.

4:23 ^r Is. 52:13 ★

¹⁶ ^s Matt. 2:23;

13:54; Mark 6:1

^t Mark 1:21; John

18:20; Acts 13:14-

16; 17:2

¹⁸ ^u Is. 49:8, 9; 61:1, 2; Matt. 11:5; 12:18; John 3:34
^v [Dan. 9:24] ⁹ NU omits *to heal the brokenhearted*
¹ downtrodden

BIBLE TIMES & CULTURE NOTES



Worship

A synagogue service began with the recitation of the *Shema*, the first Hebrew word in the passage in Deut. 6:4–9. The speaker for the day then led the congregation in prayer as they stood facing Jerusalem with hands extended. At the close of the prayer the people said “Amen.” Before the service the leader of the synagogue took from the Torah ark the scrolls containing the lesson for the day and placed them on the lectern. The chosen speaker stood and read the lesson from the Law of Moses and the interpreter translated it verse by verse into Aramaic. Then the passage from the Prophets was read and translated. For the commentary or sermon, the speaker usually sat down (Luke 4:20). After the sermon, a priest, if one was present, pronounced a benediction and the people said “Amen.” If no priest was present, a closing prayer was offered.

et Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written:

¹⁸ *“The^u Spirit of the LORD is upon Me,
Because He has anointed Me
To preach the gospel to the poor;
He has sent Me⁹ to heal the
brokenhearted,
To proclaim liberty to the captives
And recovery of sight to the blind,
To^v set at liberty those who are
¹ oppressed;*

¹⁹ *To proclaim the acceptable year of
the LORD.”*

²⁰ Then He closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And

4:8 Get behind Me, Satan: Later, Jesus makes the same statement to Peter when he becomes a channel for Satan’s message (see Matt. 16:23). In response to Satan’s second temptation, Jesus cited Deut. 6:13. Jesus knew that only God is worthy of **worship**, that only God is to be served.

4:9 The pinnacle of the temple may refer either to the high temple gate or to the southeast corner of the temple that loomed over a cliff some 450 feet high.

4:10, 11 He shall give His angels charge over you: Satan cited Ps. 91:11, 12, reminding Jesus of God’s promise of protection. However, the mere use of biblical words does not always reveal God’s will, particularly if they are placed in the wrong context.

4:12 You shall not tempt the LORD: In response to Satan’s third temptation, Jesus cited Deut. 6:16. God is to be trusted, not tested. The Deuteronomy passage refers to Israel’s attempt to test God at Meribah (see Ex. 17:1–7). Jesus would not repeat the nation’s error of unfaithfulness to God.

4:13 until an opportune time: This was but the first of several encounters Jesus had with Satan and his forces (11:14–23).

4:16, 17 Most synagogue services had a reading from the Law and one from the Prophets, with an exposition that tied the texts together. Jesus expounded from Is. 61. The scroll was kept in the synagogue and handed to Jesus by an attendant.

4:18, 19 By citing Is. 61, Jesus was claiming to be a royal figure and to have a prophetic mission (v. 24). Jesus healed **the brokenhearted**, referring to those who were discouraged because of their plight in life. Jesus proclaimed **liberty to the captives**. In the OT, captivity refers to Israel’s exile (1:68–74); here captivity refers to sin (see 1:77; 7:47; 24:47; Acts 2:38; 5:31; 10:43; 13:38; 26:18). Jesus gave **sight to the blind**, a reference to His miraculous works (7:22), though not without spiritual overtones (1:78, 79; 10:23, 24; 18:41–43). Jesus **set at liberty the oppressed**. This was originally the call of Israel, but the nation had failed in its assignment (see Is. 58:6). What Israel had failed to do, Jesus does. The image here addresses both physical and spiritual realities. Jesus proclaimed **the acceptable year of the LORD**, an allusion to Jubilee. This was every fiftieth year, in which all debt was forgiven, slaves were given their freedom, and ancestral lands were given back to its original family. The Year of Jubilee allowed for a new start (see Lev. 25:10). Jesus offers a total cancellation of spiritual debt and a new beginning to those who respond to His message.

4:20 Jesus closed the book in the middle of the sentence (see Is. 61:2). He did not continue because the next phrase—“the day of vengeance of our God”—was not being fulfilled then.

the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him. ²¹ And He began to say to them, “Today this Scripture is ^wfulfilled in your hearing.” ²² So all bore witness to Him, and ^xmarveled at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth. And they said, ^y“Is this not Joseph’s son?”

²³ He said to them, “You will surely say this proverb to Me, ‘Physician, heal yourself! Whatever we have heard done in ^zCapernaum,² do also here in ^aYour country.’” ²⁴ Then He said, “Assuredly, I say to you, no ^bprophet is accepted in his own country. ²⁵ But I tell you truly, ^cmany widows were in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, and there was a great famine throughout all the land; ²⁶ but to none of them was Elijah sent except to ³Zarephath, in the region of Sidon, to a woman *who was* a widow. ²⁷ ^dAnd many lepers were in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet, and none of them was cleansed except Naaman the Syrian.”

²⁸ So all those in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were ^efilled with ^fwrath, ²⁹ ^fand rose up and thrust Him out of the city; and they led Him to the brow of the hill on which their city was built, that they might throw Him down over the cliff. ³⁰ Then ^gpassing through the midst of them, He went His way.

Demons Are Cast Out

Mark 1:21-28

³¹ Then ^hHe went down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and was teaching them on the Sabbaths. ³² And they were ⁱaston-

21 ^w Matt. 1:22, 23; Acts 13:29
22 ^x [Ps. 45:2]; Matt. 13:54; Mark 6:2; Luke 2:47; John 1:14, 17] ^y John 6:42
23 ^z Matt. 4:13; 11:23 ^a Matt. 13:54; Mark 6:1 ² NU Capernaum, here and elsewhere
24 ^b Matt. 13:57; Mark 6:4; John 4:44
25 ^c 1 Kin. 17:9; James 5:17
26 ³ Gr. *Sarepta*
27 ^d 2 Kin. 5:1-14
28 ^e Luke 6:11
29 ^f Luke 17:25; John 8:37; 10:31
30 ^g John 8:59; 10:39
31 ^h Is. 9:1; Matt. 4:13; Mark 1:21
32 ⁱ Matt. 7:28, 29

^j Luke 4:36; [John 6:63; 7:46; 8:26, 28, 38, 47; 12:49, 50]
33 ^k Mark 1:23
34 ^l Luke 4:41 ^m Ps. 16:10; Is. 49:7; Dan. 9:24; Luke 1:35
35 ⁿ Lit. *Be muzzled*
38 ^o Matt. 8:14, 15; Mark 1:29-31 ^p Mark 5:23
39 ^p Luke 8:24
40 ^q Matt. 8:16, 17; Mark 1:32-34
41 ^r Mark 1:34; 3:11; Acts 8:7

ished at His teaching, ^jfor His word was with authority. ³³ ^kNow in the synagogue there was a man who had a spirit of an unclean demon. And he cried out with a loud voice, ³⁴ saying, “Let *us* alone! What have we to do with You, Jesus of Nazareth? Did You come to destroy us? ^lI know who You are—^m the Holy One of God!”

³⁵ But Jesus rebuked him, saying, ⁵ “Be quiet, and come out of him!” And when the demon had thrown him in *their* midst, it came out of him and did not hurt him. ³⁶ Then they were all amazed and spoke among themselves, saying, “What a word this *is*! For with authority and power He commands the unclean spirits, and they come out.” ³⁷ And the report about Him went out into every place in the surrounding region.

Peter’s Mother-in-Law Healed

Matt. 8:14, 15; Mark 1:29-31

³⁸ ⁿNow He arose from the synagogue and entered Simon’s house. But Simon’s wife’s mother was ⁶sick with a high fever, and they ^omade request of Him concerning her. ³⁹ So He stood over her and ^prebuked the fever, and it left her. And immediately she arose and served them.

Jesus Ministers Throughout Galilee

Matt. 4:23-25; 8:16, 17; Mark 1:32-39

⁴⁰ ^qWhen the sun was setting, all those who had any that were sick with various diseases brought them to Him; and He laid His hands on every one of them and healed them. ⁴¹ ^rAnd demons also came

4:21 Jesus proclaimed the fulfillment of God’s plan and promise in Himself, since He is the figure described in the passage. Luke often notes the presence of fulfillment by including a reference to **today** (2:11; 5:26; 12:28; 13:32, 33; 19:5, 9; 22:34, 61; 23:43).

4:23 Physician, heal yourself: The request for more signs was for Jesus to prove His claim by repeating the type of miraculous work He had done in Capernaum (see Mark 1:21-27). Such requests for signs often contained a mocking tone (11:16; 22:64; 23:8, 35-37).

4:24 Jesus made it clear that He is God’s messenger who declares God’s ways. However, Jesus also knew that a **prophet** is often rejected. This is a lesson of the OT to which Jesus and other NT authors allude (see 11:47-51; Acts 7:51-53).

4:25-27 Jesus speaks of a period of widespread unfaithfulness to God (see 1 Kin. 17; 18; 2 Kin. 5:1-14). During this period, judgment came on the nation in the form of **famine**. The only people to receive healing were Gentiles. With such an allusion, Jesus warned His listeners not to be unfaithful like their ancestors by rejecting His message.

4:32 Luke emphasizes Jesus’ **teaching** (v. 15). The perception of Jesus’ **authority** probably arose as a result of His discussing issues directly, rather than merely noting tradition.

4:34 Let us alone: The demon knew that Jesus possessed divine authority, and he wanted nothing to do with Him. **the Holy One of God:** Even a demon witnessed to Jesus’ divinity. In the OT, the title Holy One referred to a person with a special call from God (see “holy man”

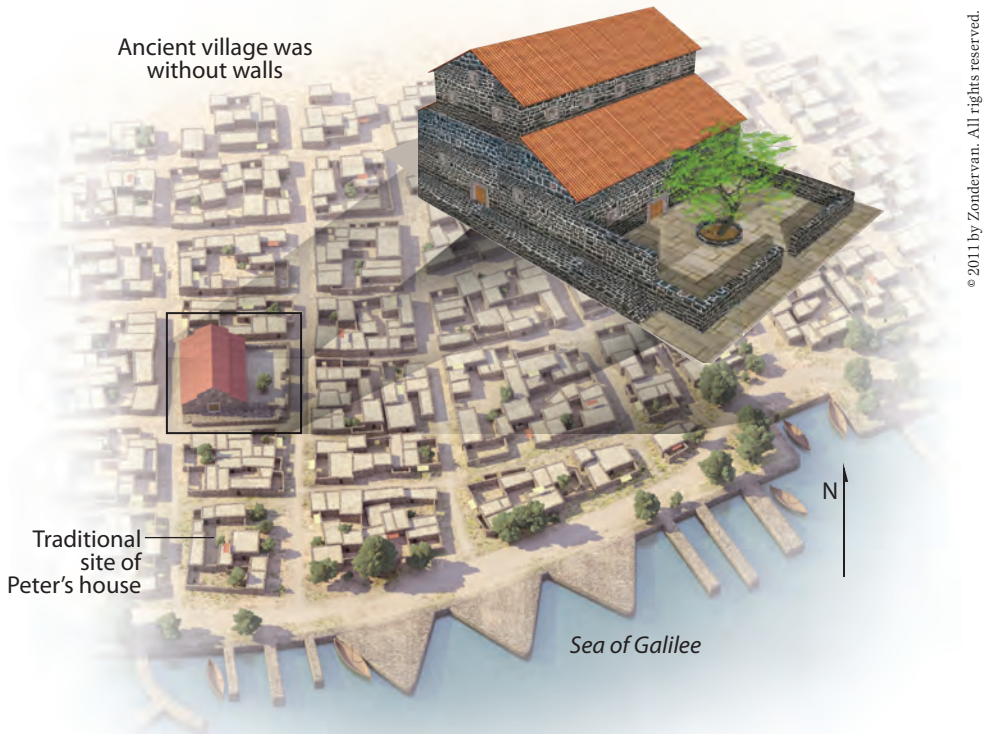
in 2 Kin. 4:9 and “saint” in Ps. 106:16). Luke records the demon’s use of this title as proof that Jesus is the promised Messiah (v. 41; 1:31-35).

4:35, 36 rebuked: This term in Aramaic was a technical term for calling evil into submission. Jesus’ authority over evil forces is clear. He possessed the **authority and power** to grant salvation, as well as to confront all opponents to it. **Be quiet:** Jesus, not Satan and his demons, controlled who would testify to His messianic identity. Why Jesus silenced such a confession is not clear. Possibilities include the following: (1) A messianic confession might label Him as a political revolutionary, something He was not. (2) Jesus might have preferred that His works testify to His messianic identity (7:18-23). (3) The Israelites might have thought it was not appropriate for a messiah to be announced until messianic works were achieved. Others regarded as messiahs by the Jews in this period, such as the Teacher of Righteousness at Qumran and Simeon ben Kosebah, were also hesitant to make direct messianic claims. (4) Jesus might not have welcomed a testimony from a demon. (5) It might not have been God’s time for Jesus to reveal His messianic identity.

4:39 The fact that Simon’s mother-in-law served her guests **immediately** indicates that her recovery from **fever** was instantaneous. Miraculous healing in the Bible was always immediate (5:13).

4:41 You are the Christ, the Son of God: This confession, unique to the Gospel of Luke, shows the close connection Luke makes between Jesus’ sonship and messiahship.

Capernaum Synagogue



Capernaum was more than a seaside fishing village in the days of Jesus. It was the place that Jesus chose to be the center of His ministry to the entire region of Galilee, and it possessed ideal characteristics as a point of dissemination for the gospel.

There were good reasons for this. The town itself was named Kepharnahum, “village of [perhaps the prophet] Nahum,” and was the centerpiece of a densely populated region having a bicultural flavor. On the one hand, there were numerous synagogues in Galilee (in addition to the one in Capernaum), where the ferment of Jewish religious life was profound. On the other hand, there was Hellenism, a pervasive culture already centuries old and potent in its paganism—a lifestyle that influenced manners, dress, architecture, and political institutions as well.

Archaeological work at Capernaum has revealed a section of the pavement of a first-century synagogue below the still-existing ruins of the fourth-century one on the site. A private house later made into a church and a place of pilgrimage has yielded some evidence that may link it to the site of Simon Peter’s house (Luke 4:38).

out of many, crying out and saying, ^s“You are ⁷the Christ, the Son of God!”

And He, ^trebuking *them*, did not allow them to ^sspeak, for they knew that He was the Christ.

⁴²“Now when it was day, He departed and went into a deserted place. And the crowd sought Him and came to Him, and tried to keep Him from leaving them; ⁴³but He said to them, “I must ^vpreach the kingdom of God to the other cities

⁴¹ ^s Mark 8:29
^t Mark 1:25, 34; 3:11;
 Luke 4:34, 35 ⁷ NU
 omits *the Christ*
^s Or say that they
 knew
⁴² ^v Mark 1:35-38;
 Luke 9:10
⁴³ ^v Mark 1:14;
 [John 9:4]
⁴⁴ ^w Matt. 4:23;
 9:35; Mark 1:39
^s NU Judea

also, because for this purpose I have been sent.” ⁴⁴^w And He was preaching in the synagogues of ⁹Galilee.

The First Disciples Are Called

5 So ^a it was, as the multitude pressed about Him to ^bhear the word of God, that He stood by the Lake of Gennesaret,

CHAPTER 5 ¹ ^a Matt. 4:18-22; Mark 1:16-20; John 1:40-42
^b Acts 13:44

4:43 The **kingdom** is referred to 30 times in Luke and six times in Acts. Jesus announced the rule of God through His person, in dealing with sin (24:47), in distributing the Spirit as He mediates blessing from God’s side (24:49), and in reigning with His followers according to the OT promise (see Ps. 2:7–12; Acts 3:18–22).

4:44 **Galilee** probably refers to the whole of Palestine in this context (see 23:5; Acts 10:37).

5:1 **The Lake of Gennesaret** is also known as the Sea of Galilee and the Sea of Tiberias.

²and saw two boats standing by the lake; but the fishermen had gone from them and were washing *their* nets. ³Then He got into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and asked him to put out a little from the land. And He ^csat down and taught the multitudes from the boat.

⁴When He had stopped speaking, He said to Simon, ^d“Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch.”

⁵But Simon answered and said to Him, “Master, we have toiled all night and caught ^enothing; nevertheless ^fat Your word I will let down the net.” ⁶And when they had done this, they caught a great number of fish, and their net was breaking. ⁷So they signaled to *their* partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink. ⁸When Simon Peter saw *it*, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, ^g“Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!”

⁹For he and all who were with him were ^hastonished at the catch of fish which they had taken; ¹⁰and so also were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, “Do not be afraid. ⁱFrom now on you will catch men.” ¹¹So when they had brought their boats to land, ^jthey ^kforsook all and followed Him.

A Leper Is Cleansed

Matt. 8:2-4; Mark 1:40-45

¹²^k And it happened when He was in a certain city, that behold, a man who

3 ^c John 8:2
4 ^d John 21:6
5 ^e John 21:3 ^f Ps. 33:9
8 ^g 2 Sam. 6:9;
1 Kin. 17:18
9 ^h Mark 5:42;
10:24, 26
10 ⁱ Matt. 4:19;
Mark 1:17
11 ^j Matt. 4:20;
19:27; [Mark 1:18;
8:34, 35; Luke 9:59-
62]; John 12:26
¹ left behind
12 ^k Matt. 8:2-4;
Mark 1:40-44

¹ Lev. 13:14
² begged
13 ^m Matt. 20:34;
Luke 8:44; John 5:9
14 ⁿ Matt. 8:4; Luke
17:14 ^o Lev. 13:1-3;
14:2-32
15 ^p Mark 1:45
^q Matt. 4:25; Mark
3:7; John 6:2
16 ^r Luke 9:10
^s Matt. 14:23; Mark
1:35; Luke 6:12;
9:18; 11:1
17 ^t NU with Him
to heal
18 ^u Matt. 9:2-8;
Mark 2:3-12
19 ^v Matt. 15:30
21 ^w Matt. 9:3;
26:65; Mark 2:6, 7;
John 10:33

was full of ¹leprosy saw Jesus; and he fell on *his* face and ²implored Him, saying, “Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean.”

¹³Then He put out *His* hand and touched him, saying, “I am willing; be cleansed.” ^mImmediately the leprosy left him. ¹⁴ⁿ And He charged him to tell no one, “But go and show yourself to the priest, and make an offering for your cleansing, as a testimony to them, ^ojust as Moses commanded.”

¹⁵However, ^pthe report went around concerning Him all the more; and ^qgreat multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed by Him of their infirmities.

A Paralytic Is Healed

Matt. 9:1-8; Mark 2:1-12

¹⁶^r So He Himself *often* withdrew into the wilderness and ^sprayed.

¹⁷Now it happened on a certain day, as He was teaching, that there were Pharisees and teachers of the law sitting by, who had come out of every town of Galilee, Judea, and Jerusalem. And the power of the Lord was *present* ³to heal them. ¹⁸^t Then behold, men brought on a bed a man who was paralyzed, whom they sought to bring in and lay before Him. ¹⁹And when they could not find how they might bring him in, because of the crowd, they went up on the housetop and let him down with *his* bed through the tiling into the midst ^ubefore Jesus.

²⁰When He saw their faith, He said to him, “Man, your sins are forgiven you.”

²¹^v And the scribes and the Pharisees

5:4 let down your nets: This was a “parabolic action.” Jesus commanded Simon to place his nets in the water in order to depict a spiritual reality. Jesus, in v. 10, explained the spiritual truth: Jesus' new occupation would be fishing for people who would do the will of Jesus.

5:5 at Your word I will let down the net: This is Peter's statement of faith. The fisherman noted that he and his companions had just failed to make a catch at the best time for fishing, the evening. The circumstances were not good for a catch at the time of Jesus' command, but Peter chose to obey His word and let down his nets anyway.

5:8 Peter's confession indicates that he recognized God's work through Jesus. Peter, as a **sinful man**, was not worthy to be in Jesus' presence, because Jesus was holy.

5:10 Do not be afraid: Jesus does not drive away the sinner who recognizes his or her wretched condition. He accepts the confessing sinner and offers that person the opportunity of reconciliation with God. Then He sends the forgiven sinner out to do the work of God. **catch men:** Peter's commission was to rescue men from the danger of sin.

5:11 forsook all and followed Him: Following Jesus became the main priority in the disciples' lives. Such priority is the essence of discipleship.

5:12 The term **leprosy** was used broadly in the ancient world. It included psoriasis, lupus, and ringworm. Lepers were isolated from the rest of society (see Lev. 13:45, 46), but could be restored to the community when they recovered (see Lev. 14).

5:13 The disease responded **immediately** to the Creator's touch

(4:39). Jesus honored the leper's humble request for health because he recognized Jesus' power and authority.

5:14 show yourself to the priest: Jesus commanded that the regulation of Lev. 14 be followed. In silencing the healed leper, Jesus sought to avoid drawing excessive attention to His healing ministry. He wanted people to seek Him for spiritual healing, not merely physical healing. The leper's **testimony** was to God's faithfulness and His exercise of power through Jesus (7:22).

5:17 The religious leadership of Israel began to watch Jesus closely. The **Pharisees** were a group of about six thousand pious, influential teachers in the synagogues. They were a group who meticulously followed the Law, adhering to the traditional rules that kept a person from inadvertently breaking it. The **teachers of the law** were officials trained in the Law of Moses. Also known as scribes, these men were in effect the religious lawyers of the Pharisees. In Judaism in the first century there was a wide range of factions, including the Sadducees and the Essenes. The Pharisees, despite their relatively low numbers, were very influential.

5:20 Luke directly links **faith** and forgiveness here. According to the OT, only God was able to forgive sin (see Ps. 103:12). Rather than announcing that God would forgive the man's sin, Jesus proclaimed that the man's sins were **forgiven**. This act was blasphemous to the ears of Jesus' theologically sensitive audience.

5:21 blasphemies: The charge of the **scribes and the Pharisees** was that Jesus' claim dishonored God. This was a serious charge; the conviction of blasphemy would eventually lead to Jesus' death (22:70, 71).

began to reason, saying, “Who is this who speaks blasphemies? ^w Who can forgive sins but God alone?”

²² But when Jesus ^xperceived their thoughts, He answered and said to them, “Why are you reasoning in your hearts? ²³ Which is easier, to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven you,’ or to say, ‘Rise up and walk’? ²⁴ But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins”—He said to the man who was paralyzed, ^y “I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house.”

²⁵ Immediately he rose up before them, took up what he had been lying on, and departed to his own house, ^z glorifying God. ²⁶ And they were all amazed, and they ^a glorified God and were filled with fear, saying, “We have seen strange things today!”

Matthew Is Called

Matt. 9:9; Mark 2:13, 14

²⁷ ^b After these things He went out and saw a tax collector named Levi, sitting at the tax office. And He said to him, ^c “Follow Me.” ²⁸ So he left all, rose up, and ^d followed Him.

Jesus Eats with Sinners

Matt. 9:10-13; Mark 2:15-17

²⁹ ^e Then Levi gave Him a great feast in his own house. And ^f there were a

²¹ ^w Ps. 32:5; 130:4; Is. 43:25
²² ^x Luke 9:47; John 2:25
²⁴ ^y Mark 2:11; 5:41; Luke 7:14
²⁵ ^z Luke 17:15, 18; Acts 3:8
²⁶ ^a Luke 1:65; 7:16
²⁷ ^b Matt. 9:9-17; Mark 2:13-22
^c [Mark 8:34]; Luke 9:59; John 12:26; 21:19, 22
²⁸ ^d Matt. 4:22; 19:27; Mark 10:28
²⁹ ^e Matt. 9:9, 10; Mark 2:15 ^f Luke 15:1

³⁰ ^g Matt. 11:19; Luke 15:2; Acts 23:9
⁴ NU But the Pharisees and their scribes ⁵ grumbled
³² ^h Matt. 9:13; 1 Tim. 1:15
³³ ⁱ Matt. 9:14; Mark 2:18; Luke 7:33
⁶ NU omits Why do, making the verse a statement
³⁴ / John 3:29
³⁶ ^k Matt. 9:16, 17; Mark 2:21, 22 ⁷ NU tears a piece from a new garment and puts it on an old one

great number of tax collectors and others who sat down with them. ³⁰ ⁴ And their scribes and the Pharisees ⁵ complained against His disciples, saying, ^g “Why do You eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?”

³¹ Jesus answered and said to them, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. ³² ^h I have not come to call *the* righteous, but sinners, to repentance.”

Jesus Teaches About Fasting

Matt. 9:14, 15; Mark 2:18-20

³³ Then they said to Him, ⁱ “Why ⁶ do the disciples of John fast often and make prayers, and likewise those of the Pharisees, but Yours eat and drink?”

³⁴ And He said to them, “Can you make the friends of the bridegroom fast while the ^j bridegroom is with them? ³⁵ But the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them; then they will fast in those days.”

Parable of the Cloth and Wineskins

Matt. 9:16, 17; Mark 2:21, 22

³⁶ ^k Then He spoke a parable to them: “No one ⁷ puts a piece from a new garment on an old one; otherwise the new makes a tear, and also the piece that was *taken out* of the new does not match the

5:22 perceived their thoughts: The reference here is to prophetic insight, since the leaders’ thoughts had not been spoken. Jesus “knew what was in man” (John 2:25).

5:23 Jesus posed a riddle to His audience. From an external point of view, it would seem **easier** to declare sins forgiven than to actually heal a person. In reality, however, one has to possess more authority to forgive sin. Jesus linked the healing to what it represented, the forgiveness of sin. Jesus forgave the man’s sins and healed him at the same time.

5:24 Son of Man is an Aramaic idiom that refers to a human being, meaning “someone” or “I.” Jesus used this idiom as a title, taken from Dan. 7:13, 14 (see 21:27; 22:69; Mark 14:62). In the Book of Daniel, the phrase Son of Man describes a figure who shares authority with the Ancient of Days. Association with the clouds gives a supernatural aura to the figure, for only God rides the clouds (see Ex. 14:20; 34:5; Num. 10:34; Ps. 104:3). In using the title here, Jesus claimed the authority to forgive sin, an authority that was limited to God.

5:27 Levi’s job as a **tax collector** was to sit at a booth collecting taxes from businessmen. His was a lower position than that of Zacchaeus, another famous tax collector in the Bible. Levi would have reported to someone like Zacchaeus. **Levi** is also called Matthew (see Matt. 9:9; 10:3).

5:29 This verse describes the first of several feasts or meals in the Book of Luke (7:36–50; 9:10–17; 10:38–42; 11:37–54; 14:1–24; 22:14–38; 24:28–32, 41–43). In ancient Israel the table was a place where spiritual points were taught and where fellowship occurred.

5:30 The issue of eating with **sinners** was sensitive in Judaism since some believed that eating with such company conveyed an acceptance of that person’s sin. Jesus preferred pursuing relationships that might lead sinners to God rather than “quarantining” Himself from such people (see 1 Cor. 5:9–13).

5:31 no need of a physician: Jesus was not saying that the Pharisees and scribes had no need of spiritual healing. Instead He was saying that only those who know their spiritual need can be treated.

As self-righteous people, the Pharisees would not come for aid, and in their own eyes, did not need a doctor.

5:32 Jesus’ mission was to call sinners to **repentance**. Upon His ascension, Jesus commissioned His disciples to the same task (24:47; see also 3:3, 8; 13:1–5; 15:7–10; 16:30; 17:3, 4; Acts 26:20). In this passage, repentance is pictured as a patient who recognizes that illness is present and that only Jesus, the Great Physician, can treat it. A humble approach to God for spiritual healing is the essence of repentance.

5:33 fast: The Pharisees fasted twice a week, on Mondays and Thursdays (18:12), as well as on the Day of Atonement (Lev. 16:29). They also fasted as an act of penitence (Is. 58:1–9) and to recall four times a year the destruction of Jerusalem (Zech. 7:3, 5; 8:19). The goal of fasting was to dedicate oneself to prayer and to focus on God. John led an ascetic life, which his followers also imitated (7:24–28; Matt. 11:1–19).

5:34 bridegroom: Jesus compared His presence to the joyous time of a wedding. In the OT, this image was used for God’s relationship to His people or to describe the messianic period (see Is. 54:5, 6; 62:4, 5; Jer. 2:2; Ezek. 16; Hos. 2:14–23). Jesus explained that while He was on earth, the time was not right for fasts.

5:35 The image of the removal of the bridegroom is the first hint in Jesus’ ministry of His approaching death (see 2:35 for the first allusion). The church will (and did) **fast** (see Acts 13:1, 2; 14:23). Though such fasting returned, it was not required or regulated to the same degree as in Judaism.

5:36 the new makes a tear: Jesus pointed out that one cannot mix old things (Judaism) with new things (the new way He brings). The attempt to mix the two is compared to repairing clothes. The original cloth has already shrunk and when the new cloth shrinks a

old. ³⁷And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; or else the new wine will burst the wineskins and be spilled, and the wineskins will be ruined. ³⁸But new wine must be put into new wineskins, ⁸and both are preserved. ³⁹And no one, having drunk old wine, ⁹immediately desires new; for he says, ‘The old is ¹better.’”

Jesus Works on the Sabbath

Matt. 12:1-8; Mark 2:23-28

6 Now ^ait happened ¹on the second Sabbath after the first that He went through the grainfields. And His disciples plucked the heads of grain and ate *them*, rubbing *them* in *their* hands. ²And some of the Pharisees said to them, “Why are you doing ^bwhat is not lawful to do on the Sabbath?”

³But Jesus answering them said, “Have you not even read this, ^cwhat David did when he was hungry, he and those who were with him: ⁴how he went into the house of God, took and ate the showbread, and also gave some to those with him, ^dwhich is not lawful for any but the priests to eat?” ⁵And He said to them, “The Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath.”

Jesus Heals on the Sabbath

Matt. 12:9-14; Mark 3:1-6

⁶e Now it happened on another Sabbath, also, that He entered the synagogue and taught. And a man was there whose

³⁸ ⁸ NU omits and both are preserved
³⁹ ⁹ NU omits immediately ¹ NU good

CHAPTER 6

¹ ^a Matt. 12:1-8; Mark 2:23-28 ¹ NU on a Sabbath that He went
² ^b Ex. 20:10
³ ^c 1 Sam. 21:6
⁴ ^d Lev. 24:9
⁶ ^e Matt. 12:9-14; Mark 3:1-6; Luke 13:14; 14:3; John 9:16

⁷ ^f Luke 13:14; 14:1-6
⁸ ^h Matt. 9:4; John 2:24, 25
⁹ ⁱ John 7:23 ² M to kill
¹⁰ ³ NU, M him
⁴ NU omits as whole as the other
¹² ^j Matt. 14:23; Mark 1:35; Luke 5:16; 9:18; 11:1
¹³ ^k John 6:70
¹ Matt. 10:1
¹⁴ ^m John 1:42
¹⁶ ⁿ Jude 1 ^o Luke 22:3-6

right hand was withered. ⁷So the scribes and Pharisees watched Him closely, whether He would ^jheal on the Sabbath, that they might find an ⁸accusation against Him. ⁸But He ^hknew their thoughts, and said to the man who had the withered hand, “Arise and stand here.” And he arose and stood. ⁹Then Jesus said to them, “I will ask you one thing: ⁱIs it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do evil, to save life or ²to destroy?” ¹⁰And when He had looked around at them all, He said to ³the man, “Stretch out your hand.” And he did so, and his hand was restored ⁴as whole as the other. ¹¹But they were filled with rage, and discussed with one another what they might do to Jesus.

Selection of the Twelve Apostles

Mark 3:13-19

¹²Now it came to pass in those days that He went out to the mountain to pray, and continued all night in ^jprayer to God. ¹³And when it was day, He called His disciples to *Himself*; ^kand from them He chose ^ltwelve whom He also named apostles: ¹⁴Simon, ^mwhom He also named Peter, and Andrew his brother; James and John; Philip and Bartholomew; ¹⁵Matthew and Thomas; James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon called the Zealot; ¹⁶Judas ⁿthe son of James, and ^oJudas Iscariot who also became a traitor.

¹⁷And He came down with them and stood on a level place with a crowd of

rip occurs. In addition, the two pieces do not match. Jesus’ teaching here indicates the discontinuity between the old way and the new. **5:37** Putting **new wine** (Jesus’ new way) into **old wineskins** (Judaism) would not work because as the new wine fermented, it would stretch the old skin and break it, ruining the wineskin and wasting the wine.

5:39 Jesus pointed out that someone who likes **old wine** will not even try **new wine**, since such a person is satisfied with the old. This analogy explained why some people in Israel had trouble turning to Jesus.

6:1 **plucked . . . ate . . . rubbing:** According to Jewish tradition, the disciples were reaping, threshing, and preparing food, and so were violating the commandment not to work on the Sabbath. It is clear that at this point the Pharisees were watching Jesus carefully (v. 7). **6:2** **what is not lawful:** The Pharisees wanted to know why the disciples had violated the traditions surrounding the Law of Moses (see 14:3; Matt. 12:12; 19:3; 22:17; 27:6; Mark 3:4; 12:14).

6:3, 4 In responding to the Pharisees’ charges against His disciples, Jesus appealed to 1 Sam. 21:1-7; 22:9, 10. **David** and his men ate the **showbread** that only the priests could eat. This was **not lawful**, but God did not punish David for it. Such bread was taken from the 12 loaves placed on a table in the Holy Place and changed once a week (see Ex. 25:30; 39:36; 40:22, 23; Lev. 24:5-9). Jesus pointed out that if David and his men could violate the Law to satisfy their hunger, His disciples could do the same. Jesus may have been attempting to show that the Law was never intended to be applied so absolutely that it would take precedence over the necessities of daily life (see Mark 2:27).

6:5 Regardless of the laws and customs that the Pharisees cited (v. 2),

Jesus has authority over the **Sabbath**. Jesus’ claim of divine authority here is similar to His claim of authority to forgive sins in 5:21, 24. **6:9** **Is it lawful:** The issue was the correct way of conducting oneself on the Sabbath (v. 2). Jesus chose to do good. The plots of the Pharisees represented doing evil and destroying. That was truly breaking the Sabbath (v. 7). **To save** here means simply to heal, as Jesus was about to do.

6:11 **Rage** here is irrational or mindless anger. The parallels in Matt. 12:14; Mark 3:6 make it clear that the Pharisees started to plot against Jesus in earnest after this confrontation.

6:12 **in prayer:** Here we find an example of Jesus spending time with God before an important event in His life (see 3:21; 22:41-44).

6:13 **chose twelve:** Jesus selected the main body of disciples, those who would become responsible for leading the early church (see Matt. 10:2-4; Mark 3:16-19; Acts 1:13).

6:14 **Bartholomew** is probably Nathanael of John 1:45.

6:15 **Matthew** is Levi of 5:27-32 (see Mark 2:14-17).

6:16 **Judas the son of James** is probably Thaddaeus (see Matt. 10:3; Mark 3:18). This is not the Lord’s half brother.

6:17 **A level place** probably refers to a plateau on a mountain. The setting and the contents of the sermon that follows suggest that Luke is providing a shorter version of the Sermon on the Mount, omitting those portions that have to do with the Law. Points of similarities between Luke’s account here and Matthew’s account in Matt. 5-7 are as follows: (1) Both begin with a series of beatitudes. (2) Both contain Jesus’ teaching on loving one’s enemies. (3) Both end with the parable of the two builders. The theme of the sermon is the disciple’s walk. The audience for the sermon consisted of both **disciples** and the **great multitude**. Jesus did not restrict His re-

^{25 f}Woe to you who are full,
For you shall hunger.
^gWoe to you who laugh now,
For you shall mourn and ^hweep.
^{26 i}Woe ⁶to you when ⁷all men speak
well of you,
For so did their fathers to the false
prophets.

Rules of Kingdom Life

Matt. 5:39-48; 7:1, 2, 12

^{27 j}“But I say to you who hear: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, ^{28 k}bless those who curse you, and ^lpray for those who spitefully use you. ^{29 m}To him who strikes you on the one cheek, offer the other also. ⁿAnd from him who takes away your cloak, do not withhold *your* tunic either. ^{30 o}Give to everyone who asks of you. And from him who takes away your goods do not ask *them* back. ^{31 p}And just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them likewise.

^{32 q}“But if you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. ³³ And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. ^{34 r} And if you lend to those from whom you hope to receive back, what credit is that to you? For even sinners lend to sinners to receive as much back. ³⁵ But ^slove your enemies, ^tdo good, and ^ulend, ⁸hoping for nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and ^vyou will be sons of the Most High. For He is kind to the unthankful and evil. ^{36 w}Therefore be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful.

^{25 f} [Is. 65:13]
^g [Prov. 14:13]
^h James 4:9
^{26 i} [John 15:19;
1 John 4:5] ⁶ NU,
M omit to you ⁷ M
omits all
²⁷ / Ex. 23:4; Prov.
25:21; Matt. 5:44;
Rom. 12:20
^{28 k} Rom. 12:14
^l Luke 23:24; Acts
7:60
^{29 m} Matt. 5:39-42
ⁿ [1 Cor. 6:7]
^{30 o} Deut. 15:7, 8;
Prov. 3:27; 21:26;
Matt. 5:42
^{31 p} Matt. 7:12
^{32 q} Matt. 5:46
^{34 r} Matt. 5:42
^{35 s} [Rom. 13:10]
^t Heb. 13:16 ^u Lev.
25:35-37; Ps.
37:26 ^v Matt. 5:46
⁸ expecting
^{36 w} Matt. 5:48;
Eph. 4:32

^{37 x} Matt. 7:1-5;
Rom. 14:4; [1 Cor.
4:5] ^y Matt.
18:21-35
^{38 z} [Prov. 19:17;
28:27] ^a Ps. 79:12;
Is. 65:6, 7; Jer. 32:18
⁹ Matt. 7:2; Mark
4:24; James 2:13
³⁹ ^c Matt. 15:14;
23:16; Rom. 2:19
^{40 d} Matt. 10:24;
[John 13:16; 15:20]
^{41 e} Matt. 7:3
^{43 f} Matt. 7:16-18, 20
^{44 g} Matt. 12:33
^{45 h} Matt. 12:35
ⁱ Prov. 15:2, 28;
16:23; 18:21; Matt.
12:34 ⁹ NU omits
treasure of his heart

^{37 x}“Judge not, and you shall not be judged. Condemn not, and you shall not be condemned. ^yForgive, and you will be forgiven. ^{38 z}Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your ^abosom. For ^bwith the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you.”

Parable of the Blind Leading the Blind

Matt. 7:3-5, 16-18

³⁹ And He spoke a parable to them: ^c“Can the blind lead the blind? Will they not both fall into the ditch? ^{40 d} A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone who is perfectly trained will be like his teacher. ^{41 e} And why do you look at the speck in your brother’s eye, but do not perceive the plank in your own eye? ⁴² Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Brother, let me remove the speck that is in your eye,’ when you yourself do not see the plank that is in your own eye? Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck that is in your brother’s eye.

^{43 f}“For a good tree does not bear bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit. ⁴⁴ For ^gevery tree is known by its own fruit. For *men* do not gather figs from thorns, nor do they gather grapes from a bramble bush. ^{45 h} A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil ⁹treasure of his heart brings forth evil. For out ⁱof the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.

believers today when their works are evaluated (see 1 Cor. 3:12-15; 2 Cor. 5:10; 1 John 2:28; Rev. 22:12). **you who are rich . . . have received your consolation:** The background for this remark is found in Mary’s song of praise in 1:51-53. All that the rich receive is what they acquire on earth (see also Matt. 6:19-21). Luke records many of Jesus’ critical remarks about the wealthy. Their wealth typically blinds them to their spiritual poverty and their need for salvation (1:53; 12:16-21; 14:12; 16:1-14, 19-26; 18:18-25; 19:1-10; 21:1-4).

6:27, 28 The threat of religious persecution was very real when Jesus presented His command for extraordinary **love**. The reference to a cursing enemy suggests a context of religious persecution.

6:29 offer the other: This is a description of being repeatedly vulnerable in the face of injustice. The one who seeks to love will always remain exposed and at risk. A **tunic** was an undergarment; a **cloak** was an outer garment.

6:30 do not ask them back: Jesus’ instruction here is to forgive and forget. The commands of vv. 29, 30 are expressed in such absolute terms that they force the listener to reflect on them by contrasting them with the normal responses people would have to such injustices.

6:31 as you want men to do to you: This is the “golden rule.” Note that Jesus’ command is stated in the positive (contrast Lev. 19:18). Such love as Jesus describes recognizes the preferences of others and is sensitive to them.

6:35 The practice of loving one’s enemies is modeled by God Him-

self, who is **kind to the unthankful and evil**. Jesus also notes that the **reward will be great** for the losses suffered while practicing this type of love. This reward will be a hundredfold—that is, ten thousand percent (Matt. 19:28, 29).

6:37 Judge not . . . Condemn not . . . Forgive: The idea here is not that one should ignore sin or refuse to discuss its consequences (see 11:39-52; Gal. 6:1, 2); rather, one should be gracious and quick to forgive.

6:38 good measure: This illustration comes from the marketplace where grain was poured out, shaken down, and then filled to overflowing so the buyer received the full amount purchased. Such is the full measure that will be returned to one who has been generous.

6:39 The blind here refers to teachers who cannot see where they are going and are unable to lead others. Jesus was warning against self-righteousness and arrogance. It is debated whether Jesus was describing the Pharisees here or simply warning His disciples about dangerous attitudes. The focus on the disciples’ attitudes suggests the latter, though the remark would also have applied to the teachers with whom Jesus was in conflict.

6:41 A speck represents a small fault in another person in contrast to a **plank**, which represents a large fault in the one making the criticism.

6:43-45 known by its own fruit: Actions, not words, indicate where one’s heart is.

Parable of the Two Foundations

Matt. 7:21-27

^{46j}“But why do you call Me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do the things which I say?”
^{47k}Whoever comes to Me, and hears My sayings and does them, I will show you whom he is like: ⁴⁸He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently against that house, and could not shake it, for it was ¹founded on the rock. ⁴⁹But he who heard and did nothing is like a man who built a house on the earth without a foundation, against which the stream beat vehemently; and immediately it ²fell. And the ruin of that house was great.”

A Centurion's Servant Is Healed

Matt. 8:5-13

⁷Now when He concluded all His sayings in the hearing of the people, He ^aentered Capernaum. ²And a certain centurion's servant, who was dear to him, was sick and ready to die. ³So when he heard about Jesus, he sent elders of the Jews to Him, pleading with Him to come and heal his servant. ⁴And when they came to Jesus, they begged Him earnestly, saying that the one for whom He should do this was deserving, ⁵“for he loves our nation, and has built us a synagogue.”

⁶Then Jesus went with them. And when He was already not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to Him, saying to Him, “Lord, do not trouble Yourself, for I am not worthy that You should enter under my roof. ⁷Therefore I did not even think myself worthy to come to You. But ^bsay the word, and my servant will be healed. ⁸For I also am a man placed under ^cauthority, having sol-

⁴⁶ / Mal. 1:6; Matt. 7:21; 25:11; Luke 13:25
⁴⁷ ^k Matt. 7:24-27; [John 14:21]; James 1:22-25
⁴⁸ ¹ NU well built
⁴⁹ ² NU collapsed

CHAPTER 7

¹ ^a Matt. 8:5-13
⁷ ^b Ps. 33:9; 107:20
⁸ ^c [Mark 13:34]

¹⁰ ¹ NU omits who had been sick
¹³ ^d Lam. 3:32; John 11:35; [Heb. 4:15] ^e Luke 8:52
¹⁴ ^f Mark 5:41; Luke 8:54; John 11:43; Acts 9:40; [Rom. 4:17]

¹⁵ ^g Matt. 11:5; Luke 8:55; John 11:44 ^h ¹ Kin. 17:23; 2 Kin. 4:36
¹⁶ ¹ Luke 1:65 / Luke 5:26 ^k Luke 24:19; John 4:19; 6:14; 9:17 ⁷ Luke 1:68 ² seized them all
¹⁸ ^m Matt. 11:2-19
¹⁹ ³ NU the Lord

diers under me. And I say to one, ‘Go,’ and he goes; and to another, ‘Come,’ and he comes; and to my servant, ‘Do this,’ and he does it.”

⁹When Jesus heard these things, He marveled at him, and turned around and said to the crowd that followed Him, “I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel!” ¹⁰And those who were sent, returning to the house, found the servant well ¹who had been sick.

A Widow's Son Is Raised

¹¹Now it happened, the day after, *that* He went into a city called Nain; and many of His disciples went with Him, and a large crowd. ¹²And when He came near the gate of the city, behold, a dead man was being carried out, the only son of his mother; and she was a widow. And a large crowd from the city was with her. ¹³When the Lord saw her, He had ^dcompassion on her and said to her, ^e“Do not weep.” ¹⁴Then He came and touched the open coffin, and those who carried *him* stood still. And He said, “Young man, I say to you, ^farise.” ¹⁵So he who was dead ^gsat up and began to speak. And He ^hpresented him to his mother.

¹⁶ⁱThen fear ²came upon all, and they *j*glorified God, saying, ^k“A great prophet has risen up among us”; and, ^l“God has visited His people.”

John's Questions Are Answered

Matt. 11:2-6

¹⁷And this report about Him went throughout all Judea and all the surrounding region.

^{18m}Then the disciples of John reported to him concerning all these things. ¹⁹And John, calling two of his disciples to *him*, sent *them* to ³Jesus, saying, “Are

6:46 Lord, Lord: Jesus pointed out that those who called Him by this title of respect acknowledged submission to Him. However, when these same people ignored His teaching, they were guilty of hypocrisy.

6:47–49 hears . . . and does: One who listens to and acts on Jesus' teaching can face any difficult circumstance. **heard and did nothing:** Not acting on Jesus' teaching will cause a person to be overwhelmed by circumstances, eventually resulting in total loss (see 1 Cor. 3:12–15; 2 John 8).

7:1 Capernaum was on the northwest shore of the Sea of Galilee. It was an important town in northern Galilee with an economy centered on fishing and agriculture. Heavily Jewish, it was the center for Jesus' Galilean ministry (4:31–44).

7:5 built us a synagogue: The Roman government regarded synagogues as valuable because their moral emphasis helped maintain order.

7:8 The centurion compared his authority as a commander of **soldiers** to Jesus' **authority** over life and health. The centurion knew that Jesus' word alone was sufficient to heal his servant.

7:9 not even in Israel: The centurion's example of faith came from outside the nation of Israel. This is one of only two cases where Jesus was said to “marvel” (see Mark 6:6).

7:12 a dead man was being carried out: This was a funeral procession. The cemetery was located outside the city gates. Funerals were normally held the day of death because keeping a body overnight rendered a house unclean. Before the funeral the body was anointed. In a town the size of Nain (v. 11) many would have stopped to share in the mourning.

7:14, 15 The fact that Jesus **touched** the coffin indicated that He preferred helping the dead man to remaining ceremonially clean (see Num. 19:11, 16).

7:16 The crowd recognized the parallel between Jesus' raising of the widow's son and the work of the **great** prophets Elijah (see 1 Kin. 17:17–24) and Elisha (see 2 Kin. 4:8–37).

7:19 Are You the Coming One: John's uncertainty may have been due to the fact that Jesus did not show signs of being the political and conquering messiah that most Jews were anticipating in that period.

You ⁿthe Coming One, or ^ddo we look for another?"

²⁰When the men had come to Him, they said, "John the Baptist has sent us to You, saying, 'Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?'" ²¹And that very hour He cured many of ⁵infirmities, afflictions, and evil spirits; and to many blind He gave sight.

²²^aJesus answered and said to them, "Go and tell John the things you have seen and heard: ^pthat *the blind* ^qsee, *the lame* ^rwalk, *the lepers* are ^scleansed, *the deaf* ^thear, *the dead* are raised, ^u*the poor* have the gospel preached to them. ²³And blessed is *he* who is not ⁶offended because of Me."

Jesus Praises John

Matt. 11:7-15

²⁴^vWhen the messengers of John had departed, He began to speak to the multitudes concerning John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? ²⁵But what did you go out to see? A man clothed in soft garments? Indeed those who are gorgeously appareled and live in luxury are in kings' courts. ²⁶But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I say to you, and more than a prophet. ²⁷This is *he* of whom it is written:

^w*'Behold, I send My messenger before Your face,
Who will prepare Your way before You.'*

²⁸For I say to you, among those born of women there is ⁷not a ^xgreater prophet than John the Baptist; but he who is least

19 ^a[Mic. 5:2; Zech. 9:9; Mal. 3:1-3]

⁴should we expect

21 ⁵illnesses

22 ^aMatt. 11:4 ^pIs.

35:5 [★] ^qJohn 9:7

^rMatt. 15:31 ^sLuke

17:12-14 ^tMark 7:37

^u[Is. 61:1-3; Luke

4:18]

23 ⁶caused to

stumble

24 ^vMatt. 11:7

27 ^wIs. 40:3; Mal.

3:1 [★]; Matt. 11:10;

Mark 1:2

28 ^x[Luke 1:15]

⁷NU none greater

than John;

in the kingdom of God is greater than he."

²⁹And when all the people heard *Him*, even the tax collectors ⁸justified God, ⁹having been baptized with the baptism of John. ³⁰But the Pharisees and ⁹lawyers rejected ^zthe will of God for themselves, not having been baptized by him.

Jesus Criticizes His Generation

Matt. 11:16-19

³¹¹And the Lord said, ^a"To what then shall I liken the men of this generation, and what are they like? ³²They are like children sitting in the marketplace and calling to one another, saying:

^b'We played the flute for you,
And you did not dance;
We mourned to you,
And you did not weep.'

³³For ^bJohn the Baptist came ^cneither eating bread nor drinking wine, and you say, 'He has a demon.' ³⁴The Son of Man has come ^deating and drinking, and you say, 'Look, a glutton and a ²winebibber, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' ³⁵^eBut wisdom is justified by all her children."

A Woman Anoints Jesus' Feet

³⁶^fThen one of the Pharisees asked Him to eat with him. And He went to the Pharisee's house, and sat down to eat. ³⁷And behold, a woman in the city who was a sinner, when she knew that *Jesus* sat at the table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of fragrant oil, ³⁸and stood at His feet behind *Him* weeping; and she began to wash His feet

7:24-26 The questions that Jesus asked were designed to emphasize that John the Baptist played a special role in God's plan. The crowds did not go out to the wilderness to see scenery or a man dressed in special clothes, but to see a **prophet**.

7:27 My messenger: The citation here is from Mal. 3:1 (see also Matt. 11:10; Mark 1:2). John the Baptist was the promised Elijah figure who would point the way to the arrival of God's salvation (1:16, 17; 3:4-6).

7:28 he who is least in the kingdom of God: Jesus emphasizes the contrast between the old and new eras. John was the greatest prophet ever born. But the lowest person in the new era of God's kingdom is higher than the greatest prophet of the old era.

7:29, 30 Luke, in an aside, contrasts the responses to John's message. **The tax collectors justified God**, which means that they responded to John's message by submitting to John's baptism. The Pharisees, however, **rejected the will of God**, which means that they refused to listen to John and were not baptized (see Matt. 3:7-12).

7:31-34 Jesus made a comparison between **children** playing a game in the marketplace and the present **generation** of Israel, referring especially to the Jewish religious leaders. The leaders were like the children in that they complained no matter what tune was played. John the Baptist refused to eat bread or drink wine, and the

religious leaders dismissed him as demon-possessed. In contrast, Jesus, **the Son of Man**, was accused of living loosely and associating with sinners. No matter what the style of God's messenger was, the religious leaders complained and rejected him.

7:35 God's **wisdom** is vindicated by those who respond to it and receive blessing.

7:36 one of the Pharisees asked Him to eat with him: This event is not the same as the one in Matt. 26:6-13; Mark 14:3-9; John 12:1-8. The event described in those passages occurred in the house of a leper, a place where no Pharisee would ever have gone. **sat down to eat:** A meal with a religious figure in the ancient world was arranged so that the invited guest was at the main table while others were along the outside wall of the room listening to the conversation.

7:37, 38 The woman's sin is not specified. This woman is not Mary Magdalene of 8:2, since in that passage she is introduced as a new figure. The woman's anointing of Jesus was in response to Jesus' message of compassion for sinners (vv. 41-43, 50). **An alabaster flask** was made of soft stone to preserve the quality of the precious and expensive perfume. There is humility and devotion in the woman's act of service, as well as a great deal of courage, as she performed the deed in front of a crowd that knew her as a sinner. Although the woman does not say a word in the entire account, her actions speak volumes about her contrite heart.

with her tears, and wiped *them* with the hair of her head; and she kissed His feet and anointed *them* with the fragrant oil. ³⁹Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw *this*, he spoke to himself, saying, ^g“This Man, if He were a prophet, would know who and what manner of woman *this* is who is touching Him, for she is a sinner.”

The Parable of the Two Debtors

⁴⁰And Jesus answered and said to him, “Simon, I have something to say to you.” So he said, “Teacher, say it.”

⁴¹“There was a certain creditor who had two debtors. One owed five hundred ^hdenarii, and the other fifty. ⁴²And when they had nothing with which to repay, he freely forgave them both. Tell Me, therefore, which of them will love him more?”

⁴³Simon answered and said, “I suppose the *one* whom he forgave more.”

And He said to him, “You have rightly judged.” ⁴⁴Then He turned to the woman and said to Simon, “Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave Me no ⁱwater for My feet, but she has washed My feet with her tears and wiped *them* with the hair of her head. ⁴⁵You gave Me no ^jkiss, but this woman has not ceased to kiss My feet since the time I came in. ⁴⁶^kYou did not anoint My head with oil, but this woman has anointed My feet with fragrant oil. ⁴⁷^lTherefore I say to you, her sins, which *are* many, are forgiven, for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, *the same* loves little.”

⁴⁸Then He said to her, ^m“Your sins are forgiven.”

⁴⁹And those who sat at the table with Him began to say to themselves, ⁿ“Who is this who even forgives sins?”

⁵⁰Then He said to the woman, ^o“Your faith has saved you. Go in peace.”

Certain Women Minister to Christ

8 Now it came to pass, afterward, that He went through every city and village, preaching and ¹bringing the glad tidings

BIBLE TIMES & CULTURE NOTES



The Underclass

Nearly every society and every city in biblical times had a large underclass. Tending to congregate in the cities, the underclass included the poor, the sick, the disabled, the lepers, the blind, the insane, the demon-possessed, widows, orphans, and refugees. Lacking resources to provide for even their basic needs, many turned to begging, stealing, menial labor, slavery, or prostitution. Few cultures made provision for these desperate, destitute wanderers, and so they remained largely powerless to change their condition. Yet it was to the underclass that Jesus intentionally directed much of His life and ministry.



Jesus healing the blind man (Luke 9)

Wikimedia Commons

³⁹ ^g Luke 15:2

⁴¹ ^h Matt. 18:28;

Mark 6:37

⁴⁴ ⁱ Gen. 18:4; 19:2;

43:24; Judg. 19:21;

1 Tim. 5:10

⁴⁵ ^j Rom. 16:16

⁴⁶ ^k 2 Sam. 12:20;

Ps. 23:5; Eccl. 9:8;

Dan. 10:3

⁴⁷ ^l [1 Tim. 1:14]

⁴⁸ ^m Matt. 9:2;

Mark 2:5

⁴⁹ ⁿ Matt. 9:3;

[Mark 2:7]; Luke

5:21

of the kingdom of God. And the twelve *were* with Him, ²and ^acertain women who had been healed of evil spirits and ²infirmities—Mary called Magdalene, ^bout of whom had come seven demons, ³and Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod’s steward, and Susanna, and many others who provided for ³Him from their ⁴substance.

⁵⁰ ^o Matt. 9:22; Mark 5:34; 10:52; Luke 8:48; 18:42

CHAPTER 8 ¹ ⁱ proclaiming the good news ² ^a Matt.

27:55; Mark 15:40, 41; Luke 23:49, 55 ^o Matt. 27:56; Mark 16:9

² sicknesses ³ ³ NU, M *them* ⁴ possessions

7:39 if He were a prophet: The Pharisee doubted Jesus’ credentials because He associated so openly with sinners. Jesus’ association with sinners is a prominent theme in Luke (v. 34; 5:8, 30, 32; 13:2; 15:1, 2, 7, 10; 18:13; 19:7; 24:7). A Pharisee would reject such associations.

7:40 I have something to say: Jesus’ reply indicates that He knew the reputation of the woman, but was more interested in what the woman could become through the grace of God.

7:41 Jesus often compared sin to a monetary debt. A denarius was a day’s wage for a basic laborer, so **five hundred denarii** was approximately the wages of one and a half years.

7:42 which of them will love him more: Jesus’ point is that the amount of love showered on the Savior will be in direct proportion with one’s sense of the gravity of the sins that the Savior has forgiv-

en. The woman knew she had been forgiven much, and as a result she would love much.

7:44–46 Jesus contrasted the actions of the woman with the actions of the Pharisee **Simon**, implying that the woman knew more about forgiveness than Simon (v. 47).

7:47 her sins . . . are forgiven: Jesus confirmed that the love of the woman, which was visible in her actions toward Jesus, had come from being forgiven.

7:49 Who is this: The grumbling over Jesus’ declaration concerning forgiveness indicates that at least some people in the audience rejected His authority.

7:50 Faith is the human channel for receiving God’s gifts (see Eph. 2:8, 9).

8:1–3 The fact that **Mary called Magdalene** is introduced here

The Parable of the Soils

Matt. 13:1-23; Mark 4:1-20

^{4c} And when a great multitude had gathered, and they had come to Him from every city, He spoke by a parable: ⁵ “A sower went out to sow his seed. And as he sowed, some fell by the wayside; and it was trampled down, and the birds of the air devoured it. ⁶ Some fell on rock; and as soon as it sprang up, it withered away because it lacked moisture. ⁷ And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up with it and choked it. ⁸ But others fell on good ground, sprang up, and yielded ^{5a} a crop a hundredfold.” When He had said these things He cried, ^d “He who has ears to hear, let him hear!”

^{9e} Then His disciples asked Him, saying, “What does this parable mean?”

¹⁰ And He said, “To you it has been given to know the ⁶ mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to the rest *it is given* in parables, that

f ^{See} *seeing they may not see,
And hearing they may not
understand.*

^{11g} “Now the parable is this: The seed is the ^h word of God. ¹² Those by the wayside are the ones who hear; then the devil comes and takes away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. ¹³ But the ones on the rock *are those* who, when they hear, receive the

4 ^c Matt. 13:2-9;
Mark 4:1-9
8 ^d Matt. 11:15;
Mark 7:16; Luke
14:35; Rev. 2:7, 11,
17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22;
13:9 ² Lit. fruit
9 ^e Matt. 13:10-23;
Mark 4:10-20
10 ^f Is. 6:9 ★; Matt.
13:14; Acts 28:26
⁶ secret or hidden
truths
11 ^g Matt. 13:18;
Mark 4:14; [1 Pet.
1:23] ^h Luke 5:1;
11:28

13 ⁷ testing
14 ⁱ Matt. 19:23;
1 Tim. 6:9, 10
15 ^j [Rom. 2:7; Heb.
10:36-39; James 5:7,
8] ⁸ endurance
16 ^k Matt. 5:15;
Mark 4:21; Luke
11:33 ¹ Matt. 5:14
17 ^m Matt. 10:26;
Luke 12:2; [1 Cor.
4:5] ⁿ [Eccl. 12:14;
2 Cor. 5:10]
18 ^o Matt. 25:29
^p Matt. 13:12
⁹ thinks that he has
19 ^q Ps. 69:8; Matt.
12:46-50; Mark
3:31-35

word with joy; and these have no root, who believe for a while and in time of ⁷ temptation fall away. ¹⁴ Now the ones *that* fell among thorns are those who, when they have heard, go out and are choked with cares, ⁱ riches, and pleasures of life, and bring no fruit to maturity. ¹⁵ But the ones *that* fell on the good ground are those who, having heard the word with a noble and good heart, keep *it* and bear fruit with ^j patience.⁸

Parable of the Lamp

Mark 4:21-25

^{16k} “No one, when he has lit a lamp, covers it with a vessel or puts *it* under a bed, but sets *it* on a lampstand, that those who enter may see the ^l light. ^{17m} For nothing is secret that will not be ⁿ revealed, nor *anything* hidden that will not be known and come to light. ¹⁸ Therefore take heed how you hear. ^o For whoever has, to him *more* will be given; and whoever does not have, even what he ⁹ seems to ^p have will be taken from him.”

Christ's True Brethren

Matt. 12:46-50; Mark 3:31-35

^{19q} Then His mother and brothers came to Him, and could not approach Him because of the crowd. ²⁰ And it was told Him *by some*, who said, “Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside, desiring to see You.”

²¹ But He answered and said to them,

as though for the first time makes it unlikely that she was the sinful woman of 7:36–50. Mary Magdalene is also distinct from Mary of Bethany in John 12:3. **Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward:** News of Jesus had reached Herod's palace, **provided for Him from their substance:** This is an example of how some women of means used their wealth to benefit the work of God.

8:4–8 In the ancient world, fields were sown sometimes before and sometimes after plowing. Paths often cut through fields. Sometimes **seed** would take root on these paths, where it could not mature. In addition, some soil was rocky and also could not support a successful crop.

8:10 Jesus' parables both concealed and revealed truths. His parables contained fresh teaching—**mysteries**—concerning **the kingdom of God**. The disciples were privileged to learn the truths of the parables. For other listeners, the parables served as judgments that concealed truth, as the reference to Is. 6:9 indicates. On occasion, a parable was understood by an outsider but was not accepted, thus still functioning as a message of judgment (20:9–19).

8:11 word of God: The parallel in Matt. 13:19 speaks of the seed as the “word of the kingdom,” a point that Luke makes in v. 10. The soils do not represent individual moments of decision as much as a lifelong response to God's Word.

8:12 Because **those by the wayside** never really gain an understanding (see Matt. 13:19) of the word of God before Satan snatches it **away**, there is really no productivity at all.

8:13 believe for a while . . . fall away: Brief and superficial encounters with the word of God will not stand times of testing. A person needs to meditate on the truths in Scripture and establish them as principles for living in order to withstand the trials and temptations that will inevitably come.

8:14 According to this parable, **cares, riches, and pleasures of life** are three great obstacles to spiritual fruitfulness. The concerns of life can squelch spiritual growth. This type of “soil” is viewed as tragically unsuccessful (see 2 Tim. 2:4; 4:10).

8:15 keep it and bear fruit: This is the one praiseworthy group in the parable. The key here is a **noble and good heart**. This “soil” allows the word of God to settle in and become productive (see John 15:2, 3; Col. 3:16, 17; James 1:21).

8:16 sets it on a lampstand: Continuing with the theme of the word of God introduced in vv. 4–15, Jesus compares His teaching to **light**. It should not be hidden, but displayed, so that people can benefit from the illumination it gives.

8:17 come to light: Eventually everything will be revealed by the light of the word of God (see Heb. 4:12, 13).

8:18 take heed how you hear: Jesus explicitly warned His audience to listen to and follow the word of God (see James 1:22–25). **what he seems to have will be taken:** This phrase introduces the principle of judgment. The one who responds to the word of God receives more. The one who does not respond to the word of God loses what he thought he had.

8:19, 20 Jesus' family was concerned about the direction of His ministry (see Mark 3:31–35). Though some have suggested that the **brothers** here were sons of Joseph by a previous marriage or cousins of Jesus, most likely they were the sons of Joseph and Mary. Joseph's absence here may mean that he had died by this time.

8:21 My mother and My brothers: In a clear contrast to v. 19, Jesus declared that His true family consists of those who hear and do the **word of God**.



The Province of Galilee

The territories of Naphtali, Zebulun, and Issachar constituted the region of Galilee that bordered Lake Chinnereth in OT times. Lake Chinnereth was later called Lake of Gennesaret (5:1), the Sea of Tiberias (John 6:1), or the Sea of Galilee (Matt. 4:18). Although it may sound large, the Sea of Galilee is actually a small lake, about 6 miles wide and 15 miles long. Under Rome's rule, the provinces of Galilee, Judah, and Samaria were part of Herod's kingdom. Herod the Great supposedly rid Galilee of robbers and repopulated the north with Jews. Once known as "Galilee of the Gentiles" (Is. 9:1), it became a vigorously Jewish region. Jesus conducted most of His ministry in the province of Galilee.



An aerial view of the Sea of Galilee

Baker Photo Archive

"My mother and My brothers are these who hear the word of God and do it."

The Storm Is Stilled

Matt. 8:23-27; Mark 4:35-41

²² Now it happened, on a certain day, that He got into a boat with His disciples. And He said to them, "Let us cross over to the other side of the lake." And they launched out. ²³ But as they sailed He fell

²² ^r Matt. 8:23-27;

Mark 4:36-41

²³ ¹ danger

²⁵ ^s Luke 9:41

^r Luke 4:36; 5:26

²⁶ ^u Matt. 8:28-34;

Mark 5:1-17 ² NU

Gerasenes

²⁷ ³ NU and for a

long time wore no

clothes

²⁸ ^v Mark 1:26; 9:26

^w Mark 1:23, 24

asleep. And a windstorm came down on the lake, and they were filling *with water*, and were in ¹ jeopardy. ²⁴ And they came to Him and awoke Him, saying, "Master, Master, we are perishing!"

Then He arose and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water. And they ceased, and there was a calm. ²⁵ But He said to them, ^s "Where is your faith?"

And they were afraid, and marveled, saying to one another, ^t "Who can this be? For He commands even the winds and water, and they obey Him!"

Demons Are Cast into Swine

Matt. 8:28-34; Mark 5:1-20

²⁶ ^u Then they sailed to the country of the ² Gadarenes, which is opposite Galilee. ²⁷ And when He stepped out on the land, there met Him a certain man from the city who had demons ³ for a long time. And he wore no clothes, nor did he live in a house but in the tombs. ²⁸ When he saw Jesus, he ^v cried out, fell down before Him, and with a loud voice said, ^w "What have I to do with ^x You, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg You, do not torment me!" ²⁹ For He had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For it had often seized him, and he was kept under guard, bound with chains and shackles; and he broke the bonds and was driven by the demon into the wilderness.

³⁰ Jesus asked him, saying, "What is your name?"

And he said, "Legion," because many demons had entered him. ³¹ And they begged Him that He would not command them to go out ³ into the abyss.

³² Now a herd of many ^z swine was feeding there on the mountain. So they begged Him that He would permit them

^x Luke 4:41

Deut. 14:8

³¹ ^v Rom. 10:7; [Rev. 20:1, 3]

³² ^z Lev. 11:7;

8:23 windstorm: The calming of the wind is the first of four miracles in vv. 22-56 that demonstrate Jesus' authority over a variety of phenomena—nature, demons, disease, and death. This first miracle took place on the Sea of Galilee. Cool air rushing down the ravines and hills of the area collides with warm air, causing sudden and strong storms. Even the experienced fishermen in the boat feared this kind of storm.

8:24 they ceased: At Jesus' word, all the chaos of the storm stopped. Such control over nature is attributed to God in the OT (see Ps. 104:3; 135:7; Nah. 1:4).

8:25 Where is your faith: Jesus' question was a rebuke of His disciples. Because God was aware of their situation, they could trust in His protection, for He was powerful enough to control the mighty winds and waves. **Who can this be:** This is the real question of Jesus' entire Galilean ministry, the beginning of which is recorded in 4:14. All of the displays of Jesus' authority during this ministry were designed to raise this question of His identity. **they obey Him:** The closest precedent to Jesus' power over nature was the miracles of

the prophet Elijah (see 1 Kin. 17:1; 18:38, 44, 45). The disciples already sensed that Jesus was more than a prophet.

8:26 The city of the **Gadarenes** (see Matt. 8:28) was probably a town about five miles southeast of the Sea of Galilee. Whatever its exact location, it was situated in a predominantly Gentile region.

8:28 The demon's confession of Jesus as **Son of the Most High God** recalls the angel's announcement to Mary in 1:31, 32 and the demonic confessions of 4:34, 41.

8:30 Legion: This name reflects the fact that the man was possessed by multiple demons. A *legion* was a Roman military unit of about six thousand soldiers; thus the name suggests a spiritual battle.

8:31 The abyss is an allusion to the underworld and the destruction of judgment (see Rom 10:7).

8:32 Swine were unclean animals for Jews (see Lev. 11:7; Deut. 14:8). Even though this incident took place in a Gentile area, it is still interesting to note that the unclean spirits sought out unclean animals.

to enter them. And He permitted them. ³³Then the demons went out of the man and entered the swine, and the herd ran violently down the steep place into the lake and drowned.

³⁴When those who fed *them* saw what had happened, they fled and told *it* in the city and in the country. ³⁵Then they went out to see what had happened, and came to Jesus, and found the man from whom the demons had departed, ^asitting at the ^bfeet of Jesus, clothed and in his ^cright mind. And they were afraid. ³⁶They also who had seen *it* told them by what means he who had been demon-possessed was ^dhealed. ³⁷^dThen the whole multitude of the surrounding region of the ^eGadarenes ^easked Him to ^fdepart from them, for they were seized with great ^gfear. And He got into the boat and returned.

³⁸Now ^hthe man from whom the demons had departed begged Him that he might be with Him. But Jesus sent him away, saying, ³⁹“Return to your own house, and tell what great things God has done for you.” And he went his way and proclaimed throughout the whole city what great things Jesus had done for him.

⁴⁰So it was, when Jesus returned, that the multitude welcomed Him, for they were all waiting for Him.

A Woman Is Healed

Matt. 9:18-22; Mark 5:21-34

⁴¹ⁱAnd behold, there came a man named Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue. And he fell down at Jesus’ feet and begged Him to come to his house, ⁴²for he had an only daughter about twelve years of age, and she ^jwas dying.

But as He went, the multitudes thronged Him. ⁴³^kNow a woman, having a ^lflow of blood for twelve years, who had spent all her livelihood on physicians and could not be healed by any, ⁴⁴came

³⁵ ^a [Matt. 11:28] ★
^b Matt. 28:9; Mark 7:25; Luke 10:39; 17:16; John 11:32
^c [2 Tim. 1:7]
³⁶ ^d *delivered*
³⁷ ^d Matt. 8:34
^e Mark 1:24;
 Luke 4:34 ^f Job 21:14; Acts 16:39
^g Luke 5:26 ⁵ NU
Gadarenes
³⁸ ^h Mark 5:18-20
⁴¹ ⁱ Matt. 9:18-26;
 Mark 5:22-43
⁴² ^j Luke 7:2
⁴³ ^k Matt. 9:20
^l Luke 15:19-22

⁴⁴ ^m Mark 6:56;
 Luke 5:13
⁴⁵ ⁿ NU omits *and those with him* ⁷ NU omits the rest of v. 45.
⁴⁶ ⁿ Mark 5:30;
 Luke 6:19
⁴⁸ ^o Mark 5:34;
 Luke 7:50 ^p John 8:11 ⁸ NU omits *be of good cheer*
⁴⁹ ^q Mark 5:35 ⁹ NU adds *anymore*
⁵⁰ ^r [Mark 11:22-24]
⁵¹ ¹ NU adds *with Him* ² NU, M *Peter, John, and James*
⁵² ^s Luke 7:13
^t [John 11:11, 13]
⁵⁴ ^u Luke 7:14; John 11:43 ³ NU omits *put them all outside*
⁵⁶ ^v Matt. 8:4; 9:30;
 Mark 5:43

from behind and ^mtouched the border of His garment. And immediately her flow of blood stopped.

⁴⁵And Jesus said, “Who touched Me?”

When all denied it, Peter ⁶and those with him said, “Master, the multitudes throng and press You, ⁷and You say, ‘Who touched Me?’”

⁴⁶But Jesus said, “Somebody touched Me, for I perceived ⁿpower going out from Me.” ⁴⁷Now when the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came trembling; and falling down before Him, she declared to Him in the presence of all the people the reason she had touched Him and how she was healed immediately.

⁴⁸And He said to her, “Daughter, ⁸be of good cheer; ^eyour faith has made you well. ^pGo in peace.”

Jairus’s Daughter Is Raised

Matt. 9:23-26; Mark 5:35-43

⁴⁹^qWhile He was still speaking, someone came from the ruler of the synagogue’s *house*, saying to him, “Your daughter is dead. Do not trouble the ⁹Teacher.”

⁵⁰But when Jesus heard *it*, He answered him, saying, “Do not be afraid; ^ronly believe, and she will be made well.” ⁵¹When He came into the house, He permitted no one to go ¹in except ²Peter, James, and John, and the father and mother of the girl. ⁵²Now all wept and mourned for her; but He said, ^s“Do not weep; she is not dead, ^tbut sleeping.” ⁵³And they ridiculed Him, knowing that she was dead.

⁵⁴But He ³put them all outside, took her by the hand and called, saying, “Little girl, ^uarise.” ⁵⁵Then her spirit returned, and she arose immediately. And He commanded that she be given *something* to eat. ⁵⁶And her parents were astonished, but ^vHe charged them to tell no one what had happened.

8:35 sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind: This is a contrast to the same man who was roaming the tombs previously (vv. 27, 29). The man’s position at Jesus’ feet paints a picture of true discipleship (10:38–42).

8:37 There is some speculation that the reason the people asked Jesus to **depart** was to prevent further economic damage to their herds. According to Luke, the people were afraid of the authoritative presence of Jesus.

8:38, 39 The man who was formerly demon-possessed wanted to go with Jesus and His disciples, but Jesus commissioned the man to be a witness in his own community. **Jesus had done:** Though Jesus wanted the Father to receive the credit for the man’s healing, the man could not separate what God did from the role Jesus had played.

8:41 ruler: Jairus was the main elder of the synagogue. As such, he conducted the service and kept order.

8:44 her flow of blood stopped: This condition not only would have been embarrassing, it would have made the woman unclean

(see Lev. 15:25–31). It took great courage for her to seek out Jesus. Note that her action was not criticized, but commended (v. 48).

8:49 Your daughter is dead: The delay caused by the woman with the blood disorder appeared to have been fatal for Jairus’s daughter.

8:50 only believe: This miracle highlights not only the authority of Jesus, but also the response of faith that God honors.

8:51 He permitted no one to go in except Peter, James, and John: The reason Jesus singled out these three disciples is not given. Luke records a similar action in 9:28. Matthew and Mark record a similar singling out at Gethsemane (see Matt. 26:37; Mark 14:33).

8:52 Sleeping, a common metaphor for death, indicates in this passage that the girl’s death was not permanent.

8:53 they ridiculed Him: The term used here suggests that the derision included laughter.

8:56 The reason for Jesus’ command for silence in this verse is not entirely clear, given that anyone could have deduced **what had happened**. The situation seems odd in light of Jesus’ instruction to the demon-possessed man to proclaim what had occurred to him in

Twelve Are Sent to Preach

Matt. 10:1-14; 14:1-14; Mark 6:7-16, 30-34

9 Then ^aHe called His twelve disciples together and ^bgave them power and authority over all demons, and to cure diseases. ^{2c}He sent them to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick. ^{3d}And He said to them, “Take nothing for the journey, neither staffs nor bag nor bread nor money; and do not have two tunics apiece.

^{4e}“Whatever house you enter, stay there, and from there depart. ^{5f}And whoever will not receive you, when you go out of that city, ^gshake off the very dust from your feet as a testimony against them.”

^{6h}So they departed and went through the towns, preaching the gospel and healing everywhere.

⁷ⁱNow Herod the tetrarch heard of all that was done by Him; and he was perplexed, because it was said by some that John had risen from the dead, ⁸and by some that Elijah had appeared, and by others that one of the old prophets had risen again. ⁹Herod said, “John I have beheaded, but who is this of whom I hear such things?” ^jSo he sought to see Him.

^{10k}And the apostles, when they had returned, told Him all that they had done. ^lThen He took them and went aside privately into a deserted place belonging to the city called Bethsaida. ¹¹But when the multitudes knew *it*, they followed Him; and He received them and spoke to them about the kingdom of God, and healed those who had need of healing.

Five Thousand Are Fed

Matt. 14:15-21; Mark 6:35-44; John 6:1-14

^{12m}When the day began to wear away, the

CHAPTER 9

¹ ^a Matt. 10:1;
² Mark 3:13; 6:7
^b Mark 16:17, 18;
[John 14:12]

² ^c Matt. 10:7, 8;
Mark 6:12; Luke
10:1, 9

³ ^d Matt. 10:9-15;
Mark 6:8-11; Luke
10:4-12; 22:35

⁴ ^e Matt. 10:11;
Mark 6:10

⁵ ^f Matt. 10:14
^g Luke 10:11; Acts
13:51

⁶ ^h Mark 6:12;
Luke 8:1

⁷ ⁱ Matt. 14:1, 2;
Mark 6:14

⁹ ^j Luke 23:8
¹⁰ ^k Mark 6:30

¹¹ ^l Matt. 14:13
¹² ^m Matt. 14:15;
Mark 6:35; John
6:1, 5

¹⁶ ⁿ Luke 22:19;
24:30

¹⁷ ^o ⁱ satisfied

¹⁸ ^p Matt. 16:13-16;
Mark 8:27-29

¹⁹ ^q Matt. 14:2

²⁰ ^r Matt. 16:16;
John 6:68, 69

²¹ ^s Matt. 8:4; 16:20;
Mark 8:30

²² ^t Matt. 16:21;
17:22; Luke 18:31-
33; 23:46; 24:46

twelve came and said to Him, “Send the multitude away, that they may go into the surrounding towns and country, and lodge and get provisions; for we are in a deserted place here.”

¹³But He said to them, “You give them something to eat.”

And they said, “We have no more than five loaves and two fish, unless we go and buy food for all these people.” ¹⁴For there were about five thousand men.

Then He said to His disciples, “Make them sit down in groups of fifty.” ¹⁵And they did so, and made them all sit down.

¹⁶Then He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, He ^o“blessed and broke them, and gave *them* to the disciples to set before the multitude. ¹⁷So they all ate and were ⁱfilled, and twelve baskets of the leftover fragments were taken up by them.

Peter's Confession of Faith

Matt. 16:13-21; Mark 8:27-31

^{18o}And it happened, as He was alone praying, *that* His disciples joined Him, and He asked them, saying, “Who do the crowds say that I am?”

¹⁹So they answered and said, ^p“John the Baptist, but some *say* Elijah; and others *say* that one of the old prophets has risen again.”

²⁰He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?”

^qPeter answered and said, “The Christ of God.”

^{21r}And He strictly warned and commanded them to tell this to no one, ²²saying, ^s“The Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day.”

8:39, 45–47 and the public raising of the dead in 7:11–17. Jesus may have wanted to curtail such healings so that they would not become the center of His ministry.

9:2 to preach . . . to heal: The entire nation of Israel needed to see the evidence of the kingdom of God and make a decision concerning the King. Jesus commissioned His disciples to spread the word about God's kingdom through preaching and healing.

9:7–9 At Herod's palace, opinions varied as to whether Jesus was **John** the Baptist, **Elijah** (see Mal. 3:1), or one of the **prophets**. Though this passage suggests that Herod was uncertain about Jesus' identity, Matt. 14:2 and Mark 6:16 indicate that Herod viewed Jesus as John the Baptist raised from the dead.

9:11 spoke . . . healed: Jesus had the same two-pronged ministry that the twelve disciples had: preaching and healing (v. 2). The topic of Jesus' preaching was always **the kingdom of God**.

9:13–17 This is the only miracle of Jesus' ministry that appears in all four Gospels (see Matt. 14:13–21; Mark 6:30–44; John 6:5–14). The feeding of the five thousand demonstrated Jesus' ability to provide. **blessed and broke:** Some see an allusion here to the Lord's Table. Though this is not made clear in Luke's presentation, the description is similar to the table fellowship of the Last Supper

(22:19) and Jesus' meal with some of the disciples after His resurrection (24:30).

9:20 The Christ of God: The emphasis here is on the messianic role of Jesus. He is the Promised One who was ushering in a new era. However, Jesus would soon reveal to the disciples that His messiahship would have elements of suffering that the disciples did not expect (see vv. 22, 23).

9:21 tell this to no one: Jesus knew that the messianic role that the people and the disciples expected was much different from His actual role as the Messiah. The element of suffering that the Messiah would endure was not a part of popular expectation. Thus Jesus' messiahship could not be openly proclaimed before the true nature of the Messiah was revealed.

9:22 must suffer . . . be rejected . . . be killed . . . be raised: This is the first of several predictions in Luke of Jesus' suffering and vindication (v. 44; 12:50; 13:31–33; 17:25; 18:31–33). The disciples struggled to understand what Jesus was saying (v. 45; 18:34). They could not comprehend how Jesus' predictions fit into God's plan. Only after Jesus' resurrection and His explanation of the Scriptures to them did they begin to understand (24:25–27, 44–49).

True Cost of Discipleship

Matt. 16:24-27; Mark 8:34-38

²³ Then He said to *them* all, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross ²daily, and follow Me. ²⁴ For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it. ²⁵ For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and is himself destroyed or lost? ²⁶ For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, of him the Son of Man will be ^xashamed when He comes in His *own* glory, and in His Father’s, and of the holy angels.

The Transfiguration

Matt. 16:28-17:9; Mark 9:1-9; 2 Pet. 1:17, 18

²⁷ But I tell you truly, there are some standing here who shall not taste death till they see the kingdom of God.”

²⁸ Now it came to pass, about eight days after these sayings, that He took Peter, John, and James and went up on the mountain to pray. ²⁹ As He prayed, the appearance of His face was altered, and His robe *became* white and glistening. ³⁰ And behold, two men talked with Him, who were ^aMoses and ^bElijah, ³¹ who appeared in glory and spoke of His ³decease which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. ³² But Peter and those with him ^cwere heavy with sleep; and when

²³ ^t Matt. 10:38; 16:24; Mark 8:34; Luke 14:27 ² M omits *daily*
²⁴ ^u Matt. 10:39; Luke 17:33; [John 12:25]
²⁵ ^v Matt. 16:26; Mark 8:36; [Luke 16:19-31]; Acts 1:18, 25
²⁶ ^w [Rom. 1:16]
^x Matt. 10:33; Mark 8:38; Luke 12:9; 2 Tim. 2:12
²⁷ ^y Matt. 16:28; Mark 9:1; Acts 7:55, 56 ^z; Rev. 20:4
²⁸ ^z Matt. 17:1-8; Mark 9:2-8
³⁰ ^a Heb. 11:23-29
^b 2 Kin. 2:11-11
³¹ ³ Death, lit. departure
³² ^c Dan. 8:18; 10:9; Matt. 26:40, 43; Mark 14:40

³³ ⁴ tents
³⁴ ^d Ex. 13:21; Acts 1:9
³⁵ ^e Ps. 2:7; [Is. 42:1; Matt. 3:17; 12:18]; Mark 1:11; Luke 3:22
^f Acts 3:22 ⁵ NU
My Son, the Chosen One
³⁶ ^g Matt. 17:9; Mark 9:9
³⁷ ^h Matt. 17:14-18; Mark 9:14-27

they were fully awake, they saw His glory and the two men who stood with Him. ³³ Then it happened, as they were parting from Him, *that* Peter said to Jesus, “Master, it is good for us to be here; and let us make three ⁴tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah”—not knowing what he said.

³⁴ While he was saying this, a cloud came and overshadowed them; and they were fearful as they entered the ^acloud. ³⁵ And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, ^e“This is ⁵My beloved Son. ^fHear Him!” ³⁶ When the voice had ceased, Jesus was found alone. ^gBut they kept quiet, and told no one in those days any of the things they had seen.

Demoniac Son Is Healed

Matt. 17:14-18; Mark 9:14-27

³⁷ Now it happened on the next day, when they had come down from the mountain, that a great multitude met Him. ³⁸ Suddenly a man from the multitude cried out, saying, “Teacher, I implore You, look on my son, for he is my only child. ³⁹ And behold, a spirit seizes him, and he suddenly cries out; it convulses him so that he foams *at the mouth*; and it departs from him with great difficulty, bruising him. ⁴⁰ So I implored Your disciples to cast it out, but they could not.”

9:23 take up his cross daily: Although Jesus offered salvation as a free gift (John 1:12; 3:16-18; see Eph. 2:8, 9), He also warned that following Him would entail suffering and hardship (Matt. 5:10-12; see also Rom. 8:17; 2 Thess. 1:5).

9:24, 25 It makes no sense to attempt to save our lives on earth only to lose everything when our lives quickly and inevitably pass away. The wise course is to invest our earthly resources—our time, talents, and wealth—in what is eternal. Even if we lose our lives for Jesus’ sake, that investment will produce returns for all eternity (see 19:11-27; Matt. 6:19-21; 19:27-30).

9:26 Recognition of Jesus will be rewarded in the coming judgment. Failure to recognize Him will lead to significant loss (see 1 Cor. 3:12-15; 2 Cor. 5:10; 2 Tim. 2:12; 1 John 2:28; 2 John 7, 8; Rev. 3:11; 22:12).

9:27 till they see the kingdom of God: Since these disciples died before Jesus’ return, the reference here is no doubt to the Transfig-

uration (vv. 28-36). With this there is probably also a prediction of the descent of the Spirit at Pentecost (10:9; 11:20; 17:21).

9:29 At the Transfiguration Jesus was *altered* into a radiant figure, even down to His **white and glistening** clothes. The description here is similar to the description of the glory of Moses after seeing God (Ex. 34:29-35).

9:31 Decease is literally exodus. This important allusion to the central OT event of salvation is unique to Luke’s account of the Transfiguration. The comparison is made between Jesus’ death and the journey to salvation that the nation of Israel experienced under Moses. Jesus’ journey would take Him to the side of God, from which He will return to exercise authority (see Acts 2:30-36; 10:42; 17:31).

9:33 let us make three tabernacles: Peter desired structures for the two OT visitors and Jesus, perhaps as a means of prolonging their visit. **not knowing what he said:** Peter did not see that Jesus was very different from Moses and Elijah; He was inaugurating a new era (see 5:36-39).

9:34 The **cloud** is an allusion to the presence of God (see Ex. 40:35).

9:35 This is My beloved Son: This is the second heavenly endorsement of Jesus (see also 3:22). The reference to the *beloved Son* recalls the words of Ps. 2:7; Is. 42:1. The command to **hear Him** alludes to Deut. 18:15-18 and identifies Jesus as the Prophet promised in that passage. Jesus, as the new Prophet, would lead a new group of people into salvation (see Matt. 21:43; Rom. 11:1-36; 1 Pet. 2:9, 10), just as Moses led the nation of Israel. As a Revealer of God’s will, Jesus had much to teach the disciples about God’s plan. The disciples needed to listen because they had much to learn.

9:36 told no one: In this passage, we are not told why the disciples remained silent about the Transfiguration. Matthew 17:8, 9; Mark 9:9, 10 note that Jesus commanded such silence and Mark makes it clear that the disciples did not yet understand the event. See 2 Pet. 1:16-21 for Peter’s reflection on this experience.

decease

(Gk. *exodos*) (9:31; 2 Pet. 1:15) Strong’s #1841

The Greek word means “departure”—literally “exodus,” meaning “the way out.” Exodus is a beautiful euphemism for death. Elijah and Moses, having already made their exodus from earth to heaven were anticipating Jesus’ exodus via His death and resurrection. Peter used this term in speaking of his own departure (2 Pet. 1:15), and the very mention of “exodus” seems to have brought to Peter’s mind the Transfiguration described in this passage (see 2 Pet. 1:15-18). Jesus had an exodus to accomplish. He was about to make a great transition—from His existence in the flesh on earth to an existence in heaven.

⁴¹ Then Jesus answered and said, “O ⁶faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you and ⁷bear with you? Bring your son here.” ⁴² And as he was still coming, the demon threw him down and convulsed *him*. Then Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, healed the child, and gave him back to his father.

Christ Prophesies His Coming Death

Matt. 17:22, 23; Mark 9:30-32

⁴³ And they were all amazed at the majesty of God.

But while everyone marveled at all the things which Jesus did, He said to His disciples, ⁴⁴ *“Let these words sink down into your ears, for the Son of Man is about to be betrayed into the hands of men.”* ⁴⁵ But they did not understand this saying, and it was hidden from them so that they did not perceive it; and they were afraid to ask Him about this saying.

True Greatness

Matt. 18:1-5; Mark 9:33-40

⁴⁶ *k* Then a dispute arose among them as to which of them would be greatest. ⁴⁷ And Jesus, ^lperceiving the thought of their heart, took a ^mlittle child and set him by Him, ⁴⁸ and said to them, ⁿ“Whoever receives this little child in My name receives Me; and ^owhoever receives Me ^preceives Him who sent Me. ^qFor he who is least among you all will be great.”

⁴⁹ *r* Now John answered and said, “Master, we saw someone casting out demons in Your name, and we forbade him because he does not follow with us.”

⁴¹ ⁶ *unbelieving*
⁷ *put up with*
⁴⁴ ⁱ *Matt. 17:22;*
Mark 10:33; 14:53;
Luke 22:54 ☆; *John*
18:12
⁴⁵ ^j *Mark 9:32; Luke*
2:50; 18:34
⁴⁶ ^k *Matt. 18:1-5;*
Mark 9:33-37; Luke
22:24
⁴⁷ ⁱ *Matt. 9:4; John*
2:24, 25 ^m *Luke*
18:17
⁴⁸ ⁿ *Matt. 18:5*
^o *Matt. 10:40;*
Mark 9:37; John
12:44 ^p *John 13:20*
^q [*Matt. 23:11, 12;*
1 Cor. 15:9; Eph. 3:8
⁴⁹ ^r *Mark 9:38-40*

⁵⁰ ^s *Matt. 12:30;*
Luke 11:23 ² *NU*
you ³ *NU your*
⁵¹ ^t *Is. 50:7; Mark*
16:19; Acts 1:2
⁵³ ^u *John 4:4, 9*
⁵⁴ ^v *Mark 3:17*
^w *2 Kin. 1:10, 12*
¹ *NU omits just as*
Elijah did
⁵⁵ ^x [*Rom. 8:15;*
2 Tim. 1:7] ² *NU*
omits the rest of
v. 55.
⁵⁶ ^y *Luke 19:10;*
John 3:17; 12:47
³ *NU omits For the*
Son of Man did not
come to destroy
men's lives but to
save them.
⁵⁷ ^z *Matt. 8:19-22*
⁵⁸ ^a *Luke 2:7; 8:23*
⁵⁹ ^b *Matt. 8:21, 22*

⁵⁰ But Jesus said to him, “Do not forbid *him*, for ^she who is not against ⁸us is on ⁹our side.”

Samaria Rejects Christ

⁵¹ Now it came to pass, when the time had come for ^tHim to be received up, that He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem, ⁵² and sent messengers before His face. And as they went, they entered a village of the Samaritans, to prepare for Him. ⁵³ But ^uthey did not receive Him, because His face was *set* for the journey to Jerusalem. ⁵⁴ And when His disciples ^vJames and John saw *this*, they said, “Lord, do You want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them, ¹just as ^wElijah did?”

⁵⁵ But He turned and rebuked them, ²and said, “You do not know what manner of ^xspirit you are of. ⁵⁶ ³For ^ythe Son of Man did not come to destroy men’s lives but to save *them*.” And they went to another village.

True Cost of Discipleship

Matt. 8:18-22

⁵⁷ ^z Now it happened as they journeyed on the road, *that* someone said to Him, “Lord, I will follow You wherever You go.”

⁵⁸ And Jesus said to him, “Foxes have holes and birds of the air *have* nests, but the Son of Man ^ahas nowhere to lay *His* head.”

⁵⁹ ^b Then He said to another, “Follow Me.”

But he said, “Lord, let me first go and bury my father.”

9:41 O faithless and perverse generation: This rebuke suggests that the disciples lacked the faith to cast out the spirit described in vv. 38–40. There is also a hint of a competitive spirit among the disciples (v. 46).

9:44 Note that Jesus predicted that He, the **Son of Man**, would be betrayed, even when many were still marveling at His ministry (v. 43).

9:45 they were afraid to ask: The indication here is that the disciples still had much to learn. Their fear shows that they understood something about what Jesus said, but they did not understand how and why Jesus could say such things about Himself, since He was the Messiah. The suffering of the Messiah was something the disciples did not yet understand. They would continue to be confused in their understanding of how such suffering fit into God’s plan until Jesus’ death and resurrection (24:25, 26, 43–49).

9:46 which of them would be greatest: Note the irony here. After Jesus predicted His suffering (v. 44), the disciples jockeyed for exalted positions in the kingdom (see 22:24; Mark 10:35–45).

9:48 he who is least . . . will be great: Jesus’ point was that prominence is not measured by human standards of achievement, but by one’s relationship to God. Anyone related to God is great, even “the least” of His disciples.

9:51 set His face to go to Jerusalem: This is the first indication that Jesus’ attention was turning toward His final suffering in Jerusalem (v. 53; 13:22, 33–35; 17:11; 18:31; 19:11, 28, 41). The journey to Jerusalem was not direct, however. In 10:38–42, we find Jesus at Martha and Mary’s house in Bethany. In 17:11, we find Him in Samaria

and Galilee. The journey to Jerusalem proceeded only according to God’s design and in His timing. Jesus was nearing the destiny of His mission—that is, His death. Luke’s Gospel uniquely emphasizes this journey to Jerusalem. Luke records much of Jesus’ teaching and parables on this journey as Jesus contrasted His way of suffering with the way of the Jewish religious leaders.

9:52 Samaritans were the descendants of Jews who had married Gentiles after the fall of the northern kingdom, Israel. The Samaritans eventually developed their own religious rites which they practiced on Mt. Gerizim instead of at the temple in Jerusalem. Though there was deep hostility between Jews and Samaritans, Jesus ministered to both groups.

9:54 command fire to come down: James and John, the “sons of thunder,” wanted Jesus to bring judgment upon the Samaritan villages that refused to respond to His message, just as Elijah had done in 2 Kin. 1:9–16. Their demand for judgment was antithetical to Jesus’ loving response (v. 56).

9:57, 58 I will follow you: This man volunteered to follow Jesus without reservation. His problem was that he had not realistically counted the cost of discipleship. His enthusiasm, based on his feelings of the moment, would not be strong enough to sustain him during the trials that lay ahead. Jesus warned the would-be disciple that He, the **Son of Man**, did not have even the ordinary comforts of home.

9:59 let me first go and bury my father: This aspiring disciple placed family responsibilities ahead of following Jesus. The concerns

⁶⁰ Jesus said to him, “Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and preach the kingdom of God.”

⁶¹ And another also said, “Lord, ^cI will follow You, but let me first go *and* bid them farewell who are at my house.”

⁶² But Jesus said to him, “No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is ^dfit for the kingdom of God.”

Mission of the Seventy

10 After these things the Lord appointed ¹seventy others also, and ^asent them two by two before His face into every city and place where He Himself was about to go. ²Then He said to them, ^b“The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few; therefore ^cpray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest. ³Go your way; ^dbehold, I send you out as lambs among wolves. ^{4e}Carry neither money bag, knapsack, nor sandals; and ^fgreet no one along the road. ^{5g}But whatever house you enter, first say, ‘Peace to this house.’ ⁶And if a son of peace is there, your peace will rest on it; if not, it will return to you. ^{7h}And remain in the same house, ⁱeating and drinking such things as they give, for ^jthe laborer is worthy of his wages. Do not go from house to house. ⁸Whatever city you enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you. ^{9k}And heal the sick there, and say to them, ^l‘The kingdom of God has come near to you.’ ¹⁰But whatever city you enter, and they do not receive you, go out into its streets and say, ^{11m}‘The very dust of your city which clings to ^{us} we wipe off against you. Nevertheless know this, that the

61 ^c 1 Kin. 19:20
62 ^d 2 Tim. 4:10

CHAPTER 10

1 ^a Matt. 10:1; Mark 6:7 ¹ NU seventy-two others
2 ^b Matt. 9:37, 38; John 4:35 ^c [1 Cor. 3:9]; 2 Thess. 3:1
3 ^d Matt. 10:16
4 ^e Matt. 10:9-14; Mark 6:8-11; Luke 9:3-5 ^f 2 Kin. 4:29
5 ^g 1 Sam. 25:6; Matt. 10:12
7 ^h Matt. 10:11
1 ⁱ Cor. 10:27
[Matt. 10:10]; 1 Cor. 9:4-8; 1 Tim. 5:18
9 ^k Mark 3:15 ¹ Matt. 3:2; 10:7; Luke 10:11
11 ^m Matt. 10:14; Mark 6:11; Luke 9:5; Acts 13:51 ² NU our feet
12 ⁿ Gen. 19:24-28; Lam. 4:6; Matt. 10:15; 11:24; Mark 6:11 ³ NU, M omit But
13 ^o Matt. 11:21-23 ^p Ezek. 3:6
15 ^q Matt. 11:23
1 ^r Gen. 11:4; Deut. 1:28; Is. 14:13-15; Jer. 51:53 ^s Ezek. 26:20 ⁴ NU will you be exalted to heaven? You will be thrust down to Hades!
16 ^t Matt. 10:40; Mark 9:37; John 13:20; Gal. 4:14
1 ^u [John 12:48]; 1 Thess. 4:8 ^v John 5:23
17 ^w Luke 10:1 ⁵ NU seventy-two
18 ^x John 12:31; Rev. 9:1; 12:8, 9

kingdom of God has come near you.’ ^{12,3} But I say to you that ⁿit will be more tolerable in that Day for Sodom than for that city.

^{13o} “Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! ^pFor if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. ¹⁴ But it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment than for you. ^{15q} And you, Capernaum, ⁴ who are ^rexalted to heaven, ^s will be brought down to Hades. ^{16t} He who hears you hears Me, ^u he who rejects you rejects Me, and ^v he who rejects Me rejects Him who sent Me.”

Return of the Seventy

¹⁷ Then ^w the ⁵seventy returned with joy, saying, “Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name.”

¹⁸ And He said to them, ^x “I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. ¹⁹ Behold, ^y I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you. ²⁰ Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but ⁶ rather rejoice because ^z your names are written in heaven.”

^{21a} In that hour Jesus rejoiced in the Spirit and said, “I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from *the* wise and prudent and revealed them to babes.”

19 ^y Ps. 91:13; Mark 16:18; Acts 28:5 ²⁰ ^z [Ex. 32:32, 33]; Ps. 69:28; Is. 4:3; Dan. 12:1; Phil. 4:3; Heb. 12:23; Rev. 13:8 ⁶ NU, M omit rather ²¹ ^a Matt. 11:25-27

of home were this man’s stumbling block. Unlike the previous volunteer (v. 57), this man was slow, meditative, and contemplative. He was counting the cost of discipleship. Cultic purity was viewed as very important in Jewish circles, so a quick burial of the dead was required (7:11–17).

9:60 Jesus emphasized that a disciple must have clear priorities. The call of God should receive priority over everything else.

9:62 Jesus’ remark about being **fit for the kingdom of God** demonstrates the seriousness of commitment to Him. Putting a **hand to the plow** means engaging in a task. Here the task is serving the kingdom. **Looking back** makes it difficult to plow straight furrows.

10:1 The account of Jesus calling **seventy** disciples is unique to the Gospel of Luke. The instructions that Jesus gave to these disciples are similar to the instructions He gave to the Twelve in 9:1–6.

10:2 The picture of a plentiful harvest suggests that a positive response awaited the laborers, even in the face of much rejection.

10:3 The image of **lambs among wolves** was popular in Judaism. It derived from Is. 40:11.

10:9 kingdom . . . near to you: Like v. 11, 12:20, and 17:21, this text shows how aspects of kingdom authority accompanied Jesus’ earthly ministry. The healing Jesus brought pictured what the kingdom offered (11:20). Jesus’ ministry was the arrival of the initial stages of God’s rule, which Jesus will consummate at His return (17:20–37). God’s kingdom comes in stages. When Jesus came the first time, He

was rejected. In His second coming, He will establish His complete rule over all.

10:13 The **mighty works** of Jesus were so great that if they had been performed before the worst pagans of the old era, those people would have repented. Jesus’ remark was meant to wake the people up to what their rejection of Him signified.

10:16 He who hears you hears Me: Hearing the messenger is the same as hearing the One who sent him. Authority resides not in the messenger, but in the person the messenger represents, the source of the message.

10:18 This verse provides a commentary on what the disciples’ healing ministry meant. The reversal of the effects of sin and death, which **Satan** introduced through his deception in Gen. 3, are portrayed graphically as Satan falling from heaven. Jesus’ ministry and what grows out of it represents the defeat of Satan, sin, and death.

10:19, 20 This verse records the transmission of Jesus’ **authority** to His immediate circle of disciples. It should be noted that similar authority was not given beyond that circle of disciples. Note the authority that is given to the Eleven in Matt. 28:16–20; Acts 1:8. As Jesus makes clear in v. 20, authority was not the most important thing the disciples received. **your names are written in heaven:** More important than the disciples’ authority over **spirits** was their position as God’s children. Their names were known to God and were written in God’s book. This was the disciples’ greatest blessing.

Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight. ^{22b}All ⁷ things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and ^cno one knows who the Son is except the Father, and who the Father is except the Son, and *the one* to whom the Son wills to reveal *Him*.”

²³Then He turned to *His* disciples and said privately, ^d“Blessed *are* the eyes which see the things you see; ²⁴for I tell you ^ethat many prophets and kings have desired to see what you see, and have not seen *it*, and to hear what you hear, and have not heard *it*.”

How to Inherit Eternal Life

²⁵And behold, a certain ⁸lawyer stood up and tested Him, saying, ^f“Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?”

²⁶He said to him, “What is written in the law? What is your reading of *it*?”

²⁷So he answered and said, ^g“‘*You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind;*’ and ^h‘*your neighbor as yourself*.’”

²⁸And He said to him, “You have answered rightly; do this and ⁱyou will live.”

Parable of the Good Samaritan

²⁹But he, wanting to ^jjustify himself, said to Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?”

³⁰Then Jesus answered and said: “A

²² ^b Matt. 28:18; John 3:35; 5:27; 17:2
^c [John 1:18; 6:44, 46] ⁷ M And turning to the disciples He said, “All
²³ ^d Matt. 13:16, 17
²⁴ ^e 1 Pet. 1:10, 11
²⁵ ^f Matt. 19:16–19; 22:35 ⁸ expert in the law
²⁷ ^g Deut. 6:5 ^h Lev. 19:18; Matt. 19:19
²⁸ ⁱ Lev. 18:5; Neh. 9:29; Ezek. 20:11, 13, 21; Matt. 19:17; Rom. 10:5
²⁹ ^j Luke 16:15

³⁰ ⁹ robbers
³¹ ^k Ps. 38:11
³³ ^j John 4:9
^m Luke 15:20
³⁵ ⁿ Matt. 20:2
¹ NU omits when he departed
³⁷ ^o Prov. 14:21; [Matt. 9:13; 12:7]
³⁸ ^p John 11:1; 12:2, 3

certain *man* went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among ⁹thieves, who stripped him of his clothing, wounded *him*, and departed, leaving *him* half dead.

³¹Now by chance a certain priest came down that road. And when he saw him, ^khe passed by on the other side. ³²Like-wise a Levite, when he arrived at the place, came and looked, and passed by on the other side. ³³But a certain ^lSamaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was. And when he saw him, he had ^mcompassion. ³⁴So he went to *him* and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; and he set him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

³⁵On the next day, ¹when he departed, he took out two ⁿdenarii, gave *them* to the innkeeper, and said to him, ‘Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I come again, I will repay you.’ ³⁶So which of these three do you think was neighbor to him who fell among the thieves?”

³⁷And he said, “He who showed mercy on him.”

Then Jesus said to him, ^o“Go and do likewise.”

Mary and Martha Are Contrasted

³⁸Now it happened as they went that He entered a certain village; and a certain woman named ^pMartha welcomed Him

10:22 All things have been delivered to Me: This is Jesus’ declaration of total authority as the Son of God (see John 10:18; 17:2). He makes a similar statement in Matt. 28:18. **except the Father . . . except the Son:** Jesus declares His unique relationship with God the Father. The Lord reveals Himself only through Jesus. To know God, one must know His Son, Jesus.

10:24 have not seen . . . heard it: Jesus contrasted the OT era of expectation, in which people desired to see the Messiah but did not, with the era in which the disciples were living. If they had the spiritual insight they could witness the fulfillment in Jesus of many of God’s promises.

10:25, 26 The question posed by the lawyer is really a challenge, since the verse speaks of the testing of Jesus. This is a similar, though probably distinct, event from Matt. 22:34–40; Mark 12:28–34. To **inherit** something is to receive it. In other words, the man was asking, “What must I do to share in the reward at the resurrection of the righteous at the end?” (see Phil. 3:11–14). The OT basis of this question is the hope of resurrection in Dan. 12:2. Jesus countered the lawyer’s test by having him answer his own question.

10:27 you shall love the LORD . . . and your neighbor: The lawyer responded to Jesus’ questions by quoting Deut. 6:5, a text that was recited twice a day by every faithful Jew. This text summarized the central ethical standard of the Law. The lawyer also alluded to Lev. 19:18. The basis of the man’s response is an expression of allegiance and devotion that also can be seen as the natural expression of faith, since the total person, **heart, soul, strength, and mind**, is involved. The theme of love for God is picked up in vv. 38–42 with its emphasis on devotion to Jesus, and in 11:1–13, where the disciples are taught to be devoted to God in prayer. In vv. 30–37 Jesus develops the theme of love for one’s neighbor.

10:28 do this and you will live: Jesus was not saying that righteousness is the result of works. Rather He was saying that love for and obedience to God will be a natural result of placing one’s faith

in the Lord. Those who believe in Jesus and follow Him will receive eternal rewards. Jesus states this principle to Peter in Matt. 19:27–30.

10:29 Luke makes it clear that the lawyer was trying to place himself in the position of satisfying the highest demands of the Law. **who is my neighbor:** This question was an attempt to limit the demands of the Law by suggesting that some people are neighbors while others are not. The lawyer was looking for minimal obedience while Jesus was looking for absolute obedience.

10:30 Jerusalem to Jericho: This was a 17 mile journey on a road known to harbor many robbers. They would hide in caves along the way and attack their victims.

10:33 Part of the beauty of the story of the Good Samaritan is the reversal of stereotypes. The priest and Levite traditionally would have been the “good guys.” The **Samaritan** would have been a “bad guy,” a person who compromised in religious matters. However, the Samaritan knew how to treat his neighbor. The neighbor here was not someone the Samaritan knew or even someone of the same race, just someone in need.

10:34 Oil was used to soothe wounds. **Wine** was used as a disinfectant.

10:35 two denarii . . . I will repay: The Samaritan, if he paid a typical rate of one-twelfth of a denarius a day, paid for 24 days at the inn.

10:36 which . . . was neighbor: The central issue is not determining who one’s neighbor is, but being a good neighbor to all.

10:37 He who showed mercy: The lawyer apparently could not bring himself to say “Samaritan” and lend credence to the surprising reversal of stereotypes in the story.

10:38 a certain village: If this is the **Martha** and **Mary** of John 11:1–12:8, then the location is Bethany, just outside Jerusalem (see John 11:1, 19; 12:1). This text suggests that the “Jerusalem journey” of 9:51–19:44 was not a direct trip to Jerusalem, but a journey of drawing near to the time for Jesus’ death.

The Unnoticed Whom Luke Notices

In Jesus' day, the Samaritans were despised by orthodox Jews because most of the Jews from that region had intermarried with foreigners. The irony of the parable of the Good Samaritan is that a scorned Samaritan knows how to show love to his neighbor, whereas a priest and Levite, who had intimate knowledge of God's law, do not. The Book of Luke highlights Jesus' love for a variety of groups who were not esteemed in His day.

Women:	
Elizabeth	1:5–25, 39–45, 57–66
Mary	1:26–56; 2:1–20, 41–52
Anna	2:36–38
The widow of Nain	7:11–15
The sinner who anoints Jesus' feet	7:36–50
Women disciples	8:1–3
The woman searching for her lost coin	15:8–10
The persistent widow petitioning the unjust judge	18:1–8
The sorrowful women along the way to the Cross	23:27
The women who discover the empty tomb	24:1–10
Social Outcasts:	
Gentiles	2:32; 24:47
Shepherds	2:8–20
The poor	6:20–23
The Samaritans	10:30–36; 17:16
Tax collectors and sinners	15:1
Lepers	17:11–17

into her house. ³⁹And she had a sister called Mary, ^qwho also ^rsat at ²Jesus' feet and heard His word. ⁴⁰But Martha was distracted with much serving, and she approached Him and said, "Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Therefore tell her to help me." ⁴¹And ³Jesus answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. ⁴²But

³⁹ ^q [1 Cor. 7:32–40]
^r Luke 8:35; Acts 22:3 ² NU the Lord's
⁴¹ ³ NU the Lord
⁴² ^s [Ps. 27:4; John 6:27]

CHAPTER 11

² ^a Matt. 6:9–13
¹ NU omits Our

^sone thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her."

The Lord's Prayer

Matt. 6:9–13

11 Now it came to pass, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, *that* one of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples."

²So He said to them, "When you pray, say:

- ^a Our ¹ Father ² in heaven,
Hallowed be Your name.
Your kingdom come.
- ³ Your will be done
On earth as *it is* in heaven.
- ³ Give us day by day our daily bread.
- ⁴ And ^b forgive us our sins,
For we also forgive everyone who is indebted to us.
And do not lead us into temptation,
⁴ But deliver us from the evil one."

Parable of the Persistent Friend

⁵And He said to them, "Which of you shall have a friend, and go to him at midnight and say to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves; ⁶for a friend of mine has come to me on his journey, and I have nothing to set before him'; ⁷and he will answer from within and say, 'Do not trouble me; the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give to you'? ⁸I say to you, ^cthough he will not rise and give to him because he is his friend, yet because of his persistence he will rise and give him as many as he needs.

² NU omits in heaven ³ NU omits the rest of v. 2. ⁴ ^b [Eph. 4:32] ⁴ NU omits But deliver us from the evil one ⁸ ^c [Luke 18:1–5]

10:40 Martha **was distracted** by the amount of **serving** she had to do. Her complaint to Jesus indicates that she was irritated that her sister was not helping her.
10:41 Jesus' tender reply is evident in the double address of **Martha, Martha** (6:46; 8:24; 13:34; 22:31). He notes that Martha was anxiety-ridden over ordinary matters.
10:42 that good part: Mary was a silent example. She said nothing, but did what was right by devoting herself to Jesus' teaching.
11:1 The Lord's Prayer illustrates the variety of requests that one can and should make to God, as well as displaying the humble attitude that should accompany prayer. The use of the plural pronoun **us** throughout the prayer shows that it is not just the prayer of one person for his or her own personal needs, but a community prayer.
11:2 Father: God is approached confidently as a caring figure. **Hallowed:** In the context of intimacy with God, there also is respect and recognition of His uniqueness. *Hallowed* means that God is holy, set apart, unique in His character and attributes. **Your kingdom come:**

The reference here is to God's program and promise. This is more affirmation than request, highlighting the petitioner's submission to God's will and the desire to see God's work come to pass.
11:3 our daily bread: This request recognizes that one is dependent on God for daily needs.
11:4 forgive us our sins: This request recognizes that sin is a debt to God that needs to be acknowledged on the basis of His mercy. **we also forgive:** The petitioner recognizes that if mercy is to be sought from God, then mercy must be shown to others. We need to adopt the same standard that we expect others to follow. **do not lead us into temptation:** This remark is often misunderstood as suggesting that perhaps God can lead us into sin. The point is that if one is to avoid sin, one must follow where God leads. In short, the petitioner asks God for the spiritual protection necessary to avoid falling into sin.
11:8 Persistence here refers to shameless boldness more than to tenacity. Jesus' point is that in prayer the disciple is to be bold. The example in the parable (vv. 5–7) is a man who goes boldly to his

^{9d}“So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; ^eseek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. ¹⁰For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.

Parable of the Good Father

Matt. 7:7-11

¹¹If a son asks for ⁵bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish? ¹²Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? ¹³If you then, being evil, know how to give ^ggood gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!”

Christ Heals the Demoniac

^{14h}And He was casting out a demon, and it was mute. So it was, when the demon had gone out, that the mute spoke; and the multitudes marveled.

Christ's Power Not from Satan

Matt. 12:25-30, 43-45; Mark 3:22-27

¹⁵But some of them said, ⁱ“He casts out demons by ⁶Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons.”

¹⁶Others, testing Him, ^jsought from Him a sign from heaven. ^{17k}But ^lHe, knowing their thoughts, said to them: “Every kingdom divided against itself is

^{9 d} Ps. 50:14, 15; Jer. 33:3; [Matt. 7:7; 21:22; Mark 11:24; John 15:7; James 1:5, 6; 1 John 3:22; 5:14, 15] ^e Is. 55:6 ^{11 f} Matt. 7:9 ⁵ NU omits bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if he asks for ^{13 g} James 1:17 ^{14 h} Matt. 9:32-34; 12:22, 24 ^{15 i} Matt. 9:34; 12:24 ⁶ NU, M Beelzebub ^{16 j} Matt. 12:38; 16:1; Mark 8:11 ^{17 k} Matt. 12:25-29; Mark 3:23-27 ^l Matt. 9:4; John 2:25

^{20 m} Ex. 8:19 ^{21 n} Matt. 12:29; Mark 3:27 ^{22 o} [Is. 53:12; Col. 2:15] ⁷ plunder ^{23 p} Matt. 12:30; Mark 9:40 ^{24 q} Matt. 12:43-45; Mark 1:27; 3:11; 5:13; Acts 5:16; 8:7 ^{26 r} John 5:14; [Heb. 6:4-6; 10:26; 2 Pet. 2:20] ^{27 s} Luke 1:28, 48 ^{28 t} Ps. 1:1, 2; 112:1; 119:1, 2; Is. 48:17, 18; [Matt. 7:21; Luke 8:21]; James 1:25

brought to desolation, and a house *divided* against a house falls. ¹⁸If Satan also is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? Because you say I cast out demons by Beelzebub. ¹⁹And if I cast out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your sons cast *them* out? Therefore they will be your judges. ²⁰But if I cast out demons ^mwith the finger of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you. ^{21 n}When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own palace, his goods are in peace. ²²But ^owhen a stronger than he comes upon him and overcomes him, he takes from him all his armor in which he trusted, and divides his ⁷spoils. ^{23 p}He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters.

^{24 q}“When an unclean spirit goes out of a man, he goes through dry places, seeking rest; and finding none, he says, ‘I will return to my house from which I came.’ ²⁵And when he comes, he finds it swept and put in order. ²⁶Then he goes and takes with *him* seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter and dwell there; and ^rthe last state of that man is worse than the first.”

²⁷And it happened, as He spoke these things, that a certain woman from the crowd raised her voice and said to Him, ^s“Blessed is the womb that bore You, and *the breasts which nursed You!*”

²⁸But He said, ^t“More than that, blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it!”

neighbor to seek what he requires. Likewise, the disciple is to go boldly to God for that which is needed.

11:10 receives: This verse does not mean that we receive whatever we want in prayer. As v. 13 demonstrates, with its reference to receiving God's Spirit, the suggestion is that we receive what is spiritually beneficial.

11:13 how much more will your heavenly Father give: If people, who are evil, can give **good** gifts, imagine the value of God's gift of the **Holy Spirit**. If anyone does not have the Holy Spirit, that person does not belong to Christ (see Rom. 8:9). In the triune Godhead, the Holy Spirit is the divine distributor (see 1 Cor. 12:11) of the good things purchased by the Son (see Eph. 4:7, 8) and ordained by the Father.

11:15 Jesus' miracles were so obvious that they required some kind of explanation. If He was not to be believed, His miracles had to be demonic in origin. This was the ultimate blasphemy—attributing the credentials of heaven to hell. The Latin name **Beelzebub** was originally a reference to the Philistine god Baal-Zebub worshiped at the city of Ekron (see 2 Kin. 1:2, 3, 6, 16). The name means “Lord of the Flies.”

11:17, 18 The attribution of Jesus' miracles to Satan was not only blasphemous, it was illogical. If Satan had cast out the demon (v. 14), he would have been destroying the result of his own work.

11:19 by whom do your sons cast them out: Jesus' question and the implied reply to it can be taken in one of two ways: (1) How did Jewish exorcists expel demons? If the answer is by God's power, then why not give Jesus the same credit? (2) How did Jesus' disciples, who were the “sons” of Israel, drive out demons? The dissenters not only had to explain Jesus' miracles, but those of His followers. Most scholars prefer the former interpretation.

11:20 The finger of God is an allusion to God's power, like that demonstrated in the Exodus (see Ex. 8:19; Deut. 9:10; Ps. 8:3). **the kingdom of God has come upon you:** Jesus' miracles represented the arrival of God's power and promise—in short, His rule. That rule comes in and through Jesus. The miracles of Jesus demonstrated God's victory over the forces of evil. The kingdom program, depicted as drawing near, will be consummated at the return of Jesus when this rule is manifested over every creature.

11:22 Jesus portrays Himself as someone **stronger** than Satan who overruns Satan's house and gives the spoils of victory to those who are His (see Eph. 4:8, 9 for a similar concept).

11:23 He who is not with Me . . . does not gather: Jesus' ministry forces everyone to make a choice. Neutrality is not an option. Either Jesus comes from God or He does not. Not to align with Jesus is to be against Him.

11:25 swept: The exorcised person becomes like a clean house, although empty if God is not present, and still exposed to spiritual danger.

11:26 the last state . . . is worse: Jesus' point is that experiencing God's blessing and then ignoring it leaves one callous towards the work of God and exposed to the control of demonic forces.

11:27, 28 Blessed is the womb: The woman offered praise for Jesus' mother. Though Jesus always honored Mary, He commented carefully on the woman's blessing to keep the focus on the **word of God**. It is easy to allow traditional practices to take the place of the authority of the Scriptures. Jesus offers His blessing to those who respond concretely to God's will as expressed in the Bible.



Lamps

Lamps were very common in Jewish homes. They burned olive oil, pitch, naphtha, or wax, and they had wicks of cotton or flax. (A Jewish tradition says that the priests made wicks for the lamps of the temple from their old linen garments.) The poorer Israelites made their lamps of clay, while the wealthy had lamps of bronze and other metals.

The Israelites let their lamps burn all night, since light made them feel safer. We are told that the family would rather go without food than let their lamps go out, since that indicated that they had deserted their house (Job 18:5, 6). The writer of Proverbs praises the prudent wife, saying, “Her lamp does not go out by night” (Prov. 31:18). Several other Bible passages show that the lamp symbolized the life and dignity of a family (cf. Job 21:17; Jer. 25:10).



Herodian-style oil lamp

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Christ's Only Sign Is Jonah

Matt. 12:39-42

²⁹u And while the crowds were thickly gathered together, He began to say, “This is an evil generation. It seeks a ^vsign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah ⁸the prophet. ³⁰For as ^wJonah became a sign to the Ninevites, so also the Son of Man will be to this generation. ³¹x The queen of the South will rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation and condemn them, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and indeed a ^ygreater than Solomon is here. ³²The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for ^zthey repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah is here.

Parable of the Lighted Lamp

³³a “No one, when he has lit a lamp, puts it in a secret place or under a ^bbas-

²⁹ u Matt. 12:38-42
v 1 Cor. 1:22 ⁸ NU omits the prophet
³⁰ w Jon. 1:17; 2:10; 3:3-10; Luke 24:46;
Acts 10:40; 1 Cor. 15:4 ☆
³¹ x 1 Kin. 10:1-9;
2 Chr. 9:1-8 v [Is. 9:6; Rom. 9:5]
³² z Jon. 3:5
³³ a Matt. 5:15;
Mark 4:21; Luke 8:16 ⁸ Matt. 5:15

³⁴ c Matt. 6:22, 23
⁹ Clear, or healthy
¹ Evil, or unhealthy
³⁸ d Matt. 15:2;
Mark 7:2, 3
³⁹ e Matt. 23:25
^f Gen. 6:5; Titus 1:15
² Lit. eager grasping or robbery

ket, but on a lampstand, that those who come in may see the light. ³⁴c The lamp of the body is the eye. Therefore, when your eye is ⁹good, your whole body also is full of light. But when *your eye* is ¹bad, your body also is full of darkness. ³⁵ Therefore take heed that the light which is in you is not darkness. ³⁶ If then your whole body is full of light, having no part dark, the whole *body* will be full of light, as when the bright shining of a lamp gives you light.”

“Woes” on the Pharisees

³⁷ And as He spoke, a certain Pharisee asked Him to dine with him. So He went in and sat down to eat. ³⁸d When the Pharisee saw *it*, he marveled that He had not first washed before dinner.

³⁹e Then the Lord said to him, “Now you Pharisees make the outside of the cup and dish clean, but ^fyour inward part is full of ²greed and wickedness. ⁴⁰ Fool-

11:29 The sign of Jonah here refers to his prophetic call to repentance rather than to the resurrection foreshadowed by Jonah's return from the belly of the great fish.

11:30-32 Jesus warned that refusal to hear Him would result in condemnation from those in the OT who had responded to God's teaching. The examples Jesus offered included Gentiles such as the **queen of the South** (the queen of Sheba in 1 Kin. 10:1-10) and the **Ninevites** (see Jon. 3). Because Jesus is **greater than** those who proclaimed God's word in those days—**Solomon and Jonah**, His word should have been heeded by the first-century Israelites.

11:34 It has been said that “you are what you eat.” But even more accurately, you are what you see. This is why David said, “I will set nothing wicked before my eyes” (Ps. 101:3). A person who concentrates on what is **good** (God's teaching) is healthy. But a person who focuses on what is **bad** (the false teaching of the world) is **full of darkness**.

11:36 your whole body is full of light: A person can become like light, a living picture of what God's Word teaches, by concentrating on the light of the truth.

11:38 He had not first washed before dinner: Such ceremonial washing is described in the OT (see Gen. 18:4; Judg. 19:21), but not commanded.

11:39 make the outside . . . clean: These condemnations by Jesus are similar to those in Matt. 23. The Pharisees washed the outside of cups, making sure that the cups had not become unclean through contact with a dead insect (see Lev. 11:31-38). Jesus pointed out that the Pharisees concerned themselves with outward appearances and ritual cleanness, while what was inside, what really counts, was full of selfishness and evil.

ish ones! Did not ^aHe who made the outside make the inside also? ⁴¹^h But rather give alms of ³such things as you have; then indeed all things are clean to you.

⁴²ⁱ “But woe to you Pharisees! For you tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and ^jpass by justice and the ^klove of God. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone. ⁴³^l Woe to you Pharisees! For you love the ⁴best seats in the synagogues and greetings in the marketplaces. ⁴⁴^m Woe to you, ⁵scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! “For you are like graves which are not seen, and the men who walk over *them* are not aware of *them*.”

“Woes” on the Lawyers

⁴⁵ Then one of the lawyers answered and said to Him, “Teacher, by saying these things You reproach us also.”

⁴⁶ And He said, “Woe to you also, lawyers! ^oFor you load men with burdens hard to bear, and you yourselves do not touch the burdens with one of your fingers. ⁴⁷^p Woe to you! For you build the tombs of the prophets, and your fathers killed them. ⁴⁸ In fact, you bear witness that you approve the deeds of your fathers; for they indeed killed them, and you build their tombs. ⁴⁹ Therefore the wisdom of God also said, ^q“I will send them prophets and apostles, and *some* of

⁴⁰ ^g Gen. 1:26, 27
⁴¹ ^h Is. 58:7; Dan. 4:27; [Luke 12:33; 16:9] ³ Or *what is inside*
⁴² ⁱ Matt. 23:23
/[Mic. 6:7, 8] ^k John 5:42
⁴³ ^j Matt. 23:6; Mark 12:38, 39; Luke 14:7; 20:46
⁴⁴ ^m Or *places of honor*
⁴⁵ ⁿ Ps. 5:9 ⁵ NU omits *scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites*
⁴⁶ ^o Matt. 23:4
⁴⁷ ^p Matt. 23:29; Acts 7:52
⁴⁹ ^q Prov. 1:20; Matt. 23:34

⁵¹ ^r Gen. 4:8; 2 Chr. 36:16 ² Chr. 24:20, 21
⁵² ^s Matt. 23:13
⁵³ ^t NU And when He left there
⁵⁴ ^u Mark 12:13
⁷ NU omits and seeking ⁸ NU omits that they might accuse Him

CHAPTER 12

¹ ^a Matt. 16:6; Mark 8:15 ^b Matt. 16:12; Luke 11:39 ¹ yeast
² ^c Matt. 10:26; Mark 4:22; Luke 8:17; [1 Cor. 4:5]

them they will kill and persecute; ⁵⁰ that the blood of all the prophets which was shed from the foundation of the world may be required of this generation, ⁵¹^r from the blood of Abel to ^sthe blood of Zechariah who perished between the altar and the temple. Yes, I say to you, it shall be required of this generation.

⁵²^t “Woe to you lawyers! For you have taken away the key of knowledge. You did not enter in yourselves, and those who were entering in you hindered.”

⁵³⁶ And as He said these things to them, the scribes and the Pharisees began to assail Him vehemently, and to cross-examine Him about many things, ⁵⁴^l lying in wait for Him, ⁷ and ^u seeking to catch Him in something He might say, ⁸ that they might accuse Him.

Christ Warns About Hypocrisy

Matt. 10:26-33

12 In ^athe meantime, when an innumerable multitude of people had gathered together, so that they trampled one another, He began to say to His disciples first of *all*, ^b “Beware of the ¹leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. ²^c For there is nothing covered that will not be revealed, nor hidden that will not be known. ³ Therefore whatever you have spoken in the dark will be heard in the light, and what you have spoken in the

11:42 pass by: The Pharisees worried about tithing ten percent, even down to the smallest herbs, which were tithed according to the dictates of tradition, not the Law of Moses (see Num. 18:21–32; Deut. 14:22–29; see also Lev. 27:30 for the practice of tithing herbs). The Law spoke of tithing all produce, but what constituted food was debated. Some Pharisees took the strictest interpretation and counted almost anything, including spices. However, they neglected two basic things that the prophets also had warned about: love and justice (see Mic. 6:8; Zech. 7:8–10).

11:44 The Pharisees were like hidden graves. To have contact with a grave or with the dead was to become ceremonially unclean (see Num. 19:11–19). Anyone or anything in the same room as the dead was considered in Jewish tradition to be impure. This is Jesus’ stronger condemnation. The Pharisees, the paragons of purity, were in fact the height of uncleanness.

11:46 Jesus applied His woes to **lawyers** as well as to the Pharisees. In everyday Greek, the term translated **burdens** refers to a ship’s cargo. The idea is that a heavy strain was being imposed on the people and yet, in the end, this burden did not bring them closer to God. Here Jesus rebuked the tradition that had grown up around the Law of Moses. **you yourselves do not touch the burdens:** The meaning of this phrase is debated. Was Jesus accusing the scribes of hypocrisy in not practicing what they taught and in making distinctions that freed them from obligations, as they did with oaths (see Matt. 5:33–37)? Or was Jesus simply accusing the scribes of not offering aid and compassion to those who tried to follow their rules? The second interpretation is more likely, since the Pharisees were known for adhering to the Law.

11:47, 48 you build the tombs of the prophets: Jesus made a biting, ironic comparison between the current generation of Israel and the generations of the past. Jesus was saying that the current generation finished the job of slaying of the prophets that the previous generation had started. The building and care of tombs was

supposed to be an act of honoring the prophets, but Jesus pointed out that something else was really going on.

11:49 The wisdom of God refers to God’s knowledge of the people. The **prophets and apostles** who would be persecuted and killed were the disciples and the prophets of the early church. This is the basis of Jesus’ previous rebuke (vv. 47, 48). Those who would come in the current generation with the message of God would suffer the same fate as the prophets of old.

11:50 Generation seems to refer to the people or nation of Israel. They had received and would receive judgment for the way they treated God’s prophets. The judgment here refers specifically to the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, and ultimately to the final judgment of God in the Tribulation.

11:50, 51 Abel is pictured as the first prophet to be killed, going back to **the foundation of the world** (see Gen. 4:10). **Zechariah** is probably the man described in 2 Chr. 24:20–25. He would be the last prophet slain in the OT if one considers the Hebrew order of the books of the OT.

11:52 Jesus charged the **lawyers** with doing the opposite of what they claimed their calling to be. Rather than bringing people nearer to God, they had removed the possibility of their entering into that **knowledge**, and had prevented others from understanding as well.

11:54 seeking to catch Him: The scribes and Pharisees began challenging Jesus in the hope that He might make a blunder that would allow them to destroy His ministry. They were **lying in wait** for Him (6:11; 19:47, 48; 20:19, 20; 22:2).

12:1, 2 Leaven here represents the presence of corruption. Unleavened bread is what the Jews ate at Passover (see Ex. 12:14–20). The corruption in view here is **hypocrisy**. Practicing hypocrisy is senseless because eventually all deeds—both good and evil—will be exposed.

12:3 will be proclaimed on the housetops: All secrets will be revealed by God (see Rom. 2:15, 16; 1 Cor. 4:5). The inner room was

ear in inner rooms will be proclaimed on the housetops.

^{4d}“And I say to you, ^eMy friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. ⁵But I will show you whom you should fear: Fear Him who, after He has killed, has power to cast into hell; yes, I say to you, ^ffear Him!

⁶“Are not five sparrows sold for two ²copper coins? And ^gnot one of them is forgotten before God. ⁷But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows.

^{8h}“Also I say to you, whoever confesses Me ⁱbefore men, him the Son of Man also will confess before the angels of God. ⁹But he who ^jdenies Me before men will be denied before the angels of God.

¹⁰“And ^kanyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but to him who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven.

¹¹“Now when they bring you to the synagogues and magistrates and authorities, do not worry about how or what you should answer, or what you should say. ¹²For the Holy Spirit will ^mteach you in that very hour what you ought to say.”

Parable of the Rich Fool

¹³Then one from the crowd said to

4 ^d Is. 51:7, 8, 12, 13; Jer. 1:8; Matt. 10:28
^e [John 15:13-15]
5 ^f Ps. 119:20
6 ^g Matt. 6:26 ² Gr. assarion, a coin worth about 1/16 of a denarius
8 ^h 1 Sam. 2:30; Matt. 10:32; [Mark 8:38; Rom. 10:9; 2 Tim. 2:12; 1 John 2:23] ¹ Ps. 119:46
9 [Matt. 10:33; [Mark 8:38; 2 Tim. 2:12]
10 ^k [Matt. 12:31, 32; Mark 3:28; 1 John 5:16]
11 ^j Matt. 6:25; 10:19; Mark 13:11
12 ^m [John 14:26]

14 ⁿ [John 18:36]
15 ^o [1 Tim. 6:6-10] ³ NU all covetousness
19 ^p Eccl. 11:9; 1 Cor. 15:32; James 5:5
^q [Eccl. 2:24; 3:13; 5:18; 8:15]
20 ^r Job 27:8; Ps. 52:7; [James 4:14]
^s Ps. 39:6; Jer. 17:11
21 ^t [Matt. 6:20; Luke 12:33; 1 Tim. 6:18, 19; James 2:5; 5:1-5]
22 ^u Matt. 6:25-33

Him, “Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me.”

¹⁴But He said to him, ⁿ“Man, who made Me a judge or an arbitrator over you?” ¹⁵And He said to them, ^o“Take heed and beware of ³covetousness, for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses.”

¹⁶Then He spoke a parable to them, saying: “The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully. ¹⁷And he thought within himself, saying, ‘What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?’ ¹⁸So he said, ‘I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods. ¹⁹And I will say to my soul, ^p“Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; ^qeat, drink, and be merry.”’ ²⁰But God said to him, ‘Fool! This night ^ryour soul will be required of you; ^sthen whose will those things be which you have provided?’

²¹“So is he who lays up treasure for himself, ^tand is not rich toward God.”

Seek the Kingdom of God

Matt. 6:25-33

²²Then He said to His disciples, “Therefore I say to you, ^udo not worry about your life, what you will eat; nor about the body, what you will put on. ²³Life is more than food, and the body

a storeroom which was surrounded by other rooms; it was the most private part of a house.

12:4 do not be afraid of those who kill the body: This verse anticipates the presence of severe religious persecution in response to Jesus’ remarks in 11:39–54.

12:5 Even in the context of physical persecution, the only One believers should **fear** is God, who sees how we live and judges us. Jesus was not guaranteeing physical preservation in this life, but was opening the prospect of deliverance in the next life.

blasphemy

(Gk. *blasphēmia*) (12:10; Matt. 12:31; Mark 3:28) Strong’s #988

Blasphemy is the act of cursing, slandering, reviling, or showing contempt or lack of reverence for God. In the OT, blaspheming God was a serious crime punishable by death (Lev. 24:15, 16). It was a violation of the third Commandment, which required that the name and reputation of the Lord be upheld (Ex. 20:7). The unbelieving Jews of Jesus’ day charged Him with blasphemy because they thought of Him only as a man while He claimed to be God’s Son (Matt. 9:3). Actually, the lawlessness of the Jews themselves was causing God’s name to be blasphemed among the Gentiles (Rom. 2:24). By their bitter opposition to Jesus and His gospel, they themselves were guilty of blasphemy (Acts 18:6). Jesus condemned as blasphemy their attributing the work of the Holy Spirit to Satan (Matt. 12:31, 32). Christians are commanded to avoid behavior that blasphemes the Lord’s name and teaching (1 Tim. 6:1).

12:6 This verse emphasizes that God knows the most minute detail of what happens on earth. The **copper coins** mentioned were the smallest coin in circulation, worth about one-sixteenth of a basic day’s wage.

12:8 The issue here is faithfulness in testimony to Jesus, especially in the context of religious rejection. Acknowledging Jesus before men means being acknowledged by the **Son of Man** before God.

12:9 denies . . . will be denied: Every act of denial of Christ on earth will meet with commensurate denial of reward at the judgment seat (see 1 John 2:28). This is not speaking of the gift of salvation, but of the prize or reward (see 1 Cor. 9:24–27).

12:10 A word against the Son of Man is forgivable because His deity was veiled, but blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is flagrant rejection of the works and words of Christ.

12:11 when they bring you to the synagogues: This is another indication that religious persecution is in view in these verses. **Magistrates and authorities** governed civil proceedings, while synagogues conducted religious tribunals. In such situations, the disciple should not worry about what to say.

12:13 tell my brother: Jesus is asked to intervene in a family dispute, as an ancient rabbi would be.

12:14 who made Me a Judge: Jesus refuses to enter into a dispute over money, which is clearly dividing a family. Such disputes over money destroy relationships, so Jesus tells a parable that explains the danger of focusing on wealth.

12:18, 19 Including v. 17, the word **I** appears six times, showing the selfish focus this man has as a result of his fortune. His plan is to store his abundant resources for himself, as though the assets were his alone and should be hoarded. This focus on the self is what Jesus is condemning.

12:20 God’s judgment on selfishness is clear. What did the rich **fool** have for the next life? He could not take his grain with him. What he owned was no longer of any value after death. In a single day,

The Ministry of the Holy Spirit in Luke’s Writings

In both of his books, Luke highlights the activities of the Spirit with his unique phrase “filled with the Holy Spirit.” The Book of Acts chronicles the anxious anticipation of the Spirit’s coming, the dramatic empowering of the disciples on the Day of Pentecost, and the spread of the church by means of the Spirit’s power. But Luke also highlights the Holy Spirit’s ministry in his Gospel, where the ministry of the Holy Spirit centers on Jesus. Those connected with Jesus—John the Baptist, Elizabeth, Mary, and Simeon—are filled with the Holy Spirit. Jesus Himself is filled with the Spirit’s power. The Old Testament prophets had spoken of One who would be empowered by the Spirit of God. Luke underscores in his Gospel that these prophecies have been fulfilled in Jesus (4:18–22).

Event	Reference	Quote and Explanation
The filling of John the Baptist	Luke 1:15–17	“He will also be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother’s womb.” John, as the forerunner to Messiah, was empowered from infancy to “make ready a people prepared for the Lord.”
The conception of the Messiah	Luke 1:35	“The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you.” The Spirit of God was the agent of divine conception; He made possible the virgin birth of Christ.
The filling of Elizabeth	Luke 1:41	“When Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary . . . [she] was filled with the Holy Spirit.” The Spirit empowered Elizabeth to encourage Mary in her faith.
The filling of Zacharias	Luke 1:67	“Now his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit.” The Spirit of God indwelt the parents of John so that they might testify about the coming Messiah.
The filling of Simeon	Luke 2:25–27	“The Holy Spirit was upon him.” The Spirit of God led the godly Simeon to an end-of-life encounter with the infant Messiah and a proclamation of the presence of the Messiah.
The baptism of Christ	Luke 3:22	“The Holy Spirit descended in bodily form like a dove upon Him.” The visible descent of the Spirit indicates God’s presence with, blessing on, and approval of Jesus.
The temptation of Christ	Luke 4:1–13	“Jesus, being filled with the Holy Spirit . . . was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, being tempted for forty days by the devil.” The Spirit led Christ into an arena in which He might demonstrate His faithful obedience to the Father.
The inauguration of Jesus’ ministry	Luke 4:14–21	“Then Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee.” Christ’s ministry, from beginning to end, was marked by the presence and power of God.
Jesus’ teaching on prayer	Luke 11:1–13	“If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!” This promise by Christ foreshadows the coming of the Spirit at Pentecost.
Jesus’ promise of the Spirit to His disciples	Luke 12:11, 12	“For the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you ought to say.” Jesus promised the comforting and enabling presence of God to His disciples when they were in danger.
Jesus’ prophecy of Pentecost	Acts 1:4–8	“You shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.” Jesus comforted His confused disciples with the assurance that the Spirit of God would come upon them in a powerful and permanent way.
Pentecost	Acts 2:1–21	“They were all filled with the Holy Spirit.” The advent of the Spirit at Pentecost gave birth to the church and empowered its members to proclaim the Good News.

is *more* than clothing. ²⁴Consider the ravens, for they neither sow nor reap, which have neither storehouse nor barn; and ^vGod feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds? ²⁵And which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? ²⁶If you then are not able to do *the* least, why ⁴are you anxious for the rest? ²⁷Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin;

²⁴ v Job 38:41; Ps. 147:9
²⁶ ⁴ do you worry

²⁷ w 1 Kin. 10:4–7; 2 Chr. 9:3–6
⁵ clothed
²⁸ x Matt. 6:30; 8:26; 14:31; 16:8

and yet I say to you, even ^wSolomon in all his glory was not ⁵arrayed like one of these. ²⁸If then God so clothes the grass, which today is in the field and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more *will He clothe* you, O *you* of ^xlittle faith? ²⁹“And do not seek what you should eat or what you should drink, nor have an anxious mind. ³⁰For all these things the nations of the world seek after, and

the rich man became poor. All earthly wealth is temporary and ultimately worthless (Matt. 6:19–21; 1 Tim. 6:6–10, 17–19; James 5:1–6). **12:24** Jesus describes God’s care of **ravens**, unclean creatures according to Jewish law and among the least respected of birds (Lev. 11:15; Deut. 14:14). Yet God even cares for them. **How much more value are you**, says Jesus, pointing out that God will surely care for the disciple as well. **12:25** It is uncertain whether Jesus is saying through His rhetorical question that worry cannot add to one’s physical height or that worry cannot add to one’s life span. In fact, worry can sometimes shorten life. What is clear is that worry is utterly useless and shows a lack of faith in God’s plan for our lives.

12:27–29 Even the wealthy King **Solomon** did not clothe himself as God has clothed the **lilies**. The illustration of **grass** indicates that God cares enough to provide beauty for the parts of His creation that have a short life. Why should we worry if God takes such care of even the smallest blade of grass? The Lord knows our problems and will provide us with what we need. **do not seek . . . nor have an anxious mind:** Since God will provide, there is no need for us to concentrate on mundane things such as food. This should not be our chief concern, but instead our first priority should be doing the will of God (v. 31). **12:30** The world pursues expensive food and luxurious clothing as ends in themselves. It has its heart set on things, without thinking of

your Father ³¹ knows that you need these things. ³¹ But seek ⁶ the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added to you.

³² “Do not fear, little flock, for ^a it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom. ³³ ^b Sell what you have and give ^c alms; ^d provide yourselves money bags which do not grow old, a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches nor moth destroys. ³⁴ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Parable of the Expectant Steward

³⁵ ^e “Let your waist be girded and ^f your lamps burning; ³⁶ and you yourselves be like men who wait for their master, when he will return from the wedding, that when he comes and knocks they may open to him immediately. ³⁷ ^g Blessed are those servants whom the master, when he comes, will find watching. Assuredly, I say to you that he will gird himself and have them sit down ^{to eat}, and will come and serve them. ³⁸ And if he should come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find ^{them} so, blessed are those servants. ³⁹ ^h But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would ⁱ have watched and not allowed his house

³⁰ ^y Matt. 6:31, 32
³¹ ^z Matt. 6:33 ^o NU
His kingdom, and these things

³² ^a [Dan. 7:18, 27];
Zech. 13:7 ☆; [Matt.
11:25, 26; Luke
22:29, 30]

³³ ^c Matt. 19:21;
Acts 2:45; 4:34
^c Luke 11:41 ^d Matt.
6:20; Luke 16:9;

[1 Tim. 6:19]

³⁵ ^e [Eph. 6:14;
1 Pet. 1:13] ^f [Matt.
25:1–13]

³⁷ ^g Matt. 24:46

³⁹ ^h Matt. 24:43;

1 Thess. 5:2; [2 Pet.
3:10]; Rev. 3:3;

16:15 ⁱ NU *not have*

allowed

⁴⁰ ⁱ Matt. 24:44;

25:13; Mark 13:33;

[Luke 21:34, 36];

1 Thess. 5:6; [2 Pet.
3:12]

⁴² ⁱ Matt. 24:45, 46;

25:21; [1 Cor. 4:2]

⁸ *at the right time*

⁴⁴ ^k Matt. 24:47;

25:21; [Rev. 3:21]

⁴⁵ ⁱ Matt. 24:48;

2 Pet. 3:3, 4

⁴⁶ ^m 1 Thess. 5:3

⁴⁷ ⁿ Num. 15:30;

Deut. 25:2; [John
9:41; 15:22; Acts
17:30] ^o [James 4:17]

⁴⁸ ^p [Lev. 5:17];

Num. 15:29; [1 Tim.
1:13]

to be broken into. ⁴⁰ Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.”

Parable of the Faithful Steward

Matt. 24:45–51

⁴¹ Then Peter said to Him, “Lord, do You speak this parable *only* to us, or to all *people*?”

⁴² And the Lord said, ^j “Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom *his* master will make ruler over his household, to give *them* *their* portion of food ⁸ in due season? ⁴³ Blessed *is* that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes. ⁴⁴ ^k Truly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all that he has. ⁴⁵ ^l But if that servant says in his heart, ‘My master is delaying his coming,’ and begins to beat the male and female servants, and to eat and drink and be drunk, ⁴⁶ the master of that servant will come on a ^m day when he is not looking for *him*, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in two and appoint *him* his portion with the unbelievers. ⁴⁷ And ⁿ that servant who ^o knew his master’s will, and did not prepare *himself* or do according to his will, shall be beaten with many *stripes*. ⁴⁸ ^p But he who did not know, yet committed things deserving

God and thanking Him for such pleasures. The materialistic world is like a group of passengers frantically scurrying to get the best deck chair on a sinking ship. When we are consumed with possessions, there can be little left in our heart for God. **your Father knows:** We can trust God to provide for us because God knows precisely what we need.

12:33 Sell what you have: In contrast to the world’s hoarding of possessions, the disciple must be generous with what God gives. **money bags which do not grow old:** By serving God and others, you can invest in your eternal future. You cannot take possessions with you in the next life, but you can store up an eternal treasure by giving to others (see Paul’s statement in Phil. 4:17).

12:34 What people consider valuable is **where** their energy will be spent. Knowing God and investing in His purposes should be the **treasure** we seek.

12:35 waist be girded . . . lamps burning: These are two pictures of readiness. A lamp was used at night, while girding the waist involved pulling up the hem of a robe so that one could run. Jesus was calling the disciples to be ready for service.

12:36 Jesus compared the disciples to servants who are ready to serve their master **immediately**. Paul also used this image in describing his relationship to God (see Rom. 1:1).

12:37 Blessed: Here the blessing is on those who watch attentively for their master’s return. Jesus was speaking of faithful and obedient service. One day Jesus will return to make an accounting of how people served Him (see Rom. 14:10; 2 Cor. 5:10). In a reversal of the servant image, Jesus pointed out that the faithful servant will be served by Jesus on His return. Faithfulness will be rewarded.

12:38 This verse speaks of a return at an unusually late hour. The exact time referred to depends on which system of time was used. In the Roman system the **second** and **third watch** would be 9 P.M. to 3 A.M. By the Jewish method it would be 10 P.M. to 6 A.M. Luke usually uses the Roman pattern (see Acts 12:4); but since Jesus is speaking, the Jewish system is also possible. The point is that constant attentiveness is necessary.

12:39, 40 he would have watched: Jesus changed the illustration slightly, comparing the watch to protecting against a robbery. Knowledge of the time would lead to vigilance. But since the time is not known, constant readiness is essential.

12:41 to us, or to all people: Peter asked if Jesus’ teaching was for the disciples only or for all people. Jesus did not answer the question directly. Instead He described a variety of categories of servants. Servants are those who belong to the Master and have their stewardship evaluated (19:11–27). Several responses, from faithfulness to blatant disobedience, are described in vv. 42–48. The issue is who lives life in a way that looks for, and takes seriously, the return of Jesus (see 1 John 2:28).

12:44 he will make him ruler: Such rule will be a part of the administration of Jesus’ kingdom when He returns (see 19:11–27; 1 Cor. 6:2, 3; Rev. 20–22).

12:45 is delaying . . . begins to beat: This servant is depicted as consciously doing the opposite of caring for others, and of treating the Master’s return as irrelevant.

12:46 The image of being slain—**cut him in two**—indicates the severity of this judgment, especially in contrast to the whippings of vv. 47, 48. **Unbelievers** are those who did not take seriously the consequences of judgment (see 2 Cor. 5:10; Rev. 3:11).

12:47 knew . . . did not prepare himself or do: This is a category of disobedience, not as blatant as doing the opposite, but unfaithfulness nonetheless. This servant is disciplined **with many stripes**, though he is not rejected. Such evaluation of church leaders is described in 1 Cor. 3:10–15 and is broadened to apply to all believers in 2 Cor. 5:10.

12:48 Discipline for the ignorant is less severe—**beaten with few**. The parable suggests degrees of God’s punishment: The faithful are rewarded, the ignorant are disciplined a little, the disobedient are disciplined moderately, and the blatantly disobedient are executed. In each case, the stewardship of the servant is evaluated.

of stripes, shall be beaten with few. For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more.

Christ Warns of the Costs of Discipleship

⁴⁹ *q* “I came to send fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled! ⁵⁰ But ^r I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how distressed I am till it is ^s accomplished! ⁵¹ *t* Do you suppose that I came to give peace on earth? I tell you, not at all, ^u but rather division. ⁵² *v* For from now on five in one house will be divided: three against two, and two against three. ⁵³ *w* Father will be divided against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.”

Christ Warns of Not Discerning the Times

⁵⁴ Then He also said to the multitudes, ^x “Whenever you see a cloud rising out of the west, immediately you say, ‘A shower is coming’; and so it is. ⁵⁵ And when you see the ^y south wind blow, you say, ‘There will be hot weather’; and there is. ⁵⁶ Hypocrites! You can discern the face of the sky and of the earth, but how *is it* you do not discern ^z this time?

⁵⁷ “Yes, and why, even of yourselves, do you not judge what is right? ⁵⁸ *a* When

⁴⁹ *q* Luke 12:51
⁵⁰ *r* Matt. 20:18, 22, 23; Mark 10:38
⁵¹ *t* John 12:27; 19:30
⁵² *u* Matt. 10:34-36
⁵³ *w* Mic. 7:6; John 7:43; 9:16; 10:19; Acts 14:4
⁵⁴ *v* Matt. 10:35; Mark 13:12
⁵⁵ *x* Matt. 10:21, 36
⁵⁶ *y* Matt. 16:2, 3
⁵⁷ *z* Job 37:17
⁵⁸ *a* Luke 19:41-44
⁵⁹ *b* Prov. 25:8; Matt. 5:25, 26

you go with your adversary to the magistrate, make every effort ^b along the way to settle with him, lest he drag you to the judge, the judge deliver you to the officer, and the officer throw you into prison. ⁵⁹ I tell you, you shall not depart from there till you have paid the very last mite.”

Christ Teaches on Repentance

13 There were present at that season some who told Him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had ¹ mingled with their sacrifices. ² And Jesus answered and said to them, “Do you suppose that these Galileans were worse sinners than all *other* Galileans, because they suffered such things? ³ I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish. ⁴ Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them, do you think that they were worse sinners than all *other* men who dwelt in Jerusalem? ⁵ I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish.”

⁶ He also spoke this parable: ^a “A certain *man* had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it and found none. ⁷ Then he said to the keeper of his vineyard, ‘Look, for three years I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree and find none. Cut it down; why does it ² use up the ground?’ ⁸ But he answered and said to him, ‘Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig around it and fertilize *it*. ⁹ ³ And if it bears fruit, *well*. But if not, after that you can ^b cut it down.’”

^b [Ps. 32:6; Is. 55:6]

CHAPTER 13

¹ ¹ *mixed*
⁶ ^a Is. 5:2; Matt. 21:19
⁷ ² *waste*
⁹ ^b [John 15:2] ³ *NU*
And if it bears fruit after that, well. But if not, you can

12:49 I came to send fire: Fire is an image associated with God’s judgment (see Jer. 51:4; 23:29). Jesus’ coming brings judgment on those who refuse to accept Him and divides the believers from the faithless. Though Jesus was ready for the judgment of humankind, other things had to happen first (v. 50).

12:50 As a figure for Jesus’ death (see Mark 10:38, 39), **baptism** in this verse refers to the coming of overflowing waters of divine judgment (see Ps. 18:4, 16; 42:7; 69:1, 2; Is. 8:7, 8; 30:27, 28). Note Jesus’ human response to what He recognized as His necessary death.

12:51 Part of Jesus’ mission was to create a **division** within humankind. Other texts of Luke speak of Jesus bringing peace (see 2:14; 7:50; 8:48; 10:5, 6; Acts 10:36; Eph. 2:13–17). He offers peace to those who respond to Him.

12:54, 55 a cloud rising out of the west: In Palestine a western breeze meant moisture coming from the Mediterranean Sea. A **south wind** meant hot air coming from the desert.

12:56 Hypocrites: Jesus rebuked His audience for being able to discern the weather but not what God was doing through Him.

12:58, 59 make every effort . . . to settle with him: The picture here is of a magistrate who functions like a bailiff bringing a debtor into prison. Since the context of this passage is Jesus’ mission, the **judge** likely represents God. The message of this parable is to become reconciled to God before judgment comes.

13:1 The details of the incident referred to here, in which Jewish blood was shed at or near the temple during a time of **sacrifices**, are not known. **Pilate** was known for his insensitivity to the Jewish people early in his rule. The event probably occurred during the Feast of the Passover or Tabernacles, when **Galileans** most likely would have been at the temple.

13:2 Do you suppose: Jesus’ question reflected the opinion of His audience. The idea that judgment and death are the results of sin led to the belief that tragic death was the result of extreme sin. While such a view was common in Judaism, it was not always a correct conclusion (see Ex. 20:5; Job 4:7; 8:4, 20; 22:5; Prov. 10:24, 25; John 9:1–3).

13:3 unless you repent: Jesus’ point here is that everyone stands at the edge of death until repentance occurs. The death in view here is spiritual, not physical.

13:4 The event referred to here was a natural tragedy as opposed to the violent human act alluded to in vv. 1, 2. However, the same question was raised. Were the people who suffered being judged for their sins? **Siloam** was located in the southeast section of Jerusalem.

13:5 The manner in which a person dies is not a measure of righteousness; what is important is not to die outside of God’s grace and care. The way to avoid such a fate is to **repent**, to come to God through the care of the physician Jesus (5:32).

13:6 A fig tree often represents God’s blessing, or a people who have a special relationship with God (see Mic. 7:1, 2). The man in this parable represents God; the fig tree represents Israel.

13:7 for three years: A fig tree was often given some time to bear good fruit since its root structure was complex and took time to develop. Three years would have been enough for the tree to yield some fruit.

13:9 But if not: If the tree, symbolizing Israel, would yield some fruit it could escape judgment; a failure to be fruitful would result in judgment. In v. 35, Jesus declares that the nation’s house is desolate, so judgment comes. That judgment is described in 19:41–44. The fall of Jerusalem, which took place in A.D. 70, is in view. This theme is also addressed in 20:9–19.

Christ Heals the Crippled Woman

¹⁰Now He was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath. ¹¹And behold, there was a woman who had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bent over and could in no way ⁴raise *herself* up. ¹²But when Jesus saw her, He called *her* to *Him* and said to her, “Woman, you are loosed from your ‘infirmity.’” ¹³^d And He laid *His* hands on her, and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God.

¹⁴But the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because Jesus had ‘healed on the Sabbath; and he said to the crowd, ^f“There are six days on which men ought to work; therefore come and be healed on them, and ^gnot on the Sabbath day.”

¹⁵The Lord then answered him and said, ⁵“Hypocrite! ^hDoes not each one of you on the Sabbath loose his ox or donkey from the stall, and lead *it* away to water it? ¹⁶So ought not this woman, ⁱbeing a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has bound—think of it—for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath?” ¹⁷And when He said these things, all His adversaries were put to shame; and all the multitude rejoiced for all the glorious things that were ^jdone by Him.

Parable of the Mustard Seed

Matt. 13:31, 32; Mark 4:30-32

¹⁸^kThen He said, “What is the kingdom of God like? And to what shall I compare it? ¹⁹It is like a mustard seed, which a man took and put in his garden; and it grew and became a ⁶large

¹¹ ⁴straighten up
¹² ^c Luke 7:21; 8:2
¹³ ^d Mark 16:18;
Acts 9:17
¹⁴ ^e [Luke 6:6-11;
14:1-6]; John 5:16
^f Ex. 20:9; 23:12
⁹ Matt. 12:10; Mark
3:2; Luke 6:7; 14:3
¹⁵ ^h [Matt. 7:5;
23:13]; Luke 14:5
⁵ NU, M *Hypocrites*
¹⁶ ⁱ Luke 19:9
¹⁷ ^j Mark 5:19, 20
¹⁸ ^k Matt. 13:31, 32;
Mark 4:30-32
¹⁹ ⁶ NU omits *large*

²¹ ^l Matt. 13:33
⁷ yeast ⁸ Gr. *sata*,
same as Heb. *seah*;
approximately 2
pecks in all
²² ^m Matt. 9:35;
Mark 6:6
²³ ⁿ [Matt. 7:14;
20:16]
²⁴ ^o [Matt. 7:13]
^p [John 7:34; 8:21;
13:33; Rom. 9:31]
²⁵ ^q [Ps. 32:6]; Is.
55:6 ^r Matt. 25:10;
Rev. 22:11 ^s Luke
6:46 ^t Matt. 7:23;
25:12
²⁷ ^u [Matt. 7:23;
25:41] ^v Ps. 6:8;
[Matt. 25:41]; Titus
1:16
²⁸ ^w Matt. 8:12;
13:42; 24:51 ^x Matt.
8:11
³⁰ ^y [Matt. 19:30;
20:16]; Mark 10:31

tree, and the birds of the air nested in its branches.”

Parable of the Leaven

Matt. 13:33-35

²⁰And again He said, “To what shall I liken the kingdom of God? ²¹It is like ⁷leaven, which a woman took and hid in three ^lmeasures⁸ of meal till it was all leavened.”

The Way into the Kingdom

²²^m And He went through the cities and villages, teaching, and journeying toward Jerusalem. ²³Then one said to Him, “Lord, are there ⁿfew who are saved?”

And He said to them, ²⁴^o “Strive to enter through the narrow gate, for ^pmany, I say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able. ²⁵^q When once the Master of the house has risen up and ^rshut the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock at the door, saying, ^s“Lord, Lord, open for us,” and He will answer and say to you, ^t“I do not know you, where you are from,” ²⁶then you will begin to say, ‘We ate and drank in Your presence, and You taught in our streets.’ ²⁷^u But He will say, ‘I tell you I do not know you, where you are from.’ ^vDepart from Me, all you workers of iniquity.’ ²⁸^w There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, ^xwhen you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and yourselves thrust out. ²⁹They will come from the east and the west, from the north and the south, and sit down in the kingdom of God. ³⁰^y And indeed there are last who will be first, and there are first who will be last.”

13:15 Hypocrite: When the ruler of the synagogue became indignant regarding Jesus’ healing on the Sabbath (vv. 10–14), Jesus pointed out that basic compassion was shown to animals on the Sabbath, so how much more compassion should be shown to a suffering woman (v. 16)?

13:16 daughter of Abraham: This description of the woman indicates how special she was. Jesus pointed out that there was no better day on which to overcome Satan than the Sabbath.

13:18, 19 Jesus compared the growth of God’s kingdom to a little seed that becomes a big tree where many birds can find shelter. A tree of the mustard family would grow to about 12 feet. The image of birds nesting in the trees is found frequently in the OT (see Ps. 104:12; Ezek. 17:22–24; Dan. 4:10–12).

13:20, 21 In this illustration the leaven is hidden in meal or flour equaling about 50 pounds. Leaven permeates bread and makes it rise. Usually this image is negative, as in 1 Cor. 5:6; but in this parable, it is positive. The kingdom will start small, but will grow and eventually fill the earth. The emphasis is not so much on a process of growth as in the difference between the kingdom’s beginning and its end.

13:24 the narrow gate: The suggestion here is that one must enter salvation on God’s terms. Those who seek to enter but are unable are those who seek entrance on their own terms. Many will miss the blessings of God because they think they can achieve salvation

on their own merit or on the basis of their own piety, rather than because they came to know God through Jesus (v. 25).

13:25 Once a person’s life has ended, the door of opportunity to respond to Jesus is closed and access into God’s presence cannot be gained. **I do not know you:** The issue here is being properly and personally related to God through Jesus. Verse 26 makes it clear that the Lord at the door is Jesus, since reference is made to His ministry. Those who seek entry after the door is closed will be rejected, since they did not come to God on His terms through Jesus.

13:26 We ate and drank . . . You taught: The appeal here is by people who experienced Jesus’ presence. The passage primarily involves those Jews who witnessed Jesus’ ministry. They were trying to gain entry into God’s presence based simply on the fact that they had observed Jesus. Jesus refused them, pointing out that it was not enough for them to have been close to Him. In order to have a relationship with God, one must embrace Jesus and come to know Him.

13:27 I do not know you . . . Depart from Me: In this verse, Jesus turns a question about salvation (v. 23) into a question about personally knowing Him. Failure to seek salvation in Jesus means that sin remains in a person’s life.

13:29 east . . . west . . . north . . . south: People would come from all corners of the earth for entrance into God’s kingdom. This passage alludes to the inclusion of Gentiles.

13:30 There will be many surprises in God’s kingdom. Those who

Christ Mourns over Jerusalem

³¹ ⁹ On that very day some Pharisees came, saying to Him, “Get out and depart from here, for Herod wants to kill You.”

³² And He said to them, “Go, tell that fox, ‘Behold, I cast out demons and perform cures today and tomorrow, and the third day ² I shall be ¹ perfected.’” ³³ Nevertheless I must journey today, tomorrow, and the day following; for it cannot be that a prophet should perish outside of Jerusalem.

³⁴ ^a “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted

³¹ ⁹ NU In that very hour

³² ² Luke 24:46; Acts 10:40; 1 Cor. 15:4; [Heb. 2:10; 5:9; 7:28] ☆

¹ Resurrected

³⁴ ^a Matt. 23:37-39; 2 Chr. 24:20, 21; 36:15, 16

³⁵ ^b Lev. 26:31, 32; Ps. 69:25; Is. 1:7; Jer. 22:5 ☆; Dan. 9:27; Mic. 3:12

^c Ps. 118:26; Matt. 21:9; Mark 11:10; Luke 19:38; John

12:13 ² NU, M omit assuredly

to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, but you were not willing! ³⁵ See! ^b Your house is left to you desolate; and ² assuredly, I say to you, you shall not see Me until the time comes when you say, ^c ‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!’”

Instruction on the Sabbath

14 Now it happened, as He went into the house of one of the rulers of the Pharisees to eat bread on the Sabbath, that they watched Him closely. ² And behold, there was a certain man before Him who had dropsy. ³ And Jesus, answering,

are despised on earth—some Gentiles, for example—will be greatly honored in the kingdom. Conversely, those who are considered influential and powerful on earth—the Jewish religious leaders of Jesus’ day, for example—will be excluded from the kingdom.

13:31–33 Herod wants to kill You: This warning from the Pharisees was apparently an effort to get Jesus out of the region and out of their hair. It is hard to know whether the warning was true. In 23:7–9, 15, Herod is portrayed as more curious than hostile. **fox:** The reference here is to Herod’s cunning. Jesus’ reply seems to take the Pharisees’ warning at face value. **I shall be perfected:** Jesus predicted His resurrection in Jerusalem. Because it was His call from God, Jesus could not avoid ministering in the region. The verb translated *perfected* means to complete something, which is why it alludes to Jesus’ resurrection, the decisive moment of His ministry. The reference to **today, tomorrow, and the day following** is figurative, since Jesus was speaking of more than three remaining days in His ministry.

13:33 it cannot be: Jesus followed a long line of prophets that were executed in the nation’s capital (see 1 Kin. 18:4, 13; 19:10, 14; 2 Chr. 24:21; Jer. 2:30; 26:20–23; 38:4–6; Amos 7:10–17).

13:34 Jerusalem, Jerusalem: The double address indicates Jesus’

deep sorrow (see 2 Sam. 18:33; Jer. 22:29). The city had executed many of God’s messengers. Stephen makes a similar point about the nation of Israel in Acts 7:51–53. **I wanted to gather:** As a prophet, Jesus spoke for God in the first person. He compared God’s desire to gather the nation to a hen sheltering and protecting her young. Sadly, the nation was not willing to be gathered.

13:35 Your house is left . . . desolate: Jesus declared that the nation stood under a judgment similar to the Exile to Babylon (see Jer. 12:7; 22:5). God would abandon the nation until they responded to the Messiah. **Blessed is He:** This is a citation of Ps. 118:26. The people of Israel would not see the Messiah again until they were ready to receive Him and recognize that He was sent from God. Psalm 118 reflects the greeting of a priest to a group entering the temple. Jesus used the language of this psalm to illustrate God’s greeting to Him.

14:2 Dropsy is a condition in which water is retained in the body, leading to swollen limbs (see Num. 5:11–27). Dropsy is a symptom and not a specific disease.

14:3 Is it lawful: Note that Jesus raised the question of Sabbath law here, preempting the questioning he had faced in 6:2 (see 6:9).

Keeping the Sabbath

A man’s withered hand is restored; a man with dropsy is healed. Most would rejoice in the restoration of health and marvel at Jesus’ power over illness. But the Pharisees were filled with rage (6:11) or remained disapprovingly silent (14:4). Why?

To the Jewish leaders of Jesus’ day, healing on the Sabbath was sacrilegious. They considered His healings to be work, and the Ten Commandments clearly prohibited work on the Sabbath (see Ex. 20:8–11; Deut. 5:12–15). The Sabbath was holy, a day set apart for God. Just as the Israelites were commanded to tithe part of their earnings to God, they were to give Him their time as well. Breaking the Sabbath was a very grave matter, for God’s law demanded death for those who ignored it (see Ex. 31:14, 15; 35:2).

During the period of the second temple (515 B.C.–A.D. 70), scribes and rabbis pored over the words of Scripture, interpreting every detail. What constituted “work” on the Sabbath? What could be allowed “within the Law”? According to the Law, burdens were not to be carried on the Sabbath. This meant that what exactly constituted a “burden” had to be clarified and defined. On the surface, the scribes had a good reason for interpreting the Law: They did not want anyone to break it inadvertently. But their interpretations increasingly emphasized external adherence to the Law instead of the cultivation of an attitude of submission before the Lord. Perfect obedience to the Law and its interpretation became a source of pride instead of a tangible expression of love for God. By Jesus’ day, the rabbis and scribes had become so strict that they accused Jesus’ disciples of breaking the Sabbath because they had simply plucked some heads of grain, rubbed them in their hands, and eaten them as they walked through a grainfield (6:1, 2).

Jesus’ healings on the Sabbath enraged the religious teachers. It was obvious to them that healing was classified as work and prohibited by the Fourth Commandment (see Deut. 5:14). But to Jesus it was common sense and a good deed. Jesus revealed the rabbis’ hypocrisy with the example of an ox falling down a pit. The Pharisees would allow an ox to be rescued on the Sabbath, but they wanted to prohibit Jesus from rescuing a human being. Their outrage at Jesus’ healing came from their own interpretation of the Law and not from the Law itself. The scribes and rabbis had thought through, categorized, and defined all the minutiae of the Law, but they had missed its central point. The Lord had given the Law to encourage the Israelites to love Him and to love others (see Mark 12:30, 31). He had never prohibited doing good on the Sabbath.



spoke to the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, “Is it lawful to heal on the ¹Sabbath?”

⁴But they kept silent. And He took *him* and healed him, and let him go. ⁵Then He answered them, saying, ^b“Which of you, having a ²donkey or an ox that has fallen into a pit, will not immediately pull him out on the Sabbath day?” ⁶And they could not answer Him regarding these things.

Parable of the Ambitious Guest

⁷So He told a parable to those who were invited, when He noted how they chose the best places, saying to them: ⁸“When you are invited by anyone to a wedding feast, do not sit down in the best place, lest one more honorable than you be invited by him; ⁹and he who invited you and him come and say to you, ‘Give place to this man,’ and then you begin with shame to take the lowest place. ¹⁰^cBut when you are invited, go and sit down in the lowest place, so that when he who invited you comes he may say to you, ‘Friend, go up higher.’ Then you will have glory in the presence of those who sit at the table with you. ¹¹^dFor whoever exalts himself will be ³humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

¹²Then He also said to him who invited Him, “When you give a dinner or a supper, do not ask your friends, your brothers, your relatives, nor rich neighbors, lest they also invite you back, and you be repaid. ¹³But when you give a feast, invite ^e*the poor, the* ⁴maimed, *the lame, the blind.* ¹⁴And you will be ^fblessed, because they cannot repay you; for you shall be repaid at the resurrection of the just.”

CHAPTER 14

3 ^a Matt. 12:10 ¹ NU adds or not
5 ^b [Ex. 23:5; Deut. 22:4]; Luke 13:15
2 NU, M son
10 ^c Prov. 25:6, 7
11 ^d Job 22:29; Ps. 18:27; Prov. 29:23; Matt. 23:12; Luke 18:14; James 4:6; [1 Pet. 5:5] ³ put down
13 ^e Neh. 8:10, 12 ⁴ crippled
14 ^f [Matt. 25:34-40]

15 ^g Rev. 19:9 ⁵ M dinner
16 ^h Matt. 22:2-14
17 ⁱ Prov. 9:2, 5
21 ⁶ crippled
24 ^j [Matt. 21:43; 22:8; Acts 13:46]
26 ^k Deut. 13:6; 33:9; Matt. 10:37
1 Rom. 9:13 ^m Rev. 12:11
27 ⁿ Matt. 16:24; Mark 8:34; Luke 9:23; [2 Tim. 3:12]

Parable of the Great Supper

¹⁵Now when one of those who sat at the table with Him heard these things, he said to Him, ^g“Blessed is he who shall eat ⁵bread in the kingdom of God!”

¹⁶^hThen He said to him, “A certain man gave a great supper and invited many, ¹⁷and ⁱsent his servant at supper time to say to those who were invited, ‘Come, for all things are now ready.’ ¹⁸But they all with one *accord* began to make excuses. The first said to him, ‘I have bought a piece of ground, and I must go and see it. I ask you to have me excused.’ ¹⁹And another said, ‘I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to test them. I ask you to have me excused.’ ²⁰Still another said, ‘I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.’ ²¹So that servant came and reported these things to his master. Then the master of the house, being angry, said to his servant, ‘Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in here *the poor and the* ⁶maimed and *the lame and the blind.*’ ²²And the servant said, ‘Master, it is done as you commanded, and still there is room.’ ²³Then the master said to the servant, ‘Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel *them* to come in, that my house may be filled. ²⁴For I say to you ^jthat none of those men who were invited shall taste my supper.’”

Christ Teaches on Discipleship

²⁵Now great multitudes went with Him. And He turned and said to them, ²⁶^k“If anyone comes to Me ^land does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, ^myes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. ²⁷And ⁿwhoever does not bear his cross

14:7 In ancient times the **best** seats at a meal were those next to the host.

14:12, 13 True hospitality and service are given to those who cannot repay. Disciples must have a special concern for the **poor, maimed, lame, and blind**, as Jesus does (4:16–19).

14:14 **you shall be repaid:** Even though there may be no reward in this life, God will not overlook what His servants have done to carry out His love and mercy. See 2 Cor. 5:10; Heb. 6:20.

14:15 **Blessed is he:** One of the guests at the meal reflected on the glory of sitting at the banquet table of God, an image of being saved and living in God’s presence. The man probably assumed that many of the people attending the meal with Jesus would be present at God’s banquet table. Jesus responded to the man’s assumption with a warning.

14:17 **those who were invited:** In the ancient world, invitations to a feast were sent out well in advance of the meal. Then on the day of the feast, servants would announce the start of the meal. This parable is similar to the one in Matt. 22:1–14, but was probably spoken on a different occasion.

14:20 **I have married a wife:** While the OT exempted a man from military duty because of marriage (see Deut. 20:7; 24:5), marriage was not an excuse for avoiding social duties. The general point

here is that the man regarded his own affairs as more important than the feast.

14:21 **poor . . . maimed . . . lame . . . blind:** This list matches that of v. 13. The maimed were excluded from full participation in Jewish worship (see Lev. 21:17–23). The master’s second invitation extended the scope of the offer to those who were rejected by society.

14:23 The master’s second invitation extended beyond the city limits, encouraging even more people to come to the feast. This may picture the inclusion of Gentiles in God’s salvation (see Is. 49:6). The instruction to **compel them to come in** does not mean to force people in, but to urge them. As outsiders, the people might not feel comfortable coming.

14:26 **does not hate:** The essence of discipleship is giving Christ first place. To “hate” one’s family and even one’s life is rhetorical. It refers to desiring something less than something else. This instruction was especially appropriate in Jesus’ day, since a decision for Jesus could mean rejection by family and persecution even to the point of death. Those who feared family disapproval or persecution would not come to Jesus.

14:27 Jesus’ call here is to follow Him in the way of rejection and suffering. A **disciple** will be rejected by those in the world who do not honor Christ. Therefore, a disciple must be ready to face and accept such rejection.

and come after Me cannot be My disciple. ²⁸For ^owhich of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has *enough* to finish it— ²⁹lest, after he has laid the foundation, and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, ³⁰saying, ‘This man began to build and was not able to finish?’ ³¹Or what king, going to make war against another king, does not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand? ³²Or else, while the other is still a great way off, he sends a delegation and asks conditions of peace. ³³So likewise, whoever of you ^pdoes not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple.

³⁴“Salt is good; but if the salt has lost its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? ³⁵It is neither fit for the land nor for the ⁷dung-hill, *but* men throw it out. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!”

Parable of the Lost Sheep

Matt. 18:12-14

15 Then ^aall the tax collectors and the sinners drew near to Him to hear Him. ²And the Pharisees and scribes complained, saying, “This Man ¹receives sinners ^band eats with them.” ³So He spoke this parable to them, saying:

⁴“What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he loses one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness, and go after the one which is lost until he

²⁸ ^o Prov. 24:27
³³ ^p Matt. 19:27
³⁴ ^q Matt. 5:13;
 [Mark 9:50]
³⁵ ^r rubbish heap

CHAPTER 15

¹ ^a [Matt. 9:10-13]
² ^b Acts 11:3; Gal. 2:12 ¹ welcomes
⁴ ^c Matt. 18:12-14;
 1 Pet. 2:25

⁶ ^d [Rom. 12:15]
^e [Luke 19:10; 1 Pet. 2:10, 25]
⁷ ^f [Luke 5:32]
^g [Mark 2:17]
² upright
⁸ ³ Gr. *drachma*, a valuable coin often worn in a ten-piece garland by married women
¹² ^h Mark 12:44
¹³ ⁴ wasteful

finds it? ⁵And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. ⁶And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, ^d‘Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep ^ewhich was lost!’ ⁷I say to you that likewise there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents ^fthan over ninety-nine ²just persons who ^gneed no repentance.

Parable of the Lost Coin

⁸“Or what woman, having ten silver ³coins, if she loses one coin, does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully until she finds it? ⁹And when she has found it, she calls her friends and neighbors together, saying, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found the piece which I lost!’ ¹⁰Likewise, I say to you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”

Parable of the Lost Son

¹¹Then He said: “A certain man had two sons. ¹²And the younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the portion of goods that falls to me.’ So he divided to them ^hhis livelihood. ¹³And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together, journeyed to a far country, and there wasted his possessions with ⁴prodigal living. ¹⁴But when he had spent all, there arose a severe famine in that land, and he began to be in want. ¹⁵Then he went and joined himself

14:30 was not able to finish: Their mocking centers on the dishonor that results from an inability to complete the task. Following Christ is not something to be taken up on a trial basis. It calls for ultimate commitment (see 9:62).

14:31, 32 The picture here is of a **king** assessing his ability to do battle with another more powerful king. The king **sends a delegation** only after appreciating the weight and consequences of his decision. Jesus urged the people to think about what it would mean to follow Him, and not to take it lightly.

14:34 In the ancient world, **salt** was often used as a catalyst for burning fuel such as cattle dung. The salt of the time was impure and could lose its strength over time, becoming useless. Jesus’ point is that the same is true of a “saltless” disciple.

14:35 throw it out: Jesus warned that an ineffective commitment leads to being cast aside. This apparently is a reference to those who are judged as unfaithful disciples (see 1 Cor. 11:30). Remaining useful to God means remaining faithful to Him (9:61, 62).

15:1 the tax collectors and the sinners: The three parables of ch. 15 explain why Jesus associated with despised groups while the Pharisees and scribes did not. The parables in this chapter are found only in Luke.

15:2 eats with them: In the ancient world, table fellowship indicated acceptance of the other guests. This is why the Jewish religious leaders complained about Jesus’ companions at His meals (see 5:30–32; 19:10; Mark 2:15).

15:4 A hundred sheep was a medium-sized flock. The average herd ran from 20 to 200 head, while a flock of three hundred or more was considered large.

15:6 The call to **rejoice** at finding the lost sheep would have been

natural enough, since sheep were valuable property in the ancient world.

15:7 likewise: Jesus compared the joy of finding a lost sheep to the joy of heaven over a sinner’s repentance. The unstated conclusion is that the hope of such a conversion was the reason Jesus associated with the undesirable of society. **Persons who need no repentance** is a rhetorical way of describing the scribes and Pharisees. A similar description is found in 5:31, where it is said that some do not need a physician. The scribes and Pharisees believed that they did not need to repent because they were not lost.

15:8 ten silver coins: A drachma was a silver coin equal to a day’s wage for a basic laborer. The woman needed a **lamp** because she lived in a windowless house. Her broom for sweeping would have been made of palm twigs. In this second parable of ch. 15, more detail is given regarding the search effort than in the first parable of vv. 4–7.

15:12 the portion of goods that falls to me: In the ancient world, this son most likely would have been in his teens and single. As the younger son he would have received half of what the elder son received (see Deut. 21:17), or a third of his father’s estate. The early Jews warned fathers against breaking up an estate too early. Here the father granted the request, illustrating how God permits each person to go his or her own way.

15:13 wasted his possessions: The verb here means “to scatter or disperse something.” The term translated **prodigal** describes a debased, extravagant life (see Prov. 28:7).

15:15 Feeding **swine** was an insulting job for a Jewish person, since pigs were unclean according to the Law of Moses.

to a citizen of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. ¹⁶ And he would gladly have filled his stomach with the ⁵ pods that the swine ate, and no one gave him *anything*.

¹⁷ “But when he came to himself, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! ¹⁸ I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, ‘Father, ¹⁹ I have sinned against heaven and before you, ¹⁹ and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants.’”

²⁰ “And he arose and came to his father. But ²¹ when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him. ²¹ And the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven ²² and in your sight, and am no longer worthy to be called your son.’

²² “But the father said to his servants, ²³ ‘Bring out the best robe and put *it* on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on *his* feet. ²³ And bring the fattened calf here and kill *it*, and let us eat and be merry; ²⁴ ²⁴ for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ And they began to be merry.

²⁵ “Now his older son was in the field. And as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. ²⁶ So he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant. ²⁷ And he said to him, ‘Your brother has come, and because he has received him safe and sound, your father has killed the fattened calf.’

²⁸ “But he was angry and would not go in. Therefore his father came out and pleaded with him. ²⁹ So he answered

¹⁶ ⁵ *carob pods*
¹⁸ ¹ Ex. 9:27; 10:16; Num. 22:34; Josh. 7:20; 1 Sam. 15:24, 30; 26:21; 2 Sam. 12:13; 24:10, 17; Ps. 51:4; Matt. 27:4
²⁰ / [Jer. 3:12]; Matt. 9:36; [Acts 2:39; Eph. 2:13, 17]
²¹ * Ps. 51:4
²² ⁶ *NU Quickly bring*
²⁴ ¹ Matt. 8:22; Luke 9:60; 15:32; Rom. 11:15; [Eph. 2:1, 5; 5:14; Col. 2:13; 1 Tim. 5:6]

32 ^m Luke 15:24

CHAPTER 16

¹ ¹ *squandering*
² ^a [Rom. 14:12; 2 Cor. 5:10; 1 Pet. 4:5, 6]
⁶ ² Gr. *batos*, same as Heb. *bath*; 8 or 9 gallons each
⁷ ³ Gr. *koros*, same as Heb. *kor*; 10 or 12 bushels each

and said to *his* father, ‘Lo, these many years I have been serving you; I never transgressed your commandment at any time; and yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might make merry with my friends. ³⁰ But as soon as this son of yours came, who has devoured your livelihood with harlots, you killed the fattened calf for him.’

³¹ “And he said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and all that I have is yours. ³² It was right that we should make merry and be glad, ^m for your brother was dead and is alive again, and was lost and is found.’”

Parable of the Unjust Servant

16 He also said to His disciples: “There was a certain rich man who had a steward, and an accusation was brought to him that this man was ¹ wasting his goods. ² So he called him and said to him, ‘What is this I hear about you? Give an ^a account of your stewardship, for you can no longer be steward.’

³ “Then the steward said within himself, ‘What shall I do? For my master is taking the stewardship away from me. I cannot dig; I am ashamed to beg. ⁴ I have resolved what to do, that when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses.’

⁵ “So he called every one of his master’s debtors to *him*, and said to the first, ‘How much do you owe my master?’ ⁶ And he said, ‘A hundred ² measures of oil.’ So he said to him, ‘Take your bill, and sit down quickly and write fifty.’ ⁷ Then he said to another, ‘And how much do you owe?’ So he said, ‘A hundred ³ measures of wheat.’ And he said to him, ‘Take your bill, and

15:18, 19 I have sinned: The son’s words represent the confession of a sinner. The son expected nothing and relied completely on the mercy of his father. So it is with the sinner who repents.

15:20 The description of the father’s **compassion** in running to his son and kissing him illustrates the immediate acceptance of a sinner who turns to God.

15:21 no longer worthy to be called your son: Despite his awareness of being accepted by his father, the son continued his confession of his sin. He then asked to become one of his father’s servants. Similarly, a sinner realizes that he or she brings nothing to and deserves nothing from God, but must rely completely on God’s mercy.

15:22 The father accepted his son’s confession but refused his request to make him a servant. Instead the returning son was made a full member of the family again. The **robe** probably represented the best clothes the father had to offer. The **ring** may have borne the family seal, signifying the son’s acceptance back into the family. The son’s confession of sin brought full restoration.

15:24 dead . . . alive . . . lost . . . found: The total transformation of the prodigal son is summarized in these two contrasts. Such a transformation is a reason to celebrate. It is also the reason Jesus chose to associate with the lost.

15:28 The older brother’s unhappiness over a fattened calf (v. 27) being killed to celebrate the return of his undisciplined brother illustrates

the response of the Pharisees and scribes at the prospect of sinners becoming acceptable to God.

15:29 I never transgressed . . . you never gave me: Note the contrast between the older son’s attitude here and the younger son’s attitude in vv. 19, 21. The older son proclaimed his righteousness and argued that justice had not been done.

15:31 all that I have is yours: The father responded to his disgruntled older son by explaining that just because someone receives a blessing, that does not mean there is no blessing for others. The father also implied that the older son always had the opportunity to celebrate with a fattened calf, since the animals were his.

16:1 A steward was a servant who supervised and administered an estate. The charge brought against this steward is incompetence.

16:2 Give an account . . . you can no longer be steward: The rich man responded to the charge that his steward was incompetent by firing the steward and asking for his records to be brought up to date.

16:6 A hundred measures of oil . . . fifty: Three explanations are commonly given concerning the steward’s right to alter the amount his master was owed: (1) The steward simply lowered the price on his own authority; (2) the steward removed the interest charge from the debt, according to the Law (see Lev. 25:36, 37; Deut. 15:7, 8; 23:20, 21); or (3) the steward removed his own commission, sacrificing only his own money and not that of his master. The

write eighty.⁸ So the master commended the unjust steward because he had dealt shrewdly. For the sons of this world are more shrewd in their generation than ^bthe sons of light.

⁹“And I say to you, ^cmake friends for yourselves by unrighteous ^dmammon, that when ⁵you fail, they may receive you into an everlasting home. ^{10d}He who is faithful in *what* is least is faithful also in much; and he who is unjust in *what* is least is unjust also in much. ¹¹Therefore if you have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true *riches*? ¹²And if you have not been faithful in what is another man’s, who will give you what is your ^eown?”

^{13f}“No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.”

Christ Warns the Pharisees

¹⁴Now the Pharisees, ^gwho were lovers of money, also heard all these things, and they ⁶derided Him. ¹⁵And He said to them, “You are those who ^hjustify yourselves ⁱbefore men, but ^jGod knows your hearts. For ^kwhat is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God.

⁸ ^b [John 12:36; Eph. 5:8]; 1 Thess. 5:5

⁹ ^c Dan. 4:27; [Matt. 6:19; 19:21]; Luke 11:41; [1 Tim. 6:17–19] ^d Lit., in Aram., *wealth* ⁵ NU it fails

¹⁰ ^d Matt. 25:21; Luke 19:17

¹² ^e [1 Pet. 1:3, 4] ¹³ / Matt. 6:24; Gal. 1:10

¹⁴ ^g Matt. 23:14 ⁶ Lit. *turned up their nose at*

¹⁵ ^h Luke 10:29 ⁱ [Matt. 6:2, 5, 16]

^j 1 Chr. 28:9; 2 Chr. 6:30; Ps. 7:9; Prov. 15:11; Jer. 17:10 ^k 1 Sam. 16:7; Ps. 10:3; Prov. 6:16–19; 16:5

¹⁶ / Matt. 3:1–12; 4:17; 11:12, 13; Luke 7:29

¹⁷ ^m Ps. 102:26, 27; Is. 40:8; 51:6; Matt. 5:18; 1 Pet. 1:25 ⁷ The smallest stroke in a Heb. letter

¹⁸ ⁿ Matt. 5:32; 19:9; Mark 10:11; 1 Cor. 7:10, 11

¹⁹ ⁸ *lived in luxury* ²¹ ⁹ NU *what fell*

²² ^o Matt. 8:11 ²⁴ ^p Zech. 14:12 ^q [Is. 66:24; Mark 9:42–48]

^{16l}“The law and the prophets *were* until John. Since that time the kingdom of God has been preached, and everyone is pressing into it. ^{17m}And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one ⁷title of the law to fail.

Christ Teaches on Divorce

¹⁸ⁿ“Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced from *her* husband commits adultery.

Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus

¹⁹“There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and ⁸fared sumptuously every day. ²⁰But there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, full of sores, who was laid at his gate, ²¹desiring to be fed with ⁹the crumbs which fell from the rich man’s table. Moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. ²²So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to ^oAbraham’s bosom. The rich man also died and was buried. ²³And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

²⁴“Then he cried and said, ‘Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and ^pcool my tongue; for I ^qam tormented in this flame.’ ²⁵But Abraham

different rates of reduction reflect the different rates for different commodities.

16:8 The master recognized the foresight in the steward’s generosity. It is debatable whether the steward was dishonest and robbed the master by such reductions or was **shrewd** in using his authority to discount the goods (vv. 6, 7). The fact that the master commended the steward may suggest that the master was not robbed, and that the steward’s reduction was the result of either an adherence to the Law or a lowering of the steward’s own commission.

16:9 **Mammon**, or money, should be used generously to build works that last. Money is called **unrighteous** because it often manifests unrighteousness and selfishness in people (see 1 Tim. 6:6–10, 17–19; James 1:9–11; 5:1–6).

16:10 **faithful . . . unjust . . . least . . . much**: Small examples of selfishness now result in greater selfishness later. Likewise, small examples of generosity now result in greater generosity later.

16:11 **mammon . . . true riches**: This is the development of v. 10. A person who cannot handle money certainly cannot handle spiritual matters that are of much more value.

16:16 Jesus indicates a basic division in God’s plan here. The time of promise extended from the Law and Prophets **until John** the Baptist. Now the promise of God’s kingdom is preached. The new era approaches. **Everyone is pressing into it** can also be translated “all are urged insistently to come in,” emphasizing the urgency of the message.

16:17 Jesus’ point is not that all the commandments of **the law** remain in effect forever, but that the goal of God’s law, the promise of God’s rule, is realized.

16:18 **commits adultery**: Jesus illustrated the moral demands of God’s law by referring to the inviolability of marriage.

16:19 **clothed in purple**: Purple clothes were extremely expensive because they were made with a special dye extracted from a kind of snail.

16:20, 21 To have his sores **licked by dogs** threatened Lazarus with infection as well as ritual uncleanness, since dogs fed on garbage, including dead animals.

16:22 **Abraham’s bosom** was the blessed place of the dead. Angelic escorts for the dead were also known in Judaism. This verse indicates that the dead know their fate immediately.

16:23 Note the reversal of fortune from vv. 19–21. Here the rich man was suffering and Lazarus was at peace. **Hades** in the OT was the place where the dead are gathered. It is also called *Sheol* in Ps. 16:10; 86:13. In the NT, Hades is often mentioned in a negative context (see 10:15; Matt. 11:23; 16:18). Hades is where the unrighteous dead dwell. *Gehenna* is the place where final judgment occurs (see 12:5; Matt. 5:22).

16:24 **I am tormented**: The rich man desired relief from his suffering. The image of thirst for the experience of judgment is common (see Is. 5:13; 65:13; Hos. 2:3).

16:25 The standard by which the rich man treated others was applied to him. In his **lifetime** he lacked compassion, so now there was no compassion for him.

mammon

(Gk. *mammōnas*) (16:9, 11; Matt. 6:24) Strong’s #3126

The Greek word is a transliteration of a common Aramaic word *mamona*, which means “wealth,” “money,” or “property.” It is impossible to serve this god called “mammon” and the true God at the same time. In ch. 16, this word is used for “riches,” considered an idol, master, or god of the human heart that is in conflict with the true God.

said, ‘Son, ^rremember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented. ²⁶And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us.’

²⁷“Then he said, ‘I beg you therefore, father, that you would send him to my father’s house, ²⁸for I have five brothers, that he may testify to them, lest they also come to this place of torment.’ ²⁹Abraham said to him, ‘They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.’ ³⁰And he said, ‘No, father Abraham; but if one goes to them from the dead, they will repent.’ ³¹But he said to him, ‘If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, ^uneither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead.’”

Christ Teaches on Offenses

17 Then He said to the disciples, ^a“It is impossible that no ¹offenses should come, but ^bwoe to him through whom they do come! ²It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were thrown into the sea, than that he should ²offend one of these little ones. ³Take heed to yourselves. ‘If your brother sins ³against you, ^drebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him. ⁴And if he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times in a day returns ⁴to you, saying, ‘I repent,’ you shall forgive him.”

⁵And the apostles said to the Lord, “Increase our faith.”

^{6e}So the Lord said, “If you have faith

25 ^r Job 21:13; Luke 6:24; James 5:5
29 ^s Is. 8:20; 34:16; [John 5:39, 45]; Acts 15:21; 17:11; [2 Tim. 3:15]
31 ^t [John 5:46]
^u John 12:10, 11

CHAPTER 17

1 ^a [1 Cor. 11:19]
b Matt. 18:6, 7; 26:24; Mark 9:42; [2 Thess. 1:6]; Jude 11
1 ¹ *stumbling blocks*
2 ² *cause one of these little ones to stumble*
3 ^c [Matt. 18:15, 21] ^d Lev. 19:17; [Prov. 17:10; Gal. 6:1; James 5:19, 20]
3 NU omits *against you*
4 ⁴ M omits *to you*
6 ^e Matt. 17:20; 21:21; [Mark 9:23; 11:23]; Luke 13:19

8 ^r [Luke 12:37]
9 ^s NU omits the rest of v. 9; M omits *him*
10 ^s Job 22:3; 35:7; Ps. 16:2; Matt. 25:30; Rom. 3:12; 11:35; [1 Cor. 9:16, 17]; Philem. 11
11 ^h Luke 9:51, 52; John 4:4
12 ⁱ Lev. 13:46; Num. 5:2
14 ^j Lev. 13:1-59; 14:1-32; Matt. 8:4; Luke 5:14
15 ^k Luke 5:25; 18:43
16 ^l 2 Kin. 17:24; Luke 9:52, 53; John 4:9

as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, ‘Be pulled up by the roots and be planted in the sea,’ and it would obey you. ⁷And which of you, having a servant plowing or tending sheep, will say to him when he has come in from the field, ‘Come at once and sit down to eat’? ⁸But will he not rather say to him, ‘Prepare something for my supper, and gird yourself ^fand serve me till I have eaten and drunk, and afterward you will eat and drink’? ⁹Does he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded ⁵him? I think not. ¹⁰So likewise you, when you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, ‘We are ^gunprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do.’”

Christ Cleanses Ten Lepers

¹¹Now it happened ^has He went to Jerusalem that He passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee. ¹²Then as He entered a certain village, there met Him ten men who were lepers, ⁱwho stood afar off. ¹³And they lifted up *their* voices and said, “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!”

¹⁴So when He saw *them*, He said to them, ^j“Go, show yourselves to the priests.” And so it was that as they went, they were cleansed.

¹⁵And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned, and with a loud voice ^kglorified God, ¹⁶and fell down on his face at His feet, giving Him thanks. And he was a ^lSamaritan.

¹⁷So Jesus answered and said, “Were there not ten cleansed? But where *are* the nine? ¹⁸Were there not any found who returned to give glory to God except

16:26 a great gulf fixed: This detail illustrates the fact that the unrighteous, once they have died, cannot enter into the sphere of the righteous.

16:27, 28 The rich man asked for a heavenly envoy to be sent so that his **brothers** would not repeat his irreversible error. It is difficult to know if his concern for his brothers was sincere, or just a backhanded way of saying that in his own life he had not received adequate warning about the judgment.

offend

(Gk. *skandalizo*) (17:2; Matt. 5:29; 13:21; John 6:61; 1 Cor. 8:13) Strong's #4624

The word is the verb form of a Greek noun that means “stumbling block” or “snare.” The term refers to the trigger which springs a trap. In the NT it means anything that hinders someone from doing what is right or causes one to sin or fall away from the faith. Jesus emphatically warns that stumbling blocks are sure to come our way. Nonetheless, He condemned those who put stumbling blocks in the way of believers. He says that death by drowning would be preferable to offending “one of these little ones” in the faith.

16:29 They have Moses and the prophets: Abraham made it clear that the rich man’s brothers should have known what to do, since they had the message of God in the ancient writings. The point here is that generosity with money and care for the poor were taught in the OT (see Deut. 14:28, 29; Is. 3:14, 15; Mic. 6:10, 11).

16:31 If they do not hear: A person who rejects God’s message will not be persuaded by resurrection. Though the rich man’s request for a heavenly messenger is denied within the parable, it is honored in the telling of the account, because the parable is part of a Gospel that announces Christ’s resurrection.

17:1, 2 woe to him: Jesus warned that judgment awaits those who cause others to stumble. The severe form of the warning suggests that false teaching, or leading someone into apostasy, is in view here. **A millstone** was a heavy stone used in a grinding mill.

17:6 Even faith the size of a tiny **mustard seed** can do wonderful things. The black **mulberry** tree has a vast root system that allows it to live up to six hundred years.

17:11 Samaria and Galilee: Though Jesus was traveling to Jerusalem, His journey did not follow a direct route.

17:14 Jesus healed the lepers but sent them to the **priests** to verify their cleansing, just as He did the leper in 5:14.

17:15–18 The Samaritans were a despised race (9:52). A hated **foreigner** was the only former leper who gave **glory to God** for his cleansing.

this foreigner?" ^{19m} And He said to him, "Arise, go your way. Your faith has made you well."

Christ Teaches on the Second Coming

²⁰ Now when He was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, He answered them and said, "The kingdom of God does not come with observation; ²¹ⁿ nor will they say, ⁶ 'See here!' or 'See there!' For indeed, ^o the kingdom of God is ⁷ within you."

²² Then He said to the disciples, ^p "The days will come when you will desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and you will not see it. ^{23q} And they will say to you, ⁸ 'Look here!' or 'Look there!' Do not go after them or follow them. ^{24r} For as the lightning that flashes out of one part under heaven shines to the other part under heaven, so also the Son of Man will be in His day. ^{25s} But first He must suffer many things and be ^t rejected by this generation. ^{26u} And as it ^v was in the ^w days of ^x Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man: ²⁷ They ate, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the ^y day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and ^z destroyed them all. ^{28a} Likewise as it was also in the days of Lot: They ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built; ²⁹ but on ^b the day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven

^{19 m} Matt. 9:22; Mark 5:34; 10:52; Luke 7:50; 8:48; 18:42

^{21 n} Luke 17:23
^o [Rom. 14:17] ^e NU reverses here and there ⁷ in your midst

^{22 p} Matt. 9:15; Mark 2:20; Luke 5:35; [John 17:12]

^{23 q} Matt. 24:23; Mark 13:21; [Luke 21:8] ⁸ NU reverses here and there

^{24 r} Matt. 24:27
^{25 s} Matt.

26:67; 27:29-31; Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:33 ^t Luke 9:22

^{26 u} Matt. 24:37-39 ^v [Gen. 6:5-7]

^w [Gen. 6:13] ^x 1 Pet. 3:20

^{27 y} Gen. 7:1-16
^z Gen. 7:19-23

^{28 a} Gen. 19

^{29 b} Gen. 19:16, 24, 29; 2 Pet. 2:6, 7

^{30 c} [Matt. 16:27]; 1 Cor. 1:7; [Col. 3:4; 2 Thess. 1:7]; 1 Pet.

1:7; 4:13; 1 John 2:28

^{31 d} Matt. 24:17, 18; Mark 13:15

⁹ possessions

^{32 e} Gen. 19:26

^{33 f} Matt. 10:39;

16:25; Mark 8:35;

Luke 9:24; John

12:25

^{34 g} Matt. 24:40, 41;

[1 Thess. 4:17] ¹ Or

people

and destroyed them all. ³⁰ Even so will it be in the day when the Son of Man ^e is revealed.

³¹ "In that day, he ^d who is on the housetop, and his ⁹ goods are in the house, let him not come down to take them away. And likewise the one who is in the field, let him not turn back. ^{32e} Remember Lot's wife. ^{33f} Whoever seeks to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life will preserve it. ^{34g} I tell you, in that night there will be two ¹ men in one bed: the one will be taken and the other will be left. ^{35h} Two women will be grinding together: the one will be taken and the other left. ³⁶ⁱ Two men will be in the field: the one will be taken and the other left."

³⁷ And they answered and said to Him, ⁱ "Where, Lord?"

So He said to them, "Wherever the body is, there the eagles will be gathered together."

Parable of the Woman and the Judge

18 Then He spoke a parable to them, that men ^a always ought to pray and not lose heart, ² saying: "There was in a certain city a judge who did not fear God nor ¹ regard man. ³ Now there was a

^{35 h} Matt. 24:40, 41 ^{36 i} NU, M omit v. 36. ^{37 j} Job 39:30;

Matt. 24:28

CHAPTER 18 ^{1 a} Luke 11:5-10; Rom. 12:12; [Eph. 6:18]; Col. 4:2; 1 Thess. 5:17 ^{2 i} respect

17:19 Jesus commended the **faith** that heals, as He did in 7:50; 8:50. The Samaritan apparently received more than physical healing.

17:20 In ancient Israel there was an expectation that the **kingdom of God** would come with cosmic signs. Such expectation was rooted in texts that linked God's coming with great signs (see Joel 2:28-32). Jesus' concept of the kingdom of God, however, was broader than the time of the final consummation.

17:21 **Within you** may also be translated "in your midst." This verse indicates that there was an aspect of kingdom promise involved in Jesus' first coming. The kingdom of God is among earthly kingdoms today; but one day the kingdom of God will swallow up all rival kingdoms (see Rev. 11:15). In vv. 22-37, Jesus makes it clear that the kingdom has two phases—one now and one to come. In the beginning of His kingdom on earth, God first prepares a King to rule; then He gathers a people for Him to rule over; then He gives the Ruler a realm in which to reign. The kingdom of God is not the same as the church, though the church is a part of the kingdom. The kingdom now is the presence of God alongside earthly kingdoms. The power of God is shown now in the distribution and work of the Holy Spirit (see Rom. 14:17; 1 Cor. 4:20). One day, however, Jesus will rule over all, and He will share that rule with His people (see Rev. 2:26, 27; 5:9, 10; 20:4-6).

17:24 **Lightning** is sudden and visible to all. Likewise, the sudden **day of the Son of Man** will be visible to all. When the Lord returns, He will come quickly and obviously. There will be no doubt as to what has occurred.

17:26 **In the days of Noah** people paid little attention to God and faced judgment as a result (see Gen. 6:5-13). The same will be the case at Jesus' return.

17:29 **destroyed them all:** The day of the Son of Man will be a time of total judgment, as were the days of Noah (v. 27) and Lot.

17:32 **Lot's wife** represents those who are attached to earthly things, those whose hearts are still in this world. Like Lot's wife, such people will perish (see Gen. 19:26).

17:33 **whoever loses his life will preserve it:** Those who invest their lives in advancing Christ's kingdom, even to the point of suffering and death, will receive great privilege and glory in the climactic reign of Christ (see Matt. 5:10-12; 19:27-30; 2 Tim. 2:12; Rev. 20:4-6).

17:34 **Taken** here suggests judgment, such as when the soldiers took Jesus to crucify Him. Verse 37 makes it clear that those who are taken are taken to final judgment.

17:35, 36 **one will be taken and the other left:** On that day, the Son of Man will divide humankind into two groups: those who are taken to judgment and those who are left to live and reign with Christ. Other commentators suggest the opposite: The righteous will be taken into God's kingdom. Either way, Jesus is clearly saying that a person's eternal destiny is not determined by being close to those who are righteous. Each person stands before God alone.

17:37 When the disciples asked **where** Jesus' return would take place, Jesus did not answer directly. **the eagles will be gathered:** The term for *eagles* here refers to vultures that gather over dead animals. When the judgment comes, it will be final and terrible, with the stench of death and the presence of vultures everywhere. No one will need to look for the place of judgment; the presence of the birds will reveal where the carcasses are.

18:2 The Romans allowed the Jews to manage most of their own affairs. This **judge** did not fear God, and was therefore probably a secular judge, not a religious one. The dishonest judge represents corrupted power.

18:3 The woman in this parable is a **widow**, dependent on society for her support. Luke often takes special note of the plight of widows (see 2:37; 4:25, 26; 7:12; 20:47; 21:2, 3; Acts 6:1-7; 9:39, 41).

widow in that city; and she came to him, saying, ²“Get justice for me from my adversary.” ⁴And he would not for a while; but afterward he said within himself, “Though I do not fear God nor regard man, ⁵yet because this widow troubles me I will ³avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.”

⁶Then the Lord said, “Hear what the unjust judge said. ⁷And ^cshall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them? ⁸I tell you ^dthat He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?”

Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector

⁹Also He spoke this parable to some ^ewho trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: ¹⁰“Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. ¹¹The Pharisee ^fstood and prayed thus with himself, ^g“God, I thank You that I am not like other men—extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. ¹²I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.” ¹³And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise ^hhis eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, “God, be merciful to me a sinner!” ¹⁴I tell you, this man went down to his house justified *rather*

3 ² *Avenge me on*
5 ^b Luke 11:8
3 *vindicate*
7 ^c Rev. 6:10
8 ^d Heb. 10:37;
[2 Pet. 3:8, 9]
9 ^e Prov. 30:12; Luke 10:29; 16:15
11 ^f Ps. 135:2 *g* Is.
1:15; 58:2; Rev. 3:17

14 ^h Job 22:29;
Matt. 23:12; Luke 14:11; [James 4:6;
1 Pet. 5:5] ⁴ *put down*
15 ⁱ Matt. 19:13-15;
Mark 10:13-16
16 ^j Matt. 18:3;
1 Cor. 14:20; 1 Pet. 2:2
17 ^k Matt. 18:3;
19:14; Mark 10:15
18 ^l Matt. 19:16-29;
Mark 10:17-30
19 ^m Ps. 86:5; 119:68
20 ⁿ Ex. 20:12-16;
Deut. 5:16-20; Mark 10:19; Rom. 13:9
^o Eph. 6:2; Col. 3:20
21 ^p Phil. 3:6
22 ^q Matt. 6:19, 20;
19:21; [1 Tim. 6:19]

than the other; ^hfor everyone who exalts himself will be ⁴humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

Christ Blesses the Children

Matt. 19:13-15; Mark 10:13-16

¹⁵i Then they also brought infants to Him that He might touch them; but when the disciples saw *it*, they rebuked them. ¹⁶But Jesus called them to *Him* and said, “Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for ^jof such is the kingdom of God. ¹⁷k Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter *it*.”

Rich Young Ruler

Matt. 19:16-26; Mark 10:17-27

¹⁸l Now a certain ruler asked Him, saying, “Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?”

¹⁹So Jesus said to him, “Why do you call Me good? No one *is* good but ^mOne, *that is*, God. ²⁰You know the commandments: ⁿ ‘Do not commit adultery,’ ‘Do not murder,’ ‘Do not steal,’ ‘Do not bear false witness,’ ^o ‘Honor your father and your mother.’”

²¹And he said, “All ^pthese things I have kept from my youth.”

²²So when Jesus heard these things, He said to him, “You still lack one thing. ^qSell all that you have and distribute to

Get justice: Perhaps the woman was asking for help concerning a financial problem.

18:5 The persistence of the widow is the lesson of the parable. God is a counterexample to the judge. God does not begrudge answering prayer. Jesus’ point is that if an insensitive judge will respond to the **continual** requests of a widow, God will certainly respond to the continual prayers of believers.

18:7 shall God not avenge His own elect: God will respond to injustice and religious persecution meted out to His people. In the end, He will avenge.

18:8 will He really find faith: Jesus’ question here is whether upon His return believers will still be looking for Him. Persecution can cause the faithful to lose their enthusiasm. In asking this question, Jesus is exhorting believers not to lose heart (v. 1).

be merciful

(Gk. *hilaskomai*) (18:13; Heb. 2:17) Strong’s #2433

The Greek word means “to be propitious” or “to be favorably inclined.” The term is used only one other time as a verb in the NT, and there it describes how Christ made reconciliation possible between God and humanity by His sacrifice on the Cross (Heb. 2:17). The noun form appears in 1 John 2:2; 4:10; in both places Jesus is called “the propitiation for our sins.” Jesus, as our sacrifice, propitiated God concerning our sins; that is, He appeased God. This tax collector, well aware of his sinful condition, was asking God for reconciliation.

18:11, 12 God, I thank You: The tone of the prayer reveals the Pharisee’s problem. He uses the pronoun *I* five times in two verses. The Pharisee’s attitude seems to be that God should be grateful to him for his commitment. The man obviously looked down on other people and was proud of his fasting and tithing.

18:13 This is an example of the humble spirit of repentance that Jesus commends. The **tax collector** knew that he could not say or bring anything to enhance his standing with God. He knew that only God’s mercy and grace, and not his own works, could deliver him.

18:14 Jesus identified the contrast between the Pharisee and the tax collector as one between pride and humility, between those who exalt and those who humble themselves. God will bring down the proud and will exalt the humble (1:52; 14:11).

18:15 they rebuked them: The disciples assumed that Jesus was too important and too busy for children. The parents’ desire for Jesus to **touch** the children was probably a request to bless them.

18:16 Jesus used the thoughtlessness of His disciples to make two points: (1) All people, even little children, are important to God. (2) The **kingdom of God** consists of those who respond to Him with the trust that a little child gives to a parent.

18:21 All these things I have kept: Like the Pharisee in vv. 11, 12, the ruler was certain of his own ability to live righteously.

18:22 Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor: This was a radical test of the ruler’s concern for others (12:33, 34). Jesus was determining whether the ruler’s treasure (see Matt. 6:19–21) lay with God or money (16:13). Jesus was not establishing a new requirement for being saved. He was examining the ruler’s orientation to God by directly confronting him with the very thing that was hindering him—namely, his wealth. By contrast, Zacchaeus was a wealthy man who responded to Jesus (19:8–10).

the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.”

²³ But when he heard this, he became very sorrowful, for he was very rich.

²⁴ And when Jesus saw that he became very sorrowful, He said, ^r“How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God! ²⁵ For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.”

²⁶ And those who heard it said, “Who then can be saved?”

²⁷ But He said, ^s“The things which are impossible with men are possible with God.”

Christ Will Reward Sacrifice

Matt. 19:27-29; Mark 10:28-30

²⁸ Then Peter said, “See, we have left ⁵ all and followed You.”

²⁹ So He said to them, “Assuredly, I say to you, ^tthere is no one who has left house or parents or brothers or wife or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God, ³⁰ ^vwho shall not receive many times more in this present time, and in the age to come eternal life.”

Christ Foretells His Death and Resurrection

Matt. 20:17-19; Mark 10:32-34

³¹ ^w Then He took the twelve aside and said to them, “Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and all things ^x that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of Man will be ⁶ accomplished. ³² For ^y He will be delivered to the Gentiles and will be mocked and insulted and spit upon.

²⁴ ^r Prov. 11:28; Matt. 19:23; Mark 10:23
²⁷ ^s Job 42:2; Jer. 32:17; Zech. 8:6; Matt. 19:26; Luke 1:37
²⁸ ^t Matt. 19:27
²⁹ ^u Deut. 33:9
³⁰ ^v Job 42:10
³¹ ^w Matt. 16:21; 17:22; 20:17; Mark 10:32; Luke 9:51
^x Ps. 22; [Is. 53]
^y fulfilled
³² ^y Matt. 26:67; 27:2, 29, 41; Mark 14:65; 15:1, 19, 20, 31; Luke 23:1 ☆; John 18:28; Acts 3:13

³⁴ ^z Mark 9:32; Luke 2:50; 9:45; [John 10:6; 12:16]
³⁵ ^a Matt. 20:29-34; Mark 10:46-52
³⁸ ^b Matt. 9:27
⁴² ^c Luke 17:19
⁴³ ^d Luke 5:26; Acts 4:21; 11:18

CHAPTER 19

¹ ^a Josh. 6:26; 1 Kin. 16:34

³³ They will scourge *Him* and kill Him. And the third day He will rise again.”

³⁴ ^z But they understood none of these things; this saying was hidden from them, and they did not know the things which were spoken.

Christ Heals Bartimaeus

Matt. 20:29-34; Mark 10:46-52

³⁵ ^a Then it happened, as He was coming near Jericho, that a certain blind man sat by the road begging. ³⁶ And hearing a multitude passing by, he asked what it meant. ³⁷ So they told him that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by. ³⁸ And he cried out, saying, “Jesus, ^b Son of David, have mercy on me!”

³⁹ Then those who went before warned him that he should be quiet; but he cried out all the more, “Son of David, have mercy on me!”

⁴⁰ So Jesus stood still and commanded him to be brought to Him. And when he had come near, He asked him, ⁴¹ saying, “What do you want Me to do for you?”

He said, “Lord, that I may receive my sight.”

⁴² Then Jesus said to him, “Receive your sight; ^c your faith has made you well.” ⁴³ And immediately he received his sight, and followed Him, ^d glorifying God. And all the people, when they saw it, gave praise to God.

Christ Abides with Zacchaeus

19 Then *Jesus* entered and passed through ^a Jericho. ² Now behold, *there was* a man named Zacchaeus who was a chief tax collector, and he was rich.

18:24, 25 **How hard it is for those who have riches:** A wealthy person is easily tempted to depend on earthly riches rather than on God. **easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle:** Jesus used this figure of speech to emphasize the difficulty of turning from wealth to find salvation. Because many Jewish people believed that wealth was evidence of God’s blessing, Jesus’ statements would have been shocking to His audience.

18:26, 27 **Who then can be saved:** Jesus answered this question by explaining that the change of heart one must experience in order to know God is **possible** only through Him. Any person who enters the kingdom does so only by the marvelous grace of God (see John 3:3).

18:28 **We have left all and followed You:** Peter wanted reassurance about the disciples’ sacrifice as compared to the ruler.

18:29, 30 **for the sake of the kingdom of God:** Jesus assured the disciples that the sacrifices they made in leaving everything to follow Him would be rewarded without measure in His kingdom. The disciples’ wise stewardship of their lives exemplifies the principle of 9:24; 17:33. In these verses there is a clear division of time into the **present time** and **the age to come**. Blessings abound in both periods for disciples. In the future will come the same eternal life the ruler asked about in v. 18. The quality of that life will more than compensate for the sacrificial investment of life today (9:24).

18:31 Though Jesus referred to the suffering He was going to face in **Jerusalem**, a suffering that was predicted **by the prophets**,

His disciples did not understand the implication of His words until after His resurrection. The theme of Jesus’ suffering is repeated in 24:25, 26, 44–47.

18:32, 33 The entire sequence of events of Jesus’ trial, crucifixion, and resurrection is predicted here in detail.

18:34 **understood none of these things:** The disciples may have understood something of what Jesus said, but they could not understand why God’s Chosen One would have to face such suffering. For those who were expecting the Promised One to be an exalted figure who would deliver God’s people, it would be very difficult to reconcile such an expectation with such terrible suffering. **was hidden:** The disciples did not understand the implications of Jesus’ suffering and death until it was explained to them in detail after Jesus was raised from the dead (24:25, 26, 44–47).

18:35 Jesus was nearing Jerusalem: **Jericho** was about 17 miles from the city.

18:38 Note the irony in this verse. The blind man recognized who **Jesus** was, the **Son of David**, more clearly than many people who were blessed with physical sight. The blind man’s cry for **mercy** demonstrated his belief that Jesus had the power to heal him.

18:43 The gracious work of God led to **praise**, not only from the one who was blessed but also from those who saw the blessing.

19:2 **Zacchaeus**, as **chief tax collector**, most likely bid for the right to collect taxes and then hired another tax collector to actually gather the money.

³And he sought to ^bsee who Jesus was, but could not because of the crowd, for he was of short stature. ⁴So he ran ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Him, for He was going to pass that way. ⁵And when Jesus came to the place, He looked up ¹and saw him, and said to him, “Zacchaeus, ²make haste and come down, for today I must stay at your house.” ⁶So he ³made haste and came down, and received Him joyfully. ⁷But when they saw *it*, they all ⁴complained, saying, ^c“He has gone to be a guest with a man who is a sinner.”

⁸Then Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, “Look, Lord, I give half of my goods to the ^dpoor; and if I have taken anything from anyone by ^efalse accusation, ^fI restore fourfold.”

⁹And Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, because ^ghe also is ^ha son of Abraham; ¹⁰ⁱfor the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.”

Christ Gives the Parable of the Ten Minas

¹¹Now as they heard these things, He spoke another parable, because He was near Jerusalem and because ^jthey thought the kingdom of God would appear immediately. ^{12k}Therefore He said: “A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return. ¹³So he called ten of his servants, delivered to them ten ⁵minas, and said to them, ‘Do business till I come.’ ^{14l}But his citizens hated him, and sent a delegation

³ ^b John 12:21
⁵ ¹ NU omits and saw him ² hurry
⁶ ³ hurried
⁷ ^c Matt. 9:11; Luke 5:30; 15:2
⁴ ^d grumbled
⁸ ^d [Ps. 41:1] ^e Luke 3:14 ^f Ex. 22:1; Lev. 6:5; Num. 5:7; 1 Sam. 12:3; 2 Sam. 12:6
⁹ ^g Luke 3:8; 13:16; [Rom. 4:16; Gal. 3:7]
^h [Luke 13:16]
¹⁰ ⁱ Matt. 18:11; [Luke 5:32; Rom. 5:8]
¹¹ ^j Acts 1:6
¹² ^k Matt. 25:14-30; Mark 13:34
¹³ ⁵ Gr. *mina*, same as Heb. *minah*, each worth about three months' salary
¹⁴ ^l [John 1:11]

¹⁷ ^m Matt. 25:21, 23
ⁿ Luke 16:10
²¹ ^o Matt. 25:24
⁶ ^a severe
²² ^p 2 Sam. 1:16; Job 15:6; [Matt. 12:37] ^q Matt. 25:26
²⁶ ^r Matt. 13:12; 25:29; Mark 4:25; Luke 8:18

after him, saying, ‘We will not have this man to reign over us.’

¹⁵“And so it was that when he returned, having received the kingdom, he then commanded these servants, to whom he had given the money, to be called to him, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading. ¹⁶Then came the first, saying, ‘Master, your mina has earned ten minas.’ ¹⁷And he said to him, ^m‘Well done, good servant; because you were ⁿfaithful in a very little, have authority over ten cities.’ ¹⁸And the second came, saying, ‘Master, your mina has earned five minas.’ ¹⁹Likewise he said to him, ‘You also be over five cities.’

²⁰“Then another came, saying, ‘Master, here is your mina, which I have kept put away in a handkerchief. ^{21o}For I feared you, because you are ⁶an austere man. You collect what you did not deposit, and reap what you did not sow.’ ²²And he said to him, ^p‘Out of your own mouth I will judge you, you wicked servant. ^qYou knew that I was an austere man, collecting what I did not deposit and reaping what I did not sow. ²³Why then did you not put my money in the bank, that at my coming I might have collected it with interest?’

²⁴“And he said to those who stood by, ‘Take the mina from him, and give *it* to him who has ten minas.’ ²⁵(But they said to him, ‘Master, he has ten minas.’) ²⁶‘For I say to you, ^rthat to everyone who has will be given; and from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him. ²⁷But bring here those enemies

19:4 A sycamore tree is similar to an oak tree, with a short trunk and wide lateral branches.

19:7 The crowd was not happy with Jesus’ choice of whom to honor with His fellowship. In the crowd’s opinion, Zacchaeus was a sinner. The term translated **complained** recalls the grumbling of 5:30 and 15:2, where the same issue was in view. Since tax collectors often took for themselves a high percentage of what they demanded, they were hated and despised in ancient Israel.

19:8 give half . . . restore fourfold: Zacchaeus determined to deal generously with others. In later Judaism, it was considered generous to give away up to 20 percent of one’s belongings; giving away more than this was considered dangerous. Legal restitution for extortion was also 20 percent (see Lev. 5:16; Num. 5:7).

19:11 Evidently the disciples believed that Jesus’ arrival in Jerusalem would signal the arrival of the **kingdom of God**. Jesus’ parable in vv. 12–27 was designed to dispel this misconception. Note that the disciples raised the same question in Acts 1:6.

19:12 This parable is similar to Matt. 25:14–30, but the occasion is probably different. The story parallels in part what happened to Archelaus, a son of Herod the Great, who came to power in 4 b.c. The people disliked Archelaus, and they appealed to Augustus Caesar not to give him authority. Jesus is not retelling the story of Archelaus, but the historical events meant that the parable had a well-known plot. A significant detail is that the kingdom is received during the journey away from the land to be ruled. This corresponds to Jesus’ leaving this earth to **receive the kingdom** following His resurrection.

19:13 Do business till I come: This detail shows that Jesus’ return would not be immediate (v. 11). The **servants** represent Jesus’ followers. They are to serve faithfully until Jesus returns. **ten minas:** Each servant received one mina, or about four months’ wages for the average worker. The master, symbolizing Jesus Himself, wants to see fruit, or dividends from his investment. Did his servants put the money they received to good use?

19:14 his citizens hated him: This is a separate group from the servants and refers to those who reject Jesus outright.

19:15 how much every man had gained: Having returned with authority to rule, the nobleman asks the servants to give an account of their labor in his absence.

19:16 The first servant earned **ten** times the amount he was given originally.

19:17 you were faithful . . . have authority over ten cities: Faithfulness is commended and rewarded with greater opportunity. The authority given to the servant represents a role in administering Jesus’ kingdom (see 1 Cor. 6:2, 3; Rev. 2:26–28; 5:9, 10; 20:1–6).

19:20–23 I feared you: The unfaithful servant’s excuse for failure reflects a negative view of the nobleman. If the servant had really feared the master, he would have done something with the money. Even putting the **money in the bank** would have yielded **interest**. As it was, the servant failed to respond to the nobleman at all or even to understand him.

19:26 what he has will be taken away from him: Unfaithfulness results in loss of reward (see Rev. 3:11).

of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, and lay *them* before me.”

The Triumphal Entry

Matt. 21:1-9; Mark 11:1-10; John 12:12-19

²⁸When He had said this, ^sHe went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. ²⁹And it came to pass, when He drew near to ⁷Bethphage and ^uBethany, at the mountain called ^vOlivet, *that* He sent two of His disciples, ³⁰saying, “Go into the village opposite *you*, where as you enter you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever sat. Loose it and bring *it here*. ³¹And if anyone asks you, ‘Why are you loosing *it*?’ thus you shall say to him, ‘Because the Lord has need of *it*.’”

³²So those who were sent went their way and found *it* just ^was He had said to them. ³³But as they were loosing the colt, the owners of it said to them, “Why are you loosing the colt?”

³⁴And they said, “The Lord has need of him.” ³⁵Then they brought him to Jesus. ^xAnd they threw their own clothes on the colt, and they set Jesus on him. ³⁶And as He went, *many* spread their clothes on the road.

³⁷Then, as He was now drawing near the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to ^yrejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works they had seen, ³⁸saying:

²⁸ ^s Mark 10:32
²⁹ ^v Matt. 21:1; Mark 11:1
^u Matt. 26:6; John 12:1
^v John 8:1; Acts 1:12
⁷ M Bethphage
³² ^w Luke 22:13
³⁵ ^x 2 Kin. 9:13; Matt. 21:7; Mark 11:7
³⁷ ^y Luke 13:17; 18:43

³⁸ ^z Ps. 118:26 ☆; Luke 13:35
^a Luke 2:14; [Eph. 2:14]
⁴⁰ ^b Hab. 2:11
⁴¹ ^c Is. 53:3; John 11:35
⁴² ^d Ps. 95:7, 8; Heb. 3:13
^e [Luke 1:77-79; Acts 10:36] ^f [Rom. 5:1]
⁴³ ^g Is. 29:3, 4; Jer. 6:3, 6; Luke 21:20
⁴⁴ ^h 1 Kin. 9:7, 8; Mic. 3:12
ⁱ Matt. 24:2; Mark 13:2; Luke 21:6
^j [Dan. 9:24; Luke 1:68, 78; 1 Pet. 2:12]
⁴⁵ ^k Mal. 3:1 ☆; Matt. 21:12, 13; Mark 11:11, 15-17; John 2:13-16
^o NU were selling, saying
⁴⁶ ^l Is. 56:7
^m Jer. 7:11
ⁿ NU shall be
⁴⁷ ⁿ Luke 21:37; 22:53
^o Mark 11:18; Luke 20:19; John 7:19; 8:37

^z “*Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the LORD!*”

^a Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!”

³⁹And some of the Pharisees called to Him from the crowd, “Teacher, rebuke Your disciples.”

⁴⁰But He answered and said to them, “I tell you that if these should keep silent, ^bthe stones would immediately cry out.”

⁴¹Now as He drew near, He saw the city and ^cwept over it, ⁴²saying, “If you had known, even you, especially in this ^dyour day, the things *that* ^emake for your ^fpeace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. ⁴³For days will come upon you when your enemies will ^gbuild an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side, ⁴⁴^hand level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and ⁱthey will not leave in you one stone upon another, ^jbecause you did not know the time of your visitation.”

Cleansing the Temple

Matt. 21:12, 13; Mark 11:15-17

⁴⁵^kThen He went into the temple and began to drive out those who ⁸bought and sold in it, ⁴⁶saying to them, “It is written, ^l*‘My house ⁹is a house of prayer,’* but you have made it a ^m*‘den of thieves.’*”

⁴⁷And He ⁿwas teaching daily in the temple. But ^othe chief priests, the scribes,

19:29, 30 Jesus was in control of the events of the last week of His life, even though those events led to His death. Here He prepared to enter the city riding a **colt**. **Bethphage** and **Bethany** were located just east of Jerusalem, within two miles of the city. The Mount of Olives was in a range of hills just outside of Jerusalem, directly across from the temple.

19:31-34 the Lord has need of it: Such borrowing of an animal was not as strange as it may appear. There was an ancient custom by which a political or religious leader could commandeer property for short-term use. Jesus was entering Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread, festivals that commemorated the great act of God’s deliverance of the nation. Such feasts were often celebrated at this time with the hope that God’s decisive deliverance would come.

19:35 The **clothes** were probably their outer garments. The scene recalls the declaration of Jehu as king in 2 Kin. 9:13. The ride on the **colt** or mule resembles the events of 1 Kin. 1:33, in which David made the new king, Solomon, ride to Gihon on a mule. Zechariah had prophesied that the coming King would ride into Jerusalem humbly on a donkey (Zech. 9:9). However, Luke does not emphasize these connections with OT prophecy as Matthew and John do (see Matt. 21:5; John 12:15).

19:36 spread their clothes on the road: The actions here indicate that a dignitary was being greeted (see 2 Kin. 9:13). This is like “rolling out the red carpet” today.

19:38 This verse is a citation of Ps. 118:26, with the title of **King** added to it. The disciples recognized that Jesus was the promised King sent from God. He is the One who brings **peace** to the relationship between people and God (1:78, 79).

19:41 wept over it: Jesus knew that so many of the people of Israel had rejected Him that the nation would suffer judgment, in the form of the terrible destruction that came on Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

19:43 build an embankment: This is a prediction of Rome’s successful siege of Jerusalem under Titus. The details reflect a divine judgment for covenant unfaithfulness, similar to the Babylonian destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. (see Is. 29:1-4; Jer. 6:6-21; 8:13-22; Ezek. 4:1-3).

19:44 level you, and your children: The totality of the destruction is made clear in this further description of the siege of Jerusalem. Even children would die, and buildings would be destroyed.

19:45 Jesus’ entrance into Jerusalem begins the final section of Luke’s Gospel. Jesus cleansed the **temple** in anger after seeing that the place of prayer had become an excuse for corrupt commerce. Merchants were selling sacrificial animals in the outer court of the temple (the court of the Gentiles) at exorbitant prices. Money changers were making an excessive profit exchanging currencies for the temple shekel. John records a temple cleansing in John 2:13-22, but it is not clear whether that event is the same as this one in Luke. Since John places the event early in Jesus’ ministry, Jesus might have cleansed the temple twice. The synoptic Gospels place the cleansing of the temple in the last week of Jesus’ ministry (Matt. 21:12-17; Mark 11:15-19). Some have suggested that John purposely placed the cleansing of the temple out of chronological order as a foretaste of Jesus’ judgment on contemporary religious practices.

19:46 The holy place of worship had become a site for taking economic advantage of people. Jesus’ remark about a **house of prayer** alludes to Is. 56:7. His comment regarding the **den of thieves** comes from Jer. 7:11.

19:47 Jesus’ actions at the temple, the most sacred location for Jews, caused the Jewish religious leaders to strengthen their resolve **to destroy Him**.

and the leaders of the people sought to destroy Him, ⁴⁸and were unable to do anything; for all the people were very attentive to ^phear Him.

Religious Leaders Question Christ's Authority

Matt. 21:23-27; Mark 11:27-33

20 Now ^ait happened on one of those days, as He taught the people in the temple and preached the gospel, *that* the chief priests and the scribes, together with the elders, confronted *Him* ²and spoke to Him, saying, “Tell us, ^bby what authority are You doing these things? Or who is he who gave You this authority?” ³But He answered and said to them, “I also will ask you one thing, and answer Me: ⁴The ^cbaptism of John—was it from heaven or from men?”

⁵And they reasoned among themselves, saying, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ He will say, ‘Why ¹then did you not believe him?’ ⁶But if we say, ‘From men,’ all the people will stone us, ^dfor they are persuaded that John was a prophet.” ⁷So they answered that they did not know where *it was* from.

⁸And Jesus said to them, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things.”

Parable of the Vineyard Owner

Matt. 21:33-44; Mark 12:1-11

⁹Then He began to tell the people this parable: “A certain man planted a vineyard, leased it to ²vinedressers, and went into a far country for a long time. ¹⁰Now at ³vintage-time he ^fsent a servant to the

48 ^p Luke 21:38

CHAPTER 20

1 ^a Matt. 21:23-27; Mark 11:27-33
2 ^b Acts 4:7; 7:27
4 ^c John 1:26, 31
5 ¹ NU, M omit *then*
6 ^d Matt. 14:5; 21:26; Mark 6:20; Luke 7:24-30
9 ^e Ps. 80:8; Matt. 21:33-46; Mark 12:1-12 ² *tenant farmers*
10 ² 2 Kin. 17:13, 14; 2 Chr. 36:15, 16; [Acts 7:52; 1 Thess. 2:15] ³ Lit. *the season*

14 ^g [Heb. 1:1-3]
^h Matt. 27:21-23
ⁱ John 11:47, 48
15 ^j Luke 23:33; Acts 2:22, 23; 3:15
16 ^k [John 1:11-13]; Rom. 11:1, 11; 1 Cor. 6:15; Gal. 2:17; 3:21; 6:14
17 ^l Ps. 118:22 ^m; Matt. 21:42; 1 Pet. 2:7, 8
18 ^m Is. 8:14, 15
ⁿ [Dan. 2:34, 35, 44, 45]; Matt. 21:44
19 ⁴ M *were afraid—for*

vinedressers, that they might give him some of the fruit of the vineyard. But the vinedressers beat him and sent *him* away empty-handed. ¹¹Again he sent another servant; and they beat him also, treated *him* shamefully, and sent *him* away empty-handed. ¹²And again he sent a third; and they wounded him also and cast *him* out.

¹³“Then the owner of the vineyard said, ‘What shall I do? I will send my beloved son. Probably they will respect *him* when they see him.’ ¹⁴But when the vinedressers saw him, they reasoned among themselves, saying, ‘This is the ^gheir. Come, ^hlet us kill him, that the inheritance may be ⁱours.’ ¹⁵So they cast him out of the vineyard and ^jkilled *him*. Therefore what will the owner of the vineyard do to them? ¹⁶He will come and destroy those vinedressers and give the vineyard to ^kothers.”

And when they heard *it* they said, “Certainly not!”

¹⁷Then He looked at them and said, “What then is this that is written:

*^l‘The stone which the builders rejected
Has become the chief cornerstone’?*

¹⁸Whoever falls on that stone will be ^mbroken; but ⁿon whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder.”

Herodians Question Tribute Money

Matt. 21:45, 46; 22:15-22; Mark 12:12-17

¹⁹And the chief priests and the scribes that very hour sought to lay hands on Him, but they ⁴feared the people—for

20:4 Here as throughout the Gospel of Luke, the ministries of **John** the Baptist and Jesus are linked (see also 1:5–80; 3:10–18; 7:18–35). Jesus’ question presented the Pharisees with a dilemma. If they recognized John’s ministry as coming **from heaven**, they would be recognizing the same divine origin of Jesus’ similar “independent,” Spirit-directed ministry. But if the Pharisees denied that John was sent by God, they risked angering the majority of the people, who believed that John’s ministry was divinely directed (vv. 5, 6).

20:9 In a variation of Is. 5:1–7, the **vineyard** here represents the promise made to Israel, while the **vinedressers** represent the nation of Israel. The **man who planted the vineyard** represents God. The imagery of the vineyard recalls the subject of Jesus’ parable in 13:6–9. This parable is also found in Matt. 21:33–44 and Mark 12:1–12, with some slight variations of detail in each account.

20:10 **beat him . . . sent him away empty-handed:** The treatment of the servant in this parable represents the treatment of the OT prophets by the people of Israel. During the time of the prophets, the nation of Israel produced no fruit; disobedience abounded (see 11:49–51; 13:34; Acts 7:51–53).

20:13 **I will send my beloved son:** This refers to Jesus (3:21, 22; 9:35).

20:14 **This is the heir . . . let us kill him:** The vinedressers hoped that with the son gone, the inheritance would fall to those who worked the property, a transfer that was possible in the ancient world. It should be noted that the details of this parable do not

represent the thinking of those who crucified Jesus. The leaders of Israel thought they were stopping someone who was dangerous to Judaism, not that they were going to inherit Jesus’ kingdom.

20:15 **cast him out . . . killed him:** The parallel here of course is Jesus’ death. **what will the owner of the vineyard do to them:** the parallel question is “What will God the Father do to those who reject and murder His Son?”

20:16 **come and destroy those vinedressers:** God will exercise judgment on those who killed His Son. He will **give the vineyard to others**. Jesus is alluding to the inclusion of Gentiles in the promise of God’s kingdom.

20:17 **The stone which the builders rejected:** This passage, taken from Ps. 118:22, pictures the exaltation of the Righteous One, Jesus, after His rejection. Opposition will not stop God from making the One who is rejected the center of His work of salvation.

20:18 Jesus is the stone. Anyone who goes against the stone will be destroyed. Jesus’ statement is similar to a late Jewish proverb: “If the stone falls on the pot, alas for the pot; if the pot falls on the stone, alas for the pot.” The imagery of Jesus as a stone is also found in 1 Pet. 2:4–8, where Peter compares the believers to living stones built into a spiritual temple for the Lord. **chief cornerstone:** This could be the large stone which joins the foundation of two walls of a building, or else the capstone at the top of a doorway.

20:19 The Jewish religious leaders wanted Jesus removed because of His direct challenges to them. But because they **feared** the

they knew He had spoken this parable against them.

²⁰ So they watched *Him*, and sent spies who pretended to be righteous, that they might seize on His words, in order to deliver Him to the power and the authority of the governor.

²¹ Then they asked Him, saying, *p*“Teacher, we know that You say and teach rightly, and You do not show personal favoritism, but teach the way of God in truth: ²² Is it lawful for us to pay taxes to Caesar or not?”

²³ But He perceived their craftiness, and said to them, ⁵ “Why do you test Me? ²⁴ Show Me a denarius. Whose image and inscription does it have?”

They answered and said, “Caesar’s.”

²⁵ And He said to them, ⁴ “Render ⁶ therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.”

²⁶ But they could not catch Him in His words in the presence of the people. And they marveled at His answer and kept silent.

Sadducees Question Resurrection

Matt. 22:23-32; Mark 12:18-27

²⁷ Then some of the Sadducees, ⁵ who deny that there is a resurrection, came to *Him* and asked Him, ²⁸ saying: “Teacher, Moses wrote to us *that* if a man’s brother dies, having a wife, and he dies without children, his brother should take his wife

²⁰ ^o Matt. 22:15
²¹ ^p Matt. 22:16;
 Mark 12:14
²³ ⁵ NU omits *Why do you test Me?*
²⁵ ⁴ Matt. 17:24-27;
 Rom. 13:7; [1 Pet.
 2:13-17] ⁶ Pay
²⁷ ^r Matt. 22:23-
 33; Mark 12:18-27
⁵ Acts 23:6, 8

³⁰ ⁷ NU omits the rest of v. 30.
³¹ ⁸ NU, *M* also left no children
³⁵ ^r Phil. 3:11
³⁶ ^u [1 Cor. 15:42,
 49, 52; 1 John 3:2]
^v Rom. 8:23
³⁷ ^w Ex. 3:1-6, 15;
 Acts 7:30-32
³⁸ ^x [Rom. 6:10, 11;
 14:8, 9; Heb. 11:16]
⁴¹ ^y Matt. 22:41-46;
 Mark 12:35-37

and raise up offspring for his brother. ²⁹ Now there were seven brothers. And the first took a wife, and died without children. ³⁰ And the second ⁷ took her as wife, and he died childless. ³¹ Then the third took her, and in like manner the seven ⁸ also; and they left no children, and died. ³² Last of all the woman died also. ³³ Therefore, in the resurrection, whose wife does she become? For all seven had her as wife.”

³⁴ Jesus answered and said to them, “The sons of this age marry and are given in marriage. ³⁵ But those who are ¹ counted worthy to attain that age, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage; ³⁶ nor can they die anymore, for ^u they are equal to the angels and are sons of God, ^v being sons of the resurrection. ³⁷ But even Moses showed in the *burning bush passage* that the dead are raised, when he called the Lord ^w “*the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.*” ³⁸ For He is not the God of the dead but of the living, for ^x all live to Him.”

Christ Questions the Scribes

Matt. 22:41-23:14; Mark 12:35-40

³⁹ Then some of the scribes answered and said, “Teacher, You have spoken well.” ⁴⁰ But after that they dared not question Him anymore.

⁴¹ And He said to them, ^y “How can they say that the Christ is the Son of

reaction of the crowd, they waited for a more favorable time to do away with Jesus.

20:20 The religious leaders **watched** Jesus very closely. They **pretended to be righteous**, which in this context means that they tried to look sincere. They wanted to trap Jesus into saying something that would make Him look like a political revolutionary, then they planned to hand Him over to the Roman **governor** Pilate. **20:22** **Is it lawful for us to pay taxes to Caesar or not:** This question concerned the poll tax to Rome, which was different from the taxes collected by the tax collectors. The poll tax was a citizenship tax paid directly to Rome, as an indication that Israel was subject to that Gentile nation. The Pharisees’ query was a trick question. If Jesus answered yes, the people would be angry because He respected a foreign power. If He answered no, He could be charged with sedition.

20:24 **Whose image . . . does it have:** Jesus’ reply was clever. He had the Pharisees pull out a coin, indicating that they already recognized Roman sovereignty by using Roman coins themselves. A denarius was a silver coin that usually had a picture of a Roman ruler on it. The coins of Tiberius were inscribed **TIBERIUS CAESAR, AUGUSTUS, SON OF DIVINE AUGUSTUS**. On some of them the reverse bore an image of Tiberius’s mother Livia, portrayed as a goddess of peace with the inscription **HIGH PRIEST**.

20:25 The Pharisees could not twist Jesus’ wise reply into a charge of sedition (23:2). According to Jesus, **Caesar**, as the ruler of the empire, had the right to collect taxes. Yet at the same time, **God** should be honored above any ruler. Honoring God does not make a person exempt from supporting the basic functions of the state (see Rom. 13:1-7), for all figures of authority have been ordained by God.

20:27 **The Sadducees**, the Pharisees, and the Essenes were three major divisions in first-century Judaism. The Sadducees rejected

the oral traditions that the Pharisees so stringently obeyed. Instead they based their teaching only on the first five books of the OT, the books of Moses. They denied that there could be a **resurrection**, and they contrived a ludicrous example to suggest that the doctrine was impossible.

20:28 In Judaism, a childless widow would marry the **brother** of her late husband, according to the custom known as levirate marriage (see Deut. 25:5; Ruth 4:1-12). The law was designed to perpetuate the name of a man who died childless.

20:34, 35 Jesus contrasted life in the current age with life in the age to come. Because marriage will not be a part of the age to come, the Sadducees’ absurd example (vv. 28-33) does not apply. Jesus upheld the doctrine of resurrection in His reply, speaking of both the **age** to come and the **resurrection**, so that the two concepts were clearly associated. Jesus also noted that only those **counted worthy** would receive the benefits of the age to come.

20:36 **equal to the angels . . . sons of God:** The everlasting life of a resurrected person makes that person something like an angel. Paul explains further that in the resurrection we will be given resurrection bodies similar to Christ’s (see 1 Cor. 15:25-58). This will be a new experience that will not necessarily parallel experiences on this earth, such as marriage.

20:38 **The God of the . . . living:** Jesus points out that if God is the God of the patriarchs, then they must be raised and alive. God has a relationship only with those who are alive. Jesus’ citation of the Law (see Ex. 3:1-6, 15) probably made an impact on the Sadducees, who revered the teachings of the books of Moses.

20:41, 42 Here Jesus takes His turn at raising a theological issue. The dilemma He poses is how the Messiah (the Hebrew word for **Christ**) could be called the **Son of David**, when David himself gave Him the title **Lord**. **my Lord:** This is a citation from Ps. 110:1 (see also

David? ⁴²Now David himself said in the Book of Psalms:

^z“The LORD said to my Lord,
“Sit at My right hand,

⁴³ Till I make Your enemies Your
footstool.”’

⁴⁴Therefore David calls Him ‘Lord’;
^ahow is He then his Son?”

^{45b}Then, in the hearing of all the people, He said to His disciples, ^{46c}“Beware of the scribes, who desire to go around in long robes, ^dlove greetings in the market-places, the best seats in the synagogues, and the best places at feasts, ^{47e}who devour widows’ houses, and for a ^fpretense make long prayers. These will receive greater condemnation.”

Christ Teaches on the Widow’s Mites

Mark 12:41-44

21 And He looked up ^aand saw the rich putting their gifts into the treasury, ²and He saw also a certain ^bpoor widow putting in two ^cmites. ¹ ³So He said, “Truly I say to you ^dthat this poor widow has put in more than all; ⁴for all these out of their abundance have put in offerings ²for God, but she out of her poverty put in ^eall the livelihood that she had.”

The Disciples’ Two Questions

Matt. 24:1-3; Mark 13:1-4

^{5f}Then, as some spoke of the temple, how it was ³adorned with beautiful

⁴² ^zPs. 110:1 ☆;
Acts 2:34, 35
⁴⁴ ^a Acts 13:22, 23;
Rom. 1:3; 9:4, 5
⁴⁵ ^b Matt. 23:1-7;
Mark 12:38-40
⁴⁶ ^c Matt. 23:5
^d Luke 11:43; 14:7
⁴⁷ ^e Matt. 23:14
^f [Matt. 6:5, 6]

CHAPTER 21

¹ ^a Mark 12:41-44
² ^b [2 Cor. 6:10]
^c Mark 12:42 ¹ Gr.
lepta, very small
copper coins
³ ^d [2 Cor. 8:12]
⁴ ^e [2 Cor. 8:12]
⁵ ^f NU omits for God
⁵ ^f Matt. 24:1; Mark
13:1 ³ decorated

⁶ ^g Is. 64:10, 11;
Lam. 2:6-9; Mic.
3:12; Luke 19:41-44
⁸ ^h Matt. 24:4;
Mark 13:5; Eph. 5:6;
2 Thess. 2:3; [1 John
4:1] ⁴ NU omits
Therefore ⁵ follow
⁹ ⁱ Rev. 6:4
¹⁰ ^j Matt. 24:7
¹¹ ^k Rev. 6:12
¹² ^l Mark 13:9; John
16:2; [Rev. 2:10]
^m Acts 4:3; 5:18;
12:4; 16:24 ⁿ Acts
25:23 ^o 1 Pet. 2:13
¹³ ^p [Phil. 1:12-14,
28; 2 Thess. 1:5]
¹⁴ ^q Matt. 10:19;
Mark 13:11; Luke
12:11 ⁶ say in
defense
¹⁵ ^r Acts 6:10
⁷ withstand
¹⁶ ^s Mic. 7:6; Mark
13:12

stones and donations, He said, ⁶“These things which you see—the days will come in which ^gnot one stone shall be left upon another that shall not be thrown down.”

⁷So they asked Him, saying, “Teacher, but when will these things be? And what sign *will there be* when these things are about to take place?”

Signs of Christ’s Coming

Matt. 24:4-13; Mark 13:5-13

⁸ And He said: ^h“Take heed that you not be deceived. For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am He,’ and, ‘The time has drawn near.’ ⁴Therefore do not ⁵go after them. ⁹But when you hear of ⁱwars and commotions, do not be terrified; for these things must come to pass first, but the end *will not come* immediately.”

^{10j}Then He said to them, “Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. ¹¹And there will be great ^kearthquakes in various places, and famines and pestilences; and there will be fearful sights and great signs from heaven. ^{12l}But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you and persecute *you*, delivering *you* up to the synagogues and ^mprisons. ⁿYou will be brought before kings and rulers ^ofor My name’s sake. ¹³But ^pit will turn out for you as an occasion for testimony. ^{14q}Therefore settle *it* in your hearts not to meditate beforehand on what you will ⁶answer; ¹⁵for I will give you a mouth and wisdom ^rwhich all your adversaries will not be able to contradict or ⁷resist. ^{16s}You will

22:69; Acts 2:30–36). The Messiah was David’s descendant and yet David gave Him the respect due to a superior, the reverse of what normally occurred in ancient times. Jesus was not denying the title *Son of David* to the Messiah, He was simply noting that the title *Lord*, meaning “Master,” is more central. Even David one day will bow at the Messiah’s feet and confess that He is Lord (see Phil. 2:10).

20:46, 47 devour widows’ houses: Jesus noted the scribes’ hypocrisy and their taking advantage of others. Such activity will be judged.

21:1 There were various places around the temple where people could leave contributions. Thirteen such locations were in the forecourt. The receptacles were made in the shape of trumpets. Each represented a different kind of offering. There was also a **treasury** room near the court of women.

21:2 The **poor widow** contributed **two mites**, small copper coins which were the smallest currency available.

21:3 **has put in more than all:** Jesus contrasted the giving of the rich (v. 1) with the sacrifice of the poor widow.

21:4 **put in all the livelihood that she had:** The widow did not refuse to give even when she needed more to live on. Her devotion to God through her contributions was her first priority (see 2 Cor. 8:1–5; 9:6–9).

21:5 **how it was adorned:** The temple was refurbished under Herod the Great with new foundation walls and enlarged areas outside the temple. Great stones of 12 to 60 feet in length were used. The entire effort took from 20 B.C. to around A.D. 64. Thus the refurbishing was in progress during Jesus’ visit, around A.D. 30. The **donations** were gift offerings for the decoration of the temple and

included gold- and silver-plated gates, grape vine clusters, and Babylonian linen tapestries which hung from the temple veil. Even Tacitus, the Roman historian, called it an “immensely opulent temple.”

21:6 **not one stone:** Jesus noted that the beautiful place of worship was temporary and would be destroyed. He was referring to the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, which itself was a picture of the destruction of the last days.

21:8 **Take heed:** The first century and early second century were times of great messianic fervor in Judaism, as the Israelites sought freedom from Roman rule. Many people claimed to be the Messiah. Jesus warned His disciples not to be fooled by such claims.

21:11 A wide variety of cosmic and natural events will occur before the end times. Verses 8–11 give signs before the end, while vv. 12–19 speak of events that will happen before the signs of vv. 8–11.

21:12 **persecute you . . . for My name’s sake:** Jesus predicted the arrests and suffering that the disciples would face as a result of identifying with Him. Some of these events are detailed in Acts 3–5; 7; 21–28. The reference to **synagogues, kings, and rulers** indicates that all nations would share responsibility for the massacre of the disciples.

21:13 **an occasion for testimony:** Suffering can be an opportunity to advance the kingdom of God. This is why those who endure suffering and persecution are called blessed (Matt. 5:10–12).

21:15 **I will give you a mouth and wisdom:** Jesus promises the disciples that the Holy Spirit will assist them in giving testimony (12:11, 12). The initial fulfillment of this promise is found in Acts 4:8–14; 7:54; 26:24–32.

21:16 **You will be betrayed:** The persecution of the disciples would

be betrayed even by parents and brothers, relatives and friends; and they will put ^csome of you to death. ¹⁷ And ^uyou will be hated by all for My name's sake. ^{18 v} But not a hair of your head shall be lost. ¹⁹ By your patience possess your souls.

Destruction of Jerusalem

Matt. 24:15-21; Mark 13:14-19

^{20 w} “But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near. ²¹ Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, let those who are in the midst of her depart, and let not those who are in the country enter her. ²² For these are the days of vengeance, that ^xall things which are written may be fulfilled. ^{23 y} But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! For there will be great distress in the land and wrath upon this people. ²⁴ And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles ^zuntil the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.

The Second Coming

Matt. 24:29-31; Mark 13:24-27

^{25 a} “And there will be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars; and on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring; ²⁶ men's

¹⁶ ^t Acts 7:59; 12:2
¹⁷ ^u Matt. 10:22
¹⁸ ^v Matt. 10:30; Luke 12:7
²⁰ ^w Matt. 24:15; Mark 13:14
²² ^x Is. 63:4; [Dan. 9:24-27]; Hos. 9:7; [Zech. 11:1]
²³ ^y Matt. 24:19
²⁴ ^z [Dan. 9:27; 12:7]
²⁵ ^a Is. 13:9, 10, 13; Matt. 24:29; Mark 13:24; [2 Pet. 3:10-12]

²⁶ ^b Matt. 24:29
²⁷ ^c Dan. 7:13; [Matt. 16:27; 24:30; 26:64]; Mark 13:26; Rev. 1:7; 14:14
²⁸ ^d [Rom. 8:19, 23]
²⁹ ^e Matt. 24:32; Mark 13:28
³³ ^f Is. 51:6; Matt. 24:35; Heb. 1:10, 11; [2 Pet. 3:7, 10, 12] ^g Is. 40:8; Luke 16:17; 1 Pet. 1:24, 25
³⁴ ^h Matt. 24:42-44; Mark 4:19; Luke 12:40, 45; Rom. 13:13; 1 Thess. 5:6; 1 Pet. 4:7 ⁱ Luke 8:14 ^h dissipation
³⁵ ⁱ 1 Thess. 5:2; [2 Pet. 3:10]; Rev. 3:3; 16:15
³⁶ ^k Matt. 24:42; 25:13; Mark 13:33; Luke 12:40 ^j Luke 18:1; [Eph. 6:18]; Col. 4:2; 1 Thess. 5:17

hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth, ^bfor the powers of the heavens will be shaken. ²⁷ Then they will see the Son of Man ^ccoming in a cloud with power and great glory. ²⁸ Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because ^dyour redemption draws near.”

Parable of the Fig Tree

Matt. 24:32-35; Mark 13:28-31

^{29 e} Then He spoke to them a parable: “Look at the fig tree, and all the trees. ³⁰ When they are already budding, you see and know for yourselves that summer is now near. ³¹ So you also, when you see these things happening, know that the kingdom of God is near. ³² Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all things take place. ³³ Heaven and earth will pass away, but My ^gwords will by no means pass away.

Warning to Watch for His Coming

Matt. 24:36-44; Mark 13:32-37

³⁴ “But ^htake heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with ⁸carousing, drunkenness, and ⁱcares of this life, and that Day come on you unexpectedly. ³⁵ For ^jit will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth. ^{36 k} Watch therefore, and ^lpray

be painful and severe. Identifying with Jesus often means risking the rejection and denunciation of family, and in some cases martyrdom. **21:19 possess your souls:** Patient allegiance to Jesus leads to eternal life (9:24).

21:20 A siege would be the sign that the end was near for **Jerusalem** and the temple. The other synoptic Gospels (see Matt. 24:15; Mark 13:14) allude to the abomination of **desolation** in Dan. 9:25–27; 11:31. This passage compares the desecration of the temple to what occurred in 167 B.C., when Antiochus Epiphanes erected an altar to Zeus in the temple. A similar desecration of the temple site occurred during the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

21:22 days of vengeance: Jerusalem had become an object of divine judgment because of its unfaithfulness. Jesus warned of this consequence throughout His ministry (13:9, 34, 35; 19:41–44). The premise for such judgment goes back to the curses of the Mosaic covenant and the OT prophets' warnings of coming judgment (see Deut. 28:49–57; 32:35; Jer. 6:1–8; 26:1–9; Hos. 9:7).

21:24 fall . . . be led away captive: This verse elaborates on Jerusalem's fall. There would be death and captivity, just as the nation experienced under the Assyrians and Babylonians. **times of the Gentiles:** There would be a period in God's salvation plan when Gentiles would be dominant, of which the fall of Jerusalem would be a clear sign. The fact that the time of the Gentiles will run its course also suggests that Israel will once again play a significant role in God's plan (see Rom. 9–11).

21:25, 26 signs: Jesus shifts His focus to the end times with His second mention of cosmic turmoil (see v. 11; Is. 24:18–20; 34:4; Ezek. 32:7, 8; Joel 2:30, 31). **men's hearts failing them:** The terror of cosmic chaos will cause apprehension about what is coming.

21:27 the Son of Man coming in a cloud: The reference here is to the authoritative return of Jesus. The allusion to the cloud and the figure comes from Dan. 7:13, 14, with its picture of One who receives

authority from the Ancient of Days. Jesus viewed this text in terms of an apocalyptic deliverance. The image of the cloud is important, since God is identified as riding the clouds in the OT (see Ex. 34:5; Ps. 104:3). **with power and great glory:** The Son of Man has divine authority to judge the world.

21:28 lift up your heads . . . redemption draws near: This is the sign of the deliverance of Jesus' followers. The Son of Man acts on behalf of those who have suffered in His name.

21:29, 30 The tender buds that appear every spring on trees show that summer is approaching; the appearance of the signs Jesus describes will warn of the coming of the end times.

21:31 when you see . . . know: The cosmic signs and earthly chaos are indications that the decisive and consummate rule of God is approaching.

21:32 The most likely meaning of this verse is that when the end comes, it will come quickly. The events of the end times will fall within one **generation** from start to finish (17:22–24). The word *generation* can also refer to a race. Thus it may mean that the Jews will continue to exist as a people until the end.

21:33 by no means pass away: The disciples had the assurance that Jesus' promises concerning the end times were more certain than creation itself. God made an unconditional and unilateral covenant, and He will keep it (see Gen. 12:1–3; 15:18–21; Ps. 89).

21:34 Though the events of the end times may not come to pass for a long time, believers should continue to look for their arrival. The **Day** of Jesus' return should not take us by surprise. We should live as if it is imminent.

21:36 Watch . . . pray: Jesus encouraged His disciples to be persistent in prayer and faith, looking for the day when the **Son of Man** exonerates the faithful in the judgment, so that they are able **to stand** before Him (see 1 John 2:28).

always that you may ⁹be counted ^mworthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and ⁿto stand before the Son of Man.”

³⁷ And in the daytime He was teaching in the temple, but ^pat night He went out and stayed on the mountain called Olivet. ³⁸ Then early in the morning all the people came to Him in the temple to hear Him.

Judas Agrees to Betray Christ

Matt. 26:1-5, 14-16; Mark 14:1, 2, 10, 11

22 Now ^athe Feast of Unleavened Bread drew near, which is called Passover. ² And ^bthe chief priests and the scribes sought how they might kill Him, for they feared the people.

³ Then Satan entered Judas, surnamed Iscariot, who was numbered among the ^dtwelve. ⁴ So he went his way and conferred with the chief priests and captains, how he might betray Him to them. ⁵ And they were glad, and ^eagreed to give him money. ⁶ So he promised and sought opportunity to ^fbetray Him to them in the absence of the multitude.

The Upper Room Is Prepared

Matt. 26:17-19; Mark 14:12-16

⁷ Then came the Day of Unleavened Bread, when the Passover must be ¹killed. ⁸ And He sent Peter and John, saying, “Go and prepare the Passover for us, that we may eat.”

⁹ So they said to Him, “Where do You want us to prepare?”

¹⁰ And He said to them, “Behold, when

³⁶ ^m Luke 20:35
ⁿ Ps. 1:5; [Eph. 6:13] ⁹ NU have strength to
³⁷ ^o John 8:1, 2
^p Luke 22:39

CHAPTER 22

¹ ^o Matt. 26:2-5; Mark 14:1, 2
² ^b Ps. 2:2; John 11:47; Acts 4:27
³ ^c Matt. 26:14-16; Mark 14:10, 11; John 13:2, 27 ^d Matt. 10:2-4
⁵ ^e Zech. 11:12
⁶ ^f Ps. 41:9
⁷ ^g Matt. 26:17-19; Mark 14:12-16
¹ Sacrificed

¹³ ^h Luke 19:32
¹⁴ ⁱ Matt. 26:20; Mark 14:17 ² NU omits twelve
¹⁶ ^j Luke 14:15; [Acts 10:41; Rev. 19:9]
¹⁸ ^k Matt. 26:29; Mark 14:25 ³ NU adds from now on
¹⁹ ^l Matt. 26:26; Mark 14:22
^m [1 Pet. 2:24]
ⁿ 1 Cor. 11:23-26
²⁰ ^o 1 Cor. 10:16

you have entered the city, a man will meet you carrying a pitcher of water; follow him into the house which he enters.

¹¹ Then you shall say to the master of the house, “The Teacher says to you, “Where is the guest room where I may eat the Passover with My disciples?”” ¹² Then he will show you a large, furnished upper room; there make ready.”

¹³ So they went and ^hfound it just as He had said to them, and they prepared the Passover.

The Passover Is Celebrated

Matt. 26:20, 29; Mark 14:17, 25

¹⁴ When the hour had come, He sat down, and the ²twelve apostles with Him. ¹⁵ Then He said to them, “With *fer-*vent desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; ¹⁶ for I say to you, I will no longer eat of it ^juntil it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.”

¹⁷ Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, “Take this and divide *it* among yourselves; ¹⁸ for ^kI say to you, ³I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.”

The Lord's Supper Is Instituted

Matt. 26:26-28; Mark 14:22-24

¹⁹ And He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave *it* to them, saying, “This is *My* ^mbody which is given for you; ⁿdo this in remembrance of Me.”

²⁰ Likewise He also *took* the cup after supper, saying, ^o“This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you.

22:1 This verse begins the “passion narrative,” the account of Jesus’ death and resurrection. **The Feast of Unleavened Bread** took place immediately following **Passover** (see Ex. 12:1–20; Deut. 16:1–8). The two feasts were often considered as one. Passover commemorated the night of the tenth plague in Egypt, when the firstborn of Israel were “passed over” and spared by the angel of death. The Feast of Unleavened Bread celebrated the Exodus (see Ex. 12; Lev. 23:5, 6). Many Jewish pilgrims traveled to Jerusalem to celebrate these feasts.

22:3 The journey to the Cross was not just a matter of human effort or Judas’s plots. Cosmic forces were at work in the opposition to Jesus. **Satan** is mentioned in the temptations of Jesus, and in 10:18 and 13:16. The name derives from the Hebrew term for “adversary” (see Job 1:9–11).

22:4 Judas’s involvement in the plot to betray Jesus was fortunate from the point of view of the Jewish religious leaders. They could arrest Jesus secretly and later claim that the driving force to stop Him came from within His own group of disciples. The **captains**, Levites who were members of the temple guard, were the ones who could make the arrest.

22:7 The synoptic Gospels are very clear that Jesus was betrayed on the day of **Passover** (see Matt. 26:17–19; Mark 14:12–16).

22:11, 12 guest room: Such rooms were often made available to the thousands of pilgrims who came to Jerusalem for the celebration of Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Such a room would contain couches for guests at the feasts to recline for

the meal. Access to the room was probably gained by stairs on the outside of the house.

22:14–30 A comparison of this account with John 13:1–30 suggests that Luke has rearranged the order of events in a topical manner. Luke has the meal first and all the discourse afterward. In John’s account, Judas was gone by the time the meal was shared. Luke’s account does not mention Judas’s departure. In addition, Luke mentions two cups, while the other three Gospels mention only one. A Passover meal had four courses and four cups. Thus it is obvious that all the Gospel writers summarize the events of the meal. The words over the bread and cup recorded by Luke are very similar to those of 1 Cor. 11:23–26.

22:16 I will no longer eat of it until it is fulfilled: In the kingdom to come, when final victory is celebrated, Jesus again will eat (see Rev. 19:9).

22:18 I will not drink of the fruit: As is made clear in v. 16, Jesus will abstain from celebrating a meal until His return.

22:19 My body . . . do this in remembrance: Jesus instituted a new meal which is not only a memorial of His death, but also a fellowship meal of unity. It is a proclamation and a symbol of the believers’ anticipation of Jesus’ return, when all God’s promises will be fulfilled (see 1 Cor. 10:16, 17; 11:23–26). The **bread** of the Lord’s Supper represents the body of Jesus, offered on behalf of His disciples.

22:20 This cup is the new covenant: The wine of the Lord’s Supper depicts the giving of life, a sacrifice of blood, which inaugurates the new covenant for those who respond to Jesus’ offer of salvation

Christ Predicts His Betrayer

Matt. 26:21-25; Mark 14:18-21; John 13:21-26

²¹*p* But behold, the hand of My betrayer is with Me on the table. ²²*q* And truly the Son of Man goes ^ras it has been determined, but woe to that man by whom He is betrayed!"

²³*s* Then they began to question among themselves, which of them it was who would do this thing.

The Disciples Argue over Who Is the Greatest

²⁴*t* Now there was also a dispute among them, as to which of them should be considered the greatest. ²⁵*u* And He said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and those who exercise authority over them are called 'benefactors.' ²⁶*v* But not so among you; on the contrary, ^whe who is greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and he who governs as he who serves. ²⁷*x* For who is greater, he who sits at the table, or he who serves? Is it not he who sits at the table? Yet ^yI am among you as the One who serves.

²⁸ "But you are those who have continued with Me in ^zMy trials. ²⁹And ^aI bestow upon you a kingdom, just as My Father bestowed *one* upon Me, ³⁰that ^byou may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, ^cand sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

Christ Predicts Peter's Denial

Matt. 26:31-35; Mark 14:27-31; John 13:36-38

³¹⁴ And the Lord said, "Simon, Simon! Indeed, ^dSatan has asked for you, that he may ^esift *you* as wheat. ³²But ^fI have

²¹ *p* Ps. 41:9 ☆; Matt. 26:21, 23; Mark 14:18; Luke 22:48; John 13:21, 26, 27
²² *q* Matt. 26:24
^r John 17:12; Acts 2:23
²³ *s* Matt. 26:22; John 13:22, 25
²⁴ *t* Mark 9:34; Luke 9:46-48
²⁵ *u* [Matt. 20:25-28]; Mark 10:42-45
²⁶ *v* Matt. 20:26; [1 Pet. 5:3] ^w Luke 9:48
²⁷ *x* [Luke 12:37] ^y Matt. 20:28; John 13:13, 14; Phil. 2:7
²⁸ *z* [Heb. 2:18; 4:15]
²⁹ *a* Matt. 24:47
³⁰ *b* [Matt. 8:11; Rev. 19:9] ^c Ps. 49:14; [Matt. 19:28; 1 Cor. 6:2; Rev. 3:21]
³¹ *d* 1 Pet. 5:8
^e Amos 9:9 ^f NU omits *And the Lord said*
³² *f* [John 17:9, 11, 15] ^g John 21:15-17; Acts 1:15; 2:14; 2 Pet. 1:10-15
³⁴ *h* Matt. 26:33-35; Mark 14:29-31; Luke 22:61; John 13:37, 38
³⁵ *i* Matt. 10:9; Mark 6:8; Luke 9:3; 10:4
³⁷ *j* Is. 53:12; Matt. 27:38; Mark 15:28; Luke 22:32
³⁹ *k* Matt. 26:36; John 18:1 ^l Luke 21:37
⁴⁰ *m* Matt. 26:36-46; Mark 14:32-42
⁴¹ *n* Matt. 26:39; Mark 14:35; [Luke 18:11-14]
⁴² *o* Is. 50:5 ★; John 4:34; 5:30; 6:38; 8:29

prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me, ^gstrengthen your brethren."

³³ But he said to Him, "Lord, I am ready to go with You, both to prison and to death."

³⁴^h Then He said, "I tell you, Peter, the rooster shall not crow this day before you will deny three times that you know Me."

Christ Predicts Coming Conflict

³⁵ⁱ And He said to them, "When I sent you without money bag, knapsack, and sandals, did you lack anything?"

So they said, "Nothing."

³⁶ Then He said to them, "But now, he who has a money bag, let him take *it*, and likewise a knapsack; and he who has no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one. ³⁷For I say to you that this which is written must still be ^jaccomplished in Me: ^j*'And He was numbered with the transgressors.'* For the things concerning Me have an end."

³⁸ So they said, "Lord, look, here *are* two swords."

And He said to them, "It is enough."

Christ Prays in Gethsemane

Matt. 26:36-46; Mark 14:32-42; John 18:1

³⁹^k Coming out, ^lHe went to the Mount of Olives, as He was accustomed, and His disciples also followed Him. ⁴⁰^m When He came to the place, He said to them, "Pray that you may not enter into temptation."

⁴¹ⁿ And He was withdrawn from them about a stone's throw, and He knelt down and prayed, ⁴²saying, "Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless ^onot My will, but Yours,

(see Heb. 8:8, 13; 9:11-28). This is the strongest substitutionary image in the Gospel of Luke: Jesus died on the Cross in our place and for our sins (see Acts 20:28).

22:22 Jesus would suffer as God's plan unfolded, and the one who betrayed Him would face **woe**.

22:24 the greatest: Note the sad irony in this verse. While Jesus faced the reality of being betrayed and killed, His disciples argued about which of them was greatest.

22:25 benefactors: This title suggests that the people should be grateful for the generous leaders of their nation and that they should recognize their power and authority.

22:26 as the younger . . . as he who serves: Leadership in the church does not exalt; it serves. It shows respect to others, as a young person would show respect to an elder. True leaders labor for others, as a servant would. In short, the Lord's view of greatness is the exact opposite of the world's view.

22:28 in My trials: Jesus recognized that the disciples had been present and had suffered with Him during His ministry.

22:29 Jesus passed on His **kingdom** authority to the apostles who would continue planting the church, a part of the kingdom. The authority that Jesus bestowed on them was like the authority that the **Father** had bestowed on Him.

22:30 eat and drink . . . sit on thrones judging: This is a promise of future blessing and authority. The disciples were promised a seat

at the banquet of victory and the right to help Jesus rule over Israel on His return (see Matt. 19:28; 2 Tim. 2:12).

22:31 Satan has asked for you: The Greek word for *you* here is plural, indicating that Satan had asked permission to trouble all of the disciples.

22:32 I have prayed for you . . . when you have returned: The Greek word for *you* here is singular, referring specifically to Peter. In effect, Jesus restored Peter even before his fall (vv. 54-62), and He instructed the disciple to shepherd the saints by strengthening them.

22:35, 36 When I sent you: The allusion here is to the disciples' mission recorded in 9:1-6; 10:1-24. When the disciples had depended on God to provide for their needs, those needs were met through generous people. However, the situation had changed. Jesus here instructed His disciples to take **a money bag, a knapsack, and a sword** on their journeys in order to be prepared for the rejection that was to come.

22:37 this which is written: Jesus cited Is. 53:12, which describes a righteous one who suffers as a criminal. Jesus noted that His death would fulfill Isaiah's prediction.

22:38 Misunderstanding Jesus' instructions in v. 36, the disciples indicated that they had weapons with which to fight (vv. 50, 51).

22:39 Mount of Olives: Matthew 26:36 gives the name Gethsemane, while John 18:1 speaks more generally of a garden.

22:42 Jesus agonized over His approaching death and the effect



Mount of Olives

The Mount of Olives is a north-to-south ridge of hills east of Jerusalem that overlooks the temple. The closeness of the Mount of Olives to Jerusalem's walls made this series of hills a grave strategic danger. The Roman commander Titus had his headquarters on the northern extension of the ridge during the siege of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. He named the place Mt. Scopus, or "Lookout Hill," because of the view it offered over the city walls. The whole hill must have provided a platform for the Roman catapults that hurled heavy objects over the Jewish fortifications of the city. In ancient times the whole mount must have been heavily wooded. As its name implies, it was covered with dense olive groves. On this site Jesus sat with His disciples to discuss the future (Mark 13; 14).



A view from Jerusalem to the Mount of Olives

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be done.” ⁴³ ⁶Then ⁷an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him. ⁴⁴ ^qAnd being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

⁴⁵ When He rose up from prayer, and had come to His disciples, He found them sleeping from sorrow. ⁴⁶ Then He said to them, “Why ^r do you sleep? Rise and ^spray, lest you enter into temptation.”

Judas Betrays Christ

Matt. 26:47-56; Mark 14:43-50; John 18:2-11

⁴⁷ And while He was still speaking, ^t behold, a multitude; and he who was called ^u Judas, one of the twelve, went before them and drew near to Jesus to kiss Him. ⁴⁸ But Jesus said to him, “Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a ^v kiss?”

⁴⁹ When those around Him saw what was going to happen, they said to Him, “Lord, shall we strike with the sword?”

⁴³ ^p Matt. 4:11 ⁶ NU brackets vv. 43 and 44 as not in the original text.

⁴⁴ ^q John 12:27; [Heb. 5:7]

⁴⁶ ^r Luke 9:32 ^s 1 Chr. 16:11; Luke 22:40; [Eph. 6:18]; 1 Thess. 5:17

⁴⁷ ^t Matt. 26:47-56; Mark 14:43-50; John 18:3-11 ^u Ps. 41:9; Matt. 20:18; Luke 9:44; 22:21; Acts 1:16, 17

⁴⁸ ^v [Prov. 27:6]

⁵⁰ ^w Matt. 26:51

⁵² ^x Matt. 26:55

^y Luke 23:32

⁵³ ^z Luke 19:47, 48

^a [John 12:27]

⁵⁴ ^b Is. 53:7, 8; Matt. 26:57; Mark 14:53; Luke 9:44; Acts 8:32

^c Matt. 26:58; Mark 14:54; John 18:15

⁵⁵ ^d Matt. 26:69-75;

Mark 14:66-72;

John 18:15, 17, 18

⁵⁰ And ^w one of them struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his right ear.

⁵¹ But Jesus answered and said, “Permit even this.” And He touched his ear and healed him.

⁵² ^x Then Jesus said to the chief priests, captains of the temple, and the elders who had come to Him, “Have you come out, as against a ^y robber, with swords and clubs? ⁵³ When I was with you daily in the ^z temple, you did not try to seize Me. But this is your ^a hour, and the power of darkness.”

Peter Denies Christ

Matt 26:57, 58, 69-75; Mark 14:53, 54, 66-72;

John 18:15-18, 25-27

⁵⁴ ^b Having arrested Him, they led Him and brought Him into the high priest's house. ^c But Peter followed at a distance. ⁵⁵ ^d Now when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the courtyard and sat down together, Peter sat among them. ⁵⁶ And a certain servant girl, seeing him as he

of God's wrath. The **cup** is a figure of speech for wrath (see Ps. 11:6; 75:7, 8; Jer. 25:15, 16; Ezek. 23:31-34).

22:43 strengthening Him: God's answer to Jesus' prayer did not allow His Son to avoid suffering. However, God did provide angelic help for Jesus to face what was coming. Sometimes God answers prayer by eliminating trials; sometimes He answers by strengthening us in the midst of them.

22:44 His sweat became like great drops of blood: Jesus' earnest prayer and emotion (vv. 42-44) led to a physical reaction. Though Jesus probably did not bleed here, His sweat became like blood.

22:48 Not only did Jesus remind Judas of what he had done, He also noted the irony of being betrayed **with a kiss**.

22:50 one of them struck the servant: John 18:10 indicates that this impetuous disciple was Peter (see also Matt. 26:51; Mark 14:47). His violent act risked giving the impression that the disciples were seditious.

22:51 touched his ear and healed him: Jesus mercifully healed the ear of one who was taking Him to His death. Jesus illustrated here the love for His enemies that He had commanded in 6:27-36.

22:52 as against a robber: The Greek term for *robber* was used of both highway bandits and revolutionaries. Jesus rebuked His captors for treating Him as though He were a dangerous lawbreaker.

22:54 This is Jesus' first appearance before Annas (see John 18:13).

sat by the fire, looked intently at him and said, “This man was also with Him.”

⁵⁷ But he denied ⁷ Him, saying, “Woman, I do not know Him.”

⁵⁸ And after a little while another saw him and said, “You also are of them.”

But Peter said, “Man, I am not!”

⁵⁹ Then after about an hour had passed, another confidently affirmed, saying, “Surely this fellow also was with Him, for he is a ⁹ Galilean.”

⁶⁰ But Peter said, “Man, I do not know what you are saying!”

Immediately, while he was still speaking, ⁸ the rooster crowed. ⁶¹ And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. Then ⁶ Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had said to him, ¹ “Before the rooster ⁹ crows, you will deny Me three times.”

⁶² So Peter went out and wept bitterly.

Christ Is Beaten

Matt. 26:67, 68; Mark 14:65

⁶³ Now the men who held Jesus mocked Him and ⁶ beat Him. ⁶⁴ And having blindfolded Him, they ¹ struck Him on the face and asked Him, saying, “Prophecy! Who is the one who struck You?” ⁶⁵ And many other things they blasphemously spoke against Him.

The Sanhedrin Tries Christ

Matt. 27:1; Mark 15:1

⁶⁶ As soon as it was day, ² the elders of the people, both chief priests and scribes, came together and led Him into their

⁵⁷ ⁷ NU it

⁵⁸ ^e Matt. 26:71; Mark 14:69; John 18:25

⁵⁹ ^f Matt. 26:73; Mark 14:70; John 18:26 ⁹ Acts 1:11; 2:7

⁶⁰ ⁸ NU, M a rooster

⁶¹ ^h Matt. 26:75; Mark 14:72 ¹ Matt. 26:34, 75; Mark 14:30; Luke 22:34; John 13:38 ⁹ NU adds today

⁶³ / Ps. 69:1, 4, 7-9; Matt. 26:67, 68; Mark 14:65; John 18:22 ^k Job 16:10; Is. 50:6 ★; Lam. 3:30

⁶⁴ / Zech. 13:7 ¹ NU And having blindfolded Him, they asked Him

⁶⁶ ^m Matt. 27:1; Mark 15:1 ⁿ Ps. 2:2; Acts 4:26

⁶⁷ ^o Matt. 26:63-66; Mark 14:61-63; Luke 22:67-71; John 18:19-21 ^p Luke 20:5-7

⁶⁸ ² NU omits also ³ NU omits the rest of v. 68.

⁶⁹ ^q Ps. 110:1; Matt. 26:64; Mark 14:62; 16:19; Acts 2:33; 7:55; Eph. 1:20; Col. 3:1; Heb. 1:3; 8:1

⁷⁰ ^r Matt. 26:64; 27:11; Mark 14:62;

Luke 1:35 ★

⁷¹ ^s Matt. 26:65; Mark 14:63; John 19:7

council, saying, ⁶⁷ “If You are the Christ, tell us.”

But He said to them, “If I tell you, you will ⁷ by no means believe. ⁶⁸ And if I ² also ask *you*, you will by no means answer ³ Me or let *Me* go. ⁶⁹ Hereafter the Son of Man will sit on the right hand of the power of God.”

⁷⁰ Then they all said, “Are You then the Son of God?”

So He said to them, ^r “You *rightly* say that I am.”

⁷¹ And they said, “What further testimony do we need? For we have heard it ourselves from His own mouth.”

Pilate Tries Christ

Matt. 27:2, 11-14; Mark 15:1-5; John 18:28-38

23 Then ^a the whole multitude of them arose and led Him to ^b Pilate. ² And they began to ^c accuse Him, saying, “We found this fellow ^d perverting ¹ the nation, and ^e forbidding to pay taxes to Caesar, saying ^f that He Himself is Christ, a King.”

³ Then Pilate asked Him, saying, “Are You the King of the Jews?”

He answered him and said, “*It is as you say.*”

⁴ So Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowd, ^h “I find no fault in this Man.”

CHAPTER 23 ¹ ^a Matt. 27:2; Mark 15:1; Luke 18:32 ★; John 18:28 ^b Luke 3:1; 13:1 ² ^c Acts 24:2 ^d Acts 17:7 ^e Matt. 17:27; Mark 12:17 / John 19:12 ¹ NU our ³ ^g Matt. 27:11; 1 Tim. 6:13 ⁴ ^h Matt. 27:19; [1 Pet. 2:22]

22:59 for he is a Galilean: According to Mark 14:70, Peter’s accent gave him away as being from the same region as Jesus.

22:61, 62 looked at Peter: Apparently a window opened into the courtyard, and Peter knew that the Lord was aware of his denials. **wept bitterly:** The Lord knew Peter better than Peter knew himself (v. 34). Peter was greatly grieved that he had failed Jesus.

22:63 mocked Him and beat Him: Matthew 26:67; Mark 14:65 further describe the abuse of Jesus at the hands of the soldiers as involving speaking, spitting, and slapping.

22:64 Prophecy: The soldiers played a game to mock Jesus. They covered His head and asked Him to identify who was striking Him.

22:66 The description here is of a major morning trial that involved all the Jewish religious leaders, the entire **council** or Sanhedrin. This trial violated various Jewish legal rules given in later sources: meeting on the morning of a feast; meeting at Caiaphas’s home; trying a defendant without defense; and reaching the verdict in one day instead of the two days that were required for capital cases.

22:69 Hereafter means “from now on.” Jesus’ point was that authority would reside with Him from this point on. Though He was on trial, in reality He is the ultimate Judge. **on the right hand of the power of God:** Jesus’ reply here alludes to the regal enthronement image of Ps. 110:1. This reply is what convicted Him. Apparently what offended Jesus’ audience was His claim to sit in God’s presence and to exercise divine authority. In effect, His answer to their question about being the Christ was more than they expected. It was not blasphemous to claim to be Messiah. What was blasphemous was the claim to be the Judge of the Jewish people, with God’s authority. Jesus’ remark also implies the hope of vindication. Though the people would kill Him, Jesus would end up at God’s

side. The title of the Son of Man is an allusion to Dan. 7 (see also Matt. 26:64; Mark 14:62).

22:70 Son of God: The Jewish leaders sensed that Jesus was claiming great authority here. They sensed that Jesus was asserting a unique and highly exalted relationship with God, making Himself the equal of God. In their view, this was not possible.

22:71 from His own mouth: The Jewish leadership concluded that Jesus had made a confession of guilt. Jesus was “convicted” by His claim to a relationship to God in which He exercises an authority like God’s.

23:1 The Roman ruler **Pilate** was responsible for collecting taxes and keeping the peace. It may be that he was in Jerusalem for judicial hearings, a procedure called an “assize.” The fact that others were crucified with Jesus makes this likely.

23:2 began to accuse: Three charges were lodged against Jesus: (1) **perverting the nation**, (2) **forbidding** payment of taxes to Rome, (3) claiming to be the **Christ**. The first charge, which was a general complaint, involved disturbing the peace. The other two charges could have been construed as challenges to Rome. The second charge was a blatant lie (see 20:20–26). The third charge was true, but not in the threatening sense that the prosecutors suggested. A three-part Roman procedure was followed at the trial: charges, examination, and verdict.

23:3 It is as you say: Jesus gave Pilate the same qualified reply He gave the Sanhedrin in 22:67, 68, 70. Jesus is a king, but He was not a threat to Rome (see John 18:36).

23:4 I find no fault: Pilate’s verdict was that Jesus was innocent. This is the first of several such declarations in this chapter (vv. 14, 15, 22, 41). Jesus’ suffering and death were those of an innocent, righteous One (v. 47).

⁵But they were the more fierce, saying, “He stirs up the people, teaching throughout all Judea, beginning from ⁱGalilee to this place.”

⁶When Pilate heard ²of Galilee, he asked if the Man were a Galilean. ⁷And as soon as he knew that He belonged to ^jHerod’s jurisdiction, he sent Him to Herod, who was also in Jerusalem at that time.

Herod Tries Christ

⁸Now when Herod saw Jesus, ^khe was exceedingly glad; for he had desired for a long time to see Him, because ^lhe had heard many things about Him, and he hoped to see some miracle done by Him. ⁹Then he questioned Him with many words, but He answered him ^mnothing. ¹⁰And the chief priests and scribes stood and vehemently accused Him. ¹¹ⁿThen Herod, with his ³men of war, treated Him with contempt and mocked Him, arrayed Him in a gorgeous robe, and sent Him back to Pilate. ¹²That very day ^oPilate and Herod became friends with each other, for previously they had been at enmity with each other.

Pilate Tries Christ Again

Matt. 27:15-26; Mark 15:6-15; John 18:39-19:16

¹³^pThen Pilate, when he had called together the chief priests, the rulers, and the people, ¹⁴said to them, ^q“You have brought this Man to me, as one who misleads the people. And indeed, ^rhaving examined Him in your presence, I have found no fault in this Man concerning those things of which you accuse Him; ¹⁵no, neither did Herod, for ⁴I sent you

⁵ ⁱ John 7:41
⁶ ² NU omits of Galilee
⁷ ^j Matt. 14:1; Mark 6:14; Luke 3:1; 9:7; 13:31
⁸ ^k Luke 9:9 ^l Matt. 14:1; Mark 6:14
⁹ ^m Is. 53:7; Matt. 27:12, 14; Mark 15:5; John 19:9
¹¹ ⁿ Is. 53:3 ★
³ troops
¹² ^o Acts 4:26, 27
¹³ ^p Matt. 27:23; Mark 15:14; John 18:38
¹⁴ ^q Luke 23:1, 2
^r Luke 23:4
¹⁵ ⁴ NU he sent Him back to us

¹⁶ ^s Matt. 27:26; Mark 15:15; Luke 23:22; John 19:1; Acts 16:37
¹⁷ ^t Matt. 27:15; Mark 15:6; John 18:39 ⁵ NU omits v. 17.
¹⁸ ^u Is. 53:3; Acts 3:13-15 ★
²³ ⁶ NU omits and of the chief priests
²⁴ ^v Matt. 27:26; Mark 15:15; John 19:16
²⁵ ^w Is. 53:8 ⁷ NU, M omit to them
²⁶ ^x Matt. 27:32; Mark 15:21; John 19:17
²⁹ ^y Matt. 24:19; Luke 21:23

back to him; and indeed nothing deserving of death has been done by Him. ¹⁶^sI will therefore chastise Him and release Him” ¹⁷^t (for ⁵ it was necessary for him to release one to them at the feast).

¹⁸And ^uthey all cried out at once, saying, “Away with this Man, and release to us Barabbas”— ¹⁹who had been thrown into prison for a certain rebellion made in the city, and for murder.

²⁰Pilate, therefore, wishing to release Jesus, again called out to them. ²¹But they shouted, saying, “Crucify Him, crucify Him!”

²²Then he said to them the third time, “Why, what evil has He done? I have found no reason for death in Him. I will therefore chastise Him and let Him go.”

²³But they were insistent, demanding with loud voices that He be crucified. And the voices of these men ⁶and of the chief priests prevailed. ²⁴So ^vPilate gave sentence that it should be as they requested. ²⁵^wAnd he released ⁷to them the one they requested, who for rebellion and murder had been thrown into prison; but he delivered Jesus to their will.

Christ Is Crucified

Matt. 27:31-56; Mark 15:20-41; John 19:16-30

²⁶^xNow as they led Him away, they laid hold of a certain man, Simon a Cyrenian, who was coming from the country, and on him they laid the cross that he might bear it after Jesus.

²⁷And a great multitude of the people followed Him, and women who also mourned and lamented Him. ²⁸But Jesus, turning to them, said, “Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. ²⁹^yFor

23:5 By mentioning the charge that Jesus stirred up the **people**, the leaders suggested that Pilate risked being found derelict in his duty if he let Jesus go.

23:7 Herod’s jurisdiction: Herod was responsible for Galilee, so Pilate “passed the buck” for the ruling and showed political courtesy at the same time.

23:8 he was exceedingly glad: Herod’s curiosity about Jesus is noted in 9:7-9.

23:9 answered him nothing: Jesus may have remained silent because He had already been declared innocent and yet was still subjected to trial (see Acts 8:32, 33).

23:11 After deciding that he had nothing to fear from Jesus, Herod and his men entertained themselves at Jesus’ expense. Dressing him in a **gorgeous robe** was probably a sarcastic reference to Jesus’ claim to be king.

23:16 chastise Him and release Him: Pilate hoped that a public whipping might satisfy the crowd and tame Jesus, avoiding the need to resort to the death penalty.

23:17 it was necessary . . . to release one to them: Pilate wanted to take advantage of this custom and let Jesus go (see Matt. 27:15; Mark 15:6).

23:18, 19 Away with this Man: The entire crowd is portrayed as wanting Jesus to die. Luke makes it clear that Jesus’ death was

not only instigated by Jewish officials but approved by the Jewish people. **Barabbas:** The people preferred that a seditious murderer be freed instead of Jesus. The idea of Jesus’ substitution for this noted murderer foreshadows the substitutionary death of Jesus for sinful people.

23:23 Luke mentions the **chief priests** separately from the crowd since they were the instigators of the plot against Jesus. Because Pilate feared the will of the people, he entered into the conspiracy and shared its guilt, agreeing to put to death someone he knew to be innocent (see Acts 4:25-27).

23:26 Jesus was apparently unable to carry His own cross. **Simon a Cyrenian,** a man from a leading city of Libya, was chosen to carry the cross for Him (see Acts 6:9; 11:20; 13:1). Mark 15:20, 21 mentions that Simon’s sons were Rufus and Alexander, believers known to Mark’s audience.

23:27 The events of vv. 27-31 are unique to Luke’s account. While such mourning for the dead was required by custom in the ancient world, Jesus’ reply seems to take the people’s mourning as sincere.

23:28 do not weep for Me: Though He was dying, Jesus pointed out that their weeping should be for Jerusalem and its inhabitants, since judgment was going to fall on the city (19:41-44). Jerusalem here represents the entire nation of Israel.

23:29, 30 barren: In the days of judgment, the children, who were

indeed the days are coming in which they will say, ‘Blessed are the barren, wombs that never bore, and breasts which never nursed!’ ³⁰ Then they will begin ^z *to say to the mountains, “Fall on us!” and to the hills, “Cover us!”* ^{31a} For if they do these things in the green wood, what will be done in the dry?”

^{32b} There were also two others, criminals, led with Him to be put to death. ³³ And ^c when they had come to the place called Calvary, there they crucified Him,

³⁰ ^z Is. 2:19; Hos. 10:8; Rev. 6:16, 17; 9:6
³¹ ^a [Prov. 11:31; Jer. 25:29]; Ezek. 20:47; 21:3, 4; 1 Pet. 4:17
³² ^b Is. 53:9, 12; Matt. 27:38; Mark 15:27; John 19:18
³³ ^c Ps. 22:16-18 ★; Matt. 27:33-44; Mark 15:22-32; John 19:17-24
³⁴ ^d Ps. 109:4;

and the criminals, one on the right hand and the other on the left. ^{34b} Then Jesus said, “Father, ^d forgive them, for ^e they do not know what they do.”

And ^f they divided His garments and cast lots. ³⁵ And ^g the people stood looking on. But even the ^h rulers with them sneered, saying, “He saved others; let

[Matt. 5:44]; Acts 7:60; 1 Cor. 4:12 ^e Acts 3:17 ^f Ps. 22:18; Matt. 27:35; Mark 15:24; John 19:23 ^g NU brackets the first sentence as a later addition. ³⁵ ^g Ps. 22:17 ★; [Zech. 12:10] ^h Ps. 22:8; Matt. 27:39; Mark 15:29

usually thought of as cursed, would be better off than those with family because the terror of that time would be so great. **Fall on us:** Fear of the judgment would be so great that people would prefer to die rather than suffer what was coming. There is an allusion here to Hos. 10:8 (see also Rev. 6:16). People who face God’s judgment desire the relief of death rather than to endure His wrath.

23:31 what will be done in the dry: The idea here seems to be “If this is what is done to a live tree, what will happen to the dead one?” In other words, “If Jesus, the living tree, has not been spared, how much more will dead wood not be spared.” This is Jesus’ final lament over the nation of Israel.

23:32 Jesus’ prediction of dying with the transgressors (see 22:37;

see also Isaiah’s prediction in Is. 53:12) was fulfilled when two **criminals** accompanied Him to death.

23:33 The name of the place in Aramaic is Golgotha, which means “Skull.” **Calvary** is the Latin name for Golgotha. Possibly the name referred to a geographical feature of the locale, something that resembled a skull.

23:34 Those who put Jesus to death acted in ignorance, not really understanding who it was they were killing. Jesus’ example of interceding for His executioners was followed by Stephen in Acts 7:60. **divided His garments and cast lots:** The language here alludes to the suffering Righteous One of Ps. 22:18.

Crucifixion



At the time of Jesus’ death, crucifixion was considered the most painful and degrading form of capital punishment in the Roman Empire. It was considered so horrible that it was used by the Romans only for slaves, those from the provinces under their control, and the lowest types of criminals. It was not to be used for a Roman citizen. This is in accord with the biblical account of Christ’s death and with church tradition, which asserts that Peter was also crucified, but Paul, a Roman citizen, was beheaded.

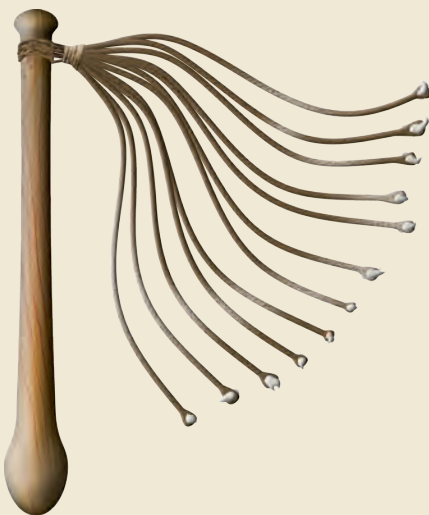
Crucifixion as a means of execution probably grew out of the practice of displaying the heads of captured enemies or criminals on a wooden stake like those used to build a wall or erect fortifications. Later, entire bodies were impaled. By Jesus’ time, crucifixion was a common sight.

Although methods of crucifixion seem to have varied throughout the Roman Empire, through biblical and historical accounts the basic pattern is known. The condemned person was first scourged with a flagellum, a whip of leather thongs with bits of metal or bone attached. This whipping greatly weakened the victim, who then had to carry the crossbeam to the place of execution. A sign specifying the crime was often placed around the criminal’s neck or on the cross. The person was stripped naked, laid on the ground with the crossbeam under his shoulders, and tied or nailed to it. Nailing made the victim die quicker, as it did Jesus, whom the Jewish officials wanted dead before the Sabbath.

The crossbeam was lifted and secured to a post so that the person’s feet were hanging just off the ground. Some archaeologists think a pin or wooden block was placed halfway up the post to provide a seat for the body so that the nails would not tear open the wounds, causing the body to fall. The feet also could be nailed or tied to the post.

Although the pain was excruciating, some victims survived on the cross for days. As in the case of the two criminals crucified with Jesus, the legs of a crucified person were sometimes broken to make the sufferer die. This caused massive shock, followed by loss of circulation and heart failure.

Although completely innocent of all sin, Jesus suffered the most horrible, disgraceful punishment known. But His agonizing death was not an ordinary death, for it was not the final chapter. Jesus turned this apparent defeat into the most glorious victory the world has ever known. At the Cross, He suffered for the sins of the world. Then after His resurrection from the dead three days later, Jesus empowered His disciples with a new message, the Good News that He had finally defeated the power of sin and death. Through the Cross, Jesus offers salvation to all who will believe in Him.



Reconstruction of a Roman scourge

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Him save Himself if He is the Christ, the chosen of God.”

³⁶The soldiers also mocked Him, coming and offering Him ⁱsour wine, ³⁷and saying, “If You are the King of the Jews, save Yourself.”

^{38j}And an inscription also was ⁹written over Him in letters of Greek, Latin, and Hebrew:

THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

^{39k}Then one of the criminals who were hanged blasphemed Him, saying, ¹“If You are the Christ, save Yourself and us.”

⁴⁰But the other, answering, rebuked him, saying, “Do you not even fear God, seeing you are under the same condemnation? ⁴¹And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this Man has done ¹nothing wrong.” ⁴²Then he said ²to Jesus, “Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom.”

⁴³And Jesus said to him, “Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in ^mParadise.”

⁴⁴ⁿNow it ³was about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over all the earth

36 ⁱ Ps. 69:21
38 ^j Matt. 27:37;
Mark 15:26; John
19:19 ⁹ NU omits
written and in
letters of Greek,
Latin, and Hebrew
39 ^k Matt. 27:44;
Mark 15:32 ¹ NU
Are You not the
Christ? Save
41 ¹ [2 Cor. 5:21;
Heb. 7:26; 1 Pet.
2:21-24]
42 ² NU ^j Jesus,
remember me
43 ^m [2 Cor. 12:4;
Eph. 4:8-10; Rev. 2:7]
44 ⁿ Amos 8:9 [★];
Matt. 27:45-56;
Mark 15:33-41 ³ NU
adds already
45 ^o Ex. 26:31-33;
Zech. 11:10; Matt.
27:51; Mark 15:38;
[Heb. 9:3; 10:19, 20]
⁴ NU obscured ⁵ the
middle
46 ^p Ps. 31:5; 1 Pet.
2:23 ^q Dan. 9:26;
Zech. 11:10, 11;
Matt. 27:50; Mark
15:37; Luke 9:22;
18:33; John 19:30
47 ^r Matt. 27:54;
Mark 15:39
49 ^s Ps. 38:11; Matt.
27:55; Mark 15:40;
John 16:20-22;
19:25

until the ninth hour. ⁴⁵Then the sun was ⁴darkened, and ^othe veil of the temple was torn in ⁵two. ⁴⁶And when Jesus had cried out with a loud voice, He said, “Father, ^p ‘into Your hands I commit My spirit.’ ” ^qHaving said this, He breathed His last.

^{47r}So when the centurion saw what had happened, he glorified God, saying, “Certainly this was a righteous Man!”

⁴⁸And the whole crowd who came together to that sight, seeing what had been done, beat their breasts and returned. ^{49s}But all His acquaintances, and the women who followed Him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things.

Christ Is Buried

Matt. 27:57-61; Mark 15:42-47; John 19:38-42

^{50t}Now behold, *there was* a man named Joseph, a council member, a good and just man. ⁵¹He had not consented to their decision and deed. *He was* from Arimathea, a city of the Jews, ^uwho ⁶himself was also waiting for the kingdom of God. ⁵²This man went to Pilate and

50 ^t Matt. 27:57-61; Mark 15:42-47; John 19:38-42 51 ^u Mark 15:43; Luke 2:25, 38 ⁶ NU who was waiting

23:36 The drink referred to here was probably **wine vinegar**, which was inexpensive and quenched thirst better than water. It was a drink of the poor.

23:38 KING OF THE JEWS: This inscription, which gave the charge against Christ, was written in three languages. Jesus was killed for who He is.

23:40 Not everyone rejected Jesus at His crucifixion. The second criminal rebuked his companion in death, warning that he should fear God. The sarcastic thief, who would suffer judgment, was in no position to insult Jesus.

23:41 we indeed justly: One criminal knew the difference between those who had sinned and deserved to die and the One who did not.

23:42 remember me: This remark is amazing for its insight. While others mocked Jesus’ seeming inability to save Himself, this thief recognized that Jesus would live and rule. He wanted to be saved and take part in Christ’s kingdom.

Paradise

(Gk. *paradeisos*) (23:43; 2 Cor. 12:4; Rev. 2:7) Strong’s #3857

This word literally means “garden” or “park.” It was used with such a meaning in the Greek OT in Eccl. 2:5; Song 4:13. The Septuagint also used *paradeisos* for the Garden of Eden (see Gen. 2:8). In later Jewish thought, Paradise is the place of the righteous dead in Sheol. Jesus perhaps alluded to this idea in His story of Lazarus going to Abraham in 16:19–31. And when Jesus spoke to the thief on the Cross, He promised him that he would that day be with Him in Paradise (23:43). This again seems to indicate a pleasant place for the righteous among the dead. The promise of Paradise in Rev. 2:7 speaks of the restitution of an Edenic paradise, an everlasting home for believers (compare Gen. 2; Rev. 22).

23:43 you will be with Me: Jesus promised eternal life to the thief, doing what the mockers had asked Him to do in v. 39.

23:44 sixth hour . . . ninth hour: The first hour was sunrise, so the time was 12 P.M. to 3 P.M. During these three hours, signs of creation revealed that the hour was not one of light but of darkness (22:53).

23:45 the sun was darkened: This testimony of creation was designed to signal the importance of Jesus’ death. Passover falls on the full moon, so this cannot have been an eclipse of the sun. The imagery is similar to that associated with the day of the Lord (Joel 2:10, 30, 31; Amos 8: 9; Zeph. 1:15). It is not clear whether the curtain that was torn was the one at the entrance to the tabernacle, or the inner curtain that separated the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place. The tearing of the veil symbolizes a renewed access to God through the death of Christ (see v. 43; Heb 9; 10).

23:46 into Your hands: Jesus’ final words are from Ps. 31:5, where this is the prayer of trust from a righteous sufferer. Jesus exercised that faith here.

23:47 In Matt. 27:54; Mark 15:39, the centurion’s remark is noted as a confession of the Son of God. If Jesus was **righteous** and innocent, then He is who He claimed to be. Thus a second figure besides the thief on the cross had insight into Jesus’ death.

23:49 The Galileans **stood at a distance** to watch Jesus’ crucifixion. Their sadness is further explained in 24:16–20.

23:50 Joseph, a council member: Not every Jewish religious leader opposed Jesus.

23:51 He had not consented: Joseph did not agree with the sentence of Jesus. Mark 14:64 suggests that “all” present were in favor of Jesus’ execution, so Joseph may not have attended the trial. **waiting for the kingdom of God:** The description of Joseph in vv. 50, 51 recalls Zacharias and Elizabeth (1:5, 6) and Simeon and Anna (2:25, 38). The description suggests that Joseph was a follower of Christ.

23:52 the body of Jesus: There is no doubt that Jesus died. Efforts to explain the Resurrection as something like a return from a coma are more impossible than the idea of the Resurrection itself.

asked for the body of Jesus. ^{53v} Then he took it down, wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a tomb *that was hewn out of the rock*, where no one had ever lain before. ⁵⁴ That day was ^w the Preparation, and the Sabbath drew near.

⁵⁵ And the women ^x who had come with Him from Galilee followed after, and ^y they observed the tomb and how His body was laid.

In the Grave

⁵⁶ Then they returned and ^z prepared spices and fragrant oils. And they rested on the Sabbath ^a according to the commandment.

The Resurrection

Matt. 28:1-8; Mark 16:1-8; John 20:1-10

24 Now ^a on the first *day* of the week, very early in the morning, they, ¹ and certain *other women* with them, came to the tomb ^b bringing the spices which they had prepared. ^{2c} But they found the stone rolled away from the tomb. ^{3d} Then they went in and did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. ⁴ And it happened, as they were ² greatly perplexed about this, that ^e behold, two men stood by them in shining garments. ⁵ Then, as they were afraid and bowed *their faces to the earth*, they said to them, “Why do you seek the living among the dead? ⁶ He is not here, but is risen! ^f Remember how He spoke to you when He was still in Galilee, ⁷ saying, ‘The Son of Man must be ^g delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.’”

⁸ And ^h they remembered His words. ⁹ⁱ Then they returned from the tomb and told all these things to the eleven and to

⁵³ ^v Is. 53:9; Matt. 27:59; Mark 15:46 ★
⁵⁴ ^w Matt. 27:62;
 Mark 15:42
⁵⁵ ^x Luke 8:2
^y Mark 15:47
⁵⁶ ^z Mark 16:1; Luke 24:1 ^a Ex. 20:10;
 Deut. 5:14

CHAPTER 24

¹ ^c Matt. 28:1-8;
 Mark 16:1-8; John 20:1-8 ^b Luke 23:56 ¹ NU omits and certain other women with them
² ^c Matt. 28:2; Mark 16:4
³ ^d Mark 16:5
⁴ ^e John 20:12; Acts 1:10 ² NU omits greatly
⁶ ^f Matt. 16:21; Mark 8:31; Luke 9:22 ★
⁷ ^g Hos. 6:1, 2; Luke 9:44; 11:29, 30; 18:31-33
⁸ ^h Luke 9:22, 44; John 2:19-22
⁹ ⁱ Matt. 28:8; Mark 16:10

¹⁰ / Luke 8:3
¹¹ ^k Luke 24:25
³ nonsense
¹² / John 20:3-6
⁴ NU omits *lying*
¹³ ^m Mark 16:12
⁵ Lit. 60 stadia
¹⁵ ⁿ [Matt. 18:20]
¹⁶ ^o John 20:14; 21:4
¹⁷ ^p NU walk? And they stood still, looking sad.
¹⁸ ^p John 19:25
¹⁹ ^q Matt. 21:11; Luke 7:16; John 3:2; Acts 2:22 ^r Acts 7:22
²⁰ ^s Luke 23:1; Acts 13:27, 28
²¹ ^t Luke 1:68; 2:38; [Acts 1:6]

all the rest. ¹⁰ It was Mary Magdalene, ^j Joanna, Mary *the mother* of James, and the other *women* with them, who told these things to the apostles. ^{11k} And their words seemed to them like ³ idle tales, and they did not believe them. ^{12l} But Peter arose and ran to the tomb; and stooping down, he saw the linen cloths ⁴ lying by themselves; and he departed, marveling to himself at what had happened.

Christ Appears on the Road to Emmaus

Mark 16:12, 13

^{13m} Now behold, two of them were traveling that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was ⁵ seven miles from Jerusalem. ¹⁴ And they talked together of all these things which had happened. ¹⁵ So it was, while they conversed and reasoned, that ⁿ Jesus Himself drew near and went with them. ¹⁶ But ^o their eyes were restrained, so that they did not know Him.

¹⁷ And He said to them, “What kind of conversation *is* this that you have with one another as you ⁶ walk and are sad?”

¹⁸ Then the one ^p whose name was Cleopas answered and said to Him, “Are You the only stranger in Jerusalem, and have You not known the things which happened there in these days?”

¹⁹ And He said to them, “What things?”

So they said to Him, “The things concerning Jesus of Nazareth, ^q who was a Prophet ^r mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, ^{20s} and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death, and crucified Him. ²¹ But we were hoping ^t that it was He who was going to redeem Israel. Indeed, besides all this, today is the third day since these things happened. ²² Yes,

23:53 Jesus was given an honorable burial (see Deut. 21:22, 23). The **linen** was probably fine cloth. The **tomb** had a stone to cover it in order to make it secure (see Matt. 27:66). Guards were posted to stop anyone trying to steal the body (Matt. 27:65, 66).

23:54 Jesus was buried late on Friday, on the day called **Preparation**, when everything was made ready for the Sabbath, the day when no labor could take place.

23:56 **prepared spices and fragrant oils:** On Friday the women prepared for the anointing of Jesus' body on the day after the Sabbath, since they could not make preparations on the Sabbath. The spices were used to delay decay and lessen the odor of the body. Mark 16:1 notes that spices were also purchased after the Sabbath. Apparently the women did not anticipate a resurrection.

24:2 Matthew 28:2 mentions that an earthquake moved the **stone**, which would have fit in a channel in front of the entrance to the tomb. Moving the stone would have been possible, though difficult, for a group of people. The earthquake settles the question of how the stone was moved.

24:4, 5 It may be assumed that the **two men** who appeared were angels, based on the way their clothes are described as **shining garments** (see also v. 23). **Why do you seek the living:** Angels announced that Jesus was alive. Anointing Him would not be necessary.

24:6 **is risen . . . Remember:** The women were reminded that Jesus had predicted His resurrection as far back as **Galilee** (see 9:22).

24:10 Three women are named: **Mary Magdalene** (see 8:2; Matt. 28:1; Mark 16:1; John 20:1), **Joanna** (8:3), and **Mary the mother of James** (see Mark 15:40; 16:1). Other women also joined in the report of Jesus' resurrection. Mary, the last one at the Cross and the first one at the tomb, was given the privilege of relaying the first resurrection message.

24:11 Skepticism reigned among the disciples. It is clear that they did not expect a resurrection. **they did not believe:** The disciples thought the women's story was nonsense.

24:12 **Peter arose and ran:** Having already experienced a fulfilled prediction of the Lord (22:54–62), Peter hurried to the tomb to check out the women's story. It is hard to say whether Peter believed in the Resurrection when he left the tomb. Does his **marveling** indicate amazement or faith?

24:19–21 **Jesus of Nazareth . . . a Prophet:** These disciples on the road to Emmaus regarded Jesus as the Revealer of God's way and the Doer of His work. **He who was going to redeem Israel:** The disciples had hoped that God would once again save Israel through Jesus.

and “certain women of our company, who arrived at the tomb early, astonished us.”²³ When they did not find His body, they came saying that they had also seen a vision of angels who said He was alive.²⁴ And “certain of those *who were* with us went to the tomb and found *it* just as the women had said; but Him they did not see.”

²⁵ Then He said to them, “O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! ²⁶ Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His ^xglory?”

²⁷ And beginning at ^yMoses and ^zall the Prophets, He ⁷expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.

²⁸ Then they drew near to the village where they were going, and ^aHe ⁸indicated that He would have gone farther. ²⁹ But ^bthey constrained Him, saying, “Abide with us, for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent.” And He went in to stay with them.

³⁰ Now it came to pass, as ^dHe sat at the table with them, that He took bread, blessed and broke *it*, and gave it to them. ³¹ Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him; and He vanished from their sight.

³² And they said to one another, “Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?”

The Proof of His Resurrection

Mark 16:4; John 20:19-23; 1 Cor. 15:5

³³ So they rose up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven and those *who were* with them

²² ^y Matt. 28:8; Mark 16:10; Luke 24:9, 10

²⁴ ^y Luke 24:12

²⁶ ^y Acts 17:2,

3; [Heb. 2:9, 10]

^x [1 Pet. 1:10-12]

²⁷ ^y [Gen. 3:15;

12:3; Num. 21:9;

Deut. 18:15]; John

5:46 ^z [Ps. 16:9, 10;

22; 132:11; Is. 7:14;

9:6; Jer. 23:5; 33:14;

15; Ezek. 34:23;

37:25; Dan. 9:24];

Mic. 7:20; [Mal.

3:1; 4:2]; John 1:45;

5:39; [Rom. 1:1-6]

⁷ explained

²⁸ ^a Gen. 32:26;

42:7; Mark 6:48

⁸ acted as if

²⁹ ^b Gen. 19:2, 3;

Acts 16:15 ^c [John

14:23]

³⁰ ^d Matt. 14:19;

Mark 8:6; Luke 9:16

³⁴ ^e 1 Cor. 15:5

³⁵ ⁹ recognized

³⁶ ^y Mark 16:14;

John 20:19; 1 Cor.

15:5

³⁷ ⁹ Matt. 14:26;

Mark 6:49

³⁹ ^y John 20:20, 27;

1 John 1:1 ^y [1 Cor.

15:50]

⁴⁰ ¹ Some printed

New Testaments

omit v. 40. It is

found in nearly all

Gr. mss.

⁴¹ ^y Gen. 45:26

⁴² ^y John 21:5

⁴³ ¹ NU omits and

some honeycomb

⁴³ ¹ Acts 10:39-41

⁴⁴ ^m Matt. 16:21;

17:22; 20:18; Mark

8:31; Luke 9:22;

18:31

⁴⁵ ⁿ Acts 16:14;

1 John 5:20

⁴⁶ ^o Ps. 22; Hos. 6:2;

Luke 11:29, 30;

gathered together,³⁴ saying, “The Lord is risen indeed, and ^ehas appeared to Simon!”³⁵ And they told about the things *that had happened* on the road, and how He was ⁹known to them in the breaking of bread.

³⁶ Now as they said these things, Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them, and said to them, “Peace to you.”³⁷ But they were terrified and frightened, and supposed they had seen ^aa spirit.³⁸ And He said to them, “Why are you troubled? And why do doubts arise in your hearts?³⁹ Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself. ^bHandle Me and see, for a ⁱspirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have.”

⁴⁰ When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet. ⁴¹ But while they still did not believe ^jfor joy, and marveled, He said to them, ^k“Have you any food here?”⁴² So they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish ²and some honeycomb. ⁴³ And He took *it* and ate in their presence.

The Great Commission

Acts 1:3-8

⁴⁴ Then He said to them, ^m“These *are* the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and *the* Prophets and *the* Psalms concerning Me.”⁴⁵ And ⁿHe opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures.

⁴⁶ Then He said to them, ^o“Thus it is written, ³and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the

Acts 17:3 ★ ³ NU that the Christ should suffer and rise

24:23 a vision of angels . . . said He was alive: The women reported that there was no body found in Jesus’ tomb, and that angels had announced to them that Jesus lives. The fact that the men were still sad indicates that they did not believe the report. They were among the skeptics of v. 11.

24:24 As far as the disciples were concerned, there was still no decisive proof of Jesus’ resurrection. They wanted to see the resurrected Jesus. Thomas was not alone in his doubts (see John 20:25).

24:25 slow of heart to believe: Jesus, who at this time was still not known to the travelers, rebuked His companions and reminded them of the things that the prophets taught.

24:26 The prophets taught the suffering of **the Christ** and His entrance into **glory**. The passages referred to here would include Ps. 16; 100; Is. 53. See the Book of Acts for the apostle’s use of these passages to prove that Jesus is the promised Messiah (see Acts 2:14–36; 8:32, 33). Note how Jesus used the title of Christ (Messiah) to refer to Himself, while the disciples called Him merely a prophet (v. 19).

24:27 Going from the books of **Moses** to the **Prophets**, Jesus provided an overview of God’s plan in the Scriptures. This plan is present throughout the entire OT (see Acts 3:22–26; 10:43).

24:34 Before the two travelers could report their experience, the other disciples reported that **Simon** had seen Jesus as well.

24:37 a spirit: The disciples had a difficult time adjusting to the

fact that the raised Jesus was in their midst. They believed they were seeing a heavenly apparition (see v. 39).

24:38 why do doubts arise: Jesus’ appearances were designed to reassure the disciples about the reality of His vindication.

24:39 Jesus pointed out that a raised body is not a disembodied spirit. The presence of **flesh and bones** indicates that Jesus had been raised bodily, and that He was not a hallucination. He was raised in the same physical body in which He had been put to death. The difference was that His resurrected body is not corruptible and not subject to death. The apostle Paul discusses the resurrection body in 1 Cor. 15:35–58.

24:43 The physical nature of Jesus’ resurrected body was confirmed by the fact that he **ate** something.

24:44, 45 The plan of God as outlined in **the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms** was being fulfilled in Jesus. This threefold categorization of the ancient Scriptures summarizes the contents of the OT. **opened their understanding:** The disciples’ comprehension involved seeing how God’s plan, as outlined in the Scriptures, fits together.

24:46 Christ to suffer and to rise: Two parts of God’s plan had been fulfilled. Jesus had been crucified and raised from the dead. OT texts that predict these events are Ps. 118:22 (see Acts 4:11) and Ps. 22.

dead the third day, ⁴⁷and that repentance and ^rremission of sins should be preached in His name ^qto all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. ⁴⁸And ^ryou are witnesses of these things.

The Ascension

Mark 16:19; Acts 1:9

⁴⁹s Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city ⁴of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high.”

⁴⁷ ^p Dan. 9:24; Acts 5:31; 10:43; 13:38; 26:18 ^q [Ps. 22:27; Jer. 31:34; Mic. 4:2]
⁴⁸ ^r [Acts 1:8]; 1 Pet. 5:1
⁴⁹ ^s Is. 44:3; Joel 2:28; Acts 2:4
⁴ NU omits of Jerusalem
⁵⁰ ^t Matt. 21:17; Acts 1:12
⁵¹ ^u Ps. 68:18; 110:1 ★; Mark 16:19; Acts 1:9-11

⁵⁰And He led them out ^tas far as Bethany, and He lifted up His hands and blessed them. ⁵¹^uNow it came to pass, while He blessed them, that He was parted from them and carried up into heaven. ⁵²^vAnd they worshiped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, ⁵³and were continually ^win the temple ⁵praising and blessing God. ⁶Amen.

⁵² ^v Matt. 28:9 ⁵³ ^w Acts 2:46 ⁵ NU omits praising and ⁶ NU omits Amen.

24:47 Jesus had been considered a pretender and a blasphemer. After His resurrection, people had to change their minds and serve Him for who He really is, the Son of God. This is the message Peter would preach at Pentecost, a message that would result in thousands of people declaring Jesus as their Lord. Jesus summarized the mission of the disciples as preaching **repentance**, calling people to turn from their own selfish ways to Christ, the One who had died for them. **remission of sins**: The content of the disciples’ preaching would center on God’s gracious offer of forgiveness to all who would believe (see Acts 2:38; 10:43). **in His name**: This is a reference to Jesus’ authority. Forgiveness and blessing come only through the work of the risen Jesus (see Acts 2:30–39). The message of Jesus’ salvation can go **to all nations**, to Jews and Gentiles alike. The offer is made to anyone who will receive it (see Acts 10–15). The disciples’ mission would begin in **Jerusalem** where Jesus died; from there, it would spread out into the entire world (see Acts 1:8).

24:48 witnesses: Jesus pointed out that the disciples were called to testify to His work (see Acts 1:8, 22; 3:15; 5:32; 10:39, 41; 13:31; 22:15; 26:16).

24:49 Promise of My Father: This is a reference to the baptism of

the Holy Spirit at Pentecost (see Acts 2). It was promised in Joel 2:28 (see Acts 2:14–18), and in Jer. 31:31–33. Peter called this coming of the Spirit “the beginning” (see Acts 11:15) because the real fulfillment of God’s promise of salvation would start in those people united by the Spirit to establish the church. **tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high**: The disciples were to remain in Jerusalem until the Spirit empowered them on the day of Pentecost.

24:50 Bethany was just outside Jerusalem (19:29).

24:51 carried up into heaven: This is the first of two descriptions of the Ascension in Luke and Acts (see Acts 1:9–11). Luke may be summarizing here what happened 40 days later to create a link to the Book of Acts.

24:53 continually in the temple praising and blessing God: The disciples’ sorrow over Jesus’ death had been totally reversed (v. 17). Now the disciples awaited the promise of God with joy. Luke’s account continues in the Book of Acts. There he records the disciple’s initial response to Jesus’ commission to preach to all the nations (v. 47).

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN



THE WORDS “Read This First” have taken an important role in the packaging of modern consumer products. Most consumers think life is too short for instruction manuals, so the packagers state it plainly: If you cannot read the manual, at least read this very important part. “Read This First”—it is for your own good. The Gospel of John makes a similar claim. It is the only book in the Bible that states its purpose clearly and succinctly: It was written to tell individuals how to find eternal life (20:31). This clearly identified purpose sets the Gospel of John apart from the other Gospels. It is not so much a life of Jesus as it is a powerful presentation of His deity. Every chapter presents evidence—both signs and statements—for His divine authority. According to John, believing that Jesus is the Son of God, the Savior of the world, is the beginning of eternal life (3:14–17). What could be more important? John’s statement about his Gospel is as good as a “Read This First” sticker for one’s entire life.

Author The author of the Gospel of John does not identify himself by name, but his identity can be learned from the dialogue recorded in 21:19–24. The author calls himself “the disciple whom Jesus loved” (21:20), a designation that occurs four other times in the book (13:23; 19:26; 20:2; 21:7). This was the same “disciple who . . . wrote these things” (21:24). The author had to be one of the twelve apostles, because he is described as leaning on Jesus’ bosom at the Last Supper, an event to which only the apostles were invited (13:23; see Mark 14:17). These details imply that he was one of the three disciples closest to Jesus: Peter, James, or John (see Matt. 17:1). He could not be Peter, because 21:20 states that Peter looked back and saw this one Jesus loved, and in another place asked a question of him (13:23, 24). On the other hand, James was martyred too early to be the author of this Gospel (see Acts 12:1, 2). Thus it is reasonable to conclude that this book was written by the apostle John. This conclusion is supported by early Christians such as Polycarp (A.D. 60–155), who was a follower of John.

Date In the nineteenth century, many critics claimed that the Gospel of John was written around A.D. 170. Then in 1935 C. H. Roberts discovered a scrap of papyrus in Egypt containing portions of 18:31–33, 37, 38 that disproved their theory. This fragment, the Rylands papyrus, was written around A.D. 125. The Gospel itself must have been written before A.D. 125, or even A.D. 110, allowing time for it to be copied and then carried to Egypt.

Conservative scholars typically date the book between A.D. 85 and A.D. 95. The book makes no reference to the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, implying that such a significant event must have occurred many years earlier. Moreover, the statement about Peter in 21:18, 23 seems to indicate that the Gospel was written when John was an old man. Only then would John have had to explain the death of Peter, or contend with a long-standing rumor of the early church. Others have suggested a date before A.D. 70 on the basis of 5:2, which indicates that Jerusalem was still standing. But there is a question about the interpretation of the tense of the verb *to be*. It is likely that the reason John used the present tense in this verse was to describe Jerusalem vividly, not to describe its present condition. Without more evidence than the tense of the verb in 5:2, the date of around A.D. 90 still seems most reasonable.

Theology The Gospel of John is a persuasive argument for the deity of Jesus. It concentrates on presenting Jesus as the Word, that is, God (1:1) who became a man (1:14). Thus John meticulously records the statements and describes the miracles of Jesus that can only be attributed to God Himself.

Jesus called Himself the bread of life (6:35, 41, 48, 51), the light of the world (8:12; 9:5), the door for the sheep (10:7, 9), the good shepherd (10:11, 14), the resurrection and the life (11:25), the way, the truth, the life (14:6), and the true vine (15:1, 5). Each of these statements begins with the words, “I am,” recalling God’s revelation of His name, “I AM,” to Moses (see Ex. 3:14). Jesus did not say He gave bread; He said He *is* the Bread which gives life. He did not say He would teach the way, the truth, and the life; instead He said He *is* the Way, because He *is* the Truth and the Life. These are Jesus’ clear claims to deity: He was not a mere man.

Then there are the signs of Jesus’ deity. Miracles in the Gospel of John are called “signs” because they point to Jesus’ divine nature. John records seven such signs: changing water into wine (2:1–11), healing a man’s son (4:46–54), healing a lame man (5:1–9), multiplying bread and fish (6:1–14), walking on water (6:15–21), healing a blind man (9:1–7), and raising Lazarus (11:38–44). These miracles show that Jesus is God; He possesses power over nature. Other indications of Jesus’ deity include the testimonies of John the Baptist (1:32–34), Nathanael (1:49), the blind man (9:35–38), Martha (11:27), and Thomas (20:28)—not to mention Jesus’ own words (5:19–26).

Jesus was also fully man. His body grew weary (4:6), His soul was troubled (12:27; 13:21), and He groaned in His spirit (11:33). At the same time, this God-man was Israel’s Messiah. Andrew told his brother, “We have found the Messiah” (1:41). Nathanael concluded, “You are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!” (1:49). Even the Samaritan woman testified to Jesus’ identity (4:25, 26, 29). Jesus the Messiah was and is the Savior of the world (4:42; 11:27; 12:13).

John urges us to trust in Jesus for eternal life. Our trust is built on our belief that (1) the Father is in Christ, and Christ is in the Father (10:38; 14:10, 11); (2) Christ came from God (16:17, 30), and God sent Him (11:42; 17:8, 21; see 6:29); and (3) He is the Son of God (6:69; 11:27; 20:31). John reveals the Bible’s most important message: Believe and follow Jesus, because He is the way to eternal life.

CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

John focuses on Jesus’ claim that He was God by including Christ’s seven “I am” statements: “I am the bread of life” (6:35, 48); “I am the light of the world” (8:12); “I am the door” (10:7, 9); “I am the good shepherd” (10:11, 14); “I am the resurrection and the life” (11:25); “I am the way, the truth, and the life” (14:6); “I am the true vine” (15:1).

John doesn’t take any chances that we might miss what these “I am” statements suggest. He records certain occasions when Jesus equates Himself with the Old Testament “I AM” (Yahweh). You can’t be more specific than this: “Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM” (8:58).



View of the interior of a typical ancient sheep pen. Jesus said, “I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture” (John 10:9).

JOHN OUTLINE

- I. Prologue 1:1–18
- II. Christ’s public ministry 1:19—12:50
 - A. The beginning of Christ’s ministry 1:19—4:54
 - B. The controversy 5:1—12:50
- III. Christ’s private ministry 13:1—17:26
 - A. The foot washing 13:1–30
 - B. Jesus’ announced departure and discourse on relationships 13:31—16:33
 - C. Jesus’ final prayer 17:1–26
- IV. Jesus’ death and resurrection 18:1—20:31
 - A. Jesus’ arrest and trials 18:1—19:15
 - B. The Crucifixion 19:16–42
 - C. Jesus’ resurrection and appearances 20:1–31
- V. Epilogue 21:1–25

4 B.C.–A.D. 39
Herod Antipas
rules in Galilee and
Perea

A.D. 14–37
Tiberius Caesar is
Roman emperor

C. A.D. 25–27
John the Baptist’s
ministry

A.D. 26–36
Pontius Pilate
is procurator of
Judea

C. A.D. 27
Jesus’ first Judean
ministry

C. A.D. 27–29
Jesus’ Galilean
ministry

C. A.D. 30
Second Judean
ministry;
Crucifixion;
Resurrection



Chapels located at Bethabara beyond the Jordan, one of the possible sites of Jesus’ baptism

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The Deity of Christ

In the beginning ^a was the Word, and the ^b Word was ^c with God, and the Word was ^d God. ^{2e} He was in the beginning with God.

The Preincarnate Work of Christ

^{3f} All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. ^{4g} In Him was life, and ^h the life was the light of men. ⁵ And ⁱ the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not ^l comprehend it.

The Forerunner of Christ

⁶ There was a ^j man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷ This man came for a ^k witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might ^l believe. ⁸ He was not that Light, but *was sent to* bear witness of that ^m Light.

CHAPTER 1

¹ ^a Gen. 1:1; [Col. 1:17]; 1 John 1:1
^b [John 1:14]; Rev. 19:13 ^c [John 17:5; 1 John 1:2]
^d [1 John 5:20]

² ^e Gen. 1:1
³ ^f Ps. 33:6; [Eph. 3:9; Col. 1:16, 17; Heb. 1:2]
⁴ ^g [1 John 5:11]
^h John 8:12; 9:5; 12:46

⁵ ⁱ [John 3:19] ^l Or overcome
⁶ ^j Mal. 3:1; Matt. 3:1-17; Mark 1:1-11; Luke 3:1-22
⁷ ^k John 3:25-36; 5:33-35 ^l [John 3:16]

⁸ ^m Is. 9:2; 49:6
⁹ ⁿ Is. 49:6 ² Or That was the true Light which, coming into the world, gives light to every man.

The Rejection of Christ

⁹ⁿ That ² was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world.

¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and ^o the world did not know Him. ^{11p} He came to His ³ own, and His ⁴ own did not receive Him.

The Acceptance of Christ

¹² But ^q as many as received Him, to them He gave the ⁵ right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: ^{13r} who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

¹⁰ ^o Acts 13:27; 1 Cor. 8:6; Col. 1:16; Heb. 1:2

¹¹ ^p Is. 53:3; [Luke 19:14] ☆ ³ His own things or domain

⁴ His own people ¹² ^q [John 11:52]; Gal. 3:26

⁵ authority ¹³ ^r [John 3:5]; James 1:18; [1 Pet. 1:23; 1 John 2:29; 3:9]

1:1 In the beginning: Genesis 1:1 starts with the moment of creation and moves forward to the creation of humanity. John 1:1 starts with creation and contemplates eternity past. The fact that **the Word was with God** suggests a face-to-face relationship. In the ancient world, it was important that persons of equal station be on the same level, or face-to-face, when sitting across from one another. Thus the word *with* indicates a personal relationship, but also implies equal status. The Word, Jesus Christ Himself, is an active Person in communication with the Father (see 1 John 1:2). Moreover, **the Word was God**. The word order in Greek shows that the Word was “God,” not “a god.” This is a straightforward declaration of Christ’s deity, since John uses *Word* to refer to Jesus. The Word was of the very quality of God, while still retaining His personal distinction from the Father.

1:2 Neither the Person of Christ, nor His Sonship, came into being at a point in time. Rather, the Father and the Son have always been in loving fellowship with one another.

1:3 All things were made through Him: God the Father created the world (Gen. 1:1) through God the Son (Col. 1:16; Heb. 1:2). All creation was made through Him. Thus He is the Creator God.

1:4 Note that **life** is not said to have been created; life existed in Christ (5:26; 6:57; 10:10; 11:25; 14:6; 17:3; 20:31). Humans are dependent on God for life. Our existence, spiritually and physically, depends on God’s sustaining power. In contrast, the Son has life in Himself from all eternity. The life, Jesus Christ, is also **the light of men**. This image conveys the concept of revelation. As the light, Jesus Christ reveals both sin and God to humans (see Ps. 36:9). Later in this Gospel, Christ declares Himself to be both the life (11:25) and the light (8:12). Death and darkness flee when the life and light enter. The dead are raised and the blind receive their sight, both physically and spiritually.

1:5 light shines in the darkness: Christ entered this dark world to give it spiritual light (see Is. 9:2). The word translated **comprehend** can mean (1) to take hold of; (2) to overpower; or (3) to understand. Therefore, this verse may mean that darkness did not positively take hold of or understand the light, or that darkness did not negatively overcome the light. Both statements are true. Humans did not appropriate or understand the light, nor did they overtake or overpower it. Although Satan and his forces resist the light, they cannot thwart its power. In short, Jesus is life and light; those who accept Him are “sons of light” (12:35, 36). As the creation of light was the beginning of the original creation (Gen. 1:3), so when believers receive the light, they become part of the new creation (2 Cor. 4:3-6).

1:6 John the Baptist is here contrasted with Jesus Christ. Jesus is God (v. 1); John **was a man sent from God**. Jesus was the Light (v. 4); John was the lamp that bore witness to the Light (vv. 7, 8).

1:7 To bear witness means “to testify” or “to declare.” John uses the

word translated *witness* 33 times as a verb and 14 times as a noun in his Gospel. The term is particularly important to his purpose, which is to record adequate witnesses to Jesus as the Messiah so that individuals might believe in Him (20:30, 31). **Believe** means “to trust.” John uses this verb almost one hundred times in his Gospel to express what must take place for a person to receive the gift of eternal life.

1:9 In order to give due notice to the incarnation of Jesus, this verse may be rephrased: “That was the true Light coming into the world, which enlightens every man.” Jesus became man in order to reveal the truth to all people. Depending on the context, **world** can refer to (1) the universe; (2) the earth; (3) humanity; or (4) the human system opposed to God.

1:11 Receive here means “to receive with favor” and implies “welcome.” Instead of a welcome mat, Jesus had a door slammed in His face. The themes of rejection and reception (v. 12) introduced in the prologue (1:1-18) appear again and again throughout the Gospel of John.

1:12 The phrase **believe in His name** occurs three times in the Gospel of John (1:12; 2:23; 3:18). *Name* does not refer to the term by which He is called, but to what His name stands for—the *Lord is salvation* (see Ex. 3:14, 15). In this context, the phrase means to believe that Jesus is the Word, the life, and the Light—that is, He is the Christ, the Son of God (20:31). **To them He gave the right** refers to the legitimate entitlement to the position of **children of God**. By believing, undeserving sinners can become full members of God’s family.

1:13 born . . . of God: This new spiritual birth is not **of blood**, that

the Word

(Gk. *ho logos*) (1:1; 1 John 1:1; Rev. 19:13) Strong’s #3056

This Greek word was used to speak of the principle of the universe, even the creative energy that generated the universe. The term *logos* may also have some connection with the OT presentation of Wisdom as a personification or attribute of God (see Prov. 8). In both the Jewish conception and the Greek, the Logos was associated with the idea of beginnings—the world began through the origination and instrumentality of the Word (Gen. 1:3). John may have had these ideas in mind, but more likely he used this word in a new way to identify the Son of God as divine. He is the image of the invisible God (Col. 1:15), the express image of God’s substance (Heb. 1:3). In the Godhead, the Son functions as the Revealer of God and is God in reality.

The Incarnation of Christ

^{14s} And the Word ^tbecame ^uflesh and dwelt among us, and ^vwe beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, ^wfull of grace and truth.

^{15x} John bore witness of Him and cried out, saying, “This was He of whom I said, ^y‘He who comes after me ^zis preferred before me, ^zfor He was before me.’”

¹⁶⁷ And of His ^afullness we have all received, and grace for grace. ¹⁷ For ^bthe law was given through Moses, *but* ^cgrace and ^dtruth came through Jesus Christ. ^{18e} No one has seen God at any time. ^fThe only begotten ^gSon, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared *Him*.

14 ^s Matt. 1:16; Rev. 19:13 ^t Rom. 1:3; Gal. 4:4; Phil. 2:7; 1 Tim. 3:16; Heb. 2:14; 1 John 1:1; 4:2; 2 John 7 ^u Heb. 2:11 ^v Is. 40:5; 2 Pet. 1:16-18 ^w [John 8:32; 14:6; 18:37]; Col. 1:19
15 ^x Mal. 3:1; John 3:32 ^y [Matt. 3:11] ^z [Col. 1:17] ^z ranks higher than I
16 ^a [Eph. 1:23; 3:19; 4:13; Col. 1:19; 2:9] ^u Nu For
17 ^b [Ex. 20:1] ^c John 1:14; [Rom. 5:21; 6:14] ^d [John 8:32; 14:6; 18:37] ^e Ex. 33:20;

John's Witness to the Priests and Levites

Matt. 3:1-12; Mark 1:2-8; Luke 3:3-16

¹⁹ Now this is ^gthe testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, “Who are you?”

^{20h} He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, “I am not the Christ.”

²¹ And they asked him, “What then? Are you Elijah?”

He said, “I am not.”

“Are you ⁱthe Prophet?”

Matt. 11:27; 1 Tim. 6:16 ^f Ps. 2:7; John 3:16, 18; 1 John 4:9 ^g NU
God ^h 19 ^g John 5:33 ^h Luke 3:15; John 3:28; Acts 13:25
21 ⁱ Deut. 18:15, 18; Matt. 21:11; John 6:14; 7:40

is, by physical generation or by parents. Nor is the new birth of the will of the flesh, that is, by personal effort. Neither is the birth of the will of man, that is, something done by another individual. Each person must individually trust Jesus Christ for eternal life. It is a gift to be received (4:10, 14), not a reward achieved through any human effort.

1:14 The Word became flesh: The Son of God who was from eternity became human, with limitations in time and space (see Phil. 2:5-8). This is the doctrine of the incarnation: God became human. Nothing of the essential nature of deity was lost in this event; we might rephrase *became* as “took to Himself.” John uses the word *flesh* to refer to the physical nature of humans, not to our sinful disposition (contrast Rom. 8:1-11). **dwelt among us:** *Dwelt* comes from the Greek word for *tent* that was used in the Greek OT for the tabernacle, where the presence of God dwelt. In the OT, **glory** refers to the divine presence (see Ex. 33:18). As God manifested His glory in the tabernacle, so Jesus displayed His divine presence before the apostles (18:6; 20:26, 27). **Only begotten** (3:16, 18) means unique, one of a kind. The same term is used of Isaac (see Heb. 11:17), who was not the only physical son of Abraham, but was the unique son of promise. All who trust Christ are born of God. In the Gospel of John, these “born ones” are called children of God (vv. 12, 13), but Jesus Christ is the unique Son of God. He is the only Son who is fully God. He is also **full of grace and truth**. When God revealed Himself to Moses, He proclaimed Himself to be “abounding in goodness and truth” (see Ex. 34:6). As applied to Jesus Christ, this phrase marks Him as the author of perfect redemption and perfect revelation.

1:15 He was before me: Jesus was born after John the Baptist (see Luke 1:36) and began His ministry later than John the Baptist. Yet John the Baptist said Jesus was *before* him, meaning that Jesus’ existence is from eternity past (v. 30).

1:16 Most people take the words of v. 15 to be John the Baptist’s. Probably the words of vv. 16-18 are those of John the writer of this Gospel, although they too may be John the Baptist’s. **Grace**

for grace means grace piled upon grace. The background of this doubled term, as well as the use of the term in v. 17, is found in Ex. 32-34. Moses and the people had received grace, but they were in tremendous need of more grace (Ex. 33:13).

1:17 Throughout the NT, **grace** is God’s favor expressed to sinful humankind apart from any human works or worth. Though there was abundant grace and truth expressed by God through the Law He gave Moses, it is in the person of Jesus Christ that grace and truth are realized to the fullest.

1:18 No one has seen God: God is Spirit (4:24) and is invisible (see Col. 1:15; 1 Tim. 1:17) unless God chooses to reveal Himself. Humans cannot look at God and live (Ex. 33:20). Abraham, the friend of God, did not see God. Even Moses, the lawgiver, could not look at God’s face (see Ex. 33:22, 23). However, the Son is in intimate relationship with the Father, face-to-face with God (see 1:1; 6:46; 1 John 1:2). God became visible to human eyes in the man Jesus. It is through seeing the Son that we see God. We cannot see Him today, but we know Him through His word. **The bosom**, or chest, is used here to designate a close and intimate relationship (see 13:23; Luke 16:23). The One who is the Father’s **only begotten Son** and who knows God intimately came to earth and **declared Him**. *Declared* can also mean “explained.”

1:19, 20 The Jews refers to the Jewish leaders or the council (the Sanhedrin), who would be responsible for examining anyone thought to be a prophet, to see if the person was true or false. The Sanhedrin included Sadducees and Pharisees; those who came to investigate John the Baptist were Pharisees (v. 24). **Who are you:** In the first century many people were waiting for the coming of the Messiah promised by the OT prophets. John did not claim to be the Messiah, but the rulers were concerned about maintaining peace under the eye of Rome, and they kept a close watch on all prospective messiahs. John was quick to acknowledge that he was **not the Christ**.

1:21 Are you Elijah: The OT promised that Elijah would come

The Word Was God

John 1:1 is probably the strongest passage in the NT for declaring the deity of Jesus Christ. Because of this, many who deny this biblical doctrine, especially cultists, have attempted to undercut it by arguing that this passage only teaches that Jesus is “a god” and so not fully Deity. This confused position falls on at least two grounds. Such a view is polytheistic, the belief in more than one god. Second, it betrays a misunderstanding of Greek grammar. Verse 1 of the first chapter of John reads, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” The last portion of v. 1 is the major point of contention. It reads in the Greek *theos en ho logos*, or literally, “the Word was God.” God, or *theos*, occurs in this verse without the Greek article *ho*, so that some have contended that the lack of the article in the Greek text should cause the statement to be translated “the Word was a god.” The best understanding for the translation, however, as recognized by Greek scholars, is that since *theos* is a predicate and precedes the noun *logos* and a verb, it is natural for it to occur here without the article. Greek scholars are agreed that the verse should be translated as it regularly is in modern and ancient translations, clearly affirming that Jesus is indeed God.



And he answered, “No.”

²² Then they said to him, “Who are you, that we may give an answer to those who sent us? What do you say about yourself?”

²³ He said: *j* “I am

k “The voice of one crying in the wilderness:

“Make straight the way of the LORD,” *l*

as the prophet Isaiah said.”

²⁴ Now those who were sent were from the Pharisees. ²⁵ And they asked him, saying, “Why then do you baptize if you are not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?”

²⁶ John answered them, saying, *l* “I baptize with water, *m* but there stands One among you whom you do not know. ²⁷ *n* It is He who, coming after me, ⁹ is preferred before me, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose.”

²⁸ These things were done *o* in ¹ Bethabara beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

John's Witness at Christ's Baptism

Matt. 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21, 22

²⁹ The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold! *p* The Lamb of God *q* who takes away the sin of the world! ³⁰ This is He of whom I said, ‘After me comes a Man who ² is preferred before me, for He was before me.’ ³¹ I did not know Him; but that He should be revealed to Israel, *r* therefore I came baptizing with water.”

²³ / Matt. 3:3 ⁴ Is. 40:3 ★; Mal. 3:1
²⁶ / Matt. 3:11; [Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; Acts 1:5]
^m Mal. 3:1; John 4:10; 8:19; 9:30; Acts 13:27
²⁷ *n* [John 3:31]; Acts 19:4; [Col. 1:17] ⁹ ranks higher than *l*
²⁸ *o* Judg. 7:24
¹ NU, M Bethany
²⁹ *p* [Ex. 12:3]; Acts 8:32; [1 Pet. 1:19]; Rev. 5:6-14 ^q [Is. 53:11; 1 Cor. 15:3; Gal. 1:4; 1 Pet. 2:24; 1 John 2:2; Rev. 1:5]
³⁰ ² ranks higher than *l*
³¹ *r* Mal. 3:1; Matt. 3:6

³² ^s Is. 42:1; 61:1; Matt. 3:16; Mark 1:10; Luke 3:22
³³ ^t Matt. 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; Acts 1:5
³⁴ ^u Ps. 2:7; Luke 1:35 ★; John 11:27
³⁶ ^v John 1:29
³⁷ ^w Matt. 4:20, 22
⁴⁰ ^x Matt. 4:18; Mark 1:29; 13:3; John 6:8; 12:22
⁴¹ ³ Lit. Anointed One
⁴² ^y Matt. 16:18
⁴ NU John ⁵ Gr. Petros, usually translated Peter

^{32s} And John bore witness, saying, “I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and He remained upon Him. ³³ I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, ‘Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, ^t this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’ ³⁴ And I have seen and testified that this is the “Son of God.”

Andrew and Peter Follow Christ

³⁵ Again, the next day, John stood with two of his disciples. ³⁶ And looking at Jesus as He walked, he said, *v* “Behold the Lamb of God!”

³⁷ The two disciples heard him speak, and they *w* followed Jesus. ³⁸ Then Jesus turned, and seeing them following, said to them, “What do you seek?”

They said to Him, “Rabbi” (which is to say, when translated, Teacher), “where are You staying?”

³⁹ He said to them, “Come and see.” They came and saw where He was staying, and remained with Him that day (now it was about the tenth hour).

⁴⁰ One of the two who heard John speak, and followed Him, was ^x Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. ⁴¹ He first found his own brother Simon, and said to him, “We have found the ³ Messiah” (which is translated, the Christ). ⁴² And he brought him to Jesus.

Now when Jesus looked at him, He said, “You are Simon the son of ⁴ Jonah. *y* You shall be called Cephas” (which is translated, ⁵ A Stone).

before the great day of the Lord (see Mal. 4:5). **Are you the Prophet:** Moses had predicted that a prophet like himself would come (see Deut. 18:15).

1:23 The voice: Christ is the Word; John the Baptist was the voice. When pressed to identify himself, John the Baptist claimed that he was the fulfillment of Is. 40:3. In Isaiah's day there were few roads. When a king traveled, roads were built so that the royal chariot would not have to travel over rough terrain or be stuck in the mud. Isaiah was saying that before God appeared to manifest His glory, a voice would be heard, inviting Israel to make straight the way by which God Himself would come. John was identifying himself as that voice calling people to **make straight the way of the Lord.**

1:24 The Pharisees were an influential sect that numbered about six thousand. As strict interpreters of the Law in Israel, they were extremely zealous for ritual and tradition.

1:25 Why . . . do you baptize: Performing the rite of baptism was regarded as making a claim to authority. The Pharisees were asking, “By what authority do you perform this religious rite?”

1:27 Undoing the sandal strap was the job of a slave. The Jewish Talmud says, “Everything that a servant will do for his master a scholar shall perform for his teacher, except the menial task of loosing his sandal thong.” Thus John was saying that “Jesus Christ is the living Lord and I am the voice, His servant and slave. Actually, I'm not even worthy to be His slave.”

1:28 The location of Bethabara is unknown. Some think that Bethany is meant, but not the same Bethany as the familiar one near

Jerusalem. **Beyond the Jordan** means east of the Jordan River. Evidently, this was John's normal place for baptizing.

1:29 The Lamb of God: In the OT, the Israelites sacrificed lambs at the Passover feast (see Ex. 12:21) and as offerings (see Lev. 14:10–25). Jesus Christ is the Lamb that God would give as a sacrifice for the sins not only of Israel, but of the whole world (see Is. 52:13–53:12).

1:31 I did not know Him: John and Jesus were cousins, so they probably knew each other. But John apparently did not know that Jesus was the Messiah. All John knew was that he was to baptize with water and that the Messiah would be made known to Israel through him. God had given John a sign by which he would know the Messiah, namely, the descending of the Holy Spirit as a dove.

1:33 He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit: Seven times the NT mentions this ministry of Jesus. Five are prophetic (see also Matt. 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; Acts 1:5); one is historical (see Acts 11:16–18); one is doctrinal (see 1 Cor. 12:13).

1:35 One of the two disciples of John the Baptist was Andrew (v. 40). The other is not named but was probably John, the author of this Gospel.

1:41 He first found: As soon as he came to faith, Andrew must have sought out his brother Simon Peter (note the four distinct days suggested in vv. 29, 35, 43). The excitement of discovering the Son of God, the Messiah (see Matt. 26:63, 64; Mark 14:61, 62; Luke 22:67–70), was contagious among the early believers.

1:42 he brought him to Jesus: Andrew appears two more times in the Gospel of John (6:4–9; 12:20–22); both times he is bringing someone to Jesus. **Cephas** is the Aramaic word for “rock” (see Matt. 16:18).

Nazareth

Nazareth is a beautifully secluded town nestled in the southernmost hills of the Lebanon mountain range. The city lay close to the important trade routes of Palestine. It overlooked the Plain of Esdraelon through which caravans passed as they traveled from Gilead to the south and west. North of the city was the main road from Ptolemais to the Decapolis, a road over which the Roman legions frequently traveled. This fact may account for the possible source of the name Nazareth in the Aramaic word meaning “watchtower.” This, coupled with a rather bad reputation in morals and religion and a certain crudeness in the Galilean dialect prompted Nathanael, when he first learned of Jesus of Nazareth, to ask, “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” (1:46).



A view of modern Nazareth with the Church of Annunciation (left)
www.HolyLandPhotos.org

Philip and Nathanael Follow Christ

⁴³ The following day Jesus wanted to go to Galilee, and He found ²Philip and said to him, “Follow Me.” ⁴⁴ Now ^aPhilip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. ⁴⁵ Philip found ^bNathanael and said to him, “We have found Him of whom ^cMoses in the law, and also the ^dprophets, wrote—Jesus ^eof Nazareth, the ^fson of Joseph.”

⁴⁶ And Nathanael said to him, ^g“Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” Philip said to him, “Come and see.”

⁴³ ² Matt. 10:3; John 6:5; 12:21, 22; 14:8, 9
⁴⁴ ^a John 12:21
⁴⁵ ^b John 21:2
^c [Gen. 3:15; Deut. 18:18]; Luke 24:27
^d [Is. 4:2; 7:14; 9:6; Mic. 5:2; Zech. 6:12]; Luke 24:27 ^e [Matt. 2:23]; Luke 2:4
^f Luke 3:23
⁴⁶ ^g John 7:41, 42, 52
⁴⁷ ^h Ps. 32:2; 73:1
⁴⁹ ⁱ Ps. 2:7 ★;

⁴⁷ Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward Him, and said of him, “Behold, ^han Israelite indeed, in whom is no deceit!”

⁴⁸ Nathanael said to Him, “How do You know me?”

Jesus answered and said to him, “Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.”

⁴⁹ Nathanael answered and said to Him, “Rabbi, ⁱYou are the Son of God! You are ^jthe King of Israel!”

Matt. 14:33; Luke 1:35 / Matt. 21:5

1:43 From this verse, it might appear that **Philip** followed Jesus without being evangelized by another disciple, but there are several indications that Philip was approached by Andrew and Peter before he actually met the Lord. Verse 44 says that Andrew and Peter were from the same city as Philip, suggesting that they had talked to him. Furthermore, when Philip told Nathanael what had happened, he said “we” have found the Messiah (v. 45).

1:45 Nathanael is not mentioned in the synoptic Gospels. But in every list of the apostles in Matthew, Mark, and Luke, the name Bartholomew is listed with Philip, as Nathanael is linked with Philip here. It is likely that Nathanael and Bartholomew were the same person. **son of Joseph:** Philip did not have knowledge of the virgin birth at this time. However, soon all of the disciples would recognize Christ as the Son of God (v. 49).

1:46 Nazareth: Nathanael knew that the OT prophets had predicted that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem. Furthermore, Nazareth was an obscure village. Nathanael simply could not fathom that such a significant person as the Messiah could come from such an insignificant place as Nazareth.

1:47 an Israelite indeed: In his younger life Jacob, the first Israelite, was a cunning, scheming fellow full of **deceit**. Nathanael was an Israelite, a descendant of Jacob, but he was genuine and sincere. Jesus read Nathanael’s character like an open book (2:24).

1:48, 49 under the fig tree: In the OT, this expression often suggests being safe and at leisure (see 1 Kin. 4:25; Mic. 4:4; Zech. 3:10). Nathanael may have been meditating under the tree about the dream of Jacob referred to in vv. 50, 51. **I saw you:** Jesus manifested His supernatural knowledge. Apparently, this incident convinced

⁵⁰Jesus answered and said to him, “Because I said to you, ‘I saw you under the fig tree,’ do you believe? You will see greater things than these.” ⁵¹And He said to him, “Most assuredly, I say to you, ^khereafter ⁶ you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.”

Christ Changes Water to Wine

2 On the third day there was a ^awedding in ^bCana of Galilee, and the ^cmother of Jesus was there. ²Now both Jesus and His disciples were invited to the wedding. ³And when they ran out of wine, the mother of Jesus said to Him, “They have no wine.”

⁴Jesus said to her, ^d“Woman, ^ewhat does your concern have to do with Me? ^fMy hour has not yet come.”

⁵His mother said to the servants, “Whatever He says to you, do *it*.”

⁶Now there were set there six waterpots of stone, ^gaccording to the manner of purification of the Jews, containing twenty or thirty gallons apiece. ⁷Jesus said to them, “Fill the waterpots with water.” And they filled them up to the

51 ^k Gen. 28:12; [Luke 2:9, 13]; Acts 1:10; 7:55, 56 ⁶ NU omits *hereafter*

CHAPTER 2

1 ^a [Heb. 13:4]
^b John 4:46 ^c John 19:25
4 ^d John 19:26
^e 2 Sam. 16:10
^f John 7:6, 8, 30; 8:20
^g Matt. 15:2; [Mark 7:3; Luke 11:39]; John 3:25

9 ^h John 4:46
11 ⁱ John 4:54
[John 1:14]
^j revealed
12 ^k Matt. 4:13; John 4:46 ^l Matt. 12:46; 13:55
13 ^m Ex. 12:14; Deut. 16:1-6; John 5:1; 6:4; 11:55
14 ⁿ Mal. 3:1 ★;
Matt. 21:12; Mark 11:15, 17; Luke 19:45
² Lit. *sitting*

brim. ⁸And He said to them, “Draw *some* out now, and take *it* to the master of the feast.” And they took *it*. ⁹When the master of the feast had tasted ^hthe water that was made wine, and did not know where it came from (but the servants who had drawn the water knew), the master of the feast called the bridegroom. ¹⁰And He said to him, “Every man at the beginning sets out the good wine, and when the *guests* have well drunk, then the inferior. You have kept the good wine until now!”

The Disciples Believe

¹¹This ⁱbeginning of signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, ^jand ^lmanifested His glory; and His disciples believed in Him.

¹²After this He went down to ^kCapernaum, He, His mother, ^lHis brothers, and His disciples; and they did not stay there many days.

Christ Cleanses the Temple

¹³^mNow the Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

¹⁴ⁿAnd He found in the temple those who sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the money changers ²doing business.

Nathanael that since Jesus had such knowledge of him, He had to be the **Son of God**, the **King of Israel** (20:31). These titles referred to the Messiah.

1:50 greater things: Jesus assured Nathanael that he would see even greater supernatural manifestations in the future. Jesus’ statement may have referred to the miracles performed in chs. 2–11; it may also refer to the future glory of Christ as the coming Son of Man (see 1:51; Dan. 7:13).

1:51 Jacob had a vision of angels ascending and descending a ladder from heaven (Gen. 28:12). The thought here is similar, namely that there will be communication between heaven and earth. **Son of Man**, an expression used in Dan. 7:13 of a heavenly being, was Jesus’ favorite designation of Himself (Matt. 8:20; Mark 2:10).

2:1, 2 The third day refers to the third day from the last day mentioned (1:43). To walk from where John was baptizing to Cana would probably have taken three days. **Cana** was about four and a half miles northwest of Nazareth. The wording of the text, **the mother of Jesus was there . . . Jesus and His disciples were invited**, suggests that Jesus and His disciples were invited because of Mary. Her forwardness in asking Jesus to help when the wine ran out (v. 3) may indicate that she was in some way related to the family holding the wedding.

2:3 Hospitality in the east was a sacred duty. A wedding feast often lasted for a week. To run out of **wine** at such an important event would have been humiliating for the bride and groom. The family of Jesus was not wealthy, and it is likely their relatives and acquaintances were not either. This may have been a “low-budget” wedding feast.

2:4 Woman was a term of respectful address (19:26). **My hour has not yet come** seems to mean that the time for Jesus to publicly work miracles, declaring Himself the Messiah, had not yet come. For the use of similar expressions, see 7:6, 8, 30; 8:20; 12:23; 13:1; 16:32; 17:1.

2:5 Jesus’ response to Mary seems to have been a refusal to do anything about the situation. Yet she seemed to expect Him to do something. Perhaps something in the tone of Jesus’ voice let Mary know that He would grant her request.

2:6 six waterpots: Each waterpot held **twenty or thirty gallons**, for a total of 120 to 180 gallons of the finest wine (v. 10). **purification**

of the Jews: Jewish tradition required several kinds of ceremonial washings. Strict Jews washed their hands before a meal, between courses, and after the meal. This “purifying” extended not only to washing hands, but also to washing cups and vessels (see Mark 7:3, 4). Because the roads were not paved and people wore sandals, water was needed for foot washing. At a large Jewish wedding, a large amount of water would have been required.

2:8–10 master of the feast: At a Jewish wedding, one of the guests served as a governor of the feast, similar to a master of ceremonies at a banquet. Our modern equivalent is probably a head waiter. This person was responsible for seating the guests and the correct running of the feast. **the good wine:** Usually the better wine was served first. Then, after the guests’ palates were dulled, the everyday wine was served. But this wine was so good that the master of the feast was surprised to see it being served late in the celebration.

2:11 In the Gospel of John, the miracles of Jesus are called **signs**, indicating that they pointed to His messiahship. John records seven signs (see also 4:46–54; 5:1–9; 6:1–14; 6:15–21; 9:1–7; 11:38–44). This sign signified Christ’s **glory**—that is, His deity. When Jesus transformed water into wine, He demonstrated His power.

2:13 the Passover of the Jews: Every male Jew was required to go to Jerusalem three times a year—for the Feast of Passover, the Feast of Pentecost, and the Feast of Tabernacles (see Ex. 23:14–19; Lev. 23). **Jerusalem:** The synoptic Gospels—Matthew, Mark, and Luke—concentrate on Jesus’ Galilean ministry. John focuses on Jesus’ ministry in Jerusalem. The different accounts do not contradict each other; instead, they complement each other.

2:14 The synoptic Gospels place the cleansing of the temple at the conclusion of Jesus’ ministry (see Matt. 21:12, 13), whereas John puts it at the beginning (vv. 14–17). Apparently Jesus cleansed the temple two different times. The language of the synoptic Gospels and that of John differ considerably, indicating two separate events. The Law of Moses required that any animal offered in sacrifice be unblemished, and that every Jewish male over 19 years of age pay a temple tax (see Lev. 1:3; Deut. 17:1). As a result, tax collectors and inspectors of sacrificial animals were present at the temple. However, these officials would not accept secular coins because they had an image of the Roman emperor, whom the pagans worshiped as a god. To put such coins into the temple treasury was thought to be an offense.

¹⁵ When He had made a whip of cords, He drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen, and poured out the changers' money and overturned the tables. ¹⁶ And He said to those who sold doves, "Take these things away! Do not make ^o My Father's house a house of merchandise!" ¹⁷ Then His disciples remembered that it was written, ^p "*Zeal for Your house ³ has eaten Me up.*"

¹⁸ So the Jews answered and said to Him, ^q "What sign do You show to us, since You do these things?"

¹⁹ Jesus answered and said to them, ^r "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."

²⁰ Then the Jews said, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?"

²¹ But He was speaking ^s of the temple of His body. ²² Therefore, when He had risen from the dead, ^t His disciples remembered that He had said this ⁴ to them; and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had said.

²³ Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the feast, many be-

¹⁶ ^o Luke 2:49
¹⁷ ^p Ps. 69:9 ★
³ NU, M *will eat*
¹⁸ ^q Matt. 12:38;
John 6:30
¹⁹ ^r Matt. 26:61;
27:40; [Mark 14:58;
15:29]; Luke 24:46;
Acts 6:14; 10:40 ☆;
1 Cor. 15:4
²¹ ^s [1 Cor. 3:16;
6:19; 2 Cor. 6:16;
Col. 2:9; Heb. 8:2]
²² ^t Luke 24:8;
John 2:17; 12:16;
14:26 ⁴ NU, M *omit*
to them
²³ ^u [John 5:36;
Acts 2:22]
²⁴ ^v Matt. 9:4; John
16:30; Rev. 2:23
²⁵ ^w 1 Sam. 16:7;
1 Chr. 28:9; Matt.
9:4; [Mark 2:8]; John
6:64; 16:30; Acts
1:24; Rev. 2:23

CHAPTER 3

² ^a John 7:50; 19:39
^b John 9:16, 33; Acts
2:22 ^c [Acts 10:38]
³ ^d [John 1:13; Gal.
6:15; Titus 3:5;
James 1:18; 1 Pet.
1:23; 1 John 3:9]

lieved in His name when they saw the "signs which He did." ²⁴ But Jesus did not commit Himself to them, because He ^v knew all *men*, ²⁵ and had no need that anyone should testify of man, for ^w He knew what was in man.

Christ Witnesses to Nicodemus

3 There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. ^{2a} This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for ^b no one can do these signs that You do unless ^c God is with him."

³ Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, ^d unless one is born ¹ again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

⁴ Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?"

⁵ Jesus answered, "Most assuredly, I

¹ Or from above

So in order to accommodate visitors in need of animals and the right kinds of coins, animal merchants and money changers set up shop in the outer court of the temple. These inspectors, collectors, and exchangers, however, charged high prices.

2:15 Jesus' whip was probably more a symbol than a weapon; nevertheless, it was effective in scattering the money changers and the animals they were selling. Jesus' actions were a sign of authority and judgment.

2:16, 17 The cleansing of the temple was the first public presentation of Jesus to Israel; He presented Himself as Messiah. The Messiah's ministry began in the temple; He came to purify (see Mal. 3:1–3). The expression **My Father's house** was a distinct claim to messiahship. At the wedding in Cana, Jesus demonstrated His deity and power; here He showed His authority. Recalling the words of Ps. 69:9, the disciples understood that Jesus was claiming to be the Messiah.

2:18 The Jews apparently refers to the religious authorities of Israel (1:19), who also understood that Jesus was representing Himself as the Messiah; therefore, they asked for a **sign** (see 1 Cor. 1:22).

2:19 Destroy this temple: Jesus was not talking about the physical building; He was referring to His body, as John emphasizes in v. 21. Jesus was speaking of His death. **I will raise it up:** Note that Jesus did not say, "I will build it again." He was referring to His resurrection, three days after His death. The sign Jesus gave the Jews was the sign of His death and resurrection (see Matt. 12:39; 16:4).

born again

(Gk. *gennaō anōthen*) (3:3, 7) Strong's #1080; 509

The Greek word *anōthen* translated here as *again* could also be rendered "from above." The birth that Jesus spoke of was either a new birth or a heavenly birth—or both. It seems that Jesus was speaking of a heavenly birth because He later used the analogy of the wind, coming from some unknown, heavenly source, to depict the spiritual birth. But Nicodemus clearly understood Jesus to be speaking of a second birth—being born again. Jesus explains this new or heavenly birth in 3:6–8, contrasting being born of the flesh with being born of the Spirit.

2:20 forty-six years: Herod the Great began restoring the temple in 20 B.C. The work was not finished at the time of this conversation. In fact, it was not completed until around A.D. 64, under Herod Agrippa.

2:21, 22 The disciples understood that Jesus was the Messiah (v. 17; 1:41, 45, 49), but they did not understand that He was speaking of the resurrection of His body until it actually happened.

2:23 many believed in His name: This was saving faith. John's purpose in recording Jesus' miracles was for people to believe and have eternal life (20:30, 31).

2:24 Commit is the same Greek word translated *believe* in v. 23. There is a play on words here. These individuals trusted Jesus, but Jesus did not entrust Himself to them. Nicodemus is an illustration (see ch. 3).

3:1 The phrase **ruler of the Jews** indicates that **Nicodemus** was a member of the Jewish council, the group that had sent a committee to investigate John the Baptist (1:24). Nicodemus no doubt knew that John the Baptist had denied being the Messiah (1:20), but had said that the Messiah was present (1:26, 27).

3:2 The fact that Nicodemus came to Jesus **by night** may reveal the timidity of his faith (12:42); however, his faith was developing (7:50, 51; 19:39).

3:3 born again: The Greek word translated *again* can mean either "from above" or "anew." The new birth, or regeneration (see Titus 3:5), is the act by which God imparts spiritual life to one who trusts Christ. Without this spiritual birth, a person cannot perceive spiritual things (see 1 Cor. 2:10, 13–16), nor can he or she enter **the kingdom of God** (v. 5).

3:5 There are several interpretations of the phrase **born of water and the Spirit**. (1) Jesus was referring to water baptism (see Acts 10:43–47). (2) Water is to be understood as a symbol for the Holy Spirit. Thus the phrase could be translated "born of water, even the Spirit." (3) Water is to be understood as a symbol of the Word of God. Similar imagery can be found in other NT passages, specifically Eph. 5:26; 1 Pet. 1:23. (4) Jesus used the phrase "born of water" to refer to physical birth. He then used the contrasting phrase "of the Spirit" to refer to spiritual birth. (5) Jesus used the phrase "born of water" to refer to John the Baptist's baptism. (6) Jesus used the OT imagery of "water" and "wind" to refer to the work of God from

say to you, ^eunless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. ⁶That which is born of the flesh is ^fflesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' ^{8g}The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit."

⁹Nicodemus answered and said to Him, ^h"How can these things be?"

¹⁰Jesus answered and said to him, "Are you the teacher of Israel, and do not know these things? ¹¹ⁱMost assuredly, I say to you, We speak what We know and testify what We have seen, and ^jyou do not receive Our witness. ¹²If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things? ^{13k}No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, ^{that is}, the Son of Man ²who is in heaven. ^{14l}And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so ^mmust the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵that whoever ⁿbelieves in Him should ³not perish but ^ohave eternal life. ^{16p}For God so loved

⁵ ^e Mark 16:16; [Acts 2:38]
⁶ ^f John 1:13; 1 Cor. 15:50
⁸ ^g Ps. 135:7; Eccl. 11:5; Ezek. 37:9; 1 Cor. 2:11
⁹ ^h John 6:52, 60
¹¹ ⁱ [Matt. 11:27]
¹² ^j John 3:32; 8:14
¹³ ^k Deut. 30:12; Prov. 30:4; Acts 2:34; Rom. 10:6; 1 Cor. 15:47; Eph. 4:9 ² NU omits *who is in heaven*
¹⁴ ^l Num. 21:9
¹⁵ ^m Matt. 27:35; Mark 15:24; Luke 23:33; John 8:28; 12:34; 19:18 [☆]
¹⁶ ⁿ John 6:47
^o John 3:36 ³ NU omits *not perish but*
¹⁶ ^p Rom. 5:8; Eph. 2:4; 2 Thess. 2:16; [1 John 4:9, 10; Rev. 1:5] ^q [Is. 9:6]
¹⁷ ^r Matt. 1:21 [☆]; Luke 9:56; 1 John 4:14
¹⁸ ^s John 5:24; 6:40, 47; 20:31; Rom. 8:1
¹⁹ ^t [John 1:4, 9-11]
²⁰ ^u Job 24:13; Eph. 5:11, 13

the world that He gave His only begotten ^qSon, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. ^{17r}For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

^{18s}"He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. ¹⁹And this is the condemnation, ^tthat the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. ²⁰For ^ueveryone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. ²¹But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been ^vdone in God."

John the Baptist Witnesses Concerning Christ

²²After these things Jesus and His disciples came into the land of Judea, and

²¹ ^v [John 15:4, 5]; 1 Cor. 15:10

above (see Is. 44:3–5; Ezek. 37:9, 10). *Wind* is an alternate translation of the term Spirit (v. 8).

3:6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh: Flesh cannot be made into spirit. A person must experience a spiritual rebirth (v. 7).

3:7 In the Greek text, **you** is plural. In v. 2, Nicodemus used the word "we," probably referring to the Jewish ruling council, the Sanhedrin. Here Jesus spoke not only to Nicodemus, but to all whom he represented.

3:8 Jesus used **the wind** as an illustration of the work of the Holy Spirit. The Greek word translated *Spirit* also means "wind." As the wind seemingly blows where it wills, so the Holy Spirit sovereignly works. Likewise, no one knows the origin or destination of the wind, but everyone knows it is there. The same is true of the Holy Spirit.

3:10 Jesus answered Nicodemus's question (vv. 13–15), but first He rebuked Nicodemus for being a **teacher** of the Hebrew Scriptures and not knowing about spiritual birth (see Is. 44:3; Ezek. 36:26, 27).

3:11 you do not receive: Again *you* is plural (v. 7). Jesus had others in mind beyond Nicodemus. Here Jesus rebuked not only Nicodemus, but the other Pharisees as well.

3:12 Earthly things refers to things that occur on earth, like the new birth (vv. 3, 5–7), the wind (v. 8), and perhaps miracles. **Heavenly things** refers to events like Christ's ascension (6:61, 62) and the coming of the Holy Spirit (16:7). Nicodemus may have believed in Jesus' miracles (v. 2); the majority of the Jewish council did not (v. 11).

3:13 In v. 9, Nicodemus, referring to the new birth, asks, "How can these things be?" Here Jesus answers the question. New birth is by **the Son**, by the Cross (v. 14), and by faith (v. 15).

3:14 Every time the words **lifted up** occur in the Gospel of John there is a reference to Jesus' death (8:28; 12:32, 34). When **Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness** (see Num. 21:9), those who looked at it lived. So it is with the Son of Man (1:51).

3:15 This is the first time **eternal life** is mentioned in John's Gospel (see 4:36; 5:39; 6:54, 68; 10:28; 12:25; 17:2, 3). When a person trusts Christ, he or she is born again and receives eternal and spiritual life, God's kind of life.

3:16 God so loved the world: God's love is not restricted to any one nation or to any spiritual elite. *World* here may also include all of creation (see Rom. 8:19–22; Col. 1:20).

3:17 At His first coming, Jesus came so that **the world through**

Him might be saved. When Jesus comes again, He will come in judgment upon those who refused His offer of salvation.

3:18 To believe is to receive life (vv. 15, 16) and avoid judgment. A person **who does not believe** not only misses life, but is **condemned already**. The idea of believing in Jesus' name is also found in 1:12.

3:19 Condemnation refers to the reason for judgment. The **light** referred to here is Jesus, the light of the world (1:7–9; 8:12; 9:5).

3:20 People offer many excuses for not accepting Christ. Some cite the presence of hypocrites in the church. Others claim inability to believe some of the truths about Christ or the gospel. These are merely attempts to conceal a heart in rebellion against God. The ultimate reason people do not come to Christ is that they do not want to.

3:21 The one **who does the truth** (see 1 John 1:5) is obviously already a believer because his or her **deeds are done in God**. Therefore, "coming to the light" is more than exercising faith. A person who **comes to the light** not only believes, but also openly identifies with the light so that his or her works can be seen as things done in union with God.

3:22 baptized: The impression here is that Jesus baptized. John corrects this idea in 4:2. Jesus provided the authority, but the disciples performed the baptisms.

the only begotten Son

(Gk. *ho monogenēs huios*) (1:18; 3:16, 18; 1 John 4:9) Strong's #3439; 5207

The Greek word for *only begotten* suggests a one and only son; it does not necessarily convey the idea of a birth. For example, Isaac is called Abraham's *only begotten* in Heb. 11:17 and in the Septuagint, the Greek OT (see Gen. 22:2, 12, 16), when actually Abraham had two sons: Ishmael and Isaac. The Son of God is the Father's one and only, His unique Son. Although the Father has begotten many children through the new birth (1:12, 13), none of these are exactly like Jesus Christ, the unique Son of God. His Sonship is from eternity. As the unique Son of God, He has a special glory and an unrivaled place of honor.

there He remained with them ^w and baptized. ²³ Now John also was baptizing in Aenon near ^s Salim, because there was much water there. ^u And they came and were baptized. ²⁴ For ^z John had not yet been thrown into prison.

²⁵ Then there arose a dispute between some of John's disciples and the Jews about purification. ²⁶ And they came to John and said to him, "Rabbi, He who was with you beyond the Jordan, ^a to whom you have testified—behold, He is baptizing, and all ^b are coming to Him!"

²⁷ John answered and said, ^c "A man can receive nothing unless it has been given to him from heaven. ²⁸ You yourselves bear me witness, that I said, ^d I am not the Christ; but, ^e I have been sent before Him." ²⁹ He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but ^g the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. Therefore this joy of mine is fulfilled. ³⁰ ^h He must increase, but I must decrease. ³¹ ⁱ He who comes from above ^j is above all; ^k he who is of the earth is earthly and speaks of the earth. ^l He who comes from heaven is above all.

²² ^w John 4:1, 2
²³ ^x 1 Sam. 9:4
^y Matt. 3:5, 6
²⁴ ^z Matt. 4:12; 14:3;
Mark 6:7; Luke 3:20
²⁶ ^a John 1:7, 15, 27,
34 ^b Mark 2:2; 3:10;
5:24; Luke 8:19
²⁷ ^c (Rom. 12:5-8);
1 Cor. 3:5, 6; 4:7;
Heb. 5:4; [James
1:17; 1 Pet. 4:10, 11]
²⁸ ^d John 1:19-27
^e Mal. 3:1; Mark 1:2;
[Luke 1:17]
²⁹ ^f Matt. 22:2;
[2 Cor. 11:2; Eph.
5:25, 27]; Rev. 21:9
^g Song 5:1
³⁰ ^h [Is. 9:7]
³¹ ⁱ John 3:13; 8:23
^j Matt. 28:18; John
1:15, 27; 13:13; Rom.
9:5; [Col. 1:17, 18]
^k 1 Cor. 15:47 ^l John
6:33; 1 Cor. 15:47;
Eph. 1:21; Phil. 2:9
³² ^m Is. 53:1, 3 ⁿ;
John 3:11; 15:15
³³ ^o Rom. 3:4;
1 John 5:10
³⁴ ^p Deut. 18:18 ^q;
John 7:16 ^r John
1:16
³⁵ ^s Matt. 11:27;
Luke 10:22;

³² And ^m what He has seen and heard, that He testifies; and no one receives His testimony. ³³ He who has received His testimony ⁿ has certified that God is true. ³⁴ For He whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God does not give the Spirit ^p by measure. ³⁵ The Father loves the Son, and has given all things into His hand. ³⁶ He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the ^s wrath of God abides on him."

Christ Witnesses to the Woman at the Well

4 Therefore, when the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and ^a baptized more disciples than John ² (though Jesus Himself did not baptize, but His disciples), ³ He left Judea and departed again to Galilee. ⁴ But He needed to go through Samaria.

⁵ So He came to a city of Samaria which is called Sychar, near the plot of ground

John 5:20; [Heb. 2:8] ³⁶ ^r John 3:16, 17; 6:47; Rom. 1:17;
1 John 5:10 ^s Rom. 1:18; Eph. 5:6; 1 Thess. 1:10
CHAPTER 4 ¹ ^t John 3:22, 26; 1 Cor. 1:17

3:24 The synoptic Gospels, particularly Matthew and Mark, give the impression that the imprisonment of John the Baptist came right after the baptism of Jesus. This verse indicates that there was an interval between Jesus' baptism and John's imprisonment during which both ministered.

3:25 The Greek word translated **then** often means "therefore." The disciples of Jesus and the disciples of John were both baptizing people; as a result, a question arose. The question came from John's disciples when they entered into a discussion with the Jews. **Purification** here refers to baptism.

3:26 John the Baptist's disciples were loyal to him. They were deeply concerned that one of his "disciples," Jesus, was competing with and surpassing him. In their astonishment, they exaggerated the predicament, saying, **all are coming to Him**. They were concerned that John was losing his audience to another preacher.

3:27 John the Baptist clarified the relationship between himself and Jesus. First, he talked about himself (vv. 27-29); then he talked about Jesus (vv. 30-36). John explained that he could not accept the position of supremacy that his disciples wanted to thrust upon him because he had not received it **from heaven**.

3:29 In explaining why people were flocking to Jesus (v. 26), John the Baptist pointed out that **the bridegroom receives the bride**. John compared himself to **the friend of the bridegroom**, who was appointed to arrange the preliminaries of the wedding, to manage the wedding, and to preside at the wedding feast. When the friend of the bridegroom finished his job, he had to get out of the way. His **joy** came from the success of the bridegroom. John was satisfied with his position in life. He was content to be a "voice" (1:23) and a friend.

3:30 John the Baptist insisted that Jesus Christ had to **increase** in popularity and that he, John, had to **decrease**. John explained that Jesus had to increase because of (1) His divine origin (v. 31), (2) His divine teaching (vv. 32-34), and (3) His divine authority (vv. 35, 36). Even though John encouraged his disciples to also follow Jesus, there were still some found many years later in Ephesus (see Acts 19).

3:31 **He who comes from above** refers to Jesus Christ. **He who is of the earth** refers to John the Baptist. John emphasized his earthly origin and its limitations. John proclaimed divine truth on earth; Jesus, on the other hand, is from heaven and **above all**.

3:32 **no one receives His testimony**: No one, apart from God's work in him or her (6:44), can accept Jesus Christ.

3:33 **Certified** means "to seal." In a society where many could not read, seals were used to convey a clear message, even to the illiterate. A seal indicated ownership to all and expressed a person's personal guarantee. To receive Jesus' testimony is to certify that **God is true** regarding what He has sealed.

3:34 Unlike human teachers, Jesus was not given **the Spirit by measure**—that is, in a limited way (see Is. 11:1, 2). The Holy Spirit was given to Jesus completely. All three Persons of the Trinity are referred to in this verse: God the Father sent Christ the Son, and gave Him the Holy Spirit without measure.

3:35 God the Father not only gave Jesus, in His humanity, the Holy Spirit (v. 34), He also gave Him **all things**, including the authority to give life (5:21) and judge (5:22). The phrase **into His hand** signifies the Son's authority over the use of "all things."

3:36 The verb translated **has** is in the present tense. The one who **believes** has eternal life as a present possession. Likewise, the one who refuses to believe on Christ has the **wrath of God** abiding on him or her as a present reality.

4:1 **Therefore** refers the reader back to 3:22-36. Christ's success in winning disciples had created jealousy among John's followers and provoked questions among the Pharisees. Since Jesus did not want to be drawn into a controversy over baptism at this stage of His ministry, He left Judea for Galilee (v. 3).

4:3 **again**: Jesus had been to Galilee before (1:43-2:12). He had left Capernaum to go to Jerusalem for the Passover.

4:4 The shortest route from Judea in the south to Galilee in the north went through Samaria. The journey took three days. Christ **needed to go through Samaria** if He wanted to travel the direct route. The Jews often avoided Samaria by going around it along the Jordan River. The hatred between the Jews and Samaritans went back to the days of the Exile. Samaria was the region between Judea and Galilee. When the northern kingdom was exiled to Assyria, King Sargon of Assyria repopulated the area with captives from other lands. The intermarriage of these foreigners and the Jews who had been left in the land complicated the ancestry of the Samaritans. The Jews hated the Samaritans and considered them to be no longer "pure" Jews. Jesus, however, had no such bias.

4:5 Jacob had purchased a parcel of ground (see Gen. 33:18, 19), which he bequeathed on his deathbed to Joseph (Gen. 48:21, 22).

Jesus in Judea and Samaria



- 1 The most important port in the Holy Land in NT times.
- 2 The birthplace of Jesus (Matt. 2:1; Luke 2:4).
- 3 John the Baptist baptized here (John 3:23). Aenon was also the probable location of John's ministry.
- 4 Here Jesus talked with a Samaritan woman at Jacob's well (John 4:5).
- 5 The mountain referred to by the Samaritan woman at the well as the worship center for the Samaritans (John 4:20–23).
- 6 Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead (John 11:43–44). Here

at Bethany Jesus was anointed in the house of Simon the Leper (Matt. 26:6). It was also the scene of the Ascension (Luke 24:50–51).

7 Jesus healed a blind man here at Jericho (Matt. 20:29) and called Zacchaeus down from a tree (Luke 19:1). The Good Samaritan helped a traveler en route here (Luke 10:30).

8 Most important biblical city. Jesus was crucified at Jerusalem as predicted (Matt. 16:21; Mark 10:33; Luke 18:31).

9 The resurrected Jesus appeared to two people walking to Emmaus, and He ate with them there (Luke 24:13).

that ^bJacob ^cgave to his son Joseph. ⁶Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied from *His* journey, sat thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour.

⁷A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give Me a drink." ⁸For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.

⁹Then the woman of Samaria said to Him, "How is it that You, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?" For ^dJews have no dealings with ^eSamaritans.

¹⁰Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the ^fgift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you ^gliving water."

¹¹The woman said to Him, "Sir, You have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep. Where then do You get that living water? ¹²Are You greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank from it himself, as well as his sons and his livestock?"

¹³Jesus answered and said to her, "Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, ¹⁴but ^hwhoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him ⁱwill become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life."

¹⁵The woman said to Him, "Sir, give me this water, that I may not thirst, nor come here to draw."

⁵ ^b Gen. 33:19; Josh. 24:32 ^c Gen. 48:22; Josh. 4:12
⁹ ^d Acts 10:28
^e 2 Kin. 17:24; Matt. 10:5, 6; Luke 9:52; 10:33; 17:16; John 8:48
¹⁰ ^f [Rom. 5:15] ^g Is. 12:3; 44:3; Jer. 2:13; Zech. 13:1; 14:8; John 7:38
¹⁴ ^h [John 6:35, 58]
ⁱ John 7:37, 38
¹⁵ John 6:34, 35; 17:2, 3; [Rom. 6:23; 1 John 5:20]

¹⁹ ^k Matt. 21:11; Luke 7:16, 39; 24:19; John 6:14; 7:40; 9:17
²⁰ ^l Gen. 12:6-8; 33:18, 20; Judg. 9:7 ^m Deut. 12:5, 11; 1 Kin. 9:3; 2 Chr. 7:12; Ps. 122:1-9
²¹ ⁿ [Mal. 1:11]; 1 Tim. 2:8
²² ^o [2 Kin. 17:28-41] ^p [Is. 2:3; Luke 24:47; Rom. 3:1; 9:4, 5]
²³ ^q Matt. 18:20; [Heb. 13:10-14]
^r Phil. 3:3 ^s [John 1:17]
²⁴ ^t 2 Cor. 3:17
²⁵ ^u Deut. 18:15
^v John 4:29, 39
²⁶ ^w Dan. 9:25; Matt. 26:63, 64; Mark 14:61, 62 ★

¹⁶Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come here."

¹⁷The woman answered and said, "I have no husband."

Jesus said to her, "You have well said, 'I have no husband,' ¹⁸for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; in that you spoke truly."

¹⁹The woman said to Him, "Sir, ^kI perceive that You are a prophet. ²⁰Our fathers worshiped on ^lthis mountain, and you *Jews* say that in ^mJerusalem is the place where one ought to worship."

²¹Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming ⁿwhen you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father. ²²You worship ^owhat you do not know; we know what we worship, for ^psalvation is of the Jews. ²³But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will ^qworship the Father in ^rspirit ^sand truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. ²⁴*God is Spirit*, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

²⁵The woman said to Him, "I know that Messiah ^uis coming" (who is called Christ). "When He comes, ^vHe will tell us all things."

²⁶Jesus said to her, ^w"I who speak to you am *He*."

Christ Witnesses to the Disciples

²⁷And at this point His disciples came, and they marveled that He talked with a

4:10 Living water (see 7:37–39; Is. 12:1–6) springs from an unfailing source and is ever-flowing. Jesus, of course, was talking about eternal life (see 4:14; Rom. 6:23).

4:11 The Samaritan woman did not comprehend Jesus' spiritual message. She was thinking only of physical water and could not understand how Jesus could provide water without a means of drawing it, especially since the **well** was **deep**.

4:16 Jesus mentioned the woman's **husband** in order to expose her sin (v. 18).

4:19 Because of what Jesus told her about herself, the woman concluded that Jesus Christ was a prophet, a person divinely inspired with supernatural knowledge (see 1 Sam. 9:9).

4:20 By mentioning the two different worship sites, the woman was perhaps trying to shift the conversation away from the subject of

her own sins to theological questions. Or perhaps she realized that she was a sinner (v. 18), and knew that she was required to offer a sacrifice. The woman probably assumed that because Jesus was a Jew, He would insist that the sacrifice be offered in the temple at Jerusalem. The Jews insisted that the exclusive place of worship was Jerusalem. But the Samaritans had set up a rival worship site on Mt. Gerizim, which according to their tradition was where Abraham went to sacrifice Isaac, and where later on he met Melchizedek. When the blessings and curses were read to the wilderness generation of Israel, the blessings were read from Mt. Gerizim (see Deut. 11:29; 27:12). Deuteronomy 27:4 instructed that an altar be erected on Mt. Ebal, opposite Mt. Gerizim. But the Samaritan scripture changed the verse to read "Mt. Gerizim." The Samaritans altered history and tampered with the text of Scripture to glorify Mt. Gerizim.

4:22 Salvation is of the Jews means that the Messiah would come from the Jewish people.

4:24 God is Spirit . . . worship Him . . . in spirit and truth: God is not limited by time and space. When people are born of the Spirit, they can commune with God anywhere. *Spirit* is the opposite of what is material and earthly, for example, Mt. Gerizim. Christ makes worship a matter of the heart. *Truth* is what is in harmony with the nature and will of God. It is the opposite of all that is false. Here the truth is specifically the worship of God through Jesus Christ. The issue is not *where* a person worships, but *how* and *whom*.

4:25 The Samaritans believed that the Prophet of Deut. 18:15 would teach **all things** when he came.

4:26 I . . . am He: Using the same words that God used when He revealed Himself to Moses (see Ex. 3:14), Jesus clearly stated that He is the Messiah.

fountain

(Gk. *pēgē*) (4:14; Rev. 7:17; 21:6) Strong's #4077

The Greek word denotes a spring of running water. How different this is from a well that requires much manual labor to dig and to draw out the water. The gift that Jesus gives—a fountain springing up into eternal life—suggests the availability and accessibility of the divine life for all believers. The expression "into everlasting life" probably means "resulting in eternal life." The result of drinking the water Jesus freely gives is that the drinker receives eternal life.

woman; yet no one said, “What do You seek?” or, “Why are You talking with her?”

²⁸The woman then left her waterpot, went her way into the city, and said to the men, ²⁹“Come, see a Man ^xwho told me all things that I ever did. Could this be the Christ?” ³⁰Then they went out of the city and came to Him.

³¹In the meantime His disciples urged Him, saying, “Rabbi, eat.”

³²But He said to them, “I have food to eat of which you do not know.”

³³Therefore the disciples said to one another, “Has anyone brought Him *anything* to eat?”

³⁴Jesus said to them, ^y“My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to ^zfinish His work. ³⁵Do you not say, ‘There are still four months and *then* comes ^athe harvest’? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, ^bfor they are already white for harvest! ^{36c}And he who reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit for eternal life, that ^dboth he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together. ³⁷For in this the saying is true: ‘One sows and another reaps.’ ³⁸I sent you to reap that for which you have not labored; ^fothers have labored, and you have entered into their labors.”

Christ Witnesses to the Samaritans

³⁹And many of the Samaritans of that city believed in Him ^θbecause of the word of the woman who testified, “He told me all that I *ever* did.” ⁴⁰So when the Samaritans had come to Him, they urged Him to stay with them; and He stayed there two days. ⁴¹And many more believed because of His own ^hword.

²⁹ ^x John 4:25
³⁴ ^y Ps. 40:7, 8; Heb. 10:9 ^z Job 23:12; [John 6:38; 17:4; 19:30]
³⁵ ^a Gen. 8:22
^b Matt. 9:37; Luke 10:2
³⁶ ^c Dan. 12:3; Rom. 6:22 ^d 1 Thess. 2:19
³⁷ ^e 1 Cor. 3:5-9
³⁸ ^f Jer. 44:4; [1 Pet. 1:12]
³⁹ ^g John 4:29
⁴¹ ^h Luke 4:32; [John 6:63]

⁴²Then they said to the woman, “Now we believe, not because of what you said, for ⁱwe ourselves have heard *Him* and we know that this is indeed ^lthe Christ, the Savior of the world.”

Christ Is Received by the Galileans

⁴³Now after the two days He departed from there and went to Galilee. ⁴⁴For ^jJesus Himself testified that a prophet has no honor in his own country. ⁴⁵So when He came to Galilee, the Galileans received Him, ^khaving seen all the things He did in Jerusalem at the feast; ^lfor they also had gone to the feast.

Christ Heals the Nobleman's Son

⁴⁶So Jesus came again to Cana of Galilee ^mwhere He had made the water wine. And there was a certain ²nobleman whose son was sick at Capernaum. ⁴⁷When he heard that Jesus had come out of Judea into Galilee, he went to Him and implored Him to come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death. ⁴⁸Then Jesus said to him, ⁿ“Unless you *people* see signs and wonders, you will by no means believe.”

⁴⁹The nobleman said to Him, “Sir, come down before my child dies!”

⁵⁰Jesus said to him, “Go your way; your son lives.” So the man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him, and he went his way. ⁵¹And as he was now going down, his servants met him and told *him*, saying, “Your son lives!”

⁵²Then he inquired of them the hour when he got better. And they said to him, “Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him.” ⁵³So the father knew that *it* was at the same hour in which Jesus said

⁴² ^j John 17:8;
 1 John 4:14 ^l NU omits the Christ
⁴⁴ ^k Matt. 13:57;
 Mark 6:4; Luke 4:24
⁴⁵ ^k John 2:13, 23;
 3:2 ^l Deut. 16:16
⁴⁶ ^m John 2:1, 11
² royal official
⁴⁸ ⁿ John 6:30;
 Rom. 15:19; 1 Cor. 1:22; 2 Cor. 12:12;
 [2 Thess. 2:9];
 Heb. 2:4

4:29 all things that I ever did: In her excitement, the woman exaggerated. She did not report what Jesus actually told her, but what He *could* have told her. Note the woman's spiritual journey. She first viewed Christ as a Jew (v. 9), then as a prophet (v. 19), and finally as the Messiah.

4:34 My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me: This food is not simply knowing the will of God, but doing it. This verse highlights the obedience of Jesus to God in His ministry and foreshadows His words on the Cross (19:30).

4:35 In vv. 35–38, Jesus offered His disciples an opportunity to do something that would be “food” for them. He was speaking about the Samaritans. In them, He saw an opportunity for a spiritual **harvest** for which the disciples would not have to wait long.

4:36 The reaper of a spiritual harvest **receives wages**—that is, fruit which brings joy. In this case, Jesus sowed by giving the message to the woman. He was about to reap because He would see the whole city saved. Also the disciples were going to reap the harvest that Christ had sown. Note the “hundredfold” wages Jesus promises in Matt. 19:27–29 (see 1 Cor. 3:6–8; 2 Cor. 5:10).

4:38 Jesus applied what He had just said to His disciples. The **others** may have been John the Baptist and his disciples. They had labored in Judea (3:22–36). Thus Jesus' disciples were reaping what others had sowed (vv. 1, 2).

4:42 The title **Savior of the world** is used only here and in 1 John 4:14. The Jews of Jesus' day taught that to approach God one first had to be a Jew. By including this incident in the Gospel, John demonstrates that Jesus is for all people of the world.

4:44 His own country has been taken to mean: (1) Judea, (2) Nazareth, or (3) Galilee. Having no honor or reception in Nazareth, Jesus went elsewhere in Galilee.

4:45 The feast refers to the Passover (see 2:13–25). The Galileans who had gone to the feast received Jesus when He came to Galilee.

4:46 Nobleman is literally royal officer, one in service of the king. Herod Antipas was technically the “tetrarch” of Galilee, but he was referred to as a king.

4:53, 54 The nobleman is said to have **believed** twice, once in v. 50 and again in v. 53. In v. 50, he believed Jesus' promise that his son would not die. But believing that Jesus can and will heal is not enough to save. What was it that the nobleman believed in v. 53? The explanation is found in v. 54. The miracle that Jesus performed was His **second sign** (see also 2:11). These signs were performed so that people might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing they might have life (20:31). When the Jewish nobleman realized that his son had been healed, he knew that Jesus was more than a mere mortal. The nobleman placed his faith in Jesus and was born again.

to him, “Your son lives.” And he himself believed, and his whole household.

⁵⁴This again is the second sign Jesus did when He had come out of Judea into Galilee.

Christ Heals the Paralytic Man

5 After ^athis there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus ^bwent up to Jerusalem. ²Now there is in Jerusalem ^cby the Sheep Gate a pool, which is called in Hebrew, ¹Bethesda, having five porches. ³In these lay a great multitude of sick people, blind, lame, ²paralyzed, ³waiting for the moving of the water. ⁴For an angel went down at a certain time into the pool and stirred up the water; then whoever stepped in first, after the stirring of the water, was made well of whatever disease he had. ⁵Now a certain man was there who had an infirmity thirty-eight years. ⁶When Jesus saw him lying there, and knew that he already had been *in that condition* a long time, He said to him, “Do you want to be made well?”

⁷The sick man answered Him, “Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; but while I am coming, another steps down before me.”

⁸Jesus said to him, ^d“Rise, take up your bed and walk.” ⁹And immediately the man was made well, took up his bed, and walked.

Christ Heals on the Sabbath

And ^ethat day was the Sabbath. ¹⁰The Jews therefore said to him who was

CHAPTER 5

1 ^a Lev. 23:2; Deut. 16:16 ^b John 2:13
2 ^c Neh. 3:1, 32; 12:39 ¹ NU Bethzatha
3 ² withered ³ NU omits the rest of v. 3 and all of v. 4.
4 ^d Matt. 9:6; Mark 2:11; Luke 5:24
9 ^e John 9:14

10 ^f Ex. 20:10; Neh. 13:19; Jer. 17:21, 22; Matt. 12:2; Mark 2:24; Luke 6:2
13 ^g Luke 13:14; 22:51
14 ^h Matt. 12:45; [Mark 2:5]; John 8:11
16 ⁱ Luke 4:29; John 8:37; 10:39 ⁴ NU omits and sought to kill Him
17 ^j [John 9:4; 17:4]
18 ^k John 7:1, 19 ^j John 10:30; Phil. 2:6
19 ^m Matt. 26:39; John 5:30; 6:38; 8:28; 12:49; 14:10
20 ⁿ Matt. 3:17; John 3:35; 2 Pet. 1:17 ^o [Matt. 11:27]

cured, “It is the Sabbath; ^fit is not lawful for you to carry your bed.”

¹¹He answered them, “He who made me well said to me, ‘Take up your bed and walk.’”

¹²Then they asked him, “Who is the Man who said to you, ‘Take up your bed and walk’?” ¹³But the one who was ^ghealed did not know who it was, for Jesus had withdrawn, a multitude being in *that* place. ¹⁴Afterward Jesus found him in the temple, and said to him, “See, you have been made well. ^hSin no more, lest a worse thing come upon you.”

¹⁵The man departed and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well.

¹⁶For this reason the Jews ⁱpersecuted Jesus, ⁴and sought to kill Him, because He had done these things on the Sabbath.

Equality with God in Nature

¹⁷But Jesus answered them, ^j“My Father has been working until now, and I have been working.”

¹⁸Therefore the Jews ^ksought all the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was His Father, ^lmaking Himself equal with God.

Equality with God in Power

¹⁹Then Jesus answered and said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, ^mthe Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner. ²⁰For ⁿthe Father loves the Son, and ^oshows Him all things that He Himself does; and He will

5:1 The feast of the Jews is probably not the Passover, which John usually refers to by name (2:13; 6:4; 11:55). It may have been Tabernacles.

5:2 The Sheep Gate was a gate in the wall of Jerusalem near the temple, through which sheep were brought for sacrifice. The pool of Bethesda was a double pool surrounded by colonnades on four sides, with a fifth colonnade standing on the dividing wall that separated the northern and southern pools. The **five porches** were in the colonnades on the two sides, with two on each end and one in the middle.

5:9 John records this miracle because it was a witness to Jesus’ deity. Jesus Himself told John the Baptist that the proof of His messiahship was that the lame would walk (see Matt. 11:1–5), for the prophet Isaiah had predicted this long before: “The lame shall leap like a deer” (see Is. 35:1–6). Carrying a **bed on the Sabbath** was considered a violation of the Law of Moses (v. 10).

5:10 The Jews probably refers to Jewish leaders who were members of the council. The Law of Moses taught that the Sabbath must be different from other days. On it, neither people nor animals could work. The prophet Jeremiah had prohibited carrying burdens or working on the Sabbath (Jer. 17:21, 22). Nehemiah made it clear that trading on the Sabbath as if it were an ordinary day was forbidden (Neh. 13:15–19). Over the years, the Jewish leaders had amassed thousands of rules and regulations concerning the Sabbath. By Jesus’ day, they had 39 different classifications of work. According to them, carrying furniture and even providing medical treatment

on the Sabbath were forbidden. Jesus did not break the Law; He violated the *traditions* of the Pharisees which had grown up around the Law.

5:13 The sick man was healed without exercising any faith. He did not know who Jesus was when he was healed. **Jesus had withdrawn:** John records Jesus quietly withdrawing from a crowd on four occasions (see also 8:59; 10:39; 12:36). However, Jesus caught up with the man later (v. 14).

5:16 This is the first recorded declaration of open hostility toward Jesus in the Gospel of John.

5:17 My Father: Jesus is “the only begotten Son” (1:14, 18; 3:16, 18)—that is, the unique Son of God. Here He claims not only a unique relationship with God the Father, but also equality with God in nature. Since God continually does good works without allowing Himself to stop on the Sabbath, the Son does likewise, since He is equal with God. Certainly the Jewish leaders understood the implications of Jesus’ claims (v. 18).

5:19 The Son can do nothing of Himself means that action by the Son apart from the Father is impossible because of the unity of the Father and the Son (v. 17). **Whatever He does, the Son also does** is a claim of deity and unity with the Father.

5:20 The Son does what the Father does (v. 19) because **the Father loves the Son**. Moreover, because the Father loves the Son, He reveals all to Him. The Father would show the Son **greater works** than the healing of the sick man. Jesus would raise the dead (v. 21) and eventually judge humanity (v. 22).

show Him greater works than these, that you may marvel. ²¹For as the Father raises the dead and gives life to *them*, ²²even so the Son gives life to whom He will.

Equality with God in Authority

²²For the Father judges no one, but ²³has committed all judgment to the Son, ²⁴that all should honor the Son just as they honor the Father. ²⁵He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him.

²⁴“Most assuredly, I say to you, ²⁵he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, ²⁶but has passed from death into life. ²⁷Most assuredly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when ²⁸the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear will live. ²⁹For ³⁰as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have ³¹life in Himself, ³²and ³³has given Him authority to execute judgment also, ³⁴because He is the Son of Man. ³⁵Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will ³⁶hear His voice ³⁷and come forth—³⁸those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation. ³⁹¶

²¹ ^ρ Luke 7:14; 8:54; [John 11:25]
²² ^α Matt. 11:27; 28:18; [John 3:35; 17:2; Acts 17:31; 1 Pet. 4:5]
²³ ^ρ Luke 10:16; 1 John 2:23
²⁴ ^ς John 3:16, 18; 6:47 [†] [1 John 3:14]
²⁵ ^α [Eph. 2:1, 5; Col. 2:13]
²⁶ ^ρ Ps. 36:9
²⁷ ^ω [John 1:4; 14:6; 1 Cor. 15:45]
²⁸ ^ς John 9:39; [Acts 10:42; 17:31]
²⁹ ^α Dan. 7:13
³⁰ ^τ [1 Thess. 4:15–17]
³¹ ^α Is. 26:19; [1 Cor. 15:52] ^β Dan. 12:2; Matt. 25:46; Acts 24:15
³² ^ς John 5:19
³³ ^α Matt. 26:39; John 4:34; 6:38
³⁴ ^α John 8:14; Rev. 3:14 ^β *valid as testimony*
³⁵ [†] [Matt. 3:17; John 8:18; 1 John 5:6]
³⁶ ^ρ [John 1:15, 19, 27, 32]
³⁷ ^β 2 Sam. 21:17; 2 Pet. 1:19 [†] Matt. 13:20; Mark 6:20
³⁸ [†] 1 John 5:9
³⁹ ^α John 3:2; 10:25; 17:4

can of Myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because ^dI do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me.

Witness of John the Baptist

³¹“If I bear witness of Myself, My witness is not ⁵true. ³²There is another who bears witness of Me, and I know that the witness which He witnesses of Me is true. ³³You have sent to John, ³⁴and he has borne witness to the truth. ³⁵Yet I do not receive testimony from man, but I say these things that you may be saved. ³⁶He was the burning and ³⁷shining lamp, and ³⁸you were willing for a time to rejoice in his light.

Witness of the Works of Christ

³⁶But ³⁷I have a greater witness than John's; for ³⁸the works which the Father has given Me to finish—the very ³⁹works that I do—bear witness of Me, that the Father has sent Me.

Witness of the Father

³⁷And the Father Himself, who sent Me, ³⁸has testified of Me. You have neither

[†] John 9:16; 10:38 ³⁷ ^ρ Matt. 3:17; John 6:27; 8:18

5:21 the Son gives life: As God raises people from the dead and gives them life, so Christ gives people spiritual life (v. 24). Jesus claimed the same power as God, thus claiming that He is equal with God.

5:22 all judgment to the Son: The Jews recognized that God alone had the right to judge humanity. In claiming that the Father committed all judgment to Him, Jesus again claimed equality with God.

5:23 honor the Son just as they honor the Father: To claim the same honor as the Father is to claim equality with the Father. Here Jesus claimed equal authority with God.

5:24 The phrase **believes in Him who sent Me** is unusual. Christ, not the Father, is usually the object of this verb in John. The issue in this passage is the unity of the Father and the Son (vv. 17–23). All who believe in the One who sent Christ will believe in Christ. **shall not come into judgment:** A judgment to decide a person's eternal destiny is no longer possible for the one who has already been given eternal life. However, all believers will stand before the judgment seat of Christ (see Rom. 14:10; 2 Cor. 5:10), not for punishment of sin, but to determine inheritance in Messiah's kingdom.

5:26 For indicates that this verse explains the previous verse. Christ can give life because He Himself possesses life. He not only has a part in giving it, He is the source of it. This is another testimony to Jesus' deity, because only God has life in Himself.

5:28 the hour is coming: Christ not only gives spiritual life now (v. 25). He will give physical life later.

5:29 Two separate resurrections (see Rev. 20:4, 5), the **resurrection of life** and the **resurrection of condemnation** are presented here in the fashion of the OT prophets, who often grouped together events of the future without distinction of time (see Is. 61:2). Jesus was teaching the universality of resurrection, not the timing of it. **those who have done good:** The only “good” anyone can do is to believe on Christ, the One God sent (6:28, 29). All other good actions flow from that. Anything good that is done without that belief means nothing to God and will result in the resurrection of condemnation.

5:30 Christ's **judgment is righteous** because it is in accordance with God's divine will. In v. 19 Jesus said, “The Son can do nothing of Himself”; here He says He can **do nothing** independent of the Father.

5:31, 32 My witness is not true: If Christ were the only one bearing witness of what He was claiming, His witness would not be accepted. According to Jewish legal practice, a person's testimony about himself was not accepted in court. So in this case, Jesus offered another witness—John the Baptist (v. 33).

5:35 Jesus is the Light (1:4, 5). John was a **lamp**. **He was:** Jesus used the past tense because by this time John's work had been ended either by imprisonment or by death.

5:36 the works: John did not perform any signs (10:41). Those were specific works that the Son was to perform, as predicted in the OT (see Is. 35:5, 6) to attest to the fact that He was sent by the Father (vv. 1–15; 2:1–11; 4:43–54).

5:37 the Father Himself . . . has testified: This is not a reference to the voice from heaven at the baptism of Christ, but to Scripture (vv. 38, 39).

testify

(Gk. *martureō*) (5:31, 32; 7:7; 8:13; 1 John 4:14; 5:9) Strong's #3140

This Greek word means “to bear witness.” According to Jewish law, a testimony to oneself is no testimony at all. Truth or validity had to be established by two or three witnesses (Deut. 17:7; 19:15). Therefore, Jesus' witness to Himself would not validate His claims; He needed the witness of another. That other witness was not John the Baptist, but Jesus' Father. In the following verses, Jesus called upon several witnesses to affirm His claims, but actually He needs only one witness, His Father's.

heard His voice at any time, ⁿ nor seen His form. ³⁸ But you do not have His word abiding in you, because whom He sent, Him you do not believe.

Witness of the Scriptures

³⁹ You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and ^p these are they which testify of Me. ⁴⁰ But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life.

⁴¹ “I do not receive honor from men. ⁴² But I know you, that you do not have the love of God in you. ⁴³ I have come in My Father’s name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, him you will receive. ⁴⁴ How can you believe, who receive honor from one another, and do not seek ^t the honor that comes from the only God? ⁴⁵ Do not think that I shall accuse you to the Father; ^u there is one who accuses you—Moses, in whom you trust. ⁴⁶ For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; ^v for he wrote about Me. ⁴⁷ But if you ^w do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?”

Christ Feeds 5,000

Matt. 14:13-21; Mark 6:31-44; Luke 9:11-17

6 After ^a these things Jesus went over the Sea of Galilee, which is *the Sea of* ^b Tiberias. ² Then a great multitude followed Him, because they saw His signs which He performed on those who were ^c diseased. ³ And Jesus went up on the mountain, and there He sat with His disciples.

³⁷ ^a Deut. 4:12; John 1:18; 1 Tim. 1:17; 1 John 4:12
³⁹ ^a Is. 8:20; 34:16; Luke 16:29; Acts 17:11 ^p Deut. 18:15; 18; Luke 24:27
⁴⁰ ^a John 1:11; 3:19
⁴¹ ^r John 5:44; 7:18; 1 Thess. 2:6
⁴⁴ ^s John 12:43
^t [Rom. 2:29]
⁴⁵ ^u Rom. 2:12
⁴⁶ ^v [Gen. 3:15]; Deut. 18:15; 18; John 1:45; Acts 26:22
⁴⁷ ^w Luke 16:29, 31

CHAPTER 6

¹ ^a Matt. 14:13; Mark 6:32; Luke 9:10, 12 ^b John 6:23; 21:1
² ^c Matt. 4:23; 8:16; 9:35; 14:36; 15:30; 19:2 ¹ ^{sick}

⁴ ^d Lev. 23:5, 7; Deut. 16:1; John 2:13
⁵ ^e Matt. 14:14; Mark 6:35; Luke 9:12 ^f John 1:43
⁷ ^g Num. 11:21, 22
⁸ ^h John 1:40
⁹ ⁱ 2 Kin. 4:43
¹¹ ² NU omits *to the disciples, and the disciples*
¹⁴ ^j Gen. 49:10; Deut. 18:15, 18; John 1:21; 7:40; Acts 3:22; 7:37

^{4d} Now the Passover, a feast of the Jews, was near. ^{5e} Then Jesus lifted up *His* eyes, and seeing a great multitude coming toward Him, He said to ^f Philip, “Where shall we buy bread, that these may eat?” ⁶ But this He said to test him, for He Himself knew what He would do.

⁷ Philip answered Him, ^g “Two hundred denarii worth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may have a little.”

⁸ One of His disciples, ^h Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, said to Him, ⁹ “There is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two small fish, ⁱ but what are they among so many?”

¹⁰ Then Jesus said, “Make the people sit down.” Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand. ¹¹ And Jesus took the loaves, and when He had given thanks He distributed *them* ² to the disciples, and the disciples to those sitting down; and likewise of the fish, as much as they wanted. ¹² So when they were filled, He said to His disciples, “Gather up the fragments that remain, so that nothing is lost.” ¹³ Therefore they gathered *them* up, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves which were left over by those who had eaten. ¹⁴ Then those men, when they had seen the sign that Jesus did, said, “This is truly ^j the Prophet who is to come into the world.”

Christ Walks on the Water

Matt. 14:22-33; Mark 6:45-52

¹⁵ Therefore when Jesus perceived that

5:39 The Jewish religious leaders of Jesus’ day diligently searched the OT **Scriptures**, but did not see Jesus as the Messiah and did not believe in Him (v. 38).

5:42 **The love of God** here is not love *from* God but love *for* God. Love from God is evidenced in Christ (3:16; Rom. 5:8). Since God loves us, we should love Him (Deut. 6:5; 1 John 4:19).

5:43 Jesus came in the **Father’s name**, revealing God to the people, but they rejected Him. Ironically, if someone had come **in his own name**, giving his own ideas in harmony with the people’s ideas, the people would have received him.

5:44 The people did not believe in Jesus because they did not seek **honor that comes from the only God**. This honor may be similar to Paul’s view of the glory that will be revealed in us in the presence of God (see Rom. 8:18).

5:45 **Trust** means “hope.” Christ will not have to accuse the people on Judgment Day because the one in whom they placed their hope, **Moses**, will. The people will be condemned by the very Law they professed to keep.

5:46 **he wrote about Me**: Moses wrote about Christ in the promises to the patriarchs, in the history of the deliverance from Egypt, in the symbolic institutions of the Law, and in the prediction of a Prophet like himself (see Luke 24:25, 26). If the people had believed Moses, they would have received Jesus gladly. Over three hundred OT prophecies were specifically fulfilled in the First Coming of Christ.

5:47 **you do not believe his writings**: The ultimate problem was that the people did not believe the Word of God written through Moses.

6:1 **After these things**: About six months elapsed between 5:47 and this verse. Herod Antipas had killed John the Baptist and was seeking Jesus. The disciples had preached throughout Galilee, and many people were curious about Jesus (v. 5). John further identifies **the Sea of Galilee** as **the Sea of Tiberias**, an indication that his Gospel was written for those outside of Palestine. The Jewish people called this body of water the Lake of Genessaret. The Romans called it Tiberias, after the city built on its western shore by Herod Antipas and named for the Emperor Tiberius.

6:7 One denarius was a day’s wage for a laborer or field hand (see Matt. 20:2). **Two hundred denarii** would have been almost two-thirds of a year’s wages.

6:9 **Barley loaves** were an inexpensive food of the common people and the poor.

6:11 The miraculous multiplication of the food demonstrated Jesus’ deity, because only God can create. This is the only miracle of Jesus that is recounted in all four Gospels.

6:14 **The Prophet** is a reference to Deut. 18:15. The men’s statement does not necessarily indicate that they believed Jesus was the Messiah. Some made a distinction between the Prophet and the Messiah (compare 1:20, 21). The bread (v. 11) may have reminded them of Moses and manna. Thus they concluded that Jesus was the Prophet that Moses had foretold.

6:15 **make Him king**: Moses had not only miraculously provided food for the Israelites, he had also led them out of bondage in Egypt. Perhaps these men felt that Jesus could lead them out of bondage to the Romans. Christ was at the zenith of His popularity, and the

they were about to come and take Him by force to make Him ^kking, He departed again to the mountain by Himself alone.

¹⁶Now when evening came, His disciples went down to the sea, ¹⁷got into the boat, and went over the sea toward Capernaum. And it was already dark, and Jesus had not come to them. ¹⁸Then the sea arose because a great wind was blowing. ¹⁹So when they had rowed about ³three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and drawing near the boat; and they were ^mafraid. ²⁰But He said to them, ⁿ“It is I; do not be afraid.” ²¹Then they willingly received Him into the boat, and immediately the boat was at the land where they were going.

“I Am the Bread of Life”

²²On the following day, when the people who were standing on the other side of the sea saw that there was no other boat there, except ⁴that one ⁵which His disciples had entered, and that Jesus had not entered the boat with His disciples, but His disciples had gone away alone—²³however, other boats came from Tiberias, near the place where they ate bread after the Lord had given thanks—²⁴when the people therefore saw that Jesus was not there, nor His disciples, they also got into boats and came to Capernaum, ^oseeking Jesus. ²⁵And when they found Him on the other side of the sea, they said to Him, “Rabbi, when did You come here?”

²⁶Jesus answered them and said, “Most assuredly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw the signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled. ²⁷^pDo not labor for the food which perishes, but ^qfor the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, ^rbecause God the Father has set His seal on Him.”

²⁸Then they said to Him, “What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?”

²⁹Jesus answered and said to them,

temptation to take the kingdom without the Cross must have been great (see Matt. 4:8–10). The parallel passages say that He went to the mountain by Himself to pray (see Matt. 14:23; Mark 6:46). Here is our greatest resource in times of testing.

6:16–18 His disciples went down to the sea: In Mark 6:45 we discover that the disciples went to the sea because Jesus compelled them to do so. It was already dark by the time the disciples got out on the lake. The wind began to pick up, setting the stage for Jesus to provide another revelation of Himself.

6:19–21 This miracle, the fifth sign recorded by John, pointed to Jesus’ deity. Only God could walk on water, calm the sea, and supernaturally transport the disciples to their destination.

6:22–24 The multitude had seen that there was only one boat and that Jesus had not entered the boat with His disciples. They

BIBLE TIMES & CULTURE NOTES



Tiberias

The city of Tiberias stands on a rocky cliff on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee. Founded by Herod Antipas (about A.D. 20), it was named after the emperor, Tiberius Caesar. It was said to have occupied the site of Rakkath (Josh. 19:35) and to have been built over a graveyard. Because of this, it was declared unclean by the Jews, who would not enter the city. Although Tiberias was an important city in the days of Christ, there is no record that He ever visited it. Ironically, after the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 135, Tiberias became the center of rabbinic learning. Here the Mishna was completed about A.D. 200 and the Jerusalem (or Palestinian) Talmud was finished about A.D. 400. The pointing system later used by the Masoretes to add vowels to the Hebrew text was first developed in Tiberias.



Modern Tiberias

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¹⁵ ^k [John 18:36]

¹⁶ ^l Matt. 14:23; Mark 6:47

¹⁹ ^m Matt. 17:6

³ Lit. 25 or 30

^{stadia}

²⁰ ⁿ Is. 43:1, 2

²² ⁴ NU omits that

⁵ NU omits which

^{His disciples had}

^{entered}

²⁴ ^o Mark 1:37;

Luke 4:42

²⁷ ^p Matt. 6:19

^q John 4:14; [Eph.

2:8, 9] ^r Ps. 2:7; Is.

42:1; Matt. 3:17;

^s “This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent.”

³⁰ Therefore they said to Him, ^t “What sign will You perform then, that we may see it and believe You? What work will You do? ³¹ ^u Our fathers ate the manna in the desert; as it is written, ^v “He gave them bread from heaven to eat.”

17:5; Mark 1:11; 9:7; Luke 3:22; 9:35; John 5:37; Acts 2:22;

2 Pet. 1:17 ²⁹ ¹ 1 Thess. 1:3; James 2:22; [1 John 3:23];

Rev. 2:26 ³⁰ ¹ Matt. 12:38; 16:1; Mark 8:11; 1 Cor. 1:22

³¹ ^u Ex. 16:15; Num. 11:7; 1 Cor. 10:3 ^v Ex. 16:4, 15; Neh. 9:15;

Ps. 78:24

assumed that Jesus was still there and were looking for Him.

6:27 Do not labor for the food: The impression that one must work for eternal life is quickly corrected when Jesus adds **which the Son of Man will give you**. The Son provides life as a gift (4:10). **Set His seal on Him** means that the Father has authorized and authenticated the Son as the Giver of life.

6:30 When Jesus said “believe in Him whom He sent,” (v. 29), the people must have understood that He was claiming to be the Messiah. Therefore, they asked for a **sign**—despite the fact that they had just witnessed the miracle of the feeding of the multitudes.

6:31 There was a tradition that said the Messiah would cause manna to fall from heaven as Moses did (see Ex. 16:4, 15). The people probably also saw this “miracle worker” as the perpetual provider of physical needs rather than spiritual ones.

³²Then Jesus said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, Moses did not give you the bread from heaven, but ^wMy Father gives you the true bread from heaven. ³³For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.”

^{34x}Then they said to Him, “Lord, give us this bread always.”

³⁵And Jesus said to them, ^y“I am the bread of life. ^zHe who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never ^athirst. ^{36b}But I said to you that you have seen Me and yet ^cdo not believe. ^{37d}All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and ^ethe one who comes to Me I will ^fby no means cast out. ³⁸For I have come down from heaven, ^fnot to do My own will, ^gbut the will of Him who sent Me. ³⁹This is the will of the Father who sent Me, ^hthat of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. ⁴⁰And this is the will of Him who sent Me, ⁱthat

³² ^w John 3:13, 16
³⁴ ^x John 4:15
³⁵ ^y John 6:48, 58
^z John 4:14; 7:37;
 Rev. 7:16 ^a Is. 55:1, 2
³⁶ ^b John 6:26, 64;
 15:24 ^c John 10:26
³⁷ ^d John 6:45
^e [Matt. 24:24; John
 10:28, 29]; 2 Tim.
 2:19; 1 John 2:19
^f ^e *certainly not*
³⁸ ^f Matt. 26:39;
 John 5:30 ^g John
 4:34
³⁹ ^h John 10:28;
 17:12; 18:9
⁴⁰ ⁱ John 3:15, 16;
 4:14; 6:27, 47, 54
⁴¹ ^j *grumbled*
⁴² ^k Matt. 13:55;
 Mark 6:3; Luke 4:22
⁴³ ^l *Stop grumbling*
⁴⁴ ^k Song 1:4
⁴⁵ [Eph. 2:8, 9; Phil.
 1:29; 2:12, 13]
⁴⁶ ^m Is. 54:13 [★];
 Jer. 31:34; Mic. 4:2;
 [Heb. 8:10] ⁿ John
 6:37 ^o *M hears and
 has learned*

everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day.”

⁴¹The Jews then ⁷complained about Him, because He said, “I am the bread which came down from heaven.” ⁴²And they said, ^j“Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How is it then that He says, ‘I have come down from heaven?’”

⁴³Jesus therefore answered and said to them, ⁸“Do not murmur among yourselves. ^{44k}No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me ^ldraws him; and I will raise him up at the last day. ⁴⁵It is written in the prophets, ^m‘*And they shall all be taught by God.*’ⁿ Therefore everyone who ⁹has heard and learned from the Father comes to Me. ^{46o}Not that anyone has seen the Father, ^pexcept He who is from God; He has seen the Father. ⁴⁷Most as-

⁴⁶ ^o John 1:18 ^p Matt. 11:27; [Luke 10:22]; John 7:29

6:32 The crowd misrepresented the truth, so Jesus corrected them. The manna had not come from Moses; it had been provided by God. Moreover, God still gives **true bread**—that is, eternal life (v. 33).

6:34 **Lord** can mean “sir,” which is no doubt the meaning here (4:11, 15).

6:35 **Bread of life** means “bread which supplies life.” Manna satisfied physical needs for a while; Christ satisfies spiritual need forever (4:13, 14).

6:36 **seen . . . not believe:** Seeing does not necessarily mean believing (v. 30; 11:46–57), although sometimes it does (11:45; 20:29). On the other hand, Christ blesses those who believe without having seen (20:29).

6:38 **For** indicates an explanation of the previous statement. Christ will not cast out any who come to Him because He came to do the Father’s **will**.

6:39, 40 **The will of the Father** is twofold: (1) that all who come to the Son will be received and not lost; (2) that all who see and believe on the Son will have **everlasting life**.

6:41 **The Jews** referred to representatives of the council. They **complained** that Jesus said He was **the bread which came down from heaven**. Although this exact phrase is not found in Jesus’ statements, it is a fair summary of what He said (vv. 33, 35, 38). Jesus did claim that He was from heaven.

6:42 **the son of Joseph:** The religious leaders’ proof that Jesus was not from heaven was that they knew His parents. To them, there was nothing supernatural about Jesus’ origin.

6:45 God draws people by teaching them. Everyone, then, who hears and learns from the Father will come to Christ.

6:46, 47 Hearing and learning (v. 45) fall short of seeing the Father. John declares, “No one has seen God at any time” (1:18; 5:37). Here

The Holy Spirit in John

The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity who exercises the power of the Father and the Son in creation and redemption. Because the Holy Spirit is the power by which believers come to Christ and see with new eyes of faith, He is closer to us than we are to ourselves. Like the eyes of the body through which we see physical things, He is seldom in focus to be seen directly because He is the one through whom all else is seen in a new light. This explains why the relationship of the Father and the Son is more prominent in the Gospels, because it is through the eyes of the Holy Spirit that the Father–Son relationship is viewed.

The Holy Spirit appears in the Gospel of John as the power by which Christians are brought to faith and helped to understand their walk with God. He brings a person to new birth: “That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit” (3:6); “It is the Spirit who gives life” (6:63). The Holy Spirit is the Paraclete, or Helper, whom Jesus promised to the disciples after His ascension. The Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are unified in ministering to believers (14:16, 26). It is through the Helper that Father and Son abide with the disciples (15:26).

This unified ministry of the Trinity is also seen as the Spirit brings the world under conviction of sin, righteousness, and judgment. He guides believers into all truth with what He hears from the Father and the Son (15:26). It is a remarkable fact that each Person of the Trinity serves the others as all defer to one another: The Son says what He hears from the Father (12:49, 50); the Father witnesses to and glorifies the Son (8:16–18, 50, 54); the Father and Son honor the Holy Spirit by commissioning Him to speak in their name (14:16, 26); the Holy Spirit honors the Father and Son by helping the community of believers.

Like Father and Son, the Holy Spirit is at the disposal of the other persons of the Trinity, and all three are one in graciously being at the disposal of the redeemed family of believers. The Holy Spirit’s attitude and ministry are marked by generosity; His chief function is to illumine Jesus’ teaching, to glorify His person, and to work in the life of the individual believer and the church.



surely, I say to you, ^ahe who believes ⁱin Me has everlasting life. ⁴⁸^rI am the bread of life. ⁴⁹^sYour fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and are dead. ⁵⁰^tThis is the bread which comes down from heaven, that one may eat of it and not die. ⁵¹ⁱI am the living bread ^uwhich came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and ^vthe bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world.”

⁵²The Jews therefore ^wquarreled among themselves, saying, “How can this Man give us *His* flesh to eat?”

⁵³Then Jesus said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless ^xyou eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. ⁵⁴^yWhoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. ⁵⁵For My flesh is ²food indeed, and My blood is ³drink indeed. ⁵⁶He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood ^zabides in Me, and I in him. ⁵⁷As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on Me will live because of Me. ⁵⁸^aThis is the bread which came down from heaven—not ^bas your fathers ate the manna, and are dead. He who eats this bread will live forever.”

⁵⁹These things He said in the synagogue as He taught in Capernaum.

Rejection by Many Followers

⁶⁰^cTherefore many of His disciples, when they heard *this*, said, “This is a ⁴hard saying; who can understand it?”

⁶¹When Jesus knew in Himself that His disciples ⁵complained about this, He said to them, “Does this ⁶offend you?

⁴⁷ ^a [John 3:16, 18]

ⁱ NU omits *in Me*

⁴⁸ ^r John 6:33, 35; [Gal. 2:20; Col. 3:3, 4]

⁴⁹ ^s John 6:31, 58

^t John 6:51, 58

^u John 3:13

^v Heb. 10:5

^w John 7:43;

9:16; 10:19

^x Matt. 26:26

^y John 4:14;

6:27, 40

⁵⁵ ² NU true food

³ NU true drink

⁵⁶ ^z [1 John 3:24;

4:15, 16]

⁵⁸ ^a John 6:49-51

^b Ex. 16:14-35

⁶⁰ ^c Matt. 11:6;

John 6:66

⁴ difficult

⁶¹ ⁵ grumbled

⁶ make you

stumble

⁶² ^d Mark 16:19;

John 3:13; Acts

1:9 ^e; 2:32, 33;

Eph. 4:8

⁶³ ^e Gen. 2:7; 2 Cor.

3:6 ^f John 3:6

^g [John 6:68;

14:24]

⁶⁴ ^h John 6:36

ⁱ John 2:24, 25;

13:11

⁶⁵ ^j John 6:37,

44, 45

⁶⁶ ^k Luke 9:62;

John 6:60 ⁷ Or

away; lit. to the

back

⁶⁸ ^l Acts 5:20

⁶⁹ ^m Matt. 16:16;

Mark 8:29; Luke

9:20; John 1:49;

11:27 ⁿ NU *Holy*

One of God.

⁷⁰ ⁿ Luke 6:13

^o [John 13:27]

⁷¹ ^p John 12:4;

13:2, 26 ^q Matt.

26:14-16

⁶²^d *What* then if you should see the Son of Man ascend where He was before? ⁶³^e It is the Spirit who gives life; the ^fflesh profits nothing. The ^gwords that I speak to you are spirit, and *they* are life. ⁶⁴But ^hthere are some of you who do not believe.” For ⁱJesus knew from the beginning who they were who did not believe, and who would betray Him. ⁶⁵And He said, “Therefore ^jI have said to you that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted to him by My Father.”

⁶⁶^k From that *time* many of His disciples went ⁷back and walked with Him no more.

Confession by Peter

⁶⁷Then Jesus said to the twelve, “Do you also want to go away?”

⁶⁸But Simon Peter answered Him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have ^lthe words of eternal life. ⁶⁹^m Also we have come to believe and know that You are the ⁸Christ, the Son of the living God.”

⁷⁰Jesus answered them, ⁿ “Did I not choose you, the twelve, ^oand one of you is a devil?” ⁷¹He spoke of ^pJudas Iscariot, *the son* of Simon, for it was he who would ^qbetray Him, being one of the twelve.

Christ's Brothers Do Not Believe

7 After these things Jesus walked in Galilee; for He did not want to walk in Judea, ^abecause the ¹Jews sought to kill Him. ²^b Now the Jews' Feast of

CHAPTER 7 ¹ ^a Matt. 21:38; 26:4; John 5:18; 7:19, 25; 8:37, 40

¹ The ruling authorities ² ^b Lev. 23:34; Deut. 16:13-15; Neh.

8:14, 18; Zech. 14:16-19

Jesus adds that only the Son **has seen the Father**. Though a person has not seen the Father, he or she can believe in Christ and have **everlasting life**.

6:48, 49 Christ is **the bread of life**. Those who believe in Him have life (v. 47). **The manna in the wilderness** did not ultimately sustain life. Those who ate it eventually died because it could not provide everlasting life.

6:51 **Eats of this bread** is a synonym for faith (vv. 35, 48–50).

6:52 **His flesh to eat**: Jesus was speaking figuratively, but the Jewish leaders took Him literally.

6:53–58 **Eats My flesh and drinks My blood**: Jesus had made it abundantly clear in this context that eternal life is gained by believing (vv. 29, 35, 40, 47). These verses teach that the benefits of Jesus' death must be appropriated, by faith, by each individual.

6:60 **Disciple** literally means “learner” and is used in a variety of ways in the NT. It can include unbelievers (see v. 64), believers who go beyond initial faith to baptism and obedience (8:31), or it can mean the apostles in particular (see 2:11). The context determines what meaning is intended. Here it simply means learner. Some of the crowd were students; they came to learn. Not all of these had believed in Christ. It was **hard** for the Jewish learners to accept the idea of eating flesh and drinking blood. Jews were forbidden to even taste blood.

6:62 Jesus was asking, “If the thought of eating flesh and drinking

blood offends you, would you be further offended at the idea of My ascension?”

6:63, 64 Jesus was trying to get the religious leaders to see beyond the physical aspects of His teaching to the real issue—namely, that if they believed on Him they would have everlasting life. Because they did **not believe**, many of these disciples did not follow Jesus any longer (v. 66).

6:65 The people did not believe (v. 64) because it was not **granted** to them by the Father. There is a balance in this chapter between God's initiative and human response. The multitude is told about the election of the Father (v. 37), and yet all are invited to believe (v. 40). The same is true of the Jewish leaders (vv. 44, 47) and those called disciples (v. 63).

6:68, 69 John wrote so that people might believe “that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God” (20:31). The similarity between the confession of Peter and the purpose statement of John is inescapable.

6:70, 71 **Judas Iscariot** never made Peter's confession of faith in Christ. Though he was a disciple and even one of **the twelve**, it is never said that he believed.

7:1 **The Jews** here means the religious authorities, not the people in general (5:18). Many common people had responded to Jesus with joy (see Mark 12:37).

7:2 **The Feast of Tabernacles** was one of the three great Jewish religious festivals (Passover and Pentecost were the other two). It was



Tabernacles was at hand. ^{3c}His brothers therefore said to Him, “Depart from here and go into Judea, that Your disciples also may see the works that You are doing. ⁴For no one does anything in secret while he himself seeks to be known openly. If You do these things, show Yourself to the

^{3 c} Matt. 12:46; Mark 3:21 ★; John 7:5, 10; Acts 1:14
^{5 d} Ps. 69:8; Mic. 7:6
^e Matt. 12:46; 13:55; Mark 3:21 ★; John 7:3, 10
^{6 f} John 2:4; 8:20

world.” ⁵For ^deven His ^ebrothers did not believe in Him.
⁶Then Jesus said to them, ^f“My time has not yet come, but your time is always ready. ^{7g}The world cannot hate you, but
^{7 g} [John 15:19]

called the Feast of Tabernacles because for seven days the people lived in makeshift shelters or lean-tos made of branches and leaves. The feast commemorated the days when the Israelites wandered in the wilderness and lived in tents (see Lev. 23:40–43). The festival was in September–October, about six months after the events of ch. 6. **7:3, 4** Jesus’ brothers argued, “If You are really working miracles and thus claiming to be the Messiah, do not hide in obscure Galilee. If you are doing miracles at all, then do them in Jerusalem at the Feast to convince the whole nation.” These words were sarcastic, as v. 5 explains.

7:6 Earlier, Jesus had told His mother, “My hour has not yet come” (see 2:4; compare 12:23). Here He told His brothers also that the time for manifesting Himself to the world had not yet come. Jesus mentioned on several occasions that the time for Him to be publicly manifested on the Cross was in the future (2:4; 7:6, 8, 30; 8:20).
7:7 The world cannot hate you: The world was not about to hate Jesus’ brothers, because they were part of it.

it hates Me ^h because I testify of it that its works are evil. ⁸ You go up to this feast. I am not ² yet going up to this feast, ⁱ for My time has not yet fully come.” ⁹ When He had said these things to them, He remained in Galilee.

Christ Secretly Goes to the Feast

¹⁰ But when His brothers had gone up, then He also went up to the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret. ¹¹ Then ^j the Jews sought Him at the feast, and said, “Where is He?” ¹² And ^k there was much complaining among the people concerning Him. ^l Some said, “He is good”; others said, “No, on the contrary, He deceives the people.” ¹³ However, no one spoke openly of Him ^m for fear of the Jews.

Christ's Authority from the Father

¹⁴ Now about the middle of the feast Jesus went up into the temple and ⁿ taught. ¹⁵ ^o And the Jews marveled, saying, “How does this Man know letters, having never studied?”

¹⁶ ³ Jesus answered them and said, ^p “My doctrine is not Mine, but His who sent Me. ¹⁷ ^q If anyone wills to do His will, he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God or *whether* I speak on My own *authority*. ¹⁸ ^r He who speaks from himself seeks his own glory; but He who ^s seeks the glory of the One who sent Him is true, and ^t no unrighteousness is in Him. ¹⁹ ^u Did not Moses give you the law, yet none of you keeps the law? ^v Why do you seek to kill Me?”

²⁰ The people answered and said, ^w “You have a demon. Who is seeking to kill You?”

²¹ Jesus answered and said to them,

⁷ ⁿ John 3:19
⁸ ⁱ John 8:20 ² NU omits yet
¹¹ ^j John 11:56
¹² ^k John 9:16;
 10:19 ^l Matt. 21:46;
 Luke 7:16; John 6:14; 7:40
¹³ ^m [John 9:22;
 12:42; 19:38]
¹⁴ ⁿ Ps. 22:22 ⁺;
 Matt. 4:23; 5:2; 7:29;
 Mark 6:34; Luke 4:15; 5:3; John 8:2
¹⁵ ^o Matt. 13:54;
 Mark 6:2; [Luke 4:22]; Acts 2:7
¹⁶ ^p Deut. 18:15, 18;
 19; John 3:11 ³ NU, M So Jesus
¹⁷ ^q Ps. 25:9, 14;
 Prov. 3:32; Dan. 12:10; John 3:21;
 8:43
¹⁸ ^r John 5:41
¹⁹ ^s John 8:50 ¹ John 8:46; [2 Cor. 5:21;
 Heb. 4:15; 7:26;
 1 Pet. 1:19; 2:22]
¹⁹ ^u Ex. 24:3; Deut. 33:4; Acts 7:38
^v Matt. 12:14
²⁰ ^w John 8:48, 52
²² ^x Lev. 12:3
^y Gen. 17:9-14;
 Acts 7:8
²³ ^z John 5:8, 9, 16
²⁴ ^a Deut. 1:16;
 Prov. 24:23; John 8:15; James 2:1
²⁵ ^b Matt. 21:38;
 26:4; Luke 22:2;
 John 5:18; 8:37, 40
²⁶ ^c John 7:48 ⁴ NU omits truly
²⁷ ^d Matt. 13:55;
 Mark 6:3; Luke 4:22
²⁸ ^e John 8:14
^f John 5:43 ^g Rom. 3:4 ^h John 1:18; 8:55
²⁹ ⁱ Matt. 11:27;
 John 8:55; 17:25
³ NU, M omit But
³⁰ ^j Mark 11:18
^k Matt. 21:46; John 7:32, 44; 8:20; 10:39

“I did one work, and you all marvel. ²² ^x Moses therefore gave you circumcision (not that it is from Moses, ^y but from the fathers), and you circumcise a man on the Sabbath. ²³ If a man receives circumcision on the Sabbath, so that the law of Moses should not be broken, are you angry with Me because ^z I made a man completely well on the Sabbath? ²⁴ ^a Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment.”

Christ's Origin from the Father

²⁵ Now some of them from Jerusalem said, “Is this not He whom they seek to ^b kill? ²⁶ But look! He speaks boldly, and they say nothing to Him. ^c Do the rulers know indeed that this is ⁴ truly the Christ? ²⁷ ^d However, we know where this Man is from; but when the Christ comes, no one knows where He is from.”

²⁸ Then Jesus cried out, as He taught in the temple, saying, ^e “You both know Me, and you know where I am from; and ^f I have not come of Myself, but He who sent Me ^g is true, ^h whom you do not know. ²⁹ ⁵ But ⁱ I know Him, for I am from Him, and He sent Me.”

³⁰ Therefore ^j they sought to take Him; but ^k no one laid a hand on Him, because His hour had not yet come. ³¹ And ^l many of the people believed in Him, and said, “When the Christ comes, will He do more signs than these which this *Man* has done?”

Christ's Departure to the Father

³² The Pharisees heard the crowd murmuring these things concerning Him, and the Pharisees and the chief priests

31 ^l Matt. 12:23

7:13 The Jews is a reference to the Jewish leaders, especially the members of the council (1:19).

7:14 The middle of the feast would have been the fourth day of the seven-day feast. During the first half of the festival Jesus remained in seclusion (v. 10). During the second half He began to teach publicly. This is the first mention in the Gospel of John of Jesus teaching in the temple.

7:15 Having never studied means never having attended a rabbinical school. Similar bewilderment was later expressed regarding Jesus' disciples (see Acts 4:13).

7:16 not Mine, but His: Jesus' statement indicates that He did not receive His teaching from the rabbis, nor did He fabricate it. Instead His teaching came directly from God.

7:18, 19 is true: The test of a teacher is whether or not he delivers God's message. Jesus gave God's message; so did Moses. The religious leaders were breaking Moses' law by seeking to kill Jesus.

7:22, 23 Circumcision began with Abraham (see Gen. 17:10). The Law of Moses required infants to be circumcised on the eighth day (see Lev. 12:3). The Jews obeyed this law, even if the eighth day fell on the Sabbath. Jesus asked why the leaders were angry with Him for making a man **completely well** on the Sabbath.

7:27 The Jewish people seem to have expected the Messiah to ap-

pear suddenly from nowhere. They reasoned that since they knew where Jesus came from, He could not be the Messiah. They were ignorant of the Scriptures, for Micah had predicted the Messiah would come from Bethlehem (see Mic. 5:2).

7:28, 29 Cried out signifies a loud cry of strong emotion. **You . . . know Me . . . where I am from:** Jesus reminded the leaders that they knew His origin. Their problem was that they did **not know** God, who sent Jesus. He explained to them that He knew God, was from God, and was sent by God.

7:30 take Him: Because of Jesus' public claims of divine origin (v. 29), the religious leaders sought to arrest Him. **because His hour had not yet come:** John passes over the immediate reason they were unable to arrest Him and gives the ultimate explanation (see 2:4). God is sovereign and He alone sets the time. As with Jesus, so with us; no one can touch us without the Father's consent (see 10:29).

7:31 In contrast to the leaders, many of the Jewish **people believed** because of the miracles Jesus performed (20:30, 31).

7:32 to take Him: The Jewish leaders decided earlier that they wanted to kill Christ (see 5:16), but this is the first real attempt on His life.

sent officers to take Him. ³³ Then Jesus said ⁶ to them, ^m “I shall be with you a little while longer, and then I ⁿ go to Him who sent Me. ³⁴ You ^o will seek Me and not find Me, and where I am you ^p cannot come.”

³⁵ Then the Jews said among themselves, “Where does He intend to go that we shall not find Him? Does He intend to go to ^q the Dispersion among the Greeks and teach the Greeks? ³⁶ What is this thing that He said, ‘You will seek Me and not find Me, and where I am you cannot come?’”

Christ Reveals the “Living Water”

³⁷ On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, ^s “If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. ³⁸ He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, ^u out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.” ³⁹ But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those ⁷ believing in Him would receive; for the ⁸ Holy Spirit was not yet *given*, because Jesus was not yet ^w glorified.

Israel Is Divided over Christ

⁴⁰ Therefore ⁹ many from the crowd, when they heard this saying, said, “Truly this is ^x the Prophet.” ⁴¹ Others said, “This is ^y the Christ.”

But some said, “Will the Christ come out of Galilee? ⁴² Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes from the seed of David and from the town of Bethlehem, ^a where David was?” ⁴³ So ^b there

³³ ^m John 13:33
ⁿ [Mark 16:19;
 Luke 24:51; Acts
 1:9 ☆; Heb. 9:24;
 1 Pet. 3:22]
⁶ NU, M omit to
 them
³⁴ ^o Hos. 5:6
^p [Matt. 5:20; 1 Cor.
 6:9; 15:50; Rev.
 21:27]
³⁵ ^q Ps. 147:2; [Is.
 11:12; 56:8; Zeph.
 3:10]; James 1:1;
 1 Pet. 1:1
³⁷ ^r Lev. 23:36;
 Num. 29:35; Neh.
 8:18 ^s [Is. 55:1]
³⁸ ^t Deut. 18:15
^u Is. 12:3; 43:20;
 44:3; 55:1; [John
 6:35]; Rev. 21:6;
 22:17
³⁹ ^v Is. 44:3; [Joel
 2:28]; John 1:33
^w John 12:16; 13:31;
 17:5 ⁷ NU who
 believed ⁸ NU omits
 Holy
⁴⁰ ^x Deut. 18:15, 18
⁹ NU some
⁴¹ ^y John 4:42;
 6:69
⁴² ^z Ps. 132:11;
 Jer. 23:5; Mic. 5:2;
 Matt. 2:5; [Luke 2:4]
^a 1 Sam. 16:1, 4
⁴³ ^b John 7:12
⁴⁴ ^c John 7:30
⁴⁶ ^d Matt. 13:54, 56;
 Luke 4:22
⁵⁰ ^e John 3:1, 2;
 19:39 ¹ Lit. *Him*
² NU before
⁵¹ ^f Deut. 1:16, 17;
 19:15
⁵² ^g [Is. 9:1, 2];
 Matt. 4:15 ³ NU is
 to rise

was a division among the people because of Him. ⁴⁴ Now ^c some of them wanted to take Him, but no one laid hands on Him.

The Sanhedrin Is Confused over Christ

⁴⁵ Then the officers came to the chief priests and Pharisees, who said to them, “Why have you not brought Him?”

⁴⁶ The officers answered, ^d “No man ever spoke like this Man!”

⁴⁷ Then the Pharisees answered them, “Are you also deceived? ⁴⁸ Have any of the rulers or the Pharisees believed in Him? ⁴⁹ But this crowd that does not know the law is accursed.”

⁵⁰ Nicodemus ^e (he who came to ¹ Jesus ² by night, being one of them) said to them, ⁵¹ ^f “Does our law judge a man before it hears him and knows what he is doing?”

⁵² They answered and said to him, “Are you also from Galilee? Search and look, for ^g no prophet ³ has arisen out of Galilee.”

A Woman Is Caught in Adultery

⁵³ ⁴ And everyone went to his *own* house.

8 But Jesus went to the Mount of Olives.

² Now ¹ early in the morning He came again into the temple, and all the peo-

⁵³ ⁴ NU brackets 7:53 through 8:11 as not in the original text. They are present in over 900 mss. of John.
 CHAPTER 8 ² ¹ M very early

7:33 a little while longer: Jesus’ time on earth was limited; soon He would be crucified and then ascend to the Father. His life was not determined by the Jewish religious leaders (v. 32), but by the Father.

7:34, 35 you cannot come: Christ would be in heaven; the people would not be able to come to Him there. **Where does He intend to go:** The Jewish leaders did not comprehend what Jesus meant. They could only think of one of the various places where Jews had been scattered.

7:37–39 On each day of the feast, the people came with palm branches and marched around the great altar. A priest took a golden pitcher filled with water from the Pool of Siloam, carried it to the temple, and poured it on the altar as an offering to God. This dramatic ceremony was a memorial of the water that flowed from the rock when the Israelites traveled through the wilderness. On the last day of the feast, the people marched seven times around the altar in memory of the seven circuits around the walls of Jericho. Perhaps at the very moment that the priest was pouring water on the altar, Jesus’ voice rang out: **If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink.**

7:38 as the Scripture has said: The reference is not to a single passage, but to the general emphasis of such passages as Deut. 18:15; Is. 58:11; Zech. 14:8 (see also Num. 24:7). In contrast to the small amount of water poured out each day during the feast, there will be a river of water coming out of those who believe in Christ. Not only will they be satisfied themselves, but they will also become a river so that others may drink and be satisfied (v. 39).

7:39 John explains that Jesus was speaking of **the Holy Spirit** who would satisfy personal thirst and produce a perennial fountain for

the satisfaction of others. The Holy Spirit would come after Jesus’ crucifixion and ascension. Jesus prepared His disciples for this in the Upper Room (14:16–20; 15:26, 27; 16:7–15).

7:40–42 Moses predicted that **the Prophet, the seed of David**, would come (see Deut. 18:15, 18; 2 Sam. 7:14–16). These people knew that the Messiah was to come from **Bethlehem** (see Mic. 5:2). However, they did not know that Jesus had been born there. They thought He was from **Galilee** (see v. 41; Matt. 16:13, 14). They knew the Scripture, but they did not take the time to know the Messiah (5:39).

7:49 this crowd . . . is accursed: The Pharisees accused the people of being ignorant of the Law and thus under God’s curse (see Deut. 28:15). The irony of the situation was that it was the Pharisees, not the crowds, who were under God’s wrath because they had rejected His Son (3:36).

7:50, 51 Nicodemus made a plea for justice (3:2; 12:42, 43), but his plea was rejected.

7:52 no prophet has arisen out of Galilee: Actually, the prophets Jonah, Hosea, Nahum, and perhaps Elijah, Elisha, and Amos were from Galilee or close to it.

8:1 The people went to their own houses (7:53). Jesus, who had no place to lay His head (see Luke 9:58), spent the night on **the Mount of Olives**.

8:2 Early in the morning literally means “at dawn.” **all the people came:** Because the Feast of Tabernacles had concluded the day before (7:2, 37), many visitors were still in Jerusalem. Attracted by the appearance of a noted rabbi, a crowd rapidly gathered. **He sat:** Teachers in ancient Israel sat when they taught. Jesus assumed the position of an authoritative teacher.

ple came to Him; and He sat down and ^ataught them. ³Then the scribes and Pharisees brought to Him a woman caught in adultery. And when they had set her in the midst, ⁴they said to Him, “Teacher, ²this woman was caught in ^badultery, in the very act. ^{5c}Now ³Moses, in the law, commanded us ⁴that such should be stoned. But what do You ⁵say?” ⁶This they said, testing Him, that they ^dmight have *something* of which to accuse Him. But Jesus stooped down and wrote on the ground with *His* finger, ⁶as though He did not hear.

⁷So when they continued asking Him, He ⁷raised Himself up and said to them, ^e“He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first.” ⁸And again He stooped down and wrote on the ground. ⁹Then those who heard *it*, ^fbeing ⁸convicted by *their* conscience, went out one by one, beginning with the oldest *even* to the last. And Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. ¹⁰When Jesus had raised Himself up ⁹and saw no one but the woman, He said to her, “Woman, where are those accusers ¹of yours? Has no one condemned you?”

¹¹She said, “No one, Lord.”

And Jesus said to her, ^g“Neither do I condemn you; go ²and ^hsin no more.”

“I Am the Light of the World”

¹²Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, ⁱ“I am the light of the world. He who ^jfollows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.”

¹³The Pharisees therefore said to Him, ^k“You bear witness of Yourself; Your witness is not ³true.”

² ^a John 8:20; 18:20
⁴ ^e Ex. 20:14; [Matt. 5:27; 19:9; Rom. 7:3]
² ^M *we found this woman*
⁵ ^c Lev. 20:10; Deut. 22:22-24 ³ ^M *in our law Moses commanded* ⁴ ^{NU}, *M to stone such* ⁵ ^M *adds about her*
⁶ ^d Matt. 22:15
⁶ ^{NU}, *M omit as though He did not hear*
⁷ ^e Deut. 17:7; [Rom. 2:1] ⁷ ^M *He looked up*
⁹ ^f Rom. 2:22 ⁸ ^{NU}, *M omit being convicted by their conscience*
¹⁰ ⁹ ^{NU} *omits and saw no one but the woman; M He saw her and said,* ¹ ^{NU}, *M omit of yours*
¹¹ ^g [Luke 9:56; 12:14; John 3:17]
^h [John 5:14] ² ^{NU}, *M add from now on*
¹² ⁱ Is. 9:2; Mal. 4:2; John 1:4; 9:5; 12:35; [2 Tim. 1:10] ¹ ^{Thess. 5:5}
¹³ ^k John 5:31
³ ^{valid as testimony}
¹⁴ ^j John 7:28; 9:29
¹⁵ ^m 1 Sam. 16:7; John 7:24 ⁿ [John 3:17; 12:47; 18:36]
¹⁶ ^p John 16:32
¹⁷ ^p Deut. 17:6; 19:15; Matt. 18:16; 2 Cor. 13:1; Heb. 10:28
¹⁸ ^q John 5:37; 1 John 5:9
¹⁹ ^r John 16:3
⁵ John 14:7
²⁰ ^t Mark 12:41, 43; Luke 21:1 ^u John 2:4; 7:30 ^v John 7:8

¹⁴Jesus answered and said to them, “Even if I bear witness of Myself, My witness is true, for I know where I came from and where I am going; but ^lyou do not know where I come from and where I am going. ¹⁵ ^mYou judge according to the flesh; ⁿI judge no one. ¹⁶And yet if I do judge, My judgment is true; for ^oI am not alone, but I *am* with the Father who sent Me. ¹⁷ ^pIt is also written in your law that the testimony of two men is true. ¹⁸I am One who bears witness of Myself, and ^qthe Father who sent Me bears witness of Me.”

¹⁹Then they said to Him, “Where is Your Father?”

Jesus answered, ^r“You know neither Me nor My Father. ^sIf you had known Me, you would have known My Father also.”

²⁰These words Jesus spoke in ^tthe treasury, as He taught in the temple; and ^uno one laid hands on Him, for ^vHis hour had not yet come.

²¹Then Jesus said to them again, “I am going away, and ^wyou will seek Me, and ^xwill die in your sin. Where I go you cannot come.”

²²So the Jews said, “Will He kill Himself, because He says, ‘Where I go you cannot come?’”

²³And He said to them, ^y“You are from beneath; I am from above. ^zYou are of this world; I am not of this world. ²⁴ ^aTherefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; ^bfor if you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins.”

²¹ ^w John 7:34; 13:33 ^x John 8:24 ²³ ^y John 3:31 ^z John 15:19; 17:16; 1 John 4:5 ²⁴ ^a John 8:21 ^b [Mark 16:16]

8:3 Abruptly bringing the adulterous woman into **the midst** of the proceedings was a rude disruption. The Pharisees were bent on confounding Jesus (7:45).

8:4, 5 **such should be stoned**: Stoning was specified in certain cases of adultery (see Deut. 22:23, 24), though not all. (It is not clear why the authorities intended to punish the woman but not the man.) In the Greek text, the pronoun **You** is emphatic. The religious leaders were trying to trap Jesus into saying something that was contrary to the Law.

8:6 **testing Him**: If Jesus had said not to stone her, He would have contradicted Jewish law. If He had said to stone her, He would have run counter to Roman law, which did not permit Jews to carry out their own executions (18:31). What Jesus **wrote on the ground** is a matter of conjecture. Some suggest that He wrote the Ten Commandments recorded in Ex. 20.

8:11 **Sin no more** implies that Jesus forgave her. He did not condemn her, but neither did He condone her sin.

8:12 **I am the light of the world**: As the sun is the physical light of the world, so Jesus is the spiritual light of the world. As the light of the world, Jesus exposes sin (vv. 1–11) and gives sight (9:1–7).

8:13 **Not true** here does not mean “false”; it means “not sufficient.” The Pharisees challenged Jesus on legal grounds, because no man on trial in a Jewish court was allowed to testify on his own behalf. Their point was that if Jesus was the only one testifying as to who He claimed to be, it would not be enough to prove His case.

8:14 **My witness is true**: In 5:31, Jesus argued on the basis of legality and offered other witnesses. Sometimes, however, an individual is the only one who knows the facts about himself. Thus self-disclosure is the only way to truth (7:29; 13:3).

8:15 **According to the flesh** could mean either “according to appearance” or “by human standards.” The religious leaders formed conclusions based on human standards and an imperfect, external, and superficial examination. Jesus did not judge according to human standards or outward appearances.

8:16–18 **I am not alone**: Jesus could claim that His pronouncements were true and accurate even though the Law of Moses required two witnesses for a testimony to be valid (see Deut. 17:6; 19:15): Both He and the Father through the signs bore testimony to Jesus’ words and works.

8:19 **Where is Your Father**: Since the Father was part of Jesus’ proof of Himself, the Pharisees wanted to know where this Father was. **You know neither**: Even if the Pharisees could see the Father, they would not receive what Jesus said. Jesus came to reveal the Father (1:18), and they had not received Him.

8:22 **kill Himself**: Later Jewish belief placed suicide on the same level with murder.

8:23 **from beneath**: Jesus was not referring to hell, but to **this world**.

8:24 **I am** was God’s designation of Himself (see Ex. 3:14). Jesus was claiming to be God. This assertion was not understood by the

BIBLE TIMES & CULTURE NOTES



Jewish Discontent

Jewish discontent was centered around taxation. In the economy of the time, taxation was heavy. The city of Rome supported itself by imposing and gathering taxes. The Roman system allowed for the lease of taxation rights to entrepreneurs, who taxed their region for profit above what was due to Rome. This method of taxation invited trouble. Jews who worked in the tax system were regarded as traitors, even though the situation might have been even worse if foreigners acted as tax agents. Jewish discontent with Roman rule also had a nationalistic element (8:33). The Jews had not forgotten their independence under the Maccabees, and even the Jews who were scattered in many regions throughout the Roman Empire retained their cultural identity. Political discontent was injected with religious fervor because the Jews considered themselves to be a holy nation, and not just a nation among others (Deut. 26:18, 19; 27:9).

²⁵ Then they said to Him, “Who are You?”

And Jesus said to them, “Just what I ^chave been saying to you from the beginning. ²⁶I have many things to say and to judge concerning you, but ^dHe who sent Me is true; and ^eI speak to the world those things which I heard from Him.”

²⁷ They did not understand that He spoke to them of the Father.

²⁸ Then Jesus said to them, “When you ^flift ^gup the Son of Man, ^hthen you will know that I am *He*, and ⁱthat I do nothing of Myself; but ^jas My Father taught Me, I speak these things. ²⁹ And ^kHe who sent Me is with Me. ^lThe Father has not left Me alone, ^mfor I always do those

²⁵ ^c John 4:26
²⁶ ^d John 7:28
^e John 3:32; 15:15
²⁸ ^e Matt. 27:35;
 Mark 15:24; Luke
 23:33; John 3:14;
 12:32; 19:18 ^g [Rom.
 1:4] ^h John 5:19, 30
ⁱ Deut. 18:15, 18, 19;
 John 3:11 ^k Crucify
²⁹ ^j John 14:10
^k John 8:16; 16:32
^l John 4:34; 5:30;
 6:38

³⁰ ^m John 7:31;
 10:42; 11:45
³¹ ⁿ [John 14:15, 23]
³² ^o [John 1:14, 17;
 14:6] ^p [Rom. 6:14,
 18, 22; James 1:25;
 2:12]
³³ ^q Lev. 25:42;
 [Matt. 3:9]; Luke 3:8
³⁴ ^r Prov. 5:22;
 Rom. 6:16; 2 Pet.
 2:19
³⁵ ^s Gen. 21:10;
 Gal. 4:30
³⁶ ^t [Rom. 8:2;
 2 Cor. 3:17]; Gal. 5:1
³⁷ ^u John 7:19
³⁸ ^v [John 3:32;
 5:19, 30; 14:10, 24]
³⁹ ^w NU heard from
 39 ^w Matt. 3:9; John
 8:37 ^x [Rom. 2:28;
 Gal. 3:7, 29]
⁴⁰ ^y John 8:37
^z John 8:26
⁴¹ ^z Deut. 32:6; Is.
 63:16; Mal. 1:6
⁴² ^{aa} 1 John 5:1
^c John 16:27; 17:8,
 25 ^d John 5:43;
 Gal. 4:4
⁴³ ^e [John 7:17]
⁴⁴ ^f Matt. 13:38;
 1 John 3:8

things that please Him.” ³⁰ As He spoke these words, ^mmany believed in Him.

³¹ Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, “If you ⁿabide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. ³² And you shall know the ^otruth, and ^pthe truth shall make you free.”

³³ They answered Him, ^q“We are Abraham’s descendants, and have never been in bondage to anyone. How *can* You say, ‘You will be made free?’”

³⁴ Jesus answered them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, ^rwhoever commits sin is a slave of sin. ³⁵ And ^sa slave does not abide in the house forever, *but* a son abides forever. ³⁶ ^tTherefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.

³⁷ “I know that you are Abraham’s descendants, but ^uyou seek to kill Me, because My word has no place in you. ³⁸ ^vI speak what I have seen with My Father, and you do what you have ⁵seen with your father.”

³⁹ They answered and said to Him, ^w“Abraham is our father.”

Jesus said to them, ^x“If you were Abraham’s children, you would do the works of Abraham. ⁴⁰ ^yBut now you seek to kill Me, a Man who has told you the truth ^zwhich I heard from God. Abraham did not do this. ⁴¹ You do the deeds of your father.”

Then they said to Him, “We were not born of fornication; ^awe have one Father—God.”

⁴² Jesus said to them, ^b“If God were your Father, you would love Me, for ^cI proceeded forth and came from God; ^dnor have I come of Myself, but He sent Me. ⁴³ ^eWhy do you not understand My speech? Because you are not able to listen to My word. ⁴⁴ ^fYou are of *your* father the devil,

religious leaders at this time. Later, Jesus’ claim to be the “I AM” (v. 58) prompted the Jewish leaders to seek His life (v. 59).

8:28 Lift up is a reference to the Crucifixion.

8:30 The Greek phrase translated **believed in** occurs almost exclusively in John’s Gospel (1:12; 2:11; 3:15, 16, 18, 36; 6:29, 35, 40, 47; 7:38, 39; 9:35, 36; 10:42; 11:25, 26, 45; 12:44, 46). The phrase describes faith in Jesus’ message (see 1 Cor. 1:21), which results in eternal life.

8:31 Abide means to remain, to continue. A believer who continues to obey the Word is a disciple, a learner.

8:32 One who abides in the Word of God knows the **truth** (v. 31; 17:17). The word **free** refers to freedom from the bondage of sin. Obedience to the Lord means fellowship with Him, protection from sin, and experiencing His love.

8:33 They answered Him: Throughout this chapter, Jesus was engaged in an exchange with His antagonists, the Pharisees (v. 13). They are also designated by the term *Jews* (vv. 22, 48, 52, 57) and the pronoun *they* (vv. 19, 25, 27, 33, 39, 41, 59). **We . . . have never been in bondage:** The Pharisees’ objection is startling. In their past, the Israelites had been in bondage to the Egyptians, the Assyrians, and the Babylonians. At the time they spoke, Israel was under the power of Rome.

8:34 slave of sin: Jesus was speaking of spiritual slavery. Such a

slave cannot break away from his bondage. He must have someone else set him free (see Rom. 8:34).

8:35 A slave was not a permanent resident of a house. A son remained a family member with family privileges forever. This proverbial saying is applied in v. 36. The application proves that the “Son” here is Jesus Christ (see “the Son of Man” in v. 28). As a family member, the Son can bestow family privileges on others.

8:37 Abraham’s descendants may have been physical heirs of Abraham, but they were not his spiritual descendants unless they had faith. But instead of trusting Christ to forgive their sins, the religious leaders wanted to kill Him. They heard the **word**, but did not believe it. Thus they could not experience its truth.

8:39 Abraham is our father: The Pharisees believed that being a descendant of Abraham guaranteed them a place in heaven. **The works of Abraham** included paying honor to those who spoke in the name of God (see Gen. 14; 18).

8:41 We were not born of fornication: From ancient times, this has been interpreted as a sneer, as if to say, “We are not illegitimate children, but You are.” Apparently gossip had followed Jesus for many years, alleging that He had been conceived out of wedlock.

8:44 your father: Jesus knew what was in the hearts of people

and the ^odesires of your father you want to ^hdo. He was a murderer from the beginning, and ⁱdoes not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own *resources*, for he is a liar and the father of it. ⁴⁵But because I tell the truth, you do not believe Me. ⁴⁶Which of you convicts Me of sin? And if I tell the truth, why do you not believe Me? ⁴⁷He who is of God hears God's words; therefore you do not hear, because you are not of God."

⁴⁸Then the Jews answered and said to Him, "Do we not say rightly that You are a Samaritan and ^khave a demon?"

⁴⁹Jesus answered, "I do not have a demon; but I honor My Father, and ^lyou dishonor Me. ⁵⁰And ^mI do not seek My *own* glory; there is One who seeks and judges. ⁵¹Most assuredly, I say to you, ⁿif anyone keeps My word he shall never see death."

⁵²Then the Jews said to Him, "Now we know that You ^ohave a demon! ^pAbraham is dead, and the prophets; and You say, 'If anyone keeps My word he shall never taste death.' ⁵³Are You greater than our father Abraham, who is dead? And the prophets are dead. ^qWho do You make Yourself out to be?"

⁵⁴Jesus answered, ^r"If I honor Myself, My honor is nothing. ^sIt is My Father who honors Me, of whom you say that He is ⁶your God. ⁵⁵Yet ^tyou have not known Him, but I know Him. And if I say, 'I do not know Him,' I shall be a liar

⁴⁴ ^g 1 John 2:16, 17
^h [1 John 3:8-10, 15]
ⁱ [Jude 6]
⁴⁷ / Luke 8:15; John 10:26; 1 John 4:6
⁴⁸ ^k John 7:20; 10:20
⁴⁹ / John 5:41
⁵⁰ ^m John 5:41; 7:18; [Phil. 2:6-8]
⁵¹ ⁿ John 5:24; 11:26
⁵² ^o John 7:20; 10:20 ^p Zech. 1:5; Heb. 11:13
⁵³ ^q John 10:33; 19:7
⁵⁴ ^r John 5:31, 32
^s John 5:41; Acts 3:13 ^t NU, M our
⁵⁵ ^t John 7:28, 29
^u [John 15:10]
⁵⁶ ^v Luke 10:24
^w Matt. 13:17; Heb. 11:13
⁵⁸ ^x Mic. 5:2; John 17:5; Heb. 7:3; Rev. 22:13 ^y Ex. 3:14; Is. 43:13; John 17:5, 24; Col. 1:17; Rev. 1:8
⁵⁹ ^z John 10:31; 11:8 ^a Luke 4:30; John 10:39 ^z NU omits the rest of v. 59.

CHAPTER 9

² ^a Luke 13:2; John 9:34; Acts 28:4
³ ^b John 11:4
⁴ ^c [John 4:34; 5:19, 36; 17:4] ^d John 11:9, 10; 12:35; Gal. 6:10 ^e NU We
⁵ ^e [John 1:5, 9; 3:19; 8:12; 12:35, 46]

like you; but I do know Him and ^ukeep His word. ⁵⁶Your father Abraham ^vrejoiced to see My day, ^wand he saw *it* and was glad."

⁵⁷Then the Jews said to Him, "You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?"

⁵⁸Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, ^xbefore Abraham was, ^yI AM."

⁵⁹Then ^zthey took up stones to throw at Him; but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple, ^agoing⁷ through the midst of them, and so passed by.

Christ Heals the Blind Man

9 Now as *Jesus* passed by, He saw a man who was blind from birth. ²And His disciples asked Him, saying, "Rabbi, ^awho sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?"

³Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned, ^bbut that the works of God should be revealed in him. ⁴^c**I** ^umust work the works of Him who sent Me while it is ^dday; *the* night is coming when no one can work. ⁵As long as I am in the world, ^e**I** am the light of the world."

⁶When He had said these things, ^fHe spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva; and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay. ⁷And He said

⁶ ^f Mark 7:33; 8:23

(2:25), so He could trace their actions to their source. The devil is a **murderer**; his agents wanted to kill Christ.

8:48 The Jewish leaders charged Jesus with being a **Samaritan** and having a **demon**. In the process, they turned back to Jesus both charges that He had brought against them, namely, that they were not legitimate children of Abraham (vv. 39, 40) and that they were of the devil (v. 44). The conversation between Jesus and the Jewish rulers had become very heated. On the Pharisees' part, emotions were running high and reason was being set aside.

8:49 The Jewish leaders were dishonoring Jesus even though their eternal destiny depended on what they did with His message (v. 51).

8:50 **One**: God the Father will seek Christ's glory and judge those who dishonor Him.

8:51 Jesus graciously held out to the Jewish leaders the promise of forgiveness and eternal life. **My word** refers to the word concerning who He is. **Death** here refers not to physical death, but to spiritual death resulting in eternal separation from God.

8:53 **greater than . . . Abraham**: Abraham and the prophets kept God's word and died. Jesus was claiming not that He would prevent physical death, but that He could give eternal life. To the Jewish leaders, this was proof that Jesus was demon-possessed.

8:56 **My day**: Abraham looked for the One who would fulfill all that was promised to him—promises that included blessings for all nations (see Gal. 3:8, 9, 29).

8:58, 59 **I AM**: Jesus was not just claiming to have lived before Abraham; He was claiming eternal existence. He was claiming to be God Himself (see Ex. 3:14). This time the Jewish leaders understood that Jesus was claiming to be God, so they **took up stones** to stone Him for blasphemy (see Lev. 24:16).

9:1 The **man who was blind from birth** was a beggar (v. 8). Beg-

gars waited by the gates of the temple for gifts from worshipers. Therefore, it is likely that this scene took place near the temple shortly after the confrontation recorded in ch. 8.

9:2 **who sinned**: It was commonly supposed that sickness was a result of sin. It would follow that sins committed by a baby still in the womb or sin committed by parents could result in a baby being born with a disease. Jesus rejected both suggestions (v. 3).

9:3 God allowed the man to be born blind so that Jesus could heal him and thus reveal **the works of God**, His healing power.

9:6 Mixing **clay** with **saliva** was a common practice used for eye infections. Jesus may have used the clay to provide an opportunity for the man to exercise his faith in washing it off.

I AM

(Gk. *egō eimi*) (6:35; 8:58; 10:7, 14; 15:1; 18:5) Strong's #1473; 1510

This expression denotes "self-identity in self-sufficiency." In one breath, Jesus asserted His eternal preexistence and His absolute deity. Abraham, as with all mortals, came into existence at one point in time. The Son of God, unlike all mortals, never has a beginning. He is eternal; and He is God. This is evident in Jesus' use of the words "I AM" for Himself. This statement recalls the Septuagint (the Greek OT) translation of Ex. 3:6, 14, in which God unveiled His identity as the "I AM WHO I AM." Thus Jesus was claiming to be the ever-existing, self-existent God.

to him, “Go, wash ^gin the pool of Siloam” (which is translated, Sent). So ^hhe went and washed, and came back seeing.

⁸Therefore the neighbors and those who previously had seen that he was ²blind said, “Is not this he who sat and begged?”

⁹Some said, “This is he.” Others said, ³“He is like him.”

⁷ ⁹ Neh. 3:15; Is. 8:6; Luke 13:4; John 9:11
^h 2 Kin. 5:14
⁸ ² NU a beggar
⁹ ³ NU “No, but he is like him.”

¹¹ ¹ John 9:6, 7
⁴ NU omits the pool of

He said, “I am *he*.”

¹⁰Therefore they said to him, “How were your eyes opened?”

¹¹He answered and said, ⁱ“A Man called Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes and said to me, ‘Go to ⁴the pool of Siloam and wash.’ So I went and washed, and I received sight.”

¹²Then they said to him, “Where is He?”

9:7 Siloam: Hezekiah had a tunnel cut through solid rock to transport water from Gihon (the “Virgin’s Fountain”) into the city of Jerusalem, to the Pool of Siloam (see 2 Kin. 20:20; 2 Chr. 32:30). John

emphasizes that the name Siloam means “Sent,” because Jesus had just announced that He had been sent by God (v. 4).

The Signs of Jesus in the Gospel of John



A blind man sees; a lame man walks. Everywhere Jesus went, people were amazed at His miraculous powers. John uses Jesus’ miracles as an organizing principle in his Gospel. He calls them all *semeia*, or “signs,” indicating that each miracle was a concrete demonstration of Jesus’ divinity and messiahship. Their purpose was to engender belief as they did for the disciples (2:11) and the nobleman’s household (4:52). But these same miracles would incite some to anger and violence (11:45–52). John records seven specific “signs.” The first was Jesus’ miracle of turning water into wine in Cana (2:1–11). In 2:11, John specifically mentions that this sign signified Christ’s glory, that is, His deity. With this sign Jesus demonstrated His creative power over nature, and His disciples appropriately placed their faith in Him (2:11).

The second sign was Jesus’ healing of the nobleman’s son (4:46–54). Although the son was in Capernaum and Jesus was in Cana, He told the boy’s father, “Your son lives” (4:50). This sign indicated that Jesus was more than a mere mortal; He possessed the power not only to defeat disease, but to transcend space. Jesus did not have to be physically present to heal. Once again, the sign produced belief (4:52).

But with the third sign, another reaction to Jesus’ miracles can be seen. A man at the pool of Bethesda had been sick for a long time. When Jesus told him, “Rise, take up your bed and walk” (5:8), immediately he was well. But this healing took place on the Sabbath. Instead of rejoicing with the healed man, the Jewish leaders reprimanded him for carrying his bed on the Sabbath. The Jewish leaders’ traditions and ideas kept them from believing in the clear signs of Jesus.

The fourth sign was Jesus’ miraculous feeding of the five thousand (6:1–15). By creating a great quantity of food out of five loaves and two fishes, Jesus was again demonstrating His deity, for only God can create. But the crowd, instead of submitting to Jesus’ teaching and following Him, wanted to make Him their king. They sought out Jesus for the food for their stomachs, and not for the spiritual food that would give them eternal life (6:26, 27).

The fifth sign was Jesus’ walking on the water (6:16–21). After the feeding of the five thousand, the disciples took a boat to cross the Sea of Galilee on their way to Capernaum. When they were three or four miles out, they saw Jesus walking on the water toward them. This time, Jesus demonstrated His complete control of nature, from the winds above to the water below. This was another sign of His deity, and another reason for the disciples to place complete trust in Him.

Jesus’ sixth sign highlights the different responses to Jesus’ miraculous works. In this account, the Pharisees’ spiritual blindness is clearly contrasted with the vibrant faith of the blind man. After being healed, this man told others about Jesus and correctly concluded that He was from God. The blind man saw clearly what Jesus’ sign meant, and believed (9:38). But the Pharisees refused to believe. They ridiculed the man’s faith and arrogantly questioned Jesus (9:34, 40, 41).



The wedding at Cana; the first “sign” of Jesus

Wikimedia Commons

The seventh sign was Jesus’ raising of Lazarus from the dead (11:1–44). Lazarus had been buried for four days when Jesus arrived in Bethany. With the simple words “Lazarus, come out,” Jesus restored to life the brother of Mary and Martha. This last sign was the greatest: Jesus at once demonstrated His power over the grave and pointed to His own resurrection. Not even death could limit Him, for He was truly God.

These seven signs certainly should have been enough to convince anyone that Jesus was the promised Messiah. Yet the miracles singled out by John were no more than “samples” of the enormous scope of Jesus’ signs and wonders (21:25). For John, all these signs pointed to the two miracles that are the greatest of all: Jesus’ incarnation (1:14) and resurrection (20:1–18). Jesus is God’s only Son become man. Although He died for our sins, He was raised from the dead. Today, He still lives and intercedes for all who believe in Him.

He said, "I do not know."

¹³They brought him who formerly was blind to the Pharisees. ¹⁴Now it was a Sabbath when Jesus made the clay and opened his eyes. ¹⁵Then the Pharisees also asked him again how he had received his sight. He said to them, "He put clay on my eyes, and I washed, and I see."

¹⁶Therefore some of the Pharisees said, "This Man is not from God, because He does not ⁵keep the Sabbath."

Others said, ^j"How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?" And ^kthere was a division among them.

¹⁷They said to the blind man again, "What do you say about Him because He opened your eyes?"

He said, ^l"He is a prophet."

¹⁸But the Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind and received his sight, until they called the parents of him who had received his sight. ¹⁹And they asked them, saying, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?"

²⁰His parents answered them and said, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; ²¹but by what means he now sees we do not know, or who opened his eyes we do not know. He is of age; ask him. He will speak for himself."

²²His parents said these *things* because ^mthey feared the Jews, for the Jews had agreed already that if anyone confessed *that He was Christ*, he ⁿwould be put out of the synagogue. ²³Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him."

²⁴So they again called the man who was blind, and said to him, ^o"Give God the glory! ^pWe know that this Man is a sinner."

²⁵He answered and said, "Whether He is a sinner *or not* I do not know. One thing I know: that though I was blind, now I see."

¹⁶ / John 3:2; 9:33
^k John 7:12, 43;
 10:19 ⁵ observe
¹⁷ ^l [John 4:19; 6:14]
²² ^m John 7:13;
 12:42; 19:38; Acts
 5:13 ⁿ John 16:2
²⁴ ^o Josh. 7:19;
 1 Sam. 6:5; Ezra
 10:11; Rev. 11:13
^p John 9:16

²⁹ ^q Ex. 19:19, 20;
 33:11; 34:29; Num.
 12:6-8 ^r [John 5:45-
 47] ^s John 7:27,
 28; 8:14
³⁰ ^t John 3:10
³¹ ^u Job 27:9; 35:12;
 Ps. 18:41; Prov. 1:28;
 15:29; 28:9; Is. 1:15;
 Jer. 11:11; 14:12;
 Ezek. 8:18; Mic. 3:4;
 Zech. 7:13; [James
 5:16]
³³ ^v John 3:2; 9:16
³⁴ ^w Ps. 51:5; John
 9:2 ^x Excom-
 municated him
³⁵ ^x John 5:14
^y John 1:7; 16:31
^z Matt. 14:33; 16:16;
 Mark 1:1; John
 10:36; 1 John 5:13
⁷ NU Man
³⁷ ^a John 4:26
³⁸ ^b Matt. 8:2
³⁹ ^c [John 3:17;
 5:22, 27; 12:47]
^d Matt. 13:13; 15:14
⁴⁰ ^e [Rom. 2:19]

²⁶Then they said to him again, "What did He do to you? How did He open your eyes?"

²⁷He answered them, "I told you already, and you did not listen. Why do you want to hear *it* again? Do you also want to become His disciples?"

²⁸Then they reviled him and said, "You are His disciple, but we are Moses' disciples. ²⁹We know that God ^qspoke to ^rMoses; *as for this fellow*, ^swe do not know where He is from."

³⁰The man answered and said to them, ^t"Why, this is a marvelous thing, that you do not know where He is from; yet He has opened my eyes! ³¹Now we know that ^uGod does not hear sinners; but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does His will, He hears him. ³²Since the world began it has been unheard of that anyone opened the eyes of one who was born blind. ³³^vIf this Man were not from God, He could do nothing."

³⁴They answered and said to him, ^w"You were completely born in sins, and are you teaching us?" And they ^xcast him out.

³⁵Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when He had ^yfound him, He said to him, "Do you ^zbelieve in ^athe Son of ⁷God?"

³⁶He answered and said, "Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?"

³⁷And Jesus said to him, "You have both seen Him and ^ait is He who is talking with you."

³⁸Then he said, "Lord, I believe!" And he ^bworshiped Him.

³⁹And Jesus said, ^c"For judgment I have come into this world, ^dthat those who do not see may see, and that those who see may be made blind."

⁴⁰Then *some* of the Pharisees who were with Him heard these words, ^eand said to Him, "Are we blind also?"

9:16 some of the Pharisees said . . . Others said: The Pharisees could not believe that Jesus was from God because He had healed on the Sabbath, thereby breaking the oral traditions that had grown up around the Law. But those who fairly evaluated Jesus' miraculous signs came to the conclusion that He was from God.

9:17 The blind man concluded that Jesus was **a prophet**. This does not mean he had decided that Jesus was the Messiah (1:20, 21; 6:14).

9:22 To be put out of the synagogue was to be excommunicated. The Jews had three types of excommunication: one lasting 30 days, during which the person could not come within six feet of anybody else; one for an indefinite time, during which the person was excluded from all fellowship and worship; and one that meant absolute expulsion forever. These judgments were very serious because no one could conduct business with a person who was excommunicated.

9:24 The command to **Give God the glory** was a solemn charge to declare the whole truth (see Josh. 7:19; 1 Sam. 6:5). Attempting to put words in the man's mouth, the Jewish leaders said they knew Jesus was **a sinner**. In their view, healing on the Sabbath was breaking the Law. So to them, Jesus was a sinner (5:16).

9:28 You are His disciple: The healed man had not claimed to be Jesus' disciple. He only asked the Jewish leaders if they were interested in this case because they wished to become Jesus' disciples (v. 27).

9:30-33 unheard of: There is no healing of a blind man recorded anywhere in the OT.

9:36 Who is He: Faith must have a proper object. Jesus, not faith, saves. Faith is only a channel to the worthy object, the Lord Jesus Christ.

9:38 Note the progression throughout this chapter of the healed man's understanding of the person of Christ. First, he called Jesus "a man" (v. 11); then "a prophet" (v. 17); and finally he realized that Jesus is the Son of God (vv. 35-38).

9:39 For judgment I have come into this world: Jesus did not come into the world to execute judgment (3:17). Nevertheless, the inevitable result of His coming is judgment, because some refuse to believe (3:18). As the light of the world, Jesus came that the blind might **see** and those who think they can see will be **made blind**.

⁴¹ Jesus said to them, ^f“If you were blind, you would have no sin; but now you say, ‘We see.’ Therefore your sin remains.

“I Am the Good Shepherd”

10 “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door, but climbs up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. ² But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. ³ To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice; and he calls his own sheep by ^a name and leads them out. ⁴ And when he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them; and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. ⁵ Yet they will by no means follow a ^b stranger, but will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.” ⁶ Jesus used this illustration, but they did not understand the things which He spoke to them.

⁷ Then Jesus said to them again, “Most assuredly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. ⁸ All who *ever* came ¹ before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. ⁹ ^c I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture. ¹⁰ The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

¹¹ ^d “I am the good shepherd. The good

41 ^f John 15:22, 24

CHAPTER 10

3 ^a John 20:16
5 ^b [2 Cor. 11:13-15]
8 ¹ M omits *before Me*
9 ^c [John 14:6; Eph. 2:18]
11 ^d Gen. 49:24; Is. 40:11; Ezek. 34:23; [Heb. 13:20]; 1 Pet. 2:25; 5:4; Rev. 7:17

12 ^e Zech. 11:16, 17
² *hired man*
14 ^f Is. 40:11; Nah. 1:7; Zech. 13:7; John 6:64; 2 Tim. 2:19
9 ² Tim. 1:12
15 ^h Matt. 11:27
¹ Matt. 27:50 ☆;
Mark 15:37; Luke 23:46; [John 15:13; 19:30]; 1 John 3:16
16 ¹ Is. 42:6; 56:8 ★;
Acts 10:45; 11:18;
13:46 ★ Ezek. 37:22;
John 11:52; 17:20;
Eph. 2:13-18; 1 Pet. 2:25
17 ¹ John 5:20 ^m [Is. 53:7, 8, 12; Heb. 2:9]
18 ⁿ Matt. 26:53;
[John 2:19; 5:26]
^o [John 6:38; 14:31;
17:4; Acts 2:24, 32]
19 ^p John 7:43; 9:16
20 ^q John 7:20
²¹ ^r *insane*
21 ^r [Ex. 4:11] ^s John 9:6, 7, 32, 33

shepherd gives His life for the sheep. ¹² But a ² hireling, *he who* is not the shepherd, one who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and ^e leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf catches the sheep and scatters them. ¹³ The hireling flees because he is a hireling and does not care about the sheep. ¹⁴ I am the good shepherd; and ^f I know My *sheep*, and ^g am known by My own. ¹⁵ ^h As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father; ⁱ and I lay down My life for the sheep. ¹⁶ And ^j other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; ^k and there will be one flock *and* one shepherd.

¹⁷ “Therefore My Father ^l loves Me, ^m because I lay down My life that I may take it again. ¹⁸ No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I ⁿ have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. ^o This command I have received from My Father.”

¹⁹ Therefore ^p there was a division again among the Jews because of these sayings. ²⁰ And many of them said, ^q “He has a demon and is ³ mad. Why do you listen to Him?”

²¹ Others said, “These are not the words of one who has a demon. ^r Can a demon ^s open the eyes of the blind?”

The Opposition at the Feast of Dedication in Jerusalem

²² Now it was the Feast of Dedication

10:1 In John 7, Jesus journeyed to Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles (see 7:2, 10). All of the events between 7:10 and 10:39 take place on that visit to Jerusalem. Thus chs. 9 and 10 are closely connected, suggesting that Jesus had the Pharisees of ch. 9 in mind when He spoke the opening words of ch. 10. A **sheepfold** was a walled enclosure or high fence made with stakes, and having one door or gate; often the enclosure was a cave. **some other way**: The Pharisees had secured their power by illegitimate means. A **thief** steals in secret; a **robber** plunders openly with violence.

10:2 In contrast to the thief, the true **shepherd** would come through **the door**.

10:3 The **doorkeeper** was the undershepherd. **Calls** expresses personal address rather than a general or authoritative invitation. **by name**: The naming of sheep was an ancient practice (see Ps. 147:4; Is. 40:26). This was good practice for the undershepherd who has been given the charge of a portion of God’s flock (see 1 Pet. 5:2).

10:4 **Brings out** is a translation of the same Greek word used in 9:34, 35 of the Pharisees casting out the man born blind. The false shepherds put out the sheep to rid themselves of trouble. The true shepherd puts out the sheep in order to feed them. The sheep know the voice of the true shepherd.

10:5 A **stranger** is anyone whom the sheep do not know, not necessarily a thief and a robber. Sheep would not follow a stranger’s voice even if he used the shepherd’s call and imitated his tone.

10:7 In vv. 1–5, Jesus is the shepherd; here He is **the door**. Some shepherds lay down across the entry of the sheepfold at night to sleep. Wild beasts would be discouraged from entering, and sheep would not exit. Thus the shepherd was also the door.

10:8 The **thieves and robbers** were the Pharisees (v. 1).

10:9 Jesus, the shepherd, gives spiritual life and access to spiritual food.

10:10 **more abundantly**: The thieves take life; the shepherd gives it. Abundant life includes salvation, nourishment, healing (v. 9), and much more. **Life** here refers to eternal life, God’s life. It speaks not only of endlessness, but of *quality* of life. With Christ, life on earth can reach much higher quality, and then in heaven it will be complete and perfect.

10:11 Jesus is **the good shepherd who gives His life for the sheep** (see 3:16; 1 John 3:16), as opposed to the wicked thief who takes their lives. While *life* in v. 10 refers to eternal life, **life** here refers to physical life. Jesus laid down His physical life in order to give us eternal life.

10:12 The **hireling** is a hired shepherd, a mercenary, who tends the flock for his own interest. When a hired shepherd sees a wolf coming he flees, not caring about the sheep.

10:16 The **other sheep** were not Jews in heathen lands, but Gentiles. The Jewish people had asked if Jesus would go and teach the Gentiles (7:35). Jesus now declared that He had sheep among the despised heathen. **One flock** anticipates the salvation of the Gentiles and the formation of the church, in which converted Jews and Gentiles would form one spiritual body (see 1 Cor. 12:13; Gal. 3:28; Eph. 2:16).

10:18 As the good shepherd, Jesus had the **power**—that is, the authority—not only to voluntarily **lay** down His life for the sheep (vv. 11, 15, 17), but also to **take it up** again. No one but God can do that.

10:19–21 After Jesus’ analogy of the good shepherd, the editorial comment by John is fitting. In the analogy, Jesus was the good shepherd whose sheep hear His voice, implying that there are sheep who do not hear His voice. John’s comment, true to the purpose of his Gospel, indicates that some believe and others do not. This is the same **division** that occurred in 9:16.

10:22 The events of 7:1–10:21 occurred during the Feast of Tab-



Herod's Temple

King Herod sought to appease his Jewish subjects by constructing an enormous, ornate, cream-colored temple of stone and gold. Building began in 19 B.C. The main building was finished by 9 B.C., but the entire structure was not completed until A.D. 64. The temple building occupied an area that measured about 490 yards from north to south and 325 yards from east to west. The entire temple complex was enclosed by a massive stone wall, the southeast corner of which stood about 50 yards above the floor of the Kidron ravine. The parapet above this corner may have been the “pinnacle of the temple” referred to in Matt. 4:5. In A.D. 70, the Romans destroyed the temple and burned it to the ground. All that currently remains is the Western Wall, also called the Wailing Wall, where Jews still gather to pray.



A model of Herod's temple
Wikimedia Commons

in Jerusalem, and it was winter. ²³ And Jesus walked in the temple, [†] in Solomon's porch. ²⁴ Then the Jews surrounded Him and said to Him, “How long do You keep us in ⁴ doubt? If You are the Christ, tell us plainly.”

²⁵ Jesus answered them, “I told you, and you do not believe. ^u The works that I do in My Father's name, they ^v bear witness of Me. ²⁶ But ^w you do not believe, because you are not of My sheep, ⁵ as I

²³ [†] Acts 3:11; 5:12

²⁴ ⁴ Suspense

²⁵ ^u John 5:36;

10:38 ^v Matt. 11:4;

John 2:11; 20:30

²⁶ ^w [John 8:47]

⁵ NU omits *as I said to you*

²⁷ ^x John 10:4, 14

²⁹ ^y John 14:28

^z [John 17:2, 6, 12, 24]

³⁰ ^a John 17:11,

21-24

³¹ ^b John 8:59

said to you. ²⁷ ^x My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.

²⁸ And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. ²⁹ ^y My Father, ^z who has given *them* to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch *them* out of My Father's hand. ³⁰ ^a I and *My* Father are one.”

³¹ Then ^b the Jews took up stones again to stone Him. ³² Jesus answered

ernacles, which fell in the middle of October. **The Feast of Dedication** was celebrated for eight days in December; thus there was a period of about two months between vv. 21 and 22. In 167 B.C., Antiochus Epiphanes desecrated the temple in Jerusalem, as prophesied in Dan. 11:31. The Maccabees restored and purified the temple. In commemoration of the restoration, the Feast of Dedication was instituted. Today it is also known as the Feast of Lights or Hanukkah. John notes that the events of 10:22 occurred in winter to explain why the Lord chose a sheltered spot in which to teach (v. 23).

10:23 A pavilion surrounded the temple. **Solomon's porch** was a long, covered cloister or colonnade in the temple court, probably on the east side.

10:25 Jesus answered: Jesus reminded the Jewish leaders of His words and works. Jesus was the Messiah and said so. He told the woman at the well that He was the Messiah (4:25, 26), as well as

the man born blind (9:35-37). His works include all the miracles He performed as signs pointing to His messiahship (see 20:31).

10:26 as I said to you: At the Feast of Tabernacles, Jesus had told the leaders that they were not among His sheep (see vv. 14, 15; 8:42-44, 47).

10:27-29 Jesus described three characteristics of His sheep: (1) **They hear His voice** (v. 4). He knows them (see Rom. 8:29). (2) **They follow Him.** The following of the sheep is a metaphor for faith. Other metaphors for faith in this Gospel include drinking water (4:14), eating bread (6:50, 51), eating flesh and drinking blood (6:54). (3) **They shall never perish;** their eternal life can never be taken away. The **Father's hand** is more powerful than that of any enemy.

10:30 I and My Father are one: The Jewish opponents understood that Jesus was claiming to be God (vv. 31, 33).

10:31 again: This was not the first time that the Jewish leaders **took up stones** against Jesus (see 8:59).

10:32, 33 The Jewish antagonizers revealed the reason for their

them, “Many good works I have shown you from My Father. For which of those works do you stone Me?”

³³The Jews answered Him, saying, “For a good work we do not stone You, but for ‘blasphemy, and because You, being a Man, ^dmake Yourself God.”

³⁴Jesus answered them, “Is it not written in your law, ^e‘I said, “You are gods”’?

³⁵If He called them gods, ^fto whom the word of God came (and the Scripture ^gcannot be broken), ³⁶do you say of Him ^hwhom the Father sanctified and ⁱsent into the world, ‘You are blaspheming,’ ^jbecause I said, ‘I am ^kthe Son of God’?

³⁷If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me; ³⁸but if I do, though you do not believe Me, ^mbelieve the works, that you may know and ⁿbelieve ^othat the Father ^pis in Me, and I in Him.”

³⁹Therefore they sought again to seize Him, but He escaped out of their hand.

⁴⁰And He went away again beyond the Jordan to the place ^qwhere John was baptizing at first, and there He stayed.

⁴¹Then many came to Him and said, “John performed no sign, ^rbut all the things that John spoke about this Man were true.” ⁴²And many believed in Him there.

Christ Raises Lazarus

11 Now a certain *man* was sick, Lazarus of Bethany, the town of ^aMary and her sister Martha. ²^bIt was *that* Mary who anointed the Lord with fragrant oil and wiped His feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick. ³Therefore the sisters sent to Him, saying, “Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick.”

⁴When Jesus heard *that*, He said,

³³ ^cMatt. 9:3
^d John 5:18
³⁴ ^e Ps. 82:6
³⁵ ^f Matt. 5:17, 18
^g 1 Pet. 1:25
³⁶ ^h John 6:27
ⁱ John 3:17 ^j John 5:17, 18 ^k Luke 1:35
³⁷ ^l John 10:25;
15:24
³⁸ ^m John 5:36
ⁿ John 14:10, 11
^o NU understand
³⁹ ^p John 7:30, 44
⁴⁰ ^q John 1:28
⁴¹ ^r [John 1:29, 36;
3:28-36; 5:33]

CHAPTER 11

¹ ^a Luke 10:38, 39;
John 11:5, 19
² ^b Matt. 26:7

⁶ ^c John 10:40
⁸ ^d John 8:59; 10:31
⁹ ^e Luke 13:33; John 9:4; 12:35 ^f Is. 9:2
¹⁰ ^g John 12:35
¹¹ ^h Deut. 31:16;
[Dan. 12:2]; Matt. 9:24; Acts 7:60;
[1 Cor. 15:18, 51]
¹⁶ ⁱ Matt. 10:3;
Mark 3:18; Luke 6:15; John 14:5;
20:26-28; Acts 1:13
¹⁸ ^j Lit. 15 stadia

“This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it.”

⁵Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. ⁶So, when He heard that he was sick, ⁷He stayed two more days in the place where He was. ⁸Then after this He said to *the* disciples, “Let us go to Judea again.”

⁹The disciples said to Him, “Rabbi, lately the Jews sought to ^dstone You, and are You going there again?”

⁹Jesus answered, “Are there not twelve hours in the day? ^eIf anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the ^flight of this world. ¹⁰But ^gif one walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him.” ¹¹These things He said, and after that He said to them, “Our friend Lazarus ^hsleeps, but I go that I may wake him up.”

¹²Then His disciples said, “Lord, if he sleeps he will get well.” ¹³However, Jesus spoke of his death, but they thought that He was speaking about taking rest in sleep.

¹⁴Then Jesus said to them plainly, “Lazarus is dead. ¹⁵And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, that you may believe. Nevertheless let us go to him.”

¹⁶Then ⁱThomas, who is called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, “Let us also go, that we may die with Him.”

¹⁷So when Jesus came, He found that he had already been in the tomb four days. ¹⁸Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, about ^jtwo miles away. ¹⁹And many of the Jews had joined the women around Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother.

opposition to Jesus—He was claiming a unique unity with the Father, a unity that clearly indicated His own deity. The Jewish leaders considered this to be **blasphemy**.

10:34 In the OT, judges were called *gods*. They exercised godlike judicial sovereignty. Psalm 82:6, the verse quoted here, refers to judges who violate the Law. Jesus’ argument was that if the divine name had been applied by God to mere men, there could be neither blasphemy nor folly in its application to the incarnate Son of God Himself.

10:35 **Broken** actually means “to loose, untie.” This is a strong statement of the inerrancy of the Holy Scriptures. Notice how Jesus made the veracity of His argument rest on the absolute trustworthiness of Scripture.

10:38 **believe the works:** Jesus asked the Jewish leaders to at least consider His miracles because these indicated and demonstrated His deity. Note that the heart of the issue is *belief*. John never deviates from this single condition for being born again. The word translated *believe* is used 99 times in this book.

10:40 **beyond the Jordan:** This sojourn into Perea is also noted in Matt. 19:1; Mark 10:1.

11:1 **Bethany,** a small village on the southeast slope of the Mount of Olives, was located about two miles from Jerusalem (v. 18).

11:2 **Mary who anointed:** The anointing had not yet taken place (12:1–3). When John wrote, the anointing was well known, so he

used the event to distinguish this Mary from other women with the same name.

11:4 **Not unto death** means not having death as its final result. **may be glorified:** By raising Lazarus from the dead, Jesus would demonstrate His deity in an undeniable way.

11:6–8 **stayed two more days:** God’s purpose was to glorify His Son (v. 4) and to cause the disciples to grow (v. 15). Had Jesus immediately rushed to Lazarus’s bedside and healed him, Lazarus would not have died and Jesus would not have been able to manifest His glory by raising Lazarus. God’s timing to accomplish His purpose is perfect. The disciples were skeptical. In their minds, for Jesus to go back to Judea would mean death.

11:15 Jesus was not **glad** that Lazarus was dead. He was glad for the opportunity the disciples would soon have to see an amazing miracle. The disciples had already believed (2:11), but each new trial offered an opportunity for their faith to grow.

11:16 **the Twin:** In Thomas, the twins of belief and unbelief combined with each other for mastery. He seems to have combined devotion to Jesus with a tendency to see the dark side of things. Jesus said, “Let us go,” that the disciples might believe (v. 15). Thomas said, **Let us also go, that we may die**. While the Lord saw their development in faith, Thomas saw their deaths. Yet in his loyalty, he followed anyway.

Jesus’ Seven “I Am” Statements

Jesus’ “I am” statements would have particular significance to the first-century Jewish listener. God had revealed Himself to Moses with a resounding “I AM” (Ex. 3:14). Now Jesus was using the same words to describe Himself (4:26; 6:20; 13:19).

Title	Reference	Context	Significance
"I am the bread of life."	6:35, 41, 48, 51	After Jesus had fed the five thousand and the people wanted more free food.	As bread sustains physical life, so Christ offers and sustains spiritual life. The nourishment and satisfaction He offers are permanent.
"I am the light of the world."	8:12	During the Feast of Tabernacles. At this feast a huge candelabra was lit in the women's court of the temple. It reminded the Israelites of the pillar of fire which guided their ancestors during the wilderness wanderings.	To a world stumbling about in the darkness of sin, Christ offers Himself as a constant guide. Light is also symbolic of holiness.
"I am the door of the sheep."	10:7, 9	During a discourse with Israel's religious leaders in which Jesus in essence declared them to be unfit shepherds of the nation.	Shepherds guided their flocks into stone enclosures each night to protect them. These structures had no doors. The shepherd would sit or lie in the opening to prevent predators from attacking. Thus Jesus was describing His care and constant devotion to those who are His.
"I am the good shepherd."	10:11, 14	Same as above.	Unlike hirelings who might run away and leave the flock unprotected, Jesus is committed to caring for and keeping watch over His people.
"I am the resurrection and the life."	11:25	After Lazarus had died.	Jesus is the Lord of all life and possesses the power to raise the dead. Death is not the final word, for all who are in Christ will live forever.
"I am the way, the truth, and the life."	14:6	When the disciples were confused about Jesus' statements about heaven.	Jesus is the one and only way to the Father. He is the source of all truth and the source for all knowledge about God. He offers to spiritually dead people the very life of God.
"I am the true vine."	15:1, 5	In the Upper Room discourse on the night of His arrest.	The Old Testament contains many references to Israel as God's vine (Ps. 80:8; Is. 5:1–7; Ezek. 15; Hos. 10:1). But because of the nation's unfruitfulness, Jesus came to fulfill God's plan. By attaching ourselves to Christ, we enable His life to flow in and through us. Then we cannot help but bear fruit that will honor the Father. In this metaphor, He is the Gardener.

²⁰Now Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met Him, but Mary was sitting in the house. ²¹Now Martha said to Jesus, “Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died. ²²But even now I know that ^jwhatever You ask of God, God will give You.” ²³Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.” ²⁴Martha said to Him, ^k“I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.” ²⁵Jesus said to her, “I am ^lthe resurrection and the life. ^mHe who believes in Me, though he may ⁿdie, he shall live. ²⁶And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?” ²⁷She said to Him, “Yes, Lord, ^oI be-

²² ^j [John 9:31; 11:41]
²⁴ ^k [Luke 14:14; John 5:29]
²⁵ ^j John 5:21; 6:39, 40, 44; [Rev. 1:18]
^m John 3:16, 36;
1 John 5:10 ⁿ 1 Cor. 15:22; [Heb. 9:27]
²⁷ ^o Matt. 16:16; Luke 2:11; John 4:42; 6:14, 69

³⁰ ² NU was still
³¹ ^p John 11:19, 33
³ NU supposing that she was going
³² ^q Mark 5:22;
7:25; Rev. 1:17
^r John 11:21

lieve that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world.” ²⁸And when she had said these things, she went her way and secretly called Mary her sister, saying, “The Teacher has come and is calling for you.” ²⁹As soon as she heard *that*, she arose quickly and came to Him. ³⁰Now Jesus had not yet come into the town, but ²was in the place where Martha met Him. ³¹^vThen the Jews who were with her in the house, and comforting her, when they saw that Mary rose up quickly and went out, followed her, ³saying, “She is going to the tomb to weep there.” ³²Then, when Mary came where Jesus was, and saw Him, she ^qfell down at His feet, saying to Him, ^r“Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died.”

11:25–27 Christ is **the resurrection** for those who believe and are physically dead. He is **the life** for those who believe and have not yet died. When Jesus asked Martha if she believed, she responded with words similar to the ones John used to describe the purpose of his book (20:31). In order to have eternal life, a person must place his

or her faith in Jesus, who is **the Christ, the Son of God**, who came into the world to bring eternal life to those who believe.
11:32 if You had been here: Mary said the same thing to the Lord as Martha had (v. 21). No doubt they had expressed this thought to one another often in the previous few days.

³³ Therefore, when Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her weeping, He groaned in the spirit and was troubled. ³⁴ And He said, “Where have you laid him?”

They said to Him, “Lord, come and see.”

³⁵ Jesus wept. ³⁶ Then the Jews said, “See how He loved him!”

³⁷ And some of them said, “Could not this Man, ¹who opened the eyes of the blind, also have kept this man from dying?”

³⁸ Then Jesus, again groaning in Himself, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a ²stone lay against it. ³⁹ Jesus said, “Take away the stone.”

Martha, the sister of him who was dead, said to Him, “Lord, by this time there is a stench, for he has been *dead* four days.”

⁴⁰ Jesus said to her, “Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would ³see the glory of God?” ⁴¹ Then they took away the stone ⁴from the place where the dead man was lying. And Jesus lifted up His eyes and said, “Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. ⁴² And I know that You always hear Me, but ⁵because of the people who are standing by I said *this*, that they may believe that You sent Me.” ⁴³ Now when He had said these things, He cried with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come forth!” ⁴⁴ And he who had died came out bound hand and foot with ⁶graveclothes, and ⁷his face was wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, “Loose him, and let him go.”

The Pharisees Plan to Kill Christ

⁴⁵ Then many of the Jews who had come to Mary, ²and had seen the things Jesus did, believed in Him. ⁴⁶ But some of them went away to the Pharisees and

³⁵ ^s Luke 19:41
³⁷ ^s John 9:6, 7
³⁸ ^s Matt. 27:60, 66; Mark 15:46; Luke 24:2; John 20:1
⁴⁰ ^v [John 11:4, 23]
⁴¹ ⁴ NU omits from the place where the dead man was lying
⁴² ^w John 12:30; 17:21
⁴⁴ ^x John 19:40
^y John 20:7
⁴⁵ ^z John 2:23; 10:42; 12:11, 18

⁴⁶ ^a John 5:15
⁴⁷ ^b Ps. 2:2; Matt. 26:3; Mark 14:1; Luke 22:2 ^c John 12:19; Acts 4:16
⁴⁹ ^d Matt. 26:3; Luke 3:2; John 18:14; Acts 4:6
⁵⁰ ^e John 18:14
⁵¹ ^{NU} you
⁵² ^f Is. 49:6; Acts 10:45; 11:18; 13:46; [1 John 2:2] ^g Ps. 22:27; John 10:16; [Eph. 2:14-17]
⁵³ ^h Matt. 26:4; Luke 6:11; 19:47; 22:2; John 5:16
⁵⁴ ⁱ John 4:1, 3; 7:1
^j 2 Chr. 13:19
⁵⁵ ^k Matt. 26:1; Mark 14:1; Luke 22:1; John 2:13; 5:1; 6:4 ^l Num. 9:10; 13:31; 19:20; 2 Chr. 30:17; Luke 2:22
⁵⁶ ^m John 7:11
⁵⁷ ⁿ Matt. 26:14-16

CHAPTER 12

¹ ^a Matt. 21:17; John 11:1, 43 ¹ NU omits who had been dead

^a told them the things Jesus did. ⁴⁷ ^b Then the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered a council and said, ^c “What shall we do? For this Man works many signs. ⁴⁸ If we let Him alone like this, everyone will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and nation.”

⁴⁹ And one of them, ^d Caiaphas, being high priest that year, said to them, “You know nothing at all, ⁵⁰ ^e nor do you consider that it is expedient for ⁵ us that one man should die for the people, and not that the whole nation should perish.”

⁵¹ Now this he did not say on his own *authority*; but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation, ⁵² and ^f not for that nation only, but ^g also that He would gather together in one the children of God who were scattered abroad.

⁵³ Then, from that day on, they plotted to ^h put Him to death. ⁵⁴ ⁱ Therefore Jesus no longer walked openly among the Jews, but went from there into the country near the wilderness, to a city called ^j Ephraim, and there remained with His disciples.

⁵⁵ ^k And the Passover of the Jews was near, and many went from the country up to Jerusalem before the Passover, to ^l purify themselves. ⁵⁶ ^m Then they sought Jesus, and spoke among themselves as they stood in the temple, “What do you think—that He will not come to the feast?” ⁵⁷ Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a command, that if anyone knew where He was, he should report *it*, that they might ⁿ seize Him.

Mary Anoints Christ

Matt. 26:6-12; Mark 14:3-9

12 Then, six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, ^a where Lazarus was ¹ who had been dead, whom

11:33 Groaned means to be deeply moved. **Troubled** means to be stirred up, disturbed. Jesus was moved by the mourning of Mary and indignant at the hypocritical lamentations of His enemies.

11:35 Wept simply means “shed tears.” Jesus did not weep aloud in hopeless grief like the others (v. 33). He knew what He was about to do, but His compassion for their pain moved Him to tears.

11:37 Some people misinterpreted Jesus’ tears as powerlessness. They complained that He had healed others, but now was incapable. **11:38 a cave:** Having a private burial place indicates that the family was wealthy.

11:43 cried: This loud cry was either the result of strong emotion or in order that the multitude might hear. **Lazarus:** Augustine once said that if Jesus had not designated Lazarus by name, all the graves would have been emptied at His command (5:28). Raising Lazarus from the dead is the seventh sign of Jesus’ messiahship, the greatest miracle of all, giving life back to the dead.

11:48 Place refers either to Jerusalem or to the temple. The real concern of the Jewish leaders is seen here. They were not as upset at Jesus’ supposed blasphemy as they were about losing their positions of authority.

11:49–52 In the opinion of **Caiaphas**, Jesus should die rather than plunge the nation into destruction. John adds that by virtue of his office, Caiaphas pronounced a message of God unconsciously: **one man should die for the people.** Caiaphas was a prophet in spite of himself. John also saw in Caiaphas’s words a prophecy that Jesus should die not only for Israel but for the Gentiles as well.

11:53 Humanly speaking, the resurrection of Lazarus was a major factor that led to the plot by the Jewish religious leaders to kill Christ. At this point the council decided informally, if not formally, to put Jesus to death. John marks the growth of the hostility step by step (5:16; 7:1, 32, 45; 8:59; 9:22; 10:39). It is ironic that these men believed they could put to death permanently One who could raise the dead.

11:54 no longer walked openly: Jesus withdrew from public life for a while. He met privately with His disciples. **Wilderness** usually refers to the desert of Judea which extended to Jericho.

12:1 six days before the Passover: If Jesus’ crucifixion took place on a Friday, this dinner occurred during the evening of the previous Saturday. Verse 12 seems to support this conclusion, because the Jerusalem entry took place on Sunday.

He had raised from the dead. ^{2b}There they made Him a supper; and Martha served, but Lazarus was one of those who sat at the table with Him. ³Then ^cMary took a pound of very costly oil of ^dspikenard, anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the oil.

⁴But one of His disciples, ^eJudas Iscariot, Simon's son, who would betray Him, said, ⁵"Why was this fragrant oil not sold for ²three hundred denarii and given to the poor?" ⁶This he said, not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and ^fhad the money box; and he used to take what was put in it.

⁷But Jesus said, "Let her alone; ³she has kept this for the day of My burial. ⁸For ^gthe poor you have with you always, but Me you do not have always."

⁹Now a great many of the Jews knew that He was there; and they came, not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might also see Lazarus, ^hwhom He had raised from the dead. ¹⁰ⁱBut the chief priests plotted to put Lazarus to death also, ^{11j}because on account of him many of the Jews went away and believed in Jesus.

The Triumphal Entry

Matt. 21:1-9; Mark 11:1-10; Luke 19:29-38

^{12k}The next day a great multitude that had come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, ¹³took branches of palm trees and went out to meet Him, and cried out:

"Hosanna!

² ^g Matt. 26:6; Mark 14:3; Luke 10:38-41
³ ^c Luke 10:38, 39; John 11:2 ^d Song 1:12
⁴ ^e John 13:26
⁵ ² About one year's wages for a worker
⁶ ^f John 13:29
⁷ ³ NU that she may keep
⁸ ^g Deut. 15:11; Matt. 26:11; Mark 14:7; John 17:11
⁹ ^h John 11:43, 44
¹⁰ ⁱ Luke 16:31
¹¹ ^j John 11:45; 12:18
¹² ^k Matt. 21:4-9; Mark 11:7-10; Luke 19:35-38

¹³ ⁱ Ps. 118:25, 26 ★
¹⁴ ^m Matt. 21:7
¹⁵ ⁿ Is. 40:9; Zech. 9:9 ★
¹⁶ ^o Luke 18:34
¹⁷ ^p John 7:39; 12:23
¹⁸ ^q [John 14:26]
¹⁹ ^r John 12:11
²⁰ ^s John 11:47, 48
²¹ ^t Mark 7:26; Acts 17:4 ^u 1 Kin. 8:41, 42; Acts 8:27
²² ^v John 1:43, 44; 14:8-11
²³ ^w Matt. 26:18, 45; John 13:32; Acts 3:13 ★
²⁴ ^x [Rom. 14:9]; 1 Cor. 15:36

¹⁴"*Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!*"
 The King of Israel!"

^{14m}Then Jesus, when He had found a young donkey, sat on it; as it is written:

¹⁵"*Fearⁿ not, daughter of Zion; Behold, your King is coming, Sitting on a donkey's colt.*"

^{16o}His disciples did not understand these things at first; ^pbut when Jesus was glorified, ^qthen they remembered that these things were written about Him and that they had done these things to Him.

¹⁷Therefore the people, who were with Him when He called Lazarus out of his tomb and raised him from the dead, bore witness. ^{18r}For this reason the people also met Him, because they heard that He had done this sign. ¹⁹The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, ^s"You see that you are accomplishing nothing. Look, the world has gone after Him!"

²⁰Now there ^twere certain Greeks among those ^uwho came up to worship at the feast. ²¹Then they came to Philip, ^vwho was from Bethsaida of Galilee, and asked him, saying, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus."

²²Philip came and told Andrew, and in turn Andrew and Philip told Jesus.

The Messiah Teaches

²³But Jesus answered them, saying, ^w"The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified. ²⁴Most assuredly, I say to you, ^xunless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains

12:2 They probably refers to the people of the village. The inhabitants of Bethany wished to express their thanks to Jesus, who by a glorious miracle had honored their obscure village. **Lazarus** was the guest of honor.

12:3 very costly oil: Judas Iscariot said that this oil cost three hundred denarii (v. 5). One denarius was a laborer's wage for one day (see Matt. 20:2). Thus the oil cost approximately a year's wages. **anointed the feet:** Mary also anointed Jesus' head (see Matt. 26:7; Mark 14:3). The custom of that time was to anoint the heads of guests. Anointing Jesus' head was an act of honor; anointing His feet was a display of devotion.

12:7 My burial: Anointing was the first stage of embalming (19:39). Whether Mary knew it or not, she was anticipating Jesus' death, which would come within the week.

12:8 the poor you have with you always: We will never lack an opportunity to care for the poor (see Deut. 15:11).

12:10, 11 plotted to put Lazarus to death also: The chief priests were mostly Sadducees. They had an additional reason to kill Lazarus. He was a living refutation of their doctrine that there was no resurrection (see 11:57; Acts 23:8). Yet this was not a meeting of the Jewish council, nor was it a formal sentence of death. **on account of him:** The ultimate motivation for wanting to kill Lazarus was that because of him many were believing in Jesus. **Went away** implies that these individuals were withdrawing from the Jewish leaders.

12:13-15 took branches of palm trees: This was the Sunday be-

fore Christ arose, today called Palm Sunday. **cried out ... King of Israel:** Until this point, Jesus had discouraged expressions of support from the people (6:15; 7:1-8). Here He allowed public enthusiasm. He entered Jerusalem on the back of a young donkey. This act fulfilled prophecy (see Zech. 9:9) and as such was a symbolic proclamation that Jesus is the Messiah.

12:16 did not understand: The disciples did not catch the prophetic significance of Jesus' act. **when Jesus was glorified:** After Christ's death, resurrection, and ascension, the disciples finally understood that the OT prophecies concerning the Messiah had been fulfilled in Jesus.

12:17-19 These verses explain the series of events that led to the condemnation and crucifixion of Jesus.

12:20 The fact that these **Greeks** came to Jerusalem **to worship at the feast** indicates that they were Jewish proselytes. By recording this incident, perhaps John was hinting that the salvation rejected by many of the Jews was already passing to the Gentiles.

12:23 The hour has come: Prior to this, Jesus had stated that His hour had not yet come (2:4; 7:6, 30; 8:20). Now the time had come for Christ to die and be raised from the dead (see 13:1; 16:32; 17:1).

12:24 unless a grain ... dies: When a seed dies, it produces fruit. Life comes by death. This principle is true not only in nature, but it is also true spiritually. Jesus was speaking first and foremost of Himself. He is the grain of wheat. His death would produce much fruit and would result in many living for God.

alone; but if it dies, it produces much ⁴grain. ²⁵*y* He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. ²⁶If anyone serves Me, let him ^zfollow Me; and ^awhere I am, there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him *My* Father will honor.

²⁷*b*“Now My soul is troubled, and what shall I say? ‘Father, save Me from this hour’? ^cBut for this purpose I came to this hour. ²⁸Father, glorify Your name.”

^dThen a voice came from heaven, *saying*, “I have both glorified *it* and will glorify *it* again.”

²⁹Therefore the people who stood by and heard *it* said that it had thundered. Others said, “An angel has spoken to Him.”

³⁰Jesus answered and said, ^e“This voice did not come because of Me, but for your sake. ³¹Now is the judgment of this world; now ^fthe ruler of this world will be cast out. ³²And I, ^gif I am ⁵lifted up from the earth, will draw ^hall *peoples* to Myself.” ³³ⁱ This He said, signifying by what death He would die.

³⁴The people answered Him, ^j“We have heard from the law that the Christ remains forever; and how *can* You say, ‘The Son of Man must be lifted up’? Who is this Son of Man?”

³⁵Then Jesus said to them, “A little while longer ^kthe light is with you. ^lWalk

²⁴ ⁴ Lit. *fruit*
²⁵ ^y Matt. 10:39; Mark 8:35; Luke 9:24
²⁶ ^z [Matt. 16:24]
^a John 14:3; 17:24; [1 Thess. 4:17]
²⁷ ^b [Matt. 26:38, 39]; Mark 14:34; Luke 12:50; John 11:33 ^c Luke 22:53; John 18:37
²⁸ ^a Matt. 3:17; 17:5; Mark 1:11; 9:7; Luke 3:22; 9:35
³⁰ ^e John 11:42
³¹ ^f Matt. 12:29; Luke 10:18; [Acts 26:18; 2 Cor. 4:4]
³² ^g John 3:14; 8:28
^h [Rom. 5:18; Heb. 2:9] ⁵ Crucified
³³ ⁱ John 18:32; 21:19
³⁴ ^j Ps. 89:36, 37; Is. 9:6, 7; Mic. 4:7
³⁵ ^k [John 1:9; 7:33; 8:12] ^l Jer. 13:16; [Gal. 6:10]; Eph. 5:8

^m John 11:10; [1 John 2:9–11]
³⁶ ^a Luke 16:8; John 8:12 ⁿ John 8:59
³⁷ ^p John 11:47
³⁸ ^q Is. 53:1 ^r ★; Rom. 10:16
⁴⁰ ^s Is. 6:9, 10 ^t ★
^s Matt. 13:14
⁴¹ ^t Is. 6:1 ^u NU because
⁴² ^u John 7:13; 9:22
⁴³ ^v John 5:41, 44

while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you; ^mhe who walks in darkness does not know where he is going. ³⁶While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become ⁿsons of light.” These things Jesus spoke, and departed, and ^owas hidden from them.

³⁷But although He had done so many ^psigns before them, they did not believe in Him, ³⁸that the word of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spoke:

^q“*Lord, who has believed our report?
And to whom has the arm of the
LORD been revealed?*”

³⁹Therefore they could not believe, because Isaiah said again:

⁴⁰“*He^r has blinded their eyes and
hardened their hearts,
^sLest they should see with their eyes,
Lest they should understand with
their hearts and turn,
So that I should heal them.*”

⁴¹^t These things Isaiah said ⁶when he saw His glory and spoke of Him.

⁴²Nevertheless even among the rulers many believed in Him, but ^ubecause of the Pharisees they did not confess *Him*, lest they should be put out of the synagogue; ⁴³^v for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.

12:25, 26 The phrase **loves his life** describes those who serve only themselves. In a very short time, Jesus was going to give the disciples an opportunity to identify this problem in their lives (13:1–7). **Hates his life** involves serving Christ. Each believer must establish his or her priorities. We cannot give ourselves fully to this life and yet be committed to the life to come. **Follow Me** in this context means to follow Jesus’ example of self-sacrifice (13:15). Jesus set the example of “hating” His life in this world so that He could accomplish eternal purposes (see Phil. 2:5–8).

12:27 **My soul is troubled:** Jesus’ agony over His impending death was not confined to Gethsemane, where He prayed, “O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me” (see Matt. 26:39). He felt the agony and expressed it almost a week before Gethsemane.

signs

(Gk. *sêmeion*) (2:11; 3:2; 4:54; 10:41; 11:47; 12:37; 20:30) Strong’s #4592

The Greek word John uses for *signs* means “a distinguishing mark” or “an indication” of the authenticity of a person or an object. Paul uses the word to refer to his signature, which authenticated his letter to the Thessalonians (see 2 Thess. 3:17). In the Gospel of John, *sêmeion* means “a portent,” a miracle that points to the divine Creator. In his Gospel, John speaks of Jesus’ miracles as *signs* pointing people to the truth that Jesus is the divine Son of God who came down from heaven. In contrast, the authors of the synoptic Gospels typically speak of Jesus’ miracles as demonstrations of His divine power (see Matt. 11:20–23; Mark 3:15).

12:34 **Christ remains forever:** The people understood that **lifted up** meant removal from the earth by death. They argued that Scripture teaches that the Messiah would abide forever (see Ps. 110:4; Is. 9:7; Ezek. 37:25). To them, the Messiah would not have to die. They did not understand that He would be raised.

12:35, 36 Instead of answering the people’s questions (v. 34), Jesus gave them a warning. **Walk while you have the light:** Jesus is the light (1:4; 8:12; 9:5). He wanted the people to believe and abide in Him (v. 46).

12:37 **they did not believe:** Their unbelief is startling. However Jesus’ predicted suffering and death did not fit the people’s idea of the Messiah.

12:38 **the word of Isaiah . . . might be fulfilled:** John quotes Is. 53:1 to prove that their unbelief is predictable.

12:39, 40 The consequence of repeated rejection is loss of the capacity to believe. Isaiah taught that some **could not believe** because God **hardened their hearts** (see Is. 6:10) after they repeatedly rejected the truth.

12:41 John uses the words **His glory** to speak of the manifestation of God Himself. John quotes Is. 6:9 (see v. 40) as a prophecy of the people’s unbelief and their rejection of Christ. In that verse, Isaiah was talking about God Himself. Therefore in this passage John is teaching that Jesus is God.

12:42, 43 **Rulers** refers to members of the council. Because the rulers **did not confess Him**, some claim that their faith was not genuine. The text, however, says that they **believed in Him**, a construction in Greek that typically indicates saving faith (8:30). Moreover, the word **nevertheless** marks a stark contrast between these believers and the unbelief spoken of in vv. 37–41. These men were genuine believers. Their problem was that they feared the opinions of their fellow leaders. Such believers will be ashamed at Christ’s return (see 1 John 2:28).

⁴⁴Then Jesus cried out and said, ^w“He who believes in Me, ^xbelieves not in Me ^ybut in Him who sent Me. ⁴⁵And ^zhe who sees Me sees Him who sent Me. ⁴⁶^aI have come *as* a light into the world, that whoever believes in Me should not abide in darkness. ⁴⁷And if anyone hears My words and does not ⁷believe, ^bI do not judge him; for ^cI did not come to judge the world but to save the world. ⁴⁸^dHe who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him—^ethe word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day. ⁴⁹For ^fI have not spoken on My own *authority*; but the Father who sent Me gave Me a command, ^gwhat I should say and what I should speak. ⁵⁰And I know that His command is everlasting life. Therefore, whatever I speak, just as the Father has told Me, so I ^hspeak.”

Christ Washes the Disciples' Feet

13 Now ^abefore the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that ^bHis hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He ^cloved them to the end.

²And ¹supper being ended, ^dthe devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's *son*, to betray Him, ³Jesus, knowing ^ethat the Father

⁴⁴ ^w Mark 9:37
^x [John 3:16, 18, 36; 11:25, 26] ^y [John 5:24]
⁴⁵ ^z [John 14:9]
⁴⁶ ^a John 1:4, 5; 8:12; 12:35, 36
⁴⁷ ^b John 5:45
^c John 3:17 ⁷ NU keep them
⁴⁸ ^d [Luke 10:16]
^e Deut. 18:18, 19; [John 5:45; 8:47]
⁴⁹ ^f John 8:38
^g Deut. 18:18
⁵⁰ ^h John 5:19; 8:28

CHAPTER 13

¹ ^a Matt. 26:2
^b John 12:23; 17:1
^c John 15:9
² ^d Luke 22:3 ¹ NU during supper
³ ^e Matt. 11:27; [John 5:20-23; 17:2]; Acts 2:36; 1 Cor. 15:27; [Heb. 2:8]
⁴ ^f John 8:42; 16:28
^g John 17:11; 20:17
⁴ ^h [Luke 22:27; Phil. 2:7, 8]
⁶ ⁱ Matt. 3:14
⁷ ^j John 12:16; 16:12
^k John 13:19
⁸ ^j [Ps. 51:2, 7; Ezek. 36:25; Acts 22:16; 1 Cor. 6:11; Eph. 5:26; Titus 3:5; Heb. 10:22]
¹⁰ ^m [John 15:3; Eph. 5:26]
¹¹ ⁿ John 6:64; 18:4
¹² ² understand

had given all things into His hands, and that He ^fhad come from God and ^gwas going to God, ^{4h}rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself. ⁵After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe *them* with the towel with which He was girded. ⁶Then He came to Simon Peter. And *Peter* said to Him, ⁱ“Lord, are You washing my feet?”
⁷Jesus answered and said to him, “What I am doing you ^jdo not understand now, ^kbut you will know after this.”

⁸Peter said to Him, “You shall never wash my feet!”

Jesus answered him, ^l“If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me.”

⁹Simon Peter said to Him, “Lord, not my feet only, but also *my* hands and *my* head!”

¹⁰Jesus said to him, “He who is bathed needs only to wash *his* feet, but is completely clean; and ^myou are clean, but not all of you.” ¹¹For ⁿHe knew who would betray Him; therefore He said, “You are not all clean.”

¹²So when He had washed their feet, taken His garments, and sat down again, He said to them, “Do you ²know what I have done to you? ¹³^o You call Me Teacher

¹³ ^o Matt. 23:8, 10; Luke 6:46; [1 Cor. 8:6; 12:3]; Eph. 6:9; [Phil. 2:11]

12:44, 45 not in Me but in Him: Jesus insisted that anyone who believed in Him was at the same time exercising belief in God the Father. Jesus explained that He was the personal manifestation of God (see 1:18; Col. 1:15; Heb. 1:3).

12:47 I do not judge may be rephrased as “I do not execute judgment.” Christ will judge, but at His first coming He did not come to judge but to save (3:17).

13:1 To the end means either “to the last” or “utterly and completely.” What follows in vv. 1–11 demonstrates Jesus' complete love. Jesus loved His disciples, even though He knew that one would betray Him, another would deny Him, and all would desert Him for a time.

13:2 Being ended may also be translated “having begun.” It was customary for slaves to wash guests' feet as the guests arrived, before they sat down to eat (vv. 4, 5). In any case, it appears that the supper had not ended, but was in progress. The statement of Jesus' complete love in v. 1 is contrasted with the fact that Judas would soon **betray Him**.

13:4 His garments: Jesus **laid aside** His outer garment, which would have impeded His movements. **towel:** By putting on an apron, Christ looked like the slave to whom the task of washing the feet of guests was assigned. Though the disciples realized what Jesus was doing, none of them offered himself for the task. Servanthood was not on their minds. Jesus loved them knowing all about them, including the worst one of them, Judas.

13:8 no part with Me: The washing was a symbol of spiritual cleansing (vv. 10, 11). If Peter did not participate in the cleansing, he would not enjoy fellowship with Christ (see 1 John 1:9).

13:9, 10 but also my hands and my head: Given Jesus' dramatic statement, Peter had no choice but to submit. Only this time he went too far in the other direction. At first he wanted to tell the Lord what to do (v. 8). Now he wanted to dictate the manner in which Jesus did it. But Jesus told him he did not need a bath; he only needed Jesus **to wash his feet** that were dusty from the road. This is symbolic.

A believer has already been “cleansed.” He or she only needs the cleansing of daily sins that comes through confession (see 1 John 1:9). Thus Jesus' washing of the disciples' feet not only is a model of service, but it represents the ultimate in service—forgiveness of sins.

13:11 You are not all clean: This is the second indication of the presence of a traitor among the apostles (6:70). Apparently this comment did not attract much attention.

13:13 Teacher and Lord were the ordinary titles of respect given to a rabbi.

wash

(Gk. *nīptō*) (13:5; 6, 8, 10; 1 Tim. 5:10) Strong's #3538

bathed

(Gk. *louō*) (13:10; Acts 9:37; Rev. 1:5) Strong's #3068

In speaking to Peter, Jesus used two different Greek words to indicate two different kinds of washing. The Greek word *nīptō* (13:5, 6, 8, 10) is used to indicate the washing of the extremities, the hands and the feet. The Greek word *louō* specifically means “bathing.” According to the social customs of those times, once a person had bathed his entire body, he needed only to wash his feet before partaking of a meal. In His response to Peter, Jesus used both words in order to advance a precious truth: just as those who have bathed need only to wash their feet, so believers who have been bathed by the Lord through His word and the Spirit (see 15:3; Eph. 5:26; Titus 3:5) need only to wash themselves daily from the filth and defilement they accumulate by their contact with the world.

and Lord, and you say well, for *so* I am. ¹⁴ If I then, *your* Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, ^q you also ought to wash one another's feet. ¹⁵ For ^r I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you. ¹⁶ Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. ¹⁷ If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.

¹⁸ "I do not speak concerning all of you. I know whom I have chosen; but that the ^uScripture may be fulfilled, ^v *'He who eats ³ bread with Me has lifted up his heel against Me.'* ¹⁹ Now I tell you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe that I am *He*. ²⁰ Most assuredly, I say to you, he who receives whomever I send receives Me; and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me."

Christ Announces Judas, the Betrayer

Matt. 26:21, 22; Mark 14:18, 19; Luke 22:21-23

²¹ When Jesus had said these things, ^z He was troubled in spirit, and testified and said, "Most assuredly, I say to you, ^a one of you will betray Me." ²² Then the disciples looked at one another, perplexed about whom He spoke.

²³ Now ^b there was ⁴ leaning on Jesus' bosom one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved. ²⁴ Simon Peter therefore motioned to him to ask who it was of whom He spoke.

²⁵ Then, leaning ⁵ back on Jesus' breast, he said to Him, "Lord, who is it?"

²⁶ Jesus answered, "It is he to whom I shall give a piece of bread when I have dipped it." And having dipped the bread, He gave it to ^c Judas Iscariot, *the son of* Simon. ²⁷ Now after the piece of bread,

¹⁴ ^p Luke 22:27
^q [Rom. 12:10; Gal. 6:1, 2; 1 Pet. 5:5]
¹⁵ ^r Matt. 11:29; Phil. 2:5; [1 Pet. 2:21-24]; 1 John 2:6
¹⁶ ^s Matt. 10:24; [Luke 6:40]; John 15:20
¹⁷ ^t Matt. 7:24; Luke 11:28; [James 1:25]
¹⁸ ^u John 15:25; 17:12 ^v Ps. 41:9 ★; Matt. 26:23 ³ NU
My bread has
¹⁹ ^w John 14:29; 16:4
²⁰ ^x Matt. 10:40; Mark 9:37; Luke 9:48; 10:16; Gal. 4:14
²¹ ^y Matt. 26:21; Mark 14:18; Luke 22:21 ^z John 12:27
^a Ps. 41:9; Matt. 26:46; Mark 14:42; Luke 22:48; John 6:64; 18:5; Acts 1:17; 1 John 2:19
²³ ^b John 19:26; 20:2; 21:7, 20
⁴ reclining
²⁵ ⁵ NU, M add *thus*
²⁶ ^c Matt. 10:4; John 6:70, 71; 12:4; Acts 1:16
²⁷ ^d Luke 22:3
²⁹ ^e John 12:6
³¹ ^f John 12:23; Acts 3:13 ^g [John 14:13; 17:4; 1 Pet. 4:11]
³² ^h John 12:23
³³ ⁱ John 12:35; 14:19; 16:16-19
^j Mark 16:19; [John 7:34; 8:21]; Acts 1:9
³⁴ ^k Lev. 19:18; Eph. 5:2; 1 Thess. 4:9; James 2:8; 1 Pet. 1:22; 1 John 2:7
³⁵ ^l 1 John 2:5
³⁶ ^m John 13:33; 14:2; 16:5 ⁿ John 21:17; 2 Pet. 1:14
³⁷ ^o Matt. 26:33-35;

Satan entered him. Then Jesus said to him, "What you do, do quickly." ²⁸ But no one at the table knew for what reason He said this to him. ²⁹ For some thought, because ^e Judas had the money box, that Jesus had said to him, "Buy *those things* we need for the feast," or that he should give something to the poor.

³⁰ Having received the piece of bread, he then went out immediately. And it was night.

Christ Announces His Departure

³¹ So, when he had gone out, Jesus said, ^f "Now the Son of Man is glorified, and ^g God is glorified in Him. ³² If God is glorified in Him, God will also glorify Him in Himself, and ^h glorify Him immediately. ³³ Little children, I shall be with you a ⁱ little while longer. You will seek Me; ^j and as I said to the Jews, 'Where I am going, you cannot come,' so now I say to you. ³⁴ A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. ³⁵ By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

Christ Foretells Peter's Denial

Matt. 26:34, 35; Mark 14:30, 31; Luke 22:33, 34

³⁶ Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, where are You going?"

Jesus answered him, "Where I ^m am going you cannot follow Me now, but ⁿ you shall follow Me afterward."

³⁷ Peter said to Him, "Lord, why can I not follow You now? I will ^o lay down my life for Your sake."

Mark 14:29-31; Luke 22:33, 34

13:14, 15 you also ought to wash one another's feet: The Lord was using His practical action to give an example of love to His disciples (v. 1).

13:18 Jesus quoted Ps. 41:9 to explain the action of Judas. Lifting up his heel was a gesture of insult, or a preparation to kick. The blow had not yet been given. This was the attitude of Judas at that moment. He was eating with the disciples, but he was ready to strike.

13:21 troubled: Faced with bereavement (11:33), His own death (12:27), and betrayal, Jesus was deeply stirred.

13:23 leaning on Jesus' bosom: At this time people did not generally sit at a table to eat. They reclined on the left side of a low platform, resting on the left elbow and eating with the right hand, their feet extended outward. Reclining in such a way, a man's head was near the bosom of the person on his left. The disciple whom Jesus loved is never named in Scripture, but the tradition of the early church designates him as John, the author of this Gospel.

13:24 Peter ... motioned to him to ask: Evidently Peter was not sitting next to Jesus. He was nearer to John, so he beckoned John to ask Jesus who was going to betray Him.

13:27 First, the devil put ideas in the head of Judas (v. 2); here Satan entered Judas. Note that Judas's actions were the result of the deepest thoughts of his heart.

13:30 it was night: Not only did Judas go out into the darkness

of the night, he had also entered into spiritual darkness, separated from Jesus, the Light of the World (8:12; 9:5).

13:31, 32 the Son of Man is glorified: Jesus would be revealed as the divine Son of God and Savior of the world by His death and resurrection, and the gift of the Holy Spirit. God would be glorified in Him in that God's love, truth, and righteousness would be revealed in what Jesus was doing.

13:33 The time had come for Jesus to announce His departure to His disciples. Little children is an expression of tender affection used nowhere else in the Gospels. John did not forget the expression; he used it repeatedly in 1 John.

13:34 The command to love was new because Jesus gave it a new standard. Moses said, "Love your neighbor as yourself" (see Lev. 19:18). Jesus said the new standard was as I have loved you. Jesus gave His disciples the example of love that they were to follow (vv. 1-17).

13:35 By this: Unbelievers recognize Jesus' disciples not by their doctrinal distinctives, nor by dramatic miracles, nor even by their love for the lost. They recognize His disciples by their deeds of love for one another.

13:36 Lord, where are You going: This question, which Jesus had already addressed twice before, indicates that Peter completely missed the point of what Jesus said in vv. 34, 35.

13:37 I will lay down my life: Peter was ready to die for Jesus.

³⁸Jesus answered him, “Will you lay down your life for My sake? Most assuredly, I say to you, the rooster shall not ^pcrow till you have denied Me three times.

Christ Comforts His Disciples

14 “Let ^anot your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. ²In My Father’s house are many ¹mansions; if *it were* not so, ²I would have told you. ^bI go to prepare a place for you. ³And if I go and prepare a place for you, ^cI will come again and receive you to Myself; that ^dwhere I am, *there* you may be also. ⁴And where I go you know, and the way you know.”

Christ Answers Thomas

⁵eThomas said to Him, “Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?”

⁶Jesus said to him, “I am ^fthe way, ^gthe truth, and ^hthe life. ⁱNo one comes to the Father ^jexcept through Me.

⁷k “If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him.”

Christ Answers Philip

⁸Philip said to Him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us.”

38 ^p Matt. 26:74; Mark 14:30; Luke 22:61; John 18:25-27 ☆

CHAPTER 14

¹ ^e [John 14:27; 16:22, 24]
² ^p Matt. 25:34; John 13:33, 36; Heb. 11:16 ¹ Lit. *dwelling*s ² NU *would I have told you that I go or I would have told you; for I go*
³ ^c [Acts 1:11]
⁴ [John 12:26; 1 Thess. 4:17]
⁵ ^e Matt. 10:3; John 11:16; 20:24-29; 21:2
⁶ ^f [John 10:9; Rom. 5:2; Eph. 2:18; Heb. 9:8; 10:19, 20]
^g [John 1:14, 17; 8:32; 18:37] ^h [John 11:25] ⁱ 1 Tim. 2:5
^j [John 10:7-9; Acts 4:12]
⁷ ^k John 8:19
⁹ ^f John 12:45; Col. 1:15; Heb. 1:3
¹⁰ ^m John 10:38; 14:11, 20 ⁿ Deut. 18:18; John 5:19; 14:24 ★
¹¹ ^o John 5:36; 10:38
¹² ^p Matt. 21:21; Mark 16:17; Luke 10:17
¹³ ^q Matt. 7:7; [Mark 11:24]; Luke 11:9;

⁹Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? ¹He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? ¹⁰Do you not believe that ^mI am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you ⁿI do not speak on My own *authority*; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works. ¹¹Believe Me that I *am* in the Father and the Father in Me, ^oor else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves.

¹²^p “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater *works* than these he will do, because I go to My Father. ¹³^q And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be ^rglorified in the Son. ¹⁴If you ³ask anything in My name, I will do *it*.

¹⁵^s “If you love Me, ⁴keep My commandments. ¹⁶And I will pray the Father, and ^tHe will give you another ⁵Helper, that He may abide with you forever—¹⁷^u the Spirit of truth, ^vwhom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you ^wand will be in

John 15:16; 16:23, 24; [James 1:5-7; 1 John 3:22] ^r John 13:31
¹⁴ ³ NU *ask Me* ¹⁵ ^t 1 John 5:3 ⁴ NU *you will keep*
¹⁶ ^t [John 15:26; 20:22]; Acts 2:4, 33 ☆; Rom. 8:15 ⁵ *Comforter*, Gr. *Parakletos* ¹⁷ ^u [John 15:26; 16:13; 1 John 4:6; 5:7]
^v [1 Cor. 2:14] ^w [1 John 2:27]

Unfortunately, he was not ready, at this point, to live for Him. He was ready to attack single-handed a cohort of soldiers with his sword (see 18:10), but he was not willing to wash the feet of his brothers as Jesus had just done (see 13:4). Actually, Peter had things backwards. Christ was about to lay down His life for Peter, instead of Peter laying down his life for Christ. In spite of all this, Christ did not give up on Peter (see Luke 22:31, 32). Later Peter would die for Christ (21:18, 19). Church tradition states that Peter was crucified upside down, at his request, for he felt himself unworthy to be crucified like his Lord.

13:38 till you have denied Me three times: At these words of Jesus, Peter was stunned and said nothing. He is not mentioned again until 18:10.

14:1 After announcing Judas’s betrayal (13:21), His own imminent departure (13:33), and Peter’s denial (13:38), Jesus told His disciples not to **be troubled**, but to trust Him.

14:2 Mansions refers to dwelling places. Everybody has a longing for a permanent, secure place. Such places have already been set aside for all of God’s children.

14:3 I will come again and receive you: Peter may have failed Jesus (13:38), but Christ will not fail to return for Peter and for everyone else who has believed in Him (see 1 Thess. 4:16, 17).

14:6 Through His death and resurrection, Jesus is **the way** to the Father. He is also **the truth** and **the life**. As truth, He is the revelation of God. As life, He is the communication of God to us.

14:7, 8 known My Father also: Jesus came to reveal the Father (1:18). To know Jesus is to know the Father (see 1 John 2:23). **show us the Father:** Jesus had just said that to see Him is to see the Father. Yet Philip asked to see the Father. Like Thomas, Philip seems to have been slow to comprehend (v. 5).

14:9 The Lord rebuked Philip because he should have known the answer to the question he asked. **He who has seen Me has seen the Father:** The Lord patiently explained again that He was reveal-

ing God the Father to them (v. 7). It is impossible to escape the claim Jesus was making. Clearly, He was claiming to be God.

14:12 Jesus had accomplished the greatest works possible, including raising the dead. How could He say that believers would do **greater works**? The answer is seen in the extent of what the apostles did. Jesus’ work on earth was confined to Palestine; the apostles would preach everywhere and see the conversion of thousands. Peter’s message at Pentecost brought more followers to Jesus than did Jesus’ entire earthly ministry. The disciples were able to do this work because Christ would go to the Father and send the Holy Spirit to empower them.

14:16 All three members of the Trinity are mentioned here. Jesus prayed to the Father who would give the Holy Spirit.

14:17 The Holy Spirit is called **the Spirit of truth** (see 15:26; 16:13; 1 John 4:6) because He is truth and guides us into all truth (see 1 Cor.

believe

(Gk. *pisteuō*) (1:7, 12; 2:23, 24; 3:15, 16, 36; 4:39, 41, 42; 6:47; 11:25; 14:1; 20:31) Strong’s #4100

The Greek word for *believe* literally means “to place one’s trust in another”; it occurs over 90 times in the Gospel of John alone. To believe in Jesus is to believe in His person and to trust in Him completely for salvation (3:15, 16). Many of Jesus’ contemporaries believed in Jesus’ miraculous powers, but they would not believe in Jesus Himself (6:23–26). Others wanted to believe in a political Messiah, but would not believe in the One who suffered for their sins (Mark 15:32). But we must be careful to believe and trust in the Jesus presented in the Scriptures, in the Son of God who sacrificed His life for our sins (Gal. 1:3, 4; Phil. 2:5–8).

you. ^{18x}I will not leave you orphans; ^yI will come to you.

¹⁹“A little while longer and the world will see Me no more, but ^zyou will see Me. ^aBecause I live, you will live also. ²⁰At that day you will know that ^bI am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you. ^{21c}He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and ⁶manifest Myself to him.”

Christ Answers Judas

^{22d}Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, “Lord, how is it that You will manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?”

²³Jesus answered and said to him, “If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, ^eand We will come to him and make Our home with him. ²⁴He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and ^fthe word which you hear is not Mine but the Father’s who sent Me.

²⁵“These things I have spoken to you while being present with you. ²⁶But ^gthe ⁷Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Fa-

18 ^x [Matt. 28:20]
y [John 14:3, 28]
19 ^z John 16:16, 22
a [Rom. 5:10; 1 Cor. 15:20; 2 Cor. 4:10]
20 ^b John 10:38; 14:11
21 ^c 1 John 2:5
6 reveal
22 ^d Luke 6:16; Acts 1:13
23 ^e 2 Cor. 6:16; Eph. 3:17; [1 John 2:24]; Rev. 3:20; 21:3
24 ^f John 5:19
26 ^g Luke 24:49
h John 15:26 ⁱ 1 Cor. 2:13 ^j John 2:22; 12:16; 1 John 2:20
7 Comforter, Gr. Parakletos
27 ^k Luke 1:79; [John 16:33; 20:19; Phil. 4:7] ★; Col. 3:15
28 ^l John 14:3, 18 ^m John 16:16
n [John 5:18; Phil. 2:6] ^o NU omits I said
29 ^p John 13:19
30 ^q [John 12:31]
a [John 8:46; 2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 4:15; 1 Pet. 1:19; 2:22]
31 ^r Is. 50:5; John 10:18 ★; Phil. 2:8

ther will ^hsend in My name, ⁱHe will teach you all things, and bring to your ^jremembrance all things that I said to you. ^{27k}Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. ²⁸You have heard Me ^lsay to you, ‘I am going away and coming back to you.’ If you loved Me, you would rejoice because ⁸I said, ^m‘I am going to the Father,’ for ⁿMy Father is greater than I.

²⁹“And ^onow I have told you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe. ³⁰I will no longer talk much with you, ^pfor the ruler of this world is coming, and he has ^qnothing in Me. ³¹But that the world may know that I love the Father, and ^ras the Father gave Me commandment, so I do. Arise, let us go from here.

The Relationship of Believers to Christ
15 “I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. ^{2a}Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit

CHAPTER 15 ^{2 a} Matt. 15:13

2:13; 2 Pet. 1:21). **Neither sees Him nor knows Him** does not mean merely that the world is not able to visually identify the Holy Spirit because He is spirit. Something more is meant: The Spirit of God is active in the world, but His acts go unnoticed by the world (see 1 Cor. 2:14).

14:18 orphans: Earlier, Jesus called the disciples “little children” (13:33). Here He told them He would not leave them fatherless; He would come to them. There are three suggested interpretations as to when that statement would be fulfilled: (1) after the Resurrection, (2) at Pentecost, in the person of the Holy Spirit, and (3) at the Second Coming.

14:19 you will see Me: Jesus would come to the disciples (v. 18), but not with the same kind of presence they experienced at that moment. The world saw Jesus only in the flesh; the disciples would see Him in a spiritual sense.

14:20, 21 These two verses are the conclusion of Jesus’ answer to Philip’s request, “show us the Father” (v. 8). As the believer lovingly obeys Christ’s commandments, he or she will experience a more intimate knowledge of Him.

14:22 The disciples had expected the Messiah to come publicly and deliver Israel from Rome and the corrupt priesthood of the temple. Jesus had said that the disciples would see Him, but the world would not (v. 19). Judas (not Iscariot) wanted to know how that could be.

14:23 loves Me . . . keep My word: In response to Judas’s question (v. 22), Jesus explained that His manifestation to the disciples would be in response to their love and obedience. **make Our home with him:** If a believer loves and obeys the Lord, he or she will experience fellowship with God.

14:24 not love . . . not keep: If a person does not love Jesus, he or she will not obey Him. Disobedience is a serious matter, for Jesus’ words are the words of God.

14:25, 26 Jesus told His disciples **these things** while He was with them, but when **the Holy Spirit** came, He would remind the disciples of **all things** that Jesus had said, and would **teach . . . all things** (see 1 Cor. 2:13). This promise was primarily fulfilled through the lives of the apostles in the writing of the NT. Matthew and John wrote down Jesus’ words. Peter wrote about the gospel in his two letters and may have dictated some of his memories of Jesus to Mark.

14:27 Peace: The customary good-bye among the Jews was to say *shalom*, meaning “peace.” The Lord was about to depart, so He added to this farewell by saying, **My peace**. The word *My* is emphatic. This is no conventional wish; this is Jesus’ personal, special grant of peace. The peace that Christ gives banishes fear and dread from the heart, for Jesus is in control of all circumstances.

14:28 My Father is greater than I: This does not mean that Jesus is less than deity. *Greater* indicates a difference in rank. As the humble, submissive Son, Jesus submitted Himself to the authority of His Father (1 Cor. 11:3; 15:28).

14:30 He has nothing in Me indicates Jesus’ sinlessness. Jesus’ yielding to what was about to happen did not mean that Satan had any power over Him. Jesus would soon voluntarily yield to the death of the Cross, in loving obedience to the Father (v. 31).

15:1 true vine: In this phrase the word *true* is emphatic. **My Father:** With such a **vinedresser**, the branches can experience complete confidence and security.

15:2 Every branch is said to be *in* Christ. Paul uses the phrase “in

vine

(Gk. *ampelos*) (15:1, 4, 5; Matt. 26:29; James 3:12) Strong’s #288

This word can describe a single grapevine or an entire vineyard. Either way, the image evokes the picture of corporate dependence. Israel was the vine of God’s planting, but it failed to bear the proper fruit (Is. 5:1–7; Jer. 2:19–21). Jesus, with His believers incorporated in Him, is the true vine—the true fulfillment and actualization of the vine. As the entire race of Israel sprang from the patriarch Israel, the new generation of God’s people is here viewed as originating from Christ, organically united to Him, as branches emanating from the vine. This is a fulfillment of Ps. 80:17, in which “the son of man” is said to be the vine planted by God.

He ¹takes away; and every *branch* that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear ^bmore fruit. ^{3c}You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. ^{4d}Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.

⁵“I am the vine, you *are* the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much ^efruit; for without Me you can do ^fnothing. ⁶If anyone does not abide in Me, ^ghe is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw *them* into the fire, and they are burned. ⁷If you abide in Me, and My words ^habide in you, ⁱyou² will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. ^{8j}By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; ^kso you will be My disciples.

⁹“As the Father ^lloved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. ^{10m}If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and abide in His love.

¹¹“These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and ⁿ*that* your joy may be full.

² ^b [Matt. 13:12]
¹ Or *lifts up*
³ ^c [John 13:10; 17:17]; Eph. 5:26
⁴ ^d [John 17:23; Eph. 3:17; [Col. 1:23]
⁵ ^e Hos. 14:8; [Gal. 5:22, 23] ² 2 Cor. 3:5
⁶ ^f Matt. 3:10
⁷ ^h 1 John 2:14
¹ John 14:13; 16:23
² NU omits *you will*
⁸ ^j Ps. 22:23; [Matt. 5:16]; John 13:31;
17:4; [Phil. 1:11];
1 Pet. 4:11 ^k John 8:31
⁹ ⁱ John 5:20;
17:26
¹⁰ ^m John 14:15
¹¹ ⁿ [John 16:24];
1 John 1:4
¹² ^o John 13:34;
1 John 3:11 ^p Rom. 12:9
¹³ ^q Eph. 5:2;
1 John 3:16
¹⁴ ^r [Matt. 12:50;
28:20]; John
14:15, 21; Acts
10:42; 1 John
3:23, 24
¹⁵ ^s Gen. 18:17
¹⁶ ^t John 6:70;
13:18; 15:19; 1 John
4:10 ^u [Matt. 28:19;
Mark 16:15; Col.
1:6] ^v John 14:13;
16:23, 24
¹⁸ ^w John 7:7;

The Relationship of Believers to Each Other

^{12o} This is My ^p commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. ^{13q} Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one’s life for his friends. ^{14r} You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. ¹⁵ No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, ^s for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you. ^{16t} You did not choose Me, but I chose you and ^u appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and *that* your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father ^v in My name He may give you. ¹⁷ These things I command you, that you love one another.

The Relationship of Believers to the World

^{18w} “If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it *hated* you. ^{19x} If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet ^y because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.

1 John 3:13 19 x 1 John 4:5 y John 17:14

Christ” to speak of a Christian’s legal and family position as a result of God’s grace. The emphasis of **in Me** in this passage, however, is on deep, abiding fellowship. Jesus’ purpose was to move His disciples from servants to friends (vv. 13–15). This would involve a process of discipline in regard to His commandments. **not bear fruit**: No plant produces fruit instantaneously; fruit is the result of a process. Such is also the case with believers. **Prunes** means “cleanses.” Once the fruit is on the vine, the vinedresser cleanses the fruit of bugs and diseases. The spiritual counterpart is cleansing which is done through the Word (v. 3).

15:4 For the branch to produce more fruit, it must **abide**, which means to dwell, to stay, to settle in, to sink deeper. The way to abide in Christ is to obey (see 15:10; 1 John 3:24). The believer who lovingly obeys the Word of God produces much fruit.

15:5 can do nothing: Apart from Christ, a believer cannot accomplish anything of permanent spiritual value.

15:6 Not abiding in Christ has serious consequences: (1) The person is **cast out as a branch**, indicating the loss of fellowship; (2) the person is **withered**, indicating a loss of vitality; (3) the person is **burned**, indicating a loss of reward. **The fire** here is figurative, symbolizing either fiery trials (see 1 Pet. 1:7; 4:12) or the fire at the judgment seat of Christ (see 1 Cor. 3:11–15). Failure to abide produces spiritual disaster. **they gather them**: Note the movement from “He” (the Father who is the vinedresser, v. 2) to “you” (the believer who does or does not abide, v. 4) to “they” (unbelievers looking for signs of life; see 13:35).

15:8 By this: Notice the striking parallel between this verse and 13:35. The love of 13:35 is pictured as **fruit** here. The text has come full circle in showing how strategic it is for disciples to love each other, as Christ’s method of evangelizing the lost. “They shall know” becomes **so you will be** Christ’s disciples. Where there is good fruit, there are also seeds for propagation.

15:9 As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you: The love of God the Father for God the Son is the measure of the love of the Son for believers.

15:10 abide in My love: Christ loves believers unconditionally (v. 9). But as believers obey Christ’s Word and abide in His love, they come to experience and understand His love for them more and more (see Eph. 3:14–19).

15:11 That your joy may be full is an expression peculiar to John (see 3:29; 16:24; 17:13; 1 John 1:4; 2 John 12). It describes a believer’s experience of Christ’s love: complete joy.

15:12 love one another: To abide, a believer must obey (v. 10). To obey, a believer must love other believers (13:34, 35).

15:13 lay down one’s life: In rashness and with confidence in the flesh, Peter had offered to lay down his life for Jesus. In actuality, he was not ready to die for Jesus; he was not even ready to live for Him (18:17, 18, 25–27). The supreme example of love is Jesus’ humility in sacrificial service (13:15).

15:14 if you do: Jesus is our model for love (v. 13). Intimacy with Him is the motive for loving as He loves. If believers obey His command to love, they enjoy the intimacy of His friendship. Note that friendship, unlike sonship, is not a once-for-all gift, but develops as the result of obeying Jesus’ command to love.

15:15 No longer . . . servants: Until this point, Jesus had called His disciples servants (12:26; 13:13–16). A servant does what he is told and sees what his master does, but does not necessarily know the meaning or purpose of it. **friends**: A friend knows what is happening because friends develop deep fellowship by communicating with one another.

15:16 I chose you: Jesus had initiated the relationship with His disciples (see 1 John 4:10). It started with selection, moved to servanthood, and grew to friendship. **that you should go and bear fruit**: Having chosen the disciples, Jesus commissioned them to bring forth permanent fruit through prayer.

15:18 hated Me: As Jesus spoke these words, the Pharisees were planning to kill Him (11:45–57). The world hated Him, so it should not be surprising that the world hates His followers.

²⁰Remember the word that I said to you, ²¹‘A servant is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. ²²‘If they kept My word, they will keep yours also. ²³But ²⁴all these things they will do to you for My name’s sake, because they do not know Him who sent Me. ²⁵‘If I had not come and spoken to them, they would have no sin, ²⁶but now they have no excuse for their sin. ²⁷‘He who hates Me hates My Father also. ²⁸‘If I had not done among them ²⁹the works which no one else did, they would have no sin; but now they have ³⁰seen and also hated both Me and My Father. ³¹But *this happened* that the word might be fulfilled which is written in their law, ³²‘*They hated Me without a cause.*’

The Promise of the Holy Spirit

²⁶‘But when the ³Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, ⁴He will testify of Me. ⁵And ⁶you also will bear witness, because ⁷you have been with Me from the beginning.

16 ‘These things I have spoken to you, that you ¹should not be made to stumble. ²‘They will put you out of

²⁰ ² Matt. 10:24; John 13:16 ²¹ Ezek. 3:7
²¹ ² Matt. 10:22; 24:9; [1 Pet. 4:14]; Rev. 2:3
²² ² John 9:41; 15:24 ²³ [Rom. 1:20; James 4:17]
²³ ² 1 John 2:23
²⁴ ² John 3:2 ²⁵ John 14:9
²⁵ ² Ps. 35:19; 69:4 ²⁶ ★; 109:3-5
²⁶ ² Luke 24:49; [John 14:17]; Acts 2:4, 33 ²⁷ 1 John 5:6 ²⁸ ³ Comforter, Gr. *Parakletos*
²⁷ ² Luke 24:48; 1 Pet. 5:1; 2 Pet. 1:16
²⁸ ² Matt. 3:14; Luke 1:2; 1 John 1:1

CHAPTER 16

¹ ² Matt. 11:6
² ² John 9:22
³ ² Acts 8:1
³ ² John 8:19; 15:21; Acts 13:27; Rom. 10:2 ⁴ NU, M omit to you
⁴ ² NU *their*
⁵ ² John 7:33; 13:33; 14:28; 17:11
⁶ ² Matt. 17:23; [John 16:20, 22]
⁷ ² Acts 2:33 ⁸ ★
⁸ ² Acts 1:8; 2:1-4, 37 ⁹ ★
⁹ ² Acts 2:22

the synagogues; yes, the time is coming ¹that whoever kills you will think that he offers God service. ²And ³these things they will do ⁴to you because they have not known the Father nor Me. ⁵But these things I have told you, that when ⁶the time comes, you may remember that I told you of them.

‘And these things I did not say to you at the beginning, because I was with you.

⁷‘But now I ⁸go away to Him who sent Me, and none of you asks Me, ‘Where are You going?’ ⁹But because I have said these things to you, ¹⁰sorrow has filled your heart. ¹¹Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but ¹²if I depart, I will send Him to you. ¹³And when He has ¹⁴come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: ¹⁵of sin, because they do not believe in Me; ¹⁶of righteousness, ¹⁷because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; ¹⁸of judgment, because ¹⁹the ruler of this world is judged.

²⁰‘I still have many things to say to you, ²¹but you cannot bear *them* now.

¹⁰ / Acts 2:32 ¹¹ John 5:32 ¹² 11 / Acts 26:18 ¹³ [Luke 10:18]
¹⁴ ² Mark 4:33

15:22, 23 no sin . . . no excuse: The world’s hatred of Jesus was a sin against God, for He revealed the Father Himself to them. **My Father also:** Since Christ and the Father are one, those who hate Christ hate the Father.

15:26, 27 He will testify . . . you also will bear witness: As the disciples spoke, the Holy Spirit would bring inner conviction to unbelievers concerning Christ. This in turn would make the disciples witnesses for Jesus.

16:2 They will put you out of the synagogues . . . kills you: The persecution that the disciples would face included excommunication and even execution. Excommunication had economic as well as religious implications, because much of the life of an ancient Jew revolved around the synagogue. **Offers** expresses the idea of offering a sacrifice. The murderers of believers would imagine that they were offering a sacrifice to God.

16:4 at the beginning: Jesus had been preparing His disciples to assimilate the truth (see Prov. 22:6). In His wisdom, the Lord never gives us more than we can handle.

16:5 none of you asks Me, ‘Where are You going?’: Peter had asked this very question (13:36) and Thomas had suggested it (14:5). However, things were different now. The disciples had learned about denials, suffering, and death. To go with Jesus involved the most serious consequences.

16:7 The disciples must have thought, “How can it be to our **advantage** to be alone? The Romans hate us because they see us as disturbers of the peace. The Jewish leaders hate us because they see us as blasphemers. You alone love us, and You are leaving us.” So Jesus explained the benefits of His departure. When Jesus left, the believers would have (1) the provision of the Holy Spirit (vv. 7–15); (2) the potential of full joy (vv. 16–24); (3) the possibility of fuller knowledge (vv. 25–28); (4) the privilege of peace (vv. 29–33). **I will send Him:** Jesus explained that the Holy Spirit will convict the world (vv. 7–11) and communicate truth to the apostles (vv. 12–15). **to you:** The Holy Spirit would not be given to the world, but to believers. The coming of the Spirit would be more profitable to believers than

even the physical presence of Christ, since the Spirit could dwell in all believers at the same time.

16:8 Convict means “convince” or “reprove.” The Holy Spirit would demonstrate the truth of Christ beyond the fear of contradiction. The Holy Spirit convicts unbelievers through believers who witness about Christ (15:26, 27). Believers are the mouthpiece for God’s voice. The content of the witness that the Spirit reinforces includes truth about **sin, righteousness, and judgment.**

16:9 of sin: Note the singular *sin*, not *sins*. Our witness should not focus on *sins* (adultery, gluttony, pride, and other sins), but on the full payment that Christ has made for *all sin*. Reception of the full pardon is the only cure for the disease of sin.

16:10 of righteousness: After Christ’s departure the Holy Spirit would convict the world of the nature of righteousness and the need for righteousness. Jesus’ work on the Cross was completely righteous. This is demonstrated by the Father’s emptying of the tomb, signifying His satisfaction with the righteous payment and His acceptance of Christ into His presence.

16:11 of judgment: Satan, the ruler of this world, rules in the hearts of unregenerate people and blinds their minds (see 1 Cor. 2:6–8). Satan was judged at the Cross, and the Holy Spirit would convince people of the judgment to come. Satan has been judged, so all who side with him will be judged with him. There is no room for neutrality. A person is either a child of God or a child of the devil.

16:12 You refers to the apostles. Technically, what the Lord says about the ministry of the Holy Spirit in vv. 12–15 applies primarily to the apostles. The Holy Spirit’s ministry to them was threefold: (1) He would guide them into all truth (v. 13); (2) He would tell them of the future (v. 13); (3) He would help them glorify Christ (vv. 14, 15). Jesus’ words were fulfilled in the apostles’ preaching and writings. The Holy Spirit guided the apostles by revealing to them not only the truths embodied in Jesus’ life and death, but also the glorious future of all believers. The apostles, in turn, wrote it down in the NT, which glorifies—that is, reveals—Jesus Christ. The word **bear** means “to carry a burden” and is used later of Christ carrying the

¹³ However, when He, ^othe Spirit of truth, has come, ^pHe will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own *authority*, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. ^{14q} He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare *it* to you. ^{15r} All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He ³ will take of Mine and declare *it* to you.

The Prediction of Christ's Death and Resurrection

¹⁶ “A ^s little while, and you will not see Me; and again a little while, and you will see Me, ^tbecause I go to the Father.”

¹⁷ Then *some* of His disciples said among themselves, “What is this that He says to us, ‘A little while, and you will not see Me; and again a little while, and you will see Me’; and, ‘because I go to the Father’?” ¹⁸ They said therefore, “What is this that He says, ‘A little while’? We do not ⁴ know what He is saying.”

¹⁹ Now Jesus knew that they desired to ask Him, and He said to them, “Are you inquiring among yourselves about what I said, ‘A little while, and you will not see Me; and again a little while, and you will

¹³ ^o [John 14:17]
^p John 14:26; Acts 11:28; Rev. 1:19 ☆
¹⁴ ^q John 15:26
¹⁵ ^r Matt. 11:27; John 3:35 ³ NU, M takes of Mine and will declare
¹⁶ ^s John 7:33; 12:35; 13:33; 14:19; 19:40-42; 20:19 ☆
^t John 13:3
¹⁸ ⁴ understand

²⁰ ^u Mark 16:10; Luke 23:48; 24:17
^v Luke 24:32, 41
²¹ ^w Gen. 3:16; Is. 13:8; 26:17; 42:14; 1 Thess. 5:3
²² ^x Luke 24:41; John 14:1, 27; 20:20; Acts 2:46; 13:52; 1 Pet. 1:8 ☆
²³ ^y Matt. 7:7; [John 14:13; 15:16]
²⁴ ^z John 17:13
^a John 15:11
²⁵ ^b John 7:13
²⁷ ^c [John 14:21, 23]
^d John 3:13

see Me’?” ²⁰ Most assuredly, I say to you that you will weep and ^ulament, but the world will rejoice; and you will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will be turned into ^vjoy. ²¹ ^w A woman, when she is in labor, has sorrow because her hour has come; but as soon as she has given birth to the child, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world. ²² Therefore you now have sorrow; but I will see you again and ^xyour heart will rejoice, and your joy no one will take from you.

²³ “And in that day you will ask Me nothing. ^y Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you. ²⁴ Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, ^z that your joy may be ^a full.

²⁵ “These things I have spoken to you in figurative language; but the time is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figurative language, but I will tell you ^b plainly about the Father. ²⁶ In that day you will ask in My name, and I do not say to you that I shall pray the Father for you; ²⁷ ^c for the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me, and ^d have believed that I came forth

Cross (19:17). In other words, there were truths that they could not understand (v. 13) or handle until the Holy Spirit came at Pentecost.

16:13 Spirit of truth: The phrase means that the Holy Spirit is the source of truth (14:17; 15:26). **guide:** The Holy Spirit would not compel or carry the disciples into truth. He would lead; their job was to follow. **All truth** refers to the truth necessary to be mature saints and thoroughly equipped servants (see 2 Tim. 3:16, 17). **Things to come** includes truths about the church (see Eph. 3:1–7), as well as future events.

16:14 For indicates that the last part of the verse explains **glorify Me**. The Holy Spirit glorifies Christ by declaring Him or making Him known. It is the work of the Holy Spirit to throw light on Jesus Christ, who is the image of the invisible God. Christ is to be on center stage; that is the desire of both the Father and the Spirit. The apostles received truth from the Holy Spirit, truth about things to come, and truth about Christ. Then under the guidance of the Holy Spirit they wrote those truths in documents known today as the NT (see 14:25, 26; 1 Cor. 2:13).

16:15 To say that the Holy Spirit will take what belongs to Christ (v. 14) does not mean He will concentrate on Christ to the exclusion of **the Father**. There is no division within the Godhead. What the Father has, the Son has (17:10). What the Son has, the Spirit will declare (see 1 Cor. 2:13). However, the focus will be on Christ because He is the “image of the invisible God” (see Col. 1:15). His steps are the only ones we can follow because He is the only one we have “seen.” **16:16 You will see Me** has been interpreted to mean: (1) the disciples would literally see Jesus after the Resurrection; (2) the disciples would spiritually see Jesus after the ascension because of the work of the Holy Spirit. Verse 22 seems to support the literal sight after the Resurrection.

16:18 A little while: The biggest question weighing on the disciples’ minds was the time factor. They simply did not understand the strange intervals marked by their separation from Jesus.

16:20, 21 weep and lament: When Jesus died, the disciples would openly express their intense sorrow. **The world would rejoice**, assuming that it was rid of Jesus. But the **sorrow** of the disciples would be **turned into joy**. This is not merely a case of sorrow being followed by joy, but of **sorrow becoming joy**. The sorrow itself would

be transformed. The death of Jesus would be first a sorrow and then a joy. To explain His words (in v. 20), Jesus used the example of a pregnant woman. **A woman . . . in labor** has **sorrow**, but the very sorrow is transformed into **joy** in the birth of the child.

16:22 I will see you again refers to Jesus’ postresurrection appearances. **your joy no one will take:** The disciples’ sorrow would depart; their joy would remain. Jesus’ death and resurrection brings the joy of forgiven sins (see 1 Pet. 1:8) that the world cannot take away.

16:25 An example of **figurative language** is the allegory of the grapevine in 15:1–8, which presents the work of the Father in producing the fruit of love in believers. A figure of speech can be more vivid and graphic than ordinary prose.

16:26, 27 In My name means by Christ’s authority. **I do not say . . . I shall pray the Father for you:** Because Jesus provides forgiveness of sins through His death and now intercedes for all believers at the right hand of the Father (see Heb. 7:25), we have direct access to the Father. We do not need the intercession of a priest, because Jesus acts as our High Priest before God. **For** indicates that v. 27 explains

Illustration

(Gk. *paroimia*) (10:6; 16:25, 29; 2 Pet. 2:22) Strong’s #3942

The Greek word can mean “proverb” (as in 2 Pet. 2:22), “enigmatic saying” (as in 16:25, 29), or “similitude.” John did not use the Greek word *parabolē*, meaning “parable,” which is common in the synoptic Gospels; and the synoptic Gospels do not have the word *paroimia*. The two words are nearly synonymous. The only difference is that in John’s Gospel the word *paroimia* may connote the idea of a similitude or analogy. Whatever the exact definition, Jesus’ similitude was not understood by His listeners because their sin had hardened their hearts and had made them unable to comprehend the spiritual truths about which Jesus spoke (see Matt. 13:10–17).

from God. ²⁸*e* I came forth from the Father and have come into the world. Again, I leave the world and go to the Father.”

²⁹His disciples said to Him, “See, now You are speaking plainly, and using no figure of speech! ³⁰Now we are sure that *f*You know all things, and have no need that anyone should question You. By this *g*we believe that You came forth from God.”

³¹Jesus answered them, “Do you now believe? ³²*h* Indeed the hour is coming, yes, has now come, that you will be scattered, *i* each to his *5* own, and will leave Me alone. And *j* yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me. ³³These things I have spoken to you, that *k* in Me you may have peace. *l* In the world you *6* will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, *m* I have overcome the world.”

Christ Prays for Himself

17 Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: “Father, *a* the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You, *2b* as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He *1* should give eternal life to as many *c* as You have given Him. ³ And *d* this is eternal life, that they may know

²⁸ *e* John 13:1, 3; 16:5, 10, 17
³⁰ *f* John 21:17
^g John 17:8
³² *h* Zech. 13:7; Matt. 26:31, 56; Mark 14:27, 40; ☆ Acts 8:1 *i* John 20:10 *j* John 8:29
⁵ *own things* or *place*
³³ *k* [Is. 9:6; Rom. 5:1; Eph. 2:14]
^l 2 Tim. 3:12 *m* Rom. 8:37; [1 John 4:4]
⁶ NU, M omit *will*

CHAPTER 17

¹ *a* John 12:23
² *b* Dan. 7:14; Matt. 11:27; John 3:35; [Phil. 2:10; Heb. 2:8]
^c John 6:37, 39; 17:6, 9, 24 *i* *M shall*
³ *d* [Is. 53:11]; Jer. 9:23, 24 *e* *1* Cor. 8:4; 1 Thess. 1:9 *j* John 3:34
⁴ *g* John 13:31 ☆
^h [Dan. 9:24]; John 4:34; 19:30 *i* Is. 49:3; 50:5; John 14:31
⁵ *j* Prov. 8:22-30; John 1:1, 2; Phil. 2:6; Col. 1:15; Heb. 1:3
² *Lit. alongside*
⁶ *k* Ps. 22:22 *l* John 6:37 *m* Ezek. 18:4; Rom. 14:8
³ *revealed*
⁸ *a* John 8:28

You, *e* the only true God, and Jesus Christ *f* whom You have sent. ^{4g} I have glorified You on the earth. *h* I have finished the work *i* which You have given Me to do. ⁵ And now, O Father, glorify Me together ² with Yourself, with the glory *j* which I had with You before the world was.

Christ Prays for His Disciples

^{6k} “I have ³ manifested Your name to the men *l* whom You have given Me out of the world. *m* They were Yours, You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word. ⁷ Now they have known that all things which You have given Me are from You. ⁸ For I have given to them the words *n* which You have given Me; and they have received *them*, *o* and have known surely that I came forth from You; and they have believed that *p* You sent Me.

⁹ “I pray for them. *q* I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours. ¹⁰ And all Mine are Yours, and *r* Yours are Mine, and I am glorified in them. ^{11s} Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Fa-

e John 8:42; 16:27, 30 *p* Deut. 18:15, 18 ☆ ⁹ *q* [1 John 5:19]
¹⁰ *r* John 16:15 ¹¹ *s* [Mark 16:19; Luke 24:51]; John 13:1; [Acts 1:9; Heb. 4:14; 9:24; 1 Pet. 3:22]

the previous verse. After Jesus’ departure, the disciples would be able to pray directly to God the Father, who loves them because they believed in and loved His Son, Jesus.

16:29, 30 we believe: Jesus had read the disciples’ hearts (v. 19) and answered their questions. Like the Samaritan woman, they concluded that He knew all things (4:39). To the disciples, Jesus’ supernatural knowledge proved His divine mission.

16:31 now believe: We continue in the Christian life the same way we begin, by believing in Jesus. The more we learn of Christ, the more we have to believe. The more we place our trust in Jesus, the more we receive. The more we receive, the more we can accomplish for His glory.

glorify

(Gk. *doxazō*) (7:39; 12:23; 13:31, 32; 17:5; Rom. 1:21; 8:30; Gal. 1:24) Strong’s #1392

This Greek term means “to give glory,” or “to make glorious.” It was one of John’s favorite expressions concerning what would happen to Jesus as the result of His crucifixion and resurrection (see 7:39; 12:23, 24). These events would show the world that Jesus was no ordinary man. The resurrection, especially, would show that He was the glorious Son of God worthy of all honor. In His final prayer, Jesus asked the Father to be glorified alongside of Him (that is, in the Father’s presence) by means of the glory He had with the Father before the world existed. In other words, Jesus was praying to enter into that pristine state of coequal glory with the Father, a position He possessed from eternity as God’s only Son (see 1:1, 18). He would enter into that glory in a new way—as the God-man, the crucified and risen Lord Jesus Christ.

16:32 you will be scattered: The disciples would desert Jesus. Knowing this, Jesus still loved them, an amazing example of unconditional love.

16:33 Tribulation is literally “pressure,” and figuratively means “affliction” or “distress.” **Be of good cheer** means “be confident and courageous.” When we place our trust in God, He can give us peace in the midst of pressure. See Phil. 1:27–30 for Paul’s explanation of the principle of joy in suffering.

17:1, 2 the hour has come: Throughout the Gospel of John, Jesus referred to the Cross as His “hour” (2:4; 7:30; 8:20; 12:23; 13:1). The time for Him to die had arrived. **Glorify Your Son:** Jesus was asking that His mission to the world would be made known through the Cross. The reasons for this request are twofold: (1) **that Your Son also may glorify You.** In the Cross, Jesus reveals the Father to the world, that is, His love and justice; and (2) that through Jesus’ death on the Cross, God would provide forgiveness of sins and **give eternal life** to all those who believe in His Son.

17:3 that they may know You: Eternal life consists of a growing knowledge of the **only true God**, as opposed to false gods.

17:4, 5 I have glorified You: Jesus made known the Father by completing the work God gave Him to do. **glorify Me:** Jesus looked to the Father to restore Him to the glory He had in heaven before He left (see Phil. 2:6). This is another indication of Christ’s preexistence and deity (1:1–14).

17:9 I do not pray for the world indicates that Jesus was praying only for present and future believers (see 17:20; Luke 23:34).

17:11 This verse reveals Jesus’ keen sensitivity to the plight of His disciples brought on by His departure. He was going to the Father, but they would be left behind. Jesus asked the Father to **keep** the disciples **through His name**, that is, to keep them true to the revelation of God that Jesus had given to them while He was with them. The disciples would have a new union with the Father and Son through the future indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

ther, ¹keep⁴ through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one ^uas We are. ¹²While I was with them ⁵in the world, ^vI kept them in ⁶Your name. Those whom You gave Me I have kept; and ^wnone of them is ⁷lost ^xexcept the son of ⁸perdition, ^ythat the Scripture might be fulfilled. ¹³But now I come to You, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy fulfilled in themselves. ¹⁴I have given them Your word; ^zand the world has hated them because they are not of the world, ^ajust as I am not of the world. ¹⁵I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but ^bthat You should keep them from the evil one. ¹⁶They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. ^{17c}Sanctify⁹ them by Your truth. ^dYour word is truth. ^{18e}As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. ¹⁹And ^ffor their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth.

Christ Prays for All Believers

²⁰“I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who ¹will believe in Me through their word; ^{21g}that they all may be one, as ^hYou, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. ²²And the ⁱglory which You gave Me I have given them; ^jthat they may be one just as We are one: ²³I in them, and You

¹¹ ^f[1 Pet. 1:5]; Jude 1 ^uJohn 10:30
⁴ NU, M keep them through Your name which You have given Me
¹² ^vHeb. 2:13
^w [John 6:39; 18:9]; 1 John 2:19 ^x Matt. 27:4, 5; John 6:70; Acts 1:16-20 ^y Ps. 41:9; 109:8; John 13:18; Acts 1:20
⁵ NU omits in the world ⁶ NU Your name which You gave Me. And I guarded them; (or it); ⁷ destroyed ⁸ destruction
¹⁴ ^z Matt. 24:9; Luke 6:22; 21:17; John 15:19; 1 John 3:13 ^a John 8:23
¹⁵ ^b Matt. 6:13; Gal. 1:4; 2 Thess. 3:3; [2 Tim. 4:18]; 2 Pet. 2:9; 1 John 5:18
¹⁷ ^c [Acts 15:9; Eph. 5:26; 1 Pet. 1:22]
^d Ps. 119:9, 142, 151
⁹ Set them apart
¹⁸ ^e John 4:38; 20:21
¹⁹ ^f 1 Cor. 1:2; 1 Thess. 4:7; [Heb. 10:10]
²⁰ ¹ NU, M omit will
²¹ ^g [John 10:16; Rom. 12:5; Gal. 3:28]; Eph. 4:4, 6 ^h John 10:38; 17:11, 23
²² ⁱ John 14:20; 1 John 1:3 ^j [2 Cor. 3:18]

in Me; ^kthat they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.

^{24l}“Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me; ^mfor You loved Me before the foundation of the world. ²⁵O righteous Father! ⁿThe world has not known You, but ^oI have known You; and ^pthese have known that You sent Me. ^{26q}And I have declared to them Your name, and will declare it, that the love ^rwith which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them.”

The Arrest of Christ

Matt. 26:47-56; Mark 14:43-52; Luke 22:47-53

18 When Jesus had spoken these words, ^aHe went out with His disciples over ^bthe Brook Kidron, where there was a garden, which He and His disciples entered. ²And Judas, who betrayed Him, also knew the place; ^cfor Jesus often met there with His disciples. ^{3d}Then Judas, having received a detachment of

²³ ^k [Col. 3:14] ²⁴ ^l [John 12:26; 14:3; 1 Thess. 4:17] ^m Matt. 25:34; John 17:5 ²⁵ ⁿ John 15:21 ^o John 7:29; 8:55; 10:15
^p John 3:17; 17:3, 8, 18, 21, 23 ²⁶ ^q Ex. 34:5-7; John 17:6
^r John 15:9; [Eph. 3:17-19]
CHAPTER 18 ¹ ^a Matt. 26:30, 36; Mark 14:26, 32; Luke 22:39
² ^b 2 Sam. 15:23; 1 Kin. 2:37; 15:13; 2 Kin. 23:4, 6, 12; 2 Chr. 15:16; 29:16; 30:14; Jer. 31:40 ² ^c Luke 21:37; 22:39 ³ ^d Matt. 26:47-56; Mark 14:43-50; Luke 22:47-53; Acts 1:16

17:12 none of them is lost: Jesus protected the disciples during His earthly ministry (18:9). Judas, **the son of perdition**, is distinguished from the rest of the apostles. He was never really one of those given to Christ (18:8, 9). He had never really been a believer (6:64-71); he had not been cleansed (13:11).

17:13 I speak in the world: Jesus prayed aloud (v. 1) so that His words would comfort the apostles when they remembered that Jesus gave them into His Father's keeping.

17:14-16 of the world: This verse has profound implications for discipleship. Our desire should not be to isolate ourselves from the world, but to use Christ's word and the Holy Spirit's power to serve Him while our life lasts. Yet at the same time, we should not become like the world, succumbing to the evil influences of the world. The term **evil one** can be translated as a common noun, *evil*, or as a reference to a person, Satan.

17:17 Sanctify means “to set apart.” There are two ways to understand this statement: (1) as separate for holiness, or (2) as set apart for service. According to the first view, Jesus was praying not only that the disciples should be kept from evil, but that they should advance in holiness. However in v. 18, sanctification seems to refer to the disciples' mission, indicating that *sanctify* may also mean that Jesus was setting apart His disciples for this. **Your word is truth** is a strong statement of Jesus' confidence in the veracity of Scripture. People's opinions may vary, and experiences are notoriously untrustworthy, but God's Word always remains true.

17:20 those who will believe: Jesus not only prayed for those the Father had given Him (v. 9) but for all future believers—for their unity (vv. 20-23) and their future glory (vv. 24-26). If you are a believer, these words are Jesus' prayer for you.

17:21 all may be one: The present tense of the verb “to be” indicates that Jesus was praying for the unity that takes place

through the sanctification of believers. This is what Jesus was commanding in 13:34, 35: His followers had to love each other so that the world may believe in the reality of Jesus' love. The loving relationship of believers to each other is the greatest witness to Jesus Christ.

17:22 The glory, the revelation of Jesus Christ through His disciples, is the means to unity. Such unity begins with belief and correct thinking about Jesus and God the Father, that is, with doctrine. But correct belief must bear fruit—a life that demonstrates God's love and produces the unity between all the believers.

17:23 I in them, and You in Me: The mutual indwelling of the Father in the Son and the Son in the church is also the means to unity, the ultimate expression of God's love (see 13:35; Rom. 8:17).

17:24 May be with Me is a prayer for the future glorification of believers. **may behold My glory:** The apostles saw Christ's glory in His words and works (v. 22). Christ prayed for all believers to behold His glory, unveiled in the full revelation of His deity.

17:25, 26 The ultimate reason for future believers to know the love of God is so that God's love may be replicated in them, thus drawing the entire world to Christ.

18:1 The Brook Kidron was a ravine between Jerusalem and the Mount of Olives.

18:3 A detachment was a cohort of about six hundred men, or one-tenth of a legion. However, sometimes this Greek word was used for one-third of a cohort, or two hundred men. These soldiers were probably the experienced Roman troops stationed at the Antonia, a fortress near the temple. The **officers** who came with the detachment were members of the temple police under the command of the Jewish council, the Sanhedrin.



The Function of the Synagogue

A distinction must be made between synagogue worship and tabernacle or temple worship. The tabernacle of Moses' day was enclosed by curtains. No one but the priests could enter this area. The later temples of Solomon, Zerubbabel, and Herod (the temple of Jesus' day) had courts or porches where the people could pray or have discussions (Matt. 26:55; Luke 2:46; Acts 2:46), but the temple precincts proper were for the priests only.

In synagogues, on the other hand, the people took part in worship, reading of the Scriptures, and prayer. By NT times, synagogues were very numerous and popular. They became centers of community activity, playing a number of roles. Sometimes they were local courts of justice (Matt. 10:17; 23:34).



A fourth-century A.D. synagogue at Capernaum with first-century (black basalt) foundation

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troops, and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, came there with lanterns, torches, and weapons. ⁴Jesus therefore, knowing all things that would come upon Him, went forward and said to them, "Whom are you seeking?"

⁵They answered Him, ^f"Jesus ¹of Nazareth."

Jesus said to them, "I am He." And Judas, who ^gbetrayed Him, also stood with them. ⁶Now when He said to them, "I am He," they drew back and fell to the ground.

⁷Then He asked them again, "Whom are you seeking?"

And they said, "Jesus of Nazareth."

⁸Jesus answered, "I have told you that I am He. Therefore, if you seek Me, let these go their way," ⁹that the saying might be fulfilled which He spoke, ^h"Of those whom You gave Me I have lost none."

¹⁰ⁱThen Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's ser-

⁴ ^e John 6:64; 13:1, 3; 19:28

⁵ ^f Matt. 21:11;

Mark 1:24; 14:67;

16:6; Luke 18:37;

24:19 ^g Ps. 41:9;

Matt. 20:18; 26:21;

John 13:21 ¹ Lit. the

Nazarene

⁹ ^h John 6:39;

17:12]

¹⁰ ⁱ Matt. 26:51;

Mark 14:47; Luke

22:49, 50

¹¹ ^j Matt. 20:22;

26:39; Mark 14:36;

Luke 22:42

¹³ ^k Matt. 26:57

¹ Luke 3:2; John

18:24; Acts 4:6

^m Matt. 26:3; John

11:49, 51

¹⁴ ⁿ John 11:50

² advantageous

¹⁵ ^o Matt. 26:58;

Mark 14:54; Luke

22:54 ^p John 20:2-5

³ ^m the other

¹⁶ ^q Matt. 26:69;

Mark 14:66-68;

Luke 22:55-57

vant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus.

¹¹So Jesus said to Peter, "Put your sword into the sheath. Shall I not drink ^jthe cup which My Father has given Me?"

First Jewish Trial Before Annas

Matt. 26:69, 70; Mark 14:66-68; Luke 22:55-57

¹²Then the detachment of troops and the captain and the officers of the Jews arrested Jesus and bound Him. ¹³Annas and ^kthey led Him away to ^lAnnas first, for he was the father-in-law of ^mCaiaphas who was high priest that year. ¹⁴ⁿNow it was Caiaphas who advised the Jews that it was ²expedient that one man should die for the people.

¹⁵^oAnd Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so ^pdid ³another³ disciple. Now that disciple was known to the high priest, and went with Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest. ¹⁶^qBut Peter stood at the door outside. Then the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went

18:4 knowing all things: Knowing He was about to be arrested, Jesus could have escaped, but He did not. He submitted Himself voluntarily to the ordeal that was ordained by God.

18:6 fell to the ground: For a moment, Christ unveiled His majesty. His statement of deity, **I am**, manifested such glory that it literally threw the soldiers to the ground.

18:8 For the third time in this passage, Jesus claimed to be **I am** (vv. 5, 6), echoing God's self-revelation in Ex. 3:14. **let these go:** As He was being arrested, Jesus demonstrated His love for the apostles.

18:10 Note the contrast between Peter and Jesus. By fighting the guard, **Simon Peter** vehemently exercised his own self-will; Jesus in contrast voluntarily submitted to the will of God. One swung the sword of self-will; the other drank from the cup of God's will. See Matt. 16:22, 23 for another attempt by Peter to control God's plan for Jesus. **cut off his right ear:** Jesus mercifully restored the ear (Luke

22:51) that Peter cut off. He often does the same in our lives when we act rashly. His purposes are fulfilled in spite of us.

18:12 A captain was the chief officer of a Roman cohort (v. 3).

18:13 Annas was high priest from A.D. 7 to 14. He was deposed by the Romans. Then Caiaphas, Annas's son-in-law, was appointed to the position and served from A.D. 18 to 37. However, according to Jewish law the high priest was a lifetime position, so the Jews still considered Annas to be high priest. So they took Jesus to Annas first. Caiaphas would soon be involved, however, since he had the authority to carry out the plan (see v. 14).

18:14 In passing, John reminds the reader of the earlier prediction of **Caiaphas** (11:50-52): Jesus would die for the entire nation.

18:15 another disciple: Although this other disciple is never identified, the consensus is that he was John, the author of this Gospel.

out and spoke to her who kept the door, and brought Peter in. ¹⁷Then the servant girl who kept the door said to Peter, “You are not also *one* of this Man’s disciples, are you?”

He said, “I am *not*.”

¹⁸Now the servants and officers who had made a fire of coals stood there, for it was cold, and they warmed themselves. And Peter stood with them and warmed himself.

¹⁹The high priest then asked Jesus about His disciples and His doctrine.

²⁰Jesus answered him, ^s“I spoke openly to the world. I always taught ^tin synagogues and ^uin the temple, where ⁴the Jews always meet, and in secret I have said nothing. ²¹Why do you ask Me? Ask ^vthose who have heard Me what I said to them. Indeed they know what I said.”

²²And when He had said these things, one of the officers who stood by ^wstruck ⁵Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, “Do You answer the high priest like that?”

²³Jesus answered him, “If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil; but if well, why do you strike Me?”

Second Jewish Trial Before Caiaphas

Matt. 26:57-68, 73-75; Mark 14:53-65, 70-72; Luke 22:59-65

^{24x}Then Annas sent Him bound to ^yCaiaphas the high priest.

²⁵Now Simon Peter stood and warmed himself. ^zTherefore they said to him,

¹⁷ ^r Matt. 26:34
²⁰ ^s Matt. 26:55;
Luke 4:15; John
8:26 ^t John 6:59
^u Mark 14:49; John
7:14, 28 ⁴ NU *all the
Jews meet*
²¹ ^v Mark 12:37
²² ^w Job 16:10; Is.
50:6; Jer. 20:2; Lam.
3:30 ⁵ Acts 23:2
⁵ Lit. *gave Jesus
a slap*,
²⁴ ^x Matt. 26:57;
Luke 3:2; Acts 4:6
^y John 11:49
²⁵ ^z Matt. 26:71-75;
Mark 14:69-72;
Luke 22:58-62

²⁷ ^a Matt. 26:74;
Mark 14:72; Luke
22:60; John 13:38
²⁸ ^b Matt. 27:2;
Mark 15:1; Luke
23:1; Acts 3:13
^c John 11:55;
Acts 10:28; 11:3
⁶ The governor’s
headquarters
²⁹ ^d Matt. 27:11-14;
Mark 15:2-5; Luke
23:2, 3
³⁰ ⁷ *a criminal*
³² ^e Matt. 20:17-19;
26:2; Mark 10:33;
Luke 18:32 ^f John
3:14; 8:28; 12:32, 33
³³ ^g Matt. 27:11
⁸ The governor’s
headquarters

“You are not also *one* of His disciples, are you?”

He denied *it* and said, “I am not!”

²⁶One of the servants of the high priest, a relative *of him* whose ear Peter cut off, said, “Did I not see you in the garden with Him?” ²⁷Peter then denied again; and ^aimmediately a rooster crowed.

First Roman Trial Before Pilate

Matt. 27:2, 11-14; Mark 15:1-5; Luke 23:1-5

^{28b}Then they led Jesus from Caiaphas to the Praetorium, and it was early morning. ^cBut they themselves did not go into the ⁶Praetorium, lest they should be defiled, but that they might eat the Passover. ^{29d}Pilate then went out to them and said, “What accusation do you bring against this Man?”

³⁰They answered and said to him, “If He were not ⁷an evildoer, we would not have delivered Him up to you.”

³¹Then Pilate said to them, “You take Him and judge Him according to your law.”

Therefore the Jews said to him, “It is not lawful for us to put anyone to death,” ^{32e}that the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled which He spoke, ^fsignifying by what death He would die.

^{33g}Then Pilate entered the ⁸Praetorium again, called Jesus, and said to Him, “Are You the King of the Jews?”

³⁴Jesus answered him, “Are you speaking for yourself about this, or did others tell you this concerning Me?”

18:17 I am not: This was the first of Peter’s three denials prophesied by Jesus (13:38).

18:21 Ask those who have heard Me: According to the law, the witnesses for the defense had to be called first. Jesus should not have been questioned until witnesses had testified.

18:22 the officers . . . struck Jesus: This was illegal according to Jewish law. There was to be no punishment before conviction.

18:23 bear witness: Jesus invited His accusers to present evidence that He had done something wrong.

18:25 I am not: This was the second of Peter’s three denials prophesied by Jesus (13:38).

18:27 Peter then denied again: For the third time, Peter denied the Lord, as Jesus had said he would (13:38). In the Upper Room, Peter had boasted that he would remain true to the Lord to the end (see 13:37; Matt. 26:33, 35). In the garden he surrendered to the desires of his body, by sleeping three times when the Lord had commanded the disciples to stay up in prayer (Mark 14:32–42). Now he submitted to the pressure of the world and denied the Lord three times.

18:28 The Praetorium was the Roman governor’s official residence, probably the Fortress Antonia near the temple. Early morning refers to the fourth watch of the night, from 3 to 6 **A.M.** A Roman court could have been held immediately after sunrise, and this scene could have taken place around 6 **A.M.** **defiled:** During Passover, if a Jew entered a house that contained leaven, he or she would be ceremonially defiled and unable to celebrate the feast. Thus Jews would not enter the residence of any Gentile for fear of being ceremonially defiled. **Passover:** The main meal of the Passover had taken place. The synoptic Gospels report that Jesus celebrated

that meal the night before (see Matt. 26:17–29; Mark 14:12–25; Luke 22:7–22). However, there were other ceremonial meals during the Passover, which lasted the entire week.

18:29, 30 What accusation: Pilate was not ignorant of the accusation. He was merely requesting that it be formally stated. **If He were not an evildoer:** Jesus’ accusers had no charge that would stand up in a Roman court. Therefore they sullenly replied, “If He were not an evildoer, we would not have delivered Him up to you.”

18:31 You take Him and judge Him: The accusations did not warrant a trial before Pilate. **It is not lawful:** The Romans did not allow the Jews to impose capital punishment. These Jewish leaders had no interest in a just trial; they simply wanted permission from Rome to have Jesus executed.

18:32 signifying by what death He would die: Jesus had said, “If I am lifted up from the earth,” indicating the method of His death, crucifixion (12:32, 33). The Jewish method of execution was stoning. However, Jesus had already indicated that He would be crucified. John is pointing out that the Jewish leaders’ inability to impose capital punishment themselves fulfilled Jesus’ prediction describing His death.

18:33 Are You the King of the Jews: The Jews charged that Jesus claimed to be their king. From their standpoint, this was the most damaging accusation possible because it would be regarded by the Romans as treason and would be punishable by death. In the Greek text, *you* is emphatic, perhaps indicating that Pilate did not think the forlorn figure before him looked like the defiant rebels he was used to dealing with as claimants to the Jewish throne.

18:34 Are you speaking for yourself: In reply to Pilate, Jesus gave no violent protest of innocence, nor was He sullenly defiant. Jesus

³⁵ Pilate answered, “Am I a Jew? Your own nation and the chief priests have delivered You to me. What have You done?”

³⁶ ^h Jesus answered, “My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here.”

³⁷ Pilate therefore said to Him, “Are You a king then?”

Jesus answered, “You say *rightly* that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, ^j that I should bear ^k witness to the truth. Everyone who ⁱ is of the truth ^m hears My voice.”

³⁸ Pilate said to Him, “What is truth?” And when he had said this, he went out again to the Jews, and said to them, “I find no fault in Him at all.

Second Roman Trial Before Pilate

Matt. 27:15-31; Mark 15:6-20; Luke 23:13-25

³⁹ ^o “But you have a custom that I should release someone to you at the Passover. Do you therefore want me to release to you the King of the Jews?”

⁴⁰ ^p Then they all cried again, saying, “Not this Man, but Barabbas!” ^q Now Barabbas was a robber.

19 So then ^a Pilate took Jesus and ^b scourged Him. ² And the soldiers twisted a crown of thorns and put it on His head, and they put on Him a purple

³⁶ ^h 1 Tim. 6:13
ⁱ [Dan. 2:44; 7:14];
 Luke 12:14; John
 6:15; 8:15
³⁷ ^j [Matt. 5:17;
 20:28; Luke 4:43;
 12:49; 19:10; John
 3:17; 9:39; 10:10;
 12:47] ^k Is. 55:4;
 Rev. 1:5 ^l [John
 14:6] ^m John 8:47;
 10:27; [1 John
 3:19; 4:6]
³⁸ ⁿ Is. 53:9; Matt.
 27:24; Luke 23:4;
 John 19:4, 6; 1 Pet.
 2:22-24
³⁹ ^o Matt. 27:15-26;
 Mark 15:6-15; Luke
 23:17-25
⁴⁰ ^p Is. 53:3; Acts
 3:14 ^q Luke 23:19

CHAPTER 19

¹ ^a Matt. 20:19;
 27:26 ^b Mark
 15:15; Luke 18:33

³ ^b Is. 50:6 ¹ NU
 And they came up to
 Him and said
 4 ^c Is. 53:9; John
 18:33, 38; 1 Pet.
 2:22-24
 6 ^d Acts 3:13
 7 ^e Lev. 24:16
^f Matt. 26:63-66;
 John 5:18; 10:33
² NU the law
 9 ^g Is. 53:7 ^h Matt.
 27:12, 14; Luke 23:9
 10 ³ authority
 11 ^h [Luke 22:53];
 John 7:30 ⁱ John
 3:27; Rom. 13:1

robe. ³¹ Then they said, “Hail, King of the Jews!” And they ^b struck Him with their hands.

⁴ Pilate then went out again, and said to them, “Behold, I am bringing Him out to you, ^c that you may know that I find no fault in Him.”

⁵ Then Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. And Pilate said to them, “Behold the Man!”

⁶ ^d Therefore, when the chief priests and officers saw Him, they cried out, saying, “Crucify Him, crucify Him!”

Pilate said to them, “You take Him and crucify Him, for I find no fault in Him.”

⁷ The Jews answered him, “We have a law, and according to ² our law He ought to die, because ^f He made Himself the Son of God.”

⁸ Therefore, when Pilate heard that saying, he was the more afraid, ⁹ and went again into the Praetorium, and said to Jesus, “Where are You from?” ^g But Jesus gave him no answer.

¹⁰ Then Pilate said to Him, “Are You not speaking to me? Do You not know that I have ³ power to crucify You, and ³ power to release You?”

¹¹ Jesus answered, ^h “You could have no power at all against Me unless it had been given you from above. Therefore ⁱ the one who delivered Me to you has the greater sin.”

¹² From then on Pilate sought to release Him, but the Jews cried out, saying, “If

politely but directly asked whether Pilate was asking on his own initiative or whether the charge was secondhand. If Pilate’s question originated with him, he was using *king* in the Roman sense of a political ruler. If not, then *king* was being used in the Jewish sense of the messianic King.

18:35 Am I a Jew: Pilate was asking, “Is it likely that I, a Roman governor, would have any interest in a Jewish question?”

18:36 My kingdom is not of this world: Jesus pointed out that though He was a king, he was no threat to Rome because His kingdom would not come by a worldly revolution.

18:37 bear witness to the truth: The truth was the seal of God. **hears My voice:** If Pilate wanted to know the truth, he would understand what Jesus was saying.

18:38 What is truth: This question has been interpreted as (1) a cynical denial of the possibility of knowing truth; (2) a contemptuous jest at anything so impractical as abstract truth; and (3) a desire to know what no one had been able to tell him. **No fault** is a legal term meaning that there were no grounds for a criminal charge. Teaching the truth was not against the law. Pilate pronounced Jesus not guilty.

18:39 you have a custom: It appears that some in the crowd suggested that a prisoner should be released in honor of the Passover (see Mark 15:8, 11). Pilate jumped at the possible compromise. By promising to release Jesus on account of the custom rather than by proclaiming Him innocent, Pilate would avoid insulting the Jewish leaders, who had already pronounced Him guilty.

18:40 The people demanded that Pilate release **Barabbas**, who was not only **a robber**, but a rebel (Mark 15:7) and a murderer (Luke 23:19).

19:1 scourged Him: Scourging was part of a capital sentence. But in this case it was inflicted before formal judgment.

19:2 The **crown of thorns** was in mockery of a kingly crown. Placing

a **purple robe** on Jesus made Him a caricature of a royal conqueror. **19:3 Hail, King of the Jews** was probably a sarcastic echo of what the soldiers had heard at Jesus’ triumphal entry or at His trial.

19:4 I am bringing Him out to you: Perhaps Pilate was appealing to the people’s compassion so that he could release Jesus.

19:6 Crucify Him: The Jewish leaders anticipated an outburst of pity. Therefore they began demanding Jesus’ death. **You . . . crucify Him:** Pilate was enraged. **I find no fault in Him:** This was the third time Pilate declared that he could find no legal grounds for capital punishment (18:38; 19:4).

19:7 We have a law: The Jewish leaders were telling Pilate, “If you are appealing to us, we say that according to our law, He must die.” As governor, Pilate was bound by Roman custom to respect Jewish law. **He made Himself the Son of God:** The Jewish leaders were accusing Jesus of violating the laws against blasphemy (see Lev. 24:16).

19:8 he was the more afraid: Though not mentioned earlier, Pilate had no doubt become fearful. The claim of Jesus’ deity further excited his fears.

19:9 Jesus gave . . . no answer: Three times Pilate had publicly pronounced Jesus innocent (18:38; 19:4, 6). If he had really wanted to know the truth, he would have believed what Jesus had already told him (18:37).

19:11 given you from above: Jesus acknowledged that Pilate had the power to take His life, but only because God allowed him that power. **The one who delivered Me to you** is a reference to Caiaphas (18:24, 28), who had the **greater sin** because as a religious leader he had that much greater a responsibility to recognize the Messiah.

19:12 not Caesar’s friend: The Jews shifted their focus from the religious charge (v. 7) to the political charge (18:33), which they backed

Jesus' Trials	
Before Jewish Religious Authorities	
Preliminary hearing before Annas (18:12–24)	Although the Romans had deposed Annas, in the eyes of the Jews he still functioned as the high priest because the office was for life. Annas questioned Jesus, but Jesus demanded a legal hearing.
Hearing before Caiaphas (Matt. 26:57–67; Mark 14:53–65)	Caiaphas was the high priest appointed by the Romans. Two false witnesses testified against Jesus and Caiaphas asked Jesus if He was the Messiah. Jesus answered yes, and Caiaphas concluded that Jesus was guilty of blasphemy.
Trial before the Sanhedrin (Matt. 27:1, 2; Mark 15:1; Luke 22:66–71)	The council of Jewish religious leaders confirmed Caiaphas's conclusion. In this trial, Jesus admitted He was the Son of God and declared that He would sit on the right hand of God the Father.
Before the Roman Authorities	
First hearing before Pilate (18:28–37; Matt. 27:11–14; Mark 15:2–5; Luke 23:1–5)	The Jewish religious leaders brought Jesus to Pilate in order to get permission to execute Him. They accused Him of treason. Pilate saw Jesus' innocence, but briefly questioned Him. In this interview, Jesus revealed to Pilate that His kingdom was not of this earth.
Hearing before Herod (Luke 23:6–12)	Pilate sent Jesus to Herod because Jesus was from Galilee, the region ruled by Herod. Jesus remained silent before Herod.
Final hearing before Pilate (18:38—19:16; Matt. 27:15–26; Mark 15:6–15; Luke 23:13–25)	Pilate did not want to condemn an innocent man, but he was afraid of another Jewish uprising. Therefore, he finally gave in to the cries of the crowd: "Crucify Him."

you let this Man go, you are not Caesar's friend. ^jWhoever makes himself a king speaks against Caesar."

¹³^k When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus out and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called *The Pavement*, but in Hebrew, Gabbatha. ¹⁴ Now ^l it was the Preparation Day of the Passover, and about the sixth hour. And he said to the Jews, "Behold your King!"

¹⁵ But they cried out, "Away with Him, away with Him! Crucify Him!"

Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your King?"

The chief priests answered, ^m "We have no king but Caesar!"

¹⁶ⁿ Then he delivered Him to them to be crucified. Then they took Jesus ⁴ and led Him away.

¹² / Luke 23:2; John 18:33; Acts 17:7
¹³ ^k Deut. 1:17; 1 Sam. 15:24; Prov. 29:25; Is. 51:12; Acts 4:19
¹⁴ ^l Matt. 27:62; John 19:31, 42
¹⁵ ^m [Gen. 49:10]
¹⁶ ⁿ Matt. 27:26, 31; Mark 15:15; Luke 23:24 ⁴ NU omits and led Him away

¹⁷ ^o Matt. 27:31, 33; Mark 15:21, 22; Luke 23:26, 33
¹⁸ ^p Num. 15:36; Heb. 13:12
¹⁹ ^q Ps. 22:16–18; Is. 53:12; Matt. 20:19; 26:2 ★
¹⁹ ^r Matt. 27:37; Mark 15:26; Luke 23:38

The Crucifixion of Christ

Matt. 27:32–38, 48, 50; Mark 15:21–26, 36, 37; Luke 23:26–33, 38, 46

¹⁷^o And He, bearing His cross, ^p went out to a place called *the Place* of a Skull, which is called in Hebrew, Golgotha, ¹⁸ where they crucified Him, and ^q two others with Him, one on either side, and Jesus in the center. ¹⁹^r Now Pilate wrote a title and put *it* on the cross. And the writing was:

JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS.

²⁰ Then many of the Jews read this title, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin.

²¹ Therefore the chief priests of the

up with an appeal to Caesar's own political interest. This new plea forced Pilate to choose between yielding to an indefinite sense of right or escaping the danger of an accusation at Rome.

19:13 The Pavement no doubt referred to a large paved area in the Fortress Antonia.

19:14 The Preparation Day of the Passover refers to the Friday of Passover week (v. 31), the preparation for the Sabbath of the Passover. Some have suggested that this may be the Thursday before the Passover, the same time that the Passover lamb was offered as a sacrifice. However this interpretation appears to conflict with the narrative of the three synoptic Gospels, where it seems that Jesus is described as being crucified on Friday (Matt. 27:62). **The sixth hour** was 6 A.M. according to the Roman system of time.

19:15, 16 The Jewish leaders preferred proclaiming a heathen emperor as their **king** to acknowledging Jesus as their Messiah. Trapped by his own fear, Pilate handed over the innocent Jesus to endure a punishment Pilate knew He did not deserve.

19:17 The Place of a Skull probably got its name from the shape of the hill.

19:18 they crucified Him: Of all the apostles, John alone witnessed the crucifixion. However, he spares his readers the revolting details. The **two others** were thieves (see Matt. 27:38; Mark 15:27).

19:19 wrote a title: It was a Roman custom to write the name of the condemned person and his crime on a plaque to be placed above his head at the execution. Mark calls this title "the inscription of His accusation" (see Mark 15:26).

19:20 written in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin: Multilingual inscriptions were common. The title was written in the local, common, and official languages of the day. Everyone could read the message in his or her own language.

19:21 The addition of the phrase **of the Jews** to the title **chief priests** (probably referring to Caiaphas and Annas) occurs nowhere else in the NT. The addition probably corresponds to the title given Jesus. The chief priest of the Jews objected to Jesus being called **King of the Jews**. They did not want a messianic designation connected with Him.

Jews said to Pilate, “Do not write, ‘The King of the Jews,’ but, ‘He said, “I am the King of the Jews.””

²² Pilate answered, “What I have written, I have written.”

²³ Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took His garments and made four parts, to each soldier a part, and also the tunic. Now the tunic was without seam, woven from the top in one piece. ²⁴ They said therefore among themselves, “Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be,” that the Scripture might be fulfilled which says:

*“They divided My garments among them,
And for My clothing they cast lots.”*

Therefore the soldiers did these things.

²⁵ Now there stood by the cross of Jesus His mother, and His mother’s sister, Mary the *wife* of ^v Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. ²⁶ When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and ^w the disciple whom He loved standing by, He said to His mother, ^x “Woman, behold your son!” ²⁷ Then He said to the disciple, “Behold your mother!” And from that hour that disciple took her ^y to his own *home*.

²³ ^s Matt. 27:35; Mark 15:24; Luke 23:34
²⁴ ^s Ps. 22:18 ★
²⁵ ^w Matt. 27:55; Mark 15:40; Luke 2:35; 23:49 ^v Luke 24:18
²⁶ ^w John 13:23; 20:2; 21:7, 20, 24
^x John 2:4
²⁷ ^y Luke 18:28; John 1:11; 16:32; Acts 21:6

²⁸ ^s Ps. 22:15 ★
^s M. seeing
²⁹ ^a Ps. 69:21; Matt. 27:48, 50 ★; Mark 15:36; Luke 23:36
³⁰ ^b Dan. 9:26;
Zech. 11:10, 11 ★;
John 17:4
³¹ ^c Matt. 27:62; Mark 15:42; Luke 23:54 ^d Deut. 21:23;
Josh. 8:29; 10:26
^e Ex. 12:16; Lev. 23:6, 7
³⁴ ^f [1 John 5:6, 8]
³⁵ ^g John 21:24
^h [John 20:31]
³⁶ ⁱ [Ex. 12:46;
Num. 9:12]; Ps. 34:20 ★

²⁸ After this, Jesus, ⁵ knowing that all things were now accomplished, ^z that the Scripture might be fulfilled, said, “I thirst!” ²⁹ Now a vessel full of sour wine was sitting there; and ^a they filled a sponge with sour wine, put *it* on hyssop, and put *it* to His mouth. ³⁰ So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, ^b “It is finished!” And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.

³¹ Therefore, because it was the Preparation Day, ^d that the bodies should not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a ^e high day), the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and *that* they might be taken away. ³² Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who was crucified with Him. ³³ But when they came to Jesus and saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs. ³⁴ But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately ^f blood and water came out. ³⁵ And he who has seen has testified, and his testimony is ^g true; and he knows that he is telling the truth, so that you may ^h believe. ³⁶ For these things were done that the Scripture should be fulfilled, ⁱ “*Not one of His bones shall be broken.*” ³⁷ And again an-

19:22 Pilate refused to change the title. As did Caiaphas, Pilate affirmed more than he ever intended. The title proclaimed to all that Jesus is indeed the promised Messiah.

19:23 the soldiers: According to Roman law, the **garments** of a condemned criminal belonged to the executioners. Jesus had two items of clothing. The cloak was a large, loose garment. The **tunic** was a close-fitting garment that went from the neck to the knees.

19:24 The outer garment could be conveniently divided, but the inner garment could not. Thus the soldiers divided the outer one and **cast lots** for the inner one. Unknowingly, the soldiers fulfilled David’s prophecy in Ps. 22:18. This passage had long been considered a messianic prophecy.

19:26 The disciple whom He loved refers to John, the author of this Gospel.

19:27 Behold your mother: Jesus placed Mary in the care of John.

19:28 that the Scripture might be fulfilled: Everything foretold concerning the earthly life of Jesus had been accomplished.

19:29 Sour wine was not the same as the drugged wine that had been offered to Jesus earlier (“wine mingled with myrrh”; see Mark 15:23). Jesus did not take that wine because He wanted to die fully conscious. He did take a sip of this wine; one of the agonies of crucifixion was incredible thirst, added to the terrible pain.

19:30 It is finished . . . He gave up His spirit: Having fulfilled every command of the Father and every prophecy of Scripture, Jesus voluntarily died. This was not a cry of exhaustion, but of completion. Jesus had done what He had agreed to do.

19:31 The Preparation Day was Friday, the day before the Sabbath (see v. 14). **bodies should not remain on the cross:** It is ironic that in the midst of a deliberate judicial murder the Jews were scrupulous

about keeping the ceremonial law. According to Jewish law (Deut. 21:23), it was necessary to remove the bodies of executed criminals before sunset. To avoid breaking the Law, the Jews requested that the legs of the condemned be broken so that the men would die quickly and could be removed from their crosses. Breaking the legs was not always part of crucifixion. But with his legs broken, a victim could no longer lift his body in order to breathe and would soon suffocate. **High day** is literally “great day.” The coming Sabbath was especially important because it was the Sabbath of the Passover Week.

19:34 To make certain that Jesus was dead, **one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear.** After the soldier did this, **blood and water came out**, indicating that Jesus was already dead. Only blood would have flowed from a living body.

19:35 he who has seen: John’s words can be trusted because he is giving an eyewitness account, so that his readers will believe that Jesus is the Savior.

19:36 One should trust Christ not only because John gives an accurate account of His death (v. 35), but also because He fulfilled Scripture (v. 37), proving that He is

The Death of Jesus	
The Jews viewed Jesus’ death as a scandal. The church understood His death as fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy.	
Aspect of Jesus’ Death	Reference
In obedience to His Father (18:11)	Psalm 40:8
Announced by Himself (18:32; see 3:14)	Numbers 21:8, 9
In the place of His people (18:14)	Isaiah 53:4–6
With evildoers (19:18)	Isaiah 53:12
In innocence (19:6)	Isaiah 53:9
Crucified (19:18)	Psalm 22:16
Buried in a rich man’s tomb (19:38–42)	Isaiah 53:9

other Scripture says,^j “*They shall look on Him whom they pierced.*”

The Burial of Christ

Matt. 27:57-60; Mark 15:42-46; Luke 23:50-54

^{38k} After this, Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly, ^lfor fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus; and Pilate gave *him* permission. So he came and took the body of Jesus. ³⁹ And ^mNicodemus, who at first came to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of ⁿmyrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds. ⁴⁰ Then they took the body of Jesus, and ^obound it in strips of linen with the spices, as the custom of the Jews is to bury. ⁴¹ Now in the place where He was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid. ⁴² So ^pthere they laid Jesus, ^qbecause of the Jews’ Preparation Day, for the tomb was nearby.

The Resurrection of Christ

Matt. 28:1-8; Mark 16:1-8; Luke 24:1-12

20 Now the “first day of the week” Mary Magdalene went to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw *that* the ^bstone had been taken away from the tomb. ² Then she ran and came to Simon Peter, and to the “other disciple,” ^dwhom Jesus loved, and said to them, “They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid Him.”

³ Peter therefore went out, and the other disciple, and were going to the tomb. ⁴ So they both ran together, and the other disciple outran Peter and came to

³⁷ / Ps. 22:16, 17; Zech. 12:10; 13:6 ★; Rev. 1:7
³⁸ ^k Matt. 27:57-61; Mark 15:42-47; Luke 23:50-56 ★ / [John 7:13; 9:22; 12:42]
³⁹ ^m John 3:1, 2; 7:50 ⁿ Ps. 45:8; Prov. 7:17; Song 4:14; Matt. 2:11
⁴⁰ ^o Luke 24:12; John 20:5, 7; Acts 5:6
⁴² ^p Is. 53:9; Matt. 26:12; Mark 14:8 ★
^q John 19:14, 31

CHAPTER 20

1 ^e Matt. 28:1-8; Mark 16:1-8; Luke 24:1-10; Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:2; Matt. 27:60, 66; 28:2; Mark 15:46; 16:4; Luke 24:2; John 11:38
2 ^c John 21:23, 24
^d John 13:23; 19:26; 21:7, 20, 24
3 ^c Luke 24:12

5 ^f John 19:40
7 ^g John 11:44
1 ^{face cloth}
8 ^h John 21:23, 24
9 ⁱ Ps. 16:10; Acts 2:25, 31; 13:34, 35
2 ^{understand}
11 ^j Mark 16:5
14 ^k Matt. 28:9; Mark 16:9 ^l [Luke 24:16, 31]; John 21:4
16 ^m John 10:3
3 ^{NU adds in Hebrew}

the tomb first. ⁵ And he, stooping down and looking in, saw ^fthe linen cloths lying *there*; yet he did not go in. ⁶ Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb; and he saw the linen cloths lying *there*, ⁷ and ^gthe ¹handkerchief that had been around His head, not lying with the linen cloths, but folded together in a place by itself. ⁸ Then the ^hother disciple, who came to the tomb first, went in also; and he saw and believed. ⁹ For as yet they did not ²know the ⁱScripture, that He must rise again from the dead. ¹⁰ Then the disciples went away again to their own homes.

Christ Appears to Mary Magdalene

¹¹ But Mary stood outside by the tomb weeping, and as she wept she stooped down and looked into the tomb. ¹² And she saw two angels in white sitting, one at the head and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. ¹³ Then they said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping?”

She said to them, “Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid Him.”

^{14k} Now when she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing *there*, and ^ldid not know that it was Jesus. ¹⁵ Jesus said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?”

She, supposing Him to be the gardener, said to Him, “Sir, if You have carried Him away, tell me where You have laid Him, and I will take Him away.”

¹⁶ Jesus said to her, ^m“Mary!”

She turned and said to ³Him, “Rabboni!” (which is to say, Teacher).

¹⁷ Jesus said to her, “Do not cling to

the Messiah. Both the lack of broken bones and the piercing of His side fulfilled prophecies recorded in the OT (see Ex. 12:46; Zech. 12:10).

19:38 Joseph, a rich member of the Jewish council (see Matt. 27:57; Mark 15:43), had not agreed with their decision (see Luke 23:50).

19:39 Nicodemus, like Joseph (v. 38), was a member of the council (3:1). At last, Nicodemus identified himself with the One who had come from above (12:42). **A hundred pounds** was a large amount. Nicodemus intended to cover Jesus’ entire body with spices—a common burial custom.

19:41 a new tomb: Matthew specifies that the tomb belonged to Joseph (see Matt. 27:60). This too was a fulfillment of a prophecy: The Messiah would be buried in a rich man’s grave (see Is. 53:9).

20:1 while it was still dark: Apparently **Mary Magdalene** arrived ahead of the other women (see Matt. 28:1; Mark 16:1; Luke 24:10). Mary Magdalene, out of whom Jesus had cast seven demons, was the last one at the Cross and the first one at the grave.

20:2 The other disciple, whom Jesus loved, was John, the author of this Gospel. **They have taken away the Lord**: Mary Magdalene jumped to the wrong conclusion. **we**: Other women were with Mary Magdalene (Matt. 28:1; Mark 16:1; Luke 24:10).

20:5 the linen cloths lying there: No one who came to steal the body would have taken the time to unwrap it and leave the cloths behind.

20:6 saw: The Greek term implies an intense stare, in contrast to the more casual look described in v. 5. Peter **went into the tomb** to get a good look. He carefully examined the place where Jesus’ body had been.

20:7 folded together: The **handkerchief** around Christ’s head had not been thrown aside, as might have been done by a thief. It had been folded and laid aside. Perhaps the implication is that Christ did not rush out of the tomb, but left His grave clothes neatly folded.

20:8 The other disciple, commonly believed to be the apostle John, **saw** the tomb and the grave clothes and **believed** that Christ had been raised from the dead.

20:9 they did not know the Scripture: The disciples believed because of what they saw in the tomb (v. 8), not because of what they knew from OT passages describing the Savior’s resurrection (see Luke 24:25–27). Jesus had prophesied His death and resurrection in the disciples’ presence, but the disciples had not understood what He was talking about. Later Jesus would instruct them about how His life and death fulfilled the Scriptures (see Luke 24:13–27, 44–47).

20:16 When Christ uttered her name, **Mary** recognized His voice. Mary addressed Christ as **Rabboni**, an Aramaic term which John translates for his Greek readers.

20:17 Cling means “to fasten oneself to” or “to hold.” Mary had grabbed Christ and was holding on to Him as if she would never turn Him loose. Christ explained to her that He could not stay because He

Me, for I have not yet ^aascended to My Father; but go to ^oMy brethren and say to them, ^p“I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and to ^qMy God and your God.”

¹⁸ Mary Magdalene came and told the ⁴disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that He had spoken these things to her.

Christ Appears to the Disciples (Thomas Absent)

Mark 16:14; Luke 24:36-43

¹⁹ Then, the same day at evening, being the first *day* of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were ⁵assembled, for ^r“fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, ^s“Peace *be* with you.” ²⁰ When He had said this, He ^vshowed them His hands and His side. ^w Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord.

²¹ So Jesus said to them again, “Peace to you! ^x As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.” ²² And when He had said this, He breathed on *them*, and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the *sins* of any, they are retained.”

²⁴ Now Thomas, ^z called the Twin, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. ²⁵ The other disciples therefore said to him, “We have seen the Lord.”

17 ^a Mark 16:19; Luke 24:5; Acts 1:9 ☆; 2:34-36; Eph. 4:8-10; Heb. 4:14
^o Ps. 22:22; Matt. 18:10; Rom. 8:29; Heb. 2:11 ^p John 16:28; 17:11 ^q Eph. 1:17
¹⁸ ^r Matt. 28:10; Luke 24:10, 23 ⁴ NU disciples, “I have seen the Lord,”
¹⁹ ^s Mark 16:14; Luke 24:36; John 14:27; 1 Cor. 15:5
^t John 9:22; 19:38
^u John 14:27; 16:33; Eph. 2:17 ⁵ NU omits assembled
²⁰ ^v Acts 1:3 ^w John 16:20, 22
²¹ ^x [Matt. 28:18-20]; John 17:18, 19; [2 Tim. 2:2]; Heb. 3:1
²² ^y Matt. 16:19; 18:18
²³ ^z John 11:16

27 ^a Ps. 22:16; Zech. 12:10; 13:6; 1 John 1:1 ^b Mark 16:14
²⁹ ^c 2 Cor. 5:7; 1 Pet. 1:8 ^d NU, M omit Thomas
³⁰ ^d John 21:25
³¹ ^e Luke 1:4 ^f John 19:35; 1 John 5:13
^g Luke 2:11; 1 John 5:1 ^h John 3:15, 16; 5:24; [1 Pet. 1:8, 9]

So he said to them, “Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe.”

Christ Appears to the Disciples (Thomas Present)

1 Cor. 15:5

²⁶ And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, “Peace to you!” ²⁷ Then He said to Thomas, “Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and ^areach your hand *here*, and put *it* into My side. Do not be ^bunbelieving, but believing.”

²⁸ And Thomas answered and said to Him, “My Lord and my God!”

²⁹ Jesus said to him, ⁶ “Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. ^c Blessed *are* those who have not seen and *yet* have believed.”

The Purpose of John's Gospel

³⁰ And ^dtruly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; ³¹ ^ebut these are written that ^fyou may believe that Jesus ^gis the Christ, the Son of God, ^h and that believing you may have life in His name.

had to ascend to His Father. **My brethren** referred to the disciples (v. 18). Jesus sent Mary to them with the first postresurrection testimony. Though it may be that Mary was formerly a woman of ill-repute, this did not keep Jesus from commissioning her to bring the gospel message to the apostles (see Mark 16:11). **My Father and your Father:** God is the Father of Christ and of believers (1:14, 18; 3:16, 18).

20:19 Jesus came and stood in the midst: Christ's appearance was miraculous, because **the doors were shut**. Jesus, as God, could perform a variety of miracles without requiring a change in His humanity. Here Christ's body was a physical body, the same body in which He died and was buried. The difference is that His flesh had been changed to take on immortality and incorruptibility (see 1 Cor. 15:53).

20:21 As indicates that the disciples were commissioned to carry on Christ's work, not to begin a new one.

20:22 Receive the Holy Spirit: The ministry to which Jesus called the disciples (v. 21; see also Matt. 28:16-20; Luke 24:47-49) required spiritual power. The reference here is to a special preparation of the apostles who were to become the foundation of the church at Pentecost. Here Jesus breathed the Spirit into the disciples. At Pentecost the Spirit unified the believers into one body and empowered them to testify of Jesus (see 1 Cor. 12:13). The reception of the Spirit here is reminiscent of the creative breath of God into Adam in Gen. 2:7. Yet the gift here was not a human spirit, but the Spirit of the living God.

20:23 If you forgive: The apostles did not take Jesus' words to mean that they had the power to forgive sins (see Acts 8:22). They knew that only God could forgive sins (see Mark 2:7). Neither the apostles nor the church had the power to forgive specific sins or to prevent forgiveness for any individual. Fundamentally Jesus was speaking of the responsibility of the church to declare the gospel to all the world, so that those who believe in Jesus can find the precious gift of forgiveness (see Matt. 16:19).

20:24, 25 Thomas was not present when Jesus appeared to the disciples in the closed room (vv. 19-23). **Unless I see in His hands:** When Jesus appeared to the other disciples, He showed them His hands and His side (v. 20). No doubt they told Thomas about it; hence his request.

20:28 My Lord and my God: In awestruck wonder, Thomas not only believed that Christ was risen from the dead, but he also saw that the Resurrection proved His deity.

20:29 Those who have not seen includes all who have believed in Christ since His ascension to the Father (see 1 Pet. 1:8, 9).

20:31 John states the purpose of his book. His purpose was to convince his readers that Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah who fulfilled God's promises to Israel. Jesus is the Son of God, God in the flesh. By believing these things, a person obtains eternal life (1:12).

life

(Gk. *zōē*) (1:4; 6:35; 11:25; 14:6; 20:31; Eph. 4:18; 1 John 5:11) Strong's #2222

This word in classical Greek was used for life in general. There are a few examples of this meaning in the NT (see Acts 17:25; James 4:14; Rev. 16:3), but in most instances the word is used to designate divine, eternal life, the life of God (Eph. 4:18). This life resided in Christ, and He has made it available to all who believe in Him. Human beings are born with the natural life, called *psuchē* in Greek, which can be translated “soul,” “personality,” or “life.” Eternal life can be received only by believing in the One who is Himself life, Jesus Christ.

Christ Appears to the Seven Disciples

21 After these things Jesus showed Himself again to the disciples at the ^aSea of Tiberias, and in this way He showed Himself: ²Simon Peter, ^bThomas called the Twin, ^cNathanael of ^dCana in Galilee, ^ethe sons of Zebedee, and two others of His disciples were together. ³Simon Peter said to them, “I am going fishing.”

They said to him, “We are going with you also.” They went out and ^fimmediately got into the boat, and that night they caught nothing. ⁴But when the morning had now come, Jesus stood on the shore; yet the disciples ^fdid not know that it was Jesus. ⁵Then ^gJesus said to them, “Children, have you any food?”

They answered Him, “No.”

⁶And He said to them, ^h“Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you will find *some*.” So they cast, and now they were not able to draw it in because of the multitude of fish.

⁷Therefore ⁱthat disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, “It is the Lord!” Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on *his* outer garment (for he had removed it), and plunged into the sea. ⁸But the other disciples came in the little boat (for they were not far from land, but about two hundred cubits), dragging the net with fish. ⁹Then, as soon as they had come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid on it, and bread. ¹⁰Jesus said to them, “Bring some of the fish which you have just caught.”

¹¹Simon Peter went up and dragged the net to land, full of large fish, one hundred and fifty-three; and although there were so many, the net was not broken. ¹²Jesus said to them, ^j“Come and eat breakfast.” Yet none of the disciples dared ask Him,

CHAPTER 21

¹ ^a Matt. 26:32; Mark 14:28; John 6:1

² ^b John 20:24

^c John 1:45–51

^d John 2:1 ^e Matt.

4:21; Mark 1:19;

Luke 5:10

³ ^f NU omits

immediately

⁴ ^f Luke 24:16; John

20:14

⁵ ^g Luke 24:41

⁶ ^h Luke 5:4, 6, 7

⁷ ⁱ John 13:23; 20:2

¹² ^j Acts 10:41

¹⁴ ^k John 20:19, 26

¹⁵ ^l Acts 20:28;

1 Tim. 4:6; 1 Pet. 5:2

² NU John ³ have

affection for

¹⁶ ^m Matt. 2:6; Acts

20:28; Heb. 13:20;

1 Pet. 2:25; 5:2, 4

ⁿ Ps. 79:13; Matt.

10:16; 15:24; 25:33;

26:31 ⁴ NU John

³ have affection for

¹⁷ ^o John 2:24, 25;

16:30 ⁶ NU John

⁷ have affection for

¹⁸ ^p John 13:36;

Acts 12:3, 4

¹⁹ ^q 2 Pet. 1:13, 14

^r [Matt. 4:19; 16:24];

John 21:22

²⁰ ^s John 13:23;

^{20:2} ^t John 13:25

“Who are You?”—knowing that it was the Lord. ¹³Jesus then came and took the bread and gave it to them, and likewise the fish.

¹⁴This *is* now ^kthe third time Jesus showed Himself to His disciples after He was raised from the dead.

Christ Speaks to Peter

¹⁵So when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon, *son* of ²Jonah, do you love Me more than these?”

He said to Him, “Yes, Lord; You know that I ³love You.”

He said to him, ^l“Feed My lambs.”

¹⁶He said to him again a second time, “Simon, *son* of ⁴Jonah, do you love Me?”

He said to Him, “Yes, Lord; You know that I ⁵love You.”

^mHe said to him, “Tend My ⁿsheep.”

¹⁷He said to him the third time, “Simon, *son* of ⁶Jonah, do you ⁷love Me?” Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, “Do you ⁷love Me?”

And he said to Him, “Lord, ^oYou know all things; You know that I ⁷love You.”

Jesus said to him, “Feed My sheep. ¹⁸Most assuredly, I say to you, when

you were younger, you girded yourself and walked where you wished; but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will gird you and carry *you* where you do not wish.”

¹⁹This He spoke, signifying ^qby what death he would glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He said to him, ^r“Follow Me.”

²⁰Then Peter, turning around, saw the disciple ^swhom Jesus loved following, ^twho also had leaned on His breast at the supper, and said, “Lord, who is the one who betrays You?” ²¹Peter, seeing him,

21:2 John, the author of this Gospel, was one of **the sons of Zebedee**. The omission of his name here is consistent with his reserve about everything connected with himself in his book.

21:4 the disciples did not know: Perhaps the apostles did not recognize Jesus because they were preoccupied with their work as Mary Magdalene had been with her sorrow (20:14). In addition, there was not much light at this time of day. **When the morning had now come** refers to daybreak.

21:5 have you any food: The question from the shore was probably regarded as a request to buy fish. The disciples answered that they had nothing to sell.

21:7 That disciple whom Jesus loved is commonly considered to be John, the author of this Gospel. **Peter . . . plunged into the sea:** John was the first to recognize the Lord; Peter was the first to act. Though Peter often made bad decisions, he had zeal that would eventually be channeled to good use (see Acts 2:14–41).

21:8 Two hundred cubits is about a hundred yards.

21:14 The phrase **the third time** applies to the disciples as a group. John himself has related three appearances before this one, the first being to Mary Magdalene (20:19–23, 26–29).

21:15 More than these means more than the other disciples (see Matt. 26:22). On two different occasions Peter had claimed extraor-

dinary love for Christ, even comparing himself to other men (see 13:37; Matt. 26:33).

21:16 Tend means to shepherd. Lambs need to be fed (v. 15); **sheep** need to be guided. Peter would need to care for diverse people in different ways, as Christ had done with His disciples.

21:17 Peter denied the Lord at least three times. Here he affirmed his love for the Lord for **the third time**.

21:18 Peter must have been bewildered by Christ's words to him. Jesus had just spoken of the future ministry of Peter; now He spoke of Peter's death. When Peter was younger, he **walked where he wished**, moving about without restriction. When Peter became older, he would **stretch out his hands**, looking for help. **Another will gird you** means that Peter would be bound as a condemned criminal. The day would come when Peter would be totally under the control of Roman executioners, who would **carry** him where he would **not wish** to go, to death (v. 19). His death is hinted at in 2 Pet. 1:13, 14. Jesus' words here confirm the early church tradition that Peter was crucified upside down.

21:20, 21 The disciple whom Jesus loved is commonly considered to be John, the author of this Gospel. **what about this man:** Peter wanted to know if John too would suffer a violent death.

The Restoration of Peter



John is the only Gospel writer who records the account of Jesus restoring Peter to His ministry after Peter’s three denials (18:17, 25–27; 21:15–19). Only a short time before this dramatic encounter with the risen Lord, Peter had boldly announced that he would give his life for Jesus. Jesus responded by informing Peter that he would actually *deny* Him three times that same night (13:37, 38).

Later that evening, Jesus was arrested. While He stood trial before the chief priest, Peter hid outside in the courtyard. Three times Peter was recognized as one of Jesus’ followers; three times he denied knowing Jesus, thus fulfilling Jesus’ words. Luke 22:62 tells us that when Peter realized what he had done, he “wept bitterly.”

Imagine, then, Peter’s emotions during his encounter with the resurrected Savior by the Sea of Tiberias. On the one hand, he was no doubt overjoyed to see the risen Lord. On the other hand, he may still have been ashamed and embarrassed about his desertion of Jesus in the hour of His greatest need.

Three times the Lord asked Peter if Peter loved Him. The first two times, Christ used the word *agapaō*, signifying a love of commitment, a love of the will. Peter responded with the word *phileō*, indicating his strong emotion for the Lord. The word suggests warmth, fondness, and friendship.

When Peter acknowledged that he loved Christ, the Lord gave him the task of feeding His lambs and taking care of His sheep. Expressing love for Christ implies accepting a duty to do the work of God and to be faithful. Peter had some difficulty with such faithfulness during Christ’s earthly ministry. As Christ was getting ready to depart, He wanted to elicit a commitment from Peter.

The third time Jesus asked Peter if he loved Him He used the word *phileō*, indicating strong friendship. Christ had taught that a friend who loves will lay down his life for a friend. Peter, instead, had denied Christ three times. With Peter’s final response, “You know that I love You,” Christ had drawn a commitment from Peter and assured the other disciples of the bond between Himself and Peter. In the process, He demonstrated His complete forgiveness of Peter. With this exchange, the Lord restored Peter to a position of leadership in the ongoing ministry of the gospel.

said to Jesus, “But Lord, what *about* this man?”

²²Jesus said to him, “If I ⁸will that he remain ^utill I come, what *is that* to you? You follow Me.”

²³Then this saying went out among the brethren that this disciple would not die. Yet Jesus did not say to him that he would not die, but, “If I will that he remain till I come, what *is that* to you?”

²² ^u [Matt. 16:27, 28; 25:31; 1 Cor. 4:5; 11:26; Rev. 2:25; 3:11; 22:7, 20]
⁸ *desire*

²⁴ ^v John 19:35;
³ John 12
²⁵ ^w John 20:30
^x Amos 7:10

The Conclusion of John’s Gospel

²⁴This is the disciple who ^vtestifies of these things, and wrote these things; and we know that his testimony is true.


²⁵^wAnd there are also many other things that Jesus did, which if they were written one by one, ^xI suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that would be written. Amen.

21:22, 23 You follow Me: The Lord told Peter that he should be concerned with following God’s will himself and not worrying about God’s will for others. **this disciple would not die:** The rumor was that Jesus would return before John died.

21:24 This is the disciple: The disciple was the one whom Jesus loved (v. 20). This is basically John’s signature to his Gospel.
21:25 there are also many other things that Jesus did: The Gospel of John is truthful (v. 24), but it is not exhaustive.

THE ACTS

OF THE APOSTLES



THE INFECTIOUS NEWS first appeared in Jerusalem, then spread quickly from person to person and from city to city. It faced opposition everywhere it went. But the world was ill-equipped to fight it. Empowered by the Holy Spirit, the followers of Christ relayed the Good News about Jesus everywhere. In less than 35 years, the gospel had reached cities from Jerusalem to Rome.

Luke wrote the Book of Acts to show the fulfillment of Jesus' words, "I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it" (see Matt. 16:18). Before Jesus ascended to heaven, He commanded His followers to make disciples of all nations (see Luke 24:46–49). Luke begins Acts with a reiteration of that commission and a description of how it would be carried out (1:8). This commission not only ties the Book of Acts to the Gospel of Luke, but it also provides an outline for the book: the witness in Jerusalem and Judea (1:1—6:7); the witness in Judea and Samaria (6:8—9:31); and the witness to the ends of the earth (9:32—28:31).

The Book of Acts begins in Jerusalem with the disciples huddled in a room on the Day of Pentecost. Then the Holy Spirit came upon them and authorized them to be His witnesses. The rest of Acts describes the ripple effect of that great event. Jesus' followers first witnessed to the Jews in Jerusalem, with Peter at the center of the movement. Then persecution broke out (7:60), scattering believers into Samaria and the rest of the known world. Saul of Tarsus, once a leader of the persecution, became a leader of the persecuted. In chapter 11, the focus of the Book of Acts moves from Peter's ministry to the Jews to Saul's ministry to the Gentiles. Under his more familiar name Paul, this converted persecutor established churches in Asia Minor and Europe. The Book of Acts records three of Paul's missionary journeys, as well as his voyage to Rome to face his trial. The book ends abruptly with Paul under house arrest in Rome. The ending is fitting, because the entire Book of Acts is itself just a prologue. Jesus has not finished His work on earth. The narrative begun by Luke in this book will not end until Jesus Christ returns in glory (see 1:11; 1 Cor. 15:28).

Author The Book of Acts begins with a reference to the author's "former account" written to a man named Theophilus (1:1), a clear reference to the Gospel of Luke (see Luke 1:3). Even though the author does not mention himself by name in either the Gospel or Acts, early tradition identifies Luke as the author of both volumes. As early as the second century, ancient authors, such as Irenaeus (c. A.D. 180) indicate this.

Called “the beloved physician” by Paul (see Col. 4:14), Luke was a doctor Paul met in Troas (see 16:8–11). He cared for Paul during the illnesses he suffered on his missionary endeavors. Paul’s references to Luke in 2 Timothy 4:11 and Philemon 24 portray Luke as Paul’s faithful traveling companion. After the two met in Troas, Luke included himself with the missionary team recorded in Acts (see 16:10, the beginning of the so-called “we” sections in the book). Luke’s faithful friendship to Paul continued until Paul’s death in Rome, for Luke was one of the few people who did not desert him (see 2 Tim. 4:11).

Date The Book of Acts does not record Paul’s death. Instead it ends abruptly during Paul’s residence in Rome (see 28:30). Paul’s house arrest in Rome occurred around A.D. 61, marking the earliest possible date for the book’s completion. Acts makes no reference to the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 or to Nero’s persecution of Christians following the fire of Rome in A.D. 64. Surely Luke would have mentioned these significant events if they had occurred when he wrote. Moreover, the many references to Paul’s vindication before Roman officials would not make sense if Nero had already started his vehement persecution of Christians. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that Acts was written between A.D. 61 and 64.

Purpose The Book of Acts provides a condensed history of the early church, an eyewitness account of the miraculous spread of the gospel from Jerusalem to Rome. The book details how the Holy Spirit authorized our spiritual forebears to carry out Jesus’ mandate to be His witnesses throughout the world. The accounts in Acts include stirring examples for us to follow, but the recurring theme of the Book of Acts is that our spiritual ancestors were empowered by the Holy Spirit. That same power is available to us. God has not left us at the mercy of our own weaknesses; He has sent the Holy Spirit to help us follow their example (see Eph. 5:17, 18), and to be Jesus’ witnesses in all of the earth.

Theology The Book of Acts is a historical narrative, but at the same time it has profound theological significance. A believer’s faith rests upon the facts of history: the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. These historical events were recorded by Luke in his Gospel in order to evoke belief. If the historical fact of Christ’s resurrection is not true, then a believer’s faith has no foundation. As Paul states, “If Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins” (1 Cor. 15:17). The Book of Acts reassures believers that their faith in Christ rests on fact. The extraordinary growth of the early church was based directly on the resurrected Christ. His command and empowerment of the disciples through the Holy Spirit is the only reasonable explanation for the incredible and rapid spread of the gospel in the first century. The early Christians were not testifying about a dead Christ, but a living Christ whom they had seen with their own eyes (1:1–5; Luke 24:36–53; 2 Pet. 1:16). The same is true for us today. Jesus lives and continues to work through the church.

CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

Although Jesus ascends into heaven in chapter 1, He figures significantly in the rest of the Book of Acts. The resurrected Christ is the central theme of the sermons, defenses, and the life of the church through the entire book.

Luke intended Acts to be an apologetic that logically attests to Jesus’ divinity. And he accomplished his purpose. Notice his references to the eyewitness accounts of Jesus’ resurrection, the firsthand testimonies of Jesus’ followers (including a converted critic of Christianity by the name of Saul), and the evidence of the Holy Spirit’s supernatural power. No wonder Luke quotes Peter as saying, “To Him all the prophets witness that, through His name, whoever believes in Him will receive remission of sins” (10:43). “Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved” (4:12).

A.D. 14–37
Tiberius Caesar is Roman emperor

C. A.D. 30–35
Pentecost; the early church in Jerusalem

C. A.D. 35–47
The church grows in Judea and Samaria

A.D. 37–41
Caligula is Roman emperor

A.D. 37–44
Herod Agrippa I rules in Judea

A.D. 41–54
Claudius is Roman emperor

C. A.D. 44
James the son of Zebedee is martyred

C. A.D. 47–49
Paul’s first missionary journey

C. A.D. 50–53
Paul’s second missionary journey

A.D. 52–60
Felix is procurator of Judea

C. A.D. 53–57
Paul’s third missionary journey

ACTS OUTLINE

- I. The apostles' witness in Jerusalem 1:1—6:7
 - A. The acts of the Holy Spirit 1:1–26
 - B. The birth of the church 2:1–47
 - C. The healing of a lame man 3:1–26
 - D. Salvation in no one else 4:1–37
 - E. The arrest of Peter and John 5:1–42
 - F. Leadership for the infant church 6:1–7
- II. The early church's witness to all Judea and Samaria 6:8—9:31
 - A. Stephen's defense and martyrdom 6:8—7:60
 - B. The church scattered 8:1–40
 - C. Saul's conversion 9:1–31
- III. The witness to the end of the earth 9:32—28:31
 - A. Extension of truth to Gentiles 9:32—11:30
 - B. Peter's miraculous escape from prison 12:1–25
 - C. Paul's first missionary trip 13:1—14:28
 - D. The Jerusalem conference concerning Gentiles in the church 15:1–35
 - E. Paul's second missionary trip 15:36—18:22
 - F. Paul's third missionary trip 18:23—21:26
 - G. Paul's trip to Rome 21:27—28:31

A.D. 54–68
Nero is Roman emperor

A.D. 60–62
Festus is procurator of Judea

C. A.D. 60–62
Paul is imprisoned in Rome



Harbor of Attalia near Perga, where Paul stopped on his first missionary journey

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Prologue

The former account I made, ^o **Theophilus**, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, ^{2b} until the day in which ¹ He was taken up, after He through the Holy Spirit ^c had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen, ^{3d} to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many ² infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.

The Holy Spirit Promised

^{4e} And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, “which,” *He said*, “you have ^f heard from Me; ^{5g} for John truly baptized with water, ^h but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.” ⁶ Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, “Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” ⁷ And He said to them, ⁱ “It is not for you to ^j know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority. ^{8k} But you shall receive power ^l when the Holy Spirit has come

CHAPTER 1

¹ ^a Luke 1:3
² ^b Mark 16:19;
Acts 1:9, 11, 22
^c Matt. 28:19; Mark
16:15; John 20:21;
Acts 10:42 ¹ He
ascended into
heaven.
³ ^d Matt. 28:17;
Mark 16:12, 14;
Luke 24:34, 36;
John 20:19, 26; 21:1,
14; 1 Cor. 15:5-7
² ^{unmistakable}
⁴ ^e Luke 24:49
^f [John 14:16, 17, 26;
15:26]; Acts 2:33
⁵ ^g Matt. 3:11; Mark
1:8; Luke 3:16; John
1:33; Acts 11:16
^h [Joel 2:28]
⁷ ¹ 1 Thess. 5:1
ⁱ Matt. 24:36; Mark
13:32
⁸ ^k [Acts 2:1, 4]
^l Luke 24:49 ^m Luke
24:48; John 15:27
ⁿ Acts 8:1, 5, 14
^o Matt. 28:19; Mark
16:15; Rom. 10:18;
Col. 1:23; [Rev. 14:6]
³ ^{NU My witnesses}
⁹ ^p Luke 24:50, 51
^q Ps. 68:18; 110:1;
Mark 16:19; Luke
23:43; John 20:17;
Acts 1:2; [Heb. 4:14;
9:24; 1 Pet. 3:22]

BIBLE TIMES & CULTURE NOTES



Sabbath Day's Journey

“A Sabbath day’s journey” (1:12) referred to the distance a Jew could travel on the Sabbath without breaking the law. This distance was usually reckoned to be about “two thousand cubits” (about a thousand yards) because of the distance between the ark of the covenant and the rest of the Israelite camp in the wilderness (Josh. 3:4). The idea was that every person within the camp or city would be close enough to the center of worship to take part in the services without having to travel such a great distance that the Sabbath became a harried and busy day. This law, although noble in intent, was soon abused by a strict legalism. In the NT, Jesus often clashed with the Pharisees because of their blind legalism over observance of the Sabbath (Matt. 12:1–9).

upon you; and ^m you shall be ³ witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and ⁿ Samaria, and to the ^o end of the earth.”

Jesus Ascends to Heaven

^{9p} Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, ^q He was

1:1 Luke addressed his Gospel to the “most excellent **Theophilus**” (see Luke 1:3), using a title that indicates Theophilus was a person of high rank. The formal title is dropped here.

1:2, 3 Taken up refers to Christ’s ascension, the end of His earthly ministry. These verses look back to Luke 24:51 and ahead to vv. 9, 22. **the apostles . . . to whom He also presented Himself alive:** The resurrected Jesus presented Himself “not to all the people, but to witnesses chosen before by God” (10:41). In the **forty days** between Jesus’ resurrection and ascension, there are recorded some 10 or 11 appearances of Jesus to believers confirming His resurrection from the dead. On the last of these appearances, Jesus gathered His apostles together and commanded them not to leave Jerusalem (v. 4). **Many infallible proofs** serve as the basis for the believer’s confidence in the resurrection of our Lord. The Greek word translated *infallible proofs* speaks of “convincing, decisive proof.” Christian belief is not built on speculation or myth but on the sovereign acts and words of God incarnate in the time-space universe. **The kingdom of God** was the central topic of discussion between Christ and His apostles during the 40 days between Jesus’ resurrection and ascension. The goal of history is not the Cross, but the crown—the time when King Jesus reveals Himself in all His majesty and reigns in glory (see Is. 11; Dan. 7:13, 14; 1 Cor. 15:24–28; Rev. 20:4–6).

1:4 As predicted by John the Baptist (see Matt. 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33) and reiterated by Jesus Himself, **the Promise of the Father** was the promise of baptism in the Holy Spirit. There are seven references in Scripture to baptism in the Spirit. Five are prophetic (see v. 5; Matt. 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33); one is historical (11:15, 16), referring to the Day of Pentecost; and one is doctrinal (see 1 Cor. 12:13), explaining the meaning of baptism in the Spirit.

1:5 shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit: The passive tense of the verb indicates that baptism does not depend upon our efforts to obtain the promise, but upon the Lord’s will. The simple future tense demonstrates that there is no uncertainty or doubt in the promise. The Greek word for *baptized* means “to immerse” or “to dip.” It also connotes being identified with someone or something. Spirit baptism means we have been placed in spiritual union with one

another in the body of Jesus Christ, the church (see 1 Cor. 12:12, 13).

1:6 Therefore: Christ’s statement that the Spirit was about to be given evidently triggered concern among the disciples about the establishment of the kingdom. Connecting the coming of the Spirit and the coming of the kingdom was consistent with OT thought (see 3:21; Is. 32:15–20; 44:3–5; Ezek. 39:28, 29; Joel 2:28–3:1; Zech. 12:8–10). **At this time** expresses the anxiety of the apostles as they anticipated the kingdom rule that Christ had spoken of in the preceding days and weeks (v. 3). The popular expectation and hope was that Christ would establish His kingdom immediately.

1:7 It is not for you to know: Jesus did not correct His disciples’ views concerning the restoration of the kingdom to Israel (v. 6). Instead He corrected their views concerning the timing of the event. This was the same erroneous thinking that He had sought to correct with His parable in Luke 19:11–27, the parable of the minas. **times or seasons:** These words speak to the issue of timing differently. *Times* refers to chronology or the duration of time—“how long.” *Seasons* refers to the epochs or “events” that occur within time. The disciples were not to know how long it would be before Christ set up His kingdom, nor were they to know what events would transpire before the establishment of it. Peter points out that even the OT prophets did not know the timing between the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow (1 Pet. 1:11).

1:8 Instead of being concerned about the date of Christ’s return, the disciples’ job was to carry His message throughout the world. **you shall receive power:** This does not refer to personal power for godly living, as demonstrated in the lives of OT saints (see Abraham in Gen. 22; Joseph in Gen. 39; Moses in Ex. 14; Daniel in Dan. 6). This was power for a new task—namely, to take the gospel to the ends of the earth. **Be witnesses** is Christ’s command to His disciples to tell others about Him regardless of the consequences. Church tradition tells us that all but one of the 11 apostles who heard this promise became martyrs. (John died in exile.) God empowered His disciples to be faithful witnesses even when they faced the most vehement opposition.

1:9–11 Jesus promised that He would not leave nor forsake us, but would be with us always, even to the end of the age (see Matt. 28:20;

taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. ¹⁰ And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them ^r in white apparel, ¹¹ who also said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This *same* Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, ^s will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven.”

The Upper Room Prayer Meeting

¹² Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day’s journey. ¹³ And when they had entered, they went up ^u into the upper room where they were staying: ^v Peter, James, John, and Andrew; Philip and Thomas; Bartholomew and Matthew; James *the son of Alphaeus* and ^w Simon the Zealot; and ^x Judas *the son of James*. ¹⁴ ^y These all continued with one ^z accord in prayer ⁵ and supplication, with ² the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with ^a His brothers.

Matthias Chosen

¹⁵ And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the ⁶ disciples (altogether the number ^b of names was about a hundred

¹⁰ ^r Matt. 28:3; Mark 16:5; Luke 24:4; John 20:12; Acts 10:3, 30
¹¹ ^s Dan. 7:13; Mark 13:26; Luke 21:27; [John 14:3]; 2 Thess. 1:10; Rev. 1:7
¹² ^t Luke 24:52
¹³ ^u Mark 14:15; Luke 22:12; Acts 9:37, 39; 20:8
^v Matt. 10:2-4
^w Luke 6:15 ^x Jude 1
¹⁴ ^y Acts 2:1, 46 ^z Luke 23:49, 55 ^a Matt. 13:55
⁵ ^{purpose or mind} NU omits and
^{supplication} 15 ^b Luke 22:32; Rev. 3:4 ⁶ NU
^{brethren} 16 ^c Ps. 41:9 [★]
^d Matt. 26:47; Mark 14:43; Luke 22:47; John 18:3
¹⁷ ^e Matt. 10:4
^f Acts 1:25
¹⁸ ^g Matt. 27:3-10
^h Matt. 18:7; 26:14, 15, 24; Mark 14:21; Luke 22:22; John 17:12 ⁷ ^{reward of unrighteousness}
⁸ ^{intestines} 20 ⁱ Ps. 69:25 / Ps. 109:8 [★]

and twenty), and said, ¹⁶ “Men *and* brethren, this Scripture had to be fulfilled, ^c which the Holy Spirit spoke before by the mouth of David concerning Judas, ^d who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus; ¹⁷ for ^e he was numbered with us and obtained a part in ^f this ministry.”

¹⁸ ^g (Now this man purchased a field with ^h the ⁷ wages of iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst open in the middle and all his ⁸ entrails gushed out. ¹⁹ And it became known to all those dwelling in Jerusalem; so that field is called in their own language, Akel Dama, that is, Field of Blood.)

²⁰ “For it is written in the Book of Psalms:

*ⁱ ‘Let his dwelling place be ⁹ desolate,
And let no one live in it’;*

and,

^j ‘Let another take his ¹ office.’

²¹ “Therefore, of these men who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord

⁹ ^{deserted} ¹ Gr. *episkopen*, position of overseer

John 14:18). He fulfilled this promise in the form of the Holy Spirit, who dwells within believers (see John 16:4–7). **taken up . . . cloud received Him . . . He went up:** These three statements portray the gradual, majestic departure of Jesus from the earth. **will so come:** The Second Coming of Christ and the establishment of His kingdom (vv. 6, 7) will occur the same way Jesus ascended: physically, visibly, and in the clouds.

1:12 A Sabbath day’s journey was the distance permitted by Jewish custom for travel on a Sabbath day (see Ex. 16:29; Num. 35:5; Josh. 3:4), about a half mile. Anyone who traveled farther than this would be regarded as breaking the fourth commandment.

1:13 The upper room could have been the room where Jesus spent the last Passover with His disciples, or the room in which He appeared to them after His resurrection (recorded in Luke 24). It is possible that the same room was the site of both events. This room may have belonged to Mary, the mother of John Mark. Her house is mentioned in 12:12 as a meeting place of disciples. Jesus’ followers **were staying** in this upper room, waiting in Jerusalem as the Lord had directed, until they received the power Jesus had promised (v. 5).

1:14 with one accord: This phrase, which is found 11 times in the Book of Acts, is made up of two words that mean “same” and “mind.” The phrase speaks of people sharing the same mind or thinking like-mindedly. It does not refer to people who all think and feel the same way about everything, but to people who set aside personal feelings and commit themselves to one task—in this case witnessing to others about the Lord Jesus Christ (see Rom. 15:5, 6). Jesus said the world would know that He was sent from the heavenly Father when people saw the love between believers (see John 17:21): The unity among the believers described in Acts was a demonstration of this love. **Mary the mother of Jesus** receives special recognition in the group. While on the Cross, Jesus had requested that John care for His mother (see John 19:25–27).

1:15, 16 From the earliest days of the apostles’ calling, **Peter** assumed a position of leadership. Though he often made mistakes, he was never bashful about dealing with problems. It was inevitable that the matter of Judas Iscariot be dealt with. In the upper room a **hundred and twenty** people gathered. No doubt the majority of

them were among those who saw the risen Christ (see 1 Cor. 15:6). Though Christ spent most of His time with the Twelve, there were many other disciples who traveled with Jesus (see John 6:66). **Holy Spirit spoke . . . mouth of David:** Peter equated the speech of David with the voice of the Holy Spirit. This is an example of the biblical doctrine of inspiration, which asserts that the words of Scripture are equally the words of God and the words of men, with no error (see 2 Tim. 3:16; 1 Pet. 1:11; 2 Pet. 1:20, 21).

1:18, 19 purchased a field: The field that was obtained with the money Judas received for betraying Jesus was actually purchased by the priests after Judas hanged himself (see Matt. 27:6–8). Since the money legally belonged to Judas, the priests purchased the field in his name. **burst open . . . entrails gushed out:** Apparently the noose Judas used to hang himself broke and his body fell, rupturing in the middle. This is why the place was called the **Field of Blood**. **1:20–22** Peter applied **Psalm**s 69 and 109 to the apostles’ situation. Psalm 69:25 speaks of the removal of the psalmist’s enemy. Psalm 109:8 mentions the replacement of an enemy by someone else. Peter, enlightened by the teaching of Jesus (see 1:3; Luke 24:44–46), regarded these scriptural references as ultimately speaking of Judas the traitor. It was the defection of Judas, not his death, that caused Peter to ask the disciples to choose another to replace him. When James was later killed (12:2), no replacement was chosen for him.

together

(Gk. *epi to auto*) (1:15; 2:1, 44; 1 Cor. 11:20; 14:23) Strong’s #1909; 847

This Greek idiom means “toward the same thing” or “in the same place”; it conveys the idea of united purpose or collective unity. In the early church it acquired a special meaning, indicating the union of the Christian body. All the members of the church not only gathered together regularly, they shared all things in common and were committed to each other and Christ with united fervor.

Jesus went in and out among us, ²²beginning from the baptism of John to that day when ^kHe was taken up from us, one of these must ^lbecome a witness with us of His resurrection.”

²³And they proposed two: Joseph called ^mBarsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias. ²⁴And they prayed and said, “You, O Lord, ⁿwho know the hearts of all, show which of these two You have chosen ²⁵^o to take part in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place.” ²⁶And they cast their lots, and the lot fell on Matthias. And he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

Coming of the Holy Spirit

2 When ^athe Day of Pentecost had fully come, ^bthey were all ¹with one accord in one place. ²And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and ^cit filled the whole house where they were sitting. ³Then there appeared to them ²divided tongues, as of fire, and *one* sat upon each of them. ⁴And ^dthey were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began ^eto speak with

22 ^k Acts 1:9 ^l Acts 1:8; 2:32
23 ^m Acts 15:22
24 ⁿ 1 Sam. 16:7; Jer. 17:10; Acts 1:2
25 ^o Acts 1:17

CHAPTER 2

1 ^a Lev. 23:15; Deut. 16:9; Acts 20:16;
1 Cor. 16:8 ^b Acts 1:14 ¹ NU together
2 ^c Acts 4:31
3 ² Or tongues as of fire, distributed and resting on each
4 ^d Matt. 3:11; 5:6; 10:20; Luke 3:16; John 14:16; 16:7-15; Acts 1:5 ^e Mark 16:17; Acts 10:46; 19:6; [1 Cor. 12:10, 28, 30; 13:1]

5 ^f Luke 2:25; Acts 8:2
6 ^g Acts 4:32
7 ^h Matt. 26:73; Acts 1:11
8 ³ dialect
9 ¹ 1 Pet. 1:1
11 ⁴ Arabians

other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

The Crowd's Response

⁵And there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, ^fdevout men, from every nation under heaven. ⁶And when this sound occurred, the ^gmultitude came together, and were confused, because everyone heard them speak in his own language. ⁷Then they were all amazed and marveled, saying to one another, “Look, are not all these who speak ^hGalileans? ⁸And how is *it that* we hear, each in our own ³language in which we were born? ⁹Parthians and Medes and Elamites, those dwelling in Mesopotamia, Judea and ⁱCappadocia, Pontus and Asia, ¹⁰Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya adjoining Cyrene, visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, ¹¹Cretans and ⁴Arabs—we hear them speaking in our own tongues the wonderful works of God.” ¹²So they were all amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, “Whatever could this mean?”

¹³Others mocking said, “They are full of new wine.”

Peter specified two qualifications for the appointed apostle. First, he had to have accompanied the disciples from the beginning of Jesus' ministry, His **baptism**. The replacement had to be someone who had seen what the apostles had seen and heard what they had heard, an eyewitness to the miracles and teachings of Jesus. Second, he had to be an eyewitness of Jesus' **resurrection**.

1:24–26 cast their lots: It was customary for the Jews to determine the will of God on certain questions by this method. The names of Matthias and Justus, probably written on stones, were put in a jar that was shaken until one of the names fell out. The name that fell out of the vessel would be the one that God had chosen to take the place of Judas. The fall of the lot was determined not by chance but by God's sovereignty.

2:1 Pentecost was one of the three major Jewish festivals; the other two are the Passover and the Feast of Tabernacles. From the Greek word for “fifty,” Pentecost was so named because it fell on the fiftieth day after the Sabbath of the Passover. Pentecost was also known as “the Feast of Weeks,” “the Firstfruits of the Wheat Harvest,” and “the Day of Firstfruits.” During this harvest celebration, the Jews brought to God the firstfruits of their harvest in thanksgiving, expecting that God would give the rest of the harvest as His blessing. This particular Day of Pentecost was the day of firstfruits of Christ's church, the beginning of the great harvest of souls who would come to know Christ and be joined together through the work of the Holy Spirit. **they were all . . . in one place:** The place may have been part of the temple. It is difficult to imagine how the large crowd mentioned in v. 5 could have observed the activities in the upper room or congregated in the narrow streets outside the house where the disciples were meeting.

2:2 A sound like a rushing mighty wind was needed to attract the multitudes to the small gathering of apostles who were **sitting**, the normal position for listening to someone speak, rather than standing for prayer.

2:3 there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire: After the great crowd-gathering sound of v. 2 came the visual manifestation of God. Fire often indicated the presence of God. God initially appeared to Moses in a burning bush that was not consumed (see Ex. 3). God guided the children of Israel with a pillar of fire by night

(see Ex. 13:21, 22), and He descended before them in fire on Mt. Sinai (see Ex. 19:18). God sent fire to consume Elijah's offering on Mt. Carmel (see 1 Kin. 18:38, 39), and He used a vision of fire to warn Ezekiel of His coming judgment (see Ezek. 1:26, 27).

2:4 The word translated **tongues** here is the normal Greek word for known languages. Speaking in “tongues” or diverse languages underscored the universal outreach of the church. These witnesses were speaking foreign dialects to the people who had gathered for Pentecost from other nations. The Day of Pentecost, as one of the three major Jewish celebrations, was a pilgrimage event. People who lived outside Israel traveled to Jerusalem to celebrate the festival. They came from Arabia, Crete, Asia, and even as far away as Rome. Many of these people stayed in Jerusalem for the entire 50-day celebration. **Spirit gave them utterance:** Note that the text does not say that the Spirit spoke through the apostles, but that the Spirit gave them the ability to speak in languages that they had not previously known.

2:5–11 men, from every nation under heaven: People from all over the known world were in Jerusalem. Most of them probably knew Greek, but they also spoke the various languages of the Mediterranean world. **everyone heard them speak in his own language:** The visitors to Jerusalem probably expected the apostles to use Aramaic or Greek, but instead they heard their own dialect. The visitors were astonished because they knew this was most unlikely unless the speakers had come from their land. This was a sign from heaven, a supernatural event. **the wonderful works of God:** It appears that the “speaking in tongues” did not consist of proclaiming the gospel. Rather, the apostles were praising God's mighty works (see 10:46; 1 Cor. 14:16).

2:12, 13 A contrast is made between two groups of people, the Hellenists and the Hebraists (6:1). Both groups heard the apostles speaking in tongues. Verse 12 speaks of the reaction of the Hellenists, who were from various parts of the world: they understood the dialects in which the apostles spoke and consequently viewed the event as miraculous. On the other hand, those mentioned in v. 13 were Judeans and did not understand the foreign languages the apostles were speaking. They concluded the apostles were drunk and speaking gibberish.

Countries of People Mentioned at Pentecost



Peter's Sermon

¹⁴But Peter, standing up with the eleven, raised his voice and said to them, “Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and heed my words. ¹⁵For these are not drunk, as you suppose, ^jsince it is *only* ⁵the third hour of the day. ¹⁶But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

¹⁷ ‘And^k it shall come to pass in the last days, says God,

^l That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh;

Your sons and ^myour daughters shall prophesy,

Your young men shall see visions,
 Your old men shall dream dreams.

¹⁸ And on My menservants and on My maidservants

I will pour out My Spirit in those days;

ⁿ And they shall prophesy.

¹⁵ / 1 Thess. 5:7

⁵ 9 **A.M.**

¹⁷ ^k Is. 44:3; Ezek. 11:19; Joel 2:28–32; [Zech. 12:10; John 7:38] ^l Acts 10:45

^m Acts 21:9

¹⁸ ⁿ Acts 21:4, 9;

1 Cor. 12:10

¹⁹ ^o Joel 2:30

²⁰ ^p Is. 13:10; Ezek.

32:7; Matt. 24:29;

Mark 13:24, 25;

Luke 21:25; Rev.

6:12

²¹ ^q Rom. 10:13

²² ^r Is. 50:5 ★; John

3:2; 5:6; Acts 10:38

²³ ^s Matt. 26:4;

Luke 22:22; Acts

3:18; 4:28; [1 Pet.

1:20] ^t Acts 5:30

⁶ NU omits have

taken

²⁴ ^u [Rom. 8:11;

1 Cor. 6:14; 2 Cor.

4:14; Eph. 1:20;

Col. 2:12]; 1 Thess.

1:10; Heb. 13:20

⁷ destroyed or

abolished

¹⁹ ^o I will show wonders in heaven above

And signs in the earth beneath:
 Blood and fire and vapor of smoke.

²⁰ ^p The sun shall be turned into darkness,

And the moon into blood,
 Before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD.

²¹ And it shall come to pass
 That ^q whoever calls on the name of the LORD
 Shall be saved.’

²² “Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you ^rby miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know— ²³Him, ^sbeing delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, ^tyou ⁶have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death; ²⁴^u whom God raised up, having ⁷loosed

2:14 Peter, the first disciple to recognize the truth about Jesus (see Matt. 16:13–19), was also the first to bear witness of Him. Peter preached his sermon to **men of Judea** who had judged the whole episode as being the effect of too much wine (vv. 13, 15).

2:16–21 Peter began his sermon by quoting Joel 2:28–32 from the Greek translation of the OT. In that passage, God had promised that there would be a time when all those who followed Him would receive His **Spirit**, and not just prophets, kings, and priests. Peter pointed out that that time had **come to pass**. God would speak to and through all those who would come to Him, whether in **visions**,

dreams, or prophecy. This was the beginning of the last days. God’s final act of salvation began with the pouring out of His Spirit. This final act of deliverance will continue to the end of this age.

2:23 **being delivered by the determined purpose**: Jesus Christ was God’s provision for the judgment of sin; yet it was our sinfulness that made His death necessary. In other words, it was both the sinfulness of humanity and God’s plan to save humanity that put Jesus to death on the Cross (see Is. 53:10). God exercises sovereign control over all events—even the death of His Son. Yet at the same time, people are still responsible for their own sinful actions.

the ⁸pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it. ²⁵For David says concerning Him:

*^v“I foresaw the LORD always before my face,
For He is at my right hand, that I may not be shaken.
²⁶ Therefore my heart rejoiced, and my tongue was glad;
Moreover my flesh also will rest in hope.
²⁷ For you will not leave my soul in Hades,
Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see ^wcorruption.
²⁸ You have made known to me the ways of life;
You will make me full of joy in Your presence.”*

²⁹“Men and brethren, let me speak freely to you ^xof the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. ³⁰Therefore, being a prophet, ^yand knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his body, ⁹according to the flesh, He would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne, ³¹he, foreseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, ^zthat His soul was not left

²⁴ ⁸ Lit. birth pangs
²⁵ ^v Ps. 16:8-11 ★
²⁷ ^w Acts 13:30-37
²⁹ ^x Acts 13:36
³⁰ ^y 2 Sam. 7:12; Ps. 132:11 ★; Luke 1:32; Rom. 1:3; 2 Tim. 2:8
⁹ NU He would seat one on his throne,
³¹ ^z Ps. 16:10; Is. 50:8; 53:10

³² ^a Acts 2:24
^b Acts 1:8; 3:15
³³ ^c Ps. 68:18 ★;
[Acts 5:31]; Phil. 2:9 ^d Ps. 110:1; Mark 16:19; [Heb. 10:12] ^e Luke 24:49; [John 14:26] ^f Matt. 3:11; 5:6; Luke 3:16; 22:69; John 14:16; 16:7-15; Acts 2:1-11, 17; 10:45; Eph. 4:8
¹ Possibly by
³⁴ ^g Ps. 68:18; 110:1 ★; Matt. 22:44; Luke 23:43; John 20:17; 1 Cor. 15:25; Eph. 1:20; Heb. 1:13
³⁷ ^h [Zech. 12:10]; Luke 3:10, 12, 14; John 16:8 ★
³⁸ ⁱ Luke 24:47
² forgiveness
³⁹ ^j Joel 2:28, 32
^k Acts 11:15, 18; Eph. 2:13

in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption. ³²^a This Jesus God has raised up, ^bof which we are all witnesses. ³³ Therefore ^cbeing exalted ¹to ^dthe right hand of God, and ^ehaving received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He ^fpoured out this which you now see and hear.

³⁴“For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he says himself:

*^g“The LORD said to my Lord,
“Sit at My right hand,
³⁵ Till I make Your enemies Your footstool.””*

³⁶“Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.”

³⁷Now when they heard *this*, ^hthey were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Men and brethren, what shall we do?”

³⁸Then Peter said to them, ⁱ“Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the ²remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹For the promise is to you and ^jto your children, and ^kto all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.”

2:25-36 Joel prophesied that the Spirit would come; Jesus fulfilled that promise when He sent the Spirit (see John 14:16). If Jesus was dead, He could not have sent the Spirit. Therefore, He must be alive. Furthermore, Jesus could not have sent the Spirit unless He had ascended as Lord to heaven. Therefore, Jesus is both our Master and our Savior. **let me speak freely:** Peter knew (v. 29) that no one could dispute the point he was about to make from Ps. 16:8-11, in which the Messiah is described as not decaying. Because David had been buried and had not come back to life, the psalm had to be speaking about someone else, David's heir. Peter pointed out that this heir is Jesus, who was put to death and resurrected. Not only had Jesus been raised from the dead, He is now at the right hand of God. As further proof of this Peter quoted David again. According to Ps. 110:1, the Messiah would sit at the right hand of God. David had not ascended to the heavens. But the apostles declared themselves to be witnesses of the very ascension spoken of in this psalm, the ascension of Jesus. Based on these points, Peter's conclusion is clear: Jesus, the One who had been crucified, is **both Lord and Christ**.

2:37 Peter's argument was irrefutable. **Cut to the heart**, the Judeans asked what they should do. This was the point of new birth. The Spirit of God brought conviction to their hearts, the springboard of action.

2:38 Repent: Repentance for the Judeans involved rejecting their former attitudes and opinions concerning who Jesus was. **be baptized:** When a person recognizes who Jesus Christ really is, the result is the desire to do what He commands. The first action that Jesus requires of a new believer is baptism (see Matt. 28:19, 20), the outward expression of inward faith. The idea of an unbaptized Christian is foreign to the NT (v. 41; 8:12, 36; 9:18; 10:48; 16:15, 33; 18:8). **for the remission of sins:** Is Peter saying that we must be baptized to receive forgiveness of our sins? Scripture clearly teaches that we are justified by faith alone, not by works (see Rom. 4:1-8; Eph. 2:8, 9). The critical word in this phrase is the word *for*, which may also be translated “with a view to.” A comparison of Peter's message in 10:34-43 makes it clear that “remission of sins” comes to “whoever believes.” Believers are baptized in view of God's work of forgiveness, not in order to receive that forgiveness. God's forgiveness in Christ gives baptism its significance. Baptism is a public declaration that a person's sins have been forgiven because of the finished work of Christ on the Cross. **The gift of the Holy Spirit** was the promise of Jesus in John 14:16, 17. The Holy Spirit puts us in communion with the Father and the Son. This indwelling of the Spirit is a beautiful promise of the New Covenant (see Jer. 31:33, 34), an indication not only that our sins are forgiven, but also that the Lord has placed His law within us.

2:39 Peter exhorted his listeners to repent. In other words, each person had to make the decision to turn away from his or her sinful habits and turn to God in faith (16:31, 33, 34). Then God would forgive that person's sins and declare them righteous because of Jesus' work on the Cross. **to you and to your children:** In first-century Israel, a father held tremendous influence in his home. When a father chose to receive Christ and be baptized, his children would follow his lead.

foreknowledge

(Gk. *prognōsis*) (2:23; 1 Pet. 1:2) Strong's #4268

The Greek term indicates “knowledge beforehand,” either of things that are seen or things that are intended or arranged. These meanings are illustrated in Acts 26:5; Rom. 11:2; 1 Pet. 1:2, 20; 2 Pet. 3:17. In the present context, the word denotes God's knowledge of His Son's death on the Cross long before the event occurred. This is clearly affirmed by Peter (see 1 Pet. 1:20) and is the implication of Rev. 13:8. Jesus' death for our redemption was not an afterthought; it was part of God's eternal plan.

A Vital Church Grows

⁴⁰ And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, “Be saved from this ³perverse generation.”
⁴¹ Then those who ⁴gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them.

⁴⁰ ³crooked
⁴¹ ⁴NU omits
gladly
⁴² ¹Acts 1:14;
Rom. 12:12; Eph.
6:18; Col. 4:2;
Heb. 10:25
⁵teaching

⁴² And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ ⁵doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. ⁴³ Then fear came upon every soul, and ^mmany wonders and signs were done through the

⁴³ ^mMark 16:17; Acts 2:22

2:40–43 three thousand souls: The response to Peter’s sermon was tremendous. Such impressive growth in the number of believers created additional needs and responsibilities. The apostles had the duty of training this large group and bringing them into fellowship with the other believers. This was a four-step process: (1) The new believers were to be trained in the **apostles’ doctrine**. Uniformity of belief concerning the person of Jesus Christ—based on the eyewitness testimony of His followers—was essential. (2) The new believers were to be trained in the **fellowship** of the church. The Greek word translated *fellowship* means sharing in the lives of other believers. (3) The new believers were to be trained in the **breaking of bread**, probably a reference to the Lord’s Supper (see 1 Cor. 11:23, 24). Some believe this is a broader reference to the “love feast,” a meal of fellowship in the early church. (4) The new believers were to be trained in the discipline of prayer. Corporate **prayers** were viewed as an essential part of the spiritual growth of the church. **Wonders and signs** apparently were given by the Lord to the apostles to validate their divinely ordained position and to verify the truthfulness of their witness in the establishment of the early church (see Heb. 2:3, 4).

persevere

(Gk. *proskartereō, proskarterēsis*) (2:42, 46; Rom. 12:12; 13:6) Strong’s #4342; 4343

The NT makes it clear that faith alone can save. But it makes it equally clear that perseverance in doing good works is the greatest indication that an individual’s faith is genuine (James 2:14–26). Indeed, perseverance springs from a faithful trust that God has been steadfast toward His people. Through persevering in God’s work, Christians prove their deep appreciation for God’s saving grace (1 Cor. 15:57, 58). As a result of perseverance, the Christian can expect not only to enhance the strength of the church, but also to build up strength of character (Rom. 5:3, 4). In short, Christians can expect to become closer to God. They learn that they can persevere primarily because God is intimately related to them (Rom. 8:25–27) and especially because they have the assurance of a final reward in heaven (1 John 5:13).

Missionary Efforts

Christ had established His church at the crossroads of the ancient world. Trade routes brought merchants and ambassadors through Palestine where they came into contact with the gospel. Thus in the Book of Acts we see the conversion of officials from Rome (10:1–48), Ethiopia (8:26–40), and other lands.

Soon after Stephen’s death, the church began a systematic effort to carry the gospel to other nations. Peter visited the major cities of Palestine, preaching to both Jews and Gentiles. Others went to Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch of Syria. Hearing that the gospel was well received in these areas, the church in Jerusalem sent Barnabas to encourage the new Christians in Antioch (11:22, 23). Barnabas then went to Tarsus to find the young convert named Saul. Barnabas took Saul back to Antioch, where they taught in the church for over a year (11:26).

A prophet named Agabus predicted that the Roman Empire would suffer a great famine under Emperor Claudius. Herod Agrippa was persecuting the church in Jerusalem; he had already executed James the brother of Jesus, and had thrown Peter into prison (12:1–4). So the Christians in Antioch collected money to send to their friends in Jerusalem, and they dispatched Barnabas and Saul with the relief. Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem with a young man named John Mark (12:25).

By this time, several evangelists had emerged within the church at Antioch so the congregation sent Barnabas and Saul on a missionary trip to Asia Minor (chs. 13–14). This was the first of three great missionary journeys that Saul (later known as Paul) made to carry the gospel to the far reaches of the Roman Empire.

The early Christian missionaries focused their teachings upon the Person and work of Jesus Christ. They declared that He was the sinless Servant and Son of God who had given His life to atone for the sins of all people who put their trust in Him (Rom. 5:8–10). He was the One whom God raised from the dead to defeat the powers of sin (Rom. 4:24, 25; 1 Cor. 15:17).



A fourth-century A.D. synagogue at Antioch
www.HolyLandPhotos.org

apostles. ⁴⁴Now all who believed were together, and ⁿhad all things in common, ⁴⁵and ⁶sold their possessions and goods, and ^odivided ⁷them among all, as anyone had need.

⁴⁶*p*So continuing daily with one accord ^qin the temple, and ^rbreaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, ⁴⁷praising God and having favor with all the people. And ^sthe Lord added ⁸to the church daily those who were being saved.

A Lame Man Healed

3 Now Peter and John went up together ^ato the temple at the hour of prayer, ^bthe ninth hour. ²And ^ca certain man lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, ^dto ¹ask alms from those who entered the temple; ³who, seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, asked for alms. ⁴And fixing his eyes on him, with John, Peter said, "Look at us." ⁵So he gave them his attention, expecting to receive something from them. ⁶Then Peter said, "Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: ^eIn the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk." ⁷And he took him by the right hand and lifted ^{him} up, and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. ⁸So he, ^fleaping up, stood and walked and entered the temple with them—walking, leaping, and praising God. ⁹*g*And all the people saw him walking and praising

⁴⁴ *n* Acts 4:32, 34, 37; 5:2
⁴⁵ *o* Is. 58:7
⁶ would sell
⁷ distributed
⁴⁶ *p* Acts 1:14
^q Luke 24:53 ^r Luke 24:30; Acts 2:42; 20:7; [1 Cor. 10:16]
⁴⁷ *s* Acts 5:14 ⁸ NU omits to the church

CHAPTER 3

¹ *a* Acts 2:46 ^b Ps. 55:17; Matt. 27:45; Acts 10:30
² *c* Acts 14:8 ^d John 9:8; Acts 3:10
¹ Beg
⁶ *e* Acts 4:10
⁸ *f* Is. 35:6
⁹ *g* Acts 4:16, 21
¹⁰ *h* John 9:8; Acts 3:2
¹¹ *i* John 10:23; Acts 5:12
¹³ *j* John 5:30 ^k Is. 49:3; John 7:39; 12:23; 13:31 ^l Matt. 27:2; ^m Matt. 27:20; Mark 15:11; Luke 23:18; John 18:40; Acts 13:28
¹⁴ *n* Ps. 16:10; Mark 1:24; Luke 1:35
^o Acts 7:52; 2 Cor. 5:21 ^p John 18:40
¹⁵ *q* Acts 2:24
^r Acts 2:32 ² Or Originator
¹⁶ *s* Matt. 9:22; Acts 4:10; 14:9
¹⁷ *t* Luke 23:34; John 16:3; [Acts 13:27; 17:30]; 1 Cor. 2:8; 1 Tim. 1:13
¹⁸ *u* Luke 24:44; Acts 26:22 ^v Ps. 22; Is. 50:6; 53:5; Dan. 9:26; Hos. 6:1;

God. ¹⁰Then they knew that it was he who ^hsat begging alms at the Beautiful Gate of the temple; and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.

Preaching in Solomon's Portico

¹¹Now as the lame man who was healed held on to Peter and John, all the people ran together to them in the porch ⁱwhich is called Solomon's, greatly amazed. ¹²So when Peter saw ^{it}, he responded to the people: "Men of Israel, why do you marvel at this? Or why look so intently at us, as though by our own power or godliness we had made this man walk? ¹³*j*The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of our fathers, ^kglorified His Servant Jesus, whom you ^ldelivered up and ^mdenied in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let ^{Him} go. ¹⁴But you denied ⁿthe Holy One ^oand the Just, and ^pasked for a murderer to be granted to you, ¹⁵and killed the ²Prince of life, ^qwhom God raised from the dead, ^rof which we are witnesses. ¹⁶*s*And His name, through faith in His name, has made this man strong, whom you see and know. Yes, the faith which ^{comes} through Him has given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.

¹⁷"Yet now, brethren, I know that ^tyou did ^{it} in ignorance, as ^{did} also your rulers. ¹⁸But ^uthose things which God foretold ^vby the mouth of all His prophets, that the Christ would suffer, He has thus fulfilled.

Zech. 13:6; 1 Pet. 1:10

2:44, 45 The disposal and distribution of possessions in the early church was directed **among all, as anyone had need**. When a physical or spiritual need became known in the church, action was taken to address it (see 1 John 3:17). The NT believers demonstrated their love for one another by giving self-sacrificially.

3:1 went up . . . to the temple: The disciples of Jesus continued to follow Jewish tradition. A prayer service accompanied each of the two daily sacrifices, one in the morning and the other in the afternoon. **The ninth hour** would have been 3 p.m.

3:2 The **lame man** was **laid** near the gate called **Beautiful**. This gate opened into the Court of the Women from the outer Court of the Gentiles. It served, in a sense, as the front door to the temple proper. The Beautiful Gate would have been an ideal place for the man to position himself for begging. Those who ignored the man's pleas may have found it difficult to worship due to the guilt they felt for refusing to help such a powerless person. Moreover, as people left the temple they would be more apt to give to someone who was waiting there for help.

3:6 The apostles indicated immediately that they did not represent themselves in what they were about to do. They represented Jesus Christ. Because of His **name**—who He is—the beggar would receive the miracle of God. The phrase "in the name of Jesus" is not a magical formula used to give some affirmation or guarantee to a prayer. A person's name represented that person's authority and influence. The power in the name of Jesus comes from what the Holy Spirit will do because of that name. Note that Peter and John did not lay their hands on the beggar and pray for God to heal him. Rather as

apostles with the power of God to perform signs and wonders, they simply told him to **rise up and walk**.

3:7 his feet and ankle bones received strength: Luke, a physician by profession, described what took place. Instantly strength was given to the portions of the body that needed it. Blood supply was increased to the muscle. The brain sent signals to the nerve endings of the ankles and feet. The hardened fluid between the joints was softened, and the atrophied muscles and ligaments regained flexibility. The feet suddenly could bear the man's weight.

3:10 The people had seen the beggar day after day, maybe year after year. His healing was not a staged event. When the beggar stood and walked, the only reasonable explanation was that God had healed him.

3:11, 12 the people ran together to them: People were following after them, but the apostles immediately gave all the glory to Jesus.

3:13–16 glorified His Servant Jesus: Peter's reference to "His Servant" comes from Is. 52:13, a messianic psalm. Jesus can be considered the Servant of God because He gave His life as a guilt offering for the sins of all humanity. The Father raised Jesus from the dead as confirmation that His sacrifice was accepted. Peter pointed to the healing of the beggar as a sign of the glorification of Christ. The people had handed Jesus over to Pilate to be crucified. Yet God had raised the crucified Jesus from the dead. It was in the name of this very same Jesus that the crippled man was healed.

3:17, 18 you did . . . God foretold: Throughout Peter's sermon in ch. 2, he balances the human responsibility of the Jews and Romans with the eternal plan of God.

¹⁹ ^w Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, ²⁰ and that He may send ³ Jesus Christ, who was ⁴ preached to you before, ²¹ ^x whom heaven must receive until the times of ^y restoration of all things, ^z which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since ⁵ the world began. ²² For Moses truly said to the fathers, ^a *“The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your brethren. Him you shall hear in all things, whatever He says to you.”* ²³ And it shall be that every soul who will not hear that Prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people. ²⁴ Yes, and ^b all the prophets, from Samuel and those who follow, as many as have spoken, have also ⁶ foretold these days. ²⁵ ^c You are sons of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying to Abraham, ^d *“And in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”* ²⁶ To you ^e first, God, having raised up His Servant Jesus, sent Him to bless you, ^f in turning away every one of *you* from your iniquities.”

Peter and John Arrested

4 Now as they spoke to the people, the priests, the captain of the temple, and the ^a Sadducees came upon them, ² being

¹⁹ ^w [Acts 2:38; 26:20]
²⁰ ³ NU, M Christ Jesus ⁴ NU, M ordained for you before
²¹ ^x Acts 1:11
^y Matt. 17:11; [Rom. 8:21] ^z Luke 1:70
⁵ Or time
²² ^a Deut. 18:15, 18, 19 ★; Acts 7:37
²⁴ ^b 2 Sam. 7:12; Luke 24:25 ^e NU, M proclaimed
²⁵ ^c Acts 2:39; [Rom. 9:4, 8; Gal. 3:26] ^d Gen. 12:3; 18:18; 22:18; 26:4; 28:14 ★
²⁶ ^e Matt. 15:24; John 4:22; Acts 13:46; [Rom. 1:16; 2:9] ^f Is. 42:1; Matt. 1:21 ★

CHAPTER 4

¹ ^a Matt. 22:23

⁶ ^b Luke 3:2; John 11:49; 18:13
⁷ ^c Ex. 2:14; Matt. 21:23; Acts 7:27
⁸ ^d Luke 12:11, 12
¹⁰ ^e Acts 2:22; 3:6, 16 ^f Acts 2:24
¹¹ ^g Ps. 118:22; Is. 28:16 ★; Matt. 21:42

greatly disturbed that they taught the people and preached in Jesus the resurrection from the dead. ³ And they laid hands on them, and put *them* in custody until the next day, for it was already evening. ⁴ However, many of those who heard the word believed; and the number of the men came to be about five thousand.

Addressing the Sanhedrin

⁵ And it came to pass, on the next day, that their rulers, elders, and scribes, ⁶ as well as ^b Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the family of the high priest, were gathered together at Jerusalem. ⁷ And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, ^c “By what power or by what name have you done this?”

⁸ ^d Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, “Rulers of the people and elders of Israel: ⁹ If we this day are judged for a good deed *done* to a helpless man, by what means he has been made well, ¹⁰ let it be known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, ^e that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, ^f whom God raised from the dead, by Him this man stands here before you whole. ¹¹ This is the ^g *“stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the*

3:19 The word translated **refreshing** refers to restoration of strength and nourishment. Strength is restored when hope is restored. Peter challenged the people to **repent and be converted**, to change their thinking about Jesus as their Messiah and to serve Him.

4:1–4 The **Sadducees** were **greatly disturbed** for two reasons. First, the Sadducees were skeptics who rejected all the OT except the books of Moses, and who denied the resurrection from the dead. Peter’s teaching about the resurrection challenged their beliefs and teaching. Second, the Sadducees were leaders of the Jews at that time. They came from wealthy families and consorted with the Roman government in order to maintain their position, influence, and wealth. The last thing the Sadducees wanted was for a couple of Jewish men to declare the resurrection of a king. **laid hands on them . . . believed:** The attempt to silence God’s truth by arresting His messengers did not hinder His work. Though God’s servants are chained, His word is never chained (see 2 Tim. 2:9). The result of the Sadducees’ taking two men into custody was that **five thousand** people believed the gospel message.

4:6 **were gathered together:** The Sanhedrin, which consisted of 70 men plus the high priest, was the highest Jewish court. The group consisted of the wealthiest, most educated, and most powerful Jewish men in Israel. **Annas the high priest:** Annas had been removed as high priest in A.D. 14 by the Romans. At the time of Christ, the high priests were appointed by the Roman governors. Apparently Annas had become a political threat to Rome. The Jewish people refused to acknowledge Roman authority over such matters; so even though Annas was officially removed from his office, the Jewish people still considered him high priest. **Caiaphas**, the son-in-law of Annas, was the actual high priest. **John** was most likely the son of Annas who succeeded Caiaphas in A.D. 37.

4:7 Because the healing of the lame man was indisputable (3:1–10), the question was how the man was healed and by whose authority or **name** the healing had been performed.

4:8–10 **Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit:** This is the second description in the Book of Acts of someone being filled with the Holy Spirit (see v. 31; 2:4; 9:17; 13:9). The initial filling accompanied the baptism in the Spirit. This filling brought boldness for God’s work. Jesus had promised His disciples that they would stand before kings and rulers and that the Spirit of God within them would implant in their minds exactly what to say to these leaders (see Matt. 10:16–20).

4:11 **the chief cornerstone:** The OT refers to the cornerstone as the foundation of the earth (Job 38:6), the foundation (Is. 28:16), the stone for the corner (Jer. 51:26), the head cornerstone (Ps. 118:22), or the headstone (Zech. 4:7). Thus the image of a cornerstone is used as both the chief stone and the stone at the corner of a foundation. In the first century A.D., the expression *chief cornerstone* was also used to refer to the stone placed on the summit of the Jerusalem temple. Thus Peter used the phrase to point out that when the people rejected Jesus Christ, they rejected the One who completed the plan of God for humankind. The phrase and its significance here would

filled with the Holy Spirit

(Gk. *plēthō pneumatōs hagiou*) (2:4; 4:8, 31; 9:17; 13:9; Luke 1:15, 41, 67) Strong’s #4130; 4151; 40

The Greek word *plēthō* is used for describing the filling of anything from a sponge to a boat (Matt. 27:48; Luke 5:7). Luke uses this common term to describe how the Holy Spirit influences a person. He uses the expression *filled with the Holy Spirit* eight times in his writings. In every case, the filling of the Holy Spirit enables the person so endowed to speak or preach for God. Thus, the filling of the Spirit is directly related to the prophetic ministry, the revelation or explanation of God’s Word.

chief cornerstone.”^{12h} Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”

The Name of Jesus Forbidden

¹³ Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, ⁱ and perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marveled. And they realized that they had been with Jesus. ¹⁴ And seeing the man who had been healed ^j standing with them, they could say nothing against it. ¹⁵ But when they had commanded them to go aside out of the council, they conferred among themselves, ¹⁶ saying, ^k “What shall we do to these men? For, indeed, that a ^l notable miracle has been done through them is ^l evident² to all who dwell in Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it. ¹⁷ But so that it spreads no further among the people, let us severely threaten them, that from now on they speak to no man in this name.”

^{18m} So they called them and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. ¹⁹ But Peter and John answered and said to them, ⁿ “Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you more than to God, you judge. ^{20o} For we cannot but speak the things which ^p we have seen and heard.” ²¹ So when they had further threatened them, they let them go, finding no way of punishing them, ^q because of the people, since they all ^r glorified God for ^s what had been done. ²² For the man was over forty years old on whom this miracle of healing had been performed.

Prayer for Boldness

²³ And being let go, ^t they went to their own companions and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said to them. ²⁴ So when they heard that, they raised their voice to God with one accord and said: “Lord, ^u You are God, who made heaven and earth and the sea, and all that

^{12 h} Is. 42:1, 6, 7; 53:11; Dan. 9:24; [Matt. 1:21; John 14:6; Acts 10:43; 1 Tim. 2:5, 6]
^{13 i} Matt. 11:25; [1 Cor. 1:27]
^{14 j} Acts 3:11
^{16 k} John 11:47
¹ Acts 3:7-10
¹ remarkable sign
² well known
^{18 m} Acts 5:28, 40
^{19 n} Acts 5:29
^{20 o} Acts 1:8; 2:32
^p Acts 22:15; [1 John 1:1, 3]
^{21 q} Matt. 21:26; Luke 20:6, 19; 22:2; Acts 5:26
^{15:31 s} Acts 3:7, 8
^{23 r} Acts 2:44-46; 12:12
^{24 u} Ex. 20:11; 2 Kin. 19:15; Neh. 9:6; Ps. 146:6

^{25 v} Ps. 2:1, 2 ★
³ NU through the Holy Spirit, by the mouth of our father, Your servant David,
^{27 w} Matt. 26:3; Luke 22:2; 23:1, 8
^x [Luke 1:35] ^v Luke 4:18; John 10:36
^{28 z} Acts 2:23; 3:18
^{29 a} Acts 4:13, 31; 9:27; 13:46; 14:3; 19:8; 26:26; Eph. 6:19
^{30 b} Acts 2:43; 5:12
^c Acts 3:6, 16 ^d Acts 4:27
^{31 e} Matt. 5:6; Acts 2:2, 4; 16:26
^f Acts 4:29
^{32 g} Acts 5:12; Rom. 15:5, 6; 2 Cor. 13:11; Phil. 1:27; 2:2; 1 Pet. 3:8
^h Acts 2:44
^{33 i} [Acts 1:8] ^j Acts 1:22 ^k Rom. 6:15
^{34 l} [Matt. 19:21]; Acts 2:45
^{35 m} Acts 4:37; 5:2
ⁿ Acts 2:45; 6:1
^{36 o} NU Joseph

is in them, ²⁵ who ³ by the mouth of Your servant David have said:

^v “Why did the nations rage,
And the people plot vain things?
²⁶ The kings of the earth took their stand,
And the rulers were gathered together
Against the LORD and against His Christ.”

²⁷ “For ^w truly against ^x Your holy Servant Jesus, ^y whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together ^{28z} to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose determined before to be done. ²⁹ Now, Lord, look on their threats, and grant to Your servants ^a that with all boldness they may speak Your word, ³⁰ by stretching out Your hand to heal, ^b and that signs and wonders may be done ^c through the name of ^d Your holy Servant Jesus.”

³¹ And when they had prayed, ^e the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, ^f and they spoke the word of God with boldness.

Sharing in All Things

³² Now the multitude of those who believed ^g were of one heart and one soul; ^h neither did anyone say that any of the things he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common. ³³ And with ⁱ great power the apostles gave ^j witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And ^k great grace was upon them all. ³⁴ Nor was there anyone among them who lacked; ^l for all who were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the proceeds of the things that were sold, ^{35m} and laid them at the apostles’ feet; ⁿ and they distributed to each as anyone had need.

³⁶ And ⁴ Joseph, who was also named

have been well understood in the first century, especially among the Jewish rabbis and people who knew the Scriptures.

4:12 no other name: Only by placing faith in the historical Jesus—the One who came, died, and was raised again—can a person be saved.

4:13 Even though Peter and John were uneducated Galilean fishermen, they spoke with confidence and freedom. Their presentation of the gospel was powerful because they were personal witnesses of everything they spoke about (1:22).

4:14–18 they could say nothing: The Sanhedrin knew that the miracle was real. The apostles offered their explanation: The miracles were the work of the resurrected Christ. But instead of believing, the members of the Sanhedrin concerned themselves with “damage control.” They tried to intimidate the apostles by warning them not to speak or teach in the name of Jesus.

4:19 listen to you more than to God: There is no authority apart from God. When human authority rejects God’s authority, it becomes twisted and loses its right to demand compliance (5:29). From the beginning, God’s people have resisted any command that was against God’s will (for example, the Jewish midwives of Ex. 1; Moses’ parents in Heb. 11:23; Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego in Dan. 3).

4:23–31 The response of Peter and John’s companions after the apostles’ release was a spontaneous outburst of praise, song, and prayer.

4:32–37 Luke notes that for the early Christians, being filled with the Holy Spirit meant not only proclaiming the Word of God, but also sharing their possessions with those in need.

Barnabas by the apostles (which is translated Son of ⁵Encouragement), a Levite of the country of Cyprus, ³⁷having land, sold *it*, and brought the money and laid *it* at the apostles' feet.

Lying to the Holy Spirit

5 But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession. ²And he kept back *part* of the proceeds, his wife also being aware *of it*, and brought a certain part and laid *it* at the apostles' feet. ^{3a}But Peter said, "Ananias, why has ^bSatan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back *part* of the price of the land for yourself? ⁴While it remained, was it not your own? And after it was sold, was it not in your own control? Why have you conceived this thing in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God."

⁵Then Ananias, hearing these words, ^cfell down and breathed his last. So great fear came upon all those who heard these things. ⁶And the young men arose and ^dwrapped him up, carried *him* out, and buried *him*.

⁷Now it was about three hours later when his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. ⁸And Peter answered her, "Tell me whether you sold the land for so much?"

She said, "Yes, for so much."

⁹Then Peter said to her, "How is it that you have agreed together ^eto test the Spirit of the Lord? Look, the feet of

36 ⁵ Or *Consolation*
37 ^o Acts 4:34, 35;
5:1, 2

CHAPTER 5

3 ^o Num. 30:2;
Deut. 23:21; Eccl.
5:4 ^b Matt. 4:10;
Luke 22:3; John
13:2, 27
5 ^c Ezek. 11:13; Acts
5:10, 11
6 ^d John 19:40
9 ^e Matt. 4:7; Acts
5:3, 4

10 ^f Ezek. 11:13;
Acts 5:5
11 ^g Acts 2:43; 5:5;
19:17
12 ^h Acts 2:43; 4:30;
6:8; 14:3; 15:12;
[Rom. 15:19]; 2 Cor.
12:12; Heb. 2:4
ⁱ Acts 3:11; 4:32
13 ^j John 9:22
^k Acts 2:47; 4:21
15 ^l Matt. 9:21;
14:36; Acts 19:12
16 ^m Mark 16:17, 18;
[John 14:12]
17 ⁿ Matt. 3:7; Acts
4:1, 2, 6 ¹ jealousy
18 ^o Luke 21:12;
Acts 4:3; 16:37
19 ^p Matt. 1:20, 24;
2:13, 19; 28:2; Luke
1:11; 2:9; Acts 12:7;
16:26

those who have buried your husband *are* at the door, and they will carry you out." ^{10f}Then immediately she fell down at his feet and breathed her last. And the young men came in and found her dead, and carrying *her* out, buried *her* by her husband. ^{11g}So great fear came upon all the church and upon all who heard these things.

Continuing Power in the Church

¹²And ^hthrough the hands of the apostles many signs and wonders were done among the people. ⁱAnd they were all with one accord in Solomon's Porch. ¹³Yet ^jnone of the rest dared join them, ^kbut the people esteemed them highly. ¹⁴And believers were increasingly added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women, ¹⁵so that they brought the sick out into the streets and laid *them* on beds and couches, ^lthat at least the shadow of Peter passing by might fall on some of them. ¹⁶Also a multitude gathered from the surrounding cities to Jerusalem, bringing ^msick people and those who were tormented by unclean spirits, and they were all healed.

Imprisoned Apostles Freed

¹⁷ⁿThen the high priest rose up, and all those who *were* with him (which is the sect of the Sadducees), and they were filled with ^lindignation, ^{18o}and laid their hands on the apostles and put them in the common prison. ¹⁹But at night ^pan

5:1, 2 Ananias and Sapphira wanted to have a reputation like that of Barnabas (4:36, 37), but they did not have the same character he had. At a time when others were seeking to serve their fellow believers, Ananias and Sapphira were seeking to serve themselves.

5:3 why has Satan filled your heart: Ananias and Sapphira believed in the Lord Jesus Christ; however, they had succumbed to the temptations of greed and pride. Note that the same word *filled* is used here in connection with Satan as is used in 4:8 of the Holy Spirit. The term means to take possession of or control. God's children, who have been freed from the tyranny of Satan, have the ability to choose whom they will allow to control them. When we choose to sin, we open the door to Satan. The Evil One tempted Ananias and Sapphira with wicked desires and thoughts, and they yielded their will to these temptations. **lie to the Holy Spirit:** The author of all lies is Satan (see John 8:44). When Ananias and Sapphira deliberately lied, they took upon themselves the moral character of the one who is behind all lies, the devil himself.

5:4 You have not lied to men but to God: The Holy Spirit is the third person of the triune Godhead. To lie to Him (v. 3) is to lie to God. **in your own control:** Ananias and Sapphira could have kept a part of their proceeds or they could have kept it all; their stewardship was between them and the Lord. But the problem was that they wanted others to believe they had sacrificed everything when in fact they had given only a portion to the Lord.

5:5 fell down and breathed his last: The severity of the punishment may seem extreme to some people, much like the story of Achan in Josh. 7:16–26. However, Prov. 6:16–19 tells us how God feels about deception and division. The early church was vulnerable to great spiritual danger. Yet Jesus had promised (Matt. 16:18)

that the power of hell would not destroy this fledgling church in its infant stage. God would move with great discipline to ensure its purity and survival.

5:8 Peter gave Ananias's wife an opportunity to **tell** the truth. Sapphira would not be disciplined for the sin of her husband. Even though Ananias and Sapphira were married, they were also brother and sister in Jesus Christ. Sapphira was responsible for her own personal relationship with God. When Sapphira committed the same sin of rebellion and deception that her husband had committed, she received her own punishment.

5:12 Signs refers to supernatural occurrences that point to a warning, instruction, or encouragement from God. A sign gave credibility to the fact that what was being said was from God. **Wonders** points to the response to a sign. By its very nature a wonder caused awe in those who saw or heard it. Signs and wonders were given by God to confirm His word (see Matt. 12:38, 39).

5:15 In the ancient world many people believed that a person's **shadow** could possess magical healing powers. The people referred to in this verse were not necessarily Christians, but those who believed that Peter, as an advocate of a new religion, had magical powers. The people imposed their superstitions upon this new faith. **5:16** they were all healed: God, working miracles through the apostles, never failed to bring complete physical restoration.

5:18 The imprisonment of the **apostles** apparently was a common event in the early church.

5:19 an angel of the Lord: The word for *angel* basically means "messenger." The phrase "angel of the Lord" is commonly used in the OT to refer to spiritual messengers of God. Sometimes these messengers were human beings and other times they were angelic

BIBLE TIMES & CULTURE NOTES



Gamaliel

Gamaliel is only mentioned twice in the NT (5:34; 22:3), but he exerted a profound influence on the course of Christianity. In the first instance, the Sanhedrin met to deal with the Christians, who insisted that the Sanhedrin was responsible for the Messiah's death. In this emotionally heated session, Gamaliel rose and gave a surprisingly insightful speech that obviously swayed the Sanhedrin (5:38, 39). Rather than the flogging they anticipated, Peter and the apostles were given a severe warning and were released. The second reference was made by Paul, Gamaliel's former pupil. Paul was appealing to a Jewish mob, and he was not hesitant to link himself to this great teacher. Gamaliel's further influence on Paul can only be surmised. Paul's clear and logical manner of explaining the great doctrines of the Christian faith was no doubt the result, at least in part, of his schooling "at the feet of Gamaliel."

angel of the Lord opened the prison doors and brought them out, and said, ²⁰ "Go, stand in the temple and speak to the people ^q all the words of this life."

²¹ And when they heard *that*, they entered the temple early in the morning and taught. ^r But the high priest and those with him came and called the ² council together, with all the ³ elders of the children of Israel, and sent to the prison to have them brought.

Apostles on Trial Again

²² But when the officers came and did not find them in the prison, they returned and reported, ²³ saying, "Indeed we found the prison shut securely, and the guards standing ⁴ outside before the

²⁰ ^q [John 6:63, 68; 17:3; 1 John 5:11]
²¹ ^r Acts 4:5;
² Sanhedrin
³ council of elders or senate
²³ ⁴ NU, M omit outside

²⁴ ^s Luke 22:4; Acts 4:1; 5:26 ⁵ NU omits the high priest
²⁵ ⁶ NU, M omit saying
²⁶ ^t Matt. 21:26
²⁸ ^u Acts 4:17;
¹⁸ ^v Acts 2:23, 36
^w Matt. 23:35
²⁹ ^x Acts 4:19
³⁰ ^y Acts 3:13, 15
^z Acts 10:39; 13:29; [Gal. 3:13; 1 Pet. 2:24]
³¹ ^a Mark 16:19; [Acts 2:33, 36; Phil. 2:9-11] ^b Acts 3:15; Rev. 1:5 ^c Matt. 1:21
^d Luke 24:47; [Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14]
³² ^e John 15:26, 27; Acts 15:28; Rom. 8:16; Heb. 2:4 ^f Acts 2:4; 10:44
³³ ^g Acts 2:37; 7:54
⁷ cut to the quick
³⁴ ^h Acts 22:3
³⁵ ⁸ be careful

doors; but when we opened them, we found no one inside!" ²⁴ Now when ⁵ the high priest, ^s the captain of the temple, and the chief priests heard these things, they wondered what the outcome would be. ²⁵ So one came and told them, ⁶ saying, "Look, the men whom you put in prison are standing in the temple and teaching the people!"

²⁶ Then the captain went with the officers and brought them without violence, ^t for they feared the people, lest they should be stoned. ²⁷ And when they had brought them, they set *them* before the council. And the high priest asked them, ²⁸ saying, ^u "Did we not strictly command you not to teach in this name? And look, you have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, ^v and intend to bring this Man's ^w blood on us!"

²⁹ But Peter and the *other* apostles answered and said: ^x "We ought to obey God rather than men. ³⁰ ^y The God of our fathers raised up Jesus whom you murdered by ^z hanging on a tree. ³¹ ^a Him God has exalted to His right hand to be ^b Prince and ^c Savior, ^d to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. ³² And ^e we are His witnesses to these things, and *so* also is the Holy Spirit ^f whom God has given to those who obey Him."

Gamaliel's Advice

³³ When they heard *this*, they were ^g furious ⁷ and plotted to kill them. ³⁴ Then one in the council stood up, a Pharisee named ^h Gamaliel, a teacher of the law held in respect by all the people, and commanded them to put the apostles outside for a little while. ³⁵ And he said to them: "Men of Israel, ⁸ take heed to yourselves what you intend to do regarding these men. ³⁶ For some time ago Theudas rose

beings. In some places the phrase may even refer to the preincarnate Christ. Considering the events of this particular passage, it is clear that a supernatural visitor is in view.

5:20 Note that the angel's orders were not to escape from the city, but to return to the **temple** courts, where the disciples had been first arrested, and speak to the people. The fact that the disciples would return to the place of their arrest was an open testimony to the Jewish leaders and the general public that these men were willing to die for the truth they were proclaiming.

5:29 **We ought to obey God:** As to the accusation of disobedience to authority, Peter put the charge in context. Jesus had said, "You shall be witnesses to Me" (1:8). The council said in effect, "You shall not be His witnesses" (see v. 28). All authority comes from God. When any authority commands what God has forbidden, or forbids what God has commanded, a Christian must obey the Author of all authority, God Himself. We submit to governmental authority because the One who instituted the authority is God Himself. When we submit to government, we are submitting to God.

5:30 **Tree** here refers to the Cross (see Deut. 21:22, 23; 1 Pet. 2:24).

5:31 The declaration that **God has exalted Him to His right hand** would have been understood by the Sanhedrin as a reference to the

Resurrection. The apostles' claim regarded the resurrected Jesus as equal with God (see John 5:18; 10:33).

5:34 **Gamaliel** was a highly respected Pharisee, the grandson of the famous Rabbi Hillel, a brilliant spiritual leader. Gamaliel was the teacher of Saul, who would later become the apostle Paul (22:3). Gamaliel was given the honored title of "Rabban," meaning "Our Teacher." It is said in the Mishna—the commentary on the Torah, the first five books of the OT—that when Gamaliel died, "the glory of the Torah ceased, and purity and sanctity died out also." This is an impressive eulogy for a Jewish teacher.

5:36, 37 A certain **Theudas** is mentioned by the Jewish historian Josephus, who places Theudas's revolt against Rome around **A.D. 44**. According to Gamaliel, the revolution by Theudas took place before **Judas of Galilee**, who began the Zealot movement around **A.D. 6**. The Romans quickly punished Theudas and his followers, forcing the movement underground. Some scholars believe Luke erred in placing Theudas before Judas of Galilee. However, it is more likely that Gamaliel and Josephus spoke of two different men. Theudas was a very common name. There were a number of insurrections and revolution attempts recorded: Josephus himself refers to ten thousand of them. Most likely, the revolution of Theudas that Gama-

up, claiming to be somebody. A number of men, about four hundred, ⁹joined him. He was slain, and all who obeyed him were scattered and came to nothing. ³⁷After this man, Judas of Galilee rose up in the days of the census, and drew away many people after him. He also perished, and all who obeyed him were dispersed. ³⁸And now I say to you, keep away from these men and let them alone; for if this plan or this work is of men, it will come to nothing; ³⁹ⁱbut if it is of God, you cannot overthrow it—lest you even be found ^jto fight against God.”

⁴⁰And they agreed with him, and when they had ^kcalled for the apostles ^land beaten ^mthem, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. ⁴¹So they departed from the presence of the council, ^mrejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for ^lHis name. ⁴²And daily ⁿin the temple, and in every house, ^othey did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ.

Seven Chosen to Serve

6 Now in those days, ^awhen the number of the disciples was multiplying,

36 ⁹ followed
39 ⁱ Luke 21:15;
¹ Cor. 1:25 ^j Acts
7:51; 9:5
40 ^k Acts 4:18
^l Matt. 10:17; Mark
13:9; Acts 16:22,
23; 21:32; 2 Cor.
11:25
41 ^m Matt. 5:10-12;
Rom. 5:3; 2 Cor.
12:10; Heb. 10:34;
[James 1:2; 1 Pet.
4:13-16] ⁿ NU the
name; M the name
of Jesus
42 ^o Acts 2:46
^o Acts 4:20, 29

CHAPTER 6

¹ ^a Acts 2:41; 4:4
^b Acts 9:29; 11:20
^c Acts 4:35; 11:29
^d Greek-speaking
Jews
2 ^d Ex. 18:17
3 ^e Deut. 1:13;
1 Tim. 3:7 ^f Phil. 1:1;
1 Tim. 3:8-13
4 ^g Acts 2:42
5 ^h Acts 6:3; 11:24
ⁱ Acts 8:5, 26; 21:8
^j Rev. 2:6, 15
6 ^k Acts 1:24
^l Num. 8:10; 27:18;
Deut. 34:9; [Mark
5:23;

there arose a complaint against the Hellenists, ¹because their widows were neglected ^ein the daily distribution. ²Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, ^d“It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables. ³Therefore, brethren, ^eseek out from among you seven men of *good* reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this ^fbusiness; ⁴but we ^gwill give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word.”

⁵And the saying pleased the whole multitude. And they chose Stephen, ^ha man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, and ⁱPhilip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and ^jNicolas, a proselyte from Antioch, ⁶whom they set before the apostles; and ^kwhen they had prayed, ^lthey laid hands on them.

⁷Then ^mthe word of God spread, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many ⁿof the priests were obedient to the faith.

Acts 8:17; 9:17; 13:3; 19:6; 1 Tim. 4:14; 2 Tim. 1:6; Heb. 6:2
7 ^m Acts 12:24; Col. 1:6 ⁿ John 12:42

liel referred to took place before A.D. 6 and was led by a different Theudas than the person Josephus mentions in his history.

5:40 they agreed with him: God first delivered the disciples from jail by supernatural means, sending an angel from heaven (vv. 19, 20). Then God delivered them through natural means, causing an enemy of Christianity to argue for their release. This passage is proof of the work of God’s sovereign hand in history. He can even use the thoughts of those who oppose the gospel to preserve and protect His servants.

5:41 This verse provides the first instance of physical persecution against the followers of Jesus Christ—in this case against the leaders of the Christian movement. The apostles’ response would set a precedent for other Christians who would be persecuted. Instead of complaining or feeling sorry for themselves, they rejoiced that they were **counted worthy** by God to endure the abuse. The apostles knew that more important things than preserving their health and life were at stake. God was using the suffering of the disciples to bring people into His kingdom (see Matt. 5:10–12; Phil. 1:29; 2 Tim. 2:12).

6:1 The Hellenists were those of Jewish descent who grew up outside the land of Israel. They spoke Greek, were raised in Hellenistic culture, and used the Greek translation of the Hebrew OT, the Septuagint (2:5). **The Hebrews** were Palestinian Jews who spoke Aramaic and used the Hebrew OT. There may have been an animosity between the groups, even among the new believers, which gave rise to distrust and tension over the care of the **widows** who were **neglected**. In Jewish law, a woman did not receive an inheritance. She was dependent on her husband or another relative.

6:2 should leave the word of God: The issue here was not blame, but rather what could be done to remedy the apparent injustice. The apostles knew that the problem of supporting the needy required attention. Though the apostles were sensitive enough to recognize the problem, they were also careful to recognize the priorities that are placed on church leaders by God. They could not leave what God had called them to do—declaring and teaching the word of God and establishing the church in prayer. **serve tables:** In NT times, business was transacted over tables. The work of administering and distributing care to those in need would have been carried on

over tables and thus was a ministry of service rather than a ministry of speaking. The words *serve* here and *ministry* in v. 4 translate Greek words that are related to the English word *deacon*.

6:3 seek out: The leaders of the church included the congregation in the search process. The local council in Jewish communities usually consisted of **seven men** known as the “seven of the town.” The men who would be chosen would be known among the people for their **good reputation** because they were **full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom**. The men’s lives were consistent with their confession of faith. They knew the will of God and understood how to carry it out in their lives (see Eph. 5:15–18). They could be trusted with responsibility and authority.

6:4 prayer and . . . word: Note the order here. Prayer was primary for the apostles (2:42).

6:5 they chose Stephen . . . Nicolas: All these names are Greek. The selection of Hellenists no doubt was a wise and gracious gesture to the people who had initially raised the complaint concerning the widows (v. 1).

6:6 The laying on of **hands** was not for these men to receive the Holy Spirit, because the seven men were already “full of the Holy Spirit” (vv. 3, 5). Instead the apostles were conferring on these men the responsibility of carrying out the ministry. The laying on of hands was a meaningful tradition that dated back to the days of Moses (see Num. 27:15–23), and it identified people with the ministries to be performed.

6:7 the word of God spread: What Jesus Christ had done in the lives of these people was spreading throughout the region. Men and women became **disciples** who lived in submission to Christ’s lordship. They were not ashamed of their faith, but with great boldness they went out to bear witness to the truth of the gospel that had changed their lives. This is what Jesus promised would happen. **a great many of the priests:** It is estimated that in Jerusalem there were some eight thousand priests. Luke is not referring here to those who attacked the faith (4:1, 2; 5:17, 18). Most priests were not from the high priestly families. They had ordinary vocations that permitted them to serve their turn in the temple periodically—much like Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist. These were humble, devoted men of God who became **obedient**

Stephen Accused of Blasphemy

⁸And Stephen, full of ²faith and power, did great ^owonders and signs among the people. ⁹Then there arose some from what is called the Synagogue of the Freedmen (Cyrenians, Alexandrians, and those from Cilicia and Asia), disputing with Stephen. ¹⁰And ^pthey were not able to resist the wisdom and the Spirit by which he spoke. ¹¹^qThen they secretly induced men to say, “We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and God.” ¹²And they stirred up the people, the elders, and the scribes; and they came upon *him*, seized him, and brought *him* to the council. ¹³They also set up false witnesses who said, “This man does not cease to speak ³blasphemous words against this holy place and the law; ¹⁴^rfor we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy

8 ^o Acts 2:43; 5:12; 8:15; 14:3 ² NU
grace
10 ^p Ex. 4:12; Is.
54:17; Luke 21:15
11 ^q 1 Kin. 21:10, 13;
Matt. 26:59, 60
13 ³ NU omits
blasphemous
14 ^r Acts 10:38; 25:8

CHAPTER 7

2 ^a Acts 22:1 ^b Ps.
29:3; 1 Cor. 2:8
^c Gen. 11:31, 32
3 ^d Gen. 12:1
4 ^e Gen. 11:31; 15:7;
Heb. 11:8-10 ^f Gen.
11:32

this place and change the customs which Moses delivered to us.” ¹⁵And all who sat in the council, looking steadfastly at him, saw his face as the face of an angel.

Stephen's Address: The Call of Abraham

7 Then the high priest said, “Are these things so?”
²And he said, ^a“Brethren and fathers, listen: The ^bGod of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in ^cHaran, ³and said to him, ^d“Get out of your country and from your relatives, and come to a land that I will show you.” ⁴Then ^ehe came out of the land of the Chaldeans and dwelt in Haran. And from there, when his father was ^fdead, He moved him to this land in which you now dwell. ⁵And God gave him no inheritance in it, not

to the faith, recognizing Jesus as the Christ. Their service in the temple was enhanced because they understood the truth behind the rituals they performed.

6:8 Stephen was full of wisdom (v. 3), full of the Holy Spirit (v. 5), and full of faith and power. He had the gifts, the boldness, and the brilliance to be a powerful witness; yet even his witness would be rejected by the religious leaders. Hearts are opened only by God, not by our gifts, boldness, or brilliance.

6:9 the Synagogue of the Freedmen: A synagogue was a local place of worship, a community center for worship and studying the Scriptures. In contrast, the temple was the one worship center for all Judaism, the focus of Jewish rituals such as sacrifice. There were many synagogues both in Judea and throughout the Roman world. The one referred to in this verse was for Hellenistic Jews from outside Jerusalem.

6:12 Resistance to the gospel had gone from discussion to debate, from debate to slander, and from slander to violence. The antagonist

stirred up the people by convincing them that the essence of the Jewish faith—the things held as most sacred: the temple, the Law, Moses, and even God—was under attack by Stephen. The issue was not the work of Christ on the Cross but the core of traditional Jewish religion.

7:1 The high priest presumably was Caiaphas, the man who had presided over the Sanhedrin’s trial of Jesus.

7:2 The God of glory appeared: God intervened in history again and again to speak to His people. When God first spoke to Abraham, it was not in the temple of Jerusalem; it was not even in Palestine.

7:4 The text does not explain why Abraham settled in Haran when the Promised Land was Canaan. All we know is that Abraham chose to wait for his father to die before he journeyed to the Promised Land (see Gen. 12:1).

7:5 gave him no inheritance in it: God moved Abraham along his spiritual pilgrimage from blessing to blessing. Possession was

Stephen the Martyr



In the Book of Acts, the infant church faced opposition from Jew and Gentile alike. But with every successive wave of persecution, the church grew more and more. In hardships and trials, Christians depended increasingly on the Lord for strength and guidance. In so doing, they demonstrated their faith to others.

Stephen, one of the seven men chosen to minister to the needs of the neglected in the early church, became the first martyr of the Christian faith, but he certainly was not the last. Although falsely accused of blaspheming Moses and God, his unfair treatment and violent death would serve as an example to persecuted believers throughout the centuries who would face similar trials for upholding the name of Christ.

The Book of Acts tells us that right after the stoning of Stephen, a zealous young Pharisee named Saul continued the persecution of the new faith by hunting its members down and imprisoning them to face similar charges and similar fates. Although Saul was trying to stop the spread of the Christian faith, other eventual persecutors such as the Roman Emperor Nero (A.D. 37–68) cared little about the blaspheming of a Jewish deity. Nero was merely looking for scapegoats to take the blame for the great fire that destroyed most of Rome in A.D. 64.

Later Christian martyrs would face death at the hands of their so-called fellow believers. William Tyndale (1494–1536) was burned at the stake for heresy because he dared to translate the Bible into the English language, thus making it more accessible to the common person. Others have traveled into remote areas fully aware of the dangers of retribution from pagans. In 1956, five American missionaries were murdered in the jungles of Ecuador by headhunters called the Aucas. This same tribe was eventually converted to Christianity through the persistence of missionaries, who emulated the perseverance of the martyred missionaries who had gone before them.

Since Stephen’s death, countless Christians have died for their witness to the truth of the gospel. They set their eyes on Jesus instead of on this world. They did not value the approval of people over the approval of their Savior. Therefore, they refused to disown Jesus. For their courage to stand up for the truth, Jesus promises to acknowledge them before His Father in heaven (see Matt. 10:32, 33).

even *enough* to set his foot on. But even when Abraham had no child, ^aHe promised to give it to him for a possession, and to his descendants after him. ^bBut God spoke in this way: ^cthat his descendants would dwell in a foreign land, and that they would bring them into ^dbondage and oppress them four hundred years. ^e*“And the nation to whom they will be in bondage I will ^fjudge,”* said God, ^g*“and after that they shall come out and serve Me in this place.”* ^hThen He gave him the covenant of circumcision; ⁱand so Abraham begot Isaac and circumcised him on the eighth day; ^jand Isaac begot Jacob, and ^kJacob begot the twelve patriarchs.

The Patriarchs in Egypt

^l*“And the patriarchs, becoming envious, ^msold Joseph into Egypt. ⁿBut God was with him ^oand delivered him out of all his troubles, ^pand gave him favor and wisdom in the presence of Pharaoh, king of Egypt; and he made him governor over Egypt and all his house. ^qNow a famine and great ^rtrouble came over all the land of Egypt and Canaan, and our fathers found no sustenance. ^sBut when Jacob heard that there was grain in Egypt, he sent out our fathers first. ^tAnd the ^usecond time Joseph was made known to his brothers, and Joseph’s family became known to the Pharaoh. ^vThen Joseph sent and called his father Jacob and ^wall his relatives to him, ^xseventy-five people. ^ySo Jacob went down to Egypt; ^zand*

⁵ ^a Gen. 12:7; 13:15; 15:3, 18; 17:8; 26:3
⁶ ^b Gen. 15:13, 14, 16; 47:11, 12 ^c Ex. 1:8-14; 12:40, 41; Gal. 3:17
⁷ ^c Gen. 15:14 ^d Ex. 14:13-31 ^e Ex. 3:12; Josh. 3:1-17
⁸ ^m Gen. 17:9-14
⁹ ⁿ Gen. 21:1-5 ^o Gen. 25:21-26 ^p Gen. 29:31-30:24; 35:18, 22-26
¹⁰ ^h Gen. 37:4, 11, 28; Ps. 105:17 ⁱ Gen. 37:28 ^j Gen. 39:2, 21, 23
¹¹ ^u Gen. 41:38-44
¹² ^v Gen. 41:54; 42:5 ¹ affliction
¹³ ^v Gen. 42:1, 2
¹⁴ ^w Gen. 45:4, 16
¹⁵ ^x Gen. 45:9, 27
¹⁶ ^y Gen. 46:26, 27; Deut. 10:22 ² Or seventy, Ex. 1:5
¹⁷ ^z Gen. 46:1-7
¹⁸ ^a Gen. 49:33; Ex. 1:6

¹⁶ ^b Gen. 50:13; Ex. 13:19; Josh. 24:32
¹⁷ ^d Gen. 23:16
¹⁸ ^d Gen. 15:13; Ex. 2:23-25; Acts 7:6, 7 ^e Ex. 1:7-9; Ps. 105:24, 25
¹⁹ ^f Ex. 1:8
²⁰ ^g Ex. 1:22
²¹ ^h Ex. 2:1, 2 ⁱ Heb. 11:23
²² ^j Ex. 2:3, 4 ^k Ex. 2:5-10
²³ ^l Luke 24:19
²⁴ ^m Ex. 2:11, 12; Heb. 11:24-26

he died, he and our fathers. ¹⁶ And ^bthey were carried back to Shechem and laid in ^cthe tomb that Abraham bought for a sum of money from the sons of Hamor, *the father* of Shechem.

God Delivers Israel by Moses

¹⁷ “But when ^dthe time of the promise drew near which God had sworn to Abraham, ^ethe people grew and multiplied in Egypt ¹⁸till another king ^farose who did not know Joseph. ¹⁹ This man dealt treacherously with our people, and oppressed our forefathers, ^gmaking them expose their babies, so that they might not live. ²⁰ ^hAt this time Moses was born, and ⁱwas well pleasing to God; and he was brought up in his father’s house for three months. ²¹ But ^jwhen he was set out, ^kPharaoh’s daughter took him away and brought him up as her own son. ²² And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was ^lmighty in words and deeds.

²³ *“Now when he was forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren, the children of Israel. ²⁴ And seeing one of them suffer wrong, he defended and avenged him who was oppressed, and struck down the Egyptian. ²⁵ For he supposed that his brethren would have understood that God would deliver them by his hand, but they did not understand. ²⁶ And the next day he appeared to two of them as they were fighting, and tried to reconcile them, saying, ‘Men, you are*

not the goal, apparently, since God would not let Abraham settle down—to stagnate in God’s past blessing.

7:6, 7 Before Abraham’s descendants would be allowed to enjoy the land as their home, they would be tested in a furnace of affliction in a foreign land.

7:8 The covenant of circumcision was the symbol given to Abraham that he might never forget that God had promised to bless him. The sign of this promise was transmitted from generation to generation, from Gen. 17 to the time of Stephen’s confrontation with the Sanhedrin. Abraham was saved by faith (Gen. 15:6), and the symbol of circumcision was an outward sign demonstrating the genuineness of his faith. Similarly, God would bless Stephen’s audience not because of their circumcision, but because of their faith.

7:9 The patriarchs refers to Jacob, the grandson of Abraham, and his 12 sons. Jacob’s name, meaning “Usurper,” was changed by God to Israel, meaning something like “God’s Defender.” His 12 sons were the founders of the 12 tribes of Israel.

7:11 The famine proved to be the providential means of bringing Joseph’s brethren to Egypt in search of grain—and more importantly, of reconciling them with Joseph.

7:14 Stephen stated that seventy-five people in all went to Egypt. Genesis 46:26 indicates that 66 people accompanied Jacob to Egypt, not including Jacob, Joseph, and the 2 sons of Joseph. Stephen derived the number 75 from the Septuagint translation of the OT. The translators apparently added 9 wives (Gen. 46:26 says the number 66 did not include the wives). It was only 9 and not 12 because the wives of Judah and Simeon had died and Joseph’s wife was already in Egypt.

7:16 Why did Stephen make the point that the patriarchs were buried in Shechem? At the time of Stephen’s defense, Shechem

was the center of Samaritan life. Nearby was Mt. Gerizim, the site of another temple (see John 4:20). Stephen was charged with speaking against the temple in Jerusalem as if this were tantamount to speaking against God Himself. Stephen’s point was that God had been speaking and moving in the lives of His people in and out of Jerusalem, with and without a temple. The most important address God made to His people was at Mt. Sinai, which was nowhere near Jerusalem.

7:17–19 Abraham’s descendants enjoyed prosperity and great growth that proved threatening to the Egyptians and to Pharaoh, who did not know Joseph.

7:22 No person has been given the attention in Jewish tradition that Moses has. It is said that Pharaoh initially had no son; therefore, Moses was being prepared by Pharaoh’s daughter to succeed to the throne. For this reason, Moses was educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians. Later, Pharaoh had a son of his own to succeed him instead of Moses. Jewish tradition also states that Moses became a great captain among the Egyptians, leading them to victory against the Ethiopians. Thus he was mighty in words and deeds.

7:23–29 In the opinion of some Jewish rabbis, forty was the age at which a man had grown to maturity. Moses’ life is divided into three parts: the first 40 years in the palace of Pharaoh, the second 40 years in the desert, and the third 40 years carrying out God’s will to deliver His people. Moses began his period of wilderness training after he had tried to free the Israelites in a way that God had not chosen. We must be careful to do God’s work in God’s way, in God’s time, and for God’s reasons. It has been said that Moses spent 40 years thinking he was somebody, then spent 40 years finding out he was nobody. Finally, he spent 40 years finding out what God could do with somebody who was nobody.



Jewish History

Political change can often lead to changed perspectives on history. The destruction of Jerusalem and its temple by the Romans in A.D. 70 forced the Hebrews to radically rethink the significance of Jerusalem and its institutions. Stephen and his fellow Christians had already departed from the earlier Jewish view that the world revolved around Israel, which in turn revolved around the temple and the Law. They still saw Jerusalem as more than just a city, but they made it into a new symbol of a higher ideal. Stephen's view of history brought the conflict between the new movement and the city fathers to a boil. Outraged, the council stoned Stephen to death and allowed Saul to start persecuting believers. Stephen's perspective on Jerusalem challenges us as modern Christians to reflect on our loyalty to beloved institutions. Our highest allegiance must be to Christ.



A medieval ivory carving of Stephen being stoned to death
Walters Art Museum/Wikimedia Commons, CC-BY-SA 3.0

brethren; why do you wrong one another?" ²⁷ But he who did his neighbor wrong pushed him away, saying, ⁿ *"Who made you a ruler and a judge over us?"* ²⁸ *Do you want to kill me as you did the Egyptian yesterday?"* ²⁹ Then, at this saying, Moses fled and became a dweller in the land of Midian, where he ^p had two sons.

³⁰ *q* "And when forty years had passed, an Angel ³ of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire in a bush, in the wilderness of Mount Sinai. ³¹ When Moses saw *it*, he marveled at the sight; and as he drew near to observe, the voice of the Lord came to him, ³² *saying, 'I am the God of your fathers—the God of Abra-*

²⁷ ⁿ Ex. 2:14; Luke 12:14; Acts 7:35
²⁹ ^o Heb. 11:27
^p Ex. 2:15, 21, 22; 4:20; 18:3
³⁰ ^q Ex. 3:1-10; Is. 63:9 ³ NU omits of the Lord
³² ^r Ex. 3:6, 15; [Matt. 22:32]; Heb. 11:16
³³ ^s Ex. 3:5, 7, 8, 10
³⁴ ^t Ex. 2:24, 25
^u Ps. 105:26
³⁵ ^v Ex. 2:14; Acts 7:27 ^w Ex. 14:21
³⁶ ^x Ex. 12:41; 33:1; Deut. 6:21, 23; Heb. 8:9 ^y Ex. 7:8, 9; Deut. 6:22; Ps. 105:27;

ham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.' And Moses trembled and dared not look. ³³ *"Then the LORD said to him, 'Take your sandals off your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground.'* ³⁴ *I have surely ^t seen the oppression of My people who are in Egypt; I have heard their groaning and have come down to deliver them. And now come, I will ^u send you to Egypt.'*" ^v

³⁵ "This Moses whom they rejected, saying, ^v *'Who made you a ruler and a judge?'* is the one God sent to be a ruler and a deliverer ^w by the hand of the Angel who appeared to him in the bush. ³⁶ ^x He brought them out, after he had ^y shown wonders and signs in the land of Egypt, ^z and in the Red Sea, ^a and in the wilderness forty years.

Israel Rebels Against God

³⁷ "This is that Moses who said to the children of Israel, ^b *'The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your brethren. ^c Him ^d you shall hear.'*

³⁸ ^d "This is he who was in the ⁵ congregation in the wilderness with ^e the Angel who spoke to him on Mount Sinai, and with our fathers, ^f the one who received the living ^g oracles ⁶ to give to us, ³⁹ whom our fathers ^h would not obey, but rejected. And in their hearts they turned back to Egypt, ⁴⁰ ⁱ saying to Aaron, *'Make us gods to go before us; as for this Moses who brought us out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.'* ⁴¹ ^j And they made a calf in those days, offered sacrifices to the idol, and ^k rejoiced in the works of their own hands. ⁴² Then ^l God turned and gave them up to worship ^m the host of heaven, as it is written in the book of the Prophets:

ⁿ 'Did you offer Me slaughtered animals and sacrifices during forty years in the wilderness, O house of Israel?'

John 4:48 ^z Ex. 14:21 ^a Ex. 16:1, 35; Num. 14:33; Ps. 95:8-10; Acts 7:42; 13:18; Heb. 3:8 ³⁷ ^b Deut. 18:15, 18, 19 [★]; Acts 3:22
^c Matt. 17:5 ⁴ NU, M omit *Him you shall hear* ³⁸ ^d Ex. 19:3
^e Is. 63:9; Gal. 3:19; Heb. 2:2 ^f Ex. 21:1; Deut. 5:27; John 1:17
^g Rom. 3:2; Heb. 5:12; 1 Pet. 4:11 ⁵ Gr. *ekklesia*, assembly or church ⁶ sayings ³⁹ ^h Ps. 95:8-11 ⁴⁰ ⁱ Ex. 32:1, 23 ⁴¹ ^j Ex. 32:2-4; Deut. 9:16; Ps. 106:19 ^k Ex. 32:6, 18, 19 ⁴² ^l Ps. 81:12; [2 Thess. 2:11] ^m Deut. 4:19; 2 Kin. 21:3 ⁿ Amos 5:25-27

7:30–34 In relating the burning bush incident, Stephen once again underscored the fact that God is free to reveal Himself wherever He pleases. Wherever God does so, that ground becomes **holy ground**.

7:35–40 Stephen pointed out that **Moses**, the very one the Jewish leaders accused him of speaking against (6:11), was rejected by the leaders' forefathers as God's appointed leader and redeemer—just as the leaders were rejecting Jesus. It was this same Moses who

spoke of the coming of Jesus in Deut. 18. Stephen challenged the religious leaders of his day either to believe all of what Moses taught or none of it. **our fathers would not obey:** The Talmud, the Jewish commentary on the OT, calls the rebellion involving the golden calf "that unspeakable deed." The rabbis did not want to talk about it, forbidding a translation of the account in the vernacular for the synagogue services. The Jewish religious leaders wanted to bury the incident, but Stephen wanted to dig it back up.

43 *You also took up the tabernacle of Moloch, And the star of your god Remphan, Images which you made to worship; And I will carry you away beyond Babylon.*⁷

God's True Tabernacle

44 “Our fathers had the tabernacle of witness in the wilderness, as He appointed, instructing Moses ^pto make it according to the pattern that he had seen, ^qwhich our fathers, having received it in turn, also brought with Joshua into the land possessed by the Gentiles, ^rwhom God drove out before the face of our fathers until the ^sdays of David, ^twho found favor before God and ^uasked to find a dwelling for the God of Jacob. ^vBut Solomon built Him a house.

48 “However, ^wthe Most High does not dwell in temples made with hands, as the prophet says:

49 *‘Heaven^x is My throne, And earth is My footstool. What house will you build for Me?’ says the LORD, Or what is the place of My rest?*
50 *Has My hand not^y made all these things?’*

Israel Resists the Holy Spirit

51 “You ^zstiff-necked⁷ and ^auncircumcised in heart and ears! You always resist the Holy Spirit; as your fathers did, so do

43 ^o 2 Chr. 36:11-21; Jer. 25:9-12
44 ^p Ex. 25:40; [Heb. 8:5]
45 ^q Deut. 32:49; Josh. 3:14; 18:1; 23:9
^r Neh. 9:24; Ps. 44:2
^s 2 Sam. 6:2-15
46 ^t 2 Sam. 7:1-13; 1 Kin. 8:17 ^u 1 Chr. 22:7; Ps. 132:4, 5
47 ^v 1 Kin. 6:1-38; 8:20, 21; 2 Chr. 3:1-17
48 ^w 1 Kin. 8:27; 2 Chr. 2:6; Acts 17:24
49 ^x Is. 66:1, 2; Matt. 5:34
50 ^y Ps. 102:25
51 ^z Ex. 32:9; Is. 6:10 ^a Lev. 26:41
⁷ stubborn

52 ^b 2 Chr. 36:16; Matt. 21:35; 23:35; 1 Thess. 2:15 ^c Acts 3:14; 22:14; 1 John 2:1
53 ^d Ex. 20:1; Deut. 33:2; Acts 7:38; Gal. 3:19; Heb. 2:2
54 ^e Acts 5:33
^f furious
55 ^f Matt. 5:8; 16:28; Mark 9:1; Luke 9:27; Acts 6:5 ^g [Ex. 24:17]
56 ^h Matt. 3:16
ⁱ Dan. 7:13
58 ⁱ Acts 22:20
59 ^k Ps. 31:5
60 ^l Matt. 5:44; Luke 23:34

CHAPTER 8

1 ^a John 16:2; Acts 8:4; 11:19

you. ^{52b} Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who foretold the coming of ^cthe Just One, of whom you now have become the betrayers and murderers, ^{53d} who have received the law by the direction of angels and have not kept it.”

Stephen the Martyr

54^e When they heard these things they were ⁸cut to the heart, and they gnashed at him with *their* teeth. ⁵⁵ But he, ^jbeing full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the ^gglory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God, ⁵⁶ and said, “Look! ^hI see the heavens opened and the ⁱSon of Man standing at the right hand of God!”

57 Then they cried out with a loud voice, stopped their ears, and ran at him with one accord; ⁵⁸ and they cast *him* out of the city and stoned *him*. And ^jthe witnesses laid down their clothes at the feet of a young man named Saul. ⁵⁹ And they stoned Stephen as he was calling on *God* and saying, “Lord Jesus, ^kreceive my spirit.” ⁶⁰ Then he knelt down and cried out with a loud voice, ^l“Lord, do not charge them with this sin.” And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

Saul Persecutes the Church

8 Now Saul was consenting to his death. At that time a great persecution arose against the church which was at Jerusalem; and ^athey were all scattered

7:44 The ancient **tabernacle** had been the focus of the Israelites’ national worship. Even after the miraculous deliverance from Egypt there was a tendency among the people to forget God’s presence with them. The tabernacle was a constant testimony of God’s presence no matter where the people went. Paul tells us that we are the tabernacle, the temple of God (see 1 Cor. 3:16). We can never move out of the presence of God, for we carry His presence with us (see Ps. 139).

7:46–48 It was David’s desire to give God a permanent **dwelling**. The danger of David’s request was that some might identify the presence of God with one place, as if God were confined to that location. God honored David’s desire by permitting his son Solomon to build such a house and by filling it with the Shekinah glory, a demonstration of His presence. But God did not live in the temple. The Creator cannot be confined by anything He has made. His presence fills all that He has made. Solomon understood this when he dedicated the temple (see 1 Kin. 8:27–30). In his speech, Stephen emphasized that God could not be confined to **temples made with hands**.

7:52 Which of the prophets: Stephen put the council on the spot. The members of the council wanted to appear open to God’s truth, but they and their ancestors rarely wanted to hear God’s truth through His messengers. Jesus made essentially the same charges in Matt. 23:34–36. Stephen did not shrink from accusing the Sanhedrin of handing Jesus over to death, thus becoming His **murderers**. He used even stronger language than Peter had (3:13–15).

7:55 Stephen at that moment was **full of the Holy Spirit**, which was evidenced by the fact that all he wanted to do was please God. He was consumed only with doing God’s will by responding to

this terrifying moment in the way that would glorify Him. Stephen completely trusted the Holy Spirit to empower him to respond in the proper way.

7:56 I see . . . the Son of Man: Gazing at death may be terrifying, but gazing past death to the presence of Jesus waiting for the believer is the hope that dissolves the fear. We have the opportunity to glorify God in the face of death, boldly declaring our confidence in the fact that we will spend eternity in the presence of God. Stephen’s use of the title *Son of Man* is similar to the Lord’s appellation of Himself in Matt. 16:13 and the apocalyptic statements about the Messiah in Dan. 7:13.

7:59, 60 Because Jewish law did not allow an execution within the walls of the Holy City, the religious leaders took Stephen outside the city walls. Jewish custom was that the first witness would push the condemned person face forward into a pit some 12 feet deep. If the man survived the fall, the body would be turned over and large boulders would be thrown down on his chest to crush his ribs. If he remained alive, stones would be thrown by the whole congregation. The situation may have been a little different with Stephen, perhaps due to the executioners’ haste; the text indicates that Stephen knelt (v. 60). **Lord Jesus, receive my spirit:** Stephen’s work was done. He was immediately ushered into the presence of Jesus (see Luke 23:43; 2 Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:21–23). **Lord, do not charge them:** As Jesus had done, Stephen requested mercy for his killers.

8:1 The church father Augustine wrote that the church owes Paul to the prayer of Stephen. **Saul**, who later became the apostle Paul, never forgot the way Stephen died—he also did not conceal that he was in full agreement with the killing (22:20). God promises in Rom. 8:28 that all things work together for good. Even though Paul

throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles. ²And devout men carried Stephen *to his burial*, and ^bmade great lamentation over him.

³As for Saul, ^che made havoc of the church, entering every house, and dragging off men and women, committing *them* to prison.

Christ Is Preached in Samaria

⁴Therefore ^dthose who were scattered went everywhere preaching the word. ⁵Then ^ePhilip went down to ¹the city of Samaria and preached Christ to them. ⁶And the multitudes with one accord heeded the things spoken by Philip, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. ⁷For ^funclean spirits, crying with a loud voice, came out of many who were possessed; and many who were paralyzed and lame were healed. ⁸And there was great joy in that city.

The Sorcerer's Profession of Faith

⁹But there was a certain man called Simon, who previously ^gpracticed ²sorcery

² ^b Gen. 23:2
³ ^c Acts 7:58; 1 Cor. 15:9; Gal. 1:13; Phil. 3:6; 1 Tim. 1:13
⁴ ^d Matt. 10:23
⁵ ^e Acts 6:5; 8:26, 30 ¹ Or *a*
⁷ ^f Mark 16:17
⁹ ^g Acts 8:11; 13:6
² *magic*

^h Acts 5:36 ³ Or *nation*
¹¹ ⁴ *magic arts*
¹² ⁱ Acts 1:3; 8:4
¹⁴ ^j Acts 5:12, 29, 40
¹⁵ ^k Acts 2:38; 19:2
¹⁶ ^l Acts 19:2
^m Matt. 28:19; Acts 2:38 ⁿ Acts 10:48; 19:5
¹⁷ ^o Acts 6:6; 19:6; Heb. 6:2

in the city and ^hastonished the ³people of Samaria, claiming that he was someone great, ¹⁰to whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, "This man is the great power of God." ¹¹And they heeded him because he had astonished them with his ⁴sorceries for a long time. ¹²But when they believed Philip as he preached the things ⁱconcerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women were baptized. ¹³Then Simon himself also believed; and when he was baptized he continued with Philip, and was amazed, seeing the miracles and signs which were done.

The Sorcerer's Sin

¹⁴Now when the ^japostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them, ¹⁵who, when they had come down, prayed for them ^kthat they might receive the Holy Spirit. ¹⁶For ^las yet He had fallen upon none of them. ^mThey had only been baptized in ⁿthe name of the Lord Jesus. ¹⁷Then ^othey

was struggling against the work of the early church and the **church** was experiencing its worst **persecution** up to that time, it was this struggle that would eventually lead Paul, the man who wrote at least half of the NT, to eternal life. **they were all scattered:** This phrase speaks of scattering seeds on the ground so that something will grow. The members of the church in Jerusalem may not have understood what was happening to them, but Jesus would not let His church become limited racially, culturally, or geographically. These early believers became missionaries as much as refugees. At this point the entire church began to pay the price of discipleship. **except the apostles:** The initial target of the great persecution was the Hellenistic or Greek-speaking Jewish believers, in the person of Stephen.

8:3 Stephen's death supplied the spark for the persecution, and Saul supplied the leadership (v. 1). **He made havoc** describes a wild boar ravaging something in an attempt to destroy it (22:4, 19; 26:9–11). Saul had all the legal papers he needed to direct this persecution, and he had the authority to put people to death. Saul was arresting the Christians, **men and women**, and taking **them to prison**. After Saul was converted to Christ, the Lord appeared to Ananias, instructing him to go minister to Saul. However, because Ananias had heard

about the tremendous pain and suffering Saul had afflicted upon the Jewish believers, he was afraid to go (ch. 9).

8:5 Philip went to preach the gospel to Samaria as Jesus had commissioned (1:8). In the first century, the Jews and the Samaritans hated each other. The Jews considered the Samaritans half-breeds and religious deviants. Following the fall of the northern kingdom of Israel in 722 B.C., Samaria had been resettled by colonists brought to the land by the Assyrians. These colonists intermarried with the remaining Jews, and the Samaritans were descendants of these mixed marriages. The Samaritans rejected the OT Scriptures beyond the five books of Moses. Furthermore, they built a rival temple on Mt. Gerizim. To express their disdain for the Samaritans, Jews traveling to Galilee would generally avoid Samaria by crossing over the Jordan River into Perea. But the gospel message transcended the first-century barrier between the Jews and Samaritans. The Spirit of God created a loving fellowship of believers out of the hate that existed. The formation of the Samaritan church indicates that there is no room for racism in the church (see 1 Cor. 12; Gal. 3:26–28), for Jesus died for the sins of the whole world.

8:13 Simon himself also believed: Though this man was baptized, he had a long way to go in Christian doctrine and personal growth. Some people believe Peter's words in v. 21 indicate that Simon's confession and baptism were not genuine. Church history later associates Simon with heresy and identifies him as an enemy of the Christian faith. His actions have given to the vocabulary of the church the word "simony," which means buying and selling of church offices.

8:14 the apostles . . . sent Peter and John: Jesus had given "the keys of the kingdom" (see Matt. 16:19) to Peter. He was the one God would use to open the doors to the Jews (ch. 2), the Samaritans (ch. 8), and the Gentiles (ch. 10).

8:15 that they might receive the Holy Spirit: Peter and John were the official messengers from Jerusalem to tell the Samaritans what had occurred at Pentecost. The Samaritans had to know that salvation came from the Jews; the Jews, in turn, had to understand that the same salvation had come to the Samaritans. Jesus said in John 17 that the world would know that Jesus came from the Father when the world saw the unity of the body of Christ. With the tremendous hatred that existed between the Jews and Samaritans, God demonstrated to both sides that they would be united together as a church. The dependence of the Samaritans upon the Jews to

persecution

(Gk. *diōgmos*) (8:1; 2 Thess. 1:4; 2 Cor. 12:10) Strong's #1375

Persecution is the hatred and affliction that follows the witness and holy life of God's people in a hostile world. Jesus taught that God's prophets always faced persecution (Matt. 5:12); so His disciples should expect the same (Matt. 10:23). The early Christians saw the persecution of Jesus' followers as a participation in His redemptive suffering: filling up "what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ" (Col. 1:24). The idea of the coming Messiah held that the suffering of God's people was part of the coming of the kingdom—evidence that a person is truly one of God's own. Therefore they are "blessed" (Matt. 5:10) and should "rejoice" and "glorify God" since "the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God" (1 Pet. 4:13–17).

laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

¹⁸And when Simon saw that through the laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Spirit was given, he offered them money, ¹⁹saying, "Give me this power also, that anyone on whom I lay hands may receive the Holy Spirit."

²⁰But Peter said to him, "Your money perish with you, because ²⁰you thought that ^athe gift of God could be purchased with money! ²¹You have neither part nor portion in this matter, for your ^rheart is not right in the sight of God. ²²Repent therefore of this your wickedness, and pray God ^sif perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you. ²³For I see that you are 'poisoned by bitterness and bound by iniquity.'"

²⁴Then Simon answered and said, "Pray to the Lord for me, that none of the things which you have spoken may come upon me."

²⁵So when they had testified and preached the word of the Lord, they returned to Jerusalem, preaching the gospel in many villages of the Samaritans.

Christ Is Preached to an Ethiopian

²⁶Now an angel of the Lord spoke to

²⁰ ^p 2 Kin. 5:16; Is. 55:1; Dan. 5:17; [Matt. 10:8] ^a [Acts 2:38; 10:45; 11:17] ²¹ ^r Jer. 17:9 ²² ^s Dan. 4:27; 2 Tim. 2:25 ²³ ^t Heb. 12:15 ²⁴ ^u Gen. 20:7, 17; Ex. 8:8; Num. 21:7; 1 Kin. 13:6; Job 42:8; James 5:16

²⁶ ^v Acts 6:5 ⁵ Or a deserted place ²⁷ ^w Ps. 68:31; 87:4; Is. 56:3; Zeph. 3:10 ^x 1 Kin. 8:41, 42; John 12:20 ³² ^y Is. 53:7, 8 ² Matt. 26:62, 63; 27:12, 14; John 19:9 ³³ ^a Luke 23:1-25 ^b Luke 23:33-46

^v Philip, saying, "Arise and go toward the south along the road which goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." This is ^s desert. ²⁷So he arose and went. And behold, ^wa man of Ethiopia, a eunuch of great authority under Candace the queen of the Ethiopians, who had charge of all her treasury, and ^xhad come to Jerusalem to worship, ²⁸was returning. And sitting in his chariot, he was reading Isaiah the prophet. ²⁹Then the Spirit said to Philip, "Go near and overtake this chariot."

³⁰So Philip ran to him, and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah, and said, "Do you understand what you are reading?"

³¹And he said, "How can I, unless someone guides me?" And he asked Philip to come up and sit with him. ³²The place in the Scripture which he read was this:

^y "He was led as a sheep to the slaughter;
And as a lamb before its shearer is silent,
^z So He opened not His mouth.
³³ In His humiliation His ^a justice was taken away,
And who will declare His generation?
For His life is ^b taken from the earth."

receive the gift of the Holy Spirit was the healing sign that the two sides were to become one.

8:18–25 Simon saw . . . the Holy Spirit was given: The text does not indicate what exactly Simon saw. The gift of tongues was a sign to the nation of Israel (see 1 Cor. 14:20–22), so it is likely that the same sign was present at each step of the opening of the gospel—at Jerusalem, at Samaria, and at the home of Cornelius (ch. 10). Alternatively, the word *saw* may simply mean that Simon perceived what was happening. **Give me this power:** Verse 13 indicates that Simon was a believer. However, he confused the work of God with his previous magical practices. Because others had paid him for the secrets of his magic, he may have simply thought that this was the best way to approach Peter. He soon learned the error of his ways.

8:26 go toward the south along the road: This road descended from Jerusalem to Gaza, southwest of Jerusalem, near the Mediterranean coast of Palestine. Gaza was the last settlement before the desert wasteland stretching to Egypt. This was the road most travelers took to Africa. God had a divine appointment for Philip to meet the Ethiopian eunuch. The gospel would take a leap from the Samaritans to the "end of the earth" (1:8)—in this case, Africa.

8:27 he arose and went: Compare Philip's response with the unquestioning obedience of Abraham (see Gen. 22:3). Faith in God means being ready to move without explanation. **a eunuch of great authority:** Technically a *eunuch* is a man who has been emasculated. However, by the first century the term had become a government title used for important military or political officials. The ancient kingdom of Ethiopia was ruled by a queen mother or **Candace**, who ruled on behalf of her son the king. Because the king was considered the child of the sun, he was too holy to become involved in secular affairs. Therefore, his mother took over the responsibility. The eunuch in this passage was the minister of finance, a prominent position in the Ethiopian regime. He was responsible for distributing the funds of the treasury based on the desires of the queen mother. **had come to Jerusalem to worship:** Many Gentiles in the first century had grown weary of the multiple gods and loose morals of their nations. They were searching in Judaism

for the truth. If they accepted Judaism as their faith, they would obey all the rules and regulations of the Law of Moses. This would include being circumcised and baptized. This type of convert was called a *proselyte*. Gentiles who did not become proselytes but did attend the Jewish synagogues to listen to the Scriptures were called *God-fearers*. We cannot be sure which the Ethiopian eunuch was.

8:28, 29 The chariot referred to in this passage was probably an ox-drawn wagon. Most likely the eunuch was part of a caravan journeying in the same direction, moving slowly down the road. As was the practice of the day, the man was reading aloud. Philip, prompted by the Spirit, spoke to the man about the prophecy of Isaiah, explaining the prophetic words about Christ.

8:30 Do you understand what you are reading: This question indicates the diligence that is required in the study of Scripture (see 2 Tim. 2:15). The Spirit of God does not eliminate the need for human teachers or diligent study. The Spirit is not given to make study needless but to make study effective.

lamb

(Gk. *amnos*) (8:32; John 1:29, 36; 1 Pet. 1:19) Strong's #286

The NT writers often identified Jesus as being "the lamb," or "the Lamb of God." They were drawing upon many images in the OT concerning sacrificial lambs. No doubt, the title "Lamb of God" would be associated in the minds of the Jews with the Passover lamb (see Ex. 12), the lamb led to the slaughter in Isaiah's prophecies (Is. 53:7), and the lambs used in the daily sacrifices of sin offerings (Lev. 14:12, 21, 24; Num. 6:12). In depicting Jesus as a lamb, the Scriptures were declaring that Jesus was the substitutionary sacrifice provided by God for our sins. The announced Messiah came not to be a philosopher, nor to be a teacher of morality. He came to do what we could not do for ourselves—take away our sin.

³⁴So the eunuch answered Philip and said, “I ask you, of whom does the prophet say this, of himself or of some other man?” ³⁵Then Philip opened his mouth, ^cand beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him. ³⁶Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, “See, *here is water*. ^dWhat hinders me from being baptized?”

³⁷⁶Then Philip said, ^e“If you believe with all your heart, you may.”

And he answered and said, ^f“I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.”

³⁸So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him. ³⁹Now when they came up out of the water, ^gthe Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away, so that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his

³⁵ ^c Luke 24:27; Acts 17:2; 18:28; 28:23
³⁶ ^d Acts 10:47; 16:33
³⁷ ^e Matt. 28:19; [Mark 16:16; Rom. 10:9, 10] ^f Matt. 16:16; John 6:69; 9:35, 38; 11:27
⁶ NU, M omit v. 37. It is found in Western texts, including the Latin tradition.
³⁹ ^g 1 Kin. 18:12; 2 Kin. 2:16; Ezek. 3:12, 14; 2 Cor. 12:2
⁴⁰ ^h Acts 21:8
⁷ Same as Heb. Ashdod

CHAPTER 9

1 ^a Acts 7:57; 8:1, 3; 26:10, 11; Gal. 1:13;
1 Tim. 1:13
2 ^b Acts 22:5

way rejoicing. ⁴⁰But Philip was found at ⁷Azotus. And passing through, he preached in all the cities till he came to ^hCaesarea.

The Damascus Road: Saul Converted

9 Then ^aSaul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest ²and asked ^bletters from him to the synagogues of Damascus, so that if he found any who were of the Way, whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem.

³^cAs he journeyed he came near Damascus, and suddenly a light shone around him from heaven. ⁴Then he fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him, “Saul, Saul, ^dwhy are you persecuting Me?”

3 ^c Acts 22:6; 26:12, 13; 1 Cor. 15:8 4 ^d [Matt. 25:40]

8:35 preached Jesus to him: First-century Jews did not speak much about a suffering Messiah. The Jewish people, facing the yoke of Roman rule, believed that the Messiah would come as the Lion of Judah, a delivering King, not a weak lamb. They believed and taught that the suffering One spoken of by Isaiah was the suffering nation of Israel. Most likely this eunuch had heard the “official” teaching of this passage in Jerusalem but still had some questions. Philip showed him that suffering One was Jesus. He had to suffer on the Cross for the sins of all of humanity.

8:36 What hinders me from being baptized: Having heard the

message of Christ’s sacrifice for sin, the eunuch responded to the conviction of the Holy Spirit. Irenaeus, an early church father who lived between A.D. 130 and 202, wrote that the eunuch returned to Ethiopia and became a missionary to his own people.

8:39, 40 caught Philip away . . . Philip was found: The Greek word translated *caught* here is also used in 1 Thess. 4:17 for the catching away of the church into the air. Though this passage may say only that Philip went from the desert to Azotus, most likely the terminology indicates a miraculous transportation.

9:1 Saul was **still** restless in his zeal to defend his Jewish faith from the new, supposedly dangerous Jewish messianic sect (8:3). **the disciples:** Christians were originally referred to as “disciples” and “belonging to the Way.” Jesus Himself had used both of these titles (see Matt. 28:19; John 14:6). *Disciple* means a follower, an imitator, one who has a master.

9:2 The **letters** were documents authorizing Saul to arrest Christians in Damascus, 140 miles northeast of Jerusalem. Rome permitted the Jewish Sanhedrin to control Jewish affairs. At this time the new church was a Jewish affair. **synagogues:** The early Jewish believers in Jesus were still attending the synagogues. The synagogues in Damascus had to cooperate with anyone who had the authorization that Saul possessed. Saul planned to take the followers of Jesus who had escaped to Damascus back to Jerusalem to stand trial before the Sanhedrin (26:9–11), and probably to face a death sentence. **The Way** was a title for the followers of Jesus (see 19:9, 23; 22:4; 24:14, 22; John 14:6).

9:3–9 A light shone that was brighter than the sun and continued to shine around Saul (26:13). The light was so intense and penetrating that **Saul fell to the ground**, as did everyone who was with him (26:14). **persecuting Me:** In persecuting the church, Saul was persecuting the body of Christ whose individual members are in Christ (see 1 Cor. 12:27). The arguments of Stephen in his final speech, the spread of the gospel, and the extraordinary response of believers to the gospel were like **goads** to Saul, but Saul in his fury continued to resist such promptings from the Holy Spirit. **hearing a voice but seeing no one:** The men with Saul stood speechless, hearing the voice but not seeing the individual speaking. In ch. 22, Paul indicates that those with him saw the light but did not understand the voice, even though they heard the sound of it. **when his eyes were opened he saw no one:** Ironically while Saul was blind, he would see his own spiritual blindness.



Roman Damascus



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Damascus represented much more to Saul, the strict Pharisee, than any other stop on his campaign of repression. It was the hub of a vast commercial network with far-flung lines of caravan trade reaching into north Syria, Mesopotamia, Anatolia, Persia, and Arabia. If the new “Way” of Christianity flourished in Damascus, it would quickly reach all these places. From the viewpoint of the Sanhedrin and of Saul, the archpersecutor, it had to be stopped in Damascus.

The dominant political figure at the time of Paul’s escape from Damascus (2 Cor. 11:32, 33) was Aretas IV, king of the Nabateans (9 B.C.–A.D. 40), though normally the Decapolis cities were attached to the province of Syria and were thus under the influence of Rome.

The city itself was a veritable oasis, situated in a plain watered by the biblical rivers Abana and Pharpar. Roman architecture overlaid the Hellenistic town plan with a great temple to Jupiter and a mile-long colonnaded street, the “Straight Street” of Acts 9:11. The city gates and a section of the town wall may still be seen today, as well as the lengthy bazaar that runs along the line of the ancient street.

⁵ And he said, “Who are You, Lord?”

Then the Lord said, “I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. ¹ It is hard for you to kick against the goads.”

⁶ So he, trembling and astonished, said, “Lord, what do You want me to do?”

Then the Lord *said* to him, “Arise and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do.”

⁷ And ^e the men who journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice but seeing no one. ⁸ Then Saul arose from the ground, and when his eyes were opened he saw no one. But they led him by the hand and brought *him* into Damascus. ⁹ And he was three days without sight, and neither ate nor drank.

⁵ ¹ NU, M omit the rest of v. 5 and begin v. 6 with *But arise and go* ⁷ e Dan. 10:7; John 12:29; [Acts 22:9; 26:13]

¹⁰ ^f Acts 22:12 ¹¹ g Acts 21:39; 22:3 ¹³ ^h Acts 9:1 ² *bad things*

Ananias Baptizes Saul

¹⁰ Now there was a certain disciple at Damascus ^f named Ananias; and to him the Lord said in a vision, “Ananias.”

And he said, “Here I am, Lord.”

¹¹ So the Lord *said* to him, “Arise and go to the street called Straight, and inquire at the house of Judas for *one* called Saul ^g of Tarsus, for behold, he is praying. ¹² And in a vision he has seen a man named Ananias coming in and putting *his* hand on him, so that he might receive his sight.”

¹³ Then Ananias answered, “Lord, I have heard from many about this man, ^h how much ² harm he has done to Your saints in Jerusalem. ¹⁴ And here he has

9:10 Not an apostle but a layman, **a certain disciple . . . named Ananias** was ready and available to be used by God. He did not know that God would send him to Saul, the man who had been vigorously persecuting the Christians.

9:11 In ancient Damascus, **the street called Straight** went from one end of the city to the other.

9:13 So far in Acts, Christians have been called “disciples,” “believers,” and those belonging to “the Way” (5:14; 6:1; 9:2). Here the word **saints** is used. It means those set apart by God for use in His service.

authority from the chief priests to bind all ⁱwho call on Your name.”

¹⁵ But the Lord said to him, “Go, for ^jhe is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before ^kGentiles, ^lkings, and the ^mchildren ³ of Israel. ¹⁶ For ⁿI will show him how many things he must suffer for My ^oname’s sake.”

¹⁷ And Ananias went his way and entered the house; and ^qlaying his hands on him he said, “Brother Saul, the Lord ⁴Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you came, has sent me that you may receive your sight and ^rbe filled with the Holy Spirit.” ¹⁸ Immediately there fell from his eyes *something* like scales, and he received his sight at once; and he arose and was baptized.

¹⁹ So when he had received food, he was strengthened. ^s Then Saul spent some days with the disciples at Damascus.

Saul Preaches Christ

²⁰ Immediately he preached ⁵ the Christ in the synagogues, that He is the Son of God.

²¹ Then all who heard were amazed, and said, “Is this not he who destroyed those who called on this name in Jerusalem, and has come here for that purpose, so that he might bring them bound to the chief priests?”

²² But Saul increased all the more in strength, ^u and confounded the Jews who dwelt in Damascus, proving that this *Jesus* is the Christ.

Saul Escapes Death

²³ Now after many days were past, ^v the Jews plotted to kill him. ²⁴ ^w But their

¹⁴ ⁱ Acts 7:59; 9:2, 21; 1 Cor. 1:2; 2 Tim. 2:22

¹⁵ ^j Acts 13:2; 22:21; Rom. 1:1; 1 Cor.

15:10; Gal. 1:15; Eph. 3:7, 8; 1 Tim. 2:7;

2 Tim. 1:11 ^k Rom. 1:5; 11:13; Gal. 2:7,

8 ^l Acts 25:22, 23; 26:1 ^m Acts 21:40;

Rom. 1:16; 9:1-5 ³ Lit. sons

¹⁶ ⁿ Acts 20:23; 2 Cor. 11:23-28;

12:7-10; Gal. 6:17; Phil. 1:29, 30

^o 2 Cor. 4:11 ¹⁷ ^p Acts 22:12, 13

^q Acts 8:17 ^r Acts 2:4; 4:31; 8:17; 13:52

⁴ ^m Omits Jesus ¹⁹ ^v Acts 26:20

²⁰ ⁵ NU Jesus ²¹ ^s Acts 8:3; 9:13;

Gal. 1:13, 23 ²² ^u Acts 18:28

²³ ^v Acts 23:12; 2 Cor. 11:26

²⁴ ^w 2 Cor. 11:32

²⁵ ^x Josh. 2:15; 1 Sam. 19:12

²⁶ ^y Acts 22:17-20; 26:20; Gal. 1:17, 18

²⁷ ^z Acts 4:36; 13:2 ^a Acts 9:20, 22

²⁸ ^b Gal. 1:18 ²⁹ ^c Acts 6:1; 11:20

^d Acts 9:23; 2 Cor. 11:26 ⁶ Greek-

speaking Jews ³¹ ^e Acts 5:11; 8:1;

16:5 ^f [Eph. 4:16, 29] ^g Ps. 34:9

^h John 14:16 ⁱ Acts 16:5 ⁷ NU church...

was ⁸ built up ³² ^j Acts 8:14

³⁴ ^k [Acts 3:6, 16; 4:10]

plot became known to Saul. And they watched the gates day and night, to kill him. ²⁵ Then the disciples took him by night and ^x let *him* down through the wall in a large basket.

Saul at Jerusalem

²⁶ And ^y when Saul had come to Jerusalem, he tried to join the disciples; but they were all afraid of him, and did not believe that he was a disciple. ²⁷ ^z But Barnabas took him and brought *him* to the apostles. And he declared to them how he had seen the Lord on the road, and that He had spoken to him, ^a and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus. ²⁸ So ^b he was with them at Jerusalem, coming in and going out. ²⁹ And he spoke boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus and disputed against the ^c Hellenists, ⁶ ^d but they attempted to kill him. ³⁰ When the brethren found out, they brought him down to Caesarea and sent him out to Tarsus.

The Church Prospers

³¹ ^e Then the ⁷ churches throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace and were ^f edified. ⁸ And walking in the ^g fear of the Lord and in the ^h comfort of the Holy Spirit, they were ⁱ multiplied.

Aeneas Healed

³² Now it came to pass, as Peter went ^j through all *parts of the country*, that he also came down to the saints who dwelt in Lydda. ³³ There he found a certain man named Aeneas, who had been bed-ridden eight years and was paralyzed. ³⁴ And Peter said to him, “Aeneas, ^k Jesus

9:17 Jesus, who appeared to you: Saul was not dreaming on the road to Damascus but instead had seen the resurrected **Lord**.

9:21 The people in Damascus **were amazed** that Saul was preaching, because Saul had come to kill Christians, not defend their faith. Saul’s fame as a persecutor of Christians was well known to the Jews in Damascus. The leaders of the synagogues were probably notified of his coming and instructed by the high priest to welcome this zealous defender of Judaism. They seem to have been unnerved at first, not only by the fact that Saul had become a Christian, but by the strength of his faith and of his argument from Scripture that Jesus was indeed the promised Savior of Israel, the Messiah.

9:22, 23 So powerful was Saul’s argument from Scripture that Jesus is the Christ that the Jews **plotted to kill him**. They even enlisted the cooperation of the governor of Damascus under King Aretas IV of Arabia, who reigned from 9 B.C. to A.D. 40.

9:25 let him down through the wall in a large basket: If the Jewish leaders had caught the Damascus disciples helping Saul pursue his service to the Lord, the result probably would have been widespread persecution. In ancient times city walls contained all kinds of openings—windows without glass. Saul’s escape here recalls the spies’ escape from Jericho in Josh. 2:15 and David’s escape from King Saul in 1 Sam. 19:12. *Basket* here refers to a wide, flexible container used to carry large quantities of things. This was the first of many attempts on Paul’s life.

9:26, 27 It is no wonder that the **disciples in Jerusalem** were cautious about Saul, wondering whether his “conversion” was actually an attempt to infiltrate their ranks and catch them all. **Barnabas**, who had the gift of encouragement, saw Paul’s true heart and defended him to the other **apostles**.

9:29 Stephen had also debated the Hellenistic Jews (6:9). In a sense, Saul picked up where Stephen left off.

9:30 Tarsus, the birthplace of Saul, was about three hundred miles north of Jerusalem and about ten miles inland from the Mediterranean Sea. Tarsus was a well-known university city, surpassed in educational opportunities only by Athens and Alexandria.

9:31 Then the churches . . . had peace: This peace was not due solely to Saul’s conversion. Tiberius, the emperor of Rome, died around this time. He was replaced by Caligula, who wanted to erect a statue of himself in the temple at Jerusalem. Thus Jewish energy was directed away from persecuting Christians and toward Caligula. Here we see God’s sovereign hand at work, giving the early church a short season of respite.

9:34, 35 Jesus the Christ heals you: Everyone who witnessed the healing believed. The outcome of the one physical healing was many spiritual healings. Many **turned to the Lord** because they saw more than a crippled man walking around; they saw proof that Jesus was alive from the dead and had authority over disease.

the Christ heals you. Arise and make your bed.” Then he arose immediately.³⁵ So all who dwelt at Lydda and ¹Sharon saw him and ^mturned to the Lord.

Dorcas Restored to Life

³⁶At Joppa there was a certain disciple named ⁹Tabitha, which is translated ¹Dorcas. This woman was full ⁿof good works and charitable deeds which she did. ³⁷But it happened in those days that she became sick and died. When they had washed her, they laid *her* in ^oan upper room. ³⁸And since Lydda was near Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent two men to him, imploring *him* not to delay in coming to them. ³⁹Then Peter arose and went with them. When he had come, they brought *him* to the upper room. And all the widows stood by him weeping, showing the tunics and garments which Dorcas had made while she was with them. ⁴⁰But Peter ^pput them all out, and ^qkneled down and prayed. And turning to the body he ^rsaid, “Tabitha, arise.” And she opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter she sat up. ⁴¹Then he gave her *his* hand and lifted her up; and when he had called the saints and widows, he presented her alive. ⁴²And it became known throughout all Joppa, ^sand many believed on the Lord. ⁴³So it was that he stayed many days in Joppa with ^tSimon, a tanner.

³⁵ ¹ Chr. 5:16; 27:29; Is. 33:9; 35:2; 65:10 ^m Acts 11:21; 15:19
³⁶ ⁿ 1 Tim. 2:10; Titus 3:8 ^o Lit., in Aram., *Gazelle*
³⁷ ^o Acts 1:13; 9:39
⁴⁰ ^p Matt. 9:25
^q Luke 22:41; Acts 7:60 ^r Mark 5:41, 42; John 11:43
⁴² ^s John 11:45
⁴³ ^t Acts 10:6

CHAPTER 10

¹ ^a Acts 8:40; 23:23
¹ Cohort
² ^b Acts 8:2; 9:22; 22:12 ^c [Acts 10:22, 35; 13:16, 26]
² charitable gifts
³ ^d Acts 10:30; 11:13
³ ³ P.M.
⁵ ^e Acts 11:13, 14
⁶ ^f Acts 9:43 ^g Acts 11:14 ^h NU, M omit the rest of v. 6.
⁹ ^h Acts 10:9-32; 11:5-14 ⁱ Noon
¹¹ ⁱ Ezek. 1:1; Matt. 3:16; Acts 7:56; Rev. 4:1; 19:11

Cornelius Sends a Delegation

10 There was a certain man in ^aCaesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of what was called the Italian ¹Regiment, ^{2b}a devout *man* and one who ^cfeared God with all his household, who gave ²alms generously to the people, and prayed to God always. ³About ³the ninth hour of the day ^dhe saw clearly in a vision an angel of God coming in and saying to him, “Cornelius!”

⁴And when he observed him, he was afraid, and said, “What is it, lord?”

So he said to him, “Your prayers and your alms have come up for a memorial before God. ⁵Now ^esend men to Joppa, and send for Simon whose surname is Peter. ⁶He is lodging with ^fSimon, a tanner, whose house is by the sea. ^gHe ⁴will tell you what you must do.” ⁷And when the angel who spoke to him had departed, Cornelius called two of his household servants and a devout soldier from among those who waited on him continually. ⁸So when he had explained all *these* things to them, he sent them to Joppa.

Peter's Vision

⁹The next day, as they went on their journey and drew near the city, ^hPeter went up on the housetop to pray, about ⁵the sixth hour. ¹⁰Then he became very hungry and wanted to eat; but while they made ready, he fell into a trance ¹¹and ⁱsaw heaven opened and an object like

9:43 To be a **tanner** was not desirable or socially acceptable in Israel. A tanner had to deal with dead animals, contrary to Jewish ceremonial practices, not to mention the unpleasantness of the work itself and its attendant odor.

10:1, 2 The following two chapters mark an important turning point in the Book of Acts. Those who were scattered by persecution from Jerusalem had been preaching the gospel only to Jews (11:19). At this point, they began to overcome their prejudices and carry the message of Christ to the Gentiles. As a **centurion**, Cornelius would have been part of a cohort, a **regiment** of the Roman military. A legion numbered about six thousand men. Each legion had ten cohorts of about six hundred men each. The cohorts were divided into centuries of a hundred men, and each century was commanded by a centurion, something like a modern sergeant. **Cornelius** was a Gentile of Italian descent. He and his family were “God-fearers,” similar to the Ethiopian eunuch (8:27). **Caesarea**, which was about 30 miles north of Joppa on the coast, was the capital of Judea under the Roman procurators.

10:6 **lodging with Simon, a tanner:** God cut away Peter’s prejudices by having him stay for many days not only with a Gentile, but with one whose trade Peter likely considered repulsive.

10:7 **when the angel . . . departed, Cornelius called:** Cornelius’s desire was to be pleasing to God. The fact that he readily obeyed the angel is a sign of how much he desired the truth. With this kind of attitude, there is no question that Cornelius was open to receiving the truth of the gospel the moment he heard it.

10:9–16 While his host was preparing the noon meal, Peter fell into a trance during which he was commanded to kill and eat all kinds of animals, reptiles, and birds. The problem was that the animals were mixed: clean and unclean beasts were gathered together (see

Lev. 11). Jewish people were taught from childhood never to touch or eat any animal that was unclean. However, here Peter was being commanded by God to do just that. Three times God corrected Peter’s resistance with the words, **what God has cleansed you must not call common**. Food may have been his first consideration, but Peter would soon understand the greater message. The vision was a sign from heaven that Jews were no longer to call Gentiles unclean. From that point on, these two groups would be on equal footing before the Father. God was breaking down Peter’s prejudices.

one who feared God

(Gk. *phoboumenos ton theon*) (10:2, 22; 13:16, 26) Strong’s #5399; 2316

Simply stated, this expression means “God-fearer.” Luke identifies such a category of people throughout the Book of Acts (see 10:2, 22, 35; 13:16, 26 for the expression “fearing God,” and 13:43, 50; 16:14; 17:4, 17; 18:7 for the expression “devout” or “worshiping God”). The God-fearers were Gentiles who were interested in Judaism but were not necessarily converts or proselytes. They worshiped the same God and observed the same laws as the Jews did, but they did not become circumcised. Many of these God-fearers were the first Gentiles to become Christians. Cornelius was the prototype of such a God-fearer.

a great sheet bound at the four corners, descending to him and let down to the earth. ¹²In it were all kinds of four-footed animals of the earth, wild beasts, creeping things, and birds of the air. ¹³And a voice came to him, “Rise, Peter; kill and eat.”

¹⁴But Peter said, “Not so, Lord! ^jFor I have never eaten anything common or unclean.”

¹⁵And a voice *spoke* to him again the second time, ^k“What God has ⁶cleansed you must not call common.” ¹⁶This was done three times. And the object was taken up into heaven again.

Summoned to Caesarea

¹⁷Now while Peter ⁷wondered within himself what this vision which he had seen meant, behold, the men who had been sent from Cornelius had made inquiry for Simon’s house, and stood before the gate. ¹⁸And they called and asked whether Simon, whose surname was Peter, was lodging there.

¹⁹While Peter thought about the vision, ^lthe Spirit said to him, “Behold, three men are seeking you. ^{20m}Arise therefore, go down and go with them, doubting nothing; for I have sent them.”

²¹Then Peter went down to the men ⁸who had been sent to him from Cornelius, and said, “Yes, I am he whom you seek. For what reason have you come?”

²²And they said, “Cornelius the centurion, a just man, one who fears God and ⁿhas a good reputation among all the nation of the Jews, was divinely instructed by a holy angel to summon you to his house, and to hear words from you.” ²³Then he invited them in and lodged them.

On the next day Peter went away with them, ^oand some brethren from Joppa accompanied him.

Peter Meets Cornelius

²⁴And the following day they entered Caesarea. Now Cornelius was waiting for them, and had called together his relatives and close friends. ²⁵As Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him and fell down at his feet and worshiped him. ²⁶But Peter lifted him up, saying, ^p“Stand up; I myself am also a man.” ²⁷And as he

¹⁴ / Lev. 11:4; 20:25; Deut. 14:3; 7; Ezek. 4:14

¹⁵ ^k [Matt. 15:11; Mark 7:19]; Acts 10:28; [Rom. 14:14]; 1 Cor. 10:25; [1 Tim. 4:4; Titus 1:15]

⁶ Declared clean

¹⁷ ⁷ was perplexed

¹⁹ / Acts 11:12

²⁰ ^m Acts 15:7-9

²¹ ⁸ NU, M omit

who had been

sent to him from

Cornelius

²² ⁿ Acts 22:12

²³ ^o Acts 10:45;

11:12

²⁶ ^p Acts 14:14, 15;

Rev. 19:10; 22:8

²⁸ ^q John 4:9;

18:28; Acts 11:3;

Gal. 2:12 ^r [Acts

10:14, 35; 15:8, 9]

³⁰ ^s Acts 1:10

^r Matt. 28:3; Mark

16:5 ⁹ NU *Four days*

ago to this hour, at

the ninth hour

³¹ ^u Dan. 10:12

^v Heb. 6:10

¹ charitable gifts

³² ² NU omits the

rest of v. 32.

³⁴ ^w Deut. 10:17;

2 Chr. 19:7; Rom.

2:11; Gal. 2:6;

Eph. 6:9

³⁵ ^x Acts 15:9;

[1 Cor. 12; 13; Eph.

2:13] ^y Ps. 15:1, 2

³⁶ ^z Is. 57:19; Eph.

2:14; [Col. 1:20]

^a Matt. 28:18; Acts

2:36; Rom. 10:12;

1 Cor. 15:27 ³ Lit.

sons

³⁷ ^b Luke 4:14

³⁸ ^c Is. 61:1-3; Luke

4:18 ^d Matt. 4:23

^e John 3:2; 8:29

³⁹ ^f Acts 1:8 ^g Acts

2:23 ⁴ NU, M *they*

also

⁴⁰ ^h Hos. 6:2; Matt.

12:39, 40; 16:4;

20:19; John 2:19-21;

Acts 2:24

⁴¹ ⁱ [John 14:17, 19,

22; 15:27] ^j Luke

24:30, 41-43

⁴² ^k Matt. 28:19

^j John 5:22, 27; Acts

17:31 ^m Rom. 14:9;

2 Tim. 4:1; 1 Pet. 4:5

talked with him, he went in and found many who had come together. ²⁸Then he said to them, “You know how ^qunlawful it is for a Jewish man to keep company with or go to one of another nation. But ^rGod has shown me that I should not call any man common or unclean. ²⁹Therefore I came without objection as soon as I was sent for. I ask, then, for what reason have you sent for me?”

³⁰So Cornelius said, ⁹“Four days ago I was fasting until this hour; and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house, and behold, ^sa man stood before me ^tin bright clothing, ³¹and said, ‘Cornelius, ^uyour prayer has been heard, and ^vyour ¹alms are remembered in the sight of God. ³²Send therefore to Joppa and call Simon here, whose surname is Peter. He is lodging in the house of Simon, a tanner, by the sea. ²When he comes, he will speak to you.’ ³³So I sent to you immediately, and you have done well to come. Now therefore, we are all present before God, to hear all the things commanded you by God.”

Preaching to Cornelius’ Household

³⁴Then Peter opened *his* mouth and said: ^w“In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality. ³⁵But ^xin every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is ^yaccepted by Him. ³⁶The word which *God* sent to the ³children of Israel, ^zpreaching peace through Jesus Christ—^aHe is Lord of all—³⁷that word you know, which was proclaimed throughout all Judea, and ^bbegan from Galilee after the baptism which John preached: ³⁸how ^cGod anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who ^dwent about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, ^efor God was with Him. ³⁹And we are ^fwitnesses of all things which He did both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem, whom ⁴they ^gkilled by hanging on a tree. ⁴⁰Him ^hGod raised up on the third day, and showed Him openly, ⁴¹ⁱnot to all the people, but to witnesses chosen before by God, *even* to us ^jwho ate and drank with Him after He arose from the dead. ⁴²And ^kHe commanded us to preach to the people, and to testify ^lthat it is He who was ordained by God *to be* Judge ^mof the living and the

10:23 Peter went away with them: Though Peter chose to travel in public with three Gentiles, he was careful to take six believing Jewish brethren with him (11:12) as witnesses.

10:27 many . . . had come together: The great faith of Cornelius is demonstrated by the fact that he had a house full of people when Peter arrived.

10:34–42 God shows no partiality: The good news of the gospel is not for a certain population. In every nation every kind of person is welcome into the kingdom of God. This is precisely what Christ had told the apostles (see Matt. 28:19).

dead. ⁴³ⁿTo Him all the prophets witness that, through His name, ^owhoever believes in Him will receive ^premission⁵ of sins.”

The Holy Spirit Falls on the Gentiles

⁴⁴While Peter was still speaking these words, ^qthe Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word. ⁴⁵^rAnd ⁶those of the circumcision who believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, ^sbecause the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also. ⁴⁶For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God.

Then Peter answered, ⁴⁷“Can anyone forbid water, that these should not be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit ^tjust as we *have*?” ⁴⁸^uAnd he commanded them to be baptized ^vin the name of the Lord. Then they asked him to stay a few days.

Peter Defends God's Grace

11 Now the apostles and brethren who were in Judea heard that the Gentiles had also received the word of God. ²And when Peter came up to Jerusalem, ^athose of the circumcision contended with him, ³saying, ^b“You went in to uncircumcised men ^cand ate with them!”

⁴But Peter explained *it* to them ^din order from the beginning, saying: ⁵^e“I was in the city of Joppa praying; and in a trance I saw a vision, an object descending like a great sheet, let down from heaven by four corners; and it came to

⁴³ ⁿ [Is. 42:1; 53:11; 61:1]; Jer. 31:34; Dan. 9:24; Hos. 6:1-3; Mic. 7:18; Zech. 13:1; Mal. 4:2
^o [John 3:16, 18; Acts 26:18]; Rom. 10:11; Gal. 3:22
^p Acts 13:38, 39
^q forgiveness
⁴⁴ ^q Acts 4:31
⁴⁵ ^r Acts 10:23 ^s Is. 42:1, 6; 49:6; Luke 2:32; John 11:52; Acts 11:18 ⁶ The Jews
⁴⁷ ^r Acts 2:4; 10:44; 11:17; 15:8
⁴⁸ ^u 1 Cor. 1:14-17
^v Acts 2:38; 8:16; 19:5

CHAPTER 11

² ^a Acts 10:45
³ ^a Matt. 9:11; Acts 10:28 ^c Gal. 2:12
⁴ ^d Luke 1:3
⁵ ^e Acts 10:9

¹² ^f [John 16:13]; Acts 10:19; 15:7
⁹ Acts 10:23
¹³ ^h Acts 10:30
¹⁵ ⁱ Acts 2:1-4; 15:7-9
¹⁶ ^j Matt. 3:11; Mark 1:8; John 1:26, 33; Acts 1:5; 19:4 ^k Is. 44:3
¹⁷ ^j [Acts 15:8, 9] ^m Acts 10:47
¹⁸ ⁿ Is. 42:1, 6; 49:6; Luke 2:32; John 11:52; Rom. 10:12, 13; 15:9, 16

me. ⁶When I observed it intently and considered, I saw four-footed animals of the earth, wild beasts, creeping things, and birds of the air. ⁷And I heard a voice saying to me, ‘Rise, Peter; kill and eat.’ ⁸But I said, ‘Not so, Lord! For nothing common or unclean has at any time entered my mouth.’ ⁹But the voice answered me again from heaven, ‘What God has cleansed you must not call common.’ ¹⁰Now this was done three times, and all were drawn up again into heaven. ¹¹At that very moment, three men stood before the house where I was, having been sent to me from Caesarea. ¹²Then ^fthe Spirit told me to go with them, doubting nothing. Moreover ^gthese six brethren accompanied me, and we entered the man’s house. ¹³^hAnd he told us how he had seen an angel standing in his house, who said to him, ‘Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon whose surname is Peter, ¹⁴who will tell you words by which you and all your household will be saved.’ ¹⁵And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them, ⁱas upon us at the beginning. ¹⁶Then I remembered the word of the Lord, how He said, ^j‘John indeed baptized with water, but ^kyou shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit.’ ¹⁷If therefore God gave them the same gift as *He gave* us when we believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, ^mwho was I that I could withstand God?”

¹⁸When they heard these things they became silent; and they glorified God, saying, ⁿ“Then God has also granted to the Gentiles repentance to life.”

10:43 In order to **receive remission of sins**, one has to believe—nothing more, nothing less.

10:44–46 The **Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard**: The Jewish believers present were amazed because they saw that the Gentiles had received the same gift of speaking in **tongues** that they had received (ch. 2). The good news had reached the Jews, the Samaritans, and now the Gentiles. All were united by the same faith in the same Lord with the same gift of the Holy Spirit.

10:47, 48 Willingness to **be baptized** is the consistent response in the Book of Acts of all who placed their faith in Christ. It is the appropriate response (see Matt. 28:19, 20) of a regenerated heart (2:36–38).

11:1 The Jews were not fond of the **Gentiles**. In some rabbinical writings, the Gentiles were considered to have been created by God to kindle the fires of hell. They were called dogs (see Matt. 15:26) and unclean (10:14).

11:2 Those of the **circumcision** refers to Jewish Christians who believed that Gentiles had to become Jews when they became Christians. The Jewish Christians had been circumcised as a seal of the Mosaic covenant and had kept the Jewish laws. They were not pleased that the Gentiles were considered equal to them in the eyes of God, based on nothing more than their faith in Christ. They wanted the Gentiles to be circumcised and to keep the Law of Moses in order to become Christians. **contended with him**: This was not a polite discussion, but an intense quarrel. The Jewish Christians were upset because Peter had broken Jewish law by going into the home of a Gentile and eating with him. The Jewish Christians justified their prejudice by claiming that it was God who had forbidden

eating with Gentiles. However, the Levitical laws were not intended to teach ostracism.

11:4–10 in a **trance I saw a vision**: Because of the importance of the issue of personal prejudice, Luke repeats the account of the vision of the sheet and the unclean animals that God used to free Peter from his racial bigotry (10:9–16).

11:12 Peter had wisely taken **six brethren** with him when he visited Cornelius’s home (10:23). He anticipated the argument from “those of the circumcision” (v. 2).

11:15 **began to speak**: Apparently Peter considered the words he spoke in Caesarea (10:34–43) to be just the introduction to the sermon he had intended to preach. **as upon us**: The manifestation of the Holy Spirit was the same to the Gentiles at Caesarea as it was to the Jews at Jerusalem (10:44). **At the beginning** is a reference to the Day of Pentecost (2:4).

11:16 **baptized with the Holy Spirit**: This statement is found seven times in the NT (see also 1:5; Matt. 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33; 1 Cor. 12:13). The reference is to a once-for-all act whereby Christ places believers in the care and safekeeping of the Holy Spirit until the day He returns.

11:18 **granted to the Gentiles repentance to life**: This section begins a bold new step in the mission of the church. The Samaritans were part Jewish; the Ethiopian eunuch and Cornelius were Jewish proselytes. Finally the Jewish Christians that made up the early church understood Jesus’ commission to them: they were to bring the gospel message to the Gentile too (1:8).

Barnabas and Saul at Antioch

¹⁹Now those who were scattered after the persecution that arose over Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to no one but the Jews only. ²⁰But some of them were men from Cyprus and Cyrene, who, when they had come to Antioch, spoke to ^pthe Hellenists, preaching the Lord Jesus. ²¹And ^qthe hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed and ^rturned to the Lord.

²²Then news of these things came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent out ^sBarnabas to go as far as Antioch. ²³When he came and had seen the grace of God, he was glad, and ^tencouraged them all that with purpose of heart they should continue with the Lord. ²⁴For he was a good man, ^ufull of the Holy Spirit and of faith. ^vAnd a great many people were added to the Lord.

²⁵Then Barnabas departed for ^wTarsus to seek Saul. ²⁶And when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. So it was that for a whole year they assembled with the church and taught a great many people. And the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.

Relief to Judea

²⁷And in these days ^xprophets came from Jerusalem to Antioch. ²⁸Then one of them, named ^yAgabus, stood up and

19 ^o Acts 8:1, 4
20 ^p Acts 6:1; 9:29
21 ^q Luke 1:66;
Acts 2:47 ^r Acts
9:35; 14:1
22 ^s Acts 4:36; 9:27
23 ^t Acts 13:43;
14:22
24 ^u Acts 6:5 ^v Acts
5:14; 11:21
25 ^w Acts 9:11, 30
27 ^x Acts 2:17; 13:1;
15:32; 21:9; 1 Cor.
12:28; Eph. 4:11
28 ^y John 16:13;
Acts 21:10

^z Acts 18:2
29 ^a Rom. 15:26;
1 Cor. 16:1; 2 Cor.
9:1
30 ^b Acts 12:25

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2 ^a Matt. 4:21; 20:23
3 ^b Ex. 12:15; 23:15;
Acts 20:6
4 ^c John 21:18 ^d Gr.
tetrads, squads
of four
5 ^e NU constantly or
earnestly
6 ^f guarding
7 ^g Acts 5:19

showed by the Spirit that there was going to be a great famine throughout all the world, which also happened in the days of ^zClaudius Caesar. ²⁹Then the disciples, each according to his ability, determined to send ^arelief to the brethren dwelling in Judea. ³⁰^bThis they also did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.

Herod's Violence to the Church

12 Now about that time Herod the king stretched out *his* hand to harass some from the church. ²Then he killed James ^athe brother of John with the sword. ³And because he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to seize Peter also. Now it was *during* ^bthe Days of Unleavened Bread. ⁴So ^cwhen he had arrested him, he put *him* in prison, and delivered *him* to four ¹squads of soldiers to keep him, intending to bring him before the people after Passover.

Peter Freed from Prison

⁵Peter was therefore kept in prison, but ²constant prayer was offered to God for him by the church. ⁶And when Herod was about to bring him out, that night Peter was sleeping, bound with two chains between two soldiers; and the guards before the door were ³keeping the prison. ⁷Now behold, ^dan angel of the Lord stood

11:19 This **persecution** began when Stephen was murdered for his faith (ch. 7). God often uses tough times to accomplish His will. Jesus said, “You shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth” (1:8). God allowed persecution to be the impetus for spreading Christ’s witness throughout the land. Those who face such persecution will receive “great reward” in heaven (see Matt. 5:10–12). **the Jews only:** At this time it was primarily the Jewish believers who were being persecuted. Consequently, the Jewish Christians were the ones who were moving out and sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ in various regions. They shared the gospel with the Jews because they still met in the local synagogues and held on to many of the Jewish customs.

11:22, 23 Seleucus I founded the city of **Antioch**, naming it after his father. The city was cosmopolitan, attracting people of various cultures and ethnic backgrounds—including people from Persia, India, and even China. The gospel proclaimed in Antioch would have had tremendous potential for reaching other areas of the world. Moreover, because the city was culturally diverse, it was not controlled by one religious group, making the people there more open to hearing the truth of the gospel message. **Barnabas**, nicknamed “Son of Encouragement” by the apostles (4:36), was sent to discern what God was doing in the lives of the new converts. When Barnabas saw the grace of God in these converts, he was true to his name and **encouraged** them in their new faith. **Purpose of heart** describes a resolve of the will to make up one’s mind about one thing. The resolve here was to remain with the Lord.

11:25 **Barnabas departed . . . to seek Saul:** Because Barnabas was sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit (v. 24), God was able to bring Saul of Tarsus to his mind again. The disciples in Jerusalem were afraid of Saul and refused to believe that he was a disciple (9:26). Barnabas, however, had defended Saul before the apostles (9:27).

11:26 The believers were **called Christians** because they worshiped Christ, the Messiah. The historian Josephus called them “that tribe of Christians.” Tacitus, the Roman historian, referred to them as “Christians, a name derived from Christ.” Originally, the church called themselves “The Way.” But later they began to refer to themselves as Christians, despite the fact that the name most likely was originally used to ridicule the believers.

12:1–3 **Herod the king** is Herod Agrippa I, the nephew of Herod Antipas who murdered John the Baptist, and the grandson of Herod the Great who had the children of Bethlehem put to death in his search for Jesus. Herod was not a Jew but an Edomite. The Jews resented this fact, and Herod knew it. **James** was the first of the Twelve to die for the sake of the gospel, and the only one whose death is recorded in the NT. Being put to death **with the sword** meant being beheaded. Jesus had told both James and his brother John that they would drink the same cup of suffering He did (see Matt. 20:20–23). For James, this suffering was execution. For John, it was exile. The killing of James by Herod was an attempt to win the favor of the Jewish leaders.

12:5, 6 **Peter** was arrested and slated to be executed like James (v. 2). However, Peter’s execution was delayed because it was against Jewish law to have a trial or sentencing during the Feast of Unleavened Bread, better known as Passover. This was Peter’s third arrest (4:3; 5:18). During a previous incarceration, Peter had miraculously escaped with the help of an angel of the Lord who opened the gates of the prison (5:19, 20). This time Peter was placed under maximum security in the care of four squads of soldiers of four men each. The soldiers worked three-hour shifts. Both of Peter’s wrists were chained, and he had a soldier on each side. Outside Peter’s cell, two more soldiers stood guard.

by *him*, and a light shone in the prison; and he struck Peter on the side and raised him up, saying, “Arise quickly!” And his chains fell off *his* hands. ⁸Then the angel said to him, “Gird yourself and tie on your sandals”; and so he did. And he said to him, “Put on your garment and follow me.” ⁹So he went out and followed him, and ^edid not know that what was done by the angel was real, but thought ^fhe was seeing a vision. ¹⁰When they were past the first and the second guard posts, they came to the iron gate that leads to the city, ^gwhich opened to them of its own accord; and they went out and went down one street, and immediately the angel departed from him.

¹¹And when Peter had come to himself, he said, “Now I know for certain that ^hthe Lord has sent His angel, and ⁱhas delivered me from the hand of Herod and *from* all the expectation of the Jewish people.”

¹²So, when he had considered *this*, ^jhe came to the house of Mary, the mother of ^kJohn whose surname was Mark, where many were gathered together ^lpraying. ¹³And as Peter knocked at the door of the gate, a girl named Rhoda came to answer. ¹⁴When she recognized Peter’s voice, because of *her* gladness she did not open the gate, but ran in and announced that Peter stood before the gate. ¹⁵But they said to her, “You are beside yourself!” Yet she kept insisting that it was so. So they said, ^m“It is his angel.”

¹⁶Now Peter continued knocking; and when they opened *the door* and saw him, they were astonished. ¹⁷But ⁿmotioning to them with his hand to keep silent, he declared to them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. And he said, “Go, tell these things to James and

⁹ ^e Ps. 126:1 ^f Acts 10:3, 17; 11:5
¹⁰ ^g Acts 5:19; 16:26
¹¹ ^h [Ps. 34:7]; Dan. 3:28; 6:22; [Heb. 1:14] ⁱ Job 5:19; [Ps. 33:18, 19; 34:22; 41:2]; 2 Cor. 1:10; [2 Pet. 2:9]
¹² ^j Acts 4:23 ^k Acts 13:5, 13; 15:37; 2 Tim. 4:11; Philem. 24; 1 Pet. 5:13 ^l Acts 12:5
¹⁵ ^m Gen. 48:16; [Matt. 18:10]
¹⁷ ⁿ Acts 13:16; 19:33; 21:40

¹⁸ ⁴ disturbance
²⁰ ^o Matt. 11:21
^p 1 Kin. 5:11; Ezra 3:7; Ezek. 27:17
⁵ who was in charge of the king’s bedchamber ⁶ Lit. nourished
²³ ^q 1 Sam. 25:38; 2 Sam. 24:16, 17; 2 Kin. 19:35; Acts 5:19 ^r Ps. 115:1
⁷ breathed his last
²⁴ ^s Is. 55:11; Acts 6:7; 19:20
²⁵ ^t Acts 11:30
^u Acts 11:30 ^v Acts 13:5, 13 ^w Acts 12:12; 15:37 ^x NU, M to

CHAPTER 13

¹ ^a Acts 14:26
^b Acts 11:22 ^c Rom. 16:21

to the brethren.” And he departed and went to another place.

¹⁸Then, as soon as it was day, there was no small ⁴stir among the soldiers about what had become of Peter. ¹⁹But when Herod had searched for him and not found him, he examined the guards and commanded that *they* should be put to death.

And he went down from Judea to Caesarea, and stayed *there*.

Herod’s Violent Death

²⁰Now Herod had been very angry with the people of ^oTyre and Sidon; but they came to him with one accord, and having made Blastus ⁵the king’s personal aide their friend, they asked for peace, because ^ptheir country was ⁶supplied with food by the king’s *country*.

²¹So on a set day Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat on his throne and gave an oration to them. ²²And the people kept shouting, “The voice of a god and not of a man!” ²³Then immediately an angel of the Lord ^qstruck him, because ^rhe did not give glory to God. And he was eaten by worms and ⁷died.

²⁴But ^sthe word of God grew and multiplied.

Barnabas and Saul Appointed

²⁵And ^tBarnabas and Saul returned ⁸from Jerusalem when they had ^ufulfilled *their* ministry, and they also ^vtook with them ^wJohn whose surname was Mark.

13 Now ^ain the church that was at Antioch there were certain prophets and teachers: ^bBarnabas, Simeon who was called Nîger, ^cLucius of Cyrene, Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. ²As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the

12:11 delivered me from the hand of Herod: Why was Peter’s life spared while James’s life was taken? The answer is the sovereign will of God. If we believe that God is good and wise, we can trust that what He allowed to happen was part of His wise plan for the good of all of His people. When we place our complete trust in the goodness of God, we can find true peace. God is in control despite any appearance to the contrary.

12:15 You are beside yourself: It is interesting to note that those who were praying so fervently for Peter’s deliverance (v. 12) should regard as insane the person who informed them that their prayers had been answered. **It is his angel:** This statement may imply a belief in individual guardian angels being assigned to believers (see Dan. 10:21; Matt. 18:10).

12:20 It is unclear why Herod was so angry with the people of Tyre and Sidon. Both cities were seaports, like Caesarea, the provincial capital of Judea. The dispute may have been an issue of seaport business, since competition was great. The important point was that the cities did not want the angry king to set an economic embargo against them. Through the royal official Blastus, the people of Tyre and Sidon received an appointment to present their case to the king.

12:22 The voice of a god: The Jewish historian Josephus also provides an account of this display, informing us that in an attempted appeasement of the king the people confessed that he was “more than a mortal.” Herod, instead of rebuking the address of deity, enjoyed the adulation—until he discovered the consequence of such blasphemy.

13:1 Prophets functioned in the early church as proclaimers of God’s revelation. **Teachers** explained the meaning of the revelation and helped the people apply it to their lives. In the early church the prophets were the preachers—the ones who communicated revelation directly from the Spirit of God. Evangelists, pastors, and teachers (see Eph. 4:11) took what was taught or declared and made it applicable for the daily nurture of people’s lives. **Antioch** was the base of operation for Saul.

13:2 ministered to the Lord: As the people carried out what God had given them to do as prophets or teachers, their ministry to the church became their ministry to the Lord. Whenever we serve each other, God accepts that service as directly unto Him (see Matt. 25:31–46).

Holy Spirit said, ^d“Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work ^eto which I have called them.” ³Then, ^fhaving fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent *them* away.

Preaching in Cyprus

⁴So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia, and from there they sailed to ^gCyprus. ⁵And when they arrived in Salamis, ^hthey preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews. They also had ⁱJohn as *their* assistant.

⁶Now when they had gone through ¹the island to Paphos, they found ^ja certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew whose name *was* Bar-Jesus, ⁷who was with the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, an intelligent man. This man called for Barnabas and Saul and sought to hear the word of God. ⁸But ^kElymas the sorcerer (for so

² ^d Num. 8:14; Acts 9:15; 22:21; Rom. 1:1; Gal. 1:15; 2:9
^e Matt. 9:38; Acts 14:26; Rom. 10:15; Eph. 3:7, 8; 1 Tim. 2:7; 2 Tim. 1:11; Heb. 5:4
³ ^f Matt. 9:15; Mark 2:20; Luke 5:35; Acts 6:6
⁴ ^g Acts 4:36
⁵ ^h [Acts 13:46]
ⁱ Acts 12:25; 15:37
⁶ ^j Acts 8:9 ¹ NU the whole island
⁸ ^k Ex. 7:11; 2 Tim. 3:8

² ^{opposed}
⁹ ¹ Acts 2:4; 4:8
¹⁰ ^m Matt. 13:38; John 8:44; [1 John 3:8]
¹¹ ⁿ Ex. 9:3; 1 Sam. 5:6; Job 19:21; Ps. 32:4; Heb. 10:31
¹³ ^o Acts 15:38

his name is translated) ²withstood them, seeking to turn the proconsul away from the faith. ⁹Then Saul, who also is *called* Paul, ^lfilled with the Holy Spirit, looked intently at him ¹⁰and said, “O full of all deceit and all fraud, ^m*you* son of the devil, *you* enemy of all righteousness, will you not cease perverting the straight ways of the Lord? ¹¹And now, indeed, ⁿthe hand of the Lord is upon you, and you shall be blind, not seeing the sun for a time.”

And immediately a dark mist fell on him, and he went around seeking someone to lead him by the hand. ¹²Then the proconsul believed, when he saw what had been done, being astonished at the teaching of the Lord.

At Antioch in Pisidia

¹³Now when Paul and his party set sail from Paphos, they came to Perga in Pamphylia; and ^oJohn, departing from them,

13:3 The laying on of **hands** was the church’s way of identifying with and affirming the mission to which God had called a particular person.

13:5 **John** was John Mark, the nephew of Barnabas (12:25).

13:6–12 Luke presents **Sergius Paulus** as the first Gentile ruler to believe the gospel. The island of Cyprus was a senatorial island, which means it was Roman-controlled. As a Roman official, Sergius was a Gentile. Unlike Cornelius (10:2), there is no evidence that Sergi-

us attended the temple or was a God-fearer. This pagan government official was amazed at the power of God and believed the truth.

13:9 **Saul, who also is called Paul:** It was not unusual for a person to have two names. In Paul’s Jewish surroundings, the name Saul was used. But in his mission to the Gentiles, his Roman name Paul was used. The name Paul means “Small One.”

13:13 **John, departing from them:** Whatever the trouble was between Paul and John Mark, it was enough for Paul not to want

The Ministries of Peter and Paul Compared and Contrasted		
	Peter	Paul
Formerly known as:	Simon	Saul
First encounter with Christ	Introduced by Andrew at Bethany (John 1:41)	A supernatural vision on the road to Damascus (9:1–6)
Occupation	Fisherman (Luke 5:1–11)	Tentmaker (18:3)
Formal religious training	A disciple of Christ (4:13; Mark 1:16, 17)	A disciple of Gamaliel (22:3); a Pharisee (23:5, 6; Phil. 3:5)
Role	Missionary to the Jews	Missionary to the Gentiles
Strength	Bold preacher and spokesman; leader of the early church	Intelligent defender of the faith and tireless church planter
Ministry experiences	Usually paired with John	Paired with Barnabas (13:1—15:39), then Silas (15:40—17:14), then a number of others
	Preached the great sermon at Pentecost when three thousand believed	Preached everywhere he went, including the famous address on Mars’ Hill (17:16–33)
	Healed others (3:1–10; 5:15)	Healed others (14:8–10; 19:12)
	Raised Dorcas from the dead (9:36–42)	Raised Eutychus from the dead (20:7–12)
	Jailed frequently (4:3; 5:18; 12:3)	Jailed frequently (16:23, 24; 21:27–36)
Writings	Gave impassioned sermons to religious authorities (4:5–12; 5:29–32)	Spoke boldly to religious rulers and leaders (22:30—23:6; 26:1–29)
	Experienced a vision in which he was commanded to take the gospel to Cornelius (ch. 10)	Experienced a vision in which he was commanded to take the gospel to Europe (16:6–10)
Death	1 and 2 Peter	Romans; 1 and 2 Corinthians; Galatians; Ephesians; Philippians; Colossians; 1 and 2 Thessalonians; 1 and 2 Timothy; Titus; Philemon
	Church tradition says he was crucified upside down.	Church tradition says he was beheaded.

returned to Jerusalem. ¹⁴But when they departed from Perga, they came to Antioch in Pisidia, and ¹⁵went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day and sat down. ¹⁶And ¹⁷after the reading of the Law and the Prophets, the rulers of the synagogue sent to them, saying, “Men *and* brethren, if you have ¹⁸any word of ¹⁹exhortation for the people, say on.”

²⁰Then Paul stood up, and motioning with *his* hand said, “Men of Israel, and ²¹you who fear God, listen: ²²The God of this people ²³Israel ²⁴chose our fathers, and exalted the people ²⁵“when they dwelt as strangers in the land of Egypt, and with ²⁶an uplifted arm He ²⁷brought them out of it. ²⁸Now ²⁹for a time of about forty years He put up with their ways in the wilderness. ³⁰And when He had destroyed ³¹seven nations in the land of Canaan, ³²He distributed their land to them by allotment.

³³“After that ³⁴He gave *them* judges for about four hundred and fifty years, ³⁵until Samuel the prophet. ³⁶And afterward they asked for a king; so God gave them ³⁷Saul the son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, for forty years. ³⁸And ³⁹when He had removed him, ⁴⁰He raised up for them David as king, to whom also He gave testimony and said, ⁴¹“*I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after My own heart, who will do all My will.*” ⁴²From this man’s seed, according ⁴³to the promise, God raised up for Israel ⁴⁴a ⁴⁵Savior—Jesus— ⁴⁶after John had first preached, before His coming, the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel. ⁴⁷And as John was finishing his course, he said, ⁴⁸“Who do you think I am? I am not *He*. But behold, ⁴⁹there comes One after me, the sandals of whose feet I am not worthy to loose.”

⁵⁰“Men *and* brethren, sons of the

¹⁴ ^p Acts 16:13
¹⁵ ^p Luke 4:16
¹⁶ ^p Heb. 13:22
¹⁷ ^p encouragement
¹⁸ ^p Acts 10:35
¹⁹ ^p Ex. 6:1, 6; 13:14, 16; Deut. 7:6-8
²⁰ ^p Acts 7:17 ^p Ex. 14:8
²¹ ^p M omits Israel
²² ^p Mighty power
²³ ^p W ex. 16:35; Num. 14:34; Acts 7:36
²⁴ ^p Deut. 7:1
²⁵ ^p Josh. 14:1, 2; 19:51; Ps. 78:55
²⁶ ^p Judg. 2:16; 1 Sam. 4:18; 7:15
²⁷ ^p 1 Sam. 3:20; Acts 3:24
²⁸ ^p 1 Sam. 8:5
²⁹ ^p 1 Sam. 10:20-24
³⁰ ^p 1 Sam. 15:23, 26, 28
³¹ ^p 1 Sam. 16:1, 12, 13
³² ^p Ps. 89:20
³³ ^p 1 Sam. 13:14
³⁴ ^p Is. 11:1
³⁵ ^p Ps. 132:11
³⁶ ^p [Matt. 1:21]
³⁷ ^p M salvation, after
³⁸ ^p Matt. 3:1; [Luke 3:3]
³⁹ ^p Matt. 3:11; Mark 1:7; Luke 3:16
⁴⁰ ^p John 1:20, 27
⁴¹ ^p Ps. 66:16
⁴² ^p Matt. 10:6
⁴³ ^p stock message
⁴⁴ ^p Luke 23:34
⁴⁵ ^p Matt. 27:22, 23; Mark 15:13, 14; Luke 23:21-23; John 19:15; Acts 3:14; [2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 4:15]; 1 Pet. 2:22
⁴⁶ ^p Luke 18:31
⁴⁷ ^p Matt. 27:57-61; Mark 15:42-47; Luke 23:50-56; John 19:38-42
⁴⁸ ^p Ps. 16:10, 11; Hos. 6:2; Matt. 12:39, 40; 28:6
⁴⁹ ^p Matt. 28:16; Acts 1:3, 11; 1 Cor. 15:5-8
⁵⁰ ^p [Gen. 3:15]

⁵¹family of Abraham, and ⁵²those among you who fear God, ⁵³to you the ⁵⁴word of this salvation has been sent. ⁵⁵For those who dwell in Jerusalem, and their rulers, ⁵⁶because they did not know Him, nor even the voices of the Prophets which are read every Sabbath, have fulfilled *them* in condemning *Him*. ⁵⁷And though they found no cause for death *in Him*, they asked Pilate that He should be put to death. ⁵⁸Now when they had fulfilled all that was written concerning Him, ⁵⁹they took *Him* down from the tree and laid *Him* in a tomb. ⁶⁰But God raised Him from the dead. ⁶¹He was seen for many days by those who came up with Him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are His witnesses to the people. ⁶²And we declare to you glad tidings—⁶³that promise which was made to the fathers. ⁶⁴God has fulfilled this for us their children, in that He has raised up Jesus. As it is also written in the second Psalm:

⁶⁵“*You are My Son,
 Today I have begotten You.*”

⁶⁶And that He raised Him from the dead, no more to return to ⁶⁷corruption, He has spoken thus:

⁶⁸“*I will give you the sure ⁶⁹mercies of David.*”

⁷⁰Therefore He also says in another *Psalms*:

⁷¹“*You will not allow Your Holy One to see corruption.*”

⁷²“For David, after he had served ⁷³his own generation by the will of God, ⁷⁴fell

⁷⁵ ^p Ps. 2:7; Heb. 1:5
⁷⁶ ^p Is. 55:3
⁷⁷ ^p the state of decay
⁷⁸ ^p blessings
⁷⁹ ^p Ps. 16:10
⁸⁰ ^p Acts 2:27
⁸¹ ^p Acts 2:29
⁸² ^p in his

John Mark to accompany him on a later journey (15:36–39). John Mark would prove faithful later in Paul’s ministry (see 2 Tim. 4:11).

13:14 Why did Paul and his party pass through Perga without any reported sharing of the gospel there? Paul might have had some physical affliction that forced him from the lowlands of Perga to the cooler, higher altitudes of Antioch in Pisidia, some 3,600 feet above sea level. Later, when Paul wrote to the Galatian churches, he spoke about an illness (see Gal. 4:13). Paul’s affliction may have affected his eyes in some way. Some think Paul had malaria, which left him with disabling headaches, described by the ancients as like a red-hot bar thrust through the forehead. Possibly this was what Paul meant when he referred to his “thorn in the flesh” (see 2 Cor. 12:7). Antioch in Pisidia was a different city from the Antioch located just north of Palestine in Syria (11:22).

13:20 Some early manuscripts apply the **four hundred and fifty years** to the period before the **judges** referred to in vv. 17–19. In either case the intended extent of the time reference is vague.

13:22 David . . . a man after My own heart: What God saw in David was a deep desire to do His will. Throughout David’s entire life that drive never changed. Unlike King Saul, who was a self-willed

man, David confessed his sins and quickly repented of them (see Ps. 51).

He put up with

(Gk. *trophophorō*) (13:18) Strong’s #5159

This Greek word, which occurs only here in the NT, means “to bear with.” But other manuscripts read “cared for” (literally “carried them as a nurse”). The two Greek words differ in only one letter: *etrophophorēsen* (meaning “nourished”) and *etrophophorēsen* (meaning “bore with”). *Nourished* is probably a quote from the Septuagint (Greek OT) translation of Deut. 1:31. With that as the reading, Paul in this sermon to Jews at Antioch was emphasizing God’s great care for the Israelites in the wilderness. Otherwise, Paul was using the expression *He put up with* as a graphic portrayal of God’s patience.



asleep, was buried with his fathers, and ³saw corruption; ³⁷but He whom God raised up ⁴saw no corruption. ³⁸Therefore let it be known to you, brethren, that ^athrough this Man is preached to you the forgiveness of sins; ³⁹and ^bby Him everyone who believes is justified from all things from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses. ⁴⁰Beware therefore, lest what has been spoken in the prophets come upon you:

⁴¹ ‘Behold, ^c you despisers, Marvel and perish!
For I work a work in your days,
A work which you will by no means believe,
Though one were to declare it to you.’”

Blessing and Conflict at Antioch

⁴²⁻⁵ So when the Jews went out of the synagogue, the Gentiles begged that these

³⁶ ³ underwent decay
³⁷ ⁴ underwent no decay
³⁸ ^a Jer. 31:34
³⁹ ^b [Is. 53:11; John 3:16]
⁴¹ ^c Hab. 1:5
⁴² ⁵ Or And when they went out of the synagogue of the Jews; NU And when they went out, they begged

⁴³ ^d Acts 11:23
^e Titus 2:11; Heb. 12:15; 1 Pet. 5:12
⁴⁵ ^f Acts 18:6; 1 Pet. 4:4; Jude 10
⁴⁶ ^g Matt. 10:6; Acts 3:26; Rom. 1:16
^h Ex. 32:10; Deut. 32:21; Is. 55:5; Matt. 21:43; Rom. 10:19
ⁱ Acts 18:6
⁴⁷ ^j Is. 42:6; 49:6; Luke 2:32

words might be preached to them the next Sabbath. ⁴³ Now when the congregation had broken up, many of the Jews and devout proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas, who, speaking to them, ^dpersuaded them to continue in ^ethe grace of God.

⁴⁴ On the next Sabbath almost the whole city came together to hear the word of God. ⁴⁵ But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy; and contradicting and blaspheming, they ^fopposed the things spoken by Paul. ⁴⁶ Then Paul and Barnabas grew bold and said, ^g“It was necessary that the word of God should be spoken to you first; but ^hsince you reject it, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, behold, ⁱwe turn to the Gentiles. ⁴⁷ For so the Lord has commanded us:

^j‘I have set you as a light to the Gentiles,

13:37 He whom God raised up saw no corruption: Paul argued that David could not have been speaking of himself in Ps. 16:10 (see v. 35). When David died, his body returned to dust just like everyone else’s (see Peter’s comments in 2:29–31). David was speaking of the Messiah, who would be raised from the dead as the final proof of His divine Sonship (see Rom. 1:4).
13:39 everyone who believes is justified: Justification is a legal term meaning “declared innocent.” It is a legal declaration that a person is acquitted and absolved. It is by justification that a person is righteous and acceptable to God. The death of Christ was the payment of our sin debt, so that we might be forgiven.

13:45 When Luke refers to **the Jews**, he is not speaking of all Jews. The Jews mentioned in v. 43, those who were urging Paul and Barnabas “to continue in the grace of God,” honestly wanted to know the truth. The Jews in this verse were the Jewish leaders, those in the positions of religious authority. When the Jewish leaders saw the crowds following Paul, they changed their minds about Paul and became filled with jealousy, especially since many of the people who had gathered were Jews.
13:46 judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life: A person who convinces himself that he does not need forgiveness from the Holy One has already condemned himself.

The Spread of the Gospel

After Stephen's martyrdom, the believers in Jerusalem were scattered over Judea and Samaria because of Jewish persecution of the Christians (8:1–3). Wherever the Christians went, they preached the gospel, obeying Christ's command to be witnesses to Him "in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." The Book of Acts records the spread of the gospel throughout the Mediterranean world.

Destination	Travelers	Purpose of the Journey	Response	Reference
Samaria	Peter and John	In response to Saul's persecution and Stephen's martyrdom, the believers scattered throughout Judea and Samaria. Peter and John went to Samaria to preach to them.	The Samaritans listened to Philip and believed in Jesus. The whole city was filled with joy.	8:4–40
The Gaza road	Philip	The angel of the Lord told Philip to go to the Gaza road. There Philip witnessed to an Ethiopian.	The Ethiopian believed and was baptized.	8:26–38
Damascus	Paul	Paul was persecuting the Christians. Some Christians were staying in Damascus, so he pursued them there. However the Lord Jesus Himself appeared in a blinding vision.	Paul submitted to the Lord, and was eventually baptized by Ananias.	9:1–19
Joppa	Peter	Peter went to Joppa and raised Tabitha from the dead.	Many believed on the Lord.	9:36–43
Caesarea	Peter	In response to a vision, Peter went to the home of Cornelius, a Gentile, to preach the gospel.	The Holy Spirit was poured out on the Gentiles, and Peter baptized them as believers.	10:1–48
Antioch; Tarsus	Barnabas	The church at Jerusalem sent Barnabas to investigate the church at Antioch, because many Greeks were becoming Christians.	Barnabas encouraged the Christians, and then brought Paul to Antioch to teach them.	11:19–26
Cyprus; Pamphylia; Galatia	Barnabas; Paul; John Mark	The first missionary journey: The church at Antioch commissioned Paul and Barnabas for missionary work to preach the gospel.	Churches were established in the cities of Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch in Pisidia.	13:1—14:28
Jerusalem	Barnabas; Paul	Paul and Barnabas went to Jerusalem to settle the question of whether Gentile Christians should obey Jewish laws.	The Jerusalem council agreed that salvation was only through Christ.	15:1–29
Cyprus	Barnabas; John Mark	After a break with Paul, Barnabas took John Mark to visit the churches in Cyprus.		15:36–41
Galatia; Asia Minor; Macedonia; Achaia	Paul; Silas; Timothy; Luke	The second missionary journey: Paul and Silas revisited the churches in Galatia and then the Holy Spirit led them to go to Macedonia. Eventually Paul was able to preach in Athens.	Churches were established in the cities of Philippi, Thessalonica, and Corinth.	15:36—18:22
Ephesus; Achaia	Apollos	Apollos traveled from Alexandria to Ephesus, where he learned the gospel from Priscilla and Aquila. Then he went to Corinth and Athens to preach the gospel.		18:24–28; 19:1
Galatia; Asia; Macedonia; Achaia	Paul; Timothy; Erastus	The third missionary journey: Paul revisited the churches of his previous journeys, especially the church that was developing in Ephesus.	The churches were strengthened.	19:1—21:14
Rome	Paul	On trial in Jerusalem, Paul appealed to Caesar. Therefore he was transported to Rome. On the way, the ship wrecked near the island of Malta.	The inhabitants of Malta honored Paul. The Gentiles and Jews in Rome listened to Paul's preaching.	27:1—28:31

That you should be for salvation to the ends of the earth.”

48 Now when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and glorified the word of the Lord. ^k And as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed. ⁴⁹ And the word of the Lord was being spread throughout all the region. ⁵⁰ But

48 ^k [Acts 2:47]

50 ^l Acts 7:52; 2 Tim. 3:11
51 ^m Matt. 10:14; Mark 6:11; [Luke 9:5]
52 ⁿ Matt. 5:12; John 16:22 ^o Acts 2:4; 4:8, 31; 13:9

the Jews stirred up the devout and prominent women and the chief men of the city, ^l raised up persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them from their region. ^{51 m} But they shook off the dust from their feet against them, and came to Iconium. ⁵² And the disciples ⁿ were filled with joy and ^o with the Holy Spirit.



The Origin of the Synagogue

In nearly every city in which we find Jesus or Paul in the NT, we also find a synagogue. Most scholars agree that the NT form of the synagogue probably began taking shape after the temple in Jerusalem had been destroyed and during the Exile. With their people scattered around the world, displaced Jews needed meeting places where they could learn about the faith and worship God.

By the time of Jesus and Paul, synagogues served as local centers of worship, education, and government in the Jewish community. According to tradition, a synagogue was established wherever there were as many as ten Jewish men. The rebuilt temple in Jerusalem remained the center for sacrificial worship and the site at which to celebrate appointed feasts. But the synagogue played an ever-increasing role in the religious instruction of the Jews.



A fourth-century A.D. synagogue at Antioch

www.HolyLandPhotos.org

At Iconium

14 Now it happened in Iconium that they went together to the synagogue of the Jews, and so spoke that a great multitude both of the Jews and of the ^aGreeks believed. ²But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles and ¹poisoned their ²minds against the brethren. ³Therefore they stayed there a long time, speaking boldly in the Lord, ^bwho was bearing witness to the word of His grace, granting signs and ^cwonders to be done by their hands.

⁴But the multitude of the city was ^ddivided: part sided with the Jews, and part with the ^eapostles. ⁵And when a violent attempt was made by both the Gentiles and Jews, with their rulers, ^fto abuse and stone them, ⁶they became aware of it and ^gfled to Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia, and to the surrounding region. ⁷And they were preaching the gospel there.

Idolatry at Lystra

^{8h} And in Lystra a certain man without strength in his feet was sitting, a cripple from his mother's womb, who had never

CHAPTER 14

¹ ^a John 7:35; Acts 18:4; Rom. 1:14, 16; 1 Cor. 1:22
² ¹ embittered ² Lit. souls
³ ^b Mark 16:20; Acts 4:29; 20:32; Heb. 2:4 ^c Acts 5:12
⁴ ^d Luke 12:51
^e Acts 13:2, 3
⁵ ² Tim. 3:11
⁶ ^g Matt. 10:23
⁸ ^h Acts 3:2
⁹ ³ Lit. Who
¹⁰ ⁱ [Is. 35:6]
¹¹ ^j Acts 8:10; 28:6
¹² ⁴ Jupiter
⁵ Mercury
¹³ ^k Dan. 2:46
¹⁴ ^l Num. 14:6; Matt. 26:65; Mark 14:63
¹⁵ ^m Acts 10:26
ⁿ James 5:17
^o 1 Sam. 12:21; Jer. 8:19; 14:22; Amos 2:4; 1 Cor. 8:4 ^p 1 Thess. 1:9
^q Gen. 1:1; Ex. 20:11; Ps. 146:6; Acts 4:24; 17:24; Rev. 14:7
¹⁶ ^r Ps. 81:12; Mic. 4:5; 1 Pet. 4:3
¹⁷ ^s Acts 17:24-27; Rom. 1:19, 20

walked. ⁹ *This* man heard Paul speaking. ³ Paul, observing him intently and seeing that he had faith to be healed, ¹⁰ said with a loud voice, ⁱ “Stand up straight on your feet!” And he leaped and walked. ¹¹ Now when the people saw what Paul had done, they raised their voices, saying in the Lycaonian *language*, ^j “The gods have come down to us in the likeness of men!” ¹² And Barnabas they called ⁴ Zeus, and Paul, ⁵ Hermes, because he was the chief speaker. ¹³ Then the priest of Zeus, whose temple was in front of their city, brought oxen and garlands to the gates, ^k intending to sacrifice with the multitudes.

¹⁴ But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard this, ^l they tore their clothes and ran in among the multitude, crying out ¹⁵ and saying, “Men, ^m why are you doing these things? ⁿ We also are men with the same nature as you, and preach to you that you should turn from ^o these useless things ^p to the living God, ^q who made the heaven, the earth, the sea, and all things that are in them, ^{16r} who in bygone generations allowed all nations to walk in their own ways. ^{17s} Nevertheless He did not leave Himself without wit-

14:1 Paul and Barnabas **spoke** with authority because they spoke the truth. The power of God is not in the person who witnesses, but in what is witnessed to.

14:8–13 **The gods have come down:** The Roman poet Ovid told of an ancient legend in which Zeus and Hermes came to the Phrygian hill country disguised as mortals seeking lodging. After being turned away from a thousand homes, they found refuge in the humble cottage of an elderly couple. In appreciation for the couple's hospitality, the gods transformed the cottage into a temple with a golden roof and marble columns. All the houses of the inhospitable

people were then destroyed. This ancient legend may be the reason that the people treated Paul and Barnabas as gods. After witnessing the healing of the cripple, they did not want to make the same mistake as their ancestors.

14:14 **tore their clothes:** The tearing of robes was a Jewish expression of distress and grief.

14:15–17 The sermon by Paul in these three verses is a condensed version of his sermon on the Areopagus in 17:22–31. These Gentiles did not know or believe in the Scriptures, so Paul preached truths that were self-evident to all and led his listeners to biblical truth.

Paul's First Missionary Journey c. A.D. 46–48 (Acts 13:4–14:28)



ness, in that He did good, ¹⁸gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with “food and gladness.” ¹⁸And with these sayings they could scarcely restrain the multitudes from sacrificing to them.

Stoning, Escape to Derbe

¹⁹Then Jews from Antioch and Iconium came there; and having persuaded the multitudes, ¹⁹they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing him to be ¹⁹dead. ²⁰However, when the disciples gathered around him, he rose up and went into the city. And the next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe.

Strengthening the Converts

²¹And when they had preached the gospel to that city ²¹and made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, ²²strengthening the souls of the disciples, ²²exhorting them to continue in

the faith, and saying, ^a“We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God.” ²³So when they had ^bappointed elders in every church, and prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed. ²⁴And after they had passed through Pisidia, they came to Pamphylia. ²⁵Now when they had preached the word in Perga, they went down to Attalia. ²⁶From there they sailed to Antioch, where they had been commended to the grace of God for the work which they had completed.

²⁷Now when they had come and gathered the church together, ^cthey reported all that God had done with them, and that He had ^dopened the door of faith to the Gentiles. ²⁸So they stayed there a long time with the disciples.

Conflict over Circumcision

15 And ^acertain men came down from Judea and taught the brethren, ^b“Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved.” ²Therefore, when Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and dispute with them, they determined that ^cPaul and Barnabas and certain others of them should go up to Jerusalem, to the apostles and elders, about this question.

³So, ^dbeing sent on their way by the church, they passed through Phoenicia and Samaria, ^edescribing the conversion of the Gentiles; and they caused great joy to all the brethren. ⁴And when they had come to Jerusalem, they were received by the church and the apostles and the elders; and they reported all things that God had done with them. ⁵But some of the sect of the Pharisees who believed rose up, saying, “It is necessary to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses.”

¹⁷ [†] Lev. 26:4; Deut. 11:14; [Matt. 5:45]
¹⁸ [†] Ps. 145:16
¹⁹ [†] Acts 13:45, 50; 14:2-5; 1 Thess. 2:14
²⁰ [†] Acts 14:5; 2 Cor. 11:25; 2 Tim. 3:11
²¹ [†] [2 Cor. 12:1-4]
²² [†] Matt. 28:19
²³ [†] Acts 11:23
²⁴ [†] Matt. 10:38; Luke 22:28; [Rom. 8:17; 2 Tim. 2:12; 3:12]
²⁵ [†] Matt. 9:15; Mark 2:20; Luke 5:35; 2 Cor. 8:19; Titus 1:5
²⁷ [†] Acts 15:4, 12
²⁸ [†] 1 Cor. 16:9; 2 Cor. 2:12; Col. 4:3; Rev. 3:8

CHAPTER 15

¹ [†] Gal. 2:12 [†] John 7:22; Acts 15:5; Gal. 5:2; Phil. 3:2; [Col. 2:8, 11, 16]
² [†] Gal. 2:1
³ [†] Acts 20:38; 21:5; Rom. 15:24; 1 Cor.

The Jerusalem Council

⁶Now the apostles and elders came together to consider this matter. ⁷And when

16:6, 11; 2 Cor. 1:16; Titus 3:13; 3 John 6 [†] Acts 14:27; 15:4, 12

14:19 supposing him to be dead: The physician Luke may be saying that Paul did not die here. However, some believe that the text speaks of Paul's resurrection.

14:23 appointed elders: It is difficult to know whether these elders were appointed by Paul and Barnabas or by a vote of the people. However, the process outlined in 6:1–7 for selecting the seven men may provide a clue to the process used for selecting elders here. Both the assembly and the apostles were involved in the selection process.

15:1–4 Later those who taught the need for circumcision among new believers were known as Judaizers. They wanted the Christian faith to become a sect of Judaism. In other words, they wanted Gentile believers to become Jewish proselytes. As proselytes, the

Gentile believers would need to be circumcised as a sign of coming into the covenant of God along with the Jews.

15:5 some of the sect of the Pharisees: These people believed in Jesus Christ but were still identified as Pharisees. Jews who became followers of Christ could still be Pharisees. The same could not be said for the Sadducees, for they denied that there was a resurrection, and thus could not believe that Jesus had been raised from the dead. **It is necessary to circumcise them:** This statement summarizes the problem. Is salvation granted through faith alone? Or does a person have to have faith plus the works of the law in order to be forgiven by God?

15:7 It was from the mouth of Peter that Cornelius and his Gentile friends heard the gospel of Jesus Christ (10:11–43).

there had been much dispute, Peter rose up *and* said to them: ^f“Men *and* brethren, you know that a good while ago God chose among us, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe. ⁸So God, ^gwho knows the heart, ¹acknowledged them by ^hgiving them the Holy Spirit, just as *He* did to us, ⁹*and* made no distinction between us and them, ^jpurifying their hearts by faith. ¹⁰Now therefore, why do you test God ^kby putting a yoke on the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? ¹¹But ^lwe believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus ²Christ we shall be saved in the same manner as they.”

¹²Then all the multitude kept silent and listened to Barnabas and Paul declaring how many miracles and wonders God had ^mworked through them among the Gentiles. ¹³And after they had ³become silent, ⁿJames answered, saying, “Men *and* brethren, listen to me: ¹⁴^oSimon has declared how God at the first visited the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name. ¹⁵And with this the words of the prophets agree, just as it is written:

¹⁶ “*After^p this I will return
And will rebuild the tabernacle of
David, which has fallen down;*

⁷ ^f Acts 10:20
⁸ ^g 1 Chr. 28:9; Acts 1:24 ^h Acts 2:4; 10:44, 47 ⁱ bore witness to
⁹ ^j Rom. 10:12 / Acts 10:15, 28
¹⁰ ^k Matt. 23:4; Gal. 5:1
¹¹ ^l Rom. 3:4; 5:15; 2 Cor. 13:14; [Eph. 2:5-8; Titus 2:11]
¹² ^m NU, M omit Christ
¹³ ⁿ Acts 14:27; 15:3, 4
¹⁴ ^o Acts 12:17
¹⁵ ^p stopped speaking
¹⁶ ^q Acts 15:7; 2 Pet. 1:1
¹⁷ ^r Amos 9:11, 12
¹⁸ ^s NU ^t LORD, who makes these things
¹⁹ ^u NU (continuing v. 17) known from eternity (of old).
²⁰ ^v Acts 15:28; 21:25 ^w 1 Thess. 1:9
²¹ ^x Acts 21:25
²² ^y Gen. 35:2; Ex. 20:3, 23; Ezek. 20:30; [1 Cor. 8:1; 10:20, 28]; Rev. 2:14
²³ ^z [1 Cor. 6:9]; Gal. 5:19; Eph. 5:3; Col. 3:5; 1 Thess. 4:3; 1 Pet. 4:3 ^{aa} Gen. 9:4; Lev. 3:17; Deut. 12:16; 1 Sam. 14:33
²⁴ ^{ab} Or fornication
²⁵ ^{ac} Acts 13:15, 27; 2 Cor. 3:14
²⁶ ^{ad} Acts 1:23

*I will rebuild its ruins,
And I will set it up;
17 So that the rest of mankind may seek
the LORD,
Even all the Gentiles who are called
by My name,
Says the ⁴LORD who does all these
things.’*

¹⁸ ^s “Known to God from eternity are all His works. ¹⁹Therefore ^qI judge that we should not trouble those from among the Gentiles who ^rare turning to God, ²⁰but that we ^swrite to them to abstain ^tfrom things polluted by idols, ^ufrom sexual immorality, ^vfrom things strangled, and ^wfrom blood. ²¹For Moses has had throughout many generations those who preach him in every city, ^wbeing read in the synagogues every Sabbath.”

The Jerusalem Decree

²²Then it pleased the apostles and elders, with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas, *namely*, Judas who was also named ^xBarsabbas, ⁷ and Silas, leading men among the brethren.

⁷ NU, M Barsabbas

15:10 Yoke here refers to the law (see Gal. 5:1).

15:11 we shall be saved in the same manner as they: These are the last words of Peter in the Book of Acts. He leaves us with the eternal truth that we are saved through faith by grace alone. The emphasis in the Book of Acts now moves from Peter to Paul, from the presentation of the gospel message among the Jews to its presentation to the Gentiles.

15:12 Barnabas and Paul reported what God was doing in changing the lives of Gentiles with the gospel of Jesus Christ. Their testimony at this council was critical.

15:13 The council listened to **James** because he was the first of the three pillars of the church (see Gal. 2:9). He was the leader of the church in Jerusalem until he was stoned to death at the insistence of the high priest in A.D. 62. James was the Lord’s half brother, the one who did not believe until the Lord appeared to him privately after the Resurrection (see 1 Cor. 15:7).

15:15–18 While the testimony of Peter, Barnabas, and Paul was important for the council in making their decision, something more

than the experience of the Gentiles had to be taken into consideration. The council needed to know what the Word of God said. James pointed out that what was happening among the Gentiles was in full agreement with the OT (Amos 9:11, 12).

15:19, 20 The testimony of Paul and Barnabas—those who worked **among the Gentiles**—and most importantly the teaching of Scripture, indicated to James that God was truly at work (v. 18). In view of this, he suggested that a letter be drafted that alleviated Jewish requirements for Gentiles who placed their trust in Jesus. Though James did not want to trouble Gentiles with Jewish ceremonial regulations, he believed certain practices should be followed. He mentioned four issues: eating food offered to **idols**, **sexual immorality**, eating food from animals that had been **strangled**, and eating food with **blood**. If Gentiles continued such practices, there would continually be tension between the Gentile and Jewish Christian communities. There is a debate as to whether these requirements were ceremonial or moral in nature. If they were ceremonial, “things polluted by idols” would refer to food offered in pagan temples (see 1 Cor. 8–10). “Sexual immorality” would refer to the marriage laws of Lev. 18:6–20. The prohibition against eating blood preceded the Law of Moses and extended back to the contract God made with Noah (see Gen. 9:3, 4; see also Lev. 17:10–14). On the other hand, if these prohibitions were moral in nature, the food polluted by idols would relate to the problem of Rev. 2:14, 20. Evidently some Gentile Christians were attending the celebrations and banquets held in pagan temples that frequently involved sexual immorality.

15:21 For Moses has had . . . those who preach him: James may have been saying that since there were Jewish communities in every city, it would be wise to remain sensitive to Jewish convictions. He may also have been saying that since the Gentile believers would learn more and more about the Scriptures, the Spirit of God would cultivate godly convictions in their hearts.

15:22 it pleased the apostles and elders: It is interesting to note the process the council followed in resolving this conflict. First, the

grace

(Gk. *charis*) (15:11; Rom. 3:24; 5:15; Eph. 2:5; Titus 2:11)
Strong’s #5485

The Greek word for *grace* is probably equivalent to the Hebrew word *chesed* meaning “lovingkindness,” a word frequently used by the psalmists to describe God’s character. In the NT, the word *charis* usually means divine favor or goodwill, but it also means “that which gives joy” and “that which is a free gift.” This is a noteworthy occurrence of the word *grace*, because while it was one of Paul’s favorite words for God’s free gift of salvation, here we see Peter using it in the same way.

23 They wrote this *letter* by them:

The apostles, the elders, and the brethren,

To the brethren who are of the Gentiles in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia:

Greetings.

24 Since we have heard that ^asome who went out from us have troubled you with words, ^bunsettling your souls, ^csaying, “*You must be circumcised and keep the law*”—to whom we gave no *such* commandment— ^dit seemed good to us, being assembled with one ^eaccord, to send chosen men to you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, ^fmen who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. ^gWe have therefore sent Judas and Silas, who will also report the same things by word of mouth. ^hFor it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things: ⁱthat you abstain from things offered to idols, ^jfrom blood, from things strangled, and from ^ksexual ^limmorality. If you keep yourselves from these, you will do well.

Farewell.

Continuing Ministry in Syria

30 So when they were sent off, they came to Antioch; and when they had gathered the multitude together, they delivered the letter. ³¹When they had read

24 ^a Acts 15:1; Gal. 2:4; 5:12; Titus 1:10, 11 ^b Gal. 1:7; 5:10 ^c NU omits saying, “*You must be circumcised and keep the law*”
25 ^d purpose or mind
26 ^e Acts 13:50; 14:19; 1 Cor. 15:30; 2 Cor. 11:23-26
29 ^f Acts 15:20; 21:25; Rev. 2:14, 20
^g Lev. 17:14 ^h 1 Cor. 5:1; 6:18; 7:2; Col. 3:5; 1 Thess. 4:3
ⁱ Or fornication

32 ^e Acts 11:27; 1 Cor. 12:28; Eph. 4:11; Rev. 18:20
^f Acts 14:22; 18:23
^g Mark 5:34; Acts 16:36; 1 Cor. 16:11; Heb. 11:31 ^h NU those who had sent them
34 ⁱ NU, M omit v. 34.
35 ^j Acts 13:1
37 ^k Acts 12:12, 25; Col. 4:10; 2 Tim. 4:11; Philem. 24
^l resolved
38 ^j Acts 13:13
39 ^k Acts 4:36; 13:4
40 ^l Acts 11:23; 14:26 ^m committed
41 ^m Acts 16:5

CHAPTER 16

1 ^a Acts 14:6 ^b Acts 19:22; Rom. 16:21; 1 Cor. 4:17; 16:10; Phil. 1:1; 2:19;
1 Thess. 3:2; 2 Tim. 1:2 ^c 2 Tim. 1:5; 3:15

it, they rejoiced over its encouragement. ³² Now Judas and Silas, themselves being ^eprophets also, ^fexhorted and strengthened the brethren with many words. ³³ And after they had stayed *there* for a time, they were ^gsent back with greetings from the brethren to ^hthe apostles.

^{34,3} However, it seemed good to Silas to remain there. ³⁵ ^hPaul and Barnabas also remained in Antioch, teaching and preaching the word of the Lord, with many others also.

Division over John Mark

³⁶ Then after some days Paul said to Barnabas, “Let us now go back and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, *and see how they are doing.*” ³⁷ Now Barnabas ⁴was determined to take with them ⁱJohn called Mark. ³⁸ But Paul insisted that they should not take with them ^jthe one who had departed from them in Pamphylia, and had not gone with them to the work. ³⁹ Then the contention became so sharp that they parted from one another. And so Barnabas took Mark and sailed to ^kCyprus; ⁴⁰ but Paul chose Silas and departed, ^lbeing ⁵commended by the brethren to the grace of God. ⁴¹ And he went through Syria and Cilicia, ^mstrengthening the churches.

Timothy Joins Paul and Silas

16 Then he came to ^aDerbe and Lystra. And behold, a certain disciple was there, ^bnamed Timothy, ^cthe son of a certain Jewish woman who believed, but his father *was* Greek. ² He was well spoken of by the brethren who were at Lystra and Iconium. ³ Paul wanted to

problem was clearly stated: Each side was presented in a debate. Second, the facts were presented by those who were acquainted with them. Third, the counsel was given by a person who was trusted for his objectivity and wisdom. Fourth, unanimity was sought in the decision. Fifth, the attitude of preserving the unity of the Spirit remained utmost on the council’s mind. This same formula would be helpful in resolving conflicts found within the church today. **chosen men of their own company:** The apostles and elders sent a representative from both sides of the dispute—a Judean (Judas) and a Hellenist (Silas)—along with Paul and Barnabas to bolster and confirm the ruling of the council.

15:38 Paul was adamant that John Mark not accompany him on his impending journey. Earlier John Mark had deserted Paul and Barnabas in Pamphylia (13:13). It is unclear why he did so. Some have speculated that John Mark returned to Jerusalem because he did not like the idea of Gentiles coming into the church by faith alone. Whatever the reason for the desertion, it is interesting to note that John Mark was reconciled to Paul and again helped him in his ministry. In 2 Tim. 4:11, Paul, who was in prison, writes, “Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for ministry.”

15:39 the contention became so sharp that they parted: There was a heated argument between Paul and Barnabas over John Mark’s usefulness to them. Note that Luke does not assign

blame for the disagreement. There are times when Christians will not agree on certain aspects of ministry. Perhaps the best course of action in some of those situations is to work separately. Barnabas left with John Mark, refusing to make the disagreement an issue before the church at Antioch. Barnabas had led the church in its early days (11:22–25). He was the church’s main representative at the Jerusalem council, but he did not use his prominence to seek a reprimand of Paul. Instead he accepted the situation and proceeded to faithfully serve the Lord.

16:1 Timothy was the son of Eunice, a Jewish woman of great faith (see 2 Tim. 1:5). Eunice had taught the Holy Scriptures to Timothy from infancy (see 2 Tim. 3:15). The NT’s silence about the faith of Timothy’s father suggests he was not a believer.

16:2 Well spoken of may be rephrased as “well witnessed.” In other words, people did not have to be told that Timothy was a Christian.

16:3 took him and circumcised him: In Jewish law, Timothy should have been circumcised and raised a Jew, even with a Gentile father. But in Greek law, the father dominated the home. The fact that Timothy was an uncircumcised Jew would have limited his effectiveness in ministering to the Jewish Christians. Salvation was not the issue here. Instead Timothy became circumcised so that God could use him to reach all people—even the Jews—with the message of the gospel.

have him go on with him. And he ^dtook him and circumcised him because of the Jews who were in that region, for they all knew that his father was Greek. ⁴And as they went through the cities, they delivered to them the ^edecrees to keep, ^fwhich were determined by the apostles and elders at Jerusalem. ^{5g}So the churches were strengthened in the faith, and increased in number daily.

The Macedonian Call

⁶Now when they had gone through Phrygia and the region of ^hGalatia, they were forbidden by the Holy Spirit to preach the word in ¹Asia. ⁷After they had come to Mysia, they tried to go into Bithynia, but the ²Spirit did not permit them. ⁸So passing by Mysia, they ⁱcame down to Troas. ⁹And a vision appeared to Paul in the night. A ^jman of Macedonia stood and pleaded with him, saying, “Come over to Macedonia and help us.” ¹⁰Now after he had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go ^kto Macedonia, concluding that the Lord had called us to preach the gospel to them.

Lydia Baptized at Philippi

¹¹Therefore, sailing from Troas, we ran a straight course to Samothrace, and the

3 ^d [1 Cor. 9:20; Gal. 2:3; 5:2]
4 ^e Acts 15:19-21
1 Acts 15:28, 29
5 ^g Acts 2:47; 15:41
6 ^h Acts 18:23; Gal. 1:1, 2
1 The Roman province of Asia
7 ² NU adds of Jesus
8 ¹ Acts 16:11; 20:5;
2 Cor. 2:12; 2 Tim. 4:13
9 ¹ Acts 10:30
10 ^k 2 Cor. 2:13

12 ¹ Acts 20:6; Phil. 1:1; 1 Thess. 2:2
3 Lit. first
14 ^m Rev. 1:11; 2:18,
24
n Luke 24:45
15 ^o Gen. 19:3;
33:11; Judg. 19:21;
Luke 24:29; [Heb. 13:2]
16 ^p Lev. 19:31;
20:6, 27; Deut. 18:11; 1 Sam. 28:3;
7; 2 Kin. 21:6; 1 Chr. 10:13; Is. 8:19
q Acts 19:24
18 ^r Mark 1:25, 34
4 distressed

next *day* came to Neapolis, ¹²and from there to ¹Philippi, which is the ³foremost city of that part of Macedonia, a colony. And we were staying in that city for some days. ¹³And on the Sabbath day we went out of the city to the riverside, where prayer was customarily made; and we sat down and spoke to the women who met *there*. ¹⁴Now a certain woman named Lydia heard *us*. She was a seller of purple from the city of ^mThyatira, who worshiped God. ⁿThe Lord opened her heart to heed the things spoken by Paul. ¹⁵And when she and her household were baptized, she begged *us*, saying, “If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay.” So ^oshe persuaded *us*.

Paul and Silas Imprisoned

¹⁶Now it happened, as we went to prayer, that a certain slave girl ^ppossessed with a spirit of divination met *us*, who brought her masters ^qmuch profit by fortune-telling. ¹⁷This girl followed Paul and *us*, and cried out, saying, “These men are the servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to *us* the way of salvation.” ¹⁸And this she did for many days.

But Paul, ^rgreatly ⁴annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, “I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of

16:4, 5 The council’s decision (15:24–29) brought great joy and comfort to the Gentiles. Apparently the **decrees** from the Jerusalem council were considered reasonable and not burdensome.

16:10 sought to go to Macedonia: With both the southwesterly route and the northern path closed by the Holy Spirit (vv. 6, 7), Paul headed in the only direction left open to him—northwest—until he came to the Aegean port of Troas, where he could go no further. Paul was at the right place at the right time to receive the call to go to Macedonia. **We:** This is the first of four “we” sections in the Book of Acts (16:10–17; 20:5–15; 21:1–18; 27:1—28:16). This indicates that Luke, the author of Acts, accompanied Paul at least these four times.

the Spirit

(Gk. to *pneuma*) (16:7; Rom. 8:9; Phil. 1:19; 1 Pet. 1:11) Strong’s #4151

The Greek word for *Spirit* is derived from the verb *pneō*, meaning “to breathe” or “to blow.” It is sometimes used to refer to the wind and sometimes to life itself (see John 3:8; Rev. 13:15). It can refer to the life of angels (Heb. 1:14), demons (Luke 4:33), and human beings (7:59). Yet this word is also used for the Spirit of God (see 1 Cor. 2:11)—that is, the Holy Spirit (Matt. 28:19), the third Person of the Trinity, the One who lives inside believers (see James 4:5; 1 John 4:13). This same Spirit is called “the Spirit of Jesus Christ” (Phil. 1:19), and as the marginal note indicates, many older manuscripts have the title *the Spirit of Jesus* in 16:7. This title emphasizes the unity of action between Jesus and the Spirit that permeates this book and its companion volume, the Gospel of Luke. During the days of Jesus’ earthly ministry, the disciples were directed by Jesus; now, after His resurrection and ascension, by the Spirit of Jesus.

16:12 Named after the father of Alexander the Great, **Philippi** was a Roman **colony** loyal to the empire. The city itself was organized by the state of Rome and functioned as a military outpost. The people who settled the city were probably army veterans, who were given the rights of Roman citizens. Typically such a colony would possess an autonomous government and be immune from tribute and taxation. Because of its proximity to the sea as well as to one of the major roads to Europe, Philippi was a commercial center in Macedonia. Its influence throughout the region made it a good place to begin preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ.

16:13 where prayer was customarily made: According to Jewish custom, a congregation consisted of ten households. If ten male household heads could be found in a city, a synagogue was formed. If not, a place of prayer was established, usually near a river under the open sky. Paul’s habit was to go first to the synagogue of a new city. However in Philippi, he searched for a Jewish prayer meeting.

16:14 Thyatira was well known for **purple** dyes and cloth dyeing. Purple dye had to be gathered drop by drop from a certain shellfish. Because it was so expensive, purple dye was used on garments worn by royalty. As an artisan in purple dyes, **Lydia** was a wealthy woman who had come to Philippi to practice her trade. Paul preached the gospel, but **the Lord opened Lydia’s heart** to it.

16:16 Luke’s description of the **slave girl** in Greek indicates that she had a “spirit of Python.” The python was a mythical serpent killed by Apollo, who took both the serpent’s gift of predictions and sometimes its form. Apollo became known as Pythian Apollo. When it was said that one had a “spirit of Python,” it meant that the person was controlled by an evil force. Apparently those who knew the girl did not regard her as insane or fraudulent. Rather they viewed her ability to foretell events as genuine. People paid the girl for her **divination** services, earning her **masters** a lot of money.

16:17, 18 greatly annoyed: Paul was upset not because what the girl said was untrue, but because the girl was being viewed as the source of truth.

her.”^s And he came out that very hour.¹⁹ But ^twhen her masters saw that their hope of profit was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and ^udragged *them* into the marketplace to the authorities.

²⁰ And they brought them to the magistrates, and said, “These men, being Jews, ^vexceedingly trouble our city; ²¹ and they teach customs which are not lawful for us, being Romans, to receive or observe.”²² Then the multitude rose up together against them; and the magistrates tore off their clothes ^wand commanded *them* to be beaten with rods.²³ And when they had laid many stripes on them, they threw *them* into prison, commanding the jailer to keep them securely.²⁴ Having received such a charge, he put them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks.

The Philippian Jailer Saved

²⁵ But at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them.²⁶^x Suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately ^yall the doors were opened and everyone’s chains were loosed.²⁷ And the keeper of the prison, awaking from sleep and seeing the prison doors open, supposing the prisoners had fled, drew his sword and was about to kill himself.²⁸ But Paul called with a loud voice, saying, “Do yourself no harm, for we are all here.”

²⁹ Then he called for a light, ran in, and fell down trembling before Paul and Silas.³⁰ And he brought them out and said, ^z“Sirs, what must I do to be saved?”

³¹ So they said, ^a“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you

18 ^s Mark 16:17
19 ^t Acts 16:16;
19:25, 25; ^u Matt.
10:18
20 ^v 1 Kin. 18:17;
Acts 17:8
22 ^w 2 Cor. 6:5;
11:23, 25; 1 Thess.
2:2
26 ^x Acts 4:31
^y Acts 5:19; 12:7, 10
30 ^z Luke 3:10; Acts
2:37; 9:6; 22:10
31 ^a [John 3:16, 36;
6:47; Acts 13:38,
39; Rom. 10:9-11;
1 John 5:10]

34 ^b Matt. 5:4; Luke
5:29; 19:6
35 ^c *fictors*, lit. *rod*
bearers
37 ^c Acts 22:25-29
39 ^d Matt. 8:34
40 ^e Acts 16:14

CHAPTER 17

1 ^a Acts 17:11, 13;
20:4; 27:2; Phil.
4:16; 1 Thess. 1:1;
2 Thess. 1:1; 2 Tim.
4:10
2 ^b Luke 4:16; Acts
9:20; 13:5, 14; 14:1;
16:13; 19:8

and your household.”³² Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house.³³ And he took them the same hour of the night and washed *their* stripes. And immediately he and all his *family* were baptized.³⁴ Now when he had brought them into his house, ^bhe set food before them; and he rejoiced, having believed in God with all his household.

Paul Refuses to Depart Secretly

³⁵ And when it was day, the magistrates sent the ⁵officers, saying, “Let those men go.”

³⁶ So the keeper of the prison reported these words to Paul, saying, “The magistrates have sent to let you go. Now therefore depart, and go in peace.”

³⁷ But Paul said to them, “They have beaten us openly, uncondemned ^cRomans, *and* have thrown *us* into prison. And now do they put us out secretly? No indeed! Let them come themselves and get us out.”

³⁸ And the officers told these words to the magistrates, and they were afraid when they heard that they were Romans.³⁹ Then they came and pleaded with them and brought *them* out, and ^dasked *them* to depart from the city.⁴⁰ So they went out of the prison ^eand entered *the house of* Lydia; and when they had seen the brethren, they encouraged them and departed.

Preaching Christ at Thessalonica

17 Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to ^aThessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews.² Then Paul, as his custom was, ^bwent

16:20, 21 These claims were as false as those leveled first against Jesus and then Stephen. Those who desire to stop the truth of God are often unscrupulous about the truthfulness of their statements. Nothing Paul and Silas had preached remotely related to Roman customs or laws.

16:22 Before prisoners were **beaten with rods**, their garments were literally torn off so that their flesh would be exposed for the flogging. Paul experienced this particular Roman ordeal on three separate occasions. Later Paul would refer to this beating with wooden rods (see 2 Cor. 11:23, 25).

16:25 **praying and singing . . . prisoners were listening:** The word translated *listening* here means “to listen with pleasure,” as if listening to beautiful music. It is in times of darkness that the light of a Christian witness shines brightest (see Phil. 2:14–16).

16:26 **immediately all the doors were opened:** In ancient prisons each door was secured by a bar. The earthquake, as it passed along the ground, probably forced the doorposts apart so that the bars fell to the ground.

16:27 Under Roman law, a guard who allowed the escape of a prisoner was generally put to death. Believing that all the prisoners had escaped, **the keeper of the prison** assumed that death was certain for him.

16:30–34 **what must I do to be saved:** The events surrounding the arrest of Paul and Silas, the way they responded to suffering, and the mighty acts of God brought the jailer to his knees. He finally knew he needed God’s salvation. But how could he be reconciled to God? Paul and Silas’s answer was simple—**just believe on the Lord Jesus Christ**. No other work was needed. The jailer and his family placed their trust in God and immediately expressed that faith by being baptized.

16:37–40 Once the **magistrates** learned that Paul and Silas were Roman citizens, they realized that they were in danger of the wrath of Rome. It was unlawful to whip a Roman citizen or deny that person the right to due process. Paul refused to leave when he had the opportunity because he was protecting the infant church in Philippi. Because Paul and Silas were beaten in public, people probably believed that they had done something wrong. If Paul left quietly, then the perception would be that those associated with him, in particular the members of the Philippian church, had also done something wrong.

17:2 **reasoned with them from the Scriptures:** There was a great deal of evidence in Scripture that Paul could use in his argument. For example, Ps. 22, written over a thousand years earlier by David, describes the crucifixion of the Messiah. Paul could quote Is. 53 and

in to them, and for three Sabbaths ^creasoned with them from the Scriptures, ³explaining and demonstrating ^dthat the Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead, and *saying*, “This Jesus whom I preach to you is the Christ.” ^{4e} And some of them were persuaded; and a great multitude of the devout Greeks, and not a few of the leading women, joined Paul and ^fSilas.

Assault on Jason’s House

⁵But the Jews ¹who were not persuaded, ²becoming ^genvious, took some of the evil men from the marketplace, and gathering a mob, set all the city in an uproar and attacked the house of ^hJason, and sought to bring them out to the people. ⁶But when they did not find them, they dragged Jason and some brethren to the rulers of the city, crying out, ⁱ“These who have turned the world upside down have come here too. ⁷Jason has ³harbored them, and these are all acting contrary to the decrees of Caesar, ^jsaying there is another king—Jesus.” ⁸And they troubled the crowd and the rulers of the city when they heard these things. ⁹So when they had taken security from Jason and the rest, they let them go.

Ministering at Berea

¹⁰Then ^kthe brethren immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea. When they arrived, they went into the synagogue of the Jews. ¹¹These were more ⁴fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and ^lsearched the Scriptures daily to *find out* whether these things were so. ¹²Therefore many of them believed, and also not a few of the Greeks, prominent women as well as

2 ^c 1 Thess. 2:1-16
3 ^d Luke 24:26,
46; Acts 18:5, 28;
Gal. 3:1
4 ^e Acts 28:24 / Acts
15:22, 27, 32, 40
5 ^g Acts 13:45
^h Acts 17:6, 7, 9;
Rom. 16:21 ¹ NU
omits who were
not persuaded ² M
omits becoming
envious
6 ⁱ [Acts 16:20]
7 ^j Luke 23:2; John
19:12; 1 Pet. 2:13
3 welcomed
10 ^k Acts 9:25; 17:14
11 ^l Is. 34:16; Luke
16:29; John 5:39
4 Lit. noble

14 ^m Matt. 10:23
15 ⁿ Acts 18:5
16 ^o 2 Pet. 2:8 ⁵ full
of idols
18 ^p 1 Cor. 15:12
^q NU, M add also
7 Lit. seed picker, an
idler who makes a
living picking up
scraps
19 ^r Lit. Hill of Ares,
or Mars’ Hill
22 ^s Lit. Hill of Ares,
or Mars’ Hill

men. ¹³But when the Jews from Thessalonica learned that the word of God was preached by Paul at Berea, they came there also and stirred up the crowds. ^{14m}Then immediately the brethren sent Paul away, to go to the sea; but both Silas and Timothy remained there. ¹⁵So those who conducted Paul brought him to Athens; and ⁿreceiving a command for Silas and Timothy to come to him with all speed, they departed.

The Philosophers at Athens

¹⁶Now while Paul waited for them at Athens, ^ohis spirit was provoked within him when he saw that the city was ⁵given over to idols. ¹⁷Therefore he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and with the *Gentile* worshipers, and in the marketplace daily with those who happened to be there. ^{18p}Then certain Epicurean and Stoic philosophers encountered him. And some said, “What does this ⁷babbler want to say?”

Others said, “He seems to be a proclaimer of foreign gods,” because he preached to them ⁹Jesus and the resurrection.

¹⁹And they took him and brought him to the ⁸Areopagus, saying, “May we know what this new doctrine *is* of which you speak? ²⁰For you are bringing some strange things to our ears. Therefore we want to know what these things mean.” ²¹For all the Athenians and the foreigners who were there spent their time in nothing else but either to tell or to hear some new thing.

Addressing the Areopagus

²²Then Paul stood in the midst of the ⁹Areopagus and said, “Men of Athens, I perceive that in all things you are very religious; ²³for as I was passing through

Zech. 12 to demonstrate that the suffering, death, and resurrection of the coming Messiah was predicted by the prophets. The OT abounds with evidence of the Messiah’s character and life that clearly matches that of Jesus (see Luke 24:25–27).

17:5 The Jews here refers to the Jewish leaders of the synagogue who felt threatened by the gospel because it contradicted their own teachings.

17:7 acting contrary to the decrees of Caesar: In A.D. 49 the Roman emperor Claudius expelled all Jews from Rome due to riots that were ignited by a group of zealous Jews. These insurrectionists were advocating revolution against Rome and were opposing the installation of a new king. Paul’s accusers were trying to paint him as a revolutionary who was bringing sedition to Thessalonica.

17:9, 10 had taken security from Jason: Taking security was similar to posting bond today. It was meant as an assurance that there would be no repetition of the trouble caused by the apostle Paul, and that he would not return to Thessalonica. Instead, Paul and Silas traveled 50 miles southwest to the city of Berea.

17:16 Paul was greatly distressed at the sight of numerous pagan temples and altars in Athens. In his letter to the Corinthians Paul explained why he was indignant (see 1 Cor. 10:20). The people’s

offerings were being sacrificed to demons. By doing this, the Gentiles were having fellowship with the powers of darkness. For these people to be so deceived by the devil was deeply troubling to Paul.

17:18 this babbler: Some of the philosophers in Athens mocked Paul, calling him a “seed picker” or gutter sparrow, a small bird that snatches up scraps of food. Paul was being accused of grabbing at bits of knowledge without fully digesting or thinking through what he taught. Because Paul did not speak eloquently (1 Cor. 2:1), some philosophers in Athens arrogantly ridiculed him, arguing that he was not sophisticated enough to be taken seriously. Others thought that Paul was advocating foreign gods named Jesus and Resurrection, incorrectly understood to be a male and female deity.

17:19 the Areopagus: Just southwest of the Acropolis in Athens was a hill called the Hill of Ares (Mars in Latin), the god of war. This was where court was held concerning questions of religion and morals. In Athens, the gospel message was examined by the supposed experts of philosophy and religion.

17:22–31 Because the men of Athens had scant knowledge of the Hebrew Scriptures, Paul started with the general revelation visible in creation itself. In the sixth century B.C. it was said that a poet from Crete named Epimenides turned aside a horrible plague from

and considering the objects of your worship, I even found an altar with this inscription:

TO THE UNKNOWN GOD.

Therefore, the One whom you worship without knowing, Him I proclaim to you: ^{24a}God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is ^rLord of heaven and earth, ^sdoes not dwell in temples made with hands. ²⁵Nor is He worshiped with men's hands, as though He needed anything, since He ^tgives to all life, breath, and all things. ²⁶And He has made from one ¹blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and ^uthe boundaries of their dwellings, ^{27v}so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, ^wthough He is not far from each one of us; ²⁸for ^xin Him we live and move and have our being, ^yas also some of your own poets have said, 'For we are also His offspring.' ²⁹Therefore, since we are the offspring of God, ^zwe ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, something shaped by art and man's devising. ³⁰Truly, ^athese times of ignorance God overlooked, but ^bnow commands all men everywhere to repent, ³¹because He has appointed a day on which ^cHe will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by ^draising Him from the dead."

³²And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked, while others said, "We will hear you again on this *matter*." ³³So Paul departed from

²⁴ ^aIs. 42:5; Acts 14:15; ^rDeut. 10:14; Ps. 115:16; Matt. 11:25; ^s1 Kin. 8:27; Acts 7:48-50
²⁵ ^tGen. 2:7; Is. 42:5; Dan. 5:23
²⁶ ^uDeut. 32:8; Job 12:23; Dan. 4:35
²⁷ ^vNU omits blood
²⁷ ^v(Rom. 1:20)
^wDeut. 4:7; Ps. 139:7, 10; Jer. 23:23, 24; [Acts 14:17]
²⁸ ^x[Col. 1:17; Heb. 1:3] ^yTitus 1:12
²⁹ ^zPs. 115:4-7; Is. 40:18, 19; Rom. 1:23
³⁰ ^aActs 14:16;
[Rom. 3:25] ^bLuke 24:47; Acts 26:20; [Titus 2:11, 12]; 1 Pet. 1:14; 4:3
³¹ ^cPs. 9:8; 96:13; 98:9; John 5:22, 27; Acts 10:42; Rom. 2:16 ^dActs 2:24

CHAPTER 18

² ^aRom. 16:3; 1 Cor. 16:19; 2 Tim. 4:19
³ ^bActs 20:34;
1 Cor. 4:12; 9:14;
2 Cor. 11:7; 12:13;
1 Thess. 2:9; 4:11;
2 Thess. 3:8
⁴ ^cActs 17:2
⁵ ^dActs 17:14, 15
^eActs 18:28 ^fOr in his spirit or in the Spirit
⁶ ^fActs 13:45
^gNeh. 5:13; Matt. 10:14; Acts 13:51
^hLev. 20:9, 11, 12;
2 Sam. 1:16; 1 Kin. 2:33; Ezek. 18:13; 33:4, 6, 8; Matt. 27:25; Acts 20:26
ⁱ[Ezek. 3:18, 19]
^jActs 13:46-48;
28:28
⁷ ²NU Titius Justus

among them. ³⁴However, some men joined him and believed, among them Dionysius the Areopagite, a woman named Damaris, and others with them.

Ministering at Corinth

18 After these things Paul departed from Athens and went to Corinth. ²And he found a certain Jew named ^aAquila, born in Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla (because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to depart from Rome); and he came to them. ³So, because he was of the same trade, he stayed with them ^band worked; for by occupation they were tentmakers. ^{4c}And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded both Jews and Greeks.

^{5d}When Silas and Timothy had come from Macedonia, Paul was ^ecompelled ¹by the Spirit, and testified to the Jews *that Jesus is the Christ*. ⁶But ^fwhen they opposed him and blasphemed, ^ghe shook *his* garments and said to them, ^h"Your blood *be* upon your *own* heads; ⁱI am clean. ^jFrom now on I will go to the Gentiles." ⁷And he departed from there and entered the house of a certain man named ²Justus, *one* who worshiped God, whose house was next door to the synagogue. ^{8k}Then Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his household. And many of the Corinthians, hearing, believed and were baptized.

⁹Now ^lthe Lord spoke to Paul in the night by a vision, "Do not be afraid, but speak, and do not keep silent; ^{10m}for I

⁸ ^k1 Cor. 1:14 ⁹ ^lActs 23:11 ¹⁰ ^mJer. 1:18, 19

the people of Athens by appealing to a god of whom the people had never heard. An altar was built to honor this god, whom the Athenians now called the **UNKNOWN GOD**. Paul obviously knew of Epimenides; he quoted the poet in Titus 1:12. Thus Paul began his presentation of the gospel by appealing to natural revelation and to certain true statements of the Athenian poets. **He has made from one blood:** God sovereignly created one man, Adam. As Adam's descendants multiplied and formed nations, it was God who designed their course (see Dan. 2:20, 21). **that they should seek the Lord:** God has placed within each one of us the yearning to worship and seek Him. We grope for Him by creating images to worship. But Paul points out that God is not far away; we can have fellowship with Him. In fact, every day we depend upon Him for our life and breath. **17:32** Paul's reference to **the resurrection of the dead** ignited a reaction among the Athenians. The Greeks repudiated the idea of a bodily resurrection. Though they embraced the concept of the soul living forever, they were repulsed by the idea of a bodily resurrection because they considered the body to be evil, something to be discarded. This idea, known as dualism, was derived from the teachings of the Greek philosophers Socrates and Plato. It held that everything physical is evil and everything spiritual is good, and that it makes no difference what one does with one's body so long as the spirit is good. Tragically, the Athenians' adherence to this philosophy blinded them to the truth of the gospel.

18:1 **Corinth** was the political capital of Achaia. It was also a center for the worship of Aphrodite, the goddess of fertility, and it housed the major temple of Apollo. Because of the sensuous nature of the religious cult of Aphrodite, Corinth had a reputation for being a city of immorality. Beginning in the fifth century B.C., the Greeks used a word meaning "to act like a Corinthian" as a synonym for sexual immorality.

18:3 All young rabbinical students had to learn a trade. **Tentmakers** were leather workers. The province of Cilicia, from which Paul came, was noted for its cloth made from goats' hair. It is likely that Paul's skill involved making such cloth.

18:5, 6 Paul's custom was to go to the Jews first whenever he entered a new city. Thus in Corinth, he began his proclamation of Jesus in the synagogues. After several attempts to reach the Jews of Corinth (v. 4), attempts that had few results, Paul turned his attention almost exclusively to the **Gentiles**.

18:7 **Justus:** Most Romans had three names. This man's name was Titius Justus. Based on Paul's letter to the Corinthians, it is likely that Justus was the man called Gaius in 1 Cor. 1:14.

18:10 In view of the severe treatment he had received elsewhere, Paul must have been very comforted by Christ's statement that he would not be **hurt** or beaten in Corinth (16:22-24).

am with you, and no one will attack you to hurt you; for I have many people in this city.” ¹¹And he continued *there* a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

¹²When Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, the Jews with one accord rose up against Paul and brought him to the ³judgment seat, ¹³saying, “This *fellow* persuades men to worship God contrary to the law.”

¹⁴And when Paul was about to open *his* mouth, Gallio said to the Jews, “If it were a matter of wrongdoing or wicked

12 ³ Gr. *bema*

15 ⁿ Acts 23:29; 25:19

17 ^o 1 Cor. 1:1 ⁴ NU they all

18 ⁵ Lit. *many days*

crimes, O Jews, there would be reason why I should bear with you. ¹⁵But if it is a ⁿquestion of words and names and your own law, look *to it* yourselves; for I do not want to be a judge of such *matters*.”

¹⁶And he drove them from the judgment seat. ¹⁷Then ⁴all the Greeks took ^oSosthenes, the ruler of the synagogue, and beat *him* before the judgment seat. But Gallio took no notice of these things.

Paul Returns to Antioch

¹⁸So Paul still remained ⁵a good while. Then he took leave of the brethren and

18:12 In the spring of A.D. 52, a **proconsul** named **Gallio** was appointed by the Roman senate to govern the province of **Achaia** (Greece). Gallio was a brother of the famous stoic philosopher Seneca, who possessed great influence in Rome. The Jewish leaders thought they would take advantage of the new governor and rid themselves of Paul and the gospel of Jesus Christ. Bringing Paul before the judgment seat of the governor was a momentous event. If the Roman governor ruled Christianity illegal, it would set a precedent and encourage immediate persecution of all Christians.

18:14 Paul did not even have to open his **mouth** to defend the faith. God had already provided for Paul's defense; he had prepared Gallio to make the correct decision. No crime had been committed against Rome. Gallio considered Christianity to be a Jewish sect. Because Judaism was an established religion in the Roman Empire, this “sect”

was not in violation of Roman law. Gallio had his bailiffs drive the accusers out of his presence. Once again the sovereign hand of God preserved the life of His faithful servant.

18:18 Paul **had his hair cut** as part of a Nazirite vow he had made (see Num. 6). Such a vow had to be fulfilled in Jerusalem, where the hair would be presented to God. Vows were made either in gratitude for God's blessing (like Paul's safekeeping in Corinth) or as part of a petition for future blessing. The vow involved abstinence from drinking wine and a commitment not to cut one's hair for a period of time. At the end of this set period, the hair was cut and then burned along with other sacrifices as a symbol of offering oneself to God (21:23–26). Paul redirected his entire travel schedule because he wanted to get to Jerusalem in time to make this vow.



sailed for Syria, and Priscilla and Aquila *were* with him. ¹⁸He had *his* hair cut off at ¹⁹Cenchrea, for he had taken a vow. ¹⁹And he came to Ephesus, and left them there; but he himself entered the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews. ²⁰When they asked *him* to stay a longer time with them, he did not consent, ²¹but took leave of them, saying, ²²“I ²³must by all means keep this coming feast in Jerusalem; but I will return again to you, ²⁴God willing.” And he sailed from Ephesus.

²²And when he had landed at ²⁵Caesarea, and ²⁶gone up and greeted the church, he went down to Antioch. ²³After he had spent some time *there*, he departed and went over the region of ²⁷Galatia and Phrygia ²⁸in order, ²⁹strengthening all the disciples.

Ministry of Apollos

²⁴Now a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man *and* mighty in the Scriptures, came to Ephesus. ²⁵This man had been instructed in the way of the Lord; and being ²⁶ fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things of the Lord, ²⁷though he knew only the baptism of John. ²⁸So he began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Aquila and Priscilla heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way

¹⁸ ¹⁹ Num. 6:2, 5, 9, 18; Acts 21:24 ²⁰ Rom. 16:1 ²¹ ²² Acts 19:21; 20:16 ²³ 1 Cor. 4:19; Heb. 6:3; James 4:15 ²⁴ NU omits *I must by all means keep this coming feast in Jerusalem* ²⁵ Acts 8:40 ²⁶ To Jerusalem ²⁷ Gal. 1:2 ²⁸ Acts 14:22; 15:32, 41 ²⁹ successively ³⁰ Acts 19:1; 1 Cor. 1:12; 3:4; 16:12; Titus 3:13 ³¹ Rom. 12:11 ³² [Matt. 3:1-11; Mark 1:7, 8; Luke 3:16, 17; 7:29; John 1:26, 33]; Acts 19:3 ³³ 1 Cor. 3:6 ³⁴ Acts 9:22; 17:3; 18:5

CHAPTER 19

¹ 1 Cor. 1:12; 3:5, 6; Titus 3:13 ² Acts 18:23 ³ 1 Sam. 3:7; Acts 8:16 ⁴ Luke 7:29; Acts 18:25 ⁵ Matt. 3:11; Mark 1:4, 7, 8; Luke 3:16; [John 1:15, 26, 27]; Acts 13:24 ⁶ Matt. 28:19; Acts 8:12, 16; 10:48

of God more accurately. ²⁷And when he desired to cross to Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him; and when he arrived, ²⁸he greatly helped those who had believed through grace; ²⁹for he vigorously refuted the Jews publicly, ³⁰showing from the Scriptures that Jesus is the Christ.

Paul at Ephesus

19 And it happened, while ¹ Apollos was at Corinth, that Paul, having passed through ² the upper regions, came to Ephesus. And finding some disciples ³ he said to them, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?”

So they said to him, ⁴“We have not so much as heard whether there is a Holy Spirit.”

⁵And he said to them, “Into what then were you baptized?”

So they said, ⁶“Into John’s baptism.”

⁷Then Paul said, ⁸“John indeed baptized with a baptism of repentance, saying to the people that they should believe on Him who would come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.”

⁹When they heard *this*, they were baptized ¹⁰in the name of the Lord Jesus.

¹¹And when Paul had ¹²laid hands on

⁶ Acts 6:6; 8:17

18:19 Paul had tried to go to **Ephesus** before but was forbidden by the Holy Spirit (16:6). We are not told how or why, but during his second missionary trip, the Holy Spirit kept Paul from traveling the southwestern route, which would have taken him to Ephesus. Instead, Paul went northwest to the Aegean port of Troas, where he received the Macedonian call to take the gospel to Europe. If we will entrust our way to God’s timing as Paul did, we will end up at the right place at the right time.

18:22 Paul completed his vow (vv. 18–21) when he went to Jerusalem and **greeted the church** there. Paul then returned to his sending church in **Antioch**, completing his second missionary journey, one that covered over three hundred miles. **he went down:** Antioch was north of Jerusalem but lower in elevation.

18:23 he departed and went over the region: On his third missionary journey Paul traveled back through Asia Minor to visit the churches that had been established on his previous trips. The cities included Derbe, Lystra, Iconium, Antioch, and Ephesus.

18:24 Apollos, born at Alexandria: This Jew with a Greek name was from the second largest city in the Roman Empire. Alexandria was a seaport on the northern coast of Egypt. Founded by Alexander the Great, the city was very cosmopolitan. Egyptians, Romans, and Greeks all lived there; over a quarter of the population was Jewish. The Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures had been produced in that city about 150 years before the birth of Jesus. The city was famous for its great library and was considered the cultural and educational center of the world.

18:25 John’s **baptism** was a baptism of repentance in preparation for the coming of the Messiah. John’s followers had scattered throughout Asia Minor and into Egypt. Apollos was a disciple of John the Baptist. Apparently he did not know about the finished work of Jesus Christ on the Cross, the Resurrection, the Ascension, and the sending of the Holy Spirit.

18:28 he vigorously refuted the Jews: Many of the believers in Corinth were Gentiles and were easy targets for opponents who

knew the Hebrew Scriptures. However, the arguments of these Jews did not stand up against the brilliance of Apollos, the new Jewish Christian apologist (v. 26).

19:2 These 12 men (v. 7) had been baptized into the baptism of John the Baptist, but they had never heard about the **Holy Spirit**. All they knew was that One mightier than John was to come. They did not know that Jesus the Messiah, the One mightier than John had already come. He had died for their sins, had been raised from the dead, had ascended to the Father, and had already sent the Holy Spirit. They needed to hear the rest of the gospel. As soon as this happened, these men could place their faith in Jesus and receive the Holy Spirit.

19:3 Baptism was a ritual used by the Jews as a picture of cleansing and purification. Gentiles who converted to Judaism would go through the rite of purification as their first act of worship. They would dip themselves in water as a sign of being cleansed from their old way of life. Before entering into the temple to worship, Jews would dip themselves in ritual bathing pools to show their desire for purification. But the dipping performed by John the Baptist was a call for repentance rather than mere ritual cleansing. His baptism was a call to people to turn to God and to identify with the coming Messiah who would forgive their sins (see Matt. 3:1–12).

19:5 in the name of the Lord Jesus: This phrase was a declaration of ownership, an identification with Jesus as Lord and Savior of one’s life.

19:6 laid hands on them: The Holy Spirit was received without the laying on of hands in 10:44–48. By laying on his hands here, Paul was demonstrating his apostolic authority. He was also affirming the unity of the new church in Ephesus with the church in Jerusalem, whose members were also were empowered by the Holy Spirit to speak in foreign languages (2:4, 11). This speaking in tongues was a sign to others that they were part of the body of Christ (see 1 Cor. 14:22).

them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and ^hthey spoke with tongues and prophesied. ⁷Now the men were about twelve in all.

⁸ⁱAnd he went into the synagogue and spoke boldly for three months, reasoning and persuading ^jconcerning the things of the kingdom of God. ⁹But ^kwhen some were hardened and did not believe, but spoke evil ^lof the Way before the multitude, he departed from them and withdrew the disciples, reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus. ¹⁰And ^mthis continued for two years, so that all who dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.

Miracles Glorify Christ

¹¹Now ⁿGod worked unusual miracles by the hands of Paul, ^{12o}so that even handkerchiefs or aprons were brought from his body to the sick, and the diseases left them and the evil spirits went out of them. ^{13p}Then some of the itinerant Jewish exorcists ^qtook it upon themselves to call the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had evil spirits, saying, ¹⁴“We ²exorcise you by the Jesus whom Paul ^rpreaches.” ¹⁴Also there were seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, who did so.

¹⁵And the evil spirit answered and said, “Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you?”

¹⁶Then the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, ³overpowered them, and prevailed against ⁴them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded. ¹⁷This became known both to all Jews and Greeks dwelling in Ephesus; and ⁵fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified. ¹⁸And

6 ^h Mark 16:17; Acts 2:4; 10:46
8 ⁱ Acts 17:2; 18:4
/ Acts 1:3; 28:23
9 ^k 2 Tim. 1:15;
2 Pet. 2:2; Jude 10
/ Acts 9:2; 19:23;
22:4; 24:14
10 ^m Acts 19:8;
20:31
11 ⁿ Mark 16:20;
Acts 14:3
12 ^o 2 Kin. 4:29;
Acts 5:15
13 ^p Matt. 12:27;
Luke 11:19 ^q Mark
9:38; Luke 9:49
/ 1 Cor. 1:23; 2:2
1 ^r NU / ² *adjure*,
solemnly
command
16 ³ M and they
overpowered them
/ ⁴ NU both of them
17 ⁵ Luke 1:65; 7:16;
Acts 2:43; 5:5, 11

18 ⁱ Matt. 3:6
20 ^u Acts 6:7; 12:24
21 ^v Rom. 15:25;
Gal. 2:1 ^w Acts
20:22; 2 Cor. 1:16
/ Acts 20:1; 1 Cor.
16:5 ^x Acts 18:21;
23:11; Rom. 1:13;
15:22-29
22 ^z 1 Tim. 1:2
/ Rom. 16:23; 2 Tim.
4:20
23 ^b 2 Cor. 1:8
/ Acts 9:2
24 ^d Acts 16:16, 19
/ ⁵ Gr. *Artemis*
26 ^e Deut. 4:28; Ps.
115:4; Is. 44:10-20;
Jer. 10:3; Acts 17:29;
1 Cor. 8:4; 10:19;
Rev. 9:20
27 ^f NU she be
deposed from her
magnificence

many who had believed came ^tconfessing and telling their deeds. ¹⁹Also, many of those who had practiced magic brought their books together and burned *them* in the sight of all. And they counted up the value of them, and *it* totaled fifty thousand *pieces* of silver. ^{20u}So the word of the Lord grew mightily and prevailed.

The Riot at Ephesus

^{21v}When these things were accomplished, Paul ^wpurposed in the Spirit, when he had passed through ^xMacedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying, “After I have been there, ^yI must also see Rome.” ²²So he sent into Macedonia two of those who ministered to him, ^zTimothy and ^aErastus, but he himself stayed in Asia for a time.

²³And ^babout that time there arose a great commotion about ^cthe Way. ²⁴For a certain man named Demetrius, a silversmith, who made silver shrines of ⁵Diana, brought ^dno small profit to the craftsmen. ²⁵He called them together with the workers of similar occupation, and said: “Men, you know that we have our prosperity by this trade. ²⁶Moreover you see and hear that not only at Ephesus, but throughout almost all Asia, this Paul has persuaded and turned away many people, saying that ^ethey are not gods which are made with hands. ²⁷So not only is this trade of ours in danger of falling into disrepute, but also the temple of the great goddess Diana may be despised and ^fher magnificence destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worship.”

²⁸Now when they heard *this*, they were full of wrath and cried out, saying, “Great is Diana of the Ephesians!” ²⁹So

19:8–10 From Ephesus, other churches were born in Asia Minor—in Colosse, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea. Note the sequence of events. Paul tried **explaining the things of the kingdom of God** to the Jews in the **synagogue** for three months. After he was finally rejected, he took those who had believed and started a new “school” for the study of the Scriptures in the facilities of a philosopher named **Tyrannus**. During the two years that Paul conducted these classes, **all who dwelt in Asia** heard the gospel. This indicates that Paul and the students of the school did more than study; they must have witnessed to others as well.
19:11 God confirmed Paul’s apostolic authority by performing **miracles** through him. The writer of the Book of Hebrews helps us understand why miracles were accomplished through the apostles (see Heb. 2:3, 4). The miracles verified that the apostles represented God and that the gospel they preached was from heaven.
19:12 handkerchiefs or aprons: A handkerchief was a cloth used to wipe away perspiration and was usually worn tied around the head. The apron was tied around the waist. These were sweat rags used by Paul in his tentmaking trade as he worked with leather. Why would God perform healings in this way? Ephesus was a focal point for magicians and wandering priests. The city was filled with wizards attempting to exercise power over the dark forces. God may

have used such unusual means in order to show that His miraculous power was greater than the powers of darkness.
19:13–16 to call the name of the Lord Jesus: The use of magical names in incantations was common in the ancient world. Jewish practitioners of magic enjoyed great prestige because they claimed to know the true pronunciation of the sacred name of God, and thus were able to release God’s full power. These practitioners had latched onto the name of Jesus to use as an incantation. **overpowered them:** The seven so-called exorcists found out that it was not enough to know the name of Jesus; they needed to know Jesus personally.
19:19 These **books** were filled with formulas, spells, and astrological forecasts. The volumes were expensive; **fifty thousand pieces of silver** would have taken 10 laborers 20 years to earn. Burning the books indicated real repentance on the part of **those who had practiced magic**.
19:24–27 Silver shrines of Diana refers to small shrines containing a miniature image of the fertility goddess of Ephesus. Sales of these idols were falling off as people were introduced to the truth of Jesus Christ.
19:29 into the theater: This amphitheater seated about 25,000 people.

the whole city was filled with confusion, and rushed into the theater with one accord, having seized ^fGaius and ^gAristarchus, Macedonians, Paul's travel companions. ³⁰And when Paul wanted to go in to the people, the disciples would not allow him. ³¹Then some of the ⁷officials of Asia, who were his friends, sent to him pleading that he would not venture into the theater. ³²Some therefore cried one thing and some another, for the assembly was confused, and most of them did not know why they had come together. ³³And they drew Alexander out of the multitude, the Jews putting him forward. And ^hAlexander ⁱmotioned with his hand, and wanted to make his defense to the people. ³⁴But when they found out that he was a Jew, all with one voice cried out for about two hours, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians!"

³⁵And when the city clerk had quieted the crowd, he said: "Men of Ephesus, what man is there who does not know that the city of the Ephesians is temple guardian of the great goddess ⁸Diana, and of the *image* which fell down from ⁹Zeus? ³⁶Therefore, since these things cannot be denied, you ought to be quiet and do nothing rashly. ³⁷For you have brought these men here who are neither robbers of temples nor blasphemers of ¹your goddess. ³⁸Therefore, if Demetrius and his fellow craftsmen have a ²case against anyone, the courts are open and there are proconsuls. Let them bring charges against one another. ³⁹But if you have any other inquiry to make, it shall be determined in the lawful assembly. ⁴⁰For we are in danger of being ³called in question for today's uproar, there being no reason which we may give to account for this disorderly gathering." ⁴¹And when he had said these things, he dismissed the assembly.

²⁹ ^f Acts 20:4; Rom. 16:23; 1 Cor. 1:14;
³ John 1 ^g Acts 20:4; 27:2; Col. 4:10; Philem. 24
³¹ ⁷ *Asiarchs, rulers of Asia, the province*
³³ ^h 1 Tim. 1:20;
² Tim. 4:14 ⁱ Acts 12:17
³⁵ ⁸ Gr. *Artemis*
⁹ *heaven*
³⁷ ¹ *NU our*
³⁸ ² *Lit. matter*
⁴⁰ ³ *Or charged with rebellion concerning today*

CHAPTER 20

¹ ^a 1 Cor. 16:5;
1 Tim. 1:3
² ^b Acts 17:15; 18:1
³ ^c Acts 9:23; 23:12;
25:3; 2 Cor. 11:26
⁴ ^d Acts 19:29; Col. 4:10 ^e Acts 19:29
^f Acts 16:1 ^g Eph. 6:21; Col. 4:7; 2 Tim. 4:12; Titus 3:12
^h Acts 21:29; 2 Tim. 4:20
⁵ ⁱ 2 Cor. 2:12;
2 Tim. 4:13
⁶ ^j Ex. 12:14, 15
^k Acts 16:8; 2 Cor. 2:12; 2 Tim. 4:13
⁷ ¹ 1 Cor. 16:2; Rev. 1:10 ^m Acts 2:42, 46; 20:11; 1 Cor. 10:16
⁸ ⁿ Acts 1:13 ¹ *NU, M we*
¹⁰ ^o 1 Kin. 17:21;
2 Kin. 4:34 ^p Matt. 9:23, 24; Mark 5:39

Journeys in Greece

20 After the uproar had ceased, Paul called the disciples to *himself*, embraced *them*, and ^adeparted to go to Macedonia. ²Now when he had gone over that region and encouraged them with many words, he came to ^bGreece ³and stayed three months. And ^cwhen the Jews plotted against him as he was about to sail to Syria, he decided to return through Macedonia. ⁴And Sopater of Berea accompanied him to Asia—also ^dAristarchus and Secundus of the Thessalonians, and ^eGaius of Derbe, and ^fTimothy, and ^gTychicus and ^hTrophimus of Asia. ⁵These men, going ahead, waited for us at ⁱTroas. ⁶But we sailed away from Philippi after ^jthe Days of Unleavened Bread, and in five days joined them ^kat Troas, where we stayed seven days.

Ministering at Troas

⁷Now on ^lthe first day of the week, when the disciples came together ^mto break bread, Paul, ready to depart the next day, spoke to them and continued his message until midnight. ⁸There were many lamps ⁿin the upper room where ¹they were gathered together. ⁹And in a window sat a certain young man named Eutychus, who was sinking into a deep sleep. He was overcome by sleep; and as Paul continued speaking, he fell down from the third story and was taken up dead. ¹⁰But Paul went down, ^ofell on him, and embracing *him* said, ^p"Do not trouble yourselves, for his life is in him." ¹¹Now when he had come up, had broken bread and eaten, and talked a long while, even till daybreak, he departed. ¹²And they brought the young man in alive, and they were not a little comforted.

From Troas to Miletus

¹³Then we went ahead to the ship and sailed to Assos, there intending to take

19:33, 34 The Jews wanted to distance themselves from Paul, so they put **Alexander** forward to explain that the Jews had nothing to do with Paul. However, Alexander never got the chance to speak once the crowd discovered he was a Jew.

19:35–41 we are in danger: The riot at Ephesus could have brought the discipline of Rome down upon the city. The Pax Romana, the peace that the Roman Empire brought to the Mediterranean world, was important to Rome. Therefore, the empire severely disciplined unruly cities. The Romans would not tolerate any kind of uprising or rebellion. Ephesus risked losing its freedom and being ruled directly by the Roman army.

20:2 The word translated **encouraged** has a full range of meanings, from rebuking to comforting. Encouragement included instruction, appeal, affirmation, warning, and correction.

20:3 he decided to return through Macedonia: Often Jewish pilgrim ships left for Syria taking Jews to the Passover. Paul had intended to sail on such a ship, but after the plot against his life was discovered he decided he would celebrate the Passover with

his friends in Philippi. It would have been easy for his enemies to arrange for Paul to "disappear" over the side of the boat and never be heard from again. Paul was very sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit in his life and ministry. Sometimes the Spirit of God led him into difficult circumstances; other times the Spirit protected him from such circumstances.

20:7 The first day of the week was Sunday. The people gathered to worship on this day for the same reason we do today, to celebrate the day of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The Jewish believers continued to worship on the Sabbath, which is Saturday. The Book of Hebrews tells us that Christ and His finished work is our Sabbath, our rest (see Heb. 4:8–10). **to break bread:** The primary purpose of the gathering was the Lord's Supper.

20:8–12 Because the rooms had **many lamps**, it was probably stuffy and hot. No wonder **Eutychus** had difficulty staying awake.

20:13–16 to go on foot: Luke and the others left Troas for Assos, some 30 miles south by sea. Paul wanted to walk to Assos alone. Paul may have felt the need to spend some time alone with God, to pray

Paul on board; for so he had ²given orders, intending himself to go on foot. ¹⁴And when he met us at Assos, we took him on board and came to Mitylene. ¹⁵We sailed from there, and the next *day* came opposite Chios. The following *day* we arrived at Samos and stayed at Trogyllium. The next *day* we came to Miletus. ¹⁶For Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus, so that he would not have to spend time in Asia; for ^qhe was hurrying ^rto be at Jerusalem, if possible, on ^sthe Day of Pentecost.

The Ephesian Elders Exhorted

¹⁷From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called for the elders of the church. ¹⁸And when they had come to him, he said to them: “You know, ^tfrom the first day that I came to Asia, in what manner I always lived among you, ¹⁹-serving the Lord with all humility, with many tears and trials which happened to me ^uby the plotting of the Jews; ²⁰how ^vI kept back nothing that was helpful, but proclaimed it to you, and taught you publicly and from house to house, ²¹^wtestifying to Jews, and also to Greeks, ^xrepentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. ²²And see, now ^yI go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that will happen to me there, ²³except that ^zthe Holy Spirit testifies in every city, saying that chains and tribulations await me. ²⁴³But ^anone of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, ^bso that I may finish my ⁴race with joy, ^cand the ministry ^dwhich I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.

²⁵“And indeed, now I know that you all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, will see my face no more. ²⁶Therefore I testify to you this day that I *am* ^einnocent⁵ of the blood of

13 ² arranged it
16 ^a Acts 18:21;
19:21; 21:4 ^t Acts
24:17 ^s Acts 2:1;
1 Cor. 16:8
18 ^t Acts 18:19; 19:1,
10; 20:4, 16
19 ^u Acts 20:3
20 ^v Acts 20:27
21 ^w Acts 18:5;
19:10 ^x Mark 1:15
22 ^y Acts 19:21
23 ^z Acts 21:4, 11
24 ^a Acts 21:13
^b Acts 13:25; 2 Tim.
4:7 ^c Acts 1:17
^d Gal. 1:1 ³ NU But I
do not count my life
of any value or dear
to myself ⁴ course
26 ^e Acts 18:6;
2 Cor. 7:2 ⁵ Lit.
clean
27 ^f Luke 7:30; John
15:15; Eph. 1:11
⁶ avoided declaring
28 ^g Luke 12:32;
John 21:15-17; Acts
20:29; [1 Tim. 4:16];
1 Pet. 5:2 ^h 1 Cor.
12:28 ⁱ Eph. 1:7, 14;
Col. 1:14; Titus 2:14;
Heb. 9:12; [1 Pet.
1:19]; Rev. 5:9 ^j Heb.
9:14 ^k M of the Lord
and God
29 ^k Ezek. 22:27;
Matt. 7:15
30 ^l 1 Tim. 1:20;
2 Tim. 1:15
^m misleading
31 ^m Acts 19:8, 10;
24:17
32 ⁿ Heb. 13:9
^o Acts 9:31 ^p Acts
26:18; Eph. 1:14,
18; 5:5; Col. 1:12;
3:24; [Heb. 9:15;
1 Pet. 1:4]
34 ^q Acts 18:3;
1 Cor. 4:12;
1 Thess. 2:9;
2 Thess. 3:8 ⁹ NU, M
omit Yes
35 ^r Rom. 15:1;
1 Cor. 9:12; 2 Cor.
11:9, 12; Eph. 4:28;
1 Thess. 4:11;
2 Thess. 3:8
37 ^s Acts 21:13

all *men*. ²⁷For I have not ⁶shunned to declare to you ^fthe whole counsel of God. ²⁸^gTherefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit ^hhas made you overseers, to shepherd the church ⁷of God ⁱwhich He purchased ^jwith His own blood. ²⁹For I know this, that after my departure ^ksavage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. ³⁰Also ^lfrom among yourselves men will rise up, speaking ⁸perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves. ³¹Therefore watch, and remember that ^mfor three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears.

³²“So now, brethren, I commend you to God and ⁿto the word of His grace, which is able ^oto build you up and give you ^pan inheritance among all those who are sanctified. ³³I have coveted no one’s silver or gold or apparel. ³⁴⁹Yes, you yourselves know ^qthat these hands have provided for my necessities, and for those who were with me. ³⁵I have shown you in every way, ^rby laboring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’”

³⁶And when he had said these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all. ³⁷Then they all ^swept ^lfreely, and ^tfell on Paul’s neck and kissed him, ³⁸sorrowing most of all for the words which he spoke, that they would see his face no more. And they accompanied him to the ship.

Warnings on the Journey to Jerusalem

21 Now it came to pass, that when we had departed from them and set sail, running a straight course we came

^t Gen. 45:14 ^l Lit. much

and reflect on what God wanted him to do. When Paul met up with the others in Assos, it is clear that he had received guidance. He was now in a hurry to get to Jerusalem to deliver the offering taken by the Gentile churches for the suffering church there.

20:17 The Greek term for **elders** is *presbuteros*, a term borrowed from the Jewish synagogue. It referred to those who were held in respect as the leaders of a particular fellowship. In v. 28 the elders are called “overseers” (Gk. *episkopos*, translated *bishop* in Titus 1:7). The terms appear to be interchangeable in the NT (see Titus 1:5–7).

20:22 I go bound in the spirit: Some say that Paul was out of the will of God in going to Jerusalem after the warnings of bonds and afflictions. But there is no evidence that Paul was rebelling against God. On the contrary, Jesus Himself confirmed that the trip was part of His good and perfect will (23:11). While Paul was in a Jerusalem prison, Jesus appeared to him to tell him to take courage. The Lord explained to Paul that just as he had solemnly witnessed for the cause of Christ at Jerusalem, he would do the same in Rome. There was no condemnation, but rather affirmation, of the fact that Paul bore witness to Jesus Christ in Jerusalem.

20:24 nor do I count my life dear to myself: Paul no longer desired to hold on to his life. He sought only the furtherance of God’s kingdom and the honor of Christ, no matter what the earthly cost was.

20:28 with His own blood: It was the blood of the Son of God that was shed for the sins of the church.

20:29, 30 wolves . . . men: There are always two threats to the church, one from the outside and one from the inside. Unbelievers are a dangerous threat from the outside; the arrogant and self-serving are a threat from within.

20:31 Watch is reminiscent of Peter’s warning about the devil in 1 Pet. 5:8. Elders protect the flock by their care and teaching.

20:35 It is more blessed to give: This saying of Jesus is not found in the Gospels, but through Paul’s knowledge of it has been recorded here.

21:1 When we had departed from them may be rephrased as “after tearing ourselves away from them.” The apostle Paul’s affection for his fellow believers ran deep (20:37). It must have been a difficult life for Paul, constantly leaving friends and family as he

to Cos, the following *day* to Rhodes, and from there to Patara. ²And finding a ship sailing over to Phoenicia, we went aboard and set sail. ³When we had sighted Cyprus, we passed it on the left, sailed to Syria, and landed at Tyre; for there the ship was to unload her cargo. ⁴And finding ¹disciples, we stayed there seven days. ^aThey told Paul through the Spirit not to go up to Jerusalem. ⁵When we had come to the end of those days, we departed and went on our way; and they all accompanied us, with wives and children, till *we were* out of the city. And

CHAPTER 21
4 ^a [Acts 20:23; 21:12] ¹ NU the disciples
5 ^b Luke 22:41; Acts 9:40; 20:36
6 ^c John 1:11
8 ^d Acts 8:40; 21:16
^e Acts 8:5, 26, 40; Eph. 4:11; 2 Tim. 4:5 ^f Acts 6:5 ² NU omits who were Paul's companions
9 ^g Joel 2:28; Acts 2:17

^bwe knelt down on the shore and prayed. ⁶When we had taken our leave of one another, we boarded the ship, and they returned ^chome. ⁷And when we had finished *our* voyage from Tyre, we came to Ptolemais, greeted the brethren, and stayed with them one day. ⁸On the next *day* we ²who were Paul's companions departed and came to ^dCaesarea, and entered the house of Philip ^ethe evangelist, ^fwho was *one* of the seven, and stayed with him. ⁹Now this man had four virgin daughters ^gwho prophesied. ¹⁰And as we stayed many

traveled about proclaiming the gospel. In **Patara**, a seaport, Paul and his companions could find a larger ship that would sail the four hundred miles directly to Phoenicia, with its ports at Tyre and Sidon. In the summer months, the wind of the Aegean Sea blows from the north, beginning very early in the morning. In the late afternoon the wind dies away. Sunset brings a dead calm, and later a gentle south breeze blows. If a ship was heading down the coast, it would typically anchor at evening and wait for the winds of the morning. **21:2 finding a ship:** Paul wasted no time because he wanted to get to Jerusalem by Pentecost, which occurs just 50 days after Passover. Paul had celebrated Passover with his friends in Philippi more than three weeks earlier, so he had less than 30 days to reach Jerusalem in time for the festival. **21:4** In this verse, a warning was being given by the Holy Spirit of

the danger that was waiting for Paul in Jerusalem. It is doubtful that the warning meant that Paul was actually not supposed to go. The warning did cause the disciples, who loved Paul and did not want to see him hurt, to discourage Paul from continuing his journey. But Paul had already demonstrated sensitivity to the leading of the Holy Spirit (16:6). He had already said that he was "bound in the spirit" to go to Jerusalem (20:22). Later Jesus Himself encouraged Paul concerning his decision to go (23:11). **21:8** Some believe that Philip's **house** was the place where the believers of **Caesarea** assembled to worship God. **21:9 four virgin daughters:** Here we see a fulfillment of what Peter said in ch. 2 about how young men and women both would be gifted by the Spirit of God to prophesy and proclaim the truth of God. **21:10–14** Agabus had predicted in 11:27–30 the famine that would



days, a certain prophet named ^hAgabus came down from Judea. ¹¹When he had come to us, he took Paul's belt, bound his *own* hands and feet, and said, "Thus says the Holy Spirit, ⁱ'So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man who owns this belt, and deliver *him* into the hands of the Gentiles.'"

¹²Now when we heard these things, both we and those from that place pleaded with him not to go up to Jerusalem. ¹³Then Paul answered, ^j"What do you mean by weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus."

¹⁴So when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, ^k"The will of the Lord be done."

Paul Urged to Make Peace

¹⁵And after those days we ³packed and went up to Jerusalem. ¹⁶Also some of the disciples from Caesarea went with us and brought with them a certain Mnason of Cyprus, an early disciple, with whom we were to lodge.

¹⁷And when we had come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly. ¹⁸On the following *day* Paul went in with us to ^mJames, and all the elders were present. ¹⁹When he had greeted them, ⁿhe told in detail those things which God had done among the Gentiles ^othrough his ministry. ²⁰And when they heard *it*, they glorified the Lord. And they said to him, "You see, brother, how many myriads of Jews

10 ^h Acts 11:28
11 ⁱ Acts 20:23;
21:33; 22:25
13 / Acts 20:24, 37
14 ^k Matt. 6:10;
26:42; Luke 11:2;
22:42
15 ³ made
preparations
17 ^j Acts 15:4
18 ^m Acts 15:13; Gal.
1:19; 2:9
19 ⁿ Acts 15:4, 12;
Rom. 15:18, 19
o Acts 1:17; 20:24;
1 Tim. 2:7

20 ^p Acts 15:1;
22:3; [Rom. 10:2];
Gal. 1:14
22 ⁴ NU What then
is to be done? They
will certainly hear
24 ^q Num. 6:2, 13,
18; Acts 18:18
25 ^r Acts 15:19, 20,
29 ⁵ NU omits that
they should observe
no such thing,
except ⁶ fornication
26 ^s John 11:55;
Acts 21:24; 24:18
t Num. 6:13; Acts
24:18 ⁷ completion
27 ^u Acts 20:19;
24:18 ^v Acts 26:21

there are who have believed, and they are all ^pzealous for the law; ²¹but they have been informed about you that you teach all the Jews who are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise *their* children nor to walk according to the customs. ²²What then? The assembly must certainly meet, for they will hear that you have come. ²³Therefore do what we tell you: We have four men who have taken a vow. ²⁴Take them and be purified with them, and pay their expenses so that they may ^qshave *their* heads, and that all may know that those things of which they were informed concerning you are nothing, but *that* you yourself also walk orderly and keep the law. ²⁵But concerning the Gentiles who believe, ^rwe have written *and* decided ⁵that they should observe no such thing, except that they should keep themselves from *things* offered to idols, from blood, from things strangled, and from ⁶sexual immorality."

Arrested in the Temple

²⁶Then Paul took the men, and the next day, having been purified with them, ^sentered the temple ^tto announce the ⁷expiration of the days of purification, at which time an offering should be made for each one of them.

²⁷Now when the seven days were almost ended, ^uthe Jews from Asia, seeing him in the temple, stirred up the whole crowd and ^vlaid hands on him, ²⁸crying out, "Men of Israel, help! This is the man

fall upon Judea. In response to his prediction, the Gentile believers had collected money for the suffering believers in Jerusalem. Here Agabus predicted Paul's imprisonment and suffering. The Holy Spirit did not forbid Paul to go to Jerusalem, but warned him of what it would cost him.

21:15, 16 we packed and went up to Jerusalem: Although they had been told repeatedly that Paul would be beaten and arrested in Jerusalem, Paul's traveling companions continued to travel with him. They would not leave Paul in his moment of crisis. During times of suffering, true friends stick close to provide comfort and assistance (see Prov. 17:17). **Mnason of Cyprus** possibly was one of the original 120 mentioned in 1:15.

21:18 James and the elders were the leaders of house churches meeting in Jerusalem. It is interesting that none of the apostles are mentioned here. Seven years had passed since the Jerusalem council meeting of ch. 15. At that time, the apostles and the leaders of the church had gathered to settle the question of whether Gentiles had to become Jews before becoming Christians. That question was settled in the negative; the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit both taught that the gospel was for all people. Apparently the apostles left Jerusalem after that conference to carry out Jesus' commission to be witnesses to the "end of the earth" (1:8).

21:19 things which God had done: The evidence of how God changed the lives of Gentiles was presented to the Christians in Jerusalem. The strongest evidence was the Gentile believers themselves who had accompanied Paul to Jerusalem. At this time, Paul may have also given the money he had been collecting from the Gentile Christians (11:27–30; 1 Cor. 16:1). The love the Gentiles expressed to their suffering Jewish brethren was a mark of their genuine conversion.

21:21 informed about you: Reports were circulating that Paul had been urging Jews to abandon Mosaic traditions. However, Paul never derided his Jewish heritage nor demanded that Jewish Christians renounce the Law of Moses. He only made it clear to everyone that the law could not function as a means of salvation. There is evidence that Paul was continuing to keep the Law when he stood before Felix in 24:11, 12. The fact that he was coming to Jerusalem to worship was evidence of this. What Paul *did* resist was any attempt to force Gentiles to become Jews. Salvation was through faith alone. Relying on adherence to the Jewish law was repudiation of the gospel message that salvation proceeds from faith in Christ and that alone.

21:24 Paul paid the **expenses** of the four men who had taken a vow, because the men were impoverished by the famine in Judea and did not have enough money to complete their vow by offering a sacrifice in the temple. But there might have been another reason as well. The Jewish historian Josephus tells us that when Herod Agrippa I began his reign over Judea in A.D. 41, he paid for a considerable number of Nazirite vows to show his respect for the Mosaic Law. For the sake of showing his Jewish brethren that he had not forsaken the laws of Moses, Paul did what they asked. Reputation was an issue for the apostle, as it is for all believers (see 1 Tim. 3:7).

21:25 they should keep themselves: The Christian leaders were not asking Gentiles to live like Jews; neither did they want to compel Jews to live like Gentiles. The spiritual unity of the body of believers is realized in its diversity, not in its conformity. From our diverse backgrounds and cultures we honor the same Lord.

21:28 defiled this holy place: The temple in NT times was surrounded by three courts. The innermost court was the Court of Israel

¹⁰who teaches all *men* everywhere against the people, the law, and this place; and furthermore he also brought Greeks into the temple and has defiled this holy place.” ²⁹(For they had ⁸previously seen ^xTrophimus the Ephesian with him in the city, whom they supposed that Paul had brought into the temple.)

³⁰And ^yall the city was disturbed; and the people ran together, seized Paul, and dragged him out of the temple; and immediately the doors were shut. ³¹Now as they were ^zseeking to kill him, news came to the commander of the ⁹garrison that all Jerusalem was in an uproar. ^{32a}He immediately took soldiers and centurions, and ran down to them. And when they saw the commander and the soldiers, they stopped beating Paul. ³³Then the ^bcommander came near and took him, and ^ccommanded *him* to be bound with two chains; and he asked who he was and what he had done. ³⁴And some among the multitude cried one thing and some another.

So when he could not ascertain the truth because of the tumult, he commanded him to be taken into the barracks. ³⁵When he reached the stairs, he had to be carried by the soldiers because of the violence of the mob. ³⁶For the multitude of the people followed after, crying out, ^d“Away with him!”

Addressing the Jerusalem Mob

³⁷Then as Paul was about to be led into the barracks, he said to the commander, “May I speak to you?”

He replied, “Can you speak Greek? ^{38e}Are you not the Egyptian who some time ago stirred up a rebellion and led

²⁸ ^w [Matt. 24:15]; Acts 6:13; 24:6
²⁹ ^x Acts 20:4 ⁸ *omits previously*
³⁰ ^y 2 Kin. 11:15; Acts 16:19; 26:21
³¹ ^z 2 Cor. 11:23
⁹ *cohort*
³² ^a Acts 23:27; 24:7
³³ ^b Acts 24:7
^c Acts 20:23; 21:11; Eph. 6:20; 2 Tim. 1:16; 2:9
³⁶ ^d Luke 23:18; John 19:15; Acts 22:22
³⁸ ^e Acts 5:36

³⁹ ^f Acts 9:11; 22:3; 2 Cor. 11:22; Phil. 3:4-6 ¹ *insignificant*
⁴⁰ ^g Acts 12:17
^h John 5:2; Acts 22:2

CHAPTER 22

¹ ^a Acts 7:2
² ^b Acts 21:40
³ ^c Acts 21:39; 2 Cor. 11:22 ^d Deut. 33:3
^e Acts 5:34 ^f Acts 23:6; 26:5; Phil. 3:6
^g Acts 21:20; Gal. 1:14 ^h [Rom. 10:2]
⁴ ⁱ Acts 8:3; 26:9-11; Phil. 3:6; 1 Tim. 1:13
⁵ ^j Acts 23:14; 24:1; 25:15 ^k Luke 22:66; Acts 4:5; 1 Tim. 4:14
^l Acts 9:2
⁶ ^m Acts 9:3; 26:12, 13
⁹ ⁿ Dan. 10:7; Acts 9:7 ¹ *NU omits and were afraid*

the four thousand assassins out into the wilderness?”

³⁹But Paul said, ^f“I am a Jew from Tarsus, in Cilicia, a citizen of no ¹mean city; and I implore you, permit me to speak to the people.”

⁴⁰So when he had given him permission, Paul stood on the stairs and ⁸motioned with his hand to the people. And when there was a great silence, he spoke to *them* in the ^hHebrew language, saying,

22 “Brethren^a and fathers, hear my defense before you now.” ²And when they heard that he spoke to them in the ^bHebrew language, they kept all the more silent.

Then he said: ^{3c}“I am indeed a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city ^dat the feet of ^eGamaliel, taught ^faccording to the strictness of our fathers’ law, and ⁸was zealous toward God ^has you all are today. ⁴ⁱI persecuted this Way to the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women, ⁵as also the high priest bears me witness, and ^jall the council of the elders, ^kfrom whom I also received letters to the brethren, and went to Damascus ^lto bring in chains even those who were there to Jerusalem to be punished.

⁶“Now ^mit happened, as I journeyed and came near Damascus at about noon, suddenly a great light from heaven shone around me. ⁷And I fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to me, ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?’ ⁸So I answered, ‘Who are You, Lord?’ And He said to me, ‘I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom you are persecuting.’

⁹“And ⁿthose who were with me indeed saw the light ¹and were afraid, but

where Jewish men could offer their sacrifices. Only consecrated priests actually entered the temple building itself, and only the high priest could enter the inner sanctuary of the Most Holy Place—once a year on the Day of Atonement (see Heb. 9:7). The second court was the Court of the Women where Jewish families could gather for prayer and worship. The outer court was the Court of the Gentiles, open to all who would worship God. If any Gentile went beyond the barrier into the second court, he or she would be liable to the death penalty. The Roman authorities, out of respect for the Jewish religion, authorized the death sentence for this trespass even for their own Roman citizens.

21:31 garrison: Between six hundred and a thousand men were stationed in the Fortress Antonia on the northwest side of the temple. From a tower overlooking the temple courts they could watch for any trouble. When the riot broke out against Paul, at least two hundred soldiers were dispatched from the fortress into the Court of the Gentiles.

21:38 When Paul spoke Greek, the commander realized that he was **not the Egyptian** assassin who had come to Jerusalem in A.D. 54 claiming to be a prophet. This Egyptian had led four thousand fanatical Jews up to the Mount of Olives, promising that at his word the walls of Jerusalem would fall and the Roman Empire would be destroyed. Felix, the governor of Jerusalem at the time, ordered his men up the Mount of Olives, where they killed some four hundred Jews

and captured another two hundred. However, the Egyptian and some of his followers slipped away into the desert. These followers were called *sicarii*, meaning “dagger men.” They would mingle with the crowds in Jerusalem during festivals and murder pro-Roman Jews.

22:1 hear my defense: This was the first of five defenses Paul would make.

22:2 After speaking Greek to the commander (21:37), Paul addressed the people in the **Hebrew** dialect, most likely Aramaic. When the people heard him speaking to them in their own language they were reminded that Paul was not a Gentile but a Jew like themselves. Therefore, they listened to what he had to say.

22:3-5 as you all are today: Paul explained to the crowd that he understood why they were beating him and wanted him dead. They were zealous for God. Paul was not blaming them for what they had done to him. He pointed out that in his former zeal he would have done the same thing. Paul showed compassion even to his attackers; we should model that same type of compassion for all people who have not yet placed their faith in Jesus.

22:6-8 Now it happened: Paul shared his personal testimony. God has given to each of us a testimony of how He has changed our lives. We must share that testimony to everyone who will listen (1:8). Peter exhorts us in 1 Pet. 3:15 always to be ready to give an answer for the hope that lies within us.

22:9 did not hear the voice: The men who had accompanied Paul

they did not hear the voice of Him who spoke to me. ¹⁰So I said, ‘What shall I do, Lord?’ And the Lord said to me, ‘Arise and go into Damascus, and there you will be told all things which are appointed for you to do.’ ¹¹And since I could not see for the glory of that light, being led by the hand of those who were with me, I came into Damascus.

¹²“Then ^aa certain Ananias, a devout man according to the law, ^phaving a good testimony with all the ^qJews who dwelt *there*, ¹³came to me; and he stood and said to me, ‘Brother Saul, receive your sight.’ And at that same hour I looked up at him. ¹⁴Then he said, ^r“The God of our fathers ^shas chosen you that you should ^tknow His will, and ^usee the Just One, ^vand hear the voice of His mouth. ¹⁵^wFor you will be His witness to all men of ^xwhat you have seen and heard. ¹⁶And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, ^yand wash away your sins, ^zcalling on the name of the Lord.’

¹⁷“Now ^ait happened, when I returned to Jerusalem and was praying in the temple, that I was in a trance ¹⁸and ^bsaw Him saying to me, ^c“Make haste and get out of Jerusalem quickly, for they will not receive your testimony concerning Me.’ ¹⁹So I said, ‘Lord, ^dthey know that in every synagogue I imprisoned and ^ebeat those who believe on You. ²⁰^fAnd when the blood of Your martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by ^gconsenting ²to his death, and guarding the clothes of those who were killing him.’ ²¹Then He said to me, ‘Depart, ^hfor I will send you far from here to the Gentiles.’”

Paul's Roman Citizenship

²²And they listened to him until this word, and *then* they raised their voices and said, ⁱ“Away with such a *fellow* from the earth, for ^jhe is not fit to live!” ²³Then, as they cried out and ³tore off

12 ^o Acts 9:17
^p Acts 10:22
^q 1 Tim. 3:7
^r Acts 3:13; 5:30
^s Acts 9:15; 26:16;
Gal. 1:15 ^t Acts 3:14;
7:52 ^u Acts 9:17;
26:16; 1 Cor. 9:1;
15:8 ^v 1 Cor. 11:23;
Gal. 1:12
^w Acts 23:11
^x Acts 4:20; 26:16
^y Acts 2:38;
1 Cor. 6:11; [Eph.
5:26]; Heb. 10:22
^z Acts 9:14; Rom.
10:13
^a Acts 9:26;
26:20; 2 Cor. 12:2
^b Acts 22:14
^c Matt. 10:14
^d Acts 8:3; 22:4
^e Matt. 10:17; Acts
26:11
^f Acts 7:54–8:1
^g Luke 11:48 ^h NU
omits to his death
ⁱ Acts 9:15; Rom.
1:5; 11:13; Gal. 2:7;
8; Eph. 3:7; 8; 1 Tim.
2:7; 2 Tim. 1:11
^j Acts 21:36;
1 Thess. 2:16 / Acts
25:24
³ Lit. *threw*

25 ^k Acts 16:37

CHAPTER 23

1 ^a Acts 24:16;
1 Cor. 4:4; 2 Cor.
1:12; 4:2; 2 Tim. 1:3;
Heb. 13:18
^b 1 Kin. 22:24; Jer.
20:2; John 18:22
^c Lev. 19:35; Deut.
25:1, 2; John 7:51

their clothes and threw dust into the air, ²⁴the commander ordered him to be brought into the barracks, and said that he should be examined under scourging, so that he might know why they shouted so against him. ²⁵And as they bound him with thongs, Paul said to the centurion who stood by, ^k“Is it lawful for you to scourge a man who is a Roman, and uncondemned?”

²⁶When the centurion heard *that*, he went and told the commander, saying, “Take care what you do, for this man is a Roman.”

²⁷Then the commander came and said to him, “Tell me, are you a Roman?” He said, “Yes.”

²⁸The commander answered, “With a large sum I obtained this citizenship.” And Paul said, “But I was born *a* citizen.”

²⁹Then immediately those who were about to examine him withdrew from him; and the commander was also afraid after he found out that he was a Roman, and because he had bound him.

The Sanhedrin Divided

³⁰The next day, because he wanted to know for certain why he was accused by the Jews, he released him from *his* bonds, and commanded the chief priests and all their council to appear, and brought Paul down and set him before them.

23 Then Paul, looking earnestly at the council, said, “Men *and* brethren, ^aI have lived in all good conscience before God until this day.” ²And the high priest Ananias commanded those who stood by him ^bto strike him on the mouth. ³Then Paul said to him, “God will strike you, *you* whitewashed wall! For you sit to judge me according to the law, and ^cdo you command me to be struck contrary to the law?”

⁴And those who stood by said, “Do you revile God’s high priest?”

heard the sound but could not understand the words that were being spoken to Paul. We are not told why they could not understand the sound they heard.

22:16 Calling on the name of the Lord saves us. Baptism is the declaration of that calling (see Rom. 10:9–13).

22:22 they listened to him: The Jews did not hate all Gentiles. In fact, they permitted God-fearing Gentiles to worship in the Court of the Gentiles. A Gentile could even become a proselyte, recognized as a Jew, by being circumcised and obeying the laws of Moses. Thus the Jews in this passage were not upset about allowing Gentiles to worship God, but at the idea that Gentiles could be on an equal footing with them before God without being proselytes. The fact that the Gentiles could come to God directly by faith in Jesus Christ was offensive to them.

22:24 The scourge was a leather whip, studded with pieces of metal or bone, fastened to a wooden handle. Paul had been beaten before with whips and rods (see 2 Cor. 11:24, 25). But **scourging** was worse. The punishment was used to cripple for life or to kill. The victim

endured this torture either stretched out on the floor, tied to a pillar, or tied to a hook suspended from the ceiling.

22:25 Is it lawful: The Roman law was that no Roman citizen could be chained, scourged, or killed without a proper trial. Failure to obey this law resulted in severe punishment for the one who commanded the illegal punishment. Paul had been chained and was about to be scourged without any formal charges having been made.

22:28 Originally the privileges of Roman citizenship were limited to free people living in the city of Rome. Later, citizenship was granted to others living in the Roman Empire. Sometimes the emperor would offer citizenship to those who had rendered outstanding service. Possibly Paul’s father or grandfather had become a citizen this way with the result that Paul was **born** a Roman. Ultimately God used Paul’s Roman citizenship to spread the gospel to Rome.

23:3 whitewashed wall: Whitewash is a thin paint used to make something dirty look clean. Ananias deserved this rebuke. The fact that Ananias had someone else “do his dirty work” did not absolve him from the ordering of the act.

⁵Then Paul said, ^d“I did not know, brethren, that he was the high priest; for it is written, ^e“*You shall not speak evil of a ruler of your people.*”

⁶But when Paul perceived that one part were Sadducees and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, “Men and brethren, ^fI am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee; ^gconcerning the hope and resurrection of the dead I am being judged!”

⁷And when he had said this, a dissension arose between the Pharisees and the Sadducees; and the assembly was divided. ^{8h}For Sadducees say that there is no resurrection—and no angel or spirit; but the Pharisees confess both. ⁹Then there arose a loud outcry. And the scribes of the Pharisees’ party arose and protested, saying, ⁱ“We find no evil in this man; ^jbut ^kif a spirit or an angel has spoken to him, ^klet us not fight against God.”

¹⁰Now when there arose a great dissension, the commander, fearing lest Paul might be pulled to pieces by them, commanded the soldiers to go down and take him by force from among them, and bring *him* into the barracks.

The Plot Against Paul

¹¹But ^lthe following night the Lord stood by him and said, ²“Be of good cheer, Paul; for as you have testified for Me in ^mJerusalem, so you must also bear witness at ⁿRome.”

¹²And when it was day, ^osome of the Jews banded together and bound themselves under an oath, saying that they would neither eat nor drink till they had ^pkilled Paul. ¹³Now there were more than forty who had formed this conspiracy. ¹⁴They came to the chief priests and ^qelders, and said, “We have bound ourselves under a great oath that we will eat nothing until we have killed Paul. ¹⁵Now you, therefore, together with the council, suggest to the commander that he be brought down to you ³tomorrow, as though you were going to make further

⁵ ^d Lev. 5:17, 18
^e Ex. 22:28; Eccl. 10:20; 2 Pet. 2:10
⁶ ^f Acts 26:5; Phil. 3:5 ^g Acts 24:15, 21; 26:6; 28:20
⁸ ^h Matt. 22:23; Mark 12:18; Luke 20:27
⁹ ⁱ Acts 25:25; 26:31
^j John 12:29; Acts 22:6, 7, 17, 18 ^k Acts 5:39 ^l NU what if a spirit or an angel has spoken to him? omitting the last clause
¹¹ ^l Acts 18:9; 27:23, 24 ^m Acts 21:18, 19; 22:1-21 ⁿ Acts 28:16, 17, 23 ² Take courage
¹² ^o Acts 23:21, 30; 25:3 ^p Acts 9:23, 24; 25:3; 26:21; 27:42; 1 Thess. 2:15
¹⁴ ^q Acts 4:5, 23; 6:12; 22:5; 24:1; 25:15
¹⁵ ³ NU omits tomorrow

²⁰ ^r Acts 23:12
²³ ^s Acts 8:40; 23:33
²⁷ ^t Acts 21:30, 33; 24:7

inquiries concerning him; but we are ready to kill him before he comes near.”

¹⁶So when Paul’s sister’s son heard of their ambush, he went and entered the barracks and told Paul. ¹⁷Then Paul called one of the centurions to *him* and said, “Take this young man to the commander, for he has something to tell him.” ¹⁸So he took him and brought *him* to the commander and said, “Paul the prisoner called me to *him* and asked *me* to bring this young man to you. He has something to say to you.”

¹⁹Then the commander took him by the hand, went aside, and asked privately, “What is it that you have to tell me?”

²⁰And he said, ^r“The Jews have agreed to ask that you bring Paul down to the council tomorrow, as though they were going to inquire more fully about him. ²¹But do not yield to them, for more than forty of them lie in wait for him, men who have bound themselves by an oath that they will neither eat nor drink till they have killed him; and now they are ready, waiting for the promise from you.”

²²So the commander let the young man depart, and commanded *him*, “Tell no one that you have revealed these things to me.”

Sent to Felix

²³And he called for two centurions, saying, “Prepare two hundred soldiers, seventy horsemen, and two hundred spearmen to go to ^sCaesarea at the third hour of the night; ²⁴and provide mounts to set Paul on, and bring *him* safely to Felix the governor.” ²⁵He wrote a letter in the following manner:

²⁶Claudius Lysias,

To the most excellent governor Felix:

Greetings.

²⁷^tThis man was seized by the Jews and was about to be killed by them.

23:5 Note that Paul did not defend his behavior (v. 3), but rather repented of it. **I did not know:** There are several possible reasons why Paul did not know Ananias was the high priest. It could be that Paul’s eyesight was poor, and he could not see Ananias clearly. Or perhaps this was not a normal assembly of the Sanhedrin, and the high priest was not wearing his normal robes or sitting in his usual place.

23:6 The **Sadducees** did not believe in the resurrection of the dead, miracles, life after death, or the existence of angels. On the other hand, the **Pharisees** believed in the supernatural and affirmed the very things the Sadducees denied.

23:11 bear witness at Rome: Warned by friends not to go to Jerusalem, Paul may have begun to doubt his decision. The Lord encouraged Paul not to be afraid because he was under the sovereign care of God. As Paul had borne witness to Jesus as a prisoner in

Jerusalem, so he would do as a prisoner in Rome. Paul’s chains would glorify God in ways that would have been impossible without them.

23:12–15 The willingness of the Jewish **council** to cooperate with the assassination plot against Paul shows how conscious they were of their weak case against him.

23:23 Paul was to be escorted out of the city under cover of darkness surrounded by hundreds of soldiers. Apparently the commander thought the threat of assassination was serious enough to commit almost half of the entire garrison at the Fortress of Antonia to escorting Paul at least part of the way to Rome.

23:25 He wrote a letter: Roman law required a subordinate officer to send a written statement of the case with a prisoner when he referred the case to his superior.

Coming with the troops I rescued him, having learned that he was a Roman. ²⁸ And when I wanted to know the reason they accused him, I brought him before their council. ²⁹ I found out that he was accused ^v concerning questions of their law, ^w but had nothing charged against him deserving of death or chains. ³⁰ And ^x when it was told me that ⁴ the Jews lay in wait for the man, I sent him immediately to you, and ^y also commanded his accusers to state before you the charges against him.

Farewell.

³¹ Then the soldiers, as they were commanded, took Paul and brought him by night to Antipatris. ³² The next day they left the horsemen to go on with him, and returned to the barracks. ³³ When they came to ^z Caesarea and had delivered the ^a letter to the governor, they also presented Paul to him. ³⁴ And when the governor had read it, he asked what province he was from. And when he understood that he was from ^b Cilicia, ³⁵ he said, ^c “I will hear you when your accusers also have come.” And he commanded him to be kept in ^d Herod’s ⁵ Praetorium.

Accused of Sedition

24 Now after ^a five days ^b Ananias the high priest came down with the elders and a certain orator named Tertullus. These gave evidence to the governor against Paul.

² And when he was called upon, Tertullus began his accusation, saying: “Seeing that through you we enjoy great peace, and ¹ prosperity is being brought to this nation by your foresight, ³ we accept it always and in all places, most noble Felix, with all thankfulness. ⁴ Neverthe-

²⁸ ^v Acts 22:30
²⁹ ^v Acts 18:15;
^{25:19} ^w Acts 25:25;
26:31
³⁰ ^x Acts 23:20
^v Acts 24:8; 25:6
⁴ NU *there would be a plot against the man*
³³ ^z Acts 8:40
^a Acts 23:26-30
³⁴ ^b Acts 6:9; 21:39
³⁵ ^c Acts 24:1, 10;
25:16 ^d Matt. 27:27
⁵ Headquarters

CHAPTER 24
¹ ^a Acts 21:27
^b Acts 23:2, 30,
35; 25:2
² ¹ Or reforms are

⁴ ² graciousness
⁵ ^c Luke 23:2; Acts
6:13; 16:20; 17:6;
21:28; 1 Pet. 2:12, 15
⁶ ^d Acts 21:28
^e John 18:31 ³ NU
ends the sentence
here and omits the
rest of v. 6, all of
v. 7, and the first
clause of v. 8.
⁷ ^f Acts 21:33; 23:10
⁸ ^g Acts 23:30
⁹ ⁴ NU, M *joined the attack*
¹¹ ^h Acts 21:15, 18,
26, 27; 24:17
¹² ⁱ Acts 25:8; 28:17
¹⁴ ^j Amos 8:14; Acts
9:2; 24:22 ^k 2 Tim.
1:3 ¹ Acts 26:22;
28:23
¹⁵ ^m Acts 23:6; 26:6,
7; 28:20 ⁿ [Dan.
12:2; John 5:28, 29;
11:24] ⁵ NU omits
of the dead
¹⁶ ^o Acts 23:1
¹⁷ ^p Acts 11:29;
30; Rom. 15:25-28;
1 Cor. 16:1-4; 2 Cor.
8:1-4; 9:1, 2, 12;
Gal. 2:10
¹⁸ ^q Acts 21:27;
26:21 ^r Acts 21:26

less, not to be tedious to you any further, I beg you to hear, by your ² courtesy, a few words from us. ⁵ For we have found this man a plague, a creator of dissension among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes. ⁶ He even tried to profane the temple, and we seized him, ³ and wanted ^e to judge him according to our law. ⁷ But the commander Lysias came by and with great violence took him out of our hands, ⁸ commanding his accusers to come to you. By examining him yourself you may ascertain all these things of which we accuse him.” ⁹ And the Jews also ⁴ assented, maintaining that these things were so.

The Defense Before Felix

¹⁰ Then Paul, after the governor had nodded to him to speak, answered: “Inasmuch as I know that you have been for many years a judge of this nation, I do the more cheerfully answer for myself, ¹¹ because you may ascertain that it is no more than twelve days since I went up to Jerusalem ^h to worship. ¹² And they neither found me in the temple disputing with anyone nor inciting the crowd, either in the synagogues or in the city. ¹³ Nor can they prove the things of which they now accuse me. ¹⁴ But this I confess to you, that according to ^j the Way which they call a sect, so I worship the ^k God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in ^l the Law and in the Prophets. ¹⁵ I have hope in God, which they themselves also accept, ⁿ that there will be a resurrection ⁵ of the dead, both of the just and the unjust. ¹⁶ This *being* so, I myself always strive to have a conscience without offense toward God and men.

¹⁷ “Now after many years ^p I came to bring alms and offerings to my nation, ¹⁸ in the midst of which some Jews from Asia found me ^r purified in the temple,

23:31, 32 Slipping out of Jerusalem when the city was quiet, the foot soldiers and cavalry probably attracted little attention. Ahead lay Antipatris, 40 miles away, by way of a winding downhill road where an ambush would have been disastrous. Antipatris was used by the Romans as a relay station for their troops. The rest of the journey was over open plain where there was no need for a large number of soldiers. The foot soldiers returned to Jerusalem, leaving the 70 horsemen to escort Paul the remaining distance to Caesarea, the capital of Judea. The hand of God over Paul’s life can be seen in the provision of such extraordinary protection.

23:34 the governor: Antonius Felix governed Judea from A.D. 52 to 60. Felix had been a slave, but had gained the status of freedman under the Emperor Claudius. Because Felix’s brother was a friend of the emperor, Felix’s political career blossomed, even though he was not popular among his peers. Felix was known for indulging in every kind of lust, and the writer Tacitus described him as “exercising the powers of a king with the character of a slave.” **he was from Cilicia:** After reading the letter from Jerusalem, Felix wanted to know Paul’s home province. When he learned it was Cilicia he decided to hear

the case, because the political status of Cilicia did not require its natives to be sent back there for trial.

23:35 As the official residence built by Herod the Great, Herod’s Praetorium included cells for prisoners (see John 18:28; Phil. 1:13). **24:5 we have found this man:** There were three basic charges against Paul: political treason, religious heresy, and temple desecration. His opponents argued that Paul had been causing riots throughout the empire, that he spoke against the Law of Moses, and that he had brought a Gentile into the Jewish temple courts.

24:11, 12 Paul first addressed the charge of sedition, knowing that if he was found guilty it would mean his life. He demonstrated how ridiculous the charge was in that it had only been twelve days since he had come to Jerusalem. This was hardly enough time to incite riots or start revolutions in Judea.

24:14 Paul openly admitted that he was a follower of the Way, but he contended that he still believed the Law and the Prophets. That is, he was a follower of Judaism, a religion protected by Rome. **24:18, 19** The reference to Jews from Asia indicated to Felix that Paul’s real accusers were not present, creating some suspicion about the charges against the apostle.

neither with a mob nor with tumult. ¹⁹They ought to have been here before you to object if they had anything against me. ²⁰Or else let those who are *here* themselves say ⁶if they found any wrongdoing in me while I stood before the council, ²¹unless *it is* for this one statement which I cried out, standing among them, “Concerning the resurrection of the dead I am being judged by you this day.”

Felix Procrastinates

²²But when Felix heard these things, having more accurate knowledge of the *Way*, he adjourned the proceedings and said, “When ^νLysias the commander comes down, I will make a decision on your case.” ²³So he commanded the centurion to keep Paul and to let *him* have liberty, and ^ωtold him not to forbid any of his friends to provide for or visit him.

²⁴And after some days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, who was Jewish, he sent for Paul and heard him concerning the *faith* in Christ. ²⁵Now as he reasoned about righteousness, self-control, and the judgment to come, Felix was afraid and answered, “Go away for now; when I have a convenient time I will call for you.” ²⁶Meanwhile he also hoped that ^θmoney would be given him by Paul, ⁷that he might release him. Therefore he sent for him more often and conversed with him.

²⁷But after two years Porcius Festus succeeded Felix; and Felix, ^zwanting to do the Jews a favor, left Paul bound.

Paul Appeals to Caesar

25 Now when Festus had come to the province, after three days he went up from ^aCaesarea to Jerusalem. ^{2b}Then the ¹high priest and the chief men of the

¹⁹ ^s [Acts 23:30; 25:16]
²⁰ ^ν NU, *M what wrongdoing they found*
²¹ ^t [Acts 23:6; 24:15; 28:20]
²² ^z Acts 9:2; 18:26; 19:9, 23; 22:4 ^v Acts 23:26; 24:7
²³ ^ω Acts 23:16; 27:3; 28:16
²⁴ ^x [John 3:15; 5:24; 11:25; 12:46; 20:31; Rom. 10:9]
²⁶ ^v Ex. 23:8 ⁷ NU omits *that he might release him*
²⁷ ^z Ex. 23:2; Acts 12:3; 23:35; 25:9, 14

CHAPTER 25

¹ ^a Acts 8:40; 25:4, 6, 13
² ^b Acts 24:1; 25:15
¹ NU *chief priests*

³ ^c Acts 23:12, 15
⁵ ^d Acts 18:14; 25:18
⁷ ^e Mark 15:3; Luke 23:2, 10; Acts 24:5, 13
⁸ ^f Acts 6:13; 24:12; 28:17
⁹ ^g Acts 12:2; 24:27
^h Acts 25:20
¹¹ ⁱ Acts 18:14; 23:29; 25:25; 26:31
^j Acts 26:32; 28:19

Jews informed him against Paul; and they petitioned him, ³asking a favor against him, that he would summon him to Jerusalem—^cwhile *they* lay in ambush along the road to kill him. ⁴But Festus answered that Paul should be kept at Caesarea, and that he himself was going *there* shortly. ⁵“Therefore,” he said, “let those who have authority among you go down with *me* and accuse this man, to see ^dif there is any fault in him.”

⁶And when he had remained among them more than ten days, he went down to Caesarea. And the next day, sitting on the judgment seat, he commanded Paul to be brought. ⁷When he had come, the Jews who had come down from Jerusalem stood about ^eand laid many serious complaints against Paul, which they could not prove, ⁸while he answered for himself, ^f“Neither against the law of the Jews, nor against the temple, nor against Caesar have I offended in anything at all.”

⁹But Festus, ^gwanting to do the Jews a favor, answered Paul and said, ^h“Are you willing to go up to Jerusalem and there be judged before me concerning these things?”

¹⁰So Paul said, “I stand at Caesar’s judgment seat, where I ought to be judged. To the Jews I have done no wrong, as you very well know. ¹¹ⁱFor if I am an offender, or have committed anything deserving of death, I do not object to dying; but if there is nothing in these things of which these men accuse me, no one can deliver me to them. ^jI appeal to Caesar.”

¹²Then Festus, when he had conferred with the council, answered, “You have appealed to Caesar? To Caesar you shall go!”

Paul Before Agrippa

¹³And after some days King Agrippa and Bernice came to Caesarea to greet

24:22 **having more accurate knowledge of the Way:** How did Felix know about the Christian faith? His wife Drusilla was Jewish. She was the great-granddaughter of Herod the Great, who had tried to kill the baby Jesus. She was the great-niece of the Herod who killed John the Baptist. Her father was the man who had the apostle James put to death (12:1, 2). Also, Felix was well acquainted with Christianity from having governed Judea and Samaria for six years.

24:25 Felix had taken Drusilla from her former husband, the king of Emesa in Syria. She was Felix’s third wife. His first wife was the granddaughter of Mark Antony and Cleopatra. His second wife was a princess whom he also divorced. When Paul talked about **righteousness, self-control**, and the coming **judgment**, Felix must have been reminded of his immoral life. He refused to talk any more about the Way because of the guilt he felt.

24:26 Felix may have hoped that Paul had **money** from the Gentile churches or that perhaps Paul’s friends would pay a ransom for him. Felix wanted to talk about a payoff; Paul wanted to talk about righteousness (v. 25).

24:27 **after two years:** It may be that this was the time Luke wrote most of the Book of Acts, considering that he had access to people in Jerusalem and Caesarea for information about the early church.

After two years, another riot broke out in Caesarea. Felix crushed it with such force that he was removed as governor around **A.D. 60**.

25:1–4 The Jews hated Felix, and they wrote letters to Rome detailing their outrage over his brutality against them. As a result, Felix was replaced as governor by Porcius **Festus**. Festus learned from the mistakes of Felix. Three days after arriving in Caesarea, Festus headed to Jerusalem to meet with the Jewish leaders to establish some sort of working arrangement with the high priest and the Sanhedrin. **they petitioned him:** The Jewish leaders pressured Festus not for a concession or a favor. They wanted Festus to send Paul back to Jerusalem for trial. Their plan was to assassinate Paul on the way (23:15).

25:5 **see if there is any fault in him:** Festus reopened Paul’s case in an attempt to appease the Jewish leaders.

25:11 Paul knew that as a citizen of Rome he could insist on a trial before the Roman judgment seat, and not the Jewish Sanhedrin, where he would find little justice. **The appeal to Caesar** was the right of any Roman citizen. If a citizen thought he was not getting justice in a provincial court, he could appeal to the emperor himself. If the appeal was declared valid, all other proceedings in the lower courts ceased and the prisoner was sent to Rome for disposition of his case.

BIBLE TIMES & CULTURE NOTES



Roman Citizenship

Paul was born a Roman citizen, but how his family gained that citizenship is unknown. There were several ways to become a Roman citizen: being born to a Roman parent; retiring from the Roman army; having citizenship granted by an emperor or a Roman general to an individual or to an entire group; purchasing it. A Roman citizen was guaranteed a fair trial and was protected against certain forms of harsh punishment. A citizen could even appeal to Caesar in order to be tried in Rome.

Paul was intelligent enough to know all of his rights and savvy enough to know how to use them to his and especially God's advantage. Not only did his rights as a Roman citizen often save his life in dangerous situations (22:25), they also allowed him to carry the gospel message to jailers, shipmates, kings, and to the emperor in Rome (25:11).

Festus. ¹⁴When they had been there many days, Festus laid Paul's case before the king, saying: ^k"There is a certain man left a prisoner by Felix, ^labout whom the chief priests and the elders of the Jews informed me, when I was in Jerusalem, asking for a judgment against him. ^mTo them I answered, 'It is not the custom of the Romans to deliver any man ²to destruction before the accused meets the accusers face to face, and has opportunity to answer for himself concerning the charge against him.' ¹⁷Therefore when they had come together, without any delay, the next day I sat on the judgment seat and commanded the man to be brought in. ¹⁸When the accusers stood up, they brought no accusation against him of such things as I ³supposed, ¹⁹but had some questions against him about their own religion and about a certain Jesus, who had died, whom Paul affirmed to be alive. ²⁰And because I was uncertain of such questions, I asked whether he was willing to go to Jerusalem and there be judged concerning these matters. ²¹But when Paul ^pappealed to be reserved for the decision of Augustus, I commanded him to be kept till I could send him to Caesar."

¹⁴ ^k Acts 24:27
¹⁵ ^l Acts 24:1; 25:2, 3
¹⁶ ^m Acts 25:4, 5 ² NU omits *to destruction*, although it is implied
¹⁷ ⁿ Matt. 27:19; Acts 25:6, 10
¹⁸ ³ suspected
¹⁹ ^o Acts 18:14, 15; 23:29
²¹ ^p Acts 25:11, 12

²² ^q Acts 9:15
²³ ^r Acts 9:15
²⁴ ^s pageantry
²⁴ ^t Acts 25:2, 3, 7
²⁵ ^u Acts 21:36; 22:22
²⁵ ^v Acts 23:9, 29; 26:31 ^v Acts 25:11, 12

CHAPTER 26

² ^a [1 Pet. 3:14; 4:14]
^b [1 Pet. 3:15, 16]
^c Acts 21:28; 24:5, 6
⁵ ^a [Acts 22:3; 23:6; 24:15, 21]; Phil. 3:5
⁶ ^e Acts 23:6 ^f [Gen. 3:15; 22:18; 26:4; 49:10; Deut. 18:15; 2 Sam. 7:12; Ps. 132:11; Is. 4:2; 7:14; 9:6; 40:10; Jer. 23:5; 33:14-16; Ezek. 34:23; 37:24; Dan. 9:24]; Acts 13:32; Rom. 15:8; [Titus 2:13]
⁷ ^g James 1:1

²² Then ^r Agrippa said to Festus, "I also would like to hear the man myself."

"Tomorrow," he said, "you shall hear him."

²³ So the next day, when Agrippa and Bernice had come with great ⁴ pomp, and had entered the auditorium with the commanders and the prominent men of the city, at Festus' command ^r Paul was brought in. ²⁴ And Festus said: "King Agrippa and all the men who are here present with us, you see this man about whom ^s the whole assembly of the Jews petitioned me, both at Jerusalem and here, crying out that he was ^t not fit to live any longer. ²⁵ But when I found that ^u he had committed nothing deserving of death, ^v and that he himself had appealed to Augustus, I decided to send him. ²⁶ I have nothing certain to write to my lord concerning him. Therefore I have brought him out before you, and especially before you, King Agrippa, so that after the examination has taken place I may have something to write. ²⁷ For it seems to me unreasonable to send a prisoner and not to specify the charges against him."

Paul's Early Life

26 Then Agrippa said to Paul, "You are permitted to speak for yourself."

So Paul stretched out his hand and answered for himself: ² "I think myself ^a happy, King Agrippa, because today I shall answer ^b for myself before you concerning all the things of which I am ^c accused by the Jews, ³ especially because you are expert in all customs and questions which have to do with the Jews. Therefore I beg you to hear me patiently.

⁴ "My manner of life from my youth, which was spent from the beginning among my own nation at Jerusalem, all the Jews know. ⁵ They knew me from the first, if they were willing to testify, that according to ^d the strictest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee. ⁶ And now I stand and am judged for the hope of ^e the promise made by God to our fathers. ⁷ To this ^f promise ^g our twelve tribes, earnestly

25:14–21 Festus laid Paul's case before the king: Festus had a problem. In the case of an appeal, a letter had to be written providing the details of the case. Festus did not understand what was going on with Paul or why the Jewish leaders hated him. When King Agrippa arrived to bring his official greetings, it gave Festus an opportunity to get an opinion from one who might have understood such things.

26:5 I lived a Pharisee: The Jewish historian Josephus described the Pharisees as "a body of Jews with the reputation of excelling the rest of the nation in the observances of religion, and as exact expo-

nents of the laws." Paul pointed out that he was not some stranger or foreigner trying to start a new religion. He was a Jew, a Pharisee, who lived out his Jewish faith better than most.

26:6 for the hope of the promise: Paul was not being judged because he had done something wrong. He had not turned against his own Jewish heritage. Instead he fervently believed in the promises God had made to the nation of Israel: the promise of a coming Messiah and the reestablishment of the kingdom of God. Paul did not reject the hope of salvation for Israel. Instead he saw that hope fulfilled in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. The fact that

serving God ^h night and day, ⁱ hope to attain. For this hope's sake, King Agrippa, I am accused by the Jews. ⁸ Why should it be thought incredible by you that God raises the dead?

⁹ “Indeed, I myself thought I must do many things ^l contrary to the name of ^k Jesus of Nazareth. ¹⁰ This I also did in Jerusalem, and many of the saints I shut up in prison, having received authority ^m from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I cast my vote against them. ¹¹ And I punished them often in every synagogue and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly enraged against them, I persecuted them even to foreign cities.

Paul Recounts His Conversion

¹² “While thus occupied, as I journeyed to Damascus with authority and commission from the chief priests, ¹³ at midday, O king, along the road I saw a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, shining around me and those who journeyed with me. ¹⁴ And when we all had fallen to the ground, I heard a voice speaking to me and saying in the Hebrew language, ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.’ ¹⁵ So I said, ‘Who are You, Lord?’ And He said, ‘I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. ¹⁶ But rise and stand on your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose, ¹⁷ to make you a minister and a witness both of the things which you have seen and of the things which I will yet reveal to you. ¹⁷ I will ² deliver you from the Jewish people, as well as from the Gentiles, ^q to whom I ³ now send you, ¹⁸ to open their eyes, in order ^s to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, ^t that they may receive forgiveness

⁷ ^h Luke 2:37;
1 Thess. 3:10; 1 Tim. 5:5
⁸ Phil. 3:11
⁹ John 16:2; 1 Cor. 15:9; 1 Tim. 1:12, 13
^k Acts 2:22; 10:38
^l against
¹⁰ Acts 8:1-3; 9:13;
Gal. 1:13
^m Acts 9:14
ⁿ Matt. 10:17;
Acts 22:19
^o Acts 9:3-8;
22:6-11; 26:12-18
^p Acts 22:15;
Eph. 3:6-8
^q Acts 22:21
^r rescue ³ NU, M
omit now
¹⁸ 1s. 35:5; 42:7;
16; Luke 1:79; [John 8:12; 2 Cor. 4:4];
Eph. 1:18; 1 Thess. 5:5
² 2 Cor. 6:14;
Eph. 4:18; 5:8; [Col. 1:13]; 1 Pet. 2:9
^t Luke 1:77

of sins and ^u an inheritance among those who are ^v sanctified ⁴ by faith in Me.’

Paul's Post-Conversion Life

¹⁹ “Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, ²⁰ but ^w declared first to those in Damascus and in Jerusalem, and throughout all the region of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent, turn to God, and do ^x works befitting repentance. ²¹ For these reasons the Jews seized me in the temple and tried to kill me. ²² Therefore, having obtained help from God, to this day I stand, witnessing both to small and great, saying no other things than those ^y which the prophets and ^z Moses said would come— ²³ ^a that the Christ would suffer, ^b that He would be the first to rise from the dead, and ^c would proclaim light to the Jewish people and to the Gentiles.”

Agrippa Parries Paul's Challenge

²⁴ Now as he thus made his defense, Festus said with a loud voice, “Paul, ^d you are beside yourself! Much learning is driving you mad!”

²⁵ But he said, “I am not ⁵ mad, most noble Festus, but speak the words of truth and reason. ²⁶ For the king, before whom I also speak freely, ^e knows these things; for I am convinced that none of these things escapes his attention, since this thing was not done in a corner. ²⁷ King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know that you do believe.”

²⁸ Then Agrippa said to Paul, “You almost persuade me to become a Christian.”

²⁹ And Paul said, ^f “I would to God that not only you, but also all who hear me today, might become both almost and altogether such as I am, except for these chains.”

³⁰ When he had said these things, the

^u Eph. 1:11; Col. 1:12
^v Acts 20:32
⁴ set apart
²⁰ ^w Acts 9:19, 20, 22; 11:26
^x Matt. 3:8; Luke 3:8
²² ^y Luke 24:27;
Acts 24:14; 28:23;
Rom. 3:21
^z John 5:46
²³ ^a Luke 24:26
^b 1 Cor. 15:20, 23;
Col. 1:18; Rev. 1:5
^c 1s. 42:6; 49:6; Luke 2:32; 2 Cor. 4:4
²⁴ ^d 2 Kin. 9:11;
John 10:20; [1 Cor. 1:23; 2:13, 14; 4:10]
²⁵ ^e out of my mind
²⁶ ^e Acts 26:3
²⁹ ^f 1 Cor. 7:7

Jesus had been raised from the dead confirmed to Paul that all believers would be raised from the dead to enjoy the blessings of the promised kingdom of God.

26:10 I cast my vote against them: Some have concluded that Paul must have been a member of the Sanhedrin at some time, since he mentions casting a vote. However, Paul was probably too young to belong to such a body of aged men or elders. Paul may have been the Sanhedrin's chief prosecutor, urging a verdict of guilty against those Christians he had hunted down in the course of his campaign of persecution.

26:11 The imperfect tense of the verb **compelled** does not tell us whether or not Paul had actually been successful in causing believers to **blaspheme** their faith, only that he had tried to compel them to do so.

26:14 kick against the goads: A young ox, when it was first yoked, usually resented the burden and tried kicking its way out. If the ox was yoked to a single-handed plow, the plowman would hold a long staff with a sharpened end close to the heels of the ox. Every time the ox kicked, it struck the spike. If the ox was yoked to a wagon, a studded bar with wooden spikes served the same pur-

pose. The point was that the ox had to learn submission to the yoke the hard way. Before his encounter with Jesus on the Damascus road, Paul was resisting God in a similar manner (see 1 Tim. 1:13).

26:20 Repentance indicates a complete change in thinking. In Rom. 12:2, Paul speaks of the “renewing of your mind.” We do what we think is best, what makes sense to us. Paul was killing Christians because he thought it was the correct course of action. Christ's revelation changed his thoughts, but his preaching of the Good News was visible proof that he had repented of his former ways. Genuine repentance is evidenced by changed behavior.

26:28-30 Agrippa realized that Paul was doing more than just defending his faith; he was actually trying to persuade Agrippa to become a follower of Jesus Christ. If Agrippa had told those gathered that he did not believe the prophets, he would have angered the Jews. If he had acknowledged that he did believe the prophets, he would have had to give weight to Paul's words. Agrippa avoided being maneuvered into an embarrassing corner by sidestepping the issue. The interview was becoming too personal for Agrippa's comfort, so he ended the dialogue.

king stood up, as well as the governor and Bernice and those who sat with them; ³¹and when they had gone aside, they talked among themselves, saying, ^g“This man is doing nothing deserving of death or chains.”

³²Then Agrippa said to Festus, “This man might have been set ^hfree ⁱif he had not appealed to Caesar.”

The Voyage to Rome Begins

27 And when ^ait was decided that we should sail to Italy, they delivered Paul and some other prisoners to *one* named Julius, a centurion of the Augustan Regiment. ²So, entering a ship of Adramyttium, we put to sea, meaning to sail along the coasts of Asia. ^bAristarchus, a Macedonian of Thessalonica, was with us. ³And the next *day* we landed at Sidon. And Julius ^ctreated Paul kindly and gave *him* liberty to go to his friends and receive care. ⁴When we had put to sea from there, we sailed under *the shelter* of Cyprus, because the winds were contrary. ⁵And when we had sailed over the sea which is off Cilicia and Pamphylia, we came to Myra, *a city* of Lycia. ⁶There the centurion found ^dan Alexandrian ship sailing to Italy, and he put us on board.

⁷When we had sailed slowly many days, and arrived with difficulty off Cnidus, the wind not permitting us to proceed, we sailed under *the shelter* of ^eCrete off Salmone. ⁸Passing it with difficulty, we came to a place called Fair Havens, near the city of Lasea.

Paul's Warning Ignored

⁹Now when much time had been spent, and sailing was now dangerous

31 ^g Acts 23:9, 29; 25:25
32 ^h Acts 28:18
ⁱ Acts 25:11

CHAPTER 27

1 ^a Acts 25:12, 25
2 ^b Acts 19:29
3 ^c Acts 24:23; 28:16
6 ^d Acts 28:11
7 ^e Acts 2:11; 27:12,
21; Titus 1:5, 12

9 ^f Lev. 16:29-31; 23:27-29; Num. 29:7 ¹ The Day of Atonement, late September or early October
14 ² A southeast wind that stirs up broad waves; NU *Euraquilon*, a northeaster
15 ³ *be driven*
16 ⁴ NU *Cauda*
17 ⁵ M *Syrtes*
19 ^g Jon. 1:5

^fbecause ¹the Fast was already over, Paul advised them, ¹⁰saying, “Men, I perceive that this voyage will end with disaster and much loss, not only of the cargo and ship, but also our lives.” ¹¹Nevertheless the centurion was more persuaded by the helmsman and the owner of the ship than by the things spoken by Paul. ¹²And because the harbor was not suitable to winter in, the majority advised to set sail from there also, if by any means they could reach Phoenix, a harbor of Crete opening toward the southwest and northwest, *and winter there*.

In the Tempest

¹³When the south wind blew softly, supposing that they had obtained *their* desire, putting out to sea, they sailed close by Crete. ¹⁴But not long after, a tempestuous head wind arose, called ²Euroclydon. ¹⁵So when the ship was caught, and could not head into the wind, we let *her* ³drive. ¹⁶And running under *the shelter* of an island called ⁴Clauda, we secured the skiff with difficulty. ¹⁷When they had taken it on board, they used cables to undergird the ship; and fearing lest they should run aground on the ⁵Syrtyis Sands, they struck sail and so were driven. ¹⁸And because we were exceedingly tempest-tossed, the next *day* they lightened the ship. ¹⁹On the third *day* ^gwe threw the ship's tackle overboard with our own hands. ²⁰Now when neither sun nor stars appeared for many days, and no small tempest beat on *us*, all hope that we would be saved was finally given up.

²¹But after long abstinence from food, then Paul stood in the midst of them and said, “Men, you should have listened to me, and not have sailed from Crete and in-

27:1 we: Luke accompanied Paul on this journey (for other “we” passages, see 16:10–17; 20:5–15; 21:1–18). **other prisoners:** Some of the other prisoners may have also appealed to Caesar, or they may have been under sentence of death and were on their way to Rome to appear as combatants in the arena.

27:4–6 the winds were contrary: This was not a good time for sailing. It was just before the winter months when sailing became difficult because of storms. Because of headwinds, the ship had to sail north of the island of Cyprus, using it and the mainland to break the force of the gale. Eventually the travelers reached the port of Myra where a larger ship was found to sail to Italy.

27:7–9 Paul and his shipmates neared **Cnidus** on the southwest tip of Asia Minor, some 130 miles from Myra, which would have been their last port of call before sailing across the Aegean Sea to the coast of Greece. However, the wind was so strong that the ship was forced southward. The ship sailed along the southern coast of the island of **Crete**, again using the island to break the force of the wind. Finally the ship docked at a small port called **Fair Havens**. The season for sailing was over, and continuing the journey would have been dangerous.

27:9–12 Paul advised them: Paul had been at sea many times before. He had been shipwrecked at least two other times (see 2 Cor. 11:25), so he had some basis for what he was saying. However, his

counsel was rejected. Because Fair Havens was a little town, the sailors decided to try to reach Phoenix, the major port on the west side of Crete, some 60 miles away. It could be that the owner of the ship wanted to get his grain to a larger port so that he could sell it. Furthermore Julius, the centurion in charge, probably wanted a better place to winter his men. In other words, greed and the desire for comfort may have gotten in the way of good sense.

27:13–16 In the morning there was a calm over the sea and a breeze blowing from the south, so the travelers quickly set sail, hugging the shoreline for protection. Suddenly a violent northeasterly storm called **Euroclydon** (a name given to all northeasterly storms) hit the ship, preventing the crew from sailing into the wind. The word translated **tempestuous** is the root of our word **typhoon**. The storm drove the ship south of a small island named **Clauda**, which broke the force of the gale long enough for the crew to take some measures to save the ship.

27:17 cables to undergird the ship: Because the ship's timbers could come apart, the sailors passed strong ropes under the ship, pulling up tight to hold the ship together. **run aground on the Syrtis Sands:** The sailors were fearful of the sandbars of Syrtis, just off the northern coast of Africa. The crew of Paul's ship let down a sea anchor, attempting to slow themselves down.

curred this disaster and loss. ²²And now I urge you to take ⁶heart, for there will be no loss of life among you, but only of the ship. ²³^hFor there stood by me this night an angel of the God to whom I belong and ⁱwhom I serve, ²⁴saying, ‘Do not be afraid, Paul; you must be brought before Caesar; and indeed God has granted you all those who sail with you.’ ²⁵Therefore take heart, men, ^jfor I believe God that it will be just as it was told me. ²⁶However, ^kwe must run aground on a certain island.”

²⁷Now when the fourteenth night had come, as we were driven up and down in the Adriatic Sea, about midnight the sailors sensed that they were drawing near some land. ²⁸And they took soundings and found *it* to be twenty fathoms; and when they had gone a little farther, they took soundings again and found *it* to be fifteen fathoms. ²⁹Then, fearing lest we should run aground on the rocks, they dropped four anchors from the stern, and ⁷prayed for day to come. ³⁰And as the sailors were seeking to escape from the ship, when they had let down the skiff into the sea, under pretense of putting out anchors from the prow, ³¹Paul said to the centurion and the soldiers, “Unless these men stay in the ship, you cannot be saved.” ³²Then the soldiers cut away the ropes of the skiff and let it fall off.

³³And as day was about to dawn, Paul implored *them* all to take food, saying, “Today is the fourteenth day you have waited and continued without food, and eaten nothing. ³⁴Therefore I urge you to take nourishment, for this is for your survival, ^lsince not a hair will fall from the head of any of you.” ³⁵And when he had said these things, he took bread and ^mgave thanks to God in the presence of them all; and when he had broken *it* he began to eat. ³⁶Then they were all encouraged, and also took food themselves. ³⁷And in all we were two hundred and seventy-six ⁿpersons on the ship. ³⁸So when they had eaten enough, they lightened the ship and threw out the wheat into the sea.

Shipwrecked on Malta

³⁹When it was day, they did not rec-

²² ⁶ courage
²³ ^h Acts 18:9;
 23:11; 2 Tim. 4:17
ⁱ Dan. 6:16; Rom.
 1:9; 2 Tim. 1:3
²⁵ ^h Luke 1:45; Rom.
 4:20, 21; 2 Tim. 1:12
²⁶ ^k Acts 28:1
²⁹ ⁷ Or wished
³⁴ ^l 1 Kin. 1:52;
 [Matt. 10:30; Luke
 12:7; 21:18]
³⁵ ^m 1 Sam. 9:13;
 Matt. 15:36; Mark
 8:6; John 6:11;
 [1 Tim. 4:3, 4]
³⁷ ⁿ Acts 2:41; 7:14;
 Rom. 13:1; 1 Pet.
 3:20

⁴⁰ ⁸ cast off
⁴¹ ^o 2 Cor. 11:25
⁹ A reef
⁴⁴ ^p Acts 27:22, 31

CHAPTER 28

¹ ^a Acts 27:26
² ^b Acts 28:4; Rom.
 1:14; 1 Cor. 14:11;
 Col. 3:11 ^l Lit.
 barbarians
⁵ ^c Mark 16:18; Luke
 10:19
⁶ ^d Acts 12:22; 14:11
⁷ ² Magistrate

ognize the land; but they observed a bay with a beach, onto which they planned to run the ship if possible. ⁴⁰And they ⁸let go the anchors and left *them* in the sea, meanwhile loosing the rudder ropes; and they hoisted the mainsail to the wind and made for shore. ⁴¹But striking ⁹a place where two seas met, ^othey ran the ship aground; and the prow stuck fast and remained immovable, but the stern was being broken up by the violence of the waves.

⁴²And the soldiers’ plan was to kill the prisoners, lest any of them should swim away and escape. ⁴³But the centurion, wanting to save Paul, kept them from *their* purpose, and commanded that those who could swim should jump *overboard* first and get to land, ⁴⁴and the rest, some on boards and some on *parts* of the ship. And so it was ^pthat they all escaped safely to land.

Paul’s Ministry on Malta

28 Now when they had escaped, they then found out that ^athe island was called Malta. ²And the ^bnatives ^lshowed us unusual kindness; for they kindled a fire and made us all welcome, because of the rain that was falling and because of the cold. ³But when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks and laid *them* on the fire, a viper came out because of the heat, and fastened on his hand. ⁴So when the natives saw the creature hanging from his hand, they said to one another, “No doubt this man is a murderer, whom, though he has escaped the sea, yet justice does not allow to live.” ⁵But he shook off the creature into the fire and ^csuffered no harm. ⁶However, they were expecting that he would swell up or suddenly fall down dead. But after they had looked for a long time and saw no harm come to him, they changed their minds and ^dsaid that he was a god.

⁷In that region there was an estate of the ²leading citizen of the island, whose name was Publius, who received us and entertained us courteously for three days. ⁸And it happened that the father of

27:22 no loss of life: Paul had been given absolute assurance by the all-powerful and all-knowing God that no one would be lost on the ship. Yet in v. 31 Paul warned that if the sailors were successful in escaping from the ship, the Roman soldiers would lose their lives. Because of Paul’s comments, the soldiers stopped the sailors from leaving the ship and everyone made it ashore alive (v. 44). God fulfilled His purpose and promise through the warnings of Paul and the choices of the soldiers.

27:42 The soldiers planned to kill the prisoners because they

knew Roman military law. If a prisoner escaped, the soldier on guard would be liable for the punishment of the one who escaped.

28:1 Malta was part of the Roman province of Sicily and was located about 60 miles south of that island near the toe of Italy.

28:8 lay sick of a fever: This fever was possibly Malta fever, which was common in Malta, Gibraltar, and other Mediterranean islands. The microorganism has since been traced to the milk of the Maltese goats. The fever usually lasted four months, but sometimes could last as long as two or three years.

Publius lay sick of a fever and dysentery. Paul went in to him and ^eprayed, and ^fhe laid his hands on him and healed him. ⁹So when this was done, the rest of those on the island who had diseases also came and were healed. ¹⁰They also honored us in many ^gways; and when we departed, they provided such things as were ^hnecessary.

Arrival at Rome

¹¹After three months we sailed in ⁱan Alexandrian ship whose figurehead was the ³Twin Brothers, which had wintered at the island. ¹²And landing at Syracuse, we stayed three days. ¹³From there we circled round and reached Rhegium. And after one day the south wind blew; and the next day we came to Puteoli, ¹⁴where we found ^jbrethren, and were invited to stay with them seven days. And so we went toward Rome. ¹⁵And from there, when the brethren heard about us, they came to meet us as far as Appii Forum and Three Inns. When Paul saw them, he thanked God and took courage.

¹⁶Now when we came to Rome, the centurion delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard; but ^kPaul was permitted to dwell by himself with the soldier who guarded him.

Paul's Ministry at Rome

¹⁷And it came to pass after three days

⁸ ^e Acts 9:40; [James 5:14, 15]
^f Matt. 9:18; Mark 5:23; 6:5; 7:32;
16:18; Luke 4:40;
Acts 19:11, 12;
[1 Cor. 12:9, 28]
¹⁰ ^g Matt. 15:6;
1 Tim. 5:17 ^h [Phil. 4:19]
¹¹ ⁱ Acts 27:6 ³ Gr. Dioskouroi, Zeus's sons Castor and Pollux
¹⁴ / Rom. 1:8
¹⁶ ^k Acts 23:11;
24:25; 27:3

¹⁷ ^j Acts 23:29;
24:12, 13; 26:31
^m Acts 21:33
¹⁸ ⁿ Acts 22:24;
24:10; 25:8; 26:32
¹⁹ ^o Acts 25:11, 21,
25 ⁴ The ruling authorities
²⁰ ^p Acts 26:6, 7
^q Acts 26:29; Eph. 3:1; 4:1; 6:20; 2 Tim. 1:8, 16; Philem. 10, 13
²² ^r Luke 2:34; Acts 24:5, 14; [1 Pet. 2:12; 3:16; 4:14, 16]
²³ ^s Luke 24:27; [Acts 17:3; 19:8]
^t Acts 26:6, 22
²⁴ ^u Acts 14:4; 19:9

that Paul called the leaders of the Jews together. So when they had come together, he said to them: "Men *and* brethren, ^lthough I have done nothing against our people or the customs of our fathers, yet ^mI was delivered as a prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans, ¹⁸who, ⁿwhen they had examined me, wanted to let *me* go, because there was no cause for putting me to death. ¹⁹But when the ⁴Jews spoke against *it*, ^oI was compelled to appeal to Caesar, not that I had anything of which to accuse my nation. ²⁰For this reason therefore I have called for you, to see *you* and speak with *you*, because ^pfor the hope of Israel I am bound with ^qthis chain."

²¹Then they said to him, "We neither received letters from Judea concerning you, nor have any of the brethren who came reported or spoken any evil of you. ²²But we desire to hear from you what you think; for concerning this sect, we know that ^rit is spoken against everywhere."

²³So when they had appointed him a day, many came to him at *his* lodging, ^sto whom he explained and solemnly testified of the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus ^tfrom both the Law of Moses and the Prophets, from morning till evening. ²⁴And ^usome were persuaded by the things which were spoken, and some disbelieved. ²⁵So when they did not

28:11 This **Alexandrian ship** bore a figurehead of the sons of Zeus called the **Twin Brothers**, Castor and Pollux, the mythological figures revered by sailors as protectors on the sea.

28:15 Some Christians from Rome traveled 33 miles south to a place called **Three Inns** to meet Paul. Others traveled ten miles farther south to meet Paul at **Appii Forum**. Three years earlier in his letter to the Roman Christians, Paul had expressed his deep desire to see them someday (see Rom. 15:24). The day had come.

28:16 Because Paul had not been accused of a dangerous crime and was not considered a political threat, he was **permitted to dwell by himself** under house arrest. This meant he could entertain his

friends and minister to groups such as Roman Jews and Gentiles.

28:17 leaders of the Jews: By this time, the decree of the emperor Claudius (18:2) had been allowed to lapse, and Jews had returned to Rome.

28:21 The Jewish leaders had not **received** any news about Paul from **Judea**. It may be that after Paul's appeal to Caesar, Paul was on the first ship that made it to Italy. Or the Jewish antagonists may have given up their attacks on Paul, having already failed with Felix, Festus, and Agrippa. A third reason may be that the Jews, only recently back in Rome after the expulsion of Claudius, wanted to avoid trouble.

Power of the Spirit

At the beginning of the Book of Acts, Jesus' followers appear confused and fearful. But by the end of the book they are well on their way to transforming the Roman world with the gospel. What accounts for this dramatic change? Acts 1:8 provides the answer: "You shall receive power." But notice:

1. The power promised was not force or political authority. Israel had enjoyed superiority under David and Solomon, but those days were a distant memory. Jesus was not indicating a revival of Jewish dominance. Instead, the word "power" means ability or capacity. Jesus promised that once the Holy Spirit came upon them, His followers would have a new ability.

2. The ability had more to do with *being* than *doing*. The believers would "be witnesses," not just "do witnessing." Evangelism is a process, not just an event. It involves a total lifestyle, not just occasional efforts.

3. The power came from without, not from within. The believers were not to manufacture their own ways of proclaiming the gospel but to look for supernatural ability from the Spirit to make them effective in gospel presentation. The power came when the Holy Spirit arrived, not before.

4. The believers were to be witnesses to Christ, not to themselves. They were to make disciples not to themselves but to the risen Lord (Matt. 28:18–20).



Paul's Journey to Rome c. A.D. 59–60 (Acts 27:1–28:16)



agree among themselves, they departed after Paul had said one word: “The Holy Spirit spoke rightly through Isaiah the prophet to ⁵our fathers, ²⁶saying,

*“Go to this people and say:
“Hearing you will hear, and shall not understand;
And seeing you will see, and not perceive;*

²⁷ *For the hearts of this people have grown dull.
Their ears are hard of hearing,
And their eyes they have closed,
Lest they should see with their eyes
and hear with their ears,*

²⁵ ⁵ NU your
²⁶ ^v Is. 6:9, 10; Jer. 5:21; Ezek. 12:2; Matt. 13:14, 15; Mark 4:12; Luke 8:10; John 12:40, 41; Rom. 11:8

²⁸ ^w Is. 42:1, 6; 49:6; Matt. 21:41; Luke 2:32; Rom. 11:11
²⁹ ⁶ NU omits v. 29.
³¹ ^x Acts 4:31; Eph. 6:19

*Lest they should understand with their hearts and turn,
So that I should heal them.”*”

²⁸ “Therefore let it be known to you that the salvation of God has been sent ^wto the Gentiles, and they will hear it!”
²⁹ ⁶ And when he had said these words, the Jews departed and had a great dispute among themselves.

³⁰ Then Paul dwelt two whole years in his own rented house, and received all who came to him, ³¹ ^x preaching the kingdom of God and teaching the things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ with all confidence, no one forbidding him.

28:30 two whole years: During this time Paul was permitted to minister to anyone who came to his rented house. Paul also wrote four of the NT letters (Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon) during this period.

28:31 Luke does not reveal what happened to Paul's case. Apparently it had not yet been decided when Luke finished Acts. There are good reasons for believing that Paul was released, since he had been found innocent by all Roman officials up to this point. Ancient tradition tells us that Paul actually went to Spain as he desired

(see Rom. 15:24). In his captivity letters, Paul expressed his hope of being released (see Philem. 22) and his confidence that he would be released (Phil. 1:25). Paul's pastoral epistles contain items that cannot be fitted into the Book of Acts, suggesting that they were written later. For instance, Titus 1:5 implies that Paul ministered on the island of Crete, something that is not reported in the Book of Acts. Paul most likely resumed his missionary travels for a few more years before being rearrested, retried, condemned, and executed as a martyr sometime between A.D. 64 and 67.

Rome in the Time of Paul

In terms of political importance, geographic position, and sheer magnificence, the superlative city of the empire was Rome, the capital.

Located on a series of jutting foothills and low-lying eminences east of a bend in the Tiber River some 18 miles from the Mediterranean, Rome was celebrated for its impressive public buildings, aqueducts, baths, theaters, and thoroughfares, many of which led from distant provinces. The city of the first Christian century had spread far beyond its fourth-century B.C. Servian walls and lay unwalled, secure in its greatness.

The most prominent features were the Capitoline hill, with temples to Jupiter and Juno, and the nearby Palatine, adorned with imperial palaces, including Nero's Golden House. Both hills overlooked the Roman Forum, the hub of the entire empire (see map below).

Alternatively described as the glorious crowning achievement of humankind and as the sewer of the universe to which all the scum from every corner of the empire flowed, Rome had reasons for both civic pride in its architecture and shame for staggering urban social problems not unlike those of cities today.

The apostle Paul entered the city from the south on the Appian Way. He first lived under house arrest and then, after a period of freedom, as a condemned prisoner (perhaps in the Mamertine dungeon near the Forum). Remarkably, Paul was able to proclaim the gospel among all classes of people, from the palace to the prison. According to tradition, he was executed at a spot on the Ostian Way outside Rome in A.D. 68.

The Neronian persecution in A.D. 64 was a transparent attempt by the emperor to throw the blame on Christians for the great fire that destroyed large parts of the city. The populace, however, blamed Nero and felt sorry for those unjustly tortured in the arena (cf. Tacitus, *Annals*, 15.44).



THE EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE ROMANS



ROMANS SERVES as the flagship of the fleet of Pauline letters within the New Testament. This letter has also loomed large in the history of Christianity. Countless men and women of faith have singled out Romans as the weapon God graciously used to bring about their surrender to Christ. Augustine, Martin Luther, John Wesley, and others received unexpected spiritual volleys from Romans that pierced their defenses and ended their rebellion against God.

Romans combines breadth, logic, and a mature understanding of the Old Testament Scriptures into a powerful arsenal. By the time it was written, the Holy Spirit had shaped the apostle Paul into a skillful communicator of the faith. The result is his letter to the Romans, a theological treatise that perfectly fits Paul's description of all Scripture as "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2 Tim. 3:16). The letter represents a full expression of apostolic theology. Paul's arguments challenge the secular, pagan mind, yet they also pierce the shallow spiritual confidence of many nonpagans. Romans is a mighty leveler, for it declares that "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (3:23). Since all are sinners, it comes as a delightful shock that "God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (5:8). This is the Good News, which Paul so eloquently and systematically defends in this theological treatise addressed to the Romans.

Author and Date The author introduces himself in the first verses of Romans by name (Paul), by identity (bondservant), by vocation (apostle), and by purpose (separated to the gospel of God). Romans has been recognized as an epistle of Paul throughout church history. The character and message of Paul, which we read so much about in Acts, appear in Romans as his signature to the letter.

This letter was written to a vibrant church in the city of Rome. Although the origins of the church are unknown, it could have been established by new believers returning from Jerusalem following the Resurrection and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. When Paul wrote this letter he had not personally visited Rome, although he had desired to do so for some time.

Few clues are included in the Epistle to the Romans about the Roman believers. Paul admired their faith and prayed regularly for them. It is evident that the church included both Jews and Gentiles. On the surface it does not appear that any problem in the church at Rome was the occasion for the epistle. However, there is some indication that the believers at Rome needed to be exhorted to live in harmony (14:1—15:13). Evidence in the Corinthian letters, in Romans, and in Acts indicates that Paul wrote to the Roman church from Corinth on his third missionary journey. When Paul composed the Corinthian epistles, he referred to a collection for the poor Christian believers in Jerusalem that was being gathered from the various Mediterranean churches (1 Cor. 16:1–3; 2 Cor. 8:1—9:1). By the time Romans was written that task had been completed and Paul was about to depart to Jerusalem to deliver the funds (15:22–29).

The implication is that Paul planned to sail for Judea directly from Corinth. Phoebe also, a fellow believer, was about to leave Corinth for Rome. She was presumably the bearer of the letter from Paul to the Romans. Since practically all navigation on the Mediterranean Sea ceased after November 11 and was not resumed again until March 10, Romans was likely written in the fall of A.D. 57.

A plot by the Jews, however, changed Paul's travel plans. Instead of taking a ship from Corinth, he went through Macedonia by foot (Acts 20:3) and eventually left for Jerusalem from Philippi the next spring (Acts 20:6). Little did Paul know that his eventual arrival in Rome would be in captivity (Acts 28:17–31).

Purpose All of Paul's other letters arise from a particular occasion and have a definite purpose. Romans is different; from the content it seems to have a much more general didactic aim. Having said this, it is possible to see at least three purposes Paul had in writing the book.

His first purpose was to prepare the Romans for his planned journey to Rome and later to Spain. His immediate itinerary involved a trip to Jerusalem, but his vision was toward the west. He clearly suggests that he expects assistance from them in his endeavor to carry the gospel to Spain (15:24). But if that had been his only purpose, a brief note would have been enough. Obviously Paul had more in mind.

A second purpose involved Paul's understanding that the believers needed to "be established" (1:11). Paul wanted to give them a well-instructed faith. His letter is a kind of syllabus of Paul's apostolic teaching. Romans is a masterful presentation of God's plan of salvation for Jews and Gentiles.

The third purpose for the letter was pastoral. Paul wanted to exhort Jewish and Gentile believers to live in harmony. As in most of the early churches, the gospel brought different groups of people together who otherwise would have stayed apart, whether for reasons of nationality, status, or culture. Once they came together under one roof, the challenge was to preserve their oneness in Christ. Thus throughout the letter, Paul deals with problems arising from Jewish and Gentile differences. He emphasizes what everyone shared. Since there is only one God, He is the God of both Jew and Gentile. Both groups are under sin (3:9), and both are saved through faith (3:30). This theme of Jew and Gentile living together surfaces most clearly in chapters 14 and 15, where Paul deals with the practical aspects of being together in one body. Paul hammers home his central theme: The righteous God justifies and ultimately glorifies both Jew and Gentile by grace through faith.

Theology Romans includes the most systematic presentation of theology found anywhere in Scripture. It explains the meaning of the Cross for the believer's life. While expounding why Jesus died for all of humanity, Paul clarifies the core concepts of the Christian faith: sin and righteousness, faith and works, justification and election. The letter contains (1) a detailed description of the sinfulness of man (1:18—3:20); (2) an extensive discussion of justification by faith (3:21—5:11), including a clear interpretation of the death of Christ (3:24–26); (3) an elaborate explanation of sanctification (5:12—8:39); (4) a strong section on the doctrine of election (9:1–29);



The Colosseum in Rome, one of the most impressive reminders of the might of the Roman Empire

(5) a developed exposition of what happened to the nation of Israel and the destiny of God's people (9:1—11:36); (6) an extended section addressing spiritual gifts (12:1–8); and (7) instructions on the believers' relationship to government (13:1–14). Certainly Romans is the most doctrinal book in the Bible. Because it provides a systematic outline of the essentials of the Christian faith, it is as useful to the mature believer as it is to someone who wants a short introduction to the Christian faith.

CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

Paul explains that Jesus Christ is the Second Adam whose righteousness and substitutionary death have provided justification for all who place their faith in Him. By reading Romans we can see how the apostle breaks down a truckload of theological truth into bite-sized installments by using a question-and-answer format.

In other words, Romans presents a Jesus who offers His righteousness as a gracious gift to sinful people like us because He bore God's condemnation and wrath for our depraved nature. Paul makes it quite clear that the Savior's life, death, and resurrection are the basis for our redemption, justification, reconciliation, salvation, and glorification. What is more, Paul contends that the Spirit of Jesus can motivate us to live responsible, Christlike lives. That's what the second half of Romans is all about.

ROMANS OUTLINE

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| <p>I. Salutation 1:1–7</p> <p>II. Thanksgiving and prayer 1:8–17</p> <p>III. Righteousness needed 1:18—3:20</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">A. All people condemned 1:18–32</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">B. The Jews condemned 2:1—3:8</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">C. Conclusion: all people condemned 3:9–20</p> <p>IV. Righteousness imputed 3:21—5:21</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">A. Justification by faith explained 3:21–31</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">B. Justification by faith illustrated 4:1–25</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">C. Justification by faith enjoyed 5:1–11</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">D. Conclusion: all can be declared and made righteous 5:12–21</p> <p>V. Righteousness accomplished 6:1—8:39</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">A. First question: Will we sin so grace can be displayed? 6:1–14</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">B. Second question: Will we sin because we are under the law? 6:15—7:6</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">C. Third question: Is the law sin? 7:7–25</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">D. The way of sanctification 8:1–39</p> <p>VI. Righteousness vindicated 9:1—11:36</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">A. Israel's past: election 9:1–29</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">B. Israel's present: rejection 9:30—10:21</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">C. Israel's future: salvation 11:1–36</p> <p>VII. Righteousness practiced 12:1—15:13</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">A. In the church 12:1–8</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">B. In society 12:9–21</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">C. Toward government 13:1–14</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">D. Toward other believers 14:1—15:13</p> <p>VIII. Paul's plans 15:14–33</p> <p>IX. Personal greetings, admonition, and benediction 16:1–27</p> | <p>C. A.D. 47–49
Paul's first missionary journey</p> <p>C. A.D. 50
The Jerusalem council</p> <p>C. A.D. 50–53
Paul's second missionary journey</p> <p>C. A.D. 53–57
Paul's third missionary journey</p> <p>C. A.D. 57
Romans is written</p> <p>C. A.D. 58
Paul is arrested in Jerusalem</p> <p>C. A.D. 60–62
Paul is imprisoned in Rome</p> <p>C. A.D. 67
Peter and Paul are executed</p> |
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The City of Rome

Rome was founded in 753 B.C., and by the time of Paul it was the greatest city in the world with over one million inhabitants. The forum was the ancient meeting place, marketplace, and political center of Rome. The city's legendary founder, Romulus, is said to be buried in the forum. Here Cicero spoke to the Senate and Julius Caesar was murdered. The forum's monumental architecture remained intact until the sixth century A.D., but has since been destroyed by war, vandals, and the ravages of nature. Although the center of power and full of magnificent buildings, the majority of people in Rome were slaves; opulence and squalor coexisted in this imperial city.

The church in Rome was well known (1:8), and it had been established for several years by the time of this letter. The believers there were numerous, and evidently they met in several places (16:1–16).



The Forum: the economic, social, religious, and cultural center of ancient Rome

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from the dead. ⁵Through Him ^hwe have received grace and apostleship for ⁱobedience to the faith among all nations ^jfor His name, ⁶among whom you also are the called of Jesus Christ;

⁷To all who are in Rome, beloved of God, ^kcalled to be saints:

¹Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Desire to Visit Rome

⁸First, ^mI thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that ⁿyour faith is spoken of throughout the whole world. ⁹For ^oGod is my witness, ^pwhom I serve ²with my spirit in the gospel of His Son, that ^qwithout ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers, ¹⁰making request if, by some means, now at last I may find a way in the will of God to come to you. ¹¹For I long to see you, that ^rI may impart to you some spiritual gift, so that you may be established— ¹²that is, that I may be encouraged together with you by ^sthe mutual faith both of you and me.

¹³Now I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that I often planned to come to you (but ^twas hindered until now), that I might have some ^ufruit among you also, just as among the other Gentiles. ¹⁴I am a debtor both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to wise and to unwise. ¹⁵So, as much as is in me, *I am* ready to preach the gospel to you who are in Rome also.

Greeting

Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, ^acalled to be an apostle, ^bseparated to the gospel of God ^{2c}which He promised before ^dthrough His prophets in the Holy Scriptures, ³concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who ¹was ^eborn of the seed of David according to the flesh, ⁴and ^fdeclared to be the Son of God with power according ^gto the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection

CHAPTER 1

1 ^a 1 Cor. 1:1; 9:1; 15:9; 2 Cor. 1:1; 1 Tim. 1:11 ^b Acts 9:15; 13:2; [Gal. 1:15] ^{2c} Acts 26:6 ^d Gal. 3:8
3 ^e 2 Sam. 7:12; 1 Chr. 17:11; Is. 9:7; Jer. 23:5; Gal. 4:4 ^f *I came*
4 ^f Ps. 2:7; Acts 9:20; 13:33; Heb. 1:2

The Just Live by Faith

¹⁶For ^vI am not ashamed of the gospel ³of Christ, for ^wit is the power of God to

9 Ps. 16:10 [★]; [Heb. 9:14] ⁵ Eph. 3:8 ⁱ Acts 6:7; Rom. 16:26 ^j Acts 9:15 ⁷ ^k Acts 9:13; Rom. 8:28; 1 Cor. 1:2, 24 ¹ Num. 6:25; 1 Cor. 1:3; 2 Cor. 1:2; Gal. 1:3; Eph. 1:2; Phil. 1:2; Col. 1:2; 1 Thess. 1:1; 2 Thess. 1:2 ⁸ ^m 1 Cor. 1:4; Eph. 1:15; Phil. 1:3; Col. 1:3; 1 Thess. 1:2; 2:13 ⁿ Acts 28:22; Rom. 16:19 ⁹ ^o Rom. 9:1 ^p Acts 27:23 ^q 1 Thess. 3:10 ² ^r Or in ¹¹ ^r Rom. 15:29 ¹² ^s Titus 1:4 ¹³ ^t [1 Thess. 2:18] ^u Phil. 4:17 ¹⁶ ^v Ps. 40:9, 10 ^w 1 Cor. 1:18, 24 ³ NU omits of Christ

1:1 Bondservant means “slave.” Paul is talking about a slavery undertaken voluntarily out of love (see Ex. 21:1–6), unlike the forced slavery well known to many in the Roman Empire. Paul emphasizes his personal subjection to Jesus Christ. By calling himself an **apostle**, Paul places himself on the level of the twelve apostles and claims authority from God for His work.

1:3 Humanly speaking, Jesus was a descendant of **David** (Matt. 1:1). He was truly and completely human; but at the same time, He was God’s Son. The fact that Jesus was a descendant of David also links Him to the Davidic covenant. When Christ returns to reign over all, He will fulfill God’s promise to David to give him a dynasty that will last forever (see 2 Sam. 7:8–17).

1:4 The word translated **declared** means “designated.” Jesus did

not **become Son of God** by His **resurrection**. Instead, His resurrection proved that He was the Son of God.

1:5 for obedience to the faith: The purpose of the apostles’ work was to persuade people to obey God’s command to trust Christ.

1:9 always in my prayers: Paul prayed for them every time he prayed. In other words, they were on his prayer list. The greatest of saints, and even our Lord Jesus, knew they could not do their work for God or live their lives without praying.

1:11 To impart . . . some spiritual gift does not mean that Paul would bestow spiritual gifts like teaching, healing, or prophecy. It means that he would exercise his spiritual gift and in so doing would bless them.

1:16 The NT speaks of **salvation** in the past tense (Eph. 2:8), the

salvation for everyone who believes,^x for the Jew first and also for the Greek.¹⁷ For ^yin it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, ^z“*The just shall live by faith.*”

God's Wrath on Unrighteousness

^{18a} For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and ^bunrighteousness of men, who ^dsuppress the truth in unrighteousness, ¹⁹ because ^cwhat may be known of God is ⁵manifest ⁶in them, for ^dGod has shown *it* to them. ²⁰ For since the creation of the

¹⁶ ^x Luke 2:30; Acts 3:26; Rom. 2:9
¹⁷ ^y Rom. 3:21; 9:30; Phil. 3:9 ^z Hab. 2:4; Gal. 3:11; Heb. 10:38
¹⁸ ^a [Acts 17:30]
^b Rom. 6:13;
² Thess. 2:10; 2 Pet. 2:13; 1 John 5:17
⁴ *hold down*
¹⁹ ^c [Acts 14:17; 17:24] ^d [John 1:9]
⁵ *evident* ⁶ *among*
²⁰ ^e Job 12:7-9; Ps. 19:1-6; Jer. 5:22
⁷ *divine nature, deity*

world ^eHis invisible *attributes* are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* His eternal power and ⁷Godhead, so that they are without excuse, ²¹ because, although they knew God, they did not glorify *Him* as God, nor were thankful, but ^fbecame futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. ^{22g} Professing to be wise, they became fools, ²³ and changed the glory of the ^hincorruptible ⁱGod into an

²¹ ^f 2 Kin. 17:15; Jer. 2:5; Eph. 4:17 ²² ^g Jer. 10:14; [1 Cor. 1:20] ²³ ^h 1 Tim. 1:17; 6:15, 16 ⁱ Deut. 4:16-18; Ps. 106:20; Jer. 2:11; Acts 17:29

present tense (2 Cor. 2:15), and the future tense (13:11). In the past, the believer has been saved from the penalty of sin. In the present, the believer is being saved from the power of sin. In the future, the believer will be saved from the very presence of sin (see Matt. 5:10–12; 8:17; 2 Cor. 5:10; 2 Tim. 2:11–13; Rev. 22:12).

1:17 From faith to faith means faith is at the beginning of the salvation process, and it is the goal as well. When a person first exercises faith in Christ, that person is saved from the penalty of sin and declared righteous. As the believer lives by faith, God continues to save him or her from the power of sin to live righteously (see v. 16).

1:18 As the next verse indicates, **the truth** is truth about God. Having departed from godliness and righteousness, people **suppress** the truth about God: that God is their loving Creator and deserves their worship and praise. Sinful people can mentally perceive the revealed truth of God (see vv. 19, 20), but they have chosen to sup-

press it. They are without excuse. God's anger **is** being **revealed** (the present tense) **against** sin and the suppression of the truth.

1:19, 20 what may be known of God: Not only are divine attributes clearly seen in humanity, but they can be seen in the material universe as well (see v. 20; 10:18; Ps. 19:1–4). Nature itself speaks eloquently of its Creator. From the intricate design of the human cell to the majestic strength of the Rocky Mountains, all of God's works testify to His wisdom and power. God's **invisible attributes**, such as His **eternal power** and **Godhead**, meaning His divine nature, can be **clearly seen** by contemplating His awesome works in all of creation.

1:21 They knew, that is “perceived,” truth about God through creation (see v. 18). Nature reveals God as great and good. Its gentle rain and rich soils provide humans with all varieties of delicious food. God is good. Even with all this evidence in creation, people refuse to recognize their Creator, worship Him, or **glorify Him as God**.

Salvation

Generally in the OT, the term *salvation* concerns physical deliverance or preservation. The major Hebrew verb for salvation, *yasha*, carries the sense of help, deliver, or save, and is used about 205 times in the Bible. It occurs in contexts of removing a burden or danger (Ex. 2:17) and can be used of removing someone from the danger of defeat (Josh. 10:6). At other times the term refers to being liberated or set free (Judg. 12:2). Used in civil law, *yasha* pertains to the obligation of one who hears the cry of someone who needs to be saved from mistreatment (Deut. 22:27; 28:29; 2 Sam. 14:4). The Hebrew word appears in many prayer petitions in reference to war and judicial issues (Ps. 3:7; 20:9; 72:4; 86:2). The noun speaks of preservation from threatened, impending, and perhaps deserved danger and suffering (Gen. 49:18; 1 Sam. 14:45; Is. 12:3).

The NT concept of salvation includes most of the elements of the OT concept and adds spiritual dimensions. The Greek term *sōtēria* has both national and personal aspects. National deliverance is discussed in Luke 1:69. There is personal deliverance from the sea (Acts 27:34) and prison (Phil. 1:19), and spiritual and eternal deliverance through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ (Acts 4:12; Rom. 10:10). The NT uses *sōtēria* and the related verb *sōzō* with regard to God's power to deliver from the bondage of sin (Phil. 2:12); the future deliverance of believers at the coming of Christ (Rom. 13:11; 1 Thess. 5:8, 9); and the deliverance of the nation of Israel at the second advent of Christ (Luke 1:71; 2 Thess. 2:10; Rev. 12:10).

In the letter to the Romans we find the apostle Paul's clearest and most detailed explanation of the gospel message. Paul explains that the Good News of Christ “is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes” (1:16). The Greek word for *salvation* used by Paul literally means “deliverance” or “preservation.” In a spiritual context, the idea is rescue from the power and dominion of sin.

Paul and the other NT writers portray Jesus Christ, on the basis of His sacrificial death on the Cross in the place of sinners, as the Author and Provider of salvation (see 3:24, 25; 5:21; Acts 4:12; Heb. 12:2). Those who repent and trust in Jesus will experience its blessings (see John 3:16; Eph. 2:8, 9; Heb. 2:3).

What exactly are those blessings? Theologians use the terms justification, sanctification, and glorification. *Justification* is the divine act of declaring sinners to be righteous on account of their faith in Jesus. He paid for their sins completely and finally on the Cross, and through faith in Him their sins can be forgiven (see 3:21; 4:5; 5:1). Closely related to justification is regeneration, in which the Spirit of God indwells a repentant sinner and imparts eternal life to his or her spiritually dead soul (see Eph. 2:1–5). *Sanctification* is the process in which God develops the new life of the believer and gradually brings it to perfection (see 6:11; Phil. 1:6). *Glorification* is the ultimate salvation of the whole person. This occurs when we are face to face with our Savior in His coming kingdom. At that time, God will completely mold us into the image of Christ (see 8:29, 30; Phil. 3:21). Then we will be able to enjoy complete fellowship with God, singing His praises forever.

Other benefits of salvation include reconciliation and adoption. When our sins are forgiven, we move from a position of being God's enemies to being His beloved children (see John 1:12; Gal. 4:4, 5; Eph. 1:5).



image made like ⁸corruptible man—and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things.

²⁴/Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, ^kto dishonor their bodies ^lamong themselves, ²⁵who exchanged ^mthe truth of God ⁿfor the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

²⁶For this reason God gave them up to ^ovile passions. For even their ⁹women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. ²⁷Likewise also the ¹men, leaving the natural use of the ²woman, burned in their lust for one another, ¹men with ¹men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due.

²⁸And even as they did not like to retain God in *their* knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things ^pwhich are not fitting; ²⁹being filled with all unrighteousness, ³sexual immorality, wickedness, ⁴covetousness, ⁵maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; *they are* whisperers, ³⁰backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, ³¹⁶undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, ⁷unforgiving, unmerciful; ³²who, ^qknowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things ^rare deserving of death, not only do the same but also ^sapprove of those who practice them.

²³ ⁸ perishable
²⁴ / Ps. 81:12; Acts 7:42; Eph. 4:18, 19
^k 1 Cor. 6:18 / Lev. 18:22
²⁵ ^m 1 Thess. 1:9
ⁿ Is. 44:20; Jer. 10:14; 13:25; 16:19
²⁶ ^o Lev. 18:22; Eph. 5:12 ⁹ Lit. *females*
²⁷ ¹ Lit. *males* ² Lit. *female*
²⁸ ^p Eph. 5:4
²⁹ ³ NU omits *sexual immorality*
⁴ *greed* ⁵ *malice*
³¹ ⁶ *without understanding* ⁷ NU omits *unforgiving*
³² ^q [Rom. 2:2]
^r [Rom. 6:21] ^s [Ps. 50:18]; Hos. 7:3

CHAPTER 2

¹ ^a [Rom. 1:20]
^b 2 Sam. 12:5-7; [Matt. 7:1-5; Luke 6:37]; John 8:9; Rom. 14:22
⁴ ^c Rom. 9:23; 11:33; [2 Cor. 8:2; Eph. 1:7, 18; 2:7; Phil. 4:19; Col. 1:27; 2:2; Titus 3:6] ^d [Rom. 3:25] ^e Ex. 34:6; [Rom. 9:22; 1 Tim. 1:16]; 1 Pet. 3:20
^f Is. 30:18; [2 Pet. 3:9, 15]
⁵ ^g [Deut. 32:34]; Prov. 1:18; James 5:3 ¹ *unrepentant*
⁶ ^h [Job 34:11]; Ps. 62:12; Prov. 24:12; Jer. 17:10; [2 Cor. 5:10; Rev. 20:12, 13]
⁸ ⁱ Job 24:13; [2 Thess. 1:8]
⁹ / Amos 3:2;

God's Righteous Judgment

2 Therefore you are ^ainexcusable, O man, whoever you are who judge, ^bfor in whatever you judge another you condemn yourself; for you who judge practice the same things. ²But we know that the judgment of God is according to truth against those who practice such things. ³And do you think this, O man, you who judge those practicing such things, and doing the same, that you will escape the judgment of God? ⁴Or do you despise ^cthe riches of His goodness, ^dforbearance, and ^elongsuffering, ^fnot knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance? ⁵But in accordance with your hardness and your ¹impenitent heart ^gyou are ²treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, ⁶who ^h“will render to each one according to his deeds”: ⁷eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honor, and immortality; ⁸but to those who are self-seeking and ⁱdo not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness—indignation and wrath, ⁹tribulation and anguish, on every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew ^jfirst and also of the ³Greek; ¹⁰^kbut glory, honor, and peace to everyone who works what is good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. ¹¹For ^lthere is no partiality with God.

Luke 12:47; Acts 3:26; Rom. 1:16; 1 Pet. 4:17 ³ Gentile
¹⁰ ^k Rom. 2:7; Heb. 2:7; [1 Pet. 1:7] ¹¹ / Deut. 10:17; [Job 34:19]; Acts 10:34; [Eph. 6:9]

1:24 In God's present wrath (see v. 18; there is also a wrath to come when Christ returns, see 1 Thess. 1:10), He **gave them up**, that is “over,” to their sin (see vv. 26, 28). God did not give up on humanity, but He did allow them to go deeper and deeper into sin. He gives us an opportunity to see how evil sin really is and how desperately wicked people can become.

1:25 The **lie** refers to idols. They are satanic counterfeits of God, void of truth and power.

1:26 The next verse makes clear that this verse refers to unnatural sexual relations between women. Lesbianism is **against nature**; it is contrary to the intention of the Creator.

1:27 Homosexuality is sin (Lev. 18:22). In this passage, the point is not that homosexuality is a sin that should be punished. Rather homosexuality itself is the punishment. Having rejected God and become idolaters, some men have been given over to their **shameful** passions (v. 26). Thus they receive **in themselves the penalty of their error**.

1:29–32 These verses contain one of the most extensive lists of sins in all Scripture. The list shows the exhaustive sweep of human moral depravity (compare **all** in v. 29). Note that while society tends to rationalize certain sins, God judges all sin. These sins particularly reveal our rebellious hearts. All, without exception, deserve God's punishment.

2:1 In 1:18–32, Paul declares that all unrighteous people are without excuse. Now he demonstrates that the self-righteous (those who **judge** others) are **inexcusable**, by revealing the standards by which everyone will be judged. Judgment will be (1) according

to truth (vv. 1–5), (2) according to works (vv. 6–11), and (3) according to the light one has of the law (vv. 12–16).

2:2 **Truth** as used in this verse is different from the truth in 1:18, 25. There it referred to the evidence of God in creation; here it refers to the true condition of humanity.

2:4 **Repentance** literally means “to change one's mind.” In this context, it means to reject one's sinful habits and turn to God. This is the only occurrence of this word in Romans.

2:5 **Wrath** as used here is different from the “wrath of God” in 1:18. There God's wrath was His present anger; here the word refers to God's future wrath. Most take this future wrath to refer to the Day of Judgment. Thus people who continue in their rebellion against God are accumulating wrath for themselves.

2:7 According to this verse, it seems that **eternal life** can be gained by **doing good**. But Romans clearly teaches justification by faith (3:22). But Paul does not contradict himself. The subject of this verse is judgment, not justification. Believers who continue in good works will receive rewards in the life to come. Whenever the NT speaks of eternal life as a present possession, it is a gift received by faith (John 3:16); but whenever it refers to eternal life as something to be received in the future by those who are already believers, it refers to eternal rewards (see 5:21; Gal. 6:8; 1 Tim. 6:17–19; Titus 1:2; 1 Pet. 1:7). Rewards will be based on works accomplished here on earth.

2:8 **Truth** refers to the gospel message (see Gal. 2:5).

2:10 All believers doing **good** works will be rewarded.

¹²For as many as have sinned without law will also perish without law, and as many as have sinned in the law will be judged by the law ¹³(for ^mnot the hearers of the law *are* just in the sight of God, but the doers of the law will be justified; ¹⁴for when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do the things in the law, these, although not having the law, are a law to themselves, ¹⁵who show the ⁿwork of the law written in their hearts, their ^oconscience also bearing witness, and between themselves *their* thoughts accusing or else excusing *them*) ¹⁶*p* in the day when God will judge the secrets of men ^qby Jesus Christ, ^raccording to my gospel.

The Jews Guilty as the Gentiles

¹⁷⁴Indeed ^syou are called a Jew, and ^trest ⁵on the law, ^uand make your boast in God, ¹⁸and ^vknow *His* will, and ^wapprove the things that are excellent, being instructed out of the law, ¹⁹and ^xare confident that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness, ²⁰an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, ^yhaving the form of knowledge and truth in the law. ²¹^zYou, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach that a man should not steal, do you steal? ²²You who say, “Do not commit adultery,” do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, ^ado you rob temples? ²³You who ^bmake your boast in the law, do you dishonor God through breaking the law? ²⁴For ^c“*the name of God is ^dblasphemed among the Gentiles because of you,*” as it is written.

¹³ ^m Matt. 7:21, 22; John 13:17;
[James 1:22, 25; 1 John 3:7]
¹⁵ ⁿ 1 Cor. 5:1
^o Acts 24:25
¹⁶ ^p Eccl. 12:14; [Matt. 25:31]; Rev. 20:12 ^q John 5:22; Acts 10:42; 17:31; Rom. 3:6; 14:10
^r 1 Tim. 1:11
¹⁷ ^s [Matt. 3:9]; John 8:33 ^t Mic. 3:11; John 5:45; Rom. 2:23; 9:4 ^u Is. 48:1, 2 ^v NU But if ^s rely
¹⁸ ^w Deut. 4:8
^x Phil. 1:10
¹⁹ ^x Matt. 15:14; John 9:34
²⁰ ^y [2 Tim. 3:5]
²¹ ^z Ps. 50:16; Matt. 23:3
²² ^a Mal. 3:8
²³ ^b Mic. 3:11; John 5:45; Rom. 2:17; 9:4
²⁴ ^c Ezek. 16:27
^d 2 Sam. 12:14; Is. 52:5; Ezek. 36:22
²⁵ ^e Gen. 17:10-14; [Gal. 5:3]
²⁶ ^f [Acts 10:34]
²⁷ ^g Matt. 12:41
²⁸ ^h *Lit. letter*
²⁸ ^h [Matt. 3:9]; John 8:39; Rom. 2:17; 9:6; [Gal. 6:15]
²⁹ ⁱ [1 Pet. 3:4]
^j Phil. 3; Col. 2:11
^k Deut. 30:6; Rom. 2:27; 7:6; [2 Cor. 3:6]
^l John 5:44; 12:43; [1 Cor. 4:5; 2 Cor. 10:18]; 1 Thess. 2:4
⁷ A play on words—Jew is literally praise.

Circumcision of No Avail

²⁵^eFor circumcision is indeed profitable if you keep the law; but if you are a breaker of the law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision. ²⁶Therefore, ^fif an uncircumcised man keeps the righteous requirements of the law, will not his uncircumcision be counted as circumcision? ²⁷And will not the physically uncircumcised, if he fulfills the law, ^gjudge you who, *even with your* ⁶written code and circumcision, are a transgressor of the law? ²⁸For ^hhe is not a Jew who *is one* outwardly, nor *is* circumcision that which *is* outward in the flesh; ²⁹but *he is* a Jew ⁱwho *is one* inwardly; and ^jcircumcision *is that of the heart,* ^kin the Spirit, not in the letter; ^lwhose ⁷praise *is* not from men but from God.

God's Judgment Defended

3 What advantage then has the Jew, or what is the profit of circumcision? ²Much in every way! Chiefly because ^ato them were committed the ¹oracles of God. ³For what if ^bsome did not believe? ^cWill their unbelief make the faithfulness of God without effect? ⁴^dCertainly not! Indeed, let ^eGod be ²true but ^fevery man a liar. As it is written:

*^g“That You may be justified in Your words,
And may overcome when You are judged.”*

CHAPTER 3 ² ^a Deut. 4:5-8; Ps. 147:19; Rom. 9:4 ¹ sayings, Scriptures ³ ^b Rom. 10:16; Heb. 4:2 ^c Num. 23:19; [2 Tim. 2:13]
⁴ ^d Job 40:8 ^e [John 3:33] ^f Ps. 62:9 ^g Ps. 51:4 ² Found true

2:12 Those **without law** are the Gentiles (see v. 14). Those **in the law** are the Jews.

2:14 by nature do the things in the law: Gentiles who do not have the Law still do such things as honor their parents, which indicates that they believe in a basic moral law (see v. 15). They know within their hearts that there is a difference between right and wrong. This “law of conscience” serves as a judge to them in place of Moses’ law.

2:15 The Law is not inscribed in our hearts, but the **work of the law** is **written** on our **hearts**. The Law of Moses was engraved in stone, and there is a similar moral law within every person.

2:16 According to the **gospel** Paul preached, God will **judge** not only people’s actions, but their motives, or **secrets**, as well (see 1 Cor. 4:5).

2:17 In this verse Paul clearly addresses Jews.

2:19, 20 The Jewish people Paul addressed were not only **confident** before God (vv. 17, 18), but they felt superior to others and considered themselves to be guides, lights, instructors, and teachers.

2:22 Apparently it was not unusual for their enemies to accuse the Jews of robbing **temples**. Paul may be using the phrase in a figurative way as an equivalent of “to be sacrilegious or impious.”

2:23, 24 Paul argues that these particular Jews who thought they were guides to the blind (v. 19) were actually breaking their own laws and dishonoring God (see Matt. 15:3-9). Paul applies Is. 52:5 as proof of his point. As a result of their hypocrisy, the Gentiles themselves **blasphemed** God.

2:25, 26 **Circumcision** becomes a useless ritual unless the per-

son develops an obedient heart that is completely submitted to God (see 1 Sam. 15:22; Is. 1:11-20). On the other hand, if a Gentile was keeping the law, circumcision would not matter. God judges a person according to the state of his or her heart, not according to external appearances.

2:27 **judge you:** These self-righteous Jews believed they would escape judgment. According to them, God’s judgment was reserved for the Gentiles. However, Paul confronted their hypocrisy. A Gentile who kept the law would be able to judge a Jew who broke it.

2:28, 29 Paul pronounces **circumcision** as being of no value (vv. 25-27). Circumcision that is only outward is of no avail before God because God wants the outward demonstration to be the sign of an inward reality. Paul’s teaching is consistent with the Law and the OT prophets, for both proclaimed the need for internal circumcision (Deut. 10:16; Jer. 4:4). **in the Spirit, not in the letter:** The change of heart that Paul describes with the image of internal circumcision is the work of the Holy Spirit, not the result of external obedience to the Law. In fact, God condemns external observance if it is not the product of a righteous heart (see Is. 1:10-18).

3:2 **Much in every way:** This verse indicates that the Jewish people have numerous advantages (see 9:4). The **oracles of God** refers to the entire OT, the laws and the covenants that had been given by God Himself to the nation of Israel. This phrase reaffirms the belief of the apostles of the inspiration of the OT. The Bible is God’s Word for us.

3:3, 4 Even if some Jews do **not believe** the Word of God, God will be faithful to what He has promised (Ps. 89:30-37).

⁵But if our unrighteousness demonstrates the righteousness of God, what shall we say? Is God unjust who inflicts wrath? ^h(I speak as a man.) ⁶Certainly not! For then ⁱhow will God judge the world?

⁷For if the truth of God has increased through my lie to His glory, why am I also still judged as a sinner? ⁸And *why* not *say*, ^j“Let us do evil that good may come?”—as we are slanderously reported and as some affirm that we say. Their ³condemnation is just.

All Have Sinned

⁹What then? Are we better *than* *they*? Not at all. For we have previously charged both Jews and Greeks that ^kthey are all under sin.

¹⁰As it is written:

- ¹“*There is none righteous, no, not one;*
¹¹*There is none who understands;*
There is none who seeks after God.
¹²*They have all turned aside;*
They have together become unprofitable;
There is none who does good, no, not one.”

⁵ ^h Rom. 6:19; 1 Cor. 9:8; 15:32; Gal. 3:15
⁶ ⁱ [Gen. 18:25]
⁸ ^j Rom. 5:20 ³ Lit. judgment
⁹ ^k Rom. 3:19, 23; 11:32; Gal. 3:22
¹⁰ ^l Ps. 14:1-3; 53:1-3; Eccl. 7:20

¹³ ^m Ps. 5:9 ⁿ Ps. 140:3 ⁴ grave
¹⁴ ^o Ps. 10:7
¹⁵ ^p Prov. 1:16; Is. 59:7, 8
¹⁸ ^q Ps. 36:1
¹⁹ ^r John 10:34
^s Job 5:16; Ps. 107:42
^t accountable
²⁰ ^t Ps. 143:2; [Acts 13:39; Gal. 2:16]
²¹ ^u Acts 15:11
^v John 5:46 ^w 1 Pet. 1:10
²² ⁶ NU omits and on all

- ¹³ “*Their^m throat is an open⁴ tomb;*
With their tongues they have
practiced deceit”;
ⁿ “*The poison of asps is under their*
lips”;
¹⁴ “*Whose^o mouth is full of cursing and*
bitterness.”
¹⁵ “*Their^p feet are swift to shed blood;*
¹⁶ *Destruction and misery are in their*
ways;
¹⁷ *And the way of peace they have not*
known.”
¹⁸ “*There^q is no fear of God before their*
eyes.””

¹⁹Now we know that whatever ^rthe law says, it says to those who are under the law, that ^severy mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become ⁵guilty before God. ²⁰Therefore ^tby the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

God's Righteousness Through Faith

²¹But now ^uthe righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, ^vbeing witnessed by the Law ^wand the Prophets, ²²even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all ⁶and on all

3:5 Speaking from a foolish human point of view, Paul asks: If humanity's **unrighteousness** reveals God's **righteousness**, why then should God punish unrighteousness? Paul explains that this is an absurd question that is nonetheless asked by many, when he adds parenthetically, **I speak as a man**. The suggestion that God is unjust is simply ridiculous.

3:6 Paul answers his own question (v. 5) with another question. If God does not punish unrighteousness, then He is not just and there will be no Day of Judgment. The flaw in logic is evident: God's justice demands that He **judge** unrighteousness. To claim that God is unjust *because* He judges is a ludicrous argument.

3:7 The question in this verse is the same basic objection as in v. 5, except this time the sinner objects to being called **a sinner** if his or her sin enhances God's truth.

3:8 Paul takes the erroneous argument a step further. If God can bring good out of evil, then we should not be judged for doing evil, because **good may come** of it. God will be proved righteous and in that way glorified by our sin. Obviously such a position is preposterous. Paul does not even try to argue against such a senseless view; he simply assigns those who hold it to God's judgment.

3:9 better than they: This question means “Do we Jews have an advantage over the Gentiles?” (see v. 1). In other words, “Is there anything we can cling to for protection?” The answer is no, since **all are under sin**.

3:10–18 To prove that all are under sin Paul quotes without formal introduction a number of different verses from the OT. The collection of citations can be divided into two parts. The first half is made up of negative statements emphasizing humanity's deficiencies (vv. 10–12); the second half mainly exposes human depravity (vv. 13–18).

3:10 This is a quotation from Ps. 14:3 that says, “There is none who does good.” Paul uses the word for **righteous** because he is discussing the unrighteous condition of all people (see 1:18). No one can be justified on the grounds of his or her own righteousness before God.

3:11 People do not understand spiritual truth (see 1 Cor. 2:14) nor do they diligently seek after God. At best, people are satisfied with externals, with being “religious.”

3:12 turned aside: This means turning away from God's way. **unprofitable:** That is, useless to God or His good purposes. **Good:** Apart from God, people lack true goodness and kindness. While some unbelievers are gracious and kind, these acts ultimately have no value because they do not come from believing hearts that seek to glorify God (see 1:21). Even a “good person” can be rebelling against God and seeking his or her own welfare through goodness.

3:13 In showing humanity's total depravity, Paul quotes passages in the Psalms that describe the evil that can come from the throat, tongue, lips, mouth, feet, and eyes. The heart is compared to a **tomb**, for buried in it is the seed of death. The **throat** reveals the corruption inside, the spiritual decay. The **lips** are like the fangs of an asp; they contain deadly poison.

3:14 Humans apart from God are not blessing others; they are often **cursing** them. They are not loving; they are bitter.

3:15–17 swift to shed blood: People apart from God are prone to violence. They murder and kill because they have no respect for the life of another.

3:18 Fear of God is an OT expression for respect and reverence for God, and is said to be the very beginning of knowledge (see Job 28:28; Prov. 1:7). Because people without God are spiritually dead, they produce only deceit, damage, and destruction.

3:19 Whatever the law says refers to vv. 10–18. **All the world**, whether Jewish or Gentile, stands in **guilty** silence **before God**.

3:20 A legal term used of the defendant in a trial, **justified** means “declared righteous.” No one will be declared righteous by doing what God requires in the Law. This is confirmed by the fact that the Law was not given to justify sinners but to expose sin (see v. 19).

3:21 In this context the **righteousness of God** is not an attribute of God, but an act of God whereby He declares a sinner righteous. This is righteousness *from* God.

3:22, 23 God revealed to people how they should live, but no one can live up to God's perfect way. **all have sinned:** No one can live up to what God created us to be; we all **fall short** of His glory. We cannot save ourselves because as sinners we can never meet God's requirements. Our only hope is **faith in Jesus Christ**.

who believe. For ^xthere is no difference; ²³for ^yall have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴being justified ⁷freely ^zby His grace ^athrough the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵whom God set forth ^bas a ⁸propitiation ^cby His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over ^dthe sins that were previously committed, ²⁶to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

Boasting Excluded

²⁷*c* Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? No, but by the law of faith. ²⁸Therefore we conclude ^fthat a man is ⁹justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law. ²⁹Or *is He* the God of the Jews only? *Is He* not also the God of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also, ³⁰since ^g*there is* one God who will justify the circumcised by faith and the

²² ^x Rom. 10:12; [Gal. 3:28; Col. 3:11]
²³ ^y Gal. 3:22
²⁴ ^z Rom. 4:4, 16; [Eph. 2:8; Titus 3:5, 7] ^a [Matt. 20:28; Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14; 1 Tim. 2:6; Heb. 9:12, 15; 1 Pet. 1:18, 19] ^b *without any cost*
²⁵ ^b Lev. 16:15
^c Col. 1:20 ^d Acts 14:16; 17:30; [Rom. 2:4] ⁸ *mercy seat*
²⁷ ^e Rom. 2:17, 23; [1 Cor. 1:29]; Eph. 2:9
²⁸ ^f Gal. 2:16
⁹ *declared righteous*
³⁰ ^g Rom. 10:12; [Gal. 3:8, 20]

CHAPTER 4

¹ ^a Gen. 11:27–25:9; Is. 51:2; [Matt. 3:9]; John 8:33
^b [Luke 3:8]; John 8:53; James 2:21
¹ ^f *(or) father according to the flesh has found?*

uncircumcised through faith. ³¹Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not! On the contrary, we establish the law.

Abraham Justified by Faith

4 What then shall we say that ^aAbraham our ^bfather ¹has found according to the flesh? ²For if Abraham was ^cjustified by works, he has *something* to boast about, but not before God. ³For what does the Scripture say? ^d*“Abraham believed God, and it was ²accounted to him for righteousness.”* ⁴Now ^eto him who works, the wages are not counted ³as grace but ³as debt.

David Celebrates the Same Truth

⁵But to him who ^fdoes not work but believes on Him who justifies ^gthe ungodly,

² ^c Rom. 3:20, 27 ³ ^d Gen. 15:6; Rom. 4:9, 22; Gal. 3:6; James 2:23 ² *imputed, credited, reckoned, counted* ⁴ ^e Rom. 11:6
³ *according to* ⁵ ^f [Gal. 2:16; Eph. 2:8, 9] ^g Josh. 24:2.

3:24 Those who believe (v. 22) are **justified**, that is, “declared righteous,” **freely**, without cost, by God’s **grace**, or “favor.” **Christ Jesus** died to provide **redemption**, which means He died to pay the price required to ransom sinners. By paying the penalty of their sin through His death, Jesus can free people from their sin and transfer His righteousness to those who believe in Him. On the basis of Christ’s righteousness alone, believers can approach God’s throne with praise. Through God’s initiative, they have been restored to a proper relationship with Him.

3:25, 26 By His death, Christ satisfied the justice of God. He paid the penalty of sin in full. Paul cites two reasons why the righteousness of God comes through Christ’s death. The first is to **demonstrate** that God Himself is righteous, and did not judge the sins committed prior to the Cross. The second reason for the Cross is that God wanted to show that He is both righteous and at the same time the One who can declare sinners righteous. Because of Christ’s death, God does not compromise His holiness when He forgives a sinner.

3:27 law of faith: Paul uses a wordplay here. The “law,” or the standard of God, is commonly associated with “works.” But here Paul says that a person can only boast in the standard of God that excludes human “works.” This “law” is faith (John 6:28, 29). Thus the Jews who were boasting in their knowledge of the law and their adherence to it were silenced by Paul (2:17, 23). The law could only condemn them, but God was the One who saved them. Therefore their boast should only be in Him.

3:28 Man is justified, that is, “declared righteous” (see v. 20), **apart** from doing what the law requires. Thus salvation is through **faith** alone (4:23–25). No matter what we do, we cannot earn our salvation. God alone saves, and His salvation is a free gift. No one can stand before God and boast of their good deeds. God is the only One who is righteous, and for this reason He should be praised.

3:31 Law can have three different meanings in this passage, and the gospel fulfills all of those meanings. If *law* here refers to the Law of Moses, the Pentateuch, then the passage is referring to the way Jesus completely fulfilled the requirements of the law. If *law* is the entire OT, then the gospel fulfills the promises of the coming of Christ and of the forgiveness of sins. If *law* is the moral law, then the gospel fulfills it because it is through Christ that people are empowered by the Holy Spirit to live in a way that pleases God.

4:1–25 This chapter is pivotal in establishing that justification is by God’s grace through faith alone. Verses 1–8 demonstrate that justification is a gift and cannot be earned by works. Verses 9–12 argue that since Abraham was justified before he was circumcised,

circumcision is not a basis of justification. Verses 13–17 prove that since Abraham was justified hundreds of years before the Mosaic Law, then justification cannot be based on the Law. Verses 18–25 summarize Paul’s argument by concluding that Abraham was justified by his faith and not by his works.

4:1 According to the flesh means “according to his own labor.” As the next verse indicates, Paul is asking, “Was Abraham justified before God by his works?”

4:3 Paul quotes Gen. 15:6 to prove that **Abraham** was not justified by works. God made a promise to Abraham, and Abraham trusted God to fulfill it. Because of Abraham’s faith, God credited Abraham with **righteousness**. In gaining this righteousness from God, Abraham did not obey some law or perform some ritual like circumcision, he simply **believed** God.

4:5 God gives **righteousness** to those who believe (v. 3). The person who **does not work**, who comes to God by faith alone without having performed rituals or followed Jewish laws—that person will be counted righteous. Paul continues to build his case that righteousness is apart from works of the law.

propitiation

(Gk. *hilastērion*) (3:25; Heb. 9:5) Strong’s #2435

This term is derived from the Greek verb *hilaskomai*, a word which has three meanings: (1) “to placate” or “to appease”; (2) “to be propitious and merciful”; or (3) “to make propitiation for someone.” The NT never describes people appeasing God. Instead, as Luke 18:13 and 1 John 2:2 make clear, the NT describes God as being merciful to, or making propitiation, for us. God provides a merciful expiation, or atonement, of the sins of believers through the death of Christ. But since Paul also speaks of God’s wrath, it must also speak of the conciliation of God’s anger by means of a sacrifice—namely, the sacrifice of His Son. John states that God demonstrated His love to us by sending His Son to become “the propitiation for our sins” (1 John 4:10). Just as in the OT God met His people when the blood of the sin offering was sprinkled on the altar, so Christ’s death brings us into fellowship with God.

his faith is accounted for righteousness, ⁶just as David also ^hdescribes the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness apart from works:

⁷ “*Blessedⁱ are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven,*

And whose sins are covered;

⁸ *Blessed is the man to whom the LORD shall not impute sin.”*

Abraham Justified Before Circumcision

⁹Does this blessedness then *come* upon the circumcised *only*, or upon the uncircumcised also? For we say that faith was accounted to Abraham for righteousness. ¹⁰How then was it accounted? While he was circumcised, or uncircumcised? Not while circumcised, but while uncircumcised. ¹¹And ^jhe received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which *he had while still* uncircumcised, that ^khe might be the father of all those who believe, though they are uncircumcised, that righteousness might be imputed to them also, ¹²and the father of circumcision to those who not only *are* of the circumcision, but who also walk in the steps of the faith which our father ^lAbraham *had while still* uncircumcised.

The Promise Granted Through Faith

¹³For the promise that he would be the ^mheir of the world *was* not to Abra-

⁶ ^hPs. 32:1, 2
⁷ ⁱPs. 32:1, 2
¹¹ ^jGen. 17:10
^k Luke 19:9; Rom. 4:16
¹² ^jRom. 4:18-22
¹³ ^mGen. 17:4-6; 22:17

¹⁴ ⁿGal. 3:18
¹⁵ ^oRom. 3:20
¹⁶ ^p[Rom. 3:24]
^q[Gal. 3:22] ^rIs. 51:2
^scertain
¹⁷ ^sGen. 17:5
¹⁹ ^wGen. 17:17
^xHeb. 11:11
²¹ ^yGen. 18:14; [Ps. 115:3; Luke 1:37; Heb. 11:19]
²² ^zGen. 15:6
²³ ^aRom. 15:4;
¹Cor. 10:6

ham or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. ¹⁴For ⁿif those who are of the law *are* heirs, faith is made void and the promise made of no effect, ¹⁵because ^othe law brings about wrath; for where there is no law *there is* no transgression.

¹⁶Therefore *it is* of faith that *it might be^p* according to grace, ^qso that the promise might be ^rsure to all the seed, not only to those who are of the law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, ^rwho is the father of us all ¹⁷(as it is written, ^s“*I have made you a father of many nations*”) in the presence of Him whom he believed—God, ^twho gives life to the dead and calls those ^uthings which do not exist as though they did; ¹⁸who, contrary to hope, in hope believed, so that he became the father of many nations, according to what was spoken, ^v“*So shall your descendants be.*” ¹⁹And not being weak in faith, ^whe did not consider his own body, already dead (since he was about a hundred years old), ^xand the deadness of Sarah’s womb. ²⁰He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God, ²¹and being fully convinced that what He had promised ^yHe was also able to perform. ²²And therefore ^z“*it was accounted to him for righteousness.*”

²³Now ^ait was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him, ²⁴but also for us. It shall be imputed to us who

4:6–8 According to Jewish law, a question was settled by two or three witnesses. Paul calls two witnesses from the OT to testify to justification through faith: one from the Law (4:1–5) and one from the Prophets (4:6–8; see also 3:21; Acts 2:29, 30 where David is called a prophet).

4:9, 10 Given the understanding that people can become righteous by faith alone, apart from obeying the Jewish law, the obvious question from Paul’s readers is: “Is this righteousness actually available to **the uncircumcised**?” Many of the Jews of Paul’s day assumed that blessing from God and forgiveness applied only to those who had been circumcised, the Jews. **Abraham**, however, received righteousness from God before he was circumcised. This fact opens the door to a new understanding of God’s grace. It is available to all people, both Jews and Gentiles.

4:11, 12 Abraham is a **father** both of the **uncircumcised** who believe as well as of the circumcised who believe. Circumcision was a **sign** and **seal**. As a **sign**, it pointed to the fact that Abraham possessed righteousness, and as a **seal** it verified that Abraham was righteous. Technically, circumcision was a sign and a seal of the covenant God gave Abraham for the land. But God would not make a covenant with one who was not righteous. Note that the conditional promise of Gen. 12:1–3 becomes an unconditional covenant in Gen. 15:18. God declared His unconditional covenant with Abraham after declaring him righteous because of his belief (15:6).

4:13 The **promise** to Abraham was not through circumcision (vv. 9–12) nor **through the law** (vv. 13–16), but **through the righteousness of faith**. **Heir of the world** means that Abraham and his **seed**, in particular Christ, will inherit the earth, a promise that will be fulfilled in the kingdom to be established when Christ returns.

4:14 **Those who are of the law** is not a reference to the Jewish

people but to any who depend on the law for their righteousness.

4:15 **Transgression** means “stepping over.” The law draws the line that should not be crossed.

4:16 **Therefore it is of faith**: Paul concludes that God’s promises to Abraham were founded on his faith so that it would be acknowledged that salvation was only through **grace**, that is, God’s favor. Since the promise was not based on adherence to any law or the performance of any ritual, such as circumcision, Abraham is the forefather of all who believe.

4:17 **Gives life to the dead** is a reference to the birth of Isaac from Abraham’s “dead” body and Sarah’s “dead” womb; both were far beyond the age of childbearing (see v. 19).

4:18 When Abraham was physically beyond any **hope** of having a child, he based his hope on God’s promises instead. He believed that his offspring would be as numerous as the stars of the heavens, because the all-powerful God had promised it.

4:19 **deadness of . . . womb**: Sarah had no children previously in her life, and by the time God gave this promise she was well past childbearing age.

4:20 **glory**: Glorifying God means declaring who God is. Abraham, by his faith, acknowledged that God was faithful and powerful enough to keep His promise.

4:23, 24 God had Abraham’s faith recorded in Scripture not to immortalize Abraham but to be a model for others. **who raised up**: Abraham’s faith was a model because he believed in a God who can raise the dead. We follow Abraham’s example when we have faith, when we believe that God raised Jesus from the dead and will grant us eternal life also. Belief in Jesus’ resurrection and ours is central to the gospel (see 1 Cor. 15:4).

believe ^bin Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, ^{25c}who was delivered up because of our offenses, and ^dwas raised because of our justification.

Faith Triumphs in Trouble

5 Therefore, ^ahaving been justified by faith, ¹we have ^bpeace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, ^{2c}through whom also we have access by faith into this grace ^din which we stand, and ^erejoice in hope of the glory of God. ³And not only *that*, but ^fwe also glory in tribulations, ^gknowing that tribulation produces ²perseverance; ^{4h}and perseverance, ³character; and character, hope. ⁵ⁱNow hope does not disappoint, ^jbecause the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

24 ^b Acts 2:24
25 ^c Is. 53:4, 5;
[Rom. 5:6; 8:32;
Gal. 2:20; Eph. 5:2;
Heb. 9:28] ^d [Rom.
5:18; 1 Cor. 15:17;
2 Cor. 5:15]

CHAPTER 5

1 ^a Is. 32:17; John
16:33 ^b [Is. 53:5];
Acts 10:36; [Eph.
2:14] ¹ Some
ancient mss. *let
us have*
2 ^c [John 10:9;
Eph. 2:18; 3:12;
Heb. 10:19; 1 Pet.
3:18] ^d 1 Cor. 15:1
^e Heb. 3:6
3 ^f Matt. 5:11, 12;
[John 16:33; Acts
5:41; 2 Cor. 12:9];
James 1:2 ^g James
1:3 ² *endurance*
4 ^h Phil. 2:22;
[James 1:12]

Christ in Our Place

⁶For when we were still without strength, ⁴in due time ^kChrist died for the ungodly. ⁷For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. ⁸But ^lGod demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. ⁹Much more then, having now been justified ^mby His blood, we shall be saved ⁿfrom wrath through Him. ¹⁰For ^oif when we were enemies ^pwe were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved ^qby His life. ¹¹And not only *that*,

³ *approved character* **5** ¹ Phil. 1:20 ² 2 Cor. 1:22; Eph. 1:13
6 ^k Is. 53:5; [Rom. 4:25; 5:8; 8:32; Gal. 2:20; Eph. 5:2] ⁴ *at the
right time* **8** ^l [John 3:16; 15:13 *; Rom. 8:39] **9** ^m Eph.
2:13; [1 John 1:7] ⁿ Rom. 1:18; 1 Thess. 1:10 **10** ^o [Rom. 8:32]
^p Rom. 11:28; 2 Cor. 5:18; [Eph. 2:5, 6]; Col. 1:21 ^q John 14:19

4:25 Jesus was **delivered up** to death, taking the penalty of our sin on Himself. Just as God brought life from Abraham and Sarah, who thought they were unable to have children, so God **raised** Jesus back to life. Jesus' resurrection brought us justification before God because His resurrection proves that God accepted Jesus' sacrifice for us.

5:1 **Peace** here is not a subjective feeling of peace. Rather, this peace is the state of being at peace instead of at war. The hostility between God and the believer has ceased. The believer has been reconciled to God.

5:2 **To have access** means "to approach," as if by introduction into a king's throne room. Believers have been granted admission to stand before God. Even though they were once rebels, they do not have to face His judgment. Instead they approach His throne in the realm of **grace**, or in the King's favor. **Rejoice** means "to boast" and **hope** means "expectation." Believers boast in the sure expectation of the **glory of God**. They are confident, for God Himself has placed the Holy Spirit in their hearts (v. 5).

5:3 **Glory** is the same Greek word that is translated "rejoice" in v. 2. Believers can rejoice, glory, and boast not only in their future hope (v. 2) but also in their present troubles. **Tribulations** refers to physical hardship, suffering, and distress. **Perseverance** means "endurance." Trials and tribulation produce endurance when we exercise faith during those difficult times (see James 1:2, 3). Such faith produces its own reward (see Matt. 5:10–12; 2 Tim. 2:12).

5:4 Perseverance produces **character**, the quality of being approved. As believers endure tribulation, God works in them to de-

velop certain qualities and virtues that will strengthen them and draw them closer to Him. The result is fortified **hope** in God and His promises.

5:5 The **hope** that believers have of their future glory with God will not **disappoint** them by being unfulfilled. They will not be put to shame or humiliated because of their hope. The reason the believer can be so confident is that **the love of God has been poured out**. The moment a person trusts in Christ, that person receives the Holy Spirit (see 8:9), who constantly encourages them in their hope in God.

5:6 Paul now explains the nature of God's love. God loved us when **we were still without strength and ungodly**. God loved us so much He sent His Son to die for us (see v. 8). God loves us just the way we are, but He loves us too much to leave us the way we are (see John 15:16; Phil. 1:6).

5:9, 10 If God loved us when we were helpless, ungodly **enemies**, how much more will He love us now that we are His children? **By His blood . . . through the death of His Son** we have been **justified**, that is "declared righteous," and **reconciled**, meaning our state of alienation from God has been changed. Believers are no longer enemies of God; they are at peace with God (v. 1). **we shall be saved**: Many take these verses to refer to final salvation from the presence of sin. But in this context, Paul goes on to discuss being saved from the power of sin (see ch. 6). Thus **wrath** here is God's present wrath (see 1:18), and **His life** is the life of Christ in believers (see v. 18). The point is that since God's love and the death of Christ have brought us justification, then as a result of that love, we can also expect salvation from God's wrath. To experience this truth, the believer must fully cooperate with the process that is explained in 6:1–14 (see John

justification

(Gk. *dikaïōsis*) (4:25; 5:18) Strong's #1347

The Greek noun for *justification* is derived from the Greek verb *dikaioō*, meaning "to acquit" or "to declare righteous" (used by Paul in 4:2, 5; 5:1). It is a legal term used of a favorable verdict in a trial. The word depicts a courtroom setting, with God presiding as the Judge, determining the faithfulness of each person to the Law. In the first section of Romans, Paul makes it clear that no one can withstand God's judgment (3:9–20). The Law was not given to justify sinners but to expose their sin. To remedy this deplorable situation, God sent His Son to die for our sins, in our place. When we believe in Jesus, God imputes His righteousness to us, and we are declared righteous before God. In this way, God demonstrates that He is both a righteous Judge and the One who declares us righteous, our Justifier (3:26).

reconciliation

(Gk. *katallagē*) (5:11; 11:15; 2 Cor. 5:18, 19) Strong's #2643

The Greek word basically means "change" or "exchange." In the context of relationships between people, the term implies a change in attitude on the part of both individuals, a change from enmity to friendship. When used to describe the relationship existing between God and a person, the term implies the change of attitude on the part of both a person and God. The need to change the sinful ways of a human being is obvious; but some argue that no change is needed on the part of God. But inherent in the doctrine of justification is the changed attitude of God toward the sinner. God declares a person who was formerly His enemy to be righteous before Him.

but we also ^rrejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.

Death in Adam, Life in Christ

¹² Therefore, just as ^sthrough one man sin entered the world, and ^tdeath through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned— ¹³ (For until the law sin was in the world, but ^usin is not imputed when there is no law. ¹⁴ Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not sinned according to the likeness of the transgression of Adam, ^vwho is a type of Him who was to come. ¹⁵ But the free gift is not like the ⁵ offense. For if by the one man's offense many died, much more the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded ^wto many. ¹⁶ And the gift is not like *that which came* through the one who sinned. For the judgment *which came* from one offense resulted in condemnation, but the free gift *which came* from many ⁶ offenses resulted in justification. ¹⁷ For if by the one man's ⁷ offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift

11 ^r [Gal. 4:9]
12 ^s Gen. 2:17; 3:6, 19; [Rom. 5:15-17; 1 Cor. 15:21] ^t Gen. 2:17
13 ^u 1 John 3:4
14 ^v [1 Cor. 15:21, 22]
15 ^w [Is. 53:11]
⁵ trespass or false step
16 ⁶ trespasses
17 ⁷ trespass

18 ^x [1 Cor. 15:21, 45] ^y Matt. 1:21; [John 12:32] ⁸ Or one trespass ⁹ Or one righteous act
19 ^z Is. 53:11, 12 [★]; [Phil. 2:8]
20 ^a John 15:22
^b Luke 7:47; Rom. 6:1; 1 Tim. 1:14

CHAPTER 6

1 ^a Rom. 3:8; 6:15
2 ^b [Rom. 6:11; 7:4, 6; Gal. 2:19; Col. 2:20; 3:3]; 1 Pet. 2:24
3 ^c Acts 2:38; 8:16; 19:5; [Gal. 3:27]; Col. 2:12 ^d [1 Cor. 15:29]
4 ^e Col. 2:12 ^f 1 Cor. 6:14 ^g John 2:11

of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.)

¹⁸ Therefore, as through ⁸ one man's offense *judgment came* to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through ^x one ⁹ Man's righteous act *the free gift came* ^y to all men, resulting in justification of life. ¹⁹ For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by ^z one Man's obedience many will be made righteous.

²⁰ Moreover ^a the law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace ^b abounded much more, ²¹ so that as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Dead to Sin, Alive to God

6 What shall we say then? ^a Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? ² Certainly not! How shall we who ^b died to sin live any longer in it? ³ Or do you not know that ^c as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus ^d were baptized into His death? ⁴ Therefore we were ^e buried with Him through baptism into death, that ^f just as Christ was raised from the dead by ^g the glory of the Father,

8:32). The believer must die to sin and present himself or herself to God as an "instrument of righteousness" (see 6:14).

5:12 The **one man** is Adam. Through him **sin entered the world**. **Sin brought death**. The result is that death is now a universal experience. The phrase **because all sinned** does not mean just that "all have sinned" sometime in their lives, thus referring to individual sins. Paul takes his readers back to the beginning of human history, to the one sin that brought death upon us all. The unity of the human race is demonstrated here. In Adam, we all sinned (see 1 Cor. 15:22). The result is physical and spiritual death for everyone. From Adam we inherited a sin nature. Furthermore, as a result of our sin in Adam, we face a common judgment—death.

5:13, 14 **Until the law**, that is, until the Law of Moses was given, sin was not **imputed**. *Imputed* means "to charge to one's account," as by an entry made in a ledger. In other words, sin was present in the world from Adam to Moses, but God did not keep an account of sins before the giving of the Law because there was no Law to obey or disobey. **not sinned**: Those after Adam and before Moses did not sin like Adam because there were no prohibitions similar to the Law of Moses. But they did sin, and the way we know this is that **death reigned**. They all died.

5:15 Through one man, Adam, death came. Yet through **one Man**, Jesus Christ, grace and **the gift** of God, eternal life, was given. **much more**: The works of the two men, Adam and Jesus, are not merely antithetical. Christ's work is greater, for it brings God's grace to those stuck in the sinfulness which originated in Adam.

5:16 Through Adam came **condemnation**, a word used only three times in the NT, and all three times in Romans (see v. 18; 8:1). The word refers to "the punishment following a judicial sentence." In the face of this, through Christ came **the free gift** that **resulted in justification**. That is to say, the aim or goal of the gift is *justification*, or "righteousness." In v. 18, the same word is translated "righteous act." In other words, the goal of the gift of eternal life is righteous living. This does not refer to justification by faith but to the practical outworking of faith through righteous acts (see 6:16). Thus this verse contrasts the penal servitude of a sinner with the righteous life of a believer.

5:18 Here Paul completes the comparison begun in v. 12 between

the sinful work of Adam and the righteous work of Jesus. Through Adam came **condemnation**. Through Christ came **justification of life**, a justification that produces life.

5:19 **Made** means "to make," "constitute." As the result of Adam's sin, people became sinners. By Christ's death **many will be made righteous** (in contrast to declared righteousness; see 4:3). That is, believers are actually being constituted or made righteous. Through the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit, the believer who has been declared righteous by God is continually becoming more righteous.

5:20 **the offense might abound**: Law magnified sin. What was inherently wrong became formally and explicitly wrong once the Law was revealed. **grace abounded much more**: The Greek term Paul uses means "superabounded." Not only can sin never exceed the grace provided by God, sin loses its threat when compared to the superabounding grace of God.

6:1 Since sin in a way makes grace more abundant (see 5:20, 21) why not **continue in sin**? This is certainly a possible conclusion, though a wrong one, from the teaching about grace in ch. 5. Apparently Paul had been accused of teaching this false doctrine, called antinomianism. To silence his accusers, Paul shows in this chapter that a believer who continues in sin would be denying his or her own identity in Christ.

6:2 **Certainly not**: The Greek expresses a response of shock, that has even been translated "God forbid." The thought of a believer living in sin in order to take advantage of grace was abhorrent to Paul. The reason believers should not live in sin is that they have **died to sin**, as is explained in vv. 3, 4.

6:3 **baptized**: Paul uses the common experience of believers being baptized as a picture of being identified with Jesus Christ. Baptism expresses faith the way a word expresses an idea. There can be an idea without words, but normally they are expressed in words. Water baptism is a symbol of the spiritual union of Christ and the believer. When a person trusts Christ, he or she is incorporated into, united to, Jesus Christ, which includes being united to **His death**. Jesus' death becomes our death. Christian baptism makes these spiritual realities vivid.

6:4, 5 **newness of life**: If the believer's identification with Christ means being identified with His death, then it logically follows that

^heven so we also should walk in newness of life.

⁵For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be *in the likeness* of His resurrection, ⁶knowing this, that ^jour old man was crucified with Him, that ^kthe body of sin might be ^ldone away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. ⁷For ^lhe who has died has been ²freed from sin. ⁸Now ^mif we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, ⁹knowing that ⁿChrist, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him. ¹⁰For *the death* that He died, ^oHe died to sin once for all; but *the life* that He lives, ^pHe lives to God. ¹¹Likewise you also, ³reckon yourselves to be ^qdead indeed to sin, but ^ralive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

¹²Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. ¹³And do not present your ^tmembers as ⁴instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but ^upresent yourselves to God as ⁴instruments of righteousness.

⁴ ^h Rom. 7:6; [2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15; Eph. 4:23; Col. 3:10]
⁵ ⁱ 2 Cor. 4:10; Phil. 3:10; Col. 2:12; 3:1
⁶ ^j Gal. 2:20; 5:24; 6:14 ^k Col. 2:11 ^l rendered *inoperative*
⁷ ^l 1 Pet. 4:1
² ^m cleared
⁸ ^m Rom. 6:4; 2 Cor. 4:10; 2 Tim. 2:11
⁹ ⁿ Rev. 1:18
¹⁰ ^o Heb. 9:27
^p Luke 20:38
¹¹ ^q (Rom. 6:2; 7:4, 6) ^r [Gal. 2:19; Col. 2:20; 3:3]; 1 Pet. 2:24 ³ ^s consider
¹² ^s Ps. 19:13
¹³ ^t Rom. 6:16, 19; 7:5; Col. 3:5; James 4:1 ^u Rom. 12:1; 2 Cor. 5:14; 1 Pet. 2:24; 4:2 ⁴ ^v *Or weapons*
¹⁴ ^v [Rom. 7:4, 6; 8:2; Gal. 5:18]
¹⁵ ^w 1 Cor. 9:21
¹⁶ ^x Prov. 5:22;

teousness to sin, but ^upresent yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as ⁴instruments of righteousness to God. ¹⁴For ^vsin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.

From Slaves of Sin to Slaves of God

¹⁵What then? Shall we sin ^wbecause we are not under law but under grace? Certainly not! ¹⁶Do you not know that ^xto whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin *leading* to death, or of obedience *leading* to righteousness? ¹⁷But God be thanked that *though* you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart ^ythat form of doctrine to which you were ^zdelivered. ¹⁸And ^zhaving been set free from sin, you became slaves of

[Matt. 6:24]; John 8:34; 2 Pet. 2:19 17 ^y 2 Tim. 1:13
^z ^{entrusted} 18 ^z John 8:32; Rom. 6:22; 8:2; 1 Cor. 7:22; Gal. 5:1; 1 Pet. 2:16

the believer also identifies with Jesus' resurrection. Having died and having been raised with Christ, the believer should live a new kind of life.

6:6 Some say **old man** refers to part of us, namely our old nature, our sinful disposition. However, the word *man* does not refer to part of a person; instead, the word describes the entire inner person before conversion, the person connected to the sin nature of Adam. The *old man* was **crucified with Christ** (see Gal. 2:20). Simply put, a believer is not the same person he or she was before conversion; a believer is a new creation in Christ (see 2 Cor. 5:17). There are two reasons (see the two clauses that begin with **that**) for crucifying the *old man*. First is **that the body of sin might be done away with**. The *body of sin* is either a reference to the physical body, that is, the body that is enslaved to sin, or the phrase is a figurative expression for the sin in a believer's life. Colossians 2:11, a parallel passage, indicates that sin in a believer's life is meant. The sinful nature of a believer is abolished when the old self is crucified with Christ. The second purpose is **that we should no longer be slaves of sin**. Believers are new people who are no longer enslaved to the old sinful nature.

6:7 Freed here translates the Greek word for "justification," which is a legal term. The idea is that the believer no longer has any obligation to sin.

6:8 Dying and living with Christ summarizes vv. 3–7. **Believe** introduces a new idea. Christians must not only know that they have died to sin (vv. 6–8) and have been made alive with Christ, they must also *believe* it.

6:9, 10 Christ died for sin once for all. He is now alive at the right hand of God. Since believers have been joined to Christ and to His **death** and resurrection, they can now believe that they too are alive to God.

6:11 Reckon is an accounting term that means "to take into account," "calculate," or "decide." Verses 3–10 reveal the truth that believers have already died to sin because they have participated in Jesus' death. Since believers have died with Christ and have also been raised with Him, Paul now urges Christians to consider themselves **dead . . . to sin**. Although before conversion they were still enslaved to the power of sin, now they are free to resist it.

6:12 Though believers in Christ have died to sin, sin is still a problem. The sin principle is still present and can express itself through the **mortal body**, the body that is subject to death. The difference is that sin has no right to **reign**. Thus Paul admonishes the believer not to **obey** it.

6:13 Verse 12 has the whole body in view; v. 13 focuses on the individual parts of the body such as the hands or mouth. Believers

are not to **present** the parts of their bodies as a means of sinning. Simply put: Do not use your hands to steal or your tongue to lie. Rather believers should **present** themselves to God and the parts of their bodies as **instruments of righteousness**.

6:14 Not under law means not under the Law of Moses. Yet the believer with God's help, the believer **under grace**, fulfills the law (see 3:31; 13:8–10). The Mosaic system consisted of external laws which revealed the sin prevalent in human hearts. In contrast, God's grace places the believer in Christ, and the Holy Spirit in the believer. Therefore a Christian does not have to sin, he or she can resist temptation and do what is right (see 2 Cor. 3:15–18).

6:16 slaves to obey: Paul highlights the principle that everyone is a slave to someone or something—whether it is a person, possession, or activity. But a Christian should be a slave to God's righteousness.

6:17 you: Paul moves from the principle (v. 16) to the experience of the Roman believers. **Form of doctrine** is a unique expression. *Form* means "pattern," "type," or "example." The gospel message is the pattern. It is the message that Christ died for our sins and rose from the dead (1 Cor. 15:3, 4). This message demands a response from the hearer and with it must be the command to believe (Acts 16:31). **Obedied from the heart:** The Roman believers voluntarily obeyed the message. There was no external law imposed on them.

6:18 slaves of righteousness: Being a slave in the ancient world meant being owned by a master. Whether slaves obeyed did not change their status as slaves, although it would affect the relationship between slave and master (Luke 19:20–26). The question is

united together

(Gk. *sumphutos*) (6:5) Strong's #4854

The expression, which occurs only here in the NT, means "to grow in union" or "to plant in union." The word describes two plants that have been planted together and are growing together, closely entwined or even united. The context speaks of union, our union with Christ in His death (6:4) and resurrection (6:5). Our union with Christ in death is like being planted with Him. Like a seed, our sinful natures must die with Christ so that we might grow in Christ and bear spiritual fruit (John 12:24). Our union with Christ is now a loving union, in which we are growing with Him "in the likeness of His resurrection."

righteousness. ¹⁹I speak in human *terms* because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members *as slaves of uncleanness, and of lawlessness leading to more lawlessness*, so now present your members *as slaves of righteousness* ⁶for holiness.

²⁰For when you were *a* slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. ²¹^bWhat fruit did you have then in the things of which you are now ashamed? For *c*the end of those things is death. ²²But now *d*having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit ⁷to holiness, and the end, everlasting life. ²³For *e*the wages of sin is death, but *f*the ⁸gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Freed from the Law

7 Or do you not know, brethren (for I speak to those who know the law), that the law ¹has dominion over a man as long as he lives? ²For *a*the woman who has a husband is bound by the law to *her* husband as long as he lives. But if the husband dies, she is released from the law of *her* husband. ³So then ^bif, while *her* husband lives, she marries another man, she will be called an

¹⁹ ⁶unto sanctification
²⁰ ^a John 8:34
²¹ ^b Jer. 12:13;
 Ezek. 16:63; Rom.
 7:5 ^c Rom. 1:32;
 Gal. 6:8
²² ^d [John 8:32];
 Rom. 6:18; 8:2
⁷ unto sanctification
²³ ^e Gen. 2:17
^f Rom. 2:7; 1 Pet. 1:4
⁸ free gift

CHAPTER 7

¹ ¹ rules
² ^a 1 Cor. 7:39
³ ^b [Matt. 5:32]

⁴ ^c Rom. 8:2; Gal.
 2:19; 5:18; [Col. 2:14]
^d Gal. 5:22
⁵ ^e Rom. 6:13
^f Rom. 6:21; Gal.
 5:19; James 1:15
⁶ ^f Rom. 2:29;
 2 Cor. 3:6
⁷ ^h Rom. 3:20 ⁱ Ex.
 20:17; Deut. 5:21;
 Acts 20:33
⁸ ^k Rom. 4:15
^k 1 Cor. 15:56

adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from that law, so that she is no adulteress, though she has married another man. ⁴Therefore, my brethren, you also have become *c*dead to the law through the body of Christ, that you may be married to another—to Him who was raised from the dead, that we should ^dbear fruit to God. ⁵For when we were in the flesh, the sinful passions which were aroused by the law *e*were at work in our members ^fto bear fruit to death. ⁶But now we have been delivered from the law, having died to what we were held by, so that we should serve ^gin the newness of the Spirit and not *in* the oldness of the letter.

Sin's Advantage in the Law

⁷What shall we say then? *Is* the law sin? Certainly not! On the contrary, ^hI would not have known sin except through the law. For I would not have known covetousness unless the law had said, ⁱ“*You shall not covet.*” ⁸But ^jsin, taking opportunity by the commandment, produced in me all *manner of evil* desire. For ^kapart from the law sin *was* dead. ⁹I was alive once without the law, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died. ¹⁰And the command-

one of obligation. A person who has been freed from sin can act as though still a slave to sin (v. 16), or that person can live as a “slave” to righteousness, as a servant to a kind master who gives great rewards.

6:19 In human terms refers to Paul’s illustration of slavery. The analogy of slavery to the Christian life is imperfect, because Christians are God’s children (8:15, 16). Having been set free from sin and having become a slave of righteousness (v. 18), the believer should serve righteousness **just as** he or she served sin before trusting Christ. The result will be **holiness**.

6:21 The result of sin is **death**. The child of God who lives in sin lives in the sphere of death (see 1 John 3:14, 15). The ultimate result is physical death (see James 1:13–15).

6:22 free from sin: (see v. 7). The new relationship with God results in a new person, which makes a new kind of **fruit** possible: righteousness. This verse and the next present the beginning and end of the salvation process. Christians have been freed from sin so that they can be given eternal life. Eternal life is a gift (John 3:16) from God to each believer.

6:23 Paul explains that **sin** results in **death**, but God gives the **gift of eternal life**. Most often this verse has been used as a promise of regeneration. The phrase *eternal life* is used 42 times in the NT, and it usually refers to something we receive as a gift at the moment of belief in the gospel (John 3:16; 5:24; 6:40). But 11 of these 42 times, *eternal life* is presented as something to be attained (v. 22; 2:7; Matt. 19:16, 29; Mark 10:17, 30; Luke 10:25; 18:18–30; John 12:25, 26; Gal. 6:8). Thus we learn from the Bible that eternal life is not simply a static entity. It is a dynamic and growing relationship with Jesus Christ Himself (see John 10:10; 17:3). Through living in faith and obedience, Christians can fully enjoy God’s free gift of eternal life.

7:1–3 Paul returns to the question of 6:15: Shall we continue to sin while under grace? Paul’s answer is no, and now he illustrates his negative answer by a comparison with marriage. Marriage is lifelong. But if one partner dies, the other is no longer bound by the law and is free to marry someone else.

7:4 An exact application of the illustration would be that the law

died, and now the believer is free to “marry” grace. Paul’s words are that believers died **to the law**. Having died to the law, the believer is now free to marry God and **bear fruit** for Him. Out of the marriage relationship comes children. So out of intimacy with Christ comes the fruit of practical righteousness (see 6:22).

7:5 In the flesh refers to the period before the believer’s conversion. In this context, those *in the flesh* are unregenerate, or not born again, and those *in the Spirit* are regenerate. On the other hand, both believers and unbelievers may walk *according to the flesh*, but only believers can walk *according to the Spirit*. The law **aroused** sinful desires that were expressed through the **members** of the body and resulted in death.

7:6 At conversion, believers **died** to the law (v. 4), with the result that they are now able to serve in newness of life (6:4). They have a new life in the Holy Spirit, not in the old way of **the letter**, the old way of trying to gain life by means of the law.

7:7 The next logical question (see 6:1, 15) is: **Is the law sin? Certainly not!** (see 6:2, 15). Paul emphatically denies that the law is sinful. **I:** Beginning here and in the rest of the chapter, Paul uses his personal experience as an illustration. **The law** reveals sin.

7:8 The law also stirs up sin (see v. 7). **sin was dead:** Sin can exist without the law (see 5:13), although without law it may be dormant. Without standards of right and wrong, there can be no judgment of what is sin and what is not. The law, however, with its commands against certain behaviors, can arouse the desire to perform those evil behaviors (see v. 5).

7:9 I was alive: There was a time when Paul was alive to God (6:8, 11, 13) and without the law (v. 4, 6; 6:14). Then sometime after his conversion, when he was enjoying fellowship with God, he was confronted by the law, and he **died**. This is a figurative way of saying that his sin nature broke his fellowship with God.

7:10, 11 bring life: Since the law points out the path of righteousness, it points to life. But since sin reigns in our natures, the law means judgment and death for us. When we focus on the law we are **deceived** into sinning, which thus “kills” our spiritual lives.

ment,¹ which was to *bring* life, I found to *bring* death. ¹¹For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it killed *me*. ¹²Therefore ^mthe law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good.

Law Cannot Save from Sin

¹³Has then what is good become death to me? Certainly not! But sin, that it might appear sin, was producing death in me through what is good, so that sin through the commandment might become exceedingly sinful. ¹⁴For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am carnal, ⁿsold under sin. ¹⁵For what I am doing, I do not understand. ^oFor what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do. ¹⁶If, then, I do what I will not to do, I agree with the law that *it is* good. ¹⁷But now, *it is* no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. ¹⁸For I know that ^pin me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but *how* to perform what is good I do not find. ¹⁹For the good that I will to *do*, I do not do; but the evil I will not to *do*, that I practice. ²⁰Now if I do what I

¹⁰ ^l Lev. 18:5; Ezek. 20:11, 13, 21; Luke 10:28; Rom. 10:5; 2 Cor. 3:7; Gal. 3:12
¹² ^m Ps. 19:8
¹⁴ ⁿ 1 Kin. 21:20, 25; 2 Kin. 17:17; Rom. 6:16
¹⁵ ^o Rom. 7:19; [Gal. 5:17]
¹⁸ ^p [Gen. 6:5; 8:21]

²² ^q Ps. 1:2 ^r [2 Cor. 4:16; Eph. 3:16; 1 Pet. 3:4]
²³ ^s Rom. 6:19; [Gal. 5:17]; James 4:1; 1 Pet. 2:11 ^t Rom. 6:13, 19
²⁴ ^u [Rom. 8:11; 1 Cor. 15:51, 52; 1 Thess. 4:14-17]
²⁵ ^v 1 Cor. 15:57

CHAPTER 8

¹ ^a Gal. 5:16 ^b NU omits the rest of v. 1.
² ^b Rom. 6:18,
²² ^c [1 Cor. 15:45]
^d Rom. 7:24, 25
³ ^c Acts 13:39; [Heb. 7:18] ^f [2 Cor. 5:21; Gal. 3:13]

will not to *do*, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me.

²¹I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good. ²²For I ^qdelight in the law of God according to ^rthe inward man. ²³But ^sI see another law in ^tmy members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. ²⁴O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me ^ufrom this body of death? ²⁵^vI thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord!

So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.

Free from Indwelling Sin

8 *There is* therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, ^awho ¹do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. ²For ^bthe law of ^cthe Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from ^dthe law of sin and death. ³For ^ewhat the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, ^fGod *did* by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin:

7:12 The conclusion is that **the law** as a whole and the individual commandments are **holy**. Our problem with sin is not the fault of the holy law of God, only of how our sinful nature (see vv. 8, 11, 13) responds to the law.

7:13 Paul asks another rhetorical question (see v. 7: 6:1, 15). **Has then what is good** (that is, the law, v. 12) **become death to me? Certainly not** is again Paul's emphatic denial (see v. 7: 6:2, 15). The problem is not the law; the problem is **sin**. Sin used the good law to produce evil, that is, death. But through the law, sin is shown for what it is, and its evil and tragic consequences are clearly revealed.

7:14 spiritual: The law comes from God. In contrast, Paul said his problem (and that of all believers; see 1 Cor. 3:1-3) is that he was **carnal**, meaning he was like a slave **sold over to sin**. Even though Paul was a Christian dedicated to serving God (v. 25), he continued to fall short of God's moral standards.

7:15-17 Being fleshly, sold over to sin, involves a conflict that mystifies Paul and other believers. Paul feels he does not understand himself. He finds himself defeated, not doing what he wants to do, and doing what he hates to do. The conflict indicates that there is battle between two identities in the believer. First there is something that acknowledges that the **law . . . is good**. Second there is something within, called **sin**, which produces evil.

7:18 The problem is the **flesh**, the part of the believer in which there is **nothing good**. The **will** is the desire to do good (see v. 12). Yet the ability to **perform** is lacking.

7:22 The **inward man** is virtually synonymous with the mind (see v. 23; 2 Cor. 4:16; Eph. 3:16), and it finds **delight in the law of God**. This delight causes believers in Christ to want to align themselves with the new nature God has imparted to them.

7:23 The law of sin is a reference to the sinful nature's rejection of the law of the mind that seeks after God. The sinful nature seeks to draw us away from following God's work in us.

7:24 The wretched, or "distressed, miserable," **man** is the believer whenever he or she is defeated by sin (see vv. 14, 23). This defeat occurs whenever the believer fails to live in the power supplied by the Spirit. **body of death**: This is a figurative expression for sin nature. Paul wants to be freed from sin, which leads to death.

7:25 thank God: Paul breaks forth in jubilant praise to God that there is victory through **Jesus Christ**, who delivers believers from

the body of death, the flesh. **So then**: Paul concludes that the problem is not the law; the problem is the flesh. From this argument, Paul moves into the solution, salvation found in Jesus Christ.

8:1 therefore: This Greek word does not draw a formal conclusion, but an informal inference, from 7:25. In contrast with the preceding vivid description of sinfulness, Paul depicts the freedom of living in the Spirit. **no condemnation**: In Christ, we are no longer under the sentence of the law, but empowered by the Spirit to live for Christ.

8:2 the law of the Spirit: The *Spirit* refers to the Holy Spirit who energizes our renewed spirit. It is also possible that the word refers to the Spirit in us that has now been brought to life.

8:3 The law could pronounce judgment on sin, but **the law could not** do anything about sin itself. It had no power to put sin to death in a person's life. **God** accomplished what the law could not do **by sending His own Son**. Jesus came in **the likeness of sinful flesh**: Jesus, as God, took on our human nature, a nature that was susceptible to temptation. Although He was tempted, He never gave in. He never sinned.

law

(Gk. *nomos*) (6:14; 7:21-23, 25; 8:2-4; Gal. 2:16; 5:3; Heb. 8:4) Strong's #3551

The Greek term for *law* here means an inward principle of action—either good or evil—operating with the regularity of a law. The term also designates a standard for a person's life. The apostle Paul described three such laws. The first is called "the law of sin" which was operating through his flesh, causing him to sin. Paul, like all other believers, needed another law to overcome "the law of sin." This is "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus," which makes us "free from the law of sin and death" (8:2). By following this law, believers can actually fulfill the righteous requirements of God's law (8:4)—which is the third law in this section; it is the standard for human action that corresponds to the righteous nature of God.

He condemned sin in the flesh, ⁴that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who ^gdo not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. ⁵For ^hthose who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those *who live* according to the Spirit, ⁱthe things of the Spirit. ⁶For ^jto be ²carnally minded *is* death, but to be spiritually minded *is* life and peace. ⁷Because ^kthe ³carnal mind *is* enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, ^lnor indeed can be. ⁸So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

⁹But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His. ¹⁰And if Christ *is* in you, the body *is* dead because of sin, but the Spirit *is* life because of righteousness. ¹¹But if the Spirit of ^mHim who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, ⁿHe who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies ⁴through His Spirit who dwells in you.

4 ^g [Rom. 6:4; 2 Cor. 5:7]; Gal. 5:16, 25; Eph. 4:1; 5:2, 15; [1 John 1:7; 2:6]
5 ^h John 3:6
[Gal. 5:22-25]
6 ⁱ Gal. 6:8 ² *fleshly*
7 ^k James 4:4
1 ^m Cor. 2:14 ³ *fleshly*
11 ⁿ Acts 2:24;
Rom. 6:4 ⁿ 1 Cor. 6:14 ⁴ Or *because of*

12 ^o [Rom. 6:7, 14]
13 ^p Gal. 6:8 ^q Eph. 4:22; [Col. 3:5-10]
14 ^r [Gal. 5:18]
15 ^s [1 Cor. 2:12]; Heb. 2:15 ² 2 Tim. 1:7 ^u [Is. 56:5]
^v Mark 14:36; Gal. 4:6 ⁵ Lit., in Aram., *Father*
16 ^w Eph. 1:13
17 ^x Acts 26:18
^y Phil. 1:29
18 ^z 2 Cor. 4:17;
[1 Pet. 1:6; 4:13]
19 ^a [2 Pet. 3:13]

Sonship Through the Spirit

¹²^oTherefore, brethren, we are debtors—not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. ¹³For ^pif you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you ^qput to death the deeds of the body, you will live. ¹⁴For ^ras many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. ¹⁵For ^syou did not receive the spirit of bondage again ^tto fear, but you received the ^uSpirit of adoption by whom we cry out, ^v“Abba,” ⁵Father.” ¹⁶^wThe Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷and if children, then ^xheirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, ^yif indeed we suffer with *Him*, that we may also be glorified together.

From Suffering to Glory

¹⁸For I consider that ^zthe sufferings of this present time are not worthy *to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us. ¹⁹For ^athe earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God.

8:4 The purpose of the coming of Christ was that **the law might be fulfilled**. The believer gains the righteous standard of the law—love (see 13:8–10)—not by means of the law but by being in Christ and walking **according to the Spirit**.

8:5 The Greek word rendered **set their minds** includes a person’s will, thoughts, and emotions. It also includes assumptions, values, desires, and purposes. Setting the mind **on the things of the flesh** or on the things of **the Spirit** means being oriented to or governed by those things on which we focus.

8:6 **Peace** is the resolution of the intense warfare described in ch. 7, as well as the inward harmony and tranquility that results from yielding to God.

8:7–11 A believer can live according to the flesh with the result of death (James 1:13–15), or else by the renewed spirit, so as to experience life. In vv. 7–11, Paul elaborates on these two possibilities, showing the possibility and the benefit of living according to the Spirit.

8:7 The reason that being carnally minded results in death (v. 6) is that **the carnal mind** is an enemy of God. The mind of the flesh is hostile to God and can never submit itself **to the law of God**.

8:8 Being **in the flesh** is different from “walking according to the flesh.” Being *in the flesh* means being unregenerate or sinful. People in that state **cannot please God**.

8:9 Christians no longer live according to the **flesh**, under control of their sinful human nature. Instead, with **the Spirit** living in them and empowering them, they can live in a way pleasing to God.

8:10 **Dead because of sin** refers not to physical death but to the “body of death” of 7:24 (see also v. 6). The problem that Paul is dealing with in this passage is how the “dead” body, in which sin dwells, can be made the vehicle for expressing the life of God.

8:11 The solution to the problem of the flesh is the Holy Spirit. He gives **life to your mortal bodies**. Being spiritually minded means overcoming the deadness of the body and experiencing life and peace. This is the resurrection life (see Phil. 3:10).

8:13 **you will die**: Death here does not refer to physical death, because those who live according to the Spirit also die physically. It refers to the experience of those who live their lives apart from God. **by the Spirit**: By walking according to the Spirit (v. 4), by being spiritually minded (v. 6), the believer can **put to death** sinful deeds and **live** for God.

8:14 Being **led by the Spirit** is virtually synonymous with walking according to the Spirit. “Walking” highlights the active participation and effort of the believer. “Being led” underscores the passive side, the submissive dependence of the believer on the Spirit. **these are sons of God**: Those led by the Spirit are God’s children, and the sovereign Lord, in turn, is their Father (see 2 Cor. 6:18).

8:15 Believers are sons of God because they received **the Spirit of adoption**. In ancient Rome, an adopted son would possess all the rights of a son born into the family. Christians have been adopted into God’s family, receiving an eternal inheritance. **Abba**: Jesus Himself prayed to God using this Aramaic word for Father (Mark 14:36).

8:16 A further indication of believers’ sonship is that the Holy Spirit **bears witness with** their spirits. When believers cry out to the Father in prayer (v. 15), the Holy Spirit intercedes for them (see v. 26).

8:17 **heirs**: All of God’s children have an inheritance based on their relationship to God, which is incorruptible, undefiled, and reserved in heaven (see 1 Pet. 1:4). Their inheritance includes an expectation of eternal life (see Titus 3:4–7). As **joint heirs** with Christ, they share His suffering now (Phil. 3:10) and will share His glory later (Phil. 3:11–14).

8:18 The **sufferings** of the present are slight when compared with the **glory** later. Paul calls the sufferings “light affliction” compared to the “eternal weight of glory” (2 Cor. 4:17). The divine compensation package is “a hundredfold” (Matt. 19:29).

8:19 **Earnest expectation** literally means “to watch with out-

adoption

(Gk. *huiothesia*) (8:15; Gal. 4:5; Eph. 1:5) Strong’s #5206

The Greek word for *adoption* is derived from the word *huios*, meaning “son,” and the word *thesis*, meaning “placement.” It is a legal term that in this context indicates that believers have been given the full privileges of sonship in God’s family. Concurrent with this placement into sonship, God places the Spirit of His Son into our hearts so that we become, in effect, His natural-born children. As such, we are not just “adopted” (in the sense the word now conveys) but genuinely “begotten” by God. God makes children of men into children of God, just the reverse of what happened to Christ when the Son of God became the Son of Man.

²⁰For ^bthe creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected *it* in hope; ²¹because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of ^ccorruption into the glorious ^dliberty of the children of God. ²²For we know that the whole creation ^dgroans and labors with birth pangs together until now. ²³Not only *that*, but we also who have ^ethe firstfruits of the Spirit, ^feven we ourselves groan ^gwithin ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the ^hredemption of our body. ²⁴For we were saved in this hope, but ⁱhope that is seen is not hope; for why does one still hope for what he sees? ²⁵But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for *it* with perseverance.

²⁶Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For ^jwe do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but ^kthe Spirit Himself makes intercession ^lfor us with groanings which cannot be uttered. ²⁷Now ^lHe who searches

²⁰ ^b Gen. 3:17-19
²¹ ^c [2 Cor. 3:17]; Gal. 5:1; 13 ^d decay
²² ^d Jer. 12:4, 11
²³ ^e 2 Cor. 5:5; Eph. 1:14 ^f 2 Cor. 5:2, 4 ^g [Luke 20:36]
^h Luke 21:28; Eph. 1:14; 4:30; [Phil. 3:20, 21]
²⁴ ^h Rom. 4:18; 2 Cor. 5:7; Heb. 11:1
²⁶ / Matt. 20:22; 2 Cor. 12:8 ^k John 14:16; Rom. 8:15; Eph. 6:18 ^l NU omits for us
²⁷ ^l 1 Chr. 28:9 ^m 1 John 5:14
²⁸ ⁿ 2 Tim. 1:9
²⁹ ^o 2 Tim. 2:19
^p Rom. 9:23; 1 Cor. 2:7; Eph. 1:5, 11
^q [2 Cor. 3:18] ^r [Col. 1:15, 18]; Heb. 1:6
³⁰ ^s Rom. 8:28; 9:24; 1 Cor. 1:9; Gal. 1:6, 15; 5:8; Eph. 1:11; 3:11; 2 Thess. 2:14; [Heb. 9:15; 1 Pet. 2:9; 3:9]
^t 1 Cor. 6:11;

the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit *is*, because He makes intercession for the saints ^maccording to *the will* of God.

²⁸And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those ⁿwho are the called according to His purpose. ²⁹For whom ^oHe foreknew, ^pHe also predestined ^qto be conformed to the image of His Son, ^rthat He might be the firstborn among many brethren. ³⁰Moreover whom He predestined, these He also ^scalled; whom He called, these He also ^tjustified; and whom He justified, these He also ^uglorified.

God's Everlasting Love

³¹What then shall we say to these things? ^vIf God *is* for us, who *can be* against us? ³²^wHe who did not spare His own Son, but ^xdelivered Him up for us

[Gal. 2:16] ^u John 17:22; Rom. 8:21 ³¹ ^v Num. 14:9
³² ^w Rom. 5:6, 10 ^x [Rom. 4:25]

stretched neck." **Creation** is impatient to see the revelation of the **sons of God**.

8:20 Futility, which means "vanity, emptiness," refers to the curse on creation (see Gen. 3:17–19).

8:21 Creation awaits the coming glory because it also will be **delivered**. **The bondage of corruption** further describes the futility of v. 20. Nature is a slave to decay and death because of sin.

8:23 The firstfruits of the Spirit may refer to the first workings of the Holy Spirit (8:9–11), which is a pledge of more work to come, like **the redemption of our body**. Otherwise, the expression *firstfruits* may be in apposition to the word *Spirit*; thus *firstfruits* is the Spirit. The firstfruits of a harvest was a foretaste of the harvest to come. So the Spirit, or His work, is God's assurance of the greater blessings to come. Elsewhere the Spirit is called a "guarantee of our inheritance" (Eph. 1:14).

8:24 Hope is a constant expectation of an unseen reality. We are saved by faith, but our hope is in the return of Christ in all His glory and our complete deliverance from our sinful natures.

8:25 If we are expecting something unseen, we **wait** with **perseverance**; that is, we are willing to endure the present.

8:26 Though more may be involved in the concept of **weaknesses**, the primary reference here is to mental ignorance. The contrast offered by Paul in this verse is between our inability to know how to pray and the effective prayers of the Spirit Himself. The emphasis indicates that the Spirit Himself prays for us. He intercedes on our behalf before the throne of God (see 1 John 2:1). But His intercession **cannot be uttered**, which means it is "unexpressed, unspoken." No language is in view here, only the inner groanings of the Spirit.

8:27, 28 As children of God, we do not always know what to pray for or how best to pray (v. 26), but we can know the purpose of God which the Holy Spirit desires to accomplish. **work together for good**: The primary reference of *all things* is the "sufferings of this present time" (v. 18). All circumstances will work together in cooperation for the believer's good—that is, the believer will be conformed to Jesus Christ now and reign with Him later. **Those who love God** are in fact **those who are the called** by God. Our love is our response to the work of the Holy Spirit in us. We are called **according to His purpose**. God does everything, including redemption, in order to accomplish His overarching plan.

8:29 God **foreknew**, which means simply "to know beforehand." This has been interpreted by some as God's free and merciful choice of certain people who would receive His gift of salvation. Those who hold this view contend that His knowledge of future events

and people did not determine His choice (see 1 Pet. 1:2). Instead He chose those who would be saved out of His own free will. Others believe that in His wisdom, God knew beforehand those who would respond to Him in faith. According to both views, *only* God saves; people never earn salvation through any work.

8:30 God not only foreknew and predestined (v. 29), He also **called** believers through the preaching of the gospel message (2 Thess. 2:14). This, however, is not the general call of the gospel to all people. If it were we would be forced to *universalism*, the view that everyone will be saved. Instead, those who are called by God have been foreknown, predestined, and **justified**. This *call* refers to the internal work of the Spirit in the hearts of God's elect to bring them to belief in Christ (see Acts 16:14). Being justified means being "declared righteous." Finally, God **glorified**. Though glorification is in the future, it is stated here in the past tense. Everyone then, who was foreknown by God in eternity past has such a certain future that the apostle speaks of their glorification as already accomplished.

8:31 The words **these things** refer to God's purpose (see vv. 28–30). If God has done everything from foreknowledge to glorification **for us**, all adversaries are powerless.

8:32 Paul answers the rhetorical question of v. 31 with a question. Since God has done the greatest thing, giving **His own Son**, will He not also **freely give us all things**?

predestined

(Gk. *proorizo*) (8:29, 30; Acts 4:28; 1 Cor. 2:7; Eph. 1:5, 11)
 Strong's #4309

To *predestine* means "to mark out beforehand," "to establish one's boundary, or one's limits, beforehand." Our English word *horizon* is a derivative of this Greek word. The Christian's ultimate destiny or horizon has been fixed by God from all eternity: to be made like His Son. Note how the words *predestined*, *called*, *justified*, and especially *glorified* in Rom. 8:29, 30 are in the past tense. That is because God, from His eternal perspective, sees this process as having been completed already. From God's perspective, we have been glorified already because He sees us righteous because of the work of Jesus on the Cross. But still, in the march of time, we must undergo the process of being conformed to the image of God's Son.

all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? ³³Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? ³⁴*It is God who justifies.* ^{34a}Who is he who condemns? *It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen,* ^awho is even at the right hand of God, ^bwho also makes intercession for us. ³⁵Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? *Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?* ³⁶As it is written:

*“For Your sake we are killed all day long;
We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.”*

^{37d}Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. ³⁸For I am persuaded that neither

³³ ^v Is. 50:8, 9; Rev. 12:10
³⁴ ^a John 3:18
^a Mark 16:19; Col. 3:1; Heb. 1:3 ^b Heb. 7:25; 9:24 ³⁶ ^c Ps. 44:22; Acts 20:24; 1 Cor. 4:9; 15:30; [2 Cor. 1:9; 4:10; 6:9; 11:23]
³⁷ ^d John 16:33; 1 Cor. 15:57; 2 Cor. 2:14; 1 John 5:4
³⁸ ^e [1 Cor. 15:24; Eph. 1:21; 1 Pet. 3:22]

CHAPTER 9

1 ^a 2 Cor. 1:23
2 ^b Rom. 10:1
3 ^c Ex. 32:32 ¹ Or relatives
4 ^d Ex. 4:22; [Rom. 8:15] ^e 1 Sam. 4:21
^f Gen. 17:2;

death nor life, nor angels nor “principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, ³⁹nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Israel's Rejection of Christ

9 I ^atell the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit, ^{2b}that I have great sorrow and continual grief in my heart. ³For ^cI could wish that I myself were accused from Christ for my brethren, my ¹countrymen according to the flesh, ⁴who are Israelites, ^dto whom *pertain* the adoption, ^ethe glory, ^fthe cov-

Deut. 29:14; Luke 1:72; Acts 3:25

8:33 This is a rhetorical question equivalent to an emphatic denial. **Elect** recalls God's eternal program (see vv. 28–30). If God, the Supreme Judge, **justifies**, then who is going to successfully bring a charge against us?

8:34 Christ . . . died . . . makes intercession: Since Christ had fully justified us and is presently interceding for us, then no one can possibly condemn us.

8:35 If no one can successfully oppose us (v. 31), charge us (v. 33), or condemn us (v. 34) with regard to our personal relationship with God, then it follows that no one can **separate** us from Christ's love for us. The list in this verse covers the full range of experiences that could seem to pose a challenge to the reality of Christ's love.

8:36 sheep for the slaughter: Those who love God (Ps. 44:17–22) have always had to face death daily (2 Cor. 4:11).

8:37 The trials and difficulties listed in v. 35 not only do not separate us from Christ's love, they make us **more than conquerors** by forcing us to depend even more on God.

8:38, 39 Absolutely nothing can **separate** believers from God's love. The apostle struggles for words to describe the absolute

certainty of God's love for believers. Nothing hard or dangerous, neither death nor life, can separate us. If God, the uncreated One, is for us, and no created thing can separate us, then our security in Him is absolute.

9:1–3 At the end of ch. 8 Paul established that: (1) God has a purpose for believers, (2) nothing can prevent that purpose from being fulfilled, and (3) no one can separate God's people from His love. But what about the Jewish people? God had a purpose for Israel and God had said He loved Israel. Yet Israel appears to be excluded from God's program. Paul addresses this problem in chs. 9–11. **accused from Christ:** Paul's pain was so great that he was willing, if possible, to be separated from Christ if it meant Israel could be united to Him (see Ex. 32:32).

9:4, 5 Paul lists some of the great privileges of Israel. For example, they were called **Israelites**. Israel was the name given to their ancestor Jacob as an expression of God's favor (see Gen. 32:28). **Christ:** Their supreme privilege was that the Messiah came through them. **eternally blessed God:** Jesus Christ is God in the flesh.

Election

The doctrine of election is one of the most hotly debated mysteries of the Christian life. Theologians through the ages have pondered the meaning of 8:29, “For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son.” What did the apostle Paul mean when he wrote that God “foreknew” certain people? How are we to understand the notion of God having “predestined” certain individuals to be saved and sanctified?

In attempting to resolve these profound questions, Bible students have typically aligned themselves in two camps. Arminians, those who embrace the position of the seventeenth-century Dutch pastor Jacobus Arminius, understand *foreknowledge* to mean God's knowledge in advance of those who would repent of their sin and believe the gospel. In other words, in eternity past, God looked down the corridors of time to see all who would one day accept the offer of salvation through Christ. In the Arminian view, those who accept salvation are the elect. The fact that they would eventually believe in Christ was the condition that prompted God to choose them “before the foundation of the world” (see Eph. 1:3) or predestine them to eternal life. To bolster their position, Arminians point to verses that clearly state God's desire for all people to be saved (see 1 Tim. 2:3, 4; 2 Pet. 3:9). Furthermore, they argue the universal call for sinners to repent and believe the gospel is meaningless if salvation is determined solely by God apart from the free will of a person.

Calvinism is the second dominant viewpoint. Calvinists, named for the Reformer John Calvin, understand *foreknowledge* as a “relational” term. In other words, foreknowledge refers to God's intimate knowledge of and love for His elect before they came into existence. From the Calvinistic perspective, it is God's sovereign choice, and not a person's exercised faith, that determines who the elect are. Put simply, Calvinists define *election* as the *unconditional choice* of God that is the *cause* of our faith. Arminians, on the other hand, would define it as the *conditional choice* of God that is the *result* of our faith. Calvinists defend their position with passages like 9:6–24 which describe why God hardened Pharaoh's heart. Moreover, they argue that depraved, spiritually dead people *could* not choose to believe and *would* not choose to believe.

Regardless of one's stance on the matter of election, this much is clear: God is infinitely wise, powerful, and good. We cannot accuse Him of being unfair in His dealings with humans. It was our own sinfulness that has entrapped us and condemned us. Yet God, out of His infinite mercy, chooses to save.



enants, ^gthe giving of the law, ^hthe service of God, and ⁱthe promises; ^{5j}of whom are the fathers and from ^kwhom, according to the flesh, Christ came, ^lwho is over all, the eternally blessed God. Amen.

Israel's Rejection and God's Purpose

^{6m}But it is not that the word of God has taken no effect. For ⁿthey are not all Israel who are of Israel, ^{7o}nor are they all children because they are the seed of Abraham; but, ^p*"In Isaac your seed shall be called."* ⁸That is, those who are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but ^qthe children of the promise are counted as the seed. ⁹For this is the word of promise: ^r*"At this time I will come and Sarah shall have a son."*

¹⁰And not only this, but when ^sRebecca also had conceived by one man, even by our father Isaac ¹¹(for the children not yet being born, nor having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works but of ^tHim who calls), ¹²it was said to her, ^u*"The older shall serve the younger."* ¹³As it is written, ^v*"Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated."*

⁴ ^g Deut. 4:13; Ps. 147:19 ^h Heb. 9:1, 6
^{5j} [Acts 2:39; 13:32; Eph. 2:12]
⁵ ⁱ Deut. 10:15
^k [Luke 1:34, 35; 3:23] ^j Jer. 23:6
⁶ ^m Num. 23:19
ⁿ [John 8:39; Gal. 6:16]
⁷ ^o [John 8:33, 39; Gal. 4:23] ^p Gen. 21:12; Heb. 11:18
⁸ ^q Gal. 4:28
⁹ ^r Gen. 18:10, 14; Heb. 11:11
¹⁰ ^s Gen. 25:21
¹¹ ^t [Rom. 4:17; 8:28]
¹² ^u Gen. 25:23
¹³ ^v Mal. 1:2, 3
¹⁴ ^w Deut. 32:4
¹⁵ ^x Ex. 33:19
¹⁷ ^y Gal. 3:8 ^z Ex. 9:16
¹⁸ ^a Ex. 4:21; Deut. 2:30; Josh. 11:20; John 12:40; Rom. 11:7, 25
¹⁹ ^b 2 Chr. 20:6; Job 9:12; Dan. 4:35
²⁰ ^c Is. 29:16; Jer. 18:6; Rom. 9:22; 2 Tim. 2:20
²¹ ^d Prov. 16:4
²² ^e 2 Tim. 2:20
²² ^f [1 Thess. 5:9]
^g Prov. 16:4; [1 Pet. 2:8]

Israel's Rejection and God's Justice

¹⁴What shall we say then? ^w*Is there unrighteousness with God?* Certainly not! ¹⁵For He says to Moses, ^x*"I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I will have compassion."* ¹⁶So then it is not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy. ¹⁷For ^ythe Scripture says to the Pharaoh, ^z*"For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I may show My power in you, and that My name may be declared in all the earth."* ¹⁸Therefore He has mercy on whom He wills, and whom He wills He ^ahardens.

¹⁹You will say to me then, "Why does He still find fault? For ^bwho has resisted His will?" ²⁰But indeed, O man, who are you to reply against God? ^cWill the thing formed say to him who formed it, "Why have you made me like this?" ²¹Does not the ^dpotter have power over the clay, from the same lump to make ^eone vessel for honor and another for dishonor?

²²What if God, wanting to show His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much longsuffering ^fthe vessels of wrath ^gprepared for destruction, ²³and that He might make known

9:6 The word of God in this context is a reference to God's promises to Israel. Paul is declaring that God's purposes and promises have not failed. **not all Israel:** Not all the physical descendants of Jacob (Israel) inherited the promises of God.

9:7 Abraham is another illustration of Paul's point that physical descent is no guarantee of a place in God's family. Abraham had two sons, Ishmael and Isaac; but Isaac inherited the promises, not Ishmael.

9:8 of the flesh: Just being a physical descendant of Abraham does not mean inheriting God's promise to Abraham and his offspring.

9:10 The children of Isaac are still another illustration of Paul's point. God's promise to Isaac was never intended to be fulfilled through Esau.

9:11 not yet . . . born: God chose Jacob over Esau before they were born. Neither had **done any good or evil** at the time the choice was made. It was not based in any way on their **works**. It was solely based on **Him who calls**. God did not elect Jacob because of anything Jacob did; his election was based on grace.

9:13 hated: Actually God made provision for Esau (see Gen. 27:39; 36; Deut. 23:7). *Hated* is an idiom where the opposite is used to express a lesser degree. For example, Gen. 29:30 says Jacob loved Rachel more than Leah, but the next verse (literally translated) says that Leah was hated. What Paul is saying is that Esau was not the object of God's electing purpose.

9:14 If God chose some of Abraham's descendants (v. 6), like Isaac over Ishmael (vv. 7–9), or Jacob over Esau (vv. 10–13), then **is there unrighteousness with God?** The complaint is that if God chose Isaac or Jacob without regard to their works, then this would have been unrighteous or unjust. If God's election and rejection was based on the evil deeds of one or the good deeds of the other, the question of God's "fairness" would never have arisen. This question is the theme of chs. 9–11.

9:15 Paul's response to the question posed in v. 14 is not to justify God's actions or choices but to state the unequivocal sovereignty of God in doing as He wills. **I will have mercy:** In this passage from Exodus, God states His absolute right not to be questioned by His creatures about His decisions (Ex. 33:19). With these words

about *mercy* and *compassion* God revealed His character to Moses when he asked to behold the glory of God. Those who question God in these matters have not seen the glory of God that Moses was allowed to see.

9:16 but of God: The basis of God's sovereign choice is not a person's conduct, but God's compassion. God is free to show mercy to whom He chooses.

9:17, 18 Pharaoh refused to obey the Lord (Ex. 5:2) and hardened his heart (see Ex. 7:13, 14, 22; 8:15, 32; 9:7). God used Pharaoh's sin to demonstrate His **power** and magnify His **name**. **hardens:** God only gave Pharaoh over to what Pharaoh had already chosen to do. Nevertheless the fact remains that God sovereignly chooses to have mercy on some and to withhold it from others.

9:19, 20 Find fault means "to blame." Paul again poses human questions that he will answer in vv. 20, 21. If God hardens whom He wills (v. 18), why blame the one who was hardened? **His will:** If God hardens, how can it be said that person is resisting God? Isn't the hardened one only doing what God has willed him to do? **Reply** means "to make a rejoinder," implying an argumentative attitude. Paul rebukes anyone who would raise such objections, which in the end are only a protest against God's ways, and not a sincere request for an explanation.

9:21 The word translated **power** can mean "right" or "authority." Paul insists on God's right to do as He pleases.

9:22, 23 What if: Some insist that Paul is raising only the possibility of a vessel designed for destruction. Others take the passage literally, that God prepares some for eternal doom. **prepared for destruction . . . prepared beforehand for glory:** The grammatical structure of the first *prepared*, referring to the vessels of wrath, is different from the second *prepared*, referring to the vessels of mercy. The first literally means "prepared themselves," while the second is "which He prepared." If we are doomed, it is because of our rejection of God; if we are redeemed, it is because of the grace of God. The question is not: Why are some saved and some condemned? Everyone deserves condemnation. It is only by God's grace that anyone is saved.

^hthe riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had ⁱprepared beforehand for glory, ²⁴even us whom He ^jcalled, ^knot of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?

²⁵As He says also in Hosea:

^l*"I will call them My people, who were not My people,
And her beloved, who was not beloved."*

²⁶*"And^m it shall come to pass in the place where it was said to them, 'You are not My people,'
There they shall be called sons of the living God."*

²⁷Isaiah also cries out concerning Israel:

ⁿ*"Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea,*

^o*The remnant will be saved.*

²⁸*For² He will finish the work and cut it short in righteousness,
^pBecause the LORD will make a short work upon the earth."*

²⁹And as Isaiah said before:

^q*"Unless the LORD of³ Sabaoth had left us a seed,
^rWe would have become like Sodom,
And we would have been made like Gomorrah."*

Present Condition of Israel

³⁰What shall we say then? ^sThat Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, have attained to righteousness, ^teven the righteousness of faith; ³¹but Israel, ^upur-

²³ ^h[Col. 1:27]

ⁱ[Rom. 8:28-30]

²⁴ ^j[Rom. 8:28] ^kIs.

42:6, 7; 49:6; Luke

2:32; Rom. 3:29

²⁵ ^lHos. 2:23; 1 Pet.

2:10

²⁶ ^mHos. 1:10

²⁷ ⁿIs. 10:22, 23

^oRom. 11:5

²⁸ ^pIs. 10:23; 28:22

²NU the LORD will

finish the work and

cut it short upon the

earth

²⁹ ^qIs. 1:9 ^rDeut.

29:23; Is. 13:19; Jer.

49:18; 50:40; Amos

4:11 ³Lit., in Heb.,

Hosts

³⁰ ^sRom. 4:11

^tRom. 1:17; 3:21;

10:6; [Gal. 2:16; 3:24;

Phil. 3:9]; Heb. 11:7

³¹ ^u[Rom. 10:2-

4] ^v[Gal. 5:4]

⁴NU omits of

righteousness

³² ^w[Luke 2:34;

1 Cor. 1:23] ⁵NU by

works, omitting of

the law

³³ ^x[Ps. 118:22]; Is.

8:14; 28:16 ★; [Matt.

21:42; 1 Pet. 2:6-8]

^yRom. 5:5; 10:11

CHAPTER 10

¹ ¹NU them

² ^aActs 21:20;

Gal. 1:14

³ ^b[Rom. 1:17]

^c[Phil. 3:9]

⁴ ^dMatt. 5:17; [Rom.

7:1-4; Gal. 3:24; 4:5]

⁵ ^eLev. 18:5; Neh.

9:29; Ezek. 20:11,

13, 21; Rom. 7:10;

Gal. 3:12

⁶ ^fDeut. 30:12-14

⁷ ^gDeut. 30:13

⁸ ^hDeut. 30:14

⁹ ⁱMatt. 10:32; Luke

12:8; Acts 8:37;

suing the law of righteousness, ^vhas not attained to the law ⁴of righteousness. ³²Why? Because *they did not seek it by faith*, but as it were, ⁵by the works of the law. For ^wthey stumbled at that stumbling stone. ³³As it is written:

^x*"Behold, I lay in Zion a stumbling stone and rock of offense,
And^y whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame."*

Israel Needs the Gospel

¹⁰Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for ¹Israel is that they may be saved. ²For I bear them witness ^athat they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. ³For they being ignorant of ^bGod's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own ^crighteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God. ⁴For ^dChrist is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

⁵For Moses writes about the righteousness which is of the law, ^e*"The man who does those things shall live by them."* ⁶But the righteousness of faith speaks in this way, ^f*"Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?'"* (that is, to bring Christ down from above) ⁷or, ^g*"Who will descend into the abyss?"* (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). ⁸But what does it say? ^h*"The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart"* (that is, the word of faith which we preach): ⁹that ⁱif you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from

Rom. 14:9; [1 Cor. 12:3]; Phil. 2:11

9:24-29 God calls both **Jews** and **Gentiles**. Paul quotes several OT passages to support this point.

9:30-32 The question is: Since **Israel** had the law and pursued **righteousness**, why have they not **attained** it? Was it because they were not elected? The answer is that they did not obtain righteousness because they did not believe. They tried obtaining righteousness **by the works of the law**. Being committed to a righteousness by works, they **stumbled** over the righteousness of faith offered in Christ.

10:1 saved: This word is used in the NT in several different ways (see 1:16). In Romans, Paul seems to make a distinction between justification and salvation (see 5:9, 10); the reader must pay attention to the context. Justification is what takes place at the moment of faith in Christ. Salvation, at least in Romans, refers to the work of God in the believer that continues after justification. It is deliverance from God's wrath (see 1:18; 5:9, 10). The logical conclusion from ch. 9 is that Israel is under divine wrath (see 9:22). Paul's deep **desire** and **prayer** is that Israel may be justified and **saved** from His wrath.

10:2 Israel had a **zeal for God**; outwardly, they were very religious. But their effort was **not according to knowledge**. They lacked a correct understanding of the kind of worship God wanted from them. Paul explains Israel's ignorance in vv. 3-13.

10:3 **God's righteousness** is the righteousness that belongs to

God, and more specifically in this context, the righteousness God gives when a person trusts Christ. **not submitted:** This means "to obey." Israel did not obey God's command to believe (see 1:5; 6:17; Acts 16:31).

10:4 **End** can mean "fulfillment"; that is, Christ fulfilled all the requirements of the law. It can also mean "goal," to say that Christ was the object to which the law led. The point is that Israel was ignorant of God's righteousness because they failed to comprehend what the law was intended to do. The law revealed sin and showed that people could not hope to keep the law. Christ came and fulfilled it, then offered us His righteousness through faith in Him.

10:5-8 There are two kinds of righteousness, by works or by faith. One is inaccessible, the other is very accessible. Paul uses the words of Deut. 30:11-14 to demonstrate that righteousness by faith is not far off and inaccessible, but is as **near** as a person's **mouth** and **heart**. All one has to do is repent, believe in Jesus, and confess that belief.

10:9 **Confess** comes before **believe** in this verse because "mouth" precedes "heart" in Deuteronomy (see v. 8). The order is reversed in the next verse. One has to confess with the **mouth** to be **saved**.

the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. ¹¹For the Scripture says, ⁱ“Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame.” ¹²For ^kthere is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for ^lthe same Lord over all ^mis rich to all who call upon Him. ¹³For ⁿ“whoever calls ^oon the name of the LORD shall be saved.”

Israel Rejects the Gospel

¹⁴How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear ^pwithout a preacher? ¹⁵And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written:

^q“How beautiful are the feet of those who ²preach the gospel of peace, Who bring glad tidings of good things!”

¹¹ / Is. 28:16; Jer. 17:7; Rom. 9:33
¹² ^k Acts 15:9; Rom. 3:22, 29; Gal. 3:28
^l Acts 10:36; 1 Tim. 2:5
^m Eph. 1:7
¹³ ⁿ Joel 2:32; Acts 2:21
^o Acts 9:14
¹⁴ ^p Acts 8:31; Titus 1:3
¹⁵ ^q Is. 52:7; Nah. 1:15
² NU omits preach the gospel of peace, Who

¹⁶ ^r Is. 53:1; John 12:38 ★
¹⁸ ^s Ps. 19:4; Matt. 24:14; Mark 16:15; Rom. 1:8; Col. 1:6, 23; 1 Thess. 1:8
^t 1 Kin. 18:10; Matt. 4:8
¹⁹ ^u Deut. 32:21; Rom. 11:11
^v Titus 3:3
²⁰ ^w Is. 65:1; Rom. 9:30

¹⁶But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, ^r“LORD, who has believed our report?”¹⁷ So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

¹⁸But I say, have they not heard? Yes indeed:

^s“Their sound has gone out to all the earth,
^tAnd their words to the ends of the world.”

¹⁹But I say, did Israel not know? First Moses says:

^u“I will provoke you to jealousy by those who are not a nation,
I will move you to anger by a ^vfoolish nation.”

²⁰But Isaiah is very bold and says:

^w“I was found by those who did not seek Me;

10:10 For indicates that this verse explains v. 9. The condition for **righteousness**, that is for being justified, is internal faith. The condition of **salvation**, meaning deliverance from wrath and from the power of sin, is external confession (see v. 1; 5:9, 10), which is calling on the Lord for help (see vv. 12, 13).

10:11–13 Paul emphasizes the universal offer of salvation. **Whoever**

in vv. 11, 13 means “all.” Verse 12 explains that this includes **Jew and Greek** (Gentile).

10:16 **they:** Israel. Not **all** Jews have **obeyed** the command to believe in Christ.

10:18–21 Israel **heard** but was **disobedient**; only a remnant believed the gospel.

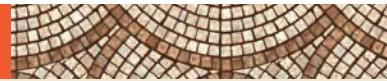
Righteousness

What is righteousness? Most of us immediately think of a person trying to keep a list of rules, like a little boy or girl who never steps over the line. When Paul speaks of righteousness in Romans, he means far more than this commonsense understanding of the word. He draws on the Old Testament concept of righteousness, which speaks of a proper relationship between God and a person, or between God and His people.

In the Old Testament, righteousness is fundamentally an attribute of God (Ps. 71:15; 119:42). He alone is truly righteous. He is the One who remains faithful, to His promises, His covenant with Israel, and the Law. In turn, the Israelites as God’s people had the responsibility to exemplify God’s righteousness on this earth. Ultimately, this meant they had to love and worship the living God alone. The Law of Moses could be summed up in that command and its corollary, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself” (Lev. 19:18; Mark 12:31). Tragically, the Israelites did not comply. They proved unfaithful to the covenant, although God proved Himself as faithful. By sending prophets to His people, the Lord warned them again and again of their sinfulness. Finally He had to discipline them, with famine, military defeat, and even exile in Babylon. But God remained faithful, and He restored His people to the land and to Himself when they repented and turned to Him.

After their return from Babylon, the Israelites confused righteousness with a strict adherence to the Law as recorded in the Pentateuch. Indeed, the Jewish religious leaders added numerous amendments to the Law to ensure that no one would inadvertently break it. Zealous obedience to the Law was equated with righteousness. Yet mere external compliance to a set of rules did not please the Lord. What God wanted was repentant, humbled hearts that truly worshiped Him. He wanted to be the God of their hearts and minds, and the center of their devotion.

In his letter to the Romans, Paul clearly states that no one has achieved this standard; no one has completely loved and worshiped the Lord as they should (3:23). All have sinned. No good work or outward appearance of piety can restore a proper relationship with the Holy One (see Is. 64:6). On the one hand, the Gentiles did not pursue a right relationship with their Creator, so they had been given over to all kinds of evil (1:18–31). On the other hand, the Jews through external obedience to the Law and their traditions were attempting to justify themselves before God (9:31, 32). Both failed. Jesus is the only One who can stand before the glorious God; He is the only One who is truly righteous. Remarkably, He has offered us a way out of our slavery to sin. By placing our faith and trust in Him, we can be declared righteous. We can have a righteousness that has nothing to do with our own works but instead relies on Jesus’ sinless life and His sacrificial death for our sins. The Lord forgives us and declares us righteous because of our identification by faith with the righteousness of His Son (4:5). Through Jesus, we can finally be released from the guilt of our sins. Not only can we approach the Holy One in praise and thankfulness, but we can do God’s will.



*I was made manifest to those who
did not ask for Me.”*

²¹ But to Israel he says:

*“All day long I have stretched out My
hands
To a disobedient and contrary people.”*

Israel’s Rejection Not Total

11 I say then, ^ahas God cast away His people? ^bCertainly not! For ^cI also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. ²God has not cast away His people whom ^dHe foreknew. Or do you not know what the Scripture says of Elijah, how he pleads with God against Israel, saying, ^{3e}“*LORD, they have killed Your prophets and torn down Your altars, and I alone am left, and they seek my life*”? ⁴But what does the divine response say to him? ^f“*I have reserved for Myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal.*” ^{5g}Even so then, at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace. ⁶And ^hif by grace, then *it is* no longer of works; otherwise grace is no longer grace. ¹But if *it is* of works, it is no longer grace; otherwise work is no longer work.

⁷What then? ⁱIsrael has not obtained what it seeks; but the elect have obtained it, and the rest were ^jblinded. ⁸Just as it is written:

*^k“God has given them a spirit of
stupor,
^lEyes that they should not see
And ears that they should not hear,
To this very day.”*

21 ^xIs. 65:2

CHAPTER 11

1 ^a Ps. 94:14; Jer. 46:28 ^b 1 Sam. 12:22; Jer. 31:37
^c 2 Cor. 11:22;
Phil. 3:5
2 ^d [Rom. 8:29]
3 ^e ^f 1 Kin. 19:10, 14
4 ^f 1 Kin. 19:18
5 ^g 2 Kin. 19:4; Rom. 9:27
6 ^h Rom. 4:4 ⁱ NU omits the rest of v. 6.
7 ⁱ Rom. 9:31 / Mark 6:52; Rom. 9:18; 11:25; 2 Cor. 3:14
8 ^k Is. 29:10, 13
^j Deut. 29:3, 4; Is. 6:9; Matt. 13:13, 14; John 12:40; Acts 28:26, 27

9 ^m Ps. 69:22, 23 [★]
11 ⁿ Is. 42:6, 7; Acts 28:28 ^o Deut. 32:21;
Acts 13:46; Rom. 10:19 ² trespass
12 ³ trespass
13 ^p Acts 9:15;
22:21; Gal. 1:16; 2:7-9; Eph. 3:8
14 ^q 1 Cor. 9:22;
1 Tim. 4:16; James 5:20
15 ^r [Is. 26:16-19]
16 ^s Lev. 23:10;
[James 1:18]
17 ^t Jer. 11:16;
[John 15:2] ^u Acts 2:39; [Eph. 2:12]
⁴ richness
18 ^v [1 Cor. 10:12]

⁹ And David says:

*^m“Let their table become a snare and a
trap,
A stumbling block and a recompense
to them.*

¹⁰ *Let their eyes be darkened, so that
they do not see,
And bow down their back always.”*

Israel’s Rejection Not Final

¹¹ I say then, have they stumbled that they should fall? Certainly not! But ⁿthrough their ²fall, to provoke them to ^ojealousy, salvation *has come* to the Gentiles. ¹²Now if their ³fall *is* riches for the world, and their failure riches for the Gentiles, how much more their fullness!

¹³For I speak to you Gentiles; inasmuch as ^pI am an apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry, ¹⁴if by any means I may provoke to jealousy *those who are* my flesh and ^qsave some of them. ¹⁵For if their being cast away *is* the reconciling of the world, what *will* their acceptance *be* ^rbut life from the dead?

¹⁶For if ^sthe firstfruit *is* holy, the lump *is* also *holy*; and if the root *is* holy, so *are* the branches. ¹⁷And if ^tsome of the branches were broken off, ^uand you, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them, and with them became a partaker of the root and ⁴fatness of the olive tree, ^{18v}do not boast against the branches. But if you do boast, *remember that* you do not support the root, but the root *supports* you.

¹⁹You will say then, “Branches were broken off that I might be grafted in.”

11:1 One of the proofs that God has not **cast away** the Jewish people is Paul himself. He was an **Israelite**, a descendant of **Abraham**, a member of the **tribe of Benjamin**. He was a Jew, and he was chosen by God to be a believer and an apostle.

11:2 In this verse, **His people** refers to the nation of Israel and not just the elect within the nation. In vv. 4–7 Paul differentiates between the nation and the remnant, but his point there is that God’s saving of the remnant proves that He has not abandoned His plan for the nation (see v. 26). **whom He foreknew**: See 8:29.

11:3–5 Paul cites Elijah as an illustration. Elijah thought that the whole nation of Israel had fallen away, but he was wrong. The **remnant** in Elijah’s day was proof that God had not cast off His people, and the remnant in Paul’s day was continuing proof of His faithfulness.

11:6 **if by grace, then it is no longer of works**: *Grace and works* are mutually exclusive. God’s election was established solely on the basis of grace (see v. 5).

11:7 **What Israel seeks** is righteousness (see 9:31–10:3). The **elect** have **obtained** righteousness by faith. The others were **blinded** because they did not believe.

11:8–10 Paul quotes Isaiah and **David** to show that Israel’s spiritual indifference was a continual pattern. Their rejection of Christ would bring untold misery on the nation.

11:11 **fall**: Does Israel’s rejection mean the end of God’s program

for the nation? **Certainly not!** Israel’s unbelief brought **salvation . . . to the Gentiles**, and it will ultimately lead to Israel’s salvation (see v. 26).

11:12 **fullness**: The nation of Israel, chosen by God to receive salvation, will be saved along with believing Gentiles, resulting in great blessing for everyone (see v. 26).

11:14 **save some**: Paul is revealing his great desire to see the salvation of all of Israel (see vv. 12, 26).

11:15 **life from the dead**: The failure of Israel in rejecting Christ will make their eventual acceptance as vivid and wonderful as the resurrection that all believers will experience; it will be as if they had come back from the dead.

11:17 The **wild olive tree** is the Gentile Christians. The **olive tree** refers to Israel, those who inherited the promises of the Abrahamic covenant (see Gen. 12:1, 2; 17:7, 8; see also Hos. 14:6). **grafted in**: Paul intentionally stretches the analogy of grafting in order to communicate his point that Gentiles have been supernaturally connected to the family of God.

11:18 Gentiles, who have been grafted into the Abrahamic covenant and therefore become recipients of God’s blessing, should not **boast**. Gentile believers should not despise the Jews, **the branches** of God’s vine.

11:19 The reason Israel was **broken off** (v. 17), “cast away” (v. 15), and has fallen (v. 12) is so that Gentiles could be grafted into the tree.

²⁰ Well *said*. Because of ^wunbelief they were broken off, and you stand by faith. Do not be haughty, but fear. ²¹ For if God did not spare the natural branches, He may not spare you either. ²² Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, ⁵goodness, ^xif you continue in His goodness. Otherwise ^yyou also will be cut off. ²³ And they also, ^zif they do not continue in unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. ²⁴ For if you were cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and were grafted contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these, who are natural *branches*, be grafted into their own olive tree?

²⁵ For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be ^awise in your own ⁶opinion, that ^bblindness in part has happened to Israel ^cuntil the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. ²⁶ And so all Israel will be ⁷saved, as it is written:

*^d“The Deliverer will come out of Zion,
And He will turn away ungodliness
from Jacob;*

²⁷ *For ^ethis is My covenant with them,
When I take away their sins.”*

²⁸ Concerning the gospel *they are* enemies for your sake, but concerning the

²⁰ ^w Heb. 3:19
²² ^x 1 Cor. 15:2;
Heb. 3:6, 14 ^y [John
15:2] ⁵ NU adds
of God
²³ ^z [2 Cor. 3:16]
²⁵ ^a Rom. 12:16
^b 2 Cor. 3:14
^c Luke 21:24; John
10:16; Rom. 11:12
⁶ *estimation*
²⁶ ^d Ps. 14:7; Is.
59:20, 21 ⁷ Or
delivered
²⁷ ^e Is. 27:9; Heb.
8:12
²⁸ ^f Deut. 7:8; 10:15;
Rom. 9:5
²⁹ ^g Num. 23:19
³⁰ ^h [Eph. 2:2]
³² ⁱ Rom. 3:9; [Gal.
3:22] ⁸ *shut them
all up in*
³⁴ ^j Is. 40:13; Jer.
23:18; 1 Cor. 2:16
^k Job 36:22
³⁵ ^j Job 41:11
³⁶ ^m [1 Cor. 8:6;
11:12]; Col. 1:16;
Heb. 2:10 ⁿ Heb.
13:21

CHAPTER 12

¹ ^a 1 Cor. 1:10;
2 Cor. 10:1-4 ^b Phil.
4:18; Heb. 10:18, 20
¹ *urge* ² *rational*
² ^c Matt. 13:22; Gal.
1:4; 1 John 2:15
^d Eph. 4:23; [Titus
3:5] ^e [1 Thess. 4:3]

election *they are* ^fbeloved for the sake of the fathers. ²⁹ For the gifts and the calling of God *are* ^girrevocable. ³⁰ For as you ^hwere once disobedient to God, yet have now obtained mercy through their disobedience, ³¹ even so these also have now been disobedient, that through the mercy shown you they also may obtain mercy. ³² For God has ⁸committed them ⁱall to disobedience, that He might have mercy on all.

³³ Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable *are* His judgments and His ways past finding out!

³⁴ *“For who has known the ^jmind of the LORD?*

Or ^kwho has become His counselor?”

³⁵ *“Or ^lwho has first given to Him
And it shall be repaid to him?”*

³⁶ For ^mof Him and through Him and to Him *are* all things, ⁿto whom *be* glory forever. Amen.

Living Sacrifices to God

12 I ^abeseech ¹you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies ^ba living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, *which is* your ²reasonable service. ² And ^cdo not be conformed to this world, but ^dbe transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may ^eprove what *is* that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

11:20 Well said: Paul agrees with the objector (see v. 19) that Israel was **broken off** because of **unbelief** and that Gentiles **stand by faith**. But he goes on to warn that Gentiles should not **be haughty, but fear**. Standing before God is based on faith. Feelings of superiority are out of place.

11:21 Paul was warning the Gentiles not to be arrogant (v. 20), but to remember that they depended on God and were accountable to Him no less than the Jews were.

11:22, 23 If Gentiles **continue** in God's **goodness**, they will not be **cut off**, and if Jews turn to God in faith, they can be grafted in again. This is not a reference to individual salvation but to God's program for Jews and Gentiles.

11:24 It is far more natural to expect Israel, the **natural branches**, to be **grafted** in, than to expect Gentiles, the **wild** branches, to be included.

11:25 If believers do not understand this **mystery**, chances are they will be **wise in their own opinion**, meaning they will be haughty (v. 20) and boast (v. 18). The mystery is that Israel has been temporarily and partially hardened, but God has not rejected them.

11:26 All Israel does not mean that every individual in the nation will turn to the Lord. It means that the nation as a whole will be saved, just as the nation as a whole (but not every individual in it) was now rejecting the Lord.

11:28, 29 The Jews are **enemies** in that they reject the **gospel**. For the **sake of the fathers** refers to the promises God made to the patriarchs. **Irrevocable** means “not to repent.” God does not change His mind. He made promises to the patriarchs (v. 28) and He will fulfill them.

11:36 God is the source, means, and end of all things. He is the

Creator, Sustainer, and the goal of everything. Therefore He should be praised and glorified **forever**.

12:1 Based on God's mercy (see 9:11, 15, 16, 18, 23; 11:30–32), Paul entreats believers to **present** their **bodies** as **a living sacrifice**, meaning they should use their bodies to serve and obey God (see 6:13). Such giving of the body to God is more than a contrast with a dead animal sacrifice, it is “newness of life” (see 6:4). **Holy** means set apart for the Lord's use; **acceptable** means pleasing to Him; and **reasonable** indicates that such a gift is the only rational reaction to all the good gifts God has showered on us.

12:2 Conformed means “to form” or “mold.” **World** is the normal word for “age” or “era.” Instead of being molded by the values of

mystery

(Gk. *mustērion*) (11:25; 16:25; 1 Cor. 2:7; Eph. 1:9; 3:3, 4, 9) Strong's #3466

The word *mystery*, so often used by Paul, does not mean something incomprehensible, but something that had been kept secret and now has been disclosed. In Paul's cultural and religious milieu, the term was often used with reference to the mystery religions. Adherents to the mystery religions used the term to speak of the secret knowledge of the religion revealed only to the initiated ones. In contrast, Paul uses the word to speak of a secret that has been openly revealed to all.

Serve God with Spiritual Gifts

³For I say, ^fthrough the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, ^gnot to think of *himself* more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt ^hto each one a measure of faith. ⁴For ⁱas we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, ⁵so ^jwe, *being* many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. ⁶Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is ^kgiven to us, *let us use them*: if prophecy, *let us* ^lprophecy in proportion to our faith; ⁷or ministry, *let us use it* in *our* ministering; ^mhe who teaches, in teaching; ⁿhe who exhorts, in exhortation; ^ohe who gives, with liberality; ^phe who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, ^qwith cheerfulness.

Behave Like a Christian

^rLet love *be* without hypocrisy. ^sAbhor what is evil. Cling to what is good.

³ ^f Rom. 1:5; 15:15; 1 Cor. 3:10; 15:10; Gal. 2:9; Eph. 3:7
^g Prov. 25:27 ^h [Eph. 4:7]
⁴ ⁱ 1 Cor. 12:12-14; [Eph. 4:4, 16]
⁵ ^j [1 Cor. 10:17]; Gal. 3:28
⁶ ^k [John 3:27]
^l Acts 11:27
⁷ ^m Eph. 4:11
⁸ ⁿ Acts 15:32
^o [Matt. 6:1-3]
^p [Acts 20:28]
^q 2 Cor. 9:7
^r 2 Cor. 6:6; 1 Tim. 1:5 ^s Ps. 34:14
¹⁰ ^t John 13:34; 1 Thess. 4:9; Heb. 13:1; 2 Pet. 1:7
^u Rom. 13:7; Phil. 2:3; [1 Pet. 2:17]
¹² ^v Luke 10:20
^w Luke 21:19
^x Luke 18:1
³ *persevering*
¹³ ^y 1 Cor. 16:1; Heb. 13:16; 1 Pet. 4:9 ^z Matt. 25:35; 1 Tim. 3:2

¹⁰^tBe kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, ^uin honor giving preference to one another; ¹¹not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; ¹²^vrejoicing in hope, ^wpatient³ in tribulation, ^xcontinuing steadfastly in prayer; ¹³^ydistributing to the needs of the saints, ^zgiven⁴ to hospitality.

¹⁴^aBless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. ¹⁵^bRejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. ¹⁶^cBe of the same mind toward one another. ^dDo not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion.

¹⁷^eRepay no one evil for evil. ^fHave⁵ regard for good things in the sight of all men. ¹⁸If it is possible, as much as depends on you, ^glive peaceably with all

⁴ Lit. *pursuing* ¹⁴ ^a [Matt. 5:44]; Luke 6:28; 1 Cor. 4:12
¹⁵ ^b [1 Cor. 12:26] ¹⁶ ^c Rom. 15:5; 2 Cor. 13:11; [Phil. 2:2; 4:2]; 1 Pet. 3:8 ^d Jer. 45:5 ¹⁷ ^e [Matt. 5:39]; 1 Pet. 3:9 ^f 2 Cor. 8:21 ⁵ Or *Provide good*
¹⁸ ^g Heb. 12:14

this world, the believer should be **transformed**, that is, changed **by the renewing of the mind**. Spiritual transformation starts in the mind and heart. A mind dedicated to the world and its concerns will produce a life tossed back and forth by the currents of culture. But a mind dedicated to God's truth will produce a life that can stand the test of time. We can resist the temptations of our culture by meditating on God's truth and letting the Holy Spirit guide and shape our thoughts and behaviors.

12:3 think of himself: A renewed mind (v. 2) begins with thinking **soberly** about oneself. The first step in changing behavior is self-observation (see 1 Cor. 11:28–32). **to each one:** God has given everyone one or more gifts that can be used in His service. **dealt . . . a measure of faith:** The *measure* refers to God's sovereignly given gifts mentioned in vv. 6–8. These gifts are not the result of intense prayer or spirituality. Instead, God simply gives everyone certain gifts so each person can strengthen the church (see 1 Cor. 12:11, 18, 28).

12:4, 5 As the human body is a unity with **many members**, each having its own **function**, so is the body of Christ. The church is a unified body under the headship of Christ, but the members have different functions (see 1 Cor. 12:12–31).

12:6 gifts: The Greek word (*charismata*) refers to God-given abilities that should be used to build up other members in the church. Although they are "irrevocable" and, thus do not change (see 11:29),

they are to be pursued and developed (see 1 Pet. 4:10). **prophecy:** This word is used here in a general sense for all types of gifts that involve speaking God's word. For example, in 1 Cor. 14:3 "exhortation" appears as a prophesying gift. In its narrower sense, *prophecy* means the revealing of God's will in a particular situation (see Acts 13:1–3).

12:7, 8 Ministry means "service" and is in contrast to the speaking gifts (see 1 Pet. 4:11). The Scriptures list five speaking gifts: prophecy, teaching, encouragement, the word of wisdom, and the word of knowledge. In addition, seven serving gifts are named: helps, mercy, faith, discernment of spirits, leadership, managing, and giving.

12:10 There are at least four Greek words for love, not all of which are used in the NT. (1) The highest form of love is *agape*. This is a self-sacrificial love. It involves an act of the will whereby one seeks the best for another. *Agape* is used in v. 9. (2) The Greek word *philos* means "affectionate regard," and the derived form *philadelphia* is translated **brotherly love** in this verse. (3) *Philotorgos* means "family affection" and is translated **kindly affectionate** in this verse. (4) *Eros* means physical love and does not occur in the NT.

preference to one another: The greatest proof of the truth of the gospel message and of the reality of Jesus' love is the love believers show to each other. Christ is the model for such self-sacrificial love (see Phil. 2:3–8).

12:11 in diligence: Christians should not offer their service half-heartedly or in a lazy manner. Instead, Paul encourages the Romans to serve eagerly and in earnest.

12:13 Hospitality means "love of strangers." The primary reference is to housing travelers, though all forms of hospitality are included. The progression in this verse is significant. As we dedicate ourselves to meeting the needs of our fellow believers, we will have opportunities to serve strangers and thus witness to them about the love of Christ.

12:14 Bless means "to speak well of" or "praise."

12:15 rejoice . . . weep: Because believers are a body, when one part hurts, everyone feels the pain; when one is joyful, everyone can rejoice. Christians cannot be indifferent to the suffering or joy of their fellow believers (see 1 Cor. 12:25, 26).

12:17 The word **good** in this verse means "morally good," "noble," or "praiseworthy." This is the positive side of the negative command not to return **evil for evil** (see 1 Pet. 3:9). A Christian should not concentrate on the evil in others, but instead should focus on what is good. By doing so, we encourage others around us to aspire to the good.

12:18 The believer's aim should be to **live peaceably**. But some-

transform

(Gk. *metamorphoo*) (12:2; Matt. 17:2; 2 Cor. 3:18) Strong's #3339

The Greek word means "to change form," as does the English derivative *metamorphosis*. In the NT, this word is used to describe an inward renewal of our mind through which our inner spirit is changed into the likeness of Christ. Paul told the Roman believers: "Be transformed by the renewing of your minds" (12:2). As our Christian life progresses, we should gradually notice that our thought life is being changed from Christlessness to Christlikeness. Transformation does not happen overnight. Our regeneration is instantaneous, but our transformation is continuous. We are conformed to Christ's image gradually as we spend time in intimate fellowship with Him (see 2 Cor. 3:18).

men. ¹⁹Beloved, ^hdo not avenge yourselves, but *rather* give place to wrath; for it is written, ⁱ“*Vengeance is Mine, I will repay*,” says the Lord. ²⁰Therefore

*“If your enemy is hungry, feed him;
If he is thirsty, give him a drink;
For in so doing you will heap coals of
fire on his head.”*

²¹Do not be overcome by evil, but ^kovercome evil with good.

Submit to Government

13 Let every soul be ^asubject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. ²Therefore whoever resists ^bthe authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will ¹bring judgment on themselves. ³For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? ^cDo what is good, and you will have praise from the same. ⁴For he is God’s minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God’s minister, an avenger to *execute* wrath on him who practices evil. ⁵Therefore ^d*you* must be subject, not only because of wrath ^ebut also for conscience’

19 ^h Lev. 19:18
/ Deut. 32:35; Ps.
94:1; 1 Thess. 4:6;
Heb. 10:30
20 / 2 Kin. 6:22;
Prov. 25:21, 22;
[Matt. 5:44]; Luke
6:27
21 ^k [Rom. 12:1, 2]

CHAPTER 13

1 ^a Titus 3:1; 1 Pet.
2:13
2 ^b [Titus 3:1] / Lit.
receive
3 ^c 1 Pet. 2:14
5 ^d Eccl. 8:2 ^e Acts
24:16; [1 Pet.
2:13, 19]
7 / Matt. 22:21;
Mark 12:17; Luke
20:25
8 ^g [Matt. 7:12;
22:39; John 13:34;
Rom. 13:10; Gal.
5:13, 14; 1 Tim. 1:5;
James 2:8]
9 ^h Ex. 20:13-17;
Deut. 5:17-21; Matt.
19:18 / Lev. 19:18;
Mark 12:31; James
2:8 ² NU omits “You
shall not bear false
witness.”
10 / [Matt. 7:12;
22:39, 40; John
13:34]; Rom. 13:8;
Gal. 5:14; James 2:8
11 ^k Mark 13:37;
[1 Cor. 15:34; Eph.
5:14]; 1 Thess. 5:6

sake. ⁶For because of this you also pay taxes, for they are God’s ministers attending continually to this very thing. ⁷/Render therefore to all their due: taxes to whom taxes *are due*, customs to whom customs, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor.

Love Your Neighbor

⁸Owe no one anything except to love one another, for ^ghe who loves another has fulfilled the law. ⁹For the commandments, ^h“*You shall not commit adultery*,” “*You shall not murder*,” “*You shall not steal*,” ²“*You shall not bear false witness*,” “*You shall not covet*,” and if *there is* any other commandment, are *all* summed up in this saying, namely, ⁱ“*You shall love your neighbor as yourself*.” ¹⁰Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore ^jlove *is* the fulfillment of the law.

Put on Christ

¹¹And *do* this, knowing the time, that now *it is* high time ^kto awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we *first* believed. ¹²The night is far spent, the day is at hand. ^lTherefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and ^mlet

12 ^l Eph. 5:11 ^m [2 Cor. 6:7; 10:4; Eph. 6:11, 13; 1 Thess. 5:8]

times peace is not within our control; this is why Paul limits the command.

12:19 Believers are not to seek personal revenge, but rather to let God punish.

12:20 Freed from vengeance, believers can give themselves to mercy, even toward their enemies. By acts of kindness, the believers will **heap coals of fire** on the head of their enemies, perhaps bringing shame and repentance to them. It is possible for an enemy to become a friend. This is the phenomenal power of God’s love that believers are connected to through Christ.

13:1 God, the supreme Sovereign, has ordained (see v. 2) that there should be **governing authorities**. **Every** believer is to **be subject** to these various authorities, even if these authorities are as evil as Nero (A.D. 54–68), the emperor of Rome who cruelly persecuted Christians. When Paul wrote this letter, Nero was in power. Yet Paul exhorted the Roman believers to submit to Nero’s authority, because that authority was ordained by God Himself.

13:2 Judgment does not necessarily include eternal punishment. God may judge people through the human authorities He appoints.

13:4 The **sword** is an instrument of death. Government has the right in the proper circumstances to impose capital punishment as well as to wage war. In Paul’s day, the common method of capital punishment was decapitation with a sword.

13:5 for conscience’ sake: Believers must obey government not only because it is their civic duty, but because it is their spiritual duty before God.

13:8 In the present context, **owe no one anything** primarily means respect and honor (see v. 7). No doubt money is also included, but this passage does not prohibit borrowing (see Ps. 37:21; Matt. 5:42). **except to love:** Love is a debt that is never paid in full.

13:9 as yourself: This verse is not a command to love ourselves. It is a recognition that we do love ourselves, and commands us to love others just as genuinely and sincerely as we love ourselves.

13:10 Love excludes murder, adultery, stealing, and lying (see v. 9). Therefore when we love, we automatically fulfill the prohibitions of **the law**. If we attempt to live by the law, we quickly discover that we are breaking the law (7:5). But when we act in accordance with God’s love, without being under the law, we fulfill it.

13:11 sleep: Believers are pictured as being asleep or inactive. **Salvation** here refers to the future, when believers will be saved from the presence of sin. Thus *salvation* here speaks of the imminent return of Christ.

13:12, 13 Night is the present age during which we live in Satan’s

The Christian Life

Description of the Christian	Result
Presents himself to God (12:1)	Becomes a sacrifice that is living, holy, and pleasing to God (12:1)
Receives transformation by a renewed mind (12:2)	Discovers and displays the will of God (12:2)
Has spiritual gifts according to grace from God (12:6–8)	Uses spiritual gifts as part of Christ’s body (12:6)
Honors civil law (13:1)	Honors God (13:1)
Loves others (13:8)	Fulfills God’s law (13:8)
Pursues peace (14:19)	Serves to edify all (14:19)
Becomes like-minded toward others (15:5)	Glorifies God with others (15:6)

The Key Terms of Salvation			
Paul, in the Epistle to the Romans, attempts to portray God’s plan of salvation in a concise and clear manner. In doing so, he uses Greek words whose meanings are not widely known today. Here is a brief glossary of the key terms of salvation in this book:			
English Term	Greek Term	References	Meaning
Faith	<i>pistis</i>	(1:17; 4:9; 12:6)	“Belief, trust”; faith is the means by which sinful people can experience and enjoy all the blessings of salvation. It is a complete trust in Jesus for salvation from sin and the coming judgment.
Gospel	<i>euangelion</i>	(1:16; 11:28)	“Good News”; Paul uses this word to refer to the wonderful message of forgiveness and eternal life in Christ.
Grace	<i>charis</i>	(1:5; 5:2; 12:3)	“The unmerited favor of God”; this term refers to God’s inexplicable giving of good things (especially salvation) to undeserving people who could never earn it. Salvation is a free gift made possible by Christ’s death on our behalf.
Justification	<i>dikaiōsis</i>	(4:25; 5:18)	“The act of being declared righteous”; a legal term used by Paul to describe the spiritual transaction whereby God (the Judge) declares those who trust in Christ and what He has done for them on the Cross, to be acceptable before Him. Such a verdict is possible only because Christ has settled all the claims of the Law against sinners.
Law	<i>nomos</i>	(2:12; 4:13; 7:12; 10:4; 13:8)	“The commandments given by God”; Paul emphasizes both the holy character of the Law and the inability of sinful people to live according to it. The Law becomes a burden and a curse, until we allow it to point us to Christ, who perfectly fulfills all its requirements.
Propitiation	<i>hilastērion</i>	(3:25)	“The satisfaction of God’s holy wrath against sin”; rebellion against God results in the wrath of God and must be met with judgment. By dying in our place and taking our sins upon Himself, Jesus satisfies God’s righteous anger against all who believe.
Redemption	<i>apolutrōsis</i>	(3:24; 8:23)	“The act of freeing someone by paying a purchase price”; this economic term is used by Paul in a theological sense to describe how Christ paid the penalty required by God for our sins (that is, death) by giving His own life on the Cross. When we believe, Jesus frees us from sin.
Righteousness	<i>dikaïosunē</i>	(3:5; 5:17; 9:30)	“God’s standard of purity” or “God’s own truthfulness and faithfulness”; God is holy, therefore He cannot tolerate sin. It is through Jesus Christ that we can find righteousness that is acceptable to God. Christ not only takes away our sin, but He grants us His perfect purity.
Salvation	<i>sōtēria</i>	(1:16; 10:10)	“Deliverance”; this word is often used in the Bible to describe someone being rescued from physical harm. The word is used by Paul chiefly to denote deliverance from sin and its deadly consequences.
Sin	<i>hamartia</i> ; <i>hamartēma</i>	(3:9; 5:12; 7:11; 8:2; 14:23)	“Missing the mark” or “disobedience to God’s law”; several different Greek words are used by Paul to describe the tendency of humans to rebel against God. Sin can be broadly defined as any attitude or action that opposes the character and will of God. Sin is what brings death—that is, separation from God.

us put on the armor of light. ¹³ ⁿLet us walk ³properly, as in the day, ^onot in revelry and drunkenness, ^pnot in lewdness and lust, ^qnot in strife and envy. ¹⁴ But ^rput on the Lord Jesus Christ, and ^smake no provision for the flesh, to *fulfill its* lusts.

¹³ ^a Phil. 4:8 ^o Prov. 23:20 ^p 1 Cor. 6:9 ^q James 3:14 ³ *decently*
¹⁴ ^r Job 29:14; Gal. 3:27; [Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10, 12] ^s [Gal. 5:16]; 1 Pet. 2:11

The Law of Liberty
14 Receive ^aone who is weak in the faith, *but* not to disputes over doubtful things. ²For one believes he ^bmay eat

CHAPTER 14 ¹ ^a [Rom. 14:2; 15:1; 1 Cor. 8:9; 9:22] ² ^b 1 Cor. 10:25; [Titus 1:15]

domain. **Day** is the beginning of a new life with Christ in His glorious reign. **At hand** means “is imminent”; the Lord could return at any moment (see Phil. 4:5; James 5:8; 1 Pet. 4:7). Note that Paul puts **strife** and **envy** on the same level as **drunkenness** and **lust**. **13:14 put on the Lord Jesus Christ:** Believers should clothe themselves with Christlike characteristics such as truth (see John 14:6), righteousness (see 1 Cor. 1:30), and peace (see Gal. 5:22, 23; Eph. 2:14; 6:10–17). **14:1, 2** Those who were **weak in the faith** did have faith; they had

trusted in Christ. Some of the Roman believers might not have accepted the apostle’s teaching concerning certain practices, such as accepting that all food was clean if received with thanksgiving (see 1 Tim. 4:4, 5). Instead, they ate **only vegetables**. The strong in the faith are told to **receive** the weak and not to dispute over **doubtful things**, which literally means “reasonings” or “opinions.” The mature believers were not to pass judgment or to enter into dispute with those who were less mature.

all things, but he who is weak eats *only* vegetables. ³Let not him who eats despise him who does not eat, and ⁴let not him who does not eat judge him who eats; for God has received him. ^{4a}Who are you to judge another's servant? To his own master he stands or falls. Indeed, he will be made to stand, for God is able to make him stand.

^{5c}One person esteems *one* day above another; another esteems every day *alike*. Let each be fully convinced in his own mind. ⁶He who ^fobserves the day, observes *it* to the Lord; ¹and he who does not observe the day, to the Lord he does not observe *it*. He who eats, eats to the Lord, for ^ghe gives God thanks; and he who does not eat, to the Lord he does not eat, and gives God thanks. ⁷For ^hnone of us lives to himself, and no one dies to himself. ⁸For if we ⁱlive, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. Therefore, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's. ⁹For ^jto this end Christ died ²and rose and lived again, that He might be ^kLord of both the dead and the living. ¹⁰But why do you judge your brother? Or why do you show contempt for your brother? For ^lwe shall all stand before the judgment seat of ³Christ. ¹¹For it is written:

*^m"As I live, says the LORD,
Every knee shall bow to Me,
And every tongue shall confess to
God."*

¹²So then ⁿeach of us shall give account of himself to God. ¹³Therefore let us not

³ c [Rom. 14:10, 13; Col. 2:16]
⁴ d Rom. 9:20; James 4:11, 12
⁵ e Gal. 4:10
⁶ f Gal. 4:10 g Matt. 14:19; 15:36; [1 Cor. 10:31; 1 Tim. 4:3]
⁷ i NU omits the rest of this sentence.
⁷ h [1 Cor. 6:19; Gal. 2:20]; 1 Thess. 5:10; [1 Pet. 4:2]
⁸ j 2 Cor. 5:14, 15
⁹ k 2 Cor. 5:15 l Acts 10:36 2 NU omits and rose
¹⁰ l Rom. 2:16;
2 Cor. 5:10 3 NU God
¹¹ m Is. 45:23; [Phil. 2:10, 11]
¹² n Matt. 12:36; 16:27; [Gal. 6:5]; 1 Pet. 4:5
¹³ o 1 Cor. 8:9 4 any longer
¹⁴ p 1 Cor. 10:25
¹⁵ q Rom. 14:20;
1 Cor. 8:11
¹⁶ r [Rom. 12:17]
¹⁷ s 1 Cor. 8:8
t [Rom. 8:6]
¹⁸ u 2 Cor. 8:21;
Phil. 4:8; 1 Pet. 2:12
⁵ NU this thing
¹⁹ v Ps. 34:14;
Rom. 12:18; 1 Cor. 7:15; 2 Tim. 2:22;
Heb. 12:14 w 1 Cor. 14:12; 1 Thess. 5:11
⁶ build up
²⁰ x Rom. 14:15
y Acts 10:15 z 1 Cor. 8:9-12 7 A feeling of giving offense
²¹ a 1 Cor. 8:13
⁸ NU omits the rest of v. 21.

judge one another ⁴anymore, but rather resolve this, ^onot to put a stumbling block or a cause to fall in *our* brother's way.

The Law of Love

¹⁴I know and am convinced by the Lord Jesus ^pthat *there* is nothing unclean of itself; but to him who considers anything to be unclean, to him *it* is unclean. ¹⁵Yet if your brother is grieved because of *your* food, you are no longer walking in love. ^qDo not destroy with your food the one for whom Christ died. ¹⁶Therefore do not let your good be spoken of as evil; ¹⁷sfor the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and ^tpeace and joy in the Holy Spirit. ¹⁸For he who serves Christ in ⁵these things ^uis acceptable to God and approved by men.

¹⁹vTherefore let us pursue the things *which* make for peace and the things by which ^wone may ⁶edify another. ²⁰xDo not destroy the work of God for the sake of food. ^yAll things indeed *are* pure, ^zbut *it* is evil for the man who eats with ⁷offense. ²¹*It* is good neither to eat ^ameat nor drink wine nor *do anything* by which your brother stumbles ⁸or is offended or is made weak. ²²gDo you have faith? Have *it* to yourself before God. ^bHappy *is* he who does not condemn himself in what he approves. ²³But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because *he* does not *eat* from faith; for ^cwhatever *is* not from faith is ¹sin.

²² b [1 John 3:21] ⁹ NU The faith which you have—have
²³ c Titus 1:15 ¹ M puts Rom. 16:25-27 here.

14:3 The strong are not to **despise** the weak, that is, to treat them with contempt. The weak are not to **judge** the strong by attempting to place excessive prohibitions on them.

14:5 one day above another: This verse probably relates to the many holy days of the OT ceremonial law. **fully convinced:** The exhortation does not mean it is wrong to have strong convictions, but that all people have a right to their own convictions. This principle is basic in dealing with disputes.

14:6 Days and diets are not the issue, but whether what is being done is committed **to the Lord**.

14:7–9 None of us refers to believers, not people in general. Believers belong to the Lord. They live and die in relation to Him. Therefore Christians should aim to please Him.

14:10 Again (see v. 3) Paul addresses the weak and the strong. The weak are not to **judge**, and the strong are not to **show contempt**, the same word that is rendered “despise” in v. 3. **All** believers are accountable to their Master, Jesus Christ, for they will appear before Him. At the **judgment seat of Christ**, every believer's life will be evaluated to determine his or her reward (see 1 Cor. 3:11–15; 2 Cor. 5:9, 10).

14:11 every knee: One day everyone will submit to God's authority. He will judge all people before His great throne (see Rev. 20:11–15).

14:14 Unclean means “common” and refers to things prohibited by the Jewish ceremonial law. **to him:** If anyone considers some activity to be unlawful, then it is wrong for that person to engage in that activity (see 14:23).

14:15 Do not destroy: Paul here builds on the principle of *conviction* with the principle of *consideration* for the brother who is

weak. This is a step in maturity. If eating meat (see v. 2; 1 Cor. 8:7–11; 10:25–28) destroys a weak believer, then the strong believer should not eat it.

14:16 Your good is what you, the believer, consider to be *good*. **Be spoken of as evil** means “reviled” or “slandered.” Do not cause your freedom, a good thing, to be reviled because of the way in which you use it.

14:17 The kingdom of God does not consist of external things like food, but in spiritual realities like **righteousness** in action and thought, **peace** that seeks harmony, and **joy** that comes from **the Holy Spirit**. Those who understand the spiritual realities of the kingdom will not choose the brief joy of satisfying selfish desires over the spiritual joy of putting aside those desires for the sake of others.

14:19, 20 The believer should **edify**, that is, “build up.” **Do not destroy:** That is, do not “throw down” or “demolish.” Paul has already exhorted mature believers to have consideration for the weak believers (in v. 15). Here Paul exhorts the mature believer to identify ways to build up those weaker in the faith.

14:21 There is little distinction between **stumbles, offended, and made weak**. Paul uses all three words to reiterate that a mature believer should not cause the downfall of another believer (see vv. 12, 13, 20).

14:22 Paul does not require the strong to abandon their convictions about things not condemned by the law. Instead he encourages them to **have faith** about such issues. Although mature believers may refrain from eating meat in front of weaker believers, they can still believe that Christ gives them the freedom to eat all types of food (see v. 2) privately **before** Him (see v. 5).

Bearing Others' Burdens

15 We ^athen who are strong ought to bear with the ¹scruples of the weak, and not to please ourselves. ^{2b}Let each of us please *his* neighbor for *his* good, leading to ²edification. ^{3c}For even Christ did not please Himself; but as it is written, ^d “*The reproaches of those who reproached You fell on Me.*” ⁴For ^ewhatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the ³patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope. ^{5f}Now may the God of patience and comfort grant you to be like-minded toward one another, according to Christ Jesus, ⁶that you may ^gwith one mind *and* one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Glorify God Together

⁷Therefore ^hreceive one another, just ⁱas Christ also received ⁴us, to the glory of God. ⁸Now I say that ^jJesus Christ has become a ⁵servant to the circumcision for the truth of God, ^kto confirm the promises *made* to the fathers, ⁹and ^lthat the Gentiles might glorify God for *His* mercy, as it is written:

“For this reason I will confess to You among the Gentiles, And sing to Your name.”

¹⁰And again he says:

“Rejoice, O Gentiles, with His people!”

CHAPTER 15

¹ ^o Rom. 14:1; [Gal. 6:1, 2]; 1 Thess. 5:14
¹ ^p weaknesses
² ^b 1 Cor. 9:22;
10:24, 33; 2 Cor.
13:9 ² ^q building up
³ ^c Matt. 26:39;
[Phil. 2:5–8] ⁴ ^r Ps.
69:9 ★
⁴ ^e Rom. 4:23,
24; 1 Cor. 10:11;
2 Tim. 3:16, 17
³ ^s perseverance
⁵ ^f 1 Cor. 1:10; Phil.
1:27
⁶ ^g Acts 4:24
⁷ ^h Rom. 14:1, 3
¹ ^t Rom. 5:2 ⁴ ^u NU,
M you
⁸ ^v Matt. 15:24;
Acts 3:26 ⁴ [Rom.
4:16]; 2 Cor. 1:20
⁵ ^w minister
⁹ ¹ John 10:16
^m 2 Sam. 22:50; Ps.
18:49
¹⁰ ⁿ Deut. 32:43

¹¹ ^o Ps. 117:1
¹² ^p Is. 11:1, 10 ★
¹³ ^q Rom. 12:12;
14:17
¹⁴ ^r 2 Pet. 1:12
⁵ ¹ Cor. 1:5; 8:1, 7, 10
⁶ ^m others
¹⁵ ¹ Rom. 1:5; 12:3
¹⁶ ^v Acts 9:15; Rom.
11:13 ^v [Is. 66:20]
⁷ ^t Consisting of
¹⁷ ^w Heb. 2:17; 5:1
¹⁸ ^x Acts 15:12;
21:19; 2 Cor. 3:5;
Gal. 2:8 ^y Rom. 1:5
¹⁹ ^z Acts 19:11

¹¹ And again:

*“Praise the LORD, all you Gentiles!
Laud Him, all you peoples!”*

¹² And again, Isaiah says:

*“There shall be a root of Jesse;
And He who shall rise to reign over
the Gentiles,
In Him the Gentiles shall hope.”*

¹³ Now may the God of hope fill you with all ^qjoy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

From Jerusalem to Illyricum

¹⁴ Now ^vI myself am confident concerning you, my brethren, that you also are full of goodness, ^sfilled with all knowledge, able also to admonish ⁶one another. ¹⁵ Nevertheless, brethren, I have written more boldly to you on *some* points, as reminding you, ^tbecause of the grace given to me by God, ¹⁶that ^uI might be a minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the ^voffering ⁷of the Gentiles might be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit. ¹⁷ Therefore I have reason to glory in Christ Jesus ^win the things *which pertain* to God. ¹⁸ For I will not dare to speak of any of those things ^xwhich Christ has not accomplished through me, in word and deed, ^yto make the Gentiles obedient—¹⁹^z in mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God, so that from

15:3 Christ is the ultimate model for the strong believer. He renounced self-gratification so that He could clearly represent God and His cause (see Phil. 2:5–8).

15:4 Through **patience** (endurance) and the **comfort** (or encouragement) of Scripture, believers learn that they have **hope**. In this case, if strong believers are patient with the scruples of the weak, they have hope of being rewarded (see 14:10; 1 Cor. 9:17, 24–27).

15:5 the God of patience: Attributing to God the same virtues just ascribed to the Scriptures (see v. 4), Paul prays for the unity of all believers.

hope

(Gk. *elpis*) (15:13; 1 Cor. 9:10) Strong's #1680

The Greek term denotes “confident expectation” or “anticipation,” not “wishful thinking” as in common parlance. The use of the word *hope* in this context is unusual and ironic, for it suggests that the Gentiles, who knew nothing or little about the Messiah, were anticipating His coming. However, we need only think of Cornelius (Acts 10) to realize that some Gentiles had anticipated the coming of the Jewish Messiah. For Jesus was sent, not only for the salvation of the Jews, but also for the Gentiles. Since God is the Author of our salvation, we can call Him the God of hope for He has given us hope (15:13).

15:7 Therefore introduces the conclusion of the discussion begun in 14:1, where Paul began with the command to **receive** the weak believer. Thus the command to **receive one another** is addressed not just to the strong believers, but to all believers.

15:8–13 Jesus Christ became a **servant** to the Jews for two purposes: (1) **to confirm** God's **promises** to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and (2) to demonstrate God's mercy to the Gentiles so that they might **glorify** Him. Paul cites four passages from the OT to prove that God intended the Gentiles as well as the Jews to glorify Him. **as it is written:** Paul quotes from all three divisions of the OT (the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms or Writings), and from three great Jewish leaders (Moses, David, and Isaiah), to demonstrate that God's purpose was always to bless the Gentiles through Israel. Although the nation of Israel has been set aside for the present (see 11:1–31), both Jews and Gentiles are being brought together in the church (see 3:1–12; Eph. 2:14–22). **root of Jesse:** This is a title for the Messiah. Jesse was the father of David, and the Son of David was the promised Messiah.

15:16 Ministering means rendering priestly service. Paul pictures himself as a priest offering a sacrifice to God. The sacrifice is Gentile believers who have been made **acceptable** to God because they have been **sanctified**, that is, set apart **by the Holy Spirit** for God's service.

15:19 By performing **mighty signs and wonders**, Paul demonstrated that God had granted him apostolic power (see 2 Cor. 12:12). **Illyricum** is roughly modern-day Albania and north, between Greece and Italy.

Jerusalem and round about to Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.²⁰ And so I have made it my aim to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named,^a lest I should build on another man's foundation,²¹ but as it is written:

*^b“To whom He was not announced,
they shall see;
And those who have not heard shall
understand.”*

Plan to Visit Rome

²²For this reason ^cI also have been much hindered from coming to you.²³ But now no longer having a place in these parts, and ^dhaving a great desire these many years to come to you,²⁴ whenever I journey to Spain, ^eI shall come to you. For I hope to see you on my journey, ^eand to be helped on my way there by you, if first I may ^fenjoy your company for a while.²⁵ But now ^gI am going to Jerusalem to ^gminister to the saints.²⁶ For ^hit pleased those from Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor among the saints who are in Jerusalem.²⁷ It pleased them indeed, and they are their debtors. For ⁱif the Gentiles have been partakers of their spiritual things, ^jtheir duty is also to minister to them in material things.²⁸ Therefore, when I have performed this and have sealed to them ^kthis fruit, I shall go by way of you to Spain.²⁹ ^lBut I know that when I come to you, I shall come in the fullness of the blessing ^lof the gospel of Christ.

³⁰Now I beg you, brethren, through the Lord Jesus Christ, and ^mthrough the love of the Spirit, ⁿthat you strive to-

²⁰ ^a 1 Cor. 3:10; [2 Cor. 10:13, 15, 16]
²¹ ^b Is. 52:15;
²² ^c Rom. 1:13;
1 Thess. 2:17, 18
²³ ^d Acts 19:21;
23:11; Rom. 1:10, 11
²⁴ ^e Acts 15:3
^f Rom. 1:12 ^g NU
omits I shall come
to you and joins
Spain with the next
sentence.
²⁵ ^g Acts 19:21
^g serve
²⁶ ^h 1 Cor. 16:1;
2 Cor. 8:1-15
²⁷ ⁱ Rom. 11:17
/ 1 Cor. 9:11
²⁸ ^k Phil. 4:17
²⁹ ^l [Rom. 1:11]
^l NU omits of the
gospel
³⁰ ^m Phil. 2:1
ⁿ 2 Cor. 1:11; Col.
4:12
³¹ ^o 2 Tim. 3:11; 4:17
^p 2 Cor. 8:4 ^{are}
disobedient
³² ^q Rom. 1:10
^r Acts 18:21 ^s 1 Cor.
16:18
³³ ^r Rom. 16:20;
1 Cor. 14:33; 2 Cor.
13:11; Phil. 4:9;
[1 Thess. 5:23];
2 Thess. 3:16; Heb.
13:20

CHAPTER 16

¹ ^a Acts 18:18
² ^b Phil. 2:29 ^c Phil.
1:27
³ ^d Acts 18:2, 18,
26; 1 Cor. 16:19;
2 Tim. 4:19
⁵ ^e 1 Cor. 16:19;
Col. 4:15; Philem. 2
/ 1 Cor. 16:15 ^f NU
Asia
⁷ ^g Acts 1:13, 26
^h Rom. 8:11; 16:3, 9,
10; 2 Cor. 5:17; 12:2;
Gal. 1:22
¹¹ ² Or relative

gether with me in prayers to God for me,³¹ that I may be delivered from those in Judea who ²do not believe, and that ³my service for Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints,³² that I may come to you with joy ³by the will of God, and may ³be refreshed together with you.³³ Now ⁴the God of peace be with you all. Amen.

Sister Phoebe Commended

16 I commend to you Phoebe our sister, who is a servant of the church in ^aCenchrea,² that you may receive her in the Lord ^cin a manner worthy of the saints, and assist her in whatever business she has need of you; for indeed she has been a helper of many and of myself also.

Greeting Roman Saints

³Greet ^dPriscilla and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, ⁴who risked their own necks for my life, to whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles.⁵ Likewise greet ^ethe church that is in their house.

Greet my beloved Epaphroditus, who is ^fthe firstfruits of ¹Achaia to Christ.⁶ Greet Mary, who labored much for us.⁷ Greet Andronicus and Junia, my countrymen and my fellow prisoners, who are of note among the ^gapostles, who also ^hwere in Christ before me.

⁸Greet Amplias, my beloved in the Lord.⁹ Greet Urbanus, our fellow worker in Christ, and Stachys, my beloved.¹⁰ Greet Apelles, approved in Christ. Greet those who are of the household of Aristobulus.¹¹ Greet Herodion, my ²countryman. Greet those who are of the household of Narcissus who are in the Lord.

15:22 For this reason: Paul's ambition to preach Christ where He was not yet known (vv. 20, 21) had **hindered** him from going to Rome.

15:25, 26 Paul planned to **minister** to the believers in Jerusalem by taking the **contribution** from Macedonia and Achaia (see 1 Cor. 16:1-4; 2 Cor. 8; 9). This money was not only aid from Gentile believers to Jewish believers, but an expression of love that would unify the church even more.

15:28 this fruit: The collection referred to in v. 26. **Spain:** No one knows for sure whether Paul ever got to Spain, but he had it on his travel itinerary.

15:29 when I come: Paul did get to Rome but not in the time frame or way he had thought. God had a special plan for Paul. The Lord would give him the opportunity to testify of his faith in the emperor's court, but he would do so as a prisoner (see Acts 27; 28).

15:31 Delivered means rescued from serious danger. He had been warned about the danger of a trip to Jerusalem (see Acts 20:22, 23).

15:32 Be refreshed pictures rest and relaxation. Paul anticipated conflict in Jerusalem. He looked forward to a time of refreshment from the believers in Rome.

16:1, 2 Servant is the word used for the office of deacon (Phil. 1:1; 1 Tim. 3:8, 10, 12). The fact that it is used here with the phrase of **the church** seems to suggest an official position. **Helper** means

"patron" or "benefactor." It implies that Phoebe was a person of wealth and position. Many have suggested that it was she who carried this letter to Rome.

16:3-16 This list of greetings is the longest in any of Paul's letters. Twenty-six people are mentioned, about one-third of them women.

16:3, 4 Priscilla and Aquila worked in the same trade as Paul, tent-making (see Acts 18:1-3), and labored with him in Corinth and Ephesus (see Acts 18:1-3, 18, 26). This married couple is never mentioned separately, perhaps because they ministered so effectively together. The NT does not record how or where Priscilla and Aquila **risked their own necks** for Paul, though it probably happened at Ephesus.

16:7 Of note among the apostles as a phrase can mean either that they were well known to the apostles, or that they were distinguished as apostles. It is probable that they were known to the apostles because there is no mention of them in the Gospels or Acts.

16:8-10 Amplias . . . Urbanus . . . Stachys . . . Apelles were common slave names. The same names have been found in lists of slaves who served in the imperial household. **Aristobulus** was a familiar Greek name. In fact, the family of Herod the Great used the name often. Some have suggested that this Aristobulus was the grandson of Herod the Great and the brother of Agrippa I.

16:11 my countryman: Herodion must have been a Jew, like Paul. Some have suggested that this **Narcissus** was a famous freedman

¹²Greet Tryphena and Tryphosa, who have labored in the Lord. Greet the beloved Persis, who labored much in the Lord. ¹³Greet Rufus, ⁱchosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine. ¹⁴Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes, and the brethren who are with them. ¹⁵Greet Philologus and Julia, Ne-reus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints who are with them.
¹⁶Greet one another with a holy kiss.
³The churches of Christ greet you.

Avoid Divisive Persons

¹⁷Now I urge you, brethren, note those ^kwho cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and ^lavoid them. ¹⁸For those who are such do not serve our Lord ⁴Jesus Christ, but ^mtheir own belly, and ⁿby smooth words and flattering speech deceive the hearts of the simple. ¹⁹For ^oyour obedience has become known to all. Therefore I am glad on your behalf; but I want you to be ^pwise in what is good, and ⁵simple concerning evil. ²⁰And ^qthe God of peace ^rwill crush Satan under your feet shortly.
^sThe grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you. Amen.

Greetings from Paul's Friends

²¹Timothy, my fellow worker, and ^uLucius, ^vJason, and ^wSosipater, my countrymen, greet you.

13 / 2 John 1
16 / 1 Cor. 16:20;
2 Cor. 13:12;
1 Thess. 5:26; 1 Pet.
5:14 ³ NU *All the churches*
17 ^k [Acts 15:1]
/ [1 Cor. 5:9]
18 ^m Phil. 3:19 ⁴ NU, 2:4; 2 Pet. 2:3 ⁴ NU, *M omit Jesus*
19 ^o Rom. 1:8
^p Jer. 4:22; Matt.
10:16; 1 Cor. 14:20
⁵ *innocent*
20 ^q Rom. 15:33
^r Gen. 3:15 ⁵ 1 Cor.
16:23; 2 Cor. 13:14;
Gal. 6:18; Phil.
4:23; 1 Thess. 5:28;
2 Thess. 3:18; Rev.
22:21
21 ^t Acts 16:1; Heb.
13:23 ^u Acts 13:1
^v Acts 17:5 ^w Acts
20:4

23 ^x 1 Cor. 1:14
^y Acts 19:22; 2 Tim.
4:20
24 ^z 1 Thess. 5:28
⁶ NU omits v. 24.
25 ^o [Eph. 3:20;
Jude 24] ⁷ M puts
Rom. 16:25-27
after Rom. 14:23.

BIBLE TIMES & CULTURE NOTES



New Testament Letters

Paul wrote letters to encourage, warn, and instruct the churches he had founded (the letters to the Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Thessalonians). He also wrote letters to churches he had not visited (Romans, Colossians), as well as to individuals (Timothy, Titus, Philemon).
The letters written by the apostles and their companions are different from the letters most people would write today. Writing tools and materials were not plentiful, so the authors sought to conserve space when writing. Moreover, the greetings and benedictions in the NT letters are unlike the sort of correspondence we would see now, but they are similar to the introductions and conclusions found in other first-century letters. The NT authors composed their letters in order to solve problems in the church or to communicate the gospel of Jesus Christ to those who needed to hear about it.

²²I, Tertius, who wrote *this* epistle, greet you in the Lord.
²³^xGaius, my host and *the host* of the whole church, greets you. ^yErastus, the treasurer of the city, greets you, and Quartus, a brother. ²⁴^zThe ⁶ grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you all. Amen.

Benediction

²⁵⁷Now ^ato Him who is able to estab-

of that name who was put to death by Agrippa shortly after Nero came to power.
16:12 Tryphena and Tryphosa are generally considered sisters.
16:13 Though a common name, this **Rufus** is often identified with the one in Mark 15:21. Since **chosen in the Lord** is true of all believers, many interpret this phrase to mean "outstanding" or "eminent." But it is possible that just as some believers demonstrate God's love and others reflect God's justice, so Rufus was an exceptional example of God's election.
16:16 holy kiss: This kiss on the cheek was practiced by the early

church as a symbol of the love and unity among the early Christians (see 1 Cor. 16:20; 2 Cor. 13:12; 1 Thess. 5:26; 1 Pet. 5:14).
16:17 Cause divisions means "to stand apart" or "to cause dissension." In the NT it occurs only here and in Gal. 5:20. Strife and rivalry cause dissension, which eventually leads to divisions in a church (see 13:13; Gal. 5:20). Such dissension causes **offenses**—that is, it becomes a snare or stumbling block to others (see 14:13 where this word occurs). Contentious, divisive people can cause others to stumble, so they should be avoided. Paul teaches this type of church discipline in his other letters (see 1 Cor. 5:9–13; 2 Thess. 3:6; 2 Tim. 3:5; Titus 3:10).
16:20 Divisive people destroy the peace and unity of the church, but **God**, who is the source of **peace**, will **crush** this work of **Satan** through the wisdom and obedience of believers. Ultimately, God will totally defeat Satan and bring peace to the whole church. Paul closes with his customary prayer that the **grace of the Lord Jesus Christ** would be with them.
16:21 Timothy worked with Paul and later received two letters from him. Some think **Lucius** here is Luke, the author of the third Gospel and Acts. But Paul includes this Luke among his **countrymen**, meaning he was a Jew. Luke the author was a Gentile. **Jason** is mentioned in Acts as Paul's host on his first journey to Thessalonica (see Acts 17:5, 7, 9). **Sosipater** is likely the same person referred to in Acts 20:4.
16:22 Paul, the author of **Romans**, dictated the letter to a secretary named **Tertius**, who actually **wrote** the words. Tertius here sends his greetings to the Romans.
16:23 Gaius of Corinth (see 1 Cor. 1:14) not only gave Paul lodging, but also offered his house as a meeting place for the church. In Acts 19:22 a man named **Erastus** was sent by Paul to Macedonia. This may have been the same man.
16:25 The word **establish** is only used twice in Romans. At the

revelation

(Gk. *apokalupsis*) (16:25; Eph. 1:17; 3:3; Rev. 1:1) Strong's #602

Revelation is God's communication to people concerning Himself, His moral standards, and His plan of salvation. God has made Himself known to all people everywhere in the marvels of nature and in the human conscience, which is able to distinguish right from wrong (1:18–20; 2:14, 15). The message of salvation was seen dimly through OT sacrifices and ceremonies. But the full and final revelation of God has occurred in Jesus Christ (Heb. 1:1, 2). At the Cross, Jesus revealed supremely God's self-giving love (Rom. 5:8). The good news is not complete until we hear that He rose again triumphantly over sin, Satan, and the grave, and is alive forevermore. The content of God's special revelation concerning salvation is found in "the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of . . . the apostles of the Lord and Savior" (2 Pet. 3:2).

lish you ^b according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, ^c according to the revelation of the mystery ^d kept secret since the world began ²⁶ but ^e now made manifest, and by the prophetic Scriptures made known to all nations, according

25 ^b Rom. 2:16
^c Matt. 13:35; Rom. 11:25; 1 Cor. 2:1, 7; 4:1; Eph. 1:9 ^d Col. 1:26; 2:2; 4:3; [1 Tim. 3:16]
26 ^e Eph. 1:9

to the commandment of the everlasting God, for ^f obedience to the faith— ²⁷ to ^g God, alone wise, ^h be glory through Jesus Christ forever. Amen.

^f [Acts 6:7]; Rom. 1:5 **27** ^g Jude 25

beginning of the book, Paul expresses a desire to visit the Romans that he might impart some spiritual gift to them so that they would be “established” (see 1:11). Now he praises God who is able to do it. God used the **gospel**, which is **the preaching of Jesus Christ**, to establish the Roman believers. Paul speaks of his message as a

mystery (see 11:25) because God’s complete plan of salvation was at first hidden but now was being revealed. The revealed *mystery* is that the church will consist of both Jews and Gentiles united in the one body of Christ (see Eph. 3:1–13).

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS



THE CHURCH AT CORINTH was a seriously troubled church. Infected with sexual immorality, split by factions that dragged each other into court, and crippled by abuse of the spiritual gifts, this church was in need of radical spiritual surgery. Though true believers, the Corinthians had a lot of growing up to do. They had to stop following the immoral, selfish, and contentious ways of their pagan neighbors in Corinth, the notoriously immoral city of that day. One can sense the disappointment of a hurt father in Paul's stern words for the Corinthians. Yet Paul, like a surgeon, diagnosed the problem and aimed his efforts straight at the source: pride and a lack of true love in the church.

Author and Date First Corinthians twice names the apostle Paul as its writer (1:1; 16:21). Paul's authorship of 1 Corinthians is almost unanimously accepted throughout biblical scholarship. One of the earliest witnesses to Paul's authorship of the book was Clement of Rome (c. A.D. 95).

Most likely Paul wrote the letter while he was ministering at Ephesus during his third missionary journey. In 16:8, Paul said that he would remain in Ephesus until Pentecost. This, coupled with Acts 20:31, indicates that he wrote it in the last year of his three-year stay in Ephesus, sometime in the spring of A.D. 56. The Corinthian church would have been about four years old at that time.

Historical Setting Corinth was an important city in ancient Greece. Geographically, it was an ideal hub for commerce between Italy and Asia. Along with the flow of merchandise, Corinth received travelers from both east and west, creating ethnic diversity among the city's inhabitants. Although Corinth was ransacked by the Romans in 146 B.C., it was rebuilt by Julius Caesar in 46 B.C. Roman control of Corinth allowed them to dominate east-west commerce as well as the Isthmian Games (9:24–27), which were surpassed in importance only by the celebrated Olympic Games.

Corinth's commercial success was rivaled only by its decadence. The immorality of Corinth was so well known that Aristophanes coined the Greek verb *korinthiazomai* (meaning "to act like a Corinthian") as a synonym for sexual immorality. Greek plays of the day often depicted Corinthians as drunkards and reprobates. The Corinthians drew attention to their lewdness through their worship of Aphrodite, the goddess of love and beauty. Yet Corinth was also a strategic location for the propagation of the gospel. The city's corrupt nature made for a unique opportunity to display to the Roman world the transforming power of Jesus Christ.

Acts 18:1–18 records the founding of the Corinthian church. Paul visited Corinth on his second missionary journey, after leaving Athens. This initial visit probably occurred in the fall of A.D. 52. Paul, Silas, Timothy, and Luke had left Troas for Macedonia about eight months earlier and had started churches in Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea. Luke remained at Philippi and Silas and Timothy at Thessalonica, while Paul journeyed on to Athens. Paul's ministry at Athens proved disappointing, perhaps leaving him discouraged as he entered Corinth, where he made tents during the week and preached in the synagogue on the Sabbath. After the Jews of Corinth rejected Paul's message, he began to reach out to the Gentiles. He ministered in Corinth for 18 months,



View from the Acrocorinth toward the Gulf of Corinth

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eventually establishing a church. This church, like the city, had a mixture of nationalities. Though some Jews had been converted, most of the believers were Gentiles (12:2).

While the Corinthian church reflected the city's multinational character, it also mirrored some of Corinth's immorality. The sharp tone of 1 Corinthians results from Paul's urgent desire to get the church back on course.

Purpose First Corinthians is a reply to two letters. Paul had left the Corinthian church under the leadership of Aquila and Priscilla in the spring of A.D. 53 to continue his second missionary journey. On his third journey, during his stay at Ephesus, he received two letters from the Corinthian believers. One was a disturbing report from the household of Chloe (1:11). The report detailed the divisions and immorality in the church. These problems arose because the young Corinthian church had failed to protect itself from the decadent culture of the city. The immaturity of the Corinthians had given way to sectarian divisions. The believers were identifying themselves as followers of specific Christian leaders rather than as followers of Christ (3:1–9). They were also dragging each other into court (6:1). Their desire to sue each other rather than settle their disputes within the church betrayed their immaturity and misplaced trust in human wisdom. Sexual immorality had become a problem in the church in spite of a previous letter (that has not been preserved) in which Paul warned against it (5:9–11).

The second letter Paul received was a set of questions that Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus had brought from Corinth (16:15–18). The detailed questions were about marriage and singleness (7:1–40) and Christian liberty (8:1–11:1).

Paul wrote 1 Corinthians to answer both letters and to give some additional instructions. He taught about decorum in worship services (11:2–16), the solemnity of the Lord's Supper (11:17–34), and the place of spiritual gifts. Though the Corinthians were very gifted, in their immaturity and pride they had abused their gifts. Paul reminded the Corinthians that gifts come from God (12:11) and are to unify and edify the church (12:24, 25; 14:1–4). In conclusion, Paul corrected a doctrinal matter by writing the New Testament's most detailed explanation of the resurrection of Christ and Christians (15:1–58). Even though the church was riddled with problems, Paul ended his confrontational letter with a note of hope. The Corinthians could have victory over sin and death because Jesus in His death and resurrection had already decisively obtained it (15:57).

CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

In this letter Paul proclaims the relevance of Christ Jesus to every area of the believer’s life. In the writer’s words, Jesus “became for us wisdom from God—and righteousness and sanctification and redemption” (1:30). Paul goes on to assert (much as Luke did in the Book of Acts) that Jesus is living out His life in the world through the church. According to Paul, we are the body of Christ with individual gifts. As we discover our gifts and invest them in mutual ministry, Jesus continues to touch the world for which He died (12:1–31).

1 CORINTHIANS OUTLINE

- I. Introduction 1:1–9
- II. Paul’s response to the report from Chloe 1:10—6:20
 - A. Divisions in the church 1:10—4:21
 - B. Incest in the church 5:1–13
 - C. Lawsuits between church members 6:1–11
 - D. Sexual immorality in the church 6:12–20
- III. Paul’s responses to the Corinthians’ questions 7:1—14:40
 - A. Marriage obligations 7:1–40
 - B. Christian liberties 8:1—11:1
 - C. Proper worship 11:2–34
 - D. Spiritual gifts 12:1—14:40
- IV. The resurrection of Christ and Christians 15:1–58
 - A. The resurrection of Christ 15:1–11
 - B. The necessity of the Resurrection 15:12–34
 - C. The resurrection of Christians 15:35–58
- V. Conclusion 16:1–24
 - A. The collection for the saints 16:1–4
 - B. Personal requests 16:5–18
 - C. Closing greetings 16:19–24

C. A.D. 47–49
Paul’s first missionary journey

C. A.D. 50
The Jerusalem council

C. A.D. 50–53
Paul’s second missionary journey

C. A.D. 52
The church at Corinth is started

C. A.D. 53–57
Paul’s third missionary journey

C. A.D. 56
Spring—
1 Corinthians is written

C. A.D. 58
Paul is arrested in Jerusalem

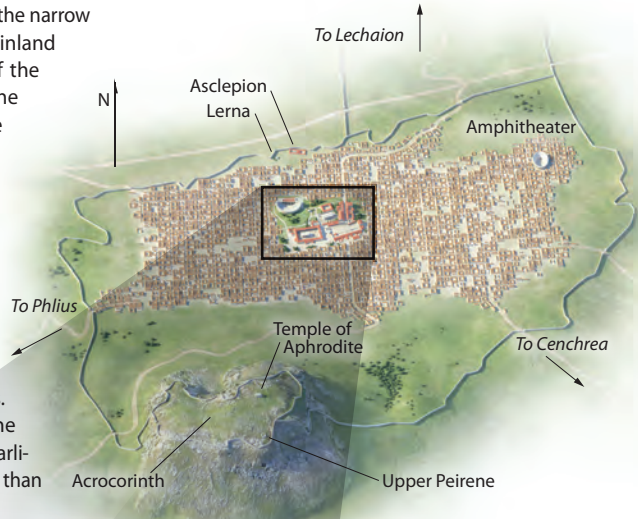
C. A.D. 60–62
Paul is imprisoned in Rome

C. A.D. 67
Peter and Paul are executed

Corinth in the Time of Paul

The city of Corinth, perched astride the narrow isthmus connecting the Greek mainland with the Peloponnese, was one of the dominant commercial centers of the Mediterranean world as early as the eighth century B.C.

No city in Greece was more favorably situated for land and sea trade. With a high, strong citadel at its back, it lay between the Saronic Gulf and the Ionian Sea, with ports at Lechaion and Cenchrea. A *diolkos*, or stone road for the overland transport of ships and/or offloaded cargo, linked the two seas. Crowning the Acrocorinth was the temple of Aphrodite, served at an earlier time, according to Strabo, by more than 1,000 pagan priestess-prostitutes.



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By the time the gospel reached Corinth in the spring of A.D. 52, the city had a proud history of leadership in the Achaian League, and a spirit of revived Hellenism under Roman domination after 44 B.C., following the destruction of the city by Mummius in 146 B.C.

Paul's lengthy stay in Corinth brought him directly in contact with the major monuments of the *agora*, many of which still survive. The fountain-house of the spring Peirene, the temple of Apollo, the *macellum* (or meat market; 1 Cor. 10:25), the theater, and the bema (Acts 18:12) all played a part in the experience of the apostle. An inscription from the theater names the city official Erastus, probably the friend of Paul mentioned in Rom. 16:23.



Corinth

The Corinth which Paul knew had been founded as a Roman colony during the century before Christ. It was strategically located in the Roman province of Achaia on a narrow strip of land between the Aegean Sea and the Adriatic Sea, with two adjoining ports. Corinth's location made it a center for trade routes passing from east to west, and the resulting prosperity brought both luxury and immorality. "To live like a Corinthian" meant to live in gross immorality, and many pagan temples located in Corinth encouraged this licentious way of life through temple prostitution. The letters Paul wrote to the believers in this city reveal the problems, pressures, and struggles of a church called out of a pagan society. Paul had founded the church in Corinth during an 18-month stay in the city (A.D. 51–52; see Acts 18:1–18).

The temple of Apollo in Corinth

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Greeting

Paul, ^acalled to be an apostle of Jesus Christ ^bthrough the will of God, and ^cSosthenes our brother,

²To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who ^dare ¹sanctified in Christ Jesus, ^ecalled to be saints, with all who in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ ^four Lord, ^gboth theirs and ours:

^{3h}Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Spiritual Gifts at Corinth

⁴ⁱI thank my God always concerning you for the grace of God which was given

CHAPTER 1

¹ ^a Rom. 1:1 ^b 2 Cor.

1:1 ^c Acts 18:17

² ^d [Acts 15:9]

^e Rom. 1:7; Eph.

4:1; 1 Thess. 2:12

^f [1 Cor. 8:6] ^g [Rom.

3:22] ¹ set apart

³ ^h Rom. 1:7

⁴ ⁱ Rom. 1:8

⁵ / [1 Cor. 12:8]

² speech

⁶ ^k 2 Thess. 1:10;

1 Tim. 2:6; 2 Tim.

1:8; Rev. 1:2 ³ Or

among

⁷ / Luke 17:30; Rom.

8:19, 23; Phil. 3:20;

Titus 2:13; [2 Pet.

3:12]

⁸ ^m 1 Thess. 3:13;

5:23 ⁿ Phil. 1:6; Col.

1:22; 2:7

to you by Christ Jesus, ⁵ that you were enriched in everything by Him ^j in all ² utterance and all knowledge, ⁶ even as ^k the testimony of Christ was confirmed ³ in you, ⁷ so that you come short in no gift, eagerly ^l waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ, ⁸ ^m who will also confirm you to the end, ⁿ that you may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ ^o God is faithful, by whom you were called into ^p the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Sectarianism Is Sin

¹⁰ Now I plead with you, brethren, by

⁹ ^o Deut. 7:9; Is. 49:7; 1 Cor. 10:13; 2 Cor. 1:18; 1 Thess. 5:24; 2 Thess. 3:3 ^p [John 15:4]

1:1–3 Paul's words of introduction are more than simple words of greeting. The first few verses introduce the themes of his letter. Thus in his greeting, Paul introduces his apostolic authority (see 9:1–27), the sanctification of his readers (see 1:5–8), and the unity of all believers (see 1:10–17), all major themes of the letter and concerns for the Corinthian believers.

1:1 through the will of God: The Corinthian church greatly valued human wisdom. This misplaced emphasis had caused some in the church to challenge Paul's authority (v. 12; 9:1, 2). They forgot that Jesus Christ Himself had called him to his ministry as an **apostle of Jesus Christ** (see 2 Cor. 1:1, where Paul uses the same title).

1:2 A local **church of God** is a group of people who identify themselves with God and gather together to worship and serve Him. **sanctified in Christ Jesus:** The Corinthians' holiness came from their position in Christ, not from their own goodness. The tense of the verb *sanctified* indicates that God had sanctified the Corinthians at a specific time in the past, producing a condition that they still enjoyed in the present. **called to be saints:** The work of Jesus Christ makes a believer holy forever in God's eyes. But in everyday living, sanctification involves small, daily changes (see Heb. 10:14). This is why Paul could call the Corinthian believers to become saints, even though the problems in their church testified that they were far from the goal of holiness. **In every place** is most

likely a reference to local churches throughout the Roman Empire (see 1 Tim. 2:8).

1:4–9 The thanksgiving Paul offers to God for the Corinthians seems odd, considering the many problems the church was experiencing. However, Paul focuses his praise not on the troubled Corinthians but on the eternally faithful God. Paul does not praise the Corinthians for their good works as he does some other churches (see Eph. 1:15); instead, he praises God who works in them. When we focus on people's faults, hope soon wanes and discouragement follows. But when we concentrate on the Lord, even the darkest hours can be filled with praise.

1:5 **Enriched** means that the Corinthians had been spiritually destitute but had become abundantly prosperous through God's grace.

1:7 **Gift** here is probably a reference to the spiritual gifts described in chs. 12–14. Despite the Corinthians' boasting, their many gifts had come from God (12:11, 18, 28). The Corinthians were richly blessed with spiritual gifts because God was giving them everything they needed to do His will (12:14–27).

1:8, 9 Because God is faithful to His word, Paul was confident that even the sin-plagued Corinthians would stand **blameless** before Him. This blamelessness does not refer to the Corinthians' works, but to their standing in Christ, their justification (3:14, 15).

1:10 Paul pleaded for an outward expression that comes from an

the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, ^qthat you all ⁴speak the same thing, and *that* there be no ⁵divisions among you, but *that* you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. ¹¹For it has been declared to me concerning you, my brethren, by those of Chloe's household, that there are ⁶contentions among you. ¹²Now I say this, that ^reach of you says, "I am of Paul," or "I am of ^sApollos," or "I am of ^tCephas," or "I am of Christ." ¹³^uIs Christ divided?

10 ^q 2 Cor. 13:11;
1 Pet. 3:8 ^r Have a
uniform testimony
^s schisms or
dissensions
11 ⁶ quarrels
12 ^r Matt. 3:8-10;
1 Cor. 3:4 ^t Acts
18:24; 1 Cor. 3:22
^u John 1:42; 1 Cor.
3:22; 9:5; 15:5
13 ^u 2 Cor. 11:4
14 ^v John 4:2 ^w Acts
18:8 ^x Rom. 16:23
16 ^y 1 Cor. 16:15, 17
17 ^z [1 Cor. 2:1, 4, 13]

Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?

¹⁴I thank God that I baptized ^vnone of you except ^wCrispus and ^xGaius, ¹⁵lest anyone should say that I had baptized in my own name. ¹⁶Yes, I also baptized the household of ^yStephanas. Besides, I do not know whether I baptized any other. ¹⁷For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel, ^znot with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of no effect.

inward spirit. Not only did Paul encourage the Corinthians to **speak the same thing** and have external unity, he also urged them to be **joined together** in a unity of hearts and minds (see Eph. 4:14–16). **1:11** Paul avoided dealing in rumors or secrecy; he openly named his sources: **Chloe's household**. We know little of this woman and her household except what this verse implies. Chloe lived in Corinth or Ephesus, and the Corinthians respected her word.

1:14–16 Paul said **I thank God that I baptized none of you**, because the Corinthians had taken to identifying with their spiritual mentors rather than Christ. **Crispus** was the ruler of the synagogue in Corinth when Paul began to preach there (see Acts 18:8). He was instrumental in the conversion of many other Corinthians. **Gaius** may be the same person who hosted Paul and the entire church (Rom. 16:23). **Stephanas** was one of Paul's first converts in Achaia, the region of which Corinth was capital. Paul praised him and his household for their devotion to the ministry and for their assistance (16:15). Stephanas was one of the couriers who took correspondence to and from Corinth.

1:17 Paul's primary ministry was **to preach the gospel**. Baptism naturally followed conversion but was secondary in importance. With the phrase **not with wisdom of words**, Paul addressed the Corinthians' tendency to place undue emphasis on human wisdom. The immature Corinthians were so impressed by clever oratory and learned debate that many of them ignored the relatively "simple" message of **the cross**.

fellowship

(Gk. *koinōnia*) (1:9; Acts 2:42; Phil. 2:1; 1 John 1:3, 6, 7) Strong's #2842

The Greek term means "that which is shared in common." In the NT the word was used to denote the believers' common participation in the Triune God—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The Father and Son have enjoyed communion with each other before the creation of the world. When the Son entered into time, His fellowship with the Father also entered into time. During the days of His ministry, Jesus was introducing the Father to the disciples and initiating them into this fellowship. Then once the disciples were regenerated unto eternal life, they actually entered into fellowship with the Father and the Son. Thus the unique fellowship between the Father and the Son begun in eternity was manifested in time through the incarnation of the Son, was introduced to the apostles, and then through the apostles was extended to each and every believer through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit (2 Cor. 13:14; Phil. 2:1).

The Message, Not the Messenger

One of the main problems facing the first-century Corinthian church was division. When Paul wrote to Corinth, the church was divided into at least four factions, each of them aligned with one of four prominent Christian leaders. One group identified itself with the apostle Paul. The members of this faction may have been attracted by Paul's emphasis on his ministry to the Gentiles. A second group identified itself with Apollos, one of Paul's fellow missionaries. He may have attracted a following because of his eloquent speaking abilities (see Acts 18:24–28). A third group identified itself with Cephas, another name for the apostle Peter. This group may have been mostly of Jewish background. A fourth group identified itself specifically with Christ. While on the surface it might seem that this group was the "godly" contingent of the Corinthian church, this may not have been the case. Paul does not commend any of the groups, not even the "I am of Christ" faction, suggesting that all of their professed allegiances were causing division and dissension in that church.

Paul uses three rhetorical questions, each expecting a negative response, to show the absurdity of the Corinthian divisions. "Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?" Paul pointed out that in the act of baptism, a person identifies himself or herself with Christ, period. Baptism does not align the believer with any human leader or with any faction of Christianity, but with the Lord Himself. The Corinthians, who prided themselves on their wisdom and understanding, had misconstrued this truth. They had begun to identify themselves with the men who had performed the baptisms rather than with Jesus Himself.

We might be tempted to write off this problem, attributing it to "those silly, immature Corinthians," if it were not for the fact that the tendency to exalt dynamic leaders is still prevalent today. Witty, engaging Christian speakers and vibrant, charismatic spiritual leaders still have the power to mesmerize and motivate believers today. And there is nothing inherently wrong with such power. The danger comes when the speaker or leader, and not the message, becomes the focus of attention.

Christian speakers and leaders are merely vessels through whom God's Word is communicated. Exalting them instead of the message they proclaim is a misunderstanding of their purpose. Put simply, it's the message, not the messenger.

As believers today, we must guard ourselves against identifying too closely with human leaders or placing too much emphasis on them. Our loyalty and identification belong only to Jesus Christ and His message.



Christ the Power and Wisdom of God

¹⁸For the ⁷message of the cross is ^afoolishness to ^bthose who are perishing, but to us ^cwho are being saved it is the ^dpower of God. ¹⁹For it is written:

*“I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,
And bring to nothing the
understanding of the prudent.”*

²⁰Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the ⁸disputer of this age? ⁹Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? ²¹For since, in the ^hwisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. ²²For ⁱJews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; ²³but we preach Christ crucified, ^jto the Jews a ⁹stumbling block and to the ¹Greeks ^kfoolishness, ²⁴but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ ^lthe power of God and ^mthe wisdom of God. ²⁵Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

Glory Only in the Lord

²⁶For ²you see your calling, brethren, ⁿthat not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many ³noble, are called. ²⁷But ^oGod has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to

18 ^a 1 Cor. 2:14
b 2 Cor. 2:15
c [1 Cor. 15:2]
d Rom. 1:16; 1 Cor. 1:24
e Is. 29:14
f Is. 19:12; 33:18
g Job 12:17; Matt. 13:22; 1 Cor. 2:6, 8; 3:18, 19
h Dan. 2:20; [Rom. 11:33]
i Matt. 12:38; Mark 8:11; John 2:18; 4:48
j Is. 8:14; Luke 2:34; John 6:60; Gal. 5:11; [1 Pet. 2:8]
k [1 Cor. 2:14] ⁹ Gr. skandalon, offense
l NU Gentiles
m [Rom. 1:4]
n Col. 2:3
o John 7:48
p consider ³ well-born
q Ps. 8:2; Matt. 11:25
r insignificant or lowly
s Jer. 23:5; 33:16; [2 Cor. 5:21; Phil. 3:9]
t Jer. 9:23, 24; 2 Cor. 10:17

CHAPTER 2

1 ¹ NU mystery
2 ^a 1 Cor. 1:23; Gal. 6:14
3 ^b Acts 18:1
c [2 Cor. 4:7]
d ² 2 Pet. 1:16
e Rom. 15:19; 1 Cor. 4:20

shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty; ²⁸and the ⁴base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are, ²⁹that no flesh should glory in His presence. ³⁰But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God—and ^prighteousness and sanctification and redemption—³¹that, as it is written, ^q“He who glories, let him glory in the LORD.”

Christ Crucified

2 And I, brethren, when I came to you, did not come with excellence of speech or of wisdom declaring to you the ¹testimony of God. ²For I determined not to know anything among you ^aexcept Jesus Christ and Him crucified. ³^bI was with you ^cin weakness, in fear, and in much trembling. ⁴And my speech and my preaching ^dwere not with persuasive words of ²human wisdom, ^ebut in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, ⁵that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the ^fpower of God.

Spiritual Wisdom

⁶However, we speak wisdom among those who are mature, yet not the wis-

² NU omits human ⁵ ^f Rom. 1:16; 1 Thess. 1:5

1:18 The message of the cross is the gospel, the Good News about Christ's death and resurrection for our sins. The gospel penetrates to the core of self-centeredness. For those who exalt self, the message sounds absurd. But for those who bow humbly in faith, it becomes the **power** that is able to snatch them from death and impart eternal life. No wonder Paul put such confidence in this message (see Rom. 1:16).

1:20, 21 The wise is probably a reference to Greek philosophers. **The scribe** is a technical term for a Jewish scholar trained to handle details of the Law. **The disputer** refers to a Greek person, especially one trained in rhetoric. These professionals tried to solve every problem with logic and debate. The point of this passage is that all human efforts to find favor with God fall woefully short (see Rom. 3:9–28). Only through faith in Christ can we be saved from our sins.

1:22, 23 The Jews sought miraculous signs from the Messiah to signal the beginning of the deliverance God had promised (see Mark 8:11; John 6:30). **The Greeks**, especially the philosophers, sought to use wisdom to answer their questions about God and life. To the Jews, who expected a political savior, Jesus was a **stumbling block**. To the Greeks, whose self-centered wisdom could not make sense of the cross, to believe in Jesus was **foolishness**.

1:26 Wise refers to the Greek philosophers. **Mighty** refers to influential, politically powerful people. **Noble** includes all the aristocratic upper classes. Most of the Corinthians came from the lower classes.

1:27 God's plan of salvation does not conform to the world's priorities. In fact, it seems **foolish**. Yet in reality, eternal salvation is more valuable than all the fame, wealth, and success pursued by the world.

1:28 base . . . despised: Paul's use of these two terms for the slave class would capture the attention of his readers in Corinth, where many slaves lived. **the things which are not:** No doubt many of

the Corinthian believers were people who did not count in the eyes of the world but had found grace in God's eyes.

1:29–31 God uses what is considered foolish and despised in this world to reveal His truth, so that He alone will receive the glory. Otherwise, the powerful would boast that they had found the truth. Instead, God sent His Son to become a humble carpenter and to die in the most despicable way, on a cross. Jesus' life and death reveals God and His **wisdom**. Since Christ not only imparts wisdom but also righteousness, the Christian cannot boast, except in **the Lord**. **2:1, 2 excellence of speech or of wisdom:** Paul did not rely on his eloquence or on Greek wisdom to convince his listeners. Instead, he gave **the testimony of God** which had not been explained before, but which was being revealed by the Holy Spirit (vv. 10–14). The focal point of Paul's preaching was **Jesus Christ**.

2:3–5 Whereas the Corinthians gloried in their strength, their wealth, and their gifts, Christ was glorified in His humility and death. Paul wanted to model Christ's humility by presenting his “weaknesses.” Then the “strength” of the gospel message could be clearly seen. **My speech** probably refers to the way Paul spoke; **my preaching** probably refers to the content of his message. **not with persuasive words . . . but in demonstration of the Spirit:** Even though Paul had many strengths of his own (see Phil. 3:4–9), he wanted to be counted among those who relied on God's strength. Rather than using the rhetoric of the day to win converts, he gave a straightforward message. **power of God:** Miraculous signs had sometimes accompanied Paul's preaching (see 2 Cor. 12:12; 1 Thess. 1:5; Heb. 2:3, 4). Such signs were intended to magnify God, not the human speaker.

2:6 among those who are mature: After having heard eloquent addresses by men like Apollos, the Corinthians may have viewed Paul's message as elementary or unpolished. Paul assured the Co-

dom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. ⁷ But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden *wisdom* which God ³ ordained before the ages for our glory, ⁸ which none of the rulers of this age knew; for ⁹ had they known, they would not have ^h crucified the Lord of glory.

⁹ But as it is written:

*“Eye has not seen, nor ear heard,
Nor have entered into the heart of
man
The things which God has prepared
for those who love Him.”*

¹⁰ But ^j God has revealed *them* to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. ¹¹ For what man knows the things of a man except the ^k spirit of the man which is in him? ^l Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God. ¹² Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but ^m the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.

¹³ These things we also speak, not in words which man’s wisdom teaches but which the ⁴ Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. ¹⁴ But the natural man does not receive

⁷ ³ *predetermined*
⁸ ^g Luke 23:34
^h Matt. 27:33-50
⁹ ⁱ [Is. 64:4; 65:17]
¹⁰ ^j Matt. 11:25;
13:11; 16:17; [Gal.
1:12; Eph. 3:3, 5]
¹¹ ^k Job 32:8; Eccl.
12:7; [1 Cor. 6:20;
James 2:26] ^l Rom.
11:33
¹² ^m [Rom. 8:15]
¹³ ⁿ NU omits *Holy*
¹⁴ ⁿ Matt. 16:23

¹⁶ ^o Job 15:8; Is.
40:13; Rom. 11:34
^p [John 15:15]

CHAPTER 3

¹ ^o 1 Cor. 2:6; Eph.
4:14; Heb. 5:13
² ^p Heb. 5:12; 1 Pet.
2:2 ^q John 16:12
³ ^r Lit. *walking*
according to man
⁵ ^d Rom. 15:16;
2 Cor. 3:3, 6; 4:1;
5:18; 6:4; Eph. 3:7;
Col. 1:25; 1 Tim. 1:12
⁶ ^e Acts 18:4; 1 Cor.
4:15; 9:1; 15:1;
2 Cor. 10:14 ^f Acts
18:24-27; 1 Cor. 1:12
^g [2 Cor. 3:5]
⁷ ^b 2 Cor. 12:11;
[Gal. 6:3]

the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned. ¹⁵ But he who is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is *rightly* judged by no one. ¹⁶ For ^o “*who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct Him?*” ^p But we have the mind of Christ.

Sectarianism Is Carnal

3 And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual *people* but as to carnal, as to ^a babes in Christ. ² I fed you with ^b milk and not with solid food; ^c for until now you were not able *to receive it*, and even now you are still not able; ³ for you are still carnal. For where *there* are envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and ¹ behaving like *mere* men? ⁴ For when one says, “I am of Paul,” and another, “I *am* of Apollos,” are you not carnal?

Watering, Working, Warning

⁵ Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ^d ministers through whom you believed, as the Lord gave to each one? ⁶ ^e I planted, ^f Apollos watered, ^g but God gave the increase. ⁷ So then ^h neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase. ⁸ Now he who plants and he who waters are

inthians that he was imparting **wisdom**—instruction that mature Christians would appreciate. **rulers of this age:** In some passages Paul used the word *rulers* to refer to spiritual beings (see Eph. 6:12; Col. 2:15); here he referred to earthly rulers, the Roman and Jewish leaders who presided over Jesus’ crucifixion. If these rulers had been among the wise, they would have worshiped the Lord instead of crucifying Him. **coming to nothing:** People look at beauty, wealth, and power as greatly desirable. But all earthly splendor will be rendered meaningless and worthless by death and the coming of God’s judgment (Luke 16:19–29; 2 Pet. 3:10–13).

2:7 The mystery that Paul referred to here is defined in Rom. 16:25, 26 as “revelation . . . kept secret since the world began but now made manifest.” The message was **hidden**, known only to God, until He chose to reveal it (see Eph. 3:1–11). This is in contrast to the teachings of the Gnostics, a group of false religious teachers who would infiltrate the early church (see 1 John 2:18–27). They claimed that there existed a body of secret knowledge that was only available to those initiated into an inner circle of spiritual teachers.

2:8 Lord of glory: Though Jesus emptied Himself of His majesty when He became human, He remained fully equal with the Father.

2:9–12 through His Spirit: Only the Holy Spirit could reveal the truths of God (see 2 Pet. 1:19–21). **knows . . . know:** The first verb refers to innate knowledge; the second refers to experiential knowledge. We could never have discovered the mysteries of God or the benefits of Christ’s death by ourselves. But we can know them by experience because they have been **freely given to us by God**.

2:13 the Holy Spirit teaches: Paul emphasized that the intellectuals of this world could not teach the knowledge he was giving to the Corinthian believers. Note that the Spirit did not simply dictate words to Paul and the other apostles; He taught them. The apostles related with their own vocabulary and style what they had learned from the Spirit. **comparing spiritual things with spiritual:** These words are difficult to translate and interpret. The Greek term translated *comparing* may also mean “to combine” or “to interpret.” The

two references to *spiritual* may mean interpreting spiritual truths to spiritual persons, or else combining spiritual truths with spiritual words. The latter seems better. In other words, the phrase teaches that the spiritual truths of God are combined with the spiritual vocabulary of the apostles (see 2 Pet. 1:20, 21; 2 Tim. 3:16).

2:14 natural man: The natural person does not have the Spirit of God, in contrast to the Christian who does have the Spirit (15:44–46).

Receive here means “to welcome.” This verb does not pertain to discovering the meaning of a passage, but *applying* the meaning to life.

3:1 The carnal person is not the same as the “natural man” mentioned in 2:14. A carnal person is a spiritually immature Christian, a spiritual infant.

3:2 fed . . . milk: Paul did not expect the Corinthians to be mature in Christ at the time of their conversion. By placing their faith in Christ, they had been justified. They had been united with Him and his death on the Cross (Rom. 6:3–5), and the Spirit of God had come to live in them (2:12; Rom. 8:9). They were considered righteous before God because of Jesus’ righteousness. Thus when Paul first established the church at Corinth he taught them as new converts, as those justified. Yet he expected them to grow in their faith—that is, become sanctified. The behavior of the Christians in Corinth should have begun to line up with their righteous position in Christ.

3:3, 4 for you are still carnal: An immature Christian naturally lacks many Christian traits, but no one should expect this condition to last. Paul was surprised that the Corinthians had not yet grown into spiritual maturity or become able to distinguish between good and evil (see Heb. 5:14).

3:5–10 Paul had planted, or started, the church in Corinth; Apollos had **watered it**—had a significant ministry there after Paul left. But both men were only servants through whom God worked. The ones who plant and water have nothing to boast about because God gives **the increase:** Only God draws unbelievers to Himself. It is our responsibility to do our job no matter what the results, for God will reward us for our efforts and the quality of our work (see 9:24–27).

one, ⁱand each one will receive his own reward according to his own labor.

⁹For ^jwe are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, *you are* ^kGod's building. ¹⁰^lAccording to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid ^mthe foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it. ¹¹For no other foundation can anyone lay than ⁿthat which is laid, ^owhich is Jesus Christ. ¹²Now if anyone builds on this foundation *with* gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, ¹³each one's work will become clear; for the Day ^pwill declare it, because ^qit will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. ¹⁴If anyone's work which he has built on *it* endures, he will receive a reward. ¹⁵If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.

¹⁶^rDo you not know that you are the temple of God and *that* the Spirit of God dwells in you? ¹⁷If anyone ²defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which *temple* you are.

Avoid Worldly Wisdom

¹⁸^sLet no one deceive himself. If anyone among you seems to be wise in this

8 ^tPs. 62:12; Rom. 2:6
9 / Mark 16:20; Acts 15:4; 2 Cor. 6:1
k [1 Cor. 3:16; Eph. 2:20-22]; Col. 2:7; Heb. 3:3, 4; [1 Pet. 2:5]
10 ^lRom. 1:5
m 1 Cor. 4:15
11 ⁿIs. 28:16; Matt. 16:18; 2 Cor. 11:4 ^oEph. 2:20; 1 Pet. 2:4
13 ^p1 Pet. 1:7 ^qMal. 3:1-3; Luke 2:35
16 ^rRom. 8:9; 1 Cor. 6:19; 2 Cor. 6:16; Eph. 2:21
17 ² destroys
18 ^s Prov. 3:7
19 ^t Job 5:13
20 ^u Ps. 94:11
21 ^v [2 Cor. 4:5]
23 ^w [Rom. 14:8]; 1 Cor. 15:23; 2 Cor. 10:7; [Gal. 3:29]

CHAPTER 4

1 ^a Matt. 24:45;
Rom. 13:6; 2 Cor. 3:6; Col. 1:25 ^b Luke 12:42; 1 Cor. 9:17;
Titus 1:7; 1 Pet. 4:10
3 / Lit. *day*
5 ^c Matt. 7:1;
Rom. 2:1; [Rev. 20:12] ^d Matt. 10:26 ^e 1 Cor. 3:13
^f Rom. 2:29; 1 Cor. 3:8; [2 Cor. 5:10]
^g motives

age, let him become a fool that he may become wise. ¹⁹For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, ^t“*He catches the wise in their own craftiness*”; ²⁰and again, ^u“*The Lord knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are futile*.” ²¹Therefore let no one boast in men. For ^vall things are yours: ²²whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas, or the world or life or death, or things present or things to come—all are yours. ²³And ^wyou are Christ's, and Christ is God's.

Stewards of the Mysteries of God

4 Let a man so consider us, as ^aservants of Christ ^band stewards of the mysteries of God. ²Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful. ³But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you or by a human ¹court. In fact, I do not even judge myself. ⁴For I know of nothing against myself, yet I am not justified by this; but He who judges me is the Lord. ⁵^cTherefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes, who will both bring to ^dlight the hidden things of darkness and ^ereveal the ²counsels of the hearts. ^fThen each one's praise will come from God.

3:11–15 Paul had established the church at Corinth on the **foundation** of Christ. **gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw:** These building materials refer to the quality of work done by the Corinthians, and possibly also to their motivations or the kinds of doctrines they taught. **The Day** speaks of the time when Christ will judge the merits of His servants' work (see 2 Cor. 5:10), not whether they receive forgiveness of sin. Likewise, **fire** does not refer to the “eternal fire” of damnation (see Rev. 20:10) but to the evaluation of believers' works (see Rev. 2:18, 19; 3:18; 22:12). Fire proves the quality of gold, but it consumes wood, hay, and stubble. Some “good work” is actually self-centered aggrandizement. The true value of such “service” will become obvious to all in the day of God's judgment (see Rev. 3:17, 18).

3:16, 17 Do you not know: This phrase, found in nine other places

in 1 Corinthians (5:6; 6:2, 3, 9, 15, 16, 19; 9:13, 24), always introduces an indisputable statement. **temple:** There are two words translated *temple* in the NT. One refers to the temple building and all its courts; the other refers strictly to the Most Holy Place where no one but the high priest could go. Paul uses the latter term to describe the local church, in whom **God dwells**. Unlike 6:19, where the word *temple* refers to the individual believer, and Eph. 2:21, where the word speaks of the church universal, these verses speak of the local church as God's temple. God takes very seriously our actions in the church. **destroy:** Any person who disrupts and destroys the church by divisions, malice, and other harmful acts invites God's discipline (see 11:30–32).

3:18–23 The wisdom of this world does not coincide with God's wisdom, the foolishness of Christ crucified (see 1:18–25). Paul quotes from Job 5:13 and Ps. 94:11 to urge the members of the Corinthian church to humble themselves. **all things are yours:** The Stoic literature of the time, which the Corinthians would have known, often spoke of the wise man as possessing everything. Everything God has done in the church, and in the entire universe, benefits all believers. There is no place for foolish boasting or competition among Christians.

4:1 Servants had no unique position, but **stewards** did. A steward was a slave who administered all the affairs of his master's household, though he himself owned nothing (compare the testimony of the early church in Acts 4:32). Joseph held such a position in the house of Potiphar (see Gen. 39:2–19). As stewards, believers manage the message and ministry God has entrusted to them.

4:3–5 each one's praise will come from God: A steward was not to worry about the evaluations of those around him or even his own self-assessment; he needed only to please his master. Similarly, while believers can benefit from the constructive evaluations of fellow believers, their ultimate Judge is the Lord Himself. Since God is the Judge, we should be careful not to make any premature evaluations of others.

futile

(Gk. *mataios*) (3:20; 15:17; Titus 3:9; James 1:26) Strong's #3152

This word means “pointless” and “purposeless.” The NT writers, especially Paul, used it to depict the meaninglessness that pervades the thought life of fallen human beings. Paul characterizes the “thoughts of the wise” as being futile (3:20), and he describes the Gentiles as living “in the futility of their minds, having their understanding darkened” because they are “alienated from the life of God” (Eph. 4:17, 18). The ideas of the unregenerate are futile and aimless because they lack divine insight; they produce a life of purposelessness and ineffectiveness. Salvation from such futility comes from the indwelling Spirit of Christ in believers (see Rom. 8:10, 11, 26, 27).

Fools for Christ's Sake

⁶Now these things, brethren, I have figuratively transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes, that you may learn in us not to think beyond what is written, that none of you may be ³puffed up on behalf of one against the other. ⁷For who ⁴makes you differ from another? And ⁸what do you have that you did not receive? Now if you did indeed receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?

⁸You are already full! ^hYou are already rich! You have reigned as kings without us—and indeed I could wish you did reign, that we also might reign with you! ⁹For I think that God has displayed us, the apostles, last, as men condemned to death; for we have been made a ⁱspectacle⁵ to the world, both to angels and to men. ¹⁰We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are wise in Christ! ^kWe are weak, but you are strong! You are distinguished, but we are dishonored! ¹¹To the present hour we both hunger and thirst, and we are poorly clothed, and beaten, and homeless. ^{12l}And we labor, working with our own hands. ^mBeing reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we endure; ¹³being defamed, we ⁶entreat. ⁿWe have been made as the filth of the world, the offscouring of all things until now.

Paul's Paternal Care

¹⁴I do not write these things to shame you, but ^oas my beloved children I warn you. ¹⁵For though you might have ten

⁶ ³ arrogant
⁷ ⁹ John 3:27; Rom. 12:3, 6; 1 Pet. 4:10
⁴ distinguishes you
⁸ ¹ Rev. 3:17
⁹ ¹ Heb. 10:33 ⁵ Lit. theater
¹⁰ ¹ Acts 17:18; 26:24; 1 Cor. 1:18
^k ¹ 1 Cor. 2:3; 2 Cor. 13:9
¹² ¹ Acts 18:3; 20:34
^m Matt. 5:44
¹³ ⁿ Lam. 3:45
⁶ exhort, encourage
¹⁴ ^o 2 Cor. 6:13;
¹²:14; 1 Thess. 2:11;
¹ John 2:1; 3 John 4
¹⁵ ^p Num. 11:12;
¹ Acts 18:11; 1 Cor. 3:8; Gal. 4:19;
¹⁶ ^q Phil. 10
¹⁶ ^q [1 Cor. 11:1];
¹ Phil. 3:17; 4:9;
¹ [1 Thess. 1:6];
² Thess. 3:9
¹⁷ ^r Acts 19:22;
¹ Phil. 2:19 ^s 1 Cor. 4:14; 1 Tim. 1:2, 18;
² Tim. 1:2 ^t 1 Cor. 11:2 ^u 1 Cor. 7:17;
¹ Titus 1:5 ^v 1 Cor. 14:33
¹⁸ ^w 1 Cor. 5:2
⁷ arrogant
¹⁹ ^x Acts 19:21;
²⁰:2; 1 Cor. 11:34;
¹⁶:5, 7-9; 2 Cor. 1:15
^y Acts 18:21; Heb. 6:3; James 4:15
²⁰ ^z 1 Thess. 1:5
^a 1 Cor. 2:4
²¹ ^b 2 Cor. 10:2

CHAPTER 5

¹ ^a Lev. 18:6-8;
² Deut. 22:30; 27:20
³ NU omits named
² ^b 1 Cor. 4:18

thousand instructors in Christ, yet *you* do not have many fathers; for ^pin Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel. ¹⁶Therefore I urge you, ^qimitate me. ¹⁷For this reason I have sent ^rTimothy to you, ^swho is my beloved and faithful son in the Lord, who will ^tremind you of my ways in Christ, as I ^uteach everywhere ^vin every church.

^{18w}Now some are ⁷puffed up, as though I were not coming to you. ^{19x}But I will come to you shortly, ^yif the Lord wills, and I will know, not the word of those who are puffed up, but the power. ²⁰For ^zthe kingdom of God is not in word but in ^apower. ²¹What do you want? ^bShall I come to you with a rod, or in love and a spirit of gentleness?

Immorality Defiles the Church

5 It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and such sexual immorality as is not even ¹named among the Gentiles—that a man has his father's ^awife! ^{2b}And you are ²puffed up, and have not rather ^cmourned, that he who has done this deed might be taken away from among you. ^{3d}For I indeed, as absent in body but present in spirit, have already judged (as though I were present) him who has so done this deed. ⁴In the ^ename of our Lord Jesus Christ, when you are gathered together, along with my spirit, ^fwith the power of our Lord Jesus

^c 2 Cor. 7:7-10 ² arrogant ³ ^d Col. 2:5; 1 Thess. 2:17
⁴ ^e [Matt. 18:20] ^f [Matt. 16:19; John 20:23]; 2 Cor. 12:9

4:6 The Greek term translated **learn** is related to the word translated *disciple* in Matt. 28:19. It implies the use of a skill and not just knowledge. The Corinthians knew about humility, so Paul called on them to become humble. Greeks considered humility to be a fault, a characteristic of slaves. To the Christian, however, it exemplifies the attitude of Christ (see Phil. 2:5–8). **in us:** Paul presented himself and Apollos as models to follow (v. 16; 11:1). **what is written:** This word is often used to introduce a quotation of the OT (see Rom. 14:11). Paul was exhorting the Corinthians not to go beyond the teachings of Scripture. Then they would avoid the pride and divisions that were fracturing their church. A true minister of God's Word will use Scripture to unify and strengthen the church.

4:9 Spectacle alludes to the public executions carried out by the Romans. In these executions condemned men were brought into the coliseum, where they were tormented and killed by wild animals as cheering crowds looked on. Paul pointed out that the whole world and the angels were witnesses to the humiliation of God's servants. With biting sarcasm Paul contrasted the Corinthians' lofty evaluation of themselves with the world's evaluation of him. Paul knew that true strength is found in understanding our weakness and Christ's sufficiency (see 2 Cor. 12:7–10; Phil. 4:11–13).

4:11–13 Paul lists the hardships he had suffered in Christ's ministry, both physical challenges and verbal abuse (see also 2 Cor. 11:22–30).

4:15 instructors . . . fathers: Paul used these two terms to differentiate between his role and the role of the Corinthian teachers, slaves who took care of their masters' children. Paul was the Corinthians' spiritual father. He had final responsibility for them and the right to command them to follow his example.

4:16 Paul urged his readers to **imitate** him as he followed Christ (see 11:1). The word refers to the way a student would follow a teacher or the way an actor would play a role (see 11:1).

4:18–20 Some people in Corinth, probably the instructors who had caused divisions (see v. 15), acted as though Paul would never return to hold them accountable for their actions. **puffed up:** These people were conceited and prone to boasting. **The kingdom of God** here does not refer to the future reign of Christ, but to Christ's present rule in the hearts of His people. This reality guaranteed that Paul would have the power to expose and discipline those who afflicted the Corinthian church.

4:21 Paul uses the same Greek word for **rod** here that Luke uses to describe the instrument that was used to beat Paul and Silas (see Acts 16:22–24). The term also is used figuratively of Christ's authority to judge (see Rev. 19:15). God had given Paul authority to punish the agitators in Corinth, though he preferred not to use that power.

5:1 The **sexual immorality** of incest was forbidden by OT law (see Lev. 18:8; Deut. 22:30) and by Roman law. Paul used the phrase **his father's wife** instead of "his mother" probably to indicate that the woman was the offender's stepmother. The omission of discipline for the woman implies that she was not a believer. The church is responsible for disciplining only its members, not unbelievers.

5:2 puffed up: The Corinthians had a twisted view of grace that caused them to be proud of their tolerance of the sexual offender. They believed that because God's grace is limitless, the freedom that every Christian enjoys is also limitless.

Christ, ^{5g}deliver such a one to ^hSatan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord ³Jesus.

⁶ⁱYour glorying is not good. Do you not know that ^ja little leaven leavens the whole lump? ⁷Therefore ⁴purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed ^kChrist, our ^lPassover, was sacrificed ⁵for us. ⁸Therefore ^mlet us keep the feast, ⁿnot with old leaven, nor ^owith the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened *bread* of sincerity and truth.

Immorality Must Be Judged

⁹I wrote to you in my epistle ^pnot to ⁶keep company with sexually immoral people. ¹⁰Yet *I* certainly *did* not *mean* with the sexually immoral people of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or idolaters, since then you would need to go ^qout of the world. ¹¹But now I have written to you not to keep company ^rwith anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner—^snot even to eat with such a person.

¹²For what *have I to do* with judging

^{5 g} Ps. 109:6; Prov. 23:14; Luke 22:31; 1 Tim. 1:20 ^h [Acts 26:18] ³ NU omits Jesus

^{6 i} 1 Cor. 3:21 / Hos. 7:4; Matt. 16:6, 12; Gal. 5:9; 2 Tim. 2:17

^{7 k} Is. 53:7 ^l John 19:14 ⁴ *clean out* ⁵ NU omits for us

^{8 m} Ex. 12:15 ⁿ Deut. 16:3 ^o Matt. 16:6

^{9 p} 2 Cor. 6:14; Eph. 5:11; 2 Thess. 3:6

⁶ *associate* ^{10 q} John 17:15

^{11 r} Matt. 18:17 ⁵ Gal. 2:12

^{13 t} Deut. 13:5; 17:7, 12; 19:19; 21:21; 22:21, 24; 24:7; 1 Cor. 5:2

CHAPTER 6

¹ ^a Dan. 7:22; Matt. 19:28

^{2 b} Ps. 49:14

^{3 c} 2 Pet. 2:4

^{4 i} *courts*

^{7 d} [Prov. 20:22]

those also who are outside? Do you not judge those who are inside? ¹³But those who are outside God judges. Therefore ^t*“put away from yourselves the evil person.”*

Do Not Sue the Brethren

6 Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the ^asaints? ²Do you not know that ^bthe saints will judge the world? And if the world will be judged by you, are you unworthy to judge the smallest matters? ³Do you not know that we shall ^cjudge angels? How much more, things that pertain to this life? ⁴If then you have ⁱjudgments concerning things pertaining to this life, do you appoint those who are least esteemed by the church to judge? ⁵I say this to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you, not even one, who will be able to judge between his brethren? ⁶But brother goes to law against brother, and that before unbelievers!

⁷Now therefore, it is already an utter failure for you that you go to law against one another. ^dWhy do you not rather accept wrong? Why do you not rather *let yourselves* be cheated? ⁸No, you yourselves do wrong and cheat, and *you do*

5:5 Destruction of the flesh may refer to God's turning the sexual offender over to **Satan** for physical affliction or even physical death. After being separated from the spiritual protection of the church, ideally the offender would recognize his sin, repent, and return to the church. All church discipline has restoration as its ultimate goal.

5:6–8 The backdrop for this passage is the Passover (see Ex. 12), when the Israelites removed yeast from their homes in preparation for the feast. The removal of leaven was a reminder of the Israelites' quick departure from Egypt. They did not have time to wait for leavened bread to rise. The point here is that a little leaven has tremendous impact or influence on whatever it is in. The Corinthian church was tolerating sexual sin. This leaven of sin, though small in size, was dangerous, because it could spread through the church. Like cancer, sin demands drastic surgery.

5:6 Like a tiny pinch of **leaven** spreading through a loaf of bread, unchallenged sin can soon contaminate the whole church. The sexual offender was guilty of sin, but the whole congregation was also guilty of ignoring the man's disobedience and failing to hold him accountable. Left unchecked, this sin could have caused many new believers to commit sexual immorality.

5:7 Jewish people were required to sweep all **leaven** out of their houses in preparation for the Passover (see Ex. 12:15). The *leaven* here symbolizes the powerful influence of sin.

5:8 The feast is a figure of speech for Christ. As Israel was to remove all leaven from the celebration of the Passover, so the Corinthians were not to contaminate their relationship with Christ with any **malice** or **wickedness**.

5:9–13 Paul here corrects a misunderstanding arising out of his previous letter (v. 9). He had commanded the Corinthians to withdraw themselves from sexually immoral people. In this letter, Paul explains that he was not speaking of the pagan culture around them. If they withdrew totally they would be unable to function in the world. Instead, he was talking about the immorality in their midst. They should judge the sin among themselves, while still reaching out to the lost in Corinth.

5:9 My epistle refers to an earlier letter from Paul to the Corinthians that no longer survives.

5:10 out of the world: Christians are called to influence the world, not run away from it (see Matt. 5:13–16). They are agents of God to carry the light of Jesus Christ into a dark world (see Phil. 2:14–16; 1 Pet. 2:11, 12).

5:11 not even to eat with such a person: Eating together is a key part of fellowship and closeness with others. The Corinthians were not to have fellowship with those who claimed to be Christians but whose lives were dominated by sin.

5:12, 13 do you not judge . . . God judges: The church's responsibility is to discipline its members while trusting the Lord to judge the world (see Matt. 13:30).

6:1–11 In these verses, Paul instructs the Corinthians to stop taking their personal disputes into the pagan courts. The Corinthians had been carrying their conflicts to the Roman courts and thus were making a mockery of Christianity by feuding in public. Their inability to settle personal disputes illustrated the sharp divisions in the church (see 1:10–17).

6:3 Believers will participate in judging fallen **angels** (see Rev. 19:19, 20; 20:10). Paul suggested that if the Corinthians were going to be judging with Christ in His future kingdom (see Matt. 19:28), then surely they had the means to settle their own personal differences.

6:4, 5 Those who are least esteemed refers to judges in civil courts. The Corinthians, though they had the ability to judge the issues themselves, took their disputes to pagan court for the judges there to decide.

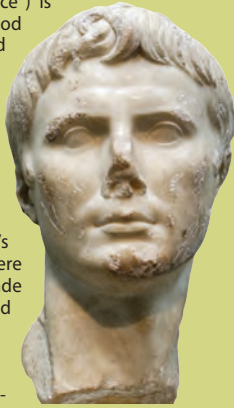
6:7, 8 cheated . . . cheat: In all of their bickering, the Corinthians made frivolous and even dishonest charges against one another. Paul suggested that it was better to be *cheated* by one of these dishonest people than to dishonor one's Christian witness before pagans.



Pax Romana

The title *Pax Romana* ("Roman peace") is given to the Roman Empire in the period from 30 B.C. to A.D. 180. This period began with the rule of Octavian. After a century of civil strife, Rome was at last united under one ruler. Octavian, given the title Augustus by the Roman Senate, concentrated on his empire's internal problems and laid the foundation for strong rule and peace.

The *Pax Romana* increased Rome's trade and prosperity. Great roads were built; tolls and other barriers to trade were removed. Stable coinage and improved methods of banking and credit encouraged economic expansion. A key to maintaining peace was Augustus's willingness to allow provinces local self-government, coupled with his quick use of military force to stifle rebellion or terrorism. Augustus allowed conquered nations to keep their language, customs, and religion, as long as the people stayed on peaceful terms with Rome.



Marble bust of the emperor Augustus

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these things *to your* brethren! ⁹ Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. ¹⁰ Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor ²homosexuals, nor ³sodomites, ¹⁰ nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. ¹¹ And such were ^fsome of you. ¹² But you were washed, but you were ⁴sanctified, but you

⁹ ^e Acts 20:32; [1 Cor. 15:50]; Gal. 5:21; Eph. 5:5; 1 Tim. 1:9 ² *catamites*, those submitting to homosexuals ³ *male homosexuals* ¹¹ ^f [1 Cor. 12:2; Col. 3:5-7; Titus 3:3-7] ⁹ Heb. 10:22 ⁴ *set apart* ¹² ^h 1 Cor. 10:23

were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.

Glorify God in Body and Spirit

¹² ^h All things are lawful for me, but all things are not ⁵helpful. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of ⁶any. ¹³ ⁱ Foods for the stomach and the stomach for foods, but God will destroy both it and them. Now the body *is* not for ^jsexual immorality but ^kfor the Lord, ^land the Lord for the body. ¹⁴ And ^mGod both raised up the Lord and will also raise us up ⁿby His power.

¹⁵ Do you not know that ^oyour bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make *them* members of a harlot? Certainly not! ¹⁶ Or do you not know that he who is joined to a harlot is one body *with her*? For ^p "*the two*," He says, "*shall become one flesh*." ¹⁷ ^q But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit *with Him*.

¹⁸ ^r Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins ^sagainst his own body. ¹⁹ Or ^t do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit *who is* in you, whom you have from God, ^uand you are not your own? ²⁰ For ^v you were bought at a price;

⁵ *profitable* ⁶ *Or anything* ¹³ ⁱ Matt. 15:17; [Rom. 14:17]; Col. 2:22 / 1 Cor. 5:1; Gal. 5:19; Eph. 5:3; Col. 3:5; 1 Thess. 4:3 ^k 1 Thess. 4:3 / [Eph. 5:23] ¹⁴ ^m Rom. 6:5, 8; 2 Cor. 4:14 ⁿ Eph. 1:19 ¹⁵ ^o Rom. 12:5; 1 Cor. 6:13; 12:27; Eph. 5:30 ¹⁶ ^p Gen. 2:24; Matt. 19:5; Mark 10:8; Eph. 5:31 ¹⁷ ^q [John 17:21-23; Rom. 8:9-11]; 1 Cor. 6:15; [Gal. 2:20]; Eph. 4:4 ¹⁸ ^r Rom. 6:12; 1 Cor. 6:9; 2 Cor. 12:21; Eph. 5:3; Col. 3:5; Heb. 13:4 ^s Rom. 1:24; 1 Thess. 4:4 ¹⁹ ^t John 2:21; 1 Cor. 3:16; 2 Cor. 6:16 ^u Rom. 14:20 ^v Acts 20:28; 1 Cor. 7:23; Gal. 3:13; 1 Pet. 1:18; 2 Pet. 2:1; Rev. 5:9

6:9, 10 The kingdom of God here seems to refer to a future time when God will rule the earth in righteousness (see Matt. 6:10; Luke 11:2). **do not be deceived:** Tragically, Christians sometimes deceive themselves into thinking that God does not require them to live righteously. Paul emphasizes that the kinds of people listed in these verses will not **inherit** or possess the kingdom of God.

6:11 In this verse, Paul uses three terms to describe the conversion of the Corinthians. The tense of all three verbs indicates an action in the past that is complete. **Washed** means spiritually cleansed by God. **Sanctified** means set apart as God's people. **Justified** means declared righteous by God because of Christ's work on the Cross.

6:12 All things are lawful for me was a slogan the Corinthians had coined to justify their immoral behavior. Paul reminded the Corinthians that freedom from the ceremonial laws of Moses did not give them license to sin or indulge their own selfishness. This would only enslave them in the sin from which Jesus had freed them. **under the power of any:** The only power that should control us is the Holy Spirit. Sin should never dominate our lives because the Spirit empowers us to fight temptation.

6:13, 14 Foods for the stomach and the stomach for foods was another phrase the Corinthians used to justify their sinful lifestyles (v. 12). Food was gratifying and essential for life. When the Corinthians became hungry, they ate. Following the same logic, whenever the Corinthians craved sex, they indulged themselves. In their opin-

ion any physical activity should not affect one's spiritual life, just as digesting food did not affect one's spirituality. The Corinthians' reasoning had two faults: (1) The stomach and the digestive process are in a sense no more than earthly and without function in eternity. But the body, through the resurrection power of Christ, is eternal. It has been sanctified by God to bring Him glory (v. 20). (2) While the stomach's purpose is to digest food, it is not the purpose of the body to commit immorality. Furthermore by design God put restrictions on both eating and sexual activity.

6:15-17 Believers' lives are greatly altered when they are joined to Christ. The union affects both the believer and Christ. When a believer commits immorality, he or she is dragging the union with Christ into the illicit relationship. By quoting Gen. 2:24, that **the two . . . shall become one flesh**, Paul illustrates the seriousness of sexual sin.

6:18 Every sin that a man does is outside the body was another slogan used by the Corinthians to justify their immorality (vv. 12, 13). Paul pointed out that the opposite is true: sexual sin is done **against** the body, not outside of it. Paul exhorted the Corinthians to **flee** any temptation to indulge in sexual sin (see Gen. 39:1-12).

6:20 Bought at a price alludes to someone purchasing a slave at a slave auction. With His death Jesus Christ paid the cost to redeem us from our slavery to sin (see Eph. 1:7; 1 Pet. 1:18, 19).

therefore glorify God in your body ⁷and in your spirit, which are God's.

Principles of Marriage

7 Now concerning the things of which you wrote to me:

^a*It is good for a man not to touch a woman.* ²Nevertheless, because of sexual immorality, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband. ^{3b}Let the husband render to his wife the affection due her, and likewise also the wife to her husband. ⁴The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband *does*. And likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife *does*. ^{5c}Do not deprive one another except with consent for a time, that you may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again so that ^dSatan does not tempt you because of your lack of self-control. ⁶But I say this as a concession, ^enot as a commandment. ⁷For ^fI wish that all men were even as I myself. But each one has his own gift from God, one in this manner and another in that.

⁸But I say to the unmarried and to the widows: ^gIt is good for them if they remain even as I am; ⁹but ^hif they cannot exercise self-control, let them marry. For it is better to marry than to burn *with passion*.

20 ⁷ NU omits the rest of v. 20.

CHAPTER 7

- 1 ^a 1 Cor. 7:8, 26
- 3 ^b Ex. 21:10
- 5 ^c Joel 2:16
- ^d 1 Thess. 3:5
- 6 ^e 2 Cor. 8:8
- 7 ^f Acts 26:29
- 8 ^g 1 Cor. 7:1, 26
- 9 ^h 1 Tim. 5:14

- 10 ⁱ Mark 10:6-10
- ^j Mal. 2:14; [Matt. 5:32]
- 14 ^k Ezra 9:2; Mal. 2:15
- 15 ^l Rom. 12:18
- 16 ^m Rom. 11:14;
- 1 Pet. 3:1
- 17 ⁿ 1 Cor. 4:17
- ¹ direct

Keep Your Marriage Vows

¹⁰Now to the married I command, *yet* not I but the ⁱLord: ^jA wife is not to depart from *her* husband. ¹¹But even if she does depart, let her remain unmarried or be reconciled to *her* husband. And a husband is not to divorce *his* wife.

¹²But to the rest I, not the Lord, say: If any brother has a wife who does not believe, and she is willing to live with him, let him not divorce her. ¹³And a woman who has a husband who does not believe, if he is willing to live with her, let her not divorce him. ¹⁴For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband; otherwise ^kyour children would be unclean, but now they are holy. ¹⁵But if the unbeliever departs, let him depart; a brother or a sister is not under bondage in such *cases*. But God has called us ^lto peace. ¹⁶For how do you know, O wife, whether you will ^msave *your* husband? Or how do you know, O husband, whether you will save *your* wife?

Live as You Are Called

¹⁷But as God has distributed to each one, as the Lord has called each one, so let him walk. And ⁿso I ¹ordain in all the churches. ¹⁸Was anyone called while circumcised? Let him not become uncir-

7:1 things of which you wrote to me: After addressing the problems reported by the people of Chloe's household (1:11), Paul began to answer questions that had been sent to him (7:1—14:40). **It is good for a man not to touch a woman:** There were two extreme positions in the Corinthian church. Both groups falsely separated the physical and the spiritual, believing that neither affected the other. One group was hedonistic. This group claimed that sin only had to do with the physical body, and that believers could sin in their body without any consequence to their spiritual lives. Paul corrects this misunderstanding in ch. 6. The other group believed that all things spiritual are good, and all things physical are bad, and that in order to be truly spiritual a person has to suppress every physical desire.

temple

(Gk. *naos*) (3:16; 6:19; 2 Cor. 6:16; Eph. 2:21; Rev. 21:22) Strong's #3485

This Greek word for *temple* refers more to the building itself than *hieron*, which was used to indicate the entire temple complex. Paul told the believers that each one of their bodies was a *naos*, a sanctuary for God (6:19). Paul also said that the church, as Christ's body, is a spiritual *temple* for God (3:16, 17; 2 Cor. 6:16; Eph. 2:21). What a special privilege it is to be God's spiritual dwelling place, both individually and corporately. The glory of God filled the tabernacle (see Ex. 40:34) and the temple (see 1 Kin. 8:10, 11). Now the glory of God in the person of the Holy Spirit dwells within every believer (see John 14:16, 17) and thus inhabits the entire church. In the New Jerusalem, there will be no need for a physical temple because God and the Lamb will be the eternal temple (Rev. 21:22).

Proponents of this view claimed that celibacy is the only proper life-style. Paul corrects their misunderstanding here and explains that while sexual relationships in marriage are good, he chose celibacy in his own personal situation.

7:2 Because of the rampant **immorality** in Corinth, Paul encouraged those who might be tempted to commit sexual sin to marry. It is better to develop a permanent relationship with a wife or husband than to lapse into sexual sin.

7:3–5 affection: Husbands and wives have a duty to maintain sexual relations with each other so that neither will be tempted by **Satan** to have sex outside of marriage.

7:10, 11 not I but the Lord: When Christ was on earth, He told us not to *divorce* a spouse; instead of *divorce*, Paul uses the word translated **depart**, which refers to wives leaving their husbands. The idea is the same: a believing husband and wife should not leave each other. The further statement that if the couple divorced they were to remain **unmarried** is consistent with Jesus' teaching (see Mark 10:9–12).

7:12 I, not the Lord, say: Paul now presents a problem that was not addressed by Jesus. Sometimes a husband or wife would become a Christian, but the spouse would not. Paul exhorts the believer to remain married if the unbelieving spouse does not want to divorce.

7:14 Sanctified primarily means "set apart." Here the term refers to the special situation an unbelieving husband or wife enjoys when his or her spouse is a believer, being exposed to God's teachings. **Unclean** here probably means the opposite of *sanctified*. Children with one believing parent may learn about God and come to Christ.

7:15 If an unbeliever seeks to divorce a believing spouse, the Christian is **not under bondage** or obligation to continue the marriage. **7:16 how do you know:** The Greek grammar suggests that Paul asked the question expecting a negative answer. The promise given in 1 Pet. 3:1–6, however, reminds us that consistent obedience to God can make a skeptical spouse into a believing one. **7:17–24 so let him walk:** This section develops the theme of faith-

cumcised. Was anyone called while uncircumcised? ¹⁹Let him not be circumcised. ¹⁹*Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing, but ^qkeeping the commandments of God is what matters.* ²⁰Let each one remain in the same calling in which he was called. ²¹Were you called *while a slave*? Do not be concerned about it; but if you can be made free, rather use it. ²²For he who is called in the Lord *while a slave* is ^rthe Lord's freedman. Likewise he who is called *while free* is ^sChrist's slave. ²³ⁱYou were bought at a price; do not become slaves of men. ²⁴Brethren, let each one remain with ^uGod in that *state* in which he was called.

To the Unmarried and Widows

²⁵Now concerning virgins: ^vI have no commandment from the Lord; yet I give judgment as one ^wwhom the Lord in His mercy has made ^xtrustworthy. ²⁶I suppose therefore that this is good because of the present distress—^ythat *it is good* for a man to remain as he is: ²⁷Are you bound to a wife? Do not seek to be loosed. Are you loosed from a wife? Do not seek a wife. ²⁸But even if you do marry, you have not sinned; and if a virgin marries, she has not sinned. Nevertheless such will have trouble in the flesh, but I would spare you.

²⁹But ^zthis I say, brethren, the time is short, so that from now on even those who have wives should be as though they had none, ³⁰those who weep as though they did not weep, those who rejoice as though they did not rejoice, those who

¹⁸ ^o Acts 15:1
¹⁹ ^p [Rom. 2:27, 29; Gal. 3:28; 5:6; 6:15; Col. 3:11] ^q [John 15:14]
²² ^r [John 8:36]; Rom. 6:18; Philem. 16 ^s [1 Cor. 9:21; Gal. 5:13; Eph. 6:6; Col. 3:24; 1 Pet. 2:16]
²³ ^t Lev. 25:42; 1 Cor. 6:20; 1 Pet. 1:18, 19; Rev. 5:9
²⁴ ^u [Eph. 6:5-8; Col. 3:22-24]
²⁵ ^v 2 Cor. 8:8
²⁶ ^w 2 Cor. 4:1; 1 Tim. 1:13, 16; 1 Tim. 1:12
²⁷ ^x 1 Cor. 7:1, 8
²⁹ ^y [Rom. 13:11]; 1 Cor. 7:31; 1 Pet. 4:7; [2 Pet. 3:8, 9]

³¹ ^a 1 Cor. 9:18 ^b Ps. 39:6; 1 Cor. 7:29; James 1:10; 4:14; 1 Pet. 1:24; 4:7; [1 John 2:17]
³² ^c 1 Tim. 5:5
³ ^{concern} ³ is concerned about
³⁴ ^d Luke 10:40
³⁶ ^e Or virgin daughter
³⁷ ^f Or virgin daughter
³⁸ ^e Heb. 13:4 ^g NU his own virgin
³⁹ ^f Rom. 7:2
^g 2 Cor. 6:14
⁴⁰ ^h 1 Cor. 7:6, 25
ⁱ 1 Thess. 4:8

buy as though they did not possess, ³¹and those who use this world as not ^amisusing it. For ^bthe form of this world is passing away.

³²But I want you to be without ²care. ^cHe who is unmarried ³cares for the things of the Lord—how he may please the Lord. ³³But he who is married cares about the things of the world—how he may please *his* wife. ³⁴There is a difference between a wife and a virgin. The unmarried woman ^dcares about the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit. But she who is married cares about the things of the world—how she may please *her* husband. ³⁵And this I say for your own profit, not that I may put a leash on you, but for what is proper, and that you may serve the Lord without distraction.

³⁶But if any man thinks he is behaving improperly toward his ⁴virgin, if she is past the flower of youth, and thus it must be, let him do what he wishes. He does not sin; let them marry. ³⁷Nevertheless he who stands steadfast in his heart, having no necessity, but has power over his own will, and has so determined in his heart that he will keep his ⁵virgin, does well. ³⁸^eSo then he who gives ⁶*her* in marriage does well, but he who does not give *her* in marriage does better.

³⁹^fA wife is bound by law as long as her husband lives; but if her husband dies, she is at liberty to be married to whom she wishes, ^gonly in the Lord. ⁴⁰But she is happier if she remains as she is, ^haccording to my judgment—and ⁱI think I also have the Spirit of God.

fulness to the Christian calling rather than to social status. Whether you are **slave** or **free**—upper class or lower, powerful or powerless, married or single—is irrelevant; what matters is your calling from God (see Col. 3:11).

7:25–40 I have no commandment from the Lord: Paul clearly distinguishes his words as an apostle from the words of Christ. **virgins:** This classification of the unmarried in the church is probably smaller than the one mentioned in v. 8, which included widows and those who had been married before. Though Paul is concerned with both celibate men and women, the attention here is on the women. Although the Greek term used in v. 25 could refer to either men or women, the other instances in this passage refer to women (vv. 28, 34, 36, 37). By the second century, the church had developed important offices for virgins, widows, and deaconesses. Since they were unencumbered with the duties of a wife, they could assist the pastors and deacons in baptizing, ministering to the sick, and other works of mercy.

7:26, 27 present distress: Paul saw turbulent days ahead for married Christians because in times of persecution, consideration for family can make it difficult to live out Christian convictions to the fullest extent. A virgin would have lesser family responsibilities and would not be deterred by the possibility of repercussions affecting her husband or children.

7:28 Paul does not want to be understood as prohibiting marriage altogether.

7:29 as though they had none: To get married is not sin, but even married couples should dedicate themselves to God's work.

7:36–38 One interpretation of this passage is that **any man** refers to the father of an unmarried **virgin**. **She is past the flower of youth** indicates that the virgin is approaching an age at which marriage would be unlikely. Under these circumstances, it would be perfectly acceptable for the father to give **her in marriage**. A second interpretation suggests that the *any man* of v. 36 refers to a fiancé who is maintaining a celibate state with a *virgin* but is having difficulty doing so. In this view, the Greek term otherwise translated "she is past the flower of youth" is translated "he has strong passions." If the man has difficulty in controlling his sex drive, he should **marry** (v. 9). On the other hand, if he can control himself (**has power over his own will**), he should maintain his celibacy (v. 8). **having no necessity:** If the man can control himself and keep himself from immoral action, he should stay single. On the other hand, if the man's will is weak, he should go ahead and marry.

7:39, 40 bound by law: This passage is similar to Rom. 7:2, where Paul used marriage to illustrate obligation to the law. Here he emphasizes that marriage should be lifelong. In a case where a marriage partner has died, the only restriction concerning remarriage is for the person to marry a fellow Christian. Even though remarriage is permitted, Paul still believes that it is wiser to remain unmarried (v. 8). **I also have the Spirit of God:** The Holy Spirit enabled Paul not only to speak with apostolic authority, but also with spiritual wisdom.

Be Sensitive to Conscience

8 Now ^aconcerning things offered to idols: We know that we all have ^bknowledge. ^cKnowledge ¹puffs up, but love ²edifies. ²And ^dif anyone thinks that he knows anything, he knows nothing yet as he ought to know. ³But if anyone loves God, this one is known by Him.

⁴Therefore concerning the eating of things offered to idols, we know that ^ean idol is nothing in the world, ^fand that *there is no other God but one.* ⁵For even if there are ^gso-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (as there are many gods and many lords), ⁶yet ^hfor us *there is one God, the Father, ⁱof whom are all things, and we for Him; and ^jone Lord Jesus Christ, ^kthrough whom are all things, and ^lthrough whom we live.*

⁷However, *there is not in everyone that knowledge; for some, ^mwith consciousness of the idol, until now eat it as a thing offered to an idol; and their conscience, being weak, is ⁿdefiled.* ⁸But ^ofood does not commend us to God; for neither if we eat are we the better, nor if we do not eat are we the worse.

⁹But ^pbeware lest somehow this liberty of yours become ^qa ³stumbling block to those who are weak. ¹⁰For if anyone sees you who have knowledge eating in an idol's temple, will not ^rthe conscience of him who is weak be emboldened to eat those things offered to idols? ¹¹And ^sbecause of your knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died? ¹²But ^twhen you thus sin against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ. ¹³Therefore, *"if food makes my brother stumble, I will never again eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble.*

CHAPTER 8

1 ^a Acts 15:20;
1 Cor. 8:4, 7, 10
2 ^b Rom. 14:14 ^c Rom. 14:3 ¹ makes arrogant ² builds up
2 ^d [1 Cor. 13:8-12]; Gal. 6:3; [1 Tim. 6:4]
4 ^e Is. 41:24 ^f Deut. 4:35, 39; 6:4; 1 Cor. 8:6
5 ^g [John 10:34]
6 ^h Mal. 2:10; Eph. 4:6 ⁱ Acts 17:28
John 13:13; 1 Cor. 1:2; Eph. 4:5; [1 Tim. 2:5] ^j John 1:3; [Col. 1:16, 17]; Heb. 1:2
1 ^k Rom. 5:11; Rev. 4:11; 5:9, 10
7 ^m [1 Cor. 10:28]
8 ⁿ Rom. 14:14, 22
9 ^o [Rom. 14:17]
9 ^p Gal. 5:13 ^q Rom. 14:13, 21; 1 Cor. 10:28 ³ cause of offense
10 ^r 1 Cor. 10:28
11 ^s Rom. 14:15, 20
12 ^t Matt. 25:40
13 ^u Rom. 14:21;
1 Cor. 10:32; 2 Cor. 6:3; 11:29

CHAPTER 9

1 ^a Acts 9:15; 2 Cor. 12:12 ^b Acts 9:3, 17; 18:9; 22:14, 18; 23:11; 1 Cor. 15:8
2 ^c 1 Cor. 3:6; 4:15
2 ^d 2 Cor. 12:12
3 ^e certification
4 ^f 1 Cor. 9:14;
[1 Thess. 2:6, 9]; 2 Thess. 3:8
2 ^g authority
5 ^h Matt. 13:55
9 ⁱ Matt. 8:14; John 1:42 ³ Lit. a sister, a wife
6 ^j Acts 4:36;
[2 Thess. 3:8]
7 ^k 2 Cor. 10:4;
1 Tim. 1:18; 2 Tim. 2:3 ^l Deut. 20:6;
Prov. 27:18; 1 Cor. 3:6, 8 ^k John 21:15

A Pattern of Self-Denial

9 Am ^aI not an apostle? Am I not free? ^bHave I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? ^cAre you not my work in the Lord? ²If I am not an apostle to others, yet doubtless I am to you. For you are ^dthe ¹seal of my apostleship in the Lord.

³My defense to those who examine me is this: ^{4e}Do we have no ²right to eat and drink? ⁵Do we have no right to take along ^{3a}a believing wife, as *do* also the other apostles, ^fthe brothers of the Lord, and ^gCephas? ⁶Or *is it* only Barnabas and I ^hwho have no right to refrain from working? ⁷Who ever ⁱgoes to war at his own expense? Who ^jplants a vineyard and does not eat of its fruit? Or who ^ktends a flock and does not drink of the milk of the flock?

⁸Do I say these things as a *mere* man? Or does not the law say the same also? ⁹For it is written in the law of Moses, ¹*"You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain."* Is it oxen God is concerned about? ¹⁰Or does He say *it* altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, *this* is written, that ^mhe who plows should plow in hope, and he who threshes in hope should be partaker of his hope. ¹¹*"If we have sown spiritual things for you, is it a great thing if we reap your material things?"* ¹²If others are partakers of *this* right over you, *are* we not even more?

^oNevertheless we have not used this right, but endure all things ^plest we hinder the gospel of Christ. ^{13q}Do you not know that those who minister the holy things eat *of the things* of the ^rtemple, and those who serve at the altar partake of *the*

9 ^l Deut. 25:4; 1 Tim. 5:18 10 ^m 2 Tim. 2:6 11 ⁿ Rom. 15:27;
1 Cor. 9:14 12 ^o [Acts 18:3; 20:33]; 1 Cor. 9:15, 18 ^p 2 Cor. 11:12 13 ^q Lev. 6:16, 26; 7:6, 31 ^r Num. 18:8-31; Deut. 18:1

8:1 We know that we all have knowledge appears to have been a slogan used by certain Corinthian believers as an arrogant statement against weaker Christians. The weaker Christians believed that eating food offered to idols was a sin. Other Corinthian believers thought that such concerns were ridiculous. They argued that if the idols were worthless, then the meat offered to them was fine to eat. Paul agreed that food offered to idols was not contaminated, but he wanted the knowledgeable Christians not to flaunt their enlightened point of view. **Knowledge puffs up, but love edifies:** This is one of Paul's five attacks on the arrogance of some of the church members at Corinth (4:6, 18, 19; 5:2). These people belittled their weaker brothers and sisters with their knowledge. They had missed the point. They should have been using their knowledge to help other believers in the church.

8:4-6 The Corinthian believers who claimed to have knowledge readily admitted that **an idol is nothing** (see Is. 37:19; Jer. 16:20; Gal. 4:8) and that there is only one God (see Deut. 6:4). But Paul did not dismiss the idea of idols altogether because though these gods are not real, they exist in the minds of those who worship them (10:20).

8:7-13 The knowledgeable believers were correct in their view of

idols, but it did not matter. If the weaker brothers and sisters saw other believers eating **food** offered to idols, they might also eat, in violation of their own conscience. To go against the conscience was in fact sinning. By their knowledge the stronger believers were causing the weaker believers to stumble. Paul exhorted the strong believers to show love to the weaker ones by refraining from offending them.

9:1, 2 Am I not an apostle: Paul substantiated his apostleship with two arguments: (1) he had **seen** the resurrected **Lord** (see Acts 1:21, 22), and (2) the church at Corinth was his work in the Lord, a **seal** of his **apostleship**.

9:3-18 Paul had the **right to eat and drink** whatever he wanted, to have a **wife**, and to receive wages for his ministry. But he did not exercise these rights. **Is it oxen God is concerned about:** God requires that ministers should be paid for their work just as He requires beasts of burden to be compensated for theirs. **those who preach the gospel should live from the gospel:** To support ministers of the gospel is commanded by God. Even as the priests in Israel were supported for their work, NT ministers were to be provided for as well (see 1 Tim. 5:17, 18).

offerings of the altar? ¹⁴Even so ^sthe Lord has commanded ^tthat those who preach the gospel should live from the gospel.

¹⁵But ^uI have used none of these things, nor have I written these things that it should be done so to me; for ^vit would be better for me to die than that anyone should make my boasting void. ¹⁶For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for ^wnecessity is laid upon me; yes, woe is me if I do not preach the gospel! ¹⁷For if I do this willingly, ^xI

¹⁴ ^s Matt. 10:10; Luke 10:7, 8; 1 Tim. 5:18 ^t Rom. 10:15
¹⁵ ^u Acts 18:3; 20:33; 1 Cor. 9:12;
¹⁶ ^v 2 Cor. 11:10
¹⁷ ^w Acts 9:15; [Rom. 1:14]
¹⁸ ^x John 4:36;
1 Cor. 3:8, 14; 9:18
^y 1 Cor. 4:1; Gal. 2:7;
Eph. 3:2; Col. 1:25
¹⁸ ^z 1 Cor. 10:33
^a 1 Cor. 7:31; 9:12
^a NU omits of Christ

have a reward; but if against my will, ^yI have been entrusted with a stewardship. ¹⁸What is my reward then? That ^zwhen I preach the gospel, I may present the gospel ^dof Christ without charge, that I ^amay not abuse my authority in the gospel.

Serving All Men

¹⁹For though I am ^bfree from all men, ^cI have made myself a servant to all, ^dthat

¹⁹ ^b 1 Cor. 9:1 ^c 2 Cor. 4:5; Gal. 5:13 ^d Matt. 18:15; 1 Pet. 3:1

9:19–23 I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win the more: Paul put his ministry of the gospel above his personal desires. He was willing to conform to the customs of other people,

whether Jew or Gentile, in order to bring them to Christ. For example, in order to relate to the Jews in Jerusalem he made a Nazirite vow in the temple (Acts 21:23, 24). Around those who were under

The Race for the Crown

What does it take to be a champion in a given sport? For one, it is necessary to have a dedication to succeed no matter what the cost. A passion for the game is certainly essential, as is a single-minded determination to accomplish the task at hand. A willingness to train incessantly is also required. And a burning desire for the trophy or prize awarded to the one who wins is an absolute must.

In his letter to the Corinthians, the apostle Paul drew a direct comparison between the Christian life and an athletic competition. This comparison would have had immediate resonance with Paul's Corinthian readers. Corinth was the site of the Isthmian games, a great athletic festival that was very similar to the Olympic games. Contestants in the Isthmian games endured ten months of mandatory training. Anyone who failed to complete this training was barred from competing in the games. The highlight of the Isthmian games was a great endurance race. It was this race that Paul used as an illustration to depict the faithful Christian life.

In the Isthmian games, several athletes competed for one prize; there could be only one winner. In contrast, the Christian life offers the opportunity for many people to be winners. The winner of the Isthmian games received a pine wreath crown. Those who faithfully complete the Christian life, on the other hand, will receive an imperishable crown.

Paul illustrates the "champion" mindset required to faithfully complete the Christian life with his statements, "I run thus: not with uncertainty" and "Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air" (9:26). Paul was not an aimless competitor. He had a clearly defined goal. Like an athlete preparing for a race or a boxing match, Paul knew that he had to discipline his body; he had to force himself to maintain the strenuous, consistent practice needed for success.

The race that Paul prepared himself for, the race that all Christians need to prepare themselves for, was the calling of God. Paul taught that Christians are rewarded for the calling that God gives them. Paul had an apostolic ministry for which he sacrificed all things. He knew that if he was faithful to his calling he would receive a reward from the Lord for his service (4:2). Paul also knew that if he ignored or treated lightly his mission he would not receive from God the victor's crown for service. Having seen some of his close friends forsake their calling (see 2 Tim. 4:10), Paul recognized that the loss of the victor's crown was a very real possibility for any believer, regardless of his or her standing in the Christian community. The apostle's overwhelming passion was to fulfill his ministry at all costs, to stay faithful to the "fight" (9:26) to the very end. In Paul's last letter, written shortly before his death, we discover that he accomplished his goal (see 2 Tim. 4:6–8).

Paul's spiritual training was the very best available. Yet he did not assume that he would automatically persevere to the end of the race. He continued to discipline himself, to fight, and follow his calling from God. In doing so, Paul provided an ideal model for all Christians striving to become champions.



Statue of a runner, late Hellenistic period
Todd Bolen/www.BiblePlaces.com

I might win the more; ²⁰ and ^e to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might win Jews; to those *who are* under the law, as under the ⁵law, that I might win those *who are* under the law; ^{21f} to ^gthose *who are* without law, as without law ^h (not being without ⁶law toward God, but under ⁷law toward Christ), that I might win those *who are* without law; ²²ⁱ to the weak I became ⁸as weak, that I might win the weak. ^jI have become all things to all *men*, ^k that I might by all means save some. ²³ Now this I do for the gospel's sake, that I may be partaker of it with *you*.

Striving for a Crown

²⁴ Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? ¹ Run in such a way that you may ⁹ obtain it. ²⁵ And everyone who competes for the prize ¹ is temperate in all things. Now they *do it* to obtain a perishable crown, but we *for* ^m an imperishable crown. ²⁶ Therefore I run thus: ⁿ not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as *one who* beats the air. ^{27o} But I discipline my body and ^p bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become ^q disqualified.

²⁰ ^e Acts 16:3; 21:23-26; Rom. 11:14 ⁵ NU adds *though not being myself under the law*
²¹ ^f [Gal. 2:3; 3:2] ^g [Rom. 2:12, 14] ^h [1 Cor. 7:22; Gal. 6:2] ⁱ NU God's law ^j NU Christ's law
²² ⁱ Rom. 14:1; 15:1; 2 Cor. 11:29 / 1 Cor. 10:33 ^k Rom. 11:14
²³ NU omits *as*
²⁴ ^j Gal. 2:2; 2 Tim. 4:7; Heb. 12:1 ⁹ win
²⁵ ^m 2 Tim. 4:8; James 1:12; [1 Pet. 5:4; Rev. 2:10; 3:11] ¹ exercises self-control
²⁶ ⁿ 2 Tim. 2:5 ²⁷ ^o [Rom. 8:13] ^p [Rom. 6:18] ^q Jer. 6:30; 2 Cor. 13:5

CHAPTER 10

¹ ^a Ex. 13:21, 22; Ps. 105:39 ^b Ex. 14:21, 22, 29; Neh. 9:11; Ps. 66:6
³ ^c Ex. 16:4, 15, 35; Deut. 8:3; Neh. 9:15, 20; Ps. 78:24; John 6:31
⁴ ^d Ex. 17:5-7; Num.

Old Testament Examples

10 Moreover, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were under ^a the cloud, all passed through ^b the sea, ² all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, ³ all ate the same ^c spiritual food, ⁴ and all drank the same ^d spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ. ⁵ But with most of them God was not well pleased, for *their bodies* ^e were scattered in the wilderness.

⁶ Now these things became our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as ^f they also lusted. ^{7g} And do not become idolaters as *were* some of them. As it is written, ^h *"The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play."* ⁸ⁱ Nor let us commit sexual immorality, as ^j some of them did, and ^k in one day twenty-three thousand fell; ⁹ nor let us ^l tempt Christ, as ^l some of them also tempted, and ^m were destroyed

20:11; Ps. 78:15 ⁵ ^e Num. 14:29, 37; 26:65; Heb. 3:17; Jude 5
⁶ ^f Num. 11:4, 34; Ps. 106:14 ⁷ ^g ⁹ Ex. 32:4; 1 Cor. 5:11; 10:14
^h Ex. 32:6; 1 Cor. 15:32 ⁸ ⁱ Rev. 2:14 / Num. 25:1-9 ^k Ps. 106:29
⁹ ⁱ Ex. 17:2, 7 ^m Num. 21:6-9 ^l test

the Law—the Jews—Paul obeyed the Law. Around those who were outside the Law—the Gentiles—Paul did not observe Jewish custom. Paul clarified this, however, lest anyone misunderstand his actions. He obeyed God's law through obedience **toward Christ** (v. 21). This was a broader law than the Mosaic legislation; this was the fulfillment of Christ's will (see 11:1; Rom. 13:8; Gal. 6:2).

9:27 I myself should become disqualified: The Greek word for *disqualified* means "disapproved after testing." Although some have cited this verse as evidence that Christians can lose their salvation, this clause most likely does not refer to salvation. A careful distinction should be made between the *prize* and the *gift*. The free gift of justification cannot be the result of good works (see Rom. 4:1-8). However the prize or crown is the reward for endurance and suffering for the cause of Christ (see Phil. 1:29; 2 Tim. 2:12).

liberty

(Gk. *exousia*) (7:39; 8:9; 9:18; Matt. 7:29; Rom. 9:21) Strong's #1849

The Greek term usually denotes "right," "authority," or even "privilege." In certain contexts, as this one, it connotes the freedom to exercise one's right. Specifically, Paul was addressing the Corinthians' right to eat meat that may have come from pagan temples. To be clear, the eating of sacrificial food—the cultic meals in pagan temples—was censured by Paul because it was understood that the participants in those meals were uniting themselves to demons (see 10:19-21). However, Paul had no problem with those who purchased food that had been left over from these events and that was later sold in the marketplace. In his judgment if they ate it at home they were not participating in idolatry. They had the liberty—or right—to eat this food in good conscience. The exception was if they would be destroying a weaker believer by doing so. For the sake of such believers, one should abstain.

10:1-5 Paul places the story of Israel's unfaithfulness to God after his exhortation to the Corinthians to persevere in God's work. He emphasizes the blessings the Israelites enjoyed in the desert. They all had the protection and guidance of God. They all experienced God's miraculous deliverance. They all identified with their spiritual head, Moses. They all enjoyed the bread from heaven. Finally they all drank the water God provided. Paul's key point is that although all of the Israelites received these wonderful blessings from God, most failed to please Him.

10:1 For the ancient Israelites **under the cloud** in the wilderness, the *cloud* served two functions: (1) It provided protection (see Ex. 14:19, 20), fire by night in the cold desert and shade by day from the blistering sun. (2) It guided the people through the desert (see Ex. 13:21). **all passed through the sea:** Every Israelite who left Egypt in the Exodus experienced the deliverance of God at the Red Sea.

10:2 all were baptized into Moses: The acts of God **in the cloud and in the sea** joined the people with their spiritual head, Moses.

10:3, 4 the same spiritual food . . . the same spiritual drink: They all followed the same God and the same laws (see John 4:13, 14; 6:32-35).

10:6-10 our examples: The discipline of God exercised against the disobedient Israelites should serve notice to Christians that God will punish His people's sin.

10:6 The first failure of the ancient Israelites was that they **lusted**, or "craved." They were not satisfied with God's provision but looked back to the provision that they had in Egypt (see Num. 11:4-34).

10:7, 8 The ancient Israelites were notorious **idolaters**. Even though the true God had brought them out of Egypt, they insisted on worshipping lifeless idols. Furthermore, the ancient Israelites engaged in **sexual immorality**, a sin that also plagued the Corinthians (5:1; 6:18). **twenty-three thousand:** The account in Numbers gives the figure twenty-four thousand (Num. 25:6-9). There are several possible reasons for the difference. Some have suggested that Paul's number reflects the number that died **in one day**, while the Numbers account may be a record of all who died in the plague. Another explanation may be that the Numbers account includes the death of the leaders (Num. 25:4) while Paul's figures do not.

by serpents; ¹⁰nor complain, as ⁿsome of them also complained, and ^owere destroyed by ^pthe destroyer. ¹¹Now ²all these things happened to them as examples, and ^qthey were written for our ³admonition, ^rupon whom the ends of the ages have come.

¹²Therefore ^slet him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. ¹³No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but ^tGod is faithful, ^uwho will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to ⁴bear it.

Flee from Idolatry

¹⁴Therefore, my beloved, ^vflee from idolatry. ¹⁵I speak as to ^wwise men; judge for yourselves what I say. ^{16x}The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the ⁵communion of the blood of Christ? ^yThe bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? ¹⁷For ^zwe, *though* many, are one bread and one body; for we all partake of that one bread.

¹⁸Observe ^aIsrael ^bafter the flesh: ^cAre not those who eat of the sacrifices ⁶partakers of the altar? ¹⁹What am I saying then? ^dThat an idol is anything, or what is offered to idols is anything? ²⁰Rather, that the things which the Gentiles ^esacrifice ^fthey sacrifice to demons and not to God, and I do not want you to have fellowship with demons. ^{21g}You cannot

10 ⁿ Ex. 16:2 ^o Num. 14:37 ^p Ex. 12:23; 2 Sam. 24:16; 1 Chr. 21:15; Heb. 11:28
11 ^q Rom.
15:4 ^r Phil. 4:5
² NU omits all
³ instruction
12 ^s Rom. 11:20
13 ^t 1 Cor. 1:9 ^u Ps. 125:3 ⁴ endure
14 ^v 2 Cor. 6:17
15 ^w 1 Cor. 8:1
16 ^x Matt. 26:26-28; Mark 14:23; Luke 22:20; 1 Cor. 11:25 ^y Matt. 26:26; Luke 22:19; Acts 2:42; 1 Cor. 11:23
⁵ fellowship or sharing
17 ^z Rom. 12:5; 1 Cor. 12:12, 27; Eph. 4:4, 16; Col. 3:15
18 ^a Rom.
4:12 ^b Rom. 4:1
^c Lev. 3:3; 7:6; 14; Deut. 12:17
⁶ fellowshippers or sharers
19 ^d 1 Cor. 8:4
20 ^e Lev. 17:7
^f Deut. 32:17; Ps. 106:37; Gal. 4:8; Rev. 9:20
21 ^g 2 Cor. 6:15; 16 ^h Deut. 32:38
ⁱ [1 Cor. 11:23-29]
22 ^j Deut. 32:21
^k Ezek. 22:14
23 ^l 1 Cor. 6:12
⁷ NU omits for me
⁸ build up
24 ^m Phil. 2:4
25 ⁿ [1 Tim. 4:4]
26 ^o Ex. 19:5; Ps. 24:1; 50:12;

drink the cup of the Lord and ^hthe cup of demons; you cannot partake of the ⁱLord's table and of the table of demons. ²²Or do we ^jprovoke the Lord to jealousy? ^kAre we stronger than He?

All to the Glory of God

²³All things are lawful ⁷for me, but not all things are ^lhelpful; all things are lawful ⁷for me, but not all things ⁸edify. ²⁴Let no one seek his own, but each one ^mthe other's *well-being*.

²⁵ⁿEat whatever is sold in the meat market, asking no questions for conscience' sake; ²⁶for ^o"*the earth is the LORD's, and all its fullness.*"

²⁷If any of those who do not believe invites you *to dinner*, and you desire to go, ^peat whatever is set before you, asking no question for conscience' sake. ²⁸But if anyone says to you, "This was offered to idols," do not eat it ^qfor the sake of the one who told you, and for conscience' sake; ⁹for ^r"*the earth is the LORD's, and all its fullness.*" ²⁹"Conscience," I say, not your own, but that of the other. For ^swhy is my liberty judged by another *man's* conscience? ³⁰But if I partake with thanks, why am I evil spoken of for *the food* ^tover which I give thanks?

^{31u}Therefore, whether you eat or drink,

1 Tim. 4:4 ²⁷ ^p Luke 10:7, 8 ²⁸ ^q [1 Cor. 8:7, 10, 12] ^r Deut. 10:14; Ps. 24:1 ⁹ NU omits the rest of v. 28. ²⁹ ^s Rom. 14:16; [1 Cor. 9:19] ³⁰ ^t Rom. 14:6 ³¹ ^u Col. 3:17; 1 Pet. 4:11

10:10 The ancient Israelites **complained** against their God-given leaders so much that many **were destroyed**, or put to death (see Num. 16:41–49).

10:12 **lest he fall**: The Corinthians may have had the attitude that since they were justified by God, nothing could happen to them. The discipline of God, however, is not to be taken lightly. No one can sin with impunity (see Gal. 6:7, 8).

10:13 Paul provides the Corinthians with a word of comfort. The various temptations they were experiencing were normal; all believers throughout the ages have had to resist temptation. God is so good that He will not let believers experience anything for which He has not prepared them. He will give every believer the grace and power to endure. Furthermore, endurance will bring its own reward (see 9:24–27).

10:14–11:1 In this section the apostle Paul addresses the problem of idolatry in the Corinthian church. Worship of various gods was totally ingrained in Greek culture. In the ancient Greek world there were idols on street corners and in houses. Various civic societies paid homage to their favorite gods. Cities adopted certain gods as their special protectors. The pagan temples were frequented often, especially in Corinth with its temple prostitution. Most of the food in the marketplace had been offered in worship to different gods. Paul first addresses the demonic nature of idol worship and then expounds on the nature of Christian liberty, especially concerning food offered to idols.

10:14–22 **flee from idolatry**: Pagan worship is a violation of the believer's union with Christ (v. 21). The idols themselves are not a threat (v. 19); the danger lies in the **demons** (v. 20) who, unknown to the worshippers, are the real objects of idol worship.

10:21 **You cannot drink**: Paul reminded the Corinthians of the

fellowship and unity they had in their participation in the Lord's Supper. Participation in idol worship is a violation of that unity.

10:23, 24 **All things are lawful for me**: Though we have freedom, we also have a responsibility to help others in their Christian growth. Our first duty is to others, not ourselves.

10:25, 26 **Eat whatever is sold**: Paul himself did not ask whether meat was sacrificed in the temple, because pagan worship could not contaminate what God had made clean (see Ps. 24:1; Acts 10:15).

10:31–11:1 Doing **all to the glory of God** involves encouraging

demon

(Gk. *daimonion*) (10:20; Matt. 12:24, 27) Strong's #1140

The origin of demons is not explicitly discussed in the Bible. But the NT speaks of the fall and later imprisonment of a group of angels led by Satan (1 Pet. 3:19, 20; 2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6). The fall left Satan and his angels free to contaminate the human race with wickedness (Gen. 3; Matt. 25:41; Rev. 12:9). A prime purpose of Jesus' earthly ministry was to overcome the power of Satan. This included His conquest of the demonic realm (Matt. 12:25–29; Luke 11:17–22; John 12:31; 1 John 3:8). Following the resurrection of Jesus and His return to heaven, these demonic principalities and powers have continued their warfare against those who are His followers (Rom. 8:38–39; Eph. 6:12). Yet after Christ returns, the devil and his angels will be defeated and thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone (Matt. 25:41; Rev. 20:10).

or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. ^{32v} Give no offense, either to the Jews or to the Greeks or to the church of God, ³³ just ^w as I also please all *men* in all *things*, not seeking my own profit, but the *profit* of many, that they may be saved.

11 Imitate^a me, just as I also *imitate* Christ.

Head Coverings

² Now I praise you, brethren, that you remember me in all things and keep the traditions just as I delivered *them* to you. ³ But I want you to know that ^b the head of every man is Christ, ^c the head of woman *is* man, and ^d the head of Christ *is* God. ⁴ Every man praying or ^e prophesying, having *his* head covered, dishonors his head. ⁵ But every woman who prays or prophesies with *her* head uncovered dishonors her head, for that is one and the same as if her head were ^f shaved. ⁶ For if a woman is not covered, let her also be shorn. But if it is ^g shameful for a woman to be shorn or shaved, let her be covered. ⁷ For a man indeed ought not to cover *his* head, since ^h he is the image and glory of God; but woman is the glory of man. ⁸ For man is not from woman, but woman ⁱ from man. ⁹ Nor was man created for the woman, but woman ^j for the

³² ^v Rom. 14:13
³³ ^w Rom. 15:2;
1 Cor. 9:22; [Gal. 1:10]

CHAPTER 11

1 ^o Eph. 5:1
3 ^b Eph. 1:22; 4:15;
5:23; Col. 1:18; 2:19
^c Gen. 3:16; [Eph. 5:23] ^d John 14:28
4 ^e 1 Cor. 12:10
5 ^f Deut. 21:12
6 ^g Num. 5:18
7 ^h Gen. 1:26, 27; 5:1;
9:6; James 3:9
8 ⁱ Gen. 2:21-23;
1 Tim. 2:13
9 ^j Gen. 2:18

11 ^k [Gal. 3:28]
15 ^l ^m Omits to her
16 ^l 1 Tim. 6:4
^m 1 Cor. 7:17
18 ⁿ 1 Cor. 1:10-12; 3:3
19 ^o Matt. 18:7;
Luke 17:1; 1 Tim. 4:1;
2 Pet. 2:1 ^p [Deut. 13:3]; Luke 2:35;
1 John 2:19 ^q Lit. manifest, evident

man. ¹⁰ For this reason the woman ought to have *a symbol* of authority on *her* head, because of the angels. ¹¹ Nevertheless, ^k neither *is* man independent of woman, nor woman independent of man, in the Lord. ¹² For as woman *came* from man, even so man also *comes* through woman; but all things are from God.

¹³ Judge among yourselves. Is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head uncovered? ¹⁴ Does not even nature itself teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a dishonor to him? ¹⁵ But if a woman has long hair, it is a glory to her; for *her* hair is given ¹ to her for a covering. ¹⁶ But ^l if anyone seems to be contentious, we have no such custom, ^m nor *do* the churches of God.

Conduct at the Lord's Supper

¹⁷ Now in giving these instructions I do not praise *you*, since you come together not for the better but for the worse. ¹⁸ For first of all, when you come together as a church, ⁿ "I hear that there are divisions among you, and in part I believe it. ¹⁹ For ^o there must also be factions among you, ^p that those who are approved may be ² recognized among you. ²⁰ Therefore when you come together in one place, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper. ²¹ For

fellow Christians and spreading the good news about Christ. Paul accomplished this by refusing to offend **Jews, Greeks, or the church of God**, even if it meant restricting his freedom. Like **Christ**, Paul did not seek his own way or do things for his own pleasure; instead, he desired to help others (v. 24). This should be our desire as well.

11:2 Now I praise you reflects genuine appreciation on Paul's part. The Corinthians had made many mistakes, but they were not totally corrupt. The Corinthians had followed the apostle's instructions in certain areas.

11:3 But introduces an exception to the praise Paul had given the Corinthians in v. 2. Paul wanted to instruct the Corinthians on another point of confusion. **Head** primarily means "authority" when used in the context of human relationships. But the Greek word for *head* can also mean "source" or "origin" in some cases. **the head of woman is man:** The relationship between men and women does not involve inferiority, for, in the parallel clause, **Christ** is not inferior to **God** the Father. Submission does not indicate inferiority, but subordination. Just as Christ and God are equally divine, men and women are equal beings. But just as Jesus and God the Father have different roles in God's plan of salvation, so men and women are given different roles.

11:4 Praying or prophesying may refer specifically to intercessory prayer similar to that of OT prophets (see Gen. 20:7; 1 Sam. 12:23; Jer. 27:18) or Anna (see Luke 2:36-38), or to the combination of tongues and prayer (see 14:13-16; Acts 2:4; 10:46). **Having his head covered** can refer to a hat or a veil. **dishonors his head:** It is impossible to decide whether *head* here refers to the man's physical head or to Christ, the man's authoritative head (v. 3). Either interpretation is possible; Paul may even have meant the word to have a double meaning.

11:5, 6 every woman who prays or prophesies: Women were obviously allowed to pray and prophesy in the Christian assembly because it would have been meaningless for Paul to give instructions for something they were not permitted to do. **Dishonors her head** refers either to the woman's own physical head or to her husband

as her head, or possibly both (v. 4). For a woman not to cover her head with a veil or with her own hair was as shameful as having a **shaved** head, a sign of public disgrace.

11:7-9 man is not from woman, but woman from man: The woman was taken from the side of the man (see Gen. 2:21). **Woman for the man** is Paul's way of stating the concept of the "helper" in Gen. 2:20. This does not mean the woman is inferior to the man; it refers only to the purposes of God for man and woman in the creative order.

11:10 Women were to wear a covering on their head **because of the angels**. Evidently God's angels are present at the meeting of the church and actually learn of God's work of grace through the lives and worship of God's people (see Eph. 3:10). **symbol of authority:** This might be a symbol of the woman's authority to prophesy in the new church age, which was inaugurated with the giving of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost (v. 5). It also might refer to a symbol of the man's authority over the woman (v. 3).

11:11, 12 neither . . . independent: Men and women need each other, and as creatures of God, both depend on Him. Neither man nor woman can have any claim to special status other than what God has purposed for them as their Creator.

11:17 I do not praise you: In contrast to Paul's praise in v. 2, that the Corinthians had followed many of his teachings, here he expressed concern for their sinful practices at worship. **Come together** is a technical term for the meeting of the church and is used three times in this passage (vv. 18, 20).

11:19 those who are approved: One of the positive results of division or **factions** in the church is that it becomes obvious who the genuine Christians are in the congregation.

11:20-22 The Lord's Supper was the centerpiece of early Christian worship. Gathered around one table, fellow believers met with the Lord and with each other in unity. Christ had expressed this type of humility and unity when He instituted the Supper (see Matt. 26:26-30; Mark 14:22-26; Luke 22:14-23). Corinthian believers were taking their **own supper** **head of others**, violating the spirit and

in eating, each one takes his own supper ahead of *others*; and one is hungry and *another* is drunk. ²²What! Do you not have houses to eat and drink in? Or do you despise ^rthe church of God and ^sshame ³those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you in this? I do not praise *you*.

Institution of the Lord's Supper

²³For ^tI received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: ^uthat the Lord Jesus on the *same* night in which He was betrayed took bread; ²⁴and when He had given thanks, He broke *it* and said, ⁴"Take, eat; this is My body which is ⁵broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me." ²⁵In the same manner *He* also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink *it*, in remembrance of Me."

²⁶For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death ^vtill He comes.

Examine Yourself

²⁷Therefore whoever eats ^wthis bread or drinks *this* cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and ⁶blood of the Lord. ²⁸But ^xlet a man examine himself, and so let him eat

²¹ ^a 2 Pet. 2:13; Jude 12
²² ^r 1 Cor. 10:32
^s James 2:6 ^t The poor
²³ ^t 1 Cor. 15:3; Gal. 1:12; Col. 3:24
^u Matt. 26:26-28; Mark 14:22-24; Luke 22:17-20; 1 Cor. 10:16
²⁴ ⁴ NU omits *Take, eat* ⁵ NU omits *broken*
²⁶ ^v John 14:3; [Acts 1:11]
²⁷ ^w [John 6:51]
⁶ NU, *M the blood*
²⁸ ^x Matt. 26:22; 2 Cor. 13:5; Gal. 6:4
²⁹ ⁷ NU omits *in an unworthy manner*
⁶ NU omits *Lord's*
³⁰ ⁹ Are dead
³¹ ^y [Ps. 32:5; 1 John 1:9]
³² ^z 2 Sam. 7:14; Ps. 94:12; [Heb. 12:5-10; Rev. 3:19]
³³ ^a 1 Cor. 14:26

CHAPTER 12

¹ ^a 1 Cor. 12:4; 14:1, 37
² ^b 1 Cor. 6:11; Eph. 2:11; 1 Pet. 4:3 ^c Ps. 115:5; Is. 46:7; Jer. 10:5; Hab. 2:18
³ NU, *M that when*
² *mute, silent*
³ ^d Matt. 16:17 ³ Gr. *anathema*
⁴ ^e Rom. 12:3-8;

of the bread and drink of the cup. ²⁹For he who eats and drinks ⁷in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the ⁸Lord's body. ³⁰For this reason many *are* weak and sick among you, and many ⁹sleep. ³¹For ^uif we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged. ³²But when we are judged, ^zwe are chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world.

³³Therefore, my brethren, when you ^acome together to eat, wait for let another. ³⁴But if anyone is hungry, let him eat at home, lest you come together for judgment. And the rest I will set in order when I come.

Spiritual Gifts: Unity in Diversity

12 Now ^aconcerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be ignorant: ²You know ^bthat ¹you were Gentiles, carried away to these ^cdumb ²idols, however you were led. ³Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God calls Jesus ³accursed, and ^dno one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit.

⁴^eThere are ⁴diversities of gifts, but ^fthe same Spirit. ⁵^gThere are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. ⁶And

1 Cor. 12:11; Eph. 4:4, 11; Heb. 2:4 ^f Eph. 4:4 ⁴ *allotments or various kinds* ⁵ ^g Rom. 12:6

purpose of the meal. In acting this way, they showed contempt for **the church of God** and shamed those who had **nothing**.

11:23–25 I received speaks of Paul's revelation from Christ, which he had **delivered** to the people. Paul explained it again.

11:26 you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes: The Lord's Supper looks back to Christ's death and forward to His second coming (see Matt. 26:29; Mark 14:25; Luke 22:18).

11:27 In an unworthy manner refers to the way in which a person eats the Lord's Supper. The Corinthians had been making the meal a time of overeating and getting drunk rather than a time of reflecting on the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

11:30 Sleep here refers to the death of Christians (see 15:18; 1 Thess. 4:15, 16). In this passage, it refers to untimely death, a punishment suffered by some Christians who failed to **examine** themselves at the Lord's Supper (v. 28).

11:31 If we would judge ourselves, God would not need to correct us. But when Christians are unwilling to do this self-examination, God Himself will chasten them.

12:1 Now concerning indicates that Paul was responding to another question addressed to him in a letter from the Corinthian church (7:1, 25; 8:1). **Spiritual gifts** here may refer to spiritual things or spiritual persons. The same Greek word is used throughout chs. 12–14 to refer to "tongue speaking" and "tongues speakers." Since the Corinthians tended to exalt the practice of speaking in tongues, it is likely that they viewed a person who spoke in tongues as especially spiritual, one uniquely possessed by the Spirit.

12:2 The term **Gentiles** here has the generic meaning of foreigners or unlearned people. Paul used this word to emphasize the Corinthians' state of ignorance. Because of their ignorance, they had been **carried away** or "swept off their feet." **Dumb idols** is an expression that the Corinthians familiar with OT idolatry would immediately recognize (see 1 Kin. 18:26–29; Is. 46:7).

12:3 calls Jesus accursed . . . say that Jesus is Lord: A person

truly speaking by means of the Holy Spirit will never curse Jesus; by the same token, no one can genuinely proclaim the lordship of Christ without the enabling of the Spirit. It is possible that some of the Corinthians were giving supposed "Spirit-induced utterances" in which they denigrated the physical, historical Jesus in favor of a "spiritual," heavenly Christ. This type of teaching would have been something like an early form of Gnosticism, a false teaching in the early church that viewed the body as evil and the soul as good.

12:4–6 Gifts here refers to spiritual capacities that God gives to

spiritual gifts

(Gk. *pneumatikos*) (12:1; 14:1, 37; Rom. 1:11) Strong's #4152

gifts

(Gk. *charisma*) (1:7; 7:7; 12:4, 9, 28, 30; 1 Tim. 4:14) Strong's #5486

The Greek term *charisma* is closely akin to the word *charis*, which means "grace" or "favor"; *charisma* denotes "that which is graciously given." Paul used the term *charisma* synonymously with the Greek term *ta pneumatika*—literally "the spiritual things"—because the things graciously given are spiritual gifts. These gifts were given by the Lord to various individuals in the church so as to enliven the meetings and to edify the believers in the church body. Each and every member has been gifted with at least one kind of *charisma*, whether it be the gift of teaching, prophesying, exercising faith, healing, performing miracles, discerning spirits, speaking in tongues, interpreting tongues, or other gifts.

Spiritual Gifts vs. Spiritual Responsibilities	
Spiritual gifts are extraordinary abilities that the Spirit gives to a believer to build up the church. Even though such attributes as faith, teaching, and giving are considered gifts, all Christians are exhorted to develop these traits.	
Some Christians are given . . .	But all believers are called . . .
Divine wisdom (12:8)	To live wisely (Rom. 16:19; Eph. 5:15; Col. 4:5)
Extraordinary faith (12:9)	To walk by faith (2 Cor. 5:7) and abound in faith (2 Cor. 8:7); to take up the shield of faith (Eph. 6:16) and pursue faith (1 Tim. 6:12; 2 Tim. 2:22)
Special teaching gifts (12:28; Rom. 12:7)	To teach others the truths of God (Matt. 28:20; 2 Tim. 2:2, 24)
Supernatural ability to help (12:28)	To serve one another in love (Gal. 5:13) and to minister to others (Rom. 12:7)
The gift of exhortation (Rom. 12:8)	To exhort one another daily (Heb. 3:13)
The ability to give with liberality (Rom. 12:8)	To give “not grudgingly or of necessity” but cheerfully (2 Cor. 9:7)
Divine power to show mercy (Rom. 12:8)	To be merciful (Luke 6:36; James 2:13)

there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God ^h who works ⁵ all in all. ⁷ But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit *of all*: ⁸ for to one is given ⁱ the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another ^j the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, ⁹ ^k to another faith by the same Spirit, to another ^l gifts of healings by ⁶ the same Spirit, ¹⁰ ^m to another the working of miracles, to another ⁿ prophecy, to another ^o discerning of spirits, to another ^p *different* kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. ¹¹ But one and the same Spirit works all these things, ^q distributing to each one individually ^r as He wills.

6 ^h 1 Cor. 15:28; Eph. 1:23; 4:6 ⁵ *all things in*
8 ⁱ 1 Cor. 2:6, 7; 2 Cor. 1:12 / Rom. 15:14; [1 Cor. 2:11, 16]; 2 Cor. 8:7
9 ^k Matt. 17:19; [1 Cor. 13:2]; 2 Cor. 4:13 / Matt. 10:1; Mark 3:15; 16:18; James 5:14 ⁶ NU *one*
10 ^m Mark 16:17
ⁿ Rom. 12:6
^o 1 John 4:1 / Acts 2:4–11
11 ^q Rom. 12:6; 2 Cor. 10:13 / [John 3:8] ¹² ^r Rom. 12:4, 5; 1 Cor. 10:17;

Unity and Diversity in One Body

¹² For ^s as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, ^t so also is Christ. ¹³ For ^u by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—^v whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and ^w have all been made to drink ⁷ into one Spirit. ¹⁴ For in fact the body is not one member but many.

¹⁵ If the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I am not of the body,” is it therefore not of the body? ¹⁶ And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I am not of the body,” is it therefore not of the body? ¹⁷ If the whole body *were* an eye, where *would be* the hearing? If the whole *were* hearing, where *would be* the smelling? ¹⁸ But now ^x God has set the members, each one of them, in the body ^y just as He pleased. ¹⁹ And if they were all one member, where *would the body be*?

²⁰ But now indeed *there* are many members, yet one body. ²¹ And the eye cannot say to the hand, “I have no need of you”; nor again the head to the feet, “I have no need of you.” ²² No, much rather, those members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary. ²³ And those *members* of the body which we think to be less honorable, on these we bestow greater honor; and our unpresentable *parts* have greater modesty, ²⁴ but our presentable *parts* have no need. But God composed the body, having given greater honor to that *part* which lacks it, ²⁵ that there should be no ⁸ schism in the body, but *that* the members should have the same care for one another. ²⁶ And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with

Eph. 4:4 ^t [Gal. 3:16] ¹³ ^u [Rom. 6:5] ^v Rom. 3:22; Gal. 3:28; [Eph. 2:13–18]; Col. 3:11 ^w [John 3:36–39] ⁷ NU omits *into* ¹⁸ ^x 1 Cor. 12:28 ^y Rom. 12:3 ²⁵ ⁸ *division*

12:12 so also is Christ: Paul used the human body to illustrate the need for unity in the diversity that existed in the church (see Eph. 2:21; 4:16).

12:13 one Spirit . . . one body: Believers are part of the whole body infused by the one God. **By** here may also be translated “in,” speaking of location. Christ places each new member of the body in the Holy Spirit for His care and safekeeping (see 2 Cor. 1:22). All believers are **baptized into the body** of Christ (see Rom. 6:3), whether they are **Jews or Greeks . . . slaves or free**. This expression echoes Paul’s teaching in the Book of Galatians concerning equal access by faith into the promise of Abraham (see Gal. 3:26–29). **have all been made to drink into one Spirit:** The Spirit not only surrounds us, He also dwells within us.

12:18 God has set . . . each one of them: Every individual believer has a vital role assigned by God Himself. That is why we should neither boast in what we do nor think too little of ourselves. Each one of us is important to the work of God and has a mission to accomplish here on earth.

12:25 The members should have the same care for one another because God gives spiritual gifts, as stated in v. 7, “for the profit of

it; or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it.

²⁷Now ^zyou are the body of Christ, and ^amembers individually. ²⁸And ^bGod has appointed these in the church: first ^capostles, second ^dprophets, third teachers, after that ^emiracles, then ^fgifts of healings, ^ghelps, ^hadministrations, varieties of tongues. ²⁹Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles? ³⁰Do all have gifts of healings? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? ³¹But ⁱearnestly desire the ^gbest gifts. And yet I show you a more excellent way.

The Greatest Gift

13 Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. ²And though I have the gift of ^aprophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, ^bso that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. ³And ^cthough I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body ¹to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing.

^{4d}Love suffers long and is ^ekind; love ^fdoes not envy; love does not parade itself, is not ²puffed up; ⁵does not behave rudely, ^gdoes not seek its own, is not provoked, ³thinks no evil; ^{6h}does not rejoice in iniquity, but ⁱrejoices in the truth; ^{7j}bears all things, believes

²⁷ ^z Rom. 12:5; Eph. 1:23; 4:12; 5:23, 30; Col. 1:24 ^a Eph. 5:30

²⁸ ^b Eph. 4:11

^c [Eph. 2:20; 3:5]

^d Acts 13:1; Rom.

^e 12:6 ¹ 1 Cor. 12:10;

²⁹ Gal. 3:5 ^f Mark

16:18; 1 Cor. 12:9, 30

^g Num. 11:17 ^h Rom.

12:8; 1 Tim. 5:17;

Heb. 13:17, 24

³¹ ¹ 1 Cor. 14:1, 39

^g NU greater

CHAPTER 13

² ^a Matt. 7:22;

1 Cor. 12:8-10, 28;

14:1 ^b Matt. 17:20;

21:21; Mark 11:23;

Luke 17:6

³ ^c Matt. 6:1, 2 ¹ NU

so I may boast

⁴ ^d Prov. 10:12;

17:9; 1 Thess. 5:14;

[1 Pet. 4:8] ^e Eph.

4:32 ^f Gal. 5:26

² arrogant

⁵ ^g 1 Cor. 10:24;

Phil. 2:4 ³ keeps no

accounts of evil

⁶ ^h Ps. 10:3; Rom.

1:32 ² 2 John 4;

3 John 3

⁷ / Rom. 15:1; Gal.

6:2; 2 Tim. 2:24

⁹ ^k 1 Cor. 8:2; 13:12

¹⁰ ^d complete

¹² ^l [2 Cor. 3:18;

5:7]; Phil. 3:12;

James 1:23

^m Gen. 32:30;

Num. 12:8; Matt.

18:10; [1 John 3:2]

all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

⁸Love never fails. But whether *there are* prophecies, they will fail; whether *there are* tongues, they will cease; whether *there is* knowledge, it will vanish away. ^{9k}For we know in part and we prophesy in part. ¹⁰But when that which is ⁴perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away.

¹¹When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things. ¹²For ¹now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then ^mface to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known.

¹³And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these *is* love.

Prophecy and Tongues

14 Pursue love, and ^adesire spiritual gifts, ^bbut especially that you may prophesy. ²For he who ^cspeaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God, for no one understands *him*; however, in the spirit he speaks mysteries. ³But he who prophesies speaks ^dedification and ^eexhortation and comfort to men. ⁴He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church.

CHAPTER 14 ¹ ^a 1 Cor. 12:31; 14:39 ^b Num. 11:25, 29 ² ^c Acts 2:4; 10:46 ³ ^d Rom. 14:19; 15:2; 2 Cor. 10:8; 12:19; Eph. 4:12, 29 ^e 1 Tim. 4:13; 2 Tim. 4:2; Titus 1:9; 2:15; Heb. 3:13; 10:25

all." Rather than being envious of other people's positions or gifts, we should give of ourselves to others. Whenever any part of the body has a need, we should minister and help that part.

12:28–30 Sometimes in the NT, the term **apostles** refers in a general sense to missionaries (see 15:7; Rom. 16:7; 2 Cor. 11:5; 12:11; Gal. 1:17, 19). Other times the term is limited to the small group who witnessed the resurrected Christ and were given a special mission by Him as His representatives (9:1; 15:5, 8). **prophets**: As was the case with the OT prophets, the primary responsibility of NT prophets was not predicting the future, but presenting God's message to their contemporaries. New Testament prophets provided guidance for the church in its infancy (see Eph. 3:2–5). The word **teachers** refers to those who explain the written revelation of God, as indicated in Gal. 6:6; 2 Tim. 2:2.

12:31 earnestly desire the best gifts: In this phrase, the verb translated *desire* could also be translated as "you are desiring." Although the phrase has generally been interpreted as Paul's exhortation to the Corinthians to seek after the more spiritually profitable gifts, it is possible that Paul is stating that the Corinthians were improperly desiring the gifts that would bring attention to themselves. In other words, he is telling them that although they desire this sort of gift, he wants to show them a **more excellent way**, the way of love (ch. 13).

13:1 the tongues of men and of angels: Paul uses an intentional exaggeration to illustrate the uselessness of each spiritual gift without love. The Corinthians would readily understand the images of **sounding brass or a clanging cymbal**. Many of them had used brass instruments and cymbals as standard elements of pagan worship in their lives before Christ.

13:3 Bestow all my goods likely pertains to the spiritual gift of giving to others (see Rom. 12:8).

13:8 Love never fails: This uncompromising and bold affirmation introduces the contrast with the spiritual gifts which will not last. Paul wants the Corinthians to know that all the gifts, especially tongues, which attracted their attention so much, would one day no longer be needed. But love would continue forever. **prophecies . . . will fail**: The word translated *fail* is in the passive voice, indicating that something will cause prophecies to stop. **tongues . . . will cease**: Unlike prophecies, tongues will simply stop (no external cause is indicated by the Greek). **knowledge . . . will vanish away**: The term translated *will vanish away* here is the same word translated "will fail" earlier in v. 8.

13:10 when that which is perfect has come: The Greek word for perfect means "end" or "completion." Most likely, this is a reference to the Second Coming of Christ and the completion of all things (see v. 12). But some have interpreted *perfect* as referring to the completion of the NT canon.

13:12 The **mirror** is probably the Word of God (see 2 Cor. 3:18; James 1:23–25), which can give us only a partial understanding of God. This will all change when we see Him **face to face**.

13:13 Faith enables us to come to God (see Heb. 11:6), but **love** enables us to imitate Him.

14:1 The word translated **pursue** carries such meanings as "hasten," "run," "run after," and "aspire to." There are many things in life that we can simply take or leave, but love is not one of them.

14:3, 4 The term **prophecies** here incorporates all speaking gifts that edify the church (see Rom. 12:6; 1 Pet. 4:11). **Edification, exhortation, and comfort** result from prophesying in the church.

⁵I wish you all spoke with tongues, but even more that you prophesied; ¹for he who prophesies is greater than he who speaks with tongues, unless indeed he interprets, that the church may receive edification.

Tongues Must Be Interpreted

⁶But now, brethren, if I come to you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you unless I speak to you either by ^frevelation, by knowledge, by prophesying, or by teaching? ⁷Even things without life, whether flute or harp, when they make a sound, unless they make a distinction in the sounds, how will it be known what is piped or played? ⁸For if the trumpet makes an uncertain sound, who will prepare for battle? ⁹So likewise you, unless you utter by the tongue words easy to understand, how will it be known what is spoken? For you will be speaking into the air. ¹⁰There are, it may be, so many kinds of languages in the world, and none of them is without ²significance. ¹¹Therefore, if I do not know the meaning of the language, I shall be a ³foreigner to him who speaks, and he who speaks *will be* a foreigner to me. ¹²Even so you, since you are ⁴zealous for spiritual *gifts*, *let it be* for the ⁵edification of the church *that* you seek to excel.

¹³Therefore let him who speaks in a tongue pray that he may ^ginterpret. ¹⁴For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my understanding is unfruitful. ¹⁵What is *the conclusion* then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will also pray with the understanding. ^hI will sing with the spirit, and I will also sing ⁱwith the under-

5 ¹ NU and
6 ¹ 1 Cor. 14:26;
Eph. 1:17
10 ² meaning
11 ³ Lit. barbarian
12 ⁴ eager
⁵ building up
13 ⁹ 1 Cor. 12:10
15 ^h Eph. 5:19; Col.
3:16 ⁱ Ps. 47:7

16 / Deut. 27:15-26;
1 Chr. 16:36; Neh.
5:13; 8:6; Ps. 106:48;
Jer. 11:5; 28:6; 1 Cor.
11:24; Rev. 5:14; 7:12
20 ⁴ Ps. 131:2; [Matt.
11:25; 18:3; 19:14];
Rom. 16:19; 1 Cor.
3:1; Eph. 4:14; Heb.
5:12, 13 ¹ [Matt.
18:3; 1 Pet. 2:2]
21 ^m John 10:34;
1 Cor. 14:34 ⁿ Is.
28:11, 12
22 ^o Mark 16:17
23 ^p Acts 2:13
⁶ insane
25 ⁷ NU omits And
thus

standing. ¹⁶Otherwise, if you bless with the spirit, how will he who occupies the place of the uninformed say “Amen” ^jat your giving of thanks, since he does not understand what you say? ¹⁷For you indeed give thanks well, but the other is not edified.

¹⁸I thank my God I speak with tongues more than you all; ¹⁹yet in the church I would rather speak five words with my understanding, that I may teach others also, than ten thousand words in a tongue.

Tongues a Sign to Unbelievers

²⁰Brethren, ^kdo not be children in understanding; however, in malice ^lbe babes, but in understanding be mature.

²¹^mIn the law it is written:

*“With men of other tongues and other lips
I will speak to this people;
And yet, for all that, they will not
hear Me,”*

says the Lord.

²²Therefore tongues are for a ^osign, not to those who believe but to unbelievers; but prophesying is not for unbelievers but for those who believe. ²³Therefore if the whole church comes together in one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in *those who are* uninformed or unbelievers, ^pwill they not say that you are ^qout of your mind? ²⁴But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or an uninformed person comes in, he is convinced by all, he is convicted by all. ²⁵⁷And thus the secrets of his heart are revealed; and

tongues

(Gk. *glōssa*) (12:10; 14:2, 4–6, 9, 13, 14, 18, 27; Acts 2:4; 10:46; 19:6) Strong's #1100

The Greek term *glōssa* means “tongue” or “language.” When the early believers were empowered by the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost, they were given the ability to speak in many different languages, so that those visiting from all around the Roman world could hear the glories of God being uttered in their native tongue (Acts 2:4–11). The household of Cornelius also spoke in different languages when they were baptized in the Holy Spirit (Acts 10:46). And the same happened with the new disciples from Ephesus (Acts 19:6). From then on, some members of the early church regularly spoke in different languages as a way of praying to God, and others spoke in different languages in church meetings. When these languages were spoken in private, interpretation was not needed; when they were spoken in the meetings, Paul required interpretation so that the others could understand and be edified (14:2–27).

For this reason, Paul wanted the Corinthians to exercise the gift of prophecy instead of speaking **in a tongue**, by which a person merely **edifies himself**.
14:5 interprets: Speaking in tongues does benefit the church whenever it is interpreted, though not as much as prophesying.
14:11 Paul underlines the original purpose of all spiritual gifts: they must serve the church (see vv. 13, 14; 12:7). Tongues must convey **meaning** or else they fail to help those who listen.
14:16, 17 He who occupies the place of the uninformed refers to anyone who does not understand the message spoken in tongues. Saying **amen** was common in Jewish and early church worship when the congregation wanted to indicate its agreement with what was being said (see Deut. 27:14–26; Rev. 5:14). Such a response would be impossible in the case of an uninterpreted tongue, because no one would have understood the prayer.
14:18, 19 more than you all: Paul spoke many languages. If the Corinthians wanted to brag of their tongue speaking, the apostle had much more to brag about. But this ability was of very limited value to Paul in fulfilling his responsibility to the people of God (vv. 5, 13). **In the church**, speaking **five words** that are understandable has more benefit than speaking a countless number (**ten thousand**) of words **in a tongue**.
14:20–22 children in understanding: Paul wanted the Corinthians to serve and benefit each other above all. But instead they had developed the skill of attacking and neglecting each other.

so, falling down on *his* face, he will worship God and report ^athat God is truly among you.

Order in Church Meetings

²⁶How is it then, brethren? Whenever you come together, each of you has a psalm, ^rhas a teaching, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation. ^sLet all things be done for ^sedification. ²⁷If anyone speaks in a tongue, *let there be* two or at the most three, *each* in turn, and let one interpret. ²⁸But if there is no interpreter, let him keep silent in church, and let him speak to himself and to God. ²⁹Let two or three prophets speak, and ^tlet the others judge. ³⁰But if *anything* is revealed to another who sits by, ^ulet the first keep silent. ³¹For you can all prophesy one by one, that all may learn and all may be encouraged. ³²And ^vthe spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets. ³³For God is not *the author* of ⁹confusion but of peace, ^was in all the churches of the saints.

^{34x}Let ¹your women keep silent in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak; but *they are* to be submissive, as ^ythe ⁹law also says. ³⁵And if they want to learn something, let them ask their own husbands at home; for it is shameful for women to speak in church.

²⁵ ^aIs. 45:14; Dan. 2:47; Zech. 8:23; Acts 4:13
²⁶ ^r1 Cor. 12:8-10; 14:6 ^s1 Cor. 12:7; [2 Cor. 12:19]
²⁷ ^bbuilding up
²⁹ ^t1 Tim. 12:10
³⁰ ^u[1 Thess. 5:19, 20]
³² ^v1 John 4:1
³³ ^w1 Cor. 11:16
³⁴ ^xdisorder
³⁴ ^x1 Tim. 2:11;
³⁴ ^x1 Pet. 3:1 ^yGen. 3:16
³⁷ ^zNU omits your
³⁷ ^z2 Cor. 10:7; [1 John 4:6]
³⁸ ^zNU if anyone does not recognize this, he is not recognized.
³⁹ ^a1 Cor. 12:31;
¹ Thess. 5:20
⁴⁰ ^b1 Cor. 14:33

CHAPTER 15

¹ ^aRom. 2:16; [Gal. 1:11] ^b[Rom. 5:2; 11:20; 2 Cor. 1:24]
² ^cRom. 1:16; 1 Cor. 1:21 ^dGal. 3:4
³ ^e1 Cor. 11:2, 23
⁴ [Gal. 1:12] ^ePs. 22:15; Is. 53:5-12; Acts 3:18; 1 Pet. 1:11
⁴ ^fGen. 1:9-13;
² Kin. 20:8; Ps. 16:9-11; 68:18; 110:1;
Is. 53:10; Hos. 6:2;
Jon. 1:17; 2:10; Matt. 12:39, 40;

³⁶Or did the word of God come *originally* from you? Or *was it* you only that it reached? ^{37z}If anyone thinks himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things which I write to you are the commandments of the Lord. ³⁸But ²if anyone is ignorant, let him be ignorant.

³⁹Therefore, brethren, ^adesire earnestly to prophesy, and do not forbid to speak with tongues. ^{40b}Let all things be done decently and in order.

The Risen Christ, Faith's Reality

15 Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel ^awhich I preached to you, which also you received and ^bin which you stand, ^{2c}by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you—unless ^dyou believed in vain.

³For ^eI delivered to you first of all that ^fwhich I also received: that Christ died for our sins ^gaccording to the Scriptures, ⁴and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day ^haccording to the Scriptures, ⁵ⁱand that He was seen by ¹Cephas, then ^jby the twelve. ⁶After that He was seen by over five hundred

Mark 8:31; Luke 11:29, 30; 24:26; John 2:19-21; Acts 2:25 ★
5 ^lLuke 24:34 / Matt. 28:17 ¹Peter

14:26 If **each** person brings to the meeting the special ability that God has given him or her, and if everything is done for **edification**, the church as a whole will benefit. **Psalm** probably refers to the singing of an OT psalm (see Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16). **Teaching** in the early church most likely consisted of presenting an OT truth or a teaching of the apostles; the one who received a **revelation** was probably the prophet who spoke the word of God (vv. 29–32).

14:29 Let two or three prophets speak: As beneficial as prophesying is, Paul sought to limit the activity. Prophets were not to monopolize the limited amount of time the church members were together. **Let the others judge** indicates that no one, not even a person exercising a spiritual gift, is exempt from accountability to the church (6:5; 11:29, 31).

14:30 Revealed indicates that prophesying as described here is different from what we call preaching or reading from Scripture. The prophesying that Paul referred to is similar to OT prophecy in which God gives a revelation to one of His servants who, in turn, gives that revelation to God's people. **Let the first keep silent** is similar to the admonition in v. 28 concerning tongues speakers. The speakers were not to compete with each other, but all things were to be done in an orderly manner (v. 40) for the benefit of those who heard (12:7). **14:31, 32** subject to the prophets: Paul anticipated that some people might claim that they could not prevent themselves from prophesying when God brought a revelation to them. He explained that the Holy Spirit does not overpower the person through whom He speaks.

14:34 Let your women keep silent: Paul's command here is the subject of much debate, for it seems to contradict the fact that Paul spoke of women prophesying in 11:5. It has been suggested that Paul was addressing a particular problem in the Corinthian church, a group of women who were disruptive. This verse has also been interpreted as a prohibition on women interpreting prophecy, judging the prophets, or speaking in tongues.

14:36 from you: In persuading the Corinthians to accept his teach-

ing, Paul had already appealed to nature—namely, the importance of order in the church to conform to God's peaceful nature (v. 33). Here the apostle emphasizes the importance of conformity, not only with the Christian churches throughout the world, but also with the origin of Christian truth. The Corinthians did not invent the truth that Paul taught. The Christian message had traveled from Jerusalem throughout most of the Roman world.

14:37 To further establish his arguments and the authority of his teaching, Paul appealed to the fact that he taught the **commandments of the Lord**. Paul's teachings were not opinions or options. To be obedient to the Lord is to be obedient to what Paul taught.

15:1, 2 Paul's **gospel** to the Corinthians centered on the physical death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God who became human yet never sinned (see Gal. 1:6–10). Paul had started the Corinthian church; the gospel that the Corinthians had originally **received** came from him (2:2).

15:3 Paul did not originate the proclamation of Jesus that he **delivered** to the Corinthians; he simply gave the Corinthians what he himself had **received**. He viewed himself as a link in a long chain of witnesses to the truth of the death and resurrection of Christ. **Christ died for our sins**: Christ's death dealt decisively with our sins. He suffered in our place to endure the just wrath of God against us. **according to the Scriptures**: Christ lived and died in accordance with the prophecies about Him in the OT (see Ps. 16:10, 22; Is. 53:8–10).

15:4 The Resurrection verifies the fact that Christ's death paid the full price for sin. The Greek term translated **rose** here is in the perfect tense, emphasizing the ongoing effects of this historical event. Christ is a risen Savior today.

15:5–8 At the time of Paul's writing, a person could have verified the truthfulness of the apostle's statements. The majority of the **five hundred** people who saw the risen Christ, as well as **all the apostles** and **James** (the half brother of Jesus), were still living. **Born out of due time** is probably Paul's comment on the unique way

brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have ²fallen asleep. ⁷After that He was seen by James, then ⁸by all the apostles. ⁸Then last of all He was seen by me also, as by one born out of due time.

⁹For I am ^mthe least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because ⁿI persecuted the church of God. ¹⁰But ^oby the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, ^pyet not I, but the grace of God *which* was with me. ¹¹Therefore, whether *it was* I or they, so we preach and so you believed.

The Risen Christ, Our Hope

¹²Now if Christ is preached that He has been raised from the dead, how do

6 ² Died
7 ^k Luke 24:50; Acts 1:3, 4
8 ¹ [Acts 9:3-8; 22:6-11; 26:12-18]; 1 Cor. 9:1
9 ^m 2 Cor. 12:11; Eph. 3:8; 1 Tim. 1:15
ⁿ Acts 8:3
10 ^o Eph. 3:7, 8
^p Matt. 10:20; Rom. 15:18; Gal. 2:8; Phil. 2:13

13 ^q [1 Thess. 4:14]
15 ^r Acts 2:24
17 ^s [Rom. 4:25]
18 ^t Job 14:12; Ps. 13:3 ² Died
19 ^u 1 Cor. 4:9; 2 Tim. 3:12
20 ^v Acts 2:24; 1 Pet. 1:3

some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? ¹³But if there is no resurrection of the dead, ^qthen Christ is not risen. ¹⁴And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching *is* empty and your faith *is* also empty. ¹⁵Yes, and we are found false witnesses of God, because ^rwe have testified of God that He raised up Christ, whom He did not raise up—if in fact the dead do not rise. ¹⁶For if *the* dead do not rise, then Christ is not risen. ¹⁷And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; ^syou are still in your sins! ¹⁸Then also those who have ³fallen ⁴asleep in Christ have perished. ¹⁹^uIf in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable.

The Last Enemy Destroyed

²⁰But now ^vChrist is risen from the

Facts About the Resurrection	
The resurrection of Christ was proclaimed eagerly by the early church. This miracle was considered an essential part of the gospel message. Surely Christ had died, but more importantly, He had been raised. More than just a suffering Savior, Jesus is our living Lord.	
Christ's resurrection was prophesied in the Old Testament Scriptures (Ps. 16:10).	15:4
The risen Christ appeared to more than five hundred witnesses, including Paul.	15:5–8
If Jesus did not rise from the dead, the gospel message is pointless, empty, and dishonest. Jesus Christ would not be alive, interceding for us, and we would not be able to place our hope in a glorious future with Him. The Resurrection is central to the gospel.	15:14, 15
According to Paul, "if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins" (15:17; see Rom. 4:25). Christ's resurrection, not merely His death on the Cross, secured our justification. His resurrection was a sign of God's approval of Christ's sacrifice for our sins. In short, no Resurrection equals no forgiveness of sin.	15:17–19
The resurrection of Christ was designed to reveal what lies ahead for those who put their trust in Jesus (15:20–57). Paul called Christ "the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep" (15:20). This Old Testament image (see Ex. 23:16–19) means that Christ serves as both an example and a guarantee of what we can expect. Because He has conquered death (15:26, 27, 54–57), we need not fear death. Because He now enjoys a glorified body, we also can expect to inherit a "spiritual body" (15:44–46) after this mortal one wears out.	15:20–26
Our dead, physical body will one day be resurrected.	15:42
We will once again be both material and immaterial beings, our soul being reunited with our resurrected body.	15:43, 44
The power behind this marvelous, yet mysterious, event is Jesus, the self-declared "resurrection and the life" (John 11:25).	15:45
Our physical body will be altered and changed to prepare us for the life to come. If Jesus is the prototype, we will still be recognizable, but our new body will be capable of supernatural activities (see Luke 24:31, 36, 51).	15:51–54
Our resurrection will take place when Jesus returns (see 1 Thess. 4:13–18).	15:53

he became an apostle. Unlike the other apostles, who had the benefit of an initial training period with Christ, Paul became an apostle abruptly, with no opportunity for earthly contact with Christ or His teaching.

15:9 Paul considered himself **the least of the apostles** because at one time he had persecuted the church (see Acts 22:4; Eph. 3:8; 1 Tim. 1:15, 16).

15:10 **I labored more abundantly:** Even though Paul got a late start and did not have the discipleship training that the other apostles did, he traveled further, established more churches, and wrote more Scripture than all of them (see 2 Cor. 11:23–27). But Paul attributed his success to **the grace of God**.

15:11 **whether . . . I or they:** Paul did not care who got credit for the Corinthians' faith. He cared only that the Corinthians believed.

15:12, 13 Some of the Corinthians were teaching **that there is no resurrection**. These opponents of Paul may have been denying the reality of Christ's resurrection. They may also have been teaching that resurrection is only spiritual rather than physical. Or they may have been teaching that the resurrection had already happened (see 2 Tim. 2:18). Whatever the case, they contradicted the essential teaching that Christ had been physically raised from the dead and that believers in Him will someday also be resurrected.

15:15 **false witnesses:** In vv. 5–8, Paul listed several people, including himself, who had witnessed the resurrected Christ. To deny the Resurrection was to deny the truth of their testimony.

15:17 **you are still in your sins:** Christ's death without His resurrection would not succeed in saving us from our sins.

15:18 Without the resurrection of Christ, those who are **asleep in Christ**—the dead—have **perished** or been destroyed. The Greek word translated *futile* in this passage speaks of something that has no results. Without the resurrection of Christ, the Christian faith brings no forgiveness and no future life in God's presence.

15:19 **we are of all men the most pitiable:** If Christians have no hope for the future, the pagans could justifiably consider Christians fools since believers would have suffered for nothing.

15:20 Jesus is the **firstfruits** of all others who believe in Him. This is an OT image of the first installment of a crop which anticipates and guarantees the ultimate offering of the whole crop (see 16:15; Rom. 8:23). Because Christ rose from the dead, those who are **asleep**

dead, *and* has become ^wthe firstfruits of those who have ⁴fallen asleep. ²¹For ^xsince by man *came* death, ^yby Man also *came* the resurrection of the dead. ²²For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall ^zbe made alive. ²³But ^aeach one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those *who are* Christ's at His coming. ²⁴Then *comes* the end, when He delivers ^bthe kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power. ²⁵For He must reign ^ctill He has put all enemies under His feet. ²⁶^dThe last enemy that will be destroyed is death. ²⁷For ^e"*He has put all things under His feet.*" But when He says "all things are put under *Him*," it is evident that He who put all things under Him is excepted. ²⁸^fNow when all things are made subject to Him, then ^gthe Son Himself will also be subject to Him who put all things under Him, that God may be all in all.

Effects of Denying the Resurrection

²⁹Otherwise, what will they do who are

²⁰ ^w Acts 26:23; 1 Cor. 15:23; Rev. 1:5 ⁴ Died
²¹ ^x Gen. 3:19; Ezek. 18:4; Rom. 5:12; 6:23; Heb. 9:27
^y John 11:25
²² ^z [John 5:28, 29]
²³ ^a [1 Thess. 4:15-17]
²⁴ ^b [Dan. 2:44; 7:14, 27 ☆; 2 Pet. 1:11]
²⁵ ^c Ps. 110:1; Matt. 22:44
²⁶ ^d [2 Tim. 1:10; Rev. 20:14 ☆; 21:4]
²⁷ ^e Ps. 8:6 ☆
²⁸ ^f [Phil. 3:21] ☆
^g 1 Cor. 3:23; 11:3; 12:6
³⁰ ^h 2 Cor. 11:26
⁵ *danger*
³¹ ⁱ 1 Thess. 2:19
^j Rom. 8:36
³² ^k 2 Cor. 1:8 ^l Eccl. 2:24; Is. 22:13; 56:12; Luke 12:19
³³ ^m [1 Cor. 5:6]
³⁴ ⁿ Rom. 13:11; Eph. 5:14 ^o [1 Thess. 4:5] ^p 1 Cor. 6:5
³⁵ ^q Ezek. 37:3

baptized for the dead, if the dead do not rise at all? Why then are they baptized for the dead? ³⁰ And ^h why do we stand in ⁵jeopardy every hour? ³¹ I affirm, by ⁱ the boasting in you which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, ^j I die daily. ³² If, in the manner of men, ^k I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantage *is it* to me? *If the dead do not rise, ^l "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die!"*

³³ Do not be deceived: ^m "Evil company corrupts good habits." ³⁴ ⁿ Awake to righteousness, and do not sin; ^o for some do not have the knowledge of God. ^p I speak *this* to your shame.

A Glorious Body

³⁵ But someone will say, ^q "How are the dead raised up? And with what body do they come?" ³⁶ Foolish one, ^r what you sow is not made alive unless it dies. ³⁷ And what you sow, you do not sow that body that shall be, but mere grain—perhaps

³⁶ ^r John 12:24

in Christ (v. 18; 1 Thess. 4:15, 16) have a guarantee of their own resurrection.

15:21, 22 by man came death: The first man, Adam, transgressed God's law and brought sin and death into the world (see Gen. 2:17; 3:19; Rom. 5:12-21); the second Man, Jesus Christ, was the perfect sacrifice to take away sin and to bring life and resurrection to those who believe in Him (see Rom. 5:15-21). **in Christ all shall be made alive:** The principle here is similar to that in Rom. 5:18, 19, where Paul explains that by one man's (Adam's) sin many were made unrighteous, whereas by one Man's (Christ's) obedience many will be made righteous.

15:23 Each one in his own order indicates that God has a certain design for the resurrection. The word *order* is a Greek military term that might also be translated "rank." The Commander is raised first; His troops afterward. In 1 Thess. 4:13-18, **His coming** is described as Christ's coming with those who have "fallen asleep" (the dead), who are then united with their physical bodies. Following this is the removal of all living Christians from the earth.

15:24 The end here refers to all remaining prophetic events that will occur after the rapture of the church and during the climax of history, when Christ **puts an end to all rule** (vv. 25-28). **delivers the kingdom to God the Father:** When Christ and the church are joined at His coming, God will establish His *kingdom* on this earth, culminating in a new heaven and a new earth. **puts an end to all rule and all authority:** Until the time of the *end*, the Father subjugates everything to the Son (see Ps. 110:1; Dan. 2:44; 7:14, 27). Christ is Lord over the universe (see Col. 1:15-17).

15:25, 26 all enemies: God has allowed His enemy Satan to rule as the "prince of the power of the air" (see Eph. 2:2) and the "god of this age" (see 2 Cor. 4:4), but his final judgment before God is certain. **The last enemy . . . death:** The conquering of *death* is final proof of God's victory and the inauguration of the new day of the Lord (see Rev. 20:14).

15:27, 28 it is evident: Paul clarified the verses that he had been quoting from the OT. The texts say that everything is put under the Son, but God the Father is **excepted**, or excluded from this subjugation, because the **Son** must be **subject to the Father**. **God may be all in all** indicates that there will be no challenge to the sovereign rule of God over all the universe. There will be universal peace and prosperity.

15:29 It may be that some of the Corinthians had for some reason been **baptized for** others who had died without baptism. Paul did

not approve or disapprove of the unusual practice, though he used **they** rather than "we" when speaking of it. **if the dead do not rise . . . Why then are they baptized:** To deny the resurrection, as the Corinthians did, and yet be involved in such baptism activities made no sense.

15:30-32 why do we stand in jeopardy: Paul risked his life **daily**. To do so would have been of no **advantage** without the hope of a resurrection. Why else should Paul have endured difficulties like fighting **beasts at Ephesus**? It would have been better for him to take the position of the Epicureans, who sought pleasure and avoided pain. The reference to *beasts* might be a figurative reference to Paul's human enemies at Ephesus. Acts 19 does not record any confrontation with animals.

15:33, 34 Paul had already warned the Corinthians to avoid fellow believers who lived immoral lives (5:9-13). Quoting a proverb from the poet Menander, **evil company corrupts good habits**, Paul warned the Corinthians to stay away from those who teach false doctrine (see 2 Cor. 6:14-7:1).

15:35-37 Some people objected to the resurrection on the grounds

resurrection

(Gk. *anastasis*) (15:12, 13, 21, 42; Acts 17:32; Rom. 1:4; 1 Pet. 1:3) Strong's #386

The Scriptures often speak of Christ's resurrection with the phrase that is literally "resurrection out from among dead ones." This is the wording in the first half of 15:12 and in other verses (see Acts 17:31; 1 Pet. 1:3). When Scripture speaks of the resurrection in general, commonly the phrase is "a resurrection of dead ones." This is the wording in the second half of 15:12 (see also 15:13, 42). In Rom. 1:4, Christ's resurrection is spoken of as "a resurrection of dead ones." The same terminology is used in 15:21, where the Greek text literally reads: "For since through a man death came, so also through a Man came a resurrection of dead persons." This shows that Christ's resurrection included the resurrection of believers to eternal life. When He arose, many arose with Him, for they were united with Him in His resurrection (see Rom. 6:4, 5; Eph. 2:6; Col. 3:1).

wheat or some other *grain*.³⁸ But God gives it a body as He pleases, and to each seed its own body.

³⁹ All flesh is not the same flesh, but *there is one kind*⁶ of flesh of men, another flesh of animals, another of fish, and another of birds.

⁴⁰ *There* are also⁷ celestial bodies and⁸ terrestrial bodies; but the glory of the celestial is one, and the *glory* of the terrestrial is another. ⁴¹ *There is* one glory of the sun, another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for *one* star differs from *another* star in glory.

⁴² *So also is* the resurrection of the dead. *The body* is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. ⁴³ *It is* sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. ⁴⁴ It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. ⁴⁵ And so it is written, ^u “*The first man Adam became a living being.*” ^v The last Adam became^w a life-giving spirit.

⁴⁶ However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural, and afterward the spiritual. ⁴⁷ *The first man was* of the earth, ^y *made*⁹ of dust; the second Man is¹ the Lord² from heaven. ⁴⁸ As *was* the² man of dust, so also are those *who are*² made of dust; ^a and as *is* the heavenly Man, so also are those *who are* heavenly. ⁴⁹ And ^b as we have borne the image of the man of dust, ^c we³ shall also bear the image of the heavenly Man.

39 ⁶ NU, M omit of flesh
40 ⁷ heavenly
⁸ earthly
42 ⁸ [Dan. 12:3; Matt. 13:43]
43 ¹ [Phil. 3:21; Col. 3:4]
45 ^u Gen. 2:7
^v [Rom. 5:14]
^w John 5:21; 6:57; [Rom. 8:2; Phil. 3:21; Col. 3:4]
47 ^x John 3:31
^y Gen. 2:7; 3:19
^z John 3:13 ⁹ earthly
¹ NU omits the Lord
48 ^a Phil. 3:20
² earthly
49 ^b Gen. 5:3
^c Rom. 8:29; [2 Cor. 3:18; Phil. 3:21; 1 John 3:2] ³ M let us also bear
50 ^d Matt. 16:17; [John 3:3, 5]
51 ^e [1 Thess. 4:15] ^f [Phil. 3:21]
⁴ hidden truth
52 ^g Zech. 9:14; Matt. 24:31; John 5:25
53 ^h 2 Cor. 5:4
54 ⁱ Is. 25:8; [Rev. 20:14]
55 ^j Hos. 13:14 ⁵ NU
O Death, where is your victory? O Death, where is your sting?
56 ^k [Rom. 3:20; 4:15; 7:8]
57 ^l [Rom. 7:25]; 2 Cor. 2:14 ^m Rom. 8:37; [Heb. 2:14; 1 John 5:4]; Rev. 21:4

Our Final Victory

⁵⁰ Now this I say, brethren, that ^d flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. ⁵¹ Behold, I tell you a ⁴ mystery: ^e We shall not all sleep, ^f but we shall all be changed—⁵² in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. ^g For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. ⁵³ For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and ^h this mortal must put on immortality. ⁵⁴ So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: ⁱ “*Death is swallowed up in victory.*”

⁵⁵ “*O^j Death, where is your sting?*

O Hades, where is your victory?”

⁵⁶ The sting of death is sin, and ^k the strength of sin is the law. ⁵⁷ ^l But thanks be to God, who gives us ^m the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

⁵⁸ ⁿ Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing ^o that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

58 ⁿ 2 Pet. 3:14 ^o [1 Cor. 3:8]

that it was too hard to understand. Paul called these people **foolish**. Difficulty understanding the nature of the resurrection should not cause a person to doubt its reality, any more than not understanding how a seed becomes a plant should cause disbelief in the coming harvest.

15:38–41 The variety found in nature among living beings such as **men, animals, fish, and birds**, and among objects such as **celestial bodies and terrestrial bodies** reflect the Creator’s power and will. The varying brightness of the **sun, moon, and stars** serves as

life-giving spirit

(Gk. *pneuma zōopoion*) (15:45; 2 Cor. 3:6; 1 Pet. 3:18) Strong’s #4151; 2227

The Greek expression denotes “the spirit that gives life” or “the spirit that makes alive.” The Lord Jesus entered into a new kind of existence when He was raised from the dead because He was glorified and simultaneously became life-giving spirit. The verse does not say Jesus became “the Spirit,” since the Second Person of the Trinity did not become the Third Person. Rather, Jesus became spirit in the sense that His mortal existence and form were changed into that which is spiritual. As One now united with the Spirit in a glorified body, Jesus is no longer bound by His mortal body. He is alive in the Spirit (see 1 Pet. 3:18), to give life to all who believe. This is why Paul speaks of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus (Rom. 8:2).

a good illustration of the differences between the earthly human body and the heavenly human body. All these different celestial and terrestrial objects are evidence that God the Creator can certainly create new resurrected human bodies out of our old bodies.

15:44–49 natural . . . spiritual: The contrast is not between a material body and an immaterial body, but between a body subject to death and a body that is immortal. The Greek term translated *spiritual* here refers to a body directed by the Spirit, as opposed to one dominated by the flesh (2:15; 10:4). **First man . . . second Man** contrasts the sinful nature that every person inherits with the new righteous nature that comes through Christ.

15:50 Mere **flesh and blood** cannot enter into the glorious existence of an immortal body (vv. 35–49). Something must happen to this *flesh* so that it becomes incorruptible (v. 42).

15:51, 52 we shall all be changed: The teaching here is similar to the teaching given to the Thessalonians (see 1 Thess. 4:13–18). Whereas the dead in Christ will be raised first, the living believers will be instantly transformed into their immortal bodies when Jesus returns.

15:53–57 The living will receive a body that is not subject to death (see v. 50). Satan’s apparent victories in the Garden of Eden (see Gen. 3:13) and at the Cross (see Mark 15:22–24) were reversed by Jesus’ death (see Col. 2:15) and resurrection. From the vantage point of Jesus’ victorious return, **Death and Hades** (the grave) have no power over Christians, because Jesus has already conquered both. We participate in His **victory**.

15:58 The Corinthians were to continue **steadfast** in the **work** of Christ, specifically because of the resurrection. **your labor is not in vain:** All the work that we do for Christ will be rewarded (see 2 Cor. 5:10; Rev. 22:12).

Collection for the Saints

16 Now concerning ^athe collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also: ^{2b}On the first *day* of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come. ³And when I come, ^cwhomever you approve by *your* letters I will send to bear your gift to Jerusalem. ^{4d}But if it is fitting that I go also, they will go with me.

Personal Plans

⁵Now I will come to you ^ewhen I pass through Macedonia (for I am passing through Macedonia). ⁶And it may be that I will remain, or even spend the winter with you, that you may ^fsend me on my journey, wherever I go. ⁷For I do not wish to see you now on the way; but I hope to stay a while with you, ^gif the Lord permits.

⁸But I will tarry in Ephesus until ^hPentecost. ⁹For ⁱa great and effective door has opened to me, and ^jthere are many adversaries.

¹⁰And ^kif Timothy comes, see that he may be with you without fear; for ^lhe does the work of the Lord, as I also *do*. ^{11m}Therefore let no one despise him. But send him on his journey ⁿin peace, that he may come to me; for I am waiting for him with the brethren.

¹²Now concerning *our* brother ^oApollos, I strongly urged him to come to you with the brethren, but he was quite unwilling to come at this time; however,

CHAPTER 16

1 ^a Acts 11:29; Gal. 2:10
2 ^b Acts 20:7
3 ^c 2 Cor. 3:1; 8:18
4 ^d 2 Cor. 8:4, 19
5 ^e Acts 19:21; 2 Cor. 1:15, 16
6 ^f Acts 15:3; Rom. 15:24; 1 Cor. 16:11
7 ^g Acts 18:21; James 4:15
8 ^h Lev. 23:15-22
9 ⁱ Acts 14:27; 2 Cor. 2:12; Col. 4:3 / Acts 19:9
10 ^k Acts 19:22; 2 Tim. 1:2 / Phil. 2:20; 1 Thess. 3:2
11 ^m 1 Tim. 4:12;
Titus 2:15 ⁿ Acts 15:33
12 ^o Acts 18:24;
1 Cor. 1:12; 3:5
13 ^p Matt. 24:42
14 ^q 1 Cor. 15:1; Gal. 5:1; Phil. 1:27;
4:1; 1 Thess. 3:8;
2 Thess. 2:15 ^r [Ps. 31:24; Eph. 3:16;
6:10; Col. 1:11]
14 ^s [1 Pet. 4:8]
15 ^t 1 Cor. 1:16
16 ^u Rom. 16:5 ^v 2 Cor. 8:4
17 ^w Eph. 5:21;
1 Thess. 5:12; Heb. 13:17 ^x [Heb. 6:10]
17 ^y 2 Cor. 11:9;
Phil. 2:30
18 ^z Col. 4:8 ^{aa} Phil. 2:29
19 ^{ab} Rom. 16:5
20 ^{ac} Rom. 16:16
21 ^{ad} Rom. 16:22;
Gal. 6:11; Col. 4:18; 2 Thess. 3:17;
Philem. 19
22 ^{ae} Eph. 6:24 ^{af} Gal. 1:8, 9 ^{ag} Jude 14, 15

he will come when he has a convenient time.

Final Exhortations

^{13p}Watch, ^qstand fast in the faith, be brave, ^rbe strong. ^{14s}Let all *that* you *do* be done with love.

¹⁵I urge you, brethren—you know ^tthe household of Stephanas, that it is ^uthe firstfruits of Achaia, and ^vthat they have devoted themselves to ^wthe ministry of the saints—^{16w}that you also submit to such, and to everyone who works and ^xlabors with *us*.

¹⁷I am glad about the coming of Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus, ^yfor what was lacking on your part they supplied. ^{18z}For they refreshed my spirit and yours. Therefore ^aacknowledge such men.

Greetings and a Solemn Farewell

¹⁹The churches of Asia greet you. Aquila and Priscilla greet you heartily in the Lord, ^bwith the church that is in their house. ²⁰All the brethren greet you.

^cGreet one another with a holy kiss.

^{21d}The salutation with my own hand—Paul’s.

²²If anyone ^edoes not love the Lord Jesus Christ, ^flet him be ^gaccused. ^{gO}²Lord, come!

^{23h}The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you. ²⁴My love *be* with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen.

¹ Gr. *anathema* ² Aram. *Marana tha*; possibly *Maran atha*, *Our Lord has come* ²³ h Rom. 16:20

16:1–4 Now concerning: Paul once again addressed a question asked by the Corinthians (7:1, 25; 8:1; 12:1) about giving (Acts 11:29, 30; 24:17; Rom. 15:25–28; 2 Cor. 8; 9). **The first day of the week** was the regular weekly meeting day of the early church. **Lay something aside** expresses the concept of Christian giving in the NT. The OT tithe (altogether coming to about 23 percent) was not adopted by the NT church, though certainly Christ practiced it. New Testament believers were encouraged to give liberally, but never a specified amount or percentage (see Rom. 12:8). Paul wanted to make sure that the Corinthians’ offering would be collected before he arrived so that he would not need to pressure the people when he saw them (see 2 Cor. 9:5). **Whomever you approve** refers to the person who would accompany Paul (v. 4) to **Jerusalem** to deliver the gift on behalf of the Corinthian church.

16:5–7 Now I will come to you: Paul had hoped to leave Ephesus soon to visit Corinth, perhaps even spending **the winter** with the Corinthians. Travel by sea during the winter was hazardous (see Acts 27:9–44). Paul eventually did make it to Corinth, but not according to the schedule he planned here. This failure to come caused him trouble later with the Corinthians (see 2 Cor. 1:15–2:1).

16:8, 9 The opportunities for Paul’s ministry **in Ephesus**, a major city of Asia Minor, were great, as was the persecution he endured there.

16:10–12 Though Paul could not leave immediately for Corinth, he wanted to be represented among the Corinthians by his fellow workers. He planned to send **Timothy**, a young man at this time. Paul encouraged the Corinthians to go easy on Timothy, for although he was trustworthy, he was more timid than Paul.

16:13, 14 Watch is often used in the NT to indicate anticipation of some future event (see Mark 13:37; Rev. 3:3). Paul’s exhortation to **stand fast in the faith** is especially important in view of the susceptibility of the Corinthians to false teaching (see 2 Cor. 11:3). **Be brave** may also be translated “play the man,” emphasizing not only bravery but maturity. Paul’s command to do everything **with love** serves as a balance to these strong exhortations.

16:15–18 The household of Stephanas was among the first in **Achaia** to respond to Paul’s preaching. **Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus** probably were the ones who confirmed the bad news brought by Chloe’s household in 1:11. They were also probably the bearers of the letter that the Corinthians sent to Paul (see 7:1).

16:19, 20 The churches of Asia may be those mentioned in Rev. 2; 3. **Aquila and Priscilla** were tentmakers who had met Paul in Corinth. They followed him to Ephesus and made their house available for the meetings of the church (see Rom. 16:3–5). They would have been known to many in the Corinthian church. **a holy kiss:** This custom, adopted by the early Christians, symbolized love, forgiveness, and unity.

16:21–23 my own hand: From this point on, Paul stopped dictating (see Rom. 16:22; Gal. 6:11) and completed the letter in his own handwriting. **let him be accused:** It may seem harsh that Paul would wish God’s damnation on those who do not love Jesus. But the acceptance or rejection of Christ is serious business. Those who reject the Lord Jesus are enemies of God (see Gal. 1:8, 9). In the next breath Paul desires the coming of our Lord with an Aramaic expression, *Marana tha*, meaning “Lord, come.”

THE SECOND EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS



SECOND CORINTHIANS is the most autobiographical of Paul's letters and probably the most difficult letter that Paul had to write. In previous letters, Paul had exhorted the Corinthian church to correct some abuses that were occurring in the congregation. However, some false teachers in the congregation were antagonized by Paul's rebuke and rejected his warnings. As a result, in this letter Paul was forced to defend his character, and more importantly his apostolic authority, in the face of slanderous accusations. His defense reveals the trials and tribulations, the problems and the pressures of his itinerant ministry more than any other book in the Bible. Yet like the rest of Paul's letters, 2 Corinthians points past Paul's sweat and tears to the power that lay behind his actions and words: the Lord Jesus Christ.

Author and Date Second Corinthians begins by identifying the author as Paul (1:1; 2:1). The style of the letter confirms Paul's authorship, as does the testimony of the early church. Some critics theorize that chapters 10–13 were not part of the original letter because the tone is different from chapters 1–9. The spirit of the first nine chapters is joyful and jubilant, while the spirit of the last four is one of sorrow and severity. Many of these critics claim that chapters 10–13 are part of a lost letter referred to in 2:4. However, the final chapters of 2 Corinthians are firm, not "sorrowful." Moreover, no early manuscript or author can be cited to support such a theory. The difference in tone can be accounted for by the change of subject in those chapters.

Paul wrote 1 Corinthians during the last year of his ministry at Ephesus, on his third missionary journey, probably in the early spring of A.D. 56. Second Corinthians was written shortly after 1 Corinthians. Thus the date of 2 Corinthians is probably the fall of A.D. 56.

Occasion In order to understand the purpose of 2 Corinthians, one must know about the background to the letter, that is, what had occurred between the writing of 1 Corinthians and this letter. Reconstructing that background, however, is complicated.

The issues are: (1) How many visits did Paul make to Corinth before he wrote 2 Corinthians (2:1; 12:14)? (2) How many letters had he written (2:3, 4, 9; 7:18)? (3) Who was "the offender" (2:5; 7:12)? There are two basic ways of reconstructing the life and letters of Paul to explain these references. The traditional view takes the references in 2 Corinthians to a previous letter to refer to 1 Corinthians. In this case, the "offender" is the incestuous person of 1 Corinthians 5. A more recent interpretation contends that the data in 2 Corinthians does not fit 1 Corinthians; therefore there must have been another letter written by Paul to Corinth between 1 and 2 Corinthians. Either that letter was lost, or else it is chapters 10–13 of 2 Corinthians. Those holding this theory usually maintain that Paul must have visited Corinth briefly between the writing of 1 and 2 Corinthians, based on the word "again" in 2:1. This is sometimes called the "painful visit." According to this view, the "offender" was not the incestuous person of 1 Corinthians 5, but the leader of a party opposed to Paul.

The traditional view contends that the data of 2 Corinthians does fit the facts of 1 Corinthians. Therefore the "previous letter" is 1 Corinthians and "the offender" is the incestuous member. According to this view, there was

no “painful visit,” for the word “again” in 2:1 does not necessarily mean that Paul made a visit between writing 1 and 2 Corinthians. It simply means he did not want to return “in sorrow.” The reference in 12:14 and 13:1, 2 to a “third time” does not mean Paul was coming for his third time, it simply means that he was “ready” to come for a third time. He had planned to come (see 1 Cor. 16:5–9), evidently was ready to come (12:14), and then did not actually make the trip (1:15–17, 23).

Thus the background of 2 Corinthians may be pieced together as follows: Paul founded the Corinthian church (Acts 18:1–17; 1 Cor. 3:6, 10). After 18 months he departed from Corinth and wrote a letter which is now lost (see 1 Cor. 5:9). Paul then talked to some members of Chloe’s household about quarrels in the Corinthian church (1 Cor. 1:11). Perhaps at this point, Paul sent Timothy on a trip that included Corinth (1 Cor. 4:17; 16:10). Then a committee arrived from Corinth with questions for Paul (1 Cor. 7:1; 16:7). Then Paul wrote the book now called 1 Corinthians to correct disorders and answer questions from the Corinthian church. Paul probably sent Titus to Corinth with 1 Corinthians. After sending him, Paul became deeply concerned about how the Corinthians would respond to what he had written. He had called them carnal (1 Cor. 3:1) and proud (1 Cor. 4:18). In the meantime, serious difficulties arose at Ephesus, so he left ahead of schedule (see Acts 20:1). He stopped at Troas to preach the gospel (2:12). But because he did not find Titus there and was still eager to hear about the Corinthians, he hastened to Macedonia (2:13). There Paul found Titus. According to an early tradition, Paul wrote 2 Corinthians from Philippi.



Clay jar containing a sabra cactus near Bethany. “But we have this treasure in earthen vessels” (2 Cor. 4:7).

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Purpose In 1 Corinthians, Paul had instructed the believers in Corinth to discipline an incestuous member (see 1 Cor. 5), and to take a collection for the poor saints in Jerusalem (1 Cor. 16:1–4). Titus gave Paul a report that was on the whole encouraging (2:14; 7:5–7). The Corinthians had responded properly to 1 Corinthians. They had faithfully carried out the discipline necessary (2:5–11). But Titus also informed Paul about the presence of “false apostles” (11:13) who accused Paul of walking according to the flesh (1:12, 17; 10:2), being deceitful (2:17; 4:2; 12:16), intimidating the church with his letters (10:9, 10), unjustly mistreating someone to the point of ruining that person (7:2), and defrauding people (7:2). These false teachers probably pointed out that Paul had not returned as he promised, and used this as evidence for his duplicity (1:15–17, 23, 24). They even attempted to discredit Paul by charging that he was raising money to enrich himself (7:2; 8:16–23). Inevitably these accusations raised doubts in the minds of the Corinthians about the integrity of the apostle Paul.

Paul wrote 2 Corinthians out of his concern for the Corinthian church (7:12). He wanted to offer the church some further instructions concerning the repentant offender (2:5–11) as well as about the collection for the poor saints in Jerusalem (9:1–5). However, Paul’s main purpose for writing 2 Corinthians was to defend his ministry. Paul’s opponents in Corinth had severely attacked him. He wrote this letter to prove that his ministry was sincere and genuine, and to reassert his authority as an apostle of Christ.

Theology Second Corinthians is primarily a personal letter, defending Paul’s ministry among the Corinthians and appealing to the factions in the church to reconcile themselves to each other. Yet Paul still uses doctrine to address this church’s problems. He speaks of the foundational doctrines of the Christian faith: the Trinity (1:21, 22; 13:14), as well as the deity (1:12, 19; 4:5), humanity (8:9), death (5:19, 21) and resurrection of Christ (5:15). Paul reaffirms that all believers have been sealed by the Holy Spirit (1:22) and have been given the Spirit as a deposit (1:22; 5:5). The believing Corinthians are in Christ (5:7) and Christ is in them (13:3, 4). They will be resurrected (4:14; 5:1–8) and evaluated at the judgment seat of Christ (5:10), where they will either be ashamed (5:3) or rewarded (5:9, 10). Paul points out that part of the reason for the Corinthians’ difficulties and divisions was Satan’s opposition to the church. He blinds unbelievers to truth (4:4) and uses every opportunity to divide the believers (2:11). That is why Paul exhorts the Corinthians to lead holy lives, to repent of the sins of the past, and to be reconciled to each other. Thus in this personal letter defending his ministry and authority, Paul still weaves doctrine into the fabric of his discussion. For Paul, the essence of Christian faith touched on every facet of life, not only divisions and controversies like those that disturbed the Corinthian church.

CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

Because Paul indicates that he experienced the comfort of the risen Christ in the midst of his hardships, he reveals Jesus as the source of the believer’s comfort: “For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also abounds through Christ” (1:5). Given Paul’s personal tragedies, Jesus the Comforter is a major emphasis in this letter. But, look further and you will find much more. Jesus is celebrated as our triumph (2:14), our light (4:6), our reconciliation (5:19), our substitute (5:21), our gift (9:15), and our strength (12:9).

2 CORINTHIANS OUTLINE

- I. Salutation and thanksgiving 1:1–11
- II. Consolation: comfort in ministry 1:12–7:16
 - A. The conduct of Paul 1:12–2:11
 - B. The character of Paul’s ministry of the gospel 2:12–6:10
 - C. The appeal to the Corinthians 6:11–7:4
 - D. The comfort in the ministry 7:5–16
- III. The collection: the ministry of giving 8:1–9:15
 - A. Arrangements for the collection 8:1–24
 - B. Arguments for the collection 9:1–15
- IV. Correction: vindication of Paul’s ministry 10:1–13:10
 - A. Paul’s position 10:1–12:18
 - B. Paul’s purpose 12:19–13:10
- V. Personal greetings, admonition, and benediction 13:11–14

C. A.D. 47–49
Paul’s first missionary journey

C. A.D. 50
The Jerusalem council

C. A.D. 50–53
Paul’s second missionary journey

C. A.D. 52
The church at Corinth is started

C. A.D. 53–57
Paul’s third missionary journey

C. A.D. 56
Spring—
1 Corinthians is written

C. A.D. 56
Fall— 2 Corinthians is written

C. A.D. 58
Paul is arrested in Jerusalem

C. A.D. 60–62
Paul is imprisoned in Rome

C. A.D. 67
Peter and Paul are executed

Greeting

Paul, ^aan apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and ^bTimothy our brother,

To the church of God which is at Corinth, ^cwith all the saints who are in all Achaia:

^{2d}Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Comfort in Suffering

^{3c}Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, ⁴who ^fcomforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any ¹trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. ⁵For as ^gthe sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our ²consolation also abounds through Christ. ⁶Now if we are afflicted, ^h*it is* for your consolation and salvation, which is effective for enduring the same sufferings which we also suffer. Or if we are comforted, *it is* for your consolation and salvation. ⁷And our hope for you *is* steadfast, because we know that ⁱas you are partakers of the sufferings, so also *you will partake* of the consolation.

CHAPTER 1

¹ ^a 1 Cor. 1:1; Eph. 1:1; Col. 1:1; 1 Tim. 1:1; 2 Tim. 1:1 ^b Acts 16:1; 1 Cor. 16:10 ^c Phil. 1:1; Col. 1:2 ² ^d Rom. 1:7 ³ ^e Eph. 1:3; 1 Pet. 1:3 ⁴ ^f Is. 51:12; 66:13; 2 Cor. 7:6, 7, 13 ¹ ^g tribulation ⁵ ^g [Acts 9:4]; 2 Cor. 4:10; Phil. 3:10; Col. 1:24 ² ^h comfort ⁶ ^h 2 Cor. 4:15; 12:15; Eph. 3:1, 13; 2 Tim. 2:10 ⁷ ⁱ [Rom. 8:17; 2 Tim. 2:12]

⁸ ^j Acts 19:23; 1 Cor. 15:32; 16:9 ³ ^k tribulation ⁹ ^k Jer. 17:5, 7 ¹⁰ ^l [2 Pet. 2:9] ⁴ ^l ^m shall ¹¹ ^m Rom. 15:30; Phil. 1:19; Phil. 1:19; Phil. 1:19 ²² ⁿ 2 Cor. 4:15; 9:11 ⁵ ^m your behalf ¹² ^o 2 Cor. 2:17 ^p [1 Cor. 2:4] ⁶ ^o The opposite of duplicity ¹⁴ ^q 2 Cor. 5:12 ^r Phil. 2:16; 1 Thess. 2:19 ¹⁵ ^s 1 Cor. 4:19

Delivered from Suffering

⁸For we do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, of ^jour ³trouble which came to us in Asia: that we were burdened beyond measure, above strength, so that we despaired even of life. ⁹Yes, we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should ^knot trust in ourselves but in God who raises the dead, ¹⁰^lwho delivered us from so great a death, and ⁴does deliver us; in whom we trust that He will still deliver us, ¹¹you also ^mhelping together in prayer for us, that thanks may be given by many persons on ⁵our behalf ⁿfor the gift *granted* to us through many.

Paul's Sincerity

¹²For our boasting is this: the testimony of our conscience that we conducted ourselves in the world in ⁶simplicity and ^ogodly sincerity, ^pnot with fleshly wisdom but by the grace of God, and more abundantly toward you. ¹³For we are not writing any other things to you than what you read or understand. Now I trust you will understand, even to the end ¹⁴(as also you have understood us in part), ^qthat we are your boast as ^ryou also *are* ours, in the day of the Lord Jesus.

Sparing the Church

¹⁵And in this confidence ^sI intended to

1:1, 2 Second Corinthians opens the way most ancient letters did: salutation, author, recipients, and greeting. The author was **Paul, an apostle**. His identification with **Jesus Christ** is especially important in this letter because false apostles (11:12–15; 1 Cor. 4:14–16) had opposed him in Corinth and caused confusion in the church. **Timothy** is listed as coauthor. Paul and Timothy wrote this letter to the church at **Corinth** and all believers in **Achaia**, what is today southern Greece. **Grace to you and peace** was Paul's standard greeting. With it, Paul was expressing his prayer that the Corinthians would experience God's favor and the joy that results from being in a proper relationship with the Lord.

1:3 A word of thanks often followed a letter's salutation (vv. 1, 2). **Blessed** expresses adoration and praise. Paul called God the **God and Father** of Christ. Even though Jesus is God, as the incarnate Son He was dependent on God the Father. Thus God the Father was His God. **Comfort** here means "exhortation," "encouragement," "cheer." Paul used this word, sometimes translated "consolation," ten times in the following five verses (vv. 3–7). This is the purpose of our gathering in the church (see Heb. 10:24, 25), and it is Paul's subject in ch. 7 (see 7:12, 13). When they meet, believers should encourage each other in the faith.

1:4 **Tribulation** means distress or affliction. God comforts us not only to make us comfortable but also to make us comforters. The comfort that God gives to us becomes a gift we can give to others (see 7:6; Acts 9:10–19). Our willingness to share it reflects the sincerity of our faith (see John 13:35).

1:5 Tribulation (v. 4) is called **the sufferings of Christ**. Christ suffered as a bearer of our sins (1 Pet. 3:18) and as a servant to His disciples (John 13:1–17). Those who follow Christ also will experience the same suffering while they serve (John 15:20), for which they will receive a reward, "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" (4:17).

1:8 Paul's commitment to Christ and His service did not by any means exempt him from trouble. By **Asia** Paul meant the Roman

province in western Asia Minor, present-day Turkey. It is not known exactly where Paul was experiencing this **trouble**, but it was probably at Ephesus. Most likely it was the uproar stirred up against Paul by Demetrius the silversmith (see Acts 19:23–41; 1 Cor. 15:31, 32).

1:9, 10 **the sentence of death**: Paul returns to the theme of death and resurrection several times in this letter (see 2:16; 4:7–14; 5:1–10; 13:4). Here Paul is probably referring to the life-threatening persecution he faced when he preached the gospel (see Acts 14:19, 20).

1:11 As Paul trusted the Lord and as the Corinthians prayed, God delivered him (v. 10). We should pray for one another so **that thanks may be given**. If many people intercede, many will thank God when He answers. Whenever we face difficulties, we should let others know so they can pray and God can be praised. Answers to **prayer** should always receive public praise, for our Deliverer deserves our adoration.

1:12 Paul's critics accused him of living for his own selfish interest (10:2). They used his failure to return to Corinth as evidence of his lack of sincerity. Paul began the body of this letter by defending his integrity (1:12–2:4). **Fleshly wisdom** refers to selfish interest (contrast with Paul's admonition and Christ's example of humility in Phil. 2:3–8). Paul's **godly sincerity** was **more abundantly** clear to the Corinthians than to others; he spent 18 months with them (Acts 18:11).

1:13 Paul's critics had accused him of being insincere in his letters, of **writing** one thing and doing the opposite (10:10). Paul denied these charges. He meant what he wrote; there were no hidden agendas in his letters.

1:15 Paul had intended to visit the Corinthians (see 1 Cor. 16:5–7), but he had failed to come. This prompted some of the members of the Corinthian church to accuse him of living according to "fleshly wisdom" (vv. 12, 17). The **second benefit** was the benefit of two visits, one on his way to Macedonia and the other after leaving (see v. 16).

come to you before, that you might have ^aa second benefit— ¹⁶to pass by way of you to Macedonia, ^uto come again from Macedonia to you, and be helped by you on my way to Judea. ¹⁷Therefore, when I was planning this, did I do it lightly? Or the things I plan, do I plan ^vaccording to the flesh, that with me there should be Yes, Yes, and No, No? ¹⁸But *as* God is ^wfaithful, our ⁷word to you was not Yes and No. ¹⁹For ^xthe Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us—by me, ^ySilvanus, and ^zTimothy—was not Yes and No, ^abut in Him was Yes. ²⁰^bFor all the promises of God in Him *are* Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us. ²¹Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and ^chas anointed us *is* God, ²²who ^dalso has sealed us and ^egiven us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.

²³Moreover ^fI call God as witness against my soul, ^gthat to spare you I came no more to Corinth. ²⁴Not ^hthat we ⁸have dominion over your faith, but are fellow workers for your joy; for ⁱby faith you stand.

15 ^t Rom. 1:11; 15:29
16 ^u Acts 19:21;
1 Cor. 16:3-6
17 ^v 2 Cor. 10:2;
11:18
18 ^w 1 John 5:20
⁷ message
19 ^x Mark 1:1; Luke
1:35; John 1:34;
20:31; 1 John 5:5;
20 ^y 1 Thess. 1:1;
2 Thess. 1:1; 1 Pet.
5:12 ^z Acts 18:5;
2 Cor. 1:1 ^a [Heb.
13:8]
20 ^b [Rom. 15:8, 9]
21 ^c [1 John 2:20,
27]
22 ^d [Eph. 4:30]
^e Rom. 8:16; 2 Cor.
5:5; [Eph. 1:14]
23 ^f Rom. 1:9;
Gal. 1:20; Phil. 1:8
^g 1 Cor. 4:21; 2 Cor.
2:3; 12:20
24 ^h 1 Cor. 3:5;
2 Cor. 4:5; 11:20;
[1 Pet. 5:3] ⁱ Rom.
11:20; 1 Cor. 15:1
⁸ rule

CHAPTER 2

1 ^a 2 Cor. 1:23
2 ^b 2 Cor. 7:8

2 But I determined this within myself, ^athat I would not come again to you in sorrow. ²For if I make you ^bsorrowful, then who is he who makes me glad but the one who is made sorrowful by me?

Forgive the Offender

³And I wrote this very thing to you, lest, when I came, ^cI should have sorrow over those from whom I ought to have joy, ^dhaving confidence in you all that my joy is *the joy* of you all. ⁴For out of much ¹affliction and anguish of heart I wrote to you, with many tears, ^enot that you should be grieved, but that you might know the love which I have so abundantly for you.

⁵But ^fif anyone has caused grief, he has not ^ggrieved me, but all of you to some extent—not to be too severe. ⁶This punishment which was *inflicted* ^hby the majority *is* sufficient for such a man,

3 ^c 1 Cor. 4:21; 2 Cor. 12:21 ^d 2 Cor. 8:22; Gal. 5:10; 2 Thess. 3:4; Philem. 21 ^e 4 ^e [2 Cor. 2:9; 7:8, 12] ¹ tribulation ⁵ [1 Cor. 5:1] ^g Gal. 4:12 ⁶ ^h 1 Cor. 5:4, 5; 2 Cor. 7:11; 1 Tim. 5:20

1:17 when I was planning this: Paul rhetorically asked: When he made plans to visit the Corinthians, was he joking, guided by self-interest, or inconsistent? The Greek text indicates that these questions expected a negative answer. Paul explained later why he changed his plans (see 1:22—2:4).

1:18 Before finishing the defense of his personal integrity (1:23—2:4), Paul defended his preaching: it was both true and trustworthy (vv. 18—22). **Our word** is a reference to teaching of Paul (see v. 19).

1:19 Paul's preaching was not **Yes and No** at the same time—not inconsistent or contradictory. Instead, his preaching reflected the truthfulness and faithfulness of God, because his teaching was based on the Scriptures and the teachings of Christ.

1:20 All of God's promises concerning Christ are true and trustworthy: a **Yes**.

1:21, 22 In the Greek text, **anointed** is connected to **establishes**. God confirmed Paul and his fellow workers by anointing them. This anointing probably refers to special empowerment by the Holy Spirit, similar to the anointing John described in 1 John 2:20, 27. **sealed:** Sealing indicates ownership and security. The *sealing* and the *giving* of the Holy Spirit are also linked. The Holy Spirit is a **guarantee**, the down payment that there is more spiritual blessing to come and that the believer will receive eternal life.

1:23 Paul had promised to come and use his authority, if necessary, to straighten out the problems at Corinth (1 Cor. 4:21). To **spare** them the pain of correction and give them an opportunity to correct themselves, he did not come. God is patient with us too. But Paul had warned them previously that their weakness, sickness, and even death was due to their failure to correct themselves (1 Cor. 11:30).

1:24 As an apostle, Paul had authority to discipline (10:2), but it was not his place to order the Corinthians around.

2:1 Paul changed his travel plans partly because he did not want to come to Corinth **again...in sorrow**. Some have interpreted this verse to mean that Paul had made a painful visit to Corinth and wanted to avoid another one. Although the narrative in Acts does not indicate such a visit, some have proposed that Paul visited Corinth between the writing of the two letters, 1 and 2 Corinthians. However, the text does not necessarily say that he had made a previous painful visit, only that he did not want his next visit to Corinth to be in sorrow.

2:3, 4 I wrote: Traditionally commentators have identified the previous letter to which Paul refers in these verses as 1 Corinthians. Many recent commentators believe that Paul is speaking about a letter written between 1 and 2 Corinthians that has been lost. Some have identified chs. 10–13 as this “lost letter” because the tone of those chapters seems to match the description of these verses, a letter of **much affliction and anguish of heart**.

2:5–11 Paul wrote of someone who had **caused grief**. The traditional interpretation has been that this offender was the incestuous man of 1 Cor. 5. Lately some commentators have suggested that the offender may be another person who had wronged Paul during the “painful visit” that he made between the writing of 1 and 2 Corinthians (see vv. 3, 4).

2:6 Punishment means “warning,” “censure,” or “rebuke.” This is a reference to the church discipline Paul had instructed the Corinthians to use on the person mentioned in v. 5. It was tough love, but it worked. The man repented.

sealed

(Gk. *sphragizō*) (1:22; Eph. 1:13; 4:30) Strong's #4972

guarantee

(Gk. *arrabōn*) (1:22; 5:5; Eph. 1:14) Strong's #728

The Greek word translated *sealed* here was a technical term denoting a seller's guarantee of the validity of a purchase. As such, God's gift of the Holy Spirit is our guarantee. In the ancient world people commonly branded or marked personal possessions as they sealed letters, with a seal identifying the owner or sender. In this passage, Paul was describing believers as being marked as God's possession with the seal of the Holy Spirit. This seal will remain until we, as God's possession, are completely redeemed (see Eph. 1:13, 14; 4:30). Paul often used another term with *sealed*, namely *arrabōn*, translated *guarantee*. This Greek term was commonly used for the promissory first installment that guaranteed a full, final payment. The word was also used by the ancients to refer to an engagement ring. As Christians, we have received the Spirit as a first installment, guarantee, and foretaste of the full inheritance yet to be given (Eph. 1:13, 14).

⁷ⁱso that, on the contrary, you *ought* rather to forgive and comfort *him*, lest perhaps such a one be swallowed up with too much sorrow. ⁸Therefore I urge you to reaffirm *your* love to him. ⁹For to this end I also wrote, that I might put you to the test, whether you are *obedient* in all things. ¹⁰Now whom you forgive anything, I also *forgive*. For ^{2f}if indeed I have forgiven anything, I have forgiven that one for your sakes in the presence of Christ, ¹¹lest Satan should take advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices.

Triumph in Christ

¹²Furthermore, ^kwhen I came to Troas to *preach* Christ's gospel, and ^{1a} ³door was opened to me by the Lord, ^{13m}I had no rest in my spirit, because I did not find Titus my brother; but taking my leave of them, I departed for Macedonia.

¹⁴Now thanks *be* to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us ⁴diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place. ¹⁵For we are to God the fragrance of Christ ⁿamong those who are being saved and ^oamong those who are perishing. ^{16p}To the one *we are* the aroma of death *leading* to death, and to the other the aroma of life *leading* to life. And ^qwho is sufficient for these things? ¹⁷For we are not, as ⁵so many, ^rpeddling ⁶the word of God; but as ^sof sincerity, but as from God, we speak in the sight of God in Christ.

⁷ Gal. 6:1; Eph. 4:32
⁹ 2 Cor. 7:15; 10:6
¹⁰ ² NU indeed, *what I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, I did it for your sakes*
¹² ^k Acts 16:8
¹ 1 Cor. 16:9
³ Opportunity
¹³ ^m 2 Cor. 7:6, 13; 8:6; Gal. 2:1, 3; 2 Tim. 4:10;
¹⁴ Titus 1:4
¹⁴ ⁴ manifests
¹⁵ ^a [1 Cor. 1:18]
^o [2 Cor. 4:3]
¹⁶ ^p Luke 2:34;
¹⁷ [John 9:39; 1 Pet. 2:7] ^q [1 Cor. 15:10]
¹⁷ ^r 2 Pet. 2:3
⁵ 1 Cor. 5:8; 2 Cor. 1:12; 1 Thess. 2:4;
¹ Pet. 4:11 ⁵ ^M the rest ⁶ adulterating for gain

CHAPTER 3

¹ ^a 2 Cor. 5:12;
¹⁰:12, 18; 12:11
^b Acts 18:27
² ^c 1 Cor. 9:2
³ ^d 1 Cor. 3:5 ^e Ex. 24:12; 31:18; 32:15;
² Cor. 3:7 ^f Ps. 40:8

BIBLE TIMES & CULTURE NOTES



The New Testament Canon

The word *canon* identifies the writings of the prophets, apostles, and their companions which are inspired by God and authoritative for truth pertaining to doctrine and life. The first question for the church to answer about a book's inclusion in the canon accepted by Christians was whether it came through the apostles of the Lord or through persons under the guidance of an apostle, such as Luke. Second, the book had to come with the power of God and be effective for changing lives. Third, it must have been generally accepted by the people of God. This latter test refers first to the ones who received the book, and second to the transmission in the church. Determination of the NT canon took place over a period of years, reaching its final form at the Synod of Carthage in 397.

Christ's Epistle

3 Do ^awe begin again to commend ourselves? Or do we need, as some *others*, ^bepistles of commendation to you or *letters* of commendation from you? ^{2c}You are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read by all men; ³clearly you are an epistle of Christ, ^dministered by us, written not with ink but by the Spirit of the living God, not ^eon tablets of stone but ^fon tablets of flesh, *that is*, of the heart.

2:7, 8 forgive and comfort him: The purpose of church discipline is repentance and restoration. Forgiveness should always follow the correction, just as Christ instructed (see Matt. 18:15–35).

2:11 One of Satan's **devices**, or designs, is to cheat the believer out of true forgiveness. The devil will try to divide the church any way he can.

2:12, 13 Troas was a city on the Aegean coast, where Paul had received his call to preach the gospel in Macedonia (see Acts 16:8). Paul **had no rest** because he was deeply concerned about the Corinthians and was looking for Titus, who was on his way back from Corinth. Paul then crossed the Aegean Sea and arrived in **Macedonia**, probably at the city of Philippi.

2:14 When Titus gave Paul good news about the Corinthians (see 7:5–7), Paul burst forth with a hymn of praise. This interruption became an extended digression. Paul did not resume the story of his trip to Macedonia and his meeting with Titus until 7:5. Verses 2:14–7:4 give a long account of his ministry. **God . . . leads us in triumph:** Paul used the metaphor of the Roman triumphal procession to praise God. When a Roman general was victorious in a war, he led his army and the captives in a parade down the main street. God is the general who has conquered. Paul is one of His officers following in His train. In the Roman procession, priests carrying censers filled with incense followed the conqueror. Paul the priest set forth the fragrance of Christ by preaching the gospel.

2:15 In v. 14 the **fragrance** was the knowledge of Christ; here it was Paul, who was a sweet smell to God for his faithfulness in preaching the gospel.

2:16 The leader in a Roman procession was followed by priests (dispensing incense), officers, soldiers, and captives. The **aroma** of the event represented victorious life to the soldiers and slavery

or **death** to the captives. In the same way, the gospel message gives life to those who accept it, but it represents death and judgment to those who reject it. The answer to Paul's question **who is sufficient for these things** is given in 3:5. It is God who makes us sufficient.

2:17 Peddling means "to make merchandise of," "to sell." Some people use religion for personal gain. To them the gospel is merchandise to be peddled for profit. Thus they corrupt or compromise it. This is the first reference in this epistle to false teachers. It may be a subtle reference to Paul's opponents. Paul, unlike some others, was sufficient for the gospel ministry because he was sincere; his motives were pure.

3:1 Having again declared his sincerity (2:17), Paul asked if he needed a letter of **commendation** to back him up, **as some others** did. The language implies that the false apostles mentioned later in this letter (11:13) had tried to gain acceptance by using such references.

3:2 You are . . . written in our hearts: The Corinthians were Paul's letter of recommendation. These verses do not mean that letters of recommendation should not be used. Paul himself used such letters before his conversion (see Acts 9:1, 2) and after (see 8:22; Rom. 16:1; 1 Cor. 16:10; Col. 4:10). In this case Paul did not need one because he already had one: the believing Corinthians and his ministry among them. Paul's love for the Corinthians was known to all who were acquainted with his ministry. One of the qualifications for ministry is love for people, both God's people and the lost.

3:3 an epistle of Christ: Paul appealed to the Corinthians themselves for proof of his ministry's authenticity. God had changed them—an obvious matter of public record.

The Spirit, Not the Letter

⁴And we have such trust through Christ toward God. ⁵*Not* that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as *being* from ourselves, but ^hour sufficiency is from God, ⁶who also made us sufficient as ⁱministers of ^jthe new covenant, not ^kof the letter but of the ^lSpirit; for ^lthe letter kills, ^mbut the Spirit gives life.

Glory of the New Covenant

⁷But if ⁿthe ministry of death, ^owritten and engraved on stones, was glorious, ^pso that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of the glory of his countenance, which *glory* was passing away, ⁸how will ^qthe ministry of the Spirit not be more glorious? ⁹For if the ministry of condemnation *had* glory, the ministry ^rof righteousness exceeds much more in glory. ¹⁰For even what was made glorious had no glory in this respect, because of the glory that excels. ¹¹For if what is passing away *was* glorious, what remains *is* much more glorious.

¹²Therefore, since we have such hope, ^swe use great boldness of speech— ¹³unlike Moses, ^t*who* put a veil over his face so that the children of Israel could not

5 ^g [John 15:5]
h 1 Cor. 15:10
6 ⁱ 1 Cor. 3:5; Eph. 3:7 / Jer. 31:31; Matt. 26:28; Luke 22:20 / Rom. 2:27 / [Rom. 3:20]; Gal. 3:10 ^m John 6:63; Rom. 8:2 / Or *spirit*
7 ⁿ Rom. 7:10 / Ex. 34:1; Deut. 10:1
p Ex. 34:29
8 ^q [Gal. 3:5]
9 ^r [Rom. 1:17; 3:21]
12 ^s Acts 4:13, 29; 2 Cor. 7:4; Eph. 6:19
13 ^t Ex. 34:33–35; 2 Cor. 3:7 / Rom. 10:4; [Gal. 3:23]
14 ^v Is. 6:10; 29:10 ★; Acts 28:26; Rom. 11:7, 8; 2 Cor. 4:4
16 ^w Ex. 34:34; Rom. 11:23 / Is. 25:7
17 ^x [1 Cor. 15:45]
z John 8:32; Gal. 5:1, 13
18 ^a 1 Cor. 13:12
b [2 Cor. 4:4, 6]
c [Rom. 8:29, 30]
2 Or *from the Lord, the Spirit*

CHAPTER 4

1 ^a 1 Cor. 7:25
b Luke 18:1; 2 Cor. 4:16; Gal. 6:9; Eph. 3:13; 2 Thess. 3:13

look steadily at ^uthe end of what was passing away. ¹⁴But ^vtheir minds were blinded. For until this day the same veil remains unlifted in the reading of the Old Testament, because the *veil* is taken away in Christ. ¹⁵But even to this day, when Moses is read, a veil lies on their heart. ¹⁶Nevertheless ^wwhen one turns to the Lord, ^xthe veil is taken away. ¹⁷Now ^ythe Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord *is*, there *is* ^zliberty. ¹⁸But we all, with unveiled face, beholding ^aas in a mirror ^bthe glory of the Lord, ^care being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as ²by the Spirit of the Lord.

The Light of Christ's Gospel

4 Therefore, since we have this ministry, ^aas we have received mercy, we ^bdo not lose heart. ²But we have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness nor ¹handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth ^ccommending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. ³But even if our gospel is

2 ^c 2 Cor. 5:11 / ¹ *adulterating the word of God*

3:4 trust: The Greek word means “confidence” (see 2:14—3:3; Phil. 4:19). Paul was convinced that Christ would make his ministry effective.

3:5, 6 Sufficient means “adequate,” or “competent.” Paul placed his confidence not in himself or his own abilities but in the Lord. This is the answer to the question asked in 2:16, Who is sufficient? **The letter** is a reference to the old covenant—that is, the Ten Commandments written on stone. The letter **kills** because all break the law, and the penalty is death.

3:7, 8 Paul lists the first of three contrasts between the OT ministry and the NT ministry (see vv. 7, 9, 11). First, the OT ministry **engraved on stones** (a reference to the Ten Commandments) was glorious, but the ministry of the Spirit is **more glorious**, because the glory of the ministry of the Law given through Moses **was passing away**. Besides, though the Law itself is holy (Rom. 7:12), the ministry of the Law is the ministry of death, whereas the ministry of the Spirit is the ministry of life (v. 6). The Holy Spirit produces eternal life.

new covenant

(Gk. *kainē diathēkē*) (3:6; Heb. 8:8; 9:15; 1 Cor. 11:25) Strong's #2537; 1242

The concept of a new covenant originated with the promise of the prophet Jeremiah that God would accomplish for His people what the old covenant had failed to do (Jer. 31:31–34). The NT, which itself means “new covenant,” interprets the work of Jesus Christ as bringing this promised new covenant into being. In Luke 22:20, when Jesus ate the Passover meal at the Last Supper with His disciples, He spoke of the cup as “the new covenant in My blood.” The new covenant, a “better covenant . . . established on better promises” (Heb. 8:6), rests directly on the sacrificial work of Christ. The new covenant accomplished what the old could not: removal of sin and cleansing of the conscience (Jer. 31:34; Heb. 10:2, 22).

3:9, 10 The second contrast (see vv. 7, 11) is that the OT ministry was a **ministry of condemnation**, but the NT ministry is more glorious because it is a **ministry of righteousness**. God declares righteous those who believe in His Son, and then the Holy Spirit empowers the believer to live righteously. This first work of God is called justification, and the second is called sanctification.

3:11 The third contrast (see vv. 7, 9) is that one ministry is **passing** while the other ministry **remains**. The New Covenant would supersede the old covenant established at Mt. Sinai between God and the nation of Israel.

3:12 Paul used **boldness of speech**, a phrase that means “freedom of speech” or “frankness.” Instead of being fearful or reluctant, Paul was frank and courageous.

3:14, 15 The **veil** on the face of Moses reminded Paul of another veil. As Moses' veil concealed the fading glory of his ministry, so there is a veil on the hearts of people concealing the fading away of the old covenant.

3:16 taken away: Whenever Moses turned to the Lord, he took off the veil (Ex. 34:34). Likewise, we find freedom in Christ by looking to Him.

3:17 the Lord is the Spirit: The Holy Spirit is God Himself, like the Father and like the Son. **liberty:** The Spirit gives us freedom from sin, death, and the condemnation of the law (vv. 7–12).

3:18 All believers behold the **glory of the Lord** in the Scripture and are **transformed** into the image of God. Christ is the image of God (4:4). **glory to glory:** An ever-growing glory. As believers behold the glory of God in the Word of God, the Spirit of God transforms them into the likeness of Jesus Christ. This is a description of the gradual process of sanctification.

4:1–3 Paul now draws a conclusion from what he said about his ministry in 3:4–18. **This ministry** is the NT ministry (3:6), a ministry of the Spirit (3:6), of life (3:7), and of righteousness (3:9). It is a glorious ministry (3:7–12) of liberty (3:17). Paul did not achieve this ministry by his own human ability but by God's **mercy** (3:5, 6). **Lose heart** means “to become weary,” “to become tired,” or “to despair.” No matter how difficult the task or how great the opposition, Paul did not retreat in silence but spoke boldly because he was motivated by the grace of God (3:12; 1 Thess. 2:1–12). **Hidden** means “secret.”

veiled,^d it is veiled to those who are perishing,^e whose minds^e the god of this age^f has blinded, who do not believe, lest^g the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ,^h who is the image of God, should shine on them.⁵ⁱ For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your bondservants for Jesus' sake.⁶ For it is the God^k who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has^l shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Cast Down but Unconquered

⁷ But we have this treasure in earthen vessels,^m that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us.⁸ We areⁿ hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair;⁹ persecuted, but not forsaken;^p struck down, but not destroyed—^{10q} always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus,^r that the life of

^{3 d} [1 Cor. 1:18]; 2 Cor. 2:15
^{4 e} John 12:31; [Eph. 6:12] ^f John 12:40 ^g [2 Cor. 3:8, 9] ^h [John 1:18]; Phil. 2:6; Col. 1:15; Heb. 1:3
^{5 i} 1 Cor. 1:13
^{6 j} 1 Cor. 9:19
^{6 k} Gen. 1:3 ^l Is. 9:2; Mal. 4:2; Luke 1:78; 2 Pet. 1:19
^{7 m} Judg. 7:2; 1 Cor. 2:5
^{8 n} 2 Cor. 1:8; 7:5
^{9 o} Ps. 129:2; [Heb. 13:5] ^p Ps. 37:24
^{10 q} Phil. 3:10
^r Rom. 8:17
^{11 s} Rom. 8:36
^{13 t} 2 Pet. 1:1 ^u Ps. 116:10
^{14 v} [Rom. 8:11]
^{15 w} Col. 1:24
^x 1 Cor. 9:19; 2 Cor. 1:11
^{16 y} 2 Cor. 4:1; Gal. 6:9 ^z [Is. 40:29, 31; Col. 3:10]
^{17 a} Matt. 5:12; Rom. 8:18; 1 Pet. 1:6

Jesus also may be manifested in our body.¹¹ For we who live^s are always delivered to death for Jesus' sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh.¹² So then death is working in us, but life in you.

¹³ And since we have^t the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, "*I believed and therefore I spoke*,"^u we also believe and therefore speak,¹⁴ knowing that^v He who raised up the Lord Jesus will also raise us up with Jesus, and will present us with you.¹⁵ For^w all things are for your sakes, that^x grace, having spread through the many, may cause thanksgiving to abound to the glory of God.

Seeing the Invisible

¹⁶ Therefore we^y do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man^z is being renewed day by day.¹⁷ For^a our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and

Paul rejected **craftiness**—that is, being unscrupulous or **handling the word of God deceitfully** (see 2:17). Apparently, Paul had been accused of being crafty (12:16) and of being deceitful in the way he preached. Paul defended his ministry because it was based on the truthfulness of the Word of God.

4:4, 5 Unbelievers have a barrier to overcome: **the god of this age has blinded** their minds. Because of Satan's deception, sometimes what the world thinks is obviously true is painfully wrong (see Prov. 14:12). **image of God:** Jesus Christ is God's Son, and He perfectly reveals God the Father to us. Although human beings have been created in the image of God, through sin they have fallen from a perfect relationship with God. Jesus Christ is restoring believers to what they were originally created to be (3:18; Gen. 1:26). **Christ Jesus the Lord:** Paul's message is that Jesus is divine. **bondservants:** Paul describes himself and those who minister with him as slaves to people. They served the Corinthians **for Jesus' sake**.

4:6 As God **commanded the light** to shine in the darkness at creation (Gen. 1:3), so he "turns on" the light in peoples' hearts so they can see who Jesus Christ is. People who do not believe are blinded by Satan (v. 4). But believers see the light.

4:8 **Hard-pressed** is translated *afflicted* in 1:6. In the Greek text, an identical expression occurs in 7:5, where it is rendered "troubled on every side." But in 7:5 Paul adds, "Outside were afflictions, inside were fears." Thus **every side** means "inside and outside." Yet Paul was not **crushed**, a compound Greek word from the words for *narrow* and *space*. **Perplexed** is derived from two Greek words: the word for *no plus* the word for *way*. Thus *perplexed* means "to be at a loss." One is perplexed when one sees no way out. Yet Paul was not **in despair**, which means "utterly at a loss." As believers, we will face trials. But we must remember that God controls trials and uses them to strengthen His people. God's glory is manifested through broken vessels, through people who endure troubles by relying on His power.

4:9 The picture behind the word **persecuted** is pursuit by someone determined to harm someone else. Paul was not **forsaken** by the Lord, but he was **struck down**. This literally happened (Acts 14:19). In Lystra a crowd stoned Paul, leaving him for dead. But he was not **destroyed**, that is, killed (see 11:23–33). The Lord spared his life so that he could continue to preach the Good News and testify to God's deliverance.

4:10, 11 The expression **carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus** is explained as being **delivered to death for Jesus' sake**. In his service for Christ, Paul constantly faced death so

that **the life of Jesus may also be manifested**. God's deliverance of Paul was evidence that Jesus is alive (see 1:8–10). For Paul, the death and resurrection of Jesus was a model for his ministry. In his suffering, he participated in Jesus' suffering and death. But Paul's endurance of all types of hardships produced eternal life in those to whom he preached the gospel. In the same way, Jesus' death was merely a precursor to His resurrection to eternal life.

4:12 **life in you:** Had Paul not been willing to risk death to bring the gospel to Corinth, the Corinthians would not have received eternal life.

4:13 **therefore I spoke:** Quoting Ps. 116:10, Paul explained why he was willing to risk his life for the gospel. His belief in the gospel compelled him to tell others.

4:14 **He who raised up:** Paul's belief was focused upon the God of resurrection power, which motivated him to face difficulties, danger, and death for Christ's sake. **knowing:** Paul rested in what he knew about God, not how he felt.

4:15 **your sakes:** All the suffering that Paul endured (vv. 8–11) brought good to others and glory to God.

4:16 Paul concluded that the Corinthians should **not lose heart**, because God would raise them up with Jesus (v. 14). Here is a great principle. A proper focus on our glorious future with Christ will empower us to endure any kind of trouble. The **outward man** is the physical body, called in this section "the earthen vessel" (v. 7), "the body" (v. 10), "mortal flesh" (v. 11), "earthly house" (5:1), and "tent" (5:1).

4:17 **Working** means "producing," or "accomplishing." Afflictions produce glory. But the glory is out of proportion to the affliction: trials are light and temporary compared to the eternal glory we will

earthen vessels

(Gk. *ostrakinos skeuos*) (4:7; 2 Tim. 2:20) Strong's #3749; 4632

This Greek phrase means "clay pots." In ancient times it was a common practice to bury treasures inside clay jars. Two recent discoveries of biblical manuscripts—the Chester Beatty Papyrus and some of the Dead Sea Scrolls—reveal that these manuscripts were hidden away in jars for nearly two thousand years. As these treasures were enclosed in earthen vessels, so the indwelling Christ lives within our earthly bodies.

eternal weight of glory, ^{18b} while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen *are* temporary, but the things which are not seen *are* eternal.

Assurance of the Resurrection

5 For we know that if ^aour earthly ¹house, *this* tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house ^bnot made with hands, eternal in the heavens. ²For in this ^cwe groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our ²habitation which is from heaven, ³if indeed, ^dhaving been clothed, we shall not be found naked. ⁴For we who are in *this* tent groan, being burdened, not because we want to be unclothed, ^ebut further clothed, that mortality may be swallowed up by life. ⁵Now He who has prepared us for this very thing *is* God, who also ^fhas given us the Spirit as ^{3a} a guarantee.

⁶So *we are* always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord. ⁷For ^gwe walk by faith, not by sight. ⁸We are confident, yes, ^hwell pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord.

¹⁸ ^b Rom. 8:24; [2 Cor. 5:7; Heb. 11:1, 13]

CHAPTER 5

¹ ^a Job 4:19; 1 Cor. 15:47; 2 Cor. 4:7
^b Mark 14:58; Acts 7:48; Heb. 9:11, 24
^c Physical body
² ^c Rom. 8:23; 2 Cor. 5:4
² ^d dwelling
³ ^d Rev. 3:18
⁴ ^e 1 Cor. 15:53
⁵ ^f Rom. 8:23; [2 Cor. 1:22]; Eph. 1:14
³ ^d down payment, earnest
⁷ ^g Rom. 8:24; Heb. 11:1
⁸ ^h Phil. 1:23

¹⁰ / Matt. 16:27; Acts 10:42; Rom. 2:16; 14:10, 12 / Gal. 6:7; Eph. 6:8
¹¹ ^k [Heb. 10:31; 12:29; Jude 23]
¹² ² Cor. 3:1
^m 2 Cor. 1:14; Phil. 1:26
¹³ ⁿ Mark 3:21; 2 Cor. 11:1, 16; 12:11
¹⁴ ^o [Rom. 5:15; 6:6; Gal. 2:20; Col. 3:3]
¹⁵ ^p [Rom. 6:11]
¹⁶ ^q 2 Cor. 10:3

The Judgment Seat of Christ

⁹ Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him. ¹⁰ⁱ For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, ^j that each one may receive the things *done* in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. ¹¹ Knowing, therefore, ^k the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are well known to God, and I also trust are well known in your consciences.

Be Reconciled to God

¹² For ^l we do not commend ourselves again to you, but give you opportunity ^m to boast on our behalf, that you may have *an answer* for those who boast in appearance and not in heart. ¹³ For ⁿ if we are beside ourselves, *it is* for God; or if we are of sound mind, *it is* for you. ¹⁴ For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that ^o if One died for all, then all died; ¹⁵ and He died for all, ^p that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again.

^{16q} Therefore, from now on, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we have known Christ according

to receive (see Mark 10:30). Paul's focus on the future enabled him to properly assess problems and see how small they were compared to their **eternal** results.

4:18 **Look** means "to keep one's eye on," "to consider," or "to contemplate." The noun form of this verb means "goal" (for example, in Phil. 3:14). In order not to lose heart, the believer needs to shift his or her focus from that which is seen to that which is **not seen**, from temporary problems to the glorious eternal rewards he or she will receive (v. 17).

5:2 Suffering makes believers **groan** with longing for their glorious future in heaven (see Rom. 8:22, 23).

5:3 **not be found naked:** Paul looks forward not only to his resurrected body but also to the reward he would receive in the future.

5:4 The believer's future experience is called **life**, meaning the full experience of eternal life in Christ. The life experience of the future is being determined by how we invest this life today (see 4:17).

5:5 **guarantee:** The Holy Spirit's work in believers' lives can be compared to a deposit or down payment (see 1:22). The presence of the Holy Spirit assures believers that God has purchased them. They are no longer slaves to sin, but His children. They will receive all the rights and privileges of children of God when their Savior returns.

5:6 Because the believer has God's guarantee (v. 5), he or she can be **confident**, a word that means "to be of good cheer" or "to be of courage."

5:7 **Sight** means "appearance." Christ is not physically present, so believers live by faith (see John 20:29).

5:8 After the parenthetical thought of v. 7, Paul resumes where he left off in v. 6. He was not only confident (v. 6) that he was going to be with the Lord, he was **pleased** that he would be **with the Lord** after his death. This is one of the passages in the NT that indicates where believers will go immediately after their death; they will be with Jesus in heaven (see also Phil. 1:23). Jesus' promise to the repentant criminal on the cross next to Him indicates this: "Today you will be with Me in Paradise" (Luke 23:43).

5:9, 10 Wanting to be with Christ (v. 8) produces the ambition to please Him (see Luke 19:17). We strive to please the Lord not only

because we know we will be with Him (v. 8) but also because He will evaluate our work—**whether good or bad**—and reward us accordingly. The person unconcerned about doing good deeds shows a grave lack of vision. **Appear** means "to make visible" or "to make known." Here it may refer to nothing more than an appearance, such as appearing in court before a judge. Or it may mean believers will stand before the Lord with their true character revealed. **Receive** means "to receive back," "to get an equivalent," or "to get one's due." The believer will be either approved or ashamed (see 5:3; Luke 19:11–26; 1 Cor. 3:14, 15; 9:27; 1 John 2:28; 2 John 7, 8).

5:11 **Therefore** indicates that this verse is a conclusion drawn from the previous one. The **terror of the Lord** is the fear of standing before the Lord and having one's life exposed and evaluated. The reality of giving an account to the Lord motivated Paul to **persuade** people, in this context meaning to convince the Corinthians of his sincerity and integrity.

5:12 Paul was defending the integrity of his ministry, not to win the approval of the Corinthians again (see 3:1), but so the Corinthians could answer those who bragged about their outward appearance, such as the false apostles present among them (11:18). **Opportunity** literally means "a base of operation." This letter would be a foundation or base for those who wanted to defend Paul's authority and ministry in the Corinthian church.

5:13 If Paul was beside himself in exposing himself to danger, it was **for God**. If he was of a **sound mind**, it was for the sake of the Corinthians. The point is that Paul's motive for ministry was for the glory of God and the good of others, not his own glory. Thus the Corinthians could justly defend him.

5:14 The phrase **the love of Christ** can mean either (1) Christ's love for us or (2) our love for Christ. The last part of the verse indicates that Paul had in mind Christ's love for us. **Died for all** refers to Christ's death for all believers. **all died:** In Christ believers die to sin (see Rom. 6:1–14).

5:16 Believers should not evaluate Christ or anyone else **according to the flesh**, that is, the way people typically evaluate each other (v. 12).

The Judgment Seat of Christ

What does it involve?	Only believers will appear before the judgment seat of Christ. The “great white throne” judgment described in Rev. 20:11–15 is for unbelievers.
What is it?	At his judgment seat, Jesus will determine a believer’s faithfulness to Him and reward each person appropriately (see 1 Cor. 3:11–15). This will not be a determination of one’s eternal destiny; that issue is decided the moment a person believes in Christ.
Who will preside?	The risen Christ.
Where will it occur?	Heaven (5:8).
When will it occur?	The Scriptures do not specify when this will occur. It is obviously at a time when all Christians are gathered in heaven.
What is the nature of these eternal rewards?	Some commentators consider the various “crowns” mentioned in the New Testament as the rewards (1 Cor. 9:25; 2 Tim. 4:8; James 1:12; 1 Pet. 5:4; Rev. 2:10). These will eventually be placed before the throne of God (Rev. 4:10). Others point to the parable of the minas in Luke 19:11–27 and see the prospects of serving and ruling in eternity as being directly tied to our faithfulness on earth. We do not know the exact nature of the “new heavens and new earth” or “the kingdom of God.” But the Scriptures do seem to imply that eternity will involve serving and reigning (Matt. 25:21, 23; Rev. 22:3, 5).
Why is this doctrine significant?	Knowing that in the future we will stand before Jesus Christ and face a review of our lives should motivate us to live righteously and faithfully in the present.
How can we prepare for our eternal “audit”?	Walk by faith, not by sight (5:7). Develop a longing for heaven (5:8). Make it our chief aim in life to please the Lord (5:9). Keep the judgment seat of Christ in view (5:10).

to the flesh, ^ryet now we know *Him thus* no longer. ¹⁷Therefore, if anyone ^sis in Christ, *he is* ^ta new creation; ^uold things have passed away; behold, all things have become ^vnew. ¹⁸Now all things *are* of God, ^wwho has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, ¹⁹that is, that ^xGod was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not ⁴imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

²⁰Now then, we are ^yambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore *you* on Christ’s behalf, be reconciled to God. ²¹For ^zHe made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become ^athe righteousness of God in Him.

Marks of the Ministry

6 We then, *as* ^aworkers together *with Him* also ^bplead with *you* not to receive the grace of God in vain. ²For He says:

*“In an acceptable time I have heard you,
And in the day of salvation I have helped you.”*

16 ^r [Matt. 12:50] 17 ^s [John 6:63] ^t [Rom. 8:9] ^u [Is. 43:18; 65:17; Eph. 4:24]; Rev. 21:4 ^v [Rom. 6:3–10; Col. 3:3] 18 ^w Rom. 5:10; Eph. 2:16; Col. 1:20] 19 ^x [Rom. 3:24] ⁴ *reckoning* 20 ^y Mal. 2:7; Eph. 6:20 21 ^z Is. 53:6, 9 ★ ^a [Rom. 1:17; 3:21; 1 Cor. 1:30]
CHAPTER 6 1 ^a 1 Cor. 3:9 ^b 2 Cor. 5:20 2 ^c Is. 49:8 ★

5:17 in Christ: Paul is presenting the results of Christ’s death for the believer and the believer’s death with Him (see v. 14). Because believers are united with Jesus both in His death and resurrection, they participate in the new creation. That is, they receive the benefits of being restored by Christ to what God had originally created them to be (Gen. 1:26; 1 Cor. 15:45–49). **All things have become new:** A believer’s life should change, because he or she is being transformed into the likeness of Christ (3:18). Instead of living for oneself, a believer lives for Christ (v. 15). Instead of evaluating others with the values of the world, a believer looks at this world through the eyes of faith (v. 16). **5:18 reconciled us to Himself:** Because of Christ’s propitiation, His satisfaction of God’s righteous demands, God is now able to turn toward us. God has made us new creatures in Christ and has given us the ministry of **reconciliation**, a word meaning “a change of relation from enmity to peace.” We who have been reconciled to God have the privilege of telling others that they can be reconciled to Him as well. **5:19** God could change His relationship toward us because our sins have been imputed (reckoned) to Christ, instead of to us. In other words, God placed our sins on Christ, who knew no sin. His death was in our place and for our sins. If we believe in Jesus, God counts Jesus’ righteousness as our righteousness (see v. 21). The **word of reconciliation** that has been entrusted to us is to tell all people that God wants to restore them to a relationship with Himself (see Rom 5:8). This is the Good News that everyone needs to hear. **5:20 Ambassadors** are more than messengers. They are representatives of the sovereign who sent them. In the Roman Empire, there

were two kinds of provinces, the senatorial and the imperial. The senatorial provinces were generally peaceful and friendly to Rome. They had submitted to Roman rule and were under the control of the Senate. The imperial provinces, however, had been acquired later, and were not as peaceful. These provinces were under the authority of the emperor himself. Syria, including Judea, was such an imperial province. To these provinces, the emperor sent ambassadors to govern and maintain peace. Christians have been called by their King to serve as ambassadors in a world that is in rebellion against Him. However, God has given His representatives a message of peace and of reconciliation. **5:21 no sin:** Jesus never did anything wrong. Yet He died for our sins, so that we could be declared righteous, that is to say, justified (v. 19). **6:1 plead:** In 5:20, Paul describes God as pleading for people to be reconciled to Him. Here Paul pleads (the same Greek word occurs in 5:20) with the Corinthians also. **in vain:** If believers live for themselves (5:15), they will have received the grace of God, but they will miss out on a heavenly reward for their service to Him (see 5:10; 1 Cor. 3:15). In Phil. 2:12 Paul encourages those who have been saved to work out or develop their salvation. The Corinthians were failing at this very point. They were saved and stuck, so to speak. They were not continually working out their salvation. Paul was encouraging them to consider their lives and realign them more closely to Christ. **6:2** Paul quoted Is. 49:8 to remind the Corinthians that God was ready to listen to them and to help them. He would deliver them, if only they turned to Him in faith.

Behold, now *is* the accepted time; behold, now *is* the day of salvation.

^{3d} We give no offense in anything, that our ministry may not be blamed. ⁴ But in all *things* we commend ourselves ^e as ministers of God: in much ¹ patience, in tribulations, in needs, in distresses, ^{5f} in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in sleeplessness, in fastings; ⁶ by purity, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Spirit, by ² sincere love, ^{7g} by the word of truth, by ^h the power of God, by ⁱ the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, ⁸ by honor and dishonor, by evil report and good report; as deceivers, and *yet* true; ⁹ as unknown, and *yet* well known; ^k as dying, and behold we live; ^l as chastened, and *yet* not killed; ¹⁰ as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many ^m rich; as having nothing, and *yet* possessing all things.

Be Holy

¹¹ O Corinthians! ³ We have spoken openly to you, ⁿ our heart is wide open. ¹² You are not restricted by us, but ^o you are restricted by your *own* affections. ¹³ Now in return for the same ^p (I speak as to children), you also be open. ^{14q} Do not be unequally yoked together

^{3 d} Rom. 14:13
^{4 e} 1 Cor. 4:1
¹ endurance
^{5 f} 2 Cor. 11:23
⁶ 2 Lit.
unhypocritical
^{7 g} 2 Cor. 7:14
^h 1 Cor. 2:4; 1 Rom.
13:12; 2 Cor. 10:4
⁹ 2 Cor. 4:2; 5:11
^k 1 Cor. 4:9; 11; 1 Ps.
118:18
^{10 m} 1 Cor. 1:5;
[2 Cor. 8:9]
^{11 n} Is. 60:5; 2 Cor.
7:3 ³ Lit. *Our mouth*
is open
^{12 o} 2 Cor. 12:15
^{13 p} 1 Cor. 4:14
^{14 q} Deut. 7:2, 3;
22:10; 1 Cor. 5:9
^r 1 Sam. 5:2, 3;
1 Kin. 18:21; Eph.
5:6, 7, 11; 1 John
1:6 ⁴ in common
⁵ fellowship
^{16 s} [1 Cor. 3:16,
17; 6:19]; Eph. 2:21;
[Heb. 3:6] ^t Ex.
29:45; Lev. 26:12;
Jer. 31:33; 32:38;
Ezek. 37:26, 27;
Zech. 8:8
⁶ NU we
^{17 u} Num. 33:51-56;
Is. 52:11; Rev. 18:4
^{18 v} 2 Sam. 7:14; Jer.
31:1, 9; [Rev. 21:7]
^w [John 1:12; Rom.
8:14; Gal. 4:5-7];
Phil. 2:15;
1 John 3:1

with unbelievers. For ^r what ⁴ fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what ⁵ communion has light with darkness? ¹⁵ And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? ¹⁶ And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For ^s you ⁶ are the temple of the living God. As God has said:

*“I will dwell in them
And walk among them.
I will be their God,
And they shall be My people.”*

¹⁷ Therefore

*“Come out from among them
And be separate, says the Lord.
Do not touch what is unclean,
And I will receive you.”*
¹⁸ *“I v will be a Father to you,
And you shall be My w sons and
daughters,
Says the LORD Almighty.”*

⁷ Therefore, ^a having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

CHAPTER 7 ^{1 a} [1 John 3:3]

6:3 Offense means “an occasion of stumbling.” Paul did not do anything that would cause others to stumble in their faith. **be blamed:** The word means “to find fault with” and implies ridicule. In other words, no one could find fault with Paul’s work among the Corinthians.

6:4–10 In many different types of situations (see 11:23–28), Paul and his coworkers conducted themselves as righteous ministers of God. These verses list the different types of experiences in which Paul and his fellow workers found themselves: (1) vv. 4, 5 describe the suffering they endured; (2) vv. 6, 7 describe how they conducted themselves; and (3) vv. 8–10 describe their paradoxical experiences.

righteousness of God

(Gk. *dikaio sunē theou*) (5:21; Rom. 1:17; 3:21, 22; 10:3) Strong’s #1343; 2316

The *righteousness of God* is a righteousness that comes from God; it is God’s way of making a sinner right, or just, before Him. Luther defined the *righteousness of God* as a “righteousness valid before God, which a man may possess through faith.” Luther said that this righteousness is the first and last need of any sinful individual. The word *righteousness* in Paul’s letter to the Romans carries a double sense, and may be labeled both legal and moral. In other words, the word refers to the legal action God takes in declaring believers righteous, but it also refers to perfect righteousness, a characteristic that can only be attributed to God Himself in Scripture and is the lofty standard for human behavior. This lofty standard cannot be achieved by anyone’s effort, so God has to act to bring His people into a right relationship with Himself.

6:4, 5 In much patience is followed by three triplets that indicate specific situations in which their endurance was demonstrated. **Sleeplessness** is not insomnia but going without sleep voluntarily in order to spend more time in ministry (see 11:27).

6:11–7:4 This section is the high point of emotion for the whole epistle. It begins and ends with Paul asking the Corinthians to open their hearts to God. The accusations against Paul and their own sinful entanglements resulted in the Corinthians withdrawing from him, at least emotionally. He had been totally open to them, but they had not responded to him in the same spirit.

6:11 O Corinthians: Paul addressed his readers by name on only two other occasions (Gal. 3:1, Phil. 4:15). When he did this he was expressing strong emotion.

6:12, 13 The suspicions planted by Paul’s enemies had **restricted** their **affections** for Paul (see 2 Tim. 4:10). Paul had been **open** with the Corinthians (v. 11) and asked that they be open with him.

6:14 unequally yoked: The Corinthians were shutting Paul out of their hearts (vv. 11–13) and developing a dangerous affection for the false apostles (11:4, 13; see Prov. 4:23).

6:15 The term **Belial** for Satan only occurs here in the NT. It refers to one who is vile and wicked and causes destruction.

6:16 you are the temple: A reference to Lev. 26:11, 12 as well as perhaps other passages such as Jer. 32:38 and Ezek. 37:27, to remind the Corinthians of their relationship with God. Since the Holy Spirit was living in them, they were God’s new dwelling place (1 Cor. 6:19).

6:17, 18 Verse 17 is derived from Is. 52:11 with words from Ezek. 20:34 added. Verse 18 is taken from 2 Sam. 7:14 with words added from Is. 43:6. **come out . . . be separate:** Paul was not encouraging isolation from unbelievers (see 1 Cor. 9:5–13) but discouraging compromise with their sinful values and practices. He was urging them (and us) to maintain integrity in the world just as Christ did (see John 15:14–16; Phil. 2:14–16).

7:1 Based on the promises that God would receive them with favor (6:17) and provide for and protect them as a father does his children

The Corinthians' Repentance

²Open *your hearts* to us. We have wronged no one, we have corrupted no one, ^bwe have cheated no one. ³I do not say *this* to condemn; for ^cI have said before that you are in our hearts, to die together and to live together. ^{4d}Great is my boldness of speech toward you, ^egreat is my boasting on your behalf. ^fI am filled with comfort. I am exceedingly joyful in all our tribulation.

⁵For indeed, ^gwhen we came to Macedonia, our bodies had no rest, but ^hwe were troubled on every side. ⁱOutside were conflicts, inside were fears. ⁶Never-

² ^b Acts 20:33
³ ^c 2 Cor. 6:11, 12
⁴ ^d 2 Cor. 3:12
^e 1 Cor. 1:4 ^f Phil. 2:17; Col. 1:24
⁵ ^g Rom. 15:26;
2 Cor. 2:13 ^h 2 Cor. 4:8 ⁱ Deut. 32:25

⁶ / Is. 49:13; 2 Cor. 1:3, 4 ^k 2 Cor. 2:13; 7:13
⁷ ^l comfort
⁸ ^m 2 Cor. 2:2
^m 2 Cor. 2:4

theless ^jGod, who comforts the downcast, comforted us by ^kthe coming of Titus, ⁷and not only by his coming, but also by the ^lconsolation with which he was comforted in you, when he told us of your earnest desire, your mourning, your zeal for me, so that I rejoiced even more.

⁸For even if I made you ^lsorry with my letter, I do not regret it; ^mthough I did regret it. For I perceive that the same epistle made you sorry, though only for a while. ⁹Now I rejoice, not that you were made sorry, but that your sorrow led to repentance. For you were made sorry in a godly manner, that you might suffer loss

(6:18), Paul exhorted the Corinthians to cleanse themselves **from all filthiness**. In other words, they were to wash away all dirt from both **flesh and spirit**, meaning those actions and attitudes that came from having the false teachers in their midst (6:14). The point of cleansing is **perfecting holiness**. This means dedicating ourselves to Christ and living righteously (see Heb. 6:1).

7:2 With the admonition **open your hearts** Paul resumed the discussion of 6:11–13. **cheated**: Perhaps the false teachers were charging that Paul had collected money for the poor saints at Jerusalem (1 Cor. 16:1–4) but had spent it on himself.

7:3 I do not say this to condemn: Paul was not blaming anyone; he was defending himself.

7:4 Paul was **filled with comfort** and joy because of the report he received from Titus about the Corinthians (see v. 7).

7:5 Paul cared very much for the Corinthians. **our bodies had no**

rest: Earlier he wrote, “I had no rest in my spirit” in Troas (2:12, 13).

troubled on every side: The same expression, though translated differently, is used in 4:8 to express Paul’s suffering in his ministry.

7:6 The Lord **comforted**, that is, encouraged Paul by allowing him to see Titus again.

7:7 but also by: Paul was encouraged to learn how Titus had been received by the Corinthians and had seen that they were accepting Paul’s exhortations.

7:8, 9 Paul regretted that he had to write a “severe letter” to the Corinthians. But since it did cause the Corinthians to repent and turn to God, his sorrow was transformed into joy. Traditionally this **letter** has been identified as 1 Corinthians, but some recent commentators have suggested that it was another letter that Paul wrote after 1 Corinthians, but that has not been preserved (see 2:3, 4).

A Faithful Minister

In his most autobiographical epistle, Paul defends his ministry, giving us clear insights into the numerous difficulties he faced as a servant of Christ.

Reference	Difficulties Paul Faced	Paul's Response
1:3–7	Tribulation, sufferings	Turned to God for comfort
1:8–11	Life-threatening trouble	Trusted in God
1:12–24	Charges by his opponents that he was unreliable and untrustworthy	Explained his pure motives for changing his itinerary and postponing his trip to Corinth
2:1–4	Emotional anguish over an unpleasant visit with the Corinthian church	Expressed his great love
2:5–12	An unpleasant church discipline situation	Urged forgiveness and comfort for the repentant sinner
2:17; 4:2, 5	Motives suspected	Clarified his sincere motives
4:7–5:11	Trials, persecution, and pressure	Persevered, clinging to the truth that Jesus was being manifested and God was being glorified
6:3–10	Apostolic credentials questioned	Recited his record of faithfulness in a wide variety of difficult circumstances
7:2	Allegations of misconduct	Maintained innocence; stated his affection; pleaded for a more loving response
7:5–7	Conflict, fear, and discouragement	Found comfort in the arrival of Titus and in the news that the Corinthians cared about his situation
8:1–9:15	Having to write about the uncomfortable subject of giving	Cited the sterling example of the Macedonian Christians; courageously challenged the Corinthians to give
10:9–11	Criticism from the false apostles	Refused to compare; sought the Lord's commendation
11:5–33	Comparisons to the false apostles	Set forth his long history of sacrificial service
12:1–10	A “thorn in the flesh”	Prayed for the removal of this ongoing, unpleasant affliction, then realized it was God's grace to him, forcing him to rely on God's strength and not his own

from us in nothing. ¹⁰For ^agodly sorrow produces repentance *leading* to salvation, not to be regretted; ^bbut the sorrow of the world produces death. ¹¹For observe this very thing, that you sorrowed in a godly manner: What diligence it produced in you, *what* ^cclearing of yourselves, *what* indignation, *what* fear, *what* vehement desire, *what* zeal, *what* vindication! In all *things* you proved yourselves to be ^dclear in this matter. ¹²Therefore, although I wrote to you, *I did not do it* for the sake of him who had done the wrong, nor for the sake of him who suffered wrong, ^ebut that our care for you in the sight of God might appear to you.

The Joy of Titus

¹³Therefore we have been comforted in your comfort. And we rejoiced exceedingly more for the joy of Titus, because his spirit ^fhas been refreshed by you all.

¹⁰ ^a 2 Sam. 12:13; Ps. 32:10; Matt. 26:75 ^b Prov. 17:22
¹¹ ^c Eph. 5:11
¹² ^d 2 Cor. 2:5-11
¹² ^e 2 Cor. 2:4
¹³ ^f Rom. 15:32

¹⁵ ^g 2 Cor. 2:9; Phil. 2:12

¹⁶ ^h 2 Cor. 2:3; 8:22; 2 Thess. 3:4; Philem. 8, 21

CHAPTER 8

² ⁱ Mark 12:44
⁴ ^j Acts 11:29; 24:17; Rom. 15:25, 26; 1 Cor. 16:1, 3, 4; 2 Cor. 9:1 ^k NU, *omit that we would receive, thus changing text to urgency for the favor and fellowship*

¹⁴For if in anything I have boasted to him about you, I am not ashamed. But as we spoke all things to you in truth, even so our boasting to Titus was found true. ¹⁵And his affections are greater for you as he remembers ^lthe obedience of you all, how with fear and trembling you received him. ¹⁶Therefore I rejoice that ^mI have confidence in you in everything.

Excel in Giving

8 Moreover, brethren, we make known to you the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia: ²that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and ⁿtheir deep poverty abounded in the riches of their liberality. ³For I bear witness that according to *their* ability, yes, and beyond *their* ability, *they were* freely willing, ⁴imploping us with much urgency ^othat we would receive the gift and ^pthe fellowship of the ministering to

7:10 godly sorrow produces repentance: True sorrow for sins leads to a change of mind and a turning to God. Since repentance means turning to God, who is the Savior, repentance results in spiritual deliverance, or **salvation** (see 6:2). But the kind of sorrow the world experiences **produces death**.

7:11 sorrowed in a godly manner: Although Paul had been harsh in his previous letter (see v. 8), he generously praised the Corinthians for how they responded to his admonition.

7:12 care: Paul wrote the “severe letter” (see v. 8) not only to correct the one who had sinned but also to tell the Corinthians that he cared for them (see 1 Cor. 4:14).

8:1—9:15 Before, Paul had instructed the Corinthians to collect

money for the believers in Jerusalem (1 Cor. 16:1–4). The Corinthians had begun the collection (v. 10; 9:1, 2) and now Paul urges them to finish it (9:5).

8:1 Macedonia corresponds to the northern part of present-day Greece. Paul had established churches in the Macedonian cities of Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea.

8:2–5 The Macedonians were a great example of giving because they gave (1) during **affliction**, (2) in spite of great **poverty**, (3) with great **joy**, (4) beyond their means, and (5) **freely**. In fact, (6) they pleaded for the privilege of sharing their wealth with other believers, and (7) they **gave themselves to the Lord** and to others.

New Testament Giving

The most detailed passage on giving in the New Testament is found in 2 Corinthians (chs. 8; 9). The primary reason that Paul addressed this topic here was that false teachers in Corinth were questioning Paul’s motives for ministry. Evidently they were suggesting that Paul was pocketing contributions earmarked for the poor believers in Jerusalem. Consequently the Corinthians, despite their announced willingness to help, had not donated to the cause.

Taking pen in hand, Paul defended his integrity (1:12). Using the churches in Macedonia as his example, Paul gave the Corinthians a wonderful summary of why and how believers ought to give. Here are the highlights of Paul’s sermon:

First, who should give? All believers can and should contribute to the cause of Christ. The church at Macedonia was notoriously poor, yet they asked for the privilege of being allowed to give (8:4) out of “their deep poverty” (8:2).

In what spirit should we give? We ought to give willingly (8:12; 9:2) and cheerfully, “not grudgingly or of necessity” (9:7). It is a privilege to share in the work of God. Moreover, it is the appropriate response to God’s “incredible gift,” His own Son (9:15).

How much should we give? Nowhere does the New Testament give us a specified percentage or amount. In this passage, Paul simply exhorts each of the members of the Corinthian church to give “as he purposes in his heart” (9:7). Ideally, our gifts would be “generous” (9:5) and given with “liberality” (9:11). The overall tenor of this passage suggests sacrificial giving. Again, by way of example, the Macedonians, like the poor widow praised by Christ in Luke 21:1–4, gave not merely their “leftovers,” but more than they could afford (8:3).

How should monetary gifts be handled? Paul took special care to explain that the Corinthians’ contributions would be handled with integrity by Titus (8:16–20, 23) and another unnamed brother (8:22). These were men of the highest character. They were trustworthy and above reproach in the handling of money. We should entrust our church finances to men of this caliber.

Why is giving so important? In Paul’s words, it tests the sincerity of our love for God and others (8:7, 8). To paraphrase the words of Christ (Matt. 6:19–21), how we handle material wealth is a barometer of our spiritual health.

What will be the results of our giving? We should not give primarily to get, but Paul makes it clear that giving does lead to abundance. Cheerful givers experience God’s love in a special way (9:7). They enjoy the spiritual blessing of participating in a rich harvest of righteousness (9:10).



the saints. ⁵And not *only* as we had hoped, but they first *gave* themselves to the Lord, and *then* to us by the *d*will of God. ⁶So *e*we urged Titus, that as he had begun, so he would also complete this grace in you as well. ⁷But as *f*you abound in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all diligence, and in your love for us—*see g*that you abound in this grace also.

Christ Our Pattern

⁸*h*I speak not by commandment, but I am testing the sincerity of your love by the diligence of others. ⁹For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, *i*that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become *j*rich.

¹⁰And in this *k*I give advice: *l*It is to your advantage not only to be doing what you began and *m*were desiring to do a year ago; ¹¹but now you also must complete the doing *of it*; that as *there* was a readiness to desire *it*, so *there* also *may be* a completion out of what *you* have. ¹²For *n*if there is first a willing mind, *it* is accepted according to what one has, and not according to what he does not have.

¹³For *I do* not *mean* that others should be eased and you burdened; ¹⁴but by an equality, *that* now at this time your abundance *may supply* their lack, that their abundance also *may supply* your lack—that there may be equality. ¹⁵As it is written, *o*“He who gathered much had nothing left over, and he who gathered little had no lack.”

Collection for the Judean Saints

¹⁶But thanks *be* to God who ²puts the same earnest care for you into the heart of Titus. ¹⁷For he not only accepted the exhortation, but being more diligent, he

5 *c* [Rom. 12:1, 2]
d [Eph. 6:6]
 6 *e* 2 Cor. 8:17; 12:18
 7 *f* [1 Cor. 1:5; 12:13]
g 2 Cor. 9:8
 8 *h* 1 Cor. 7:6
 9 *i* Matt. 8:20; Luke 9:58; Phil. 2:6, 7
j Rom. 9:23; [Eph. 1:7; Rev. 3:18]
 10 *k* 1 Cor. 7:25, 40
l [Prov. 19:17; Matt. 10:42; 1 Tim. 6:18, 19; Heb. 13:16]
m 1 Cor. 16:2; 2 Cor. 9:2
 12 *n* Mark 12:43, 44; Luke 21:3, 4; 2 Cor. 9:7
 15 *o* Ex. 16:18
 16 *NU* has put

18 *p* 1 Cor. 16:3; 2 Cor. 12:18
 19 *q* Acts 14:23; 1 Cor. 16:3, 4
r 2 Cor. 4:15
 21 *s* Rom. 12:17; Phil. 4:8; 1 Pet. 2:12
 23 *t* 2 Cor. 7:13, 14
u [John 13:16]; Phil. 2:25
v Lit. *apostles*, “sent ones”
 24 *v* 2 Cor. 7:4, 14; 9:2
NU, *M* omit and

CHAPTER 9

1 *a* Acts 11:29; Rom. 15:26; 1 Cor. 16:1; 2 Cor. 8:4; Gal. 2:10
 2 *b* 2 Cor. 8:10
 3 *c* 2 Cor. 8:6, 17
 4 *d* *NU* confidence.
 5 *e* *encourage*

went to you of his own accord. ¹⁸And we have sent with him *p*the brother whose praise is in the gospel throughout all the churches, ¹⁹and not only *that*, but who was also *q*chosen by the churches to travel with us with this gift, which is administered by us *r*to the glory of the Lord Himself and *to show* your ready mind, ²⁰avoiding this: that anyone should blame us in this lavish gift which is administered by us—²¹*s*providing honorable things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men.

²²And we have sent with them our brother whom we have often proved diligent in many things, but now much more diligent, because of the great confidence which *we have* in you. ²³If *anyone inquires* about *t*Titus, *he is* my partner and fellow worker concerning you. Or if our brethren *are inquired about*, *they are* *u*messengers³ of the churches, the glory of Christ. ²⁴Therefore show to them, ⁴and before the churches the proof of your love and of our *v*boasting on your behalf.

Administering the Gift

9 Now concerning *a*the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you; ²for I know your willingness, about which I boast of you to the Macedonians, that Achaia was ready *a* year ago; and your zeal has stirred up the majority. ³Yet I have sent the brethren, lest our boasting of you should be in vain in this respect, that, as I said, you may be ready; ⁴lest if *some* Macedonians come with me and find you unprepared, we (not to mention you!) should be ashamed of this ¹confident boasting. ⁵Therefore I thought it necessary to ²exhort the brethren to go to you ahead of time, and prepare your generous gift beforehand, which *you had* previously

8:6 Titus had begun the collection when he was in Corinth (2:13; 7:6, 7, 13–15). Paul wanted him to complete it.

8:7 The Corinthians had an abundance of spiritual gifts and graces (1 Cor. 1:4–7). They had the gift of **faith** (1 Cor. 12:9; 13:2), gifts of **speech**, such as prophecy (1 Cor. 1:5; 12:10), and the gift of **knowledge** (1 Cor. 1:5; 12:8). They were also blessed with **diligence** (7:11) and **love** for Paul (7:7).

8:8 testing: Generosity is the natural result of sincere love.

8:9 The Corinthians did not need a command (v. 8), because the example of Christ taught them about sacrificial giving. **He was rich:** See John 17:5; Col. 1:16. **He became poor:** See Phil. 2:7, 8 for an eloquent description of all that Jesus gave up to come to this earth.

You . . . might become rich refers to the spiritual riches that Jesus gives to all who place their trust in Him: He offers forgiveness, justification, regeneration, eternal life, and glorification. Jesus purchases us from slavery to sin and makes us children of God. He gives us the right and privilege to approach God with requests and praise.

8:10 Advantage means “profit.” Giving now would profit the Corinthians at the judgment seat of Christ (see Phil. 4:17). Such giving is an investment (see Matt. 6:19–21; Rev. 22:12).

8:16, 17 thanks be to God: Paul asked Titus to go, but Titus went of his own accord, probably at his own cost. Paul attributed this desire in the heart of Titus to God (see Phil. 2:12, 13).

8:18 The brother has been variously identified as Luke, Barnabas, Silas, Timothy, John Mark, and others. The churches of the first century knew who he was, but no one today knows.

8:20, 21 These honest men were sent to handle the collection in order to do what was **honorable before the Lord and men**, and to prevent anyone from blaming Paul for mishandling the funds. Verse 21 is a quotation from Prov. 3:4.

9:1 In this verse, the collection for the Jerusalem believers is called **the ministering to the saints**.

9:4 Paul was in Macedonia when he wrote this letter (2:13; 7:5). When he left Macedonia to come to Corinth, some of the Macedonians would no doubt come with him. He did not want them to find that the Corinthians had not completed the collection (8:11) and thus **be ashamed**.

9:5 The brethren mentioned here are the delegation of 8:16–20.

promised, that it may be ready as a *matter* of generosity and not as a ³grudging obligation.

The Cheerful Giver

^{6d}But this *I say*: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows ⁴bountifully will also reap ⁴bountifully. ⁷So let each one *give* as he purposes in his heart, ^enot grudgingly or of ⁵necessity; for ^fGod loves a cheerful giver. ^{8g}And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all *things*, may have an abundance for every good work. ⁹As it is written:

*“He has dispersed abroad,
He has given to the poor;
His righteousness endures forever.”*

¹⁰Now ⁶may He who ⁱsupplies seed to the sower, and bread for food, ⁷supply and multiply the seed you have *sown* and increase the fruits of your ^jrighteousness, ¹¹while *you* are enriched in everything for all liberality, ^kwhich causes thanksgiving through us to God. ¹²For the administration of this service not only ^lsupplies the needs of the saints, but also is abounding through many thanksgivings to God, ¹³while, through the proof of this ministry, they ^mglorify God for the obedience of your confession to the gospel of Christ, and for *your* liberal ⁿsharing with them and all *men*, ¹⁴and by their prayer for you, who long for you because of the exceeding ^ograce of God in you. ¹⁵Thanks *be* to God ^pfor His indescribable gift!

⁵ ³ Lit. *covetousness*
^{6d} Prov. 11:24; 22:9;
Gal. 6:7, 9 ⁴ *with blessings*
⁷ Deut. 15:7
^f Deut. 15:10; 1 Chr. 29:17; [Prov. 11:25]; Rom. 12:8; [2 Cor. 8:12] ⁵ *compulsion*
^{8g} [Prov. 11:24]
^{9h} Ps. 112:9
¹⁰ⁱ Is. 55:10 / Hos. 10:12 ⁶ NU omits *may* ⁷ NU will *supply*
^{11k} 2 Cor. 1:11
^{12l} 2 Cor. 8:14
^{13m} [Matt. 5:16]
ⁿ [Heb. 13:16]
^{14o} 2 Cor. 8:1
^{15p} [John 3:16; 4:10; Rom. 6:23; 8:32; Eph. 2:8; James 1:17]

CHAPTER 10

¹ a Rom. 12:1
^b 1 Thess. 2:7
² c 1 Cor. 4:21;
2 Cor. 13:2, 10
⁴ d Eph. 6:13
^e 1 Cor. 9:7; [2 Cor. 6:7]; 1 Tim. 1:18
^f Acts 7:22 ^g Jer. 1:10; [2 Cor. 10:8; 13:10] ^l *of the flesh*
^{5h} 1 Cor. 1:19
⁶ 2 Cor. 13:2, 10
⁷ 2 Cor. 7:15
^{7k} [John 7:24]; 2 Cor. 5:12 ¹ 1 Cor. 1:12; 14:37 ^m [Rom. 14:8]; 1 Cor. 3:23
² NU as we are.
⁸ⁿ 2 Cor. 13:10
^o 2 Cor. 7:14 ³ NU omits *us* ⁴ *building up*
^{10p} 1 Cor. 2:3, 4;

The Spiritual War

10 Now ^aI, Paul, myself am pleading with you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ—^bwho in presence *am* lowly among you, but being absent *am* bold toward you. ²But I beg *you* ^cthat when I am present I may not be bold with that confidence by which I intend to be bold against some, who think of us as if we walked according to the flesh. ³For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. ^{4d}For the weapons ^eof our warfare *are* not ¹carnal but ^fmighty in God ^gfor pulling down strongholds, ^{5h}casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, ⁶ⁱand being ready to punish all disobedience when ^jyour obedience is fulfilled.

Reality of Paul's Authority

^{7k}Do you look at things according to the outward appearance? ^lIf anyone is convinced in himself that he is Christ's, let him again consider this in himself, that just as he *is* Christ's, even ²so ^mwe *are* Christ's. ⁸For even if I should boast somewhat more ⁿabout our authority, which the Lord gave ³us for ⁴edification and not for your destruction, ^oI shall not be ashamed—⁹lest I seem to terrify you by letters. ¹⁰“For *his* letters,” they say, “*are* weighty and powerful, but ^p*his* bodi-

2 Cor. 12:7; Gal. 4:13

9:6 reap sparingly: The law of the harvest is referred to repeatedly in Scripture (see Prov. 11:24, 25; 19:17; Luke 6:38; Gal. 6:7). Paul applied it to giving. Giving is like sowing seed. The amount of the harvest is determined by the amount of the seed sown.

9:7 Knowing the law of the harvest (v. 6), each believer should give **as he purposes in his heart**. The believer is to give freely and cheerfully, not out of compulsion, and without regret.

9:8 If we give, **God is able** to give us more so that we can perform other good works. In other words, God sees to it that the generous giver will not suffer want. Instead, God generously provides for those who give so that they can continue to do so.

9:10 This verse is Paul's prayer for God's blessing to be poured out on the Corinthians. The words **supplies seed to the sower, and bread for food** are adapted from Is. 55:10. The latter part of the verse is a reflection of Hos. 10:12.

9:13 **They** refers to the Jerusalem Christians.

9:14 **their prayer for you:** Paul anticipated that God's grace would lead the Jerusalem Christians to pray for the Corinthian believers and to be deeply concerned about them.

9:15 God's **indescribable gift** is His Son, Jesus Christ. Our gifts can never compare to God's sacrifice for us.

10:1 I, Paul, myself: Timothy and Paul together wrote the first nine chapters of this letter (1:1). In this section, Paul alone addresses the Corinthians. **in presence . . . lowly . . . absent . . . bold:** This is a quotation from Paul's critics in the Corinthian church. They accused him of being weak when present, and bold only in his letters (see vv. 9, 10).

10:2 By saying **I beg**, Paul was gently asking the Corinthians to deal

with his critics before he came so that he would not have to be stern with them. Paul's critics said that he **walked according to the flesh** and that he was thinking only of himself when he did not come as promised (see 1:17).

10:4, 5 strongholds . . . high thing: Overlooking ancient Corinth was a hill 1,857 feet high. On top of it was a fortress. Paul used that imagery as an illustration of the spiritual warfare he waged. He destroyed strongholds, cast down towers, and took captives. The fortress, towers, and captives represent the **arguments**, thoughts, and plans that Paul was opposing. Paul cast down all rationalizations. He took captive **to the obedience of Christ** every perception and intention of the heart that was against God. Our actions reveal our thoughts. We should not cling to thoughts that do not conform to the life and teachings of Christ. Paul did not walk according to the flesh or his worldly desires; instead he conquered the flesh. He explains his strategy in 1 Cor. 9:24–27: “I discipline my body and bring it into subjection.”

10:7 In this context, being **Christ's** means more than merely belonging to Him. It means being His servant or His disciple (see v. 8).

10:8 Paul had **authority** as an apostle **for edification**, a word that means “building up.” His exhortation in his letter was aimed at correcting abuses, not the **destruction** of the church. The word **destruction** means “tearing down.” Paul repeated his authorization at the end of his letter (13:10).

10:10 they say: Paul spoke simply so that the power of God would remain evident. He did not use complicated rhetorical techniques to sway his audience. His critics at the Corinthian church had turned his simple, unpretentious style against him (see 11:6; 1 Cor. 1:17; 2:1–5).

ly presence is weak, and *his* ^aspeech contemptible.” ¹¹Let such a person consider this, that what we are in word by letters when we are absent, such *we will* also *be* in deed when we are present.

Limits of Paul's Authority

¹²r For we dare not class ourselves or compare ourselves with those who commend themselves. But they, measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise. ¹³s We, however, will not boast beyond measure, but within the limits of the sphere which God appointed us—a sphere which especially includes you. ¹⁴For we are not overextending ourselves (as though *our authority* did not extend to you), ^tfor it was to you that we came with the gospel of Christ; ¹⁵not boasting of things beyond measure, *that is*, “in other men’s labors, but having hope, *that as* your faith is increased, we shall be greatly enlarged by you in our sphere, ¹⁶to preach the gospel in the *regions* beyond you, *and* not to boast in another man’s sphere of accomplishment.

¹⁷But v “*he who glories, let him glory in the LORD.*” ¹⁸For w not he who commends himself is approved, but x whom the Lord commends.

Concern for Their Faithfulness

11 Oh, that you would bear with me in a little ^afolly—and indeed you do bear with me. ²For I am ^bjealous for you with godly jealousy. For ^cI have betrothed you to one husband, ^dthat I may

10 ^q [1 Cor. 1:17]; 2 Cor. 11:6
12 ^r 2 Cor. 5:12
13 ^s 2 Cor. 10:15
14 ^t 1 Cor. 3:5, 6
15 ^u Rom. 15:20
17 ^v Is. 65:16; Jer. 9:24; 1 Cor. 1:31
18 ^w Prov. 27:2
^x Rom. 2:29; [1 Cor. 4:5]

CHAPTER 11

1 ^a Matt. 17:17;
2 Cor. 11:4, 16, 19
2 ^b Gal. 4:17 ^c Hos. 2:19; [Eph. 5:26]
^d Col. 1:28

^e Lev. 21:13
3 ^f Gen. 3:4, 13;
John 8:44; 1 Thess. 3:5; 1 Tim. 2:14; [Rev. 12:9, 15]
^g Eph. 6:24 ^h NU adds *and purity*
4 ^h Gal. 1:6–8
5 ⁱ [1 Cor. 15:10]; 2 Cor. 12:11; Gal. 2:6
6 ^j [1 Cor. 1:17]
^k [1 Cor. 12:8; Eph. 3:4] ^l [2 Cor. 12:12]
^m NU omits *been*
7 ^m Acts 18:3; 1 Cor. 9:18; 2 Cor. 12:13
ⁿ putting myself down
9 ⁿ Acts 20:33
^o Phil. 4:10
10 ^p Rom. 1:9; 9:1; 2 Cor. 1:23; [Gal. 2:20] ^q 1 Cor. 9:15
11 ^r 2 Cor. 6:11; 12:15
12 ^s 1 Cor. 9:12
13 ^t Acts 15:24; Rom. 16:18; Gal. 1:7; Phil. 1:15; 2 Pet. 2:1; Rev. 2:2

present *you* ^eas a chaste virgin to Christ. ³But I fear, lest somehow, as ^fthe serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds ^gmay be corrupted from the ⁱsimplicity that is in Christ. ⁴For if he who comes preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or *if* you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a ^hdifferent gospel which you have not accepted—you may well put up with it!

Paul and False Apostles

⁵For I consider that ⁱI am not at all inferior to the most eminent apostles. ⁶Even though ^jI am untrained in speech, yet *I am* not ^kin knowledge. But ^lwe have ²been thoroughly manifested among you in all things.

⁷Did I commit sin in ³humbling myself that you might be exalted, because I preached the gospel of God to you ^mfree of charge? ⁸I robbed other churches, taking wages *from them* to minister to you. ⁹And when I was present with you, and in need, ⁿI was a burden to no one, for what I lacked ^othe brethren who came from Macedonia supplied. And in everything I kept myself from being burdensome to you, and so I will keep *myself*. ¹⁰p As the truth of Christ is in me, ^qno one shall stop me from this boasting in the regions of Achaia. ¹¹Why? ^rBecause I do not love you? God knows!

¹²But what I do, I will also continue to do, ^sthat I may cut off the opportunity from those who desire an opportunity to be regarded just as we are in the things of which they boast. ¹³For such ^tare false

10:12 They, Paul’s critics, commended themselves (see 3:1), measured themselves by their own personal opinions, and compared themselves with others. Contrast Paul’s advice to esteem others above oneself (Phil. 2:3, 4).

10:13–15 Paul boasted only within the **sphere** of ministry God had given him, but that sphere included the Corinthians. By implication, Paul’s critics were boasting of what they had not worked at or cultivated, perhaps the results of Paul’s ministry in Corinth.

10:16 **regions beyond you:** In the Book of Romans, which Paul wrote around this time, he said his ambition was to preach the gospel in Spain (Rom. 15:24).

10:18 Paul began this section by saying he was not going to place himself among the group that commended themselves (v. 12). The reason he would not was that **the Lord** would commend him as a faithful worker (see 1 Cor. 4:5). Throughout this passage, Paul has been very careful to only boast in the Lord and His work in order to establish his credentials as an apostle to the Corinthians.

11:2 Paul loved the Corinthians and was legitimately **jealous** because as their spiritual father (1 Cor. 4:15), he had **betrothed** them to Christ and wanted to present them to Him as a **chaste virgin**. He did not want them corrupted by false teachers (vv. 3, 4).

11:3 The Greek word translated **simplicity** is used in 2 Corinthians of sincerity (1:12) and generosity (8:2, 9). The Corinthians had a sincere singleness of heart toward Christ, which expressed itself in generosity.

11:4 **Another Jesus** would be one who was a man but not God, or crucified but not risen. **A different spirit** would be one of fear,

not faith (4:13)—of bondage, not freedom (3:17; see Gal. 5:1). **A different gospel** would be one of law and not grace, one of works and not faith.

11:5 Some take the **eminent apostles** as a sarcastic reference to the false apostles in Corinth (v. 13). Others believe that Paul was comparing himself here to the genuine apostles of Christ, as he did later in the book (12:11, 12).

11:6 By **untrained in speech**, Paul meant he was not schooled in professional rhetoric. This does not mean that he was a poor speaker, only that he was not trained in Greek oratory. He did not lack **knowledge**. He had received direct revelation from the Lord (Gal. 1:11, 12).

11:7, 8 **free of charge:** In Paul’s day, professional philosophers and teachers in Greek society charged for teaching. Paul did not. He labored (1 Thess. 2:9) and received support from other churches. Those who preach the gospel should make a living from the gospel (1 Cor. 9:14). Although Paul had the right to take money from the Corinthians, he chose not to do so in order to demonstrate his integrity (1 Cor. 9:12).

11:9 **The brethren who came from Macedonia** were probably from Philippi (Phil. 4:14–18).

11:10 Paul’s **boasting** was that he preached without charge (see vv. 7, 8).

11:12 Paul did not accept money from the Corinthians because he did not want to give his critics **the opportunity** to put themselves on the same level as himself.

11:13 Paul’s critics apparently called themselves **apostles of Christ**,

apostles, “deceitful workers, transform-
ing themselves into apostles of Christ.
14 And no wonder! For Satan himself
transforms himself into “an angel of
light. 15 Therefore *it is* no great thing if
his ministers also transform themselves
into ministers of righteousness, “whose
end will be according to their works.

Reluctant Boasting

16 I say again, let no one think me a

13 “ Phil. 3:2; Titus
1:10
14 “ Gal. 1:8
15 “ [Phil. 3:19]

17 x 1 Cor. 7:6
19 x 1 Cor. 4:10
20 z 2 Cor. 1:24;
[Gal. 2:4; 4:3, 9; 5:1]

fool. If otherwise, at least receive me
as a fool, that I also may boast a little.
17 What I speak, x I speak not according
to the Lord, but as it were, foolishly, in
this confidence of boasting. 18 Seeing that
many boast according to the flesh, I also
will boast. 19 For you put up with fools
gladly, y since you yourselves are wise!
20 For you put up with it z if one brings
you into bondage, if one devours you, if
one takes from you, if one exalts himself,

but Paul said they were **transforming themselves**. The word means “to change in appearance,” “to disguise,” or “to masquerade.” They were false teachers.

11:14, 15 And no wonder: If Satan, the prince of darkness, can disguise himself as an angel of light, then his servants, the ministers of evil, can disguise themselves as **ministers of righteousness**. Satan’s main tool is deception.

11:16 Also indicates that his opponents were boasting.

11:17 Not according to the Lord means “not according to the Lord’s standard.” This kind of boasting was not characteristic of the Lord. Jesus Christ was an example of humility, not boasting (Phil. 2:5–11).

11:18 The false apostles were boasting **according to the flesh**, that is, they measured themselves by their own standards rather than by God’s. Unfortunately, the Corinthians were listening to them (vv. 19, 20).

Paul’s Defense

“I speak as a fool” (11:23). These words jump out of the pages of 2 Corinthians; they seem out of place in the Bible. Why would an apostle speak foolishly? A closer look reveals the reason behind Paul’s words. The church at Corinth had been infiltrated by insidious false teachers. Although no one knows what philosophical or theological group these false teachers belonged to, we can ascertain some of their beliefs from Paul’s two letters to the Corinthians. Evidently they were a group who prided themselves on their Jewish heritage (11:22). This group may also have held to what some have called an “incipient Gnosticism.” They placed value on spiritual knowledge and experiences (1 Cor. 8:1) that were only accessible to gifted teachers, perhaps those who were especially skilled in Greek rhetoric (11:6). These “false teachers” were not only slandering Paul, they were denying his authority (12:11) and the truthfulness of what he preached. Some have postulated that there were several different groups that opposed Paul. That may have been the case, for Paul speaks of several different factions in the church (1 Cor. 1:12, 13).

To counter the accusations of his opponents, Paul took great pains to present his apostolic credentials. He opened his life and ministry for all to review. But he was doing more than defending himself; the great apostle wrote with an additional goal in mind. This was to warn the Corinthians of the dangers the false teachings posed. Thus Paul reluctantly painted a stark contrast between his own ministry and that of his rivals. According to Paul, these false teachers preached “another Jesus” and a “different gospel” (11:4). He regarded them as “deceitful workers” (11:13). Unlike Paul, these impostors collected fees for their services (11:7–9). And unlike Paul, they enjoyed comfortable, easygoing ministries. To defend himself, Paul was forced to “boast” in his ministry. But his boast was unusual, for it was in his weaknesses and suffering. He did not boast of his own accomplishments, but in the troubles and difficulties that clearly showed the power of Christ in his life (12:9).



According to Acts 18:12–17 Paul was brought before Gallio and accused by the Jews of inciting others to “worship God contrary to the law.” It is possible that Gallio judged the case from this “bema.” Paul was often defending his ministry from Jews and false teachers alike.

Many centuries later, the cast of characters has changed, but the story remains the same. The church continues to be infiltrated by those who advocate unbiblical ideas. Many of these present-day “false teachers” appear to be very sincere. They speak with great passion and eloquence. Their ideas seem to make perfect sense. But we must exercise extreme caution. The lucrative potential of modern mass communications has attracted hucksters who tickle the “itching ears” (2 Tim. 4:3) of their audiences in an attempt to profit personally. Every message must be weighed against the Word of God.

And what is a church body to do if it detects false teachers in its midst? On this issue, the New Testament is clear: Those who foster division within the church by persistently advocating unbiblical beliefs are to be removed from fellowship (6:14; Rom. 16:17, 18; 1 Tim. 6:3–5; Titus 3:9–11; 2 John 9–11). There is to be no toleration. When unaddressed, false doctrine is like a cancer that permeates a body, weakening it, and ultimately bringing about its demise.

if one strikes you on the face. ²¹To our shame ^aI say that we were too weak for that! But ^bin whatever anyone is bold—I speak foolishly—I am bold also.

Suffering for Christ

²²Are they ^cHebrews? So *am* I. Are they Israelites? So *am* I. Are they the seed of Abraham? So *am* I. ²³Are they ministers of Christ?—I speak as a fool—I *am* more: ^din labors more abundant, ^ein stripes above measure, in prisons more frequently, ^fin deaths often. ²⁴From the Jews five times I received ^gforty ^hstripes minus one. ²⁵Three times I was ⁱbeaten with rods; ^jonce I was stoned; three times I ^kwas shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; ²⁶in journeys often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, ^lin perils of *my own* countrymen, ^min perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; ²⁷in weariness and toil, ⁿin sleeplessness often, ^oin hunger and thirst, in ^pfastings often, in cold and nakedness—²⁸besides the other things, what comes upon me daily: ^qmy deep concern for all the churches. ²⁹Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to stumble, and I do not burn *with indignation*?

³⁰If I must boast, ^sI will boast in the things which concern my ^tinfirmity. ³¹The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, ^uwho is blessed forever, knows that I am not lying. ³²In Damascus the

²¹ ^a 2 Cor. 10:10
^b Phil. 3:4
²² ^c Acts 22:3; Rom. 11:1; Phil. 3:4–6
²³ ^d 1 Cor. 15:10
^e Acts 9:16 ^f 1 Cor. 15:30
²⁴ ^g Deut. 25:3
^h 2 Cor. 6:5
²⁵ ⁱ Acts 16:22, 23; 21:32 ^j Acts 14:5, 19
^k Acts 27:1–44
²⁶ ^l Acts 9:23, 24; 13:45, 50; 17:5, 13; 1 Thess. 2:15 ^m Acts 14:5, 19; 19:23; 27:42
²⁷ ⁿ Acts 20:31
^o 1 Cor. 4:11; Phil. 4:12 ^p Acts 9:9; 13:2, 3; 14:23
²⁸ ^q Acts 20:18; [Rom. 1:14]; 2 Cor. 7:12; 12:20; Gal. 4:11; 1 Thess. 3:10
²⁹ ^r [1 Cor. 8:9, 13; 9:22]
³⁰ ^s [2 Cor. 12:5, 9, 10] ^t weakness
³¹ ^u Rom. 1:9; Gal. 1:20; 1 Thess. 2:5
³² ^v Rom. 9:5
³² ^v Acts 9:19–25

CHAPTER 12

¹ ^a Acts 16:9; 18:9; 22:17, 18; 23:11; 26:13–15; 27:23
^b Acts 9:3–6; 1 Cor. 14:6; 2 Cor. 12:7; [Gal. 1:12; 2:2; Eph. 3:3–6] ^c NU necessary, though not profitable, to boast
² ^c Rom. 16:7; Gal. 1:22 ^d Acts 22:17
⁴ ^e Luke 23:43; [Rev.

governor, under Aretas the king, was guarding the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desiring to arrest me; ³³but I was let down in a basket through a window in the wall, and escaped from his hands.

The Vision of Paradise

12 It is ¹doubtless not profitable for me to boast. I will come to ^avisions and ^brevelations of the Lord: ²I know a man ^cin Christ who fourteen years ago—whether in the body I do not know, or whether out of the body I do not know, God knows—such a one ^dwas caught up to the third heaven. ³And I know such a man—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows—⁴how he was caught up into ^eParadise and heard inexpressible words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. ⁵Of such a one I will boast; yet of myself I will not ^fboast, except in my infirmities. ⁶For though I might desire to boast, I will not be a fool; for I will speak the truth. But I refrain, lest anyone should think of me above what he sees me *to be* or hears from me.

The Thorn in the Flesh

⁷And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a ^gthorn in the flesh was given to

2:7] ⁵ ^f 2 Cor. 11:30 ⁷ ^g Num. 33:55; Ezek. 28:24; Hos. 2:6; Gal. 4:13, 14

11:21 Paul's critics had accused him of being weak (10:10). He sarcastically said that he was **too weak** to rule the Corinthians harshly as the false apostles had done.

11:22 **So am I:** Paul's adversaries were Jewish and apparently felt that this made them superior not only to Gentiles but also to Greek-speaking Jews. Paul boasted that he was just as Jewish as they were.

11:23 Paul's opponents were not **ministers of Christ**. They were "false apostles" (v. 13), "ministers of Satan" (v. 15). But for the sake of argument, he responded to their claim as if it were true. **I speak as a fool:** Paul was hesitant to brag about his spiritual "accomplishments," because he knew that only God had made his preaching and service effective. He was merely God's instrument, and God was the One who deserved the glory. Paul's boast was in the Lord (10:17).

11:23–33 Paul's long list of problems includes physical suffering, long and difficult travel, toil, and weaknesses. He suffered profoundly for following Christ. Anyone who ever imagined that Christian faith always leads to health, wealth, and comfortable circumstances has forgotten Paul. This apostle was under no such delusions. He knew very well that faithfulness to God brings difficulty, not ease (see 12:9, 10). Yet temporal difficulties for the cause of the gospel bring their own eternal reward.

11:27 **Hunger and thirst** means involuntarily going without food and drink; **fastings** means voluntarily going without food for the sake of the ministry (see 6:5).

11:30 **Infirmity** means "weakness." Paul explains his weakness further in 12:7–10.

11:32 **Aretas the king:** Aretas IV (9 B.C.–A.D. 40), the father-in-law of Herod Antipas, was king of Nabatea, a kingdom whose capital was

Petra. Nabatea included the city of Damascus before the city was incorporated into the Roman province of Syria. Aretas was able to appoint a governor over Damascus because the Emperor Caligula (A.D. 37–41) gave Aretas control over the city.

11:33 Escaping from Damascus **in a basket** was Paul's example of boasting in his weakness (v. 30).

12:1 Paul prepared to boast about **visions and revelations** he received from God, possibly to counter similar claims by the false teachers, but he set them in contrast to the trials he had suffered in his ministry (vv. 7–10).

12:2 It becomes apparent later in the passage (see vv. 5–7) that Paul was writing here about himself, but he modestly presented this experience about **a man in Christ** as if it had happened to someone else. Paul wrote 2 Corinthians in A.D. 56; **fourteen years** before would have been A.D. 42, probably when he was in Antioch (Acts 11:26). **the third heaven:** It was common to speak of three "heavens": The first is the atmosphere where the birds fly; the second is the place of the sun, moon, and stars; the third is where God dwells. **12:3, 4** **Heaven** (v. 2) is here called **Paradise**. This experience should be compared to others in the Bible. God came down and met Moses on Sinai. Moses and Elijah came down from heaven to meet Christ. Peter, James, and John saw Christ glorified on the Mount of Transfiguration. John saw visions of the heavenly throne. And Paul is said to have been transported to heaven and returned. The experience probably helped Paul to endure suffering for the cause of Christ. Yet Paul never placed the focus of his message on this experience; instead he always preached Christ crucified (4:1–5).

12:7 **Thorn** means "splinter," "stake," or "something pointed." **Flesh** can refer to the body or to the sinful nature. Three basic suggested

me, ^ha messenger of Satan to ²buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure. ⁸ⁱConcerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. ⁹And He said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore most gladly ^jI will rather boast in my infirmities, ^kthat the power of Christ may rest upon me. ¹⁰Therefore ^lI take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ’s sake. ^mFor when I am weak, then I am strong.

Signs of an Apostle

¹¹I have become ⁿa fool ³in boasting; you have compelled me. For I ought to have been commended by you; for ^oin nothing was I behind the most eminent apostles, though ^pI am nothing. ^{12q}Truly the signs of an apostle were accomplished among you with all perseverance, in signs and ^rwonders and mighty ^sdeeds. ¹³For what is it in which you were inferior to other churches, except that I myself was not burdensome to you? Forgive me this wrong!

Love for the Church

¹⁴ⁱNow for the third time I am ready to come to you. And I will not be burdensome to you; for ¹I do not seek yours, but you. ^vFor the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the

⁷ ^h Job 2:7; Matt. 4:10; Luke 13:16; [1 Cor. 5:5] ² *beat* 8 / Deut. 3:23; Matt. 26:44
⁹ ^j 2 Cor. 11:30
^k [1 Pet. 4:14]
¹⁰ / [Rom. 5:3; 8:35]
^m 2 Cor. 13:4
¹¹ ⁿ 2 Cor. 5:13; 11:1, 16; 12:6 ^o 1 Cor. 15:10; 2 Cor. 11:5
^p 1 Cor. 3:7; 13:2; 15:9 ³ NU omits *in boasting*
¹² ^q Acts 14:3; Rom. 15:18 ^r Acts 15:12 ^s Acts 14:8-10; 16:16-18; 19:11, 12; 20:6-12; 28:1-10
¹⁴ ³ 2 Cor. 1:15; 13:1, 2 ^u Acts 20:33; [1 Cor. 10:24-33]
^v 1 Cor. 4:14; Gal. 4:19
¹⁵ ^w John 10:11; Rom. 9:3; 2 Cor. 1:6; Phil. 2:17; Col. 1:24; 1 Thess. 2:8; [2 Tim. 2:10] ^x 2 Cor. 6:12, 13
¹⁶ ^y 2 Cor. 11:9
¹⁸ ^z 2 Cor. 8:18
¹⁹ ^a 2 Cor. 5:12
^b [Rom. 9:1, 2]; 2 Cor. 11:31 ^c 1 Cor. 10:33 ⁴ NU *You have been thinking for a long time that we*
²⁰ ^d 1 Cor. 4:21; 2 Cor. 13:2, 10
²¹ ^e 2 Cor. 2:1, 4
^f 2 Cor. 13:2
^g 1 Cor. 5:1

children. ¹⁵And I will very gladly spend and be spent ^wfor your souls; though ^xthe more abundantly I love you, the less I am loved.

¹⁶But be that *as it may*, ^yI did not burden you. Nevertheless, being crafty, I caught you by cunning! ¹⁷Did I take advantage of you by any of those whom I sent to you? ¹⁸I urged Titus, and sent our ^zbrother with *him*. Did Titus take advantage of you? Did we not walk in the same spirit? Did *we* not *walk* in the same steps?

¹⁹^a Again, ⁴ do you think that we excuse ourselves to you? ^b We speak before God in Christ. ^c But *we do* all things, beloved, for your edification. ²⁰For I fear lest, when I come, I shall not find you such as I wish, and *that* ^d I shall be found by you such as you do not wish; lest *there be* contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, backbitings, whisperings, conceits, tumults; ²¹lest, when I come again, my God ^ewill humble me among you, and I shall mourn for many ^fwho have sinned before and have not repented of the uncleanness, ^gfornication, and lewdness which they have practiced.

Coming with Authority

13 This *will be* ^a the third time I am coming to you. ^b *“By the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall*

CHAPTER 13 ¹ ^a 2 Cor. 12:14 ^b Num. 35:30; Deut. 17:6; 19:15; Matt. 18:16; John 8:17; Heb. 10:28

interpretations of the thorn are as follows: (1) If flesh is a reference to the body, then it is a physical ailment like an earache, headache, eye trouble, epilepsy, or recurrent fever. (2) If flesh is a reference to the fallen nature, then the thorn could be a temptation. (3) If the expression is figurative, it could refer to persecution or opposition. Most commentators interpret it as a physical ailment. Many suggest that it was eye trouble, on the basis of Gal. 4:15. **messenger of Satan:** God permitted Satan to afflict Paul as He did Job (see Job 1; 2). **Buffet** means “to strike with the fist” (see Matt. 26:67). Paul’s thorn was a painful, humiliating experience given to prevent pride. **12:9 infirmities . . . power:** When believers are without strength and look to the Lord (v. 8), He provides power by His grace.

apostle

(Gk. *apostolos*) (1:1; 12:12; Matt. 10:2; Acts 2:37; Rom. 1:1; Heb. 3:1) Strong’s #652

The Greek word simply means “sent ones.” Out of Jesus’ many disciples, He selected 12 to be His apostles. These were the men who were sent by Jesus to take His message to the world and then raise up churches. Paul also became an apostle by the appointment of the risen Christ, who encountered Paul on the road to Damascus (see Acts 9). Paul’s apostleship was accompanied by a great deal of suffering; and then to add to it, some false teachers in the Corinthian church doubted his authority. Thus in 2 Corinthians, Paul repeatedly defended the genuineness of his apostleship.

12:10 Paul not only boasted about his weaknesses (v. 9), he said **I take pleasure**, a word meaning “to think good,” “to be well-pleased” in them. In Paul’s weaknesses, Christ’s power was made more apparent to others. It would bring praise to the only One who deserved it.

12:11 The Corinthians **compelled** Paul to boast because they listened to the false apostles (11:4) and were taken in by them (11:12).

12:12 When Paul established the church in Corinth, he performed **the signs of an apostle**, miracles or supernatural evidences that proved his authority as an apostle (see Acts 14:3).

12:14 for the third time I am ready to come: Paul’s first visit to Corinth was on his second missionary journey (Acts 18:1–18). Because of Paul’s mention of a “painful visit” in 2:1, some consider Paul’s second visit as occurring sometime when he was staying in Ephesus and before he wrote this letter (Acts 19:1–14). Others discount a second visit before this time. They insist that *ready* in this verse indicates that Paul had prepared to come to Corinth, but did not make the trip (see 1:15, 16, 23; 2:1–4 for evidence of this). He promised not to be **burdensome**, that is, to take financial support from them.

12:16 Earlier Paul said he was “not walking in craftiness” (4:2). He also pointed out that Satan was deceitful (11:3) and that the false apostles were like Satan (11:13, 14). Now he sarcastically echoes his critics’ charge that he was **being crafty**. But how did he trick them? He tricked them into not supporting him. Through sarcasm, Paul was vindicating himself against the charge of both trickery and fraud.

12:18 Apparently **Titus** was being implicated through the false apostles’ accusations because Paul had recommended Titus for the collection task (8:16, 17). However they did not have any evidence against Titus. He was above reproach.

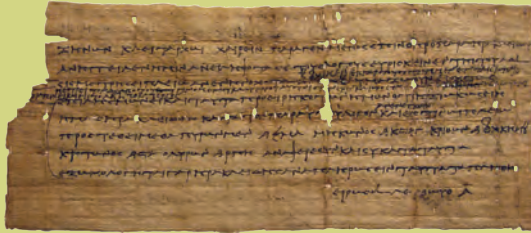
13:1 The **third time** has been interpreted two different ways. Those who hold that Paul had visited Corinth twice before writing this



Correspondence in Bible Times

Greek letters may be roughly divided into six classes: (1) private letters, averaging slightly less than a hundred words in length, and written on papyrus (an early form of paper); (2) correspondence between government officials; (3) letters intended for publication, such as the correspondence of the church fathers in the fourth century A.D.; (4) letters written to communicate ideas; (5) letters attributed to famous personalities; and (6) imaginary letters, somewhat like our modern historical novels, which were designed to entertain.

The Roman government provided postal service only for official documents. Private letters had to be sent by special messengers or friendly travelers. Letters normally were sent to designated parties, although some were “open” or circular letters. Paul’s letters, with the possible exception of Ephesians, were addressed to specific congregations; but the non-Pauline letters, usually called “general” epistles, included some letters that were circulated to several churches.



A Greek papyrus letter regarding tax issues, third century B.C.
Tillemahos Efthimiadis from Athens, Greece/Wikimedia Commons, CC-BY 2.0

be established.”^{2c} I have told you before, and foretell as if I were present the second time, and now being absent ¹ I write to those ^d who have sinned before, and to all the rest, that if I come again ^e I will not spare—³ since you seek a proof of Christ ^f speaking in me, who is not weak toward you, but mighty ^g in you. ^{4h} For though

^{2c} 2 Cor. 10:2
^d 2 Cor. 12:21
^e 2 Cor. 1:23; 10:11
^f NU omits I write
³ Matt. 10:20;
[1 Cor. 5:4; 7:40]
^g [1 Cor. 9:2]
^{4h} Phil. 2:7;
8; [1 Pet. 3:18]

He was crucified in weakness, yet ⁱ He lives by the power of God. For ^j we also are weak in Him, but we shall live with Him by the power of God toward you.

⁵ Examine yourselves *as to* whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, ^k that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you ² are ^l disqualified. ⁶ But I trust that you will know that we are not disqualified.

Paul Prefers Gentleness

⁷ Now ³ⁱ I pray to God that you do no evil, not that we should appear approved, but that you should do what is honorable, though ^m we may seem disqualified. ⁸ For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth. ⁹ For we are glad ⁿ when we are weak and you are strong. And this also we pray, ^o that you may be made complete. ^{10p} Therefore I write these things being absent, lest being present I should use sharpness, according to the ^q authority which the Lord has given me for edification and not for destruction.

Greetings and Benediction

¹¹ Finally, brethren, farewell. Become complete. ^r Be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love ^s and peace will be with you.

^{12t} Greet one another with a holy kiss.

¹³ All the saints greet you.

^{14u} The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and ^v the ^d communion of the Holy Spirit *be* with you all. Amen.

¹ [Rom. 1:4; 6:4; 1 Cor. 6:14] / ² [2 Cor. 10:3, 4] ⁵ ^a Rom. 8:10; [Gal. 4:19] / ¹ 1 Cor. 9:27 ² do not stand the test ⁷ ^m 2 Cor. 6:9 ³ NU we ⁹ ⁿ 1 Cor. 4:10 ^o 1 Cor. 1:10; 2 Cor. 13:11; Eph. 4:12; [1 Thess. 3:10] ¹⁰ ^p 1 Cor. 4:21 ^q 1 Cor. 5:4; 2 Cor. 10:8 ¹¹ ^r Rom. 12:16, 18 ^s Rom. 15:33; Eph. 6:23 ¹² ^t Rom. 16:16 ¹⁴ ^u Rom. 16:24 ^v Phil. 2:1 ^d fellowship

letter take this statement at face value, that Paul had been there twice and was now ready to come a third time. Those who say that Paul had been to Corinth only once point to 12:14 and say that he was prepared to come again but did not actually do so.

13:2 told you before: In 1 Corinthians, Paul warned against sexual immorality (see 1 Cor. 6:12–20). By writing this letter, he was warning them a second time (see 12:21). **Not spare** means he would confront them if necessary.

13:3 Paul would confront those who were sinning (v. 2) since the Corinthians were seeking a **proof of Christ speaking** in him. Apparently Paul’s critics claimed that an apostle should be a strong individual. Paul was saying that when he came again he would be strong.

13:4 For indicates that Paul was going to explain how Christ, who is strong, could be speaking through Paul, who was weak. As Christ appeared to be weak when he was crucified, but was raised by the **power of God**, so Paul was weak, but by the power of God he would live with Christ in strength toward them. Paul was not speaking of the future resurrection but of his next visit.

13:5 The Corinthians had been seeking proof of Christ’s speaking in Paul; he told them to examine themselves to see if they were **in the faith** (for the phrase, see 1 Cor. 16:13; Titus 1:13). Paul did not doubt that they were true believers (see 1:1, 24; 7:1, 8; 12:14). He wanted them to ask themselves whether they were walking according to

the gospel that they professed. He wanted them to apply the same standard to themselves that they were applying to him.

13:7–9 Paul prayed they would **do no evil**, which is probably a reference to the sins listed in 12:20, 21, and that they would be made **complete**. The Greek word for *complete* was used to describe the setting of bones and the reconciling of alienated friends. Paul was praying that there would be reconciliation of the divisions (12:20), and restoration. If his prayer was answered, he would **seem disqualified**, for he would not have to exercise his apostolic authority to discipline them.

13:10 I write: Paul confronted the Corinthians on paper so that he would not have to do it in person (see v. 2; 10:11; 12:20).

13:11 Here, as in other passages, **farewell** no doubt means “rejoice” (Phil. 3:1; 1 Thess. 5:16).

13:14 Paul’s concluding benediction invokes the blessing of the triune God: **grace** from the **Lord Jesus Christ** (see 8:9), the **love of God** (v. 11), and the **communion of the Holy Spirit**. At the end of his letter, Paul identifies the solution to many of the Corinthians’ problems. The Holy Spirit, who dwelled in each of them, could empower them to live righteously. Furthermore the Spirit could reconcile them to each other. They could love and encourage each other instead of fighting each other (12:20). They needed God’s grace, not selfishness; God’s love, not anger; and communion, not conflict.

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE GALATIANS



IN THE WHOLE BIBLE, there is no more passionate, comprehensive, yet concise statement of the truth of the gospel than Galatians. Salvation is through faith in Jesus Christ alone (2:16; 3:11, 12). No work can earn salvation. Paul's succinct refutation of the Judaizers in this letter has transformed the lives of many—from Martin Luther to John Wesley. In general, people want to earn their salvation by works that can easily be identified. In this letter, Paul reveals the arrogance of such thinking. It amounts to a desertion of the truth of the gospel and a turning away from God (1:6). We can stand justified before God only through faith in Jesus Christ; nothing else will save us.

Author The writer of Galatians identifies himself as Paul (1:1). He claims to be an apostle, and then goes on to argue at length for the apostolic authority behind his gospel message. Much of the personal information he gives in the course of his defense corresponds to the narratives about Paul in the Book of Acts, as well as to the autobiographical material in Philippians 3:4–6. The use of the Old Testament in chapters 3 and 4 fits Paul's rigorous training in Judaism. Finally, the theology presented in this letter corresponds perfectly with the theology Paul expresses in his other writings, notably the Epistle to the Romans.

Date Paul addresses his letter “to the churches of Galatia” (1:2) and to readers he expressly calls “Galatians” (3:1), but it is not easy to determine what this means precisely. At the time Paul was writing, the word “Galatians” could be used with an ethnic or with a political meaning.

To a great extent assigning a date for Galatians depends on making a decision about the destination of the letter. If the churches of Galatia were founded on Paul's second missionary journey in the northern part of Galatia (see Acts 16:6), the earliest the epistle could have been written was around A.D. 52. The similarity in content between Galatians and Romans, among other things, has led some to date the letter in the mid-50s. On the other hand, if Galatia is understood to be southern Galatia, including Lystra, Iconium, and Pisidian Antioch (see Acts 14:21), congregations planted on Paul's first missionary journey, the letter could have been written as early as A.D. 48.

To determine the date, the possible role of the Jerusalem council (see Acts 15) in the controversies addressed in Galatians must also be considered. If Galatians was written after the Jerusalem council had made its authoritative decisions, Paul most likely would have centered his argument on those decisions, or at least made an unmistakable reference to them. Since he did not, Galatians probably dates from A.D. 48. This means it is one of the earliest New Testament books.

Purpose Apparently Paul became aware of a perversion of the gospel of grace that was actively infecting the Galatian churches. The false teachers who had come to Galatia since Paul's ministry there were advocating salvation by “the works of the law”—that is, by keeping the law. Specific emphasis was placed on the Jewish rite of circumcision.

Paul's letter to the Galatians was a swift and decisive attempt to counter this message, which was a different



Basilica of St. Paul in Pisidian Antioch, built in the fourth century A.D. Paul preached one of his sermons in the synagogue at Antioch (Acts 13:13–43).

www.HolyLandPhotos.org

gospel. Paul had to convince his “little children” in the faith, whom he had evangelized personally, that the new teaching was in fact a distortion of the gospel of Christ. In his argument Paul reasserted his authority as an apostle, which apparently had been minimized by the Judaizing teachers. Paul wrote not out of anger, but out of love. He saw the Galatians leaving the correct path by their additions to the gospel message, and he loved his fellow believers too much to allow them to go astray.

Literary Form Galatians contains the three standard elements of a typical first-century letter: introduction (1:1–5), body (1:6—6:10), and conclusion (6:11–18). However, Galatians differs from many of Paul’s other letters. For example, most of Paul’s other letters contain an introductory thanksgiving section that serves as a prologue (Phil. 1:3–11). The startling absence of such a thanksgiving at the beginning of Galatians probably indicates the severity of the situation in Paul’s eyes. There is virtually nothing for which Paul can be thankful, since some of the Galatians were abandoning the gospel they had once embraced. Likewise, the letter contains no concluding greetings, whether long, like Rom. 16:3–23, or short, like 2 Cor. 13:12, 13. There is only a terse benediction and concluding salutation (6:16, 18).

Theology If there is one repeated phrase that summarizes the subject of Galatians, it is “the truth of the gospel.” Unlike Romans, which presents the gospel as the answer to universal human sinfulness (see Rom. 3:23; 6:23), Galatians clarifies the gospel message against the subtle, but ever deadly, danger of works salvation. No sinful person has ever been granted eternal life based on works. What is more, everyone who lives by such a confidence in works is “cursed,” because no one can perfectly obey the law (3:10). Thus, to add works, rituals, or the law to the message of what it takes to become a Christian is to overturn the Good News. The proper place of the law is to convict us of our sin, demonstrating the urgent need for the redemption provided by Jesus Christ.

What then is the basic gospel that Paul goes to such lengths to clarify and safeguard? The only way a person can be justified before God is by faith in Jesus Christ (2:16). Paul emphasizes this point over and over. Faith in Christ, nothing more and nothing less, is the proper response to the gospel. This emphasis on faith is not about the historical dimension of the gospel that is open to reasonable inquiry: Jesus perfectly kept the Law of Moses (4:4), died on the Cross (2:20), and rose from the dead (1:1). Rather Paul underscores faith in Christ because the controversies in Galatia raged around the reception of the gospel in the lives of new believers.

Paul also addresses themes dealing with the Christian life, or living out the new freedom the believer possesses in Christ. Between the extremes of legalistic sanctification and hedonistic license, Paul charts a middle course of “faith working through love” and the power of the Holy Spirit (5:5, 6). Thus, not only is justification by faith alone, but so is sanctification.

Paul variously describes this life of faith as walking in the Spirit (5:16, 25), being “led by the Spirit” (5:18), producing “the fruit of the Spirit” (5:22, 23), and sowing “to the Spirit” (6:8). Concretely, “faith working through love” (5:6) expresses itself in love for neighbors, especially other believers, and in bearing one another’s burdens (5:14; 6:2, 6). The ever-present danger is that rather than relying upon the power of the Spirit, the believer will start displaying the corrupt “works of the flesh.” Works can be truly good only when they are accomplished in the power of the Holy Spirit given to those who place their faith in Christ (6:7–10).

CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

Paul introduces Jesus to this errant flock as the One in whom the message of grace is grounded. “For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ” (1:12). It’s a message declaring that Jesus has freed the Christian from the bondage to the law. Legalism is no longer a master to whom we are accountable. It is this same Jesus who has set the believer free from sin. He has created an environment where we breathe the oxygen of liberty and have the power to do what we ought.

The Jesus whom Paul encountered en route to Damascus has reversed the curse of sin, law, and self. (See 1:4; 2:20; 3:13; 4:5; 5:24; and 6:14.) What makes this reversal possible is nothing other than the transforming power of the Cross.

GALATIANS OUTLINE

- I. Introduction 1:1–9
 - A. Salutation and preview of the letter’s themes 1:1–5
 - B. Occasion of the letter: condemnation of error 1:6–9
- II. Defense of the apostolic authority of the gospel message 1:10—2:21
 - A. Apostolic call: the divine source of Paul’s gospel 1:10–16
 - B. Apostolic confirmation: human agreement with Paul’s gospel 1:17—2:21
- III. Scriptural basis of the gospel message 3:1—4:31
 - A. Identifying the Old Testament roots of the gospel 3:1–25
 - B. Clarifying the meaning of the gospel: sonship versus slavery 3:26—4:31
- IV. Implications of the gospel message for Christian living 5:1—6:10
 - A. Avoiding the extremes of legalism and license 5:1–15
 - B. Walking in the power of the Holy Spirit 5:16–26
 - C. Serving one another according to the law of Christ 6:1–10
- V. Conclusion 6:11–18
 - A. Personal signature 6:11
 - B. Summary of the church’s problem: external legalism 6:12, 13
 - C. Summary of the gospel solution: the Cross and the new creation 6:14, 15
 - D. Benediction, request, and salutation 6:16–18

C. A.D. 47–49

Paul’s first missionary journey

C. A.D. 48

Galatians is written—if to southern Galatia

C. A.D. 50

The Jerusalem council

C. A.D. 50–53

Paul’s second missionary journey

C. A.D. 52

Galatians is written—if to northern Galatia

C. A.D. 53–57

Paul’s third missionary journey

C. A.D. 58

Paul is arrested in Jerusalem

C. A.D. 60–62

Paul is imprisoned in Rome

C. A.D. 67

Peter and Paul are executed

Greeting

Paul, an apostle (not from men nor through man, but ^athrough Jesus Christ and God the Father ^bwho raised Him from the dead), ²and all the brethren who are with me,

To the churches of Galatia:

³Grace to you and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, ^{4c}who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us ^dfrom this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, ⁵to whom *be* glory forever and ever. Amen.

Only One Gospel

⁶I marvel that you are turning away so soon ^efrom Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel, ^{7f}which is not another; but there are some ^gwho trouble you and want to ^hpervert ¹the gospel of Christ. ⁸But even if ⁱwe, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be ²accursed. ⁹As we have said before, so now I say

CHAPTER 1

¹ ^a Acts 9:6 ^b Acts 2:24
⁴ ^c [Matt. 20:28]
^d Heb. 2:5
⁶ ^e [Rom. 8:28]; Gal. 1:15; 5:8
⁷ ^f 2 Cor. 11:4 ^g Acts 15:1; Gal. 5:10;
¹² ^h 2 Cor. 2:17
¹ distort
⁸ ⁱ 1 Cor. 16:22 ² Gr. *anathema*

⁹ Deut. 4:2
¹⁰ ^k [1 Cor. 10:33]; 1 Thess. 2:4 ¹ 1 Sam. 24:7
^m 1 Thess. 2:4
¹¹ ⁿ [Rom. 2:16]; 1 Cor. 15:1
¹² ^o 1 Cor. 15:1
^p [Eph. 3:3-5]
¹³ ^q Acts 9:1 ^r Acts 8:3; 22:4, 5
¹⁴ ^s Acts 26:9; Phil. 3:6 ^t Jer. 9:14; Matt. 15:2; Mark 7:3; [Col. 2:8]
¹⁵ ^u Is. 49:1, 5; Jer. 1:5; Acts 9:15; Rom. 1:1; Gal. 1:6
¹⁶ ^v [2 Cor. 4:5-7]
^w Acts 9:15; Gal. 2:9

again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you ^jthan what you have received, let him be accursed.

¹⁰For ^kdo I now ^lpersuade men, or God? Or ^mdo I seek to please men? For if I still pleased men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ.

Call to Apostleship

¹¹ⁿBut I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. ¹²For ^oI neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but it *came* ^pthrough the revelation of Jesus Christ.

¹³For you have heard of my former conduct in Judaism, how ^qI persecuted the church of God beyond measure and ^rtried to destroy it. ¹⁴And I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries in my own nation, ^sbeing more exceedingly zealous ^tfor the traditions of my fathers.

¹⁵But when it pleased God, ^uwho separated me from my mother's womb and called *me* through His grace, ^{16v}to reveal His Son in me, that ^wI might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately

1:1 Paul calls himself **an apostle** to assert his divinely given authority to speak to the problem confronting the Galatian churches. **Through Jesus Christ and God the Father** refers to Paul's unique call to be an apostle (vv. 15, 16), which came to him at the same time as his salvation on the road to Damascus (see Acts 26:12–18).

Raised Him from the dead is a reference to the resurrection of Jesus Christ, a central belief of the Christian faith (see 1 Cor. 15).

1:2 churches of Galatia: Galatians is a circular letter, intended for several churches.

1:3 **Grace** is a variation from the standard greeting of ancient letters in Paul's time. **Peace** is the Greek translation of the traditional Hebrew greeting. Paul commonly combines the two ideas of grace and peace in the introductions of his letters (see 1 Cor. 1:3; 2 Cor. 1:2). The true message of salvation is based solely on God's grace (1:6; 2:21) received by faith (see Eph. 2:8), and it provides peace with God (see Rom. 5:1).

1:4 **gave Himself for our sins:** This phrase looks ahead to Paul's discussion of redemption in 3:13, 14. It is a quick summary of the Good News: Christ's death is for you (see 1 Cor. 15:3). **Deliver us from this present evil age** is similar to Col. 1:13, which states that Christ "has delivered us from the power of darkness" into His kingdom. Both passages develop this truth based on Christ's redemptive work (see Col. 1:14), implying that the word *deliver* refers to sanctification in the face of the temptations of this present age.

1:6, 7 The use of the word **marvel** reveals Paul's ongoing shock at the Galatians' defection from the **gospel** of God's undeserved **grace**. The Galatians had unwittingly fallen for a **different** message, one which was **not another** true message of salvation at all. Those causing the **trouble** were guilty of seeking to **pervert the gospel of Christ**, not to present a better alternative.

1:8, 9 Paul moves from the hypothetical (vv. 6, 7) to the actual in denouncing the Galatians' perversion of the **gospel**. If even the apostles or an **angel from heaven** were to **preach** a false gospel, they would be **accursed**. That being the case, **anyone** who proclaimed a perversion of the message that the Galatians had **received** from Paul fully deserved eternal destruction. Paul's concern for the purity of the gospel message is revealed by his assertion that he would condemn to destruction anyone who taught a false gospel.

1:10 **To please men** was neither Paul's motivation nor the source of

his authority (v. 1). Paul continually sought the approval of God. He did not base his decisions on the opinions of other people. Instead he single-mindedly aimed at pleasing God (Phil. 3:14). As an apostle Paul was a leader, but he was always **a bondservant of Christ**.

1:11, 12 There was no human creativity flavoring the **gospel Paul preached**. Paul knew it only because he **received** it by special **revelation from Jesus Christ** at his conversion (see Acts 26:12–18).

1:13, 14 **Judaism** means the Jewish way of life, which was based partly on the OT and partly on additional **traditions of the fathers**, or leaders of the people (see Matt. 15:2). Paul's **conduct** before his conversion had greatly distinguished him in Judaism in two ways: (1) He painstakingly kept the law and traditions, certainly more so than the Judaizers in Galatia (6:13). (2) He **persecuted the church of God** in order to **destroy it** (see Phil. 3:6), doing so under the authority of Jewish religious leaders (see Acts 8:3; 9:1, 2).

1:15–17 In words echoing the calling of the messianic Servant (see Is. 49:1) and Jeremiah the prophet (see Jer. 1:5), Paul relates that God had chosen him to be an apostle (v. 1) before his birth. Paul, like the

revelation of Jesus Christ

(Gk. *apokalupsis Iēsou Christou*) (1:12; 1 Pet. 1:13; Rev. 1:1) Strong's #602; 2424; 5547

In the Greek this could be an objective genitive—a revelation concerning Jesus Christ, or a subjective genitive—a revelation from Jesus Christ. Both thoughts are consistent with the context. Paul's "revelation of Jesus Christ" enabled him to see that Christ was God's Son (1:16), the sole object of our faith (2:16), and the unique source of oneness of all believers—whether Jew or Gentile, bond or free, male or female (see 3:27, 28; Eph. 3:1–11). Paul received his knowledge by special revelation (1 Cor. 11:23; 15:3; Eph. 3:3; 1 Thess. 4:15). Paul was thus an independent witness to the gospel; and although he had received no instructions directly from the apostles but only from the Holy Spirit, his teachings agreed with theirs.

confer with ^xflesh and blood, ¹⁷nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those *who were* apostles before me; but I went to Arabia, and returned again to Damascus.

Contacts at Jerusalem

¹⁸Then after three years ^yI went up to Jerusalem to see ³Peter, and remained with him fifteen days. ¹⁹But ^zI saw none of the other apostles except ^aJames, the Lord's brother. ²⁰(Now *concerning* the things which I write to you, indeed, before God, I do not lie.)

²¹^bAfterward I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia. ²²And I was unknown by face to the churches of Judea which ^cwere in Christ. ²³But they were ^dhearing only, "He who formerly ^epersecuted us now preaches the faith which he once *tried* to destroy." ²⁴And they ^fglorified God in me.

Defending the Gospel

²Then after fourteen years ^aI went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and also took Titus with *me*. ²And

16 ^x Matt. 16:17
18 ^y Acts 9:26 ³ NU
Cephas
19 ^z 1 Cor. 9:5
^a Matt. 13:55
21 ^b Acts 9:30
22 ^c Rom. 16:7
23 ^d Acts 9:20, 21
^e Acts 8:3
24 ^f Acts 11:18

CHAPTER 2

1 ^a Acts 15:2
2 ^b Acts 15:1-4
^c [Rom. 9:16; 1 Cor. 9:24]; Gal. 5:7; Phil. 2:16; 1 Thess. 3:5;
2 Tim. 4:7; Heb. 12:1
^d because of
4 ^d Acts 15:1, 24;
2 Cor. 11:13, 26; Gal. 1:7
^e Gal. 3:25; 5:1, 13; [James 1:25]
^f Gal. 4:3, 9
5 ^g [Gal. 1:6; 2:14; 3:1]; Col. 1:5
6 ^h Gal. 2:9; 6:3
ⁱ Acts 10:34; Rom. 2:11 / 2 Cor. 11:5;
12:11 ² Lit. *does not receive the face of a man*
7 ^k Acts 9:15; 13:46; 22:21; Rom. 11:13

I went up ¹by revelation, and communicated to them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but ^bprivately to those who were of reputation, lest by any means ^cI might run, or had run, in vain. ³Yet not even Titus who *was* with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised. ⁴And *this occurred* because of ^dfalse brethren secretly brought in (who came in by stealth to spy out our ^eliberty which we have in Christ Jesus, ^fthat they might bring us into bondage), ⁵to whom we did not yield submission even for an hour, that ^gthe truth of the gospel might continue with you.

⁶But from those ^hwho seemed to be something—whatever they were, it makes no difference to me; ⁱGod ²shows personal favoritism to no man—for those who seemed *to be something* ^jadded nothing to me. ⁷But on the contrary, ^kwhen they saw that the gospel for the uncircumcised ^lhad been committed to me, *as the gospel* for the circumcised *was* to Peter ⁸(for He

^l 1 Cor. 9:17; 1 Thess. 2:4; 1 Tim. 1:11

Judaizers in Galatia, had previously tried to earn his salvation by works (v. 14). However, his apostolic call and conversion both came through God's **grace**. His undeserved favor. If Paul's gospel message was made by men, he would have had to **confer** with other people to receive or validate it. To do this, Paul would have had to travel to **Jerusalem**, where the other **apostles** were, for such a conference. Instead, when he left **Damascus**, where he had stayed immediately after his conversion to Christianity (see Acts 9:1–22), he went to **Arabia** (see 2 Cor. 11:32, 33). This was the kingdom of the Nabatean Arabs, extending from Damascus to the Red Sea, including parts of modern Syria, Jordan, Israel, and Saudi Arabia.

1:18 after three years: This could be 36 months, or else a shorter period measured from the end of one year, through a complete year, and ending early in the third year. The three years could begin at the time of Paul's conversion (vv. 15, 16) or of his departure to Arabia (v. 17). Undoubtedly Paul and **Peter** talked at length about Christ and the gospel during the **fifteen days** Paul was in **Jerusalem**.

1:19 The apparent reference to **James, the Lord's brother**, as being one of the **other apostles** indicates that the word *apostles* was not always restricted to "the Twelve" (see Matt. 10:1–4; 1 Cor. 15:5).

1:21 Following his brief trip to Jerusalem (vv. 18, 19), Paul **went to Syria and Cilicia**, likely the same journey mentioned in Acts 9:30, in which Paul traveled from Jerusalem to his childhood home, Tarsus in Cilicia (see Acts 22:3).

2:1 After fourteen years may refer to 12 full years plus fractions of the first and last years (1:18). This time span could date from Paul's previous visit to Jerusalem (1:18, 19), but more likely from his conversion (1:15, 16). This was the point at which Paul received the gospel message, the focus of discussion throughout this extended section (1:11—2:14). **I went up again to Jerusalem:** If Galatians was written before the Jerusalem council, this journey is the one recorded in Acts 11:30. Otherwise, it is a reference to the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15). **Barnabas** is a Hebrew nickname meaning "Son of Encouragement" (see Acts 4:36). Barnabas met Paul briefly in **Jerusalem** during Paul's first postconversion visit (see Acts 9:26, 27). Later they served together in the events narrated in Acts 11:25–30; 12:25—15:39. **Titus** is not mentioned in Acts, but he was a convert of Paul's (see Titus 1:4) and an effective ministry associate over a number of years (see 2 Cor. 2:13).

2:2 Revelation here may refer to the prophecy of Agabus in Acts

11:27–30. Or it may refer to a private revelation of the Lord to Paul, perhaps similar to the one he received in Jerusalem earlier (see Acts 22:17–21). Later Jesus appeared to Paul in another vision (see Acts 23:11). **Them** may refer to the Jerusalem church at large, or it may be only **those who were of reputation**, presumably the inner core made up of James, Cephas (Peter), and John (v. 9). For Paul to have **communicated** with these leaders **privately** does not mean he considered altering his gospel, as the following section clearly shows (vv. 3–10). **In vain** does not reflect on the effectiveness of Paul's **gospel**, but rather on his efforts to maintain a unity in the church without sacrificing "the truth of the gospel" (v. 5).

2:3 Titus (v. 1) was a "test-case" Gentile. The term **circumcised** introduces a central topic of the Jewish false teachers, one which Paul addresses repeatedly in Galatians (5:2, 3, 6). Unlike Timothy, whom Paul had circumcised because Timothy's mother was Jewish, Titus was not circumcised. Circumcising him would have been a sign to all other Gentiles that following Jewish law was required for a person to become a Christian. As Paul explains in this letter, that would be a rejection of the Good News that salvation is God's gift to those who believe in His Son.

2:4 false brethren: This phrase apparently indicates that although these people passed themselves off convincingly as Christians, there was reason to view their profession as a sham. These pseudo-Christians did not announce their purpose, which was to curtail Christian **liberty** (5:1, 13) and to bring Paul and his converts into the **bondage** of Jewish legalism (6:12–15). These false brethren maintained that one had to keep the Jewish law in order to be saved. They refused to confess that salvation was God's gift through faith alone. For this reason, Paul would not recognize them as genuine Christians.

2:5 Paul's message about **the truth of the gospel** had never given way to the message of the false teachers, whether in Jerusalem (vv. 1–10), Syrian Antioch (vv. 11–14), or Galatia. **you:** The Galatian Christians could trust Paul's consistent advocacy of his gospel, which was revealed by God (1:11, 12).

2:6 While Paul recognized the leadership roles of James, Cephas (Peter), and John (v. 9) as "pillars" of the Jerusalem church, he pointed out that they were in no way superior to him in their understanding of the gospel. **added nothing to me:** The other apostles were satisfied with Paul's understanding of the gospel.

2:7–10 There were not two different gospels, one for **the uncircumcised** Gentiles and another for **the circumcised** Jews. Rather,



The Galatians

The ethnic Galatians were Celts who migrated from central Europe to Asia Minor in the third century B.C. By NT times there was a Roman province called Galatia that was larger than the original ethnic area. Territory to the south that was not ethnically Galatian was included in the province. Whether Galatia refers to the people or to the province would indicate who the original readers of the letter to Galatians were. The usual view until the last two centuries was that Paul addressed “North Galatia,” or congregations of ethnic Galatians located in the northern part of the province. However, a “South Galatian” theory is more widely held today. According to this view Paul wrote to churches in the southern part of the province, that is, to the churches he founded on his first missionary journey (see Acts 13:14—14:24) and later revisited (see Acts 16:1–5).



Lystra tell, in southern Galatia
Baker Photo Archive

Christ was clearly portrayed ²among you as crucified? ²This only I want to learn from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, ^aor by the hearing of faith? ³Are you so foolish? ^bHaving begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by ^cthe flesh? ^{4d}Have you suffered so ³many things in vain—if indeed *it was* in vain?

⁵Therefore He who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you, *does He do it* by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?— ⁶just as Abraham ^e“believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.” ⁷Therefore know that *only* ^fthose who are of faith are sons of Abraham. ⁸And ^gthe Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify

¹ ² NU omits among you
² ^a Rom. 10:16, 17
³ ^b [Gal. 4:9] ^c Heb. 7:16
⁴ ^d Heb. 10:35 ³ Or great
⁶ ^e Gen. 15:6
⁷ ^f John 8:39
⁸ ^g Rom. 9:17

^h Gen. 12:3; 18:18; 22:18; 26:4; 28:14
¹⁰ ⁱ Deut. 27:26
¹¹ / Hab. 2:4; Rom. 1:17; Heb. 10:38
⁴ declared righteous
¹² ^k Rom. 4:4, 5
ⁱ Lev. 18:5; Rom. 10:5
¹³ ^m [Rom. 8:3]

the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand, *saying*, ^h“*In you all the nations shall be blessed.*” ⁹So then those who *are* of faith are blessed with believing Abraham.

The Law Brings a Curse

¹⁰For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, ⁱ“*Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them.*” ¹¹But that no one is ⁴justified by the law in the sight of God is evident, for ^j“*the just shall live by faith.*” ¹²Yet ^kthe law is not of faith, but ^l“*the man who does them shall live by them.*”

¹³ ^m Christ has redeemed us from the

wisdom. Paul wonders whether something like an evil spell had prevented the Galatians from recalling the gospel of the **crucified** Christ, which had been **clearly portrayed** or preached to them.

3:2 In this verse, Paul contrasts obedience to the law with faith. **The hearing of faith** is probably what Paul had in mind in Rom. 10:17 when he said, “So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” It may also be closely related to Paul’s concept of obedience to the faith, since the Greek word for “hear” can also be translated “listen” or “obey” (see Rom. 1:5; 16:26).

3:3 Paul reminds the Galatians that their Christian life was **begun in the Spirit** by faith alone (see v. 2; 2:16). **Being made perfect by the flesh** indicates that the Galatians were mistakenly trying to achieve perfection through their own efforts, especially through circumcision.

3:4 This statement implies that the Galatian Christians had previously **suffered** for their faith, before they were tricked by the false gospel.

3:6 There are several reasons for Paul’s reference to Abraham’s faith as an example. (1) Abraham was the father of the Jewish nation (see Gen. 12:1–3). (2) Abraham is the clearest example of justification in the OT. (3) The Judaizers almost certainly were pointing back to Abraham, probably in connection with circumcision (2:3; 5:2, 3). The

example of Abraham’s faith is also developed in Rom. 4; Heb. 11; James 2. Paul quotes Gen. 15:6 from the Greek translation of the OT to show that **Abraham** was justified by faith alone. This verse communicates precisely what Paul called “the truth of the gospel” (2:5, 14).

3:7 **Those who are of faith** are spiritual **sons of Abraham**, even if they are not Jews. They are part of God’s people.

3:8, 9 **Scripture** is personified as a preacher who foretells that **Abraham** and his example of faith (see Gen. 15:6) would become a life-changing blessing to all **nations** (see Gen. 12:3; Matt. 28:19) as the **gospel** spread. All who have **faith**, as Abraham did, join in his **blessed** status.

3:10 Being **under the curse** through trying to be justified by **the works of the law** is contrasted with being blessed as a believer (v. 9). The quotation from Deut. 27:26 says that those who do not keep the whole law are **cursed**, proving that all are *cursed* who follow the law, because all fall short of the law’s standards (see Rom. 1:17; 3:10–18, 23).

3:11, 12 Paul quotes Hab. 2:4 to demonstrate that a person can only be **justified** through **faith**. He cites Lev. 18:5 to prove that keeping **the law** to gain salvation is utterly incompatible with faith.

3:13 Paul knew that many of his readers would perceive that they

curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, ⁿ“*Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree*”), ^{14o}that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the ^pGentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive ^qthe promise of the Spirit through faith.

The Changeless Promise

¹⁵Brethren, I speak in the manner of men: ^rThough *it is* only a man’s covenant, yet *if it is* confirmed, no one annuls or adds to it. ¹⁶Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, “And to seeds,” as of many, but as of ^sone, ^t“*And to your Seed*,” who is ^uChrist. ¹⁷And this I say, *that* the law,

¹³ ⁿ Deut. 21:23
¹⁴ ^o [Rom. 4:1-5, 9, 16 ★; Gal. 3:28] ^p Is. 42:1, 6; 49:6; Luke 2:32; Rom. 3:29, 30
^q Is. 32:15
¹⁵ ^r Heb. 9:17
¹⁶ ^s Gen. 22:18
^t Gen. 12:3, 7 ★;
 13:15; 24:7 ^u [1 Cor. 12:12]
¹⁷ ^v Gen. 15:13; Ex. 12:40; Acts 7:6
^w [Rom. 4:13] ^x NU omits *in Christ*
¹⁸ ^x [Rom. 8:17]
^y Rom. 4:14
¹⁹ ^z John 15:22
^a Gal. 4:4 ^b Acts 7:53 ^c Ex. 20:19; Deut. 5:5
²⁰ ^d [Rom. 3:29]

^v which was four hundred and thirty years later, cannot annul the covenant that was confirmed before by God ⁵in Christ, ^wthat it should make the promise of no effect. ¹⁸For if ^xthe inheritance *is* of the law, ^y*it is* no longer of promise; but God gave *it* to Abraham by promise.

Purpose of the Law

¹⁹What purpose then *does* the law *serve*? ²It was added because of transgressions, till the ^aSeed should come to whom the promise was made; *and it was* ^bappointed through angels by the hand ^cof a mediator. ²⁰Now a mediator does not *mediate* for one *only*, ^dbut God is one. ²¹Is the law then against the promises

were actually under **the curse of the law** (see v. 10; Deut. 27:26). For them as for us it is incredibly comforting to know that **Christ** became that curse **for us** on the Cross (see Deut. 21:23).

3:15 **Covenant** here probably means a “last will and testament,” which is unchangeable after it is **confirmed**. Most of the uses of the word in the NT refer to a solemn agreement or contract God made with His people.

3:16 **Jesus Christ** is the fulfillment of the covenant (v. 15) God made with **Abraham**. Although in one sense all Jews are the physical seed of Abraham, Christ is the final focus of God’s **promises**, the ultimate **Seed**. Christians are the spiritual seed of Abraham (see v. 29).

3:17 **Four hundred and thirty years** was the period of time Israel was in Egypt before the Exodus (see Ex. 12:40, 41). **The law**, which was put into force at the end of those centuries, could not override or **annul** the standing **covenant** with Abraham (see Gen. 15:18).

3:18 **The law** of Moses and the **promise** God made to **Abraham** were at odds with each other. Paul demonstrated that the false teachers’ view that the law was the fulfillment of the Abrahamic covenant had no scriptural basis.

3:19, 20 **The purpose of the law** of Moses was not to justify humankind in God’s eyes (2:16). Rather, the law was **added** after God’s promise to Abraham (vv. 16, 17) to clarify the issue of sin until Christ **the Seed** (v. 16) came. According to Stephen’s sermon in Acts 7, the law was given **through angels** to Moses as the human **mediator** (see Acts 7:38). This view was in line with Jewish teaching of the NT

era. No mediator, or go-between, was needed with the Abrahamic covenant since it was a **one**-party, or unilateral, **promise**. God put Abraham into a “deep sleep” and consummated the ceremonial enactment of the covenant alone (see Gen. 15:12–17).

3:21, 22 The relationship of **the law** and **the promises of God** is not competition, but need and fulfillment. The law was not designed by God to give eternal **life** and **righteousness**. Rather, the law showed humanity’s need for the **promise of life** through **faith in Jesus Christ** (v. 9; 2:16), having **confined all** people **under** their **sin** (see Rom. 3:23; 6:23).

idolatry

(Gk. *eidōlolatēia*) (3:20; 1 Cor. 10:14; Col. 3:5) Strong’s #1495

This word refers to the practice of worshiping idols. Related Greek words are translated “idolater” in 1 Cor. 5:10, 11; 6:9; 10:7; “idol” in 1 Cor. 8:4, 7; 10:19; 12:2; and “things offered to idols” in 1 Cor. 8:1, 4, 7; 10:19, 28. Paul had told the Corinthians not to associate with those who called themselves believers but were still idolaters (1 Cor. 5:9–11). The Corinthians must have asked Paul for clarification on this matter, for in 1 Cor. Paul warns the believers to refrain from all forms of idol worship.

We Are Family

In Galatians 3:28, Paul emphasizes that three major social distinctions no longer matter in Christ:

- Ethnicity: “neither Jew nor Greek.”
- Socioeconomic status: “neither slave nor free.”
- Gender: “neither male nor female.”

First-century culture was deeply divided along these lines. So was the church. But Paul stressed, “You are all *one* in Christ Jesus” (emphasis added).

Christians have become children of God through faith, which means we are all in the same family. We are no longer divided by ethnicity, social status, or gender, but have become brothers and sisters in God’s family.

One powerful symbol of that new unity is baptism (3:27). As part of the baptismal ceremony, a believer affirms the lordship of Christ and his or her commitment to a new way of life. Paul was possibly quoting from a first-century baptismal creed (3:28) to remind us of our promise to “put on Christ,” not just in word but also in deed.

In the early Christian communities this meant that both Gentiles and Jews could exercise their spiritual gifts. Both slaves and masters could pray or prophesy. Both women and men could enjoy full membership in the body. “Christ is all and in all” (Col. 3:11). The breaking down of traditional barriers wasn’t just a future hope. The early church worked to make it a reality.

Which brings us to the question: What walls of ethnicity, status, or gender divide believers today? Are we willing to model reconciliation between different and even antagonistic groups? If not, then is our church truly a sign of God’s kingdom, or merely a human institution?



of God? Certainly not! For if there had been a law given which could have given life, truly righteousness would have been by the law. ²²But the Scripture has confined ^eall under sin, ^fthat the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. ²³But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, ^gkept for the faith which would afterward be revealed. ²⁴Therefore ^hthe law was our ⁱtutor to bring us to Christ, ^hthat we might be justified by faith. ²⁵But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.

Sons and Heirs

²⁶For you ⁱare all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. ²⁷For ^jas many of you as were baptized into Christ ^khave put on Christ. ²⁸^lThere is neither Jew

²² ^e Rom. 11:32
^f Rom. 4:11
²³ ^g Lit. *confined*
²⁴ ^h Rom. 10:4
ⁱ Acts 13:39 ^j In a household, the guardian responsible for the care and discipline of the children
²⁶ ^k John 1:12
²⁷ ^l Matt. 28:19; [Rom. 6:3]; 1 Cor. 10:2 ^m Rom. 10:12; 13:14
²⁸ ⁿ [John 10:16]; Rom. 3:22; 10:12; [Eph. 2:14]; Col. 3:11 ^o [1 Cor. 12:13]
²⁹ ^p John 17:11; [1 Cor. 12:13; Eph. 2:15, 16]
²⁹ ^q Gen. 21:10; Heb. 11:18 ^r Rom. 4:11; Gal. 3:7
^q Gen. 12:3; 18:18; Rom. 8:17

nor Greek, ^mthere is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all ⁿone in Christ Jesus. ²⁹And ^oif you *are* Christ's, then you are Abraham's ^pseed, and ^qheirs according to the promise.

4 Now I say *that* the heir, as long as he is a child, does not differ at all from a slave, though he is master of all, ²but is under guardians and stewards until the time appointed by the father. ³Even so we, when we were children, ^awere in bondage under the elements of the world. ⁴But ^bwhen the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, ^cborn ¹^d of a woman, ^eborn under the law, ⁵^fto

CHAPTER 4 ³ ^a Gal. 4:9; Col. 2:8, 20; Heb. 5:12; 9:10
⁴ ^b [Gen. 49:10] ^c [John 1:14]; Rom. 1:3; 8:3; [Phil. 2:7] ^d Gen. 3:15; [Is. 7:14 ^e; Matt. 1:25] ^e [Matt. 5:17]; Luke 2:21, 27 ^f Or *made* ⁵ [Matt. 20:28; Gal. 3:13]

3:23–25 Paul gives two different illustrations concerning the function of **the law** until **Christ** came (4:4, 5). The law acted as a jail **guard** to hold humankind in custody until faith in Christ was **revealed**. But the law also served as a **tutor**. A tutor in ancient Greek culture would accompany the children in his care, instructing and disciplining them when necessary. The law was like a tutor because it both corrected and instructed the Israelites in God's ways until Christ was revealed, and such a tutor was no longer needed (4:1, 2).
3:26 **Through faith in Christ Jesus** believers are not only blessed as sons of Abraham (vv. 7, 9) but also as **sons of God** (see John 1:12)

and God's heirs (4:7). Believers have been adopted by God Himself. Although we were His enemies, we have been made His sons. Although we deserve judgment, we will receive an eternal inheritance from our Father.
3:28 The context of this verse is justification by faith in **Christ Jesus**, the fact that Jesus has redeemed all those who believe on Him, whether Jew or Gentile (3:26—4:27). Racial, social, and gender distinctions that so easily divide in no way hinder a person from coming to Christ in order to receive His mercy. All people equally can become God's heirs and recipients of His eternal promises (4:5–7).

Grace vs. the Law	
The Galatian believers, under pressure from Jewish legalists, were considering rejecting the gospel of grace and reverting back to dependence on the Mosaic Law for salvation. Paul wrote this letter to outline the dramatic differences between the two approaches to God.	
Grace . . .	Law . . .
• is based on faith (2:16).	• is based on works (2:16).
• justifies sinful men (2:16, 17).	• is incapable of resulting in justification (2:16; 3:11).
• begins and ends with Christ (2:20).	• makes Christ nothing (5:2).
• is the way of the Spirit (3:2, 3, 14).	• is the way of the flesh (3:3).
• is a "blessing" (3:14).	• is a "curse" (3:13).
• is God's desired end for His people (3:23–25).	• was intended to be only a means to an end (3:23–25).
• results in intimacy with Christ (3:27).	• results in estrangement from Christ (5:4).
• makes one a son of God and an heir of Christ (4:6, 7).	• keeps one a slave (4:7).
• brings liberty (5:1).	• results in bondage (5:1).
• depends on the power of the Holy Spirit (5:16–18, 22, 23).	• depends on human effort (5:19–21).
• is motivated by love (5:13, 14).	• is motivated by pride (6:3, 13, 14).
• centers on the cross of Christ (6:12–14).	• centers on circumcision (5:11; 6:12–15).

4:1, 2 Drawing upon the illustration of the "tutor" and "heirs" in 3:24–29, Paul develops the idea of what it means to be an adopted son of God. In ancient society a **child** had to wait until the proper time before he could inherit what was his. Paul uses this to explain why God delayed Jesus Christ's coming, leaving people with His law as a guide (3:23–25).
4:3 **We were children . . . in bondage** parallels "child" and "slave" in v. 1. Some believe that the **elements** Paul refers to in this verse are "elemental spiritual forces." As in astrology today, the ancients associated spiritual forces with "the elements," such as earth, air, fire, and water. But the context, and Paul's use of the word elsewhere (Col. 2:8, 20), favors an understanding of *elements* as "elementary principles or regulations," perhaps the Jewish law or aspects of it (compare Heb 5:12—6:3). This is confirmed in the context, for *elements of the world* parallels "guardians and stewards" in v. 2, as well as the role of the law in 3:23–25. These elements are described as "weak and beggarly" in v. 9 and are linked to what appears to be Jewish calendar observances in v. 10.
4:4, 5 **The fullness of the time** is "the perfect time" in history, the "time appointed" by **God** the Father (v. 2) for **His Son** to be born, and later to die for the sins of the world. **Born of a woman** speaks of Christ's humanity and perhaps alludes to His role as the ultimate "Seed" of the woman (see 3:16; Gen. 3:15). **Born under the law** means Christ was subject to the Jewish law (see Matt. 5:17–19), further establishing His identification with all people who are subject to the law. **Redeem**, meaning "to buy from the slave market," is a term used only by Paul in the NT (see 3:13; Eph. 5:16; Col. 4:5). The verb describes Christ's supreme and final payment for the sins of humanity (see Rom. 3:23–25). This payment, His death on the Cross, frees those who believe on Him to become God's **sons**. Although there is only one natural Son in God's family, Jesus Christ (vv. 4, 6), God has graciously adopted all believers as His children.

redeem those who were under the law, ^gthat we might receive the adoption as sons.

⁶And because you are sons, God has sent forth ^hthe Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, ²“Abba, Father!” ⁷Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, ⁱand if a son, then an heir ³of God ⁴through Christ.

Fears for the Church

⁸But then, indeed, ^jwhen you did not know God, ^kyou served those which by nature are not gods. ⁹But now ^lafter you have known God, or rather are known by God, ^mhow is it that you turn again to ⁿthe weak and beggarly elements, to which you desire again to be in bondage? ¹⁰^oYou observe days and months and seasons and years. ¹¹I am afraid for you, ^plest I have labored for you in vain.

¹²Brethren, I urge you to become like me, for I *became* like you. ^qYou have not injured me at all. ¹³You know that ^rbecause of physical infirmity I preached

⁵ ^g [John 1:12]
⁶ ^h [Acts 16:7; Rom. 5:5; 8:9, 15, 16; 2 Cor. 3:17] ² Lit., in Aram., *Father*
⁷ ⁱ [Rom. 8:16, 17]
³ ^{NU through God}
⁴ ^{NU omits through Christ}
⁸ ¹ Cor. 1:21; Eph. 2:12; 1 Thess. 4:5; 2 Thess. 1:8 ^{*} Rom. 1:25
⁹ ¹ [1 Cor. 8:3] ^m Gal. 3:1-3; Col. 2:20
^o Heb. 7:18
¹⁰ ^o Rom. 14:5; Col. 2:16
¹¹ ^p 1 Thess. 3:5
¹² ^q 2 Cor. 2:5
¹³ ^r 1 Cor. 2:3

¹⁴ ^s Mal. 2:7
¹ [Luke 10:16] ⁵ Or messenger
¹⁵ ^o NU Where
¹⁷ ^u Rom. 10:2
¹⁹ ^v 1 Cor. 4:15

the gospel to you at the first. ¹⁴And my trial which was in my flesh you did not despise or reject, but you received me ^sas an ⁵angel of God, ^t*even* as Christ Jesus. ¹⁵⁶What then was the blessing you *enjoyed*? For I bear you witness that, if possible, you would have plucked out your own eyes and given them to me. ¹⁶Have I therefore become your enemy because I tell you the truth?

¹⁷They ^uzealously court you, *but* for no good; yes, they want to exclude you, that you may be zealous for them. ¹⁸But it is good to be zealous in a good thing always, and not only when I am present with you. ¹⁹^vMy little children, for whom I labor in birth again until Christ is formed in you, ²⁰I would like to be present with you now and to change my tone; for I have doubts about you.

Two Covenants

²¹Tell me, you who desire to be under the law, do you not hear the law? ²²For it is written that Abraham had two sons:

4:6 Just as “God sent forth His Son” in “the fullness of the time” in world history (v. 4), so **God has sent forth the Spirit of Christ** at just the right time for every person who believes in Christ. **into your hearts:** Christians can know intimacy with the Father because of the indwelling Spirit (see Rom. 8:1–17).

4:7 Paul summarizes the illustrations and teaching of the preceding section (vv. 1–6) by speaking of the transformation of the believer from being a spiritual **slave** to being a **son** with full rights.

4:8, 9 The words in **bondage** and **elements** refer back to v. 3. Paul was in effect asking the Galatians, “Is it spiritual progress **again** to be enslaved to **weak and beggarly** rituals and observances (v. 10)? How could you **have known God** and turned away to ‘childish’ (v. 3) things?” The Galatians had come to **know God** through faith in Jesus Christ (see John 17:2, 3). He had adopted them as His own sons, but they were turning back to the law that had once enslaved them.

4:10 The word **days** likely refers to Sabbaths or special feasts.

Months and seasons pertain to longer observances, such as the celebrations between the Passover and the Day of Pentecost. **Years** probably indicates the Year of Jubilee, the fiftieth year in which slaves were to be freed, family lands returned to their original owners, and the land left fallow (see Lev. 23–25). The Jews commemorated all these feasts in order to please God.

4:12 I urge you: To get beyond the present dilemma, Paul appeals to the Galatians to follow his example (see 1 Cor. 11:1). He had abandoned the ceremonial rules and regulations connected with Judaism so that he could freely preach the gospel of Christ to Jew and Gentile alike in the cities of Galatia. They too should not hinder the gospel of Christ with laws and regulations.

4:13–15 Paul describes the closeness and understanding that had existed between him and the Galatians when he had **preached the gospel** to them initially. He recalls how the Galatians had cared for him in his illness, treating him as they would **an angel**, or even **Christ Himself**. Paul’s **physical infirmity** could have been an illness contracted en route to Galatia, a consequence of having been blinded on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:3, 8) or a consequence of being stoned (Acts 14:19). Some have suggested that Paul was practically blind. This would explain the reference to **your own eyes**, as well as the size of Paul’s handwriting, referred to in 6:11. This might have been the infirmity about which Paul wrote in his letter to the Corinthians. Paul had repeatedly asked God for healing, but God refused to heal him because his weakness demonstrated God’s strength (see 2 Cor. 12:7–10).

4:16 A person with pure motives and real friendship does not always say things that are pleasant to hear. Paul was telling the Galatians the **truth**, and as result was being labeled as their **enemy**. Sometimes the truth hurts; but a faithful friend would courageously confront another (see Prov. 27:6).

4:17, 18 Paul’s own career of persecuting Christians proved that **zealous** behavior can be tragically misguided (1:13, 14). Paul was strongly implying that the false teachers in Galatia were making the same mistake he had made prior to his conversion. Their zeal for the law was blinding them to the freedom and truth to be found in Jesus Christ.

4:19 In a most tender way, Paul calls the Galatian Christians his **little children** because of their lack of spiritual growth and depth. The apostle also portrays himself as the Galatians’ “spiritual mother.” He was feeling the **labor** pains of their **birth** all over **again** because they had fallen into serious error.

4:21, 22 Once again Paul speaks of **the law** and the experience of **Abraham**, addressing the false teachers’ foundational respect for Abraham (3:6–9) and the Galatians’ infatuation with living **under** the law. To clinch his lengthy argument about the bondage of the law and the freedom found in Christ, Paul uses as examples the

elements

(Gk. *stoicheion*) (4:3, 9; Col. 2:8, 20; Heb. 5:12; 2 Pet. 3:10) Strong’s #4747

This Greek word can mean (1) “elementary or rudimentary principles” or (2) “elemental spirits.” The word itself means things placed in line or in a row, like an alphabet. It was used to speak of rudimentary principles (Heb. 5:12) or basic elements of the universe, whether physical (2 Pet. 3:10) or spiritual. If Paul was thinking of elementary principles, he meant that people are in bondage to the basic elements of religion (see Col. 2:20); if he meant spirits, he was saying that people are in bondage to the “elemental spirits,” meaning certain gods or demons. *Principles* suits the overall context of Galatians, whereas *spirits* accords with 4:8–10. In either case, Paul was saying that people were in bondage until Christ came.

^wthe one by a bondwoman, ^xthe other by a freewoman. ²³But he *who was* of the bondwoman ^ywas born according to the flesh, ^zand he of the freewoman through promise, ²⁴which things are symbolic. For these are ⁷the two covenants: the one from Mount ^aSinai which gives birth to bondage, which is Hagar— ²⁵for this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children— ²⁶but the ^bJerusalem above is free, which is the mother of us all. ²⁷For it is written:

*“Rejoice, O barren,
You who do not bear!
Break forth and shout,
You who are not in labor!
For the desolate has many more
children
Than she who has a husband.”*

²⁸Now ^dwe, brethren, as Isaac *was*, are ^echildren of promise. ²⁹But, as ^fhe who was born according to the flesh then persecuted him *who was born* according to the Spirit, ^geven so *it is* now. ³⁰Nevertheless what does ^hthe Scripture say? ⁱ“*Cast out the bondwoman and her son, for^j the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir*

²² ^w Gen. 16:15
^x Gen. 21:2
²³ ^y Rom. 9:7, 8;
Gal. 4:29 ^z Gen.
16:15; 17:15–19;
18:10; 21:1; Gal.
4:28; Heb. 11:11
²⁴ ^a Ex. 24:6–8;
Deut. 33:2 ⁷ NU, M
omit the
²⁶ ^b [Is. 2:2]
²⁷ ^c Is. 54:1
²⁸ ^d Rom. 9:7, 8;
Gal. 3:29 ^e Acts
3:25
²⁹ ^f Gen. 21:9 ^g Gal.
5:11
³⁰ ^h [Gal. 3:8, 22]
ⁱ Gen. 21:10, 12
^j [John 8:35]

CHAPTER 5

¹ ^a Phil. 4:1 ^b Acts
15:10; Gal. 2:4 ¹ NU
For freedom Christ
has made us free;
stand fast therefore,
and
² ^c Acts 15:1; Gal.
5:3, 6, 11
³ ^d [Deut. 27:26;
Rom. 2:25; Gal.
3:10] ² obligated
⁴ ^e [Rom. 9:31]
^f Heb. 12:15; 2 Pet.
3:17
⁵ ^g Rom. 8:24
⁶ ^h [1 Cor. 7:19; Gal.
6:15; Col. 3:11] ¹ Col.
1:4; 1 Thess. 1:3;

with the son of the freewoman.” ³¹So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman but of the free.

Christian Liberty

5 Stand ^a fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a ^b yoke of bondage. ² Indeed I, Paul, say to you that ^c if you become circumcised, Christ will profit you nothing. ³ And I testify again to every man who becomes circumcised ^d that he is ² a debtor to keep the whole law. ⁴ ^e You have become estranged from Christ, you who *attempt* to be justified by law; ^f you have fallen from grace. ⁵ For we through the Spirit eagerly ^g wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. ⁶ For ^h in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but ⁱ faith working through love.

Love Fulfills the Law

⁷ You *ran well*. Who hindered you from obeying the truth? ⁸ This persuasion does not *come* from Him who calls you. ⁹ ^k A little leaven leavens the whole lump. ¹⁰ I have confidence in you, in the

[James 2:18, 20, 22] ⁷ / 1 Cor. 9:24 ⁹ ^k 1 Cor. 5:6

two sons of Abraham. These are Ishmael, who was born of the **bondwoman** Hagar (v. 24); and Isaac, who was born of Sarah, the rightful wife of Abraham and a **freewoman**. Appropriately, Paul counters the Jewish false teachers’ zeal for the law with an argument based on the Law, the Pentateuch (Gen. 16:15; 21:2). He uses allegory to prove his point because it was a rhetorical technique the false teachers used. In other words, Paul was demonstrating that he could argue from the Law just as well as they could, but to prove that the Law of Moses pointed to the Messiah, Jesus Christ. **4:23** In Gen. 16, Abraham and Sarah attempted to fulfill God’s **promise** through their own strength, using Hagar, a **bondwoman**. In spite of the complications caused by that “fleshly” alternative, Sarah, a **freewoman**, eventually saw the miraculous outworking of God’s promise in the birth of Isaac (see Gen. 12:2; 15:4).

4:24 symbolic: Paul was using the common Jewish allegorical method of the day to make his point. He used this approach to draw a stark contrast between **two biblical covenants** at odds with each other in the churches in Galatia: the Abrahamic promise (see Gen. 12:1–3) and the Law of Moses that God gave Israel at **Mount Sinai**. **4:25** Paul compared **Jerusalem** of the center of Jewish life, to **Mount Sinai**, the birthplace of the Law of Moses.

4:26 The Jerusalem above represents the Jewish hope of heaven finally coming to earth (see Rev. 21; 22). Since **us all** obviously refers to those who are **free** through faith in Christ (v. 7), Paul was strongly implying that the question at hand was not allegiance to Jerusalem, but allegiance to *which* Jerusalem—the new or the old? Would the Galatians follow the shortsighted present Jerusalem and its legalism or the liberty of the heavenly Jerusalem?

4:27 Paul quotes Is. 54:1, using the prophesied restoration of Israel from judgment and exile to illustrate how the later-born **children** of promise would eventually far outnumber the earlier offspring.

4:28–30 This portion of Paul’s allegory is based on Gen. 21:9, 10. **Isaac** was continually **persecuted** by his older half brother Ishmael. Eventually, Ishmael and his mother Hagar were expelled because Ishmael had no standing in God’s eyes as **heir** of Abraham. In creating a parallel between the story from Genesis and the Galatians’

situation, Paul points out that (1) the persecution by the Jewish legalists of his day was not unexpected, and (2) it would not go on indefinitely because the legalists would soon be cast out.

4:31–5:1 **So then** represents the conclusion of the previous section, while **therefore** signals that Paul is going to apply this spiritual truth to the lives of the Galatian believers. To be **children of the bondwoman** is to be enslaved to the covenant from Mount Sinai (4:24, 25), the Law of Moses. To be **of the free** is to follow Abraham’s example of faith (3:6–9), to be “born according to the Spirit” (3:2; 4:29), and to be destined for the “Jerusalem above” (4:26). Understanding such realities, the believer in **Christ** must continually **stand fast** in the **liberty** of not having to keep the Law of Moses in order to be saved. The Galatians were on the verge of becoming enslaved to the law again.

5:2, 3 The legalistic Jewish teachers in Galatia were urging believers to be **circumcised** (6:12, 13). Paul points out that being circumcised changes the entire orientation of salvation away from God’s grace to one’s own actions. One who is circumcised in an attempt to gain God’s acceptance is obligated **to keep the whole law**, which history has abundantly demonstrated no one can do (see Rom. 3:10–18).

5:4 Fallen from grace is understood by some to refer to the loss of salvation. However, *fallen from* may refer to their attitude and to the message that it communicates, rather than to their eternal salvation.

5:5 Faith in Christ brings about not only justification before God, but also growth in the Christian life until we are completely glorified by God and freed from the presence of sin. This is **the hope of righteousness**. We can be assured that we will be declared righteous before the Lord on that last day, because we have a foretaste of that righteousness from the Spirit who lives within us (2 Cor. 5:5).

5:6 By **faith** it is possible to fulfill Christ’s command to **love** one’s neighbor (see vv. 13, 14; John 13:34, 35).

5:7, 8 You ran well: The Galatians’ splendid start in the race of the Christian life had not continued. Their detour into legalism was certainly not God’s will.

5:9, 10 Leaven symbolizes the intruders, with their false doctrine and sinister influence. They were taking the gospel of free forgive-

Lord, that you will have no other mind; but he who troubles you shall bear his judgment, whoever he is.

¹¹ And I, brethren, if I still preach circumcision, ¹ why do I still suffer persecution? Then ^m the offense of the cross has ceased. ¹² ⁿ I could wish that those ^o who trouble you would even ³ cut themselves off!

¹³ For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only ^p do not *use* liberty as an ^q opportunity for the flesh, but ^r through love serve one another. ¹⁴ For ^s all the law is fulfilled in one word, *even* in this: ^t “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” ¹⁵ But if you bite and devour one another, beware lest you be consumed by one another!

Walking in the Spirit

¹⁶ I say then: ^u Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. ¹⁷ For ^v the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, ^w so that you do not do the things that you wish. ¹⁸ But

¹¹ ¹ 1 Cor. 15:30
^m Rom. 9:33; [1 Cor. 1:23]
¹² ⁿ Josh. 7:25
^o Acts 15:1, 2
³ *mutilate themselves*
¹³ ^p [Rom. 8:2]; 1 Cor. 8:9; Gal. 5:1
^q Rom. 6:1; 1 Pet. 2:16 ¹ 1 Cor. 9:19; Eph. 5:21
¹⁴ ^s Matt. 7:12; 22:40; Rom. 13:8, 10; Gal. 6:2 ^t Lev. 19:18; Matt. 22:39; Rom. 13:9
¹⁶ ^u Rom. 6:12
¹⁷ ^v Rom. 7:18, 22, 23; 8:5 ^w Rom. 7:15
¹⁸ ^x [Rom. 6:14; 7:4; 8:14; 1 Tim. 1:9]
¹⁹ ^y Rom. 1:26–31; Eph. 5:3, 11; 2 Tim. 3:2–4 ⁴ NU omits *adultery* ⁵ *sexual immorality*
²¹ ^z 1 Cor. 6:9, 10
⁶ NU omits *murders*
²² ^a [John 15:2]
^b [Rom. 5:1–5; 1 Cor. 13:4; Col. 3:12–15] ^c Rom. 15:14
^d 1 Cor. 13:7

^x if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

¹⁹ Now ^y the works of the flesh are evident, which are: ⁴ adultery, ⁵ fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, ²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, ²¹ envy, ⁶ murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told *you* in time past, that ^z those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

²² But ^a the fruit of the Spirit is ^b love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, ^c goodness, ^d faithfulness, ²³ ⁷ gentleness, self-control. ^e Against such there is no law. ²⁴ And those *who are* Christ's ^f have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. ²⁵ ^g If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. ²⁶ ^h Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

²³ ^e 1 Tim. 1:9 ⁷ meekness ²⁴ ^f Rom. 6:6; [Gal. 2:20; 6:14]
²⁵ ^g [Rom. 8:4, 5] ²⁶ ^h Phil. 2:3

ness away from the Galatians. The one who causes such harm will experience God's **judgment** (see 2 Cor. 5:10).

5:11 The cross gives offense because it proclaims God's unmerited grace (2:21), leaving no place for people's good works.

5:12 cut themselves off: The spiritual damage caused by legalistic teaching regarding circumcision and the law was so serious that Paul used strong, sarcastic words to emphasize his point. The false teachers should go beyond mere circumcision and castrate themselves. This exaggerated statement reveals Paul's frustration with those who muddled the clear gospel message of God's grace.

5:13 Liberty presents an opposite temptation from legalism. A person can be tempted to view freedom in Christ as a selfish **opportunity for the flesh**, in other words, an opportunity to do whatever one wants to do. But Paul points out that true Christian **liberty** is the freedom to **serve one another in love** (vv. 5, 6).

5:14 The Christian does not live under the **law** of Moses, but instead under “the law of Christ” (6:2). Living in Christ empowers us to love others, which is the fulfillment of the law (see Jesus' summary of the Law and the Prophets in Matt. 22:36–40).

5:15 When Christians follow their sinful desires (v. 13), they begin to criticize and contend with **one another**. Such self-centered behavior is self-defeating. Those who criticize and attack usually end up being **consumed** in worthless struggles.

5:16 The only consistent way to overcome the sinful desires of our human nature (the **flesh**) is to live step-by-step in the power of the **Holy Spirit** as He works through our spirit (v. 25). **Shall not** is a striking promise. Walking each moment by faith in God's word under the Spirit's control assures absolute victory over the desires of our sinful nature.

5:17 The potential of **the flesh** energized by Satan in the life of the Christian should not be underestimated. Given free rein, the flesh will direct our choices, making us do what we know we should not do. This inner conflict between the flesh and the **Spirit** is very real, but there is considerable disagreement as to its precise meaning. Some believe that *flesh* here refers to a “sinful nature” continuing after salvation, while others view it as simply the physical flesh and its natural tendencies. Still others focus on the “fleshly” or “worldly” habits and patterns that continue after justification. The desires of our flesh are at odds with what the Holy Spirit desires for us: to be free from sin.

5:19–21 The works of the flesh include, but go well beyond, the

destructive **contentions** and **jealousies** portrayed in v. 15. Where there is such behavior, it is positive proof that the person is not living in the power of the Holy Spirit (vv. 16, 18, 22, 23) but is being energized by Satan and his hosts (see Matt. 16:23; Acts 5:3).

5:22, 23 Spirit: There is a question here whether Paul means specifically the works done by a person's regenerated human spirit, or works done by the Holy Spirit Himself in the believer's life. The **fruit** analogy is reminiscent of Jesus' teaching on the vine, branches, and fruitful harvest (see John 15:1–5).

5:24 Christians are spiritually “crucified with Christ” (2:20). They no longer have to follow the values or desires of the world (6:14). However, it remains difficult for Christians to apply this spiritual reality to the **passions** (affections) and **desires** (lusts) of **the flesh** (v. 16). Those who have mastered these sinful desires are those who have kept their focus on God (see Jer. 9:23, 24; Dan. 11:32; John 17:3; Heb. 12:1–3).

5:25, 26 In these verses, Paul exhorts the Galatians to walk in the Spirit because they are already living in the Spirit. Such an action should be natural, but unfortunately we are at war with the flesh.

Walk in the Spirit means to obey the prompting of the Holy Spirit. A believer following the Spirit's lead (v. 16) will not **become conceited**, provoke others, or envy others.

flesh

(Gk. *sarx*) (5:19, 24; 6:8, 12, 13; Rom. 7:18; 8:3, 13) Strong's #4561

In Greek literature, the word *sarx* usually meant nothing more than the human body. It was also used this way in the NT (see John 1:14; Rev. 17:16; 19:18, 21). However, Paul often used the word to denote the entire fallen human being—not just the sinful body but the entire being, including the soul and mind, as affected by sin. Thus Paul often pitted the “flesh” against the “Spirit” as being two diametrically opposed forces. The unbeliever can live only in the flesh, but the believers can live in the flesh or in the Spirit. Paul repeatedly encourages the believers to overcome the deeds of the flesh by living in the Spirit.



A farmer harvests wheat in a field in the West Bank village of Beit Liqqiya. The Bible has many statements that draw imagery from activities of daily life. (See the study note below on Galatians 6:7, 8.)

Muhammed Muheisen/AP Images

Bear and Share the Burdens

6 Brethren, if a man is ¹overtaken in any trespass, you who *are* spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of ^agentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. ^{2b}Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill ^cthe law of Christ. ³For ^dif anyone thinks himself to be something, when ^ehe is nothing, he deceives him-

CHAPTER 6

¹ ^a Eph. 4:2
¹ caught
² ^b Acts 20:35; Rom. 15:1; 1 Thess. 5:14
^c [James 2:8]
³ ^d Rom. 12:3
^e [2 Cor. 3:5; James 1:22]
⁴ ^f 1 Cor. 11:28
^g Luke 18:11

self. ⁴But ^flet each one examine his own work, and then he will have rejoicing in himself alone, and ^gnot in another. ⁵For ^heach one shall bear his own load.

Be Generous and Do Good

⁶ⁱLet him who is taught the word share in all good things with him who teaches.

⁷Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for ^jwhatever a man sows, that he will also reap. ⁸For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap ^keverlasting life. ⁹And ^llet us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap ^mif we do not lose heart. ¹⁰ⁿTherefore, as we have opportunity, ^olet us do good to all, ^pespecially to those who are of the household of faith.

Glory Only in the Cross

¹¹See with what large letters I have written to you with my own hand! ¹²As many as desire to make a good showing in the flesh, these *would* compel you to be circumcised, ^qonly that they may not suffer persecution for the cross of Christ. ¹³For not even those who are circum-

⁵ ^h [Rom. 2:6] ⁶ ⁱ 1 Cor. 9:11, 14 ⁷ ^j [Rom. 2:6] ⁸ ^k [Rom. 6:8] ⁹ ^l 1 Cor. 15:58; 2 Cor. 4:1; 2 Thess. 3:13 ^m [Matt. 24:13]; Heb. 12:3, 5; [James 5:7, 8] ¹⁰ ⁿ Prov. 3:27; [John 9:4; 12:35] ^o Titus 3:8 ^p Rom. 12:13 ¹² ^q Gal. 5:11; Phil. 3:8

6:1 Any trespass probably recalls the sinful "works of the flesh" in 5:19–21. Overtaken means to be caught off guard, perhaps at a vulnerable point. A believer devastated by sin needs to be approached with gentleness (5:23) by fellow believers. Those not controlled by the Holy Spirit would tend to boast by comparing themselves to the fallen believer (vv. 3, 4). Even as a doctor can catch a disease from treating a patient, so one restoring a fallen sinner can be tempted to fall into sin. That danger is well worth considering.

6:2 The law of Christ referred to here is probably the summation of the law: "Love your neighbor" (see 5:14; Matt. 22:39; John 13:34, 35). The term fulfill suggests that choosing to bear another Christian's burdens (or restore another Christian from burdensome sin, v. 1) is precisely what Christ expects of all believers. The Greek word for burdens refers to something beyond the normal capacity to carry, as opposed to a "load" (v. 5), which is what a person could be expected to carry.

6:3, 4 Anyone who concludes that he is something special, through shortsighted self-comparison with those who seem to have fallen, truly deceives himself. Instead of examining and judging others, a Christian should always examine his own work to see if he is closely following Christ's example (see 1 Cor. 11:31; 2 Cor. 13:5).

6:6 One important way to bear other believers' burdens (v. 2) is to share in all good things, including financial support, with one who teaches God's word. After all, teachers and preachers work hard in their ministry (see 1 Tim. 5:17).

6:7, 8 The principle of sowing and reaping was known to everyone in a largely agricultural society. It is a vain attempt to "mock" God for a Christian to think that if he sows to his flesh he can escape the harvest of destruction and judgment that comes upon those who participate in sin (5:19–21; Hos. 8:7). Corruption is a term used for a field in which the produce is too rotten to harvest (see Heb. 6:8). Some interpret corruption to imply eternal destruction, either through losing salvation or through never having been truly saved

at all. Others understand a tragic loss of rewards for the carnal believer (see 1 Cor. 3:12–15; 2 Cor. 5:10; Rev. 22:12). He who sows to the Spirit will . . . reap everlasting life does not mean that eternal life is earned by works. Rather, Paul is saying that everlasting life is the glorious end of those who follow the guidance of the Spirit (see Rom. 6:22).

6:9 In this verse, Paul speaks of doing good. The apostle has argued at length that such works cannot justify (2:16) or sanctify (3:3) anyone. However, good works are, in fact, an important fruit of the life of faith (5:5) that God has planned for each believer (see Eph. 2:8–10). In 5:19–23, the apostle describes the attitudes and actions of those controlled by the "flesh" versus those controlled by the Spirit. In vv. 7–9, Paul shows the impact of those two contradictory ways over the length of a Christian's life (see 2 Cor. 5:10; Rev. 22:12).

6:10 Therefore indicates that this verse speaks of an important application of the spiritual sowing and reaping process (vv. 7–9). Christians are not only to serve one another in love (see v. 2; 5:13), they also should do good to non-Christians.

6:11 Probably here Paul began to write with his own hand, after having up to now dictated the letter to a secretary. His reference to large letters in light of the wording of 4:13–15 implies that Paul had problems with his eyesight or was even partly blind. Paul commonly ended his letters with personal greetings (see 2 Thess. 3:17).

6:12 a good showing: The Judaizers were trying to appear spiritual by becoming circumcised and demanding that others become circumcised (5:2–12). persecution: By teaching that all Christians should become circumcised, the Judaizers were trying to make Christianity into a sect of Judaism. This would have two advantages. First, they could counter the persecution that they suffered from zealous Jews. Second, they could include themselves with an officially sanctioned religion of the Roman Empire, Judaism.

6:13 Even the Judaizers who advocated the Galatians' circumcision did not really keep the entire law. They knew they were required

cised keep the law, but they desire to have you circumcised that they may boast in your flesh. ¹⁴But God forbid that I should boast except in the ^rcross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by ²whom the world has been crucified to me, and ^sI to the world. ¹⁵For ^tin Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but a new creation.

¹⁴ ^r [1 Cor. 1:18]
^s [Gal. 2:20; Col. 2:20] ² Or *which*,
 the cross
¹⁵ ^t [Rom. 2:26, 28]; 1 Cor. 7:19;
 [Gal. 5:6]

Blessing and a Plea

¹⁶And as many as walk according to this rule, peace and mercy *be* upon them, and upon the Israel of God.

¹⁷From now on let no one trouble me, for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.

¹⁸Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with your spirit. Amen.

to do so (3:10–12), but were ultimately unable to fulfill all of the requirements (see Rom. 3:23). Still, they attempted to persuade the Galatians to be circumcised so **that they** could **boast** about having them as their followers.

6:14 As a representative believer, Paul spoke of himself as **crucified** with Christ (2:20). In that decisive act, “the flesh with its passions and desires” (5:24) was also crucified, as was **the world** with all of its continuing attractions (see 1 John 2:15–17).

6:15 To a Christian under the New Covenant, following the Abrahamic sign of **circumcision** (see Gen. 17:9–14) does not mean **anything** in terms of spirituality. What really matters is being **a new creation** in Christ (see 2 Cor. 5:17).

6:16 As many as recalls the wording of v. 12. Those who live **according to** the example of Christ and the new creation (vv. 14, 15)

are in stark contrast with those desiring to make a good impression through circumcision and keeping the law (vv. 12, 13). **The Israel of God** probably refers to the remnant of believing Jews (see Rom. 11:1, 2, 7). They are Abraham’s spiritual descendants (3:6–9) because they believe in God and rely on His grace.

6:17 Paul’s physical **body** carried the hard evidence of his allegiance to **the Lord Jesus**, the **marks** of harsh persecution (see 2 Cor. 11:23–26) suffered for preaching the gospel. Paul’s scars branded him as a slave for Christ (Rom. 1:1). Such marks far outweighed the “mark” of circumcision so valued by the false teachers in Galatia (vv. 12–15).

6:18 Paul ends his letter to the Galatians as he began it (see 1:3), highlighting the theme of his entire letter: that it is only by God’s **grace** that we are saved.

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE EPHESIANS



IN ROME, Paul was in official custody. Although his movements were restricted, he continued to guide the early church and preach the gospel. The Romans could imprison Paul, but they could not imprison the spread of the Good News. Numerous local assemblies had sprouted up along the routes of Paul's three missionary journeys. The members of these churches were still proclaiming the gospel, not only by what they said, but also with their lives. Paul wrote the letter to the Ephesians to strengthen these congregations. He wanted them to understand the spiritual reality behind the numerous groups that gathered in houses all over the Mediterranean world, and he wanted them to encourage each other in the faith. They were the body of Christ.

Author and Date Paul identifies himself as the author of Ephesians at the beginning and in the middle of the letter (1:1; 3:1). Internal evidence supports Pauline authorship. The fact that the author describes himself as being imprisoned points to Paul, for Luke describes Paul as being under house arrest in Rome in Acts 28. The letter is similar in content to Colossians, suggesting that both letters were written during the same imprisonment in Rome, around A.D. 60. The vocabulary and thought of the letter are typical of Paul, with his characteristic emphasis on justification by faith (2:8). New uses of old words are merely examples of the apostle's genius and versatility. Finally, the early church fathers were unanimous in ascribing the letter of Ephesians to Paul.

Modern scholars have recognized the clear Pauline themes in the letter, but some have used this characteristic of the letter to prove an alternative theory about the authorship of Ephesians. These scholars contend that when the body of Pauline epistles was collected, someone else constructed Ephesians as an introduction to Paul's writings. However, this elaborate theory still has to surmount the convincing evidence for Paul's authorship of the letter.

Setting Ephesus was the capital of the Roman province of Asia (today part of Turkey). Located at the intersection of several major trade routes, Ephesus was a vital commercial center of the Roman Empire. It was the site of a famous temple for the fertility goddess Diana that was one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. Most importantly, however, Ephesus figured prominently and dramatically in early church history, for Paul used the city as a center for his missionary work in that region.

Paul visited Ephesus briefly at the end of his second missionary journey. When he departed, he left behind Priscilla and Aquila to continue the ministry in that city (see Acts 18:18–21). On Paul's third missionary journey, he spent about three years in Ephesus. When the apostle's gospel message was rebuffed by the Jews in the Ephesian synagogue, Paul taught Scripture to both Jews and Greeks in the school of Tyrannus. Paul's ministry at Ephesus was marked by several Spirit-empowered miracles. As a result, the city became a center for evangelistic outreach to the rest of the province of Asia (see Acts 19:18–20). In fact, so many people in Ephesus turned to Christ and renounced their pagan ways that some craftsmen in the city started a riot because the gospel threatened their trade of making and selling idols.

In Acts 20:17–38 Paul warned the elders of the Ephesian church about “savage wolves” who would not spare the congregation. About four decades later, the Lord Jesus Himself dictated to the apostle John a letter to the same congregation (see Rev. 2:1–7). He commended the Ephesians for hearing Paul and not tolerating false teachers, but He exhorted them to recapture their first love for God.

Recipients There is much evidence that the Epistle to the Ephesians was originally a circular letter sent to several congregations in the province of Asia, where Ephesus was the capital. Some manuscripts lack “in Ephesus” in 1:1. Another clue that Ephesians is a circular letter is its lack of personal references. The phrases in 1:15 and 3:2 imply that Paul had only heard of the recipients of the letter but had never met them. This is especially noteworthy since Paul had spent three years ministering at Ephesus. It seems likely that the apostle would have mentioned at least some of the Ephesians by name in his letter. In addition to the lack of personal references, the content and teaching of the letter is itself very general. Paul refers to the church as the body of Christ as a whole, and not to a specific local church. If the letters to the Corinthians bristle with local congregational problems, Ephesians lacks such allusions entirely.

The idea that Ephesians is a circular letter is not unparalleled. In a way, all the New Testament epistles are circular in the sense that they eventually were circulated among many churches. While the question of destination is interesting, it does not strongly affect the meaning or the relevance of the letter. To a greater or lesser extent all the letters in the New Testament are for the general edification of the church.

Themes Ephesians, like so much of Paul’s writing, underscores the truth that salvation is by faith alone and not through works or human striving. The first half of the epistle (chs. 1–3) addresses the central doctrines of the Christian faith, while the second half of the letter (chs. 4–6) describes how those spiritual truths should be reflected in a Christian’s behavior. Some would divide the second half of the letter into two sections—first the Christian’s conduct and then spiritual conflict with the forces of evil. Such a division highlights the familiar passage describing the spiritual armor of a Christian.

The whole letter emphasizes the truth that all believers are united in Christ because the church is the one body of Christ. In the early chapters, Paul describes how God formed this new body from Jews and Gentiles with His Son as the Head. Through Jesus’ death, God reconciled sinful people to Himself. This reconciliation with God has its effects on earth. People who were normally divided, like the Jews and the Gentiles in the first century, were reconciled to each other through Christ. In Ephesians, Paul exhorted his readers to live out the spiritual truth of being joined together with Christ. Whether Jew or Gentile, they had to work together to make the unity



Library of Celsus at Ephesus, built during the period A.D. 110–135

of the church a reality. In the rest of his letter, Paul gives a number of practical ways for church members to unite against the forces of evil. Each individual has to do his or her part in order for the whole body to function properly. Each person has to display Christ's love, patience, humility, and gentleness as they use their gifts to build up the church. From parent to child, employer to employee, each person has a unique task in the body of Christ (5:22–33).

CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

The phrase "in Christ" (or its equivalent) appears about 35 times in the New Testament. Jesus is not a distant stone deity like the pagan goddess Diana; Jesus is alive and empowered as the Lord of all creation. He is seated at the right hand of God's throne where He interacts with His followers on earth in a dynamic way. Jesus, says Paul, is "head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all" (1:22, 23).

Paul's point is that in Jesus we've been given hope (1:12) and made alive (2:5) in order to grow (2:21) and make a difference in this world by the way we live. "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God. . . . For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them" (2:8, 10).

EPHESIANS OUTLINE

- I. Doctrines for members of Christ's body 1:1—3:21
 - A. Paul's greeting of grace 1:1, 2
 - B. God's election 1:3–12
 - C. The Spirit's sealing 1:13–23
 - D. Salvation by grace through faith 2:1–10
 - E. The unity of Christ's body 2:11–22
 - F. The mystery of Christ's body 3:1–21
- II. Duties of the members of Christ's body 4:1—6:24
 - A. To walk worthy 4:1–6
 - B. To build up the body through one's gift 4:7–16
 - C. To put on the new person 4:17–32
 - D. To be imitators of God 5:1–21
 - E. To promote domestic harmony 5:22—6:9
 - F. To put on God's full armor 6:10–20
 - G. Paul's salutation of grace 6:21–24

C. A.D. 47–49
Paul's first missionary journey

C. A.D. 50
The Jerusalem council

C. A.D. 50–53
Paul's second missionary journey

C. A.D. 53
The church at Ephesus is started

C. A.D. 53–57
Paul's third missionary journey

C. A.D. 54–56
Paul's extended stay in Ephesus

C. A.D. 58
Paul is arrested in Jerusalem

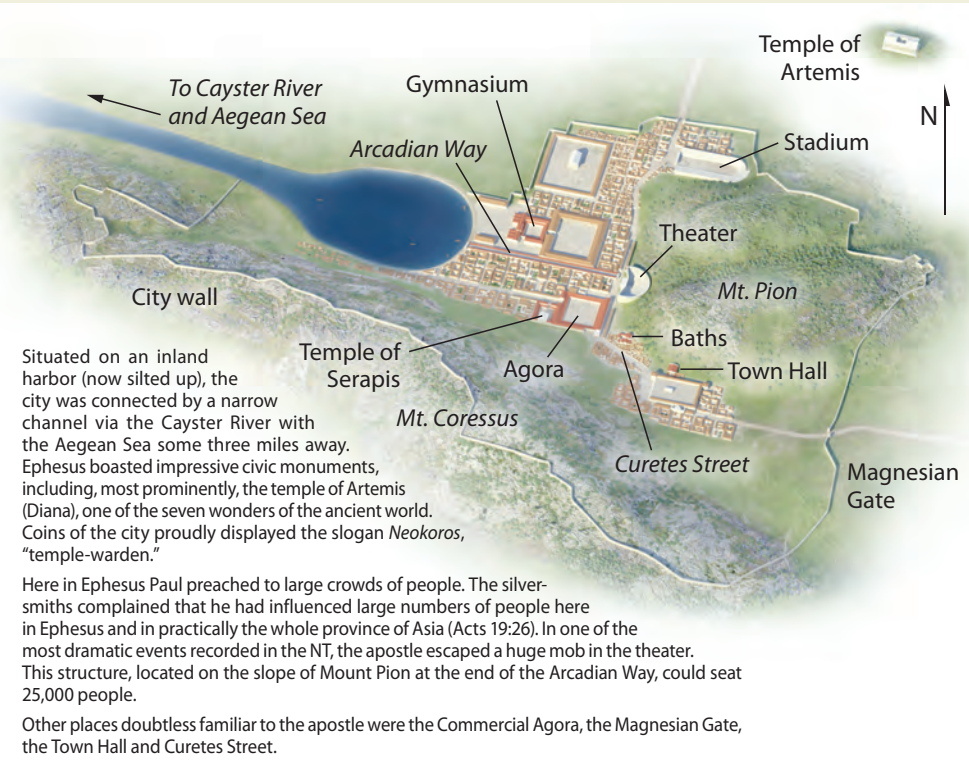
C. A.D. 60–62
Paul is imprisoned in Rome; Ephesians is written

C. A.D. 67
Peter and Paul are executed

Ephesus in the Time of Paul

The Roman province of Asia with its many splendid cities was one of the jewels on a belt of Roman lands encircling the Mediterranean.

Located on the most direct sea and land route to the eastern provinces of the empire, Ephesus was an emporium that had few equals anywhere in the world. Certainly no city in Asia was more famous or more populous. It ranked with Rome, Corinth, Antioch, and Alexandria among the foremost urban centers of the empire.



Greeting

Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God,

To the saints who are in Ephesus, and faithful in Christ Jesus:

²Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Redemption in Christ

^{3a}Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, ⁴just as ^bHe chose us in Him ^cbefore the foundation of the world, that we should ^dbe holy and without blame before Him in love, ^{5e}having predestined us to ^fadoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, ^gaccording to the good pleasure of His will, ⁶to the praise of the glory of His grace, ^hby which He ⁱmade us accepted in ⁱthe Beloved.

^{7j}In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, accord-

CHAPTER 1

3 ^a 2 Cor. 1:3
4 ^b Rom. 8:28
c 1 Pet. 1:2 ^d Luke 1:75
5 ^e Acts 13:48;
[Rom. 8:29] ^f John 1:12 ^g [1 Cor. 1:21]
6 ^h [Rom. 3:24]
i Matt. 3:17 ⁱ Lit. bestowed grace (favor) upon us
7 ^j [Heb. 9:12]
k [Rom. 3:24, 25]
8 ² understanding
9 ¹ [Rom. 16:25]
m [2 Tim. 1:9]
10 ⁿ Gal. 4:4 ^o 1 Cor. 3:22 ^p Eph. 3:15;
[Phil. 2:9; Col. 1:16, 20] ³ NU, M omit both
11 ^q Rom. 8:17 ^r Is. 46:10
12 ^s 2 Thess. 2:13
t James 1:18
13 ^u John 1:17
v [2 Cor. 1:22]
14 ^w 2 Cor. 5:5
x Rom. 8:23
y [Acts 20:28]
z 1 Pet. 2:9 ⁴ NU which

ing to ^kthe riches of His grace ⁸which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and ²prudence, ^{9l}having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure ^mwhich He purposed in Himself, ¹⁰that in the dispensation of ⁿthe fullness of the times ^oHe might gather together in one ^pall things in Christ, ³both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him. ^{11q}In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to ^rthe purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, ^{12s}that we ^twho first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory.

¹³In Him you also *trusted*, after you heard ^uthe word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, ^vyou were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, ^{14w}who ⁴is the ⁵guarantee of our inheritance ^xuntil the redemption of ^ythe purchased possession, ^zto the praise of His glory.

⁵ down payment, earnest

1:1, 2 The salutations in NT epistles follow the form of the typical first-century letter: the writer is mentioned first and the recipient next, followed by a blessing or best wishes for good health. The difference lies in the content of the blessing: pagan letters mentioned non-existent gods and goddesses such as Diana or Apollo; the apostles call upon the one true God and His Son Jesus Christ to bless their readers. In Ephesians, Paul refers to himself as an **apostle** because he was personally commissioned by Jesus Christ with special authority to preach the gospel. **Saints** in the NT refers to all believers set apart by God in Christ. **Ephesus:** This letter may have been a circular letter for the churches around Ephesus. (See Introduction.)

1:3–12 Right at the beginning of the letter, Paul bursts out in praise for the God who chose him before the foundation of the world.

1:3 The blessings of Christianity are largely **spiritual**. God does not

guarantee health, wealth, and prosperity to the NT believer. The phrase **in the heavenly places** suggests that a Christian living anywhere in the world is even now in a spiritual sense seated with Christ on high.

1:4, 5 Love here is *agape* in Greek, the love that is by choice or one's will, not just a sentimental feeling. **having predestined us:** Predestination is not a cold-hearted determinism or set fate, but rather a loving choice on God's part.

1:6 The Beloved may also be translated "the One He Loves," namely, Jesus Christ. In Col. 1:13 Paul uses the similar title "the Son of His love." *The Beloved* is a messianic title, referring to God's Son. Jesus is not simply one among others who are loved by God. He is *the* Beloved Son.

1:7 redemption: The word means "buy back" or "ransom." In ancient times, one could buy back a person who was sold into slavery. In the same way, Christ through His death bought us from our slavery to sin. **His blood:** The blood of Christ is the means by which our redemption comes. The OT and the New both clearly teach that there is no forgiveness without the shedding of blood. Blood here is a vivid symbolic equivalent of death. It recalls the sacrificial system of the old covenant, which looked forward to the self-sacrifice of Jesus Christ that took away the sin of the world.

1:9 The mystery is not a puzzle to solve, or knowledge only for the few and the initiated, as in the mystery religions of Paul's day. In Paul's usage, the word *mystery* refers to an aspect of God's will that was once hidden or obscure, but now was being revealed by God (Rom. 11:25).

1:10 The word translated **dispensation** means "house rule." The English word *economy* is derived from this Greek word. The word refers to God's administration or arrangement of all history to fulfill His plan of salvation. While God never changes, His plan for the salvation of humanity has distinct phases. In this context, *dispensation* probably refers to the time when God will establish His eternal kingdom.

1:13 The seal or mark of ownership in believers' lives is the **Holy Spirit**.

1:14 The guarantee of our inheritance is the Holy Spirit Himself. Interestingly, the Greek word for *guarantee* can also be used to indicate an engagement ring. As Christ is the Bridegroom and the church is the bride, so the Holy Spirit is the down payment, the earnest money, in the long-awaited marriage of the two (see Rev. 19:7, 8). **purchased possession:** The OT described the nation of

purpose
(Gk. <i>prothesis</i>) (1:9, 11; 3:11; Rom. 8:28) Strong's #4286
counsel
(Gk. <i>boulē</i>) (1:11; 1 Cor. 4:5; Heb. 6:17) Strong's #1012
will
(Gk. <i>thelēma</i>) (1:1, 9, 11; 2:3; 5:17; Rom. 1:10; 1 Cor. 1:1) Strong's #2307
Three key words, all related conceptually, appear in this verse. One of these words (<i>thelēma</i>) has been used by Paul twice before in this chapter (1:1, 9). The word conveys the idea of desire, even a heart's desire, for the word primarily expresses emotion instead of volition. Thus God's will is not so much God's intention, as it is His heart's desire. The word <i>prothesis</i> denotes an intention or a plan; it literally means "a laying out beforehand" like a blueprint. This plan was created in God's counsel, a translation of the Greek word <i>boulē</i> , which means the result of deliberate determination. But behind the plan and the counsel was not just a mastermind but a heart of love.



The City of Ephesus

Ephesus was a major city of Asia between the Croessus mountain range and the Aegean Sea, seated at the mouth of the Cayster River in Paul's day. (Today the site of the ancient city is six miles inland, due to river silting.) First-century population is estimated to have been around 300,000, making it one of the larger cities of the Roman Empire. The city was extraordinarily prosperous as a commercial center, provincial capital, and port city in the eastern Roman Empire. It boasted numerous monuments, theaters, and temples. In fact, the city was an international tourist destination, so profitable that its leaders opened the first world bank. The city was a frequent stop for Paul, who stayed almost three years and helped establish a church. He may have been jailed there, and probably wrote some of his letters from there.



The Ephesus theater

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glory, ^d may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, ^{18e} the eyes of your ⁶ understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is ^f the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, ¹⁹ and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, ^g according to the working of His mighty power ²⁰ which He worked in Christ when ^h He raised Him from the dead and ⁱ seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, ^{21j} far above all ^k principality ⁷ and ⁸ power and ⁹ might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come.

²² And ^l He put all *things* under His feet, and gave Him ^m to be head over all *things* to the church, ²³ⁿ which is His body, ^o the fullness of Him ^p who fills all in all.

By Grace Through Faith

2 And ^a you *He made alive*, ^b who were dead in trespasses and sins, ^{2c} in which you once walked according to the ¹ course of this world, according to ^d the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in ^e the sons of disobedience, ^{3f} among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in ^g the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and ^h were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.

Prayer for Spiritual Wisdom

¹⁵ Therefore I also, ^a after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, ^{16b} do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers: ¹⁷ that ^c the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of

15 ^a Col. 1:4; Phil. 5
16 ^b Rom. 1:9
17 ^c John 20:17; Rom. 15:6 ^d Is. 11:2; Col. 1:9
18 ^e Acts 26:18; 2 Cor. 4:6; Heb.

6:4 ^f Eph. 2:12 ^g NU, M hearts 19 ^g Col. 2:12 20 ^h Acts 2:24
1 Ps. 110:1 21 ⁱ Is. 9:6, 7; Luke 1:32, 33; Phil. 2:9, 10; Rev. 19:12
^k [Rom. 8:38, 39] ⁷ rule ⁸ authority ⁹ power 22 ^l Ps. 8:6; 110:1;
Matt. 28:18 ^m; 1 Cor. 15:27 ⁿ Heb. 2:7 23 ⁿ Rom. 12:5 ^o Col. 2:9 ^p [1 Cor. 12:6]
CHAPTER 2 1 ^a Eph. 2:5; Col. 2:13 ^b Eph. 4:18 2 ^c Col. 1:21
^d [John 12:31]; Eph. 6:12 ^e Col. 3:6 ^f Gr. *aion*, aeon 3 ^f 1 Pet. 4:3 ^g Gal. 5:16 ^h [Ps. 51:5]

Israel as God's special treasure, one He had purchased by His mighty acts of deliverance during the Exodus (Ex. 19:5; Deut. 7:6). Here Paul describes Christians as the Lord's own possession, one bought with the blood of His own Son.

1:18, 19 The eyes of your understanding refers to spiritual understanding. To describe this, Paul uses words that picture the heart looking out with eyes that have been brightened with divine illumination. **what is the hope:** A Christian may hope many things, but there is one hope that all Christians have in common (4:4), the Lord Jesus Christ (see. Col. 1:5, 27). In Him we find true hope and true riches.

1:20 worked in Christ: The resurrection of Christ from the dead was the expression of God's power. The Resurrection is also proof of what God can do in us and for us. **seated Him:** Christ Jesus was not only raised from the dead, He was given a position at the right hand of God. Jesus received this position as the Son of David in fulfillment of the messianic prophecies of Ps. 2; 110. Jesus Christ will remain at the Father's right hand until the enemies of God have been subjugated and it is time for Christ to return.

1:21 The Jews of Christ's time understood the end times to be divided into two time periods, the age in which they were living and the coming age. The Messiah, called "the Coming One," would rule in the age **which is to come**.

1:22, 23 In Ephesians Paul emphasizes Christ as **head**, just as his letter to the Colossians, written during the same imprisonment, emphasizes the body of Christ. **The church** here does not refer to any one local assembly but to all believers.

2:1 Dead in trespasses and sins means spiritually dead and lost.

2:2 you once walked: Walking is a biblical expression that pictures a believer's steady, normal progress with God (see Ps. 1:1). Paul here refers to a believer's old walk. Whether it was a path of moral carelessness or the dark alley of evil, believers should no longer walk according to their past evil ways (4:17). Believers are saved so that they can have a lifestyle characterized by good works (v. 10). They are to walk worthy of their calling (4:1), which means to walk in love (5:2), in light (5:8), and in wisdom (5:15). Paul points out to the Ephesians that they formerly walked according to the world's ways and after **the prince of the power of the air**—namely, the adversarial **spirit** Satan. **Sons of** is a Hebrew way of saying "those characterized by." Thus the **sons of disobedience** are people who disobey, whether Christians or non-Christians (see Matt. 16:23; Luke 22:31, 32; Acts 5:3).

2:3 Lusts means "strong desires." Even with the modifier **of our flesh**, this word pertains to more than merely sensual cravings. The natural human desires for fame, power, and riches are meant as well (see Gal. 5:19–21).

⁴But God, ⁱwho is rich in mercy, because of His ^jgreat love with which He loved us, ^{5k}even when we were dead in trespasses, ^lmade us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), ⁶and raised ^{us} up together, and made ^{us} sit together ^min the heavenly ^{places} in Christ Jesus, ⁷that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in ⁿHis kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. ^{8o}For by grace you have been saved ^pthrough faith, and that not of yourselves; ^qit is the gift of God, ⁹not of ^rworks, lest anyone should ^sboast. ¹⁰For we are ^tHis workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

Brought Near by His Blood

¹¹Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh—who are called Uncircumcision by what is called ^uthe Circumcision made in the flesh by hands— ¹²that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. ¹³But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

⁴ ⁱPs. 103:8-11; Rom. 10:12 / John 3:16; 1 John 4:9, 10
⁵ ^kRom. 5:6, 8
^l [Rom. 6:4, 5]
⁶ ^mEph. 1:20
⁷ ⁿTitus 3:4
⁸ ^o [2 Tim. 1:9]
^p Rom. 4:16 ^q [John 1:12, 13]
⁹ ^rRom. 4:4, 5; 11:6
^s Rom. 3:27
¹⁰ ^tIs. 19:25
¹¹ ^u [Rom. 2:28; Col. 2:11]

¹⁵ ^vGal. 6:15
¹⁶ ^w2 Cor. 5:18; [Col. 1:20-22]
^x [Rom. 6:6]
¹⁸ ^yJohn 10:9
^z1 Cor. 12:13; Eph. 4:4
²⁰ ^a1 Pet. 2:4
^b Matt. 16:18; 1 Cor. 3:10, 11; Rev. 21:14
^c1 Cor. 12:28; Eph. 3:5 ^dPs. 118:22 ★; Luke 20:17
²¹ ^e1 Cor. 3:16, 17
²² ^f1 Pet. 2:5
^g John 17:23

Christ Our Peace

¹⁴For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, ¹⁵having abolished in His flesh the enmity, *that is*, the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one ^vnew man *from* the two, *thus* making peace, ¹⁶and that He might ^wreconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby ^xputting to death the enmity. ¹⁷And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. ¹⁸For ^ythrough Him we both have access ^zby one Spirit to the Father.

Christ Our Cornerstone

¹⁹Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, ²⁰having been ^abuilt ^bon the foundation of the ^capostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being ^dthe chief cornerstone, ²¹in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into ^ea holy temple in the Lord, ^{22f}in whom you also are being built together for a ^gdwelling place of God in the Spirit.

The Mystery Revealed

3 For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles—

2:4-7 we were dead: Because of Adam's sin, the entire human race is spiritually dead. Only God can grant new life and save us from this predicament. Out of His mercy, God gave His Son for us while we were yet His enemies. He loved us long before we loved Him (see 1 John 4:9, 10). In addition to making us spiritually **alive**, He determined that we would sit in **heavenly places** with our Savior, Jesus Christ. **in the ages to come:** God desires to demonstrate **His kindness** throughout eternity through **Christ Jesus** His Son. This has nothing to do with our own merit. It is only because He is merciful and kind that He reaches out to save us.

2:8-10 Christians have been saved by grace. The grace of God is the source of salvation; **faith** is the channel, not the cause. God alone saves. Salvation never originates in the efforts of people; it always arises out of the lovingkindness of God. Truly, "salvation is of the **LORD**" (Jon. 2:9). The past tense of the verb *saved* in this passage indicates that the believer's salvation has already occurred in the past, at the Cross. **the gift of God:** We cannot do anything to earn our salvation. Some suggest that *the gift of God* modifies the word *faith* in this verse. Thus Paul is saying that even our belief in God does not originate in ourselves. This too is a gift.

2:11 Because the sign of the Abrahamic covenant was circumcision, the Jews proudly referred to themselves as **the Circumcision**.

workmanship

(Gk. *poiëma*) (2:10; Rom. 1:20) Strong's #4161

The word literally means "a thing made"; it comes into English as *poem*. The word indicates a handiwork, a masterpiece. God's church is His "poem," His masterpiece, His workmanship, just as all creation is (Ps. 19:1; Rom. 1:20). As He is the Author of His handiwork, He should get all the credit (see Ps. 19:1-6).

Somewhat less kindly, they called Gentiles the **Uncircumcision**.

2:12, 13 Paul painted vividly the bleak condition of pagans. They had no hope, for God had not reached out to them to establish a covenant relationship. However, the shed **blood of Christ** could bring the Gentiles back to their Creator.

2:14 The middle wall of separation between Jews and Gentiles was vividly portrayed by an actual partition in the temple area, with a sign warning that any Gentile going beyond the Court of the Gentiles would receive swift and sudden death.

2:15 having abolished ... the law: Paul was not saying that God had rejected the righteous standards of the law. Rather, in Christ the righteous standards that people could never reach have been accomplished. He is our righteousness; in Him, believers fulfill the law (see Matt. 5:17, 20; Rom. 3:21, 22, 31). The Christian church, composed of both Jews and Gentiles, is described as **one new man**. In the earliest days of Christianity, the church was largely made up of Jews. But under the direction of God's Spirit, the believers witnessed to Gentiles (Acts 10), who then outnumbered the Jewish members.

2:20 The apostles and prophets were the foundation of the church because they pointed to and witnessed to Jesus. The early church was established on their teaching and preaching (see Acts 2). Yet Christ Himself is the rock foundation on which the whole church rests (see 1 Cor. 3:11). The **cornerstone** was the first large stone placed at the corner of a building. The builders would line up the rest of the structure to the chief cornerstone (see also 1 Pet. 2:1-9).

2:21 Being fitted together pictures the process in Roman construction whereby laborers (usually slaves) would turn huge rocks around until they fit each other perfectly. For example, columns appeared to be one piece, but were actually separate cylinders of stone resting on each other. In similar fashion, God fits believers together into the **holy temple** He is building for Himself.

3:1 For this reason: Paul deviates from the main purpose of his letter to remind his readers of his own past and of his special minis-

²if indeed you have heard of the ¹dispensation of the grace of God ^awhich was given to me for you, ^{3b}how that by revelation ^cHe made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already, ⁴by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ), ⁵which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets: ⁶that the Gentiles ^dshould be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel, ^{7e}of which I became a minister ^faccording to the gift of the grace of God given to me by ^gthe effective working of His power.

Purpose of the Mystery

⁸To me, ^hwho am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles ⁱthe unsearchable riches of Christ, ⁹and to make all see what *is* the ²fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who ^jcreated all things ³through Jesus Christ; ^{10k}to the intent that now ^lthe ⁴manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church ^mto the ⁵principalities and powers in the heavenly *places*, ¹¹ⁿaccording to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord, ¹²in whom we have boldness and access ^owith confidence through faith in Him. ^{13p}Therefore I ask that you do not lose

CHAPTER 3

² ^a Acts 9:15
¹ *stewardship*
³ ^b Acts 2:27, 21; 26:16 ^c [Rom. 11:25; 16:25; Eph. 3:4, 9; 6:19]; Col. 1:26; 4:3
⁶ ^d Gal. 3:28, 29
⁷ ^e Rom. 15:16
^f Rom. 1:5 ^g Rom. 15:18
⁸ ^h [1 Cor. 15:9]
⁹ [Col. 1:27; 2:2, 3]
⁹ John 1:3; Col. 1:16; Heb. 1:2 ² NU, *M stewardship (dispensation)*
³ NU omits *through Jesus Christ*
¹⁰ ^k 1 Pet. 1:12
¹ [1 Tim. 3:16]
^m Eph. 1:21; 6:12; Col. 1:16; 2:10, 15
⁴ *variegated or many-sided* ⁵ *rulers*
¹¹ ⁿ [Eph. 1:4, 11]
¹² ^o 2 Cor. 3:4; Heb. 4:16; 10:19, 35; [1 John 2:28; 3:21]
¹³ ^p Phil. 1:14
² 2 Cor. 1:6
¹⁴ ^r Eph. 1:3 ⁶ NU omits *of our Lord Jesus Christ*
¹⁶ ^s [Eph. 1:7; 2:4; Phil. 4:19] ¹ 1 Cor. 16:13; Phil. 4:13; Col. 1:11 ¹¹ ^u Rom. 7:22
¹⁷ ^v John 14:23; Rom. 8:9; 2 Cor. 13:5; [Eph. 2:22]
^w Col. 1:23
¹⁸ ^x Eph. 1:18
^y Rom. 8:39
¹⁹ ^z Eph. 1:23
²⁰ ^a Rom. 16:25
^b 1 Cor. 2:9

heart at my tribulations for you, ^qwhich is your glory.

Appreciation of the Mystery

¹⁴For this reason I bow my knees to the ^rFather ⁶of our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁵from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, ¹⁶that He would grant you, ^saccording to the riches of His glory, ^tto be strengthened with might through His Spirit in ^uthe inner man, ^{17v}that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, ^wbeing rooted and grounded in love, ^{18x}may be able to comprehend with all the saints ^ywhat *is* the width and length and depth and height— ¹⁹to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled ^zwith all the fullness of God.

²⁰Now ^ato Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly ^babove all that we ask or think, ^caccording to the power that works in us, ^{21d}to Him *be* glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

Walk in Unity

4 I, therefore, the prisoner ¹of the Lord, ²beseech you to ^awalk worthy of the calling with which you were called, ²with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another

^c Col. 1:29 ²¹ ^d Rom. 11:36

CHAPTER 4 ¹ ^e Eph. 2:10; [Col. 1:10; 2:6]; 1 Thess. 2:12 ¹ Lit. *in*
² *exhort, encourage*

try to them. The digression in vv. 1–13 serves as a reminder that Paul was writing a letter, not a book of systematic theology.

3:2–4 The **dispensation** (stewardship) that God gave Paul for the benefit of the Ephesians had previously been a mystery. Now God was revealing this mystery more fully in Paul's ministry to the Gentiles. The mystery was that Jews and Gentiles were to have an equal status in the church, the body of Christ.

3:5, 6 People who lived in the **other ages**, before Pentecost, had a great deal of knowledge about God and His grace, as the OT demonstrates. However, that knowledge was not as all-embracing as the revelation that we receive in Christ Jesus. The OT predicted that God's grace would come to the Gentiles (Gen. 12:3), but equality with the Jews in one body was a secret never before **revealed**.

3:7 The word translated **minister** here means "servant."

3:8 Paul was not expressing false humility when he called himself **less than the least of all the saints**. He was truly humble because he previously had persecuted Christ's church. In another place Paul refers to himself as the chief of sinners (see 1 Tim. 1:15).

3:9 Paul's mission as an apostle was to enlighten all people about the **mystery** of God's grace in Christ, which was not understood in previous times but which had become clear with the coming of Jesus Christ.

3:10 God's **manifold wisdom** is to be displayed to the angelic beings by the members of the church. God's ways are not only "mysterious," but also varied. Angels are also learning about God's wisdom as they watch His grace working in us (see 1 Cor. 11:10).

3:14, 15 **Father and family** are related words in the original text. All families of men and angels derive from God the Father, their Creator.

3:17 **Dwell** suggests settling in at home. Christ resides in a believer's heart.

3:19 The **love of Christ** is so great that it is beyond our understanding. The **fullness of God** is the abundance of gifts that flows from God.

3:20, 21 These two verses form a doxology, or praise, to God in which Paul points out that God can **do exceedingly abundantly above** anything we may ask. Neither God's love nor His power is limited by human imagination.

4:1 The second half of Ephesians, like that of a number of Paul's epistles, emphasizes the behavior that should result from the doctrines or beliefs taught in the first half. Note that the Christian life is not compared here to running or standing still, but to a walk. **walk worthy**: A believer's life should match the excellency of Christ's calling.

4:2 **lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering**: These are the attitudes that Jesus demonstrated when He was on earth (Phil.

stewardship

(Gk. *oikonomia*) (1:10; 3:2; 1 Cor. 9:17; 1 Tim. 1:4) Strong's #3622

The word means "household management." In ancient times, the word was often used to describe the work of a person who took care of all the financial affairs of a large household or business (see Luke 16:1, 2). Paul was entrusted with the stewardship of God's economy, to dispense the riches of Christ to God's household and to preach the Good News (3:2–11). Paul uses this same word to describe God's own administration or government of time (see 1:10).

in love, ³endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit ^bin the bond of peace. ^{4c}There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; ^{5d}one Lord, ^eone faith, ^fone baptism; ^{6g}one God and Father of all, who is above all, and ^hthrough all, and in ³you all.

Spiritual Gifts

⁷But ⁱto each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift. ⁸Therefore He says:

j "When He ascended on high,

^{3 b} Col. 3:14
^{4 c} Rom. 12:5
^{5 d} 1 Cor. 1:13
^e [1 Cor. 15:1-8];
Jude 3 ^f 1 Cor.
12:12, 13;
[Heb. 6:6]
^{6 g} Mal. 2:10;
1 Cor. 8:6; 12:6
^h Rom. 11:36 ³ NU
omits you; M us
^{7 i} [1 Cor. 12:7, 11]
⁸ / Ps. 68:18 ☆; [Col.
2:15]
^{9 k} Luke 23:43; John
3:13; 20:17; [1 Pet.
3:19, 20] ⁴ NU omits
first

*He led captivity captive,
And gave gifts to men."*

^{9k} (Now this, "He ascended"—what does it mean but that He also ⁴first descended into the lower parts of the earth? ¹⁰He who descended is also the One ^lwho ascended far above all the heavens, ^mthat He might fill all things.)

¹¹And He Himself gave some *to be* apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers,

^{10 l} Acts 1:9 ★ ^m [Acts 2:33; Eph. 1:23]

2:5–8). These attitudes do not come naturally, but must be cultivated by the determination to place others above ourselves. Only the Spirit can empower us to treat people this way consistently. **Bearing** is close to our expression "putting up with"; however, Paul's use of the term has positive connotations. It describes being patient with the shortcomings of others. Often we ask God to be patient with our own failings, and yet do not exercise the same type of patience ourselves.

4:3 unity of the Spirit: All Christians are one in the Spirit. It is our duty to **keep** or observe that unity, recognize it as real, and act upon it without a sectarian spirit (see John 17:20–26). **Endeavoring** means to make every effort, to work hard at maintaining the unity of the Spirit.

4:5 One baptism may refer to the baptism in the Spirit that places all believers into the body of Christ, the church (see 1 Cor. 12:13). It may also refer to water baptism, the sign or seal that a person is a member of the body of Christ. At the time of the early church, public baptism clearly identified a person as a Christian.

4:7 Like Peter (see 1 Pet. 4:10), Paul taught that all Christians have a spiritual **gift** or gifts. The gifts are given sovereignly by the ascended Christ in order to build up the church (see 1 Cor. 12:11). Thus the body of Christ is to function like a machine in which every part is

essential for getting a job done. But unlike a machine, the body of Christ should maintain itself and build every one of its members up so that they can do good works (see 1 Cor. 12:7).

4:8 Paul quotes Ps. 68:18 to picture the **ascended** Messiah, triumphant over Satan and his hosts, distributing spiritual **gifts** to His people. The faithful stewardship of our gifts on earth will determine our position of service in Christ's messianic reign.

4:9 Many people take this descent to refer to Christ's entering Hades (specifically the saved portion of that unseen world) after His crucifixion to take saints to heaven when He rose from the dead. On the other hand, **lower parts of the earth** may also be translated "lower parts, the earth," so as to refer to Christ's coming to our humble planet as a man. This is the more likely meaning here (see Phil. 2:5–8).

4:10 The One who humbled Himself as a lowly Servant is the same One **who ascended far above all the heavens** in universal supremacy (see Phil. 2:9–11; Col. 1:18).

4:11 Apostles, meaning "envoys," or "ambassadors," in its strict sense refers to those who saw Christ in resurrected form, performed miracles, and were specially chosen by Christ to tell others about Him from their eyewitness accounts. As such, there are no apostles today. **Prophets** delivered direct revelations from God before the NT was written (see 1 Cor. 14). They foretold God's actions in the

The Trinity in the Bible

The term *trinity* is not found in the Bible but is a theological word which expresses the clear teaching of Holy Scripture, especially the New Testament. The first theologian of the church to use the term was Theophilus who spoke of God as *trias*. The great Latin church father Tertullian first developed the concept of *trinitas*, one God in three persons. Though the fathers of the church in the second and third centuries spoke of the three persons of the Godhead while recognizing that there is but one God, the councils of Nicea (A.D. 325) and Constantinople (A.D. 381) gave the fullest expression to the biblical doctrine. Belief in one God in the ancient Mediterranean world was unique to the nation of Israel. The faith of Israel is given in the famous Shema: "Hear, O Israel: The **LORD** our God, the **LORD** is one" (Deut. 6:4). Repeatedly the teaching of the Law and the pronouncements of God's prophets confirm this absolute truth.

The church continued the teaching of the Hebrew Scriptures, as well as the teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ, that there is only one God (see 1 Cor. 8:6; Eph. 4:6; 1 Tim. 2:5). This it did in contrast to the rampant polytheism that permeated the Greco-Roman world with its multitude of gods, including worship of the emperor as a god during the latter half of the first century. As the apostles and later the church began to articulate this monotheism against pagan religion, it was necessary to explain how this belief in one God was consistent with the concurrent belief that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are each God and yet still only one God.

Jesus is the Son of the Father. Jesus calls Himself the Son of God, and He also calls God His Father in a way that implies a profoundly unique association. Moreover, Jesus claims a relationship with God the Father as a partner from all eternity. At other times Jesus makes statements and does deeds that cause others to recognize His claim to equality with God. The specific charge of blasphemy made against Christ was His admission to being the Son of God (Luke 22:70). These texts identify the person Jesus, preexistent to the world, as being God and yet distinct from God the Father.

Like Jesus the Son, the Holy Spirit is also a divine Person. Before Christ left the earth to be with the Father, He promised a Comforter similar to but distinct from Himself. He and the Father come to the believer through this Person, the Holy Spirit.

God is called the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ as well as of Christians (Eph. 1:2; Phil. 1:2; 2 John 3). The apostle John specifically calls Jesus God (John 1:1, 18; 8:58). In several places Paul identifies Jesus as God (Rom. 9:5; Phil. 2:6; Titus 2:13), as does Peter (2 Pet. 1:1). The Holy Spirit is declared to be God by Peter (Acts 5:4) and is listed alongside the Father and the Son (Matt. 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14).



¹²for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, ¹³for the ⁵edifying of ^othe body of Christ, ¹³till we all come to the unity of the faith ^pand of the knowledge of the Son of God, to ^qa perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; ¹⁴that we should no longer be ^rchildren, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of ^sdeceitful plotting, ¹⁵but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the ^thead—Christ—¹⁶from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.

¹² ⁿ 1 Cor. 14:26 ^o Col. 1:24
⁵ *building up*
¹³ ^p Col. 2:2 ^q 1 Cor. 14:20; Col. 1:28; Heb. 5:14
¹⁴ ^r 1 Cor. 14:20
^s Rom. 16:18
¹⁵ ^t Eph. 1:22
¹⁶ ^u [Rom. 12:4]; Col. 2:19

¹⁷ ^v Eph. 2:2; 4:22
^o NU omits the rest of
¹⁸ ^w Rom. 1:21
¹⁹ ^x 1 Tim. 4:2
^y 1 Pet. 4:3
²² ^z Col. 3:8
²³ ^a [Rom. 12:2; Col. 3:10]

The New Man

¹⁷This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should ^vno longer walk as ^othe rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind, ¹⁸having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the ^wblindness of their heart; ¹⁹^xwho, being past feeling, ^yhave given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.

²⁰But you have not so learned Christ, ²¹if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus: ²²that you ^zput off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, ²³and ^abe renewed in the spirit of

future, and they proclaimed what God had already said in the Scriptures. **Evangelists** are gospel preachers who help bring people into the body of Christ. They do so by presenting Christ's offer of free salvation by grace through faith (2:8, 9). Since each of these categories is responsible for equipping believers, evangelists may also train other believers to share their faith effectively. **Pastors** do all for the church that a literal shepherd does for sheep: feeds, nurtures, cares for, and protects them from enemies. A shepherd's task is not to acquire sheep. **Teachers**: While the Greek ties the two titles *teachers* and *pastors* closely together here, elsewhere they are listed separately (see Rom. 12:7; 1 Pet. 5:2).

4:12, 13 Three stages of growth are presented here: Gifted leaders are responsible for **the equipping of the saints**; the well-equipped saints do **the work of ministry**; and the result is that **the body of Christ** is built up. The final goal is maturity, truth, and love.

4:14 **Children** are glibble, vulnerable, and easily victimized. The

church needs to work diligently at moving babes in Christ on to maturity (see 1 Pet. 2:2).

4:15 **Speaking the truth in love** suggests that all that believers say or do should be honest and true, and said or done in a loving manner.

4:16 Note the use of the body metaphor here to present the same truth as the building metaphor in 2:21. **Every joint . . . every part** is essential to full growth. There are no insignificant parts in the body (see 1 Cor. 12:14–27). Anything that builds up believers and the church can be said to be **edifying**.

4:18, 19 Those who are so insensitive to moral darkness as to be **past feeling** have been hardened by years of sin and debauchery. **4:22–24** Paul compared the Christian life to stripping **off** the dirty clothes of a sinful past and putting **on** the snowy white robes of Christ's righteousness.

Baptism

It is well known that ablution or bathing was common in most ancient nations as a preparation for prayers and sacrifice or as expiatory of sin. In warm countries this connection is probably even closer than in colder climates; and hence the frequency of ablution in the religious rites throughout the East. Jews baptized their Gentile converts, some Jewish sects practiced baptism as a symbol of purification, and John the Baptist made baptism an important part of his ministry. The New Testament does not say whether Jesus regularly baptized His converts, but on at least one occasion before John's imprisonment He was found baptizing. (It may, however, have been John's baptism that He was administering.) At any rate, the early Christians were baptized in Jesus' name following Jesus' example (compare Mark 1:10; Gal. 3:27).

It appears that the early Christians interpreted the meaning of baptism in various ways—as a symbol of a person's death to sin (Rom. 6:4; Gal. 2:12), of the cleansing from sin (Acts 22:16; Eph. 5:26), and of the new life in Christ (Acts 2:41; Rom. 6:3). Occasionally the entire family of a new convert would be baptized (compare Acts 11:16; 1 Cor. 1:16), which may have signified the person's desire to consecrate all that he had to Christ.

The command to baptize was linked with the command to preach the gospel. All nations were to be evangelized, and they were to be made disciples by baptism (Matt. 28:19). It appears to have been a kind of transition from the Jewish baptism to the Christian. The distinction between John's baptism and Christian baptism appears in the case of Apollos (Acts 18:26, 27) and of the disciples at Ephesus mentioned in Acts 19:1–6. We cannot but draw from this history the inference that in Christian baptism there was a deeper spiritual significance.



A third-century A.D. fresco of a baptism scene

Baptism Scene, 3rd century, Paleo-Christian/Catacombs of San Callisto, Rome, Italy/Index/The Bridgeman Art Library

your mind, ²⁴and that you ^bput on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.

Do Not Grieve the Spirit

²⁵Therefore, putting away lying, ^c*“Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor,”* for ^dwe are members of one another. ^{26e}*“Be angry, and do not sin”*; do not let the sun go down on your wrath, ^{27f}nor give ⁷place to the devil. ²⁸Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather ^glet him labor, working with *his* hands what is good, that he may have something ^hto give him who has need. ²⁹ⁱLet no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but ^jwhat is good for necessary ⁸edification, ^kthat it may impart grace to the hearers. ³⁰And ^ldo not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. ^{31m}Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, ⁹clamor, and ⁿevil speaking be put away from you, ^owith all malice. ³²And ^pbe kind to one another, tender-hearted, ^qforgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.

Walk in Love

⁵Therefore ^abe imitators of God as dear ^bchildren. ²And ^cwalk in love, ^das Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God ^efor a sweet-smelling aroma. ³But fornication and all ^funcleanness or ^gcovetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints; ^{4h}neither filthiness, nor ⁱfoolish talking, nor

²⁴ ^b [Rom. 6:4; 7:6; 12:2; 2 Cor. 5:17; Col. 3:10]
²⁵ ^c Zech. 8:16; Eph. 4:15; Col. 3:9
^d Rom. 12:5
²⁶ ^e Ps. 4:4; 37:8
²⁷ ^f [Rom. 12:19; James 4:7]; 1 Pet. 5:9 ⁷ *an opportunity*
²⁸ ^g Acts 20:35; 1 Cor. 4:12; Gal. 6:10
^h Luke 3:11; 1 Thess. 4:12
²⁹ ⁱ Matt. 12:34; Eph. 5:4; Col. 3:8
^j 1 Thess. 5:11 ^k Col. 3:16 ⁸ *building up*
³⁰ ^l Is. 7:13
³¹ ^m Rom. 3:14; Col. 3:8, 19 ⁿ James 4:11
^o Titus 3:3 ⁹ *loud quarreling*
³² ^p [Matt. 6:14]; 2 Cor. 6:10 ^q [Mark 11:25; Luke 6:37]

CHAPTER 5

¹ ^a [Matt. 5:48]; Luke 6:36; Eph. 4:32
^b 1 Pet. 1:14-16
² ^c 1 Thess. 4:9
^d John 15:9; Gal. 1:4; 1 John 3:16 ^e Ex. 29:18, 25; 2 Cor. 2:14, 15
³ ^f Col. 3:5-7
^g [Luke 12:15]
⁴ ^h Matt. 12:34, 35; Eph. 4:29; Col. 3:8; James 1:21 ⁱ Titus 3:9 ^j Rom. 1:28
^k Phil. 4:6; Col. 3:17; [1 Thess. 5:18]
⁵ ^l 1 Cor. 6:9, 10; Col. 3:5 ^m *NU know this*
⁷ ⁿ 1 Tim. 5:22

coarse jesting, ^jwhich are not fitting, but rather ^kgiving of thanks. ⁵For ¹this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any ^linheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. ⁶Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. ⁷Therefore do not be ^mpartakers with them.

Walk in Light

⁸For you were once darkness, but now *you are* ⁿlight in the Lord. Walk as children of light ⁹(for ^othe fruit of the ²Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), ^{10p}finding out what is acceptable to the Lord. ¹¹And have ^qno fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather ³expose *them*. ¹²For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret. ¹³But ^sall things that are ⁴exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light. ¹⁴Therefore He says:

*“Awake, you who sleep,
Arise from the dead,
And Christ will give you light.”*

Walk in Wisdom

^{15u}See then that you walk ⁵circum-

⁸ ⁿ 1 Thess. 5:5 ⁹ ^o Gal. 5:22 ² *NU light* ¹⁰ ^p [Rom. 12:1, 2] ¹¹ ^q 1 Cor. 5:9; 2 Cor. 6:14 ³ *reprove* ¹² ^r Rom. 1:24 ¹³ ^s [John 3:20, 21] ⁴ *reproved* ¹⁴ ^t [Is. 26:19; 60:1 *; Rom. 13:11] ¹⁵ ^u Col. 4:5 ⁵ *carefully*

4:25 Quoting Zech. 8:16, Paul calls for believers to speak the **truth** to each other, because all believers are united in Christ. The Proverbs identify a lying tongue as one of the six things God abhors (Prov. 6:17).

4:26 Paul uses Ps. 4:4 to illustrate that not all **wrath** is sinful. However, anger should not be allowed to fester or continue for long (Mark 11:25). Christians may respond in controlled anger to injustice and sin, but they should never be consumed by this anger. Instead they should seek opportunities to express Christ’s love to everyone.

4:28 something to give him who has need: Instead of taking what belongs to someone else, a Christian should earn enough to share some of his or her own earnings with the needy. This is not

merely a call to stop stealing or being greedy. Rather, this is a call to be generous, to have a true change of attitude.

4:29 Standards of speech for Christians are extremely high: **no corrupt word** is permitted.

4:30 The Holy Spirit of God should never be pushed away, ignored, or rejected. If we would remember that the One who lives in us is God’s own Spirit, we would be much more selective about what we think, read, watch, say, and do. Note that Paul acknowledges that evil thoughts and actions are temptations even for those who are **sealed** by the Holy Spirit.

5:1 Believers are to follow the example of God’s actions. He loved us when we were still His enemies. As **imitators**, believers should demonstrate that type of self-sacrificial love.

5:3 Ephesus, with its pagan temple dedicated to the Roman goddess Diana (see Acts 19:23–31), was similar to our society in that sexual immorality and greed ran rampant. Paul warned the believers in Ephesus to avoid these pitfalls.

5:8–10 The believer’s position has changed from **darkness** (sin) to **light (righteousness)**. Believers are to change their **walk** to correspond to their position in Christ (see Rom 12:2).

5:12 in secret: This verse effectively bans Christians from indulging in the modern preoccupation with examining the lurid details of evils such as the occult and other perverted practices.

5:14 Awake, you who sleep: This may be a fragment of a first-century Christian hymn, or an original thought by Paul alluding to Is. 26:19, a promise of God’s coming salvation.

5:15 To walk circumspectly is to step gingerly. We should watch our path to avoid contact with undesirable influences.

new man

(Gk. *kainos anthrōpos*) (4:24; Col. 3:10) Strong’s #2537; 444

This Greek word for *new* does not mean something more recent in time, but something having a different quality or nature. Thus the *new man* is the new humanity created in Christ, of which all believers partake, both individually and corporately. Since Paul has already spoken of the new man created in Christ in terms of a new unified corporate humanity (2:14, 15), the new man in this verse must also be thought of corporately (see Col. 3:9–11). In the immediate context, Paul is exhorting each believer to put on his or her new human nature.

The Blessings and the Responsibilities of Believers

Paul's letter to the Ephesian church divides neatly into two sections. The first describes the spiritual blessings all believers possess; the second outlines what God expects of believers in light of all He has done for them.

The Blessings Christians Enjoy	The Responsibilities Christians Have
• Chosen by God; election (1:4)	• To keep the unity of the Spirit (4:3–6)
• Adoption into God's family (1:5; 2:19)	• To use our abilities for the church's benefit (4:7–13)
• Acceptance before God (1:6)	• To keep growing and maturing (4:14, 15)
• Forgiveness of sins (1:7)	• To put away old, sinful ways (4:17–24; 5:2–14)
• Insight into God's will (1:9)	• To speak honestly and purely (4:25, 29)
• An eternal inheritance (1:11)	• To do what the Spirit leads us to do (4:30)
• The seal of the Spirit (1:13; 2:18)	• To imitate God (5:1)
• God's mercy and love (2:4; 3:17–19)	• To walk in love (5:2)
• Wisdom and knowledge (1:17)	• To find out what is acceptable to the Lord (5:10)
• Divine power (1:19, 20; 3:16, 20)	• To make the most of our time (5:16)
• Spiritual life (2:1, 5)	• To be filled with the Spirit (5:18)
• The promise of eternal kindness (2:7)	• To submit to one another (5:21)
• The knowledge that God's plan for us is good (2:10)	• To have marriages that honor God (5:22–33)
• Unity and peace with all believers (2:11–18; 3:6)	• To honor God in our families (6:1–4)
• Heavenly citizenship (2:19)	• To demonstrate integrity in the workplace (6:5–9)
• Access to God through Christ (3:12)	• To stand strong against the forces of evil (6:10–18)

spectly, not as fools but as wise, ^{16v}redeeming the time, ^wbecause the days are evil.

^{17x}Therefore do not be unwise, but ^yunderstand ^zwhat the will of the Lord is. ¹⁸And ^ado not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, ¹⁹speaking to one another ^bin psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making ^cmelody in your heart to the Lord, ^{20d}giving thanks always for all things to God the Father ^ein the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, ^{21f}submitting to one another in the fear of ^gGod.

¹⁶ v Col. 4:5 w Eccl. 11:2
¹⁷ x Col. 4:5 y [Rom. 12:2]; Col. 1:9
¹⁸ a Prov. 20:1; 23:31; Rom. 13:13; 1 Cor. 5:11; 1 Thess. 5:7
¹⁹ b Acts 16:25
^c James 5:13
²⁰ d Ps. 34:1
^e [1 Pet. 2:5]
²¹ f [Phil. 2:3]; 1 Pet. 5:5 g NU Christ
²² g Eph. 5:22–6:9; Col. 3:18–4:1;

Marriage—Christ and the Church

²²Wives, ^gsubmit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. ²³For ^hthe husband is head of the wife, as also ⁱChrist is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. ²⁴Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so ^{let} the wives ^{be} to their own husbands ^jin everything.

^{25k}Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and ^lgave

1 Pet. 3:1–6 ²³ h [1 Cor. 11:3] i Col. 1:18
²⁴ i Titus 2:4, 5 ²⁵ k Eph. 5:28, 33; Col. 3:19; [1 Pet. 3:7] l Acts 20:28

5:16 Redeeming the time means taking advantage of opportunities for service. We each have a limited amount of time on this earth. Paul exhorts us to use as much of that time as possible for advancing Christ's purposes in this world.

5:17 do not be unwise, but understand: Discerning the will of the Lord is not a matter of feeling or emotion, but of mental understanding, applying our minds to Scripture.

5:18 Just as a person who is **drunk with wine** is under the control of alcohol, so a Spirit-filled believer is controlled by the Spirit. **filled:** Filling is a step beyond the sealing of the Holy Spirit (1:13). Sealing is an action God took at the point of our new birth. The tense of the Greek word translated *filled* indicates that filling is a moment-by-moment, repeatable action. It is something Paul commands the believers at Ephesus to do. In other words, not all Christians are Spirit-filled, but all have been sealed (4:30).

5:19 One of the natural outcomes of being filled with the Spirit is **singing and making melody** to God. Some take the three types of music that Paul mentions in this verse to refer to different parts of the Book of Psalms. Most believe that these words refer to three

larger categories: (1) the 150 **psalms** in the Psalter, plus other psalm-like poems throughout the Scripture; (2) **hymns**, compositions addressed directly to God, like the modern song "How Great Thou Art"; (3) **spiritual songs**, hymns about the Christian experience, like "Amazing Grace."

5:21, 22 Verse 21 completes the thought of the previous verses (vv. 18–20), which address how being filled with the Spirit manifests itself in the believer's life. It also introduces the next section (5:22–6:4), about how members of a Christian family should relate to each other. **submitting:** The Greek word for *submitting* does not refer to being under the absolute control of another but to voluntarily placing oneself under the authority of another.

5:22–24 Just as Christ is not inferior to the Father, but is the second Person in the Trinity, so **wives** are equal to their **own husbands**. Yet in a marriage relationship, a husband and wife have different roles. **to the Lord:** A wife's voluntary submission arises out of her own submission to Christ.

5:25 Husbands, love: Paul does not emphasize the husband's authority; instead, he calls on husbands to love self-sacrificially.



The Temple of Diana

Conspicuous at the head of the harbor of Ephesus was the great temple of Diana (Artemis), one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. The temple dated back to the seventh century B.C. The original temple burned on July 21, 356 B.C., the night Alexander the Great was born. When Alexander later conquered Asia Minor, he offered to rebuild the temple—which was done after his death, in 323 B.C. The temple was again destroyed by the Goths in A.D. 262, and was finally torn down by St. John Chrysostom in A.D. 401.

Diana was the goddess of fertility. Paul encountered her devotees on his visit to Ephesus (Acts 19:21-40) where he ran afoul of silversmiths who made big business of portable shrines which strangers purchased and devotees carried with them on journeys or set up in their houses.

The remains of the Temple of Diana in Ephesus

© Goldika/Shutterstock



Himself for her, ²⁶that He might ⁷sanctify and cleanse her ^mwith the washing of water ⁿby the word, ²⁷that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, ^pnot having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. ²⁸So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. ²⁹For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord *does* the church. ³⁰For ^qwe are members of His body, ⁸of His flesh and of His bones. ³¹*“For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the ^stwo shall become one flesh.”* ³²This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church. ³³Nevertheless ¹let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife *see* that she *“respects her husband.*

²⁶ ^m John 3:5

ⁿ [John 15:3; 17:17; Rom. 10:8; Eph. 6:17] ⁷ set it apart ²⁷ ^o [2 Cor. 4:14; 11:2]; Col. 1:22

^p Song 4:7

³⁰ ^q Gen. 2:23 ⁸ NU omits the rest of v. 30.

³¹ ^r Gen. 2:24; Matt.

19:5; Mark 10:7

^s [1 Cor. 6:16]

³³ ^t Col. 3:19

^u 1 Pet. 3:1, 6

CHAPTER 6

1 ^a Prov. 6:20;

23:22; Col. 3:20

2 ^b Ex. 20:12; Deut.

5:16

4 ^c Col. 3:21 ^d Gen.

18:19; Deut. 6:7;

11:19; Ps. 78:4; Prov.

22:6; 2 Tim. 3:15

5 ^e Col. 3:22; [1 Tim.

6:1]; Titus 2:9; 1 Pet.

2:18 ^f 2 Cor. 7:15

Children and Parents

6 Children, ^aobey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ^{2b}*“Honor your father and mother,”* which is the first commandment with promise: ³*“that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth.”*

⁴ And ^cyou, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but ^dbring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.

Bondservants and Masters

^{5e} Bondservants, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, ^fwith fear and trembling, ^gin sincerity of heart, as to Christ; ^{6h}not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, ⁷with goodwill doing

^g 1 Chr. 29:17 ^{6h} Col. 3:22

Husbands are to emulate Christ's love, the kind of love that is willing to lay down one's life for another person and serve that person even if it means suffering.

5:26, 27 In these verses, Paul briefly outlines what Jesus has done for the church. First of all, He loved the church so much that He was willing to suffer and die for it. His actions not only saved the church, they also sanctified it. In other words, Jesus wanted to develop the church into what it should be, the holy temple of God.

5:29 A husband who realizes that his wife is truly **his own flesh** will treat her with love and care.

5:31 the two shall become one flesh: Paul quotes Gen. 2:24, which teaches that the special union between husband and wife supersedes the original family ties.

5:32 The mystery, a sacred secret revealed, is that Christian marriage parallels the union that exists spiritually between **Christ** and His bride, **the church**.

6:1-4 This paragraph has the beautiful balance we expect to find in God's Word: Children are to be obey their parents, and parents

are to treat their children in such a way that the children will want to obey. **Children** must obey their **parents** for Christ's sake, even if their parents are not believers. This is supported by the only one of the Ten Commandments followed by a **promise** (see Deut. 5:16). Of course, Christian children should not do anything sinful even if their parents should command them to. In such a case, children must obey God rather than men (see Acts 5:29). **do not provoke:** Parents should not be unreasonably severe with children or ridicule them.

6:5 A very large percentage of the population of the Roman Empire was made up of **bondservants** or slaves. These people were considered mere property and could be abused and even killed by their masters with no resulting investigation by the state. In the church, wealthy slave owners and their slaves broke bread together at the Lord's Table as equals. No doubt some slaves were gifted spiritual leaders and ministered the word to people far above them on the social ladder.

6:6 not with eyeservice: Servants and employees should serve faithfully even when no one is looking. After all, God sees all that we do.

service, as to the Lord, and not to men, ⁸ⁱknowing that whatever good anyone does, he will receive the same from the Lord, whether *he is* a slave or free.

⁹And you, masters, do the same things to them, giving up threatening, knowing that ¹your own ^jMaster also is in heaven, and ^kthere is no partiality with Him.

The Whole Armor of God

¹⁰Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. ¹¹Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the ²wiles of the devil. ¹²For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against ^mprincipalities, against powers, against ⁿthe rulers of ³the darkness of this age, against spiritual ^{hosts} of wickedness in the heavenly places. ^{13o}Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand ^pin the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

¹⁴Stand therefore, ^qhaving girded your waist with truth, ^rhaving put on the breastplate of righteousness, ^{15s}and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; ¹⁶above all, taking ^tthe shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the

⁸ Rom. 2:6
⁹ Job 31:13; John 13:13; Col. 4:1
^k Deut. 10:17; Acts 10:34; Rom. 2:11; Col. 3:25
¹ NU *He who is both their Master and yours is*
¹¹ [2 Cor. 6:7]
² schemings
¹² m Rom. 8:38
ⁿ Luke 22:53 ³ NU *this darkness,*
¹³ o [2 Cor. 10:4]
^p Eph. 5:16
¹⁴ q Is. 11:5; Luke 12:35; 1 Pet. 1:13
^r Is. 59:17; Rom. 13:12; Eph. 6:13; 1 Thess. 5:8
¹⁵ s Is. 52:7; Rom. 10:15
¹⁶ t 1 John 5:4
¹⁷ u 1 Thess. 5:8
^v Is. 49:2; Hos. 6:5; [Heb. 4:12]
¹⁸ w Luke 18:1; Col. 1:3; 4:2; 1 Thess. 5:17 ^x [Matt. 26:41]
^y Phil. 1:4
¹⁹ z Acts 4:29; Col. 4:3
²⁰ a 2 Cor. 5:20; Philem. 9
²¹ b Acts 20:4; 2 Tim. 4:12; Titus 3:12 ^c 1 Cor. 4:1, 2
²² d Col. 4:8

wicked one. ¹⁷And ^utake the helmet of salvation, and ^vthe sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; ^{18w}praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, ^xbeing watchful to this end with all perseverance and ^ysupplication for all the saints— ¹⁹and for me, that utterance may be given to me, ^zthat I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel, ²⁰for which ^aI am an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

A Gracious Greeting

²¹But that you also may know my affairs *and* how I am doing, ^bTychicus, a beloved brother and ^cfaithful minister in the Lord, will make all things known to you; ^{22d}whom I have sent to you for this very purpose, that you may know our affairs, and *that* he may ^ecomfort your hearts.

²³Peace to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴Grace *be* with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen.

^e 2 Cor. 1:6

6:8 Receive the same refers to future rewards (see Col. 3:23–25).

6:9 Christian masters should not use threatening language to their servants but should remember that they too are servants of a much higher Master . . . in heaven, who is completely fair.

6:10–20 This practical passage is one of the most famous and richly rewarding in all of the NT. Paul probably had plenty of time to contemplate the parts of a Roman soldier's armor. After all, he was constantly guarded during his house arrest in Rome.

6:10 Be strong may also be translated "be made strong." The passive voice would suggest that we cannot do it ourselves.

6:11 The whole armor of God is the believer's protection against evil and the Evil One. Paul presented the extended metaphor of the battle dress roughly according to the order in which the various pieces were put on. Wiles of the devil are Satan's subtle tricks to defeat Christians in spiritual warfare (see 2 Cor. 11:3).

6:12 Our real battle is not with human cultists, false religionists, atheists, agnostics, and pseudo-Christians, but with the demonic beings working through them, of which even the flesh and blood opponents themselves are sometimes unaware.

6:13 The evil day is taken by some to refer to the end times when the Evil One will launch a ferocious campaign against Christ and His army. A more common view is that any great spiritual contest in a believer's life could be in view here.

6:14 Verses 14–17 present the six pieces of spiritual armor. Four are mentioned specifically and the belt and shoes are implied. Soldiers girded themselves with a belt, from which hung strips of leather to protect the lower body. Truth is considered crucial by Paul (4:15, 25), because a dishonest Christian cannot hope to withstand the father of lies himself. The truth referred to here is integrity, a life of practical truthfulness and honesty. The breastplate of Roman times went completely around the body, so that the back of a warrior was also protected. The breastplate was made of hard leather or metal. The righteousness that the breastplate represents is not the righteousness of Christ, which all believers possess, but the practical, righteous character and deeds of believers.

6:15 A Roman soldier's feet were shod with hard, studded shoes.

Paul used this image to represent the preparation of the gospel of peace. This may mean either that the gospel is the firm foundation on which Christians are to stand or that the Christian soldier should be ready to go out to defend and spread the gospel.

6:16 Above all may mean that the shield is to be used against everything. It may also mean that the shield is to cover the whole armor. A Roman soldier's shield typically measured two and a half feet by four feet. The Christian's shield offers protection against all the fiery darts of the wicked one. Flaming arrows could not penetrate the fireproof shield of the ancient Roman soldier, nor can the assaults of Satan penetrate to the believer who places his or her faith in God.

6:17 the helmet of salvation: The intricately designed Roman helmet protected the soldier's head and also made him look taller and more impressive. The sword of the Spirit is the only offensive weapon in the believer's armor. This weapon is not necessarily the Bible as a whole, but the specific word that needs to be spoken in a specific situation. To have the precise word ready, a person must know the Bible intimately.

6:18 Without prayer, all the armor in the world would be of no use. praying always: General prayers and specific petitions in the Spirit are to be made for all believers and at all occasions. Perseverance and patience in prayer are essential.

6:19 The apostle Paul was not ashamed to ask other believers to pray that he would have the courage to proclaim the gospel. Even as a prisoner, Paul still wanted to be a faithful witness for the Lord. **6:20** Paul was an ambassador in chains in Rome for the gospel of Christ. His prayer was that he might speak boldly, as an ambassador for the King of kings ought to speak.

6:21–24 The last verses of Ephesians reveal Paul's appreciation of the ministry of others, especially the ministry of Tychicus (see Col. 4:7). The fact that this letter does not conclude with personal greetings as Paul's other letters do (see Rom. 16) may indicate that this was a circular letter, one intended for a number of churches around Ephesus. Sincerity may also be translated "without corruption."

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE PHILIPPIANS

FROM BEATINGS TO IMPRISONMENT, Paul had endured much suffering for the cause of Christ. These trials had taught Paul to be content in all circumstances, an ability that Paul encouraged the Philippians to cultivate (4:11). In fact, his letter to the Philippians is a testimony to this attitude. Even though he was in prison, facing an uncertain future, Paul wrote this thank-you letter to the Philippians, a letter that expresses Paul's abundant joy in what God was accomplishing through them.

Author and Date Church tradition unanimously agrees with the statement in Philippians (1:1) that Paul wrote this letter. The events described in this letter parallel the life of Paul.

To determine when Paul wrote his letter to the Philippians requires identifying the location from which he wrote. He says that he was in prison (1:13). But to which imprisonment was Paul referring? The answer must be guided by three factors: evidence of Paul's imprisonment in a given city, whether the Praetorian Guard was in that city, and the distance of that city from Philippi, which has to allow for several trips between the two cities.

Some speculate that Paul was writing from Corinth, and therefore date the letter around A.D. 50. Proponents of this view typically refer to Acts 18:10, a passage in which the Lord indicates to Paul that He would protect him from harm in Corinth. However that passage does not explicitly speak about imprisonment.

Others point to the city of Ephesus (and hence a date of A.D. 53–55) on the basis of its proximity to Philippi and the definite possibility that the Praetorian Guard was stationed there. Once again, although several passages reveal that Paul experienced difficulties in Ephesus (Rom. 16:4, 7; 1 Cor. 15:32; 2 Cor. 1:8–23), there is no clear record that he was ever imprisoned there.

Still others advocate Caesarea as the location from which Paul wrote the letter (about A.D. 58–59). The Praetorian Guard may have been garrisoned at Caesarea, and the guard was at times considered to be part of Caesar's household (see Paul's statement in 4:22). However, Paul's expectation that he would soon be set free (1:19, 26; 2:24) does not fit the circumstances of this imprisonment. In Caesarea, release from prison was only a remote possibility. In fact, Paul had to appeal to Caesar in order to escape Jewish influence over the judicial process (Acts 25:6–11). Furthermore, Caesarea was far from Philippi. It is an improbable origin for Paul's short letter to the Philippians.

Most students have favored Rome (about A.D. 60–62) as the city from which Paul wrote this epistle. Although the distance between Rome and Philippi is great, Paul was in Rome long enough for messages to travel back and forth to that city. Furthermore, Paul's imprisonment in Rome is well established in Scripture (Acts 28:16–31). Because his situation allowed him freedom to preach the gospel (1:12, 13; Acts 28:23–31), he undoubtedly felt confident that his release from prison was imminent.

Setting While on his second missionary journey, and in response to a vision from God, Paul left Troas in the province of Asia (part of present-day Turkey) and traveled to Macedonia (in present-day Greece) to establish the first church in Europe, the church in the city of Philippi (Acts 16:6–12).

Named for Philip II of Macedon, the father of Alexander the Great, Philippi was strategically located on a major road, the Egnatian Way, that connected the eastern provinces of the Roman Empire to Rome. Thus Philippi became the leading city of Macedonia. In 42 B.C., the Romans granted Philippi the highest status possible for a provincial city, the status of a Roman colony. This meant that the citizens of Philippi could purchase, own, or transfer property. They also had the privilege of filing civil lawsuits in Roman courts and were exempted from paying both poll and land taxes. Their elevated status and wealth gave them not only confidence but a pride that bordered on arrogance.

The church that Paul established in Philippi was a mixture of races, cultures, and social classes (although mostly poor; see 4:15, 16) from its inception. The first converts were an upper-class woman (Lydia, a seller of royal dyes; see Acts 16:14, 15), a middle-class Roman jailer (Acts 16:22–34), and perhaps a lower-class young girl who had been demon-possessed (Acts 16:16–18). As the church grew, it maintained primarily a Gentile flavor, yet the less populous group of Jewish-Christians exerted much influence over the church.

Literary Structure Philippians closely follows the normal form of Paul's letters: (1) an identification of author and readers; (2) a pronouncement of God's grace and peace; (3) thanks offered to God because of the readers; (4) the body of the letter; (5) a personal desire to see the readers or to send someone to them; (6) greetings to the readers from those with Paul; and (7) a statement of blessing which serves as the conclusion of the letter. The only variation from this basic pattern is that Paul places the desire-to-send section (2:19–30) in the body of the letter. Paul does this in order to illustrate his point concerning humble service with the lives of Timothy and Epaphroditus.

Although the letter follows Paul's normal pattern, some have suggested that the letter is actually three letters combined into one. They do so on the basis of Paul's use of the Greek words for *finally* in 3:1 and 4:8. They argue that those words signal actual conclusions at those two points, thus indicating that Philippians is actually three different letters.

Yet the Greek words for *finally* can function as a transitional phrase (see 1 Thess. 4:1), in essence meaning "besides" or "furthermore." The strongest evidence for the unity of Philippians is a Greek manuscript from around A.D. 200 that includes all three sections of the letter (1:1—2:30; 3:1—4:7; 4:8–23). But whether Philippians is a unity or a compilation of several letters, it contains timeless truths from the pen of the apostle Paul.

Themes The most prominent theme of the Epistle to the Philippians is joy, specifically the joy of serving Jesus. The general tone of the letter reflects Paul's gratitude toward the Philippians and his joy in God. This may seem strange because Paul wrote this letter while he was in prison. Paul, however, had the ability to recognize opportunities for sharing the gospel even in apparent setbacks. This was the origin of Paul's joy: He saw God working through the difficult situations he faced.

Another theme of Paul's letter is "partnership in the gospel." Paul uses the Greek word *koinonia* in this letter in various ways: "fellowship" (1:5; 2:1; 3:10), "partakers" (1:7), and "shared" (4:15). All of these passages highlight the Philippians' active involvement in Paul's own ministry. By supporting Paul, the Philippians had become partners with him to further the Good News of Jesus Christ. Paul illustrates this concept of "partnering" or "fellowship" with the lives of Jesus Christ (2:5–11), Timothy (2:19–23), Epaphroditus (2:25–30), and Euodia and Syntyche (4:2, 3).

Since the Philippian Christians already possessed great joy and had demonstrated their partnership in sharing the gospel, Paul took the opportunity to identify a few weak areas that could be improved (4:2). For example, fellowship has two components: love and discernment. The Philippians had expressed the former but were lacking the latter (1:9; 4:10–16). Thus Paul exhorted the Philippians to grow in *knowledge* and *discernment*, words that in the Greek refer to a relational understanding (1:9). In other words, the Greek word for *knowledge* focuses on a person-to-God relationship, whereas the Greek word for *discernment* points to a person-to-person relationship. Paul wanted the Philippians not only to abound in love but also to experience more of God so that they could grow into a mature understanding of His ways.

All this shows that Paul had more than one purpose for his letter to the Philippians. Today's readers will

C. A.D. 47–49
Paul's first missionary journey

C. A.D. 50
The Jerusalem council

C. A.D. 50–53
Paul's second missionary journey

C. A.D. 50
The church at Philippi is started

C. A.D. 53–57
Paul's third missionary journey

C. A.D. 56
Paul revisits Philippi

C. A.D. 58
Paul is arrested in Jerusalem

C. A.D. 60–62
Paul is imprisoned in Rome; Philippians is written

C. A.D. 67
Peter and Paul are executed

1902 PHILIPPIANS INTRODUCTION

continue to find wonderful passages of encouragement in this short, joyful letter. Situations such as bickering among church members, living in this evil world, giving to missionaries, and finding contentment are still current issues for today's Christians. In this letter, Paul provides God's wisdom and encouragement. But most importantly, he holds up Jesus' life as the model for believers.

CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

Paul picks up his pen and (as if brushing a canvas) paints several portraits of the Savior. In chapter 1 the apostle reveals that Christ's life cannot be distinguished from the lives of His followers. "For to me, to live is Christ" (1:21). In chapter 2 he frames a humble profile of Jesus by picturing Him as the model of true humility: "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus" (2:5). Paul continues to paint. In chapter 3 he presents Jesus as the One who alone is capable of transforming our lowly bodies that they might be conformed to His glorious body (3:21).

But it is the ever-popular chapter 4 where Paul hangs his own self-portrait, extolling Jesus' power that has carried him through difficult circumstances over and over again. Along with Paul, we too can claim, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (4:13).

PHILIPPIANS OUTLINE

- I. Salutation 1:1, 2
- II. Paul's prayers for the Philippians 1:3–11
 - A. Praise for the Philippians 1:3–5
 - B. Promise: Paul's confidence in Christ and His work 1:6, 7
 - C. Prayer for the Philippians 1:8–11
- III. The biography of Paul 1:12–26
 - A. Success in jail: the gospel proclaimed by Paul and others 1:12–18
 - B. Success in Jesus: Paul's desire and determination to glorify Christ 1:19–26
- IV. The body of the letter 1:27—4:9
 - A. Excellence in conduct 1:27—2:18
 - B. Examples of good conduct: Timothy and Epaphroditus 2:19–30
 - C. Example of commitment: Paul's rejection of the world for Christ 3:1–21
 - D. Excellence in commitment: dedication to Christ 4:1–9
- V. Blessings 4:10–20
 - A. For Paul 4:10–18
 - B. For the Philippians 4:19, 20
- VI. Benediction and greetings 4:21–23

Roman and Byzantine remains at Philippi. Paul visited the city on his second and third missionary journeys. He was imprisoned here with Silas during the second journey (Acts 16:16–40).

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Philippi in the Time of Paul

The Roman colony of Philippi (*Colonia Augusta Julia Philippensis*) was an important city in Macedonia, located on the main highway leading from the eastern provinces to Rome. This road, the Egnatian Way, ran along the north side of the city's forum and was the chief cause of its prosperity and political importance. Ten miles east on the coast was Neapolis, the place where Paul landed after sailing from Troas in response to the Macedonian vision.

As a prominent city of the gold-producing region of Macedonia, Philippi had a proud history. Named originally after Philip II, the father of Alexander the Great, the city was later honored with the names of Julius Caesar and Augustus. Many Italian settlers from the legions swelled the ranks of citizens and made Philippi vigorous and polyglot. It grew from a small settlement to a city of dignity and privilege. Among its

highest honors was the *ius Italicum*, by which it enjoyed rights legally equivalent to those of Italian cities.

Ruins of the theater, the acropolis, the forum, the baths, and the commemorative arch (about a mile west of the city) have been found. A little farther beyond the arch at the Gangites River is the place where Paul addressed some God-fearing women and where Lydia was converted (Acts 16:13–15).



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Greeting

Paul and Timothy, bondservants of Jesus Christ,
To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, with the ¹bishops and ^adeacons:

²Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Thankfulness and Prayer

^{3b}I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, ⁴always in ^cevery prayer of mine making request for you all with joy, ^{5d}for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now, ⁶being con-

CHAPTER 1

1 ^a [1 Tim. 3:8–13]
1 Lit. *overseers*
3 ^b 1 Cor. 1:4
4 ^c Eph. 1:16;
1 Thess. 1:2
5 ^d [Rom. 12:13]

6 ^e [John 6:29]
11 ^f [Eph. 2:10];
Col. 1:6

fidant of this very thing, that He who has begun ^ea good work in you will complete *it* until the day of Jesus Christ; ⁷just as it is right for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart, inasmuch as both in my chains and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, you all are partakers with me of grace. ⁸For God is my witness, how greatly I long for you all with the affection of Jesus Christ.

⁹And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment, ¹⁰that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ, ¹¹being filled with the fruits of righteousness ^fwhich *are*

1:1–11 In the first few verses, Paul reveals his great love for the Philippians. He thinks of them often (vv. 3–6), he is concerned about them (vv. 7, 8), and he regularly prays for them (vv. 9–11). These verses not only reveal Paul's relation to the Philippians but also his view of God. The Lord does not merely start a wonderful work in us; He finishes what He starts. This is a comfort for those Christians who are in times of distress or suffering. God will continue His work in us.

1:1 bondservants: In his other prison epistles (Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon), Paul calls himself an apostle. In this letter he begins by giving the title of servant to Timothy and himself. It establishes Timothy (2:19–23), Epaphroditus (2:25–30), and Paul (3:7–9) as individuals who demonstrate the same servantlike attitude that Christ had (2:5–8). **Saints** means "holy ones" (those who are separated to God) and refers to all the believers in Philippi. **Bishops** refers to those who watched over the spiritual welfare of the local church (synonymous with "elders" in other passages; see Acts 20:17; Titus 1:5, 7). They were the main administrators of the church. **Deacons** refers to those who served the congregation in special service capacities. They were charged with handling the physical and material concerns of the church (see Acts 6:1–7). The mention of these two groups suggests that the church at Philippi had grown considerably since Paul's first visit there (see Acts 16:12–34).

1:2 Paul combines the word **grace** with a Greek translation of the Hebrew greeting *shalom*, or **peace** (see 2 Cor. 1:2; Gal. 1:3).

1:3 I thank: The tense of the Greek verb indicates that Paul was continually thankful to God for the Philippian Christians. **upon every remembrance of you:** Every time God brought them to his mind, Paul gave thanks.

1:4 Joy, a prominent theme in Philippians, filled Paul's prayers for the Philippians even when he interceded for their needs. This is the first of five uses of the Greek word for *joy* in the letter (v. 25; 2:2, 29; 4:1). Paul also uses the Greek word for *rejoice* nine times in this letter (v. 18; 2:17 [twice], 18 [twice], 28; 3:1; 4:4 [twice]).

1:5 Fellowship is a commercial term for a joint-partnership in a business venture in which all parties actively participate to ensure the success of the business. In the Christian community, the word expresses intimacy with Christ (see 1 Cor. 1:9) and other believers (see 2 Cor. 8:4, 1 John 1:7). In this case, Paul may be using the word *fellowship* to refer to the financial contributions the Philippians had given Paul **from the first day until now** (see 4:14, 15). Immediately upon becoming Christians and continually thereafter, the Philippians had dedicated themselves to living and proclaiming the truth about Jesus Christ, and specifically to helping Paul in his ministry.

1:6 being confident: Paul had become convinced some time in the past that God would complete His good work among the Philippians, and his confidence remained unshaken. **in you:** Since you is a plural pronoun, the good work that God was doing was taking place "among" the believers rather than "in" any isolated believer. **Until** can also be translated "as far as." It expresses progress toward a goal and indicates that a time is coming when God will completely finish His work among the Philippian Christians. **the day of Jesus Christ:** The ministry in which the Philippians participated continues

(like a relay race) up to the present, and it will continue until Christ returns. Paul calls Christ's return "the day of Christ" (see 2:16). On that day, Christ will judge nonbelievers and evaluate the lives of believers (see 2 Tim. 2:11–13).

1:7 The word **right** conveys a sense of moral uprightness (in keeping with God's law) and is often translated throughout the NT as "righteous." In this context, the word indicates that Paul's thoughts regarding the Philippians were in perfect accord with God's will.

because I have you in my heart: *Heart* refers to the innermost part of a person, the place where one thinks and reflects. Since **defense** implies speech, we can be certain that Paul was not silent while in prison, but boldly spoke about Jesus Christ. Paul may have also been indicating that he would testify about Christ at his judicial proceedings. **confirmation:** Used only here and in Heb. 6:16 in the NT, this word is a legal and commercial term meaning "a validating guarantee." *Defense* and *confirmation* are the negative and positive aspects of Paul's ministry. He defended the gospel against its opponents' attacks, and he confirmed the gospel through powerful signs.

1:8 affection of Jesus Christ: The word translated *affection* literally means the internal organs, regarded by the first-century reader as the center of the deepest feelings. Whereas the heart is the seat of reflection, Paul now speaks of his affection, his deep feelings for the believers. In modern terminology, Paul revealed that he had the "heart" of Jesus Christ. His feelings for the Philippians were like those of Jesus Christ, who loved them and died for them.

1:9 The **love** that Paul sought for the believers is the highest form of Christian love, based on a lasting, unconditional commitment, not on an unstable emotion. **knowledge:** The first of two terms on which a directed love is built, *knowledge* suggests an intimate understanding based on a relationship with the person. Here the focus of this knowledge is God. **discernment:** Found only here in the NT, the Greek word means moral or ethical understanding based on both the intellect and the senses. The word implies perception or insight into social situations.

1:10 that you may approve: This verb is used in ancient literature for the testing of gold to determine its purity, and for trying oxen to assess their usefulness for the task at hand. The purpose of increasing in love, controlled by knowledge, is to be able to evaluate people and situations correctly. **sincere:** This term, literally meaning "judged by sunlight," does not mean "honestly trying hard," but rather pure, unmixed, and free from falsehood. Any spot in a garment or imperfection in merchandise could be seen by holding the object up to the sunlight. Christ died to free the church from every blemish (Eph. 5:27). **without offense:** Using still another graphic term to describe the Christian, Paul conveys the sense of not striking out at someone. Here the phrase means not leading others into sin by one's own behavior. **day of Christ:** The goal ahead for the believer is the *day of Christ* in which the believer will stand for evaluation before the Savior, who is the faithful and true witness (see v. 6; 1 Cor. 1:8; 5:5).

1:11 fruits of righteousness: This phrase is best understood either as "fruit that results from being justified" or "fruit characterized by

by Jesus Christ, ^gto the glory and praise of God.

Christ Is Preached

¹²But I want you to know, brethren, that the things *which happened* to me have actually turned out for the furtherance of the gospel, ¹³so that it has become evident ^hto the whole ²palace guard, and to all the rest, that my chains are in Christ; ¹⁴and most of the brethren in the Lord, having become confident by my chains, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.

¹⁵Some indeed preach Christ even from envy and strife, and some also from goodwill: ¹⁶³The former preach Christ from selfish ambition, not sincerely, suppos-

¹¹ ^g John 15:8
¹³ ^h Phil. 4:22 ² Or
Praetorium
¹⁶ ³ NU reverses vv.
16 and 17.

¹⁹ ⁱ Job 13:16, LXX
²⁰ / Eph. 6:19, 20
^k (Rom. 14:8)

ing to add affliction to my chains; ¹⁷but the latter out of love, knowing that I am appointed for the defense of the gospel.

¹⁸What then? Only *that* in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is preached; and in this I rejoice, yes, and will rejoice.

To Live Is Christ

¹⁹For I know that ⁱthis will turn out for my deliverance through your prayer and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, ²⁰according to my earnest expectation and hope that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but ^jwith all boldness, as always, so now also Christ will be magnified in my body, whether by life ^kor by death. ²¹For to me, to live *is* Christ,

morally correct conduct." *Righteousness* describes the source or the nature of the fruit, the behavior.

1:12 actually turned out: Paul wanted the Philippians to know that his imprisonment was advancing, not hindering, the gospel. Such words would comfort the Philippians who were concerned about Paul's welfare and who needed assurance that their prayers for Paul and their gifts to him had not been in vain. **furtherance:** This word could suggest a pioneer beating or cutting a path through a densely forested area. Paul's imprisonment was a strategic advance in the kingdom of God because it was clearing the way for the gospel to penetrate the ranks of the Roman military (see v. 13) and even the royal house (see 4:22). These were two areas that under normal circumstances would have been closed to the gospel.

1:13 Paul's imprisonment furthered the gospel in two ways. First, the palace guard heard it as Paul preached in prison. Second, **all the rest**—Paul's visitors—heard the gospel. Some of his visitors were leaders of the Jews in Rome (see Acts 28:17). The **palace guard** (Praetorian Guard) consisted of several thousand and highly trained, elite soldiers of the Roman Empire who were headquartered at Rome. For the one to two years that Paul had been under house arrest in Rome, different soldiers had taken turns guarding him. Because they were chained to Paul, they had no other choice but to listen to him proclaim the gospel; they could not beat him into silence because he was a Roman citizen (see Acts 16:37, 38). Although Paul could not go to the world to preach, in this way God brought the world to Paul. In an ironic twist, they were the captives and Paul was free to preach. **in Christ:** Paul considered his imprisonment to be the result of God's sovereign will.

1:14 without fear: Although they too could be imprisoned as Paul was, the Roman Christians were emboldened by Paul's courage and were able to proclaim the message about Jesus Christ fearlessly.

1:15 Those preaching **from envy and strife** were not heretics, since they were preaching Christ. But apparently they were jealous of the attention Paul received, and they determined to sow seeds of dissension in order to cause him trouble. **some . . . from goodwill:** Other Christians preached Christ with good motives. They thought well of Paul and of the gospel message and were dedicated to serving God faithfully.

1:16, 17 Some manuscripts reverse the order of vv. 16 and 17. **selfish ambition:** The motives of these believers were anything but good. The term for *selfish ambition* implies that they did not preach to honor God or to help Paul but rather to gain applause and followers for themselves (see 2:3). **not sincerely:** Paul reemphasizes the fact that these Christians were not acting with pure motives. **to add:** The word Paul uses here literally means "to raise up" or "to cause." In other words, Paul believes that these preachers actually desired to cause him additional problems while he was in prison.

1:18 What then: In essence Paul is saying, "Their motives are between them and God." **in pretense or in truth:** Whether the preaching was done for false motives or pure, whether for appear-

ance's sake or for the sake of what was right, Paul was pleased that the gospel was being spread.

1:19 will turn out: Paul expresses his positive attitude and confidence about how the sovereign God would work out this difficult situation. **deliverance:** The Greek word translated *deliverance* is usually translated "salvation." In the NT this word is used for physical healing, rescue from danger or death, justification, sanctification, and glorification. Here Paul refers to his daily empowering to endure the troubling situation before him. He may also be indicating his confidence that he would be delivered from prison (see v. 25). **your prayer:** Here is the channel for his deliverance. The prayer of believers on behalf of other believers is vitally important because by it, and together with the work of the Holy Spirit, God produces positive results. **supply:** Originally this word was used to refer to a wealthy benefactor defraying the expenses of a chorus or dance troupe. Later and more generally, it meant to supply the abundant resources that would meet someone's need.

1:20 earnest expectation: This phrase translates a Greek word which pictures the outstretched hand of someone straining to focus attention on an object. **hope:** This is not just wishful thinking but confident expectation. **in nothing . . . ashamed:** Paul was determined not to be dishonored in anything or by anyone. He vividly demonstrated that right actions are not determined by environment but by right thinking. **will be magnified:** Paul was committed to ensuring that Christ would be made even more conspicuous in his own life than ever. He was not relying on himself to exalt Christ but looked to the Holy Spirit (see v. 19) to magnify Christ in him (see John 16:14; 2 Cor. 3:18). **by life or by death:** There was no difference between life and death as far as Paul was concerned, as long as that life or death magnified, glorified, and exalted Christ before others.

1:21 For to me is similar to the common expression: "As far as I'm concerned." **Christ . . . gain:** Paul would experience *gain* in his own death because he would be with Christ (v. 23). In fact, Paul may have been expressing his confidence that since his imprisonment had furthered the gospel, God would also use his death to further His kingdom.

supply

(Gk. *epichorēgia*) (1:19; Eph. 4:16) Strong's #2024

The Philippians' prayer would generate the Spirit's *supply*. The Greek word was used to describe what a choir manager would provide all the members of a Greek choir who performed in Greek drama. In short, he took care of all their living expenses. The word came to mean a full supply of any kind. Paul was looking forward to getting a full supply of Jesus Christ's Spirit as a result of the Philippians' prayers.

and to die *is* gain. ²²But if *I* live on in the flesh, this *will mean* fruit from *my* labor; yet what *I* shall choose *I* ⁴cannot tell. ²³⁵For *I* am hard-pressed between the two, having a ¹desire to depart and be with Christ, *which is* ^mfar better. ²⁴Nevertheless to remain in the flesh *is* more needful for you. ²⁵And being confident of this, *I* know that *I* shall remain and continue with you all for your progress and joy of faith, ²⁶that ⁿyour rejoicing for me may be more abundant in Jesus Christ by my coming to you again.

Striving and Suffering for Christ

²⁷Only ^alet your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether *I* come and see you or am absent, *I* may hear of your affairs, that you stand fast in one spirit, ^pwith one mind ^qstriv-

²² ⁴do not know
²³ ¹[2 Cor. 5:2, 8];
2 Tim. 4:6 ^m[Ps.
16:11] ⁵NU, M But
²⁶ ⁿ2 Cor. 1:14
²⁷ ^oEph. 4:1;
1 Thess. 2:12
^p 1 Cor. 1:10; Eph.
4:3 ^qJude 3
²⁸ ⁶NU of your
salvation
²⁹ ^r[Matt. 5:11, 12;
Acts 5:41; Rom. 5:3]
^s Eph. 2:8 ^t[2 Tim.
3:12]
³⁰ ^uCol. 1:29; 2:1;
1 Thess. 2:2; 1 Tim.
6:12; 2 Tim. 4:7;
Heb. 10:32; 12:1
^v Acts 16:19–40;
Phil. 1:13; 1 Thess.
2:2

CHAPTER 2

¹ ^aCol. 3:12
¹ Or encouragement

ing together for the faith of the gospel, ²⁸and not in any way terrified by your adversaries, which is to them a proof of perdition, but ⁶to you of salvation, and that from God. ²⁹For to you ^rit has been granted on behalf of Christ, ^snot only to believe in Him, but also to ^tsuffer for His sake, ³⁰^uhaving the same conflict ^vwhich you saw in me and now hear *is* in me.

Unity Through Humility

²Therefore if *there is* any ¹consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any ^aaffection and mercy, ^{2b}fulfill my joy ^cby being like-minded, having the same love, *being of* ^done accord, of one mind. ^{3e}Let nothing be

² ^bJohn 3:29 ^cRom. 12:16 ^dPhil. 4:2 ³ ^eGal. 5:26;
James 3:14

1:22 fruit from my labor: If Paul continued to live, he would have the opportunity to preach the gospel to others and see spiritual victory in the lives of the Philippians. **what I shall choose:** Paul was in a dilemma because he clearly saw the advantages of both life and death for the Christian. Life meant an opportunity to minister to people like the Philippians (see v. 24), while death meant being with Christ his Savior.

1:23 Paul felt pressed in on every side, much like a besieged city with no hope of relief from its affliction. He was torn between the prospect of seeing the Lord and his passion for ministering to the Philippians. A **desire** here means more than a wish; it indicates an intense longing. **to depart:** In relation to Paul's profession as a tent-maker, the term *depart* means to strike, or take down, the tent to be ready to travel elsewhere. Paul saw death not as the end of life but as a time of moving from one home to another.

1:25 your progress: Paul was not satisfied that the Philippian Christians should simply be saved, but that they should advance to maturity in Christ. He felt a responsibility to continue to teach them.

1:27 let your conduct: The word used could refer to discharging the obligations of a citizen. Because Philippi held the privileged status of a Roman colony, its citizens understood the responsibilities associated with citizenship. Paul here commanded them (the first command in the letter) to shift their perspective from the earthly realm to the heavenly one. They should live in this world as citizens of another world, the heavenly kingdom. Their conduct should reveal their heavenly citizenship. **stand fast:** They were not to stand alone in isolation but together in oneness of spirit and mind, united for a common goal. **striving together:** Teamwork is the key concept expressed by this Greek word, which literally means "to engage together in an athletic contest." **for the faith:** God never intended believers to be alone. His plan is that we should gather together in a church in order to strengthen and encourage each other (see 2:2). Paul was urging them to strive together, not just for the sake of their individual faith, but also on behalf of the truth of Christianity, their common faith.

striving together

(Gk. *sunathleō*) (1:27; 4:3) Strong's #4866

The image in Greek is drawn from athletic contests. Usually, athletes competed one against another; in 1:27 Paul asks the church at Philippi to compete together as a team of athletes to help advance the faith that comes through the preaching of the gospel. In the same epistle, he also mentions Euodia and Syntyche as those who were contending for the gospel side by side with him (4:2, 3).

1:28 The word translated **terrified** is a strong term that is used of the terror of a panicked horse. The Philippians are not to be terror-stricken in the face of their enemies. Their courage would be proof of their salvation and of the ultimate failure of their foes.

proof of perdition: By striving together in love and confidence, the Philippians would be living *proof* (a legal term denoting proof obtained by an analysis of the facts) to their opponents that the message of Jesus Christ is true. This would confirm the lost state of their adversaries. Because Paul contrasted **salvation to perdition**, his focus here undoubtedly was on eternal matters. Contrast this with Paul's focus on his own present salvation, or "deliverance," in v. 19.

1:29 to suffer: Suffering is actually a gift from God, for in the midst of suffering He comforts us (see 2 Cor. 1:5) and enables us to rejoice (see 1 Pet. 4:12, 13). Suffering is a blessing because it brings eternal reward (see Matt. 5:1–12; 2 Cor. 4:17; 2 Tim. 2:12; Rev. 22:12). God sees suffering as a tool to accomplish His purposes both in His Son (see Heb. 2:10) and in His children (see 1 Pet. 1:6, 7). Suffering, moreover, matures us as Christians in the present (see James 1:2–4) and enables us to be glorified with Christ in the future (see Rom. 8:17).

2:1 The Philippians' biggest battle was not with their external circumstances but with those internal attitudes that destroy unity. Paul had demonstrated his own refusal to let external circumstances control his attitudes (1:12–18). The **therefore** ties together his conflict and their conflict. **if...if...if...if:** The conditional clauses in this verse indicate certainties, not "maybes." Each *if* here expresses the idea of "since," and each following clause may be considered to be true. **fellowship:** Scripture teaches that our fellowship is not only with God the Holy Spirit as seen here, but also with God the Father (see 1 John 1:3) and God the Son (see 1 Cor. 1:9; 1 John 1:3), as well as with other Christians (see 1 John 1:7). **affection:** See 1:8. **mercy:** The Greek term means compassionate desires that develop in response to a situation and that stimulate a person to meet recognized needs in that situation.

2:2 In this verse the apostle sets forth a fourfold appeal, an appeal that expresses one major idea—namely the unity of the church. **like-minded:** This expresses Paul's concern for humility (see 4:2). Paul illustrates this attitude in 2:3, 4 and then describes the greatest example of humility, Jesus Christ Himself, in 2:5–8. **same love:** See 1:9. **one accord:** Paul here is stressing a unity of spirit between Christians (see Ps. 133), literally "a togetherness of soul." **one mind:** The words Paul uses to indicate *one mind* are virtually identical to the words translated *like-minded* earlier in this verse. Paul was strongly emphasizing the unity that should exist between believers and how they must single-mindedly strive together to advance the gospel of Jesus Christ.

2:3 Here Paul attempts to correct any misunderstanding that may arise from what he said earlier in the letter about some preaching out of selfish motives (see 1:15, 16). He was concerned that some-

done through selfish ambition or conceit, but ^fin lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. ^{4g}Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of ^hothers.

The Humbled and Exalted Christ

⁵ⁱLet this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, ⁶who, ^jbeing in the form of God, did not consider it ²robbery to be equal with God, ^{7k}but ³made Himself of no reputation, taking the form ^lof a bondservant, and ^mcoming in the likeness of men. ⁸And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and ⁿbecame ^oobedient to the point

³ ^fRom. 12:10; Eph. 5:21
⁴ ^g1 Cor. 13:5
^h Rom. 15:1, 2
⁵ [Matt. 11:29]; Rom. 15:3
⁶ / 2 Cor. 4:4 ² Or something to be held onto to be equal
⁷ ^k Ps. 22:6 / Is. 42:1
^m [John 1:14]; Rom. 8:3; Gal. 4:4; [Heb. 2:17] ³ emptied Himself of His privileges
⁸ ⁿ Ps. 40:6–8; Matt. 26:39; John 10:18; [Rom. 5:19]
^o Heb. 5:8
⁹ ^p [Matt. 28:18];

of death, even the death of the cross. ^{9p}Therefore God also ^qhas highly exalted Him and ^rgiven Him the name which is above every name, ^{10s}that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, ¹¹and ^tthat every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Light Bearers

¹²Therefore, my beloved, ^uas you have

Heb. 2:9 ^q Ps. 68:18; 110:1; Is. 52:13; Acts 2:33 ★ ^r Is. 9:6; Luke 1:32; Eph. 1:21 ¹⁰ ^s Is. 45:23; Rom. 14:11; Rev. 5:13
¹¹ ^t John 13:13; [Rom. 10:9; 14:9] ¹² ^u Phil. 1:5, 6; 4:15

one might think he was condoning **selfish ambition**, so long as the gospel was being preached. **conceit**: Paul uses a Greek term meaning “empty pride,” or “groundless self-esteem.” Pride should not be a Christian’s motivation; instead everything should be done in the power of the Holy Spirit. **lowliness of mind**: The Greek word suggests a deep sense of humility. Although the pagan writers used the word negatively, in effect to mean abjectness or groveling, Paul did not. What Paul was calling for was an honest evaluation of one’s own nature. Such an evaluation should always lead to a glorification of Christ. **let each esteem**: This verb indicates a thorough analysis of the facts in order to reach a correct conclusion about the matter. In other words, each Philippian Christian was to properly assess himself or herself. Such an assessment would lead to valuing others. **others better than himself**: The honest self-examination that Paul was calling for leads to true humility.

2:5 These verses (vv. 5–8) present one of the most significant statements in all of Scripture on the nature of the Incarnation, the fact that God became man. Also, through this wonderful description of Christ, Paul vividly illustrates the principle of humility (vv. 3, 4). **Let this mind be**: All godly action begins with the “renewing of the mind.” Right thinking produces right actions. Our actions are the fruit of our deepest thoughts. **in you**: Thinking and being like Christ are requirements not only for an individual but also for the corporate body of believers. Together we need to think and act like one being, like the Person of Jesus Christ.

2:6 robbery: Because Christ was God, He did not look on sharing God’s nature as *robbery*, that is, as “a thing to be seized,” as though He did not already possess it, or as “a thing to be retained,” as though He might lose it. **equal**: As used in this verse, this word speaks of equality of existence. Christ was fully God, but He limited Himself in such a way that He could also be completely human. In Christ, God became man.

2:7 made Himself of no reputation: This phrase can be translated “He emptied Himself.” Christ did this by taking on the form of a servant, a mere man. In doing this, He did not empty Himself of any part of His essence as God. Instead He merely gave up His privileges as God and took upon Himself existence as a man. While remaining completely God, He became completely human. **form**: Jesus added to His divine essence (see v. 6) a servant’s essence, that is, the essential characteristics of a human being seeking to fulfill the will of another. **bondservant**: In this context, the term refers to the lowest status on the social ladder (see Heb. 10:5), the exact opposite of the term *Lord*, a title by which all will one day recognize the risen and exalted Christ (see v. 11). It is truly amazing, therefore, that the God who created the universe (see John 1:3; Col. 1:16) and who rules over all creation (see Col. 1:17) would choose to add to His person the nature of a servant. **likeness**: This word does not mean that Christ only appeared to be a man. Rather, the term emphasizes identity. In reality He was a man, possessing all the essential aspects of a human being, although unlike all others He was sinless.

2:8 appearance: This is the third word Paul uses to show the Philippians that Jesus Christ who is fully God from all eternity is also fully man. In the previous verses, Paul describes Jesus as possessing the

nature of God and taking on the nature of a servant. Jesus came to the earth with the identity of a man. Here the word *appearance* points to the external characteristics of Jesus: He had the bearing, actions, and manners of a man. **He humbled Himself**: Jesus willingly took the role of a servant; no one forced Him to do it. **obedient**: Although He never sinned and did not deserve to die, He chose to die so that the sins of the world could be charged to His account. Subsequently He could credit His righteousness to the account of all who believe in Him (see 2 Cor. 5:21; Gal. 1:4). **even the death of the cross**: Paul describes the depths of Christ’s humiliation by reminding his readers that Christ died by the cruelest form of capital punishment, crucifixion. The Romans reserved the agonizing death of crucifixion for slaves and foreigners, and the Jews viewed death on a cross as a curse from God (see Deut. 21:23; Gal. 3:13).

2:9 Note the contrast between Jesus’ placing Himself in a debased status (see v. 8) with God the Father’s elevation of Jesus to a **highly exalted** status.

2:10 every knee: Although all will one day worship Christ, only those who put their faith in Him in this life will have an everlasting relationship with Him after death (see Rev. 20:13–15). **those under the earth**: Paul refers here to those who will already have died at the time of Christ’s return, in contrast to the angels in heaven and those who will still be living on earth.

2:11 confess: The term Paul uses is a strong, intensive verb, which means “agree with” or “say the same thing.” Essentially Paul is saying that everyone will unanimously affirm what God the Father has already stated (Is. 45:23); that Jesus Christ is Lord.

2:12 Therefore: Paul desires the Philippians to respond positively to his admonition to have the mind of Christ (vv. 5–8). The command is to the entire group since the word **you** is plural. The subject is their mutual, corporate salvation (see 1:19, 28; Luke 22:24–30). **work out**: The Greek term speaks of the present deliverance of the Philippians. The word translated *work out* is used by the first-century author Strabo to speak of digging silver out of silver mines. Thus salvation can be compared to a huge gift that needs to be unwrapped for one’s thorough enjoyment. Note that Paul is encouraging the Philippians to develop and *work out* their salvation, but not to work for their salvation.

form of God

(Gk. *morphē theou*) (2:6) Strong’s #3444; 2316

The Greek word for *form* was generally used to express the way in which a thing exists and appears according to what it is in itself. Thus the expression *form of God* may be correctly understood as the essential nature and character of God. To say, therefore, that Christ existed in the *form of God* is to say that apart from His human nature Christ possesses all the characteristics and qualities belonging to God because He is, in fact, God.



The Believers at Philippi

There must have been very few Jews in Philippi because the city did not have a synagogue, and in first-century Judaism it took only ten Jewish men to justify building a synagogue for worship. The Jews who did live in Philippi went outside the city gate to the banks of the Gangites River for worship and prayer. Philippi was a culturally diverse Roman city on the main highway (the Egnatian Way) from the eastern provinces to Rome, and the church at Philippi had a diverse group of believers. The NT specifically mentions an Asian, a Greek, and a Roman. One was a businesswoman who sold purple cloth to the rich; one was a slave girl who had been possessed with a spirit of divination; the third was a jailer. These people represented three different races, three different social ranks, and probably three different religious loyalties before encountering Christ.



Part of the Via Egnatia that runs along the forum at Philippi

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always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, ^vwork out your own salvation with ^wfear and trembling; ¹³for ^xit is God who works in you both to will and to do ^yfor His good pleasure.

¹⁴Do all things ^zwithout ⁴complaining

12 ^v John 6:27, 29;
2 Pet. 1:10 ^w Eph.
6:5

13 ^x Rom. 12:3;
1 Cor. 12:6; 15:10;
2 Cor. 3:5; Heb.
13:20, 21
^y Eph. 1:5

and ^adisputing, ⁵ ¹⁵that you may become blameless and ⁶harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as ^blights in the world, ¹⁶holding fast the word of life, so that ^cI may rejoice in the day of Christ that ^dI have not run in vain or labored in ^evain.

¹⁷Yes, and if ^fI am being poured out as a drink offering on the sacrifice ^gand service of your faith, ^hI am glad and rejoice with you all. ¹⁸For the same reason you also be glad and rejoice with me.

Timothy Commended

¹⁹But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send ⁱTimothy to you shortly, that I also may be encouraged when I know your ⁷state. ²⁰For I have no one ^jlike-minded, who will sincerely care for your state. ²¹For all seek their own, not the things which are of Christ Jesus. ²²But you know his proven character, ^kthat as a son with ^{his} father he served with me in the gospel. ²³Therefore I hope to send him at once, as soon as I see how it goes with me. ²⁴But I trust in the Lord that I myself shall also come shortly.

Epaphroditus Praised

²⁵Yet I considered it necessary to send to you ^lEpaphroditus, my brother, fellow

14 ^z 1 Cor. 10:10; 1 Pet. 4:9 ^a Rom. 14:1 ⁴ grumbling ⁵ arguing
15 ^b Matt. 5:15, 16 ⁶ innocent 16 ^c 2 Cor. 1:14 ^d Gal. 2:2 ^e Is.
49:4; Gal. 4:11; 1 Thess. 3:5 17 ^f 2 Cor. 12:15; 2 Tim. 4:6 ^g Num.
28:6, 7; Rom. 15:16 ^h 2 Cor. 7:4 19 ⁱ Rom. 16:21 ⁷ condition
20 ^j 1 Cor. 16:10; 2 Tim. 3:10 22 ^k 1 Cor. 4:17 25 ^l Phil. 4:18

2:14 The Philippians have been secretly discontented and have been **complaining** (2:1–4). But the word used suggests that loud dissension had not yet broken out.

2:15 This verse focuses on the testimony of the church. The purpose of the command in v. 14 is that the Philippians might be **blameless** light bearers in their world. They should deserve no censure because they are free from fault or defect in relation to the outside world (see 3:6). If the Philippian believers were going to have a testimony in their community, they had to be blameless in their actions and attitudes, both inside and outside the church (see 1 Tim. 3:2). **without fault:** This term is a technical word used to denote anything that is fit to be offered as a sacrifice to God, without blot or blemish, untainted by sin. **crooked and perverse generation:** Paul describes the world as being the opposite of Christian. On the one hand the world is turned away from the truth, while on the other hand it exerts a corrupting influence that is opposed to the truth. **shine as lights:** Paul depicts believers as stars whose light penetrates the spiritual darkness of a perverted world. Jesus said, “I am the light of the world.” He also said, “You are the light of the world” (Matt. 5:14). We are the light of the world as long as we reflect Christ.

2:16 The Greek verb translated **holding fast** contains two thoughts: holding fast and holding forth. The former concept suggests a steadfastness in which our lights (see v. 15) blaze continually for God. The latter concept implies projecting our lights into the darkness of this world. **Run** suggests energetic activity, while **labored** indicates the toil of Paul’s ministry.

2:17 being poured out: Both Jews and Greeks sometimes poured wine out on an altar in connection with religious sacrifices (see Num.

15:1–10). Some have interpreted this figure of speech as depicting Paul’s own martyrdom for the cause of Christ. However the content of the letter reveals by contrast that Paul assumes he will live (see 1:25) and expects to be released from prison shortly (see v. 24). Thus Paul probably was saying that he was presently being poured out as a living **offering** on behalf of the faith of the Philippians. **sacrifice:** This means primarily the act of offering something to God. **service:** Paul chooses a Greek term that depicts a person who fulfills the duties of a public office at his or her own expense. In the Christian context, this word speaks of worship humbly offered to God.

2:19 Paul balanced the previous somber passage (vv. 12–18) with the optimistic hope of sending his coworker **Timothy**, whose name means “One Who Honors God” and was from a believing family. Both his mother Eunice and his grandmother Lois had become Christians (see 2 Tim. 1:5). He had accompanied Paul on the second missionary journey, during which time they had established the church at Philippi. Timothy apparently was well-loved by the Philippians, and he in turn exhibited a great concern for them (see vv. 20–22).

2:20 like-minded: Timothy and Paul had the same quality of concern for the Philippians (see Paul’s command in v. 2 for the Philippians to be like-minded).

2:22 Timothy had shown his faithful **character** to the Philippians, who knew of his ten years of ministry with the apostle Paul. **as a son:** In NT times, a son who **served** his father did so to learn the family trade. Serving in this way meant learning all about the business and being willing to obey the teacher in order to become as skillful as possible in the work.

2:25 Epaphroditus was a Philippian Christian sent by the church

worker, and ^mfellow soldier, ⁿbut your messenger and ^othe one who ministered to my need; ²⁶^psince he was longing for you all, and was distressed because you had heard that he was sick. ²⁷For indeed he was sick almost unto death; but God had mercy on him, and not only on him but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow. ²⁸Therefore I sent him the more eagerly, that when you see him again you may rejoice, and I may be less sorrowful. ²⁹Receive him therefore in the Lord with all gladness, and hold such men in esteem; ³⁰because for the work of Christ he came close to death, ⁸not regarding his life, ^qto supply what was lacking in your service toward me.

All for Christ

3 Finally, my brethren, ^arejoice in the Lord. For me to write the same things to you *is* not tedious, but for you *it is* safe. ²^bBeware of dogs, beware of ^cevil

²⁵ ^m Philem. 2
ⁿ John 13:16; 2 Cor.
8:23 ^o 2 Cor. 11:9
²⁶ ^p Phil. 1:8
³⁰ ^q 1 Cor. 16:17;
Phil. 4:10 ⁸ *risking*

CHAPTER 3

¹ ^a 1 Thess. 5:16
² ^b Ps. 22:16, 20;
Gal. 5:15; Rev. 22:15
^c Ps. 119:115 ^d Rom.
2:28
³ ^e Deut. 30:6; Rom.
2:28, 29; 9:6; [Gal.
6:15] ^f John 4:24;
Rom. 7:6 ¹ NU, M in
the Spirit of God
⁴ ^g 2 Cor. 5:16; 11:18
^h 2 Cor. 11:22, 23
⁵ ⁱ Rom. 11:1 ^j 2 Cor.
11:22 ^k Acts 23:6
⁶ ^l Acts 8:3; 22:4, 5;
26:9–11
⁷ ^m Matt. 13:44
⁸ ⁿ Is. 53:11; Jer. 9:23;
John 17:3; 1 Cor. 2:2;
[Eph. 4:13]
⁹ ^o Rom. 10:3
^p Rom. 1:17

workers, ^dbeware of the mutilation! ³For we are ^ethe circumcision, ^fwho worship ¹God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh, ⁴though ^gI also might have confidence in the flesh. If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I ^hmore so: ⁵circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, ⁱof the tribe of Benjamin, ^ja Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, ^ka Pharisee; ⁶concerning zeal, ^lpersecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

⁷But ^mwhat things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. ⁸Yet indeed I also count all things loss ⁿfor the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ ⁹and be found in Him, not having ^omy own righteousness, which *is* from the law, but ^pthat which *is* through faith in

in Philippi to take a gift to Paul (see 4:18) and to assist Paul in his ministry. He is described with a series of complimentary terms: a “brother,” a “fellow worker,” a “fellow soldier,” a “messenger” to the Philippians, and a “minister” to Paul. He is mentioned in the Bible only in this letter. **fellow worker:** Paul considers Epaphroditus to be an equal in the work of the gospel. The title of **fellow soldier** was given only to those who had fought honorably alongside another. Paul thus offered high praise to Epaphroditus for his faithful service in the cause of Christ. **your messenger:** Here Paul uses the Greek term usually translated apostle in its nontechnical sense. Both Paul and Epaphroditus are messengers, but Paul’s authority is greater than Epaphroditus’s. Paul had a direct commission from Jesus Christ, while Epaphroditus was sent by the Philippians.

2:26 longing: Paul declares that Epaphroditus demonstrates the same concern for the Philippians as he himself does (see 1:8). Thus they are one in their work for the Lord (see v. 25), and they are one in their love for the Lord’s people.

2:27 sick almost unto death: Paul was making certain that the Philippians understood the effort that Epaphroditus had made for the cause of Jesus Christ. Epaphroditus’s condition had been far worse than perhaps they had imagined. Paul viewed Epaphroditus’s healing as God’s direct intervention. Though Paul exercised apostolic powers (see 2 Cor. 12:12), those powers were useless outside of the will and timing of God.

2:30 not regarding his life: Paul informs the Philippians of the commitment that Epaphroditus had for the work that they had given him to do. **to supply what was lacking:** Paul acknowledges the work that the Philippians had already done for him. Epaphroditus was able to do what the Philippians could not do: be physically present to minister to him.

3:1 safe: Paul is concerned that the Philippians do not fall into the trap set forth by those within the church who support heresy.

3:2 In NT times, **dogs** were hated scavengers. The term came to be used for all who had morally impure minds. **evil workers:** Since the term *workers* was occasionally used to identify those who propagated a religion, the words *evil workers* probably refers to teachers who are spreading destructive doctrines. **mutilation:** Paul here points sarcastically and specifically to those who desire to reinstate Jewish religious practices as necessary for salvation. He chooses a term that literally means “to cut.” By doing so, he suggests that these people do not even understand the truth about the OT practice of circumcision but understand it merely as a cutting of the flesh.

3:3 Paul defines true **circumcision** as a matter of the heart and not of the flesh. He reveals three aspects of true circumcision: (1) worshipping **God in the Spirit**; (2) rejoicing in **Christ**; and (3) placing

no **confidence** in any human honor or accomplishment as a means to reach God. The OT also taught that circumcision was more than a ritual of the flesh (see Lev. 26:41; Deut. 10:16, 30:6; Jer. 4:4; Ezek. 44:7).

3:4–9 Paul speaks as though he had **confidence in the flesh** to show that the reason he did not rely on Jewish credentials was not that he did not possess them, but that they could not achieve the righteousness only God could provide.

3:5 eighth day: Paul’s parents obeyed God’s law and had Paul circumcised on the appropriate day after his birth (see Lev. 12:2, 3). The people of Israel are called the people of God. That Paul states he is of the **stock of Israel** implies that he is able to trace his origins to the true line of Israel, to Jacob and not Esau. **tribe of Benjamin:** The *tribe of Benjamin* was highly regarded by Israelites because that line had produced the first king of Israel and had remained loyal to David. Furthermore, that tribe had joined Judah after the Exile to form the foundation for the restored nation (see 1 Sam. 9:15–21; 1 Kin. 12:21–24). **Hebrew of the Hebrews:** This description of Paul may indicate that (1) both his parents were Jews, (2) he was a model Jew, or (3) he was educated completely as a Jew. **Pharisee:** Pharisees were highly educated Jewish leaders who spearheaded the opposition against Jesus while He was on earth, and later against the Christian church. They rigorously followed and defended the letter of the Jewish law. Paul himself came from a line of Pharisees (see Acts 23:6) and had studied under Gamaliel, a highly respected Pharisee of that day (see Acts 22:3).

3:6 persecuting the church: Prior to becoming a Christian, Paul vigorously attacked those who believed in Christ, even to the point of having them put to death (see Acts 7:58–8:3; 9:1, 2).

3:7 gain: See 1:21. **loss:** This word indicates that which is damaged or of no further use (see v. 8; Acts 27:10, 21). Those things that Paul thought to be important became unimportant after confronting the resurrected Messiah.

3:8 excellence: The value of knowing Christ surpasses all else (see 2:3; 4:7). **rubbish:** This word means anything that is detestable or worthless. All the things of this world are rubbish compared to Christ. Even “our righteousnesses are like filthy rags” (see Is. 64:6). **I may gain:** The former *gain* (see v. 7) is here substituted for the latter *gain*: Christ Jesus (see 1:21).

3:9 from the law: In vv. 6 and 7, Paul reveals the uselessness of righteousness that is in the law. Here he divulges that his own righteousness that had been in that law was also in vain. **through faith in Christ:** Paul recognizes that true righteousness is a matter of faith, not of works. It is God’s righteousness that comes through Christ, not our own righteousness.

Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; ¹⁰ that I may know Him and the ^rpower of His resurrection, and ^rthe fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, ¹¹ if, by any means, I may ^sattain² to the resurrection from the dead.

Pressing Toward the Goal

¹² Not that I have already ^tattained,³ or am already ^uperfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. ¹³ Brethren, I do not count myself to have ⁴apprehended; but one thing *I do*, ^vforgetting those things which are behind and ^wreaching forward to those things which are ahead, ^{14x} I press toward the goal for the prize of ^ythe upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

¹⁵ Therefore let us, as many as are ^zmature, ^ahave this mind; and if in anything you think otherwise, ^bGod will reveal even this to you. ¹⁶ Nevertheless, to the *degree* that we have already ⁵attained, ^clet us walk ^dby the same ⁶rule, let us be of the same mind.

10 ^a Eph. 1:19, 20 ^r [Rom. 6:3–5]; 2 Cor. 1:5; 1 Pet. 4:13
11 ^s Acts 26:6–8; [1 Cor. 15:23; Rev. 20:5] ² Lit. *arrive at*
12 ^t 1 Cor. 9:24; [1 Tim. 6:12; 19] ^u Heb. 12:23
13 ^v obtained it
13 ^v Luke 9:62
^w Heb. 6:1 ⁴ laid hold of it
14 ^x 2 Tim. 4:7
^y Heb. 3:1
15 ^z Matt. 5:48; 1 Cor. 2:6 ^a Gal. 5:10
^b Hos. 6:3; James 1:5
16 ^c Gal. 6:16
^d Rom. 12:16; 15:5
⁵ arrived ⁶ NU omits rule and the rest of v. 16.
17 ^e [1 Cor. 4:16; 11:1]; Phil. 4:9 ^f Titus 2:7, 8; 1 Pet. 5:3
18 ^g Gal. 1:7
19 ^h 2 Cor. 11:15
ⁱ 1 Tim. 6:5 ^j Hos. 4:7 ^k Rom. 8:5; Col. 3:2
20 ^l Eph. 2:6, 19; Phil. 1:27; [Col. 3:1; Heb. 12:22] ^m Acts 1:11 ⁿ 1 Cor. 1:7

Our Citizenship in Heaven

¹⁷ Brethren, ^ejoin in following my example, and note those who so walk, as ^fyou have us for a pattern. ¹⁸ For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, *that they are* ^gthe enemies of the cross of Christ: ¹⁹ ^hwhose end is destruction, ⁱwhose god is their belly, and ^jwhose glory is in their shame—^kwho set their mind on earthly things. ²⁰ For ^lour citizenship is in heaven, ^mfrom which we also ⁿeagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, ^{21o} who will transform our lowly body that it may be ^pconformed to His glorious body, ^qaccording to the working by which He is able even to ^rsubdue all things to Himself.

4 Therefore, my beloved and ^alonged-for brethren, ^bmy joy and crown, so ^cstand fast in the Lord, beloved.

Be United, Joyful, and in Prayer

² I implore Euodia and I implore Synty-

21 ^o [1 Cor. 15:43–53] ^p 1 John 3:2 ^q Eph. 1:19 ^r [1 Cor. 15:28]
CHAPTER 4 ¹ ^s Phil. 1:8 ^t 2 Cor. 1:14 ^u 1 Cor. 16:13; Phil. 1:27

3:10 Paul indicates that he rejected his own righteousness in order to secure not merely an intellectual knowledge of Christ but also a relational knowledge, in fact, an intimate knowledge of **Him**. **power of His resurrection:** Paul does not say the power “in” His resurrection, which would specify the power of the one-time event of His resurrection. Rather Paul seeks the ongoing power that is the day-to-day experience of being in Christ. Paul may also be alluding to his desire to be clothed with his own resurrection body. **fellowship of His sufferings:** Paul sees the value of participating in the persecutions or struggles that naturally accompany one who is in partnership (that is, fellowship, see 1:5) with Christ and His sufferings (see James 1:2–4; 1 Pet. 2:21–24). **being conformed to His death:** Paul desires to imitate Christ—even in His death. In other words, Paul wants to be completely obedient to God the Father, just as Jesus was obedient to His Father’s will (Luke 22:42).

3:11 Attain to means “to arrive at” as well as to “become a partaker of.” Paul was not doubting his participation in the resurrection but was instead viewing it in expectation (1 Cor. 15:1–34). Paul desired to be with those Christians who, through their victory in Christ, would receive special reward in the **resurrection** (see Heb. 11:35).

3:12 not . . . attained: Paul chooses a different Greek word from that translated in v. 11 as *attain*. Here he indicates he has not yet “gained possession of” or “laid hold of” all that he seeks to be. **perfected:** The Greek term means mature or complete, finished. It does not specifically mean a moral or sinless perfection. Paul is not speaking of moral perfection or righteousness but of reaching the state of completion as a Christian. **press on:** Paul “pursues with all deliberate speed” the goal that is before him. The verb form indicates that he is doing this continually. **lay hold of:** This phrase adds the idea of overtaking by surprise to the sense of seizing some object. Paul urgently wants to “grab hold of” God as God had **laid hold of** him (Acts 9:1–22). Christ had dramatically and suddenly seized Paul on the road to Damascus, and his life was never the same since.

3:13 Paul could not obliterate the past from his memory, but he refused to let his past obstruct his progress toward his goal. He wanted to forget his self-righteous past (see vv. 4–7). By using the present tense for **forgetting** Paul was indicating that it is an ongoing process. He might even be implying that he wanted to forget everything so that he would not rest on his past successes in Christ, but continue to labor for the Lord.

3:14 goal: This word specifically refers to the marker at the end of a race on which runners intently fix their eyes. The **prize** is the reward for victory. Paul evidently takes to heart what he teaches in 1 Cor. 9:24. **upward call:** In the NT this speaks of the divine call to complete salvation. It may refer to the judgment seat of Christ, the place of reward. Paul does not say that he is pressing on for the call of God but rather for the prize of that call. He is not working for his salvation but rather for a reward.

3:16 let us walk: Paul commands the Philippians to conduct themselves as soldiers who “march in line” together, organized, each in his proper position.

3:17 The word **pattern** indicates an exact representation of the original. The example of Paul’s life is so evident that one can readily see it and use it as a pattern for living.

3:18 The term **weeping** reveals Paul’s compassion and concern for those who most tragically are **the enemies of the cross**. In v. 2, he offers a stern warning against them, but here he weeps for them.

3:19 In this verse **destruction** indicates the opposite of eternal salvation (see 1:19, 28). **belly:** The physical appetites of the “many” (v. 18) control and consume them. **glory is in their shame:** The things in which they take pride actually are the things that will bring “disgrace” or “humiliation” to them, things of which they should have been ashamed.

3:20 Christians need to remember that though we are in this world we are not of this world; our ultimate **citizenship is in heaven**. **eagerly wait:** Here Paul presents a direct contrast to the earthly focus of the enemies of the Cross in v. 19. The eager desire of Christians is not earthly things, but a heavenly Person, the Savior, **the Lord Jesus Christ** (see Rom. 8:19–25).

3:21 Paul guarantees that Christ **will transform**, or “change in appearance,” the believer. **lowly body:** What God will transform is the physical body. **conformed to His glorious body:** In v. 10, Christians are conformed to Christ’s death; here they are conformed to His life. Our body now is weak and susceptible to sin, disease, and death. But God will change our bodies to resemble Christ’s glorious resurrection body.

4:2 Euodia . . . Syntyche: These were Christian women at Philippi who had fallen into some disagreement that was affecting the whole church. What is written in vv. 2, 3 is all that is known about the two women or about their dispute. Paul does not take sides

che ^d to be of the same mind in the Lord. ³¹ And I urge you also, true companion, help these women who ^e labored with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in ^f the Book of Life.

^{4g} Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice!

⁵ Let your ² gentleness be known to all men. ^h The Lord is at hand.

⁶ⁱ Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with ^j thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; ⁷ and ^k the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Meditate on These Things

⁸ Finally, brethren, whatever things are ^l true, whatever things are ^m noble, whatever things are ⁿ just, ^o whatever things are pure, whatever things are ^p lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things. ⁹ The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and ^q the God of peace will be with you.

The Christian Quest

• Christ above all (1:21; 3:7, 8) and FIND righteousness in Christ and the power of His resurrection (3:9–11).

Seek

• Christlike humility (2:5–7) and FIND God's will in the believer (2:12, 13).

• A divinely appointed goal (3:14) and FIND the prize of eternal salvation (3:14).

• All things that are true, noble, just, pure, lovely, virtuous, and praiseworthy (4:8) and FIND the presence of the God of peace (4:9).

^{2 d} Phil. 2:2; 3:16
^{3 e} Rom. 16:3 / Ex. 32:32; Luke 10:20
¹ NU, M Yes
^{4 g} Rom. 12:12
^{5 h} 1 Cor. 16:22; Heb. 10:25, 37; James 5:7–9; Rev. 22:7, 20
² graciousness or forbearance
^{6 i} Ps. 55:22; Matt. 6:25; 1 Pet. 5:7
^j [1 Thess. 5:17, 18]
^{7 k} [Is. 26:3; John 14:27]; Phil. 4:9; Col. 3:15
^{8 l} Eph. 4:25
^m 2 Cor. 8:21
ⁿ Deut. 16:20

Philippian Generosity

¹⁰ But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at last ^r your ³ care for me has flourished again; though you surely did care, but you lacked opportunity. ¹¹ Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, ^s to be content: ^{12 t} I know how to ⁴ be abased, and I know how to ⁵ abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound

^o 1 Thess. 5:22; James 3:17 ^p 1 Cor. 13:4–7 ^q Rom. 15:33; Heb. 13:20 ^{10 r} 2 Cor. 11:9; Phil. 2:30 ³ you have revived your care ^{11 s} 2 Cor. 9:8; 1 Tim. 6:6, 8; Heb. 13:5 ^{12 t} 1 Cor. 4:11
⁴ live humbly ⁵ live in prosperity

in the argument, but instead encourages them to be reconciled.

4:3 I urge: This word implies a certain level of familiarity; it introduces a request, not a demand. **true companion:** The identity of this person is unknown. It may be a specific person named Syzygos (the Greek word for *companion*), someone else particularly close to Paul, or any of the faithful Christians in the church who could help resolve the dispute. **help:** This verb means literally “to assist by holding together” and suggests that the women’s dispute is not minor but potentially divisive. The **Book of Life** refers to a book in heaven where the names of believers are recorded (Dan. 12:1; Rev. 21:27).

4:4 In the midst of difficulties, in the midst of all situations, Christians are to **rejoice**. The joy of Christians is not based on agreeable circumstances, instead it is based on their relationship to God. Christians will face trouble in this world, but they should rejoice in the trials they face because they know God is using those situations to improve their character (see James 1:2–4).

4:5 gentleness: This noun identifies a person who manifests a calmness and fairness of spirit. A person who is gentle is willing to sacrifice his or her own personal rights to show consideration to others. **at hand:** The Lord’s return could occur at any moment. Paul uses that fact to motivate the Philippians to honor God with their lives.

4:6 Paul exhorts the Philippians to pray about their circumstances instead of worrying over them. **be anxious for nothing:** Although the same word in 2:20 describes Timothy’s concern for the Philippians, here Paul uses the word to refer to worry. He prohibits the Philippians from worrying about their own problems. Instead they are to commit their problems to God in prayer, trusting that He will provide deliverance.

4:7 will guard: Paul’s choice of a military term implies that the mind is in a battle zone and needs to be “protected by a military guard.” Since the purpose of such a guard in a wartime situation is either to prevent a hostile invasion or to keep the inhabitants of a besieged city from escaping, the **peace of God** operates in the same way: to protect the mind from external corrupting influences and to keep the mind focused on God’s truth.

4:8 noble: This term describes that which is of honorable character. **pure:** This word is closely associated with the Greek word for *holy* and thus means “sacred” or “immaculate.” **meditate on:** Paul com-

mands the Philippians “to deliberate,” “to evaluate,” “to compute over and over” what is good and pure. In this way, Christians can renew their minds so that they will not conform to the evil habits of this world (Rom. 12:2).

4:9 learned: This verb conveys not only the concept of “increasing in intellectual knowledge” but also the idea of “learning by habitual practice.” In some areas of their Christian development the Philippians had been excellent disciples of Paul, practicing what he had taught.

4:10–20 What Paul discusses in this section may be the reason why he wrote this letter. The Philippians had given him a gift and he desired to thank them for it. In this section, Paul indicates that the Philippians would be rewarded for their gift and that God would meet all their needs.

4:10 flourished again: Paul uses an agricultural word found only here in the NT to picture a plant that “shoots up” or “sprouts again,” describing a condition of prosperity or abundance. **lacked opportunity:** Paul politely lets the Philippians know that he is aware of their continual concern for him.

4:11 content: The word literally means “self-sufficient.” In Stoic philosophy this Greek word described a person who dispassionately accepted whatever circumstances brought. For the Greeks, this contentment came from personal sufficiency. But for Paul true sufficiency is found in the strength of Christ (v. 13).

virtue

(Gk. *aretē*) (4:8; 1 Pet. 2:9; 2 Pet. 1:3) Strong’s #703

A rare word in the NT but generously used in Greek writings, this word denotes moral excellence. Peter in his first letter uses the word to describe the excellent nature or “excellencies” of God (see 1 Pet. 2:9 where the word is translated *praises*). Such excellence is said to have been possessed by various people, but it is a quality that comes from God. Only those who are given divine power can be morally excellent on this earth (2 Pet. 1:3).

and to suffer need. ¹³I can do all things ^uthrough ⁶Christ who strengthens me.

¹⁴Nevertheless you have done well that ^vyou shared in my distress. ¹⁵Now you Philippians know also that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, ^wno church shared with me concerning giving and receiving but you only. ¹⁶For even in Thessalonica you sent *aid* once and again for my necessities. ¹⁷Not that I seek the gift, but I seek ^xthe fruit that abounds to your account. ¹⁸Indeed I ⁷have all and abound. I am full, having received from ^yEpaphroditus the things *sent* from you,

¹³ ^u John 15:5 ⁶ NU
Him who
¹⁴ ^v Phil. 1:7
¹⁵ ^w 2 Cor. 11:8, 9
¹⁷ ^x Titus 3:14
¹⁸ ^y Phil. 2:25 ⁷ Or
have received all

^z Heb. 13:16 ^a Rom.
12:1; 2 Cor. 9:12
¹⁹ ^b Ps. 23:1; 2 Cor.
9:8
²⁰ ^c Rom. 16:27
²¹ ^d Gal. 1:2
²³ ^e NU *your spirit*

^za sweet-smelling aroma, ^aan acceptable sacrifice, well pleasing to God. ¹⁹And my God ^bshall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus. ²⁰^cNow to our God and Father *be* glory forever and ever. Amen.

Greeting and Blessing

²¹Greet every saint in Christ Jesus. The brethren ^dwho are with me greet you. ²²All the saints greet you, but especially those who are of Caesar's household.

²³The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with ^eyou all. Amen.

4:15 giving and receiving: Paul considers the relationship between himself and the Philippians to be a two-way street, with both parties actively involved in the sharing of both material and spiritual gifts.

4:17 Paul has in mind in this verse the material **gift** that the Philippians sent to him. **account:** Paul uses business terminology. The Philippians' gift was producing spiritual profit just as money deposited in a bank account accrues interest. But Paul was not as concerned with their *gift* as with the development in the Philippians of the spiritual ability to give.

4:18 an acceptable sacrifice: By giving to Paul, the Philippians had offered themselves as a gift to God (see Rom. 12:1, 2).

4:19 In v. 18 Paul says that he is full because they gave. In this verse

he writes that God will **supply all** their needs. The Philippians, in turn, will be full because of the gifts God will give them. **according to His riches:** Out of His abundant wealth, God will more than amply take care of the Philippians.

4:20 The Jewish practice of closing prayers with the word **amen** carried over to the Christian church as well. When found at the end of a sentence as it is here, the word can be translated "so be it," or "may it be fulfilled." At the beginning of a sentence, it means "surely," "truly," or "most assuredly."

4:22 those . . . of Caesar's household: These believers may have been officials in the Roman government (such as members of the Praetorian Guard; see 1:13) or servants who lived and served in the emperor's palace.

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS



JUST AS A CHILD needs proper instruction early in life, so the early believers needed to be set on the proper path with correct teaching. Paul wrote this letter to deal with a doctrinal heresy that was creeping into the Colossian church. Although we are not told specifically what this heresy was, we can pick up clues from Paul's response. The error was probably a mixture of Judaism and an early form of Gnosticism. The Colossian church was experiencing the same problems other early churches had encountered. Certain members were teaching that the observance of Jewish rules about food, the Sabbath, and special festivals would help believers to earn their salvation (see Gal. 3:23–25; 4:10, 11). At Colosse, however, some of the Gentile members were apparently also promoting a form of mysticism that claimed that Jesus was a higher being, but not God. Paul refutes these false doctrines by pointing to Christ. Jesus had been the focus of Paul's preaching from the beginning. In Colossians, Paul reiterates the supremacy of Christ. It was because Jesus is divine that His death reconciles believers to their Creator.

As in all of his epistles, Paul seems to write as though he had our own society in mind. Even today, new cults claim to be Christian yet deny the deity of Christ and the basic beliefs of Christianity. Many today view Jesus as no more than "a great teacher." Paul's patient correction of the Colossian believers should remind us that we need to keep the worship of Jesus Christ central in our churches.

Author and Date Pauline authorship of this letter has been universally recognized throughout church history. Paul identifies himself as the author of the letter three different times, describing himself as "an apostle of Jesus Christ" and as a servant of the gospel. Furthermore Paul closes the epistle with a handwritten greeting, a characteristic of several of his letters (see 1 Cor. 16:21; 2 Thess. 3:17). The Muratorian fragment (a document written around A.D. 180 that lists books considered by the early church to be divinely inspired) includes Colossians as a Pauline epistle. Many church fathers also upheld Paul as the author of Colossians. These include Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, and Origen.

Paul probably wrote Colossians while imprisoned in Rome around A.D. 60. Some have argued for other places of origin, such as Ephesus and Caesarea, but there is not enough evidence to displace the traditional theory that Paul wrote from his prison in Rome. Colossians is one of the four prison epistles of Paul, along with Ephesians, Philippians, and Philemon. Because Colossians, Ephesians, and Philemon have several similarities, many believe that the three were written at about the same time.

Setting The city of Colosse was about a hundred miles east of Ephesus, in the valley of the Lycus River. During the Persian Wars of the fifth century B.C., Colosse was a large and strategic city. By the time of the apostle Paul, however, it had declined into the shadows of its two sister cities, Laodicea and Hierapolis, and had become a small merchant town on the trade route from Rome to the east.

Evanglization of Colosse probably took place during Paul's three-year stay in Ephesus. Luke records in Acts 19:10 that people throughout the Asian region heard the gospel. Apparently Epaphras was converted in Ephesus, and after being instructed by Paul returned home to Colosse to proclaim the gospel. Evidently the church that emerged was largely composed of Gentiles, for Paul refers to their "uncircumcision," a word employed by Paul to designate Gentiles (see 2:13; Rom. 2:24–27; Eph. 2:11).

Relationship of Colossians to Philemon The circumstances of Colossians and Philemon are the same. Paul is imprisoned, along with others, for preaching the gospel (4:10; Philem. 1, 23). The companions Paul lists are identical in the two letters, with the exception of Justus, who is found only in the letter to Colossians (see 1:1; 4:9–14, 17; Philem. 1, 2, 10, 23, 24). Furthermore, Onesimus (the slave of Philemon) went to Colosse with Tychicus, the bearer of the Colossian letter (4:7–9). Thus the two letters are companion epistles: one for the Colossian church as a whole and one addressed to a member of that church, Philemon.

Relationship of Colossians and Ephesians The many parallels between Colossians and Ephesians indicate that the two letters were written about the same time. Both letters reveal the centrality of Christ and His relationship to the church. Ephesians shows Christ as Head of the church, while Colossians extends that imagery of His authority over all creation (see 1:16–18; 2:10). In Ephesians, Paul highlights how Christians are the members of the body of Christ, who is the Head. In Colossians, he places emphasis on Christ the Head, of whose body Christians are members.

The differences in the epistles are significant as well. Colossians stresses the completeness of the believer in Christ; Ephesians points to Christian unity which is found in Christ. The mystery in Colossians is that Christ is in believers (1:26, 27), while the mystery in Ephesians is the unity of Jew and Gentile in Christ. Colossians speaks of Jesus as Lord over all creation, while Ephesians concerns itself with Christ's authority over the church. Finally, Colossians has a stronger tone because it confronts a specific false teaching in Colosse. Ephesians has a softer tone; it does not address a specific heresy.

But with all their similarities and differences, Ephesians and Colossians together present a mature understanding of who Christ is and what His life and death mean for the believer. From prison, Paul was teaching the



The unexcavated theater (or possibly odeon) at Colosse

churches in Asia Minor how central the person of Jesus Christ is to the Christian faith. He is the image of God, the source of all wisdom, and the Head of the church. He is the One who reconciles us to God and to our fellow believers. As our Savior and Deliverer, He deserves our sincere adoration and praise.

CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

Colossians is the one book in the New Testament that uniquely centers on the cosmic Christ—"the head of all principality and power" (2:10). Paul wants us to know that in Jesus we see the face of God: "He is the image of the invisible God" (1:15). As such, Jesus' divine nature and incarnation are celebrated as watershed realities. This image of the invisible God is the Author of reconciliation (1:20–22; 2:13–15) and our Redeemer and Reconciler (2:11–15, 20–22). Because of those facts, it only stands to reason that He is the basis for all believers' hope (1:5, 23, 27).

COLOSSIANS OUTLINE

- I. Introduction 1:1, 2
- II. The preeminence of Christ in the life of the Colossians 1:3–14
 - A. Paul's thanks for the Colossians' faith in Christ 1:3–8
 - B. Paul's prayer for the Colossians' understanding and fruitfulness 1:9–14
- III. The preeminence of Christ in His nature and work 1:15–23
 - A. The divine nature of Christ 1:15–20
 - B. The glorious work of Christ 1:21–23
- IV. Paul's ministry in general and for the Colossians 1:24—2:7
- V. The preeminence of Christ over false religion 2:8–23
 - A. The superiority of Christ over false philosophy 2:8–15
 - B. The reality of Christ instead of false worship 2:16–19
 - C. The power of Christ versus false asceticism 2:20–23
- VI. The preeminence of Christ in Christian living 3:1—4:6
 - A. Christ, the foundation of the believer's life 3:1–4
 - B. The virtues of the believer's life in Christ 3:5–17
 - C. Christ in relationships 3:18—4:6
- VII. Conclusion 4:7–18

C. A.D. 47–49

Paul's first missionary journey

C. A.D. 50

The Jerusalem council

C. A.D. 50–53

Paul's second missionary journey

C. A.D. 53–57

Paul's third missionary journey

C. A.D. 54–56

The church at Colosse is started

C. A.D. 58

Paul is arrested in Jerusalem

C. A.D. 60–62

Paul is imprisoned in Rome; Colossians is written

C. A.D. 67

Peter and Paul are executed

Greeting

Paul,^a an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy our brother,

²To the saints^b and faithful brethren in Christ *who are* in Colosse:

^cGrace to you and peace from God our Father¹ and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Their Faith in Christ

^{3d}We give thanks to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always

CHAPTER 1

1 ^a Eph. 1:1
2 ^b 1 Cor. 4:17 ^c Gal. 1:3 ¹ NU omits *and the Lord Jesus Christ*
3 ^d 1 Cor. 1:4; Eph. 1:16; Phil. 1:3
4 ^e Eph. 1:15 ^f [Heb. 6:10]
5 ^g [1 Pet. 1:4]
6 ^h Matt. 24:14
ⁱ John 15:16 ^j Eph. 3:2 ² NU, M add *and growing*
7 ^k Col. 4:12; Philem. 23 ¹ 1 Cor. 4:1, 2; 2 Cor. 11:23
8 ^m Rom. 15:30

for you,^{4e} since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of^f your love for all the saints;⁵ because of the hope^g which is laid up for you in heaven, of which you heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel,⁶ which has come to you,^h as *it* has also in all the world, andⁱ is bringing forth² fruit, as *it* is also among you since the day you heard and knew^j the grace of God in truth;⁷ as you also learned from^k Epaphras, our dear fellow servant, who is^l a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf,⁸ who also declared to us your^m love in the Spirit.

1:1 Paul calls himself **an apostle**, a word whose root means “to send.” This Greek word was first used of a cargo ship or fleet, but later denoted a commander of a fleet. The NT employs the word to signify an approved spokesman sent as a personal representative. Although not every Christian is called by God to minister like Paul or

the twelve apostles, every Christian is sent by God to represent Him before the people with whom he or she comes in contact.

1:2 The Greek term translated **saints** means “holy people.” The essence of “holiness” is being set apart to God. All believers are saints, not because they are perfect, but because they belong to God. **in Christ:** This is a favorite expression of the apostle Paul, used some 80 times in his letters. Paul saw all of Christian experience growing out of the believer’s position in Christ. **Grace . . . peace:** Paul combines the Greek word for grace with the standard Hebrew greeting, *peace*. He broadens and deepens his meaning by reminding his readers that the ultimate source of “favor” and “wholeness” is in **God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ** (see Rom. 1:7).

1:3 The apostle indicates the tender concern that he has for these Christians; he is **praying always** for them. This common phrase of Paul’s (Eph. 1:16; Phil. 1:4; 1 Thess. 1:2), which combines intercessory prayer and thanksgiving, means that each time Paul prayed, he interceded for the Colossians and offered praise for God’s work among them.

1:4–8 faith . . . love . . . hope: Paul often uses these three terms together (Rom. 5:2–5; 1 Cor. 13:13; 1 Thess. 1:3; 5:8). **Faith** is in Christ. This is the thrust of the passage. The Colossians’ faith was grounded in the nature and work of Jesus Christ. **Love** flows from faith and proves the genuineness of one’s faith (James 2:14–26). The Colossians’ sacrificial love **for all the saints** proved their true belief in Christ. **Hope** refers to the result of faith, the treasure **laid up . . . in heaven** where our faith will find its fulfillment in the presence of Christ. **Epaphras** is also mentioned in 4:12, 13 and Philem. 23.

Jesus Christ

(Gk. *Iēsous Christos*) (1:1; Matt. 1:1, 18; Mark 1:1; John 1:17; 17:3; 1 Cor. 1:2–10) Strong’s #2424; 5547

“Jesus Christ” is not the first and last names of Jesus, as people are commonly named today. *Jesus* is His human name, whose meaning relates to His mission to save us (see Matt. 1:18). *Christ* is a description of His office: He is “the Anointed One,” anointed by God to be our King, Prophet, and High Priest. The combination of name and title is rare in the Gospels (occurring only five times) because Jesus was still in the process of revealing Himself as the Christ. Once this was recognized by His followers, the combination was used prolifically throughout the Book of Acts and the Epistles to express the belief that Jesus is the Christ, the promised Messiah. Paul uses the combined form at the start of Colossians to indicate the theme of his letter, the supremacy of Jesus Christ.





The City of Colosse

Colosse was a Roman city of Asia Minor located at the base of 8,000-foot-high Mt. Cadmus in the Lycus River valley east of Ephesus. The city was watered by a cascade descending through a gorge from Mt. Cadmus. It survived a devastating earthquake in A.D. 61, but later its population moved three miles south to Chonai (modern Honaz). It was a prosperous industrial center, especially famous for its textiles. Judaism, Platonism, and mystery cults from the surrounding mountain people blended into strange, often contradictory religious practices. Cultic worship of angels persisted, with Michael as the favorite. He was credited with sparing the city in a time of disaster. This “syncretism” (combining various ideas, beliefs and practices) mired the Colossian church in debates, division, and depravity. Paul’s message was clear: Christ is preeminent.



Unexcavated tell at Colosse. A tell is a mound of ancient ruins including several layers built over each other through time.

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Preeminence of Christ

⁹ For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask ^o that you may be filled with ^p the knowledge of His will ^q in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; ¹⁰ ^r that you may walk worthy of the Lord, ^s fully pleasing Him, ^t being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the “knowledge of God; ¹¹ ^v strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, ^w for all patience and longsuffering ^x with joy; ¹² ^y giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of ^z the inheritance of the saints in the light. ¹³ He has delivered us from ^a the power of darkness ^b and ³ conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, ¹⁴ ^c in whom we have redemption ^d through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.

¹⁵ He is ^d the image of the invisible God,

⁹ ^a Eph. 1:15-17 ^o 1 Cor. 1:5 ^p [Rom. 12:2]; Eph. 5:17
^q Eph. 1:8 ¹⁰ ^r Eph. 4:1; Phil. 1:27; 1 Thess. 2:12 ^s 1 Thess. 4:1
^t ¹ Heb. 13:21 ^u 2 Pet. 3:18 ¹¹ ^v [Eph. 3:16; 6:10] ^w Eph. 4:2
^x [Acts 5:41]; 2 Cor. 8:2; [Heb. 10:34] ¹² ^y [Eph. 5:20]
^z Eph. 1:11 ¹³ ^a Eph. 6:12 ^b 2 Pet. 1:11 ³ transferred
¹⁴ ^c Eph. 1:7 ^d NU, M omit through His blood ¹⁵ ^d 2 Cor. 4:4; Heb. 1:3

1:12 qualified: The word means to be able or authorized for a task. Believers can never be qualified on their own; instead God must make them sufficient through Jesus Christ. The tense of the verb points to “qualifying” as an act in the past rather than a process. Ordinarily to qualify for an event or a position, we have to prove ourselves. However the **inheritance** (see v. 5) that believers receive is not one that they have earned but is based on being *qualified* by God. The Father “qualifies” us for eternal life with Him, whereas the Son will reward us at the end of the race (Rev. 22:12). The term **saints** probably does not refer to the angels of God as in 1 Thess. 3:13. Instead Paul uses the word for the believers at Colosse.

1:13 Delivered . . . conveyed: God has liberated believers from the dominion of darkness. The apostle uses the common symbolism of light and darkness for good and evil, for God’s kingdom and Satan’s kingdom, that is found throughout the NT. The kingdom from which believers have been rescued is the kingdom of darkness (see this imagery in John 1:4-9; Eph. 5:8; 1 Thess. 5:5; 1 Pet. 2:9; 1 John 1:5).

1:14 The Greek word **redemption** points naturally to the payment of a price or ransom for the release of a slave. The slavery from which believers are released is not physical but spiritual. They are freed from bondage to sin by **forgiveness of sins** through the blood of Jesus Christ (Eph. 1:7).

1:15-20 Paul interrupts his description of his prayers for the Colossians with a song of praise. These verses are generally recognized as an early Christian hymn celebrating the supremacy of Jesus Christ.

1:15 firstborn over all creation: *Firstborn* could denote a priority in time or in rank. The word does not describe Christ as the first being created in time because the hymn proclaims that all things were “created by Him” and that “He is before all things.” Jesus is the eternal One who was before all creation. The idea of *firstborn* in the Hebrew culture did not require that one be the first son born. This was not the case with either Isaac or Jacob. But they were the *firstborn* in the sense that they were rightful heirs to the line of their fathers. Being *firstborn* referred more to rank and privilege than to order of birth. Since Christ is God, He is supreme in rank over all creation. Yet He is not only the transcendent deity who created us; He is the One who died on our behalf (see Phil. 2:6-18) and was

Epaphras probably was Paul’s convert and fellow prisoner. He most likely started the church in his hometown of Colosse.

1:9-12 Paul’s prayer for the Colossian Christians is a model for us. As soon as he heard of the new faith of the Colossians, he began interceding with God for them, asking Him to give them knowledge, wisdom, strength, and joy. He prayed that the new believers at Colosse would grow into Christian maturity so that they might walk before God, pleasing Him and producing good works.

1:9 Paul’s chief concern is that the Colossians might have full **knowledge** of God’s **will**. The desire to serve God will be in vain without a proper understanding of the One we want to serve. Thus Paul prays that the Colossians might be filled with full knowledge that encompasses **all wisdom and spiritual understanding**. *Wisdom* is the practical outworking of knowledge (see James 3:17), and that knowledge cannot be separated from the *spiritual understanding* that comes through the discernment given by the Holy Spirit.

1:10 In addition to the full knowledge of the Lord’s will mentioned in v. 9, Paul desires that the Colossians **may walk worthy of the Lord**. Paul wanted the Colossians to live in a manner that adequately reflected what God had done for them and was doing in them. Being “worthy of God” is a phrase that occurs in ancient pagan inscriptions throughout Asia. It pictures someone’s life being weighed on scales to determine its worth. If these devotees to false gods knew they had to walk in a worthy manner, certainly Christians should dedicate their lives to the living God in order to please Him.

1:11 according to His glorious power: This phrase means that believers are empowered not in proportion to their need but according to God’s strength. So then, Paul desires to see nothing less than the very power of God Himself at work in the Colossian believers. Like Samson’s (Judg. 14:19), a believer’s strength comes from God alone.

^ethe firstborn over all creation. ¹⁶For ^fby Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or ^gdominions or ⁵principalities or ⁶powers. All things were created ^hthrough Him and for Him. ¹⁷ⁱAnd He is before all things, and in Him ^jall things consist. ¹⁸And ^kHe is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, ^lthe firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence.

Reconciled in Christ

¹⁹For it pleased *the Father* that ^min Him all the fullness should dwell, ²⁰and

15 ^e Ps. 89:27; Rev. 3:14
16 ^f John 1:3; Heb. 1:2, 3 ^g [Eph. 1:20, 21; Col. 2:15] ^h John 1:3; Rom. 11:36; 1 Cor. 8:6; Heb. 2:10
⁵ rulers ⁶ authorities
17 ⁱ [John 17:5]
^j Heb. 1:3
18 ^k 1 Cor. 11:3; Eph. 1:22 ^l Rev. 1:5
19 ^m John 1:16
20 ⁿ Rom. 5:1; Eph. 2:14 ^o 2 Cor. 5:18
^p Eph. 1:10
21 ^q [Eph. 2:1]
^r Titus 1:15 ^s 2 Cor. 5:18, 19
22 ^t 2 Cor. 5:18;
[Eph. 2:14-16]

ⁿby Him to reconcile ^oall things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, ^phaving made peace through the blood of His cross.
²¹ And you, ^qwho once were alienated and enemies in your mind ^rby wicked works, yet now He has ^sreconciled ²²^tin the body of His flesh through death, ^uto present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight— ²³if indeed you continue ^vin the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are ^wnot moved away from the hope of the gospel which you heard,

^u [Eph. 5:27]; Col. 1:28 ²³ ^v Eph. 3:17; Col. 2:7 ^w [John 15:6]; 1 Cor. 15:58

subsequently raised from dead. Thus He is also the *firstborn* from the dead (v. 18). The first One who experienced the true resurrection (see 1 Cor. 15:20).

1:16 This early Christian hymn emphasizes the superiority of Christ over all creation. Christ is the One who created all things, whether they be material or immaterial, seen or unseen. This idea is in direct contradiction to the false teaching, later known as Gnosticism, that was developing in the Colossian church. In general, Gnostics believed that various angelic beings were the creators of the earth and that Christ was one among many of these angels. **All things were created through Him and for Him:** Not only did Jesus create all things; everything was created for His purposes (see Heb. 1:2, where Christ is said to be the “heir of all things”). But the glory of the earth, the heavens, or the sun, moon, and stars cannot be compared with the glory of His new creation (2 Cor. 5:17).

1:18 Following the celebration of Christ’s authority over all creation, this early Christian hymn proceeds to proclaim His authority over the church. He is the **head** of His own **body**, which is the church. No one should underestimate the significance of the church, for it is in fact Christ’s body. The sovereign Creator of the universe, as Head of the church, provides leadership and oversight over it. No wonder He is so jealous for it (see 1 Cor. 3:16, 17). **firstborn from the dead:** Christ was the first to be raised from the dead. His own resurrection guarantees that the church will one day be resurrected (see 1 Cor. 15:12–28).

1:19 fullness: The opponents of Paul, and later the Greek Gnostics, seem to have used this word as a technical term for the sphere between heaven and earth where a hierarchy of angels lived. The Gnostics viewed Christ as one of many spirits existing in this hier-

archy between God and all people. However, Paul used the term *fullness* to refer to the complete embodiment of God. Christ is the only Intercessor for human beings and fully embodies all of God’s nature (1 Tim. 2:5). No other intermediary, whether person or group, is able to stand in our place before the Father. Only Jesus can do this.

1:20, 21 reconcile all things . . . now He has reconciled: This phrase shows the significance of Christ’s work on the Cross. It does not mean that all people will be saved, since many passages clearly say that unbelievers will suffer eternal separation from God (see Matt. 25:46). The work of Christ will overthrow the damage effected by the Fall and change all of creation from a position of enmity to a relationship of peace and friendship (see Rom. 8:20–23; 2 Cor. 5:18–20).

1:22 body of His flesh: The false teachers at Colosse were telling the believers that redemption could only be accomplished through a spiritual being. They rejected Christ’s incarnation. According to them, Jesus could not have had a physical body. Thus Paul uses two terms, *body* and *flesh*, to clearly state that Christ became man and experienced a physical death. **holy . . . blameless . . . above reproach in His sight:** We who were once enemies of God and alienated by our own wicked works will one day be presented as above reproach on account of Christ’s death for us.

1:23 if indeed you continue in the faith: The perseverance of the Colossians was proof of the reconciling work of Christ on their behalf (vv. 21, 22). **every creature under heaven:** Paul uses this exaggeration to illustrate the rapid spread of the gospel. Compare Acts 17:6, where the apostles are said to have turned the world upside down, even though their ministry up to that point had been limited to a small portion of the eastern Mediterranean region.

Firstborn over Creation



The translation of 1:15–17 has posed a problem for many who study this important passage about Jesus’ relation to creation. The passage reads, literally, “He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation, because by means of Him all things were created in the heavens and on the earth. . . . All things have been created through Him and from Him. He is before all things and by means of Him all things were made to exist.” This text of Scripture avers the same teaching about Jesus as found in John 1:1, namely, that He preceded creation and is the cause of all creation. Some advocate an unorthodox view from this passage in saying that Jesus was in reality the first creature that God the Father created and that Jesus then was used by God to create all other creation. They do so by arguing that “firstborn of all creation” means He was first thing created, and that the subsequent verses should be translated “all other things have been created through Him” and “He is before all other things.”

The difficulty of this attempt to deny Jesus Christ His stature as Creator is that “of all creation” in the Greek is a genitive case, the meaning of “begotten,” and the fact that the Greek word for “other” does not occur in the text at all. “First” in the statement speaks of Christ’s priority to creation and sovereignty over all creation. The words “of all creation” are the object of “firstborn” rather than “firstborn” being the object of “of all creation.” Second, “begotten” is not the same as “creation”; the words are clearly distinguished in the passage. God begets the Son, but the Son creates the world. When a man begets, he begets a man; when God begets, He begets God and this is from eternity. Creation, on the other hand, is not the same as God. Third, to put “other” in the passage is foreign to the discussion of the text and is merely an attempt to explain away the meaning of the text that Jesus the Creator created all things.

^xwhich was preached to every creature under heaven, ^yof which I, Paul, became a minister.

Sacrificial Service for Christ

^{24z}I now rejoice in my sufferings ^afor you, and fill up in my flesh ^bwhat is lacking in the afflictions of Christ, for ^cthe sake of His body, which is the church, ²⁵of which I became a minister according to ^dthe ⁷stewardship from God which was given to me for you, to fulfill the word of God, ^{26e}the ⁸mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, ^fbut now has been revealed to His saints. ^{27g}To them God willed to make known what are ^hthe riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: ⁹which is ⁱChrist in you, ^jthe hope of glory. ²⁸Him we preach, ^kwarning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, ^lthat we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. ²⁹To this *end* I also labor, striving according to His working which works in me ^mmightily.

²³ ^x Mark 16:15; Acts 2:5; Rom. 10:18; Col. 1:6
^y Acts 1:17; Eph. 3:7; Col. 1:25
²⁴ ^z 2 Cor. 7:4
^a Eph. 3:1, 13
^b [Rom. 8:17; 2 Cor. 1:5; 12:15]; Phil. 2:17
^c Eph. 1:23
²⁵ ^d Gal. 2:7
⁷ dispensation or administration
²⁶ ^e [1 Cor. 2:7]
^f [2 Tim. 1:10]
⁸ secret or hidden truth
²⁷ ^g 2 Cor. 2:14
^h Rom. 9:23 ⁱ [Rom. 8:10, 11] ^j 1 Tim. 1:1
⁹ M who
²⁸ ^k Acts 20:20
^l Eph. 5:27
²⁹ ^m Eph. 3:7

CHAPTER 2

¹ ^a Phil. 1:30; Col. 1:29; 4:12; 1 Thess. 2:2
² ¹ struggle
² ² NU omits both of the Father and
³ ^b 1 Cor. 1:24, 30

Not Philosophy but Christ

²For I want you to know what a great ^aconflict ¹I have for you and those in Laodicea, and *for* as many as have not seen my face in the flesh, ²that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, and *attaining* to all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the knowledge of the mystery of God, ²both of the Father and of Christ, ^{3b}in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

⁴Now this I say ^clest anyone should deceive you with persuasive words. ⁵For ^dthough I am absent in the flesh, yet I am with you in spirit, rejoicing ³to see ^eyour *good* order and the ^fsteadfastness of your faith in Christ.

^{6g}As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, ^{7h}rooted and built up in Him and established

⁴ ^c Rom. 16:18; 2 Cor. 11:13; Eph. 4:14; 5:6
⁵ ^d 1 Thess. 2:17
^e 1 Cor. 14:40 ^f 1 Pet. 5:9
³ Lit. and seeing
⁶ ^g 1 Thess. 4:1
⁷ ^h Eph. 2:21

1:24 In this verse, Paul is not saying that Christ's death was insufficient (see 2:11–15) or that somehow he was a coredeemer with Christ. Paul is making the point that a Christian will endure the **sufferings** that Christ would be enduring if He were still in the world (see 2 Cor. 1:5; 4:11). Christ had told His disciples that if the world hated Him it would hate His followers. If people persecuted Him they would persecute His followers (John 15:19, 20). Paul believed he was suffering the afflictions God wanted him to endure. Instead of facing his difficulties with dread, Paul saw his troubles as a time of joy (Rom. 8:17; Phil. 1:29; 1 Thess. 1:6; 2:2; 3:3–5; 2 Tim. 3:12), because they were producing an eternal reward (2 Cor. 4:17).

1:26, 27 The **mystery** referred to in these verses is similar to the mystery spoken of in Eph. 3:8–10. In Greek pagan religions, a mystery was a secret teaching reserved for a few spiritual teachers who had been initiated into an inner circle. Paul uses the word to refer to knowledge that had been **hidden from ages and from generations** (see 2:2; 4:3; 1 Cor. 2:7; 4:1; Eph. 3:4, 9; 5:32; 6:19; 1 Tim. 3:9, 16), but was now being revealed by God. The Lord had revealed this mystery to Paul and called him to be a steward of it (see Eph. 3:5). The mystery is that Christ now lives within Gentile believers: **Christ in you, the hope of glory**. This is in harmony with Ephesians. In that letter, Paul states that the mystery is the union of Jews and Gentiles in one body, Christ's church (Eph. 3:6).

1:28 perfect: The concept of perfection in the NT means completeness or maturity. Here the reference is probably to the coming of Christ, when every believer will experience the completion of Christ's work in him or her (see 1 Cor. 13:10).

1:29 Paul toiled and agonized for the perfection of his fellow believers (see v. 28), not in his own strength but by the power of God working in him.

2:1 Laodicea was a sister city of Colosse about 11 miles away. The two churches were to share their letters from Paul (see 4:16).

2:2, 3 Though the false teachers at Colosse spoke of initiating people into a superior knowledge, Paul tells his readers that they can understand the **mystery** (see 1:26, 27) of God without this false philosophy. The Gnostics sought knowledge as an end in itself, but Paul reminds the Colossians that true knowledge will demonstrate itself by bringing people together in Christian love in the church. Note how Paul joins the **Father** and **Christ** together, emphasizing their common deity and unity. The Gnostics would view Jesus only as an emanation from the Father, sharing a portion of the attributes of deity. Paul not only emphasizes Jesus' deity, but also explains that He possesses all wisdom and knowledge. The Gnostics thought only certain "knowledgeable" people could join their elite group; Paul teaches that every believer has access to complete wisdom found in Christ.

2:6, 7 Just as the Colossian believers had begun with Christ, so Paul

The Preeminence of Christ

CHRIST				
In universal government	In reconciliation	In wisdom and knowledge	In religious observance	In Christian living
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The visible image of God (Col. 1:15) • The agent of creation (1:16) • The Sustainer (1:17) • The Head of the church (1:18) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pleases the Father (1:19, 20) • Reconciles us through His death (1:21, 22) • Lives in us as our hope of glory (1:27) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The source of all treasures (2:2, 3) • Worldly philosophy does not conform to Him (2:8) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are alive in Him (2:11–13) • No need for legalism and ritualism (2:16–23) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He is our life (3:3) • We can avoid immorality and can bless others (3:5–14)

in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding⁴ in it with thanksgiving.

⁸Beware lest anyone ⁵cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to ⁱthe tradition of men, according to the ^jbasic principles of the world, and not according to Christ. ⁹For ^kin Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead ⁶bodily; ¹⁰and you are complete in Him, who is the ^lhead of all ⁷principality and power.

Not Legalism but Christ

¹¹In Him you were also ^mcircumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by ⁿputting off the body ⁸of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, ¹²^oburied with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through ^pfaith in the working of God, ^qwho raised Him from the dead. ¹³And

⁷ ⁴ NU omits *in it*
⁸ ⁱ Gal. 1:14 / Gal. 4:3, 9, 10; Col. 2:20
⁵ Lit. *plunder you or take you captive*
⁹ ^k [John 1:14]; Col. 1:19 ⁶ *in bodily form*
¹⁰ ^j [Eph. 1:20, 21; 1 Pet. 3:22] ⁷ *rule and authority*
¹¹ ^m Deut. 10:16
ⁿ Rom. 6:6; 7:24; Gal. 5:24; Col. 3:5 ⁸ NU omits *of the sins*
¹² ^o Rom. 6:4
^p Eph. 1:19, 20
^q Acts 2:24
¹⁴ ^r [Eph. 2:15, 16]; Col. 2:20
⁹ *certificate of debt with its*
¹⁵ ^s [Is. 53:12; Heb. 2:14] ^t Eph. 6:12
¹⁶ ^u Rom. 14:3
^v *feast day*
¹⁷ ^v Heb. 8:5; 10:1
² Lit. *body*

you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, ¹⁴^rhaving wiped out the ⁹handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. ¹⁵^sHaving disarmed ^tprincipalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.

¹⁶So let no one ^ujudge you in food or in drink, or regarding a ¹festival or a new moon or sabbaths, ¹⁷^vwhich are a shadow of things to come, but the ²substance is of Christ. ¹⁸Let no one cheat you of your reward, taking delight in *false* humility and worship of angels, intruding into those things which he has ³not seen, vainly

18 ³ NU omits *not*

encourages them to continue in their **walk** with Him. Paul uses four words to describe the Colossians' walk with Christ. The tense of the word translated **rooted** denotes a complete action; the believers *have been* rooted in Christ. The next three words, **built up**, **established**, and **abounding**, are in the present tense, showing the continual growth that should characterize every Christian's walk with Christ.

2:8 This verse has been used at times to teach that Christians should not study or read **philosophy**. This is not Paul's meaning. Paul himself was adept at philosophy, evidenced by his interaction with the Stoic and Epicurean philosophers in Athens (Acts 17:1–34). Paul was warning the believers not to be taken in by any philosophy that does not conform to a proper knowledge of Christ. The false teachers at Colosse had combined worldly philosophies with the gospel. These philosophies are spoken of by Paul as the **basic principles** of the world, which some have interpreted as "spirits" or "angels" who supposedly control a person's life (see Gal. 4:3, 9). It seems more likely that the term *principles* refers to the elementary rules and regulations that certain teachers were seeking to impose on believers according to the dictates of human philosophies. Paul's strongest indictment against the heretics was that their teaching was **not according to Christ**, and thus they were not walking with Christ (see Paul's exhortation in vv. 6, 7).

2:9 In this verse Paul clearly proclaims the Incarnation, the fact that God became a man **bodily**. This contradicts the Gnostic idea of the inherent evil of physical bodies and the claim that Jesus is merely a spirit. The Gnostics thought **the fullness** of God had been divided among a number of angelic beings, the last creating the material world. In contrast, Paul says that the fullness of God exists in Christ.

fullness of the Godhead

(Gk. *plērōma tēs theotētos*) (2:9) Strong's #4138; 2320

The Greek word *plērōma* indicates "plenitude" and "totality." The Gnostics used the word to describe the totality of all deities. Both Paul and John used the word to describe Christ, who is the fullness, the plenitude of God, for all the fullness of the Godhead dwells in Him **bodily** (1:19; 2:9). Since all of God's fullness resides in Christ, every spiritual reality is found in Christ. In Him, we lack nothing. The Greek word *theotētos* for **Godhead** is used only here in the NT and designates the totality of God's nature and person. All the fullness of the Godhead "dwells" or "permanently resides" in the body of Jesus, the God-man.

2:10 Paul illustrates the adequacy of Christ by demonstrating how the Colossian believers are **complete**. In Christ, the Colossians have put off the power of sin and the flesh (v. 11), have received new life (vv. 12, 13), have been forgiven, have been delivered from requirements laid down by human traditions (v. 14), and have been freed from the powers of spirit beings (v. 15). There is nothing that the Christian needs to add to what was received in Christ at the time of conversion. Paul emphasizes the sufficiency of Christ in order to refute the Gnostics and the Judaizers who respectively believed that special knowledge or works were necessary to make a Christian complete.

2:11 Whereas all Jewish males were required to receive physical **circumcision**, the circumcision that is from Christ is **without hands** (see Deut. 10:16 for this idea in the OT). Rather than the mere removal of flesh, Christian circumcision is the spiritual removal of sin from the heart, taking part in the New Covenant of Jesus Christ.

2:12, 13 buried . . . in baptism: Baptism is the symbol of the believer's association with Christ's death on the Cross. Water baptism itself does not bring forgiveness of sins, but Paul uses the rite to help explain the work of the Spirit. The early church would never have understood the idea of an unbaptized Christian. Baptism and faith were considered to be the outward and inward realities of being a Christian (see Acts 2:38; 10:47, 48; 16:33; Rom. 6:3–5). Some have highlighted Paul's close association of baptism and circumcision in this passage as an indication that water baptism is a sign of the New Covenant, just as circumcision was a sign of the Abrahamic covenant.

2:14 nailed . . . to the cross: Not only were our personal sins forgiven at the Cross, but those rules that condemned us have also been removed by the death of Christ.

2:15 Principalities and powers allude to Satan and the fallen angels. Paul is describing Christ's victory on the Cross over the powers that opposed Him and that were against God's faithful people. To describe this victory, Paul uses the spectacle of the military triumph, when prisoners of war were stripped and paraded before the populace behind the conquering general. Satan and his forces thought the Cross would be their victory and Christ's defeat. In reality, at the Cross the Lord vanquished His foes, took away their weapons, and **made a public spectacle of them**.

2:16–19 In view of Christ's victory over His enemies, we should not be controlled by those powers and practices over which Christ has already triumphed. The false teachers in Colosse were tempting the Colossians to bind themselves with the outward observances of Judaism, such as the Jewish dietary restrictions. These were merely a **shadow** of Christ. Judaism and its rites pointed to Christ. Paul warns the believers in Colosse not to let others bind them to regulations from which Christ has already freed them. **false humility:** People

BIBLE TIMES & CULTURE NOTES



False Teaching at Colosse

The doctrine that was infecting Colosse would eventually be called Gnosticism. This was a prominent Christian heresy in the second and third centuries. Gnosticism taught that special knowledge was needed for a soul to break from the physical realm into the spiritual realm. As this false doctrine developed, it claimed that salvation could only be obtained through such special knowledge. In this way the Gnostics replaced faith with intellect. Gnosticism followed the Greek philosophy that matter was inherently evil. Only nonphysical, "spiritual" realities were good. Gnosticism affected a person's morality in one of two ways: One tendency was indulgence; the other was asceticism. Paul's opponents at Colosse were ascetics. They found legalism alluring, and the strict Jewish laws (see 2:16) meshed easily with their harsh, self-denying rituals. Paul warned his readers that such rituals were useless and had no spiritual value (2:20–23).

puffed up by his fleshly mind,¹⁹ and not holding fast to ^w the Head, from whom all the body, nourished and knit together by joints and ligaments, ^x grows with the increase *that* is from God.

²⁰ ⁴ Therefore, if you ^y died with Christ from the basic principles of the world, ^z why, as *though* living in the world, do you subject yourselves to regulations—²¹ ^a "Do not touch, do not taste, do not handle," ²² which all concern things which perish with the using—^b according to the commandments and doctrines of men? ²³ ^c These things indeed have an appearance of wisdom in self-imposed religion, *false* humility, and ⁵ neglect of

19 ^w Eph. 4:15
^x Eph. 1:23; 4:16
²⁰ ^y Rom. 6:2–5
^z Gal. 4:3, 9 ¹ NU, M omit *Therefore*
²¹ ^a 1 Tim. 4:3
²² ^b Is. 29:13; Matt. 15:9; Titus 1:14
²³ ^c Rom. 13:14;
 1 Tim. 4:8 ⁵ *severe treatment, asceticism*

CHAPTER 3

1 ^a Rom. 6:5; Eph. 2:6; Col. 2:12 ^b Ps. 68:18; 110:1; [Rom. 8:34]; Eph. 1:20
 2 ^c [Matt. 6:19–21]
 3 ^d [Rom. 6:2; 2 Cor. 5:14; Gal. 2:20]; Col. 2:20 ^e [2 Cor. 5:7]
 4 ^f [1 John 3:2]
^g John 14:6 ^h 1 Cor. 15:43
 5 ⁱ [Rom. 8:13]
^j [Rom. 6:13] ^k Eph. 5:3 ^l Mark 7:21;
 1 Cor. 6:9, 18; 2 Cor. 12:21; Gal. 5:19;
 Eph. 4:19; 5:3, 5
 6 ^m Rom. 1:18;
 Eph. 5:6; Rev. 22:15
ⁿ [Eph. 2:2]
 7 ^o 1 Cor. 6:11; [Eph. 2:2]; Titus 3:3
 8 ^p Eph. 4:22;
 1 Pet. 2:1
 10 ^q Rom. 12:2;
 2 Cor. 4:16 ^r [Rom. 8:29] ^s [Eph. 2:10]
 11 ^t Rom. 10:12;
 [1 Cor. 12:13]; Gal. 3:27, 28 ^u Eph. 1:23
 12 ^v [1 Pet. 1:2]
^w Luke 1:78; Phil. 2:1; 1 John 3:17
 13 ^x [Mark 11:25]

the body, *but are* of no value against the indulgence of the flesh.

Not Carnality but Christ

3 If then you were ^a raised with Christ, ^b seek those things which are above, ^b where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. ² Set your mind on things above, not on things on the ^c earth. ³ ^d For you died, ^e and your life is hidden with Christ in God. ⁴ ^f When Christ *who is* ^g our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in ^h glory.

⁵ ⁱ Therefore put to death ^j your members which are on the earth: ^k fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, ^l which is idolatry. ⁶ ^m Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon ⁿ the sons of disobedience, ⁷ ^o in which you yourselves once walked when you lived in them.

⁸ ^p But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth. ⁹ Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, ¹⁰ and have put on the new *man* who ^q is renewed in knowledge ^r according to the image of Him who ^s created him, ¹¹ where there is neither ^t Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave *nor* free, ^u but Christ is all and in all.

Character of the New Man

¹² Therefore, ^v as the elect of God, holy and beloved, ^w put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, long-suffering; ¹³ ^x bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even

who do not champion salvation in Christ alone often appear to be humble. But their search for a new spiritual experience or advocacy of some work as necessary for salvation is actually human pride. They do not want to submit to God's plan of salvation revealed in the Bible.

2:20–23 regulations: Since believers have been released from ritualistic observances why should they let others bind them down again (see Rom. 6:3–14)? No human work can be added to the merit of Christ's death. His work on the Cross is the only acceptable work in God's eyes. The legalistic commands of others are a **self-imposed religion** and **are of no value** for salvation.

3:1–4 Paul's exhortations in ch. 3 are practical applications of the doctrine he has presented in ch. 2. **if . . . you were raised with Christ:** Paul ties his ethical teaching (v. 5) to the doctrine of the Resurrection (see 2:12, 13). **Set your mind on things above:** The false teachers were instructing the Colossians to concentrate on temporal observances; in contrast, Paul instructs them to concentrate on the eternal realities of heaven. The Greek verb for *set* emphasizes an ongoing decision. Christians must continually discipline themselves to focus on eternal realities, instead of the temporal realities of this earth. A Christian's life is no longer dictated by this world but is **hidden with Christ**. The Greek word for *hidden* indicates that God has accomplished this in the past so that it is a present reality.

3:5–8 While obedience to rules cannot bring salvation, those who are saved ought to live worthy of that salvation. Thus Paul gives the Colossians instructions concerning proper conduct. He states in negative and positive terms the kind of life that God wants Christians to live. Although the believers at Colosse were once captivated by the evil practices listed in vv. 5, 8, 9, they were to abandon such practices.

3:9, 10 The analogies between the **old man** and our old sinful ways and the **new man** and our new lives in Jesus Christ parallels Paul's discussion in Rom. 6 about dying to sin and living for Christ. The two words *old man* and *new man* do not refer to the Christian's fleshly and spiritual natures. Instead, Paul describes our former unredeemed life as the *old man*, and our life as God's child as the *new man*. The new man has the image of the new creation in Christ, just as the old man bears the image of our fallen nature. The old man is under an old master, Satan, while the new man has a new master, the Spirit of God living within.

3:11 barbarian: In the Roman Empire a person who did not speak Greek was despised. **Scythian:** An uncultured person who came from the area around the Black Sea. **Greek . . . Jew . . . slave . . . free:** This list is similar to the list in Gal. 3:28. In both places the point is not the functions of the persons in the body of Christ, but equal acceptance of all the groups into God's family.

as Christ forgave you, so you also *must* do. ¹⁴But above all these things ²put on love, which is the ^abond of perfection. ¹⁵And let ^bthe peace of God rule in your hearts, ^cto which also you were called ^din one body; and ^ebe thankful. ¹⁶Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another ^fin psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. ¹⁷And ^gwhatever you do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

The Christian Home

- ¹⁸Wives, submit to your own husbands, ⁱas is fitting in the Lord.
- ¹⁹Husbands, love your wives and do not be ^kbitter toward them.
- ²⁰Children, obey your parents ^min all things, for this is well pleasing to the Lord.
- ²¹Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged.
- ²²Bondservants, obey in all things

14 ^y 1 Pet. 4:8
2 ⁱ [1 Cor. 13] ^a Eph. 4:3
15 ^b [John 14:27; Phil. 4:7] ^c 1 Cor. 7:15 ^d Eph. 4:4
e [1 Thess. 5:18]
16 ^e Eph. 5:19
17 ^g 1 Cor. 10:31
18 ^h 1 Pet. 3:1 ⁱ [Col. 3:18–41; Eph. 5:22–6:9]
19 ^j [Eph. 5:25; 1 Pet. 3:7] ^k Eph. 4:31
20 ^j Eph. 6:1 ^m Eph. 5:24
21 ⁿ Eph. 6:4
22 ^o Eph. 6:5; [1 Tim. 6:1]; Titus 2:9; 1 Pet. 2:18
23 ^p [Eccl. 9:10]
24 ^q Eph. 6:8
r 1 Cor. 7:22 ¹ NU omits for
25 ^r Rom. 2:11

CHAPTER 4

1 ^a Eph. 6:9
2 ^b Luke 18:1
c Col. 2:7
3 ^d Eph. 6:19
e 1 Cor. 16:9 / Eph. 3:3, 4; 6:19 ^g Eph. 6:20 ¹ hidden truth

your masters according to the flesh, not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but in sincerity of heart, fearing God. ²³And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, ²⁴knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; ^rfor ¹ you serve the Lord Christ. ²⁵But he who does wrong will be repaid for what he has done, and ^sthere is no partiality.

4 Masters,^a give your bondservants what is just and fair, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven.

Christian Graces

- ^{2b}Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it ^cwith thanksgiving; ^{3d}meanwhile praying also for us, that God would ^eopen to us a door for the word, to speak ^fthe ¹mystery of Christ, ^gfor which I am also in chains, ⁴that I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak.
- ^{5h}Walk in ⁱwisdom toward those *who* are outside, ^jredeeming the time. ⁶Let

5 ^h Eph. 5:15 ¹ [Matt. 10:16] / Eph. 5:16

3:16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly is apparently a parallel thought to Paul's statement in Eph. 5:18 where he says to be "filled with the Spirit." Both here and in Ephesians, the result of being "filled" with the Spirit or the word of Christ is singing (Eph. 5:19–21). The **psalms** are the *psalms* found in the OT, the "songbook" of the early church as well as of Israel. The **hymns** would be the songs of the church that reflected the new truth in Christ. Examples of such hymns are found in 1:15–20; Phil. 2:5–11; 1 Tim. 3:16. **Spiritual songs** may have been other kinds of songs praising God.

3:17 In this verse, Paul sums up how Christians should live. We should commit everything we do or say to **Jesus** and continually thank God for all His good gifts (see Eccl. 12:13, 14).

3:18, 19 Based on the kind of Christian life to which believers are called, Paul gives some practical guidance. General applications like "be good" or "love everybody" are very difficult to follow, so Paul seeks to apply moral truths to the daily lives of the Colossians (see Eph. 5:21–6:9). The Colossian home would usually consist of father, mother, children, and servants. Paul gives instructions to each group. The first is for **wives to submit**. The word *submit* is a military

term meaning to "arrange oneself under another" and indicates a voluntary submission, not an unthinking obedience. The parallel passage of Eph. 5:21 may speak of mutual submission, as some have suggested. Either way it is clear that submission does not denigrate the one who submits. The husband is commanded to **love** his wife (Eph. 5:25 says as Christ loved the church). In his headship, he is to seek her highest good, not his own welfare. He is to honor her and be considerate of her, and not to be bitter or harsh.

3:20, 21 Children and fathers also have admonitions from the apostle. Children are to obey. Yet the **all things** should not be taken as an absolute. When God's truth and anyone's demands come into conflict, a child should obey God. Furthermore, a father should be careful not to frustrate his children or discourage them. Regulations should be reasonable, not arbitrary. The father should train his children the same way God disciplines and teaches him.

3:22–25 Bondservants, obey . . . your masters: The question of slaves and masters may appear to be out-of-date and inapplicable to modern society, but on second glance there are important principles in this passage. Even though slavery might not be officially condoned or practiced today, the admonition to work hard as though one was working for God, and not people, applies to employees. **the reward of the inheritance:** The strong motivation to serve someone well is found in the future reward that Christ gives to those who are faithful in this service. We normally think we receive eternal rewards for spiritual practices like reading the Bible, prayer, or evangelism. Here Paul asserts that all work done to the honor of Christ will bring an eternal reward (see 1:22, 23; 2:18).

4:1 Masters: Paul does not concern himself only with servants or employees. Employers also have a duty not to take advantage of employees. Instead they should offer a just wage, proper benefits, and adequate rest. In contemporary societies, many of these benefits are required by government regulations. But how much better when Christian employers treat their employees well for the Lord's sake, knowing that they too have **a Master in heaven**.

4:2 Paul encourages the Colossians to be diligent in thanksgiving and prayer, especially praying for himself and his coworkers as they worked at spreading the gospel. Even the apostle Paul requested and needed the prayers of others to support him.

4:5 Walk in wisdom toward those who are outside: Early Christians were often viewed with suspicion, distrust, and disdain. They were considered atheists because they would not worship the gods

peace

(Gk. *eirēnē*) (1:2; 3:15; Eph. 2:17; Phil. 1:2; 4:7) Strong's #1515

rule

(Gk. *brabeuō*) (3:15) Strong's #1018

The Greek term *eirēnē* has a variety of meanings, including "unity," "tranquility," and "concord," and corresponds to the Hebrew word *shalom*, which primarily means "wholeness." In the NT, the Greek word is used for a harmonious relationship between people (Rom. 14:19), the order produced by a ruling government (Acts 24:2), and the reconciliation between God and a person through the saving work of Christ (Eph. 2:17). In 3:15, Paul encourages the believers to let "the peace of God rule" in their hearts. The Greek word for *rule* means "to act as umpire" or "to arbitrate." The peace of God should act as our umpire when anger, envy, and other such passions arise in our hearts.

your speech always *be* ^kwith grace, ^lseasoned with salt, ^mthat you may know how you ought to answer each one.

Final Greetings

⁷ⁿTychicus, a beloved brother, faithful minister, and fellow servant in the Lord, will tell you all the news about me. ^{8o}I am sending him to you for this very purpose, that ²he may know your circumstances and comfort your hearts, ⁹with ^pOnesimus, a faithful and beloved brother, who is *one* of you. They will make known to you all things which *are happening* here.

^{10q}Aristarchus my fellow prisoner greets you, with ^rMark the cousin of Barnabas (about whom you received instructions: if he comes to you, welcome him), ¹¹and Jesus who is called Justus. These *are my* only fellow workers for the kingdom of God who are of the circumcision; they have proved to be a comfort to me.

^{12s}Epaphras, who is *one* of you, a bondservant of Christ, greets you, always

6 ^a Eccl. 10:12
^r Mark 9:50 ^m 1 Pet. 3:15
⁷ ⁿ Acts 20:4; Eph. 6:21; 2 Tim. 4:12;
⁸ Titus 3:12
⁸ ^o Eph. 6:22 ² NU
you may know our circumstances and he may comfort
⁹ ^p Philem. 10
¹⁰ ^q Acts 19:29; 20:4; 27:2; Philem. 24
^r Acts 15:37; 2 Tim. 4:11
¹² ^s Col. 1:7; Philem. 23
^r Rom. 15:30
^u Matt. 5:48; 1 Cor. 2:6
³ NU *fully assured*
¹³ ^a NU *concern*
¹⁴ ^v 2 Tim. 4:11; Philem. 24
² Tim. 4:10
¹⁵ ^x Rom. 16:5;
¹ Cor. 16:19
² NU
¹⁶ ^y 1 Thess. 5:27;
² Thess. 3:14
¹⁷ ^z Philem. 2
^a 1 Tim. 4:6; 2 Tim. 4:5

^rlaboring fervently for you in prayers, that you may stand ^uperfect and ³complete in all the will of God. ¹³For I bear him witness that he has a great ⁴zeal for you, and those who are in Laodicea, and those in Hierapolis. ¹⁴^vLuke the beloved physician and ^wDemas greet you. ¹⁵Greet the brethren who are in Laodicea, and ⁵Nymphas and ^xthe church that *is* in ⁶his house.

Closing Exhortations and Blessing

¹⁶Now when ^ythis epistle is read among you, see that it is read also in the church of the Laodiceans, and that you likewise read the *epistle* from Laodicea. ¹⁷And say to ^zArchippus, “Take heed to ^athe ministry which you have received in the Lord, that you may fulfill it.”

^{18b}This salutation by my own hand—Paul. ^cRemember my chains. Grace *be* with you. Amen.

18 ^b 1 Cor. 16:21; 2 Thess. 3:17 ^c Heb. 13:3

of Rome and Greece. Many labeled them as unpatriotic because they would not burn incense before the image of the emperor. Some accused the early Christians of participating in orgies because of their talk of “love feasts” (Jude 12). Others harbored suspicions that Christians were really cannibals, who ate and drank the blood and the body of the Lord. With such misrepresentations of Christian belief and practice running rampant, it was very important for misunderstandings to be dispelled by the virtuous and impeccable lives of Christian believers.

4:7, 8 Tychicus was an intimate friend of Paul’s who came from the province of Asia. He had accompanied Paul on part of the third missionary journey. He probably delivered this letter and answered questions about Paul’s condition in prison.

4:9 The slave **Onesimus** probably accompanied Tychicus to Colosse. Paul’s letter to Philemon would have been carried along with the letter to the Colossians. It dealt with a personal situation between Philemon and his slave Onesimus, so Paul wrote a separate letter to him.

4:10–15 Paul greets a number of friends and introduces and commends several who work with him. The apostle’s great warmth and true appreciation for his beloved coworkers comes through in these few verses. This should remind us that no one is an island. We all need the support of each other in the work of God. **Aristarchus**, a Jew from Thessalonica, had been traveling with Paul since the riot that occurred in Ephesus on his third missionary journey (Acts 19:29; 20:4). Evidently he remained with Paul even when he was imprisoned in Rome (27:2). **Mark** is the author of the Gospel of Mark. At the beginning of his second missionary journey, Paul had refused to take Mark with him (Acts 15:37–40). Evidently the two had been reconciled, for Paul commends him here and in 2 Tim. 4:11. **Luke** is the author of the Gospel of Luke and the Book of Acts. He accompa-

nied Paul on many of his missionary journeys. **Demas** would later abandon Paul (see 2 Tim. 4:10).

4:16 There are numerous theories as to the identity of the Laodicean letter mentioned in this verse. Whether it is one of the other NT letters, like 1 or 2 Thessalonians or Ephesians, or whether it is a lost **epistle** probably cannot be determined.

4:18 This salutation by my own hand: The apostle dictated his letters to a secretary, but it was his custom to give a greeting in his own handwriting at the end (see 2 Thess. 2:1, 2; 3:17). This served to personalize and authenticate the letter.

perfect

(Gk. *teleios*) (1:28; 4:12; Rom. 12:2; Phil. 3:15; James 1:4) Strong’s #5046

This Greek word is an adjective derived from the word *telos*, meaning “end,” “limit,” or “fulfillment.” Paul uses *telos* to speak of Jesus Christ as the complete fulfillment of God’s law (see Rom. 10:4). In his letter to the Colossians, Paul uses *teleios* to speak of the completion or perfection of Christians (1:28; 4:12). The “perfect” Christian is a mature Christian, who has endured trials (James 1:4) and has learned to express God’s love to others (3:14). By loving others, we not only are made complete in and through Christ but we also see God’s love “perfected” in us (see 1 John 4:12). Just as Paul pressed on towards the goal of perfection (Phil. 3:12–14) to which Christ had called him, so we too should make perfection in Christ our goal, a goal that will be completely achieved when “that which is perfect” comes (1 Cor. 13:10).

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE THESSALONIANS



NEARLY ALL NEW BELIEVERS have questions about their faith. As a seasoned missionary, Paul knew this. For this reason, he sent Timothy back to Thessalonica shortly after establishing the church there. Timothy's job was to find out how the young church was doing. When he returned, he was loaded down with their questions. First Thessalonians is Paul's patient reply. He reinforces the basic gospel message, instructs them further in the faith, and provides practical applications for spiritual truths.

Author and Date Paul's authorship of 1 Thessalonians has not been seriously questioned except by a few modern liberal scholars. Paul refers to himself as the author in the letter (1:1; 2:18), and the early church recognized him as such. The canon of Marcion lists 1 Thessalonians as being a work of Paul. Early church fathers such as Irenaeus, Tertullian, and Clement of Alexandria also acknowledged it as being by Paul.

The letter was probably written from Corinth around A.D. 51 and is considered to be one of Paul's earliest epistles. In fact, Galatians may be the only one written before it.

Historical Background Thessalonica was one of the first cities to be evangelized by Paul and Silas when they landed on the continent of Europe. A divine vision of a man from Macedonia inviting Paul to preach the gospel had drawn the two missionaries to that region (see Acts 16:9, 10). After preaching in Philippi, Paul traveled another one hundred miles to Thessalonica. This was a port city and commercial center located in the northwest corner of the Aegean Sea. The Egnatian Way linking Rome to Byzantium passed through it. This important highway and the thriving port made Thessalonica one of the wealthiest trade centers of the Roman Empire. It was the capital and the largest city of the province of Macedonia, with a population of about 200,000.

Because of its strategic location, Thessalonica became a base for the spread of the gospel in Macedonia and Greece. This was Paul's plan. A church planted in a geographic center would become the evangelistic hub for the surrounding region. Evidently this was especially true of Thessalonica, for Paul commends them for their evangelistic work (see 1:8). Paul started the Thessalonian church by preaching for three Sabbath days in the Jewish synagogue. He had great success, not only among the Jews but also among God-fearing Greeks. But some Jews who rejected Paul's message and were envious of his success hired thugs to attack him. When Paul could not be found, the Jews brought the owner of the house where Paul was staying, Jason, before the magistrates. They charged him with treason because he was harboring someone who was teaching that there was another king, Jesus. The magistrates took a bond from Jason and let him go. Consequently, Paul and Silas considered it best to leave immediately, and went to the next important town, Berea. Here they also had a good reception. But when the Jews in Thessalonica heard of it, they went there to stir up more opposition to Paul and Silas. Paul moved on to Athens. After a brief stay there, he went to Corinth, where he was joined by Silas and Timothy (Acts 18:5). Concerned about the welfare of the Thessalonian converts, Paul sent Timothy back to Thessalonica to see how the believers were doing.

After a brief, encouraging ministry in Thessalonica, Timothy rejoined Paul in Corinth and brought a good report of the faithfulness of the Thessalonians even under persecution. They did have some questions about the faith, and Paul undertook to answer these.

Themes First Thessalonians gives us an intimate introduction to how Paul mentored young believers. As this epistle demonstrates, his teaching for young converts was rich in doctrine and application, accurately describing salvation in its full dimensions.

In 1 Thessalonians, Paul reviewed some of the basics of the faith and applied these truths to the believers' lives. He challenged them to persevere in godly living despite persecution. He extended the comfort of the Resurrection to those who were in mourning, and he spoke about details of the Second Coming. In addition, Paul responded to the angry attacks of his Jewish opponents, who were jealous because Christians were drawing God-fearing Gentiles away from the local synagogue. Paul's opponents may have charged that his failure to return to Thessalonica proved that he was insincere. Paul devoted the first three chapters of his letter to correcting this false impression.

In a brief space, Paul covered a wide spectrum of the essential doctrines of Christianity. These include such beliefs as the Trinity (1:5, 6), the deity of Christ (3:11, 12), the power of the Holy Spirit (1:5, 6), the nature of Scripture (2:13), the timing and the events of the Second Coming (1:10; 2:19; 3:13; 4:13–17; 5:23), the day of the Lord (5:1–3), assurance of salvation (1:5), conversion (1:9), sanctification (4:3; 5:23), the Resurrection (4:14–18), the relation of faith to works (1:3), the relation of love to service (1:3), and the relation of patience to hope (1:3).

Because 1 Thessalonians is one of Paul's earliest letters, it reveals much of what Paul preached during his second missionary journey. Evidently the return of Christ was central to his message, for Paul answers many questions about the Second Coming. In fact, perhaps the most significant doctrinal contribution of this small letter is its detailed explanation of Christ's return.

CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

Not only does Paul encourage the Thessalonians, but he also motivates their faithfulness by alluding to the Second Coming. Jesus is pictured in this letter as the believers' hope of salvation both now and when He returns to earth. At that time He will deliver us from the wrath that will envelop the world (1:10; 5:4–11). This same Jesus will reward our faithfulness with His physical presence (2:19) after He has resurrected our mortal bodies. "For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven. . . . We who are alive and remain shall be caught up together. . . . And thus we shall always be with the Lord" (4:16, 17).



Looking south at the eastern edge of the Thessaloniki Bay. During the days of Paul, Thessalonica was the capital city of Macedonia. He visited there on his second and third missionary journeys.

C. A.D. 47–49
Paul's first missionary journey

C. A.D. 50
The Jerusalem council

C. A.D. 50–53
Paul's second missionary journey

C. A.D. 51
The church at Thessalonica is started

C. A.D. 51
1 Thessalonians is written

C. A.D. 53–57
Paul's third missionary journey

C. A.D. 58
Paul is arrested in Jerusalem

C. A.D. 60–62
Paul is imprisoned in Rome

C. A.D. 67
Peter and Paul are executed

1926 1 THESSALONIANS INTRODUCTION

In the meantime Paul reminds them (and us) that Jesus is committed to our spiritual growth. “May the Lord make you increase and abound in love” (3:12). Even maturing Christians like these in Thessalonica need help in that regard.



View of the Taurus mountains through the Cilician Gates. Paul passed through here on his second and third missionary journeys. The church at Thessalonica was founded during Paul's second journey.

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1 THESSALONIANS OUTLINE

- I. Thanksgiving for the Thessalonians' salvation 1:1–10
- II. Paul's defense of his ministry in Thessalonica 2:1–12
 - A. His integrity in his ministry 2:1–4
 - B. His selfless and loving ministry 2:5–9
 - C. His blameless behavior 2:10–12
- III. Paul's prayer for their spiritual growth 2:13—3:13
 - A. His concern for their suffering 2:13–16
 - B. His earnest desire to see them 2:17–20
 - C. His expression of love through Timothy 3:1–8
 - D. His prayer 3:9–13
- IV. Paul's exhortation for their sanctification 4:1–12
 - A. His command that they abstain from sexual immorality 4:1–8
 - B. His exhortation to brotherly love rather than sexual impurity 4:9, 10
 - C. His exhortation to proper Christian life 4:11, 12
- V. The return of Christ 4:13–18
- VI. The day of the Lord 5:1–11
- VII. Paul's concluding exhortations 5:12–28



Thessalonica

In Paul's time, Thessalonica was the prominent seaport and the capital of the Roman province of Macedonia. This prosperous city was located on the Via Egnatia, the main road from Rome to the East, and was within sight of Mt. Olympus, legendary home of the Greek pantheon. A city of perhaps 200,000 in the first century A.D., Thessalonica had a sizable Jewish population, and the ethical monotheism of the Jewish religion attracted many Gentiles who had become disenchanted with Greek paganism. According to 1:9 and 2:14–16, most of the Thessalonian converts were Gentiles who came out of idolatry.

Modern Thessaloniki
Wikimedia Commons



Greeting

Paul, ^aSilvanus, and Timothy,

To the church of the ^bThessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:

Grace to you and peace ¹from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Their Good Example

^{2c}We give thanks to God always for

CHAPTER 1

¹ ^a 1 Pet. 5:12
^b Acts 17:1–9 ¹ NU omits *from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ*
² ^c Rom. 1:8;
2 Thess. 1:3
³ ^d John 6:29
^e Rom. 16:6
⁴ ^f Col. 3:12
⁵ ^g Mark 16:20
^h 2 Cor. 6:6 ¹ Heb. 2:3

you all, making mention of you in our prayers, ³remembering without ceasing ^dyour work of faith, ^elabor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the sight of our God and Father, ⁴knowing, beloved brethren, ^fyour election by God. ⁵For ^gour gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power, ^hand in the Holy Spirit ⁱand in much assurance, as you know what kind of men we were among you for your sake.

1:1 Paul follows the customary form of ancient letters, giving the writer first, the destination second, and a brief greeting third. Paul mentions **Silvanus**, Silas's Roman name, and Timothy, but he is the writer of the epistle (4:9). When Paul uses the pronoun *we* (v. 2), he may be referring to Silas and Timothy as editors with him of the letter. After Paul separated from Barnabas (Acts 15:36–40), Silas became Paul's traveling companion on the second missionary journey, and he may have served as Paul's secretary. He was a leader of the Jerusalem church (Acts 15:22, 23), and he accompanied Paul and Barnabas to Antioch to deliver the decree of the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15:22, 23). He and Paul suffered a beating at Philippi (Acts 16:22–24), and he had helped found the church at Thessalonica (Acts 17:1–4). **Timothy** was also with Paul on the second missionary journey. Paul considered him like a son and loved him dearly (Acts 16:3; see 1 Tim. 1:2). This letter is a response to Timothy's report from the church in Thessalonica. **To the church:** The Greek word *ekklesia* was a familiar term meaning any gathering or assembly. In its NT usage this common Greek word calls to mind the relationship of believers to one another and to Christ. Note that Paul addresses the believers at Thessalonica as a body, and not as individual believers. The expression **grace to you and peace**, though similar to common salutations, eloquently expresses the main concepts of the Christian faith. The word *grace* means "unmerited favor and blessing," and the word *peace* describes the relationship Christians have with God and should cultivate with other people. The order of the two terms in the greeting is always maintained in the NT, since God's grace is the only basis for His people's peace.

1:2 prayers: Continuing the pattern of the Jerusalem church, these early church planters gave themselves to prayer as well as to preaching the gospel (see Acts 6:4). As in other cities, they had suffered labor pains in giving birth to the church at Thessalonica, and the infant church at Thessalonica was deeply ingrained in their hearts (see 2:13, 17; 3:5, 6).

1:3 The faith of the believers at Thessalonica had produced true repentance. When they turned to God, they turned away from idols (v. 9). Note that Paul views the Thessalonians' repentance as a result of their faith, not vice versa. **labor of love:** The Thessalonians' love for Christ resulted in serving (v. 9) in the midst of persecution (v. 6). Note the contrast between *work* and *labor*. Whereas work may be pleasant and stimulating, labor often involves strenuous effort to the point of fatigue and even exhaustion. **patience of hope:** The believers at Thessalonica fixed their hope solidly on the return of Jesus Christ (v. 10). Notice that each of the virtues has Christ as its object. Jesus is constantly the focus. This is a good standard for evaluating any Christian service: Does it glorify Christ?

1:4 knowing . . . your election: The missionaries gave thanks not only for the good works arising from the Thessalonians' faith (v. 3), but more importantly for what God had done for them. God had chosen them to be His holy people. In vv. 5–10, Paul lists the indisputable proof of their election by God: their joyful response to the gospel, their strong faith, and their progress in holiness. God had graciously chosen them, a clear reason to rejoice (v. 2; Eph. 1:3–14). **1:5** Paul does not define his **gospel** at this point, but he had preached it clearly when he was with them: for three weeks he had "reasoned with them from the Scriptures, explaining and demonstrating that the Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead" (see Acts 17:2, 3). This message of a crucified Christ was far different from the messianic expectations that Paul knew from his own training as a Pharisee. The Jews of that day were not looking for a suffering savior but a conquering champion. Thus Paul had to demonstrate from the OT Scripture that the prophets had foretold the suffering, death, and resurrection of the Messiah. **not . . . in word only, but also in power:** Paul did not neglect a careful, precise, and persuasive use of the Scriptures in his preaching. But he realized that apart from the convicting work of the Holy Spirit, no one could or would turn to Christ (see John 16:8). But with God's



⁶ And ^jyou became followers of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, ^kwith joy of the Holy Spirit, ⁷so that you became examples to all in Macedonia and Achaia who believe. ⁸For from you the word of the Lord ^lhas sounded forth, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also ^min every place. Your faith toward God has gone out, so that we do not need to say anything. ⁹For they themselves declare concerning us ⁿwhat manner of entry we had to you, ^oand how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, ¹⁰and ^pto wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, *even* Jesus who delivers us ^qfrom the wrath to come.

Paul's Conduct

2 For you yourselves know, brethren, that our coming to you was not in vain. ²But ¹even after we had suffered before and were spitefully treated at ^aPhilippi, as you know, we were ^bbold in our God to speak to you the gospel of God in much conflict. ³^cFor our exhortation *did not come* from error or uncleanness, nor *was it* in deceit. ⁴But as ^dwe have been approved by God ^eto be entrusted with the gospel, even so we speak, ^fnot as pleasing men, but God ^gwho tests our hearts. ⁵For ^hneither at

6 / 1 Cor. 4:16; 11:1 ^k Acts 5:41; 13:52; 2 Cor. 6:10; Gal. 5:22
8 / Rom. 10:18 ^m Rom. 1:8; 16:19; 2 Cor. 2:14; 2 Thess. 1:4
9 ⁿ 1 Thess. 2:1 ^o 1 Cor. 12:2 ¹⁰ ^p [Rom. 2:7] ^q Matt. 3:7; Rom. 5:9
CHAPTER 2 ² ^a Acts 14:5; 16:19-24; Phil. 1:30 ^b Acts 17:1-9
¹ NU, M omit *even* ³ ^c 2 Cor. 7:2 ⁴ ^d 1 Cor. 7:25 ^e Titus 1:3
^f Gal. 1:10 ^g Prov. 17:3 ⁵ ^h 2 Cor. 2:17

blessing, Paul's preaching persuaded some of the Jews in the synagogue, together with "a great multitude of the devout Greeks, and not a few of the leading women" (Acts 17:4).

1:6 followers of us and of the Lord: Everyone needs teachers, especially new converts. At times, Paul encouraged new believers to imitate him (1 Cor. 11:1) as he was imitating Christ. All the writers of the NT lead their readers back to the footprints of Christ as shown in the Gospels (see Phil. 2:5; Heb. 12:2; 1 Pet. 2:21; 1 John 2:6). This should be our goal also, to lead others to Christ by our own virtuous example. As we focus on Jesus, we will reflect His image to others (2 Cor. 3:18). **Having received** is not the usual word for reception, but a word expressing a warm welcome. The Thessalonians seized the gospel with joy, even if it meant facing persecution.

1:8 Your faith . . . has gone out: Testimony of the Thessalonians' remarkable faith rang out throughout Greece and Macedonia. Since Thessalonica was a port city and was on the much-traveled Egnatian Way, those who saw the virtuous life and persistent faith of the Thessalonian Christians would spread the word throughout the entire region. The same had occurred at the Jerusalem church (see Acts 6:7); that is, vital Christian living was making an impact on the people who lived in and traveled through the city.

1:9 they themselves declare concerning us: These reports were not from missionaries but from ordinary travelers who were giving their impressions of the Thessalonian believers. **turned to God from idols:** The truth of the gospel exposed the falsehood of idolatry. Since Jews avoided idolatry, Paul was primarily speaking to a Greek audience (see Acts 17:4).

1:10 to wait for His Son: Paul hoped for the Lord's return to occur

at any moment. The phrase *to wait for* pictures an eager and expectant looking forward to the return of our Lord Jesus who **delivers us from the wrath to come**. This is a future deliverance, but this verse does not make clear whether Paul is referring to a specific time or to the outpouring of God's wrath on unbelievers in a more general sense. Because Christ endured God's wrath at Calvary, all who are in Christ will escape all aspects of God's wrath (see 5:9). Thus, they have nothing to fear.

2:1, 2 Paul's motives for coming to Thessalonica had apparently been attacked after he left by pagan Gentiles and by Jews clinging to their traditional faith. Paul pointed out what the Thessalonians knew, that he had not preached to them **in vain** (see 1:9) but had declared his message in the face of opposition, including the painful experience of being beaten and put in the stocks in **Philippi** (Acts 16:22-24).

2:3, 4 Answering criticism of his motives for preaching, Paul asserted that he used the truth, not **error**; his motives were pure, not from **uncleanness**; his presentation was in sincerity, not in **deceit** (a word used also of a fishing lure to catch fish, suggesting trickery). In contrast to these criticisms, Paul asserted that he and his coworkers were **approved** messengers, missionaries shown by testing to be genuine. Their ministry was not their personal choice, but God's appointment.

2:5-8 Paul denied that in his visit to the Thessalonians he had used flattery. Instead, he preached boldly that everyone was a sinner who needed to be saved by the grace of God. His preaching did not serve as a **cloak for covetousness**, that is, as a mask to hide greed. Here he appeals to God as his **witness** because no person could

any time did we use flattering words, as you know, nor a ²cloak for covetousness—ⁱ God is witness. ^{6j} Nor did we seek glory from men, either from you or from others, when ^k we might have ^l made demands ^m as apostles of Christ. ⁷ But ⁿ we were gentle among you, just as a nursing mother cherishes her own children. ⁸ So, affectionately longing for you, we were well pleased ^o to impart to you not only the gospel of God, but also ^p our own lives, because you had become dear to us. ⁹ For you remember, brethren, our ^q labor and toil; for laboring night and day, ^r that we might not be a burden to any of you, we preached to you the gospel of God.

^{10s} You are witnesses, and God also, ^t how devoutly and justly and blamelessly we behaved ourselves among you who believe; ¹¹ as you know how we exhorted, and comforted, and ³ charged every one

⁵ ⁱ Rom. 1:9;
1 Thess. 2:10
² pretext for greed
⁶ ^j 1 Tim. 5:17
^k 1 Cor. 9:4 ^l 2 Cor.
11:9 ^m 1 Cor. 9:1
⁷ ⁿ 1 Cor. 2:3
⁸ ^o Rom. 1:11
^p 2 Cor. 12:15;
1 John 3:16
⁹ ^q Acts 18:3;
20:34, 35; 1 Cor.
4:12; 2 Thess. 3:7, 8
^r 2 Cor. 12:13
¹⁰ ^s 2 Cor. 1:12;
1 Thess. 1:5 ^t 2 Cor.
7:2
¹¹ ³ NU, M *implored*
¹² ^u Eph. 4:1; Col.
1:10 ^v Rom. 8:28;
1 Cor. 1:9; 1 Thess.
5:24; 2 Thess. 2:14;
[2 Tim. 1:9]
¹³ ^w Rom. 1:8;
1 Thess. 1:2, 3
^x Mark 4:20 ^y [Matt.
10:20; Gal. 4:14]

of you, as a father *does* his own children, ^{12u} that you would walk worthy of God ^v who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.

Their Conversion

¹³ For this reason we also thank God ^w without ceasing, because when you ^x received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed it ^y not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively ^z works in you who believe. ¹⁴ For you, brethren, became imitators ^a of the churches of God which are in Judea in Christ Jesus. For ^b you also suffered the same things from your own countrymen, just as they *did* from the Judeans, ^{15c} who

^z [1 Pet. 1:23] ¹⁴ ^a Gal. 1:22 ^b Acts 17:5; 1 Thess. 3:4; 2 Thess. 1:4 ¹⁵ ^c Luke 24:20; Acts 2:23

examine his motives. Moreover, he and his companions were not seeking praise or desiring positions of authority. Paul did not even exercise his right for financial support (1 Cor. 9:3–14; 2 Cor. 11:7–11). Instead, here as in Corinth he paid his own way. In contrast to the enemies' accusations, Paul and his companions had demonstrated their loving care for the Thessalonians. While a professional nurse would know how to provide for the physical needs of an infant, a mother **cherishes her own children** with maternal love. Paul emphasizes the extent of his love: he would have sacrificed his own life for them if necessary.

2:9 Paul's affection for the Thessalonians was demonstrated by his **labor**. As in 1:3, this word indicates strenuous work that produces weariness and fatigue. Paul made tents to provide for his financial needs, working early and late, in order that he might not be a burden to his converts. Paul's actions showed that his ministry was motivated by an unselfish desire to promote the well-being of others rather than to advance his own needs.

2:10–12 In addition to their avoiding any need for financial support (v. 9), the morality and devotion to God demonstrated by Paul and his companions backed up their message. They both comforted and challenged the Thessalonians like a loving **father** (see also v. 7). Paul's ultimate goal for them was that they would **walk worthy**

of God, or live in a way measuring up to the God they served. It seems an impossible standard. But Paul reminds the Thessalonians that God had called them for this purpose, and He would surely empower them, for "He who has begun a good work in you will complete it" (Phil. 1:6). Christians should have the same goals Paul had, of divine approval and the reward at the judgment seat of Christ (2 Cor. 5:9, 10).

2:13 Paul and his companions were thankful for the way the Thessalonians had welcomed the Word of God. **effectively works**: Gentle Christians in Thessalonica could contrast the pure Word of God, with its transforming effect, to the immoral pagan religions, which only perverted people even more. Likewise, Jewish believers could contrast the love and grace of God in the gospel to the legalism and pride often produced by the Jewish religion.

2:14 As the church in Judea had been persecuted by unbelieving Jews, so the Thessalonians were being persecuted by both Jews and Gentiles, and they became **imitators** of those in Judea (see 1:6). Sometimes suffering comes because of our own failures (1 Pet. 4:15), but these believers were suffering because they stood for God's truth (1 Pet. 4:16).

2:15 and have persecuted us: Paul tells the Thessalonians that they should not be surprised at suffering for Christ's sake, since

Painful Expectations

Paul's second missionary journey included a brief, turbulent stop in Thessalonica. His four-week visit on the way from Philippi to Berea resulted in a church. But Thessalonica proved to be a hostile environment for the gospel. Not only did Paul and Silas have to leave the city prematurely, but their opponents followed them to Berea and created problems for them there (see Acts 16:35–17:15).

Paul reminded his Thessalonian friends that they had become believers "under fire" (2:14). He had tried to strengthen their young faith with warnings about the suffering they would experience (3:4). But he was concerned about the survival of the church because he had had so little time to lay a solid foundation there.

Paul decided to take action. He traveled alone to Athens while Timothy traveled to Thessalonica to "establish" and "encourage" (3:2) the Christians there, and then undoubtedly to bring fresh news to Paul from that church. Paul based his first letter to the Thessalonians on the encouraging report he received from Timothy.

The Thessalonian experience illustrates a key aspect of the spread of the gospel. The truth takes root in resistant soil. When the "tempter" (3:5) cannot prevent the Good News from bringing life to someone, his tactic changes in order to make the young Christian ineffective. Pressure and persecution are inevitable. They may come camouflaged as vague cultural disapproval, or they may be open hostility, but in one way or another spiritual growth will always meet resistance.

Persecution is demoralizing, but it can also be a cause for taking heart. Without resistance, how can growth be recognized? Trials and tribulations test character (James 1:2–4). Absence of pressure may indicate a lack of growth. Paul's encouraging words still ring true today. The fellowship that comes from suffering together promotes Christian maturity (2:14–16; 3:3, 7).



killed both the Lord Jesus and ^dtheir own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they do not please God ^cand are ⁴contrary to all men, ¹⁶/forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they may be saved, so as always ^gto fill up *the measure* of their sins; ^hbut wrath has come upon them to the uttermost.

Longing to See Them

¹⁷But we, brethren, having been taken away from you for a short time ⁱin presence, not in heart, endeavored more eagerly to see your face with great desire. ¹⁸Therefore we wanted to come to you—even I, Paul, time and again—but ^jSatan hindered us. ¹⁹For ^kwhat *is* our hope, or joy, or ^lcrown of rejoicing? *Is it* not even you in the ^mpresence of our Lord Jesus Christ ⁿat His coming? ²⁰For you are our glory and joy.

Concern for Their Faith

3 Therefore, when we could no longer endure it, we thought it good to be left in Athens alone, ²and sent ^aTimothy, our brother and minister of God, and our fellow laborer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you and encourage you concerning your faith, ^{3b}that no one should be shaken by these afflictions; for you

15 ^d Jer. 2:30; Matt. 5:12; 23:34; 35; Acts 7:52 ^e Esth. 3:8
⁴ hostile
16 ^f Luke 11:52
⁹ Gen. 15:16; Dan. 8:23; Matt. 23:32
^h Matt. 24:6
17 ¹ 1 Cor. 5:3
18 ^j Rom. 1:13; 15:22
19 ^k 2 Cor. 1:14
ⁱ Prov. 16:31 ^m Jude 24 ⁿ 1 Cor. 15:23

CHAPTER 3

2 ^a Rom. 16:21
3 ^b Eph. 3:13

^c John 16:2; Acts 9:16; 14:22; 1 Cor. 4:9; 2 Tim. 3:12;
1 Pet. 2:21
4 ^d Acts 20:24
5 ^e 1 Cor. 7:5 ^f Gal. 2:2
6 ^g Acts 18:5 ^h Phil. 1:8
7 ⁱ 2 Cor. 1:4
8 ^j [Eph. 6:13, 14]; Phil. 4:1
10 ^k 2 Cor. 13:9;
Col. 4:12
11 ^l Mark 1:3

yourself know that ^cwe are appointed to this. ^{4d}For, in fact, we told you before when we were with you that we would suffer tribulation, just as it happened, and you know. ⁵For this reason, when I could no longer endure it, I sent to know your faith, ^elest by some means the tempter had tempted you, and ^four labor might be in vain.

Encouraged by Timothy

^{6g}But now that Timothy has come to us from you, and brought us good news of your faith and love, and that you always have good remembrance of us, greatly desiring to see us, ^has we also *to see you*—⁷therefore, brethren, in all our affliction and distress ⁱwe were comforted concerning you by your faith. ⁸For now we live, if you ^jstand fast in the Lord.

⁹For what thanks can we render to God for you, for all the joy with which we rejoice for your sake before our God, ¹⁰night and day praying exceedingly that we may see your face ^kand perfect what is lacking in your faith?

Prayer for the Church

¹¹Now may our God and Father Himself, and our Lord Jesus Christ, ^ldirect our way to you. ¹²And may the Lord

fellow believers in Judea, including himself, had already suffered for the cause of the gospel. Such hostility toward the church actually represents hostility toward Christ (see Christ's words to Paul in Acts 9:4, 5).

2:16 to fill up . . . their sins: The implication is that God will allow a nation, group, or individual to accumulate only a certain amount of sin before His judgment falls on them (see Gen. 15:16). In this case, Paul says that the judgment is near. Just as walking in Christ will lead to complete salvation and a reward, the sins of the wicked will lead to ultimate punishment.

2:17, 18 Contrary to what Paul's accusers were asserting, Paul eagerly desired to return. But he may have been **hindered** (see Dan. 10:13), among other things, by the bond that Jason had deposited for him (Acts 17:9). If Paul returned and a riot ensued, Jason's bond would have been forfeited (Acts 17:1–9). **Having been taken away** literally means “orphaned,” as a parent is separated from a child (2:7, 2:11). Paul was heartbroken about being taken from them, especially in their infancy in Christ. The many expressions of endearment in this letter indicate the genuine concern Paul had for these new converts.

2:19 In spite of persecution and satanic opposition, Paul looked beyond the present trials (see 2 Cor. 4:16–18) to the joy of being **in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ** and being with the Thessalonian Christians who had found the Lord through him. The Thessalonians would be Paul's **crown** (the wreath presented to the winner of Greek athletic contests) because they would prove the genuineness of his work for Christ.

3:1 When forced to leave Thessalonica, Paul and Silas went to Berea, the next city west of Thessalonica. The Jews in Thessalonica who opposed Paul, upon learning that he was at Berea, went there also and stirred up opposition. Paul's friends then escorted him south to **Athens** (Acts 17:13–15). There Paul left word for Silas and Timothy to join him. But before they arrived, Paul left for Corinth, a short distance west of Athens.

3:2 Because Paul himself could not go to Thessalonica, he sent Tim-

othy in his place. Apparently Silas went back to Philippi, their first stop in Macedonia. Paul sent Timothy to strengthen the church at Thessalonica and to **encourage them concerning their faith**. The Thessalonians, now that they were saved, needed to be built up in the faith and fortified against the ever-present opposition. Because Timothy was young and lacked the maturity of Paul, a special word of commendation was expressed for him as a **brother in Christ**, and more importantly as a **minister of God**, and a **fellow laborer in the gospel**. Paul showed his strong confidence in Timothy by sending him, not only to the Thessalonians, but later to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 16:10, 11) and to the Philippian (Phil. 2:19–23).

3:3, 4 Difficulties are to be expected in the Christian life, and Paul had warned the congregation of their coming **afflictions**. The Scripture teaches that those who live godly lives should expect persecution (2 Tim. 3:12). In fact, Christ warned His disciples that they would experience the same type of rejection He had experienced (John 15:18–21). Suffering from persecution should not cause Christians to be downcast. Instead they should rejoice that they have been considered worthy of sharing in Christ's sufferings (see Matt. 5:10–12).

3:5–8 our labor might be in vain: Paul was concerned that the Thessalonians might succumb to the temptations of Satan and forsake their Christian faith. **if you stand fast:** Paul's joy was based on the Thessalonians' faithfulness to Christ.

3:9 Paul made prayer a priority. In his prayers, he did not forget to thank God for what He was doing. Christians should follow Paul's example by offering praise and thanksgiving along with their petitions.

3:10 Paul's desire to see the Thessalonians was not primarily to satisfy his own love and emotion but to **perfect**, or complete, their own **faith**. There is always room for improvement. The Thessalonians' endurance under persecution demonstrated the growth of their faith, but Paul wanted them to mature in it.

3:11–13 Christ had told His disciples that His followers would be identified by their love for one another (John 13:35). Here Paul prays

make you increase and ^mabound in love to one another and to all, just as we *do* to you, ¹³so that He may establish ⁿyour hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints.

Plea for Purity

4 Finally then, brethren, we urge and exhort in the Lord Jesus ^athat you should abound more and more, ^bjust as you received from us how you ought to walk and to please God; ²for you know what commandments we gave you through the Lord Jesus.

³For this is ^cthe will of God, ^dyour sanctification: ^ethat you should abstain from sexual immorality; ^{4f}that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, ^{5g}not in passion of lust, ^hlike the Gentiles ⁱwho do not know God; ⁶that no one should take advantage of and defraud his

12 ^m Phil. 1:9;
1 Thess. 4:1, 10;
2 Thess. 1:3
13 ⁿ 2 Thess. 2:17

CHAPTER 4

1 ^a 1 Cor. 15:58
^b Phil. 1:27; Col. 1:10
3 ^c [Rom. 12:2]
^d Eph. 5:27 ^e [1 Cor. 6:15-20; Col. 3:5]
4 ^f Rom. 6:19
5 ^g Col. 3:5 ^h Eph. 4:17, 18 ⁱ 1 Cor. 15:34
6 ^j 2 Thess. 1:8
7 ^k Lev. 11:44;
[Heb. 12:14]; 1 Pet. 1:14-16
8 ^l Luke 10:16
^m 1 Cor. 2:10 ⁿ NU who also gives
9 ^o [Jer. 31:33, 34]; John 6:45; 15:12, 17; [1 John 2:27]
^p Matt. 22:39
10 ^p 1 Thess. 3:12
11 ^q 2 Thess. 3:11;
1 Pet. 4:15 ^r Acts 20:35

brother in this matter, because the Lord ^jis the avenger of all such, as we also forewarned you and testified. ⁷For God did not call us to uncleanness, ^kbut in holiness. ^{8l}Therefore he who rejects *this* does not reject man, but God, ^mwho ⁱhas also given us His Holy Spirit.

A Brotherly and Orderly Life

⁹But concerning brotherly love you have no need that I should write to you, for ⁿyou yourselves are taught by God ^oto love one another; ¹⁰and indeed you do so toward all the brethren who are in all Macedonia. But we urge you, brethren, ^pthat you increase more and more; ¹¹that you also aspire to lead a quiet life, ^qto mind your own business, and ^rto work with your own hands, as we commanded you, ^{12s}that you may walk properly

12 ^s Rom. 13:13; Col. 4:5; [1 Pet. 2:12]

that the Thessalonians would love each other more and more. Finally, Paul expresses his desire that their **hearts** would be **blameless in holiness**, not simply before people but before **God**. The word **saints** can refer both to saved people and to holy angels. Angels will participate in the Second Coming (4:16; Jude 14; Rev. 19:14).

4:1, 2 Finally does not mean that Paul was coming to a conclusion but serves as a transition to the main section of the letter, addressing doctrine and its application to life. In the first three chapters Paul dealt with the readers as a “nursing mother” gently cares for her children (2:7). Now in these last two chapters he urges and charges them with the authority of a father (4:1, 2). Paul commonly uses the word **walk** as a description of a Christian life (Rom. 6:4; 2 Cor. 5:7; Gal. 5:16; Col. 1:10; 2:6; 4:5). The Christian life not only begins with faith, but it continues as a daily walk of faith. Just as people are dependent on their limbs to support them in every step, so Christians walk in dependence on God. As walking has a direction, so does the Christian life. Christians are not to walk like unsaved Gentiles (Eph. 4:17), instead they are to walk worthy of their calling from God (Eph. 4:1). John exhorts Christians to walk in the light, that is, in the revealed will of God (see 1 John 1:7).

4:3–5 A major problem for the early church was maintaining sexual purity (1 Cor. 5:1, 9–11). Pagan religions often condoned **sexual immorality** as part of their rites, and ancient Roman culture had few sexual boundaries. In contrast, Paul strongly urged the Thessalonians not to participate in any sexual activity outside of marriage. He reminded them that the human body is God’s temple and should be kept holy (see 1 Cor. 6:18–20). The body should be honored as created by God and should be sanctified in keeping with its holy purpose. Sexual involvement outside of marriage dishonors God, one’s marriage partner or future spouse, and even one’s own body.

coming

(Gk. *parousia*) (3:13; 4:15; 5:23; 2 Thess. 2:1, 8; 2 Pet. 1:16) Strong’s #3952

The Greek word *parousia* literally means “presence.” The word was commonly used in NT times to describe the visitation of royalty or of some other important person. Thus the word signals no ordinary “coming.” The NT writers used the word to describe Christ’s second coming, when He will return to earth in His ultimate, glorious visitation as the King over all.

4:7, 8 Rejecting **holiness** is rejecting God and the ministry of the Holy Spirit within us.

4:9, 10 The Thessalonian believers already had a good record of loving one another, but Paul desired that love to **increase more and more**. This was the commandment of Jesus (John 13:34, 35; 15:12, 17) and is an important basis of evangelism. In a world that is filled with self-serving individuals, the genuine love of Christians should attract others to the faith.

4:11, 12 Summarizing his preceding instructions, Paul exhorted the Thessalonian believers to lead **a quiet life**, not referring to a lack of activity but rather to an inner quietness and peace befitting the Christian faith (see 2 Thess. 3:12; 1 Tim. 2:11). They should not be busybodies but should **mind their own business**. Usually people who are busy running other people’s affairs do not run their own affairs well. A Christian’s house should be in order as a testimony to others. Paul also exhorted the Thessalonians **to work with their own hands** as he had done among them (2:9). Possibly because of their enthusiasm for the coming of the Lord, some Thessalonians had become idle. They might also have been influenced by the general Greek abhorrence for physical labor. But Paul admonished the Christians to be dedicated and productive workers so that they might bring honor to Christ’s name.

sanctification

(Gk. *hagiasmos*) (4:3, 4, 7; Rom. 6:19, 22; 1 Cor. 1:30; 2 Thess. 2:13; Heb. 12:14) Strong’s #38

The Greek term for *sanctify* means to “set apart” for God’s special use, to make distinct from what is common—hence, to be made like God who is distinct from all else and therefore holy. The Greek word for *sanctify* refers to a process which is perfect in principle though not yet attained. Though we are not yet completely holy, we stand in relation to God as though we were. This is indicated in Heb. 10:10, where the verb *sanctified* is in a tense that indicates the present result of a past action. Thus Christ sanctified by His one sacrifice, and that sanctification has the lasting result that it continues to work in us, making us holy. Sanctification has been done once for all, but its effect still continues as stated in Heb. 10:14, in “those who are being sanctified.”

toward those who are outside, and *that* you may lack nothing.

The Comfort of Christ's Coming

¹³ But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have ²fallen asleep, lest you sorrow ³as others ⁴“who have no hope. ¹⁴For ⁵“if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him ⁶“those who ⁷sleep in Jesus.
¹⁵ For this we say to you ⁸by the word

13 ¹ Lev. 19:28
² [Eph. 2:12] ² Died
14 ⁴ 1 Cor. 15:13
⁵ 1 Cor. 15:20, 23
³ Or through Jesus sleep
15 ¹ 1 Kin. 13:17;
20:35; 2 Cor. 12:1;
Gal. 1:12 ¹ 1 Cor.
15:51, 52; 1 Thess.
5:10 ⁴ Dead
16 ² [Matt. 24:30,
31] ⁵ [1 Cor. 15:52]
⁶ [1 Cor. 15:23];
2 Thess. 2:1; Rev.
14:13; 20:6

of the Lord, that ⁹we who are alive *and* remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are ⁴asleep. ¹⁶For ²the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with ⁴the trumpet of God. ⁶And the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷^cThen we who are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them ^din the clouds to meet the Lord

17 ^c [1 Cor. 15:51-53]; 1 Thess. 5:10 ^d Dan. 7:13; Acts 1:9; Rev. 11:12

4:13 fallen asleep: This is a metaphor for dying. Though Paul had taught the Thessalonians about Christ’s return when he was there, apparently Timothy had encountered further questions on the subject, possibly arising from the death of some of the new converts. In answer to these questions, Paul stated that he wanted them to be informed, and also to be comforted by the hope of seeing their loved ones again. This was a hope their pagan neighbors did not have.
4:14 This hope (v. 13) for the dead Christians was as certain as the fact of the death and resurrection of Christ. Paul says that **God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus**. Some have inferred from this statement that departed Christians are unconscious until the Second Coming. But the Bible indicates that to be absent from our present body is to be present with the Lord Jesus (5:10; 2 Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:23). Accordingly when a Christian dies, it is the body that sleeps; the soul goes to heaven.
4:15 Paul believed that Christ could come in his lifetime, and so did the Thessalonians (see 1:10). **precede those who are asleep:** Evidently the Thessalonians were concerned that believers who had died would miss the glory associated with the Second Coming. Paul answers their question by affirming that actually those who were dead would go before (v. 16) those living on earth.
4:16 Accompanying the descent of Christ from heaven will be the voice of an archangel, perhaps Michael, who is portrayed as the leader of the army of God (Dan. 10:13, 21; Jude 9; Rev. 12:7–9).

The archangel’s voice will be one of triumph because of the great victory at the coming of Christ, culminating thousands of years of spiritual conflict with Satan. The final signal will be the trumpet of God. The three elements consisting of the **shout** of the Lord Himself, the **voice** of an archangel, and the **trumpet** of God will perhaps be separate events occurring in rapid succession. The answer to the question as to how the dead can be raised when the remains of their bodies are in some cases totally scattered is not a problem for a supernatural God who created the world. Clearly the resurrection will be a physical resurrection in which bodily existence will be restored, as confirmed in 1 Cor. 15:51–53. The resurrected bodies of Christians will be like that of Christ (1 John 3:2), incorruptible and immortal, and yet they will be bodies of flesh and bone (Luke 24:39, 40; John 20:20, 25, 27). They all will be recognizable, as was the resurrected body of Christ.
4:17 Living Christians will be **caught up** together with the other believers in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. (The English word *rapture* comes from the Latin verb meaning *caught up*.) **In the clouds** probably refers to atmospheric clouds that also will attend the Second Coming (Rev. 1:7), or it may be the resurrected multitudes who are referred to as a cloud (Heb. 12:1). In the Bible, the Lord is often accompanied by clouds, signifying His glory (see Ps. 68:4; 97:2). The important result is that **we shall always be with the Lord**.

Sexual Immorality	
Even though the Thessalonians were living in a sexually charged culture, the apostle Paul urged them to “abstain from sexual immorality” (4:3). According to the Bible, what exactly is sexual immorality? The following is a quick summary.	
What is sexual immorality?	The Greek word used by Paul is the term from which we get the English word pornography (4:3). It is a broad term, encompassing any illicit sexual activity.
What specific sexual activities does Scripture prohibit?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lust may be a strong desire for anything. But in sexual contexts, lust is defined as “the sinful desire for illicit sex.” Lust is forbidden by Scripture because it gives birth to sin, which leads to death (4:5; Matt. 5:28; Rom. 13:13; James 1:14, 15; 1 Pet. 4:3). • Adultery is extramarital sex. It is strictly condemned in the Scriptures. The seriousness of this sin is demonstrated by its inclusion in the Ten Commandments (Ex. 20:14) and by its warranting the death penalty under Old Testament law (Lev. 20:10). Proverbs states that it “destroys” the guilty party’s soul (Prov. 6:32). • Incest, sex with a close relative other than one’s spouse, is prohibited and said to be worthy of the sentence of death (Lev. 18:6–18; 20:11, 12, 17; Deut. 27:20, 22, 23). • Homosexuality, sex with a person of one’s own gender, is condemned in no uncertain terms in several Old and New Testament passages (Lev. 18:22; 20:13; Rom. 1:26, 27; 1 Cor. 6:9; 1 Tim. 1:10). • Bestiality is sex with an animal. This sexually deviant behavior is outlawed in the Bible. It was punished with death in ancient Israel (Ex. 22:19; Lev. 18:23; 20:15, 16; Deut. 27:21).
Does the Bible take a prudish view of sex?	No. Sex within marriage is viewed as a good gift from God to be enjoyed and celebrated by both husband and wife (Prov. 5:15–20; Heb. 13:4).
How can believers stay pure in an impure world?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By living carefully according to God’s Word (Ps. 119:9), and hiding it in our hearts (Ps 119:11). • By making the conscious choice not to lust (Job 31:1). • By walking under the control of the Holy Spirit (Gal. 5:16–25). • By fleeing sexual temptations and pursuing righteousness (2 Tim. 2:22).



End Times Terms

Allegorical interpretation—a method that looks for a sense deemed higher than the literal sense in an otherwise apparently historical statement

Apocalypse—the English transliteration of the Greek title for the Book of Revelation

Bema—the judgment seat or reward seat before which each Christian must appear (2 Cor. 5:10)

Eschatology—the study of last things or the events that are awaiting future fulfillment

Kingdom—may refer to (1) the reign of Christ in the hearts of believers, (2) the heavenly kingdom, or (3) the earthly kingdom of Christ

Israel—except in rare instances, a reference to the literal national group designated Israel

Millennium—Latin word for one thousand years

Rapture—non-biblical word describing the removal of Christians from the world at the return of Christ

Tribulation—seven-year period of unparalleled distress on earth

in the air. And thus ^ewe shall always be with the Lord. ^{18f}Therefore comfort one another with these words.

The Day of the Lord

5 But concerning ^athe times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. ²For you yourselves know perfectly that ^bthe day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. ³For when they say, “Peace and safety!”

¹⁷ ^e John 14:3;
17:24
¹⁸ ^f 1 Thess. 5:11

CHAPTER 5

¹ ^a Matt. 24:3;
² ^b Luke 21:34;
1 Thess. 5:4; [2 Pet.
3:10]; Rev. 3:3;
16:15
³ ^c Is. 13:6-9 ^d Hos.
13:13
⁴ ^e [Acts 26:18];

then ^csudden destruction comes upon them, ^das labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape. ^{4e}But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. ⁵You are all ^fsons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. ^{6g}Therefore let us not sleep, as

Rom. 13:12; Eph. 5:8; 1 John 2:8 ⁵ ^f Eph. 5:8
⁶ ^g Matt. 25:5

4:18 The wonderful truth described (vv. 13–17) is to be a **comfort** to the Thessalonians and to all Christians. They had mistakenly thought that only those who were alive at the time of the coming of Christ would witness and share in the glory of it. The fact is that Christians who have died will be raised first and so go before the living to the gathering in the sky. Observe that Paul expects a practical, immediate response to this great doctrinal teaching of the Second Coming. The Thessalonians should remind one another of this truth as a source of comfort in the face of death. The sentence is in the present tense, indicating that it should be a constant comfort to us to think each day that the Lord may come.

5:1 But concerning: This expression characteristically introduces a different topic. From the discussion of the Second Coming the apostle turns to the day of the Lord. **the times and the seasons:** This reminds us of the same expression used by our Lord in Acts 1:7. *Times* probably emphasizes quantity, duration, or measurement, whereas *seasons* draws attention to the quality, character, or critical nature of the times. **no need that I should write:** In the previous verses (4:13–18) Paul addressed a matter of ignorance; now he addresses a matter of knowledge. He is not informing as much as he is exhorting them to live in the light of what they already know.

5:2–11 In these verses Paul develops the topic of the day of the Lord. This expression was familiar to those who knew the Hebrew Scriptures. The day of the Lord in the OT was characterized by two phases: God’s judgment against sinful people and God’s eternal reign over His people. God’s judgment will be a time of darkness and an expression of God’s wrath (Joel 2:1, 2; Amos 5:18–20; Zeph. 1:14, 15). His reign will be a time of God’s blessing (Is. 2:1–3; 11:1–9; 30:23–26; Zech. 14:1, 7–11, 20, 21; Matt. 19:28; Acts 3:19–21).

5:2 In contrast to the certainty in the previous paragraph of Christ’s coming, Paul now deals with the uncertainty of the timing of the coming **day of the Lord**. This period is the subject of considerable

prophecy in the OT (Is. 13:9–11; Joel 2:28–32; Zeph. 1:14–18; 3:14, 15). The Book of Joel as a whole is an exposition of the day of the Lord, describing it as a terrible time of judgment. In the OT, the phrase *the day of the Lord* is used for any period where God intervenes in judgment on the earth. There were “days of the Lord” predicted in the OT that have already been fulfilled (see Amos 5:18). Here Paul uses the expression to refer to Christ’s return and the coming judgment. **thief in the night:** The day of the Lord will come when no one expects it.

5:3 when they say: Paul does not include himself and his readers among the *they*. Evidently he is speaking about unbelievers. The world will be absorbed in the cares of this life and will be lulled into a false sense of safety and security. **Peace** gives the idea of no feeling of alarm, and **safety** conveys an idea of security from external threats from God or people. The world will have turned a deaf ear to the repeated warnings of coming judgment. Paul uses the image of **labor pains** to stress the suddenness of the day of the Lord. A woman’s first contraction comes suddenly and unexpectedly.

5:4, 5 But you, brethren: Though the day of the Lord will overtake the unsaved world unexpectedly, it will not overtake Christians, because they will be looking forward to and expecting it. In his characteristic style, Paul first addresses the readers’ beliefs (vv. 1–5) and then their behavior (vv. 6–11). The fact that Christ could come at any moment should motivate unbelievers to accept His forgiveness, and believers to live daily for Him.

5:6 Because Christians are informed concerning future events, they should not be spiritually asleep but should **watch and be sober**. While every Christian is prepared to go to heaven in the sense of having been saved, not every Christian is prepared at every moment to present the quality of his or her spiritual life to God. Accordingly, this is a call to face the fact that our lives will be judged by Christ (see 1:3, 4; Rom. 14:10, 11; 1 Cor. 3:11–15; 9:24–27; 2 Cor. 5:10).

others *do*, but ^hlet us watch and be ^lsober. ⁷For ⁱthose who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk ^jare drunk at night. ⁸But let us who are of the day be sober, ^kputting on the breastplate of faith and love, and *as* a helmet the hope of salvation. ⁹For ^lGod did not appoint us to wrath, ^mbut to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁰ⁿwho died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him.

¹¹Therefore ²comfort each other and ³edify one another, just as you also are doing.

Various Exhortations

¹²And we urge you, brethren, ^oto recognize those who labor among you, and are over you in the Lord and ⁴admonish you, ¹³and to esteem them very highly in

6 ^h Matt. 25:13; Mark 13:35; [1 Pet. 5:8] ^l self-controlled
 7 ⁱ [Luke 21:34] / Acts 2:15; 2 Pet. 2:13
 8 ^k Is. 59:17; Eph. 6:14
 9 ^l Rom. 9:22
^m [2 Thess. 2:13]
 10 ⁿ 2 Cor. 5:15
 11 ² Or encourage
 3 build one another up
 12 ^o 1 Cor. 16:18; 1 Tim. 5:17; Heb. 13:7, 17 ⁴ instruct or warn
 13 ^p Mark 9:50
 14 ^q 2 Thess. 3:6, 7, 11 ^r Heb. 12:12
^s Rom. 14:1; 15:1; 1 Cor. 8:7 ^t Gal. 5:22 ⁵ encourage
 6 insubordinate or idle

love for their work's sake. ^pBe at peace among yourselves.

¹⁴Now we ⁵exhort you, brethren, ^qwarn those who are ⁶unruly, ^rcomfort the fainthearted, ^suphold the weak, ^tbe patient with all. ¹⁵^uSee that no one renders evil for evil to anyone, but always ^vpursue what is good both for yourselves and for all.

¹⁶^wRejoice always, ¹⁷^xpray without ceasing, ¹⁸in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

¹⁹^yDo not quench the Spirit. ²⁰^zDo not despise prophecies. ²¹^aTest all things; ^bhold fast what is good. ²²Abstain from every form of evil.

15 ^u Lev. 19:18 ^v Rom. 12:9; Gal. 6:10; 1 Thess. 5:21
 16 ^w [2 Cor. 6:10] ^x Eph. 6:18 ^y Eph. 4:30 ^z Acts 13:1; 1 Cor. 14:1, 31 ^a 1 Cor. 14:29; 1 John 4:1 ^b Phil. 4:8

5:8 In contrast to what unbelievers do, the Christian should be **sober**, living a disciplined life, not only free from drunkenness but alert to spiritual realities. The believer should put on the **breastplate of faith**. Here again is the familiar triad of faith, hope, and love, the basic essentials of a Christian life. In contrast to the unbelief of the world, with its love of self and of material wealth (see 1:3), Christians should place their faith in God and give their love to God and to other people. In addition to demonstrating faith and love, Christians should adopt **the hope of salvation** and live in the light of the Lord's return.

5:9, 10 Paul states that **God did not appoint us** (believers) **to wrath** (see 1:10). There will be wrath at the day of the Lord, but it will be God's wrath on the unbelieving world that has spurned and mocked Christ (Rev. 6:12–17). When we think about divine judgment, we should offer thanks to Christ for saving us from that horrible fate by dying **for us**. Whether we are still living at the Second Coming, or whether we have died and our bodies are in the tomb, it is assured that we will **live together with Him** forever.

5:12, 13 Significantly Paul combines prophecy with practical teachings for the Christian life. God never intended prophecy as a field for academic debate but as a truth that would provide believers hope

and direction in their lives. In vv. 12–22, Paul describes the characteristics of a person who is living in the light of Christ's imminent return. **recognize those:** Because everyone in the Thessalonian church was a recent convert, it may have been difficult for some to recognize the leadership of others. Paul teaches the Thessalonians submission rather than individualism and rejection of authority (see Eph. 5:21). He emphasizes that the leaders' authority was from the **Lord**. Paul admonishes the believers to appreciate and submit to those congregational leaders. They should be held in high esteem because of the important work they were doing. At the same time, the believers were to work together in maintaining the peace among themselves. Notice the plural pronouns; the Thessalonians followed the pattern of the Jerusalem church and all NT churches by having more than one person in leadership (see Acts 6:1–7).

5:14 The Thessalonians had to face the fact that some of them were not living as Christians should, but were **unruly**. They needed to be warned about their behavior. Some were **fainthearted** and needed **comfort**. The congregation should also **uphold the weak** and **be patient** toward all, recognizing that all Christians have faults. To be most effective in promoting positive change in people's lives, believers should respond to individuals according to each one's particular needs.

5:15 renders evil for evil: For a Christian to try to get revenge is a denial of basic Christian love (see Rom. 12:17; 1 Pet. 3:9), and it goes against Jesus' teaching (Matt. 5:38–42; 18:21–35).

5:16 Regardless of difficult circumstances (see 3:2, 3), a Christian **always** has grounds for rejoicing. The Lord is a sovereign Ruler and will accomplish His purpose. Christian joy is not based on circumstances but on a growing awareness of God and the certain future of eternal life with Christ (Rev. 21:1–7).

5:17 Paul exhorts the Thessalonians to maintain a faithful prayer life like his own (1:2, 3; 2:13; Rom. 1:9, 10; Eph. 6:18; Col. 1:3; 2 Tim. 1:3). Praying **without ceasing** does not mean praying constantly, but being persistent and consistent in prayer.

5:18 Thankfulness should characterize the Christian life in every circumstance, not thanks for everything but thanks **in everything**. Paul emphatically states **this is the will of God**. An OT example of this was when Job lost his money, his children, and his health. He blessed the name of God in spite of his personal tragedies, not because of them. Nothing speaks more powerfully of a walk with God than continuous thankfulness.

5:19 To **quench the Spirit** means to resist His influence, like trying to smother a fire. One of the fundamental rules of walking with God is that we should not say no to the Spirit of God.

spirit

(Gk. *pneuma*) (5:23; Luke 8:55; 1 Cor. 5:5) Strong's #4151

soul

(Gk. *psuchē*) (5:23; Eph. 6:6; Phil. 1:27) Strong's #5590

body

(Gk. *sōma*) (5:23; Matt. 6:22; Heb. 4:12) Strong's #4983

This is the only place in the NT where the tripartite being of a person is implied. Yet in this passage, all three constitute a person in his or her entirety. The *spirit* enables a person to contact the divine Spirit and is that part of a person that the Spirit quickens at the time of regeneration (John 3:6; Rom. 8:16). The Greek word *psuchē*, translated *soul*, means "life." The NT writers use this word to speak of a person's personality or inward, animating essence. Finally the NT writers identify the *body*, a person's physical being, as separate from one's soul or spirit. As this verse indicates, God works from the inside out, sanctifying our entire being so that we can live with Him forever.

Blessing and Admonition

²³Now may ^ethe God of peace Himself ^dsanctify⁷ you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body ^ebe preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴He who calls you *is* ^ffaithful, who also will ^gdo *it*.

²³ c Phil. 4:9
^d 1 Thess. 3:13
^e 1 Cor. 1:8, 9 ⁷ set you apart
²⁴ f [1 Cor. 10:13]; 2 Thess. 3:3 ^g Phil. 1:6
²⁷ ⁸ letter ⁹ NU omits *holy*

²⁵Brethren, pray for us.
²⁶Greet all the brethren with a holy kiss.
²⁷I charge you by the Lord that this ⁸epistle be read to all the ⁹holy brethren.
²⁸The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you. Amen.

5:23 Paul's prayer for the Thessalonians is that they may be sanctified in all aspects of their life, **spirit, soul, and body**. Every part of a Christian's life should bear evidence that he or she is set apart as holy to God. This will result in being **blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ**. Christians are already saints in the sense that they have been set apart to God. Paul exhorts the Thessalonians to express holiness in this life so that the Lord would approve of their conduct upon His return. *Blameless* does not mean sinless, but free from causes for reproach and regret.

5:25 pray for us: Paul was faithful in prayer for the Thessalonians, but he also recognized the need and importance of their prayers for him.

5:26 Greeting one another **with a holy kiss** on the cheek was customary, something like our modern handshake. It could have had more significance than just a handshake, signifying spiritual reconciliation.

5:28 The greatest benediction Paul could express is that the **grace** of Jesus Christ would be with them. Christians are saved by grace and live by grace, enjoying undeserved blessing from their loving God.

epistle

(Gk. *epistolē*) (5:27; 2 Cor. 3:1–3; 2 Thess. 2:2, 15; 2 Pet. 3:1, 16) Strong's #1992

This Greek word has come into English as *epistle*. It signifies a written letter, whether personal correspondence (such as 2 and 3 John; see 2 John 12; 3 John 13), or official correspondence (such as Acts 15:23–29; 23:26–30), or a formal treatise (such as Romans; see Rom. 16:22). Sometimes letters of recommendation were sent along with emissaries in order to establish their credentials among those they were visiting. In 2 Corinthians, Paul called the believers in Corinth his epistles, or his living letters of recommendation from God (2 Cor. 3:1–3). Here Paul exhorts the Thessalonians to read his letter to the entire church so that everyone could profit from its teaching.

THE SECOND EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE THESSALONIANS



A SIMPLE PHONE CALL could have cleared up some of the problems encountered by believers in the early church. But of course there were no telephones in the ancient world. Paul had to be personally tracked down wherever he was and given a letter with questions. The apostle then had to dictate his response and have someone hand-deliver a letter in return. Because of the distances and slow modes of transportation, this process took weeks or even months. The intervening time span often allowed false beliefs to spread or become ingrained in new churches. Second Thessalonians is an example of just such a situation. Paul had to write this letter to correct false ideas about the Second Coming that had arisen in that church.

Author and Date Paul identifies himself as the author of 2 Thessalonians, and even calls attention to his own handwriting at the end of the letter (1:1; 3:17). Although many of the early church fathers, including Irenaeus, Tertullian, and Clement of Alexandria, confirm that this letter came from Paul, some modern scholars have questioned the letter's authenticity. Some have asserted that 1 and 2 Thessalonians teach contradictory doctrines about the Second Coming. The first letter is said to teach an imminent return of Christ, but the second to include an intervening period of "lawlessness" before Christ's return. A closer examination of the question reveals that the instructions of the two letters concerning the end times are complementary, not contradictory. First Thessalonians emphasizes the suddenness of the Lord's coming to those who are unprepared, while 2 Thessalonians highlights some of the events that will occur before Jesus returns. Since Paul wrote 2 Thessalonians to correct a misunderstanding that had arisen from his first letter, the difference between the two letters is understandable.

Second Thessalonians was written from Corinth shortly after 1 Thessalonians, or around A.D. 51 or 52.

Background Paul had encountered stiff opposition when he first preached the gospel in Thessalonica (Acts 17:1–9), forcing him to flee at night to Berea. His travels soon brought him to Corinth. From that city, he sent Timothy back to Thessalonica to ascertain the condition of the church there. Timothy returned with an encouraging report: The Thessalonian Christians were enduring despite persecution. Not only that, but the testimony of the Thessalonians' steadfast faith was spreading throughout Macedonia (1 Thess. 1:8). Paul wrote a letter to encourage the young church and to answer a few questions that they had sent with Timothy. He wrote 2 Thessalonians soon after to correct some misunderstandings about the end times and to counter false teachings that had crept into the church.

Themes Since the writing of 1 Thessalonians, reports had come to Paul of continued progress in the Thessalonian church, indicating their faithfulness to the gospel. However, doctrinal problems had also arisen. False teachers had begun to tell the believers in Thessalonica that the day of the Lord was already at hand. These teachers were misapplying and possibly even twisting Paul's teaching that the day of the Lord would come suddenly (1 Thess. 5:2). Most likely because of this, some of the believers had stopped working and were simply waiting for the Lord. Mounting persecution may have also fueled these extreme beliefs about the Second Coming.

In 2 Thessalonians, Paul stated emphatically that he had never taught that the day of the Lord had already come. To counter false doctrine, Paul gave the Thessalonians a good dose of the truth, explaining to them the emergence of the man of lawlessness and the prevalence of sin during the end times. Furthermore, he reminded them they had been called by God and saved through Christ's work. In view of this fact, he exhorted them to stand firm in Christ (2:15) and to work hard (3:12), always patiently waiting for Jesus' return.

CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

Paul writes a second letter in an attempt to weed out the erroneous teaching in the church in Thessalonica. He explains that the day of the Lord has not come and gone; Jesus' return is still pending. As in his first letter, Paul presents Jesus as the joyful hope of all Christians. His eventual return will more than make up for the persecution, suffering, and injustices we are currently anticipating or enduring. Although the Lord's presence will be worth it all for those who look for Him with hope, His return has awesome and terrifying implications for those who refuse to trust in His salvation (1:6–10; 2:8–12).

2 THESSALONIANS OUTLINE

- I. Encouragement to faithfulness in spite of persecution 1:1–12
 - A. Salutation 1:1, 2
 - B. Thankfulness for their faithfulness 1:3–5
 - C. Assurance of judgment on their persecutors 1:6–10
 - D. Prayer for their glorification 1:11, 12
- II. Explanations concerning the day of the Lord 2:1–17
 - A. Correction of the false teaching that the day of the Lord had begun 2:1, 2
 - B. Evidence that the day of the Lord had not begun 2:3–12
 - C. God's work in believers and the believers' response 2:13–17
- III. Exhortation to continued faithfulness to God 3:1–15
 - A. Desire for prayer and continued service for God 3:1–5
 - B. Idleness condemned 3:6–15
- IV. Benediction of grace and peace 3:16–18



Thessalonian odeum, a smaller theater where musicians and orators performed

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C. A.D. 47–49
Paul's first missionary journey

C. A.D. 50
The Jerusalem council

C. A.D. 50–53
Paul's second missionary journey

C. A.D. 51
The church at Thessalonica is started

C. A.D. 51
1 Thessalonians is written

C. A.D. 51–52
2 Thessalonians is written

C. A.D. 53–57
Paul's third missionary journey

C. A.D. 58
Paul is arrested in Jerusalem

C. A.D. 60–62
Paul is imprisoned in Rome

C. A.D. 67
Peter and Paul are executed

Greeting

Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy,

To the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:

^{2a} Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

God's Final Judgment and Glory

³ We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is fitting, because your faith grows exceedingly, and the love of every one of you all abounds toward each other, ⁴ so that ^b we ourselves boast of you among the churches of God ^c for your patience and faith ^d in all your persecutions and ¹ tribulations that you endure, ⁵ which is ^e manifest ² evidence of the righteous judgment of God, that

CHAPTER 1

² ^a 1 Cor. 1:3
⁴ ^b 2 Cor. 7:4;
[1 Thess. 2:19]
^c 1 Thess. 1:3
^d 1 Thess. 2:14
¹ afflictions
⁵ ^e Phil. 1:28 ² plain

^f 1 Thess. 2:14
⁶ ^g Rev. 6:10
³ affliction
⁷ ^h Rev. 14:13
[1 Thess. 4:16];
Jude 14
⁹ / Phil. 3:19;
1 Thess. 5:3 ^k Deut.
33:2
¹⁰ ⁱ Matt. 25:31
^m Is. 49:3; John
17:10; 1 Thess.
2:12 ⁴ NU, M have
believed
¹¹ ⁿ Col. 1:12

you may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, ^f for which you also suffer; ^{6g} since *it* is a righteous thing with God to repay with ³ tribulation those who trouble you, ⁷ and to *give* you who are troubled ^h rest with us when ⁱ the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, ⁸ in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. ^{9j} These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and ^k from the glory of His power, ¹⁰ when He comes, in that Day, ^l to be ^m glorified in His saints and to be admired among all those who ⁴ believe, because our testimony among you was believed.

¹¹ Therefore we also pray always for you that our God would ⁿ count you worthy of *this* calling, and fulfill all the good

1:1 Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy were also the authors and editors of 1 Thessalonians. **Silvanus** (Latin for Silas) had been Paul's traveling companion ever since the start of the second missionary journey. He had participated in the founding of the church at Thessalonica (Acts 17:1–4). **Timothy** also was accompanying Paul on his second missionary journey. His report from the Thessalonian church had been the occasion for the writing of 1 Thessalonians (1 Thess. 3:6–8). **To the church:** The Greek word *ekklesia* means "gathering" or "assembly." Even though the Thessalonians were experiencing persecution and were being infiltrated by false teachers, Paul still addresses them as an assembly in **God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ**. Their troubled circumstances did not change their position before God.

1:2 Paul's salutation is similar to those in other ancient letters (see Gal. 1:3; Col. 1:2; 1 Thess. 1:2), but his expression is filled with spiritual meaning. **Grace** is the unmerited favor God gives to believers through Jesus Christ. **Peace** refers to the end of enmity between God and people. The Thessalonians could experience peace with God even during severe persecution.

1:3 The faithfulness of the Thessalonian church in persecution gave Paul reason to praise God. Satan persecutes Christians in order to discourage and defeat them. These Christians had experienced persecution but continued to grow in Christ, in agreement with the apostle's earlier prayer in his first letter to them (see 1 Thess. 3:10; 4:9, 10). Here the apostle praises God because the Thessalonians' faith is growing **exceedingly**. They were growing beyond all natural expectation. **Abounds** pictures an expansive growth similar to the sudden surge of flood waters. The Thessalonians' steadfast faith not only strengthened them to withstand difficult circumstances, it also

motivated them to express genuine love for others. A Christian's faith in Christ should always culminate in true love for others (see Christ's command in John 13:34, 35).

1:4 Persecution not only tests faith but reveals it and causes it to grow. Continued faith and endurance through **persecutions** provide a testimony for Christ, of which Paul was boasting to the other churches.

1:5, 6 Although the Thessalonians were enduring persecution (see Acts 17:5–9; 1 Thess. 2:14), Paul explains that their persecutors would be repaid by God. The **judgment of God** requires that the unrighteous be punished for their persecution of the righteous (see Ps. 9; 10; 17; 137; Rev. 6:9, 10). Also if the believers handle their persecutions properly, they will be **counted worthy** of great reward in the coming kingdom of God (Matt. 5:12; 1 Pet. 2:19, 20). Christians are called to endure suffering in this world, for they will receive a far greater reward in the next (see 2 Tim. 2:12).

1:7–9 **Rest** is the relief from affliction that will come at Christ's return (see Rev. 6:11). The Christian's race or warfare on this earth necessarily includes tension. This promise of future eternal rest helps the suffering Christian to endure present trials (see v. 4). **When the Lord Jesus is revealed:** Presently the Lord Jesus is enthroned in glory at the right hand of the Father (John 17:5). Stephen saw this glory before he was martyred (Acts 7:55, 56), but one day, and it may be soon, "every eye will see Him" (Rev. 1:7). Notice the three-fold description of His appearance: **from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire**. Although other passages picture His coming in the clouds, this one describes Him as encircled with leaping flames of fire, taking vengeance on those who have rejected Him. John the Baptist prophesied of this baptism by fire (see Matt. 3:11, 12; Luke 3:16, 17). Today is the day of salvation, but that day will be the day of vengeance on **those who do not know God** (unbelieving Gentiles; see Eph. 2:11, 12) and **those who do not obey the gospel** (unbelieving Jews who knew about God but who rejected His Son; Rom. 10:1, 16). There were both Jewish and Gentile converts in the Thessalonian church (see Acts 17:1–5). Therefore the persecuted Thessalonian believers could be encouraged by the fact that when Jesus is revealed from heaven with His angels, He will bring flaming fire and **everlasting destruction** on the enemies of God, the ones who were persecuting them (Rev. 19:12, 17–19; 20:10–15). The word *destruction* does not mean annihilation; it refers to the awful fate of those who reject Jesus, eternal separation from God (Matt. 25:42–46).

1:10–12 In contrast to the destruction of the wicked, Christ will be **glorified in His saints**. Christ will be glorified not only among but also in the saints, for believers reflect His glory. Paul continued to pray that the Thessalonian believers would live in a manner **worthy** of God, in a way that would glorify Christ (1 Thess. 2:12).

destruction

(Gk. *olethros*) (1:9; 1 Cor. 5:5; 1 Thess. 5:3; 1 Tim. 6:9) Strong's #3639

The Greek word for *destruction* does not mean annihilation, which as nonexistence could not be eternal, but rather the loss of everything worthwhile. In 1 Corinthians, Paul uses the word to speak of the devastating temporal consequences of sin (1 Cor. 5:5). Here and in 1 Tim. 6:9, Paul uses the same word to refer to the eternal consequences of sin. The penalty for sin is not annihilation, but eternal ruin, eternal separation from the love of Christ. Just as endless life belongs to Christians, endless ruin belongs to those who are opposed to Christ.

pleasure of *His* goodness and ^othe work of faith with power, ^{12p}that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and you in Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Great Apostasy

2 Now, brethren, ^aconcerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ ^band our gathering together to Him, we ask you, ^{2c}not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of ¹Christ had come. ³Let no one deceive you by any means; for *that Day will not come* ^dunless the falling away comes first, and ^ethe man of ²sin is revealed, ^fthe son of perdition, ⁴who opposes and ^gexalts

11 ^o 1 Thess. 1:3
12 ^p [Col. 3:17]

CHAPTER 2

1 ^a Mark 13:26;
[1 Thess. 4:15–17]
^b Matt. 24:31
2 ^c Matt. 24:4 ¹ NU
the Lord
3 ^d 1 Tim. 4:1 ^e Dan.
7:25; 8:25; 11:36;
2 Thess. 2:8; Rev.
13:5 ^f John 17:12
² NU lawlessness
4 ^g Is. 14:13, 14;
Ezek. 28:2 ^h 1 Cor.
8:5 ³ NU omits
as God
7 ¹ John 2:18
⁴ hidden truth
⁵ Or he
8 ¹ Dan. 7:10 ^k Is.
11:4; Rev. 2:16; 19:15
¹ Heb. 10:27

himself ^habove all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits ³as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.

⁵Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things? ⁶And now you know what is restraining, that he may be revealed in his own time. ⁷For ⁱthe ⁴mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only ⁵He who now restrains *will do so* until ⁵He is taken out of the way. ⁸And then the lawless one will be revealed, ^jwhom the Lord will consume ^kwith the breath of His mouth and destroy ^lwith the brightness of His coming. ⁹The coming of the *lawless one* is ^maccording to the working of Satan, with

⁹ ^m John 8:41

2:1, 2 After writing 1 Thessalonians, Paul had received word that the believers in Thessalonica were being misled by false teachers who were confusing the believers with erroneous ideas about the Second Coming. Paul's second letter was his attempt to correct these misunderstandings. The Greek word translated **gathering together** is found in the NT only here and in Heb. 10:25. There it refers to the local congregation, while here it is the congregation of the whole church. This will be the first time the whole church, including every believer, will be gathered before the Lord to worship Him. The phrase seems to refer to the event described in 1 Thess. 4:17, where Paul speaks of meeting the Lord in the air. The false teaching was that the day of the Lord (called the **day of Christ** here, but compare 1 Thess. 5:2–4) had already come, bringing with it the tribulations they were experiencing. Thus some Thessalonian believers thought the Second Coming had passed them by. Paul states that they were not to believe such teaching, whether **by spirit or by word or by letter**, as though it had come from him.

2:3 When Paul wrote 1 Thessalonians, the believers were in danger of losing hope in the Second Coming. In this letter, Paul was correcting the opposite extreme—that Jesus had already come. Paul restores balance to the church by describing some of the major events that would precede the day of the Lord (see 1 Thess. 5:1–11), in particular the **falling away**, and the revealing of the **man of sin**. The falling away, Paul declared, must come first. The Greek term translated *falling away* commonly means a military rebellion. But in the Scriptures, the word is used of rebellion against God, which will prepare the way for the Antichrist. Some translate the term as *departure* and understand it to be a reference to the Rapture. That is to say, the man of sin cannot be revealed until Christ comes to take His church to be with Him. As far as the word itself is concerned, it could refer to a spiritual departure (falling away), or it could refer to a physical departure (the Rapture). Paul does not use the title Antichrist for this man, but his description of him parallels John's description of the Antichrist (1 John 2:18; Rev. 13). The man of sin will lead the world into rebellion against God (v. 10), perform wonders through Satan's power (v. 9), and finally will present himself as a god to be worshiped (v. 4).

2:4 The man of sin will proclaim himself to be divine and will sit **in the temple of God**, acting as if he is a god. Many leaders in history have called themselves gods, and the Antichrist is the final declaration of that blasphemy. He will tolerate no one else being worshiped but himself (see Rev. 13:6–8). Note the contrasts between the true God and the Antichrist. The One who deserves all worship and praise does not command worship but instead came to this world as a servant. In contrast, the one who deserves only contempt presents himself as a god. The man of sin will probably stand in a physical temple in Jerusalem, to declare himself to be god, the ultimate fulfillment of the “abomination of desolation” spoken of by Daniel (Dan. 7:23; 9:26, 27; 11:31, 36, 37; 12:11) and Jesus (Matt. 24:15;

Mark 13:14). These prophecies may have been partially fulfilled when Antiochus Epiphanes erected a pagan altar to Zeus in the temple in Jerusalem in 167 B.C. (175–164 B.C.), or when Titus destroyed the temple in A.D. 70. Others have interpreted Paul's reference to the temple of God as a reference to the church. In other words, the man of sin will attempt to divert the church's true worship of God to himself.

2:5 **Do you not remember:** Paul reminds the Thessalonians of his previous teaching about the Second Coming, confirmed in his first letter to them (1 Thess. 4:13–5:11).

2:7 **already at work:** The evil and deception that the man of sin embodies already exist in this world. John states that there are many antichrists presently at work (see 1 John 2:18). Anyone who opposes Christ and His church and seeks to deceive others into worshipping false gods is against Christ, and in that case is an antichrist. **He who now restrains:** There was a good reason why the man of sin had not been revealed. The present restrainer, probably the Spirit of God, had to be taken out of the world. God has restrained sin in the world through the power of the Holy Spirit. Some have interpreted **taken out of the way** in this verse as a reference to the Rapture, for the church cannot exist without the Spirit's presence. Thus the removal of the church through the Rapture will be in effect the removal of all restraint on the power of sin in this world. The Roman state, the emperor of Rome, Paul's missionary work, the Jewish state, or the principle of law and government embodied in the state have all been proposed as the restrainer of lawlessness.

2:8, 9 Although the man of sin will be revealed as extremely powerful (Rev. 13:7), he will be destroyed by Christ and cast into the lake of fire when the Lord comes (Rev. 19:19, 20). The **power, signs, and lying wonders** of the **lawless one** will be overshadowed by the

falling away

(Gk. *apostasia*) (2:3; Acts 21:21) Strong's #646

The meaning here is a falling away from the faith. The nation of Israel fell into repeated backslidings (Jer. 5:6). The prophet Jeremiah predicted the judgment of God upon such disloyalty: “Your own wickedness will correct you, and your backslidings will rebuke you” (Jer. 2:19). In the NT, apostasy is generally defined as the determined, willful rejection of Christ and His teachings by a Christian believer (John 15:22; Heb. 10:26–29). This is different from false belief, or error, which is the result of ignorance. The Day of Christ “will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition” (2:3). Some Christian groups teach that falling away is impossible for those persons who have truly accepted Jesus as Savior and Lord.

all power, ⁿsigns, and lying wonders, ¹⁰and with all unrighteous deception among ^othose who perish, because they did not receive ^pthe love of the truth, that they might be saved. ¹¹And ^qfor this reason God will send them strong delusion, ^rthat they should believe the lie, ¹²that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but ^shad pleasure in unrighteousness.

Stand Fast

¹³But we are ⁶bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God ^tfrom the beginning ^uchose you for salvation ^vthrough ⁷sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth, ¹⁴to which He called you by our gospel, for ^wthe obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. ¹⁵Therefore, brethren, ^xstand fast and hold ^ythe tradi-

9 ⁿ Deut. 13:1
10 ^o 2 Cor. 2:15
11 ^p 1 Cor. 16:22
11 ^q Rom. 1:28
11 ^r 1 Tim. 4:1
12 ^s Rom. 1:32;
1 Cor. 13:6
13 ^t Eph. 1:4
14 ^u 1 Thess. 1:4
15 ^v 1 Thess. 4:7;
[1 Pet. 1:2] ⁶ under obligation ⁷ being set apart by
14 ^w 1 Pet. 5:10
15 ^x 1 Cor. 16:13
16 ^y Rom. 6:17; 1 Cor. 11:2; 2 Thess. 3:6;
Jude 3 ⁸ letter
16 ^z [Rev. 1:5] ^a Titus 3:7; 1 Pet. 1:3
17 ^b 1 Cor. 1:8
⁹ strengthen

CHAPTER 3

1 ^a Eph. 6:19
2 ^b Rom. 15:31
3 ^c Acts 28:24
3 ^d 1 Cor. 1:9;

tions which you were taught, whether by word or our ⁸epistle.

¹⁶Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and our God and Father, ^zwho has loved us and given *us* everlasting consolation and ^agood hope by grace, ¹⁷comfort your hearts ^band ⁹establish you in every good word and work.

Pray for Us

3 Finally, brethren, ^apray for us, that the word of the Lord may run *swiftly* and be glorified, just as *it is* with you, ²and ^bthat we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men; ^cfor not all have faith.

³But ^dthe Lord is faithful, who will establish you and ^eguard *you* from the evil one. ⁴And ^fwe have confidence in the

1 Thess. 5:24 ^e John 17:15 ⁴ 2 Cor. 7:16

glory and brightness of Christ in His Second Coming. It is significant that Satan, in order to promote his lie at the end of the age and pass himself off as a god, will use the same kind of power, signs, and wonders that the Spirit of Christ used at the beginning of the age to authenticate the truth about Himself as God (see 2 Cor. 12:12; Heb. 2:4). **2:12** Unbelievers will share the condemnation of those who rejected the truth and took **pleasure** in their own **unrighteousness**. Rejection of the truth of the gospel always results in condemnation. Even those who never hear the gospel can reject the revelation of God in nature (Rom. 1:18–21).

2:13 Paul in these verses emphasizes the importance of believing the truth. Again he begins with thanksgiving (see 1:3; 1 Thess. 1:2; 2:13; 3:9). Paul was continually giving **thanks** to the Lord for the believers. He was thankful for their **salvation**, which was based on God's choice of them, His work in them through the Spirit and the Word, and their ultimate glorification. **chose**: The Greek tense of this word indicates that in the past God had chosen the Thessalonians to be His people, set apart as holy to Him. Their salvation was accomplished by the Spirit when they placed their faith in Christ. Yet note the balance of the Spirit and the **truth** (the Word). The Spirit without the Word is mute; He has nothing to say. The Word without the Spirit is lifeless; it has no power to act. The work of the Spirit is always united with the work of the Word to convict the believer of the truth.

2:14 our gospel: In 1 Thess. 1:5, Paul uses this expression to speak of the Good News that Jesus died for us. In other passages he calls it the gospel of Christ (1 Thess. 3:2) and the gospel of God the Father (1 Thess. 2:8). This is the message that Paul had confidently proclaimed among the Thessalonians with the power of the Holy Spirit (see 1 Thess. 1:5). **obtaining of the glory**: Paul makes it clear that the Thessalonians have already been saved (v. 13) and **called** by God alone. But now he indicates the Thessalonians' responsibility

to respond to God's work in them. Through the power of the Spirit (v. 13), the Thessalonians were to prepare on this earth for a glorious future with Christ by living in a holy manner (see 1:10; 1 Thess. 4:1, 2).

2:15 Traditions refers to instructions passed on from one person to another. Sometimes the word refers to human traditions, people's opinions and speculations. But in this case Paul is referring to the revealed truth of God that contains no error. This is what Paul had passed on to them. He had communicated some of God's truth when he was preaching among them, further truth by his first **epistle**, and now he was communicating more truth through a second letter. The NT had not yet been written, and the essential beliefs of the Christian faith were being communicated through the apostles' preaching and letters. Having believed the truth, the Thessalonian believers were now to maintain it and stand fast in their faith.

2:16, 17 In preparation for the instructions that follow in ch. 3, Paul prays that God would encourage the Thessalonians and establish them in the truth (see a similar prayer in 1 Thess. 3:11–13). It was only because God had graciously **loved** them, and **given** them everlasting salvation, that they could have **hope**. Paul uses the singular verbs **comfort** and **establish** with the plural subject, **Jesus Christ** and the **Father**, to indicate the unity and equality of these two Persons of the Godhead (see 1 Thess. 3:11).

3:1, 2 Paul not only prayed for the Thessalonians, but he also sensed his own need for their prayers. He asked them to pray for the advance of the gospel and for his own deliverance from human opposition. **Run swiftly** refers to the rapid spread of the gospel, while **glorified** expresses the idea of being triumphant. The verbs suggest not a single victory but a continuing series of victories marking the progression of the gospel throughout the world. **Unreasonable** means the men are capable of harmful deeds, while **wicked** indicates that they are evil in themselves and desire to corrupt others. These men may have been unbelieving Jews in Corinth who were persecuting Paul at the time he wrote this letter (see Acts 18:12, 13). Justice in this world may never come for Christians, but they can certainly pray for deliverance from the wicked.

3:3 Although Paul was aware that the Thessalonians might be tempted and prove unfaithful, he was confident that God would **establish** or strengthen them (2:17; 1 Thess. 3:2, 13). He knew that God would **guard** or protect them (see Phil. 1:6; 1 Thess. 5:24). In the previous verse, he had warned them concerning evil men (v. 2). Here Paul assures them that God will faithfully stand watch over them so that not even the **evil one**, Satan himself, could get hold of them. This passage must have been especially comforting to the Thessalonians, for they were still experiencing severe persecution on account of their faith (1:4).

3:4 Paul had **confidence** that the Thessalonians would obey his

the lawless one

(Gk. *ho anomos*) (2:8; 1 Tim. 1:9; 2 Pet. 2:8) Strong's #459

The Greek word *anomos* literally means "without law." Thus this word is depicting the "man of rebellion." Just as Christ embodies righteousness, so the "man of lawlessness" will embody rebellion against God's righteous law. This figure is probably the same person described by John as "the Antichrist" (1 John 4:2, 3) and "the beast" (Rev. 13:1). With his open defiance of the sovereign Ruler of the universe, this man is the embodiment of evil and the great opponent of Christ and His kingdom.

Lord concerning you, both that you do and will do the things we command you.

⁵ Now may ^g the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and into the patience of Christ.

Warning Against Idleness

⁶ But we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, ^h that you withdraw ⁱ from every brother who walks ^j disorderly and not according to the tradition which ^l he received from us. ⁷ For you yourselves know how you ought to follow us, for we were not disorderly among you; ⁸ nor did we eat anyone's bread ² free of charge, but worked with ^k labor and toil night and day, that

⁵ ^g 1 Chr. 29:18
⁶ ^h Rom. 16:17
⁷ 1 Cor. 5:1 / 1 Thess. 4:11 / NU, M they
⁸ ^k 1 Thess. 2:9
² Lit. for nothing

⁹ 1 Cor. 9:4, 6–14
¹¹ ^m 1 Tim. 5:13;
 1 Pet. 4:15
¹² ⁿ Eph. 4:28;
 1 Thess. 4:11, 12
³ encourage
¹³ ^o 2 Cor. 4:1;
 Gal. 6:9

we might not be a burden to any of you, ⁹ not because we do not have ^l authority, but to make ourselves an example of how you should follow us.

¹⁰ For even when we were with you, we commanded you this: If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat. ¹¹ For we hear that there are some who walk among you in a disorderly manner, not working at all, but are ^m busybodies. ¹² Now those who are such we command and ³ exhort through our Lord Jesus Christ ⁿ that they work in quietness and eat their own bread.

¹³ But *as for* you, brethren, ^o do not grow weary *in* doing good. ¹⁴ And if anyone does not obey our word in this

commands, but his confidence was in the Lord and based on what the Lord would do to help the Thessalonians stand true. Paul had a similar confidence regarding the church in Philippi (see Phil. 1:6).

3:5 With the prayer **may the Lord direct your hearts**, Paul was indicating that the heart, the seat of a person's will, is the place where spiritual renewal begins. There God plants His love and patience, traits that will produce a harvest of good works. Paul uses the word *direct* to indicate that God will clear away the obstacles that may stand in the way of their progress toward **love** and **patience**. Paul prays that the Thessalonians, when faced with persecution, will be able to show the same type of patience Jesus expressed when people rejected Him.

3:6 Paul uses here the strong word **command** (see v. 4; 1 Thess. 4:2, 11). This is not simply a suggestion but a binding order with the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ. The same word, found also in vv. 10 and 12, is used of a military command that one must obey or else face the penalty of treason. Paul instructs the Thessalonians to **withdraw**, or withhold fellowship, from a disobedient person. Among other things this would include not allowing the person to participate in love feasts and the Lord's Supper (see 1 Cor. 5:9–13). See Jesus' instructions in Matt. 18:15–17.

3:7, 8 Some Thessalonians, perhaps using the impending return of the Lord as an excuse, had refused to work and were expecting others in the church to feed them. In his previous letter Paul had already exhorted them to work (1 Thess. 4:11, 12). Evidently they had not heeded Paul's instruction, for in this letter Paul tells the church to discipline them (v. 6). As an example to all, Paul had **worked . . . night and day** when he preached among them. His goal was to avoid being a burden to anyone. Both the Greeks and the Romans

despised manual labor; typically they used slaves for all such tasks. By contrast, the Jews regarded work as an evidence of good character and trained their children to work in a trade. Paul made tents in order to provide for his needs whenever this became necessary on his missionary journeys (Acts 18:1–3).

3:9 Christian workers can expect financial support, and the church is obligated to pay those who serve them (Luke 10:7; 1 Cor. 9:6–14; Gal. 6:6; 1 Tim. 5:17, 18). Yet Paul did not want to use his **authority** to demand payment. Rather, he wanted to be an **example** for others to follow. The fact that he worked would also cut off any opportunity to accuse him of greed. He wanted nothing to hinder the spread of the gospel (1 Cor. 9:12).

3:10 Again using the expression **we commanded you this**, Paul laid down the rule that if anyone does not work, neither should he eat. This applies to those unwilling to work, not to those unable to work.

3:11 Idleness breeds sin. Those who are **disorderly**, not working at all, become **busybodies**, causing trouble and division in the church.

3:12 Again Paul says **we command and exhort** (see vv. 6, 10). He urges the Thessalonians to **eat their own bread** and to do so in a quiet manner, not causing division and disruption. Paul's cure for gossip is hard work.

3:14 do not keep company with him: Again (see v. 6) the believers were to withdraw fellowship and not associate with anyone who disregarded the words of this authoritative letter from the apostle Paul. Otherwise their pagan neighbors might think the Thessalonian Christians approved of that person's actions.

Busy Waiting

Every generation of Christians must face the dilemma of how to live in the tension between the possibility of Christ's immediate return and the impossibility of predicting the moment. Many Christians unfortunately settle the problem by living as if Christ will not return. Meanwhile, others dabble in various fruitless but persistent schemes to "figure out" the time of Christ's return.

The young Thessalonian church struggled with persecution from the outset. Facing such difficulties, many of them found hope in the promise of Christ's return. Others misapplied the lesson by becoming lazy. After all, they reasoned, if Christ is already on His way, why participate in the details and responsibilities of life? Why sow if we will not be here to reap?

For those who had chosen to "coast" until Christ's return, Paul had blunt words: "If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat" (3:10). Paul understood the strong temptation to hide irresponsibility under a cover of spirituality. The integrity of the gospel was at stake.

In his final words of encouragement in 2 Thessalonians, Paul touched on the daily challenge for every person seeking to live for Christ: "But as for you, brethren, do not grow weary in doing good" (3:13). Herein lies the secret of being ready for Christ's return. If the hope of His arrival stirs up a wholehearted commitment to do good for His sake, we will be ready for Him. We must be busy waiting.



⁴epistle, note that person and ^pdo not keep company with him, that he may be ashamed. ^{15q}Yet do not count *him* as an enemy, ^rbut ⁵admonish *him* as a brother.

Benediction

¹⁶Now may ^sthe Lord of peace Himself

¹⁴ ^p Matt. 18:17
⁴ letter
¹⁵ ^q Lev. 19:17
^r Titus 3:10 ⁵ warn
¹⁶ ^s John 14:27;
Rom. 15:33; Phil. 4:9
¹⁷ ^t 1 Cor. 16:21
⁶ letter
¹⁸ ^u Rom. 16:20, 24;
1 Thess. 5:28

give you peace always in every way. The Lord *be* with you all.
¹⁷ ^tThe salutation of Paul with my own hand, which is a sign in every ⁶epistle; so I write.
¹⁸ ^uThe grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you all. Amen.

3:15 admonish him as a brother: The disobedient one is not an enemy, but one who needs correction. Even though rebellion was to be dealt with, Paul demonstrates his tremendous compassion for fellow believers. He hated the sin but not the sinner.
3:16 In view of the possibility of disharmony in the church, Paul prayed that the **Lord of peace** would guide their actions, granting peace and unity to the church.
3:17 with my own hand: Paul dictated many of his epistles to a secretary. He adds a personal word in his own handwriting as evidence of the authenticity of this letter (see also Col. 4:18). This

proof was necessary in this case because Paul suspected that the Thessalonians might have received a letter falsely attributed to him (see 2:2). To guard against this, Paul explicitly tells the Thessalonians that his handwriting at the end of a letter is the official **sign** that a letter was from him.
3:18 To all the difficulties that faced the Thessalonians and Paul as well, the solution was the **grace of our Lord Jesus Christ**. Not only was Jesus the Thessalonians' ultimate hope, but it was He who lovingly strengthened them to endure trials. It was Paul's prayer that this would be evident in their midst.

Church Discipline	
In 2 Thess. 3:14, Paul instructs the Thessalonians to discipline one of their church members. What does church discipline involve? When should it be employed? What does the Scripture say about it? The following chart attempts to sort out a frequently misunderstood process.	
The Definition	Church discipline is ultimately the denying of fellowship to a believer in Christ who is involved in open sin.
The Occasion	Church discipline involves Christians engaged in overt sin (Matt. 18:15–17; 1 Cor. 5:9–13), especially sexual immorality; those creating division within the body of Christ (Rom. 16:17; Titus 3:10); and those in open defiance of God's appointed leadership in the church (3:6, 7, 14; Heb. 13:17).
The Reason	A church must exercise discipline because the church must remain pure (1 Cor. 5:8).
The Goal	The goal of church discipline is to cause the sinning person to repent (James 5:19, 20); to "gain back" or restore an erring brother (Matt. 18:15; Gal. 6:1); to make the sinful person feel ashamed enough to change (3:14).
The Steps	There are several distinct steps to church discipline. First, meet one-on-one with the person. Second, if necessary meet with the person and another church member. Third, if there is no change in behavior, announce the matter to the congregation so that the whole church can corporately encourage the person to repent. Finally, if all else fails put the sinning person out of the assembly (Matt. 18:15–17).
The Attitude	The tone of church discipline should be firm gentleness (Gal. 6:1). The people exercising church discipline should put away any spite, hatred, or malice so that they can facilitate true restoration.
The Commands	Matt. 18:15–17; Rom. 16:17; 1 Cor. 5:1–13; Gal. 6:1; 2 Thess. 3:6, 7, 14, 15; Titus 3:10, 11; Heb. 13:17; James 5:19, 20

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO TIMOTHY



SOMETIMES THE MOST DIFFICULT PART of a teacher's job is to let the students go, to let them graduate and make their way in the world. One can sense this kind of anxiety in Paul's first letter to Timothy. He affectionately calls Timothy "a true son" (1:2), charging him again and again to remain faithful to what he had taught him (1:18; 4:12–16; 5:21; 6:11–13). The letter concludes with Paul's heartfelt cry: "O Timothy! Guard what was committed to your trust" (6:20).

Timothy had accompanied Paul for years (Acts 16:1–3; 17:15; 20:4), assisting him and acting as his liaison to a number of churches. Paul had not only taught Timothy the essentials of the Christian faith, he had modeled Christian leadership to him. Now Paul was leaving Timothy in charge of the church at Ephesus. From Macedonia, Paul wrote to encourage his "son" in the faith. In effect, this letter is Timothy's commission, his orders from his concerned teacher, the apostle Paul.

Author and Date The letter names Paul as its author, and the author's statements about his life in 1:12, 13 are consistent with what is known of him. The early church fathers Clement of Rome and Polycarp accepted the letter as one of Paul's, as did Irenaeus, Tertullian, and Clement of Alexandria.

Early in the nineteenth century, some scholars began to question Paul's authorship of the Pastoral Epistles (1 and 2 Timothy and Titus). Critics claimed that these letters were "pious forgeries" written in the second century. They leveled four different attacks on the integrity and authenticity of these letters. First is a historical problem. Since the chronological references in these letters do not correspond with the Book of Acts, critics assume that the letters were written at a much later time by an impostor. However, the letters could have been written soon after the events described in the Book of Acts. Many scholars hold that Paul was acquitted and released from the imprisonment described in Acts 28, and then traveled for several years in Asia Minor and Macedonia. During this time he wrote the disputed letters. Eventually he was imprisoned in Rome again, and then died in Nero's persecution.

Second, critics argue that the Pastoral Epistles do not fit Paul's writing style. These letters contain a number of words that occur only here in the New Testament but are common in the writings of the second century. This is taken as evidence that the letters are from the second century. The weakness of this argument is that there is a limited body of literature from the second century from which to draw such a dogmatic conclusion.

The third point relates to the form of church leadership described in the Pastoral Epistles. The structure of authority, including elders and deacons, seems to represent a more developed, second-century church. However, it is clear from Philippians 1:1 that the offices of bishop and deacon were already functioning during Paul's ministry.

The fourth argument involves theology. Critics claim that the heresy combated in the Pastoral Epistles is the full-grown Gnosticism of the second century. While it is true that Gnosticism was not fully developed until

the second century, it is also certain that the heresy began slowly and evolved before it became a complete theological system. Paul dealt with similar false teachings in Colosse (see Col. 1:9–15). The heresy in 1 Timothy appears to be an early form of gnostic teaching that combined elements of Judaism (see 1:7), Persian thought, and Christianity.

There is no reason, therefore, to conclude that 1 and 2 Timothy are not authentic Pauline Epistles. First Timothy was probably composed shortly after Paul's release from his first Roman imprisonment. This means the book was composed in Macedonia around A.D. 62.

Historical Setting Timothy was a native of Lystra in Phrygia (see Acts 16:1–3). His father was Greek, and his mother Eunice and grandmother Lois were godly Jewish women (see 2 Tim. 1:5; 3:14, 15). It was through the influence of these women that Timothy learned the Hebrew Scriptures as a child. Paul calls Timothy a “true son in the faith” (1:2), suggesting that he was converted during Paul's first missionary visit to Lystra (see Acts 14:6, 19).

At the beginning of Paul's second missionary journey, Timothy was chosen by Paul to accompany him and Silas (see Acts 16:3). Since they would be preaching to Jews, Paul had Timothy circumcised (Acts 16:3), and evidently the leadership of the church laid hands on Timothy (4:14; 2 Tim. 1:6). He traveled with Paul and Silas helping them in their evangelization of Philippi and Thessalonica. Apparently he remained in Thessalonica (see Acts 17:10) and then joined Paul and Silas in Berea. In Corinth, Paul employed Timothy as a liaison between himself and the church in Thessalonica (see the Introduction to 1 Thessalonians). Later he used Timothy as a liaison again, this time to the church in Corinth, to teach the believers there (1 Cor. 4:17; 16:10). Acts does not record Timothy's travels during this period. He reappears in Ephesus (Acts 19:22), where Paul commissioned Timothy and Erastus to prepare the churches in Macedonia for his arrival. Timothy remained in Macedonia and accompanied Paul to Corinth, where presumably Paul wrote his letter to the Romans (see Rom. 16:21).

Then Timothy, along with six others, spearheaded Paul's journey to Troas (see Acts 20:4, 5). Later he comforted Paul in Rome during the apostle's first imprisonment (A.D. 60–62), sending greetings to the Colossians (see Col. 1:1), Philemon (see Philem. 1), and the Philippians (see Phil. 1:1). During Paul's imprisonment, Timothy traveled to Philippi to encourage the believers there and then report back to Paul in Rome (Phil. 2:19). After Paul's release, Timothy traveled with him to Ephesus. Timothy stayed there to confront the false teachers who were infiltrating the church, and Paul went on to Macedonia, where he wrote his first letter to Timothy (1:3). He wrote his second letter to him from prison (2 Tim. 1:8), imploring Timothy to come quickly. This was probably Paul's last letter, for he was soon to die. If Timothy did come quickly, he would have been with him as his “true son” in the final days before his execution (see 2 Tim. 4:11, 21).



Unexcavated tell at Lystra, Timothy's hometown. Paul visited Lystra during his first missionary journey. Timothy joined his missionary team on the second journey (Acts 16:1–3).

Themes The central purpose of 1 Timothy is found in 3:15: “I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.” The church is God’s primary vehicle for accomplishing His work on earth (see Matt. 16:18–20). The Lord has ordained that men and women who have trusted Him as Savior should be involved in working out His will in local assemblies around the world (see Heb. 10:24, 25).

Paul wrote 1 Timothy in order to instruct his young protégé on how the church should function and on how mature men and women of God should interact in it (6:11–16). Specifics are given on developing and recognizing godly leadership and avoiding false doctrine in the church (3:1–13; 4:1–6). Paul insists that Christian maturity should be expected in leadership, while it is developed in the lives of all believers (4:6–10). Paul offers Timothy a whole list of extremely practical advice for leading a church. As he faced the problems and hardships of ministry in a local church, Timothy must have repeatedly read Paul’s letter for the valuable insights it offers (4:15).

CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

In this letter Paul presents Jesus as the “one Mediator between God and men” (2:5), and reminds Timothy, his young apprentice, that “God was manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen by angels, preached among the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up in glory” (3:16). Jesus came to earth to save sinners (1:15) by giving Himself as a ransom for all (2:6). Paul wants Timothy to understand that this One who is both God and Man not only has our salvation in mind but is also the source of spiritual strength, faith, and love (1:12, 14). No wonder Paul wants Timothy to focus on Jesus as he faces the challenges of ministry. Jesus is the Savior in every and all circumstances (4:10).

1 TIMOTHY OUTLINE

- I. Reminders in ministry 1:1–20
 - A. Warnings concerning false doctrine 1:1–17
 - B. Warnings concerning good warfare 1:18–20
- II. Regulations in ministry 2:1—3:16
 - A. Women in worship 2:1–15
 - B. Leadership in the house of God 3:1–16
- III. Responsibilities in ministry 4:1—6:21
 - A. Personal responsibility 4:1–16
 - B. Responsibilities to various groups in the church 5:1–25
 - C. Final responsibilities of Timothy 6:1–21

C. A.D. 47–49
Paul’s first missionary journey

C. A.D. 50
The Jerusalem council

C. A.D. 50–53
Paul’s second missionary journey

C. A.D. 50
Timothy joins Paul and Silas in Lystra

C. A.D. 53–57
Paul’s third missionary journey

C. A.D. 54
Timothy again joins Paul’s entourage

C. A.D. 58
Paul is arrested in Jerusalem

C. A.D. 60–62
Paul is imprisoned in Rome

C. A.D. 62
Paul is released; 1 Timothy is written

C. A.D. 67
Peter and Paul are executed

Greeting

Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the commandment of God our Savior and the Lord Jesus Christ, our hope,

2To Timothy, a true son in the faith:

Grace, mercy, and peace from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord.

No Other Doctrine

3As I urged you when I went into Macedonia—remain in Ephesus that you may charge some that they teach no other doctrine, nor give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which cause disputes rather than godly edification

CHAPTER 1

2 ^a Acts 16:1, 2; Rom. 1:7; 2 Tim. 1:2; Titus 1:4 ^b Gal. 1:3
3 ^c Acts 20:1,3
^d Rom. 16:17;
2 Cor. 11:4; Gal. 1:6, 7; 1 Tim. 6:3
^e command
4 ^e 1 Tim. 6:3, 4, 20; Titus 1:14

5 ^f Rom. 13:8-10; Gal. 5:14 ^g Eph. 6:24
2 Lit. *unhypocritical*
6 ^h 1 Tim. 6:4, 20
8 ⁱ Rom. 7:12, 16

which is in faith. Now the purpose of the commandment is love from a pure heart, from a good conscience, and from sincere faith, from which some, having strayed, have turned aside to idle talk, desiring to be teachers of the law, understanding neither what they say nor the things which they affirm.

But we know that the law is good if one uses it lawfully, knowing this: that the law is not made for a righteous person, but for the lawless and insubordinate, for the ungodly and for sinners, for the unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, for fornicators, for sodomites, for kidnappers, for liars, for perjurers, and if there is any other thing that

1:1 Paul begins his first letter to Timothy by asserting his authority as an apostle of Jesus Christ. The Greek word for *apostle* means “sent one.” Thus Paul was declaring that he was an ambassador sent by Christ. The commandment of God refers to God’s sovereign commissioning of Paul’s ministry (see Acts 9). The authority of Paul’s ministry came from two sources: from God our Savior and from the Lord Jesus Christ. The title *Savior* identifies God as the source of our salvation, both our justification and sanctification. Paul speaks of Christ as our hope because He is the reason we can expectantly look forward to eternal life in glory. 1:2 Timothy was a young believer from Lystra who traveled with Paul during his second and third missionary journeys (Acts 16:2, 3).

True son refers to a legitimate child who possessed all the rights and privileges of membership in a family. Paul was indicating total acceptance of Timothy as a believer.

1:3 It is not certain when Paul traveled to Macedonia. His request for Timothy to remain in Ephesus, ministering to believers there, demonstrates Paul’s confidence in the young man.

1:4 The word fables is used in Titus 1:14 in connection with Jewish fables. Genealogies is used in Titus 3:9 within the context of the Law. The errors that Paul left Timothy to correct in Ephesus appear to have been primarily Jewish in nature, involving unrestrained speculation about genealogies and allegorical interpretations of the Law like those found in rabbinical literature. In Ephesus this could have been combined with Gnostic speculation concerning a number of spiritual beings. The Greek word for edification means “stewardship” and expresses the concept of orderly management of a household. Paul understands the church as the “house of God” (see 3:14, 15). Disputes do not promote “house order” in the church. The focus of a believer’s life should be the clear and sound doctrine found in the Word of God, not human speculation.

1:5 The purpose of Paul’s command to Timothy is the promotion of God’s love in the church (see John 13:34, 35).

1:6 Idle talk means “empty chatter.” Gossip, speculation, and criticism should not come from the lips of believers.

1:7 teachers of the law: This phrase is derived from Judaism and is used in Luke 5:17; Acts 5:34 in connection with the Pharisees. These were the individuals whom Timothy was to instruct and correct. Their errors came from their relation to the law. These men were loveless, legalistic teachers with impure hearts and motives. Instruction without love promotes legalism.

1:8 The proper function of the law is to make sinners aware of their sinfulness (see Rom. 3:20).

1:9 Paul’s list of those who have violated the law appears to parallel the order of the Ten Commandments (see Ex. 20:3–17). The first three pairs of violations recall the first four commands, which address a person’s relationship with God: the lawless and insubordinate, the ungodly and . . . sinners, and the unholy and profane. Following these are eight violations that parallel five of the last six commands of the Ten Commandments. Covetousness is not mentioned.

1:10 Fornicators are persons involved in sexual immorality in general. Sodomites are specifically male homosexuals (see 1 Cor. 6:9). But heterosexual and homosexual immorality are violations of the seventh commandment. kidnappers . . . liars . . . perjurers: These are violations of commandments eight and nine. Sound doctrine may also be translated “healthy teaching.”

Practical Advice for the Ministry	
Timothy was a young minister, appointed to lead the apparently contentious church at Ephesus. He had already learned the essentials of the gospel; now he had to learn how to lead. In this letter, Paul was passing on all the wisdom he had accumulated in his years of ministry. His insights are extremely practical and valuable even today.	
Exhortations: what to do	Warnings: what to avoid
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Command others to teach no other doctrine than the true doctrine of Christ (1:3).• Teach the Good News that Christ saves sinners (1:15–18).• Pray and intercede for everyone (2:1).• Choose church leaders who are worthy of the office (3:1–15).• Instruct others in sound doctrine (4:6).• Train oneself in godliness (4:7, 8).• Be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, and in purity (4:12).• Honor widows (5:3).• Stay pure (5:22).• Pursue righteousness, faith, love, patience, and gentleness (6:11).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do not listen to fables or endless genealogies, which cause disputes (1:4).• Reject fables (4:7).• Do not neglect your gift (4:14).• Do not rebuke older men, but exhort them (5:1).• Do not receive an accusation against an elder unless there are two witnesses (5:19).• Do not govern the church with prejudice; be impartial (5:21).• Do not hastily lay hands on anyone (5:22).• Withdraw from those who reject Paul’s teaching and are constantly arguing over words (6:4, 5).• Flee from those who are greedy and want to become wealthy from the ministry (6:5–11).• Avoid profane and idle talk, which is falsely called knowledge (6:20).

is ³contrary to sound doctrine, ¹¹according to the glorious gospel of the ^jblessed God which was ^kcommitted to my trust.

Glory to God for His Grace

¹²And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has ^lenabled me, ^mbecause He counted me faithful, ⁿputting me into the ministry, ¹³although ^oI was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an ⁴insolent man; but I obtained mercy because ^pI did it ignorantly in unbelief. ^{14q}And the grace of our Lord was exceedingly abundant, ^rwith faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. ^{15s}This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that ^tChrist Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief. ¹⁶However, for this reason I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show all long-suffering, as a pattern to those who are going to believe on Him for everlasting life. ¹⁷Now to ^uthe King eternal, ^vimmortal, ^winvisible, to ⁵God ^xwho alone

¹⁰ ³opposed
¹¹ 1 Tim. 6:15
^k 1 Cor. 9:17
¹² 1 Cor. 15:10
^m 1 Cor. 7:25 ⁿ Col. 1:25
¹³ ^o Acts 8:3; 1 Cor. 15:9 ^p John 4:21
⁴ violently arrogant
¹⁴ ^q Rom. 5:20;
 1 Cor. 3:10; 2 Cor. 4:15; Gal. 1:13-16
^r 1 Thess. 1:3; 1 Tim. 2:15; 4:12; 6:11;
 2 Tim. 1:13; 2:22;
 Titus 2:2
¹⁵ ^s 1 Tim. 3:1; 4:9;
 2 Tim. 2:11; Titus 3:8
^t Is. 53:5; 61:1; Hos. 6:1-3; Matt. 1:21;
 9:13 ★
¹⁷ ^u Ps. 10:16
^v Rom. 1:23 ^w Heb. 11:27 ^x Rom. 16:27
^y 1 Chr. 29:11 ⁵ NU the only God,
¹⁸ ⁶ command
²⁰ ² 2 Tim. 2:17, 18
² 2 Tim. 4:14 ^b Acts 13:45

CHAPTER 2

¹ ¹ encourage
² ^a Ezra 6:10

is wise, ⁸be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

Fight the Good Fight

¹⁸This ⁶charge I commit to you, son Timothy, according to the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you may wage the good warfare, ¹⁹having faith and a good conscience, which some having rejected, concerning the faith have suffered shipwreck, ²⁰of whom are ²Hymenaeus and ^aAlexander, whom I delivered to Satan that they may learn not to ^bblaspheme.

Pray for All Men

²Therefore I ¹exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, ^{2a}for kings and ^ball who are in ²authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and ³reverence. ³For this is ^cgood and acceptable in the

^b [Rom. 13:1] ^{2a} a prominent place ³ dignity ³ ^c Rom. 12:2

Sound is derived from the Greek for "in good health." Doctrine is a key theme in 1 Tim. (see also 4:1, 6, 13, 16; 5:17; 6:1).

1:11 according to the glorious gospel: This phrase should be interpreted in its immediate context, a discussion about the purpose of the law. The proper use of the law is to demonstrate human sinfulness and our need for the Good News that Christ has saved us from bondage to the law and our own sins.

1:13 Before Paul trusted in Christ as Savior, he was a **blasphemer**, speaking against God; a **persecutor**, pursuing Christians like a hunter pursuing his prey (see Acts 8:3; 9:1-5); and an **insolent man**, a violent person acting out of personal pride. **but I obtained mercy:** If the apostle Paul could find mercy after the terrible things he did against Christ, then God surely offers salvation with "open arms" to all people (see 2:4).

1:14 Grace is God's undeserved, unearned, freely given favor. The grace given to Paul was **exceedingly abundant**, overflowing beyond all expectations.

1:15 Paul summarized the heart of the gospel (v.11): **Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.** *World* refers to all humanity. *Save* means to deliver or rescue. Christ came to die for the sins of humanity. **of whom I am chief:** Paul saw the degradation of sin and understood the sinfulness of human beings. Because of this, he placed himself first among sinners.

1:16 believe on Him: Over 185 times in the NT the sole condition given for salvation is belief, having faith or trust in Jesus Christ. The gospel is that Christ died for our sins, was buried, and rose on the third day. All those who place their trust in Jesus for salvation will be saved from the coming judgment. To add any other condition to faith for salvation is to make justification a matter of works (see Rom. 11:6; Gal. 2:16).

1:18 Apparently earlier in his ministry **prophecies** had been made about Timothy and his future role in the church. Paul urges Timothy to **wage the good warfare.** According to this powerful imagery, Christian ministry is spiritual warfare directed against God's enemies.

1:20 Hymenaeus and Alexander: Paul offered examples of two men (see also 2 Tim. 2:17, 18; 4:14) who were failing to fight the good fight (v. 18, 19). The phrase **delivered to Satan** is similar to 1 Cor. 5:5. The authority to "deliver over" was apostolic in nature. Paul did not deliver the two men because they were unbelievers, but so that they would **learn not to blaspheme.** In the NT the word translated *learn* is used only of God's discipline of believers (see 1 Cor.

11:32; Heb. 12:6, 7, 10). Paul was indicating that these men should be excluded from the church so that they might abandon their evil ways (1 Cor. 5:1-5).

2:1, 2 Therefore: Here Paul elaborates on what will build up the church (see 1:4). In these verses, Paul uses four of the seven NT terms for prayer. **Supplications** emphasizes personal need. The verb from which the noun is derived has the idea of "petition." **Prayers** is the general word for prayer. The term is always directed toward God with reverence or worship. **Intercessions** means "approaching with confidence," suggesting free access to God. **Giving of thanks** is an attitude of gratitude, the act of praising God for what He has done for us. Each of these aspects of prayer should be included in the prayer life of a church. **For all men** is the first object of prayer. This generic expression for male and female alike cannot be restricted to believers; it also includes nonbelievers, such as **kings and all who are in authority.** **Peaceable** refers to internal composure or an amiable attitude. The idea of praying for kings has a twofold emphasis. First, it is a specific way to pray for all men, because the actions of a king affect society as a whole. Second, it reminds believers

intercession

(Gk. *enteuxis, entugchanō*) (2:1; Rom. 8:34; Heb. 7:25) Strong's #1783; 1793

Intercession is the act of petitioning God or praying on behalf of another person or group. The sinful nature of this world separates human beings from God. It has always been necessary, therefore, for righteous individuals to go before God to seek reconciliation between Him and His fallen creation. The sacrifices and prayers of OT priests (Ex. 29:42; 30:7) were acts of intercession that point forward to the work of Christ. Christ is, of course, the greatest intercessor. He prayed on behalf of Peter (Luke 22:32) and His disciples (John 17). Then in the most selfless intercession of all, He petitioned God on behalf of those who crucified Him (Luke 23:34). In heaven He intercedes for His church (Heb. 7:25). Finally, because of their unique relationship to God through Christ, Christians are urged to intercede for all people (1 Tim. 2:1).

sight ^d of God our Savior, ^{4e} who desires all men to be saved ^f and to come to the knowledge of the truth. ^{5g} For *there* is one God and ^h one Mediator between God and men, *the* Man Christ Jesus, ⁶ⁱ who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time, ^{7j} for which I was appointed

3 ^d 2 Tim. 1:9
4 ^e Ezek. 18:23, 32;
John 3:17; 1 Tim.
4:10; Titus 2:11;
2 Pet. 3:9 ^f [John
17:3]
5 ^g 1 Cor. 8:6; Gal.
3:20 ^h [Heb. 9:15]

a preacher and an apostle—I am speaking the truth ⁴ in Christ *and* not lying—^k a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.

6 ⁱ Mark 10:45 7 ^j Eph. 3:7, 8; 1 Tim. 1:11; 2 Tim. 1:11 ^k [Gal. 1:15, 16] ^l NU omits in Christ

that God is the ultimate Sovereign. He is in control, and our prayers affect decisions at the highest level.

2:4 Who desires all men to be saved does not mean that God has willed that everyone should come to salvation, for elsewhere Paul clearly teaches that only those who believe in Christ will receive salvation (see Rom. 1:16, 17; 3:21–26; 5:17). This is also the clear teaching of Jesus (John 3:15–18). Thus universal salvation is not the *determinative will* of God by which He sovereignly rules the world. Instead what Paul might be saying here is that the Savior God extends the offer of salvation to all. Christ died for the sins of all, but

only those who believe receive the benefits of that sacrifice (see John 3:16; 2 Cor. 5:14, 15). **The knowledge of the truth** refers to Christian growth after being saved. God’s desire is not only our salvation (justification) but also our growth in the truth (sanctification), so that we will not be led astray by false teachers (1:3, 4).

2:5 One God is a central truth of the Hebrew Scriptures. The only living God desires all to be saved. He is the only One to whom our prayers should be addressed. **Mediator** is a concept derived from the ceremonial worship prescribed in the OT. In the tabernacle and later in the temple, the priests meditated between God and the Israelites by offering animal sacrifices to atone for the sins of the people and by interceding to God for the nation. In their position as mediators, the priests were the only ones eligible to enter the Holy Place, the place where God had made His presence known. The **one** Mediator is **the Man Christ Jesus** (see Heb. 9:11–15). There is one God from whom salvation is available. There is only one way to Him, through the Mediator, Christ Jesus, who has the full nature of God and the full nature of man.

2:6 The work of the Mediator (v. 5) is described as giving **Himself a ransom for all**. The Greek word translated *ransom* is found only here in the NT. It specifically refers to a ransom paid for a slave. In Greek it is formed with a prefix that reinforces the idea of substitution (see Matt. 20:28; Mark 10:45). In other words, Christ substituted His life for ours. Our sins had separated us from God. Christ paid the penalty for our sins so that we could be reconciled to our Father.

2:7 Teacher of the Gentiles describes the ministry to which Paul

ransom

(Gk. *antilutron*) (2:6) Strong’s #487

The word *ransom* in Greek is *antilutron* made up of *anti* (signifying substitution) and *lutron* (the word used for the ransom of a slave or prisoner). The *antilutron* is a payment given instead of a slave or prisoner—that is, in substitution for him or her. The person holding the slave accepts the payment as a substitute. According to Gal. 3:13, Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law. The law held us captive in its condemnation, and no one but Christ could pay the price to release us from this bondage.

A New Way to Worship

What is the proper way to worship God? For those who had grown up in the religious climate of Ephesus before the gospel, Christian worship called for altogether different behavior than they were used to practicing. So Paul offered guidelines for worship to the men and women in the Ephesian church (1 Tim. 2:8–15).

Ephesus was world-renowned for its magnificent temple of Diana (Artemis). Pagan cults flourished there, along with occult practices. In fact, books with magic recipes came to be known as “Ephesian books.”

Nevertheless, the gospel bore great fruit there and the community of believers grew rapidly. Yet some of the new converts brought their old way of life into the church and began teaching other doctrines (1:3–7). When it came to worship, many were used to wild rites and festivals. Ephesian women were particularly unacquainted with public behavior, having been excluded for the most part from public gatherings, except pagan rituals.

So Paul described the correct way of worship. Men, who were apparently given to anger and doubts, needed to stop wrangling and start praying (2:8). Likewise, women needed to focus on godliness and good works rather than clothing, jewelry, and hairstyles (2:9, 10). And because some were apparently disruptive, they needed to practice restraint (2:11)—not necessarily complete silence, but “quietness” (as the word is translated in 2 Thess. 3:12), since they likely participated in the prayers and other expressive parts of the worship gatherings (compare 1 Cor. 11:5; Eph. 5:19).

Today the message of Christ continues to attract people from a variety of backgrounds. Some, like the Ephesians, need to learn for the first time about worshiping God. Others bring cultural norms and expectations that are worth using in the worship experience, so long as they preserve biblical guidelines such as those that Paul gave to the Ephesians.



Palmyra funerary relief, third century A.D. Paul instructs the women to dress modestly (2:9, 10) rather than focusing on their fancy clothing, jewelry, and hairstyles.

Baker Photo Archive. Musée du Louvre; Autorisation de photographeur et de filmer—LOUVRE

Men and Women in the Church

⁸I desire therefore that the men pray ^leverywhere, ^mlifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting; ⁹in like manner also, that the ⁿwomen adorn themselves in modest apparel, with propriety and ⁵moderation, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing, ¹⁰but, which is proper for women professing godliness, with good works. ¹¹Let a woman learn in silence with all submission. ¹²And ^pI do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man,

⁸ ^l Luke 23:34 ^m Ps. 134:2
⁹ ⁿ 1 Pet. 3:3
⁵ discretion
¹⁰ ^o 1 Pet. 3:4
¹² ^p 1 Cor. 14:34;
 Titus 2:5

CHAPTER 3

¹ ^l Lit. overseer

but to be in silence. ¹³For Adam was formed first, then Eve. ¹⁴And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression. ¹⁵Nevertheless she will be saved in childbearing if they continue in faith, love, and holiness, with self-control.

Qualifications of Overseers

3 This is a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a ¹bishop, he desires a good work. ²A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife,

had been commissioned (see Acts 9:15; Rom. 11:13). **Faith** refers to one's initial salvation (justification); **truth** relates to the believer's growth in salvation (sanctification). Paul was called not only to preach the gospel to the Gentiles but also to guide their growth in the truth. This is why he left Timothy at Ephesus. Timothy was to charge the Ephesians not to teach other doctrines, fables, or endless genealogies (1:4).

2:8 The men refers to those involved in leading public worship. Leadership in public worship is not restricted to elders or those with specific gifts. Prayer is one of the central features of Christian worship. The Greek word translated *men* in this verse refers to males distinguished from females. Some have insisted that this means that males are to be the only leaders in public worship. On the other hand, Paul describes women as praying in public in some of his other letters (see v. 9; 1 Cor. 11:5). **Lifting up holy hands** is a Hebrew way of praying (see 1 Kin. 8:22; Ps. 141:2). *Holy* means "morally and spiritually clean." Biblical prayer must be done with a clean heart and life (see Heb. 10:22). **without wrath and doubting:** *Wrath* is a slow, boiling type of anger. *Doubting* literally means "to think backward and forward." It carries the idea of disputing. Prayer is to be offered without resentment or disputing among those in the church. If believers do not have good relations with others in the church, they should not lead in public worship.

2:9 in like manner also: This expression probably continues the discussion of prayer begun in v. 8. In other words, when men pray they are to possess sincere and holy attitudes; when women pray, they should be modest. **modest apparel:** The emphasis is that women should dress appropriately when at worship, and not put on extravagant clothes that draw attention to themselves. **Propriety** means reverence and respect, shrinking away from what is inappropriate. **Moderation** may also be translated "sound judgment" or "self-control."

2:10 Paul exhorts the women at Ephesus to be concerned about clothing themselves with godly character instead of wearing inappropriate and lavish clothes. **with good works:** A Christian woman's beauty is found in her godly character and her love for the Lord as demonstrated in all types of good works.

2:11 Let a woman learn is a command. Paul ignored popular myths about women being incapable of learning and urged Timothy to provide opportunities for women to be educated. **In silence** refers to the woman's attitude or manner while learning, as should be true of all believers. Paul was not saying that a woman could not speak in the local assembly (see 1 Cor. 11:2–16). He was simply cautioning women to learn with an attitude of **all submission** and not in an unruly manner.

2:12 to teach: Paul uses a Greek word that indicates the type of teaching that was found in the Jewish communities and synagogues from which he had come. Such teaching was built on the revelation of God and assumed that there would be some sort of oversight, like that exercised in the early church by the elders (see 4:11; 4:16–5:2; 2 Tim. 3:17; 4:1–4; Titus 2:15; 3:8–11). Generally those who exercised this responsibility in the early church had the spiritual gift of teaching (see Rom. 12:7; 1 Cor. 12:28), but not every gift of teaching (by men or women) was necessarily to be exercised over the entire congregation. The word **or** seems to indicate that *teach* is defined by the phrase **have authority over a man**. It seems best

to understand this passage as teaching that women may exercise their spiritual gifts in a variety of ministries in a local assembly (see 2 Tim. 3:14; Titus 2:3, 4), as long as those gifts are exercised under the appropriate leadership of men. Other commentators have viewed this verse as an example of Paul using his apostolic authority to curb the spread in Ephesus of false teaching (see 1:3–7) that apparently was becoming popular among some women who had not been properly instructed (see v. 11).

2:13, 14 For: Paul offers reasons for the directives of vv. 9–12. **Adam was formed first** refers to Gen. 2:7–25. In God's order of creation (see 1 Cor. 11:9), Adam was made before Eve. This is an implied reference to the privileges that a firstborn received in ancient society. These privileges were not given on the basis of inherent superiority but instead on being born first, something controlled by God Himself. The second reason for the prohibitions in vv. 9–12 is related to the Fall. **Adam was not deceived** points to the fact that Adam sinned with his eyes open; he knew what he was doing (see Rom. 5:12). **woman being deceived:** The verb indicates that Eve was "completely deceived." Paul's argument from creation and the Fall in these verses seems to indicate that the prohibitions in vv. 9–12 are permanent. (Some have argued that Paul was drawing an analogy between creation and the Fall and the present situation in the Ephesian church, where men were teaching and some women were being misled by false teachers.)

2:15 saved in childbearing: Some believe this verse refers to the birth of Christ and that the woman is Mary. However, it may refer to the woman's special task of bearing children (see Titus 2:3–5). The salvation referred to here is not justification, but daily sanctification. Most likely, Paul is referring to being delivered from the desire to dominate by recognizing one's appropriate place in God's creation order. **If they continue** suggests that this salvation (that is, sanctification) is conditioned upon women's continued walk in the faith, in love, in holiness, and in self-control.

3:1 bishop: This Greek word refers to a person who oversees a congregation. In many NT passages, the Greek words for *bishop* and *elder* are used interchangeably for the same office (see Titus 1:5–7).

3:2 Blameless means "not laid hold of." The idea is not that a bishop is sinless but that he displays mature, consistent Christian conduct that gives no reason for anyone to accuse him of anything. **Husband of one wife** literally means "a one-woman kind of man." This

bishop

(Gk. *episkopos*) (3:2; Acts 20:28; Phil. 1:1; Titus 1:7) Strong's #1985

The Greek term *episkopos* means "one who oversees." In the NT, elders are described as overseeing a congregation. See Acts 20:17; 20:28, where the *elders* of the church at Ephesus are called *overseers*. Elders were responsible for the internal affairs of the church; and there seem to have been several elders in positions of responsibility in any given congregation (see Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5–7). After NT times, it became the custom to appoint one elder as the presiding elder and to give him the title of *bishop*.

temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach; ³not ²given to wine, not violent, ³not greedy for money, but gentle, not quarrelsome, not ⁴covetous; ⁴one who rules his own house well, having *his* children in submission

³ ²addicted ³NU omits not greedy for money ⁴loving money
⁶ ⁵new convert

with all reverence ⁵(for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?); ⁶not a ⁵novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the *same* condemnation as the devil. ⁷Moreover he must have a

expression has been interpreted as a general exclusion from office of all who are sexually immoral or of polygamists, or as referring specifically to those who have remarried after divorce. This is also a qualification of deacons (v. 12). **Temperate** means “without wine,” sober or clear-headed. **Sober-minded** means that an overseer must have control of his body and mind. It is a balanced state of mind arising out of self-restraint. **Of good behavior** means “orderly.” **Hospitable** means “loving strangers.” An overseer’s home should be open for purposes of ministry. **Able to teach** could also be translated “qualified to teach,” or “teachable.” Since the passage is about character, it seems best to understand this qualification as being teachable, a necessity for a man of God (see 5:17; 2 Tim. 2:24; Titus 1:9 for the requirement that an elder should be able to teach). **3:3 Not given to wine** means “not addicted to wine.” **Not violent** means “not a striker.” An elder should not be prone to violence or to striking others. **Not greedy for money:** An overseer is not to have a materialistic attitude toward money or possessions. Part of this qualification is a warning to those in church leadership concerning

proper management of God’s finances. **Not quarrelsome** means “without fighting.” This is the quality of being peaceable. A bishop or overseer should contend for the faith without being contentious. **Not covetous** means “not a lover of silver” (6:9). Note that this is a second warning about money. Certain Ephesian elders were receiving financial support from the ministry (5:17, 18). Paul exhorted them not to allow their desire for money to become a priority. **3:4 Rules** means “stands before” or “manages.” **his own house:** An elder must manage his own family well. His children must submit to his leadership with **reverence** or respect. **3:6 Novice** means “newly planted.” An elder is not to be a new believer. Being a new convert could put him in danger of **being puffed up with pride**. Such pride is described as the **condemnation of the devil** (see Ezek. 28:11–19). **3:7 good testimony:** An elder must have a good reputation in the community (see Acts 6:3). A non-Christian should not be able to **reproach** or insult an elder. The elder’s good testimony avoids the **snare of the devil**, the traps or pitfalls of Satan (see 2 Tim. 2:26).

Paul’s Fourth Missionary Journey c. A.D. 62–68

It is clear from Acts 13:1—21:17 that Paul went on three missionary journeys. There is also reason to believe that he made a fourth journey after his release from the Roman imprisonment recorded in Acts 28. The conclusion that such a journey did indeed take place is based on: (1) Paul’s declared intention to go to Spain (Rom. 15:24, 28), (2) Eusebius’s implication that Paul was released following his first Roman imprisonment (*Ecclesiastical History*, 2.22.2–3), and (3) statements in early Christian literature that he took the gospel as far as Spain (Clement of Rome, *Epistle to the Corinthians*, ch. 5; *Actus Petri Vercellenses*, chs. 1–3; Muratorian Canon, lines 34–39).

The places Paul may have visited after his release from prison are indicated by statements of intention in his earlier writings and by subsequent mention in the Pastoral Letters. The order of his travel cannot be determined with certainty, but the itinerary below seems likely.

- 1. **Rome** — released from prison in A.D. 62
- 2. **Spain** — 62–64 (Rom. 15:24, 28)
- 3. **CReTe** — 64–65 (Titus 1:5)
- 4. **miletu S** — 65 (2 Tim. 4:20)
- 5. **Col oSse** — 66 (Philem. 22)
- 6. **epheSuS** — 66 (1 Tim. 1:3)
- 7. **philippi** — 66 (Phil. 2:23, 24; 1 Tim. 1:3)
- 8. **niCopoli S** — 66–67 (Titus 3:12)
- 9. **Rome** — 67 (2 Tim. 1:17)
- 10. **maRtyRdom** — 67/68 (2 Tim. 4:6)



good testimony among those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach and the ^asnare of the devil.

Qualifications of Deacons

⁸Likewise deacons *must be* reverent, not double-tongued, ^bnot given to much wine, not greedy for money, ⁹holding the ⁶mystery of the faith with a pure

7 ^a 1 Tim. 6:9;
2 Tim. 2:26
8 ^b Ezek. 44:21
9 ^c hidden truth

11 ⁷ malicious
gossips
13 ^c Matt. 25:21

conscience. ¹⁰But let these also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons, being *found* blameless. ¹¹Likewise, *their* wives *must be* reverent, not ⁷slanderers, temperate, faithful in all things. ¹²Let deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling *their* children and their own houses well. ¹³For those who have served well as deacons ^cobtain for themselves a good

3:8 Deacons fill a second leadership position in the local assembly. The Greek word for *deacon* means “servant.” Although the word itself is not used in Acts 6, the seven godly men selected there to distribute food to widows appear to be the forerunners of this office and ministry. This verse and Phil. 1:1 indicate that the office of deacon was an established office in the early church. **not double-tongued:** This phrase speaks of the dangers of gossip, specifically saying one thing to one person and another to someone else. **3:9 The mystery of the faith** is the doctrine clarified in v. 16 as the incarnation of God in the flesh. The Son of God becoming flesh to serve humanity (see Mark 10:43–45) is the embodiment of service. **3:10 tested:** Deacons are to be evaluated, observed, and approved before being appointed to office. Their character in this approval process is to be **blameless** or “without accusation.”

3:11 Likewise, their wives: The similar phrasing of v. 8 seems to indicate that Paul was speaking of another office in the local body, the deaconess. These women, like deacons (vv. 8–10, 12, 13), served under the leadership of the elders. However some interpret this verse as referring to the wives of deacons and not to an office.

3:13 A twofold encouragement is given to deacons who serve well. First, they will receive a good **standing**, or respect. This relates primarily to their standing in the congregation, but also to their greater rewards for service at the judgment seat of Christ (see Rom. 14:10; 1 Cor. 3:10–15; 2 Cor. 5:10). Second, they develop **boldness in the faith**. Faithful servants develop confidence and assurance in their Christian walk.



standing and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

The Great Mystery

¹⁴These things I write to you, though I hope to come to you shortly; ¹⁵but if I am delayed, *I write* so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ⁸ground of the truth. ¹⁶And without controversy great is the ⁹mystery of godliness:

- ^d God ¹ was manifested in the flesh,
- ^e Justified in the Spirit,
- ^f Seen by angels,
- ^g Preached among the Gentiles,
- ^h Believed on in the world,
- ⁱ Received up in glory.

The Great Apostasy

4 Now the Spirit ¹expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed ^ato deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, ^{2b}speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience ^cseared with a hot iron, ³forbidding to marry, *and commanding* to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those

¹⁵ ⁸ foundation, mainstay
¹⁶ ^d [John 1:14; 1 Pet. 1:20; 1 John 1:2; 3:5, 8] ^e [Matt. 3:16; Rom. 1:4]
^f Matt. 28:2 ^g Acts 10:34; Rom. 10:18
^h Rom. 16:26;
2 Cor. 1:19; Col. 1:6, 23 ⁱ Luke 24:51
⁹ hidden truth ¹ NU Who

CHAPTER 4
¹ ^a 2 Tim. 3:13; Rev. 16:14 ¹ explicitly
² b Matt. 7:15 ^c Eph. 4:19

⁵ ² set apart
⁶ ^d 2 Tim. 3:14
⁷ ^e 2 Tim. 2:16; Titus 1:14 ^f Heb. 5:14
⁸ ^g 1 Cor. 8:8 ^h Ps. 37:9
¹⁰ ⁱ Ps. 36:6 ³ NU we labor and strive,
12 / Phil. 3:17; Titus 2:7; 1 Pet. 5:3 ⁴ look down on your youthfulness ⁵ NU omits in spirit

who believe and know the truth. ⁴For every creature of God *is* good, and nothing is to be refused if it is received with thanksgiving; ⁵for it is ²sanctified by the word of God and prayer.

A Good Servant of Jesus Christ

⁶If you instruct the brethren in these things, you will be a good minister of Jesus Christ, ⁴nourished in the words of faith and of the good doctrine which you have carefully followed. ⁷But ^ereject profane and old wives' fables, and ^fexercise yourself toward godliness. ⁸For ^gbodily exercise profits a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, ^hhaving promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come. ⁹This *is* a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance. ¹⁰For to this *end* ³we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, ⁱwho is the Savior of all men, especially of those who believe. ¹¹These things command and teach.

Take Heed to Your Ministry

¹²Let no one ⁴despise your youth, but be an ^jexample to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, ⁵in spirit, in faith, in purity. ¹³Till I come, give attention

3:15 Paul's purpose in writing his first letter to Timothy was to give him instructions on how a local assembly and its leadership should function. **church of the living God:** The church universal is manifested in local assemblies around the world. **the pillar and ground of the truth:** Misconduct and disorder in the local church weaken the support of God's truth in the world. Godly men and women gathering together in local assemblies to worship the Lord produce an orderly church, a church that testifies to others of the truth of God.

3:16 This verse contains an early hymn of the church. The hymn is three couplets. **Manifested in the flesh** refers to Christ's incarnation, the fact that Jesus became man (see John 1:14). **Justified in the Spirit** refers to the Holy Spirit's work in Jesus' ministry and resurrection (see Matt. 3:15–17; John 16:7, 10; Rom. 1:4). **Seen by angels** refers to the angelic witness of Christ's ministry and resurrection. **Preached among the Gentiles** refers to the proclamation of Christ to the nations (see Col. 1:23). **Believed on in the world** refers to the response of individuals to God's plan of salvation (see 1 Cor. 1:18–25). **Received up in glory** refers to the Ascension; Christ is seated in God's presence in heaven (see Acts 1:9; Heb. 1:3, 4).

4:1 Paul begins a series of instructions specifically for Timothy. **the Spirit expressly says:** Paul may be referring to various prophecies inspired by the Holy Spirit concerning defection from God's truth (see Dan. 7:25; 8:23; Matt. 24:4–12), or he might be speaking of a revelation the Spirit had given to him. **Depart** here means literally "to stand away from." There will be various seasons in which **some** people will depart from their faith (1:19, 20). The reference here is not to a loss of salvation but to a failure to walk obediently (see John 19:25–27; 1 Cor. 3:1–3; 11:29, 30). The impact of satanic attack and influence is described in vv. 1–3. **Doctrines of demons** refers to following occult practices.

4:3, 4 The false teachers at Ephesus evidently disparaged the material world as evil, which became a central doctrine of the full-grown Gnosticism of the second century. In Gen. 1:31, God's creation is called "very good." Believers are to enjoy the **good** things God creates and gives them to manage.

4:5 Sanctified means "set apart." Marriage, eating, and possessions are, in reality, spiritual issues. They are to be enjoyed as the believer recognizes their proper purposes before God.

4:6 Continued growth in the church occurs through **words of faith** and instruction in **good doctrine**. Sound doctrine is the basis of a healthy ministry and correct practice.

4:7 Exercise is the normal term for the physical training of Greek athletes. True spirituality requires one to train at godliness in one's walk with the Lord.

4:8 Profits a little contrasts the short-term value of physical exercise with the long-term benefits of **godliness for all things**. Discipline in godliness affects both the present and future life of the believer. The present aspect includes obedience and a life of purpose (see John 10:10). The future aspect involves greater rewards in the coming reign of Christ (see 1 Cor. 3:10–15; 2 Cor. 5:9, 10).

4:10 Savior of all men describes God as the One who gives life, breath, and existence to all. **Especially of those who believe** draws a contrast between God's common grace to all and His special saving grace to those who trust Him as their Savior.

4:12 Youth was a term applied to men until they were 40. Timothy might have been between 35 and 40 years old at this time. The antidote for his *youth* was his life. He was to set an example in six areas: (1) **in word**, meaning conversation; (2) **in conduct**, or behavior; (3) **in love**, which is the love of God; (4) **in spirit**, the attitude or power of the Holy Spirit; (5) **in faith**, meaning trust in God; and (6) **in purity**, both in sexual matters and in thoughts (5:2). These godly elements are not only for the young, but should be desired and practiced by all. These qualities should be developed early in a Christian's life.

4:13 Reading is a command for public reading of the Scriptures (see Acts 13:15). **Exhortation** is an encouragement to obey the Scriptures. **Doctrine** is formal teaching and instruction in the Word of God (2:12).



Greek and Roman Schools

Ancient Greek and Roman schools were not compulsory, nor were they run by the government. In the Greek system, boys were sent to school at age six. Their education had three main divisions: music, gymnastics, writing. All Greek children were taught to play the lyre. Greek girls were taught to read and write by their mothers, who also taught them to weave, dance, and play a musical instrument. Greek boys could attend school until they were 16. After that, they were expected to train in sports.

Unlike the Greeks, the Romans used people of other nationalities to teach their children. Boys and girls entered formal school at age seven. At 13, if they had done well, children went to high school; there were 20 such schools in Rome in A.D. 30. Even Roman secondary education was taught in Greek, and the teachers were generally Greek slaves or freedmen.



A second-century A.D. Roman school scene

Relief depicting a school scene, from Neumagen, Gallo-Roman/Rheinisches Landesmuseum, Trier, Germany/Giraudon/The Bridgeman Art Library

to reading, to exhortation, to ⁶doctrine. ^{14k}Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy ^lwith the laying on of the hands of the eldership. ¹⁵Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all. ¹⁶Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.

Treatment of Church Members

5 Do not rebuke an older man, but exhort *him* as a father, younger men as brothers, ²older women as mothers,

¹³ ⁶teaching
¹⁴ ^k 2 Tim. 1:6
^l Acts 6:6; 1 Tim. 5:22

CHAPTER 5

⁴ ^o Gen. 45:10 ^l NU,
M omit good and
⁵ ^b Acts 26:7
⁶ ² indulgence

younger women as sisters, with all purity.

Honor True Widows

³Honor widows who are really widows. ⁴But if any widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to show piety at home and ^ato repay their parents; for this is ¹good and acceptable before God. ⁵Now she who is really a widow, and left alone, trusts in God and continues in supplications and prayers ^bnight and day. ⁶But she who lives in ²pleasure is dead while she lives. ⁷And these things command, that they may be

4:14 Paul encourages Timothy to be diligent. The **gift** is the spiritual gift Timothy received from Christ (see Eph. 4:7, 8). **by prophecy:** Timothy's gift was given through a prophetic message (1:18) and **with the laying on of . . . hands**, probably at Lystra (see Acts 16:1). The laying on of hands signified the elders' commission and recognition of God's work in Timothy's life. Paul himself was part of the group that laid their hands on Timothy (see 2 Tim. 1:6).

4:15 Paul's care for Timothy, his "son in the faith" (see 1:2), is evident. He was instructing Timothy so that his **progress** would be **evident** to everyone in the church.

4:16 **Save . . . yourself** is not a reference to justification by works but to sanctification, the Christian's daily walk of faith (see Mark 8:34–38; John 12:25, 26). **Those who hear you** refers to the members in the church to whom Timothy was reading, exhorting, and teaching.

5:2 **All purity** is a word of caution to young men. They must respect the purity of the younger women as the purity of a sister.

5:3 **Honor** is a command to show respect, a respect demonstrated by one's attitude and through financial support (vv. 4, 8). **Widows** are those who have family to help support them (vv. 4, 16); the one who is **really a widow** is one without family support.

5:4 Family members are instructed to care for widows. **Piety** is respect, reverence, or obligation. **repay:** Honoring our **parents** includes caring for them physically and financially as they grow older. In effect, we are returning the time and energy they gave to us while we were young.

5:5 **Trusts** means to have hope or confidence in God.

5:6 This verse identifies widows living ungodly lives, who are not to be supported by the church. **Lives in pleasure** refers to a life of comfort focused on one's own desires. **Dead** means separated from fellowship (see James 2:26). Widows in the church who choose to live for themselves are separating themselves from fellowship with God and the church.

blameless. ⁸But if anyone does not provide for his own, ^cand especially for those of his household, ^dhe has denied the faith ^eand is worse than an unbeliever.

⁹Do not let a widow under sixty years old be taken into the number, *and not unless* she has been the wife of one man, ¹⁰well reported for good works: if she has brought up children, if she has lodged strangers, if she has washed the saints' feet, if she has relieved the afflicted, if she has diligently followed every good work.

¹¹But ³refuse *the* younger widows; for when they have begun to grow wanton against Christ, they desire to marry, ¹²having condemnation because they have cast off their first ⁴faith. ¹³And besides they learn to *be* idle, wandering about from house to house, and not only idle but also gossips and busybodies, saying things which they ought not. ¹⁴Therefore I desire that *the* younger widows marry, bear children, manage the house, give no opportunity to the adversary to speak reproachfully. ¹⁵For some have already turned aside after Satan. ¹⁶If any believing ⁵man or woman has widows, let them ⁶relieve them, and do not let the church be burdened, that it may relieve those who are really widows.

8 ^c Is. 58:7; 2 Cor. 12:14 ^d 2 Tim. 3:5
 9 Matt. 18:17
 11 ³ Refuse to enroll
 12 ⁴ Or solemn promise
 16 ⁵ NU omits man or ⁶ give aid to

18 ^f Deut. 25:4;
 1 Cor. 9:7-9 ^g Lev. 19:13; Deut. 24:15;
 Matt. 10:10; Luke 10:7; 1 Cor. 9:14
 19 ^h Deut. 17:6;
 19:15; Matt. 18:16
 21 ⁱ Deut. 1:17
^j chosen
 22 ^j Eph. 5:6, 7;
 2 John 11
 23 ^k illnesses
 24 ^k Gal. 5:19-21

CHAPTER 6

1 ^o Eph. 6:5; Titus 2:9; 1 Pet. 2:18

Honor the Elders

¹⁷Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and doctrine. ¹⁸For the Scripture says, ^f"*You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain,*" and, ^g"The laborer is worthy of his wages."¹⁹ Do not receive an accusation against an elder except ^hfrom two or three witnesses. ²⁰Those who are sinning rebuke in the presence of all, that the rest also may fear.

²¹I charge *you* before God and the Lord Jesus Christ and the ⁷elect angels that you observe these things without ⁱprejudice, doing nothing with partiality. ²²Do not lay hands on anyone hastily, nor ^jshare in other people's sins; keep yourself pure.

²³No longer drink only water, but use a little wine for your stomach's sake and your frequent ⁸infirmities.

²⁴Some men's sins are ^kclearly evident, preceding *them* to judgment, but those of some *men* follow later. ²⁵Likewise, the good works of *some* are clearly evident, and those that are otherwise cannot be hidden.

Honor Masters

6 Let as many ^abondservants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honor, so that the name

5:8 A believer is to **provide for his own** (his near relatives) and **his household** (his immediate family). Failure to provide for one's family is equal to denial of **the faith** (see Ex. 20:12; Mark 7:9–12; Eph. 6:2). If a Christian cannot even care for his or her own family, how can that person sincerely love and care for others? **worse than an unbeliever**: Some unbelievers take better care of their families than believers do.

5:9 Taken into the number means to write down on a list. The list referred to here was most likely a list of widows whom the church was to assist. Widows who were enrolled on the list were to be at least **sixty years old** and **the wife of one man**. Some have maintained that this list was an official order of widows. These widows were to pray for the church (v. 5) and practice works of charity (v. 10).

5:10 Children refers either to the widow's own children or possibly to orphans. **Lodged strangers** indicates an attitude of hospitality. **Washed the saints' feet** demonstrates a servant's heart. **Relieved the afflicted** suggests giving aid to those facing adversity. **Followed every good work** indicates a commitment to serving.

5:11, 12 Refuse is a command to not put **younger widows**, those less than 60 years old, on the list of widows to be supported by the church. The reason for this refusal is that younger widows may **grow wanton**, which means to experience sexual desire, and thus **desire to marry**, presumably an unbeliever, since the marriage is said to be outside their **first faith**.

5:13, 14 It is best for those younger widows to remarry (see 1 Cor. 7:39, 40). Otherwise, they might become **idle**, without work. **gossips and busybodies**: Paul was concerned that younger widows would not have enough to do, and thus would bother everyone else with worthless talk or even harmful and divisive words.

5:17 The primary function of **elders** is to **rule well**. The word **honor** was used in ancient writings outside the Bible to refer to financial remuneration. **Double** refers to two types of honor: (1) respect for ruling well and (2) adequate pay for their diligent care of the church (see 1 Cor. 9:1–14). **Those who labor in the word and doctrine** are those elders who preach and teach the Scriptures.

5:18 For the Scripture says: With two quotations, one from Deut. 25:4 and the other from the words of Christ in Luke 10:7, Paul provides proof for the principle of providing adequate financial care for elders. The Luke passage is especially noteworthy because it shows that that Gospel was considered by Paul to be Scripture along with the Book of Deuteronomy.

5:19 An elder is protected against malicious attacks by the command not to **receive an accusation**, a charge or legal accusation, except when it comes from **two or three witnesses** (see Deut. 19:15; Matt. 18:16). Charges against elders are to be factual, not based on a single opinion or rumor.

5:20 Those who are sinning refers to elders who fail in their leadership, whether in the local church, in their social life, or in their home life. **Rebuke** is a command to bring a sin to light, to expose it before **all**, including other elders and the church body. **the rest also may fear**: The public rebuke of a sinning elder is to serve as a warning to other believers. God's discipline is consistent from leadership to laity. Sin is a serious matter in the lives of believers, especially those in leadership (see 1 Pet. 4:17). When leaders sin with impunity, church members might erroneously start justifying their own sins.

5:22 This verse warns against too **hastily** restoring a leader who has fallen. Correction in love and restoration to fellowship should occur as soon as possible, but restoration to leadership should not be made without time and biblical evaluation. Another interpretation of this verse suggests that it is a command to evaluate carefully anyone being considered for leadership, not just former leaders who want to be restored (3:1–14). **Keep yourself pure** is a caution for Timothy not to share responsibility for another person's sins by restoring or appointing someone who is not qualified.

5:25 cannot be hidden: Unnoticed good works will become evident, if not in this life then at the judgment seat of Christ (see 1 Cor. 3:10–15).

6:1 Bondservants . . . under the yoke refers to believers who are slaves. Believing slaves were to give their unbelieving masters **all**

of God and *His* doctrine may not be blasphemed. ²And those who have believing masters, let them not despise *them* because they are brethren, but rather serve *them* because those who are benefited are believers and beloved. Teach and exhort these things.

Error and Greed

³If anyone teaches otherwise and does not consent to ^bwholesome words, *even* the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, ^cand to the ¹doctrine which accords with godliness, ⁴he is proud, knowing nothing, but is obsessed with disputes and arguments over words, from which come envy, strife, reviling, evil suspicions, ^{5,2}useless wranglings of men of corrupt minds and destitute of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a *means* of gain. ³From ^dsuch withdraw yourself.

³ ^b 2 Tim. 1:13 ^c Titus 1:1
¹ *teaching*
⁵ ^d 2 Tim. 3:5 ² NU, M *constant friction*
³ NU omits the rest of v. 5.

⁶ ^e Phil. 4:11; Heb. 13:5
⁷ ^f Job 1:21; Ps. 49:17; Eccl. 5:15
⁴ NU omits *and it is* *certain*
⁸ ^g Prov. 30:8, 9

⁶Now godliness with ^econtentment is great gain. ⁷For we brought nothing into *this* world, ⁴*and it is* ^fcertain we can carry nothing out. ⁸And having food and clothing, with these we shall be ^gcontent. ⁹But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and *into* many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition. ¹⁰For the love of money is a root of all *kinds* of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

The Good Confession

¹¹But you, O man of God, flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness. ¹²Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession

honor or respect. The life and actions of a Christian slave were to represent the Christian faith and Christ Himself. In the same way we should watch how we act at work. It is extremely important, for our actions testify to the reality of Christ's power in our lives.

6:2 Teach: Paul moves to the conclusion with a final warning for Timothy to instruct his congregation in order to combat the false teachings that were infiltrating that church (see v. 4, 5). The Greek word for *teach* means the formal presentation of doctrine (see 2:12), while the Greek word for **exhort** implies less formal instruction, a "coming alongside" to guide. **These things** is probably best understood as the contents of this letter.

6:3, 4 If anyone teaches otherwise: Here Paul refers to false teachers. He contrasts their "sick" teaching with the **wholesome words** (see "sound doctrine" in 1:10) of the **Lord Jesus Christ**. These false teachers were more interested in theory and debate than putting the truth into practice. They had a morbid desire to argue over words.

6:5 Destitute of the truth describes the uselessness of speculative religious arguments. These false teachers were using religion for their own financial **gain**. Probably they were hoping that their debates on religion would gain them a following and financial support.

6:9 Two types of people are described in relation to wealth (see v. 17). The first type are those who **desire to be rich**. An inner lack

of godliness and contentment leaves a vacuum filled with greed. This greed drives people into **temptation**, snares, and **foolish and harmful lusts**. **Drown** literally means to drag to the bottom. Paul was painting a graphic word picture of a greedy person drowning under the tremendous weight of material desires. **Destruction and perdition** are synonymous with ruin and irretrievable loss. This loss may be experienced in this life, as through a wrong purpose for living, or it may be experienced in the afterlife if material desires lead a person away from Christ (see 1:16; 2:4; Luke 16:1-14).

6:10 Money in and of itself is not a problem, but the **love of money** is. Love of money is a **root**, though not *the* root, of **evil**. The love of money can drive a person into all types of evil. **Greediness** may cause a believer even to stray **from the faith**. Christians may be blinded by greed and materialism to such a degree that they break away from their faith. **many sorrows:** A life focused on material things produces only pain.

6:11 Paul issues a powerful warning against materialism. **Flee** is a strong command. **Pursue** is a command to hunt or chase after some object. **Righteousness, godliness, and faith** are character qualities. **Love, patience, and gentleness** are fruit of the Spirit-controlled life (see Gal. 5:22). Men and women of God should pursue godliness, not materialism, with all of their being.

6:12 lay hold on eternal life: Eternal life is viewed as a free gift

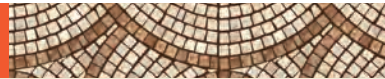
The Challenge of Contentment

Paul's young disciple Timothy had his hands full in Ephesus. The apostle had left Timothy in that city to oversee the organization of the church. Timothy was to provide consistent teaching, help the church choose leaders, and model personal integrity as a leader.

Paul's first letter to Timothy contains both direction and encouragement for Timothy. Among his memorable objectives Paul included the following: "Now godliness with contentment is great gain" (6:6). Obviously, the absence of both godliness and contentment would indicate great loss, especially in the Christian life. Godliness without contentment would be a joyless and legalistic righteousness. Contentment without godliness describes a person sadly disconnected from God's truth.

What kind of life was Paul describing when he speaks of godly contentment? Paul describes such a person as having a firm understanding of the passing nature of life. The things of this world are here when we arrive and are left behind when we leave. Neither godliness nor contentment can be found in accumulating them. Things beyond God's provision of our basic needs ("food and clothing," 6:8) can be enjoyed without becoming a necessity. Paul understood that if godliness (our desire to see God's character reproduced in us) and contentment (our acceptance of God's will in our lives) depend on our environment or circumstances, both will always be unstable.

Elsewhere, Paul indicates that godly contentment must be a learned response (see Phil. 4:11-13). Developing godly contentment lies well beyond our abilities. That is why along with Paul we must appeal to the right source for such a character trait: "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (Phil. 4:13).



in the presence of many witnesses. ¹³I urge you in the sight of God who gives life to all things, and *before* Christ Jesus ^hwho witnessed the good confession before Pontius Pilate, ¹⁴that you keep *this* commandment without spot, blameless until our Lord Jesus Christ's appearing, ¹⁵which He will manifest in His own time, *He who is* the blessed and only ⁵Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords, ¹⁶who alone has immortality, dwelling in ⁱunapproachable light, ^jwhom no man has seen or can see, to whom *be* honor and everlasting power. Amen.

Instructions to the Rich

¹⁷Command those who are rich in

¹³ ^k Matt. 27:2; John 18:36, 37
¹⁵ ⁵ Sovereign
¹⁶ ⁱ Dan. 2:22
^j John 6:46

¹⁷ ^k Jer. 9:23; 48:7
ⁱ Eccl. 5:18, 19
¹⁹ ^m [Matt. 6:20, 21; 19:21]
²⁰ ⁿ [2 Tim. 1:12, 14]
^o Titus 1:14 ⁶ empty chatter

this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain ^kriches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things ^lto enjoy. ¹⁸*Let them* do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share, ¹⁹^mstoring up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.

Guard the Faith

²⁰O Timothy! ⁿGuard what was committed to your trust, ^oavoiding the profane and ⁶idle babblings and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge— ²¹by professing it some have strayed concerning the faith.

Grace *be* with you. Amen.

(see John 3:16; Eph. 2:8–10), a present experience (see John 10:10), and a reward (see Mark 10:29, 30; Luke 18:29, 30). Here Paul is not speaking of Timothy's salvation, but instead of his fruitfulness in this life and his rewards in the next. **The good confession** is Timothy's call and ministry. Paul was urging Timothy to continue his ministry of preaching the Word of God.

6:14 commandment: In the immediate context, Paul was exhorting Timothy to avoid empty religious argumentation (6:3–5) and the greed of materialism (6:6–10). Timothy was to remain faithful to Christ until He appeared again. Thus Paul was encouraging Timothy to focus on the return of Christ, not on temporal gain. The imminent return of Christ should be a motive for godly living (see 2 Pet. 3:10–16; 1 John 2:28).

6:15, 16 God will **manifest** the return of Christ in **His own time**.

idle babblings

(Gk. *kenophōnia*) (6:20; 2 Tim. 2:16) Strong's #2757

This Greek word literally means "empty words." In Paul's writings, the Greek word *kenos* expresses the ultimate emptiness of all that is not filled with spiritual meaning. In other words, human achievement amounts to nothing if it does not come from the will of God. Nothing comes from this nothingness; it is futility. Paul uses a derivative of this word to describe the hollow words (see 6:20; 2 Tim. 2:16) spoken by Judaizers trying to entice the believers with their foolish philosophies (see Eph. 5:6; Col. 2:8). But the teaching committed to Paul and the apostles was not futile; it would last throughout eternity because it originated in God's unchanging will (Matt. 5:18; 1 Cor. 15:12–15).

This will happen at a specific point in time that Jesus declared was known only to the Father (see Acts 1:6, 7). The last half of v. 15 and all of v. 16 form a doxology of praise to the Lord Jesus. **Immortality** may also be translated "without death." Jesus is God and therefore can never die.

6:17 those who are rich: Paul has already condemned those who are attempting to become rich through the ministry (vv. 6–10). The second group of people Paul addresses in regard to wealth (see also v. 9) are those who are already wealthy. Paul encourages Timothy to tell the rich not to be high-minded or proud and not to **trust in uncertain riches**. Only **the living God** can provide for all of our needs.

6:18 Those with wealth are commanded to recognize God as the true source of their wealth and to be generous with their riches. The material blessings of God are to be enjoyed and used for the advancement of His Kingdom, not for self-centered living.

6:19 Storing up may also be translated "treasuring up," a phrase similar to Jesus' challenge in Matt. 6:19–21 to lay up treasure in heaven. A believer's daily obedience to God builds a **good foundation** for the **time to come**. The Scriptures teach that a believer's works will be evaluated to see what his or her life in Christ has produced (see 1 Cor. 3:10–15).

6:20 The Greek term for **committed** is found only here and in 2 Tim. 1:12, 14. The deposit that Timothy had to guard was the truth revealed in this letter. **Knowledge** is the Greek word *gnosis*, from which the word Gnosticism is derived. Evidently an early form of Gnosticism had infiltrated the Ephesian church. This heresy taught that salvation came through the "knowledge" of spiritual mysteries. In unequivocal terms, Paul warns Timothy not to be caught up in this false teaching (see 1:3, 4; 6:3–5).

6:21 First Timothy closes as it begins (1:2), with an emphasis on God's **grace**. The Greek word for **you** is plural, perhaps indicating that this letter was to be read to the church in Ephesus.

THE SECOND EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO TIMOTHY



WHEN DEATH NEARS, priorities change. In light of mortality, what used to seem significant may dim in comparison to one's ultimate fate. That is why we listen to a person's "last words." When all is said and done, everyone wants to know what gave that person hope in the face of death. Second Timothy is Paul's "last words." From a cold, lonely Roman prison, the aged apostle Paul wrote his final instructions to his protégé Timothy. Paul knew that this letter might well be his final contact with Timothy; his execution was most likely imminent. He implored Timothy to come quickly to his side. But in case he did not make it, Paul imparted his last words of encouragement to his "son" in the faith.

Author and Date The author of 2 Timothy identifies himself as Paul (1:1). Other remarks in the book are characteristic of Paul's ministry (see 3:10, 11; 4:10, 11, 19, 20). Many of the early church fathers such as Polycarp, Justin Martyr, and Irenaeus support Pauline authorship. For an explanation of the challenges to Pauline authorship of 2 Timothy, see the Introduction to 1 Timothy. Most of these challenges are based on the erroneous assumption that the theology and Greek style of this letter can only fit the context of the second century.

Many scholars believe that 2 Timothy was written during a second imprisonment of Paul in Rome (see 1:8, 16, 17; 4:6–13). According to the fourth-century church historian Eusebius, Paul was martyred during Nero's regime, sometime before A.D. 68. Since this letter was written immediately before Paul's death, it was probably written around A.D. 67.

Setting The Book of Acts ends with Paul under house arrest in Rome (Acts 28). But many scholars believe that Paul was acquitted, as he had expected (Phil. 1:19). From sporadic evidence in the Pastoral Epistles, we can trace Paul's travels after his imprisonment. He probably visited Crete (Titus 1:5), Ephesus (1 Tim. 1:3), Macedonia, and perhaps Colosse (Philem. 22) and Spain (see Rom. 15:24). Timothy traveled with Paul to Ephesus and was left there to confront the false teachers that were infiltrating the church in that city (1 Tim. 1:3).

Many believe that Paul was put in prison when Nero began his campaign of persecution, shortly after Rome burned down in A.D. 64. Nero blamed the Christians for starting the fire, and executed many of them with extreme cruelty. Soon afterward, the apostle Peter died for his faith by being crucified upside down, according to the church father Origen. As Paul penned his second letter to Timothy, he was aware of his coming death (4:6–8). A number of believers had deserted him (4:16), and only Luke was with him at the writing of this letter (4:11). At the end of the letter, one can sense Paul's concern. He implores Timothy: "Be diligent to come to me quickly" (4:9). Paul did not want to leave this earth without seeing Timothy and Mark to give them some final words of wisdom (4:9–13).

Paul's concern for Timothy arose out of their long relationship with each other. Ever since the beginning of the second missionary journey Timothy had been close to Paul, assisting him in his ministry, acting as his liaison, and learning from his godly example. Timothy's devout mother Eunice and grandmother Lois had provided him with a grounding in the Hebrew Scriptures on which Paul could build (see 2 Tim. 1:5; 3:14, 15). Although evidently Timothy was slightly timid because of his young age (1:7; 1 Tim. 4:12), Paul developed his son in the



Temple of Hadrian (second century A.D.) at Ephesus. Paul wrote this letter to Timothy, who was serving in Ephesus.

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faith by placing more and more responsibility on his shoulders. Timothy had functioned as Paul's representative to Thessalonica (1 Thess. 3:2) and Corinth (1 Cor. 4:17). But leaving Timothy at Ephesus was a major step for Paul; as a concerned mentor, he wrote a letter to Timothy repeatedly charging him to remain faithful to the essentials of the Christian faith (1 Tim. 1:18; 4:12–16; 5:21; 6:11–13). Paul had served as Timothy's spiritual mentor throughout his life. Now as he neared his death Paul wanted to see him one last time. And if that could not be, he wanted at least to give Timothy some final words of encouragement.

Purpose Paul's primary purpose for writing this letter was to offer final instructions to Timothy regarding the Christian life. Second Timothy has an intensely personal nature and tone. One senses Paul's strong love and concern for Timothy. Paul encourages his close friend to use his spiritual gifts. He writes to strengthen Timothy's loyalty to Christ in the face of the suffering and persecution that would come. The apostle challenges Timothy to handle the Word of God accurately, faithfully instructing others in the truths of the faith. Warnings and instructions are given concerning how a believer should relate to the world in times of apostasy. In the closing chapter, Paul offers Timothy his final word of advice: "Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season." This was Paul's own mission, to preach the gospel to the Gentiles; now he was passing it on to his beloved son in the faith, Timothy.

Paul's second purpose for writing this letter was to urge Timothy to join him in Rome. Paul knew that he was soon to die. He longed to see and have fellowship with his child in the faith one last time.

Theology Paul was well aware that hardships and conflict are a part of Christian ministry. One of the essential characteristics of a faithful servant of Christ is endurance in the midst of difficulties. To encourage Timothy in this virtue, the apostle reminds him that Jesus Christ is "of the seed of David" and "was raised from the dead" (2:8). Mention of the seed of David links Christ with the Davidic covenant (see 2 Sam. 7:11–16), which states that a Son of David will rule on his throne forever. Furthermore, Christ has been resurrected; He is alive. The promise of ruling and reigning with Him (see 2:11–13) is set before Timothy as a motive for faithful endurance in ministry. A special crown will be given to those who faithfully serve the Lord and wait for His return (4:8).

Chapter 3 develops the theme of apostasy in the latter days. Paul warns Timothy that difficulties are coming for believers, and he instructs him about how Christians are to respond and behave. Jesus had predicted that such times would come (John 15:18–25; 16:33; 17:15–18), and Paul himself had referred previously to these times (1 Thess. 3:1–8). Although he would not live to see these dreadful days, Paul still cared enough to urge Timothy to be bold in the work of the Lord, even in the midst of troubling times.

CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

In this follow-up correspondence, Paul identifies Christ Jesus as the One who appeared on earth in order to abolish death and bring life and immortality to light (1:10). But Paul is candid enough to move beyond the creedal affirmations of faith to speak about the personal consequences of following the Son of God. “All who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution” (3:12). Jesus is nothing less than the source of our salvation, our faith, and the gospel we proclaim, which will surely make waves in the world. No wonder Paul writes to Timothy to inspire perseverance. Conflict and resistance come with the turf of discipleship. But Paul looks to the end of the race and reminds his friend that all who love Jesus’ appearing will receive the crown of righteousness (4:8). Even more, they will one day reign with Christ (2:12).

2 TIMOTHY OUTLINE

- I. Encouragement in ministry 1:1–18
 - A. Using spiritual gifts 1:1–7
 - B. Suffering for the gospel 1:8–18
- II. Examples in ministry 2:1–26
 - A. Comparisons to a soldier, an athlete, and a farmer 2:1–13
 - B. Challenge to handle God’s Word accurately 2:14–26
- III. Exhortations in ministry 3:1–17
 - A. Warnings of apostasy 3:1–9
 - B. Ways to face apostasy 3:10–17
- IV. Encouragements in ministry 4:1–22
 - A. Preach the Word 4:1–5
 - B. Final exhortations and encouragements 4:6–22

C. A.D. 47–49

Paul’s first missionary journey

C. A.D. 50

The Jerusalem council

C. A.D. 50–53

Paul’s second missionary journey

C. A.D. 50

Timothy joins Paul and Silas in Lystra

C. A.D. 53–57

Paul’s third missionary journey

C. A.D. 54

Timothy again joins Paul’s entourage

C. A.D. 58

Paul is arrested in Jerusalem

C. A.D. 60–62

Paul is imprisoned in Rome

C. A.D. 62

Paul is released; 1 Timothy is written

C. A.D. 67

Paul is imprisoned again in Rome; 2 Timothy is written

C. A.D. 67

Peter and Paul are executed

Greeting

Paul, an apostle of ¹Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to the ^apromise of life which is in Christ Jesus,

²To Timothy, a ^bbeloved son:

Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

Timothy's Faith and Heritage

³I thank God, whom I serve with a pure conscience, as *my* ^cforefathers

CHAPTER 1

¹ ^a Titus 1:2 ¹ NU, M Christ Jesus
² ^b 1 Tim. 1:2; 2 Tim. 2:1; Titus 1:4
³ ^c Acts 24:14

⁵ ^d 1 Tim. 1:5; 4:6
^e Acts 16:1 ² Lit. unhyprocritical
⁶ ^f 1 Tim. 4:14
⁷ ^g John 14:27; Rom. 8:15; 1 John 4:18 ^h [Acts 1:8]

did, as without ceasing I remember you in my prayers night and day, ⁴greatly desiring to see you, being mindful of your tears, that I may be filled with joy, ⁵when I call to remembrance ^dthe ²genuine faith that is in you, which dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and ^eyour mother Eunice, and I am persuaded is in you also. ⁶Therefore I remind you ^fto stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands. ⁷For ^gGod has not given us a spirit of fear, ^hbut of power and of love and of a sound mind.

1:1 Paul speaks of himself in 1 Tim. as an **apostle** “by the commandment of God” (see 1 Tim. 1:1). In 2 Timothy he calls himself an apostle **by the will of God** (see also 2 Cor. 1:1; Eph. 1:1; Col. 1:1). **according to the promise of life:** Paul considers himself a bearer of a life-giving message. This message of life stands in ironic contrast to the fact that Paul was writing from a Roman prison, facing his execution. The characteristic phrase **in Christ**, found in other Pauline letters, also appears in this letter, further indicating that it came from Paul.

1:2 beloved son: In his first letter to Timothy, Paul referred to him as a “true son in the faith” (see 1 Tim. 1:2). Paul’s deep love and concern for this younger man of God is shown throughout this letter.

1:3 I serve is a priestly phrase often associated with worship. **Forefathers** were the patriarchs of the faith: Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Paul had a great love for Israel (see Rom. 9:1–5). The reason he connects himself with Israel’s forefathers may be to demonstrate that he is not advocating a new religion but one of which the godly of the past are also a part. **remember you in my prayers:** Although he was most likely held in a cold and damp prison (4:13), the aged apostle was still worshipping God and offering prayers on behalf of Timothy. Christian service and worship go hand in hand in ministry. No matter what their circumstances, believers should pray to their heavenly Father, committing everything to His loving hands.

1:4 desiring to see you: Paul longed to see Timothy, possibly because the apostle realized his life would end soon (4:6–17).

1:5 The word translated **genuine** means “unhyprocritical.” Paul rejoices when he recalls Timothy’s faithful **grandmother Lois** and **mother Eunice**, whose name means “Good Victory.” The prayers, witness, and faith of his godly mother and grandmother were central factors in the spiritual development of Timothy (see 1 Tim. 2:15).

1:6 stir up the gift: Timothy is urged to rekindle his spiritual gift (this idea is expressed in the negative in 1 Tim. 4:14). The desire to discover, develop, and deploy our specific spiritual gifts should be like a fire blazing within us. The constant struggle of Christians is to be diligent about our work for God and not to slacken our pace in this spiritual race. We need to make a conscious effort to exercise our gift for the common good of the body of Christ.

1:7 The Holy Spirit is the One who gives us spiritual gifts and empowers us to use them. God’s Spirit does not impart **fear** or cowardice, but **power, love, and a sound mind**, or “self-control.” The Spirit imparts power for the various circumstances of ministry. The love the Spirit gives to us should be directed toward other individuals. Furthermore, as we use our spiritual gifts to build up the church, we should exercise self-control, using our abilities only at the appropriate times.

The Handbook for a Life's Work



In his final and intimate letter to his “son in the faith,” Paul reminded Timothy of the essentials of the faith, the basis of Christian ministry. Paul did not want Timothy to drift away from the truth, as Phygellus and Hermogenes had done (1:15). Therefore he passionately exhorted Timothy to hold on tightly to the faith and to the sound teaching that Paul had entrusted to him (1:13).

Paul knew that consistency and personal integrity (2:22–26) would be a significant factor in the young pastor’s effectiveness. So Paul warned Timothy about associations with others (3:1–5), encouraging him to reflect on their years together as an example of ethical consistency in the midst of difficulty (3:10–15). In fact, Paul wrote, “all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution” (3:12). Timothy certainly had vivid memories of trials in ministry to illustrate Paul’s point (see Acts 19:21—20:6).

But Paul also made sure that whatever other counsel he gave his pupil, Timothy would find beneath it all a rock-solid dependence on God’s Word. Timothy’s authority would not come from his own wisdom, Paul’s endorsement, or the acceptance of others. His teaching would stand only to the degree that it was based on Scripture.

Paul’s ringing tribute to the authority and practicality of God’s Word (3:16, 17) completes a section which begins in 2:2 with his charge to Timothy to “commit” what he had learned to “faithful men who will be able to teach others also.” In 3:17, Paul offered the central test for measuring whether the gospel torch had been successfully passed from one generation to the next. The application of God’s Word in four distinct ways would insure that the next generation would become “complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work” (3:17). Effective teaching would include (1) doctrine, the basic truths of the faith; (2) reproof, or challenging and confronting each other with the Word of God; (3) correction, by providing guidance from the truths in Scripture; and (4) instruction in righteousness, the personal and practical application of biblical truths.

Paul was encouraging Timothy not only to pass the truths of Scripture on to the next generation, but also to pass on the basis of those truths, the Word of God itself. As we follow in Paul’s footsteps, we too must make it clear that the authority of our teaching comes from the Bible. If we teach the truth but do not teach the source of truth, we will not succeed in passing on our faith. Our affirmations and actions have to be founded on God’s Word or they will be little more than wishful thinking.

Not Ashamed of the Gospel

⁸i Therefore do not be ashamed of ^jthe testimony of our Lord, nor of me ^kHis prisoner, but share with me in the sufferings for the gospel according to the power of God, ⁹who has saved us and called ^{us} with a holy calling, ¹not according to our works, but ^maccording to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus ⁿbefore time began, ¹⁰but ^ohas now been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, ^{who} has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, ¹¹^pto which I was appointed a preacher, an apostle, and a teacher ³of the Gentiles. ¹²For this reason I also suffer these things; nevertheless I am not ashamed, ^qfor I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that Day.

Be Loyal to the Faith

¹³r Hold fast ^sthe pattern of ^tsound words which you have heard from me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. ¹⁴That good thing which was committed to you, keep by the Holy Spirit who dwells in us.

¹⁵This you know, that all those in Asia

⁸ i [Mark 8:38; Luke 9:26; Rom. 1:16];
² Tim. 1:12, 16
^j 1 Tim. 2:6 ^k Eph. 3:1; 2 Tim. 1:16
⁹ i [Rom. 3:20]; Eph. 2:8, 9 ^m Rom. 8:28
ⁿ Rom. 16:25; Eph. 1:4; Titus 1:2
¹⁰ o Eph. 1:9
¹¹ p Acts 9:15
³ NU omits of the Gentiles
¹² q 1 Pet. 4:19
¹³ r 2 Tim. 3:14; Titus 1:9 ^s Rom. 2:20; 6:17 ^t 1 Tim. 6:3
¹⁶ u 2 Tim. 4:19
¹⁸ v Matt. 6:4; Mark 9:41 ^w 2 Thess. 1:10
^x Heb. 6:10 ⁴ to me from Vg., a few Gr. mss.

CHAPTER 2

¹ a 1 Tim. 1:2 ^b Eph. 6:10
³ c 2 Tim. 4:5
^d 1 Cor. 9:7; 1 Tim. 1:18 ¹ NU You must share
⁴ e [2 Pet. 2:20]
⁵ f [1 Cor. 9:25]
⁷ g Prov. 2:6 ² NU the Lord will give you

have turned away from me, among whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes. ¹⁶The Lord grant mercy to the ^uhousehold of Onesiphorus, for he often refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain; ¹⁷but when he arrived in Rome, he sought me out very zealously and found ^{me}. ¹⁸The Lord ^vgrant to him that he may find mercy from the Lord ^win that Day—and you know very well how many ways he ^xministered ⁴to me at Ephesus.

Be Strong in Grace

² You therefore, ^amy son, ^bbe strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. ²And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. ³You therefore must ^cendure ¹hardship ^das a good soldier of Jesus Christ. ⁴e No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of ^{this} life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier. ⁵And also ^fif anyone competes in athletics, he is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules. ⁶The hardworking farmer must be first to partake of the crops. ⁷Consider what I say, and ²may the Lord ^ggive you understanding in all things.

1:8 Timothy is encouraged not to be **ashamed** or shrink back from the **testimony of our Lord**. *Testimony* is the witness of the Lord; the Greek term is the source of the English word *martyr*. Church tradition says that most of the apostles died as martyrs. Paul is concerned that in the face of vehement opposition Timothy might be afraid to witness. **Share with me in the sufferings** indicates that at times a faithful witness for the Lord will involve adversity. Paul's call for boldness in vv. 7–9 may indicate that Timothy was timid. Every once in awhile he needed a gentle push to be bold.

1:9 God's saving and calling of believers is **not according to . . . works**. It is impossible for people to earn their way into heaven. Salvation is according to God's **own purpose** or sovereign plan (see Rom. 8:28–30; Eph. 1:11). **Grace** is God's unearned favor. The Lord called us and saved us **in Christ Jesus before time began**.

1:10 The manifestation of God's plan and grace has been **revealed**, or brought to light, in the **appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ**. **abolished death**: Fear of dying might have caused believers to shrink from testifying about their faith. The Greek term translated **life** is typically used of eternal life in the NT. God's life, unlike the life of humans, is immortal; He cannot die. Through their faith in Christ, believers have inherited eternal life. We have nothing to fear, not even death. Therefore we can proclaim with boldness our trust in Christ.

1:12 Paul's confidence in the gospel and his Savior enabled him to suffer without any shame. The phrase **whom I have believed** expresses Paul's unshakable trust in his Savior. **What I have committed** does not refer to something Paul had done for Christ, but to something he had entrusted to Him, like a deposit in a bank. This speaks not of Paul's confidence in himself but of Christ's trustworthiness. Paul was certain that God would **keep** his deposit, his life and the eternal rewards of his ministry. The apostle was preparing for imminent death, but in spite of this he was hopeful. He had spent his time, resources, and even his life on proclaiming the gospel, and this investment in Christ's kingdom would bring him an abundant reward in eternity (see Luke 19:15; 1 Cor. 3:10–15; Rev. 11:15, 18). God will protect us in life and in death. He will not forget a life of faithful service to Him when He returns.

1:13 **Hold fast** is a command to Timothy to persist in the **sound words** of healthy teaching (see 1 Tim. 1:3–10). Many who say they speak for Christ proclaim false doctrine. Like Timothy, we need to pursue sound teaching and avoid all teaching that does not conform to the Scriptures, no matter how good certain teachers might sound or how large their following might be.

1:14 **That good thing** may be rephrased as “the good deposit.” Here the phrase refers to Paul's teachings to Timothy (see 1 Tim. 6:20). **Keep** means “to guard” or “to protect.” **Who dwells in us** describes the indwelling of the **Holy Spirit** in believers.

1:15–17 These verses describe those who had abandoned Paul. Yet even here, Paul recalls **Onesiphorus** (a name meaning “Help Bringer”). This man from Ephesus had **refreshed** Paul as if by a cup of cold water. We too should be a refreshment to other believers.

2:1 In light of the defections of others (1:15), Paul exhorts Timothy to be faithful. But Paul's call is for Timothy to **be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus**. The emphasis is on the strength of Christ, not on Timothy's own power. If we trust in ourselves, we are doomed to fail.

2:2 Timothy is commanded to **commit** Paul's teaching to **faithful men**. Faithful men then have the responsibility of teaching others. This would be the basis for an endless chain of Christian discipleship, the teaching of Christian teachers (see Matt. 28:18–20). **among many witnesses**: Discipleship may occur in large groups, small groups, or one-on-one encounters. Here Paul emphasizes a group setting.

2:3–6 Three illustrations are given for faithfulness. The first is a **soldier**. The Christian walk is often presented as spiritual warfare. Effective service calls for singleness of purpose. The second illustration comes from **athletics**. The Greek games were important and demanded strenuous training (see 1 Cor. 9:25). No competitor could be **crowned** unless he competed in accordance with **the rules**. Here the reference is to a victor's wreath given in an athletic contest. Faithful believers will receive a victor's crown, not the royal crown which belongs to Jesus. Paul is saying that spiritual activity must be conducted within the directives of biblical faith and doctrine. To defect from true doctrine is to lose our reward

⁸Remember that Jesus Christ, ^hof the seed of David, ⁱwas raised from the dead ^jaccording to my gospel, ^{9k}for which I suffer trouble as an evildoer, ^leven to the point of chains; ^mbut the word of God is not chained. ¹⁰Therefore ⁿI endure all things for the sake of the ³elect, ^othat they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.

^{8 h} Rom. 1:3, 4
ⁱ 1 Cor. 15:4 / Rom. 2:16
^{9 k} Acts 9:16 / Eph. 3:1 ^m Acts 28:31; [2 Tim. 4:17]
^{10 n} Eph. 3:13
^o 2 Cor. 1:6; 1 Thess. 5:9 ³ chosen ones
^{11 p} Rom. 6:5, 8; 1 Thess. 5:10
^{12 q} [Matt. 19:28];

¹¹ *This is a faithful saying:*
For ^pif we died with *Him*,
We shall also live with *Him*.
^{12 q} If we endure,
We shall also reign with *Him*.
^r If we deny *Him*,
He also will deny us.
Luke 22:29; [Rom. 5:17; 8:17] ^r Matt. 10:33; Luke 12:9; 1 Tim. 5:8

(see 2 John 7, 8). The third illustration is that of a **hardworking farmer**. Conscientious, hard labor is necessary before a farmer can enjoy a bountiful harvest.
2:8 Timothy is commanded to **remember** Christ’s resurrection. **The seed of David** emphasizes Jesus’ humanity and the fact that He would fulfill all the promises God had given to David (see 2 Sam. 7:11–16). **Raised from the dead** emphasizes that our Savior lives today seated at the right hand of God the Father.
2:9 Human circumstances cannot confine the **word of God**. Whether through a tract, a book, a Bible, or a simple statement, God uses His word to accomplish His purposes. There are numerous examples of people who were antagonistic to God’s truth but who surrendered their lives to God when He kept after them (see Paul’s conversion in Acts 9:1–25). We must not hide the gospel, but instead let it go forth unchained in spite of our own limitations.
2:10 Paul is able to **endure** his present difficult circumstances —his

own imprisonment—because he knows that God’s work is still progressing among the **elect**, God’s chosen ones. The final outcome of their salvation will be the **eternal glory** of God’s coming kingdom.
2:11–13 This section is possibly a hymn or confession of the early church. The form resembles the parallelism of Hebrew poetry. The hymn reflects the themes of Christ’s death and resurrection introduced by Paul in v. 8.
2:11 if we died . . . We shall also live: Believers are united with Christ in His death and resurrection (see Rom. 6:8), which become our death to sin and our resurrection to eternal life.
2:12 If we endure: Persevering in the faith even in the face of hardship or persecution will result in a reward when Christ returns (see Luke 19:11–27; Rom. 8:17; Rev. 3:21). **He will also deny us:** If believers deny the enduring of persecution for Christ, He will deny them the reward and reign that could have been theirs.

Descriptions of the Christian Life		
In describing how Christians should live, Paul often resorts to analogies or metaphors. This chart lists some of the metaphors of the Christian life found in the New Testament.		
Christians are called to be like ...	Text	Meaning
Soldiers	2 Tim. 2:3, 4	Like a single-minded soldier, we should respond to the orders of our commanding officer, the Lord Jesus, with unquestioning obedience.
Farmers	2 Tim. 2:6	Farmers labor strenuously and consistently in order to reap a fruitful harvest. We also must work hard in serving the Lord.
Athletes	2 Tim. 2:5	Athletes follow strict training rules so as to avoid being disqualified from their race; we must display a similar measure of self-control.
Workers	2 Tim. 2:15	Our work is to “rightly divide” or correctly handle God’s Word so as to avoid shame.
Vessels	2 Tim. 2:20, 21	We must take care to keep ourselves pure, like a clean dish, so that we will be “useful for the Master.”
Fishers of men	Matt. 4:19	As fishermen, we are called to “catch” men with the Good News of Christ.
Salt	Matt. 5:13	As salt, we act as a godly preservative in an evil society; moreover, we make people thirsty to know their Creator.
Light	Matt. 5:14–16	As light, we point the way to reconciliation with God, and we reflect God’s character, for He is the Light (John 1:7).
Branches	John 15:5	As branches, we bear godly fruit as long as we are attached to the Vine, Christ.
Stewards	1 Cor. 4:1, 2	Like administrators, we have responsibilities to manage. God will evaluate how we handled the resources He has given us.
Ambassadors	2 Cor. 5:20	We are representatives of God’s kingdom to the lost citizens of this world.
Living stones	1 Pet. 2:5	In former days, God dwelt in a physical temple; now He dwells in His people, the church.
Priests	1 Pet. 2:5, 9, 10	Like priests, we have the privilege of approaching near to God, and the responsibility of helping others in reconciling themselves to Him.
Sojourners	1 Pet. 2:11	As children of God, we do not belong to the world. This world is not our home; we are only “passing through.”

- 13 If we are faithless,
He remains faithful;
He ^s cannot deny Himself.

Approved and Disapproved Workers

¹⁴Remind *them* of these things, ^tcharging *them* before the Lord not to ⁴strive about words to no profit, to the ruin of the hearers. ¹⁵^uBe diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. ¹⁶But shun profane and ⁵idle babblings, for they will ⁶increase to more ungodliness. ¹⁷And their message will spread like cancer. ^vHymenaeus and Philetus are of this sort, ¹⁸who have strayed concerning the truth, ^wsaying that the resurrection is already past; and they overthrow the faith of some. ¹⁹Nevertheless ^xthe solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: “The Lord ^yknows those who are His,” and, “Let everyone who names the name of ⁷Christ depart from iniquity.”

²⁰But in a great house there are not only ^zvessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay, some for honor and some for dishonor. ²¹Therefore if anyone cleanses himself from the latter, he will be a vessel for honor, ⁸sanctified and

13 ^s Num. 23:19;
Titus 1:2
14 ^t 1 Tim. 5:21; 6:4;
2 Tim. 2:23; Titus
3:9 ⁴ battle
15 ^u 1 Tim. 4:13;
2 Pet. 1:10
16 ⁵ empty chatter
⁶ lead
17 ^v 1 Tim. 1:20
18 ^w 1 Cor. 15:12
19 ^x Matt. 24:24;
[1 Cor. 3:11] ^y Num.
16:5; [Nah. 1:7];
John 10:14, 27
⁷ NU, M the Lord
20 ^z Rom. 9:21
21 ^a 2 Cor. 9:8; [Eph.
2:10]; 2 Tim. 3:17
⁸ set apart
22 ^b 1 Tim. 6:11
24 ^c Titus 3:2
^d Titus 1:9 ^e 1 Tim.
3:3; Titus 1:7
25 ^f Gal. 6:1; Titus
3:2; 1 Pet. 3:15
^g Acts 8:22 ^h 1 Tim.
2:4
26 ⁱ 1 Tim. 3:7

CHAPTER 3

1 ^a 1 Tim. 4:1; 2 Pet.
3:3; 1 John 2:18;
Jude 17, 18 ¹ times
of stress
3 ² irreconcilable
4 ^b 2 Pet. 2:10

useful for the Master, ^aprepared for every good work. ²²^bFlee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart. ²³But avoid foolish and ignorant disputes, knowing that they generate strife. ²⁴And ^ca servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, ^dable to teach, ^epatient, ²⁵^fin humility correcting those who are in opposition, ^gif God perhaps will grant them repentance, ^hso that they may know the truth, ²⁶ⁱand that they may come to their senses and ⁱescape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to *do* his will.

Perilous Times and Perilous Men

3 But know this, that ^ain the last days ¹perilous times will come: ²For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, ³unloving, ²unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, ⁴^btraitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, ⁵^chaving a form of godliness but

5 ^c Titus 1:16

2:13 Faithless describes the life of an immature believer who lives for oneself and not for the Savior (see 1 Cor. 3:1–3, 15). **He remains faithful:** Even when believers fail the Savior, He remains loyal. For Christ to abandon us would be contrary to His faithful nature (see John 10:27–30; Heb. 10:23; 13:5). Christ’s relationship with Peter is a great example of God’s faithfulness (see Luke 22:31–34).

2:15 What is **approved** is what remains after testing, like metals that have been refined by fire. **Rightly dividing** literally means “cutting straight.” **word of truth:** Truth defines the nature of Scripture. It is a beacon of truth in the darkness of all kinds of falsehoods. Teachers of the Bible should make every effort to handle His truth accurately. Failure to do so will lead to divine judgment (see James 3:1).

2:16–18 Paul warns Timothy about two men, **Hymenaeus and Philetus**, who taught that the resurrection of believers had already occurred (see 1 Tim. 1:20). This was probably an early form of Gnosticism that emphasized a spiritual resurrection as opposed to the Christian belief in a future bodily resurrection.

2:19 In spite of the unfaithful actions of some, the **solid foundation of God stands**. The tense of the verb indicates that Paul saw God’s truth as standing not only in the past but also in the present. Isaiah 40:8 reveals that God’s Word will also stand firmly in the future, since it is eternal. **The Lord knows those who are His:** This is an intimate, experiential knowledge that can only be obtained in a relationship. **depart from iniquity:** Our sure relationship with our Father in heaven should motivate us to a life of purity.

2:20, 21 The imagery of the **house** is used to describe two categories of believers. **Gold and silver** represent believers who are faithful and useful in serving Christ. **Wood and clay** represent believers who fail to honor the Lord (see 1 Cor. 3:12–15). **Master** is a strong term for God’s authority over the lives of believers regardless of their level of spiritual maturity. We choose to serve the Lord in the power of the Holy Spirit in order to be useful to our Master.

2:22, 23 Flee . . . pursue . . . avoid: In these verses Paul describes in practical terms how Timothy can be a useful vessel for God’s work.

2:24 Quarrel translates a military term for hand-to-hand combat. The Lord’s servant must not battle with words, but instead must be **gentle** and kind to all.

2:25, 26 Correcting means “training” or “bringing to maturity.”

Those who are in opposition are those who place themselves in conflict with the preaching of God’s truth, such as Hymenaeus and Philetus (v. 17). The aim of correction is **repentance**, or a “change of thinking.” Paul exhorts Timothy to persevere in correcting his opponents because it is imperative that they should **know the truth**, even though they might oppose the truth at present with their false teachings about the resurrection (see v. 18). It was Paul’s hope that they would finally **come to their senses**, or become sober again. False teaching has an intoxicating effect that dulls the mind to God’s truth. Timothy’s persistence in correcting them might enable them to **escape the snare of the devil**. The devil takes **captive** believers who teach false doctrine, leading others astray. One of Satan’s tactics is to cause divisions in the church.

3:1 The exhortations of ch. 2 to endure hardship, be diligent, rightly divide the Word, and be a vessel fit for the Master’s use are given in the context of difficult, even **perilous times**. **Last days** includes the whole time from the writing of this letter until the return of Christ.

3:5 A form of godliness is an outward appearance of reverence for God. **Denying its power** describes religious activity that is not

rightly dividing

(Gk. *orthotomeō*) (2:15) Strong’s #3718

This word, which occurs only here in the NT, means “to cut straight,” as to cut a straight road or to keep a straight course. The idea could also be that of plowing a straight furrow or of squaring and cutting a stone to fit it in its proper place. In the Greek OT, the word is used in Prov. 3:6; 11:5 to depict God’s provision of a straight path for the righteous. Paul encouraged Timothy to handle the word of truth in a straight way, like a road that goes straight to its goal, without being turned aside by useless debates.

^ddenying its power. And ^efrom such people turn away! ^fFor ^fof this sort are those who creep into households and make captives of gullible women loaded down with sins, led away by various lusts, ^galways learning and never able ^hto come to the knowledge of the truth. ^hNow as Jannes and Jambres resisted Moses, so do these also resist the truth: ⁱmen of corrupt minds, ^jdisapproved concerning the faith; ⁹but they will progress no further, for their folly will be manifest to all, ^kas theirs also was.

The Man of God and the Word of God
¹⁰But you have carefully followed my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, perseverance, ¹¹persecutions, afflictions, which happened to me ^mat Antioch, ⁿat Iconium, ^oat Lystra—what persecutions I endured. And ^pout of *them* all the Lord delivered me. ¹²Yes, and ^qall who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. ¹³But evil men and impostors will grow worse and

5 ^d 1 Tim. 5:8
e Matt. 23:3;
2 Thess. 3:6; 1 Tim. 6:5
6 ^f Matt. 23:14;
Titus 1:11
7 ^g 1 Tim. 2:4
8 ^h Ex. 7:11, 12, 22;
8:7; 9:11 ⁱ 1 Tim. 6:5
J Rom. 1:28
9 ^k Ex. 7:11, 12;
8:18; 9:11
10 ^j Phil. 2:20, 22;
1 Tim. 4:6
11 ^m Acts 13:44–52
n Acts 14:1–6, 19
o Acts 14:8–20 ^p Ps.
34:19
12 ^q [Ps. 34:19]
13 ^r 2 Thess. 2:11
14 ^s 2 Tim. 1:13;
Titus 1:9
15 ^t Ps. 119:97–104;
John 5:39
16 ^u [2 Pet. 1:20]
v Rom. 4:23; 15:4
3 training, discipline
17 ^w 1 Tim. 6:11
x 2 Tim. 2:21; Heb.
13:21

CHAPTER 4

1 ^a 1 Tim. 5:21;

worse, deceiving and being deceived. ¹⁴But you must ^scontinue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned *them*, ¹⁵and that from childhood you have known ^tthe Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.
¹⁶*u* All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, ^vand *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for ³instruction in righteousness, ¹⁷*w* that the man of God may be complete, ^xthoroughly equipped for every good work.

Preach the Word

4 I ^acharge *you* ¹therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, ^bwho will judge the living and the dead ²at His appearing and His kingdom: ²Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. ^cConvince, ^drebuke, ^eexhort, with

2 Tim. 4:1 ^b Acts 10:42 ¹ NU omits *therefore* ² NU and by
2 ^c Titus 2:15 ^d 1 Tim. 5:20; Titus 1:13; 2:15 ^e 1 Tim. 4:13

connected to a living relationship with Jesus Christ. As time progresses, people would begin to participate in religious activities that are empty. Their activities have nothing to do with a true relationship with God or with individual faith in Jesus Christ. This kind of religion provokes God's anger (see Is. 1:10–18; Matt. 23:25–28). **Turn away** is a command for Timothy to avoid the evil persons described in vv. 2–5. We are not to link up in common cause with them (see 1 Cor. 15:33).
3:6 creep into households: The empty religious individuals of vv. 2–5 use deception to gain a hearing. **Make captives** is a military term for taking prisoners in war. The imagery of spiritual combat is clear in these verses. **Gullible women** are the target of attacks by false teachers. Evidently the false teachers at Ephesus had made significant inroads among a group of women in that church (1 Tim. 5:13–15). Here is the danger of ignorance. Hence, Paul instructs Timothy to “let a woman learn” (1 Tim. 2:11).
3:8 Paul gives a specific example of two men who resisted truth in Moses' time. **Jannes and Jambres** are not named in the OT, but according to Jewish tradition, they were two of the Egyptian magicians who opposed Moses (Ex. 7:11). Men of **corrupt minds** resist the truth because it unveils their shameful thinking and behavior.
3:9 their folly will be manifest: The character and empty religion of false teachers will ultimately be exposed (see Num. 32:23).
3:10, 11 you have carefully followed: Paul draws a sharp contrast

between a Christian testimony and the way of the false teachers (vv. 2–9). He notes ten different qualities of his own teaching and life that Timothy had had opportunity to observe.
3:12 Those who want to live godly lives must be prepared for **persecution**, literally “to be hunted.” God does not promise us deliverance from persecution but deliverance through it. Persecution is one of the means God uses to develop our capacity to reign with Him in His kingdom (see 2:12; Matt. 5:10–12; Rev. 2:10).
3:13 The Greek word translated **impostors** can also mean sorcerers or swindlers. **deceiving and being deceived:** False teachers deceive themselves as well as others (see Matt. 15:18–20).
3:15 from childhood: Paul emphasizes Timothy's godly heritage (1:5). His mother Eunice and his grandmother Lois had faithfully taught him the **Holy Scriptures**. The truths of God's Word directed Timothy to Christ. God's Word and the Spirit of God are both essential for our salvation. The Word of God without the Spirit of God is lifeless; it has no power to act. But the Word of God empowered by the Spirit of God becomes a living force in our lives.
3:16 Paul emphasizes the preeminence of **all Scripture**. **Given by inspiration** is literally “God-breathed.” In this verse, Paul teaches that God was actively involved in the revelation of His truth to the apostles and prophets, who wrote it down. The Author of the Bible is God Himself. Thus Scripture is true in all that it affirms and is completely authoritative (see 1 Pet. 1:20, 21). The study of the Bible is profitable in at least four different ways. **Doctrine** is teaching. Paul highlights correct teaching first; Luke also emphasizes the Jerusalem church's commitment to doctrine first (see Acts 2:42). **Reproof** is conviction. This is not simply a rebuke; it is demonstrating some truth beyond dispute. **Correction** refers to setting something straight (2:15). **Instruction** refers to the process of training a child. In this list, only one of these terms is oriented to knowledge and information—that is, *doctrine* (see 1 Pet. 2:2). The other three in the list involve a change of life. Knowledge that does not change one's life is useless.
3:17 The study of Scripture will make a believer **complete**, meaning “capable” or “proficient.” **Thoroughly equipped** means “fully prepared.” The person who masters the Word of God will never lose his or her way. **every good work:** Paul emphasizes the essential link between knowing God's Word and applying it to one's daily life. Right doctrine should produce right practice.
4:1, 2 I charge: Paul underscores the importance of his command to Timothy by calling on God and Jesus to be witnesses to it. He

inspiration of God

(Gk. *theopneustos*) (3:16) Strong's #2315

The Greek word means “God-breathed,” from *theos* (God) and *pneō* (to breathe). Although it is difficult to fully recreate the thought of this Greek expression in English, we are fairly sure that Paul meant to say that all Scripture was breathed out from God. This is the primary meaning. But the expression could also mean that the Word was “inbreathed,” or inspired, by God. The first definition affirms the Bible's divine origin; the second speaks of God's spiritual presence in the Word. Thus God not only inspired the authors who wrote the words of the Bible, but He also inspires those who read it with a heart of faith.



Books and Parchments

Paul requests of his friend Timothy that he bring with him “the books, especially the parchments” (4:13). The word for books (*biblion*) is common in the NT, but the word for parchments (*membrana*) is used only here—it is a word derived from Latin which means an animal skin used for writing. The two words in this passage have been interpreted in three different ways: (1) “The books” were copies of OT books, and “the parchments” were copies of various NT books; (2) “the books” were copies of OT and NT books, and “the parchments” were blank writing material or notebooks containing rough drafts; or (3) the two words signified the same thing: “the books—that is, the parchment notebooks.” If the third interpretation is correct, it suggests that Paul was anxious to recover some rough drafts he had left behind when he was arrested.



A page of the Gospel of Luke written on parchment in Coptic

Baker Photo Archive. Musée du Louvre; Autorisation de photographe et de filmer—LOUVRE

all longsuffering and teaching. ³For the time will come when they will not endure ^asound doctrine, ^bbut according to their own desires, *because* they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; ⁴and they will turn *their* ears away from the truth, and ⁱbe turned aside to fables. ⁵But you be watchful in all things, ^jendure afflictions, do the work of ^kan evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

³ 2 Tim. 3:1
⁹ 1 Tim. 1:10; 2 Tim. 1:13 ^b Is. 30:9-11; Jer. 5:30, 31; 2 Tim. 3:6
⁴ 1 Tim. 1:4
⁵ 2 Tim. 1:8 ^k Acts 21:8
⁶ Phil. 2:17 ^m [Phil. 1:23]; 2 Pet. 1:14
⁷ ⁿ 1 Cor. 9:24-27; Phil. 3:13, 14

Paul's Valedictory

⁶For ^lI am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of ^mmy departure is at hand. ⁷ⁿI have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. ⁸Finally, there is laid up for me ^othe crown of righteousness,

⁸ ^o [1 Cor. 9:25; 2 Tim. 2:5]; James 1:12

reminds Timothy that Jesus will return in judgment. Paul's charge to Timothy is to **preach the word**. The foundation of any ministry is God's Word. Preaching God's truth is a sacred and demanding task, requiring perseverance and courage. **Be ready** means to take a stand. Timothy was to be alert at all times to his responsibilities, even when it was inconvenient. This type of ministry is not for a novice (see James 3:1). **longsuffering . . . teaching**: Patience and instruction are two necessary components of an effective ministry. True spiritual growth occurs over a period of time, through consistent teaching and application of God's Word.

4:3 Timothy needs to be alert and ready to preach God's Word. **Sound** teaching is essential for spiritual maturity, but will not always be tolerated. There will come a time when people will seek out teachers to tell them what they want to hear and what makes them feel good.

4:4 People **turn their ears** to avoid **truth**. This is the sixth time that Paul uses the word *truth* in this short letter (see also 2:15, 18, 25; 3:7, 8). He had used the word five times in the first letter to Timothy (see 1 Tim. 2:4, 7; 3:15; 4:3; 6:5). As Paul faced execution, he was evidently concerned that his son in the faith would be tempted to depart from truth, lured by deceptive false teachers.

4:5 **Watchful** means “sober.” **Endure afflictions** refers to the hard toil of ministry, which will have its own reward (2:12). **work of an evangelist**: *Evangelist* is one of five offices mentioned by Paul in Eph. 4:11. An evangelist equips and encourages believers to share the Good News.

4:6 Paul is aware that the time of his death is near. A **drink offering** was an offering performed by pouring wine out on the ground or altar (Num. 28:11–31). Paul's life was already being poured out in service to Jesus Christ, the Lamb (Rev. 5:4–6). **my departure is at hand**: Paul was confident that no one could touch him until the

Heavenly Father ushered him into his eternal home with a victory celebration.

4:7 Paul had been vigilant in his service to God. Note that Paul did not make these comments until the end of his race, until he was about to die. He did not presume or rely on his past service. Instead he persevered, struggled, and served God until the end (see 1 Cor. 9:24–27).

4:8 Paul understood the eternal potential of a lifetime of faithful service to Christ. Jesus would return with rewards for those who stick it out over the long haul. **The crown of righteousness** is a special reward given to those who serve God faithfully on this earth (see Matt. 5:10–12). There will be as many crowns as there are runners who finish the race well. **All who have loved His appearing** are those believers in Christ who have lived faithfully in the hope of His return (see Titus 2:11–15; 1 John 2:28).

appearing

(Gk. *epiphaneia*) (1:10; 4:1, 8; 2 Thess. 2:8; 1 Tim. 6:14; Titus 2:13) Strong's #2015

This word literally means “a shining forth” and was used in Greek literature to denote a divine appearance. The English word *epiphany* is a close equivalent. The NT writers use the word to refer to Jesus' first coming, the time when He entered this world as a man (see 1:10). They also use the word to speak of Jesus' second coming, specifically to His appearance to all the world (see Matt. 24:27).

which the Lord, the righteous ⁹Judge, will give to me ⁹on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.

The Abandoned Apostle

⁹Be diligent to come to me quickly; ¹⁰for ¹⁰Demas has forsaken me, ¹¹having loved this present world, and has departed for Thessalonica—Crescens for Galatia, Titus for Dalmatia. ¹¹Only Luke is with me. Get ¹¹Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for ministry. ¹²And ¹²Tychicus I have sent to Ephesus. ¹³Bring the cloak that I left with Carpus at Troas when you come—and the books, especially the parchments.

¹⁴Alexander the coppersmith did me much harm. May the Lord repay him according to his works. ¹⁵You also must beware of him, for he has greatly resisted our words.

¹⁶At my first defense no one stood with me, but all forsook me. ¹⁶May it not be charged against them.

8 ⁸ John 5:22
9 2 Tim. 1:12
10 ¹⁰ Col. 4:14;
Philem. 24 ¹¹ John 2:15
11 ¹¹ Acts 12:12, 25;
15:37-39; Col. 4:10
12 ¹² Acts 20:4; Eph.
6:21, 22; Col. 4:7;
Titus 3:12
14 ¹⁴ Acts 19:33;
1 Tim. 1:20
16 ¹⁶ Acts 7:60;
[1 Cor. 13:5]

17 ¹⁷ Deut. 31:6; Acts
23:11 ¹⁸ Acts 9:15;
Phil. 1:12 ¹⁹ 1 Sam.
17:37; Ps. 22:21
18 ¹⁸ Ps. 121:7;
[2 Pet. 2:9] ¹⁹ Rom.
11:36; Gal. 1:5; Heb.
13:21; 2 Pet. 3:18
19 ¹⁹ Acts 18:2; Rom.
16:3 ²⁰ 2 Tim. 1:16
20 ²⁰ Acts 19:22;
Rom. 16:23 ²¹ Acts
20:4; 21:29
22 ²² NU omits Jesus
Christ

The Lord Is Faithful

¹⁷^xBut the Lord stood with me and strengthened me, ¹⁸so that the message might be preached fully through me, and *that* all the Gentiles might hear. Also I was delivered ¹⁹out of the mouth of the lion. ¹⁸^aAnd the Lord will deliver me from every evil work and preserve *me* for His heavenly kingdom. ¹⁹^bTo Him *be* glory forever and ever. Amen!

Come Before Winter

¹⁹Greet ¹⁹cPrisca and Aquila, and the household of ²⁰dOnesiphorus. ²⁰^eErastus stayed in Corinth, but ²¹fTrophimus I have left in Miletus sick.

²¹Do your utmost to come before winter.

Eubulus greets you, as well as Pudens, Linus, Claudia, and all the brethren.

Farewell

²²The Lord ²³Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Grace be with you. Amen.

4:9 Paul is in prison and sends a heartfelt plea to Timothy, asking his young friend to **come . . . quickly**. Paul desired Christian fellowship and some words of encouragement from Timothy, the one he had trained in the faith.

4:10 **Demas**, Paul's trusted coworker (see Col. 4:14, Philem. 24), had fled because he **loved this present world**. He could not endure the hardships of ministry and instead followed worldly pleasures and comfort.

4:11, 12 **Only Luke is with me**: The value of a trusted friend in the midst of hard times cannot be overstated. Paul's reference to **Mark** as **useful** is a note of tender restoration. Mark's desertion of Paul in Pamphylia on his first missionary journey had led to the separation of Paul and Barnabas at the beginning of Paul's second missionary journey (see Acts 15:36–40). But later Paul and Mark were reconciled, and Mark served Paul in the ministry (Col. 4:10). Now at the end of his life, Paul expresses his appreciation of Mark's service. **to Ephesus**: Paul was sending a faithful coworker Tychicus (see Acts 20:4; Eph. 6:21; Col. 4:7) to replace Timothy at Ephesus.

4:14, 15 Timothy is warned about **Alexander**. This is possibly the person named in 1 Tim. 1:20 or Acts 19:33, who caused **harm** to Paul's ministry in Ephesus. Jesus warned the apostles that they could expect opposition (see John 15:18–21).

4:16 Paul echoes the forgiving attitude of Christ. Although many had abandoned him, he asked God not to hold them accountable for their actions.

4:17 In spite of the failure of his friends, Paul was supported by the Lord, who always strengthens and empowers. Often people will fail us in troublesome times. The Lord, however, never fails His children, no matter how difficult the circumstances are (see Luke 22:32; Heb. 7:25). God had consistently empowered Paul during his life so that he could continue to preach the truth to the Gentiles. **Lion** is probably a reference to execution by lions. It is also possible that Paul is using the word as a metaphor for the spiritual conflict from which he was delivered.

4:18 Paul's expression of confidence in God builds to a crescendo of praise, ending with **Amen**.

4:19–21 Paul closes the epistle with a number of instructions regarding various individuals in his ministry. **Greet Prisca and Aquila**: Prisca is another name for Priscilla. Paul had met both Priscilla and Aquila in Corinth on his second missionary journey (Acts 18:1–3), and they had assisted in God's work in Ephesus (Acts 18:18, 19). **Onesiphorus**: This greeting indicates that Timothy was probably still at Ephesus, for Onesiphorus was from there (see 1:16–18; 1 Tim. 1:3). **Trophimus**, a member of the church of Ephesus (Acts 21:29), had traveled with Paul to Jerusalem (Acts 20:4).

4:22 The final note of this book and of Paul's ministry is **grace**, a fitting conclusion for this man of God and his faithful service to the **Lord Jesus Christ**. The fact that the pronoun **you** is plural may indicate that Paul intended this letter to be read before the congregation.

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO TITUS

“POINT MAN,” “pinch hitter,” “clutch player,” “go-getter.” These terms describe a person who can be counted on, someone who knows what to do and how to do it and who works tirelessly to get it done. Titus was that kind of person.

He had to be. Much of his work, like the apostle Paul’s, was dangerous, unpopular, difficult, and tiring. It involved traveling, introducing strangers to new ideas, constantly making new friends, consistently battling new enemies, and even deflecting threats on one’s life. The number of people who could share such a load was small, but the early church desperately needed them. Not just anyone could start and maintain a new church in a hostile world. Yet Titus rose to the challenge.

The believers in Crete lacked leadership and were suffering as a result. False teachers were taking advantage of the absence of sound doctrine. Judging from Paul’s exhortations, the harmony and morals of the young congregation were disrupted. Paul relied on Titus to help them establish their leadership and make up their other deficits. Their struggles are repeated in every age, and this letter is as relevant today as it was to Titus.

Author and Date This letter says it was written by the apostle Paul (1:1), and there is little reason to doubt that he wrote it. Although some scholars have raised objections in the last two hundred years, these objections rest mainly on the assumption that Paul died at the end of the imprisonment described in Acts 28 and did not make the journey implied in the letter to Timothy and Titus. The historical details within Titus itself give us no reason to abandon the traditional view that Paul wrote this letter. Because the arguments against Pauline authorship are the same ones suggested against the Pastoral Epistles in general, see the Introduction to 1 Timothy for more information.

It seems that Paul wrote Titus some time between his two Roman imprisonments, between A.D. 62 and 65. Tradition holds that Titus was written shortly after 1 Timothy, around A.D. 63.

Historical Background Crete is a large island, approximately 160 miles long and 35 miles wide, in the Mediterranean Sea. The island is located 100 miles southeast of Greece. The Cretans developed a relatively prosperous agriculture and trading economy, creating one of the best-known business centers of the ancient world. Such prosperity also fostered a great deal of excess. In 1:12, Paul quotes the Greek poet Epimenides, who wrote “Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons.”

Paul may have planted a church on the island of Crete during a missionary trip after his first imprisonment in Rome, which ended about A.D. 62. When Paul departed from Crete, he left Titus behind to “set in order the things that [were] lacking” in the church (1:5).

Titus is mentioned numerous times in the New Testament as one of Paul's most trusted assistants. He was a Greek and was converted by Paul (see Gal. 2:3). He assisted the apostle on some of his missionary journeys (see 2 Cor. 7:6, 7; 8:6, 16) and went with him to the Jerusalem council (see Acts 15:2; Gal. 2:1–3). Paul mentioned Titus several times in 2 Corinthians (see 2 Cor. 2:13; 7:6, 13, 14; 8:6, 16, 23; 12:18). Titus carried the letter to Corinth. While at Corinth, Titus was entrusted with collecting funds from the Corinthian church. Later Titus went to Dalmatia at Paul's request (see 2 Tim. 4:10). Early church tradition says that Titus returned to Crete and spent the remainder of his life there.

Theology Although Titus contains only 46 verses, it covers a wide range of topics. It is a key New Testament book for church organization, with its guidelines for elders, pastors, and other believers. Furthermore, it contains one of the clearest statements about God's grace in all of the New Testament (2:11–14; 3:3–7). It explicates the significance of Christ's first (2:11) and second coming (2:13). The book contributes to our understanding of the work of the Holy Spirit in salvation and the Christian life (3:5). But it is known most for its practical instruction about the roles of men, women, and servants (2:2–10) and its instruction for dealing with false teaching (1:9–16; 2:1, 7, 8, 12, 15; 3:2, 8–11, 14). A church needs organization, sound doctrine, and good teaching to survive. In this letter, Paul gives Titus a succinct overview on how to lead a church.

Theme Whereas the letters to Timothy emphasize sound doctrine, the letter to Titus emphasizes good works (1:16; 2:7, 14; 3:1, 5, 8, 14). There were influential people in the church who were motivated by personal interest and selfish gain (1:11). In his letter, Paul exposes the ways this was affecting the doctrine (1:11) and practice (1:16) of the church and urges Titus to champion purity, service, and kindness toward others (2:11–15; 3:3–7). Paul reminds Titus that salvation is not based on our own "works of righteousness" (3:5) but rather is the result of God's work of kindness and love toward us (3:4). We are unable to do good works in our disobedient and selfish state (3:3). Salvation in Christ frees us to do good works, and the "washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit" (3:5) enables us.



Cove on the island of Crete. Paul had left Titus to oversee the church at Crete.

God wants His people to devote themselves to doing good works (2:11, 12; 3:1, 8, 14). Older men (2:2), older women (2:3), young women (2:4, 5), young men (2:6–8), and servants (2:9, 10) should “adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things” (2:10). In his letter, Paul exhorts the believers at Crete to display the testimony of good works to outsiders (2:11, 12; 3:1, 8, 14). While good works are a Christian duty, they are also a gift from God. Through justification in Christ (3:7), God declares us righteous. We must have this legal standing in order to qualify before God to do good works. Redemption (2:14) removes us from the jurisdiction of Satan by paying the debt incurred by our sins. At the same time, it places us in the family of God so that we might be “His own special people, zealous for good works” (2:14).

C. A.D. 47–49
Paul’s first missionary journey

C. A.D. 50
The Jerusalem council

C. A.D. 50–53
Paul’s second missionary journey

C. A.D. 53–57
Paul’s third missionary journey

C. A.D. 58
Paul is arrested in Jerusalem

CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

As in his other letters, Paul’s greeting refers to the grace, mercy, and peace that are available from both God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ (1:4). And the reason Paul refers to them as a unit is because of his unflappable belief that Jesus is one with the Father. In Titus 2:13 Paul refers to Him as “our great God and Savior.” Obviously that is not unique to this letter, but it is noteworthy. So is the way Paul calls attention to Jesus being the “blessed hope” who has yet to return to earth in a “glorious appearing.”

Paul beautifully describes the Savior’s redemptive work on our behalf: Jesus is the One “who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works” (2:14). Certainly Titus got the message.

TITUS OUTLINE

- I. Greeting 1:1–4
- II. The character of the elders and the Cretans 1:5–16
 - A. The character of the elders 1:5–9
 - B. The character of the Cretan false teachers 1:10–16
- III. God’s grace displayed within the church 2:1–10
 - A. The duty of Titus to teach sound doctrine 2:1
 - B. Instructions for various age groups 2:2–6
 - C. The personal example of Titus 2:7, 8
 - D. An exhortation to slaves 2:9, 10
- IV. God’s grace displayed to all humanity 2:11–3:11
 - A. Instructions based on God’s grace 2:11–14
 - B. Restatement of Titus’s duties 2:15
 - C. Display of good works 3:1–11
- V. Farewell instructions 3:12–15

C. A.D. 60–62
Paul is imprisoned in Rome

C. A.D. 63
Titus is written

C. A.D. 67
Peter and Paul are executed

Greeting

Paul, a bondservant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect and ^athe acknowledgment of the truth ^bwhich accords with godliness, ²in hope of eternal life which God, who ^ccannot lie, promised before time began, ³but has in due time manifested His word through

CHAPTER 1

1 ^a 2 Tim. 2:25
2 ^b 1 Tim. 3:16
3 ^c Num. 23:19

4 ^d 2 Cor. 2:13; 8:23;
Gal. 2:3; 2 Tim. 4:10
1 NU Christ Jesus

preaching, which was committed to me according to the commandment of God our Savior;

⁴To ^dTitus, a true son in *our* common faith:

Grace, mercy, *and* peace from God the Father and ¹the Lord Jesus Christ our Savior.

slave

(Gk. *doulos*) (1:1; John 13:16; 1 Cor. 7:21; Philem. 16; Rev. 6:15; 13:16) Strong's #1401

This Greek word means "a bonds slave," one who is subject to the will of his master. The Roman Empire depended on slavery, and many Christians were slaves. The NT does not endorse slavery, nor does it promote a political crusade against it. Instead, Paul encouraged slaves to get their freedom if they could do so within the confines of the law (1 Cor. 7:21), and it seems that Paul was asking Philemon to set Onesimus free (Philem. 15, 16). To express his complete submission to God's will, Paul described himself as slave to God (see Rom. 1:1; Gal. 1:10).

1:1 Paul introduces the theme of the book, good works, in the first verse with the term **godliness**. *Good works or works* appears eight times in this epistle (twice in v. 16; 2:7, 14; 3:1, 5, 8, 14). At least two other phrases parallel the good works theme: "reverent in behavior" (2:3) and "adorn the doctrine of God" (2:10).

1:2 cannot lie: This phrase translates a single Greek word meaning "truthful," or "free from all deceit." The salvation that God has promised to each of us who know His Son will be fulfilled; God is faithful to His promises.

1:3 The Greek word translated **preaching** was the word for the message proclaimed by a public herald. Paul places emphasis on the message, not the messenger. Christians should always focus on Christ, for He is the center of our faith, not any one preacher (see 1 Cor. 9:16; 2 Cor. 4:5). The power is in the truth of what is preached, the good news that Christ has saved us from our sins (see Rom. 1:15, 16; 1 Cor. 2:4). **committed to me:** A king's commission is a definite, official act, giving a person a task and authority to carry it out. Paul's commission was as God's "imperial secretary," carrying the royal message of salvation.





Crete

The Mediterranean island of Crete is 160 miles long and up to 35 miles wide. Its first-century inhabitants were notorious for untruthfulness and immorality (1:12, 13) and the expression “to act the Cretan” became an idiom meaning “to play the liar.” A number of Jews from Crete were present in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:11) and some of them may have believed in Christ and introduced the gospel to their country. Although Paul was shipwrecked on Crete during his trip to Rome (Acts 27:7–13), he probably had little time for active ministry during that brief sojourn. The apostle spread the gospel in the cities of Crete after his release from Roman imprisonment and he left Titus there to finish organizing the churches. Not long after his departure, Paul wrote this letter to encourage and assist Titus in that task.



The seventh-century A.D. Church of Titus on Crete

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Qualified Elders

⁵For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should ^eset in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every city as I commanded you— ⁶if a man is blameless, the husband of one wife, ^fhaving faithful children not accused of ²dissipation or insubordination. ⁷For a ³bishop must be blameless, as a steward of God, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, ^gnot given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, ⁸but hospitable, a lover of what is good, sober-minded, just, holy,

⁵ ^e 1 Cor. 11:34
⁶ ^f 1 Tim. 3:2–4;
 Titus 1:6–8
² *debauchery*, lit.
incorrigibility
⁷ ^g Lev. 10:9 ³ Lit.
overseer

¹⁰ ^h James 1:26
¹¹ ⁱ 1 Tim. 6:5
¹² / Acts 17:28

self-controlled, ⁹holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict.

The Elders' Task

¹⁰For there are many insubordinate, both idle ^htalkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision, ¹¹whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole households, teaching things which they ought not, ⁱfor the sake of dishonest gain. ¹²^jOne of them, a prophet of their

1:5 Lacking indicates an unfinished organization of the churches in Crete due to the brevity of Paul's visit. Paul identifies three specific areas of shortcoming: (1) a lack of organization in the churches (vv. 5–9); (2) unchallenged false teachers (vv. 10, 11; 3:10, 11); (3) a need for teaching in doctrine and practical living (2:1–10; 3:1, 2). Titus was left behind to **set in order** these deficiencies. Titus's first step toward completing his task was to **appoint elders in every city** (see Acts 14:23). Apparently the early church had several leaders in a particular church instead of one principal leader. The Greek words for *elder* and *bishop* (literally, overseer) seem to have been used interchangeably by Paul (see v. 7). *Elder* perhaps speaks more of the office and its authority, while *bishop* may speak more of the person's function and the ministry of oversight (see Acts 20:17).

1:6 Blameless means to have nothing in one's conduct on which someone could base an accusation (see 1 Tim. 3:2). Such is to be the overall characteristic of an elder. Yet Paul further defines this blamelessness with 16 qualities. These qualities are in three areas: family life (v. 6), personal life (vv. 7, 8), and doctrinal beliefs (v. 9). The contrast between the blameless behavior of church elders and the base behavior of the false teachers should have been evident to all (vv. 10–16). **husband of one wife:** This phrase is found only in the Pastoral Epistles (see 1 Tim. 3:2, 12; 5:9). Its exact meaning is debated. The apostle might be barring a polygamist, a divorced or remarried man, or a man known to be unfaithful to his wife. Paul was emphasizing, as Jesus did (see Matt. 19:5), the importance of marital faithfulness. Marriage is the uniting of a man and a woman

into “one flesh.” **faithful children:** Not only should the man have a good relationship with his wife, he should also have children who demonstrate faithfulness to God. If a man has children who reject the ways of God, this reflects on the father's ability to lead others outside his home. This rule would apply to children who are not yet fully grown, but possibly not to adult children.

1:7–9 Elders were not to be **self-willed**, but **self-controlled**. If they were self-seeking, like the false teachers on Crete (vv. 10–16), they would not possess the character required to promote good works and sound doctrine among the believers. **Convict** means to rebuke in such a way as to produce repentance and confession of sin (see John 16:8). A rebuke can have the positive results of producing change in a person's life.

1:10, 11 many insubordinate: In these verses, Paul describes the characteristics of the false teachers whose teaching was contrary to the truth and was undermining the authority of church leaders. **those of the circumcision:** Apparently there were Jewish Christians in the churches of Crete who were limiting the Christian freedom of Gentile Christians by requiring an adherence to Jewish laws (see Gal. 3).

1:12 Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons: Paul is quoting the Cretan poet Epimenides, who wrote these words around 600 B.C. The Cretans were so much regarded as liars in the Mediterranean world that the expression “to Cretanize” meant to lie. Paul was contrasting the Cretans' reputation with God's. The Lord was incapable of lying (see v. 2).

own, said, “Cretans *are* always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons.” ¹³This testimony is true. ^kTherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith, ¹⁴not giving heed to Jewish fables and ^lcommandments of men who turn from the truth. ^{15m}To the pure all things are pure, but to those who are defiled and unbelieving nothing is pure; but even their mind and conscience are defiled. ¹⁶They profess to ⁿknow God, but ^oin works they deny *Him*, being ⁴abominable, disobedient, ^pand disqualified for every good work.

13 ^k 2 Cor. 13:10;
2 Tim. 4:2
14 ^l Is. 29:13
15 ^m Luke 11:41;
Rom. 14:14, 20;
1 Cor. 6:12
16 ⁿ Matt. 7:20-
23; 25:12; 1 John
2:4 ^o [2 Tim. 3:5,
7] ^p Rom. 1:28
⁴ detestable

CHAPTER 2

5 ^a 1 Tim. 5:14
^b 1 Cor. 14:34;
1 Tim. 2:11 ^c Rom.
2:24

Qualities of a Sound Church

2 But as for you, speak the things which are proper for sound doctrine: ²that the older men be sober, reverent, temperate, sound in faith, in love, in patience; ³the older women likewise, that they be reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things— ⁴that they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, ⁵to be discreet, chaste, ^ahomemakers, good, ^bobedient to their own husbands, ^cthat the word of God may not be blasphemed.

1:14 The word *fable* is always used in contrast to Christian doctrine (see 1 Tim. 4:6, 7). These **Jewish fables** were probably legends about OT figures, like some that survive to this day in nonbiblical writings. This speculation was not only opposed to the **truth**, but it also undermined the faith (v. 13). **commandments of men**: The rules that come from false doctrine are contrasted with the good works (v. 16) that should proceed from sound doctrine. See Mark 7:1–16 for examples of fables and commandments of men.

1:15 In this verse Paul highlights the mistaken asceticism of the Cretan false teachers. They had identified certain foods and practices as defiled when in reality it was their minds that were **defiled and unbelieving**. On the other hand, **to the pure all things are pure**. Because the Cretan believers had placed their trust in Christ, focusing their minds on Him, they would be empowered by God’s Spirit to lead pure lives. Jesus taught the same principle in Matt. 15:11. Physical objects or external practices do not defile a person, but a mind focused on evil thoroughly corrupts. Although present-day believers are typically not concerned with Jewish ritual observances, the principle is still applicable. We should be more concerned about renewing our mind and focusing it on Jesus than observing a list of rules that have no biblical support.

2:1 Paul normally follows a rebuke of false doctrine with an admonition of how the believer should act (see 2 Tim. 3:10, 14). **Sound**

means “healthy.” Paul makes frequent use of the term in the Pastoral Epistles. He uses it five times in Titus (see also 1:9, 13; 2:2, 8). Paul views sound doctrine as the root that produces the fruit of sound practice (good works), such as faith, love, and patience (v. 2), as well as sound speech (v. 8). Right thinking is the raw material for right actions (see Ps. 119:11; Prov. 23:7; Rom. 12:2; James 1:13–15). Our actions will naturally reveal the direction of our thoughts.

2:2 Older men refers to men older than about 50. The same is true of older women (see v. 3). The character of those who are mature should serve as a spiritual example to all. Maturity is not determined simply by age or even by how much a person knows; it is determined by how skilled a person is in applying the truth to life and in distinguishing good from evil (see Heb. 5:13, 14).

2:3 In keeping with the theme of good works (vv. 1, 2), **older women** are not to engage in evil practices like slander, gossip, or drunkenness; instead, they are to teach younger women (v. 4).

2:4 In this verse the word **admonish** means “to give encouragement through advice.” Older women are to pass on their insights to their younger counterparts. **love their husbands**: Paul speaks here not of romantic love, but of the commitment of a woman to her husband’s welfare.

2:5 homemakers: The importance that Paul places on the role of women in the home may also be seen in 1 Tim. 5:2–16 (see also

Personal Training



In a world where education seems to be offered everywhere, the biblical description of the church as God’s training center for holy living is often overlooked (2:1–15). This error becomes obvious when a church lacks leaders. Effective leadership in a church is the result of proper training. When young believers have not been trained the church begins to flounder.

Paul was one of the most effective leaders of the early church. He preached the gospel tirelessly, founded a succession of churches throughout Asia Minor and Greece, and grounded these churches in God’s Word and the essentials of the Christian faith. But to be truly effective, Paul had to nurture others to follow in his footsteps and faithfully lead the church into the next century. Titus was one of the young men Paul was training for leadership. He had accompanied Paul early in his ministry (Gal. 2:1–3), had served as Paul’s representative (2 Cor. 7:5–16), and was considered a “fellow worker” (2 Cor. 8:23). When Paul wrote this letter, he had begun to pass the reins of leadership to this capable young man who was overseeing the churches on the island of Crete.

In his instructions to Titus, Paul reminds him of the traits of a spiritual leader (1:5–16). Paul had chosen Titus as a helper because he had evidenced these qualities. Now he had to model such traits to others, searching for those who could become leaders in the newly planted churches.

Paul instructed Titus to place the responsibility of moral leadership on the elders. Older men and women (2:1–5) had to lead the way in personal holiness. If their lives demonstrated the transforming power of the gospel, they would leave a lasting impact on following generations. Young men who saw older men diligently maintaining their faith in Christ would do likewise (2:2). Young women who heard older women encourage them to “love their husbands, to love their children” (2:4) would be more likely to take the counsel to heart if they saw their mentors doing that themselves. Titus himself was to exhort “young men” (2:6), while making sure that he was consistently following the pattern of life he was teaching (2:7).

The degree to which sound training exists in a local church practically determines the health of that church. The pastor may be the designated teacher, but the Bible makes everyone both a trainer and a trainee. Church members should rely on each other for spiritual guidance. The older generation should pass on to the next generation their vital Christian faith by word and example. The character that results from this process of spiritual training truly is an eye-catching advertisement for the gospel.

⁶Likewise, exhort the young men to be sober-minded, ⁷in all things showing yourself to be ^aa pattern of good works; in doctrine *showing* integrity, reverence, ^eincorruptibility, ¹ ⁸sound speech that cannot be condemned, that one who is an opponent may be ashamed, having nothing evil to say of ²you.

⁹*Exhort* ^fbondservants to be obedient to their own masters, to be well pleasing in all *things*, not answering back, ¹⁰not ³pilfering, but showing all good ⁴fidelity, that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things.

Trained by Saving Grace

¹¹For ^gthe grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, ¹²teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, ¹³^hlooking for the blessed ⁱhope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, ¹⁴^jwho gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed ^kand purify for Him-

⁷ ^d Phil. 3:17;
1 Tim. 4:12 ^e Eph.
6:24 ¹ NU omits
incorruptibility
⁸ ² NU, M us
⁹ Eph. 6:5; 1 Tim. 6:1
¹⁰ ³ *thieving*
⁴ *honesty*
¹¹ ^g [Rom. 5:15]
¹³ ^h 1 Cor. 1:7 ¹ [Col.
3:4]
¹⁴ / Is. 53:12; Gal.
1:4 ★ ^k Ezek. 37:23;
[Heb. 1:3; 9:14;
1 John 1:7]

/ Ex. 15:16
¹⁵ ^m 1 Tim. 4:13;
5:20; 2 Tim. 4:2

CHAPTER 3

¹ ^e [Rom. 13:1];
1 Pet. 2:13 ^b Col.
1:10
³ ^c 1 Cor. 6:11;
1 Pet. 4:3
⁴ ^d Titus 2:11
^e 1 Tim. 2:3
⁵ ^f [Rom. 3:20]; Eph.
2:4-9 ^g John 3:3
⁶ ^h Ezek. 36:26
⁷ / [Matt. 25:34];
Mark 10:17; [Rom.
8:17, 23, 24; Titus
1:2]

self ^lHis own special people, zealous for good works.

¹⁵Speak these things, ^mexhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no one despise you.

Graces of the Heirs of Grace

3 Remind them ^ato be subject to rulers and authorities, to obey, ^bto be ready for every good work, ²to speak evil of no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing all humility to all men. ³For ^cwe ourselves were also once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving various lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another. ⁴But when ^dthe kindness and the love of ^eGod our Savior toward man appeared, ⁵^fnot by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through ^gthe washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, ⁶^hwhom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, ⁷that having been justified by His grace ⁱwe should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

Prov. 31). **obedient to their own husbands:** Women are not under the authority of men in general, but rather the authority of their own husbands. The Greek word translated *obedient* is a military term which indicates voluntary submission to the one in authority (see Eph. 5:21). **that the word of God may not be blasphemed:** Paul wanted the older women to teach the younger women so that their actions would glorify God, build His kingdom, and strengthen the family. Failure to follow Paul's instructions would result in the word of God being maligned in the pagan community.

2:6 Young men are to pursue the character qualities that older men should possess already.

2:7, 8 a pattern of good works: Paul concludes his instructions to various age groups by reminding Titus that his personal life is an essential aspect of his teaching. More people will learn from our daily actions than from what we say. Therefore we must pay careful attention that our lives are in line with our beliefs.

2:9, 10 bondservants: Good works from a Christian slave would make **the doctrine of God** very attractive to a non-Christian master. Believing the teachings of Scripture is proper and good, but living those truths will influence the nonbelievers with whom we rub shoulders every day.

2:11 appeared: Twice in this context Paul speaks of Christ's appearance in history. The first time Christ came in **grace** to save men from their sins; the second time He will come in glory (v. 13) to reign.

2:12, 13 The appearance of the grace of God is to produce two results in the lives of believers: First, we are to resist the evil temptations of this world, living godly lives in this present age. Second, we are to look for Christ's return. Paul reminded Timothy that there is a special crown awaiting "all who have loved His appearing." (see 2 Tim. 4:8). **great God and Savior Jesus Christ:** This is one of the strongest statements of the deity of Christ in the NT.

2:14 Redeem means "to purchase." With His death on the Cross, Christ paid the price to release us from the bondage of sin (see Eph. 1:7) to which every unbeliever is a slave (see Rom. 6:6, 7, 17, 20). God's purpose in redeeming us is not only to save us from hell; He also wants to free us from sin so that we can produce good works that glorify Him (see Eph. 2:8-10).

2:15 rebuke: For the third time in this letter (see also 1:11, 13), Paul strongly commands Titus to confront false teachers.

3:1, 2 Remind: Paul had already instructed the Cretans regarding submission and obedience to the authorities in their communities.

Titus was to remind them of their duty to be good citizens, a virtue which the Cretans notoriously lacked (see 1:12). **rulers and authorities:** This phrase often refers to the angelic realm, including both good (see Eph. 3:10) and evil angels (see Eph. 6:12). Here it refers to civil leaders and institutions. Disobedience permeated the Cretans' lifestyle, both in the church (v. 10) and in government. Titus must advise them to get along with civil authorities and to live peacefully with their neighbors. This type of life would reflect positively on the Christian faith and thus glorify God.

3:3 Paul provides another motive for good works by explaining the rationale for the Christian life. The believers were supposed to treat others the way God in His grace had treated them when they were involved in the ungodly activities noted in this verse (see Rom. 5:8).

3:5 not by works of righteousness: Since Paul has been exhorting Titus to emphasize good works in his ministry with the Cretans, he wants to make it clear that such works have no value in saving a person. Rather, it is solely on the basis of God's **mercy** that we are delivered from the penalty of our sin. **washing of regeneration:** This phrase refers to the work of the Holy Spirit, who in a moment makes a person new by the cleansing of regeneration (the new birth). This new nature is the ground for living the Christian life and performing good deeds. **renewing of the Holy Spirit:** The continual process of Christian living is enabled by the Holy Spirit, resulting in growth in character and good works.

3:7 we should become heirs: God justifies believers so that they

God our Savior

(Gk. *sôtēr hēmōn theos*) (1:3; 2:10; 3:4; 1 Tim. 1:1; 2:3) Strong's #4990; 2257; 2316

In the Pastoral Epistles, this expression or similar ones appear often. In each of these verses, the appellation seems to describe God the Father. The OT writers speak of God as Savior (see Ps. 24:5; Is. 12:2; 45:15, 21) and so do a few other NT writers (Luke 1:47; Jude 25). The Son is called Savior in the Pastoral Epistles (1:4; 2:13; 3:6; 2 Tim. 1:10), and in 2:13 the Son is called "our great God and Savior," thus clearly identifying Jesus as God.

^{8j}This is a faithful saying, and these things I want you to affirm constantly, that those who have believed in God should be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable to men.

Avoid Dissension

⁹But ^kavoid foolish disputes, genealogies, contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and useless. ^{10l}Reject a divisive man after the first and second ^ladmonition, ¹¹knowing that such a person is warped and sinning, being self-condemned.

8 / 1 Tim. 1:15
9 ^k 1 Tim. 1:4; 2 Tim. 2:23
10 ^l Matt. 18:17
^l warning

12 ^m Acts 20:4;
Eph. 6:21; Col. 4:7;
2 Tim. 4:12
13 ⁿ Acts 18:24;
1 Cor. 16:12

Final Messages

¹²When I send Artemas to you, or ^mTychicus, be diligent to come to me at Nicopolis, for I have decided to spend the winter there. ¹³Send Zenas the lawyer and ⁿApollos on their journey with haste, that they may lack nothing. ¹⁴And let our *people* also learn to maintain good works, to *meet* urgent needs, that they may not be unfruitful.

Farewell

¹⁵All who *are* with me greet you. Greet those who love us in the faith.
Grace *be* with you all. Amen.

might become coheirs with Jesus Christ in His coming reign (see Rom. 8:17; 2 Tim. 2:12).

3:8 This is a faithful saying: Paul is emphasizing that what he has written (vv. 4–8) is a trustworthy statement, one that is central to the Christian faith. There are four other places in the Pastoral Epistles where Paul labels his teaching as a faithful saying (see also 1 Tim. 1:15; 3:1; 4:9; 2 Tim. 2:11–13). It is significant that the faithful

saying in Titus includes an admonition to **maintain good works**, the theme of the letter. **These things are good and profitable:** This emphasizes the practical benefit of good works.

3:9–11 Paul was admonishing Titus to avoid anything that would promote wickedness among the believers. **Reject a divisive man:** Titus was to cut off the church's relationship with any person who would not submit to correction after two warnings (see 2 Thess. 3:14, 15). The Greek word for **warped** here suggests that Satan is perverting this person. **Sin**ning indicates that the man will not change his ways and thus continues to rebel against God.

3:12, 13 Tychicus, one of Paul's assistants, is also mentioned in Acts 20:4; Eph. 6:21; Col. 4:7; 2 Tim. 4:12. The city of **Nicopolis** was on the Adriatic coast of Greece. **Apollos** was a fellow worker of Paul's (see Acts 18:24; 19:1; 1 Cor. 1:12; 3:4–6, 22; 4:6; 16:12), an Alexandrian who had been taught by Priscilla and Aquila and had eloquently preached the gospel at Ephesus and Corinth (see Acts 18:24–19:1).

3:14 Paul ends his letter to Titus with an emphasis on **good works**, the theme of this letter (see 1:1). **to meet urgent needs:** Paul gives the Cretans a practical way they can start demonstrating their faith in good works: they can begin meeting the needs of other people. **that they may not be unfruitful:** A recurring theme throughout the NT is that believers should live up to their holy calling. They should continue being sanctified (see Heb. 10:14, 23–26). Justification is solely a gift from God, but we will be rewarded according to what we do on this earth (see Rev. 22:12). What a tragedy it will be for some to stand ashamed at Christ's return (see 1 John 2:28). How much better it will be to abound in good works which the Holy Spirit empowered us to do (see Phil. 4:17).

washing of regeneration

(Gk. *louttron palingenesias*) (3:5) Strong's #3067; 3824

The Greek word for *washing* can signify the receptacle of washing (the basin) or the act of washing itself. In Eph. 5:26, the only other NT occurrence of this word, the natural meaning is washing. Here also the action of washing is presented. Quite simply, the text says that regeneration is characterized by or accompanied by the action of washing. The regenerative activity of the Holy Spirit is characterized elsewhere in Scripture as cleansing and purifying (see Ezek. 36:25–27; John 3:5). The Greek term for *regeneration* literally means "being born again"—indicating a new birth effected by the Holy Spirit (see John 3:6; Rom. 8:16; Gal. 4:6). Thus God saved us through one process with two aspects: the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit.

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO PHILEMON



UNDER ROMAN LAW, a slave who ran away from his master could face the death penalty. In spite of this possibility, the apostle Paul sent Onesimus, a runaway slave and a recent convert to Christianity, back to his owner Philemon to make restitution. The Epistle to Philemon is Paul's plea that Onesimus no longer be viewed as a runaway slave, but rather as a "beloved brother" (see vv. 16, 17; Col. 4:9). Obedience to these requests would require forgiveness and restoration, actions which no other slave owner would have to contemplate in the ancient world. But Christians were called to a higher calling, one that contradicted the expectations of the culture at large. While the world pursued power and glory, Christians were to pursue the way of the Cross—the way of forgiveness, servanthood, suffering, and love.

Author and Date Three times in this book (vv. 1, 9, 19) Paul identifies himself as its author. The vocabulary and style are clearly his, for many of the phrases in this letter are found in Paul's other letters (compare v. 4 with Phil. 1:3, 4). Also, many of those who sent their greetings with this letter are the same ones who did so in the letter to the Colossians. This fact indicates the close relationship between the two letters (see Col. 4:12–15 and the Introduction to Colossians).

Paul was a prisoner when he wrote this epistle, but his location is uncertain. Three possibilities have been suggested: Ephesus, Caesarea (see Acts 24–26), and Rome (Acts 28). But most hold that Paul wrote this letter during the first Roman imprisonment around A.D. 60, along with the other Prison Epistles—Ephesians, Philip-
pians, and Colossians.

Occasion and Purpose The greeting and the content of the letter indicate that Philemon is the intended recipient. Philemon was a slave owner whose home served as the meeting place for a local church. Philemon probably lived in Colosse, a city in the Roman province of Asia Minor. He was a convert to Christianity as a result of Paul's ministry, possibly during the apostle's stay in Ephesus (see Acts 19:26). Apphia was probably his wife, and Archippus may have been his son, possibly serving at this time as the pastor of the church that met in Philemon's house (see Col. 4:17).

Philemon owned a slave named Onesimus, a common name for slaves in that period. Onesimus ran away and had apparently stolen something from his master. Having fled to Rome, the escaped slave providentially came into contact with Paul, became a Christian, and remained with the apostle for some time, serving him in prison. However, restoration and restitution needed to be made. It was agreed that Onesimus would return to Philemon, even though this could result in the former's death. Paul wrote a letter to his friend Philemon, pleading the cause of Onesimus. At the same time he wrote a letter to the church at Colosse and sent it with Tychicus (see Col. 4:7–9). The New Testament does not reveal what finally happened to Onesimus. Some have taken him to be the Onesimus who eventually became the bishop of Ephesus, mentioned by Ignatius in the early second century.

Slavery in the Ancient World To recognize the significance of this letter, it is essential to understand slavery as it existed in the first century. At that time the slave-master relationship was as common as the employee-employer relationship is today. Onesimus was a runaway Roman slave.

During this period, the Jews practiced slavery according to the provisions of the Law of Moses. A Jewish slave belonged to the family of the owner and had certain religious and social rights. If the slave was a Hebrew, the term of slavery was limited to six years. Jeremiah had warned that permanent slavery would bring about divine disfavor (Jer. 34:8–22). But even if the slave was a Gentile, the owner's power was limited by Jewish law. If a master punished and injured a slave in his possession, the slave was to be set free. If the punishment resulted in the slave's death, then the master was to be punished. The slave was viewed as a person and was to be treated fairly, which differed from the Roman system of slavery.

Among the Jews, slaves were only a small part of the total population. But in Rome, slaves outnumbered Roman citizens. Some of the wealthy Roman landowners may have had ten to twenty thousand slaves working on their estates. To the Romans, a slave was not a person and was basically thought of as property. Many slaves were treated humanely and sometimes were better off economically than many free persons, but there was still the fact that they were considered a possession. They were vulnerable to cruel treatment and could even be killed with impunity. With slaves far outnumbering citizens, controlling the slave population was an imperative to the Romans. To lose control of the slaves was to forfeit the social and economic basis of the Roman Empire.



Mosaic of slaves pouring wine for guests at a banquet (third century A.D.). In Philemon, Paul makes a plea on behalf of Onesimus, Philemon's slave.

Pascal Radigue/Wikimedia Commons, CC-BY 3.0

Theology The Epistle to Philemon was not written to refute theological error or to teach doctrine. However, into this short letter Paul skillfully weaves the concepts of salvation (vv. 10, 16), substitution (v. 17), imputation (v. 18), and redemption (v. 19). Although here these ideas speak of Paul's relationship with Onesimus, they remind us of Christ's relationship with us (Gal. 4:1–7). We were once slaves to sin, but Christ redeemed us from our awful fate, death.

This letter is basically an earnest plea for a Christian love that would confront the cruelty and hatred embodied in the cultural institutions of that day. Paul commends Philemon for already expressing that type of love (vv. 5, 7). But to ensure that this love would be shown to Onesimus, Paul offers to pay Onesimus's debt (v. 19). Paul's love for Onesimus went beyond mere words; he was willing to give out of his own poverty to guarantee this slave's well-being.

CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

Onesimus, the new convert, has become a new creature in Christ and has become extremely valuable to Paul. But both of them know that Onesimus has a moral obligation as a Christian to return to Philemon. It is what Paul pens in this passionate letter (that the ex-slave will personally carry to Philemon) where we see Jesus in this book.

The forgiveness that the believer finds in Christ is beautifully portrayed by analogy. Although Onesimus is guilty of a great offense (vv. 11, 18), Paul is moved to intercede on his behalf. Paul lays aside his rights (v. 8) and becomes Onesimus's substitute by assuming his debt (vv. 18, 19)—as Jesus did for every one of us. We are like Onesimus: Paul's advocacy before Philemon is parallel to Christ's work of mediation before the Father on our behalf.

PHILEMON OUTLINE

- I. Introductory greetings 1–3
- II. Paul's prayer for Philemon 4–7
- III. Paul's plea to Philemon 8–22
 - A. The authority behind the plea 8, 9
 - B. The person involved in the plea 10, 11
 - C. The explanation necessary for the plea 12–14
 - D. The providence behind the plea 15, 16
 - E. The content of the plea 17–21
 - F. The proof of the reception of the plea 22
- IV. Closing blessing 23–25

C. A.D. 47–49

Paul's first missionary journey

C. A.D. 50

The Jerusalem council

C. A.D. 50–53

Paul's second missionary journey

C. A.D. 53–57

Paul's third missionary journey

C. A.D. 58

Paul is arrested in Jerusalem

C. A.D. 60–62

Paul is imprisoned in Rome; Philemon is written

C. A.D. 67

Peter and Paul are executed

Greeting

Paul, a ^aprisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy *our* brother,

To Philemon our beloved *friend* and fellow laborer, ²to ¹the beloved Apphia, ^bArchippus our fellow soldier, and to the church in your house:

³Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Philemon's Love and Faith

^{4c}I thank my God, making mention of you always in my prayers, ^{5d}hearing of

1 ^a Eph. 3:1
2 ^b Col. 4:17 ¹ NU
our sister Apphia
4 ^c Eph. 1:16;
1 Thess. 1:2;
2 Thess. 1:3
5 ^d Eph. 1:15; Col.
1:4; 1 Thess. 3:6
6 ^e Phil. 1:9; [Col.
1:9; 3:10; James
2:14-17] ^f [1 Thess.
5:18] ² NU, M us
7 ³ NU had ⁴ M
thanksgiving
⁵ comfort ⁶ Lit.
inward parts, heart,
liver, and lungs

your love and faith which you have toward the Lord Jesus and toward all the saints, ⁶that the sharing of your faith may become effective ^eby the acknowledgment of ^fevery good thing which is in ²you in Christ Jesus. ⁷For we ³have great ⁴joy and ⁵consolation in your love, because the ⁶hearts of the saints have been refreshed by you, brother.

The Plea for Onesimus

⁸Therefore, though I might be very bold in Christ to command you what is fitting, ⁹yet for love's sake I rather appeal to *you*—being such a one as Paul,

1, 2 Paul addresses the letter to Philemon and the Colossian church, but this intensely personal epistle uses the singular “I” and “you” (except in vv. 22 and 25), demonstrating that the letter is Paul’s plea to Philemon.

1 Paul identifies himself not as an apostle, but as a **prisoner**, because of his surrender to the cause of Christ and the fact that he was writing from prison in Rome (vv. 9, 10, 13, 23). **Timothy** was with Paul in Rome (see Col. 1:1) and in Ephesus. Philemon is called **beloved**. Paul’s plea (vv. 9, 10) will be built on the concept of love. **Fellow laborer** indicates someone who is united with Paul in the work of Christ.

2 **Apphia** may have been the wife of Philemon. **Archippus** may have been the son of Philemon or perhaps an elder of the Colossian church (see Col. 4:17). **fellow soldier**: This term implies more than *fellow laborer* (v. 1). It is used only one other time in the NT, when Paul speaks of Epaphroditus (see Phil. 2:25). **in your house**: The church was meeting in Philemon’s house. Philemon may have been an active leader in the church.

4, 5 in my prayers: Philemon’s Christian life was a continual cause for thanksgiving whenever Paul prayed. **love and faith . . . toward the Lord Jesus and toward all the saints**: This may be an example of the literary device called a chiasmus, where parallel phrases are connected in reverse order. Thus the word *faith* refers

to Christ, and the word *love* refers to the saints. *Saints* speaks of all believers. True love is expressed in action and not just in words (see 1 Cor. 13:1–7).

6 Paul prays that Philemon’s **faith** will be **effective**—a term that speaks of being in good working order (see Heb. 4:12, where *powerful* translates the same word). Working faith is a sharing faith; it is the **acknowledgment** of what Christ has done in the believer’s life (see Eph. 3:17–19). That kind of faith will also result in the sharing of possessions with other believers (see vv. 17, 18).

7 Rather than merely being happy because of Philemon’s love, the apostle remarkably stated that he had **joy**, even when he was in chains (see v. 1). A Christian’s joy in trying circumstances is a testimony to God’s peace. **Consolation** may also be translated “encouragement.” Philemon’s **love** brought joy and encouragement to Paul. **Hearts** refers to the inner emotional nature of a person (vv. 12, 20). Paul had heard that the hearts of the saints were also being **refreshed** by Philemon’s love (see Matt. 11:28; 1 Cor. 16:18).

8 Therefore: In light of the foundation that has been laid (vv. 4–7), Paul is ready to make his plea. **very bold**: This phrase speaks of “free and open speaking” (see 2 Cor. 3:12; Eph. 6:19). Paul’s apostolic authority and Philemon’s spiritual condition made Paul confident that he could **command** Philemon to do what is proper (see Col. 3:18).

9 Rather than commanding Philemon (v. 8), Paul preferred to





Paul and Slavery

Although he was a Roman citizen himself, Paul brought to the nature of slavery a unique Christian understanding that was grounded in Hebraic ethics. In his letters Paul did not approve of slavery, but he also did not condemn it. He exhorted slaves to demonstrate Christian obedience and humility even to their masters (Eph. 6:5–8; Col. 3:22–25). In turn, Christian masters were to treat their slaves fairly (Eph. 5:9; Col. 4:1).

Some have criticized Paul and the NT church for not calling for an end to slavery. It is true that first-century believers didn't actively campaign for an end to slavery, petition the government, or urge slaves to rebel. However, Paul clearly declared the equality of both slaves and free persons before Christ, a principle that would eventually undermine the institution of slavery (see 1 Cor. 7:22; Gal. 3:28; Eph. 6:8; Col. 3:11).



Fourth-century mosaic of Roman slaves helping to dress their master

Mosaico delle Terme, fourth century A.D./Villa Romana del Casale, Piazza Armerina, Sicily, Italy/De Agostini Picture Library/A. Dagli Orti/The Bridgeman Art Library

the aged, and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ—¹⁰I appeal to you for my son ⁹Onesimus, whom I have begotten *while* in my chains, ¹¹who once was unprofitable to you, but now is profitable to you and to me.

¹²I am sending him ⁷back. You therefore receive him, that is, my own ⁸heart, ¹³whom I wished to keep with me, that on your behalf he might minister to me in my chains for the gospel. ¹⁴But without your consent I wanted to do nothing,

¹⁰ ⁹ Col. 4:9
¹² ⁷ NU *back to you in person, that is, my own heart*,
⁸ See v. 7.

¹⁴ ^h 2 Cor. 9:7;
1 Pet. 5:2
¹⁶ ⁱ Eph. 6:5; Col. 3:22

^h that your good deed might not be by compulsion, as it were, but voluntary.

¹⁵For perhaps he departed for a while for this *purpose*, that you might receive him forever, ¹⁶no longer as a slave but more than a slave—a beloved brother, especially to me but how much more to you, both in the ⁱflesh and in the Lord.

Philemon's Obedience Encouraged

¹⁷If then you count me as a partner, receive him as *you would* me. ¹⁸But if he

appeal to Philemon on the basis of love. *Appeal* is the same word translated *consolation* in v. 7. **Paul, the aged:** The apostle is speaking either of the office of elder or of his old age.

10 My son is the Greek word for “child.” The imagery of a father and child is used at other times by Paul when speaking of his converts (see 1 Tim. 1:2; Titus 1:4). **begotten:** The apostle was personally responsible for bringing Onesimus to Christ (see 1 Cor. 4:15; Gal. 4:19).

11 Paul uses an interesting play on words here. Having just mentioned Onesimus, whose name means “Useful” (v. 10), the apostle describes him as someone who was formerly **unprofitable** (unuseful) but is now **profitable**. Paul is saying that Onesimus had become good and useful, even more so than Philemon could have imagined.

12 I am sending him back: Paul is referring the case back to Philemon for a decision. He encourages Philemon not to view Onesimus as a runaway slave. In fact, Onesimus had become a part of Paul's own heart (vv. 7, 20).

13 wished: Paul wanted to keep Onesimus in Rome, helping in the ministry, confident that Philemon would approve. Onesimus had been serving Paul in place of Philemon, giving Paul the aid Philemon could not.

14 Paul expressed his desire to have Philemon involved in the decision of whether Onesimus could remain with him. Therefore, he

would act only with Philemon's **consent**. Philemon's **good deed** had to be **voluntary**. Service for Christ is never forced. Paul had given Philemon several good reasons to forgive Onesimus, but here he returns to the foundation of his argument: Philemon's actions had to proceed from his own love (v. 9).

15 departed for a while: It was God's plan that Onesimus would run away. **receive him forever:** Paul contrasts the temporary separation because of Onesimus's running away to the eternal benefit of his salvation.

16 no longer as a slave but . . . a beloved brother: Paul contrasts the lowly position of a slave to the high privilege of a Christian brother. **in the flesh and in the Lord:** Not only will Onesimus be useful on the human level, he will be useful for the work of the Lord.

17, 18 partner . . . owes: Onesimus had probably stolen something from Philemon when he left. Furthermore, he owed Philemon for the time he was gone. Paul uses business imagery in offering to pay for any loss Philemon suffered because of Onesimus's actions. **Partner** is a form of the Greek word for *fellowship*. Philemon was to receive Onesimus as he would his partner in Christ, Paul. **put that on my account:** This accounting imagery reminds us of the theological truth that our sins were charged over to Christ even though He had not earned them. Forgiveness is costly (see Is. 53:6).

has wronged you or owes anything, put that on my account. ¹⁹I, Paul, am writing with my own ^jhand. I will repay—not to mention to you that you owe me even your own self besides. ²⁰Yes, brother, let me have joy from you in the Lord; refresh my heart in the Lord.

²¹^k Having confidence in your obedience, I write to you, knowing that you will do even more than I say. ²²But, meanwhile, also prepare a guest room

¹⁹ ^j 1 Cor. 16:21; Gal. 6:11; 2 Thess. 3:17
²¹ ^k 2 Cor. 7:16
²² ^l Phil. 1:25; 2:24
^m 2 Cor. 1:11
²³ ⁿ Col. 1:7; 4:12
²⁴ ^o Acts 12:12, 25; 15:37-39; Col. 4:10
^p Acts 19:29; 27:2; Col. 4:10 ^q Col. 4:14; 2 Tim. 4:10 ^r 2 Tim. 4:11
²⁵ ^s 2 Tim. 4:22

for me, for ^lI trust that ^mthrough your prayers I shall be granted to you.

Farewell

²³ ⁿ Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, greets you, ²⁴*as do* ^o Mark, ^p Aristarchus, ^q Demas, ^r Luke, my fellow laborers.

²⁵ ^s The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with your spirit. Amen.

19 my own hand: Paul wrote this note himself because it was a personal note, but also because the letter could be considered a legal document obligating him to pay the damages Onesimus had caused. **I will repay:** Paul promises to pay Onesimus's debt to assure the runaway slave's gracious reception by his owner. **you owe me:** The mention of Philemon's spiritual debt to Paul is not an attempt to cancel his own promise to pay; Paul chooses not to appeal to Philemon on the basis of this obligation.

20 The word translated **joy** in this verse is different from the one used in v. 7. The term here may also mean "benefit." Philemon's restoration of Onesimus would benefit Paul. **refresh:** What Philemon

had done for other believers (v. 7), he could do for Paul by his kind treatment of Onesimus.

21 obedience: Paul is expecting Philemon to be compassionate to his former slave Onesimus (vv. 5, 7, 9).

22 prepare a guest room: Hospitality is a Christian virtue (see Rom. 12:13; 1 Tim. 3:2). Paul's mention of a possible visit adds weight to his request of Philemon. The term translated **granted** here is related to the Greek word for *grace*. Paul expects to be released from prison (see Phil. 2:24).

23, 24 These five coworkers are also mentioned in Col. 4:10–14.

THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS



AT FIRST Christianity was Jewish. Jesus was a Jew, His disciples were Jews, and the first converts were Jews. Their first meetings took place in synagogues, and their first controversies concerned adherence to Jewish laws. Christianity's first critics knew it as a Jewish sect.

But for the first Jewish believers, believing in Christ raised many questions. What about the temple and animal sacrifices? What about the Law of Moses? Did believing in Christ negate so much that they had grown up believing? Was it really enough to trust in Christ? The Old Testament did not answer these questions.

Answers were needed right away for those who lived in the time of this book's writing. Tolerance would soon give way to torture and executions. Nero would not leave this odd group alone forever. Believing in Christ would be a life-or-death proposition, and the temptation for Jewish believers to go back to their old ways would be irresistible—unless they could know for sure they had made the right choice.

Author and Date No one knows for sure who wrote Hebrews. No one in the early church could say with certainty that they knew, though the church at Alexandria (Egypt) strongly believed it to be the apostle Paul's work. Yet Hebrews has been accorded one of the most respected places in the Bible. This book won its place in the New Testament by its merit, not by the esteem of its author.

Did Paul write Hebrews? The letter's vocabulary, style, and theology differ greatly from Paul's letters. Unlike the author of Hebrews, Paul always identified himself in his writings; in fact, in one of them he offered his name as proof of the letter's authenticity (see 2 Thess. 3:17, 18). The language of Hebrews is polished, deliberate, and without the outbursts of emotion so characteristic of Paul. Typically Paul used Greek, Hebrew, and other sources in his Old Testament quotations, while the author of Hebrews used only the Greek Septuagint. Hebrews 2:3 seems to say that the author did not hear the word of salvation directly from the Lord, whereas Paul did. If Paul wrote Hebrews, he left none of the usual clues.

Tertullian suggested that Barnabas wrote it. Barnabas was from Cyprus, where the Greek was of good quality, and Hebrews represents the Greek of the educated and cultural classes more than any other New Testament book. Barnabas was also a Levite (see Acts 4:36), a person who would be very familiar with Judaism's sacrificial system, central to the book's theme. Barnabas's name is translated in Acts 4:36 as "Son of Consolation" or "Son of Exhortation," a parallel to the description in Heb. 13:22.

Martin Luther and many contemporary scholars have speculated that Apollos wrote Hebrews. Apollos was a Jew, an Alexandrian, and a knowledgeable, eloquent man (see Acts 18:24). But none of the church fathers named him. And if Apollos did write Hebrews, the Alexandrian church would probably have known it because Apollos was an Alexandrian.

Could the author have been Priscilla, as the scholar Adolf Harnack suggested (see Acts 18:26)? The masculine participle in 11:32 probably rules that out. The original recipients knew who wrote it (see 13:18, 22–24), but they left no clue for us.

No one knows exactly when Hebrews was written either, although guessing a date is easier than guessing the author. If it was written to the Jewish believers at Rome, as is commonly assumed, then the fact that the community had not yet been called upon to suffer death for their faith suggests that the epistle should be dated before Nero's persecution of Christians in A.D. 64.

Recipients The original audience of Hebrews is not named. Some scholars have said that the book was written to Gentile Christians, arguing from the author's use of the Septuagint and from the absence of any mention of Gentile-Jewish controversy. Others have suggested that the letter was addressed to a mixed group of Jews and Gentiles.

But most scholars suppose that the addressees were Jewish Christians because of the book's heavy emphasis on Jewish topics and themes, especially the detailed discussion of the superiority of Jesus Christ over angels, Moses, Joshua, and Old Testament believers. Quotes of Old Testament passages appear throughout the book. Many of the author's themes assume an in-depth knowledge of Old Testament priesthood and sacrifice. Jews living outside of Jerusalem would almost certainly have been Greek-speaking, explaining the use of the Septuagint. The recipients are addressed as "brethren" throughout, and in the early church this would have included a large number of Jews. The title "To the Hebrews" is not from the author's hands, but it is dated as early as the second century.

Where did the readers live? The expression "those from Italy" (13:24) may refer to those in Italy or originally from Italy but presently away from there. It seems most reasonable to think of the readers as Jewish believers at Rome. The letter was first known at Rome, and the concluding salutation easily fits this view (see 13:24; Acts 18:2). The reference to false teaching about food in 13:9 matches a similar problem in the Roman church (see Rom. 14:1–15:3).

Structure The structure of Hebrews is unique among the epistles of the New Testament. Was it a letter or a sermon? It has the ending of a letter but not the salutation of one. It does not name its author or its intended audience, yet it contains personal greetings, assumes that the readers knew who was writing to them, and mentions some well-known mutual acquaintances, such as Timothy (13:23). This mix of elements has caused much debate over what the Book of Hebrews really is, with no solid conclusion. The author himself calls it "the word of exhortation" (13:22).

Purpose The Book of Hebrews was written to address the doubts of those who were second-guessing their conversion to Christianity. "You began with God's plan of salvation," it says in effect. "You believed in His word and followed His plan of salvation through the temple sacrifices. And then when His once-for-all final sacrifice was made in Jesus Christ, you believed. That was as it should be. That was God's plan. Do not go back on the steps you have taken!"

The author of Hebrews set out to show that Christianity is the true successor to Judaism. He centers his attention on three topics: (1) priesthood, or divine mediation (7:1–28; 10:19–22); (2) sacrifice, or divine redemption (9:11–10:18); (3) covenant, or divine promises (8:8–13; 9:15–22). He uses three Old Testament passages to prove his point: (1) Ps. 110:4, which announces a new priesthood providing the necessary divine mediation; (2) Ps. 40:6–8, which speaks of the new and final sacrifice providing divine redemption; (3) Jer. 31:31–34, which announces a new covenant that provides full and final forgiveness.

According to the author of Hebrews, all of this points to the supremacy and sufficiency of Christ. True spirituality comes through access to God (7:19; 10:19–22); and this spirituality can be found only through the Son of God, Jesus Christ. The Book of Hebrews establishes the supremacy and sufficiency of Christ over all (1:1–4; 9:11–14). His sacrifice was enough to take away our sin; He is all we need to come to God today.



Known as sword of Tiberius. Iron sword and tinned bronze scabbard, Roman A.D. 15. Heb. 4:12 reminds us that the word of God is "sharper than any two-edged sword."

Kim Walton, courtesy of the British Museum

CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

Although the identity of the author of Hebrews is difficult to trace, his message is quite easy to follow. Many Jewish believers, having stepped out of Judaism into Christianity, wanted to reverse their course in order to escape persecution from their countrymen. But the writer stops them in their tracks, exhorting them to “go on to perfection” (6:1). His appeal is based on the superiority of Christ. The Hebrew system of sacrifice and priestly rule pales in comparison to Christ’s work. The writer insists that Jesus is better than the angels, for even the angels worship Him (2:5). Jesus is better than Moses, for He created him (3:3). Jesus is better than the Aaronic priesthood, for His sacrifice was once for all time (5:4). And He is better than the Law, for He mediates a better covenant.

HEBREWS OUTLINE

- I. Prologue: God has spoken through His Son 1:1–4
- II. The superiority and sacrificial work of Christ 1:5—10:18
 - A. Christ’s superiority 1:5—7:28
 - B. Christ, the minister and High Priest of the New Covenant 8:1—10:18
- III. Elements of the faith 10:19—13:17
 - A. Description of the faith 10:19–25
 - B. Description of those who reject the faith 10:26–39
 - C. Examples of the life of faith 11:1–40
 - D. Christ, the supreme example of faith 12:1–4
 - E. The Father’s love made known through chastening 12:5–11
 - F. Christian conduct under the New Covenant 12:12–29
 - G. Christian life in daily practice 13:1–17
- IV. Epilogue 13:18–25



A collection of stone anchors that were discovered off shore near Caesarea. “This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast” (Heb. 6:19).

God's Supreme Revelation

God, who ¹at various times and ^ain various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, ²has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the ²worlds; ^{3b}who being the brightness of His glory and the express ^cimage of His person, and ^dupholding all things by the word of His power, ^ewhen He had ³by Himself ⁴purged ⁵our sins, ^fsat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, ⁴having become so much better than the angels, as ^gHe has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.

The Son Exalted Above Angels

⁵For to which of the angels did He ever say:

^h“You are My Son,
Today I have begotten You”?

CHAPTER 1

¹ ^a Num. 12:6, 8; Joel 2:28 ¹ Or in many portions
² ² Or ages, Gr. aiones, aeons
³ ^b John 1:14
^c ² Cor. 4:4; Col. 1:15 ^d Col. 1:17
^e [Heb. 7:27] ^f Ps. 110:1 [★] ³ NU omits by Himself
⁴ ⁴ cleansed ⁵ NU omits our
⁴ ^g Is. 9:6, 7; Luke 1:32, 33; [Phil. 2:9, 10]
⁵ ^h Ps. 2:7; Acts 13:33; Heb. 5:5

¹ ² Sam. 7:14
⁶ / Ps. 89:27; [Rom. 8:29] ^k Deut. 32:43; LXX, DSS; Ps. 97:7; 1 Pet. 3:22; Rev. 5:11-13
⁷ / Ps. 104:4
⁸ ^m Ps. 45:6, 7 [★]
⁶ A ruler's staff

And again:

ⁱ“I will be to Him a Father,
And He shall be to Me a Son”?

⁶But when He again brings ^jthe first-born into the world, He says:

^k“Let all the angels of God worship Him.”

⁷And of the angels He says:

^l“Who makes His angels spirits
And His ministers a flame of fire.”

⁸But to the Son He says:

^m“Your throne, O God, is forever and ever;

A ⁶scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom.

⁹ You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness;

1:1 Various times refers to the periods of OT history. Various ways refers to the different methods God used to communicate, including visitations, dreams, signs, parables, and events (see Is. 28:10).

1:2 By His Son may be rephrased as “in such a person as a Son.” The emphasis rests on the character of the revelation. It is a revelation of the Son, a revelation not so much in what He has said as in who He is and what He has done. **heir of all things:** Jesus will inherit everything because He is the eternal Son of God Himself (see Is. 9:6, 7; Mic. 5:2). His inheritance is universal dominion: He will rule over everyone and everything (see Rom. 4:13; Rev. 11:15). **made the worlds:** The Greek word for *worlds* can also mean “ages.” Thus *worlds* indicates the entire created universe, all space throughout all time. The Son is the Lord of all history. He has managed the universe throughout its history as Mediator under the Father.

1:3 The Son is **the brightness of God's glory**, meaning the radiance that comes from God's essential glory (see John 1:14; 2 Cor. 4:4, 6). The author of Hebrews is emphasizing that this is not a reflected brightness like the light of the moon. Instead this is an inherent brightness like a ray from the sun. Jesus' glorious brightness comes from being essentially divine. The phrase **express image** occurs only here in the NT and means “exact representation” or “exact character.” In Greek literature the word was used of stamping a coin from the die. The Son is the exact representation of God's being

because He is God Himself (see Col. 1:15). In fact, the Greek word translated **person** here means “nature” or “being.” As Jesus said, “He who has seen Me has seen the Father” (John 14:9). **Upholding** means “bearing” or “carrying,” referring to movement and progress toward a final end. The Son not only created the universe by His powerful word but also maintains and directs its course. **Purged** means “cleansed” or “purified.” The glory of redemption is far greater than the glory of creation. The Son of God came down not to dazzle us with His splendor but to purge our sins. **Sat down** suggests the formal act of assuming the office of High Priest and implies a contrast to the Levitical priest, who never finished his work and sat down (10:11–13).

1:4 The Son is **better than the angels**, or higher in rank, because He sits at the right hand of God (v. 3) and because of His eternal inheritance. The Son has obtained a greater name than the angels. This majestic picture builds up to the dramatic invitation in 4:16 for us to come boldly into the Son's presence.

1:5–14 The author of Hebrews uses seven OT citations to explain why the Son is superior to angels.

1:5 Angels are “sons” collectively, in that they were created by God (see Job 1:6). In contrast, Christ is uniquely and eternally the **Son**. He is superior to the angels. **Today I have begotten You** probably refers to the day Christ sat down at the Father's right hand after He accomplished His work as the Messiah. On that day the eternal Son entered into the full experience of His Sonship. **I will be to Him a Father:** This passage quotes 2 Sam. 7:14 and is a prophecy of Christ as the eternal Person in whom the Davidic line and kingdom culminates.

1:6 When He again brings is a reference to the Second Coming. **Firstborn** here refers to rank, meaning one who ranks above all others (see Ps. 89:27). The Son does not worship but is worshiped by angels. The quotation in this verse is either from the Septuagint version of Deut. 32:43 or from Ps. 97:7, where the Septuagint correctly renders the Hebrew text *angels*. The angels will **worship** the Son when He is enthroned as the King over the entire earth (2:5–9), after taking revenge on His enemies and restoring His people.

1:7 The Son is superior to angels because He is the Sovereign who is worshiped, while the angels are **ministers**, that is, servants of God. The author of Hebrews quotes Ps. 104 because that psalm places angels in a long list of created objects which God sovereignly controls.

1:8 **O God:** Jesus Christ is accorded the rank of full deity. The Son has an eternal **throne**, which means He possesses an eternal kingdom.

1:9 **Companions** comes from a word that means “close associates” or “partners.” The concept of believers being companions with

brightness

(Gk. *apaugasma*) (1:3) Strong's #541

express image

(Gk. *charaktēr*) (1:3) Strong's #5481

These two expressions occur only here in the NT. The Greek word for *brightness* expresses the brilliance emanating from a glorious source of light, such as the beams of the sun. Christ, as the effulgence of God's glory, is the radiance of God, revealing God's glory to humanity. The Greek word translated *express image* can mean the instrument used in engraving or stamping, but usually it means the image engraved or stamped. In this context, the word means that Christ is the exact representation of God's nature. Since God's essence, nature, and being are invisible, the Son reveals God to us, for He is an exact visible likeness of God.

*Therefore God, Your God, ^uhas
anointed You
With the oil of gladness more than
Your companions.”*

¹⁰ And:

*“You, LORD, in the beginning laid the
foundation of the earth,
And the heavens are the work of
Your hands.*

¹¹ *p They will perish, but You remain;
And ^athey will all grow old like a
garment;*

¹² *Like a cloak You will fold them up,
And they will be changed.
But You are the ^rsame,
And Your years will not fail.”*

¹³ But to which of the angels has He
ever said:

*^s“Sit at My right hand,
Till I make Your enemies Your
footstool”?*

¹⁴ *t* Are they not all ministering spirits
sent forth to minister for those who will
“inherit salvation”?

9 ^o Is. 61:1, 3 ★
10 ^o Ps. 102:25-27
11 ^p [Is. 34:4] ^q Is.
50:9; 51:6; Heb. 8:13
12 ^r Heb. 13:8
13 ^s Ps. 110:1; Matt.
22:44; Heb. 1:3
14 ^t Ps. 103:20; Dan.
7:10 ^u Rom. 8:17

CHAPTER 2

1 ¹ all the more
careful attention
2 ^a Deut. 33:2;
Acts 7:53; Gal.
3:19 ^b Num. 15:30
2 ² retribution or
penalty
3 ^c Heb. 10:28
4 ^d Matt. 4:17 ^e Mark
16:20; Luke 1:2;
1 John 1:1
4 ^f Mark 16:20
9 Acts 2:22, 43;
2 Cor. 12:2 ^h 1 Cor.
12:4, 7, 11; Eph.
4:7 ⁱ Eph. 1:5, 9
3 ³ distributions
5 ^j [2 Pet. 3:13]
6 ^k Job 7:17; Ps.
8:4-6
7 ⁴ Or for a little
while

Do Not Neglect Salvation

2 Therefore we must give ¹the more
earnest heed to the things we have
heard, lest we drift away. ²For if the word
^aspoken through angels proved steadfast,
and ^bevery transgression and disobedience
received a just ²reward, ^{3c}how shall
we escape if we neglect so great a salva-
tion, ^dwhich at the first began to be spo-
ken by the Lord, and was ^econfirmed to us
by those who heard Him, ^{4f}God also bear-
ing witness ^gboth with signs and wonders,
with various miracles, and ^hgifts³ of the
Holy Spirit, ⁱaccording to His own will?

The Son Made Lower than Angels

⁵For He has not put ^jthe world to
come, of which we speak, in subjection
to angels. ⁶But one testified in a certain
place, saying:

*^k“What is man that You are mindful of
him,
Or the son of man that You take care
of him?
⁷ You have made him ⁴a little lower
than the angels;
You have crowned him with glory
and honor,*

Christ is key in Hebrews (3:1, 14; 6:4; 12:8). The term refers to those who will be participants with Christ in His reign.

1:10–12 The context of Ps. 102, from which these verses are taken, clearly indicates that the **LORD** is the One who would appear in the future to Israel and the nations (see Ps. 102:12–16). Thus the psalm can only refer to Jesus, the Second Person of the Trinity, the only One who would become incarnate. Jesus is God become man. The universe will **perish** (see 2 Pet. 3:10–13; Rev. 21:1), but the Son will **remain** forever. The universe will **be changed**, but the Son will remain the **same** (13:8).

1:13 Christ sits at the **right hand** of God until the final victory over all His **enemies** (see 1 Cor. 15:25–28).

1:14 Angels are mere servants (v. 7) who serve **those who will inherit salvation**. *Salvation* here is not justification because it is in the future, not in the past. The reference is to believers who inherit the kingdom or rule in God’s kingdom as a reward for their service to the Son (see 9:28; Col. 3:24). The author is speaking about “the world to come” (2:5). References to salvation in 2:3, 10; 5:9; 6:9 probably also concern the future.

2:1 The author issues the first of five exhortations (see vv. 1–4; 3:1–4:16; 5:11–6:20; 10:19–39; 12:1–29). Believers **have heard** from the Lord God because we have heard the gospel message. His very majesty demands that we listen attentively to what He says. **drift away**: The author’s audience was marked by immaturity and spiritual sluggishness (5:11, 12). The author warned them not to be carried away by the popular opinions that surrounded them. Instead they were to hold fast to Christ’s words because they were the words of God.

2:2 the word spoken through angels: The Law was delivered from God to Moses by angels (see Deut. 33:2; Acts 7:38, 53; Gal. 3:19).

2:3 how shall we escape: If the people who heard the message delivered through angels were justly punished when they disobeyed the Law, how can believers expect to escape punishment when they neglect the even greater message delivered through the greater Messenger, the Son? *We* is found five times in vv. 1, 3. The author warns these believers, including himself, about neglecting salvation and losing out on the opportunity to reign with Christ. The **great salvation** (see Phil. 2:12, 13) cannot be a reference merely to justification because this salvation was **first . . . spoken by the Lord**.

Justification was spoken of in the OT (see Gen. 15:6); but it was the Lord who first spoke of His followers inheriting His kingdom and reigning with Him (see v. 10; Luke 12:31, 32; 22:29, 30). **those who heard Him**: The author includes himself among those who had not heard the Lord Himself.

2:4 Signs and wonders refers to the miracles performed by the **Holy Spirit** through the Lord and His apostles in fulfillment of the ancient promises regarding the coming of the Messiah (see Acts 2:22, 43; 4:30; 5:12; 6:8; 14:3; 15:12; 2 Cor. 12:12).

2:5 The author returns to the theme of ch. 1 that the Son is superior to the angels. **For** connects this passage with 1:4–14, as the mention of angels in this verse and the allusion to Ps. 110 (v. 8) indicate. **The world to come** is the future rule of the Son and His companions (1:9) on the earth.

2:6–8 Since the Son’s humanity might appear to be an obstacle to the claim of His superiority, the author of Hebrews cites Ps. 8, a lyrical

firstborn

(Gk. *prōtotokos*) (1:6; Rom. 8:29; Col. 1:15) Strong’s #4416

The first part of this word (*prōto*) can indicate “first in time” (temporal priority) or “first in place” (preeminence). In this context, preeminence is in the forefront. Thus the Son of Man is the “chiefborn” among all God’s creatures. See Ex. 4:22; Deut. 21:16, 17; Ps. 89:23, where in the Greek OT *prōtotokos* is used to express the idea of preeminence. Understood as a second, separate description of Christ’s human nature, this title indicates that the Son in His humanity is now the foremost creature of all creation. But the designation in no way indicates that Christ Himself was created by God, for the next verse asserts that all things were created in, through, and for Christ. As a participant in the creation of all things, Christ cannot be a created being. Instead He is the Son of God, the Second Person of the Godhead, who has existed from eternity.

⁵ And set him over the works of Your hands.
⁸ ¹ You have put all things in subjection under his feet.”

For in that He put all in subjection under him, He left nothing *that* is not put under him. But now ^m we do not yet see all things put under him. ⁹ But we see Jesus, ⁿ who

⁷ ^s NU, M omit the rest of v. 7.
⁸ / Matt. 28:18 ^m Ps. 8:6; 1 Cor. 15:25, 27
⁹ ⁿ Phil. 2:7-9; Heb. 1:9
^o Acts 2:33; 3:13; 1 Pet. 1:21 ^p Is. 53:12; [John 3:16]
^q Or for a little while
¹⁰ ^q Col. 1:16

was made ⁶ a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death ^o crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death ^p for everyone.

Bringing Many Sons to Glory

¹⁰ For it was fitting for Him, ^q for whom *are* all things and by whom *are* all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make

reflection on Gen. 1, to prove that God has placed humanity over all created things, which includes the angelic world.

2:8 But now: The rule of human beings over God’s creation has been delayed because of sin (v. 15). Humanity’s collusion with Satan has brought all people into collision with God. **Not yet** indicates that the delay is only temporary.

2:9 Human beings will rule over creation, but it will be through Jesus

Christ. **But we see Jesus:** The author uses Christ’s human name *Jesus* for the first time in this letter. Citing phrases from Ps. 8, the author points out that Christ, by His humiliation and exaltation, has regained what Adam lost, the original calling for human beings to rule over God’s creation (see Phil. 2:6–11; Rev. 5:1–14).

2:10 The Greek word for **captain** means “leader” or “originator.” The word describes a pioneer or pathfinder. Jesus’ endurance of

Angels

One of the most popular topics of speculation in recent years has been the subject of angels. Many books have been published that claim to offer first-hand accounts of experiences with angels. But as always, the Bible must remain our authority on the supernatural. By nature angels are spiritual beings (1:14). Their nature is superior to human nature (2:7), and they have superhuman power and knowledge (2 Sam. 14:17, 20; 2 Pet. 2:11). They are not, however, all-powerful and all-knowing (Ps. 103:20; 2 Thess. 1:7). Furthermore, artistic portrayals of angels as winged beings are generally without basis in the Bible (except for the cherubim and seraphim mentioned in Ex. 25:20; Is. 6:2, 6; Ezek. 1:6 and Rev. 4:8).

The Bible presents angels as real beings and provides limited information about them but for the most part leaves them veiled in mystery. However, God sometimes lifts the veil and allows humans to catch a glimpse of the spiritual activity and warfare taking place around us. Daniel saw some of that reality and found it overwhelming and troubling (Dan. 7:15; 8:27; 10:15, 16). On the other hand, Elisha experienced it and found it reassuring (2 Kin. 6:16, 17).

Angels were created by God (Ps. 148:2, 5) and were present to rejoice when He created the world (Job 38:4–7). In their original state they were holy, but before the creation of the world some of them rebelled against God and lost this exalted position. The leading angel in this revolt became the devil, also known as Satan (Gen. 3:4, 14; Rev. 12:4, 7–9).

Two of the vast company of angels are named in the Bible. They are the archangels Michael (Dan. 10:13, 21; 12:1; Jude 9; Rev. 12:7) and Gabriel (Dan. 8:16; 9:21; Luke 1:19, 26). Michael has the special task of caring for Israel, and Gabriel communicates special messages to God’s servants.



The angel Gabriel appears to Mary to predict the birth of Jesus.

Wikimedia Commons

Angels are never known to appear to wicked people—only to those whom the Bible views as good, such as Abraham, Moses, David, Daniel, Jesus, Peter, and Paul. They are charged with caring for such people and serving them in times of need (Ps. 91:11, 12; Heb. 1:14). This task is illustrated by the role the angels played in God’s giving of the Law to Moses (Acts 7:38, 53; Heb. 2:2). Sometimes their guidance comes through human dreams (Gen. 28:12; 31:11).

Angels also protect the people of God (Ex. 14:19, 20; Dan. 3:28; Matt. 26:53). They meet a wide variety of human needs, including relieving hunger and thirst (Gen. 21:17–19; Mark 1:13) and overcoming loneliness and dread (Luke 22:43). They sometimes deliver the people of God from danger (Acts 5:19; 12:6–11).

Although they are not the objects of salvation, angels are interested in the salvation of human beings (Luke 15:10; 1 Cor. 4:9). They also were particularly active in the events surrounding the birth and resurrection of Jesus (Matt. 1:20; 2:13, 19; 28:2; Luke 1:11–38; 2:9–15; 22:43; 24:23; John 20:12). The frequency with which angels participate in human affairs has diminished since Pentecost, probably because of the larger role played by the Holy Spirit in the lives of Christians since then.

Jesus spoke frequently of angels, both good and bad (Matt. 13:41; 26:53; Mark 8:38; Luke 12:8, 9). Angels are quite real, and they play a vital part in God’s plan for the world. As you develop your understanding and beliefs about angelic forces, good and evil, cosmic battles in the heavens, and other topics of the supernatural, be sure that they accord with Scripture. Sensational stories and wild speculations may make for interesting reading, but ultimately truth is at stake. God’s revelation in Scripture can help you sort it all out.

the captain of their salvation ^rperfect through sufferings. ¹¹For ^sboth He who ⁷sanctifies and those who are being sanctified ^tare all of one, for which reason ^uHe is not ashamed to call them brethren, ¹²saying:

v “I will declare Your name to My brethren;
In the midst of the assembly I will
sing praise to You.”

¹³ And again:

w “I will put My trust in Him.”

And again:

x “Here am I and the children whom
God has given Me.”

¹⁴ Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He ^yHim-

¹⁰ ^r Heb. 5:8, 9; 7:28
¹¹ ^s Heb. 10:10
^t Acts 17:26 ^u Matt.
28:10 ^v sets apart
¹² ^v Ps. 22:22
¹³ ^w 2 Sam. 22:3; Is.
8:17 ^x Is. 8:18
¹⁴ ^y John 1:14

^z Col. 2:15 ^a [1 Cor.
15:54-57]; 2 Tim.
1:10
¹⁵ ^b Ps. 68:18; Is.
42:7; 45:13; 49:9;
61:1 [★]; [Luke 1:74]
¹⁶ ^o Or take on
the nature of ^o Or
take on
¹⁷ ^c Phil. 2:7; Heb.
2:14 ^d [Heb. 4:15;
5:1-10]
¹⁸ ^e [Heb. 4:15, 16]
¹ tested

CHAPTER 3

² ^a Ex. 40:16; Num.
12:7; Heb. 3:5

self likewise shared in the same, ^zthat through death He might destroy him who had the power of ^adeath, that is, the devil, ¹⁵and release those who ^bthrough fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. ¹⁶For indeed He does not ⁸give aid to angels, but He does ⁹give aid to the seed of Abraham. ¹⁷Therefore, in all things He had ^cto be made like His brethren, that He might be ^da merciful and faithful High Priest in things *pertaining* to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. ^{18e}For in that He Himself has suffered, being ¹tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted.

The Son Was Faithful

3 Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus, ²who was faithful to Him who appointed Him, as ^aMoses also

sufferings on this earth makes Him our leader. He has already experienced the sufferings we must go through on this earth. He not only endured them but triumphed over sin, death, and Satan through them. His sinless life has blazed a path to God, a path we must follow. Jesus is our model, our leader, and our captain. He understands our pain because He Himself went through suffering. **Salvation** refers to our future salvation, our glorification in Christ's coming kingdom (1:14).

2:11 all of one: This phrase refers either to the common humanity which Jesus shares with all believers, or to the fact that Jesus and believers all belong to God. Because the children of God and the Son Himself are from the same Father (see John 20:17), Jesus can call all believers His **brethren**.

2:12 Psalm 22, which is quoted here, describes the agony of a righteous sufferer. Ultimately the psalm is messianic. It depicts the sufferings of Christ. Jesus quoted Ps. 22:1 on the Cross (see Matt. 27:46). In this psalm, the Messiah refers to **My brethren**, identifying Himself with all those who place their faith in God.

2:13 The citations are from Is. 8:17, 18 and refer to a prophet, who, like the Lord Jesus, was persecuted and rejected but became a rallying point for the faithful.

2:14-16 Having established the unity between the Son and believers, the author concludes that there are two purposes of this close identification. The Son became human so that He could destroy the devil (v. 14) and release those who were in bondage to sin (v. 15).

2:14 shared in the same: Jesus Christ shared in our humanity by humbling himself to become a man (see Phil. 2:5-11). **power of death:** The devil tempts people to sin and then accuses them of rebelling against God (see Gen. 3; Job 1). By inducing them to sin, Satan delivers people over to death, the due penalty for their sin (Rom. 5:12). The devil is still active today (see 1 Pet. 5:8), but his power over death has been taken away from him. Christ's death fulfilled the penalty for sin. Thus by placing our trust in Christ, we can be free from Satan's evil grasp (see Luke 10:18; 2 Tim. 1:10; Rev. 1:18).

2:15 The devil uses the **fear of death** to enslave us. Through His death (v. 14), the Son eliminated such fear and broke the **bondage** of sin and death.

2:16 The seed of Abraham refers either to the physical descendants of Abraham or the spiritual children of Abraham—that is, the ones who, like Abraham, have placed their faith in God (see Gal. 3:7, 29). The author may have used this expression because the recipients of this letter were primarily Jewish believers. The author is pointing out that Christ came to the aid of Abraham's sons, not of the angelic hosts.

2:17 In all things includes Jesus' humanity (v. 14) and His suffering (v. 18). Jesus participated in our nature and in our sufferings on

earth so that He could be a sympathetic Mediator between God and humanity. He understands our weaknesses and intercedes for us in the presence of God the Father. He is a **merciful** (sympathetic) and **faithful** (trustworthy) **High Priest**. This is the first time the title High Priest occurs in Hebrews, and the first time the title is applied to Jesus Christ in the Bible. **Make propitiation** refers to the satisfaction of the claims of a holy and righteous God against sinners who have broken His law. Christ appeased God's righteous wrath by dying on the Cross in our place (see Rom. 3:21-26). Although completely perfect and sinless, Christ voluntarily submitted to the penalty of sin, His agonizing death on the Cross. This voluntary sacrifice of Himself for our welfare satisfied the justice and holiness of God.

2:18 being tempted: Christ's suffering included temptation. He experienced the lure of sin, but He never surrendered Himself to it. He knows what it is like to be tempted, so He knows how to assist those who are being tempted.

3:1, 2 Partakers is the same Greek word that is translated *companions* in 1:9. The **heavenly calling** of these *companions* is to inherit salvation (1:14) and their future glory in Christ (2:10). The author of Hebrews invites Jewish believers to **consider** the faithfulness of Christ Jesus. **Apostle** means “one who is sent.” This is the only passage in the NT that labels Jesus as the Apostle. The title indicates that Jesus was “sent” by God to reveal the Father (see John 4:34; 6:38; 7:28, 29; 8:16). The phrase **in all His house** is taken from Num. 12:7. *House* refers to the tabernacle, the center of Israelite worship. Moses had faithfully obeyed God's instructions concerning the tabernacle. In the same way, Jesus had been obedient to the mission the Father had given Him. Through His obedience, God established a new house of God, the church.

captain

(Gk. *archēgos*) (2:10; 12:2; Acts 3:15; 5:31) Strong's #747

The Greek word for *captain* means “pioneer” or “leader.” It literally means “the first one to lead the way” from *archē* (“the first”) and *agō* (“to lead”). To express this idea of leadership, the word is translated in Acts 3:15; 5:31 as the “Prince” and in Heb. 12:2 as “the author.” Thus the writer of Hebrews is emphasizing that Jesus endured suffering and temptation on this earth in order to become a perfect leader. He is not only sinless but also can sympathize with our difficulties in following His perfect way, the Way that leads to glory.

was faithful in all His house. ³For this One has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as ^bHe who built the house has more honor than the house. ⁴For every house is built by someone, but ^cHe who built all things is God. ^{5d}And Moses indeed was faithful in all His house as ^ea servant, ^ffor a testimony of those things which would be spoken afterward, ⁶but Christ as ^ga Son over His own house, ^hwhose house we are ⁱif we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope ¹firm to the end.

^{3 b} Zech. 6:12, 13
^{4 c} [Eph. 2:10]
^{5 d} Ex. 40:16; Num. 12:7; Heb. 3:2
^e Ex. 14:31; Num. 12:7
^f Deut. 18:15, 18, 19
^g Ps. 2:7; 110:4; Heb. 1:2
^h [1 Cor. 3:16]; 1 Tim. 3:15
ⁱ [Matt. 10:22]
¹ NU omits *firm to the end*
^{7 i} Acts 1:16
^k Ps. 95:7-11; Heb. 3:15; 4:7

Be Faithful
⁷Therefore, as ^jthe Holy Spirit says:
^k“*Today, if you will hear His voice,*
⁸ *Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion,*
In the day of trial in the wilderness,
⁹ *Where your fathers tested Me, tried Me,*
And saw My works forty years.
¹⁰ *Therefore I was angry with that generation,*

3:3, 4 He who built all things is God: The author of Hebrews equates Jesus with God. Thus Jesus is certainly **worthy of more glory than Moses** (1:2, 8, 10). The implication is that the covenant established through Jesus' death is more glorious than the covenant established at Mt. Sinai.
3:5 The author of Hebrews continues the comparison between Moses and Jesus. While Moses was faithful **as a servant**, Christ's faithfulness was greater because it was performed **by a Son**. **Things ... spoken afterward** indicates that Moses' work pointed forward to Christ (9:10; 10:1-3). The regulations of the Law of Moses pointed out both the sin of humanity and the need for a perfect sacrifice to reconcile people to their holy Creator.
3:6 a Son over His own house: The Son is the One who will sit

on the throne in the coming kingdom (1:8). He presently rules over the church and will rule over all creation when His opponents are completely defeated. His house consists of all those who believe in Him. **hold fast the confidence ... to the end:** Those who endure to the end, steadfastly placing their hope in the Son, will live with Him in eternity.
3:7-11 The author of Hebrews quotes Ps. 95:7-11 to warn the Jewish Christians about hardening their hearts to God and the salvation He offers. Moses' generation had refused to trust in God to provide for their needs in the wilderness (see Ex. 17:1-7), and the readers of this letter were in danger of not trusting in the salvation offered through God's Son. If they were to hold fast to the end (see v. 6), they could not **harden** their hearts to God now (vv. 8, 13, 15). Instead they had

The Majesty of Christ	
Hebrews is perhaps the greatest Christological book in the Bible, giving us a detailed description of the attributes and accomplishments of Jesus Christ. The following chart is a summary.	
Christ is . . .	This means . . .
heir of all things (1:2)	As God's "firstborn" Son, Christ will inherit infinite glory and honor.
the One through whom God made the worlds (1:2)	Christ was the Agent who created the universe.
the brightness of God's glory (1:3)	Christ reflects the majesty of God.
the express image of His person (1:3)	Christ is God made visible, in the flesh.
upholding all things by the word of His power (1:3)	Christ holds the universe together (Col. 1:17).
seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high (1:3)	Christ is reigning and ruling with God the Father as Lord over all.
better than the angels (1:4)	Christ is to be exalted more than the angels, no matter how glorious and awe-inspiring they are.
captain of our salvation (2:10)	Christ is the founder of the effort to bring "many sons to glory" (2:10).
the destroyer . . . of . . . the devil (2:14)	In dying for our sins, Christ overcame our greatest enemies—death and the devil.
a merciful and faithful High Priest (2:17)	Christ brought the ultimate sacrifice before God—His own blood—so that we might have fellowship with God.
worthy of more glory than Moses (3:3)	Unlike Moses, who was merely a servant in the house of God, Christ is the "Son over His own house" (3:6).
a High Priest who can sympathize with our weaknesses (4:15)	While on this earth, Jesus experienced the temptations and trials of living in a fallen world. He understands the struggles we face and has compassion for us.
always alive to make intercession (7:25)	Christ's priesthood is eternal. We will always have a perfect representative for us before the throne of God.
Mediator of a better covenant (8:6)	The old covenant with its earthly tabernacle and imperfect priests has been superseded by the sinless Christ. He is our High Priest who is interceding for us before God in heaven.
our model for enduring hostility from sinners (12:2, 3)	When we are discouraged, we can find strength and inspiration in Christ's willingness to persevere.
that great Shepherd of the sheep (13:20)	Christ will care for us and lead us to our eternal home.

And said, *‘They always go astray in their heart,
And they have not known My ways.’*

¹¹ *So I swore in My wrath,
‘They shall not enter My rest.’”*

¹² Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; ¹³ but ² exhort one another daily, while it is called *“Today,”* lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. ¹⁴ For we have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end, ¹⁵ while it is said:

*“Today, if you will hear His voice,
Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion.”*

Failure of the Wilderness Wanderers

¹⁶ For who, having heard, rebelled? Indeed, *was it* not all who came out of Egypt, *led* by Moses? ¹⁷ Now with whom was He angry forty years? *Was it* not with those who sinned, ¹⁸ whose corpses fell in the wilderness? ¹⁹ And ^o to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who did not obey? ¹⁹ So we see that they could not enter in because of ^p unbelief.

The Promise of Rest

4 Therefore, since a promise remains of entering His rest, ^a let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of

¹³ ² encourage
¹⁵ ¹ Ps. 95:7, 8
¹⁶ ^m Num. 14:2, 11, 30; Deut. 1:35, 36, 38
¹⁷ ⁿ Num. 14:22, 23
¹⁸ ^o Num. 14:30
¹⁹ ^p Num. 14:1-39; 1 Cor. 10:11, 12

CHAPTER 4

¹ ^a 2 Cor. 6:1; [Gal. 5:4]; Heb. 12:15

² ¹ NU, M since they were not united by faith with those who heeded it
³ ^b Ps. 95:11; Heb. 3:11
⁴ ^c Gen. 2:2; Ex. 20:11; 31:17
⁵ ^d Ps. 95:11
⁷ ^e Ps. 95:7, 8
⁸ ^f Josh. 22:4 ² Gr. Jesus, same as Heb. Joshua
¹¹ ^g 2 Pet. 1:10

it. ² For indeed the gospel was preached to us as well as to them; but the word which they heard did not profit them, ¹ not being mixed with faith in those who heard it. ³ For we who have believed do enter that rest, as He has said:

*^b “So I swore in My wrath,
‘They shall not enter My rest,’”*

although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. ⁴ For He has spoken in a certain place of the seventh day in this way: ^c *“And God rested on the seventh day from all His works”*; ⁵ and again in this place: ^d *“They shall not enter My rest.”*

⁶ Since therefore it remains that some *must* enter it, and those to whom it was first preached did not enter because of disobedience, ⁷ again He designates a certain day, saying in David, *“Today,”* after such a long time, as it has been said:

*^e “Today, if you will hear His voice,
Do not harden your hearts.”*

⁸ For if ² Joshua had ^f given them rest, then He would not afterward have spoken of another day. ⁹ There remains therefore a rest for the people of God. ¹⁰ For he who has entered His rest has himself also ceased from his works as God *did* from His.

The Word Discovers Our Condition

¹¹ ^g Let us therefore be diligent to enter

to renew their belief in God’s Word (vv. 12, 19), place their trust in Christ, and obey Him (v. 18). **Rest** is a key concept in Hebrews. In the OT, the conquest of the Promised Land and the cessation of fighting in the land was viewed as a form of rest (see Deut. 3:20; 12:9; 25:19; Josh. 11:23; 21:44; 22:4; 23:1). In the NT, *rest* speaks of the believer’s eternal home and the joy that he or she will experience in Jesus’ presence (4:1).

3:12, 13 The original recipients of this letter were probably believers (as indicated by the word **brethren**) who were in danger of departing from God (v. 12) and forsaking the assembly of believers (10:25). The author advises them not to do so but to remain in the assembly, urging each other on in the faith, in love, and in good works (10:24).

Unbelief is a grave sin because it leads us away from **God**. In essence, it is a stubborn refusal to trust in the truthfulness of His word. **3:14** Exhorting each other to continue in the faith is important. Believers must hold their faith firmly to the end of their lives if they are to be **partakers of Christ** (vv. 15–19). *Partakers* is the same word translated *companions* in 1:9. Believers will be partners with Christ in His future kingdom (see Rev. 2:26, 27).

3:15–19 The author of Hebrews speaks of the Israelites’ unbelief as sin (v. 17) and disobedience (v. 18). The Israelites did not **enter** God’s **rest**, the Promised Land (v. 11), because they did not believe in God’s promises to them (see Num. 1:1–34). They failed to possess their inheritance because they did not trust in God (see Deut. 12:9; Josh. 13:7). The Jewish Christians to whom this letter was addressed were in danger of following in their ancestors’ footsteps. They were tempted to doubt the words of Jesus. With the rhetorical questions in these verses, the author of Hebrews was encouraging them to place their faith firmly in Christ (10:26; 12:1, 2).

4:1 The tragic unbelief of the desert generation of Israelites (3:7–19)

serves as a warning for believers today to enter into God’s **rest**, which is still offered to the faithful (see vv. 6–11).

4:2 **The gospel was preached** is the translation of a single Greek word meaning “the good news was announced.” The good news of God’s rest (v. 1) had been proclaimed to the Israelites. The generation led by Moses had failed to enter their rest, which was the Promised Land (see Deut. 12:9), because of their lack of **faith**. In the same way, the gospel of Christ that had been proclaimed to the author’s audience was calling them into God’s rest, but their unbelief would hinder them from entering into it.

4:4 **God rested**: The theme of rest has its beginning in God’s own rest after creation. The fact that Genesis makes no mention of the evening of the seventh day of creation provides a basis for some Jewish commentators to conclude that the rest of God lasts throughout all of history.

4:7, 8 By merely entering the Promised Land, the Israelites had not entered God’s rest, for David (years after Joshua had led the Israelites into the land) had warned his generation to not **harden** their hearts, so that they could enter God’s rest (see 3:7–11). Like David, the author of Hebrews called the present generation to respond to God **today** (3:13), which is the day of repentance.

4:9 The Greek word for **rest** in this verse is different from the word used in vv. 1, 3, 5, 10, 11; 3:11, 18. This word means “Sabbath rest” and is found only here in the NT. Jews commonly taught that the Sabbath foreshadowed the world to come, and they spoke of “a day which shall be all Sabbath.”

4:10 **rest... from his works**: This may refer to the rest believers will enter in when they finish their work for God’s kingdom on this earth (see Rev. 14:13).

4:11 **us**: Including himself as well as his readers, the author exhorts

that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience. ¹²For the word of God is ^hliving and powerful, and ⁱsharper than any ^jtwo-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is ^ka discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. ¹³^lAnd there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are ^mnaked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we *must give* account.

Our Compassionate High Priest

¹⁴Seeing then that we have a great ⁿHigh Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, ^olet us hold fast *our* confession. ¹⁵For ^pwe do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but ^qwas in all *points* tempted as *we are*, ^ryet without sin. ¹⁶^sLet us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Qualifications for High Priesthood

5 For every high priest taken from among men ^ais appointed for men

¹² ^hPs. 147:15 ⁱIs. 49:2 ^jEph. 6:17; Rev. 2:12 ^k[John 12:48]; 1 Cor. 14:24, 25
¹³ ^l2 Chr. 16:9; Ps. 33:13-15; 90:8 ^mJob 26:6; Prov. 15:11
¹⁴ ⁿHeb. 2:17; 7:26
^oHeb. 10:23
¹⁵ ^pIs. 53:3-5
^qLuke 22:28 ^r2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 7:26
¹⁶ ^s[Eph. 2:18; Heb. 10:19, 22]

CHAPTER 5

1 ^oHeb. 2:17; 8:3

² ^bHeb. 7:28 ¹deal gently with
³ ^cLev. 9:7; 16:6; [Heb. 7:27; 9:7]
⁴ ^dEx. 28:1; Num. 16:40; 1 Chr. 23:13
⁵ ^eJohn 8:54 ^fPs. 2:7 ★
⁶ ^gPs. 110:4 ★; Heb. 7:17
⁷ ^hMatt. 26:39, 42, 44; Mark 14:36, 39; Luke 22:41, 44
ⁱPs. 22:1

in things *pertaining* to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins. ²He can ¹have compassion on those who are ignorant and going astray, since he himself is also subject to ^bweakness. ³Because of this he is required as for the people, so also for ^chimself, to offer *sacrifices* for sins. ⁴And no man takes this honor to himself, but he who is called by God, just as ^dAaron was.

A Priest Forever

⁵^eSo also Christ did not glorify Himself to become High Priest, but *it was* He who said to Him:

f“You are My Son,
Today I have begotten You.”

⁶As *He* also says in another place:

g“You are a priest forever
According to the order of
Melchizedek”;

⁷who, in the days of His flesh, when He had ^hoffered up prayers and supplications, ⁱwith vehement cries and tears

believers to **be diligent**, a phrase meaning “make every effort.” to **enter that rest**: The rest is not automatic. Determined diligence is required. The danger is that believers today, like the Israelites of the past, will not stand, but **fall in disobedience**.

4:12 The **word of God** is the measuring stick Christ will use at the judgment (see 2 Cor. 5:10). God’s message is alive and active, penetrating the innermost parts of a person. It distinguishes what is natural and what is spiritual, as well as the **thoughts** (reflections) and **intents** (insights) of a person. The word of God exposes the natural and spiritual motivations of a believer’s **heart** (v. 7; 3:8, 10, 12, 15; 8:10; 10:16, 22; 13:9).

4:13 **Naked and open** suggests complete exposure and defenselessness before God. All believers must **give account** to the all-seeing, all-knowing God (see Rom. 14:10–12; 2 Cor. 5:10).

mercy

(Gk. *eleos*) (4:16; Rom. 15:9; Eph. 2:4; Titus 3:5; Jude 21) Strong’s #1656

The Greek word for *mercy* denotes an outward demonstration of pity, a sympathy that expresses itself in helping a person in need instead of remaining completely passive. The word *eleos* is often used in conjunction with the Greek word *charis*, translated *grace* (Eph. 2:4, 5; 1 Tim. 1:2; 1 Pet. 1:2, 3). A similar idea is expressed by the Hebrew word *chesed*, often translated *lovingkindness* or *goodness*. It is the “loyal love” that God freely showed the Israelites because of His covenant with them. The ultimate expression of God’s mercy is His voluntary offering of His only Son for our sins, even when we were still His enemies (Eph. 2:4, 5). Since Jesus, our Intercessor at the right hand of God (7:25), has experienced every kind of temptation we endure (4:15), we can approach Him with boldness, knowing that we will find sympathy and mercy. We who have experienced God’s mercy and forgiveness should, in turn, show mercy to others (Col. 3:12).

4:14 **Then** refers back to the subject of the High Priesthood of Christ (2:17—3:6). **We have** indicates possession. In the OT the high priest of Israel passed through the courts and veils into the Most Holy Place. Our High Priest has **passed through the heavens** to the very presence of God, where He sits at God’s right hand (1:3).

4:15 **Sympathize** means “to suffer with” and expresses the feeling of one who has entered into suffering. **In all points tempted** means Jesus experienced every degree of temptation (2:18).

4:16 **Come** is the same Greek word translated *draw near* in 10:22. This command strongly contrasts with God’s command at Mt. Sinai: “Do not go up to the mountain or touch its base” (Ex. 19:12). Because of Christ’s priestly work, believers can approach God’s presence. The writer of Hebrews is expressing the openness of God’s call in Christ, “Come” (see Rev. 22:17). **Boldly** is the same word that is rendered *confidence* in 3:6 (see 10:19) and means “plainness of speech,” “fearlessness,” or “courage.” Believers should courageously approach God in prayer because His is a **throne of grace**, and our High Priest sits at His right hand interceding for us.

5:1–4 These verses explain what it means to be a **high priest**. A high priest must be a person (vv. 1–3) called by God (v. 4). A priest represents the people and thus must identify with their human nature. But he also represents God to the people and thus must be called by God to his office.

5:1 **gifts and sacrifices**: The primary reference here is to the work of the high priest on the Day of Atonement, the one day of the year when a priest entered into the Most Holy Place (9:7–10) to atone for the sins of the people and intercede for them.

5:2 **Ignorant and going astray** describes those who unintentionally sinned among the people (see Num. 15:30–36).

5:3 The high priest was required to offer a sacrifice **for himself** on the Day of Atonement (see 9:7; Lev. 16:6).

5:4 **called by God**: Aaron was appointed to the position of priest by God Himself (see Ex. 28:1), as were his successors (see Num. 20:23–28; 25:10–13). Those who challenged Aaron’s call or appointed themselves as priests were put to death by God (see Num. 16).

5:5, 6 **Christ** did not call Himself to the office of **High Priest**; the Father called Him to the honor. Both Ps. 2:7 and 110:4 are cited to prove this fact. Psalm 2:7 is also quoted in 1:5 to prove Christ’s superiority to the angels, and now the writer uses the quote to prove



Melchizedek

One of the most mysterious figures in the OT serves as an illustration of Christ. Melchizedek appears in Gen. 14:18–20 and in Ps. 110. He was a real man, king of Salem (Jerusalem) and a priest of God. It was apparently in this priestly role that he first met Abraham returning from the rescue of his nephew Lot. Melchizedek praised God for giving the victory to Abraham, showing that there were people other than Abraham and his family who served the true God in ancient times. The writer to the Hebrews recalls the incident between Abraham and Melchizedek and shows the parallels between him and Christ. Both are kings of righteousness and peace, both have priesthoods superior to the Levitical order. In Ps. 110, a messianic psalm written by David, Melchizedek is also seen as a type of Christ.



A thirteenth-century A.D. mosaic of Abraham meeting Melchizedek

Wikimedia Commons

Jesus' special relationship with God the Father. The quote from Ps. 110:4 highlights the eternal nature of Jesus' priesthood. He will be Mediator between God and us forever.

5:8 He learned obedience: Jesus experienced all of what a person goes through on this earth. He knows how difficult it is to obey God completely, just as He understands the attractions of temptation (2:18). Yet He persisted in obedience, leading a sinless life (1 John 3:5).

5:9 having been perfected: This phrase does not suggest that Jesus had not been perfect before. It means that He successfully carried out God's plan for Him. He endured suffering and temptation so that He could truly function as our High Priest, understanding our weaknesses and interceding before God for us. **Author** means "cause" or "source." Jesus' obedience to the Father led to Calvary, His own death on the Cross. The sacrifice of this sinless One in our place makes Him the source of our **salvation**.

5:10 Called here means "designated" and introduces Christ's formal title, **High Priest**.

5:11 Though the author of Hebrews has much more to say about Jesus' priesthood, it will be **hard to explain** to the readers of this letter because they are **dull of hearing**. *Dull* means "sluggish." When these people heard the word of God they were not quick to accept it (6:11, 12). They had grown even more lazy in the faith, so explaining the truth to them would be difficult.

5:12 First principles are basic truths (6:1, 2). The phrase refers to the letters of the alphabet in writing or to addition and subtraction tables in arithmetic. First principles are the elements out of which everything else develops.

to Him ^jwho was able to save Him from death, and was heard ^kbecause of His godly fear, ⁸though He was a Son, *yet* He learned ^lobedience by the things which He suffered. ⁹And ^mhaving been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him, ¹⁰called by God as High Priest ⁿ"according to the order of Melchizedek," ¹¹of whom ^owe have much to say, and hard to explain, since you have become ^pdull of hearing.

Spiritual Immaturity

¹²For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need *someone* to teach you again the first principles of the ²oracles of God; and you have come to need ^qmilk and not solid food. ¹³For everyone who partakes *only* of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is ^ra babe. ¹⁴But solid food belongs to those who are ³of full age, *that is*, those who by reason of ⁴use have their senses exercised ^sto discern both good and evil.

The Peril of Not Progressing

6 Therefore, ^aleaving the discussion of the elementary *principles* of Christ, let us go on to ¹perfection, not laying

7 / Matt. 26:53 ^k Matt. 26:39 8 / Phil. 2:8 9 ^m Heb. 2:10
10 ⁿ Ps. 110:4 ★ 11 ^o [John 16:12]; Heb. 7:1-22
12 ^q [Matt. 13:15] 12 ^r 1 Cor. 3:1-3; 1 Pet. 2:2 ² *sayings*,
Scriptures 13 ^r Eph. 4:14 14 ^s Is. 7:15; Phil. 1:9 ³ *mature*
⁴ *practice*
CHAPTER 6 1 ^a Heb. 5:12 ¹ *maturity*

5:13 unskilled in the word of righteousness: The readers of this letter did not necessarily lack information concerning righteousness; they lacked experience in practicing the information they had. Maturity comes from practice.

5:14 Full age describes the spiritually mature. **Reason of use** means "practice" or "habit." Those who make a habit of obeying the message of righteousness mature in the faith and are able to distinguish **good and evil**.

6:1, 2 The author urges the readers of his letter to leave the basics and **go on to perfection**, meaning "maturity." He lists six items in three couplets that he calls **the elementary principles of Christ**

oracles

(Gk. *logion*) (5:12; Acts 7:38; Rom. 3:2; 1 Pet. 4:11) Strong's #3051

The Greek term *logion* is a diminutive of the word *logos* (in 5:13). Here it is not "the Word of God," but "words from God" or "divine communications." Peter uses the word for the teaching of Christian preachers (1 Pet. 4:11), while Paul employs the word to refer to the writings of the OT prophets (Rom. 3:2). Stephen uses the word to speak of God's utterances on Mt. Sinai and His promises concerning the coming of the Messiah. The author of Hebrews uses this word for the basics of Christian doctrine, perhaps consciously contrasting this word to the *logos*, "the word of righteousness," which is for the mature Christian (5:13).

again the foundation of repentance from ^bdead works and of faith toward God, ^{2c}of the doctrine of baptisms, ^dof laying on of hands, ^eof resurrection of the dead, ^fand of eternal judgment. ³And this ²we will do if God permits.

⁴For *it is* impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted ^gthe heavenly gift, and ^hhave become partakers of the Holy Spirit, ⁵and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, ^{6,3}if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, ⁱsince they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put *Him* to an open shame.

⁷For the earth which drinks in the rain that often comes upon it, and bears herbs useful for those by whom it is cultivated, ^jreceives blessing from God; ^{8,k}but if it bears thorns and briars, *it is* rejected and near to being cursed, whose end is to be burned.

^{1 b} [Heb. 9:14]
^{2 c} John 3:25; Acts 19:3-5 ^d [Acts 8:17]
^e Acts 17:31 ^f Acts 24:25
^{3 2} M *let us do*
^{4 g} [John 4:10]; Eph. 2:8 ^h [Gal. 3:2, 5]; Heb. 2:4
⁵ Heb. 10:29 ³ Or *and have fallen away*
⁷ / Ps. 65:10
^{8 k} Is. 5:6

¹⁰ / Rom. 3:4
^m 1 Thess. 1:3
ⁿ Rom. 15:25;
 Heb. 10:32-34 ⁴ NU
 omits *labor of*
¹¹ ^a Col. 2:2
¹² ^p Heb. 10:36
⁵ ^l *lazy*
¹³ ^q Gen. 22:16, 17;
 Luke 1:73
¹⁴ ^r Gen. 22:16, 17

A Better Estimate

⁹But, beloved, we are confident of better things concerning you, yes, things that accompany salvation, though we speak in this manner. ¹⁰For ¹God is not unjust to forget ^myour work and ⁴labor of love which you have shown toward His name, *in that* you have ⁿministered to the saints, and do minister. ¹¹And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence ^oto the full assurance of hope until the end, ¹²that you do not become ⁵sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience ^pinherit the promises.

God's Infallible Purpose in Christ

¹³For when God made a promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no one greater, ^qHe swore by Himself, ¹⁴saying, ^r“Surely blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply you.” ¹⁵And so, after he had patiently

(see “the first principles” in 5:12). (1) **Repentance from dead works** refers to a change of mind about the demands of the Law of Moses (9:14). Even though the Law was good (see 1 Tim. 1:8), it was weak because of the weakness of our sinful nature (see Rom. 8:3). (2) What is needed for salvation is not lifeless works that cannot save, but **faith directed toward God**. (3) **Baptisms** refers either to the various baptisms in the NT (the baptism of Christ, of John, of believers, and the spiritual baptism of believers), or to the various ritual washings practiced by the Jewish people. (4) In the Book of Acts, the **laying on of hands** was used to impart the Holy Spirit (see Acts 8:17, 18; 19:6). It was also used for ordination for ministry (see Acts 6:6; 13:3). This practice is also found in the OT in commissioning someone to a public office (see Num. 27:18, 23; Deut. 34:9) or in the context of presenting a sacrificial offering to the Lord (see Lev. 1:4; 3:2; 4:4; 8:14; 16:21). (5) **Resurrection of the dead** refers to the resurrection of all people at the end times (Rev. 20:11–15). The resurrection is an OT teaching (Is. 26:19; Dan. 12:2) which was widely taught in first-century Judaism, especially by the Pharisees. To Christians, belief in the bodily resurrection of Jesus was essential, for without His resurrection there is no forgiveness of sin (see 1 Cor. 15:12–17). (6) **Eternal judgment** refers to the belief that everyone will be judged by the great Judge. The Scriptures indicate that there are two judgments: one for believers, in which Jesus determines every believer’s reward (1 Cor. 3:12–15), and the other a judgment of condemnation on unbelievers (Rev. 20:11–15).

6:4–6 This difficult passage concerning the falling away of some from the faith has been interpreted in various ways. Some insist that the author of Hebrews is speaking of nominal Christians who heard the truth and appeared to believe in Christ, but eventually demonstrated their shallow adherence to Christ by publicly renouncing Him. Others view these verses as a hypothetical argument. In other words, the author of Hebrews is using this hypothetical case to warn the spiritually immature (vv. 1–3) not to reject God’s offer of salvation (see v. 6; 3:12). Typically those who postulate these two positions cite the numerous passages that speak of a true believer’s eternal security (see John 6:39, 40; 10:27–29; Rom. 8:28–30). Once God has saved us, nothing can separate us from His love (Rom. 8:35–39). But another group of commentators insist that the author is speaking of genuine Christians who renounce Christ. They claim that this is a clear reading of this text and cite the numerous warnings in the NT to resist the deceptions of false teachers as additional evidence for their interpretation (2 Cor. 11:1–4, 13–15; 2 Tim. 2:17, 18; 1 John 2:21–25). Whatever way one interprets this passage, it is clear that the author of Hebrews has given us a clear warning not to renounce Christ or spurn His offer of salvation. Only those who believe in Jesus will be saved; and the day to embrace His gift of salvation is today (3:7–12).

6:4 Impossible is used three other times in the Book of Hebrews. It is impossible for the blood of animals to take away sin (10:4), for God to lie (v. 18), and for anyone to please God without faith (11:6). Here it is impossible to renew those who have fallen away from the faith (see v. 6). **Enlightened** is used in only one other place in Hebrews (the word is translated *illuminated* in 10:32). In that verse, enlightenment refers to a full knowledge of the truth. **Tasted** is used elsewhere in Hebrews of actual experience (2:9). Thus to taste **the heavenly gift** is to experience the gift of eternal life. The Greek word for **partakers** is used elsewhere in Hebrews of regenerate people (1:9; 3:1, 14).

6:6 The phrase **if they fall away** may also be rendered “having fallen away.” The fact that there is no hint of a conditional element in the Greek text argues against the “hypothetical” interpretation of this passage (see v. 4). Falling away here refers to deliberate apostasy (3:12), a defection from the faith. **To renew** means “to restore.” In other words, it is impossible for continuous effort on the part of anyone in the Christian community to restore an apostate back to fellowship with God. This is the reason for the strong warning of 3:13 to exhort one another to avoid a hard heart. Continuing Christian immaturity is dangerous. **crucify again**: Departing from the faith amounts to a fresh public rejection of Christ, a crucifixion of Him all over again.

6:7, 8 The author tells a short parable relating to agriculture to illustrate the spiritual truths conveyed in vv. 4–6. **Rejected** means “disqualified,” and the word is used of believers being disqualified from receiving rewards (see 1 Cor. 9:27; 2 Cor. 13:5, 7). Note that the ground that produced thorns is not cursed; instead it is **near to being cursed** (see 1 Cor. 11:29–31). Its ultimate end is burning, perhaps indicating the earthly, temporal judgment of God. In the OT, God’s judgment on His people is compared to the burning of a field (see Is. 9:18, 19; 10:17), indicating physical death, not eternal death. Perhaps this parable is an allusion to the fire which Jesus will use to reveal the quality of a believer’s works (see 1 Cor. 3:11–15). There was an ancient practice of burning a piece of ground to destroy weeds and make a field useful again. If such an allusion is intended here, then this passage could be teaching that while all human attempts to restore apostates are futile (v. 6), there is still hope that God will restore such a person.

6:9 With the warmth and affection of the title **beloved**, the author assures the Hebrews that he is **confident of better things** for them. Their good works were signs to the author that they had genuinely received Christ (v. 10).

6:12 Sluggish is the same word which is translated *dull* in 5:11 and initiates this exhortation to the Hebrews to grow in their faith (5:11–6:12).

6:13–15 Abraham is an example of faith and patience in God’s

endured, he obtained the ^spromise. ¹⁶For men indeed swear by the greater, and ^tan oath for confirmation *is* for them an end of all dispute. ¹⁷Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to ^uthe heirs of promise ^vthe ⁶immutability of His counsel, ⁷confirmed *it* by an oath, ¹⁸that by two ⁸immutable things, in which it *is* impossible for God to ^wlie, we ⁹might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope ^xset before us.

¹⁹This *hope* we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, ^yand which enters the *Presence* behind the veil, ²⁰^zwhere the forerunner has entered for us, *even* Jesus, ^ahaving become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

The King of Righteousness

7 For this ^aMelchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, ²to whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all, first being translated “king of righteousness,” and then also king of Salem, meaning “king of peace,” ³without father, without mother, without genealogy, having

15 ^s Gen. 12:4; 21:5
16 ^t Ex. 22:11
17 ^u Rom. 8:17; Heb. 11:9 ^v Rom. 11:29
⁶ *unchangeableness of His purpose*
⁷ *guaranteed*
18 ^w Num. 23:19; 1 Sam. 15:29; Titus 1:2 ^x [Col. 1:5]; Heb. 3:6; 7:19; 12:1
⁸ *unchangeable*
⁹ *Moments might*
19 ^y Lev. 16:2, 15; Heb. 9:3, 7
20 ^z [John 14:2; Heb. 4:14] ^a Gen. 14:17-19; Ps. 110:4; Heb. 3:1; 5:10, 11

CHAPTER 7

1 ^a Gen. 14:18-20; Heb. 7:6

4 ¹ *plunder*
5 ^b Num. 18:21-26; 2 Chr. 31:4
6 ^c Gen. 14:19, 20
^d [Rom. 4:13]
8 ^e Heb. 5:6; 6:20; [Rev. 1:18]
11 ^f [Rom. 7:7-14]; Gal. 2:21; Heb. 7:18; 8:7

neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of God, remains a priest continually.

⁴Now consider how great this man *was*, to whom even the patriarch Abraham gave a tenth of the ¹spoils. ⁵And indeed ^bthose who are of the sons of Levi, who receive the priesthood, have a commandment to receive tithes from the people according to the law, that is, from their brethren, though they have come from the loins of Abraham; ⁶but he whose genealogy is not derived from them received tithes from Abraham ^cand blessed ^dhim who had the promises. ⁷Now beyond all contradiction the lesser is blessed by the better. ⁸Here mortal men receive tithes, but there he *receives them*, ^eof whom it is witnessed that he lives. ⁹Even Levi, who receives tithes, paid tithes through Abraham, so to speak, ¹⁰for he was still in the loins of his father when Melchizedek met him.

Need for a New Priesthood

¹¹^fTherefore, if perfection were through the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law), what further need *was there* that another

promise (see v. 12). He waited 25 years from the time the promise was first made until Isaac, the promised son, was born (see Gen. 12:4; 21:5).

6:16, 17 Confirmation means “guarantee.” An **oath** is used to guarantee an agreement.

6:18 The Lord confirmed His oath to Abraham by swearing by Himself (v. 13) because He alone is beyond deceit. The **two immutable things** are God’s Word and God’s oath. Since God does not lie and since He is all-powerful, He will fulfill all His promises. This unchanging nature of God is the believer’s **consolation** and encouragement.

6:19 The believer’s **hope** in Christ is secure, like an **anchor**. Furthermore this anchor is not in sand, but in the very presence of the Almighty. **Behind the veil** refers to the Most Holy Place, the place where God dwells.

6:20 The Greek word for **forerunner** was used in the second century A.D. of the smaller boats sent into the harbor by larger ships unable to enter due to the buffeting of the weather. These smaller boats carried the anchor through the breakers inside the harbor and dropped it there, securing the larger ship. **Forerunner** presupposes that others will follow. Thus Jesus is not only the believer’s anchor but He is like a runner boat that has taken our anchor into port and secured it there. There is thus no doubt as to whether this vessel is going into port. The only question is whether it will go in with the sleekness of a well-trimmed sailing vessel or like a water-laden barge. Believers who have such a hope in the presence of God should come boldly before the throne of grace (see 4:14–16).

7:1 The mention of **Melchizedek** recalls the author’s reference to this ancient priest in 5:10, 11. Melchizedek was both a **king** and a **priest**, a common combination in ancient times. **Salem** was later renamed Jerusalem.

7:2 The name Melchizedek means **king of righteousness**. **Salem** means **peace**. The ideal king rules in righteousness, which assures peace (see Is. 32:17).

7:3 without father . . . mother . . . genealogy: Genesis, a book with many genealogies, has none for Melchizedek. The author is not saying that Melchizedek was born without a father and moth-

er, only that there is no record of his birth in the genealogies of Genesis. This description of Melchizedek prefigures the eternal priesthood of Jesus. Like Melchizedek, Jesus is both a Priest and a King, belonging to a righteous priesthood that is independent of Aaron’s. Some commentators have cited this passage as evidence that Melchizedek is a preincarnate manifestation of Jesus. This is unlikely, for the author states that Melchizedek is **like the Son of God**, not the same as Him.

7:4 Melchizedek was **great** because **Abraham** gave him a tithe. In the Greek text the word **patriarch** is emphatic. The greatness of Abraham, the one who possessed the promises of God (v. 6), underscores the even greater rank of Melchizedek, the priest of righteousness.

7:8–10 Melchizedek was not only superior to Abraham, he was superior to the Levitical priesthood in two ways. First, the Levitical priests were **mortal**—that is, they died; and thus different priests represented the people at different times. In contrast, Melchizedek **lives**, meaning the OT does not record his death (v. 3). Second, in a sense, Levi paid tithes to Melchizedek through Abraham’s gift. **So to speak** indicates that Levi, who was not yet born, did not literally pay tithes. However, because he descended from Abraham, he is counted as having paid tithes to Melchizedek too.

7:11 If the **Levitical priesthood** had been able to bring people to **perfection**, then a superior priest from the **order of Melchizedek** would not have been needed (see Ps. 110:4). If the priests under

made like

(Gk. *aphomoioō*) (7:3) Strong’s #871

This Greek word literally means “to make a facsimile,” or “to produce a model or copy.” Thus the author of Hebrews was highlighting the similarities between the Son of God and the way Scripture presents Melchizedek. In other words, the ancient priest-king of Salem was a copy of Jesus.

priest should rise according to the order of Melchizedek, and not be called according to the order of Aaron? ¹²For the priesthood being changed, of necessity there is also a change of the law. ¹³For He of whom these things are spoken belongs to another tribe, from which no man has ²officiated at the altar.

¹⁴For it is evident that ^gour Lord arose from ^hJudah, of which tribe Moses spoke nothing concerning ³priesthood. ¹⁵And it is yet far more evident if, in the likeness of Melchizedek, there arises another priest ¹⁶who has come, not according to the law of a fleshly commandment, but according to the power of an endless life. ¹⁷For ⁴He testifies:

*ⁱ“You are a priest forever
According to the order of
Melchizedek.”*

¹⁸For on the one hand there is an annulling of the former commandment because of ^jits weakness and unprofit-

¹³ ²served
¹⁴ ^gGen. 49:8-10;
Num. 24:17; Is.
1:1 ★; Mic. 5:2;
Matt. 1:3; 2:6; Rev.
5:5 ^hMatt. 1:2 ³NU
priests
¹⁷ ⁱPs. 110:4 ★;
Heb. 5:6; 6:20; 7:21
⁴NU it is testified
¹⁸ / [Rom. 8:3]; Gal.
3:21; Heb. 7:11

¹⁹ ^k[Acts 13:39];
Rom. 3:20; 7:7; Gal.
2:16; 3:21; Heb. 9:9;
10:1 ^lHeb. 6:18, 19
^mLam. 3:57; Rom.
5:2; [Eph. 2:18];
Heb. 4:16; James
4:8 ⁵complete
²¹ ⁿPs. 110:4; Heb.
5:6; 7:17 ⁶NU ends
the quotation after
forever.
²² ^oHeb. 8:6
⁷guarantee
²⁵ ^pJude 24

ableness, ¹⁹for ^kthe law made nothing ⁵perfect; on the other hand, *there is the bringing in of ^la better hope, through which ^mwe draw near to God.*

Greatness of the New Priest

²⁰And inasmuch as *He* was not made priest without an oath ²¹(for they have become priests without an oath, but He with an oath by Him who said to Him:

*ⁿ“The LORD has sworn
And will not relent,
‘You are a priest ⁶forever
According to the order of
Melchizedek’ ”),*

²²by so much more Jesus has become a ⁷surety of a ^obetter covenant.

²³Also there were many priests, because they were prevented by death from continuing. ²⁴But He, because He continues forever, has an unchangeable priesthood. ²⁵Therefore He is also ^pable to save

the Law of Moses could offer permanent reconciliation between God and His people, there would be no need for a coming Messiah, One who would restore the Israelites to their relationship with God.

7:12 Change means “removal” (12:27). If the Melchizedek priesthood removed the Levitical priesthood, then the Mosaic Law is also removed. In short, the believer is not under the Law but instead relies on the righteousness of Christ (see Rom. 6:14; Gal. 3:24, 25).

7:13, 14 He of whom these things are spoken is the Lord, who arose from another tribe, namely Judah. According to the Law, the tribe of Judah had nothing to do with the priesthood. The argument hinges on Ps. 110:4 (see also 5:6). If the OT said that another priest was coming from another tribe, then clearly the Law was going to be superseded.

7:15–18 The law, which regulated the priesthood, was fleshly in

the sense that it regulated a person’s external actions. The Lord, however, is a Priest according to the power of an endless life. This is proved by Ps. 110:4, quoted in v. 17. Jesus is a different kind of Priest, another indication that the Law has been changed. There has been an annulling, a putting away, of the Law.

7:20–22 Christ’s priesthood is superior to the Levitical priesthood because it was established by an oath (see “the LORD has sworn” in Ps. 110:4).

7:23, 24 Because Christ lives forever, His priesthood is unchangeable. In the Levitical system, the high priest’s office was always changing hands. When one high priest died, another assumed the office. Josephus estimated that there were 83 different high priests between Aaron and the fall of the temple in A.D. 70.

7:25 Christ is . . . able to save because He is fully God and fully

The Superiority of Jesus

When it comes to spiritual matters, people are peculiar. They become obsessed with angels, but somehow ignore or forget the God who created and directs these heavenly messengers. They devote themselves to seeking and understanding “truth,” but they never encounter the Holy One who encompasses all truth. They engage in all sorts of rituals and practices to try to find and reach out to their Creator; but they somehow miss the fact that He has already reached down to them.

This is the case today, just as it was in the first century. In fact, this spiritual “peculiarity” is one of the reasons the Spirit of God inspired the letter to the Hebrews. To Jewish Christians who were dealing with persecution and hardship, who were doubting the truth of the gospel and the New Covenant, and who were considering the idea of turning away, the writer of Hebrews sent this clear message: Christ is the ultimate.

More than a mere prophet, Christ is God in the flesh (1:2, 3, 8). He is Creator (1:10–12) and Sustainer of all (1:3). As the “holy, harmless, undefiled” High Priest who is “separate from sinners” and “who does not need . . . to offer up sacrifices . . . for His own sins” (7:26, 27), Jesus Christ alone is capable of providing salvation and sanctification (2:10, 11).

Given these facts, it is easy to see why the author of Hebrews states that Christ is better than the angels (1:4). It is clear why even Moses pales in comparison. No wonder Hebrews states that Christ is the author and mediator of a better covenant (7:22; 8:6), that He offered a better sacrifice for sin (9:23), that He possesses a more excellent name (1:4), and that He carries out a more excellent ministry (8:6).

We must resist the temptation to settle for a superficial spirituality. Angels, rituals, and human role models all have their place. But none of these things compares to Christ. And therein lies the staggering promise of the gospel: Jesus Christ comes to us and offers Himself. Because of His perfect payment for sins, we can find the forgiveness we so desperately need. More than that, we can experience eternal life, which Jesus Himself described as an intimate, never-ending relationship with God the Father and God the Son. Given that mind-boggling opportunity, why would we look anywhere else or settle for anything less?



⁸to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives ⁹to make intercession for them.

²⁶For such a High Priest was fitting for us, ^rwho is holy, ⁹harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, ^sand has become higher than the heavens; ²⁷who does not need daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His ^town sins and then for the people's, for this He did once for all when He offered up Himself. ²⁸For the law appoints as high priests men who have weakness, but the word of the oath, which came after the law, *appoints* the Son who has been perfected forever.

The New Priestly Service

8 Now *this* is the main point of the things we are saying: We have such a High Priest, ^awho is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, ²a Minister of ^bthe ¹sanctuary and of ^cthe true tabernacle which the Lord erected, and not man.

³For ^devery high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices. Therefore ^eit is necessary that this One also have something to offer. ⁴For if He were on earth, He would not be a priest, since there are priests who offer the gifts ac-

²⁵ ^qRom. 8:34; 1 Tim. 2:5; Heb. 9:24; 1 John 2:1
⁸ *completely or forever*
²⁶ ^r[2 Cor. 5:21]; Heb. 4:15 ^sEph. 1:20 ⁹innocent
²⁷ ^tLev. 9:7; 16:6; Heb. 5:3

CHAPTER 8

¹ ^aPs. 68:18; 110:1; Eph. 1:20; Col. 3:1; Heb. 2:17; 3:1; 10:12
² ^bHeb. 9:8, 12
^cHeb. 9:11, 24 ¹Lit. *holy*
³ ^d[Rom. 4:25; 5:6, 8; Gal. 2:20; Eph. 5:2]; Heb. 5:1; 8:4
^e[Eph. 5:2; Heb. 9:14]

⁵ ^fHeb. 9:23, 24
⁹Col. 2:17; Heb. 10:1
^hEx. 25:40
⁶ ⁱ[2 Cor. 3:6-8] ^j[Luke 22:20]; Heb. 7:22
⁷ ^kEx. 3:8; 19:5
⁸ ^lJer. 31:31-34 ★
¹⁰ ^mJer. 31:33; Rom. 11:27; Heb. 10:16 ⁿZech. 8:8

cording to the law; ⁵who serve ^fthe copy and ^gshadow of the heavenly things, as Moses was divinely instructed when he was about to make the tabernacle. For He said, ^h*"See that you make all things according to the pattern shown you on the mountain."* ⁶But now ⁱHe has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a ^jbetter covenant, which was established on better promises.

A New Covenant

⁷For if that ^kfirst *covenant* had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second. ⁸Because finding fault with them, He says: ^l*"Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah—⁹not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they did not continue in My covenant, and I disregarded them, says the Lord. ¹⁰For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the ^mLORD: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and ⁿI*

human (2:18; 4:15). Since this verse speaks of Jesus' present intercession for us, the word *save* in this verse speaks of our sanctification, the continuing process by which we are freed from the power of sin. This continuing process of salvation will eventually be completed in our glorification, when we are saved from the presence of sin. The word **uttermost** may speak of this glorification, this "complete" or "whole" salvation. **come:** The Greek verb for *come* is in the present tense. Therefore the word indicates that Jesus continues to save those who keep coming to Him. Our justification is a once-for-all event accomplished on the Cross, but our sanctification is a continuing process.

7:26–28 The author concludes this chapter with a summary of why Jesus' priesthood is superior to any other. **Higher than the heavens** means Christ is exalted above all and sits in glory at the right hand of the Father (1:3; 2:9; 4:14). **daily, as those high priests:** The high priest offered an annual sacrifice on the Day of Atonement for the atonement of the people's sins (9:7; 10:1), but the priests also offered sacrifices every day before the Lord (see Ex. 29:36). In contrast, Jesus offered Himself **once**, a perfect, sinless sacrifice for the sins of all. Since Jesus is perfect, He did not have to offer sacrifices for His own sins. The permanent, eternal nature of Jesus' priesthood established by an **oath** of God is in sharp contrast to the temporal, weak nature of the Levitical priesthood.

8:1 The main point of this section of Hebrews (vv. 1–6) is the High Priesthood of Christ, mentioned in 2:17–3:1 and developed in 4:14–7:28.

8:2 The sanctuary refers to the heavenly reality represented by the Most Holy Place (9:2, 8, 24; 10:19; 13:11). This reality is the presence of God. Our High Priest serves there and desires to bring us there (10:19).

8:4 according to the law: Only men from the tribe of Levi could serve as priests. Christ was not from that tribe (7:13, 14).

8:5 The Levitical priesthood served as a **copy** of the **heavenly** Priest. The same goes for the tabernacle. Moses was shown a **pattern**, a type or model, of the true tabernacle (see Ex. 25:40).

8:7 That first covenant is the Mosaic covenant (see v. 9; Ex. 19:5).

8:8 The new covenant is the "better covenant" of v. 6. This covenant was made with **Israel and Judah**, yet the church enjoys the spiritual blessings of this covenant now. The Abrahamic covenant was made with Abraham and his physical descendants (see Gen. 17:7), who would inherit the land (see Gen. 12:7; 13:14, 15). Yet the Abrahamic covenant also contained spiritual promises (see Gen. 12:3) in which the church participates (see Rom. 11:11–27; Gal. 3:13, 14). The new covenant in fact is a fulfillment of the spiritual redemption promised in the Abrahamic and Davidic covenants (see Matt. 26:26–29; Luke 22:20).

8:10–12 There are four provisions of the new covenant: (1) God's law will be written on believers' minds and **hearts**. This is in contrast to the Mosaic Law which was written on tablets of stone. (2) Believers will have a relationship with God fulfilling the promise of Lev. 26:12 (see 2 Cor. 6:16). (3) **All will know** God. No longer will Pharisees and scribes have to teach the intricacies of the Law to the people. (4) God will forgive the sins of believers and remember them no more. The continual sacrifice of animals for the atonement of sin will cease.

know

(Gk. *ginōskō*) (8:11; John 21:17; Gal. 4:9) Strong's #1097; (Gk. *oīda*) (8:11; John 21:15–17; 2 Cor. 5:16; Gal. 4:8, 9) Strong's #1492

In the statement "know the LORD, for all shall know Me," there are two different Greek words for *know*. The first word (*ginōskō*) means "to come to know" or "to know personally." It can designate ongoing, personal knowledge, which implies a relationship between the knower and the person who is known. The second word (*oīda*) is derived from the Greek verb meaning "to see." Thus *oīda* means "to perceive" or "to know absolutely." It suggests complete knowledge, while *ginōskō* means a growing knowledge.

will be their God, and they shall be My people. ¹¹None of them shall teach his neighbor, and none his brother, saying, 'Know the ¹LORD,' for all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them. ¹²For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins ²and their lawless deeds I will remember no more."

¹³In that He says, "A new covenant," He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.

The Earthly Sanctuary

9 Then indeed, even the first covenant had ordinances of divine service and ^athe earthly sanctuary. ²For a tabernacle was prepared: the first part, in which was the lampstand, the table, and the showbread, which is called the ¹sanctuary; ³and behind the second veil, the part of the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of All, ⁴which had the ^cgolden censer and ^dthe ark of the covenant overlaid on all sides with gold, in which were ^ethe golden pot that had the manna, ^fAaron's rod that budded, and ^gthe tablets of the covenant; ⁵and ^habove it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat. Of these things we cannot now speak in detail.

Limitations of the Earthly Service

⁶Now when these things had been thus

¹¹ ^oIs. 54:13; John 6:45; [1 John 2:27]
^p Jer. 31:34
¹² ^qRom. 11:27
² NU omits and their lawless deeds
¹³ ^r[2 Cor. 5:17]; Heb. 1:11

CHAPTER 9

¹ ^a Ex. 25:8; [Heb. 8:2; 9:11, 24]
² ⁱ holy place, lit. holies
³ ^b Ex. 26:31-35; 40:3
⁴ ^c Lev. 16:12 ^d Ex. 25:10 ^e Ex. 16:33
^f Num. 17:1-10 ^g Ex. 25:16; 34:29; Deut. 10:2-5
⁵ ^h Ex. 25:17, 20; Lev. 16:2; 1 Kin. 8:7
⁶ ⁱ Num. 18:2-6; 28:3
⁷ ^j Ex. 30:10; Lev. 16:34; Heb. 10:3
^k Heb. 5:3
⁸ ^j [John 14:6; Heb. 10:20]
⁹ ^m [Gal. 3:21]; Heb. 7:19
¹⁰ ⁿ Lev. 11:2; Col. 2:16 ^o Num. 19:7
^p Eph. 2:15 ² Lit. baptisms
¹¹ ^q [Eph. 1:3-11]; Heb. 10:1 ³ NU that have come
¹² ^r Heb. 10:4 ^s Is. 53:12; Eph. 1:7
^r Zech. 3:9 ^u [Dan. 9:24] ★
¹³ ^v Lev. 16:14, 15;

prepared, ⁱthe priests always went into the first part of the tabernacle, performing the services. ⁷But into the second part the high priest went alone ^jonce a year, not without blood, which he offered for ^khimself and for the people's sins committed in ignorance; ⁸the Holy Spirit indicating this, that ^lthe way into the Holiest of All was not yet made manifest while the first tabernacle was still standing. ⁹It was symbolic for the present time in which both gifts and sacrifices are offered ^mwhich cannot make him who performed the service perfect in regard to the conscience— ¹⁰concerned only with ⁿfoods and drinks, ^ovarious ²washings, ^pand fleshly ordinances imposed until the time of reformation.

The Heavenly Sanctuary

¹¹But Christ came as High Priest of ^qthe good things ³to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation. ¹²Not ^rwith the blood of goats and calves, but ^swith His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place ^tonce for all, ^uhaving obtained eternal redemption. ¹³For if ^vthe blood of bulls and goats and ^wthe ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, ⁴sanctifies for the ⁵purifying of the flesh, ¹⁴how much more shall the blood

Heb. 9:19; 10:4 ^w Num. 19:2 ⁴ sets apart ⁵ cleansing

8:13 The presence of a **new**, better covenant not only demonstrates that the **first** covenant is not sufficient (v. 7), it also shows that the first covenant is **obsolete** and **ready to vanish away**. At the time the author of Hebrews wrote these words, the ceremonies of the Mosaic covenant were still being conducted in the temple in Jerusalem. In **A.D. 70** the Roman general Titus destroyed the temple, fulfilling these words.

9:1 The **first** (Mosaic) **covenant** included an **earthly sanctuary**, the tabernacle (v. 2), in which **divine service** was offered.

9:2-5 These verses simply describe the furniture of the **tabernacle**. The tabernacle courtyard contained an altar for animal sacrifice, a laver for ceremonial washings, and the tent itself (the word *tabernacle* literally means "tent"). The tabernacle was divided into two rooms by a veil. The first part was the **sanctuary** or holy place, housing the lampstand, the table for the showbread, and the altar of incense. The second room was the Most Holy Place (v. 3) containing the **ark of the covenant**, in which were stored symbols of the Mosaic covenant. The **pot of manna** reminded the people of God's miraculous provision for them in the wilderness. **Aaron's rod** was a sign of the authority of the priesthood. God had ordained Aaron and his sons to be representatives of the people before Him. The **tablets** were the Ten Commandments given to the nation at Mt. Sinai. On top of the ark was the **mercy seat**, the place where God made His presence known. **golden censer**: In this passage, it sounds as if the censer was placed in the Most Holy Place, when in fact it was just outside the veil that separated the Most Holy Place from the holy place. Because of its function, the censer was commonly associated with the Most Holy Place (see Ex. 30:6; 40:6).

9:6 Every morning and every evening the **priests** entered the holy place to burn incense on the golden altar and trim the lamps (see Ex. 30:7, 8). Every week on the Sabbath, the showbread was changed (see Lev. 24:5-8).

9:7 Only the **high priest** could enter the Most Holy Place. **Once a year**, on the Day of Atonement, the high priest offered a **blood sacrifice for himself** and for the sins of **ignorance** committed by everyone in the nation of Israel (see Lev. 16). In the provisions of the Mosaic covenant, access to God was limited (compare the promises of the "new covenant" in 8:10, 11).

9:8 The fact that the high priest could enter the **Holiest of All** only once a year indicates the striking failure of the Mosaic covenant to bring believers into the presence of God.

9:9 The tabernacle was **symbolic**, an illustration of spiritual truths. **The present time** refers to the OT period. **cannot make . . . perfect**: The Mosaic covenant covered sins of ignorance (v. 7), but not premeditated sins or the sinful nature of all people (see Ps. 51). In other words, the old system was lacking. It did not completely reconcile the people to God.

9:11 Christ's tabernacle is better than the OT tabernacle (vv. 1-5). **The good things to come** include access to God (8:10-12). The preposition **with** in this context means "in connection with." Therefore, **the greater and more perfect tabernacle** is not a reference to Christ's body but to the "true tabernacle" (see 8:2).

9:12 The service of the Levitical priest obtained a limited, recurring, symbolic type of redemption. Christ, **with His own blood**, obtained **eternal redemption**. His sacrifice never has to be repeated because it is perfect.

9:13 According to Mosaic Law, **the blood of bulls and goats** from the sacrifices made on the Day of Atonement would atone for the people's sins (v. 12). **The ashes of a heifer** were mixed with water and were used to cleanse a person who had become ceremonially defiled by touching a corpse (see Num. 19). The author of Hebrews points out that these ceremonies could purify only a person's exterior, not a person's heart.

9:14 The **eternal Spirit** is the Holy Spirit; all three persons of the

of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without ⁶spot to God, ^xcleanse your conscience from ^ydead works ^zto serve the living God? ¹⁵ And for this reason ^aHe is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that ^bthose who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.

The Mediator's Death Necessary

¹⁶For where there is a testament, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. ¹⁷For ^ca testament is in force after men are dead, since it has no power at all while the testator lives. ^{18d}Therefore not even the first covenant was dedicated without blood. ¹⁹For when Moses had spoken every ⁷precept to all the people according to the law, ^ehe took the blood of calves and goats, ^fwith water, scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people, ²⁰saying, ^g"This is the ^hblood of the covenant which God has commanded you." ²¹Then likewise ⁱhe sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry. ²²And according to the law almost all things are ⁸purified with blood, and ^jwithout shedding of blood there is no ⁹remission.

14 ^x 1 John 1:7
^y Heb. 6:1 ^z Luke 1:74 ^a *blemish*
¹⁵ ^a Rom. 3:25
^b Heb. 3:1
¹⁷ ^c Gal. 3:15
¹⁸ ^d Ex. 24:6
¹⁹ ^e Ex. 24:5, 6
^f Lev. 14:4, 7; Num. 19:6, 18 ⁷ *command*
²⁰ ^g [Matt. 26:28]
^h Ex. 24:3-8
²¹ ⁱ Ex. 29:12, 36
²² ^j Lev. 17:11
⁸ *cleansed*
⁹ *forgiveness*

23 ^k Heb. 8:5
¹ *cleansed*
²⁴ ^l Heb. 6:20 ^m Heb. 8:2 ⁿ Rom. 8:34
² *representations*
²⁵ ^o Heb. 9:7
²⁷ ^p Gen. 3:19; Eccl. 3:20 ^q [2 Cor. 5:10]; 1 John 4:17
²⁸ ^r Rom. 6:10 ★
^s Is. 53:12; 1 Pet. 2:24 ^t Matt. 26:28
^u 1 Cor. 1:7; Titus 2:13

CHAPTER 10

1 ^a Heb. 8:5 ^b Heb. 7:19; 9:9
² ⁱ *cleansed*

Greatness of Christ's Sacrifice

²³Therefore *it was* necessary that ^kthe copies of the things in the heavens should be ¹purified with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. ²⁴For ^lChrist has not entered the holy places made with hands, *which are* ²copies of ^mthe true, but into heaven itself, now ⁿto appear in the presence of God for us; ²⁵not that He should offer Himself often, as ^othe high priest enters the Most Holy Place every year with blood of another—²⁶He then would have had to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now, once at the end of the ages, He has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. ²⁷^pAnd as it is appointed for men to die once, ^qbut after this the judgment, ²⁸so ^rChrist was ^soffered once to bear the sins ^tof many. To those who ^ueagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation.

Animal Sacrifices Insufficient

10 For the law, having a ^ashadow of the good things to come, *and* not the very image of the things, ^bcan never with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, make those who approach perfect. ²For then would they not have ceased to be offered? For the worshipers, once ¹purified, would

Trinity are involved in cleansing. **cleanse your conscience:** The defilement is internal, not external (v. 13). Christ's death has the power to purify a person's mind and soul. **Dead works** are the rituals of the Mosaic Law that could not give life (6:1). Placing faith and confidence in what has already served its purpose and has now passed away is useless. It is disobedience. The author of Hebrews commands his audience to free their conscience from regulations of Mosaic Law and instead cling to Christ for cleansing. In doing so, they could truly **serve the living God** and not dead works.

9:15 The new covenant provides two gifts to a believer: redemption and inheritance. Believers receive **redemption** from the sins committed under the Law. In other words, Christ paid the price to free us from our own sin. His death substitutes for our death, the penalty of our sins. Like the Israelites, believers receive an inheritance, but our inheritance is **eternal** (v.14). By imitating the faith and patience of Abraham, believers are assured that they will inherit the marvelous promises God has made (6:12; see the promises at 8:6–12).

9:16, 17 **Testament** is the same word translated *covenant* in v. 15. It means a legal will. Before the provisions of a will take effect, the one who made it must die.

9:18–21 The Mosaic covenant was ratified by **blood**, that is to say, death. It was not the death of the one making the covenant, but the death of the animals offered as a sacrifice to God (see Ex. 24:1–8).

9:22 **Almost** indicates that there were exceptions to blood purification (see Lev. 5:11–13), but that they were few in comparison with the central importance of sacrifices made for the remission of sins (see Lev. 17:11).

9:24 Christ's sacrifice was better than sacrifices made under the Mosaic covenant because Christ did not enter a man-made sanctuary, which was a copy; instead, He entered the true sanctuary, which is in heaven—the very **presence of God**.

9:25, 26 Christ's sacrifice was better than sacrifices made under the Mosaic covenant because He did not offer an annual sacrifice

of animals, but offered **Himself** once. **at the end of the ages:** The coming of Christ is the climax of the OT period.

9:27, 28 As men **die** once, so **Christ** died once—not like the repeated sacrifices of the Levitical system. Unlike men, Christ did not die and face judgment. He died once to appear a second time **for salvation** (1:14). Those who **eagerly wait for Him** are not necessarily all believers, but those who look for His return, those who are steadfast to the end.

10:1–4 **Not the very image** means "not the exact representation." **Perfect** refers to the removal of the consciousness of sins (v. 2; 8:12; 9:9). The sacrifices of the Mosaic covenant prefigured Christ's ultimate sacrifice of Himself. Therefore these imperfect sacrifices of mere animals could not completely purify the person who offered them. If they had been able to, these sacrifices would have **ceased**. Instead of thoroughly atoning for the sins of the people, the annual sacrifice on the Day of the Atonement was a visible reminder of the people's sins.

redemption

(Gk. *apolutrōsis*) (9:15; Rom. 3:24; Eph. 1:14; Col. 1:14) Strong's #629

Two related words, *lutrōsis* and *apolutrōsis*, are both translated *redemption* and are frequently used by the NT writers. The first word indicates the act of freeing or releasing by paying a ransom price; the second, the act of buying back by paying a ransom price. Christ paid the ransom price with His own blood (1 Pet. 1:18, 19) and thus freed us from the demands of the law and its curse on sin to become children of God (Gal. 3:13; 4:5).

have had no more consciousness of sins. ³But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year. ⁴For ^cit is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins.

Christ's Death Fulfills God's Will

⁵Therefore, when He came into the world, He said:

- ^d“Sacrifice and offering You did not desire,
But a body You have prepared for Me.
⁶ In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin
You had no pleasure.
⁷ Then I said, ‘Behold, I have come—
In the volume of the book it is
written of Me—
To do Your will, O God.’”

⁸Previously saying, “Sacrifice and offering, burnt offerings, and offerings for sin You did not desire, nor had pleasure in them” (which are offered according to the law), ⁹then He said, “Behold, I have come to do Your will, ² O God.” He takes away the first that He may establish the second. ^{10e}By that will we have been

4 ^c Mic. 6:6, 7
5 ^d Ps. 40:6-8 ★
9 ² NU, M omit
O God
10 ^e John 17:19;
[Eph. 5:26; Heb.
2:11; 10:14, 29;
13:12]

^f[Heb. 9:12] ³ set
apart
11 ^g Num. 28:3
12 ^h Col. 3:1 ★; Heb.
1:3 ⁱ Ps. 110:1
13 ^j Ps. 110:1 ★;
Heb. 1:13
14 ^k set apart
16 ^k Jer. 31:33,
34 ★; Heb. 8:10
17 ^j Jer. 31:34
18 ^l forgiveness
19 ^m [Eph. 2:18];
Heb. 4:16 ⁿ Heb.
9:8, 12 ^o confidence
20 ^o John 14:6;
[Heb. 7:24, 25]

³sanctified ^fthrough the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Christ's Death Perfects the Sanctified

¹¹And every priest stands ^gministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. ^{12h}But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down ⁱat the right hand of God, ¹³from that time waiting ^jtill His enemies are made His footstool. ¹⁴For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being ⁴sanctified.

¹⁵But the Holy Spirit also witnesses to us; for after He had said before,

^{16k}“This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds I will write them.”

¹⁷then He adds, ^l“Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.”

¹⁸Now where there is ⁵remission of these, there is no longer an offering for sin.

Hold Fast Your Confession

¹⁹Therefore, brethren, having ^mboldness ⁶to enter ⁿthe Holiest by the blood of Jesus, ²⁰by a new and ^oliving way which He consecrated for us, through the veil,

10:5-7 Therefore: Based on the inadequacy of animal sacrifices, a conclusion is drawn. **it is written of Me:** The author presents Ps. 40 as a messianic psalm, for only Christ, and not David, could have fulfilled the prophecies of the book, the OT. **To do Your will:** The OT prophets had warned the Israelites that sacrifices alone would not please God. He desired obedience as well (Ps. 51:16, 17; Is. 1:13-17; see also Mark 12:33). This messianic psalm indicates that Jesus' obedience to God the Father was one of the reasons His sacrifice was better than the OT sacrifices.

10:8, 9 The author explains Ps. 40, concluding that God **takes away the first**, meaning the Levitical sacrificial system, to **establish the second**, namely, the Son's obedient sacrifice. The verb translated *takes away* means “abolishes.” The imperfect sacrifices were abolished so that the perfect Sacrifice could impart true life.

10:10 Sanctified means “set apart.” Believers have been separated from their sins and set apart to God by the once-for-all sacrifice of Christ.

10:11, 12 The author of Hebrews contrasts the Levitical priests with Jesus, our High Priest. The Levitical priests always stood before God. There were no seats in the sanctuary, for the priests' job was never

done. There were always more sins for which to atone. In contrast, Christ **sat down** (1:3; 8:1) after offering Himself as a sacrifice. Sitting indicates that His work of atonement is finished. His final words on the Cross, “It is finished,” declare this spiritual reality (John 19:30).

10:14 The finished work of Christ in dying for sin once for all (v. 10) has **perfected** (v. 1) **forever those who are being sanctified**, that is, those who have been set apart to God (see v. 10). Notice that the sanctification spoken of in v. 10 is positional; it refers to our justification, the fact that we have been declared righteous. However in this verse, sanctification refers to the gradual process by which believers are being made more and more perfect.

10:16-18 If full and final forgiveness has been achieved so that God does not remember sin any longer (v. 17), then no further sacrifice for sin is necessary. To **remember sins no more** does not mean to forget, but not to hold sin against us any longer.

10:19-25 In these verses, the author of Hebrews demonstrates the relationship between faith, hope, and love. Faith in God leads believers to place their hope in His promises. Restoring a right relationship with God then prompts believers to restore their relationships with others. Love for God demonstrates itself in love for others. The author exhorts his readers to faith, hope, and love through three commands: “let us draw near” (v. 22); “let us hold fast” (v. 23); and “let us consider” (v. 24).

10:19 Therefore recalls the *therefore* of 4:16. The author has spent five chapters explaining the superiority of Christ's priesthood to the Levitical priesthood and the superiority of the New Covenant to the Mosaic covenant. Unlike the Israelites, who approached God at Mt. Sinai with fear and trembling (Ex. 20:18-21), believers can approach God with **boldness** (see 3:6; 4:16; 10:35) because we possess Christ's righteousness and not our own. The **Holiest** refers to the very presence of God. On this earth, most of us do not have immediate access to a president or monarch. But through Christ's **blood**, we have perpetual access to God Himself.

10:20 The OT high priest passed through a **veil** to get to the Most Holy Place. Now believers enter God's presence through Christ's **flesh**, meaning His sacrificial death.

new and living way

(Gk. *hodos prosphatos kai zōsa*) (10:20) Strong's #3598; 4372; 2532; 2198

The Greek word for new is *prospatos*, meaning “recently killed” or “freshly slain.” Because Christ shed His blood to prepare the way for us to enter the Most Holy Place, this way is “a freshly slain way,” a way ever fresh because of the eternal efficacy of Jesus' blood. At the same time, this is the living way, for this way leads to our source of spiritual life, namely God Himself. Therefore, this way, prepared by Jesus' death, leads to eternal life.

that is, His flesh, ²¹ and *having* a High Priest over the house of God, ²² let us ^p draw near with a true heart ^q in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. ²³ Let us hold fast the confession of *our* hope without wavering, for ^r He who promised *is* faithful. ²⁴ And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, ^{25s} not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as *is* the manner of some, but exhorting *one another*, and ^t so much the more as you see ^u the Day approaching.

The Just Live by Faith

²⁶ For ^v if we sin willfully ^w after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there ^x no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, ²⁷ but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and ^y fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries. ²⁸ Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three ^z witnesses. ^{29a} Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, ^b counted the blood of the covenant by which he was

²² ^p Heb. 7:19; 10:1
^q Eph. 3:12
²³ ^r 1 Cor. 1:9;
 10:13; 1 Thess. 5:24;
 Heb. 11:1
²⁵ ^s Acts 2:42
^t Rom. 13:11 ^u Phil.
 4:5
²⁶ ^v Num. 15:30
^w 2 Pet. 2:20 ^x Heb.
 6:6
²⁷ ^y Zeph. 1:18
²⁸ ^z Deut. 17:2-6;
 19:15; Matt. 18:16;
 Heb. 2:2
²⁹ ^a [Heb. 2:3]
^b 1 Cor. 11:29
^c [Matt. 12:31]
³⁰ ^d Deut. 32:35;
 Rom. 12:19 ^e Deut.
 32:36 ^f NU omits
says the Lord
³¹ ^f [Luke 12:5]
³² ^g Gal. 3:4;
 Heb. 6:9, 10
³³ ^h *enlightened*
³⁴ ^h 1 Cor. 4:9; Heb.
 12:4 ⁱ Phil. 1:7
³⁴ ⁱ 2 Tim. 1:16
³⁵ ⁱ Matt. 5:12 ^j Matt.
 6:20 ^j NU the
prisoners instead
of me in my chains
³⁶ ^j *possessions* ^k NU
 omits in heaven
³⁵ ^m Matt. 5:12
³⁶ ⁿ Luke 21:19;
 Heb. 12:1 ^o [Col.
 3:24]

sanctified a common thing, ^c and insulted the Spirit of grace? ³⁰ For we know Him who said, ^d "*Vengeance is Mine, I will repay*," ⁷ says the Lord. And again, ^e "*The Lord will judge His people*." ^{31f} It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

³² But ^g recall the former days in which, after you were ⁸ illuminated, you endured a great struggle with sufferings: ³³ partly while you were made ^h a spectacle both by reproaches and tribulations, and partly while ⁱ you became companions of those who were so treated; ³⁴ for you had compassion on ^j me ^j in my chains, and ^k joyfully accepted the plundering of your ^l goods, knowing that ⁱ you have a better and an enduring possession for yourselves ² in heaven. ³⁵ Therefore do not cast away your confidence, ^m which has great reward. ³⁶ⁿ For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, ^o you may receive the promise:

³⁷ "*For ^p yet a little while, And ^q He³ who is coming will come and will not ⁴ tarry.*"

³⁷ ^p Luke 18:8 ^q Hab. 2:3, 4 ☆; Heb. 10:25; Rev. 22:20 ³ Or that which ⁴ delay

10:21 Believers have a **High Priest** who, having been tempted Himself, can sympathize with their weaknesses and perfectly represent them before God (4:14, 15).

10:22 **Draw near** is the same word rendered *come* in 4:16. **Full assurance** means "certainty" (6:11). **our hearts sprinkled . . . our bodies washed:** Our consciences can be cleansed through the blood of Christ (9:14). Just as the high priest washed before entering the Most Holy Place (Lev. 16:3, 4), so believers are cleansed before they come before the Holy One.

10:23 **Confession of our hope** is the believer's confident expectation of the future. **Promised** here may refer to the promise of rest (4:1). If the believer does his or her part, there is no question that God will fulfill His part of the agreement (see 2 Tim. 2:11, 12).

10:24, 25 **Consider** means "to observe," "to contemplate," or "to have an intelligent insight into." Note that **love and good works** need to be stirred up; they do not just occur. The Greek word translated **stir up** has come into English as *paroxysm*, which means a "convulsion." In this context the Greek word speaks forcefully of the tremendous impact believers can have on each other. That is why the author exhorts the Hebrews to gather together. Evidently some believers had stopped attending the worship services of the church, perhaps because they feared persecution. The author does not use the usual Greek word for *church*, perhaps because the term had come to mean the spiritual, invisible body of believers. Instead he uses a compound form of the word *synagogue*, which specifically means the local, physical gathering of believers (see Ps. 40:9, 10; 42:4). **Exhorting** means coming alongside and inspiring another with the truth. The local assembly is where the gospel message is preached, but also where the Word of God is applied to the circumstances of our lives. **Approaching** may also be translated "at hand" (see Rom. 13:12; Phil. 4:5; James 5:8; 1 Pet. 4:7; Rev. 1:3). Knowing that Christ's return is imminent, the believers were to encourage each other even more to remain faithful to Him (3:13).

10:26 **sin willfully:** The reference here is not to an occasional act of sin (which can be confessed and forgiven; see 1 John 1:8, 9), but to a conscious rejection of God. The OT speaks in Num. 15:30, 31 of committing willful sin. A person who sinned presumptuously was to be cut off from the people. To sin deliberately **after** receiving the

knowledge of the truth is apostasy. If a Christian rejects God's provision for his or her salvation, there is no other remedy for sins (see also Num. 15:29-31), since forgiveness of sins can only be found in Christ's perfect sacrifice.

10:27 With no hope of forgiveness (v. 26), all that one can expect is **judgment**, described here as a **fiery indignation**. Those who choose to disobey God become His **adversaries** (see James 4:4).

10:28, 29 The specific sin in the OT that required **two or three witnesses** was idolatry (see Deut. 17:2-7). The judgment for idolatry was death by stoning. If idolatry was punished with physical death, **how much worse punishment** should someone receive who treats the word of Christ with disrespect or disdain? **Counted the blood . . . a common thing** means the blood of Christ is treated as no different from the blood of an ordinary man or the blood of an animal sacrifice. **Insulted the Spirit of grace** is a reference to the Holy Spirit, the agent of God's gracious gift of salvation. A believer who commits these offenses will be judged with a punishment worse than physical death.

10:30, 31 The author quotes two passages from Deut. 32 to support his claim that judgment belongs to the Lord and that God's people are not excused from God's judgment. **It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God** because there is no other sacrifice for sin than Christ's sacrifice on the Cross (v. 26), only a fearful expectation of judgment (v. 27). All sin not covered by the blood of Christ will result in great loss at the judgment seat (see 1 Cor. 3:15; 2 Cor. 5:10).

10:32, 33 To encourage his readers, the author urges them to **recall** their **former** endurance, which occurred right after they were **illuminated** or converted (6:9-12). They had endured even though they were ridiculed because of their faith.

10:34 The people to whom Hebrews was written had shown **compassion** on the author when he was in prison and had **joyfully accepted** economic hardship.

10:35 To **cast away one's confidence** is to lose conviction about the value of one's Christian commitment. For the recipients of Hebrews to return to the safety of Judaism would mean a loss of eternal **reward** at the judgment seat of Christ.

10:37, 38 These verses focus the attention of a person facing trial

38 Now^r the^s just shall live by faith;
But if anyone draws back,
My soul has no pleasure in him.”

39 But we are not of those ^swho draw back to ⁶perdition, but of those who ^tbelieve to the saving of the soul.

By Faith We Understand

11 Now faith is the ¹substance of things hoped for, the ²evidence ^aof things not seen. ²For by it the elders obtained a *good* testimony.

³By faith we understand that ^bthe ³worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.

Faith at the Dawn of History

⁴By faith ^cAbel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was

38 ^r Hab. 2:3, 4;
Rom. 1:17; Gal. 3:11
^s NU My just one
39 ^s 2 Pet. 2:20
^t Acts 16:31
⁶ destruction

CHAPTER 11

1 ^a Rom. 8:24;
[2 Cor. 4:18; 5:7];
Heb. 11:7, 27
¹ realization ² Or confidence
3 ^b Gen. 1:1; Ps.
33:6; [John 1:3];
2 Pet. 3:5 ² Or ages,
Gr. *aiones*, aeons
4 ^c Gen. 4:3-5; Matt.
23:35; 1 John 3:12

^d Gen. 4:8-10; Heb.
12:24
⁵ ^e Gen. 5:21-24
⁷ ^f Gen. 6:13-22
^g 1 Pet. 3:20 ^h Rom.
3:22
⁸ ⁱ Gen. 12:1-4; Acts
7:2-4

righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still ^dspeaks.

⁵By faith Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death, ^e“and was not found, because God had taken him”; for before he was taken he had this testimony, that he pleased God. ⁶But without faith *it is* impossible to please *Him*, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and *that* He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

⁷By faith ^fNoah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, ^gprepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of ^hthe righteousness which is according to faith.

Faithful Abraham

⁸By faith ⁱAbraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And

on the imminent return of the Lord and the need to endure **by faith** (3:12, 13).

10:39 Those who draw back are in danger of destruction. The writer is confident that he and his readers **believe to the saving of the soul**. Those who live by faith (v. 38) invest their physical lives for eternal dividends.

11:1 This verse is not a definition of **faith**, but a description of what faith does. **Substance** means “essence” or “reality.” Faith treats **things hoped for** as reality. **Evidence** means “proof” or “conviction.” Faith itself proves that what is unseen is real, such as the believer’s rewards at the return of Christ (see 2 Cor. 4:18).

11:2 The elders are the believers of the OT. **Good testimony** refers to God’s approval; He considered them righteous because of their faith (see v. 4, 5, 7).

11:3 worlds: Faith understands that the invisible God created the vast universe.

11:4 Abel’s sacrifice was acceptable to God because of his **faith**, and was therefore declared **righteous**. Evidently Cain offered his sacrifices without faith (see Gen. 4). Abel **still speaks** to us because his righteous deeds have been recorded in Scripture.

11:6 The word **comes** is used repeatedly in Hebrews to refer to the privilege of drawing near to God (see 4:16; 7:25; 10:1, 22). Here the author of Hebrews explains that faith is mandatory for those who approach Him (see 10:22). **rewarder:** God rewards not only those who seek Him, but those who do good works in the Holy Spirit’s power (see Rev. 22:12).

11:7 Noah had never **seen** (v. 1) the flood God revealed to him. Yet he believed God in spite of this and heeded His warnings. His faith not only saved him from the deluge but also from God’s judgment, for He became an **heir of righteousness**.

11:8 Abraham did not know **where he was going**, yet he still placed his trust in God. Faith means obediently stepping into the

Heroes of Faith

The Jewish Christians to whom the Epistle to the Hebrews is addressed were demoralized and discouraged. Christianity had proven difficult for them. It was radical. It set aside centuries of tradition. It emphasized a new but troubling kind of spiritual freedom. In short, it incurred the wrath of the Jewish religious establishment.

Many converts were ready to turn back and to leave the uneasy, uncharted waters of faith for the comfortable, familiar life of works and moral effort. This was the choice they faced: depending on the Law or following Jesus, trying to appease God or trusting in Him, a complicated religious system or a simple relationship with the living God through Christ.

After reminding these immature believers of the superiority of Jesus Christ, the writer of Hebrews, beginning in 10:19, demonstrates for them the superiority of faith. Faith means we cannot see the outcome, we are not sure what lies ahead (11:1). But we are convinced of the reality of God (11:6). In other words, “We’re not sure what the future holds, but we know Who holds the future.” Faith means clinging to the hope that God will eventually triumph; He will come back to earth in judgment, to reward those who have sought after Him (11:6). And so we obey. We do God’s bidding, even when submission is hard.

It is the response of obedience that qualifies the characters in ch. 11 as people of great faith. Abraham and Sarah believed God; consequently, they obeyed Him, regardless of the consequences. It is this kind of willing trust that pleases God (11:6). Anything less will not do.

Those who do not have faith cannot see past the physical world around them. They are limited by their temporal circumstances and are blind to what God is doing. But those who open their spiritual eyes can see the spiritual realities which transcend this world. Their hope is in God’s strength and in His faithfulness. In that hope they find the strength to endure. When it comes to faith, the world scoffs. Faith, at best, seems like a great waste; at worst, it seems almost suicidal. Do we really want to give up all the pleasures of this world for something elusive and ethereal?

Faith is never easy. But the more convinced we are of the reality of an all-good, all-powerful God, the more our trust will grow, and the less we will be overwhelmed by doubts and temptations.



he went out, not knowing where he was going. ⁹By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as *in* a foreign country, ^jdwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, ^kthe heirs with him of the same promise; ¹⁰for he waited for ^lthe city which has foundations, ^mwhose builder and maker is God.

¹¹By faith ⁿSarah herself also received strength to conceive seed, and ^oshe ⁴bore a child when she was past the age, because she judged Him ^pfaithful who had promised. ¹²Therefore from one man, and him as good as ^qdead, were born as *many* as the ^rstars of the sky in multitude—innumerable as the sand which is by the seashore.

The Heavenly Hope

¹³These all died in faith, ^snot having received the ^tpromises, but ^uhaving seen them afar off ⁵were assured of them, embraced *them* and ^vconfessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. ¹⁴For those who say such things ^wdeclare plainly that they seek a homeland. ¹⁵And truly if they had called to mind ^xthat *country* from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return. ¹⁶But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly *country*. Therefore God is not ashamed ^yto be called their God, for He has ^zprepared a city for them.

The Faith of the Patriarchs

¹⁷By faith Abraham, ^awhen he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had

⁹ / Gen. 12:8; 13:3, 18; 18:1, 9 ^k Heb. 6:17
¹⁰ ^l / Heb. 12:22; 13:14] ^m [Rev. 21:10]
¹¹ ⁿ Gen. 17:19; 18:11-14; 21:1, 2
^o Luke 1:36 ^p Heb. 10:23 ⁴ NU omits *she bore a child*
¹² ^q Rom. 4:19
^r Gen. 15:5; 22:17; 32:12
¹³ ^s Heb. 11:39
^t Gen. 12:7 ^u John 8:56; Heb. 11:27
^v Gen. 23:4; 47:9; 1 Chr. 29:15; Ps. 39:12; Eph. 2:19; 1 Pet. 1:17; 2:11
⁵ NU, M omit *were assured of them*
¹⁴ ^w Heb. 13:14
¹⁵ ^x Gen. 11:31
¹⁶ ^y Gen. 26:24; 28:13; Ex. 3:6, 15; 4:5
^z [John 14:2; Heb. 11:10; [Rev. 21:2]
¹⁷ ^a Gen. 22:1-14; James 2:21
¹⁸ ^b Gen. 21:12 ★; Rom. 9:7 ^c to
¹⁹ ^c Rom. 4:17
²⁰ ^d Gen. 27:26-40
²¹ ^e Gen. 48:1, 5, 16, 20
²² ^f Gen. 50:24, 25; Ex. 13:19
²³ ^g Ex. 2:1-3 ^h Ex. 1:16, 22
²⁴ ⁱ Ex. 2:11-15
²⁵ ^j temporary
²⁶ / Heb. 13:13
^k Rom. 8:18; 2 Cor. 4:17 ⁸ reviling because of ⁹ NU, M of
²⁷ ^l Ex. 10:28
²⁸ ^m Ex. 12:21
²⁹ ⁿ Ex. 14:22-29; Jude 5

received the promises offered up his only begotten *son*, ¹⁶of whom it was said, ^b*“In Isaac your seed shall be called,”* ¹⁹concluding that God ^cwas able to raise him up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense.

²⁰By faith ^dIsaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come.

²¹By faith Jacob, when he was dying, ^eblessed each of the sons of Joseph, and worshiped, *leaning* on the top of his staff.

²²By faith ^fJoseph, when he was dying, made mention of the departure of the children of Israel, and gave instructions concerning his bones.

The Faith of Moses

²³By faith ^gMoses, when he was born, was hidden three months by his parents, because they saw *he was* a beautiful child; and they were not afraid of the king's ^hcommand.

²⁴By faith ⁱMoses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, ²⁵choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the ^jpassing pleasures of sin, ²⁶esteeming ^jthe ⁸reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures ⁹in Egypt; for he looked to the ^kreward.

²⁷By faith ^lhe forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured as seeing Him who is invisible. ²⁸By faith ^mhe kept the Passover and the sprinkling of blood, lest he who destroyed the first-born should touch them.

²⁹By faith ⁿthey passed through the Red Sea as by dry *land*, *whereas* the Egyptians, attempting to do so, were drowned.

unknown (v. 1). Abraham did this, and God considered him righteous because of it (Gen. 15:6; Rom. 4:1-12).

11:10 The city here is the New Jerusalem (see Rev. 21:2, 10). Abraham lived in the land waiting for the future yet unseen New Jerusalem.

11:11, 12 Though the Book of Genesis does not explicitly say so, Sarah evidently believed that nothing was too hard for the Lord (see Gen. 18:15). As a result, God blessed her with the **promised** son, though she was **past the age** of child-bearing.

11:13, 14 These all refers to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Sarah (vv. 8, 9, 11), who **died** before taking possession of the land or seeing any of the other provisions of God's covenant. Nevertheless, they endured in the faith, even to the end of their lives. **strangers and pilgrims on the earth:** These men and women of faith knew that this world was temporary, that their eternal home would be with God.

11:15 The patriarchs and Sarah did not **return** to Ur, even though they could have if they had wanted to. The recipients of Hebrews were to follow the patriarchs' example and refuse to return to the religion of their ancestors, a religious system that no longer provided atonement for sin (see 8:7-13). Similarly, present-day believers should refuse to return to the attractions of this world (see 2 Tim. 2:3, 4; 4:10).

11:17-19 When **Abraham** was **tested**, he believed that God could **raise** Isaac **from the dead** (see Gen. 22:5) if necessary. The incident is figurative of what God has done for us. Isaac was as

good as dead, but God provided a ram to sacrifice in his place (Gen. 22:9-14). With God everything is possible. He is the Almighty, and His Son has triumphed over death (see John 11:38-44; 1 Cor. 15:54-57; Rev. 1:18).

11:20-22 Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph all believed until the end of their lives in the unseen future God had promised.

11:23 The **parents** of Moses had faith in God in the midst of opposition.

11:24-28 Moses believed God by refusing a high position in Pharaoh's court. Instead, he chose suffering, forsook Egypt, and instituted the Passover.

11:26 The **reproach of Christ** refers to the earthly disgrace Christ received. Like Christ, Moses chose to suffer the indignities associated with God's people, instead of embracing the worldly pleasures of Pharaoh's court. The possibility of **reward** is the most frequently mentioned motivation for enduring in the faith (for example, see Matt. 5:10-12; 16:24-27; 1 Cor. 3:12-15; 2 Cor. 4:16-18; 2 Tim. 2:11-13; 1 John 2:28; Rev. 22:12).

11:27 **forsook Egypt:** Some commentators interpret this as a reference to Moses' flight to Midian. However, the mention of **not fearing the wrath of the king** in this verse fits the events of the Exodus better. At that time Moses showed true courage, a resolute faith in the Lord (see Ex. 14:13, 14).

11:28 God told Moses to sprinkle **blood** on the doorposts. Moses believed God's word, heeded His warning, and as a result the first-born of every Israelite family was saved (Ex. 12:1-13).

By Faith They Overcame

³⁰ By faith ^o the walls of Jericho fell down after they were encircled for seven days. ³¹ By faith ^p the harlot Rahab did not perish with those who ^l did not believe, when ^q she had received the spies with peace.

³² And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of ^r Gideon and ^s Barak and ^t Samson and ^u Jephthah, also of ^v David and ^w Samuel and the prophets: ³³ who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, ^x stopped the mouths of lions, ³⁴ quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. ³⁵ ^z Women received their dead raised to life again.

Others were ^a tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. ³⁶ Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and ^b of chains and imprisonment. ³⁷ ^c They were stoned, they were sawn in two, ² were tempted, were slain with the sword. ^d They wandered about ^e in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented— ³⁸ of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, ^f in dens and caves of the earth.

³⁹ And all these, ^g having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, ⁴⁰ God having provided something better for us, that they should not be ^h made perfect apart from us.

The Race of Faith

12 Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, ^a let us lay aside every weight,

³⁰ ^o Josh. 6:20
³¹ ^p Josh. 2:9;
 6:23; James 2:25
^q Josh. 2:1 ¹ were
 disobedient
³² ^r Judg. 6:11; 7:1-
 25 ^s Judg. 4:6-24
^t Judg. 13:24-16:31
^u Judg. 11:1-29; 12:1-
 7 ^v 1 Sam. 16:17;
 17 ^w 1 Sam. 7:9-14
³³ ^x Judg. 14:6;
 1 Sam. 17:34; Dan.
 6:22
³⁴ ^y Dan. 3:23-28
³⁵ ^z 1 Kin. 17:22;
 2 Kin. 4:35-37
^a Acts 22:25
³⁶ ^b Gen. 39:20;
 1 Kin. 22:27; 2 Chr.
 18:26; Jer. 20:2;
 37:15
³⁷ ^c 1 Kin. 21:13;
 2 Chr. 24:21; Acts
 7:58 ^d 2 Kin. 1:8;
 Matt. 3:4 ^e 1 Kin.
 19:13, 19; 2 Kin. 2:8,
 13; Zech. 13:4 ² NU
 omits were tempted
³⁸ ^f 1 Kin. 18:4,
 13; 19:9
³⁹ ^g Heb. 11:2, 13
⁴⁰ ^h Heb. 5:9

CHAPTER 12

¹ ^a Col. 3:8 ^b 1 Cor.
 9:24; Gal. 2:2; Heb.
 10:39 ^c Rom. 12:12;
 Heb. 10:36
² ^d Luke 24:26 ^e Ps.
 69:7, 19 ^f Phil.
 2:8; [Heb. 2:9] ¹ Ps.
 110:1 ¹ originator
² perfecter
³ ^g Matt. 10:24
^h Gal. 6:9; Heb. 12:5
⁴ ⁱ [1 Cor. 10:13]
⁵ ^j Job 5:17; Prov.
 3:11, 12 ³ discipline
⁶ ^k Ps. 94:12; Rev.
 3:19
⁷ ^l Deut. 8:5; 2 Sam.
 7:14 ^m Prov. 13:24;
 19:18; 23:13 ⁴ NU, M

and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and ^b let us run ^c with endurance the race that is set before us, ² looking unto Jesus, the ¹ author and ² finisher of our faith, ^d who for the joy that was set before Him ^e endured the cross, despising the shame, and ^f has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

The Discipline of God

³ For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, ^h lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls. ⁴ ⁱ You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin. ⁵ And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons:

j “My son, do not despise the
³ chastening of the LORD,
 Nor be discouraged when you are
 rebuked by Him;
⁶ For ^k whom the LORD loves He
 chastens,
 And scourges every son whom He
 receives.”

⁷ ^l If ⁴ you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what ^m son is there whom a father does not chasten? ⁸ But if you are without chastening, ⁿ of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons. ⁹ Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected us, and we paid them respect. Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to ^o the Father of spirits

*It is for discipline that you endure; God
 8 ⁿ 1 Pet. 5:9 9 ^o Job 12:10]*

11:30 It took **faith** for the warriors of Israel to destroy the walled city of **Jericho** by such unconventional means. Yet this act of faith brought the results they desired; God gave them victory over their enemies (Josh. 6).

11:35 The reference to **women who received their dead** is probably a reference to the raising of the son of the widow of Zarephath (1 Kin. 17:17-24) and of the Shunammite woman (2 Kin. 4:32-37). But the author of Hebrews also points out that not all who had faith won victories, at least not in the same hour. **tortured**: This is usually understood to be an allusion to the heroic martyrs of Maccabean times, who were well known. **A better resurrection** is a reference to a richer resurrection, an abundant entrance into the kingdom (see 2 Pet. 1:11), which is our eternal reward.

11:37 Zechariah was **stoned** (2 Chr. 24:20, 21). According to Jewish tradition, the prophet Isaiah was **sawn in two**. Urijah was **slain with the sword** (see Jer. 26:20-23). **Wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins** is probably a reference to Elijah (see 2 Kin. 1:8). **11:39, 40 Made perfect** means “made complete.” This completion, the realization of all of God’s promises in Christ’s coming kingdom, awaits all believers.

12:1 The **cloud of witnesses** refers to the people of faith mentioned in ch. 11. They are not actually spectators watching us; they are witnesses testifying to the truth of the faith (11:2, 4-6). **Weight** is anything that hinders a runner.

12:2 **Looking** here means “fixing one’s eyes trustingly.” We need to consistently focus on Christ instead of our own circumstances. **finisher**: Christ has done everything necessary for us to endure in our faith. He is our example and model, for He focused on the **joy that was set before Him**. His attention was not on the agonies of the Cross, but on the crown; not on the suffering, but the reward.

12:3 **Consider** here involves the idea of comparison, as an accountant would compare the various columns of a balance sheet. Believers should compare their sufferings to the torture Christ endured on their behalf (v. 4).

12:4 **not yet resisted to bloodshed**: Christ died (v. 3); but the community that received the letter to the Hebrews had not yet suffered deadly persecutions.

12:5, 6 Proverbs 3:11, 12 teaches that divine discipline demonstrates divine love. **Scourges** means “whips,” and is used figuratively of punishment. In the context of these verses, this discipline includes persecution (vv. 3, 4).

12:7 **for what son**: Sons are naturally disciplined out of love by their fathers. They should accept and learn from this discipline. In the same way, God disciplines us because He wants to make us better.

12:8 In Roman society an **illegitimate** son was one who had no inheritance rights.

12:9 Believers should not only endure God’s discipline, they should **readily be in subjection** to their heavenly Father.

and live? ¹⁰For they indeed for a few days chastened *us* as seemed *best* to them, but He for *our* profit, ¹¹that *we* may be partakers of His holiness. ¹²Now no ¹³chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields ¹⁴the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

Renew Your Spiritual Vitality

¹²Therefore ¹³strengthen the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees, ¹⁴and make straight paths for your feet,

¹⁰ ^p Lev. 11:44
¹¹ ^q Is. 32:17; 2 Tim. 4:8; James 3:17, 18
⁵ discipline
¹² ^r Is. 35:3

¹⁴ ^s Ps. 34:14
^t Matt. 5:8; [Heb. 9:28]
¹⁵ ^u 2 Cor. 6:1; Gal. 5:4; Heb. 4:1 ^v Deut. 29:18
¹⁶ ^w [1 Cor. 6:13-18] ^x Gen. 25:33
⁶ godless
¹⁷ ^y Gen. 27:30-40

so that what is lame may not be dislocated, but rather be healed.
^{14s} Pursue peace with all *people*, and holiness, ^twithout which no one will see the Lord: ¹⁵looking carefully lest anyone ^ufall short of the grace of God; lest any ^vroot of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled; ¹⁶lest there *be* any ^wfornicator or ⁶profligate person like Esau, ^xwho for one morsel of food sold his birthright. ¹⁷For you know that afterward, when he wanted to inherit the blessing, he was ^yrejected, for

12:10, 11 our profit: Although fathers discipline for awhile as they see fit, God disciplines us with our good welfare in mind. With every trial, God is fashioning us into a holy people, set apart for His good purposes (see v. 14; 10:10). **The peaceable fruit of righteousness** suggests that the result of God's **chastening** is peace and righteousness.
12:12, 13 Borrowing the language of Is. 35:3, the author admonishes his readers to renew their strength so that they can endure the race of faith (see v. 1).
12:15-17 Believers pursuing peace and practical righteousness

(v. 14) should watch for three dangers: (1) falling **short of God's grace**—that is, refusing Christ's gracious offer of salvation and His provision for their needs (see 4:16); (2) allowing a **root of bitterness** to grow in their assembly—perhaps allowing idol worshipers to remain in the church (see Deut. 29:18); and (3) becoming sexually immoral or irreligious. Esau illustrates those who are irreligious. Under the Law, the eldest son would receive a double inheritance (see Deut. 21:17). Esau lost his inheritance, which included God's gracious promises, by despising it and valuing the pleasure of food over it (Gen. 25:34).

The Imperative of Faith	
What is faith?	• Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen (11:1).
Why is faith important?	• Without faith it is impossible to please God (11:6).
In what does faith believe?	• Faith believes that God is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him (11:6).
What does faith look like in a person's life?	• Abel offered a costly sacrifice (11:4). • Enoch lived in a way that pleased God (11:5). • Noah obeyed divine warnings and built a giant ark (11:7). • Abraham left Ur at God's calling and went out, not knowing where he was going (11:8). • Sarah bore Isaac in her old age (11:11). • Abraham was willing to offer up Isaac, his only son, trusting that God was able to raise him up (11:17-19). • Isaac blessed his sons and exhorted them to obey the covenant (11:20). • Jacob likewise reminded his sons of God's promises (11:21). • Joseph expressed his confidence that God would bring the Israelites out of Egypt (11:22). • Moses' parents refused to carry out the commands of Pharaoh to kill their child (11:23). • Moses turned his back on the passing pleasures of sin and sided with the downtrodden children of Israel, leading them out of Egypt and obediently carrying out the difficult commands of God (11:24-29). • The Israelites, led by Joshua, trusted God to give them victory over the city of Jericho (11:30). • Rahab believed in the power of God and helped the Israelite spies (11:31). • Many other Old Testament people of faith trusted God for power and victory and refused to compromise their faith in God, even in the midst of life-threatening circumstances (11:32-38).
What happens to the faithful?	• Some died without having received the promises (11:13). • Some have to find consolation in the truth that they will not realize the full blessings of God until they enter heaven (11:14-16). • Some experience miraculous deliverance (11:33-35). • Others, despite their implicit trust in God, experience torture, mockings, scourgings, imprisonment, stonings, destitution, affliction, and torment (11:35-38).
What is God's verdict on those who faithfully endure?	• They are those of whom the world is not worthy (11:38).
How should the lives of faithful believers affect us?	• We should be motivated to lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and . . . run with endurance the race that is set before us (12:1).

he found no place for repentance, though he sought it diligently with tears.

The Glorious Company

¹⁸For you have not come ⁷to ^zthe mountain that may be touched and that burned with fire, and to blackness and ⁸darkness and tempest, ¹⁹and the sound of a trumpet and the voice of words, so that those who heard it ^abegged that the word should not be spoken to them anymore. ²⁰(For they could not endure what was commanded: ^b*“And if so much as a beast touches the mountain, it shall be stoned ⁹or shot with an arrow.”*) ²¹And so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, ^c*“I am exceedingly afraid and trembling.”*)

²²But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, ²³to the ¹general assembly and church of ^dthe firstborn ^ewho are registered in heaven, to God ^fthe Judge of all, to the spirits of just men ^gmade perfect, ²⁴to Jesus ^hthe Mediator of the new covenant, and to ⁱthe blood of sprinkling that speaks better things ^jthan that of Abel.

Hear the Heavenly Voice

²⁵See that you do not refuse Him who speaks. For ^kif they did not escape who

18 ^z Ex. 19:12, 16; 20:18; Deut. 4:11; 5:22 ⁷ NU to that which ⁸ NU gloom 19 ^a Ex. 20:18-26; Deut. 5:25; 18:16 20 ^b Ex. 19:12, 13 ⁹ NU, M omit the rest of v. 20. 21 ^c Deut. 9:19 23 ^d [James 1:18] ^e Luke 10:20 ^f Gen. 18:25; Ps. 50:6; 94:2 ^g [Phil. 3:12] ¹ *festal gathering* 24 ^h 1 Tim. 2:5; Heb. 8:6; 9:15 ⁱ Ex. 24:8 ^j Gen. 4:10; Heb. 11:4 25 ^k Heb. 2:2, 3 26 ¹ Hag. 2:6 ² NU will shake 27 ^m [Is. 34:4; 54:10; 65:17; Rom. 8:19, 21]; 1 Cor. 7:31; Heb. 1:10 28 ⁿ Heb. 13:15, 21 ³ M omits may 29 ^o Ex. 24:17

CHAPTER 13

1 ^a Rom. 12:10 2 ^b Matt. 25:35; Rom. 12:13 ^c Gen. 18:1-22; 19:1 3 ^d Matt. 25:36; Heb. 10:34 4 ^e Prov. 5:18, 19 ^f 1 Cor. 6:9; Gal. 5:19, 21; 1 Thess. 4:6 5 ^g Gen. 28:15; Deut. 31:6, 8; Josh. 1:5

refused Him who spoke on earth, much more *shall we not escape* if we turn away from Him who *speaks from heaven*, ²⁶whose voice then shook the earth; but now He has promised, saying, ¹*“Yet once more I² shake not only the earth, but also heaven.”* ²⁷Now this, *“Yet once more,”* indicates the ^mremoval of those things that are being shaken, as of things that are made, that the things which cannot be shaken may remain.

²⁸Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we ³may ⁿserve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. ²⁹For ^oour God *is a consuming fire*.

Concluding Moral Directions

13 Let ^abrotherly love continue. ^{2b}Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so *doing* ^csome have unwittingly entertained angels. ^{3d}Remember the prisoners as if chained with them—those who are mistreated—since you yourselves are in the body also.

^{4e}Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; ^fbut fornicators and adulterers God will judge.

⁵Let your conduct ^{be} without covetousness; ^{be} content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, ^g*“I will never leave you nor forsake you.”* ⁶So we may boldly say:

12:18–24 In these verses, the author of Hebrews contrasts the Mosaic covenant with the New Covenant by contrasting two mountains: Mt. Sinai and Mt. Zion. At Mt. Sinai, the Israelites received the Law from God with fear and trembling, for God displayed at that time His awesome power (see Ex. 19:10—20:26). In contrast, Christian believers have come to a heavenly Jerusalem on Mt. Zion through Jesus’ blood. This mountain is a celebration of the Holy One, attended by angels, believers, and righteous people. The author makes the contrast between the two covenants vivid, and then once again exhorts his readers not to reject Christ’s offer of salvation (see vv. 25–29).

12:23 In the OT the **firstborn** received a double inheritance (see Deut. 21:17). These then are heirs who are in heaven awaiting the kingdom (1:14). **Just men made perfect** refers to all believers who have died. They are just because they have been justified, and perfect because they are now “complete” in heaven.

12:24 The blood of **Abel** cried out for revenge (see Gen. 4:10); **the blood** of Christ speaks of redemption.

12:25 **Him who speaks from heaven** is Christ, who spoke on earth and is now in heaven. **much more:** Greater revelation means greater responsibility (2:1–4). If the Israelites were judged for not believing in God’s promises (Num. 14:20–25), we too will be judged for disbelief.

12:26–28 **The earth** shook at Mt. Sinai. **The earth and heaven** will shake in the latter days (see Matt. 24:29). But the kingdom of God will not be shaken, for it will endure throughout all eternity (Luke 18:29).

12:29 **our God is a consuming fire:** The author concludes his lengthy warning to those who are tempted to abandon the faith (2:1—12:29) with a vivid description of God’s judgment (Deut. 4:24). The Lord will judge His people (10:27, 30).

13:1 **continue:** The recipients of this letter had practiced **brotherly love** (see 6:10); but the author feared that the idea of returning to some form of Judaism might be hindering them from encouraging each other in the faith (10:24, 25).

13:2 **Entertained angels** is a reference to men in the OT who encountered heavenly beings. These men included Abraham (see Gen. 18), Lot (see Gen. 19), Gideon (see Judg. 6), and Manoah (see Judg. 13). The idea is that when you practice hospitality you may be helping a messenger of God without realizing it.

13:3 **Remember the prisoners** probably refers to believers who were being persecuted for the faith. The recipients of this letter had remembered those who were suffering (10:32–34). **In the body** is not a reference to the body of Christ, but to the physical body. The recipients of this letter were vulnerable to similar persecution as long as they were alive.

13:5, 6 **Covetousness** is addressed in the last of the Ten Commandments (see Ex. 19:17). This attitude destroys a person’s inheritance in the kingdom (see 1 Cor. 6:9, 10). **I will never leave you nor forsake you:** This quotation is one of the most emphatic statements in the

Mediator

(Gk. *mesitēs*) (8:6; 9:15; 12:24; Gal. 3:19, 20; 1 Tim. 2:5) Strong’s #3316

This Greek word means “a go-between,” an intermediary between two parties. Paul describes Moses as a mediator of the first covenant: he acted as a liaison between God and the Israelites, communicating the obligations of the covenant to Israel and pleading the Israelites’ case before God (see Gal. 3:19, 20). In a similar way, Jesus is the Mediator of the New Covenant. He established it through His own death, commissioning His disciples to preach the Good News. Now He sits at the right hand of God interceding for us (7:25).

*^h“The LORD is my helper;
I will not fear.
What can man do to me?”*

Concluding Religious Directions

⁷Remember those who ¹rule over you, who have spoken the word of God to you, whose faith follow, considering the outcome of *their* conduct. ⁸Jesus Christ is ⁱthe same yesterday, today, and forever. ⁹Do not be carried ²about with various and strange doctrines. For *it is* good that the heart be established by grace, not with foods which have not profited those who have been occupied with them.

¹⁰We have an altar from which those who serve the tabernacle have no right to eat. ¹¹For the bodies of those animals, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned outside the camp. ¹²Therefore Jesus also, that He might ³sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered outside the gate. ¹³Therefore let us go forth to Him, outside the camp, bearing ^jHis reproach. ¹⁴For here we have no continuing city, but we seek the one to come. ¹⁵^kTherefore by Him let us continually offer ^lthe sacrifice of praise to God, that is, ^mthe fruit of *our* lips, ⁴giving thanks to His

⁶ ⁿPs. 27:1; 118:6
⁷ ¹lead
⁸ ¹[John 8:58];
2 Cor. 1:19; Heb.
1:12
⁹ ²NU, M away
¹² ³set apart
¹³ ¹1 Pet. 4:14
¹⁵ ^kEph. 5:20 ¹Lev.
7:12 ^mIs. 57:19;
Hos. 14:2 ⁴Lit.
confessing

¹⁶ ⁿRom. 12:13
² 2 Cor. 9:12; Phil.
4:18
¹⁷ ^pPhil. 2:29 ^qIs.
62:6; Ezek. 3:17;
Acts 20:28 ⁵lead
¹⁸ ^rEph. 6:19 ⁺Acts
23:1
²⁰ ^tRom. 5:1, 2, 10;
15:33 ^uPs. 16:10, 11;
Hos. 6:2 ⁺Rom.
4:24 ^vPs. 23:1; Is.
40:11; 63:11; John
10:11; 1 Pet. 2:25;
5:4 ^wZech. 9:11;
Heb. 10:29
²¹ ^xPhil. 2:13
⁶perfect ⁷NU, M us

name. ¹⁶ⁿBut do not forget to do good and to share, for ^owith such sacrifices God is well pleased.

¹⁷^pObeys those who ⁵rule over you, and be submissive, for ^qthey watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.

Prayer Requested

¹⁸^rPray for us; for we are confident that we have ^sa good conscience, in all things desiring to live honorably. ¹⁹But I especially urge *you* to do this, that I may be restored to you the sooner.

Benediction, Final Exhortation, Farewell

²⁰Now may ^tthe God of peace ^uwho brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, ^vthat great Shepherd of the sheep, ^wthrough the blood of the everlasting covenant, ²¹make you ⁶complete in every good work to do His will, ^xworking in ⁷you what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom *be* glory forever and ever. Amen.

²²And I appeal to you, brethren, bear with the word of exhortation, for I have

NT. In Greek it contains two double negatives, similar to saying in English, “I will never, ever, ever forsake you.” Jesus uses the same technique to express the certainty of eternal life for believers (see John 10:28).

13:8 the same: The unchanging nature of the Son was mentioned at the beginning of this book (1:12). **yesterday:** Christ gave His grace to the former leaders who trusted Him (see v. 7). **today, and forever:** Christ’s grace is presently and permanently available to all who believe in Him.

13:9 Strange doctrines implies ideas foreign to the gospel message. Many of the ideas which the author of Hebrews was confronting were Jewish in origin—pertaining to ritual observances, sacrificial feasts, and various laws identifying what was clean and unclean.

13:10, 11 The word **altar** is used figuratively of the sacrifice of Christ. On the Day of Atonement, the high priest did not have the **right to eat** the sacrificed animal because it had atoned for the people’s sins. Instead, it was **burned outside the camp**. The believer has a sacrifice, Jesus Christ. He atoned for the sins of humanity with His death on the Cross. But unlike the high priests of the OT, believers receive their sustenance from Christ in a symbolic way, by believing in Him (see John 6:41–58).

13:12, 13 To be **outside the gate** was considered a disgrace to Jews because it meant being separated from the community. The author exhorts his readers to take on Christ’s **reproach** or disgrace (see Moses’ example in 11:26). In essence, the author’s command to **go forth** to Christ was a command to abandon Judaism. Anyone found with Christ—outside of the city gate—would be considered outside the Jewish community.

13:14 Believers do not have a permanent home on earth. They seek the eternal **city** which is in an eternal kingdom (11:10, 16; 12:22, 28).

13:15, 16 Although the OT sacrifices are now obsolete (8:13), believers are to offer spiritual sacrifices, which include their **praise**, their possessions, and even their lives (see Rom. 12:1, 2).

13:17 The current leaders would give an account of their service at the judgment seat of Christ (see Rom. 14:10–12).

13:18, 19 A good conscience is one that is not accusing. **that I may be restored to you:** Something hindered the author’s coming, though it was probably not prison (see v. 23).

13:20 The title **God of peace** is used six times in the NT (see also Rom. 15:33; 1 Cor. 14:33; 2 Cor. 13:11; Phil. 4:9; 1 Thess. 5:23). Whenever the title was used, some sort of difficulty existed among the recipients of the letter. This is also the case here: The readers of Hebrews were wondering whether they should reject Christianity and return to Judaism in the face of increasing persecution. Jesus is the **great Shepherd of the sheep**, having laid down His life for them (see John 10:15) and now continuing to make intercession for them (7:25). The New Covenant is an **everlasting covenant**; it will never become obsolete like the Mosaic covenant (8:13).

13:22 The word of exhortation refers to the whole Epistle to the Hebrews. It is an exhortation not to depart from the living God (3:12), but to go on to maturity (6:1) and endure in the faith to the end (3:6, 14). **In few words** is used as a comparison to what more could have been said (5:11; 9:5).

covenant

(Gk. *diathēkē*) (9:15, 16, 17, 18, 20; 13:20; Matt. 26:28; Gal. 3:17) Strong’s #1242

The word *diathēkē* can refer either to an agreement or a will (or testament). In 9:15–20, the author of Hebrews explains why the second covenant (8:7) has succeeded the first one made at Mt. Sinai. The explanation employs an analogy to a “will.” Thus the author uses the word *diathēkē* throughout the section, employing the two different meanings of the word and tying them together. Just as the stipulations of a will go into effect when a person dies, so Christ died to initiate the New Covenant, the covenant that frees us from bondage to the first covenant.

written to you in few words. ²³Know that *our* brother Timothy has been set free, with whom I shall see you if he comes shortly.

²⁴⁸ *lead*

²⁴Greet all those who ⁸rule over you, and all the saints. Those from Italy greet you.
²⁵Grace *be* with you all. Amen.

13:23 Timothy was a well-known associate of Paul. Two NT letters are addressed by name to him. **Set free** probably means released from prison.
13:24 Those from Italy may refer to people living in Italy, or else to people from there who were now living elsewhere. Because of

its ambiguity, this phrase does not reveal the location of the author or of the recipients.
13:25 In light of what has been said about **grace** in the letter (see v. 9; 2:9; 4:16; 10:29; 12:15), this closing is particularly appropriate.

THE EPISTLE OF JAMES



FROM FIXING A CAR to wallpapering a bedroom, “how-to” books explain how things are done, with helpful pointers and colorful illustrations. The Epistle of James is the “how-to” book of the Christian life. It is one of the most practical books in the New Testament because it offers instruction and exhortation to Christians who are experiencing problems, as all of us do.

As if the trials themselves were not bad enough, James points out the dangers that come with them. Besides the obvious pitfall of failing to place our trust in the Lord and thus not enduring, James speaks of prejudice, improper speech, judging one another, leaving God out of our plans, and even bitterness. Like the author of a “how-to” book, James explains in a few words the responsibilities of a Christian, while supplying apt illustrations from real-life categories such as shipping and horseback riding.

Author and Date The author of this epistle identifies himself with the phrase “James, a bondservant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ.” James is a common name in the New Testament. The accompanying phrase could have described any Christian, suggesting that this particular James must have been a church leader who needed no further introduction.

Four men named “James” are mentioned in the New Testament: (1) James, the son of Zebedee and brother of John (see Matt. 4:21), a disciple and apostle of Christ; (2) James, the son of Alphaeus (see Matt. 10:3), called “the Less” or “the Younger,” also one of the apostles; (3) James, the father of an apostle named Judas (see Luke 6:16); and (4) James, the half brother of Jesus, traditionally called “the Just” (see Matt. 13:55). He became the leader of the Jerusalem church (see Acts 15:3; Gal. 2:9) and seems to be the most probable author of this epistle. If he was the author, it is noteworthy that he did not mention his relation to Jesus in this letter. Instead his sole claim to authority was his spiritual servanthood to the Lord Jesus Christ (see 1:1).

Though not universally agreed upon, the evidence is strong that James is one of the oldest books in the New Testament. Since the letter contains no specific references to time or events that would indicate a particular date, one must consider the Jewish tone of the letter and the letter’s accurate reflection of the general situation found in the early apostolic church. Many scholars assign a date somewhere between A.D. 44 and 62. The first date is the time when James became the leader of the Jerusalem church, taking Peter’s place after he was released from prison in the year Herod Agrippa I died (see Acts 12:5–23). The second date is the date given by Josephus, the first-century Jewish historian, for the martyrdom of James. In the end, an early date of around A.D. 46 seems reasonable for this letter.

Recipients The salutation identifies the readers of James as “the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad.” Some believe this letter was directed to all Jews living outside of Palestine, including both Christian and non-Christian Jews. This seems unlikely, however, since James identifies himself as a follower of Christ and refers to his readers as a community of believers (see 1:18; 2:1, 7; 5:7). Others hold that the salutation is a figurative

2008 JAMES INTRODUCTION

reference to all Christian churches, represented symbolically by ancient Israel. This too is improbable since the letter contains recognizable Jewish elements. There is also a third possibility, that the readers were Jewish Christians living outside of Palestine. Since this letter was a circular letter that was passed from church to church, no specific geographical destination is pinpointed.

Most of the recipients seem to have been poor and suffering from oppression imposed by their fellow Jews, among whom they were living. Evidently some of these Jewish Christians had been imprisoned and deprived of their possessions and livelihoods. Under such conditions, they fell into the clutches of worldliness, fought among themselves, favored the rich over the poor, and lost their original love for one another.

Theology The Epistle of James is more practical than doctrinal. Nevertheless, James contains theological statements. God is “the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation” (1:17), meaning that He is the Creator and is unchangeable. Jesus is “the Lord of glory” (2:1), a reference to Jesus’ deity. James asserts that Jesus is coming again (5:7, 8), and when He does, He will judge all of humanity (5:9).

But the major theological issue in James is faith and works (2:14–26). Many contend that James is talking about true faith versus false faith. But it seems apparent that James is not questioning whether the recipients were genuine believers; he repeatedly calls them “brethren,” “my brethren,” or “my beloved brethren” (2:1, 14). These are clearly people who were exercising saving faith. Thus what James is discussing is faith that is alone, meaning without works. He calls faith without works “dead,” indicating that it was faith that was once alive (2:17, 26). For James, works is a natural result of faith. When a person truly believes in something, he or she will act on that belief. With this letter, James was sounding a wake-up call to all Christians: “Get your life in line with what you believe!”

CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

Compared to New Testament writers, James says little about Jesus. He begins his book referring to the Lord Jesus Christ (1:1; 2:1) and anticipates “the coming of the Lord” (5:7), but that’s about it in terms of direct references. Still, James’ message is virtually saturated in Jesus’ teachings. The Sermon on the Mount in particular figures prominently into James’ thinking with multiple indirect references to that most famous of Jesus’ sermons (1:2 is based on Matt. 5:10–12; 1:4 is connected to Matt. 5:48; 2:13 relates to Matt. 6:14, 15; 4:11 relates to Matt. 7:1, 2; 5:2 is understood in light of Matt. 6:13).

Through his teaching, James presents Jesus as One who insists that the righteousness of His followers exceeds that of the Pharisees (Matt. 5:20).



Vineyard in Israel. James uses common images such as grapevines to illustrate spiritual truths (James 3:12).

JAMES OUTLINE

- I. Salutation 1:1
- II. Prologue 1:2–18
 - A. Responding to trials 1:2–11
 - B. Responding to temptations 1:12–18
- III. The themes: being swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath 1:19, 20
- IV. Being swift to hear 1:21—2:26
 - A. Doing good works as a result of hearing the Word of God 1:21–27
 - B. Excluding partiality 2:1–13
 - C. Integrating faith and works 2:14–26
- V. Being slow to speak 3:1–18
 - A. Controlling the tongue 3:1–12
 - B. Acting wisely before speaking 3:13–18
- VI. Being slow to wrath 4:1—5:12
 - A. Solving conflict through humility 4:1–10
 - B. Withholding judgment 4:11, 12
 - C. Curbing arrogance with a reliance on God 4:13–17
 - D. Being patient when treated unjustly 5:1–12
- VII. Epilogue: concluding prayer 5:13–20

C. A.D. 30

The risen Lord
Jesus appears to
His brother James

C. A.D. 44

James is
mentioned in a
church leadership
role

C. A.D. 46

Approximate date
James is written

C. A.D. 50

James leads the
Jerusalem council

C. A.D. 62

James is executed
by priestly
authorities in
Jerusalem



Rough waves on the Sea of Galilee. “He who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind” (James 1:6).

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Greeting to the Twelve Tribes

James, ^aa bondservant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ,

To the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad:

Greetings.

Profiting from Trials

²My brethren, ^bcount it all joy ^cwhen you fall into various trials, ^{3d}knowing that the testing of your faith produces ¹patience. ⁴But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be ²perfect and complete, lacking nothing. ^{5e}If any of

CHAPTER 1

1 ^a Acts 12:17
2 ^b Acts 5:41
3 ^c 1 Pet. 1:6
3 ^d Rom. 5:3-5
1 ^e endurance or perseverance
4 ² mature
5 ^e 1 Kin. 3:9; James 3:17

^f Prov. 2:3-6; Matt. 7:7
^g Jer. 29:12
6 ^h [Mark 11:23, 24]; Acts 10:20
8 ⁱ James 4:8
10 ^j Job 14:2

you lacks wisdom, ^flet him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and ^git will be given to him. ^{6h}But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. ⁷For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; ^{8he}is ⁱa double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

The Perspective of Rich and Poor

⁹Let the lowly brother glory in his exaltation, ¹⁰but the rich in his humiliation, because ^jas a flower of the field he will pass away. ¹¹For no sooner has the sun

1:1 Early church tradition identifies the author **James** as the half brother of Christ (see the Introduction; 1 Cor. 15:7). **To the twelve tribes:** This salutation probably means the letter is for Jewish Christians living outside of Palestine. The letter was not intended for one specific church but was to be passed around among various local assemblies.

1:2 **Trials** are of outward circumstances—conflicts, sufferings, and troubles—encountered by all believers. Trials are not pleasant and may be extremely grievous, but believers are to consider them as opportunities for rejoicing. Troubles and difficulties are a tool which refines and purifies our faith, producing patience and endurance.

1:3 The word translated **testing of your faith** occurs only here and in 1 Pet. 1:7. The term, which means “tested” or “approved,” was used for coins that were genuine and not debased. The aim of testing is not to destroy or afflict, but to purge and refine. It is essential to Christian maturity, for even Abraham’s faith had to be tested (see Gen. 22:1–8). The meaning of **patience** transcends the idea of bearing affliction; it includes the idea of standing fast under pressure, with a staying power that turns adversities into opportunities.

1:4 If a believer endures a trial, he or she will be **perfect**, meaning “having reached the end,” and **complete**, meaning “whole.”

1:5 The **wisdom** God gives is not necessarily information on how to get out of trouble but rather insight on how to learn from one’s difficulties (see also Prov. 29:15). It is not more information about how to avoid times of testing but instead a new perspective on trials. The wisdom of God begins with a genuine reverence for the Almighty (see “the fear of the **LORD**” in Ps. 111:10; Prov. 9:10) and a steadfast confidence that God controls all circumstances, guiding them to His good purposes (Rom. 8:28).

1:6 **Doubting** means “to be divided in one’s mind” or “to debate.” The term does not describe a momentary doubt but a divided allegiance, an uncertainty.

1:8 **Double-minded** is literally “two souls.” If one part of a person is set on God and the other is set on this world (see Matt. 6:24), there will be constant conflict within.

1:9–11 James offers two examples of trials (vv. 2–8): one is of a **lowly brother** and the other is about a **rich** man. Probably **lowly** means “poor,” in contrast to the other man who is rich. The poor believer is

Rich or Poor?	
In ancient Israel, there were grasses that sprouted out of the ground in the morning and by the afternoon would wither away under the intense heat of the summer sun. James compares the instability of wealth to this type of grass; it is here today and gone tomorrow. The following chart delineates what Scripture says about riches.	
The World's View of Riches	The Word's View of Riches
• Money brings freedom.	• The desire for money can be enslaving and lead to destruction; only Christ brings true freedom (1 Tim. 6:7–10).
• Money brings security.	• Worldly wealth is very insecure; it will quickly pass away (1:10). Real security is found in knowing and trusting God (Jer. 9:23, 24; 1 Tim. 6:17–19).
• Money is what matters.	• Christ and the kingdom of God are what matters (Matt. 6:33; Phil. 3:7–10).
• Money is power.	• Power comes from being filled with the Spirit (Acts 1:8; 3:1–10).
• Money establishes not only your net worth, but your worth as a person.	• Your worth is based on what God says, not what your bank statement says (John 3:16; Eph. 1:3–14).
• Money makes you successful.	• Success comes from knowing and doing what God says (Josh. 1:8).
• Money gives you options.	• God is the One who ultimately gives you options (Eph. 3:20).
• Money brings happiness.	• The happiness that money brings is short-lived. And in the long run, money can actually produce “many sorrows” (1 Tim. 6:10). Lasting joy comes from knowing God (5:1–6; John 15:11; 16:24).
• Money is your reward. Save it, and spend it on yourself.	• Give as much as you can (Matt. 6:19–24; Acts 20:35; 2 Cor. 9:6–11; 1 Tim. 6:18).
• Money is your possession. Spend it on whatever you want.	• All that you have is God’s to do with as He pleases. You are merely a manager of His possessions (Ps. 24:1; Luke 19:11–27; 2 Cor. 5:10).

risen with a burning heat than it withers the grass; its flower falls, and its beautiful appearance perishes. So the rich man also will fade away in his pursuits.

Loving God Under Trials

¹²^k Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive ^lthe crown of life ^mwhich the Lord has promised to those who love Him. ¹³ Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am tempted by God”; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone. ¹⁴ But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. ¹⁵ Then, ⁿwhen desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, ^obrings forth death.

¹⁶ Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren. ¹⁷^p Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, ^qwith whom there is no variation or shadow of turning. ¹⁸^r Of His own will He brought us forth by the ^sword of truth, ^tthat we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures.

¹² ^k Job 5:17; Luke 6:22; Heb. 10:36; James 5:11; [1 Pet. 3:14; 4:14] ^l [1 Cor. 9:25] ^m Matt. 10:22
¹⁵ ⁿ Job 15:35; Ps. 7:14; Is. 59:4
^o [Rom. 5:12; 6:23]
¹⁷ ^p John 3:27
^q Num. 23:19
¹⁸ ^r John 1:13
^s 2 Cor. 6:7; 1 Thess. 2:13; 2 Tim. 2:15;
[1 Pet. 1:3, 23]
^t [Eph. 1:12, 13]; Heb. 12:23; Rev. 14:4
¹⁹ ^u Prov. 10:19;
17:27 ^v Prov. 14:17;
16:32; Eccl. 7:9 ³ NU
Know this or This
you know
²¹ ^w Col. 3:8 ^x Acts
13:26 ^y abundance
²² ^y Matt. 7:21-28;
Luke 6:46-49;
[Rom. 2:13; James
1:22-25; 2:14-20]
²³ ^z Luke 6:47
²⁵ ^a [John 8:32;
Rom. 8:2; 2 Cor.
3:17]; Gal. 2:4; 6:2;
James 2:12; 1 Pet.
2:16 ^b John 13:17
²⁶ ^c Ps. 34:13 ³ NU
omits among you
²⁷ ^d Matt. 25:34-36

Qualities Needed in Trials

¹⁹³ So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, ^uslow to speak, ^vslow to wrath; ²⁰ for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God.

Doers—Not Hearers Only

²¹ Therefore ^wlay aside all filthiness and ^xoverflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, ^ywhich is able to save your souls.

²² But ^zbe doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. ²³ For ^aif anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; ²⁴ for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. ²⁵ But ^ahe who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues *in it*, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, ^bthis one will be blessed in what he does.

²⁶ If anyone ^camong you thinks he is religious, and ^cdoes not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one's religion is useless. ²⁷^d Pure and undefiled

to **glory** (see “count it all joy” in v. 2) in the fact that God has exalted him by allowing him to experience difficult circumstances, for these will only perfect his character and faith (v. 4). The rich believer can also glory when a trial brings him low because it teaches him that life is short, and that **his pursuits**, that is, his business, will **fade away**. The rich man should always trust the Lord, not himself or his money. **1:12** The believer who **endures** trials demonstrates that he or she loves Jesus and therefore **will receive the crown of life** (see Rev. 2:10) at the judgment seat of Christ. The Bible describes the believer's reward (see 2 Cor. 5:10; Rev. 22:12) under various vivid images such as precious metals (see 1 Cor. 3:8–14), garments (Rev. 3:5, 18; 19:7, 8), and crowns (see 1 Cor. 9:25; Rev. 2:10; 3:11).

1:13 The focus of the chapter turns from trials (vv. 2–12) to temptation (vv. 13–18). **nor does He . . . tempt anyone**: Enticement to sin does not come from God. God will never deliberately lead a person to commit sin because that would not only go against His nature, but it would be opposed to His purpose of molding His creation into His holy image. Yet God does sometimes place His people in adverse circumstances for the purpose of building godly character (see Gen. 22:1, 12).

1:14, 15 **Drawn away** and **enticed** express the intensity with which desire lures an individual until he or she is tragically entrapped. Sin does not force itself on the unwilling, but is chosen because of its attractions. **Conceived** suggests the image of a person's will bending toward and finally seizing evil. This same idea is vividly illustrated by the tragic path of an addict: A habit once acquired completely controls that person eventually. **Full-grown** suggests bringing a goal to completion. The idea here is that sin has reached its maturity and has possessed the very character of the individual. **Death** here refers to physical death (see Prov. 10:27; 11:19; Rom. 8:13).

1:19 The conclusion of the introduction of James (vv. 2–18) is that enduring trials leads to a crown of life (v. 12) and yielding to temptation can lead to physical death (v. 15). Since that is the case, the believer in the midst of a trial needs to be **swift to hear, slow to speak, and slow to wrath**. These three exhortations reveal the outline of this letter (see 1:21—2:26 for “swift to hear”; 3:1–18 for “slow to speak”; 4:1—5:18 for “slow to wrath”).

1:20 If a believer gets angry in difficult circumstances, the practical **righteousness of God** will not be evident in his or her life. When someone wrongs us, the natural reaction is to retaliate, at least ver-

bally (see v. 19). But this response does not glorify God. Holding one's tongue, trying to understand the other person's position, and leaving vindication to God demonstrates godly love in tense situations (Rom. 12:17–21).

1:21 The **word** of God that has been **implanted** in the believer's heart should be received with **meekness**—describing a teachable spirit—without resistance, disputing, or questioning. Receiving God's Word in this way will **save** the believer's *soul*, a word meaning “life.” Sin leads to death (v. 15). Obedience prevents death; it protects a believer from sinful behavior that can lead directly or indirectly to physical death (see v. 15; 1 Cor. 11:30).

1:22 **be doers of the word, and not hearers only**: Believers who hear the Word of God (v. 19) must receive it with a teachable spirit (v. 21), applying it to their daily lives. To hear and not obey is to be deceived.

1:25 **The perfect law of liberty** is the law of love. Loving God and loving one's neighbor sums up the Law (see Matt. 26:36–40). But it is Christ's love (Eph. 3:17–19) which frees us from our sins to truly love others (John 8:36–38; Gal. 5:13).

1:27 **To visit** comes from the Greek word usually translated *bishop*, a person who oversees God's people (1 Tim. 3:1). **Orphans and**

good gift

(Gk. *dosis agathē*) (1:17) Strong's #1394; 18

perfect gift

(Gk. *dōrēma teleion*) (1:17) Strong's #1434; 5046

In the Greek text there are two separate words to describe God's giving. The first word (*dosis*) means “the act of giving” and is accompanied by the adjective for *good*, while the second (*dōrēma*) denotes the actual gifts received and is preceded by the adjective for *perfect*. The first expression emphasizes the goodness of receiving something from God, while the second, the perfect quality of whatever God gives. God's giving is continuously good; and His gifts are always perfect.

religion before God and the Father is this: ^eto visit orphans and widows in their trouble, ^fand to keep oneself unspotted from the world.

Beware of Personal Favoritism

2 My brethren, do not hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, ^athe Lord of glory, with ^bpartiality. ²For if there should come into your assembly a man with gold rings, in ¹fine apparel, and there should also come in a poor man in ²filthy clothes, ³and you ³pay attention to the one wearing the fine clothes and say to him, “You sit here in a good place,” and say to the poor man, “You stand there,” or, “Sit here at my footstool,” ⁴have you not ⁴shown partiality among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts?

27 ^eIs. 1:17 ^f[Rom. 12:2]
CHAPTER 2
1 ^a Acts 7:2; 1 Cor. 2:8 ^b Lev. 19:15
2 ¹ bright ² vile
3 ³ Lit. look upon
4 ⁴ differentiated
5 ^c Job 34:19; John 7:48; 1 Cor. 1:27
^d Luke 12:21; 1 Tim. 6:18; Rev. 2:9 ^e Ex. 20:6
6 ^f 1 Cor. 11:22
9 Acts 13:50
7 ^h Acts 11:26;
1 Pet. 4:16
8 ⁱ Lev. 19:18
9 ^j Lev. 19:15;
Deut. 1:17
⁵ Lit. receive the face
10 ^k Gal. 3:10

⁵Listen, my beloved brethren: ^cHas God not chosen the poor of this world ^{to be} ^drich in faith and heirs of the kingdom ^ewhich He promised to those who love Him? ⁶But ^fyou have dishonored the poor man. Do not the rich oppress you ^gand drag you into the courts? ⁷Do they not blaspheme that noble name by which you are ^hcalled?
⁸If you really fulfill ^{the} royal law according to the Scripture, ⁱ“*You shall love your neighbor as yourself,*” you do well; ⁹but if you ⁵show partiality, you commit sin, and are convicted by the law as ^jtransgressors. ¹⁰For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet ^kstumble in one point, ¹he is guilty of all. ¹¹For He who ^lDeut. 27:26

widows were among the most unprotected and needy classes in ancient societies (see Ezek. 22:7). Pure religion does not merely give material goods for the relief of the distressed, it also oversees their care (see Acts 6:1–7; 1 Tim. 5:3–16).
2:1 The faith of our Lord Jesus Christ includes the fact that God loves the world and that Christ died for it. If God and Christ show grace and mercy without favoritism, so should believers (vv. 8, 13).
2:5 God has chosen to use **poor** people who are **rich in faith** to advance His kingdom. Those who **love Him** and obey Him (see John 14:15; 15:9–17) and endure the testing of their faith (1:12) will inherit the **kingdom**. This inheritance means more than entering the kingdom; it also involves ruling with Christ (see 1 Cor. 6:9; Gal. 5:21; 2 Tim. 2:12).
2:8, 9 The royal law is the law of love (see 1:25; Lev. 19:18; Matt.

22:39), a law superior to all other laws. **if you show partiality, you commit sin:** James alludes to Lev. 19:15, which prohibits favoritism to either the poor or the rich.
2:10 he is guilty of all: God does not allow selective obedience. We cannot choose to obey the parts of the Law that are to our own liking and disregard the rest. Some of the Pharisees were guilty of this. They carefully observed some of the requirements of the Law, such as keeping the Sabbath, and ignored others, such as honoring their parents (see Jesus’ comments in Matt. 15:1–7). Sin is violation of the perfect righteousness of God, who is the Lawgiver. James is saying that the whole divine law has to be accepted as an expression of God’s will for His people. The violation of even one commandment separates an individual from God and His purposes.

Faith and Works

The great reformer Martin Luther, champion of the doctrine of salvation through faith alone, never felt good about the epistle of James. He called it an “epistle full of straw” in the preface to his 1522 edition of the New Testament, and he put the book in the appendix. He preferred Paul’s wording of the faith-works equation: “A man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law” (Rom. 3:28).

In a sense, Luther had little choice. He was surrounded by men who said that good works could save you. He knew that God alone could save through faith alone, and his mission was to tell them.

But Luther went too far when he put James in the appendix to the New Testament. Neither faith nor works can be cut off and thrown away. James was taking aim at freeloaders, those who claimed to have no need for good deeds since they had faith. The reality is that if you have faith, works will naturally be a product. You cannot get rid of works just because they do not save you. You cannot sever the effect from the cause. Just as an apple tree will bear apples, so faith will produce good works (see Luke 6:43, 44).

Paul had the opposite problem in view when he wrote Romans. His letter targeted those who placed their faith in the Law of Moses. Their trust was in their own good works, and not in God. That is why Paul wrote a defense of faith, and that is why Luther preferred it to James’s defense of works.

Faith and works are not enemies. True faith and righteous works go hand in hand. They are two parts of God’s work in us. Faith brings a person to salvation, and works bring that person to faithfulness. Faith is the cause, works are the effect. James believed it, and so did Paul.



Martin Luther's 1522 edition of the New Testament
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said, ^m“Do not commit adultery,” also said, ⁿ“Do not murder.” Now if you do not commit adultery, but you do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. ¹²So speak and so do as those who will be judged by ^othe law of liberty. ¹³For ^pjudgment is without mercy to the one who has shown ^qno ^rmercy. ^sMercy triumphs over judgment.

Faith Without Works Is Dead

¹⁴^tWhat does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him? ¹⁵^uIf a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, ¹⁶and ^vone of you says to them, “Depart in peace, be warmed and filled,” but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit? ¹⁷Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.

¹⁸But someone will say, “You have faith, and I have works.” ^wShow me your faith without ⁶your works, ^xand I will show you my faith by ⁷my works. ¹⁹You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble! ²⁰But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is ⁸dead? ²¹Was not Abraham our father justified by works ⁹when he offered Isaac his son on the altar? ²²Do you see ^zthat faith was working together with his works, and by ^aworks faith was made ⁹perfect? ²³And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, ^b“Abraham believed God, and it was ¹accounted to him for righteousness.” And

¹¹ ^m Ex. 20:14; Deut. 5:18 ⁿ Ex. 20:13; Deut. 5:17 ¹² ^o James 1:25 ¹³ ^p Job 22:6 ^q Prov. 21:13; Matt. 18:32-35; [Luke 6:37] ^r Mic. 7:18; [Matt. 5:7] ^s Rom. 12:8 ¹⁴ ^t Matt. 7:21-23, 26; 21:28-32 ¹⁵ ^u Matt. 25:35; Luke 3:11 ¹⁶ ^v [1 John 3:17, 18] ¹⁷ ^w Col. 1:6; 1 Thess. 1:3; Heb. 6:10 ^x [Gal. 5:6]; James 3:13 ^y NU omits your ^z NU omits my ²⁰ ^a NU useless ²¹ ^y Gen. 22:9, 10, 12, 16-18 ²² ^z [John 6:29]; Heb. 11:17 ^a John 8:39 ^b complete ²³ ^b Gen. 15:6; Rom. 4:3 ^c 2 Chr. 20:7; Is. 41:8 ¹ credited ²⁵ ^d Heb. 11:31

CHAPTER 3

¹ ^a [Matt. 23:8]; Rom. 2:21; 1 Tim. 1:7 ^b Luke 6:37 ² ^c 1 Kin. 8:46 ^d Ps. 34:13 ^e [Matt. 12:34-37; James 3:2-12] ¹ mature ³ ^f Ps. 32:9 ² NU Now if ⁵ ^g Prov. 12:18; 15:2; James 1:26 ^h Ps. 12:3; 73:8 ⁶ ⁱ Ps. 120:2, 3; Prov. 16:27 ^j [Matt. 12:36; 15:11, 18]

he was called ^cthe friend of God. ²⁴You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only.

²⁵Likewise, ^dwas not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent *them* out another way?

²⁶For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

The Untamable Tongue

³ My brethren, ^alet not many of you become teachers, ^bknowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment. ²For ^cwe all stumble in many things. ^dIf anyone does not stumble in word, ^ehe is a ¹perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body. ³²Indeed, ^fwe put bits in horses' mouths that they may obey us, and we turn their whole body. ⁴Look also at ships: although they are so large and are driven by fierce winds, they are turned by a very small rudder wherever the pilot desires. ⁵Even so ^gthe tongue is a little member and ^hboasts great things.

See how great a forest a little fire kindles! ⁶And ⁱthe tongue is a fire, a world of ³iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it ^jdefiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of ⁴nature; and it is set on fire by ⁵hell. ⁷For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and creature of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by mankind. ⁸But no man can tame the tongue. *It is an unruly*

³ unrighteousness ⁴ existence ⁵ Gr. Gehenna

2:12, 13 Believers **will be judged by the law of liberty**, which is the law of love (see 1:25). Believers who do not practice partiality, but who practice love (vv. 5, 8) and **mercy**, will triumph at the judgment seat. Those who have not shown mercy will not receive mercy.

2:14 my brethren: James addresses this section to people who have exercised genuine faith. The issue in this section (2:14–26) is faith without works (v. 17) versus faith accompanied by works (v. 18). Genuine faith will naturally produce good works; the two complement each other. When someone truly believes in a cause, that belief will change the way that person lives. **Works** are actions which follow the “royal law” of love (see vv. 8, 15, 16). James is implying in this verse that faith in Christ will demonstrate itself in love for others (see Jesus’ command to His disciples in John 13:34, 35).

2:17 Some interpreters conclude that James is speaking about genuine faith which has become **dead**. Others maintain that this verse is referring to a faith that was never alive.

2:19 Even the demons know that there is one God (see Deut. 6:4), but they do not love Him (see Deut. 6:5). Their kind of belief does not lead to love, submission, and obedience; instead it leads to hatred, rebellion, and disobedience.

2:20 James calls the person who separates faith and works (see v. 18) **foolish**, meaning “empty-headed.”

2:21 James clearly teaches justification by faith, for he quotes Gen. 15:6 in v. 23, which obviously connects the crediting of righteousness, that is, salvation, to Abraham’s belief (see Paul’s explanation of Gen. 15:6 in Rom. 4:1–12). The justification **by works** of which James is speaking is a different type of justification. This type of justification is before other people. In other words, James is using the word

justified to mean “proved.” We prove to others our genuine faith in Christ through our works. But the justification that comes through faith is before God, and we do not “prove” ourselves to Him; instead, God declares us righteous through our association with Christ, the One who died for our sins (Rom. 3:28).

2:22 Faith and works should be together; there is a close relationship between the two. Faith produces works; and works makes faith **perfect**, meaning “mature” or “complete.”

2:23 By offering Isaac (see Gen. 22:1–12), **Abraham** endured the test and demonstrated his complete trust in God. His obedience made him a friend of God (see John 15:14).

3:1 we shall receive a stricter judgment: James does not give the warning of judgment to others without applying it to himself.

Teachers will stand before the judgment seat of Christ and be judged more strictly than others. Their greater influence translates into greater responsibility. Judgment here most likely does not refer to eternal separation from God; rather it suggests a thorough judgment of teachers before Christ (Matt. 5:19; Rom. 14:10–12). Leadership imposes responsibility.

3:2 Perfect here means “mature.”

3:6 An uncontrolled **tongue** can defile the **whole body**, or the whole person. **Course of nature** may also be translated “wheel of life,” meaning the whole course of life.

3:7, 8 no man can tame the tongue: The instincts of animals can be subdued through conditioning and punishment, but the sinful nature that inspires evil words is beyond our control. Only the work of the Holy Spirit within us can bring this destructive force under control.

evil, ^kfull of deadly poison. ⁹With it we bless our God and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made ^lin the ⁶similitude of God. ¹⁰Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be so. ¹¹Does a spring send forth fresh water and bitter from the same opening? ¹²Can a ^mfig tree, my brethren, bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? ⁷Thus no spring yields both salt water and fresh.

Heavenly Versus Demonic Wisdom

¹³ⁿWho is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom. ¹⁴But if you have ^obitter envy and ⁸self-seeking in your hearts, ^pdo not boast and lie against the truth. ¹⁵^qThis wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic. ¹⁶For ^rwhere envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there. ¹⁷But ^sthe wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits,

⁸ ^k Ps. 140:3; Eccl. 10:11; Rom. 3:13
⁹ ^j Gen. 1:26; 5:1; 9:6; 1 Cor. 11:7
⁶ ^l likeness
¹² ^m Matt. 7:16-20
⁷ ^{NU} Neither can a salty spring produce fresh water.
¹³ ⁿ Gal. 6:4
¹⁴ ^o Rom. 13:13
^p Rom. 2:17 ⁸ selfish ambition
¹⁵ ^q Phil. 3:19
¹⁶ ^r 1 Cor. 3:3
¹⁷ ^s 1 Cor. 2:6, 7
^t James 2:1 ^u Rom. 12:9; 2 Cor. 6:6; 1 Pet. 1:22
¹⁸ ^v Prov. 11:18; Is. 32:17; Hos. 10:12; Amos 6:12; [Gal. 6:8; Phil. 1:11]

CHAPTER 4

¹ ^o Rom. 7:23; [Gal. 5:17]; 1 Pet. 2:11
¹ ^{battles}
² ² battle ³ ^{NU}, M omit Yet
³ ^b Job 27:8, 9 ^c [Ps. 66:18]
⁴ ^d Rom. 8:7;

without partiality ^uand without hypocrisy. ¹⁸^vNow the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

Pride Promotes Strife

4 Where do ¹wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure ^athat war in your members? ²You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and ²war. ³Yet you do not have because you do not ask. ^{3b}You ask and do not receive, ^cbecause you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures. ^{4a}Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that ^dfriendship with the world is enmity with God? ^eWhoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. ⁵Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, ^f“The Spirit who dwells in us yearns jealously”? ⁵

¹ John 2:15 ^a Gal. 1:4 ⁴ ^{NU} omits Adulterers and
⁵ ^f Gen. 6:5

3:9 Bless our God may refer to the Jewish practice of saying “blessed be He” whenever God’s name was mentioned. James is pointing out the inconsistency of blessing God while cursing people who are created in His image. **similitude of God:** God created human beings, both man and woman, in His own image (see Gen. 1:26). Today, people still reflect God’s image, though badly marred by sin (see Gen. 9:6).

3:10–12 Pouring salt water into fresh produces salt water; and mixing bad fruit with good fruit produces a bushel of rotten fruit. Likewise, mixing the contradictory speech of **blessing** and **cursing** will only produce negative results.

3:13 The solution for the problem of controlling our tongues is to seek divine **wisdom** (see 1:5). The person who possesses godly wisdom (v. 17) will meekly show it with works, not just words. That is, believers should be slow to speak (1:19).

3:16 Evil produces confusion. On the other hand, God brings harmony and wisdom (see 1 Cor. 14:33). Anyone who is involved in **envy** and **strife** is confused. This confusion corrupts human relationships. It is likely that the Jewish Christians to whom James was writing were going through turmoil because of sinful acts like the ones mentioned here. James wanted his readers to set aside their petty attitudes and seek reconciliation.

3:17 The main characteristic of godly wisdom is that it is **pure**,

meaning “free from defilement.” Bitterness, envy, and selfish behavior thoroughly corrupt a person (vv. 14, 16). Godly wisdom is also **peaceable**, describing a spirit of tranquility and calmness. It does not suggest compromising truth just for the sake of peace, which would promote falsehood. In addition, godly wisdom is undivided, without favoritism, unwavering, and consistent. **without hypocrisy:** True wisdom is sincere and unpretentious.

4:1 The conflict *within* us is between our sinful **desires for pleasure** and the desire for God’s will, an attitude the Holy Spirit has placed within us (v. 5).

4:2 The source of conflict *among* believers is often material things. James attributes fighting, murder, and war to materialism. John also warns believers of lusting after “the things in the world” (see 1 John 2:15, 16).

4:3 because you ask amiss: Some might have protested James’ admonition (vv. 1, 2) by claiming that they had not received an answer to their prayers (see Matt. 7:7). James responds by suggesting that they were praying for the wrong things. Instead of praying for their sinful desires, they should have been praying for God’s good will for them. Often the reason God does not supply what a person desires is simply that He knows it would not benefit that person (see Phil. 4:19). God is not obliged to answer our prayers in the affirmative. He will not act in ways that are contrary to His will, even if He is besieged by fervent prayers. Anytime we seek to further our personal **pleasures** through prayer, we are asking *amiss* (see Matt. 6:33).

4:4 This verse does not speak of God’s attitude toward the believer but of the believer’s attitude toward God. The difference between the world and God is so vast that as we move toward **the world** we alienate ourselves from God. In the world, sin is considered acceptable and pleasurable. Ultimately the world has lost its awareness of sin, and thus sin has become habitual.

4:5 Scripture says: James probably does not have any specific OT reference in mind; instead he is speaking of a general concept in Scripture. The jealous yearning in this verse most likely refers to God’s jealousy for His people, a concept prevalent in the OT (Ex. 20:5; 34:14; Ps. 78:58; 79:5) and an idea that fits the context. The friendship with the world mentioned in v. 4 would naturally provoke God’s jealousy. However, the expression **Spirit who dwells in us** could also indicate our individual human spirit. Then the jealous yearning would be the covetous desire of people, recalling the theme of v. 2 (see Gen. 8:21 for a possible OT reference).

similitude of God

(Gk. *homoiōsis theou*) (3:9) Strong’s #3669; 2316

The Greek expression means “God’s likeness.” Although human beings have lost much of Godlikeness, there is still enough in our make-up to hint at what we once were like and what we can become again through the work of Christ. It is interesting how the ancient Alexandrian Christians understood Gen. 1:26, where man and woman are created in the “image” and “likeness” of God. The “image” was that Godlike part of us that we never lost in the Fall, while the “likeness” was that Godlike part of humanness that we have yet to acquire. By “image” they meant a person’s physical and intellectual nature; by “likeness” they meant a person’s moral being.

⁶But He gives more grace. Therefore He says:

*^g“God resists the proud,
But gives grace to the humble.”*

Humility Cures Worldliness

⁷Therefore submit to God. ^hResist the devil and he will flee from you. ⁸ⁱDraw near to God and He will draw near to you. ^jCleanse *your* hands, *you* sinners; and ^kpurify *your* hearts, *you* double-minded. ^{9l}Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and *your* joy to gloom. ^{10m}Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.

Do Not Judge a Brother

¹¹ⁿDo not speak evil of one another, brethren. He who speaks evil of a brother ^oand judges his brother, speaks evil of the law and judges the law. But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge. ¹²There is one ⁵Lawgiver, ^pwho is able to save and to destroy. ^qWho ⁶are you to judge ⁷another?

Do Not Boast About Tomorrow

¹³Come now, you who say, “Today or tomorrow ⁸we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit”; ¹⁴whereas you do not know what *will happen* tomorrow.

⁶ ^g Job 22:29; Ps. 138:6; Prov. 3:34; Matt. 23:12; 1 Pet. 5:5
⁷ ^h [Eph. 4:27; 6:11]; 1 Pet. 5:8
⁸ ⁱ 2 Chr. 15:2; Zech. 1:3; Mal. 3:7; Heb. 7:19 / Job 17:9; Is. 1:16; 1 Tim. 2:8
^k Jer. 4:14; James 3:17; 1 Pet. 1:22; 1 John 3:3
⁹ / Matt. 5:4
¹⁰ ^m Job 22:29; Luke 14:11; 18:14; 1 Pet. 5:6
¹¹ ⁿ 2 Cor. 12:20; Eph. 4:31; James 5:9; 1 Pet. 2:1-3
^o [Matt. 7:1-5]; Rom. 14:4
¹² ^p [Matt. 10:28]
^q Rom. 14:4 ⁵ NU adds and Judge
⁶ NU, M But who
⁷ NU a neighbor
¹³ ⁸ M let us
¹⁴ ^j Job 7:7; Ps. 102:3; 1 Pet. 1:24
¹⁵ ^s Acts 18:21; 1 Cor. 4:19
¹⁶ ^t 1 Cor. 5:6
¹⁷ ^u [Luke 12:47]; John 9:41; 2 Pet. 2:21

CHAPTER 5

¹ ^a Prov. 11:28; [Luke 6:24; 1 Tim. 6:9]
² ^b Jer. 17:11; Matt. 6:19 / Job 13:28
¹ have rotted
³ ^c Rom. 2:5
⁴ ^e Lev. 19:13;

For what *is* your life? ^vIt is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away. ¹⁵Instead you *ought* to say, ^s“If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that.” ¹⁶But now you boast in your arrogance. ^tAll such boasting is evil.

¹⁷Therefore, ^uto him who knows to do good and does not do *it*, to him it is sin.

Rich Oppressors Will Be Judged

⁵Come now, *you* ^arich, weep and howl for your miseries that are coming upon *you*! ²Your ^briches ¹are corrupted, and ^cyour garments are moth-eaten. ³Your gold and silver are corroded, and their corrosion will be a witness against you and will eat your flesh like fire. ⁴You have heaped up treasure in the last days. ⁴Indeed ^ethe wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, cry out; and ^fthe cries of the reapers have reached the ears of the Lord of ²Sabaoth. ⁵You have lived on the earth in pleasure and ³luxury; you have ⁴fatened your hearts ⁵as in a day of slaughter. ⁶You have condemned, you have murdered the just; he does not resist you.

Be Patient and Persevering

⁷Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. See *how* the

Job 24:10; Jer. 22:13; Mal. 3:5 / Ex. 2:23; Deut. 24:15; Job 31:38
² Lit., in Heb., *Hosts* ⁵ ^s indulgence ⁴ Lit. *nourished* ⁵ NU omits *as*

4:6 God resists the proud: James quotes from Prov. 3:34 to prove his point. Those who submit to divine wisdom will receive the necessary **grace** from God to put into practice the kind of life James describes (see 3:13–18). On the other hand, those who elevate themselves will face a formidable foe (v. 4). God Himself will fight against their plans because they are not on His side.

4:7 submit to God: We must follow in order the two commands in this verse. First we must submit to God by abandoning our selfish pride (see vv. 1–6). Submitting to the Lord also involves putting on the whole armor of God, an image that includes everything from placing our faith in Him to immersing ourselves in the truth of God’s Word (see Eph. 6:11–18). Second, we must resist any temptation that the **devil** throws our way. Then the Evil One will have no choice but to **flee**, for we will belong to the army of the living God.

4:9 Lament and mourn and weep: When a believer who has fallen into sin responds to God’s call for repentance, he or she should place laughter and joy aside to reflect on the sin with genuine sorrow (2 Cor. 7:9, 10). In this verse, **laughter** seems to refer to the loud revelry of pleasure-loving people. They immerse themselves in a celebration of their sins in an effort to forget God’s judgment. A Christian should never laugh at sin. However, Christian sorrow leads to repentance; repentance leads to forgiveness; and forgiveness leads to true joy over one’s reconciliation with God (see Ps. 32:1; 126:2; Prov. 15:13).

4:11, 12 There is one Lawgiver: The NT teaches us not to judge (see Matt. 7:1), for God is the ultimate Judge and the One who will take vengeance on those who practice evil (Rom. 12:9; Heb. 10:30). Yet the Scriptures also exhort the church to exercise judgment over its members (see 1 Cor. 6:2–5). This type of judgment is corporate discipline exercised in accordance with biblical truths and the pattern in Matt. 18:15–20.

4:13 we will go . . . make a profit: The problem here is not the plan or the concept of planning; it is leaving God out of the plan (v. 15).

4:17 It is sin to doubt whether an action is right and yet go ahead and do it; it is also a sin to know what is right and yet not do it (see Rom. 14:23). This is a stern warning against sins of omission (see Luke 16:19–31 for an example of neglecting to do what is right).

5:1–6 In the spirit of the OT prophets, James pronounces judgment on employers who treat their employees unjustly (Is. 3:14, 15; 10:2). God will judge those who oppress the poor (see Ezek. 18:12, 13).

5:2, 3 In the ancient world food, costly **garments**, and precious metals were conspicuous signs of wealth. James pronounces judgment and destruction on all three.

5:7 be patient: James urges believers to maintain an attitude of patience while suffering injustices. Though every effort should be made to improve conditions and achieve justice, believers must

Lord of Sabaoth

(Gk. *kurios Sabaōth*) (5:4; Rom. 9:29) Strong’s #2962; 4519

The name means “the Lord of hosts,” “the Lord of armies,” or “the Master of creation.” It was suitable for James to use this familiar OT title (Ps. 24:10) in a letter to Jewish Christians, for they would have understood that the choice of this particular name of God was especially appropriate in this context. The rich oppress the poor because they think no one will stand up for them. But the Lord of all the hosts of heaven and earth is their Defender, and He is coming back to make all things right (5:7).

farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently for it until it receives the early and latter rain. ⁸You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord ⁶is at hand.

⁹Do not ⁷grumble against one another, brethren, lest you be ⁸condemned. Behold, the Judge is standing at the door! ¹⁰My brethren, take the prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord, as an example of suffering and ^hpatience. ¹¹Indeed ⁱwe count them blessed who ^jendure. You have heard of ^kthe perseverance of Job and seen ^lthe end *intended* by the Lord—that ^mthe Lord is very compassionate and merciful.

¹²But above all, my brethren, ⁿdo not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath. But let your “Yes” be “Yes,” and *your* “No,” “No,” lest you fall into ^jjudgment.

Meeting Specific Needs

¹³Is anyone among you suffering? Let him ^opray. Is anyone cheerful? ^pLet him

⁸ ⁶ has drawn near
⁹ ⁷ Lit. groan ⁸ NU,
M judged
¹⁰ ⁹ Matt. 5:12
^h Heb. 10:36
¹¹ ⁱ [Ps. 94:12; Matt.
5:10]; James 1:2
^j [James 1:12] ^k Job
1:21, 22; 2:10 ^l Job
42:10 ^m Num. 14:18
¹² ⁿ Matt. 5:34-37
⁹ M hypocrisis
¹³ ^o Ps. 50:14, 15
^p Eph. 5:19

¹⁴ ^q Mark 6:13;
16:18
¹⁵ ^r Is. 33:24
¹⁶ ^s Num. 11:2
¹ NU Therefore
confess your sins
² supplication
¹⁷ ^t Acts 14:15
^u 1 Kin. 17:1; 18:1
¹⁸ ^v 1 Kin. 18:1, 42
¹⁹ ^w Matt. 18:15;
Gal. 6:1
²⁰ ^x Rom. 11:14;
1 Cor. 1:21; James
1:21 ^y Prov. 10:12;
[1 Pet. 4:8] ³ NU
his soul

sing psalms. ¹⁴Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, ^qanointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. ¹⁵And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. ^rAnd if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. ¹⁶*Confess your* trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. ^sThe effective, ²fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much. ¹⁷Elijah was a man ^twith a nature like ours, and ^uhe prayed earnestly that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months. ¹⁸And he prayed ^vagain, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth produced its fruit.

Bring Back the Erring One

¹⁹Brethren, if anyone among you wanders from the truth, and someone ^wturns him back, ²⁰let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way ^xwill save ³a soul from death and ^ycover a multitude of sins.

keep a spirit of patient endurance, even in the midst of cruel treatment. The early church lived in the expectation of the imminent **coming of the Lord**. Their hope was that at that time justice would be handed both to the oppressor and the oppressed. At Christ’s coming, wrongs will be righted and believers will be rewarded for their faithfulness to Christ (see Prov. 14:14; Matt. 5:12). **5:8, 9** Expressions like **at hand** and **the Judge is standing at the door** indicate that the Lord could return at any moment. **5:12, 13** James is not forbidding a believer from taking an **oath** in court or invoking God as witness to some significant statement (see 1 Thess. 2:5). Instead he is prohibiting the ancient practice of appealing to a variety of different objects to confirm the veracity of one’s statement. This practice was extremely close to idolatry, for it implied that such objects contained spirits. The warning in these verses can serve as a reminder to us to watch what we say.

anointing

(Gk. *aleiphō*) (5:14; Matt. 6:17; Mark 6:13; Luke 7:38; John 11:2; 12:3) Strong’s #218

The Greek word *aleiphō* was commonly used in Greek literature to describe a medicinal anointing. Another Greek word, *chriō*, was used to describe a sacramental anointing. The distinction is still observed in modern Greek, with *aleiphō* meaning “to daub” or “to smear,” and *chriō* meaning “to anoint.” Furthermore, oil was one of the most common medicines of biblical times. Thus James was prescribing both prayer and medicine in this verse.

We should not use God’s name in a reckless manner; and we should be careful to speak the truth. **5:14** Literally the Greek term translated **elders** meant those advanced in years (see 1 Tim. 5:1). However, the word also referred to those holding positions of authority in the community or in a local congregation. As church officers, *elders* were responsible for pastoral supervision and spiritual leadership. The term is used interchangeably with *bishop* in the NT (see 1 Tim. 3:1; 5:17; Titus 1:5–9). **Anointing him with oil** may refer to medicinal treatment (see Luke 10:34). Yet in this passage it most likely refers to the healing power of the Holy Spirit, for v. 15 speaks of prayer saving the person. In either case, there is no indication that calling the elders excludes the use of a physician or medicine. **5:15 the prayer of faith:** Whether a believer is healed through medicine or through miraculous means, all healing is ultimately from the Lord. That is why prayers should be consistently offered for the sick (see 4:3 for an improper attitude towards prayer). **if he has committed sins:** The NT teaches that sickness may be the consequence of sin (see Matt. 9:2), but not invariably (John 9:1–3). Yet when sin is involved, confession is a prerequisite to healing (see v. 16). **5:16, 17 Confess:** This confession is not necessarily between the sick person and the elders, though this is not ruled out altogether. Instead, this exhortation is intended for the sick person and any person with whom the sick one needs to be reconciled. **Effective, fervent prayer . . . much:** This can mean either that (1) prayer is effective when it is used or (2) fervent prayer accomplishes great results. The illustration of **Elijah** may favor the latter meaning, for he prayed **earnestly**. **5:20** The covering of **sins** is an OT image for forgiveness (Ps. 32:1).

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PETER



RETURNING GOOD FOR EVIL sounds noble, and Christians agree that it is the right thing to do; however, in the midst of trials and persecutions, showing kindness to our persecutors can be extremely difficult. The Christians of Asia Minor who received this letter from Peter had discovered this. They had found that a life lived for God is often a life of many difficulties. Some of their troubles came from their neighbors, while some came from government authorities. Peter wrote to these Christians to encourage them, to explain to them why suffering occurs, and to remind them of their eternal reward at the end of this earthly life.

Author Early church tradition affirms that the apostle Peter was the author of the letter known as 1 Peter. Those in the modern era who challenge his authorship argue that the vocabulary and literary style of the letter is more advanced than the vocabulary of an “uneducated and untrained” fisherman (see Acts 4:13). Many of these critics also assert that the theology of the letter is too much like Paul’s. It reflects Paul’s thought rather than the experiences of the earthly life of Jesus Christ, as one might expect from Peter, one of Jesus’ closest friends. Finally, these critics claim that the persecutions described in this letter could not have taken place during Peter’s lifetime. But none of these arguments is conclusive. Peter was from Galilee, a region that was bilingual. People who grew up there had to know two languages, Greek and Aramaic. As a fisherman, functioning in the business world of his day, Peter must have been reasonably fluent in Greek. Moreover Peter, having “been with Jesus” (see Acts 4:13), must have learned how to express himself from the Master Communicator Himself. As one of the first teachers and preachers of the gospel, Peter would have been able to express himself eloquently in Greek (see Acts 2). If his own Greek style was not sufficiently polished, Peter could certainly have dictated this letter, perhaps to Silvanus (see 5:12), who would have polished his presentation (see also Acts 15:22–29). That Peter’s letter reflects ideas similar to those found in the writings of the apostle Paul is understandable because the two men knew each other (see Gal. 2:7–9). Peter had read Paul’s letters (see 2 Pet. 3:15, 16), and both men were under the guidance of the Holy Spirit when they wrote. Thus finding Pauline concepts in this letter is not a strong argument that Peter cannot be the author.

The issue about the author’s seeming unfamiliarity with the earthly life of Jesus is best handled by looking at the letter itself, which reveals that the author is thoroughly acquainted with Christ’s earthly sufferings and claims to be an eyewitness to them (see 2:21–23; 3:18; 4:1; 5:1). Moreover, the purpose of the letter was not to provide a record of the life of Christ. Instead, Peter was encouraging Christians with the comforting spiritual realities behind the persecution they faced.

Finally, the sporadic and local persecution before Nero’s reign (before A.D. 68) is the persecution that Peter is probably addressing in this letter. Although severe official persecution did not begin until the reigns of Domitian (A.D. 95) or Trajan (A.D. 112), early Christians experienced oppressive local persecution from the beginning (see Acts 14:19). In conclusion, there is no substantial evidence that contradicts the plain assertion of the letter that it is from the apostle Peter (see 1:1).

Date and Place of Writing Church tradition tells us that Peter died in Rome during the anti-Christian persecution that took place during the reign of Nero (A.D. 54–68), so A.D. 67 is probably the latest this letter could have been written.

There are several indications that Peter wrote the letter around A.D. 62–64. First, Paul makes no reference to Peter being in Rome when Paul was writing his letters from there (Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon), sometime between A.D. 60–62. Moreover, in his letter Peter makes no reference to Paul as being in Rome, identifying only Silvanus and Mark as his companions (5:12, 13). These facts suggest that Peter was writing after A.D. 62. But the fact that Peter admonishes his readers to submit to governmental authorities in 2:13–15 may indicate a date before the more severe persecution which occurred after the burning of Rome in A.D. 64.

Of course, this dating assumes that Peter wrote this letter from Rome and not from some other location. Peter concludes the letter by sending greetings from “she who is in Babylon” (5:13). Three locations are generally suggested for this reference: Babylon on the Euphrates River in Mesopotamia, a lesser-known city in the ancient world also called Babylon, and Rome.

The argument in favor of the Mesopotamian Babylon is its identity in the Old Testament as a city of great power, a city feared and hated by the Israelites (see 2 Kin. 24; 25; Is. 39; Jer. 25). Yet by the first century A.D., Babylon was an insignificant town with no real power. More importantly, there is no record of Peter ever having been there. Other cities named Babylon (such as the Roman military outpost located in Egypt near where Cairo stands today) are excluded as well, because none of these towns played a significant role in early Christian history.

However, Rome was a widely-recognized center of opposition to Christianity and also the seat of power in the Roman Empire. In the New Testament, Babylon is used as a veiled reference to the city of Rome, the center of the kingdom of darkness (see Rev. 14:8; 16:19; 17:5; 18:2, 10, 21). Moreover, many of Peter’s readers would understand Babylon as a place of exile, something with which they themselves could identify, since Peter addresses them as pilgrims scattered throughout Asia Minor. In this way Peter was concluding his letter where it began, with a sense that he and his fellow Christians had not yet arrived “home.” Peter was using Babylon as a code word readily understood by early Christians to mean Rome, yet at the same time symbolizing more than just that earthly city.

Setting To reach the centers of the provinces of ancient Asia Minor (present-day Turkey) to which Peter was writing, his letter had to travel many hundreds of miles



First Peter was written to the churches in Asia Minor (see 1:1), including Cappadocia, seen here. Cappadocia is known for these strange rock formations, into which local peoples carved subterranean towns, seeking shelter from the conquerors.

C. A.D. 27
Andrew brings his brother Simon Peter to Jesus

C. A.D. 29
Peter witnesses the Transfiguration

C. A.D. 30
Peter denies his Lord on the eve of the Crucifixion

C. A.D. 30
Peter becomes a church leader after Pentecost

C. A.D. 41
Peter first takes the gospel to Gentiles

C. A.D. 50
Peter speaks at the Jerusalem council

C. A.D. 62–64
1 Peter is written

C. A.D. 64–67
2 Peter is written

C. A.D. 67
Peter and Paul are executed in Rome



A modern Syrian shepherd with his sheep. Jesus is referred to as the Chief Shepherd in 1 Peter 5:4.

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over rugged terrain and treacherous seas. The bearer of the letter would have encountered Jews and Gentiles, Christians and pagans, free citizens and slaves. Some of the places in which the letter was read were cosmopolitan trade centers that were links between the Middle East and Europe. Other places were isolated villages. Yet throughout Asia Minor, small groups of Christians of a wide variety of social, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds would gather to hear God's word, to praise God, and to encourage one another in the faith.

Theology Peter blended five different themes in this letter. (1) He emphasized that Christians can expect suffering as a natural part of a life dedicated to Christ. Suffering was God's tool to shape godly character within them (1:6, 7; 3:14; 4:12–14). (2) He went on to exhort Christians to live righteous and holy lives in the face of the evils they were experiencing (1:13–16, 22; 2:1–5, 11, 12; 3:15; 4:1, 2, 7–11; 5:8–10). No matter how tempting it was, Christians were not to return evil for evil. That is a worldly and not a Christian response to persecution. (3) No matter how much suffering they experienced, Peter assured the Christians in Asia Minor they did not deserve it. Their suffering was a part of their service to God and His kingdom (2:20; 3:16, 17; 4:15–19). Although Christians would suffer injustice on this earth, there would come a time when God would right every wrong and reward those who have endured persecution for His name. (4) In light of this, Peter encouraged Christians to submit themselves to others for the sake of the gospel and for the sake of harmonious interpersonal relationships (2:13–19; 3:1–9; 5:1–7). Christ would eventually judge their actions, and the difficulties they were experiencing would not be an excuse for rebellion and dissension. (5) Finally Peter used this letter as an opportunity to drive home the central truth of the gospel, that Jesus endured the agony of the Cross to save us from our bondage to sin (1:2–5, 7–11, 17–21; 2:21–24; 3:18–22). Christ's example—His sinless life, His quiet endurance of suffering, and His commitment to the truth—should be our model in all the difficulties of this life.

CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

For Peter, Jesus is the basis for our living hope and inheritance (1:3, 4). What is more, the love relationship that is available with Him is a source of inexpressible joy (1:8). Peter is quick to convey what Paul and the Gospel writers have already established—that Jesus' suffering and death provide redemption for all who trust in Him "who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness—by whose stripes you were healed" (2:24).

Jesus also is lifted up as the Overseer and Chief Shepherd of all Christians (2:25; 5:4), and when He appears, those who have a relationship with Him will be glorified.

1 PETER OUTLINE

- I. Comfort and reassurance in suffering 1:1–25
 - A. Salutation 1:1, 2
 - B. Reassurance in God's grace and salvation 1:3–12
 - C. Reassurance in holiness 1:13–25
- II. Practical holiness 2:1—3:22
 - A. The foundation of holiness 2:1–3
 - B. Participation in a holy community 2:4–10
 - C. Unimpeachable living, the answer to persecution 2:11—3:13
 - D. Victory in unjust suffering 3:14–22
- III. The spiritual significance of suffering 4:1–19
 - A. Physical suffering: a type of death to the flesh 4:1–6
 - B. Love for one another despite suffering 4:7–11
 - C. The purifying fires of persecution 4:12–19
- IV. Divine love as a guide in church life 5:1–11
 - A. Elders to rule in love 5:1–7
 - B. The devil to be resisted through divine grace 5:8–11
- V. Closing salutation and benediction 5:12–14

Greeting to the Elect Pilgrims

Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ,

To the ¹pilgrims ^aof the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, ^{2b}elect ^caccording to the foreknowledge of God the Father, ^din sanctification of the Spirit, for ^eobedience and ^fsprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ:

^gGrace to you and peace be multiplied.

A Heavenly Inheritance

^{3h}Blessed ^{be} the God and Father of our

CHAPTER 1

¹ ^a John 7:35; James 1:1
¹ ^{sojourners}, temporary residents
² ^b Eph. 1:4 ^c [Rom. 8:29]; 1 Pet. 1:20
^d 2 Thess. 2:13
^e Rom. 1:5 ^f Is. 52:15 ^g; Heb. 10:22; 12:24 ^g Rom. 1:7
³ ^h Eph. 1:3 ⁱ Gal. 6:16; Titus 3:5
^j [John 3:3, 5]
^k 1 Cor. 15:20; 1 Pet. 3:21
⁴ ^l Col. 1:5
² ^m imperishable

Lord Jesus Christ, who ⁱaccording to His abundant mercy ^jhas begotten us again to a living hope ^kthrough the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴to an inheritance ²incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, ¹reserved in heaven for you, ^{5m}who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

⁶ⁿIn this you greatly rejoice, though now ^ofor a little while, if need be, ^pyou have been ³grieved by various trials,

⁵ ^m John 10:28; [Phil. 4:7] ⁶ ⁿ Matt. 5:12 ^o 2 Cor. 4:17 ^p James 1:2; 1 Pet. 4:12 ³ distressed

1:1 Peter, the author of this letter, writes to Christians living in **Asia Minor** (present-day Turkey). By way of encouragement, he identifies them as people who live in the light of their relationship to God the Father, God the Holy Spirit, and God the Son (v. 2). **apostle**: Peter received a special commission from the Lord to act with official authority as God's representative among believers, in order to carry God's message to them. **pilgrims**: These believers do not belong to the world around them but to a heavenly world. **Dispersion**: This term conveys the idea of being scattered among strangers, much like the Jewish exiles of the OT who were not living in their homeland but in Babylon. **Pontus . . . Bithynia**: Peter addresses his letter to the believers in the provinces of Asia Minor. This region had been thoroughly evangelized by Paul during his missionary journeys (see Acts 2:9–11; 16:6, 7; 18:23; 19:26).

1:2 Believers are chosen to be included in God's family, not on the basis of what they have done or who they are, but on the basis of God's eternal wisdom. **Sanctification** is the ongoing process whereby the Holy Spirit works in believers, making their lives holy, separated from their old ways and to God in order to be more like Him. **obedience**: One reason that God chooses us is so that we might serve Him. **sprinkling of the blood**: This concept, the second reason why God chooses us, draws our attention to three situations in the OT when the Israelites were sprinkled with the blood of animals: (1) Moses' sprinkling of blood on the Israelites at Mt. Sinai, to symbolize their initiation into the covenant (see Ex. 24:5–8); (2)

the sprinkling of Aaron and his sons to be the priests of Israel (see Ex. 29:19–21); and (3) the sprinkling of blood performed by priests over healed lepers to symbolize their cleansing (see Lev. 14:1–9). Any of these three cases could be the one that Peter has in mind here.

1:3 according to His abundant mercy: Our salvation is grounded in God's mercy. His act of compassion toward us despite our condition of sinfulness. **has begotten us again**: God has given believers a new, spiritual life that enables us to live in an entirely different dimension than the one our physical birth allowed. **to a living hope**: *Hope* here does not imply a wishfulness but rather a dynamic confidence that does not end with this life but continues throughout eternity. **through the resurrection**: Although this phrase may modify the phrase "to a living hope," the context suggests that it is to be understood as the means of our salvation rather than the means of our hope (see 1 Cor. 15:12–19).

1:4 The Greek word translated **inheritance** here suggests both a present and a future reality. God has already determined what we will one day experience in its totality. **reserved**: God has set aside in heaven a wonderful inheritance that is waiting for us even now.

1:5 who are kept: God keeps His people safe from external attack and safe within the protective boundaries of His kingdom. **revealed**: We do not now see or understand fully the salvation that God has prepared for us, but one day we will (1 Cor. 4:5; 1 John 3:2).

1:6 grieved: While there is much rejoicing because of the salvation God has prepared for us, there will also be agony because of the

Peter Wrote This Letter to Provinces in Asia Minor



⁷that ^qthe genuineness of your faith, *be- ing* much more precious than gold that perishes, though ^rit is tested by fire, ^smay be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, ^{8t}whom having not ⁴seen you love. ^uThough now you do not see *Him*, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, ⁹receiving the end of your faith—the salvation of *your* souls.

¹⁰Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace *that would come* to you, ¹¹searching what, or what manner of time, ^vthe Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. ¹²To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to ⁵us they were ministering the things which now have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent

⁷ ^q James 1:3 ^r Job 23:10 ^s [Rom. 2:7]
⁸ ^t 1 John 4:20
^u John 20:29
⁴ ^M known
¹¹ ^v 2 Pet. 1:21
¹² ⁵ NU, ^M you

^w Eph. 3:10
¹⁴ ^x [Rom. 12:2];
1 Pet. 4:2
¹⁵ ^y [2 Cor. 7:1]
¹⁶ ^z Lev. 11:44, 45;
19:2; 20:7
¹⁷ ^a Acts 10:34
⁶ *sojourning, dwelling as resident aliens*
¹⁸ ⁷ *perishable*
¹⁹ ^b Acts 20:28;
1 Pet. 1:2

from heaven—things which ^wangels desire to look into.

Living Before God Our Father

¹³Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest *your* hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; ¹⁴as obedient children, not ^xconforming yourselves to the former lusts, *as* in your ignorance; ^{15y}but as He who called you *is* holy, you also be holy in all *your* conduct, ¹⁶because it is written, ^z“*Be holy, for I am holy.*”

¹⁷And if you call on the Father, who ^awithout partiality judges according to each one’s work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your ⁶stay *here* in fear; ¹⁸knowing that you were not redeemed with ⁷corruptible things, *like* silver or gold, from your aimless conduct *received* by tradition from your fathers, ¹⁹but ^bwith the precious blood of Christ,

pressures and difficulties of life. **by various trials:** In this context (v. 7), *trials* refers to ordeals that we encounter in life rather than those things that would induce us to sin. Note that no one particular problem is in view here, but rather all the testings of life.

1:7 genuineness: As the purity of gold is brought forth by intense heat, so the reality and purity of our faith are revealed as a result of the fiery trials we face. Ultimately the testing of our faith not only demonstrates our final salvation but also develops our capacity to bring glory to the Lord **Jesus Christ** when He comes into His kingdom and we reign with Him (see Rom. 8:17; 2 Tim. 2:12; Rev. 5:9–12).

1:8 having not seen: Only a few believers had the privilege of walking and talking with Jesus when He was on earth (see John 20:29).

1:9, 10 receiving the end: There is a final, positive outcome for trusting God through all the difficulties of life—our **salvation**, which here has an eschatological sense. **salvation of your souls:** This phrase refers to our glorification in heaven and perhaps the rewards we will receive for following Christ (see Matt. 16:24–27; James 1:21). **the prophets:** Peter indicates that the OT prophets knew of the gracious salvation we would one day receive and, as a result, studied it carefully and intensively.

1:11 The focus of the OT prophets’ study (v. 10) was not the **what** of our salvation but the **when**. They wanted to know when the Messiah would suffer and when the glories of the end times would be revealed. Note that **the Spirit of Christ**, rather than the prophets themselves, was prophesying (see 2 Pet. 1:20, 21). The prophets were mouthpieces for God, not inventors of their own new ideas.

1:12 was revealed: God made known to the prophets that they would not experience all that we experience in Christ and that they

were serving God for our benefit. **by the Holy Spirit:** Although humans may preach God’s message of salvation, ultimately the Holy Spirit is the One who proclaims these great truths. Even the **angels** are amazed at what a wonderful salvation God has enacted on our behalf (see Eph. 3:10).

1:13 gird up the loins of your mind: Just as people in biblical times would gather up their long robes and tie them around their waists so that they could move quickly and freely, we need to do whatever it takes to focus our thoughts on those things that allow us to serve God successfully, all the while eliminating any thoughts that would trip us up (see Heb. 12:1). **be sober:** Peter’s concern here is primarily using mentally or spiritually sound judgment. **rest your hope:** We need to exhibit confidence that God will accomplish all that He promised He would do (see v. 3; Rom. 8:24, 25).

1:14 not conforming yourselves: Believers should not pattern their lives after the desires that controlled them when they were not Christians, when they did not know God’s ways (see Rom. 12:2).

1:15 Holy refers to being set apart or separate. We are to live so as to be dedicated totally to God and separated totally from the sin of this world.

1:17 who without partiality judges: Our heavenly Father is also our earthly Judge. Moreover, our relationship to Him as His children does not imply that we will escape judgment. God does not show favoritism in judgment but invokes His judgment on all people **according** to their works. **in fear:** For Christians, this phrase should be understood as something between terror and reverential awe. We need to remember that God is both our merciful Savior (vv. 3, 18–21) and our holy Judge (vv. 15–17).

1:18 Redeemed suggests the idea of offering something, usually money, in exchange for the freedom of a slave or a prisoner of war. God bought our freedom, paying for us with His Son’s life (v. 19). **your aimless conduct:** Peter’s focus is not on any specific action, but on the way of life that his readers inherited from their ancestors. Those old ways were futile, empty of power and incapable of securing salvation. Peter’s readers needed to be snatched from their hopeless condition.

1:19 precious blood: God’s way of salvation is contrasted to human attempts at gaining salvation through the use of earthly means (v. 18). **a lamb:** Peter describes Christ as the ultimate sacrificial Lamb, who is offered in our place to pay the price for our sins. The analogy here may be a reference either to the Passover lamb (see Ex. 12:3–6) or to the many lambs without blemish that were offered as part of the OT sacrificial system (see Lev. 23:12; Num. 6:14; 28:3).

word

(Gk. *logos*) (1:23; 2:8; 3:1, 15; 4:5; Rom. 9:6; Eph. 1:13) Strong’s #3056; (Gk. *rhēma*) (1:25; Rom. 10:17; Eph. 5:26) Strong’s #4487

In 1:23 the Greek expression for *word* is *logos*, referring primarily to the idea. In 1:25 the Greek term is *rhēma*, referring primarily to the spoken word. The spoken word is the gospel preached and proclaimed (see the use of *rhēma* in Rom. 10:17, 18). “The word of the Lord” is the gospel message about the Lord Jesus Christ. This word can regenerate men and women. Peter adapted the OT text (which says “the word of our God” in Is. 40:6–8) to its NT context.

as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. ^{20d}He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was ⁸manifest ^ein these last times for you ²¹who through Him believe in God, ^fwho raised Him from the dead and ^ggave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.

The Enduring Word

²²Since you ^hhave purified your souls in obeying the truth ⁹through the Spirit in ¹sincere ⁱlove of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart, ²³having been born again, not of ²corruptible seed but ³incorruptible, ^kthrough the word of God which lives and abides ⁴forever, ²⁴because

*¹“All flesh is as grass,
And all ⁵the glory of man as the
flower of the grass.*

¹⁹ ^c Ex. 12:5; Is. 53:7 ★
²⁰ ^d Rom. 3:25
^e Gal. 4:4 ⁸ revealed
²¹ ^f Acts 2:24
⁹ Acts 2:33
²² ^h Acts 15:9
ⁱ John 13:34; Rom. 12:10; Heb. 13:1;
1 Pet. 2:17; 3:8 ⁹ NU omits through the Spirit ¹ Lit. unhyphocritical
²³ ^j John 1:13
^k 1 Thess. 2:13;
James 1:18
² perishable
³ imperishable ⁴ NU omits forever
²⁴ ^l Is. 40:6-8;
James 1:10 ² NU its glory as
²⁵ ^m Is. 40:8
ⁿ [John 1:1]
⁶ spoken word

CHAPTER 2

¹ ^a Heb. 12:1

*The grass withers,
And its flower falls away,
^{25m}But the ⁶word of the LORD endures
forever.”*

ⁿ Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you.

² Therefore, ^alaying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking, ^{2b}as newborn babes, desire the pure ^cmilk of the word, that you may grow ¹thereby, ³if indeed you have ^dtasted that the Lord is gracious.

The Chosen Stone and His Chosen People

⁴Coming to Him *as to* a living stone, ^erejected indeed by men, but chosen

² ^b [Matt. 18:3; 19:14; Mark 10:15; Luke 18:17]; 1 Cor. 14:20
^c 1 Cor. 3:2 ¹ NU adds up to salvation ³ ^d Ps. 34:8; Titus 3:4;
Heb. 6:5 ⁴ ^e Ps. 118:22

1:20 foreordained: God has known (v. 2) the One who would bring salvation, even as He has known those to whom that salvation is offered and secured (see Rom. 11:2). **but was manifest:** This phrase contrasts with the first half of the verse. What was known only to God before the creation of the world is now made known to us.

1:22 Peter does not say that we purify our own **souls** but that we accomplish the purification of our souls by obedience to God's **truth**. It is unclear whether this obedience is a reference to the conversion process or to the sanctifying process after one's conversion. The former seems more likely in the context of vv. 20, 21; the latter seems more likely in light of Peter's general theme of holiness in this letter.

1:23 born again: Though this phrase is commonly used by Christians today, it is rarely found in the NT (see John 3:3–8 for Jesus' use of the phrase). Christians are dead in sin before their life is renewed by the Spirit (see Eph. 2:1). The same idea is expressed by “the washing of regeneration” (see Titus 3:5) and the concept of “children of God” in John's first letter (see 1 John 3:1, 2).

1:24 withers . . . falls away: Peter reminds his readers of our transitory nature with an OT quote, comparing us to the temporary things of this world—a direct contrast to God's permanent work and His eternal word (vv. 23, 25; see Is. 40:6–8).

2:2 Desire does not mean merely to want something, but rather to long for something with all of one's being. **that you may grow:** The purpose of studying God's truth is not only to learn more, but to become mature in the faith.

2:4 living stone: This phrase anticipates the OT quotations in vv. 6–8. Jesus, as a living stone, is superior to the OT temple. These words also may be a subtle attack on the dead stone idols that the Gentiles worshiped prior to becoming Christians. Thus Jesus is greater than the traditions received from the fathers (1:18). He is greater than the temple in Jerusalem, and He is greater than the traditions of the Gentiles with their lifeless stone idols. The new building of God, of which Jesus is the Cornerstone, is living; it is the assembly of all believers, the church (v. 5). **rejected:** Not to receive Christ is to reject Him (see John 3:18; Rom. 1:18–23).

The Christian Calling: Holiness

Writing to believers in Christ who were experiencing extreme persecution at the hands of a pagan culture, Peter advocated holy living. Seven times in Peter's first letter, we find the word *holy* (*hagios* in Greek) used in reference to conduct or behavior. And even when the word is not explicitly used, pure conduct is called for again and again.

Holy implies sacredness, being consecrated to God, or being worthy of God. In order to qualify for this label, a person or thing has to be free from impurity. There can be no hint of moral pollution or spiritual defilement. To be holy is to be free from anything that would offend a perfect God.

This state may seem impossible to achieve. After all, how can imperfect, fallen creatures like ourselves live up to the command to “be holy in all [our] conduct” (1:15)? The answer is found in the opening sentence of Peter's letter. *Sanctification*, the process by which we are made holy, is “of the Spirit” (1:2). The Holy Spirit of God, who indwells us at the moment of salvation, is able to transform us. By the power of the Spirit we find the ability to “abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul” (2:11). As we yield ourselves to God, and as we soberly and vigilantly resist the devil (5:9) and all his temptations, we will find that God is able to “perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle” us (5:10).

Holy living should be our goal not merely because God commands it, but also because it befits our true identity. In Christ we are no longer citizens of a sinful world, but the “people of God” (2:10). We are “sojourners and pilgrims” in this world, on our way to our true home, which is heaven (2:11).

Furthermore, holiness serves an evangelistic purpose. It is a “holy nation” and “special people” who are able to “proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light” (2:9). It is our “honorable” conduct and “good works” that cause evildoers to glorify God (2:12).

Finally, Peter speaks of the day when we will stand before God and give an account for the way we have lived. Those who have maintained a lifelong fear (reverence) of God resulting in holy living will be best prepared for that day of reckoning (1:17).



by God *and* precious, ⁵you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. ⁶Therefore it is also contained in the Scripture,

*^f“Behold, I lay in Zion
A chief cornerstone, elect, precious,
And he who believes on Him will by
no means be put to shame.”*

⁷Therefore, to you who believe, *He* is precious; but to those who ²are disobedient,

*^g“The stone which the builders
rejected
Has become the chief cornerstone,”*

⁸and

*^h“A stone of stumbling
And a rock of offense.”*

ⁱThey stumble, being disobedient to the word,^j to which they also were appointed.

⁶ ^fIs. 28:16 ★; Rom. 9:32, 33; 10:11; 1 Pet. 2:8
⁷ ^gPs. 118:22; Matt. 21:42; Luke 2:34
² ^hNU *disbelieve*
⁸ ^hIs. 8:14 ★ ⁱ 1 Cor. 1:23; Gal. 5:11
^j Rom. 9:22

⁹ ^kIs. 9:2; 42:16; [Acts 26:18; 2 Cor. 4:6]
¹⁰ ^lHos. 1:9, 10; 2:23; Rom. 9:25; 10:19
¹¹ ^m [Rom. 8:13]; Gal. 5:17; James 4:1
¹² ⁿ 2 Cor. 8:21; Phil. 2:15; Titus 2:8;
1 Pet. 2:15; 3:16
^o Matt. 5:16; 9:8;
John 13:31; 1 Pet. 4:11, 16
¹³ ^p Matt. 22:21
³ *institution*

⁹But you *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of ^kdarkness into His marvelous light; ¹⁰^lwho once *were* not a people but *are* now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.

Living Before the World

¹¹Beloved, I beg *you* as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts ^mwhich war against the soul, ¹²ⁿhaving your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, ^othey may, by *your* good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation.

Submission to Government

¹³^pTherefore submit yourselves to every ³ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether to the king as supreme, ¹⁴or to governors, as to those who are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and *for the* praise of those who do

2:5 Christians are part of God's great spiritual building project. **Stones** here refers to stones that are shaped and ready for use in construction, as opposed to natural rock. **a holy priesthood:** Unlike the OT priesthood, in which only those who were born into a certain tribe could be priests, all who are reborn into God's family, that is, all believers, are priests who have the privilege and responsibility of offering **spiritual sacrifices** to God (see Rom. 12:1, 2; Heb. 13:15, 16).

2:6 chief cornerstone: Jesus is the foundation stone from which the placement of all other living stones in the spiritual house (v. 5) is determined (see Is. 28:16). In ancient buildings, the cornerstone was first situated on the foundation and then all of the other stones were aligned to it. Thus as part of the house of God, we need to keep our focus on our Cornerstone (see Heb. 12:2). **put to shame:** Those who trust in Jesus will never be embarrassed by making Him the focus of their lives.

2:7 Rejected suggests that unbelievers, after examining Jesus to see if He meets their needs, declared Him to be useless or undesirable. Though He was not what they wanted, He is specifically the One whom God the Father has chosen to be the foundation of His eternal work.

2:8 stone of stumbling . . . rock of offense: Unbelievers, because they do not follow God's Word, find Jesus to be repugnant, an obstacle in their way and a cause for disapproval and anger. **they also were appointed:** The Greek does not clearly indicate whether those who are presently unbelieving (v. 7) are appointed to stumbling, to being disobedient, or to both. However, the context reveals that it is God who does the appointing.

2:9 But you: This verse provides a direct contrast to the previ-

ous verse, a contrast between those who believe in Jesus Christ and those who do not. **a chosen generation:** God has not left to chance those who will be part of a unique body of people, a group who will serve Him. He has reserved that decision for Himself.

a royal priesthood: Believers are transformed not only internally (see v. 5, which describes us as being made into "a holy priesthood") but also externally. We are a priesthood that functions in a ruling capacity, as kings. **a holy nation:** Believers are a unified group of people who are set apart for God's use. **His own special people:** God protects those whom He has adopted into His family.

2:10 obtained mercy: Although we once deserved condemnation because of unbelief (see John 3:18, 36; Eph. 2:1–3), we no longer are under the sentence of judgment (see Eph. 2:4–7).

2:11 sojourners and pilgrims: With these words, Peter reminds believers (1:1) that this earth is not our home. We are foreigners here, traveling to our eternal home, heaven. The word translated **abstain** literally means "to hold away from one's person." In other words, we must distance ourselves from our own self-indulgent urges. **war:** Life is not a game but a war to be waged, and that war is a matter of eternal life or death (see Rom. 7:23; James 4:1). Yet the war is not necessarily fought on a physical, temporal plane, but on a spiritual one.

2:12 Gentiles here refers to those who are not believers in Christ, not to those who are not Jews. **they speak against you as evildoers:** Despite our good works, those who are unbelievers will slander us. **they observe:** The Greek word for *observe*, used only here and in 3:2, implies a conscious, ongoing examination—in this case, of the actions of believers. **The day of visitation** probably refers to the final day of judgment when all people, believers and unbelievers alike, will fall on their knees and acknowledge who Jesus Christ is and what He has done through His people.

2:13 Peter forcefully commands Christians to **submit** voluntarily to governing authorities. He does not make submission a matter of personal conviction or choice. He decrees that it is an obligation for all Christians. **to every ordinance of man:** This phrase suggests that the submission of Christians is not to be exercised solely in relation to civil authorities (v. 14), but to all kinds of rules that Christians encounter (2:18; 3:1).

2:14 governors: This term was used by the Greeks for all people, apart from the supreme ruler of a nation (v. 13), who exercise authority on behalf of the government of a country.

example

(Gk. *hupogrammos*) (2:21) Strong's #5261

In common Greek usage, this word designated a tablet that contained the entire Greek alphabet. Students would use this to trace the alphabet, learning each letter from alpha to omega. The life of Jesus, a life of suffering, is just such a tracing tablet. We, the learners of Jesus, are to trace this life, beginning from alpha and going on to omega.

good. ¹⁵For this is the will of God, that by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men— ¹⁶*as free, yet not using liberty as a cloak for vice, but as bondservants of God.* ¹⁷Honor all *people*. Love the brotherhood. Fear ^sGod. Honor the king.

Submission to Masters

¹⁸*Servants, be submissive to your masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the harsh.* ¹⁹For this is commendable, if because of conscience toward God one endures grief, suffering wrongfully. ²⁰For ^vwhat credit *is it* if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently? But when you do good and suffer, if you take it patiently, this is commendable before God. ²¹For ^wto this you were called, because Christ also suffered for ⁵us, ^xleaving ⁶us an example, that you should follow His steps:

²² “*Who committed no sin,
Nor was deceit found in His mouth*”;

¹⁶ ^q Rom. 6:14, 20, 22; 1 Cor. 7:22; [Gal. 5:1] ^q Gal. 5:13 ^q wickedness
¹⁷ ^s Prov. 24:21
¹⁸ ^t Eph. 6:5-8
¹⁹ ^v Matt. 5:10
²⁰ ^v Luke 6:32-34
²¹ ^w Matt. 16:24;
1 Thess. 3:3, 4
^x [1 John 2:6] ⁵ NU
^{you} ⁶ NU, M ^{you}
²² ^v Is. 53:9 [★];
2 Cor. 5:21
²³ ^v Is. 53:7 [★]; Heb. 12:3; 1 Pet. 3:9
^q Luke 23:46
²⁴ ^b Is. 53:4, 11 [★];
1 Cor. 15:3; [Heb. 9:28] ^c Rom. 7:6
^d Is. 53:5 ⁷ wounds
²⁵ ^e Is. 53:5, 6 ^f Is. 40:11; [Ezek. 34:23];
Zech. 13:7 [★] ^g Gr.
Episkopos

CHAPTER 3

¹ ^e Gen. 3:16; 1 Cor. 14:34; Eph. 5:22;
Col. 3:18 ¹ 1 Cor. 7:16 ^c Matt. 18:15
² ^d 1 Pet. 2:12; 3:6

²³*who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously;* ²⁴*who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness—*^d*by whose stripes you were healed.* ²⁵For ^eyou were like sheep going astray, but have now returned ^fto the Shepherd and ^gOverseer of your souls.

Submission to Husbands

3 Wives, likewise, *be* ^asubmissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, ^bthey, without a word, may ^cbe won by the conduct of their wives, ^dwhen they observe your chaste conduct *accompanied* by fear. ^{3e}Do not let your adornment be *merely* outward—arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on *fine* apparel— ⁴rather *let it*

³ ^e Is. 3:18; 1 Tim. 2:9

2:15 the will of God: The authority backing Peter’s command for civil obedience is the God of the universe, the Sovereign Ruler over all citizens and governments and over all Christians and non-Christians. **put to silence:** Our actions should make our accusers speechless, like a muzzle placed over their mouths.

2:16 not using liberty: Freedom in Christ must be used wisely (see 1 Cor. 6:12, 13; 10:23–31). **A cloak for vice** may be understood either as an excuse made up before the fact (a reason for wrongdoing), or after the fact (a cover-up for wrongdoing). The context here seems to support the second. **as bondservants of God:** We should submit all our actions to God, for He is our Master.

2:17 Fear God: Our reverence for God should be the basis of our relationships with others. All people are created in His image, and He is the One who has placed some people in authority over us. Therefore we should treat everyone with love and respect.

2:18 Servants: Somewhere from one-third to half of the population of the Roman Empire were slaves. The percentage of Christians who were slaves may have been even higher. **be submissive . . . with all fear:** Workers are to take their responsibilities seriously. **but also to the harsh:** Christians are to serve even the worst of bosses with respect.

2:19 Those who suffer faithfully but unjustly as a result of their service to God please Him. Such suffering has a great reward (see Matt. 5:10–12; Rom. 8:17, 18; Phil. 1:19; 2 Tim. 2:12). Peter himself had asked Jesus about this and received an exciting encouragement about the divine compensation package (see Matt. 19:27–30). **endures:** Believers are not merely to survive the difficulties that come their way, rather they are to bear patiently their heavy loads. **Grief** here is not the result of loss but of being afflicted. **wrongfully:** This verse is about injustice, about people being treated worse than they deserve.

2:20 Credit suggests benefit or personal gain. There is no advantage to believers for successfully enduring a deserved punishment for wrongdoing, yet there is great value when we honor God with our actions when we are unfairly condemned by others (3:17). **take it patiently:** Endurance and perseverance in the face of suffering please God.

2:21 For to this you were called: Part of being a Christian is the privilege of serving God faithfully when we encounter undeserved judgment (see Phil. 1:29). **leaving us an example:** Observing how Christ handled unjust punishment gives us insight as to how we also may endure such trials.

2:22 Who committed no sin: Christ was perfect in everything

He did, even when He was wrongly condemned to death by the world. **Nor was deceit found:** In His thoughts and attitudes, Jesus was perfect.

2:24 who Himself bore our sins: The Greek wording emphasizes Jesus’ personal involvement in the act of paying the price for our sins. It also emphasizes that it is our sins that Jesus bore on the Cross.

The tree is the Cross. **that we . . . might live for righteousness:** The purpose of Christ’s bearing our sins is that we might live to please Him. **by whose stripes:** The Greek word for *stripes* is singular rather than plural. Thus our spiritual healing comes neither from Jesus’ day-to-day sufferings nor from His sufferings that led to the Cross, but from the one ultimate wound—His death.

2:25 Shepherd: This title portrays Christ as One who tenderly and wisely provides for all our needs. **Overseer:** Christ is also our Guardian, our Protector, the One who watches over us. This is the only place where the titles Shepherd (Pastor) and Overseer (Bishop or Elder) are used in the singular. No one else is qualified to be the one Shepherd and Overseer of our souls—only Christ is. For this reason the NT regularly describes the church and its congregations as having more than one leader (see Titus 1:5).

3:1 In the same manner that citizens are to relate to their government leaders (2:13–17) and employees to their employers (2:18–25), so wives are to relate to their husbands. **be submissive:** Wives are commanded to place themselves willingly under the guidance and control of their husbands, living in such a way that their husbands will be challenged to live in obedience to God’s truth. **do not obey the word:** Peter here is referring to non-Christian husbands (v. 20; 2:7, 8; 4:17). **without a word:** A godly wife does not preach to her husband with words but with the Christlike beauty of her daily life. **may be won:** The goal of her actions is to see the unbelieving husband become a Christian (see 1 Cor. 9:19–22).

3:2 chaste conduct: The Christian wife is to live without moral defect or blemish. **Fear** here refers to respect for God.

3:3 Do not let your adornment be merely outward: Christians are to spend more time developing their inner character than attempting to make themselves look beautiful on the outside (see 1 Sam. 16:7). Peter is not condemning women who wear jewelry. He is emphasizing the importance of a woman’s character.

3:4 Incorruptible beauty involves inner qualities that do not decay or fade like makeup, jewelry, and clothes (v. 3). **gentle and quiet spirit:** Peter encourages Christian wives to exhibit attitudes that do not demand personal rights, attitudes that are not harsh and grating but are soothing and tranquil.

be ^fthe hidden person of the heart, with the ⁱincorruptible *beauty* of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God. ⁵For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, being submissive to their own husbands, ⁶as Sarah obeyed Abraham, ^ocalling him lord, whose daughters you are if you do good and are not afraid with any terror.

A Word to Husbands

^{7h}Husbands, likewise, dwell with *them* with understanding, giving honor to the wife, ⁱas to the weaker vessel, and as *be-ing* heirs together of the grace of life, ^jthat your prayers may not be hindered.

Called to Blessing

⁸Finally, all of *you be* of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, *be* tenderhearted, *be* ²courteous; ^{9k}not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary ^lblessing, knowing that you were called to this, ^mthat you may inherit a blessing. ¹⁰For

*“He who would love life
And see good days,*

⁴ ^fRom. 2:29
¹ ⁱimperishable
⁶ ^gGen. 18:12
⁷ ^h1 Cor. 7:3; [Eph. 5:25]; Col. 3:19
¹ ⁱCor. 12:23 / Job 42:8
⁸ ² ^{NU} humble
⁹ ^k [Prov. 17:13]
^l ^{Matt.} 5:44 ^m ^{Matt.} 25:34
¹⁰ ⁿ ^{Ps.} 34:12-16

^o ^{James} 1:26
³ ^{restrain}
¹¹ ^p ^{Ps.} 37:27
^q ^{Rom.} 12:18
¹² ^r ^{John} 9:31
¹³ ^s ^{Prov.} 16:7
¹⁴ ^t ^{James} 1:12
^u ^{Is.} 8:12
¹⁵ ^v ^{Ps.} 119:46
^w [Titus 3:7] ⁴ ^{set apart} ⁵ ^{NU} ^{Christ as Lord}
¹⁶ ^x ¹ ^{Tim.} 1:5; Heb. 13:18; 1 ^{Pet.} 3:21

*“Let him ³refrain his tongue from evil,
And his lips from speaking deceit.
¹¹ Let him ^pturn away from evil and do good;
^qLet him seek peace and pursue it.
¹² For the eyes of the LORD are on the righteous,
^rAnd His ears are open to their prayers;
But the face of the LORD is against those who do evil.”*

Suffering for Right and Wrong

^{13s}And who is he who will harm you if you become followers of what is good? ^{14t}But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, *you are blessed.* ^u“And do not be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled.” ¹⁵But ⁴sanctify ⁵the Lord God in your hearts, and always ^v*be* ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the ^whope that is in you, with meekness and fear; ^{16x}having a good conscience, that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed. ¹⁷For *it is better*, if it is the will of God, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil.

3:6 calling him lord: Sarah was not worshipping Abraham; she was showing him respect. **not afraid:** Fear of her husband should not be the driving force that causes a Christian wife to practice the principles of godly marital relations.

3:7 Christian husbands are to demonstrate toward their wives the same unselfish spirit as Christian citizens (2:13–17), Christian subordinates (2:18–25), and Christian wives (vv. 1–6). **with understanding:** A Christian husband should be intimately aware of his wife's needs, her strengths and weaknesses, and her goals and desires. He should know as much about her as possible in order to respond in the best way to her. **giving honor:** A Christian husband gives honor to his wife because she deserves honor (vv. 1–6). **weaker vessel:** The weakness in view here is primarily physical weakness, since the term *vessel* means the human body. **being heirs together:** The relationship described here is one between a Christian husband and his Christian wife, since all Christians and only Christians are heirs of **the grace of life** (see Rom. 8:17). **that your prayers may not be hindered:** A Christian husband's spiritual relationship with God is directly affected by the way he treats his wife.

3:9 reviling for reviling: Peter encourages Christians to act like the

Lord Jesus. He endured suffering and ridicule in silence, entrusting His just cause to the ultimate Judge (2:23). **but on the contrary blessing:** Peter emphasizes the contrast between our natural tendency as human beings, to get even when we are offended, with the way we should act as believers: returning good to those who hurt us (see Eph. 4:25, 29). **that you may inherit a blessing:** Christ will reward us for any suffering we endure in His name (see Matt. 5:10–12; 19:27–30).

3:12 Peter uses the imagery of **eyes** and **ears** to remind his readers that God knows everything about believers, especially their suffering, and that He listens and responds to their cries for help (see Heb. 4:12–16). **the face of the Lord is against:** In direct contrast to God's all-knowing and all-caring interest in His children who serve Him, He is diametrically opposed to those who do not follow His path of righteousness.

3:14 Since not everything in the world functions as it should, even those who do God's will may undergo suffering. **for righteousness' sake:** Believers should make certain that when they suffer it is only because they have served God faithfully and not because they have done anything wrong (4:14, 15). **you are blessed:** God specially honors those who suffer for doing what is right (see Matt. 5:10–12).

3:15 sanctify the Lord God: Believers should acknowledge the eternal holiness of Christ by revering Him as the Lord of the universe who is in control of all things. **to give a defense:** Peter assumes that the Christian faith will be falsely accused. He therefore encourages Christians to have rational answers to respond to those false accusations. **Meekness** is the same term translated *gentle* in v. 4. Meekness is not weakness. Scripture indicates that both Moses and Christ were meek men; however, they were certainly not weak men. Fear implies a high degree of reverence or respect.

3:17 for it is better: Peter is not encouraging believers to seek out situations in which they will experience suffering. Instead, he is saying that believers should make certain that when they suffer it is the result of having been faithful to God rather than because they have done evil (see 2:19, 20). **if it is the will of God:** Suffering may be part of God's perfect and wise plan for a believer (see Matt. 5:10–12).

heirs together

(Gk. *sunkléronomos*) (3:7; Rom. 8:17; Eph. 3:6; Heb. 11:9) Strong's #4789

The Greek word means “joint-heirs” or “coheirs.” For Christian couples to be “joint-heirs” is for them to have an equal share and joint-participation in the Father's kingdom. The concept of inheritance is prominent both in the OT and NT (see Num. 26:56; Ps. 25:13; Is. 60:21; Matt. 5:5; Gal. 3:29). For believers, Jesus promises an eternal inheritance in His kingdom. Paul uses the same Greek word to describe Christians' participation with Christ in glory (see Eph. 3:6).

Christ's Suffering and Ours

¹⁸For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring ⁶us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit, ¹⁹by whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison, ²⁰who formerly were disobedient, ⁷when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water. ²¹There is also an antitype which now saves us—baptism ²(not the removal of the filth of the flesh, ^abut the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, ²²who has gone into heaven and ^bis at the right hand of God, ^cangels and authorities and powers having been made subject to Him.

¹⁸ ⁶ NU, M you
²⁰ ⁷ NU, M when the longsuffering of God waited patiently
²¹ ^v Acts 16:33; Eph. 5:26 ^z [Titus 3:5] ^a [Rom. 10:10]
²² ^b Ps. 110:1
^c Rom. 8:38; Heb. 1:6

CHAPTER 4

¹ ¹ NU omits for us
² ² John 1:13
³ ² NU time
⁵ ^b Acts 10:42; Rom. 14:9; 2 Tim. 4:1
⁶ ^c 1 Pet. 1:12; 3:19
^d [Rom. 8:9, 13]; Gal. 5:25

4 Therefore, since Christ suffered ¹for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind, for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, ²that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh for the lusts of men, ^abut for the will of God. ³For we have spent enough of our past ²lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles—when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries. ⁴In regard to these, they think it strange that you do not run with them in the same flood of dissipation, speaking evil of you. ⁵They will give an account to Him who is ready ^bto judge the living and the dead. ⁶For this reason ^cthe gospel was preached also to those who are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but ^dlive according to God in the spirit.

3:18 once for sins: Christ's death on the Cross was a once-for-all event. He died once for our sins; He does not have to be "recrucified" each time we sin. **that He might bring us to God:** Christ died so that we can be reconciled to God.

3:19, 20 There are various interpretations of the meaning of these verses, primarily because of the ambiguity of the phrase **spirits in prison**. The Greek term translated *spirits* can refer to human spirits, angels, or demons. There are three main interpretations: (1) Some interpret these verses as describing Jesus as going to the place where fallen angels are incarcerated and declaring His final victory over evil in His work on the Cross. These commentators suggest that Peter is referring to **the days of Noah** because these fallen angels were typified by the gross immorality of those "spirits" who married human women at that time (see Gen. 6:1–4; 2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 1:6). Depending on the commentator, this proclamation is assigned to the time between Christ's crucifixion and resurrection, or to a time after Christ's ascension to heaven. (2) Others hold that *spirits* refers to human spirits. Thus Christ preached to human beings who had died in Noah's day and were in the realm of the dead (hell or Hades). Although some have insisted that Christ's preaching included an offer of salvation to these people, this is at best unlikely and at worst misleading, for Scripture never concedes a "second chance" for sinners after death. The content of Christ's preaching was most likely a proclamation of His victory over sin. (3) Finally, another major interpretation understands this passage as describing Christ preaching through Noah to the unbelievers of his day. Since they rejected Noah's message of salvation, they were presently *in prison*—that is, hell.

3:21 an antitype which now saves us: The symbolic act of **baptism** is the **answer of a good conscience** of one who has been saved from the penalty of sin (see Rom. 4:1–6) by trusting in the death, burial, and **resurrection** of Christ (see Rom. 6:4, 5). The floodwaters symbolize the baptismal waters, which in turn symbolize the salvation that can be obtained through Christ's death (see Matt. 28:19, 20; Acts 2:38).

3:22 Being at the right hand of God means that Christ is in a position of power and authority.

4:1 in the flesh: Christ's suffering was real because He took on our human nature. **arm yourselves:** In order to fight the good fight successfully, believers must take on the **same mind** as Christ (see Phil. 2:5). **He who has suffered** in this context refers to suffering Christians. **has ceased from sin:** Those who serve God faithfully in the midst of suffering take on a different attitude toward sin than what they previously held. Sin no longer holds the same grip on them. The phrase *has ceased* here does not suggest that those who have suffered become sinlessly perfect or that they will never sin again.

4:3 Lewdness speaks of insolent, shameless behavior that goes unchecked in a person's life. **Revelries** refers to long, protracted

feasts that involve much drinking and immorality. **abominable idolatries:** The idea here is that some forms of idolatry may have been detestable even to the civil authorities. Of course, all types of idolatry are hateful to God (see Ex. 20:3–5; Deut. 7:25; 32:16, 17).

4:4 they think it strange: Unbelievers cannot understand the transformed lives of believers. **flood of dissipation:** In contrast to believers, who live in order to please God, unbelievers live without thought of the eternal consequences of their acts. They fill their lives with evil deeds that have no eternal value. **speaking evil of you:** Unbelievers typically ridicule those who refuse to follow them in their frivolous and wicked lifestyles.

4:5 They will give an account: Although unbelievers think they are free to do as they please, they are greatly mistaken. There are consequences to what they do. One day they will stand defenseless before God and give an account of all of their wickedness (see Rev. 20:11–15).

4:6 There are four main interpretations of who Peter refers to when he speaks of the **dead** in this verse. (1) Some see a connection between the gospel preached in this verse and the proclamation of Christ in 3:19, 20. Accordingly, they understand this verse to be about Christ offering salvation to those who lived in pre-Christian times (see 3:19, 20). This is most likely mistaken, because there is no indication in Scripture that anyone gets a "second chance" to be saved after death. (2) Another group of commentators also connects this preaching to 3:19, 20, but holds that this verse is speaking of Christ preaching the gospel only to the righteous people of OT times. The other two interpretations maintain that this verse is not connected to 3:19, 20: (3) One view has Peter speaking of the gospel which was preached to believers who are *now* dead. They had died just like other people, but they were now living with God. (4) The final and perhaps the most sound interpretation of this verse is that Peter is referring to the *spiritually* dead. The gospel was being preached to them so that they could come alive spiritually.

love

(Gk. *agapē*) (4:8; Rom. 5:5, 8; 1 John 3:1; 4:7, 8, 16; Jude 21) Strong's #26

This Greek word was rarely used in Greek literature prior to the NT. When it was used, it denoted showing kindness to strangers, giving hospitality, and being charitable. In the NT, the word *agapē* took on a special meaning: it was used by the NT writers to designate a volitional love as opposed to the purely emotional kind. It is a self-sacrificial love, a kind naturally expressed by God but not so easily by men and women.



Persecutions

Trials were common to first-century Christians. The Book of Acts testifies that Christians were slandered, defamed, boycotted, mobbed, imprisoned, and even killed because of their faith. Although cultural progress may not have touched many of the cities in which Christians lived, hostility to the gospel and to Christians themselves was there. Christians were targets of attack because they no longer participated in pagan religious practices. Since they were the ones who abandoned the so-called gods of the people, Christians were blamed for everything from natural disasters to economic downturns. They were even more vulnerable because they were often strangers in a city, having been driven out of other cities by persecution or having come from a Jewish background. These early Christians often had little security, low social status (many were slaves), and little recourse to government protection. Peter wrote to encourage them.



A second-century A.D. mosaic of a Christian being martyred in a Roman amphitheater — The Granger Collection, NYC — All rights reserved.

Serving for God's Glory

⁷But ^ethe end of all things is at hand; therefore be serious and watchful in your prayers. ⁸And above all things have fervent love for one another, for ^f*love will cover a multitude of sins.* ⁹*Be hospitable to one another ^hwithout grumbling.*

⁷ ^e Rom. 13:11; Heb. 9:26; James 5:8, 9; 1 John 2:18
⁸ ^f [Prov. 10:12]; 1 Cor. 13:4; James 5:20
⁹ ^g 1 Tim. 3:2; Heb. 13:2 ^h 2 Cor. 9:7
¹⁰ ⁱ Rom. 12:6-8

¹⁰ⁱ As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, ^jas good stewards of ^kthe manifold grace of God. ¹¹If anyone speaks, *let him speak* as the ³oracles of God. If anyone ministers, *let him do it* as with the ability which God supplies, that ^min all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the ⁴dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Suffering for God's Glory

¹²Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; ¹³but rejoice ⁿto the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that ^owhen His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy. ¹⁴If you are ⁵reproached for the name of Christ, ^p*blessed are you*, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. ⁶On their part He is blasphemed, ^qbut on your part He is glorified. ¹⁵But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, or as a ⁷busybody in other people's matters. ¹⁶Yet if *anyone suffers* as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this ⁸matter.

¹⁷For the time *has come* ^rfor judgment to begin at the house of God; and if it *begins* with us first, ^swhat will be the end

^j Matt. 24:45; 1 Cor. 4:1, 2 ^k [1 Cor. 12:4] ¹¹ Eph. 4:29
^m [1 Cor. 10:31]; Eph. 5:20 ³ utterances ⁴ sovereignty
¹³ ^p James 1:2 ^o 2 Tim. 2:12 ¹⁴ ^p Matt. 5:11; Luke 6:22; Acts 5:41 ^q Matt. 5:16 ⁵ insulted or reviled ⁶ NU omits the rest of v. 14. ¹⁵ ^r meddler ¹⁶ ^s NU name ¹⁷ ^r Is. 10:12
⁸ Luke 10:12

4:7 Christ can come in judgment at any time. Therefore, everyone should be ready to give a reason for the way he or she has lived. **serious:** Christians should curb all sinful passions in light of the coming of the Lord. **watchful:** Peter urges his readers to be sober-minded and disciplined so that they can offer their **prayers** to God.

4:8 love will cover a multitude of sins: Peter is not suggesting that one Christian's love atones for another Christian's sins. Rather, by introducing this proverb from the OT (see Prov. 10:12), he is reminding us that love does not stir up sins. We can demonstrate our love for our fellow believers by truly forgiving them and not talking openly about their past sins.

4:9 Be hospitable: In NT times, hospitality typically meant housing and feeding travelers for two to three days with no expectation of payment in return. **without grumbling:** Being truly hospitable required personal sacrifice. Therefore many who performed such acts of kindness to strangers sometimes complained behind the backs of their guests about the hardships of caring for them. In this letter, Peter exhorts those Christians to serve others cheerfully.

4:10 As each one has received a gift: Every believer is gifted to serve. **Stewards** are managers or trustees who will be held accountable for using their gift in the best interest of the One who gave it to them.

4:11 as the oracles of God: Those who teach God's truth to others should teach it in a reverent manner so that their hearers will respect the Word of God. **with the ability which God supplies:** Not relying on their own strength, Christians should use the power God gives them to do His will on earth.

4:12 do not think it strange: Apparently Peter's readers were astonished that they had to suffer as Christians, especially to the extent that they were suffering. The Greek word translated **fiery trial** here was also used to speak of the intense fire that burned away impurities in metals (1:6, 7). **to try you:** For Christians the purpose of suffering is to prove their true character, to clear away the dross of sin and to allow the pure nature of Christ to show itself. **some strange thing:** Christians should expect and prepare for suffering. **4:13 when His glory is revealed:** Suffering will be part of the Christian experience until Christ returns (see Rom. 8:18–22).

4:14 reproached: Christians may be unjustly blamed because of their association with **Christ**. Peter calls this situation **blessed** because it brings great reward in the next life (see Matt. 5:10–12). **rests upon you:** When Christians suffer unjustly on behalf of Christ, they will discover that the close relationship they have with God during that period will refresh their spirit.

4:15 busybody: Meddling in other people's business is equated with murdering and stealing.

4:17 the time has come for judgment: Judgment does not always imply condemnation in Scripture. When used in relation to Christians, it consistently refers to the evaluation of a believer's works for the purpose of reward (see 1 Cor. 3:10–15). **the house of God:** The focus here is not on a building but on believers. **those who do not obey:** Throughout this letter, Peter speaks of those who are not part of God's eternal family as being disobedient (2:7, 8; 3:1, 20).

of those who do not obey the gospel of God? ¹⁸Now

*“If the righteous one is scarcely saved,
Where will the ungodly and the
sinner appear?”*

¹⁹Therefore let those who suffer accord-
ing to the will of God ^acommit their souls

¹⁸ [†] Prov. 11:31
¹⁹ ^υ Ps. 37:5-7;
2 Tim. 1:12

CHAPTER 5

¹ ^υ Matt. 26:37
^υ Rom. 8:17, 18

to Him in doing good, as to a faithful
Creator.

Shepherd the Flock

5 The elders who are among you I ex-
hort, I who am a fellow elder and a
^awitness of the sufferings of Christ, and
also a partaker of the ^bglory that will be

4:18 scarcely saved: No one deserves to be saved, and no one is able to be saved by his or her good works (see Eph. 2:8, 9). Since everyone deserves condemnation, the fact that anyone is saved is solely the result of God’s grace. **appear:** If God does not hold back judgment from His own people, imagine the end of the enemies of God who have no one to justify them before Him (see Ps. 1:4–6; Rev. 20:11–15).
4:19 Christians are to entrust their very lives to God, especially in

the midst of suffering, always recognizing that He is the **faithful Creator** who is in control of all things. God never gives us more than we can handle (see 1 Cor. 10:13); everything He does always has a good purpose (see Rom. 8:28).
5:1 Peter sees himself on the same level as the rest of the **elders**. **Partaker** is a key term in the Epistle to the Hebrews (see Heb. 3:1, 14). It speaks of sharing in Christ’s reign in the coming kingdom (see Rom. 8:17; Rev. 2:26–28; 5:9, 10). Peter considers himself to be

Church Leaders

Peter concludes his first letter with an exhortation for overseers to “shepherd the flock of God” (5:2). The following is a summary of the responsibilities and qualification of overseers and of deacons, the other church officials mentioned in the New Testament.

Overseers/Bishops/Elders		Deacons
Meaning	The Greek word <i>presbuteros</i> literally means “aged,” which explains the common translation <i>elder</i> .	The Greek word <i>diakonos</i> literally means “servant.”
Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To pastor or “shepherd” God’s church—to feed, lead, guide, and nurture (Acts 20:28; 1 Pet. 5:2)• To administrate or rule God’s church (1 Tim. 5:17; Titus 1:5)• To teach and preach (Eph. 4:12, 13; 1 Tim. 3:2; 5:17)• To represent the church (Acts 20:17)• To pray for the sick (James 5:14)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To tend to physical needs among the believers (Acts 6:1–6)• To free up the elders for their ministry in teaching and prayer (Acts 6:1–6)
Qualifications from 1 Tim. 3	• Blameless (v. 2; Titus 1:6)	• Blameless (v. 10)
	• Husband of one wife (v. 2; Titus 1:6)	• Husband of one wife (v. 12)
	• Temperate (v. 2)	
	• Sober-minded (v. 2; Titus 1:8)	
	• Of good behavior (v. 2)	
	• Hospitable (v. 2; Titus 1:8)	
	• Able to teach (v. 2; Titus 1:9)	
	• Not given to wine (v. 3; Titus 1:7)	• Not given to wine (v. 8)
	• Not violent, but gentle (v. 3; Titus 1:7)	
Qualifications from Titus 1	• Not greedy for money (v. 3; Titus 1:7)	• Not greedy for money (v. 8)
	• Not quarrelsome (v. 3)	
	• Not covetous (v. 3)	
	• Rules own house well (v. 4)	• Rules own house well (v. 12)
	• Has submissive children (v. 4; Titus 1:6)	
	• Not a novice (v. 6)	
	• Has a good testimony (v. 7)	
		• Reverent (v. 8)
		• Not double-tongued (v. 8)
Qualifications from Titus 1	• Not self-willed (v. 7)	• Has a pure conscience (v. 9)
	• Not quick-tempered (v. 7)	• Tested (v. 10)
	• A lover of what is good (v. 8)	
	• Just (v. 8)	
	• Holy (v. 8)	
	• Self-controlled (v. 8)	

revealed: ^{2c}Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, ^dnot by compulsion but ⁱwillingly, ^enot for dishonest gain but eagerly; ³nor as ^fbeing ²lords over ^gthose entrusted to you, but ^hbeing examples to the flock; ⁴and when ⁱthe Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive ^jthe crown of glory that does not fade away.

Submit to God, Resist the Devil

⁵Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to *your* elders. Yes, ^kall of *you* be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for

*^l"God resists the proud,
But ^mgives grace to the humble."*

⁶Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, ⁷casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.

⁸Be ³sober, be ⁴vigilant; ⁵because your adversary the devil walks about like a

^{2 c} John 21:16; Acts 20:28 ^d 1 Cor. 9:17
^e 1 Tim. 3:3 ⁱ NU adds according to God
³ Ezek. 34:4; Matt. 20:25 ^g Ps. 33:12
^h John 13:15; Phil. 3:17; 1 Thess. 1:7; 2 Thess. 3:9; 1 Tim. 4:12; Titus 2:7
² masters
⁴ Is. 40:11; Zech. 13:7; Heb. 13:20; 1 Pet. 2:25 / 2 Tim. 4:8
⁵ k Rom. 12:10; Eph. 5:21 / Prov. 3:34; James 4:6 m Is. 57:15
⁸ ³ self-controlled ⁴ watchful
⁵ NU, M omit because
¹⁰ ⁿ 1 Cor. 1:9; 1 Thess. 2:12 ⁶ NU the God of all grace,
⁷ NU, M you ⁸ NU will perfect
¹¹ ^o Rev. 1:6
¹² ^p 2 Cor. 1:19; 1 Thess. 1:1;
2 Thess. 1:1 ^q Acts 20:24

roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. ⁹Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world. ¹⁰But ⁶may the God of all grace, ⁿwho called ⁷us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, ⁸perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle *you*. ¹¹^oTo Him *be* the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Farewell and Peace

¹²By ^pSilvanus, our faithful brother as I consider him, I have written to you briefly, exhorting and testifying ^qthat this is the true grace of God in which you stand.

¹³She who is in Babylon, elect together with *you*, greets you; and *so does* ^rMark my son. ¹⁴Greet one another with a kiss of love.

Peace to you all who are in Christ Jesus. Amen.

^{13 r} Acts 12:12, 25; 15:37, 39; Col. 4:10; Philem. 24

already participating partly in **the glory** that one day he will experience fully.

5:2 Shepherd the flock of God: An ancient Israelite shepherd would go before his sheep to lead them; he would not drive the sheep in front of him. Church leaders should lead the people of God in the same way: feeding, protecting, and guiding them (see John 21:15–17). Christian leaders should also remember that they have been given responsibility for tending a flock that belongs to God, not to themselves. **serving as overseers:** Church leaders must do everything in their power to ensure that the Christians under their care are living according to God's Word. **not by compulsion:** The work of the ministry is to be done joyfully, not merely as a duty. **not for dishonest gain:** Christian leaders need to make certain that their work is not motivated by money, but by a passion for the good of those believers put in their charge (see 1 Tim. 3:3, 8; Titus 1:11).

5:3 nor as being lords over: Echoing a command that Peter heard directly from Jesus during His earthly ministry, Peter reminds all Christian leaders that they need to perform the role of servants, not of masters, to those whom God has assigned to their care (see Matt. 20:25–28; Mark 10:42–45). **being examples:** Christian leaders should be a godly model to other believers (see Phil. 3:17; 2 Thess. 3:9; 1 Tim. 4:12). Christ Himself set the example for all of us (see John 13:15).

5:4 Chief Shepherd: Elsewhere Jesus is called the Shepherd (2:25), the good Shepherd (see John 10:11, 14), and the great Shepherd (see Heb. 13:20). **crown of glory:** God guarantees that those ministers who serve Him faithfully, in accordance with the guidelines of vv. 2, 3, will receive an eternal reward in Christ's coming kingdom.

5:7 casting all your care upon Him: We need to present all our worries, anxieties, and problems to God in order to let Him handle them.

5:8 Be sober means to be self-disciplined, to think rationally and not foolishly. **Be vigilant** means to be alert to the spiritual pitfalls of life and take appropriate steps to make certain that we do not stumble. **your adversary:** Satan is our avowed enemy. He never ceases from being hostile toward us; he is constantly accusing us before God (see Job 1:9–2:7; Zech. 3:1; Luke 22:31; Rev. 12:10). **like**

a roaring lion: Satan is both cunning and cruel. He attacks when least expected and desires to destroy completely those whom he attacks.

5:9 Resist him: We are not commanded to run, but to resist—to fight rather than flee. Victory comes when we remain committed to God, because He is greater than our enemy (see 1 John 4:4).

5:10 perfect: Like a doctor setting a broken bone, God will mend our broken lives and make us whole. **establish:** God will make our way stable, despite the instability we feel living in a world that inflicts suffering upon us. **strengthen:** God will give us the ability to succeed in all that we do for Him. **settle:** As a consequence of our facing the attacks of our enemy, God will build in us a firm foundation that will make us steadfast and immovable.

5:11 the glory and the dominion: God is in control of all things both in this world and throughout eternity. **Amen:** Responding to the Word of God by saying “amen” echoes a Jewish practice of declaring that everything that had been said is true and that the hearers were committed to putting into practice that truth (see Phil. 4:20).

5:12 Silvanus, whose Aramaic name was Silas, worked closely with both Peter and Paul (see Acts 15:40; 16:19, 25, 29; 2 Cor. 1:19; 1 Thess. 1:1). **testifying:** Peter uses an intensive verb form here to show the intensity of his commitment to witness unashamedly of God's truth. Contrast Peter's cowardly behavior prior to Jesus' crucifixion (see Matt. 26:69–75; Mark 14:66–72; Luke 22:54–62; John 18:25–27).

5:13 She indicates the people who comprise the local church in the city from which Peter was writing (the Greek word for *church* is a feminine noun). Peter uses the term **Babylon** to refer to Rome. By the first century, the original Babylon was a small and insignificant town (see the Introduction to 1 Peter). **elect together with you:** All of the people of God are chosen by Him to be His people (1:2). **Mark my son:** John Mark (see Acts 12:12, 25; 15:37, 39) was Peter's spiritual son, not his physical one.

5:14 a kiss of love: Early Christians and Jews greeted fellow believers with a kiss on the cheek. Here Peter is encouraging believers to treat fellow believers as part of one large spiritual family of God (see Rom. 16:16; 1 Cor. 16:20; 2 Cor. 13:12; 1 Thess. 5:26).

THE SECOND EPISTLE OF PETER



TEACHING AND LEARNING is important because it involves truth and error. What a student learns becomes ingrained in the heart and soul. The student develops an attachment to it. If this “learning” is false—if the student comes to believe that something untrue is actually true—so much the worse. It will be hard to convince the person otherwise. And if the truth or error involves our eternal destiny, the stakes only go up. This is why Peter wrote his second epistle. The Christian faith that Peter had faithfully preached was not just a matter of philosophy. It was a matter of eternal life and death. Yet there were those who were peddling their own propaganda, falsehoods that contradicted the truth. Peter had to say something; he had to confront these falsehoods so they would not be mistaken for the truth.

Author Second Peter is one of the New Testament books that struggled the longest to gain acceptance into the New Testament canon. Church authorities such as Origen (around A.D. 240) accepted it as canonical but admitted that it was a “disputed” book. Early critics believed it was written by a disciple of Peter in the second century who used Peter’s name. They based their belief on differences of language and style between it and 1 Peter, as well as differences in subject matter and approach. Furthermore they noted the similarities between 2 Peter and Jude, asserting that the unknown writer of 2 Peter borrowed from Jude, something the apostle Peter would have never done.

Nevertheless, by the fourth century A.D. the church councils had accepted 2 Peter as one of Peter’s authentic letters. Modern studies have shown that the differences with 1 Peter are not nearly as great as earlier critics contended, and the stylistic differences can be accounted for by the use of different secretaries. First Peter may have been written with the help of Silvanus (see 1 Pet. 5:12). It is quite likely that Peter either wrote the second letter himself or employed another scribe to write it down—perhaps Mark. Although 2 Peter does not refer to as many events in the life of Jesus as 1 Peter does, it accurately describes the Transfiguration, the prophecy of Peter’s own death, the day of the Lord’s coming as a thief in the night, and the prediction of the appearance of false prophets. All of these are clear allusions to Jesus’ life as recorded in the Gospels.

There is clear evidence from the early centuries of Christianity that the church did not tolerate those who wrote in an apostle’s name. In one instance (specifically *The Acts of Paul and Thecla*), the author of such a work was disciplined for doing so. Paul also condemned such practices in his Thessalonian letters (2 Thess. 3:17). From the preceding evidence, it is reasonable to maintain that Simon Peter wrote this letter, just as the letter itself asserts (see 1:1).

Date and Recipients Second Peter can be dated sometime between A.D. 64 and 68. It was probably written from Rome, where early church tradition has the apostle spending the closing years of his life. Peter died a martyr around A.D. 68, and the epistle was written shortly before that (see 1:14, 15).

Peter addressed his letter “to those who have obtained like precious faith with us” (1:1), a way of saying “to all believers everywhere.” He had written 1 Peter to the widely scattered Christians in the Asia Minor provinces

of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia. By the time he wrote 2 Peter, they were no doubt even more widely scattered. Some have noted that 2 Peter seems to be addressed to a group whom Peter knows well and who were facing a specific false teaching. Even if this is the case, the readers seem to be largely Gentiles (because of the multiple references to licentious lifestyles, a characteristic of Gentiles) or a mixed group of Jews and Gentiles, probably living in one of the provinces mentioned above. Word of their difficulties with false teachers had reached Peter in Rome, and he dispatched this letter to them to encourage them and warn them of the dangers they faced.

Relationship of 2 Peter to Jude The obvious similarities between 2 Peter and Jude call for an explanation (compare ch. 2 with Jude 4–18). Some have suggested that Peter borrowed from Jude, while other have maintained the opposite. In addition, some have suggested that both authors borrowed from another, anonymous source. This type of borrowing was fairly common in the first century. For example, it is evident that Luke used other sources when he wrote his Gospel (see Luke 1:1–4). Most scholars agree that the more complete and precise statements in Jude point to Peter borrowing from Jude. The fact that the early church treated James, a half brother of Jesus, with utmost respect (Acts 12:17; 15:13; 21:18; Gal. 1:19) may help explain why Peter borrowed from the letter of another half brother of Jesus, Jude.

Theology With its emphasis on holy living and its efforts to refute false teachings, 2 Peter stresses sanctification. Ultimately Peter traces the motivation for leading a holy life back to the imminent return of Christ and the punishment and rewards Jesus would bring. The letter groups these teachings into five different themes. (1) Initially Peter asserts his own authority and the authority of the apostles' teaching. Their instruction would help the readers of 2 Peter to distinguish truth from error. (2) Evidently the recipients of this letter were having trouble establishing the connection between following Christ and leading a holy life. Peter reiterated to them that discipleship to Christ means putting away all kinds of immorality. (3) Furthermore Peter warned them not to imitate the arrogance of the false teachers, who were slandering spiritual beings. (4) To encourage them to persevere and to remain faithful to the truths of the faith, Peter depicted the day of the Lord, which would result in a new heaven and new earth. (5) Towards the end of his letter, Peter encouraged his readers to be patient. God had good reasons for delaying Christ's return and the fulfillment of His prophetic program. The day of the Lord had been delayed, but it was still imminent. For this reason, they should vigilantly watch their belief and practice so that they would not be deceived by falsehood.



A view of Mt. Tabor, a possible site for Jesus' transfiguration. Peter refers to this event in 2 Peter 1:17, 18.



Remains of the fifth-century church built over a house believed to have been Peter's at Capernaum
www.HolyLandPhotos.org

CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

As in his first epistle, Peter points to Jesus as the means by which our inner lives can remain godly. The Lord Jesus Christ, he says, is the source of full knowledge and power for the attainment of spiritual maturity (1:2, 3, 8; 3:18). Peter recalls the glory of Jesus' transfiguration on the holy mountain. He should know; he was there. Reflecting on that unforgettable experience, Peter anticipates the Lord's glorious return to earth. Then it won't just be three men on a mountain who see Him; all will behold His glory.

2 PETER OUTLINE

- I. Salutation: the spiritual resources of a Christian 1:1–4
- II. Essential Christian virtues 1:5–15
 - A. Efforts for Christian faithfulness 1:5–9
 - B. Confirmation of election 1:10, 11
 - C. Need for reminders 1:12–15
- III. Christ's divine authority 1:16–21
 - A. Witnessed by the apostles 1:16–18
 - B. Proven by divine prophecy 1:19–21
- IV. False prophets and teachers 2:1–22
 - A. Some warnings against false teachers 2:1–3
 - B. The judgment of false teachers in the past 2:4–9
 - C. The immorality of false teachers 2:10–16
 - D. The uselessness of false teachings 2:17–22
- V. Christ's return 3:1–18
 - A. The certainty of the day of the Lord 3:1–10
 - B. The ethical implications of the day of the Lord 3:11–16
 - C. The need to guard against error 3:17, 18

Greeting the Faithful

Simon Peter, a bondservant and apostle of Jesus Christ,

To those who have obtained like precious faith with us by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ:

Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine

CHAPTER 1

1 ^a Gal. 2:8 ^b Eph. 4:5 ¹ received
2 faith of the same value
2 ^c Dan. 4:1
3 ^d 1 Pet. 1:5
4 ^e 1 Thess. 2:12;
2 Thess. 2:14; 1 Pet. 5:10
4 ^f 2 Cor. 1:20; 7:1
9 ^g [2 Cor. 3:18]

3 depravity
5 ^h 2 Pet. 3:18
2 Pet. 1:2
6 ⁱ patience
7 ^j Gal. 6:10
8 ^k [John 15:2]
5 useless
9 ^l 1 John 2:9-11

nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

Fruitful Growth in the Faith

But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins.

Therefore, brethren, be even more

1:1 apostle: With this term Peter identifies himself as an authorized spokesman for the truth that Christ proclaimed. In vv. 1–4 Peter describes the resources his readers have that will make growth in grace and knowledge possible. His apostleship is the first of these resources. **like precious faith:** Anyone who has faith in Jesus has the same access to God as any other believer. This access is the second great resource that Peter’s readers possess. It was obtained when they were given the gift of **righteousness** (justification). The righteousness believers are given is the righteousness of Christ Himself. **our God and Savior Jesus Christ:** This title of Jesus reflects Peter’s great confession in John 6:69: “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”

1:2 Grace and peace is a common Christian greeting in the epistles, combining Greek and Hebrew salutations. However, the phrase is more than a salutation to Peter. He sees grace and peace as blessings that spring from **the knowledge of God** and Jesus. The Greek word translated *knowledge* is a key word in this letter. It describes a special kind of knowledge, a kind that is complete. Since our knowledge of Jesus grows as we mature in the faith, we will experience His grace and peace on many different occasions in our Christian walk.

1:3 The apostle Paul identifies the **divine power** referred to here as “the power of His resurrection” (see Phil. 3:10; 4:13). This power is the third resource for godly living that Peter lists in this letter (v. 1). **by glory and virtue:** These words suggest the qualities of Jesus that attract believers to Him. The glory that John saw in Jesus (see John 1:14) was His authority and power. The glory that Peter saw probably was manifested at the Transfiguration (vv. 16–18). Jesus’ virtue is His moral excellence that continually awed His disciples.

1:4 Great and precious promises refers to the numerous offers of divine provision found in Scripture. These promises offer us the glory and virtue of Christ as the basis for our growing participation

in the divine nature. We have Christ within us, as He promised (see John 14:23), to enable us to become increasingly Christlike (see 2 Cor. 3:18). Because we have become new creatures in Christ, we have already **escaped the corruption** (the moral ruin) **that is in the world through lust** (perverted desire). We should make our escape from this world evident to all by our godly behavior and the renewing of our mind (see Rom. 12:2). These promises are the fourth resource (vv. 1, 3) upon which believers may draw for sustaining help.

1:5 add: This exhortation begins a section (vv. 5–11) in which Peter describes the responsibilities that result from possessing the godly resources described in vv. 1, 3, 4. **Faith** marks the beginning of the Christian life (see Acts 3:16; Rom. 3:28; Heb. 11:6). Through genuine faith, God grants eternal life to a spiritually dead person (see Eph. 2:1). **Virtue** is the same word used in v. 3 in reference to Christ’s character. We cannot produce virtue ourselves; but we can choose to obey the virtuous promptings of the Holy Spirit who lives in us. **Knowledge** (practical wisdom) is obtained by dedicating ourselves to learning God’s truth in the Scriptures and putting that truth into action.

1:6 Self-control means mastering one’s emotions rather than being controlled by them. The false teachers whose views Peter was exposing believed that knowledge freed people from the need to control their passions. **perseverance:** A person who exercises self-control will not easily succumb to discouragement or the temptation to quit. Viewing all circumstances as coming from the hand of a loving Father who is in control of all things is the secret of perseverance.

1:7 The Greek word for **godliness** was used by ancient pagans to describe a religious individual who kept in close touch with the gods. Here Peter uses the word to speak of the need for Christians to be continually aware of God’s presence. Knowing that all of our life is in His hands should influence every aspect of our life. We should live for God and not for ourselves. **Brotherly kindness** is so closely linked with *godliness* that 1 John 4:20 says, “If someone says, ‘I love God,’ and hates his brother, he is a liar.” As Jesus taught in John 15:12–17, love involves serving one another, sharing with one another, and praying for one another. **Love** here refers to God’s kind of love, which originates not in the one loved but in the one who loves. God loves because He is love; we are to love because we are from God.

1:8 neither barren nor unfruitful: The presence of the qualities listed in vv. 5–7 marks a healthy Christian and assures productivity in our lives.

1:9 The lack of fruitfulness (v. 8) in a believer’s life may be caused by two factors: **blindness** and forgetfulness. A **shortsighted** person is one who looks only at earthly and material values—what is close at hand—and does not see the eternal spiritual realities. Concerned only with this present life, such a person becomes blind to the things of God, forgetting the wonderful sense of cleansing that comes from turning oneself over to Christ.

divine power

(Gk. *theios dunamis*) (1:3) Strong’s #2304; 1411

divine nature

(Gk. *theios phusis*) (1:4) Strong’s #2304; 5449

These are unique expressions in the NT. The divine power is the power God used in raising Christ from the dead, and that same power is available to the church (Eph. 1:19, 20). This divine power has provided us with the spiritual ability to live a godly life. The divine nature is the nature that characterizes God, the nature that is expressed in holiness, virtue, righteousness, love, and grace (see 1:5–7). By being regenerated with the divine nature, believers can exhibit the same characteristics.

diligent ^m to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble; ¹¹ for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Peter's Approaching Death

¹² For this reason ⁿ I will not be negligent to remind you always of these things, ^o though you know and are established

^{10 m} 2 Cor. 13:5;
1 John 3:19
^{12 n} Phil. 3:1; 1 John 2:21; Jude 5 ^o 1 Pet. 5:12
^{13 p} [2 Cor. 5:1, 4];
2 Pet. 1:14 ^q 2 Pet. 3:1 ^r Body
^{14 r} [2 Cor. 5:1;
2 Tim. 4:6] ^s John 13:36; 21:18, 19
^t Die and leave this body

in the present truth. ¹³ Yes, I think it is right, ^p as long as I am in this ^q tent, ^r to stir you up by reminding *you*, ^{14 r} knowing that shortly I *must* ^t put off my tent, just as ^s our Lord Jesus Christ showed me. ¹⁵ Moreover I will be careful to ensure that you always have a reminder of these things after my ^u decease.

^{15 s} Lit. *exodus, departure*

1:11 entrance . . . abundantly: Peter distinguishes between a just-barely-made-it entrance into the eternal kingdom and a richly abundant one. The Scripture indicates that fruitful and faithful living here will be rewarded by greater privileges and rewards in glory (see Rev. 22:12).

1:12 to remind you: Three times in vv. 12–15 Peter speaks of his desire to remind his readers of the truth he has already shared. To do otherwise would be negligence on his part, since even established

Christians can lose sight of the importance of pressing on to the end. **1:13, 14** Peter is conscious of the short time he has to be in his body. Paul also viewed his body as a **tent** or tabernacle, a temporary residence (see 2 Cor. 5:1). Jesus had told Peter that when he was old he would be taken captive and put to death (see John 21:18, 19). Now that he had little time left, Peter encouraged his readers to seize the opportunity to display Christ's love while they still could.

1:15 careful to ensure: Several early church fathers took these

The Bible: Trustworthy and True



Is the Bible a trustworthy document? Are the Scriptures true as written? Or are they full of myths that may have symbolic value but little if any basis in fact? People have been questioning the biblical record almost from its beginnings. Peter, for instance, encountered skepticism as he presented the gospel in the first century. His claims about Jesus were nothing but cleverly devised fables, some said—a charge he vehemently denied (1:16).

Today the Bible's credibility and authority are still attacked. Yet how many of its critics have carefully studied its teaching? How many have even looked at the story of how it came to be written?

A careful reader will recognize that the Bible is not so much a single book as a library of 66 books. It contains a variety of literary genres: history, poetry, narrative, exposition, parable, and "apocalyptic" (see Rev. 10:1–10). Its many authors wrote during a period of some two thousand years using three languages—Hebrew, Greek, and Aramaic. Probably all but one were Jews.

Remarkably, the writers tell one unified story:

- They offer the same understanding of God throughout. He is one God, Creator, Savior, and Judge. He is all-powerful, all-knowing, and eternal. His character is holy, good, loving, and just.
- They offer the same understanding of human nature. People are made in God's image and are capable of great good. Yet they are also sinful and capable of great wickedness. The great need of humanity is to be reconciled to God and to each other.
- They offer a common understanding of Jesus Christ. He is both God and man. He became a real human being in order to show the world the God it could not otherwise perceive. Something deeply significant happened as a result of His death on the cross, making it possible for God and humanity to be reconciled.
- They offer the same hope. God will accomplish His purposes for His creation.

Aside from the internal evidence that Scripture is what it claims to be—the very words of God—is a growing body of external evidence that supports its reliability as a document. For example, scholars have found many contemporary sources that parallel the Scriptural record. For instance, Jesus is mentioned by two Roman writers of the first century, Tacitus (*Annals* 15.44) and Pliny the Younger (*Letters* 19.96), as well as by some Jewish writings of that period, including Josephus (*Antiquities* 18.3.3) and the Mishnah, a collection of traditions under compilation in Jesus' day.

Another body of research that proves invaluable for biblical studies is archaeology. Countless discoveries have helped to verify the text of Scripture, most notably the Dead Sea Scrolls. Likewise, digs throughout the Mediterranean have supported biblical references to various places and people and the events of which they were a part thousands of years ago.

The more one examines the evidence, the more one becomes convinced that the Bible is more than a cleverly devised tale. It has the ring of authenticity. But in that case, readers ought to pay attention to its message. That is the ultimate issue. As Mark Twain aptly put it, it is not the things in the Bible that people can't understand that prove troublesome, but the things they can understand. Even if people are convinced that the Bible is true from cover to cover, will they heed its message?



The Great Isaiah Scroll found at Qumran
Wikimedia Commons

The Trustworthy Prophetic Word

¹⁶For we did not follow ^tcunningly devised fables when we made known to you the ^upower and ^vcoming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were ^weyewitnesses of His majesty. ¹⁷For He received from God the Father honor and glory when such a voice came to Him from the Excellent Glory: ^x“This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” ¹⁸And we heard this voice which came from heaven when we were with Him on ^ythe holy mountain. ¹⁹⁹And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a ^zlight that shines in a dark place, ^auntil ^bthe day dawns and the morning star rises in your ^chearts; ²⁰knowing this first, that ^dno prophecy of Scripture is of any private ¹interpretation, ²¹for ^eprophecy never came by the will of man, ^fbut ²holy men of God spoke *as they were* moved by the Holy Spirit.

16 ^t 1 Cor. 1:17
^u [Matt. 28:18; Eph. 1:19-22] ^v [1 Pet. 5:4] ^w Matt. 17:1-5; Luke 1:2
¹⁷ ^x Ps. 2:7; Is. 42:1; Matt. 17:5; Mark 9:7; Luke 1:35; 9:35
¹⁸ ^y Matt. 17:1
¹⁹ ^z [John 1:4, 5, 9]
^a Prov. 4:18 ^b Rev. 2:28; 22:16 ^c [2 Cor. 4:5-7] ⁹ Or *We also have the more sure prophetic word*
²⁰ ^d [Rom. 12:6]
¹ Or *origin*
²¹ ^e Jer. 23:26; [2 Tim. 3:16]
^f 2 Sam. 23:2; Luke 1:70; Acts 1:16; 3:18; 1 Pet. 1:11
² NU *men spoke from God*

CHAPTER 2

1 ^a Matt. 24:5, 24; 1 Tim. 4:1, 2

Destructive Doctrines

2 But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be ^afalse teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, *and* bring on themselves swift destruction. ²And many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed. ³By covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words; for a long time their judgment has not been idle, and their destruction ¹does not slumber.

Doom of False Teachers

⁴For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast *them* down to ²hell and delivered *them* into chains of dark-

3 ¹ M will not 4 ² Lit. Tartarus

words to be Peter's promise to leave behind a testimony of the truth for his readers, which they considered to be the Gospel of Mark (a Gospel widely regarded as Peter's testimony of the life of Jesus). Peter describes his **decease** as an exodus or departure (see Paul's use of the term in 2 Tim. 4:6).

1:16 False teachers were claiming that Jesus' resurrection and return, as well as the Holy Spirit's indwelling of believers, were all **cunningly devised fables**. Peter countered their faith claims with an eyewitness account. Peter himself had actually seen the **power** and **coming** of the **Lord Jesus Christ**. These are the twin themes of this letter: the power of Jesus available for holy living and the coming of Jesus as the glorious hope of each believer.

1:17, 18 Along with James and John, Peter heard the **voice** of the **Father** during the Transfiguration (see Matt. 17:1-13). That voice conferred **honor** upon Jesus by identifying Him as "My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (see Matt. 17:5). Jesus' **glory** was displayed in His shining garments (see Mark 9:3).

1:19 **We have the prophetic word confirmed** may be rephrased as "we have the prophetic word as a surer confirmation." As strong as an eyewitness account (vv. 16-18) may be, there is an even stronger confirmation that Jesus is who He said He was. The written Scriptures are even more trustworthy than the personal experience of the apostle Peter. They cast a **light that shines** like a lamp **in a dark place** and will continue to do so until the **morning star rises** (see Rom. 13:12-14). In other words, the truths in the Bible will continue to point to the source of all truth, Christ, until He returns in glory.

1:20 **of any private interpretation**: Although some have taken this phrase to mean that no individual Christian has the right to interpret prophecy for himself or herself, the context and the Greek word for *interpretation* indicates another meaning for the verse. The Greek word for *interpretation* can also mean "origin." In the context

of v. 21, it is clear that Peter is speaking of Scripture's "origin" from God Himself and not the credentials of the one who interprets it. There is no private source for the Bible; the prophets did not supply their own solutions or explanations to the mysteries of life. Rather, God spoke through them; He alone is responsible for what is written in Scripture.

1:21 **prophecy never came by the will of man**: No mere mortal chose to utter his own thoughts as though they were God's. On the contrary, God chose holy men to be His spokesmen, men who uttered thoughts given to them by the Holy Spirit.

2:1 Just as God's prophets of the past were opposed by **false prophets**, believers are opposed by **false teachers**. The difference in terminology suggests that the false teachers among Peter's readers made no claim to being prophets, but were distorting the Scriptures with heretical interpretations. Peter's certainty that there will be such false teachers probably rests on Jesus' predictions (see Matt. 24:4, 5). False teachers could be recognized by their secretive approaches, their doctrinal errors (such as a denial of Christ), and by their abrupt departure from the Christian community (see 1 John 2:19).

2:2 **destructive ways**: Peter is addressing here the ethical implications of false teaching. The Greek word translated *destructive* means "shameful" or "deliberately immoral." The false teachers gloried in the privileges of Christianity but treated its moral demands with indifference. **blasphemed**: The truth of Christian redemption is held in contempt by many because of the immoral behavior of professing Christians.

2:3 **covetousness**: The false teachers did not hesitate to take advantage of their followers in order to enrich themselves. **judgment ... destruction**: Peter turns from the description of the false teachers to a description of their fate. Verses 4-8 provide three vivid examples of judgment on false teachers of the past.

2:4 **the angels who sinned**: There are two main interpretations of this passage, depending on one's understanding of Gen. 6:1-6. Some think that Peter is referring to "sons of God" in Gen. 6:2. According to this interpretation, the "sons of God" were angels who rebelled against God and their role in creation. They began to engage in forbidden practices with the daughters of men. Their outrageous conduct was met with immediate judgment: The angels were **cast** into **hell**, or Tartarus, a place of final punishment. Tartarus involves severe limitation of action, symbolized by **chains**, and almost total lack of understanding, symbolized by **darkness**. A second group of commentators balk at the suggestion of sexual relations between angels and women. They consider this verse to be simply a reference to those angels who fell with Satan.

morning star

(Gk. *phōsphoros*) (1:19) Strong's #5459

The Greek term means "light-bearer" or "light-bringer." Christ is the morning star, as elsewhere He is called the Bright and Morning Star (Rev. 22:16) and the Dayspring, that is, the rising sun (Luke 1:78). Presently, Christ shines in our hearts; when He returns, He will arise in our hearts and bring us into a perfect day. His outward coming will be matched by an inward rising, "an illuminating transformation" of our spirits.

ness, to be reserved for judgment;⁵ and did not spare the ancient world, but saved Noah, *one of eight people*, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood on the world of the ungodly;⁶ and turning the cities of ^bSodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned *them* to destruction, making *them* an example to those who afterward would live ungodly;⁷ and ^cdelivered righteous Lot, *who was* oppressed by the filthy conduct of the wicked⁸ (for that righteous man, dwelling among them, ^dtormented *his* righteous soul from day

6 ^b Gen. 19:1-26; Jude 7
7 ^c Gen. 19:16, 29
8 ^d Ps. 119:139

9 ^e Ps. 34:15-19; 1 Cor. 10:13; Rev. 3:10
10 ^f Jude 4, 7, 8
^g Ex. 22:28; Jude 8
^h glorious ones, lit. glories
11 ^h Jude 9

to day by seeing and hearing *their* lawless deeds)—⁹ *then* ^ethe Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations and to reserve the unjust under punishment for the day of judgment,¹⁰ and especially ^fthose who walk according to the flesh in the lust of uncleanness and despise authority. ^g*They are* presumptuous, self-willed. They are not afraid to speak evil of ^hdignitaries,¹¹ whereas ^hangels, who are greater in power and might, do not bring a reviling accusation against them before the Lord.

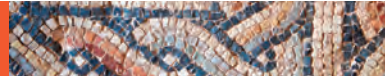
2:5 did not spare the ancient world: Peter's second example of God's judgment (see v. 4) is **the flood** that came upon **the ungodly** in Noah's day (see 3:6; 1 Pet. 3:20). **Noah** is called a **preacher of righteousness** because his righteous life put to shame the immoral lives of his neighbors. Noah's building of the ark would certainly have given him the opportunity to explain the coming judgment and to invite people to repent and believe in God. But his entreaties fell on deaf ears, just as the truth of Christ's atonement fell on the deaf ears of the false teachers of Peter's day. Such indifference and unbelief brought the ungodly of Noah's world to certain destruction.

2:6 Sodom and Gomorrah is Peter's third example of God's judgment (see vv. 4, 5). Genesis 19 makes it clear that sexual perversion was the primary cause of the **destruction** of Sodom and Gomorrah.

2:7, 8 Three times in these two verses **Lot** is described as a **righteous** man. The Genesis account seems to portray Lot as a man influenced by the values of the world. Here we are told of Lot's reaction to evil: He was depressed **by the filthy conduct of the wicked** and upset at their **lawless** actions. Lot was considered righteous by God because he refused to join in the immoral revelry of that city. For this reason he was delivered by divine intervention.

2:9, 10 the Lord knows how: God is in full control of all events. He delivers **the godly out of**, but not away from, their trials. He also sees that the **unjust** do not escape their day of **punishment**. Two particular groups are singled out for judgment: those who live in unclean **lust** and those who hold **authority** in contempt. **presumptuous, self-willed:** These words describe the character

Demons



Demons are another name for fallen angels who joined the kingdom of Satan in rebellion against God.

The origin of demons is not explicitly discussed in the Bible. But the New Testament speaks of the fall and later imprisonment of a group of angels (1 Pet. 3:19, 20; 2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6). The group that participated in the fall apparently followed one of their own number, Satan. The fall occurred before God's creation of the world. In retaliatory hatred for God, Satan and his angels tirelessly seek to contaminate the human race with wickedness (Gen. 3; Matt. 25:41; Rev. 12:9).

A symbolic view of this "initial" fall appears in Revelation 12:4 where the dragon (a symbol for Satan) "drew a third of the stars of heaven" (a symbol for fallen angels) and "threw them to the earth." Thus Satan has his own "angels," who most students see as the demons of this era (Matt. 25:41; Rev. 12:9).

Because the Jews believed God's power was unlimited, the Old Testament contains little information about demons. The primitive status of the understanding of demons during this time is perhaps reflected in the way the Old Testament relates the fallen angels to God. It was a "distressing [or evil] spirit from God" (1 Sam. 16:15, 16, 23) that brought great distress to Saul the king. It was a "lying spirit" from the Lord about whom Micaiah, the prophet of the Lord, spoke (1 Kin. 22:21-23). In short, this is not to say God willed, but rather allowed the evil spirit to do its work. The Bible reveals also that all pagan worship is a fountainhead of demon activity (Lev. 17:7; Ps. 106:37). Demons function with greater freedom to work their bondage wherever human activities open to their "worship"—that is, participate in carnal activities that disobey God's Word, indulge the flesh, and cooperate with hell's agenda of sin, lust, and self-indulgence.

The New Testament accepts the Old Testament teaching about evil spirits and advances the doctrine significantly. Demons are designated in a number of different ways in the New Testament. They are called "unclean spirits" (Matt. 10:1; Mark 6:7), "evil spirits" (Luke 7:21; Acts 19:12, 13), "deceiving spirits" (1 Tim. 4:1), and a "spirit of error" (1 John 4:6). The Bible warns against occult involvements, showing demon activity proliferates in such an evil spiritual environment. Luke describes one demon as a "spirit of divination" (Acts 16:16). Isaiah 8:19-22 and 47:9-15 clearly reinforce the danger-avoiding direction of Leviticus 17:7, in the spirit of the truth inherent in Deuteronomy 18:9-14 and 32:15-18. Paul clearly held this understanding (1 Cor. 10:20, 21) and warns against believers conceding any territory in their souls to the devil or his cohorts (Eph. 4:25-32; see v. 27).

A prime purpose of Jesus' earthly ministry was to overcome the power of Satan. This included His conquest of the demonic realm (Matt. 12:25-29; Luke 11:17-22; John 12:31; 1 John 3:8). This explains the fierce conflict between Jesus and these evil spirits while He was on earth, and why Jesus promises His people—the redeemed—authority over and power to cast out demons (Matt. 10:8; Mark 16:17).

Following the resurrection of Jesus and His return to heaven, these demonic principalities and powers have continued their warfare against those who are His followers (Rom. 8:38, 39; Eph. 6:12). Yet Satan and his allies will finally be overthrown by God. After Christ returns, the devil and his angels will be defeated and thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone (Matt. 25:41; Rev. 20:10). This is a doom with which demons are quite familiar (Matt. 8:29). God will achieve the ultimate victory in this conflict which has been going on since the beginning of time.

Depravity of False Teachers

¹²But these, ⁱlike natural brute beasts made to be caught and destroyed, speak evil of the things they do not understand, and will utterly perish in their own corruption, ¹³*and* will receive the wages of unrighteousness, *as* those who count it pleasure ^kto ⁴carouse in the daytime. ¹*They* are spots and blemishes, ⁵carousing in their own deceptions while ^mthey feast with you, ¹⁴having eyes full of ⁶adultery and that cannot cease from sin, enticing unstable souls. ⁿThey have a heart trained in covetous practices, *and* are accursed children. ¹⁵They have forsaken the right way and gone astray, following the way of ^oBalaam the son of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness; ¹⁶but he was rebuked for his iniquity: a dumb donkey speaking with a man's voice restrained the madness of the prophet. ¹⁷*p*These are wells without water, ⁷clouds carried by a tempest, for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness ⁸forever.

¹² ⁱ Jude 10
¹³ ^j Phil. 3:19 ^k Rom. 13:13 ^j Jude 12
^m 1 Cor. 11:20, 21
⁴ ^{revel} ⁵ ^{reveling}
¹⁴ ⁿ Jude 11 ⁶ Lit. an adulteress
¹⁵ ^o Num. 22:5, 7; Deut. 23:4; Neh. 13:2; Jude 11; Rev. 2:14
¹⁷ ^p Jude 12, 13
⁷ NU and mists ⁸ NU omits forever

¹⁸ ⁹ NU are barely escaping
¹⁹ ^q John 8:34; Rom. 6:16
¹ ^{depravity} ² ^{slavery}
²⁰ ^r Matt. 12:45
⁵ Luke 11:26; [Heb. 6:4-6]
²¹ ^s Luke 12:47
²² ^t Prov. 26:11

Deceptions of False Teachers

¹⁸For when they speak great swelling words of emptiness, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through lewdness, the ones who ⁹have actually escaped from those who live in error. ¹⁹While they promise them liberty, they themselves are slaves of ¹corruption; ⁴for by whom a person is overcome, by him also he is brought into ²bondage. ²⁰For if, after they ^rhave escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are ^sagain entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning. ²¹For ^tit would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known *it*, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them. ²²But it has happened to them according to the true proverb: ^u“A dog returns to his own vomit,” and, “a sow, having washed, to her wallowing in the mire.”

and methods of false teachers. Their actions are characterized by boldness; they recklessly defy both God and man. Behind their presumption is a commitment to their own desires. The dignitaries that the false teachers slander are probably angels, although the word can refer to people in authority. The reference here is almost certainly to Jude 9, where the archangel Michael, disputing with Satan over the body of Moses, does not revile the devil but simply says, “The Lord rebuke you.”

2:12 like natural brute beasts: False teachers are compared to animals in their behavior because they act in ignorance of the realities of death and judgment. Like animals, they also react only to present circumstances, without giving thought to the consequences of their actions.

2:13 False teachers are perverse in their display of evil, like those who **carouse in the daytime**. Even pagan societies thought it strange and unnatural to hold drunken revels in broad daylight. However, the false teachers had no qualms about practicing their erroneous concept of Christian liberty in clear daylight. As a result, they would **receive the wages of unrighteousness**, that is, spiritual death (see Rom. 6:23). The **feast** mentioned here may have been the *agape*, or love feast, built around the celebration of the Lord's Supper. On the other hand, the term may simply refer to social contact with the heretical teachers. The heretics were so self-deceived that they actually thought they were celebrating their freedom in Christ with their drunken revelry at the Lord's Table. In fact, they were **spots and blemishes**, disfiguring and degrading the purity of the Lord's feast.

2:14 The **eyes** of the false teachers were **full of adultery**. They looked lustfully at women. They could not **cease from sin** because their fantasizing had become habitual. As a consequence, they convinced certain **unstable souls** in the church that adultery was acceptable Christian behavior and lured them into sexual immorality. **Enticing** means “to catch with bait.” These new, unstable converts, not yet fully grounded in Christ, were easily hooked into an immoral lifestyle.

2:15, 16 The account of Balaam in Num. 22–24 is used here, as well as in Jude 11 and Rev. 2:14, to depict the danger of forsaking **the right way** and going **astray**. Balaam's primary downfall was that he **loved the wages of unrighteousness**. He sold his prophetic powers to the pagan king Balak and, for a promised monetary reward, sought to curse the children of God.

2:17 wells . . . clouds: Peter accuses the heretical teachers of awakening false expectations, like springs that contain no water or storm clouds that darken but produce no rain.

2:18 Allure, like *enticing* in v. 14, means “to catch with bait.” The bait is **great swelling words of emptiness**, high-sounding promises that prove to have no real content. The hook is the **lusts of the flesh**, normal sexual desires that are practiced in wrong ways. The heretical teachers clearly were implying that once the soul is saved, what is done in the body is of no importance. **those who live in error:** The guarding of the flock from “wolves in sheep's clothing,” as Jesus described false teachers, was one of the primary concerns of the apostles and is one of the chief tasks of pastors.

2:19 The irony of false teaching is that it promises great freedom while its advocates are already **slaves** to sin. The gospel offers release from the **corruption** of the world, but the false teachers were involved in moral ruin by their immoral practices (vv. 14–18) and greedy motivations (v. 3). These false teachers were probably twisting the Christian concept of freedom from the law into a license for sinning (see Paul's condemnation of this type of thinking in Rom. 6).

2:20 they have escaped: The subject of this phrase is the heretical teachers who are called “slaves of corruption” in v. 19. This verse seems to indicate that the teachers had formerly turned from the pollution of the world through a full and experiential knowledge of Christ. Now, however, they have fallen again into immorality, even becoming teachers of sinful lifestyles. As a result, **the latter end is worse for them than the beginning**. This phrase is almost certainly taken from Jesus' words in Matt. 12:45 and probably reflects Peter's memory of that occasion.

2:21 better . . . not to have known: Knowledge without obedience is dangerous. Jesus said of Judas that it would have been better for him not to have been born than to have turned from the truth he had known (see Matt. 26:24). The phrases **way of righteousness** and **holy commandment** emphasize the ethical content of the knowledge the false teachers had (v. 20). They knew what was right and holy, but they deliberately chose to do what was wrong and corrupt.

2:22 according to the true proverb: Jews considered dogs and pigs among the lowest of animals, so Peter chooses these animals to describe people who have known the truth but have turned away from it. The first proverb is found in Prov. 26:11; the second is from the Syrian story of Ahikar, known to Peter and his readers.

God's Promise Is Not Slack

3 Beloved, I now write to you this second epistle (in *both of which* ^aI stir up your pure minds by way of reminder), ²that you may be mindful of the words ^bwhich were spoken before by the holy prophets, ^cand of the commandment of ¹us, the apostles of the Lord and Savior, ³knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, ^dwalking according to their own lusts, ⁴and saying, “Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as

CHAPTER 3
¹ ^a 2 Pet. 1:13
² ^b 2 Pet. 1:21
^c Jude 17 ¹ NU, M
the apostles of your
Lord and Savior or
your apostles of the
Lord and Savior
³ ^d 2 Pet. 2:10
⁴ ^e Gen. 6:1-7
⁵ ^f Gen. 1:6, 9; Heb.
11:3 ^g Ps. 24:2;
136:6
⁶ ^h Gen. 7:11, 12,
21-23; Matt. 24:37-39;

they were from the beginning of ^ecreation.”
⁵For this they willfully forget: that ^fby the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth ^gstanding out of water and in the water, ^{6h}by which the world *that* then existed perished, being flooded with water.
⁷But ⁱthe heavens and the earth *which* are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for ^jfire until the day of judgment and ²perdition of ungodly men.

Luke 17:26, 27; 2 Pet. 2:5 ⁷ ⁱ 2 Pet. 3:10, 12 ^j Matt. 25:41;
[2 Thess. 1:8] ² destruction

3:1 Peter returns to his exhortation of the believers, addressing them as **beloved** (see vv. 8, 14, 17). **this second epistle**: It is natural to assume that the first epistle Peter implies here is 1 Peter. However, 1 Peter is not really a letter of reminder, as Peter suggests here (1:12–15). In addition, 1 Peter was sent to a wide range of readers living in five different provinces (see 1 Pet. 1:1), while this letter seems to be addressed to a single church (or nearby churches) whose people and circumstances Peter knows well. For these reasons, many believe that the first letter referred to here was one written to the same readers as 2 Peter, but now lost to us (see Paul’s reference to an earlier letter in 1 Cor. 5:9). In both letters to this congregation, Peter sought to awaken his readers’ **pure minds** to the dangers of phony leaders who claimed to be Christians.
3:2 words which were spoken before: The only way Peter’s readers could recognize the errors of the heretical teachers was to compare their teaching with the teaching of the **holy prophets** and **apostles**. As Peter had already reminded his readers in 1:21, “holy men” spoke words given to them by the Holy Spirit, which were therefore utterly reliable. These completely reliable words are in the Bible, God’s Word. The **commandment** of the apostles probably refers to the new commandment Jesus gave, that believers should love one another (see John 13:34, 35).
3:3 A primary motivation for righteous living was the expectation

of Christ’s return (see 1 John 3:2, 3). However, the unforeseen delay in that coming would soon produce **scoffers** who would mock the coming, because they desired to live in ways that fulfilled their self-indulgent desires. The suggestion is that the scoffers here and the heretical teachers of ch. 2 are one and the same. The apostles had predicted that such scoffing would occur (see 2 Tim. 3:1–5; James 5:3; Jude 18). **The last days** refers to the present age (see Heb. 1:2). Throughout the centuries, scoffers have denied the Second Coming whenever hedonism and humanism have prevailed in the church.
3:4 all things continue: The basis for denying the supernatural reappearance of Jesus is that nothing of that nature has occurred in the past. The **fathers who fell asleep** refers to the OT patriarchs.
3:5, 6 they willfully forget: The scoffing teachers would choose to overlook events such as creation and the Flood. The people of Noah’s time did not believe in Noah’s warning because they had never experienced a flood. They forgot, as the false teachers later would, that God created the entire universe by His **word**, something that they also had not experienced. Just as creation was by His word, the world is being sustained by His word. Likewise, the world’s judgment and destruction would be by His word. God is in control, no matter what happens to this world.

Right Living in a Wretched World

Writing to beleaguered Christians in an evil world where false teachers were aggressively spreading dangerous heresies, Peter urged, “grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (3:18). The following is a summary of the components of spiritual growth Peter advocated.

Practice	Passage	Principles
Godly Living	1:1–15	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Through Christ we have been given everything we need to live godly lives.• We are partakers of the divine nature.• We have been freed from the power of the old corrupt, sinful nature.
Reliance on the Scriptures	1:16–21; 3:1, 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Christian doctrine is not just another point of view; it is not a fable.• The Scriptures can be trusted because they were written by prophets and apostles inspired by the Holy Spirit.• The Scriptures function as a light in a dark age; they are an absolute in a relativistic world.
Opposition to False Teaching	2:1–22	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We are not to be swayed by the large numbers of people who are persuaded by unbiblical ideas.• Judgment is guaranteed for all who oppose the truths of God.• We should exercise discernment granted by the Holy Spirit to detect the deceptive teachings and alluring promises of the ungodly.
Watchfulness	3:3–18	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• By looking for the return of Christ, we can avoid the sinful traps of the world.• We need to take care that we do not become lax in our thinking—God has set a day which will mark the end of this world as we know it.• God’s promise of judgment should prompt us to encourage others to repent and believe in Christ.

⁸But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day *is* as a thousand years, and ^ka thousand years as one day. ⁹^lThe Lord is not slack concerning *His* promise, as some count slackness, but ^mis longsuffering toward ³us, ⁿnot willing that any should perish but ^othat all should come to repentance.

The Day of the Lord

¹⁰But ^pthe day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which ^qthe heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be ⁴burned up. ¹¹Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of *persons* ought you to be ^rin holy conduct and godliness, ¹²^slooking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will ^tbe dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will ^umelt with fervent heat? ¹³Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for ^vnew heavens and a ^wnew earth in which righteousness dwells.

8 ^k Ps. 90:4
9 ^l Hab. 2:3; Rom. 13:11; Heb. 10:37
^m Ps. 86:15; Is. 30:18
ⁿ Ezek. 33:11 ^o Matt. 20:28; [Rom. 2:4]
^p NU you
10 ^p Matt. 24:42, 43 ^q; Luke 12:39; 1 Thess. 5:2; Rev. 3:3; 16:15 ^r Gen. 1:6-8; Ps. 102:25, 26; Is. 51:6; Rev. 20:11
⁴ NU *laid bare*, lit. *found*
11 ^r 1 Pet. 1:15
12 ^s 1 Cor. 1:7, 8; Titus 2:13-15 ^t Ps. 50:3 ^u Is. 24:19; 34:4; Mic. 1:4
13 ^v Is. 65:17; 66:22
^w [Rom. 8:21]; Rev. 21:1
14 ^x 1 Cor. 1:8; 15:58; [1 Thess. 3:12, 13; 5:23]
15 ^y Ps. 86:15; Rom. 2:4; 1 Pet. 3:20
16 ^z Rom. 8:19; 1 Cor. 15:24; 1 Thess. 4:15; 2 Thess. 1:10
^a 2 Tim. 3:16
17 ^b Mark 13:23

Be Steadfast

¹⁴Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent ^xto be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless; ¹⁵and consider *that* ^ythe longsuffering of our Lord *is* salvation—as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you, ¹⁶as also in all his ^zepistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable *people* twist to their own destruction, as *they do* also the ^arest of the Scriptures.

¹⁷You therefore, beloved, ^bsince you know *this* beforehand, ^cbeware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked; ¹⁸^dbut grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

^eTo Him *be* the glory both now and forever. Amen.

^c Eph. 4:14 ^d Eph. 4:15 ^e Rom. 11:36; 2 Tim. 4:18; Rev. 1:6

3:8 a thousand years: God will surely accomplish His purposes and promises, even though it may appear that He is slow in doing so. His timing is always perfect.

3:9 The delay of God's judgment is not due to **slackness**, but to the Lord's **longsuffering** attitude toward His people. **not willing that any should perish:** This text does not teach that God actually decrees that all will be saved (universalism). The reference here is not to God's decree, but to His desire. Obviously everything that a sovereign God decrees will occur. Here Peter is describing the sovereign God's desire that all people would turn to Him and turn away from unprofitable lives (see 1 Tim. 2:4).

3:10 Day of the Lord here describes the end-time events, the Second Coming (see the descriptions of the end times in Dan. 9:24–27; 1 Thess. 5:2; 2 Thess. 2:1–12). At the end of this age in the day of the Lord's judgment, the **heavens will pass away with a great noise** and the **elements will melt**, presumably by fire (v. 12). Peter's description requires the unlimited power of God in dissolving the very elements of the universe, from which He will create a new heaven and new earth (see v. 13; Rev. 21; 22).

3:11 what manner of persons: The primary purpose of prophetic teaching is not to satisfy our curiosity but to motivate us to change our lives. Rather than working for things that will ultimately be destroyed, we should work for things that are eternal.

3:15, 16 Note that Peter equates the letters of **Paul** with **the rest of the Scriptures**, indicating that Peter considered the apostle Paul's writings to be the Word of God. Note that Peter considers Paul's writings on the end times to be **hard to understand**. This should be a comfort to each of us who attempt to interpret the writings of Paul on the coming of Christ. Even Peter found them difficult. Because of this, however, Peter says some **people** who are **untaught and unstable** destroy themselves. *Untaught* refers to one whose mind is untrained and undisciplined in habits of thought. *Unstable* refers to one whose conduct is not properly established on the truths of God's Word.

3:17, 18 Peter admonishes his readers that since they know truth, they should depart from **the error of the wicked** and **grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord**.

knowledge

(Gk. *gnōsis*) (1:5; 3:18; Eph. 3:19; Phil. 3:8; Col. 2:3) Strong's #1108

This Greek word for *knowledge* usually connotes progressive, experiential, and personal knowledge; it is knowledge that can grow. We need to grow in our actual, personal knowledge of Jesus Christ; such knowledge is the greatest protection against false teachings. One of the prominent themes in this epistle is Peter's exhortation to the believers to attain a fuller, more thorough knowledge of Jesus Christ (1:8; 2:20; 3:18).



THE FIRST EPISTLE OF JOHN

PART OF THE ARROGANCE of human nature is to think that we know more than others do. In this letter, the apostle John addresses the problem of false teachers who were making lofty claims about their knowledge regarding the deity and nature of Christ. John counters their false claims by reminding his readers of the eyewitness accounts of the apostles, including himself. Jesus Christ came in human flesh, lived a human life, died, and then was raised from the dead. He was fully human and fully God. Anything else being taught by others was false. In this letter, John sounded the alarm: False teaching could not be tolerated. Falsehoods would lead to immorality, and immorality would lead to eternal death. In contrast, the truth would demonstrate itself in love, and love would lead to eternal life. For John, what one believed truly mattered.

Author and Date The author of this letter is understood to be John, the beloved apostle. Though he does not identify himself in this letter, the similarity of vocabulary and writing style between this book and the Gospel of John argues convincingly that both were written by the same person. The writings of the early church fathers, from Ignatius to Polycarp, also identify John as the author of this letter. Furthermore, in the epistle's first few verses (1:1–4), the author places himself among the eyewitnesses of the earthly life of Christ, as one who literally saw and touched “the Word of life.” Obviously such a description fits an apostle but not a second-generation church leader. Finally, the author virtually calls himself an apostle (the “we” of 1:1–3; 4:14 seems to refer to the apostles).

Although some have argued that the epistle was written before the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, a later first-century date allows for the appearance of the ideas that later developed into Gnosticism, ideas that John was probably addressing in this letter. On the other hand, the letter could not have been written later than the end of the first century, when John died. Also, the evidence of early second-century writers who knew of the epistle and quoted from it demonstrates that it was written prior to then. Thus 1 John probably was written just a few years before the Book of Revelation.

In determining the date of the writing, several factors should be considered. First, the tone of the book and especially the attitude of the author toward the readers suggest an older person addressing a younger generation. Second, Irenaeus indicates that John lived in Ephesus and wrote to the churches of Asia. John's letters to the churches of Asia in Revelation (see Rev. 2; 3) substantiate Irenaeus's comment. It is natural to conclude that 1 John is directed to these same believers. Third, Paul visited Ephesus several times between A.D. 53 and 56, using the city as the center of his evangelism efforts. Timothy was in Ephesus with Paul around A.D. 63 and was still there when Paul wrote him around A.D. 67. There is no indication that Timothy and John were at Ephesus at the same time, so John must have visited Ephesus after Timothy's departure. This would put the date of the writing of 1 John after A.D. 67 but before A.D. 98. A date around A.D. 90 seems reasonable.

Historical Background Gnosticism was a problem that threatened the church in Asia Minor during the second century A.D. Gnosticism was a teaching that blended Eastern mysticism with Greek dualism (which claimed that the spirit is completely good, but matter is completely evil). This teaching was present in the church in a seminal form during the latter years of the first century. By the middle of the second century it had become a fully developed theological system, which included Gnostic gospels and epistles. John recognized the danger of Gnosticism and wrote to counteract its influence before it could sweep through the churches of Asia Minor. Based on the concept that matter is evil and spirit is good, some Gnostics concluded that if God was truly good He could not have created the material universe. Therefore, some lesser god had to have created it. According to them, the God of the Old Testament was this lesser god. The dualistic views of Gnosticism were also reflected in the prevalent belief that Jesus did not have a physical body. This teaching, called Docetism, claimed that Jesus only appeared to have a human body and never actually suffered pain and death on the Cross.



Ruins of the Basilica of St. John near Ephesus. The traditional grave of John is under the square platform at bottom right.

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Another heresy that John addressed in this letter and personally confronted at Ephesus was Cerinthianism. This heresy taught that Jesus was just a man upon whom the “Christ” descended at His baptism, that the Christ then departed from Jesus just before His crucifixion, and that thus the spiritual Christ did not really suffer and die for humanity’s sins on the Cross, but only appeared to.

There are several indications that John was addressing these heresies in this epistle. Note the use of expressions like “which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled” (1:1); “every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God” (4:2); and “He who came by water and blood” (5:6). All of these phrases use explicit and vivid language to describe the Incarnation, the truth that Jesus is both completely God and completely human.

Purpose and Themes John most likely wrote this letter with two purposes in mind—one pastoral and one polemical. John’s pastoral purpose was to promote fellowship (1:3). But for the believers to have true fellowship, they needed to understand the true nature of God (1:5; 2:29; 4:7, 8). Thus the pastoral purpose naturally leads to the polemical purpose (2:26), which was to protect his readers against the deceptive ideas of false teachers. If the believers were deceived by false doctrine, they would eventually lose their unity, which is possible only in the love of Christ. Evidently some deceivers had arisen among the believers (2:18, 19, 26). If Christians could sort out truth from falsehood, they would be able to maintain their unity in the faith and have an opportunity to show love to their fellow believers (3:11). For John, a person’s behavior was naturally a result of that person’s belief.

In accordance with John’s purpose, fellowship dominates the first portion of this letter (1:5—2:27), while assurance of salvation dominates the remainder. Key concepts in the letter include eternal life, knowing God, and abiding in the faith. In addition, John develops theological ideas in this letter through explicit contrasts, such as walking in light or in darkness, children of God or of the devil, life or death, love or hate. With these contrasts John was attempting to draw a clear line between true and false teachers.

John was writing to believers who were dealing with a particular type of false teaching, the contagious heresy of early Gnosticism. He wrote this letter to encourage them to abide in what they had heard from the beginning so that they could maintain their fellowship with God and their love for fellow believers. In short, he exhorted them to make their belief in Christ evident to all, so that correct doctrine could be identified by their righteous life and their wholehearted love for others.

CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

A heretical movement known as Gnosticism was gaining in popularity. It denied that Jesus really did have a human body. John explains clearly that Jesus was both divine and human—he had seen that with his own eyes, having been witness to Jesus’ life as well as to His transfiguration. “That which was from the beginning, which

we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life . . . ” (1:1).

But John is not only concerned with countering the Gnostics’ claims. He also desires to encourage the persecuted believers by reminding them of Jesus’ present ministry among them. The Savior’s blood continually cleanses us from all sin. That’s because, as John emphasizes, Jesus is our righteous Advocate before the Father.

1 JOHN OUTLINE

- I. Introduction: the message of eternal life 1:1–4
- II. Foundational principles 1:5–2:11
 - A. Principles for fellowship with God 1:5–2:2
 - B. Principles for knowing God 2:3–11
- III. Purpose of the letter 2:12–27
 - A. Motivations for John to write the letter 2:12–14
 - B. Love of the world versus love for God 2:15–17
 - C. The antichrists’ denial that Jesus is the Christ 2:18–23
 - D. Abiding in God’s Word 2:24–27
- IV. God’s righteousness 2:28–4:6
 - A. Righteous living and abiding in God 2:28–3:3
 - B. Two classes of people: the righteous and the wicked 3:4–9
 - C. Two families: children of God versus children of the devil 3:10–15
 - D. Love and obedience: an indicator of belonging to Christ 3:16–23
 - E. Orthodox confession: an indicator of belonging to Christ 3:24–4:6
- V. God’s love 4:7–5:13
 - A. Love: an indicator of a relationship with God 4:7–16
 - B. Mature love and assurance of salvation 4:17–19
 - C. The relationship between love for God and love for others
4:20–5:5
 - D. The Father’s witness of Jesus 5:6–13
- VI. Epilogue: prayer and knowledge 5:14–21
 - A. Assurance produces confidence and concern in prayer 5:14–17
 - B. Proper knowledge 5:18–21

C. A.D. 27

Jesus calls John the son of Zebedee to follow Him

C. A.D. 30

John becomes a leader in the early church

C. A.D. 67

Peter and Paul are executed; John takes up residence at Ephesus

C. A.D. 70

The Romans destroy Jerusalem and the church is scattered

C. A.D. 90

John writes his Gospel and letters

A view of the road from the Ephesus theater toward the now-silted harbor. John spent most of his later years in Ephesus and wrote his letters from there.

Z. Radovan/www.BibleLandPictures.com



What Was Heard, Seen, and Touched

That ^awhich was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have ^bseen with our eyes, ^cwhich we have looked upon, and ^dour hands have handled, concerning the ^eWord of life— ^{2f}the life ^gwas manifested, and we have seen, ^hand bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was ⁱwith the Father and was manifested to us— ³that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship ^{is} ^jwith the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER 1

1 ^a [John 1:1];
1 John 2:13, 14
^b Luke 1:2; John 1:14
^c 2 Pet. 1:16 ^d Luke
24:39; John 20:27
^e [John 1:1, 4, 14]
^{2f} John 1:4; [1 John
3:5, 8; 5:20] ^g Rom.
16:26; 1 Tim. 3:16
^h John 21:24 ⁱ [John
1:1, 18; 16:28]
³ John 17:21; 1 Cor.
1:9; 1 John 2:24
⁴ John 15:11;
16:24; 1 Pet. 1:8
^j NU, M our
5 ^j John 1:19;

⁴ And these things we write to you ^kthat
^lyour joy may be full.

Fellowship with Him and One Another

^{5l}This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that ^mGod is light and in Him is no darkness at all. ⁶ⁿIf we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. ⁷But if we ^owalk in the light as He is in the light,

1 John 3:11 ^m [1 Tim. 6:16]; James 1:17 ⁶ⁿ [John 8:12]; 2 Cor. 6:14; [1 John 2:9-11] ^{7o} Is. 2:5

1:1–4 These verses show similarities to the prologue of the Gospel of John (see John 1:1–18). However, while the Gospel of John emphasizes the metaphysical nature of Jesus, **the Word**, these verses emphasize the personal experience of the apostles with the incarnate Word. The memory of Jesus Christ burned in the mind of John as he reflected on the three and a half years that he and the other disciples were with the Lord. Now he wanted to be sure that the churches under his care enjoyed **fellowship** with the resurrected Lord and with other disciples.

1:1 That which could refer to (1) the revelation about Christ, (2) the teachings of Christ, (3) the eternal life manifested by Christ, or (4) Christ Himself. The words **heard, seen, looked upon, and handled** indicate that Christ Himself is the likely subject. **The beginning** may refer to creation or to the beginning of Christ’s ministry. If it is creation, it is like the statement about Christ and creation in the Gospel (John 1:1). However, the context makes it likely that the reference is to the beginning of Christ’s ministry, similar to 2:7, 24; 3:11. **We** is probably a reference to the apostles. **The Word of life** may refer to Jesus, who is the *Word* (see John 1:1) and the *life* (see John 14:6), or possibly to the gospel message and all that it says about eternal life. Most likely, the reference is to Jesus, the Word who brings life. This life is a gift from God, a gift that cannot be earned or taken from us.

1:2 The life that **was manifested** to the apostles is now declared by them. The life was not hidden or obscured so that few, if any, could find it. Rather, this life was made known openly and had its origin in God **the Father**. God had provided truth about Himself in nature and through the prophets of old, but the revelation in His Son (see Heb. 1:1, 2) is God’s finest and clearest presentation of Himself.

1:3 The primary reason John writes is to provide his readers with

an understanding of what they must do to **have fellowship** with the apostles and God. *Fellowship* carries both the idea of a positive relationship that people share and participation in a common interest or goal.

1:4 A Christian can have no real **joy** except in a proper relationship with God and others (see Ps. 16:11; 51:12; John 15:11).

1:5 **God is light** by nature, in His essential being, just as He is Spirit (see John 4:24) and love (4:8). *Light* refers to God’s moral character. **no darkness at all**: God is holy, untouched by any evil or sin. Because God is light, those who desire fellowship with Him must also be pure.

1:6 Verses 6–10 contain three contrasts between words and works, or saying one thing and doing another. Following each contrast is the result of the action. **If we say**: The first false claim is to have **fellowship with God** while failing to reflect His moral character. **Walk** refers to a way of life or daily practice. To walk in **darkness** means to live contrary to the moral character of God, to live a sinful life. To claim fellowship with God without living a moral life or practicing **the truth** is to live a lie, since God cannot compromise His holiness to accommodate sin.

1:7 To **walk in the light** is to live in such a way that one is enlightened by the truth of who God is. **with one another**: When a Christian’s conduct reflects God’s moral character, then real fellowship is possible with other Christians. But it may be that *one another* refers to fellowship with God rather than fellowship with other believers. Our fellowship with God is dependent on walking in God’s light, where sin is revealed. Such revelation enables us to see our sins and brings us to Jesus to seek salvation. Only **the blood of Jesus Christ** can cleanse us **from all sin**, making it possible for imperfect believers to have fellowship with a holy God.

Freedom from Guilt

No one likes to feel guilty. Like an unwelcome guest, guilt shows up at the worst possible time and does not go away no matter how much you wish it would.

Yet the truth is that we need guilt. It is the only proper response to any offense, whether a selfish thought or a premeditated murder. Even a nonbeliever wants a burglar to feel remorse for his theft. Why? Because he *should*. Guilt exposes the truth that we wish to avoid: we have all sinned. John puts it this way: “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us” (1:8).

But John does not leave us with this dismal picture of ourselves. Instead he goes on to paint a glorious portrait of a forgiving God. This is our only hope: “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1:9). Guilt does more than just deliver the distressing news. It unlocks the door to forgiveness. Progress, change, reform, and most important of all, God’s forgiveness all start with confession.

Confession works against the worst part of human nature, the part that imagines itself to be better than it really is. What person has not felt, “I’m not perfect, but I’m not as bad as my next-door neighbor”? This mindset always stops short of confessing; it would rather ignore or ease feelings of guilt than admit them. But only open confession of our sins will completely cleanse us. Only when we admit that we are sinners, unworthy of God’s grace, can we make a fresh start.

C. S. Lewis said that “No man knows how bad he is till he has tried very hard to be good.” Similarly, we can never know how much we need freedom until we try to unload our burden of sin. Yet God’s forgiveness will liberate us to begin anew on the path of righteousness.



we have fellowship with one another, and ^pthe blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

⁸If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. ⁹If we ^qconfess our sins, He is ^rfaithful and just to forgive us *our* sins and to ^scleanse us from all unrighteousness. ¹⁰If we say that we have not sinned, we ^tmake Him a liar, and His word is not in us.

2 My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, ^awe have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. ²And ^bHe Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but ^calso for the whole world.

7 ^p [1 Cor. 6:11]
9 ^q Ps. 32:5; Prov. 28:13 ^r [Rom. 3:24-26] ^s Ps. 51:2
10 ^t John 3:33;
1 John 5:10

CHAPTER 2

1 ^a Rom. 8:34;
1 Tim. 2:5; Heb. 7:25; 9:24
2 ^b [Rom. 3:25];
Heb. 2:17; 1 John 4:10 ^c John 1:29
4 ^d Rom. 3:4
5 ^e John 14:21, 23
[1 John 4:12] ^f has been completed
6 ^g John 15:4
^h Matt. 11:29;
John 13:15; 15:10;

The Test of Knowing Him

³Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. ⁴He who says, “I know Him,” and does not keep His commandments, is a ^dliar, and the truth is not in him. ⁵But ^ewhoever keeps His word, truly the love of God ^fis perfected ^fin him. By this we know that we are in Him. ^{6g}He who says he abides in Him ^hought himself also to walk just as He walked.

⁷²Brethren, I write no new commandment to you, but an old commandment which you have had ⁱfrom the beginning.

1 Pet. 2:21 7 ^f John 13:34; 1 John 3:11, 23; 4:21; 2 John 5
² NU *Beloved*

1:8 The second false claim (see also v. 6) is **that we have no sin**. The idea would be that our sin nature is completely gone. To say this is to **deceive ourselves** (see 2 Chr. 6:36; John 9:41). **The truth** is God’s revelation, which says just the opposite. To have no sin is to have no need of a Savior, which would make the coming of Jesus unnecessary.

1:9 Though John uses **we** primarily to refer to himself and the other apostles as eyewitnesses of Christ (v. 1), here the term includes all believers who **confess** (acknowledge) sin. God says that we are sinners in need of forgiveness. To **confess** is to agree with Him, to admit that we are sinners in need of His mercy. If a believer confesses his or her specific sins to God, He will cleanse **all unrighteousness** from that person. Forgiveness and cleansing are guaranteed because God is **faithful** to His promises. Those promises are legitimate because God is **just**. God can maintain His perfect character and yet forgive us because of the perfect and righteous sacrifice of Jesus, His own Son (2:2).

1:10 we have not sinned: We may admit to having a sin nature while still denying any personal sin and therefore any need for confession. The Greek verb translated *we have not sinned* indicates a denial in the past that continues to the present. Unlike v. 8, which speaks of the guilt of sin or a sinful nature, this verse is about the denial of any particular sins. To make this denial is to call God a **liar** because God’s **word** emphasizes the penetrating nature of sin (see Rom. 7:14–24). Denying that sin is in us indicates that God’s **word is not in us**. In other words, a person who denies committing sinful acts does not have the Word of God changing his or her life.

2:1 With fatherly concern, the aged apostle John addresses his readers affectionately as **children**. **that you may not sin:** John’s statements about sin (1:8, 10) were designed to make believers aware of sin’s ever-present danger and to put them on guard against it. According to Greek grammar, the **if** before **anyone sins** carries the added sense of “and it is assumed that we all do.” This statement is not an encouragement to sin but a warning to all Christians to be on guard against sinful tendencies. **Advocate:** This Greek word is also used of the Holy Spirit in John 14:16, referring to a Helper for us in understanding the truth of God’s Word. Here the word describes the intercessory work of the Son. When we sin, Jesus represents us as our **Advocate with the Father** to plead our cause in heaven’s court. Satan, on the other hand, is the accuser of believers (see Zech. 3; Rev. 12:10).

2:2 Propitiation brings about the merciful removal of guilt through divine forgiveness. In the Greek OT (the Septuagint), the Greek term for **propitiation** was used for the sacrificial mercy seat on which the high priest placed the blood of the Israelites’ sacrifices (see Ex. 25:17–22; 1 Chr. 28:2). This practice indicates that God’s righteous wrath had to be appeased somehow. God sent His Son and satisfied His own wrath with Jesus’ sacrifice on the Cross. Our sins made it necessary for Jesus to suffer the agonies of crucifixion; but God demonstrated His love and justice by providing His own Son. The sacrifice of Jesus’ sinless life is so effective that it can supply forgiveness **for the whole world** (see 2 Cor. 5:14, 15, 19; Heb. 2:9). Christ’s

death is *sufficient* for all, but efficient only for those who believe in Christ. Not everyone will be saved, but Jesus offers salvation to all (see Rev. 22:17).

2:3–11 In this section, three false claims are exposed, each introduced by the phrase “he who says.”

2:3 we know Him: The NT speaks of knowing God in two senses. One who has trusted Christ knows Him (see John 17:3), that is to say, has met Him. One who has previously met the Lord can also come to know Him intimately (see Phil. 3:10). In this verse John is talking about knowing the Lord intimately.

2:4 does not keep His commandments: Disobedience shows a lack of personal knowledge of Christ. To claim to know Christ while disobeying His Word is to lie. **truth is not in him:** Not only does the conflict of word and action make a person a **liar**, but it also shows that the truth is not a controlling influence in that person’s life (1:6, 8, 10).

2:5 perfected: This verb expresses the idea of maturity and completeness. **The love of God is perfected** may mean one of two things: (1) The believer’s love for God grows as he or she keeps God’s Word, or (2) as the believer pursues fellowship and obedience, God’s love for him or her is more fully completed. The second is indicated here. The believer begins to **know** by experience **that** he or she is **in Him**. As John explains in the next verse, *in Him* means “abiding in Him.” **Word** is a synonym for **commandment** in vv. 3, 4. *The love of God* here may refer to (1) God’s love for men, (2) a godly kind of love, or (3) a person’s love for God.

2:6 abides in Him: Abiding is habitual obedience. It has the idea of settling down in Christ or resting in Him. It is evidenced by a life modeled after Christ. **ought . . . to walk:** The admonition to live by the teaching of Jesus reveals that this conformity comes from us. Slaves *must* follow the commands of their masters or they will be punished. Employees *need* to do their work to keep their jobs. However, the Christian as a child of God *ought* to obey God because of a sincere desire to do so. It should be a joy to follow in the footsteps of the One who died for us.

2:7 old commandment: In vv. 3–6, John insists that the test of personal intimacy and knowledge of God is obedience to Christ’s

advocate

(Gk. *paraklētos*) (2:1; John 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7) Strong’s #3875

The Greek word literally means “one who is called to our side.” This could be a comforter, a consoler, or a defense attorney. In John 14:26 and 15:26, the Holy Spirit is called our *paraklētos*, our Comforter. Here Christ is called our *paraklētos*, our Advocate. While the Holy Spirit works within us to comfort and help us, Christ represents us before the Father in heaven. The two Paracletes work together in perfect harmony (see Rom. 8:26, 27, 34).

The old commandment is the word which you heard ³from the beginning. ⁸Again, ^ja new commandment I write to you, which thing is true in Him and in you, ^kbecause the darkness is passing away, and ^lthe true light is already shining. ^{9m}He who says he is in the light, and hates his brother, is in darkness until now. ¹⁰ⁿHe who loves his brother abides in the light, and ^othere is no cause for stumbling in him. ¹¹But he who ^phates his brother is in darkness and ^qwalks in darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes.

Their Spiritual State

- ¹² I write to you, little children,
Because ^ryour sins are forgiven you
for His name's sake.
- ¹³ I write to you, fathers,
Because you have known Him *who*
is ^sfrom the beginning.
- I write to you, young men,
Because you have overcome the
wicked one.
- I write to you, little children,

⁷ ³ NU omits from the beginning
⁸ / John 13:34;
15:12 ^k Rom. 13:12;
Eph. 5:8; 1 Thess.
5:4 ^l [John 1:9; 8:12;
12:35]
^{9m} [1 Cor. 13:2];
1 John 3:14
¹⁰ⁿ [1 John 3:14]
^o 2 Pet. 1:10
^{11p} [1 John 2:9;
3:15; 4:20] ^q John
12:35; 1 John 1:6
^{12r} [1 Cor. 6:11]
^{13s} John 1:1; Rev.
22:13

^r [Rom. 8:15-17;
Gal. 4:6]
^{14u} Eph. 6:10
^{15v} [Rom. 12:2];
Gal. 1:4; James
1:27 ^w Matt. 6:24;
James 4:4
^{16x} [Eccl. 5:10, 11]
^{17y} 1 Cor. 7:31;
1 Pet. 1:24
^{18z} John 21:5
^a Rom. 13:11; 1 Tim.
4:1; Heb. 1:2; 1 Pet.
4:7 ^b 2 Thess. 2:3
^c Matt. 24:5, 24;
1 John 2:22; 4:3;
2 John 7 ⁴ NU
omits the

Because you have ^tknown the
Father.

- ¹⁴ I have written to you, fathers,
Because you have known Him *who*
is from the beginning.

I have written to you, young men,
Because ^uyou are strong, and the
word of God abides in you,
And you have overcome the wicked
one.

Do Not Love the World

^{15v} Do not love the world or the things
in the world. ^wIf anyone loves the world,
the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶For
all that *is* in the world—the lust of the
flesh, ^xthe lust of the eyes, and the pride
of life—is not of the Father but is of the
world. ¹⁷And ^ythe world is passing away,
and the lust of it; but he who does the
will of God abides forever.

Deceptions of the Last Hour

^{18z} Little children, ^ait is the last hour;
and as you have heard that ^bthe ⁴ Anti-
christ is coming, ^ceven now many anti-
christ is coming, by which we know

commandments. But which ones? John emphasizes that he has no new obligation in mind, but rather what the believers have known **from the beginning** (see v. 24; 1:1; 3:11; 2 John 5).

2:8 The new commandment that John refers to is love (v. 10). It may be that John is simply repeating the statement of Christ in John 13:34. **true in Him and in you:** The command to love reached its truest and fullest expression in the life of Christ. He demonstrated what true love is by coming into our world and giving His life for us. Christians should follow His supreme example. We know that the new commandment is in effect **because the darkness is passing away, and the true light is already shining.** This new commandment of love belongs to the new age begun by Christ.

2:9 Brother here refers to a fellow believer.

2:11 he who hates his brother: Hating one's brother opposes the teaching of Christ to love one another. The idea that one could hate a brother and yet claim fellowship with God shows the utter **darkness** that has **blinded** the Christian to the truth. The believer who hates is in darkness and not light, in sin and not in fellowship with God. **does not know where he is going:** A believer who hates his brother has lost his spiritual perspective and sense of direction (see 2 Pet. 1:9).

2:12–14 These verses contain two sets of three items, describing

John's readers as **little children, fathers, and young men**. These three classifications are not physical age groups or spiritual stages. Rather, it seems that each group is a reference to all of John's readers. For example, viewed as little children, they know their sins are forgiven. Viewed as fathers, they not only have a relationship with God, but they also have knowledge of God that comes from obedience to His commandments. Viewed as young men, they are strong. **2:15 Do not love the world** may be rephrased as "stop loving the world." John's readers were acting in a way that was inconsistent with the relationship with Christ. *World* here is the morally evil system opposed to all that God is and holds dear. In this sense, the *world* is the satanic system opposing Christ's kingdom on this earth (see v. 16; 3:1; 4:4; 5:19; John 12:31; 15:18; Eph. 6:11, 12; James 4:4).

2:16 the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life: The world is characterized by these three lusts, which have been interpreted as corresponding to the three different ways Eve was tempted in the garden (see Gen. 3:6), or the three different temptations Jesus experienced (see Luke 4:1–12). However, the correspondences are not close enough to make it certain that John was alluding to either of these. Instead, John was probably making a short list of the different ways believers could be lured away from loving God. *The lust of the flesh* refers to desires for sinful sensual pleasure. *The lust of the eyes* refers to covetousness or materialism. *The pride of life* refers to being proud about one's position in this world.

2:17 passing away: John highlights the brevity of life. To be consumed with this life is to be unprepared for the next. What a tragedy to invest our resources in what will not last.

2:18 last hour: John views the rise of those who deny the truth of Christ from within the Christian community as an indication of the beginning of the end of all things. **Antichrists** is a combination of two Greek words: *anti*, meaning "instead of" or "against," and *christos*, meaning "anointed one." *Antichrists* most likely means those who seek to take the place of Christ. The **many** antichrists are the false teachers John opposed in this letter (see v. 22; 4:3; 2 John 7). They are reminiscent of the *false christs* Jesus told the disciples about (see Matt. 24:24). They are forerunners of the future **Antichrist**, also known as the *beast* in the Book of Revelation (see Rev. 13:1–18), who will exalt himself above God (see Dan. 9:27; 11:31; 12:11; Matt. 24:15).

anointing

(Gk. *chrisma*) (2:20; 2 Cor. 1:21) Strong's #5545

The Greek term *chrisma* is related to the title Christ, which means "Anointed One," and is used in the Greek OT (the Septuagint) for the anointing of a high priest (see Ex. 29:17). The *anointing* here depicts the impartation of the Holy Spirit to a person (see also Is. 61:1). As Christians, now indwelt by the Holy Spirit, we are joined to the Anointed One and share in His anointing (2 Cor. 1:21, 22). Therefore we can know all things with respect to truth and falsehood. Because the Spirit lives within us, we know all that we need to know in order to resist the temptations of false teachers and to live godly lives in this world.

^dthat it is the last hour. ^{19e}They went out from us, but they were not of us; for ^fif they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but *they went out* ^gthat they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us.

²⁰But ^hyou have an anointing ⁱfrom the Holy One, and ^jyou ^sknow all things. ²¹I have not written to you because you do not know the truth, but because you know it, and that no lie is of the truth.

^{22k}Who is a liar but he who denies that ^lJesus is the Christ? He is antichrist who denies the Father and the Son. ^{23m}Whoever denies the Son does not have the ⁿFather either; ^ohe who acknowledges the Son has the Father also.

Let Truth Abide in You

²⁴Therefore let that abide in you ^pwhich you heard from the beginning. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, ^qyou also will abide in the Son and in the Father. ^{25r}And this is the promise that He has promised us—eternal life.

²⁶These things I have written to you concerning those who *try to* ⁶deceive you. ²⁷But the ^sanointing which you have received from Him abides in you, and

18 ^d 1 Tim. 4:1
19 ^e Deut. 13:13
Matt. 24:24
1 Cor. 11:19
20 ^h 2 Cor. 1:21;
Heb. 1:9; 1 John
2:27 ⁱ Acts 3:14
Prov. 28:5; [John
16:13]; 1 Cor. 2:15,
16 ^j NU you all
know.
22 ^k 2 John 7
1 John 4:3
23 ^m John 15:23
John 5:23
24 ^p 1 John 4:15; 5:1;
2 John 9
25 ^r 2 John 5, 6
John 14:23; 1 John
1:3; 2 John 9
26 ^s John 3:14-
16; 6:40; 17:2, 3;
1 John 1:2
27 ^t John 14:16;
16:13; 1 John 2:20
[Jer. 31:33] ^u John
14:16; 1 Cor. 2:12;
1 Thess. 4:9 ^v NU
omits will
28 ^v Eph. 3:12;
1 John 3:21; 4:17;
5:14 ^w NU if
29 ^x Acts 22:14
John 7:18; 1 John
3:7, 10

CHAPTER 3

1 ^a [John 3:16;

^yyou do not need that anyone teach you; but as the same anointing ^uteaches you concerning all things, and is true, and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you ⁷will abide in Him.

The Children of God

²⁸And now, little children, abide in Him, that ⁸when He appears, we may have ^vconfidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming. ^{29w}If you know that He is righteous, you know that ^xeveryone who practices righteousness is born of Him.

3 Behold ^awhat manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that ^bwe should be called children of ¹God! Therefore the world does not know ²us, ^cbecause it did not know Him. ²Beloved, ^dnow we are children of God; and ^eit has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, ^fwe shall be like Him, for ^gwe shall see Him as He is. ^{3h}And everyone who has

Eph. 2:4-7; 1 John 4:10] ^b [John 1:12] ^c [John 15:18, 21; 16:3
¹ NU adds *And we are*. ² *My* you ² d [Is. 56:5; Rom. 8:15, 16]
^e [Rom. 8:18, 19, 23] ^f Rom. 8:29; 2 Pet. 1:4 ^g [Ps. 16:11]
³ ^h 1 John 4:17

2:19 When the false teachers **went out from** among the believers, they revealed that they did not belong to the Christian community; they were never true believers. **they . . . us:** In the opening verses of this book, John made a distinction between *we* and *you* (1:1, 3). *We*, the apostles, were the eyewitnesses of Christ, *you* were the readers. That same distinction is probably maintained here (see also v. 20). Thus when John says these false teachers were **not of us**, he means they did not agree with the teaching of the apostles. These antichrists had departed from the apostolic churches, and their attitudes and actions were not of the apostolic persuasion. If they had been in harmony with the apostles, they would have remained in fellowship with them (1:1-3).

2:20 Anointing here refers either to the Holy Spirit or to Scripture. This anointing is the protection that believers have against the false teachers. John says that these believers are in contrast to the ones who went out (v. 19), who were representatives of the Antichrist. The true Anointed One, Jesus, also has representatives who are anointed. Since only God knows everything, the phrase **all things** must be limited in some way. In this context, *all things* is all the truth the believers needed to resist the antichrists (v. 21). One of the main heresies the first-century church faced was Gnosticism, whose followers claimed to have secret knowledge of the truth that led to salvation. Here John was opposing this teaching by asserting that all believers knew the truth. As an apostle, John was merely reminding them of what they already knew, not acting as an exclusive source of the truth.

2:22, 23 Denying the deity of Jesus is the same as denying the **Father and the Son**. In John's epistles, denying **that Jesus is the Christ** includes denying that He came in the flesh (see 1:1-3; 4:3; 2 John 7). A person cannot worship God while denying Jesus' full deity and full humanity.

2:24 The message they **heard from the beginning** was that Jesus is the Christ (v. 22), the Son of God (v. 22) who had come in the flesh (1:1-3). If John's readers would resist the lies of the antichrists and hold on to the truth they had been taught from the beginning, they would continue abiding in fellowship with **the Son and the Father**.

2:25 **Eternal life** speaks of both the quality of life in the present, a life filled with the joy of God, and the promise of a future life in eternity.

2:26 **Those who try to deceive you** refers to false teachers, or antichrists. *You* indicates that it is possible for believers to be deceived by false teaching.

2:27 We are to base our walk with the Lord on the truth He has given us. Believers who know God's standards and desires for us but fail to put these truths into practice in their lives will also not mature in Christ (see Heb. 5:11-6:12).

2:28-4:6 Because God is righteous, the divine sonship of Christians is revealed through righteous living, which includes love of fellow believers and orthodox belief in the deity of Jesus. This section moves from John's emphasis on fellowship to its basis, assurance of salvation.

2:28 John has been urging his readers to let what they have heard from the beginning abide in them (vv. 24-27). Here he advises them to **abide in Christ** Himself. If we abide in Christ we will avoid embarrassment when He returns. **ashamed:** The shame is the result of not having had a lifestyle of obedience when Christ returns.

2:29 Since God is **righteous**, those who practice **righteousness** will be recognized as being **born of God**. This verse does not say that everyone who is born of God practices righteousness. Believers can walk in darkness and sin (1:6, 8; 2:1). The point here is that when a child exhibits the nature of his or her father, he or she is perceived as the child of the father.

3:1 Behold what manner of love: John stands in amazement of God's love. But the greater amazement and appreciation is for the fact that God's love is expressed to human beings, that Christians are included in His family. God loves all believers, the weak as well as the strong. John describes Jesus on the night of His betrayal as "having loved His own who were in the world," and writes that "He loved them to the end" (John 13:1). God's love is in stark contrast to the love of the world. The world loves those who love them, while God loves even those who disobey Him.

3:2 Be like Him: Though we do not know all the specifics of our future existence, we do know that we will have a body like Christ's (see Phil. 3:21). Believers will put on immortality and become free from the sin nature that presently plagues us.

3:3 Everyone who has the hope of seeing Christ and being like Him (v. 2) realizes that Christ is morally pure. This realization helps a person pursue purity even more.

this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

Sin and the Child of God

⁴Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and ⁱsin is lawlessness. ⁵And you know ^jthat He was manifested ^kto take away our sins, and ^lin Him there is no sin. ⁶Whoever abides in Him does not sin. Whoever sins has neither seen Him nor known Him.

⁷Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous. ^{8m}He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, ⁿthat He might destroy the works of the devil. ⁹Whoever has been ^oborn of God does not sin, for ^pHis seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God.

4 ⁱ Rom. 4:15;
1 John 5:17
5 ^j 1 John 1:2; 3:8
^k [Is. 53:5, 6]; John
1:29; [2 Cor. 5:21;
Heb. 9:26] ^l [2 Cor.
5:21]; 1 John 2:29
8 ^m Matt. 13:38;
John 8:44; 1 John
3:10 ⁿ Luke 10:18;
[Heb. 2:14]
9 ^o John 1:3; 3:3;
[1 John 2:29; 4:7;
5:1, 4, 18]; 3 John 11
^p 1 Pet. 1:23
11 ^q [John 13:34;
15:12]; 1 John 4:7,
11, 21; 2 John 5
12 ^r Gen. 4:4, 8
13 ^s [John 15:18;
17:14]
14 ^t NU omits *his*
brother
15 ^u Matt. 5:21; John
8:44 ^v [Gal. 5:20, 21;
Rev. 21:8]
16 ^w [John 3:16]
^x John 10:11; 15:13;
Gal. 2:20

The Imperative of Love

¹⁰In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is he who does not love his brother. ¹¹For this is the message that you heard from the beginning, ^qthat we should love one another, ¹²not as ^rCain *who* was of the wicked one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his works were evil and his brother's righteous.

¹³Do not marvel, my brethren, if ^sthe world hates you. ¹⁴We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love ³his brother abides in death. ¹⁵^tWhoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that ^uno murderer has eternal life abiding in him.

The Outworking of Love

^{16v}By this we know love, ^wbecause He

3:4 The **sin** described in this verse is not occasional sin but a consistent lifestyle of sin. **Lawlessness** is not the absence of law but active rebellion against the law.

3:5, 6 If Christ is sinless and the purpose of His coming was to remove sin, then **whoever abides in Him does not sin**. Habitually sinful conduct indicates an absence of fellowship with Christ. Thus if we claim to be a Christian but sin is our way of life, our status as children of God can legitimately be questioned.

3:7 let no one deceive you: Evidently the antichrists who were

denying the doctrine of Christ (2:22) were also claiming to know God, yet were living in unrighteousness (1:6). True believers practice **righteousness** because the One in whom they dwell is **righteous**. God's righteousness is revealed in His children through their conduct. Righteous conduct does not *produce* righteous character, but reveals its presence in us.

3:8 Satan's sinful nature is shown through the lives of those who belong to him. Jesus' purpose in coming was to **destroy** the devil's **works**. A person **who sins**, even a believer, **is of the devil** in the sense that he is participating in the devil's activity (2:19). Thus John is indicating that it is possible for believers to do that which is of the devil (see Mark 8:31–33; James 3:6).

3:9 The **seed** that **remains** is probably the divine nature in which believers can participate (see 2 Pet. 1:4). But the **seed** has been variously interpreted as Jesus, the Holy Spirit, Scripture, or the gospel message. In other words, this verse is saying that habitual **sin** is not consistent with the Christian walk.

3:10 Christians **manifest** their nature by practicing **righteousness** (2:7). **Children of the devil** display their basic nature by sinning. Believers who sin are not expressing their nature as **children of God**; instead, they are following the devil's pattern.

3:11 John identifies loving **one another** as absolutely basic to living for Christ and advancing His kingdom.

3:12 **Cain** is identified as a spiritual child of the devil. His brother Abel is identified as a child of God. Cain's act of murder was the epitome of hatred, and thus came from **the wicked one** (v. 8).

3:14 **Love** for fellow believers is evidence that one has **passed from** the realm of **death** to the sphere of **life**. The tense of the verb *have passed* indicates that something experienced in the past has continuing and abiding results in the present. Thus John is saying that Christians, who have experienced Christ's salvation in the past, should demonstrate their salvation by loving their fellow believers in the present.

3:15 **eternal life abiding in him**: Those who do not love their fellow Christians are not living in the light but instead are living in the darkness (2:11). They are not abiding in life but in death (v. 14). What they are doing is not of God but of the devil (v. 8). **Eternal life** is not *abiding* in these believers in the sense that it is not the controlling factor in their lives.

The Facts of Love in 1 John	
In five short chapters, John uses different forms of the word love 46 times. He wanted to teach his readers the importance of love in the Christian walk.	
Principle	Passage
• Keeping God's Word is the proof that we love God.	2:5; 5:2, 3
• When we love our brother, we will live without stumbling.	2:10
• We are not to love the world or the things in the world.	2:15
• We cannot love the world and love God also.	2:15
• God's love prompted Him to make us His children through the death of His Son.	3:1, 16; 4:9–11
• Loving other believers is a fundamental requirement of the Christian life.	3:11, 16, 23; 4:7, 11, 12
• A failure to love other Christians raises serious questions about the genuineness of our faith.	3:10, 14; 4:8, 20
• Genuine love always results in action—not merely sentimental words.	3:17, 18
• God is the source of all love.	4:7, 16
• Mature love does not produce fear but instead imparts courage.	4:17, 18
• Long before we loved God, He loved us first.	4:19

laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down *our* lives for the brethren. ¹⁷ But ^x whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him?

¹⁸ My little children, ^y let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth. ¹⁹ And by this we ⁴ know ^z that we are of the truth, and shall ⁵ assure our hearts before Him. ^{20a} For if our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and knows all things. ²¹ Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, ^b we have confidence toward God. ²² And ^c whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments ^d and do those things that are pleasing in His sight. ²³ And this is His commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ ^e and love one another, as He gave ⁶ us commandment.

The Spirit of Truth and the Spirit of Error

²⁴ Now ^f he who keeps His commandments ^g abides in Him, and He in him. And ^h by this we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.

¹⁷ ^x Deut. 15:7
¹⁸ ^y Ezek. 33:31
¹⁹ ^z John 18:37
⁴ ^{NU} shall know
⁵ ^{persuade, set at rest}
²⁰ ^a [1 Cor. 4:4, 5]
²¹ ^b [Heb. 10:22; 1 John 2:28; 5:14]
²² ^c Ps. 34:15; [John 15:7; 1 John 5:14, 15
^d John 8:29; Heb. 13:21
²³ ^e Matt. 22:39
⁶ ^M omits us
²⁴ ^f John 14:23
^g John 14:21; 17:21
^h John 14:17; Rom. 8:9, 14, 16; 1 Thess. 4:8; 1 John 4:13

CHAPTER 4

¹ ^a 1 Cor. 14:29
^b Matt. 24:5
² ^c [Rom. 10:8-10]; 1 Cor. 12:3; 1 John 5:1
³ ¹ ^{NU} omits that
² ^{NU} omits Christ
⁴ ^d John 14:30; 16:11
⁵ ^e John 3:31
^f John 15:19;
¹⁷ ¹⁴ ^g [1 Cor. 2:12-16]
⁷ ^h 1 John 3:10, 11, 23

4 Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but ^a test the spirits, whether they are of God; because ^b many false prophets have gone out into the world. ² By this you know the Spirit of God: ^c Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, ³ and every spirit that does not confess ¹ that Jesus ² Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the *spirit* of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world.

⁴ You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than ^d he who is in the world. ⁵ ^e They are of the world. Therefore they speak *as* of the world, and ^f the world hears them. ⁶ We are of God. He who knows God hears us; he who is not of God does not hear us. ^g By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

Knowing God Through Love

⁷ ^h Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who ⁱ loves

¹ 1 Thess. 4:9; [1 John 3:14]

3:17 Goods means "course of life," "living," or "livelihood." This same Greek word is translated *life* in 2:16. It refers to the material objects that sustain life. Therefore, the **need** that is mentioned is for food, clothing, and shelter. Believers can lay down their lives for fellow believers (see v. 16) by giving some of their livelihood to those who are in need. By giving our material possessions to others, we can demonstrate the same type of self-sacrificial love that Christ demonstrated on the Cross (see v. 16).

3:18 To love in word is to speak loving words but to stop short of doing anything to prove that love. The opposite of loving in word is loving **in deed and in truth**.

3:19 We can be assured of the presence of eternal life within us when we demonstrate self-sacrificial love to others. Believers who begin to truly love (v. 18) will know their behavior has its source in the truth and therefore will have confidence before God (v. 21). Thus love benefits the giver and the receiver both. **Of the truth** means being identified with Him who is the Truth. **Before Him** recalls 2:28, 29 and refers to the Christian's appearance before the judgment seat of Christ (2 Cor. 5:9, 10).

3:20 Our heart condemns us in that we recognize that we do not measure up to the standard of love and feel insecure in approaching God. Our conscience may not acknowledge the loving deeds we have done in the power of the Holy Spirit, but **God** does, and He is superior to our heart. Unlike our conscience, God takes everything into account, including Christ's atoning work for us. God is more compassionate and understanding toward us than we sometimes are toward ourselves.

3:24 Abides in this verse describes the mutual indwelling of Jesus and the Christian. The believer abides in Christ by keeping **His commandments**. Christ abides in the obedient believer as One who is "at home" with that believer. Jesus spoke of this mutual abiding in John 15:4, 5, 7.

4:1 John speaks of the **spirits** of teachers in a way similar to what Paul says about the spirits of the prophets in 1 Cor. 14:32. John is not referring here to demon possession, but to teachers who promote error. Believers have the Holy Spirit (3:24); but **false prophets** obey evil spirits. A true prophet is one who receives direct revelation from

God. A false prophet claims to have received direct revelation from God but in fact promotes erroneous ideas.

4:2 By this you know: One test of whether a person is led by the Holy Spirit is whether that person's beliefs agree with the truth of God's Word (see 2:22; 1 Cor. 12:3). **Jesus Christ has come in the flesh:** This test seems to be aimed at Docetists. They taught that Christ did not have a physical body. The test may also be aimed at the followers of Cerinthus who claimed that Jesus and "the Christ" were two separate beings, one physical and the other spiritual. In this letter, John is careful to use the name and title of **Jesus Christ** together to clearly express the complete union of the two titles in one person.

4:3 Cerinthus, a false teacher of John's day, denied the Incarnation by teaching that the divine Christ descended on the human Jesus at His baptism and then departed before His crucifixion (2:22). John teaches that Jesus did not merely enter into an already existing human being, but He came as a human being. The Greek tense of the verb **has come** and the meaning of the noun **flesh** indicate that not only did Jesus come as a human being, He was still a human being even as John wrote. God the Son is forever fully God and fully man. He is immortal and has received a resurrected human body that does not age or die. A denial of Jesus' full and true humanity proves that a teacher is **not of God**.

4:4 We can **overcome** by recognizing false teachers and refusing to follow them. **He who is in you** is the Holy Spirit. **He who is in the world** is the devil (5:19).

4:5 **They** is a reference to the false prophets (v. 1) who have the spirit of the Antichrist (v. 3). The false teachers, being a part of the **world** system ruled by Satan, are accepted by the world. **The world** believes their false teachings and receives them into fellowship.

4:6 **We** refers to the apostles, who find acceptance only among those who know God. **He who knows God** (2:3) listens to what the apostles have to say. This passage, then, gives two tests of the spirit: (1) the confession of Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God come in the flesh (vv. 1–3); (2) the acceptance of the teaching of the apostles.

4:7 Love for **one another**, which here means fellow Christians, proves our spiritual birth and our relationship with God. **Born of**

is born of God and knows God. ⁸He who does not love does not know God, for God is love. ⁹In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten ^kSon into the world, that we might live through Him. ¹⁰In this is love, ^lnot that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son ^mto be the propitiation for our sins. ¹¹Beloved, ⁿif God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

Seeing God Through Love

^{12o}No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love has been perfected in us. ^{13p}By this we know that we abide in Him, and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit. ¹⁴And ^qwe have seen and testify that ^rthe Father has sent the Son *as* Savior of the world. ^{15s}Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. ¹⁶And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and ^the who abides in love abides in God, and God ^uin him.

The Consummation of Love

¹⁷Love has been perfected among us in this: that ^vwe may have boldness in

9 / Rom. 5:8 ^kIs. 9:6;
7; John 3:16
10 ^lTitus 3:5
^m1 John 2:2
11 ⁿMatt. 18:33
12 ^oJohn 1:18;
1 Tim. 6:16; 1 John
4:20
13 ^pJohn 14:20
14 ^qJohn 1:14
^rJohn 3:17; 4:42;
1 John 2:2
15 ^s[Rom. 10:9];
1 John 3:23; 4:2;
5:1, 5
16 ^t[1 John 3:24]
^u[John 14:23]
17 ^v[James 2:13];
1 John 2:28

19 ^w1 John 4:10
^xNU omits *Him*
20 ^x[1 John 2:4]
^y1 Pet. 1:8; 1 John
4:12 ^zNU *he cannot*
21 ^zLev. 19:18;
[Matt. 5:43, 44;
22:39]; John 13:34

CHAPTER 5

1 ^a1 John 2:22; 4:2,
15 ^bJohn 1:13
2 ^cJohn 15:10;
2 John 6
3 ^dJohn 14:15;
2 John 6 ^eMic. 6:8;
Matt. 11:30; 23:4
4 ^fJohn 16:33
5 ^f1 John 2:13; 4:4
^gMy your
5 ^h1 Cor. 15:57

the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world. ¹⁸There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love. ^{19w}We love ³Him because He first loved us.

Obedience by Faith

^{20x}If someone says, “I love God,” and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, ⁴how can he love God ^ywhom he has not seen? ²¹And ^zthis commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God *must* love his brother also.

5 Whoever believes that ^aJesus is the Christ is ^bborn of God, and everyone who loves Him who begot also loves him who is begotten of Him. ²By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and ^ckeep His commandments. ^{3d}For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And ^eHis commandments are not burdensome. ⁴For ^fwhatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that ^ghas overcome the world—¹our faith. ⁵Who is he who overcomes the world, but ^hhe who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

God recalls Jesus’ conversation with Nicodemus in John 3:3–6. **Knows God** recalls Jesus’ words in John 14:7.

4:8 Know God here refers to an intimate, experiential knowledge (v. 6; 2:3) of God, rather than just information about God. John never says that those who do not love are not born of God (v. 7). Yet it is impossible to know God intimately without loving others, for **God is love**: Anyone in whom God dwells reflects His character. To claim to know God while failing to love others is to make a false claim (1:6).

4:9 The love of God for His children was visibly demonstrated through Jesus’ work on the Cross on our behalf. **Only begotten Son** expresses the sense of uniqueness, not a literal birth (see Heb. 11:17). John is the only NT author who calls Jesus this (see John 1:18; 3:16, 18). In other words, Jesus is the unique Son of God; no other person is God’s Son in the way He is.

4:13 By this looks forward to the evidence of His Spirit rather than back to the evidence of love (vv. 7–11) for proof **that we abide in Him, and He in us** (3:24). Mutual abiding refers to the fellowship

we have with God as a result of our salvation. The evidence that God abides in us and we in Him is the experience of the Holy **Spirit** dwelling in us. In the remainder of this passage (vv. 12–16), John explains how a believer can know that the Spirit is working in his or her life (vv. 15, 16).

4:15 A sincere confession of belief is an indication that the confessor is saved. **Abides in** in this context refers to salvation rather than the fellowship that results from salvation. To be a Christian, a person must believe **that Jesus is the Son of God**.

4:16 And we have known is parallel to “and we have seen” in v. 14. **Abides in love** means the Christian lives within the sphere of God’s love. That love is both experienced and expressed through the Christian’s life.

4:17 The mature expression of **perfected** love (v. 12) produces confidence as a Christian anticipates Jesus’ **judgment** of the world. A person who abides in love will not be ashamed when Jesus returns (see 2:28; John 15:9–17).

4:18 A mature understanding of God’s **love** removes any **fear** of God’s judgment.

5:1 The condition for being **born of God**, for being a child of God, is believing or trusting in Jesus Christ. Only correct, sincere belief produces spiritual birth. This birth is reflected in love for others who also have been born into the family of God (2:3–11).

5:3 The love of God demands obedience (see John 14:15). However, rather than being **burdensome**, God’s commands free believers to be the people they were originally created to be: holy beings who clearly reflect the image of God.

5:4 Whatever speaks of the new nature of the child of God. Regeneration (that is, our spiritual rebirth) provides **victory** over the world which is opposed to God. The **faith** that overcomes the world is faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God (see v. 5), who died for us (v. 6). The one who overcomes **the world** obeys God rather than following the expectations of the world. If we love God, we will find obeying Him a pleasure.

sin

(Gk. *hamartia*) (1:7, 9; 2:2; 3:4, 9; 4:10; 5:16; Gal. 1:4) Strong’s #266

The word literally means “to miss the mark,” to err. In this verse, there is one kind of sin one can recover from and another kind of sin from which one can’t recover. The difference is one which John’s readers were expected to recognize. We can only conjecture. The content of this letter suggests that those who had abandoned the Christian community (2:18, 19) in pursuit of heretical, “antichrist” teachings were irrecoverable. Their denial of Jesus’ true person (4:1–3) leads to unrepentant sin, which finally produces spiritual death.

The Certainty of God's Witness

⁶This is He who came ⁱby water and blood—Jesus Christ; not only by water, but by water and blood.^j And it is the Spirit who bears witness, because the Spirit is truth. ⁷For there are three that bear witness ²in heaven: the Father, ^kthe Word, and the Holy Spirit; ^land these three are one. ⁸And there are three that bear witness on earth: ^mthe Spirit, the water, and the blood; and these three agree as one.

⁹If we receive ⁿthe witness of men, the witness of God is greater; ^ofor this is the witness of ³God which He has testified of His Son. ¹⁰He who believes in the Son of God ^phas the witness in himself; he who

⁶ ⁱ John 1:31-34; [Eph. 5:26, 27] ^j [John 14:17] ⁷ ^k [John 1:1] ^l John 10:30 ² NU, M omit the words from *in heaven* (v. 7) through *on earth* (v. 8). Only 4 or 5 very late mss. contain these words in Greek. ⁸ ^m John 15:26 ⁹ ⁿ John 5:34, 37; 8:17, 18 ^o [Matt. 3:16, 17]; John 5:32, 37 ³ NU *God, that* ¹⁰ ^p [Rom. 8:16]; Gal. 4:6; Rev. 12:17 ^q John 3:18, 33;

does not believe God ^qhas made Him a liar, because he has not believed the testimony that God has given of His Son. ¹¹And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. ¹²He who has the Son has ⁴life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have ⁴life. ¹³These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, ⁵and that you may *continue* to believe in the name of the Son of God.

1 John 1:10 12 ^r [John 3:15, 36; 6:47; 17:2, 3] ⁴ Or *the life* ¹³ ⁵ NU omits the rest of v. 13.

5:6 Water and blood have been interpreted in at least four ways: (1) as Jesus' baptism and death, (2) as His incarnation, (3) as the water and blood that flowed from His side on the Cross, and (4) as the baptism of the believer and the Lord's Supper. Most scholars favor the first interpretation. John is correcting the false teacher Cerinthus, who claimed that the Spirit came on Jesus at His baptism but left Him before His death (see 4:2, 3).

5:7, 8 The Holy Spirit testifies in accord with **the water and the blood** (v. 6) that Jesus is the Son of God.

5:10 The witness looks back to the anointing of the believer described in 2:27 and refers either to the Holy Spirit or to the testimony of the Scripture. The last part of the verse suggests that the Scripture is meant. John is contrasting those who accept and those reject what God says. A person who trusts in Jesus possesses the witness, namely, the truth of God (v. 9). The one who rejects God's **testimony** is claiming that God is a **liar**.

5:11 This is the testimony is the same phrase as what is translated "this is the witness" in v. 9. God's witness or testimony is that **He has given us eternal life . . . in His Son**. Eternal life is not a wage to be earned, but a gift to be received from God (see Rom. 6:23).

5:12 John clearly states that our relationship with **the Son** determines whether we possess eternal life.

5:13 Some assume that the phrase **these things** refers to the whole book of 1 John and conclude that the way to know that one has eternal life is not only to believe in the Son but also to live a righteous life and love fellow believers. However, the phrase does not refer to the whole book but to the immediately preceding verses and similar expressions throughout this letter (vv. 9–12; 2:1, 12–14, 21, 26; 4:1). In other words, the foundation of assurance of salvation is belief in God's Word and His Son, of whom the Spirit and Scripture testify (vv. 11, 12). Those who trust Christ can know they have eternal life because God says they have it.

The Trinity

First John as a whole is clearly founded on the doctrine of the Trinity. From evidence throughout Scripture (see Matt. 28:19), it is clear that God is both one and three. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit are one God, but they are also distinct Persons of the Godhead. Throughout his first epistle, John illustrates how each Person of the Godhead works with and through the others to accomplish God's plan of salvation for us.

God the Father	God the Son	God the Holy Spirit
• Through Christ, we have fellowship with the Father (1:3).	• Jesus is called "the Word of life" (1:1).	• The Spirit indwells us and gives assurance of salvation (3:24).
• God is light (1:5).	• Jesus' blood cleanses us from sin (1:7).	• The Spirit causes us to confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh (4:2).
• The Father has great love for His children (3:1).	• Jesus is our Advocate with the Father (2:1).	• The Spirit is the gift of God to all believers (4:13).
• God is "greater than our heart, and knows all things" (3:20).	• Jesus is the propitiation for our sin (2:2).	• The Spirit bears witness to the truth and to Jesus Christ (5:6).
• God is love (4:8).	• Jesus is sinless (3:5).	• The Spirit is one with the Father and the Son (5:7, 8).
• God "sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (4:10).	• The Son of God destroyed the works of the devil (3:8).	
• God abides in believers, and they in Him (4:15).	• Jesus has come in the flesh (4:2).	
• God is the Giver of eternal life through Jesus Christ (5:11).	• The Son is the Savior of the world (4:14).	
	• The Son is the source of eternal life (5:11).	
	• Believing in the Son of God is necessary for us to inherit eternal life (5:13).	

Confidence and Compassion
in Prayer

¹⁴Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that ^sif we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. ¹⁵And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.

¹⁶If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin *which does not lead* to death, he will ask, and ^tHe will give him life for those who commit sin not *leading* to death. *"There is sin leading to death."* ^vI do not say that he should pray about that. ^{17w}All unrighteousness is sin, and there is sin not *leading* to death.

14 ^s [1 John 2:28; 3:21, 22]
16 ^t Job 42:8
^u [Matt. 12:31] ^v Jer. 7:16; 14:11
17 ^w 1 John 3:4

18 ^x [1 Pet. 1:23];
1 John 3:9 ^y James 1:27 ^z guards ⁷ NU
him
19 ^z John 12:31;
17:15; Gal. 1:4
20 ^a 1 John 4:2
^b Luke 24:45 ^c John 17:3; Rev. 3:7 ^d Is. 9:6 ^e 1 John 5:11, 12

Knowing the True—Rejecting
the False

¹⁸We know that ^xwhoever is born of God does not sin; but he who has been born of God ^ykeeps ⁶ ⁷himself, and the wicked one does not touch him.

¹⁹We know that we are of God, and ^zthe whole world lies *under the sway of* the wicked one.

²⁰And we know that the ^aSon of God has come and ^bhas given us an understanding, ^cthat we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. ^dThis is the true God ^eand eternal life.

²¹Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen.

5:14, 15 The key to knowing that God **hears** our prayers is to pray **according to His will**.

5:16, 17 A believer should intercede for a sinning fellow Christian provided that (1) the believer **sees** the **brother sinning** and (2) the sin **does not lead to death**. *Death* may refer either to spiritual or physical death, though physical death is probably the case here. **give him life**: The believer can pray with confidence knowing that it is the will of God that sinning believers should stop sinning. A **sin leading to death** may refer to blaspheming the Holy Spirit, rejecting Christ as Savior, rejecting the humanity or deity of Jesus, a specific sin such as murder (3:12, 15), or a life of habitual sin. Whatever it is, the sin seems to be a flagrant violation of the sanctity of the Christian community (see Acts 5:1–11; 1 Cor. 5:5; 11:30). In other words, John is encouraging us to help fellow believers who are straying; we can be the tools God uses to restore an erring brother or sister to true fellowship.

5:18–20 These verses contain three concluding absolute truths, each of which is introduced by the phrase **we know** (vv. 18, 19, 20).

The general idea of this concluding section is that a proper relationship with God results in confidence of our position in Christ within a hostile world. **We** is possibly another reference to the apostles (1:1). **Does not sin** conveys the idea of not practicing sin as a habitual lifestyle. The phrase cannot mean that believers do not sin because John just spoke of seeing a believer sinning (v. 16).

5:19 The apostles are **of God**, meaning He is the source of their actions and attitudes (see 2:19). Satan does not touch the one born of God (v. 18), but he does have **the whole world** in his grip and under his dominion.

5:20 The **understanding** that Christ gives enables us to **know** God in a personal, intimate sense. **Jesus Christ is the true God**; to know Him is to have **eternal life**.

5:21 **Idols** here may refer to literal idols, foods sacrificed to idols, false ideas in contrast to God's truth, or the doctrines of false teachers. John has just reminded his readers of the true God (v. 20). It is appropriate that he closes by exhorting them to stay away from false gods.

THE SECOND EPISTLE OF JOHN



THE EARLY CHURCH had its hands full with false teachers. First there were the Judaizers, who held that Gentiles who did not observe Jewish rituals could not be Christians. Then there were false apostles, who specialized in attacking Paul's credibility. Later came Docetists, Gnostics, and many others who distorted the truth. Each brought their own version of the truth.

Second John is testimony to the fact that no question consumed more time than "Who is Jesus?" The false teachers, who prompted John to write this letter were promoting a heresy about this question. This heresy, called Docetism, was the teaching that Christ did not actually come in the flesh. In other words, Christ did not have a body but only *seemed* to have a body and to suffer and die on the Cross (see v. 7). Yet these teachers claimed to be Christians, teaching the truths of Jesus' life and death.

John would have none of it. He urged the believers to cling to the truth: Jesus Christ came in the flesh. The word *truth* appears five times in the first four verses. John wanted believers to guard against falsehood, and the best way to do that would be to arm themselves with the truth.

Author and Date The evidence is that the apostle John wrote this letter. Some have argued that there were two Johns, the apostle and a church leader known as John the Elder. But as with 1 John, evidence from the early church fathers identifies this letter with the apostle. Other evidences favoring John the apostle as the author of this letter are the similarity of the language and content of 1 and 2 John. John may have used the title Elder as an affectionate description of himself, since his authority as an apostle would not be in question at this late date.

This epistle was probably written soon after 1 John, for it assumes that the readers will understand what is meant by "antichrist" in verse 7. No firm date can be given because there is insufficient information in the letter itself and from church fathers. A date between A.D. 80 and 100 would fit. Early church writers stated that John was based in Ephesus following the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, and it is likely that this letter was written there.

Historical Background The early church made a practice of supporting traveling ministers and teachers with gifts and hospitality. Christians in each church would house these missionaries and provide for their needs (see 3 John 5, 6). Since false teachers also relied on this hospitality, John urged his readers to show discernment and not to support traveling teachers "who do not confess Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh" (v. 7).

Audience John wrote this letter "to the elect lady and her children." This is either a figurative reference to a church community or a literal reference to a specific person. Several arguments favor the figurative meaning and several favor the literal. In defense of the figurative, the issues addressed seem to reflect the problems faced by a church more than an individual. The plural pronouns in verses 6, 8, 10, 12 imply an audience of more than just one person. Neither the lady nor her children are named directly, although in 3 John three names appear.

The fact that both Paul and John personified the church as a woman in other passages provides supporting evidence for the theory that this letter was addressed to the church as a whole (see 2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:25–27, 31, 32; Rev. 21:2, 9; 22:17). And finally, the greeting of verse 13 makes better sense when it is understood as a greeting from one congregation to another rather than from a group of relatives to their aunt.

It is just as possible that John wrote this letter to a literal woman. The phrase “elect lady” makes sense as a title for a well-known and respected woman. The reference to her children walking in the truth also makes sense when taken literally. The greeting from her sister’s children in verse 13 would fit this interpretation. The Greek word translated *elect* could be a woman’s name, with *lady* added as a title of respect, as in “Lady Eklekta.” As for the greeting, Paul forwarded greetings from others in his personal letter to Philemon (see Philem. 23–25), so for John to do so in verse 13 of this letter would not be unprecedented. And finally, the plural references in verses 6, 8, 10, and 12 could well refer to the woman and her children. The proof is not conclusive for either possibility, so the true identity of John’s audience for this letter probably will always remain unknown. Yet the message of the letter remains clear: vigilantly guard against false teaching, and persevere in the truth.

CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

Once again John takes sharp aim at those who deny the bodily reality of Jesus. The Jesus of whom he writes (and whom he knows intimately) had flesh and blood and bones. He labels the insurrectionists as false teachers. And whereas John often proclaims the message to “love one another,” he forcefully demands that Christians have nothing to do with heretics. The reason is obvious. In order to have a relationship with God the Father, we must abide “in the doctrine of Christ” (v. 9). We cannot approach the Father without going through Jesus. For John, the person and work of Jesus Christ affect every area of life and faith.

2 JOHN OUTLINE

- I. Opening greeting 1–3
- II. Walking in the truth 4–11
 - A. Walking in truth and love 4–6
 - B. Responding to deceivers 7–11
- III. Closing greeting 12, 13



The ruins of St. John’s Basilica, located near Ephesus, constructed in the fifth century A.D. by Emperor Justinian. It stands on what is believed to be the burial site of John the apostle.



Hospitality

Hospitality is the practice of entertaining strangers graciously. Hospitality was a very important trait in Bible times. In the NT, the Greek word translated “hospitality” literally means “love of strangers” (Rom. 12:13). In the OT, Abraham was the host to angels unaware; he invited strangers into his house, washed their feet, prepared fresh meat, had Sarah bake bread, and later accompanied them as they left (Gen. 18:1–15). Even today a traditional greeting to the guests among the bedouin people of the Middle East is “You are among your family.”

Hospitality was specifically commanded by God (Lev. 19:33, 34; Luke 14:13, 14; Rom. 12:13). It was to be characteristic of all believers (1 Pet. 4:9), especially bishops (Titus 1:7, 8; 1 Tim. 3:2). Jesus emphasized the importance of hospitality by answering the question of who should inherit the kingdom: “I was a stranger and you took Me in” (Matt. 25:35).

Abraham entertaining the angels

Wikimedia Commons



Greeting the Elect Lady

The Elder,

To the ¹elect lady and her children, whom I love in truth, and not only I, but also all those who have known ^athe truth, ²because of the truth which abides in us and will be with us forever:

^{3b}Grace, mercy, and peace will be with ²you from God the Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love.

Walk in Christ's Commandments

⁴I rejoiced greatly that I have found

¹ ^a Col. 1:5 ¹ chosen
³ ^b Rom. 1:7; 1 Tim.
1:2 ² NU, M us
⁴ ^c 1 Thess. 2:19, 20;
3 John 3, 4

⁵ ^d [John 13:34, 35;
15:12, 17]; 1 John
3:11; 4:7, 11
⁶ ^e John 14:15;
1 John 2:5; 5:3
^f 1 John 2:24
⁷ ^g 1 John 2:19;
4:1 ^h 1 John 4:2
ⁱ 1 John 2:22
⁸ / Mark 13:9

some of your children walking in truth, as we received commandment from the Father. ⁵And now I plead with you, lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment to you, but that which we have had from the beginning: ^dthat we love one another. ^{6e}This is love, that we walk according to His commandments. This is the commandment, that ^fas you have heard from the beginning, you should walk in it.

Beware of Antichrist Deceivers

⁷For ^gmany deceivers have gone out into the world ^hwho do not confess Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh. ⁱThis is a deceiver and an antichrist. ^{8j}Look to

1 The Elder is probably the apostle John. The title can refer either to an old man, an older person deserving respect, or a church leader. Here the word probably refers to the author's authority in the church. **The elect lady** may be a specific person, or the phrase may be a figurative description of the local church (see the Introduction to 2 John). **I love in truth:** John links truth and love. The second use of **truth** refers to the body of doctrine that is true. This is God's revelation, the clear teachings and commands of Scripture.

3 If we wish to experience God's **grace, mercy, and peace**, we must commit ourselves to His **truth** and communicate His **love**. Blessing comes from **the Father** and **Son** equally. John affirms the deity of Jesus by affirming the Son's equality with the Father.

4 Walking in truth means having an authentic relationship with God. Our walk with the Lord if genuine must be based upon His Word.

5 Specifically, our walk with God is based on His **commandment to love one another** (see John 13:34, 35).

6 God's love is the basis of His desire for our obedience, and it is the reason He has revealed His will through **His commandments** in His

Word. We prove our obedience to Him by demonstrating love toward one another. Love is an unlimited resource readily available to us, and it is tremendously effective in furthering the work of Christ.

7 One of the stumbling blocks to Christians is the **many deceivers** who subtly blur the truth about Jesus. Walking in truth means responding to deceivers by guarding against and rejecting them. **Coming in the flesh** refers to the Incarnation, the fact that Jesus is the God-man. The humanity of Jesus provides a test by which false teachers can be identified. The Gnostic heresy, against which John wrote in 1 and 2 John, included a denial of the physical body of Christ. People who deny the physical reality of Jesus are not Christians, but antichrists.

8 Being seduced by false teachers is one way that Christians can lose their reward at the judgment. With this in mind, John writes that the reason to guard against deceivers is our own desire not to **lose** our reward at the judgment seat of Christ. Jesus cautioned the church at Philadelphia to “hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown” (see Rev. 3:11). Every believer has the potential of a **full reward** or a complete loss of reward (see 1 Cor. 3:15).

yourselves, ^kthat ³we do not lose those things we worked for, but *that* ³we may receive a full reward.

^{9l}Whoever ⁴transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son. ¹⁰If anyone comes to you and ^mdoes not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into your house nor greet him;

⁸ ^k Gal. 3:4 ³ NU you
⁹ ^l John 7:16; 8:31;
1 John 2:19, 23, 24
⁴ NU goes ahead
¹⁰ ^m 1 Kin. 13:16;
Rom. 16:17; 2 Thess.
3:6, 14; Titus 3:10

¹² ⁿ 3 John 13, 14
^o John 17:13
¹³ ^p 1 Pet. 5:13

¹¹ for he who greets him shares in his evil deeds.

John's Farewell Greeting

¹² ⁿ Having many things to write to you, I did not wish *to do so* with paper and ink; but I hope to come to you and speak face to face, ^othat our joy may be full.

¹³ ^pThe children of your elect sister greet you. Amen.

The determining factor is our faithfulness to Christ. Justification is not in view here because it is not something **we worked for**, but something we received as a gift from God (see Rom. 4:1–6; Eph. 2:8). **9 Transgresses** has the strong sense of running too far ahead, going too far. This is probably an allusion to the Gnostics who considered themselves as having advanced beyond basic Christianity. Such departure from the doctrine of Christ indicates that a person does **not have God**. Love for God means supporting the truth and rejecting those who stand against it. **10 This doctrine** refers to the Christian belief that Jesus is God come “in the flesh” (v. 7); He is completely human and completely

divine. A Christian should not only refuse to **receive** false teachers in the sense of supporting them while they visit the community, a Christian should also avoid appearing to endorse their teachings. The proper response to deceivers is to reject them as unbelievers. This shows how seriously we should take the Scriptures and how careful we should be in evaluating the teachings of everyone. **11 greets him shares:** To greet someone means to identify with that person publicly. This can refer to a personal greeting by an individual (v. 1) or to the church’s public welcome of a false teacher (v. 10).

THE THIRD EPISTLE OF JOHN



STRUGGLES WITH FORCES outside the church can be harmful enough, but struggles within a church can be devastating. Third John was written in response to one such struggle within a local church. One of the church leaders, Diotrephes, had asserted control over the congregation to such an extent that he was prohibiting representatives of other churches from ministering to his congregation. Worse yet, he began driving away members of his own church who dared to help the representatives after he had refused to accept them. Diotrephes's actions violated Christ's command to love one another.

This was not a case of doctrinal deviation but of moral failure. However, it was as much a threat to the life of the church as the false teaching addressed in 1 and 2 John. Faithful members of the church community were being hurt by Diotrephes's arrogant attitude. The apostle John felt the need to deal with the problem and was planning a personal visit. In the meantime, the letter's recipient Gaius needed encouragement, and Demetrius needed support in his ministry.

Author and Date As with 1 and 2 John, the author of this epistle is generally accepted to be the apostle John. Similarities among the letters and early church tradition speak strongly of John's authorship. Although some have proposed that there were two Johns, the apostle and a church leader known as John the Elder, the consensus remains that the apostle wrote this letter.

No information is given within the epistle to indicate its date. The circumstance addressed in 3 John is markedly different from that of John's first two letters, and it is not possible to say whether it was written before or after 1 and 2 John. The letter was probably sent from Ephesus, where early church tradition says John located his ministry following the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

Recipient The recipient of the letter was a Christian named Gaius, though no other record of him has been found to date. He was likely a member of one of the churches in Asia Minor to which John's influence had spread during his Ephesian ministry. He seems to have had the resources to show hospitality to itinerant preachers, and he was certainly a prominent and trustworthy person to whom John could give the task of standing firm against the authoritarianism of Diotrephes until the apostle could come to deal with the problem himself.

Historical Background The background of this epistle is similar to that of John's first two epistles, though the problem threatening the addressees of 3 John is made clearer from the content of the letter.

The early church had the practice of sending out itinerant ministers as messengers of the apostles or churches. These men would minister in a local church for a period of time, providing spiritual encouragement and doctrinal instruction. They were the equivalent of our modern evangelists, ministers, and missionaries who travel from their home churches to provide teaching and encouragement to other believers. Itinerant

ministers were expected to know and teach the doctrines of the apostles, and while they were with the church, the community of Christians benefiting from their ministry was expected to support them. Titus's ministry as Paul's representative to the church in Corinth (see 2 Cor. 2:12, 13; 7:6–15; 8:6) and to the churches of Crete (see Titus 1:5) is an example of this. As the itinerant ministers traveled from one place of ministry to the next, they would seek assistance and comfort from the churches of the communities through which they passed. This practice is reflected in Paul's instructions to Titus to assist Zenas and Apollos as they traveled (see Titus 3:13).

As is true today, some leaders, filled with personal ambition instead of the love of Christ, sought to control their local congregations with an iron hand. In this case, a man named Diotrephes was trying to assert his leadership even against the apostles. Diotrephes had asserted his influence and was driving out legitimate representatives of the apostles in order to maintain his personal control.

CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

In verse 7, John is referring to a group of itinerant Christian missionaries. They are ministering "for His name's sake." Jesus is the means and motivation for taking the Good News to the world. That is, after all, why these missionaries were on the move and in need of Christian hospitality and fellowship. Without such, they would have no place to stay.

3 JOHN OUTLINE

- I. Opening greeting to Gaius 1–4
- II. Gaius's responsibility 5–12
 - A. Gaius's support of fellow believers 5–8
 - B. Diotrephes's opposition 9–11
 - C. Endorsement of Demetrius 12
- III. Closing greetings 13, 14



The commercial agora at Ephesus with the Library of Celsus in the background. John lived here after the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, and the traditional view is that he died here c. A.D. 100.

Greeting to Gaius

The Elder,

To the beloved Gaius, ^awhom I love in truth:

²Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers. ³For I ^brejoiced greatly when brethren came and testified of the truth *that is* in you, just as you walk in the truth. ⁴I have no greater ^cjoy than to hear that ^dmy children walk in ¹truth.

Gaius Commended for Generosity

⁵Beloved, you do faithfully whatever you do for the brethren ²and for strangers, ⁶who have borne witness of your love before the church. *If* you send them forward on their journey in a manner worthy of God, you will do well, ⁷because they went forth for His name's sake, ^etaking nothing from the Gentiles. ⁸We therefore ought to ^freceive ³such, that we may become fellow workers for the truth.

Diotrephes and Demetrius

⁹I wrote to the church, but Diotrephes, who loves to have the preeminence among them, does not receive us. ¹⁰Therefore, if I come, I will call to mind his deeds which

¹ ^a 2 John 1 ³ ^b 2 John 4 ⁴ ^c 1 Thess. 2:19, 20; 2 John 4
^d [1 Cor. 4:15] ¹ NU the truth ⁵ ² NU and especially for
⁷ ^e 1 Cor. 9:12, 15 ⁸ ^f Matt. 10:40; Rom. 12:13; Heb. 13:2;
1 Pet. 4:9 ³ NU support



A Roman period inkpot and stylus pens, similar to the instruments John would have used to write his papyrus letters
 Roman/Museo Archeologico Nazionale, Siena, Italy/The Bridgeman Art Library

1 The Elder is the apostle John. The word *Elder* can refer to an old man, an older person deserving respect, or a church leader. Here the word is an appeal to writer's authority in the church. **Gaius** was a common Roman name. The Gaius to whom John wrote was a Christian in one of the churches of Asia Minor.

2 may prosper . . . be in health . . . soul prospers: John's greeting may imply that Gaius was physically weak, though spiritually strong. More probably John is simply following the pattern of greetings common to Greek letters.

3 The reason for John's prayer is the testimony of others that Gaius walks **in the truth**. *Truth* here refers to the body of truth given to the church through the apostles and prophets, that is, the Scripture. Gaius walks according to the Word of God rather than the ways of the world.

4 My children is likely a term John uses to describe those under his pastoral care, as reflected in 1 John 2:1, 12, 18, 28; 3:7, 18; 4:4; 5:21. To **walk in truth** means to walk according to God's Word, the revelation of His truth.

5–12 In these verses John affirms Gaius's responsibility to assist Demetrius despite the opposition of Diotrephes and his expulsion of those who received traveling missionaries. In the first part of this section (vv. 5–8), John says that Gaius's support of itinerant preachers should be continued in order for him to be a fellow worker in the truth. In the last part of the section (vv. 9–11), John promises that Diotrephes's opposition will be addressed by him when he arrives. Meanwhile, John endorses Demetrius as a legitimate teacher who is deserving of shelter and support (v. 12).

5 you do faithfully: Gaius's support of **the brethren**, including those he does not know personally, reflects his faithfulness to the Lord. This emphasizes the importance of serving the Lord by being faithful in our responsibilities within our local churches.

6 worthy of God: These people had reported to others about Gaius's ministry in their lives.

7 Gentiles here refers to unbelievers, not to Gentile Christians. The majority of Christians in the churches of Asia Minor were Gentile converts rather than Jewish.

8 We become fellow workers in the Lord's service when we support the ministries of others, publicly as well as financially. To **receive** means to identify with people publicly, welcome them into our homes, and supply their needs.

9 I wrote: John had written an earlier letter that was either lost or possibly destroyed by **Diotrephes**, who was asserting his control over the church out of his own personal ambition (see 1 Pet. 5:1–5). John had probably written asking Diotrephes's church to extend hospitality to the traveling missionaries the apostle had sent out (v. 10), and Diotrephes had refused to heed John's request.

10 If I come reflects the idea of "when I come." John intends to come and take Diotrephes to task for his attitudes and actions, and to exercise his apostolic authority in punishing him. This is a warning similar to those of Paul in 2 Cor. 10:2; 13:1, 2. Diotrephes's sins include verbal attacks on John and his representatives, as well as active opposition to those who wanted to support legitimate ministers.

he does, ^gprating^d against us with malicious words. And not content with that, he himself does not receive the brethren, and forbids those who wish to, putting *them* out of the church.

¹¹ Beloved, ^h do not imitate what is evil, but what is good. ⁱ He who does good is of God, ⁵ but he who does evil has not seen ^j God.

¹² Demetrius ^k has a *good* testimony from all, and from the truth itself. And

10 ^g Prov. 10:8, 10
^d talking nonsense
11 ^h Ps. 34:14;
37:27; Rom. 14:19;
1 Thess. 5:15; 1 Tim.
6:11; 2 Tim. 2:22
ⁱ [1 John 2:29; 3:10]
^j [1 John 3:10] ⁵ NU,
M omit but
12 ^k Acts 6:3;
1 Tim. 3:7
^l John 19:35; 21:24
⁶ testify
13 ^m 2 John 12

we also ⁶ bear witness, ^l and you know that our testimony is true.

Farewell Greeting

^{13 m} I had many things to write, but I do not wish to write to you with pen and ink; ¹⁴ but I hope to see you shortly, and we shall speak face to face.

Peace to you. Our friends greet you. Greet the friends by name.

church

(Gk. *ekklesia*) (vv. 6, 9, 10; Matt. 16:18; Acts 8:1; Rom. 16:1; Rev. 1:4) Strong's #1577

The Greek term simply means "an assembly." It was used in secular Greek to speak of any gathering of people to a political or festive assembly. It was used by the NT writers to mean a local assembly of believers, or the whole body of believers. In John's third epistle we see an example of both uses: "the church" in v. 6 connotes a large, unspecified group of believers, whereas "the church" in vv. 9, 10 has to be a specific local church. According to the overall pattern of the NT, it appears that the Christians of each city were unified under one group of elders (see Acts 14:23; 15:2, 4; 20:17, 18; Titus 1:5). Within the local church in the city there were probably several "assemblies" or "meetings" of believers, held in various homes.

11 The proof of our commitment to God is that we personally reject evil and embrace a life patterned after that which **is good**. The idea of **has not seen God** is explained more fully in 1 John 3:4–9. The lifestyle that we exhibit is a direct reflection of the extent to which we have seen God. If we were to see God perfectly, we would never sin. Our sin is a result of a faulty vision of God. Therefore, the Scriptures encourage us to look at Christ (see 2 Cor. 3:18; 4:16–18; Heb. 12:2, 3), for the day when we see Him perfectly will be the day that we will be like Him (see 1 John 3:2, 3).

12 Gaius can trust John's endorsement of **Demetrius**, who not only has a good reputation but also has a testimony **from the truth itself**. In other words, Demetrius's life measured up to the teaching of Scripture and Christ's commands. His conduct matched his theology.

13, 14 The brevity of the letter reflects John's plan to speak to Gaius soon. The apostle closes with a greeting of **peace**, a common feature of Greek letters.

THE EPISTLE OF JUDE



FEW BOOKS in the New Testament have more to say to our generation than the Epistle of Jude. Distorters of the faith will find the book distasteful because of its warnings and uncompromising stance against defectors from the truth of Jesus Christ. But to those who approach the book with receptive hearts, Jude's words speak as clearly and forcefully today as they did almost two thousand years ago.

This small epistle strikes the imagination with its vivid pictures of false teachers. The writer commands our attention with his appeals for defending the faith and growing in grace. The primary focus of the book is on the faith, the believers, and God—not on the errors and character of the heretics. It is notable that with all of the blunt descriptions of false teachers, Jude gives us neither a command to confront these troublemakers (only to avoid them) nor a plan of disciplinary action. He simply indicates they are under the condemnation of God.

Author and Date The author of this epistle calls himself Jude, and there is no reason to think that this is a pseudonym. There are six individuals named Jude in the New Testament, but only two are likely to have written this book: (1) the apostle Jude (see Luke 6:16; Acts 1:13), who is probably Thaddaeus of Matthew 10:3; (2) Jude the brother of James and the half brother of the Lord Jesus. The brothers of the Lord are named in Matthew 13:55 as “James, Joses, Simon, and Judas.”

Since the author does not claim apostolic authority, and since verse 17 indicates that the apostles are a group that does not include the writer, we are left with the second candidate—Jude, the brother of the Lord and of James. This identification is confirmed by the author's reference to his brother James (v. 1) and a reference in a letter of Clement of Alexandria (around A.D. 153–217).

We might wonder why Jude did not assert that he was the brother of the Lord Jesus, but his first readers would already have known this. Also, even in the years following the Resurrection, there were already some superstitions surrounding the “holy family” that Jude might have wished to avoid.

Although assigning an exact date for the writing of Jude is impossible, it is likely that the book was written between A.D. 60 and 64. It was almost certainly written before A.D. 70, since Jude does not make any reference to the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. If he had been writing after this event he would doubtless have mentioned it, since it would serve as an example of God's judgment.

Relationship of Jude to 2 Peter The obvious similarities between Jude and 2 Peter 2 seem to show that one has borrowed from the other. The vocabulary of the two books is similar; both books use the Old Testament for illustrations, and neither quotes it directly. The books deal with similar situations, though their approaches are different. Peter seems to be anticipating difficulty with false teachers (the future tense is used in 2 Pet. 2:1–3), while Jude uses the past tense to describe the situation (v. 4). On the other hand, because of the more precise language in Jude, many scholars believe that Jude was first and Peter borrowed from him, but this cannot be known for certain.



Sunset over the Sea of Galilee. Jude 13 compares false teachers to “raging waves of the sea.”

© David Orcea/Shutterstock

Christians are “called, sanctified . . . and preserved”; in verse 2 the author wishes for his readers “mercy, peace, and love”; in verses 5–7 there are three illustrations of sin and judgment from the Old Testament; in verse 8 the false teachers are described as defiling the flesh, rejecting authority, and speaking evil of dignitaries; in verse 11 three examples of rebellion—Cain, Balaam, and Korah—are given. All of this persuasive prose results in a strong encouragement to the faithful to “contend earnestly for the faith” (v. 3).

Theme and Structure The literary form of Jude is the common style of correspondence of that day. The letter opens with the author’s name, a description of the recipients, and a conventional wish that they are well. Yet as with other New Testament epistles, the eloquence and depth of thought rises far above the usual business and personal correspondence. Jude comes quickly to his point. Not content merely to expose error, he forcefully exhorts his readers and concludes with a truly eloquent benediction.

From his opening sentence, the author assaults error, threatens judgment, and encourages holiness. The description of the errors of the false teachers is poetic in its imagery (vv. 12, 13). Jude likes to arrange his thoughts in groups of three. In verse 1

CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

Those churches to whom Jude writes had been infiltrated by pleasure-seeking teachers who had perverted grace into a sensual license, a permission slip for irresponsible and ungodly living. Jude responds that believers must remember the words of Jesus’ apostles to build themselves up in the faith and to keep themselves in the love of God. The key is to keep “looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life” (v. 21). Whereas those who follow immoral desires and deny Christ will be condemned, Jude assures believers that Jesus is the One who preserves us and keeps us. What a blessed assurance that Christ holds us close; He never fails.

C. A.D. 30
The risen Christ appears to Jude and other family members

A.D. 54–68
Nero is Roman emperor

C. A.D. 60–64
Jude writes his letter

C. A.D. 67
Peter and Paul are executed

C. A.D. 70
The Romans destroy Jerusalem and the church is scattered

JUDE OUTLINE

- I. Introduction: the believer’s standing 1, 2
- II. The present danger of false teachers 3, 4
- III. God’s judgment of sin 5–7
- IV. The wickedness of the false teachers 8–16
 - A. Their opposition to authority 8–10
 - B. Their versatility in sin 11–13
 - C. Their judgment in righteousness 14–16
- V. The call for Christians to be alert 17–23
 - A. By heeding the words of the apostles 17, 18
 - B. By being wary of heretics 19
 - C. By growing in grace 20, 21
 - D. By caring for others 22, 23
- VI. Doxology 24, 25

Greeting to the Called

Jude, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, and ^abrother of James,

To those who are ^bcalled, ¹sanctified by God the Father, and ^cpreserved in Jesus Christ:

²Mercy, ^dpeace, and love be multiplied to you.

Contend for the Faith

³Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you ^econcerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting ^fyou to contend ear-

1 ^a Acts 1:13 ^b Rom. 1:7 ^c John 17:11, 12
¹ NU beloved
 2 ^d 1 Pet. 1:2;
 2 Pet. 1:2
 3 ^e Titus 1:4 ^f Phil. 1:27

4 ² NU omits God
 5 ^g Ex. 12:51; 1 Cor. 10:5-10; Heb. 3:16
 6 ² own

nestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints. ⁴For certain men have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord ²God and our Lord Jesus Christ.

Old and New Apostates

⁵But I want to remind you, though you once knew this, that ^gthe Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe. ⁶And the angels who did not keep their ³proper domain, but left their

1 Instead of flaunting his honored relationship as a half brother to Jesus, **Jude** calls himself a **bondservant**, a servant of the Son of God. **called**: This is the primary description of Jude's readers: they had been chosen by God to represent Him in this world.

2 **Mercy, peace, and love be multiplied**: These words in Greek express a strong desire. Though *mercy* is mentioned in a greeting only four other times in the NT, those occurrences are important because they also precede a warning against false teaching (see 1 Tim. 1:2; 2 Tim. 1:2; Titus 1:4; 2 John 3). *Mercy* is God's undeserving favor on us. *Peace* is the state of a person who rests in God completely for salvation and protection.

3 Jude intended to write a more general doctrinal letter, but the present crisis demanded this short, pointed attack on doctrinal error. When Jude speaks of **common salvation**, he is referring to the unity all believers have in Christ. But due to the crisis of the infiltrating heretics, Jude does not dwell on the subject of the common salvation. **Contend earnestly** translates a Greek word that is the basis of the English word *agonize*. Christians are not called to passive service, but to vigilance in the cause of Christ (see Phil. 1:27). **The faith** here does not have its usual sense of personal belief in Christ for salvation; here it means the body of teaching passed down in the church by the apostles (v. 17). This is similar to traditions about the Lord Jesus spoken of by the apostle Paul in 1 Cor. 11:1; 15:3-8. The revelation was not ongoing but **once for all delivered**, final and complete (see Heb. 1:2).

4 The heretics were subtle. Their primary tactics were to pervert God's **grace** and to **deny** the authority of the Lord (see Prov. 1:29).

They were clever enough to have infiltrated the Christian community, even though they were **ungodly**. Jesus anticipated this kind of people when He spoke about wolves in sheep's clothing (see Matt. 7:15). **turn the grace of our God into lewdness**: The teaching of grace can be dangerous when perverted by false teachers or carnal people who believe that because they have been saved by grace they may live as they please (see Rom. 6:1, 2). **the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ**: These false teachers not only lived immorally, they rejected the authority of Christ. The first Greek word translated *Lord* here means "Master." It identifies one who possesses absolute power and thus commands obedience. In the original wording it is clear that the entire statement refers to Christ: Jesus is both our absolute Sovereign and our God.

5 **though you once knew this**: These Christians were given fair warning concerning false teachers from the words of Christ and the apostles (vv. 17, 18) but they had become negligent and were no longer on guard. **destroyed those who did not believe**: The Israelites of the Exodus had a magnificent beginning in Egypt but a disastrous ending in the wilderness. That we have begun with the Lord does not mean that we will have the glorious conclusion we might have envisioned at the beginning of our salvation journey. The false believers who had infiltrated God's people would be judged, just like the false believers who rejected God in the wilderness (see Num. 25:1-9).

6 The meaning of this verse is disputed, as is a similar reference in 2 Pet. 2:4. It is clear that **the angels** to which Jude refers are not holy angels of God. Instead these angels could be those who had

The Use of Apocryphal Sources

The Jewish Apocrypha consists of books and writings that were never recognized as part of the canon of Scripture, but which served a devotional purpose for many believers of ancient times, including some of the authors of the New Testament. Jude cites two books of the Apocrypha in his letter. Jude 9 apparently comes from *The Assumption of Moses*, and verse 14 comes from *The Book of Enoch*. Today we do not have a complete text of *The Assumption of Moses*, but two early church fathers, Clement of Alexandria and Origen, testify that verse 9 is a reference to that book.

Jude is not the only New Testament author who quotes extrabiblical sources. In 1 Corinthians 10:4, Paul apparently made use of a Hebrew commentary (the Midrash) to support his interpretation of Israel's wilderness wanderings. In Acts 17:28 and Titus 1:12, he quoted from pagan poets to support some of his assertions. Though we do not know where the names Jannes and Jambres come from (see 2 Tim. 3:8), Paul did not hesitate to use their story as an example of godlessness for Timothy.

Should the New Testament writers have quoted from apocryphal sources? Surely God had no trouble guiding the biblical writers in selecting material from these sources. Luke knew of "many" accounts of the life of Christ (see Luke 1:1), which he set out to better with his own "orderly account" (1:3). Along the same lines, Paul had at least one letter from the Corinthian church to guide his responses in 1 and 2 Corinthians. Even the devil is quoted in Matthew 4:3, 6, 9. This does not mean that these sources are inspired, or even accurate, but it does mean that sometimes New Testament writers drew from the written sources God had given them to communicate effectively what He wanted them to say. The writers of Scripture wrote all that, and only that, which God had inspired them to say. We must affirm with Peter that the ultimate origin of Scripture is the mind of God (see 2 Pet. 1:19-21).



own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day; ⁷as ^hSodom and Gomorrah, and the cities around them in a similar manner to these, having given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh, are set forth as an example, suffering the ⁴vengeance of eternal fire.

⁸ⁱLikewise also these dreamers defile the flesh, reject authority, and ⁱspeak evil of ⁵dignitaries. ⁹Yet Michael the archangel, in ⁶contending with the devil, when he disputed about the body of Moses, dared not bring against him a reviling accusation, but said, ^k“The Lord rebuke you!” ^{10l}But these speak evil of whatever they do not know; and whatever they know naturally, like brute beasts, in these things they corrupt themselves. ¹¹Woe to them! For they have gone in the way ^mof Cain, ⁿhave run greedily in the error of Balaam for profit, and perished ^oin the rebellion of Korah.

⁷ ^h Gen. 19:24;
2 Pet. 2:6
⁴ ^{punishment}
⁸ ⁱ 2 Pet. 2:10 / Ex.
22:28 ⁵ ^{glorious}
^{ones}, lit. ^{glories}
⁹ ^k Zech. 3:2
⁶ ^{arguing}
¹⁰ ⁱ 2 Pet. 2:12
¹¹ ^m Gen. 4:3–8;
Heb. 11:4; 1 John
3:12 ⁿ Num. 31:16;
2 Pet. 2:15; Rev.
2:14 ^o Num. 16:1–3,
31–35

¹² ⁷ ^{stains}, or
^{hidden reefs} ⁸ NU,
M ^{along}
¹³ ^p Is. 57:20 ^q [Phil.
3:19] ^r 2 Pet. 2:17;
Jude 6
¹⁵ ^s 1 Sam. 2:3

Apostates Depraved and Doomed

¹²These are ⁷spots in your love feasts, while they feast with you without fear, serving *only* themselves. *They are* clouds without water, carried ⁸about by the winds; late autumn trees without fruit, twice dead, pulled up by the roots; ¹³*raging waves of the sea*, ^qfoaming up their own shame; wandering stars ^rfor whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever.

¹⁴Now Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men also, saying, “Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints, ¹⁵to execute judgment on all, to convict all who are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have committed in an ungodly way, and of all the ^sharsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him.”

Apostates Predicted

¹⁶These are grumblers, complainers,

previously fallen with Satan. Some think that these angels are “the sons of God” of Gen. 6:2, who took on human form and married women before the Flood. According to this interpretation, these perverted angels were condemned by God to **chains and darkness** and are presently awaiting the final judgment of Satan and all his angels (see 2 Pet. 2:4).

7 in a similar manner to these: As the angels had committed sexual immorality with humans, so the citizens of **Sodom and Gomorrah** had pursued all kinds of sexual perversion (here **strange flesh** refers to homosexual acts; see Gen. 19:5). They were also judged by God with fire from heaven (see Gen. 19:24).

8 The false teachers were arrogant and had their own agenda. They had not been commissioned by the church nor called by the Holy Spirit. Jude calls these ungodly persons **dreamers**, perhaps because they claimed divine revelation, but more likely because they denied the Lord and thus were living in an unreal world of deception. They were creating their own false world in which indulging in immorality went hand in hand with salvation. **reject authority, and speak evil of dignitaries:** The false teachers even rejected those who were placed in positions of authority in local congregations. They not only preferred error to truth but also demeaned and rejected those who taught the truth.

9 Jude’s description here is probably taken from an apocryphal book called *The Assumption of Moses*, written in the first century A.D. There is no record in the Bible itself of the archangel’s encounter with Satan, or a detailed account of Moses’ body (there is a reference to it in Deut. 34:6). Although Jude uses an extrabiblical source to illustrate the arrogance of the false teachers, this does not invalidate the inspiration of this letter, and it does not mean the source from which Jude quotes was inspired (see Paul’s use of pagan authors in Acts 17:28; Titus 1:12). The name **Michael** means “Who Is Like God?” The desire to be like God was the initial sin of Satan (see Is. 14:14). It was also the enticement that Satan offered Eve: “You will be like God” (see Gen. 3:5). Michael, though opposing Satan, refused to bring a **reviling accusation** against him. Michael would not even accuse Satan, the chief of blasphemers, of being a blasphemer. Instead he left judgment to God.

10 The false teachers **do not know** the truth of the gospel. They speak on matters that they do not understand, as natural people and not as spiritual people (see 1 Cor. 2:14). They have understanding not of the Spirit of God, but only of what they share in common with the animal world, things far less than God’s intent for His human creatures.

11 The heretics are compared to three OT failures. **Cain**, a tiller of

the soil, did not place his faith in the Lord. The way of Cain is the way of pride and self-righteousness (see Gen. 4:3–8; Heb. 11:4; 1 John 3:12). **Balaam** epitomized the sin of greed. He was a pagan prophet, an enemy of God, who believed he could profit from doing the work of God (see Num. 31:16; 2 Pet. 2:15; Rev. 2:14). Similar to Balaam, the ungodly teachers in the church appeared to be religious. They sought to mix in with the people of God, and they were even accepted by the believers. However, their true motive was greed. **Korah** was a Levite (see Num. 16:1–3, 31–35) who resented the prominent positions of Moses and Aaron as God’s representatives. The Lord brought judgment on him and his followers for rebelling against those He had placed in authority.

12, 13 spots in your love feasts: The people of God had been deceived by people who appeared to be messengers of God but instead were ministers of Satan (see 2 Cor. 11:4, 13–15). The Greek word for *spots* may also be translated “hidden reefs”; it serves as a strong warning to be on guard against deceivers. **clouds without water . . . trees without fruit:** Clouds may look like they will bring rain until the wind blows them away (see Prov. 25:14). Trees may look productive until autumn arrives, the time for fruit to be picked. The ministers of Satan promise spiritual growth but do not satisfy the hunger of God’s people for the truth. They talk about God but are truly godless. **raging waves . . . foaming . . . wandering stars:** These godless people put on a great show but lacked any substance. They boasted of liberty but placed the people of God in bondage to sin (see 2 Pet. 2:19). After they had done their evil deeds and made their profits, they, like wandering stars, moved on to other places to exploit God’s people again. **darkness forever:** These deceivers might not be punished for their evil deeds in this world, and their true character and deeds might fail to be discovered by Christians, but their punishment is certain.

14 Enoch, the seventh from Adam: Jude quotes from the apocryphal *Book of Enoch* here. This was a book supposedly by Enoch, who was taken to heaven by the Lord before he died (see Gen. 5:21–24).

Ten thousands is a Hebrew expression meaning a limitless number.

15 ungodly: This word is repeated four times, making the verse one of the most striking in the letter. In view of the wicked nature of evil persons, how could the church allow them to stay in their midst? They are ungodly, yet they are with God’s people, claiming to represent God. Just as Judas Iscariot appeared to be a follower of Christ right up to the end, so do these religious leaders (note the contrast with believers in v. 1; see John 13:18–30).

16 grumblers, complainers: This verse describes various ways evil people misuse their tongues. Instead of praising God, they boast;

walking according to their own lusts; and they ¹mouth great swelling words, ²flattering people to gain advantage. ¹⁷ But you, beloved, remember the words which were spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ: ¹⁸ how they told you that ¹⁹ there would be mockers in the last time who would walk according to their own ungodly lusts. ¹⁹ These are ⁹ sensual persons, who cause divisions, not having the Spirit.

Maintain Your Life with God

²⁰ But you, beloved, ^x building yourselves up on your most holy faith, ^y praying in the Holy Spirit, ²¹ keep yourselves in the love of God, ^z looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

²² And on some have compassion,

16 ¹ 2 Pet. 2:18
^a Prov. 28:21
 17 ^v 2 Pet. 3:2
 18 ^w Acts 20:29;
 [1 Tim. 4:1]; 2 Tim.
 3:1; 4:3; 2 Pet. 3:3
 19 ⁹ *soulish or worldly*
 20 ^x Col. 2:7;
 1 Thess. 5:11
^y [Rom. 8:26]
 21 ^z Titus 2:13; Heb.
 9:28; 2 Pet. 3:12
 22 ¹ NU who
 are doubting (or
 making distinctions)
 23 ^a Rom. 11:14
^b Amos 4:11; Zech.
 3:2; 1 Cor. 3:15
^c [Zech. 3:4, 5]; Rev.
 3:4 ² NU omits with
 fear ³ NU adds and
 on some have mercy
 with fear
 24 ^d [Eph. 3:20]
^e Col. 1:22 ⁴ M them

¹ making a distinction; ²³ but ^a others save
² with fear, ^b pulling them out of the ³ fire,
 hating even ^c the garment defiled by the
 flesh.

Glory to God

^{24 d} Now to Him who is able to keep
⁴ you from stumbling,
 And ^e to present you faultless
 Before the presence of His glory with
 exceeding joy,
²⁵ To ⁵ God our Savior,
⁶ Who alone is wise,
 Be glory and majesty,
 Dominion and ⁷ power,
 Both now and forever.
 Amen.

25 ⁵ NU the only God our ⁶ NU Through Jesus Christ our Lord, Be
 glory ⁷ NU adds Before all time,

instead of encouraging, they whine and complain. Their lives are characterized by intense selfishness and a slavery to personal desires. By using flattering words, they try to gain a following for themselves that opposes the proper authorities in local congregations.

17 The words of the apostles are important because they express the will of God. In discerning the spirit (v. 19) of anyone claiming to speak for God, the only sure standard for evaluation is the Bible. Those who attack the central truths of Scripture, the ones concerning God, Christ, and salvation by God's grace through faith, must be avoided.

18 Jude points out that nothing that has been observed about the false teachers should have taken the believers by surprise. The apostles had given warning (v. 17) that in the end times evil deceivers would come among them. The description of the heretics as mockers indicates that one of their main tactics to gain credibility was to tear down godly leaders.

sensual

(Gk. *psuchikos*) (v. 19; 1 Cor. 2:14; 15:44; James 3:15) Strong's #5591

The Greek term literally means "of the soul" or "natural," as opposed to "spiritual," or "having the Spirit." It is translated "the natural man" in 1 Cor. 2:14. According to the Scripture, a person's being, both soul and body, should be ruled by "the spirit," that part of a person which is influenced by the Holy Spirit. But in the "natural" person, the spirit is subservient to the natural soul, which is worldly in its motives and aims.

19 When Jude declares that the false teachers are without the Spirit, he leaves no doubt as to their eternal destiny. They are merely worldly persons and do not belong to God.

20, 21 Jude tells us how to keep ourselves in the love of God. It is clear that Jude is encouraging us in this verse to cultivate our love for Christ, for we cannot be separated from His love for us (see Rom. 8:35–39).

22, 23 We have certain obligations to other believers. First, we need to show mercy to those in any kind of spiritual or physical need. Second, we need to use discernment (making a distinction) in helping our brothers and sisters in the church. Some will require tender care and patience to help them grow in Christ. With others, we may need to use drastic action to rescue them from the temptations of sin. In rescuing our fellow believers, there is always the need to use wisdom and caution to prevent getting caught up in the sin that caused them to fall. **Hating even the garment defiled by the flesh** is a metaphor for staying wary of sin—as Paul says, "considering yourself lest you also be tempted" (Gal. 6:1).

24, 25 Jude concludes his letter with exuberant praise for the Lord, who alone could keep the readers from being deceived. **Stumbling** probably refers to the possibility of being tripped up by the false teachers' errors. Note that Jude does not use the word *falling*, but *stumbling*. Only a person who is already walking or running (frequent biblical images of the Christian life) can stumble (see Gal. 5:7; 1 Thess. 4:1; Heb. 12:1; 1 John 2:6). God is able to keep us from stumbling (see Ps. 37:23, 24; 121:3; Prov. 4:11, 12). He guards us in this life, despite all the dangers and pitfalls that deceivers put in our way. **Faultless** is a Greek word used of sacrificial animals that had no blemish and thus were fit to be offered to God. Only God can save us, cleanse us from our sins, and present us to Himself as *faultless*, for God is the Author and Perfecter of our faith (see Heb. 12:2).

THE REVELATION

OF JESUS CHRIST



AS OUTSIDE PERSECUTION against Christians increased, the first-century church also faced internal problems. They struggled with suffering, spiritual warfare, heretical doctrine and practice, and spiritual apathy. Christ had promised to return—but when? And how? And what would He do about the problems facing the church when He did come back?

Confronted with these circumstances, the original readers of Revelation needed to be both encouraged and exhorted. On the one hand, Revelation was intended to be a promise of divine protection from God’s judgment on the world. On the other hand, those who read the book were to take it to heart and obey, worshipfully standing for the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus, as the apostle John had. In recording the Revelation of Jesus Christ, John wanted to reassure his readers that Jesus Christ controls the course and climax of history.

God’s overriding purpose in all of history is the establishment of the promised messianic kingdom. Associated with this ultimate divine objective is the opportunity for believers to persevere by faith in a life of obedience. The prospect for these overcomers or victors is the destiny of reigning with Christ as coheirs in His kingdom.

Author and Date The author of Revelation refers to himself as John. He is associated with the seven churches in the Roman province of Asia (present-day southwestern Turkey) in their suffering, blessing, and perseverance. His stand “for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ” (1:9) caused him to be exiled to Patmos, a small island located about 60 miles southwest of Ephesus in the Aegean Sea.

The author writes with prophetic authority. Allusions to Old Testament and extrabiblical Jewish literature saturate Revelation, suggesting that the writer is a Jew. Furthermore, striking parallels exist between the Gospel of John and Revelation. Thus it is extremely likely that both books were written by the same author.

These lines of evidence do not prove that the apostle John wrote Revelation; however, John, who was one of the fiery “Sons of Thunder” (see Mark 3:17) in his younger days, is the most likely candidate. The earliest witnesses in church history, such as Justin Martyr in the second century A.D., agreed that the apostle authored Revelation. However, a century later, Dionysius, bishop of Alexandria determined that the book was written by another John, called “John the Elder.” His view was based on differences between the language, style, and thought of Revelation and the more commonly acknowledged writings of John.

Through the ensuing centuries, Dionysius’s conclusion has attracted some followers, including Martin Luther during the Reformation. Yet the external evidence of history still strongly supports John the son of Zebedee as God’s inspired writer of the Revelation of Jesus Christ.

As for the date of its writing, clearly Revelation emerged during a time when Christians were suffering persecution. The dates most widely suggested are an early one, before A.D. 70, and a later one, around A.D. 95.

The strength of the late sixties date rests on the popular myth of that period that the deranged emperor Nero would be revived. This myth parallels much of the imagery of chapter 13. Reference to “the temple of God” and “the altar” (11:1) in Jerusalem, which were both destroyed in A.D. 70, also supports the earlier dating. But the later date, near the end of Domitian’s reign as emperor (A.D. 81–96), is more likely. The picture of suffering seen in Revelation seems closer to what is known of the persecution under Domitian. There is also the statement of Irenaeus, in about A.D. 185, that John wrote Revelation “at the close of Domitian’s reign.” This would be around A.D. 95.

Historical Background From about A.D. 53 the apostle Paul used the great city of Ephesus as a center for evangelism and church planting throughout the Roman province of Asia (see Acts 19:10). Probably the seven churches of Revelation were founded during this time or shortly thereafter.

While imprisoned in Rome (around A.D. 60–62), Paul wrote his letters to the Ephesians, the Colossians, the Philippians, and Philemon. Colossians was to be read “in the church of the Laodiceans,” and “the epistle from Laodicea” was to be heard in the congregation in Colosse (Col. 4:16). Apparently the practice of writing epistles for wider circulation than a single individual or group was an accepted one, as seen in chapters 2 and 3 of Revelation.

Reliable historical sources dating from the second century A.D. place the apostle John in Ephesus and ministering throughout the province of Asia from about A.D. 70 to 100. It is likely that 1, 2, and 3 John were written by the apostle to Christians in that region around A.D. 80–100. During the latter part of this period, the emperor Domitian intensified his persecution of Christians. John was undoubtedly placed on the island of Patmos because of his Christian testimony. He was released after 18 months by Emperor Nerva (A.D. 96–98), after which the apostle returned to Ephesus to resume his leadership role there.

Theology The book titles itself “The Revelation of Jesus Christ” (1:1). Christ is pictured as the glorified Son of Man (1:12–16), the Lion of Judah (5:5), the worthy Lamb (5:8–13), the Son who will rule all (12:5), the Bridegroom (19:7–9), the conquering King of kings and Lord of lords (19:16), and the rightful Ruler of His earthly (20:4–6) and eternal (22:1, 3) kingdoms. It must never be forgotten that “the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy” (19:10). His person, victory, and rule result in worship and praise throughout the Book of Revelation.

The book details Christ’s directions to the churches (chs. 2; 3) and describes “the wrath of the Lamb” (6:16), His judgments on the sinful world (chs. 6; 8; 9; 14; 16–18) prior to His Second Coming (19:11–21). This focus on the last times is completed by a brief description of the Lord’s thousand-year reign (20:2–6), His judgment of the entire existing created order (20:4, 11–15), and His eternal rule (21:1—22:5).

The death, resurrection (1:5), and ascension (12:5) of Jesus Christ are the historical backdrop for His gracious offer of redemption from sin and eternal life (22:14, 17). Believers (2:5) and unbelievers (9:20, 21) both are urged



Monastery of St. John on the island of Patmos

to repent and to overcome by “the blood of the Lamb” (12:11). Those who obey are a royal priesthood for the Lord (1:6; 5:9, 10) and will reign with Him (20:4, 6). Their prayers are continually before God’s heavenly throne (5:8; 8:3, 4).

In the power of the Holy Spirit, John received great visions (1:10; 4:2; 17:3; 21:10) as well as crucial messages that the church needed to hear (2:7). In the spiritual realm, Revelation depicts a divine struggle against Satan and his demons (2:9, 10, 13, 24; 3:9). Yet this battle against the deceiver of the world and the “accuser of our brethren” has already been won by the blood of the Lamb (12:9–11). All that remains is for Satan and his followers to be sentenced to their just, eternal punishment by the Lord (19:20—20:3, 10). Their doom is sure.

CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

One thing the author conveys about Jesus is that He continues to lead and interact with His church. In addition, He alone has received authority to judge the earth. This “letter” to the universal church comes from Him and centers on Him. It begins with a vision of His glory, wisdom, and power (ch. 1) and portrays His authority over the entire church (2:3). He is the Lamb who was slain and declared worthy to open the book of judgment (ch. 5). It is this same Jesus who will pour out His righteous wrath on the whole earth (chs. 6–18). It is this same Jesus who will return in power to judge His enemies and to reign as the Lord over all forever (chs. 19–22).

REVELATION OUTLINE

- I. Introduction 1:1–20
 - A. Prologue 1:1–3
 - B. Salutation and doxology 1:4–8
 - C. The Son of Man and the churches 1:9–20
- II. Letters to the seven churches of Asia 2:1—3:22
 - A. To the church in Ephesus 2:1–7
 - B. To the church in Smyrna 2:8–11
 - C. To the church in Pergamos 2:12–17
 - D. To the church in Thyatira 2:18–29
 - E. To the church in Sardis 3:1–6
 - F. To the church in Philadelphia 3:7–13
 - G. To the church in Laodicea 3:14–22
- III. Visions of the end of this age and the new heaven and earth 4:1—22:5
 - A. The heavenly throne room, the sealed scroll, and the Lamb 4:1—5:14
 - B. The opening of the seven seals of the scroll 6:1—8:1
 - C. The sounding of the seven trumpets announcing judgment 8:2—11:19
 - D. The seven signs and characters before the final judgment 12:1—14:20
 - E. The seven bowls of the wrath of God 15:1—19:5
 - F. The coming again and reign of the King of kings 19:6—20:15
 - G. The new heaven and earth and the New Jerusalem 21:1—22:5
- IV. Conclusion 22:6–21
 - A. The assurance of Christ’s imminent return 22:6–15
 - B. The final offer of the water of life 22:16–19
 - C. Benediction 22:20, 21

C. A.D. 27
Jesus calls John the son of Zebedee to follow Him

C. A.D. 30
John becomes a leader in the early church

C. A.D. 67
Peter and Paul are executed; John takes up residence at Ephesus

C. A.D. 70
The Romans destroy Jerusalem and the church is scattered

C. A.D. 90
John writes his Gospel and letters

C. A.D. 93
John is exiled to the island of Patmos

C. A.D. 95
John writes Revelation

Introduction and Benediction

The Revelation of Jesus Christ, ^awhich God gave Him to show His servants—things which must ¹shortly take place. And ^bHe sent and signified *it* by His angel to His servant John, ^{2c}who bore witness to the word of God, and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, to all things ^dthat he saw. ^{3e}Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for ^fthe time is near.

Greeting the Seven Churches

⁴John, to the seven churches which are in Asia:

Grace to you and peace from Him ^gwho is and ^hwho was and who is to come, ⁱand from the seven Spirits who are before His throne, ⁵and from Jesus Christ, ^jthe faithful ^kwitness, the ^lfirstborn from the dead, and ^mthe ruler over the kings of the earth.

To Him ⁿwho ²loved us ^oand washed us from our sins in His own blood, ⁶and has ^pmade us ³kings and priests to His God and Father, ^qto Him *be* glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

CHAPTER 1

1 ^a John 3:32 ^b Rev. 22:6 ¹ quickly or swiftly
2 ^c 1 Cor. 1:6
3 ^d 1 John 1:1
3 ^e Luke 11:28; Rev. 22:7 ^f James 5:8; Rev. 22:10
4 ^g Ex. 3:14 ^h John 1:1 ⁱ [Is. 11:2]; Zech. 3:9; Rev. 3:1; 4:5; 5:6
5 ^j John 8:14; Prov. 14:5 ^k Is. 55:4 ^l Ps. 89:27 ^m ⁿ 1 Cor. 15:20; [Col. 1:18]
^m Rev. 17:14 ^o John 13:34 ^p Heb. 9:14
2 NU loves us and freed; M loves us and washed
6 ^p 1 Pet. 2:5, 9
9 ^q 1 Tim. 6:16 ³ NU, M a kingdom
7 ^r Matt. 24:30
5 Zech. 12:10-14; John 19:37
8 ^s Is. 41:4; Rev. 21:6; 22:13 ^u Rev. 4:8; 11:17 ^v Is. 9:6
4 NU, M omit the Beginning and the End ⁵ NU, M Lord God
9 ^w Phil. 1:7 ^x [Rom. 8:17; 2 Tim. 2:12]
6 NU, M omit both
10 ^y Acts 10:10

⁷Behold, He is coming with ^rclouds, and every eye will see Him, even ^sthey who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen.

⁸^t“I am the Alpha and the Omega, ⁴the Beginning and *the* End,” says the ⁵Lord, ^u“who is and who was and who is to come, the ^vAlmighty.”

Vision of the Son of Man

⁹I, John, ⁶both your brother and ^wcompanion in the tribulation and ^xkingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was on the island that is called Patmos for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ. ¹⁰^yI was in the Spirit on ^zthe Lord’s Day, and I heard behind me ^aa loud voice, as of a trumpet, ¹¹saying, ⁷“I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last,” and, “What you see, write in a book and send *it* to the seven churches ⁸which are in Asia: to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamos, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea.”

^a Acts 20:7 ^o Rev. 4:1 ¹¹ ^y NU, M omit “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last,” and, ⁸ NU, M omit which are in Asia

1:1 Revelation (a word meaning “Unveiling” or “Disclosure”) indicates that this book is a type of literature known as *apocalyptic* (see the article “Revelation as Apocalyptic Literature”). The Revelation of **Jesus Christ** can mean it comes from Christ, or is about Him—or in this case most likely both, since He is the subject of the entire book. Christ’s **servants** are believers. The phrase **must shortly take place** is an allusion to Dan. 2:28, 29, 45, since *shortly* seems to indicate that the things that must come to pass in the last days will take place in quick succession. **John** (v. 4) is the human writer of Revelation, whereas Jesus is the divine Author.

1:2 The word of God, and . . . the testimony of Jesus Christ are the reasons John was exiled to the island of Patmos (v. 9) and are often the reasons Christians are still persecuted today. **All things that he saw** are the visions of the Book of Revelation.

1:3 Blessed, meaning spiritually “happy” from God’s perspective, signals the first of seven beatitudes in Revelation (see also 14:13; 16:15; 19:9; 20:6; 22:7, 14). This is the first of many groups of seven throughout the book, a number signifying completeness.

1:4 John addressed Revelation to **seven churches** in the Roman province of **Asia**, which today is southwestern Turkey. The churches fit within a square 50 miles on each side, and their names are given in order going clockwise from the southwest. **Grace** is the Christian version of a common Greek greeting; **peace** is a common Hebrew greeting. **Him who is and who was and who is to come** describes God, who not only exists now, but always has and always will exist (see Heb. 13:8). **The seven Spirits** may refer to the angels of the seven churches (chs. 2; 3), to seven other angels (8:2), or to the fullness of the Holy Spirit (see Is. 11:2).

1:5 Jesus Christ . . . the firstborn from the dead guarantees the Christian’s future resurrection through His own resurrection (see 1 Cor. 15:20, 23). Though He is the rightful **ruler**, Christ will not fully exert His authority (see Matt. 28:18) **over the kings of the earth** until His second coming (19:17–21). At that time, He will establish His kingdom on earth (19:6) and will appoint prepared rulers who will share His sovereignty in submission to Him (2:26, 27; 3:21; 5:10; 20:4; 21:24).

1:6 Kings and priests echoes the description of Israel in Ex. 19:6,

a description which is also applied to the church by the title “royal priesthood” in 1 Pet. 2:9. Christ’s sacrifice of Himself (v. 5) has set apart believers as royal priests to offer spiritual sacrifices to God (see Rom. 8:17; Heb. 3:1, 14; 13:15, 16).

1:7 Coming with clouds recalls Daniel’s vision of the Son of Man (see Dan. 7:13; Matt. 24:30). Jesus applies Daniel’s vision to His glorious second coming (see Matt. 24:30; Acts 1:11). **Every eye** indicates that Christ will be universally visible at His second coming, in contrast with His first coming in Bethlehem. The phrase **pierced Him** speaks of Christ’s crucifixion (see John 19:34) and Zechariah’s prophecy that Israel will come to a point of mourning their rejected Messiah (see Zech. 12:10; John 19:34, 37). In fact, **all the tribes of the earth will mourn** over Christ and regret their unbelief.

1:8 The Lord God’s self-description as **the Alpha and the Omega**, the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet, means He is **Almighty** from **the Beginning to the End** of all creation. This knowledge can be a great comfort to a person who is suffering (v. 9). The Lord is sovereignly guiding history toward its consummation, the victory of Christ over all (see 1 Cor. 15:24–28).

1:9 John strongly identifies with his readers as a **brother and companion in the tribulation**, a tribulation which some were already suffering (2:9, 10). The apostle Paul said there would be many tribulations (see Acts 14:22) for the believer before the coming of the **kingdom** (11:15). Such trials develop **patience** and maturity (see James 1:2–4) in **Christ**. Enduring trials that come our way is a prerequisite for reigning with Christ (see Rom. 8:17; 2 Tim. 2:12). The immediate suffering of John was related to his exile on the small **island of Patmos** in the Aegean Sea. Although John had been exiled in an effort to silence **the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ** (the Greek word translated *testimony* literally means “witness” and is the basis for the English word *martyr*), his witness continued in the writing of Revelation (vv. 1, 2).

1:10 In the Spirit describes John’s state of spiritual exaltation as he received the visions of the Apocalypse (4:1, 2).

1:11 The seven churches in the province of Asia each received the whole Book of Revelation, and each received an individual letter from Christ (2:1—3:22).

Patmos

Patmos is a small, rugged, and bare island in the Aegean Sea that lies 20 miles south of Samos and 24 miles west of Asia Minor. Patmos is divided into two nearly equal parts, a northern and a southern, by a very narrow isthmus, where, on the east side, are the harbor and the town. Because of its desolate and barren nature, Patmos was used by the Romans as a place to banish criminals, who were forced to work at hard labor in the mines and quarries of the island. Because Christians were regarded as criminals by the Roman Emperor Domitian (ruled A.D. 81–96), the apostle John was banished there in A.D. 95 and probably suffered from harsh treatment. An early Christian tradition said John was in exile for 18 months.



Patmos
© Olga Lipatova/Shutterstock

¹²Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned ^bI saw seven golden lampstands, ^{13c}and in the midst of the seven lampstands ^dOne like the Son of Man, ^eclothed with a garment down to the feet and ^fgirded about the chest with a golden band. ¹⁴His head and ^ghair were white like wool, as white as snow, and ^hHis eyes like a flame of fire; ¹⁵ⁱHis feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and ^jHis voice as the sound of many waters; ^{16k}He had in His right hand seven stars, ^lout of His mouth

¹² ^b Ex. 25:37; Zech. 4:2; Rev. 1:20; 2:1
¹³ ^c Rev. 2:1 ^d Ezek. 1:26; Dan. 7:13; 10:16; Rev. 14:14
^e Dan. 10:5 ^f Rev. 15:6
¹⁴ ^g Dan. 7:9 ^h Dan. 10:6; Rev. 2:18; 19:12
¹⁵ ⁱ Ezek. 1:7; Dan. 10:6; Rev. 2:18
^j Ezek. 1:24; 43:2; Rev. 14:2; 19:6
¹⁶ ^k Rev. 1:20; 2:1; 3:1 ^l Is. 49:2 ★; [Heb. 4:12];

went a sharp two-edged sword, ^mand His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength. ¹⁷And ⁿwhen I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But ^oHe laid His right hand on me, saying ^qto me, “Do not be afraid; ^pI am the First and the Last. ^{18q}I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, ^rI am alive forevermore. Amen.

Rev. 2:12, 16; 19:15 ^m Matt. 17:2; Acts 26:13; Rev. 10:1
¹⁷ ⁿ Ezek. 1:28 ^o Dan. 8:18; 10:10, 12 ^p Is. 41:4; 44:6; 48:12; Rev. 2:8; 22:13 ^q NU, M omit to me ¹⁸ ^r Rom. 6:9; Rev. 2:8; 10:6; 15:7 ^r Rev. 4:9

1:12 The **seven golden lampstands** represent the seven churches named in v. 11 (see also v. 20).
1:13 **One like the Son of Man** is a reference to Dan. 7:13. Comparison of these two passages, along with Jesus’ common use of the name Son of Man (see Matt. 20:28) for Himself, indicate that Christ is the subject of vv. 12–18. **In the midst** speaks of love and familiarity. Christ was fully man and fully God. The long **garment** and **band** (sash) indicate that the glorified Christ is dressed like a high priest (see Ex. 28:4).
1:14 The **white** appearance is parallel to the description of the “Ancient of Days” in Dan. 7:9 and of Christ on the Mount of Transfiguration (see Matt. 17:2). The similar descriptions demonstrate the purity and eternity of both God the Father and God the Son. Additionally, overcoming believers will be “clothed in white garments” (3:5; 19:8) in Christ’s presence, symbolizing purity. Christ’s **eyes like . . . fire** indicate His righteousness, as well as His judgment of everything impure (see Dan. 10:6; 1 Cor. 3:13).

1:15 **His feet of fine brass** may speak of respect or power, as well as His treading everything underfoot (see 1 Cor. 15:25).
1:16 The **seven stars** are “the angels of the seven churches,” according to v. 20. These probably are literal angels, since it would be unlikely to interpret one symbol by using another. **A sharp two-edged sword** was a fierce long sword. This sword, coming out of Christ’s mouth, is symbolic of the judging power of the Word of God (see Is. 49:2; Heb. 4:12).
1:18 When Christ speaks of Himself as **He who lives, and was dead, and is alive forevermore**, He is referring to His eternal existence, His becoming a man and dying on the Cross, and His glorified resurrection state. **The keys of Hades and of Death** describes Christ’s authority over those who have died physically and over their present resting place, which will be emptied and destroyed at the time of the great white throne judgment (20:11–15).

And ^sI have the keys of ¹Hades and of Death. ^{19,2}Write the things which you have ^tseen, ^uand the things which are, ^vand the things which will take place after this. ²⁰The ³mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars are ^wthe ⁴angels of the seven churches, and ^xthe seven lampstands ⁵which you saw are the seven churches.

The Loveless Church

2 “To the ¹angel of the church of Ephesus write,

“These things says ^aHe who holds the seven stars in His right hand, ^bwho walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands: ^{2c}“I know your works, your labor, your ²patience, and that you cannot ³bear those who are evil. And ^dyou have tested those ^ewho say they

¹⁸ ^s Ps. 68:20 ¹ Lit. Unseen; the unseen realm
¹⁹ ^t Rev. 1:9-18
^u Rev. 2:1 ^v John 16:13; Rev. 4:1 ² NU, M Therefore, write
²⁰ ^w Mal. 2:7; Rev. 2:1 ^x Ex. 25:37; 37:23; Zech. 4:2; Matt. 5:15; Phil. 2:15 ³ hidden truth
⁴ Or messengers
⁵ NU, M omit which you saw

CHAPTER 2

¹ ^a Rev. 1:16 ^b Rev. 1:13 ¹ ^c Or messenger
² ^c Ps. 1:6 ^d John 6:6; 1 John 4:1
² ^c Cor. 11:13
² perseverance
³ endure
³ ^f Gal. 6:9; Heb. 12:3, 5
⁵ ^g Matt. 21:41

are apostles and are not, and have found them liars; ³and you have persevered and have patience, and have labored for My name's sake and have ^fnot become weary. ⁴Nevertheless I have *this* against you, that you have left your first love. ⁵Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, ^gor else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place—unless you repent. ⁶But this you have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.

^{7h} “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give ⁱto eat from ^jthe tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.”

⁷ ^h Matt. 11:15; Rev. 2:11, 17; 3:6, 13, 22; 13:9 ⁱ [Rev. 22:2, 14] ^j [Gen. 2:9; 3:22]

1:19 The phrase **write the things which you have seen** expands and clarifies Christ's earlier command, “What you see, write” (v. 11). “The things which you have seen” apparently refers to the vision of vv. 10–18. **The things which are, and the things which will take place after this** may refer to the present state of the churches in Asia (chs. 2; 3), followed by the visions of the future (chs. 4–22). The use of *after this* in combination with the vision of “One like the Son of Man” (v. 13) is an echo of Dan. 2:29, 45.

1:20 **The angels of the seven churches** have sometimes been understood to be human messengers or ministers. The normal NT meaning of the word *angel*, as in Revelation (v. 1; 5:2), is of spirit beings, who minister to believers (see Heb. 1:14). It is not unreasonable to view angels as having authority over and responsibility for churches in the present age. This situation will be reversed in the kingdom of God: Believers will judge angels (see 1 Cor. 6:2, 3). **The seven churches** have the glorified Son of Man in their midst (vv. 12, 13), recalling Christ's promise that “where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them” (Matt. 18:20).

2:1–3:22 The seven letters are, with minor exceptions, organized in the following general pattern: (1) a description of Christ derived from the vision of ch. 1; (2) a commendation of the congregation; (3) a rebuke for spiritual deficiencies; (4) a correction for what is wrong; and (5) a promise to overcomers. The seven churches were congregations in Asia Minor in John's day. Sometimes they are interpreted as representing seven stages of church history. But this interpretation

is unlikely, since there is disagreement among interpreters about what part of Revelation represents which period in history. More likely, these seven assemblies are examples of the kind of churches that exist throughout history (2:7). This means that all seven letters are warnings to every church in every age (see 2:7).

2:1 **The angel of the church** is either its guardian angel (see Heb. 1:14) in spiritual warfare (see Dan. 10:13) or some human leader.

Ephesus was the most important city in Asia Minor when Revelation was written. It was the center of the worship of Artemis (or Diana; see Acts 19:28), the goddess of fertility. It was a strategic commercial center and a great seaport. These were some of the reasons the apostle Paul invested nearly three years in establishing the church in Ephesus and the cities of the surrounding province (see Acts 19:10; 20:31).

2:2 **I know your works** is a phrase that appears in each letter (vv. 9, 13, 19; 3:1, 8, 15), as a statement of recognition from the omniscient, omnipresent Judge.

2:4 **The first love** of the church may mean first in point of time, or first in importance. The greatest commandment is to “love the Lord your God” (Matt. 22:37, 38). Leaving the *first love* means a great diminishing of the church's initial love, or a turning away from the love of the Lord.

2:5 **Remember . . . from where you have fallen** speaks of a considerable drop-off of love (v. 4) in the Ephesian church. A generation earlier the same church was commended for love (see Eph. 1:15, 16; 6:24), although it was also strongly commanded to grow in love (see Eph. 4:2, 15, 16). **Repent** means to change one's thinking. It is clearly connected with changed behavior, as seen in the phrase **and do the first works**. The Ephesian Christians were to regain the lifestyle that they had before they departed from their first love (v. 4). **To remove your lampstand** would be to judge the church **quickly** or immediately.

2:6 Even if the Ephesian church did not love as it should have (v. 4), at least the Lord could positively say, **you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans**. The Nicolaitans were a heretical group that troubled the churches at Ephesus and Pergamos (v. 15). Apparently their teaching and practice were immoral, perhaps even idolatrous (v. 14). Some church fathers connected this sect with Nicolas, one of the seven elected leaders in the Jerusalem church in Acts 6:5.

2:7 **He who has an ear, let him hear** is reminiscent of Jesus' warnings to His hearers after giving the parable of the sower (see Matt. 13:9). When **the Spirit** of God speaks **to the churches**, it is to represent Christ (v. 2), for He is the Spirit of Christ (see Gal. 4:6) who guides believers into all truth, and does not speak on His own authority (see John 16:13). The one **who overcomes** is the believer who perseveres in obedience and is victorious in the face of trials. There are three main views about the nature of the *overcomer* in

death

(Gk. *thanatos*) (1:17, 18; Heb. 2:14, 15) Strong's #2288

The Bible speaks of death in a threefold way: physical, spiritual, and eternal. The ancient Hebrews regarded physical death as entrance into *Sheol*, where they were cut off from everything dear in life, including God and loved ones. Because “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Rom. 3:23), all people are spiritually dead—separated from God who is the Source of spiritual life (Luke 15:32; Eph. 2:1–3; Col. 2:13). The Bible also speaks of “the second death” (2:11), which is eternal death, the everlasting separation of the lost from God in hell (20:14; 21:8). In His resurrection, Jesus conquered death—physical, spiritual, and eternal. Through fear of death, people are subject to bondage (Heb. 2:15); but “our Savior Jesus Christ . . . has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel” (2 Tim. 1:10).

The Persecuted Church

⁸“And to the ⁴angel of the church in Smyrna write,
“These things says ^kthe First and the Last, who was dead, and came to life: ⁹“I know your works, tribulation, and poverty (but you are ^lrich); and I know the blasphemy of ^mthose who say they are Jews and are not, ⁿbut are a ⁵synagogue of Satan. ¹⁰“Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you

⁸ ^k Rev. 1:8, 17, 18
⁴ Or messenger
⁹ ^l Luke 12:21
^m Rom. 2:17 ⁿ Rev. 3:9 ⁵ congregation
¹⁰ ^o Matt. 10:22

^p Matt. 24:13
^q James 1:12
¹¹ ^r Rev. 13:9 ^s [Rev. 20:6, 14; 21:8]
¹² ⁶ Or messenger

into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. ^pBe faithful until death, and I will give you ^qthe crown of life.
¹¹ ^r“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes shall not be hurt by ^sthe second death.”

The Compromising Church

¹²“And to the ⁶angel of the church in Pergamos write,

vv. 7, 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21. The first view is that believers are overcomers; failure to overcome means that there was no true salvation in that person’s case. The second view holds that the promises are experienced only by those believers who are faithful and obedient; failure to overcome means there has been a loss of salvation. The third view is that the promises are experienced only by believers who are faithful and obedient; failure to overcome means a loss of rewards, not salvation (see 1 Cor. 3:15). None of these is without difficulties, but the correct interpretation would be the one that most consistently handles the details of all seven “overcomer” passages. This means the last view is most likely. John is telling the Ephesian believers that they have spiritual obstacles to overcome. The problem in the church at Ephesus was a lack of fervent love for Christ. The church is commanded to “repent and do the first works” (v. 5), which suggests a lapse in Christian living. The reward for those who obey is the promise that they will eat of the tree of life—a

promise of special intimacy with the Lord, a promise of renewing the fellowship lost before the Fall (see 22:14; Gen. 2:9; 3:22, 24; Prov. 11:30). The privileged access once denied Adam (see Gen. 3:24) will be enjoyed by the overcomer. **Paradise** is the place Jesus told the believing thief he would go to after his death on a cross (see Luke 23:43). Paul uses the term interchangeably with “the third heaven” in 2 Cor. 12:2, 4.
2:8 Smyrna was an important seaport 35 miles north of Ephesus. The presence of a Roman imperial cult and a large Jewish population made life difficult for believers in Smyrna. However, the churches of Smyrna and Philadelphia are the only two of the seven not rebuked by Christ in some way.
2:9 Although there will yet be great tribulation (7:14) unparalleled in world history (see Matt. 24:21), believers must expect to suffer much **tribulation** even in the present age (see Acts 14:22). Christians hindered by **poverty** in this life can take consolation in the fact that they possess great spiritual riches in Christ (see Eph. 1:18). **Those who say they are Jews and are not** are either Jewish proselytes or Jews who refuse to believe the scriptural proof that Jesus is the promised Messiah (see Rom. 2:28, 29). Calling these Jews a **synagogue of Satan** probably indicates that they were persecuting the believers.
2:10 You will have tribulation ten days has been understood as ten short outbreaks of persecution during the NT era, but more likely it means suffering for ten actual days, or one brief period. **The crown of life** may be the “victory wreath” of the martyr, following the normal Greek use of **crown** for the garland given to winners in athletic events. James 1:12 also promises the crown of life to believers who persevere under trial. Such perseverance will result in the ultimate enjoyment of life in God’s kingdom.
2:11 He who overcomes by faith (see 1 John 5:4, 5) need not fear the unending torment of the unbeliever in the lake of fire, **the second death** (20:14). Some understand this statement to imply that those believers who do not overcome will be harmed by the lake of fire in the sense that when their works are tried by fire (see 1 Cor. 3:11–15) they will suffer loss of reward. However, this promise is best understood as a figure of speech where the positive idea is stated by negating its opposite. The second death refers to the experience of eternal death in the lake of fire (20:14, 15). No believer will experience the second death; the overcomer will suffer no loss whatsoever. The believer who is faithful to death is promised the crown of life, a wonderful experience of life in the hereafter. Thus there is not only deliverance from the second death, but an experience of life to a rich degree (see John 10:10).
2:12 Pergamos, the ancient capital of the province of Asia, was said to be the place where parchment was first used. Pergamos means “Citadel” in Greek. It was located 50 miles north of Smyrna and was situated on a high hill dominating the valley below. **The sharp two-edged sword** is the powerful word of Christ’s mouth (see 1:16; Heb. 4:12).



“These things says ¹He who has the sharp two-edged sword: ¹³“I know your works, and where you dwell, where Satan’s throne is. And you hold fast to My name, and did not deny My faith even in the days in which Antipas *was* My faithful martyr, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells. ¹⁴But I have a few things against you, because you have there those who hold the doctrine of ¹⁴Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, ¹⁵to eat things sacrificed to idols, ¹⁶and to commit sexual immorality. ¹⁵Thus you also have those who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, ¹⁷which thing I hate. ¹⁶Repent, or else I will come to you quickly and ¹⁷will fight against them with the sword of My mouth.

¹⁷“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give some of the hidden ¹⁸manna to eat. And I will give him a white stone, and on the stone ¹⁹a new name written which no one knows except him who receives it.”

The Corrupt Church

¹⁸“And to the ¹⁸angel of the church in Thyatira write,

“These things says the Son of God, ¹⁹who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet like fine brass: ¹⁹“I know your

¹² ¹Is. 49:2 ☆; Rev. 1:16; 2:16
¹⁴ ¹Num. 31:16
¹⁵ ¹Num. 25; Acts 15:29; [1 Cor. 10:20]; Rev. 2:20 ¹1 Cor. 6:13
¹⁵ ¹NU, M likewise.
¹⁶ ¹Is. 11:4; 2 Thess. 2:8; Rev. 19:15
¹⁷ ¹Ex. 16:33, 34; [John 6:49, 51] ¹Is. 56:5; 62:2; 65:15; Rev. 3:12
¹⁸ ¹Rev. 1:14, 15
¹⁸ ¹Or messenger
¹⁹ ¹Rev. 2:2 ¹NU, M faith, service ¹perseverance
²⁰ ¹1 Kin. 16:31; 21:25; 2 Kin. 9:7, 22, 30 ¹Ex. 34:15 ¹NU, M against you that you tolerate ¹M your wife Jezebel
²¹ ¹NU, M and teaches and seduces
²¹ ¹Rev. 2:5; Rev. 9:20; 16:9, 11 ¹NU, M repent, and she does not want to repent of her sexual immorality.
²² ¹NU, M her
²³ ¹Ps. 7:9; 26:2; 139:1; Jer. 11:20; 17:10; Matt. 16:27; Luke 16:15; Acts 1:24; Rom. 8:27 ¹examines
²⁴ ¹2 Tim. 3:1-9
²⁴ ¹Acts 15:28 ¹NU, M omit and ¹NU, M omit will

works, love, ¹⁹service, faith, and your ¹patience; and *as* for your works, the last *are* more than the first. ²⁰Nevertheless I have ²¹a few things against you, because you allow ²²that woman ²³Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, ²⁴to teach and seduce My servants ²⁵to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols. ²¹And I gave her time ²⁶to ²⁷repent of her sexual immorality, and she did not repent. ²²Indeed I will cast her into a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of ²⁸their deeds. ²³I will kill her children with death, and all the churches shall know that I am He who ²⁹searches ³⁰the minds and hearts. And I will give to each one of you according to your works.

²⁴“Now to you I say, ²⁵and to the rest in Thyatira, as many as do not have this doctrine, who have not known the ²⁶depths of Satan, as they say, ²⁷h I ²⁸will put on you no other burden. ²⁵But hold fast ²⁹what you have till I come. ²⁶And he who overcomes, and keeps ³⁰My works until the end, ³¹to him I will give power over the nations—

²⁷ ¹He¹ shall rule them with a rod of iron;

²⁵ ¹Rev. 3:11 ²⁶ ¹[John 6:29] ²⁷ ¹[Matt. 19:28] ²⁷ ¹Ps. 2:8, 9 ☆; Rev. 12:5; 19:15

2:13 Satan’s throne implies that Satan’s authority and power were honored either openly or in effect. **Antipas** (not Herod Antipas) had already suffered martyrdom, thus receiving the promised “crown of life.”

2:14 The doctrine of Balaam is explained from its background in the OT (see Num. 22–25; 31). **Balak** hired Balaam to turn the hearts of **Israel** away from the Lord. Apparently, similar seduction was taking place in the church at Pergamos, especially in regard to **idols** and **sexual immorality** (see Acts 15:20).

2:15 The doctrine of the Nicolaitans, already seen in the church at Ephesus (v. 6), was apparently similar to that of Balaam (v. 14).

2:17 The person who **overcomes** by faith amidst terrible circumstances (vv. 13–15) will receive **hidden manna to eat**. The hidden manna, **white stone**, and **new name** are all prospective rewards for faithfulness to God. The hidden manna recalls the food from heaven that sustained Israel in the wilderness (see Ex. 16:4, 14, 15, 31), a portion of which was placed inside the ark as a memorial (see Ex. 16:32, 33; Heb. 9:4). Believers in Pergamos were involved in pagan feasts, where they ate food sacrificed to idols and committed sexual immorality (v. 14). The promise, then, is for those who refuse to compromise and partake of the feasts. For them there will be a better banquet in heaven. The hidden manna also suggests special intimacy with Christ (see Luke 14:7–11; 22:28–30). Overcomers are promised supernatural sustenance in the resurrected state to enable them to function effectively as co-rulers in Christ’s kingdom. In John’s day the **white stone** could signify acquittal from legal charges, but it seems best to relate this either to a custom in the Greek athletic games of giving a white stone to the victor in a contest, or to gladiators at the Roman games who had won the admiration of the public and had been allowed to retire from further combat. This symbol of victory over the enemies of God cannot be separated from a **new name**, which identifies the obedient believer in terms of his or her distinctive character.

2:18 Thyatira was a city with a large military detachment about 30 miles southeast of Pergamos. Recognized for its wool and dye industries, the city was also noted for its trade guilds. The description of Christ as having **eyes like a flame** and **feet like fine brass** virtually repeats the wording of Dan. 10:6.

2:20 Whether **Jezebel** is an actual name or a nickname, this woman’s wicked actions parallel Queen Jezebel’s in 1 Kin. 16; 2 Kin. 9. **Sexual immorality** and **things sacrificed to idols** link the activities of Jezebel to the sins in Pergamos (v. 14).

2:22 A sickbed is where a believer involved in prolonged, unconfessed sin may end up. The next step of God’s discipline is death (see 1 Cor. 11:30). Sin can bring **great tribulation** into an individual believer’s life, although this is not the great tribulation that will come upon the world prior to Christ’s return (7:14).

2:24 The depths of Satan may be the secrets known by those initiated into the things of the devil. There was considerable satanic influence in Asia Minor in John’s day (vv. 9, 13; 3:9). Contrast the **depths of Satan** with “the deep things of God” (see 1 Cor. 2:10).

2:26, 27 Note that **he who overcomes** is further identified as the one who **keeps My works until the end**. To this faithful believer Christ promises the privilege of ruling and reigning with His kingdom and sharing in His royal splendor (see Luke 16:11; 19:17–19; Rom. 8:17; 2 Tim. 2:12). While all believers share the glory of Christ by being glorified with Him, it seems that not all believers will share His royal splendor with the accompanying privilege of reigning with Him. The words **power over the nations** and the quote from Ps. 2:9, which prophesies the Messiah’s all-powerful role, link overcoming believers with the earthly rule of Christ in 20:4, 6. Only those believers who are overcomers and who persevere in obedience to the end of life have the promise of being coheirs with Christ. He will share His sovereignty with messianic partners who have proven their trustworthiness in this life by doing the will of God to the end. This is the exalted destiny to which all believers should aspire.

They shall be dashed to pieces like the potter's vessels—

as I also have received from My Father;
28 and I will give him ^mthe morning star.
29 “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”

The Dead Church

3 “And to the ¹angel of the church in Sardis write,
“These things says He who ^ahas the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars: “I know your works, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead. ²Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die, for I have not found your works perfect before ²God. ^{3b}Remember therefore how you have received and heard; hold

28 ^m 2 Pet. 1:19;
Rev. 22:16

CHAPTER 3

1 ^a Rev. 1:4, 16 ¹ Or messenger
2 ² NU, M My God
3 ^b 1 Tim. 6:20
^c Rev. 3:19 ^d Matt. 24:42, 43; Luke 12:39 ^e 1 Thess. 5:2; [2 Pet. 3:10; Rev. 16:15]
4 ^f Acts 1:15
5 [Jude 23] ^h Rev. 4:4; 6:11 ³ NU, M Nevertheless you
⁴ NU, M omit even
5 ⁱ [Rev. 19:8] / Ex. 32:32; Ps. 69:28; Luke 10:20; [Rev. 13:8; 17:8; 20:12, 15; 21:27] ^k Phil. 4:3 ^l Matt. 10:32; Luke 12:8

fast and ^erepent. ^dTherefore if you will not watch, I will come upon you ^eas a thief, and you will not know what hour I will come upon you. ⁴³You have ^fa few names ⁴even in Sardis who have not ^gdefiled their garments; and they shall walk with Me ^hin white, for they are worthy. ⁵He who overcomes ⁱshall be clothed in white garments, and I will not ^jblot out his name from the ^kBook of Life; but ^lI will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.

^{6m} “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”

The Faithful Church

7 “And to the ⁵angel of the church in Philadelphia write,

6 ^m Rev. 2:7 ⁷ ⁵ Or messenger

2:28 The morning star is Christ Himself in 22:16. For the overcoming believer, Christ’s presence is the light in the dark and difficult times before the dawn of the Son’s coming. Moreover, *morning star* refers to the faithful believer’s share in the glory or splendor of Christ. Christ gives every faithful believer the privilege of being like Him in royal splendor, to various degrees (see Dan. 12:3).
3:1 Sardis, located 30 miles southeast of Thyatira, had been the capital of Lydia. The worship of the Roman Caesar and of Artemis, goddess of fertility, were active here. **The seven Spirits** may be the Holy Spirit, or perhaps seven angels (1:4). **The seven stars** are “the angels of the seven churches” (1:20).
3:2 No one’s **works** are completely **perfect before God** (see Rom. 3:23). Unbelievers, those whose names are not “written in the Book of Life” (20:15), will be judged solely according to their works (20:12, 13).
3:3 Christ’s warning that He will **come unexpectedly as a thief** echoes His repeated emphasis in Matt. 24:36—25:13: Be alert and ready for My coming (16:15).
3:4 Those **who have not defiled their garments** are those who have remained faithful to Christ. Unlike some of the believers, they have had victory over sin and have demonstrated a practical righteousness. The Lord promises those who have not defiled their garments that they will **walk with Him in white, for they are worthy**.

This image probably describes righteous acts, not the imputed righteousness of Christ (19:8).
3:5 The white garments probably symbolize the Lord’s recognition of godly character and faithful service in this life (v. 4; 6:11; 19:7, 8). White is the color of the garments the redeemed will wear in the Lord’s presence (7:13, 14). **The Book of Life** is the list of the eternally redeemed (20:12, 15). To not **blot out** is a figure of speech, affirming a positive by negating its opposite. Thus it means “I will include their names.” *Blot out* likely alludes to Ex. 32:32, 33, where God says He will blot out sinners, but not faithful ones like Moses, from His Book. Christ will make sure the faithful believer’s name and works are not erased, but remembered and honored. **Confess his name before My Father and before His angels**: The text does not state that any believer will have his name blotted out of the Book of Life (see Luke 10:20). Rather, the faithful believer will be resoundingly confessed before the saints, the angels, and the Father by the Son (see Matt. 10:32, 33; 2 Tim. 2:12). To have the Lord publicly confess one’s name is to have the Lord’s approval of one’s character and service (see Matt. 10:32, 33; 1 Tim. 2:12, 13).
3:7 Philadelphia, which means “Brotherly Love” in Greek, was a small city located about 40 miles southeast of Sardis. Its location, vineyards, and wine production made it wealthy and commercially important. **The key of David** represents authority as the One

The Seven Churches of the Apocalypse				
	Commendation	Criticism	Instruction	Promise
Ephesus (2:1–7)	Rejects evil, perseveres, has patience	Love for Christ no longer fervent	Do the works you did at first	The tree of life
Smyrna (2:8–11)	Gracefully bears suffering	None	Be faithful until death	The crown of life
Pergamos (2:12–17)	Keeps the faith of Christ	Tolerates immorality, idolatry, and heresies	Repent	Hidden manna and a stone with a new name
Thyatira (2:18–29)	Love, service, faith, patience are greater than at first	Tolerates cult of idolatry and immorality	Judgment coming; keep the faith	Rule over nations and receive morning star
Sardis (3:1–6)	Some have kept the faith	A dead church	Repent; strengthen what remains	Faithful honored and clothed in white
Philadelphia (3:7–13)	Perseveres in the faith, keeps the word of Christ, honors His name	None	Keep the faith	A place in God’s presence, a new name, and the New Jerusalem
Laodicea (3:14–22)	None	Indifferent	Be zealous and repent	Share Christ’s throne

"These things says ⁿHe who is holy, ^oHe who is true, ^p*"He who has the key of David, ^qHe who opens and no one shuts, and ^rshuts and no one opens"*. ^s"I know your works. See, I have set before you ^tan open door, ^uand no one can shut it; for you have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name. ^vIndeed I will make ^wthose of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not, but lie—indeed ^xI will make them come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you. ^yBecause you have kept ^zMy command to persevere, ^{aa}I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon ^{ab}the whole world, to test those who dwell ^{ac}on the earth. ^{ad}Behold, ^{ae}I am coming quickly! ^{af}Hold fast what you have, that no one may take ^{ag}your crown. ^{ah}He who overcomes, I will make him ^{ai}a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall ^{aj}go out no more. ^{ak}I will write on him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the ^{al}New Jerusalem, which ^{am}comes down out of heaven from My God. ^{an}And *I will write on him My new name.*

⁷ ⁿ Acts 3:14 ^o John 14:6; 1 John 5:20; Rev. 3:14; 19:11 ^p Is. 9:7; 22:22; Jer. 23:5 ^q [Matt. 16:19; Rev. 1:18] ^r Job 12:14 ^s ⁸ ^t Rev. 3:1 ^u 1 Cor. 16:9 ^v NU, M which no one can shut ^w ⁹ ^x Rev. 2:9 ^y Is. 45:14; 49:23; 60:14 ^z 2 Tim. 2:12; 2 Pet. 2:9 ^{aa} Luke 2:1 ^{ab} Is. 24:17 ^{ac} Lit. the word of My patience ^{ad} ¹¹ ^{ae} Phil. 4:5 ^{af} Rev. 2:25 ^{ag} [Rev. 2:10] ^{ah} NU, M omit Behold ^{ai} ¹² ^{aj} ^c 1 Kin. 7:21; Jer. 1:18; Gal. 2:9 ^{ak} Ps. 23:6 ^{al} [Rev. 14:1; 22:4] ^{am} [Heb. 12:22] ^{an} ⁹ Rev. 21:2 ^{ao} [Rev. 2:17; 22:4] ^{ap} ¹³ ^{ar} Rev. 2:7 ^{as} ¹⁴ ^{at} Is. 65:16; 2 Cor. 1:20 ^{au} ¹⁵ ^{av} Rev. 1:5; 3:7; 19:11 ^{aw} [Col. 1:15] ^{ax} Or messenger ^{ay} NU, M in Laodicea ^{az} ¹⁵ ^m Rev. 3:1 ^{ba} ¹⁶ ² NU, M hot nor cold ^{bb} ¹⁷ ² Hos. 12:8; Zech. 11:5;

¹³ⁱ "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

The Lukewarm Church

¹⁴ "And to the ⁹angel of the church ¹of the Laodiceans write,

^j"These things says the Amen, ^kthe Faithful and True Witness, ^lthe Beginning of the creation of God: ^{15m} "I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. ¹⁶ So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither ²cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth. ¹⁷ Because you say, ⁿ"I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing"—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked— ¹⁸ I counsel you ^oto buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and ^pwhite garments, that you may be clothed, *that* the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see. ^{19a} As many as I love,

[Matt. 5:3]; 1 Cor. 4:8 ¹⁸ ^o Is. 55:1; Matt. 13:44 ^p 2 Cor. 5:3 ¹⁹ ^q Job 5:17

who opens and shuts the door in the Davidic kingdom (see Is. 22:22), a prerogative that is Christ's as the rightful "Son of David" (see Matt. 1:1).

3:8 The door that **no one can shut** seems, in this context, to be entrance into heaven and "the New Jerusalem" (vv. 12, 21, 22). It is possible that the open door is also an opening for witness or service (see Col. 4:3). Despite their having **little strength**, the believers at Philadelphia had obediently **kept Christ's word** (see 1:3; Matt. 28:20) and had **not denied His name**.

3:9 Those in Philadelphia who ultimately belonged to **Satan**, though they claimed to be **Jews** outwardly (see Rom. 2:28, 29), would ultimately be forced to **worship** before the church and to acknowledge that Christ has **loved** His own (20:4, 6).

3:10 Christ's promise to **keep** the believers **from the hour of trial** is most likely a promise that He will remove them before the period of unparalleled tribulation. However, some take this promise to mean that believers will not be removed but rather protected, during the trial. The *hour of trial* is another way of referring to the unparalleled judgment of "the great tribulation" (7:14) predicted in Dan. 12:1; Matt. 24:21.

3:11 The Christian must always be ready for Jesus' **coming** (3:3). Christ's return with expected suddenness is an incentive to persevere in faithful service. Through misconduct one can lose a **crown** that had been previously attained (see 2 John 8). The crown signifies the royal authority given to the victorious coheirs of Christ. The judgment seat of Christ will be an occasion of either reward or regret (2 Cor. 5:10).

3:12 Christ promises that the faithful believer will be a **pillar**, the most stable and permanent part of a building. To be a pillar **in the temple** implies a prominent place of service in Christ's kingdom (see Is. 22:23; Luke 19:16–19). **He who overcomes**: The overcomer is identified with the names of **God** (signifying His ownership); **the city of My God**, **the New Jerusalem** (citizenship in the heavenly city); and Christ's **new name** (the full revelation of His character). The latter also implies special intimacy (vv. 4, 21; 2:7, 17). The overcomer is associated with the ultimate rulers and the governing center of the universe throughout all eternity (21:9–22:21).

3:13 **He who has an ear, let him hear**: Openness to the truths of the Word of God is a necessity for understanding the special destiny of the overcoming Christian.

3:14 Laodicea was 45 miles southeast of Philadelphia and 90 miles east of Ephesus. It was a wealthy city with thriving banks, a textile industry, and a medical school. The city was also known for its sparse water supply. All of these characteristics are played upon in Christ's message to the church (vv. 15–18). References to Christ as **the Amen** (meaning "The True One"), **the Faithful and True Witness**, and **the Beginning** (meaning "The First Place" or "The Ruler") of God's **creation** indicate that the lethargic Laodicean church (vv. 15–18) should pay close attention to His words. The phrase about creation has been interpreted by some to teach that Jesus is the first being that God created. This is certainly not required by Greek grammar, and is contrary to other biblical passages. Christ is described in other passages of the NT as eternal (see John 1:1–3) and as being God Himself (see John 8:58; Phil. 2:6; Titus 2:13). Revelation speaks of Him as the First and the Last, the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End. In fact, the Greek phrase in this verse can be translated in a more active sense, so as to read "the One who begins the creation of God."

3:15, 16 Cold water is refreshing; **hot** water is useful for medical purposes. **Lukewarm** water is neither. By analogy, the **works** of the Laodicean church made Christ want to **vomit** the believers **out of His mouth**. In very vivid terms, the Lord rejects the halfhearted efforts of self-satisfied Christians.

3:17, 18 The Laodicean church was spiritually self-deluded. Because the church was **wealthy** it assumed that it had **need of nothing**, when in actuality it was spiritually impoverished. The church believed that because it had expensive **garments** it was well-clothed, when it was really spiritually **naked**. It believed that physical sight indicated the ability to **see** spiritually, when it was actually **blind** to spiritual realities. Fortunately, Christ provides spiritual **gold**, heavenly **white garments** (7:13, 14; 19:7, 8), and healing **eye salve** to all who repent (v. 19).

3:19 God's **love** for His children manifests itself in **rebuke** and chastening when they go astray (vv. 15–18). The intent of the Lord's discipline is for our "profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness" (Heb. 12:10). The proper response to God's loving discipline is to **repent** (to change our wrong outlook) and be **zealous** to move away from a dangerous, lukewarm spiritual state (vv. 15, 16). These believers needed to change their perspective and seek the spiritual riches of the ultimate Overcomer.

I rebuke and ^rchasten.³ Therefore be ⁴zealous and repent. ²⁰Behold, ^sI stand at the door and knock. ^tIf anyone hears My voice and opens the door, ^uI will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me. ²¹To him who overcomes ^vI will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.

²²“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.””

The Throne Room of Heaven

4 After these things I looked, and behold, a door *standing* ^aopen in heaven. And the first voice which I heard *was* like a ^btrumpet speaking with me, say-

¹⁹ ^r Prov. 3:12; [2 Cor. 11:32]; Heb. 12:6 ³ discipline ⁴ eager ²⁰ ^s Song 5:2 ^t Luke 12:36, 37; John 10:3 ^u [John 14:23] ^v Matt. 19:28; 2 Tim. 2:12; [Rev. 2:26; 20:4] ²² ^w Rev. 2:7

CHAPTER 4

¹ ^a Ezek. 1:1; Rev. 19:11 ^b Rev. 1:10 ² ^c Rev. 1:10 ^d 1 Kin. 22:19; Is. 6:1; Ezek. 1:26; Dan. 7:9; Rev. 3:21; 4:9 ³ ^e Matt. 5:8; Rev. 21:11 ^f Gen. 9:13-17;

ing, “Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this.”

²Immediately ^cI was in the Spirit; and behold, ^da throne set in heaven, and *One* sat on the throne. ³¹ And He who sat there was ^elike a jasper and a sardius stone in appearance; ^fand *there was* a rainbow around the throne, in appearance like an emerald. ⁴^g Around the throne *were* twenty-four thrones, and on the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, ^hclothed in white ²robes; and they had crowns of gold on their heads.

Ezek. 1:28; Rev. 10:1 ¹ M omits *And He who sat there was*, making the following a description of the throne. ⁴ ^g Rev. 11:16 ^h Rev. 3:4, 5 ² NU, M robes, with crowns

3:20 I stand at the door and knock pictures the Lord Jesus seeking entrance into His own church (v. 14) for the purpose of renewed fellowship. Though it is often understood as Christ knocking at the door of an individual unbeliever's heart, the context makes that improbable.

3:21 To him who overcomes: The promises to the faithful Christian reach a climax as the believer shares the actual throne with Christ. Those who share Christ's victorious experience on earth will have a victory similar to His. The victory of Christ led to His present position at the right hand of God in heaven, while the victory of believers leads to the privilege of sharing Christ's own earthly throne (see 2:26, 27; Luke 19:16–19; 2 Tim. 2:12). Jesus Christ **overcame** by humble obedience, even to the point of death (see Phil. 2:6–8). As a result, the Lord Jesus **sat down . . . on His throne** and will be highly exalted (see Phil. 2:9–11). Just as Christ overcame through faithful obedience, a believer today who overcomes by humble, obedient faith will sit with Christ on His throne (20:4, 6). God's purpose in the church is to raise up coheirs who will share Christ's authority in His kingdom. These coheirs must overcome as Christ did by persevering in the faith despite suffering (see Rom. 8:17; 2 Tim. 2:12).

4:1 This verse signals the beginning of a new section of the Book of Revelation, which reveals the terrifying events that will occur in the

future. This is the main section of the Apocalypse, and it continues through 22:5. **Come up here** is also the command given to the two resurrected witnesses in 11:12. Some consider this command to refer to the Rapture of the church before “the great tribulation” (see 7:14; Matt. 24:21). However, it may be simply a phrase in apocalyptic style that introduces John's revelatory vision (v. 2).

4:2 In the Spirit also described John's state of spiritual receptiveness in regard to the initial vision of this book (1:11–20), as well as later visions (17:3). The **throne** where God sits (3:21) dominates the heavenly scene before John, much as the glorified “Son of Man” dominated the prior vision (1:13–16).

4:3 The **rainbow** is reminiscent of God's covenant never again to judge the earth by a flood (see Gen. 9:8–17), perhaps implying that a different means of judgment was about to come upon the earth.

4:4 Twenty-four elders occupy other thrones. The identity of the elders is not certain. Some think that they represent the church or believers in heaven, but it seems preferable to view the elders as angels who comprise a heavenly ruling council (see Jer. 23:18, 22). These elders function as ruling priests in the present age. Michael, an angel, is identified as one of these chief princes (see Dan. 10:13; Col. 1:16). In contrast, the church is not prepared to rule until 19:7, 8. The **white robes** and **crowns of gold** point to those who are

Revelation as Apocalyptic Literature

The word *revelation* (1:1) is a translation of the Greek word *apokalupsis*, from which we get the English words *apocalypse* and *apocalyptic*. An apocalypse is a special kind of prophecy. It features what most people associate with prophetic works of all kinds—dramatic, symbolic predictions of the future communicated to a prophet in a vision. The Old Testament contains apocalyptic sections in Daniel, Ezekiel, and Zechariah, which were written around the sixth century B.C. Much of the Book of Revelation is apocalyptic.

Jewish apocalyptic literature outside the Bible flourished from the second century B.C. through at least the first century A.D. In most cases, these works were written to encourage and comfort the Jewish people, who were enduring the hardships of oppressive foreign rule. Some of these works are found in the Apocrypha and the Dead Sea Scrolls.

Because of its many symbols, apocalyptic prophecy is harder to interpret than any other kind of Scripture. Sometimes explicit interpretations (such as in 1:20) or an obvious reference to Old Testament imagery or visions interpreted in previous passages (such as in Dan. 7) give strong clues. In other cases, we must guess or infer the meaning. Revelation's four horsemen, the locusts, the dragon, and the beasts have all challenged commentators ever since John first wrote of them.

It helps to remember that like the nonbiblical apocalyptic literature of its day, Revelation's purpose is to comfort and challenge its readers. It affirms God's sovereign control over history and the certainty of His plan for the future. It reminds us that our present difficulties have a connection to the future, a future firmly in God's hands.

Though most of the Book of Revelation is apocalyptic, not all of it is. Revelation also contains straightforward prophecy (1:3) and seven letters of admonition (1:4). As prophecy, it focuses on our present duties and their relationship to the future. As a letter, it gives advice and encouragement to the believers at seven churches (1:4, 11; 2:1–3:22). In the final analysis, the Book of Revelation is a hybrid of apocalypse and prophecy written within the framework of an ancient Greek letter. The purpose of this letter is to inspire us to overcome all obstacles by steadfastly holding on to our faith (2:7, 17, 25, 26; 3:5, 11, 12, 21). The central message of the letter is clear: God is in control of all of history. He is coming back; and He will come in judgment, rewarding those who have remained faithful to Him (22:7, 12, 13, 20).

⁵And from the throne proceeded ⁱlightnings, ³thunderings, and voices. ^jSeven lamps of fire *were* burning before the throne, which are ^kthe ⁴seven Spirits of God.

⁶Before the throne *there* ⁵was ^la sea of glass, like crystal. ^mAnd in the midst of the throne, and around the throne, *were* four living creatures full of eyes in front and in back. ⁷ⁿThe first living creature *was* like a lion, the second living creature like a calf, the third living creature had a face like a man, and the fourth living creature *was* like a flying eagle. ⁸The four living creatures, each having ^osix wings, were full of eyes around and within. And they do not rest day or night, saying:

^p“Holy, ⁶ holy, holy,
^qLord God Almighty,
^rWho was and is and is to come!”

⁹Whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, ^swho lives forever and ever, ^{10t}the twenty-four elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne and worship Him who lives forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying:

¹¹“You ^u are worthy, ⁷O Lord,

⁵ ⁱ Gen. 49:9, 10; Ex. 19:16; Rev. 8:5; 11:19; 16:18 / Ex. 37:23 ^k 2 Sam. 7:12; [Rev. 1:4]
³ NU, M voices, and thunderings. ⁴ M omits the
⁶ ⁱ Ex. 38:8; Ezek. 1:22; Rev. 15:2
^m Ezek. 1:5; Rev. 4:8; 5:6; 6:1, 6; 7:11; 14:3; 15:7; 19:4 ⁵ NU, M add something like
⁷ⁿ ⁱ Ezek. 1:10; 10:14
⁸ ^o Is. 6:2 ^p Is. 6:3
^q Rev. 1:8 ^r Rev. 1:4
^s M has holy nine times.
⁹ ^r Rev. 1:18
¹⁰ ^t Rev. 5:8, 14; 7:11; 11:16; 19:4
¹¹ ^u Rev. 1:6; 5:12
^v Gen. 1:1; John 1:3
^w Col. 1:16 ⁷ NU, M our Lord and God
⁸ NU, M existed

CHAPTER 5

¹ ^o Ezek. 2:9, 10 ^b Is. 29:11; Dan. 12:4
² ^c Rev. 4:11; 5:9
⁴ ⁱ NU, M omit and read
⁵ ^d Gen. 49:9 ^e Heb. 7:14 ^f Is. 11:1, 10; Rom. 15:12; Rev. 22:16 ⁹ Rev. 3:21
^h Rev. 6:1 ² NU, M omit to loose
⁶ ⁱ Is. 53:7; [John 1:29; 1 Pet. 1:19] / Zech. 3:9; 4:10

To receive glory and honor and power;
^vFor You created all things,
And by ^wYour will they ⁸exist and were created.”

The Lamb Takes the Scroll

5 And I saw in the right *hand* of Him who sat on the throne ^aa scroll written inside and on the back, ^bsealed with seven seals. ²Then I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, “Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals?” ³And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll, or to look at it.

⁴So I wept much, because no one was found worthy to open ¹and read the scroll, or to look at it. ⁵But one of the elders said to me, “Do not weep. Behold, ^dthe Lion of the tribe of ^eJudah, ^fthe Root of David, has ^gprevailed to open the scroll ^hand ²to loose its seven seals.”

⁶And I looked, ³and behold, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood ⁱa Lamb as though it had been slain, having seven horns and ^jseven eyes, which are ^kthe seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth. ⁷Then He

^k Rev. 1:4; 3:1; 4:5 ³ NU, M I saw in the midst . . . a Lamb standing

confirmed in righteousness and who possess ruling authority. The wearing of the crowns indicates that the elders had already been judged and rewarded.

4:5 **Lightnings and thunderings** reflect the awesome majesty of God and recall the divine authority to judge (6:1; 8:5; 11:19; 14:2; 16:18; 19:6). **Seven Spirits of God** as represented by **seven lamps** presents the fullness of the sevenfold character of the Holy Spirit (see Is. 11:2, 3). The seven lamps or torches signify the unique role of the Holy Spirit in executing judgment.

4:6 The **four living creatures** are strikingly similar to the cherubim (angels) Ezekiel saw close to God’s throne (see Ezek. 10:1–20). **Full of eyes** means that these creatures see everything.

4:7 The **lion, calf, man, and eagle** have been understood as referring to the four Gospels with their distinctive portrayals of Christ. However, the description recalls the four cherubim in Ezek. 1:4–10, and thus the four figures probably represent four different angels (see Ezek. 10). These living creatures or angels seem to be associated with creation and its ultimate redemption.

4:8–11 **Rest** is a physical necessity of earthly life, but in heaven it is unnecessary. There is constant worship **day and night**. **Holy, holy, holy** recalls the similar heavenly scene in Is. 6:1–10. **Was and is and is to come** speaks of the eternal nature of God, past, present, and future. The elders **cast their crowns before the throne**, symbolizing the willing surrender of their authority in light of the worthiness of God as Creator. Because no one but God can create, He alone should be worshiped and recognized as sovereign.

5:1 **A scroll . . . sealed with seven seals** cannot be read until all the seals have been opened. The scroll apparently contains the judgments and redemption seen in later chapters. It may also be the scroll that was sealed in Dan. 12:4. There appears to be an allusion to the scroll the Lord handed Ezekiel in Ezek. 2:9, 10.

5:2–4 No creature in all of creation was **found worthy to open the seals on the scroll** in God’s hand (v. 1).

5:5, 6 Here we see the consummation of God’s twofold purpose in history: to reclaim His kingdom and to redeem His people. This twofold victory over Satan is first predicted in Gen. 3:15 and then covenanted to Abraham in the promise of a land and a Seed (see Gen. 12:1–3; Deut. 30:1–5; 2 Sam. 7:12–16).

5:5 **The Lion of the tribe of Judah** (see Gen. 49:8–10) and **the Root of David** (see Is. 11:1, 10) are messianic titles for Jesus Christ. **Prevailed** refers to the death and resurrection of Christ on behalf of those who would be redeemed (v. 9).

5:6 The **Lamb that had been slain** is Christ, whom John the Baptist called “the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world” (John 1:29). In the Bible, **horns** stand for power, strength, and the authority to rule (see Dan. 7:8, 20, 24).

5:7 The reception of the **scroll** from the Father demonstrates that judgment and authority over the earth is committed to the Son (see Dan. 7:13, 14). The scroll is likely the same one sealed by Daniel (see Dan. 12:9).

seven Spirits

(Gk. *hepta pneumata*) (1:4; 3:1; 4:5; 5:6) Strong’s #2033; 4151

This term connotes the “sevenfold Spirit.” Since the number *seven* represents completeness, this description of the divine Spirit depicts the sevenfold energy of the Holy Spirit, His perfect, complete, and universal energy. The term *sevenfold* probably corresponds to the earlier reference to the seven churches. The Spirit of God is one in His essence but numerous in His gracious influences. The origin of this expression could have been a popular interpretation of Is. 11:1, 2 in the Greek OT, which was taken as a reference to the sevenfold spiritual blessings.

came and took the scroll out of the right hand ^lof Him who sat on the throne.

Worthy Is the Lamb

⁸Now when He had taken the scroll, ^mthe four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the ⁿprayers of the saints. ⁹And ^othey sang a new song, saying:

^p“You are worthy to take the scroll,
And to open its seals;
For You were slain,
And ^qhave redeemed us to God ^rby
Your blood
Out of every tribe and tongue and
people and nation,
¹⁰ And have made ^{us} ^skings⁵ and
^tpriests to our God;
And ⁶we shall reign on the earth.”

¹¹Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, ¹²saying with a loud voice:

“Worthy is the Lamb who was slain
To receive power and riches and
wisdom,
And strength and honor and glory
and blessing!”

¹³And ^uevery creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard saying:

⁷ ¹ Rev. 4:2
⁸ ^m Rev. 4:8-10; 19:4
ⁿ Ps. 141:2; Rev. 8:3
⁹ ^o Rev. 14:3 ^p Rev.
4:11 ^q John 1:29
^r [Heb. 9:12; 1 Pet.
1:18, 19]
¹⁰ ^s Ex. 19:6 ^t Is.
61:6 ⁴ NU, M them
⁵ NU a kingdom
⁶ NU, M they
¹³ ^u Phil. 2:10;
Rev. 5:3

^v 1 Chr. 29:11; Rom.
9:5; 1 Tim. 6:16;
1 Pet. 4:11 ^w Rev.
4:2, 3; 6:16; 20:11
⁷ M adds Amen
¹⁴ ⁸ NU, M omit
twenty-four ⁹ NU,
M omit Him who
lives forever and
ever

CHAPTER 6

¹ ^a Is. 53:7; [John
1:29; Rev. 5:5-7,
12; 13:8] ^b Rev. 4:7
¹ NU, M seven seals
² ^c Zech. 1:8; 6:3
^d Ps. 45:4, 5, LXX
^e Zech. 6:11; Rev.
9:7; 14:14; 19:12
^f Matt. 24:5; Rev.
3:21
³ ^g Rev. 4:7 ² NU, M
omit and see
⁴ ^h Zech. 1:8; 6:2
ⁱ Matt. 24:6, 7
⁵ ^j Rev. 4:7 ^k Zech.
6:2, 6 ¹ Matt. 24:7
³ balances
⁶ ⁴ Gr. choinix,
about 1 quart
⁵ About 1 day's
wage for a worker

^v“Blessing and honor and glory and
power
Be to Him ^wwho sits on the throne,
And to the Lamb, forever and ⁷ever!”

¹⁴Then the four living creatures said,
“Amen!” And the ⁸twenty-four elders
fell down and worshiped ⁹Him who lives
forever and ever.

First Seal: The Conqueror

6 Now ^aI saw when the Lamb opened
one of the ¹seals; and I heard ^bone
of the four living creatures saying with
a voice like thunder, “Come and see.”
² And I looked, and behold, ^ca white
horse. ^dHe who sat on it had a bow; ^eand
a crown was given to him, and he went
out ^fconquering and to conquer.

Second Seal: Conflict on Earth

³ When He opened the second seal, ^gI
heard the second living creature saying,
“Come ²and see.” ⁴^h Another horse, fiery
red, went out. And it was granted to the
one who sat on it to ⁱtake peace from the
earth, and that ^{people} should kill one an-
other; and there was given to him a great
sword.

Third Seal: Scarcity on Earth

⁵ When He opened the third seal,
^jI heard the third living creature say,
“Come and see.” So I looked, and behold,
^ka black horse, and he who sat on it had a
pair of ^lscales³ in his hand. ⁶ And I heard
a voice in the midst of the four living
creatures saying, “A ⁴quart of wheat for
⁵a ⁵denarius, and three quarts of barley

5:8 The prayers of the saints (believers) play an important role in the Lamb’s opening of the **scroll** and the ensuing judgment (8:1–6). **Golden bowls** are also used to pour out God’s wrath on the earth (see 15:7; 16:1–21).

5:9 The new song celebrates the redemptive work of the Son as the basis of His right to judge. Divine rule has its basis in creation (ch. 4) and redemption.

5:13, 14 Blessing and honor and glory and power: From the

vantage point of heaven, these verses look forward to the climactic point when “every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord” (Phil. 2:11).

6:1—8:1 This section details the opening of the seven seals on the scroll by the Lamb who was found worthy. The scroll cannot be opened and read until all the seals have been broken. Therefore, the narrative of 6:1—8:1 apparently represents events prior to the outpouring of God’s judgment contained in the scroll. The unsealing of the scroll follows the general pattern of the signs called “the beginning of sorrows” (see Matt. 24:8) in the Olivet Discourse (see Matt. 24:1–31). Some think that a number of these events have already taken place or will take place before the tribulation begins. Others think this section describes the beginning of the tribulation period.

6:2 Because the first rider is on a **white horse** and is **conquering**, some take it to be Christ (19:11). If so, His full conquest is considerably delayed (19:11—20:6). Other widely held views are that this is the Antichrist, or a spirit of conquest and delusion (see Matt. 24:3–6). The **bow** indicates that the rider is a warrior. The **crown** suggests that he is a ruler.

6:4 The **red** color of the second horse stands for bloodshed, and killing with the **sword**, for war instead of **peace** on **earth** (see Matt. 24:6, 7).

6:5, 6 The **black horse** apparently symbolizes famine, since the prices for the **wheat** and **barley** are extraordinarily high, as they would be in a time of extreme drought.

Hades

(Gk. *hadēs*) (6:8; 20:13, 14; Luke 16:23; Acts 2:27, 31) Strong’s #86

The Greek term means “the place of the unseen.” It designates the invisible world of the dead, as does the Hebrew word *sheol*. All people who die go to Hades because all pass from the visible world to the invisible. The association between Death and Hades is therefore a natural one. Unfortunately, this word has often been associated with hell, a place of eternal punishment. But there is a different Greek word for hell; it is *gehenna* (see Mark 9:43–45). We cannot avoid Hades, but we can avoid hell, by believing in Jesus and receiving eternal life.

for a denarius; and ^m do not harm the oil and the wine.”

Fourth Seal: Widespread Death on Earth

⁷ When He opened the fourth seal, ⁿ I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, “Come and see.” ^{8o} So I looked, and behold, a pale horse. And the name of him who sat on it was Death, and Hades followed with him. And ⁶ power was given to them over a fourth of the earth, ^p to kill with sword, with hunger, with death, ^q and by the beasts of the earth.

Fifth Seal: The Cry of the Martyrs

⁹ When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under ^r the altar ^s the souls of those who had been slain ^t for the word of God and for ^u the testimony which they held. ¹⁰ And they cried with a loud voice, saying, ^v “How long, O Lord, ^w holy and true, ^x until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?” ¹¹ Then a ^y white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them ^z that they should rest a little while longer, until both *the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they were*, was completed.

Sixth Seal: Cosmic Disturbances

¹² I looked when He opened the sixth seal, ^a and ⁷ behold, there was a great earthquake; and ^b the sun became black

6 ^m Rev. 7:3; 9:4
7 ⁿ Rev. 4:7
8 ^o Zech. 6:3 ^p Jer. 14:12; 15:2; 24:10; 29:17; Ezek. 5:12, 17; 14:21; 29:5; Matt. 24:9 ^q Lev. 26:22
⁶ authority
9 ^r Rev. 8:3 ^s [Rev. 20:4] ^t Rev. 1:2, 9 ^u 2 Tim. 1:8
10 ^v Ps. 13:1-6; Zech. 1:12 ^w Rev. 3:7 ^x Rev. 11:18
11 ^y Rev. 3:4, 5; 7:9 ^z Heb. 11:40
12 ^a Matt. 24:7; Rev. 8:5; 11:13; 16:18 ^b Is. 13:10; Joel 2:10, 31; 3:15; Matt. 24:29; Mark 13:24 ⁷ NU, M omit behold ⁸ NU, M whole moon
13 ^c Matt. 24:29; Mark 13:25; Rev. 8:10; 9:1
14 ^d Ps. 102:26; Is. 34:4; [2 Pet. 3:10]; Rev. 20:11; 21:1
^e Jer. 3:23; Rev. 16:20 ⁹ Or split apart
15 ^f Ps. 2:2-4 ^g Is. 2:10, 19, 21; 24:21; Rev. 19:18 ¹ NU, M the commanders, the rich men,
16 ^h Hos. 10:8; Luke 23:29, 30; Rev. 9:6 ⁱ Rev. 20:11
17 ^j Is. 63:4; Jer. 30:7; Joel 1:15; 2:1, 11, 31; Zeph. 1:14; Rev. 16:14

CHAPTER 7

1 ^a Jer. 49:36; Dan. 7:2; Zech. 6:5; Matt. 24:31

as sackcloth of hair, and the ⁸ moon became like blood. ^{13c} And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind. ^{14d} Then the sky ⁹ receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and ^e every mountain and island was moved out of its place. ¹⁵ And the ^f kings of the earth, the great men, ¹ the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, ^g hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains, ^{16h} and said to the mountains and rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who ⁱ sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! ¹⁷ For the great day of His wrath has come, ^j and who is able to stand?”

The Sealed of Israel

7 After these things I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, ^a holding the four winds of the earth, ^b that the wind should not blow on the earth, on the sea, or on any tree. ² Then I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God. And he cried with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was granted to harm the earth and the sea, ³ saying, ^c “Do not harm the earth, the sea, or the trees till we have sealed the servants of our God ^d on their foreheads.” ^{4e} And I heard the number of those who were sealed.

^b Rev. 7:3; 8:7; 9:4 ³ ^c Rev. 6:6 ^d Ezek. 9:4, 6; Rev. 22:4
⁴ ^e Rev. 9:16

6:8 Pale, which means literally “yellowish-green,” is the color of a corpse. Thus it is fitting that the pale horse is ridden by a figure named **Death**. **Hades** follows after Death to claim those who have died. This fourth judgment is the inevitable consequence of the first three. Up to this point, these three are characterized as the sword, famine, and pestilence. They are the same means that God used to bring the nation of Israel to repentance (see 1 Kin. 8:33–39; 1 Chr. 21:12), and in Revelation a godly nucleus does arise as a result of these judgments (7:3–8).

6:9, 10 The fifth seal focuses on martyrs slain for standing for **the word of God** and Christ’s **testimony**, the very reasons John was exiled to Patmos (1:9). These martyrs’ souls are **under the altar** because sacrificial blood was poured beside the base of the altar in the temple (see Ex. 29:12). The martyrs are impatient for the **Lord** to **avenge their blood** and to **judge all those** who are not among His redeemed (5:9). This vengeance will not be carried out completely until 19:2.

6:11 Each martyr is **given the white robe** of the overcomer (3:5) and told to **rest . . . until** God’s appointed time. “Vengeance is mine,” says the Lord (see Deut. 32:35; Rom. 12:19); it will come in His perfect timing.

6:12, 13 A great earthquake also occurs in 11:13; 16:18. The effects on the **sun, moon, and stars** are worded similarly to Matt. 24:29, placing these events in proximity to the coming of the Son of Man (see Matt. 24:30). **Late figs** appeared in the winter, the off-season, and were easily blown off the tree.

6:14 The description of the **sky . . . rolled up** could be related to the effects on the sun, moon, and stars (vv. 12, 13). It may also be describ-

ing the scene of the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven (see Matt. 24:30). The moving of **every mountain and island** would cause seismic damage in excess of any recorded earthquake.

6:15–17 Wrath means “anger.” God’s wrath is presently revealed against unbelievers by letting them go their way and face the consequences of their behavior (see Rom. 1:18–32). However, **the great day** of His wrath (see Rom. 2:5) is still to come. **Has come** may mean “has taken place” or “has begun.” **Who is able to stand** is answered in the surrounding context. Unbelievers, no matter how strong, cannot stand. Those protected by the Lord are enabled to stand, whether on earth (7:1–8) or in God’s presence in heaven (7:9–17).

7:1 There are two visions in this chapter: the 144,000 servants of God (vv. 1–8) and the innumerable multitude now in heaven (vv. 9–17). The **four angels** seem to be God’s divine agents associated with the judgments. The **four winds** represent destructive forces from every direction.

7:2, 3 Before the judgments are unleashed, God prepares to seal 144,000 of His servants **on their foreheads**. Seals are signs of ownership or authority that in ancient times were stamped onto a document by pressing a signet or cylinder into a lump of clay at the point where the document was opened and closed.

7:4 One hundred and forty-four thousand may be taken either as an actual number or as a number symbolizing completeness (12 x 12 x 1000), referring to all who will be saved. The first option is more likely because of the details developed in vv. 5–8. **The children of Israel** is understood by some as the church, the new Israel (see Gal. 6:16), and by others as the nation of Israel.

^fOne hundred *and* forty-four thousand
^gof all the tribes of the children of Israel
were sealed:

- ⁵ of the tribe of Judah twelve thousand
were sealed;
of the tribe of Reuben twelve
thousand *were* ¹sealed;
of the tribe of Gad twelve thousand
were sealed;
- ⁶ of the tribe of Asher twelve thousand
were sealed;
of the tribe of Naphtali twelve
thousand *were* sealed;

4 ^fRev. 14:1, 3
^gGen. 49:1-27
5 ¹ NU, M omit
sealed in vv. 5b-8b.

- ⁷ of the tribe of Manasseh twelve
thousand *were* sealed;
of the tribe of Simeon twelve
thousand *were* sealed;
of the tribe of Levi twelve thousand
were sealed;
of the tribe of Issachar twelve
thousand *were* sealed;
- ⁸ of the tribe of Zebulun twelve
thousand *were* sealed;
of the tribe of Joseph twelve
thousand *were* sealed;
of the tribe of Benjamin twelve
thousand *were* sealed.

7:5–8 Judah is placed first in this list of the Israelite tribes because Christ, the Messiah, is the “Lion of the tribe of Judah” (see 5:5; Gen. 49:8–10). **Reuben** is next as Jacob’s firstborn (see Gen. 49:3, 4). Dan and Ephraim are omitted, perhaps because of their gross idolatry

during the period of the judges, demonstrated by the incident in Dan (see Judg. 18). **Joseph** and his son **Manasseh** are both included, as is Levi, bringing the number of tribes to twelve.

Interpreting Revelation



Interpreting Revelation has caused much debate, and at least four standard methods for interpreting the book have developed. *Preterists* view the book as referring almost exclusively to first-century events. *Historicists* view the book as referring to the unfolding of church history until Christ’s second coming. *Idealists* see the book as symbolizing the eternal conflict between good and evil. *Futurists* see the book as mainly about the end times. Sometimes interpreters blend two or more of these approaches.

Furthermore, the “thousand years” of 20:2–6 has been the basis of three different views of the *millennium* (the Latin word for “thousand years”). The *amillennial* (no millennium) interpretation sees Christ as ruling spiritually in the church now; Satan has been bound or at least hindered during this present church era. According to this view, there will be no literal thousand-year reign; instead, Christ reigns through the church for an unknown number of years before He returns. The *postmillennial* (after the millennium) interpretation understands that by the spread of the gospel the world will become progressively more Christian. When the world becomes completely Christian there will be a millennium, then Jesus will return in glory. The *premillennial* (before the millennium) view holds that Jesus Christ will return to earth to set up His visible kingdom. At that time Satan will be bound for a thousand years.

Those who accept the premillennial position take specific views on when Christ will remove believers from the earth before He returns (19:11–21). A comparison of the common symbolism of Daniel and Revelation, as well as time references in Daniel 7:25; 9:27; 12:7 along with those in Revelation 11:2, 3; 12:6, 14; 13:5, seem to indicate that a seven-year period (see Dan. 9:24–27), often called the Tribulation, will precede Christ’s return. Five different views have tried to explain the timing between the Rapture of the church and the Tribulation. (The word *rapture* comes from the Latin translation of “caught up” in 1 Thess. 4:17.)

Pretribulationists expect the Rapture to take place before seven years of tribulation. *Midtribulationists* say the Rapture will occur midway through the seven-year period. The *posttribulation* view states that the church will go through the Tribulation, but will be removed at the time of Christ’s second coming. The prewrath view places the Rapture between the mid- and post-tribulational points, before the climactic wrath of God.

Each of these positions depends on a different view of how the text of Revelation should be interpreted. It is a good idea to keep this in mind whenever you try to understand a position or talk about it with others. The central idea on which all these views agree is that Christ will return some time in the future, and that His return will be a welcome sight to His people. Our hope and prayer is the same as the apostle John’s: “Come, Lord Jesus!” (22:20).



In Revelation there is a lot of symbolic language, and it can be difficult to interpret. However, all major biblical interpretations agree that Christ will return some time in the future!

Ms 386 fol. 25r Angels with Trumpets and the Earth Shaking, from the Apocalypse of St. John, French School/Bibliothèque Municipale, Cambrai, France/Giraudon/The Bridgeman Art Library

A Multitude from the Great Tribulation

⁹ After these things I looked, and behold, ^ha great multitude which no one could number, ⁱof all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, ^jclothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, ¹⁰and crying out with a loud voice, saying, ^k“Salvation *belongs* to our God ^lwho sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!” ¹¹^mAll the angels stood around the throne and the elders and the four living creatures, and fell on their faces before the throne and ⁿworshiped God, ¹²^osaying:

“Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom,
Thanksgiving and honor and power
and might,
Be to our God forever and ever.
Amen.”

¹³ Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, “Who are these arrayed in ^pwhite robes, and where did they come from?”

¹⁴ And I said to him, ²“Sir, you know.”

So he said to me, ^q“These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and ^rwashed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. ¹⁵ Therefore they are before the throne of God,

⁹ ^h Is. 60:1-5; Rom. 11:25 ⁱ Rev. 5:9
^j Rev. 3:5, 18; 4:4; 6:11
¹⁰ ^k Ps. 3:8; Is. 43:11; Jer. 3:23; Hos. 13:4; Rev. 19:1 ^l Rev. 5:13
¹¹ ^m Rev. 4:6 ⁿ Rev. 4:11; 5:9, 12, 14; 11:16
¹² ^o Rev. 5:13, 14
¹³ ^p Rev. 7:9
¹⁴ ^q Rev. 6:9 ^r Is. 1:18; Zech. 3:3-5; [Heb. 9:14] ² NU, M
My lord

¹⁵ ^s Is. 4:5, 6; Rev. 21:3
¹⁶ ^t Ps. 121:5; Is. 49:10 ^u Ps. 121:6; Rev. 21:4
¹⁷ ^v Ps. 23:1; Matt. 2:6; [John 10:11, 14] ^w Is. 25:8; Matt. 5:4; Rev. 21:4 ³ NU, M
fountains of the waters of life

CHAPTER 8

¹ ^a Rev. 6:1
² ^b [Matt. 18:10]; Luke 1:19 ^c 2 Chr. 29:25-28
³ ^d Rev. 5:8 ^e Ex. 30:1; Rev. 8:3
⁴ ^f Ps. 141:2; Luke 1:10
⁵ ^g Ex. 19:16; Rev. 11:19; 16:18 ^h Rev. 4:5 ⁱ 2 Sam. 22:8; 1 Kin. 19:11; Acts 4:31

and serve Him day and night in His temple. And He who sits on the throne will ^sdwell among them. ¹⁶^tThey shall neither hunger anymore nor thirst anymore; ^uthe sun shall not strike them, nor any heat; ¹⁷for the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne ^vwill shepherd them and lead them to ³living fountains of waters. ^wAnd God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.”

Seventh Seal: Prelude to the Seven Trumpets

8 When ^aHe opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour. ²^bAnd I saw the seven angels who stand before God, ^cand to them were given seven trumpets. ³Then another angel, having a golden censer, came and stood at the altar. He was given much incense, that he should offer *it* with ^dthe prayers of all the saints upon ^ethe golden altar which was before the throne. ⁴And ^fthe smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, ascended before God from the angel's hand. ⁵Then the angel took the censer, filled it with fire from the altar, and threw *it* to the earth. And ^gthere were noises, thunderings, ^hlightnings, ⁱand an earthquake.

⁶So the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.

7:9, 10 The **great multitude**, in addition to praising **God** and the **Lamb** for providing **salvation**, will later glorify God for judging Babylon (19:1-3) and will proclaim “the marriage of the Lamb” (19:6, 7). **White robes** may be the garments of overcoming believers (3:5, 18) or of martyrs (6:11). **Palm branches** were typically waved by crowds at victory celebrations (see John 12:13).

7:14 This vast multitude has **come out of the great tribulation**, referring to “the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world” (3:10). In view of the great loss of life during this time period, martyrdom is most likely the means of their escape. Tribulation was already being experienced by the church in John's day (see 2:10; Acts 14:22). However, the great tribulation, predicted in Dan. 12:1, will be of an intensity “such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be” (Matt. 24:21). **Washed their robes . . . in the blood of the Lamb** may imply martyrdom, but it more likely refers to forgiveness of sins through faith in Christ and His shed blood (1:5; 5:9).

7:15 The great multitude (v. 9) will **serve** the Lamb **day and night**. The 144,000 are later described as “the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes” (14:4). To *serve* indicates priestly service before the Lord (1:6; 5:10). The priesthood of Christians will enter a new phase in the presence of God in heaven. **Temple** actually refers to the inner sanctuary of the temple rather than the outer courts (11:19). The word translated **dwell** means “to live in a tent” or “to tabernacle.” This verse echoes John 1:14. Believers who did not see Christ when He lived on this earth in His first coming will go to heaven, where He will dwell **among** them.

7:17 **Shepherd them and lead them to living fountains of waters** recalls Ps. 23. The Lord who is the Shepherd in Ps. 23:1 is equated here with the **Lamb**. Both King David and the great multitude (v. 9) will “dwell in the house of the **LORD** forever” (Ps. 23:6), with Christ as their pastor. The “living” waters explain why there is no thirst

(see v. 16). The water of life is freely available to all who will come to Christ by faith (22:17). **God will wipe away every tear** means that there will be no crying, sorrow, or pain in the presence of the Lord.

8:1 The seventh seal on the scroll (5:1) is **opened**, finally allowing it to be unrolled. **Silence in heaven for about half an hour** seems to mark a brief but significant break between the unsealing of the scroll (6:1—8:1) and the trumpet judgments (8:6—11:19). This silence is broken only by a heavenly offering and “the prayers of all the saints” (vv. 3, 4). It is, however, the eerie silence before the storm as all of heaven awaits the coming judgment.

8:2 The judgments of the **seven trumpets** unfold in a pattern parallel to the unsealing of the seven-sealed scroll (6:1—8:1). This has led some to conclude that both describe the same time period from different angles, but greatly increased severity of the trumpet judgments makes this unlikely. The sounding of a trumpet had more than one significance in the OT. It was used to gather the Lord's people (see Num. 10:7, 8), to assemble the Lord's army (see Num. 10:9), to announce a new king (see 1 Kin. 1:34—39), and to proclaim the Year of Jubilee (see Lev. 25:9). In this context, the sounding of trumpets indicates a declaration of war.

8:2-5 The **seven angels who stand before God** are likely “the angels of the seven churches” (1:20). The **prayers** of God's **saints** seem to have a part in the judgment of God. The **censer** is a firepan used for burning **incense**. The **golden altar** reflects the splendor of the heavenly throne room (4:2, 3). **Incense** here may speak of the fragrance of the infinite perfections of Christ that accompanies the prayers of all the saints or is mingled with their prayers. The addition of this incense is necessary to make our prayers acceptable before the throne. In breaking the silence in heaven (v. 1), the prayers of God's people for God to act in just judgment (6:10) are heard and responded to with **noises, thunderings, lightnings, and an earthquake**.

First Trumpet: Vegetation Struck

⁷The first angel sounded: *j* And hail and fire followed, mingled with blood, and they were thrown *k* to the *l* earth. And a third *l* of the trees were burned up, and all green grass was burned up.

Second Trumpet: The Seas Struck

⁸Then the second angel sounded: *m* And *something* like a great mountain burning with fire was thrown into the sea, *n* and a third of the sea *o* became blood. ⁹*p* And a third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed.

Third Trumpet: The Waters Struck

¹⁰Then the third angel sounded: *q* And a great star fell from heaven, burning like a torch, *r* and it fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water. ¹¹*s* The name of the star is Wormwood. *t* A third of the waters became wormwood, and many men died from the water, because it was made bitter.

Fourth Trumpet: The Heavens Struck

¹²*u* Then the fourth angel sounded:

7 ^j Ex. 9:23; Is. 28:2; Ezek. 38:22; Joel 2:30 ^k Rev. 16:2 ^l Is. 2:13; Rev. 9:4, 15-18 ^m NU, M add *and a third of the earth was burned up*
8 ⁿ Jer. 51:25; Amos 7:4 ^o Ex. 7:17; Rev. 11:6; 16:3 ^p Ezek. 14:19
9 ^p Rev. 16:3
10 ^q Is. 14:12; Rev. 6:13; 9:1 ^r Rev. 14:7; 16:4
11 ^s Ruth 1:20 ^t Ex. 15:23
12 ^u Is. 13:10; Joel 2:31; Amos 8:9; Matt. 24:29; Rev. 6:12 ^v *had no light*
13 ^v Rev. 14:6; 19:17
^w Rev. 9:12; 11:14;
12:12 ^x NU, M *eagle*

CHAPTER 9

1 ^a Luke 10:18; Rev. 8:10 ^b Luke 8:31; Rev. 9:2, 11; 17:8
^c Lit. *shaft of the abyss*
2 ^c Joel 2:2, 10
3 ^d Ex. 10:4; Judg. 7:12
4 ^e Rev. 6:6 ^f Rev. 8:7 ^g Ex. 12:23; Ezek. 9:4; Rev. 7:2, 3

And a third of the sun was struck, a third of the moon, and a third of the stars, so that a third of them were darkened. A third of the day ² did not shine, and likewise the night.

¹³ And I looked, ^v and I heard an ³ angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, ^w “Woe, woe, woe to the inhabitants of the earth, because of the remaining blasts of the trumpet of the three angels who are about to sound!”

Fifth Trumpet: The Locusts from the Bottomless Pit

⁹ Then the fifth angel sounded: *a* And I saw a star fallen from heaven to the earth. To him was given the key to *b* the ¹ bottomless pit. ² And he opened the bottomless pit, and smoke arose out of the pit like the smoke of a great furnace. So the ^c sun and the air were darkened because of the smoke of the pit. ³ Then out of the smoke locusts came upon the earth. And to them was given power, ^d as the scorpions of the earth have power. ⁴ They were commanded ^e not to harm ^f the grass of the earth, or any green thing, or any tree, but only those men who do not have ^g the seal of God on their foreheads.

8:7-12 As in the sequence of the first four seals, the angels sound the first four trumpets in rapid succession. But the effects of the trumpet judgments on earth are far more devastating than the seal judgments. **A third of all trees and grass; a third of the sea, the living creatures in the sea, and the ships on the sea; a third of all rivers and springs of water;** and apparently **a third** of all daylight and moonlight are affected by the trumpet judgments. The first four judgments seem designed to reverse in part the original creation of God. The Lord initially assaults the environment. Food is destroyed; distribution of goods is crippled; water supply is severely limited; production is cut drastically.

8:7 When the **first angel** sounds the trumpet, a storm of **hail, fire, and blood** breaks forth. This incredible blend of destruction and horror sounds like a combination of the imagery of the first (see Ex. 7:19, 20) and seventh (see Ex. 9:22-25) plagues of God upon Egypt. **A third** here could be figurative for widespread, but not yet complete, destruction.

8:8, 9 A **great mountain burning** suggests a massive island volcano erupting explosively over a far-flung section of ocean waters. The description of the effects on the sea, however, indicates that this is much more than windblown pollution from volcanic ash. The sea becoming **blood** and the **creatures in the sea** dying are like an extension of the first plague on the Egyptians, the turning of the waters of the Nile River into blood (see Ex. 7:17-21).

8:10 **Star** here translates the same term used for the angelic star in 9:1 and for Christ as “the Bright and Morning Star” in 22:16. But the precise meaning of each word must be carefully interpreted in its context. Here the star seems to be a huge asteroid that falls **from heaven** to earth, **burning like a torch** as it enters the atmosphere. The star could fall **on a third of the rivers and . . . springs** by disintegrating as it passes through the earth’s atmosphere. It is also possible that the pollution of the headwaters of a number of the world’s major rivers and underground water sources could rapidly spread to a third of the planet’s waters.

8:11 **Wormwood** is a plant found in the Middle East, known for its bitter taste. Here and elsewhere (see Lam. 3:19) the term is figurative for bitterness. Normally wormwood is not poisonous, but the plague of the third trumpet involves effects far more potent than the taste

of this bitter plant: **many men die from the water.** Rapid pollution of **a third** of the world’s drinking water would set off a chaotic crisis.

8:12 Reference to darkening the **sun, moon, and stars** is reminiscent of the ninth plague upon Egypt (see Ex. 10:21, 22), and of the heavenly disturbances involved in Christ’s description of His second coming (see Matt. 24:29, 30). It is also similar to the phenomena of the sixth seal (6:12). **A third of the day did not shine** could mean that the sun, moon, and stars will not be seen for several hours of the normal cycle of day and night. But probably what is meant is that the intensity of light during the day and night is reduced by a third because of cosmic and atmospheric disturbances (vv. 7, 8, 10).

8:13 **Woe, woe, woe** refers to the impact of the three **remaining . . . trumpet** judgments on the unbelieving **inhabitants of the earth**. The first woe is the fifth trumpet (9:12); the second woe is the sixth trumpet (11:14). The third woe is said to be “coming quickly” and may be the same as the seventh trumpet (11:15-19), although that is not stated. If not, the final woe may be focused on Babylon, the great harlot, because of the climactic use of “woe” (translated *alas* in 18:10, 16, 19).

9:1 The **star fallen . . . to the earth** may be a demon (v. 11), Satan himself (12:9), or an angel serving God (20:1). **The bottomless pit** is the interim jail for some demons (see Luke 8:31). It is also the place of origin of the beast (11:7; 17:8). Furthermore, it will be the place where Satan will be imprisoned during Christ’s reign (20:2, 3).

9:3 **Locusts**, or grasshoppers, were greatly feared in ancient agricultural societies because they devoured crops. In Ex. 10:12-15, a plague of locusts wiped out what was left of Egypt’s crops. Joel 1:2 tells of an invasion of locusts that the Lord used to judge unrepentant Judah, which was a foreshadowing of the day of the Lord. Perhaps that passage is a basis of the imagery in vv. 2-10. **Scorpions** sting with their tails, causing great pain and even death (v. 10). The only point of comparison between the locusts and the scorpions is the “stings in their tails” (v. 10).

9:4 God controls the locusts’ actions, causing them to avoid those who **have the seal of God** (7:2-4). Since **no harm** is to be done **to the grass or any tree**—just unbelieving people who do not possess the seal of God—these insects are not ordinary locusts (vv. 7-10). A seal is placed on the 144,000 ^a of all the tribes of the

⁵ And ² they were not given *authority* to kill them, ^h but to torment them *for* five months. Their torment *was* like the torment of a scorpion when it strikes a man. ⁶ In those days ⁱ men will seek death and will not find it; they will desire to die, and death will flee from them.

⁷ The shape of the locusts *was* like horses prepared for battle. ^k On their heads were crowns of something like gold, ^l and their faces *were* like the faces of men. ⁸ They had hair like women's hair, and ^m their teeth *were* like lions' teeth. ⁹ And they had breastplates like breastplates of iron, and the sound of their wings *was* ⁿ like the sound of chariots with many horses running into battle. ¹⁰ They had tails like scorpions, and there were stings in their tails. Their power *was* to hurt men five months. ¹¹ And they had as king over them ^o the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in Hebrew is ³ Abaddon, but in Greek he has the name ⁴ Apollyon.

¹² One woe is past. Behold, still two more woes are coming after these things.

Sixth Trumpet: The Angels from the Euphrates

¹³ Then the sixth angel sounded: And I heard a voice from the four horns of the ^q golden altar which is before God,

⁵ ^h [Rev. 9:10; 11:7]

² The locusts

⁶ ⁱ Job 3:21; 7:15;

Is. 2:19; Jer. 8:3;

Rev. 6:16

⁷ Joel 2:4 ^k Nah.

3:17 ^l Dan. 7:8

⁸ ^m Joel 1:6

⁹ ⁿ Jer. 47:3; Joel

2:5-7

¹¹ ^o Eph. 2:2 ³ Lit.

Destruction ⁴ Lit.

Destroyer

¹² ^p Rev. 8:13; 11:14

¹³ ^q Rev. 8:3

¹⁴ ^r Gen. 15:18;

Deut. 1:7; Josh. 1:4;

Rev. 16:12

¹⁵ ^s Rev. 8:7-9; 9:18

¹⁶ ^t Ps. 68:17; Dan.

7:10 ^u Ezek. 38:4

^v Rev. 7:4

¹⁷ ^w 1 Chr. 12:8; Is.

5:28, 29

¹⁹ ^x Is. 9:15 ⁵ NU,

M the power of the

horses

²⁰ ^y Deut. 31:29

^z Lev. 17:7; Deut.

32:17; Ps. 106:37;

1 Cor. 10:20 ^o Ps.

115:4-7; 135:15-17;

Dan. 5:23

²¹ ^b Rev. 21:8; 22:15

^c NU, *M drugs*

¹⁴ saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, "Release the four angels who are bound ^r at the great river Euphrates."

¹⁵ So the four angels, who had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year, were released to kill a ^s third of mankind. ¹⁶ Now ^t the number of the army ^u of the horsemen *was* two hundred million; ^v I heard the number of them. ¹⁷ And thus I saw the horses in the vision: those who sat on them had breastplates of fiery red, hyacinth blue, and sulfur yellow; ^w and the heads of the horses *were* like the heads of lions; and out of their mouths came fire, smoke, and brimstone. ¹⁸ By these three *plagues* a third of mankind was killed—by the fire and the smoke and the brimstone which came out of their mouths. ¹⁹ For ⁵ their power is in their mouth and in their tails; ^x for their tails *are* like serpents, having heads; and with them they do harm.

²⁰ But the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, ^y did not repent of the works of their hands, that they should not worship ^z demons, ^a and idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk. ²¹ And they did not repent of their murders ^b or their ^c sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts.

children of Israel" (7:2-4) to protect them during "the great tribulation" (7:14).

9:5, 6 The **torment** apparently lasts **five months** because that is the life span of a locust. Many unbelieving **men will seek death**, but unsuccessfully. The passage does not say how their death wish is frustrated. However, this time period is an additional opportunity for these unbelievers to repent before the Lord (vv. 20, 21) and to be saved through Christ.

9:7 The phrase **like horses prepared for battle** may be further explained in v. 9 as "like breastplates of iron." If so, this means **the locusts** have some sort of armor. **Crowns . . . like gold** may imply that the locusts have high status among the demons but still rank below their king, Abaddon or Apollyon (v. 11). **faces of men:** The locusts have some humanlike characteristics.

9:8 **Hair like women's** may refer to the long antennae of insects.

Teeth . . . like lions' suggests strength and cruelty, a description similar to that of the beast in 13:2.

9:11 The angel of the **bottomless pit** is demonic and controls the demonic locusts (vv. 3-10). If this angel serves God, this is another instance where the activity of Satan or his demons is under the Lord's sovereign control (see 2 Cor. 12:7, 9). The **name** of the angel in **Hebrew** as in **Greek** means "Destruction."

9:12 The first **woe** spoken of in 8:13 is the demonic locust plague that comprises the fifth trumpet (vv. 1-11). This implies that the **two remaining woes** are the sixth (vv. 13-21; 11:14) and seventh trumpets (11:15-19).

9:13 The fact that John heard a **voice** instead of a symphony of the voices of all the martyrs (6:9, 10), and a voice of authority instead of an angel's voice (8:3-5), indicates that the speaker is the Lamb who was slain and has redeemed His people (5:9).

9:14-16 The **great river Euphrates** is the eastern boundary of the land promised to Abraham and his descendants in Gen. 15:18, as well as the geographic area from which powerful enemies like

Assyria and Babylon came to invade Israel (see Is. 8:5-8). It may represent the seat of Satan's former victory (in the Garden of Eden). The **release of the four angels** at the exact **hour and day** is in keeping with apocalyptic literature's portrayal of God's sovereign control of the timing of His plan (see Dan. 9:24-27). **The army of . . . two hundred million will kill a third of mankind**, under the command or influence of the four angels who were released. A third of humankind could number in the billions. Coupled with the former destruction of one-fourth of humanity, over one-half of the world's population will have been killed. Some hold that a *third* here is merely a stylistic feature of the trumpet judgments (8:7-12). Note also that widespread killing had already visited a fourth of the earth during the opening of the fourth seal (6:8), and many died during the catastrophes of the first three trumpets (8:7-11), further reducing the world population.

9:17-19 Although it is the horsemen for whom the number of two hundred million is given (v. 16), **the horses** they ride and their killing **power** are primarily described. There are similarities between the horses of the sixth trumpet judgment and the locusts shaped "like horses" (v. 7) of the fifth trumpet. The mention of **breastplates** (v. 9), the comparison with **lions** (v. 8), and the **power** in their **tails** (vv. 5, 10) could suggest that these two passages offer different perspectives on the same demonically inspired force. This is unlikely, however, because the locusts are not given authority to kill (v. 5), but only to torment, while the horses kill **a third of mankind**.

9:20, 21 **The rest of mankind** who do **not repent** does not include those who "have the seal of God on their foreheads" (v. 4; 7:2-4). The unwillingness to repent despite the incredible devastation of the **plagues** is reminiscent of Pharaoh's attitude toward most of the plagues that came upon Egypt (see Ex. 7:22; 9:7). *Repent* here means to change one's mind about ungodly **works**, to stop trusting **demons** and **idols** and to turn to the Lord Jesus Christ in faith (see Luke 24:47; Acts 26:20).

The Mighty Angel with the Little Book

10 I saw still another mighty angel coming down from heaven, clothed with a cloud. ^aAnd a rainbow *was* on ^bhis head, his face *was* like the sun, and ^chis feet like pillars of fire. ²He had a little book open in his hand. ^dAnd he set his right foot on the sea and *his* left foot on the land, ³and cried with a loud voice, as *when* a lion roars. When he cried out, ^eseven thunders uttered their voices. ⁴Now when the seven thunders ¹uttered their voices, I was about to write; but I heard a voice from heaven saying ²to me, ^f“Seal up the things which the seven thunders uttered, and do not write them.”

⁵The angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land ^graised up his ³hand to heaven ⁶and swore by Him who lives forever and ever, ^hwho created heaven and the things that are in it, the earth and the things that are in it, and the sea and the things that are in it, ⁱthat there should be delay no longer, ⁷but ^jin the days of the sounding of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, the mystery of God would be finished, as He declared to His servants the prophets.

John Eats the Little Book

⁸Then the voice which I heard from

CHAPTER 10

1 ^a Ezek. 1:26-28; Rev. 4:3 ^b Matt. 17:2; Rev. 1:16 ^c Rev. 1:15
2 ^d Ps. 95:5; Matt. 28:18
3 ^e Ps. 29:3-9; Rev. 4:5; 8:5
4 ^f Dan. 8:26; 12:4, 9; Rev. 22:10 ¹ NU, M sounded, ² NU, M omit to me
5 ^g Ex. 6:8; Deut. 32:40; Dan. 12:7
6 ^h NU, M right hand
6 ^h Gen. 1:1; Ex. 20:11; Neh. 9:6; Rev. 4:11 ¹ Dan. 12:7; Rev. 16:17
7 ^j Rev. 11:15
9 ^k Jer. 15:16; Ezek. 2:8; 3:1-3
10 ^l Ezek. 3:3
11 ^m Ezek. 2:10
11 ⁴ NU, M they

CHAPTER 11

1 ^a Ezek. 40:3-42:20; Zech. 2:1; Rev. 21:15 ^b Num. 23:18 ¹ NU, M omit And the angel stood
2 ^c Ezek. 40:17, 20 ^d Ps. 79:1; Luke 21:24 ^e Dan. 8:10
3 ^f Dan. 7:25; 12:7; Rev. 12:6; 13:5
3 ^g Deut. 17:6; Rev. 20:4 ^h Rev. 19:10
4 ⁱ Rev. 12:6

heaven spoke to me again and said, “Go, take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel who stands on the sea and on the earth.”

⁹So I went to the angel and said to him, “Give me the little book.”

And he said to me, ^k“Take and eat it; and it will make your stomach bitter, but it will be as sweet as honey in your mouth.”

¹⁰Then I took the little book out of the angel’s hand and ate it, ^land it was as sweet as honey in my mouth. But when I had eaten it, ^mmy stomach became bitter. ¹¹And ⁴he said to me, “You must prophesy again about many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings.”

The Two Witnesses

11 Then I was given ^aa reed like a measuring rod. ¹And the angel stood, saying, ^b“Rise and measure the temple of God, the altar, and those who worship there. ²But leave out ^cthe court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, ^dfor it has been given to the Gentiles. And they will ^etread the holy city underfoot for ^fforty-two months. ³And I will give ^gpower to my two ^gwitnesses, ^hand they will prophesy ⁱone thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth.”

10:1 This **mighty angel** could be the “strong angel” of 5:2 or the angel “having great authority” of 18:1. It is unlikely that this is Michael, who is referred to by name elsewhere (see 12:7; Dan. 12:1), or Christ, since He is never called an angel in the NT. Furthermore, unlike Christ, this angel comes to earth before the time of tribulation is over.

10:2 The **little book** is not the same as the scroll that was unsealed in 6:1–8:1. It is more likely the scroll eaten by Ezekiel (see Ezek. 2:9–3:3), although this scroll causes John’s *stomach* to become bitter (vv. 9, 10), not just his spirit (see Ezek. 3:14). The angel standing with one **foot on the sea** and the other **on the land** conveys the image of taking possession. A majestic representative of God’s throne is intervening in the affairs of the earth.

10:3, 4 The devil and his hordes present themselves as fierce lions (see 9:8, 17; 1 Pet. 5:8). The victorious **lion** of Judah (5:5) also has an angelic servant who **roars** like a lion. It cannot be known what the **seven thunders uttered** because a heavenly **voice**, perhaps Christ’s, commanded John to **seal up** what he had heard (see Dan. 12:4, 9).

10:6 **swore by Him who lives forever**: Only by the all-powerful authority of the eternal Creator can the mighty angel (v. 1) make the declaration about how and when “the mystery of God would be finished” (v. 7). After the sounding of the seventh trumpet (11:15–19), there will be **no more delay** in the unfolding of events leading toward Christ’s return (19:11–21).

10:7 **The mystery of God**, truth that has not been previously revealed (see Eph. 3:9), will be revealed and **finished** as the events of the final half of the Apocalypse develop. Significant aspects of this mystery have already been revealed through the OT and NT **prophets**, but much remains that will be understood only when the events take place.

10:8–11 As words of judgment, the book would **make** John’s **stomach bitter**, in the same way that Ezekiel’s spirit had become bitter (see Ezek. 3:14). The events of Ezek. 2, 3 occurred soon before God’s

judgment on Judah and Jerusalem and were in effect the prophet’s commission. John may have sensed a similar commission here to **prophesy** his message of judgment to the world. John’s prophecy about **peoples, nations, tongues, and kings** may refer specifically to the remainder of the second woe (11:1–14), since there is a focus on the testimony of the two witnesses. However, the use of similar expressions in 13:7; 14:6; and 17:15 implies that John’s commission was to prophesy most or all of the Book of Revelation, a prophecy which speaks of all the events leading up to Christ’s second coming (19:11–21).

11:1 John is given **a reed like a measuring rod**, much like that used by Ezekiel (see Ezek. 40:3, 5) in his vision of the measuring of the temple (see Ezek. 40–48). **measure the temple . . . altar**: This is the temple of the tribulation period that will eventually be desecrated (see 13:14, 15; Dan. 9:27; Luke 21:24; 2 Thess. 2:4). The measuring of **those who worship there** may mean that those who worship the Lord in the temple will be protected, while unbelieving Gentiles will not.

11:2 Luke 21:24 prophesies that **the Gentiles will tread the holy city underfoot** until “the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.” Apparently the period of **forty-two months** is the conclusion of “the times of the Gentiles.” *Gentiles* here may also be translated “nations” (v. 9; 10:11).

11:3 Forty-two months (v. 2) is the same length of time as **one thousand two hundred . . . sixty days** (12:6). Almost certainly “a time and times and half a time” (12:14) is also a period of three and a half years made up of 42 30-day lunar months. These expressions draw from the prophecies in Daniel (see Dan. 12:6, 7, 11, 12). The **two witnesses** will **prophesy** for 1260 days with astounding **power** (vv. 5, 6). Therefore, it seems that the beast’s period of domination (v. 7; 13:5) follows the ministry of the witnesses, each occupying roughly half the tribulation period. The two unnamed witnesses are strikingly similar to Elijah (see vv. 5, 6; 1 Kin. 17; Mal. 4:5) and Moses (see v. 6; Ex. 7–11), who appeared together with Christ on the Mount of

⁴These are the ^jtwo olive trees and the two lampstands standing before the ²God of the earth. ⁵And if anyone wants to harm them, ^kfire proceeds from their mouth and devours their enemies. ^lAnd if anyone wants to harm them, he must be killed in this manner. ⁶These ^mhave power to shut heaven, so that no rain falls in the days of their prophecy; and they have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to strike the earth with all plagues, as often as they desire.

The Witnesses Killed

⁷When they ⁿfinish their testimony, ^othe beast that ascends ^pout of the bottomless pit ^qwill make war against them, overcome them, and kill them. ⁸And their dead bodies *will lie* in the street of ^rthe great city which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, ^swhere also ³our Lord was crucified. ⁹^tThen *those* from the peoples, tribes, tongues, and nations ⁴will see their dead bodies three-and-a-half days, ^uand not allow their dead bodies to be put into graves. ¹⁰^vAnd those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them, make merry, ^wand send gifts to one another, ^xbecause these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth.

4 / Ps. 52:8; Jer. 11:16; Zech. 4:2, 3, 11, 14 ² NU, M Lord 5 ² Kin. 1:10-12; Jer. 1:10; 5:14; Ezek. 43:3; Hos. 6:5; Rev. 9:17 ¹ Num. 16:29 6 ^m 1 Kin. 17:1; Luke 4:25; [James 5:16, 17] 7 ⁿ Luke 13:32 8 ^o Rev. 13:1, 11; 17:8 9 ^p Rev. 9:1, 2 ^q Dan. 7:21; Rev. 13:7 8 ^r Rev. 14:8 ^s Heb. 13:12 ³ NU, M their 9 ^t Rev. 17:15 10 ^u 1 Kin. 13:22; Ps. 79:2, 3 ⁴ NU, M see... and will not allow 10 ^v Rev. 12:12 11 ^w Neh. 8:10, 12; Esth. 9:19, 22 ^x Rev. 16:10 11 ^v Rev. 11:9 12 ^z Ezek. 37:5, 9, 10 12 ^o Is. 14:13 ^b Is. 60:8; Acts 1:9 13 ^c 2 Kin. 2:11, 12 ⁵ M / 13 ^d Rev. 6:12; 8:5; 11:19; 16:18 ^e Rev. 16:19 ^f Josh. 7:19; John 9:24; Rev. 14:7; 16:9; 19:7 14 ^g Rev. 8:13; 9:12 15 ^h Rev. 8:2; 10:7 ⁱ Is. 27:13 / Rev. 12:10 ^k Ex. 15:18; Dan. 2:44; 7:14, 27; Luke 1:33

The Witnesses Resurrected

¹¹^yNow after the three-and-a-half days ^zthe breath of life from God entered them, and they stood on their feet, and great fear fell on those who saw them. ¹²And ⁵they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, “Come up here.” ^aAnd they ascended to heaven ^bin a cloud, ^cand their enemies saw them. ¹³In the same hour ^dthere was a great earthquake, ^eand a tenth of the city fell. In the earthquake seven thousand people were killed, and the rest were afraid ^fand gave glory to the God of heaven.

¹⁴^gThe second woe is past. Behold, the third woe is coming quickly.

Seventh Trumpet: The Kingdom Proclaimed

¹⁵Then ^hthe seventh angel sounded: ⁱAnd there were loud voices in heaven, saying, ^j“The ⁶kingdoms of this world have become *the kingdoms* of our Lord and of His Christ, ^kand He shall reign forever and ever!” ¹⁶And ^lthe twenty-four elders who sat before God on their thrones fell on their faces and ^mworshiped God, ¹⁷saying:

⁶ NU, M kingdom... has become the kingdom 16 ^l Matt. 19:28; Rev. 4:4 ^m Rev. 4:11; 5:9, 12, 14; 7:11

Transfiguration (see Luke 9:29–32). It is also possible that these two witnesses symbolize all faithful believers testifying during the tribulation. **Clothed in sackcloth** means the witnesses are mourning for the unrepentant world to which they prophesy (see Matt. 11:21).

11:4 The witnesses are described as **two olive trees** and **two lampstands**, linking them to the vision in Zech. 4 of “the two anointed ones, who stand beside the Lord of the whole earth” (see Zech. 4:14). There the two anointed ones are Zerubbabel and Joshua the priest. But the overarching principle for these and all other witnesses for the Lord is that their testimony to the truth is “not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit” (Zech. 4:6).

11:6 The two witnesses have the authority to prevent **rain** during **the days of their prophecy**, identifying them with Elijah, whose prayer caused it not to rain for three and a half years (James 5:17). Turning the **waters into blood** (Ex. 7:17–21) and striking **the earth** with **plagues** (see Ex. 7–11) is reminiscent of Moses in Egypt.

11:7, 8 **Finish** translates the same word Jesus shouted climactically and triumphantly from the Cross: “It is finished” (John 19:30). **The beast** is allowed to **kill** the two witnesses in the same city where Jesus was put to death. The beast, who emerges as the satanically empowered world ruler in chs. 13; 17, emerges from **the bottomless pit**, as did the demonic locust plague of the fifth trumpet (9:1–10). **The great city** in Revelation is often Babylon (14:8), which possibly represents Rome (see 1 Pet. 5:13). But the further description **where also our Lord was crucified** seems to refer to Jerusalem. Some see the phrase as symbolic, meaning the sinful world in which Christ was crucified. **Sodom** was the prototype for the moral degeneration of this great city (see Gen. 19); **Egypt** was the prototype for its rampant idolatry.

11:9, 10 **The peoples, tribes, tongues, and nations** are those to whom the gospel witness must continue until “the end of the age” (see Matt. 28:19, 20). **Those who dwell on the earth** are those upon whom God’s judgment falls (6:10; 8:13). Being **dead** for **three-and-a-half days** recalls the three-and-a-half year ministry of the witnesses (v. 3). The death of the **two prophets** (v. 7) will set

off a global celebration among unbelievers who have hated their message of truth.

11:13 **In the same hour**: Soon after the two witnesses ascend to heaven, **a great earthquake** (6:12) will destroy **a tenth of the city**, resulting in **seven thousand** casualties. Those who survive will be terrified and will glorify God.

11:14 **The second woe** includes the sixth trumpet (9:12–21) and a second interlude (10:1–11:13). **The third woe** is apparently the seventh trumpet (vv. 15–19), since it is said to be **coming quickly**, and since 8:13 relates the woes to the last three blasts of the trumpet. The final woe may extend further since the word **woe** recurs in 12:12.

11:15 **Our Lord... shall reign forever** anticipates the return of Christ (6:12–17; 19:11–21).

11:16–18 **The twenty-four elders** were previously seen as continually worshiping God (4:10, 11) and the Lord Jesus (5:8–10). Here their thanksgiving to the **Lord God Almighty** enters a new phase: they praise God’s **power** and **wrath** and the corresponding distribution of **reward** and judgment. This stanza of heavenly thanks seems to reflect on the fulfillment of the great messianic prophecy in Ps. 2.

11:17 **Reigned** may refer to a present rule in heaven, or to the fact that Christ has already come to earth to subdue the nations (v. 18) by this point. It is also possible that this is a past tense of certainty,

the Almighty

(Gk. *pantokratōr*) (4:8; 11:17; 15:3; 16:7, 14; 19:6, 15; 21:22; 2 Cor. 6:18) Strong’s #3841

The Greek word means “one who has power over everything”—in other words, the One in total control. God commands all the hosts of powers in heaven and earth, and He is able to overcome all His foes. The title Almighty occurs often in Revelation as this book unveils God’s awesome control over all the universe and throughout all history.

“We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty,
The One ⁿ who is and who was ⁷ and
who is to come,
Because You have taken Your great
power ^a and reigned.
¹⁸ The nations were ^p angry, and Your
⁸ wrath has come,
And the time of the ^a dead, that they
should be judged,
And that You should reward Your
servants the prophets and the
saints,
And those who fear Your name,
small and great,
And should destroy those who
destroy the earth.”

¹⁹ Then ^r the temple of God was opened
in heaven, and the ark of ⁹ His covenant
was seen in His temple. And ^s there were
lightnings, noises, thunderings, an earth-
quake, ^t and great hail.

17 ^a Rev. 16:5 ^a Rev.
19:6 ^r NU, M omit
and who is to come
18 ^p Ps. 2:1 ^a Dan.
7:10; [Rev. 20:12, 13]
^a anger
19 ^r Rev. 4:1; 15:5,
8 ^s Rev. 8:5 ^r Rev.
16:21 ⁹ M the
covenant of the Lord

CHAPTER 12
² ^a Is. 26:17; 66:6-9;
Mic. 4:9; Gal. 4:19
³ ^b Rev. 13:1; 17:3,
7, 9
⁴ ^c Rev. 9:10, 19
^d Rev. 8:7, 12 ^e Dan.
8:10 ^f Rev. 12:2
^g Ex. 1:16; Matt. 2:16
⁵ ^h Ps. 2:9; Is. 7:14;
9:6; Rev. 2:27;
19:15 ⁱ Luke
24:51; Acts 1:9-11
⁶ ^j Rev. 12:4, 14
^k Rev. 11:3; 13:5

The Woman, the Child, and the Dragon

12 Now a great sign appeared in heav-
en: a woman clothed with the sun,
with the moon under her feet, and on
her head a garland of twelve stars. ² Then
being with child, she cried out ^a in labor
and in pain to give birth.
³ And another sign appeared in heaven:
behold, ^b a great, fiery red dragon having
seven heads and ten horns, and seven
diadems on his heads. ^{4c} His tail drew a
third ^d of the stars of heaven ^e and threw
them to the earth. And the dragon stood
^f before the woman who was ready to give
birth, ^g to devour her Child as soon as it
was born. ⁵ She bore a male Child ^h who
was to rule all nations with a rod of iron.
And her Child was ⁱ caught up to God and
His throne. ⁶ Then ^j the woman fled into
the wilderness, where she has a place
prepared by God, that they should feed
her there ^k one thousand two hundred
and sixty days.

signifying a future event as good as done in God's plan for the world. For example in Rom. 8:30, the believer is said to be *justified* and already *glorified* (past tense), although glorification in fact takes place later, when the Christian comes into Jesus' presence.

11:18 Here God's **wrath has come** (6:16, 17). The wrath of Satan will also be seen in 12:12, but the divine wrath cannot be rivaled (14:19). **The time of the dead** includes the bestowing of rewards upon God's people, His **servants, prophets, and saints** (see 2 Cor. 5:10), and the pronouncement of everlasting judgment on the unbelieving **nations** (see Matt. 25:46). This is what the martyrs prayed for in 6:10; it is not completed until 20:12–15. **Those who fear** God's **name** are those who have responded by faith to "the everlasting gospel" (14:6, 7), possibly including those who feared and glorified God in v. 13.

11:19 **The temple of God** here is not the one in vv. 1, 2. That earthly temple had an outer court "given to the Gentiles" (v. 2); this temple is **in heaven**. An **ark of the covenant** is spoken of here, even though the ark of the covenant made by Moses was probably destroyed by the Babylonians when they looted and burned the temple in Jerusalem (see 2 Chr. 36:18, 19). The ark represented God's presence, leadership, and protection of Israel in the wilderness (see Num. 10:33–36) and in the Promised Land (see Josh. 3:3, 15–17). The ark here may represent similar blessings related to the New Covenant and Christ's return (see Heb. 9:1, 4, 11, 23–28).

12:1 In Revelation a **sign** is a person or event that looks beyond itself to some greater significance. In John's Gospel, each *sign* points to the divinity of Christ (see John 2:11). In Revelation, besides the

additional **great signs in heaven** (v. 3; 15:1), there are demonic signs on earth (13:13, 14; 16:14; 19:20). **The woman clothed with the sun** is interpreted by some as the church, by others as believing Jews, and by still others as ethnic Israelites. The **garland of twelve stars** is a reference to the twelve tribes of Israel, or perhaps to the twelve apostles (see 21:12–14). The stars recall Joseph's vision (Gen. 37:9–11), which signified the preeminence of Joseph over his brothers.

12:2 The description of **labor and pain** before giving **birth** to the Child who becomes ruler of the nations (v. 5) may speak specifically of Mary, the mother of Jesus (see Mic. 5:3; Luke 2:5–7). Later details (vv. 6, 13–17), however, suggest that the woman probably has a broader reference. Since similar imagery is used of Israel in Mic. 4:9, 10, it may picture the Jewish nation or the believing remnant within the nation. In addition, the first prophecy of the Bible, Gen. 3:15, serves as the ultimate backdrop to this struggle between a woman and Satan.

12:3 The **sign of the fiery red dragon** is interpreted in v. 9 as Satan, who first appears in Scripture as the serpent in the Garden of Eden (see Gen. 3). The imagery is in keeping with OT and extrabiblical usage (see Is. 27:1). The dragon with the seven heads and ten horns refers to Satan and the empire over which he rules during the course of time. **Seven heads, ten horns, and seven diadems** refer to Satan's (v. 9) brilliance, power, and glory as "god of this age" (2 Cor. 4:4). This description is almost identical to that of the beast from the sea in 13:1.

12:4 The reference to **a third of the stars** may link this event to the earlier trumpet judgments in which *a third* is the characteristic proportion of destruction (8:7), including a "third of the stars" (see 8:12). However, many understand this reference to speak of the rebellion of a third of the angelic host following Satan. The attempt of **the dragon to devour** the newborn Christ **Child** reveals that the strategy of Herod to kill the baby Jesus (see Matt. 2:3–16) was satanically inspired.

12:5 The **male Child** who will **rule . . . with a rod of iron** is the messianic figure of Ps. 2:8, 9; however, there is no earthly rule over **all nations** at this point. From the perspective of this heavenly scene, the Child-Ruler is soon **caught up** to the **throne of God**, apparently referring to the ascension of Christ (see Acts 1:9).

12:6 **The wilderness** here is a **place of protection prepared by God** (Hos. 2:14) for the woman. The reference to God's feeding the woman in the wilderness recalls the Lord's miraculous provision for Israel in the Sinai wilderness (see Ex. 16). **One thousand two hundred and sixty days** is the period of provision and protection for the woman in the wilderness. The detailed way in which this same length of time is expressed (see "a time and times and half a

Devil
(Gk. <i>diabolos</i>) (2:10; 12:9, 12; 20:2, 10; Matt. 4:1; Acts 10:38) Strong's #1228
Satan
(Gk. <i>Satanas</i>) (20:2, 7; Matt. 4:10; Rom. 16:20) Strong's #4567
The word <i>diabolos</i> signifies a slanderer, one who accuses another. Hence that other name given him: "the accuser of our brethren" (12:10). The name Satan signifies an adversary, one who lies in wait for or sets himself in opposition to another. These and other names of the same fallen spirit point to different features of his evil character and deceitful operations.

Satan Thrown Out of Heaven

⁷And war broke out in heaven: ¹Michael and his angels fought ^mwith the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, ⁸but they ¹did not prevail, nor was a place found for ²them in heaven any longer. ⁹So ⁿthe great dragon was cast out, ^othat serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, ^pwho deceives the whole world; ^qhe was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

¹⁰Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, ^r“Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, ^swho accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down. ¹¹And ^tthey overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, ^uand they did not love their lives to the death. ¹²Therefore ^vrejoice, O heavens, and you who dwell in them! ^wWoe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, ^xbecause he knows that he has a short time.”

The Woman Persecuted

¹³Now when the dragon saw that he had been cast to the earth, he persecuted ^ythe woman who gave birth to the male

⁷ ¹ Dan. 10:13, 21; 12:1; Jude 9 ^m Rev. 20:2
⁸ ¹ were not strong enough ² M him
⁹ ⁿ Luke 10:18; John 12:31 ^o Gen. 3:1, 4; 2 Cor. 11:3; Rev. 12:15; 20:2 ^p Rev. 20:3 ^q Rev. 9:1
¹⁰ ^r Rev. 11:15 ^s Job 1:9, 11; 2:5; Zech. 3:1
¹¹ ^t Rom. 16:20
¹² ^u Luke 14:26; [Rev. 2:10]
¹³ ^v Ps. 96:11; Is. 44:23; Rev. 18:20
¹⁴ ^w Rev. 8:13 ^x Rev. 10:6
¹⁵ ^y Rev. 12:5

¹⁴ ^z Ex. 19:4; Deut. 32:11; Is. 40:31
¹⁵ ^a Rev. 12:6 ^b Rev. 17:3 ^c Dan. 7:25; 12:7
¹⁶ ^d Is. 59:19
¹⁷ ³ NU, M omit Christ

CHAPTER 13

¹ ^a Dan. 7:2, 7
² ^b Rev. 12:3 ^c Dan. 7:8; 11:36; Rev. 17:3
³ ¹ NU he ² NU, M ten horns and seven heads
⁴ ^d Rev. 12:3, 9; 13:4, 12
⁵ ^e Rev. 13:12, 14
⁶ ^f Rev. 17:8

Child. ^{14z}But the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, ^athat she might fly ^binto the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished ^cfor a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent. ¹⁵So the serpent ^dspewed water out of his mouth like a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away by the flood. ¹⁶But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed up the flood which the dragon had spewed out of his mouth. ¹⁷And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus ³Christ.

The Beast from the Sea

13 Then ¹I stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw ^aa beast rising up out of the sea, ^bhaving ²seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads a ^cblasphemous name. ²Now the beast which I saw was like a leopard, his feet were like *the feet of a bear*, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. The ^ddragon gave him his power, his throne, and great authority. ³And I saw one of his heads ^eas if it had been mortally wounded, and his deadly wound was healed. And ^fall the world marveled

time” in v. 14) suggests half of a literal seven-year tribulation period (see Dan. 9:27).

12:7, 8 Michael is an archangel (see Jude 9). According to Dan. 12:1 he is a special guardian angel for the nation of Israel. Apparently he commands an army of **angels**. Michael and the heavenly forces are victorious, making heaven off-limits to Satan and his demons.

12:9 The devil’s expulsion from heaven **to the earth** means that this world becomes his base of operations, and that his anger is vented toward the remaining inhabitants of the earth (v. 12). Thus it is likely that the end times will be the greatest period of spiritual warfare (see Eph. 6:10–18) in history.

12:10, 11 The heavenly defeat of Satan (vv. 7–9) is followed by reference to his earthly setbacks, including the crucifixion of Christ (**the blood of the Lamb**), the verbal witness of believers (**the word of their testimony**), and the martyrdom of some of the **brethren**. All these events precede the coming of the **kingdom of our God**.

12:12 Those in the **heavens** have good reason to **rejoice**, because of the permanent expulsion of **the devil**. On the other hand, the natural creation (**the earth and the sea**) now has an additional **woe** (8:13; 9:12; 11:14) to contend with—the **great** anger of the devil, who **knows his time is short**. Soon Satan is to be bound in the bottomless pit for a thousand years (20:1–3).

12:14 The **woman** (vv. 1–6) is somehow brought to her place of protection from the **serpent**, the **wilderness**, as if carried on the **wings of a great eagle**. This is reminiscent of how Israel escaped the Egyptians and came to Mt. Sinai (see Ex. 19:4; Deut. 32:11, 12). A **time** probably equals one year, so the period of protection here is three and a half years, which corresponds to the length of the two witnesses’ testimony in 11:3. It is also equivalent to the period of the beast’s authority (see “forty-two months” in 13:5), which includes his ability “to make war with the saints and to overcome them” (see 13:7; see Dan. 7:25; 12:7).

12:15, 16 The danger of the **flood** to the **woman** is averted when **the earth** opens up, perhaps as it did to claim the rebellious Korah

and his followers in Num. 16:30–33. There is no way of determining whether this describes an actual flood or figuratively describes the onslaught of Satan against those protected by God.

12:17 Enraged by his inability to destroy the **woman**, Satan, the **dragon**, resorts to **war** against a related group. **The rest of her offspring** are believers in Christ, since they **keep the commandments of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ**. It is not clear whether they are Jewish believers (physical offspring of the woman) or Gentile believers (spiritual offspring; see Gal. 3:29). In desperation, Satan opposes every trace of a biblically oriented faith in Christ.

13:1, 2 The description of the first **beast (seven heads . . . ten horns . . . ten crowns)** is very similar to that of the great **dragon** (that is, Satan) in 12:3. Whereas the crowns are on the heads of the dragon, they are on the **horns** of the sea beast. The seven-headed beast may refer to Gentile world power as it relates to Israel, especially in the end times. The heads are identified both as mountains and as rulers (17:9, 10). A mountain is typically a symbol for a kingdom (see Dan. 2:34, 35, 44, 45). The seven heads could be Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Greece, Persia, Rome, and a restored Roman Empire. The ten horns may signify the final form of Gentile world power. The beast receives his **power and authority** from the dragon. The parallel to the four beasts (especially the fourth) in Dan. 7 and the explanation of the beast given in 17:8–11 make it seem that the beast symbolizes both a revived Roman Empire, which exercises universal authority, and a specific ruler, whom John calls the “Antichrist” in 1 John 2:18. The **blasphemous name** may be the common claim of ancient Roman emperors to be divine, or blasphemy against the name of the true God (vv. 5, 6) as Daniel predicted of the willful “king” during the tribulation period (see Dan. 11:36).

13:3, 4 One of his heads may stand for a specific ruler, but more likely it stands for an empire. The unbelieving **world** is enticed (12:9) by Satan to follow and worship the **beast**. Those who **worshiped** the beast also unwittingly worshiped the devil, **who gave authority to the beast**. Any false worship or idolatry is ultimately

and followed the beast. ⁴So they worshiped the dragon who gave authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, ^g“Who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?”

⁵And he was given ^ha mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was given authority to ³continue for ⁱforty-two months. ⁶Then he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, ^jHis tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven. ⁷It was granted to him ^kto make war with the saints and to overcome them. And ^lauthority was given him over every ⁴tribe, tongue, and nation. ⁸All who dwell on the earth will worship him, ^mwhose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain ⁿfrom the foundation of the world.

⁴ ^g Ex. 15:11; Is. 46:5; Rev. 18:18
⁵ ^h Dan. 7:8, 11, 20, 25; 11:36; 2 Thess. 2:3 ⁱ Rev. 11:2 ³ M make war
⁶ ^j [John 1:14; Col. 2:9]
⁷ ^k Dan. 7:21; Rev. 11:7 ^l Rev. 11:18
⁴ NU, M add and people
⁸ ^m Ex. 32:32; [Rev. 20:12-15] ⁿ Matt. 25:34; Rev. 17:8
⁹ ^o Rev. 2:7
¹⁰ ^p Is. 33:1; Jer. 15:2; 43:11 ^q Gen. 9:6; Matt. 26:52; Rev. 11:18 ^r Heb. 6:12; Rev. 14:12
⁵ perseverance
¹¹ ^s Rev. 11:7
¹² ^t Rev. 13:3, 4

⁹ If anyone has an ear, let him hear. ¹⁰ He who leads into captivity shall go into captivity; ^q he who kills with the sword must be killed with the sword. ^r Here is the ⁵ patience and the faith of the saints.

The Beast from the Earth

¹¹ Then I saw another beast ^s coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb and spoke like a dragon. ¹² And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence, and causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, ^t whose deadly wound was healed. ¹³ ^u He performs great

¹³ ^u Deut. 13:1; Matt. 24:24; 2 Thess. 2:9; Rev. 16:14

demonic and satanic (see 1 Cor. 10:20–22). The beast is worshiped because the world is convinced that no one is **like** him and that no one can successfully **make war** against him.

13:5, 7 Forty-two months is the duration of the beast’s worldwide supremacy, in keeping with the prophecy of Dan. 7:25.

13:6 This first use of the word **tabernacle** in Revelation (see also 15:5; 21:3) may look back to the time when the power and presence of God were undoubted because the glory of God was seen clearly in the wilderness tabernacle. It may also look ahead to the time when God’s tabernacle will be among His people in the new heaven and earth (21:3). In the meantime, there is no visible answer to the beast’s **blasphemy**. He will appear to be victorious over God’s people.

13:8 The Book of Life is the register of those who will receive eternal life, in contrast to those destined for the lake of fire (20:12, 15). Just as it was God’s plan before **the world** began that Jesus Christ, the **Lamb** of God, would be **slain** for humanity’s sin, so the **names** of believers have been included in the Book of Life from the beginning (17:8).

13:9 If anyone has an ear, let him hear seems to imply that either the following saying (v. 10) or the wider context has significant

present application, not just future reference. Therefore, widespread spiritual delusion and blasphemy, as well as persecution and martyrdom, should not surprise believers at any point in history.

13:10 Even when believers face **captivity** or are being **killed**, they can have **patience** and **faith**, knowing that God will vindicate them (see Rom. 12:19) on “the day of wrath and . . . righteous judgment” (Rom. 2:5).

13:11 Another means “another of the same kind,” speaking of the close relationship between this **beast** from **the earth** and the previous beast that emerged from the sea (v. 1), even though their outward appearance is markedly different. This beast’s actions described in vv. 12–17 make it virtually certain that he is the false prophet spoken of in 16:13; 19:20; 20:10. The two beasts may also symbolize the intermingling of secular, political power and religion during the Roman period and during the last days. This is the only place in Revelation where **lamb** does not refer to Christ. The lamb with **two horns** here is an emblem of Jewish worship and religious authority. **Spoke like a dragon** probably indicates that the second beast’s message comes from the dragon (Satan), just as the first beast took his power and authority from the dragon (13:2).

13:12–15 Great signs, such as calling **fire** from **heaven** and giving

God Restrains Evil



The presence of pain, suffering, and evil in the world causes some people to wonder whether a good God exists, and if He does, why He doesn’t put an end to it if He can. John’s vision of a beast rising up out of the sea (13:1) and causing great havoc in the world does not explain why there is evil, but it does sound an important note of encouragement: The evils of the world happen only by “permission” and those that do occur have precise limits imposed on them by God. Notice that the beast “was given authority to continue for *forty-two months*” (13:5, emphasis added).

Clearly, God has placed restraints on evil. We have not and will not experience the full onslaught of pain and suffering that could be delivered. This restraining work of God can be seen in several incidents in the Old Testament:

Adam and Eve (Gen. 3:22–24). After Adam and Eve sinned, God sent them out of the garden and sealed it off. According to Genesis, this was not a matter of retaliation by God but a protection from the possibility of eating from the tree of life and being separated from Him forever.

The Flood (Gen. 6:5–8). When evil had corrupted the entire world, God acted with “severe mercy” by sending the flood. This restricted evil and made possible a second start for the earth.

The Tower of Babel (Gen. 11:1–9). Again, widespread evil threatened to consume the creation. God intervened by confusing the languages of the peoples to limit their collusion in wickedness. This was a case of God preserving sinful humanity from itself.

Job (Job 1:6–2:10). Satan wanted to prove to God that Job’s faithfulness was merely the result of God blessing him. So God granted Satan limited permission to inflict suffering.

John was writing to believers to help them maintain a realistic view of good and evil in the midst of intense persecution. Today, as we watch televised reports of death and disaster around the world, and as we experience pain and suffering in our own families and among our neighbors and associates, we too need to maintain a godly perspective. God has placed limits on evil. The very fact that we have a distaste for it reflects that we do indeed bear God’s image as His creatures.

signs, ^vso that he even makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men. ^{14w}And he deceives ⁶those who dwell on the earth ^xby those signs which he was granted to do in the sight of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who was wounded by the sword ^yand lived. ¹⁵He was granted *power* to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak ^zand cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed. ¹⁶He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, ^ato receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, ¹⁷and that no one may buy or sell except one who has ⁷the mark or ^bthe name of the beast, ^cor the number of his name.

^{18d}Here is wisdom. Let him who has ^eunderstanding calculate ^fthe number of the beast, ^gfor it is the number of a man: His number is 666.

The Lamb and the 144,000

14 Then I looked, and behold, ^{1a} ^aLamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him ^bone hundred and forty-four thousand, ²having His Father's name ^cwritten on their foreheads. ²And I heard a voice from heaven, ^dlike the voice of many waters, and like the voice of loud thunder. And I heard the sound

13 v 1 Kin. 18:38; 2 Kin. 1:10; Luke 9:54; Rev. 11:5; 20:9
14 w Rev. 12:9
x 2 Thess. 2:9
y 2 Kin. 20:7 6 M my own people
15 z Rev. 16:2
16 a Gal. 6:17; Rev. 7:3; 14:9; 20:4
17 b Rev. 14:9-11
c Rev. 15:2 7 NU, M the mark, the name
18 d Rev. 17:9
e [1 Cor. 2:14] f Rev. 15:2 g Rev. 21:17

CHAPTER 14

1 a Rev. 5:6 b Rev. 7:4; 14:3 c Ezek. 9:4; Rev. 7:3; 22:4 1 NU, M the 2 NU, M add His name and
2 d Rev. 1:15; 19:6 e Rev. 5:8
3 f Rev. 5:9
4 g [Matt. 19:12; 2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:27] h Rev. 3:4; 7:17 i Rev. 5:9 j Heb. 12:23; James 1:18
3 M adds by Jesus
5 k Ps. 32:2; Zeph. 3:13; Mal. 2:6; John 1:47; 1 Pet. 2:22
f Eph. 5:27 4 NU, M falsehood 5 NU, M omit the rest of v. 5.
6 m Rev. 8:13 n Eph. 3:9 o Rev. 13:7
7 p Rev. 11:18
q Neh. 9:6

of ^eharpists playing their harps. ³They sang as it were a new song before the throne, before the four living creatures, and the elders; and no one could learn that song ^fexcept the hundred and forty-four thousand who were redeemed from the earth. ⁴These are the ones who were not defiled with women, ^gfor they are virgins. These are the ones ^hwho follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These ⁱwere ³redeemed from *among* men, ^jbeing firstfruits to God and to the Lamb. ⁵And ^kin their mouth was found no ⁴deceit, for ^lthey are without fault ⁵before the throne of God.

The Proclamations of Three Angels

⁶Then I saw another angel ^mflying in the midst of heaven, ⁿhaving the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth—^oto every nation, tribe, tongue, and people— ⁷saying with a loud voice, ^p“Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; ^qand worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water.”

⁸And another angel followed, saying, ^r“Babylon ⁶is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because ^sshe has made all nations

8 r Is. 21:9; Jer. 51:8; Rev. 18:2 s Jer. 51:7; Rev. 17:2 6 NU Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, which has made; M Babylon the great is fallen. She has made

breath and speech to the **image** of the first beast, are persuasive. These signs are very similar to those performed by the two witnesses (11:5, 6). The performance of great signs by the power of Satan is part of the mass deception prophesied by Paul in 2 Thess. 2:8, 9.

13:16, 17 The **mark** is equivalent to the **name of the beast** and the **number of his name**. Apparently the mark of the beast is some sort of identifiable proof of ownership and loyalty placed on the **right hand** or the forehead. Since there is no evidence of such a practice in first-century society, this mark is apparently an evil counterfeit of the seal on the foreheads of the servants of God in 7:3; 14:1.

13:18 After the preceding description of the tyranny of the **beast**, an explanatory comment designed to impart **wisdom** and **understanding** to the reader is given. The **number** (the “name” in v. 17) of the beast is **666**; it is also described as the **number of a man**. The beast is merely a man, not a god, as the signs might suggest. The number 6, just short of 7 (the number of completeness), is intensified as 666—the number of the most powerful man who is not God. This man’s identity will someday be understood in relation to the number 666. It is a key for identifying the Antichrist.

14:1 **Mount Zion** is a synonym for the earthly Jerusalem, focusing on the hill where the temple was built. There is some difficulty in deciding whether this is a reference to the earthly or to the heavenly Mt. Zion (see Heb. 12:22). The **one hundred and forty-four thousand** have God’s **name written on their foreheads**, instead of the name of the beast (13:17). In 7:2–4 the protection for this group is referred to as a seal on their foreheads. This is intended to be a contrast to the mark of the beast (13:16, 17), or it may be a sign visible only in heaven and in the new earth and heaven (3:12; 22:4).

14:3 The **new song** is probably the one sung **before** God’s **throne** in 5:9, 10. Since that song is about redemption and victory in Christ, apparently only those already in heaven and those **redeemed from the earth**, like the **hundred and forty-four thousand**, are allowed to **learn** it.

14:4 The **virgins** are symbolic of spiritual purity (see 2 Cor. 11:2). Redeemed believers will not compromise with evil. They will reject false doctrine and refuse to worship the beast. In the NT, the **firstfruits** are the first part of a crop to be gathered, implying a much larger harvest to come later (see 1 Cor. 16:15). At times, the term emphasizes only the sanctified nature of a sacrifice (see James 1:18). Certainly the commitment of the 144,000 to God emphasizes that they are holy ones, set apart to God. However, the continuing offer of the gospel (v. 6) and the harvest imagery (v. 15) also implies that many others will come to faith in Jesus Christ (vv. 12, 13).

14:5 The 144,000 were not sinless in their earthly lives (see Rom. 3:23), but they were without **deceit** and **fault** with regard to their testimony for Christ. In particular, they did not participate in falsehood, because they rejected the lie of the Antichrist (see 2 Thess. 2). They were without fault or blemish because they refused the mark of the beast.

14:6, 7 The **angel** who preaches the **gospel to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people** helps to fulfill God’s promise that the gospel “will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations” (Matt. 24:14) before Christ returns. The word *gospel*, which literally means “Good News,” is used here only in Revelation. Even at this late stage in God’s judgment He continues to offer **everlasting** life to the world (see John 3:16). The gospel message at this point beseeches unbelievers to **fear God and give glory to Him** and to escape the **hour of His judgment**. Earlier, some people had responded in this manner after the miracle of the two witnesses’ resurrection (11:11–13). The activity of this angel may be behind the scenes, prompting a worldwide proclamation of the gospel by those who will declare the truth even at the cost of their lives.

14:8 Another **angel** proclaims part of the bad news of judgment to those among **all nations** (see Matt. 28:19) who will not receive the good news of the gospel (see v. 6). **Babylon** is first mentioned in Revelation here, and it becomes the focus of God’s judgment in

drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.”

⁹Then a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, ¹⁰“If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives *his* ¹¹mark on his forehead or on his hand, ¹²he himself ¹³shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is ¹⁴poured out full strength into ¹⁵the cup of His indignation. ¹⁶He shall be tormented with ¹⁷fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. ¹⁸And ¹⁹the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name.”

^{12b}Here is the ⁷patience of the saints; ^chere ⁸are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.

¹³Then I heard a voice from heaven saying ⁹to me, “Write: ^d‘Blessed are the dead ^ewho die in the Lord from now on.’”

“Yes,” says the Spirit, ^f“that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow ^gthem.”

⁹ ¹ Rev. 13:14, 15; 14:11 ¹⁰ Rev. 13:16 ¹¹ ¹ Ps. 75:8 ¹² Rev. 18:6 ¹³ Rev. 16:19 ¹⁴ Rev. 20:10 ¹⁵ Gen. 19:24; Ezek. 38:22; 2 Thess. 1:7; Rev. 19:20 ¹⁶ Is. 34:8-10; Rev. 18:9, 18; 19:3 ¹⁷ Rev. 13:10 ¹⁸ Rev. 12:17 ¹⁹ ¹ steadfastness, perseverance ⁸ NU, M omit here are those ¹³ ¹ Eccl. 4:1, 2 ¹⁴ ¹ Cor. 15:18; [1 Thess. 4:16] ¹⁵ ¹ 2 Thess. 1:7; Heb. 4:9, 10; Rev. 6:11 ¹⁶ [1 Cor. 3:11-15; 15:58] ¹⁷ NU, M omit to me ¹⁸ ¹ Rev. 16:17 ¹⁹ Joel 3:13; Mark 4:29; Rev. 14:18 ¹ Jer. 51:33; [Matt. 13:39-41] ¹ NU, M omit for You ¹⁸ ¹ Rev. 16:8 ¹ Joel 3:13; Mark 4:29; Rev. 14:15

Reaping the Earth's Harvest

¹⁴Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and on the cloud sat *One* like the Son of Man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle. ¹⁵And another angel ^hcame out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to Him who sat on the cloud, ⁱ“Thrust in Your sickle and reap, for the time has come ¹for You to reap, for the harvest ^jof the earth is ripe.” ¹⁶So He who sat on the cloud thrust in His sickle on the earth, and the earth was reaped.

Reaping the Grapes of Wrath

¹⁷Then another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle.

¹⁸And another angel came out from the altar, ^kwho had power over fire, and he cried with a loud cry to him who had the sharp sickle, saying, ¹“Thrust in your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, for her grapes are fully ripe.” ¹⁹So the angel thrust his sickle into

the following section (chs. 16–18). The **great city** here is Babylon; earlier the phrase was used to describe the city where “our Lord was crucified” (11:8), perhaps meaning Jerusalem in that reference.

14:9–11 A third angel announces with a loud voice the tragic eternal destiny of the one who rejects the offer of the gospel (vv. 6, 7) and **worships the beast** (ch. 13). In Romans, Paul speaks of the **wrath of God** as being revealed from heaven (Rom. 1:18) against unbelievers, as God allows them to receive the just consequences of their own ungodly behavior. In 6:17, “the great day of His wrath” was announced (see also 11:18). Now it will be experienced in its **full strength** by those who follow the beast. In the just outworking of God’s wrath, unbelievers who worship the beast will **be tormented ... forever and ever, with no rest day or night**.

14:12 The **patience of the saints** echoes 13:10, as well as John’s place as a partner with his readers in the “patience of Jesus Christ” (1:9). Those who patiently **keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus**, even in very difficult times (ch. 13), will receive a special divine blessing (v. 13).

14:13 **Blessed** signals the second of seven beatitudes in Revelation (see also 1:3; 16:15; 19:9; 20:6; 22:7, 14). Six of the seven are clustered in the latter third of the Book of Revelation, perhaps as promises to encourage exemplary Christian response in the extremely difficult

circumstances of the end times. **From now on** may mean from the point in the tribulation John is referring to, or from the time John was writing to his original readers. Spiritual **rest** is available to anyone who comes to Jesus Christ in faith (see Matt. 11:28). The martyrs under the fifth seal had been told by the Lord to rest “a little while longer” (6:11), until God’s plan was complete. Here the believers who have died are also told to rest **from their labors**, in the knowledge that their good **works** will be remembered and rewarded (see 1 Tim. 5:25).

14:14, 15 The reference to the **Son of Man** with a **golden crown** on His head indicates that the figure is Jesus Christ (see 1:13; Dan. 7). Some, however, hesitate to make this identification, largely because **another angel** gives the first figure the command to **reap**, which seems improper if “One like the Son of Man” is Christ. Yet there is no impropriety in having a representative of God the Father entrust judgment to the Son of Man (see John 5:22). The Son will judge humankind as one who shares human nature. A **sharp flint** or **iron sickle** was the primary tool for an ancient grain **harvest**. Since the 144,000 have been received by God as the firstfruits (v. 4) of His harvest, the rest of the harvest **of the earth** is surely **ripe** for salvation (see Matt. 13:37–43), as well as judgment.

14:16 The power of the Son of Man (Jesus Christ) is shown in that, with one **thrust of His sickle**, the harvest **of the earth** is reaped. This pictures the events of chs. 16–19 as parts of one rapid succession of judgment. Thus this judgment is experienced by the inhabitants of the entire world.

14:17, 18 Another angel is placed in charge of the harvest of the **clusters of grapes** that are also **ripe**, meaning worthy of judgment. The other **angel**, referred to as having **power over fire**, may be the angel at **the altar** in 8:3–5. Perhaps the fire will burn the tares separated in the harvest (see Matt. 13:38–43).

14:19, 20 A **winepress** was a trough in which workers **trampled** grapes with their bare feet, causing the juice to flow down into a vat. This common OT sign of God’s **wrath** and judgment (see Is. 63:3) apparently also explains how “the wine of the wrath of God” (v. 10) is produced. The image of the winepress is symbolic of an unbelievable quantity of shed **blood**. This description of the flow of blood indicates an unparalleled slaughter of life. **One thousand six hundred furlongs** is nearly two hundred miles. This great bloodshed is probably the result of Christ’s defeat of the collected human armies (19:17–19) as He returns before “the supper of the great God” (19:17), which some hold to be the Battle of Armageddon (16:16).

wrath

(Gk. *orgē*) (14:10; John 3:36; Rom. 1:18) Strong’s #3709

God’s wrath is His holy indignation—His anger directed against sin. The Bible declares that all people are “by nature children of wrath” (Eph. 2:3) and that “the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness” (Rom. 1:18). Since Christians have been “justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him” (Rom. 5:9). The magnitude of God’s love is manifested in the Cross, where God’s only Son experienced wrath on our behalf. “The day of the Lord’s wrath” (Zeph. 1:18) is identical with “the great day of the Lord” (Zeph. 1:14). These terms refer to “the wrath of the Lamb” (6:16), Jesus Christ, that will fall on the ungodly at His Second Coming.

the earth and gathered the vine of the earth, and threw *it* into ^mthe great winepress of the wrath of God. ²⁰And ⁿthe winepress was trampled ^ooutside the city, and blood came out of the winepress, ^pup to the horses' bridles, for one thousand six hundred ²furlongs.

Prelude to the Bowl Judgments

15 Then ^aI saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous: ^bseven angels having the seven last plagues, ^cfor in them the wrath of God is complete.

²And I saw *something* like ^da sea of glass ^emingled with fire, and those who have the victory over the beast, ^fover his image and ¹over his mark *and* over the ^gnumber of his name, standing on the sea of glass, ^hhaving harps of God. ³They sing ⁱthe song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the ^jLamb, saying:

^k“Great and marvelous *are* Your works, Lord God Almighty!

¹Just and true *are* Your ways, O King of the ²saints!

⁴ ^mWho shall not fear You, O Lord, and glorify Your name?

For You alone *are* ⁿholy.

For ^oall nations shall come and worship before You,

For Your judgments have been manifested.”

¹⁹ ^m Is. 63:2; Rev. 19:15
²⁰ ⁿ Is. 63:3; Lam. 1:15; Rev. 19:15
^o Heb. 13:12; Rev. 11:8
^p Is. 34:3 ² Lit. stadia, about 184 miles in all

CHAPTER 15

¹ ^a Rev. 12:1, 3
^b Rev. 21:9 ^c Rev. 14:10
² ^d Rev. 4:6 ^e [Matt. 3:11] ^f Rev. 13:14, 15
^g Rev. 13:17 ^h Rev. 5:8 ⁱ NU, M omit *over his mark*
³ ^j Ex. 15:1-21 / Rev. 15:3 ^k Deut. 32:3, 4; Ps. 92:5; Rom. 11:33 ^l Ps. 145:17; Rev. 16:7 ² NU, M *nations*
⁴ ^m Ex. 15:14 ⁿ Lev. 11:44; 1 Pet. 1:16; Rev. 4:8 ^o Ex. 86:9; Is. 66:23
⁵ ^p Ex. 38:21; Num. 1:50; Heb. 8:5; Rev. 13:6 ³ NU, M omit *behold*
⁴ ^{sanctuary}, the inner shrine
⁶ ^q Ex. 28:6
⁵ ^{sanctuary}, the inner shrine
⁷ ^r Rev. 4:6
^s 1 Thess. 1:9
⁸ ^t Ex. 19:18; 40:34; Lev. 16:2; 1 Kin. 8:10; 2 Chr. 5:13; Is. 6:4 ^u 2 Thess. 1:9

⁵After these things I looked, and ³behold, ^pthe ⁴temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened. ⁶And out of the ⁵temple came the seven angels having the seven plagues, ^qclothed in pure bright linen, and having their chests girded with golden bands. ⁷Then one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God ^swho lives forever and ever. ⁸The temple was filled with smoke ^tfrom the glory of God and from His power, and no one was able to enter the temple till the seven plagues of the seven angels were completed.

16 Then I heard a loud voice from the temple saying ^ato the seven angels, “Go and pour out the ¹bowls ^bof the wrath of God on the earth.”

First Bowl: Loathsome Sores

²So the first went and poured out his bowl ^cupon the earth, and a ²foul and ^dloathsome sore came upon the men ^ewho had the mark of the beast and those ^fwho worshiped his image.

Second Bowl: The Sea Turns to Blood

³Then the second angel poured out his

CHAPTER 16 ¹ ^a Rev. 15:1 ^b Rev. 14:10 ¹ NU, M seven bowls
² ^c Rev. 8:7 ^d Ex. 9:9-11; Deut. 28:35; Rev. 16:11 ^e Rev. 13:15-17; 14:9 ^f Rev. 13:14 ² severe and malignant, lit. bad and evil

15:1 Another sign looks back to 12:1, 3, where the symbolism of the woman and the dragon also appeared in heaven. This sign is **great and marvelous**, apparently because it deals with the **seven last plagues** sent by the Lord. The plagues, “the bowls of the wrath of God” (16:1), are much stronger and more widespread than the trumpet judgments in 8:2–11:19. **The wrath of God is complete** with the seven last plagues (see 15:1–19:5). They are immediately followed by the Second Coming and the marriage supper of the Lamb (19:6–21).

15:2 A sea of glass is mentioned in 4:6 as a place of worship before the throne of God. Here it is seen **mingled with fire**, which is often a sign of God’s judgment. The fire shows that the wrath of God acting in judgment has reached its zenith. The sea of glass also serves as the Lord’s victory stand for all of His overcomers. **Those who have the victory over the beast** are believing martyrs who “did not love their lives to the death” (12:11).

15:3, 4 The song of Moses is a reference to Ex. 15:1–18, in which Israel celebrated its deliverance from Egyptian bondage, specifically from Pharaoh’s army (see Ex. 14). That song, remembering the great OT redemption, was sung by Jews in their Sabbath gatherings, as well as by early Christians at Easter. **The song of the Lamb** compares the completed redemptive work of Jesus Christ with God’s deliverance in the Exodus. Perhaps the victorious overcomers in v. 2 are “safe on the other side,” and the intensifying judgments of the preceding chapters are comparable to the climactic destruction of Pharaoh’s army when the Red Sea closed in upon them. Considering God’s **great . . . works** and character, every person should **fear** the Lord and **glorify His name** by trusting Jesus Christ. **All nations** is the same phrase found in Matt. 28:19 and Luke 24:47, expressing the scope of the Great Commission, Jesus’ command to proclaim Good News to all nations. **Worship** means “to prostrate oneself,” calling to mind Paul’s description of the time when “every knee should bow” to Jesus Christ, the Lord (Phil. 2:10, 11).

15:5 The temple of the tabernacle links the powerful imagery of the heavenly temple in 11:19 with the strong parallels in ch. 15 to the Exodus period, when the majestic presence of God was clearly seen in the tabernacle. The tabernacle of the testimony calls attention to the Law or the tablets of testimony given to Moses (see Ex. 31:18; 32:15). In the new heaven and new earth the tabernacle of God will be with believers because He will dwell eternally with them (21:3).

15:6 Seven angels come forward to administer the **seven plagues**, which are the last plagues (v. 1). God will send forth before Christ returns. **clothed in pure bright linen . . . golden bands**: Because their garments signify purity and righteousness, the angels are representatives of spotless justice.

15:7 The **golden bowls** of wrath recall the similar golden bowls that in 5:8 hold incense, representing the prayers of the saints.

15:8 The **smoke** that filled the temple had its source in the power and glory of God and prohibited access into the Most Holy Place. The smoke signified God’s resolve to act in judgment as an expression of His character and authority. Judgment was now irreversible, with no place for intercession (see Lam. 3:44).

16:1 The **loud voice from the temple** is likely the voice of God, since no other heavenly being could enter the heavenly temple “till the seven plagues of the seven angels were completed” (15:8).

16:2 The effect of the **first . . . bowl** being poured out is a terrible **sore** upon all **who had the mark of the beast** (13:16, 17). The Egyptians faced a similar affliction during the sixth plague of the Exodus (see Ex. 9:9–11). Just as God’s great power could not be denied by the Egyptians and their magicians (see Ex. 9:11), so unbelieving people will be unable to deny God’s sovereign justice as the bowls of God’s judgments rapidly progress (vv. 9, 11, 21).

16:3 The **second . . . bowl** turns the sea into **blood**, as did the second trumpet (8:8). However, only a third of the sea was affected by the trumpet (8:8, 9). This bowl brings about the death of **every living creature** in the sea. This verse is similar to Ex. 7:17–21, in

bowl^g on the sea, and ^hit became blood as of a dead *man*; ⁱand every living creature in the sea died.

Third Bowl: The Waters Turn to Blood

⁴Then the third angel poured out his bowl ^jon the rivers and springs of water, ^kand they became blood. ⁵And I heard the angel of the waters saying:

- ¹“You are righteous, ³O Lord,
The One ^mwho is and who ⁴was and
who is to be,
Because You have judged these
things.
⁶ For ⁿthey have shed the blood ^oof
saints and prophets,
^pAnd You have given them blood to
drink.
⁵ For it is their just due.”

⁷And I heard ⁶another from the altar saying, “Even so, ^qLord God Almighty, ^rtrue and righteous are Your judgments.”

Fourth Bowl: Men Are Scorched

⁸Then the fourth angel poured out his bowl ^son the sun, ^tand power was given to him to scorch men with fire. ⁹And men were scorched with great heat, and they ^ublasphemed the name of God who

3 ^g Rev. 8:8; 11:6
^h Ex. 7:17-21 / Rev. 8:9
4 / Rev. 8:10 ^k Ex. 7:17-20; Ps. 78:44; Rev. 11:6
5 ^j Rev. 15:3, 4
^m Rev. 1:4, 8 ³ NU, M omit *O Lord*
⁴ NU, M was, the Holy One
6 ⁿ Matt. 23:34
^o Rev. 11:18 ^p Is. 49:26; Luke 11:49-51 ⁵ NU, M omit *For*
7 ^q Rev. 15:3 ^r Rev. 13:10; 19:2 ⁶ NU, M omit *another from*
8 ³ Rev. 8:12 ^t Rev. 9:17, 18
9 ^u Rev. 16:11 ^v Dan. 5:22 ^w Rev. 11:13
10 ^x Rev. 13:2 ^y Ex. 10:21; Is. 8:22; Rev. 8:12; 9:2 ² Rev. 11:10
12 ^a Rev. 9:14 ^b Jer. 50:38 ^c Is. 41:2, 25; 46:11
13 ^d 1 John 4:1
^e Rev. 12:3, 9 ^f Rev. 13:11, 14; 19:20; 20:10
14 ^g 2 Thess. 2:9
^h Luke 2:1 ⁱ 1 Kin. 22:21-23; Rev. 17:14; 19:19; 20:8 ^j NU, M omit *of the earth and*
15 ^k Matt. 24:43 ☆; Luke 12:39; Rev. 3:3, 11 ^k 2 Cor. 5:3
16 ^l Rev. 19:19 ⁸ Lit. Mount Megiddo; M Megiddo

has power over these plagues; ^vand they did not repent ^wand give Him glory.

Fifth Bowl: Darkness and Pain

¹⁰Then the fifth angel poured out his bowl ^xon the throne of the beast, ^yand his kingdom became full of darkness; ^zand they gnawed their tongues because of the pain. ¹¹They blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and did not repent of their deeds.

Sixth Bowl: Euphrates Dried Up

¹²Then the sixth angel poured out his bowl ^aon the great river Euphrates, ^band its water was dried up, ^cso that the way of the kings from the east might be prepared. ¹³And I saw three unclean ^dspirits like frogs *coming* out of the mouth of ^ethe dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of ^fthe false prophet. ¹⁴For they are spirits of demons, ^gperforming signs, *which* go out to the kings ⁷of the earth and of ^hthe whole world, to gather them to ⁱthe battle of that great day of God Almighty.

^{15j}“Behold, I am coming as a thief. Blessed is he who watches, and keeps his garments, ^klest he walk naked and they see his shame.”

^{16l}And they gathered them together to the place called in Hebrew, ⁸Armageddon.

which the Nile River is turned to blood; however, the judgment here is infinitely worse because of its global scope.

16:4 The third . . . bowl, like the third trumpet (8:10), targets the rivers and springs of water. This time, however, the impact is worldwide (compare 8:10, 11), and the water sources turn to blood instead of just becoming “bitter” (see 8:11).

16:5 The angel of the waters is probably the same angel who poured out the third bowl (v. 4), and not a separate figure. Because God is eternally righteous, His judgment of the inhabitants of the earth (v. 10) and their violent, unrighteous works is completely just.

16:6 God forces the unrepentant (v. 9) unbelievers who have shed the blood of God’s people to drink blood in order to avenge the deaths of the martyrs, as some of them requested in 6:10. **Saints** refers to those who are set apart because of their relationship with Jesus Christ. In Revelation, saints may be Christians in general (5:8), or those believers facing persecution and martyrdom (13:7). **Prophets** may refer to all of God’s spokesmen who have been killed as a result of persecution, or specifically to the two witnesses who prophesied for three and a half years (11:3–13, 18).

16:8 The fourth . . . bowl is reminiscent of the fourth trumpet in its effect on the sun (8:12). But in this plague, the sun’s heat is intensified instead of diminished.

16:9 Those who followed the beast here blaspheme the name of God, just as the beast himself did (13:5, 6). They cannot argue against the existence or power of God, but even so they will not repent and give God glory (v. 11, 21). The Good News of Christ is still in effect even just before His return (19:11–21), though it is apparently rejected by all unbelievers who are still alive.

16:10, 11 The fifth . . . bowl is focused against the throne of the beast, apparently referring to his worldwide kingdom and authority (13:7). The phrase “Satan’s throne” is used in 2:13 to speak of the satanic foothold in Pergamos as a result of the prevalence of emperor worship there. (All other uses of *throne* in Revelation refer

to the Lord’s throne.) The darkness in 6:12–17 caused even world leaders to fear “the wrath of the Lamb” (6:16). At this late date, the beast and his followers still blaspheme the God of heaven and refuse to repent of their deeds. Pains and sores may be roughly parallel to the torment suffered by those stung by the demonic locusts during the fifth trumpet judgment (9:5–10). However, it is more likely that pains refers to the scorching by the sun in vv. 8, 9 and sores to the effects of the first bowl (v. 2).

16:12–14 The sixth bowl involves the Euphrates River, as does the sixth trumpet (9:14). Both judgments deal with demonically inspired military forces. The army of two hundred million (9:16) will kill a third of all humankind (9:18); the army in vv. 12–14 will do battle against God (19:19–21).

16:12 With the water of the river Euphrates completely dried up, invasion from the east would be much easier. The kings from the east have been understood as the Parthian armies that menaced the eastern half of the Roman Empire, though any powerful force from Asia would fit the wording of this verse.

16:13, 14 Unclean spirits spread forth the authoritative words of the dragon (Satan; 12:9), the beast, and the false prophet—an unholy trinity. There will be great deception involved in the signs (13:13, 14) that are used to persuade the kings of . . . the whole world to gather for battle against God. In 6:15, 16, the kings of the earth recoil in fear before the judgment of the Lamb. Here the kings are willing to wage war against God. The difference seems to be their confidence in the power of the beast, since they reason, “Who is able to make war with him?” (13:4). The battle of that great day takes place at Armageddon (v. 16; 19:17–21).

16:15 Blessed indicates that this is the third of seven beatitudes in Revelation (see also 1:3; 14:13; 19:9; 20:6; 22:7, 14). **Coming as a thief** looks back to Jesus’ warning to believers to be vigilant because of the unexpected timing of His return (see Matt. 24:43, 44).

16:16 The place of the battle spoken of in v. 14 is Armageddon, a

Seventh Bowl: The Earth Utterly Shaken

¹⁷Then the seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air, and a loud voice came out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, ¹⁸"It is done!" ¹⁹And ²⁰there were noises and thunderings and lightnings; ²¹and there was a great earthquake, such a mighty and great earthquake ²²as had not occurred since men were on the earth. ²³Now ²⁴the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell. And ²⁵great Babylon ²⁶was remembered before God, ²⁷to give her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath. ²⁸Then ²⁹every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. ³⁰And great hail from heaven fell upon men, ³¹each hailstone about the weight of a talent. Men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail, since that plague was exceedingly great.

The Scarlet Woman and the Scarlet Beast

¹Then ²one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and talked with me, saying ³to me, "Come, ⁴I will show you the judgment of ⁵the great harlot ⁶who sits on many waters, ⁷with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, and ⁸the inhabitants of the

¹⁷ ^m Rev. 10:6; 21:6
¹⁸ ⁿ Rev. 4:5 ^o Rev. 11:13 ^p Dan. 12:1; Matt. 24:21
¹⁹ ^q Rev. 14:8 ^r Rev. 17:5, 18 ^s Rev. 14:8; 18:5 ^t Is. 51:17; Rev. 14:10
²⁰ ^u Rev. 6:14; 20:11

CHAPTER 17

¹ ^a Rev. 1:1; 21:9
² Rev. 16:19 ^c Is. 1:21; Jer. 2:20; Nah. 3:4; Rev. 17:5, 15; 19:2 ^d Jer. 51:13; Rev. 17:15 ^e NU, M omit to me
² ^f Rev. 2:22; 18:3, 9
³ Jer. 51:7; Rev. 14:8

³ ^g Rev. 12:6, 14; 21:10 ^h Rev. 12:3 ⁱ Rev. 13:1
⁴ Ezek. 28:13; Rev. 18:12, 16 ^k Dan. 11:38 ^l Jer. 51:7; Rev. 18:6 ^m Rev. 14:8
⁵ ⁿ The fornication of the earth
⁶ ^o 2 Thess. 2:7; Rev. 1:20; 17:7
⁶ ^p Rev. 18:24 ^q Rev. 13:15 ^r Rev. 6:9, 10
⁷ ^s hidden truth

earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication."

³So he carried me away in the Spirit ⁴to the wilderness. And I saw a woman sitting ⁵on a scarlet beast ⁶which was full of ⁷names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. ⁸The woman ⁹was arrayed in purple and scarlet, ¹⁰and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, ¹¹having in her hand a golden cup ¹²full of abominations and the filthiness of ¹³her fornication. ¹⁴And on her forehead a name was written:

"MYSTERY,
BABYLON THE GREAT,
THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS
AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS
OF THE EARTH.

⁶I saw ⁷the woman, drunk ⁸with the blood of the saints and with the blood of ⁹the martyrs of Jesus. And when I saw her, I marveled with great amazement.

The Meaning of the Woman and the Beast

⁷But the angel said to me, "Why did you marvel? I will tell you the ⁸mystery of the woman and of the beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and the ten horns. ⁹The beast that you saw

Hebrew word literally meaning "Mount of Megiddo." Some believe that this is not an actual place, but rather a symbol of the final battle between good and evil.

16:17 The seventh . . . bowl is the climax of all of Revelation's judgments. **It is done:** This is God's final act of judgment before Christ comes.

16:19 The great city of Babylon (11:8) seems to be the epicenter of the most destructive earthquake the world will ever see. The quake seems to be worldwide, wreaking havoc on **the cities of the nations**. Babylon had not been forgotten **before God**. Here He acts on His earlier promise that Babylon would fall (14:8) and that the **cup** of His **wrath** would be dispensed (14:10). Babylon here may refer to the rebuilt ancient city, or it may be a symbolic name for Rome (17:9). It may also be a way of referring to any proud human society that attempts to exist apart from God. Babylon's classic manifestations of rebellion against God are the Tower of Babel (see Gen. 11:1–9) and the Babylonian Empire under Nebuchadnezzar (see Dan. 4:30).

16:21 Hail falling from heaven, with each stone weighing about 75 pounds (a **talent**), would be phenomenally destructive.

17:1, 2 The reference to **one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls** marks this passage as a continuation of 16:17–21. The coming reference to "BABYLON THE GREAT" (v. 5) has the same linking effect. **Many waters** are interpreted in v. 15 as "peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues." Although Babylon is only called the **harlot** in vv. 1, 5, 16, and 19:2, her habitual **fornication** was introduced in 14:8, as was her imminent and well-deserved **judgment**. Both the **kings of the earth** and the **inhabitants of the earth** are seduced into committing spiritual adultery with Babylon. The indication is that she made them **drunk with power**, material possessions, false worship, and pride. The **wine** of Babylon's fornication (14:8) is judged forcefully and finally by God in "the wine of the fierceness of His wrath" (16:19).

17:3 In the Spirit describes John's spiritually exalted state as he receives the various visions of the Book of Revelation (1:10). **The wil-**

derness is where the **woman** identified as "Babylon, the mother of harlots" (v. 5) is seen sitting on a **scarlet beast** (12:3; 13:1). Since this woman normally "sits on many waters" (v. 1) and since the woman who gave birth to the Child-Ruler fled into the wilderness as a place of protection (12:6, 14), perhaps Babylon here is seen as being in league with the dragon and the beast as they ferociously pursue God's people (12:13–16). The description of the scarlet beast clearly identifies him with the beast from the sea—the Antichrist—in 13:1, 5, 6. The **ten horns** are interpreted in v. 12 as ten kings; they may represent the ten toes of Nebuchadnezzar's vision (see Dan. 2:41). **17:4 The woman**, Babylon, is dressed like a queen (18:7), wearing **purple, scarlet, gold, and pearls**. Though the appearance of "the great harlot" (vv. 1, 5) is regal, her royal **golden cup** is full of **abominations and . . . filthiness**, speaking of idolatry and unclean acts that disgust God. This description is given first from the standpoint of people, who look at the outer appearance, and then from the perspective of God, who knows the heart (see 1 Sam. 16:7).

17:5 The **name** on Babylon's **forehead** may imply that Babylon is ultimately subordinate to the beast (13:16, 17). **MYSTERY** may be the first part of the title for **BABYLON THE GREAT**. But based on the use of the word **mystery** in v. 7, this verse should probably read, "on her forehead a mysterious name was written." The title itself suggests that all spiritual harlotry and abominable acts in history are somehow the offspring of Babylon.

17:6 The woman Babylon is **drunk with the blood of the saints** and **Christian martyrs** (see Matt. 24:21), as well as by "the wine of her fornication" (v. 2). Thus her actions are doubly repugnant to the Lord, as are the acts of anyone who persecutes God's people. The woman's hatred of Christianity is clearly portrayed in this verse. Being drunk from saints' blood implies a time of extraordinary slaughter.

17:8 The description of **the beast** as one who **was, and is not, and will ascend . . . and go to perdition** is a conscious contrast to the description of God in 1:4, 8. **Was** apparently indicates that the beast had been manifested in the past (see Dan. 7). **Is not** suggests

was, and is not, and ^rwill ascend out of the bottomless pit and ^sgo to ⁴perdition. And those who ^tdwell on the earth ^uwill marvel, ^vwhose names are not written in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world, when they see the beast that was, and is not, and ⁵yet is.

⁹“Here is the mind which has wisdom: ^aThe seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits. ¹⁰There are also seven kings. Five have fallen, one is, and the other has not yet come. And when he comes, he must ^ycontinue a short time. ¹¹The ^zbeast that was, and is not, is himself also the eighth, and is of the seven, and is going to ⁶perdition.

¹²^a“The ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have received no kingdom as yet, but they receive authority for one hour as kings with the beast. ¹³These are of one mind, and they will give their power and authority to the beast. ¹⁴^bThese will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will ^covercome them, ^dfor He is Lord of lords and King of kings; ^eand those *who are* with Him *are* called, chosen, and faithful.”

8 ^r Rev. 11:7 ^s Rev. 13:10; 17:1 ^t Rev. 3:10 ^u Rev. 13:3 ^v Matt. 25:34; Rev. 13:8 ⁴ destruction ⁵ NU, M shall be present ⁹ ^w Rev. 13:18 ^x Rev. 13:1 ^y Rev. 13:5 ¹¹ ^z Rev. 13:3, 12, 14; 17:8 ⁶ destruction ¹² ^a Dan. 7:20 ¹⁴ ^b Rev. 16:14; 19:19 ^c Rev. 19:20 ^d Deut. 10:17; 1 Tim. 6:15; Rev. 19:16 ^e Jer. 50:44 ¹⁵ ^f Is. 8:7; Jer. 47:2; Rev. 17:1 ⁹ Rev. 13:7 ¹⁶ ^h Jer. 50:41 ⁱ Rev. 18:17, 19 ^j Ezek. 16:37, 39 ^k Rev. 18:8 ⁷ NU, M saw, and the beast ¹⁷ ² Thess. 2:11 ^m Rev. 10:7 ¹⁸ ⁿ Rev. 11:8; 16:19 ^o Rev. 12:4

CHAPTER 18

1 ^a Rev. 17:1, 7 ^b Ezek. 43:2 ² ^c Is. 13:19; 21:9;

¹⁵Then he said to me, ^f“The waters which you saw, where the harlot sits, ^gare peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues. ¹⁶And the ten horns which you ⁷saw on the beast, ^hthese will hate the harlot, make her ⁱdesolate ^jand naked, eat her flesh and ^kburn her with fire. ¹⁷For God has put it into their hearts to fulfill His purpose, to be of one mind, and to give their kingdom to the beast, ^muntil the words of God are fulfilled. ¹⁸And the woman whom you saw ⁿis that great city ^owhich reigns over the kings of the earth.”

The Fall of Babylon the Great

18 After^a these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, ^band the earth was illuminated with his glory. ²And he cried ⁱmightily with a loud voice, saying, ^c“Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and ^dhas become a dwelling place of demons, a prison for every foul spirit, and

Jer. 51:8; Rev. 14:8 ^d Is. 13:21; 34:11, 13-15; Jer. 50:39; 51:37; Zeph. 2:14 ¹ NU, M omit mightily

that the beast was not working his evil in John's day. *Will ascend ... to perdition* suggests eternal ruin or punishment. Those **whose names are not written in the Book of Life** (13:8; 20:12, 15) are deceived by the beast because they do not know its certain eternal destiny. All they **see** is one who once existed and has now made an incredible reemergence.

17:9, 10 The mind which has wisdom possesses divinely aided spiritual understanding, which is a mind receptive to God's truth (1:3). The clause may possibly be connected with v. 8 rather than v. 9, and may refer specifically to wisdom in understanding who the beast is. It may also refer to the following verses, the interpretation of the heads, the beast, the horns, and the woman (see vv. 1–6). The **seven heads** of the beast (v. 3) symbolize both **seven mountains** and **seven kings**. Since the word *mountains* also means “hills” in Revelation (14:1), most interpreters understand this as referring to the seven hills along the Tiber River, a well-known designation of the city of Rome. However, *seven mountains* may also refer to successive world empires, since mountains are typically symbols of earthly kingdoms or empires (see Ps. 30:7; Jer. 51:25; Dan. 2:44, 45). According to this view, **five** would be past kingdoms (perhaps Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, and Greece), with sixth being the Roman Empire and seventh another which **has not yet come**. Perhaps it is to be a revived Rome Empire. *Kings* may refer to Roman emperors, but this is unlikely since more than five had reigned before the writing of Revelation.

17:11, 12 The beast ... is ... the eighth, and is of the seven: The beast is related to the seventh king, but also has a separate identity. The obscure wording may express the worldwide amazement that the beast was healed from a deadly wound to rule the world again (13:3). It seems that the eighth world empire is some form of a revived Roman Empire over which the Antichrist establishes the imperial authority of a dictator. He will overcome three horns, or nations (see Dan. 7:20), and will claim universal authority. **one hour:** A limited time is allotted to the **ten kings**, or **ten horns** (see 1:3; Dan. 2:34, 41, 42), who will **receive authority** to rule alongside **the beast** (18:10, 17, 19). The Lord's sovereignty is not threatened in these statements of sequence and duration because the beast cannot change the fact that he, because of God's just judgment, **is going to perdition**. The time frame for these events may

coincide with 16:14, in which the preparations for the battle at Armageddon are described.

17:13 The ten kings who ultimately rule under the authority of the beast (v. 12) cooperate fully and **give back their power and authority to the beast**. Some understand these ten rulers to be provincial heads in the Roman Empire in John's day, while others take *ten* symbolically to mean a host of national powers aligned with the beast. Still others see a ten-nation confederacy, perhaps a revived latter-day Roman Empire (see Dan. 7:7, 19, 20, 23, 24).

17:14 The ten kings in league with the beast will be so bold as to **make war against the Lamb** (Christ). He, the all-powerful **Lord of lords and King of kings** (19:16), will easily **overcome them** at His second coming (19:19–21). This wording is in direct contrast with 13:7, where the beast and his forces are allowed by God “to make war with the saints and to overcome them.” Many of those whom the beast defeated and even killed are now numbered in the conquering army of the Lamb. The Lord's army is composed of the **called, chosen, and faithful**—probably the heavenly soldiers of 19:14.

17:16, 17 The ten horns (the kings of v. 12) will grow to hate Babylon, **the harlot**. As a result, they will expose and then utterly destroy her. Since this description is similar to God's judgment on Babylon in 18:8, it seems that the Lord sovereignly uses the forces of the beast as His instrument of judgment on the kingdom of Antichrist (ch. 18) before they themselves are destroyed (see 19:19–21). With the advent of the beast as a supreme ruler given to self-deification (see Dan. 11:36; Matt. 24:15; 2 Thess. 2), Satan has originated an entirely new order. This order is so radically different from the great harlot (vv. 1–6) that the beast, or perhaps the political aspect of Babylon, turns upon and destroys the religious aspect of Babylon.

17:18 The woman in John's vision (vv. 1–6) is the **great city** Babylon (16:19), yet is also the ancient “mother of harlots” (v. 5). Thus the satanic influence of this city over the world's leaders has continued from Babel through Babylon to Rome (vv. 9, 10), its classic manifestation in the first century A.D.

18:2 Babylon ... is fallen continues the thought introduced in 14:8 and 16:19, describing the city's destruction. The normal **dwelling place of demons** is the bottomless pit (9:1, 2). A **prison** is a place of banishment. Thus Babylon, in the wake of her fall and judgment, will become a virtual hell on earth.



Babylon

In Revelation, the world in rebellion against God is called “Babylon.” The OT prophets often prophesied the fall of Babylon, the capital of an empire that destroyed God’s city, Jerusalem, and carried His people away as captives (Is. 14:22; 21:9; 43:14; Jer. 50:9; 51:37). Today, the ruins of this city stand as an eloquent testimony to the passing of proud empires and to the providential hand of God.

In Revelation, Babylon is a word-picture for a society that persecuted God’s people but that God will eventually destroy. The name may have been a kind of code name for pre-Christian Rome, which was built on seven hills (17:9; see also 1 Pet. 5:13) and which was already persecuting the church. Since that time, generations of Christians have been able to identify their own Babylons and have found reassurance in Revelation’s message.



Reconstruction of ancient Babylon

Wikimedia Commons

^ea cage for every unclean and hated bird!

³For all the nations ^fhave drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, ^gand the merchants of the earth have become rich through the ²abundance of her luxury.”

⁴And I heard another voice from heaven saying, ^h“Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you re-

² ^e Is. 14:23
³ ^f Jer. 51:7; Rev. 14:8 ^g Is. 47:15 ² Lit. strengths
⁴ ^h Is. 48:20
⁵ ⁱ Gen. 18:20 ^j Rev. 16:19 ³ NU, M have been heaped up
⁶ ^k Ps. 137:8; Jer. 50:15, 29 ^j Rev. 14:10 ^m Rev. 16:19
⁴ NU, M omit to you

ceive of her plagues. ⁵ⁱFor her sins ³have reached to heaven, and ^jGod has remembered her iniquities. ⁶^kRender to her just as she rendered ⁴to you, and repay her double according to her works; ^lin the cup which she has mixed, ^mmix double for her. ⁷ⁿIn the measure that she glorified herself and lived ⁵luxuriously, in

⁷ ⁿ Ezek. 28:2-8 ⁵ sensually

18:3 This unparalleled judgment from God has come because of Babylon’s spiritual **fornication** (idolatry and abominations; see 17:4) with the **nations** and their **kings**, largely through **rich** commerce, providing many **merchants** an **abundance** of wealth.

18:4 **Come out . . . my people** is a command that echoes Is. 52:11 and especially Jer. 51:45, prophecies proclaimed at a time when the Babylonian Empire was ripe for judgment.

18:6-8 God will avenge Babylon’s long history of iniquities and

sinful **works** to the fullest extent and beyond (**double**; see Is. 51:19). Instead of glorifying God, Babylon **glorified herself** (see 14:7; Rom. 1:21) with a royal lifestyle. She had thrived on pleasure and excess, but now judgment will leave her with only **torture** and **sorrow**. The climactic judgment of ancient Babylon also arrived **in one day** (see “one hour” in vv. 10, 17, 19), as Darius the Mede invaded the city and killed Belshazzar (see Dan. 5:30, 31).

the same measure give her torment and sorrow; for she says in her heart, 'I sit as ^oqueen, and am no widow, and will not see sorrow.' ⁸Therefore her plagues will come ^pin one day—death and mourning and famine. And ^qshe will be utterly burned with fire, ^rfor strong is the Lord God who ⁶judges her.

The World Mourns Babylon's Fall

⁹s "The kings of the earth who committed fornication and lived luxuriously with her ^twill weep and lament for her, ^uwhen they see the smoke of her burning, ¹⁰standing at a distance for fear of her torment, saying, ^v"Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! ^wFor in one hour your judgment has come."

¹¹And ^xthe merchants of the earth will weep and mourn over her, for no one buys their merchandise anymore: ¹²^ymerchandise of gold and silver, precious stones and pearls, fine linen and purple, silk and scarlet, every kind of citron wood, every kind of object of ivory, every kind of object of most precious wood, bronze, iron, and marble; ¹³and cinnamon and incense, fragrant oil and frankincense, wine and oil, fine flour and wheat, cattle and sheep, horses and chariots, and bodies and ^zsouls of men. ¹⁴The fruit that your soul longed for has gone from you, and all the things which are rich and splendid have ⁷gone from you, and you shall find them no more at all. ¹⁵The merchants of these things, who became rich by her, will stand at a distance for fear of her torment, weeping and wailing, ¹⁶and saying, 'Alas, alas, ^athat great city ^bthat was clothed in fine linen, purple, and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls!

⁷ ^o Is. 47:7, 8; Zeph. 2:15
⁸ ^p Is. 47:9; Jer. 50:31; Rev. 18:10
⁹ ^q Rev. 17:16 ^r Jer. 50:34; Heb. 10:31; Rev. 11:17 ^s NU, M has judged
⁹ ^s Ezek. 26:16; 27:35 ^t Jer. 50:46; Rev. 17:2; 18:3
^u Rev. 19:3
¹⁰ ^v Is. 21:9 ^w Rev. 18:17, 19
¹¹ ^x Ezek. 27:27-34
¹² ^y Ezek. 27:12-22; Rev. 17:4
¹³ ^z 1 Chr. 5:21; Ezek. 27:13
¹⁴ ^z NU, M been lost to you
¹⁶ ^a Rev. 17:18
^b Rev. 17:4

¹⁷ ^c Rev. 18:10 ^d Is. 23:14 ⁸ have been laid waste
¹⁸ ^e Ezek. 27:30
^f Rev. 13:4
¹⁹ ^g Josh. 7:6; Job 2:12; Lam. 2:10; Ezek. 27:30 ^h Rev. 18:8 ⁹ have been laid waste
²⁰ ⁱ Is. 44:23; 49:13; Jer. 51:48; Rev. 12:12
^j Luke 11:49; Rev. 19:2 ^k NU, M saints and apostles
²¹ ^k Jer. 51:63, 64
^l Rev. 12:8; 16:20
²² ^m Eccl. 12:4; Jer. 7:34; 16:9; 25:10; Rev. 14:1-3
²³ ⁿ Jer. 25:10 ^o Jer. 7:34; 16:9 ^p Is. 23:8; Rev. 6:15; 18:3
^q 2 Kin. 9:22
²⁴ ^r Rev. 16:6; 17:6
^s Jer. 51:49

CHAPTER 19

¹ ^a Jer. 51:48; Rev. 11:15; 19:6 ^b Rev. 4:11 ¹ NU, M add something like

¹⁷^cFor in one hour such great riches ⁸came to nothing.' ^dEvery shipmaster, all who travel by ship, sailors, and as many as trade on the sea, stood at a distance ¹⁸^eand cried out when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, ^f"What is like this great city?"

¹⁹^g"They threw dust on their heads and cried out, weeping and wailing, and saying, 'Alas, alas, that great city, in which all who had ships on the sea became rich by her wealth! ^hFor in one hour she ⁹is made desolate.'

²⁰ⁱ"Rejoice over her, O heaven, and ^{you} ¹holy apostles and prophets, for ^jGod has avenged you on her!"

Finality of Babylon's Fall

²¹Then a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw *it* into the sea, saying, ^k"Thus with violence the great city Babylon shall be thrown down, and ^lshall not be found anymore. ²²^mThe sound of harpists, musicians, flutists, and trumpeters shall not be heard in you anymore. No craftsman of any craft shall be found in you anymore, and the sound of a millstone shall not be heard in you anymore. ²³ⁿThe light of a lamp shall not shine in you anymore, ^oand the voice of bridegroom and bride shall not be heard in you anymore. For ^pyour merchants were the great men of the earth, ^qfor by your sorcery all the nations were deceived. ²⁴And ^rin her was found the blood of prophets and saints, and of all who ^swere slain on the earth."

Heaven Exults over Babylon

19 After these things ^aI ¹heard a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, "Alleluia! ^bSalvation and glory

18:9–19 This section is framed like an ancient **lament** and is especially similar in content to Ezekiel's lament over the destruction of Tyre (see Ezek. 27).

18:9, 10 The world's **kings**, the illicit partners of **Babylon**, will see her **burning** and **weep** out loud, probably as much for their loss as hers. They will, however, stay at a **distance** (v. 15) to escape her **torment**.

18:12, 13 The **merchandise** includes **purple**, an expensive dye; **citron wood**, valuable material for cabinet making; and **fragrant oil** (literally "myrrh") and **frankincense**, both of which the wise men gave as gifts to the infant Jesus (see Matt. 2:11). **Bodies and souls** refers to the slave trade.

18:16 clothed . . . adorned: The description of wealthy Babylon is almost identical to that of the harlot Babylon in 17:4.

18:17–19 Those who make their living from **trade on the sea** also lament the judgment and **burning** by which Babylon is **made desolate**. They throw **dust on their heads** in an expression of great sorrow, which is also seen in Ezek. 27:30 in the lament over Tyre.

18:20 This call to **rejoice** is a compressed introduction to the longer praise hymn in 19:1–5. Judgment for killing God's **prophets** is mentioned in 16:6, but this is the only place in Revelation other than 21:14 where Christ's **apostles** are mentioned. If specific apos-

tles are in mind here, Peter and Paul's deaths at the hands of the state in Rome probably apply here. If Babylon is the symbol of all the enemies of God and His people, and not just the Babylonian or Roman manifestations, even the killing of James in Acts 12:1, 2 is being **avenged** here.

18:21, 22 The concluding lament over the fall of the **great city Babylon** comes from an **angel** powerful enough to hurl a huge **millstone** weighing thousands of pounds **into the sea** as an illustration of the swiftness and **violence** of Babylon's judgment.

18:23 From this point on in Revelation, the **voice of bridegroom and bride** is heard only in regard to "the marriage of the Lamb" (19:7–9) and the New Jerusalem, "a bride adorned for her husband" (21:2). **Sorcery** (literally "magic arts") is used in 9:21 to refer to the sins of humankind at large. Perhaps Babylon's influence is seen as corrupting **all the nations**.

18:24 The **blood** of the slain seems to refer to all the martyrs for the cause of Christ throughout history (6:10; 17:6). However, it may refer specifically to those who were slain during the tribulation, particularly during the beast's reign (see 13:7, 15).

19:1 The **great multitude** here is the "great multitude which no one could number" in 7:9. The reference to **salvation** (7:10) and the later reference to the 24 elders and 4 living creatures (v. 4; 7:11, 13)

and honor and power *belong* to ²the Lord our God! ²For ^etrue and righteous *are* His judgments, because He has judged the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication; and He ^dhas avenged on her the blood of His servants *shed* by her.” ³Again they said, “Alleluia! ^eHer smoke rises up forever and ever!” ⁴And ^fthe twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who sat on the throne, saying, ^g“Amen! Alleluia!” ⁵Then a voice came from the throne, saying, ^h“Praise our God, all you His servants and those who fear Him, ⁱboth ³ small and great!”

^{6j}And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, “Alleluia! For ^kthe ⁴ Lord God Omnipotent reigns! ⁷Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for ^lthe marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.” ⁸And ^mto her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, ⁿfor the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.

⁹Then he said to me, “Write: ^oBlessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!” And he said to me, ^p“These are the true sayings of God.” ¹⁰And ^qI fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, ^r“See that *you do not do that!* I am your ^sfellow servant, and of

1 ² NU, M omit
 the Lord
 2 ² Rev. 15:3; 16:7
³ Deut. 32:43; 2 Kin.
 9:7; Luke 18:7; 8;
 Rev. 6:10
 3 ³ Is. 34:10; Rev.
 14:11
 4 ⁴ Rev. 4:4, 6, 10
 9 Chr. 13:6
 5 ⁵ Ps. 134:1 ¹ Rev.
 11:18 ³ NU, M omit
 both
 6 ⁶ Ezek. 1:24; Rev.
 1:15; 14:2 ¹ Rev.
 11:15 ⁴ NU, M our
 7 ¹ Matt. 22:2;
 25:10; Luke 12:36;
 John 3:29; 2 Cor.
 11:21; Eph. 5:23, 32;
 Rev. 19:9
 8 ⁸ Ps. 45:13; Ezek.
 16:10 ¹ Ps. 132:9
 9 ⁹ Matt. 22:2; Luke
 14:15 ¹ Rev. 22:6
 10 ¹ Rev. 22:8
¹ Acts 10:26; Rev.
 22:9 ¹ [Heb. 1:14]
¹ 1 John 5:10 ¹ Luke
 24:27; John 5:39
 11 ¹ Rev. 15:5 ¹ Ps.
 45:3, 4; Rev. 6:2;
 19:19, 21 ¹ Rev.
 3:7, 14 ¹ Ps. 96:13;
 Is. 11:4
 12 ² Dan. 10:6; Rev.
 1:14 ¹ 5:5; Rev. 2:17;
 19:16 ¹ M adds
 names written, and
 13 ¹ Is. 63:2, 3 ¹
 [John 1:1, 14]
 14 ¹ Rev. 14:20

your brethren ^twho have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the "testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

Christ on a White Horse

^{11v} Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, ^wa white horse. And He who sat on him was called ^xFaithful and True, and ^yin righteousness He judges and makes war. ^{12z} His eyes *were* like a flame of fire, and on His head *were* many crowns. ^a He ⁵ had a name written that no one knew except Himself. ^{13b} He *was* clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called ^c The Word of God. ^{14d} And the armies in heaven, ^e clothed in ⁶ fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. ¹⁵ Now ^f out of His mouth goes a ⁷ sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And ⁸ He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. ^h He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. ¹⁶ And ⁱ He has on *His* robe and on His thigh a name written:

*j*KING OF KINGS
AND LORD OF LORDS.

^e Matt. 28:3 ⁶ NU, M *pure white linen* 15 ^f ls. 11:4; 2 Thess. 2:8; Rev. 1:16 ^g Ps. 2:8, 9 ^h ls. 63:3-6; Rev. 14:20 ⁷ M *sharp two-edged* 16 ⁱ Rev. 2:17; 19:12 ^j Dan. 2:47

seem to support this understanding. However, some contend that *multitude* here refers to angels. **Alleluia** represents the Hebrew word meaning “praise the **LORD**.” The Hebrew word is well known in the OT from its frequent use in the Psalms (see “praise the **LORD**” in Ps. 150:1, 6). The Greek transliteration of it appears in the NT only in Revelation (vv. 1, 3, 4, 6).

19:3 Alleluia: God is praised because evidence of Babylon's just judgment will continue eternally.

19:4 The twenty-four elders and the four living creatures constantly worship **God** (4:2–11; 5:8–14; 11:16; 14:3). The representatives of the angelic realm praise the Lord for the destruction of the system that originated in a fallen angel, Satan.

19:7 Here the Lord is glorified specifically because **the marriage of the Lamb** has come at last. In both the OT (see Hos. 2:19, 20) and the NT (see Eph. 5:23, 32), God's people are viewed as the Lord's betrothed bride or **wife**. The bride of that time would make **herself ready** by bathing, rubbing on oil, and using perfume. Her hair would be specially fixed and she would wear her wedding down.

19:8 The bride of the Lamb wears a garment of precious **fine linen** that symbolizes the good works of believers. In other words, the white garment signifies faithful obedience to God (see Matt. 22:11, 12).

19:9 Blessed introduces the fourth of the seven beatitudes in Revelation (see also 1:3; 14:13; 16:15; 20:6; 22:9, 14). **The marriage supper** of John's day would begin on the evening of the wedding, but the celebration might continue for days. The marriage supper here is a time of joyous feasting to be enjoyed by the church and especially by the overcomers who will reign with Christ. The key to being able to participate in the wedding banquet is faithfulness to God.

19:10 To **worship** any person or object other than **God** is a form of idolatry (see Ex. 20:3–5). The angel rebukes John for his error (22:8, 9) and tells John that he is simply a **fellow servant** with him and his believing **brethren**. The **testimony of Jesus** here refers to the witness about Jesus (1:2, 9). Biblical **prophecy** looks to or is dependent

dent upon the work of Christ and its proclamation (see 1 Pet. 1:12).
19:11 This verse answers the question asked about the beast in 13:4: "Who is able to make war with him?" Christ can defeat him.

19:12 Eyes . . . like a flame of fire parallels the description of the glorified Christ in 1:14. **Many crowns** show Christ to be more powerful than either Satan (12:3) or the beast (13:1). In ancient society, a **name** was more than a title. It revealed a person's character. **No one knew except Himself** apparently means that there are parts of the character of the eternal and limitless God (see 1 Tim. 6:15, 16) that only God knows, though Christ may reveal such matters at His second coming.

19:13 A robe dipped in blood may speak of Christ's redemptive death on the Cross (7:9), or His trampling of the "winepress of the wrath of God" (see v. 15; 14:19, 20), or both. **The Word of God** cannot be the name that no one knew except Christ (v. 12) because that name is revealed in John 1:1. 14.

19:14 **The armies in heaven** may be angelic hosts (see 5:11; Matt. 26:53); but 17:14 speaks of those with the Lord at His coming as being “called, chosen, and faithful,” all terms for believers (see Rom. 1:7; Eph. 1:1; 1 Pet. 2:9). The garments of **fine linen**, like that of the Lamb’s bride in v. 8, supports this interpretation. **White horses**, a common symbol of victory, would be appropriate for those who are already victorious over the beast (15:2).

19:15 The **sharp sword** that comes out of Christ's **mouth** is the two-edged sword spoken of in 1:16. **Strike the nations** may be a general statement of judgment or a specific reference to the armies of the earth being "killed with the sword" in v. 21. Christ **will rule . . . with a rod of iron** in fulfillment of the messianic prophecies in Ps. 2:8, 9; Is. 11:4. **Treads the winepress of God's wrath** recalls the command in 14:18–20 to gather the grapes of the earth for the "great winepress of the wrath of God."

19:16 KING OF KINGS means the One who is supreme over all earthly rulers. The phrase “Lord of lords and King of kings” is found in 17:14, anticipating the Second Coming.

The Beast and His Armies Defeated

¹⁷Then I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in the midst of heaven, ^k“Come and gather together for the ^ssupper of the great God, ¹⁸that you may eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them, and the flesh of all *people*, ⁹free and slave, both small and great.”

¹⁹And I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army. ²⁰Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and ^othose who worshiped his image. ^pThese two were cast alive into the lake of fire ^qburning with brimstone. ²¹And the rest ^rwere killed with the sword which proceeded from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse. ^sAnd all the birds ^twere filled with their flesh.

Satan Bound 1,000 Years

20 Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, ^ahaving the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. ²He laid hold of ^bthe dragon, that

17 ^k 1 Sam. 17:44; Jer. 12:9; Ezek. 39:17 ⁸ NU, M *great supper of God* 18 ¹ Ezek. 39:18-20 ⁹ NU, M *both free* 19 ^m Rev. 16:13-16 [☆] 20 ⁿ Rev. 16:13 ^o Rev. 13:8, 12, 13 ^p Is. 30:33; Dan. 7:11 ^q Rev. 14:10 ^r Rev. 19:15 ^s Rev. 19:17, 18 ^t Rev. 17:16

CHAPTER 20

1 ^a Rev. 1:18; 9:1 ² b Is. 24:22; 2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6

3 ^c Dan. 6:17; Matt. 27:66 ^d Rev. 12:9; 20:8, 10 ^e Dan. 7:9; Matt. 19:28; Luke 22:30 ^f Dan. 7:22; [1 Cor. 6:2, 3] ⁴ ^g Rev. 6:9 ^h Rev. 13:12 ⁱ Rev. 13:15 ^j John 14:19 ^k Rom. 8:17; 2 Tim. 2:12 ¹ M *the* 6 ^l [Rev. 2:11; 20:14] ^m Is. 61:6; 1 Pet. 2:9; Rev. 1:6 ⁿ Rev. 20:4

serpent of old, who is *the* Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; ³ and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and ^cset a seal on him, ^dso that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while.

The Saints Reign with Christ 1,000 Years

⁴And I saw ^ethrones, and they sat on them, and ^fjudgment was committed to them. Then I *saw* ^gthe souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, ^hwho had not worshiped the beast ⁱor his image, and had not received *his* mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they ^jlived and ^kreigned with Christ for ^la thousand years. ⁵But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. ⁶Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such ^lthe second death has no power, but they shall be ^mpriests of God and of Christ, ⁿand shall reign with Him a thousand years.

Satanic Rebellion Crushed

⁷Now when the thousand years have expired, Satan will be released from his

19:17, 18 The birds are told to **gather** to feast on the carcasses of the fallen armies gathered in opposition against Christ.

19:19–21 This picture of **the beast** and his extensive force has already been seen in 17:14 and is almost certainly the same as those gathered for “the battle of that great day of God Almighty” (16:14) at Armageddon (16:16). The beast (13:1–10) and **the false prophet** (13:11–17) are **captured** and **cast alive into the lake of fire**, the eternal destiny of all unbelievers (20:10, 14, 15). They are apparently the first to suffer the torment of the lake of **brimstone**. The rest of the beast’s allies are **killed by the sword from the mouth** of the victorious Christ. Apparently all those who now suffer death go to Hades (see Matt. 16:18), to which Jesus has the keys (1:18), until Death and Hades are emptied and cast into the lake of fire (20:13–15).

20:1–3 The **angel** here may be the same one who had the **key to the bottomless pit** in 9:1, 2. The bottomless pit is presently the place of imprisonment of some demons (see Luke 8:31) and will be the place from which the beast ascends (17:8). Thus it is fitting that **the Devil** will be held there for a **thousand years**. The **dragon** of 12:3, 9, known as **Satan**, was in control of the **serpent** in the Garden of Eden (see Gen. 3). God has a sovereign plan for Satan. He will be **shut . . . up** in the abyss for a thousand years and then will be briefly released to **deceive the nations** one final time (vv. 7–9) before being cast into the lake of fire (v. 10). **Must be released** indicates that Satan will not escape from the pit but instead will be allowed to go forth from the pit to fulfill God’s sovereign plan.

20:4–6 The interpretation of the thousand-year reign of Christ has been the subject of much controversy. Some understand a **thousand years** as a specific statement of time, while others take it figuratively as a round number for a long but undetermined period.

20:4 **Thrones . . . reigned** indicates that believers will participate significantly **with Christ** during His millennial rule (1:6; 2:26, 27; 5:10). This may be a partial fulfillment of Dan. 7:18, 27. The aspect of **judgment** in ruling is referred to in 1 Cor. 6:2–4. At the onset of the kingdom, authority is officially transferred from angels to men (see

Heb. 2:5, 8). A new world order is established with the overcoming saints of the church age ruling together with Christ in His kingdom (see Rom. 8:17). **Those who had been beheaded** are believers martyred by **the beast** (13:7, 15) and may also be the victorious throng who sing praises to the Lamb in 15:2–4. John could identify with those who lost their lives because of **their witness to Jesus** and God’s **word**, since John was exiled to the island of Patmos for the same reasons (1:9).

20:5 **Did not live again** indicates that the **resurrection** of the dead will not encompass all people at the same time, as passages like Dan. 12:2 and John 5:29 may also indicate. Like 1 Cor. 15:23, 52, this passage indicates that there will be a **first** resurrection of dead believers before **the thousand years** of Christ’s reign and a final resurrection after the millennium is **finished**, before the great white throne judgment (vv. 11–13).

20:6 **Blessed** begins the fifth of seven beatitudes in Revelation. The other six (1:3; 14:13; 16:15; 19:9; 22:9, 14) all look forward to life with **Christ** beyond the **first resurrection** (v. 5). The first resurrection is assured for all believers. But the blessedness mentioned here belongs more precisely to those who have a **part** in the first resurrection. It is possible that this refers only to those believers who qualify to function as king-priests in Christ’s kingdom. This might be what Paul was referring to when he spoke of his goal of obtaining the prize of Christ (see 1 Cor. 9:27; Phil. 3:10–14). **The second death** is the everlasting death of torment in the lake of fire for unbelievers who face the great white throne judgment (vv. 11–15). John has previously stated that the one who overcomes will not be hurt by the second death (2:11).

20:7–9 At the conclusion of Christ’s thousand-year reign, **Satan will be released** by God to **deceive the nations . . . of the earth** (vv. 2, 3) again as he has throughout history (12:9). As a result of satanic deception, the world’s armies will gather for battle against God again as they had done before Christ’s second coming (16:13, 14; 19:19, 20). **Gog and Magog** was a common rabbinical title for

prison ⁸and will go out ⁹to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, ¹⁰Gog and Magog, ¹¹to gather them together to battle, whose number is as the sand of the sea. ¹²They went up on the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. And fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them. ¹³The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone ¹⁴where ¹⁵the beast and the false prophet are. And

8 ^o Rev. 12:9; 20:3,
10 ^p Ezek. 38:2;
39:1, 6 ^q Rev. 16:14
9 ^r Is. 8:8; Ezek.
38:9, 16
10 ^s Rev. 19:20;
20:14, 15 ^t Rev.
14:10 ² NU, M
where also
11 ^u 2 Pet. 3:7; Rev.
21:1 ^v Dan. 2:35;
Rev. 12:8
12 ^w Rev. 19:5
^x Dan. 7:10

they 'will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

The Great White Throne Judgment

¹¹Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face "the earth and the heaven fled away. ¹²And there was found no place for them. ¹³And I saw the dead, ¹⁴small and great, standing before ¹⁵God, ¹⁶and books were

³ NU, M the throne

the nations in rebellion against the Lord, and the names recall the prophesied invasion of Israel in Ezek. 38; 39. Some hold that the battle of vv. 8, 9 is the one spoken of in Ezekiel, but there are major differences as well as similarities in the two passages. The use of **fire ... out of heaven** to destroy gathered armies is also seen in Ezek. 38:22; 39:6. **Camp** is used elsewhere to refer to armies (see Heb. 11:34) or the barracks of such forces (see Acts 23:10). Some interpret the camp **of the saints** as being symbolic of the unity of the people of God. **The beloved city** may symbolically refer to the home of God's people. However, the New Jerusalem is commonly called "the city of My God" (3:12) and "the holy city" (21:2). The city here may be the renewed earthly Jerusalem, ready to give way to the everlasting sinless glory of the New Jerusalem (21:1—22:5).

20:10 When the final rebellion is put down by the Lord (vv. 8, 9), **the devil will join the beast and the false prophet** (19:20) in torment **forever in the lake of fire** (see 14:10, 11; Is. 66:22—24; Mark 9:48).

20:11 The **great white throne** is a picture of God's holy rule and judgment. The One occupying the throne may be God the Father (see 1 Cor. 15:24—28) or both the Father and the Lamb (Christ), as in the New Jerusalem (22:1, 3). **The earth and the heaven fled** is a poetic way of describing the burning up of this creation and its related works, as described in 2 Pet. 3:10—13. There is **no place** for this sin-polluted creation in the new heaven and new earth (21:1—22:5).

20:12 **The dead**, called "the rest of the dead" in v. 5, are raised and made to stand before God's throne of judgment. To some, the first resurrection (v. 5) includes only martyrs (v. 4), so that both believers

God and the Problem of Evil

Few stories offer a more dramatic or thrilling climax than the closing chapters of Revelation. The scene of God ultimately destroying Satan and his hosts (20:1—10) brings a joyful conclusion not only to the Revelation, but to the entire Bible. Once and for all, evil will be banished, never again to trouble God's creation.

Yet while Christians look forward to that day with hope, many other people reject God and the gospel precisely because of evil in the world. Their reasoning goes something like this:

- A God who is good and loving would not allow evil and suffering in His world.
- Yet evil exists in the world.
- If God is all-powerful, He could remove evil if He wanted to.
- Yet evil remains. In fact, at times it seems to grow worse.
- Therefore, a good and powerful God must not exist.

This is a powerful argument, and there can be no question that evil and pain are a big problem to both belief and behavior. Christianity offers no knock-down solution, but the Bible does give us ground to stand on as we try to live in a world where suffering is real.

1. *The Bible teaches that God did not create evil.* The world He made was utterly good (Gen. 1:31). But people themselves turned against God, using His gift of free will to rebel against Him. With that moral rebellion, the perfection of God's world came tumbling down and people began to suffer. The Bible also claims that behind human wickedness lies a great outside influence—Satan. This fallen angel hates God and everything to do with Him. He is out to destroy both humanity and the environment and does everything he can to attack God and His purposes. He promotes much of the evil and suffering that we see.

2. *Even though God did not create evil, nor does He will it, He nevertheless uses it to accomplish His purposes.* For instance, God sometimes uses pain to draw people to Himself, especially when they otherwise would not respond to Him. Likewise, the struggle against evil has led many people to strive for good, producing such admirable traits as courage, endurance, self-sacrifice, and compassion.

3. *Why then, if God is all-powerful, does He not remove evil from the world?* This question assumes that He has done nothing. But in fact, He has. First, God Himself came into this world, with all its sorrow and pain, and lived as a man. Jesus knew poverty, thirst, hunger, injustice, physical abuse, heartbreak, and betrayal. He ended his life in excruciating pain. So God certainly understands our condition. He has personally experienced it. In the process, God dealt with the problem of evil at its root. On the cross, Jesus took on Himself the wickedness of every person who has ever lived in order to do away with it. Christ broke the grip of evil that holds the world captive. Already we can see among God's people a glimpse of the new life that He has brought about (Rom. 8:4, 11).

This brings us to God's final solution to evil, which John describes in Revelation 20. In the end, God will triumph by doing away with evil and those who promote it. He will restore His creation and His creatures to their original purpose, to the original relationship they enjoyed with Him. Suffering will be but a memory. Goodness, justice, and peace will characterize the moral climate of God's new heaven and earth.



opened. And another ^ybook was opened, which is *the Book of Life*. And the dead were judged ^zaccording to their works, by the things which were written in the books. ¹³The sea gave up the dead who were in it, ^aand Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. ^bAnd they were judged, each one according to his works. ¹⁴Then ^cDeath and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. ^dThis is the second ⁴death. ¹⁵And anyone not found written in the Book of Life ^ewas cast into the lake of fire.

All Things Made New

21 Now ^aI saw a new heaven and a new earth, ^bfor the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. ²Then I, ¹John, saw ^cthe holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared ^das a bride adorned for her husband. ³And I heard a loud voice

12 ^y Ps. 69:28; Dan. 12:1; Phil. 4:3; Rev. 3:5 ^z Jer. 17:10; Matt. 16:27; Rom. 2:6; Rev. 2:23; 20:12
13 ^a 1 Cor. 15:26; Rev. 1:18; 6:8; 21:4
^b Matt. 16:27; Rev. 2:23; 20:12
14 ^c 1 Cor. 15:26; Rev. 1:18; 6:8; 21:4
^d Rev. 21:8 ^e NU, *M death, the lake of fire*.
15 ^e Rev. 19:20

CHAPTER 21
1 ^a Is. 65:17; 66:22; [2 Pet. 3:13] ^b [2 Pet. 3:10]; Rev. 20:11
2 ^c Is. 52:1; [Gal. 4:26]; Heb. 11:10
^d Is. 54:5; 2 Cor. 11:2
¹ NU, *M omit John*
3 ^e Lev. 26:11; Ezek. 43:7; 2 Cor. 6:16
4 ^f Is. 25:8 ^g; Rev. 7:17 ^g 1 Cor. 15:26; Rev. 20:14 ^h Is. 35:10 ^h; 51:11; 65:19

from heaven saying, “Behold, ^ethe tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them *and be* their God. ^{4f}And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; ^gthere shall be no more death, ^hnor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.”

⁵Then ⁱHe who sat on the throne said, ^j“Behold, I make all things new.” And He said ²to me, “Write, for ^kthese words are true and faithful.”

⁶And He said to me, ^l“^{It}³ is done! ^mI am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. ⁿI will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts. ⁷He who overcomes ⁴shall inherit all things, and ^oI will be his God

5 ⁱ Rev. 4:2, 9; 20:11 / Is. 43:19; 2 Cor. 5:17 ^k Rev. 19:9; 22:6 ² NU, *M omit to me* ⁶ ^l Rev. 10:6; 16:17 ^m Rev. 1:8; 22:13 ⁿ Is. 12:3; 55:1; John 4:10; Rev. 7:17; 22:17 ³ *M omits It is done*
7 ^o Zech. 8:8 ^g; Heb. 8:10 ⁴ *M I shall give him these things*

and unbelievers will stand before the great white throne. Others point to the broad promises to Christians in the Book of Revelation of ruling with Christ (see 1:6; 2:26, 27; 5:10) as evidence that all Christians will experience the first resurrection and thus will not have to endure the great white throne judgment. **Books** refers to the record of all **works** done in this life. Since all have sinned and fall short of God’s standard (see Rom. 3:23), the opening of these books would certainly lead to eternal sentences in the lake of fire. **The Book of Life**, God’s register of those who are saved (17:8), is also opened. So although no one will be judged acceptable based on works (see Eph. 2:9), many will be saved by God’s grace received by faith in Jesus Christ (see Eph. 2:8).

20:13, 14 The sea is the resting place of unburied bodies. **Death and Hades** refers not only to dying, but to existence beyond the grave (1:18; 6:8). The picture here is of all intermediate abodes of human bodies giving them up to God’s judgment. While unbelieving humanity is judged **according to its works**, Death and Hades, the Lord’s final enemy (see 1 Cor. 15:26), is also destroyed by being **cast into the lake of fire**. **The second death** is spiritual and eternal, the just punishment of the wicked. The first death is physical dying. Both are included in the overall meaning of the death that came upon the human race because of Adam and Eve’s sin (see Gen. 2:16, 17; 3:1–19; Rom. 5:12).

20:15 Only God’s elect, those whose names are **written in the Book of Life**, will escape **the lake of fire**. The rejection of the eternal gospel results in eternal condemnation (14:6, 7).

21:1, 2 New here suggests freshness, not just a second beginning. This is the fulfillment of the prophecies of Is. 65:17; 66:22; 2 Pet. 3:13. Significantly, this eternal renewal has already begun in the life of the believer because, using the same term, Paul says, “If anyone is in Christ, he is a *new creation*” (2 Cor. 5:17). The present **heaven and . . .**

earth, including the **sea**, were burned up in the great white throne judgment (20:11, 13), and thus have **passed away** before the arrival of the new heaven and earth. The fact that there will be a continuation of some features of the present creation in the new heaven and new earth is implied by the description of the **New Jerusalem as the holy city**, a title that is applied to the present Jerusalem in 11:2. Yet the drastic difference in the new eternal state is obvious from the fact that there will be **no more** sea, which was a major part of the original creation (see Gen. 1:6–10). It is impossible to tell whether the New Jerusalem will sit on the new earth, since all three references to it describe the holy city as **coming down out of heaven** (see also v. 10; 3:12). **Prepared as a bride** is essentially the imagery of 19:7, 8, where God’s people—or, more specifically, Christ’s church—are prepared for “the marriage . . . of the Lamb” (19:9). **Her husband** refers again to Christ, the Lamb (v. 9), but the bride is the New Jerusalem, according to vv. 9, 10. In other words, Christ’s bride (v. 9) is the redeemed inhabitants of the holy city (vv. 3–7, 24–27). **21:3** In this verse, God is described as dwelling among His people. This recalls the Incarnation, the fact that Jesus “became flesh and dwelt among us” (John 1:14), and is a fulfillment of the promise in 7:15 that **God** will dwell among His redeemed people. A virtually identical promise was given to Israel in Ezek. 37:27, 28.

21:4, 5 Wipe away every tear fulfills the promises in 7:17 and Is. 25:8. **No more death . . . no more pain** goes far beyond the earlier promise of 7:16, which promises freedom from hunger, thirst, and scorching heat. **Former things have passed away** echoes both v. 1 and 2 Cor. 5:17. The believer’s rebirth through faith in Christ brings newness to that person’s life, but it is only in the eternal state that God will **make all things new**.

21:6 It is done echoes the voice from the throne in 16:17 that proclaims the completion of God’s wrath being poured out on Babylon. Here the completion of the new creation by Him who is **the Alpha and the Omega** of all things is the focus. **Water of life** may be recalling Jesus’ references to living water in John 4:14; 7:38, in connection with eternal life and life in the Holy Spirit. This water is further described in 22:1. A similar offer of God’s grace **to him who spiritually thirsts** is repeated in 22:17.

21:7 He who overcomes will inherit not only the specific promises to the churches in 2:7, 11, 17, 26–28; 3:5, 12, 21, but **all things**. The most wonderful part of this inheritance is that the believer **will be a son** (a person who is a rightful heir) of **God** forever. Sonship is a special honor associated with the Davidic covenant and includes privileged intimacy with God and the authority to rule (see 2 Sam. 7:14).

New Jerusalem

(Gk. *Hierousalēm kainē*) (3:12; 21:2) Strong’s #2419; 2537

The Greek term denotes “the brand-new Jerusalem.” The New Jerusalem that comes out of heaven is plainly distinct from the earthly Jerusalem, the former capital of Israel. This is the city Abraham looked for, the city that has foundations, whose builder and maker is God (Heb. 11:10). This is the city that exists even now in heaven, for Paul calls it the Jerusalem that is above (Gal. 4:26).

and he shall be My son. ^{8p}But the cowardly, ⁵unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in ^qthe lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”

The New Jerusalem

⁹Then one of ^rthe seven angels who had the seven bowls filled with the seven last plagues came ⁶to me and talked with me, saying, “Come, I will show you ^sthe ⁷bride, the Lamb’s wife.” ¹⁰And he carried me away ^tin the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me ^uthe ⁸great city, the ⁹holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, ^{11v}having the glory of God. Her light *was* like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal. ¹²Also she had a great and high wall with ^wtwelve gates, and twelve angels at the gates, and names written on them, which are *the names* of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: ^{13x}three gates on the east, three gates on the north, three gates on the south, and three gates on the west.

¹⁴Now the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and ^yon them were the ¹names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. ¹⁵And he who talked with me

^{8p} 1 Cor. 6:9; Gal. 5:19; Eph. 5:5; 1 Tim. 1:9; [Heb. 12:14]
^q Rev. 20:14 ⁵ M adds and sinners,
⁹ Rev. 15:1 ^r Rev. 19:7; 21:2 ^s NU, M omit to me ^t M woman, the Lamb’s bride
¹⁰ Rev. 1:10
^u Ezek. 48 ⁶ NU, M omit great ⁹ NU, M holy city, Jerusalem
^{11v} Is. 60:1; Ezek. 43:2; Rev. 15:8; 21:23; 22:5
^{12w} Ezek. 48:31-34
^{13x} Ezek. 48:31-34
^{14v} Matt. 16:18; Luke 22:29, 30; Gal. 2:9; Eph. 2:20 ¹ NU, M twelve names

^{15z} Ezek. 40:3; Zech. 2:1; Rev. 11:1
^{16z} Lit. *stadia*, about 1,380 miles in all
^{19x} Ex. 28:17-20; Is. 54:11; Ezek. 28:13
^{21b} Matt. 13:45, 46
^c Rev. 22:2
^{22d} Matt. 24:2; John 4:21, 23
^{23e} Is. 24:23; 60:19, 20; Rev. 21:25; 22:5
³ NU, M omit in it
⁴ M very glory

^zhad a gold reed to measure the city, its gates, and its wall. ¹⁶The city is laid out as a square; its length is as great as its breadth. And he measured the city with the reed: twelve thousand ²furlongs. Its length, breadth, and height are equal. ¹⁷Then he measured its wall: one hundred and forty-four cubits, *according* to the measure of a man, that is, of an angel. ¹⁸The construction of its wall was of jasper; and the city *was* pure gold, like clear glass. ^{19a}The foundations of the wall of the city *were* adorned with all kinds of precious stones: the first foundation *was* jasper, the second sapphire, the third chalcedony, the fourth emerald, ²⁰the fifth sardonyx, the sixth sardius, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, and the twelfth amethyst. ²¹The twelve gates *were* twelve ^bpearls: each individual gate was of one pearl. ^cAnd the street of the city *was* pure gold, like transparent glass.

The Glory of the New Jerusalem

^{22d}But I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. ^{23e}The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine ³in it, for the ⁴glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb

21:8 The characteristics of those who are not in Christ through faith—the **unbelieving**—are described. These unbelievers are destined for **the lake of fire**, eternal **death** after God’s final judgment (see 20:12–14). All whose names are not written in the Book of Life (20:15) are judged according to their works (20:12), and are shown to be worthy of endless death (see Rom. 6:23). In 1 Cor. 6:9–11, Paul makes essentially the same point.

21:9, 10 Since the beginning of this passage is similar to the beginning of ch. 17, it seems that **the Lamb’s wife**, the **New Jerusalem**, is being contrasted with Babylon, “the great harlot” (17:1, 5). **In the Spirit** is the exalted state in which John received the apocalyptic visions of this book (1:10), the last of which **carried him away** (17:3) to a **high mountain** overlooking Jerusalem.

21:11 This description of the eternal city, New Jerusalem, emphasizes God’s **glory**, which is a source of the **light** for the city (21:23). God’s heavenly glory is like a **jasper stone** (4:3); the light in the New Jerusalem will be similar to the brilliant crystalline reflection of priceless jasper.

21:12, 13 The description of the **great and high wall** that contains **twelve gates** named after **the twelve tribes . . . of Israel** echoes Ezek. 48:30–35. Commentators variously interpret these 12 gates as representing all of God’s people, including both Israel and the church, or as representing strictly the Israelites.

21:14 The **twelve foundations**, the huge stones upon which the wall of the New Jerusalem rests, contain the **names of the twelve apostles** of Christ (see Luke 6:13–16), calling to mind Paul’s imagery of the apostles as the foundation of the house of God in Eph. 2:20 (see Jesus’ promise to His apostles that they would occupy a prominent place in His kingdom in Matt. 19:28).

21:15–17 The reference to the **reed to measure the city** recalls Ezek. 40:41, as does the reference in 11:1, 2. The city seems to be **laid out** as a cube, since its **length, breadth, and height are equal**. The cube was an ancient symbol of perfection. The Most Holy Place in the OT tabernacle and in the temple were cubic in design. The symmetrical measurements of the city are so vast (**twelve**

thousand furlongs, or about 1400 miles) and the wall is so thick (**one hundred and forty-four cubits**, or over 200 feet) that they almost surpass the imagination. The imagery indicates that the city is the dwelling place of God’s presence, just as the tabernacle and temple had been. It is impossible to be certain whether ordinary measurements should be applied to the eternal state, though the reference to **the measure of a man** (human standards) may imply that they should.

21:18 As thick as the walls of New Jerusalem are (200 feet; v. 17), they are as transparent as crystalline **jasper**. The vast city itself (v. 16), especially the streets (v. 21), are also **like clear glass**, even though they are made of **pure gold**. The overall effect is that of an incredibly beautiful and transparent city, symbolizing never-ending glory and purity.

21:19, 20 The **stones** that serve as **foundations of the wall** for the New Jerusalem are named for the twelve apostles (v. 14), although there is no way to know which of the **precious gems** represents each apostle. While the exact color of some of the stones is uncertain, it is probable that **jasper** is colorless, **sapphire** is blue, **chalcedony** is green or greenish-blue, **emerald** is bright green, **sardonyx** has layers of red and white, **sardius** is blood-red, **chrysolite** is yellow, **beryl** is blue or blue-green, **topaz** is golden, **chrysoprase** is apple-green, **jacinth** is blue or blue-purple, and **amethyst** is purple or violet.

21:21 The **twelve gates** of the eternal city, representing the twelve tribes of Israel (v. 12), are **each** made from **one huge pearl**. What is immediately striking is that **the street** in the New Jerusalem is **gold** (v. 18), but it is also significant that only one street is mentioned (22:2).

21:22 There will be **no temple** building in the New Jerusalem because the Father and the Son (**the Lamb**) will be there. Recall that Christ referred to His body as a temple (see John 2:19, 21) and that the church itself is called “the temple of God” (1 Cor. 3:16), “a holy temple,” and the “dwelling place of God” (Eph. 2:21, 22).

21:23 Because of the **light** provided by God’s **glory** and **the Lamb**,

is its light. ^{24f}And the nations ⁵of those who are saved shall walk in its light, and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor ⁶into it. ^{25g}Its gates shall not be shut at all by day ^h(there shall be no night there). ²⁶ⁱAnd they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into ⁷it. ²⁷But ^jthere shall by no means enter it anything ⁸that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb's ^kBook of Life.

The River of Life

22 And he showed me ^aa ¹pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb. ^{2b}In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, ^cwas the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree ^dwere for the healing of the nations. ³And ^ethere shall be no more curse, ^fbut the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His ^gservants shall serve Him. ^{4h}They shall see His face, and ⁱHis name shall be on their foreheads. ^{5j}There shall be no night there: They need no lamp nor ^klight of the sun,

²⁴ ^fIs. 60:3, 5; 66:12
⁵ NU, M omit of those who are saved
⁶ M of the nations to Him
²⁵ ^gIs. 60:11 ^hIs. 60:20; Zech. 14:7
²⁶ ⁱRev. 21:24 ⁷ M adds that they may enter in.
²⁷ ^jIs. 35:8; Joel 3:17 ^k Phil. 4:3 ⁸ NU, M profane, nor one who causes

CHAPTER 22

¹ ^a Ps. 46:4; Ezek. 47:1; [Zech. 14:8]
¹ NU, M omit pure
² ^b Ezek. 47:12 [☆]
^c Gen. 2:9; [Rev. 2:7; 22:14, 19] ^d Rev. 21:24
³ ^c Zech. 14:11
^f Ezek. 48:35 ^g Rev. 7:15
⁴ ^h [Ps. 17:15; 42:2; Matt. 5:8 [☆]; 1 Cor. 13:12; 1 John 3:2]
ⁱ Rev. 14:1
⁵ ^j Is. 60:19; Rev. 21:23 ^k Rev. 7:15
¹ Ps. 36:9 ^m Dan. 7:18, 27; Matt. 19:28; [Rom. 5:17]; 2 Tim. 2:12; Rev. 20:4

for ^lthe Lord God gives them light. ^mAnd they shall reign forever and ever.

The Time Is Near

⁶Then he said to me, ⁿ“These words are faithful and true.” And the Lord God of the ²holy prophets ^osent His angel to show His servants the things which must ^pshortly take place.

^{7q}“Behold, I am coming quickly! ^rBlessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book.”

⁸Now I, John, ³saw and heard these things. And when I heard and saw, ^sI fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who showed me these things.

⁹Then he said to me, ^t“See that you do not do that. ⁴For I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren the prophets, and of those who keep the words of this book. Worship God.” ^{10u}And he said to me, “Do not seal the words of the prophecy of this book, ^vfor the time is at hand.

¹¹He who is unjust, let him be unjust still;

⁶ ^a Rev. 19:9 ^o Rev. 1:1 ^p NU, M spirits of the prophets ⁷ ^q [Rev. 3:11] ^r Rev. 1:3 ⁸ ^s Rev. 19:10 ³ NU, M am the one who heard and saw ⁹ ^t Rev. 19:10 ⁴ NU, M omit For ¹⁰ ^u Dan. 8:26; Rev. 10:4 ^v Rev. 1:3

there is **no need of the sun or of the moon** in the eternal state (contrast Gen. 1:14–19). It is speculated that God’s glory was the source of the light mentioned before the creation of the sun and moon in Genesis (see Gen. 1:3–5, 16).

21:24 From all **the nations** (see Matt. 28:19; Luke 24:47), Christ redeemed His people (5:9), continually calling unbelievers to repent of their sins and believe in Him (14:6, 7). Great multitudes who may be among this group in the eternal Jerusalem have come into the Lord’s presence in 7:9 and 15:1–4. Others hold that *the nations* here refers to believers from nations that existed during the millennium (see 20:1–10).

21:25 The **gates** to the eternal city will not need to **be shut** because everything that could threaten the city has been defeated (v. 27) and consigned to the lake of fire (20:15).

21:27 Never again can the devil (12:9), the one behind every **abomination** and **lie** (see John 8:44), emerge to instigate sin (see Gen. 3). His eternal destiny in the lake of fire is certain (20:10). Only believers, whose names **are written in the Lamb’s Book of Life**, are allowed by God to **enter** the New Jerusalem.

22:1 The **river** flowing with the **water of life** is reminiscent of the water coming from the temple in Ezek. 47, as well as of Jesus’ expression “rivers of living water” (John 7:38), symbolizing the New Covenant ministry of the Holy Spirit (7:39).

the tree of life

(Gk. *xulon zōēs*) (2:7; 22:2, 14) Strong’s #3586; 2222

The term in Greek denotes “a tree that gives life,” that is, eternal life (see John 20:31). This tree symbolizes the eternal life God has made available to humankind. The tree of life was present in the Garden of Eden, but its fruit was not eaten because Adam and Eve had fallen into sin (Gen. 2:9; 3:24). Jesus came to earth to restore humankind and to again offer them the tree of life (2:7). Those who are in the new paradise, the New Jerusalem, will partake of the tree of life forever (22:2).

22:2 The **tree of life** in the original creation was in the middle of the Garden of Eden (Gen. 2:9), from which all of humanity was excluded after sin entered the world (see Gen. 3:22–24). Ezekiel’s apocalyptic vision included trees bearing fruit every month with medicinal leaves (see Ezek. 47:12). Since only one tree of life is mentioned here—even though it is on both sides **of the river**—it is probably meant as a parallel to Gen. 2, implying that a new, better, and everlasting Eden has come.

22:3 **No more curse** means that the affliction of sin, especially on the human race and creation (see Gen. 3:14–19), will be erased. As **God** had fellowship with Adam and Eve before their fall into sin (see Gen. 3:8), so the Lord will again be with His **servants** eternally. In turn, His servants will worshipfully **serve Him** (see Rom. 12:1).

22:4 The believer’s hope today is to **see** the Lord **face** to face (see 1 Cor. 13:12), something neither Moses nor any other human was previously allowed to do (see Ex. 33:20). The **name . . . on their foreheads** is both in contrast to the mark of the beast (13:16, 17) and in fulfillment of the promise to the faithful believers at Philadelphia (see 3:12). It may also extend the imagery of the 144,000 in 14:1.

22:5 **No night . . . no lamp** fulfills Christ’s proclamation of Himself as “the light of the world” (John 8:12; 9:5; 12:46). The eternal inhabitants of the New Jerusalem (20:15; 21:27) **shall reign forever** with the Lord, as implied in 1:6 and stated in Dan. 7:18, 27.

22:6, 7 The visions of Revelation are meant to inform the **servants of God**, true believers who will serve and reign with the Lord eternally (vv. 3, 5), as to what could **take place** very soon. **Blessed** begins the sixth of seven beatitudes in Revelation (see also v. 14; 1:3; 14:13; 16:15; 19:9; 20:6).

22:8, 9 **John** makes the mistake of worshiping an **angel** for a second time (19:10). Again the angel reminds John that he is merely a **fellow servant** of God and admonishes him to **worship only God**.

22:10 Earlier John was commanded to seal up (that is, to not write down) the utterances of the seven thunders in 10:4, as Daniel had been instructed to do (see Dan. 12:4, 9). The reason John is now told not to **seal the book** is that **the time** of its fulfillment is potentially very near.

22:11 **unjust . . . filthy . . . righteous . . . holy**: This verse, on the surface, seems to be a prediction that believers and unbelievers

he who is filthy, let him be filthy still; he who is righteous, let him ⁵be righteous still; he who is holy, let him be holy still.”

Jesus Testifies to the Churches

¹²“And behold, I am coming quickly, and ¹⁰My reward is with Me, ¹¹to give to every one according to his work. ¹³¹²I am the Alpha and the Omega, *the* ⁶Beginning and *the* End, the First and the Last.”

¹⁴¹³Blessed are those who ⁷do His commandments, that they may have the right ^ato the tree of life, ^band may enter through the gates into the city. ¹⁵⁸But ^coutside are ^ddogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie.

¹⁶^c“I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things in the churches. ¹I am the Root and the Offspring of David, ⁹the Bright and Morning Star.”

¹⁷And the Spirit and ^hthe bride say, “Come!” And let him who hears say, “Come!” ⁱAnd let him who thirsts come.

¹¹ ⁵NU, M do right
¹² ^wIs. 40:10 ☆;
62:11 ^xRev. 20:12
¹³ ^yIs. 41:4 ⁶NU, M
*First and the Last,
the Beginning and
the End.*
¹⁴ ^zDan. 12:12;
[1 John 3:24]
^a[Prov. 11:30]; Rev.
2:7 ^bRev. 21:27
⁷NU wash their
robes,
¹⁵ ^cMatt. 8:12;
1 Cor. 6:9; Gal. 5:19;
Col. 3:6; Rev. 21:8
^dDeut. 23:18; Matt.
7:6; Phil. 3:2 ⁸NU,
M omit But
¹⁶ ^eRev. 1:1
¹⁷ ^f2 Sam. 7:12; Is. 9:7;
Jer. 23:5; Rev. 5:5
⁹Num. 24:17; Luke
1:78; 2 Pet. 1:9
¹⁷ ^h[Rev. 21:2, 9]
ⁱIs. 55:1; Rev. 21:6
¹⁸ / Deut. 4:2; 12:32;
Prov. 30:6 ⁹NU, M
omit For ¹M may
God add
¹⁹ ^kEx. 32:33 ²M
may God take away

Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely.

A Warning

¹⁸⁹For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: ^jIf anyone adds to these things, ¹God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; ¹⁹and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, ^kGod ²shall take away his part from the ³Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

I Am Coming Quickly

²⁰He who testifies to these things says, “Surely I am coming quickly.”

Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!

²¹The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* ⁴with you all. Amen.

³ NU, M tree of life ²¹ ⁴NU with all; M with all the saints

will live out their lives true to their nature until the final judgment (20:12–15). However, it is almost certainly an implied, indirect evangelistic appeal based on the continuing offer of the gospel in v. 17 and 14:6, 7.

22:12, 13 The rewarding of each believer according to his or her works is taught in 2 Cor. 5:10. Christ’s rewards are meant to provide a powerful incentive for an obedient life. Little wonder that the apostle Paul rigorously disciplined himself so that he would not be disqualified from the reward of reigning with Christ (see 1 Cor. 9:24–27). The judgment seat of Christ can be a time of great regret, or it can be an occasion of supreme joy (see 2 Cor. 5:9–11). After Christ comes again, He will give rewards to His own. This can be counted on because Christ is in control of all history and eternity.

22:14, 15 Blessed introduces the last of the seven beatitudes in Revelation (see also v. 7; 1:3; 14:13; 16:15; 19:9; 20:6). Since the **tree of life** is literal but is also viewed figuratively (see Prov. 3:18; 11:30; 13:12; 15:4), it suggests a quality of life involving an intimate fellowship with Jesus Christ based upon a persevering obedience. This may be a fulfillment of Christ’s provision of life, and more abundant life (see John 10:10). Since no one can **enter . . . into the city** unless their name is written in the Lamb’s Book of Life (21:27), this beatitude is speaking of those justified by faith who express that faith in obedience (see Eph. 2:8–10). The obedient overcomer is promised the reward of entering through the gates of the city, possibly a privilege reserved for those who share in the Lord’s victory procession.

22:15 Dogs was a common expression used by Jews to speak of Gentiles (see Matt. 15:26); here, however, it more likely speaks of false teachers (see Phil. 3:2). **Loves and practices a lie** indicates a life dominated by falsehood (21:8).

22:16 the Root and the Offspring of David: Jesus is both the Source and Son of David, echoing the wording of Is. 11:1, 10. Jesus is both greater than David and the rightful heir to the throne of David. **Bright and Morning Star** means that for the Christian, Jesus is the

comforting light in a dark world until the dawn of His return (2:28).

22:17 This invitation by the Spirit remains open to anyone who will **come** by faith to Christ to accept the Lord’s gracious offer of eternal life.

22:18, 19 The Book of Revelation was intended to be heard and obeyed (v. 7; 1:3), not tampered with. The person who either **adds to** or **takes away** from its contents will receive from **God** the strictest punishment, a punishment with eternal consequences. This terrifying warning is even stronger than that of Deut. 4:2 and Prov. 30:6.

22:20 The fact that Jesus is **coming quickly** within the scope of God’s overall plan for this creation is a repeated theme in Revelation (3:11; 22:7, 12). John adds the hope of all believers to the declaration of Christ by praying, **come, Lord Jesus**.

22:21 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ begins and concludes the Book of Revelation (1:4), implying that the message of grace and the free gift of eternal life in Christ (see Eph. 2:8, 9)—not merely the message of judgment upon unbelievers—can be found in this book.

the Alpha and the Omega

(Gk. to A kai to Ō) (1:8; 21:6; 22:13) Strong’s #1; 2532; 5598

Alpha and omega are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. In every context this phrase is used, it is difficult to tell whether the title applies to the Father or to Christ or to both. Most likely it can be attributed to both. God in Christ comprises everything, all that goes between the Alpha and the Omega, as well as being the First and the Last. This expresses God’s fullness, comprehensiveness, and all-inclusiveness. He is the Source of all things and will bring all things to their appointed end.

TABLE OF MONIES, WEIGHTS, AND MEASURES

The Hebrews probably first used coins in the Persian period (500–350 B.C.). However, minting began around 700 B.C. in other nations. Prior to this, precious metals were weighed, not counted as money.

Some units appear as both measures of money and measures of weights. This comes from naming the coins after their weight. For example, the shekel was a weight long before it became the name of a coin.

It is helpful to relate biblical monies to current values. But we cannot make exact equivalents. The fluctuating value of money's purchasing power is difficult to determine in our own day. It is even harder to evaluate currencies used two- to three-thousand years ago.

Therefore, it is best to choose a value meaningful over time, such as a common laborer's daily wage. One day's wage corresponds to the ancient Jewish system (a silver shekel is four days' wages) as well as to the Greek and Roman systems (the drachma and the denarius were each coins representing a day's wage).

The monies chart below takes a current day's wage as thirty-two dollars. Though there are differences of economies and standards of living, this measure will help us apply meaningful values to the monetary units in the chart and in the biblical text.

Monies			
Unit	Monetary Value	Equivalents	Translations
Jewish Weights			
Talent	gold—\$5,760,000 ¹ silver—\$384,000	3,000 shekels; 6,000 bekas	talent
Shekel	gold—\$1,920 silver—\$128	4 days' wages; 2 bekas; 20 gerahs	shekel
Beka	gold—\$960 silver—\$64	½ shekel; 10 gerahs	bekah
Gerah	gold—\$96 silver—\$6.40	1/20 shekel	gerah
Persian Coins			
Daric	gold—\$1,280 ² silver—\$64	2 days' wages; ½ Jewish silver shekel	daric, drachma
Greek Coins			
Tetradrachma (Stater)	\$128	4 drachmas	piece of money
Didrachma	\$64	2 drachmas	tribute
Drachma	\$32	1 day's wage	piece of silver, coin
Lepton	\$.25	½ of a Roman kodrantes	mite
Roman Coins			
Aureus	\$800	25 denarii	gold
Denarius	\$32	1 day's wage	denarius
Assarius	\$2	1/16 of a denarius	copper coin
Kodrantes	\$.50	¼ of an assarius	penny
¹ Value of gold is fifteen times the value of silver. ² Value of gold is twenty times the value of silver.			

weights			
Unit	weight	Equivalents	Translations
Jewish wEigh Ts			
Talent	c. 75 pounds for common talent, c. 150 pounds for royal talent	60 minas; 3,000 shekels	talent
Mina	1.25 pounds	50 shekels	mina
Shekel	c. .4 ounce (11.4 grams) for common shekel, c. .8 ounce for royal shekel	2 bekas; 20 gerahs	shekel
Beka	c. .2 ounce (5.7 grams)	½ shekel; 10 gerahs	half a shekel
Gerah	c. .02 ounce (.57 grams)	1/20 shekel	gerah
r oMan wEigh T			
Litra	12 ounces		pound

Measures of Length			
Unit	Length	Equivalents	Translations
Day's journey	c. 20 miles		day's journey
Roman mile	4,854 feet	8 stadia	mile
Sabbath day's journey	3,637 feet	6 stadia	Sabbath day's journey
Stadion	606 feet	⅛ Roman mile	furlong
Rod	9 feet (10.5 feet in Ezekiel)	3 paces; 6 cubits	measuring reed, reed
Fathom	6 feet	4 cubits	fathom
Pace	3 feet	⅓ rod; 2 cubits	pace
Cubit	18 inches	½ pace; 2 spans	cubit
Span	9 inches	½ cubit; 3 handbreadths	span
Handbreadth	3 inches	⅓ span; 4 fingers	handbreadth
Finger	.75 inches	¼ handbreadth	finger

Dry Measures			
Unit	Measure	Equivalents	Translations
Homer	6.52 bushels	10 ephahs	homer
Kor	6.52 bushels	1 homer; 10 ephahs	kor, measure
Lethech	3.26 bushels	½ kor	half homer
Ephah	.65 bushel, 20.8 quarts	⅒ homer	ephah
Modius	7.68 quarts		bushel
Seah	7 quarts	⅓ ephah	measure
Omer	2.08 quarts	⅒ ephah; 1⅔ kab	omer
Kab	1.16 quarts	4 logs	kab
Choenix	1 quart		measure
Xestes	1 ⅙ pints		pot
Log	.58 pint	¼ kab	log

Liquid Measures			
Unit	Measure	Equivalents	Translations
Kor	60 gallons	10 baths	kor
Metretes	10.2 gallons		gallon
Bath	6 gallons	6 hins	measure, bath
Hin	1 gallon	2 kabs	hin
Kab	2 quarts	4 logs	kab
Log	1 pint	¼ kab	log

TEACHINGS AND ILLUSTRATIONS OF CHRIST

Subject Reference

Abiding in Christ	John 15:4–10
Ability	Matt. 25:14, 15
Ablution	Matt. 6:17, 18
Abode	John 14:23
Abraham	John 8:37, 56
Abstinence	Luke 21:34
Abundant life	John 10:10
Access to God	John 10:7, 9
Accountability	Luke 12:47, 48
Accusation, false	Matt. 5:11
Adultery	Matt. 5:27, 28
Adversity	Luke 24:46
Affliction	Matt. 24:7–12
Agreement	Matt. 18:19
Altar	Matt. 23:18, 19
Ambition	Luke 22:25–30
Angels	Matt. 13:39, 41
Anger	Matt. 5:22
Anxiety	Luke 12:22–31
Apostasy	Matt. 13:18–22 Luke 8:13
Apostles	Luke 11:49
Appearance	Matt. 6:16
Appearance, outward	Matt. 23:27, 28
Authority	Matt. 21:24 Luke 10:19
Avarice	Luke 12:16–21
Backsliding	Luke 9:62
Baptism	Matt. 28:19 Acts 1:5
Beatitudes	Matt. 5:3–11
Beelzebub	Matt. 10:25
Begging	Luke 16:3
Beneficence	Matt. 5:42
Betrayal	Matt. 26:21
Bigotry	Luke 18:9–14
Birds	Matt. 8:20
Blasphemy	Matt. 12:31, 32
Blessings	Matt. 5:3–11
Blind guides	Matt. 15:14
Borrowing	Matt. 5:42
Bread of life	John 6:32–35
Brothers	Matt. 23:8
Builders	Matt. 7:24 Luke 6:47–49
Burdens	Luke 11:46
Burial	Matt. 8:22
Caesar	Matt. 22:21
Call of God	Matt. 20:16
Called ones	Matt. 22:14

Subject Reference

Capital and labor	Matt. 20:1–15
Capital punishment	Matt. 26:52
Care of God	Matt. 6:30, 33
Caution	Mark 4:24
Celibacy	Matt. 19:11, 12
Character	John 1:47
Charity	Luke 12:33
Cheating	Mark 10:19
Chosen	Matt. 22:14
Church	Matt. 18:17
Circumcision	John 7:22, 23
Cleansing	John 15:3
Coin	Matt. 22:19–21
Coldness	Matt. 24:12
Communication	Luke 24:17
Compassion	Matt. 15:32 Luke 10:33
Compromise	Matt. 5:25, 26
Conceit	Luke 18:10–12
Conduct, Christian	Matt. 5:16
Confessing Christ	Matt. 10:32, 33
Confession of sin	Luke 18:13, 14
Confidence	Mark 10:24
Conflict	Matt. 10:34–36
Conscience	John 8:7–9
Contention	Matt. 18:15–17
Contentment	John 6:43
Conversion	Matt. 13:15
Convict	John 16:8
Corruption, moral	Luke 11:39
Courage	Matt. 9:22
Covenant	Mark 14:24
Coveting	Mark 7:21, 22
Cross-bearing	Matt. 10:38
Crucifixion	Luke 9:22
Cup of water	Matt. 10:42
Dancing	Luke 15:25–27
Daniel	Matt. 24:15
Darkness	Luke 11:35
David	Matt. 12:3
Day	John 11:9
Deaf	Matt. 13:13–15
Death	Luke 9:22 John 8:51
Debts	Matt. 18:24
Deceivers	Matt. 24:4, 5
Decision	Matt. 6:24
Defilement	Matt. 15:11, 18, 19
Devil	Matt. 13:38, 39

Subject Reference

Diligence	John 9:4
Disbelief	John 5:38
Discernment	Matt. 16:2, 3
Discipleship	Luke 14:33
Disputes	Mark 9:33, 34
Distress	Luke 21:23, 25
Divorce	Matt. 5:31, 32
Doctrine	Mark 7:7
Doubt	Matt. 21:21
Drunkard	Luke 7:34
Drunkenness	Luke 21:34
Dullness	Matt. 13:13
Duty	Luke 17:10
Dwelling places	John 14:2, 3
Earth	Matt. 5:18
Earthquakes	Mark 13:8
Economy	Matt. 15:37 John 6:12
Elect	Matt. 24:24, 31
Election	Matt. 25:34
Elijah	Matt. 17:11, 12
Employer	Matt. 20:1–16
Encouragement	Matt. 9:2
Endowments	Matt. 25:14, 15
Endurance	Matt. 10:22 Luke 21:19
Enemies	Matt. 5:43, 44
Eternal life	Matt. 19:29
Eternal sin	Mark 3:29
Etiquette	Luke 10:8
Evil	Matt. 15:19
Exaltation	Matt. 23:12
Example	John 13:15
Excuses	Luke 14:18–20
Extravagance	Luke 15:11–14
Fainting	Mark 8:2, 3
Faith	Matt. 6:25 Mark 11:22 Luke 7:50
Faithfulness	Matt. 25:21
Faithlessness	Matt. 25:24–30
False prophets	Matt. 24:11
False witness	Matt. 19:18
Farm	Matt. 22:2–6
Fasting	Matt. 6:16–18
Faultfinding	Matt. 7:3–5
Faults	Matt. 18:15
Fear of God	Matt. 10:28
Fest	Luke 14:8
Feet washing	John 13:12–15
Fellowship	Matt. 8:11
Flattery	Luke 6:26

Subject	Reference
Flesh	John 6:53
Flock	Matt. 26:31
Following Christ	Matt. 10:37, 38
Food	Matt. 6:11
	Matt. 6:25
	John 6:27
Fool	Matt. 5:22
Formalism	Matt. 23:23–28
Forsaking all	Luke 14:33
Foxes	Luke 9:58
Friends	Luke 11:5–8
Frugality	John 6:12
Fruitfulness	Matt. 13:23
Fruitlessness	Luke 13:6–9
Generosity	Matt. 25:34–40
Gentiles	Matt. 10:5–7
Gentleness	Matt. 5:5
Giving	Luke 6:38
Gladness	Luke 15:32
Glorifying God	Matt. 5:16
Gluttony	Luke 21:34
God	Matt. 19:17, 26
Godlessness	John 5:42, 44
Golden Rule	Matt. 7:12
Gospel	Luke 4:18
Grace	2 Cor. 12:9
Greatness	Matt. 5:19
Grumble	John 6:43
Guidance	John 16:13
Hairs numbered	Matt. 10:30
Hand of God	John 10:27–29
Happiness	Matt. 5:12
	John 13:16, 17
Harlots	Matt. 21:31
Harvest	Matt. 9:37, 38
Hatred	John 15:18, 19
Healing	Matt. 10:7, 8
	Mark 2:17
Heart	Matt. 13:19
Heaven	Luke 16:17
	John 3:13
Hell	Matt. 5:22
	Matt. 10:28
Helper	John 14:16
	John 15:26
Helpless	John 6:44
Hireling	John 10:11–13
Holy Spirit	John 14:26
Home	Mark 5:19
Honesty	Mark 10:19
	Luke 8:15
Honor of men	Matt. 6:2
Honor of parents	Matt. 15:3–6
Hospitality	Luke 14:12–14
Humility	Matt. 11:29
	John 13:14
Hunger, spiritual	Matt. 5:6
	Luke 6:21
Hypocrisy	Matt. 6:5
	Luke 6:42
Ignorance	Matt. 22:29
Immortality	Matt. 25:46
	John 11:25, 26

Subject	Reference
Impartiality of God	Matt. 5:45
Inconsistency	Matt. 7:3–5
	Luke 6:41, 42
Indecision	Luke 9:62
Indifference	Matt. 24:12
Industry	John 4:36
Infidelity	John 3:18
Influence	Matt. 5:13
Ingratitude	Luke 17:17, 18
Innocence	Matt. 10:16
Insincerity	Luke 16:15
Inspiration	Luke 12:12
Instability	Matt. 7:26, 27
Instruction	John 6:45
Insufficiency	Mark 10:21
Integrity	Luke 16:10
Intercession	John 17:9
Investment	Matt. 6:19, 20
Jealousy	Luke 15:25–30
John the Baptist	Luke 7:24–28
Jonah	Matt. 12:39–41
Joy	Matt. 25:21
	Luke 15:7, 10
Judge not	Matt. 7:1, 2
Judgment	Matt. 11:24
Judgment day	Matt. 25:31–46
Justice	John 5:30
Justification, self	Luke 16:15
Killing	Matt. 5:21, 22
Kindness	Luke 10:30–35
Kingdom	Luke 7:28
	John 18:36
Kiss	Luke 7:45
Knowledge	John 8:31, 32
Labor	Matt. 20:1–14
Laughter	Luke 6:21
Law	Luke 16:16
Lawsuit	Matt. 5:25, 40
Lawyers	Luke 11:46
Leaven	Matt. 16:6
	Luke 13:20, 21
Lending	Luke 6:34, 35
Lepers	Matt. 10:7, 8
Levite	Luke 10:30–32
Liars	John 8:44, 45
Liberality	Luke 6:30, 38
Liberty	Luke 4:18
Life	Matt. 6:25
	John 5:40
Light	Luke 11:33
	John 8:12
Living water	John 4:10
Log	Luke 6:41, 42
Loneliness	John 16:32
Lord's Supper	Matt. 26:26–29
Loss of soul	Matt. 16:25, 26
Lost opportunity	Matt. 25:7–12
Love	Matt. 22:37–40
Lukewarmness	Matt. 26:40, 41
Lunatic	Matt. 17:14, 15
Lust	Mark 4:18, 19

Subject	Reference
Magistrates	Luke 12:11, 58
Mammon	Matt. 6:24
Marriage	Matt. 19:4–6
	Mark 12:25
Martyrdom	John 16:1–3
Mary's choice	Luke 10:41, 42
Memorial	Matt. 26:13
Mercy	Matt. 5:7
	Luke 16:24
Minister	Luke 10:2
Miracles	Matt. 12:28
Money lender, creditor	Luke 7:41, 42
Moses	Matt. 19:8
Moses' Law	John 7:19
Mother	Matt. 10:37
Mourn	Matt. 5:4
Murder	Matt. 15:19
Mysteries of Heaven	Matt. 13:11
Narrow way	Matt. 7:13, 14
Neglect	Luke 12:47
Neighbor	Matt. 19:19
Neutrality	Matt. 12:30
New birth	John 3:3, 5–8
Noah	Luke 17:26, 27
Oath	Matt. 5:33–37
Obedience	Matt. 12:50
Offering	Matt. 5:25
Offerings	Luke 21:3, 4
Opportunity	Matt. 5:25
Parables	Mark 4:11, 12
Paradise	Luke 23:43
Pardoning	Luke 6:37
Parents	Matt. 10:21
Patriotism	Matt. 22:21
Peace	Mark 9:50
Peacemakers	Matt. 5:9
Penitence	Luke 18:13
Perception	John 8:43
Perfection	Matt. 5:48
Persecution	Matt. 24:9
Perseverance	Matt. 10:22
Pharisaism	Matt. 23:2–33
Pharisee and tax collector	Luke 18:10–14
Pharisees	Matt. 5:20
Philanthropy	Luke 11:41
Physician	Matt. 9:12
Piety	John 1:47
Pleasing God	John 8:29
Pleasures	Luke 8:14
Poison	Mark 16:17, 18
Poll tax	Matt. 22:19–21
Polygamy	Matt. 19:8, 9
Poor	Mark 14:7
Power	Matt. 6:13
Prayer	Matt. 6:9–13
	Matt. 7:7–11
Preaching	Mark 16:15, 16
Procrastination	Matt. 25:3
Profit and loss	Matt. 16:26
Prophets	Matt. 7:15
	Matt. 10:41

Subject	Reference
Proselyte	Luke 23:15
Protection	Luke 18:3
Providence	Matt. 6:25–33
Prudence	Matt. 10:16–20
Punishment	Matt. 21:41
Purity	Matt. 5:8
Ransom	Matt. 20:28
Reaping	John 4:35–38
Receiving	
Christ	Mark 9:37
Reconciliation	Matt. 5:23, 24
Regeneration	Matt. 19:28
Rejecting	
Christ	John 3:18
Rejoicing	Luke 10:20
Release	Luke 4:18
Religion	Matt. 25:34–36
	Mark 7:6–8
Repentance	Matt. 11:21
	Luke 13:28
Reproof	Matt. 11:21–23
Resignation	Matt. 26:39
Responsibility	Luke 12:47, 48
Rest	Matt. 11:28–30
	Matt. 26:45
Resurrection	John 6:40
Retaliation	Matt. 5:39–44
Retribution	Matt. 23:34, 35
Reward	Matt. 10:42
Riches	Mark 4:19
Righteousness	Matt. 5:6, 20
	John 16:10
Robbers	Luke 10:30
	John 10:1
Robbery	Matt. 23:25
Sabbath	Matt. 12:5–8
Sackcloth	Matt. 11:21
Sacrifice	Matt. 12:7
Sacrilege	Matt. 21:13
Sadducees	Matt. 16:6
Salt	Matt. 5:13
	Mark 9:50
Salvation	Luke 19:19
	John 4:22
Samaritan	Luke 10:30–35
Sanctification	John 17:17
Satan	Matt. 4:10
	Mark 4:15
Scripture	Matt. 21:42
	Luke 4:21
Secrecy	Luke 12:2, 3
Security	Luke 6:47, 48
Seduction	Mark 13:22
Seeking the	
kingdom	Matt. 6:19, 20

Subject	Reference
Self-	
condemnation	Matt. 23:29–32
	Luke 19:20–24
Self-control	Matt. 5:21
Self-deception	Luke 12:16–21
Self-denial	Matt. 16:24–26
Self-exaltation	Matt. 23:12
Self-	
examination	Matt. 7:3–5
Selfishness	Luke 6:32–35
Self-	
righteousness	Matt. 23:23–27
Self-sacrifice	Matt. 16:25
Serpents	Matt. 23:33
	John 3:14
Service	Luke 22:27
Sheep	Luke 15:4–7
Shepherd	John 10:1–18
Sickness	Matt. 10:8
Signs	Luke 11:16
	John 4:48
Silence	Matt. 17:9
Sin	Matt. 26:28
	John 8:34
Sincerity	Matt. 5:13–16
Skepticism	John 20:27, 29
Slaves	Matt. 18:23
	John 15:15
Sleep	Mark 4:26, 27
	Mark 13:35, 36
Slothfulness	Matt. 25:26–30
Son of Man	Luke 9:22
Sorrow	Matt. 19:22
	John 16:6
Soul	Matt. 10:28
	Luke 12:19, 20
Soul winners	Matt. 4:19
Sowing	Mark 4:14
Speech	John 8:43
Spirit	Matt. 26:41
	Mark 5:8
Statement	Matt. 5:37
Steadfastness	Matt. 10:22
Stealing	Matt. 19:18
Steward	Luke 12:42, 43
	Luke 16:1–8
Stewardship	Luke 19:13–27
Stomach	Matt. 15:17
Strife	Luke 22:24
Stubbornness	John 5:40
Stumbling	
block	Matt. 23:13
Submission	Matt. 26:39, 42
Suffering	Matt. 26:38
Supper,	
The Lord's	Luke 22:14–20
Swearing	Matt. 23:16–22

Subject	Reference
Talents	Matt. 18:24
Taxes	Matt. 22:19–21
Tax collectors	Matt. 5:46, 47
Teaching	Matt. 28:19, 20
	John 13:13–15
Temperance	Luke 21:34
Temptations	Matt. 4:1–11
	Luke 8:13
Thieves	Matt. 6:19
	John 10:1, 8
Timidness	Mark 4:40
Tithes	Luke 18:11, 12
Traditions	Mark 7:9, 13
Transgres-	
sions	Matt. 15:2
Treasures	Matt. 6:19–21
Tribulation	Matt. 24:9
	John 16:33
Truth	John 14:6
Unbelievers	Luke 12:46
Uncharitable-	
ness	John 7:24
Unchastity	Matt. 5:31, 32
Uncleanness	Matt. 23:27
Unity	John 17:20, 21
Unpardonable	
sin	Matt. 12:31, 32
Vengeance	Matt. 5:39, 40
Vine	John 15:1, 4, 5
Visions	Matt. 17:9
Walks of Life	John 8:12
	John 12:35
War	Matt. 24:26
Watchfulness	Matt. 24:42, 44
	Luke 12:37–40
Wedding	Luke 14:8–10
Widow	Mark 12:43, 44
Wine	Luke 5:37–39
Wisdom	Luke 21:15
Witness	John 8:14
Witness, false	Matt. 19:18
Witnessing	Acts 1:8
Wives	Luke 14:20, 26
Worker	Matt. 10:10
Worldliness	Luke 21:34
Worm	Mark 9:43–48
Worries of the	
world	Matt. 13:22
Worship	Matt. 4:10
Yoke	Matt. 11:28, 29
Zacchaeus	Luke 19:5
Zeal	John 2:17

PROPHECIES OF THE MESSIAH FULFILLED IN JESUS CHRIST

Presented Here in Their Order of Fulfillment

ProPhETic sCriPTUrE	sUBJECT	FULFILLED
Gen. 3:15 “And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.”	seed of a woman	Gal. 4:4 “But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law.”
Gen. 12:3 “I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”	descendant of a braham	Matt. 1:1 “The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham.”
Gen. 17:19 “Then God said, ‘No, Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac; I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his descendants after him.’”	descendant of isaac	Luke 3:34 <i>“the son of Jacob, the son of Isaac, the son of Abraham, the son of Terah, the son of Nahor.”</i>
Num. 24:17 “I see Him, but not now; I behold Him, but not near; a Star shall come out of Jacob; a Scepter shall rise out of Israel, and batter the brow of Moab, and destroy all the sons of tumult.”	descendant of Jacob	Matt. 1:2 “Abraham begot Isaac, Isaac begot Jacob, and Jacob begot Judah and his brothers.”
Gen. 49:10 “The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh comes; and to Him <i>shall be</i> the obedience of the people.”	from the tribe of Judah	Luke 3:33 <i>“the son of Amminadab, the son of Ram, the son of Hezron, the son of Perez, the son of Judah.”</i>
Is. 9:7 “Of the increase of <i>His</i> government and peace <i>there will be</i> no end, upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, to order it and establish it with judgment and justice from that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.”	heir to the throne of David	Luke 1:32, 33 “He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end.”
Ps. 45:6, 7; 102:25–27 “Your throne, O God, <i>is</i> forever and ever; a scepter of righteousness <i>is</i> the scepter of Your kingdom. You love righteousness, and hate wickedness; therefore God, Your God, has anointed You with the oil of gladness more than Your companions.” “Of old You laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens <i>are</i> the work of Your hands. They will perish, but You will endure; yes, they will all grow old like a garment; like a cloak You will change them, and they will be changed. But You <i>are</i> the same, and Your years will have no end.”	anointed and eternal	Heb. 1:8–12 “But to the Son <i>He says</i> : ‘Your throne, O God, <i>is</i> forever and ever; a scepter of righteousness <i>is</i> the scepter of Your kingdom. You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; therefore God, Your God, has anointed You with the oil of gladness more than Your companions.’ And: ‘You, LORD, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of Your hands. They will perish, but You remain; and they will all grow old like a garment; like a cloak You will fold them up, and they will be changed. But You are the same, and Your years will not fail.’”

Pr oPhETiC sCri PTUr E	sUBJECT	FULFiLLED
<p>Mic. 5:2</p> <p>“But you, Bethlehem, Ephrathah, <i>though</i> you are little among the thousands of Judah, <i>yet</i> out of you shall come forth to Me the One to be Ruler in Israel, whose goings forth <i>are</i> from of old, from everlasting.”</p>	<p>born in Bethlehem</p>	<p>Luke 2:4, 5, 7</p> <p>“And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed wife, who was with child. . . . And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.”</p>
<p>Dan. 9:25</p> <p>“Know therefore and understand, <i>that</i> from the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince, <i>there shall be</i> seven weeks, and sixty-two weeks; the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublesome times.”</p>	<p>time for his birth</p>	<p>Luke 2:1, 2</p> <p>“And it came to pass in those days <i>that</i> a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This census first took place while Quirinius was governing Syria.”</p>
<p>Is. 7:14</p> <p>“Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.”</p>	<p>to be born of a virgin</p>	<p>Luke 1:26, 27, 30, 31</p> <p>“Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin’s name <i>was</i> Mary. . . . Then the angel said to her, ‘Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name JESUS.’”</p>
<p>Jer. 31:15</p> <p>“Thus says the LORD: ‘A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, <i>and</i> bitter weeping, Rachel weeping for her children, refusing to be comforted for her children, because they <i>are</i> no more.’”</p>	<p>slaughter of children</p>	<p>Matt. 2:16–18</p> <p>“Then Herod, when he saw that he was deceived by the wise men, was exceedingly angry; and he sent forth and put to death all the male children who were in Bethlehem and in all its districts, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had determined from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying: ‘A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping <i>for</i> her children, refusing to be comforted, because they are no more.’”</p>
<p>Hos. 11:1</p> <p>“When Israel <i>was</i> a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called My son.”</p>	<p>flight to Egypt</p>	<p>Matt. 2:14, 15</p> <p>“When he arose, he took the young Child and His mother by night and departed for Egypt, and was there until the death of Herod, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, ‘Out of Egypt I called My Son.’”</p>
<p>Is. 40:3–5</p> <p>“The voice of one crying in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the LORD; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill brought low; the crooked places shall be made straight and the rough places smooth; the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see <i>it</i> together; for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.’”</p>	<p>the way prepared</p>	<p>Luke 3:3–6</p> <p>“And he went into all the region around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins, as it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet, saying: ‘The voice of one crying in the wilderness: “Prepare the way of the LORD; make His paths straight. Every valley shall be filled and every mountain and hill brought low; the crooked places shall be made straight and the rough ways smooth; and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.”’”</p>

Pr o Ph Et i C s Cr i Pt U r E	s U B J E C T	F U L F I L L E D
Mal. 3:1 “Behold, I send My messenger, and he will prepare the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple, even the Messenger of the covenant, in whom you delight. Behold, He is coming,” says the LORD of hosts.”	preceded by a forerunner	Luke 7:24, 27 “When the messengers of John had departed, He began to speak to the multitudes concerning John: ‘What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? . . . This is <i>he</i> of whom it is written: “Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, who will prepare Your way before You.”’”
Mal. 4:5, 6 “Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD. And he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the earth with a curse.”	preceded by Elijah	Matt. 11:13, 14 “For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. And if you are willing to receive <i>it</i> , he is Elijah who is to come.”
Ps. 2:7 “I will declare the decree: the LORD has said to Me, ‘You <i>are</i> My Son, today I have begotten You.’”	declared the son of god	Matt. 3:17 “And suddenly a voice <i>came</i> from heaven, saying, ‘This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.’”
Is. 9:1, 2 “Nevertheless the gloom <i>will not be</i> upon her who <i>is</i> distressed, as when at first He lightly esteemed the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, and afterward more heavily oppressed <i>her</i> , <i>by</i> the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, in Galilee of the Gentiles. The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, upon them a light has shined.”	galilean ministry	Matt. 4:13–16 “And leaving Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the regions of Zebulun and Naphtali, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: ‘The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, <i>by</i> the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles: The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and upon those who sat in the region and shadow of death light has dawned.’”
Ps. 78:2–4 “I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings of old, which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us. We will not hide <i>them</i> from their children, telling to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and His strength and His wonderful works that He has done.”	speaks in parables	Matt. 13:34, 35 “All these things Jesus spoke to the multitude in parables; and without a parable He did not speak to them, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying: ‘I will open My mouth in parables; I will utter things kept secret from the foundation of the world.’”
Deut. 18:15 “The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear.”	a prophet	Acts 3:20, 22 “And that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before, . . . For Moses truly said to the fathers, ‘The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your brethren. Him you shall hear in all things, whatever He says to you.’”
Is. 61:1, 2 “The Spirit of the Lord GOD <i>is</i> upon Me, because the LORD has anointed Me to preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to <i>those who are</i> bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn.”	to bind up the brokenhearted	Luke 4:18, 19 “The Spirit of the LORD <i>is</i> upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to <i>the</i> poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to <i>the</i> captives, and recovery of sight to <i>the</i> blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed; to proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.”
Is. 53:3 “He is despised and rejected by men, a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, <i>our</i> faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.”	rejected by his own people, the Jews	John 1:11 “He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.” Luke 23:18 “And they all cried out at once, saying, ‘Away with this <i>Man</i> , and release to us Barabbas.’”

Pr oPhETiC sCri PTUr E	sUBJECT	FULFILLED
<p>Ps. 110:4</p> <p>“The LORD has sworn and will not relent, ‘You <i>are</i> a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.’”</p>	<p>priest after order of Melchizedek</p>	<p>Heb. 5:5, 6</p> <p>“So also Christ did not glorify Himself to become High Priest, but <i>it was</i> He who said to Him: ‘You are My Son, today I have begotten You.’ As <i>He</i> also says in another <i>place</i>: ‘You <i>are</i> a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.’”</p>
<p>Zech. 9:9</p> <p>“Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He <i>is</i> just and having salvation, lowly and riding on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey.”</p>	<p>triumphal entry</p>	<p>Mark 11:7, 9, 11</p> <p>“Then they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their clothes on it, and He sat on it. . . . Then those who went before and those who followed cried out, saying: ‘Hosanna! Blessed <i>is</i> He who comes in the name of the LORD!’ . . . And Jesus went into Jerusalem and into the temple. So when He had looked around at all things, as the hour was already late, He went out to Bethany with the twelve.”</p>
<p>Ps. 8:2</p> <p>“Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants You have ordained strength, because of Your enemies, that You may silence the enemy and the avenger.”</p>	<p>adored by infants</p>	<p>Matt. 21:15, 16</p> <p>“But when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that He did, and the children crying out in the temple and saying, ‘Hosanna to the Son of David!’ they were indignant and said to Him, ‘Do You hear what these are saying?’ And Jesus said to them, ‘Yes. Have you never read, “Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants You have perfected praise?”’”</p>
<p>Is. 53:1</p> <p>“Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?”</p>	<p>not believed</p>	<p>John 12:37, 38</p> <p>“But although He had done so many signs before them, they did not believe in Him, that the word of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spoke: ‘Lord, who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?’”</p>
<p>Ps. 41:9</p> <p>“Even my own familiar friend in whom I trusted, who ate my bread, has lifted up <i>his</i> heel against me.”</p>	<p>betrayed by a close friend</p>	<p>Luke 22:47, 48</p> <p>“And while He was still speaking, behold, a multitude; and he who was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them and drew near to Jesus to kiss Him. But Jesus said to him, ‘Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?’”</p>
<p>Zech. 11:12</p> <p>“Then I said to them, ‘If it is agreeable to you, give <i>me</i> my wages; and if not, refrain!’ So they weighed out for my wages thirty <i>pieces</i> of silver.”</p>	<p>betrayed for thirty pieces of silver</p>	<p>Matt. 26:14, 15</p> <p>“Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests and said, ‘What are you willing to give me if I deliver Him to you?’ And they counted out to him thirty pieces of silver.”</p>
<p>Ps. 35:11</p> <p>“Fierce witnesses rise up; they ask me <i>things</i> that I do not know.”</p>	<p>accused by false witnesses</p>	<p>Mark 14:57, 58</p> <p>“Then some rose up and bore false witness against Him, saying, ‘We heard Him say, “I will destroy this temple made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands.”’”</p>
<p>Is. 53:7</p> <p>“He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so He opened not His mouth.”</p>	<p>silent to accusations</p>	<p>Mark 15:4, 5</p> <p>“Then Pilate asked Him again, saying, ‘Do You answer nothing? See how many things they testify against You!’ But Jesus still answered nothing, so that Pilate marveled.”</p>
<p>Is. 50:6</p> <p>“I gave My back to those who struck <i>Me</i>, and My cheeks to those who plucked out the beard; I did not hide My face from shame and spitting.”</p>	<p>spat on and struck</p>	<p>Matt. 26:67</p> <p>“Then they spat in His face and beat Him; and others struck <i>Him</i> with the palms of their hands.”</p>

Pr o Ph ET i C s Cr i PT U r E	s U B J E C T	F U L F I L L E D
Ps. 35:19 “Let them not rejoice over me who are wrongfully my enemies; nor let them wink with the eye who hate me without a cause.”	hated without reason	John 15:24, 25 “If I had not done among them the works which no one else did, they would have no sin; but now they have seen and also hated both Me and My Father. But <i>this happened</i> that the word might be fulfilled which is written in their law, ‘They hated Me without a cause.’”
Is. 53:5 “But He <i>was</i> wounded for our transgressions, He <i>was</i> bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace <i>was</i> upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed.”	vicarious sacrifice	Rom. 5:6, 8 “For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. . . . But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”
Is. 53:12 “Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great, and He shall divide the spoil with the strong. Because He poured out His soul unto death, and He was numbered with the transgressors, and He bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.”	crucified with malefactors	Mark 15:27, 28 “With Him they also crucified two robbers, one on His right and the other on His left. So the Scripture was fulfilled which says, ‘And He was numbered with the transgressors.’”
Zech. 12:10 “And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for <i>his</i> only <i>son</i> , and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.”	pierced through hands and feet	John 20:27 “Then He said to Thomas, ‘Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand <i>here</i> , and put <i>it</i> into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing.’”
Ps. 22:7, 8 “All those who see Me ridicule Me; they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, <i>saying</i> , ‘He trusted in the LORD, let Him rescue Him; let Him deliver Him, since He delights in Him!’”	sneered and mocked	Luke 23:35 “And the people stood looking on. But even the rulers with them sneered, saying, ‘He saved others; let Him save Himself if He is the Christ, the chosen of God.’”
Ps. 69:9 “Because zeal for Your house has eaten me up, and the reproaches of those who reproach You have fallen on me.”	was reproached	Rom. 15:3 “For even Christ did not please Himself; but as it is written, ‘The reproaches of those who reproached You fell on Me.’”
Ps. 109:4 “In return for my love they are my accusers, but I <i>give myself</i> to prayer.”	prayer for his enemies	Luke 23:34 “Then Jesus said, ‘Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do.’ And they divided His garments and cast lots.”
Ps. 22:17, 18 “I can count all My bones. They look <i>and</i> stare at Me. They divide My garments among them, and for My clothing they cast lots.”	soldiers gambled for his clothing	Matt. 27:35, 36 “Then they crucified Him, and divided His garments, casting lots, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet: ‘They divided My garments among them, and for My clothing they cast lots.’ Sitting down, they kept watch over Him there.”
Ps. 22:1 “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? <i>Why are You so far</i> from helping Me, <i>and from</i> the words of My groaning?”	forsaken by god	Matt. 27:46 “And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, ‘Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?’ that is, ‘My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?’”
Ps. 34:20 “He guards all his bones, not one of them is broken.”	no bones broken	John 19:32, 33, 36 “Then the soliders came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who was crucified with Him. But when they came to Jesus and saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs. . . . For these things were done that the Scripture should be fulfilled, ‘Not <i>one</i> of His bones shall be broken.’”

Pr oPhETiC sCri PTUr E	sUBJECT	FULFiLLED
Zech. 12:10 “And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they have pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for <i>his</i> only <i>son</i> , and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.”	his side pierced	John 19:34 “But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out.”
Is. 53:9 “And they made His grave with the wicked—but with the rich at His death, because He had done no violence, nor <i>was any</i> deceit in His mouth.”	buried with the rich	Matt. 27:57–60 “Now when evening had come, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who himself had also become a disciple of Jesus. This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be given to him. When Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and laid it in his new tomb which he had hewn out of the rock; and he rolled a large stone against the door of the tomb, and departed.”
Ps. 16:10 “For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.” Ps. 49:15 “But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave, for He shall receive me. <i>Selah</i> ”	to be resurrected	Mark 16:6, 7 “But he said to them, ‘Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He is risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid Him. But go, tell His disciples—and Peter—that He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him, as He said to you.’”
Ps. 68:18 “You have ascended on high. You have led captivity captive; You have received gifts among men; even <i>from</i> the rebellious, that the LORD God might dwell <i>there</i> .”	his ascension to god’s right hand	Mark 16:19 “So then, after the Lord had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God.” 1 Cor. 15:4 “And that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.” Eph. 4:8 “Therefore He says: ‘When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men.’”

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3. Unshrunk (New) Cloth on an Old Garment	9:16	2:21	5:36
4. New Wine in Old Wineskins	9:17	2:22	5:37, 38
5. The Sower	13:3–23	4:2–20	8:4–15
6. The Tares (Weeds)	13:24–30		
7. The Mustard Seed	13:31, 32	4:30–32	13:18, 19
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10. The Pearl of Great Price	13:45, 46		
11. The Dragnet	13:47–50		
12. The Lost Sheep	18:12–14		15:3–7
13. The Unforgiving Servant	18:23–35		
14. The Laborers in the Vineyard	20:1–16		
15. The Two Sons	21:28–32		
16. The Wicked Vinedressers	21:33–45	12:1–12	20:9–19
17. The Wedding Feast	22:2–14		
18. The Fig Tree	24:32–44	13:28–32	21:29–33
19. The Wise and Foolish Virgins	25:1–13		
20. The Talents	25:14–30		
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4. Healing the Sick at Evening	8:16	1:32	4:40	
5. Stilling the Storm	8:23	4:35	8:22	
6. Demons Entering a Herd of Swine	8:28	5:1	8:26	
7. Healing a Paralytic	9:2	2:3	5:18	
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19. Temple Tax in the Fish's Mouth	17:24			
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26. Draught of Fish			5:1	
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28. Healing the Infirm, Bowed Woman			13:11	
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30. Cleansing the Ten Lepers			17:11	
31. Restoring a Servant's Ear			22:51	
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33. Healing the Nobleman's Son (of fever)				4:46
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Abraham —for Abimelech	Gen. 20:17
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- Word Study “assembly,” p. 683
- Article “Blemished Sacrifices,” p. 1490
- Word Study “burn incense,” p. 575
- Bible Times “Dancing,” p. 491

Word Study “fasting,” p. 779
Word Study “fear,” p. 1004
Word Study “feast,” p. 323
Word Study “give thanks,” p. 935
Article “King David as Priest,” p. 654
Introduction to Malachi
Word Study “mammon,” p. 1659
Bible Times “The Mezuzah,” p. 288
Article “A New Way to Worship,” p. 1948
Article “Sacrifices of Joy,” p. 262
Word Study “sing praise,” p. 385
Article “Solomon’s Temple,” p. 679
Bible Times “Worship,” p. 1627
Word Study “worship,” p. 314

Writing
Ex. 17:14; 2 Pet. 3:15, 16
Bible Times “Books and Parchments,” p. 1965
Bible Times “Correspondence in Bible Times,”
p. 1871
Bible Times “Cuneiform,” p. 26
Word Study “inspiration of God,” p. 1964
Bible Times “New Testament Letters,” p. 1822
Word Study “tittle,” p. 1521

Xerxes the Great
(see Ahasuerus)

Yeast
(see Leaven)

Zacchaeus
Luke 19:2; 19:7; 19:8

Zacharias (John the Baptist’s father)
Luke 1:8, 9; 1:13; 1:18; 1:20; 1:67
(see also Priest(s), Priesthood)

Zadok
1 Kin. 1:8; 1:39, 40; 2:35
(see also Priest(s), Priesthood)

Zechariah (the prophet)
Ezra 5:1; Zech. 1:7—6:15
Introduction to Zechariah
Chart “The Kings and Prophets of Israel and
Judah,” p. 590

Zedekiah (king of Judah)
2 Kin. 25:7; 2 Chr. 36:10; Jer. 38:19
also known as Mattaniah, 2 Kin. 24:18
rebellion of, 2 Kin. 24:20
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Zelophehad, Daughters of
Num. 27:1–5; 27:6–11; 36:1–4

Zephaniah
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Judah,” p. 590
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Zerubbabel
Ezra 5:2; Hag. 1:1; 2:23

CONCORDANCE

This Concordance is designed to help you locate important occurrences of significant words, phrases, and proper names found in the Bible. Words and phrases are referenced with Scripture quotations, in which the first letter of the word or phrase, italicized, stands for the entire word or phrase. Phrases are cross-referenced under every major word of the phrase except the first. When looking up a word, be sure to check for related forms of the word and for phrases beginning with that word.

Proper names are defined by descriptive phrases and Scripture references. If a name applies to more than one person, place, or group (see ABIJAH, below), the different identities are distinguished by the dash (“——”).

AARON

Ancestry and family of, Ex 6:16–20, 23
 Helper and prophet to Moses, Ex 4:13–31; 7:1, 2
 Appears before Pharaoh, Ex 5:1–4
 Performs miracles, Ex 7:9, 10, 19, 20
 Supports Moses' hands, Ex 17:10–12
 Ascends Mt. Sinai; sees God's glory, Ex 19:24; 24:1, 9, 10
 Judges Israel in Moses' absence, Ex 24:14
 Chosen by God as priest, Ex 28:1
 Consecrated, Ex 29; Lev 8
 Duties prescribed, Ex 30:7–10
 Tolerates Israel's idolatry, Ex 32
 Priestly ministry begins, Lev 9
 Sons offer profane fire; Aaron's humble response, Lev 10
 Conspires against Moses, Num 12:1–16
 Rebelled against by Korah, Num 16
 Intercedes to stop plague, Num 16:45–48
 Rod buds to confirm his authority, Num 17:1–10
 With Moses, fails at Meribah, Num 20:1–13
 Dies; son succeeds him as priest, Num 20:23–29
 His priesthood compared: with Melchizedek's, Heb 7:11–19
 with Christ's, Heb 9:6–15, 23–28

ABADDON

Angel of the bottomless pit, Rev 9:11

ABASED

I know how to be a Phil 4:12

ABBA

And He said, “A Mark 14:36
 by whom we cry out, “A Rom 8:15
 crying out, “A Gal 4:6

ABED-NEGO

Babylonian name given to Azariah, a Hebrew captive, Dan 1:7
 Appointed by Nebuchadnezzar, Dan 2:49
 Refuses to serve idols; cast into furnace but delivered, Dan 3:12–30

ABEL

Adam's second son, Gen 4:2
 His offering accepted, Gen 4:4
 Murdered by Cain, Gen 4:8
 His sacrifice offered by faith, Heb 11:4

ABEL BETH MAACHAH

Captured by Tiglath-Pileser, 2 Kin 15:29
 Refuge of Sheba; saved from destruction, 2 Sam 20:14–22
 Seized by Ben-Hadad, 1 Kin 15:20

ABEL MEHOLAH

A city a few miles east of Jabesh Gilead, Judg 7:22; 1 Kin 4:12
 Elisha's native city, 1 Kin 19:16

ABHOR

My soul shall not a Lev 26:11

Therefore I a myself Job 42:6
 nations will a him Prov 24:24
 a the pride of Jacob Amos 6:8
 A what is evil Rom 12:9

ABHORRED

a His own inheritance Ps 106:40
 he who is a by the Prov 22:14
 and their soul also a Zech 11:8

ABHORRENCE

They shall be an a Is 66:24

ABHORRENT

you have made us a Ex 5:21

ABHORS

So that his life a Job 33:20

ABIATHAR

A priest who escapes Saul at Nob, 1 Sam 22:20–23
 Becomes high priest under David, 1 Sam 23:6, 9–12
 Remains faithful to David, 2 Sam 15:24–29
 Informs David about Ahithophel, 2 Sam 15:34–36
 Supports Adonijah's usurpation, 1 Kin 1:7, 9, 25
 Deposed by Solomon, 1 Kin 2:26, 27, 35

ABIDE

nor a in its paths Job 24:13
 LORD, who may a Ps 15:1
 He shall a before God Ps 61:7
 the Most High shall a Ps 91:1
 “If you a in My word John 8:31
 And a slave does not a John 8:35
 Helper, that He may a John 14:16
 A in Me and I in you John 15:4
 If you a in Me John 15:7
 a in My love John 15:9
 And now a faith 1 Cor 13:13
 does the love of God a 1 John 3:17
 this we know that we a 1 John 4:13

ABIDES

even He who a from of old Ps 55:19
 He who a in Me John 15:5
 lives and a forever 1 Pet 1:23
 will of God a forever 1 John 2:17

ABIDING

not have His word a John 5:38
 has eternal life a 1 John 3:15

ABIEZRITES

Relatives of Gideon; rally to his call, Judg 6:11, 24, 34

ABIGAIL

Wise wife of foolish Nabal, 1 Sam 25:3
 Appeases David and becomes his wife, 1 Sam 25:14–42

Mother of Chileab, 2 Sam 3:3

ABIHU

Second son of Aaron, Ex 6:23

Offers profane fire and dies, Lev 10:1–7

ABIJAH

Samuel's second son; follows corrupt ways, 1 Sam 8:2, 3
 —— Descendant of Aaron; head of an office of priests, 1 Chr 24:3, 10
 Zechariah belongs to division of, Luke 1:5
 —— Son of Jeroboam I, 1 Kin 14:1–18
 —— Another name for King Abijam, 2 Chr 11:20

ABIJAM (or Abijah)

King of Judah, 1 Kin 14:31
 Follows the sins of his father, 1 Kin 15:1–7
 Defeats Jeroboam and takes cities, 2 Chr 13:13–20

ABILENE

A province or tetrarchy of Syria, Luke 3:1

ABILITY

who had a to serve Dan 1:4
 according to his own a Matt 25:15
 and beyond their a 2 Cor 8:3
 a which God supplies 1 Pet 4:11

ABIMELECH

King of Gerar; takes Sarah in ignorance, Gen 20:1–18
 Makes treaty with Abraham, Gen 21:22–34
 —— A second king of Gerar; sends Isaac away, Gen 26:1–16
 Makes treaty with Isaac, Gen 26:17–33
 —— Gideon's son by a concubine, Judg 8:31
 Conspires to become king, Judg 9

ABINADAB

A man of Kiriath Jearim in whose house the ark was kept, 1 Sam 7:1, 2
 —— The second of Jesse's eight sons, 1 Sam 16:8
 Serves in Saul's army, 1 Sam 17:13
 —— A son of Saul slain at Mt. Gilboa, 1 Sam 31:1–8
 Bones of, buried by men of Jabesh, 1 Chr 10:1–12

ABIRAM

Reubenite who conspired against Moses, Num 16:1–50

ABISHAG

A Shunammite employed as David's nurse, 1 Kin 1:1–4, 15
 Witnessed David's choice of Solomon as successor, 1 Kin 1:15–31
 Adonijah slain for desiring to marry her, 1 Kin 2:13–25

ABISHAI

David's nephew; joins Joab in blood revenge against Abner, 2 Sam 2:18–24
 Loyal to David during Absalom's and Sheba's rebellion, 2 Sam 16:9–12; 20:1–6, 10

Rebuke by David, 2 Sam 16:9-12;
19:21-23
His exploits, 2 Sam 21:16, 17; 23:18;
1 Chr 18:12, 13

ABLE

you are *a* to number Gen 15:5
the LORD was not *a* Num 14:16
shall give as he is *a* Deut 16:17
For who is *a* to judge 1 Kin 3:9
should be *a* to offer 1 Chr 29:14
who is *a* to build Him 2 Chr 2:6
"The LORD is *a* 2 Chr 25:9
Who then is *a* to stand Job 41:10
gold will not be *a* to Ezek 7:19
God whom we serve is *a* Dan 3:17
in pride He is *a* to abase Dan 4:37
God is *a* to raise up Matt 3:9
believe that I am *a* Matt 9:28
fear Him who is *a* Matt 10:28
Are you *a* to drink the Matt 20:22
enter and will not be *a* Luke 13:24
was not *a* to finish Luke 14:30
be *a* to contradict or Luke 21:15
shall be *a* to separate Rom 8:39
God is *a* to make him Rom 14:4
Now to Him who is *a* Rom 16:25
beyond what you are *a* 1 Cor 10:13
And God is *a* to make 2 Cor 9:8
may be *a* to comprehend Eph 3:18
that you may be *a* to Eph 6:13
hospitable, *a* to teach 1 Tim 3:2
persuaded that He is *a* 2 Tim 1:12
learning and never *a* 2 Tim 3:7
being tempted, He is *a* Heb 2:18
Therefore He is also *a* to Heb 7:25
that God was *a* to Heb 11:19
a also to bridle the James 3:2
to Him who is *a* Jude 24
was *a* to open the scroll, Rev 5:3
has come, and who is *a* Rev 6:17

ABNER

Saul's cousin; commander of his army,
1 Sam 14:50, 51
Rebuke by David, 1 Sam 26:5, 14-16
Supports Ishbosheth; defeated by
David's men; kills Asahel, 2 Sam
2:8-32
Makes covenant with David, 2 Sam
3:6-21
Killed by Joab; mourned by David,
2 Sam 3:22-39

ABODE

but left their own *a* Jude 6

ABOLISHED

your works may be *a* Ezek 6:6
having *a* in His flesh Eph 2:15
Christ, who has *a* 2 Tim 1:10

ABOMINABLE

not make yourselves *a* Lev 11:43
They have done *a* Ps 14:1
your grave like an *a* Is 14:19
Oh, do not do this *a* Jer 44:4
they deny Him, being *a* Titus 1:16
and *a* idolatries 1 Pet 4:3
unbelieving, *a*, murderers Rev 21:8

ABOMINATION

every shepherd is an *a* Gen 46:34
If we sacrifice the *a* Ex 8:26
You have made me an *a* Ps 88:8
yes, seven are an *a* Prov 6:16
wickedness is an *a* Prov 8:7
Dishonest scales are an *a* Prov 11:1
the scoffer is an *a* Prov 24:9
even his prayer is an *a* Prov 28:9
An unjust man is an *a* Prov 29:27
incense is an *a* to Me Is 1:13
and place there the *a* Dan 11:31
the *a* of desolation Dan 12:11
the '*a* of desolation,' Matt 24:15

among men is an *a* Luke 16:15

ABOMINATIONS

to follow the *a* Deut 18:9
delights in their *a* Is 66:3
will put away your *a* Jer 4:1
your harlotry, your *a* Jer 13:27
will see greater *a* Ezek 8:6
a which they commit Ezek 8:17
you, throw away the *a* Ezek 20:7
show her all her *a* Ezek 22:2
a golden cup full of *a* Rev 17:4
of the *a* of the earth Rev 17:5

ABOUND

lawlessness will *a* Matt 24:12
the offense might *a* Rom 5:20
sin that grace may *a* Rom 6:1
thanksgiving to *a* 2 Cor 4:15
to make all grace *a* 2 Cor 9:8
and I know how to *a* Phil 4:12
that you should *a* 1 Thess 4:1
things are yours and *a* 2 Pet 1:8

ABOUNDED

But where sin *a* Rom 5:20

ABOUNDING

and *a* in goodness and Ex 34:6
and *a* in mercy Ps 103:8
immovable, always *a* 1 Cor 15:58
a in it with thanksgiving Col 2:7

ABOVE

that is in heaven *a* Ex 20:4
"He sent from *a* 2 Sam 22:17
A it stood seraphim Is 6:2
nor *a* servant *a* his Matt 10:24
He who comes from *a* John 3:31
beneath; I am from *a* John 8:23
been given you from *a* John 19:11
of all, who is *a* all Eph 4:6
the name which is *a* Phil 2:9
things which are *a* Col 3:1
perfect gift is from *a* James 1:17

ABRAHAM

Ancestry and family, Gen 11:26-31
Receives God's call; enters Canaan,
Gen 12:1-6
Promised Canaan by God; pitches tent
near Bethel, Gen 12:7, 8
Deceives Egyptians concerning Sarai,
Gen 12:11-20
Separates from Lot; inherits Canaan,
Gen 13
Rescues Lot from captivity, Gen
14:11-16
Gives a tithe to Melchizedek; refuses
spoil, Gen 14:18-24
Covenant renewed; promised a son,
Gen 15
Takes Hagar as concubine; Ishmael
born, Gen 16
Name changed from Abram; circumci-
sion commanded, Gen 17
Entertains Lord and angels, Gen
18:1-15
Intercedes for Sodom, Gen 18:16-33
Deceives Abimelech concerning Sarah,
Gen 20
Birth of Isaac, Gen 21:1-7
Sends Hagar and Ishmael away, Gen
21:9-14
Offers Isaac in obedience to God, Gen
22:1-19
Finds wife for Isaac, Gen 24
Marries Keturah; fathers other chil-
dren; dies, Gen 25:1-10
Friend of God, 2 Chr 20:7
Justified by faith, Rom 4:1-12
Father of true believers, Rom 4:11-25
In the line of faith, Heb 11:8-10
Eternal home of, in heaven, Luke
16:19-25

A was circumcised Gen 17:26
bore *A* a son in his Gen 21:2
A circumcised his son Gen 21:4
A was one hundred Gen 21:5
God tested *A*, and Gen 22:1
A said, "My son, God Gen 22:8
A begot Isaac Gen 25:19
His covenant with *A* Ex 2:24
I swore to give to *A* Ex 6:8
which I swore to *A* Num 32:11
which He made with *A* 1 Chr 16:16
O seed of *A* His servant Ps 105:6
LORD, who redeemed *A* Is 29:22
descendants of *A* My Is 41:8
David, the Son of *A* Matt 1:1
to you, before *A* was John 8:58
For if *A* was justified Rom 4:2
A believed God, and Rom 4:3
are of the faith of *A* Rom 4:16
of *A* might come upon Gal 3:14
Now to *A* and his Seed Gal 3:16
that *A* had two sons Gal 4:22
also *A* gave a tenth Heb 7:2
By faith *A* obeyed when Heb 11:8
By faith *A*, when he Heb 11:17
A believed God, and James 2:23
as Sarah obeyed *A*, 1 Pet 3:6

ABRAM

See ABRAHAM

ABRONAH

Israelite encampment, Num 33:34

ABSALOM

Son of David, 2 Sam 3:3
Kills Amnon for raping Tamar; flees
from David, 2 Sam 13:20-39
Returns through Joab's intrigue; recon-
ciled to David, 2 Sam 14
Attempts to usurp throne, 2 Sam
15:1-18:8
Caught and killed by Joab, 2 Sam
18:9-18
Mourned by David, 2 Sam 18:19-19:8

ABSENT

For I indeed, as *a* 1 Cor 5:3
in the body we are *a* 2 Cor 5:6

ABSTAIN

we write to them to *a* Acts 15:20
A from every form 1 Thess 5:22
and commanding to *a* 1 Tim 4:3
a from fleshly lusts 1 Pet 2:11

ABUNDANCE

is the sound of *a* 1 Kin 18:41
workmen with you in *a* 1 Chr 22:15
flourish, and *a* of peace Ps 72:7
eyes bulge with *a* Ps 73:7
nor he who loves *a* Eccl 5:10
delight itself in *a* Is 55:2
out of the *a* of the heart Matt 12:34
put in out of their *a* Mark 12:44
not consist in the *a* Luke 12:15
of affliction the *a* 2 Cor 8:2
above measure by the *a* 2 Cor 12:7
rich through the *a* Rev 18:3

ABUNDANT

in judgment and *a* Job 37:23
a in mercy to all those Ps 86:5
Longsuffering and *a* Ps 86:15
Him is *a* redemption Ps 130:7
placed it by *a* waters Ezek 17:5
lovely and its fruit *a* Dan 4:21
slow to anger and *a* Jon 4:2
in labors more *a* 2 Cor 11:23
may be more *a* in Jesus Phil 1:26
Lord was exceedingly *a* 1 Tim 1:14
a mercy has begotten 1 Tim 1:3

ABUNDANTLY

a satisfied with the Ps 36:8
may have it more *a* John 10:10
to do exceedingly *a* Eph 3:20
to show more *a* to the Heb 6:17

ACACIA

make an ark of a wood Ex 25:10
make a table of a wood Ex 25:23

ACACIA GROVE

Spies sent from, Josh 2:1
Israel's last camp before crossing the
Jordan, Josh 3:1

ACCEPT

For I will a him Job 42:8
a your burnt sacrifice Ps 20:3
offering, I will not a Jer 14:12
Should I a this from Mal 1:13

ACCEPTABLE

sought to find a Eccl 12:10
a time I have heard Is 49:8
proclaim the a year Is 61:2
proclaim the a year Luke 4:19
is that good and a Rom 12:2
finding out what is a Eph 5:10
For this is good and a 1 Tim 2:3
spiritual sacrifices a 1 Pet 2:5

ACCEPTABLY

we may serve God a Heb 12:28

ACCEPTED

Behold, now is the a 2 Cor 6:2
by which He made us a Eph 1:6

ACCESS

we have a by faith Rom 5:2
we have boldness and a Eph 3:12

ACCOMPLISHED

today the LORD has a 1 Sam 11:13
A desire a is sweet to Prov 13:19
must still be a in Me Luke 22:37
all things were now a John 19:28

ACCORD

See WITH ONE ACCORD
and Israel with one a Josh 9:2
serve Him with one a Zeph 3:9
continued with one a Acts 1:14
daily with one a Acts 2:46
what a has Christ with 2 Cor 6:15
love, being of one a Phil 2:2

ACCORDING TO THE FLESH

You judge a; I judge John 8:15
of the seed of David a Rom 1:3
who do not walk a Rom 8:1
not many wise a 1 Cor 1:26
do I plan a, that with 1 Cor 1:17
we regard no one a 2 Cor 5:16
we do not war a 2 Cor 10:3
that many boast a 2 Cor 11:18
as he who was born a Gal 4:29
those who walk a 2 Pet 2:10

ACCORDING TO THE LAW

a of his separation Num 6:21
let it be done a Ezra 10:3
a of the Medes Dan 6:8
of her purification a Luke 2:22
performed all things a Luke 2:39
Ananias, a devout man a Acts 22:12
you sit to judge me a Acts 23:3
who has come, not a Heb 7:16
a almost all things are Heb 9:22
(which are offered a Heb 10:8

ACCORDING TO THE WORD OF THE LORD

Moses numbered them a Num 3:16
in the land of Moab, a Deut 34:5
booty for themselves, a Josh 8:27
they had obtained a Josh 22:9
him and killed him, a 1 Kin 13:26
he had destroyed him, a 1 Kin 15:29
he set up its gates, a 1 Kin 16:34
jar of oil run dry, a 1 Kin 17:16
a which he had spoken 1 Kin 22:38
barley for a shekel, a 2 Kin 7:16
David king over Israel, a 1 Chr 11:3
So I got a sash a Jer 13:2

arose and went to Nineveh, a Jon 3:3

ACCOUNT

they will give a of it Matt 12:36
The former a I made Acts 1:1
each of us shall give a Rom 14:12
put that on my a Phil 1:8
those who must give a Heb 13:17

ACCOUNTED

and He a it to him Gen 15:6
And that was a to him Ps 106:31
his faith is a for Rom 4:5
a as sheep for the Rom 8:36
and it was a to him Gal 3:6
and it was a to him James 2:23

ACCURSED

he who is hanged is a Deut 21:23
regarding the a things Josh 7:1
years old shall be a Is 65:20
not know the law is a John 7:49
that I myself were a Rom 9:3
calls Jesus a, and no 1 Cor 12:3
let him be a Gal 1:8

ACCUSATION

they wrote an a against Ezra 4:6
over His head the a Matt 27:37
they might find an a Luke 6:7
Do not receive an a 1 Tim 5:19
not bring a reviling a 2 Pet 2:11

ACCUSE

anyone or a falsely Luke 3:14
they began to a Him Luke 23:2
think that I shall a John 5:45

ACCUSED

forward and a the Jews Dan 3:8
while He was being a Matt 27:12

ACCUSER

a of our brethren Rev 12:10

ACCUSERS

Let my a be clothed Ps 109:29
meets the a face to Acts 25:16

ACCUSING

their thoughts a or else Rom 2:15

ACHAIA

Visited by Paul, Acts 18:1, 12
Apollos preaches in, Acts 18:24-28
Gospel proclaimed throughout, 1 Thess
1:7, 8

ACHAN (or Achar)

Sin of, caused Israel's defeat, Josh
7:1-15
Stoned to death, Josh 7:16-25
Sin of, recalled, Josh 22:20
Also called Achar, 1 Chr 2:7

ACHISH

A king of Gath, 1 Sam 21:10-15
David seeks refuge with, 1 Sam
27:1-12
Forced by Philistine lords to expel
David, 1 Sam 29:1-11
Receives Shimei's servants, 1 Kin 2:39,
40

ACHOR, VALLEY OF

Site of Achan's stoning, Josh 7:24-26
On Judah's boundary, Josh 15:7
Promises concerning, Is 65:10

ACHSAH

A daughter of Caleb, 1 Chr 2:49
Given to Othniel, Josh 15:16-19
Given springs of water, Judg 1:12-15

ACKNOWLEDGE

did he a his brothers Deut 33:9
a my transgressions Ps 51:3
in all your ways a Prov 3:6
and Israel does not a Is 63:16
Only a your iniquity Jer 3:13
let him a that the 1 Cor 14:37

ACKNOWLEDGED

of Israel, and God a them Ex 2:25
a my sin to You Ps 32:5

ACKNOWLEDGES

there is no one who a Ps 142:4
he who a the Son has 1 John 2:23

ACQUAINT

a yourself with Him Job 22:21

ACQUAINTANCES

You have put away my a Ps 88:8
All my a watched for Jer 20:10
all His a, and the women Luke 23:49

ACQUAINTED

a with all my ways Ps 139:3
a Man of sorrows and a Is 53:3

ACQUIRE

a possessions for Gen 34:10

ACQUIRED

he has a all this wealth Gen 31:1
I have a as my wife Ruth 4:10
I a male and female Eccl 2:7

ACQUIT

at all a the wicked Nah 1:3

ACQUITTED

struck him shall be a Ex 21:19
of the ox shall be a Ex 21:28
that you may be a Is 43:26
whom I had not a Joel 3:21

ACT

a corruptly and make Deut 4:25
seen every great a Deut 11:7
hear in heaven, and a 1 Kin 8:32
hear from heaven, and a 2 Chr 6:23
Thus you shall a in 2 Chr 19:9
is time for You to a Ps 119:126
His a, His unusual a Is 28:21
O Lord, listen and a Dan 9:19
adultery, in the very a John 8:4

ACTED

if you have a in truth Judg 9:16
But Jehu a deceptively, 2 Kin 10:19
a more wickedly than 2 Kin 21:11

ACTIONS

by Him a are weighed 1 Sam 2:3

ACTS

LORD, the righteous a Judg 5:11
His a to the children Ps 103:7
declare Your mighty a Ps 145:4
of Your awesome a Ps 145:6

ADAM

Creation of, Gen 1:26, 27; 2:7
Given dominion over the earth, Gen
1:28-30
Given a wife, Gen 2:18-25
Temptation, fall, and exile from Eden,
Gen 3
Children of, Gen 4:1, 2; 5:3, 4
Transgression results in sin and death,
Rom 5:12-14
—— Last or second Adam, an appella-
tion of Christ, Rom 5:14, 15; 1 Cor
15:20-24, 45-48

ADD

THE LORD shall a to me Gen 30:24
You shall not a Deut 4:2
you shall not a to it Deut 12:32
A iniquity to their Ps 69:27
Do not a to His words Prov 30:6
by worrying can a one Matt 6:27
by worrying can a one Luke 12:25
a to your faith virtue, to 2 Pet 1:5
Gold will a to him the Rev 22:18

ADDED

things shall be a Matt 6:33
And the LORD a to the Acts 2:47
many people were a Acts 11:24

It was a because of Gal 3:19

ADDS

and He a no sorrow Prov 10:22
no one annuls or a to it Gal 3:15
If anyone a to these Rev 22:18

ADMINISTERS

a justice for the Deut 10:18

ADMONISH

also to a one another Rom 15:14
a him as a brother 2 Thess 3:15

ADMONISHED

further, my son, be a Eccl 12:12
Angel of the LORD a Zech 3:6

ADMONISHING

a one another in Col 3:16

ADMONITION

were written for our a 1 Cor 10:11
in the training and a Eph 6:4

ADONI-ZEDEK

An Amorite king of Jerusalem, Josh
10:1-5
Defeated and slain by Joshua, Josh
10:6-27

ADONIJAH

David's fourth son, 2 Sam 3:2, 4
Attempts to usurp throne, 1 Kin 1:5-53
Desires Abishag as wife, 1 Kin 2:13-18
Executed by Solomon, 1 Kin 2:19-25

ADONIRAM (or Adoram)

Official under David, Solomon, and
Rehoboam, 2 Sam 20:24; 1 Kin 5:14;
12:18
Stoned by angry Israelites, 1 Kin 12:18
Called Hadoram, 2 Chr 10:18

ADOPTION

received the Spirit of a Rom 8:15
waiting for the a Rom 8:23
to whom pertain the a Rom 9:4
we might receive the a Gal 4:5
a as sons by Jesus Eph 1:5

ADORN

a the monuments Matt 23:29
also, that the women a 1 Tim 2:9

ADORNED

By His Spirit He a Job 26:13
You shall again be a Jer 31:4
temple, how it was a Luke 21:5
also a themselves 1 Pet 3:5
prepared as a bride a Rev 21:2

ADRIFF

A among the dead Ps 88:5

ADULLAM

A town of Canaan, Gen 38:1, 12, 20;
Josh 12:7, 15; 15:20, 35
David seeks refuge in caves of,
1 Sam 23:13-17

ADULTERER

the a and the adulteress Lev 20:10
The eye of the a Job 24:15

ADULTERERS

the land is full of a Jer 23:10
nor idolaters, nor a 1 Cor 6:9
a God will judge Heb 13:4
A and adulteresses James 4:4

ADULTERIES

I have seen your a Jer 13:27
her sight, and her a Hos 2:2
evil thoughts, a Mark 7:21

ADULTEROUS

evil and a generation Matt 12:39

ADULTERY

You shall not commit a Ex 20:14
You shall not commit a Deut 5:18
Whoever commits a Prov 6:32
Israel had committed a Jer 3:8

have committed a with Jer 29:23
a with their idols Ezek 23:37
and is committing a Hos 3:1
already committed a Matt 5:28
is divorced commits a Matt 5:32
You shall not commit a Matt 19:18
another commits a Mark 10:11
husband commits a Luke 16:18
a woman caught in a John 8:3
which are: a, fornication, Gal 5:19
having eyes full of a 2 Pet 2:14
those who commit a Rev 2:22

ADVANCE

Joshua was old, a in Josh 13:1
I am old, a in age Josh 23:2
David was old, a in years 1 Kin 1:1
were both well a in years Luke 1:7
wife is well a in years Luke 1:18
I a in Judaism beyond Gal 1:14

ADVANTAGE

a will it be to You Job 35:3
man has no a over Eccl 3:19
a that I go away John 16:7
What a then has the Rom 3:1
Satan should take a 2 Cor 2:11
no one should take a 1 Thess 4:6
people to gain a Jude 16

ADVERSARIES

The a of the LORD 1 Sam 2:10
rid Myself of My a Is 1:24
a will not be able Luke 21:15
and there are many a 1 Cor 16:9
terrified by your a Phil 1:28
will devour the a Heb 10:27

ADVERSARY

in the way as an a Num 22:22
battle he become our a 1 Sam 29:4
how long will the a Ps 74:10
a has spread his hand Lam 1:10
Agree with your a Matt 5:25
for me from my a Luke 18:3
opportunity to the a 1 Tim 5:14
your a the devil walks 1 Pet 5:8

ADVERSITIES

you from all your a 1 Sam 10:19
known my soul in a Ps 31:7

ADVERSITY

them with every a 2 Chr 15:6
I shall never be in a Ps 10:6
from the days of a Ps 94:13
brother is born for a Prov 17:17
faint in the day of a Prov 24:10
the day of a consider Eccl 7:14
you the bread of a Is 30:20

ADVICE

And blessed is your a 1 Sam 25:33
in this I give my a 2 Cor 8:10

ADVOCATE

we have an A with the 1 John 2:1

AENON

A place near Salim where John the
Baptist baptized, John 3:22, 23

AFAR

and worship from a Ex 24:1
sons shall come from a Is 60:4
and not a God a Jer 23:23
and saw Abraham a Luke 16:23
to all who are a Acts 2:39
to you who were a Eph 2:17
but having seen them a Heb 11:13

AFFAIRS

he will guide his a Ps 112:5
I may hear of your a Phil 1:27
himself with the a 2 Tim 2:4

AFFECTION

to his wife the a 1 Cor 7:3
for you all with the a Phil 1:8

if any a and mercy Phil 2:1

AFFECTIONATE

Be kindly a to one Rom 12:10

AFFIRM

you to a constantly Titus 3:8

AFFLICT

a them with their Ex 1:11
oath to a her soul Num 30:13
may be bound to a you Judg 16:6
a the descendants 1 Kin 11:39
will hear, and a them Ps 55:19
a Your heritage Ps 94:5
a man to a his soul Is 58:5
to destroy, and to a Jer 31:28
For He does not a Lam 3:33
deal with all who a Zeph 3:19

AFFLICT YOUR SOULS

shall a, and do no work Lev 16:29
you shall a, and offer Lev 23:27
You shall a; you shall not Num 29:7

AFFLICTED

"Why have You a Num 11:11
and the Almighty has a Ruth 1:21
To him who is a Job 6:14
hears the cry of the a Job 34:28
You a the peoples Ps 44:2
Before I was a Ps 119:67
I am a very much Ps 119:107
Many a time they have a Ps 129:1
the cause of the a Ps 140:12
days of the a are evil Prov 15:15
Smitten by God, and a Is 53:4
oppressed and He was a Is 53:7
"O you a one, tossed Is 54:11
Why have we a our Is 58:3
and satisfy the a Is 58:10
her virgins are a Lam 1:4
she has relieved the a 1 Tim 5:10
being destitute, a Heb 11:37

AFFLICTING

A the just and taking Amos 5:12

AFFLICTION

in the land of my a Gen 41:52
the bread of a Deut 16:3
indeed look on the a 1 Sam 1:11
LORD saw that the a 2 Kin 14:26
a take hold of me Job 30:16
days of a confront me Job 30:27
held in the cords of a Job 36:8
of death, bound in a Ps 107:10
is my comfort in my a Ps 119:50
and it is an evil a Eccl 6:2
a He was afflicted Is 63:9
refuge in the day of a Jer 16:19
"O LORD, behold my a Lam 1:9
not grieved for the a Amos 6:6
For our light a 2 Cor 4:17
supposing to add a Phil 1:16
the word in much a 1 Thess 1:6

AFFLICTIONS

Many are the a of the Ps 34:19
in the a of Christ Col 1:24
shaken by these a 1 Thess 3:3
persecutions, a, which 2 Tim 3:11
in all things, endure a, 2 Tim 4:5

AFFORD

poor and cannot a it Lev 14:21
such as he can a Lev 14:30

AFRAID

See DO NOT BE AFRAID
garden, and I was a Gen 3:10
saying, "Do not be a Gen 15:1
his face, for he was a Ex 3:6
none will make you a Lev 26:6
you shall not be a in Deut 1:17
of whom you are a Deut 7:19
do not be a of them Deut 20:1
Do not be a of the 2 Kin 25:24

David was *a* of God 1 Chr 13:12
 I will not be *a* of ten Ps 3:6
 ungodliness made me *a* Ps 18:4
 Of whom shall I be *a* Ps 27:1
 Do not be *a* when one Ps 49:16
 Whenever I am *a* Ps 56:3
 farthest parts are *a* Ps 65:8
 you will not be *a* Prov 3:24
 nor be *a* of their threats Is 8:12
 be *a* of the Assyrian Is 10:24
 I will trust and not be *a* Is 12:2
 no one will make them *a* Is 17:2
 Do not fear, nor be *a* Is 44:8
 that you should be *a* Is 51:12
 Do not be *a* of their faces, Jer 1:8
 dream which made me *a* Dan 4:5
 Then the mariners were *a* Jon 1:5
 It is I; do not be *a* Matt 14:27
 Do not be *a*; only believe Mark 5:36
 Do not be *a*, Zacharias, Luke 1:13
 Do not be *a*, Mary, for Luke 1:30
 not be *a* of those who Luke 12:4
 neither let it be *a* John 14:27
 "Do not be *a*, Paul Acts 27:24
 if you do evil, be *a* Rom 13:4
 do good and are not *a* 1 Pet 3:6

AFTERWARD

A he will let you go Ex 11:1
a we will speak Job 18:2
a receive me to glory Ps 73:24
 you shall follow Me *a* John 13:36
 the firstfruits, *a* 1 Cor 15:23

AGAG

A king of Amalek in Balaam's proph-
 ecy, Num 24:7
 — Amalekite king spared by Saul,
 but slain by Samuel, 1 Sam 15:8,
 9, 20–24, 32, 33

AGAIN

See BORN AGAIN
day He will rise *a* Matt 20:19
'You must be born *a* John 3:7
to renew them *a* Heb 6:6
having been born *a* 1 Pet 1:23

AGAINST

See SINNED AGAINST THE LORD; SINNED
 AGAINST YOU
his hand shall be *a* Gen 16:12
I will set My face *a* Lev 20:3
come to 'set a man *a* Matt 10:35
or house divided *a* Matt 12:25
not with Me is a Me Matt 12:30
blasphemy *a* the Spirit Matt 12:31
For nation will rise *a* Matt 24:7
out, as *a* a robber Matt 26:55
I have sinned *a* Luke 15:18
lifted up his heel *a* John 13:18
LORD and *a* His Christ Acts 4:26
to kick *a* the goads Acts 9:5
all men everywhere *a* Acts 21:28
let us not fight *a* Acts 23:9
a the promises of God Gal 3:21
we do not wrestle *a* Eph 6:12
I have *a* few things *a* Rev 2:20

AGE

well advanced in *a* Gen 18:11
Israel were dim with *a* Gen 48:10
the flower of their *a* 1 Sam 2:33
the grave at *a* full Job 5:26
a is *a* nothing Ps 39:5
and in the *a* to come Mark 10:30
 "The sons of this *a* Luke 20:34
He is of *a*; ask him John 9:21
who are of full *a* Heb 5:14
the powers of the *a* Heb 6:5

AGE TO COME

in this *a* *or in the* *a* Matt 12:32
in the *a*, eternal life Mark 10:30
in the *a* eternal life Luke 18:30
the powers of the *a* Heb 6:5

AGED

Wisdom is with *a* Job 12:12
a one *a* *as* Paul, the *a* Philem 9

AGES

ordained before the *a* 1 Cor 2:7
in other *a* was not Eph 3:5
at the end of the *a* Heb 9:26

AGONY

And being in *a* Luke 22:44

AGREE

A with your adversary Matt 5:25
that if two of you *a* Matt 18:19
testimonies did not *a* Mark 14:56
and these three *a* 1 John 5:8

AGREED

unless they are *a* Amos 3:3
they were glad, and *a* Luke 22:5

AGREEMENT

with Sheol we are in *a* Is 28:15
the North to make an *a* Dan 11:6
what *a* has the temple 2 Cor 6:16

AHAB

A wicked king of Israel, 1 Kin 16:29
Marries Jezebel; promotes Baal wor-
ship, 1 Kin 16:31–33; 18:17–46
Denounced by Elijah, 1 Kin 17:1
Wars against Ben-Hadad, 1 Kin
 20:1–43
Covets Naboth's vineyard, 1 Kin
 21:1–16
Death predicted; repentance delays
judgment, 1 Kin 21:17–29
Goes to war in spite of Micaiah's warn-
ing; killed in battle, 1 Kin. 22:1–37
Prophecy concerning, fulfilled, 1 Kin
 22:38
 — Lying prophet, Jer 29:21–23

AHASUERUS

The father of Darius the Mede, Dan
 9:1
 — Persian king, probably Xerxes 1,
 486–465 B.C., Ezra 4:6; Esth 1:1
Makes Esther queen, Esth 2:16, 17
Orders Jews annihilated, by Haman's
advice, Esth 3:8–15
Reverses decree at Esther's request,
 Esth 7: 8
Exalts Mordecai, Esth 10:1–3

AHAZ

King of Judah; pursues idolatry; sub-
mits to Assyrian rule; desecrates
the temple, 2 Kin 16
Defeated by Syria and Israel, 2 Chr
 28:5–15
Comforted by Isaiah; refuses to ask
a sign, Is 7:1–17

AHAZIAH

King of Israel; son of Ahab and Jezebel;
worships Baal, 1 Kin 22:51–53
Falls through lattice; calls on Baal-
Zebub; dies according to Elijah's
word, 2 Kin 1:2–18
 — King of Judah; Ahab's son-in-law;
reigns wickedly, 2 Kin 8:25–29; 2 Chr
 22:1–6
Killed by Jehu, 2 Kin 9:27–29; 2 Chr
 22:7–9

AHIJAH

A prophet of Shiloh who foretells divi-
 sion of Solomon's kingdom,
 1 Kin 11:29–39
Foretells elimination of Jeroboam's
line, 1 Kin 14:1–18
A writer of prophecy, 2 Chr 9:29

AHIKAM

Sent in Josiah's mission to Huldah,
 2 Kin 22:12–14
Protects Jeremiah, Jer 26:24

The father of Gedaliah, governor under
Nebuchadnezzar, 2 Kin 25:22; Jer
 39:14

AHIMAAZ

A son of Zadok the high priest, 1 Chr
 6:8, 9
Warns David of Absalom's plans,
 2 Sam 15:27, 36
First to tell David of Absalom's defeat,
 2 Sam 18:19–30

AHIMELECH

High priest in Saul's reign; helps David,
 1 Sam 21:1–9
Betrayed and killed by Doeg; son Abi-
athar escapes, 1 Sam 22:9–20
David writes concerning, Ps 52:title

AHINOAM

Wife of David, 1 Sam 25:43; 27:3; 30:5,
 18
Mother of Amnon, 2 Sam 3:2

AHITHOPHEL

David's counselor, 2 Sam 15:12
Joins Absalom's insurrection; counsels
him, 2 Sam 15:31; 16:20–23
His counsel rejected; commits suicide,
 2 Sam 17:1–23

AI

Israel defeated at, Josh 7:2–5
Israel destroys completely, Josh 8:1–28

AIDE

the king's personal *a* Acts 12:20

AIALON

Amorites not driven from, Judg 1:35
Miracle there, Josh 10:12, 13
City of refuge, 1 Chr 6:66–69
Fortified by Rehoboam, 2 Chr 11:5, 10
Captured by Philistines, 2 Chr 28:18

AIR

the birds of the *a* Gen 1:26
of the *a* have nests Luke 9:58
as one who beats the *a* 1 Cor 9:26
be speaking into the *a* 1 Cor 14:9
of the power of the *a* Eph 2:2
the Lord in the *a* 1 Thess 4:17
his bowl into the *a* Rev 16:17

AKEL DAMA

Field called "Field of Blood," Acts 1:19

AKRABBIM

An "ascent" on the south of the Dead
Sea, Num 34:4
One border of Judah, Josh 15:3

ALABASTER

mosaic pavement of *a* Esth 1:6
an *a* flask of very costly Matt 26:7
woman came having an *a* Mark 14:3
brought an *a* flask of Luke 7:37

ALARM

to sound the *a* against 2 Chr 13:12
A day of trumpet and *a* Zeph 1:16

ALEXANDER

A member of the high-priestly family,
 Acts 4:6
 — A Jew in Ephesus, Acts 19:33, 34
 — An apostate condemned by Paul,
 1 Tim 1:19, 20

ALEXANDRIA

Men of, persecute Stephen, Acts 6:9
Paul sails in ship of, Acts 27:6

ALGUM

a logs from Lebanon, 2 Chr 2:8
Ophir, brought *a* wood 2 Chr 9:10
a wood for the house 2 Chr 9:11

ALIEN

because you were an *a* Deut 23:7
I am an *a* in their Job 19:15
who turn away an *a* Mal 3:5

ALIENATED

a herself from them Ezek 23:17
darkened, being a Eph 4:18
you, who once were a Col 1:21

ALIENS

For we are a 1 Chr 29:15
For I have loved a Jer 2:25
A have devoured his Hos 7:9
without Christ, being a Eph 2:12
the armies of the a Heb 11:34

ALIGHTING

dove and a upon Him Matt 3:16

ALIKE

All things come a Eccl 9:2
esteems every day a Rom 14:5

ALIVE

In the ark remained a Gen 7:23
with them went down a Num 16:33
LORD your God are a Deut 4:4
I kill and I make a Deut 32:39
Let them go down a Ps 55:15
he preserves himself a Ezek 18:27
heard that He was a Mark 16:11
son was dead and is a Luke 15:24
presented Himself a Acts 1:3
dead indeed to sin, but a Rom 6:11
I was a once without Rom 7:9
all shall be made a 1 Cor 15:22
trespasses, made us a Eph 2:5
flesh, He has made a Col 2:13
that we who are a 1 Thess 4:5
the flesh but made a 1 Pet 3:18
and behold, I am a Rev 1:18
a name that you are a Rev 3:1
These two were cast a Rev 19:20

ALL

See WITH ALL YOUR HEART
for this is man's a Eccl 12:13

ALL THE DAYS OF HIS LIFE

he shall read it a Deut 17:19
give him to the LORD a 1 Sam 1:11
I have made him ruler a 1 Kin 11:34
He commanded him a 1 Kin 15:5
toils under the sun a Eccl 5:18
before the king a Jer 52:33

ALL THE EARTH

over the cattle, over a Gen 1:26
alive on the face of a Gen 7:3
confused the language of a Gen 11:9
Shall not the Judge of a Gen 18:25
there is none like Me in a Ex 9:14
going the way of a Josh 23:14
I go the way of a 1 Kin 2:2
a sought the presence 1 Kin 10:24
Sing to the LORD, a 1 Chr 16:23
Let a fear the LORD; Ps 33:8
A shall worship You Ps 66:4
I have gathered a Is 10:14
that made a drunk Jer 51:7
which shall rule over a Dan 2:39
Let a keep silence Hab 2:20
was darkness over a Luke 23:44
sound has gone out to a Rom 10:18
of God sent into a Rev 5:6

ALL THE SAINTS

God will come, and a Zech 14:5
your love for a Eph 1:15
less than the least of a Eph 3:8
able to comprehend with a Eph 3:18
and supplication for a Eph 6:16
your love for a Col 1:4
with the prayers of a Rev 8:3

ALLELUIA

Again they said, "A Rev 19:3

ALLOW

a Your Holy One Ps 16:10
a My faithfulness Ps 89:33
nor do you a those Matt 23:13

a Your Holy One Acts 2:27
who will not a you to be 1 Cor 10:13

ALLOWED

bygone generations a Acts 14:16

ALLURE

behold, I will a Hos 2:14
they a through the lusts 2 Pet 2:18

ALMIGHTY

I am A God; walk before Gen 17:1
May God A bless you, and Gen 28:3
and to Jacob, as God A Ex 6:3
for the A has dealt very Ruth 1:20
does the A pervert justice Job 8:3
find out the limits of the A Job 11:7
of the wrath of the A Job 21:20
your delight in the A Job 22:26
breath of the A gives me Job 33:4
under the shadow of the A Ps 91:1
as destruction from the A Is 13:6
as destruction from the A Joel 1:15
and who is to come, the A Rev 1:8
holy, holy, Lord God A Rev 4:8
Even so, Lord God A Rev 16:7
fierceness and wrath of A Rev 19:15

ALMOND

a blossoms on one Ex 25:33
a tree blossoms Eccl 12:5
branch of an a tree Jer 1:11

ALMOST

for me, my feet had a Ps 73:2
a persuade me to Acts 26:28
a all things are Heb 9:22

ALMS

But rather give a Luke 11:41
you have and give a Luke 12:33
I came to bring a Acts 24:17

ALOES

with myrrh and a Ps 45:8
my bed with myrrh, a Prov 7:17
mixture of myrrh and a John 19:39

ALoud

And he wept a, and the Gen 45:2
many shouted a for joy Ezra 3:12
them sing a on their beds Ps 149:5
Wisdom calls a outside Prov 1:20
Cry a at Beth Aven Hos 5:8

ALPHA

I am the A and the Rev 1:8
I am the A and the Rev 22:13

ALTAR

Then Noah built an a Gen 8:20
he built an a to the LORD Gen 12:7
built an a there Gen 13:18
Abraham built an a Gen 22:9
son and laid him on the a Gen 22:9
So he built an a there Gen 26:25
make an a there to God Gen 35:1
And Moses built an a Ex 17:15
An a of earth you Ex 20:24
two sides of the a Ex 27:7
incense a of acacia wood Ex 37:25
a shall be kept Lev 6:9
it to you upon the a Lev 17:11
offering for the a Num 7:84
a to the LORD your God Deut 27:5
Joshua built an a Josh 8:30
a great, impressive a Josh 22:10
called the a Witness Josh 22:34
and tear down the a Judg 6:25
early and built an a Judg 21:4
built an a to the LORD 1 Sam 7:17
Saul built an a 1 Sam 14:35
"Go up, erect an a 2 Sam 24:18
built there an a 2 Sam 24:25
a which he had made 1 Kin 12:33
cried out against the a 1 Kin 13:2
set up an a for Baal 1 Kin 16:32
he repaired the a 1 Kin 18:30
a according to all that 2 Kin 16:11

built there an a 1 Chr 21:26
made a bronze a 2 Chr 4:1
a of gold and the tables 2 Chr 4:19
he restored the a 2 Chr 15:8
worship before one a 2 Chr 32:12
repaired the a of the 2 Chr 33:16
the a of the God of Ezra 3:2
I will go to the a Ps 43:4
tongs from the a Is 6:6
there will be an a Is 19:19
Lord has spurned His a Lam 2:7
The a was in front Ezek 40:47
you cover the a Mal 2:13
your gift to the a Matt 5:23
swears by the a Matt 23:18
I even found an a Acts 17:23
the offerings of the a 1 Cor 9:13
partakers of the a 1 Cor 10:18
We have an a from Heb 13:10
Isaac his son on the a James 2:21
under the a the souls Rev 6:9
and stood at the a Rev 8:3
horns of the golden a Rev 9:13
angel came out from the a Rev 14:18

ALTARS

a Hezekiah has taken 2 Kin 18:22
Even Your a, O LORD Ps 84:3
on the horns of your a Jer 17:1
a shall be broken Ezek 6:4
has made many a Hos 8:11
a shall be heaps Hos 12:11
destruction on the a Amos 3:14
and torn down Your a Rom 11:3

ALTER

put their hand to a it Ezra 6:12
Nor a the word Ps 89:34
Persians, which does not a Dan 6:8
Persians, which does not a Dan 6:12

ALTERED

of His face was a Luke 9:29

ALWAYS

delight, rejoicing a Prov 8:30
the poor with you a Matt 26:11
Me you do not have a Matt 26:11
lo, I am with you a Matt 28:20
'Son, you are a Luke 15:31
men a ought to pray Luke 18:1
immovable, a abounding 1 Cor 15:58
Rejoice in the Lord a Phil 4:4
thus we shall a 1 Thess 4:17
a be ready to give a 1 Pet 3:15

AM

See HERE I AM; I AM WITH YOU
to Moses, "I A WHO I A Ex 3:14
First and I a the Last Is 44:6
in My name, I a there Matt 18:20
I a the bread of life John 6:35
I a the light of the John 8:12
I a from above John 8:23
Abraham was, I A John 8:58
I a the door John 10:9
I a the good shepherd John 10:11
I a the resurrection John 11:25
to him, "I a the way John 14:6
of God I a what I a 1 Cor 10:16

AMALEK

Grandson of Esau, Gen 36:11, 12
A chief of Edom, Gen 36:16
First among nations, Num 24:20

AMALEKITES

Destruction predicted, Ex 17:14; Deut
25:17-19
Defeated by Israel, Ex 17:8-13; Judg
7:12-25; 1 Sam 14:47, 48; 27:8, 9;
1 Chr 4:42, 43
Overcome Israel, Num 14:39-45; Judg
3:13

AMASA

Commands Absalom's rebels, 2 Sam
17:25

Made David's commander, 2 Sam 19:13
Treacherously killed by Joab, 2 Sam
20:9-12
Death avenged, 1 Kin 2:28-34

AMAZED

the multitudes were a Matt 12:23
trembled and were a Mark 16:8
saw Him, they were a Luke 2:48
Then they were all a and Acts 2:7
with Philip, and was a Acts 8:13

AMAZIAH

King of Judah; kills his father's assassi-
nators, 2 Kin 14:1-6; 2 Chr 25:1-4
Hires troops from Israel; is rebuked by
a man of God; sends troops home,
2 Chr 25:5-10
Defeats Edomites; worships their gods,
2 Chr 25:11-16
Wars with Israel, 2 Kin 14:8-14; 2 Chr
25:17-24
Killed by conspirators, 2 Chr 25:25-28

AMBASSADOR

but a faithful a Prov 13:17
for which I am an a Eph 6:20

AMBASSADORS

which sends a by sea Is 8:2
cry outside, the a Is 33:7
we are a for Christ 2 Cor 5:20

AMBITION

Christ from selfish a Phil 1:16
through selfish a Phil 2:3

AMBUSH

Lay an a for the city Josh 8:2
a all around Gibeah Judg 20:29
son heard of their a Acts 23:16
they lay in a along Acts 25:3

AMEN

shall say, "A, so be it Num 5:22
answer and say, "A Deut 27:15
the people said, "A!" 1 Chr 16:36
all the people say, "A!" Ps 106:48
and the glory forever. A Matt 6:13
to the end of the age." A Matt 28:20
accompanying signs. A Mark 16:20
and blessing God. A Luke 24:53
that would be written. A John 21:25
uninformed say "A 1 Cor 14:16
are Yes, and in Him A 2 Cor 1:20
These things says the A Rev 3:14
creatures said, "A Rev 5:14
I am coming quickly." A Rev 22:20

AMEND

A your ways and your Jer 7:3
from his evil way, a Jer 35:15

AMETHYST

an agate, and an a Ex 28:19
the twelfth a Rev 21:20

AMMON

A nation fathered by Lot, Gen 19:36,
38

AMMONITES

Excluded from assembly for hostility
to Israel, Deut 23:3-6
Propose cruel treaty; conquered by
Saul, 1 Sam 11:1-3, 11
Abuse David's ambassadors; con-
quered by his army, 2 Sam 10:1-14
Harass postexilic Jews, Neh 4:3, 7, 8
Defeated by Israel and Judah, Judg
11:4-33; 2 Chr 20:1-25; 27:5, 6
Prophecies concerning, Ps 83:1-18; Jer
25:9-21; Ezek 25:1-7; Amos 1:13-15;
Zeph 2:9-11

AMNON

A son of David, 2 Sam 3:2
Rapes his half sister, 2 Sam 13:1-18
Killed by Absalom, 2 Sam 13:19-29

AMON

King of Judah, 2 Kin 21:18, 19
Follows evil, 2 Chr 33:22, 23
Killed by conspiracy, 2 Kin 21:23, 24
— A governor of Samaria, 1 Kin
22:10, 26

AMORITES

Defeated by Joshua, Josh 10:1-43
Not driven out of Canaan, Judg
1:34-36
Put to forced labor under Solomon,
1 Kin 9:20, 21

AMOS

A prophet of Israel, Amos 1:1
Pronounces judgment against nations,
Amos 1:1-3, 15
Denounces Israel's sins, Amos 4:1-7-9
Condemns Amaziah, the priest of
Bethel, Amos 7:10-17
Predicts Israel's downfall, Amos
9:1-10
Foretells great blessings, Amos
9:11-15

AMPHIPOLIS

A city in Macedonia visited by Paul,
Acts 17:1

AMRAM

Son of Kohath, Num 3:17-19
The father of Aaron, Moses and
Miriam, Ex 6:18-20; 1 Chr 6:3

ANAKIM

A race of giants; very strong, Num
13:28-33; Deut 2:10, 11, 21
Defeated:
by Joshua, Josh 10:36-39; 11:21
by Caleb, Josh 14:6-15

ANANIAS

Disciple at Jerusalem; slain for lying
to God, Acts 5:1-11
— A Christian disciple at Damascus,
Acts 9:10-19; 22:12-16
— A Jewish high priest, Acts 23:1-5

ANATHOTH

A Levitical city in Benjamin, Josh 21:18
Jeremiah's birthplace; he buys prop-
erty there, Jer 1:1; 32:6-15
To be invaded by Assyria, Is 10:30

ANCHOR

hope we have as an a Heb 6:19

ANCIENT

Do not remove the a Prov 23:10
a times that I Is 37:26
until the A of Days Dan 7:22

ANDREW

A disciple of John the Baptist, then of
Christ, Matt 4:18, 19; John 1:40-42
Enrolled among the Twelve, Matt
10:2
Mentioned, Mark 13:3, 4; John 6:8, 9;
12:20-22; Acts 1:13

ANGEL

Now the A of the Lord Gen 16:7
A who has redeemed me Gen 48:16
"Behold, I send an A Ex 23:20
the donkey saw the A Num 22:23
For I have seen the A Judg 6:22
Manoah said to the A Judg 13:17
in my sight as an a 1 Sam 29:9
a who was destroying 2 Sam 24:16
night that the a 2 Kin 19:35
the A of His Presence Is 63:9
struggled with the A Hos 12:4
standing before the A Zech 3:3
like God, like the A Zech 12:8
things, behold, an a Matt 1:20
for an a of the Lord Matt 28:2
Then an a of the Lord Luke 1:11
And behold, an a Luke 2:9

a appeared to Him from Luke 22:43
For an a went down at John 5:4
a has spoken to Him John 12:29
But at night an a Acts 5:19
A who appeared to him Acts 7:35
Then immediately an a Acts 12:23
and no a or spirit Acts 23:8
a has spoken to him Acts 23:9
by me this night an a Acts 27:23
himself into an a 2 Cor 11:14
even if we, or an a Gal 1:8
Then I saw a strong a Rev 5:2
over them the a Rev 9:11
Then I saw an a Rev 19:17
Jesus, have sent My a Rev 22:16

ANGEL OF GOD

the a called to Hagar Gen 21:17
Then the A spoke to me Gen 31:11
A, who went before the Ex 14:19
the A came to the woman Judg 13:9
the king is like the a 2 Sam 19:27
in a vision an a coming Acts 10:3
you received me as an a Gal 4:14

ANGEL OF THE LORD

A found her by a spring Gen 16:7
the A called to Abraham Gen 22:15
A appeared to him in a flame Ex 3:2
the donkey saw the A Num 22:23
the A came up from Gilgal Judg 2:1
the A appeared to him Judg 6:12
A appeared to the woman Judg 13:3
A was by the threshing 2 Sam 24:16
a said to Elijah 2 Kin 1:3
a went out, and killed 2 Kin 19:35
in the land, with the a 1 Chr 21:12
The a encamps all around Ps 34:7
let the a pursue them Ps 35:6
A, who stood among the Zech 1:11
priest standing before the A Zech 3:1
like the A before them Zech 12:8
a appeared to him in a Matt 1:20
an a appeared to Joseph Matt 2:13
a descended from heaven, Matt 28:2
an a appeared to him, Luke 1:11
an a opened the prison Acts 5:19
a spoke to Philip, saying Acts 8:26
an a stood by him, Acts 12:7
an a struck him, Acts 12:23

ANGELS

If He charges His a Job 4:18
lower than the a Ps 8:5
He shall give His a Ps 91:11
Praise Him, all His a Ps 148:2
He shall give His a Matt 4:6
a will come forth Matt 13:49
a always see the face Matt 18:10
but are like a of God Matt 22:30
not even the a of heaven Matt 24:36
and all the holy a Matt 25:31
twelve legions of a Matt 26:53
the presence of the a Luke 15:10
was carried by the a Luke 16:22
are equal to the a Luke 20:36
And she saw two a John 20:12
that we shall judge a 1 Cor 6:3
head, because of the a 1 Cor 11:10
and worship of a Col 2:18
with His mighty a 2 Thess 1:7
the Spirit, seen by a 1 Tim 3:16
much better than the a Heb 1:4
does not give aid to a Heb 2:16
company of a, to the Heb 12:22
unwittingly entertained a Heb 13:2
things which a desire 1 Pet 1:12
did not spare the a 2 Pet 2:4
a who did not keep Jude 6
Michael and his a Rev 12:7

ANGER

See SLOW TO ANGER
Cursed be their a Gen 49:7

sun, that the fierce a Num 25:4
 fierceness of His a Deut 13:17
 heat of this great a Deut 29:24
 So the a of the LORD Judg 10:7
 to provoke Me to a 1 Kin 16:2
 For His a is but for a Ps 30:5
 let Your wrathful a Ps 69:24
 a time He turned His a Ps 78:38
 made a path for His a Ps 78:50
 You prolong Your a Ps 85:5
 the power of Your a Ps 90:11
 gracious, slow to a Ps 103:8
 Nor will He keep His a Ps 103:9
 harsh word stirs up a Prov 15:1
 a sins against his own Prov 20:2
 a rests in the bosom Eccl 7:9
 a the Holy One of Is 1:4
 a is not turned away Is 5:25
 a is turned away Is 12:1
 'I will not cause My a Jer 3:12
 For great is the a Jer 36:7
 and I will send My a Ezek 7:3
 does not retain His a Mic 7:18
 fierceness of His a Nah 1:6
 a is kindled against Zech 10:3
 around at them with a Mark 3:5
 bitterness, wrath, a Eph 4:31

ANGER OF THE LORD

a was kindled against Moses, Ex 4:14
 a was aroused against Num 25:3
 a burned against the Josh 7:1
 a was hot against Israel Judg 2:14
 a was aroused against 2 Sam 6:7
 a was aroused against 2 Kin 13:3
 a is aroused against His Is 5:25
 a will not turn back Jer 23:20
 because of the a this Jer 52:3

ANGRY

Cain, "Why are you a Gen 4:6
 "Let not the Lord be a Gen 18:30
 the Son, lest He be a Ps 2:12
 judge, and God is a Ps 7:11
 When once You are a Ps 76:7
 Will you be a forever Ps 79:5
 friendship with an a Prov 22:24
 backbiting tongue an a Prov 25:23
 a man stirs up strife Prov 29:22
 in your spirit to be a Eccl 7:9
 I was a with My people Is 47:6
 nor will I always be a Is 57:16
 covetousness I was a Is 57:17
 right for you to be a Jon 4:4
 LORD has been very a Zech 1:2
 I am exceedingly a Zech 1:15
 you that whoever is a Matt 5:22
 "Be a, and do not sin" Eph 4:26
 Therefore I was a Heb 3:10
 with whom was He a Heb 3:17
 The nations were a Rev 11:18

ANGUISH

a has come upon me 2 Sam 1:9
 a make him afraid Job 15:24
 I will be in a over my Ps 38:18
 and a have overtaken Ps 119:143
 longer remembers the a John 16:21
 tribulation and a Rom 2:9
 much affliction and a 2 Cor 2:4

ANIMAL

of every clean a Gen 7:2
 Whoever kills an a Lev 24:18
 the life of his a Prov 12:10
 set him on his own a Luke 10:34

ANIMALS

of a after their kind Gen 6:20
 sacrifices of fat a Ps 66:15
 of four-footed a Acts 10:12
 and four-footed a Rom 1:23

ANISE

tithe of mint and a Matt 23:23

ANNA

Aged prophetess, Luke 2:36-38

ANNAS

A Jewish high priest, Luke 3:2
 Christ appeared before, John 18:12-24
 Peter and John appeared before, Acts 4:6

ANNUL

and who will a Is 14:27
 years later, cannot a Gal 3:17

ANNULLING

one hand there is an a Heb 7:18

ANNULS

is confirmed, no one a Gal 3:15

ANOINT

You shall a them Ex 28:41
 but you shall not a Deut 28:40
 you shall a for Me the 1 Sam 16:3
 a yourself with oil 2 Sam 14:2
 a my head with oil Ps 23:5
 Arise, you princes, a Is 21:5
 a the Most Holy Dan 9:24
 when you fast, a Matt 6:17
 a My body for burial Mark 14:8
 they might come and a Mark 16:1
 a your eyes with eye Rev 3:18

ANOINTED

See LORD'S ANOINTED
 the priest, who is a Lev 16:32
 "Surely the LORD's a 1 Sam 16:6
 destroy the LORD's a 2 Sam 1:14
 he cursed the LORD's a 2 Sam 19:21
 shows mercy to His a 2 Sam 22:51
 "Do not touch My a 1 Chr 16:22
 the LORD saves His a Ps 20:6
 because the LORD has a Is 61:1
 "These are the two a Zech 4:14
 Because He has a Luke 4:18
 but this woman has a Luke 7:46
 a the eyes of the John 9:6
 It was that Mary who a John 11:2
 Jesus, whom You a Acts 4:27
 and has a us is God 2 Cor 1:21

ANOINTING

also made the holy a Ex 37:29
 pray over him, a him James 5:14
 But you have an a 1 John 2:20
 but as the same a 1 John 2:27

ANOTHER

See LOVE ONE ANOTHER
 that you love one a John 13:34
 and He will give you a John 14:16
 'Let a take his office Acts 1:20

ANSWER

will give Pharaoh an a Gen 41:16
 a I should take back 2 Sam 24:13
 Him, he could not a Job 9:3
 Call, and I will a Job 13:22
 how shall I a Him Job 31:14
 and you shall a Job 40:7
 the day that I call, a Ps 102:2
 In Your faithfulness a Ps 143:1
 a turns away wrath Prov 15:1
 A man has joy by the a Prov 15:23
 He who gives a right a Prov 24:26
 a fool according Prov 26:4
 was there none to a Is 50:2
 for there is no a Mic 3:7
 or what you should a Luke 12:11
 you may have an a 2 Cor 5:12
 ought to a each one Col 4:6

ANSWERS

a matter before he Prov 18:13
 but the rich a roughly Prov 18:23
 money a everything Eccl 10:19

ANT

Go to the a, you sluggard Prov 6:6

ANTICHRIST

heard that the A 1 John 2:18
 a who denies the 1 John 2:22
 is the spirit of the A 1 John 4:3
 is a deceiver and an a 2 John 7

ANTIOCH

— In Syria:
 First Gentile church established, Acts 11:19-21
 Disciples first called "Christians" in, Acts 11:26
 Church commissions Paul, Acts 13:1-4; 15:35-41
 Church troubled by Judaizers, Acts 15:1-4; Gal 2:11-21
 — In Pisidia:
 Paul visits; Jews reject the gospel, Acts 13:14; 42-51

ANTIPATRIS

A city between Jerusalem and Caesarea, Acts 23:31

ANTITYPE

a which now saves us 1 Pet 3:21

ANXIETIES

the multitude of my a Ps 94:19
 Try me, and know my a Ps 139:23

ANXIETY

A in the heart of man Prov 12:25
 eat their bread with a Ezek 12:19

ANXIOUS

drink, nor have an a Luke 12:29
 Be a for nothing Phil 4:6

APART

See SET APART
 that you shall set a Ex 13:12
 she shall be set a Lev 15:19
 the LORD has set a Ps 4:3
 justified by faith a Rom 3:28

APHEK

A town in the Plain of Sharon, Josh 12:18
 Site of Philistine camp, 1 Sam 4:1; 29:1
 — A city in Jezreel, 1 Kin 20:26-30
 Syria's defeat prophesied here, 2 Kin 13:14-19

APOLLOS

An Alexandrian Jew; instructed by Aquila and Priscilla and sent to Achaia, Acts 18:24-28
 Referred to as having ministered in Corinth, 1 Cor 1:12; 3:4, 22; 4:6; 16:12

APOLLONIA

A town between Amphipolis and Thessalonica, Acts 17:1

APOLLYON

Angel of the bottomless pit, Rev 9:11

APOSTLE

called to be an a Rom 1:1
 inasmuch as I am an a Rom 11:13
 Am I not an a 1 Cor 9:1
 the signs of an a were 2 Cor 12:12
 a preacher and an a 1 Tim 2:7
 consider the A and High Heb 3:1

APOSTLES

See TWELVE APOSTLES
 names of the twelve a Matt 10:2
 whom He also named a Luke 6:13
 displayed us, the a 1 Cor 4:9
 am the least of the a 1 Cor 15:9
 to the most eminent a 2 Cor 11:5
 themselves into a 2 Cor 11:13
 none of the other a Gal 1:19
 gave some to be a Eph 4:11
 who say they are a Rev 2:2
 heaven, and you holy a Rev 18:20

APOSTLESHIP

in this ministry and a Acts 1:25

received grace and a Rom 1:5
are the seal of my a 1 Cor 9:2
in Peter for the a Gal 2:8

APPAREL

is glorious in His a Is 63:1
clothed with foreign a Zeph 1:8
by them in white a Acts 1:10
themselves in modest a 1 Tim 2:9
gold rings, in fine a James 2:2
or putting on fine a 1 Pet 3:3

APPEAL

I a to Caesar Acts 25:11
love's sake I rather a Philem 9

APPEAR

and let the dry land a Gen 1:9
all your males shall a Ex 23:17
all Israel comes to a Deut 31:11
shall I come and a Ps 42:2
Let Your work a Ps 90:16
He shall a in His Ps 102:16
doings your sins a Ezek 21:24
faces that they may a Matt 6:16
also outwardly a Matt 23:28
kingdom of God would a Luke 19:11
For we must all a 2 Cor 5:10
for Him He will a Heb 9:28
and the sinner a 1 Pet 4:18

APPEARANCE

Do not look at his a 1 Sam 16:7
a is blacker than soot Lam 4:8
As He prayed, the a Luke 9:29
judge according to a John 7:24
those who boast in a 2 Cor 5:12
to the outward a 2 Cor 10:7
found in a as a man Phil 2:8
indeed have an a Col 2:23

APPEARED

See LORD APPEARED TO
an angel of the Lord a Luke 1:11
who a in glory and Luke 9:31
brings salvation has a Titus 2:11
of the ages, He has a Heb 9:26

APPEARING

Lord Jesus Christ's a 1 Tim 6:14
been revealed by the a 2 Tim 1:10
and the dead at His a 2 Tim 4:1
who have loved His a 2 Tim 4:8
hope and glorious a Titus 2:13

APPEARS

can stand when He a Mal 3:2
who is our life a Col 3:4
the Chief Shepherd a 1 Pet 5:4
in Him, that when He a 1 John 2:28

APPETITE

or satisfy the a Job 38:39
are a man given to a Prov 23:2

APPII FORUM

A town about 40 miles south of Rome
where Christians came to meet Paul,
Acts 28:15

APPLE

He kept him as the a Deut 32:10
And my law as the a Prov 7:2
Like an a tree among Song 2:3
touches the a of His eye Zech 2:8

APPLES

fitly spoken is like a Prov 25:11
refresh me with a Song 2:5

APPLIED

a my heart to know Eccl 7:25

APPOINT

I will even a terror Lev 26:16
a each of them to his Num 4:19
a me ruler over the 2 Sam 6:21
a salvation for walls Is 26:1
For God did not a 1 Thess 5:9
a elders in every city Titus 1:5

APPOINTED

You have a his limits Job 14:5
To release those a Ps 102:20
And as it is a for men Heb 9:27

APPOINTED FEASTS

to the LORD at your a Num 29:39
your a my soul hates Is 1:14
her Sabbaths, all her a Hos 2:11
O Judah, keep your a Nah 1:15

APPOINTED TIME

At the a I will return to Gen 18:14
keep the Passover at its a Num 9:2
the morning till the a 2 Sam 24:15
at the a the end shall be Dan 8:19
end will still be at the a Dan 11:27
vision is yet for an a Hab 2:3

APPROACH

a anyone who is near Lev 18:6
And cause to a You Ps 65:4
year, make those who a Heb 10:1

APPROACHING

take delight in a God Is 58:2
as you see the Day a Heb 10:25

APPROVE

their posterity who a Ps 49:13
do the same but also a Rom 1:32
a the things that Rom 2:18
a the things that are Phil 1:10

APPROVED

to God and a by men Rom 14:18
to present yourself a 2 Tim 2:15
when he has been a James 1:12

APRONS

a were brought from his Acts 19:12

AQUEDUCT

stood by the a 2 Kin 18:17
at the end of the a Is 7:3
he stood by the a Is 36:2

AQUILA

Paul's host in Corinth, Acts 18:2, 3
Travels to Syria and Ephesus with Paul,
Acts 18:18, 19
Instructs Apollos, Acts 18:24–26
Esteemed by Paul, Rom 16:3, 4

AR

A chief Moabite city, Num 21:15
On Israel's route, Deut 2:18
Destroyed by Sihon, Num 21:28
Destroyed by God, Is 15:1

ARABIA

Pay tribute to Solomon, 1 Kin 10:14, 15
Plunders Jerusalem, 2 Chr 21:16, 17
Defeated by Uzziah, 2 Chr 26:1, 7
Denounced by prophets, Is 21:13–17

ARARAT

Site of ark's landing, Gen 8:4
Assassins flee to, 2 Kin 19:37; Is 37:38

ARAUHAH (or Ornan)

A Jebusite, 2 Sam 24:15–25
His threshing floor bought by David,
2 Sam 24:18–25
becomes site of temple, 2 Chr 3:1
Also called Ornan, 1 Chr 21:18–28

ARBITRATOR

a judge or an a over Luke 12:14

ARCHANGEL

with the voice of an a 1 Thess 4:16
Yet Michael the a Jude 9

ARCHELAUS

Son of Herod the Great, Matt 2:22

AREOPAGUS

Paul preaches at, Acts 17:18–34

ARGUMENTS

fill my mouth with a Job 23:4
casting down a and 2 Cor 10:5

ARIEL

Ezra's friend, Ezra 8:15–17
—— Name applied to Jerusalem,
Is 29:1, 2, 7

ARISE

needy, now I will a Ps 12:5
A for our help Ps 44:26
Let God a Ps 68:1
A, shine; for your light Is 60:1
But the LORD will a Is 60:2
Righteousness shall a Mal 4:2
I will a and go to Luke 15:18
you who sleep, a Eph 5:14

ARISTARCHUS

A Macedonian Christian, Acts 19:29
Accompanies Paul, Acts 20:1, 4
Imprisoned with Paul, Col 4:10

ARK

Make yourself an a Gen 6:14
two of every sort into the a Gen 6:19
Then the a rested Gen 8:4
she took an a of bulrushes Ex 2:3
in the a you shall put Ex 25:21
Bezalel made the a Ex 37:1
seat which is on the a Lev 16:2
the a which I had made Deut 10:5
"Cross over before the a Josh 4:5
"Take up the a Josh 6:6
Let us bring the a 1 Sam 4:3
Also the a of God 1 Sam 4:11
a of God was captured 1 Sam 4:19
Philistines took the a 1 Sam 5:1
the a remained in Kirjath 1 Sam 7:2
out his hand to the a 2 Sam 6:6
brought the a of the 2 Sam 6:17
Nothing was in the a 1 Kin 8:9
his hand to hold the a 1 Chr 13:9
the holy a in the house 2 Chr 35:3
golden censer and the a Heb 9:4
prepared an a for the Heb 11:7
of Noah, while the a 1 Pet 3:20
in heaven, and the a Rev 11:19

ARM

with an outstretched a Ex 6:6
"Has the LORD's a Num 11:23
With him is an a 2 Chr 32:8
a that has no strength Job 26:2
Have you an a like God Job 40:9
Break the a of the Ps 10:15
You have a mighty a Ps 89:13
a have gained Him the Ps 98:1
a shall rule for Him Is 40:10
therefore His own a Is 59:16
strength with His a Luke 1:51
with an uplifted a Acts 13:17
a yourselves also with 1 Pet 4:1

ARMAGEDDON

See MEGIDDO
Possible site of final battle, Rev 16:16

ARMED

You have a me with 2 Sam 22:40
a strong man, fully a Luke 11:21

ARMIES

make captains of the a Deut 20:9
"I defy the a of Israel 1 Sam 17:10
any number to His a Job 25:3
not go out with our a Ps 60:10
And he sent out his a Matt 22:7
surrounded by a Luke 21:20
And the a in heaven Rev 19:14
the earth, and their a Rev 19:19

ARMOR

but he put his a 1 Sam 17:54
spears, put on the a Jer 46:4
let us put on the a Rom 13:12
Put on the whole a Eph 6:11

ARMORBEARER

to the young man, his a Judg 9:54

Jonathan said to his *a* 1 Sam 14:12
he became his *a* 1 Sam 16:21
Saul said to his *a* 1 Sam 31:4
his *a* would not, for he 1 Chr 10:4
when his *a* saw that Saul ... 1 Chr 10:5

ARMS

are the everlasting *a* Deut 33:27
into the clash of *a* Job 39:21
It is God who *a* Ps 18:32
My *a* will judge the Is 51:5
wounds between your *a* Zech 13:6
took them up in His *a* Mark 10:16
took Him up in his *a* Luke 2:28

ARMY

the multitude of an *a* Ps 33:16
an exceedingly great *a* Ezek 37:10
the number of the *a* Rev 9:16

ARNON

Boundary between Moab and Ammon.
Num 21:13, 26
Border of Reuben, Deut 3:12, 16
Ammonites reminded of, Judg
11:18–26

AROER

A town in east Jordan; rebuilt by Gad-
ites. Num 32:34; Deut 2:36
Assigned to Reuben, Deut 3:12
Ruled by Amorites, Josh 12:2; 13:9, 10,
16

AROMA

smelled a soothing *a* Gen 8:21
To the one we are the *a* 2 Cor 2:16
for a sweet-smelling *a* Eph 5:2
a sweet-smelling *a* Phil 4:18

AROSE

younger *a* and lay with Gen 19:35
a and crossed the river Gen 31:21
behold, my sheaf *a* Gen 37:7
there *a* a new king Ex 1:8
Deborah *a* and went Judg 4:9
until I, Deborah, *a* Judg 5:7
a a mother in Israel Judg 5:7
Samuel *a* and went to Eli, 1 Sam 3:6
David *a* and fled 1 Sam 21:10
LORD *a* against His 2 Chr 36:16
Then I *a* in the night Neh 2:12
Esther *a* and stood before Esth 8:4
I *a* to open for my beloved Song 5:5
the king *a* very early Dan 6:19
afterward I *a* and went Dan 8:27
Jonah *a* to flee to Jon 1:3
And she *a* and served Matt 8:15
tempest *a* on the sea Matt 8:24
He *a* and rebuked Matt 8:26
all those virgins *a* and Matt 25:7
a great windstorm *a* Mark 4:37
a and rebuked the wind Mark 4:39
a against the church Acts 8:1
he *a* and was baptized Acts 9:18
with Him after He *a* Acts 10:41
a dissension *a* between Acts 23:7
smoke *a* out of the pit Rev 9:2

AROUSED

the LORD was greatly *a* Num 11:10
his wrath was *a* because Job 32:2
Then Joseph, being *a* Matt 1:24

ARPHAXAD

A son of Shem, Gen 10:22, 24
Born two years after the flood, Gen
11:10–13
An ancestor of Christ, Luke 3:36

ARRAY

a against Gibeah Judg 20:30
battle *a* against Israel 1 Sam 4:2
drew up in battle *a* 1 Sam 17:2
a yourself with glory Job 40:10

ARRAYED

his glory was not *a* Matt 6:29

“Who are these *a* Rev 7:13
The woman was *a* Rev 17:4

ARREST

come up to a Samson Judg 15:10
the altar, saying, “A him 1 Kin 13:4
when they *a* you Mark 13:11

ARROGANCE

Pride and *a* and the Prov 8:13
I will halt the *a* Is 13:11

ARROGANT

the fruit of the *a* Is 10:12
sanctuary, your *a* boast Ezek 24:21

ARROW

deliverance and the *a* 2 Kin 13:17
a cannot make him flee Job 41:28
make ready their *a* Ps 11:2
a that flies by day Ps 91:5
a sword, and a sharp *a* Prov 25:18
Their tongue is an *a* Jer 9:8
as a target for the *a* Lam 3:12

ARROWS

He sent out *a* and 2 Sam 22:15
a pierce me deeply Ps 38:2
There He broke the *a* Ps 76:3
Like *a* in the hand of Ps 127:4
He has caused the *a* Lam 3:13
were sworn over Your *a* Hab 3:9

ARTAXERXES

Artaxerxes I, king of Persia (465–425
B.C.), authorizes Ezra’s mission to
Jerusalem. Ezra 7:1–28
Temporarily halts rebuilding program
at Jerusalem, Ezra 4:7–23
Authorizes Nehemiah’s mission, Neh
2:1–10
Permits Nehemiah to return, Neh 13:6

ARTISAN

gifted *a* in whom Ex 36:1
the skillful *a*, and the expert Is 3:3

ARTISTIC

a designs of cherubim Ex 26:1
to design *a* works Ex 31:4
a designs of cherubim Ex 36:8
linen, into *a* designs Ex 39:3

AS IT IS WRITTEN

A in the Law of Moses, Dan 9:13
of Man indeed goes just *a*, Matt 26:24
A in the Prophets: “Behold, Mark 1:2
of you hypocrites, *a* Mark 7:6
whatever they wished, *a* Mark 9:13
a, “He gave them bread John 6:31
donkey, sat on it; *a* John 12:14
a, “The just shall live Rom 1:17
Israel will be saved, *a* Rom 11:26
but *a*, “The reproaches of Rom 15:3

ASA

Third king of Judah; restores true wor-
ship, 1 Kin 15:8–15; 2 Chr 14: 15
Hires Ben-Hadad against Baasha; re-
buked by a prophet, 1 Kin 15:16–22;
2 Chr 16:1–10
Diseased, seeks physicians rather than
the Lord, 2 Chr 16:12
Death and burial, 2 Chr 16:13, 14

ASAHIEL

David’s nephew; captain in his army;
noted for valor, 2 Sam 2:18; 23:24;
1 Chr 2:16; 27:7

Killed by Abner, 2 Sam 2:19–23

Avenged by Joab, 2 Sam 3:27, 30

ASAPH

A Levite choir leader under David and
Solomon, 1 Chr 15:16–19; 16:1–7;
2 Chr 5:6, 12
Twelve psalms assigned to, 2 Chr
29:30; Ps 50; 73–83

ASCEND

Who may *a* into the Ps 24:3

If I *a* into heaven Ps 139:8
“I will *a* into heaven Is 14:13
a as high as the eagle Obad 4
see the Son of Man *a* John 6:62

ASCENDED

You have *a* on high Ps 68:18
Who has *a* into heaven Prov 30:4
No one has *a* to heaven John 3:13
“When He *a* on high Eph 4:8
also the One who *a* Eph 4:10
And they *a* to heaven Rev 11:12

ASCENDING

angels of God were *a* Gen 28:12
the angels of God *a* John 1:51

ASCRIBE

a greatness to our God Deut 32:3
I will *a* righteousness to Job 36:3
A strength to God Ps 68:34

ASENATH

Daughter of Poti-Pherah and wife of
Joseph, Gen 41:45
Mother of Manasseh and Ephraim, Gen
41:50–52; 46:20

ASHAMED

O my God, I am too *a* and Ezra 9:6
all my enemies be *a* Ps 6:10
Let me not be *a* Ps 25:2
who waits on You be *a* Ps 25:3
The wise men are *a* Jer 8:9
forsake You shall be *a* Jer 17:13
And Israel shall be *a* Hos 10:6
For whoever is *a* Mark 8:38
am not *a* of the gospel Rom 1:16
nothing I shall be *a* Phil 1:20
Therefore God is not *a* Heb 11:16
in Christ may be *a* 1 Pet 3:16
let him not be *a* 1 Pet 4:16
and not be *a* before 1 John 2:28

ASHDOD

One of five Philistine cities, Josh 13:3
Seat of Dagon worship, 1 Sam 5:1–8
Opposes Nehemiah, Neh 4:7
Women of, marry Jews, Neh 13:23, 24
Called Azotus, Acts 8:40

ASHER

Jacob’s second son by Zilpah, Gen
30:12, 13
Goes to Egypt with Jacob, Gen 46:8,
17
Blessed by Jacob, Gen 49:20
—— Tribe of:
Census of, Num 1:41; 26:47
Slow to fight against Canaanites, Judg
1:31, 32; 5:17
Among Gideon’s army, Judg 6:35; 7:23
A godly remnant among, 2 Chr 30:11

ASHERAH

The female counterpart of Baal, Judg
3:7; 1 Kin 18:19
Image of, erected by Manasseh in the
temple, 2 Kin 21:7
Vessels of, destroyed by Josiah, 2 Kin
23:4
—— Translated “wooden images,”
idols used in the worship of Asherah,
Ex 34:13; Deut 12:3; 16:21; 1 Kin
16:32, 33; 2 Kin 23:6, 7

ASHES

are proverbs of *a* Job 13:12
become like dust and *a* Job 30:19
For I have eaten *a* Ps 102:9
He feeds on *a*; *a* deceived Is 44:20
sackcloth and sat in *a* Jon 3:6
in sackcloth and *a* Luke 10:13
and the *a* of *a* heifer Heb 9:13

ASHKELON

One of five Philistine cities, Josh 13:3;
Jer 47:5, 7

Captured by Judah, Judg 1:18
Men of, killed by Samson, Judg 14:19, 20
Repossessed by Philistines, 1 Sam 6:17; 2 Sam 1:20
Doom of, pronounced by the prophets, Jer 47:5, 7; Amos 1:8; Zeph 2:4, 7; Zech 9:5

ASHTAROTH

A city in Bashan; residence of King Og, Deut 1:4; Josh 12:4
Captured by Israel, Josh 9:10
— A general designation of the Canaanite female deities, 1 Sam 7:3, 4; 31:10

ASHTORETH

A mother-goddess worshiped by the Philistines, 1 Sam 31:10
Israel ensnared by, Judg 2:13; 10:6
Worshiped by Solomon, 1 Kin 11:5, 33
Destroyed by Josiah, 2 Kin 23:13

ASIA

Paul forbidden to preach in, Acts 16:6
Paul's later ministry in, Acts 19:1-26
Seven churches of, Rev 1:4, 11

ASIDE

See **TURN ASIDE**
lay something *a*, storing ... 1 Cor 16:2
lay *a* all filthiness ... James 1:21
Therefore, laying *a* ... 1 Pet 2:1

ASK

"Why is it that you *a* ... Gen 32:29
when your children *a* ... Josh 4:6
"A sign for yourself ... Is 7:11
They shall *a* the way ... Jer 50:5
the young children *a* ... Lam 4:4
A the LORD for rain in ... Zech 10:1
whatever things you *a* ... Matt 21:22
a, and it will be ... Luke 11:9
that whatever You *a* ... John 11:22
a anything in My ... John 14:14
in that day you will *a* ... John 16:23
something, let them *a* ... 1 Cor 14:35
above all that we *a* ... Eph 3:20
wisdom, let him *a* ... James 1:5
But let him *a* in faith ... James 1:6
because you do not *a* ... James 4:2
hears us, whatever we *a* ... 1 John 5:15

ASKS

For everyone who *a* ... Matt 7:8
if his son *a* for bread ... Matt 7:9
Or if he *a* for a fish ... Luke 11:11

ASLEEP

down, and was fast *a* ... Jon 1:5
But He was *a* ... Matt 8:24
but some have fallen *a* ... 1 Cor 15:6
those who are *a* ... 1 Thess 4:15
the fathers fell *a* ... 2 Pet 3:4

ASSEMBLE

a the men of Judah ... 2 Sam 20:4
a the outcasts of Israel ... Is 11:12
a yourselves, and let ... Jer 4:5
I will *a* them in the midst ... Jer 21:4
a yourselves and come ... Ezek 39:17
a a multitude of great ... Dan 11:10
a and come, all you ... Joel 3:11
I will surely *a* all of you ... Mic 2:12

ASSEMBLED

a all the congregation ... Num 1:18
Israel *a* together at Shiloh ... Josh 18:1
Solomon *a* the elders ... 1 Kin 8:1
David *a* the children of ... 1 Chr 15:4
of the God of Israel *a* ... Ezra 9:4
Israel were *a* with fasting ... Neh 9:1
who were at Shushan *a* ... Esth 9:18
behold, the kings *a* ... Ps 48:4
elders of the people *a* at ... Matt 26:3
with him were *a* all the ... Mark 14:53

the disciples were *a* ... John 20:19
a together was shaken ... Acts 4:31
being *a* with one accord, ... Acts 15:25

ASSEMBLING

not forsaking the *a* ... Heb 10:25

ASSEMBLY

to kill this whole *a* ... Ex 16:3
It is *a* sacred *a* ... Lev 23:36
a I will praise You ... Ps 22:22
I have hated the *a* ... Ps 26:5
also in the *a* of the ... Ps 89:5
to be feared in the *a* ... Ps 89:7
will rest in the *a* of the ... Prov 21:16
fast, call *a* sacred *a* ... Joel 1:14
people, sanctify the *a* ... Joel 2:15
a I will sing praise ... Heb 2:12
to the general *a* ... Heb 12:23
come into your *a* ... James 2:2

ASSHUR

One of the sons of Shem; progenitor of the Assyrians, Gen 10:22; 1 Chr 1:17
— The chief god of the Assyrians; seen in names like Ashurbanipal (Osnapper), Ezra 4:10
— A city in Assyria or the nation of Assyria, Num 24:22, 24

ASSOS

A seaport of Mysia in Asia to which Paul walked, Acts 20:13

ASSURANCE

night, and have no *a* ... Deut 28:66
riches of the full *a* ... Col 2:2
Spirit and in much *a* ... 1 Thess 1:5
to the full *a* of hope ... Heb 6:11
a true heart in full *a* ... Heb 10:22

ASSURE

a our hearts before ... 1 John 3:19

ASSURED

I will give you *a* peace ... Jer 14:13
learned and been *a* ... 2 Tim 3:14

ASSUREDLY, I SAY TO YOU

"For *a*, till heaven and ... Matt 5:18
"A, you will by no means ... Matt 5:26
A, they have their reward, ... Matt 6:2
"A, I have not found such ... Matt 8:10
"A, it will be more ... Matt 10:15
For *a*, you will not have ... Matt 10:23
a, he shall by no means ... Matt 10:42
"A, among those born of ... Matt 11:11
"a that many prophets ... Matt 13:17
"A, there are some ... Matt 16:28
for *a*, if you have faith ... Matt 17:20
"A, unless you are ... Matt 18:3
a, he rejoices more over ... Matt 18:13
"A, whatever you bind ... Matt 18:18
"A that it is hard for *a* ... Matt 19:23
"A, that in the ... Matt 19:28
"A, if you have faith and ... Matt 21:21
"A that tax collectors ... Matt 21:31
"A, all these things will ... Matt 23:36
A, not one stone shall be ... Matt 24:2
"A, this generation will ... Matt 24:34
"A that he will make ... Matt 24:47
"A, I do not know you, ... Matt 25:12
"A, inasmuch as you did ... Matt 25:40
"A, inasmuch as you did ... Matt 25:45
A, wherever this gospel ... Matt 26:13
"A, one of you will betray ... Matt 26:21
"A that this night, before ... Matt 26:34
"A, all sins will be ... Mark 3:28
A, no sign shall be given ... Mark 8:12
A, whoever does not ... Mark 10:15
"A, there is no one who ... Mark 10:29
a, whoever says to this ... Mark 11:23
"A that this poor widow ... Mark 12:43
"A, I will no longer ... Mark 14:25
"A, no prophet is accepted ... Luke 4:24
A that he will gird ... Luke 12:37

a, you shall not see Me ... Luke 13:35
"A, today you will be ... Luke 23:43
"Most *a*, hereafter you ... John 1:51
"Most *a*, unless one is born ... John 3:3
"Most *a*, We speak what ... John 3:11
"Most *a*, the Son can do ... John 5:19
"Most *a*, he who hears ... John 5:24
"Most *a*, the hour is ... John 5:25
"Most *a*, you seek Me, not ... John 6:26
"Most *a*, Moses did not ... John 6:32
"Most *a*, he who believes ... John 6:47
"Most *a*, unless you eat ... John 6:53
"Most *a*, whoever commits ... John 8:34
"Most *a*, if anyone keeps ... John 8:51
"Most *a*, before Abraham ... John 8:58
"Most *a*, he who does not ... John 10:1
"Most *a*, I am the door of ... John 10:7
"Most *a*, unless a grain ... John 12:24
Most *a*, he who receives ... John 13:20
"Most *a*, he who believes ... John 14:12
"Most *a* that you will ... John 16:20
Most *a*, whatever you ask ... John 16:23
"Most *a*, when you were ... John 21:18

ASSYRIA (or Asshur)

Founded by Nimrod, Gen 10:8-12; Mic 5:6
Agent of God's purposes, Is 7:17-20; 10:5, 6
Attacks and finally conquers Israel, 2 Kin 15:19, 20, 29; 17:3-41
Invades and threatens Judah, 2 Kin 18:13-37
Hezekiah prays for help against; army miraculously slain, 2 Kin 19:1-35
Prophecies concerning, Num 24:22-24; Is 10:12-19; 14:24, 25; 19:23-25; Hos 10:6; 11:5; Nah 3:1-19

ASTONISHED

dwell in it shall be *a* ... Lev 26:32
who passes by it will be *a* ... 1 Kin 9:8
I sat *a* until the evening ... Ezra 9:4
are *a* at His rebuke ... Job 26:11
Just as many were *a* ... Is 52:14
Be *a*, O heavens, at ... Jer 2:12
remained there *a* ... Ezek 3:15
was *a* for a time, and his ... Dan 4:19
that the people were *a* ... Matt 7:28
so that they were *a* ... Matt 13:54
disciples were *a* at His ... Mark 10:24
who heard Him were *a* ... Luke 2:47
a at the catch of fish ... Luke 5:9
her parents were *a* ... Luke 8:56
at the tomb early, *a* us ... Luke 24:22
So he, trembling and *a* ... Acts 9:6
who believed were *a* ... Acts 10:45
saw him, they were *a* ... Acts 12:16
being *a* at the teaching ... Acts 13:12

ASTONISHMENT

you shall become an *a* ... Deut 28:37
a has taken hold ... Jer 8:21

ASTRAY

is *a* people who go *a* ... Ps 95:10
a fool, shall not go *a* ... Is 35:8
Their lies lead them *a* ... Amos 2:4
and one of them goes *a* ... Matt 18:12
"They always go *a* ... Heb 3:10
like sheep going *a* ... 1 Pet 2:25

ASTROLOGERS

the *a*, the stargazers ... Is 47:13
the magicians, the *a* ... Dan 2:2
bring in the *a* ... Dan 5:7

AT THE RIGHT HAND

Son of Man sitting *a* ... Matt 26:64
heaven, and sat down *a* ... Mark 16:19
Jesus standing *a* of God ... Acts 7:55
who is even *a* of God, ... Rom 8:34
sat down *a* of the Majesty ... Heb 1:3
Priest, who is seated *a* ... Heb 8:1
heaven and is *a* of God, ... 1 Pet 3:22

ATE

she took of its fruit and a Gen 3:6
 near to him, and he a Gen 27:25
 I a all of it before Gen 27:33
 gaunt cows a up the seven Gen 41:4
 a manna forty years Ex 16:35
 died, you arose and a 2 Sam 12:21
 Men a angels' food Ps 78:25
 I a them, and Your word Jer 15:16
 I a it, and it was in my Ezek 3:3
 all a and were filled Matt 14:20
 all a and were filled Matt 15:37
 he a locusts and wild Mark 1:6
 a the showbread Mark 2:26
 all a and were filled Mark 6:42
 they a and were filled Mark 8:8
 all a and were filled Luke 9:17
 Our fathers a the manna John 6:31
 men and a with them Acts 11:3
 a the same spiritual 1 Cor 10:3
 a it, and it was as sweet Rev 10:10

ATHALIAH

Daughter of Ahab and Jezebel, 2 Kin
 8:18, 26; 2 Chr 22:2, 3
 Kills royal children; usurps throne,
 2 Kin 11:1-3; 2 Chr 22:10, 11
 Killed in priestly uprising, 2 Kin
 11:4-16; 2 Chr 23:1-21

ATHENS

Paul preaches in, Acts 17:15-34
 Paul resides in, 1 Thess 3:1

ATONEMENT

a year he shall make a Ex 30:10
 priest shall make a Lev 16:30
 the blood that makes a Lev 17:11
 for it is the Day of Atonement Lev 23:28
 what shall I make a 2 Sam 21:3
 offerings to make a Neh 10:33
 a is provided for Prov 16:6
 there will be no a Is 22:14
 I provide you an a Ezek 16:63

ATTACK

the Midianites, and a Num 25:17
 men go up and a Ai Josh 7:3
 a Amalek, and utterly 1 Sam 15:3
 got ready to a the city 1 Kin 20:12
 a Jerusalem and create Neh 4:8
 king of the South shall a Dan 11:40
 no one will a you to hurt Acts 18:10

ATTACKED

a the Rephaim in Gen 14:5
 who a Midian in the Gen 36:35
 they a them until they left Josh 11:8
 he a the army while the Judg 8:11
 Jonathan a the garrison 1 Sam 13:3
 a Ziklag and burned it 1 Sam 30:1
 David a the Philistines 2 Sam 8:1
 a Judah, and carried 2 Chr 28:17
 a the ram, and broke Dan 8:7
 a the house of Jason Acts 17:5

ATTAIN

It is high, I cannot a Ps 139:6
 understanding will a Prov 1:5
 How long until they a Hos 8:5
 worthy to a that age Luke 20:35
 by any means, I may a Phil 3:11

ATTALIA

A seaport of Pamphylia from which
 Paul sailed to Antioch, Acts 14:25

ATTEND

just cause, O LORD, a Ps 17:1
 And a to the voice of Ps 86:6
 behold, I will a Jer 23:2

ATTENTION

My son, give a to my Prov 4:20
 Till I come, give a 1 Tim 4:13
 and you pay a to the James 2:3

ATTENTIVE

Let Your ears be a Ps 130:2

the people were very a Luke 19:48

ATTESTED

a Man a by God to you Acts 2:22

AUSTERE

because you are an a Luke 19:21

AUTHOR

For God is not the a 1 Cor 14:33
 He became the a Heb 5:9
 unto Jesus, the a Heb 12:2

AUTHORITIES

magistrates and a Luke 12:11
 a that exist are Rom 13:1
 subject to rulers and a Titus 3:1
 of God, angels and a 1 Pet 3:22

AUTHORITY

Jew, wrote with full a Esth 9:29
 the righteous are in a Prov 29:2
 them as one having a Matt 7:29
 a man under a Matt 8:9
 who are great exercise a Matt 20:25
 "All a has been given Matt 28:18
 ones exercise a over Mark 10:42
 By what a are You Mark 11:28
 a I will give You Luke 4:6
 His word was with a Luke 4:32
 a over all demons Luke 9:1
 and has given Him a John 5:27
 You have given Him a John 17:2
 has put in His own a Acts 1:7
 For there is no a Rom 13:1
 a over her own body 1 Cor 7:4
 to have a symbol of a 1 Cor 11:10
 end to all rule and all a 1 Cor 15:24
 and all who are in a 1 Tim 2:2
 have a over a man 1 Tim 2:12
 and rebuke with all a Titus 2:15
 defile the flesh, reject a Jude 8
 his throne, and great a Rev 13:2
 they receive a for one Rev 17:12

AUTUMN

a trees without fruit Jude 12

AVALS

nor uncircumcision a Gal 5:6
 of a righteous man a James 5:16

AVEN

The city of On in Egypt near Cairo;
 known as Heliopolis, Gen 41:45;
 Ezek 30:17

— A name contemptuously applied
 to Bethel, Hos 10:5, 8
 — Valley in Syria, Amos 1:5

AVENGE

for He will a the Deut 32:43
 you that He will a Luke 18:8
 Beloved, do not a Rom 12:19
 a our blood on those Rev 6:10

AVENGER

The a of blood Num 35:19
 the enemy and the a Ps 8:2
 God's minister, an a Rom 13:4
 the Lord is the a 1 Thess 4:6

AVENGES

It is God who a 2 Sam 22:48
 When He a blood Ps 9:12

AVOID

a foolish and ignorant 2 Tim 2:23
 a foolish disputes Titus 3:9

AWAKE

be satisfied when I a Ps 17:15
 I lie a and am like Ps 102:7
 A, lute and harp Ps 108:2
 My eyes are a through Ps 119:148
 A, O north wind Song 4:16
 but my heart is a Song 5:2
 of the earth shall a Dan 12:2
 it is high time to a Rom 13:11
 A to righteousness 1 Cor 15:34

"A, you who sleep Eph 5:14

AWARE

Before I was even a Song 6:12
 hour that he is not a of Matt 24:50
 But Jesus, being a of it Mark 8:17
 hour when he is not a Luke 12:46
 his wife also being a Acts 5:2

AWAY

the wind drives a Ps 1:4
 Do not cast me a Ps 51:11
 A time to cast a Eccl 3:5
 fair one, and come a Song 2:10
 and the shadows flee a Song 2:17
 minded to put her a Matt 1:19
 and earth will pass a Matt 24:35
 and steal Him a Matt 27:64
 the rich He has sent a Luke 1:53
 of God who takes a John 1:29
 "I am going a, and you John 8:21
 they cried out, "A John 19:15
 "They have taken a John 20:2
 crying out, "A with him Acts 21:36
 the veil is taken a 2 Cor 3:14
 Barnabas was carried a Gal 2:13
 unless the falling a 2 Thess 2:3
 in Asia have turned a 2 Tim 1:15
 heard, lest we drift a Heb 2:1
 if they fall a, to renew Heb 6:6
 which can never take a Heb 10:11
 that does not fade a 1 Pet 5:4
 the world is passing a 1 John 2:17
 and the heaven fled a Rev 20:11
 if anyone takes a Rev 22:19

AWE

the world stand in a Ps 33:8
 my heart stands in a Ps 119:161

AWESOME

How a is this place Gen 28:17
 a thing that I will do Ex 34:10
 God, the great and a Deut 7:21
 God, mighty and a Deut 10:17
 a things which your eyes Deut 10:21
 a name, THE LORD Deut 28:58
 Angel of God, very a Judg 13:6
 a deeds for Your land 2 Sam 7:23
 a deeds, by driving out 1 Chr 17:21
 heaven, O great and a Neh 1:5
 the Lord, great and a Neh 4:14
 a God, Who keeps Neh 9:32
 show Yourself a Job 10:16
 with God is a majesty Job 37:22
 hand shall teach You a Ps 45:4
 LORD Most High is a Ps 47:2
 By a deeds in Ps 65:5
 a are Your works Ps 66:3
 He is a in His doing Ps 66:5
 O God, You are more a Ps 68:35
 He is a to the kings Ps 76:12
 Your great and a name Ps 99:3
 a things by the Red Sea Ps 106:22
 Holy and a is His name Ps 111:9
 of the might of Your a Ps 145:6
 When You did a things Is 64:3
 with me as a mighty, a Jer 20:11
 her collapse was a Lam 1:9
 so high they were a Ezek 1:18
 color of an a crystal Ezek 1:22
 its form was a Dan 2:31
 "O LORD, great and a Dan 9:4
 The LORD will be a Zeph 2:11

AWL

his ear with an a Ex 21:6
 you shall take an a Deut 15:17

AWOKE

Noah a from his wine, Gen 9:24
 Jacob a from his sleep Gen 28:16
 I a, for the LORD sustained Ps 3:5
 Then the Lord a as Ps 78:65
 came to Him and a Him, Matt 8:25
 they a Him and said to Mark 4:38

came to Him and a Him, . . . Luke 8:24

AX
 a stroke with the *a* Deut 19:5
 Abimelech took an *a* Judg 9:48
 a tree, the iron *a* 2 Kin 6:5
 If the *a* is dull, and one Eccl 10:10
a boast itself against Is 10:15
 And even now the *a* Matt 3:10

AZARIAH
 A prophet who encourages King Asa,
 2 Chr 15:1-8
 — Son of King Jehoshaphat, 2 Chr
 21:2
 — King of Judah, 2 Kin 15:1
 — A high priest who rebukes King
 Uzziah, 2 Chr 26:16-20
 — Chief priest in the time of Heze-
 kiah, 2 Chr 31:9, 10
 — The Hebrew name of Abed-Nego,
 Dan 1:7

AZEKAH
 Camp of Goliath, 1 Sam 17:1, 4, 17
 Besieged by Nebuchadnezzar, Jer 34:7

AZMAVETH
 A village near Jerusalem, Neh 12:29
 Also called Beth Azmaveth, Neh 7:28

AZOTUS
 A city which Philip the evangelist
 visited, Acts 8:40

BAAL (or Baals)
 Deities of Canaanite polytheism, Judg
 10:10-14
 The male god of the Phoenicians and
 Canaanites; the counterpart of the
 female Ashtaroth, 2 Kin 23:5
 Nature of the worship of, 1 Kin 18:26,
 28; 19:18; Ps 106:28; Jer 7:9; 19:5; Hos
 9:10; 13:1, 2
 Worshiped by Israelites, Num 25:1-5;
 Judg 2:11-14; 3:7; 6:28-32; 1 Kin
 16:31, 32; 2 Kin 21:3; Jer 11:13; Hos
 2:8
 Ahaz makes images to, 2 Chr 28:1-4
 Overthrown by Elijah, 1 Kin 18:17-40
 by Josiah, 2 Kin 23:4, 5
 Denounced by prophets, Jer 19:4-6;
 Ezek 16:1, 2, 20, 21
 Historic retrospect, Rom 11:4

BAAL PEOR (or Baal of Peor)
 A Moabite god; worshiped by Israel-
 ites, Num 25:1-9

BAAL PERAZIM
 Site of David's victory over the Philis-
 tines, 2 Sam 5:18-20
 Same as Perazim, Is 28:21

BAAL-ZEBUB
 A Philistine god at Ekron, 2 Kin 1:2
 Ahaziah inquires of, 2 Kin 1:2, 6, 16
 Also called Beelzebub, Matt 10:25;
 12:24

BAALAH
 A town also known as Kirjath Jearim,
 Josh 15:9, 10

BAALS
 Deities of Canaanite polytheism, Judg
 10:10-14
 Ensnare Israelites, Judg 2:11-14; 3:7
 Ahaz makes images to, 2 Chr 28:1-4

BAANAH
 A murderer of Ishbosheth, 2 Sam
 4:1-12

BAASHA
 Usurps throne of Israel; his evil reign;
 wars with Judah, 1 Kin 15:16-16:7

BABBLER
b is no different Eccl 10:11
 "What does this *b* Acts 17:18

BABBLINGS
 the profane and idle *b* 1 Tim 6:20

BABE
 the *b* leaped in my Luke 1:44
 You will find a *B* Luke 2:12
 righteousness, for he is a *b* Heb 5:13

BABEL, TOWER OF
 A huge brick structure intended to
 magnify man and preserve the unity
 of the race, Gen 11:1-4
 Objectives of, thwarted by God, Gen
 11:5-9

BABES
 Out of the mouth of *b* Ps 8:2
b shall rule over them Is 3:4
 revealed them to *b* Matt 11:25
 'Out of the mouth of *b* Matt 21:16
 foolish, a teacher of *b* Rom 2:20
 as to carnal, as to *b* 1 Cor 3:1
 as newborn *b*, desire 1 Pet 2:2

BABYLON
 Built by Nimrod; Tower of Babel, Gen
 10:8-10; 11:1-9
 Descriptions of, Is 13:19; 14:4; Jer
 51:44; Dan 4:30
 Jews carried captive to, 2 Kin 25:1-21;
 2 Chr 36:5-21
 Inhabitants of, described, Is 47:1, 9-13;
 Jer 50:35-38; Dan 5:1-3
 Prophecies concerning, Is 13:1-22; Jer
 21:1-7; 25:9-12; 27:5-8; 29:10; Jer
 50:1-46; Dan 2:31-38; 7:2-4
 The prophetic city, Rev 14:8; 16:19;
 17:1-18:24

BACK
 Jordan turned *b* Ps 114:3
 but a rod is for the *b* Prov 10:13
 a rod for the fool's *b* Prov 26:3
 I gave My *b* to those Is 50:6
 cast Me behind your *b* Ezek 23:35
 found Him, bring *b* word Matt 2:8
 plow, and looking *b* Luke 9:62
 they drew *b* and fell John 18:6
 I am sending him *b* Philem 12
 of those who draw *b* Heb 10:39
 someone turns him *b* James 5:19
 inside and on the *b* Rev 5:1

BACKBITERS
b, haters of God Rom 1:30

BACKBITING
b tongue an angry Prov 25:23

BACKSLIDER
 The *b* in heart will be Prov 14:14

BACKSLIDINGS
b will rebuke you Jer 2:19
 And I will heal your *b* Jer 3:22
b have increased Jer 5:6
 for our *b* are many Jer 14:7

BACKWARD
 fell off the seat *b* 1 Sam 4:18
 shadow ten degrees *b* 2 Kin 20:11

BAD
 speak to you either *b* Gen 24:50
 good for *b* or *b* for good Lev 27:10
 trouble is like a *b* tooth Prov 25:19
 as the *b* figs which cannot Jer 24:8
 if your eye is *b*, your Matt 6:23
b tree bears *b* fruit Matt 7:17
 a *b* tree bear good Luke 6:43
 whether good or *b* 2 Cor 5:10

BADGER
 covering of *b* skins Ex 26:14
 sandals of *b* skin Ezek 16:10

BAG
 is sealed up in a *b* Job 14:17

wages to put into a *b* Hag 1:6
 nor *b* for your journey Matt 10:10

BAKE
b twelve cakes with it Lev 24:5

BAKED
b unleavened cakes Ex 12:39
b unleavened bread 1 Sam 28:24

BAKER
 the butler and the *b* Gen 40:1
 an oven heated by a *b* Hos 7:4

BAKERS
 of bread from the *b* Jer 37:21

BAKES
 kindles it and *b* bread Is 44:15

BALAAM
 Sent by Balak to curse Israel, Num
 22:5-7; Josh 24:9
 Hindered by talking donkey, Num
 22:22-35; 2 Pet 2:16
 Curse becomes a blessing, Deut 23:4,
 5; Josh 24:10
 Prophecies of, Num 23:7-10, 18-24;
 24:3-9, 15-24
 N.T. references to, 2 Pet 2:15, 16; Jude
 11; Rev 2:14

BALAK
 A Moabite king, Num 22:4
 Hires Balaam to curse Israel, Num
 22-24

BALANCE
 and the hills in a *b* Is 40:12

BALANCES
 weighed in the *b* Dan 5:27

BALD
 shall not make any *b* Lev 21:5
 every head shall be *b* Jer 48:37
 completely *b* because Ezek 27:31

BALDHEAD
 Go up, you *b* 2 Kin 2:23

BALM
 a little *b* and a little Gen 43:11
 Is there no *b* in Gilead Jer 8:22

BAN
 No person under the *b* Lev 27:29

BAND
 A *b* of robbers takes Hos 7:1
 with a golden *b* Rev 1:13

BANDS
 their *b* shall be silver Ex 27:10
 broken the *b* of your yoke Lev 26:13
 broken the *b* of their Ezek 34:27
 with *b* of love, and I was Hos 11:4
 girded with golden *b* Rev 15:6

BANDAGED
 him, and *b* his wounds Luke 10:34

BANISHED
 bring his *b* one home 2 Sam 14:13
 he *b* the perverted 1 Kin 15:12

BANK
 cows on the *b* of the river Gen 41:3
 the reeds by the river's *b* Ex 2:3
 along the *b* of the river, Ezek 47:7
 put my money in the *b* Luke 19:23

BANKERS
 my money with the *b* Matt 25:27

BANKS
 the *b* of the Jordan Num 13:29
 overflows all its *b* Josh 3:15
 overflowed all its *b* 1 Chr 12:15
b of scented herbs Song 5:13
 the *b* of the Ulai Dan 8:16

BANNER
 his *b* over me was love Song 2:4
 a *b* to the people Is 11:10

a *b* for the nations Is 11:12
 lift up a *b* for the peoples Is 62:10
 Set up a *b* in the land Jer 51:27
 a *b* over His land Zech 9:16

BANNERS

we will set up our *b* Ps 20:5
 They set up their *b* Ps 74:4
 as an army with *b* Song 6:4

BANQUET

b that I have prepared Esth 5:4
 companions make a *b* Job 41:6
 lords, came to the *b* Dan 5:10

BANQUETING

He brought me to the *b* Song 2:4

BANQUETS

b shall be removed Amos 6:7

BAPTISM

coming to his *b* Matt 3:7
b that I am baptized Matt 20:22
 The *b* of John—where Matt 21:25
 a *b* of repentance Mark 1:4
 baptized with the *b* that Mark 10:38
 The *b* of John—was it Mark 11:30
 a *b* of repentance Luke 3:3
 But I have a *b* to be Luke 12:50
 The *b* of John—was it Luke 20:4
 from the *b* of John Acts 1:22
b which John preached Acts 10:37
b of repentance to all Acts 13:24
 only the *b* of John Acts 18:25
 said, "Into John's *b* Acts 19:3
 a *b* of repentance, Acts 19:4
 with Him through Rom 6:4
 Lord, one faith, one *b* Eph 4:5
 buried with Him in *b* Col 2:12
 now saves us—*b* 1 Pet 3:21

BAPTISMS

of the doctrine of *b* Heb 6:2

BAPTIZE

I indeed *b* you with Matt 3:11
 He will *b* you with Mark 1:8
b you with the Holy Luke 3:16
 "Why then do you *b* John 1:25
 me to *b* with water John 1:33
 Himself did not *b* John 4:2
 did not send me to *b* 1 Cor 1:17

BAPTIZED

b by him in the Jordan, Matt 3:6
 at the Jordan to be *b* by Matt 3:13
 "I need to be *b* by You Matt 3:14
 When He had been *b* Matt 3:16
 were all *b* by him Mark 1:5
 was *b* by John Mark 1:9
b with the baptism that Mark 10:38
b with you will be *b* Mark 10:39
 and is *b* will be saved Mark 16:16
 came out to be *b* Luke 3:7
 also came to be *b* Luke 3:12
 Jesus also was *b* Luke 3:21
 not having been *b* Luke 7:30
 with them and *b* John 3:22
b more disciples John 4:1
 for John truly *b* with water Acts 1:5
 every one of you be *b* Acts 2:38
 received his word were *b* Acts 2:41
 men and women were *b* Acts 8:12
 he was *b* he continued Acts 8:13
 only been *b* in the name Acts 8:16
 hinders me from being *b* Acts 8:36
 water, and he *b* him Acts 8:38
 he arose and was *b* Acts 9:18
 these should not be *b* Acts 10:47
 be *b* in the name Acts 10:48
 you shall be *b* with Acts 11:16
 her household were *b* Acts 16:15
 all his family were *b* Acts 16:33
 believed and were *b* Acts 18:8
 Into what then were you *b* Acts 19:3
 Arise and be *b*, and wash Acts 22:16

were *b* into Christ Rom 6:3
 I thank God that I *b* 1 Cor 1:14
b the household 1 Cor 1:16
 all were *b* into Moses 1 Cor 10:2
 Spirit we were all *b* 1 Cor 12:13
 who are *b* for the dead 1 Cor 15:29
 as many of you as were *b* Gal 3:27

BAPTIZING

b them in the name of Matt 28:19
b in the wilderness Mark 1:4
 where John was *b* John 1:28
 therefore I came *b* John 1:31
 John also was *b* in Aenon John 3:23
 behold, He is *b* John 3:26
 where John was *b* John 10:40

BAR-JESUS (or Elymas)

A Jewish false prophet, Acts 13:6–12

BAR-JONAH

Surname of Simon (Peter), Matt 16:17

BARABBAS

A murderer released in place of Jesus,
 Matt 27:16–26; Acts 3:14, 15

BARAK

Defeats Jabin, Judg 4:1–24
 A man of faith, Heb 11:32

BARBARIAN

nor uncircumcised, *b* Col 3:11

BARBARIANS

to Greeks and to *b* Rom 1:14

BARE

make yourselves *b* Is 32:11
 The LORD has made *b* Is 52:10

BAREFOOT

covered and went *b* 2 Sam 15:30
 walking naked and *b* Is 20:2

BARLEY

a land of wheat and *b* Deut 8:8
 loaf of *b* bread tumbled Judg 7:13
 beginning of *b* harvest Ruth 1:22
 who has five *b* loaves John 6:9
 and three quarts of *b* Rev 6:6

BARN

seed still in the *b* Hag 2:19
 the wheat into my *b* Matt 13:30
 storehouse nor *b* Luke 12:24

BARNABAS

A disciple from Cyprus; gives property,
 Acts 4:36, 37
 Supports Paul, Acts 9:27
 Ministers in Antioch, Acts 11:22–30
 Travels with Paul, Acts 12:25; 13–15
 Breaks with Paul over John Mark, Acts
 15:36–39

BARNs

so your *b* will be filled Prov 3:10
b are broken down Joel 1:17
 reap nor gather into *b* Matt 6:26
 I will pull down my *b* Luke 12:18

BAREN

But Sarai was *b* Gen 11:30
b has borne seven 1 Sam 2:5
 He grants the *b* Ps 113:9
 "Sing, O *b*, you who have Is 54:1
 'Blessed are the *b* Luke 23:29
 "Rejoice, O *b*, you who do Gal 4:27
 you will be neither *b* 2 Pet 1:8

BARRENNESS

A fruitful land into *b* Ps 107:34

BARS

has strengthened the *b* Ps 147:13
 bronze and cut the *b* Is 45:2
 the earth with its *b* Jon 2:6

BARsABAS

Nominated to replace Judas, Acts 1:23
 Sent to Antioch, Acts 15:22

BARTHOLOMEW

Called Nathanael, John 1:45, 46
 One of the twelve apostles, Matt 10:3;
 Acts 1:13

BARTIMAEUS

Blind beggar healed by Jesus, Mark
 10:46–52

BARUCH

Son of Neriah, Jer 32:12, 13
 Jeremiah's faithful friend and scribe,
 Jer 36:4–32

BARZILLAI

Supplies David with food, 2 Sam
 17:27–29
 Age restrains him from following
 David, 2 Sam 19:31–39

BASE

the elder, and the *b* Is 3:5
 and the *b* things of 1 Cor 1:28

BASHAN

Conquered by Israel, Num 21:33–35
 Assigned to Manasseh, Deut 3:13
 Conquered by Hazael, king of Syria,
 2 Kin 10:32, 33

BASIC

to the *b* principles Col 2:8
b principles of the world Col 2:20

BASIN

poured water into a *b* John 13:5

BASINS

its shovels and its *b* Ex 27:3
b of silver, trimmers 2 Kin 12:13
 gold for the forks, the *b* 1 Chr 28:17
 filled with blood like *b* Zech 9:15

BASKET

the *b* on my head Gen 40:17
 the *b* out of your hand Deut 26:4
 Blessed shall be your *b* Deut 28:5
 Cursed shall be your *b* Deut 28:17
b had very good figs Jer 24:2
 "A *b* of summer fruit Amos 8:2
 lifted up the *b* between Zech 5:9
 and put it under a *b* Matt 5:15
 under a *b*, but on a Luke 11:33
 I was let down in a *b* 2 Cor 11:33

BASKETS

there were three white *b* Gen 40:16
 and there were two *b* Jer 24:1
 they took up twelve *b* Matt 14:20
 took up seven large *b* Matt 15:37

BATHED

My sword shall be *b* Is 34:5
 to him, "He who is *b* John 13:10

BATHSHEBA

Wife of Uriah, taken by David, 2 Sam
 11
 Her first child dies, 2 Sam 12:14–19
 Bears Solomon, 2 Sam 12:24
 Secures throne for Solomon, 1 Kin
 1:15–31
 Deceived by Adonijah, 1 Kin 2:13–25

BATS

To the moles and *b* Is 2:20

BATTLE

b is the LORD's 1 Sam 17:47
 out to God in the *b* 1 Chr 5:20
 strength for the *b* Ps 18:39
 shield and sword of *b* Ps 76:3
 for the day of *b* Prov 21:31
 the *b* to the strong Eccl 9:11
 who turn back the *b* Is 28:6
 A sound of *b* is in the Jer 50:22
 who will prepare for *b*? 1 Cor 14:8
 became valiant in *b* Heb 11:34
 gather them to the *b* Rev 16:14

BATTLE-AX

You are My *b* Jer 51:20

each with his *b* in his hand . . . Ezek 9:2

BATTLEMENT

upon her a *b* of silver Song 8:9

BATTLES

before us and fight our *b* . . . 1 Sam 8:20
to fight our *b* 2 Chr 32:8

BDELLIUM

B and the onyx stone Gen 2:12
like the color of *b* Num 11:7

**BE FRUITFUL AND
MULTIPLY**

blessed them, saying, "*B* Gen 1:22
on the earth, and *b* Gen 8:17
"*B*, and fill the earth Gen 9:1
B: a nation and a Gen 35:11

BE GLAD AND REJOICE

I will *b* in You; I will Ps 9:2
I will *b* in Your mercy, Ps 31:7
We will *b* in you Song 1:4
we will *b* in His salvation Is 25:9
you also *b* with me Phil 2:18
us *b* and give Him glory, Rev 19:7

BE OF GOOD CHEER

to the paralytic, "*Son*, *b* Matt 9:2
her He said, "*B*, daughter Matt 9:22
to them, saying, "*B* Matt 14:27
man, saying to him, "*B* Mark 10:49
b, I have overcome John 16:33
by him and said, "*B* Acts 23:11

BEAM

on a carrying *b* Num 4:10
like a weaver's *b* 1 Sam 17:7
the *b* from the timbers Hab 2:11

BEAMS

paneled the temple with *b* . . . 1 Kin 6:9
cedar *b* on the pillars 1 Kin 7:2
the *b* and doorposts 2 Chr 3:7
make *b* for the gates Neh 2:8
bones are like *b* Job 40:18
He lays the *b* of His Ps 104:3
of our houses are cedar Song 1:17

BEAR

greater than I can *b* Gen 4:13
whom Sarah shall *b* Gen 17:21
not *b* false witness Ex 20:16
from the paw of the *b* 1 Sam 17:37
they shall *b* you up in Ps 91:12
b a broken spirit Prov 18:14
be clean, you who *b* Is 52:11
b their iniquities Is 53:11
LORD could no longer *b* Jer 44:22
b deprived of her cubs Hos 13:8
lion, and a *b* met him Amos 5:19
He shall *b* the glory Zech 6:13
child, and *b* a Son Matt 1:23
A good tree cannot *b* Matt 7:18
how long shall I *b* Matt 17:17
by, to *b* His cross Mark 15:21
wife Elizabeth will *b* Luke 1:13
And whoever does not *b* Luke 14:27
in Me that does not *b* John 15:2
for he does not *b* Rom 13:4
are strong ought to *b* Rom 15:1
you may be able to *b* 1 Cor 10:13
B one another's Gal 6:2
I *b* in my body the Gal 6:17
b the sins of many Heb 9:28
like the feet of a *b* Rev 13:2

BEAR FRUIT

take root downward, and *b* . . . Is 37:31
bring forth branches, *b*, Ezek 17:8
shall the vine fail to *b* Mal 3:11
the word, accept it, and *b*, Mark 4:20
it and *b* with patience Luke 8:15
does not *b* He takes away John 15:2
branch cannot *b* of itself, John 15:4
that we should *b* to God Rom 7:4

our members to *b* to death . . . Rom 7:5

BEAR WITNESS

you *b* that you approve Luke 11:48
to *b* of the Light, John 1:7
If I *b* of Myself, John 5:31
"You *b* of Yourself John 8:13
Father's name, they *b* John 10:25
And you also will *b*, John 15:27
I should *b* to the truth John 18:37
must also *b* at Rome Acts 23:11
we have seen, and *b*, and . . . 1 John 1:2
three who *b* in heaven 1 John 5:7
three that *b* on earth: 1 John 5:8

BEARD

the edges of your *b* Lev 19:27
I caught it by its *b* 1 Sam 17:35
took Amasa by the *b* 2 Sam 20:9
Running down on the *b* Ps 133:2

BEARING

goes forth weeping, *b* Ps 126:6
And He, *b* His cross John 19:17
b with one another Col 3:13
the camp, *b* His reproach Heb 13:13

BEARS

Every branch that *b* John 15:2
b all things, believes 1 Cor 13:7
it is the Spirit who *b* 1 John 5:6

BEAST

b has devoured him Gen 37:20
You preserve man and *b* Ps 36:6
I was like a *b* before Ps 73:22
to the *b* its food Ps 147:9
b touches the mountain Heb 12:20
And I saw a *b* rising Rev 13:1
Then I saw another *b* Rev 13:11
the mark of the *b* Rev 19:20

BEASTS

are we counted as *b* Job 18:3
The *b* go into dens Job 37:8
like the *b* that perish Ps 49:12
I have fought with *b* 1 Cor 15:32
naturally, like brute *b* Jude 10

BEAT

I will *b* down his foes Ps 89:23
You shall *b* him with a Prov 23:14
b their swords into Is 2:4
you shall *b* in pieces Mic 4:13
spat in His face and *b* Matt 26:67
but *b* his breast Luke 18:13

BEATEN

and you will be *b* Mark 13:9
his will, shall be *b* Luke 12:47
Three times I was *b* 2 Cor 11:25
when you are *b* for your 1 Pet 2:20

BEATS

one who *b* the air 1 Cor 9:26

BEAUTIFUL

of men, that they were *b* Gen 6:2
woman of *b* countenance Gen 12:11
that she was very *b* Gen 12:14
woman was very *b* Gen 24:16
she is *b* to behold Gen 26:7
but Rachel was *b* Gen 29:17
he was a *b* child Ex 2:2
the captives a *b* woman Deut 21:11
a *b* Babylonian garment Josh 7:21
and *b* appearance 1 Sam 25:3
woman was very *b* 2 Sam 11:2
a woman of *b* 2 Sam 14:27
she was *b* to behold Esth 1:11
woman was lovely and *b* Esth 2:7
b as the daughters of Job Job 42:15
B in elevation, the joy Ps 48:2
has made everything *b* Eccl 3:11
my love, you are as *b* Song 6:4
How *b* are your feet Song 7:1
of the LORD shall be *b* Is 4:2
How *b* upon the Is 52:7

a *b* heritage of the hosts Jer 3:19
became very *b* Ezek 16:7
a *b* crown on your head Ezek 16:12
You were exceedingly *b* Ezek 16:13
b crowns on their heads Ezek 23:42
b with a multitude Ezek 31:9
indeed appear *b* Matt 23:27
adorned with *b* stones Luke 21:5
temple which is called *B* Acts 3:2
begging alms at the *B* Acts 3:10
How *b* are the feet Rom 10:15
they saw he was a *b* Heb 11:23
b appearance perishes James 1:11

BEAUTIFY

b the humble with Ps 149:4
b the place of My Is 60:13

BEAUTY

for glory and for *b* Ex 28:2
"The *b* of Israel is 2 Sam 1:19
in the *b* of holiness 1 Chr 16:29
show her *b* to the people Esth 1:11
let *b* preparations be given Esth 2:3
yourself with glory and *b* Job 40:10
To behold the *b* Ps 27:4
greatly desire your *b* Ps 45:11
Zion, the perfection of *b* Ps 50:2
b of the LORD our God, Ps 90:17
do not lust after her *b* Prov 6:25
and *b* is passing Prov 31:30
branding instead of *b* Is 3:24
glorious *b* is a fading Is 28:1
see the King in His *b* Is 33:17
no *b* that we should Is 53:2
to give them *b* for ashes Is 61:3
"the perfection of *b* Lam 2:15
b to be abhorred Ezek 16:25
said, "I am perfect in *b* Ezek 27:3
wisdom and perfect in *b* Ezek 28:12
of God was like it in *b* Ezek 31:8
the one I called *B* Zech 11:7
the incorruptible *b* 1 Pet 3:4

BECAME

man *b* a living being Gen 2:7
to the Jews I *b* as a Jew 1 Cor 9:20
like me, for I *b* like you Gal 4:12

BED

house, if I make my *b* Job 17:13
I remember You on my *b* Ps 63:6
if I make my *b* in hell Ps 139:8
Also our *b* is green Song 1:16
b is too short to stretch Is 28:20
you have set your *b* Is 57:7
"Arise, take up your *b* Matt 9:6
be two men in one *b* Luke 17:34
and the *b* undefiled Heb 13:4

BEDRIDDEN

had been *b* eight years Acts 9:33

BEDROOM

lying on his bed in his *b* 2 Sam 4:7
her brother in the *b* 2 Sam 13:10
and his nurse in the *b* 2 Kin 11:2

BEDS

sing aloud on their *b* Ps 149:5
shall rest in their *b* Is 57:2
who lie on *b* of ivory Amos 6:4

BEDSTEAD

his *b* was an iron *b* Deut 3:11

BEE

Egypt, and for the *b* Is 7:18

BEELEZUBUB

Jesus accused of serving, Matt 10:25;
12:24-27

BEER LAHAI ROI

Angel meets Hagar there, Gen 16:7-14
Isaac dwells in, Gen 24:62

BEERSHEBA

God appears there to Hagar, Gen
21:14-19

to Isaac, Gen 26:23-25
to Jacob, Gen 46:1-5
to Elijah, 1 Kin 19:3-7
Oaths sworn there by Abraham, Gen
21:31-33
by Isaac, Gen 26:26-33

BEFALL

calamity *b* him Gen 42:4
b you in the last days Gen 49:1
No evil shall *b* you Ps 91:10

BEFOREHAND

do not worry *b* Mark 13:11
told you all things *b* Mark 13:23
not to meditate *b* Luke 21:14
when He testified *b* 1 Pet 1:11

BEG

I would *b* mercy of my Job 9:15
I am ashamed to *b* Luke 16:3
b you as sojourners 1 Pet 2:11

BEGAN

Then men *b* to call on Gen 4:26
since the world *b* Luke 1:70

BEGETS

b a scoffer does Prov 17:21
b a wise child will Prov 23:24
b a hundred children Eccl 6:3

BEGGAR

lifts the *b* from the ash 1 Sam 2:8
there was a certain *b* Luke 16:20

BEGGARLY

weak and *b* elements Gal 4:9

BEGGED

So the demons *b* Him, Matt 8:31
they *b* Him to depart Matt 8:34
b him, saying, 'Have Matt 18:29
b Him to put His hand Mark 7:32
b Him earnestly, saying Luke 7:4
b Him to come to his Luke 8:41
not this he who sat and *b* John 9:8
the Gentiles *b* that these Acts 13:42
those who heard it *b* Heb 12:19

BEGINNING

b God created the Gen 1:1
Though your *b* was Job 8:7
of the LORD is the *b* Ps 111:10
that God does from *b* Eccl 3:11
who made them at the *b* Matt 19:4
In the *b* was the Word John 1:1
This *b* of signs Jesus John 2:11
a murderer from the *b* John 8:44
with Me from the *b* John 15:27
the *b*, the firstborn Col 1:18
having neither *b* Heb 7:3
True Witness, the *B* Rev 3:14
and the Omega, the *B* Rev 21:6

BEGOTTEN

See ONLY BEGOTTEN SON

today I have *b* You Ps 2:7
heart, 'Who has *b* Is 49:21
glory as of the only *b* John 1:14
Christ Jesus I have *b* 1 Cor 4:15
* abundant mercy has *b* 1 Pet 1:3
loves him who is *b* 1 John 5:1

BEGUN

Having *b* in the Spirit Gal 3:3
that He who has *b* Phil 1:6

BEHALF

to speak on God's *b* Job 36:2
you on Christ's *b* 2 Cor 5:20
has been granted on *b* Phil 1:29

BEHAVE

I will *b* wisely in a Ps 101:2
does not *b* rudely 1 Cor 13:5

BEHAVED

sent him, and *b* wisely 1 Sam 18:5
and blamelessly we *b* 1 Thess 2:10

BEHAVIOR

of good *b*, hospitable 1 Tim 3:2
they be reverent in *b* Titus 2:3

BEHEADED

he sent and had John *b* Matt 14:10
those who had been *b* Rev 20:4

BEHEMOTH

Described, Job 40:15-24

BEHOLD

the eyes to *b* the sun Eccl 11:7
B, you are fair Song 1:15
B, the virgin shall Is 7:14
Judah, "B your God Is 40:9
B the Lamb of God John 1:36
I am, that they may *b* John 17:24
to them, "B the Man John 19:5
B what manner of love 1 John 3:1

BEHOLDING

with unveiled face, *b* 2 Cor 3:18

BEING

man became a living *b* Gen 2:7
God while I have my *b* Ps 104:33
move and have our *b* Acts 17:28
who, *b* in the form of Phil 2:6

BEL

Patron god of Babylon, Is 46:1; Jer 50:2;
51:44

BELIEF

by the Spirit and *b* 2 Thess 2:13

BELIEVE

b me or listen to my voice Ex 4:1
will they not *b* Me Num 14:11
did not *b* the LORD Deut 1:32
I did not *b* the words 1 Kin 10:7
B in the LORD your God 2 Chr 20:20
did not *b* in His wondrous Ps 78:32
which you would not *b* Hab 1:5
ones who *b* in Me to sin Matt 18:6
'Why then did you not *b* Matt 21:25
cross, and we will *b* Him Matt 27:42
Repent, and *b* Mark 1:15
Do not be afraid; only *b* Mark 5:36
tears, "Lord, I *b* Mark 9:24
b in Me to stumble Mark 9:42
b that you receive Mark 11:24
that we may see and *b* Mark 15:32
because they did not *b* Mark 16:14
have no root, who *b* Luke 8:13
only *b*, and she will Luke 8:50
will by no means *b* Luke 22:67
and slow of heart to *b* Luke 24:25
all through him might *b* John 1:7
to those who *b* John 1:12
how will you *b* John 3:12
Now we *b*, not because John 4:42
sent, Him you do not *b* John 5:38
we may see it and *b* John 6:30
we have come to *b* John 6:69
brothers did not *b* in Him John 7:5
not *b* that I am He John 8:24
to him, "Do you *b* John 9:35
not *b*, because you John 10:26
b that the Father is in Me John 10:38
b that You are the Christ John 11:27
this, that they may *b* John 11:42
they did not *b* in Him John 12:37
may *b* that I am He John 13:19
you *b* in God, *b* also in John 14:1
B Me that I am in John 14:11
we *b* that You came John 16:30
b that You sent Me John 17:21
truth, so that you may *b* John 19:35
into His side, I will not *b* John 20:25
written that you may *b* John 20:31
word of the gospel and *b* Acts 15:7
"B on the Lord Jesus Acts 16:31
b on Him who would Acts 19:4
King Agrippa, do you *b* Acts 26:27
to all and on all who *b* Rom 3:22

father of all those who *b* Rom 4:11
the Lord Jesus and *b* Rom 10:9
And how shall they *b* Rom 10:14
to save those who *b* 1 Cor 1:21
a wife who does not *b* 1 Cor 7:12
I spoke," we also *b* 2 Cor 4:13
given to those who *b* Gal 3:22
Christ, not only to *b* Phil 1:29
if we *b* that Jesus died 1 Thess 4:14
should *b* the lie 2 Thess 2:11
of those who *b* 1 Tim 4:10
comes to God must *b* Heb 11:6
Even the demons *b* James 2:19
to you who *b*, He 1 Pet 2:7
should *b* on the name 1 John 3:23
Beloved, do not *b* 1 John 4:1
written to you who *b* 1 John 5:13

BELIEVED

And he *b* in the LORD Gen 15:6
So the people *b* Ex 4:31
b that I would see the Ps 27:13
Who has *b* our report Is 53:1
people of Nineveh *b* Jon 3:5
Blessed is she who *b* Luke 1:45
they *b* the Scripture John 2:22
because he has not *b* John 3:18
of that city *b* in Him John 4:39
you *b* Moses, you would John 5:46
Jesus did, *b* in Him John 11:45
who has *b* our report John 12:38
and he saw and *b* John 20:8
seen Me, you have *b* John 20:29
who heard the word of Acts 4:4
of those who *b* were of Acts 4:32
appointed to eternal life *b* Acts 13:48
Holy Spirit when you *b* Acts 19:2
"Abraham *b* God Rom 4:3
in whom they have not *b* Rom 10:14
than when we first *b* Rom 13:11
unless you *b* in vain 1 Cor 15:2
"I *b* and therefore I spoke 2 Cor 4:13
b God, and it was accounted Gal 3:6
b on in the world 1 Tim 3:16
I know whom I have *b* 2 Tim 1:12
b the love that God has 1 John 4:16

BELIEVERS

be an example to the *b* 1 Tim 4:12
are benefited are *b* 1 Tim 6:2

BELIEVES

See HE WHO BELIEVES

The simple *b* every Prov 14:15
possible to him who *b* Mark 9:23
b that those things he Mark 11:23
He who *b* and is Mark 16:16
that whoever *b* in Him John 3:16
He who *b* in the Son John 3:36
b in Him who sent Me John 5:24
who *b* in Me shall never John 6:35
b in Him may have John 6:40
he who *b* in Me has John 6:47
He who *b* in Me, as the John 7:38
He who *b* in Me, though John 11:25
He who *b* in Me John 12:44
whoever *b* in Him Acts 10:43
Him everyone who *b* is Acts 13:39
for everyone who *b* Rom 1:16
to everyone who *b* Rom 10:4
with the heart one *b* Rom 10:10
b all things, hopes all 1 Cor 13:7
Whoever *b* that Jesus is 1 John 5:1
he who *b* that Jesus is 1 John 5:5
b in the Son of God 1 John 5:10

BELIEVING

you ask in prayer, *b* Matt 21:22
b you may have life John 20:31
take along a *b* wife 1 Cor 9:5
blessed with *b* Abraham Gal 3:9
those who have *b* masters 1 Tim 6:2

BELLY

On your *b* you shall go Gen 3:14

And Jonah was in the *b* Jon 1:17
 three nights in the *b* Matt 12:40
 whose god is their *b* Phil 3:19

BELONG

interpretations *b* to God Gen 40:8
 highest heavens *b* to Deut 10:14
 secret things *b* to Deut 29:29
 "Dominion and fear *b* Job 25:2
 shields of the earth *b* Ps 47:9
 things also *b* to the wise Prov 24:23
 To the Lord our God *b* Dan 9:9
 My name, because you *b* Mark 9:41
 to whom *b* the glory 1 Pet 4:11

BELONGS

offering that *b* to the LORD Lev 7:20
 Salvation *b* to the LORD Ps 3:8
 that power *b* to God Ps 62:11
 to You, O Lord, *b* mercy Ps 62:12
 shield *b* to the LORD Ps 89:18
 to whom vengeance *b* Ps 94:1
 righteousness *b* to You Dan 9:7
 solid food *b* to those Heb 5:14
b to another tribe Heb 7:13
 "Salvation *b* to our God Rev 7:10

BELOVED

"The *b* of the Lord Deut 33:12
 so He gives His *b* Ps 127:2
 of myrrh is my *b* Song 1:13
 My *b* is mine, and I am Song 2:16
b more than another Song 5:9
 Where has your *b* Song 6:1
 leaning upon her *b* Song 8:5
 a song of my *B* Is 5:1
 for you are greatly *b* Dan 9:23
 "This is My *b* Son Matt 3:17
 election they are *b* Rom 11:28
 us accepted in the *B* Eph 1:6
 Luke the *b* physician Col 4:14
 than a slave as a *b* Philem 16
 "This is My *b* Son 2 Pet 1:17
 our *b* brother Paul 2 Pet 3:15
 the saints and the *b* Rev 20:9

BELoved SON

saying, "This is My *b* Matt 3:17
 "This is My *b*, in whom Matt 17:5
 I will send my *b* Luke 20:13
 To Timothy, a *b* 2 Tim 1:2

BELSHAZZAR

King of Babylon; Daniel interprets his
 dream, Dan 5

BELT

with a leather *b* Matt 3:4
 us, he took Paul's *b* Acts 21:11

BELTESHAZZAR

Daniel's Babylonian name, Dan 1:7

BEMOAN

Or who will *b* you Jer 15:5
 for the dead, nor *b* Jer 22:10

BEN-AMMI

Son of Lot; father of the Ammonites,
 Gen 19:38

BEN-HADAD

Ben-Hadad I, king of Damascus; hired
 by Asa, king of Judah, to attack Ba-
 asha, king of Israel, 1 Kin 15:18-21
 — Ben-Hadad II, king of Damascus;
 makes war on Ahab, king of Israel,
 1 Kin 20
 Falls in siege against Samaria, 2 Kin
 6:24-33; 7:6-20
 Killed by Hazael, 2 Kin 8:7-15
 — Ben-Hadad III, king of Damascus;
 loses all Israelite conquests made by
 Hazael, his father, 2 Kin 13:3-25

BEN-ONI

Rachel's name for Benjamin, Gen
 35:16-18

BENAIAH

The son of Jehoiada; a mighty man,
 2 Sam 23:20-23
 Faithful to David, 2 Sam 15:18; 20:23
 Escorts Solomon to the throne, 1 Kin
 1:38-40
 Executes Adonijah, Joab and Shimei,
 1 Kin 2:25, 29-34, 46
 — A Pirathonite; another of David's
 mighty men, 2 Sam 23:30
 Divisional commander, 1 Chr 27:14

BEND

The wicked *b* their bow Ps 11:2

BENEATH

and on the earth *b* Deut 4:39
 "You are from *b* John 8:23

BENEFACTORS

them are called '*b* Luke 22:25

BENEFIT

That I may see the *b* Ps 106:5
 people who could not *b* Is 30:5
 might have a second *b* 2 Cor 1:15

BENEFITS

daily loads us with *b* Ps 68:19
 forget not all His *b* Ps 103:2
 for all His *b* toward me Ps 116:12

BENJAMIN

Jacob's youngest son, Gen 35:16-20
 Taken to Egypt against Jacob's wishes,
 Gen 42-45
 Jacob's prophecy concerning, Gen
 49:27
 — Tribe of:
 Families of, Num 26:38-41
 Territory allotted to, Josh 18:11-28
 Attacked by remaining tribes for con-
 doning sin of Gibeah, Judg 20:12-48
 Wives provided for remnant of, Judg
 21:1-23
 Tribe of Saul, 1 Sam 9:1, 2
 of Paul, Phil 3:5

BENT

have *b* their bow, Ps 37:14
 and all their bows *b* Is 5:28
 behold, this vine *b* Ezek 17:7
 hearts shall be *b* on evil Dan 11:27
 I have *b* Judah, My bow, Zech 9:13
 was *b* over and could Luke 13:11

BEREA

A city of Macedonia; visited by Paul,
 Acts 17:10-15

BEREAVE

I will *b* them of Jer 15:7
 no more shall you *b* Ezek 36:12
 children, yet I will *b* Hos 9:12

BERNICE

Sister of Herod Agrippa II, Acts 25:13,
 23

Hears Paul's defense, Acts 26:1-30

BERODACH-BALADAN

See MERODACH-BALADAN
 A king of Babylon, 2 Kin 20:12-19

BERYL

fourth row, a *b* Ex 28:20
 a *b*, an onyx Ex 39:13
 rods of gold set with *b* Song 5:14
 was like the color of *b* Ezek 1:16
 the color of a *b* Ezek 10:9
 topaz, and diamond, *b* Ezek 28:13
 His body was like *b* Dan 10:6
 chrysolite, the eighth *b* Rev 21:20

BESEECH

Return, we *b* You Ps 80:14
b you therefore Rom 12:1
 of the LORD, *b* you to Eph 4:1

BESIDE

He leads me *b* the Ps 23:2

"Paul, you are *b* Acts 26:24
 For if we are *b* 2 Cor 5:13

BESIEGED

Joab *b* the city 2 Sam 11:16
 went up and *b* Samaria 2 Kin 6:24
 and the city was *b* 2 Kin 24:10
 of cucumbers, as a *b* city Is 1:8
 army *b* Jerusalem Jer 32:2
 to Jerusalem and *b* it Dan 1:1

BEST

with the *b* ointments Amos 6:6
b seats in the synagogues Matt 23:6
b places at feasts Mark 12:39
 sit down in the *b* place Luke 14:8
 'Bring out the *b* Luke 15:22
 earnestly desire the *b* 1 Cor 12:31

BESTOW

LORD, that He may *b* Ex 32:29
b greater honor 1 Cor 12:23

BESTOWED

love the Father has *b* 1 John 3:1

BETH HORON

Twin towns of Ephraim, Josh 16:3, 5
 Fortified by Solomon, 2 Chr 8:3-5
 Prominent in battles, Josh 10:10-14;
 1 Sam 13:18

BETH PEOR

Town near Pisgah, Deut 3:29
 Moses buried near, Deut 34:6
 Assigned to Reubenites, Josh 13:15, 20

BETH SHAN (or Beth Shean)

A town in Issachar, Josh 17:11-16
 Saul's corpse hung up at, 1 Sam
 31:10-13; 2 Sam 21:12-14

BETH SHEMESH

Ark brought to, 1 Sam 6:12-19
 Joash defeats Amaziah at, 2 Kin 14:11
 Taken by Philistines, 2 Chr 28:18

BETHABARA

A place beyond the Jordan where John
 baptized, John 1:28

BETHANY

A town on the Mt. of Olives, Luke 19:29
 Home of Lazarus, John 11:1
 Home of Simon, the leper, Matt 26:6
 Jesus visits there, Mark 11:1, 11, 12
 Scene of the ascension, Luke 24:50, 51

BETHEL

Abram settles near, Gen 12:7, 8
 Site of Abram's altar, Gen 13:3, 4
 Site of Jacob's vision of the ladder, Gen
 28:10-19
 Jacob returns to, Gen 35:1-15
 Samuel judges there, 1 Sam 7:15, 16
 Site of worship and sacrifice, 1 Sam
 10:3
 Center of idolatry, 1 Kin 12:28-33
 Josiah destroys altars of, 2 Kin 23:4,
 15-20
 Denounced by prophets, 1 Kin 13:1-10;
 Amos 7:10-13; Jer 48:13; Hos 10:15

BETHESDA

Jerusalem pool, John 5:2-4

BETHLEHEM

Originally called Ephrath, Gen 35:16
 Rachel buried there, Gen 35:19
 Home of Naomi and Boaz, Ruth 1:1,
 19; 4:9-11
 Home of David, 1 Sam 16:1-18
 Predicted place of Messiah's birth, Mic
 5:2
 Christ born there, Matt 2:1; Luke
 2:4-7; John 7:42
 Infants of, killed by Herod, Matt
 2:16-18

BETHPHAGE

Village near Bethany, Mark 11:1

Near Mt. of Olives, Matt 21:1

BETHSAIDA

A city of Galilee, Mark 6:45

Home of Andrew, Peter and Philip,

John 1:44; 12:21

Blind man healed there, Mark 8:22, 23

5,000 fed nearby, Luke 9:10-17

Unbelief of, denounced, Matt 11:21;

Luke 10:13

BETRAY

the outcasts, do not *b* Is 16:3

you, one of you will *b* Matt 26:21

Now brother will *b* Mark 13:12

BETRAYED

Man is about to be *b* Matt 17:22

in which He was *b* 1 Cor 11:23

BETRAYER

See, My *b* is at hand Matt 26:46

BETRAYING

"Judas, are you *b* Luke 22:48

BETRAYS

who is the one who *b* John 21:20

BETROTH

"You shall *b* a wife Deut 28:30

"I will *b* you to Me Hos 2:19

BETROTHED

a virgin who is not *b* Ex 22:16

finds a *b* young woman Deut 22:25

I *b* to myself for a 2 Sam 3:14

mother Mary was *b* to Matt 1:18

to a virgin *b* to a man Luke 1:27

For I have *b* you to 2 Cor 11:2

BETTER

obey is *b* than sacrifice 1 Sam 15:22

It is *b* to trust in Ps 118:8

B is a little with the Prov 15:16

B is a dry morsel Prov 17:1

B is the poor who Prov 19:1

B to dwell in Prov 21:19

b is a neighbor Prov 27:10

B a handful with Eccl 4:6

Two are *b* than one Eccl 4:9

B a poor and wise Eccl 4:13

were the former days *b* Eccl 7:10

features appeared *b* Dan 1:15

For it is *b* to marry 1 Cor 7:9

Christ, which is far *b* Phil 1:23

b than the angels Heb 1:4

b things concerning Heb 6:9

b things than that Heb 12:24

BEULAH

A symbol of true Israel, Is 62:4, 5

BEVERAGE

lacks no blended *b* Song 7:2

BEWAIL

Israel, *b* the burning Lev 10:6

b my virginity Judg 11:37

I will *b* the vine Is 16:9

BEWARE

"*B* of false prophets Matt 7:15

b of evil workers Phil 3:2

B lest anyone cheat Col 2:8

BEWILDERED

"They are *b* by the land Ex 14:3

BEWITCHED

b you that you should Gal 3:1

BEYOND

b what is written 1 Cor 4:6

yes, and *b* their ability 2 Cor 8:3

advanced in Judaism *b* Gal 1:14

BEZALEL

Hur's grandson, 1 Chr 2:20

Tabernacle builder, Ex 31:1-11;

35:30-35

BEZER

A city of refuge in the territory of

Reuben, Deut 4:43; John 20:8

BILDAD

One of Job's friends, Job 2:11

Makes three speeches, Job 8:1-22;

18:1-21; 25:1-6

BILHAH

Rachel's maid, Gen 29:29

The mother of Dan and Naphtali, Gen

30:1-8

Commits incest with Reuben, Gen

35:22

BILLOWS

b have gone over me Ps 42:7

all Your *b* and Your Jon 2:3

BIND

b them as a sign Deut 6:8

b this line of scarlet Josh 2:18

b the cluster of the Job 38:31

b the wild ox in the Job 39:10

b the sacrifice with cords Ps 118:27

b them around your Prov 3:3

B them continually upon Prov 6:21

B them on your fingers Prov 7:3

B up the testimony Is 8:16

but He will *b* us up Hos 6:1

and whatever you *b* Matt 16:19

'*B* him hand and foot Matt 22:13

b heavy burdens Matt 23:4

b the man who owns this Acts 21:11

BINDS

first *b* the strong man Matt 12:29

BIRD

the blood of the *b* Lev 14:52

with him as with a *b* Job 41:5

soul, "Flee as a *b* Ps 11:1

has escaped as a *b* Ps 124:7

b hastens to the snare Prov 7:23

for a *b* of the air may Eccl 10:20

fly away like a *b* Hos 9:11

unclean and hated *b* Rev 18:2

BIRDS

b will eat your flesh Gen 40:19

b make their nests Ps 104:17

b caught in a snare Eccl 9:12

Look at the *b* of the air Matt 6:26

"Foxes have holes and *b* Matt 8:20

BIRTH

curSED the day of his *b* Job 3:1

heaven, who gives it *b* Job 38:29

makes the deer give *b* Ps 29:9

the day of one's *b* Eccl 7:1

bring to the time of *b* Is 66:9

the deer also gave *b* Jer 14:5

no *b*, no pregnancy Hos 9:11

Now the *b* of Jesus Matt 1:18

will rejoice at his *b* Luke 1:14

who was blind from *b* John 9:1

labors with *b* pangs Rom 8:22

conceived, it gives *b* James 1:15

BIRTHDAY

which was Pharaoh's *b* Gen 40:20

b gave a feast for his Mark 6:21

BIRTHRIGHT

"Sell me your *b* Gen 25:31

Esau despised his *b* Gen 25:34

according to his *b* Gen 43:33

of food sold his *b* Heb 12:16

BIRTHSTOOLS

see them on the *b* Ex 1:16

BISHOP

the position of a *b* 1 Tim 3:1

b must be blameless Titus 1:7

BIT

and they *b* the people Num 21:6

be harnessed with *b* Ps 32:9

BITE

A serpent may *b* Eccl 10:11

But if you *b* and Gal 5:15

BITHYNIA

The Spirit keeps Paul from, Acts 16:7

Peter writes to Christians of, 1 Pet 1:1

BITS

the great house into *b* Amos 6:11

Indeed, we put *b* James 3:3

BITTER

made their lives *b* Ex 1:14

b herbs they shall eat it Ex 12:8

to those who are *b* Prov 31:6

who put *b* for sweet Is 5:20

and do not be *b* Col 3:19

But if you have *b* James 3:14

make your stomach *b* Rev 10:9

BITTERLY

has dealt very *b* Ruth 1:20

And Hezekiah wept *b* 2 Kin 20:3

he went out and wept *b* Matt 26:75

BITTERNESS

man dies in the *b* Job 21:25

heart knows its own *b* Prov 14:10

all my years in the *b* Is 38:15

you are poisoned by *b* Acts 8:23

b springing up cause Heb 12:15

BLACK

My skin grows *b* Job 30:30

wavy, and *b* as a raven Song 5:11

one hair white or *b* Matt 5:36

a *b* horse and he who sat Rev 6:5

and the sun became *b* Rev 6:12

BLACKNESS

the heavens with *b* Is 50:3

whom is reserved the *b* Jude 13

BLACKSMITH

no *b* to be found 1 Sam 13:19

The *b* with the tongs Is 44:12

I have created the *b* Is 54:16

BLADE

went in after the *b* Judg 3:22

first the *b*, then the head Mark 4:28

BLAME

that anyone should *b* 2 Cor 8:20

be holy and without *b* Eph 1:4

BLAMELESS

walk before Me and be *b* Gen 17:1

You shall be *b* Deut 18:13

b before Him, and I 2 Sam 22:24

and that man was *b* Job 1:1

a *b* and upright man Job 1:8

a *b* and upright man Job 2:3

will not cast away the *b* Job 8:20

though I were *b* Job 9:20

b who is ridiculed Job 12:4

make your ways *b* Job 22:3

I was also *b* before Him Ps 18:23

Then I shall be *b* Ps 19:13

Mark the *b* man Ps 37:37

when You speak, and *b* Ps 51:4

Let my heart be *b* Ps 119:80

the *b* will remain Prov 2:21

righteousness of the *b* Prov 11:5

the *b* in their ways Prov 11:20

the *b* will inherit good Prov 28:10

Sabbath, and are *b* Matt 12:5

end, that you may be *b* 1 Cor 1:8

that you may become *b* Phil 2:15

which is in the law, *b* Phil 3:6

you holy, and *b* Col 1:22

your hearts *b* in 1 Thess 3:13

body be preserved *b* 1 Thess 5:23

bishop then must be *b* 1 Tim 3:2

deacons, being found *b* 1 Tim 3:10

man is *b*, the husband Titus 1:6

a bishop must be *b* Titus 1:7

without spot and *b* 2 Pet 3:14

BLAMELESSLY

b we behaved 1 Thess 2:10

BLANKET

covered him with a *b* Judg 4:18

BLASPHEME

b Your name forever Ps 74:10
compelled them to *b* Acts 26:11
may learn not to *b* 1 Tim 1:20
b that noble name James 2:7
God, to *b* His name Rev 13:6

BLASPHEMED

a foolish people has *b* Ps 74:18
b continually every Is 52:5
who passed by *b* Him Matt 27:39
who were hanged *b* Luke 23:39
The name of God is *b* Rom 2:24
doctrine may not be *b* 1 Tim 6:1
On their part He is *b* 1 Pet 4:14
great heat, and they *b* Rev 16:9

BLASPHEMER

I was formerly a *b* 1 Tim 1:13

BLASPHEMERS

boasters, proud, *b* 2 Tim 3:2

BLASPHEMES

b the name of the LORD Lev 24:16
"This Man *b*!" Matt 9:3
who *b* against the Holy Mark 3:29
to him who *b* against Luke 12:10

BLASPHEMIES

false witness, *b* Matt 15:19
is this who speaks *b* Luke 5:21
great things and *b* Rev 13:5

BLASPHEMY

trouble and rebuke and *b* Is 37:3
but the *b* against Matt 12:31
"He has spoken *b*" Matt 26:65
You have heard the *b* Mark 14:64
not stone You, but for *b* John 10:33
mouth in *b* against God Rev 13:6
was full of names of *b* Rev 17:3

BLAST

By the *b* of God they Job 4:9
for the *b* of the terrible Is 25:4

BLASTED

"I *b* you with blight Amos 4:9

BLEATING

"What then is this *b* 1 Sam 15:14

BLEMISH

shall be without *b* Ex 12:5
LORD, a ram without *b* Lev 6:6
be holy and without *b* Eph 5:27
as of a lamb without *b* 1 Pet 1:19

BLEMISHED

to the Lord what is *b* Mal 1:14

BLESS

I will *b* you and make Gen 12:2
b those who *b* you Gen 12:3
blessing I will *b* you Gen 22:17
I will *b* you and multiply Gen 26:24
b you before I die Gen 27:4
"B me—me also Gen 27:34
You go unless You *b* Gen 32:26
He will *b* your bread Ex 23:25
"The LORD *b* you and Num 6:24
whom you *b* is blessed Num 22:6
Gerizim to *b* the people Deut 27:12
returned to *b* his house 1 Chr 16:43
b the LORD at all Ps 34:1
b with their mouth Ps 62:4
b You while I live Ps 63:4
b His holy name Ps 103:1
b the house of Israel Ps 115:12
b those who fear the Ps 115:13
b you in the name of Ps 129:8
I will abundantly *b* Ps 132:15
this day forward I will *b* Hag 2:19
b those who curse Luke 6:28
B those who persecute Rom 12:14
Being reviled, we *b* 1 Cor 4:12

of blessing which we *b* 1 Cor 10:16
"blessing I will *b* you Heb 6:14
With it we *b* our God James 3:9

BLESS THE LORD

then you shall *b* your God Deut 8:10
the assembly, "Now *b* 1 Chr 29:20
Stand up and *b* Neh 9:5
I will *b* who has given Ps 16:7
the congregations I will *b* Ps 26:12
I will *b* at all times: Ps 34:1
B, O my soul; and all Ps 103:1
B, O my soul! O LORD Ps 104:1
we will *b* from this time Ps 115:18
b, all you servants Ps 134:1
B, O house of Israel! Ps 135:19

BLESSED

And God *b* them Gen 1:22
God *b* the seventh day Gen 2:3
God *b* Noah and his sons Gen 9:1
the earth shall be *b* Gen 12:3
b be those who Gen 27:29
indeed he shall be *b* Gen 27:33
b the Sabbath day Ex 20:11
he whom you bless is *b* Num 22:6
b, and I cannot reverse Num 23:20
B is he who blesses Num 24:9
B shall you be in the city Deut 28:3
b among women is Jael Judg 5:24
grew, and the LORD *b* Judg 13:24
the LORD *b* Obed-Edom 2 Sam 6:11
You have *b* the work of Job 1:10
B is the man who walks Ps 1:1
B is the man to whom Ps 32:2
B is the nation whose Ps 33:12
B is he who considers Ps 41:1
B are those who keep Ps 106:3
B is he who comes Ps 118:26
b who fears the LORD Ps 128:4
rise up and call her *b* Prov 31:28
nations will call you *b* Mal 3:12
B are the poor in Matt 5:3
B are those who mourn Matt 5:4
B are the meek Matt 5:5
B are those who hunger Matt 5:6
B are the merciful Matt 5:7
B are the pure in Matt 5:8
B are the peacemakers Matt 5:9
B are those who are Matt 5:10
B are you when they Matt 5:11
b is he who is not Matt 11:6
b are your eyes Matt 13:16
B is He who comes Matt 21:9
hand, "Come, you *b* Matt 25:34
Jesus took bread, *b* Matt 26:26
b are you among women Luke 1:28
"B is He who comes Luke 13:35
know these things, *b* John 13:17
B are those who have John 20:29
"It is more *b* to give Acts 20:35
the Creator, who is *b* Rom 1:25
all, the eternally *b* Rom 9:5
B be the God and Father 2 Cor 1:3
b with believing Abraham Gal 3:9
B be the God and Eph 1:3
b God which was 1 Tim 1:11
the lesser is *b* by the better Heb 7:7
this one will be *b* James 1:25
B is he who reads Rev 1:3
"B are the dead who Rev 14:13
B is he who watches Rev 16:15
B are those who are Rev 19:9
B and holy is he who Rev 20:6
B is he who keeps the Rev 22:7
B are those who do His Rev 22:14

BLESSED BE THE LORD

B God of my master Gen 24:27
"B, who has delivered you Ex 18:10
"B, who has not left you Ruth 4:14
"B, who has pleaded 1 Sam 25:39
"B God of Israel, who 1 Kin 1:48
B God of Israel from 1 Chr 16:36

B God of our fathers, Ezra 7:27
B, because He has heard Ps 28:6
B, for he has shown me Ps 31:21
B, who daily loads us Ps 68:19
B, who has not given us Ps 124:6
B my Rock, who trains Ps 144:1

BLESSING

and you shall be a *b* Gen 12:2
the *b* of Abraham Gen 28:4
I will command My *b* Lev 25:21
before you today a *b* Deut 11:26
LORD will command the *b* Deut 28:8
life and death, *b* Deut 30:19
exalted above all *b* Neh 9:5
The *b* of a perishing Job 29:13
Your *b* is upon Your Ps 3:8
did not delight in *b* Ps 109:17
The *b* of the LORD Prov 10:22
My *b* on your offspring Is 44:3
shall be showers of *b* Ezek 34:26
relent, and leave a *b* Jer 1:24
and you shall be a *b* Zech 8:13
pour out for you such *b* Mal 3:10
the fullness of the *b* Rom 15:29
b which we bless 1 Cor 10:16
that the *b* of Abraham Gal 3:14
with every spiritual *b* Eph 1:3
cultivated, receives *b* Heb 6:7
"Surely *b* I will bless you Heb 6:14
to inherit the *b* Heb 12:17
same mouth proceed *b* James 3:10
honor and glory and *b* Rev 5:12

BLESSINGS

of the law, the *b* Josh 8:34
B are on the head of Prov 10:6

BLEW

b them into the Red Sea Ex 10:19
b the trumpets, and the Josh 6:8
Then Saul *b* the trumpet 1 Sam 13:3
the priests regularly *b* 1 Chr 16:6
came, and the winds *b* Matt 7:25

BLIGHT

"I blasted you with *b* Amos 4:9
I struck you with *b* Hag 2:17

BLIND

I was eyes to the *b* Job 29:15
B yourselves and be Is 29:9
To open *b* eyes Is 42:7
I will bring the *b* Is 42:16
b people who have eyes Is 43:8
His watchmen are *b* Is 56:10
They wandered *b* Lam 4:14
when you offer the *b* Mal 1:8
The *b* see and the lame Matt 11:5
if the *b* leads the *b* Matt 15:14
of sight to the *b* Luke 4:18
to Him, "Are we *b* John 9:40
miserable, poor, *b* Rev 3:17

BLINDED

b their eyes and John 12:40
and the rest were *b* Rom 11:7
of this age has *b* 2 Cor 4:4
the darkness has *b* 1 John 2:11

BLINDFOLD

to *b* Him, and to beat Mark 14:65

BLINDS

a bribe, for a bribe *b* Deut 16:19

BLOCK

See STUMBLING BLOCK
not to put a stumbling *b* Rom 14:13
the Jews a stumbling *b* 2 Cor 1:23

BLOOD

See FLESH AND BLOOD; INNOCENT
BLOOD
of your brother's *b* Gen 4:10
life, that is, its *b* Gen 9:4
b shall be shed Gen 9:6
the tunic in the *b* Gen 37:31

you are a husband of *b* Ex 4:25
 river were turned to *b* Ex 7:20
 when I see the *b*, I will Ex 12:13
 the *b* of the covenant Ex 24:8
b that makes atonement Lev 17:11
b sustains its life Lev 17:14
 do not cover my *b* Job 16:18
 is there in my *b* Ps 30:9
 And condemn innocent *b* Ps 94:21
 hands are full of *b* Is 1:15
 also disclose her *b* Is 26:21
 to you in your *b* Ezek 16:6
 And the moon into *b* Joel 2:31
 to the *b* of Zechariah Matt 23:35
 For this is My *b* Matt 26:28
 betraying innocent *b* Matt 27:4
 called the Field of *B* Matt 27:8
b of this just Person Matt 27:24
 "His *b* be on us and Matt 27:25
 new covenant in My *b* Luke 22:20
b falling down Luke 22:44
 were born, not of *b* John 1:13
b has eternal life John 6:54
 that is, Field of *B* Acts 1:19
 the moon into *b* Acts 2:20
b every nation of men Acts 17:26
 with His own *b* Acts 20:28
 propitiation by His *b* Rom 3:25
 justified by His *b* Rom 5:9
 communion of the *b* 1 Cor 10:16
b cannot inherit 1 Cor 15:50
 confer with flesh and *b* Gal 1:16
 redemption through His *b* Eph 1:7
 brought near by the *b* Eph 2:13
 against flesh and *b* Eph 6:12
 peace through the *b* Col 1:20
 His own *b* He entered Heb 9:12
 "This is the *b* of the Heb 9:20
 are purified with *b* Heb 9:22
 the Holiest by the *b* Heb 10:19
 sprinkling of the *b* 1 Pet 1:2
 with the precious *b* 1 Pet 1:19
b of Jesus Christ His 1 John 1:7
 the water, and the *b* 1 John 5:8
 our sins in His own *b* Rev 1:5
 us to God by Your *b* Rev 5:9
 moon became like *b* Rev 6:12
 them white in the *b* Rev 7:14
 the sea became *b* Rev 8:8
 overcame him by the *b* Rev 12:11
 with the *b* of the martyrs Rev 17:6
 a robe dipped in *b* Rev 19:13

BLOODSHED

me from the guilt of *b* Ps 51:14
 the land is full of *b* Ezek 9:9
 build up Zion with *b* Mic 3:10

BLOODTHIRSTY

The LORD abhors the *b* Ps 5:6
B and deceitful men Ps 55:23

BLOSSOM

Israel shall *b* and bud Is 27:6
 and *b* as the rose Is 35:1
 the fig tree may not *b* Hab 3:17

BLOT

b me out of Your book Ex 32:32
 say that He would *b* 2 Kin 14:27
 from my sins, and *b* Ps 51:9
 and I will not *b* Rev 3:5

BLOTTED

Let them be *b* out of Ps 69:28
 I have *b* out, like a thick Is 44:22
 your sins may be *b* Acts 3:19

BLOW

b the trumpets over Num 10:10
 priests shall *b* the Josh 6:4
 When I *b* the trumpet Judg 7:18
 an east wind to *b* Ps 78:26
B upon my garden Song 4:16
 with a very severe *b* Jer 14:17
B the trumpet in Zion Joel 2:1

Lord God will *b* the Zech 9:14

BLOWS

B that hurt cleanse Prov 20:30
 breath of the LORD *b* Is 40:7
 The wind *b* where it John 3:8

BLUE

b, purple, and scarlet Ex 25:4
 pomegranates of *b* Ex 28:33
 tabernacle door, of *b* Ex 36:37
 spread a *b* cloth Num 4:7
 put a *b* thread in the Num 15:38
 made the veil of *b* 2 Chr 3:14
 royal apparel of *b* Esth 8:15
 of fiery red, hyacinth *b* Rev 9:17

BLUSH

did they know how to *b* Jer 6:15

BOANERGES

Surname of James and John, Mark
 3:17

BOAST

puts on his armor *b* 1 Kin 20:11
 soul shall make its *b* Ps 34:2
 God we *b* all day long Ps 44:8
 and make your *b* Rom 2:17
 that we are your *b* 2 Cor 1:14
 you, and not to *b* 2 Cor 10:16
 that I also may *b* 2 Cor 11:16
 lest anyone should *b* Eph 2:9
 your hearts, do not *b* James 3:14

BOASTERS

God, violent, proud, *b* Rom 1:30
 lovers of money, *b* 2 Tim 3:2

BOASTFUL

b shall not stand Ps 5:5
 I was envious of the *b* Ps 73:3

BOASTING

Where is *b* then Rom 3:27
 should make my *b* 1 Cor 9:15
 you, great is my *b* 2 Cor 7:4
 All such *b* is evil James 4:16

BOASTS

Whoever falsely *b* Prov 25:14

BOAT

In the *b* with Zebedee Matt 4:21
 So He got into a *b* Matt 9:1
 disciples get into the *b* Matt 14:22
 by *b* to the other side Mark 5:21
 in the *b* by themselves Mark 6:32
b was in the middle Mark 6:47
b with His disciples Luke 8:22
 immediately the *b* was John 6:21

BOAZ

A wealthy Bethlehemite, Ruth 2:1,
 4-18
 Husband of Ruth, Ruth 4:10-13
 Ancestor of Christ, Matt 1:5
 — Pillar of the temple, 1 Kin 7:21

BODIES

valley of the dead *b* Jer 31:40
b a living sacrifice Rom 12:1
 not know that your *b* 1 Cor 6:15
 also celestial *b* 1 Cor 15:40
 wives as their own *b* Eph 5:28
 and chariots, and *b* Rev 18:13

BODILY

b form like a dove Luke 3:22
b presence is weak 2 Cor 10:10
 of the Godhead *b* Col 2:9
b exercise profits 1 Tim 4:8

BODY

b clings to the ground Ps 44:25
b is carved ivory Song 5:14
b was wet with the dew Dan 4:33
 of the *b* is the eye Matt 6:22
 those who kill the *b* Matt 10:28
 Take, eat; this is My *b* Matt 26:26
 and asked for the *b* Matt 27:58

around his naked *b* Mark 14:51
 of the temple of His *b* John 2:21
 deliver me from this *b* Rom 7:24
 redemption of our *b* Rom 8:23
 members in one *b* Rom 12:4
 and the Lord for the *b* 1 Cor 6:18
 against his own *b* 1 Cor 6:18
 not know that your *b* 1 Cor 6:19
 glorify God in your *b* 1 Cor 6:20
 But I discipline my *b* 1 Cor 9:27
 one bread and one *b* 1 Cor 10:17
b which is broken 1 Cor 11:24
 be guilty of the *b* 1 Cor 11:27
 For as the *b* is one 1 Cor 12:12
 baptized into one *b* 1 Cor 12:13
b is not one member 1 Cor 12:14
 are the *b* of Christ 1 Cor 12:27
 though I give my *b* 1 Cor 13:3
 It is sown a natural *b* 1 Cor 15:44
 both to God in one *b* Eph 2:16
 be magnified in my *b* Phil 1:20
 in the *b* of His flesh Col 1:22
 by putting off the *b* Col 2:11
 and neglect of the *b* Col 2:23
 were called in one *b* Col 3:15
b You have prepared Heb 10:10
 the offering of the *b* Heb 10:10
 For as the *b* without James 2:26
 our sins in His own *b* 1 Pet 2:24

BOILS

Job with painful *b* Job 2:7

BOISTEROUS

that the wind was *b* Matt 14:30

BOLD

the righteous are *b* Prov 28:1
 whatever anyone is *b* 2 Cor 11:21
 are much more *b* Phil 1:14

BOLDLY

I may open my mouth *b* Eph 6:19
 therefore come *b* Heb 4:16
 So we may *b* say Heb 13:6

BOLDNESS

Great is my *b* of 2 Cor 7:4
 in whom we have *b* Eph 3:12
 but with all *b* Phil 1:20
 standing and great *b* 1 Tim 3:13
 brethren, having *b* Heb 10:19
 that we may have *b* 1 John 4:17

BOND

bring you into the *b* Ezek 20:37
 of the Spirit in the *b* Eph 4:43
 love, which is the *b* Col 3:14

BONDAGE

because of the *b* Ex 2:23
 out of the house of *b* Ex 13:14
 receive the spirit of *b* Rom 8:15
 might bring us into *b* Gal 2:4
 which gives birth to *b* Gal 4:24
 again with a yoke of *b* Gal 5:1
 lifetime subject to *b* Heb 2:15
 he is brought into *b* 2 Pet 2:19

BONDS

"Let us break Their *b* Ps 2:3
 the other I called *B* Zech 11:7

BONDSERVANT

Paul, a *b* of Jesus Christ, Rom 1:1
 would not be a *b* of Christ Gal 1:10
 who is one of you, a *b* Col 4:12
 Paul, a *b* of God and an Titus 1:1
 James, a *b* of God and of James 1:1
 Simon Peter, a *b* and 2 Pet 1:1
 Jude, a *b* of Jesus Christ, Jude 1

BONDSERVICES

your *b* for Jesus' sake 2 Cor 4:5
B, be obedient to Eph 6:5
 as men-pleasers, but as *b* Eph 6:6
 Paul and Timothy, *b* of Phil 1:1
B, obey in all things Col 3:22

Masters, give your *b* Col 4:1
Exhort *b* to be obedient Titus 2:9
for vice, but as *b* 1 Pet 2:16

BONDWOMAN

*Cast out this *b* Gen 21:10
the one by a *b* Gal 4:22

BONE

*This is now *b* of my Gen 2:23
b clings to my skin Job 19:20
bonds came together, *b* Ezek 37:7

BONES

shall carry up my *b* Gen 50:25
which made all my *b* Job 4:14
His *b* are like beams Job 40:18
I can count all My *b* Ps 22:17
and my *b* waste away Ps 31:10
I kept silent, my *b* Ps 32:3
the wind, or how the *b* Eccl 11:5
say to them, 'O dry *b* Ezek 37:4
b are the whole house Ezek 37:11
of dead men's *b* Matt 23:27
b shall be broken John 19:36
concerning his *b* Heb 11:22

BOOK

you will find in the *b* Ezra 4:15
distinctly from the *b* Neh 8:8
were inscribed in a *b* Job 19:23
"Search from the *b* Is 34:16
'Write in a *b* for Jer 30:2
found written in the *b* Dan 12:1
so a *b* of remembrance Mal 3:16
are written in the *b* Gal 3:10
sprinkled both the *b* Heb 9:19
in the Lamb's *B* Rev 21:27
the prophecy of this *b* Rev 22:18
the words of the *b* Rev 22:19

BOOK OF LIFE

whose names are in the *B* Phil 4:3
out his name from the *B* Rev 3:5
written in the *B* of the Rev 13:8
not written in the *B* Rev 17:8
opened, which is the *B* Rev 20:12
found written in the *B* Rev 20:15
written in the Lamb's *B* Rev 21:27
away his part from the *B* Rev 22:19

BOOK OF THE LAW

are written in this *B* Deut 30:10
Take this *B*, and put it Deut 31:26
This *B* shall not depart Josh 1:8
that is written in the *B* Josh 8:34
that is written in the *B* Josh 23:6
"I have found the *B* 2 Kin 22:8
the words of the *B* 2 Kin 22:11
in Judah, and had the *B* 2 Chr 17:9
the scribe to bring the *B* Neh 8:1
written in the *b* Gal 3:10

BOOKS

b there is no end Eccl 12:12
not contain the *b* John 21:25
magic brought their *b* Acts 19:19
God, and *b* were opened Rev 20:12

BOOTH

b which a watchman Job 27:18
of Zion is left as a *b* Is 1:8

BOOTHES

dwell in *b* for seven Lev 23:42
in *b* during the feast Neh 8:14

BORDER

pillar to the LORD at its *b* Is 19:19

BORDERS

and enlarge your *b* Ex 34:24
makes peace in your *b* Ps 147:14
and enlarge the *b* Matt 23:5

BORE

conceived and *b* Cain Gen 4:1
And to Sarah who *b* Is 51:2
b the sin of many Is 53:12

and He *b* them and Is 63:9
b our sicknesses Matt 8:17
who Himself *b* our sins 1 Pet 2:24
b a male Child who was Rev 12:5

BORN

"Every son who is *b* Ex 1:22
yet man is *b* to trouble Job 5:7
"Man who is *b* Job 14:1
"This one was *b* Ps 87:4
A time to be *b* Eccl 3:2
unto us a Child is *b* Is 9:6
Or shall a nation be *b* Is 66:8
b Jesus who is called Matt 1:16
For there is *b* to you Luke 2:11
unless one is *b* again John 3:3
That which is *b* John 3:6
For this cause I was *b* John 18:37
me also, as by one *b* 1 Cor 15:8
of the bondwoman was *b* Gal 4:23
having been *b* again 1 Pet 1:23
who loves is *b* of God 1 John 4:7
is the Christ is *b* 1 John 5:1
know that whoever is *b* 1 John 5:18

BORN AGAIN

unless one is *b* John 3:3
"You must be *b* John 3:7
having been *b*, not of 1 Pet 1:23

BORNE

had *b* him no children Gen 16:1
the barren has *b* seven 1 Sam 2:5
not my son whom I had *b* 1 Kin 3:21
"I have *b* chastening Job 34:31
Surely He has *b* our griefs Is 53:4
you who have not *b* Is 54:1
you have *b* the shame Ezek 36:6
who have *b* the burden Matt 20:12
And as we have *b* 1 Cor 15:49

BORROWER

b is servant to the Prov 22:7
lender, so with the *b* Is 24:2

BORROWS

The wicked *b* and does Ps 37:21

BOSOM

man take fire to his *b* Prov 6:27
consolation of her *b* Is 66:11
angels to Abraham's *b* Luke 16:22
Son, who is in the *b* John 1:18
leaning on Jesus' *b* John 13:23

BOTTLE

tears into Your *b* Ps 56:8
b shall be filled Jer 13:12

BOTTOM

they sank to the *b* Ex 15:5
in two from top to *b* Matt 27:51
in two from top to *b* Mark 15:38

BOTTOMLESS

given the key to the *b* Rev 9:1
ascend out of the *b* Rev 17:8
the key to the *b* Rev 20:1

BOTTOMLESS PIT

given the key to the *b* Rev 9:1
the angel of the *b* Rev 9:11
ascends out of the *b* Rev 11:7
ascend out of the *b* Rev 17:8
having the key to the *b* Rev 20:1
cast him into the *b* Rev 20:3

BOUGH

Joseph is a fruitful *b* Gen 49:22
cut down a *b* from the Judg 9:48
lop off the *b* with terror Is 10:33
will be as a forsaken *b* Is 17:9

BOUGHS

cedars with its *b* Ps 80:10
She sent out her *b* Ps 80:11

BOUGHT

the hand of him who *b* Lev 25:28
not your Father, who *b* Deut 32:6

b the threshing floor 2 Sam 24:24
b the field from Jer 32:9
all that he had and *b* Matt 13:46
For you were *b* at a 1 Cor 6:20
denying the Lord who *b* 2 Pet 2:1

BOUND

he *b* Isaac his son Gen 22:9
she *b* the scarlet cord Josh 2:21
b him with two new Judg 15:13
b him with bronze Judg 16:21
of the wicked have *b* Ps 119:61
cast three men *b* Dan 3:24
b the waters in a Prov 30:4
not been closed or *b* Is 1:6
on earth will be *b* Matt 16:19
b hand and foot with John 11:44
b at the four corners Acts 10:11
And see, now I go *b* Acts 20:22
of Israel I am *b* Acts 28:20
who has a husband is *b* Rom 7:2
Are you *b* to a wife 1 Cor 7:27
Devil and Satan, and *b* Rev 20:2

BOUNDARY

b that they may not Ps 104:9

BOUNDS

You shall set *b* Ex 19:12
I will set your *b* Ex 23:31

BOUNTIFUL

the miser said to be *b* Is 32:5
you into a *b* country Jer 2:7

BOUNTIFULLY

Because He has dealt *b* Ps 13:6
and he who sows *b* 2 Cor 9:6

BOW

sons *b* down to you Gen 27:29
brothers indeed come to *b* Gen 37:10
b remained in strength Gen 49:24
You shall not *b* Ex 23:24
to serve them and *b* Judg 2:19
b is renewed in my Job 29:20
Judah the Song of the *B* 2 Sam 1:18
will not trust in my *b* Ps 44:6
He breaks the *b* Ps 46:9
like a deceitful *b* Ps 78:57
let us worship and *b* Ps 95:6
B down Your heavens Ps 144:5
Me every knee shall *b* Is 45:23
not save them by *b* Hos 1:7
knee shall *b* to Me Rom 14:11
For this reason I *b* Eph 3:14
Jesus every knee should *b* Phil 2:10
who sat on it had a *b* Rev 6:2

BOWED

stood all around and *b* Gen 37:7
b the heavens also 2 Sam 22:10
whose knees have not *b* 1 Kin 19:18
They have *b* down and Ps 20:8
And they *b* the knee Matt 27:29
men who have not *b* Rom 11:4

BOWED THEIR HEADS

then they *b* and worshiped Ex 4:31
So the people *b* Ex 12:27
b and prostrated 1 Chr 29:20
b and worshiped the Lord Neh 8:6

BOWL

his hand in the *b* Prov 19:24
or the golden *b* Eccl 12:6
and poured out his *b* Rev 16:2

BOWLS

who drink wine from *b* Amos 6:6
a harp, and golden *b* Rev 5:8
Go and pour out the *b* Rev 16:1
who had the seven *b* Rev 21:9

BOWS

"The *b* of the mighty 1 Sam 2:4

BOWSTRING

He has loosed my *b* Job 30:11

BOX

Judas had the money *b* John 13:29

BOY

b to Hagar, and sent her Gen 21:14
Do not sin against the *b* Gen 42:22
the *b* Samuel ministered 1 Sam 3:1
B Jesus lingered behind Luke 2:43

BOYS

Shall be full of *b* Zech 8:5

BOZRAH

City of Edom, Gen 36:33
Destruction of, foretold, Amos 1:12
Figurative of Messiah's victory, Is 63:1

BRACELET

b that was on his arm, 2 Sam 1:10

BRACELETS

two *b* for her wrists Gen 24:22
of gold: armlets and *b* Num 31:50
b on their wrists Ezek 23:42

BRAIDED

not with *b* hair or 1 Tim 2:9

BRAMBLE

gather grapes from a *b* Luke 6:44

BRANCH

blossoms on one *b* Ex 25:33
b will not be green Job 15:32
from Israel, palm *b* Is 9:14
B shall grow out of Is 11:1
raise to David a *B* Jer 23:5
grow up to David a *B* Jer 33:15
forth My Servant the *B* Zech 3:8
whose name is the *B* Zech 6:12
b has already become Matt 24:32
b that bears fruit He John 15:2
b cannot bear fruit John 15:4
he is cast out as a *b* John 15:6

BRANCHES

in the sun, and his *b* Job 8:16
and bring forth *b* Job 14:9
and cut down the *b* Is 18:5
and its *b* are broken Jer 11:16
His *b* shall spread Hos 14:6
of the air nested in its *b* Luke 13:19
vine, you are the *b* John 15:5
root is holy, so are the *b* Rom 11:16
b were broken off Rom 11:17

BRAND

Is this not a *b* plucked Zech 3:2

BRASS

become sounding *b* 1 Cor 13:1
feet were like fine *b* Rev 1:15

BRAVE

in the faith, be *b* 1 Cor 16:13

BREACH

before Him in the *b* Ps 106:23
the Repairer of the *B* Is 58:12

BREACHES

Heal its *b*, for it is Ps 60:2

BREAD

See FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD;
UNLEAVENED BREAD

face you shall eat *b* Gen 3:19
of Salem brought out *b* Gen 14:18
"Behold, I will rain *b* Ex 16:4
shall eat unleavened *b* Ex 23:15
not live by *b* alone Deut 8:3
lives, I do not have *b* 1 Kin 17:12
new wine, a land of *b* 2 Kin 18:32
that his life abhors *b* Job 33:20
people as they eat *b* Ps 14:4
Can He give *b* also Ps 78:20
up late, to eat the *b* Ps 127:2
her poor with the *b* Ps 132:15
For they eat the *b* Prov 4:17
b eaten in secret is Prov 9:17
B gained by deceit is Prov 20:17

Go, eat your *b* with Eccl 9:7
Cast your *b* upon the Eccl 11:1
b will be given him Is 33:16
for what is not *b* Is 55:2
to share your *b* Is 58:7
We get our *b* at the Lam 5:9
who give me my *b* Hos 2:5
For their *b* shall be Hos 9:4
And lack of *b* in all Amos 4:6
these stones become *b* Matt 4:3
not live by *b* alone Matt 4:4
this day our daily *b* Matt 6:11
eating, Jesus took *b* Matt 26:26
no bag, no *b*, no copper Mark 6:8
is he who shall eat *b* Luke 14:15
gives you the true *b* John 6:32
I am the *b* of life John 6:48
having dipped the *b* John 13:26
b which we break 1 Cor 10:16
He was betrayed took *b* 1 Cor 11:23
as you eat this *b* 1 Cor 11:26
did we eat anyone's *b* 2 Thess 3:8
and eat their own *b* 2 Thess 3:12

BREAKTH

is as great as its *b* Rev 21:16

BREAK

that you shall *b* his yoke Gen 27:40
nor shall you *b* one of its Ex 12:46
lest the LORD *b* out against Ex 19:22
B off the golden earrings Ex 32:2
b their bones and Num 24:8
never *b* My covenant Judg 2:1
torment my soul, and *b* Job 19:2
They *b* up my path Job 30:13
B their teeth in their Ps 58:6
And now they *b* down Ps 74:6
b My statutes and do Ps 89:31
covenant I will not *b* Ps 89:34
reed He will not *b* Is 42:3
and that you *b* every yoke Is 58:6
your light shall *b* forth Is 58:8
Remember, do not *b* Jer 14:21
b your fallow ground, Hos 10:12
and where thieves *b* in Matt 6:19
reed He will not *b* Matt 12:20
they did not *b* His legs John 19:33
together to *b* bread Acts 20:7
bread which we *b*, 1 Cor 10:16
B forth and shout, Gal 4:27

BREAKING

in the *b* of bread Acts 2:42
b bread from house to Acts 2:46
weeping and *b* my heart Acts 21:13
dishonor God through *b* Rom 2:23

BREAKS

He *b* in pieces mighty Job 34:24
My soul *b* with longing Ps 119:20
Until the day *b* Song 2:17
Whoever therefore *b* Matt 5:19

BREAST

back on Jesus' *b* John 13:25

BREASTPLATE

a *b*, an ephod Ex 28:4
righteousness as a *b* Is 59:17
having put on the *b* Eph 6:14

BREASTS

blessings of the *b* Gen 49:25
on My mother's *b* Ps 22:9
doe, let her *b* satisfy Prov 5:19
Your two *b* are like Song 4:5
b which nursed You Luke 11:27
done, beat their *b* Luke 23:48

BREATH

nostrils the *b* of life Gen 2:7
at the blast of the *b* 2 Sam 22:16
that there was no *b* 1 Kin 17:17
perish, and by the *b* Job 4:9
as long as my *b* Job 27:3
has made me, and the *b* Job 33:4

You take away their *b* Ps 104:29
Man is like a *b* Ps 144:4
everything that has *b* Ps 150:6
they all have one *b* Eccl 3:19
from it, who gives *b* Is 42:5
"Surely I will cause *b* Ezek 37:5
God who holds your *b* Dan 5:23
gives to all life, *b* Acts 17:25
consume with the *b* 2 Thess 2:8
power to give *b* Rev 13:15

BREATH OF LIFE

into his nostrils the *b* Gen 2:7
flesh in which is the *b* Gen 6:17
flesh in which is the *b* Gen 7:15
b from God entered them Rev 11:11

BREATHE

me, and such as *b* Ps 27:12
winds, O breath, and *b* Ezek 37:9

BREATHED

and *b* into his nostrils the Gen 2:7
a loud voice, and *B* His Mark 15:37
He *b* on them, and said John 20:22
fell down and *b* his last Acts 5:5
at his feet and *b* her last Acts 5:10

BREATHES

indeed he *b* his last Job 14:10

BRETHREN

presence of all his *b* Gen 16:12
be lifted above his *b* Deut 17:20
how good it is for *b* to Ps 133:1
and you are all *b* Matt 23:8
least of these My *b* Matt 25:40
Go and tell My *b* Matt 28:10
Men and *b*, this Scripture Acts 1:16
six *b* accompanied me Acts 11:12
firstborn among many *b* Rom 8:29
to judge between his *b* 1 Cor 6:5
thus sin against the *b* 1 Cor 8:12
over five hundred *b* 1 Cor 15:6
perils among false *b* 2 Cor 11:26
b secretly brought Gal 3:24
Finally, my *b*, be strong Eph 6:10
Greet all the *b* with 1 Thess 5:26
to be made like His *b* Heb 2:17
sincere love of the *b* 1 Pet 1:22
because we love the *b* 1 John 3:14
our lives for the *b* 1 John 3:16
does not receive the *b* 3 John 10
for the accuser of our *b* Rev 12:10
of your *b* the prophets Rev 22:9

BRIBE

you shall take no *b* Ex 23:8
b blinds the eyes Deut 16:19
b debases the heart Eccl 7:7

BRIBERY

consume the tents of *b* Job 15:34

BRIBES

hand is full of *b* Ps 26:10
but he who hates *b* Prov 15:27
but he who receives *b* Prov 29:4
everyone loves *b* Is 1:23
the just and taking *b* Amos 5:12

BRICK

people straw to make *b* Ex 5:7
incense on altars of *b* Is 65:3
Make strong the *b* Nah 3:14

BRICKS

"Come, let us make *b* Gen 11:3
b which they made Ex 5:8
deliver the quota of *b* Ex 5:18
b have fallen down Is 9:10

BRIDE

them on you as a *b* Is 49:18
He who has the *b* John 3:29
I will show you the *b* Rev 21:9
the Spirit and the *b* Rev 22:17

BRIDEGROOM

righteousness, as a *b* Is 61:10

and as the *b* rejoices Is 62:5
 mourn as long as the *b* Matt 9:15
b will be taken away Matt 9:15
 went out to meet the *b* Matt 25:1
b fast while the Mark 2:19
 the friend of the *b* John 3:29

BRIDLE

harnessed with bit and *b* Ps 32:9
b the whole body James 3:2

BRIER

b shall come up the Is 55:13
 longer be a pricking *b* Ezek 28:24
 of them is like a *b* Mic 7:4

BRIERS

there shall come up *b* Is 5:6
 their words, though *b* Ezek 2:6

BRIGHTER

Her Nazirites were *b* Lam 4:7
 a light from heaven, *b* Acts 26:13

BRIGHTNESS

From the *b* before Him 2 Sam 22:13
 and kings to the *b* Is 60:3
 goes forth as *b* Is 62:1
 very dark, with no *b* Amos 5:20
 who being the *b* Heb 1:3

BRIMSTONE

Then the LORD rained *b* Gen 19:24
b is scattered on his Job 18:15
 fire, smoke, and *b* Rev 9:17
 the lake of fire and *b* Rev 20:10

BRING

LORD your God will *b* Deut 30:3
b back his soul Job 33:30
 for they *b* down Ps 55:3
 Lord said, "I will *b* Ps 68:22
B forth your strong Is 41:21
 He will *b* forth justice Is 42:3
b My righteousness Is 46:13
 Though they *b* up their Hos 9:12
 she will *b* forth a Son Matt 1:21
b no fruit to maturity Luke 8:14
b this Man's blood Acts 5:28
 Who shall *b* a charge Rom 8:33
b Christ down from Rom 10:6
b Christ up from the Rom 10:7
 even so God will *b* 1 Thess 4:14

BROAD

set me in a *b* place Ps 118:5
b is the way that Matt 7:13
 their phylacteries *b* Matt 23:5

BROKE

b them at the foot of Ex 32:19
b open the fountain Ps 74:15
 covenant which they *b* Jer 31:32
 He blessed and *b* Matt 14:19
b the flask and poured Mark 14:3
b the legs of the John 19:32

BROKEN

he has *b* My covenant Gen 17:14
 I am like a *b* vessel Ps 31:12
 their bows shall be *b* Ps 37:15
 He has *b* his covenant Ps 55:20
 heart the spirit is *b* Prov 15:13
b spirit dries the Prov 17:22
 but who can bear a *b* Prov 18:14
 in the staff of this *b* Is 36:6
 heart within me is *b* Jer 23:9
 is oppressed and *b* Hos 5:11
 this stone will be *b* Matt 21:44
 Scripture cannot be *b* John 10:35
 is My body which is *b* 1 Cor 11:24

BROKENHEARTED

He heals the *b* and Ps 147:3
 sent Me to heal the *b* Is 61:1
 sent Me to heal the *b* Luke 4:18

BRONZE

So Moses made a *b* Num 21:9

your head shall be *b* Deut 28:23
b serpent that Moses 2 Kin 18:4
 Or is my flesh *b* Job 6:12
b as rotten wood Job 41:27
 broken the gates of *b* Ps 107:16
b I will bring Is 60:17
b walls against the Jer 1:18
 people a fortified *b* Jer 15:20
 a third kingdom of *b* Dan 2:39
 make your hooves *b* Mic 4:13
 were mountains of *b* Zech 6:1

BROOD

The *b* of evildoers Is 14:20
B of vipers Matt 12:34
 hen gathers her *b* Luke 13:34

BROOD OF VIPERS

he said to them, "B Matt 3:7
B! How can you, being Matt 12:34
 Serpents, *b*! How can Matt 23:33
 baptized by him, "B Luke 3:7

BROOK

stones from the *b* 1 Sam 17:40
 shall drink of the *b* Ps 110:7
 disciples over the *B* John 18:1

BROOK CHERITH

God hides Elijah here and the ravens
 feed him, 1 Kin 17:3-6

BROOKS

good land, a land of *b* Deut 8:7
b that pass away Job 6:15
 for the water *b* Ps 42:1

BROTHER

"Where is Abel your *b* Gen 4:9
 he were my friend or *b* Ps 35:14
 speak against your *b* Ps 50:20
 and a *b* is born for Prov 17:17
b offended is harder Prov 18:19
 has neither son nor *b* Eccl 4:8
 and do not trust any *b* Jer 9:4
 he pursued his *b* Amos 1:11
 Was not Esau Jacob's *b* Mal 1:2
b will deliver up Matt 10:21
 how often shall my *b* Matt 18:21
 "Teacher, tell my *b* Luke 12:13
b will rise again John 11:23
 do you judge your *b* Rom 14:10
b goes to law against 1 Cor 6:6
 shall the weak *b* 1 Cor 8:11
 slave—a beloved *b* Phil 1:16
 He who loves his *b* 1 John 2:10
 and murdered his *b* 1 John 3:12
 Whoever hates his *b* 1 John 3:15
b sinning a sin which 1 John 5:16
 I, John, both your *b* Rev 1:9

BROTHERHOOD

the covenant of *b* Amos 1:9
 I might break the *b* Zech 11:14
 Love the *b* 1 Pet 2:17
 experienced by your *b* 1 Pet 5:9

BROTHERLY

to one another with *b* Rom 12:10
b love continue Heb 13:1

BROTHER'S

Am I my *b* keeper Gen 4:9
 at the speck in your *b* Matt 7:3

BROTHERS

My *b* have dealt Job 6:15
 a stranger to my *b* Ps 69:8
 is My mother, or My *b* Mark 3:33
b are these who hear Luke 8:21
b did not believe John 7:5
 love as *b*, be tenderhearted 1 Pet 3:8

BROUGHT

He *b* out His people Ps 105:43
 The king has *b* me into Song 1:4
 to heaven, will be *b* Luke 10:15

BRUISE

He shall *b* your head Gen 3:15

LORD binds up the *b* Is 30:26
 the LORD to *b* Him Is 53:10

BRUISED

b reed He will not Is 42:3
 He was *b* for our Is 53:5
b reed He will not Matt 12:20

BRUTAL

b men who are Ezek 21:31

BUCKET

are as a drop in a *b* Is 40:15

BUCKLER

be your shield and *b* Ps 91:4

BUD

it bring forth and *b* Is 55:10

BUFFET

of Satan to *b* me 2 Cor 12:7

BUILD

b ourselves a city Gen 11:4
 cities which you did not *b* Deut 6:10
 shall *b* with whole stones Deut 27:6
b an altar to the LORD Judg 6:26
 will *b* him a sure house 1 Sam 2:35
 "Would you *b* a house 2 Sam 7:5
b a temple for the name 1 Kin 8:17
 that the LORD will *b* 1 Chr 17:10
 Solomon who shall *b* 1 Chr 28:6
 able to *b* Him a temple 2 Chr 2:6
b the house of the LORD Ezra 1:5
 and let us *b* the wall of Neh 2:17
B the walls of Jerusalem Ps 51:18
 labor in vain who *b* Ps 127:1
 afterward *b* your house Prov 24:27
 down, and a time to *b* Eccl 3:3
 house that you will *b* Is 66:1
 I will *b* them and not Jer 24:6
 Who *b* up Zion with Mic 3:10
b the desolate places Mal 1:4
 "This man began to *b* Luke 14:30
 What house will you *b* Acts 7:49
b you up and give you Acts 20:32
 named, lest I should *b* Rom 15:20
 For if I *b* again Gal 2:18

BUILDER

me, as a wise master *b* 1 Cor 3:10
 foundations, whose *b* Heb 11:10

BUILDERS

The stone which the *b* Ps 118:22
 The stone which the *b* Matt 21:42
 The stone which the *b* Mark 12:10
 The stone which the *b* Luke 20:17
 was rejected by you Acts 4:11
 The stone which the *b* 1 Pet 2:7

BUILDING

field, you are God's *b* 1 Cor 3:9
 destroyed, we have a *b* 2 Cor 5:1
 in whom the whole *b* Eph 2:21
 But you, beloved, *b* Jude 20

BUILDS

The LORD *b* up Ps 147:2
 The wise woman *b* Prov 14:1
 one take heed how he *b* 1 Cor 3:10

BUILT

Wisdom has *b* her house Prov 9:1
 my works great, I *b* Eccl 2:4
 Babylon, that I have *b* Dan 4:30
 to a wise man who *b* Matt 7:24
 a foolish man who *b* Matt 7:26
 work which he has *b* 1 Cor 3:14
 having been *b* on the Eph 2:20
 rooted and *b* up in Him Col 2:7
 For every house is *b* Heb 3:4
 stones, are being *b* 1 Pet 2:5

BULL

I will not take a *b* Ps 50:9
 like an untrained *b* Jer 31:18

BULLS

in the blood of *b* Is 1:11

For if the blood of *b* Heb 9:13

BULRUSHES

she took an ark of *b* Ex 2:3

BULWARKS

Mark well her *b* Ps 48:13
for walls and *b* Is 26:1

BUNDLE

each man's *b* of money Gen 42:35
A *b* of myrrh is my Song 1:13

BURDEN

You have laid the *b* Num 11:11
one knows his own *b* 2 Chr 6:29
so that I am a *b* Job 7:20
Cast your *b* on the Ps 55:22
the grasshopper is a *b* Eccl 12:5
in that day that his *b* Is 10:27
its reproach is a *b* Zeph 3:18
easy and My *b* is light Matt 11:30
upon you no greater *b* Acts 15:28
as it may, I did not *b* 2 Cor 12:16
we might not be a *b* 1 Thess 2:9
on you no other *b* Rev 2:24

BURDENED

but you have *b* Me with Is 43:24
were *b* beyond measure 2 Cor 1:8
this tent groan, being *b* 2 Cor 5:4
be eased and you *b* 2 Cor 8:13
not let the church be *b* 1 Tim 5:16

BURDENS

and looked at their *b* Ex 2:11
For they bind heavy *b* Matt 23:4
Bear one another's *b* Gal 6:2

BURDENSOME

b task God has given Eccl 1:13
his life will be *b* Is 15:4
I myself was not *b* 2 Cor 12:13
commandments are not *b* ... 1 John 5:3

BURIAL

as property for a *b* place ... Gen 23:20
Indeed he has no *b* Eccl 6:3
she did it for My *b* Matt 26:12
to anoint My body for *b* Mark 14:8
for the day of My *b* John 12:7
Stephen to his *b* Acts 8:2

BURIED

and there will I be *b* Ruth 1:17
I saw the wicked *b* Eccl 8:10
away the body and *b* Matt 14:12
also died and was *b* Luke 16:22
Therefore we were *b* Rom 6:4
and that He was *b* 1 Cor 15:4
b with Him in baptism Col 2:12

BURN

the bush does not *b* Ex 3:3
that My wrath may *b* Ex 32:10
b their chariots Josh 11:6
both will *b* together Is 1:31
"Did not our heart *b* Luke 24:32
eat her flesh and *b* Rev 17:16

BURNED

If anyone's work is *b* 1 Cor 3:15
my body to be *b* 1 Cor 13:3
whose end is to be *b* Heb 6:8
be touched and that *b* Heb 12:18
are *b* outside the camp Heb 13:11
in it will be *b* 2 Pet 3:10
all green grass was *b* Rev 8:7

BURNING

b torch that passed Gen 15:17
with severe *b* fever Deut 28:22
on his lips like a *b* Prov 16:27
b fire shut up in my Jer 20:9
b jealousy against the Ezek 36:5
plucked from the *b* Amos 4:11
a great mountain *b* Rev 8:8
fell from heaven, *b* Rev 8:10

BURNT

offered *b* offerings Gen 8:20

lamb for a *b* offering Gen 22:7
and *b* offerings, that Ex 10:25
took a *b* offering and Ex 18:12
shall set the altar of the *b* Ex 40:6
is a *b* sacrifice of the herd Lev 1:3
And they offered on it *b* Josh 8:31
offer a *b* sacrifice with Judg 6:26
if you offer a *b* offering Judg 13:16
accepted a *b* offering Judg 13:23
b offerings on that altar 1 Kin 3:4
offered *b* offerings 1 Kin 9:25
offer *b* offerings on it, Ezra 3:2
delight in *b* offering Ps 51:16
b offerings are not Jer 6:20
sacrificing *b* offerings Ezek 43:18
Though you offer Me *b* Amos 5:22

BURST

it is ready to *b* Job 32:19
with doors, when it *b* Job 38:8
the new wine will *b* Luke 5:37
furling headlong, he *b* Acts 1:18

BURY

b your dead in the Gen 23:6
was no one to *b* them Ps 79:3
go and *b* my father Matt 8:21
and let the dead *b* Matt 8:22

BUSH

from the midst of a *b* Ex 3:2
Him who dwelt in the *b* Deut 33:16
to him in the *b* Acts 7:35

BUSINESS

in ships, who do *b* Ps 107:23
farm, another to his *b* Matt 22:5
about My Father's *b* Luke 2:49

BUSYBODIES

at all, but are *b* 2 Thess 3:11
but also gossips and *b* 1 Tim 5:13

BUT I SAY TO YOU

B that whoever is angry Matt 5:22
B that whoever looks Matt 5:28
B that whoever divorces Matt 5:32
B, do not swear at all Matt 5:34
B, love your enemies, Matt 5:44
B, it will be more Matt 11:22
B that for every idle Matt 12:36
B that Elijah has come Matt 17:12
B, I will not drink of Matt 26:29
B that Elijah has also Mark 9:13
B who hear: Love Luke 6:27
B that it will be more Luke 10:12

BUTLER

b did not remember Gen 40:23

BUTTER

So he took *b* and milk Gen 18:8
were smoother than *b* Ps 55:21
of milk produces *b* Prov 30:33

BUY

in Egypt to *b* grain Gen 41:57
B it back in the presence Ruth 4:4
B the threshing floor 2 Sam 24:21
B the truth, and do not Prov 23:23
Yes, come, *b* wine and Is 55:1
B the field for money, and Jer 32:25
will *b* fields for money Jer 32:44
that we may *b* the poor Amos 8:6
b food for all these Luke 9:13
"B those things we John 13:29
rejoice, those who *b* 1 Cor 7:30
spend a year there, *b* James 4:13
I counsel you to *b* Rev 3:18
and that no one may *b* Rev 13:17

BUYER

nothing," cries the *b* Prov 20:14
as with the *b*, so with Is 24:2
"Let not the *b* rejoice Ezek 7:12

BUYS

a field and *b* it Prov 31:16
has and *b* that field Matt 13:44

b their merchandise Rev 18:11

BYGONE

b generations Acts 14:16

BYWORD

But He has made me a *b* Job 17:6
You made us a *b* Ps 44:14

CAESAR

Augustus Caesar (31 B.C.–A.D. 14):
Decree of brings Joseph and Mary to
Bethlehem, Luke 2:1

Tiberius Caesar (A.D. 14–37):
Christ's ministry dated by, Luke
3:1–23

Tribute paid to, Matt 22:17–21

Jews side with, John 19:12

Claudius Caesar (A.D. 41–54):

Famine in time of, Acts 11:28

Banished Jews from Rome, Acts 18:2

Nero Caesar (A.D. 54–68):

Paul appealed to, Acts 25:8–12

Christian converts in household of,
Phil 4:22

Paul tried before, 2 Tim 4:16–18

Called Augustus, Acts 25:21

CAESAREA

Roman capital of Palestine, Acts 12:19;
23:33

Paul escorted to, Acts 23:23–33

Paul imprisoned at; appeals to Caesar,
Acts 25:4, 8–13

Peter preaches at, Acts 10:34–43

Paul preaches at, Acts 9:26–30; 18:22;
21:8

CAESAREA PHILIPPI

A city in northern Palestine; scene of
Peter's great confession, Matt
16:13–20

Probable site of the transfiguration,
Matt 17:1–3

CAKE

c is full of birds Jer 5:27

foul spirit, and a *c* Rev 18:2

CAIAPHAS

Son-in-law of Annas; high priest, John
18:13

Makes prophecy, John 11:49–52

Jesus appears before, John 18:23, 24

Apostles appear before, Acts 4:1–22

CAIN

Adam's first son, Gen 4:1

His offering rejected, Gen 4:2–7; Heb
11:4

Murders Abel; is exiled; settles in Nod,
Gen 4:8–17

A type of evil, Jude 11

CAKE

Ephraim is a *c* Hos 7:8

CAKES

Sustain me with *c* Song 2:5
and love the raisin *c* Hos 3:1

CALAMITIES

refuge, until these *c* Ps 57:1

CALAMITY

for the day of their *c* Deut 32:35
will laugh at your *c* Prov 1:26

c shall come suddenly Prov 6:15
If there is *c* in a Amos 3:6

CALCULATED

c the dust of the Is 40:12

CALDRON

this city is the *c* Ezek 11:3

CALEB

Sent as spy; gives good report; re-
warded, Num 13:2, 6, 27, 30; 14:5–9,
24–38

Inherits Hebron, Josh 14:6-15
 Conquers his territory with Othniel's
 help, Josh 15:13-19

CALF

and made a molded c Ex 32:4
 They made a c in Horeb Ps 106:19
 is, than a fattened c Prov 15:17
 like a stubborn c Hos 4:16
 Your c is rejected Hos 8:5
 And bring the fattened c Luke 15:23
 creature like a c Rev 4:7

CALL

Then men began to c Gen 4:26
 I c heaven and earth Deut 4:26
 I did not c, my son 1 Sam 3:6
 I will c to the LORD 1 Sam 12:17
 c their lands after Ps 49:11
 To you, O men, I c Prov 8:4
 c upon Him while He Is 55:6
 c the Sabbath a delight Is 58:13
 'C to Me, and I will Jer 33:3
 Arise, c on your God Jon 1:6
 They will c on My name Zech 13:9
 c His name JESUS Matt 1:21
 c the righteous Matt 9:13
 Why do you c Me good Mark 10:18
 shall c his name John Luke 1:13
 shall c His name JESUS Luke 1:31
 Lord our God will c Acts 2:39
 you must not c common Acts 10:15
 c them My people Rom 9:25
 then shall they c Rom 10:14
 For God did not c 1 Thess 4:7
 Let him c for the elders James 5:14
 c and election sure 2 Pet 1:10

CALLED

c the light Day Gen 1:5
 c his wife's name Eve Gen 3:20
 "I, the LORD, have c Is 42:6
 I have c you by your Is 43:1
 The LORD has c Me from Is 49:1
 and out of Egypt I c Hos 11:1
 "Out of Egypt I c Matt 2:15
 a city c Nazareth Matt 2:23
 For many are c Matt 20:16
 to those who are the c Rom 8:28
 these He also c Rom 8:30
 But God has c us to 1 Cor 7:15
 praises of Him who c 1 Pet 2:9
 knowledge of Him who c 2 Pet 1:3
 c children of God 1 John 3:1

CALLED BY MY NAME

if My people who are c 2 Chr 7:14
 everyone who is c Is 43:7
 a nation that was not c Is 65:1
 this house which is c Jer 7:10
 the city which is c Jer 25:29
 house which is c Jer 32:34
 the Gentiles who are c Amos 9:12
 the Gentiles who are c Acts 15:17

CALLING

the gifts and the c Rom 11:29
 For you see your c 1 Cor 1:26
 remain in the same c 1 Cor 7:20
 to walk worthy of the c Eph 4:1
 in one hope of your c Eph 4:4
 us with a holy c 2 Tim 1:9
 of the heavenly c Heb 3:1

CALLS

c them all by name Ps 147:4
 there is no one who c Is 64:7
 David himself c Mark 12:37
 c his own sheep John 10:3
 For "whoever c Rom 10:13

CALM

the sea will become c Jon 1:12
 there was a great c Matt 8:26

CALMED

Surely I have c Ps 131:2

CALVARY

Christ crucified there, Luke 23:33
 Same as "Golgotha" in Hebrew, John
 19:17

CALVES

made two c of gold 1 Kin 22:28
 their cow c without Job 21:10
 like stall-fed c Mal 4:2
 blood of goats and c Heb 9:12
 he took the blood of c Heb 9:19

CAMEL

it is easier for a c Matt 19:24
 and swallow a c Matt 23:24

CAMEL'S

John was clothed with c Mark 1:6

CAMP

"This is God's c Gen 32:2
 who went before the c Ex 14:19
 to Him, outside the c Heb 13:13

CAN

I c do all things Phil 4:13

CANA

A village of upper Galilee; home of Na-
 thanael, John 21:2
 Site of Christ's first miracle, John
 2:1-11
 Healing at, John 4:46-54

CANAAN

A son of Ham, Gen 10:6
 Cursed by Noah, Gen 9:20-25
 — Promised Land, Gen 12:5

Boundaries of, Gen 10:19
 God's promises concerning, given to
 Abraham, Gen 12:1-3
 to Isaac, Gen 26:2, 3
 to Jacob, Gen 28:10-13
 to Israel, Ex 3:8
 Conquest of, announced, Gen 15:7-21
 preceded by spying expedition, Num
 13:1-33
 delayed by unbelief, Num 14:1-35
 accomplished by the Lord, Josh
 23:1-16
 achieved only in part, Judg 1:21,
 27-36

CANAANITES

Israelites commanded to:
 drive them out; not serve their gods,
 Ex 23:23-33
 shun their abominations, Lev 18:24-
 30
 not make covenants or intermarry
 with them, Deut 7:1-3

CANCER

will spread like c 2 Tim 2:17

CANE

bought Me no sweet c Is 43:24
 Sheba, and sweet c Jer 6:20

CANOPIES

He made darkness c 2 Sam 22:12

CANOPY

His c around Him was Ps 18:11

CAPERNAUM

Simon Peter's home, Mark 1:21, 29
 Christ performs healings there, Matt
 8:5-17; 9:1-8; Mark 1:21-28; John
 4:46-54
 preaches there, Mark 9:33-50; John
 6:24-71
 uses as headquarters, Matt 4:13-17
 pronounces judgment upon, Matt
 11:23, 24

CAPPADOCIA

Jews from, at Pentecost, Acts 2:1, 9
 Christians of, addressed by Peter, 1 Pet
 1:1

CAPSTONE

bring forth the c Zech 4:7

CAPTAIN

c of the guard, an Gen 39:1
 made Amasa c of the 2 Sam 17:25
 Nebuzaradan the c 2 Kin 25:11
 which, having no c Prov 6:7
 of troops and the c John 18:12
 to the c of the guard Acts 28:16

CAPTIVE

have led captivity c Ps 68:18
 of your neck, O c Is 52:2
 they shall now go c Amos 6:7
 and be led away c Luke 21:24
 He led captivity c Eph 4:8

CAPTIVES

will bring back the c Amos 9:14
 and return their c Zeph 2:7
 make c of gullible women 2 Tim 3:6

CAPTIVITY

bring you back from c Deut 30:3
 high, You have led c Ps 68:18
 Judah has gone into c Lam 1:3
 from David until the c Matt 1:17
 and bringing me into c Rom 7:23
 every thought into c 2 Cor 10:5
 on high, He led c Eph 4:8
 shall go into c Rev 13:10

CARCASS

honey were in the c Judg 14:8
 For wherever the c Matt 24:28

CARE

and let her c for him 1 Kin 1:2
 into the c of Hegai the Esth 2:8
 Your c has preserved my Job 10:12
 the LORD will take c of me Ps 27:10
 do You c about anyone, Matt 22:16
 to an inn, and took c of Luke 10:34
 "Lord, do You not c Luke 10:40
 not c about the sheep John 10:13
 you to be without c 1 Cor 7:32
 same c for one another 1 Cor 12:25
 but that our c for you 2 Cor 7:12
 who will sincerely c Phil 2:20
 that now at last your c for Phil 4:10
 how will he take c 1 Tim 3:5
 that You take c of him Heb 2:6
 casting all your c 1 Pet 5:7

CARED

he said, not that he c John 12:6

CAREFUL

c to observe all the Deut 17:19
 shall be c to observe 2 Kin 17:37
 c to maintain good works Titus 3:8

CAREFULLY

c keep all these Deut 11:22
 choose his friends c Prov 12:26
 than love c concealed Prov 27:5
 I shall walk c all my Is 38:15
 you have c followed 1 Tim 4:6

CARELESS

but he who is c Prov 19:16

CARES

no one c for my soul Ps 142:4
 and are choked with c Luke 8:14
 He who is unmarried c 1 Cor 7:32
 for He c for you 1 Pet 5:7

CARMEL

City of Judah, Josh 15:55
 Site of Saul's victory, 1 Sam 15:12
 — A mountain of Palestine, Josh
 19:26
 Scene of Elijah's triumph, 1 Kin
 18:19-45
 Elisha visits, 2 Kin 2:25

CARNAL

spiritual, but I am c Rom 7:14

c mind is enmity Rom 8:7
for you are still c 1 Cor 3:3
our warfare are not c 2 Cor 10:4

CARNALLY

we may know them c Gen 19:5
that we may know him c Judg 19:22
c minded is death Rom 8:6

CAROUSE

count it pleasure to c 2 Pet 2:13

CAROUSING

be weighed down with c Luke 21:34

CARPENTER

Is this not the c Mark 6:3

CARRIED

the LORD your God c Deut 1:31
and c our sorrows Is 53:4
parted from them and c Luke 24:51
c me away in the Rev 17:3

CARRY

shall c me out of Egypt Gen 47:30
you shall c up my bones Ex 13:19
longer c the tabernacle 1 Chr 23:26
their hands cannot c Job 5:12
c them away like a Ps 90:5
to gray hairs I will c you Is 46:4
and c out great exploits Dan 11:32
I am not worthy to c Matt 3:11
C neither money bag Luke 10:4
for you to c your bed John 5:10
c you where you do not John 21:18
it is certain we can c 1 Tim 6:7

CARRYING

a man will meet you c Mark 14:13
always c about in the 2 Cor 4:10

CART

ark of the LORD on the c 1 Sam 6:11
ark of God on a new c 2 Sam 6:3
Every c had four bronze 1 Kin 7:30
and sin as if with a c rope Is 5:18
as a c is weighed down Amos 2:13

CARTS

and Joseph gave them c Gen 45:21
made ten c of bronze 1 Kin 7:27
the ten c, and ten lavers 1 Kin 7:43
one Sea, and the c 2 Kin 25:16

CARVE

that its maker should c it Hab 2:18

CARVED

for yourself a c image Ex 20:4
shall burn the c images Deut 7:25
the c images of their gods Deut 12:3
son, to make a c image Judg 17:3
Micah's c image which Judg 18:31
Then he c cherubim 1 Kin 6:35
He even set a c image, 2 Chr 33:7
to shame who serve c Ps 97:7
workman to prepare a c Is 40:20
the c images of Babylon Jer 51:47
I will cut off the c image Nah 1:14

CASE

God has judged my c Gen 30:6
c that is too hard Deut 1:17
I have prepared my c Job 13:18
I would present my c Job 23:4
"Present your c Is 41:21
plead His c with all flesh Jer 25:31
My c with you face to Ezek 20:35
plead your c before the Mic 6:1
Him, until He pleads my c Mic 7:9
Festus laid Paul's c Acts 25:14

CASSIA

myrrh and aloes and c Ps 45:8

CAST

C out this bondwoman Gen 21:10
c him into this pit which Gen 37:22
c longing eyes on Joseph Gen 39:7
c it before Pharaoh, Ex 7:9

army He has c into the sea Ex 15:4
that I may c lots for you Josh 18:6
c two pillars of bronze 1 Kin 7:15
they c lots for their duty, 1 Chr 25:8
they c Pur (that is, the lot) Esth 3:7
had c Pur (that is, the lot), Esth 9:24
When they c you down Job 22:29
c away Their cords from Ps 2:3
c upon You from birth Ps 22:10
For My clothing they c lots Ps 22:18
Why are you c down Ps 42:5
But You have c us off Ps 44:9
c me away from Your Ps 51:11
C your burden on the Ps 55:22
He c on them the Ps 78:49
the LORD will not c Ps 94:14
me up and c me away Ps 102:10
The lot is c into the lap, Prov 16:33
the people c off restraint Prov 29:18
and the earth shall c Is 26:19
My sight, as I have c Jer 7:15
C away from you all Ezek 18:31
Did we not c three men Dan 3:24
brought Daniel and c Dan 6:16
c all our sins into Mic 7:19
whole body to be c Matt 5:29
c out demons in Your Matt 7:22
the kingdom will be c Matt 8:12
spirits, to c them out Matt 10:1
And if I c out demons by Matt 12:27
My clothing they c lots Matt 27:35
can Satan c out Satan Mark 3:23
In My name they will c Mark 16:17
do your sons c them out Luke 11:19
has power to c into hell Luke 12:5
His garments and c lots Luke 23:34
by no means c out John 6:37
C the net on the right John 21:6
c away His people Rom 11:1
C out the bondwoman Gal 4:30
c away your confidence Heb 10:35
c their crowns before Rev 4:10
the great dragon was c Rev 12:9
c him into the bottomless Rev 20:3
was c into the lake of fire Rev 20:15

CAST OUT DEMONS

c in Your name, Matt 7:22
raise the dead, c Matt 10:8
"This fellow does not c Matt 12:24
heal sicknesses and to c Mark 3:15
In My name they will c Mark 16:17
And if I c by Beelzebub, Luke 11:19
that fox, 'Behold, I c Luke 13:32

CASTING

nation which I am c Lev 20:23
Andrew his brother, c Matt 4:18
c down arguments 2 Cor 10:5
c all your care 1 Pet 5:7

CASTING OUT DEMONS

all Galilee, and c Mark 1:39
who does not follow us c Mark 9:38
someone c in Your name, Luke 9:49

CASTLE

are like the bars of a c Prov 18:19

CASTS

If Satan c out Satan Matt 12:26
perfect love c out 1 John 4:18

CATASTROPHE

bring such a c on this place Jer 19:3
not rise from the c that I Jer 51:64

CATCH

in wait to c the poor Ps 10:9
c Him in His words Mark 12:13
down your nets for a c Luke 5:4
From now on you will c Luke 5:10
seeking to c Him in Luke 11:54
they could not c Him in Luke 20:26

CATCHES

and the wolf c the John 10:12

c the wise in their 1 Cor 3:19

CATERPILLAR

their crops to the c Ps 78:46

CATTLE

c you shall take as Josh 8:2
does not let their c Ps 107:38

CAUGHT

behind him was a ram c Gen 22:13
and that night they c John 21:3
Spirit of the Lord c Acts 8:39
her Child was c up Rev 12:5

CAUSE

I would commit my c Job 5:8
my enemy without c Ps 7:4
hate me without a c Ps 35:19
c His face to shine Ps 67:1
C me to know the way Ps 143:8
one to plead his c Prov 18:17
God, Who pleads the c Is 51:22
He judged the c Jer 22:16
brother without a c Matt 5:22
hated Me without a c John 15:25
For this c I was born John 18:37

CAUSED

not c it to rain on the earth Gen 2:5
LORD God c a deep sleep Gen 2:21
LORD c the sea to go back Ex 14:21
Jonathan again c 1 Sam 20:17
pagan women c even him Neh 13:26
c the dawn to know its Job 38:12
which You have c me Ps 119:49
I have c to be carried Jer 29:4
the LORD has c the Lam 2:6
He c me to eat that scroll Ezek 3:2

CAVALRY

and cities for his c 1 Kin 9:19
on a horse with the c 1 Kin 20:20
their c comes from afar Hab 1:8

CAVE

daughters dwell in a c Gen 19:30
field and the c that is in Gen 23:11
him in the c of Machpelah Gen 25:9
in a c at Makkedah Josh 10:16
escaped to the c of 1 Sam 22:1
hidden them, fifty to a c 1 Kin 18:4
It was a c, and a stone John 11:38

CAVES

the people hid in c 1 Sam 13:6
rocks, and into the c Is 2:19
in dens and c of the Heb 11:38

CEASE

and night shall not c Gen 8:22
Why should the work c Neh 6:3
There the wicked c Job 3:17
He makes wars c Ps 46:9
C listening to Prov 19:27
when the grinders c Eccl 12:3
C to do evil Is 1:16
eyes flow and do not c Lam 3:49
cause all her mirth to c Hos 2:11
they did not c teaching Acts 5:42
tongues, they will c 1 Cor 13:8
do not c to give Eph 1:16
do not c to pray for Col 1:9

CEASED

c building the city Gen 11:8
the sea, and the sea c Jon 1:15
this woman has not c to Luke 7:45
offense of the cross has c Gal 5:11

CEASES

for the godly man c Ps 12:1

CEASING

c your work of faith 1 Thess 1:3
thank God without c 1 Thess 2:13
pray without c 1 Thess 5:17

CEDAR

dwell in a house of c 2 Sam 7:2

He shall grow like a c Ps 92:12
of our houses are c Song 1:17
it, paneling it with c Jer 22:14
Indeed Assyria was a c Ezek 31:3

CEDARS

the LORD breaks the c Ps 29:5
c of Lebanon which He Ps 104:16

CELEBRATE

you shall c your sabbath Lev 23:32
You shall c it in the Lev 23:41
to c the dedication with Neh 12:27
c yearly the fourteenth Esth 9:21

CELEBRATED

Herod's birthday was c Matt 14:6

CELESTIAL

but the glory of the c 1 Cor 15:40

CENCHREA

A harbor of Corinth, Acts 18:18
Home of Phoebe, Rom 16:1

CENSER

Aaron, each took his c Lev 10:1
Each man had a c Ezek 8:11
which had the golden c Heb 9:4
the angel took the c Rev 8:5

CENSUS

When you take the c of Ex 30:12
"Take a c of all the Num 1:2
Take a c of the people Num 26:4
Israel because of this c 1 Chr 27:24
the c in which David 2 Chr 2:17
c first took place while Luke 2:2
in the days of the c Acts 5:37

CENTER

the sanctuary in the c Ezek 48:8
side, and Jesus in the c John 19:18

CENTURION

c came to Him, pleading Matt 8:5
when the c, who stood Mark 15:39
when the c saw what Luke 23:47
Cornelius the c, a just Acts 10:22
said to the c who stood Acts 22:25
a c of the Augustan Acts 27:1

CENTURION'S

a certain c servant, who Luke 7:2

CEPHAS

Aramaic for Peter, John 1:42

CERAMIC

the iron mixed with c clay .. Dan 2:41

CEREMONIALLY

Israel and cleanse them c ... Num 8:6

CEREMONIES

rites and c you shall keep ... Num 9:3
as in the c of your fathers, ... Jer 34:5

CERTAIN

a c man of Bethlehem, Ruth 1:1
Know for c that on the 1 Kin 2:42
a c man clothed in linen, ... Dan 10:5
was a c landowner Matt 21:33
into the city to a c man ... Matt 26:18
But a c Samaritan, as he ... Luke 10:33
A c man had a fig tree Luke 13:6
A c man gave a great Luke 14:16
A c man had two sons Luke 15:11
There was a c rich man Luke 16:1
there was a c beggar Luke 16:20
there was a c nobleman ... John 4:46
c we can carry nothing 1 Tim 6:7
He designates a c day Heb 4:7
a c fearful expectation Heb 10:27

CERTAINLY NOT

C! Indeed, let God be true ... Rom 3:4
C! For then how will God ... Rom 3:6
the law through faith? C! ... Rom 3:31
C! How shall we who died ... Rom 6:2
law but under grace? C ... Rom 6:15
Is the law sin? C Rom 7:7

C! But sin, that it might Rom 7:13
with God? C Rom 9:14
cast away His people? C ... Rom 11:1
C! But through their fall, ... Rom 11:11
members of a harlot? C ... 1 Cor 6:15
a minister of sin? C Gal 2:17
C! For if there had been Gal 3:21

CERTAINTY

make you know the c Prov 22:21
you may know the c Luke 1:4

CERTIFICATE

writes her a c of divorce ... Deut 24:1
Where is the c of your Is 50:1
given her a c of divorce ... Jer 3:8
a man to write a c Mark 10:4

CERTIFIED

His testimony has c John 3:33

CHAFF

c that a storm Job 21:18
c which the wind Ps 1:4
Let them be like c Ps 35:5
be chased like the c Is 17:13
You shall conceive c Is 33:11
the day passes like c Zeph 2:2
He will burn up the c Matt 3:12

CHAIN

He has made my c Lam 3:7
pit and a great c Rev 20:1

CHAINED

of God is not c 2 Tim 2:9
the prisoners as if c Heb 13:3

CHAINS

their kings with c Ps 149:8
your neck with c Song 1:10
And his c fell off Acts 12:7
am, except for these c Acts 26:29
Remember my c Col 4:18
minister to me in my c Phil 1:13
delivered them into c 2 Pet 2:4

CHAINWORK

with wreaths of c 1 Kin 7:17
carved palm trees and c ... 2 Chr 3:5

CHAIR

and a table and a c 2 Kin 4:10

CHALCEDONY

sapphire, the third c Rev 21:19

CHALDEA

Originally, the southern portion of Babylonia, Gen 11:31
Applied later to all Babylonia, Dan 3:8
Abram came from, Gen 11:28-31

CHALDEANS

Attack Job, Job 1:17
Nebuchadnezzar, king of, 2 Kin 24:1
Jerusalem defeated by, 2 Kin 25:1-21
Babylon, "the glory of," Is 13:19
Predicted captivity of Jews among, Jer 25:1-26
God's agent, Hab 1:6

CHALK

he marks one out with c Is 44:13

CHALKSTONES

c that are beaten to dust Is 27:9

CHAMBER

went into his c and wept ... Gen 43:30
in his cool private c Judg 3:20
into an inner c to hide ... 2 Chr 18:24
go out from his c Joel 2:16

CHAMBERS

and the c of the south Job 9:9
brought me into his c Song 1:4
and his c by injustice Jer 22:13

CHAMPION

And a c went out from ... 1 Sam 17:4

CHANCE

time and c happen to Eccl 9:11

CHANGE

c his countenance Job 14:20
c the night into day Job 17:12
and who can make Him c ... Job 23:13
Because they do not c Ps 55:19
a cloak You will c Ps 102:26
with those given to c Prov 24:21
Can the Ethiopian c Jer 13:23
c times and law Dan 7:25
c their glory into Hos 4:7
the LORD, I do not c Mal 3:6
now and to c my tone Gal 4:20
there is also a c Heb 7:12

CHANGED

c my wages ten times, Gen 31:7
c his clothing, and came ... Gen 41:14
them, and they will be c ... Ps 102:26
But My people have c Jer 2:11
his countenance was c, ... Dan 5:9
c the glory of the Rom 1:23
but we shall all be c 1 Cor 15:51
up, and they will be c Heb 1:12
the priesthood being c Heb 7:12

CHANGERS'

and poured out the c John 2:15

CHANGES

c the times and the Dan 2:21

CHANNELS

c of the sea were seen Ps 18:15

CHANT

who c "Peace" while Mic 3:5

CHARACTER

and c, hope Rom 5:4
you know his proven c Phil 2:22

CHARCOAL

As c is to burning coals, .. Prov 26:21

CHARGE

My voice and kept My c Gen 26:5
shall not c him interest ... Ex 22:25
You shall not c interest ... Deut 23:19
in c of the music 1 Chr 15:22
kept the c of their God ... Neh 12:45
not sin nor c God with ... Job 1:22
His angels c over you Ps 91:11
His angels c over you Matt 4:6
His angels c over You Luke 4:10
not c them with this sin ... Acts 7:60
shall bring a c against ... Rom 8:33
of Christ without c 1 Cor 9:18
of God to you free of c ... 2 Cor 11:7
anyone's bread free of c ... 2 Thess 3:8
This c I commit to you, ... 1 Tim 1:18

CHARGED

May it not be c 2 Tim 4:16

CHARIOT

He took off their c Ex 14:25
that suddenly a c 2 Kin 2:11
makes the clouds His c Ps 104:3
and overtake this c Acts 8:29

CHARIOTEERS

killed seven hundred c ... 2 Sam 10:18

CHARIOTS

the clatter of his c Judg 5:28
Some trust in c Ps 20:7
The c of God are Ps 68:17

CHARITABLE

you do not do your c Matt 6:1
that your c deed Matt 6:4
c deeds which she Acts 9:36

CHARM

C is deceitful and Prov 31:30

CHARMED

may bite when it is not c ... Eccl 10:11
vipers which cannot be c ... Jer 8:17

CHARMERS

heed the voice of c Ps 58:5

CHARMS

the perfume boxes, the c Is 3:20
have scattered your c to Jer 3:13
who sew magic c Ezek 13:18

CHASE

Five of you shall c Lev 26:8
How could one c Deut 32:30
angel of the LORD c Ps 35:5

CHASTE

may present you as a c 2 Cor 11:2
to be discreet, c Titus 2:5
c conduct accompanied 1 Pet 3:2

CHASTEN

C your son while there Prov 19:18
is My desire, I will c Hos 10:10
a father does not c Heb 12:7
I love, I rebuke and c Rev 3:19

CHASTENED

c my soul with fasting Ps 69:10
c every morning Ps 73:14
The LORD has c me Ps 118:18
In vain I have c Jer 2:30
c us as seemed best Heb 12:10

CHASTENING

have not seen the c Deut 11:2
do not despise the c Job 5:17
I have borne c Job 34:31
a prayer when Your c Is 26:16
if you are without c Heb 12:8
Now no c seems to be Heb 12:11

CHASTENS

the LORD your God c you Deut 8:5
the LORD loves He c Heb 12:6

CHASTISE

and I, even I, will c Lev 26:28
c them according Hos 7:12
I will therefore c Luke 23:22

CHASTISED

father c you with whips, ... 1 Kin 12:11
have c me, and I was c Jer 31:18

CHASTISEMENT

the c for our peace Is 53:5

CHATTER

c leads only to poverty Prov 14:23

CHEAT

"You shall not c Lev 19:13
Beware lest anyone c Col 2:8

CHEATED

let yourselves be c 1 Cor 6:7
we have c no one 2 Cor 7:2

CHEBAR

River in Babylonia, Ezek 1:3
Site of Ezekiel's visions, Ezek 10:15,
20

CHEDORLAOMER

A king of Elam; invaded Canaan, Gen
14:1-16

CHEEK

Let him give his c Lam 3:30
with a rod on the c Mic 5:1
on your right c Matt 5:39

CHEEKBONE

my enemies on the c Ps 3:7

CHEEKS

c are lovely with Song 1:10
His c are like a bed Song 5:13
struck Me, and My c Is 50:6

CHEER

See BE OF GOOD CHEER
and let your heart c Eccl 11:9
"Son, be of good c Matt 9:2

CHEERFUL

makes a c countenance Prov 15:13
for God loves a c 2 Cor 9:7
Is anyone c? Let him James 5:13

CHEERFULNESS

shows mercy, with c Rom 12:8

CHEESE

and curdle me like c Job 10:10

CHEMOSH

The god of the Moabites, Num 21:29
Children sacrificed to, 2 Kin 3:26, 27
Solomon builds altars to, 1 Kin 11:7
Josiah destroys altars of, 2 Kin 23:13

CHERISHES

but nourishes and c Eph 5:29
as a nursing mother c 1 Thess 2:7

CHERUB

Make one c at one end, Ex 25:19
c at one end on this side Ex 37:8
He rode upon a c 2 Sam 22:11
other c was ten cubits 1 Kin 6:25
And He rode upon a c Ps 18:10
the wheels, under the c Ezek 10:2
anointed c who covers Ezek 28:14
tree between c and c Ezek 41:18

CHERUBIM

and He placed c Gen 3:24
shall make two c of gold Ex 25:18
an artistic design of c Ex 26:31
dwells between the c 2 Sam 6:2
two c of olive wood 1 Kin 6:23
out the wings of the c so 1 Kin 6:27
were lions, oxen, and c 1 Kin 7:29
its panels he engraved c 1 Kin 7:36
under the wings of the c 1 Kin 8:6
c overshadowed the ark 2 Chr 5:8
dwell between the c Ps 80:1
who dwells between the c Is 37:16
fire from among the c Ezek 10:2
above it were the c Heb 9:5

CHEST

offering in a c by its side 1 Sam 6:8
the c with the gold rats 1 Sam 6:11
the priest took a c 2 Kin 12:9
came and emptied the c 2 Chr 24:11

CHESTNUT

c trees, peeled white Gen 30:37

CHEW

or does not c the cud, is Lev 11:26

CHEWING

What the c locust left, the Joel 1:4
the c locust, my great Joel 2:25

CHICKS

gathers her c under her Matt 23:37

CHIEF

is white and ruddy, c Song 5:10
of whom I am c 1 Tim 1:15
Zion a c cornerstone 1 Pet 2:6
has become the c 1 Pet 2:7
C Shepherd appears 1 Pet 5:4

CHILD

See WITH CHILD
she is with c by harlotry Gen 38:24
that he was a beautiful c Ex 2:2
c grew, and she brought Ex 2:10
the c shall be a Nazirite Judg 13:5
the c ministered to the 1 Sam 2:11
c Samuel grew in stature 1 Sam 2:26
named the c Ichabod 1 Sam 4:21
her dead c in my bosom 1 Kin 3:20
Divide the living c in two 1 Kin 3:25
soul of the c came back 1 Kin 17:22
flesh of the c became 2 Kin 4:34
Like a weaned c Ps 131:2
c is known by his Prov 20:11
Train up a c in the Prov 22:6
before the C shall know Is 7:16
For unto us a C Is 9:6
c shall lead them Is 11:6
When Israel was a c Hos 11:1
with c of the Holy Spirit Matt 1:18

virgin shall be with c Matt 1:23
He took a little c Mark 9:36
of God as a little c Mark 10:15
kind of c will this be Luke 1:66
So the c grew and Luke 1:80
the circumcision of the C Luke 2:21
When I was a c 1 Cor 13:11
She bore a male C Rev 12:5

CHILDBEARING

she will be saved in c 1 Tim 2:15

CHILDBIRTH

pain as a woman in c Is 13:8

CHILDHOOD

from your flesh, for c Eccl 11:10
And he said, "From c Mark 9:21
c you have known 2 Tim 3:15

CHILDISH

I put away c things 1 Cor 13:11

CHILDLESS

give me, seeing I go c Gen 15:2
This man down as c Jer 22:30

CHILDREN

See LITTLE CHILDREN
she bore Jacob no c Gen 30:1
and all of you are c Ps 82:6
c are a heritage Ps 127:3
He has blessed your c Ps 147:13
let the c of Zion be Ps 149:2
c are blessed after Prov 20:7
c rise up and call her Prov 31:28
c are their oppressors Is 3:12
c whom the LORD has Is 8:18
be the peace of your c Is 54:13
they are My people, c Is 63:8
the hearts of the c Mal 4:6
c will rise up against Matt 10:21
and become as little c Matt 18:3
c were brought to Him Matt 19:13
"Let the little c Matt 19:14
the right to become c John 1:12
you were Abraham's c John 8:39
spirit that we are c Rom 8:16
but as my beloved c 1 Cor 4:14
Brethren, do not be c 1 Cor 14:20
c ought not to lay up 2 Cor 12:14
and were by nature c Eph 2:3
should no longer be c Eph 4:14
Walk as c of light Eph 5:8
and harmless, c of God Phil 2:15
now we are c of God 1 John 3:2
that we love the c 1 John 5:2
to hear that my c 3 John 4

CHILDREN'S

are really ours and our c Gen 31:16
the c children to the third Ex 34:7
His righteousness to c Ps 103:17
you see your c children Ps 128:6
inheritance to his c Prov 13:22
C children are the crown Prov 17:6
the c teeth are set on edge Jer 31:29
good to take the c bread Matt 15:26
eat from the c crumbs Mark 7:28

CHILION

Elimelech's son, Ruth 1:2
Orpah's deceased husband, Ruth
1:4, 5
Boaz redeems his estate, Ruth 4:9

CHINNERETH (or Chinneroth)

Fortified city in Naphtali, Deut 3:17
A region bordering the Sea of Galilee,
1 Kin 15:20

Same as the plain of Gennesaret, Matt
14:34

— The O.T. name for the Sea of Gali-
lee, Num 34:11

Also called Lake of Gennesaret, Luke
5:1

CHOICE

rather than c gold Prov 8:10

CHOIR

c went the opposite way, . . . Neh 12:38

CHOKE

things entering in c the . . . Mark 4:19

CHOKED

thorns sprang up and c . . . Matt 13:7

are c with cares, riches, . . . Luke 8:14

CHOOSE

therefore c life . . . Deut 30:19

c none of his ways . . . Prov 3:31

evil and c the good . . . Is 7:15

will still c Israel . . . Is 14:1

will again c Jerusalem . . . Zech 1:17

You did not c Me, but I . . . John 15:16

yet what I shall c . . . Phil 1:22

CHOSE

in the way He c . . . Ps 25:12

CHOSE

a good while ago God c . . . Acts 15:7

just as He c us in Him . . . Eph 1:4

from the beginning c . . . 2 Thess 2:13

CHOSEN

the LORD has c you to be . . . Deut 14:2

has c them to minister to . . . Deut 21:5

c the son of Jesse to . . . 1 Sam 20:30

of Jacob, His c . . . 1 Chr 16:13

I have c Jerusalem, that . . . 2 Chr 6:6

I have c David to be over . . . 2 Chr 6:6

people He has c . . . Ps 33:12

a covenant with My c . . . Ps 89:3

c the way of truth . . . Ps 119:30

A good name is to be c . . . Prov 22:1

servant whom I have c . . . Is 43:10

Is it a fast that I have c . . . Is 58:5

c that good part . . . Luke 10:42

I know whom I have c . . . John 13:18

c you that you should . . . Acts 22:14

c the foolish things . . . 1 Cor 1:27

Has God not c the poor . . . James 2:5

But you are a c . . . 1 Pet 2:9

CHRIST

See JESUS; LORD JESUS CHRIST; LOVE

OF CHRIST; YOU ARE THE CHRIST

Preexistence of, Ps 2:7; John 8:58; Col

1:15-18

Birth of, from a virgin, Is 7:14; Matt

1:18-25

Deity of, Is 9:6; John 1:1, 14, 18; 20:28,

29; Rom 9:5; Heb 1:8

Humanity of, Gen 3:15; Matt 22:45;

Luke 3:38; John 1:14; 1 Cor 15:45-

47; Gal 4:4; Phil 2:5-11; 1 Tim 2:5

Character of:

omnipotent, Matt 28:18

omniscient, Col 2:3

omnipresent, Matt 18:20

eternal, John 1:1, 2, 15

holy, Luke 1:35

righteous, Is 53:11

just, Zech 9:9

guileless, 1 Pet 2:22

sinless, 2 Cor 5:21

spotless, 1 Pet 1:19

innocent, Matt 27:4

gentle, Matt 11:29

merciful, Heb 2:17

humble, Phil 2:8

forgiving, Luke 23:34

Mission of:

do God's will, John 6:38

save sinners, Luke 19:10

destroy Satan's works, Heb 2:14;

1 John 3:8

fulfill the O.T., Matt 5:17

give life, John 10:10, 28

complete revelation, Heb 1:1

Worshiped by:

O.T. saints, Josh 5:13-15

demons, Mark 5:2, 6

men, John 9:38

angels, Heb 1:6

disciples, Luke 24:52

saints in glory, Rev 7:9, 10

all, Phil 2:10, 11

O.T. types of:

Adam, Rom 5:14

Abel, Heb 12:24

Moses, Deut 18:15

Passover, 1 Cor 5:7

manna, John 6:32

bronze serpent, John 3:14

genealogy of Jesus C . . . Matt 1:1

Jesus who is called C . . . Matt 1:16

"You are the C . . . Matt 16:16

do you think about the C . . . Matt 22:42

if You are the C . . . Matt 26:63

of the gospel of Jesus C . . . Mark 1:1

You are the C . . . Mark 8:29

Are You the C, the Son . . . Mark 14:61

a Savior, who is C . . . Luke 2:11

and said, "The C of God . . . Luke 9:20

that He Himself is C . . . Luke 23:2

is translated, the C . . . John 1:41

the law that the C . . . John 12:34

believe that Jesus is the C . . . John 20:31

crucified, both Lord and C . . . Acts 2:36

preaching Jesus as the C . . . Acts 5:42

he preached the C . . . Acts 9:20

that this Jesus is the C . . . Acts 9:22

Jesus the C heals . . . Acts 9:34

the C had to suffer and . . . Acts 17:3

that Jesus is the C . . . Acts 18:28

that the C would suffer, . . . Acts 26:23

His Son Jesus C our Lord . . . Rom 1:3

faith in Jesus C to all and . . . Rom 3:22

through our Lord Jesus C . . . Rom 5:1

in due time C died for the . . . Rom 5:6

through our Lord Jesus C . . . Rom 5:11

through the One, Jesus C . . . Rom 5:17

that just as C was raised . . . Rom 6:4

life in C Jesus our Lord . . . Rom 6:23

law through the body of C . . . Rom 7:4

those who are in C Jesus . . . Rom 8:1

have the Spirit of C . . . Rom 8:9

and joint heirs with C . . . Rom 8:17

It is C who died . . . Rom 8:34

C came, who is over all . . . Rom 9:5

C is the end of the law . . . Rom 10:4

many, are one body in C . . . Rom 12:5

put on the Lord Jesus C . . . Rom 13:14

For to this end C died . . . Rom 14:9

C did not please . . . Rom 15:3

just as C also received us, . . . Rom 15:7

serve our Lord Jesus C . . . Rom 16:18

are sanctified in C Jesus . . . 1 Cor 1:2

Is C divided . . . 1 Cor 1:13

For C did not send me to . . . 1 Cor 1:17

we preach C crucified . . . 1 Cor 1:23

Him you are in C Jesus . . . 1 Cor 1:30

among you except Jesus C . . . 1 Cor 2:2

is laid, which is Jesus C . . . 1 Cor 3:11

indeed C, our Passover, . . . 1 Cor 5:7

bodies are members of C . . . 1 Cor 6:15

Lord Jesus C, through . . . 1 Cor 8:6

you sin against C . . . 1 Cor 8:12

and that Rock was C . . . 1 Cor 10:4

just as I also imitate C . . . 1 Cor 11:1

head of every man is C . . . 1 Cor 11:3

you are the body of C . . . 1 Cor 12:27

that C died for our sins . . . 1 Cor 15:3

if C is not risen, then . . . 1 Cor 15:14

even so in C all shall be . . . 1 Cor 15:22

our Lord Jesus C . . . 1 Cor 15:57

sufferings of C abound . . . 2 Cor 1:5

leads us in triumph in C . . . 2 Cor 2:14

you are an epistle of C . . . 2 Cor 3:3

veil is taken away in C . . . 2 Cor 3:14

gospel of the glory of C . . . 2 Cor 4:4

the judgment seat of C . . . 2 Cor 5:10

if anyone is in C . . . 2 Cor 5:17

accord has C with Belial . . . 2 Cor 6:15

and gentleness of C . . . 2 Cor 10:1

as a chaste virgin to C . . . 2 Cor 11:2

to pervert the gospel of C . . . Gal 1:7

which we have in C Jesus, . . . Gal 2:4

to be justified by C . . . Gal 2:17

been crucified with C . . . Gal 2:20

your Seed," who is C . . . Gal 3:16

before by God in C . . . Gal 3:17

through faith in C Jesus . . . Gal 3:26

until C is formed in you, . . . Gal 4:19

which C has made us free . . . Gal 5:1

become estranged from C . . . Gal 5:4

cross of our Lord Jesus C . . . Gal 6:14

the heavenly places in C . . . Eph 1:3

in one all things in C, . . . Eph 1:10

which He worked in C . . . Eph 1:20

C (by grace you have been . . . Eph 2:5

time you were without C . . . Eph 2:12

Jesus C Himself being . . . Eph 2:20

unsearchable riches of C . . . Eph 3:8

C may dwell in your . . . Eph 3:17

stature of the fullness of C . . . Eph 4:13

Him who is the head—C . . . Eph 4:15

even as God in C forgave . . . Eph 4:32

C will give you light . . . Eph 5:14

C is head of the church . . . Eph 5:23

just as C also loved the . . . Eph 5:25

or in truth, C is preached . . . Phil 1:18

to me, to live in C . . . Phil 1:21

to depart and be with C . . . Phil 1:23

worthy of the gospel of C . . . Phil 1:27

which was also in C Jesus . . . Phil 2:5

confess that Jesus C . . . Phil 2:11

I have counted loss for C . . . Phil 3:7

enemies of the cross of C . . . Phil 3:18

C who strengthens . . . Phil 4:13

riches in glory by C Jesus . . . Phil 4:19

of your faith in C Jesus . . . Col 1:4

which is C in you . . . Col 1:27

every man perfect in C . . . Col 1:28

of the Father and of C . . . Col 2:2

received C Jesus the Lord . . . Col 2:6

but the substance is of C . . . Col 2:17

you were raised with C . . . Col 3:1

hidden with C in God . . . Col 3:3

C who is our life . . . Col 3:4

C is all and in all . . . Col 3:11

Let the word of C dwell . . . Col 3:16

dead in C will rise first . . . 1 Thess 4:16

our Lord Jesus C, . . . 1 Thess 5:9

and the Lord Jesus C . . . 2 Thess 1:2

of our Lord Jesus C . . . 2 Thess 2:1

of our Lord Jesus C . . . 2 Thess 2:14

I thank C Jesus our Lord . . . 1 Tim 1:12

that C Jesus came into . . . 1 Tim 1:15

first Jesus C might show . . . 1 Tim 1:16

and men, the Man C . . . 1 Tim 2:5

in C Jesus before time . . . 2 Tim 1:9

good soldier of Jesus C . . . 2 Tim 2:3

in C Jesus with eternal . . . 2 Tim 2:10

in C Jesus will suffer . . . 2 Tim 3:12

faith which is in C Jesus . . . 2 Tim 3:15

and the Lord Jesus C, . . . 2 Tim 4:1

God and Savior Jesus C . . . Titus 2:13

of our confession, C Jesus, . . . Heb 3:1

C as a Son over His own . . . Heb 3:6

C if we hold the beginning . . . Heb 3:14

So also C did not glorify . . . Heb 5:5

elementary principles of C . . . Heb 6:1

But C came as High Priest . . . Heb 9:11

more shall the blood of C . . . Heb 9:14

For C has not entered the . . . Heb 9:24

C was offered once to bear . . . Heb 9:28

body of Jesus C once for . . . Heb 10:10

Jesus C is the same . . . Heb 13:8

of the blood of Jesus C . . . 1 Pet 1:2

Spirit of C who was in . . . 1 Pet 1:11

the precious blood of C . . . 1 Pet 1:19

because C also suffered . . . 1 Pet 2:21

For C also suffered once . . . 1 Pet 3:18

resurrection of Jesus C . . . 1 Pet 3:21

for the name of C 1 Pet 4:14
 God and Savior Jesus C 2 Pet 1:1
 of our Lord Jesus C 2 Pet 1:16
 C His Son cleanses us 1 John 1:7
 Jesus C the righteous 1 John 2:1
 denies that Jesus is the C 1 John 2:22
 name of His Son Jesus C 1 John 3:23
 confesses that Jesus C 1 John 4:2
 that Jesus is the C 1 John 5:1
 true, in His Son Jesus C 1 John 5:20
 of C does not have God 2 John 9
 and our Lord Jesus C 2 John 9
 The Revelation of Jesus C Rev 1:1
 from Jesus C, the faithful Rev 1:5
 the testimony of Jesus C Rev 1:9
 of our Lord and of His C Rev 11:15
 of His C have come Rev 12:10
 and reigned with C Rev 20:4
 be priests of God and of C Rev 20:6

CHRISTIAN

me to become a C Acts 26:28
 anyone suffers as a C 1 Pet 4:16

CHRISTIANS

were first called C Acts 11:26

CHRIST'S

you are C, and Christ is 1 Cor 3:23
 We are fools for C sake, 1 Cor 4:10
 are C at His coming 1 Cor 15:23
 in himself that he is C 2 Cor 10:7
 if you are C, then you are Gal 3:29
 partake of C sufferings 1 Pet 4:13

CHRISTS

For false c and Matt 24:24

CHRYSOLEITE

sardius, the seventh c Rev 21:20

CHRY SOPRASE

ninth topaz, the tenth c Rev 21:20

CHURCH

rock I will build My c Matt 16:18
 them, tell it to the c Matt 18:17
 c daily those who were Acts 2:47
 elders in every c Acts 14:23
 do you despise the c 1 Cor 11:22
 persecuted the c of God 1 Cor 15:9
 over all things to the c Eph 1:22
 be made known by the c Eph 3:10
 also loved the c Eph 5:25
 Himself a glorious c Eph 5:27
 as the Lord does the c Eph 5:29
 no c shared with me Phil 4:15
 body, which is the c Col 1:24
 is the c of the living 1 Tim 3:15
 and do not let the c 1 Tim 5:16
 general assembly and c Heb 12:23
 To the angel of the c Rev 2:1

CHURCHES

strengthening the c Acts 15:41
 The c of Christ greet Rom 16:16
 imitators of the c 1 Thess 2:14
 John, to the seven c Rev 1:4
 angels of the seven c Rev 1:20
 these things in the c Rev 22:16

CHURNING

For as the c of milk Prov 30:33

CHURNS

My heart c within Me Hos 11:8

CILICIA

Paul's homeland, Acts 21:39
 Students from, argued with Stephen,
 Acts 6:9
 Paul labors in, Gal 1:21

CINNAMON

sweet-smelling c Ex 30:23
 saffron, calamus and c Song 4:14
 c and incense, fragrant Rev 18:13

CIRCLE

He walks above the c Job 22:14

when He drew a c Prov 8:27
 who sits above the c Is 40:22

CIRCUIT

of heaven, and its c Ps 19:6
 comes again on its c Eccl 1:6

CIRCUMCISE

c the foreskin of your Deut 10:16
 LORD your God will c Deut 30:6
 C yourselves to the c Jer 4:4
 is necessary to c them Acts 15:5

CIRCUMCISED

among you shall be c Gen 17:10
 day Abraham was c Gen 17:26
 Abraham c his son Isaac Gen 21:4
 every male was c, all Gen 34:24
 let all his males be c Ex 12:48
 of Egypt, had not been c Josh 5:5
 c him on the eighth day Acts 7:8
 who will justify the c Rom 3:30
 While he was c Rom 4:10
 the gospel for the c Gal 2:7
 if you become c Gal 5:2
 c the eighth day Phil 3:5
 In Him you were also c Col 2:11

CIRCUMCISION

him the covenant of c Acts 7:8
 c that which is outward Rom 2:28
 c is that of the heart Rom 2:29
 a servant to the c Rom 15:8
 C is nothing and 1 Cor 7:19
 Christ Jesus neither c Gal 5:6
 For we are the c Phil 3:3
 circumcised with the c Col 2:11
 those of the c Titus 1:10

CIRCUMSPECTLY

then that you walk c Eph 5:15

CISTERN

waters of his own c 2 Kin 18:31
 from your own c Prov 5:15

CISTERS

and hewn themselves c Jer 2:13
 went to the c and found Jer 14:3

CITIES

He overthrew those c Gen 19:25
 repair the ruined c Is 61:4
 c are a wilderness Is 64:10
 c will be laid waste Jer 4:7
 three parts, and the c Rev 16:19

CITIZEN

But I was born a c Acts 22:28

CITIZENS

But his c hated him Luke 19:14
 but fellow c with the Eph 2:19

CITIZENSHIP

sum I obtained this c Acts 22:28
 For our c is in heaven Phil 3:20

CITY

See HOLY CITY
 And he built a c Gen 4:17
 shall make glad the c Ps 46:4
 c shall flourish Ps 72:16
 They found no c Ps 107:4
 c that is compact Ps 122:3
 the LORD guards the c Ps 127:1
 at the entry of the c Prov 8:3
 c has become a harlot Is 1:21
 upon Zion, the c Is 33:20
 after the holy c Is 48:2
 How lonely sits the c Lam 1:1
 Nineveh, that great c Jon 4:11
 c that dwelt securely Zeph 2:15
 to the oppressing c Zeph 3:1
 c called Nazareth Matt 2:23
 c that is set on a c Matt 5:14
 He has prepared a c Heb 11:16
 Zion and to the c Heb 12:22
 have no continuing c Heb 13:14

will tread the holy c Rev 11:2
 fallen, that great c Rev 14:8
 and the beloved c Rev 20:9
 John, saw the holy c Rev 21:2
 c was pure gold Rev 21:18
 c had no need of the Rev 21:23
 the gates into the c Rev 22:14

CITY OF DAVID

of Zion (that is, the C 2 Sam 5:7
 with him into the C 2 Sam 6:10
 was buried in the C 1 Kin 2:10
 of the Lord from the C 1 Kin 8:1
 was buried in the C 1 Kin 11:43
 for himself in the C 1 Chr 15:1
 the Millo in the C 2 Chr 32:5
 the west side of the C 2 Chr 32:30
 that go down from the C Neh 3:15
 up the stairs of the C Neh 12:37
 the damage to the c Is 22:9
 into Judea, to the c Luke 2:4
 this day in the c a Savior, Luke 2:11

CLAD

was c with zeal as a cloak Is 59:17

CLAMOROUS

A foolish woman is c Prov 9:13

CLANGING

brass or a c cymbal 1 Cor 13:1

CLAP

c their hands at him Job 27:23
 Oh, c your hands Ps 47:1
 let the rivers c Ps 98:8
 of the field shall c Is 55:12

CLAUDIUS LYSIAS

Roman commander who protected
 Paul, Acts 24:22-24, 26

CLAY

dwelt in houses of c Job 4:19
 have made me like c Job 10:9
 are defenses of c Job 13:12
 been formed out of c Job 33:6
 takes on form like c Job 38:14
 pit, out of the miry c Ps 40:2
 be esteemed as the c Is 29:16
 Shall the c say to him Is 45:9
 We are the c, and You Is 64:8
 "Look, as the c Jer 18:6
 iron and partly of c Dan 2:33
 blind man with the c John 9:6
 have power over the c Rom 9:21
 but also of wood and c 2 Tim 2:20

CLEAN

seven each of every c Gen 7:2
 outside the camp to a c Lev 4:12
 all who are c may eat of it Lev 7:19
 between unclean and c Lev 10:10
 shall be c from the flow Lev 12:7
 shall pronounce him c Lev 13:23
 wash his clothes and be c Lev 13:34
 wash in them and be c 2 Kin 5:12
 all of them were ritually c Ezra 6:20
 pure, and I am c in your Job 11:4
 Who can bring a c Job 14:4
 He who has c hands and Ps 24:4
 hyssop, and I shall be c Ps 51:7
 Create in me a c heart, Ps 51:10
 I have made my heart c Prov 20:9
 make yourselves c Is 1:16
 the midst of her, be c Is 52:11
 Then I will sprinkle c Ezek 36:25
 c out His threshing Matt 3:12
 You can make me c Matt 8:2
 outside of them may be c Matt 23:26
 wrapped it in a c linen Matt 27:59
 all things are c Luke 11:41
 but is completely c John 13:10
 "You are not all c John 13:11
 You are already c John 15:3
 your own heads; I am c Acts 18:6

in fine linen, c Rev 19:8

CLEANNES

according to the c of 2 Sam 22:21
According to the c of my Ps 18:20
Also I gave you c of teeth Amos 4:6

CLEANSE

You shall c the altar Ex 29:36
and c them ceremonially Num 8:6
and c my hands with soap, Job 9:30
C me from secret Ps 19:12
and c me from my sin Ps 51:2
How can a young man c Ps 119:9
I will c you from all Ezek 36:25
they shall c the altar Ezek 43:22
c the lepers, raise Matt 10:8
For you c the outside Matt 23:25
let us c ourselves from all 2 Cor 7:1
might sanctify and c Eph 5:26
c your conscience Heb 9:14
C your hands James 4:8
us our sins and to c 1 John 1:9

CLEANS

He who is to be c shall Lev 14:8
Surely I have c Ps 73:13
and you were not c Ezek 24:13
the sanctuary shall be c Dan 8:14
I am willing; be c." Matt 8:3
the lepers are c Matt 11:5
they went, they were c Luke 17:14
"Were there not ten c Luke 17:17
God has c you must Acts 10:15

CLEANS

Therefore if anyone c 2 Tim 2:21
Jesus Christ His Son c 1 John 1:7

CLEAR

c shining after rain 2 Sam 23:4
fair as the moon, c Song 6:10
yourselves to be c 2 Cor 7:11
like a jasper stone, c Rev 21:11
of life, c as crystal Rev 22:1

CLEARLY

I not c reveal Myself 1 Sam 2:27
you will see c to remove Matt 7:5
hour of the day he saw c Acts 10:3
c portrayed among you Gal 3:1
men's sins are c evident 1 Tim 5:24

CLEAR

by no means c the guilty Num 14:18

CLEFTS

to go into the c Is 2:21
valleys and in the c Is 7:19
you who dwell in the c Jer 49:16

CLERK

c had quieted the Acts 19:35

CLIFF

secret places of the c Song 2:14

CLIMB

go into thickets and c Jer 4:29
mighty men, they c Joel 2:7
though they c up to Amos 9:2

CLIMBED

c up into a sycamore tree Luke 19:4

CLIMBS

c up some other way John 10:1

CLING

and that you may c Deut 30:20
to her, "Do not c John 20:17
C to what is good Rom 12:9

CLINGS

and My tongue c Ps 22:15
My soul c to the dust Ps 119:25

CLOAK

c You will change them Ps 102:26
let him have your c Matt 5:40
c You will fold them Heb 1:12
using liberty as a c 1 Pet 2:16

CLODS

The c of the valley Job 21:33

CLOSE

c friends abhor me Job 19:19
of Christ he came c Phil 2:30

CLOSED

c up the flesh in its place Gen 2:21
LORD had c her womb 1 Sam 1:5
and has c your eyes Is 29:10
for the words are c Dan 12:9
the deep c around me Jon 2:5
Then He c the book, and Luke 4:20
their eyes they have c Acts 28:27

CLOSER

sticks c than a brother Prov 18:24

CLOTH

a piece of unshrunk c Matt 9:16
in a clean linen c Matt 27:59

CLOTHE

c them with tunics Ex 40:14
c me with skin and Job 10:11
c her priests with Ps 132:16
His enemies I will c Ps 132:18
Though you c yourself Jer 4:30
He not much more c Matt 6:30

CLOTHED

of skin, and c them Gen 3:21
Have you c his neck Job 39:19
off my sackcloth and c Ps 30:11
The pastures are c Ps 65:13
the LORD is c Ps 93:1
You are c with honor Ps 104:1
c himself with cursing Ps 109:18
Let Your priests be c Ps 132:9
all her household is c Prov 31:21
c you with fine linen Ezek 16:10
A man c in soft Matt 11:8
I was naked and you c Matt 25:36
legion, sitting and c Mark 5:15
And they c Him with Mark 15:17
rich man who was c Luke 16:19
desiring to be c 2 Cor 5:2
that you may be c Rev 3:18
a woman c with the sun Rev 12:1
He was c with a robe Rev 19:13

CLOTHES

See TORE HIS CLOTHES

c will abhor me Job 9:31
c became shining Mark 9:3
many spread their c Luke 19:36
laid down their c Acts 7:58
and tore off their c Acts 22:23
a poor man in filthy c James 2:2

CLOTHING

c they cast lots Ps 22:18
c is woven with gold Ps 45:13
will provide your c Prov 27:26
and honor are her c Prov 31:25
of vengeance for c Is 59:17
the body more than c Matt 6:25
do you worry about c Matt 6:28
to you in sheep's c Matt 7:15
those who wear soft c Matt 11:8
c as white as snow Matt 28:3
c they cast lots John 19:24
before me in bright c Acts 10:30

CLOTHS

wrapped in swaddling c Luke 2:12
in, saw the linen c John 20:5

CLOUD

My rainbow in the c Gen 9:13
rainbow shall be in the c Gen 9:16
day in a pillar of c Ex 13:21
c covered the mountain Ex 24:15
c descended and stood Ex 33:9
the c above the mercy seat Lev 16:2
that the c of incense may Lev 16:13
that the c filled the house 1 Kin 8:10

LORD, was filled with a c 2 Chr 5:13
would dwell in the dark c 2 Chr 6:1
c did not depart Neh 9:19
He led them with the c Ps 78:14
his favor is like a c Prov 16:15
like a c of dew in the heat Is 18:4
these who fly like a c Is 60:8
rainbow in a c on a Ezek 1:28
like a morning c Hos 6:4
behold, a bright c Matt 17:5
c came and overshadowed Luke 9:34
of Man coming in a c Luke 21:27
c received Him out of Acts 1:9
were under the c 1 Cor 10:1
by so great a c Heb 12:1
ascended to heaven in a c Rev 11:12

CLOUDS

a morning without c 2 Sam 23:4
c poured out water Ps 77:17
and hail, snow and c Ps 148:8
c drop down the dew Prov 3:20
he who regards the c Eccl 11:4
of Man coming on the c Matt 24:30
with them in the c 1 Thess 4:17
are c without water Jude 12
He is coming with c Rev 1:7

CLOUDY

them by day with a c Neh 9:12
spoke to them in the c Ps 99:7

CLOVEN

the hoof, having c Lev 11:3
chew the cud or have c Deut 14:7

CLUNG

but Ruth c to her Ruth 1:14
Solomon c to these in 1 Kin 11:2

CLUSTER

beloved is to me a c Song 1:14
wine is found in the c Is 65:8

CNIDUS

City of Asia Minor on Paul's voyage,
Acts 27:7

COAL

in his hand a live c Is 6:6
it shall not be a c Is 47:14

COALS

wicked He will rain c Ps 11:6
c were kindled by it Ps 18:8
let burning c fall Ps 140:10
Can one walk on hot c Prov 6:28
so you will heap c Prov 25:22
doing you will heap c Rom 12:20

COARSE

robe of c hair to deceive Zech 13:4
nor c jesting, which are Eph 5:4

COBRA

it becomes c venom Job 20:14
c that stops its ear Ps 58:4
the lion and the c Ps 91:13

COBRA'S

shall play by the c Is 11:8

CODE

even with your written c Rom 2:27

COFFIN

and he was put in a c Gen 50:26
David followed the c 2 Sam 3:31
touched the open c Luke 7:14

COIN

sold for a copper c Matt 10:29
if she loses one c Luke 15:8

COLD

and harvest, c and Gen 8:22
can stand before His c Ps 147:17
Like the c of snow in Prov 25:13
c water to the snow Prov 25:25
c water in the name of Matt 10:42
of many will grow c Matt 24:12

that you are neither c Rev 3:15

COLLECTED

coming I might have c Luke 19:23

COLLECTION

from Jerusalem the c 2 Chr 24:6

concerning the c 1 Cor 16:1

COLLECTOR

See TAX COLLECTOR; TAX COLLECTORS
AND SINNERS

COLOR

c like the c of bdellium Num 11:7

the c of burnished bronze Ezek 1:7

c of an awesome crystal Ezek 1:22

the c of a beryl stone Ezek 10:9

all faces are drained of c Joel 2:6

COLORS

him a tunic of many c Gen 37:3

on a robe of many c 2 Sam 13:18

stones of various c, all 1 Chr 29:2

COLOSSE

A city in Asia Minor, Col 1:2

Evangelized by Epaphras, Col 1:7

Not visited by Paul, Col 2:1

Paul writes against errors of, Col
2:16-23

COLT

and his donkey's c Gen 49:11

on a donkey, a c Zech 9:9

on a donkey, a c Matt 21:5

own clothes on the c Luke 19:35

COME

then does wisdom c Job 28:20

of glory shall c Ps 24:7

Our God shall c Ps 50:3

You all flesh will c Ps 65:2

C with me from Lebanon Song 4:8

He will c and save you Is 35:4

who have no money, C Is 55:1

Your kingdom c Matt 6:10

C to Me Matt 11:28

For many will c Matt 24:5

Israel, let Him now c Matt 27:42

If anyone desires to c Luke 9:23

kingdom of God has c Luke 10:9

I have c in My John 5:43

and I have not c John 7:38

thirsts, let him c John 7:27

c that they may have John 10:10

c as a light into the John 12:46

I will c to you John 14:18

If I had not c John 15:22

savage wolves will c Acts 20:29

O Lord, c 1 Cor 16:22

the door, I will c Rev 3:20

the bride say, "C Rev 22:17

COMELINESS

He has no form or c Is 53:2

COMES

Who is this who c Is 63:1

"Come," and he c Matt 8:9

Lord's death till He c 1 Cor 11:26

Then c the end 1 Cor 15:24

COMFORT

one will c us concerning Gen 5:29

daughters arose to c him Gen 37:35

speak c to your servants 2 Sam 19:7

with him, and to c him Job 2:11

And your staff, they c Ps 23:4

And c me on every side Ps 71:21

is my c in my affliction Ps 119:50

kindness be for my c Ps 119:76

When will you c Ps 119:82

go up to the c of my bed Ps 132:3

yes, c My people Is 40:1

For the LORD will c Is 51:3

c all who mourn Is 61:2

comforts, so I will c you Is 66:13

she has none to c her Lam 1:2

wilderness, and speak c to Hos 2:14

the LORD will again c Zech 1:17

c them concerning their John 11:19

in the c of the Holy Spirit Acts 9:31

c of the Scriptures might Rom 15:4

and exhortation and c to 1 Cor 14:3

and God of all c 2 Cor 1:3

trouble, with the c 2 Cor 1:4

that he may c your hearts Eph 6:22

in Christ, if any c Phil 2:1

and c your hearts Col 4:8

c one another 1 Thess 4:18

c each other and edify 1 Thess 5:11

c your hearts and 2 Thess 2:17

COMFORTED

So Isaac was c after Gen 24:67

c them and spoke kindly Gen 50:21

David c Bathsheba 2 Sam 12:24

soul refused to be c Ps 77:2

For the LORD has c Is 49:13

refusing to be c Jer 31:15

children, refusing to be c Matt 2:18

mourn, for they shall be c Matt 5:4

but now he is c Luke 16:25

they were not a little c Acts 20:12

ourselves are c by God 2 Cor 1:4

COMFORTER

but they have no c Eccl 4:1

She had no c Lam 1:9

COMFORTERS

because he has sent c to 2 Sam 10:3

miserable c are you all Job 16:2

for c, but I found none Ps 69:20

COMFORTS

the army, as one who c Job 29:25

I, even I, am He who c Is 51:12

him, and restore c Is 57:18

one whom his mother c Is 66:13

who c us in all our 2 Cor 1:4

who c the downcast 2 Cor 7:6

COMING

your salvation is c Is 62:11

behold, the day is c Mal 4:1

but He who is c Matt 3:11

"Are You the C Matt 11:3

be the sign of Your c Matt 24:3

is delaying his c Matt 24:48

see the Son of Man c Mark 13:26

mightier than I is c Luke 3:16

are Christ's at His c 1 Cor 15:23

to you the power and c 2 Pet 1:16

the promise of His c 2 Pet 3:4

Behold, I am c Rev 3:11

"Behold, I am c Rev 22:7

"Surely I am c Rev 22:20

COMMAND

in order that he may c Gen 18:19

shall speak all that I c you Ex 7:2

transgress the c of the Num 14:41

add to the word which I c Deut 4:2

I c you today you must be Deut 8:1

Whatever I c you, be Deut 12:32

therefore I c you, saying Deut 15:11

"The LORD will c Deut 28:8

in that I c you Deut 30:16

today, which you shall c Deut 32:46

c His lovingkindness Ps 42:8

c victories for Jacob Ps 44:4

you, and whatever I c you Jer 1:7

to them all that I c you Jer 1:17

to all that I c Jer 11:4

that I c you to speak to Jer 26:2

c that these stones Matt 4:3

if it is You, c Matt 14:28

c fire to come down Luke 9:54

c I have received John 10:18

And I know that His c John 12:50

if you do whatever I c John 15:14

These things I c you, John 15:17

do the things we c 2 Thess 3:4

C those who are rich in 1 Tim 6:17

kept My c to persevere Rev 3:10

COMMANDED

See LORD COMMANDED

the LORD God c the man Gen 2:16

to all that the LORD c him Gen 7:5

Joseph c his servants the Gen 50:2

just as the LORD c them Ex 7:6

which the LORD c him Ex 19:7

just as the LORD my God c Deut 4:5

LORD c us to observe all Deut 6:24

Have I not c you Josh 1:9

did so, as the LORD c 2 Sam 5:25

which I c your fathers 2 Kin 17:13

to all that I have c them 2 Kin 21:8

to all that I have c them 2 Chr 33:8

"Have you c the LORD Job 38:12

He c, and it stood fast Ps 33:9

Which He c our fathers, Ps 78:5

c His covenant forever Ps 111:9

For there the LORD c Ps 133:3

of the LORD, for He c Ps 148:5

things that I have c you Matt 28:20

Even so the LORD has c 1 Cor 9:14

it is the God who c 2 Cor 4:6

not endure what was c Heb 12:20

COMMANDER

the c of his army, spoke Gen 21:22

but as C of the army of Josh 5:14

c of his army was Sisera, Judg 4:2

c over His inheritance 1 Sam 10:1

Abner, the c of the 1 Sam 17:55

Joab the c of the army 1 Kin 1:19

have a message for you, 2 Kin 9:5

Rehume the c and Shimshal Ezra 4:8

news came to the c of Acts 21:31

But the c Lysias came by Acts 24:7

COMMANDMENT

to the c of the LORD Ex 17:1

numbered at the c of the Num 3:39

shall keep every c which Deut 11:8

heed to do the c Josh 22:5

observe the law and the c 2 Chr 14:4

according to the c of 2 Chr 29:25

c of the LORD is pure Ps 19:8

c is exceedingly broad Ps 119:96

For the c is a lamp Prov 6:23

Me is taught by the c Is 29:13

which is the great c Matt 22:36

is the first and great c Matt 22:38

no other c greater than Mark 12:31

according to the c Luke 23:56

A new c I give to John 13:34

the Father gave Me c John 14:31

is My c, that you love John 15:12

whom we gave no such c Acts 15:24

law, but when the c Rom 7:9

the c might become Rom 7:13

and if there is any other c Rom 13:9

as a concession, not as a c 1 Cor 7:6

I speak not by c, but 2 Cor 8:8

which is the first c Eph 6:2

have a c to receive tithes Heb 7:5

the holy c delivered to 2 Pet 2:21

of the c of us, the apostles 2 Pet 3:2

c is the word which 1 John 2:7

And this is His c 1 John 3:23

as we received c 2 John 4

I wrote a new c to you 2 John 5

This is the c that as you 2 John 6

COMMANDMENTS

love Me and keep My c Ex 20:6

c which I have written, Ex 24:12

covenant, the Ten C Ex 34:28

he gave them as c all that Ex 34:32

you shall keep My c Lev 22:31

all the c of the LORD and Num 15:39

perform the Ten C Deut 4:13

love Me and keep My c Deut 5:10

to observe all these c Deut 6:25

love Him and Keep His c Deut 7:9
 first writing, the Ten C Deut 10:4
 judgments, and His c Deut 11:1
 obey the c of the LORD Deut 11:27
 c which I command you Deut 28:1
 your God, to keep His c Deut 30:10
 His ways, to keep His c Josh 22:5
 keep His statutes, His c 1 Kin 2:3
 ways, and to keep His c 1 Kin 8:58
 statutes and keep His c 1 Kin 8:61
 steadfast to observe My c 1 Chr 28:7
 heart to keep Your c 1 Chr 29:19
 You and observe Your c Neh 1:5
 of God, but keep His c Ps 78:7
 who remember His c Ps 103:18
 delights greatly in His c Ps 112:1
 do not hide Your c Ps 119:19
 myself in Your c Ps 119:47
 for I believe Your c Ps 119:66
 Your c are faithful Ps 119:86
 c more than gold Ps 119:127
 Fear God and keep His c Eccl 12:13
 that you had heeded My c Is 48:18
 those who keep His c Dan 9:4
 one of the least of these c Matt 5:19
 as doctrines the c Matt 15:9
 enter into life, keep the c Matt 19:17
 c hang all the Law Matt 22:40
 You know the c Mark 10:19
 The first of all the c is Mark 12:29
 God, walking in all the c Luke 1:6
 You know the c Luke 18:20
 He who has My c John 14:21
 If you keep My c, you John 15:10
 For the c, "You shall not Rom 13:9
 keeping the c of God is 1 Cor 7:19
 the law of c contained in Eph 2:15
 according to the c Col 2:22
 Him, if we keep His c 1 John 2:3
 because we keep His c 1 John 3:22
 he who keeps His c 1 John 3:24
 love God and keep His c 1 John 5:2
 walk according to His c 2 John 6
 keep the c of God and Rev 12:17
 who keep the c of God Rev 14:12

COMMANDS

treasure my c within you Prov 2:1
 let your heart keep my c Prov 3:1
 wise in heart will receive c Prov 10:8
 with authority He c Mark 1:27
 c all men everywhere Acts 17:30

COMMEND

I c you to God and to the Acts 20:32
 But food does not c 1 Cor 8:8
 begin again to c ourselves 2 Cor 3:1
 those who c themselves 2 Cor 10:12

COMMENDABLE

For this is c, if because 1 Pet 2:19
 patiently, this is c 1 Pet 2:20

COMMENDED

A man will be c Prov 12:8
 c the unjust steward Luke 16:8
 where they had been c Acts 14:26

COMMENDING

of the truth c 2 Cor 4:2

COMMENTS

but whom the Lord c 2 Cor 10:18

COMMIT

"You shall not c Ex 20:14
 You shall not c adultery Deut 5:18
 c a trespass in the Josh 22:20
 C your works to the Prov 16:3
 mammon, who will c Luke 16:11
 into Your hands I c Luke 23:46
 But Jesus did not c John 2:24
 c sexual immorality 1 Cor 10:8
 c these to faithful 2 Tim 2:2
 if you do not c adultery James 2:11
 c their souls to Him 1 Pet 4:19

c sin not leading 1 John 5:16
 to c sexual immorality Rev 2:14

COMMITTS

to you, whoever c John 8:34
 sin also c lawlessness 1 John 3:4

COMMITTED

For My people have c Jer 2:13
 c things deserving Luke 12:48
 For God has c them all Rom 11:32
 Guard what was c 1 Tim 6:20
 "Who c no sin 1 Pet 2:22
 c Himself to Him who 1 Pet 2:23

COMMON

of the c people sins Lev 4:27
 poor have this in c Prov 22:2
 c people heard Him Mark 12:37
 had all things in c Acts 2:44
 never eaten anything c Acts 10:14
 not call any man c Acts 10:28
 a true son in our c Titus 1:4
 concerning our c Jude 3

COMMOTION

there arose a great c Acts 19:23

COMMUNED

I c with my heart Eccl 1:16

COMMUNION

bless, is it not the c 1 Cor 10:16
 c has light with 2 Cor 6:14
 c of the Holy Spirit 2 Cor 13:14

COMPANION

a man my equal, My c Ps 55:13
 I am a c of all who Ps 119:63
 the Man who is My C Zech 13:7
 urge you also, true c Phil 4:3
 your brother and c Rev 1:9

COMPANIONS

are rebellious, and c Is 1:23
 and calling to their c Matt 11:16
 more than Your c Heb 1:9
 while you became c Heb 10:33

COMPANY

great was the c Ps 68:11
 epistle not to keep c 1 Cor 5:9
 c corrupts good habits 1 Cor 15:33
 and do not keep c 2 Thess 3:14
 to an innumerable c Heb 12:22

COMPARABLE

make him a helper c to Gen 2:18

COMPARE

may desire cannot c Prov 3:15
 likeness will you c to Him Is 40:18
 c ourselves with those 2 Cor 10:12

COMPARED

the heavens can be c Ps 89:6
 may desire cannot be c Prov 8:11
 are not worthy to be c Rom 8:18

COMPASSION

will have c on whom I will Ex 33:19
 show you mercy, have c Deut 13:17
 have c on you, and gather Deut 30:3
 His people and have c Deut 32:36
 yearned with c for her 1 Kin 3:26
 had c on them, and 2 Kin 13:23
 will be treated with c by 2 Chr 30:9
 He, being full of c Ps 78:38
 are a God full of c Ps 86:15
 have c on Your servants Ps 90:13
 He will have c on His Ps 135:14
 is gracious and full of c Ps 145:8
 not have c on the son of Is 49:15
 will return and have c Jer 12:15
 yet He will show c Lam 3:32
 for you, to have c on you Ezek 16:5
 He will again have c on us Mic 7:19
 c everyone to his Zech 7:9
 He was moved with c Matt 9:36
 moved with c for them Matt 14:14

have c on the multitude, Matt 15:32
 was moved with c Matt 18:27
 also have had c Matt 18:33
 So Jesus had c and Matt 20:34
 Jesus, moved with c, put Mark 1:41
 moved with c for them Mark 6:34
 "I have c on the Mark 8:2
 saw him and had c Luke 15:20
 whomever I will have c Rom 9:15
 He can have c on those Heb 5:2
 of one mind, having c 1 Pet 3:8
 And on some have c Jude 22

COMPASSIONATE

c women have cooked Lam 4:10
 the Lord is very c James 5:11

COMPASSIONS

because His c fail not Lam 3:22

COMPEL

c them to come in Luke 14:23
 why do you c Gentiles to Gal 2:14

COMPELLED

they c to bear His cross Matt 27:32
 Macedonia, Paul was c Acts 18:5
 and c them to blaspheme Acts 26:11
 was c to be circumcised Gal 2:3

COMPELS

the spirit within me c Job 32:18
 And whoever c Matt 5:41
 the love of Christ c 2 Cor 5:14

COMPETES

everyone who c for the 1 Cor 9:25
 if anyone c in athletics 2 Tim 2:5

COMPLACENCY

slay them, and the c Prov 1:32
 who are settled in c Zeph 1:12

COMPLAIN

should a living man c Lam 3:39

COMPLAINED

and you c in your Deut 1:27
 but c in their tents Ps 106:25
 some of them also c 1 Cor 10:10

COMPLAINERS

These are grumblers, c Jude 16

COMPLAINING

all things without c Phil 2:14

COMPLAINT

"Even today my c Job 23:2
 I pour out my c Ps 142:2
 for the LORD has a c Mic 6:2
 if anyone has a c Col 3:13

COMPLAINTS

Who has c Prov 23:29
 laid many serious c Acts 25:7

COMPLETE

would also c this grace 2 Cor 8:6
 must c the doing of it 2 Cor 8:11
 that you may be made c 2 Cor 13:9
 work in you will c Phil 1:6
 and you are c in Him Col 2:10
 and c in all the will of God Col 4:12
 of God may be c 2 Tim 3:17
 make you c in every Heb 13:21
 you may be perfect and c James 1:4
 the wrath of God is c Rev 15:1

COMPLETED

Moses had c writing Deut 31:24
 house of the LORD was c 2 Chr 8:16
 is built and the walls c Ezra 4:13
 when these days were c Esth 1:5
 when seventy years are c Jer 25:12
 days were c for her to be Luke 2:6
 work which they had c Acts 14:26
 killed as they were, was c Rev 6:11

COMPLETELY

person shall be c cut off Num 15:31
 did not c drive them out Judg 1:28

filthiness c from you Ezek 22:15
I made a man c well John 7:23
You were c born in sins. John 9:34
his feet, but is c clean John 13:10
Himself sanctify you c 1 Thess 5:23

COMPOSED

But God c the body 1 Cor 12:24

COMPREHEND

which we cannot c Job 37:5
c my path and my lying Ps 139:3
the darkness did not c John 1:5
may be able to c Eph 3:18

CONCEAL

Almighty I will not c Job 27:11
c pride from man Job 33:17
of God to c a matter Prov 25:2

CONCEALED

c Your lovingkindness Ps 40:10
than love carefully c Prov 27:5

CONCEIT

selfish ambition or c Phil 2:3

CONCEITED

Let us not become c Gal 5:26

CONCEIVE

the virgin shall c Is 7:14
And behold, you will c Luke 1:31

CONCEIVED

in sin my mother c Ps 51:5
when desire has c James 1:15

CONCERN

Neither do I c myself Ps 131:1
c for My holy name. Ezek 36:21
may the dream c those Dan 4:19
the things which c Acts 28:31
my deep c for all the 2 Cor 11:28

CONCERNED

Is it oxen God is c 1 Cor 9:9
c only with foods and Heb 9:10

CONCESSION

But I say this as a c 1 Cor 7:6

CONCILIATION

c pacifies great Eccl 10:4

CONCLUSION

Let us hear the c Eccl 12:13

CONCUBINE

with Bilhah his father's c Gen 35:22
c who was in Shechem Judg 8:31
He took for himself a c Judg 19:1
Saul had a c 2 Sam 3:7
to Keturah, Abraham's c 1 Chr 1:32

CONCUBINES

And David took more c 2 Sam 5:13
Go in to your father's c 2 Sam 16:21
and three hundred c 1 Kin 11:3
eunuch who kept the c Esth 2:14
sixty queens and eighty c Song 6:8

CONDEMN

say to God, 'Do not c Job 10:2
Would you c Me that you Job 40:8
who is he who will c Me Is 50:9
they will c Him to death. Matt 20:18
C not, and you shall not Luke 6:37
world to c the world John 3:17
her. 'Neither do I c John 8:11
judge another you c Rom 2:1
is he who does not c Rom 14:22
I do not say this to c 2 Cor 7:3
our heart does not c 1 John 3:21

CONDEMNATION

will receive greater c Matt 23:14
can you escape the c Matt 23:33
subject to eternal c Mark 3:29
And this is the c John 3:19
the resurrection of c John 5:29
Their c is just Rom 3:8
therefore now no c Rom 8:1

of c had glory 2 Cor 3:9
having c because they 1 Tim 5:12
marked out for this c Jude 4

CONDEMNED

David's heart c him 2 Sam 24:10
words you will be c Matt 12:37
and you shall not be c Luke 6:37
does not believe is c John 3:18
Has no one c you John 8:10
c sin in the flesh Rom 8:3
he who doubts is c if he Rom 14:23
last, as men c to death 1 Cor 4:9
by which he c the world Heb 11:7
brethren, lest you be c James 5:9
c them to destruction. 2 Pet 2:6

CONDEMNNS

Who is he who c Rom 8:34
For if our heart c 1 John 3:20

CONDUCT

c yourselves like men 1 Sam 4:9
who are of upright c Ps 37:14
c yourself in the 1 Tim 3:15
c that his works are James 3:13
to each one's work, c 1 Pet 1:17
from your aimless c 1 Pet 1:18
may be won by the c 1 Pet 3:1

CONFERRED

c with the chief priests Luke 22:4
they c among themselves, Acts 4:15
when he had c with the Acts 25:12

CONFESS

c my transgressions Ps 32:5
that if you c with Rom 10:9
every tongue shall c Rom 14:11
C your trespasses James 5:16
If we c our sins 1 John 1:9
but I will c his name Rev 3:5

CONFESSED

stood and c their sins Neh 9:2
did not deny, but c, "I John 1:20
c that He was Christ John 9:22
c the good confession 1 Tim 6:12

CONFESSES

prosper, but whoever c Prov 28:13
Every spirit that c that 1 John 4:2
c that Jesus is the 1 John 4:15

CONFESSION

of Israel, and make c Josh 7:19
with the mouth c Rom 10:10
c to the gospel of Christ 2 Cor 9:13
confessed the good c 1 Tim 6:12
witnessed the good c 1 Tim 6:13
High Priest of our c Heb 3:1
let us hold fast our c Heb 4:14

CONFIDENCE

fine gold, 'You are my c' Job 31:24
You who are the c Ps 65:5
the LORD than to put c Ps 118:8
the LORD will be your c Prov 3:26
c shall be your Is 30:15
Jesus Christ with all c Acts 28:31
having c in you all that 2 Cor 2:3
Jesus, and have no c Phil 3:3
we have c in the Lord 2 Thess 3:4
if we hold fast the c Heb 3:6
do not cast away your c Heb 10:35
appears, we may have c 1 John 2:28
Now this is the c that 1 John 5:14

CONFIDENT

me, in this I will be c Ps 27:3
I myself am c Rom 15:14
so we are always c 2 Cor 5:6
become c by my chains Phil 1:14
we are c that we have a Heb 13:18

CONFINED

saying, "I am c Jer 36:5
the Scripture has c Gal 3:22

CONFIRM

c the promises Rom 15:8

who will also c 1 Cor 1:8

CONFIRMATION

c of the gospel, you all Phil 1:7
an oath for c is for them Heb 6:16

CONFIRMED

covenant that was c Gal 3:17
by the Lord, and was c Heb 2:3
c it by an oath Heb 6:17
prophetic word c 2 Pet 1:19

CONFIRMING

c the word through the Mark 16:20

CONFLICT

having the same c Phil 1:30
to know what a great c Col 2:1

CONFLICTS

Outside were c 2 Cor 7:5

CONFORMED

predestined to be c Rom 8:29
And do not be c Rom 12:2
sufferings, being c Phil 3:10
body that it may be c Phil 3:21

CONFOUNDED

who seek You be c Ps 69:6
ashamed and c who seek Ps 70:2
c the Jews who dwelt in Acts 9:22

CONFRONTED

They c me in the day 2 Sam 22:19
The snares of death c me Ps 18:5
c Him as He was Matt 21:23
with the elders, c Him Luke 20:1

CONFUSE

c their language Gen 11:7

CONFUSED

there the LORD c Gen 11:9
the assembly was c Acts 19:32

CONFUSION

I will cause c among all Ex 23:27
blindness and c of heart Deut 28:28
c who plot my hurt Ps 35:4
us drink the wine of c Ps 60:3
strike every horse with c Zech 12:4
city was filled with c Acts 19:29
author of c but of peace 1 Cor 14:33
and self-seeking exist, c James 3:16

CONGREGATION

Nor sinners in the c Ps 1:5
the c of the wicked Ps 22:16
God stands in the c Ps 82:1
is he who was in the c Acts 7:38
the c had broken up, Acts 13:43

CONIAH

King of Judah, Jer 22:24, 28
Same as Jehoiachin, 2 Kin 24:8

CONJURES

or one who c spells, or a Deut 18:11

CONQUER

conquering and to c Rev 6:2

CONQUERORS

we are more than c Rom 8:37

CONSCIENCE

convicted by their c John 8:9
strive to have a c Acts 24:16
c also bearing witness, Rom 2:15
I am not lying, my c Rom 9:1
wrath but also for c Rom 13:5
and their c, being weak, is 1 Cor 8:7
no questions for c 1 Cor 10:25
by another man's c 1 Cor 10:29
c in the sight of God 2 Cor 4:2
faith with a pure c 1 Tim 3:9
having their own c 1 Tim 4:2
mind and c are defiled Titus 1:15
to God, cleanse your c Heb 9:14
from an evil c and our Heb 10:22
having a good c 1 Pet 3:16

CONSCIENCE'

wrath but also for c sake ... Rom 13:5
no questions for c sake ... 1 Cor 10:25

CONSECRATE

"C to Me all the ... Ex 13:2
c himself this day ... 1 Chr 29:5
the trumpet in Zion, c ... Joel 2:15
c their gain to the ... Mic 4:13

CONSECRATED

c this house which you ... 1 Kin 9:3

CONSENT

entice you, do not c ... Prov 1:10
and does not c to ... 1 Tim 6:3

CONSENTED

you saw a thief, you c ... Ps 50:18
He had not c to their ... Luke 23:51

CONSENTING

Now Saul was c to his ... Acts 8:1

CONSIDER

When I c Your heavens ... Ps 8:3
c her palaces ... Ps 48:13
c carefully what is ... Prov 23:1
who weighs the hearts c ... Prov 24:12
not c that poverty will ... Prov 28:22
turned myself to c wisdom ... Eccl 2:12
C the work of God ... Eccl 7:13
My people do not c ... Is 1:3
c the operation ... Is 5:12
your God will c ... Jon 1:6
"C your ways ... Hag 1:5
C the lilies of the c ... Matt 6:28
do not c the plank in ... Matt 7:3
C the ravens ... Luke 12:24
Let a man so c us ... 1 Cor 4:1
c the Apostle and High ... Heb 3:1
c how great this man ... Heb 7:4
c one another in order ... Heb 10:24
c Him who endured ... Heb 12:3

CONSIDERS

c all their works ... Ps 33:15
Blessed is he who c the ... Ps 41:1
She c a field and buys it ... Prov 31:16

CONSIST

not c in the abundance ... Luke 12:15
in Him all things c ... Col 1:17

CONSOLATION

waiting for the C ... Luke 2:25
have received your c ... Luke 6:24
abound in us, so our c ... 2 Cor 1:5
if there is any c ... Phil 2:1
given us everlasting c ... 2 Thess 2:16
we might have strong c ... Heb 6:18

CONSOLATIONS

Are the c of God too ... Job 15:11

CONSOLE

c those who mourn ... Is 61:3

CONSPIRE

What do you c against ... Nah 1:9

CONSTANT

c prayer was offered ... Acts 12:5

CONSULT

They only c to cast ... Ps 62:4

CONSULTED

c together against ... Ps 83:3

CONSUME

your midst, lest I c ... Ex 33:3
this great fire will c ... Deut 5:25
C them in wrath ... Ps 59:13
whom the Lord will c ... 2 Thess 2:8

CONSUMED

but the bush was not c ... Ex 3:2
c the burnt sacrifice ... 1 Kin 18:38
For we have been c ... Ps 90:7
mercies we are not c ... Lam 3:22
beware lest you be c ... Gal 5:15

CONSUMING

the LORD was like a c ... Ex 24:17
before you as a c ... Deut 9:3
our God is a c fire ... Heb 12:29

CONSUMMATION

I have seen the c ... Ps 119:96

CONSUMPTION

will strike you with c ... Deut 28:22

CONTAIN

of heavens cannot c ... 2 Chr 2:6
c the books that c ... John 21:25

CONTEMPT

He pours c on princes ... Job 12:21
wicked comes, c comes ... Prov 18:3
and everlasting c ... Dan 12:2
and be treated with c ... Mark 9:12

CONTEMPTIBLE

of the LORD is c ... Mal 1:7
also have made you c ... Mal 2:9
and his speech c ... 2 Cor 10:10

CONTEND

show me why You c ... Job 10:2
Will you c for God ... Job 13:8
let us c together ... Is 43:26
for I will c with him ... Is 49:25
then how can you c ... Jer 12:5
c earnestly for the ... Jude 3

CONTENDED

Therefore the people c ... Ex 17:2

CONTENDING

in c with the devil, when ... Jude 9

CONTENT

heard that, he was c ... Lev 10:20
Oh, that we had been c ... Josh 7:7
and be c with your wages ... Luke 3:14
state I am, to be c ... Phil 4:11
these we shall be c ... 1 Tim 6:8
covetousness; be c ... Heb 13:5

CONTENTION

lips enter into c ... Prov 18:6
and c will leave ... Prov 22:10
strife and a man of c ... Jer 15:10

CONTENTIONS

Casting lots causes c ... Prov 18:18
sorcery, hatred, c ... Gal 5:20
genealogies, c ... Titus 3:9

CONTENTIOUS

than with a c and ... Prov 21:19
shared with a c woman ... Prov 25:24
anyone seems to be c ... 1 Cor 11:16

CONTENTMENT

c is great gain ... 1 Tim 6:6

CONTINUAL

a merry heart has a c ... Prov 15:15
in wrath with a c ... Is 14:6
c coming she weary me ... Luke 18:5
c grief in my heart ... Rom 9:2

CONTINUALLY

heart was only evil c ... Gen 6:5
His praise shall c ... Ps 34:1
and Your truth c ... Ps 40:11
of God endures c ... Ps 52:1
I keep Your law c ... Ps 119:44
Before Me c are grief ... Jer 6:7
and wait on your God c ... Hos 12:6
will give ourselves c ... Acts 6:4
remains a priest c ... Heb 7:3
c offer the sacrifice ... Heb 13:15

CONTINUE

kingdom shall not c ... 1 Sam 13:14
c Your lovingkindness ... Ps 36:10
tells lies shall not c ... Ps 101:7
persuaded them to c ... Acts 13:43
Shall we c in sin that ... Rom 6:1
if you c in His goodness ... Rom 11:22
who does not c in all ... Gal 3:10

if indeed you c in the faith ... Col 1:23
C earnestly in prayer ... Col 4:2
if they c in faith, love, ... 1 Tim 2:15
because they did not c ... Heb 8:9
Let brotherly love c ... Heb 13:1
asleep, all things c ... 2 Pet 3:4
to c for forty-two months ... Rev 13:5

CONTINUED

c prospering until he ... Gen 26:13
as she c praying before ... 1 Sam 1:12
for the sea c to grow more ... Jon 1:13
c with Me three days ... Matt 15:32
c all night in prayer to ... Luke 6:12
c steadfastly in the ... Acts 2:42
Now Peter c knocking ... Acts 12:16
c his message until ... Acts 20:7
c without food, and ... Acts 27:33
us, they would have c ... 1 John 2:19

CONTINUES

But He, because He c ... Heb 7:24
law of liberty and c ... James 1:25

CONTINUING

c daily with one accord ... Acts 2:46
c steadfastly in prayer ... Rom 12:12
here we have no c city ... Heb 13:14

CONTRADICTIONS

idle babblings and c ... 1 Tim 6:20

CONTRARY

for the wind was c ... Matt 14:24
to worship God c ... Acts 18:13
me to be struck c to the ... Acts 23:3
c to hope, in hope ... Rom 4:18
were grafted c to nature ... Rom 11:24
and these are c ... Gal 5:17
against us, which was c to ... Col 2:14
please God and are c ... 1 Thess 2:15
other thing that is c ... 1 Tim 1:10

CONTRIBUTION

to make a certain c ... Rom 15:26

CONTRITE

saves such as have a c ... Ps 34:18
a broken and a c ... Ps 51:17
with him who has a c ... Is 57:15
poor and of a c spirit ... Is 66:2

CONTROVERSY

another, matters of c ... Deut 17:8
For the LORD has a c ... Jer 25:31
without c great is ... 1 Tim 3:16

CONVERSION

describing the c ... Acts 15:3

CONVERTED

unless you are c ... Matt 18:3
Repent therefore and be c ... Acts 3:19

CONVERTING

LORD is perfect, c the soul ... Ps 19:7

CONVEYED

of darkness and c ... Col 1:13

CONVICT

He has come, He will c ... John 16:8
c those who contradict ... Titus 1:9
c all who are ungodly ... Jude 15

CONVICTED

c by their conscience, ... John 8:9
sin, and are c by the law ... James 2:9

CONVICTS

Which of you c ... John 8:46

CONVINCED

I am c that none of these ... Acts 26:26
Let each be fully c ... Rom 14:5
he is c by all, he is ... 1 Cor 14:24
If anyone is c in himself ... 2 Cor 10:7

CONVOCATION

day there shall be a holy c ... Ex 12:16
of solemn rest, a holy c ... Lev 23:3
of trumpets, a holy c ... Lev 23:24

CONVULSED

unclean spirit had c him . . . Mark 1:26
immediately the spirit c . . . Mark 9:20

COOKED

c their own children . . . Lam 4:10

COOL

in the garden in the c . . . Gen 3:8
and c my tongue . . . Luke 16:24

COPIES

necessary that the c . . . Heb 9:23
hands, which are c . . . Heb 9:24

COPPER

hills you can dig c . . . Deut 8:9
c in your money belts . . . Matt 10:9
of cups, pitchers, c . . . Mark 7:4
sold for two c coins . . . Luke 12:6

COPPERSMITH

c did me much harm . . . 2 Tim 4:14

COPY

who serve the c . . . Heb 8:5

CORBAN

from me is C (that is, . . . Mark 7:11)

CORD

this line of scarlet c . . . Josh 2:18
And a threefold c . . . Eccl 4:12
before the silver c . . . Eccl 12:6

CORDS

cut in pieces the c . . . Ps 129:4
he is caught in the c . . . Prov 5:22
draw iniquity with c . . . Is 5:18
them with gentle c . . . Hos 11:4
had made a whip of c . . . John 2:15

CORIANDER

it was like white c seed . . . Ex 16:31
manna was like c seed . . . Num 11:7

CORINTH

Paul labors at, Acts 18:1–18
Site of church, 1 Cor 1:2
Visited by Apollos, Acts 19:1

CORNELIUS

A religious Gentile, Acts 10:1–48

CORNER

cut off a c of Saul's robe . . . 1 Sam 24:4
Jerusalem at the C Gate . . . 2 Chr 26:9
dwell in a c of a housepot . . . Prov 21:9
in the c of a bed and on . . . Amos 3:12
was not done in a c . . . Acts 26:26

CORNERS

its horns on its four c . . . Ex 27:2
in the tassels of the c . . . Num 15:38
sheet bound at the four c . . . Acts 10:11
at the four c of the earth . . . Rev 7:1

CORNERSTONE

Or who laid its c . . . Job 38:6
has become the chief c . . . Ps 118:22
stone, a precious c . . . Is 28:16
become the chief c . . . Matt 21:42
has become the chief c . . . Acts 4:11
Himself being the chief c . . . Eph 2:20
in Zion a chief c . . . 1 Pet 2:6

CORPSE

c was thrown on the . . . 1 Kin 13:24
c trodden underfoot . . . Is 14:19

CORRECT

with rebukes You c . . . Ps 39:11
C your son, and he will . . . Prov 29:17
But I will c you in . . . Jer 30:11

CORRECTED

human fathers who c . . . Heb 12:9

CORRECTION

nor detest His c . . . Prov 3:11
but he who refuses c . . . Prov 10:17
but he who hates c . . . Prov 12:1
rod of c will drive it . . . Prov 22:15
Do not withhold c . . . Prov 23:13

they received no c . . . Jer 2:30
for reproof, for c . . . 2 Tim 3:16

CORRECTS

is the man whom God c . . . Job 5:17
the LORD loves He c . . . Prov 3:12

CORRODED

and silver are c . . . James 5:3

CORRUPT

earth also was c before . . . Gen 6:11
the sons of Eli were c . . . 1 Sam 2:12
have together become c . . . Ps 14:3
have together become c . . . Ps 53:3
old man which grows c . . . Eph 4:22
Let no c word . . . Eph 4:29
men of c minds . . . 2 Tim 3:8
in these things they c . . . Jude 10

CORRUPTED

for all flesh had c . . . Gen 6:12
we have c no one . . . 2 Cor 7:2
so your minds may be c . . . 2 Cor 11:3
Your riches are c . . . James 5:2
the great harlot who c . . . Rev 19:2

CORRUPTIBLE

For this c must put on . . . 1 Cor 15:53
redeemed with c things . . . 1 Pet 1:18

CORRUPTION

Your Holy One to see c . . . Ps 16:10
God raised up saw no c . . . Acts 13:37
from the bondage of c . . . Rom 8:21
The body is sown in c . . . 1 Cor 15:42
c inherit incorruption . . . 1 Cor 15:50
of the flesh reap c . . . Gal 6:8
having escaped the c . . . 2 Pet 1:4
perish in their own c . . . 2 Pet 2:12

COST

and count the c . . . Luke 14:28

COSTLY

foundation was of c . . . 1 Kin 7:10
of very c oil of spikenard . . . Mark 14:3
or pearls or c clothing . . . 1 Tim 2:9

COSTS

which c me nothing . . . 2 Sam 24:24

COUCH

He went up to my c . . . Gen 49:4
I drench my c with my . . . Ps 6:6
Behold, it is Solomon's c . . . Song 3:7

COULD

has done what she c . . . Mark 14:8
c remove mountains . . . 1 Cor 13:2
which no one c number . . . Rev 7:9

COUNCIL

shall be in danger of the c . . . Matt 5:22
all the c sought false . . . Matt 26:59
a prominent c member, . . . Mark 15:43
Pharisees gathered a c . . . John 11:47
and called the c together . . . Acts 5:21
all the c of the elders, . . . Acts 22:5

COUNCILS

deliver you up to c . . . Mark 13:9

COUNSEL

and strength, He has c . . . Job 12:13
the c of the wicked is . . . Job 21:16
when the friendly c . . . Job 29:4
is this who darkens c . . . Job 38:2
who walks not in the c . . . Ps 1:1
We took sweet c . . . Ps 55:14
guide me with Your c . . . Ps 73:24
you disdained all my c . . . Prov 1:25
have none of my c . . . Prov 1:30
Where there is no c . . . Prov 11:14
C in the heart of man . . . Prov 20:5
by wise c wage war . . . Prov 20:18
whom did He take c . . . Is 40:14
You are great in c . . . Jer 32:19
according to the c . . . Eph 1:11
immutability of His c . . . Heb 6:17
I c you to buy from . . . Rev 3:18

COUNSELOR

be called Wonderful, C . . . Is 9:6
but there was no c . . . Is 41:28
Has your c perished . . . Mic 4:9
who has become His c . . . Rom 11:34

COUNSELORS

c there is safety . . . Prov 11:14

COUNT

c the people of Israel . . . 2 Sam 24:4
I can c all My bones . . . Ps 22:17
all c John as a prophet . . . Matt 21:26
c my life dear to . . . Acts 20:24
c me as a partner . . . Philem 17
c it all joy when you fall . . . James 1:2
His promise, as some c . . . 2 Pet 3:9

COUNTED

Even a fool is c . . . Prov 17:28
c as the small dust . . . Is 40:15
the wages are not c . . . Rom 4:4
me, these I have c loss for . . . Phil 3:7
He c me faithful . . . 1 Tim 1:12
who rule well be c . . . 1 Tim 5:17
c the blood of the . . . Heb 10:29

COUNTENANCE

The LORD lift up His c . . . Num 6:26
c they did not cast . . . Job 29:24
up the light of Your c . . . Ps 4:6
His c is like Lebanon . . . Song 5:15
hypocrites, with a sad c . . . Matt 6:16
His c was like . . . Matt 28:3
of the glory of his c . . . 2 Cor 3:7
sword, and His c . . . Rev 1:16

COUNTRY

See FAR COUNTRY

"Get out of your c . . . Gen 12:1
but you shall go to my c . . . Gen 24:4
us pass through your c . . . Num 20:17
Israel to search out the c . . . Josh 2:2
an end of dividing the c . . . Josh 19:51
the c was quiet for forty . . . Judg 8:28
dwell in the c of Moab . . . Ruth 1:1
the c of the Philistines . . . 1 Sam 27:11
good news from a far c . . . Prov 25:25
you into a bountiful c . . . Jer 2:7
their own c another way . . . Matt 2:12
honor except in his own c . . . Matt 13:57
and went into a far c . . . Matt 21:33
the c of the Gadarenes . . . Mark 5:1
go into the surrounding c . . . Mark 6:36
and went into a far c . . . Luke 12:1
there were in the same c . . . Luke 2:8
journeyed to a far c . . . Luke 15:13
as in a foreign c . . . Heb 11:9
that is, a heavenly c . . . Heb 11:16

COUNTRYMEN

for my brethren, my c . . . Rom 9:3

COUNTS

c the number of the stars . . . Ps 147:4

COURAGE

strong and of good c . . . Deut 31:6
c in anyone because of . . . Josh 2:11
the prophet, he took c . . . 2 Chr 15:8
Be of good c, and do it . . . Ezra 10:4
his c against the king of . . . Dan 11:25
thanked God and took c . . . Acts 28:15

COURAGEOUS

Only be strong and very c . . . Josh 1:7
Be strong and c . . . 2 Chr 32:7

COURSE

and sets on fire the c . . . James 3:6

COURT

the c of the tabernacle . . . Ex 27:9
men, and they come to c . . . Deut 25:1
made the c of the priests . . . 2 Chr 4:9
the inner c to the king . . . Esth 4:11
appoint my day in c . . . Job 9:19
many would c your favor . . . Job 11:19
Do not go hastily to c . . . Prov 25:8

up in the c of the prison Jer 32:2
cloud filled the inner c Ezek 10:3
me into the outer c Ezek 40:17
by you or by a human c 1 Cor 4:43
They zealously c you Gal 4:17

COURTEOUS

be tenderhearted, be c 1 Pet 3:8

COURTS

he may dwell in Your c Ps 65:4
even faints for the c Ps 84:2
flourish in the c Ps 92:13
and into His c Ps 100:4
drink it in My holy c Is 62:9

COVENANT

See NEW COVENANT

I will establish My c Gen 6:18
I establish My c with you Gen 9:9
the LORD made a c Gen 15:18
I will make My c between Gen 17:2
for Me, behold, My c Gen 17:4
My voice and keep My c Ex 19:5
he took the Book of the C Ex 24:7
as a perpetual c Ex 31:16
it is a c of salt Num 18:19
c which He commanded Deut 4:13
the c which He made Deut 29:1
never break My c with Judg 2:1
a c before the LORD 1 Sam 23:18
is the c of the LORD 1 Kin 8:21
You, who keep Your c 1 Kin 8:23
of the Book of the C 2 Kin 23:2
Remember His c forever 1 Chr 16:15
You, who keep Your c 2 Chr 6:14
of the Book of the C 2 Chr 34:30
You who keep Your c Neh 1:5
"I have made a c Job 31:1
I will show them His c Ps 25:14
c shall stand firm Ps 89:28
has remembered His c Ps 105:8
sons will keep My c Ps 132:12
forgets the c of her God Prov 2:17
and give You as a c Is 42:6
with them an everlasting c Is 61:8
the words of this c Jer 11:2
I will make a new c Jer 31:31
"I made a c with your Jer 34:13
a c of peace with them Ezek 37:26
c with many for one week Dan 9:27
they transgressed the c Hos 6:7
I might break the c Zech 11:10
and your wife by c Mal 2:14
the Messenger of the c Mal 3:1
is My blood of the new c Matt 26:28
My blood of the new c Mark 14:24
cup is the new c Luke 22:20
the new c in My blood 1 Cor 11:25
as ministers of the new c 2 Cor 3:6
c that was confirmed Gal 3:17
Mediator of a better c Heb 8:6
c had been faultless Heb 8:7
He says, "A new c Heb 8:13
the Mediator of the new c Heb 9:15
Mediator of the new c Heb 12:24
of the everlasting c Heb 13:20

COVENANTED

your kingdom, as I c 2 Chr 7:18
to the word that I c Hag 2:5

COVENANTS

the glory, the c Rom 9:4
these are the two c Gal 4:24

COVER

the rock, and will c Ex 33:22
He shall c you with Ps 91:4
c Yourself with light Ps 104:2
LORD as the waters c Is 11:9
and will no more c Is 26:21
from the wind and a c Is 32:2
and to the hills, 'C us Luke 23:30
not to c his head 1 Cor 11:7
c a multitude of sins James 5:20

love will c a multitude of 1 Pet 4:8

COVERED

The depths have c Ex 15:5
c my transgressions as Job 31:33
Whose sin is c Ps 32:1
the wings of a dove c Ps 68:13
You have c all their sin Ps 85:2
You c me in my Ps 139:13
with two he c his face Is 6:2
of Jacob will be c Is 27:9
You have c Yourself Lam 3:44
For there is nothing c Matt 10:26

COVERING

spread a cloud for a c Ps 105:39
make sackcloth their c Is 50:3
given to her for a c 1 Cor 11:15

COVERINGS

and made themselves c Gen 3:7

COVET

"You shall not c Ex 20:17
c fields and take them Mic 2:2
You murder and c James 4:2

COVETED

c no one's silver Acts 20:33

COVETOUS

nor thieves, nor c 1 Cor 6:10
trained in c practices 2 Pet 2:14

COVETOUSNESS

but he who hates c Prov 28:16
for nothing but your c Jer 22:17
heed and beware of c Luke 12:15
would not have known c Rom 7:7
all uncleanness or c Eph 5:3
conduct be without c Heb 13:5

COWARDLY

the c, unbelieving Rev 21:8

COWS

out of the river seven c Gen 41:2
c ate up the first seven Gen 41:20
take two milk c which 1 Sam 6:7
you c of Bashan, who are Amos 4:1

CRAFTILY

His people, to deal c Ps 105:25

CRAFTINESS

wise in their own c Job 5:13
not walking in c 2 Cor 4:2
deceived Eve by his c 2 Cor 11:3
in the cunning c Eph 4:14

CRAFTSMAN

instructor of every c Gen 4:22
c encouraged the Is 41:7
c stretches out his Is 44:13

CRAFTSMEN

all the c who were doing Ex 36:4
and the Valley of C Neh 11:35
no small profit to the c Acts 19:24

CRAFTY

Jonadab was a very c 2 Sam 13:3
the devices of the c Job 5:12
They have taken c Ps 83:3
of a harlot, and a c Prov 7:10
Nevertheless, being c 2 Cor 12:16

CRANE

Like a c or a swallow Is 38:14

CRAVES

and his soul still c Is 29:8

CRAVING

yielded to intense c Num 11:4
who had yielded to c Num 11:34

CREAM

she brought out c Judg 5:25
were bathed with c Job 29:6

CREATE

C in me a clean heart, Ps 51:10

then the LORD will c above Is 4:5
peace and c calamity Is 45:7
Who did not c it in vain Is 45:18
For behold, I c Is 65:17
to c in Himself one new Eph 2:15

CREATED

God c the heavens Gen 1:1
God c great sea creatures Gen 1:21
So God c man in His Gen 1:27
earth when they were c Gen 2:4
the day that God c man Gen 5:1
man whom I have c Gen 6:7
God c man on the earth Deut 4:32
south, You have c them Ps 89:12
You c all the children of Ps 89:47
c may praise the LORD Ps 102:18
Spirit, they are c Ps 104:30
and they were c Ps 148:5
and see who has c Is 40:26
of Israel has c Is 41:20
LORD, Who c the heavens Is 42:5
says the LORD, who c you Is 43:1
I, the LORD, have c it Is 45:8
They are c now and not Is 48:7
I have c the blacksmith Is 54:16
For the LORD has c Jer 31:22
place where you were c Ezek 21:30
on the day you were c Ezek 28:13
Has not one God c Mal 2:10
which God c until this Mark 13:19
nor any other c thing Rom 8:39
Nor was man c for the 1 Cor 11:9
c in Christ Jesus Eph 2:10
hidden in God who c Eph 3:9
new man which was c Eph 4:24
Him all things were c Col 1:16
from foods which God c 1 Tim 4:3
for You c all things Rev 4:11
who c heaven and the Rev 10:6

CREATION

the beginning of the c Mark 10:6
beginning of the c which Mark 13:19
since the c of the world Rom 1:20
c was subjected Rom 8:20
know that the whole c Rom 8:22
Christ, he is a new c 2 Cor 5:17
anything, but a new c Gal 6:15
firstborn over all c Col 1:15
that is, not of this c Heb 9:11
from the beginning of c 2 Pet 3:4
Beginning of the c of God Rev 3:14

CREATOR

Remember now your C Eccl 12:1
God, the LORD, the C Is 40:28
rather than the C Rom 1:25
good, as to a faithful C 1 Pet 4:19

CREATURE

See LIVING CREATURE

every living c that is with Gen 9:12
living c with its four Ezek 1:15
the gospel to every c Mark 16:15
For every c of God is 1 Tim 4:4
And there is no c Heb 4:13
And every c which is Rev 5:13
and every living c Rev 16:3

CREATURES

See LIVING CREATURES

created great sea c Gen 1:21
firstfruits of His c James 1:18
were four living c Rev 4:6

CREDIT

who love you, what c Luke 6:32
For what c is it if 1 Pet 2:20

CREDITOR

Every c who has lent Deut 15:2
c is coming to take my 2 Kin 4:1
c seize all that he Ps 109:11
There was a certain c Luke 7:41

CREEP

beasts of the forest c Ps 104:20

sort are those who c 2 Tim 3:6

CREEPING

c thing and beast of Gen 1:24
every sort of c thing Ezek 8:10
animals and c things Rom 1:23

CREPT

For certain men have c Jude 4

CRETE

Paul visits, Acts 27:7-21
Titus dispatched to, Titus 1:5
Inhabitants of, evil and lazy, Titus 1:12

CRIB

donkey its master's c Is 1:3

CRIED

he c with an exceedingly Gen 27:34
the poor who c out Job 29:12
They c to You Ps 22:5
of the depths I have c Ps 130:1
of the belly of Sheol I c Jon 2:2
beginning to sink he c Matt 14:30
Jesus c out and said John 12:44
they c out, "Away with John 19:15

CRIES

your brother's blood c Gen 4:10
with vehement c Heb 5:7

CRIMES

land is filled with c Ezek 7:23

CRIMINALS

also two others, c Luke 23:32

CRIMSON

blue, and purple, and c 2 Chr 3:14
though they are red like c Is 1:18

CRIPPLE

c from his mother's womb Acts 14:8

CRISPUS

Chief ruler of synagogue of Corinth,
Acts 18:8
Baptized by Paul, 1 Cor 1:14

CROOKED

perverse and c generation Deut 32:5
turn aside to their c Ps 125:5
whose ways are c Prov 2:15
What is c cannot be made Eccl 1:15
what He has made c Eccl 7:13
c places shall be made Is 40:4
c places straight Is 45:2
c places shall be made Luke 3:5
in the midst of a c Phil 2:15

CROSS

I would not c over the Deut 4:21
But when you c over the Deut 12:10
does not take his c Matt 10:38
and take up his c Matt 16:24
compelled to bear His c Matt 27:32
down from the c Matt 27:40
and take up his c Mark 8:34
and take up his c daily, Luke 9:23
does not bear his c Luke 14:27
And He, bearing His c, John 19:17
lest the c of Christ 1 Cor 1:17
offense of the c has ceased Gal 5:11
persecution for the c Gal 6:12
boast except in the c Gal 6:14
one body through the c Eph 2:16
even the death of the c Phil 2:8
the enemies of the c Phil 3:18
through the blood of His c Col 1:20
having nailed it to the c Col 2:14
Him endured the c Heb 12:2

CROW

rooster will not c this Luke 22:34

CROWD

shall not follow a c Ex 23:2

CROWN

the holy c on the turban Ex 29:6
You set a c of pure Ps 21:3

c the year with Your Ps 65:11
have profaned his c Ps 89:39
upon Himself His c Ps 132:18
The c of the wise is Prov 14:24
head is a c of glory Prov 16:31
Woe to the c of pride Is 28:1
hosts will be for a c Is 28:5
c has fallen from our Lam 5:16
they had twisted a c Matt 27:29
wearing the c of thorns John 19:5
obtain a perishable c 1 Cor 9:25
brethren, my joy and c Phil 4:1
or joy, or c of rejoicing 1 Thess 2:19
laid up for me the c 2 Tim 4:8
he will receive the c James 1:12
you will receive the c of 1 Pet 5:4
I will give you the c of life Rev 2:10
no one may take your c Rev 3:11
on His head a golden c Rev 14:14

CROWNED

angels, and You have c Ps 8:5
but the prudent are c Prov 14:18
athletics, he is not c 2 Tim 2:5
You have c him with glory Heb 2:7

CROWNS

and they had c of gold Rev 4:4
on his horns ten c Rev 13:1
His head were many c Rev 19:12

CRUCIFIED

be delivered up to be c Matt 26:2
"Let Him be c Matt 27:22
robbers were c with Him Matt 27:38
you seek Jesus who was c Matt 28:5
scourged Him, to be c Mark 15:15
third hour, and they c Mark 15:25
of Nazareth, who was c Mark 16:6
Calvary, there they c Luke 23:33
of sinful men, and be c Luke 24:7
to death, and c Him Luke 24:20
Him to them to be c John 19:16
c there was a garden John 19:41
lawless hands, have c Acts 2:23
of Nazareth, whom you c Acts 4:10
that our old man was c Rom 6:6
Was Paul c for you 1 Cor 1:13
but we preach Christ c 1 Cor 1:23
Jesus Christ and Him c 1 Cor 2:2
they would not have c 1 Cor 2:8
though He was c 2 Cor 13:4
I have been c with Christ Gal 2:20
portrayed among you as c Gal 3:1
c the flesh with its passions Gal 5:24
the world has been c to me Gal 6:14
where also our Lord was c Rev 11:8

CRUCIFY

and to scourge and to c Matt 20:19
them you will kill and c Matt 23:34
out again, "C Him Mark 15:13
saying, "C Him, c Him Luke 23:21
I have power to c You John 19:10
"Shall I c your King John 19:15
since they c again Heb 6:6

CRUEL

wrath, for it is c Gen 49:7
spirit and c bondage Ex 6:9
hate me with c hatred Ps 25:19
of the wicked are c Prov 12:10

CRUELTY

of c are in their Gen 49:5
the haunts of Ps 74:20
c you have ruled Ezek 34:4

CRUMBS

eat from the children's c Mark 7:28
c which fell from the Luke 16:21

CRUSH

that a foot may c Job 39:15
that your foot may c Ps 68:23
the poor, who c Amos 4:1
of peace will c Rom 16:20

CRUSHED

in the dust, who are c Job 4:19
c my life to the Ps 143:3
every side, yet not c 2 Cor 4:8

CRUST

man is reduced to a c Prov 6:26

CRY

and their c came up to Ex 2:23
of oppressions they c Job 35:9
heart and my flesh c Ps 84:2
I c out with my whole Ps 119:145
Does not wisdom c Prov 8:1
"What shall I c Is 40:6
nor lift up a c Jer 7:16
c mightily to God Jon 3:8
at midnight a c Matt 25:6
His own elect who c Luke 18:7

CRYING

"The voice of one c Matt 3:3
nor sorrow, nor c Rev 21:4

CRYSTAL

nor c can equal it Job 28:17
your gates of c Is 54:12
of an awesome c Ezek 1:22
a sea of glass, like c Rev 4:6

CUBIT

shall finish it to a c Gen 6:16
can add one c Matt 6:27

CUCUMBERS

in Egypt, the c Num 11:5
a hut in a garden of c Is 1:8

CUD

c or those that have cloven Lev 11:4
the c or have cloven Deut 14:7

CUMI

Talitha, c," which is Mark 5:41

CUNNING

the serpent was more c Gen 3:1
c comes quickly Job 5:13
c craftiness of deceitful Eph 4:14

CUP

My c runs over Ps 23:5
waters of a full c are Ps 73:10
the LORD there is a c Ps 75:8
I will take up the c Ps 116:13
the dregs of the c Is 51:17
men give them the c Jer 16:7
"Take this wine c Jer 25:15
The c of the LORD's Hab 2:16
make Jerusalem a c Zech 12:2
little ones only a c Matt 10:42
will indeed drink My c Matt 20:23
cleanse the inside of the c Matt 23:26
Then He took the c Matt 26:27
possible, let this c Matt 26:39
c of water to drink in My Mark 9:41
the outside of the c Luke 11:39
c is the new covenant Luke 22:20
this c away from Me Luke 22:42
cannot drink the c 1 Cor 10:21
c is the new covenant 1 Cor 11:25
the c of His indignation Rev 14:10
to give her the c Rev 16:19
c full of abominations Rev 17:4

CURE

but they could not c Matt 17:16
and to c diseases Luke 9:1

CURES

and perform c Luke 13:32

CURSE

c the ground for man's Gen 8:21
will c him who curses you Gen 12:3
your c be on me, my son Gen 27:13
c a ruler of your Ex 22:28
You shall not c the deaf Lev 19:14
c this people for me Num 22:6
Balaam, "Neither c Num 23:25

your God turned the c Deut 23:5
 on Mount Ebal to c Deut 27:13
 c which I have set before Deut 30:1
 said to him. 'C David 2 Sam 16:10
 the c into a blessing Neh 13:2
 'C God and die Job 2:9
 mouth, but they c Ps 62:4
 Let them c, but You bless Ps 109:28
 The c of the LORD is Prov 3:33
 So a c without cause shall Prov 26:2
 Do not c the king Eccl 10:20
 the c has devoured Is 24:6
 a byword, a taunt and a c Jer 24:9
 This is the c that goes out Zech 5:3
 a c among the nations Zech 8:13
 'I will send a c Mal 2:2
 are cursed with a c Mal 3:9
 bless those who c you, Luke 6:28
 bless and do not c Rom 12:14
 law are under the c Gal 3:10
 us from the c of the law, Gal 3:13
 Father, and with it we c James 3:9
 there shall be no more c Rev 22:3

CURSED

c more than all cattle Gen 3:14
 C is the man who Jer 17:5
 c is he who keeps Jer 48:10
 'Depart from Me, you c Matt 25:41
 C is everyone who hangs Gal 3:13
 and near to being c Heb 6:8

CURSES

I will curse him who c Gen 12:3
 'For everyone who c Lev 20:9
 write these c in a book Num 5:23
 c his father or his Prov 20:20
 'He who c father or Mark 7:10

CURSINGS

by the sword for the c Hos 7:16

CURTAIN

of each c shall be Ex 26:2
 the heavens like a c Ps 104:2

CUSH

Ham's oldest son, 1 Chr 1:8-10
 — Another name for Ethiopia, Is 18:1

CUSHAN-RISHATHAIM

Mesopotamian king; oppresses Israel,
 Judg 3:8
 Othniel delivers Israel from, Judg 3:9,
 10

CUSTOM

to me, as Your c Ps 119:132
 according to the c Acts 15:1
 we have no such c 1 Cor 11:16

CUT

confidence shall be c Job 8:14
 evildoers shall be c Ps 37:9
 the wicked will be c Prov 2:22
 c off your supply of bread Ezek 5:16
 your navel cord was not c Ezek 16:4
 stone was c out without Dan 2:34
 that I will c off the names Zech 13:2
 not bear good fruit is c Matt 3:10
 causes you to sin, c Matt 5:30
 and will c him in Matt 24:51
 him whose ear Peter c John 18:26
 He had his hair c Acts 18:18

CYMBAL

or a clanging c 1 Cor 13:1

CYPRUS

Mentioned in prophecies, Num 24:24;
 Is 23:1-12; Jer 2:10
 Christians preach to Jews of, Acts
 11:19, 20
 Paul and Barnabas visit, Acts 13:4-13;
 15:39

CYRENE

A Greek colonial city in North Africa;
 home of Simon the cross-bearer,
 Matt 27:32

Synagogue of, Acts 6:9
 Christians from, become missionaries,
 Acts 11:20

CYRUS

King of Persia, referred to as God's
 anointed, Is 44:28-45:1

DAGON

The national god of the Philistines,
 Judg 16:23
 Falls before ark, 1 Sam 5:1-5

DAILY

much as they gather d Ex 16:5
 d He shall be praised Ps 72:15
 to me, watching d Prov 8:34
 Yet they seek Me d Is 58:2
 Give us this day our d Matt 6:11
 I sat d with you Matt 26:55
 take up his cross d Luke 9:23
 the Scriptures d Acts 17:11
 our Lord, I die d 1 Cor 15:31
 stands ministering d Heb 10:11

DALMATIA

A region east of the Adriatic Sea: Titus
 departs for, 2 Tim 4:10

DAMASCUS

Capital of Syria; captured by David;
 ruled by enemy kings, 2 Sam 8:5, 6;
 1 Kin 11:23, 24; 15:18
 Elisha's prophecy in, 2 Kin 8:7-15
 Taken by Assyrians, 2 Kin 16:9
 Prophecy concerning, Is 8:3, 4
 Paul converted on road to: first
 preaches there, Acts 9:1-22
 escapes from, 2 Cor 11:32, 33
 revisits, Gal 1:17

DAN

Jacob's son by Bilhah, Gen 30:5, 6
 Prophecy concerning, Gen 49:16, 17
 — Tribe of:
 Numbered, Num 1:38, 39
 Blessed, Deut 33:22
 Receive their inheritance, Josh
 19:40-47
 Fall into idolatry, Judg 18:1-31
 — Town, northern boundary of Is-
 rael, Judg 20:1
 Called Leshem; captured by Danites,
 Josh 19:47
 Center of idolatry, 1 Kin 12:28-30
 Destroyed by Ben-Hadad, 1 Kin 15:20

DANCE

and their children d Job 21:11
 His name with the d Ps 149:3
 mourn, and a time to d Eccl 3:4
 d has turned into Lam 5:15
 and you did not d Matt 11:17

DANCED

Then David d before 2 Sam 6:14
 daughter of Herodias d Matt 14:6

DANCING

saw the calf and the d Ex 32:19
 me my mourning into d Ps 30:11
 he heard music and d Luke 15:25

DANIEL

Taken to Babylon; refuses Nebuchad-
 nezzar's foods, Dan 1
 Interprets dreams; honored by king,
 Dan 2
 Interprets handwriting on wall; hon-
 ored by Belshazzar, Dan 5:10-29
 Appointed to high office; conspired
 against and thrown to lions, Dan
 6:1-23
 Visions of four beasts, ram and goat,
 Dan 7; 8

Intercedes for Israel, Dan 9:1-19
 Further visions, Dan 9:20-12:13

DARE

someone would even d Rom 5:7
 D any of you 1 Cor 6:1

DARIUS

Darius the Mede, son of Ahasuerus;
 made king of the Chaldeans, Dan 9:1
 Succeeds Belshazzar, Dan 5:30, 31
 Co-ruler with Cyrus, Dan 6:28
 — Darius Hystaspis (522-486 B.C.),
 king of all Persia; temple work dated
 by his reign, Ezra 4:5, 24
 Confirms Cyrus's royal edict, Ezra
 6:1-14
 — Darius the Persian (423-404 B.C.);
 priestly records kept during his
 reign, Neh 12:22

DARK

dwell in the d cloud 1 Kin 8:12
 I am d, but lovely Song 1:5
 d place of the earth Is 45:19
 d places like the dead Lam 3:6
 and makes the day d Amos 5:8
 and the day shall be d Mic 3:6
 I tell you in the d Matt 10:27
 while it was still d John 20:1
 shines in a d place 2 Pet 1:19

DARKENED

so that the land was d Ex 10:15
 Let their eyes be d Ps 69:23
 their understanding d Eph 4:18

DARKNESS

d He called Night Gen 1:5
 shall enlighten my d 2 Sam 22:29
 through the deep d Job 22:13
 Those who sat in d Ps 107:10
 d shall not hide Ps 139:12
 d have seen a great light Is 9:2
 I will make d light Is 42:16
 and deep d the people Is 60:2
 Israel, or a land of d Jer 2:31
 body will be full of d Matt 6:23
 cast out into outer d Matt 8:12
 and the power of d Luke 22:53
 d rather than light John 3:19
 d does not know John 12:35
 For you were once d Eph 5:8
 the rulers of the d Eph 6:12
 us from the power of d Col 1:13
 of the night nor of d 1 Thess 5:5
 and to blackness and d Heb 12:18
 called you out of d 1 Pet 2:9
 blackness of d forever 2 Pet 2:17
 and in Him is no d 1 John 1:5
 Him, and walk in d 1 John 1:6
 d is passing away 1 John 2:8
 blackness of d forever Jude 13

DARTS

quench all the fiery d Eph 6:16

DASH

You shall d them to Ps 2:9
 lest you d your foot Matt 4:6

DASHED

hand, O LORD, has d Ex 15:6
 also will be d to Is 13:16
 infants shall be d Hos 13:16

DATHAN

Joins Korah's rebellion, Num 16:1-35
 Swallowed up by the earth, Ps 106:17

DAUGHTER

I am the d of Bethuel, Gen 24:24
 Dinah the d of Leah Gen 34:1
 Jochebed the d of Levi Num 26:59
 had neither son nor d Judg 11:34
 cry of the d of my people Jer 8:19
 the virgin d of my people Jer 14:17

O virgin, the *d* of Egypt Jer 46:11
 "Rejoice greatly, O *d* Zech 9:9
 My *d* has just died, Matt 9:18
 Be of good cheer, *d* Matt 9:22
 being a *d* of Abraham, Luke 13:16
 "Fear not, *d* of Zion John 12:15
 the son of Pharaoh's *d* Heb 11:24

DAUGHTER-IN-LAW

Judah said to Tamar his *d* Gen 38:11
 the Moabitess her *d* with Ruth 1:22
 lewdly defiles his *d* Ezek 22:11
d against her Mic 7:6
 a *d* against her Matt 10:35

DAUGHTERS

he had sons and *d* Gen 5:4
 of God saw the *d* Gen 6:2
 Thus both the *d* of Lot Gen 19:36
 years for your two *d* Gen 31:41
 the *d* of Zelophehad Num 27:1
 not give them our *d* as Judg 21:7
 Turn back, my *d* Ruth 1:11
 O *d* of Israel, weep over 2 Sam 1:24
d wore such apparel 2 Sam 13:18
 beautiful as the *d* of Job Job 42:15
 Kings' *d* are among Your Ps 45:9
 Let the *d* of Judah be glad, Ps 48:11
 The leech has two *d* Prov 30:15
 "Many *d* have done well Prov 31:29
 a bird, and all the *d* Eccl 12:4
 O *d* of Jerusalem, like the Song 1:5
 "Because the *d* of Zion are Is 3:16
d shall go into captivity Joel 2:28
 your *d* shall prophesy Joel 2:28
 O of Jerusalem, do not Luke 23:28
d shall prophesy Acts 2:17
 man had four virgin *d* Acts 21:9
 shall be My sons and *d* 2 Cor 6:18
 whose *d* you are if you 1 Pet 3:6

DAVID

See CITY OF DAVID; HOUSE OF DAVID;

SEED OF DAVID; SON OF DAVID;

THRONE OF DAVID

Anointed by Samuel, 1 Sam 16:1-13
 Becomes royal harpist, 1 Sam 16:14-23
 Defeats Goliath, 1 Sam 17
 Makes covenant with Jonathan, 1 Sam 18:1-4
 Honored by Saul; loved by the people;
 Saul becomes jealous, 1 Sam 18:5-16
 Wins Michal as wife, 1 Sam 18:17-30
 Flees from Saul, 1 Sam 19:20;
 21:10-22:5; 23:14-29
 Eats the holy bread, 1 Sam 21:1-6; Matt 12:3, 4
 Saves Keilah from Philistines, 1 Sam 23:1-13
 Twice spares Saul's life, 1 Sam 24:1-22; 26:1-25
 Anger at Nabal appeased by Abigail;
 marries her, 1 Sam 25:2-42
 Allies with the Philistines, 1 Sam 27:1-28:2
 Rejected by them, 1 Sam 29
 Avenges destruction of Ziklag, 1 Sam 30
 Mourns death of Saul and Jonathan, 2 Sam 1
 Anointed king of Judah, 2 Sam 2:1-7
 War with Saul's house; Abner defects to David, 2 Sam 3:1, 6-21
 Mourns Abner's death, 2 Sam 3:28-39
 Punishes Ishbosheth's murderers, 2 Sam 4
 Anointed king of all Israel, 2 Sam 5:1-5
 Conquers Jerusalem; makes it his capital, 2 Sam 5:6-16
 Defeats Philistines, 2 Sam 5:17-25
 Brings ark to Jerusalem, 2 Sam 6
 Receives eternal covenant, 2 Sam 7
 Further conquests, 2 Sam 8; 10

Shows mercy to Mephibosheth.

2 Sam 9

Commits adultery and murder, 2 Sam

11

Rebuked by Nathan; repents, 2 Sam

12:1-23; Ps 32; 51

Absalom's rebellion, 2 Sam 15-18

Mourns Absalom's death, 2 Sam

18:33-19:8

Shows himself merciful, 2 Sam

19:18-39

Sheba's rebellion, 2 Sam 19:40-20:22

Avenges the Gibeonites, 2 Sam

21:1-14

Song of deliverance, 2 Sam 22

Sins by numbering the people, 2 Sam

24:1-17

Buys threshing floor to build altar,

2 Sam 24:18-25

Secures Solomon's succession, 1 Kin

1:5-53

Instructions to Solomon, 1 Kin 2:1-11

Last words, 2 Sam 23:1-7

Inspired by Spirit, Matt 22:43

As prophet, Acts 2:29-34

Faith of, Heb 11:32-34

DAY

See LAST DAY; THIRD DAY

God called the light *D* Gen 1:5

blessed the seventh *d* Gen 2:3

garden in the cool of the *d* Gen 3:8

on that *d* all the fountains Gen 7:11

and *d* and night Gen 8:22

"Swear to me as of this *d* Gen 25:33

shall observe this *d* Ex 12:17

a certain quota every *d* Ex 16:4

sixth *d* bread for two days Ex 16:29

rested on the seventh *d* Ex 16:30

Remember the Sabbath *d* Ex 20:8

eaten the same *d* Lev 19:6

seventh *d* shall be a holy Lev 23:8

be the *D* of Atonement Lev 23:27

clothes on the seventh *d* Num 31:24

and in the cloud by *d* Deut 1:33

This *d* you are to cross Deut 2:18

witness against you this *d* Deut 4:26

the *d* of their calamity Deut 32:35

you shall meditate in it *d* Josh 1:8

"This *d* I have rolled away Josh 5:9

grain, on the very same *d* Josh 5:11

has been no *d* like that Josh 10:14

rebel this *d* against the Josh 22:16

You are witnesses this *d* Ruth 4:10

on the *d* of battle, that 1 Sam 13:22

the victory that *d* was 2 Sam 19:2

This *d* is a *d* of good news, 2 Kin 7:9

This *d* is a *d* of trouble, 2 Kin 19:3

of a pit on a snowy *d* 1 Chr 11:22

d of the foundation of 2 Chr 8:16

Be still, for the *d* is holy Neh 8:11

made it a *d* of feasting Esth 9:18

and cursed the *d* Job 3:1

for the *d* of battle and Job 38:23

d utters speech Ps 19:2

For a *d* in Your courts Ps 84:10

In the *d* of my trouble Ps 86:7

the LORD has made Ps 118:24

do not strike you by *d* Ps 121:6

night shines as the *d* Ps 139:12

unto the perfect *d* Prov 4:18

do not know what a *d* Prov 27:1

the *d* when the keepers Eccl 12:3

Until the *d* breaks and Song 4:6

In that *d* the Branch of the Is 4:2

in the *d* of your fast you Is 58:3

tears, that I might weep *d* Jer 9:1

My covenant with the *d* Jer 33:20

a cloud on a rainy *d*, so Ezek 1:28

Behold, the *d* Ezek 7:10

on the *d* of the LORD Ezek 13:5

the *d* you were created Ezek 28:15

life, in the *d* of your fall Ezek 32:10
 knees three times that *d* Dan 6:10
 you shall stumble in the *d* Hos 4:5
 a *d* of clouds and thick Joel 2:2
 For the *d* of the LORD Joel 2:11
 who put far off the *d* Amos 6:3
 next *d* God prepared a Jon 4:7
 the *d* of your watchman Mic 7:4
 for the *d* of the LORD Zeph 1:7
 who has despised the *d* Zech 4:10
 neither *d* nor night Zech 14:7
 who can endure the *d* Mal 3:2
d our daily bread Matt 6:11
 and Gomorrah in the *d* Matt 10:15
d when I drink it new Matt 26:29
 this *d* in the city of David Luke 2:11
 you seven times in a *d* Luke 17:4
 and the third *d* rise again Luke 24:7
 sent Me while it is *d* John 9:4
 great and awesome *d* Acts 2:20
 person esteems one *d* Rom 14:5
D will declare it 1 Cor 3:13
 again the third *d* 1 Cor 15:4
d I have been in the 2 Cor 11:25
 perfectly that the *d* 1 Thess 5:2
 and sons of the *d* 1 Thess 5:5
 He designates a certain *d* Heb 4:7
 God in the *d* of visitation 1 Pet 2:12
 with the Lord one *d* 2 Pet 3:8
 great *d* of God Almighty Rev 16:14

DAY OF THE LORD

For the *d* of hosts shall Is 2:12
 Wail, for the *d* is at hand Is 13:6
 the holy *d* honorable, Is 58:13
 is the *d* God of hosts, Jer 46:10
 stand in battle on the *d* Ezek 13:5
 is near, even the *d* Ezek 30:3
 For the *d* is at hand; Joel 1:15
 the great and awesome *d* Joel 2:31
 For what good is the *d* Amos 5:18
d upon all the nations Obad 15
 for the *d* is at hand, Zeph 1:7
 the great and dreadful *d* Mai 4:5
 the great and awesome *d* Acts 2:20
 may be saved in the *d* 1 Cor 5:5
 also are ours, in the *d* 2 Cor 1:14
d will come as a thief 2 Pet 3:10

DAYS

See ALL THE DAYS OF HIS LIFE; LAST

DAYS

seasons, and for *d* Gen 1:14
 rain on the earth forty *d* Gen 7:4
 He who is eight *d* old Gen 17:12
 Seven *d* you shall eat Ex 12:15
 Six *d* you shall gather it, Ex 16:26
 Six *d* you shall labor Ex 20:9
 that your *d* may be long Deut 5:16
d are swifter than a Job 7:6
 Let me alone, for my *d* Job 7:16
 of woman is of few *d* Job 14:1
 blessed the latter *d* Job 42:12
 me all the *d* of my life Ps 23:6
 The *d* of our lives are Ps 90:10
 teach us to number our *d* Ps 90:12
 For my *d* are consumed Ps 102:3
 I remember the *d* of old Ps 143:5
 for length of *d* and long Prov 3:2
 of the LORD prolongs *d* Prov 10:27
 evil all the *d* of her life Prov 31:12
 "Why were the former *d* Eccl 7:10
 Before the difficult *d* Eccl 12:1
 and tested them ten *d* Dan 1:14
 He had fasted forty *d* Matt 4:2
 But the *d* will come when Matt 9:15
 those *d* were shortened Matt 24:22
 had shortened those *d* Mark 13:20
 the *d* were completed Luke 2:6
 But the *d* will come when Luke 5:35
 raise it up in three *d* John 2:20
 he has been dead four *d* John 11:39
 by them during forty *d* Acts 1:3

You observe *d* and Gal 4:10
 life and see good *d* 1 Pet 3:10
 will come in the last *d* 2 Pet 3:3
 two hundred and sixty *d* Rev 11:3

DAYSPRING

with which the *D* Luke 1:78

DEACONS

with the bishops and *d* Phil 1:1
d must be reverent 1 Tim 3:8
d be the husbands 1 Tim 3:12

DEAD

See RAISED FROM THE DEAD; RAISED

HIM FROM THE DEAD

"We shall all be *d* Ex 12:33
 he stood between the *d* Num 16:48
 work wonders for the *d* Ps 88:10
 who have long been *d* Ps 143:3
 But the *d* know nothing Eccl 9:5
 shall cast out the *d* Is 26:19
d bury their own *d* Matt 8:22
d are raised up and Matt 11:5
 not the God of the *d* Matt 22:32
 for this my son was *d* Luke 15:24
d will hear the voice John 5:25
 was raised from the *d* Rom 6:4
 yourselves to be *d* Rom 6:11
 from the law sin was *d* Rom 7:8
 be Lord of both the *d* Rom 14:9
 resurrection of the *d* 1 Cor 15:12
 baptized for the *d* 1 Cor 15:29
 made alive, who were *d* Eph 2:1
 And the *d* in Christ 1 Thess 4:16
d while she lives 1 Tim 5:6
 without works is *d* James 2:26
d did not live again Rev 20:5
 And the *d* were judged Rev 20:12

DEAD SEA

Called the:

Salt Sea, Gen 14:3
 Sea of the Arabah, Deut 3:17

DEADLY

they drink anything *d* Mark 16:18
 evil, full of *d* poison James 3:8
d wound was healed Rev 13:3

DEADNESS

the *d* of Sarah's womb Rom 4:19

DEAF

makes the mute, the *d* Ex 4:11
d shall hear the words Is 29:18
d shall be unstopped Is 35:5
d as My messenger Is 42:19
d who have ears Is 43:8
 their ears shall be *d* Mic 7:16
 are cleansed and the *d* Matt 11:5

DEAL

Do you thus *d* with the Deut 32:6
 My Servant shall *d* Is 52:13

DEAR

servant, who was *d* to him Luke 7:2
 count my life *d* to myself Acts 20:24
 of God as *d* children Eph 5:1
 you had become *d* to us 1 Thess 2:8

DEARLY

I have given the *d* beloved Jer 12:7
 rulers *d* love dishonor Hos 4:18

DEATH

See SECOND DEATH; SHADOW OF
 DEATH

Let me die the *d* Num 23:10
d parts you and me Ruth 1:17
 and the shadow of *d* Job 10:21
 You will bring me to *d* Job 30:23
 For in *d* there is no Ps 6:5
 I sleep the sleep of *d* Ps 13:3
 of the shadow of *d* Ps 23:4
 my soul from *d* Ps 56:13
 can live and not see *d* Ps 89:48
 house leads down to *d* Prov 2:18
 who hate me love *d* Prov 8:36

D and life are in the Prov 18:21
 swallow up *d* forever Is 25:8
 no pleasure in the *d* Ezek 18:32
 redeem them from *d* Hos 13:14
 turns the shadow of *d* Amos 5:8
 who shall not taste *d* Matt 16:28
 but has passed from *d* John 5:24
 he shall never see *d* John 8:51
 Nevertheless *d* reigned Rom 5:14
 as sin reigned in *d* Rom 5:21
D no longer has Rom 6:9
 the wages of sin is *d* Rom 6:23
 to bear fruit to *d* Rom 7:5
 proclaim the Lord's *d* 1 Cor 11:26
 since by man came *d* 1 Cor 15:21
D is swallowed up in 1 Cor 15:54
 The sting of *d* is sin 1 Cor 15:56
 we are the aroma of *d* 2 Cor 2:16
d is working in us 2 Cor 4:12
 the world produces *d* 2 Cor 7:10
 to the point of *d* Phil 2:8
d crowned with glory Heb 2:9
 who had the power of *d* Heb 2:14
 that he did not see *d* Heb 11:5
 brings forth *d* James 1:15
 to God, being put to *d* 1 Pet 3:18
 is sin leading to *d* 1 John 5:16
 Be faithful until *d* Rev 2:10
 Over such the second *d* Rev 20:6
 shall be no more *d* Rev 21:4
 which is the second *d* Rev 21:8

DEBATE

D your case with your Prov 25:9
 you fast for strife and *d* Is 58:4

DEBIR

City of Judah; captured by Joshua, Josh
 10:38, 39
 Recaptured by Othniel; formerly called
 Kirjath Sepher, Josh 15:15-17; Judg
 1:11-13

DEBORAH

A prophetess and judge, Judg 4:4-14
 Composed song of triumph, Judg
 5:1-31

DEBT

everyone who was in *d* 1 Sam 22:2
 sell the oil and pay your *d* 2 Kin 4:7
 the exacting of every *d* Neh 10:31
 and forgave him the *d* Matt 18:27
 counted as grace but as *d* Rom 4:4

DEBTOR

I am a *d* both to Rom 1:14
 that he is a *d* to keep Gal 5:3

DEBTORS

as we forgive our *d* Matt 6:12
 of his master's *d* Luke 16:5
 brethren, we are *d* Rom 8:12
 and they are their *d* Rom 15:27

DEBTS

forgive us our *d*, as we Matt 6:12

DECAPOLIS

Multitudes from follow Jesus, Matt
 4:25
 Jesus heals demon-possessed,
 preaches in, Mark 5:20

DECEIT

spirit there is no *d* Ps 32:2
 from speaking *d* Ps 34:13
d shall not dwell Ps 101:7
D is in the heart of Prov 12:20
 Nor was any *d* in His Is 53:9
 They hold fast to *d* Jer 8:5
 in whom is no *d* John 1:47
 "O full of all *d* Acts 13:10
 philosophy and empty *d* Col 2:8
 no sin, nor was *d* 1 Pet 2:22
 mouth was found no *d* Rev 14:5

DECEITFUL

deliver me from the *d* Ps 43:1

d men shall not Ps 55:23
 of the wicked are *d* Prov 12:5
 of an enemy are *d* Prov 27:6
 "The heart is *d* Jer 17:9
 are false apostles, *d* 2 Cor 11:13

DECEITFULLY

an idol, nor sworn *d* Ps 24:4
 the word of God *d* 2 Cor 4:2

DECEITFULNESS

this world and the *d* Matt 13:22
 hardened through the *d* Heb 3:13

DECEIVE

"Do not *d* yourselves Jer 37:9
 rise up and *d* many Matt 24:11
 signs and wonders to *d* Matt 24:24
 Let no one *d* himself 1 Cor 3:18
 Let no one *d* you with Eph 5:6
 we have no sin, we *d* 1 John 1:8
 children, let no one *d* you 1 John 3:7
 go out to *d* the nations Rev 20:8

DECEIVED

"The serpent *d* Gen 3:13
 Why then have you *d* me Gen 29:25
 Why have you *d* us Josh 9:22
d heart has turned him Is 44:20
 heed that you not be *d* Luke 21:8
 Are you also *d* John 7:47
 by the commandment, *d* Rom 7:11
 Do not be *d* 1 Cor 6:9
 as the serpent *d* 2 Cor 11:3
 Do not be *d*, God is not Gal 6:7
 but the woman being *d* 1 Tim 2:14
 deceiving and being *d* 2 Tim 3:13
 Do not be *d*, my beloved James 1:16
 all the nations were *d* Rev 18:23
 who *d* them Rev 20:10

DECEIVER

"But cursed be the *d* Mal 1:14
 how that *d* said Matt 27:63
 This is a *d* and an 2 John 7

DECEIVES

heed that no one *d* Matt 24:4
d his own heart James 1:26
 Satan, who *d* the whole Rev 12:9

DECEIVING

giving heed to *d* spirits 1 Tim 4:1
 and worse, *d* and being 2 Tim 3:13
 hearers only, *d* James 1:22

DECENTLY

all things be done *d* 1 Cor 14:40

DECEPTION

d all the day long Ps 38:12

DECEPTIVE

you with *d* words 2 Pet 2:3

DECISION

but its every *d* Prov 16:33
 in the valley of *d* Joel 3:14

DECLARE

D His glory among the 1 Chr 16:24
 I will *d* the decree Ps 2:7
 The heavens *d* the Ps 19:1
d Your name to My Ps 22:22
d what He had done Ps 66:16
d that the LORD is Ps 92:15
d His generation Is 53:8
 what is Mine and *d* it to John 16:14
 who will *d* His generation Acts 8:33
 we *d* to you glad tidings Acts 13:32
 "I will *d* Your name Heb 2:12
 seen and heard we *d* 1 John 1:3

DECLARED

the Father, He has *d* John 1:18
 and *d* to be the Son of Rom 1:4

DECREE

King Cyrus issued a *d* to Ezra 5:13
 Moreover I issue a *d* as to Ezra 6:8
 let a royal *d* go out from Esth 1:19

let a *d* be written that they ... Esth 3:9
 "I will declare the *d* ... Ps 2:7
d which shall not pass ... Ps 148:6
 Woe to those who *d* ... Is 10:1
 by a perpetual *d* ... Jer 5:22
 is by the *d* of the watchers ... Dan 4:17
 Nineveh by the *d* of the ... Jon 3:7
 in those days that a *d* ... Luke 2:1

DEDICATED

house and has not *d* ... Deut 20:5
 every *d* thing in ... Ezek 44:29
 first covenant was *d* ... Heb 9:18

DEDICATION

sacrifices at the *d* ... Ezra 6:17
 it was the Feast of *D* ... John 10:22

DEED

What *d* is this you have ... Gen 44:15
d has been done ... Judg 19:30
 So I took the purchase *d* ... Jer 32:11
 you do a charitable *d* ... Matt 6:2
 a Prophet mighty in *d* ... Luke 4:19
 you do in word or *d* ... Col 3:17
 us from every lawless *d* ... Titus 2:14
 your good *d* might not ... Philem 14
 in or tongue, but in *d* ... 1 John 3:18

DEEDS

works and Your mighty *d* ... Deut 3:24
 make known His *d* ... 1 Chr 16:8
 Declare His *d* among ... Ps 9:11
 them according to their *d* ... Ps 28:4
d You did in their days ... Ps 44:1
 awesome *d* in righteousness ... Ps 65:5
 vengeance on their *d* ... Ps 99:8
 Make known His *d* ... Ps 105:1
 harlot by their own *d* ... Ps 106:39
 against the *d* of the wicked ... Ps 141:5
 man according to his *d* ... Prov 24:12
 declare His *d* among ... Is 12:4
 they surpass the *d* ... Jer 5:28
 their *d* on their own head ... Ezek 9:10
 charitable *d* before men ... Matt 6:1
 the *d* of your fathers ... Luke 11:48
 because their *d* ... John 3:19
 You do the *d* of your ... John 8:41
 mighty in words and *d* ... Acts 7:22
 one according to his *d* ... Rom 2:6
 apart from the *d* of the law ... Rom 3:28
 you put to death the *d* ... Rom 8:13
 off the old man with his *d* ... Col 3:9
 shares in his evil *d* ... 2 John 11
 that you hate the *d* of the ... Rev 2:6
 did not repent of their *d* ... Rev 16:11

DEEP

LORD God caused a *d* ... Gen 2:21
 He lays up the *d* ... Ps 33:7
D calls unto *d* ... Ps 42:7
 In His hand are the *d* ... Ps 95:4
 His wonders in the *d* ... Ps 107:24
 put out in *d* darkness ... Prov 20:20
 led them through the *d* ... Is 63:13
d closed around me ... Jon 2:5
d uttered its voice ... Hab 3:10
 "Launch out into the *d* ... Luke 5:4
 I have been in the *d* ... 2 Cor 11:25

DEEPER

D than Sheol ... Job 11:8

DEEPLY

Drink, yes, drink *d* ... Song 5:1
 But He sighed *d* ... Mark 8:12

DEER

"Naphtali is a *d* ... Gen 49:21
 my feet like the feet of *d* ... Ps 18:33
 As the *d* pants for the ... Ps 42:1
 shall leap like a *d* ... Is 35:6

DEER'S

will make my feet like *d* ... Hab 3:19

DEFEATED

and Israel was *d* ... 1 Sam 4:10

DEFECT

who has any *d* ... Lev 21:17

DEFEND

"For I will *d* this ... 2 Kin 19:34
d my own ways before ... Job 13:15
 for joy, because You *d* ... Ps 5:11
 of the God of Jacob *d* you ... Ps 20:1
D the poor and ... Ps 82:3
d the fatherless ... Is 1:17
 of hosts *d* Jerusalem ... Is 31:5
 The LORD of hosts will *d* ... Zech 9:15

DEFENDER

a *d* of widows ... Ps 68:5

DEFENSE

For wisdom is a *d* ... Eccl 7:12
d will be the fortress ... Is 33:16
 am appointed for the *d* ... Phil 1:17
d no one stood with me ... 2 Tim 4:16
 be ready to give a *d* ... 1 Pet 3:15

DEFERRED

Hope *d* makes the heart ... Prov 13:12

DEFILE

the heart, and they *d* ... Matt 15:18
 also these dreamers *d* ... Jude 8

DEFILED

had *d* Dinah his daughter ... Gen 34:5
d the dwelling place ... Ps 74:7
 For your hands are *d* ... Is 59:3
 lest they should be *d* ... John 18:28
 and has *d* this holy place ... Acts 21:28
 being weak, is *d* ... 1 Cor 8:7
 and conscience are *d* ... Titus 1:15
 even the garment *d* ... Jude 23
 have not *d* their garments ... Rev 3:4

DEFILES

mouth, this *d* a man ... Matt 15:11
d the temple of God ... 1 Cor 3:17
 it anything that *d* ... Rev 21:27

DEFRAUD

d his brother in this ... 1 Thess 4:6

DEGENERATE

before Me into the *d* ... Jer 2:21
d is your heart ... Ezek 16:30

DEGREES

go forward ten *d* ... 2 Kin 20:9

DELAIAH

Son of Shemaiah; urges Jehoiakim not
 to burn Jeremiah's scroll, Jer 36:12,
 25

DELICACIES

let me eat of their *d* ... Ps 141:4
 Do not desire his *d* ... Prov 23:3
 of the king's *d* ... Dan 1:5

DELICATE

Leah's eyes were *d*, but ... Gen 29:17
 be called tender and *d* ... Is 47:1
 a lovely and *d* woman ... Jer 6:2

DELIGHT

the LORD as great *d* ... 1 Sam 15:22
 And his heart took *d* ... 2 Chr 17:6
 your *d* in the Almighty ... Job 22:26
 Will he *d* himself in ... Job 27:10
 But his *d* is in the ... Ps 1:2
 ones, in whom is all my *d* ... Ps 16:3
D yourself also in the ... Ps 37:4
 I *d* to do Your will ... Ps 40:8
 You do not *d* in burnt ... Ps 51:16
 They *d* in lies ... Ps 62:4
 the peoples who *d* in war ... Ps 68:30
 I will *d* myself in Your ... Ps 119:16
 commandments, For I *d* ... Ps 119:35
 For Your law is my *d* ... Ps 119:77
 Your law had been my *d* ... Ps 119:92
 And Your law is my *d* ... Ps 119:174
 does not *d* in the strength ... Ps 147:10
 For scornors *d* in their ... Prov 1:22
d in the perversity of the ... Prov 2:14

d ourselves with love ... Prov 7:18
 And I was daily His *d* ... Prov 8:30
 but a just weight is His *d* ... Prov 11:1
 truthfully are His *d* ... Prov 12:22
 will give *d* to your soul ... Prov 29:17
 in his shade with great *d* ... Song 2:3
 His *d* is in the fear of the ... Is 11:3
 gold, they will not *d* in it ... Is 13:17
 And let your soul *d* ... Is 55:2
 call the Sabbath a *d* ... Is 58:13
 that in which I do not *d* ... Is 65:12
 For in these I *d*, says the ... Jer 9:24
 eyes, the *d* of your soul ... Ezek 24:21
 For I *d* in the law of ... Rom 7:22
 taking *d* in false humility ... Col 2:18

DELIGHTED

The LORD *d* only in ... Deut 10:15
d greatly in David ... 1 Sam 19:1
 because He *d* in me ... 2 Sam 22:20
 who *d* in you, setting you ... 2 Chr 9:8
 me because He *d* in me ... Ps 18:19

DELIGHTS

whom the king *d* to honor ... Esth 6:6
 Him, since He *d* in Him ... Ps 22:8
 the LORD, and He *d* in his ... Ps 37:23
 the son in whom he *d* ... Prov 3:12
 O love, with your *d* ... Song 7:6
 For the LORD *d* in you ... Is 62:4
 forever, because He *d* ... Mic 7:18

DELILAH

Deceives Samson, Judg 16:4-22

DELIVER

d them out of the hand ... Ex 3:8
 will *d* him into your hand ... Judg 4:7
 The LORD will *d* us ... 2 Kin 18:32
 He shall *d* you in six ... Job 5:19
 is no one who can *d* ... Job 10:7
 "D him from going down ... Job 33:24
 Let Him *d* Him ... Ps 22:8
d their soul from ... Ps 33:19
 I will *d* him and honor ... Ps 91:15
d you from the immoral ... Prov 2:16
 wickedness will not *d* ... Eccl 8:8
 have I no power to *d* ... Is 50:2
 we serve is able to *d* ... Dan 3:17
 into temptation, but *d* ... Matt 6:13
 let Him *d* Him now if ... Matt 27:43
d such a one to Satan ... 1 Cor 5:5
 And the Lord will *d* ... 2 Tim 4:18
d the godly out of ... 2 Pet 2:9

DELIVERANCE

d He gives to His king ... Ps 18:50
 but *d* is of the LORD ... Prov 21:31
 not accepting *d* ... Heb 11:35

DELIVERED

d the poor who cried ... Job 29:12
 for You have *d* my soul ... Ps 56:13
 For He has *d* the life ... Jer 20:13
 All things have been *d* ... Matt 11:27
 who was *d* up because ... Rom 4:25
 But now we have been *d* ... Rom 7:6
 who *d* us from so great ... 2 Cor 1:10
 was once for all *d* ... Jude 3

DELIVERER

the LORD raised up a *d* ... Judg 3:9
 LORD raised up a *d* for ... Judg 3:15
 my fortress and my *d* ... 2 Sam 22:2
 LORD gave Israel a *d* ... 2 Kin 13:5
 You are my help and my *d* ... Ps 40:17
 My high tower and my *d* ... Ps 144:2
d by the hand of the Angel ... Acts 7:35
D will come out of ... Rom 11:26

DELIVERERS

d who saved them ... Neh 9:27

DELIVERS

d the kingdom to God ... 1 Cor 15:24
 even Jesus who *d* ... 1 Thess 1:10

DELUSION

send them strong *d* ... 2 Thess 2:11

DEMAS

Follows Paul, Col 4:14
Forsakes Paul, 2 Tim 4:10

DEMETRIUS

A silversmith at Ephesus, Acts
19:24-31

— A good Christian, 3 John 12

DEMON

when the *d* was cast out . . . Matt 9:33
they say, 'He has a *d* . . . Matt 11:18
Jesus rebuked the *d* . . . Matt 17:18
the *d* out of her daughter . . . Mark 7:26
a spirit of an unclean *d* . . . Luke 4:33
you say, 'He has a *d* . . . Luke 7:33
was driven by the *d* into . . . Luke 8:29
d threw him down and . . . Luke 9:42
He was casting out a *d* . . . Luke 11:14
You have a *d* . . . John 7:20
and have a *d* . . . John 8:48
He has a *d* and is mad . . . John 10:20

DEMON-POSSESSED

and those who were *d* . . . Matt 4:24
to Him many who were *d* . . . Matt 8:16
there met Him two *d* men, . . . Matt 8:28
Him a man, mute and *d* . . . Matt 9:32
to Him who was *d* . . . Matt 12:22
daughter is severely *d* . . . Matt 15:22
and those who were *d* . . . Mark 1:32
one who had been *d* . . . Mark 5:15
had been *d* was healed . . . Luke 8:36

DEMONIC

is earthly, sensual, *d* . . . James 3:15

DEMONS

See CAST OUT DEMONS; CASTING OUT
DEMONS

They sacrificed to *d* . . . Deut 32:17
their daughters to *d* . . . Ps 106:37
cast out *d* in Your name . . . Matt 7:22
d begged Him, saying, . . . Matt 8:31
He casts out *d* . . . Matt 9:34
raise the dead, cast out *d* . . . Matt 10:8
except by Beelzebub . . . Matt 12:24
and cast out many *d* . . . Mark 1:34
and to cast out *d* . . . Mark 3:15
d begged Him, saying, . . . Mark 5:12
they cast out many *d* . . . Mark 6:13
out *d* in Your name . . . Mark 9:38
He had cast seven *d* . . . Mark 16:9
name they will cast out *d* . . . Mark 16:17
And *d* also came out of . . . Luke 4:41
whom had come seven *d* . . . Luke 8:2
many *d* had entered . . . Luke 8:30
authority over all *d* . . . Luke 9:1
casting out *d* in Your . . . Luke 9:49
the *d* are subject . . . Luke 10:17
casts out *d* by Beelzebub . . . Luke 11:15
fox, 'Behold, I cast out *d* . . . Luke 13:32
Lord and the cup of *d* . . . 1 Cor 10:21
spirits and doctrines of *d* . . . 1 Tim 4:1
Even the *d* believe . . . James 2:19
they should not worship *d* . . . Rev 9:20
For they are spirits of *d* . . . Rev 16:14
a dwelling place of *d* . . . Rev 18:2

DEMONSTRATE

faith, to *d* His . . . Rom 3:25

DEMONSTRATES

d His own love toward . . . Rom 5:8

DEMONSTRATION

but in *d* of the Spirit and . . . 1 Cor 2:4

DEN

in the viper's *d* . . . Is 11:8
by My name, become a *d* . . . Jer 7:11
cast him into the *d* . . . Dan 6:16
it a '*d* of thieves . . . Matt 21:13

DENARIUS

the laborers for a *d* . . . Matt 20:2
they brought Him a *d* . . . Matt 22:19
quart of wheat for a *d* . . . Rev 6:6

DENIED

before men will be *d* . . . Luke 12:9
Peter then *d* again . . . John 18:27
d the Holy One and the . . . Acts 3:14
things cannot be *d* . . . Acts 19:36
household, he has *d* . . . 1 Tim 5:8
word, and have not *d* . . . Rev 3:8

DENIES

But whoever *d* Me . . . Matt 10:33
d that Jesus is the . . . 1 John 2:22

DENS

lie down in their *d* . . . Ps 104:22
and mountains, in *d* . . . Heb 11:38

DENY

lest you *d* your God . . . Josh 24:27
place, then it will *d* him . . . Job 8:18
lest I be full and *d* . . . Prov 30:9
him I will also *d* before . . . Matt 10:33
let him *d* himself . . . Matt 16:24
will *d* Me three times . . . Matt 26:34
who *d* that there is a . . . Luke 20:27
confessed, and did not *d* . . . John 1:20
He cannot *d* Himself . . . 2 Tim 2:13
in works they *d* . . . Titus 1:16
d the only Lord . . . Jude 4
d My faith even . . . Rev 2:13

DENYING

but *d* its power . . . 2 Tim 3:5
d ungodliness and . . . Titus 2:12
of the Lord who bought . . . 2 Pet 2:1

DEPART

scepter shall not *d* . . . Gen 49:10
they say to God, '*D* . . . Job 21:14
D from evil and do good . . . Ps 34:14
fear the LORD and *d* . . . Prov 3:7
the mountains, shall *d* . . . Is 54:10
on the left hand, '*D* . . . Matt 25:41
will *d* from the faith . . . 1 Tim 4:1

DEPARTED

the day that you *d* . . . Deut 9:7

DEPARTING

heart of unbelief in *d* . . . Heb 3:12

DEPARTS

His spirit *d*, he returns to . . . Ps 146:4
But if the unbeliever *d* . . . 1 Cor 7:15

DEPARTURE

d savage wolves will . . . Acts 20:29
and the time of my *d* . . . 2 Tim 4:6

DEPRESSION

of man causes *d* . . . Prov 12:25

DEPRIVE

d myself of good . . . Eccl 4:8
d one another except . . . 1 Cor 7:5

DEPRIVED

like a bear *d* of her cubs . . . Hos 13:8

DEPTH

because they had no *d* . . . Matt 13:5
nor height nor *d* . . . Rom 8:39
Oh, the *d* of the . . . Rom 11:33
width and length and *d* . . . Eph 3:18

DEPTHS

d have covered them . . . Ex 15:5
The *d* also trembled . . . Ps 77:16
my soul from the *d* . . . Ps 86:13
led them through the *d* . . . Ps 106:9
go down again to the *d* . . . Ps 107:26
d I was brought forth . . . Prov 8:24
our sins into the *d* . . . Mic 7:19
have not known the *d* . . . Rev 2:24

DERANGED

the nations are *d* . . . Jer 51:7

DERBE

Paul visits, Acts 14:6, 20
Paul meets Timothy at, Acts 16:1

DERISION

shall hold them in *d* . . . Ps 2:4

I am in *d* daily . . . Jer 20:7

DESCEND

His glory shall not *d* . . . Ps 49:17
d now from the cross . . . Mark 15:32
Lord Himself will *d* . . . 1 Thess 4:16
This wisdom does not *d* . . . James 3:15

DESCENDANTS

All you *d* of Jacob . . . Ps 22:23
d shall inherit the . . . Ps 25:13
pour My Spirit on your *d* . . . Is 44:3
In the LORD all the *d* . . . Is 45:25
none of his *d* shall prosper . . . Jer 22:30
"We are Abraham's *d* . . . John 8:33
So shall your *d* be . . . Rom 4:18

DESCENDED

because the LORD *d* . . . Ex 19:18
that He also first *d* . . . Eph 4:9
He who *d* is also the . . . Eph 4:10

DESCENDING

were ascending and *d* . . . Gen 28:12
"I saw the Spirit *d* . . . John 1:32
God ascending and *d* . . . John 1:51
the holy Jerusalem, *d* . . . Rev 21:10

DESERT

And tested God in the *d* . . . Ps 106:14
d shall rejoice and blossom . . . Is 35:1
and rivers in the *d* . . . Is 43:19
her *d* like the garden of . . . Is 51:3
'Look, He is in the *d* . . . Matt 24:26
ate the manna in the *d* . . . John 6:31

DESERTED

d place by Himself . . . Matt 14:13

DESERTS

led them through the *d* . . . Is 48:21
They wandered in *d* . . . Heb 11:38

DESERVE

to them what they *d* . . . Ps 28:4
d I will judge them . . . Ezek 7:27

DESIGN

with an artistic *d* . . . Ex 26:31
may keep its whole *d* . . . Ezek 43:11

DESIRABLE

the eyes, and a tree *d* . . . Gen 3:6
d that we should leave . . . Acts 6:2

DESIRE

d shall be for your . . . Gen 3:16
and you shall not *d* your . . . Deut 5:21
is all the *d* of Israel . . . 1 Sam 9:20
salvation and all my *d* . . . 2 Sam 23:5
I *d* to reason with God . . . Job 13:3
for we do not *d* . . . Job 21:14
boasts of his heart's *d* . . . Ps 10:3
heard the *d* of the humble . . . Ps 10:17
him his heart's *d* . . . Ps 21:2
and offering You did not *d* . . . Ps 40:6
Behold, You *d* truth in . . . Ps 51:6
confused Who *d* my hurt . . . Ps 70:2
upon earth that I *d* . . . Ps 73:25
the *d* of the wicked . . . Ps 112:10
and satisfy the *d* . . . Ps 145:16
all the things you may *d* . . . Prov 3:15
all the things one may *d* . . . Prov 8:11
d of the righteous will . . . Prov 10:24
The *d* of the righteous is . . . Prov 11:23
The *d* of the lazy . . . Prov 21:25
nor *d* to be with them . . . Prov 24:1
a burden, and *d* fails . . . Eccl 12:5
and his *d* is toward me . . . Song 7:10
the *d* of our soul is . . . Is 26:8
beauty that we should *d* . . . Is 53:2
the *d* of their eyes, and . . . Ezek 24:25
For I *d* mercy and not . . . Hos 6:6
great man utters his evil *d* . . . Mic 7:3
d mercy and not sacrifice . . . Matt 9:13
d I have desired . . . Luke 22:15
"Father, I *d* that . . . John 17:24
all manner of evil *d* . . . Rom 7:8
Brethren, my heart's *d* . . . Rom 10:1

d the best gifts 1 Cor 12:31
d spiritual gifts 1 Cor 14:1
d was a readiness to *d* 2 Cor 8:11
the two, having a *d* Phil 1:23
passion, evil *d* Col 3:5
offering You did not *d* Heb 10:5
But now they *d* a better Heb 11:16
d has conceived James 1:15
angels *d* to look into 1 Pet 1:12
d the pure milk of the 1 Pet 2:2

DESIRED

d are they than gold Ps 19:10
One thing I have *d* Ps 27:4
guides them to their *d* Ps 107:30
What is *d* in a man is Prov 19:22
Whatever my eyes *d* Eccl 2:10
desire I have *d* Luke 22:15

DESIRES

all that your heart *d* 2 Sam 3:21
Who is the man who *d* Ps 34:12
shall give you the *d* Ps 37:4
the *d* of the wicked Ps 140:8
soul of a lazy man *d* Prov 13:4
for himself of all he *d* Eccl 6:2
d to come after Me Matt 16:24
d to become great Matt 20:26
the *d* for other things Mark 4:19
wine, immediately *d* new Luke 5:39
the devil, and the *d* John 8:44
with its passions and *d* Gal 5:24
fulfilling the *d* of the flesh Eph 2:3
If a man *d* the position 1 Tim 3:1
according to their own *d* 2 Tim 4:3
away by his own *d* James 1:14
not come from your *d* James 4:1
Whoever *d*, let him take Rev 22:17

DESIRING

earnestly *d* to be clothed 2 Cor 5:2
-*d* to be teachers of the 1 Tim 1:7
in all things *d* to live Heb 13:18

DESOLATE

on me, for I am *d* Ps 25:16
the wilderness in a *d* Ps 107:4
my children and am *d* Is 49:21
any more be termed *D* Is 62:4
to make your land *d* Jer 4:7
house is left to you *d* Matt 23:38
one hour she is made *d* Rev 18:19

DESOLATION

the 'abomination of *d* Matt 24:15
then know that its *d* Luke 21:20

DESOLATIONS

LORD, who has made *d* Ps 46:8

DESPAISED

turned my heart and *d* Eccl 2:20
strength, so that we *d* 2 Cor 1:8

DESPERATELY

he flees *d* from its Job 27:22

DESPISE

If you *d* My statutes Lev 26:15
d Me shall be lightly 1 Sam 2:30
I *d* my life Job 9:21
but fools *d* wisdom Prov 1:7
People do not *d* a thief if Prov 6:30
d your mother when she Prov 23:22
Because you *d* this word Is 30:12
d your feast days Amos 5:21
to you priests who *d* Mal 1:6
one and *d* the other Matt 6:24
d one of these little ones Matt 18:10
d the riches of His Rom 2:4
d the church of God 1 Cor 11:22
Therefore let no one *d* 1 Cor 16:11
Do not *d* prophecies 1 Thess 5:20
Let no one *d* your youth 1 Tim 4:12
do not *d* the chastening of Heb 12:5
and *d* authority 2 Pet 2:10

DESPISED

mistress became *d* in her Gen 16:4

Esau *d* his birthright Gen 25:34
you have *d* the LORD Num 11:20
she *d* him in her heart 2 Sam 6:16
men, and *d* by the people Ps 22:6
d the counsel of the Most Ps 107:11
perverse heart will be *d* Prov 12:8
poor man's wisdom is *d* Eccl 9:16
it would be utterly *d* Song 8:7
d the word of the Holy Is 5:24
He is *d* and rejected Is 53:3
have *d* My holy things Ezek 22:8
For who has *d* the day of Zech 4:10
righteous, and *d* others Luke 18:9
the things which are *d* 1 Cor 1:28

DESPISES

wisdom *d* his neighbor Prov 11:12
d the word will be Prov 13:13
d his neighbor sins Prov 14:21
but a foolish man *d* Prov 15:20
d the scepter of My Ezek 21:10

DESPISING

the cross, *d* the shame Heb 12:2

DESTINED

this Child is *d* for the fall Luke 2:34

DESTINY

did not consider her *d* Lam 1:9

DESTITUTE

the prayer of the *d* Ps 102:17
of corrupt minds and *d* 1 Tim 6:5
sister is naked and *d* James 2:15

DESTROY

d the righteous Gen 18:23
d all the wicked Ps 101:8
of the LORD I will *d* Ps 118:10
the wicked He will *d* Ps 145:20
Why should you *d* Eccl 7:16
shall not hurt nor *d* Is 11:9
have mercy, but will *d* Jer 13:14
d them with double Jer 17:18
I did not come to *d* Matt 5:17
where moth and rust *d* Matt 6:19
Him who is able to *d* Matt 10:28
I am able to *d* the temple Matt 26:61
Barabbas and *d* Jesus Matt 27:20
You who *d* the temple Matt 27:40
'I will *d* this temple Mark 14:58
to save life or to *d* Luke 6:9
d men's lives but to Luke 9:56
D this temple, and in John 2:19
and to kill, and to *d* John 10:10
d the work of God for Rom 14:20
d the wisdom of the 1 Cor 1:19
God will *d* him 1 Cor 3:17
foods, but God will *d* 1 Cor 6:13
d with the brightness of 2 Thess 2:8
able to save and to *d* James 4:12
He might *d* the works 1 John 3:8

DESTROYED

d all living things Gen 7:23
d those who hated me 2 Sam 22:41
My people are *d* Hos 4:6
'O Israel, you are *d* Hos 13:9
house, this tent, is *d* 2 Cor 5:1

DESTROYER

the paths of the *d* Ps 17:4
him who is a great *d* Prov 18:9
destroyed by the *d* 1 Cor 10:10

DESTRUCTION

not be afraid of *d* Job 5:21
D has no covering Job 26:6
d come upon him Ps 35:8
cast them down to *d* Ps 73:18
You turn man to *d* Ps 90:3
d that lays waste Ps 91:6
your life from *d* Ps 103:4
d will come to the Prov 10:29
Pride goes before *d* Prov 16:18
d the heart of a man Prov 18:12

called the City of *D* Is 19:18
neither wasting nor *d* Is 60:18
heifer, but *d* comes Jer 46:20
wrath prepared for *d* Rom 9:22
one to Satan for the *d* 1 Cor 5:5
whose end is *d* Phil 3:19
then sudden *d* 1 Thess 5:3
with everlasting *d* 2 Thess 1:9
which drown men in *d* 1 Tim 6:9
twist to their own *d* 2 Pet 3:16

DESTRUCTIVE

bring in *d* heresies 2 Pet 2:1

DETERMINED

Since his days are *d* Job 14:5
of hosts will make a *d* Is 10:23
'Seventy weeks are *d* Dan 9:24
d their preappointed Acts 17:26
For I do not to know 1 Cor 2:2

DETESTABLE

shall not eat any *d* Deut 14:3

DEVICE

there is no work or *d* Eccl 9:10

DEVICES

not ignorant of his *d* 2 Cor 2:11

DEVIL

See SATAN

Titles of:

Abaddon, Apollyon, angel of the
bottomless pit, Rev 9:11
accuser, Rev 12:10
adversary, 1 Pet 5:8
Beelzebub, prince of demons, Matt
12:24
Belial, 2 Cor 6:15
evil one, Matt 6:13; Luke 11:4
god of this age, 2 Cor 4:4
murderer, father of lies, John 8:44
prince of the power of the air, Eph
2:2
ruler of darkness, Eph 6:12
ruler of this world, John 14:30
Satan, Luke 10:18
serpent, Gen 3:4
serpent of old, Rev 20:2
wicked one, Matt 13:19
Origin of, in heaven, Is 14:12-20; Rev
12:7-9
Power and activities of:
tempted Eve, Gen 3:1
tempted David, 1 Chr 21:1
accused and tormented Job, Job 1:6-
2:10
opposed Joshua the high priest, Zech
3:1
tempted Jesus, Matt 4:1-11; Mark
3:22-28; Luke 22:31
entered Judas at betrayal, Luke 22:3;
John 13:27
deceives and ensnares, 2 Cor 11:3-15;
1 Tim 3:6, 7; Rev 20:7, 8
works in evildoers, Acts 13:8-10; Eph
2:2
accuses believers before God, Rev
12:10
Believers must resist, 2 Cor 2:10, 11;
Eph 6:11-16; James 4:7; 1 Pet 5:8, 9;
1 John 2:13
His defeat by Christ, Gen 3:15; Rev
12:10-12; 20:7-10
to be tempted by the *d* Matt 4:1
who sowed them is the *d* Matt 13:39
prepared for the *d* Matt 25:41
forty days by the *d* Luke 4:2
then the *d* comes and Luke 8:12
and one of you is a *d* John 6:70
of your father the *d* John 8:44
d having already put John 13:2
oppressed by the *d* Acts 10:38
fraud, you son of the *d* Acts 13:10

give place to the *d* Eph 4:27
 the wiles of the *d* Eph 6:11
 condemnation as the *d* 1 Tim 3:6
 the snare of the *d* 2 Tim 2:26
 of death, that is, the *d* Heb 2:14
 Resist the *d* and he James 4:7
d walks about like a 1 Pet 5:8
 the works of the *d* 1 John 3:8
 contending with the *d* Jude 9
 Indeed, the *d* is about Rev 2:10
 serpent of old, called the *D* Rev 12:9
 the *d* has come down to Rev 12:12
 serpent of old, who is the *D* Rev 20:2
d, who deceived them Rev 20:10

DEVIOUS

crooked, and who are *d* Prov 2:15

DEVISE

Do not *d* evil against Prov 3:29
 Woe to those who *d* Mic 2:1

DEVISES

d wickedness on his Ps 36:4
 he *d* evil continually Prov 6:14
d wicked plans to Is 32:7
 But a generous man *d* Is 32:8

DEVOID

He who is *d* of wisdom Prov 11:12

DEVOTE

d rashly something as Prov 20:25

DEVOTED

d offering is most Lev 27:28
 "Every *d* thing in Num 18:14
 Your servant, who is *d* Ps 119:38

DEVOUR

A fire shall *d* before Ps 50:3
 For you *d* widows" Matt 23:14
 bite and *d* one another Gal 5:15
 seeking whom he may *d* 1 Pet 5:8
d her Child as Rev 12:4

DEVOURED

Some wild beast has *d* Gen 37:20
 rebel, you shall be *d* Is 1:20
 the curse has *d* Is 24:6
 Your sword has *d* Jer 2:30
 For shame has *d* Jer 3:24
 have *d* their judges Hos 7:7
 trees, the locust *d* Amos 4:9
 birds came and *d* them Matt 13:4
 of heaven and *d* them Rev 20:9

DEVOURER

I will rebuke the *d* Mal 3:11

DEVOURING

You love all *d* words Ps 52:4
 the flame of *d* fire Is 29:6

DEVOUT

man was just and *d* Luke 2:25
d men carried Stephen Acts 8:2
d soldier from among Acts 10:7
d proselytes followed Paul Acts 13:43

DEW

God give you of the *d* Gen 27:28
 shall also drop *d* Deut 33:28
 have the *d* of Your youth Ps 110:3
 his favor is like *d* Prov 19:12
 a cloud of *d* in the heat Is 18:4
 your *d* is like the *d* Is 26:19
 like the early *d* Hos 6:4
 many peoples, like *d* Mic 5:7

DIADEM

LORD, and a royal *d* Is 62:3

DIADEMS

ten horns, and seven *d* Rev 12:3

DIAL

d by which it had gone Is 38:8

DIAMOND

a sapphire, and a *d* Ex 28:18
d it is engraved Jer 17:1

the sardius, topaz, and *d* Ezek 28:13

DIANA

Worship of at Ephesus creates uproar,
 Acts 19:23-41

DIBON

Amorite town, Num 21:30
 Taken by Israel, Num 32:2-5
 Destruction of, foretold, Jer 48:18, 22

DICTATES

according to the *d* Jer 23:17

DIE

it you shall surely *d* Gen 2:17
 you touch it, lest you *d* Gen 3:3
 the land of Egypt shall *d* Ex 11:5
 Where you *d*, I will *d* Ruth 1:17
 but a person shall *d* 2 Chr 25:4
 Curse God and *d* Job 2:9
 sees wise men *d* Ps 49:10
 I shall not *d*, but live Ps 118:17
 He shall *d* for lack of Prov 5:23
 but fools *d* for lack of Prov 10:21
 hates correction will *d* Prov 15:10
 with a rod, he will not *d* Prov 23:13
 who are appointed to *d* Prov 31:8
 how does a wise man *d* Eccl 2:16
 born, and a time to *d* Eccl 3:2
 why should you *d* Eccl 7:17
 drink, for tomorrow we *d* Is 22:13
 their worm does not *d* Is 66:24
 every one shall *d* for his Jer 31:30
 wicked way, he shall *d* Ezek 3:19
 the soul who sins shall *d* Ezek 18:4
 man, you shall surely *d* Ezek 33:8
 "Even if I have to *d* Matt 26:35
 "their worm does not *d* Mark 9:44
 nor can they *d* Luke 20:36
 eat of it and not *d* John 6:50
 to you that you will *d* John 8:24
 though he may *d* John 11:25
 that one man should *d* John 11:50
 that Jesus would *d* John 11:51
 our law He ought to *d* John 19:7
 righteous man will one *d* Rom 5:7
 the flesh you will *d* Rom 8:13
 if we *d*, we *d* to the Lord Rom 14:8
 For as in Adam all *d* 1 Cor 15:22
 Jesus our Lord, I *d* daily 1 Cor 15:31
 and to *d* is gain Phil 1:21
 for men to *d* once Heb 9:27
 are the dead who *d* Rev 14:13

DIED

And all flesh *d* Gen 7:21
 "Oh, that we had *d* Ex 16:3
 himself with fire, and *d* 1 Kin 16:18
 Hadad *d* also 1 Chr 1:51
 So Saul *d* for his 1 Chr 10:13
 was that the beggar *d* Luke 16:22
 in due time Christ *d* Rom 5:6
 Christ *d* for us Rom 5:8
 For he who has *d* Rom 6:7
 Now if we *d* with Rom 6:8
 sin revived and I *d* Rom 7:9
 For to this end Christ *d* Rom 14:9
 perish, for whom Christ *d* 1 Cor 8:11
 that Christ *d* for our sins 1 Cor 15:3
 that if One *d* for all 2 Cor 5:14
 and He *d* for all 2 Cor 5:15
 through the law *d* Gal 2:19
 if you *d* with Christ from Col 2:20
 For you *d*, and your life is Col 3:3
 believe that Jesus *d* 1 Thess 4:14
 who *d* for us 1 Thess 5:10
 for if we *d* with Him 2 Tim 2:11
 These all *d* in faith Heb 11:13
 having *d* to sins 1 Pet 2:24

DIES

If a man *d*, shall he live Job 14:14
 When a wicked man *d* Prov 11:7
 into the ground and *d* John 12:24
 if the husband *d*, she is Rom 7:2

and no one *d* to himself Rom 14:7
 made alive unless it *d* 1 Cor 15:36

DIFFERENCE

the LORD will make a *d* Ex 9:4
d between the unclean Ezek 22:26
 the *d* between the holy Ezek 44:23
 For there is no *d* Rom 3:22
 were, it makes no *d* to me Gal 2:6

DIFFERENCES

There are *d* of ministries, 1 Cor 12:5

DIFFERENT

he has a *d* spirit in him Num 14:24
 with *d* kinds of seed Deut 22:9
 each *d* from the other Dan 7:3
d kinds of tongues 1 Cor 12:10
 if you receive a *d* spirit 2 Cor 11:4
 of Christ, to a *d* gospel, Gal 1:6

DIFFERING

Having then gifts *d* Rom 12:6

DIFFERS

for one star *d* from 1 Cor 15:41

DIFFICULT

d is the way which leads Matt 7:14

DIFFUSED

By what way is light *d* Job 38:24

DIFFUSES

us *d* the fragrance 2 Cor 2:14

DIG

wells which you did not *d* Deut 6:11
 Son of man, *d* into the Ezek 8:8
 Though they *d* into hell Amos 9:2
 I cannot *d*; I am ashamed Luke 16:3

DIGNITARIES

afraid to speak evil of *d* 2 Pet 2:10
 and speak evil of *d* Jude 8

DILIGENCE

your heart with all *d* Prov 4:23
d is man's precious Prov 12:27
 he who leads, with *d* Rom 12:8
 not lagging in *d*, fervent Rom 12:11
d it produced in you 2 Cor 7:11
 of your love by the *d* 2 Cor 8:8
 giving all *d*, add to your 2 Pet 1:5

DILIGENT

d in sanctifying 2 Chr 29:34
 and my spirit makes *d* Ps 77:6
 hand of the *d* makes rich Prov 10:4
 of the *d* will rule Prov 12:24
d shall be made rich Prov 13:4
 proved *d* in many things 2 Cor 8:22
d to come to me quickly 2 Tim 4:9
 Let us therefore be *d* Heb 4:11
 be *d* to be found by Him 2 Pet 3:14

DILIGENTLY

if you *d* obey the voice of Deut 28:1
 seek me *d* will find me Prov 8:17
d followed every good 1 Tim 5:10
 he sought it *d* with tears Heb 12:17

DIM

His eyes were not *d* Deut 34:7
 the windows grow *d* Eccl 12:3
 the gold has become *d* Lam 4:1

DIMINISH

stars *d* their brightness Joel 2:10
 the lights will *d* Zech 14:6

DIMLY

we see in a mirror, *d* 1 Cor 13:12

DINAH

Daughter of Leah, Gen 30:20, 21
 Defiled by Shechem, Gen 34:1-24
 Avenged by brothers, Gen 34:25-31

DINE

asked Him to *d* with Luke 11:37
 come in to him and *d* Rev 3:20

DINNER

Better is a *d* of herbs Prov 15:17

I have prepared my *d* Matt 22:4
invites you to *d* 1 Cor 10:27

DIOTREPHES

Unruly church member, 3 John 9, 10

DIP

d them in the blood Lev 14:51
d it in the water, Num 19:18
let him *d* his foot in oil Deut 33:24
d your piece of bread Ruth 2:14
d the tip of his finger in Luke 16:24

DIPPED

d the tunic in the blood Gen 37:31
d his finger in the Lev 9:9
d seven times in the 2 Kin 5:14
of bread when I have *d* John 13:26
clothed with a robe *d* Rev 19:13

DIRECT

the morning I will *d* Ps 5:3
and He shall *d* your paths Prov 3:6
d their work in truth Is 61:8
Now may the Lord *d* 2 Thess 3:5

DIRT

I cast them out like *d* Ps 18:42
cast up mire and *d* Is 57:20

DISAPPEARS

As water *d* from the Job 14:11

DISARMED

d principalities Col 2:15

DISARMS

and *d* the mighty Job 12:21

DISASTER

bring *d* on the house 1 Kin 14:10
I am fashioning a *d* Jer 18:11
war and *d* and pestilence Jer 28:8
D will come upon Ezek 7:26
you shall see *d* Zeph 3:15
voyage will end with *d* Acts 27:10

DISCERN

Can I *d* between the 2 Sam 19:35
Then you shall again *d* Mal 3:18
d the face of the sky Matt 16:3
senses exercised to *d* Heb 5:14

DISCERNED

they are spiritually *d* 1 Cor 2:14

DISCERNER

d of the thoughts Heb 4:12

DISCERNING

not *d* the Lord's body 1 Cor 11:29
another *d* of spirits, to 1 Cor 12:10

DISCERNMENT

and takes away the *d* Job 12:20

DISCERNS

a wise man's heart *d* Eccl 8:5

DISCIPLE

d is not above his Matt 10:24
in the name of a *d* Matt 10:42
he cannot be My *d* Luke 14:26
the *d* whom He loved John 19:26
d whom Jesus loved John 21:2
the *d* whom Jesus loved John 21:20

DISCIPLES

See TWELVE DISCIPLES
but Your *d* do not fast Matt 9:14
called His twelve *d* to Matt 10:1
d transgress the Matt 15:2
took the twelve *d* Matt 20:17
all the *d* forsook Him Matt 26:56
make *d* of all the nations, Matt 28:19
with His *d* to the sea Mark 3:7
called His *d* to Himself Luke 6:13
His *d* believed in Him John 2:11
many of His *d* went back John 6:66
My word, you are My *d* John 8:31
to become His *d* John 9:27
but we are Moses' *d* John 9:28
His *d* did not understand John 12:16

know that you are My *d* John 13:35
so you will be My *d* John 15:8
Then the *d* were glad John 20:20
of the *d* was multiplying, Acts 6:1
the *d* were first called Acts 11:26
souls of the *d*, exhorting Acts 14:22
strengthening all the *d* Acts 18:23

DISCIPLES'

began to wash the *d* feet John 13:5

DISCIPLINE

Harsh *d* is for him who Prov 15:10
I *d* my body and bring 1 Cor 9:27

DISCIPLINES

but he who loves him *d* Prov 13:24

DISCLOSE

d my dark saying Ps 49:4

DISCORD

and one who sows *d* Prov 6:19

DISCOURAGE

why will you *d* the heart Num 32:7

DISCOURAGED

do not fear or be *d* Deut 1:21
will not fail nor be *d* Is 42:4
lest they become *d* Col 3:21
you become weary and *d* Heb 12:3
d when you are rebuked Heb 12:5

DISCREET

d, chaste, homemakers, Titus 2:5

DISCRETION

D will preserve you Prov 2:11
out knowledge and *d* Prov 8:12
woman who lacks *d* Prov 11:22
The *d* of a man makes Prov 19:11
the heavens at His *d* Jer 10:12

DISEASE

Shall I recover from this *d* 2 Kin 8:8
in his *d* he did not seek 2 Chr 16:12
all kinds of *d* among the Matt 4:23
every *d* among the people Matt 9:35
well of whatever *d* he had John 5:4

DISEASES

Who heals all your *d*, Ps 103:3
afflicted with various *d* Matt 4:24
various *d* brought them Luke 4:40
all demons, and to cure *d* Luke 9:1
d left them and the evil Acts 19:12

DISFIGURE

nor shall you *d* the edges Lev 19:27
d their faces that Matt 6:16

DISGRACE

plead my *d* against me, Job 19:5
do not *d* the throne of Jer 14:21

DISGRACEFUL

he had done a *d* thing Gen 34:7
done a *d* thing in Israel Josh 7:15
Do not do this *d* thing 2 Sam 13:12

DISGUISES

and he *d* his face Job 24:15
He who hates, *d* Prov 26:24

DISHONEST GAIN

turned aside after *d* 1 Sam 8:3
for the sake of *d* Titus 1:11
not for *d* but eagerly 1 Pet 5:2

DISHONESTY

Wealth gained by *d* will Prov 13:11

DISHONOR

d who wish me evil Ps 40:14
with *d* comes reproach Prov 18:3
d the pride of all Is 23:9
Her rulers dearly love *d* Hos 4:18
My Father, and you *d* Me John 8:49
d their bodies among Rom 1:24
and another for *d* Rom 9:21
long hair, it is a *d* to 1 Cor 11:14

It is sown in *d* 1 Cor 15:43
by honor and *d* 2 Cor 6:8
honor and some for *d* 2 Tim 2:20

DISHONORED

but we are *d* 1 Cor 4:10
But you have *d* the James 2:6

DISHONORS

For son *d* father Mic 7:6
covered, *d* his head 1 Cor 11:4

DISOBEDIENCE

d many were made Rom 5:19
works in the sons of *d* Eph 2:2
d received a just Heb 2:2

DISOBEDIENT

Nevertheless they were *d* Neh 9:26
the *d* to the wisdom of Luke 1:17
out My hands to a *d* Rom 10:21
you were once *d* to God Rom 11:30
d to parents, unthankful, 2 Tim 3:2
d, deceived, serving Titus 3:3
They stumble, being *d* 1 Pet 2:8
who formerly were *d* 1 Pet 3:20

DISORDERLY

for this *d* gathering Acts 19:40
brother who walks *d* 2 Thess 3:6

DISPENSATION

d of the fullness of Eph 1:10
d of the grace of God Eph 3:2

DISPERSE

d them throughout the Ezek 20:23

DISPERSION

intend to go to the *D* John 7:35
the pilgrims of the *D* 1 Pet 1:1

DISPLEASE

LORD see it, and it *d*, Prov 24:18

DISPLEASED

that David had done *d* 2 Sam 11:27
You have been *d* Ps 60:1
they were greatly *d* Matt 20:24
it, He was greatly *d* Mark 10:14

DISPUTE

Now there was also a *d* Luke 22:24

DISPUTED

when he *d* about the body Jude 9

DISPUTER

Where is the *d* of this 1 Cor 1:20

DISPUTES

d rather than godly 1 Tim 1:4
but is obsessed with *d* 1 Tim 6:4
foolish and ignorant *d* 2 Tim 2:23
But avoid foolish *d* Titus 3:9

DISQUALIFIED

myself should become *d* 1 Cor 9:27
indeed you are *d* 2 Cor 13:5
though we may seem *d* 2 Cor 13:7

DISQUIETED

And why are you *d* Ps 42:5

DISSENSION

had no small *d* and Acts 15:2
this, a *d* arose between Acts 23:7
a creator of *d* among all Acts 24:5

DISSENSIONS

selfish ambitions, *d* Gal 5:20

DISSIPATION

not accused of *d* Titus 1:6
in the same field of *d* 1 Pet 4:4

DISSOLVED

of heaven shall be *d* Is 34:4
the heavens will be *d* 2 Pet 3:12

DISTINCTION

and made no *d* Acts 15:9
For there is no *d* Rom 10:12
compassion, making a *d* Jude 22

DISTRACTED

But Martha was *d* with Luke 10:40

DISTRESS

me in the day of my *d* Gen 35:3
 When you are in *d* Deut 4:30
 my life from every *d* 1 Kin 1:29
 you out of dire *d* Job 36:16
 keep you from *d* Job 36:19
d them in His deep Ps 2:5
 on the LORD in *d* Ps 118:5
 a whirlwind, when *d* Prov 1:27
 and on the earth *d* Luke 21:25
 tribulation, or *d* Rom 8:35
 of the present *d* 1 Cor 7:26

DISTRESSED

was greatly afraid and *d* Gen 32:7
 Israel was severely *d* Judg 10:9
 David was greatly *d* 1 Sam 30:6
 the queen was deeply *d* Esth 4:4
 heart within me is *d* Ps 143:4
 not be upon her who is *d* Is 9:1
 troubled and deeply *d* Mark 14:33
 and how *d* I am till it is Luke 12:50

DISTRESSES

bring me out of my *d* Ps 25:17

DISTRESSING

d spirit from the LORD 1 Sam 16:14
 Now the *d* spirit from 1 Sam 19:9

DISTRIBUTE

that you have and *d* Luke 18:22

DISTRIBUTED

and they *d* to each as Acts 4:35
 But as God has *d* 1 Cor 7:17

DISTRIBUTING

d to the needs of the Rom 12:13

DITCH

will fall into a *d* Matt 15:14

DIVERSE

D weights are an Prov 20:23

DIVERSITIES

There are *d* of gifts 1 Cor 12:4
 there are *d* of activities, 1 Cor 12:6

DIVIDE

D the living child 1 Kin 3:25
d My garments among Ps 22:18
d their tongues Ps 55:9
d the spoil with the Prov 16:19
d the inheritance Luke 12:13
 "Take this and *d* Luke 22:17

DIVIDED

and the waters were *d* Ex 14:21
 death they were not *d* 2 Sam 1:23
 And You *d* the sea Neh 9:11
 "Who has *d* a channel Job 38:25
 shall they ever be *d* Ezek 37:22
 kingdom has been *d* Dan 5:28
 your land shall be *d* Amos 7:17
 "Every kingdom *d* Matt 12:25
 and a house *d* against Luke 11:17
 in one house will be *d* Luke 12:52
 So he *d* to them his Luke 15:12
 they *d* His garments and Luke 23:34
d My garments among John 19:24
 appeared to them *d* Acts 2:3
d them among all Acts 2:45
 Is Christ *d*? Was Paul 1 Cor 1:13
 the great city was *d* Rev 16:19

DIVIDES

at home *d* the spoil Ps 68:12

DIVIDING

rightly *d* the word of 2 Tim 2:15

DIVINATION

shall you practice *d* Lev 19:26
D is on the lips of Prov 16:10
 darkness without *d* Acts 3:6
 a spirit of *d* met us Acts 16:16

DIVINE

futility and who *d* Ezek 13:9

and her prophets *d* Mic 3:11
d service and the Heb 9:1
d power has given 2 Pet 1:3

DIVINERS

your prophets, your *d* Jer 27:9

DIVISION

So there was a *d* John 7:43
 piercing even to the *d* Heb 4:12

DIVISIONS

note those who cause *d* Rom 16:17
 and that there be no *d* 1 Cor 1:10
 envy, strife, and *d* 1 Cor 3:3
 hear that there are *d* 1 Cor 11:18
 persons, who cause *d* Jude 19

DIVISIVE

Reject a *d* man after Titus 3:10

DIVORCE

cannot *d* her all his days Deut 22:19
 her a certificate of *d* Deut 24:1
 of your mother's *d* Is 50:1
 given her a certificate of *d* Jer 3:8
 Israel says that He hates *d* Mal 2:16
 give her a certificate of *d* Matt 5:31
 to *d* his wife for just any Matt 19:3
 a certificate of *d* Mark 10:4
 husband is not to *d* his 1 Cor 7:11

DIVORCED

d from her husband Lev 21:7
 A widow or a *d* woman Lev 21:14
 daughter is a widow or *d* Lev 22:13
 vow of a widow or a *d* Num 30:9
d her must not take her Deut 24:4
 a widow or a *d* woman Ezek 44:22
d commits adultery Matt 5:32
d from her husband Luke 16:18

DIVORCES

say, "If a man *d* his wife Jer 3:1
 said, "Whoever *d* his wife Matt 5:31
 whoever *d* his wife Matt 19:9
 Whoever *d* his wife Mark 10:11
 Whoever *d* his wife Luke 16:18

DO

set in them to *d* evil Eccl 8:11
 I will also *d* it Is 46:11
 men to *d* to you, *d* Matt 7:12
d this and you will Luke 10:28
 He sees the Father *d* John 5:19
 without Me you can *d* John 15:5
 "Sirs, what must I *d* Acts 16:30
d evil that good may Rom 3:8
 For what I will to *d* Rom 7:15
 good that I will to *d* Rom 7:19
 or whatever you *d*, *d* 1 Cor 10:31
d all things through Phil 4:13
d in word or deed, *d* Col 3:17
d good and to share Heb 13:16
 and *d* this or that James 4:15

DO NOT BE AFRAID

vision, saying, "D. Abram Gen 15:1
 said to the people, "D Ex 14:13
d, and do not tremble Deut 20:3
 Lord said to Joshua, "D Josh 11:6
d of him." So he arose 2 Kin 1:15
D of the words 2 Kin 19:6
D of sudden terror, Prov 3:25
D of their faces, for Jer 1:8
 "D to serve the Chaldeans Jer 40:9
 And you, son of man, *d* Ezek 2:6
D, you beasts of the Joel 2:22
 "Joseph, son of David, *d* Matt 1:20
 It is I, *d* Matt 14:27
 "Arise, and *d* Matt 17:7
 said to the women, "D Matt 28:5
 of the synagogue, "D Mark 5:36
 angel said to him, "D Luke 1:13
 "D. Mary, for you have Luke 1:30
 angel said to them, "D Luke 2:10
 Jesus said to Simon, "D Luke 5:10

d of those who kill the Luke 12:4
 "D, but speak Acts 18:9
 "D, Paul; you must Acts 27:24
 saying to me, "D Rev 1:17

DO NOT FEAR

d, for I am with you, Gen 26:24
d to go down to Egypt, Gen 46:3
D; for God has come Ex 20:20
d or be discouraged Deut 1:21
d the gods of the Judg 6:10
d, you shall not die Judg 6:23
D, You have done all 1 Sam 12:20
D, for I will surely 2 Sam 9:7
 Elijah said to her, "D 1 Kin 17:13
D, for those who are with 2 Kin 6:16
d or be fainthearted Is 7:4
 fearful-hearted, "Be strong, *d* Is 35:4
d the reproach of men, Is 51:7
d, O My servant Jacob, Jer 30:10
 said to me, "D, Daniel Dan 10:12
 remains among you; *d* Hag 2:5
D, let your hands be Zech 8:13
d them. For there is Matt 10:26
D therefore; you are of Luke 12:7
D any of those things Rev 2:10

DOCTRINE

said, "My *d* is pure Job 11:4
 for I give you good *d* Prov 4:2
 idol is a worthless *d* Jer 10:8
 of bread, but of the *d* Matt 16:12
 What new *d* is this Mark 1:27
 "My *d* is not Mine John 7:16
 Jerusalem with your *d* Acts 5:28
 heart that form of *d* Rom 6:17
 with every wind of *d* Eph 4:14
 is contrary to sound *d* 1 Tim 1:10
 followed my *d* 2 Tim 3:10
 is profitable for *d* 2 Tim 3:16
 not endure sound *d* 2 Tim 4:3
 in *d* showing integrity Titus 2:7
 they may adorn the *d* Titus 2:10
 not abide in the *d* 2 John 9

DOCTRINES

the commandments and *d* Col 2:22
 spirits and *d* of demons 1 Tim 4:1
 various and strange *d* Heb 13:9

DOEG

An Edomite; chief of Saul's herdsmen, 1 Sam 21:7
 Betrays David, 1 Sam 22:9, 10
 Kills 85 priests, 1 Sam 22:18, 19

DOERS

of God, but the *d* Rom 2:13
 But be *d* of the word James 1:22

DOG

to David, "Am I a *d* 1 Sam 17:43
 they growl like a *d* Ps 59:6
d returns to his own Prov 26:11
d is better than a Eccl 9:4
d returns to his own 2 Pet 2:22

DOGS

you shall throw it to the *d* Ex 22:31
 The *d* shall eat whoever 1 Kin 14:11
 The *d* shall eat Jezebel 2 Kin 9:10
 Yes, they are greedy *d* Is 56:11
 what is holy to the *d* Matt 7:6
d eat the crumbs which Matt 15:27
 Moreover the *d* came Luke 16:21
 But outside are *d* Rev 22:15

DOMINION

let them have *d* Gen 1:26
 "D and fear belong Job 25:2
 made him to have *d* Ps 8:6
 let them not have *d* Ps 19:13
 besides You have had *d* Is 26:13
d is an everlasting Dan 4:34
 sin shall not have *d* Rom 6:14
 Not that we have *d* 2 Cor 1:24
 glory and majesty, *d* Jude 25

DONKEY

d saw the Angel Num 22:23
 Does the wild *d* Job 6:5
d its master's crib Is 1:3
 and riding on a *d* Zech 9:9
 colt, the foal of a *d* Matt 21:5
 He had found a young *d* John 12:14
d speaking with a 2 Pet 2:16

DONKEY'S

d colt is born a man Job 11:12

DONKEYS

d quench their thirst Ps 104:11
 a chariot of *d* Is 21:7
 And the wild *d* stood Jer 14:6

DOOM

for the day of *d* Prov 16:4

DOOR

sin lies at the *d* Gen 4:7
 keep watch over the *d* Ps 141:3
d turns on its hinges Prov 26:14
 stone against the *d* Matt 27:60
 to you, I am the *d* John 10:7
 and effective *d* 1 Cor 16:9
d was opened to me by 2 Cor 2:12
 would open to us a *d* Col 4:3
d is standing at the *d* James 5:9
 before you an open *d* Rev 3:8
 I stand at the *d* Rev 3:20
 and behold, a *d* Rev 4:1

DOORKEEPER

I would rather be a *d* Ps 84:10
 To him the *d* John 10:3

DOORPOSTS

write them on the *d* Deut 6:9
 "Strike the *d* Amos 9:1

DOORS

up, you everlasting *d* Ps 24:7
 the entrance of the *d* Prov 8:3
 when the *d* are shut in Eccl 12:4
 who would shut the *d* Mal 1:10

DOR

City captured by Joshua and assigned
 to Manasseh, Josh 12:23; 17:11; Judg
 1:27

DORCAS

Disciple at Joppa, also called Tabitha;
 raised to life, Acts 9:36-42

DOTHAN

Ancient town where Joseph was sold,
 Gen 37:14-25
 Elisha strikes Syrians at, 2 Kin 6:8-23

DOUBLE

Please let a *d* portion of 2 Kin 2:9
 from the LORD's hand Is 40:2
 first I will repay *d* Jer 16:18
 worthy of *d* honor 1 Tim 5:17
 and repay her *d* Rev 18:6

DOUBLE-MINDED

I hate the *d* Ps 119:113
 he is a *d* man James 1:8
 your hearts, you *d* James 4:8

DOUBT

life shall hang in *d* Deut 28:66
 faith, why did you *d* Matt 14:31
 does not *d* in his heart Mark 11:23
 No *d* this man is a Acts 28:4

DOUBTING

without wrath and *d* 1 Tim 2:8
 in faith, with no *d* James 1:6

DOUBTS

And why do *d* arise in Luke 24:38
 for I have *d* about you Gal 4:20
 doubting, for he who *d* James 1:6

DOUGH

d before it was leavened, Ex 12:34

DOVE

d found no resting Gen 8:9
 I had wings like a *d* Ps 55:6

I mourned like a *d* Is 38:14
 also is like a silly *d* Hos 7:11
 descending like a *d* Matt 3:16

DOVES

and moan sadly like *d* Is 59:11
 and harmless as *d* Matt 10:16
 of those who sold *d* Matt 21:12

DOWNCAST

who comforts the *d* 2 Cor 7:6

DRAGNET

gather them in their *d* Hab 1:15
d that was cast Matt 13:47

DRAGON

a great, fiery red *d* Rev 12:3
 fought with the *d* Rev 12:7
 they worshipped the *d* Rev 13:4
 He laid hold of the *d* Rev 20:2

DRAIN

wicked of the earth *d* Ps 75:8

DRAINED

all faces are *d* Joel 2:6

DRANK

them, and they all *d* Mark 14:23
d with Him after He Acts 10:41
d the same spiritual 1 Cor 10:4

DRAW

d honey from the rock Deut 32:13
 me to *d* near to God Ps 73:28
 and the years *d* Eccl 12:1
D me away Song 1:4
 Woe to those who *d* Is 5:18
 with joy you will *d* Is 12:3
 "D some out now John 2:8
 You have nothing to *d* John 4:11
 will *d* all peoples John 12:32
 let us *d* near with a Heb 10:22
 who *d* back to perdition Heb 10:39
D near to God and He James 4:8

DRAWN

The wicked have *d* Ps 37:14
 tempted when he is *d* James 1:14

DRAWS

and my life *d* near to Ps 88:3
 your redemption *d* Luke 21:28
 the Father who sent Me *d* John 6:44
 but if anyone *d* back Heb 10:38

DREAD

fear of you and the *d* Gen 9:2
 begin to put the *d* Deut 2:25

DREADFUL

of the great and *d* Mal 4:5

DREAM

Now Joseph had a *d* Gen 37:5
 We each have had a *d* Gen 40:8
 I speak to him in a *d* Num 12:6
 will fly away like a *d* Job 20:8
 As a *d* when one awakes Ps 73:20
 like those who *d* Ps 126:1
 For a *d* comes through Eccl 5:3
 her, shall be as a *d* Is 29:7
 prophet who has a *d* Jer 23:28
 do not let the *d* Dan 4:19
 your old men shall *d* Joel 2:28
 to Joseph in a *d* Matt 2:13
 things today in a *d* Matt 27:19
 your old men shall *d* Acts 2:17

DREAMERS

d defile the flesh Jude 8

DREAMS

in the multitude of *d* Eccl 5:7
 when a hungry man *d* Is 29:8
 Nebuchadnezzar had *d* Dan 2:1

DREGS

d shall all the wicked Ps 75:8
 has settled on his *d* Jer 48:11

DREW

and *d* for all his camels Gen 24:20

Because I *d* him out of Ex 2:10
d me out of many waters Ps 18:16
 and *d* his sword, struck Matt 26:51

DRIED

My strength is *d* Ps 22:15
 of her blood was *d* Mark 5:29
 saw the fig tree *d* Mark 11:20
 and its water was *d* Rev 16:12

DRIFT

have heard, lest we *d* Heb 2:1

DRINK

"What shall we *d* Ex 15:24
 "Do not *d* wine or Lev 10:9
 and let him *d* of the Job 21:20
d gave me vinegar to *d* Ps 69:21
D water from your own Prov 5:15
 mocker, strong *d* Prov 20:1
 lest they *d* and forget Prov 31:5
 Give strong *d* to him Prov 31:6
 Let him *d* and forget Prov 31:7
d your wine with a Eccl 9:7
 follow intoxicating *d* Is 5:11
 mixing intoxicating *d* Is 5:22
d the milk of the Is 60:16
 My servants shall *d* Is 65:13
 bosom, that you may *d* Is 66:11
d water by measure Ezek 4:11
 "Bring wine, let us *d* Amos 4:1
 to you of wine and *d* Mic 2:11
 and you gave Me no *d* Matt 25:42
 that day when I *d* Matt 26:29
 mingled with gall to *d* Matt 27:34
 with myrrh to *d* Mark 15:23
 to her, "Give Me a *d* John 4:7
 him come to Me and *d* John 7:37
d wine nor do anything Rom 14:21
 do, as often as you *d* 1 Cor 11:25
 all been made to *d* 1 Cor 12:13
 No longer *d* only water 1 Tim 5:23
 has made all nations *d* Rev 14:8

DRINKS

to her, "Whoever *d* John 4:13
D My blood has eternal John 6:54
 For he who eats and *d* 1 Cor 11:29
 For the earth which *d* Heb 6:7

DRIP

immoral woman *d* honey Prov 5:3
d as the honeycomb Song 4:11
 shall *d* with new wine, the Joel 3:18

DRIPPED

my hands *d* with myrrh, Song 5:5

DRIPPING

wife are a continual *d* Prov 19:13
 His lips are lilies, *d* Song 5:13

DRIVE

Little by little I will *d* Ex 23:30
 then you shall *d* out all Num 33:52
 not utterly *d* them out Josh 17:13
 but they could not *d* out Judg 1:19
 of the wicked *d* Ps 36:11
 so *d* them away Ps 68:2
 will *d* it far from him Prov 22:15
 They shall *d* you from Dan 4:25
 I will *d* them from My Hos 9:15
 temple and began to *d* Mark 11:15

DRIVEN

They were *d* out from Job 30:5
 Let them be *d* backward Ps 40:14
 sail and so were *d* Acts 27:17
 a wave of the sea *d* James 1:6

DROP

They *d* on the pastures Ps 65:12
 the nations are as a *d* Is 40:15

DROSS

of the earth like *d* Ps 119:119
 Take away the *d* Prov 25:4
 purge away your *d* Is 1:25
 of Israel has become *d* Ezek 22:18

DROUGHT

through a land of *d* Jer 2:6
in the year of *d* Jer 17:8
For I called for a *d* Hag 1:11

DROVE

So He *d* out the man Gen 3:24
temple of God and *d* Matt 21:12
a whip of cords, He *d* John 2:15

DROWN

nor can the floods *d* Song 8:7
harmful lusts which *d* 1 Tim 6:9

DROWSINESS

d will clothe a Prov 23:21

DRUNK

of the wine and was *d* Gen 9:21
d my wine with my milk Song 5:1
you afflicted, and *d* Is 51:21
My anger, made them *d* Is 63:6
be satiated and made *d* Jer 46:10
the guests have well *d* John 2:10
For these are not *d* Acts 2:15
and another is *d* 1 Cor 11:21
And do not be *d* Eph 5:18
and those who get *d* 1 Thess 5:7
the earth were made *d* Rev 17:2
I saw the woman, *d* Rev 17:6

DRUNKARD

d could be included Deut 29:19
d is a proverb in the Prov 26:9
to and fro like a *d* Is 24:20
or a reviler, or a *d* 1 Cor 5:11

DRUNKEN

I am like a *d* man Jer 23:9

DRUNKENNESS

will be filled with *d* Ezek 23:33
Jerusalem a cup of *d* Zech 12:2
with carousing, *d* Luke 21:34
not in revelry and *d* Rom 13:13
envy, murders, *d* Gal 5:21
lusts, *d*, revelries 1 Pet 4:3

DRUSILLA

Wife of Felix; hears Paul, Acts 24:24,
25

DRY

place, and let the *d* Gen 1:9
made the sea into *d* Ex 14:21
It was *d* on the fleece Judg 6:40
I will *d* up her sea Jer 51:36
d tree flourish Ezek 17:24
will make the rivers *d* Ezek 30:12
will be done in the *d* Luke 23:31

DUE

because it is your *d* Lev 10:13
their food in *d* season Ps 104:27
pay all that was *d* Matt 18:34
d time Christ died Rom 5:6
to whom taxes are *d* Rom 13:7
d season we shall Gal 6:9
exalt you in *d* time 1 Pet 5:6

DUG

that I have *d* this well Gen 21:30
father's servants had *d* Gen 26:15
in my grave which I *d* for Gen 50:5
They have *d* a pit before Ps 57:6
the pit is *d* for the wicked Ps 94:13
proud have *d* pits for me Ps 119:85
He *d* it up and cleared out Is 5:2
to the Euphrates and *d* Jer 13:7
d a winepress in it and Matt 21:33
d in the ground, and hid Matt 25:18
who *d* deep and laid Luke 6:48

DULL

heart of this people *d* Is 6:10
people have grown *d* Matt 13:15
you have become *d* Heb 5:11

DUMB

the tongue of the *d* Is 35:6
"Deaf and *d* spirit Mark 9:25

DUNGHILL

the land nor for the *d* Luke 14:35

DUST

formed man of the *d* Gen 2:7
d you shall return Gen 3:19
descendants as the *d* Gen 13:16
now, I who am but *d* Gen 18:27
"Who can count the *d* Num 23:10
lay your gold in the *d* Job 22:24
and repent in *d* Job 42:6
Will the *d* praise You Ps 30:9
like the whirling *d* Ps 83:13
show favor to her *d* Ps 102:14
remembers that we are *d* Ps 103:14
or the primal *d* Prov 8:26
all are from the *d* Eccl 3:20
counted as the small *d* Is 40:15
They shall lick the *d* Mic 7:17
city, shake off the *d* Matt 10:14
image of the man of *d* 1 Cor 15:49

DUTY

the *d* of a husband's Deut 25:5
d of a close relative Ruth 3:13
done what was our *d* Luke 17:10

DWELL

O LORD, make me *d* Ps 4:8
Who may *d* in Your holy Ps 15:1
He himself shall *d* Ps 25:13
d in the land, and feed on Ps 37:3
the LORD God might *d* Ps 68:18
of my God than *d* Ps 84:10
Him, that glory may *d* Ps 85:9
Woe is me, that I *d* Ps 120:5
better to *d* in a corner Prov 25:24
he will *d* on high Is 33:16
into Egypt to *d* there Is 52:4
"I *d* in the high and Is 57:15
Restorer of Streets to *D* In Is 58:12
"They shall no longer *d* Lam 4:15
they enter and *d* there Matt 12:45
of Judea and all who *d* Acts 2:14
"I will *d* in them 2 Cor 6:16
that Christ may *d* Eph 3:17
the fullness should *d* Col 1:19
the word of Christ *d* Col 3:16
men, and He will *d* Rev 21:3

DWELLER

fled and became a *d* Acts 7:29

DWELLING

A people *d* alone Num 23:9
is the way to the *d* Job 38:19
built together for a *d* Eph 2:22
a foreign country, *d* Heb 11:9

DWELLS

He who *d* in the secret Ps 91:1
but the Father who *d* John 14:10
do it, but sin that *d* Rom 7:17
the Spirit of God *d* Rom 8:9
from the dead *d* Rom 8:11
the Spirit of God *d* 1 Cor 3:16
d all the fullness Col 2:9
which righteousness *d* 2 Pet 3:13
you, where Satan *d* Rev 2:13

DWELT

Egypt, and Jacob *d* Ps 105:23
became flesh and *d* John 1:14
By faith he *d* in the Heb 11:9

DYING

I do not object to *d* Acts 25:11
in the body the *d* 2 Cor 4:10
Jacob, when he was *d* Heb 11:21

EAGLE

As an *e* stirs up its Deut 32:11
e swooping on its prey Job 9:26
fly away like an *e* Prov 23:5

The way of an *e* Prov 30:19
nest as high as the *e* Jer 49:16
had the face of an *e* Ezek 1:10
like a flying *e* Rev 4:7
two wings of a great *e* Rev 12:14

EAGLES

up with wings like *e* Is 40:31
are swifter than *e* Jer 4:13
e will be gathered Matt 24:28

EAGLES'

how I bore you on *e* Ex 19:4

EAR

shall pierce his *e* Ex 21:6
Does not the *e* test Job 12:11
Bow down Your *e* Ps 31:2
And the *e* of the wise Prov 18:15
He awakens My *e* Is 50:4
e is uncircumcised Jer 6:10
what you hear in the *e* Matt 10:27
cut off his right *e* John 18:10
not seen, nor *e* heard 1 Cor 2:9
if the *e* should say 1 Cor 12:16
He who has an *e* Rev 2:7

EARLY

Very *e* in the morning Mark 16:2
arrived at the tomb *e* Luke 24:22

EARNEST

must give the more *e* Heb 2:1

EARNESTLY

if you *e* obey My Deut 11:13
He prayed more *e* Luke 22:44
in this we groan, *e* 2 Cor 5:2
e that it would not James 5:17
you to contend *e* Jude 3

EARS

both his *e* will tingle 2 Kin 21:12
Whoever shuts his *e* Prov 21:13
And hear with their *e* Is 6:10
He who has *e* Matt 11:15
e are hard of hearing Matt 13:15
they have itching *e* 2 Tim 4:3
e are open to their 1 Pet 3:12

EARS TO HEAR

eyes to see and *e* Deut 29:4
e but does not hear Ezek 12:2
He who has *e* Matt 11:15
He who has *e* Matt 13:9
He who has *e* Matt 13:43
"He who has *e* Mark 4:9
If anyone has *e* Mark 4:23
If anyone has *e* Mark 7:16
"He who has *e* Luke 8:8
He who has *e* Luke 14:35

EARTH

See ALL THE EARTH; HEAVEN AND
EARTH

The *e* was without form Gen 1:2
God called the dry land *E* Gen 1:10
caused it to rain on the *e* Gen 2:5
The *e* also was corrupt Gen 6:11
a wind to pass over the *e* Gen 8:1
and multiply, and fill the *e* Gen 9:1
the whole *e* was populated Gen 9:19
and struck the dust of the *e* Ex 8:17
the *e* is the LORD's Ex 9:29
the *e* swallowed them Ex 15:12
"Lest the *e* swallow us Num 16:34
or that is in the *e* beneath Deut 5:8
e which is under you Deut 28:23
e to witness against Deut 31:28
fell to the *e* on his face Josh 7:6
the *e* trembled Judg 5:4
e are the LORD's 1 Sam 2:8
the *e* quaked 1 Sam 14:15
"I go the way of all the *e* 1 Kin 2:2
the *e* was divided 1 Chr 1:19
to the LORD, all the *e* 1 Chr 16:23
coming to judge the *e* 1 Chr 16:33

service for man on *e* Job 7:1
 He hangs the *e* on Job 26:7
 foundations of the *e* Job 38:4
 tried in a furnace of *e* Ps 12:6
e is the LORD's Ps 24:1
 the shields of the *e* Ps 47:9
 You visit the *e* Ps 65:9
 You had formed the *e* Ps 90:2
 let the *e* be moved Ps 99:1
 glory is above the *e* Ps 148:13
 wisdom founded the *e* Prov 3:19
 there was ever an *e* Prov 8:23
 For three things the *e* Prov 30:21
e abides forever Eccl 1:4
 heaven, and you on *e* Eccl 5:2
 the fruit of the *e* Is 4:2
 for the meek of the *e* Is 11:4
 the *e* shall be full of Is 11:9
 curse has devoured the *e* Is 24:6
 a dark place of the *e* Is 45:19
 the foundations of the *e* Is 51:16
 are higher than the *e* Is 55:9
e is My footstool Is 66:1
 new *e* which I will make Is 66:22
 O *e*, *e*, *e*, hear the word Jer 22:29
 lifted me up between *e* Ezek 8:3
 and the *e* shone with Ezek 43:2
 a tree in the midst of the *e* Dan 4:10
 in heaven and on *e* Dan 6:27
 The *e* shall answer Hos 2:22
 I will darken the *e* Amos 8:9
e will be filled Hab 2:14
 Let all the *e* keep silence Hab 2:20
 shall inherit the *e* Matt 5:5
 heaven and *e* pass away Matt 5:18
e as it is in heaven Matt 6:10
 treasures on *e*, where Matt 6:19
 whatever you bind on *e* Matt 18:18
 of the *e* will mourn Matt 24:30
 Me in heaven and on *e* Matt 28:18
 all the seeds on *e* Mark 4:31
 and *e* will pass away Mark 13:31
 on *e* peace, goodwill Luke 2:14
 power on *e* to forgive Luke 5:24
 find faith on the *e* Luke 18:8
e is My footstool Acts 7:49
 then shook the *e* Heb 12:26
e which are now 2 Pet 3:7
 heavens and a new *e* 2 Pet 3:13
 all the tribes of the *e* Rev 1:7
 "Do not harm the *e* Rev 17:3
 he was cast to the *e* Rev 12:9
 the *e* helped the woman Rev 12:16
 on the *e* will worship him Rev 13:8
 and the *e* was reaped Rev 14:16
 the *e* was illuminated Rev 18:1
 from whose face the *e* Rev 20:11
 new heaven and a new *e* Rev 21:1

EARTHEN

holy water in an *e* vessel Num 5:17
 a potter's *e* flask Jer 19:1
 treasure in *e* vessels 2 Cor 4:7

EARTHLY

If I have told you *e* John 3:12
 that if our *e* house 2 Cor 5:1
 their mind on *e* things Phil 3:19
 from above, but is *e* James 3:15

EARTHQUAKE

LORD was not in the *e* 1 Kin 19:11
 as you fled from the *e* Zech 14:5
 there was a great *e* Matt 28:2
 there was a great *e* Acts 16:26
 there was a great *e* Rev 6:12
e as had not occurred Rev 16:18

EARTHQUAKES

And there will be *e* Mark 13:8

EASE

I was at *e*, but He has Job 16:12
 you women who are at *e* Is 32:9
 to you who are at *e* Amos 6:1

take your *e*; eat, drink Luke 12:19

EASIER

Which is *e*, to say Mark 2:9
 It is *e* for a camel Mark 10:25
e for heaven and earth Luke 16:17

EAST

goes toward the *e* Gen 2:14
e of the garden of Eden Gen 3:24
 the LORD brought an *e* Ex 10:13
e wind scattered Job 38:24
 As far as the *e* Ps 103:12
 descendants from the *e* Is 43:5
 wise men from the *E* Matt 2:1
 many will come from *e* Matt 8:11
 will come from the *e* Luke 13:29
e might be prepared Rev 16:12

EASTWARD

planted a garden *e* in Eden Gen 2:8

EASY

My yoke is *e* and My Matt 11:30

EAT

you may freely *e* Gen 2:16
e dust all the days Gen 3:14
 "You shall not *e* Gen 3:17
 you shall *e* the herb Gen 3:18
e of my game Gen 27:19
 brethren to *e* bread Gen 31:54
 you shall *e* it in haste Ex 12:11
 No foreigner shall *e* it Ex 12:43
 may not *e* the life Deut 12:23
 dogs shall *e* Jezebel 2 Kin 9:10
 my people as they *e* Ps 53:4
 love it will *e* its fruit Prov 18:21
E only as much as you Prov 25:16
 good to *e* much honey Prov 25:27
e your bread with joy Eccl 9:7
 Curds and honey He shall *e* Is 7:15
 You shall *e* this year such Is 37:30
 lion shall *e* straw Is 65:25
e this scroll Ezek 3:1
 on your couches, *e* Amos 6:4
e the flesh of My Mic 3:3
 life, what you will *e* Matt 6:25
 even the little dogs *e* Matt 15:27
 You to *e* the Passover Matt 26:17
 I may *e* the Passover Mark 14:14
e; this is My body Mark 14:22
 what you will *e* Luke 12:22
 food to *e* of which you John 4:32
 give us His flesh to *e* John 6:52
 "Rise, Peter; kill and *e*," Acts 10:13
e nor drink till they have Acts 23:21
 one believes he may *e* Rom 14:2
e meat nor drink wine Rom 14:21
 I will never again *e* 1 Cor 8:13
e whatever is set 1 Cor 10:27
e; this is My body 1 Cor 11:24
 neither shall he *e* 2 Thess 3:10
 have no right to *e* Heb 13:10
e your flesh like fire James 5:3
 "Take and *e* it Rev 10:9

EATEN

Have you *e* from the Gen 3:11
 It shall be *e* the same day Lev 19:6
 Your house has *e* me up Ps 69:9
e my honeycomb with my Song 5:1
 bad figs which cannot be *e* Jer 24:8
e the fruit of lies Hos 10:13
 And he was *e* by worms Acts 12:23

EATING

by *e* with the blood 1 Sam 14:33
 sons and daughters were *e* Job 1:13
e swine's flesh Is 66:17
 neither *e* nor drinking Matt 11:18
 the flood, they were *e* Matt 24:38
 as they were *e*, He said Matt 26:21
 Pharisees saw Him *e* Mark 2:16
 in the same house, *e* Luke 10:7
e in an idol's temple 1 Cor 8:10

in *e*, each one takes 1 Cor 11:21

EATS

The righteous *e* Prov 13:25
 receives sinners and *e* Luke 15:2
 Whoever *e* My flesh John 6:54
e this bread will live John 6:58
e despise him who does Rom 14:3
 He who *e*, *e* to the Rom 14:6
 an unworthy manner *e* 1 Cor 11:29

EBAL

Mountain in Samaria, Deut 27:12, 13
 Stones of the Law erected upon, Deut
 27:1-8; Josh 8:30-35

EBED-MELECH

Ethiopian eunuch; rescues Jeremiah,
 Jer 38:7-13
 Promised divine protection, Jer
 39:15-18

EBENEZER

Site of Israel's defeat, 1 Sam 4:1-10
 Ark transferred from, 1 Sam 5:1
 Site of memorial stone, 1 Sam 7:10, 12

EBER

Great-grandson of Shem, Gen
 10:21-24; 1 Chr 1:25
 Progenitor of the:
 Hebrews, Gen 11:16-26
 Arabians and Arameans, Gen
 10:25-30
 Ancestor of Christ, Luke 3:35

EDEN

First home of mankind, Gen 2:8-15
 Zion becomes like, Is 51:3
 Called the "garden of God," Ezek 28:13

EDIFICATION

his good, leading to *e* Rom 15:2
 prophesies speaks *e* 1 Cor 14:3
 things be done for *e* 1 Cor 14:26
 the Lord gave us for *e* 2 Cor 10:8
 has given me for *e* 2 Cor 13:10
 rather than godly *e* 1 Tim 1:4

EDIFIES

puffs up, but love *e* 1 Cor 8:1
 he who prophesies *e* 1 Cor 14:4

EDIFY

but not all things *e* 1 Cor 10:23
 and *e* one another 1 Thess 5:11

EDIFYING

of the body for the *e* Eph 4:16

EDOM

Name given to Esau, Gen 25:30
 ——— Land of Esau; called Seir, Gen 32:3
 Called Edom and Idumea, Mark 3:8
 People of, cursed, Is 34:5, 6

EDOMITES

Descendants of Esau, Gen 36:9
 Refuse passage to Israel, Num
 20:18-20
 Hostile to Israel, Gen 27:40; 1 Sam
 14:47; 2 Chr 20:10; Ps 137:7
 Prophecies concerning, Gen 27:37; Is
 34:5-17; Ezek 25:12-14; 35:5-7;
 Amos 9:11, 12

EDREI

Capital of Bashan, Deut 3:10
 Site of Og's defeat, Num 21:33-35

EFFECT

of the peoples of no *e* Ps 33:10
 of no *e* by your tradition Matt 15:6
 promise made of no *e* Rom 4:14
 make the promise of no *e* Gal 3:17

EFFECTIVELY

for He who worked *e* Gal 2:8
e works in you who 1 Thess 2:13

EGG

in the white of an *e* Job 6:6

Or if he asks for an *e* Luke 11:12

EGLON

City of Judah, Josh 15:39

EGYPT

Abram visits, Gen 12:10

Joseph sold into, Gen 37:28, 36

Joseph becomes leader in, Gen 39:1-4

Hebrews move to, Gen 46:5-7

Hebrews persecuted in, Ex 1:15-22

Plagues on, Ex 7-11

Israel leaves, Ex 12:31-33

Army of, perishes, Ex 14:26-28

Prophecies concerning, Gen 15:13; Is

19:18-25; Ezek 29:14, 15; 30:24, 25;

Matt 2:15

EHUD

Son of Gera, Judg 3:15

Slay's Eglon, Judg 3:16-26

EIGHT

Isaac when he was *e* days Gen 21:4

Jesse, and who had *e* 1 Sam 17:12

Josiah was *e* years old 2 Kin 22:1

e days were completed Luke 2:21

about *e* days after these Luke 9:28

bedridden *e* years Acts 9:33

a few, that is, *e* 1 Pet 3:20

saved Noah, one of *e* 2 Pet 2:5

EIGHTH

shall sow in the *e* year Lev 25:22

So it was, on the *e* day Luke 1:59

circumcised the *e* day, of Phil 3:5

EIGHTY

Moses was *e* years old Ex 7:7

land had rest for *e* years Judg 3:30

I am today *e* years old 2 Sam 19:35

with him were *e* priests 2 Chr 26:17

strength they are *e* years Ps 90:10

your bill, and write *e* Luke 16:7

EKRON

Philistine city, Josh 13:3

Captured by Judah, Judg 1:18

Assigned to Dan, Josh 19:40, 43

Ark sent to, 1 Sam 5:10

Denounced by the prophets, Jer 25:9, 20

EL BETHEL

Site of Jacob's altar, Gen 35:6, 7

ELAH

King of Israel, 1 Kin 16:6, 8-10

ELAMITES

Descendants of Shem, Gen 10:22

Destruction of, Jer 49:34-39

In Persian Empire, Ezra 4:9

Jews from, at Pentecost, Acts 2:9

ELATH

Seaport on Red Sea, 1 Kin 9:26

Built by Azariah, 2 Kin 14:21, 22

Captured by Syrians, 2 Kin 16:6

Same as Ezion Geber, 2 Chr 8:17

ELDER

clothes of her *e* son Esau Gen 27:15

The *e* and honorable Is 9:15

against an *e* except 1 Tim 5:19

I who am a fellow *e* 1 Pet 5:1

The *E*, To the elect lady 2 John 1

The *E*, To the beloved 3 John 1

ELDERS

See TWENTY-FOUR ELDERS

and seventy of the *e* Ex 24:1

called for the *e* of Israel Josh 24:1

the advice of the *e* 2 Chr 10:13

And teach his *e* Ps 105:22

in the company of the *e* Ps 107:32

and counsel from the *e* Ezek 7:26

the tradition of the *e* Matt 15:2

many things from the *e* Matt 16:21

e of the people plotted Matt 27:1

be rejected by the *e* Luke 9:22

e who had come to Him Luke 22:52

the people, the *e* Acts 6:12

they had appointed *e* Acts 14:23

e came together to Acts 15:6

and called for the *e* Acts 20:17

e who rule well be 1 Tim 5:17

lacking, and appoint *e* Titus 1:5

e obtained a good Heb 11:2

Let him call for the *e* James 5:14

e who are among you 1 Pet 5:1

I saw twenty-four *e* Rev 4:4

twenty-four *e* fall down Rev 4:10

the twenty-four *e* fell down Rev 5:8

ELDERSHIP

of the hands of the *e* 1 Tim 4:14

ELEAZAR

Son of Aaron; succeeds him as high

priest, Ex 6:23, 25; 28:1; Lev 10:6, 7;

Num 3:32; 20:25-28; Josh 14:1; 24:33

ELECT

whom I uphold, My *E* Is 42:1

and Israel My *e* Is 45:4

e shall long enjoy the Is 65:22

gather together His *e* Matt 24:31

e have obtained it Rom 11:7

e according to the 1 Pet 1:2

a chief cornerstone, *e* 1 Pet 2:6

e sister greet you 2 John 13

ELECTION

e they are beloved Rom 11:28

call and *e* sure 2 Pet 1:10

ELEMENTS

weak and beggarly *e* Gal 4:9

e will melt with 2 Pet 3:10

ELEVEN

and his *e* sons Gen 32:22

the *e* stars bowed down Gen 37:9

e disciples went away Matt 28:16

and found the *e* Luke 24:33

numbered with the *e* Acts 1:26

ELI

Officiates in Shiloh, 1 Sam 1:3

Blesses Hannah, 1 Sam 1:12-19

Becomes Samuel's guardian, 1 Sam

1:20-28

Samuel ministers before, 1 Sam 2:11

Sons of, 1 Sam 2:12-17

Rebukes sons, 1 Sam 2:22-25

Rebuked by a man of God, 1 Sam

2:27-36

Instructs Samuel, 1 Sam 3:1-18

Death of, 1 Sam 4:15-18

ELIAB

Brother of David, 1 Sam 16:5-13

Fights in Saul's army, 1 Sam 17:13

Discounts David's worth, 1 Sam 17:28, 29

ELIAKIM

Son of Hilkiah, 2 Kin 18:18

Confers with Rabshakeh, Is 36:4,

11-22

Sent to Isaiah, Is 37:2-5

Becomes type of the Messiah,

Is 22:20-25

—— Son of King Josiah, 2 Kin 23:34

Name changed to Jehoiakim, 2 Chr 36:4

ELIASHIB

High priest, Neh 12:10

Rebuilds Sheep Gate, Neh 3:1, 20, 21

Allies with foreigners, Neh 13:4, 5, 28

ELIHU

David's brother, 1 Chr 27:18

Called Eliab, 1 Sam 16:6

—— One who reproved Job and his friends, Job 32:2, 4-6

ELIJAH

Denounces Ahab; goes into hiding; fed

by ravens, 1 Kin 17:1-7

Dwells with widow; performs miracles for her, 1 Kin 17:8-24

Sends message to Ahab; overthrows

prophets of Baal, 1 Kin 18:1-40

Brings rain, 1 Kin 18:41-45

Flees from Jezebel; fed by angels, 1 Kin 19:1-8

Receives revelation from God, 1 Kin

19:9-18

Condemns Ahab, 1 Kin 21:15-29

Condemns Ahaziah; fire consumes

troops sent against him, 2 Kin

1:1-16

Taken up to heaven, 2 Kin 2:1-15

Appears with Christ in transfiguration,

Matt 17:1-4

Type of John the Baptist, Mal 4:5, 6;

Luke 1:17

ELIMELECH

Naomi's husband, Ruth 1:1-3; 2:1, 3; 4:3-9

ELIPHAZ

One of Job's friends, Job 2:11

Rebukes Job, Job 4:1, 5

Is forgiven, Job 42:7-9

ELISHA

Chosen as Elijah's successor; follows

him, 1 Kin 19:16-21

Witnesses Elijah's translation; receives

his spirit and mantle, 2 Kin 2:1-18

Performs miracles, 2 Kin 2:19-25;

4:1-6:23

Prophecies victory over Moab; fulfilled,

2 Kin 3:11-27

Prophecies end of siege; fulfilled,

2 Kin 7

Prophecies death of Ben-Hadad, 2 Kin

8:7-15

Sends servant to anoint Jehu, 2 Kin

9:1-3

Last words and death; miracle performed by his bones, 2 Kin 13:14-21

ELIZABETH

Barren wife of Zacharias, Luke 1:5-7

Conceives a son, Luke 1:13, 24, 25

Salutation to Mary, Luke 1:36-45

Mother of John the Baptist, Luke

1:57-60

ELIZAPHAN

Chief of Kohathites, Num 3:30

Heads family, 1 Chr 15:5, 8

Family consecrated, 2 Chr 29:12-16

ELKANAH

Father of Samuel, 1 Sam 1:1-23

—— Son of Korah, Ex 6:24

Escapes judgment, Num 26:11

ELNATHAN

Father of Nehushta, 2 Kin 24:8

Goes to Egypt, Jer 26:22

Entreats with king, Jer 36:25

ELOQUENT

"O my Lord, I am not *e* Ex 4:10

an *e* man and mighty Acts 18:24

ELYMAS

Arabic name of Bar-Jesus, a false

prophet, Acts 13:6-12

EMBALM

to *e* his father Gen 50:2

EMBANKMENT

will build an *e* Luke 19:43

EMBRACE

you shall *e* a son 2 Kin 4:16

a time to *e*, and a time Eccl 3:5

EMBRACED

and have *e* other gods 1 Kin 9:9

be e in the arms of Prov 5:20
e them, and departed to Acts 20:1
e them, and confessed Heb 11:13

EMBRACES

his right hand e me Song 2:6

EMERALD

sardius, a topaz, and an e ... Ex 28:17
turquoise, and e with Ezek 28:13
chalcedony, the fourth e Rev 21:19

EMERALDS

for your wares e Ezek 27:16

EMMAUS

Town near Jerusalem, Luke 24:13-18

EMPTY

And the pit was e Gen 37:24
appear before Me e Ex 23:15
e pitchers, and torches Judg 7:16
after e things which 1 Sam 12:21
comfort me with e words Job 21:34
not listen to e talk Job 35:13
LORD makes the earth e Is 24:1
trust in e words Is 59:4
comes, he finds it e Matt 12:44
He has sent away e Luke 1:53
you with e words Eph 5:6

EMPTY-HANDED

sent me away e Gen 31:42
appear before Me e Ex 34:20
'Do not go e to your Ruth 3:17
and sent him away e Mark 12:3

EMPTY-HEADED

e man will be wise Job 11:12

EN DOR

Town of Manasseh which was the
home of the witch whom Saul con-
sulted, Josh 17:11; 1 Sam 28:1-10;
..... Ps 83:9, 10

EN GEDI

Occupied by the Amorites, Gen 14:7
Assigned to Judah, Josh 15:62, 63
David's hiding place, 1 Sam 23:29
Noted for vineyards, Song 1:14

EN HAKKORE

Miraculous spring, Judg 15:14-19

EN ROGEL

Fountain outside Jerusalem, 2 Sam
17:17
Seat of Adonijah's plot, 1 Kin 1:5-9

ENABLED

our Lord who has e 1 Tim 1:12

ENCHANTER

and the expert e Is 3:3

ENCOURAGE

e him and strengthen him .. Deut 32:8
e you concerning your 1 Thess 3:2

ENCOURAGED

is, that I may be e Rom 1:12
and all may be e 1 Cor 14:31
their hearts may be e Col 2:2

ENCOURAGEMENT

Hezekiah gave e to 2 Chr 30:22
translated Son of E) Acts 4:36
they rejoiced over its e Acts 15:31

END

at the e of forty days Gen 8:6
one cherub at one e Ex 25:19
at the e of forty days Deut 9:11
the e of every seven years .. Deut 15:1
made an e of dividing Josh 19:51
yet your latter e Job 8:7
Man puts an e to darkness .. Job 28:3
from one e of heaven Ps 19:6
make me to know my e Ps 39:4
Your years will have no e .. Ps 102:27
shall keep it to the e Ps 119:33
e is the way of death Prov 14:12

not be blessed at the e Prov 20:21
There was no e of all Eccl 4:16
The e of a thing is better Eccl 7:8
and peace there will be no e Is 9:7
Declaring the e Is 46:10
Our e was near Lam 4:18
whose iniquity shall e Ezek 21:25
shall endure to the e Dan 6:26
the time of the e Dan 8:17
until the time of the e Dan 11:35
what shall be the e Dan 12:8
e has come upon my Amos 8:2
to the e will be saved Matt 10:22
the harvest is the e Matt 13:39
to pass, but the e Matt 24:6
always, even to the e Matt 28:20
there will be no e Luke 1:33
He loved them to the e John 13:1
to the e of the earth Acts 1:8
the e of those things is Rom 6:21
For Christ is the e Rom 10:4
the hope firm to the e Heb 3:6
steadfast to the e Heb 3:14
but now, once at the e Heb 9:26
of Job and seen the e James 5:11
the e of your faith 1 Pet 1:9
But the e of all 1 Pet 4:7
what will be the e 1 Pet 4:17
the latter e is worse 2 Pet 2:20
My works until the e Rev 2:26
Beginning and the E Rev 22:13

ENDEAVORING

e to keep the unity Eph 4:3

ENDED

the seventh day God e His Gen 2:2
that her warfare is e Is 40:2
is past, the summer is e Jer 8:24
Jesus had e these sayings .. Matt 7:28
had e every temptation Luke 4:13
supper being e, the devil John 13:2

ENDLESS

and e genealogies 1 Tim 1:4
to the power of an e Heb 7:16

ENDS

cherubim at the two e of Ex 25:19
judge the e of the earth 1 Sam 2:10
looks to the e of the earth .. Job 28:24
All the e of the world Ps 22:27
all the e of the earth have .. Ps 98:3
established all the e Prov 30:4
Creator of the e of the Is 40:28
from the e of the earth Is 42:10
she came from the e Matt 12:42
salvation to the e Acts 13:47
their words to the e Rom 10:18

ENDURANCE

For you have need of e Heb 10:36
run with e the race that Heb 12:1

ENDURE

But the LORD shall e Ps 9:7
weeping may e for a night .. Ps 30:5
as the sun and moon e Ps 72:5
His name shall e Ps 72:17
heart, Him I will not e Ps 101:5
glory of the LORD e Ps 104:31
nor does a crown e Prov 27:24
Can your heart e Ezek 22:14
e only for a time Mark 4:17
persecuted, we e 1 Cor 4:12
must e hardship 2 Tim 2:3
Therefore I e all 2 Tim 2:10
If you e chastening Heb 12:7
them blessed who e James 5:11

ENDURED

what persecutions I e 2 Tim 3:11
he had patiently e Heb 6:15
e as seeing Him who Heb 11:27
For consider Him who e Heb 12:3

ENDURES

See HIS MERCY ENDURES FOREVER

goodness of God e Ps 52:1
And His truth e Ps 100:5
his righteousness e forever .. Ps 112:3
truth of the LORD e forever .. Ps 117:2
For His mercy e Ps 136:1
But he who e to the Matt 10:22
e only for a while Matt 13:21
for the food which e John 6:27
he has built on it e 1 Cor 3:14
hopes all things, e 1 Cor 13:7
is the man who e James 1:12
word of the LORD e 1 Pet 1:25

ENDURING

the LORD is clean, e Ps 19:9
e possession for Heb 10:34

ENEMIES

See LOVE YOUR ENEMIES

an enemy to your e Ex 23:22
Your e be scattered Num 10:35
I took you to curse my e Num 23:11
LORD will cause your e Deut 28:7
from the hand of our e 1 Sam 12:10
your e from before you 2 Sam 7:9
be saved from my e 2 Sam 22:4
Let all my e be ashamed Ps 6:10
be saved from my e Ps 18:3
delivers me from my e Ps 18:48
the presence of my e Ps 23:5
Let not my e triumph Ps 25:2
But my e are vigorous Ps 38:19
arise, let His e be scattered .. Ps 68:1
e will lick the dust Ps 72:9
Your e with Your mighty Ps 89:10
Your e Your footstool Ps 110:1
me wiser than my e Ps 119:98
rescued us from our e Ps 136:24
I count them my e Ps 139:22
makes even his e to be Prov 16:7
e are the men of his Mic 7:6
darkness will pursue His e Nah 1:8
to you, love your e Matt 5:44
a man's e will be those Matt 10:36
be saved from our e Luke 1:71
Your e Your footstool Luke 20:43
e we were reconciled Rom 5:10
the gospel they are e Rom 11:28
till He has put all e 1 Cor 15:25
were alienated and e Col 1:21
His e are made His Heb 10:13
and devours their e Rev 11:5

ENEMY

then I will be an e Ex 23:22
out the e from before Deut 33:27
David's e continually 1 Sam 18:29
delivered your e into 1 Sam 26:8
Haman, the e of the Jews Esth 8:1
regard me as Your e Job 13:24
He counts me as His e Job 33:10
or have plundered my e Ps 74:4
You may silence the e Ps 8:2
e does not triumph Ps 41:11
e who reproaches me Ps 55:12
a strong tower from the e Ps 61:3
e has persecuted my Ps 143:3
If your e is hungry Prov 25:21
kisses of an e are Prov 27:6
the e comes in like Is 59:19
with the wound of an e Jer 30:14
rejoice over me, my e Mic 7:8
and hate your e Matt 5:43
The e who sowed them Matt 13:39
all the power of the e Luke 10:19
"If your e hungers Rom 12:20
last e that will be 1 Cor 15:26
become your e because Gal 4:16
not count him as an e 2 Thess 3:15
makes himself an e James 4:4

ENGRAVE

two onyx stones and e Ex 28:9
e its inscription Zech 3:9

ENJOY

e its sabbaths as long Lev 26:34
 therefore e pleasure Eccl 2:1
 e the good of all his labor Eccl 3:13
 richly all things to e 1 Tim 6:17
 than to e the passing Heb 11:25

ENJOYMENT

So I commended e Eccl 8:15

ENLARGES

He e nations Job 12:23
 e his desire as hell Hab 2:5

ENLIGHTEN

E my eyes, lest I sleep Ps 13:3
 the LORD my God will e Ps 18:28

ENLIGHTENED

those who were once e Heb 6:4

ENMITY

And I will put e Gen 3:15
 the carnal mind is e Rom 8:7
 in His flesh the e Eph 2:15
 putting to death the e Eph 2:16
 with the world is e James 4:4

ENOCH

Father of Methuselah, Gen 5:21
 Walks with God, Gen 5:22
 Taken up to heaven, Gen 5:24
 Prophecy of, cited, Jude 14, 15

ENOUGH

four never say, "E Prov 30:15
 It is e! The hour has Mark 14:41
 servants have bread e Luke 15:17

ENRAGED

being exceedingly e Acts 26:11
 And the dragon was e Rev 12:17

ENRAPTURED

And always be e Prov 5:19

ENRICHED

that you were e 1 Cor 1:5
 while you are e 2 Cor 9:11

ENSNARED

The wicked is e Prov 12:13

ENSNARES

sin which so easily e Heb 12:1

ENTANGLE

how they might e Matt 22:15

ENTANGLES

engaged in warfare e 2 Tim 2:4

ENTER

"They shall not e My rest Ps 95:11
 E into His gates Ps 100:4
 Do not e into judgment Ps 143:2
 E into the rock Is 2:10
 He shall e into peace Is 57:2
 Jonah began to e the city on Jon 3:4
 you will by no means e Matt 5:20
 "E by the narrow Matt 7:13
 Lord," shall e the kingdom Matt 7:21
 city or town you e Matt 10:11
 e into life with one eye Matt 18:9
 e the kingdom of God Matt 19:24
 E into the joy of your Matt 25:21
 and pray, lest you e Matt 26:41
 e a strong man's Mark 3:27
 child will by no means e Mark 10:15
 e the kingdom of God Mark 10:24
 Whatever house you e Luke 9:4
 "Strive to e through Luke 13:24
 Can he e a second time John 3:4
 cannot e the kingdom John 3:5
 you, he who does not e John 10:1
 who have believed do e Heb 4:3
 e the Holiest by the Heb 10:19
 e the temple till the Rev 15:8
 e through the gates Rev 22:14

ENTERED

day that Noah e the ark Matt 24:38

went out and e the swine Mark 5:13
 as they e the cloud Luke 9:34
 day that Noah e the ark Luke 17:27
 Then Satan e Judas Luke 22:3
 through one man sin e Rom 5:12
 ear heard, nor have e 1 Cor 2:9
 he who has e His rest Heb 4:10
 the forerunner has e Heb 6:20
 e the Most Holy Place Heb 9:12

ENTERS

If anyone e by Me John 10:9
 e the Presence behind Heb 6:19

ENTHRONED

You are holy, e in Ps 22:3
 LORD sat e at the Flood Ps 29:10

ENTICED

his own desires and e James 1:14

ENTICING

e speech she caused Prov 7:21
 e unstable souls 2 Pet 2:14

ENTIRELY

give yourself e to them 1 Tim 4:15

ENTRANCE

The e of Your words Ps 119:130
 e will be supplied 2 Pet 1:11

ENTREAT

"E me not to leave you Ruth 1:16
 "But now e God's favor Mai 1:9
 being defamed, we e 1 Cor 4:13

ENTREATED

man of God e the LORD 1 Kin 13:6
 e our God for this Ezra 8:23

ENTRUSTED

e with a stewardship 1 Cor 9:17
 e with the gospel 1 Thess 2:4

ENVIOUS

For I was e of the Ps 73:3
 Do not be e of evil Prov 24:1
 patriarchs, becoming e Acts 7:9

ENVY

e slays a simple Job 5:2
 e the oppressor Prov 3:31
 e is rottenness Prov 14:30
 not let your heart e Prov 23:17
 e have now perished Eccl 9:6
 Him over because of e Matt 27:18
 full of e, murder Rom 1:29
 not in strife and e Rom 13:13
 where there are e, strife 1 Cor 3:3
 love does not e 1 Cor 13:4
 e, murders, drunkenness Gal 5:21
 preach Christ even from e Phil 1:15
 living in malice and e Titus 3:3
 For where e and James 3:16
 deceit, hypocrisy, e 1 Pet 2:1

EPAPHRAS

Leader of the Colossian church, Col
 1:7, 8
 Suffers as a prisoner in Rome, Philem
 23

EPAPHRODITUS

Messenger from Philippi, Phil 2:25-27
 Brings a gift to Paul, Phil 4:18

EPHES DAMMIM

Philistine encampment, 1 Sam 17:1
 Called Pasdammim, 1 Chr 11:13

EPHESUS

Paul visits, Acts 18:18-21
 Miracles done here, Acts 19:11-21
 Demetrius stirs up riot in, Acts
 19:24-29
 Elders of, addressed by Paul at Miletus,
 Acts 20:17-38
 Letter sent to, Eph 1:1
 Site of one of seven churches, Rev 1:11

EPHOD

stones to be set in the e Ex 25:7

a breastplate, an e Ex 28:4
 made the e of gold, blue Ex 39:2
 and put the e on him Lev 8:7
 Gideon made it into an e Judg 8:27
 a shrine, and made an e Judg 17:5
 a child, wearing a linen e 1 Sam 2:18
 was wearing an e 1 Sam 14:3
 "Bring the e here 1 Sam 23:9
 brought the e to David 1 Sam 30:7
 was wearing a linen e 2 Sam 6:14

EPHRAIM

Joseph's younger son, Gen 41:52
 Obtains Jacob's blessing, Gen 48:8-20

Tribe of:

Predictions concerning, Gen 48:20
 Territory assigned to, Josh 16:1-10
 Assist Deborah, Judg 5:14, 15
 Assist Gideon, Judg 7:24, 25
 Quarrel with Gideon, Judg 8:1-3
 Quarrel with Jephthah, Judg 12:1-4
 Leading tribe of kingdom of Israel,
 Is 7:2-17
 Provoke God by sin, Hos 12:7-14
 Many of, join Judah, 2 Chr 15:8, 9
 Captivity of, predicted, Hos 9:3-17
 Messiah promised to, Zech 9:9-13

EPHRATHAH

Ancient name of Bethlehem, Ruth 4:11
 Prophecy concerning, Mic 5:2

EPHRON

Hittite who sold Machpelah to
 Abraham, Gen 23:8-20

EPICUREANS

Sect of pleasure-loving philosophers,
 Acts 17:18

EPISTLE

You are our e written 2 Cor 3:2
 you are an e 2 Cor 3:3
 by word or our e 2 Thess 2:15
 our word in this e 2 Thess 3:14
 is a sign in every e 2 Thess 3:17

EPISTLES

e of commendation to 2 Cor 3:1
 as also in all his e 2 Pet 3:16

EQUAL

it was you, a man my e Ps 55:13
 and you made them e Matt 20:12
 they are e to the angels Luke 20:36
 making Himself e John 5:18
 it robbery to be e Phil 2:6

EQUALITY

that there may be e 2 Cor 8:14

EQUITY

You have established e Ps 99:4
 judgment, and e Prov 1:3
 and e cannot enter Is 59:14
 and pervert all e Mic 3:9
 with Me in peace and e Mal 2:6

ER

Son of Judah, Gen 38:1-7; 46:12

ERASTUS

Paul's friend at Ephesus, Acts 19:21,
 22; 2 Tim 4:20
 Treasurer of Corinth, Rom 16:23

ERR

you cause you to e Is 3:12
 My people Israel to e Jer 23:13

ERROR

God that it was an e Eccl 5:6
 utter e against the LORD Is 32:6
 nor was there any e Dan 6:4
 e which was due Rom 1:27
 a sinner from the e James 5:20
 led away with the e 2 Pet 3:17
 and the spirit of e 1 John 4:6
 run greedily in the e Jude 11

ERRORS

can understand his e Ps 19:12

ESARHADDON

Son of Sennacherib; king of Assyria
(681–669 B.C.), 2 Kin 19:36, 37

ESAU

Isaac's favorite son, Gen 25:25–28
Sells his birthright, Gen 25:29–34
Deprived of blessing; seeks to kill
Jacob, Gen 27
Reconciled to Jacob, Gen 33:1–17
Descendants of, Gen 36

ESCAPE

E to the mountains Gen 19:17
Do not let one of them *e* 1 Kin 18:40
and they shall not *e* Job 11:20
Shall they *e* by Ps 56:7
speaks lies will not *e* Prov 19:5
who fears God will *e* Eccl 7:18
and how shall we *e* Is 20:6
who does such things *e* Ezek 17:15
nothing shall *e* them Joel 2:3
How can you *e* the Matt 23:33
e all these things Luke 21:36
same, that you will *e* Rom 2:3
also make the way of *e* 1 Cor 10:13
And they shall not *e* 1 Thess 5:3
e the snare of the devil 2 Tim 2:26
how shall we *e* if we Heb 2:3
e who refused Him who Heb 12:25

ESCAPED

I alone have *e* to tell Job 1:15
my flesh, and I have *e* Job 19:20
Our soul has *e* as a Ps 124:7
all *e* safely to land Acts 27:44
having *e* the corruption 2 Pet 1:4
after they have *e* 2 Pet 2:20

ESH-BAAL

Son of Saul, 1 Chr 8:33

ESHCOL

Valley near Hebron, Num 13:22–27;
Deut 1:24

ESTABLISH

But I will *e* My covenant Gen 6:18
I will *e* the throne of his 2 Sam 7:13
to *e* them forever 2 Chr 9:8
‘Your seed I will *e* Ps 89:4
e the work of our Ps 90:17
E Your word to Your Ps 119:38
e an everlasting Ezek 16:60
e justice in the gate Amos 5:15
seeking to *e* their own Rom 10:3
to Him who is able to *e* Rom 16:25
He may *e* your hearts 1 Thess 3:13
e you in every good 2 Thess 2:17
faithful, who will *e* 2 Thess 3:3
that He may *e* the second Heb 10:9
E your hearts James 5:8
a while, perfect, *e* 1 Pet 5:10

ESTABLISHED

He not made you and *e* Deut 32:6
also is firmly *e* 1 Chr 16:30
David my father be *e* 2 Chr 1:9
e it upon the waters Ps 24:2
a rock, and *e* my steps Ps 40:2
e a testimony in Jacob Ps 78:5
It shall be *e* forever Ps 89:37
Your throne is *e* Ps 93:2
LORD has *e* His throne Ps 103:19
let all your ways be *e* Prov 4:26
e the clouds above Prov 8:28
lip shall be *e* forever Prov 12:19
your thoughts will be *e* Prov 16:3
by understanding it is *e* Prov 24:3
house shall be *e* Is 2:2
In mercy the throne will be *e* Is 16:5
by His power, He has *e* Jer 10:12
every word may be *e* Matt 18:16
built up in Him and *e* Col 2:7
covenant, which was *e* Heb 8:6
that the heart be *e* Heb 13:9

ESTABLISHES

The king *e* the land by Prov 29:4
Now He who *e* us with 2 Cor 1:21

ESTEEM

high wall in his own *e* Prov 18:11
and we did not *e* Is 53:3
e others better than Phil 2:3
and hold such men in *e* Phil 2:29
e them very highly 1 Thess 5:13

ESTEEMED

For what is highly *e* Luke 16:15
those who are least *e* 1 Cor 6:4

ESTEEMS

One person *e* one day Rom 14:5

ESTHER

Selected for harem, Esth 2:7–16
Chosen to be queen, Esth 2:17, 18
Agrees to intercede for her people,
Esth 4
Invites king to banquet, Esth 5:1–8
Denounces Haman; obtains reversal of
decree, Esth 7:1–8:8
Establishes Purim, Esth 9:29–32

ESTRANGED

The wicked are *e* Ps 58:3
because they are all *e* Ezek 14:5
You have become *e* Gal 5:4

ETAM

Rock where Samson took refuge, Judg
15:8–19

ETERNAL

e God is your refuge Deut 33:27
For man goes to his *e* Eccl 12:5
I do that I may have *e* Matt 19:16
and inherit *e* life Matt 19:29
the righteous into *e* life Matt 25:46
that I may inherit *e* life Mark 10:17
in the age to come, *e* Mark 10:30
not perish but have *e* John 3:15
gathers fruit for *e* life John 4:36
you think you have *e* John 5:39
drinks My blood has *e* life John 6:54
the words of *e* life John 6:68
And I give them *e* life John 10:28
that He should give *e* John 17:2
And this is *e* life John 17:3
e life to those who by Rom 2:7
righteousness to *e* Rom 5:21
the gift of God is *e* Rom 6:23
e weight of glory 2 Cor 4:17
are not seen are *e* 2 Cor 4:18
not made with hands, *e* 2 Cor 5:1
to the King *e*, immortal 1 Tim 1:17
lay hold on *e* life 1 Tim 6:12
e life which God Titus 1:2
to the hope of *e* life Titus 3:7
and of *e* judgment Heb 6:2
obtained *e* redemption Heb 9:12
e life which was 1 John 1:2
has promised us—*e* life 1 John 2:25
that no murderer has *e* 1 John 3:15
God has given us *e* 1 John 5:11
that you have *e* life 1 John 5:13
the true God and *e* life 1 John 5:20
Jesus Christ unto *e* Jude 21

ETERNAL LIFE

that I may have *e* Matt 19:16
the righteous into *e* Matt 25:46
in the age to come, *e* Mark 10:30
I do to inherit *e* Luke 10:25
not perish but have *e* John 3:15
and gathers fruit for *e* John 4:36
you think you have *e* John 5:39
You have the words of *e* John 6:68
will keep it for *e* John 12:25
is *e*, that they may know John 17:3
had been appointed to *e* Acts 13:48
e to those who by patient Rom 2:7
righteousness to *e* Rom 5:21

the gift of God is *e* Rom 6:23
lay hold on *e* 1 Tim 6:12
in hope of *e* which God, Titus 1:2
declare to you that *e* 1 John 1:2
He has promised us *e* 1 John 2:25
no murderer has *e* 1 John 3:15
that God has given us *e* 1 John 5:11
Lord Jesus Christ unto *e* Jude 21

ETERNITY

Also He has put *e* Eccl 3:11
One who inhabits *e* Is 57:15

ETHAM

Israel's encampment, Ex 13:20

ETHIOPIA

See CUSH
Hostile to Israel and Judah, 2 Chr 12:2,
3; 14:9–15; Is 43:3; Dan 11:43
Prophecies against, Is 20:1–6; Ezek
30:4–9

ETHIOPIANS

Skin of, unchangeable, Jer 13:23

EUNICE

Mother of Timothy, 2 Tim 1:5

EUNUCH

eczema or scab, or is a *e* Lev 21:20
Hegai the king's *e* Esth 2:3
of Ethiopia, a *e* Acts 8:27

EUNUCHS

seven *e* who served Esth 1:10
be *e* in the palace Is 39:7
Ethiopian, one of the *e* Jer 38:7
the master of his *e* Dan 1:3
have made themselves *e* Matt 19:12

EUPHRATES

River of Eden, Gen 2:14
Boundary of Promised Land, Gen
15:18; 1 Kin 4:21, 24
Scene of battle, Jer 46:2, 6, 10
Angels bound there, Rev 9:14

EUTYCHUS

Sleeps during Paul's sermon, Acts 20:9
Restored to life, Acts 20:12

EVANGELIST

house of Philip the *e* Acts 21:8
do the work of an *e* 2 Tim 4:5

EVANGELISTS

some prophets, some *e* Eph 4:11

EVEN

E in laughter the heart Prov 14:13
E a child is known Prov 20:11
e nature itself teach 1 Cor 11:14
e denying the Lord who 2 Pet 2:1

EVENING

the *e* and the morning were Gen 1:5
quails came up at *e* Ex 16:13
At *e* they return Ps 59:6
e it is cut down and Ps 90:6
of my hands as the *e* Ps 141:2
e do not withhold your Eccl 11:6
and more fierce than *e* Hab 1:8
When it is *e* you say, ‘It Matt 16:2
when *e* came, the boat Mark 6:47
in the *e*, at midnight Mark 13:35
it is toward *e* Luke 24:29

EVER

shall reign forever and *e* Ex 15:18
No razor has *e* come Judg 16:17
were the upright *e* cut off Job 4:7
Let them *e* shout for joy, Ps 5:11
eyes are *e* toward the LORD, Ps 25:15
He is *e* merciful Ps 37:26
Or *e* You had formed Ps 90:2
Your name forever and *e* Ps 145:1
shines *e* brighter unto Prov 4:18
there was *e* an earth Prov 8:23
even forever and *e* Dan 7:18
time, no, nor *e* shall be Matt 24:21
eat fruit from you *e* Mark 11:14

all things that I e did John 4:29
 "No man e spoke like John 7:46
 be glory forever and e Gal 1:5
 no one e hated his own Eph 5:29
 the angels has He e said Heb 1:13
 to the Lamb, forever and e Rev 5:13
 shall reign forever and e Rev 11:15

EVERLASTING

for an e covenant Gen 17:7
 are the e arms Deut 33:27
 God of Israel from e 1 Chr 16:36
 His mercy is e Ps 100:5
 of the LORD is from e Ps 103:17
 to Israel as an e covenant Ps 105:10
 righteousness is an e Ps 119:142
 lead me in the way e Ps 139:24
 Your kingdom is an e Ps 145:13
 E Father, Prince of Peace Is 9:6
 in YAH, the LORD, is e Is 26:4
 e joy on their heads Is 35:10
 I will make an e covenant Is 55:3
 will be to you an e Is 60:19
 from E is Your name Is 63:16
 loved you with an e love Jer 31:3
 awake, some to e life Dan 12:2
 cast into the e fire Matt 18:8
 away into e punishment Matt 25:46
 not perish but have e John 3:16
 springing up into e life John 4:14
 Him who sent Me has e John 5:24
 endures to e life John 6:27
 in Him may have e John 6:40
 believes in Me has e John 6:47
 unworthy of e life Acts 13:46
 and the end, e life Rom 6:22
 of the Spirit reap e Gal 6:8
 e destruction from the 2 Thess 1:9
 reserved in e chains Jude 6

EVERLASTING LIFE

Some to e, some to shame Dan 12:2
 not perish but have e John 3:16
 springing up into e John 4:14
 e and shall not come John 5:24
 food which endures to e John 6:27
 His command is e John 12:50
 yourselves unworthy of e Acts 13:46
 holiness, and the end, e Rom 6:22
 will of the Spirit reap e Gal 6:8
 to believe on Him for e 1 Tim 1:16

EVERYONE

said, 'Repent now e Jer 25:5
 e who is born of the John 3:8
 E who is of the truth John 18:37

EVIDENCE

my e is on high Job 16:19
 e of things not seen Heb 11:1

EVIDENT

the sight of God is e Gal 3:11
 of some are clearly e 1 Tim 5:25
 e that our Lord arose Heb 7:14

EVIL

knowledge of good and e Gen 2:9
 knowing good and e Gen 3:5
 his heart was only e Gen 6:5
 repaid e for good Gen 44:4
 e have been the Gen 47:9
 you meant e against me Gen 50:20
 follow a crowd to do e Ex 23:2
 e in the sight of the Num 32:13
 the e from your midst Deut 13:5
 and good, death and e Deut 30:15
 Saul plotted e against 1 Sam 23:9
 rebellious and e city Ezra 4:12
 feared God and shunned e Job 1:1
 e shall touch you Job 5:19
 I looked for good, e Job 30:26
 nor shall e dwell Ps 5:4
 Nor does e to his neighbor Ps 15:3
 I will fear no e Ps 23:4
 Keep your tongue from e Ps 34:13

E shall slay the Ps 34:21
 he does not abhor e Ps 36:4
 Depart from e, and do Ps 37:27
 done this e in Your sight Ps 51:4
 e more than good Ps 52:3
 e shall befall you Ps 91:10
 love the LORD, hate e Ps 97:10
 not be afraid of e tidings Ps 112:7
 feet from every e way Ps 119:101
 preserve you from all e Ps 121:7
 secure, without fear of e Prov 1:33
 LORD and depart from e Prov 3:7
 of the LORD is to hate e Prov 8:13
 To do e is like sport Prov 10:23
 shall be filled with e Prov 12:21
 e will bow before the Prov 14:19
 Keeping watch on the e Prov 15:3
 is to depart from e Prov 16:17
 Whoever rewards e Prov 17:13
 A prudent man forsees e Prov 22:3
 e all the days of her Prov 31:12
 vanity and a great e Eccl 2:21
 There is a severe e Eccl 5:13
 of men are full of e Eccl 9:3
 put away e from your Eccl 11:10
 to those who call e Is 5:20
 his eyes from seeing e Is 33:15
 is taken away from e Is 57:1
 of peace and not of e Jer 29:11
 commit this great e Jer 44:7
 Seek good and not e Amos 5:14
 turn from his e way Jon 3:8
 "Turn now from your e Zech 1:4
 not to resist an e person Matt 5:39
 His sun rise on the e Matt 5:45
 deliver us from the e Matt 6:13
 If you then, being e Matt 7:11
 "Why do you think e Matt 9:4
 e treasure brings Matt 12:35
 "An e and adulterous Matt 12:39
 to do good or to do e Mark 3:4
 proceed e thoughts Mark 7:21
 what e has He done Mark 15:14
 to the unthankful and e Luke 6:35
 e treasure of his heart Luke 6:45
 If you then, being e Luke 11:13
 everyone practicing e John 3:20
 them from the e one John 17:15
 bear witness of the e John 18:23
 the e spirits went out Acts 19:12
 "You shall not speak e of Acts 23:5
 e I will not to do Rom 7:19
 then a law, that e Rom 7:21
 done any good or e Rom 9:11
 Abhor what is e Rom 12:9
 Repay no one e for Rom 12:17
 not be overcome by e Rom 12:21
 to good works, but to e Rom 13:3
 good be spoken of as e Rom 14:16
 simple concerning e Rom 16:19
 provoked, thinks no e 1 Cor 13:5
 "E company corrupts 1 Cor 15:33
 from this present e age Gal 1:4
 e speaking be put away Eph 4:31
 withstand in the e day Eph 6:13
 from every form of e 1 Thess 5:22
 a root of all kinds of e 1 Tim 6:10
 an e heart of unbelief Heb 3:12
 cannot be tempted by e James 1:13
 speaks e of a brother James 4:11
 envy, and all e speaking 1 Pet 2:1
 refrain his tongue from e 1 Pet 3:10
 against those who do e 1 Pet 3:12
 he who does e has not 3 John 11

EVIL-MERODACH

Babylonian king (562-560 B.C.), 2 Kin 25:27-30

EVIL-MINDEDNESS

strife, deceit, e Rom 1:29

EVIL ONE

than these is from the e Matt 5:37

But deliver us from the e Matt 6:13
 But deliver us from the e Luke 11:4
 keep them from the e John 17:15
 guard you from the e 2 Thess 3:3

EVILDOER

LORD shall repay the e 2 Sam 3:39
 An e gives heed to false Prov 17:4
 "If He were not an e John 18:30
 suffer trouble as an e 2 Tim 2:9
 a thief, an e 1 Pet 4:15

EVILDOERS

Do not fret because of e Ps 37:1
 e shall be cut off Ps 37:9
 Depart from me, you e Ps 119:115
 iniquity, a brood of e Is 1:4
 e shall never be Is 14:20
 against you as e 1 Pet 2:12

EVILS

e have surrounded me Ps 40:12
 have committed two e Jer 2:13

EXALT

God, and I will e Ex 15:2
 do you e yourselves Num 16:3
 e the horn of His 1 Sam 2:10
 e His name together Ps 34:3
 E the LORD our God Ps 99:5
 Let them e Him Ps 107:32
 are my God, I will e Ps 118:28
 if I do not e Jerusalem Ps 137:6
 E her, and she will Prov 4:8
 into heaven, I will e Is 14:13
 I will e You, I will praise Is 25:1
 E the humble Ezek 21:26
 and he shall e himself Dan 8:25
 He may e you in due time 1 Pet 5:6

EXALTATION

e comes neither from Ps 75:6
 who rejoice in My e Is 13:3
 brother glory in his e James 1:9

EXALTED

Let God be e 2 Sam 22:47
 So the LORD e Solomon 1 Chr 29:25
 built You an e house 2 Chr 6:2
 name, which is e Neh 9:5
 e for a little while Job 24:24
 God is e by His power Job 36:22
 when vileness is e Ps 12:8
 God of my salvation be e Ps 18:46
 Be e, O LORD, in Your Ps 21:13
 I will be e among the Ps 46:10
 Be e, O God, above Ps 57:5
 righteous shall be e Ps 75:10
 favor our horn is e Ps 89:17
 You are e far above Ps 97:9
 hand of the LORD is e Ps 118:16
 His name alone is e Ps 148:13
 upright the city is e Prov 11:11
 LORD alone shall be e Is 2:11
 His name is e Is 12:4
 The LORD is e, for He dwells Is 33:5
 valley shall be e Is 40:4
 and humble the e Ezek 21:26
 e above the hills Mic 4:1
 humbles himself will be e Matt 23:12
 Him God has e Acts 5:31
 And lest I should be e 2 Cor 12:7
 also has highly e Phil 2:9

EXALTS

down one, and e another Ps 75:7
 Righteousness e Prov 14:34
 whoever e himself will Luke 14:11
 high thing that e 2 Cor 10:5
 e himself above all 2 Thess 2:4

EXAMINE

E me, O LORD Ps 26:2
 e our ways, and turn Lam 3:40
 But let a man e 1 Cor 11:28
 But let each one e Gal 6:4

EXAMPLE

to make her a public *e* Matt 1:19
 I have given you an *e* John 13:15
 in following my *e* Phil 3:17
 to make ourselves an *e* 2 Thess 3:9
 youth, but be an *e* 1 Tim 4:12
 us, leaving us an *e* 1 Pet 2:21
 making them an *e* 2 Pet 2:6
 are set forth as an *e* Jude 7

EXAMPLES

happened to them as *e* 1 Cor 10:11
 so that you became *e* 1 Thess 1:7
 to you, but being *e* 1 Pet 5:3

EXCEEDING

for us a far more *e* 2 Cor 4:17
 the *e* greatness of Eph 1:19
 He might show the *e* Eph 2:7
 also be glad with *e* joy 1 Pet 4:13

EXCEEDINGLY

prevailed *e* on the earth Gen 7:19
 your *e* great reward Gen 15:1
 your descendants *e* Gen 16:10
 and grew *e* mighty Ex 1:7
 for the LORD must be *e* 1 Chr 22:5
 You have made him *e* Ps 21:6
 let them rejoice *e* Ps 68:3
 and I love them *e* Ps 119:167
 is far off and *e* deep Eccl 7:24
 it displeased Jonah *e* Jon 4:1
 rejoiced with *e* great joy Matt 2:10
e high mountain Matt 4:8
 Rejoice and be *e* Matt 5:12
 they were *e* sorrowful Matt 26:22
e white, like snow Mark 9:3
 "My soul is *e* sorrowful Mark 14:34
 Him who is able to do *e* Eph 3:20
 our Lord was *e* abundant 1 Tim 1:14
 given to us *e* great 2 Pet 1:4

EXCEEDS

your righteousness *e* Matt 5:20

EXCEL

you His angels, who *e* Ps 103:20
 but you *e* them all Prov 31:29
 that you seek to *e* 1 Cor 14:12

EXCELLENCE

e You have overthrown Ex 15:7
 did not come with *e* 1 Cor 2:1
 the *e* of the power 2 Cor 4:7
 things loss for the *e* Phil 3:8

EXCELLENT

He is *e* in power Job 37:23
 How *e* is Your name in all Ps 8:1
 It shall be as *e* oil Ps 141:5
 to His *e* greatness Ps 150:2
 will speak of *e* things Prov 8:6
 An *e* wife is the crown of Prov 12:4
 like Lebanon, *e* Song 5:15
 for He has done *e* Is 12:5
 in counsel and *e* Is 28:29
 Inasmuch as an *e* Dan 5:12
 the things that are *e* Rom 2:18
 show you a more *e* way 1 Cor 12:31
 the things that are *e* Phil 1:10
 a more *e* name Heb 1:4
e sacrifice than Cain Heb 11:4
 came to Him from the *E* 2 Pet 1:17

EXCELS

Do you see a man who *e* Prov 22:29
 I saw that wisdom *e* Eccl 2:13
 of the glory that *e* 2 Cor 3:10

EXCHANGE

give in *e* for his soul Matt 16:26

EXCHANGED

Nor can it be *e* Job 28:17
e the truth of God for Rom 1:25
 For even their women *e* Rom 1:26

EXCLUDE

you, and when they *e* Luke 6:22

they want to *e* you Gal 4:17

EXCUSE

God be angry at your *e* Eccl 5:6
 but now they have no *e* John 15:22
 they are without *e* Rom 1:20
 do you think that we *e* 2 Cor 12:19

EXCUSES

began to make *e* Luke 14:18

EXECUTE

nor *e* His fierce wrath 1 Sam 28:18
e vengeance on the Ps 149:7
 if you thoroughly *e* Jer 7:5
E judgment and Jer 22:3
e the fierceness Hos 11:9
 'E true justice Zech 7:9
e judgment also John 5:27
e wrath on him who Rom 13:4

EXECUTES

by the judgment He *e* Ps 9:16
e righteousness Ps 103:6
e justice for the Ps 146:7
 One whose *E* His word Joel 2:11
e justice for me Mic 7:9

EXERCISE

those who are great *e* Matt 20:25
e yourself toward 1 Tim 4:7
e profits a little 1 Tim 4:8

EXERCISED

have their senses *e* Heb 5:14

EXHORT

we command and *e* 2 Thess 3:12
 I *e* first of all 1 Tim 2:1
e him as a father 1 Tim 5:1
 and *e* these things 1 Tim 6:2
 Convince, rebuke, *e* 2 Tim 4:2
 doctrine, both to *e* Titus 1:9
e the young men Titus 2:6
 Speak these things, *e* Titus 2:15
e one another Heb 3:13

EXHORTATION

you have any word of *e* Acts 13:15
 he who exhorts, in *e* Rom 12:8
 to reading, to *e* 1 Tim 4:13
 with the word of *e* Heb 13:22

EXHORTED

For I earnestly *e* Jer 11:7
e and strengthened Acts 15:32
 as you know how we *e* 1 Thess 2:11

EXILE

and also an *e* from 2 Sam 15:19
 The captive *e* hastens Is 51:14

EXIST

things which do not *e* Rom 4:17
 by Your will they *e* Rev 4:11

EXPECT

an hour you do not *e* Luke 12:40

EXPECTATION

The *e* of the poor Ps 9:18
 God alone, for my *e* Ps 62:5
 the people were in *e* Luke 3:15
 For the earnest *e* Rom 8:19
 a certain fearful *e* Heb 10:27

EXPECTING

e to receive something Acts 3:5

EXPEDIENT

e for us that one man John 11:50

EXPERT

and the *e* enchanter Is 3:3
 those of an *e* warrior Jer 50:9
 because you are *e* Acts 26:3

EXPLAIN

was no one who could *e* Gen 41:24
 days they could not *e* Judg 14:14
 "E this parable to us Matt 15:15
 to say, and hard to *e* Heb 5:11

EXPLAINED

He *e* all things to His Mark 4:34
e to him the way of God Acts 18:26

EXPLOIT

e all your laborers Is 58:3
 against those who *e* Mal 3:5
 they will *e* you with 2 Pet 2:3

EXPOSED

his deeds should be *e* John 3:20
 all things that are *e* Eph 5:13

EXPOUNDED

He *e* to them in all Luke 24:27

EXPRESS

man cannot *e* it Eccl 1:8
 of His glory and the *e* Heb 1:3

EXPRESSLY

of the LORD came *e* Ezek 1:3
 Now the Spirit *e* 1 Tim 4:1

EXTEND

none to *e* mercy to him Ps 109:12
 "Behold, I will *e* Is 66:12
 did not *e* to you 2 Cor 10:14

EXTINGUISHED

broken, my days are *e* Job 17:1
 They are *e*, they are Is 43:17

EXTOL

I will *e* You Ps 30:1
e Him who rides Ps 68:4

EXTOLLED

e with my tongue Ps 66:17
 shall be exalted and *e* Is 52:13

EXTORTION

e gathers it for him Prov 28:8
 your neighbors by *e* Ezek 22:12
 they are full of *e* Matt 23:25

EXTORTIONERS

nor *e* will inherit 1 Cor 6:10

EXULT

in anguish I would *e* Job 6:10

EYE

e for *e*, tooth for tooth Ex 21:24
 your *e* be evil against Deut 15:9
 the ear, but now my *e* Job 42:5
 me as the apple of Your *e* Ps 17:8
 guide you with My *e* Ps 32:8
 Behold, the *e* of the Ps 33:18
 He who formed the *e* Ps 94:9
 with the *e* causes trouble Prov 10:10
 and the seeing *e* Prov 20:12
 who has a generous *e* Prov 22:9
 A man with an evil *e* Prov 28:22
e that mocks his Prov 30:17
e is not satisfied Eccl 1:8
 labors, nor is his *e* Eccl 4:8
 for they shall see *e* Is 52:8
e seen any God besides Is 64:4
 the apple of His *e* Zech 2:8
 If your right *e* causes Matt 5:29
 it was said, "An *e* Matt 5:38
 lamp of the body is the *e* Matt 6:22
 plank in your own *e* Matt 7:3
e causes you to sin Matt 18:9
 Or is your *e* evil Matt 20:15
e causes you to sin Mark 9:47
 when your *e* is good Luke 11:34
 the *e* of a needle Luke 18:25
 "E has not seen 1 Cor 2:9
 "Because I am not an *e* 1 Cor 12:16
 whole body were an *e* 1 Cor 12:17
 the twinkling of an *e* 1 Cor 15:52
 every *e* will see Him Rev 1:7
 your eyes with *e* salve Rev 3:18

EYELIDS

His eyes behold, His *e* Ps 11:4
e look right before Prov 4:25
 slumber to your *e* Prov 6:4

EYES

e will be opened Gen 3:5
 "Lift your *e* now and Gen 13:14
 Abraham lifted his *e* Gen 22:13
 the *e* of Israel were dim Gen 48:10
 and you can be our *e* Num 10:31
 hallow Me in the *e* of Num 20:12
 Your *e* have seen what the Deut 4:3
 frontlets between your *e* Deut 6:8
 right in his own *e* Deut 12:8
 in the *e* of the LORD Deut 13:18
e to see and ears to hear Deut 29:4
 thorns in your *e* Josh 23:13
 found favor in your *e* Ruth 2:10
 open his *e* that he may 2 Kin 6:17
 she put paint on her *e* 2 Kin 9:30
 My *e* will be open 2 Chr 7:15
 For the *e* of the LORD 2 Chr 16:9
 God may enlighten our *e* Ezra 9:8
 Do You have *e* of flesh Job 10:4
 And my *e* shall behold Job 19:27
 His *e* are on their ways Job 24:23
 I was *e* to the blind Job 29:15
e observe from afar Job 39:29
e are secretly fixed Ps 10:8
 His *e* behold, His eyelids Ps 11:4
 enlightening the *e* Ps 19:8
e are ever toward the Ps 25:15
 is before my *e* Ps 26:3
 The *e* of the LORD are Ps 34:15
 His *e* observe the nations Ps 66:7
e fail while I wait Ps 69:3
e shall you look Ps 91:8
E they have, but they Ps 115:5
 marvelous in our *e* Ps 118:23
 Open my *e*, that I may see Ps 119:18
 I will lift up my *e* Ps 121:1
 our *e* look to the LORD Ps 123:2
 not give sleep to my *e* Ps 132:4
e saw my substance Ps 139:16
 wise in your own *e* Prov 3:7
 not depart from your *e* Prov 3:21
e look straight ahead Prov 4:25
 is right in his own *e* Prov 12:15
 The *e* of the LORD are Prov 15:3
 but the *e* of a fool Prov 17:24
 Will you set your *e* Prov 23:5
 Who has redness of *e* Prov 23:29
 be wise in his own *e* Prov 26:5
 so the *e* of man are Prov 27:20
 pure in its own *e* Prov 30:12
 The wise man's *e* Eccl 2:14
e than the wandering Eccl 6:9
 You have dove's *e* Song 1:15
 the *e* of the lofty Is 5:15
e have seen the King Is 6:5
 lest they see with their *e* Is 6:10
 of the book, and the *e* Is 29:18
 open Your *e*, O LORD Is 37:17
e fail from looking Is 38:14
 O LORD, are not Your *e* Jer 5:3
 Who have *e* and see Jer 5:21
e will weep bitterly Jer 13:17
 For I will set My *e* Jer 24:6
 your *e* from tears Jer 31:16
 rims were full of *e* Ezek 1:18
 full of *e* all around Ezek 10:12
e to see but does Ezek 12:2
 that horn which had *e* Dan 7:20
 horn between his *e* Dan 8:5
e like torches of fire, Dan 10:6
 the *e* of the Lord God Amos 9:8
 You are of purer *e* Hab 1:13
 their *e* were opened Matt 9:30
 But blessed are your *e* Matt 13:16
 their *e* were heavy Matt 26:43
 it is marvelous in our *e* Mark 12:11
 Hades, he lifted up his *e* Luke 16:23
 raise his *e* to heaven Luke 18:13
 lift up your *e* and look John 4:35
 "He put clay on my *e* John 9:15
e of one who was born John 9:32

fixing his *e* on him Acts 3:4
e they have closed Acts 28:27
e that they should not Rom 11:8
 plucked out your own *e* Gal 4:15
e of your understanding Eph 1:18
 have seen with our *e* 1 John 1:1
 the lust of the *e* 1 John 2:16
 as snow, and His *e* Rev 1:14
 and anoint your *e* Rev 3:18
 creatures full of *e* Rev 4:6
 horns and seven *e* Rev 5:6
 tear from their *e* Rev 21:4

EYESERVICE

not with *e*, as Eph 6:6
 the flesh, not with *e* Col 3:22

EYEWITNESSES

the beginning were *e* Luke 1:2
e of His majesty 2 Pet 1:16

EZEKIEL

Sent to rebellious Israel, Ezek 2; 3
 Prophecies by symbolic action:
 siege of Jerusalem, Ezek 4
 destruction of Jerusalem, Ezek 5
 captivity of Judah, Ezek 12:1–20
 destruction of the temple, Ezek
 24:15–27
 Visions of:
 God's glory, Ezek 1:4–28
 abominations, Ezek 8:5–18
 valley of dry bones, Ezek 37:1–14
 messianic times, Ezek 40–48
 river of life, Ezek 47:1–5
 Parables, allegories, dirges of, Ezek 15;
 16; 17; 19; 23; 24

EZION GEBER

See ELATH
 Town on the Red Sea, 1 Kin 9:26
 Israelite encampment, Num 33:35
 Seaport of Israel's navy, 1 Kin 22:48

EZRA

Scribe, priest and reformer of post-
 exilic times; commissioned by
 Artaxerxes, Ezra 7
 Returns with exiles to Jerusalem,
 Ezra 8
 Institutes reforms, Ezra 9
 Reads the Law, Neh 8
 Assists in dedication of wall, Neh
 12:27–43

FABLES

nor give heed to *f* 1 Tim 1:4
 be turned aside to *f* 2 Tim 4:4
 cunningly devised *f* 2 Pet 1:16

FACE

was on the *f* of the deep Gen 1:2
 In the sweat of your *f* you Gen 3:19
 "For I have seen God *f* Gen 32:30
 shall see my *f* no more Gen 44:23
 Joseph fell on his father's *f* Gen 50:1
 LORD spoke to Moses *f* to *f* Ex 33:11
f shone while he Ex 34:29
 he put a veil on his *f* Ex 34:33
 the LORD make His *f* Num 6:25
 I will hide My *f* from Deut 31:17
 his *f* in his mantle 1 Kin 19:13
 Then he turned his *f* 2 Kin 20:2
 seek His *f* evermore 1 Chr 16:11
 and pray and seek My *f* 2 Chr 7:14
 not turn His *f* from you 2 Chr 30:9
 Why is your *f* sad, since Neh 2:2
 curse You to Your *f* Job 1:11
 I will put off my sad *f* and Job 9:26
 and lift up your *f* to God Job 22:26
 He shall see His *f* with joy Job 33:26
 me, I will see Your *f* Ps 17:15
 "Your *f*, LORD, I will seek Ps 27:8

Do not hide Your *f* from Ps 27:9
 Why do You hide Your *f* Ps 44:24
 and cause His *f* to shine Ps 67:1
 Do not hide Your *f* from Ps 102:2
 Make Your *f* shine upon Ps 119:135
 As in water *f* reflects Prov 27:19
 of his *f* is changed Eccl 8:1
 I have set My *f* like a flint Is 50:7
 sins have hidden His *f* Is 59:2
 I have made your *f* Ezek 3:8
 set your *f* against Gog, of Ezek 38:2
 but to us shame of *f* Dan 9:7
 before Your *f* who Matt 11:10
 to discern the *f* of the sky Matt 16:3
f shone like the sun Matt 17:2
 of His *f* was altered Luke 9:29
 His *f* to go to Jerusalem Luke 9:51
 they struck Him on the *f* Luke 22:64
 always before my *f* Num 12:8
 his *f* as the *f* of an angel Acts 6:15
 dimly, but then *f* 1 Cor 13:12
 look steadily at the *f* 2 Cor 3:7
 with unveiled *f* 2 Cor 3:18
 one strikes you on the *f* 2 Cor 11:20
 withstood him to his *f* Gal 2:11
 that we may see your *f* 1 Thess 3:10
 his natural *f* in a James 1:23
 but the *f* of the LORD 1 Pet 3:12
 creature had a *f* like a man Rev 4:7
 They shall see His *f* Rev 22:4

FACE TO FACE

For I have seen God *f*, Gen 32:30
 the Lord spoke to Moses *f* Ex 33:11
 I speak with him *f* Num 12:8
 the LORD talked with you *f* Deut 5:4
 whom the LORD knew *f* Deut 34:10
 Angel of the LORD *f* Judg 6:22
 My case with you *f* Ezek 20:35
 mirror, dimly, but then *f* 1 Cor 13:12

FACES

f were not ashamed Ps 34:5
 wipe away tears from all *f* Is 25:8
 hid, as it were, our *f* Is 53:3
 be afraid of their *f* Jer 1:8
 and all *f* turned pale Jer 30:6
 Each one had four *f* Ezek 1:6
 the gate that *f* toward the Ezek 43:1
 your *f* looking worse than Dan 1:10
 all *f* are drained of color Joel 2:6
 they disfigure their *f* Matt 6:16
 fell on their *f* before the Rev 7:11

FACTIONS

there must also be *f* 1 Cor 11:19

FADE

we all *f* as a leaf Is 64:6
 and the leaf shall *f* Jer 8:13
 rich man also will *f* James 1:11
 and that does not *f* 1 Pet 1:4
 of glory that does not *f* 1 Pet 5:4

FADES

withers, the flower *f* Is 40:7

FAIL

eyes shall look and *f* Deut 28:32
 man's heart *f* because 1 Sam 17:32
 You shall not *f* to have a 1 Kin 8:25
 eyes of the wicked will *f* Job 11:20
 flesh and my heart *f* Ps 73:26
 of the thirsty to *f* Is 32:6
 not one of these shall *f* Is 34:16
 their tongues *f* Is 41:17
 whose waters do not *f* Is 58:11
 have caused wine to *f* Jer 48:33
 His compassions *f* not Lam 3:22
 of the olive may *f* Hab 3:17
 nor shall the vine *f* Mal 3:11
 heavens that does not *f* Luke 12:33
 that when you *f* Luke 16:9
 tittle of the law to *f* Luke 16:17
 faith should not *f* Luke 22:32
 prophecies, they will *f* 1 Cor 13:18

Your years will not *f* Heb 1:12
For the time would *f* Heb 11:32

FAILED

Not a word *f* of any Josh 21:45
My relatives have *f* Job 19:14
Has His promise *f* Ps 77:8
refuge has *f* me Ps 142:4

FAILING

men's hearts *f* Luke 21:26

FAILS

my strength *f* because Ps 31:10
Therefore my heart *f* me Ps 40:12
my spirit *f* Ps 143:7
and every vision *f* Ezek 12:22
wine is dried up, the oil *f* Joel 1:10
He never *f*, but the unjust Zeph 3:5
Love never *f* 1 Cor 13:8

FAINT

If you *f* in the day of Prov 24:10
the youths shall *f* Is 40:30
shall walk and not *f* Is 40:31
my heart is *f* in me Jer 8:18
and the infants *f* Lam 2:11

FAINTED

thirsty, their soul *f* Ps 107:5

FAINTHEARTED

unruly, comfort the *f* 1 Thess 5:14

FAINTS

longs, yes, even *f* Ps 84:2
My soul *f* for Your Ps 119:81
And the whole heart *f* Is 1:5
the earth, neither *f* Is 40:28

FAIR

Behold, you are *f* Song 1:15
How *f* and how pleasant Song 7:6
of the Lord is not *f* Ezek 18:25
My ways which are *f* Ezek 18:29
say, It will be *f* weather Matt 16:2
to a place called *f* Acts 27:8
what is just and *f* Col 4:1

FAIR HAVENS

Harbor of Crete at which Paul landed,
Acts 27:8

FAIR-MINDED

These were more *f* Acts 17:11

FAIRER

f than the sons Ps 45:2

FAIREST

another beloved, O *f* Song 5:9
your beloved gone, O *f* Song 6:1

FAITH

in whom is no *f* Deut 32:20
shall live by his *f* Hab 2:4
you, O you of little *f* Matt 6:30
not found such great *f* Matt 8:10
your *f* has made you well Matt 9:22
"O you of little *f* Matt 14:31
woman, great is your *f* Matt 15:28
f as a mustard seed Matt 17:20
that you have no *f* Mark 4:40
to them, "Have *f* Mark 11:22
not found such great *f* Luke 7:9
you, O you of little *f* Luke 12:28
"Increase our *f* Luke 17:5
will He really find *f* Luke 18:8
through *f* in His name Acts 3:16
a man full of *f* Acts 6:5
the Holy Spirit and of *f* Acts 11:24
that he had *f* to be healed Acts 14:9
were strengthened in the *f* Acts 16:5
are sanctified by *f* Acts 26:18
for obedience to the *f* Rom 1:5
that your *f* is spoken of Rom 1:8
God is revealed from *f* Rom 1:17
God, through *f* Rom 3:22
f apart from the deeds Rom 3:28

his *f* is accounted for Rom 4:5
f which he had while still Rom 4:11
f is made void and the Rom 4:14
those who are of the *f* Rom 4:16
And not being weak in *f* Rom 4:19
having been justified by *f* Rom 5:1
of *f* speaks in this way Rom 10:6
f which we preach Rom 10:8
f comes by hearing Rom 10:17
and you stand by *f* Rom 11:20
each one a measure of *f* Rom 12:3
in proportion to our *f* Rom 12:6
Do you have *f* Rom 14:22
whatever is not from *f* Rom 14:23
that your *f* should not be 1 Cor 2:5
though I have all *f* 1 Cor 13:2
And now abide *f* 1 Cor 13:13
your *f* is also empty 1 Cor 15:14
stand fast in the *f* 1 Cor 16:13
For we walk by *f* 2 Cor 5:7
as your *f* is increased 2 Cor 10:15
now preaches the *f* which Gal 1:23
law but by *f* in Jesus Christ Gal 2:16
hate the *f* I live by *f* Gal 2:20
or by the hearing of *f* Gal 3:2
f are sons of Abraham Gal 3:7
the just shall live by *f* Gal 3:11
the law is not of *f* Gal 3:12
of the Spirit through *f* Gal 3:14
But before *f* came Gal 3:23
But after *f* has come Gal 3:25
f working through love Gal 5:6
of the household of *f* Gal 6:10
been saved through *f* Eph 2:8
one Lord, one *f* Eph 4:5
to the unity of the *f* Eph 4:13
taking the shield of *f* Eph 6:16
for the *f* of the gospel Phil 1:27
established in the *f* Col 2:7
your work of *f* 1 Thess 1:3
on the breastplate of *f* 1 Thess 5:8
work of *f* with power 2 Thess 1:11
for not all have *f* 2 Thess 3:2
a true son in the *f* 1 Tim 1:2
edification which is in *f* 1 Tim 1:4
having *f* and a good 1 Tim 1:19
if they continue in *f*, love 1 Tim 2:15
the mystery of the *f* 1 Tim 3:9
great boldness in the *f* 1 Tim 3:13
in love, in spirit, in *f* 1 Tim 4:12
he has denied the *f* 1 Tim 5:8
righteousness, godliness, *f* 1 Tim 6:11
Fight the good fight of *f* 1 Tim 6:12
I have kept the *f* 2 Tim 4:7
in our common *f* Titus 1:4
temperate, sound in *f* Titus 2:2
not being mixed with *f* Heb 4:2
of *f* toward God, Heb 6:1
those who through *f* Heb 6:12
in full assurance of *f* Heb 10:22
the just shall live by *f* Heb 10:38
f is the substance Heb 11:1
without *f* it is Heb 11:6
These all died in *f* Heb 11:13
good testimony through *f* Heb 11:39
author and finisher of our *f* Heb 12:2
whose *f* follow Heb 13:7
your *f* produces patience James 1:3
But let him ask in *f* James 1:6
someone says he has *f* James 2:14
Show me your *f* James 2:18
f without works is dead James 2:20
and not by *f* only James 2:24
f will save the sick James 5:15
the genuineness of your *f* 1 Pet 1:7
receiving the end of your *f* 1 Pet 1:9
him, steadfast in the *f* 1 Pet 5:9
add to your *f* virtue 2 Pet 1:5
on your most holy *f* Jude 20
works, love, service, *f* Rev 2:19
the patience and the *f* Rev 13:10
of God and the *f* Rev 14:12

FAITHFUL

he is *f* in all My house Num 12:7
God, He is God, the *f* Deut 7:9
found his heart *f* Neh 9:8
f disappear from among Ps 12:1
LORD preserves the *f* Ps 31:23
whose spirit was not *f* Ps 78:8
eyes shall be on the *f* Ps 101:6
commandments are *f* Ps 119:86
are righteous and very *f* Ps 119:138
f spirit conceals a Prov 11:13
A *f* witness does not lie Prov 14:5
But who can find a *f* Prov 20:6
A *f* man will abound Prov 28:20
the LORD who is *f* Is 49:7
f witness between us Jer 42:5
or fault, because he was *f* Dan 6:4
the Holy One who is *f* Hos 11:12
"Who then is a *f* Matt 24:45
good and *f* servant Matt 25:23
"Who then is that *f* Luke 12:42
He who is *f* in what Luke 16:10
if you have not been *f* Luke 16:12
have judged me to be *f* Acts 16:15
God is *f*, by whom 1 Cor 1:9
that one be found *f* 1 Cor 4:2
is my beloved and *f* 1 Cor 4:17
God is *f*, who will not 1 Cor 10:13
But as God is *f* 2 Cor 1:18
f minister in the LORD Eph 6:21
f brethren in Christ Col 1:2
He who calls you is *f* 1 Thess 5:24
because He counted me *f* 1 Tim 1:12
This is a *f* saying and 1 Tim 1:15
temperate, *f* in all things 1 Tim 3:11
commit these to *f* men 2 Tim 2:2
f High Priest in Heb 2:17
as Moses also was *f* Heb 3:2
Moses indeed was *f* Heb 3:5
He who promised is *f* Heb 10:23
judged Him *f* who had Heb 11:11
He is *f* and just to 1 John 1:9
Be *f* until death Rev 2:10
words are true and *f* Rev 21:5

FAITHFULNESS

righteousness and his *f* 1 Sam 26:23
for in their *f* they 2 Chr 31:18
f reaches to the clouds Ps 36:5
I have declared Your *f* Ps 40:10
Your *f* to all generations Ps 89:1
f You shall establish Ps 89:2
Your *f* also surrounds Ps 89:8
allow My *f* to fail Ps 89:33
and Your *f* every night Ps 92:2
f endures to all Ps 119:90
In Your *f* answer me Ps 143:1
counsels of old are *f* Is 25:1
great is Your *f* Lam 3:23
your *f* is like a morning Hos 6:4
unbelief make the *f* Rom 3:3
kindness, goodness, *f* Gal 5:22

FAITHLESS

the words of the *f* Prov 22:12
"O *f* and perverse Matt 17:17
"O *f* generation Mark 9:19
If we are *f*, He remains 2 Tim 2:13

FALL

a deep sleep to *f* Gen 2:21
but do not let me *f* 2 Sam 24:14
Let them *f* by their Ps 5:10
Though he *f*, he shall not Ps 37:24
For I am ready to *f* Ps 38:17
Yes, all kings shall *f* Ps 72:11
A thousand may *f* at your Ps 91:7
Let the wicked *f* into their Ps 141:10
LORD upholds all who *f* Ps 145:14
but a prating fool will *f* Prov 10:8
the wicked will *f* by his Prov 11:5
no counsel, the people *f* Prov 11:14
trusts in his riches will *f* Prov 11:28
haughty spirit before a *f* Prov 16:18

but the wicked shall *f* Prov 24:16
 digs a pit will *f* Prov 26:27
 For if they *f*, one will lift Eccl 4:10
 both he who helps will *f* Is 31:3
 all their host shall *f* Is 34:4
 men shall utterly *f* Is 40:30
 "Will they *f* and not rise Jer 8:4
F and rise no more Jer 25:27
 proud shall stumble and *f* Jer 50:32
 of music, you shall *f* Dan 3:5
 if You will *f* down Matt 4:9
 And great was its *f* Matt 7:27
 the blind, both will *f* Matt 15:14
f from their masters' Matt 15:27
 the stars will *f* Matt 24:29
 Child is destined for the *f* Luke 2:34
 "I saw Satan *f* Luke 10:18
 they will *f* by the edge Luke 21:24
 might *f* on some Acts 5:15
f short of the glory of Rom 3:23
 that they should *f* Rom 11:11
 block or a cause to *f* in Rom 14:13
 take heed lest he *f* 1 Cor 10:12
 with pride he *f* 1 Tim 3:6
 be rich *f* into temptation 1 Tim 6:9
 if they *f* away Heb 6:6
 to *f* into the hands of the Heb 10:31
 lest anyone *f* short of Heb 12:15
 it all joy when you *f* James 1:2
 and rocks. "F on us Rev 6:16

FALLEN

has your countenance *f* Gen 4:6
 terror of you has *f* on us Josh 2:9
f on its face to the earth 1 Sam 5:3
 who reproach You have *f* Ps 69:9
 you are *f* from heaven Is 14:12
 "Babylon is *f* Is 21:9
 Babylon has suddenly *f* Jer 51:8
 you have *f* from grace Gal 5:4
 who have *f* asleep 1 Thess 4:13
 And I saw a star *f* Rev 9:1
 "Babylon is *f* Rev 14:8

FALLING

and my feet from *f* Ps 116:8
 and *f* down before Him Luke 8:47
 great drops of blood *f* Luke 22:44
f away comes first 2 Thess 2:3

FALLS

when your enemy *f* Prov 24:17
 who is alone when he *f* Eccl 4:10
 not one of them *f* to the Matt 10:29
 And whoever *f* Matt 21:44
 divided against a house *f* Luke 11:17
 wheat *f* into the ground John 12:24
 master he stands or *f* Rom 14:4
 grass; its flower *f* James 1:11
 withers, and its flower *f* 1 Pet 1:24
 so that no rain *f* Rev 11:6

FALSE

"You shall not bear *f* Ex 20:16
 shall not bear *f* witness Deut 5:20
 I hate every *f* way Ps 119:104
f witness who speaks lies Prov 6:19
 gives heed to *f* lips Prov 17:4
f witness shall perish Prov 21:28
 the *f* pen of the scribe Jer 8:8
 walk in a *f* spirit Mic 2:11
 and do not love a *f* Zech 8:7
 "Beware of *f* prophets Matt 7:15
 shall not bear *f* witness Matt 19:18
f christs and *f* Matt 24:24
 at last two *f* witnesses Matt 26:60
f prophets will rise Mark 13:22
 and we are found *f* 1 Cor 15:15
 among *f* brethren 2 Cor 11:26
 of *f* brethren secretly Gal 2:4
 taking delight in *f* humility Col 2:18
f prophets have gone 1 John 4:1
f teachers among you 2 Pet 2:1
 mouth of the *f* prophet Rev 16:13

FALSE PROPHETS

Beware of *f*, who come to Matt 7:15
 many *f* will rise up Matt 24:11
 false christs and *f* Matt 24:24
f will rise and show Mark 13:22
 their fathers to the *f* Luke 6:26
 But there were also *f* 2 Pet 2:1
 many *f* have gone out 1 John 4:1

FALSE WITNESS

You shall not bear *f* Ex 20:16
 a *f* who speaks lies, Prov 6:19
 But a *f*, deceit Prov 12:17
f will not go unpunished Prov 19:5
 A man who bears *f* Prov 25:18
 thefts, *f*, blasphemies Matt 15:19
 bore *f* against Him Mark 14:56

FALSEHOOD

since *f* remains in your Job 21:34
 If I have walked with *f* Job 31:5
 those who speak *f* Ps 5:6
 and brings forth *f* Ps 7:14
 For their deceit is *f* Ps 119:118
 remove *f* and lies far Prov 30:8
 under *f* we have hidden Is 28:15
 offspring of *f* Is 57:4
 and trusted in *f* Jer 13:25

FALSELY

it, and swears *f* Lev 6:3
 shall not steal, nor deal *f* Lev 19:11
 nor have we dealt *f* Ps 44:17
 Whoever *f* boasts of Prov 25:14
 surely they swear *f* Jer 5:2
 prophesy *f* to you Jer 29:9
 words, swearing *f* Hos 10:4
 of evil against you *f* Matt 5:11
 anyone or accuse *f* Luke 3:14
f called knowledge 1 Tim 6:20

FAME

his *f* spread throughout Josh 6:27
 Sheba heard of the *f* 1 Kin 10:1
 nor have the *f* of which 1 Kin 10:7
 his *f* spread throughout all Esth 9:4
 endures forever, Your *f* Ps 135:13
 heard My *f* nor seen Is 66:19
 Your *f* went out Ezek 16:14
 them for praise and *f* Zeph 3:19
 Then His *f* went Matt 4:24

FAMILIAR

to mediums and *f* spirits Lev 19:31
 and *f* spirits, to prostitute Lev 20:6
 Even my own *f* friend Ps 41:9

FAMILIES

in you all the *f* Gen 12:3
 in your seed all the *f* of Gen 28:14
 and all the *f* of the nations Ps 22:27
 God sets the solitary in *f* Ps 68:6
 and makes their *f* Ps 107:41
 the God of all the *f* Jer 31:1
f which the LORD has Jer 33:24
 of all the *f* of the earth Amos 3:2
 in your seed all the *f* Acts 3:25

FAMILY

that man and against his *f* Lev 20:5
 against the whole *f* Amos 3:1
 shall mourn, every *f* Zech 12:12
 Joseph's *f* became known Acts 7:13
 sons of the *f* of Abraham Acts 13:26
f were baptized Acts 16:33
 from whom the whole *f* Eph 3:15

FAMINE

Now there was a *f* Gen 12:10
 besides the first *f* that was Gen 26:1
 seven years of *f* will arise Gen 41:30
 the *f* was severe in the Gen 43:1
 the LORD has called for a *f* 2 Kin 8:1
 In *f* He shall redeem you Job 5:20
 keep them alive in *f* Ps 33:19
 He called for a *f* Ps 105:16
 and destruction, *f* Is 51:19

shall die by the sword, by *f* Jer 21:9
 send the sword, the *f* Jer 24:10
 of the fever of *f* Lam 5:10
 I will increase the *f* Ezek 5:16
 there arose a severe *f* Luke 15:14
 a *f* and great trouble came Acts 7:11
 or persecution, or *f*, or Rom 8:35

FAMINES

And there will be *f* Matt 24:7

FAMISH

righteous soul to *f* Prov 10:3

FAMISHED

honorable men are *f* Is 5:13

FAMOUS

and may his name be *f* Ruth 4:14

FAN

not to *f* or to cleanse Jer 4:11
 His winnowing *f* Matt 3:12

FANCIES

with their own *f* Prov 1:31

FAR

removed my brothers *f* Job 19:13
 Your judgments are *f* Ps 10:5
 Be not *f* from Me Ps 22:11
 those who are *f* Ps 73:27
 The LORD is *f* from the Prov 15:29
 but it was *f* from me Eccl 7:23
 removed their hearts *f* Is 29:13
 Those near and those *f* Ezek 22:5
 their heart is *f* from Matt 15:8
 going to a *f* country Mark 13:34
 though He is not *f* Acts 17:27
 you who once were *f* Eph 2:13

FAR BE IT FROM ME

"F that I should do so Gen 44:17
 'F: for those who honor 1 Sam 2:30
f that I should sin 1 Sam 12:23
 F! Let not the king 1 Sam 22:15
f, that I should swallow 2 Sam 20:20
 "F, O LORD, that 2 Sam 23:17
 "F, O my God, that 1 Chr 11:19
 F that I should say Job 27:5

FAR COUNTRY

"We have come from a *f* Josh 9:6
 good news from a *f* Prov 25:25
f, from the end of heaven Is 13:5
 from a *f*, from Babylon Is 39:3
 and went into a *f* Matt 21:33
 man traveling to a *f* Matt 25:14
 a *f*, and there wasted Luke 15:13
 nobleman went into a *f* Luke 19:12
 and went into a *f* Luke 20:9

FARMER

The hard-working *f* 2 Tim 2:6
 See how the *f* waits James 5:7

FASHIONED

have made me and *f* Job 10:8

FASHIONS

He *f* their hearts Ps 33:15

FAST

"But you who held *f* to the Deut 4:4
 serve Him and hold *f* to Deut 13:4
 For he held *f* to the LORD 2 Kin 18:6
 My maids and I will *f* Esth 4:16
 commanded, and it stood *f* Ps 33:9
 of your *f* you find pleasure Is 58:3
f that I have chosen Is 58:5
 they *f*, I will not hear Jer 14:12
 Consecrate a *f*, call a Joel 1:14
 believed God, proclaimed a *f* Jon 3:5
 "Moreover, when you *f* Matt 6:16
 disciples do not *f* Matt 9:14
f while the bridegroom is Luke 2:19
 I *f* twice a week Luke 18:12
 if you hold *f* that word 1 Cor 15:2
 stand *f* in the faith, be 1 Cor 16:13
 holding *f* the word of life Phil 2:16
 you stand *f* in the Lord 1 Thess 3:8

holding *f* the faithful word . . . Titus 1:9
hold *f* our confession . . . Heb 4:14
hold *f* the confession . . . Heb 10:23
Hold *f* what you have . . . Rev 3:11

FASTED

and *f* seven days . . . 1 Sam 31:13
the child, and David *f* . . . 2 Sam 12:16
f and entreated our God . . . Ezra 8:23
'Why have we *f* . . . Is 58:3
'When you *f* and . . . Zech 7:5
And when He had *f* . . . Matt 4:2
Then, having *f* and prayed . . . Acts 13:3

FASTENED

were its foundations *f* . . . Job 38:6
'the peg that is *f* . . . Is 22:25

FASTING

I was *f* and praying before . . . Neh 1:4
humbled myself with *f* . . . Ps 35:13
are weak through *f* . . . Ps 109:24
house on the day of *f* . . . Jer 36:6
and spent the night *f* . . . Dan 6:18
with all your heart, with *f* . . . Joel 2:12
not appear to men to be *f* . . . Matt 6:18
except by prayer and *f* . . . Matt 17:21
I was *f* until this hour . . . Acts 10:30
give yourselves to *f* . . . 1 Cor 7:5

FASTINGS

but served God with *f* . . . Luke 2:37
in sleeplessness, in *f* . . . 2 Cor 6:5

FAT

the first seven, the *f* crows . . . Gen 41:20
and you will eat the *f* . . . Gen 45:18
f is the LORD'S . . . Lev 3:16
Now Eglon was a very *f* . . . Judg 3:17
have closed up their *f* . . . Ps 17:10

FATHER

See GOD THE FATHER; HEAVENLY

FATHER

man shall leave his *f* . . . Gen 2:24
saw the nakedness of his *f* . . . Gen 9:22
and you shall be a *f* . . . Gen 17:4
the lineage of our *f* . . . Gen 19:32
his *f* blessed him . . . Gen 27:41
God of my *f* has been with . . . Gen 31:5
Esau was the *f* of the . . . Gen 36:43
f loved him more than all . . . Gen 37:4
Thus his *f* wept for him . . . Gen 37:35
'Is your *f* still alive . . . Gen 43:7
bring my *f* down here . . . Gen 45:13
God, the God of your *f* . . . Gen 46:3
to meet his *f* Israel . . . Gen 46:29
went up to bury his *f* . . . Gen 50:7
Honor your *f* and your . . . Ex 20:12
Honor your *f* and your . . . Deut 5:16
obey the voice of his *f* . . . Deut 21:18
of Jesse, the *f* of David . . . Ruth 4:17
son, and I will be his *F* . . . 1 Chr 22:10
son, and I will be his *F* . . . 1 Chr 28:6
'You are my *f* . . . Job 17:14
I was a *f* to the poor . . . Job 29:16
When my *f* and my mother . . . Ps 27:10
A *f* of the fatherless . . . Ps 68:5
f pities his children . . . Ps 103:13
the instruction of a *f* . . . Prov 4:1
wise son makes a glad *f* . . . Prov 10:1
wise son makes a *f* glad . . . Prov 15:20
glory of children is their *f* . . . Prov 17:6
the *f* of a fool has no joy . . . Prov 17:21
son is a grief to his *f* . . . Prov 17:25
curses his *f* or his . . . Prov 20:20
f of the righteous will . . . Prov 23:24
makes his *f* rejoice . . . Prov 29:3
that curses its *f* . . . Prov 30:11
God, Everlasting *F* . . . Is 9:6
Your first *f* sinned . . . Is 43:27
You, O LORD, are our *F* . . . Is 63:16
time cry to Me, My *F* . . . Jer 3:4
for I am a *F* to Israel . . . Jer 31:9
for the iniquity of his *f* . . . Ezek 18:17
not bear the guilt of the *f* . . . Ezek 18:20

"A son honors his *f* . . . Mal 1:6
Have we not all one *F* . . . Mal 2:10
your *F* who sees in secret . . . Matt 6:4
your heavenly *F* will also . . . Matt 6:14
neither will your *F* forgive . . . Matt 6:15
your heavenly *F* knows . . . Matt 6:32
much more will your *F* . . . Matt 7:11
He who loves *f* . . . Matt 10:37
does anyone know the *F* . . . Matt 11:27
'He who curses *f* . . . Matt 15:4
My *F* who is in heaven . . . Matt 18:10
a man shall leave his *f* . . . Matt 19:5
for One is your *F* . . . Matt 23:9
you blessed of My *F* . . . Matt 25:34
'O My *F*, if this cup . . . Matt 26:42
in the name of the *F* . . . Matt 28:19
F with the holy angels . . . Mark 8:38
a man shall leave his *f* . . . Mark 10:7
the Son, but only the *F* . . . Mark 13:32
'Abba, *F*, all things are . . . Mark 14:36
Your *f* and I have sought . . . Luke 2:48
just as your *F* also is . . . Luke 6:36
first go and bury my *f* . . . Luke 9:59
who the Son is but the *F* . . . Luke 10:22
bread from any *f* among . . . Luke 11:11
F give the Holy Spirit to . . . Luke 11:13
F will be divided . . . Luke 12:53
does not hate his *f* . . . Luke 14:26
arise and go to my *f* . . . Luke 15:18
'I beg you therefore, *f* . . . Luke 16:27
'*F*, if it is Your will . . . Luke 22:42
'*F*, forgive them, for . . . Luke 23:34
only begotten of the *F* . . . John 1:14
F loves the Son . . . John 3:35
worship the *F* in spirit . . . John 4:23
F has been working . . . John 5:17
what He sees the *F* do . . . John 5:19
F raises the dead . . . John 5:21
F judges no one . . . John 5:22
not honor the *F* who sent . . . John 5:23
All that the *F* gives Me . . . John 6:37
He has seen the *F* . . . John 6:46
F who sent Me bears . . . John 8:18
but as My *F* taught Me, I . . . John 8:28
we have one *F* . . . John 8:41
he is a liar and the *f* of it . . . John 8:44
I and My *F* are one . . . John 10:30
and believe that the *F* . . . John 10:38
'*F*, I thank You that . . . John 11:41
F, glorify Your name . . . John 12:28
'Lord, show us the *F* . . . John 14:8
seen Me has seen the *F* . . . John 14:9
believe that I am in the *F* . . . John 14:10
because I go to My *F* . . . John 14:12
And I will pray the *F* . . . John 14:16
will be loved by My *F* . . . John 14:21
'I am going to the *F* . . . John 14:28
F is the vinedresser . . . John 15:1
whatever you ask the *F* . . . John 15:16
you ask the *F* in My . . . John 16:23
came forth from the *F* . . . John 16:28
And now, O *F*, glorify Me . . . John 17:5
yet ascended to My *F* . . . John 20:17
F the promise of the Holy . . . Acts 2:33
that he might be the *f* . . . Rom 4:11
'I have made you a *f* . . . Rom 4:17
we cry out, "Abba, *F*." . . . Rom 8:15
F of our Lord Jesus . . . Rom 15:6
F of mercies and God of . . . 2 Cor 1:3
'I will be a *F* to you . . . 2 Cor 6:18
by one Spirit to the *F* . . . Eph 2:18
I bow my knees to the *F* of . . . Eph 3:14
one God and *F* of all . . . Eph 4:6
a man shall leave his *f* and . . . Eph 5:31
F be glory forever and . . . Phil 4:20
For it pleased the *F* that in . . . Col 1:19
f does his own children . . . 1 Thess 2:11
but exhort him as a *f* . . . 1 Tim 5:1
'I will be to Him a *F* . . . Heb 1:5
without *f*, without mother . . . Heb 7:3
whom a *f* does not chasten . . . Heb 12:7
comes down from the *F* . . . James 1:17

we bless our God and *F* . . . James 3:9
if you call on the *F* . . . 1 Pet 1:17
an Advocate with the *F* . . . 1 John 2:1
love of the *F* is not in . . . 1 John 2:15
love the *F* has bestowed . . . 1 John 3:1
and testify that the *F* . . . 1 John 4:14
F, the Word, and the . . . 1 John 5:7
his name before My *F* . . . Rev 3:5

FATHER IN HEAVEN

and glorify your *F* . . . Matt 5:16
may be sons of your *F* . . . Matt 5:45
just as your *F* is perfect . . . Matt 5:48
no reward from your *F* . . . Matt 6:1
Our *F*, hallowed be Your . . . Matt 6:9
who does the will of My *F* . . . Matt 7:21
does the will of My *F* . . . Matt 12:50
done for them by My *F* . . . Matt 18:19
F may also forgive you . . . Mark 11:25
Our *F*, hallowed be . . . Luke 11:2

FATHER'S

Joseph fell on his *f* face . . . Gen 50:1
he and his *f* household . . . Gen 50:22
my *f* God, and I will exalt . . . Ex 15:2
When I was my *f* son . . . Prov 4:3
keep your *f* command . . . Prov 6:20
heeds his *f* instruction . . . Prov 13:1
you in My *F* kingdom . . . Matt 26:29
I must be about My *F* . . . Luke 2:49
many of my *f* hired . . . Luke 15:17
Do not make My *F* house . . . John 2:16
works that I do in My *F* . . . John 10:25
F house are many . . . John 14:2
the *F* who sent Me . . . John 14:24
that a man has his *f* . . . 1 Cor 5:1

FATHERLESS

afflict any widow or *f* child . . . Ex 22:22
and your children *f* . . . Ex 22:24
justice for the *f* . . . Deut 10:18
my hand against the *f* . . . Job 31:21
the helper of the *f* . . . Ps 10:14
to do justice to the *f* . . . Ps 10:18
father of the *f*, a defender . . . Ps 68:5
Let his children be *f* . . . Ps 109:9
He relieves the *f* . . . Ps 146:9
the fields of the *f* . . . Prov 23:10
do not defend the *f* . . . Is 1:23
they may rob the *f* . . . Is 10:2
'You the *f* finds mercy . . . Hos 14:3
the widow or the *f* . . . Zech 7:10

FATHERS

bury me with my *f* . . . Gen 49:29
swore to your *f* to give you . . . Ex 13:5
the iniquity of the *f* . . . Ex 20:5
the LORD swore to your *f* . . . Deut 1:8
f make you a thousand . . . Deut 1:11
the iniquity of the *f* upon . . . Deut 5:9
the LORD God of our *f* . . . Ezra 7:27
f trusted in You . . . Ps 22:4
sojourner, as all my *f* were . . . Ps 39:12
our ears, O God, our *f* . . . Ps 44:1
He commanded our *f* . . . Ps 78:5
did in the sight of their *f* . . . Ps 78:12
have sinned with our *f* . . . Ps 106:6
that I gave to your *f* forever . . . Jer 7:7
f have eaten sour grapes . . . Jer 31:29
f have eaten sour grapes . . . Ezek 18:2
for the iniquities of our *f* . . . Dan 9:16
f provoked Me to wrath . . . Zech 8:14
For so did their *f* to the . . . Luke 6:26
Our *f* worshiped on this . . . John 4:20
f ate the manna . . . John 6:31
f nor we were able to . . . Acts 15:10
of whom are the *f* . . . Rom 9:5
you do not have many *f* . . . 1 Cor 4:15
unaware that all our *f* . . . 1 Cor 10:1
f, do not provoke . . . Eph 6:4
F, do not provoke your . . . Col 3:21
where your *f* tested Me . . . Heb 3:9

FATLING

and the *f* together . . . Is 11:6

FATNESS

as with marrow and *f* Ps 63:5
of the root and *f* Rom 11:17

FATTED

f cattle are killed Matt 22:4
has killed the *f* Luke 15:27

FATTENED

f your hearts as James 5:5

FATTER

f in flesh than all the Dan 1:15

FAULT

find no charge or *f* Dan 6:4
tell him his *f* between Matt 18:15
I have found no *f* Luke 23:14
does He still find *f* Rom 9:19
of God without *f* Phil 2:15
for they are without *f* Rev 14:5

FAULTLESS

covenant had been *f* Heb 8:7
to present you *f* Jude 24

FAULTS

"I remember my *f* Gen 41:9
me from secret *f* Ps 19:12
are beaten for your *f* 1 Pet 2:20

FAVOR

Joseph found *f* in his sight Gen 39:4
nor show *f* to the young Deut 28:50
"Let me find *f* in your Ruth 2:13
f in his sight more than all Esth 2:17
granted me life and *f* Job 10:12
with *f* You will surround Ps 15:12
His *f* is for life Ps 30:5
who *f* my righteous cause Ps 35:27
the *f* You have toward Ps 106:4
find *f* and high esteem Prov 3:4
obtains *f* from the LORD Prov 8:35
A good man obtains *f* Prov 12:2
understanding gains *f* Prov 13:15
his *f* is like a cloud Prov 16:15
but his *f* is like dew Prov 19:12
loving *f* rather than silver Prov 22:1
in My *f* I have had mercy Is 60:10
and seek the LORD's *f* Jer 26:19
brought Daniel into the *f* Dan 1:9
have found *f* with God Luke 1:30
and stature, and in *f* Luke 2:52
God and having *f* Acts 2:47
troubles, and gave him *f* Acts 7:10
to do the Jews a *f* Acts 24:27

FAVORABLE

And will He be *f* Ps 77:7
LORD, You have been *f* Ps 85:1

FAVORED

because You *f* them Ps 44:3
"Rejoice, highly *f* Luke 1:28

FAVORITISM

do not show personal *f* Luke 20:21
God shows personal *f* Gal 2:6

FEAR

See DO NOT FEAR

do not *f*, for I am with Gen 26:24
this and live, for I *f* God Gen 42:18
not *f* to go down to Egypt Gen 46:3
f the people of the Num 14:9
not *f* or be discouraged Deut 1:21
to put the dread and *f* Deut 2:25
f Me all the days Deut 4:10
You shall *f* the LORD Deut 6:13
f Him, and keep His Deut 13:4
book, that you may *f* Deut 28:58
do not *f* nor be dismayed Deut 31:8
said, "Does Job *f* Job 1:9
Yes, you cast off *f* Job 15:4
houses are safe from *f* Job 21:9
"Dominion and *f* belong Job 25:2
Surely no *f* of me will Job 33:7
He mocks at *f* Job 39:22

they are in great *f* Ps 14:5
You who *f* the LORD Ps 22:23
of death, I will *f* Ps 23:4
with those who *f* Him Ps 25:14
whom shall I *f* Ps 27:1
me, my heart shall not *f* Ps 27:3
Let all the earth *f* Ps 33:8
on those who *f* Him Ps 33:18
around those who *f* Him Ps 34:7
Oh, *f* the LORD Ps 34:9
there is no *f* of God Ps 36:1
they are in great *f* Ps 53:5
hear, all you who *f* Ps 66:16
ends of the earth shall *f* Ps 67:7
f You as long as the Ps 72:5
heart to *f* Your name Ps 86:11
LORD pities those who *f* Ps 103:13
those who *f* the LORD Ps 115:13
Let those who *f* the LORD Ps 118:4
f You will be glad Ps 119:74
pleasure in those who *f* Ps 147:11
by the *f* of the LORD one Prov 16:6
The *f* of man brings a Prov 29:25
it, that men should *f* Eccl 3:14
F God and keep His Eccl 12:13
let Him be your *f* Is 8:13
their *f* toward Me is taught Is 29:13
"Be strong, do not *f* Is 35:4
F not, for I am with you Is 41:10
F not, for I have redeemed Is 43:1
not *f* the reproach of men Is 51:7
Do not *f*, for you will not Is 54:4
the *f* of Me is not in you Jer 2:19
Do you not *f* Me Jer 5:22
who would not *f* Jer 10:7
but I will put My *f* Jer 32:40
greatly beloved, *f* not Dan 10:19
who *f* My name the Sun Mal 4:2
f Him who is able Matt 10:28
serve Him without *f* Luke 1:74
Then *f* came upon all Luke 7:16
"Do not *f*, little flock Luke 12:32
a judge who did not *f* Luke 18:2
failing them from *f* Luke 21:26
"Do you not even *f* Luke 23:40
of bondage again to *f* Rom 8:15
f to whom *f*, honor to Rom 13:7
holiness in the *f* of God 2 Cor 7:1
another in the *f* of God Eph 5:21
your own salvation with *f* Phil 2:12
the rest also may *f* 1 Tim 5:20
given us a spirit of *f* 2 Tim 1:7
those who through *f* Heb 2:15
His rest, let us *f* Heb 4:1
because of His godly *f* Heb 5:7
F God, Honor the king 1 Pet 2:17
love casts out *f* 1 John 4:18
Do not *f* any of Rev 2:10
"F God and give glory Rev 14:7
servants and those who *f* Rev 19:5

FEAR OF THE LORD

f fell on the people 1 Sam 11:7
f fell on all the 2 Chr 17:10
f, that is wisdom, Job 28:28
The *f* is clean, enduring Ps 19:9
I will teach you the *f* Ps 34:11
The *f* is the beginning of Ps 111:10
The *f* is the beginning of Prov 1:7
The *f* is to hate evil: Prov 8:13
The *f* is the beginning of Prov 9:10
The *f* prolongs days Prov 10:27
The *f* is a fountain of Prov 14:27
a little with the *f* Prov 15:16
The *f* is the instruction Prov 15:33
The *f* leads to life, Prov 19:23
By humility and the *f* Prov 22:4
of knowledge and of the *f* Is 11:2
His delight is in the *f* Is 11:3
And walking in the *f* Acts 9:31

FEAR THE LORD

That you may *f* your God Deut 6:2

require of you, but to *f* Deut 10:12
that they may learn to *f* Deut 31:12
f, serve Him in sincerity Josh 24:14
them how they should *f* 2 Kin 17:28
he honors those who *f* Ps 15:4
who *f*, trust in the LORD: Ps 115:11
F and depart from evil Prov 3:7
"Let us now *f* Jer 5:24
I *f*, the God of heaven, Jon 1:9

FEARED

But the midwives *f* Ex 1:17
so the people *f* the LORD Ex 14:31
He is also to be *f* 1 Chr 16:25
f God more than Neh 7:2
thing I greatly *f* has come Job 3:25
Yourself, are to be *f* Ps 76:7
God is greatly to be *f* Ps 89:7
He is to be *f* above all gods Ps 96:4
Then those who *f* Mal 3:16
they *f* greatly, saying Matt 27:54
Him, for they *f* the people Luke 22:2
one who *f* God with all his Acts 10:2

FEARFUL

f in praises, doing Ex 15:11
them, "Why are you *f* Matt 8:26
there will be *f* sights Luke 21:11
It is a *f* thing to Heb 10:31

FEARFUL-HEARTED

to those who are *f* Is 35:4

FEARFULLY

f and wonderfully made Ps 139:14

FEARFULNESS

F and trembling have Ps 55:5
f has seized the Is 33:14

FEARING

is devoted to *f* You Ps 119:38
woman, *f* and trembling Mark 5:33
sincerity of heart, *f* Col 3:22
forsook Egypt, not *f* Heb 11:27

FEARS

upright man, one who *f* Job 1:8
Who is the man that *f* Ps 25:12
me from all my *f* Ps 34:4
every one who *f* the LORD Ps 128:1
in his uprightness *f* Prov 14:2
a woman who *f* the LORD Prov 31:30
an oath as he who *f* Eccl 9:2
every nation whoever *f* Acts 10:35
f has not been made 1 John 4:18

FEAST

Then he made them a *f* Gen 19:3
F of Unleavened Bread Ex 12:17
keep a *f* to Me in the year Ex 23:14
and the *F* of Harvest Ex 23:16
F of Ingathering Ex 23:16
observe the *F* of Weeks Ex 34:22
F of the Passover be left Ex 34:25
F of Tabernacles for Lev 23:34
and you shall keep a *f* Num 29:12
the *F* of Esther, for all his Esth 2:18
moon, on our solemn *f* day Ps 81:3
f is made for laughter Eccl 10:19
f day the terrors that Lam 2:22
hate, I despise your *f* Amos 5:21
"Not during the *f*, lest Mark 14:2
every year at the *F* Luke 2:41
by anyone to a wedding *f* Luke 14:8
when you give a *f* Luke 14:13
Now the Passover, a *f* John 6:4
the *f* Jesus went up into John 7:14
great day of the *f* John 7:37
Now before the *f* of the John 13:1
let us keep the *f* 1 Cor 5:8

FEAST OF DEDICATION

Now it was the *F* John 10:22

FEAST OF HARVEST

and the *F*, the firstfruits Ex 23:16

FEAST OF INGATHERING

F at the end of the year. . . . Ex 23:16
and the *F* at the year's end. . . . Ex 34:22

FEAST OF TABERNACLES

the *F* for seven days. . . . Lev 23:34
observe the *F* seven. . . . Deut 16:13
year of release, at the *F*. . . . Deut 31:10
They also kept the *F*. . . . Ezra 3:4
and to keep the *F*. . . . Zech 14:16
Now the Jews' *F*. . . . John 7:2

FEAST OF UNLEAVENED

BREAD

you shall observe the *F*. . . . Ex 12:17
You shall keep the *F*. . . . Ex 23:15
F you shall keep. Seven. . . . Ex 34:18
Jerusalem to keep the *F*. . . . 2 Chr 30:13
And they kept the *F*. . . . Ezra 6:22
on the first day of the *F*. . . . Matt 26:17
the Passover and the *F*. . . . Mark 14:1
Now the *F* drew near. . . . Luke 22:1

FEAST OF WEEKS

you shall observe the *F*. . . . Ex 34:22
at your *f*, you shall have. . . . Num 28:26
you shall keep the *F*. . . . Deut 16:10

FEASTING

house full of *f* with strife. . . . Prov 17:1
go to the house of *f*. . . . Eccl 7:2

FEASTS

See APPOINTED FEASTS

These are the *f* of the LORD. . . . Lev 23:4
in your appointed *f*. . . . Num 10:10
Moons and on the set *f*. . . . 1 Chr 23:31
I will turn your *f*. . . . Amos 8:10
the best places at *f*. . . . Luke 20:46
spots in your love *f*. . . . Jude 12

FEATHERS

shall cover you with His *f*. . . . Ps 91:4

FED

f me all my life long. . . . Gen 48:15
and *f* you with manna. . . . Deut 8:3
but the shepherds *f*. . . . Ezek 34:8
They *f* him with grass like. . . . Dan 5:21
So those who *f* the swine. . . . Mark 5:14
desiring to be *f* with the. . . . Luke 16:21
f you with milk and. . . . 1 Cor 3:2

FEEBLE

strengthened the *f*. . . . Job 4:4
And there was none *f*. . . . Ps 105:37
And my flesh is *f*. . . . Ps 109:24
and make firm the *f* knees. . . . Is 35:3
Every hand will be *f*. . . . Ezek 7:17
hang down, and the *f*. . . . Heb 12:12

FEED

ravens to *f* you there. . . . 1 Kin 17:4
and *f* on His faithfulness. . . . Ps 37:3
death shall *f* on them. . . . Ps 49:14
of the righteous *f*. . . . Prov 10:21
He will *f* His flock like a. . . . Is 40:11
and *f* your flocks. . . . Is 61:5
f you with knowledge. . . . Jer 3:15
over them who will *f* them. . . . Jer 23:4
I will *f* My flock, and I. . . . Ezek 34:15
to him. "F My lambs. . . . John 21:15
to him. "F My sheep. . . . John 21:17
your enemy hungers, *f*. . . . Rom 12:20
my goods to *f* the poor. . . . 1 Cor 13:3

FEEDS

"Ephraim *f* on the wind. . . . Hos 12:1
your heavenly Father *f*. . . . Matt 6:26
he who *f* on Me will live. . . . John 6:57

FEET

See UNDER HIS FEET

your sandals off your *f*. . . . Ex 3:5
not worn out on your *f*. . . . Deut 29:5
f touched the dry land. . . . Josh 4:18
So she lay at his *f*. . . . Ruth 3:14
was lame in both his *f*. . . . 2 Sam 9:13
so my *f* did not slip. . . . 2 Sam 22:37

in places forgotten by *f*. . . . Job 28:4
I was *f* to the lame. . . . Job 29:15
all things under his *f*. . . . Ps 8:6
He makes my *f* like the. . . . Ps 18:33
pierced My hands and My *f*. . . . Ps 22:16
You have set my *f*. . . . Ps 31:8
and set my *f* upon a rock. . . . Ps 40:2
does not allow our *f*. . . . Ps 66:9
f had almost stumbled. . . . Ps 73:2
and my *f* from falling. . . . Ps 116:8
f from every evil way. . . . Ps 119:101
word is a lamp to my *f*. . . . Ps 119:105
f have been standing. . . . Ps 122:2
For their *f* run to. . . . Prov 1:16
Her *f* go down to death. . . . Prov 5:5
f that are swift in running. . . . Prov 6:18
spreads a net for his *f*. . . . Prov 29:5
with two he covered his *f*. . . . Is 6:2
sandals off your *f*. . . . Is 20:2
called him to His *f*. . . . Is 41:2
up the dust of your *f*. . . . Is 49:23
mountains are the *f*. . . . Is 52:7
place of My *f* glorious. . . . Is 60:13
have not restrained their *f*. . . . Jer 14:10
its *f* partly of iron and. . . . Dan 2:33
f like burnished bronze in. . . . Dan 10:6
are the dust of His *f*. . . . Nah 1:3
on the mountains the *f* of. . . . Nah 1:15
make my *f* like deer's *f*. . . . Hab 3:19
in that day His *f*. . . . Zech 14:4
off the dust from your *f*. . . . Matt 10:14
two hands or two *f*. . . . Matt 18:8
saw Him, he fell at His *f*. . . . Mark 5:22
she came and fell at His *f*. . . . Mark 7:25
rather than having two *f*. . . . Mark 9:45
began to wash His *f*. . . . Luke 7:38
sitting at the *f* of Jesus. . . . Luke 8:35
also sat at Jesus' *f*. . . . Luke 10:39
and sandals on his *f*. . . . Luke 15:22
My hands and My *f*. . . . Luke 24:39
wash the disciples' *f*. . . . John 13:5
wash one another's *f*. . . . John 13:14
and the other at the *f*. . . . John 20:12
up, and immediately his *f*. . . . Acts 3:7
at the apostles' *f*. . . . Acts 4:35
your sandals off your *f*. . . . Acts 7:33
his own hands and *f*. . . . Acts 21:11
f are swift to shed. . . . Rom 3:15
beautiful are the *f*. . . . Rom 10:15
all things under His *f*. . . . 1 Cor 15:27
put all things under His *f*. . . . Eph 1:22
and having shod your *f*. . . . Eph 6:15
straight paths for your *f*. . . . Heb 12:13
fell at His *f* as dead. . . . Rev 1:17
And I fell at his *f*. . . . Rev 19:10

FELIX

Governor of Judea; letter addressed to.
Acts 23:24-30
Paul's defense before. Acts 24:1-27

FELL

f on his neck and kissed. . . . Gen 33:4
Joseph *f* on his father's. . . . Gen 50:1
Saul took a sword and *f*. . . . 1 Sam 31:4
ax head *f* into the water. . . . 2 Kin 6:5
Saul took a sword and *f*. . . . 1 Chr 10:4
fear of the Jews *f* upon. . . . Esth 8:17
fire of God *f* from heaven. . . . Job 1:16
foes, they stumbled and *f*. . . . Ps 27:2
f on my face, and I heard. . . . Ezek 1:28
Spirit of the LORD *f* upon. . . . Ezek 11:5
f down bound into the. . . . Dan 3:23
lots, and the lot *f* on Jonah. . . . Jon 1:7
on that house; and it *f*. . . . Matt 7:27
seed *f* by the wayside. . . . Matt 13:4
others *f* on good ground. . . . Matt 13:8
saw Him, he *f* at His feet. . . . Mark 5:22
as they sailed He *f* asleep. . . . Luke 8:23
f among thieves. . . . Luke 10:30
the tower in Siloam *f*. . . . Luke 13:4
f from the rich man's. . . . Luke 16:21
she *f* down at His feet. . . . John 11:32

and the lot *f* on Matthias. . . . Acts 1:26
f down and breathed his. . . . Acts 5:5
had said this, he *f* asleep. . . . Acts 7:60
ready, he *f* into a trance. . . . Acts 10:10
the Holy Spirit *f* upon all. . . . Acts 10:44
his chains *f* off his hands. . . . Acts 12:7
he *f* down from the third. . . . Acts 20:9
who reproached You *f* on. . . . Rom 15:3
f down after they were. . . . Heb 11:30
elders *f* down before. . . . Rev 5:8
of heaven *f* to the earth. . . . Rev 6:13
a great star *f* from heaven. . . . Rev 8:10
four living creatures *f*. . . . Rev 19:4

FELLOW

f servants who owed. . . . Matt 18:28
begins to beat his *f*. . . . Matt 24:49
f worker concerning. . . . 2 Cor 8:23
f citizens with the. . . . Eph 2:19
Gentiles should be *f*. . . . Eph 3:6
rest of my *f* workers. . . . Phil 4:3
These are my only *f*. . . . Col 4:11
that we may become *f*. . . . 3 John 8
I am your *f* servant. . . . Rev 19:10

FELLOWSHIP

doctrine and *f*. . . . Acts 2:42
were called into the *f*. . . . 1 Cor 1:9
not want you to have *f*. . . . 1 Cor 10:20
f has righteousness. . . . 2 Cor 6:14
the right hand of *f*. . . . Gal 2:9
And have no *f* with the. . . . Eph 5:11
for your *f* in the. . . . Phil 1:5
of love, if any *f*. . . . Phil 2:1
and the *f* of His. . . . Phil 3:10
also may have *f*. . . . 1 John 1:3
we say that we have *f*. . . . 1 John 1:6
the light, we have *f*. . . . 1 John 1:7

FEMALE

male and *f* He created. . . . Gen 1:27
they shall be male and *f*. . . . Gen 6:19
ark to Noah, male and *f*. . . . Gen 7:9
has borne a male or a *f*. . . . Lev 12:7
made them male and *f*. . . . Matt 19:4
there is neither male nor *f*. . . . Gal 3:28

FENCE

and a tottering *f*. . . . Ps 62:3

FENCED

He has *f* up my way. . . . Job 19:8

FERTILIZE

I dig around it and *f*. . . . Luke 13:8

FERVENT

f desire I have desired. . . . Luke 22:15
and being *f* in spirit. . . . Acts 18:25
f in spirit, serving the. . . . Rom 12:11
f prayer of a. . . . James 5:16
all things have *f*. . . . 1 Pet 4:8
will melt with *f*. . . . 2 Pet 3:10

FERVENTLY

you, always laboring *f*. . . . Col 4:12
love one another *f*. . . . 1 Pet 1:22

FESTIVAL

night when a holy *f*. . . . Is 30:29
or regarding a *f*. . . . Col 2:16

FESTUS

Governor of Judea, Acts 24:27
Paul's defense made to, Acts 25:1-22

FETCH

f my knowledge from. . . . Job 36:3

FETTERS

hurt his feet with *f*. . . . Ps 105:18
their nobles with *f*. . . . Ps 149:8

FEVER

f which shall consume. . . . Lev 26:16
my bones burn with *f*. . . . Job 30:30
mother lying sick with a *f*. . . . Matt 8:14
immediately the *f* left her. . . . Mark 1:31
and rebuked the *f*. . . . Luke 4:39
of Publius lay sick of a *f*. . . . Acts 28:8

FEW

f and evil have been Gen 47:9
f days and full of Job 14:1
 Let his days be *f* Ps 109:8
 let your words be *f* Eccl 5:2
 there are *f* who find it Matt 7:14
 but the laborers are *f* Matt 9:37
 called, but *f* chosen Matt 20:16
 "Lord, are there *f* Luke 13:23
 prepared, in which a *f* 1 Pet 3:20
 I have a *f* things Rev 2:20

FIDELITY

but showing all good *f* Titus 2:10

FIELD

and to every beast of the *f* Gen 2:20
f which the Lord has Gen 27:27
 gleaned in the *f* after the Ruth 2:3
 even the beasts of the *f* Ps 8:7
 Let the *f* be joyful Ps 96:12
 as a flower of the *f*, so he Ps 103:15
 went by the *f* of the lazy Prov 24:30
 She considers a *f* and Prov 31:16
 to house; they add *f* Is 5:8
 becomes a fruitful *f* Is 32:15
 is like the flower of the *f* Is 40:6
 beast of the *f* will honor Is 43:20
 all the trees of the *f* shall Is 55:12
 "Buy the *f* for money Jer 32:25
 thrive like a plant in the *f* Ezek 16:5
 shall be plowed like a *f* Mic 3:12
 Consider the lilies of the *f* Matt 6:28
 clothes the grass of the *f* Matt 6:30
 The *f* is the world Matt 13:38
 and buys that *f* Matt 13:44
 let him who is in the *f* Matt 24:18
f has been called the Matt 27:8
 which today is in the *f* Luke 12:28
 Two men will be in the *f* Luke 17:36
 you are God's *f* 1 Cor 3:9
 the *f* he will pass away James 1:10

FIELD OF BLOOD

A field bought as a cemetery for Judas's
 burial, Matt 27:1-10
 Predicted in the O.T., Zech 11:12, 13

FIELDS

and sends waters on the *f* Job 5:10
 nor enter the *f* of the Prov 23:10
f yield no food Hab 3:17
 living out in the *f* Luke 2:8
 eyes and look at the *f* John 4:35

FIERCE

the *f* wrath of our God Ezra 10:14
f wrath has gone over me Ps 88:16
 A lion is in the streets Prov 26:13
 the *f* anger of the LORD Jer 4:8
 in the day of His *f* anger Lam 1:12
 turn away from His *f* anger Jon 3:9
 the tombs, exceedingly *f* Matt 8:28
 are driven by *f* winds James 3:4

FIERCENESS

f has deceived you Jer 49:16
 the winepress of the *f* Rev 19:15

FIERY

the LORD sent *f* serpents Num 21:6
 right hand came a *f* Deut 33:2
 shall make them as a *f* Ps 21:9
 their flocks to *f* lightning Ps 78:48
 offspring will be a *f* Is 14:29
 burning *f* furnace Dan 3:6
 from the burning *f* furnace Dan 3:17
f darts of the wicked one Eph 6:16
 concerning the *f* trial 1 Pet 4:12
 horse, *f* red, went out Rev 6:4
f red dragon having Rev 12:3

FIFTEEN

about *f* thousand all who Judg 8:10
 add to your days *f* years 2 Kin 20:6
 remained with him *f* days Gal 1:18

FIFTH

morning were the *f* day Gen 1:23

He opened the *f* seal Rev 6:9
 the *f* angel poured out Rev 16:10

FIFTY

nine hundred and *f* years Gen 9:29
 Suppose there were *f* Gen 18:24
f prophets of Baal, and 1 Kin 18:19
 denarii, and the other *f* Luke 7:41
 sit down in groups of *f* Luke 9:14
 down quickly and write *f* Luke 16:6
 "You are not yet *f* years John 8:57

FIG

f leaves together Gen 3:7
f trees and pomegranates Deut 8:8
 his vine and his *f* 1 Kin 4:25
 from his own *f* tree 2 Kin 18:31
 fruit falling from a *f* Is 34:4
 and the *f* tree has withered Joel 1:12
f tree and the vine yield Joel 2:22
f tree may not blossom Hab 3:17
 immediately the *f* tree Matt 21:19
 parable from the *f* tree Matt 24:32
 saw the *f* tree dried up Mark 11:20
 fruit on this *f* Luke 13:7
 "Look at the *f* Luke 21:29
 "I saw you under the *f* John 1:50
 Can a *f* tree James 3:12
f tree drops its late Rev 6:13

FIGHT

The LORD will *f* for you Ex 14:14
 like men, and *f* 1 Sam 4:9
 you go with me to *f* 1 Kin 22:4
 Our God will *f* for us Neh 4:20
 My servants would *f* John 18:36
 to him, let us not *f* Acts 23:9
 Thus I *f*: not as one who 1 Cor 9:26
F the good *f* 1 Tim 6:12
 have fought the good *f* 2 Tim 4:7
 You *f* and war James 4:2

FIGHTS

your God is He who *f* Josh 23:10
 because my lord *f* 1 Sam 25:28
f come from among James 4:1

FIGS

puts forth her green *f* Song 2:13
f set before the Jer 24:1
 from thornbushes or *f* Matt 7:16
 men do not gather *f* Luke 6:44
 or a grapevine bear *f* James 3:12

FIGURATIVELY

brethren, I have *f* 1 Cor 4:6

FIGURE

using no *f* of speech John 16:29

FILL

f the earth and subdue Gen 1:28
 multiply, and *f* the earth Gen 9:1
f their sacks with grain Gen 42:25
 "F four waterpots 1 Kin 18:33
 He will yet *f* your mouth Job 8:21
f my mouth with Job 23:4
 wealth, that I may *f* Prov 8:21
 out of his wings will *f* the Is 8:8
 "Do I not *f* heaven Jer 23:24
f this temple with Hag 2:7
f such a great multitude Matt 15:33
 "F the waterpots John 2:7
 hope *f* you with all joy Rom 15:13
 that He might *f* Eph 4:10
 so as always to *f* 1 Thess 2:16

FILLED

f her pitcher, and came Gen 24:16
 you shall be *f* with bread Ex 16:12
 the LORD *f* the tabernacle Ex 40:34
 all the earth shall be *f* Num 14:21
f the house of the LORD 1 Kin 8:11
 So they ate and were *f* Neh 9:25
 the whole earth be *f* Ps 72:19
 they are *f* with good Ps 104:28
 Then our mouth was *f* Ps 126:2

barns will be *f* with Prov 3:10
 of his lips he shall be *f* Prov 18:20
 for they shall be *f* Matt 5:6
 they all ate and were *f* Matt 14:20
 "Let the children be *f* Mark 7:27
 in spirit, *f* with wisdom Luke 2:40
f with the Holy Spirit Luke 4:1
 were *f* with fear, saying Luke 5:26
 he would gladly have *f* Luke 15:16
 they *f* them up to the brim John 2:7
f twelve baskets with the John 6:13
 sorrow has *f* your heart John 16:6
 were all *f* with the Holy Acts 2:4
 why has Satan *f* your heart Acts 5:3
 being *f* with all Rom 1:29
 full of goodness, *f* Rom 15:14
 that you may be *f* Eph 3:19
 but be *f* with the Spirit Eph 5:18
 being *f* with the fruits Phil 1:11
 peace, be warmed and *f* James 2:16

FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT

He will also be *f* Luke 1:15
 and Elizabeth was *f* Luke 1:41
 father Zacharias was *f* Luke 1:67
 Then Jesus, being *f* Luke 4:1
 And they were all *f* Acts 2:4
 Peter, *f*, said to them Acts 4:8
 and they were all *f* Acts 4:31
 your sight and be *f* Acts 9:17
 who also is called Paul, *f* Acts 13:9

FILTH

has washed away the *f* Is 4:4
 been made as the *f* 1 Cor 4:13
 the removal of the *f* 1 Pet 3:21

FILTHINESS

from all your *f* Ezek 36:25
 ourselves from all *f* 2 Cor 7:1
 lay aside all *f* James 1:21
 abominations and the *f* Rev 17:4

FILTHY

is abominable and *f* Job 15:16
 with *f* garments Zech 3:3
 malice, blasphemy, *f* Col 3:8
 poor man in *f* clothes James 2:2
 oppressed by the *f* 2 Pet 2:7
 let him be *f* Rev 22:11

FIND

"If I *f* in Sodom fifty Gen 18:26
 not *f* the household idols Gen 31:35
 Can we *f* such a one as Gen 41:38
 straw where you can *f* it Ex 5:11
 that I may *f* grace in Your Ex 33:13
 sure your sin will *f* Num 32:23
 you will *f* Him if you seek Deut 4:29
 "Let me *f* favor in your Ruth 2:13
f the arrows which I 1 Sam 20:36
f in the book of the Ezra 4:15
 Can you *f* out the limits of Job 11:7
 knew where I might *f* Him Job 23:3
 Almighty, we cannot *f* Job 37:23
 but they will not *f* me Prov 1:28
 life to those who *f* Prov 4:22
 seek me diligently will *f* Prov 8:17
 word wisely will *f* good Prov 16:20
 can *f* a virtuous wife Prov 31:10
 that no one can *f* Eccl 3:11
 waters, for you will *f* Eccl 11:1
 if you *f* my beloved Song 5:8
f Me, when you search for Jer 29:13
 seek, and you will *f* Matt 7:7
 and there are few who *f* it Matt 7:14
 for My sake will *f* Matt 10:39
 will *f* a piece of money Matt 17:27
 when he comes, will *f* Matt 24:46
 you will *f* a colt tied Mark 11:2
 he *f* you sleeping Mark 13:36
f a Babe wrapped Luke 2:12
 seek, and you will *f* Luke 11:9
 you will *f* a colt tied Luke 19:30

f no fault in this Man Luke 23:4
 seek Me and not *f* Me John 7:34
 not *f* them in the prison Acts 5:22
 I *f* then a law Rom 7:21
f grace to help in Heb 4:16
 seek death and will not *f* it Rev 9:6

FINDING

great things past *f* Job 9:10
 rest, and *f* none Luke 11:24
 and His ways past *f* Rom 11:33

FINDS

one who *f* great treasure Ps 119:162
 the man who *f* wisdom Prov 3:13
 whoever *f* me *f* life Prov 8:35
f a wife *f* a good Prov 18:22
 Whatever your hand *f* Eccl 9:10
 You the fatherless *f* mercy Hos 14:3
 and he who seeks *f* Matt 7:8
f his life will lose Matt 10:39
 he *f* it empty, swept, and Matt 12:44
 and he who seeks *f* Luke 11:10
 carefully until she *f* it Luke 15:8

FINE

ate up the seven *f* looking Gen 41:4
 Then I beat them as *f* 2 Sam 22:43
 gold, yea, than much *f* Ps 19:10
 than gold, yes, than *f* gold Prov 8:19
f gold is a wise Prov 25:12
 her clothing is *f* linen Prov 31:22
 set on bases of *f* gold Song 5:15
 more rare than *f* Is 13:12
 and for *f* clothing Is 23:18
 how changed the *f* Lam 4:1
 Then he bought *f* linen Mark 15:46
 rings, in *f* apparel James 2:2
 His feet were like *f* brass Rev 1:15
 for the *f* linen is the Rev 19:8

FINGER

written with the *f* Ex 31:18
 written with the *f* of God Deut 9:10
f shall be thicker 1 Kin 12:10
 the pointing of the *f* Is 58:9
 demons with the *f* of Luke 11:20
 dip the tip of his *f* Luke 16:24
 the ground with His *f* John 8:6
 "Reach your *f* John 20:27

FINGERS

the work of Your *f* Ps 8:3
 he points with his *f* Prov 6:13
 Bind them on your *f* Prov 7:3
 that which their own *f* Is 2:8
 In the same hour the *f* of a Dan 5:5
 with one of their *f* Matt 23:4
 put His *f* in his ears Mark 7:33

FINISH

We *f* our years like a sigh Ps 90:9
 to *f* the transgression Dan 9:24
 he has enough to *f* Luke 14:28
 has given Me to *f* John 5:36
 so that I may *f* Acts 20:24

FINISHED

house of the LORD was *f* 1 Kin 7:51
f the work which You John 17:4
 He said, "It is *f* John 19:30
 I have *f* the race 2 Tim 4:7
 thousand years were *f* Rev 20:3

FIRE

rained brimstone and *f* Gen 19:24
 to him in a flame of *f* Ex 3:2
 the pillar of *f* by night Ex 13:22
 descended upon it in *f* Ex 19:18
 made, burned it in the *f* Ex 32:20
 by day, and *f* was over Ex 40:38
 profane *f* before the LORD Lev 10:1
 through the *f* to Molech Lev 18:21
 like the appearance of *f* Num 9:15
 the *f* was quenched Num 11:2
 from the midst of the *f* Deut 5:24
 God, who answers by *f* 1 Kin 18:24

the *f* of the LORD fell 1 Kin 18:38
 LORD was not in the *f* 1 Kin 19:12
 of *f* appeared with horses 2 Kin 2:11
 I was musing, the *f* Ps 39:3
 we went through *f* Ps 66:12
 they have set *f* Ps 74:7
f goes before Him Ps 97:3
 His ministers a flame of *f* Ps 104:4
f and hail, snow and Ps 148:8
 burns as the *f* Is 9:18
 says the LORD, whose *f* Is 31:9
 you walk through the *f* Is 43:2
f that burns all the Is 65:5
 My fury come forth like *f* Jer 4:4
 their daughters in the *f* Jer 7:31
 His waist and downward, *f* Ezek 8:2
 in the midst of the *f* Dan 3:25
 the smell of *f* was not on Dan 3:27
 He break out like *f* Amos 5:6
 for conflict by *f* Amos 7:4
 a brand plucked from the *f* Zech 3:2
 like a refiner's *f* Mal 3:2
 the Holy Spirit and *f* Matt 3:11
 chaff with unquenchable *f* Matt 3:12
 shall be in danger of hell *f* Matt 5:22
 he often falls into the *f* Matt 17:15
 into the everlasting *f* Matt 25:41
f is not quenched Mark 9:44
 "I came to send *f* Luke 12:49
 tongues, as of *f* Acts 2:3
 off the creature into the *f* Acts 28:5
 coals of *f* on his head Rom 12:20
f taking vengeance 2 Thess 1:8
 His ministers a flame of *f* Heb 1:7
 and that burned with *f* Heb 12:18
 our God is a consuming *f* Heb 12:29
 And the tongue is a *f* James 3:6
 vengeance of eternal *f* Jude 7
 His eyes like a flame of *f* Rev 1:14
f came down from God Rev 20:9
 into the lake of *f* Rev 20:14

FIREBRAND

f plucked from the Amos 4:11

FIREBRANDS

a madman who throws *f* Prov 26:18
 two stubs of smoking *f* Is 7:4

FIRM

their strength is *f* Ps 73:4
 shall stand *f* with him Ps 89:28
 Take *f* hold of instruction Prov 4:13
f the feeble knees Is 35:3
 of the hope *f* to the Heb 3:6

FIRMAMENT

Thus God made the *f* Gen 1:7
f shows His handiwork Ps 19:1
 in His mighty *f* Ps 150:1
 brightness of the *f* Dan 12:3

FIRST

the morning were the *f* day Gen 1:5
 cows ate up the *f* seven Gen 41:20
 The *f* of the firstfruits of Ex 23:19
 "Give the *f* woman the 1 Kin 3:27
 The *f* one to plead his Prov 18:17
f father sinned Is 43:27
 the *F* and I am the Last Is 44:6
f was like a lion, and had Dan 7:4
F be reconciled to your Matt 5:24
 seek *f* the kingdom of Matt 6:33
F remove the plank from Matt 7:5
 unless he *f* binds the Matt 12:29
 man is worse than the *f* Matt 12:45
 who are *f* will be last Matt 19:30
 desires to be *f* Matt 20:27
 This is the *f* and great Matt 22:38
f the blade, then the Mark 4:28
 that Elijah must come *f* Mark 9:11
f shall be slave Mark 10:44
 the *f* commandment Mark 12:30
 And the gospel must *f* Mark 13:10
 He appeared *f* to Mary Mark 16:9

let me *f* go and bury my Luke 9:59
f He must suffer many Luke 17:25
f took a wife, and died Luke 20:29
f found his own brother John 1:41
 him throw a stone at her *f* John 8:7
 disciples were *f* called Acts 11:26
 evil, of the Jew *f* Rom 2:9
 "Or who has *f* given Rom 11:35
f apostles, second 1 Cor 12:28
f man Adam became a 1 Cor 15:45
f a willing mind 2 Cor 8:12
 that we who *f* trusted Eph 1:12
 the *f* commandment with Eph 6:2
 in Christ will rise *f* 1 Thess 4:16
 the falling away comes *f* 2 Thess 2:3
 Therefore I exhort *f* of all 1 Tim 2:1
 For Adam was formed *f* 1 Tim 2:13
 let them *f* learn to show 1 Tim 5:4
 to teach you again the *f* Heb 5:12
f covenant had been Heb 8:7
 from above is *f* pure James 3:17
 knowing this *f*, that no 2 Pet 1:20
 this *f*, that scoffers will 2 Pet 3:3
 love Him because He *f* 1 John 4:19
 I am the *F* and the Rev 1:17
 you have left your *f* Rev 2:4
 The *f* angel sounded Rev 8:7
 is the *f* resurrection Rev 20:5
f earth had passed away Rev 21:1

FIRST AND THE LAST

and the Omega, the *F* Rev 1:11
 not be afraid; I am the *F* Rev 1:17
 "These things says the *F*, Rev 2:8
 and the End, the *F* Rev 22:13

FIRST-RIPE

f fruit which my soul Mic 7:1

FIRSTBORN

"I am Esau your *f* Gen 27:19
 "Israel is My son. My *f* Ex 4:22
 LORD struck all the *f* Ex 12:29
 "Consecrate to Me all the *f* Ex 13:2
 was the *f* of Israel Num 26:5
 destroyed all the *f* in Egypt Ps 78:51
 I will make him My *f* Ps 89:27
 Shall I give my *f* Mic 6:7
 as one grieves for a *f* Zech 12:10
 brought forth her *f* Matt 1:25
 brought forth her *f* Son Luke 2:7
 that He might be the *f* Rom 8:29
 invisible God, the *f* Col 1:15
 the beginning, the *f* Col 1:18
 witness, the *f* from Rev 1:5

FIRSTFRUIT

For if the *f* is holy Rom 11:16

FIRSTFRUITS

the *f* of your harvest to Lev 23:10
 bring the *f* of our ground Neh 10:35
 with the *f* of all your Prov 3:9
 also who have the *f* Rom 8:23
 and has become the *f* 1 Cor 15:20
 order: Christ the *f* 1 Cor 15:23
 might be a kind of *f* James 1:18
 among men, being *f* Rev 14:4

FISH

over the *f* of the sea Gen 1:28
f taken in a cruel net Eccl 9:12
 had prepared a great *f* Jon 1:17
 do You make men like *f* Hab 1:14
 Or if he asks for a *f* Matt 7:10
 belly of the great *f* Matt 12:40
 five loaves and two *f* Matt 14:17
 and likewise the *f* John 21:13

FISHERMEN

The *f* also will mourn Is 19:8
 I will send for many *f* Jer 16:16

FISHERS

and I will make you *f* Matt 4:19

FIT

and looking back, is *f* Luke 9:62

FITTING

Therefore it is not *f* for the . . . Esth 3:8
 Is it *f* to say to a . . . Job 34:18
 Luxury is not *f* . . . Prov 19:10
 so honor is not *f* . . . Prov 26:1
 things which are not *f* . . . Rom 1:28
 husbands, as is *f* in the . . . Col 3:18
 a High Priest was *f* . . . Heb 7:26

FIVE

bring out those *f* kings . . . Josh 10:22
f smooth stones . . . 1 Sam 17:40
 about *f* thousand men . . . Matt 14:21
 and *f* were foolish . . . Matt 25:2
 to one he gave *f* talents . . . Matt 25:15
 Are not *f* sparrows sold . . . Luke 12:6
 bought *f* yoke of oxen . . . Luke 14:19
 you have had *f* husbands . . . John 4:18
 speak *f* words with my . . . 1 Cor 14:19

FIXED

f My limit for it . . . Job 38:10
 is a great gulf *f* . . . Luke 16:26

FLAME

appeared to him in a *f* . . . Ex 3:2
f will dry out his . . . Job 15:30
 His ministers a *f* of fire . . . Ps 104:4
f consumes the chaff . . . Is 5:24
 and his Holy One for a *f* . . . Is 10:17
 and tempest and the *f* . . . Is 29:6
 nor shall the *f* scorch you . . . Is 43:2
 hot, the *f* of the fire killed . . . Dan 3:22
 behind them a *f* . . . Joel 2:3
 am tormented in this *f* . . . Luke 16:24
 and His ministers a *f* . . . Heb 1:7
 and His eyes like a *f* . . . Rev 1:14

FLAMES

the LORD divides the *f* . . . Ps 29:7

FLAMING

f sword which turned . . . Gen 3:24
f fire in their land . . . Ps 105:32
 in *f* fire taking . . . 2 Thess 1:8

FLANKS

Strengthen your *f* . . . Nah 2:1

FLASK

alabaster *f* of fragrant oil . . . Luke 7:37

FLATTER

I do not know how to *f* . . . Job 32:22
 They *f* with their . . . Ps 5:9

FLATTERED

Nevertheless they *f* . . . Ps 78:36

FLATTERING

f mouth works ruin . . . Prov 26:28
f speech deceive . . . Rom 16:18
 any time did we use *f* . . . 1 Thess 2:5
 swelling words, *f* . . . Jude 16

FLATTERS

with one who *f* with . . . Prov 20:19
f his neighbor spreads . . . Prov 29:5

FLATTERY

shall corrupt with *f* . . . Dan 11:32

FLAVOR

the salt loses its *f* . . . Matt 5:13

FLAVORLESS

f food be eaten . . . Job 6:6

FLAX

f He will not quench . . . Is 42:3
f He will not quench . . . Matt 12:20

FLED

Moses *f* from the face of . . . Ex 2:15
f before the men of Ai . . . Josh 7:4
 The sea saw it and *f* . . . Ps 114:3
 who have *f* for refuge . . . Heb 6:18

FLEE

f away secretly . . . Gen 31:27
 those who hate You *f* . . . Num 10:35
 such a man as I *f* . . . Neh 6:11
 who see me outside *f* . . . Ps 31:11

Or where can I *f* . . . Ps 139:7
 wicked *f* when no one . . . Prov 28:1
 And the shadows *f* . . . Song 2:17
f to Egypt, and stay there . . . Matt 2:13
 who are in Judea *f* . . . Matt 24:16
F sexual immorality . . . 1 Cor 6:18
f these things and . . . 1 Tim 6:11
F also youthful lusts . . . 2 Tim 2:22
 devil and he will *f* . . . James 4:7

FLEECE

there is dew on the *f* only . . . Judg 6:37

FLESH

See ACCORDING TO THE FLESH

bone of my bones and *f* . . . Gen 2:23
 shall become one *f* . . . Gen 2:24
f had corrupted their . . . Gen 6:12
f I shall see God . . . Job 19:26
 My *f* also will rest in . . . Ps 16:9
 What can *f* do to me . . . Ps 56:4
f longs for You in a dry . . . Ps 63:1
 that they were but *f* . . . Ps 78:39
 my heart and my *f* . . . Ps 84:2
 Who gives food to all *f* . . . Ps 136:25
f shall bless His holy . . . Ps 145:21
 It will be health to your *f* . . . Prov 3:8
 and health to all their *f* . . . Prov 4:22
 mouth cause your *f* to sin . . . Eccl 5:6
 is wearisome to the *f* . . . Eccl 12:12
 And all *f* shall see it . . . Is 40:5
 "All *f* is grass . . . Is 40:6
 give them a heart of *f* . . . Ezek 11:19
 of stone out of your *f* . . . Ezek 36:26
 out My Spirit on all *f* . . . Ezek 2:28
 Be silent, all *f*, before the . . . Zech 2:13
 two shall become one *f* . . . Matt 19:5
 were shortened, no *f* . . . Matt 24:22
 is willing, but the *f* is . . . Matt 26:41
 shall become one *f* . . . Mark 10:8
 but the *f* is weak . . . Mark 14:38
f shall see the salvation . . . Luke 3:6
 And the Word became *f* . . . John 1:14
 is born of the *f* is *f* . . . John 3:6
 I shall give is My *f* . . . John 6:51
 unless you eat the *f* . . . John 6:53
 Whoever eats My *f* and . . . John 6:54
 For My *f* is food indeed . . . John 6:55
f profits nothing . . . John 6:63
 according to the *f* . . . John 8:15
 Him authority over all *f* . . . John 17:2
 out of My Spirit on all *f* . . . Acts 2:17
 did His *f* see corruption . . . Acts 2:31
 no *f* will be justified in . . . Rom 3:20
 when we were in the *f* . . . Rom 7:5
 in my *f*) nothing good . . . Rom 7:18
 of God, but with the *f* . . . Rom 7:25
 not walk according to the *f* . . . Rom 8:1
 on the things of the *f* . . . Rom 8:5
 in the *f* cannot please God . . . Rom 8:8
 you are not in the *f* . . . Rom 8:9
 to the *f* you will die . . . Rom 8:13
 no provision for the *f* . . . Rom 13:14
f should glory in His . . . 1 Cor 1:29
 for the destruction of the *f* . . . 1 Cor 5:5
 "shall become one *f* . . . 1 Cor 6:16
 there is one kind of *f* . . . 1 Cor 15:39
 no one according to the *f* . . . 2 Cor 5:16
 from all filthiness of the *f* . . . 2 Cor 7:1
 war according to the *f* . . . 2 Cor 10:3
 immediately confer with *f* . . . Gal 1:16
 law no *f* shall be justified . . . Gal 2:16
 which I now live in the *f* . . . Gal 2:20
 not fulfill the lust of the *f* . . . Gal 5:16
 For the *f* lusts . . . Gal 5:17
 have crucified the *f* . . . Gal 5:24
 his *f* will of the *f* reap . . . Gal 6:8
 good showing in the *f* . . . Gal 6:12
 may boast in your *f* . . . Gal 6:13
 one ever hated his own *f* . . . Eph 5:29
 two shall become one *f* . . . Eph 5:31
 have no confidence in the *f* . . . Phil 3:3
 of His *f* through death . . . Col 1:22

was manifested in the *f* . . . 1 Tim 3:16
 the veil, that is, His *f* . . . Heb 10:20
f has ceased from sin . . . 1 Pet 4:1
 of his time in the *f* . . . 1 Pet 4:2
 the lust of the *f* . . . 1 John 2:16
 has come in the *f* . . . 1 John 4:2
 dreamers defile the *f* . . . Jude 8

FLESH AND BLOOD

f has not revealed this . . . Matt 16:17
f cannot inherit the . . . 1 Cor 15:50
 do not wrestle against *f* . . . Eph 6:12
 have partaken of *f* . . . Heb 2:14

FLESHLY

f wisdom but by the . . . 2 Cor 1:12
 law of a *f* commandment . . . Heb 7:16
f lusts which war against . . . 1 Pet 2:11

FLIES

will send swarms of *f* . . . Ex 8:21
 He sent swarms of *f* . . . Ps 78:45
 of the arrow that *f* by day . . . Ps 91:5
 Dead *f* putrefy the *f* . . . Eccl 10:1

FLIGHT

put ten thousand to *f* . . . Deut 32:30
f shall perish from . . . Amos 2:14
 And pray that your *f* . . . Matt 24:20
 turned to *f* the armies of . . . Heb 11:34

FLINT

will seem like *f* . . . Is 5:28
 set My face like a *f* . . . Is 50:7

FLINTY

out of the *f* rock . . . Deut 8:15
 oil from the *f* rock . . . Deut 32:13

FLOAT

and he made the iron *f* . . . 2 Kin 6:6

FLOCK

of the firstborn of his *f* . . . Gen 4:4
 Go now to the *f* and bring . . . Gen 27:9
 pass through all your *f* . . . Gen 30:32
 put them with Laban's *f* . . . Gen 30:40
 Moses was tending the *f* . . . Ex 3:1
 Your people like a *f* . . . Ps 77:20
 wilderness like a *f* . . . Ps 78:52
 lead Joseph like a *f* . . . Ps 80:1
 their families like a *f* . . . Ps 107:41
 the footsteps of the *f* . . . Song 1:8
 He will feed His *f* . . . Is 40:11
 with the shepherd of His *f* . . . Is 63:11
 "You have scattered My *f* . . . Jer 23:2
 gather the remnant of My *f* . . . Jer 23:3
 oil, for the young of the *f* . . . Jer 31:12
 you do not feed the *f* . . . Ezek 34:3
 are My *f*, the *f* . . . Ezek 34:31
 though the *f* be cut . . . Hab 3:17
 my God, "Feed the *f* . . . Zech 11:4
 sheep of the *f* will be . . . Matt 26:31
 watch over their *f* by night . . . Luke 2:8
 "Do not fear, little *f* . . . Luke 12:32
 there will be one *f* . . . John 10:16
 and to all the *f* . . . Acts 20:28
 not sparing the *f* . . . Acts 20:29
 of the milk of the *f* . . . 1 Cor 9:7
 Shepherd the *f* of God . . . 1 Pet 5:2
 examples to the *f* . . . 1 Pet 5:3

FLOCKS

fed the rest of Laban's *f* . . . Gen 30:36
 their little ones, their *f* . . . Gen 50:8
 Also take your *f* and your . . . Ex 12:32
 are clothed with *f* . . . Ps 65:13
 the *f* of your companions . . . Song 1:7
 lion among *f* of sheep . . . Mic 5:8
 for they shall feed their *f* . . . Zeph 3:13

FLOOD

the waters of the *f* . . . Gen 7:10
 a *f* to destroy all flesh . . . Gen 9:15
 on the earth after the *f* . . . Gen 10:32
 sat enthroned at the *F* . . . Ps 29:10
 them away like a *f* . . . Ps 90:5
 enemy comes in like a *f* . . . Is 59:19

the days before the *f* Matt 24:38
 when the *f* arose, the Luke 6:48
 bringing in the *f* 2 Pet 2:5
 of his mouth like a *f* Rev 12:15

FLOODS

me, and the *f* of Ps 18:4
f on the dry ground Is 44:3
 and the *f* surrounded me Jon 2:3
 rain descended, the *f* Matt 7:25

FLOOR

down to the threshing *f* Ruth 3:6
 came to the threshing *f* Ruth 3:14
 bought the threshing *f* 2 Sam 24:24
 clean out His threshing *f* Matt 3:12
 clean out His threshing *f* Luke 3:17

FLOUR

a handful of *f* in a bin 1 Kin 17:12
 bin of *f* was not used up 1 Kin 17:16
 "Then bring some *f* 2 Kin 4:41

FLOURISH

the righteous shall *f* Ps 72:7
f in the courts of our God Ps 92:13
 tent of the upright will *f* Prov 14:11

FLOURISHED

your care for me has *f* Phil 4:10

FLOURISHES

In the morning it *f* Ps 90:6

FLOW

f away as waters which Ps 58:7
 and the waters *f* Ps 147:18
 that its spices may *f* Song 4:16
 all nations shall *f* Is 2:2
 and peoples shall *f* to it Mic 4:1
 who had a *f* of blood Matt 9:20
f of blood for twelve Mark 5:25
 immediately her *f* of Luke 8:44
 of his heart will *f* John 7:38

FLOWER

comes forth like a *f* Job 14:2
 as a *f* of the field Ps 103:15
 beauty is a fading *f* Is 28:4
 is like the *f* of the Is 40:6
 grass withers, the *f* Is 40:7
 if she is past the *f* 1 Cor 7:36
 of man as the *f* 1 Pet 1:24

FLOWERS

f appear on the earth Song 2:12

FLOWING

a land *f* with milk Deut 6:3
 of wisdom is a *f* Prov 18:4
 the Gentiles like a *f* Is 66:12

FLUTE

play the harp and *f* Gen 4:21
 sound of the horn, *f* Ps 45:6
 saw the *f* players Matt 9:23
 "We played the *f* for you Luke 7:32

FLUTES

instruments and *f* Ps 150:4

FLUTISTS

harpists, musicians, *f* Rev 18:22

FLY

let birds *f* above the earth Gen 1:20
 I would *f* away and be Ps 55:6
 soon cut off, and we *f* Ps 90:10
 they *f* away like an Prov 23:5
 being caused to *f* swiftly Dan 9:21

FLYING

a *f* swallow, so a curse Prov 26:2

FOAL

a colt, the *f* of a donkey Zech 9:9
 a colt, the *f* of a donkey Matt 21:5

FOAMS

so that he *f* at the mouth Luke 9:39

FOE

and scattered the *f* Ps 18:14

FOES

my enemies and *f* Ps 27:2
 I will beat down his *f* Ps 89:23

FOLD

are not of this *f* John 10:16
 a cloak You will *f* Heb 1:12

FOLDING

slumber, a little *f* Prov 6:10
f of the hands to sleep Prov 24:33

FOLLOW

willing to *f* me to this land Gen 24:5
f what is altogether Deut 16:20
 If the LORD is God, *f* 1 Kin 18:21
 shall *f* me all the days Ps 23:6
 to Me, you who *f* Is 51:1
 "F Me, and I will make Matt 4:19
f You wherever You go Matt 8:19
 "F Me, and let the dead Matt 8:22
 He said to him, "F Matt 9:9
f after Me is not worthy Matt 10:38
 his cross, and *f* Me Matt 16:24
 up his cross, and *f* Mark 8:34
 someone who does not *f* Mark 9:38
 the cross, and *f* Me Mark 10:21
 signs will *f* those who Mark 16:17
 he does not *f* with us Luke 9:49
 I will *f* You wherever Luke 9:57
 said to another, "F Me Luke 9:59
 not go after them or *f* Luke 17:23
 and come, *f* Me Luke 18:22
f him into the house Luke 22:10
 the sheep *f* him, for they John 10:4
 will by no means *f* John 10:5
 serves Me, let him *f* John 12:26
 on your garment and *f* Acts 12:8
 those of some men *f* 1 Tim 5:24
 God to you, whose faith *f* Heb 13:7
 that you should *f* 1 Pet 2:21
f the Lamb wherever He Rev 14:4
 and their works *f* Rev 14:13

FOLLOWED

f the LORD my God Josh 14:8
 LORD took me as I *f* Amos 7:15
 left their nets and *f* Him Matt 4:20
 great multitudes *f* Him Matt 8:1
 Peter *f* Him at a distance Matt 26:58
 women who *f* Jesus Matt 27:55
 we have left all and *f* Mark 10:28
 sight and *f* Jesus Mark 10:52
 This girl *f* Paul and us Acts 16:17
 spiritual Rock that *f* 1 Cor 10:4
 diligently *f* every good 1 Tim 5:10
 carefully *f* my doctrine 2 Tim 3:10

FOLLOWING

if you turn away from *f* Num 32:15
 away this day from *f* the Josh 22:16
 back from *f* after you Ruth 1:16
 continue *f* the LORD 1 Sam 12:14
f the sheep, to be ruler 2 Sam 7:8
 away from *f* the LORD 2 Chr 25:27
 turned, and seeing them *f* John 1:38
 whom Jesus loved *f* John 21:20
 join in *f* my example Phil 3:17
f the way of Balaam 2 Pet 2:15

FOLLOWS

My soul *f* close behind Ps 63:8
 but he who *f* frivolity is Prov 12:11
 loves him who *f* Prov 15:9
f Me shall not walk John 8:12

FOLLY

taken much notice of *f* Job 35:15
 not turn back to *f* Ps 85:8
F is joy to him who is Prov 15:21
 correction of fools is *f* Prov 16:22
F is set in great Eccl 10:6

FOOD

you it shall be for *f* Gen 1:29
 that lives shall be *f* Gen 9:3
 stranger, giving him *f* Deut 10:18

He gives *f* in abundance Job 36:31
 he may bring forth *f* Ps 104:14
 Who gives *f* to all Ps 136:25
 Much *f* is in the Prov 13:23
 feed me with the *f* Prov 30:8
 their *f* in the summer Prov 30:25
 night, and provides *f* Prov 31:15
f which you eat shall Ezek 4:10
 I ate no pleasant *f* Dan 10:3
 the fields yield no *f* Hab 3:17
 that there may be *f* Mal 3:10
 is worthy of his *f* Matt 10:10
 to give them *f* in due Matt 24:45
 and you gave Me *f* Matt 25:35
 and he who has *f* Luke 3:11
 Life is more than *f* Luke 12:23
 I have *f* to eat of which John 4:32
f is to do the will of Him John 4:34
 for the *f* which perishes John 6:27
 have you any *f* John 21:5
 they ate their *f* Acts 2:46
 our hearts with *f* Acts 14:17
 destroy with your *f* Rom 14:15
f makes my brother 1 Cor 8:13
 the same spiritual *f* 1 Cor 10:3
 sower, and bread for *f* 2 Cor 9:10
 And having *f* and 1 Tim 6:8
 and not solid *f* Heb 5:12
 But solid *f* belongs to Heb 5:14
 of *f* sold his birthright Heb 12:16
 destitute of daily *f* James 2:15

FOODS

F for the stomach 1 Cor 6:13
f which God created 1 Tim 4:3

FOOL

I have played the *f* 1 Sam 26:21
 Should Abner die as a *f* 2 Sam 3:33
f has said in his Ps 14:1
 or as a *f* to the correction Prov 7:22
 is like sport to a *f* Prov 10:23
f will be servant Prov 11:29
f is right in his own Prov 12:15
f lays open his folly Prov 13:16
 A *f* despises his father's Prov 15:5
 a hundred blows on a *f* Prov 17:10
 is too lofty for a *f* Prov 24:7
 Do not answer a *f* Prov 26:4
 "As it happens to the *f*, it Eccl 2:15
 A *f* also multiplies words Eccl 10:14
 whoever says, "You *f* Matt 5:22
 But God said to him, "F Luke 12:20
 let him become a *f* that 1 Cor 3:18
 I speak as a *f* 2 Cor 11:23
 I have become a *f* 2 Cor 12:11

FOOLISH

of the *f* women speaks Job 2:10
 I was so *f* and Ps 73:22
f pulls it down with Prov 14:1
f man squanders it Prov 21:20
 "For My people are *f* Jer 4:22
f hearts were darkened Rom 1:21
 Has not God made *f* 1 Cor 1:20
 But God has chosen the *f* 1 Cor 1:27
 O *f* Galatians Gal 3:1
 nor *f* talking, nor coarse Eph 5:4
 But avoid *f* and ignorant 2 Tim 2:23
 were also once *f* Titus 3:3
 But avoid *f* disputes Titus 3:9

FOOLISHLY

man acts *f*, and a man Prov 14:17
 I speak *f*—I am bold 2 Cor 11:21

FOOLISHNESS

O God, You know my *f* Ps 69:5
 Forsake *f* and live Prov 9:6
 of fools proclaims *f* Prov 12:23
 The *f* of a man twists Prov 19:3
F is bound up in the Prov 22:15
 devising of *f* is sin Prov 24:9
 person will speak *f* Is 32:6
 of the cross is *f* 1 Cor 1:18

Because the *f* of God 1 Cor 1:25
 this world is *f* with God 1 Cor 3:19

FOOLS

f despise wisdom Prov 1:7
 folly of *f* is deceit Prov 14:8
F mock at sin Prov 14:9
 has no pleasure in *f* Eccl 5:4
F and blind! Matt 23:17
 to be wise, they became *f* Rom 1:22
 We are *f* for Christ's 1 Cor 4:10
 not as *f* but as wise Eph 5:15

FOOT

your *f* will tread upon Josh 1:3
 your sandal off your *f* Josh 5:15
f has trodden shall be Josh 14:9
 dash your *f* against a stone Ps 91:12
 will not allow your *f* Ps 121:3
f will not stumble Prov 3:23
 From the sole of the *f* Is 1:6
 you turn away your *f* Is 58:13
 dash your *f* against a stone Matt 4:6
f causes you to sin Matt 18:8
 you dash your *f* Luke 4:11
 If the *f* should say 1 Cor 12:15

FOOTMEN

have run with the *f* Jer 12:5

FOOTSTEPS

f were not known Ps 77:19
 and shall make His *f* Ps 85:13

FOOTSTOOL

God, and worship at His *f* Ps 99:5
 Your enemies Your *f* Ps 110:1
 throne, and earth is My *f* Is 66:1
 by the earth, for it is His *f* Matt 5:35
 Your enemies Your *f* Matt 22:44
 throne, and earth is My *f* Acts 7:49
 "Sit here at my *f* James 2:3

FORBID

come to Me, and do not *f* Matt 19:14
 said, "Do not *f* him Mark 9:39
 "Can anyone *f* water Acts 10:47
 prophesy, and do not *f* 1 Cor 14:39
f that I should boast Gal 6:14

FORBIDDEN

LORD your God has *f* you Deut 4:23
 they were *f* by the Holy Acts 16:6

FORBIDDING

confidence, no one *f* Acts 28:31
f us to speak to the 1 Thess 2:16
f to marry 1 Tim 4:3

FORCE

violent take it by *f* Matt 11:12
 come and take Him by *f* John 6:15
 a testament is in *f* Heb 9:17

FORCEFUL

f are right words Job 6:25

FORCES

Though they join *f* Prov 11:21

FOREFATHERS

f who refused to hear Jer 11:10
 and oppressed our *f* Acts 7:19
 conscience, as my *f* 2 Tim 1:3

FOREHEADS

strong against their *f* Ezek 3:8
 put a mark on the *f* Ezek 9:4
 seal of God on their *f* Rev 9:4
 his mark on their *f* Rev 20:4

FOREIGN

been a stranger in a *f* land Ex 2:22
 put away the *f* gods Josh 24:23
 loved many *f* women 1 Kin 11:1
 the LORD's song in a *f* land Ps 137:4
 set out *f* seedlings Is 17:10
 promise as in a *f* country Heb 11:9

FOREIGN GODS

"put away the *f* Gen 35:2

to jealousy with *f* Deut 32:16
 the LORD and serve *f* Josh 24:20
 So they put away the *f* Judg 10:16
 then put away the *f* 1 Sam 7:3
 the altars of the *f* 2 Chr 14:3
 He took away the *f* 2 Chr 33:15
 forsaken Me and served *f* Jer 5:19
 to be a proclaimer of *f* Acts 17:18

FOREIGNER

"I am a *f* and a Gen 23:4
 of me, since I am a *f* Ruth 2:10
 to God except this *f* Luke 17:18
 who speaks will be a *f* 1 Cor 14:11

FOREIGNERS

from the hand of *f* Ps 144:11
 with the children of *f* Is 2:6
f shall build up your Is 60:10
f who were there Acts 17:21
 longer strangers and *f* Eph 2:19

FOREKNEW

For whom He *f* Rom 8:29
 His people whom He *f* Rom 11:2

FOREKNOWLEDGE

purpose and *f* of God Acts 2:23
 according to the *f* 1 Pet 1:2

FOREORDAINED

He indeed was *f* 1 Pet 1:20

FORERUNNER

f has entered for us Heb 6:20

FORESAW

"I *f* the LORD Acts 2:25

FORESEEING

f that God would Gal 3:8

FORESEES

A prudent man *f* Prov 22:3

FORESKINS

in the flesh of your *f* Gen 17:11
f of the Philistines 1 Sam 18:25

FOREST

beast of the *f* is Mine Ps 50:10
 See how great a *f* James 3:5

FORESTS

and strips the *f* Ps 29:9

FORETOLD

have also *f* these days Acts 3:24
 killed those who *f* Acts 7:52

FOREVER

See HIS MERCY ENDURES FOREVER
 and eat, and live *f* Gen 3:22
 shall not strive with man *f* Gen 6:3
 This is My name *f* Ex 3:15
 and they shall inherit it *f* Ex 32:13
 to our children *f* Deut 29:29
 has loved Israel *f* 1 Kin 10:9
 for His mercy endures *f* 2 Chr 5:13
 for His mercy endures *f* 2 Chr 7:3
 I would not live *f* Job 7:16
 from this generation *f* Ps 12:7
 LORD sits as King *f* Ps 29:10
 Do not cast us off *f* Ps 44:23
 throne, O God, is *f* Ps 45:6
 "You are a priest *f* Ps 110:4
 His mercy endures *f* Ps 118:1
 F, O LORD, Your word is, Ps 119:89
 be moved, but abides *f* Ps 125:1
 From this time forth and *f* Ps 125:2
 This is My resting place *f* Ps 132:14
 name, O LORD, endures *f* Ps 135:13
 His mercy endures *f* Ps 136:1
 will bless Your name *f* Ps 145:1
 bless His holy name *f* Ps 145:21
 who keeps truth *f* Ps 146:6
 The LORD shall reign *f* Ps 146:10
 also established them *f* Ps 148:6
 lip shall be established *f* Prov 12:19
 for riches are not *f* Prov 27:24
 Trust in the LORD *f* Is 26:4

of our God stands *f* Is 40:8
 My salvation will be *f* Is 51:6
 will not cast off *f* Lam 3:31
 be the name of God *f* Dan 2:20
 Like the stars *f* Dan 12:3
 of the LORD our God *f* Mic 4:5
 and the glory *f* Matt 6:13
 eats this bread will live *f* John 6:58
 the Christ remains *f* John 12:34
 He may abide with you *f* John 14:16
 righteousness endures *f* 2 Cor 9:9
 who is blessed *f* 2 Cor 11:31
 to whom be glory *f* Gal 1:5
 generation, *f* and ever Eph 3:21
 and Father be glory *f* Phil 4:20
 throne, O God, is *f* Heb 1:8
 "You are a priest *f* Heb 5:6
f according to the order of Heb 6:20
 has been perfected *f* Heb 7:28
 one sacrifice for sins *f* Heb 10:12
 yesterday, today, and *f* Heb 13:8
 lives and abides *f* 1 Pet 1:23
 of the LORD endures *f* 1 Pet 1:25
 blackness of darkness *f* Jude 1:7
 power, both now and *f* Jude 25
 throne, and to the Lamb, *f* Rev 5:13
 And they shall reign *f* Rev 22:5

FOREVERMORE

Blessed be the LORD *f* Ps 89:52
 this time forth and *f* Ps 113:2
 behold, I am alive *f* Rev 1:18

FOREWARNED

all such, as we also *f* 1 Thess 4:6

FORGAVE

f the iniquity of my Ps 32:5
 and *f* him the debt Matt 18:27
 I *f* you all that debt Matt 18:32
 to repay, he freely *f* Luke 7:42
 the one whom he *f* more Luke 7:43
 God in Christ *f* Eph 4:32
 even as Christ *f* Col 3:13

FORGED

The proud have *f* Ps 119:69

FORGERS

But you *f* of lies Job 13:4

FORGET

"For God has made me *f* Gen 41:51
 yourselves, lest you *f* Deut 4:23
f the covenant of your Deut 4:31
f the LORD who brought Deut 6:12
 the paths of all who *f* Job 8:13
 all the nations that *f* Ps 9:17
 this, you who *f* God Ps 50:22
f the works of God Ps 78:7
 I will not *f* Your word Ps 119:16
 If I *f* you, O Jerusalem Ps 137:5
 My son, do not *f* Prov 3:1
f her nursing child Is 49:15
f the LORD your Maker Is 51:13
 virgin *f* her ornaments Jer 2:32
f your work and labor Heb 6:10
 Do not *f* to entertain Heb 13:2
 But do not *f* to do good Heb 13:16
 do not *f* this one thing 2 Pet 3:8

FORGETFUL

not a *f* hearer but a doer James 1:25

FORGETFULNESS

in the land of *f* Ps 88:12

FORGETS

f the covenant of her Prov 2:17
 and immediately *f* James 1:24

FORGETTING

f those things which Phil 3:13

FORGIVE

please *f* my sin only this Ex 10:17
 if You will *f* their sin Ex 32:32
 dwelling place, and *f* 1 Kin 8:39
f their sin and heal 2 Chr 7:14

good, and ready to *f* Ps 86:5
 For I will *f* their iniquity Jer 31:34
 O Lord, hear! O Lord, *f* Dan 9:19
 And *f* us our debts Matt 6:12
 Father will also *f* Matt 6:14
f men their trespasses Matt 6:15
 sin against me, and I *f* Matt 18:21
 his heart, does not *f* Matt 18:35
 Who can *f* sins but God Mark 2:7
f him, that your Father Mark 11:25
 if you do not *f*, neither Mark 11:26
 power on earth to *f* sins Luke 5:24
F, and you will be Luke 6:37
f us our sins, for we also Luke 11:4
 and if he repents, *f* him Luke 17:3
 'I repent,' you shall *f* him Luke 17:4
f them, for they do not Luke 23:34
f the sins of any John 20:23
 you ought rather to *f* 2 Cor 2:7
 anything, I also *f* 2 Cor 2:10
F me this wrong 2 Cor 12:13
f us our sins and to 1 John 1:9

FORGIVEN

transgression is *f* Ps 32:1
 sins be *f* them Mark 4:12
 to whom little is *f* Luke 7:47
 of your heart may be *f* Acts 8:22
 indeed I have *f* 2 Cor 2:10
f you all trespasses Col 2:13
 sins, he will be *f* James 5:15
 your sins are *f* 1 John 2:12

FORGIVENESS

But there is *f* with Ps 130:4
 God belong mercy and *f* Dan 9:9
 never has *f*, but is subject Mark 3:29
 preached to you the *f* Acts 13:38
 they may receive *f* Acts 26:18
 His blood, the *f* Eph 1:7
 His blood, the *f* of sins Col 1:14

FORGIVES

f all your iniquities Ps 103:3
 "Who is this who even *f* Luke 7:49

FORGIVING

tenderhearted, *f* Eph 4:32
 and *f* one another Col 3:13

FORGOT

remember Joseph, but *f* Gen 40:23
f the LORD their God Judg 3:7
f His works and His Ps 78:11
 They soon *f* His works Ps 106:13

FORGOTTEN

f the God who fathered Deut 32:18
 needy shall not always be *f* Ps 9:18
 "Why have You *f* Ps 42:9
 If we had *f* the name Ps 44:20
 memory of them is *f* Eccl 9:5
 you will not be *f* Is 44:21
 And my Lord has *f* Is 49:14
 I have *f* prosperity Lam 3:17
 not one of them is *f* Luke 12:6
f the exhortation Heb 12:5
f that he was cleansed 2 Pet 1:9

FORM

earth was without *f* Gen 1:2
 he sees the *f* of the LORD Num 12:8
 of the words, but saw no *f* Deut 4:12
 Who would *f* a god or Is 44:10
f the light and create Is 45:7
 He has no *f* or comeliness Is 53:2
 descended in bodily *f* Luke 3:22
 time, nor seen His *f* John 5:37
 having the *f* of knowledge Rom 2:20
 For the *f* of this 1 Cor 7:31
 who, being in the *f* Phil 2:6
 the *f* of a bondservant Phil 2:7
 Abstain from every *f* 1 Thess 5:22
 having a *f* of godliness 2 Tim 3:5

FORMED

And the LORD God *f* Gen 2:7

And His hands *f* Ps 95:5
f my inward parts Ps 139:13
f everything gives the Prov 26:10
 say of him who *f* Is 29:16
 Me there was no God *f* Is 43:10
 This people I have *f* Is 43:21
 No weapon *f* against you Is 54:17
 "Before I *f* you in Jer 1:5
 Will the thing *f* say to Rom 9:20
 until Christ is *f* Gal 4:19
 For Adam was *f* first 1 Tim 2:13

FORMER

according to the *f* Gen 40:13
 not remember *f* inquiries Ps 79:8
f lovingkindness Ps 89:49
f days better than Eccl 7:10
 Who gives rain, both the *f* Jer 5:24
f rain to the earth Hos 6:3
 the *f* rain, and the latter Joel 2:23
f prophets preached Zech 1:4
 through the *f* prophets Zech 7:12
 The *f* account I made, O Acts 1:1
f conduct in Judaism Gal 1:13
 your *f* conduct, the old Eph 4:22
 yourselves to the *f* lusts 1 Pet 1:14
 in *f* times, the holy women 1 Pet 3:5
f things have passed Rev 21:4

FORMS

clay say to him who *f* Is 45:9
f the spirit of man Zech 12:1

FORNICATION

"We were not born of *f* John 8:41
 adultery, *f*, uncleanness Gal 5:19
 of the wrath of her *f* Rev 14:8

FORNICATOR

you know, that no *f* Eph 5:5
 lest there be any *f* Heb 12:16

FORNICATORS

but *f* and adulterers Heb 13:4

FORSAKE

but if you *f* Him 2 Chr 15:2
 and did not *f* them Neh 9:17
 mercies You did not *f* Neh 9:19
 Do not leave me nor *f* me Ps 27:9
 father and my mother *f* me Ps 27:10
 Cease from anger, and *f* Ps 37:8
 And does not *f* His saints Ps 37:28
 "If his sons *f* My law Ps 89:30
f His inheritance Ps 94:14
 But I did not *f* Your Ps 119:87
 father, and do not *f* Prov 1:8
 Let not mercy and truth *f* Prov 3:3
 worthless idols *f* Jon 2:8
 of you does not *f* Luke 14:33
 never leave you nor *f* Heb 13:5

FORSAKEN

My God, why have You *f* Ps 22:1
 seen the righteous *f* Ps 37:25
 you dread will be *f* Is 7:16
 cities will be as a *f* Is 17:9
 a mere moment I have *f* Is 54:7
 no longer be termed *F* Is 62:4
 they have *f* Me Jer 2:13
 My God, why have You *f* Matt 27:46
 persecuted, but not *f* 2 Cor 4:9
 for Demas has *f* 2 Tim 4:10
f the right way 2 Pet 2:15

FORSAKES

f the companion of her Prov 2:17
 and *f* them will have Prov 28:13

FORSAKING

f the assembling Heb 10:25

FORSOOK

f God who made him Deut 32:15
 all the disciples *f* Matt 26:56
 with me, but all *f* 2 Tim 4:16
 By faith he *f* Egypt Heb 11:27

FORT

Man the *f*! Nah 2:1

FORTRESS

LORD is my rock, my *f* 2 Sam 22:2
 my rock of refuge, a *f* Ps 31:2
 He is my refuge and my *f* Ps 91:2

FORTUNE-TELLING

masters much profit by *f* Acts 16:16

FORTY

to rain on the earth *f* days Gen 7:4
 to pass, at the end of *f* days Gen 8:6
 not do it for the sake of *f* Gen 18:29
 Isaac was *f* years old Gen 25:20
 Esau was *f* years old Gen 26:34
F days were required Gen 50:3
 Israel ate manna *f* years Ex 16:35
 mountain *f* days and *f* Ex 24:18
 LORD *f* days and *f* nights Ex 34:28
 out the land after *f* days Num 13:25
 in the wilderness *f* years Num 14:33
f days, for each day you Num 14:34
 in the wilderness *f* years Num 32:13
 These *f* years the LORD Deut 2:7
f years in the wilderness Deut 8:2
 foot swell these *f* years Josh 14:7
 first, *f* days and *f* nights Deut 9:18
f nights I kept prostrating Deut 9:25
 mountain *f* days and *f* Deut 10:10
F blows he may give him Deut 25:3
f years old when Moses Josh 14:7
 land had rest for *f* years Judg 5:31
 the Philistines for *f* years Judg 13:1
 judged Israel *f* years 1 Sam 4:18
 presented himself *f* 1 Sam 17:16
f nights as far as Horeb 1 Kin 19:8
 For *f* years I was grieved Ps 95:10
f days, and Nineveh shall Jon 3:4
 when He had fasted *f* days Matt 4:2
 for *f* days by the devil Luke 4:2
 seen by them during *f* days Acts 1:3
 when he was *f* years old Acts 7:23
 when *f* years had passed Acts 7:30
f who had formed this Acts 23:13
 more than *f* of them lie Acts 23:21
f stripes minus one 2 Cor 11:24
 and saw My works *f* years Heb 3:9
 was He angry *f* years Heb 3:17

FORWARD

David from that day *f* 1 Sam 16:13
 David from that day *f* 1 Sam 18:9

FOUGHT

f against me without Ps 109:3
 I have *f* the good fight, I 2 Tim 4:7

FOUL

My wounds are *f* Ps 38:5
f weather today Matt 16:3
 a prison for every *f* Rev 18:2

FOUND

f a helper comparable Gen 2:20
 Why have I *f* favor in Ruth 2:10
 where can wisdom be *f* Job 28:12
 when You may be *f* Ps 32:6
f My servant David Ps 89:20
 a thousand I have *f* Eccl 7:28
 this only I have *f* Eccl 7:29
f the one I love Song 3:4
 LORD while He may be *f* Is 55:6
 none was *f* like Daniel Dan 1:19
 he *f* them ten times better Dan 1:20
 balances, and *f* wanting Dan 5:27
 any error or fault *f* in him Dan 6:4
f Daniel praying and Dan 6:11
 your fruit is *f* Hos 14:8
 and when you have *f* Him Matt 2:8
 not *f* such great faith Matt 8:10
 when he had *f* one pearl Matt 13:46
f nothing on it but leaves Matt 21:19
f them sleeping, and said Matt 26:40
 have *f* favor with God Luke 1:30
 they *f* Him in the temple Luke 2:46
 fruit on it and *f* none Luke 13:6

he was lost and is *f* Luke 15:24
 they *f* the stone rolled Luke 24:2
f the Messiah" (which John 1:41
 we *f* the prison shut Acts 5:23
 I even *f* an altar with Acts 17:23
 I *f* to bring death Rom 7:10
 that one be *f* faithful 1 Cor 4:2
 and be *f* in Him Phil 3:9
 being *f* blameless 1 Tim 3:10
 be diligent to be *f* 2 Pet 3:14
 anyone not *f* written in Rev 20:15

FOUNDATION

he shall lay its *f* Josh 6:26
 His *f* is in the holy Ps 87:1
 and justice are the *f* Ps 89:14
 Of old you laid the *f* Ps 102:25
 has an everlasting *f* Prov 10:25
 deep and laid the *f* Luke 6:48
 the earth without a *f* Luke 6:49
 loved Me before the *f* John 17:24
 I have laid the *f* 1 Cor 3:10
f can anyone lay than 1 Cor 3:11
 us in Him before the *f* Eph 1:4
 the solid *f* of God 2 Tim 2:19
 not laying again the *f* Heb 6:1
 Lamb slain from the *f* Rev 13:8
 the first *f* was jasper Rev 21:19

FOUNDATIONS

when I laid the *f* Job 38:4
f are destroyed Ps 11:3
 You who laid the *f* Ps 104:5
 shall raise up the *f* Is 58:12
 that the *f* of the prison Acts 16:26
 The *f* of the wall Rev 21:19

FOUNDED

For He has *f* it upon Ps 24:2
 by wisdom *f* the earth Prov 3:19
 shake it, for it was *f* Luke 6:48

FOUNTAIN

Let your *f* be blessed Prov 5:18
 Immediately the *f* of her Mark 5:29
 will become in him a *f* John 4:14
 I will give of the *f* of the Rev 21:6

FOUNTAINS

on that day all the *f* Gen 7:11
f be dispersed abroad Prov 5:16
 when there were no *f* Prov 8:24
 lead them to living *f* Rev 7:17

FOUR

became *f* riverheads Gen 2:10
 prophets are *f* hundred 1 Kin 18:22
 Each one had *f* faces Ezek 10:14
 and each one *f* wings Ezek 10:21
 I see *f* men loose, walking Dan 3:25
f great beasts came up Dan 7:3
f kingdoms shall arise Dan 8:22
 are *f* spirits of heaven Zech 6:5
 ate were *f* thousand Matt 15:38
 been in the tomb *f* days John 11:17
 sheet bound at the *f* Acts 10:11
 Now this man had *f* virgin Acts 21:9
 were *f* living creatures full Rev 4:6
 the *f* angels to whom it was Rev 7:2

FOWLER

you from the snare of the *f* Ps 91:3
 bird from the hand of the *f* Prov 6:5

FOX

build, if even a *f* Neh 4:3
 "Go, tell that *f* Luke 13:32

FOXES

caught three hundred *f* Judg 15:4
f that spoil the vines Song 2:15
F have holes and birds Luke 9:58

FRAGMENTS

f that remained Matt 14:20
 of the leftover *f* Luke 9:17
 baskets with the *f* John 6:13

FRAGRANCE

garments is like the *f* Song 4:11
 was filled with the *f* John 12:3
 we are to God the *f* 2 Cor 2:15

FRAGRANT

the merchant's *f* powders Song 3:6
 flask of very costly *f* oil Matt 26:7
 an alabaster flask of *f* oil Luke 7:37
 prepared spices and *f* Luke 23:56
 was this *f* oil not sold John 12:5
f oil and frankincense Rev 18:13

FRAIL

that I may know how *f* Ps 39:4

FRAME

For He knows our *f* Ps 103:14
f was not hidden Ps 139:15

FRAMED

that the worlds were *f* Heb 11:3

FRANKINCENSE

oil on it, and put *f* on it Lev 2:1
 with myrrh and *f* Song 3:6
 gold, *f*, and myrrh Matt 2:11
 incense, fragrant oil and *f* Rev 18:13

FREE

and the servant is *f* Job 3:19
 let the oppressed go *f* Is 58:6
 "You will be made *f* John 8:33
 if the Son makes you *f* John 8:36
 And having been set *f* Rom 6:18
 now having been set *f* Rom 6:22
 Jesus has made me *f* Rom 8:2
 Am I not *f* 1 Cor 9:1
 is neither slave nor *f* Gal 3:28
 Jerusalem above is *f* Gal 4:26
 Christ has made us *f* Gal 5:1
 he is a slave or *f* Eph 6:8
 poor, *f* and slave Rev 13:16

FREED

has died has been *f* Rom 6:7

FREEDMAN

slave is the Lord's *f* 1 Cor 7:22

FREEDOM

The LORD gives *f* to the Ps 146:7

FREELY

the garden you may *f* Gen 2:16
 I will love them *f* Hos 14:4
F you have received Matt 10:8
f give us all things Rom 8:32
 that have been *f* 1 Cor 2:12
 the water of life *f* Rev 22:17

FREEWOMAN

the other by a *f* Gal 4:22
 with the son of the *f* Gal 4:30

FRESH

My glory is *f* within Job 29:20
 they shall be *f* Ps 92:14
 both salt water and *f* James 3:12

FRETS

and his heart *f* Prov 19:3

FRIEND

a man speaks to his *f* Ex 33:11
 of Abraham Your *f* 2 Chr 20:7
 though he were my *f* Ps 35:14
f You have put far from me Ps 88:18
f loves at all times Prov 17:17
f who sticks closer Prov 18:24
 not forsake your own *f* Prov 27:10
 a *f* of tax collectors Matt 11:19
 of you shall have a *f* Luke 11:5
f Lazarus sleeps John 11:11
 you are not Caesar's *f* John 19:12
 Philemon our beloved *f* Philem 1
 he was called the *f* James 2:23
 wants to be a *f* James 4:4

FRIENDLY

friends must himself be *f* Prov 18:24

FRIENDS

and hate you *f* 2 Sam 19:6
 My *f* scorn me Job 16:20
f have forgotten me Job 19:14
 the rich has many *f* Prov 14:20
 one's life for his *f* John 15:13
 You are My *f* John 15:14
 I have called you *f* John 15:15
 to forbid any of his *f* Acts 24:23

FRIENDSHIP

no *f* with an angry man Prov 22:24
 that *f* with the world James 4:4

FROGS

your territory with *f* Ex 8:2
f coming out of the Rev 16:13

FRONTLETS

on your hand and as *f* Ex 13:16
 and they shall be as *f* Deut 6:8

FROZEN

the broad waters are *f* Job 37:10

FRUIT

See BEAR FRUIT
 and showed them the *f* Num 13:26
 Blessed shall be the *f* Deut 28:4
 brings forth its *f* Ps 1:3
f is better than gold Prov 8:19
 The *f* of the righteous Prov 11:30
 with good by the *f* Prov 12:14
f was sweet to my Song 2:3
 they shall eat the *f* Is 3:10
 like the first *f* Is 28:4
 "I create the *f* Is 57:19
f is found in Me Hos 14:8
 does not bear good *f* Matt 3:10
 good tree bears good *f* Matt 7:17
 not drink of this *f* Matt 26:29
 and blessed is the *f* Luke 1:42
 life, and bring no *f* Luke 8:14
 and he came seeking *f* Luke 13:6
 And if it bears *f* Luke 13:9
 branch that bears *f* John 15:2
 that you bear much *f* John 15:8
 should go and bear *f* John 15:16
f did you have then in Rom 6:21
 God, you have your *f* Rom 6:22
 that we should bear *f* Rom 7:4
 But the *f* of the Spirit is Gal 5:22
 (for the *f* of the Spirit is Eph 5:9
 but I seek the *f* Phil 4:17
 yields the peaceable *f* Heb 12:11
 the *f* of our lips, giving Heb 13:15
 Now the *f* of James 3:18
 precious *f* of the earth James 5:7
 autumn trees without *f* Jude 12
 tree yielding its *f* Rev 22:2

FRUITFUL

See BE FRUITFUL AND MULTIPLY
 them, saying, "Be *f* Gen 1:22
 a *f* bough, a *f* Gen 49:22
 wife shall be like a *f* Ps 128:3
 heaven and *f* seasons Acts 14:17
 pleasing Him, being *f* Col 1:10

FRUITS

Therefore bear *f* Matt 3:8
 know them by their *f* Matt 7:16
 and increase the *f* 2 Cor 9:10
 being filled with the *f* of Phil 1:11
 of mercy and good *f* James 3:17
 which bore twelve *f* Rev 22:2

FUEL

people shall be as *f* Is 9:19
 into the fire for *f* Ezek 15:4

FUGITIVE

A *f* and a vagabond Gen 4:12

FULFILL

the LORD, to *f* his vow Lev 22:21
 And you shall *f* 1 Kin 5:9
f all your petitions Ps 20:5

f the desire of those Ps 145:19
 for us to *f* all Matt 3:15
 come to destroy but to *f* Matt 5:17
 for the flesh, to *f* its lusts Rom 13:14
f the law of Christ Gal 6:2
f my joy by being Phil 2:2
 and *f* all the good 2 Thess 1:11
 evangelist, *f* your ministry 2 Tim 4:5
 If you really *f* James 2:8

FULFILLED

be *f* which was spoken by Matt 1:22
 the law till all is *f* Matt 5:18
 could the Scriptures be *f* Matt 26:54
 is *f*, and the kingdom Mark 1:15
 is *f* in your hearing Luke 4:21
 of the Gentiles are *f* Luke 21:24
 all things must be *f* Luke 24:44
 this joy of mine is *f* John 3:29
 the Scripture may be *f* John 13:18
 My joy *f* in themselves John 17:13
 this Scripture had to be *f* Acts 1:16
 they had *f* their ministry Acts 12:25
 of the law might be *f* Rom 8:4
 loves another has *f* Rom 13:8
 For all the law is *f* Gal 5:14
 the words of God are *f* Rev 17:17

FULFILLMENT

for there will be a *f* Luke 1:45
 love is the *f* of the Rom 13:10

FULL

I went out *f* Ruth 1:21
 For I am *f* of words Job 32:18
 of the LORD is *f* Ps 29:4
 who has his quiver *f* Ps 127:5
 Lest I be *f* and deny Prov 30:9
 yet the sea is not *f* Eccl 1:7
 the whole earth is *f* Is 6:3
 and it was *f* of bones Ezek 37:1
 But truly I am *f* Mic 3:8
 whole body will be *f* Matt 6:22
 of the Father, *f* of grace John 1:14
 your joy may be *f* John 15:11
 chose Stephen, a man *f* Acts 6:5
 You are already *f* 1 Cor 4:8
 learned both to be *f* Phil 4:12
 I am *f*, having received Phil 4:18
 in *f* assurance of faith Heb 10:22
 that your joy may be *f* 1 John 1:4
 we may receive a *f* reward 2 John 8

FULL-GROWN

and sin, when it is *f* James 1:15

FULLNESS

satisfied with the *f* Ps 36:8
f we have all received John 1:16
 to Israel until the *f* Rom 11:25
 But when the *f* of the Gal 4:4
 dispensation of the *f* Eph 1:10
 filled with all the *f* Eph 3:19
 Him dwells all the *f* Col 2:9

FULLY

did not *f* follow the LORD 1 Kin 11:6
 time has not yet *f* come John 7:8
 Pentecost had *f* come Acts 2:1
 being *f* convinced that Rom 4:21
f preached the gospel Rom 15:19
f pleasing Him, being Col 1:10
 preached *f* through me 2 Tim 4:17
 rest your hope *f* upon the 1 Pet 1:13

FUME

Why do you *f* with envy Ps 68:16

FUNCTION

do not have the same *f* Rom 12:4

FURIOUS

You have been *f* Ps 89:38
f man do not go Prov 22:24
 fury and in *f* rebukes Ezek 5:15
 LORD avenges and is *f* Nah 1:2
 this, they were *f* Acts 5:33

FURIOUSLY

for he drives *f* 2 Kin 9:20

FURNACE

you out of the iron *f* Deut 4:20
 tested you in the *f* Is 48:10
 of a burning fiery *f* Dan 3:6
 cast them into the *f* Matt 13:42
 the smoke of a great *f* Rev 9:2

FURNISHED

also *f* her table Prov 9:2
 a large upper room, *f* Mark 14:15

FURNISHINGS

and the pattern of all its *f* Ex 25:9
 tabernacle and all its *f* Num 1:50
 Solomon had all the *f* 1 Kin 7:48
 all the holy *f* that were in 2 Chr 5:5

FURY

F is not in Me Is 27:4
 they are full of the *f* Is 51:20
f to His adversaries Is 59:18
 My own *f*, it sustained Is 63:5
 even in anger and *f* Jer 21:5
 and I will cause My *f* Ezek 5:13
 Thus will I spend My *f* Ezek 6:12
 in anger and *f* on the Mic 5:15

FUTILE

For it is not a *f* thing Deut 32:47
 of the peoples are *f* Jer 10:3
 wise, that they are *f* 1 Cor 3:20
 risen, your faith is *f* 1 Cor 15:17

FUTILITY

allotted months of *f* Job 7:3
f have You created all Ps 89:47
 was subjected to *f* Rom 8:20

FUTURE

for the *f* of that man Ps 37:37
 the *f* of the wicked Ps 37:38
 to give you a *f* and a hope Jer 29:11
 to many days in the *f* Dan 8:26

GAAL

Son of Ebed; vilifies Abimelech, Judg
 9:26-41

GAASH

Hill of Ephraim, Judg 2:9
 Joshua buried near, Josh 24:30

GABBATHA

Place of Pilate's court, John 19:13

GABRIEL

Messenger archangel; interprets Dan-
 iel's vision, Dan 8:16-27
 Reveals the prophecy of 70 weeks, Dan
 9:21-27
 Announces John's birth, Luke 1:11-22
 Announces Christ's birth, Luke
 1:26-38
 Stands in God's presence, Luke 1:19

GAD

Son of Jacob by Zilpah, Gen 30:10, 11
 Blessed by Jacob, Gen 49:19
 ——— Tribe of:
 Census of, Num 1:24, 25
 Territory of, Num 32:20-36
 Captivity of, 1 Chr 5:26
 Later references to, Rev 7:5
 ——— Prophet in David's reign, 1 Sam
 22:5
 Message of, to David, 2 Sam 24:10-16

GADARENES (or Gergesenes)

People east of the Sea of Galilee, Mark
 5:1
 Healing of demon-possessed in terri-
 tory of, Matt 8:28-34

GAIN

See DISHONEST GAIN

aside after dishonest *g* 1 Sam 8:3
 they did not *g* possession Ps 44:3
 That we may *g* a heart of Ps 90:12
g than fine gold Prov 3:14
 He who is greedy for *g* Prov 15:27
 will have no lack of *g* Prov 31:11
 a time to *g* Eccl 3:6
 to get dishonest *g* Ezek 22:27
 him who covets evil *g* Hab 2:9
 and to die is *g* Phil 1:21
 what things were *g* to me Phil 3:7
 rubbish, that I may *g* Phil 3:8
 is a means of *g* 1 Tim 6:5
 contentment is great *g* 1 Tim 6:6
 the sake of dishonest *g* Titus 1:11
 for dishonest *g* 1 Pet 5:2
 people to *g* advantage Jude 16

GAINED

which he had *g* Gen 31:18
g in the land of Canaan Gen 36:6
 have *g* Him the victory Ps 98:1
 Wealth *g* by dishonesty Prov 13:11
 Bread *g* by deceit is Prov 20:17
 An inheritance *g* hastily Prov 20:21
g more wisdom than all Eccl 1:16
 you have *g* your brother Matt 18:15
 received two *g* two more Matt 25:17
g five more talents Matt 25:20

GAINS

understanding *g* favor Prov 13:15
g the whole world Matt 16:26

GAIUS

Companion of Paul, Acts 19:29
 ——— Convert at Derbe, Acts 20:4
 ——— Paul's host at Corinth, Rom 16:23;
 1 Cor 1:14

GALATIA

Paul visits, Acts 16:6; 18:23
 Paul writes to Christians in, Gal 1:1
 Peter writes to Christians in, 1 Pet 1:1

GALILEANS

Speech of, Mark 14:70
 Faith of, John 4:45
 Pilate's cruelty toward, Luke 13:1, 2

GALILEE

Prophecies concerning, Deut 33:18-23;
 Is 9:1, 2
 Dialect of, distinctive, Matt 26:73
 Herod's jurisdiction over, Luke 3:1
 Christ's contacts with, Matt 2:22;
 4:12-25; 26:32; 27:55; John 4:1, 3

GALILEE, SEA OF

Scene of many events in Christ's life,
 Mark 7:31
 Called Chinnereth, Num 34:11
 Later called Gennesaret, Luke 5:1

GALL

grapes are grapes of *g* Deut 32:32
 They also gave me *g* Ps 69:21
 the wormwood and the *g* Lam 3:19
 turned justice into *g* Amos 6:12
 wine mingled with *g* Matt 27:34

GALLIO

Roman proconsul of Achaia, dismisses
 charges against Paul, Acts 18:12-17

GALLONS

twenty or thirty *g* apiece John 2:6

GALLOWES

both were hanged on a *g* Esth 2:23
 should be hanged on the *g* Esth 9:25

GAMALIEL

Famous Jewish teacher, Acts 22:3
 Respected by people, Acts 5:34-39

GAME

because he ate of his *g* Gen 25:28
 Bring me *g* and make Gen 27:7

GAP

and stand in the *g* Ezek 22:30

GARDEN

LORD God planted a *g* Gen 2:8
g enclosed is my Song 4:12
 like a watered *g* Is 58:11
 Eden, the *g* of God Ezek 28:13
 raise up for them a *g* Ezek 34:29
 where there was a *g* John 18:1
 in the *g* a new tomb John 19:41

GARDENER

Him to be the *g* John 20:15

GARDENS

I made myself *g* Eccl 2:5
 plant *g* and eat their Jer 29:5

GARLANDS

brought oxen and *g* Acts 14:13

GARLIC

the onions, and the *g* Num 11:5

GARMENT

and Japheth took a *g* Gen 9:23
 like a hairy *g* all over Gen 25:25
 she caught him by his *g* Gen 39:12
 she kept his *g* with her Gen 39:16
 beautiful Babylonian *g* Josh 7:21
 put on your best *g* Ruth 3:3
g that is moth-eaten Job 13:28
 made sackcloth my *g* Ps 69:11
 with light as with a *g* Ps 104:2
 one who takes away a *g* Prov 25:20
 the *g* of praise for the Is 61:3
 the hem of His *g* Matt 9:20
 have on a wedding *g* Matt 22:11
 cloth on an old *g* Mark 2:21
 throwing aside his *g* Mark 10:50
 all grow old like a *g* Heb 1:11
 hating even the *g* Jude 23

GARMENTS

took off her widow's *g* Gen 38:14
 the *g* of her widowhood Gen 38:19
g did not wear out on Deut 8:4
 and old *g* on themselves Josh 9:5
 our *g* and our sandals Josh 9:13
 cut off their *g* in the 2 Sam 10:4
 Why are your *g* hot Job 37:17
 They divide My *g* Ps 22:18
 She makes linen *g* and Prov 31:24
g always be white Eccl 9:8
g rolled in blood Is 9:5
 from Edom, with dyed *g* Is 63:1
 nor were their *g* affected Dan 3:27
 your heart, and not your *g* Joel 2:13
 Take away the filthy *g* Zech 3:4
 man clothed in soft *g* Matt 11:8
 and divided His *g* Matt 27:35
 by them in shining *g* Luke 24:4
 and laid aside His *g* John 13:4
 divided My *g* among John 19:24
g which Dorcas had made Acts 9:39
g are moth-eaten James 5:2
 be clothed in white *g* Rev 3:5

GARRISON

gathered the whole *g* Matt 27:27
 Damascenes with a *g* 2 Cor 11:32

GATE

sitting in the *g* of Sodom Gen 19:1
 Boaz went up to the *g* Ruth 4:1
 people who were at the *g* Ruth 4:11
 This is the *g* of the Ps 118:20
 by the narrow *g* Matt 7:13
 Because narrow is the *g* Matt 7:14
 by the Sheep *G* a pool John 5:2
 laid daily at the *g* Acts 3:2
 she did not open the *g* Acts 12:14
 suffered outside the *g* Heb 13:12
 each individual *g* Rev 21:21

GATES

possess the *g* of those Gen 24:60
g are burned with fire Neh 1:3

I commanded the *g* to be Neh 13:19
 they go down to the *g* Job 17:16
 up your heads, O you *g* Ps 24:7
 The LORD loves the *g* Ps 87:2
 Enter into His *g* with Ps 100:4
 Open to me the *g* Ps 118:19
 watching daily at my *g* Prov 8:34
 is known in the *g* Prov 31:23
 praise her in the *g* Prov 31:31
 go through the *g* Is 62:10
 and the *g* of Hades Matt 16:18
 wail with twelve *g* Rev 21:12
g were twelve pearls Rev 21:21
g shall not be shut Rev 21:25

GATH

Philistine city, 1 Sam 6:17
 Ark carried to, 1 Sam 5:8
 David takes refuge in, 1 Sam 21:10–15
 David's second flight to, 1 Sam 27:3–12
 Captured by David, 1 Chr 18:1
 Destruction of, prophetic, Amos 6:1–3
 Name becomes proverbial, Mic 1:10

GATH HEPHER

Birthplace of Jonah, 2 Kin 14:25

GATHER

g my soul with sinners Ps 26:9
G My saints together Ps 50:5
 and a time to *g* stones Eccl 3:5
g the lambs with His Is 40:11
g His wheat into the Matt 3:12
 sow nor reap nor *g* Matt 6:26
 Do men *g* grapes from Matt 7:16
g where I have not Matt 25:26
g together His elect Mark 13:27
 who does not *g* with Me Luke 11:23
 often I wanted to *g* your Luke 13:34
G up the fragments that John 6:12
 of the times He might *g* Eph 1:10

GATHERED

g little had no lack Ex 16:18
 And *g* out of the lands Ps 107:3
g some of every kind Matt 13:47
g together in My name Matt 18:20
 the nations will be *g* Matt 25:32
 many were *g* together Acts 12:12
g the church together Acts 14:27
 when Paul had *g* a bundle Acts 28:3
 when you are *g* together 1 Cor 5:4
 who *g* much had nothing 2 Cor 8:15
 they *g* them together Rev 16:16

GATHERING

g together of the waters Gen 1:10
 widow was there *g* 1 Kin 17:10
 I am *g* a couple of sticks 1 Kin 17:12
 they were three days *g* 2 Chr 20:25
 He gives the work of *g* Eccl 2:26
g where you have not Matt 25:24
g a mob, set all the city in Acts 17:5
 for this disorderly *g* Acts 19:40
g together to Him 2 Thess 2:1

GATHERS

g the waters of the Ps 33:7
 His heart *g* iniquity Ps 41:6
 He *g* together the outcasts Ps 147:2
g her food in the Prov 6:8
 He who *g* in summer is a Prov 10:5
 he who *g* by labor will Prov 13:11
 extortion *g* it for him who Prov 28:8
 The Lord *G*od, who Is 56:8
 together, as a hen *g* Matt 23:37

GAUNT

out of the river, ugly and *g* Gen 41:3
g and ugly cows ate up Gen 41:20

GAVE

So Adam *g* names to all Gen 2:20
 She also *g* to her husband Gen 3:6
 to be with me, she *g* Gen 3:12
 he *g* him a tithe of all Gen 14:20

g her to her husband Gen 16:3
 and *g* the lad a drink Gen 21:19
 hand, and *g* him a drink Gen 24:18
 Abraham *g* all that he had Gen 25:5
 Jacob *g* Esau bread and Gen 25:34
 which God *g* to Abraham Gen 28:4
g him favor in the sight Gen 39:21
 Joseph *g* a command Gen 42:25
 it *g* light by night to the Ex 14:20
 He *g* Moses two tablets of Ex 31:18
 So they *g* it to me, and I Ex 32:24
g the children of Israel Num 13:32
 stone and *g* them to me Deut 5:22
 the LORD *g* me the two Deut 9:11
g you on this side of the Josh 1:14
g it as an inheritance Josh 11:23
 So he *g* her the upper Josh 15:19
 The LORD *g* them rest all Josh 21:44
 Samson *g* a feast there Judg 14:10
g the changes of clothing Judg 14:19
 therefore I *g* her to your Judg 15:2
 LORD *g* her conception Ruth 4:13
g birth, for her labor 1 Sam 4:19
 God *g* him another heart 1 Sam 10:9
g it to David, with his 1 Sam 18:4
 Saul *g* him Michal 1 Sam 18:27
 So the priest *g* him holy 1 Sam 21:6
g him the sword of 1 Sam 22:10
 this woman also *g* birth 1 Kin 3:18
 God *g* Solomon wisdom 1 Kin 4:29
 Hiram *g* Solomon cedar 1 Kin 5:10
g to King Solomon 1 Kin 10:10
g a commandment 1 Chr 14:12
 David *g* his son 1 Chr 28:11
g it to the workmen 2 Chr 34:10
 Hilkiah *g* the book to 2 Chr 34:15
 Josiah *g* the lay people 2 Chr 35:7
 so he readily *g* beauty Esth 2:9
g gifts according to the Esth 2:18
 He also *g* him a copy of Esth 4:8
 and *g* it to Mordecai Esth 8:2
 return to God who *g* it Eccl 12:7
 of the eunuchs *g* names Dan 1:7
 and *g* them vegetables Dan 1:16
 God *g* them knowledge Dan 1:17
g him many great gifts Dan 2:48
 Belshazzar *g* the command Dan 5:2
g thanks before his God Dan 6:10
 He *g* them power over Matt 10:1
g You this authority Matt 21:23
 hungry and you *g* Me Matt 25:35
g thanks, and *g* it to Matt 26:27
g Him sour wine Matt 27:34
 platter, and *g* it to Mark 6:28
 To many blind He *g* sight Luke 7:21
g Me no water for My Luke 7:44
g them to the innkeeper Luke 10:35
 no one *g* him anything Luke 15:16
 saw it, *g* praise to God Luke 18:43
 to them He *g* the right to John 1:12
 that He *g* His only John 3:16
 Those whom You *g* John 17:12
 glory which You *g* Me John 17:22
 head, He *g* up His spirit John 19:30
 tongues, as the Spirit *g* Acts 2:4
 great power the apostles *g* Acts 4:33
 who *g* alms generously to Acts 10:2
g us rain from heaven Acts 14:17
 God also *g* them up Rom 1:24
 but God *g* the increase 1 Cor 3:6
 but first *g* themselves to 2 Cor 8:5
 but God *g* it to Abraham Gal 3:18
g Him to be head over all Eph 1:22
 captive, and *g* gifts to men Eph 4:8
 He Himself *g* some to be Eph 4:11
 Abraham *g* a tenth part of Heb 7:2
 and the heaven *g* rain James 5:18
g Him glory, so that your 1 Pet 1:21
 He *g* us commandment 1 John 3:23
 which God *g* Him to show Rev 1:1
g to the seven angels Rev 15:7
 The sea *g* up the dead Rev 20:13

GAVE HIMSELF

who *g* for our sins, Gal 1:4
 who loved me and *g* Gal 2:20
 loved the church and *g* Eph 5:25
 who *g* a ransom for all, 1 Tim 2:6
 who *g* for us, Titus 2:14

GAZA

Philistine city, Josh 13:3
 Samson removes the gates of, Judg
 16:1-3
 Samson taken there as prisoner; his
 revenge, Judg 16:21-31
 Sin of, condemned, Amos 1:6, 7
 Philip journeys to, Acts 8:26

GAZED

g into heaven and saw Acts 7:55

GAZING

why do you stand *g* Acts 1:11

GEBA

Levite city in Benjamin, Josh 18:24;
 21:17
 Rebuilt by Asa, 1 Kin 15:22

GEDALIAH

Made governor of Judah, 2 Kin
 25:22-26
 Befriends Jeremiah, Jer 40:5, 6
 Murdered by Ishmael, Jer 41:2, 18

GEHAZI

Elisha's servant; seeks reward from
 Naaman, 2 Kin 5:20-24
 Afflicted with leprosy, 2 Kin 5:25-27
 Relates Elisha's deeds to Jehoram,
 2 Kin 8:4-6

GEMS

your stones with colorful *g* Is 54:11

GENEALOGIES

fables and endless *g* 1 Tim 1:4

GENEALOGY

The book of the *g* Matt 1:1
 mother, without *g* Heb 7:3

GENERAL

g assembly and church Heb 12:23

GENERATE

that they *g* strife 2 Tim 2:23

GENERATION

See THIS GENERATION

before Me in this *g* Gen 7:1
 the third and the fourth *g* Ex 34:7
 to the third and fourth *g* Num 14:18
 until all the *g* that had Num 32:13
 perverse and crooked *g* Deut 32:5
 another *g* arose after Judg 2:10
 Telling to the *g* to come Ps 78:6
 That the *g* to come might Ps 78:6
 stubborn and rebellious *g* Ps 78:8
 The *g* of the upright Ps 112:2
g shall praise Your Ps 145:4
g that curses its Prov 30:11
g that is pure in its Prov 30:12
 One *g* passes away Eccl 1:4
 to *g* it shall lie waste Is 34:10
 who will declare His *g* Is 53:8
 O *g*, see the word of the Jer 2:31
 His dominion is from *g* to *g* Dan 4:3
 kingdom is from *g* to *g* Dan 4:34
 their children another *g* Joel 1:3
 what shall I liken this *g* Matt 11:16
 and adulterous *g* Matt 12:39
 this *g* will by no Matt 24:34
 O faithless *g*, how long Mark 9:19
 fear Him from *g* to *g* Luke 1:50
 be required of this *g* Luke 11:50
g than the sons of light Luke 16:8
g will by no means pass Luke 21:32
 from this perverse *g* Acts 2:40
 who will declare His *g* Acts 8:33
 I was angry with that *g* Heb 3:10

But you are a chosen *g* 1 Pet 2:9

GENERATIONS

a just man, perfect in his *g* Gen 6:9
 with you, for perpetual *g* Gen 9:12
 according to their *g* Gen 10:32
 male child in your *g* Gen 17:12
 is My memorial to all *g* Ex 3:15
g of those who hate Me Ex 20:5
 fourth *g* of those who hate Deut 5:9
 mercy for a thousand *g* Deut 7:9
 grandchildren for four *g* Job 42:16
 plans of His heart to all *g* Ps 33:11
 be remembered in all *g* Ps 45:17
 Your praise to all *g* Ps 79:13
 Your faithfulness to all *g* Ps 89:1
 our dwelling place in all *g* Ps 90:1
 His truth endures to all *g* Ps 100:5
 for a thousand *g* Ps 105:8
 endures to all *g* Ps 119:90
 a crown endure to all *g* Prov 27:24
g will call me blessed Luke 1:48
 from ages and from *g* Col 1:26

GENEROSITY

be ready as a matter of *g* 2 Cor 9:5

GENEROUS

uphold me by Your *g* Spirit Ps 51:12
g soul will be made Prov 11:25
g eye will be blessed Prov 22:9
 no longer be called *g* Is 32:5
g man devises *g* Is 32:8

GENEROUSLY

*g*ave alms *g* to the people Acts 10:2

GENNESARET

See GALILEE

GENTILE

with the *G* worshipers Acts 17:17

GENTILES

G were separated Gen 10:5
 Rejoice, O *G*, with His Deut 32:43
 O LORD, among the *G* 2 Sam 22:50
 Why should the *G* say, Ps 115:2
 Praise the LORD, all you *G* Ps 117:1
 for the *G* shall seek Him Is 11:10
 as a light to the *G* Is 42:6
G shall come to your Is 60:3
 the riches of the *G* Is 61:6
 The *G* shall see your Is 62:2
 the glory of the *G* like a Is 66:12
 all the *G* who are called Amos 9:12
 shall be among the *G* Mic 5:8
 be great among the *G* Mal 1:11
 all these things the *G* Matt 6:32
 into the way of the *G* Matt 10:5
 revelation to the *G* Luke 2:32
 times of the *G* are Luke 21:24
 bear My name before *G* Acts 9:15
 poured out on the *G* Acts 10:45
 a light to the *G* Acts 13:47
 blasphemed among the *G* Rom 2:24
 also the God of the *G* Rom 3:29
 even named among the *G* 1 Cor 5:1
 in perils of the *G*, in 2 Cor 11:26
 he would eat with the *G* Gal 2:12
 mystery among the *G* Col 1:27
 a teacher of the *G* 1 Tim 2:7
 and a teacher of the *G* 2 Tim 1:11
 nothing from the *G* 3 John 7

GENTLE

g tongue breaks a bone Prov 25:15
 I drew them with *g* cords, Hos 11:4
 from Me, for I am *g* Matt 11:29
 But we were *g* among 1 Thess 2:7
 to be peaceable, *g* Titus 3:2
 pure, then peaceable, *g* James 3:17
 only to the good and *g* 1 Pet 2:18
 ornament of a *g* and quiet 1 Pet 3:4

GENTLENESS

g has made me great Ps 18:35

love and a spirit of *g* 1 Cor 4:21
g, self-control Gal 5:23
 all lowliness and *g* Eph 4:2
 Let your *g* be known to Phil 4:5
 love, patience, *g* 1 Tim 6:11

GERAR

Town of Philistia, Gen 10:19
 Visited by Abraham, Gen 20:1-18
 Visited by Isaac, Gen 26:1-17
 Abimelech, king of, Gen 26:1, 26

GERIZIM

See MOUNT GERIZIM

GERSHOM (or Gershon)

Son of Moses, Ex 2:21, 22
 Circumcised, Ex 4:25
 Founder of Levite family, 1 Chr
 23:14-16

GESHUR

Inhabitants of, not expelled by Israel,
 Josh 13:13
 Talmi, king of, grandfather of Absa-
 lom, 2 Sam 3:3
 Absalom flees to, 2 Sam 13:37, 38

GETHESEMANE

Garden near Jerusalem, Matt 26:30, 38
 Often visited by Christ, Luke 22:39
 Scene of Christ's agony and betrayal,
 Matt 26:36-56; John 18:1-12

GEZER

Canaanite city, Josh 10:33
 Inhabitants not expelled, Josh 16:10
 Given as dowry of Pharaoh's daughter,
 1 Kin 9:15-17

GHOST

supposed it was a *g* Mark 6:49

GIBEAH

Town of Benjamin; known for wicked-
 ness, Judg 19:12-30
 Destruction of, Judg 20:1-48
 Saul's birthplace, 1 Sam 10:26
 Saul's political capital, 1 Sam 15:34
 Wickedness of, long remembered,
 Hos 9:9

GIBEON

Sun stands still at, Josh 10:12
 Location of tabernacle, 1 Chr 16:39
 Joab struck Amasa at, 2 Sam 20:8-10
 Joab killed at, 1 Kin 2:28-34
 Site of Solomon's sacrifice and dream,
 1 Kin 3:5-15

GIBEONITES

Trick Joshua into making treaty; sub-
 jected to forced labor, Josh 9:3-27
 Rescued by Joshua, Josh 10
 Massacred by Saul; avenged by David,
 2 Sam 21:1-9

GIDEON

Called by an angel, Judg 6:11-24
 Destroys Baal's altar, Judg 6:25-32
 Fleece confirms call from God, Judg
 6:36-40
 Miraculous victory over the Midianites,
 Judg 7
 Takes revenge on Succoth and Penuel,
 Judg 8:4-21
 Refuses kingship; makes an ephod,
 Judg 8:22-28
 Fathers 71 sons; dies, Judg 8:29-35

GIFT

g makes room for him Prov 18:16
 A *g* in secret pacifies Prov 21:14
 it is the *g* of God Eccl 3:13
 Receive the *g* from the Zech 6:10
 bring your *g* to the altar Matt 5:23
 swears by the *g* that is Matt 23:18
 altar that sanctifies the *g* Matt 23:19
 is Corban"—(that is, a *g* Mark 7:11

"If you knew the *g* John 4:10
 the *g* of the Holy Spirit Acts 2:38
 thought that the *g* of God Acts 8:20
 the *g* of the Holy Acts 10:45
 same *g* as He gave us Acts 11:17
 to you some spiritual *g* Rom 1:11
 But the free *g* is not Rom 5:15
 of the *g* of righteousness Rom 5:17
 but the *g* of God is Rom 6:23
 each one has his own *g* 1 Cor 7:7
 though I have the *g* 1 Cor 13:2
 it is the *g* of God Eph 2:8
 Not that I seek the *g* Phil 4:17
 Do not neglect the *g* 1 Tim 4:14
 you to stir up the *g* 2 Tim 1:6
 tasted the heavenly *g* Heb 6:4
 Every good *g* and every James 1:17
 one has received a *g* 1 Pet 4:10

GIFTED

the women who were *g* Ex 35:25
 but good-looking, *g* Dan 1:4

GISTS

g you shall offer Num 18:29
 You have received *g* Ps 68:18
 and Seba will offer *g* Ps 72:10
 though you give many *g* Prov 6:35
 to one who gives *g* Prov 19:6
 how to give good *g* Luke 7:11
 rich putting their *g* Matt 21:1
 Having then *g* differing Rom 12:6
 are diversities of *g* 1 Cor 12:4
 and desire spiritual *g* 1 Cor 14:1
 captive, and gave *g* Eph 4:8

GIHON

River of Eden, Gen 2:13
 — Spring outside Jerusalem, 1 Kin
 1:33-45
 Source of water supply, 2 Chr 32:30

GILBOA

Range of limestone hills in Issachar,
 1 Sam 28:4
 Scene of Saul's death, 1 Sam 31:1-9
 Under David's curse, 2 Sam 1:17, 21

GILEAD

Plain east of the Jordan; taken from
 the Amorites and assigned to Gad,
 Reuben, and Manasseh, Num
 21:21-31; 32:33-40; Deut 3:12, 13;
 Josh 13:24-31
 Ishbosheth rules over, 2 Sam 2:8, 9
 David takes refuge in, 2 Sam 17:21-26
 Conquered by Hazeal, 2 Kin 10:32, 33
 Balm of, figurative of national healing,
 Jer 8:22

GILGAL

Site of memorial stones, circumcision,
 first Passover in the Promised Land,
 Josh 4:19-5:12
 Site of Gibeonite covenant, Josh
 9:3-15
 One location on Samuel's circuit, 1 Sam
 7:15, 16
 Saul made king and later rejected,
 1 Sam 11:15; 13:4-15
 Denounced for idolatry, Hos 9:15

GIRD

G Your sword upon Your Ps 45:3
 of wrath You shall *g* Ps 76:10
 I will *g* you, though you Is 45:5
 and another will *g* John 21:18
 Therefore *g* up the 1 Pet 1:13

GIRDED

a towel and *g* Himself John 13:4
 down to the feet and *g* Rev 1:13

GIRGASHITES

Descendants of Canaan, Gen 10:15, 16
 Land of, given to Abraham's descen-
 dants, Gen 15:18, 21
 Delivered to Israel, Josh 24:11

GITTITES

600 follow David, 2 Sam 15:18-23

GIVE

g thanks to the LORD 1 Chr 16:8
g me wisdom and 2 Chr 1:10
G ear to my prayer Ps 17:1
G to them according Ps 28:4
g you the desires Ps 37:4
 Yes, the LORD will *g* Ps 85:12
G me understanding Ps 119:34
g me your heart Prov 23:26
 You will *g* truth to Mic 7:20
G to him who asks Matt 5:42
G us this day our Matt 6:11
 what you have and *g* Matt 19:21
 authority I will *g* Luke 4:6
g them eternal life John 10:28
 new commandment I *g* John 13:34
 but what I do have I *g* Acts 3:6
g us all things Rom 8:32
G no offense 1 Cor 10:32
 So let each one *g* 2 Cor 9:7
 nor *g* place to the devil Eph 4:27
g him who has need Eph 4:28
g thanks to God 2 Thess 2:13
g yourself entirely 1 Tim 4:15
 good works, ready to *g* 1 Tim 6:18
 and always be ready to *g* 1 Pet 3:15
 They will *g* an account to 1 Pet 4:5
 I will *g* you the crown of Rev 2:10
 I will *g* him a white stone, Rev 2:17
 I will *g* him the morning Rev 2:28
 "G me the little book Rev 10:9
 I will *g* of the fountain of Rev 21:6
g to every one according Rev 22:12

GIVEN

I have *g* every green herb Gen 1:30
 land which He has *g* you Deut 8:10
 will tread upon I have *g* Josh 1:3
 I had *g* rest to Israel from Josh 23:1
 see, I have *g* you a wise 1 Kin 3:12
 I have *g* us rest on 2 Chr 14:7
 she was *g* whatever she Esth 2:13
 You have *g* me wisdom Dan 2:23
 Ask and it will be *g* to you Matt 7:7
 to him more will be *g* Matt 13:12
 nor are *g* in marriage Matt 22:30
 has, more will be *g* Matt 25:29
 to whom much is *g* Luke 12:48
 and are *g* in marriage Luke 20:34
 My body which is *g* for Luke 22:19
 law was *g* through Moses John 1:17
 has *g* Him authority to John 5:27
g Me I should lose John 6:39
 Spirit was not yet *g* John 7:39
 have been freely *g* 1 Cor 2:12
g us the Spirit in our 2 Cor 1:22
g according to the Eph 4:7
 utterance may be *g* to me Eph 6:19
 not *g* to wine 1 Tim 3:3
 God has not *g* us a spirit 2 Tim 1:7
 All Scripture is *g* by 2 Tim 3:16
 robe was *g* to each of Rev 6:11

GIVES

He who *g* to the poor Prov 28:27
 For God *g* wisdom and Eccl 2:26
g life to the world John 6:33
 All that the Father *g* John 6:37
 The good shepherd *g* John 10:11
 not as the world *g* John 14:27
g us richly all things 1 Tim 6:17
 who *g* to all liberally James 1:5
g grace to the humble James 4:6

GLAD

See BE GLAD AND REJOICE
g of heart for the good 2 Chr 7:10
 I will be *g* and Ps 9:2
 my heart is *g* Ps 16:9
 Be *g* in the LORD and Ps 32:11
 streams shall make *g* Ps 46:4

And wine that makes *g* Ps 104:15
 I will be *g* in the LORD Ps 104:34
 I was *g* when they said Ps 122:1
 son makes a *g* father Prov 10:1
 We will be *g* and rejoice Song 1:4
 Be *g* and rejoice with all Zeph 3:14
 shall see it and be *g* Zech 10:7
 and be exceedingly *g* Matt 5:12
 bring you these *g* tidings Luke 1:19
 bringing the *g* tidings of Luke 8:1
 make merry and be *g* Luke 15:32
 he saw it and was *g* John 8:56
 Let us be *g* and rejoice Rev 19:7

GLADNESS

in the day of your *g* Num 10:10
 day of feasting and *g* Esth 9:17
 You have put *g* in my Ps 4:7
 me hear joy and *g* Ps 51:8
 Serve the LORD with *g* Ps 100:2
 shall obtain joy and *g* Is 35:10
 They shall obtain joy and *g* Is 51:11
 over you with *g* Zeph 3:17
 receive it with *g* Mark 4:16
 they ate their food with *g* Acts 2:46
 You with the oil of *g* more Heb 1:9

GLASS

there was a sea of *g* Rev 4:6
 like transparent *g* Rev 21:21

GLORIFIED

the people I must be *g* Lev 10:3
 and they *g* the God of Matt 15:31
 Jesus was not yet *g* John 7:39
 when Jesus was *g* John 12:16
 By this My Father is *g* John 15:8
 I have *g* You on the John 17:4
g His Servant Jesus Acts 3:13
 these He also *g* Rom 8:30
 things God may be *g* 1 Pet 4:11

GLORIFY

My altar, and I will *g* Is 60:7
g your Father in Matt 5:16
 "Father, *g* Your name John 12:28
 He will *g* Me John 16:14
 And now, O Father, *g* John 17:5
 what death he would *g* John 21:19
 God, they did not *g* Rom 1:21
 therefore *g* God in 1 Cor 6:20
 also Christ did not *g* Heb 5:5
 ashamed, but let him *g* 1 Pet 4:16

GLORIOUS

g in holiness, fearful in Ex 15:11
 daughter is all *g* Ps 45:13
 And blessed be His *g* Ps 72:19
G things are spoken Ps 87:3
 is honorable and *g* Ps 111:3
g splendor of Your Ps 145:5
 habitation, holy and *g* Is 63:15
 also enter the *G* Land Dan 11:41
 engraved on stones, was *g* 2 Cor 3:7
 it to Himself a *g* Eph 5:27
 be conformed to His *g* Phil 3:21
g appearing of our Titus 2:13

GLORY

"Please, show me Your *g* Ex 33:18
 filled with the *g* of the Num 14:21
g has departed from 1 Sam 4:21
G in His holy name 1 Chr 16:10
 a shield for me, my *g* Ps 3:3
 who have set Your *g* Ps 8:1
 Who is this King of *g* Ps 24:8
 the place where Your *g* Ps 26:8
 Your power and Your *g* Ps 63:2
 shall speak of the *g* Ps 145:11
 wise shall inherit *g* Prov 3:35
 head is a crown of *g*, if Prov 16:31
 The *g* of young men is Prov 20:29
 It is the *g* of God to Prov 25:2
 "G to the righteous Is 24:16
g I will not give Is 42:8
g will be seen upon Is 60:2

brightness of the LORD's *g* . . . Ezek 10:4
 then be likened in *g* . . . Ezek 31:18
 I will set My *g* among . . . Ezek 39:21
 I will change their *g* . . . Hos 4:7
 and I will be the *g* . . . Zech 2:5
 He shall bear the *g* . . . Zech 6:13
 that they may have *g* . . . Matt 6:2
 the power and the *g* . . . Matt 6:13
g was not arrayed . . . Matt 6:29
 Man will come in the *g* . . . Matt 16:27
 with power and great *g* . . . Matt 24:30
 "G to God in the . . . Luke 2:14
 and we beheld His *g* . . . John 1:14
 and manifested His *g* . . . John 2:11
 I do not seek My own *g* . . . John 8:50
 "Give God the *g* . . . John 9:24
g which I had with You . . . John 17:5
g which You gave Me I . . . John 17:22
 he did not give *g* . . . Rom 12:23
 doing good seek for *g* . . . Rom 2:7
 in faith, giving *g* . . . Rom 4:20
 the adoption, the *g* . . . Rom 9:4
 the riches of His *g* . . . Rom 9:23
 God, alone wise, be *g* . . . Rom 16:27
 who glories, let him *g* . . . 1 Cor 1:31
 but woman is the *g* . . . 1 Cor 11:7
 of the *g* that excels . . . 2 Cor 3:10
 of the gospel of the *g* . . . 2 Cor 4:4
 eternal weight of *g* . . . 2 Cor 4:17
 who glories, let him *g* . . . 2 Cor 10:17
 to His riches in *g* . . . Phil 4:19
 appear with Him in *g* . . . Col 3:4
 For you are our *g* . . . 1 Thess 2:20
 You crowned him with *g* . . . Heb 2:7
 many sons to *g* . . . Heb 2:10
 grass, and all the *g* . . . 1 Pet 1:24
 to whom belong the *g* . . . 1 Pet 4:11
 for the Spirit of *g* . . . 1 Pet 4:14
 To Him be the *g* and the . . . 1 Pet 5:11
 the presence of His *g* . . . Jude 24
 O Lord, to receive *g* . . . Rev 4:11

GLORY OF GOD

The heavens declare the *g* . . . Ps 19:1
 unto death, but for the *g* . . . John 11:4
 into heaven and saw the *g* . . . Acts 7:55
 fall short of the *g* . . . Rom 3:23
 do all to the *g* . . . 1 Cor 10:31
 he is the image and *g* . . . 1 Cor 11:7
g in the face of Jesus . . . 2 Cor 4:6
 with smoke from the *g* . . . Rev 15:8
 having the *g* . . . Rev 21:11
 for the *g* illuminated it . . . Rev 21:23

GLORY OF THE LORD

g appeared in the cloud . . . Ex 16:10
g rested on Mount Sinai . . . Ex 24:16
g filled the tabernacle . . . Ex 40:34
 the *g* will appear to you . . . Lev 9:6
g appeared in the . . . Num 14:10
 the *g* appeared to all . . . Num 16:19
 and the *g* appeared . . . Num 16:42
 the *g* appeared to them . . . Num 20:6
 the *g* filled the house . . . 1 Kin 8:11
 the *g* filled the temple . . . 2 Chr 7:1
 May the *g* endure forever . . . Ps 104:31
 They shall see the *g* . . . Is 35:2
 the *g* shall be revealed, . . . Is 40:5
 the *g* is risen upon you . . . Is 60:1
 of the likeness of the *g* . . . Ezek 1:28
 behold, the *g* stood there . . . Ezek 3:23
 the *g* went up . . . Ezek 10:4
 the *g* came into the . . . Ezek 43:4
g filled the house of the . . . Ezek 44:4
 the knowledge of the *g* . . . Hab 2:14
 the *g* shone around them, . . . Luke 2:9
 as in a mirror the *g* . . . 2 Cor 3:18
 by us to the *g* . . . 2 Cor 8:19

GLORYING

Your *g* is not good . . . 1 Cor 5:6

GLUTTON

g will come to poverty . . . Prov 23:21
 you say, 'Look, a *g* . . . Luke 7:34

GLUTTONS

companion of *g* shames . . . Prov 28:7
 evil beasts, lazy *g* . . . Titus 1:12

GNASHING

will be weeping and *g* . . . Matt 8:12

GO

He said, "Let Me *g* . . . Gen 32:26
 'Let My people *g* . . . Ex 5:1
 Presence does not *g* . . . Ex 33:15
 for wherever you *g* . . . Ruth 1:16
 "Look, I *g* forward . . . Job 23:8
 For I used to *g* with the . . . Ps 42:4
g astray as soon as . . . Ps 58:3
 I will *g* in the strength of . . . Ps 71:16
 Those who *g* down to . . . Ps 107:23
 Where can I *g* from . . . Ps 139:7
 G to the ant . . . Prov 6:6
 All *g* to one place . . . Eccl 3:20
 of mourning than to *g* . . . Eccl 7:2
 out of Zion shall *g* forth . . . Is 2:3
 You wherever You *g* . . . Matt 8:19
 do not *g* out . . . Matt 24:26
 He said to them, "G . . . Mark 16:15
 And I say to one, 'G . . . Luke 7:8
 also want to *g* away . . . John 6:67
 to whom shall we *g* . . . John 6:68
g you cannot come . . . John 8:21
 I *g* to prepare a place . . . John 14:2
 will do, because I *g* . . . John 14:12
 seek Me, let these *g* . . . John 18:8
 and he shall *g* out no more . . . Rev 3:12

GOADS

of the wise are like *g* . . . Eccl 12:11
 to kick against the *g* . . . Acts 9:5

GOAL

I press toward the *g* . . . Phil 3:14

GOATS

drink the blood of *g* . . . Ps 50:13
 his sheep from the *g* . . . Matt 25:32
 with the blood of *g* . . . Heb 9:12
g could take away . . . Heb 10:4

GOD

See ANGEL OF GOD; GLORY OF GOD;
 HAND OF GOD; HOUSE OF GOD;
 KINGDOM OF GOD; LORD GOD OF
 HOSTS; LORD GOD OF ISRAEL; LOVE
 OF GOD; LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD;
 MAN OF GOD; PEOPLE OF GOD; POWER
 OF GOD; RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD;
 SON OF GOD; SONS OF GOD; SPIRIT OF
 GOD; THINGS OF GOD; THRONE OF
 GOD; WILL OF GOD; WORD OF GOD;
 WRATH OF GOD

Names of:

God, Gen 1:1
 LORD God, Gen 2:4
 God Most High, Gen 14:18–22
 Lord God, Gen 15:2, 8
 Almighty God, Gen 17:1, 2
 I AM, Ex 3:14
 Jealous, Ex 34:14
 Eternal God, Deut 33:27
 Living God, Josh 3:10
 God of hosts, Ps 80:7
 LORD of hosts, Is 1:24
 Holy One of Israel, Is 43:3, 14, 15
 Mighty God, Jer 32:18
 God of heaven, Jon 1:9
 Heavenly Father, Matt 6:26
 King eternal, 1 Tim 1:17
 only Potentate, 1 Tim 6:15
 Father of lights, James 1:17

Manifestations of:

voice of, Gen 32:30
 voice of, Deut 5:22–26
 glory of, Ex 40:34, 35
 Angel of, Gen 16:7–13
 name of, Ex 34:5–7
 form of, Num 12:6–8

Nature of:

spirit, John 4:24
 one, Deut 6:4
 personal, John 17:1–3
 trinitarian, 2 Cor 13:14

Attributes of:

incomparable, 2 Sam 7:22
 invisible, John 1:18
 inscrutable, Is 40:28
 unchangeable, Num 23:19
 unequalled, Is 40:13–25
 unsearchable, Rom 11:33, 34
 infinite, 1 King 8:27
 eternal, Is 57:15
 omnipotent, Jer 32:17, 27
 omnipresent, Ps 139:7–12
 omniscient, 1 John 3:20
 foreknowing, Is 48:3, 5
 wise, Acts 15:18
 holy, Rev 4:8
 impartial, 1 Pet 1:17
 just, Ps 89:14
 longsuffering, Ex 34:6, 7
 love, 1 John 4:8, 16
 mercy, Lam 3:22, 23
 truth, Ps 117:2
 vengeance, Deut 32:34–41
 wrath, Deut 32:22

G created the heavens . . . Gen 1:1
 Abram of G Most High . . . Gen 14:19
 and I will be their G . . . Gen 17:8
 hands of the Mighty G . . . Gen 49:24
 the G of Abraham . . . Ex 3:6
 He is my G . . . Ex 15:2
 Stand before G for the . . . Ex 18:19
 "I am the LORD your G . . . Ex 20:2
 "This is your *g* . . . Ex 32:4
 G is not a man . . . Num 23:19
 G is a consuming fire . . . Deut 4:24
 great and awesome G . . . Deut 7:21
 my people, and your G . . . Ruth 1:16
 know that there is a G . . . 1 Sam 17:46
 a rock, except our G . . . 2 Sam 22:32
 If the LORD is G . . . 1 Kin 18:21
 G is greater than all . . . 2 Chr 2:5
 G is greater than all . . . Job 33:12
 "Behold, G is mighty . . . Job 36:5
 "Behold, G is great . . . Job 36:26
 You have been My G . . . Ps 22:10
 "Where is your G . . . Ps 42:3
 G is our refuge . . . Ps 46:1
 G is in the midst of . . . Ps 46:5
 G is the King of all . . . Ps 47:7
 The Mighty One, G . . . Ps 50:1
 I am G, your G . . . Ps 50:7
 me a clean heart, O G . . . Ps 51:10
 Our G is the G . . . Ps 68:20
 Who is so great a G . . . Ps 77:13
 Restore us, O G . . . Ps 80:7
 You alone are G . . . Ps 86:10
 Exalt the LORD our G . . . Ps 99:9
 Yes, our G is merciful . . . Ps 116:5
 give thanks to the G . . . Ps 136:26
 For G is in heaven . . . Eccl 5:2
 Counselor, Mighty G . . . Is 9:6
 G is my salvation . . . Is 12:2
 Behold, this is our G . . . Is 25:9
 "Behold your G . . . Is 40:9
 Is there a G besides . . . Is 44:8
 to Zion, "Your G . . . Is 52:7
 stricken, smitten by G . . . Is 53:4
 and I will be their G . . . Jer 31:33
 and I saw visions of G . . . Ezek 1:1
 Who is a G like You . . . Mic 7:18
 translated, "G with us." . . . Matt 1:23
 in G my Savior . . . Luke 1:47
 the Word was with G . . . John 1:1
 enter the kingdom of G . . . John 3:5
 For G so loved the . . . John 3:16
 has certified that G . . . John 3:33
 G is Spirit, and those . . . John 4:24

"My Lord and my G John 20:28
 Christ is the Son of G Acts 8:37
 To the Unknown G Acts 17:23
 Indeed, let G be true Rom 3:4
 If G is for us Rom 8:31
 G is faithful 1 Cor 1:9
 us there is one G 1 Cor 8:6
 G shall supply all Phil 4:19
 and I will be their G Heb 8:10
 G is a consuming fire Heb 12:29
 G is greater than our 1 John 3:20
 for G is love 1 John 4:8
 No one has seen G 1 John 4:12
 in the temple of My G Rev 4:12
 gave glory to the G Rev 11:13
 G Himself will be Rev 21:3
 and I will be his G Rev 21:7

GOD THE FATHER

G has set His seal on Him John 6:27
 the kingdom to G 1 Cor 15:24
 through Jesus Christ and G Gal 1:1
 G and our Lord Jesus Christ Gal 1:3
 for all things to G Eph 5:20
 love with faith, from G Eph 6:23
 to the glory of G Phil 2:11
 giving thanks to G Col 3:17
 in G and the Lord Jesus 1 Thess 1:1
 mercy, and peace from G 2 Tim 1:2
 mercy, and peace from G Titus 1:4
 the foreknowledge of G 1 Pet 1:2
 For He received from G 2 Pet 1:17
 G and from the Lord Jesus 2 John 3
 sanctified by G, and Jude 1

GODESS

after Ashtoreth the *g* 1 Kin 11:5
 of the great *g* Diana Acts 19:35

GODHEAD

eternal power and G Rom 1:20
 the fullness of the G Col 2:9

GODLINESS

is the mystery of *g* 1 Tim 3:16
g is profitable 1 Tim 4:8
 Now *g* with contentment 1 Tim 6:6
 having a form of *g* 2 Tim 3:5
 pertain to life and *g* 2 Pet 1:3
 to perseverance *g* 2 Pet 1:6

GODLY

Himself him who is *g* Ps 4:3
 everyone who is *g* Ps 32:6
 who desire to live *g* 2 Tim 3:12
 righteously, and *g* Titus 2:12
 reverence and *g* fear Heb 12:28
 to deliver the *g* 2 Pet 2:9

GODS

See FOREIGN GODS
 your God is God of *g* Deut 10:17
 the household *g* 2 Kin 23:24
 He judges among the *g* Ps 82:1
 I said, "You are *g* Ps 82:6
 yourselves with *g* Is 57:5
 If He called them *g* John 10:35
g have come down to Acts 14:11

GOG

Prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal,
 Ezek 38:2, 3
 — Leader of the final battle, Rev
 20:8-15

GOLAN

City of refuge, Josh 20:8, 21:27

GOLD

And the *g* of that land Gen 2:12
 a mercy seat of pure *g* Ex 25:17
 multiply silver and *g* Deut 17:17
 "If I have made *g* Job 31:24
 yea, than much fine *g* Ps 19:10
 is like apples of *g* Prov 25:11
 is Mine, and the *g* Hag 2:8
g I do not have Acts 3:6

with braided hair or *g* 1 Tim 2:9
 a man with *g* rings James 2:2
 Your *g* and silver are James 5:3
 more precious than *g* 1 Pet 1:7
 like silver or *g* 1 Pet 1:18
 of the city was pure *g* Rev 21:21

GOLDEN

g bell and a pomegranate Ex 28:34
g tumors and five *g* rats 1 Sam 6:4
 from the *g* calves that 2 Kin 10:29
 or the *g* bowl is broken, or Eccl 12:6
 the seven *g* lampstands Rev 1:20
 and *g* bowls full of incense, Rev 5:8
g altar which is before Rev 9:13
 having in her hand a *g* cup Rev 17:4

GOLGOTHA

Where Jesus died, Matt 27:33-35

GOLIATH

Giant of Gath, 1 Sam 17:4
 Killed by David, 1 Sam 17:50
 — Brother of above; killed by El-
 hanan, 2 Sam 21:19

GOMER

Son of Japheth, Gen 10:2, 3; 1 Chr
 1:5, 6
 Northern nation, Ezek 38:6
 — Wife of Hosea, Hos 1:2, 3

GOMORRAH

See SODOM AND GOMORRAH
 With Sodom, defeated by Chedor-
 laomer; Lot captured, Gen 14:8-12
 Destroyed by God, Gen 19:23-29
 Later references to, Is 1:10; Amos 4:11;
 Matt 10:15

GONE

I am *g* like a shadow Ps 109:23
 I have *g* astray like a Ps 119:176
 the word has *g* out of Is 45:23
 like sheep have *g* Is 53:6

GOOD

See BE OF GOOD CHEER; LORD IS GOOD
 God saw that it was *g* Gen 1:10
 but God meant it for *g* Gen 50:20
 LORD has promised *g* Num 10:29
 you have spoken is *g* 2 Kin 20:19
 seeking the *g* of his Esth 10:3
 Shall we indeed accept *g* Job 2:10
 "Who will show us any *g* Ps 4:6
 is none who does *g* Ps 14:1
 G and upright is the Ps 25:8
 that he may see *g* Ps 34:12
 Truly God is *g* to Ps 73:1
g man deals graciously Ps 112:5
 Your Spirit is *g* Ps 143:10
g man obtains favor Prov 12:2
g word makes it glad Prov 12:25
 on the evil and the *g* Prov 15:3
 A merry heart does *g* Prov 17:22
 who knows what is *g* Eccl 6:12
 learn to do *g* Is 1:17
 Zion, you who bring *g* Is 40:9
 tidings of *g* things Is 52:7
 talked to me, with *g* Zech 1:13
 said, "Be of *g* cheer Matt 9:22
 A *g* man out of the Matt 12:35
 "G Teacher, what *g* Matt 19:16
 No one is *g* but One Matt 19:17
 For she has done a *g* Matt 26:10
 behold, I bring you *g* Luke 2:10
 love your enemies, do *g* Luke 6:35
 "Can anything *g* come John 1:46
 Some said, "He is *g* John 7:12
 who went about doing *g* Acts 10:38
 For he was a *g* man Acts 11:24
 in that He did *g* Acts 14:17
g man someone would Rom 5:7
 in my flesh) nothing *g* Rom 7:18
 overcome evil with *g* Rom 12:21
 according to the *g* pleasure Eph 1:5

fruitful in every *g* Col 1:10
 know that the law is *g* 1 Tim 1:8
 may wage the *g* warfare 1 Tim 1:18
 For this is *g* and 2 Tim 2:3
 bishop, he desires a *g* 1 Tim 3:1
 for this is *g* and 1 Tim 5:4
 a *g* soldier of Jesus Christ 2 Tim 2:3
 prepared for every *g* 2 Tim 2:21
 I have fought the *g* fight 2 Tim 4:7
 and have tasted the *g* Heb 6:5
 obtained a *g* testimony Heb 11:2
 Every *g* gift and every James 1:17
g days, let him refrain 1 Pet 3:10
 to suffer for doing *g* 1 Pet 3:17
g stewards of the 1 Pet 4:10

GOOD WORKS

that they may see your *g* Matt 5:16
 "Many *g* I have shown John 10:32
 woman was full of *g* Acts 9:36
 in Christ Jesus for *g* Eph 2:10
 godliness, with *g* 1 Tim 2:10
 well reported for *g* 1 Tim 5:10
g of some are clearly, 1 Tim 5:25
 that they be rich in *g* 1 Tim 6:18
 to be a pattern of *g* Titus 2:7
 stir up love and *g* Heb 10:24
 by your *g* which they 1 Pet 2:12

GOODNESS

"I will make all My *g* Ex 33:19
 and abounding in *g* Ex 34:6
 "You are my Lord, my *g* Ps 16:2
 Surely *g* and mercy Ps 23:6
 that I would see the *g* Ps 27:13
 how great is Your *g* Ps 31:19
 The *g* of God endures Ps 52:1
 how great is its *g* Zech 9:17
 the riches of His *g* Rom 2:4
 consider the *g* and Rom 11:22
 kindness, *g* Gal 5:22

GOODS

When *g* increase Eccl 5:11
 and plunder his *g* Matt 12:29
 ruler over all his *g* Matt 24:47
 "Soul, you have many *g* Luke 12:19
 man was wasting his *g* Luke 16:1
 I give half of my *g* Luke 19:8
 has this world's *g* 1 John 3:17

GOSHEN

District of Egypt where Israel lived; the
 best of the land, Gen 45:10; 46:28,
 29; 47:1-11

GOSEPEL

See PREACH THE GOSPEL
 The beginning of the *g* Mark 1:1
 and believe in the *g* Mark 1:15
g must first be preached Mark 13:10
 to testify to the *g* Acts 20:24
 separated to the *g* Rom 1:1
 not ashamed of the *g* Rom 1:16
 should live from the *g* 1 Cor 9:14
 if our *g* is veiled 2 Cor 4:3
 to a different *g* Gal 1:6
 of truth, the *g* Eph 1:13
 the mystery of the *g* Eph 6:19
g which you heard Col 1:23
 the everlasting *g* Rev 14:6

GOSSIPS

only idle but also *g* 1 Tim 5:13

GOVERNMENT

and the *g* will be upon Is 9:6

GRACE

But Noah found *g* Gen 6:8
G is poured upon Your Ps 45:2
 The LORD will give *g* Ps 84:11
 the Spirit of *g* Zech 12:10
 and the *g* of God was Luke 2:40
g and truth came John 1:17
 And great *g* was upon Acts 4:33
G to you and peace Rom 1:7

receive abundance of *g* Rom 5:17
g is no longer *g* Rom 11:6
 The *g* of our Lord Rom 16:20
 For you know the *g* 2 Cor 8:9
 "My *g* is sufficient 2 Cor 12:9
 The *g* of the Lord 2 Cor 13:14
 you have fallen from *g* Gal 5:4
 to the riches of His *g* Eph 1:7
g you have been saved Eph 2:8
 dispensation of the *g* Eph 3:2
g was given according Eph 4:7
G be with all those Eph 6:24
G to you and peace 1 Thess 1:1
 according to the *g* of 2 Thess 1:12
 and good hope by *g* 2 Thess 2:16
 be strong in the *g* that is 2 Tim 2:1
 the *g* of God that brings Titus 2:11
 been justified by His *g* we Titus 3:7
G be with you all Titus 3:15
 insulted the Spirit of *g* Heb 10:29
 shaken, let us have *g* Heb 12:28
 But He gives more *g* James 4:6
 who prophesied of the *g* 1 Pet 1:10
 together of the *g* of life 1 Pet 3:7
 this is the true *g* 1 Pet 5:12
 but grow in the *g* 2 Pet 3:18

GRACIOUS

he said, "God be *g* Gen 43:29
 I will be *g* to whom I Ex 33:19
 then He is *g* to him Job 33:24
 wise man's mouth are *g* Eccl 10:12
 of hosts will be *g* Amos 5:15
 know that You are a *g* Jon 4:2
 that He may be *g* Mal 1:9
 at the *g* words which Luke 4:22
 that the Lord is *g* 1 Pet 2:3

GRACIOUSLY

God has dealt *g* with me Gen 33:11
 A good man deals *g* and Ps 112:5
 receive us, for we will Hos 14:2

GRAFT

able to *g* them in again Rom 11:23

GRAFTED

in unbelief, will be *g* Rom 11:23

GRAIN

Israel went to buy *g* Gen 42:5
 it treads out the *g* Deut 25:4
 You provide their *g* Ps 65:9
 be an abundance of *g* Ps 72:16
 him who withholds *g* Prov 11:26
 be revived like *g* Hos 14:7
G shall make the young Zech 9:17
 to pluck heads of *g* Matt 12:1
 unless a *g* of wheat John 12:24
 it treads out the *g* 1 Cor 9:9

GRAINFIELDS

the *g* on the Sabbath Matt 12:1
 He went through the *g* Luke 6:1

GRANT

and *g* us Your salvation Ps 85:7
G that these two Matt 20:21
 who overcomes I will *g* Rev 3:21

GRANTED

has *g* me my petition 1 Sam 1:27
 It shall be *g* you Esth 5:6
 he *g* the body to Joseph Mark 15:45
g to him by My Father John 6:65
 it was *g* to harm the earth Rev 7:2
 He was *g* power to give Rev 13:15

GRAPEVINE

olives, or a *g* bear figs James 3:12

GRAPES

in the blood of *g* Gen 49:11
 their *g* are *g* of gall Deut 32:32
g give a good smell Song 2:13
 vines have tender *g* Song 2:15
 brought forth wild *g* Is 5:2
 Yet gleanings *g* will be Is 17:6

No *g* shall be on the vine Jer 8:13
 have eaten sour *g* Ezek 18:2
 Do men gather *g* Matt 7:16
g are fully ripe Rev 14:18

GRASPING

all is vanity and *g* Eccl 1:14

GRASS

they were as the *g* 2 Kin 19:26
 offspring like the *g* Job 5:25
g which grows up Ps 90:5
 his days are like *g* Ps 103:15
 The *g* withers Is 40:7
 so clothes the *g* Matt 6:30
 to sit down on the *g* Matt 14:19
 "All flesh is as *g* 1 Pet 1:24

GRASSHOPPERS

inhabitants are like *g* Is 40:22
 generals like great *g* Nah 3:17

GRAVE

g does not come Job 7:9
 for the *g* as my house Job 17:13
 my soul up from the *g* Ps 30:3
 the power of the *g* Ps 49:15
 or wisdom in the *g* Eccl 9:10
 And they made His *g* Is 53:9
 the power of the *g* Hos 13:14

GRAVES

there were no *g* Ex 14:11
 and the *g* were opened Matt 27:52
g which are not Luke 11:44
g will hear His voice John 5:28

GRAY

would bring down my *g* Gen 42:38
 the man of *g* hairs Deut 32:25
 of old men is their *g* Prov 20:29

GRAZE

cow and bear shall *g* Is 11:7
 let him *g* with the beasts Dan 4:15

GREAT

God made two *g* lights Gen 1:16
 and make your name *g* Gen 12:2
 With *g* wrestlings I have Gen 30:8
 there was a *g* cry in Egypt Ex 12:30
 have committed a *g* sin Ex 32:30
 shall shout with a *g* shout Josh 6:5
 were *g* resolves of heart Judg 5:15
 He has done us this *g* 1 Sam 6:9
 For the LORD is *g* 1 Chr 16:25
 I build will be *g* 2 Chr 2:5
 "The work is *g* Neh 4:19
 Who does *g* things Job 5:9
G men are not always Job 32:9
 in the *g* assembly Ps 22:25
g are Your works Ps 92:5
 my God, You are very *g* Ps 104:1
 "The LORD has done *g* Ps 126:2
g is the sum of them Ps 139:17
 in the place of the *g* Prov 25:6
g is the Holy One Is 12:6
 And do you seek *g* Jer 45:5
g is Your faithfulness Lam 3:23
 The *g* day of the LORD Zeph 1:14
 he shall be called *g* Matt 5:19
 one pearl of *g* price Matt 13:46
 desires to become *g* Matt 20:26
 a *g* commandment Matt 22:38
 a *g* windstorm arose, and Mark 4:37
g multitude followed Mark 5:24
 he had *g* possessions Mark 10:22
 She was of a *g* age, and Luke 2:36
g drops of blood Luke 22:44
 before the coming of the *g* Acts 2:20
 did *g* wonders and signs Acts 6:8
 that he was someone *g* Acts 8:9
 "G is Diana of the Acts 19:28
 that I have *g* sorrow Rom 9:2
 a *g* and effective door 1 Cor 16:9
 because of His *g* love with Eph 2:4
 This is a *g* mystery, but I Eph 5:32

without controversy *g* 1 Tim 3:16
 with contentment is *g* 1 Tim 6:6
 But in a *g* house 2 Tim 2:20
 appearing of our *g* Titus 2:13
 See how *g* a forest James 3:5
g men, the rich men Rev 6:15
 Babylon the *G* Rev 17:5
 Then I saw a *g* white Rev 20:11
 the dead, small and *g* Rev 20:12

GREATER

the throne will I be *g* Gen 41:40
g than all the gods Ex 18:11
 whose appearance was *g* Dan 7:20
 kingdom of heaven is *g* Matt 11:11
 place there is One *g* Matt 12:6
g than Jonah is here Matt 12:41
g than Solomon is here Matt 12:42
g things than these John 1:50
g than our father John 4:12
 a servant is not *g* John 13:16
G love has no one John 15:13
 "A servant is not *g* John 15:20
 parts have *g* modesty 1 Cor 12:23
 he who prophesies is *g* 1 Cor 14:5
 swear by no one *g* Heb 6:13
 condemns us, God is *g* 1 John 3:20
 witness of God is *g* 1 John 5:9

GREATEST

little child is the *g* Matt 18:4
 be considered the *g* Luke 22:24
 but the *g* of these is 1 Cor 13:13

GREATNESS

And in the *g* of Your Ex 15:7
 According to the *g* Ps 79:11
g is unsearchable Ps 145:3
 I will declare Your *g* Ps 145:6
 I have attained *g* Eccl 1:16
 traveling in the *g* Is 63:1
 is the exceeding *g* Eph 1:19

GREECE

Paul preaches in, Acts 17:16-31
 Daniel's vision of, Dan 8:21

GREED

part is full of *g* Luke 11:39

GREEDINESS

all uncleanness with *g* Eph 4:19
 the faith in their *g* 1 Tim 6:10

GREEDY

of everyone who is *g* Prov 1:19
 not violent, not *g* 1 Tim 3:3
 not violent, not *g* Titus 1:7

GREEK

written in Hebrew, *G* John 19:20
 and also for the *G* Rom 1:16
 with me, being a *G* Gal 2:3
 is neither Jew nor *G* Gal 3:28

GREEKS

Natives of Greece, Joel 3:6; Acts 16:1
 Spiritual state of, Rom 10:12
 Some believe, Acts 14:1

GREEN

and under every *g* tree 2 Kin 17:10
 lie down in *g* pastures Ps 23:2

GREET

g your brethren only Matt 5:47
G one another with a 1 Cor 16:20
 into your house nor *g* 2 John 10
G the friends by name 3 John 14

GREETED

and *g* Elizabeth Luke 1:40

GREW

Pharaoh's heart *g* hard Ex 7:13
 Samuel *g* before the 1 Sam 2:21
 and you *g*, matured, and Ezek 16:7
g exceedingly great toward Dan 8:9
 and the thorns *g* up and Mark 4:7
 And the Child *g* Luke 2:40

But the word of God *g* Acts 12:24
the word of the Lord *g* Acts 19:20

GRIEF

burden and his own *g* 2 Chr 6:29
g were fully weighed Job 6:2
Though I speak, my *g* Job 16:6
observe trouble and *g* Ps 10:14
of mirth may be *g* Prov 14:13
much wisdom is much *g* Eccl 1:18
and acquainted with *g* Is 53:3
joy and not with *g* Heb 13:17

GRIEVE

g the children of men Lam 3:33
g the Holy Spirit Eph 4:30

GRIEVED

earth, and He was *g* Gen 6:6
Has not my soul *g* Job 30:25
forty years I was *g* Ps 95:10
a woman forsaken and *g* Is 54:6
g His Holy Spirit Is 63:10
with anger, being *g* Mark 3:5
Peter was *g* because John 21:17

GRINDERS

when the *g* cease Eccl 12:3

GRINDING

the sound of *g* is low Eccl 12:4
g the faces of the poor Is 3:15
Two women will be *g* Matt 24:41

GROAN

The dying *g* in the Job 24:12
even we ourselves *g* Rom 8:23
who are in this tent *g* 2 Cor 5:4

GROANED

He *g* in the spirit and John 11:33

GROANING

So God heard their *g* Ex 2:24
I am weary with my *g* Ps 6:6
Then Jesus, again *g* John 11:38

GROANINGS

g which cannot Rom 8:26

GROPE

And you shall *g* Deut 28:29
They *g* in the dark Job 12:25
We *g* for the walk like Is 59:10
hope that they might *g* Acts 17:27

GROUND

"Cursed is the *g* Gen 3:17
you stand is holy *g* Ex 3:5
up your fellow *g* Jer 4:3
give its fruit, the *g* Zech 8:12
others fell on good *g* Matt 13:8
bought a piece of *g* Luke 14:18
God, the pillar and *g* 1 Tim 3:15

GROUNDED

being rooted and *g* Eph 3:17

GROUPS

sit down in *g* of fifty Luke 9:14

GROW

they will all *g* old like Ps 102:26
the horn of David *g* Ps 132:17
the earth will *g* old like Is 51:6
you shall go out and *g* Mal 4:2
truth in love, may *g* Eph 4:15
and they will all *g* Heb 1:11
but *g* in the grace and 2 Pet 3:18

GROWN

plants *g* up in their youth Ps 144:12
They have *g* fat, they are Jer 5:28
this people have *g* dull Matt 13:15
this people have *g* dull Acts 28:27

GROWS

shall eat every tree which *g* Ex 10:5
what *g* of its own accord Lev 25:11
It *g* old because of all my Ps 6:7
when it is sown, it *g* up Mark 4:32
g into a holy temple in the Eph 2:21

your faith *g* exceedingly 2 Thess 1:3

GROWTH

causes *g* of the body for Eph 4:16

GRUDGINGLY

in his heart, not *g* 2 Cor 9:7

GRUMBLERS

These are *g* Jude 16

GUARANTEE

in our hearts as a *g* 2 Cor 1:22
us the Spirit as a *g* 2 Cor 5:5
who is the *g* of our Eph 1:14

GUARD

g the way to the tree Gen 3:24
I will *g* my ways, lest I sin Ps 39:1
will be your rear *g* Is 52:12
g the doors of your Mic 7:5
we were kept under *g* Gal 3:23
to the whole palace *g* Phil 1:13
g your hearts and minds Phil 4:7
g you from the evil one 2 Thess 3:3
G what was committed 1 Tim 6:20

GUARDIANS

but is under *g* and Gal 4:2

GUARDS

Unless the LORD *g* Ps 127:1
And the *g* shook for Matt 28:4

GUIDANCE

and excellent in *g* Is 28:29

GUIDE

I will *g* you with My eye Ps 32:8
He will be our *g* Ps 48:14
Father, You are the *g* Jer 3:4
g our feet into the Luke 1:79
has come, He will *g* John 16:13
Judas, who became a *g* Acts 1:16
you yourself are a *g* Rom 2:19

GUIDES

Woe to you, blind *g* Matt 23:16
unless someone *g* Acts 8:31

GUILT

they accept their *g* Lev 26:41
g has grown up to the Ezra 9:6
of your fathers' *g* Matt 23:32

GUILTLESS

g who takes His name Ex 20:7
have condemned the *g* Matt 12:7

GUILTY

"We are truly *g* Gen 42:21
we have been very *g* Ezra 9:7
the world may become *g* Rom 3:19
in one point, he is *g* James 2:10

GULF

you there is a great *g* Luke 16:26

HABAKKUK

Prophet in Judah just prior to Babylo-
nian invasion, Hab 1:1
Prayer of, in praise of God, Hab
3:1-19

HABITATION

To Your holy *h* Ex 15:13
Is God in His holy *h* Ps 68:5
in a peaceful *h* Is 32:18
from His holy *h* Zech 2:13
be clothed with our *h* 2 Cor 5:2

HACHILAH

Hill in the Wilderness of Ziph where
David hid, 1 Sam 23:19-26

HADADEZER

King of Zobah, 2 Sam 8:3-13
Defeated by David, 2 Sam 10:6-19

HADASSAH

Esther's Jewish name, Esth 2:7

HADES

be brought down to *H* Matt 11:23
H shall not prevail Matt 16:18
being in torments in *H* Luke 16:23
not leave my soul in *H* Acts 2:27
I have the keys of *H* Rev 1:18
H were cast into the Rev 20:14

HAGAR

Sarah's servant; bears Ishmael to Abra-
ham, Gen 16
Abraham sends her away; God com-
forts her, Gen 21:9-21
Paul explains symbolic meaning of,
Gal 4:22-31

HAGGAI

Postexilic prophet; contemporary of
Zechariah, Ezra 5:1, 2, 6:14; Hag 1:1

HAGGITH

One of David's wives, 2 Sam 3:4
Mother of Adonijah, 1 Kin 1:5

HAIL

cause very heavy *h* Ex 9:18
seen the treasury of *h* Job 38:22
He casts out His *h* Ps 147:17
h will sweep away the Is 28:17
of the plague of the *h* Rev 16:21

HAILSTONES

clouds passed with *h* Ps 18:12

HAIR

bring down my gray *h* Gen 42:38
shaved his consecrated *h* Num 6:19
h of his head began to Judg 16:22
he cut the *h* of his 2 Sam 14:26
the *h* on my body stood Job 4:15
Your *h* is like a flock Song 4:1
h had grown like eagles' Dan 4:33
you cannot make one *h* Matt 5:36
clothed with camel's *h* Mark 1:6
But not a *h* of your Luke 21:18
wiped His feet with her *h* John 11:2
He had his *h* cut off at Acts 18:18
since not a *h* will fall Acts 27:34
if a woman has long *h* 1 Cor 11:15
not with braided *h* 1 Tim 2:9
arranging the *h* 1 Pet 3:3
h were white like wool Rev 1:14
black as sackcloth of *h* Rev 6:12
h like women's *h* Rev 9:8

HAIRS

are more than the *h* Ps 40:12
h I will carry you Is 46:4
yes, gray *h* are here Hos 7:9
But the very *h* Matt 10:30

HAIRY

h garment all over Gen 25:25
A *h* man wearing a leather 2 Kin 1:8

HAKKOZ

Descendant of Aaron, 1 Chr 24:1, 10
Called Koz, Ezra 2:61, 62
Descendants of, kept from priesthood,
Neh 7:63, 64

HALF

h of it in the morning and Lev 6:20
h the tribe of Manasseh Josh 22:9
h of the people followed 1 Kin 16:21
up to *h* the kingdom Esth 5:6
you, up to *h* my kingdom Mark 6:23
I give *h* of my goods to Luke 19:8
h a time, from the Rev 12:14

HALLOW

hosts, Him you shall *h* Is 8:13
h the Holy One of Is 29:23
h the Sabbath day Jer 17:24

HALLOWED

the Sabbath day and *h* Ex 20:11
but I will be *h* Lev 22:32
who is holy shall be *h* Is 5:16

heaven, *h* be Your name Matt 6:9

HAM

Noah's youngest son, Gen 5:32

Enters ark, Gen 7:7

His immoral behavior merits Noah's curse, Gen 9:22-25

Father of descendants of repopulated earth, Gen 10:6-20

HAMAN

Plots to destroy Jews, Esth 3:3-15

Invited to Esther's banquet, Esth 5:1-14

Forced to honor Mordecai, Esth 6:5-14

Hanged on his own gallows, Esth 7:1-10

HAMATH

Israel's northern boundary, Num 34:8; 1 Kin 8:65; Ezek 47:16-20

Conquered, 2 Kin 18:34; Jer 49:23

Israelites exiled there, Is 11:11

HAMMER

h that breaks the rock Jer 23:29

How the *h* of the whole Jer 50:23

HAMOR

Sells land to Jacob, Gen 33:18-20; Acts 7:16

Killed by Jacob's sons, Gen 34:1-31

HAMSTRUNG

their self-will they *h* an ox .. Gen 49:6

David *h* all the chariot 2 Sam 8:4

HANANI

Father of Jehu the prophet, 1 Kin

16:1, 7

Rebukes Asa; confined to prison, 2 Chr

16:7-10

— Nehemiah's brother; brings news

concerning the Jews, Neh 1:2

Becomes a governor of Jerusalem, Neh

7:2

HANANIAH

False prophet who contradicts Jere-

miah, Jer 28:1-17

— Hebrew name of Shadrach, Dan

1:6, 7, 11

HAND

See AT THE RIGHT HAND; HIS RIGHT

HAND; MY RIGHT HAND; STRETCH

OUT MY HAND; STRETCHED OUT HIS

HAND

Iest he put out his *h* Gen 3:22

h shall be against Gen 16:12

your *h* under my thigh Gen 24:2

h toward Israel's right *h* Gen 48:13

What is that in your *h* Ex 4:2

took the rod of God in his *h* .. Ex 4:20

tooth for tooth, *h* Ex 21:24

lay his *h* on the bull's head Lev 4:4

Egypt with a mighty *h* Deut 9:26

and strengthened his *h* .. 1 Sam 23:16

Uzzah put out his *h* 2 Sam 6:6

let us fall into the *h* 2 Sam 24:14

Then, by the good *h* Ezra 8:18

He would loose His *h* Job 6:9

he stretches out his *h* Job 15:25

that your own right *h* Job 40:14

h has held me up Ps 18:35

My times are in Your *h* Ps 31:15

and night Your *h* Ps 32:4

Your right *h* is full Ps 48:10

Let Your *h* be upon the Ps 80:17

h shall be established Ps 89:21

"Sit at My right *h* Ps 110:1

days is in her right *h* Prov 3:16

heart is in the *h* Prov 21:1

Whatever your *h* finds Eccl 9:10

is at his right *h* Eccl 10:2

do not withhold your *h* Eccl 11:6

His left *h* is under my Song 8:3

My *h* has laid the Is 48:13

Behold, the LORD's *h* Is 59:1

are the work of Your *h* Is 64:8

the clay is in the potter's *h* Jer 18:6

Am I a God near at *h* Jer 23:23

and incense in their *h*, to Jer 41:5

h under their wings Ezek 10:8

a measuring rod in his *h* Ezek 40:3

of a man's *h* appeared Dan 5:5

a *h* touched me, which Dan 10:10

of heaven is at *h* Matt 3:2

if your right *h* causes Matt 5:30

do not let your left *h* Matt 6:3

h causes you to sin Mark 9:43

sitting at the right *h* Mark 14:62

delivered from the *h* Luke 1:74

Sit at My right *h* Acts 2:34

at the right *h* of God Acts 7:55

is even at the right *h* Rom 8:34

Because I am not a *h* 1 Cor 12:15

with my own *h* 1 Cor 16:21

the right *h* of fellowship Gal 2:9

by the *h* of a mediator Gal 3:19

to you with my own *h* Gal 6:11

The Lord is at *h* Phil 4:5

sitting at the right *h* of God Col 3:1

"Sit at My right *h* Heb 1:13

right *h* of the throne of the Heb 8:1

down at the right *h* Heb 10:12

of the Lord is at *h* James 5:8

in His right *h* seven stars Rev 1:16

stars in His right *h* Rev 2:1

HAND OF GOD

the *h* was very heavy 1 Sam 5:11

the *h* was on Judah 2 Chr 30:12

the *h* has struck me Job 19:21

was from the *h* Eccl 2:24

their works are in the *h* Eccl 9:1

under the mighty *h* 1 Pet 5:6

HAND OF THE LORD

the *h* was against them, Deut 2:15

earth may know the *h* Josh 4:24

of Israel out of the *h* Josh 22:31

h has gone out against Ruth 1:13

h was heavy on the 1 Sam 5:6

h was against the 1 Sam 7:13

let us fall into the *h* 2 Sam 24:14

h came upon Elijah; 1 Kin 18:46

the *h* came upon him 2 Kin 3:15

according to the *h* Ezra 7:6

h my God was upon me Ezra 7:28

the *h* has done this Job 12:9

the right *h* does valiantly Ps 118:15

king's heart is in the *h* Prov 21:1

crown of glory in the *h* Is 62:3

the *h* shall be known Is 66:14

the *h* was strong upon me Ezek 3:14

the *h* came upon me Ezek 37:1

And the *h* was with him Luke 1:66

And the *h* was with them Acts 11:21

the *h* is upon you, Acts 13:11

HANDIWORK

firmament shows His *h* Ps 19:1

HANDKERCHIEFS

so that even *h* or aprons Acts 19:12

HANDLE

h the law did not know Jer 2:8

H Me and see Luke 24:39

do not taste, do not *h* Col 2:21

HANDLED

and our hands have *h* 1 John 1:1

HANDS

the *h* are the *h* Gen 27:22

and Hur supported his *h* Ex 17:12

Moses had laid his *h* on Deut 34:9

here we are, in your *h* Josh 9:25

took his life in his *h* 1 Sam 19:5

put my life in my *h* 1 Sam 28:21

but His *h* make whole Job 5:18

and cleanse my *h* Job 9:30

h have made me and Job 10:8

They pierced My *h* Ps 22:16

washed my *h* in innocence Ps 73:13

establish the work of our *h* Ps 90:17

In their *h* they shall bear Ps 91:12

h formed the dry land Ps 95:5

stretches out her *h* Prov 31:19

say, 'He has no *h* Is 45:9

strike your *h* together Ezek 21:14

was cut out without *h* Dan 2:34

on the palms of my *h* Dan 10:10

The *h* of Zerubbabel have Zech 4:9

than having two *h* Matt 18:8

will lay *h* on the sick Mark 16:18

into Your *h* I commit Luke 23:46

Behold My *h* and My Luke 24:39

only, but also my *h* John 13:9

h the print of the John 20:25

his chains fell off his *h* Acts 12:7

know that these *h* Acts 20:34

and he laid his *h* on him Acts 28:8

a house not made with *h* 2 Cor 5:1

his *h* what is good Eph 4:28

made without *h* Col 2:11

lifting up holy *h* 1 Tim 2:8

the laying on of the *h* 1 Tim 4:14

Do not lay *h* on anyone 1 Tim 5:22

the laying on of my *h* 2 Tim 1:6

baptisms, of laying on of *h* Heb 6:2

not made with *h* Heb 9:11

to fall into the *h* Heb 10:31

Cleanse your *h*, you James 4:8

and our *h* have handled, 1 John 1:1

foreheads or on their *h* Rev 20:4

HANDWRITING

having wiped out the *h* Col 2:14

HANG

They will *h* on him all the Is 22:24

commandments *h* all the Matt 22:40

the hands which *h* down Heb 12:12

HANGED

for he who is *h* Deut 21:23

went and *h* himself Matt 27:5

HANGS

h the earth on nothing Job 26:7

is everyone who *h* Gal 3:13

HANNAH

Barren wife of Elkanah; prays for a

son, 1 Sam 1:1-18

Bears Samuel and dedicates him to the

Lord, 1 Sam 1:19-28

Magnifies God, 1 Sam 2:1-10

HANUN

King of Ammon; disgraces David's am-

bassadors and is defeated by him,

2 Sam 10:1-14

HAPPEN

show us what will *h* Is 41:22

understand what will *h* Dan 10:14

not know what will *h* James 4:14

HAPPINESS

one year, and bring *h* Deut 24:5

HAPPY

h are these your servants 2 Chr 9:7

H is the man who has Ps 127:5

H are the people who Ps 144:15

H is the man who finds Prov 3:13

mercy on the poor, *h* Prov 14:21

trusts in the LORD, *h* Prov 16:20

h is he who keeps Prov 29:18

H is he who does not Rom 14:22

HARAN

Abraham's younger brother, Gen

11:26-31

— City of Mesopotamia, Gen 11:31

Abraham leaves, Gen 12:4, 5

Jacob dwells at, Gen 29:4-35

HARASS

and Judah shall not *h* Is 11:13
h some from the church Acts 12:1

HARD

Is anything too *h* Gen 18:14
 Pharaoh's heart is *h* Ex 7:14
 test him with *h* questions 1 Kin 10:1
 His heart is as *h* Job 41:24
 shown Your people *h* Ps 60:3
 of the unfaithful is *h* Prov 13:15
h to bear, and lay them Matt 23:4
 I knew you to be a *h* Matt 25:24
 "This is a *h* saying John 6:60
 It is *h* for you to kick Acts 9:5
 are some things *h* 2 Pet 3:16

HARDEN

But I will *h* his heart Ex 4:21
 Do not *h* your hearts Ps 95:8
h your hearts as Heb 3:8

HARDENED

But Pharaoh *h* his Ex 8:32
 Who has *h* himself Job 9:4
 their heart was *h* Mark 6:52
 eyes and *h* their hearts John 12:40
 lest any of you be *h* Heb 3:13

HARDENS

A wicked man *h* his Prov 21:29
h his heart will fall Prov 28:14
 whom He wills He *h* Rom 9:18

HARDER

brother offended is *h* to Prov 18:19
 their faces *h* than rock Jer 5:3
h than flint, I have made Ezek 3:9

HARDSHIP

h that has befallen us Num 20:14
h as a good soldier 2 Tim 2:3

HARLOT

play the *h* with their gods Ex 34:16
 shall be no ritual *h* Deut 23:17
 of a *h* named Rahab Josh 2:1
h is a deep pit Prov 23:27
 the deeds of a brazen *h* Ezek 16:30
 Oholah played the *h* Ezek 23:5
 you, Israel, play the *h*, let Hos 4:15
h is one body with 1 Cor 6:16
h Rahab did not perish Heb 11:31
 of the great *h* who Rev 17:1

HARLOTRIES

the land with your *h* Jer 3:2
 Let her put away her *h* Hos 2:2

HARLOTRY

through her casual *h* Jer 3:9
 the lewdness of your *h* Jer 13:27
 let them put their *h* Ezek 43:9
 are the children of *h* Hos 2:4
 Ephraim, you commit *h* Hos 5:3
 for the spirit of *h* Hos 5:4

HARLOTS

his blood while the *h* 1 Kin 22:38
h enter the kingdom Matt 21:31
 Great, The Mother of *H* Rev 17:5

HARM

do My prophets no *h* 1 Chr 16:22
 they thought to do me *h* Neh 6:2
 those who sought their *h* Esth 9:2
 it only causes *h* Ps 37:8
 and do My prophets no *h* Ps 105:15
 and I will not *h* you Jer 25:6
 Do yourself no *h*, for we Acts 16:28
 Love does no *h* to a Rom 13:10
 and do not *h* the oil Rev 6:6
 Do not *h* the earth, the Rev 7:3

HARMLESS

become blameless and *h* Phil 2:15
 for us, who is holy, *h* Heb 7:26

HARMONIOUS

the harp, with *h* sound Ps 92:3

HAROD

Well near Gideon's camp, Judg 7:1

HARP

those who play the *h* Gen 4:21
 skillful player on the *h* 1 Sam 16:16
 Praise the LORD with the *h* Ps 33:2
 Sing to the LORD with the *h* Ps 98:5
 On a *h* of ten strings I will Ps 144:9
 with the lute and *h* Ps 150:3
 Lamb, each having a *h* Rev 5:8

HARPS

to direct with *h* on the 1 Chr 15:21
 We hung our *h* upon the Ps 137:2
 playing their *h* Rev 14:2
 of glass, having *h* of God Rev 15:2

HARSH

a *h* word stirs up anger Prov 15:1
 "Your words have been *h* Mal 3:13
 but also to the *h* 1 Pet 2:18

HARVEST

See FEAST OF HARVEST
 seedtime and *h* Gen 8:22
 to death in the days of *h* 2 Sam 21:9
 He who sleeps in *h* is a Prov 10:5
 to the joy of *h* Is 9:3
 cloud of dew in the heat of *h* Is 18:4
 shall eat up your *h* Jer 5:17
 "The *h* is past Jer 8:20
 of her *h* will come Jer 51:33
 the sickle, for the *h* is ripe Joel 3:13
h truly is plentiful Matt 9:37
 pray the Lord of the *h* Matt 9:38
 sickle, because the *h* Mark 4:29
 pray the Lord of the *h* to Luke 10:2
 already white for *h* John 4:35
 the *h* of the earth is Rev 14:15

HASTE

you shall eat it in *h* Ex 12:11
 For I said in my *h* Ps 31:22
 And they came with *h* Luke 2:16
 "Zacchaeus, make *h* Luke 19:5

HASTEN

be multiplied who *h* Ps 16:4
 Do not *h* in your Eccl 7:9
 I, the LORD, will *h* Is 60:22

HASTENING

h the coming of the 2 Pet 3:12

HASTENS

and he sins who *h* Prov 19:2
 with an evil eye *h* Prov 28:22
 is near and *h* quickly Zeph 1:14

HASTILY

utter anything *h* Eccl 5:2
 lay hands on anyone *h* 1 Tim 5:22

HASTY

Do you see a man *h* Prov 29:20

HATE

You shall not *h* Lev 19:17
h all workers of Ps 5:5
h the righteous shall Ps 34:21
 love the LORD, *h* evil Ps 97:10
h every false way Ps 119:104
h the double-minded Ps 119:13
 I *h* and abhor lying Ps 119:163
 love, and a time to *h* Eccl 3:8
h robbery for burnt Is 61:8
H evil, love good Amos 5:15
 I *h*, I despise your feast Amos 5:21
 You who *h* good and Mic 3:2
 either he will *h* the one Matt 6:24
 but what I *h*, that I do Rom 7:15
 Nicolaitans, which I also *h* Rev 2:6
 these will *h* the harlot, Rev 17:16

HATED

So Esau *h* Jacob because Gen 27:41
 they *h* knowledge Prov 1:29
 Therefore I *h* life Eccl 2:17

h all my labor in Eccl 2:18
 but Esau I have *h* Mal 1:3
 And you will be *h* Matt 10:22
 have seen and also *h* John 15:24
h Me without a cause John 15:25
 world has *h* them John 17:14
 but Esau I have *h* Rom 9:13
 For no one ever *h* Eph 5:29
 and *h* lawlessness Heb 1:9

HATEFUL

h woman when she is Prov 30:23
 in malice and envy, *h* Titus 3:3

HATERS

The *h* of the LORD Ps 81:15
 backbiters, *h* of God Rom 1:30

HATES

six things the LORD *h* Prov 6:16
 lose it, and he who *h* John 12:25
 "If the world *h* John 15:18
h his brother is 1 John 2:11

HATING

h even the garment defiled Jude 23

HATRED

I hate them with perfect *h* Ps 139:22

HAUGHTY

Your eyes are on the *h* 2 Sam 22:28
 bring down *h* looks Ps 18:27
 my heart is not *h* Ps 131:1
h spirit before a fall Prov 16:18
 A proud and *h* man Prov 21:24
 Do not be *h*, but fear Rom 11:20
 age not to be *h* 1 Tim 6:17

HAUNTS

are full of the *h* Ps 74:20

HAURAN

District southeast of Mt. Hermon, Ezek 47:16

HAVE MERCY

h on me, and hear my prayer Ps 4:1
h on me, for I am Ps 25:16
H upon me, O God, Ps 51:1
 arise and *h* on Zion; Ps 102:13
 and forsakes them will *h* Prov 28:13
 nor *h* on their fatherless Is 9:17
 the Lord will *h* Is 14:1
 will *h* on His afflicted Is 49:13
 not pity nor spare nor *h* Jer 13:14
 I will surely *h* on him." Jer 31:20
 captives of Jacob, and *h* Ezek 39:25
 I will no longer *h* Hos 1:6
 how long will You not *h* Zech 1:12
 "Son of David, *h* on us Matt 9:27
 "H on me, O Lord Matt 15:22
 Lord, *h* on my son, Matt 17:15
 "H on us, O Lord, Matt 20:30
 "Jesus, Son of David, *h* Mark 10:47
 "Father Abraham, *h* Luke 16:24
 "Jesus, Master, *h* on us Luke 17:13
 "Jesus, Son of David, *h* Luke 18:38
 "I will *h* on whomever Rom 9:15
 that He might *h* on all Rom 11:32

HAVEN

shall dwell by the *h* Gen 49:13
 to their desired *h* Ps 107:30

HAVOC

for Saul, he made *h* Acts 8:3

HAY

precious stones, wood, *h* 1 Cor 3:12

HAZAEI

Anointed king of Syria by Elijah, 1 Kin 19:15-17
 Elisha predicts his taking the throne, 2 Kin 8:7-15
 Oppresses Israel, 2 Kin 8:28, 29; 10:32, 33; 12:17, 18; 13:3-7, 22

HAZAR ENAN

Village of north Palestine, Num 34:9, 10

HAZEROTH

Scene of sedition of Miriam and Aaron,
Num 11:35—12:16

HAZOR

Royal Canaanite city destroyed by
Joshua, Josh 11:1–13
Rebuilt and assigned to Naphtali, Josh
19:32, 36
Army of, defeated by Deborah and
Barak, Judg 4:1–24

HE WHO BELIEVES

H and is baptized Mark 16:16
H in Him is not John 3:18
H in the Son has John 3:36
h in Me shall never thirst John 6:35
h in Me has everlasting John 6:47
H in Me, as the Scripture John 7:38
H, though he may die, John 11:25
and said, “*H* in Me, John 12:44
h in Me, the works that John 14:12
precious, and *h* on Him 1 Pet 2:6
the world, but *h* 1 John 5:5
H in the Son of God 1 John 5:10

HEAD

He shall bruise your *h* Gen 3:15
white baskets on my *h* Gen 40:16
on the *h* of the bed Gen 47:31
your right hand on his *h* Gen 48:18
shall come upon his *h* 1 Sam 1:11
a bronze helmet on his *h* 1 Sam 17:5
and cut off his *h* with 1 Sam 17:51
crown from his *h* 2 Sam 12:30
put ashes on her *h* 2 Sam 13:19
and dust on his *h* 2 Sam 15:32
My *h*, my *h*!” 2 Kin 4:19
is with us as our *h* 2 Chr 13:12
my skin, and laid my *h* Job 16:15
return upon his own *h* Ps 7:16
of pure gold upon his *h* Ps 21:3
the lip, they shake the *h* Ps 22:7
You anoint my *h* with oil Ps 23:5
than the hairs of my *h* Ps 40:12
the precious oil upon the *h* Ps 133:2
The silver-haired *h* is a Prov 16:31
old men is their gray *h* Prov 20:29
coals of fire on his *h* Prov 25:22
h is covered with dew Song 5:2
The whole *h* is sick Is 1:5
it to bow down his *h* Is 58:5
For every *h* shall be bald Jer 48:37
visions of my *h* troubled Dan 4:5
could lift up his *h* Zech 1:21
you swear by your *h* Matt 5:36
you fast, anoint your *h* Matt 6:17
Baptist’s *h* here on a Matt 14:8
first the blade, then the *h* Mark 4:28
and poured it on His *h* Mark 14:3
thorns, put it on His *h* Mark 15:17
did not anoint My *h* with Luke 7:46
has nowhere to lay His *h* Luke 9:58
bowing His *h*, He gave John 19:30
coals of fire on his *h* Rom 12:20
having his *h* covered 1 Cor 11:4
or prophesies with her *h* 1 Cor 11:5
and gave Him to be *h* Eph 1:22
For the husband is *h* Eph 5:23
His *h* and his hair Rev 1:14
having on His *h* a golden Rev 14:14
His *h* were many crowns Rev 19:12

HEADS

See BOWED THEIR HEADS
men to ride over our *h* Ps 66:12
Him, wagging their *h* Matt 27:39
dragon having seven *h* Rev 12:3

HEAL

I wound and I *h* Deut 32:39
surely I will *h* you 2 Kin 20:5
O LORD, *h* me Ps 6:2
H my soul, for I have Ps 41:4
time to kill, and a time to *h* Eccl 3:3

sent Me to *h* the Is 61:1
h your backslidings Jer 3:22
who can *h* you Lam 2:13
torn, but He will *h* Hos 6:1
H all kinds of sickness Matt 10:1
H the sick, cleanse Matt 10:8
to *h* on the Sabbath Matt 12:10
so that I should *h* Matt 13:15
power to *h* sicknesses Mark 3:15
sent Me to *h* the Luke 4:18
Physician, *h* yourself Luke 4:23

HEALED

I have *h* this water 2 Kin 2:21
His word and *h* them Ps 107:20
And return and be *h* Is 6:10
His stripes we are *h* Is 53:5
h the hurt of My Jer 6:14
When I would have *h* Hos 7:1
and He *h* them Matt 4:24
and my servant will be *h* Matt 8:8
and *h* all who were sick, Matt 8:16
Jesus’ feet, and He *h* Matt 15:30
be *h* of their diseases, Luke 6:17
demon-possessed was *h* Luke 8:36
h the child, and gave him Luke 9:42
touched his ear and *h* Luke 22:51
and they were all *h* Acts 5:16
he had faith to be *h* Acts 14:9
but rather be *h* Heb 12:13
that you may be *h* James 5:16
whose stripes you were *h* 1 Pet 2:24
his deadly wound was *h* Rev 13:3

HEALING

h shall spring forth Is 58:8
so that there is no *h* Jer 14:19
Your injury has no *h* Nah 3:19
shall arise with *h* Mal 4:2
and *h* all kinds of Matt 4:23
h all who were oppressed Acts 10:38
tree were for the *h* Rev 22:2

HEALINGS

to another gifts of *h* 1 Cor 12:9
Do all have gifts of *h* 1 Cor 12:30

HEALS

h all your diseases Ps 103:3
He *h* the broken-hearted Ps 147:3
h the stroke of their Is 30:26
Jesus the Christ *h* Acts 9:34

HEALTH

It will be *h* to your flesh Prov 3:8
and *h* to all their flesh Prov 4:22
of the wise promotes *h* Prov 12:18
to the soul and *h* Prov 16:24
and for a time of *h* Jer 8:15
no recovery for the *h* Jer 8:22
For I will restore *h* to you Jer 30:17
all things and be in *h* 3 John 2

HEAP

This *h* is a witness Gen 31:48
I could *h* up words Job 16:4
sea together as a *h* Ps 33:7
so you will *h* coals of Prov 25:22
ears, they will *h* 2 Tim 4:3

HEARS

Though he *h* up silver Job 27:16

HEAR

See EARS TO HEAR
with us, and we will *h* Ex 20:19
Me, I will surely *h* their Ex 22:23
“*H*, O Israel: The LORD Deut 6:4
Him you shall *h* Deut 18:15
of the oxen which I *h* 1 Sam 15:14
You *h* the supplication of 1 Kin 8:30
h in heaven Your 1 Kin 8:43
H me when I call Ps 4:1
O You who *h* prayer Ps 65:2
h what God the LORD Ps 85:8
ear, shall He not *h* Ps 94:9
h the words of the Prov 22:17

h rather than to give Eccl 5:1
H, O heavens, and give ear Is 1:2
H, you who are afar Is 33:13
Let the earth *h* Is 34:1
I have made you *h* new Is 48:6
I spoke, you did not *h* Is 65:12
cleansed and the deaf *h* Matt 11:5
“Hearing you will *h* Matt 13:14
if he will not *h* Matt 18:16
“Take heed what you *h* Mark 4:24
ears, do you not *h* Mark 8:18
h the sound of it John 3:8
that God does not *h* John 9:31
My sheep *h* My voice John 10:27
And how shall they *h* Rom 10:14
man be swift to *h* James 1:19
those who *h* the words of Rev 1:3
h what the Spirit says Rev 2:7
has an ear, let him *h* Rev 13:9

HEARD

h the sound of the Gen 3:8
h their cry because of Ex 3:7
you only *h* a voice Deut 4:12
certainly God has *h* Ps 66:19
quietly, should be *h* Eccl 9:17
Have you not *h* Is 40:21
world men have not *h* Is 64:4
Who has *h* such a thing Is 66:8
h Ephraim bemoaning Jer 31:18
that they will be *h* Matt 6:7
h the word believed Acts 4:4
I say, have they not *h* Rom 10:18
not seen, nor ear *h* 1 Cor 2:9
h inexpressible words 2 Cor 12:4
things that you have *h* 2 Tim 2:2
the things we have *h* Heb 2:1
the word which they *h* Heb 4:2
from death, and was *h* Heb 5:7
which we have *h* 1 John 1:1
Lord’s Day, and I *h* Rev 1:10

HEARER

if anyone is a *h* James 1:23
is not a forgetful *h* James 1:25

HEARERS

for not the *h* of the Rom 2:13
impart grace to the *h* Eph 4:29
of the word, and not *h* James 1:22

HEARING

and read in the *h* Ex 24:7
Book of Moses in the *h* Neh 13:1
Do not speak in the *h* Prov 23:9
“Keep on *h*, but do not Is 6:9
h they do not Matt 13:13
h they may hear Mark 4:12
If the whole were *h* 1 Cor 12:17
or by the *h* of faith Gal 3:2
have become dull of *h* Heb 5:11

HEARS

for Your servant *h* 1 Sam 3:9
out, and the LORD *h* Ps 34:17
He who *h* you *h* Me Luke 10:16
of God *h* God’s words John 8:47
And if anyone *h* John 12:47
who is of the truth *h* John 18:37
He who knows God *h* 1 John 4:6
And let him who *h* Rev 22:17

HEART

See UPRIGHT IN HEART; WITH ALL YOUR
HEART

h was only evil Gen 6:5
for you know the *h* Ex 23:9
as many as had a willing *h* Ex 35:22
h the LORD had put Ex 36:2
seek Him with all your *h* Deut 4:29
the foreskin of your *h* Deut 10:16
whatever your *h* desires Deut 14:26
and confusion of *h* Deut 28:28
will circumcise your *h* Deut 30:6
incline your *h* to the Josh 24:23
great searchings of *h* Judg 5:16

Hannah spoke in her *h* . . . 1 Sam 1:13
h rejoices in the LORD. . . . 1 Sam 2:1
 God gave him another *h* . . . 1 Sam 10:9
 a man after His own *h* . . . 1 Sam 13:14
 LORD looked at the *h* . . . 1 Sam 16:7
 his *h* died within him. . . . 1 Sam 25:37
 despised him in her *h* . . . 2 Sam 6:16
 David's *h* condemned . . . 2 Sam 24:10
 and understanding *h* . . . 1 Kin 3:12
 largeness of *h* like the . . . 1 Kin 4:29
h to build a temple for . . . 1 Kin 8:18
 My eyes and My *h* will be . . . 1 Kin 9:3
 his wives turned his *h* . . . 1 Kin 11:4
 Ezra had prepared his *h* . . . Ezra 7:10
 He pierces my *h* . . . Job 16:13
 How my *h* yearns within . . . Job 19:27
 For God made my *h* . . . Job 23:16
 My *h* is in turmoil and . . . Job 30:27
 within your *h* on your bed . . . Ps 4:4
 My *h* also instructs me . . . Ps 16:7
 your *h* live forever . . . Ps 22:26
h is overflowing . . . Ps 45:1
 My *h* is steadfast . . . Ps 57:7
 Thus my *h* was grieved . . . Ps 73:21
 my *h* and my flesh cry . . . Ps 84:2
h is set on pilgrimage . . . Ps 84:5
 may gain a *h* of wisdom . . . Ps 90:12
h shall depart from me . . . Ps 101:4
 look and a proud *h* . . . Ps 101:5
 with my whole *h* . . . Ps 111:1
 With my whole *h* I have . . . Ps 119:10
 I have hidden in my *h* . . . Ps 119:11
h is not haughty . . . Ps 131:1
 O God, and know my *h* . . . Ps 139:23
h makes a cheerful . . . Prov 15:13
 The king's *h* is in the . . . Prov 21:1
 as he thinks in his *h* . . . Prov 23:7
 with a wicked *h* . . . Prov 26:23
h reveals the man . . . Prov 27:19
 trusts in his own *h* . . . Prov 28:26
 The *h* of the wise is . . . Eccl 7:4
 and a wise man's *h* . . . Eccl 8:5
h yearned for him . . . Song 5:4
 and the whole *h* . . . Is 1:5
h shall resound . . . Is 16:11
 the yearning of Your *h* . . . Is 63:15
 the mind and the *h* . . . Jer 11:20
h is deceitful above . . . Jer 17:9
 I will give them a *h* . . . Jer 24:7
 therefore My *h* yearns . . . Jer 31:20
 and take the stony *h* . . . Ezek 11:19
 get yourselves a new *h* . . . Ezek 18:31
 uncircumcised in *h* . . . Ezek 44:7
 are the pure in *h* . . . Matt 5:8
 is, there your *h* . . . Matt 6:21
 of the *h* proceed evil . . . Matt 15:19
 does not doubt in his *h* . . . Mark 11:23
 Did not our *h* burn . . . Luke 24:32
h will flow rivers . . . John 7:38
 "Let not your *h* . . . John 14:1
 believed were of one *h* . . . Acts 4:32
 Satan filled your *h* . . . Acts 5:3
h is not right in the . . . Acts 8:21
 is that of the *h* . . . Rom 2:29
h that God has raised . . . Rom 10:9
 with the *h* one believes . . . Rom 10:10
 in sincerity of the . . . Eph 6:5
 refresh my *h* in the . . . Philem 20
 always go astray in their *h* . . . Heb 3:10
 and shuts up his *h* . . . 1 John 3:17
 if our *h* condemns us . . . 1 John 3:20

HEARTILY

you do, do it *h* . . . Col 3:23

HEARTS

God tests the *h* . . . Ps 7:9
 who seek God, your *h* . . . Ps 69:32
 let the *h* of those . . . Ps 105:3
 And he will turn the *h* . . . Mal 4:6
h failing them from . . . Luke 21:26
 purifying their *h* . . . Acts 15:9
 will guard your *h* . . . Phil 4:7

of God rule in your *h* . . . Col 3:15

HEAT

and harvest, cold and *h* . . . Gen 8:22
 storm, a shade from the *h* . . . Is 25:4
 in the *h* of my spirit . . . Ezek 3:14
 will melt with fervent *h* . . . 2 Pet 3:12

HEATHEN

repetitions as the *h* . . . Matt 6:7
 him be to you like a *h* . . . Matt 18:17

HEAVEN

See FATHER IN HEAVEN; HOST OF

HEAVEN; KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

called the firmament *H* . . . Gen 1:8
 High, Possessor of *h* . . . Gen 14:19
 called to him from *h* . . . Gen 22:11
 multiply as the stars of *h* . . . Gen 26:4
 give you of the dew of *h* . . . Gen 27:28
 and this is the gate of *h* . . . Gen 28:17
 with blessings of *h* above . . . Gen 49:25
 out his rod toward *h* . . . Ex 9:23
 rain bread from *h* for you . . . Ex 16:4
 Out of *h* He let you hear . . . Deut 4:36
 precious things of *h* . . . Deut 33:13
 foundations of *h* quaked . . . 2 Sam 22:8
 the host of *h* standing . . . 1 Kin 22:19
 came down from *h* . . . 2 Kin 1:12
 Elijah into *h* by a . . . 2 Kin 2:1
 would make windows in *h* . . . 2 Kin 7:2
 Behold, *h* and the *h* of . . . 2 Chr 6:18
 The LORD's throne is in *h* . . . Ps 11:4
 LORD looks down from *h* . . . Ps 14:2
 Whom have I in *h* but You . . . Ps 73:25
 word is settled in *h* . . . Ps 119:89
 For God is in *h* . . . Eccl 5:2
 "H is My throne . . . Is 66:1
 "If *h* above can be . . . Jer 31:37
 and the birds of the *h* . . . Dan 2:38
 come to know that *H* . . . Dan 4:26
 though they climb up to *h* . . . Amos 9:2
 These are four spirits of *h* . . . Zech 6:5
 for the kingdom of *h* . . . Matt 3:2
 your Father in *h* . . . Matt 5:16
 Our Father in *h*, hallowed . . . Matt 6:9
 on earth as it is in *h* . . . Matt 6:10
H and earth will . . . Matt 24:35
 from Him a sign from *h* . . . Mark 8:11
 but are like angels in *h* . . . Mark 12:25
 with the clouds of *h* . . . Mark 14:62
 prayed, the *h* was opened . . . Luke 3:21
 fall like lightning from *h* . . . Luke 10:18
 names are written in *h* . . . Luke 10:20
 done on earth as it is in *h* . . . Luke 11:2
 will be more joy in *h* . . . Luke 15:7
 have sinned against *h* . . . Luke 15:18
 descending from *h* like a . . . John 1:32
 you shall see *h* open . . . John 1:51
 one has ascended to *h* . . . John 3:13
 the true bread from *h* . . . John 6:32
 a voice came from *h* . . . John 12:28
 sheet, let down from *h* . . . Acts 11:5
 the whole family in *h* . . . Eph 3:15
 laid up for you in *h* . . . Col 1:5
 and the *h* gave rain . . . James 5:18
 there was silence in *h* . . . Rev 8:1
 sign appeared in *h* . . . Rev 12:1
 Now I saw a new *h* . . . Rev 21:1

HEAVEN AND EARTH

High, Possessor of *h* . . . Gen 14:19
 "I call *h* to witness . . . Deut 4:26
 You have made *h* . . . 2 Kin 19:15
 of Israel, who made *h* . . . 2 Chr 2:12
 servants of the God of *h* . . . Ezra 5:11
 Let *h* praise Him, the seas . . . Ps 69:34
 the LORD, who made *h* . . . Ps 121:2
 LORD who made *h* bless . . . Ps 134:3
 who made *h*, the sea, and . . . Ps 146:6
 You have made *h* . . . Is 37:16
 "do I not fill *h*?" says . . . Jer 23:24
 the ordinances of *h* . . . Jer 33:25
 I will shake *h*, the sea and . . . Hag 2:6

till *h* pass away, one jot . . . Matt 5:18
 Father, Lord of *h* . . . Matt 11:25
 "H will pass away, but . . . Matt 24:35
 You are God, who made *h* . . . Acts 4:24
 the whole family in *h* . . . Eph 3:15
 worship Him who made *h* . . . Rev 14:7

HEAVENLY

h host praising God . . . Luke 2:13
 if I tell you *h* things . . . John 3:12
 are those who are *h* . . . 1 Cor 15:48
 the image of the *h* Man . . . 1 Cor 15:49
 blessing in the *h* . . . Eph 1:3
 the *h* places in Christ Jesus . . . Eph 2:6
 and powers in the *h* places . . . Eph 3:10
 wickedness in the *h* places . . . Eph 6:12
 and have tasted the *h* . . . Heb 6:4
h things themselves . . . Heb 9:23
 a better, that is, a *h* . . . Heb 11:16
 the living God, the *h* . . . Heb 12:22

HEAVENLY FATHER

your *h* will also forgive . . . Matt 6:14
 yet your *h* feeds them . . . Matt 6:26
h knows that you need . . . Matt 6:32
 My *h* has not planted . . . Matt 15:13
 "So My *h* also will do . . . Matt 18:35
 your *h* give the Holy . . . Luke 11:13

HEAVENS

I will make your *h* . . . Lev 26:19
 and the highest *h* . . . Deut 10:14
h cannot contain . . . 1 Kin 8:27
 the LORD made the *h* . . . 1 Chr 16:26
 Till the *h* are no more . . . Job 14:12
 in the *h* shall laugh . . . Ps 2:4
h declare the glory . . . Ps 19:1
 Let the *h* declare His . . . Ps 50:6
h can be compared . . . Ps 89:6
 The *h* are Yours . . . Ps 89:11
 For as the *h* are high . . . Ps 103:11
 When He prepared the *h* . . . Prov 8:27
h are higher than the . . . Is 55:9
 behold, I create new *h* . . . Is 65:17
 and behold, the *h* . . . Matt 3:16
h will be shaken . . . Matt 24:29
h are the work of Your . . . Heb 1:10
h will pass away . . . 2 Pet 3:10

HEAVINESS

and I am full of *h* . . . Ps 69:20
 My soul melts from *h* . . . Ps 119:28

HEAVY

the bondage was *h* . . . Neh 5:18

HEBREW

Term applied to:
 Abram, Gen 14:13
 Israelites, 1 Sam 4:6, 9
 Jews, Acts 6:1
 Paul, Phil 3:5

HEBRON

Abram, Isaac, and Jacob dwell there,
 Gen 13:18; 23:2–20; 35:27
 Visited by spies, Num 13:21, 22
 Defeated by Joshua, Josh 10:1–37
 Caleb's inheritance, Josh 14:12–15
 David's original capital: sons born
 there, 2 Sam 2:1–3, 11; 3:2–5
 Site of Absalom's rebellion, 2 Sam
 15:7–10

HEDGE

behold, I will *h* up your . . . Hos 2:6
 sharper than a thorn *h* . . . Mic 7:4
 a vineyard and set a *h* . . . Mark 12:1

HEDGED

and whom God has *h* . . . Job 3:23
 You have *h* me behind . . . Ps 139:5
 He has *h* me in so that . . . Lam 3:7

HEED

See TAKE HEED

By taking *h* according . . . Ps 119:9
 if you *h* Me carefully . . . Jer 17:24

and let us not give *h* Jer 18:18
 Take *h*. watch and pray ... Mark 13:33
 stands take *h* lest he 1 Cor 10:12
 nor give *h* to fables 1 Tim 1:4
 giving *h* to deceiving 1 Tim 4:1
 the more earnest *h* Heb 2:1

HEEDS

h counsel is wise Prov 12:15

HEEL

you shall bruise His *h* Gen 3:15
 took hold of Esau's *h* Gen 25:26
 has lifted up his *h* Ps 41:9
 Me has lifted up his *h* John 13:18

HEIFER

a red *h* without blemish Num 19:2
 not plowed with my *h* Judg 14:18
 goats and the ashes of a *h* Heb 9:13

HEIGHT

"Is not God in the *h* Job 22:12
 looked down from the *h* Ps 102:19
 nor *h* nor depth Rom 8:39
 length and depth and *h* Eph 3:18

HEIR

own body shall be your *h* Gen 15:4
 Has he no *h* Jer 49:1
 Now I say that the *h* Gal 4:1
 if a son, then an *h* Gal 4:7
 He has appointed *h* Heb 1:2
 the world and became *h* Heb 11:7

HEIRS

of God and joint *h* Rom 8:17
 should be fellow *h* Eph 3:6
 be rich in faith and *h* James 2:5
 vessel, and as being *h* 1 Pet 3:7

HELAM

Place between Damascus and Hamath
 where David defeated Syrians,
 2 Sam 10:16–19

HELL

shall be turned into *h* Ps 9:17
 go down alive into *h* Ps 55:15
 house is the way to *h* Prov 7:27
 his soul from *h* Prov 23:14
H and Destruction are Prov 27:20
 "H from beneath is Is 14:9
 be in danger of *h* fire Matt 5:22
 to be cast into *h* Matt 18:9
 the condemnation of *h* Matt 23:33
 power to cast into *h* Luke 12:5
 it is set on fire by *h* James 3:6

HELLENISTS

Greek-speaking Jews, Acts 6:1
 Hostile to Paul, Acts 9:29
 Gospel preached to, Acts 11:20

HELMET

a breastplate, and a *h* Is 59:17
 And take the *h* of Eph 6:17
 and love, and as a *h* 1 Thess 5:8

HELP

the shield of your *h* Deut 33:29
 Is my *h* not within me Job 6:13
 "There is no *h* for him Ps 3:2
 May He send you *h* Ps 20:2
 He is our *h* and our Ps 33:20
 yet praise Him, the *h* Ps 42:11
 A very present *h* Ps 46:1
 Give us *h* from trouble Ps 60:11
 God, make haste to *h* Ps 71:12
 "I have given *h* Ps 89:19
 the LORD had been my *h* Ps 94:17
 there was none to *h* Ps 107:12
 He is their *h* and Ps 115:9
 Our *h* is in the name Ps 124:8
 let no one *h* him Prov 28:17
 my unbelief Mark 9:24
 tell her to *h* me Luke 10:40
 and find grace to *h* Heb 4:16

HELPED

far the LORD has *h* 1 Sam 7:12

h the people to Neh 8:7
 fall, but the LORD *h* Ps 118:13
 of salvation I have *h* Is 49:8
h His servant Israel Luke 1:54

HELPER

I will make him a *h* Gen 2:18
 Behold, God is my *h* Ps 54:4
 give you another *H* John 14:16
 "But when the *H* John 15:26
 she has been a *h* Rom 16:2
 "The LORD is my *h* Heb 13:6

HELPFUL

all things are not *h* 1 Cor 6:12

HELPS

the Spirit also *h* Rom 8:26
 gifts of healings, *h* 1 Cor 12:28

HEM

and touched the *h* Matt 9:20
 might only touch the *h* Matt 14:36

HEMAN

Composer of a psalm, Ps 88:title

HEMLOCK

judgment springs up like *h* ... Hos 10:4

HEN

as a *h* gathers her chicks .. Matt 23:37
 as a *h* gathers her brood .. Luke 13:34

HENNA

is to me a cluster of *h* Song 1:14
 fragrant *h* with spikenard .. Song 4:13

HERB

the *h* that yields seed, and .. Gen 1:11
 every green *h* for food Gen 1:30
 struck every *h* of the field Ex 9:25
 ate every *h* of the land Ex 10:15
 raindrops on the tender *h* .. Deut 32:2
 field and the green *h* 2 Kin 19:26
 And wither as the green *h* Ps 37:2
 the field and the green *h* Is 37:27

HERBS

with bitter *h* they shall eat .. Ex 12:8
 bread and bitter *h* Num 9:11
 a dinner of *h* where love .. Prov 15:17

HERD

And Abraham ran to the *h* .. Gen 18:7
 a burnt sacrifice of the *h* Lev 1:3
 tithe of the *h* or the flock .. Lev 27:32
 there be no *h* in the stalls ... Hab 3:17
 into the *h* of swine Matt 8:31

HERE

Then I said, "H am I Is 6:8

HERE I AM

And he said, "H Gen 22:1
 And he answered him, "H .. Gen 27:1
 'Jacob.' And I said, 'H Gen 31:11
 So he said to him, "H Gen 37:13
 Jacob!" And he said, "H Gen 46:2
 Moses!" And he said, "H Ex 3:4
 And he answered, "H 1 Sam 3:4
 "H. Witness against me 1 Sam 12:3
h. let Him do to me as 2 Sam 15:26
h, the first to come 2 Sam 19:20
 nor let the eunuch say, "H Is 56:3
 cry, and He will say, 'H Is 58:9
 I said, 'H, *h*.' to a nation Is 65:1
h, in your hand; do with Jer 26:14
 And he said, "H Acts 9:10

HERESIES

dissensions, *h* Gal 5:20
 in destructive *h* 2 Pet 2:1

HERITAGE

give it to you as a *h* Ex 6:8
 have given me the *h* Ps 61:5
 for that is his *h* Eccl 3:22
 for it is his *h* Eccl 5:18
 This is the *h* of the Is 54:17
 of My people, My *h* Joel 3:2

The flock of Your *h* Mic 7:14

HERMES

Paul acclaimed as, Acts 14:12

HERMON

Highest mountain (9,166 ft.) in Syria;
 also called Sirion, Shenir, Deut
 3:8, 9

HEROD

— Herod the Great, procurator of
 Judea (37–4 B.C.), Luke 1:5
 Inquires about Jesus' birth, Matt
 2:3–8
 Slays infants of Bethlehem, Matt
 2:12–18

— Herod Antipas, the tetrarch, ruler
 of Galilee and Perea (4 B.C.–A.D. 39),
 Luke 3:1

Imprisons John the Baptist, Luke
 3:18–21

Has John the Baptist beheaded, Matt
 14:1–12

Disturbed about Jesus, Luke 9:7–9

Jesus sent to him, Luke 23:7–11

— Herod Agrippa I (A.D. 37–44), Acts
 12:1, 19

Kills James, Acts 12:1, 2

Imprisons Peter, Acts 12:3–11, 19

Slain by an angel, Acts 12:20–23

— Herod Agrippa II (A.D. 53–70);

called Agrippa and King Agrippa,
 Acts 25:22–24, 26

Festus tells him about Paul, Acts
 25:13–27

Paul makes a defense before, Acts
 26:1–32

HERODIANS

Join Pharisees against Jesus, Mark 3:6
 Seek to trap Jesus, Matt 22:15–22
 Jesus warns against, Mark 8:15

HERODIAS

Granddaughter of Herod the Great;

plots John's death, Matt 14:3–12

Married her uncle, Mark 6:17, 18

HESHBON

Ancient Moabite city; taken by Moses,
 Num 21:23–34
 Assigned to Reubenites, Num 32:1–37

Prophecies concerning, Is 15:1–4;

16:8–14; Jer 48:2, 34, 35

HETH

Son of Canaan, Gen 10:15
 Abraham buys field from sons of, Gen
 23:3–20

Esau marries daughters of, Gen 27:46

HEW

H for yourself two tablets .. Deut 10:1

HEWN

she has *h* out her seven Prov 9:1

in a tomb that was *h* Luke 23:53

HEZEKIAH

Righteous king of Judah; reforms tem-
 ple and worship, 2 Chr 29–31
 Wars with Assyria; prayer for deliver-
 ance is answered, 2 Kin 18:7–19:37

His sickness and recovery; thanks-
 giving, 2 Kin 20:1–11; Is 38:9–22
 Boasts to Babylonian ambassadors,
 2 Kin 20:12–19

Death, 2 Kin 20:20, 21

HID

naked; and I *h* myself Gen 3:10

child, she *h* him three Ex 2:2

Egyptian and *h* him in the Ex 2:12

she *h* the messengers Josh 6:25

David *h* in the field 1 Sam 20:24

they *h* him and his nurse .. 2 Kin 11:2

And we *h*, as it were, our Is 53:3

and *h* his lord's money Matt 25:18

she *h* herself five months, . . . Luke 1:24
h in three measures of . . . Luke 13:21
 but Jesus *h* Himself and . . . John 8:59
h themselves in the caves . . . Rev 6:15

HIDDEKEL

Hebrew name of the river Tigris, Gen
 2:14; Dan 10:4

HIDDEN

and the LORD has *h* . . . 2 Kin 4:27
 It is *h* from the eyes . . . Job 28:21
h Your righteousness . . . Ps 40:10
 and my sins are not *h* . . . Ps 69:5
 Your word I have *h* . . . Ps 119:11
h riches of secret places . . . Is 45:3
 there His power was *h* . . . Hab 3:4
h that will not . . . Matt 10:26
 the *h* wisdom which God . . . 1 Cor 2:7
 bring to light the *h* . . . 1 Cor 4:5
 have renounced the *h* . . . 2 Cor 4:2
 rather let it be the *h* . . . 1 Pet 3:4
 give some of the *h* . . . Rev 2:17

HIDE

h by the Brook Cherith, . . . 1 Kin 17:3
H me under the shadow . . . Ps 17:8
 tabernacle He shall *h* me . . . Ps 27:5
 You shall *h* them in . . . Ps 31:20
 O God, and do not *h* . . . Ps 55:1
 You *h* Your face . . . Ps 104:29
 darkness shall not *h* . . . Ps 139:12
 You are God, who *h* . . . Is 45:15
h yourself from your . . . Is 58:7
 "Fall on us and *h* . . . Rev 6:16

HIDES

He *h* His face . . . Ps 10:11

HIDING

You are my *h* place . . . Ps 32:7
 A man will be as a *h* . . . Is 32:2

HIEL

Native of Bethel; rebuilds Jericho,
 1 Kin 16:34
 Fulfills Joshua's curse, Josh 6:26

HIGH

See MOST HIGH
 priest of God Most *H* . . . Gen 14:18
 For the LORD Most *H* . . . Ps 47:2
h is Your right hand . . . Ps 89:13
 are on *h* forevermore . . . Ps 92:8
 the LORD is on *h* . . . Ps 138:6
 "I dwell in the *h* . . . Is 57:15
 know that the Most *H* . . . Dan 4:17
 whose habitation is *h* . . . Obad 3
 up on a *h* mountain by . . . Matt 17:1
 your mind on *h* things . . . Rom 12:16
h thing that exalts . . . 2 Cor 10:5
 and faithful *H* Priest . . . Heb 2:17

HIGH PLACE

people today on the *h* . . . 1 Sam 9:12
 coming down from the *h* . . . 1 Sam 10:5
 great *h*: Solomon offered . . . 1 Kin 3:4
 Solomon built a *h* for . . . 1 Kin 11:7
h which Jeroboam the . . . 2 Kin 23:15
h that was at Gibeon . . . 1 Chr 16:39
 Moab is weary on the *h* . . . Is 16:12
 made a *h* for yourself in . . . Ezek 16:24
 this *h* to which you go? . . . Ezek 20:29

HIGH PLACES

I will destroy your *h* . . . Lev 26:30
 him up to the *h* of Baal . . . Num 22:41
 demolish all their *h* . . . Num 33:52
 shall tread down their *h* . . . Deut 33:29
 Israel is slain on your *h* . . . 2 Sam 1:19
 and sets me on my *h* . . . 2 Sam 22:34
 people sacrificed at the *h* . . . 1 Kin 3:2
 made shrines on the *h* . . . 1 Kin 12:31
 the *h* were not removed . . . 1 Kin 15:14
H removed the *h* and . . . 2 Kin 18:4
 to burn incense on the *h* . . . 2 Kin 23:5
 He also removed the *h* . . . 2 Chr 14:5

threw down the *h* and . . . 2 Chr 31:1
 taken away His *h* . . . 2 Chr 32:12
h, the wooden images . . . 2 Chr 34:3
 He makes peace in His *h* . . . Job 25:2
 deer, and sets me on my *h* . . . Ps 18:33
 Him to anger with their *h* . . . Ps 78:58
 to the *h* to weep. Moab will . . . Is 15:2
 have built the *h* of Tophet . . . Jer 7:31
 your *h* of sin within all . . . Jer 17:3
 I will destroy your *h* . . . Ezek 6:3
 adorned multicolored *h* . . . Ezek 16:16
 of their kings on their *h* . . . Ezek 43:7
 Also the *h* of Aven, the sin . . . Hos 10:8
 who treads the *h* of the . . . Amos 4:13

HIGH PRIEST

'And he who is the *h* . . . Lev 21:10
 until the death of the *h* . . . Num 35:25
 "Go up to Hilkiah the *h* . . . 2 Kin 22:4
h, was a son-in-law of . . . Neh 13:28
 son of Jehozadak, the *h* . . . Hag 1:1
 showed me Joshua the *h* . . . Zech 3:1
 at the palace of the *h* . . . Matt 26:3
 days of Abiathar the *h* . . . Mark 2:26
 servant of the *h*, and . . . Mark 14:47
 Caiaphas, being *h* that . . . John 11:49
 the courtyard of the *h* . . . John 18:15
 Annas the *h*, Caiaphas, . . . Acts 4:6
 of the Lord, went to the *h* . . . Acts 9:1
h Ananias commanded . . . Acts 23:2
 a merciful and faithful *H* . . . Heb 2:17
 we have a great *H* who . . . Heb 4:14
 we do not have a *H* who . . . Heb 4:15
 called by God as *H* . . . Heb 5:10
H forever according to the . . . Heb 6:20
 We have such a *H*, who is . . . Heb 8:1
h went alone once a year . . . Heb 9:7
H over the house of God . . . Heb 10:21

HIGHER

They are *h* than heaven . . . Job 11:8
 you, 'Friend, go up *h* . . . Luke 14:10
h than the heavens . . . Heb 7:26

HIGHEST

the *h* heavens belong to . . . Deut 10:14
 Hosanna in the *h*! . . . Matt 21:9
 the power of the *H* will . . . Luke 1:35
 Glory to God in the *h* . . . Luke 2:14
 and glory in the *h* . . . Luke 19:38

HIGHLY

Rejoice, *h* favored one . . . Luke 1:28
 also *h* has exalted Him . . . Phil 2:9

HIGHWAY

of the upright is a *h* . . . Prov 15:19
 in the desert a *h* . . . Is 40:3
 up, build up the *h* . . . Is 62:10

HIGHWAYS

h shall be elevated . . . Is 49:11
 go into the *h* . . . Matt 22:9

HILKIAH

Shallum's son, 1 Chr 6:13
 High priest in Josiah's reign, 2 Chr
 34:9-22
 Oversees temple work, 2 Kin 22:4-7
 Finds the Book of the Law, 2 Kin
 22:8-14
 Aids in reformation, 2 Kin 23:4

HILL

My King on My holy *h* . . . Ps 2:6
h cannot be hidden . . . Matt 5:14
 and *h* brought low . . . Luke 3:5
 to the brow of the *h* . . . Luke 4:29

HILLS

of the everlasting *h* . . . Gen 49:26
 possess is a land of *h* . . . Deut 11:11
 of the *h* are His also . . . Ps 95:4
 up my eyes to the *h* . . . Ps 121:1
 settled, before the *h* . . . Prov 8:25

HINDER

takes away, who can *h* . . . Job 9:12

all things lest we *h* . . . 1 Cor 9:12

HINDERED

come to you (but was *h* . . . Rom 1:13
 Who *h* you from obeying . . . Gal 5:7
 prayers may not be *h* . . . 1 Pet 3:7

HINDERS

h me from being baptized . . . Acts 8:36

HINNOM, VALLEY OF THE**SON OF**

See TOPHET
 Place near Jerusalem used for human
 sacrifice, 2 Kin 23:10; 2 Chr 28:3; Jer
 7:31, 32; 19:1-15

HIP

socket of Jacob's *h* . . . Gen 32:25

HIRAM

King of Tyre; provided materials for
 David's palace and Solomon's tem-
 ple, 2 Sam 5:11; 1 Kin 5:1-12;
 9:10-14, 26-28; 10:11; 1 Chr 14:1

HIRE

h laborers for his . . . Matt 20:1

HIRED

h man who eagerly . . . Job 7:2
 as the years of a *h* man . . . Is 16:14
h about the eleventh hour . . . Matt 20:9
h servants have bread . . . Luke 15:17

HIRELING

The *h* flees because . . . John 10:13

HIS MERCY ENDURES**FOREVER**

for He is good! For *H* . . . 1 Chr 16:34
 "For He is good, for *H* . . . 2 Chr 5:13
 "Praise the LORD, for *H* . . . 2 Chr 20:21
 For *H* toward Israel." . . . Ezra 3:11
 for He is good! For *H* . . . Ps 106:1
 for He is good! For *H* . . . Ps 107:1
 for He is good! For *H* . . . Ps 118:1
 for He is good! For *H* . . . Ps 136:1
 the LORD is good, for *H* . . . Jer 33:11

HIS RIGHT HAND

Ephraim with *h* toward . . . Gen 48:13
 on the thumb of *h*, and on . . . Lev 8:23
 on *H* and on His left . . . 1 Kin 22:19
 the saving strength of *H* . . . Ps 20:6
H and His holy arm have . . . Ps 98:1
 A wise man's heart is at *h* . . . Eccl 10:2
 is under my head, and *h* . . . Song 2:6
 The LORD has sworn by *H* . . . Is 62:8
 He has drawn back *H* from . . . Lam 2:3
 when he held up *h* and his . . . Dan 12:7
 Satan standing at *h* to . . . Zech 3:1
 will set the sheep on *H* . . . Matt 25:33
 a reed in *H*. And they . . . Matt 27:29
 God has exalted to *H* . . . Acts 5:31
 seated Him at *H* in . . . Eph 1:20
 He had in *H* seven stars . . . Rev 1:16
 holds the seven stars in *H* . . . Rev 2:1

HITTITES

One of seven Canaanite nations, Deut
 7:1
 Israelites intermarry with, Judg 3:5, 6;
 1 Kin 11:1; Ezra 9:1, 2

HIVITES

One of seven Canaanite nations, Deut
 7:1
 Esau intermarries with, Gen 36:2
 Gibeonites belong to, Josh 9:3, 7

HOLD

he took *h* of his father's . . . Gen 48:17
 for we must *h* a feast to the . . . Ex 10:9
 sorrow will take *h* of the . . . Ex 15:14
 trembling will take *h* of . . . Ex 15:15
 took *h* of the doors of the . . . Judg 16:3
 took *h* of the horns of the . . . 1 Kin 1:50
 enough to *h* two seahs . . . 1 Kin 18:32

out his hand to *h* the ark . . . 1 Chr 13:9
 Take *h* of shield and . . . Ps 35:2
h my eyelids open . . . Ps 77:4
 right hand shall *h* . . . Ps 139:10
 LORD your God, will *h* . . . Is 41:13
 cisterns that can *h* no . . . Jer 2:13
 I cannot *h* my peace . . . Jer 4:19
 Herod had laid *h* of John . . . Matt 14:3
 who had laid *h* of Jesus . . . Matt 26:57
 you *h* the tradition of men . . . Mark 7:8
h fast that word . . . 1 Cor 15:2
h fast our confession . . . Heb 4:14
h fast and repent . . . Rev 3:3
H fast what you have, that . . . Rev 3:11

HOLES

"Foxes have *h* . . . Matt 8:20

HOLIER

near me, for I am *h* . . . Is 65:5

HOLIEST

the way into the *H* . . . Heb 9:8
 to enter the *H* by the . . . Heb 10:19

HOLINESS

You, glorious in *h* . . . Ex 15:11
H to the LORD . . . Ex 28:36
 LORD in the beauty of *h* . . . 1 Chr 16:29
 has spoken in His *h* . . . Ps 60:6
 I have sworn by My *h* . . . Ps 89:35
h adorns Your house . . . Ps 93:5
 the Highway of *H* . . . Is 35:8
 to the Spirit of *h* . . . Rom 1:4
 spirit, perfecting *h* . . . 2 Cor 7:1
 uncleanness, but in *h* . . . 1 Thess 4:7
 be partakers of His *h* . . . Heb 12:10

HOLY

See MOST HOLY PLACE

where you stand is *h* . . . Ex 3:5
 rest, a *h* Sabbath to the . . . Ex 16:23
 priests and a *h* nation . . . Ex 19:6
 day, to keep it *h* . . . Ex 20:8
 put the *h* crown on the . . . Ex 29:6
 the altar shall be most *h* . . . Ex 29:37
 It shall be a *h* anointing oil . . . Ex 30:25
 distinguish between *h* . . . Lev 10:10
 the LORD your God am *h* . . . Lev 19:2
 the priest is *h* to his God . . . Lev 21:7
 all the congregation is *h* . . . Num 16:3
 "No one is *h* like the . . . 1 Sam 2:2
 priest gave him *h* bread . . . 1 Sam 21:6
 the ark in the house . . . 2 Chr 35:3
h seed is mixed . . . Ezra 9:2
 This day is *h* to the LORD . . . Neh 8:9
h ones will you turn . . . Job 5:1
 LORD is in His *h* temple . . . Ps 11:4
 may dwell in Your *h* hill . . . Ps 15:1
H One to see corruption . . . Ps 16:10
 God sits on His *h* . . . Ps 47:8
 God, in His *h* mountain . . . Ps 48:1
 my life, for I am *h* . . . Ps 86:2
 "H, *h*, *h* is the LORD . . . Is 6:3
H One of Israel, in truth . . . Is 10:20
 destroy in all My *h* . . . Is 11:9
 hallow the *H* One of Jacob . . . Is 29:23
 Redeemer, the *H* One of . . . Is 41:14
 call them The *H* People . . . Is 62:12
 It shall be the *h* district . . . Ezek 48:21
 Spirit of the *H* God is in . . . Dan 4:9
 I heard a *h* one speaking . . . Dan 8:13
 the *h* angels with Him . . . Matt 25:31
 name of Your *h* Servant . . . Acts 4:30
 if the firstfruit is *h* . . . Rom 11:16
 bodies a living sacrifice, *h* . . . Rom 12:1
 one another with a *h* . . . Rom 16:16
 that we should be *h* . . . Eph 1:4
 lifting up *h* hands, without . . . 1 Tim 2:8
 called us with a *h* calling . . . 2 Tim 1:9
 has not entered the *h* . . . Heb 9:24
 He who called you is *h* . . . 1 Pet 1:15
 it is written, "Be *h* . . . 1 Pet 1:16
 a *h* priesthood, to offer up . . . 1 Pet 2:5
 a *h* nation, His own special . . . 1 Pet 2:9

you to be in *h* conduct . . . 2 Pet 3:11
 says He who is *h* . . . Rev 3:7
H, *h*, *h*, Lord God . . . Rev 4:8
 For You alone are *h* . . . Rev 15:4
 is *h*, let him be *h* . . . Rev 22:11

HOLY CITY

dwell in Jerusalem, the *h* . . . Neh 11:1
 call themselves after the *h* . . . Is 48:2
 O Jerusalem, the *h* . . . Is 52:1
 people and for your *h* . . . Dan 9:24
 took Him up into the *h* . . . Matt 4:5
 they went into the *h* and . . . Matt 27:53
 they will read the *h* under . . . Rev 11:2
 Then I, John, saw the *h* . . . Rev 21:2
 Book of Life, from the *h* . . . Rev 22:19

HOLY NAME

and profane My *h* . . . Lev 20:3
 Glory in His *h*: let . . . 1 Chr 16:10
 You a house for Your *h* . . . 1 Chr 29:16
 remembrance of His *h* . . . Ps 30:4
 we have trusted in His *h* . . . Ps 33:21
 remembrance of His *h* . . . Ps 97:12
 is within me, bless His *h* . . . Ps 103:1
 Glory in His *h*: let the . . . Ps 105:3
 to give thanks to Your *h* . . . Ps 106:47
 all flesh shall bless His *h* . . . Ps 145:21
 profane My *h* no more . . . Ezek 20:39
 I had concern for My *h* . . . Ezek 36:21
 be jealous for My *h* . . . Ezek 39:25
 same girl, to defile My *h* . . . Amos 2:7

HOLY ONE OF ISRAEL

on high? Against the *H* . . . 2 Kin 19:22
 sing with the harp, O *H* . . . Ps 71:22
 And our king to the *H* . . . Ps 89:18
 have provoked to anger the *H* . . . Is 1:4
 depend on the LORD, the *H* . . . Is 10:20
 great is the *H* in your midst . . . Is 12:6
 and your Redeemer, the *H* . . . Is 41:14
 LORD who is faithful, the *H* . . . Is 49:7
 of the LORD, Zion of the *H* . . . Is 60:14
 the LORD, against the *H* . . . Jer 50:29

HOLY PLACE

between the *h* and the . . . Ex 26:33
 when he goes into the *h* . . . Ex 28:29
 sweet incense for the *h* . . . Ex 31:11
 it shall be eaten in a *h* . . . Lev 6:16
 any time into the *H* inside . . . Lev 16:2
 most *h* you shall eat . . . Num 18:10
 sanctuary, as the Most *H* . . . 1 Kin 6:16
 the needs of the *h*, and . . . 1 Chr 23:32
 And he made the Most *H* . . . 2 Chr 3:8
H, under the wings of the . . . 2 Chr 5:7
 the rubbish from the *h* . . . 2 Chr 29:5
 stand in the *h* according . . . 2 Chr 35:5
 to give us a peg in His *h* . . . Ezra 9:8
 who may stand in His *h*? . . . Ps 24:3
 the *h* of the tabernacle of . . . Ps 46:4
 as in Sinai, in the *H* . . . Ps 68:17
 "I dwell in the high and *h* . . . Is 57:15
 "This is the Most *H* . . . Ezek 41:4
 standing in the *h* . . . Matt 24:15
 words against this *h* and . . . Acts 6:13
 and has defiled this *h* . . . Acts 21:28
 He entered the Most *H* . . . Heb 9:12
 priest enters the Most *H* . . . Heb 9:25

HOLY SPIRIT

See FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT

Affirmed as divine:

called God, Acts 5:3, 4
 joined with the Father and the Son,
 Matt 28:19; 2 Cor 13:14
 eternal, Heb 9:14
 omnipotent, Luke 1:35
 omniscient, 1 Cor 2:10, 11
 omnipresent, Ps 139:7-13
 Creator, Gen 1:2
 sovereign, 1 Cor 12:6, 11
 new creation, John 3:3, 8
 sin against, unforgiveable, Matt 12:31,
 32

Work of:

speaks in Scripture, Acts 1:16, 17;
 28:25; 2 Tim 3:16
 role in Christ's ministry, Matt 3:16;
 12:28; Luke 1:35; 4:1, 17, 18; Rom 1:4;
 1 Tim 3:16; Heb 9:14
 regenerates, John 3:3, 5
 indwells, Rom 8:11
 anoints, 1 John 2:20, 27
 baptizes, Acts 2:17-41
 guides, John 16:13
 empowers, Mic 3:8
 sanctifies, Rom 15:16; 2 Thess 2:13
 bears witness, Rom 8:16; Heb 10:15
 helps, John 14:16-26
 gives joy, Rom 14:17
 gives discernment, 1 Cor 2:10-16;
 1 John 4:1-6
 bears fruit, Gal 5:22, 23
 gives gifts, 1 Cor 12:3-11
 comforts, Acts 9:31
 illuminates the mind, 1 Cor 2:12, 13;
 Eph 1:16, 17
 reveals things of God, Is 40:13, 14;
 1 Cor 2:10, 13
 Promised, Joel 2:28-32
 Received by disciples, Acts 2:1-21
 Received by Gentiles, Acts 10:45
 Persons filled by:
 Bezalel, Ex 31:2
 Jesus, Luke 4:1
 John the Baptist, Luke 1:15, 60
 Elizabeth, Luke 1:41
 Zacharias, Luke 1:67
 Pentecost Christians, Acts 2:1-4
 Peter, Acts 4:8
 seven deacons, Acts 6:3-5
 Stephen, Acts 7:55
 Barnabas, Acts 11:22, 24
 Paul, Acts 13:9
 certain disciples, Acts 13:52

not take Your *H* from me . . . Ps 51:11
 rebelled and grieved His *H* . . . Is 63:10
 found with child of the *H* . . . Matt 1:18
 baptize you with the *H* . . . Matt 3:11
 speaks against the *H*, it . . . Matt 12:32
 of the Son and of the *H* . . . Matt 28:19
 himself said by the *H* . . . Mark 12:36
 who speak, but the *H* . . . Mark 13:11
 filled with the *H*, even . . . Luke 1:15
 was filled with the *H* . . . Luke 1:41
 the *H*, and prophesied . . . Luke 1:67
 and the *H* was upon him . . . Luke 2:25
 And the *H* descended in . . . Luke 3:22
 being filled with the *H* . . . Luke 4:1
 Father give the *H* . . . Luke 11:13
 the *H* was not yet given . . . John 7:39
 "But the Helper, the *H* . . . John 14:26
 to them, "Receive the *H* . . . John 20:22
 be baptized with the *H* . . . Acts 1:5
 receive power when the *H* . . . Acts 1:8
 were all filled with the *H* . . . Acts 2:4
 the promise of the *H* . . . Acts 2:33
 receive the gift of the *H* . . . Acts 2:38
 Peter, filled with the *H* . . . Acts 4:8
 were all filled with the *H* . . . Acts 4:31
 to lie to the *H* and keep . . . Acts 5:3
 full of the *H* and wisdom . . . Acts 6:3
 You always resist the *H* . . . Acts 7:51
 they might receive the *H* . . . Acts 8:15
 and be filled with the *H* . . . Acts 9:17
 in the comfort of the *H* . . . Acts 9:31
 the *H* fell upon all those . . . Acts 10:44
 the *H* fell upon them, as . . . Acts 11:15
 the *H* said, "Now separate . . . Acts 13:2
 with joy and with the *H* . . . Acts 13:52
 by giving them the *H* just . . . Acts 15:8
 it seemed good to the *H* . . . Acts 15:28
 were forbidden by the *H* . . . Acts 16:6
 the *H* testifies in every . . . Acts 20:23
H has made you . . . Acts 20:28

says the *H*. "So shall the . . . Acts 21:11
out in our hearts by the *H* . . . Rom 5:5
me witness in the *H* . . . Rom 9:1
peace and joy in the *H* . . . Rom 14:17
sanctified by the *H* . . . Rom 15:16
but which the *H* teaches . . . 1 Cor 2:13
is the temple of the *H* . . . 1 Cor 6:19
is Lord except by the *H* . . . 1 Cor 12:3
by kindness, by the *H* . . . 2 Cor 6:6
were sealed with the *H* of . . . Eph 1:13
And do not grieve the *H* . . . Eph 4:30
by the *H* who dwells . . . 2 Tim 1:14
and renewing of the *H* . . . Titus 3:5
miracles, and gifts of the *H* . . . Heb 2:4
become partakers of the *H* . . . Heb 6:4
were moved by the *H* . . . 2 Pet 1:21
the Word, and the *H* . . . 1 John 5:7

HOME

LORD has brought me *h* . . . Ruth 1:21
sparrow has found a *h* . . . Ps 84:3
the stork has her *h* . . . Ps 104:17
to his eternal *h* . . . Eccl 12:5
said to him, "Go *h* . . . Mark 5:19
into an everlasting *h* . . . Luke 16:9
to him and make Our *h* . . . John 14:23
took her to his own *h* . . . John 19:27
let him eat at *h* . . . 1 Cor 11:34
own husbands at *h* . . . 1 Cor 14:35
that while we are at *h* . . . 2 Cor 5:6
to show piety at *h* . . . 1 Tim 5:4

HOMELESS

and beaten, and *h* . . . 1 Cor 4:11

HOMEMAKERS

be discreet, chaste, *h* . . . Titus 2:5

HOMOSEXUALS

nor adulterers, nor *h*, nor . . . 1 Cor 6:9

HONEST

we are *h* men . . . Gen 42:11

HONEY

See MILK AND HONEY

flowing with milk and *h* . . . Num 16:13
"What is sweeter than *h* . . . Judg 14:18
I tasted a little of this *h* . . . 1 Sam 14:29
Sweeter also than *h* and . . . Ps 19:10
and with *h* from the . . . Ps 81:16
sweeter than *h* to my . . . Ps 119:103
My son, eat *h* because . . . Prov 24:13
not good to eat much *h* . . . Prov 25:27
h and milk are under . . . Song 4:11
was locusts and wild *h* . . . Matt 3:4
sweet as *h* in my mouth . . . Rev 10:10

HONEYCOMB

than honey and the *h* . . . Ps 19:10
words are like a *h* . . . Prov 16:24
fish and some *h* . . . Luke 24:42

HONOR

H your father and your . . . Ex 20:12
both riches and *h* . . . 1 Kin 3:13
the king delights to *h* . . . Esth 6:6
earth, and lay my *h* . . . Ps 7:5
A man who is in *h* . . . Ps 49:20
Sing out the *h* of His . . . Ps 66:2
will deliver him and *h* . . . Ps 91:15
H and majesty are . . . Ps 96:6
h have all His saints . . . Ps 149:9
H the LORD with your . . . Prov 3:9
before *h* is humility . . . Prov 15:33
h is not fitting . . . Prov 26:1
spirit will retain *h* . . . Prov 29:23
Father, where is My *h* . . . Mal 1:6
is not without *h* . . . Matt 13:57
'*H* your father and your . . . Matt 15:4
h the Son just as they . . . John 5:23
"I do not receive *h* . . . John 5:41
but I *h* My Father . . . John 8:49
"If I *h* Myself . . . John 8:54
him My Father will *h* . . . John 12:26
make one vessel for *h* . . . Rom 9:21
to whom fear, *h* . . . Rom 13:7
we bestow greater *h* . . . 1 Cor 12:23

sanctification and *h* . . . 1 Thess 4:4
alone is wise, be *h* . . . 1 Tim 1:17
worthy of double *h* . . . 1 Tim 5:17
and clay, some for *h* . . . 2 Tim 2:20
no man takes this *h* . . . Heb 5:4
H the king . . . 1 Pet 2:17
from God the Father *h* . . . 2 Pet 1:17
give glory and *h* . . . Rev 4:9

HONORABLE

of God, and he is an *h* . . . 1 Sam 9:6
His work is *h* and . . . Ps 111:3
It is *h* for a man to . . . Prov 20:3
traders are the *h* . . . Is 23:8
holy day of the LORD *h* . . . Is 58:13
providing *h* things . . . 2 Cor 8:21
Marriage is *h* among . . . Heb 13:4
having your conduct *h* . . . 1 Pet 2:12

HONORABLY

desiring to live *h* . . . Heb 13:18

HONORS

h those who fear the . . . Ps 15:4
'This people *h* Me . . . Mark 7:6
It is My Father who *h* . . . John 8:54

HOOKS

will lament who cast *h* . . . Is 19:8
spears into pruning *h* . . . Mic 4:3

HOOVES

those that have cloven *h* . . . Lev 11:4
I will make your *h* bronze . . . Mic 4:13

HOPE

I should say I have *h* . . . Ruth 1:12
are spent without *h* . . . Job 7:6
so You destroy the *h* . . . Job 14:19
where then is my *h* . . . Job 17:15
h He has uprooted . . . Job 19:10
also will rest in *h* . . . Ps 16:9
heart, all you who *h* . . . Ps 31:24
My *h* is in You . . . Ps 39:7
For You are my *h* . . . Ps 71:5
I *h* in Your word . . . Ps 119:147
O Israel, *h* in the . . . Ps 130:7
h will not be cut . . . Prov 23:18
There is more *h* . . . Prov 26:12
the living there is *h* . . . Eccl 9:4
O the *H* of Israel . . . Jer 14:8
good that one should *h* . . . Lam 3:26
Achor as a door of *h* . . . Hos 2:15
you prisoners of *h* . . . Zech 9:12
I have *h* in God . . . Acts 24:15
to *h*, in *h* believed . . . Rom 4:18
and rejoice in *h* . . . Rom 5:2
h does not disappoint . . . Rom 5:5
h that is seen is . . . Rom 8:24
But if we *h* for what . . . Rom 8:25
And now abide faith, *h* . . . 1 Cor 13:13
life only we have *h* . . . 1 Cor 15:19
may know what is the *h* . . . Eph 1:18
were called in one *h* . . . Eph 4:4
h which is laid . . . Col 1:5
Christ in you, the *h* . . . Col 1:27
For what is our *h* . . . 1 Thess 2:19
others who have no *h* . . . 1 Thess 4:13
and as a helmet the *h* . . . 1 Thess 5:8
Jesus Christ, our *h* . . . 1 Tim 1:1
in *h* of eternal life . . . Titus 1:2
for the blessed *h* . . . Titus 2:13
to lay hold of the *h* . . . Heb 6:18
of a better *h* . . . Heb 7:19
us again to a living *h* . . . 1 Pet 1:3
you a reason for the *h* . . . 1 Pet 3:15
who has this *h* in Him . . . 1 John 3:3

HOPED

substance of things *h* . . . Heb 11:1

HOPHNI

Wicked son of Eli, 1 Sam 1:3; 2:12-17,
22-25
Prophecy against, 1 Sam 2:27-36;
3:11-14
Carries ark into battle; killed, 1 Sam
4:1-11

HOR

Mountain of Edom; scene of Aaron's
death, Num 20:22-29; 33:37-39

HOREB

See SINAI

God appears to Moses at, Ex 3:1-22
Water flows from, Ex 17:6
Elijah lodged here 40 days, 1 Kin
19:8, 9

HORITES

Inhabitants of Mt. Seir, Gen 36:20
Defeated by Chedorlaomer, Gen
14:5, 6
Driven out by Esau's descendants, Gen
36:20-29; Deut 2:12, 22

HORMAH

Destroyed by Israel, Num 21:1-3

HORN

my shield and the *h* . . . Ps 18:2
h will be exalted . . . Ps 112:9
goat had a notable *h* . . . Dan 8:5
and has raised up a *h* . . . Luke 1:69

HORRIBLE

h thing has been . . . Jer 5:30
I have seen a *h* . . . Hos 6:10

HORROR

and behold, *h* and . . . Gen 15:12
sorrow, the cup of *h* . . . Ezek 23:33
you will become a *h* . . . Ezek 27:36

HORSE

The *h* and its rider He . . . Ex 15:1
Have you given the *h* . . . Job 39:19
h is a vain hope . . . Ps 33:17
the strength of the *h* . . . Ps 147:10
h is prepared for the . . . Prov 21:31
and behold, a white *h* . . . Rev 6:2
and behold, a black *h* . . . Rev 6:5
and behold, a pale *h* . . . Rev 6:8
and behold, a white *h* . . . Rev 19:11

HORSES

seen servants on *h* . . . Eccl 10:7
h are swifter than . . . Jer 4:13
Do *h* run on rocks . . . Amos 6:12
we put bits in *h* . . . James 3:3

HOSANNA

H in the highest . . . Matt 21:9

HOSEA

Son of Beeri, prophet of the northern
kingdom, Hos 1:1

HOSHEA

Original name of Joshua, the son of
Nun, Deut 32:44; Num 13:8, 16
— Israel's last king; usurps throne,
2 Kin 15:30
Reigns wickedly; Israel taken to
Assyria during his reign, 2 Kin
17:1-23

HOSPITABLE

of good behavior, *h* . . . 1 Tim 3:2
Be *h* to one another . . . 1 Pet 4:9

HOST

who brings out their *h* . . . Is 40:26
of the heavenly *h* . . . Luke 2:13

HOST OF HEAVEN

all the *h*, you feel driven . . . Deut 4:19
throne, and all the *h* . . . 1 Kin 22:19
worshiped all the *h* . . . 2 Kin 17:16
and for all the *h* . . . 2 Kin 23:4
The *h* worships You . . . Neh 9:6
All the *h* shall be dissolved . . . Is 34:4
the moon and all the *h* . . . Jer 8:2
burned incense to all the *h* . . . Jer 19:13
the *h* cannot be numbered . . . Jer 33:22
And it grew up to the *h* . . . Dan 8:10
them up to worship the *h* . . . Acts 7:42

HOSTILITY

Him who endured such *h* . . . Heb 12:3

HOSTS

See LORD GOD OF HOSTS; LORD OF HOSTS

name of the LORD of *h* 1 Sam 17:45
As the LORD of *h* lives 1 Kin 18:15
The LORD of *h* is with Ps 46:7
LORD, all you His *h* Ps 103:21
praise Him, all His *h* Ps 148:2
word of the LORD of *h* Is 39:5
LORD of *h* is His name Is 47:4
against spiritual *h* Eph 6:12

HOT

of the LORD was *h* Judg 2:14
My heart was *h* within Ps 39:3
are neither cold nor *h* Rev 3:15

HOUD

My enemies would *h* Ps 56:2

HOUR

h what you should Matt 10:19
day and *h* no one knows Matt 24:36
Man is coming at an *h* Matt 24:23
Behold, the *h* is at Matt 26:45
But this is your *h* Luke 22:53
h has not yet come John 2:4
But the *h* is coming John 4:23
h has come that the John 12:23
save Me from this *h* John 12:27
"Father, the *h* has come John 17:1
will not know what *h* Rev 3:3
keep you from the *h* Rev 3:10

HOURS

Are there not twelve *h* John 11:9

HOUSE

from your father's *h* Gen 12:1
But as for me and my *h* Josh 24:15
h appointed for all Job 30:23
with them to the *h* Ps 42:4
the goodness of Your *h* Ps 65:4
For her *h* leads down Prov 2:18
Through wisdom a *h* Prov 24:3
better to go to the *h* Eccl 7:2
of the *h* tremble Eccl 12:3
to the *h* of the God of Is 2:3
to those who join *h* Is 5:8
h was filled with Is 6:4
"Set your *h* in order Is 38:1
h shall be called a Is 56:7
built his *h* on the rock Matt 7:24
and beat on that *h* Matt 7:25
blew and beat on that *h* Matt 7:27
had come into Peter's *h* Matt 8:14
came into the ruler's *h* Matt 9:23
sheep of the *h* of Israel Matt 10:6
h divided against Matt 12:25
enter a strong man's *h* Matt 12:29
h shall be called a Matt 21:13
Your *h* is left to you Matt 23:38
the *h* of Simon the leper Matt 26:6
no one who has left *h* Mark 10:29
My *h* shall be called a *h* Mark 11:17
the *h* of Zachariah Luke 1:40
bed, and go to your *h* Luke 5:24
ruin of that *h* was great Luke 6:49
Whatever *h* you enter Luke 9:4
h may be filled Luke 14:23
light a lamp, sweep the *h* Luke 15:8
has come to this *h* Luke 19:9
make My Father's *h* John 2:16
for Your *h* has eaten Me John 2:17
the *h* was filled with the John 12:3
h are many mansions John 14:2
bread from *h* to *h*, they Acts 2:46
hour I prayed in my *h* Acts 10:30
in the *h* of Simon Acts 10:32
publicly and from *h* Acts 20:20
in his own rented *h* Acts 28:30
church that is in their *h* Rom 16:5
a *h* not made with hands 2 Cor 5:1
who rules his own *h* 1 Tim 3:4
children, manage the *h* 1 Tim 5:14

in a great *h* there are 2 Tim 2:20
the church in your *h* Phil 2
has more honor than the *h* Heb 3:3
For every *h* is built Heb 3:4
His own *h*, whose *h* Heb 3:6
Priest over the *h* of God Heb 10:21
being built up a spiritual *h* 1 Pet 2:5
to begin at the *h* of God 1 Pet 4:17
him into your *h* 2 John 1:10

HOUSE OF DAVID

a covenant with the *h* 1 Sam 20:16
house of Saul and the *h* 2 Sam 3:1
rebellion against the *h* 1 Kin 12:19
may return to the *h* 1 Kin 12:26
shall be born to the *h* 1 Kin 13:2
away from the *h* 1 Kin 14:8
shall not dwell in the *h* 2 Chr 8:11
would not destroy the *h* 2 Chr 21:7
the wall, beyond the *h* Neh 12:37
the thrones of the *h* Ps 122:5
And it was told to the *h* Is 7:2
The key of the *h* I will lay Is 22:22
"O *h*! Thus says the LORD Jer 21:12
h shall be like God Zech 12:8
was Joseph, of the *h* Luke 1:27

HOUSE OF GOD

none other than the *h* Gen 28:17
the *h* was in Shiloh Judg 18:31
of the tabernacle of the *h* 1 Chr 6:48
stones to build the *h* 1 Chr 22:2
all the service of the *h* 1 Chr 28:21
King Solomon for the *h* 2 Chr 4:11
of the LORD filled the *h* 2 Chr 5:14
people dedicated the *h* 2 Chr 7:5
also brought into the *h* 2 Chr 15:18
with them in the *h* 2 Chr 22:12
articles from the *h* 2 Chr 36:18
freewill offerings for the *h* Ezra 1:4
oversee the work of the *h* Ezra 3:8
or the courts of the *h* Neh 8:16
"Why is the *h* forsaken?" Neh 13:11
I went with them to the *h* Ps 42:4
a green olive tree in the *h* Ps 52:8
walked to the *h* in the Ps 55:14
when you go to the *h* Eccl 5:1
the articles of the *h* Dan 1:2
from the temple of the *h* Dan 5:3
how he entered the *h* and Matt 12:4
conduct yourself in the *h* 1 Tim 3:15
High Priest over the *h* Heb 10:21
to begin at the *h* 1 Pet 4:17

HOUSE OF THE LORD

you shall bring into the *h* Ex 23:19
price of a dog to the *h* Deut 23:18
into the treasury of the *h* Josh 6:24
she went up to the *h* 1 Sam 1:7
brought him to the *h* 1 Sam 1:24
he went into the *h* and 2 Sam 12:20
his own house, and the *h* 1 Kin 3:1
he began to build the *h* 1 Kin 6:1
the cloud filled the *h* 1 Kin 8:10
hidden with her in the *h* 2 Kin 11:3
the damage of the *h* 2 Kin 12:12
service of song in the *h* 1 Chr 6:31
David said, "This is the *h* 1 Chr 22:1
began to build the *h* 2 Chr 3:1
for the *h* was finished 2 Chr 5:1
So the *h* was completed 2 Chr 8:16
heart on repairing the *h* 2 Chr 24:4
cut off from the *h* 2 Chr 26:21
of the *h* to cleanse it 2 Chr 29:16
built altars in the *h* 2 Chr 33:4
of the Law in the *h* 2 Chr 34:15
from the *h* to Babylon 2 Chr 36:7
build the *h* God of Israel Ezra 1:3
heart, to beautify the *h* Ezra 7:27
I will dwell in the *h* forever Ps 23:6
that I may dwell in the *h* Ps 27:4
who are planted in the *h* Ps 92:13
"Let us go into the *h* Ps 122:1
Hezekiah went up to the *h* Is 37:14

these words in the *h* Jer 26:7
of praise into the *h*. For I Jer 33:11
He burned the *h* and the Jer 52:13
noise in the *h* as on the Lam 2:7
LORD filled the *h*; and I Ezek 44:4
it shall not come into the *h* Hos 9:4
shall flow from the *h* Joel 3:18
came and worked on the *h* Hag 1:14
priests who were in the *h* Zech 7:3

HOUSEHOLD

over the ways of her *h* Prov 31:27
If the *h* is worthy Matt 10:13
be those of his own *h* Matt 10:36
make ruler over his *h* Luke 12:42
h were baptized Acts 16:15
saved, you and your *h* Acts 16:31
also baptized the *h* 1 Cor 1:16
the *h* of Stephanas 1 Cor 16:15
those who are of the *h* Gal 6:10
who are of Caesar's *h* Phil 4:22
mercy to the *h* of 2 Tim 1:16
ark for the saving of his *h* Heb 11:7

HOUSEHOLDER

h who brings out of Matt 13:52

HOUSEHOLDS

that He provided *h* for Ex 1:21
heads of the fathers' *h* Ezra 10:16
those who creep into *h* 2 Tim 3:6
who subvert whole *h* Titus 1:11

HOUSES

h are safe from fear Job 21:9
Yet He filled their *h* Job 22:18
is that their *h* will last Ps 49:11
H and riches are an Prov 19:14
who has left *h* or Matt 19:29
you devour widows' *h* Matt 23:14
Do you not have *h* 1 Cor 11:22

HOusetOP

dwell in a corner of a *h* Prov 25:24
they went up on the *h* Luke 5:19
went up on the *h* to pray, Acts 10:9

HOusetOPS

herb, as the grass on the *h* Is 37:27
ear, preach on the *h* Matt 10:27
be proclaimed on the *h* Luke 12:3

HOVERING

Spirit of God was *h* Gen 1:2

HOW

"*H* can this be Luke 1:34
H long do You keep John 10:24
h you turned to God 1 Thess 1:9

HULDAH

Wife of Shallum, 2 Kin 22:14
Foretells Jerusalem's ruin, 2 Kin
22:15-17; 2 Chr 34:22-25
Exempts Josiah from trouble, 2 Kin
22:18-20

HUMAN

broken without *h* means Dan 8:25
for joy that a *h* being John 16:21
I speak in *h* terms Rom 6:19
words of *h* wisdom 1 Cor 2:4
we have had *h* fathers Heb 12:9

HUMBLE

man Moses was very *h* Num 12:3
h you and test you Deut 8:2
who is proud, and *h* Job 40:11
the cry of the *h* Ps 9:12
Do not forget the *h* Ps 10:12
the desire of the *h* Ps 10:17
h He guides in justice Ps 25:9
h shall hear of it and Ps 34:2
LORD lifts up the *h* Ps 147:6
h spirit with the Prov 16:19
contrite and *h* spirit Is 57:15
a meek and *h* people Zeph 3:12
associate with the *h* Rom 12:16
gives grace to the *h* James 4:6

H yourselves in the James 4:10
 gives grace to the *h* 1 Pet 5:5
h yourselves under the 1 Pet 5:6

HUMBLED
h himself greatly 2 Chr 33:12
 as a man. He *h* Himself Phil 2:8

HUMBLES
h Himself to behold Ps 113:6

HUMILIATION
 to plunder, and to *h* Ezra 9:7
h His justice was Acts 8:33
 but the rich in his *h* James 1:10

HUMILITY
 By *h* and the fear of Prov 22:4
 righteousness, seek *h* Zeph 2:3
 the Lord with all *h* Acts 20:19
 delight in false *h* Col 2:18
 mercies, kindness, *h* Col 3:12
h correcting those 2 Tim 2:25
 gentle, showing all *h* Titus 3:2
 and be clothed with *h* 1 Pet 5:5

HUNDRED
 Adam lived were nine *h* Gen 5:5
 of Lamech were seven *h* Gen 5:31
 of Jacob's life was one *h* Gen 47:28
 Joseph lived one *h* and Gen 50:22
 one *h* cubits long for one Ex 27:9
 of which was one *h* Num 7:13
 for a *h* foreskins of the 2 Sam 3:14
 one *h* summer fruits 2 Sam 16:1
 had taken one *h* prophets 1 Kin 18:4

HUNDREDFOLD
 in the same year a *h* Gen 26:12
 some a *h*, some sixty Matt 13:8
 receive a *h* now in this Mark 10:30
 up, and yielded a crop a *h* Luke 8:8

HUNGER
 you, allowed you to *h* Deut 8:3
 lack and suffer *h* Ps 34:10
 They shall neither *h* Is 49:10
 likely to die from *h* Jer 38:9
 are those who *h* Matt 5:6
 for you shall *h* Luke 6:25
 to Me shall never *h* John 6:35
 present hour we both *h* 1 Cor 4:11
 They shall neither *h* Rev 7:16

HUNGRY
 bread from the *h* Job 22:7
 and fills the *h* Ps 107:9
 gives food to the *h* Ps 146:7
h soul every bitter Prov 27:7
 your soul to the *h* Is 58:10
 for I was *h* and you Matt 25:35
 when did we see You *h* Matt 25:37
 and one is *h* and 1 Cor 11:21
 But if anyone is *h* 1 Cor 11:34
 to be full and to be *h* Phil 4:12

HUNT
 Yet you *h* my life to 1 Sam 24:11
h the violent man Ps 140:11
h the souls of My Ezek 13:18

HUNTER
 Nimrod the mighty *h* Gen 10:9
 Esau was a skillful *h* Gen 25:27

HUR
 Man of Judah; of Caleb's house, 1 Chr
 2:18–20
 Supports Moses' hands, Ex 17:10–12
 Aids Aaron, Ex 24:14

HURAM
 Master craftsman of Solomon's temple,
 1 Kin 7:13–40, 45; 2 Chr 2:13, 14

HURT
h a woman with child Ex 21:22
 who plot my *h* Ps 35:4
 but I was not *h* Prov 23:35
 another to his own *h* Eccl 8:9

They shall not *h* Is 11:9
 of my people I am *h* Jer 8:21
 Woe is me for my *h* Jer 10:19
 it will by no means *h* Mark 16:18
 shall not be *h* by the Rev 2:11

HUSBAND
 She also gave to her *h* Gen 3:6
 desire shall be for your *h* Gen 3:16
 “Surely you are a *h* Ex 4:25
 Uriah her *h* was dead 2 Sam 11:26
h safely trusts her Prov 31:11
 Her *h* is known in the Prov 31:23
 your Maker is your *h* Is 54:5
 though I was a *h* Jer 31:32
 you will call Me “My *H* Hos 2:16
 I have no *h* John 4:17
 now have is not your *h* John 4:18
 But if the *h* dies, she is Rom 7:2
 woman have her own *h* 1 Cor 7:2
 For the unbelieving *h* 1 Cor 7:14
 you will save your *h* 1 Cor 7:16
 betrothed you to one *h* 2 Cor 11:2
 For the *h* is head of Eph 5:23
 the *h* of one wife 1 Tim 3:2
 a bride adorned for her *h* Rev 21:2

HUSBANDS
 them ask their own *h* 1 Cor 14:35
H, love your wives Eph 5:25
H, love your wives and do Col 3:19
 Let deacons be the *h* 1 Tim 3:12
 women to love their *h* Titus 2:4
 submissive to your own *h* 1 Pet 3:1

HUSHAI
 Archite; David's friend, 2 Sam
 15:32–37
 Feigns sympathy with Absalom, 2 Sam
 16:16–19
 Defeats Ahithophel's advice, 2 Sam
 17:5–23

HYACINTH
h blue, and sulfur yellow Rev 9:17

HYMENAEUS
 False teacher excommunicated by
 Paul, 1 Tim 1:19, 20

HYMN
 they had sung a *h* Matt 26:30

HYMNS
 praying and singing *h* Acts 16:25
 in psalms and *h* Eph 5:19

HYPOCRISY
 you are full of *h* Matt 23:28
 Pharisees, which is *h* Luke 12:1
 Let love be without *h* Rom 12:9
 away with their *h* Gal 2:13
 and without *h* James 3:17
 malice, all deceit, *h* 1 Pet 2:1

HYPOCRITE
 of the *h* shall perish Job 8:13
 and the joy of the *h* Job 20:5
 is the hope of the *h* Job 27:8
 for everyone is a *h* Is 9:17
 also played the *h* Gal 2:13

HYPOCRITES
 “But the *h* in heart Job 36:13
 will I go in with *h* Ps 26:4
 For you were *h* Jer 42:20
 not be like the *h* Matt 6:5
 do you test Me, you *h* Matt 22:18
 and Pharisees, *h* Matt 23:13

HYSSOP
 Purge me with *h* Ps 51:7
 sour wine, put it on *h* John 19:29

I AM WITH YOU
 do not fear, for I, I will Gen 26:24
 “Behold, I and will keep Gen 28:15

Fear not, for I; be not Is 41:10
 I to deliver you,” says the Jer 1:8
 prevail against you; for I Jer 15:20
 For I,” says the LORD, “to Jer 30:11
 I, to save you and deliver Jer 42:11
 saying, “I, says the LORD,” Hag 1:13
 and lo, I always, even to Matt 28:20
 I, and no one will attack Acts 18:10
 absent in the flesh, yet I in Col 2:5

I WILL BE WITH YOU
 “Dwell in this land, and I Gen 26:3
 to your family, and I Gen 31:3
 I swore to them, and I Deut 31:23
 as I was with Moses, so I Josh 1:5
 “Surely I, and you shall Judg 6:16
 David did, then I 1 Kin 11:38
 pass through the waters, I Is 43:2

IBZAN
 Judge of Israel; father of 60 children,
 Judg 12:8, 9

ICE
 dark because of the *i* Job 6:16

ICHABOD
 Son of Phinehas, 1 Sam 4:19–22

ICONIUM
 City of Asia Minor; visited by Paul, Acts
 13:51
 Many converts in, Acts 14:1–6

IDDO
 Leader of Jews at Casiphia, Ezra
 8:17–20
 ——— Seer whose writings are cited,
 2 Chr 9:29

IDLE
 For they are *i* Ex 5:8
i person will suffer Prov 19:15
i word men may speak Matt 12:36
 saw others standing *i* Matt 20:3
 they learn to be *i* 1 Tim 5:13
 both *i* talkers and Titus 1:10

IDLENESS
 not eat the bread of *i* Prov 31:27
 through *i* of hands the Eccl 10:18
 food, and abundance of *i* Ezek 16:49

IDLY
 They speak *i* everyone with Ps 12:2

IDOL
 lifted up his soul to an *i* Ps 24:4
 if he blesses an *i* Is 66:3
 a wooden *i* is a worthless Jer 10:8
 that an *i* is nothing 1 Cor 8:4
 thing offered to an *i* 1 Cor 8:7
 That an *i* is anything 1 Cor 10:19

IDOLATER
 or covetous, or an *i* 1 Cor 5:11
 man, who is an *i* Eph 5:5

IDOLATERS
 fornicators, nor *i* 1 Cor 6:9
 immoral, sorcerers, *i* Rev 21:8
 and murderers and *i* Rev 22:15

IDOLATRIES
 and abominable *i* 1 Pet 4:3

IDOLATROUS
 he removed the *i* priests 2 Kin 23:5
 I have not sat with *i* mortals Ps 26:4
 pay for your *i* sins Ezek 23:49
 the names of the *i* priests Zeph 1:4

IDOLATRY
 beloved, flee from *i* 1 Cor 10:14
i, sorcery, hatred Gal 5:20
 covetousness, which is *i* Col 3:5

IDOLS
 stolen the household *i* Gen 31:19
 of the peoples are *i* Ps 96:5
i are silver and gold Ps 115:4
 land is also full of *i* Is 2:8

insane with their *i* Jer 50:38
in the room of his *i* Ezek 8:12
from their wooden *i* Hos 4:12
who regard worthless *i* Jon 2:8
i speak delusion Zech 10:2
things polluted by *i* Acts 15:20
You who abhor *i* Rom 2:22
This was offered to *i* 1 Cor 10:28
keep yourselves from *i* 1 John 5:21
worship demons, and *i* Rev 9:20

IDUMEA

Name used by Greeks and Romans to designate Edom, Mark 3:8

IGNORANCE

unintentionally or in *i* Ezek 45:20
that you did it in *i* Acts 3:17
i God overlooked Acts 17:30
sins committed in *i* Heb 9:7
to silence the *i* 1 Pet 2:15

IGNORANT

I was so foolish and *i* Ps 73:22
though Abraham was *i* Is 63:16
For they being *i* of God's Rom 10:3
be *i* of this mystery Rom 11:25
not want you to be *i* 1 Cor 12:1
But if anyone is *i* 1 Cor 14:38
i disputes, knowing that 2 Tim 2:23
on those who are *i* Heb 5:2

IGNORANTLY

because I did it 1 Tim 1:13

IJON

Town of Naphtali; captured by Ben-Hadad, 1 Kin 15:20
Captured by Tiglath-Pileser, 2 Kin 15:29

ILL

God sent a spirit of *i* will Judg 9:23
David, and it became *i* 2 Sam 12:15
bed and pretend to be *i* 2 Sam 13:5
go *i* with him who is Job 20:26

ILLEGITIMATE

then you are *i* Heb 12:8

ILLUMINATED

after you were *i* Heb 10:32
and the earth was *i* Rev 18:1
for the glory of God *i* Rev 21:23

ILLYRICUM

Paul preaches in, Rom 15:19

IMAGE

See WOODEN IMAGE; WOODEN IMAGES
Us make man in Our *i* Gen 1:26
yourselves a carved *i* Deut 4:16
shall despise their *i* Ps 73:20
the king made an *i* Dan 3:1
to them, "Whose *i* Matt 22:20
since he is the *i* 1 Cor 11:7
He is the *i* of the Col 1:15
and not the very *i* Heb 10:1
the beast and his *i* Rev 14:9
who worshipped his *i* Rev 19:20

IMAGINATION

although the *i* of man's Gen 8:21
the proud in the *i* Luke 1:51

IMITATE

I urge you, *i* me 1 Cor 4:16
as I also *i* Christ 1 Cor 11:1
i those who through Heb 6:12

IMMANUEL

shall call His name *i* Is 7:14
shall call His name *i* Matt 1:23

IMMEDIATELY

i the fig tree withered Matt 21:19
i the Spirit drove Him Mark 1:12
i they left their nets and Mark 1:18
hear, Satan comes *i* Mark 4:15
i he puts in the sickle, Mark 4:29
i his mouth was opened Luke 1:64

i her flow of blood Luke 8:44
stones would *i* cry out Luke 19:40
I sent to you *i*, and you Acts 10:33
i an angel of the Lord Acts 12:23
I did not *i* confer with flesh Gal 1:16
i forgets what kind of James 1:24
i I was in the Spirit Rev 4:2

IMMORAL

lips of an *i* woman drip Prov 5:3
i woman is a deep pit Prov 22:14
with sexually *i* people 1 Cor 5:9
murderers, sexually *i* Rev 21:8

IMMORALITY

except sexual *i* Matt 5:32
wife, except for sexual *i* Matt 19:9
and from sexual *i* Acts 15:29
unrighteousness, sexual *i* Rom 1:29
i as is not even named 1 Cor 5:1
Flee sexual *i* 1 Cor 6:18
abstain from sexual *i* 1 Thess 4:3
themselves over to sexual *i* Jude 7
to repent of her sexual *i* Rev 2:21

IMMORTAL

to the King eternal, *i* 1 Tim 1:17

IMMORTALITY

glory, honor, and *i* Rom 2:7
mortal must put on *i* 1 Cor 15:53
who alone has *i* 1 Tim 6:16
and brought life and *i* 2 Tim 1:10

IMMOVABLE

be steadfast, *i* 1 Cor 15:58

IMMUTABLE

that by two *i* things Heb 6:18

IMPART

see you, that I may *i* Rom 1:11
that it may *i* grace Eph 4:29

IMPENITENT

i heart you are Rom 2:5

IMPERISHABLE

but we for an *i* crown 1 Cor 9:25

IMPLANTED

with meekness the *i* James 1:21

IMPORTED

had horses *i* from Egypt 1 Kin 10:28
i from Egypt a chariot 2 Chr 1:17

IMPOSSIBLE

and nothing will be *i* Matt 17:20
"With men this is *i* Matt 19:26
God nothing will be *i* Luke 1:37
It is *i* that no offenses Luke 17:1
For it is *i* for those who Heb 6:4
which it is *i* for God to lie Heb 6:18
without faith it is *i* Heb 11:6

IMPOSTORS

i will grow worse 2 Tim 3:13

IMPRISONMENT

and of chains and *i* Heb 11:36

IMPRISONMENTS

in stripes, in *i* 2 Cor 6:5

IMPULSIVE

but he who is *i* Prov 14:29

IMPURITY

during her *i* shall be Lev 15:20
cleansed from her *i* 2 Sam 11:4
end to another with her *i* Ezra 9:11
a woman during her *i* Ezek 18:6

IMPUTE

"Do not let my lord *i* 2 Sam 19:19
the LORD does not *i* Ps 32:2
the LORD shall not *i* Rom 4:8

IMPUTED

bloodshed shall be *i* Lev 17:4
might be *i* to them Rom 4:11
alone that it was *i* Rom 4:23
but sin is not *i* Rom 5:13

IMPUTES

i righteousness apart Rom 4:6

IN MY NAME

which He speaks *i* Deut 18:19
to speak a word *i* Deut 18:20
i his horn shall be exalted, Ps 89:24
prophets prophesy lies *i* Jer 14:14
prophesy falsely to you *i* Jer 29:9
little child like this *i* Matt 18:5
are gathered together *i* Matt 18:20
many will come *i*, saying Matt 24:5
who works a miracle *i* Mark 9:39
cup of water to drink *i* Mark 9:41
i they will cast out Mark 16:17
whatever you ask *i* John 14:13
the Father will send *i* John 14:26
you ask the Father *i* John 15:16
day you will ask *i* John 16:26

IN THE WORLD

He was *i*, and the world John 1:10
"As long as I am *i*, I am John 9:5
His own who were *i* John 13:1
i you will have John 16:33
"Now I am no longer *i* John 17:11
I was with them *i* John 17:12
until the law sin was *i* Rom 5:13
an idol is nothing *i* 1 Cor 8:4
we conducted ourselves *i* 2 Cor 1:12
no hope and without God *i* Eph 2:12
you shine as lights *i* Phil 2:15
why, as though living *i* Col 2:20
believed on *i*, received 1 Tim 3:16
the corruption that is *i* 2 Pet 1:4
the world or the things *i* 1 John 2:15
greater than he who is *i* 1 John 4:4

INCENSE

oil and for the sweet *i* Ex 25:6
lamps, he shall burn *i* on it Ex 30:7
perpetual *i* before the LORD Ex 30:8
the pure *i* of sweet spices, Ex 37:29
the cloud of *i* may cover Lev 16:13
put *i* in it, and each of Num 16:17
burned *i* at the high places 1 Kin 3:3
be set before You as *i* Ps 141:2
i is an abomination to Me Is 1:13
i to the queen of heaven Jer 44:18
oil and My *i* before them Ezek 16:18
In every place *i* shall be Mal 1:11
his lot fell to burn *i* when Luke 1:9
right side of the altar of *i* Luke 1:11
golden bowls full of *i* Rev 5:8
the smoke of the *i*, with Rev 8:4
cinnamon and *i*, fragrant Rev 18:13

INCLINE

i your heart to the Josh 24:23
i Your ear to me, and hear Ps 17:6
i Your ear to my cry Ps 88:2
i my heart to Your Ps 119:36
i my heart to any evil Ps 141:4
i your ear to my sayings Prov 4:20
not obey Me or *i* their ear Jer 7:26
O my God, *i* Your ear and Dan 9:18

INCORRUPTIBLE

the glory of the *i* Rom 1:23
dead will be raised *i* 1 Cor 15:52
to an inheritance *i* 1 Pet 1:4
corruptible seed but *i* 1 Pet 1:23
i beauty of a gentle 1 Pet 3:4

INCORRUPTION

it is raised in *i* 1 Cor 15:42
corruption inherit *i* 1 Cor 15:50
must put on *i* 1 Cor 15:53

INCREASE

if riches *i*, do not set Ps 62:10
the LORD give you *i* Ps 115:14
hear and *i* learning Prov 1:5
When goods *i*, they Eccl 5:11
Of the *i* of His Is 9:7
and knowledge shall *i* Dan 12:4

Lord, "I our faith Luke 17:5
He must *i*, but I must John 3:30
but God gave the *i* 1 Cor 3:6
grows with the *i* Col 2:19
for they will *i* 2 Tim 2:16

INCREASED

The waters *i* and Gen 7:17
i your mercy which you Gen 19:19
nation and *i* its joy Is 9:3
And Jesus *i* in wisdom Luke 2:52

INCREASES

i knowledge *i* sorrow Eccl 1:18
who have no might He *i* Is 40:29

INCREDIBLE

should it be thought *i* Acts 26:8

INCURABLE

My wound is *i* Job 34:6
"Your affliction is *i* Jer 30:12
Your sorrow is *i* Jer 30:15

INDEBTED

everyone who is *i* Luke 11:4

INDEED

i it was very good Gen 1:31
"But will God *i* 1 Kin 8:27
"Behold, an Israelite *i* John 1:47

INDIA

Eastern limit of Persian Empire, Esth
1:1

INDICATING

the Holy Spirit *i* Heb 9:8
who was in them was *i* 1 Pet 1:11

INDIGNANT

saw it, they were *i* Matt 26:8

INDIGNATION

of His anger, wrath, *i* Ps 78:49
i has taken hold Ps 119:53
in whose hand is My *i* Is 10:5
For the *i* of the LORD Is 34:2
have filled me with *i* Jer 15:17
can stand before His *i* Nah 1:6
i which will devour Heb 10:27
into the cup of His *i* Rev 14:10

INDIVIDUALLY

He fashions their hearts *i* Ps 33:15
i members of one another Rom 12:5
Christ, and members *i* 1 Cor 12:27

INDUCED

O LORD, You *i* me Jer 20:7
if the prophet is *i* Ezek 14:9

INDULGENCE

no value against the *i* Col 2:23

INEXCUSABLE

Therefore you are *i* Rom 2:1

INEXPRESSIBLE

Paradise and heard *i* 2 Cor 12:4
you rejoice with joy *i* 1 Pet 1:8

INFALLIBLE

suffering by many *i* Acts 1:3

INFANTS

i who never saw Job 3:16
i You have ordained Ps 8:2
i You have perfected Matt 21:16
they also brought *i* Luke 18:15

INFERIOR

another kingdom *i* Dan 2:39
that I am not at all *i* 2 Cor 11:5

INFIRMITIES

"He Himself took our *i* Matt 8:17
boast, except in my *i* 2 Cor 12:5
and your frequent *i* 1 Tim 5:23

INFIRMITY

a spirit of *i* eighteen Luke 13:11
had an *i* thirty-eight years John 5:5
i I preached the gospel to Gal 4:13

INFLAMING

i yourselves with gods Is 57:5

INGATHERING

the Feast of *i* at the year's Ex 34:22

INHABIT

the wicked will not *i* Prov 10:30
cities and *i* them Amos 9:14

INHABITANT

Cry out and shout, O *i* Is 12:6
And the *i* will not say Is 33:24

INHABITANTS

He looks on all the *i* Ps 33:14
give ear, all *i* Ps 49:1
Let the *i* of Sela sing Is 42:11
Woe to the *i* of the Rev 12:12

INHABITED

rejoicing in His *i* Prov 8:31
"You shall be *i* Is 44:26
who formed it to be *i* Is 45:18

INHERIT

i the iniquities Job 13:26
descendants shall *i* Ps 25:13
The righteous shall *i* Ps 37:29
The wise shall *i* Prov 3:35
love me to *i* wealth Prov 8:21
The simple *i* folly Prov 14:18
the blameless will *i* Prov 28:10
i the kingdom prepared Matt 25:34
I do that I may *i* Mark 10:17
unrighteous will not *i* 1 Cor 6:9
you may *i* a blessing 1 Pet 3:9
who overcomes shall *i* Rev 21:7

INHERITANCE

"You shall have no *i* Num 18:20
i is the place of His *i* Deut 32:9
the portion of my *i* Ps 16:5
yes, I have a good *i* Ps 16:6
i shall be forever Ps 37:18
He will choose our *i* Ps 47:4
You confirmed Your *i* Ps 68:9
the tribe of Your *i* Ps 74:2
i gained hastily Prov 20:21
right of *i* is yours Jer 32:8
i has been turned Lam 5:2
will arise to your *i* Dan 12:13
And God gave him no *i* Acts 7:5
and give you an *i* Acts 20:32
For if the *i* is of the Gal 3:18
we have obtained an *i* Eph 1:11
be partakers of the *i* Col 1:12
receive as an *i* Heb 11:8
to an *i* incorruptible 1 Pet 1:4

INIQUITIES

How many are my *i* Job 13:23
i have overtaken me Ps 40:12
i prevail against me Ps 65:3
forgives all your *i* Ps 103:3
LORD, should mark *i* Ps 130:3
was bruised for our *i* Is 53:5
He shall bear their *i* Is 53:11
i have separated you Is 59:2

INIQUITY

See WORKERS OF INIQUITY
God, visiting the *i* of the Ex 20:5
He has not observed *i* Num 23:21
wicked brings forth *i* Ps 7:14
O LORD, pardon my *i* Ps 25:11
i I have not hidden Ps 32:5
i was brought forth in *i* Ps 51:5
If I regard *i* in my Ps 66:18
Add *i* to their *i* Ps 69:27
workers of *i* flourish Ps 92:7
i boast in themselves Ps 94:4
Shall the throne of *i* Ps 94:20
let no *i* have dominion Ps 119:133
i will reap sorrow Prov 22:8
a people laden with *i* Is 1:4
i is taken away Is 6:7

has laid on Him the *i* Is 53:6
will remember their *i* Hos 9:9
to those who devise *i* Mic 2:1
like You, pardoning *i* Mic 7:18
all you workers of *i* Luke 13:27
a fire, a world of *i* James 3:6

INJUSTICE

of truth and without *i* Deut 32:4
i shuts her mouth Job 5:16
i have your fathers Jer 2:5

INK

us, written not with *i* 2 Cor 3:3
do so with paper and *i* 2 John 12

INN

room for them in the *i* Luke 2:7
brought him to an *i* Luke 10:34

INNOCENCE

of my heart and *i* Gen 20:5
washed my hands in *i* Ps 73:13

INNOCENT

do not kill the *i* Ex 23:7
a bribe to slay an *i* Deut 27:25
i will divide the Job 27:17
a bribe against the *i* Ps 15:5
because I was found *i* Dan 6:22
by betraying *i* blood Matt 27:4
saying, "I am *i* Matt 27:24
this day that I am *i* Acts 20:26

INNOCENT BLOOD

"lest *i* be shed in the Deut 19:10
against *i*, to kill David 1 Sam 19:5
the *i* which Joab shed 1 Kin 2:31
shed very much *i* 2 Kin 21:16
righteous, and condemn *i* Ps 94:21
And shed *i*, the blood Ps 106:38
tongue, hands that shed *i* Prov 6:17
they make haste to shed *i* Is 59:7
do not shed *i* in this place Jer 7:6
you will surely bring *i* Jer 26:15
for they have shed *i* Joel 3:19
do not charge us with *i* Jon 1:14
sinned by betraying *i* Matt 27:4

INNUMERABLE

i as the sand which is Heb 11:12
i company of angels Heb 12:22

INQUIRE

went to *i* of the LORD Gen 25:22
a man went to *i* of God 1 Sam 9:9
I may go to her and *i* 1 Sam 28:7
sent you to Me to *i* of Me Jer 37:7
i who in it is worthy Matt 10:11
to *i* more fully about him Acts 23:20

INQUIRED

children of Israel *i* Judg 20:27
Therefore David *i* 1 Sam 23:2
the LORD, nor *i* of Him Zeph 1:6
the prophets have *i* 1 Pet 1:10

INQUIRY

shall make careful *i* Deut 19:18

INSANE

images, and they are *i* Jer 50:38
the spiritual man is *i* Hos 9:7

INSCRIBED

Oh, that they were *i* Job 19:23
See, I have *i* you on Is 49:16

INSCRIPTION

wrote on it an *i* like the Ex 39:30
image and *i* is this Matt 22:20
the *i* of His accusation Mark 15:26
found an altar with this *i* Acts 17:23

INSPIRATION

is given by *i* of God 2 Tim 3:16

INSTRUCT

good Spirit to *i* them Neh 9:20
I will *i* you and teach Ps 32:8
is the man whom You *i* Ps 94:12

the LORD that he may *i* 1 Cor 2:16
If you *i* the brethren in 1 Tim 4:6

INSTRUCTED

Surely you have *i* Job 4:3
counsel, and who *i* Is 40:14
This man had been *i* Acts 18:25
are excellent, being *i* Rom 2:18
Moses was divinely *i* Heb 8:5

INSTRUCTION

also opens their ear to *i* Job 36:10
seeing you hate *i* Ps 50:17
despise wisdom and *i* Prov 1:7
Take firm hold of *i* Prov 4:13
He shall die for lack of *i* Prov 5:23
Hear *i* and be wise Prov 8:33
Give *i* to a wise man Prov 9:9
i loves knowledge Prov 12:1
fool despises his father's *i* Prov 15:5
Cease listening to *i* Prov 19:27
Apply your heart to *i* Prov 23:12
you have written at my *i* Jer 36:6
for correction, for *i* 2 Tim 3:16

INSTRUCTORS

have ten thousand *i* 1 Cor 4:15

INSTRUCTS

My heart also *i* Ps 16:7
He who *i* the nations Ps 94:10

INSTRUMENT

to Him with an *i* Ps 33:2
on an *i* of ten strings Ps 92:3

INSTRUMENTS

i of cruelty are in Gen 49:5
on harps, on stringed *i* 2 Sam 6:5
by *i* of music 1 Chr 15:16
with stringed *i* 2 Chr 20:28
cymbals and stringed *i* Neh 12:27
for Himself *i* of death Ps 7:13
with stringed *i* Ps 150:4
and musical *i* of all kinds Eccl 2:8
i of unrighteousness Rom 6:13

INSUBORDINATE

for the lawless and *i* 1 Tim 1:9
For there are many *i* Titus 1:10

INSUBORDINATION

of dissipation or *i* Titus 1:6

INSULT

shall not return *i* for *i* Mic 2:6

INSULTED

will be mocked and *i* Luke 18:32
i the Spirit of grace Heb 10:29

INSULTS

nor be afraid of their *i* Is 51:7

INTEGRITY

In the *i* of my heart Gen 20:5
walked, in *i* of heart and 1 Kin 9:4
he holds fast to his *i* Job 2:3
that God may know my *i* Job 31:6
Let *i* and uprightness Ps 25:21
I have walked in my *i* Ps 26:1
You uphold me in my *i* Ps 41:12
with *i* walks securely Prov 10:9
The *i* of the upright Prov 11:3
poor who walks in his *i* Prov 19:1
man walks in his *i* Prov 20:7
i than one perverse in his Prov 28:6
in doctrine showing *i* Titus 2:7

INTELLIGENT

Sergius Paulus, an *i* Acts 13:7

INTENT

that every *i* of the thoughts Gen 6:5
all the *i* of the thoughts 1 Chr 28:9
brings it with wicked *i* Prov 21:27
to the *i* that we should 1 Cor 10:6

INTERCEDE

the LORD, who will *i* 1 Sam 2:25

INTERCESSION

of many, and made *i* Is 53:12

Spirit Himself makes *i* Rom 8:26
always lives to make *i* Heb 7:25

INTERCESSOR

that there was no *i* Is 59:16

INTEREST

shall not charge him *i* Ex 22:25
men lent to me for *i* Jer 15:10
collected it with *i* Luke 19:23

INTERPRET

could *i* them for Pharaoh Gen 41:8
Do all *i* 1 Cor 12:30
pray that he may *i* 1 Cor 14:13
in turn, and let one *i* 1 Cor 14:27

INTERPRETATION

"This is the *i* Gen 40:12
who knows the *i* of a thing Eccl 8:1
you tell the dream and its *i* Dan 2:6
to another the *i* 1 Cor 12:10
a revelation, has an *i* 1 Cor 14:26
of any private *i* 2 Pet 1:20

INTERPRETATIONS

Do not *i* belong to God Gen 40:8
that you can give *i* Dan 5:16

INTOXICATING

not drink wine or *i* drink Lev 10:9

INTRIGUE

seize the kingdom by *i* Dan 11:21
join with them by *i* Dan 11:34

INTRUDING

i into those things which Col 2:18

INVENT

but you *i* them in your own Neh 6:8
i for yourselves musical Amos 6:5

INVISIBLE

of the world His *i* Rom 1:20
is the image of the *i* Col 1:15
eternal, immortal, *i* 1 Tim 1:17
as seeing Him who is *i* Heb 11:27

INVITE

i Jesse to the sacrifice 1 Sam 16:3
he did not *i* Nathan the 1 Kin 1:10
you find, *i* to the wedding Matt 22:9
lest they also *i* you back Luke 14:12

INVITED

so Absalom *i* all the 2 Sam 13:23
has *i* all the sons of the 1 Kin 1:19
Queen Esther *i* no one but Esth 5:12
were *i* to the wedding Matt 22:3
who had *i* Him saw this Luke 7:39
to those who were *i* Luke 14:7
were *i* to the wedding John 2:2
he *i* them in and lodged Acts 10:23
were *i* to stay with them Acts 28:14

INWARD

i part is destruction Ps 5:9
Both the *i* thought Ps 64:6
You have formed my *i* Ps 139:13
God according to the *i* Rom 7:22
i man is being renewed 2 Cor 4:16

INWARDLY

i they are ravenous Matt 7:15
is a Jew who is one *i* Rom 2:29

IRON

make your heavens like *i* Lev 26:19
was an *i* bedstead Deut 3:11
He will put a yoke of *i* Deut 28:48
i picks and *i* axes, and 2 Sam 12:31
He regards *i* as straw Job 41:27
i sharpens *i* Prov 27:17
and your neck was an *i* Is 48:4
its feet partly of *i* Dan 2:33
seared with a hot *i* 1 Tim 4:2
all nations with a rod of *i* Rev 12:5

IRREVOCABLE

calling of God are *i* Rom 11:29

ISAAC

Promised heir of the covenant, Gen
17:16–21

Born and circumcised, Gen 21:1–7
Offered up as a sacrifice, Gen 22:1–19
Marries Rebekah, Gen 24:62–67
Prays for children; prefers Esau, Gen
25:21–28
Dealings with Abimelech, king of
Gerar, Gen 26:1–31
Mistakenly blesses Jacob, Gen
27:1–28:5
Dies in his old age, Gen 35:28, 29
N.T. references to, Luke 3:34; Gal
4:21–31; Heb 11:9, 20

ISAIAH

Prophet during reigns of Uzziah,
Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, Is 1:1
Responds to prophetic call, Is 6:1–13
Prophecies to Hezekiah, 2 Kin 19: 20
Writes Uzziah's biography, 2 Chr 26:22
Writes Hezekiah's biography, 2 Chr
32:32
Quoted in N.T., Matt 1:22, 23; 3:3; 8:17;
12:17–21; Luke 4:17–19; Acts 13:34;
Rom 9:27, 29; 10:16, 20, 21; 11:26, 27;
15:12; 1 Pet 2:22

ISCARIOT, JUDAS

Listed among the Twelve, Mark 3:14,
19; Luke 6:16
Criticizes Mary, John 12:3–6
Identified as betrayer, John 13:21–30
Takes money to betray Christ, Matt
26:14–16
Betrays Christ with a kiss, Mark
14:43–45
Repents and commits suicide, Matt
27:3–10
His place filled, Acts 1:15–26

ISHBOSHETH

One of Saul's sons; made king, 2 Sam
2:8–10
Offends Abner, 2 Sam 3:7–11
Slain; his assassins executed, 2 Sam
4:1–12

ISHMAEL

Abram's son by Hagar, Gen 16:3, 4,
11–16
Circumcised, Gen 17:25
Scoffs at Isaac's feast; exiled with his
mother, Gen 21:8–21
His sons; his death, Gen 25:12–18
—— Son of Nathaniah; kills Gedaliah,
2 Kin 25:22–26

ISHMAELITES

Settle at Havilah, Gen 25:17, 18
Joseph sold to, Gen 37:25–28
Sell Joseph to Potiphar, Gen 39:1

ISLAND

aground on a certain *i* Acts 27:26
the leading citizen of the *i* Acts 28:7
i was moved out of its Rev 6:14
Then every *i* fled away Rev 16:20

ISLES

the multitude of *i* be glad Ps 97:1
declare it in the *i* afar off Jer 31:10
many *i* were the market Ezek 27:15
i will be astonished at Ezek 27:35

ISRAEL

See HOLY ONE OF ISRAEL; LORD GOD
OF ISRAEL
Used to refer to:
Jacob, Gen 32:28
descendants of Jacob, Gen 49:16, 28
ten northern tribes (in contrast to
Judah), 1 Sam 11:8
restored nation after exile, Ezra 9:1
true church, Gal 6:16

be called Jacob, but *i* Gen 32:28
"Hear, O *i*: The LORD Deut 6:4
shepherd My people *i* 2 Sam 7:7

Jacob rejoice and *I* be glad . . . Ps 14:7
 Redeem *I*, O God, out of . . . Ps 25:22
 Truly God is good to *I* . . . Ps 73:1
 O *I*, if you will listen to Me . . . Ps 81:8
 When *I* went out of Egypt, . . . Ps 114:1
 Let *I* now say, "His mercy . . . Ps 118:2
 O *I*, hope in the LORD . . . Ps 130:7
 Let *I* rejoice in My Maker . . . Ps 149:2
 will shepherd My people *I* . . . Matt 2:6
 great faith, not even in *I* . . . Matt 8:10
 sheep of the house of *I* . . . Matt 10:6
 the twelve tribes of *I* . . . Matt 19:28
 If He is the King of *I*, let . . . Matt 27:42
 helped His servant *I* . . . Luke 1:54
 of his manifestation to *I* . . . Luke 1:80
 Are you the teacher of *I* . . . John 3:10
 restore the kingdom to *I* . . . Acts 1:6
 God raised up for *I* a . . . Acts 13:23
 because for the hope of *I* . . . Acts 28:20
 For they are not all *I* . . . Rom 9:6
 so all *I* will be saved . . . Rom 11:26
 Observe *I* after the flesh . . . 1 Cor 10:18
 and upon the *I* of God . . . Gal 6:16
 eighth day, of the stock of *I* . . . Phil 3:5
 with the house of *I* . . . Heb 8:8
 children of *I* were sealed . . . Rev 7:4
 tribes of the children of *I* . . . Rev 21:12

ISRAELITES

Afflicted in Egypt, Ex 1:12–22
 Escape from Egypt, Ex 12:29–42, 50;
 13:17–22
 Receive law at Sinai, Ex 19
 Idolatry and rebellion of, Ex 32; Num
 13; 14
 Wander in the wilderness, Num
 14:26–39
 Cross Jordan; conquer Canaan, Josh
 4; 12
 Ruled by judges, Judg 2
 Saul chosen as king, 1 Sam 10
 Kingdom divided, 1 Kin 12
 Northern kingdom carried captive,
 2 Kin 17
 Southern kingdom carried captive,
 2 Kin 24
 70 years in exile, 2 Chr 36:20, 21
 Return after exile, Ezra 1:1–5
 Nation rejects Christ, Matt 27:20–27
 Nation destroyed, Luke 21:20–24

ISSACHAR

Jacob's fifth son, Gen 30:17, 18
 — Tribe of:
 Genealogy of, 1 Chr 7:1–5
 Prophecy concerning, Gen 49:14, 15
 Census at Sinai, Num 1:28, 29
 Inheritance of, Josh 19:17–23

ISSUED

King Darius *i* a decree . . . Ezra 6:1
 be *i* as law in every . . . Esth 3:14
i as a decree in every . . . Esth 8:13
 A fiery stream *i* and came . . . Dan 7:10
 before the decree is *i* . . . Zeph 2:2

IT IS WRITTEN

as *i* in the Law of Moses . . . 1 Kin 2:3
 as *i* in this Book of . . . 2 Kin 23:21
 Feast of Tabernacles, as *i* . . . Ezra 3:4
 trees, to make booths, as *i* . . . Neh 8:15
 in the scroll of the Book *i* . . . Ps 40:7
 "Behold, *i* before Me: *I* will . . . Is 65:6
 "As *i* in the Law of Moses . . . Dan 9:13
 for thus *i* by the prophet: . . . Matt 2:5
 "I, 'Man shall not live by . . . Matt 4:4
 throw Yourself down. For *i* . . . Matt 4:6
 "I again, 'You shall not . . . Matt 4:7
i, 'You shall worship . . . Matt 4:10
 "For this is he of whom *i* . . . Matt 11:10
 "I, 'My house shall be . . . Matt 21:13
i, 'I will strike the . . . Matt 26:31
 "Thus *i*, and thus it was . . . Luke 24:46
 "I in the prophets, 'And . . . John 6:45

i in the book of Psalms . . . Acts 1:20
i, 'You shall not speak . . . Acts 23:5
 volume of the book *i* . . . Heb 10:7
 because *i*, "Be holy, for . . . 1 Pet 1:16

ITALIAN

was called the *I* Regiment . . . Acts 10:1

ITALY

Jews expelled from, Acts 18:2
 Paul sails for, Acts 27:1, 6
 Christians in, Acts 28:14

ITCHING

they have *i* ears . . . 2 Tim 4:3

ITHAMAR

Youngest son of Aaron, Ex 6:23
 Consecrated as priest, Ex 28:1
 Duty entrusted to, Ex 38:21
 Jurisdiction over Gershonites and
 Merarites, Num 4:21–33

ITINERANT

i Jewish exorcists . . . Acts 19:13

ITUREA

Region ruled by Herod Philip, Luke 3:1

IVORY

made a great throne of *i* . . . 1 Kin 10:18
 Out of the *i* palaces . . . Ps 45:8
 neck is like an *i* tower . . . Song 7:4
 lie on beds of *i*, stretch . . . Amos 6:4

JABBOK

River entering the Jordan about 20
 miles north of the Dead Sea, Num
 21:24
 Scene of Jacob's conflict, Gen
 32:22–32
 Boundary marker, Deut 3:16

JABESH GILEAD

Consigned to destruction, Judg
 21:8–15
 Saul defeats the Ammonites at, 1 Sam
 11:1–11
 Citizens of, rescue Saul's body, 1 Sam
 31:11–13
 David thanks citizens of, 2 Sam 2:4–7

JABIN

Canaanite king of Hazor; leads confederacy
 against Joshua, Josh 11:1–14
 — Another king of Hazor; oppresses
 Israelites, Judg 4:2
 Defeated by Deborah and Barak, Judg
 4:3–24
 Immortalized in poetry, Judg 5:1–31

JACHIN

One of two pillars in front of Solomon's
 temple, 1 Kin 7:21, 22

JACINTH

third row, a *j*, an agate, . . . Ex 28:19
 the eleventh *j* . . . Rev 21:20

JACKALS

it shall be a habitation of *j* . . . Is 34:13
 make a wailing like the *j* . . . Mic 1:8

JACOB

Son of Isaac and Rebekah; Rebekah's
 favorite, Gen 25:21–28
 Obtains birthright, Gen 25:29–34
 Obtains blessing meant for Esau; flees,
 Gen 27:1–28:5
 Sees vision of ladder, Gen 28:10–22
 Serves Laban for Rachel and Leah, Gen
 29:1–30
 Fathers children, Gen 29:31–30:24
 Flees from, makes covenant with
 Laban, Gen 30:25–31:55
 Makes peace with Esau, Gen 32:1–21;
 33:1–17

Wrestles with God, Gen 32:22–32
 Returns to Bethel; renamed Israel, Gen
 35:1–15
 Shows preference for Joseph, Gen 37:3
 Mourns Joseph's disappearance, Gen
 37:32–35
 Sends sons to Egypt for food, Gen
 42:1–5
 Reluctantly allows Benjamin to go, Gen
 43:1–15
 Moves his household to Egypt, Gen
 45:25–47:12
 Blesses his sons and grandsons; dies,
 Gen 48; 49
 Buried in Canaan, Gen 50:1–14

JACOB'S WELL

Christ teaches a Samaritan woman at,
 John 4:5–26

JAEI

Wife of Heber the Kenite; kills Sisera,
 Judg 4:17–22
 Praised by Deborah, Judg 5:24–27

JAIR

Manassite warrior; conquers towns in
 Gilead, Num 32:41; Deut 3:14
 — Eighth judge of Israel, Judg
 10:3–5

JAIRUS

Ruler of the synagogue; Jesus raises
 his daughter, Mark 5:22–24, 35–43

JAMES

Son of Zebedee, called as disciple, Matt
 4:21, 22; Luke 5:10, 11
 One of the Twelve, Matt 10:2; Mark 3:17
 Zealous for the Lord, Luke 9:52–54
 Ambitious for honor, Mark 10:35–45
 Witnesses transfiguration, Matt
 17:1–9
 Martyred by Herod Agrippa, Acts 12:2
 — Son of Alphaeus; one of the
 Twelve, Matt 10:3, 4
 Called "the Less," Mark 15:40
 — Jesus' half brother, Matt 13:55, 56;
 Gal 1:19
 Becomes leader of Jerusalem Council
 and Jerusalem church, Acts
 15:13–22; Gal 2:9
 Author of an epistle, James 1:1

JANNES AND JAMBRES

Two Egyptian magicians; oppose
 Moses, Ex 7:11–22; 2 Tim 3:8

JANOAH

Town of Naphtali, 2 Kin 15:29

JAPHETH

One of Noah's three sons, Gen 5:32
 Receives blessing, Gen 9:20–27
 His descendants occupy Asia Minor
 and Europe, Gen 10:2–5

JARED

Father of Enoch, Gen 5:15–20
 Ancestor of Noah, 1 Chr 1:2
 Ancestor of Christ, Luke 3:37

JASHER

Book of, quoted, Josh 10:13

JASON

Welcomes Paul at Thessalonica, Acts
 17:5–9
 Described as Paul's kinsman, Rom
 16:21

JASPER

a beryl, an onyx, and a *j* . . . Ex 28:20
 beryl, onyx, and *j* . . . Ezek 28:13
 stone, like a *j* stone, clear . . . Rev 21:11

JAVAN

Son of Japheth, Gen 10:2, 4
 Descendants of, to receive good news,
 Is 66:19, 20

JAVELINS

bows and arrows, the *j* Ezek 39:9

JAW

or pierce his *j* with a hook Job 41:2

JAWBONE

a fresh *j* of a donkey Judg 15:15

JAWS

My tongue clings to My *j* Ps 22:15
 bridle in the *j* of the people Is 30:28
 I will put hooks in your *j* Ezek 29:4
 put hooks into your *j* Ezek 38:4

JEALOUS

your God, am a *j* God Ex 20:5
 LORD, whose name is *J* Ex 34:14
 he becomes *j* of his wife, Num 5:14
 a consuming fire, a *j* Deut 4:24
 I will be *j* for My holy Ezek 39:25
 For I am *j* for you 2 Cor 11:2

JEALOUSY

They provoked Him to *j* Deut 32:16
 Will Your *j* burn like Ps 79:5
j is a husband's Prov 6:34
 as strong as death, *j* Song 8:6
 will provoke you to *j* Rom 10:19
 fall, to provoke them to *j* Rom 11:11
 provoke the Lord to *j* 1 Cor 10:22
 for you with godly *j* 2 Cor 11:2

JEBUS

Canaanite name of Jerusalem before
 captured by David, 1 Chr 11:4-8

JEBUSITES

Descendants of Canaan, Gen 15:18-21;
 Num 13:29
 Defeated by Joshua, Josh 11:1-12
 Not driven from Jerusalem; later con-
 quered by David, Judg 1:21; 2 Sam
 5:6-8
 Put to forced labor under Solomon,
 1 Kin 9:20, 21

JECONIAH

See JEHOIACHIN
 Variant form of Jehoiachin, 1 Chr 3:16,
 17
 Abbreviated to Coniah, Jer 22:24, 28

JEDIDIAH

Name given to Solomon by Nathan,
 2 Sam 12:24, 25

JEDUTHUN

Levite musician appointed by David,
 1 Chr 16:41, 42
 Heads a family of musicians, 2 Chr
 5:12
 Name appears in psalm titles, Ps 39;
 62; 77

JEGAR SAHADUTHA

Name given by Laban to memorial
 stones, Gen 31:46, 47

JEHOAHAZ

Son and successor of Jehu, king of
 Israel, 2 Kin 10:35
 Seeks the Lord in defeat, 2 Kin 13:2-9
 — Son and successor of Josiah, king
 of Judah, 2 Kin 23:30-34
 Called Shallum, 1 Chr 3:15
 — Another form of Ahaziah, young-
 est son of King Joram, 2 Chr 21:17

JEHOASH

See JOASH

JEHOIACHIN

Son of Jehoiakim; next to the last king
 of Judah, 2 Kin 24:8
 Deported to Babylon, 2 Kin 24:8-16
 Liberated by Evil-Merodach, Jer
 52:31-34

JEHOIADA

High priest during reign of Joash, 2 Kin
 11:4-12:16
 Instructs Joash, 2 Kin 12:2

JEHOIAKIM

Wicked king of Judah; son of Josiah;
 serves Pharaoh and Nebuchadnezzar,
 2 Kin 23:34-24:7
 Taken captive to Babylon, 2 Chr
 36:6-8
 Kills prophet Urijah, Jer 26:20-23
 Destroys Jeremiah's scroll; cursed by
 God, Jer 36

JEHORAM (or Joram)

Wicked king of Judah; son of
 Jehoshaphat, 2 Kin 8:16-24
 Marries Athaliah, 2 Kin 8:18, 19
 Kills his brothers, 2 Chr 21:2, 4
 Elijah prophesies against him; prophe-
 cy fulfilled, 2 Chr 21:12-20
 — Wicked king of Israel; son of Ahab,
 2 Kin 3:1-3

Counseled by Elisha, 2 Kin 3: 5:8;
 6:8-12
 Wounded in battle, 2 Kin 8:28, 29
 Killed by Jehu, 2 Kin 9:14-26

JEHOSHAPHAT

Righteous king of Judah; son of Asa,
 1 Kin 22:41-50
 Goes to war with Ahab against Syria,
 1 Kin 22:1-36
 Institutes reforms; sends out teachers
 of the Law, 2 Chr 17:6-9; 19
 His enemies defeated through his faith,
 2 Chr 20:1-30

JEHOZABAD

Son of a Moabitess; assassinate Joash,
 2 Kin 12:20, 21
 Put to death, 2 Chr 25:3

JEHU

Prophet; denounces Baasha, 1 Kin
 16:1-7
 Rebukes Jehoshaphat, 2 Chr 19:2, 3
 — Commander under Ahab;
 anointed king, 1 Kin 19:16; 2 Kin
 9:1-13
 Destroys the house of Ahab, 2 Kin
 9:14-10:30
 Turns away from the Lord; dies, 2 Kin
 10:31-36

JEHUDI

Reads Jeremiah's scroll, Jer 36:14, 21,
 23

JEOPARDY

stand in *j* every hour 1 Cor 15:30

JEPHTHAH

Gilead's son by a harlot, Judg 11:1
 Driven out, then brought back to com-
 mand army against Ammonites,
 Judg 11:2-28
 Sacrifices his daughter to fulfill a vow,
 Judg 11:29-40
 Chastises Ephraim, Judg 12:1-7

JEREMIAH

Prophet under Josiah, Jehoiakim, and
 Zedekiah, Jer 1:1-3
 Called by God, Jer 1:4-9
 Forbidden to marry, Jer 16:2
 Imprisoned by Pashhur, Jer 20:1-6
 Prophecy written, destroyed, rewritten,
 Jer 36
 Accused of defection and imprisoned;
 released by Zedekiah, Jer 37
 Cast into dungeon; rescued; prophecies
 to Zedekiah, Jer 38
 Set free by Nebuchadnezzar, Jer
 39:11-40:6

Forcibly taken to Egypt, Jer 43:5-7

JERICHO

City near the Jordan, Num 22:1
 Called the city of palm trees, Deut 34:3;
 2 Chr 28:15
 Miraculously defeated by Joshua,
 Josh 6
 Rebuilt by Hiel, 1 Kin 16:34
 Visited by Jesus, Matt 20:29-34; Luke
 19:1-10

JEROBOAM

Son of Nebat; receives prophecy that
 he will be king, 1 Kin 11:26-40
 Made king; leads revolt against
 Rehoboam, 1 Kin 12:1-24
 Sets up idols, 1 Kin 12:25-33
 Rebuked by a man of God, 1 Kin
 13:1-10
 Judgment on house of, 1 Kin
 13:33-14:20
 — Wicked king of Israel; son of
 Joash; successful in war, 2 Kin
 14:23-29
 Prophecy concerning, Amos 7:7-13

JERUBBAAL

Name given to Gideon for destroying
 Baal's altar, Judg 6:32

JERUSALEM

Originally called Salem, Gen 14:18
 Jebusite city, Josh 15:8; Judg 1:8, 21
 King of, defeated by Joshua, Josh
 10:5-23
 Conquered by David; made capital,
 2 Sam 5:6-9
 Ark brought to, 2 Sam 6:12-17; 1 Kin
 8:1-13
 Saved from plague, 2 Sam 24:16
 Temple built and dedicated here, 1 Kin
 6: 8:14-66
 Suffers in war, 1 Kin 14:25-27; 2 Kin
 14:13, 14; Is 7:1
 Miraculously saved, 2 Kin 19:31-36
 Captured by Babylon, 2 Kin
 24:10-25:21; Jer 39:1-8
 Exiles return and rebuild temple, Ezra
 1:1-4; 2:1
 Walls of, dedicated, Neh 12:27-47
 Christ enters as King, Matt 21:4-11
 Christ laments for, Matt 23:37; Luke
 19:41-44
 Church born in, Acts 2
 Christians of, persecuted, Acts 4

Jebusite city (which is *J*) Josh 15:8
 in *J* he reigned 2 Sam 5:5
 were born to him in *J* 2 Sam 5:14
 ark of God back to *J* 2 Sam 15:29
 yourself a house in *J* 1 Kin 2:36
 a lamp before Me in *J* 1 Kin 11:36
 Solomon reigned in *J* 1 Kin 11:42
 Rehoboam came to *J* 1 Kin 12:21
 gave him a lamp in *J* 1 Kin 15:4
 down the wall of *J* from 2 Kin 14:13
 up to *J* to make war 2 Kin 16:5
 before this altar in *J* 2 Kin 18:22
 should deliver *J* from 2 Kin 18:35
J shall not be given into 2 Kin 19:10
 daughter of *J* has 2 Kin 19:21
 I will stretch over *J* the 2 Kin 21:13
 (She dwelt in *J* in the 2 Kin 22:14
 elders of Judah and *J* to 2 Kin 23:1
 burned them outside *J* 2 Kin 23:4
 from *J* to Babylon 2 Kin 24:15
 his army came against *J* 2 Kin 25:1
 the walls of *J* all around 2 Kin 25:10
J into captivity by the 1 Chr 6:15
 house of the LORD in *J* 1 Chr 6:32
 Now in *J* the children of 1 Chr 9:3
 and all Israel went to *J* 1 Chr 11:4
 took more wives in *J* 1 Chr 14:3

all Israel together at *J*, to . . . 1 Chr 15:3
 angel to *J* to destroy it . . . 1 Chr 21:15
 they may dwell in *J* . . . 1 Chr 23:25
 David assembled at *J* all . . . 1 Chr 28:1
 gold as common in *J* as . . . 2 Chr 1:15
 the LORD at *J* on Mount . . . 2 Chr 3:1
 Solomon reigned in *J* . . . 2 Chr 9:30
 So Rehoboam dwelt in *J* . . . 2 Chr 11:5
 of Judah and came to *J* . . . 2 Chr 12:4
 him in the city, in *J* . . . 2 Chr 28:27
 the altars that were in *J* . . . 2 Chr 30:14
 against the God of *J* . . . 2 Chr 32:19
 the inhabitants of *J* . . . 2 Chr 32:26
 to *J* into his kingdom . . . 2 Chr 33:13
 and the inhabitants of *J* . . . 2 Chr 35:18
 of the LORD which is in *J* . . . Ezra 2:68
 together as one man to *J* . . . Ezra 3:1
 out of the captivity to *J* . . . Ezra 3:8
 the temple which is in *J* . . . Ezra 6:5
 to bring them to *J* to the . . . Ezra 8:30
 a wall in Judah and *J* . . . Ezra 9:9
 that they must gather at *J* . . . Ezra 10:7
 I came to *J* and was there . . . Neh 2:11
 let us build the wall of *J* . . . Neh 2:17
 to come and attack *J* . . . Neh 4:8
 it was, at the gates of *J* . . . Neh 13:19
 build the walls of *J* . . . Ps 51:18
 In the midst of you, O *J* . . . Ps 116:19
J is built as a city that is . . . Ps 122:3
 If I forget you, O *J*, let my . . . Ps 137:5
 The LORD builds up *J* . . . Ps 147:2
 was King over Israel in *J* . . . Ecccl 1:12
 you, O daughters of *J* . . . Song 5:8
 as Tirzah, lovely as *J* . . . Song 6:4
 snare to the inhabitants of *J* . . . Is 8:14
 of Zion, the hill of *J* . . . Is 10:32
 numbered the houses of *J* . . . Is 22:10
 watchmen on your walls, O *J* . . . Is 62:6
 a wilderness, *J* a desolation . . . Is 64:10
 yes, proclaim against *J* . . . Jer 4:16
 Be instructed, O *J*, lest My . . . Jer 6:8
 will make *J* a heap of ruins . . . Jer 9:11
 the cry of *J* has gone up . . . Jer 14:2
 reigned eleven years in *J* . . . Jer 52:1
J has become an unclean . . . Lam 1:17
 and portray on it a city, *J* . . . Ezek 4:1
 me in visions of God to *J* . . . Ezek 8:3
 Oholah, and *J* is Oholibah . . . Ezek 23:4
 build *J* until Messiah the . . . Dan 9:25
 then *J* shall be holy, and . . . Joel 3:17
 utters His voice from *J* . . . Amos 1:2
 The captives of *J* who are . . . Obad 20
 You not have mercy on *J* . . . Zech 1:12
 To measure *J*, to see what . . . Zech 2:2
 again in her own place—*J* . . . Zech 12:6
 to *J* to worship the King . . . Zech 14:17
 from the East came to *J* . . . Matt 2:1
 that He must go to *J* . . . Matt 16:21
 O *J*, the one who . . . Matt 23:37
 we are going up to *J* . . . Mark 10:33
 Jesus lingered behind in *J* . . . Luke 2:43
 you see *J* surrounded . . . Luke 21:20
 Daughters of *J*, do not . . . Luke 23:28
 but tarry in the city of *J* . . . Luke 24:49
J before the Passover . . . John 11:55
 be witnesses to Me in *J* . . . Acts 1:8
 were gathered together at *J* . . . Acts 4:6
 you have filled *J* with . . . Acts 5:28
 Lord, they returned to *J* . . . Acts 8:25
 bring them bound to *J* . . . Acts 9:2
 when Saul had come to *J* . . . Acts 9:26
 when Peter came up to *J* . . . Acts 11:2
 came from *J* to Antioch . . . Acts 11:27
 shroud in the spirit to *J* . . . Acts 20:22
 shall the Jews at *J* bind . . . Acts 21:11
 I went up to *J* to worship . . . Acts 24:11
 he was willing to go to *J* . . . Acts 25:20
 the saints who are in *J* . . . Rom 15:26
 to bear your gift to *J* . . . 1 Cor 16:3
 corresponds to *J* which . . . Gal 4:25
 city of My God, the New *J* . . . Rev 3:12
 saw the holy city, New *J* . . . Rev 21:2

JESHIMON

Wilderness west of the Dead Sea.
 1 Sam 23:19, 24

JESHUA (or Joshua)

Postexilic high priest; returns with
 Zerubbabel, Ezra 2:2
 Aids in rebuilding temple, Ezra 3:2–8
 Also called Joshua; seen in vision,
 Zech 3:1–10

JESHURUN

Poetic name of endearment for Israel.
 Deut 32:15

JESSE

Grandson of Ruth and Boaz, Ruth
 4:17–22
 Father of David, 1 Sam 16:1–13
 Mentioned in prophecy, Is 11:1, 10

JESTING

talking, nor coarse *j* . . . Eph 5:4

JESUS

See CHRIST; LORD JESUS CHRIST
 birth of *J* Christ was as . . . Matt 1:18
 shall call His name *J* . . . Matt 1:21
J was led up by the . . . Matt 4:1
 These twelve *J* sent . . . Matt 10:5
 and laid hands on *J* . . . Matt 26:50
 Barabbas and destroy *J* . . . Matt 27:20
 we to do with You, *J* . . . Mark 1:24
J withdrew with His . . . Mark 3:7
J said, "Do not forbid . . . Mark 9:39
J went into Jerusalem . . . Mark 11:11
 as they were eating, *J* . . . Mark 14:22
 and he delivered *J* . . . Mark 15:15
J increased in wisdom . . . Luke 2:52
J said, "Who touched . . . Luke 8:45
J rebuked the unclean . . . Luke 9:42
J said to him, "Foxes . . . Luke 9:58
 sought to see who *J* was . . . Luke 19:3
 near to *J* to kiss Him . . . Luke 22:47
J Himself stood in the . . . Luke 24:36
 truth came through *J* . . . John 1:17
J said to him, "Rise, take . . . John 5:8
J lifted up His eyes . . . John 6:5
 they saw *J* walking on . . . John 6:19
 But *J* stooped down and . . . John 8:6
J wept . . . John 11:35
 anointed the feet of *J* . . . John 12:3
J was crucified . . . John 19:20
 other things that *J* did . . . John 21:25
 This *J* God has raised . . . Acts 2:32
 of Your holy Servant *J* . . . Acts 4:30
 believed on the Lord *J* . . . Acts 11:17
 baptized into Christ *J* . . . Rom 6:3
 Spirit of life in Christ *J* . . . Rom 8:2
 your mouth the Lord *J* . . . Rom 10:9
 among you except *J* . . . 1 Cor 2:2
 the day of the Lord *J* . . . 1 Cor 5:5
 heavenly places in Christ *J* . . . Eph 2:6
 that at the name of *J* every . . . Phil 2:10
 perfect in Christ *J* . . . Col 1:28
 exhort in the Lord *J* . . . 1 Thess 4:1
 But we see *J*, who was . . . Heb 2:9
J the Son of God, let us . . . Heb 4:14
 looking unto *J*, the author . . . Heb 12:2
J Christ the righteous . . . 1 John 2:1
 that *J* is the Son of God . . . 1 John 5:5
 Revelation of *J* Christ . . . Rev 1:1
 Even so, come, Lord *J* . . . Rev 22:20

JETHER

Gideon's oldest son, Judg 8:20, 21

JETHRO

Priest of Midian; becomes Moses'
 father-in-law, Ex 2:16–22
 Blesses Moses' departure, Ex 4:18
 Visits and counsels Moses, Ex 18
 Also called Reuel, Num 10:29

JEW

J whose name was . . . Esth 2:5

is it that You, being a *J* . . . John 4:9
 Am I a *J*? . . . John 18:35
 found out that he was a *J* . . . Acts 19:34
 I am indeed a *J*, born in . . . Acts 22:3
 believes, for the *J* first . . . Rom 1:16
 who does evil, of the *J* first . . . Rom 2:9
 he is not a *J* who is one . . . Rom 2:28
 advantage then has the *J* . . . Rom 3:1
 no distinction between *J* . . . Rom 10:12
 Jews I became as a *J* . . . 1 Cor 9:20
 If you, being a *J*, live in . . . Gal 2:14
 is neither *J* nor Greek . . . Gal 3:28
 is neither Greek nor *J* . . . Col 3:11

JEWELS

your thighs are like *j* . . . Songs 7:1
 that I make them My *j* . . . Mal 3:17

JEWISH

against their *J* brethren . . . Neh 5:1
J descent, you will not . . . Esth 6:13
 a *J* brother in bondage . . . Jer 34:9
 expectation of the *J* . . . Acts 12:11
J exorcists took it upon . . . Acts 19:13
 light to the *J* people and . . . Acts 26:23
 giving heed to *J* fables . . . Titus 1:14

JEWS

See KING OF THE JEWS

Jesus born King of the, Matt 2:2
 Salvation comes through the, John
 4:22; Acts 11:19; Rom 1:16; 2:9, 10
 Reject Christ, Matt 27:21–25
 Reject the gospel, Acts 13:42–46

the elders of the *J* build . . . Ezra 6:7
 are these feeble *J* doing . . . Neh 4:2
J who were at Shushan . . . Esth 9:18
 sent letters to all the *J* . . . Esth 9:30
 I am afraid of the *J* who . . . Jer 38:19
 of the *J* seven hundred . . . Jer 52:30
 There are certain *J* whom . . . Dan 3:12
 You the King of the *J* . . . Matt 27:11
 of purification of the *J* . . . John 2:6
 for salvation is of the *J* . . . John 4:22
 those *J* who believed Him . . . John 8:31
 the *J* took up stones . . . John 10:31
 The King of the *J* . . . John 19:19
 dwelling in Jerusalem *J* . . . Acts 2:5
 confounded the *J* who . . . Acts 9:22
 in the land of the *J* . . . Acts 10:39
 in the synagogues of the *J* . . . Acts 13:5
 But the *J* stirred up the . . . Acts 13:50
 refuted the *J* publicly, . . . Acts 18:28
 the God of the *J* only . . . Rom 3:29
J a stumbling block . . . 1 Cor 1:23
 whether *J* or Greeks, . . . 1 Cor 12:13
 From the *J* five times I . . . 2 Cor 11:24
 compel Gentiles to live as *J* . . . Gal 2:14
 of those who say they are *J* . . . Rev 2:9
 Satan, who say they are *J* . . . Rev 3:9

JEZEBEL

Ahab's idolatrous wife, 1 Kin 16:31
 Her abominable acts, 1 Kin 18:4, 13;
 19:1, 2; 21:1–16
 Death prophesied; prophecy fulfilled,
 1 Kin 21:23; 2 Kin 9:7, 30–37
 ——— Type of paganism in the church,
 Rev 2:20

JEZREEL

Ahab's capital, 1 Kin 18:45; 21:1
 Ahab's family destroyed at, 1 Kin
 21:23; 2 Kin 9:30–37; 10:1–11

JOAB

David's nephew; commands his army,
 2 Sam 2:10–32; 8:16; 10:1–14; 11:1,
 14–25; 20:1–23
 Kills Abner, 2 Sam 3:26, 27
 Intercedes for Absalom, 2 Sam 14:1–33
 Remains loyal to David; kills Absalom,
 2 Sam 18:1–5, 9–17
 Demoted; kills Amasa, 2 Sam 19:13;
 20:8–10

Opposes census, 2 Sam 24:1-9; 1 Chr 21:1-6
 Supports Adonijah, 1 Kin 1:7
 Solomon orders his death in obedience to David's command, 1 Kin 2:1-6, 28-34

JOANNA

Wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, Luke 8:1-3
 With others, heralds Christ's resurrection, Luke 23:55, 56

JOASH (or Jehoash)

Son of Ahaziah: saved from Athaliah's massacre and crowned by Jehoiada, 2 Kin 11:1-12
 Repairs the temple, 2 Kin 12:1-16
 Turns away from the Lord and is killed, 2 Chr 24:17-25
 — Wicked king of Israel: son of Jehoahaz, 2 Kin 13:10-25
 Defeats Amaziah in battle, 2 Kin 14:8-15; 2 Chr 25:17-24

JOB

Model of righteousness, Job 1:1-5
 His faith tested, Job 1:6-2:10
 Debates with his three friends: complains to God, Job 3-33
 Elihu intervenes, Job 34-37
 God's answer, Job 38-41
 Humbles himself and repents, Job 42:1-6
 Restored to prosperity, Job 42:10-17

JOCHEBED

Daughter of Levi: mother of Miriam, Aaron, and Moses, Ex 6:20

JOEL

Preexilic prophet, Joel 1:1
 Quoted in N.T., Acts 2:16

JOGBEHAH

Town in Gilead, Judg 8:11

JOHANAN

Military leader of Judah: warns Gedaliah of Ishmael's plot, Jer 40:13-16
 Avenges Gedaliah: takes the people to Egypt, Jer 41:11-18

JOHN

The apostle, son of Zebedee: called as disciple, Matt 4:21, 22; Luke 5:1-11
 Chosen as one of the Twelve, Matt 10:2
 Especially close to Christ, Matt 17:1-9; Mark 13:3; John 13:23-25; 19:26, 27; 20:2-8; 21:7, 20
 Ambitious and overzealous, Mark 10:35-41; Luke 9:54-56
 Sent to prepare the Passover, Luke 22:8-13
 With Peter, heals a man and is arrested, Acts 3:1-4:22
 Goes on missionary trip with Peter, Acts 8:14-25
 Exiled on Patmos, Rev 1:9
 Author of Gospel, three epistles, and the Revelation, John 21:23-25; 1 John; 2 John; 3 John; Rev 1:1
 — The Baptist: O.T. prophecy concerning, Is 40:3-5; Mal 4:5
 His birth announced and accomplished, Luke 1:11-20, 57-80
 Preaches repentance, Luke 3:1-20
 Bears witness to Christ, John 1:19-36; 3:25-36
 Baptizes Jesus, Matt 3:13-17
 Jesus speaks about, Matt 11:7-19
 Identified with Elijah, Matt 11:13, 14
 Herod imprisons and kills, Matt 14:3-12
 — Surnamed Mark: see MARK

JOHN

Woe to those who *j* Is 5:8
 'Come and let us *j* Jer 50:5
 of the rest dared *j* Acts 5:13

JOINED

and mother and be *j* Gen 2:24
 for him who is *j* Eccl 9:4
 "Ephraim is *j* Hos 4:17
 what God has *j* Matt 19:6
 you be perfectly *j* 1 Cor 1:10
 But he who is *j* 1 Cor 6:17
 the whole body, *j* Eph 4:16

JOINT

j as He wrestled Gen 32:25
 My bones are out of *j* Ps 22:14
j heirs with Christ Rom 8:17
 by what every *j* Eph 4:16

JOINTS

and knit together by *j* Col 2:19
 and spirit, and of *j* Heb 4:12

JOKTAN

See ARABIA
 Descendants of Shem, Gen. 10:21, 25

JONADAB (or Jehonadab)

David's nephew: encourages Amnon in sin, 2 Sam 13:3-5, 32-36
 — Son of Rechab: father of the Rechabites, Jer 35:5-19
 Helps Jehu overthrow Baal, 2 Kin 10:15-28

JONAH

Prophet sent to Nineveh: rebels and is punished, Jon 1
 Repents and is saved, Jon 2
 Preaches in Nineveh, Jon 3
 Becomes angry at God's mercy, Jon 4
 Type of Christ's resurrection, Matt 12:39, 40

JONATHAN

King Saul's eldest son; his exploits in battle, 1 Sam 13:2, 3; 14:1-14, 49
 Saved from his father's wrath, 1 Sam 14:24-45
 Makes covenant with David: protects him from Saul, 1 Sam 18:1-4; 19:1-7; 20:1-42; 23:15-18
 Killed by Philistines, 1 Sam 31:2, 8
 Mourned by David: his son provided for, 2 Sam 1:17-27; 9:1-8
 — Son of high priest Abiathar: faithful to David, 2 Sam 15:26-36; 17:15-22
 Informs Adonijah of Solomon's coronation, 1 Kin 1:41-49

JOPPA

Scene of Peter's vision, Acts 10:5, 23, 32

JORAM

See JEHORAM

JORDAN RIVER

Lot dwells near, Gen 13:8-13
 Canaan's eastern boundary, Num 34:12
 Moses forbidden to cross, Deut 3:27
 Miraculous dividing of, for Israel, Josh 3:1-17
 by Elijah, 2 Kin 2:5-8
 by Elisha, 2 Kin 2:13, 14
 Naaman healed in, 2 Kin 5:10-14
 John baptizes in, Matt 3:6, 13-17

JOSEPH

Son of Jacob by Rachel, Gen 30:22-24
 Loved by Jacob: hated by his brothers, Gen 37:3-11
 Sold into slavery, Gen 37:12-36
 Unjustly imprisoned in Egypt, Gen 39:1-23
 Interprets dreams in prison, Gen 40:1-23

Wins Pharaoh's favor, Gen 41:1-44
 Prepares Egypt for famine, Gen 41:45-57

Sells grain to his brothers, Gen 42-44

Reveals identity and reconciles with brothers: sends for Jacob, Gen 45:1-28

Settles family in Egypt, Gen 47:1-12
 His sons blessed by Jacob, Gen 48:1-22

Blessed by Jacob, Gen 49:22-26

Buries his father: reassures his brothers, Gen 50:1-21

His death, Gen 50:22-26

— Husband of Mary, Jesus' mother, Matt 1:16

Visited by angel, Matt 1:19-25

Takes Mary to Bethlehem, Luke 2:3-7

Protects Jesus from Herod, Matt 2:13-23

Jesus subject to, Luke 2:51

— Secret disciple from Arimathea: donates tomb and assists in Christ's burial, Mark 15:42-46; Luke 23:50-53; John 19:38-42

JOSES

One of Jesus' half brothers, Matt 13:55
 — The name of Barnabas, Acts 4:36

JOSHUA

See JESHUA

— Leader of Israel succeeding Moses, Num 27:18-23

Leads battle against Amalek, Ex 17:8-16

Sent as spy into Canaan: reports favorably, Num 13:16-25; 14:6-9

Assumes command, Josh 1:1-18

Sends spies to Jericho, Josh 2:1

Leads Israel across Jordan, Josh 3:1-17

Sets up commemorative stones, Josh 4:1-24

Circumcises the people, Josh 5:2-9

Conquers Jericho, Josh 5:13-6:27

Punishes Achan, Josh 7:10-26

Conquers Canaan, Josh 8-12

Divides the land, Josh 13-19

Addresses rulers, Josh 23:1-16

Addresses the people, Josh 24:1-28

His death, Josh 24:29, 30

JOSIAH

Righteous king of Judah: son of Amon, 2 Kin 22:1, 2

Repairs the temple, 2 Kin 22:3-9

Hears the Law: spared for his humility, 2 Kin 22:10-20

Institutes reforms, 2 Kin 23:1-25

Killed in battle, 2 Chr 35:20-25

JOT

one *j* or one tittle Matt 5:18

JOTHAM

Gideon's youngest son; escapes Abimelech's massacre, Judg 9:5

Utters prophetic parable, Judg 9:7-21

— Righteous king of Judah: son of Azariah, 2 Kin 15:32-38; 2 Chr 27:1-9

JOURNEY

us go three days' *j* Ex 3:18
 busy, or he is on a *j* 1 Kin 18:27
 he has gone on a long *j* Prov 7:19
 city, a three-day *j* in extent Jon 3:3
 nor bag for your *j*, nor Matt 10:10
 he went on a *j* Matt 25:15
 Nevertheless I must *j* Luke 13:33
 wearied from His *j* John 4:6
 may send me on my *j* 1 Cor 16:6
j in a manner worthy of 3 John 6

JOY

LORD your God with *j* Deut 28:47
 of Obed-Edom with *j* 1 Chr 15:25
 the *j* of the LORD is your Neh 8:10
 heart to sing for *j* Job 29:13
 presence is fullness of *j* Ps 16:11
j comes in the morning Ps 30:5
 To God my exceeding *j* Ps 43:4
 me the *j* of Your salvation Ps 51:12
 sow in tears shall reap in *j* Ps 126:5
 You according to the *j* Is 9:3
j you will draw water Is 12:3
 everlasting *j* on their heads Is 51:11
 ashes, the oil of *j* Is 61:3
j shall be theirs Is 61:7
 shall sing for *j* Is 65:14
 word was to me the *j* Jer 15:16
 I will *j* in the God of my Hab 3:18
 receives it with *j* Matt 13:20
 Enter into the *j* Matt 25:21
 in my womb for *j* Luke 1:44
 good tidings of great *j* Luke 2:10
 there will be more *j* Luke 15:7
 did not believe for *j* Luke 24:41
 My *j* may remain in John 15:11
 will be turned into *j* John 16:20
 that your *j* may be full John 16:24
 they may have My *j* John 17:13
 finish my race with *j* Acts 20:24
 peace and *j* in the Holy Rom 14:17
 fill you with all *j* Rom 15:13
 that my *j* is the *j* 2 Cor 2:3
 the Spirit is love, *j* Gal 5:22
 brethren, my *j* and Phil 4:1
 longsuffering with *j* Col 1:11
 with *j* of the Holy Spirit, 1 Thess 1:6
 are our glory and *j* 1 Thess 2:20
 that I may be filled with *j* 2 Tim 1:4
j that was set before Heb 12:2
 count it all *j* James 1:2
j inexpressible and full 1 Pet 1:8
 with exceeding *j* 1 Pet 4:13
 that your *j* may be full 1 John 1:4
 that our *j* may be full 2 John 12
 I have no greater *j* 3 John 4
 His glory with exceeding *j* Jude 24

JOYFUL

And my soul shall be *j* Ps 35:9
 Make a *j* shout to the LORD Ps 100:1
 of prosperity be *j* Ecc1 7:14
 and make them *j* Is 56:7
 soul shall be *j* in my God Is 61:10
 I am exceedingly *j* 2 Cor 7:4
 to be *j* for the present Heb 12:11

JOYFULLY

Let us shout *j* to the Rock Ps 95:1
 shout *j* before the LORD Ps 98:6
j accepted the plundering Heb 10:34

JOZACHAR

Assassin of Joash, 2 Kin 12:19–21
 Called Zabab, 2 Chr 24:26

JUBAL

Son of Lamech, Gen 4:21

JUBILEE

cause the trumpet of the *J* Lev 25:9
 For it is the *J* Lev 25:12
 his field after the *J*, then Lev 27:18
 In the Year of the *J* the field Lev 27:24
 the *J* of the children Num 36:4

JUDAH

Son of Jacob and Leah, Gen 29:30–35
 Intercedes for Joseph, Gen 37:26, 27
 Fails in duty to Tamar, Gen 38:1–30
 Offers himself as Benjamin's ransom,
 Gen 44:18–34
 Jacob bestows birthright on, Gen
 49:3–10
 Ancestor of Christ, Matt 1:3, 16
 ——— Tribe of:
 Prophecy concerning, Gen 49:8–12

Numbered at Sinai, Num 1:26, 27
 Territory assigned to, Josh 15:1–63
 Leads in conquest of Canaan, Judg
 1:1–19
 Makes David king, 2 Sam 2:1–11
 Loyal to David and his house, 2 Sam
 20:1, 2; 1 Kin 12:20
 Becomes leader of southern kingdom,
 1 Kin 14:21, 22
 Taken to Babylon, 2 Kin 24:1–16
 Returns after exile, 2 Chr 36:20–23

JUDAISM

And I advanced in *J* Gal 1:14

JUDAS

Judas Lebbaeus, surnamed Thad-
 daeus, Matt 10:3
 One of the Twelve, Luke 6:13, 16
 Offers a question, John 14:22
 ——— Judas Barsabas, a chief deputy,
 Acts 15:22–32
 ——— Betrayer of Christ: see ISCAIOT

JUDE (or Judas)

Half brother of Christ, Matt 13:55
 Does not believe in Christ, John 7:5
 Becomes Christ's disciple, Acts 1:14
 Writes an epistle, Jude 1

JUDEA

Christ born in, Matt 2:1, 5, 6
 Hostile toward Christ, John 7:1
 Gospel preached in, Acts 8:1, 4
 Churches established in, Acts 9:31

JUDGE

The LORD *j* between Gen 16:5
 Dan shall *j* his people as Gen 49:16
 you a price and a *j* over us Ex 2:14
 Moses sat to *j* the people Ex 18:13
 For the LORD will *j* Deut 32:36
 the LORD was with the *j* Judg 2:18
 coming to *j* the earth 1 Chr 16:33
 and judges who may *j* all Ezra 7:25
 He shall *j* the world in Ps 9:8
 How long will you *j* unjustly Ps 82:2
 Arise, O God, *j* the earth Ps 82:8
 Rise up, O *J* of the Ps 94:2
 He is coming to *j* the earth Ps 96:13
 He shall *j* the world, and Ps 98:9
 the LORD will *j* His people Ps 135:14
j righteously, and plead Prov 31:9
 sword the LORD will *j* Is 66:16
 deliver you to the *j* Matt 5:25
 “*J* not, that you be not Matt 7:1
 “Man, who made Me a *j* Luke 12:14
j who did not fear God Luke 18:2
 As I hear, I *j* John 5:30
 Do not *j* according John 7:24
 I *j* no one John 8:15
j the world but to John 12:47
 this, O man, you who *j* Rom 2:3
 then how will God *j* Rom 3:6
 Therefore let us not *j* Rom 14:13
 the saints will *j* the world 1 Cor 6:2
 that we shall *j* angels 1 Cor 6:3
J among yourselves 1 Cor 11:13
 let no one *j* you in Col 2:16
 Christ, who will *j* 2 Tim 4:1
 Lord, the righteous *J* 2 Tim 4:8
 heaven, to God the *J* Heb 12:23
 and adulterers God will *j* Heb 13:4
 are you to *j* another James 4:12
 the *J* is standing at the James 5:9
 who is ready to *j* the living 1 Pet 4:5
 holy and true, until You *j* Rev 6:10

JUDGE

God has *j* my case Gen 30:6
 So they *j* the people at all Ex 18:26
 upon him, and he *j* Israel Judg 3:10
 Samuel *j* Israel all the 1 Sam 7:15
 condemn him when he is *j* Ps 37:33
 He *j* the cause of the poor Jer 22:16
 You who *j* your sisters, Ezek 16:52

Judge not, that you be not *j* Matt 7:1
 You have rightly *j* Luke 7:43
 ruler of this world is *j* John 16:11
 being *j* by you this day Acts 24:21
 law will be *j* by the law Rom 2:12
 overcome when You are *j* Rom 3:4
 world will be *j* by you 1 Cor 6:2
 But when we are *j* 1 Cor 11:32
 be *j* by the law of liberty James 2:12
 the dead were *j* according Rev 20:12

JUDGES

j who delivered Judg 2:16
 in the days when the *j* Ruth 1:1
 said to the *j*, “Take heed 2 Chr 19:6
 Surely He is God who *j* Ps 58:11
 He *j* among the gods Ps 82:1
 He makes the *j* of the Is 40:23
j are evening wolves Zeph 3:3
 For the Father *j* John 5:22
 he who is spiritual *j* 1 Cor 2:15
j me is the Lord 1 Cor 4:4
 who without partiality *j* 1 Pet 1:17
 Him who *j* righteously 1 Pet 2:23

JUDGMENT

Aaron shall bear the *j* of Ex 28:30
 show partiality in *j* Deut 1:17
 David administered *j* 2 Sam 8:15
 Does God subvert *j* Job 8:3
 Teach me good *j* Ps 119:66
 instructs him in right *j* Is 28:26
 from prison and from *j* Is 53:8
 I will also speak *j* Jer 4:12
j was made in favor of Dan 7:22
 be in danger of the *j* Matt 5:21
 For with what *j* you judge Matt 7:2
 in the day of *j* than for Matt 11:22
 will rise up in the *j* Matt 12:42
 shall not come into *j* John 5:24
 and My *j* is righteous John 5:30
 but judge with righteous *j* John 7:24
 if I do judge, My *j* John 8:16
 For *j* I have come into John 9:39
 Now is the *j* of this John 12:31
 the righteous *j* of God Rom 1:32
j which came from one Rom 5:16
 all stand before the *j* Rom 14:10
 yet I give *j* as one whom 1 Cor 7:25
 eats and drinks *j* 1 Cor 11:29
 appear before the *j* 2 Cor 5:10
 preceding them to *j* 1 Tim 5:24
 after this the *j* Heb 9:27
 For *j* is without mercy James 2:13
 receive a stricter *j* James 3:1
 time has come for *j* 1 Pet 4:7
 a long time their *j* 2 Pet 2:3
 boldness in the day of *j* 1 John 4:17
 darkness for the *j* Jude 6
 the hour of His *j* has come Rev 14:7
 hour your *j* has come Rev 18:10
j was committed to them Rev 20:4

JUDGMENTS

The *j* of the LORD are Ps 19:9
j are a great deep Ps 36:6
 I dread, for Your *j* Ps 119:39
 statutes nor kept My *j* Ezek 5:7
 had not executed My *j* Ezek 20:24
 unsearchable are His *j* Rom 11:33
 righteous are His *j* Rev 19:2

JUG

So she opened a *j* of milk Judg 4:19
j of water by Saul's 1 Sam 26:12

JULIUS

Roman centurion assigned to guard
 Paul, Acts 27:1–44

JUST

Noah was a *j* man Gen 6:9
 I have done *j* as you told Gen 27:19
j as the LORD commanded Num 26:4
J as the gazelle and the Deut 12:22
 a perfect and *j* weight Deut 25:15

j as my strength was Josh 14:11
 Hear a *j* cause Ps 17:1
 the path of the *j* is like Prov 4:18
j weight is His delight Prov 11:1
 It is a joy for the *j* Prov 21:15
j man who perishes Eccl 7:15
 For there is not a *j* Eccl 7:20
 way of the *j* is uprightness Is 26:7
 the blood of the *j* Lam 4:13
j shall live by his Hab 2:4
 He is *j* and having Zech 9:9
 her husband, being a *j* Matt 1:19
 resurrection of the *j* Luke 14:14
j persons who need no Luke 15:7
 the Holy One and the *J* Acts 3:14
 dead, both of the *j* Acts 24:15
j shall live by faith Rom 1:17
 that He might be *j* Rom 3:26
 the *j* shall live by faith Gal 3:11
j as you were called in one Eph 4:4
j as Christ also loved the Eph 5:25
 whatever things are *j* Phil 4:8
 received a *j* reward, Heb 2:2
j men made perfect Heb 12:23
 have murdered the *j* James 5:6
 He is faithful and *j* 1 John 1:9
J and true are Your Rev 15:3

JUSTICE

to do righteousness and *j* Gen 18:19
 after many to pervert *j* Ex 23:2
 for all His ways are *j* Deut 32:4
 bribes, and perverted *j* 1 Sam 8:3
 to discern *j* 1 Kin 3:11
 the Almighty pervert *j* Job 36:6
 gives *j* to the oppressed Job 36:6
j as the noonday Ps 37:6
 and Your poor with *j* Ps 72:2
 Do *j* to the afflicted Ps 82:3
 and *j* are the Ps 89:14
j for all who are oppressed Ps 103:6
 He guards the paths of *j*, Prov 2:8
 revenues without *j* Prov 16:8
 do not understand *j* Prov 28:5
j the measuring line Is 28:17
 the LORD is a God of *j*, Is 30:18
 He will bring forth *j* Is 42:1
 No one calls for *j* Is 59:4
J is turned back Is 59:14
 I, the LORD, love *j* Is 61:8
 you, O home of *j* Jer 31:23
 plundering, execute *j* Ezek 45:9
 truth, and His ways *j* Dan 4:37
 observe mercy and *j* Hos 12:6
 who turn *j* to wormwood Amos 5:7
 "Execute true *j* Zech 7:9
 "Where is the God of *j* Mal 2:17
 And He will declare *j* Matt 12:18
 of herbs, and pass by *j*, Luke 11:42
 His humiliation His *j* Acts 8:33

JUSTIFICATION

because of our *j* Rom 4:25
 offenses resulted in *j* Rom 5:16
 men, resulting in *j* Rom 5:18

JUSTIFIED

Me that you may be *j* Job 40:8
 of Israel shall be *j* Is 45:25
 words you will be *j* Matt 12:37
 But wisdom is *j* Luke 7:35
j rather than the Luke 18:14
 who believes is *j* Acts 13:39
 "That You may be *j* Rom 3:4
 law no flesh will be *j* Rom 3:20
j freely by His grace Rom 3:24
 having been *j* by Rom 5:1
 these He also *j* Rom 8:30
 but you were *j* 1 Cor 6:11
 that we might be *j* Gal 2:16
 who attempt to be *j* Gal 5:4
j in the Spirit 1 Tim 3:16
 then that a man is *j*, James 2:24
 the harlot also *j* James 2:25

JUSTIFIER

be just and the *j* Rom 3:26

JUSTIFIES

He who *j* the wicked Prov 17:15
 It is God who *j* Rom 8:33

JUSTIFY

j the wicked for a Is 5:23
 wanting to *j* himself Luke 10:29
 "You are those who *j* Luke 16:15
 is one God who will *j* Rom 3:30
 that God would *j* Gal 3:8

JUSTLY

of you but to do *j* Mic 6:8
 How we indeed *j* Luke 23:41
 and devoutly and *j*, 1 Thess 2:10

JUSTUS

Surname of Joseph, a disciple, Acts
 1:23
 — Man of Corinth; befriends Paul,
 Acts 18:7
 — Fellow worker of Paul, also called
 Jesus, Col 4:11

KADESH

Spies sent from, Num 13:3, 26
 Moses strikes rock at, Num 20:1–13
 Boundary in the new Israel, Ezek 47:19

KADESH BARNEA

Boundary of Promised Land, Num
 34:1–4
 Limit of Joshua's military campaign,
 Josh 10:41

KARNAIM

Conquered region, Amos 6:13

KEDESH

Town in south Judah, Josh 15:23
 — Levite city in Issachar, 1 Chr 6:72

KEDESH NAPHTALI

City of refuge, Josh 21:27, 32
 Home of Barak, Judg 4:6

KEEP

k you wherever you Gen 28:15
 day, to *k* it holy Ex 20:8
 and *k* My judgments Lev 25:18
k all My commandments 1 Kin 6:12
 and that You would *k* 1 Chr 4:10
 Even he who cannot *k* Ps 22:29
K my soul, and deliver me Ps 25:20
 do not *k* silence Ps 35:22
k Your righteous Ps 119:106
k them in the midst of Prov 4:21
K your heart with all Prov 4:23
 a time to *k* silence Eccl 3:7
k your appointed feasts, Nah 1:15
 Let all the earth *k* Hab 2:20
k the commandments Matt 19:17
 charge over you, to *k* Luke 4:10
 If you love Me, *k* John 14:15
k through Your name John 17:11
 orderly and *k* the law Acts 21:24
 and *k* the traditions 1 Cor 11:2
 Let your women *k* 1 Cor 14:34
 a debtor to *k* the whole law Gal 5:3
k the unity of the Eph 4:3
k yourself pure 1 Tim 5:22
 He is able to *k* what I 2 Tim 1:12
 to *k* oneself unspotted James 1:27
k His commandments 1 John 2:3
k His commandments 1 John 3:22
k yourselves from idols 1 John 5:21
k yourselves in the Jude 21
k you from stumbling Jude 24
k those things Rev 1:3
 I also will *k* you from the Rev 3:10
 of those who *k* the words Rev 22:9

KEEPER

Am I my brother's *k* Gen 4:9

of the *k* of the prison Gen 39:21
 The LORD is your *k* Ps 121:5
 me the *k* of the vineyards Song 1:6
 to the *k* of his vineyard Luke 13:7
 of the prison, awaking Acts 16:27

KEEPERS

in the day when the *k* Eccl 12:3

KEEPS

the faithful God who *k* Deut 7:9
 God, Who *k* covenant and Neh 9:32
 who *k* you will not slumber Ps 121:3
k truth forever Ps 146:6
k his way preserves Prov 16:17
k the commandment Prov 19:16
 Whoever *k* the law is a Prov 28:7
 none of you *k* the law John 7:19
 born of God *k* himself 1 John 5:18
 and *k* his garments Rev 16:15

KEILAH

Town of Judah; rescued from Philis-
 tines by David, 1 Sam 23:1–5
 Prepares to betray David; he escapes,
 1 Sam 23:6–13

KENITES

Canaanite tribe whose land is promised
 to Abraham's seed, Gen 15:19
 Subjects of Balaam's prophecy, Num
 24:20–22
 Settle with Judahites, Judg 1:16
 Spared by Saul in war with Amalekites,
 1 Sam 15:6

KEPT

shall be *k* burning on it Lev 6:9
 be *k* as a sign against Num 17:10
 He *k* him as the apple of Deut 32:10
 For I have *k* the ways 2 Sam 22:22
k what You promised 2 Chr 6:15
 Now Josiah *k* a Passover 2 Chr 35:1
 desolate she *k* Sabbath 2 Chr 36:21
 brethren who *k* the gates, Neh 11:19
 gatekeepers *k* the charge Neh 12:45
 that *k* a pilgrim feast Ps 42:4
 vineyard I have not *k* Song 1:6
 when a holy festival is *k* Is 30:29
k charge of My Ezek 44:15
 we have *k* His ordinance Mal 3:14
 these things I have *k* Matt 19:20
 But Jesus *k* silent Matt 26:63
 she *k* asking Him to cast Mark 7:26
 all these things I have *k* Mark 10:20
k all these things Luke 2:19
 love, just as I have *k* John 15:10
 If they *k* My word, they John 15:20
 You gave Me I have *k* John 17:12
k back part of the Acts 5:2
k secret since the world Rom 16:25
 I have *k* the faith 2 Tim 4:7
 who are *k* by the power 1 Pet 3:5
 Because you have *k* My Rev 3:10

KETURAH

Abraham's second wife, Gen 25:1
 Sons of:
 listed, Gen 25:1, 2
 given gifts and sent away, Gen 25:6

KEY

The *k* of the house of Is 22:22
 have taken away the *k* Luke 11:52
 "He who has the *k* Rev 3:7
 heaven, having the *k* Rev 20:1

KEYS

I will give you the *k* Matt 16:19
 And I have the *k* Rev 1:18

KIBROTH HATTA'AVAH

Burial site of Israelites slain by God,
 Num 11:33–35

KICK

is hard for you to *k* Acts 9:5

KIDNAPPERS

for sodomites, for *k* 1 Tim 1:10

KIDNAPS

"He who *k* a man and Ex 21:16

KIDRON

Valley near Jerusalem; crossed by
David and Christ, 2 Sam 15:23;
John 18:1

Idols dumped there, 2 Chr 29:16

KILL

who finds me will *k* Gen 4:14
k the Passover lamb Ex 12:21
I *k* and I make alive Deut 32:39
"Am I God, to *k* 2 Kin 5:7
a time to *k* Eccl 3:3
to save life or to *k* Mark 3:4
of them they will *k* Luke 11:49
afraid of those who *k* Luke 12:4
Why do you seek to *k* John 7:19
except to steal, and to *k* John 10:10
"Rise, Peter; *k* and eat Acts 10:13
was about to *k* himself Acts 16:27
to *k* with sword, with Rev 6:8

KILLED

Abel his brother and *k* Gen 4:8
For I have *k* a man for Gen 4:23
LORD *k* all the firstborn Ex 13:15
Your servant has *k* 1 Sam 17:36
for Your sake we are *k* Ps 44:22
and scribes, and be *k* Matt 16:21
Siloam fell and *k* them Luke 13:4
k the Prince of life Acts 3:15
me, and by it *k* me Rom 7:11
"For Your sake we are *k* Rom 8:36
who *k* both the Lord 1 Thess 2:15
martyr, who was *k* Rev 2:13

KILLS

"The LORD *k* and 1 Sam 2:6
the one who *k* the Matt 23:37
for the letter *k* 2 Cor 3:6

KIND

animals after their *k* Gen 6:20
breed with another *k* Lev 19:19
k can come out by Mark 9:29
For He is *k* to the Luke 6:35
suffers long and is *k* 1 Cor 13:4
is one *k* of flesh of men, 1 Cor 15:39
And be *k* to one Eph 4:32
forgets what *k* of man James 1:24

KINDLED

When His wrath is *k* Ps 2:12
I, the LORD, have *k* Ezek 10:48
wish it were already *k* Luke 12:49
they *k* a fire and made us Acts 28:2

KINDLY

The LORD deal *k* Ruth 1:8
Julius treated Paul *k* Acts 27:3
k affectionate to one Rom 12:10

KINDNESS

may the LORD show *k* 2 Sam 2:6
anger, abundant in *k* Neh 9:17
me His marvelous *k* Ps 31:21
For His merciful *k* Ps 117:2
tongue is the law of *k* Prov 31:26
k shall not depart Is 54:10
I remember you, the *k* Jer 2:2
by long suffering, by *k* 2 Cor 6:6
long suffering, *k* Gal 5:22
But when the *k* and the Titus 3:4
and to brotherly *k* 2 Pet 1:7

KING

Then Melchizedek *k* Gen 14:18
days there was no *k* Judg 17:6
said, "Give us a *k* 1 Sam 8:6
"Long live the *k* 1 Sam 10:24
they anointed David *k* 2 Sam 2:4
Yet I have set My *k* Ps 2:6
The LORD is *k* forever Ps 10:16
k answer us when we Ps 20:9
And the *k* of glory Ps 24:7
k is saved by the Ps 33:16

k Your judgments Ps 72:1
For God is my *k* Ps 74:12
do who succeeds the *k* Eccl 2:12
out of prison to be *k* Eccl 4:14
when you *k* is a child Eccl 10:16
In the year that *k* Is 6:1
k will reign in Is 32:1
the LORD is our *k* Is 33:22
Is not her *k* in her Jer 8:19
and the everlasting *k* Jer 10:10
k of Babylon, *k* Ezek 26:7
I gave you a *k* in My Hos 13:11
the LORD shall be *k* Zech 14:9
He who has been born *k* Matt 2:2
This Is Jesus the *k* Matt 27:37
by force to make Him *k* John 6:15
"Behold your *k* John 19:14
there is another *k* Acts 17:7
Now to the *k* eternal 1 Tim 1:17
only Potentate, the *k* 1 Tim 6:15
this Melchizedek, *k* Heb 7:1
Honor the *k* 1 Pet 2:17
k of kings and Lord of Rev 19:16

KING OF THE JEWS

He who has been born *k* Matt 2:2
saying, "Are You the *k* Matt 27:11
This Is Jesus the *k* Matt 27:37
to release to you the *k* Mark 15:9
salute Him, "Hail, *k* Mark 15:18
"If You are the *k* Luke 23:37
"He said, "I am the *k* John 19:21

KINGDOM

you shall be to Me a *k* Ex 19:6
LORD has torn the *k* 1 Sam 15:28
Yours is the *k* 1 Chr 29:11
k is the LORD's Ps 22:28
the scepter of Your *k* Ps 45:6
in heaven, and His *k* Ps 103:19
is an everlasting *k* Ps 145:13
k which shall never be Dan 2:44
High rules in the *k* Dan 4:17
Your *k* has been divided, Dan 5:28
and glory and a *k* Dan 7:14
k shall be the LORD's Obad 21
for Yours is the *k* Matt 6:13
Baptist until now the *k* Matt 11:12
are the sons of the *k* Matt 13:38
k all things that offend Matt 13:41
up to half of my *k* Mark 6:23
Blessed is the *k* of our Mark 11:10
nation, and *k* against Mark 13:8
of His *k* there will be no Luke 1:33
k of God has come near Luke 10:9
k come. Your will be done Luke 11:2
k divided against Luke 11:17
to give you the *k* Luke 12:32
of such is the *k* of God Luke 18:16
against nation, and *k* Luke 21:10
at My table in My *k* Luke 22:30
You come into Your *k* Luke 23:42
he cannot enter the *k* John 3:5
If My *k* were of this John 18:36
preaching the *k* of God Acts 20:25
when He delivers the *k* 1 Cor 15:24
in the *k* of Christ and God Eph 5:5
you into His own *k* 1 Thess 2:12
the scepter of Your *k* Heb 1:8
we are receiving a *k* Heb 12:28
into the everlasting *k* 2 Pet 1:11

KINGDOM OF GOD

But seek first the *k* Matt 6:33
k has come upon you Matt 12:28
rich man to enter the *k* Matt 19:24
harlots enter the *k* Matt 21:31
the *k* will be taken Matt 21:43
the gospel of the *k* Mark 1:14
the *k* is at hand Mark 1:15
the mystery of the *k* Mark 4:11
what shall we liken the *k* Mark 4:30
death till they see the *k* Mark 9:1
enter the *k* with one eye Mark 9:47

for of such is the *k* Mark 10:14
riches to enter the *k* Mark 10:23
are not far from the *k* Mark 12:34
I drink it new in the *k* Mark 14:25
waiting for the *k* Mark 15:43
"I must preach the *k* Luke 4:43
poor, for yours is the *k* Luke 6:20
he who is least in the *k* Luke 7:28
preach the *k* and to heal Luke 9:2
you go and preach the *k* Luke 9:60
back, is fit for the *k* Luke 9:62
all the prophets in the *k* Luke 13:28
shall eat bread in the *k* Luke 14:15
k has been preached Luke 16:16
k does not come with Luke 17:20
the *k* is within you Luke 17:21
for the sake of the *k* Luke 18:29
thought the *k* would Luke 19:11
know that the *k* is near Luke 21:31
he cannot see the *k* John 3:3
things pertaining to the *k* Acts 1:3
tribulations enter the *k* Acts 14:22
testified of the *k* Acts 28:23
the *k* is not eating and Rom 14:17
the *k* is not in word 1 Cor 4:20
will not inherit the *k* 1 Cor 6:9
cannot inherit the *k* 1 Cor 15:50
will not inherit the *k* Gal 5:21
fellow workers for the *k* Col 4:11
counted worthy of the *k* 2 Thess 1:5

KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

"Repent, for the *k* Matt 3:2
for theirs is the *k* Matt 5:10
by no means enter the *k* Matt 5:20
Lord, shall enter the *k* Matt 7:21
Isaac, and Jacob in the *k* Matt 8:11
"The *k* is at hand Matt 10:7
who is least in the *k* Matt 11:11
the mysteries of the *k* Matt 13:11
The *k* is like a man Matt 13:24
k is like a mustard seed, Matt 13:31
The *k* is like leaven, Matt 13:33
the *k* is like treasure Matt 13:44
k is like a dragnet Matt 13:47
you the keys of the *k* Matt 16:19
then is greatest in the *k* Matt 18:1
by no means enter the *k* Matt 18:3
is the greatest in the *k* Matt 18:4
k is like a certain king Matt 18:23
for of such is the *k* Matt 19:14
a rich man to enter the *k* Matt 19:23
k is like a landowner Matt 20:1
k is like a certain king Matt 22:2
you shut up the *k* Matt 23:13
k shall be likened Matt 25:1
the *k* is like a man Matt 25:14

KINGDOMS

the *k* were moved Ps 46:6
tremble, who shook *k* Is 14:16
showed Him all the *k* Matt 4:8
have become the *k* Rev 11:15

KINGS

The *k* of the earth set Ps 2:2
k shall fall down Ps 72:11
He is awesome to the *k* Ps 76:12
By me *k* reign Prov 8:15
He will stand before *k* Prov 22:29
k is unsearchable Prov 25:3
that which destroys *k* Prov 31:3
it is not for *k* to drink Prov 31:4
k shall be your foster Is 49:23
"They set up *k* Hos 8:4
before governors and *k* Matt 10:18
k have desired to see Luke 10:24
You have reigned as *k* 1 Cor 4:8
and has made us *k* Rev 1:6
that the way of the *k* Rev 16:12
may eat the flesh of *k* Rev 19:18

KIR HARESETH

Fortified city of Moab, 2 Kin 3:25; Is
15:1; 16:7

KIRJATH ARBA

Ancient name of Hebron, Gen 23:2
Possessed by Judah, Judg 1:10

KIRJATH JEARIM

Gibeonite town, Josh 9:17
Ark taken from, 1 Chr 13:5

KISH

Benjamite of Gibeah; father of King
Saul, 1 Sam 9:1-3

KISHON

River of north Palestine; Sisera's army
swept away by, Judg 4:7, 13
Elijah executes prophets of Baal at,
1 Kin 18:40

KISS

k the Son, lest He be Ps 2:12
Let him *k* me with the Song 1:2
who sacrifice *k* the calves Hos 13:2
Whomever I *k*, He is Mark 14:44
You gave Me no *k* Luke 7:45
drew near to Jesus to *k* Luke 22:47
another with a holy *k* Rom 16:16
another with a holy *k* 2 Cor 13:12
with a holy *k* 1 Thess 5:26
one another with a *k* 1 Pet 5:14

KISSED

they *k* one another 1 Sam 20:41
and peace have *k* each. Ps 85:10
Rabbi!" and *k* Him Matt 26:49
and she *k* His feet and Luke 7:38

KITTIM

See CYPRUS
Descendants of Javan, Gen 10:4

KNEE

that to Me every *k* Is 45:23
And they bowed the *k* Matt 27:29
have not bowed the *k* Rom 11:4
every *k* shall bow to Rom 14:11
of Jesus every *k* Phil 2:10

KNEES

make firm the feeble *k* Is 35:3
be dandled on her *k* Is 66:12
this reason I bow my *k* Eph 3:14
and the feeble *k* Heb 12:12

KNEW

k that they were naked Gen 3:7
Adam *k* Eve his wife Gen 4:1
in the womb I *k* Jer 1:5
to them, "I never *k* Matt 7:23
k what was in man John 2:25
For He made Him who *k* 2 Cor 5:21

KNIFE

fire in his hand, and a *k* Gen 22:6
his house he took a *k* Judg 19:29
put a *k* to your throat if Prov 23:2
cut it with the scribe's *k* Jer 36:23

KNIT

of Jonathan was *k* 1 Sam 18:1
k me together with Job 10:11
be encouraged, being *k* Col 2:2

KNOCK

k, and it will be Matt 7:7
at the door and *k* Rev 3:20

KNOW

k good and evil Gen 3:22
and I did not *k* Gen 28:16
Egypt, who did not *k* Joseph Ex 1:8
k that I am the LORD Ex 6:7
"I *k* you by name, and you Ex 33:12
way, that I may *k* You Ex 33:13
to *k* how to do all manner Ex 36:1
Therefore *k* that the LORD Deut 7:9
k what was in your heart Deut 8:2
You should *k* in your heart Deut 8:5
that you may *k* the way by Josh 3:4
might be taught to *k* war, Judg 3:2
Samuel did not yet *k* the 1 Sam 3:7

k that there is a God 1 Sam 17:46
I *k* that this is a holy man 2 Kin 4:9
k that there is no God 2 Kin 5:15
you, my son Solomon, *k* 1 Chr 28:9
Hear it, and *k* for Job 5:27
and *k* nothing, because Job 8:9
k that my Redeemer Job 19:25
"What does God *k* Job 22:13
k Your name will put Ps 9:10
Now I *k* that the LORD saves Ps 20:6
k that I am God Ps 46:10
make me to *k* wisdom Ps 51:6
O God, and *k* my heart Ps 139:23
k wisdom and instruction, Prov 1:2
to *k* understanding Prov 4:1
set my heart to *k* wisdom Eccl 1:17
that He may *k* to refuse the Is 7:15
Egyptians will *k* the LORD Is 19:21
But I *k* your dwelling place, Is 37:28
do not *k* nor understand Is 44:18
All flesh shall *k* that I, the Is 49:26
My people shall *k* My name Is 52:6
call a nation you do not *k* Is 55:5
language you do not *k* Jer 5:15
nor did they *k* how to blush Jer 6:15
Who can *k* it Jer 17:9
saying, "K the LORD Jer 31:34
you shall *k* that I am Ezek 6:13
of the field shall *k* that I Ezek 17:24
Gentiles shall *k* that Ezek 39:23
is anxious to *k* the dream Dan 2:3
you may *k* the thoughts Dan 2:30
I wished to *k* the truth Dan 7:19
you shall *k* no God but Me Hos 13:4
For I *k* your manifold Amos 5:12
for you to *k* justice Mic 3:1
did not *k* her till she had Matt 1:25
You *k* how to discern the Matt 16:3
k that summer is near Matt 24:32
k what hour your Lord Matt 24:42
an oath, "I do not *k* Matt 26:72
I do not *k* the Man Matt 26:74
k the mystery of the Mark 4:11
k the commandments Mark 10:19
do not *k* what you ask Mark 10:38
do not *k* what manner of Luke 9:55
k how to give good gifts Luke 11:13
k that its desolation is Luke 21:20
the world did not *k* John 1:10
We speak what We *k* John 3:11
k what we worship John 4:22
k that You are the Christ John 6:69
k that you are Abraham's John 8:37
we *k* that God does not John 9:31
hear My voice, and I *k* John 10:27
If you *k* these things John 13:17
k whom I have chosen John 13:18
we are sure that You *k* John 16:30
k that I love You John 21:15
k times or seasons Acts 1:7
and said, "Jesus I *k* Acts 19:15
we *k* that all things work Rom 8:28
wisdom did not *k* 1 Cor 1:21
nor can he *k* them 1 Cor 2:14
For we *k* in part and 1 Cor 13:9
k a man in Christ who 2 Cor 12:2
when you did not *k* God, Gal 4:8
k the love of Christ Eph 3:19
k Him and the power Phil 3:10
abased, and I *k* how to Phil 4:12
k how to possess his 1 Thess 4:4
k what is restraining 2 Thess 2:6
k whom I have believed 2 Tim 1:12
so that they may *k* 2 Tim 2:25
this we *k* that we *k* Him 1 John 2:3
He who says, "I *k* 1 John 2:4
and you *k* all things 1 John 2:20
By this we *k* love 1 John 3:16
k that we are of the 1 John 3:19
k that He abides 1 John 3:24
k that we are of God 1 John 5:19
"I *k* your works Rev 2:2

KNOWING

like God, *k* good and evil Gen 3:5
k their thoughts, said, Matt 9:4
not *k* the Scriptures nor Matt 22:29
k all things that would John 18:4
k that tribulation produces Rom 5:3
k that your labor is not 1 Cor 15:58
k that He who raised up 2 Cor 4:14
k that while we are at 2 Cor 5:6
k that I am appointed for Phil 1:17
k that you also have a Col 4:1
k that you have a better Heb 10:34
not *k* where he was going Heb 11:8
k that the testing of your James 1:3
k that the same sufferings 1 Pet 5:9

KNOWLEDGE

and the tree of the *k* Gen 2:9
and understanding, in *k* Ex 35:31
LORD is the God of *k* 1 Sam 2:3
give me wisdom and *k* 2 Chr 1:10
Can anyone teach God *k* Job 21:22
who is perfect in *k* Job 36:4
unto night reveals *k* Ps 19:2
me good judgment and *k* Ps 119:66
k is too wonderful Ps 139:6
LORD is the beginning of *k* Prov 1:7
k the depths were Prov 3:20
k rather than choice Prov 8:10
Wise people store up *k* Prov 10:14
prudent man conceals *k* Prov 12:23
k is easy to him who Prov 14:6
k spares his words Prov 17:27
a soul to be without *k* Prov 19:2
by *k* the rooms are filled Prov 24:4
of *k* increases strength Prov 24:5
and he who increases *k* Eccl 1:18
k is that wisdom Eccl 7:12
no work or device or *k* Eccl 9:10
Whom will he teach *k* Is 28:9
His *k* My righteous Servant Is 53:11
k shall increase Dan 12:4
you have rejected *k* Hos 4:6
taken away the key of *k* Luke 11:52
having more accurate *k* Acts 24:22
to retain God in their *k* Rom 1:28
having the form of *k* Rom 2:20
by the law is the *k* of sin Rom 3:20
K puffs up, but love 1 Cor 8:1
to another the word of *k* 1 Cor 12:8
all mysteries and all *k* 1 Cor 13:2
whether there is *k* 1 Cor 13:8
of His *k* in every place 2 Cor 2:14
to give the light of the *k* 2 Cor 4:6
by purity, by *k*, by 2 Cor 6:6
against the *k* of God 2 Cor 10:5
Christ which passes *k* Eph 3:19
k of His will in all wisdom Col 1:9
treasures of wisdom and *k* Col 2:3
is falsely called *k* 1 Tim 6:20
faith virtue, to virtue *k* 2 Pet 1:5
in the grace and *k* 2 Pet 3:18

KNOWN

In Judah God is *k* Ps 76:1
my mouth will I make *k* Ps 89:1
If you had *k* Me John 8:19
My sheep, and am *k* John 10:14
The world has not *k* John 17:25
peace they have not *k* Rom 3:17
I would not have *k* Rom 7:7
"For who has *k* Rom 11:34
after you have *k* Gal 4:9
requests be made *k* Phil 4:6
k the Holy Scriptures 2 Tim 3:15
have not *k* the depths of Rev 2:24

KNOWS

For God *k* that in Gen 3:5
k the secrets of the Ps 44:21
he understands and *k* Jer 9:24
k what is in the Dan 2:22
k those who trust Nah 1:7
k the things you have Matt 6:8

and hour no one *k* Matt 24:36
k who the Son is Luke 10:22
 but God *k* your hearts Luke 16:15
 searches the hearts *k* Rom 8:27
k the things of God 1 Cor 2:11
 The LORD *k* the thoughts 1 Cor 3:20
k those who are His 2 Tim 2:19
 to him who *k* to do James 4:17
 and *k* all things 1 John 3:20
 written which no one *k* Rev 2:17

KORATH

Second son of Levi, Gen 46:8, 11
 Brother of Jochebed, mother of Aaron
 and Moses, Ex 6:16–20

KOHATHITES

Numbered, Num 3:27, 28
 Duties assigned to, Num 4:15–20
 Leaders of temple music, 1 Chr
 6:31–38; 2 Chr 20:19

KORAH

Leads rebellion against Moses and
 Aaron; supernaturally destroyed,
 Num 16:1–35
 Sons of, not destroyed, Num 26:9–11

LABAN

Son of Bethuel; brother of Rebekah;
 father of Leah and Rachel, Gen 24:15,
 24, 29; 29:16
 Agrees to Rebekah's marriage to Isaac,
 Gen 24:50, 51
 Entertains Jacob, Gen 29:1–14
 Substitutes Leah for Rachel, Gen
 29:15–30
 Agrees to division of cattle; grows re-
 sentful of Jacob, Gen 30:25–31:2
 Pursues Jacob and makes covenant
 with him, Gen 31:21–55

LABOR

Six days you shall *l* Ex 20:9
 why then do *l* Job 9:29
 their boast is only *l* Ps 90:10
 The *l* of the righteous Prov 10:16
l will increase Prov 13:11
l there is profit Prov 14:23
 things are full of *l* Eccl 1:8
 has man for all his *l* Eccl 2:22
 He shall see the *l* Is 53:11
 "Before she was in *l* Is 66:7
 from the womb to see *l* Jer 20:18
 to Me, all you who *l* Matt 11:28
 Do not *l* for the John 6:27
 knowing that your *l* 1 Cor 15:58
 but rather let him *l* Eph 4:28
 mean fruit from my *l* Phil 1:22
 your work of faith, *l* 1 Thess 1:3
 forget your work and *l* Heb 6:10
 your works, your *l* Rev 2:2

LABORED

l more abundantly than 1 Cor 15:10
 for you, lest *l* have *l* Gal 4:11

LABORERS

but the *l* are few Matt 9:37

LABORING

of a *l* man is sweet Eccl 5:12
l night and day 1 Thess 2:9

LABORS

The person who *l* Prov 16:26
 is no end to all his *l* Eccl 4:8
 entered into their *l* John 4:38
 creation groans and *l* Rom 8:23
l more abundant 2 Cor 11:23
 may rest from their *l* Rev 14:13

LACHISH

Defeated by Joshua, Josh 10:3–33
 Taken by Sennacherib, 2 Kin 18:13–17;
 Is 36:1, 2; 37:8

LACK

the city for *l* of five Gen 18:28
 gathered little had no *l* Ex 16:18
 'you shall not *l* a man on 1 Kin 2:4
 anyone perish for *l* Job 31:19
 the LORD shall not *l* Ps 34:10
 fools die for *l* of wisdom Prov 10:21
 for *l* of justice there is Prov 13:23
 to the poor will not *l* Prov 28:27
l a man to stand before Jer 35:19
 for *l* of knowledge Hos 4:6
 What do *l* still Matt 19:20
 "One thing you *l* Mark 10:21
 did you *l* anything Luke 22:35
 of your *l* of self-control 1 Cor 7:5
 may supply their *l* 2 Cor 8:14
 gathered little had no *l* 2 Cor 8:15

LACKED

among them who *l* Acts 4:34

LACKING

is *l* cannot be numbered Eccl 1:15
 to supply what was *l* in Phil 2:30
 the things that are *l* Titus 1:5
 and complete, *l* nothing James 1:4

LACKS

woman who *l* discretion Prov 11:22
 who *l* understanding Prov 28:16
 to that part which *l* 1 Cor 12:24
 If any of you *l* wisdom James 1:5
 he who *l* these things is 2 Pet 1:9

LAD

and gave the *l* a drink Gen 21:19
 lay your hand on the *l* Gen 22:12
 said, "The *l* is no more Gen 37:30
 "The *l* cannot leave his Gen 44:30
 As the *l* ran, he shot an 1 Sam 20:36
 "There is a *l* here who has John 6:9

LADDER

and behold, a *l* Gen 28:12

LADEN

nation, a people *l* Is 1:4
 and are heavy *l* Matt 11:28

LADIES

wisest *l* answered her Judg 5:29
 very day the noble *l* Esth 1:18

LADY

"*l* shall be a *l* Is 47:7
 To the elect *l* 2 John 1

LAGGING

not *l* in diligence Rom 12:11

LAHAI ROI

Name of a well, Gen 16:7, 14
 Same as Beer Lahai Roi, Gen 24:62

LAID

l him on the altar Gen 22:9
l up the food in the cities Gen 41:48
 and *l* it in the reeds by the Ex 2:3
l the staff on the face of 2 Kin 4:31
l the foundation of the Ezra 5:16
 But man dies and is *l* Job 14:10
 You *l* the foundation Ps 102:25
 He has *l* waste My vine Joel 1:7
 have *l* the foundation of Zech 4:9
 even now the ax is *l* to Matt 3:10
 the place where they *l* Mark 16:6
l Him in a manger Luke 2:7
l the foundation on the Luke 6:48
 "Where have you *l* John 11:34
l aside His garments John 13:4
 where You have *l* Him John 20:15
l it at the apostles' feet Acts 4:37
 and he *l* his hands on him Acts 28:8
 I have *l* the foundation 1 Cor 3:10
 He *l* down His life 1 John 3:16
 He *l* His right hand on me Rev 1:17

LAISH

Called Leshem, Josh 19:47; Judg 18:29
 Taken by Danites, Judg 18:7, 14, 27

LAKE

by the *L* of Gennesaret Luke 5:1
 to the other side of the *l* Luke 8:22
 cast alive into the *l* Rev 19:20

LAMB

but where is the *l* Gen 22:7
 a *l* for a household Ex 12:3
 and kill the Passover *l* Ex 12:21
 took the poor man's *l* 2 Sam 12:4
 shall dwell with the *l* Is 11:6
 He was led as a *l* Is 53:7
l shall feed together Is 65:25
 The *L* of God who takes John 1:29
 as a *l* before its shearer Acts 8:32
 of Christ, as of a *l* 1 Pet 1:19
 the elders, stood a *L* Rev 5:6
 "Worthy is the *L* Rev 5:12
 by the blood of the *L* Rev 12:11
 Book of Life of the *L* Rev 13:8
 supper of the *L* Rev 19:9

LAMB'S

the bride, the *L* wife Rev 21:9
 in the *L* Book of Life Rev 21:27

LAMBS

slaughtered the Passover *l* Ezra 6:20
 O little hills, like *l* Ps 114:6
 with the blood of *l* and Is 34:6
 gather the *l* with His arm Is 40:11
 out as *l* among wolves Luke 10:3
 "Feed My *l* John 21:15

LAME

l take the prey Is 33:23
l shall leap like a Is 35:6
 when you offer the *l* Mal 1:8
 blind see and the *l* Matt 11:5
 And a certain man *l* Acts 3:2
 so that what is *l* Heb 12:13

LAMECH

Son of Methushael, of Cain's race, Gen
 4:17, 18
 — Son of Methuselah; father of Noah,
 Gen 5:25–31

LAMENT

l the daughter of Judg 11:40
 king sang a *l* over Abner 2 Sam 3:33
 Her gates shall *l* and mourn Is 3:26
 "They shall not *l* for him, Jer 22:18
 they shall *l* for her Ezek 32:16
 to you, and you did not *l* Matt 11:17
 that you will weep and *l* John 16:20
l and mourn and weep James 4:9
l for her, when they see Rev 18:9

LAMENTATION

a great and very solemn *l* Gen 50:10
 with this *l* over Saul and 2 Sam 1:17
 was heard in Ramah, *l* Jer 31:15
l in the daughter of Judah Lam 2:5
 was heard in Ramah, *l* Matt 2:18
 and made great *l* Acts 8:2

LAMP

For You are my *l* 2 Sam 22:29
 "How often is the *l* Job 21:17
 You will light my *l* Ps 18:28
 Your word is a *l* Ps 119:105
 the *l* of the wicked Prov 13:9
 his *l* will be put out Prov 20:20
 Nor do they light a *l* Matt 5:15
 "The *l* of the body Matt 6:22
 when he has lit a *l* Luke 8:16
l gives you light Luke 11:36
 does not light a *l* Luke 15:8
 burning and shining *l* John 5:35
l shall not shine Rev 18:23
 They need no *l* nor Rev 22:5

LAMPS

he made its seven *l* Ex 37:23
 Jerusalem with *l* Zeph 1:12

and trimmed their *l* Matt 25:7
Seven *l* of fire Rev 4:5

LAMPSTAND

branches of the *l* Ex 25:32
and there is a *l* Zech 4:2
a basket, but on a *l* Matt 5:15
in which was the *l* Heb 9:2
and remove your *l* Rev 2:5

LAND

and let the dry *l* appear Gen 1:9
God called the dry *l* Earth Gen 1:10
dwelt in the *l* of Nod Gen 4:16
l that *I* will show you Gen 12:1
I will give this *l* Gen 12:7
was a famine in the *l* Gen 12:10
Is not the whole *l* before Gen 13:9
walk in the *l* through its Gen 13:17
I have given this *l* Gen 15:18
arise, get out of this *l* Gen 31:13
the best of the *l* of Egypt Gen 45:18
dwell in the *l* of Goshen Gen 46:34
a stranger in a foreign *l* Ex 2:22
l flowing with milk Ex 3:8
to a *l* flowing with milk and Ex 3:17
the *l* of their pilgrimage Ex 6:4
firstborn in the *l* of Egypt Ex 12:12
and the *l* vomits out its Lev 18:25
for the *l* is Mine Lev 25:23
I will give peace in the *l* Lev 26:6
And all the tithe of the *l* Lev 27:30
spy out the *l* of Canaan Num 13:17
evil report about the *l* Num 14:37
l is subdued before the Num 32:22
possess the good *l* Deut 6:18
a *l* of wheat and barley Deut 8:8
He will bless you in the *l* Deut 28:8
the produce of your *l* Deut 28:51
l which *I* am giving Josh 1:2
to go in to possess the *l* Josh 1:11
Joshua took the whole *l* Josh 11:23
Joshua divided the *l* Josh 18:10
to return to the *l* of Judah Ruth 1:7
sold the piece of *l* which Ruth 4:3
spiritists from the *l* 1 Sam 28:9
In the *l* of the living Ps 27:13
dwell in the *l*, and feed on Ps 37:3
turned the sea into dry *l* Ps 66:6
in the *l* of forgetfulness Ps 88:12
l was polluted with blood Ps 106:38
dry *l* into watersprings Ps 107:35
for You like a thirsty *l* Ps 143:6
is heard in our *l* Song 2:12
they will see the *l* Is 33:17
a *l* of grain and new wine Is 36:17
and your *l* shall be married Is 62:4
Bethlehem, in the *l* Matt 2:6
put out a little from the *l* Luke 5:3
price of the *l* for yourself Acts 5:3
and his left foot on the *l* Rev 10:2

LAND OF THE LIVING

nor is it found in the *l* Job 28:13
of the LORD in the *l* Ps 27:13
uproot you from the *l* Ps 52:5
before the LORD in the *l* Ps 116:9
my portion in the *l* Ps 142:5
the LORD in the *l* Is 38:11
cut off from the *l* Is 53:8
establish glory in the *l* Ezek 26:20

LANDMARK

your neighbor's *l* Deut 19:14
remove the ancient *l* Prov 22:28
those who remove a *l* Hos 5:10

LANDS

We have mortgaged our *l* Neh 5:3
to scatter them in the *l* Ps 106:27
or wife or children or *l* Matt 19:29
of *l* or houses sold them Acts 4:34

LANGUAGE

whole earth had one *l* Gen 11:1
there confuse their *l* Gen 11:7

is no speech nor *l* Ps 19:3
a people of strange *l* Ps 114:1
the peoples a pure *l* Zeph 3:9
speak in his own *l* Acts 2:6
blasphemy, filthy *l* Col 3:8

LANGUAGES

according to their *l* Gen 10:20
be, so many kinds of *l* 1 Cor 14:10

LAODICEA

Paul's concern for, Col 2:1; 4:12–16
Letter to church of, Rev 3:14–22

LAST

See FIRST AND THE LAST

He shall stand at *l* Job 19:25
First and *I* am the *L* Is 44:6
I man the same as Matt 20:14
I will be first Matt 20:16
are first who will be *l* Luke 13:30
raise him up at the *l* day John 6:40
On the *l* day, that great John 7:37
come to pass in the *l* days Acts 2:17
The *l* enemy that will be 1 Cor 15:26
eye, at the *l* trumpet 1 Cor 15:52
has in these *l* days spoken Heb 1:2
children, it is the *l* 1 John 2:18
the First and the *L* Rev 1:11
I are more than the first Rev 2:19

LAST DAY

raise it up at the *l* John 6:39
the resurrection at the *l* John 11:24
will judge him in the *l* John 12:48

LAST DAYS

shall befall you in the *l* Gen 49:1
come to pass in the *l* Acts 2:17
in the *l* perilous times 2 Tim 3:1
these *l* spoken to us Heb 1:2
up treasure in the *l* James 5:3
will come in the *l* 2 Pet 3:3

LATE

to rise up early, to sit up *l* Ps 127:2
and already the hour is *l* Mark 6:35
l autumn trees without Jude 12
as a fig tree drops its *l* Rev 6:13

LATIN

in Hebrew, Greek, and *L* John 19:20

LATTER

people in the *l* days Dan 10:14
former rain, and the *l* Joel 2:23
The glory of this *l* temple Hag 2:9
l times some will 1 Tim 4:1
the early and *l* rain James 5:7
l end is worse for them 2 Pet 2:20

LATTICE

I looked through my *l* Prov 7:6
gazing through the *l* Song 2:9

LAUGH

Why did Sarah *l* Gen 18:13
"God has made me *l* Gen 21:6
sits in the heavens shall *l* Ps 2:4
You, O LORD, shall *l* Ps 59:8
to weep, and a time to *l* Eccl 3:4
Woe to you who *l* Luke 6:25

LAUGHS

he *l* at the threat of Job 41:29
The Lord *l* at him Ps 37:13

LAUGHTER

was filled with *l* Ps 126:2
your *l* be turned to James 4:9

LAUNDERER

such as no *l* on earth can Mark 9:3

LAVER

also make a *l* of bronze Ex 30:18
l contained forty baths 1 Kin 7:38

LAW

See ACCORDING TO THE LAW; BOOK
OF THE LAW; UNDER THE LAW;
WORKS OF THE LAW

stones a copy of the *l* Josh 8:32
When He made a *l* Job 28:26
The *l* of the LORD is Ps 19:7
The *l* of his God is in Ps 37:31
I delight in Your *l* Ps 119:70
The *l* of Your mouth is Ps 119:72
l is my delight Ps 119:77
Oh, how *I* love Your *l* Ps 119:97
And Your *l* is truth Ps 119:142
and the *l* a light Prov 6:23
is he who keeps the *l* Prov 29:18
shall go forth the *l* Is 2:3
l will proceed from Me Is 51:4
in whose heart is My *l* Is 51:7
the *L* is no more Lam 2:9
The *l* of truth was in Mal 2:6
to destroy the *L* Matt 5:17
for this is the *L* Matt 7:12
l prophesied until John Matt 11:13
hang all the *L* and the Matt 22:40
one tithe of the *l* to fail Luke 16:17
l was given through John 1:17
"Does our *l* judge a John 7:51
a teacher of the *l* held in Acts 5:34
and keep the *l* Acts 15:24
are all zealous for the *l* Acts 21:20
man according to the *l* Acts 22:12
l is the knowledge Rom 3:20
By what *l*? Of works? Rom 3:27
because the *l* brings Rom 4:15
when there is no *l* Rom 5:13
you are not under *l* Rom 6:14
have become dead to the *l* Rom 7:4
Is the *l* sin Rom 7:7
For we know that the *l* Rom 7:14
warring against the *l* Rom 7:23
For the *l* of the Spirit of Rom 8:2
For what the *l* could Rom 8:3
A wife is bound by *l* as 1 Cor 7:39
who are without *l* 1 Cor 9:21
strength of sin is the *l* 1 Cor 15:56
l that *I* might live Gal 2:19
Spirit by the works of the *l* Gal 3:2
under guard by the *l* Gal 3:23
the *l* was our tutor Gal 3:24
born under the *l* Gal 4:4
l is fulfilled in one Gal 5:14
and so fulfill the *l* of Christ Gal 6:2
concerning the *l*, a Pharisee Phil 3:5
to be teachers of the *l* 1 Tim 1:7
l is not made for a 1 Tim 1:9
and strivings about the *l* Titus 3:9
into the perfect *l* James 1:25
fulfill the royal *l* James 2:8

LAW AND THE PROPHETS

them, for this is the *L* Matt 7:12
hang all the *L* Matt 22:40
The *l* were until John Luke 16:16
being witnessed by the *L* Rom 3:21

LAW OF MOSES

the stones a copy of the *l* Josh 8:32
a skilled scribe in the *L* Ezra 7:6
bring the Book of the *L* Neh 8:1
oath written in the *L* Dan 9:11
the *L*, My servant Mal 4:4
according to the *l* Luke 2:22
were written in the *L* Luke 24:44
Sabbath, so that the *l* John 7:23
not be justified by the *l* Acts 13:39
them to keep the *l* Acts 15:5

LAW OF THE LORD

that you may keep the *l* 1 Chr 22:12
that he forsook the *l* 2 Chr 12:1
themselves to the *L* 2 Chr 31:4
his heart to seek the *L* Ezra 7:10
his delight is in the *l* Ps 1:2
l is perfect, converting Ps 19:7
way, who walk in the *l* Ps 119:1
they have rejected the *l* Is 5:24
who will not hear the *l* Is 30:9
'We are wise, and the *l* Jer 8:8

they have despised the *l* Amos 2:4
things according to the *l* Luke 2:39

LAWFUL

doing what is not *l* Matt 12:2
Is it *l* to pay taxes Matt 22:17
All things are *l* 1 Cor 6:12

LAWGIVER

Judah is My *l* Ps 60:7
the LORD is our *L* Is 33:22
There is one *L* James 4:12

LAWLESS

l one will be revealed 2 Thess 2:8
and hearing their *l* 2 Pet 2:8

LAWLESSNESS

Me, you who practice *l* Matt 7:23
l is already at work 2 Thess 2:7
and hated *l* Heb 1:9
and sin is *l* 1 John 3:4

LAWYERS

l rejected the will of Luke 7:30
Wee to you also, *l* Luke 11:46

LAY

l it on the wood, but put 1 Kin 18:23
l *l* down and slept Ps 3:5
l will *l* your stones with Is 54:11
Do not *l* up for yourselves Matt 6:19
nowhere to *l* His head Matt 8:20
l have power to *l* it down John 10:18
Will you *l* down your life John 13:38
l hands may receive Acts 8:19
Do not *l* hands on 1 Tim 5:22
let us *l* aside every weight, Heb 12:1
l aside all filthiness James 1:21
"Behold, *l* *l* in Zion a chief 1 Pet 2:6

LAYING

l on of the apostles' hands Acts 8:18
the *l* on of my hands 2 Tim 1:6
not *l* again the foundation Heb 6:1
of *l* on of hands, of Heb 6:2
l aside all malice, all deceit 1 Pet 2:1

LAYS

'God *l* up one's iniquity Job 21:19
He *l* up the deep in Ps 33:7
He *l* the beams of His Ps 104:3
which the LORD *l* on him Is 30:32
l the foundation of the Zech 12:1
he who *l* up treasure Luke 12:21
he *l* it on his shoulders, Luke 15:5

LAZARUS

Beggar described in a parable, Luke
16:20-25
— Brother of Mary and Martha;
raised from the dead, John 11:1-44
Attends a supper, John 12:1, 2
Jews seek to kill, John 12:9-11

LAZINESS

L casts one into a Prov 19:15
l the building decays Eccl 10:18

LAZY

l man will be put to Prov 12:24
l man does not roast Prov 12:27
soul of a *l* man desires Prov 13:4
l man buries his hand Prov 19:24
by the field of the *l* Prov 24:30
l man is wiser in his Prov 26:16
wicked and *l* servant Matt 25:26
liars, evil beasts, *l* Titus 1:12

LEAD

pillar of cloud to *l* the way Ex 13:21
they sank like *l* Ex 15:10
L me in Your truth and Ps 25:5
And *l* me in a smooth path Ps 27:11
L me and guide me Ps 31:3
L me to the rock that is Ps 61:2
Your hand shall *l* Ps 139:10
a little child shall *l* them Is 11:6
l will *l* them in paths they Is 42:16

l is consumed by the fire Jer 6:29
bronze, tin, iron, and *l* Ezek 22:18
tin, and *l* for your goods Ezek 27:12
threw the *l* cover over its Zech 5:8
And do not *l* us into Matt 6:13
"Can the blind *l* Luke 6:39
not *l* us into temptation Luke 11:4
someone to *l* him by the Acts 13:11
aspire to *l* a quiet life 1 Thess 4:11
that we may *l* a quiet and 1 Tim 2:2
to *l* them out of the land of Heb 8:9
sin which does not *l* to 1 John 5:16
l them to living fountains Rev 7:17

LEADING

l men among the Acts 15:22
not a few of the *l* women Acts 17:4
of lawlessness *l* to more Rom 6:19
his good, *l* to edification Rom 15:2
sin not *l* to death 1 John 5:16

LEADS

He *l* me beside the Ps 23:2
He *l* me in the paths Ps 23:3
And if the blind *l* Matt 15:14
by name and *l* them out John 10:3
the goodness of God *l* Rom 2:4

LEAF

plucked olive *l* Gen 8:11
Will You frighten a *l* Job 13:25
l will be green Jer 17:8

LEAH

Laban's eldest daughter; given to Jacob
deceitfully, Gen 29:16-27
Unloved by Jacob, but bears children,
Gen 29:30-35; 30:16-21

LEAN

all your heart, and *l* Prov 3:5
Yet they *l* on the LORD Mic 3:11

LEANING

Then, *l* back on Jesus' John 13:25
l on the top of his Heb 11:21

LEANNESS

request, but sent *l* Ps 106:15
of hosts, will send *l* Is 10:16

LEAP

by my God *l* can *l* Ps 18:29
Then the lame shall *l* Is 35:6

LEAPED

the rams which *l* upon Gen 31:10
they *l* about the altar 1 Kin 18:26
the babe *l* in her womb Luke 1:41
and he *l* and walked Acts 14:10

LEAPING

saw King David *l* 2 Sam 6:16
walking, *l*, and praising Acts 3:8

LEARN

it, may hear and *l* Deut 31:13
l Your statutes Ps 119:71
lest you *l* his ways Prov 22:25
l to do good Is 1:17
neither shall they *l* Is 2:4
My yoke upon you and *l* Matt 11:29
Let a woman *l* in 1 Tim 2:11
let our people also *l* Titus 3:14
no one could *l* that song Rev 14:3

LEARNED

Me the tongue of the *l* Is 50:4
who has heard and *l* John 6:45
have not so *l* Christ Eph 4:20
in all things *l* have *l* Phil 4:12
l obedience by the Heb 5:8

LEARNING

hear and increase *l* Prov 1:5
l is driving you mad Acts 26:24
were written for our *l* Rom 15:4

LEAST

Judah, are not the *l* Matt 2:6

so, shall be called *l* Matt 5:19
For *l* am the *l* of the 1 Cor 15:9

LEATHER

everything made of *l* Num 31:20
wearing a *l* belt around 2 Kin 1:8
with a *l* belt around his Mark 1:6

LEAVE

a man shall *l* his Gen 2:24
He will not *l* you nor Deut 31:6
For You will not *l* Ps 16:10
do not *l* me nor Ps 27:9
"I will never *l* Heb 13:5

LEAVEN

day you shall remove *l* Ex 12:15
of heaven is like *l* Matt 13:33
and beware of the *l* Matt 16:6
know that a little *l* 1 Cor 5:6
l leavens the whole Gal 5:9

LEAVENED

For whoever eats *l* bread Ex 12:15
shall eat no *l* bread with Deut 16:3
of meal till it was all *l* Matt 13:33

LEAVES

and they sewed fig *l* Gen 3:7
nothing on it but *l* Matt 21:19
l the sheep and flees John 10:12
The *l* of the tree Rev 22:2

LEBANON

Part of Israel's inheritance, Josh
13:5-7
Not completely conquered, Judg
3:1-3
Source of materials for temple, 1 Kin
5:2-18; Ezra 3:7
Mentioned in prophecy, Is 10:34; 29:17;
35:2; Ezek 17:3; Hos 14:5-7

LEBBAEUS

See JUDAS
Surname of Judas (Jude), Matt 10:3

LEBONAH

Town north of Shiloh, Judg 21:19

LED

l the people around by Ex 13:18
l have *l* you forty years in Deut 29:5
so the LORD alone *l* Deut 32:12
have *l* captivity captive Ps 68:18
l them forth by the Ps 107:7
He was *l* as a lamb to the Is 53:7
and be *l* out with peace Is 55:12
l them by the right Is 63:12
have *l* them astray Jer 50:6
Then Jesus was *l* up by the Matt 4:1
l Him out to crucify Mark 15:20
"He was *l* as a sheep to Acts 8:32
For as many as are *l* Rom 8:14
sorrow *l* to repentance 2 Cor 7:9
if you are *l* by the Spirit Gal 5:18
l captivity captive Eph 4:8
l away by various 2 Tim 3:6

LEFT

Lie also on your *l* side Ezek 4:4
l hand know what your Matt 6:3
"See, we have *l* Matt 19:27
And everyone who has *l* Matt 19:29
on My *l* is not Mine to Mark 10:40
right hand and on the *l* 2 Cor 6:7

LEGACY

shame shall be the *l* Prov 3:35

LEGION

"My name is *L* Mark 5:9
"*L*," because many Luke 8:30

LEGIONS

twelve *l* of angels Matt 26:53

LEGS

Like the *l* of the lame Prov 26:7
l are pillars of Song 5:15
did not break His *l* John 19:33

LEHI

Samson kills Philistines at, Judg
15:9-19

LEMUEL

King taught by his mother, Prov
31:1-31

LEND

"If you *l* money to Ex 22:25
l him sufficient Deut 15:8
And if you *l* to those Luke 6:34
l me three loaves Luke 11:5

LENDER

is servant to the *l* Prov 22:7
as with the *l* Is 24:2

LENDING

and my servants, am *l* Neh 5:10

LENDs

ever merciful, and *l* Ps 37:26
deals graciously and *l* Ps 112:5
has pity on the poor *l* Prov 19:17

LENGTH

The *l* of the ark shall Gen 6:15
is your life and the *l* Deut 30:20
l of days is in her Prov 3:16
l is as great as its Rev 21:16

LENGTHENS

a shadow when it *l* Ps 109:23

LEOPARD

the *l* shall lie down Is 11:6
or the *l* its spots Jer 13:23

LEPER

put out of the camp every *l* Num 5:2
and there she was, a *l* Num 12:10
King Uzziah was a *l* 2 Chr 26:21
l came and worshiped Matt 8:2
house of Simon the *l* Mark 14:3

LEPERS

And when these *l* 2 Kin 7:8
the sick, cleanse the *l* Matt 10:8
And many *l* were in Luke 4:27
ten men who were *l* Luke 17:12

LEPROSY

This is the law of *l* Lev 14:57
he would heal him of his *l* 2 Kin 5:3
l broke out on his 2 Chr 26:19
immediately the *l* left him Luke 5:13

LEPROUS

out, behold, his hand was *l* Ex 4:6
Miriam became *l* Num 12:10
out from his presence *l* 2 Kin 5:27
his forehead, he was *l* 2 Chr 26:20

LET

"*L* there be light" Gen 1:3
L the little children Matt 19:14

LETTER

they delivered the *l* Acts 15:30
the Spirit, and not in the *l* Rom 2:29
the oldness of the *l* Rom 7:6
for the *l* kills 2 Cor 3:6
you sorry with my *l* 2 Cor 7:8
or by word or by *l* 2 Thess 2:2

LETTERS

does this Man know *l* John 7:15
or *l* of commendation 2 Cor 3:1
"For his *l*" they say 2 Cor 10:10
with what large *l* Gal 6:11

LEVI

Third son of Jacob and Leah, Gen 29:34
Avenges rape of Dinah, Gen 34:25-31
Jacob's prophecy concerning, Gen
49:5-7
Ancestor of Moses and Aaron, Ex
6:16-27

LEVIATHAN

"Can you draw out *L* Job 41:1
L which You have made Ps 104:26

LEVITE

"Is not Aaron the *L* Ex 4:14
Likewise a *L*, when he Luke 10:32
a *L* of the country of Acts 4:36

LEVITES

Rewarded for dedication, Ex 32:26-29
Appointed over tabernacle, Num
1:47-54
Substituted for Israel's firstborn, Num
3:12-45
Consecrated to the Lord's service, Num
8:5-26
Cities assigned to, Num 35:2-8; Josh
14:3, 4; 1 Chr 6:54-81
Organized for temple service, 1 Chr
9:14-34; 23:1-26:28

LEVITICAL

were through the *L* Heb 7:11

LEWDNESS

wickedness, deceit, *l* Mark 7:22
drunkenness, not in *l* Rom 13:13
themselves over to *l* Eph 4:19
when we walked in *l* 1 Pet 4:3

LIAR

a *l* listens eagerly to a Prov 17:4
for he is a *l* and the John 8:44
but every man a *l* Rom 3:4
we make Him a *l* 1 John 1:10
Who is a *l* but he who 1 John 2:22
his brother, he is a *l* 1 John 4:20
God has made Him a *l* 1 John 5:10

LIARS

"All men are *l* Ps 116:11
Cretans are always *l* Titus 1:12
and have found them *l* Rev 2:2
l shall have their Rev 21:8

LIBERALITY

he who gives, with *l* Rom 12:8
the riches of their *l* 2 Cor 8:2

LIBERALLY

who gives to all *l* James 1:5

LIBERTY

year, and proclaim *l* Lev 25:10
And *l* will walk at *l* Ps 119:45
to proclaim *l* to the Is 61:1
to proclaim *l* to the Luke 4:18
into the glorious *l* Rom 8:21
For why is my *l* 1 Cor 10:29
Lord is, there is *l* 2 Cor 3:17
therefore in the *l* Gal 5:1
l as an opportunity Gal 5:13
the perfect law of *l* James 1:25
yet not using *l* 1 Pet 2:16

LIBNAH

Canaanite city, captured by Joshua,
Josh 10:29, 30
Given to Aaron's descendants, Josh
21:13

LIBYA

Mentioned in prophecy, Ezek 30:5; Dan
11:43
Jews from, present at Pentecost, Acts
2:1-10

LICE

so that it may become *l* Ex 8:16
and *l* in all their territory Ps 105:31

LIE

man, that He should *l* Num 23:19
to Samuel, "Go, *l* down 1 Sam 3:9
For now *l* will *l* Job 7:21
l will not *l* to David Ps 89:35
forged a *l* against me Ps 119:69
leopard shall *l* down with Is 11:6
prophecy a *l* to you in My Jer 29:21
heart to *l* to the Holy Spirit Acts 5:3
Do not *l* to one Col 3:9
God, who cannot *l* Titus 1:2

do not boast and *l* James 3:14
know it, and that no *l* 1 John 2:21
an abomination or a *l* Rev 21:27

LIED

They have *l* about the Jer 5:12
You have not *l* to men Acts 5:4

LIES

sin *l* at the door Gen 4:7
not say, "Here *l* Jezebel 2 Kin 9:37
He *l* in wait secretly Ps 10:9
speak *l* shall be stopped Ps 63:11
and he who speaks *l* Prov 19:5
She also *l* in wait as for Prov 23:28
prophecy *l* in My name Jer 14:14
they shall speak *l* at the Dan 11:27
l in the name of the LORD Zech 13:3
speaking *l* in hypocrisy 1 Tim 4:2
and the whole world *l* 1 John 5:19

LIFE

See ALL THE DAYS OF HIS LIFE; BOOK
OF LIFE; BREATH OF LIFE; ETERNAL
LIFE; EVERLASTING LIFE; TREE OF
LIFE; WATER OF LIFE
the breath of *l* Gen 2:7
l was also in the Gen 2:9
l will require the *l* of man Gen 9:5
then you shall give *l* Ex 21:23
For the *l* of the Lev 17:11
before you today *l* Deut 30:15
You have granted me *l* Job 10:12
in whose hand is the *l* Job 12:10
God takes away his *l* Job 27:8
with the light of *l* Job 33:30
He will redeem their *l* Ps 72:14
word has given me *l* Ps 119:50
blessing—*L* forevermore Ps 133:3
regain the paths of *l* Prov 2:19
She is a tree of *l* Prov 3:18
so they will be *l* Prov 3:22
finds me finds *l* Prov 8:35
the *l* of his animal Prov 12:10
LORD is a fountain of *l* Prov 14:27
l winds upward for the Prov 15:24
thief hates his own *l* Prov 29:24
is that wisdom gives *l* Eccl 7:12
l have cut off my *l* Is 38:12
you the way of *l* Jer 21:8
l shall be as a prize Jer 39:18
not worry about your *l* Matt 6:25
l does not consist Luke 12:15
L is more than food Luke 12:23
l was the light John 1:4
so the Son gives *l* John 5:21
as the Father has *l* John 5:26
spirit, and they are *l* John 6:63
have the light of *l* John 8:12
and *l* lay down My *l* John 10:15
resurrection and the *l* John 11:25
you lay down your *l* John 13:38
God, who gives *l* Rom 4:17
that pertain to this *l* 1 Cor 6:3
Lord Jesus, that the *l* 2 Cor 4:10
l which *l* now live Gal 2:20
l is hidden with Col 3:3
of God who gives *l* 1 Tim 6:13
For what is your *l* James 4:14
that pertain to *l* 2 Pet 1:3
l was manifested 1 John 1:2
and the pride of *l* 1 John 2:16
has given us eternal *l* 1 John 5:11
who has the Son has *l* 1 John 5:12
the Lamb's Book of *L* Rev 21:27
right to the tree of *l* Rev 22:14
the water of *l* freely Rev 22:17
from the Book of *L* Rev 22:19

LIFT

"*L* your eyes now and Gen 13:14
l up His countenance Num 6:26
L up your heads Ps 24:7
l will *l* up my hands Ps 63:4

I will *l* up my eyes to Ps 121:1
l up your voice like a Is 58:1
l up a banner for the Is 62:10
l our hearts and hands Lam 3:41
Nation shall not *l* up sword Mic 4:3
Lord, and He will *l* James 4:10

LIFTED

l up the ark, and it rose Gen 7:17
Then Abraham *l* his eyes Gen 22:13
Esau *l* up his voice and Gen 27:38
he *l* up the rod and struck Ex 7:20
when your heart is *l* up Deut 8:14
O LORD, for You have *l* Ps 30:1
l up his heel against me Ps 41:9
your heart is *l* up Ezek 28:2
l like a banner over His Zech 9:16
He *l* up His eyes toward Luke 6:20
in Hades, he *l* up his Luke 16:23
l up His hands and Luke 24:50
the Son of Man be *l* John 3:14
And I, if I am *l* John 12:32
of Man must be *l* John 12:34
l up his heel against Me John 13:18
l up His eyes to heaven John 17:1

LIFTING

while *l* up their hands Neh 8:6
The *l* up of my hands as Ps 141:2
l up holy hands, without 1 Tim 2:8

LIFTS

He brings low and *l* up 1 Sam 2:7
the One who *l* up my head Ps 3:3
The LORD *l* up the humble Ps 147:6

LIGAMENTS

together by joints and *l* Col 2:19

LIGHT

"Let there be *l* Gen 1:3
God called the *l* Day Gen 1:5
had *l* in their dwellings Ex 10:23
pillar of fire to give them *l* Ex 13:21
of pressed olives for the *l* Ex 27:20
he shall be like the *l* of 2 Sam 23:4
by night, to show them *l* Neh 9:19
"The *l* of the wicked Job 18:5
l will shine on your Job 22:28
the wicked their *l* Job 38:15
to the dwelling of *l* Job 38:19
LORD, lift up the *l* Ps 4:6
For You will *l* my lamp Ps 18:28
The LORD is my *l* Ps 27:1
Oh, send out Your *l* Ps 43:3
L is sown for the Ps 97:11
and He has given us *l* Ps 118:27
and a *l* to my path Ps 119:105
Him, all you stars of *l* Ps 148:3
The *l* of the righteous Prov 13:9
The *l* of the eyes Prov 15:30
The LORD gives *l* Prov 29:13
Truly the *l* is sweet Eccl 11:7
let us walk in the *l* Is 2:5
l is darkened by the Is 5:30
because there is no *l* Is 8:20
moon will be as the *l* Is 30:26
darkness *l* before them Is 42:16
l shall break forth Is 58:8
for your *l* has come Is 60:1
shall come to your *l* Is 60:3
be your everlasting *l* Is 60:20
gives the sun for a *l* Jer 31:35
moon shall not give her *l* Ezek 32:7
like *l* that goes forth Hos 6:5
have seen a great *l* Matt 4:16
"You are the *l* Matt 5:14
Let your *l* so shine Matt 5:16
body will be full of *l* Matt 6:22
moon will not give its *l* Matt 24:29
take heed that the *l* Luke 11:35
than the sons of *l* Luke 16:8
and the life was the *l* John 1:4
That was the true *L* John 1:9
darkness rather than *l* John 3:19

evil hates the *l* John 3:20
truth comes to the *l* John 3:21
saying, "I am the *l* John 8:12
believe in the *l* John 12:36
I have come as a *l* John 12:46
to *l* the hidden things 1 Cor 4:5
God who commanded *l* 2 Cor 4:6
Walk as children of *l* Eph 5:8
You are all sons of *l* 1 Thess 5:5
and immortality to *l* 2 Tim 1:10
into His marvelous *l* 1 Pet 2:9
do well to heed as a *l* 2 Pet 1:19
to you, that God is *l* 1 John 1:5
l as He is in the 1 John 1:7
says he is in the *l* 1 John 2:9
l of a lamp shall not Rev 18:23
The Lamb is its *l* Rev 21:23
LORD God gives them *l* Rev 22:5

LIGHTEN

L the yoke which 1 Kin 12:9
the sea, to *l* the load Jon 1:5

LIGHTLY

this, did I do it *l* 2 Cor 1:17

LIGHTNING

For as the *l* comes Matt 24:27
countenance was like *l* Matt 28:3
saw Satan fall like *l* Luke 10:18

LIGHTNINGS

were thunderings and *l* Ex 19:16
the *l* lit up the world Ps 77:18
l light the world Ps 97:4
the throne proceeded *l* Rev 4:5

LIGHTS

"Let there be *l* Gen 1:14
when Aaron *l* the lamps at Ex 30:8
Him who made great *l* Ps 136:7
whom you shine as *l* Phil 2:15
from the Father of *l* James 1:17

LIKE

"Who is *l* You Ex 15:11
L a lily among thorns Song 2:2
be made *l* His brethren Heb 2:17

LIKE-MINDED

grant you to be *l* Rom 15:5
For I have no one *l* Phil 2:20

LIKEN

To whom will you *l* Me Is 46:5
shall *l* *l* this generation Matt 11:16
shall *l* *l* the kingdom Luke 13:20

LIKENESS

according to Our *l* Gen 1:26
carved image—any *l* Ex 20:4
when *l* awake in Your *l* Ps 17:15
in the *l* of His death Rom 6:5
His own Son in the *l* Rom 8:3
and coming in the *l* Phil 2:7

LILIES

were in the shape of *l* 1 Kin 7:22
his lips are *l*, dripping Song 5:13
feeds his flock among the *l* Song 6:3
the *l*, how they grow Luke 12:27

LILY

the *l* of the valleys Song 2:1
Like a *l* among thorns Song 2:2
shall grow like the *l* Hos 14:5

LIMIT

Do you *l* wisdom to Job 15:8
to the sea its *l* Prov 8:29

LIMITED

l the Holy One of Ps 78:41

LINE

l has gone out through Ps 19:4
upon precept, *l* upon *l* Is 28:10
I am setting a plumb *l* Amos 7:8

LINEAGE

was of the house and *l* Luke 2:4

LINEN

him in garments of fine *l* Gen 41:42
artistically woven of fine *l* Ex 39:27
shall put on his *l* garment Lev 6:10
with the *l* turban he shall Lev 16:4
take off the *l* garments Lev 16:23
child, wearing a *l* ephod 1 Sam 2:18
David also wore a *l* 1 Chr 15:27
her clothing is fine *l* Prov 31:22
get yourself a *l* sash Jer 13:1
to the man clothed with *l* Ezek 9:3
heard the man clothed in *l* Dan 12:7
wrapped it in a clean *l* Matt 27:59
wrapped Him in the *l* Mark 15:46
in purple and fine *l* Luke 16:19
strips of *l* with the spices John 19:40
saw the *l* cloths lying John 20:5
that was clothed in fine *l* Rev 18:16
l is the righteous Rev 19:8

LINGER

Those who *l* long at Prov 23:30
salvation shall not *l* Is 46:13

LINGERED

the Boy Jesus *l* behind Luke 2:43

LINTEL

on the *l* of the houses Ex 12:7
the *l* and doorposts were 1 Kin 6:31

LION

he lies down as a *l* Gen 49:9
he tore the *l* apart as one Judg 14:6
when a *l* or a bear 1 Sam 17:34
is like the heart of a *l* 2 Sam 17:10
l standing by the corpse 1 Kin 13:28
Killed a *l* in the midst 1 Chr 11:22
like a fierce *l* Job 10:16
l shall eat straw Is 11:7
face of a *l* on the right Ezek 1:10
the third the face of a *l* Ezek 10:14
the face of a young *l* Ezek 41:19
For *l* will be like a *l* Hos 5:14
about like a roaring *l* 1 Pet 5:8
living creature was like a *l* Rev 4:7
the *L* of the tribe of Judah Rev 5:5

LION'S

Judah is a *l* whelp Gen 49:9

LIONS

Twelve *l* stood there 1 Kin 10:20
My soul is among *l* Ps 57:4
be cast into the den of *l* Dan 6:7
the mouths of *l* Heb 11:33
were like the heads of *l* Rev 9:17

LIPS

of uncircumcised *l* Ex 6:12
off all flattering *l* Ps 12:3
Let the lying *l* Ps 31:18
The *l* of the righteous Prov 10:21
but the *l* of knowledge Prov 20:15
am a man of unclean *l* Is 6:5
with stammering *l* and Is 28:11
I create the fruit of the *l* Is 57:19
offer the sacrifices of our *l* Hos 14:2
honors Me with their *l* Mark 7:6
asps is under their *l* Rom 3:13
other *l* I will speak 1 Cor 14:21
that is, the fruit of our *l* Heb 13:15
from evil, and his *l* 1 Pet 3:10

LISTEN

L now to my voice Ex 18:19
would not *l* to Balaam Deut 23:5
not *l* to their judges Judg 2:17
But do not *l* to Hezekiah 2 Kin 18:32
L carefully to Me Is 55:2
O LORD, *l* and act Dan 9:19
"Behold, a sower went Mark 4:3
you are not able to *l* John 8:43
Why do you *l* to Him John 10:20
you who fear God, *l* Acts 13:16

LISTENED

God *l* to Leah, and she Gen 30:17

the LORD *l* to the voice of . . . Num 21:3
 But the LORD *l* to me . . . Deut 9:19
l to the voice of Manoah . . . Judg 13:9
 and the LORD *l* to him . . . 2 Kin 13:4
 the LORD *l* to Hezekiah . . . 2 Chr 30:20
 Yet you have not *l* to Me . . . Jer 25:7
 "Men, you should have *l* . . . Acts 27:21

LISTENS

but whoever *l* to me . . . Prov 1:33

LITTLE

l foxes that spoil the . . . Song 2:15
 We have a *l* sister . . . Song 8:8
 upon line, here a *l* . . . Is 28:10
 though you are *l* . . . Mic 5:2
 indeed it came to *l* . . . Hag 1:9
 for I was a *l* angry . . . Zech 1:15
l ones only a cup . . . Luke 10:42
 "O you of *l* faith . . . Matt 14:31
 Whoever receives one *l* . . . Matt 18:5
 to whom *l* is forgiven . . . Luke 7:47
 "Let the *l* children come . . . Luke 18:16
 faithful in a very *l* . . . Luke 19:17
 gathered *l* had no lack . . . 2 Cor 8:15
l leaven leavens the whole . . . Gal 5:9
 exercise profits a *l* . . . 1 Tim 4:8
 made him a *l* lower than . . . Heb 2:7
 "For yet a *l* while . . . Heb 10:37
 the tongue is a *l* member . . . James 3:5
L children, keep . . . 1 John 5:21
 "Give me the *l* book . . . Rev 10:9

LITTLE CHILDREN

converted and become as *l* . . . Matt 18:3
l were brought to Him . . . Matt 19:13
 receives one of these *l* . . . Mark 9:37
 "Let the *l* come to Me. . . Mark 10:14
L, I shall be with you . . . John 13:33
 My *l*, for whom I labor . . . Gal 4:19
l, these things I write . . . 1 John 2:1
 I write to you, *l* . . . 1 John 2:12
 now, *l*, abide in Him. . . 1 John 2:28
L, let no one deceive . . . 1 John 3:7
 You are of God, *l* . . . 1 John 4:4
L, keep yourselves from . . . 1 John 5:21

LIVE

eat, and *l* forever . . . Gen 3:22
 a man does, he shall *l* . . . Lev 18:5
 I would not *l* forever . . . Job 7:16
L joyfully with the . . . Eccl 9:9
 by these things men *l* . . . Is 38:16
 sin, he shall surely *l* . . . Ezek 3:21
 "Seek Me and *l* . . . Amos 5:4
 but the just shall *l* . . . Hab 2:4
l by bread alone . . . Matt 4:4
 who feeds on Me will *l* . . . John 6:57
 Because I *l*, you will *l* . . . John 14:19
 for in Him we *l* . . . Acts 17:28
 those who *l* according to . . . Rom 8:5
l peaceably with all . . . Rom 12:18
 should *l* from the gospel . . . 1 Cor 9:14
 as dying, and behold we *l* . . . 2 Cor 6:9
l in the manner of Gentiles . . . Gal 2:14
 the life which I now *l* . . . Gal 2:20
 "the just shall *l* by faith . . . Gal 3:11
 If we *l* in the Spirit . . . Gal 5:25
 to me, to *l* is Christ . . . Phil 1:21
l godly in Christ . . . 2 Tim 3:12
 the just shall *l* by faith . . . Heb 10:38
 Father of spirits and *l* . . . Heb 12:9
 to *l* honorably . . . Heb 13:18
l according to God in . . . 1 Pet 4:6
l again until the thousand . . . Rev 20:5

LIVED

our religion I *l* a Pharisee . . . Acts 26:5
 died and rose and *l* . . . Rom 14:9
 walked when you *l* in them . . . Col 3:7
 And they *l* and reigned . . . Rev 20:4

LIVES

but man *l* by every . . . Deut 8:3
 know that my Redeemer *l* . . . Job 19:25
 days of our *l* are seventy . . . Ps 90:10

have risked their *l* . . . Acts 15:26
 He *l* to God . . . Rom 6:10
 For none of us *l* . . . Rom 14:7
 He *l* by the power of God . . . 2 Cor 13:4
 but Christ *l* in me . . . Gal 2:20
 at all while the testator *l* . . . Heb 9:17
 to lay down our *l* . . . 1 John 3:16
 I am He who *l* . . . Rev 1:18

LIVING

See LAND OF THE LIVING

and man became a *l* . . . Gen 2:7
 in the light of the *l* . . . Ps 56:13
l will take it to heart . . . Eccl 7:2
l know that they will . . . Eccl 9:5
 Why should a *l* man . . . Lam 3:39
 the dead, but of the *l* . . . Matt 22:32
 Why do you seek the *l* . . . Luke 24:5
 I am the *l* bread . . . John 6:51
 will flow rivers of *l* water . . . John 7:38
 to be Judge of the *l* . . . Acts 10:42
 your bodies a *l* sacrifice . . . Rom 12:1
 the church of the *l* God . . . 1 Tim 3:15
 who will judge the *l* . . . 2 Tim 4:1
 the word of God is *l* . . . Heb 4:12
 the hands of the *l* God . . . Heb 10:31
 to Him as to a *l* stone . . . 1 Pet 2:4
 ready to judge the *l* . . . 1 Pet 4:5
l creature was like a . . . Rev 4:7
 the four *l* creatures . . . Rev 7:11

LIVING CREATURE

earth bring forth the *l* . . . Gen 1:24
 Adam called each *l* . . . Gen 2:19
 every *l* that is with you: . . . Gen 9:10
 and every *l* of all flesh . . . Gen 9:15
 every *l* that moves . . . Lev 11:46
 each *l* with its four . . . Ezek 1:15
 This was the *l* I saw . . . Ezek 10:15
 the spirit of the *l* . . . Ezek 10:17
 first *l* was like a lion. . . Rev 4:7
 I heard the second *l* . . . Rev 6:3
l in the sea died . . . Rev 16:3

LIVING CREATURES

with an abundance of *l* . . . Gen 1:20
 likeness of four *l* . . . Ezek 1:5
 the wings of the *l* . . . Ezek 3:13
 four *l* full of eyes . . . Rev 4:6
 four *l* said, "Amen!" . . . Rev 5:14
 the *l* in the sea died. . . Rev 8:9
 before the four *l* . . . Rev 14:3
 one of the four *l* . . . Rev 15:7
l fell down and worshiped . . . Rev 19:4

LO-AMMI

Symbolic name of Hosea's son, Hos
 1:8, 9

LO-RUHAMAH

Symbolic name of Hosea's daughter,
 Hos 1:6

LOAD

into the sea, to lighten the *l* . . . Jon 1:5
 you *l* men with burdens . . . Luke 11:46
 shall bear his own *l* . . . Gal 6:5

LOADED

they *l* their donkeys with . . . Gen 42:26
l them on donkeys . . . 1 Sam 25:18
 women *l* down with sins . . . 2 Tim 3:6

LOAF

l of barley bread tumbled . . . Judg 7:13
l with them in the boat . . . Mark 8:14

LOATHE

I *l* my life . . . Job 7:16
l themselves for the . . . Ezek 6:9

LOATHSOME

but a wicked man is *l* . . . Prov 13:5

LOAVES

have here only five *l* . . . Matt 14:17
 He took the seven *l* . . . Matt 15:36
 lend me three *l* . . . Luke 11:5
 you ate of the *l* . . . John 6:26

LOCKS

If you weave the seven *l* . . . Judg 16:13
 his *l* are wavy, and black . . . Song 5:11

LOCUST

What the chewing *l* . . . Joel 1:4
 left, the swarming *l* . . . Joel 1:4

LOCUSTS

as numerous as *l* . . . Judg 7:12
 He spoke, and *l* came . . . Ps 105:34
 the *l* have no king . . . Prov 30:27
 and his food was *l* . . . Matt 3:4
 waist, and he ate *l* . . . Mark 1:6
 out of the smoke *l* . . . Rev 9:3

LODGED

them in and *l* them . . . Acts 10:23
 children, if she has *l* . . . 1 Tim 5:10

LOFTILY

they speak *l* . . . Ps 73:8

LOFTY

haughty, nor my eyes *l* . . . Ps 131:1
 Wisdom is too *l* . . . Prov 24:7
l are their eyes . . . Prov 30:13
 and *L* One who . . . Is 57:15

LOINS

gird up the *l* of your . . . 1 Pet 1:13

LONELY

How *l* sits the city that was . . . Lam 1:1

LONG

your days may be *l* . . . Deut 5:16
 said, "L live the king . . . 1 Sam 10:24
 who *l* for death . . . Job 3:21
 me the thing that *l* . . . Job 6:8
l for Your salvation . . . Ps 119:174
 the appointed time was *l* . . . Dan 10:1
l as the bridegroom is . . . Matt 9:15
 How *l* shall I bear with . . . Mark 9:19
 go around in *l* robes . . . Mark 12:38
 make *l* prayers . . . Luke 20:47
 we are killed all day *l* . . . Rom 8:36
 Love suffers *l* and is kind . . . 1 Cor 13:4
 how greatly *l* *l* . . . Phil 1:8
 "How *l*, O LORD, holy and . . . Rev 6:10

LONGING

wife cast *l* eyes on Joseph . . . Gen 39:7
 David said with *l*, "Oh . . . 2 Sam 23:15
 For He satisfies the *l* soul . . . Ps 107:9
 since he was *l* for you all . . . Phil 2:26

LONGSUFFERING

and gracious, *l* . . . Ps 86:15
 is love, joy, peace, *l* . . . Gal 5:22
 and gentleness, with *l* . . . Eph 4:2
 for all patience and *l* . . . Col 1:11
 might show all *l* . . . 1 Tim 1:16
 when once the Divine *l* . . . 1 Pet 3:20
 and consider that the *l* . . . 2 Pet 3:15

LOOK

Do not *l* behind you . . . Gen 19:17
l down from heaven . . . Ps 80:14
 who has a haughty *l* . . . Ps 101:5
 A proud *l*, a lying . . . Prov 6:17
 that day a man will *l* . . . Is 17:7
L upon Zion . . . Is 33:20
 "L to Me, and be saved . . . Is 45:22
l to the rock from which . . . Is 51:1
 we *l* for light . . . Is 59:9
 we *l* for justice . . . Is 59:11
 "L among the nations . . . Hab 1:5
l on Me whom they . . . Zech 12:10
L at the birds of the air . . . Matt 6:26
 why do you *l* at the speck . . . Matt 7:3
 say to you, 'L here . . . Luke 17:23
L at the fig tree . . . Luke 21:29
 and *l* at My hands . . . John 20:27
l on their threats . . . Acts 4:29
L! see the heavens . . . Acts 7:56
 of Israel could not *l* . . . 2 Cor 3:7
 while we do not *l* . . . 2 Cor 4:18
 Let each of you *l* . . . Phil 2:4

angels desire to *l* into 1 Pet 1:12
l for new heavens and a 2 Pet 3:13
L to yourselves 2 John 8
 open the scroll, or to *l* at it Rev 5:3

LOOKED

But when I *l* for good Job 30:26
 They *l* to Him and were Ps 34:5
 For He *l* down from the Ps 102:19
 He *l* for justice Is 5:7
 "We *l* for peace Jer 8:15
 "You *l* for much Hag 1:9
 the Lord turned and *l* Luke 22:61
 for he *l* to the reward Heb 11:26

LOOKING

the plow, and *l* back Luke 9:62
l for the blessed hope Titus 2:13
l unto Jesus, the author Heb 12:2
l carefully lest Heb 12:15
l for the mercy of Jude 21

LOOKS

Absalom for his good *l* 2 Sam 14:25
 Then he *l* at men and Job 33:27
 God *l* down from heaven Ps 53:2
 The lofty *l* of man Is 2:11
 to you that whoever *l* Matt 5:28

LOOM

and the web from the *l* Judg 16:14
 cuts me off from the *l* Is 38:12

LOOSE

l the armor of kings Is 45:1
 and whatever you *l* Matt 16:19
 said to them, "L him John 11:44

LOOSED

You have *l* my bonds Ps 116:16
 the silver cord is *l* Eccl 12:6
 on earth will be *l* in Matt 16:19
 his tongue was *l*, and he Mark 7:35
l from your infirmity Luke 13:12
 be *l* from this bond Luke 13:16
l the pains of death Acts 2:24
 everyone's chains were *l* Acts 16:26
 Do not seek to be *l* 1 Cor 7:27

LORD

See ANGEL OF THE LORD; ANGER
 OF THE LORD; BLESS THE LORD;
 BLESSED BE THE LORD; DAY OF THE
 LORD; FEAR OF THE LORD; FEAR
 THE LORD; GLORY OF THE LORD;
 HAND OF THE LORD; HOUSE OF THE
 LORD; LAW OF THE LORD; LOVE THE
 LORD YOUR GOD; PRAISE THE LORD;
 REJOICE IN THE LORD; SEEK THE
 LORD; SERVE THE LORD; SINNED
 AGAINST THE LORD; SPIRIT OF THE
 LORD; VOICE OF THE LORD; VOW TO
 THE LORD; WAIT ON THE LORD; WAY
 OF THE LORD; WRATH OF THE LORD
L is my strength Ex 15:2
L is a man of war Ex 15:3
L our God, the *L* Deut 6:4
 sacrifice to the *L* your Deut 17:1
 may know that the *L* 1 Kin 8:60
 If the *L* is God 1 Kin 18:21
 You alone are the *L* Neh 9:6
 The *L* of hosts Ps 24:10
 belongs to the *L* Ps 89:18
 let us sing to the *L* Ps 95:1
L is the great God Ps 95:3
 Gracious is the *L* Ps 116:5
L surrounds His people Ps 125:2
 The *L* is righteous Ps 129:4
L is near to all who Ps 145:18
L is a God of justice Is 30:18
L Our Righteousness Jer 23:6
L has done marvelous Joel 2:21
L God is my strength Hab 3:19
 "The *L* is one Zech 14:3
 shall not tempt the *L* Matt 4:7
 shall worship the *L* Matt 4:10

Son of Man is also *L* Mark 2:28
 who is Christ the *L* Luke 2:11
 why do you call Me '*L*' Luke 6:46
L is risen indeed Luke 24:34
 call Me Teacher and *L* John 13:13
 He is *L* of all Acts 10:36
 "Who are You, *L* Acts 26:15
 with your mouth the *L* Rom 10:9
 Greek, for the same *L* Rom 10:12
 say that Jesus is *L* 1 Cor 12:3
 second Man is the *L* 1 Cor 15:47
 the Spirit of the *L* 2 Cor 3:17
 that Jesus Christ is *L* Phil 2:11
 and deny the only *L* Jude 4
L God Omnipotent Rev 19:6

LORD APPEARED TO

Then the *L* Abram and Gen 12:7
 the *L* Abram and said to Gen 17:1
L him by the terebinth Gen 18:1
 Then the *L* him and said Gen 26:2
 Then the glory of the *L* Lev 9:23
 glory of the *L* them Num 20:6
L Solomon in a dream 1 Kin 3:5
L Solomon the second 1 Kin 9:2

LORD COMMANDED

all that the *L* him Gen 7:5
L Moses and Aaron, Ex 12:50
 words which the *L* him Ex 19:7
 the thing which the *L* Ex 35:4
 The *L* this to be given Lev 7:36
 which the *L* Moses Lev 27:34
 As the *L* Moses, so he Num 1:19
 as the *L* Moses, all Num 15:36
 Moses did as the *L* Num 27:22
 statutes which the *L* Num 30:16
 the *L* us to observe Deut 6:24
 not kept what the *L* 1 Sam 13:14
 David did so, as the *L* 2 Sam 5:25
 So the *L* the angel, 1 Chr 21:27
 there the *L* the blessing Ps 133:3
 the Euphrates, as the *L* Jer 13:5
 did as the angel of the *L* Matt 1:24

LORD GOD OF HOSTS

the *L* was with him 2 Sam 5:10
 very zealous for the *L* 1 Kin 19:10
 who wait for You, O *L*, Ps 69:6
 Restore us, O *L*, Ps 80:19
L, hear my prayer; Ps 84:8
 Therefore thus says the *L* Is 10:24
L in the Valley of Vision Is 22:5
 I have heard from the *L* Is 28:22
 called by Your name, O *L* Jer 15:16
 this is the day of the *L* Jer 46:10
 the work of the *L* Jer 50:25
 the *L* is his name Amos 4:13
 The *L*, he who touches Amos 9:5

LORD GOD OF ISRAEL

Pharaoh, "Thus says the *L* Ex 5:1
 before the Lord, the *L* Ex 34:23
 give glory to the *L* Josh 7:19
 built an altar to the *L* Josh 8:30
 sworn to them by the *L* Josh 9:19
 the *L* fought for Israel Josh 10:42
L was their inheritance Josh 13:33
 your heart to the *L* Josh 24:23
 will sing praise to the *L* Judg 5:3
 "O *L*, why has this come Judg 21:3
 be given you by the *L* Ruth 2:12
 Saul said to the *L* 1 Sam 14:41
 "O *L*, Your servant 1 Sam 23:10
 Blessed is the *L* 1 Sam 25:32
L: "I anointed you 2 Sam 12:7
 'Blessed be the *L* 1 Kin 1:48
 for the name of the *L* 1 Kin 8:17
 turned away from the *L* 1 Kin 11:9
 provoked the *L* to anger 1 Kin 15:30
 O *L*, the One who 2 Kin 19:15
 the ark of the *L* 1 Chr 15:12
 build a house for the *L* 1 Chr 22:6
 "The *L* has given rest 1 Chr 23:25

their heart to seek the *L* 2 Chr 11:16
 they turned to the *L* 2 Chr 15:4
 the Passover to the *L* 2 Chr 30:1
 build the house of the *L* Ezra 1:3
 in order to seek the *L* Ezra 6:21
 Blessed be the *L*, from Ps 41:13
 Blessed is the *L*, for he Luke 1:68

LORD HAS SPOKEN

son's wife, as the *L* Gen 24:51
 that the *L* we will do Ex 19:8
 the statutes which the *L* Lev 10:11
 which the *L* to Moses Num 15:22
 For the *L* of David 2 Sam 3:18
 the sign which the *L* 1 Kin 13:3
 the mouth of the *L* Is 1:20
 for the mouth of the *L* Is 40:5
 not be proud, for the *L* Jer 13:15
 Hear this word that the *L* Amos 3:1

LORD IS GOOD

taste and see that the *L* Ps 34:8
 For the *L*, His mercy Ps 100:5
 Praise the Lord, for the *L* Ps 135:3
L to all, and His Ps 145:9
 Lord of hosts, for the *L* Jer 33:11
 The *L* to those who wait Lam 3:25
 The *L*, a stronghold Nah 1:7

LORD JESUS CHRIST

we believed on the *L* Acts 11:17
 the grace of the *L* Acts 15:11
 for the name of our *L* Acts 15:26
 "Believe on the *L* Acts 16:31
 with God through our *L* Rom 5:1
 in God through our *L* Rom 5:11
 But put on the *L* Rom 13:14
 do not serve our *L* Rom 16:18
 the revelation of our *L* 1 Cor 1:7
 in the day of our *L* 1 Cor 1:8
 victory through our *L* 1 Cor 15:57
 does not love the *L* 1 Cor 16:22
 know the grace of our *L* 2 Cor 8:9
 in the cross of our *L* Gal 6:14
 in the name of our *L* Eph 5:20
 for the Savior, the *L* Phil 3:20
 presence of our *L* 1 Thess 2:19
 salvation through our *L* 1 Thess 5:9
 at the coming of our *L* 1 Thess 5:23
 obey the gospel of our *L* 2 Thess 1:8
 the coming of our *L* 2 Thess 2:1
 hold the faith of our *L* James 2:1
 in the knowledge of *L* 2 Pet 1:8
 just as our *L* showed me 2 Pet 1:14
 Lord God and our *L* Jude 4
 by the apostles of our *L* Jude 17
 The grace of our *L* Rev 22:21

LORD OF HOSTS

to the *L* in Shiloh 1 Sam 1:3
 "O *L*, if You will indeed 1 Sam 1:11
L, who dwells between 1 Sam 4:4
 in the name of the *L* 1 Sam 17:45
 'L is the God over Israel 2 Sam 7:26
 The zeal of the *L* 2 Kin 19:31
 the *L* was with him 1 Chr 11:9
 The *L*, He is the King Ps 24:10
 The *L* is with us; Ps 46:7
 Your tabernacle, O *L* Ps 84:1
 Unless the *L* had left to Is 1:9
 For the day of the *L* Is 2:12
 vineyard of the *L* Is 5:7
 Holy, holy, holy is the *L* Is 6:3
 The *L*, Him you shall Is 8:13
 The zeal of the *L* Is 9:7
 Through the wrath of the *L* Is 9:19
 in the wrath of the *L* Is 13:13
L will reign on Mount Zion Is 24:23
 In that day the *L* Is 28:5
 O *L*, God of Israel Is 37:16
 his Redeemer, the *L* Is 44:6
 is your husband, the *L* Is 54:5
 But, O *L*, You who test Jer 20:12
 of the living God, the *L* Jer 23:36

intercession to the *L* Jer 27:18
 the *L* is His name Jer 31:35
 Praise the *L*, for the Lord Jer 33:11
 by his God, the *L* Jer 51:5
 The *L* has sworn Jer 51:14
 the people of the *L* Zeph 2:10
 on the house of the *L* Hag 1:14
 with glory," says the *L* Hag 2:7
 "Return to me," says the *L* Zech 1:3
 "O *L*, how long will You Zech 1:12
L has sent me Zech 2:9
 My Spirit," says the *L* Zech 4:6
 wrath came from the *L* Zech 7:12
 the Mountain of the *L* Zech 8:3
 shall come to seek the *L* Zech 8:22
 The *L* will defend them Zech 9:15
 worship the King, the *L* Zech 14:16
 a great King," says the *L* Mal 1:14
 is the messenger of the *L* Mal 2:7
 return to you, says the *L* Mal 3:7

LORD OF LORDS

God of gods and *L* Deut 10:17
 give thanks to the *L* Ps 136:3
 King of kings and *L* 1 Tim 6:15
 He is *L* and King of kings Rev 17:14
 King of kings and *L* Rev 19:16

LORD WAS WITH HIM

master saw that the *L* Gen 39:3
 Samuel grew, and the *L* 1 Sam 3:19
 David, because the *L* 1 Sam 18:12
 ways, and the *L* 1 Sam 18:14
 The *L*; he prospered 2 Kin 18:7
 And the hand of the *L* Luke 1:66

LORD'S ANOINTED

"Surely the *L* is before 1 Sam 16:6
 to my master, the *L* 1 Sam 24:6
 his hand against the *L* 1 Sam 26:9
 hand to destroy the *L* 2 Sam 1:14
 he cursed the *L* 2 Sam 19:21

LORDS

many gods and many *l* 1 Cor 8:5
 nor as being *l* over 1 Pet 5:3
 for He is Lord of *l* Rev 17:14

LORDSHIP

Gentiles exercise *l* Luke 22:25

LOSE

gain, and a time to *l* Eccl 3:6
 save his life will *l* Matt 16:25
 reap if we do not *l* Gal 6:9
 that we do not *l* 2 John 8

LOSES

but if the salt *l* Matt 5:13
 and *l* his own soul Matt 16:26
 if she *l* one coin Luke 15:8
l his life will preserve Luke 17:33

LOSS

he will suffer *l* 1 Cor 3:15
 count all things *l* Phil 3:8

LOST

are dry, our hope is *l* Ezek 37:11
 save that which was *l* Matt 18:11
 the one which is *l* Luke 15:4
 my sheep which was *l* Luke 15:6
 the piece which I *l* Luke 15:9
 and none of them is *l* John 17:12
 You gave Me I have *l* John 18:9

LOT

Abram's nephew; accompanies him,
 Gen 11:27—12:5; 13:1
 Separates from Abram, Gen 13:5—12
 Rescued by Abram, Gen 14:12—16
 Saved from Sodom for his hospitality,
 Gen 19:1—29
 Tricked into committing incest, Gen
 19:30—38

LOT

shall be divided by *l* Num 26:55
 You maintain my *l* Ps 16:5

cast in your *l* among Prov 1:14
l is cast into the lap Prov 16:33

LOT'S WIFE

Disobedient, becomes pillar of salt,
 Gen 19:26
 Event to be remembered, Luke 17:32

LOTS

l causes contentions Prov 18:18
 garments, casting *l* Mark 15:24
 And they cast their *l* Acts 1:26

LOUD

I cried out with a *l* Gen 39:14
 Him with *l* cymbals Ps 150:5
 cried out with a *l* Matt 27:46
 I heard behind me a *l* Rev 1:10

LOVE

l your neighbor as Lev 19:18
l the LORD your God Deut 6:5
 your *l* to me was 2 Sam 1:26
 How long will you *l* Ps 4:2
 Oh, *l* the LORD Ps 31:23
l righteousness Ps 45:7
 he has set his *l* Ps 91:14
 Oh, how I *l* Your law Ps 119:97
 peace have those who *l* Ps 119:165
 preserves all who *l* Ps 145:20
 us take our fill of *l* Prov 7:18
l covers all sins Prov 10:12
 a time to *l* Eccl 3:8
 People know neither *l* Eccl 9:1
l is better than wine Song 1:2
 banner over me was *l* Song 2:4
 stir up nor awaken *l* Song 3:5
 I will give you my *l* Song 7:12
l is as strong as death Song 8:6
 waters cannot quench *l* Song 8:7
 time was the time of *l* Ezek 16:8
 backsliding, I will *l* Hos 14:4
 do justly, to *l* mercy Mic 6:8
 to you, *l* your enemies Matt 5:44
l those who *l* you Matt 5:46
 which of them will *l* Luke 7:42
 you do not have the *l* John 5:42
 if you have *l* for one John 13:35
 "If you *l* Me, keep My John 14:15
 and My Father will *l* John 14:23
l one another as I John 15:12
l has no one than this John 15:13
l Me more than these John 21:15
 of Jonah, do you *l* John 21:16
 because the *l* of God Rom 5:5
 Let *l* be without Rom 12:9
 to *l* one another Rom 13:8
l does no harm to a Rom 13:10
 up, but *l* edifies 1 Cor 8:1
l suffers long and is 1 Cor 13:4
l never fails 1 Cor 13:8
 greatest of these is *l* 1 Cor 13:13
 For the *l* of Christ 2 Cor 5:14
 and the God of *l* 2 Cor 13:11
 of the Spirit is *l* Gal 5:22
 rooted and grounded in *l* Eph 3:17
 the edifying of itself in *l* Eph 4:16
 Husbands, *l* your wives Eph 5:25
 if any comfort of *l* Phil 2:1
 of the Son of His *l* Col 1:13
 being knit together in *l* Col 2:2
l your wives and do Col 3:19
 breastplate of faith and *l* 1 Thess 5:8
 the commandment is *l* 1 Tim 1:5
 continue in faith, *l* 1 Tim 2:15
 word, in conduct, in *l* 1 Tim 4:12
 For the *l* of money is 1 Tim 6:10
l their husbands Titus 2:4
 Let brotherly *l* Heb 13:1
 having not seen you *l* 1 Pet 1:8
l the brotherhood 1 Pet 2:17
 for "I will cover a 1 Pet 4:8
 with a kiss of *l* 1 Pet 5:14
 brotherly kindness *l* 2 Pet 1:7
l loves the world, the *l* 1 John 2:15

we *l* the brethren 1 John 3:14
 By this we know *l* 1 John 3:16
 him, how does the *l* 1 John 3:17
 Beloved, let us *l* 1 John 4:7
 know God, for God is *l* 1 John 4:8
 In this is *l* 1 John 4:10
 If we *l* one another 1 John 4:12
l has been perfected 1 John 4:17
 There is no fear in *l* 1 John 4:18
l Him because He first 1 John 4:19
 who loves God must *l* 1 John 4:21
 For this is the *l* 1 John 5:3
 and *l* be multiplied to you Jude 2
 are spots in your *l* feasts Jude 12
 have left your first *l* Rev 2:4
 your works, *l* service Rev 2:19
 and they did not *l* Rev 12:11

LOVE OF CHRIST

separate us from the *l* Rom 8:35
 For the *l* compels us 2 Cor 5:14
l which passes knowledge Eph 3:19

LOVE OF GOD

pass by justice and the *l* Luke 11:42
 you do not have the *l* John 5:42
 the *l* has been poured Rom 5:5
 separate us from the *l* Rom 8:39
l is perfected in him 1 John 2:5
 the *l* abide in him 1 John 3:17
 In this the *l* 1 John 4:9
 For this is the *l* 1 John 5:3
 keep yourselves in the *l* Jude 21

LOVE ONE ANOTHER

l; as I have loved you John 13:34
 that you *l* as I have John 15:12
 anything except to *l* Rom 13:8
 are taught by God to *l* 1 Thess 4:9
l fervently with a pure 1 Pet 1:22
 that we should *l* 1 John 3:11
 Beloved, let us *l* 1 John 4:7
 the beginning; that we *l* 2 John 5

LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD

You shall *l* with all your Deut 6:5
 to *l* with all your heart Deut 30:6
l, to walk in all His ways Josh 22:5
 "You shall *l* with Matt 22:37
l with all your heart Mark 12:30
l with all your heart Luke 10:27

LOVE YOUR ENEMIES

in that you *l* 2 Sam 19:6
 But I say to you, *l* Matt 5:44
l, do good to those Luke 6:27

LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR

you shall *l* as yourself Lev 19:18
l and hate your enemy Matt 5:43
 "You shall *l* as yourself Matt 19:19
l as yourself Gal 5:14
 "You shall *l* as yourself James 2:8

LOVED

Because the LORD has *l* 1 Kin 10:9
l one and friend You Ps 88:18
 Yet Jacob I have *l* Mal 1:2
 forgiven, for she *l* Luke 7:47
 so *l* the world that John 3:16
 "See how He *l* John 11:36
 whom Jesus *l* John 13:23
 "As the Father *l* John 15:9
l them as You have John 17:23
 "Jacob I have *l* Rom 9:13
 the Son of God, who *l* Gal 2:20
l the church and gave Eph 5:25
l righteousness Heb 1:9
 God, but that He *l* 1 John 4:10
 Beloved, if God so *l* 1 John 4:11
 To Him who *l* us and Rev 1:5

LOVELY

l are your tents, O Jacob Num 24:5
 of David had a *l* sister 2 Sam 13:1
 The young woman was *l* Esth 2:7
l is Your tabernacle Ps 84:1

l woman who lacks Prov 11:22
I am dark, but *l* Song 1:5
 he is altogether *l* Song 5:16
 whatever things are *l* Phil 4:8

LOVER

a *l* of what is good Titus 1:8

LOVERS

the harlot with many *l* Jer 3:1
 your *l* have forgotten you Jer 30:14
 "I will go after my *l* Hos 2:5
 Ephraim has hired *l* Hos 8:9
 who were *l* of money Luke 16:14
 For men will be *l* 2 Tim 3:2

LOVES

l righteousness Ps 33:5
 life, and *l* many days Ps 34:12
 A friend *l* at all Prov 17:17
 He who *l* father or Matt 10:37
l his life will lose John 12:25
l Me will be loved John 14:21
l a cheerful giver 2 Cor 9:7
 who *l* his wife *l* Eph 5:28
 If anyone *l* the world 1 John 2:15
l God must love his 1 John 4:21
l him who is 1 John 5:1

LOVESICK

apples, for *I* am *l* Song 2:5
 you tell him *I* am *l* Song 5:8

LOVINGKINDNESS

not concealed Your *l* Ps 40:10
l is better than life Ps 63:3
 to declare Your *l* Ps 92:2
 Who crowns you with *l* Ps 103:4
l I have drawn Jer 31:3
 You show *l* to thousands Jer 32:18
 justice, in *l* and mercy Hos 2:19
 abundant in *l* Jon 4:2

LOVINGKINDNESSES

mercies and Your *l* Ps 25:6
 where are Your former *l* Ps 89:49
 the multitude of His *l* Is 63:7

LOW

He brings *l* and lifts 1 Sam 2:7
 both *l* and high Ps 49:2
 it *l*, He lays it *l* Is 26:5
 and hill brought *l* Luke 3:5

LOWER

made him a little *l* Ps 8:5
 shall go into the *l* Ps 63:9
 made him a little *l* Heb 2:7

LOWEST

and sets over it the *l* Dan 4:17

LOWLINESS

with all *l* and Eph 4:2
 or conceit, but in *l* Phil 2:3

LOWLY

yet He regards the *l* Ps 138:6
 for *I* am gentle and *l* Matt 11:29
 He has regarded the *l* Luke 1:48
 and exalted the *l* Luke 1:52
 in presence am *l* 2 Cor 10:1
l body that it may be Phil 3:21
l brother glory James 1:9

LOYAL

be *l* to the LORD our God 1 Kin 8:61
 truth and with a *l* heart 2 Kin 20:3
 with a *l* heart they 1 Chr 29:9
 faithfully and with a *l* 2 Chr 19:9
 or else he will be *l* Matt 6:24

LUCIFER

Name applied to Satan, Is 14:12

LUD

See LYDIA

A people descended from Shem, 1 Chr 1:17

LUKE

"The beloved physician," Col 4:14

Paul's last companion, 2 Tim 4:11
 Author of third Gospel, Luke (title)

LUKEWARM

because you are *l* Rev 3:16

LUMP

from the same *l* Rom 9:21
 you may be a new *l* 1 Cor 5:7

LUST

Do not *l* after her Prov 6:25
 caught by their *l* Prov 11:6
 looks at a woman to *l* Matt 5:28
 not fulfill the *l* Gal 5:16
 not in passion of *l* 1 Thess 4:5
 You *l* and do not have James 4:2
 the *l* of the flesh 1 John 2:16

LUSTS

to fulfill its *l* Rom 13:14
l which drown men 1 Tim 6:9
 also youthful *l* 2 Tim 2:22
 and worldly *l* Titus 2:12
 to the former *l* 1 Pet 1:14
 abstain from fleshly *l* 1 Pet 2:11
 to their own ungodly *l* Jude 18

LUTE

Awake, *l* and harp Ps 57:8
l I will praise You Ps 71:22
 harp with the *l* Ps 81:2
 ten strings, on the *l* Ps 92:3
 Awake, *l* and harp Ps 108:2
 Praise Him with the *l* Ps 150:3

LUXURY

L is not fitting Prov 19:10
l are in kings' courts Luke 7:25
 in pleasure and *l* James 5:5
 the abundance of her *l* Rev 18:3

LYCAONIA

District of Asia Minor where Paul
 preached, Acts 14:6, 11

LYCIA

Province of Asia Minor visited by Paul,
 Acts 21:1, 2; 27:5, 6

LYDDA

Aeneas healed at, Acts 9:32-35

LYDIA

Woman of Thyatira; Paul's first European
 convert, Acts 16:14, 15, 40
 — District of Asia Minor containing
 Ephesus, Smyrna, Thyatira, and Sardis,
 Rev 1:11

LYING

has put a *l* spirit 1 Kin 22:23
I hate and abhor *l* Ps 119:163
 proud look, a *l* tongue Prov 6:17
L lips are an Prov 12:22
 righteous man hates *l* Prov 13:5
 not trust in these *l* Jer 7:4
 a paralytic *l* on a bed Matt 9:2
 in swaddling cloths, *l* Luke 2:12
 the Babe *l* in a manger Luke 2:16
 cloths *l* by themselves Luke 24:12
 saw the linen cloths *l* John 20:5
 putting away *l* Eph 4:25
 signs, and *l* wonders 2 Thess 2:9

LYRE

the horn, flute, harp, *l* Dan 3:15

LYSIAS, CLAUDIUS

See CLAUDIUS LYSIAS

LYSTRA

Paul visits; is worshiped by people of
 and stoned by Jews, Acts 14:6-20
 Home of Timothy, Acts 16:1, 2

Not possessed by Israel, Josh 13:13
 — David's wife; mother of Absalom,
 2 Sam 3:3
 — Wife of Rehoboam; mother of King
 Abijah, 2 Chr 11:18-21
 Makes idol; is deposed as queen
 mother, 1 Kin 15:13

MACEDONIA

Paul preaches in, Acts 16:9—17:14
 Paul's troubles in, 2 Cor 7:5
 Churches of, generous, Rom 15:26;
 2 Cor 8:1-5

MACHIR

Manasseh's only son, Gen 50:23
 Founder of the family of Machirites,
 Num 26:29
 Conqueror of Gilead, Num 32:39, 40

MACHPELAH

Field containing a cave; bought by
 Abraham, Gen 23:9-18
 Sarah and Abraham buried here, Gen
 23:19; 25:9, 10
 Isaac, Rebekah, Leah, and Jacob bur-
 ied here, Gen 49:29-31

MAD

has a demon and is *m* John 10:20
 he said, "I am not *m* Acts 26:25

MADE

m the stars also Gen 1:16
 everything that He had *m* Gen 1:31
 wife the LORD God *m* Gen 3:21
 God *m* a wind to pass over Gen 8:1
 'I have *m* Abram rich' Gen 14:23
 LORD *m* a covenant with Gen 15:18
 I have *m* you a father of Gen 17:5
 he *m* him a tunic of many Gen 37:3
 Joseph *m* himself known Gen 45:1
 they *m* their lives bitter Ex 1:14
m the sea into dry land Ex 14:21
 tool, and *m* a molded calf Ex 32:4
 He also *m* the mercy seat Ex 37:6
 LORD *m* between Himself Lev 26:46
 Moses *m* a bronze serpent Num 21:9
m a covenant 1 Sam 20:16
 has *m* Solomon king 1 Kin 1:43
 he *m* the Most Holy Place 2 Chr 3:8
 had *m* to praise the LORD 2 Chr 7:6
 Have You not *m* a hedge Job 1:10
 You have *m* me like clay Job 10:9
 He has *m* me a byword of Job 17:6
 For You have *m* him a little Ps 8:5
 You have *m* him to have Ps 8:6
 You *m* Me trust while on Ps 22:9
 by which they have *m* You Ps 45:8
 have *m* summer and winter Ps 74:17
 you have *m* the LORD Ps 91:9
 It is He who has *m* us, and Ps 100:3
m known His ways to Ps 103:7
 LORD, who *m* heaven and Ps 115:15
 the day the LORD has *m* Ps 118:24
 by wisdom *m* the heavens Ps 138:5
 and wonderfully *m* Ps 139:14
 generous soul will be *m* Prov 11:25
m everything beautiful Eccl 3:11
 A feast is *m* for laughter Eccl 10:19
 hear long ago how *l* *m* Is 37:26
 I have *m* the earth, and Is 45:12
 things My hand has *m* Is 66:2
 He has *m* the earth by His Jer 10:12
 I have *m* you a watchman Ezek 3:17
 king *m* a great feast for a Dan 5:1
 your faith has *m* you well Matt 9:22
 you have *m* it a den of Matt 21:13
m another five talents Matt 25:16
 God '*m* them male and Mark 10:6
 temple *m* with hands Mark 14:58
 places shall be *m* straight Luke 3:5
 she was *m* straight, and Luke 13:13
 All things were *m* John 1:3
 the water that was *m* wine John 2:9

in temples *m* with hands ... Acts 7:48
 he *m* havoc of the church, ... Acts 8:3
 are heirs, faith is *m* void ... Rom 4:14
m me free from the law of ... Rom 8:2
 confession is *m* unto ... Rom 10:10
 Has not God *m* foolish ... 1 Cor 1:20
 all shall be *m* alive ... 1 Cor 15:22
m Him who knew no ... 2 Cor 5:21
 strength is *m* perfect ... 2 Cor 12:9
 Seed were the promises *m* ... Gal 3:16
 And you He *m* alive, who ... Eph 2:1
 and *m* us sit together in ... Eph 2:6
 of God might be *m* ... Eph 3:10
 but *m* Himself of no ... Phil 2:7
 requests be *m* known to ... Phil 4:6
 He has *m* alive together ... Col 2:13
m Him a little lower than ... Eph 2:13
 are *m* His footstool ... Heb 10:13
 but *m* alive by the Spirit ... 1 Pet 3:18
 not been *m* perfect in ... 1 John 4:18
 has *m* us kings and priests ... Rev 1:6
m them white in the blood ... Rev 7:14
 worship Him who *m* ... Rev 14:7
 of the earth were *m* drunk ... Rev 17:2

MADNESS

pretended *m* in ... 1 Sam 21:13
 wisdom and to know *m* ... Eccl 1:17
m is in their hearts ... Eccl 9:3

MAGDALA

City of Galilee, Matt 15:39

MAGDALENE

See MARY

MAGIC

women who sew *m* ... Ezek 13:18
m brought their books ... Acts 19:19

MAGNIFICENCE

m I cannot endure ... Job 31:23

MAGNIFIED

So let Your name be *m* ... 2 Sam 7:26
 "Let the LORD be *m* ... Ps 35:27
 The LORD be *m* ... Ps 40:16
 for You have *m* Your ... Ps 138:2
 The LORD is *m* beyond the ... Mal 1:5
 the Lord Jesus was *m* ... Acts 19:17
 also Christ will be *m* ... Phil 1:20

MAGNIFIES

"My soul *m* the Lord ... Luke 1:46

MAGNIFY

m the LORD with me ... Ps 34:3
m himself above every ... Dan 11:36

MAGOG

People among Japheth's descendants,
 Gen 10:2
 Associated with Gog, Ezek 38:2
 Representatives of final enemies, Rev
 20:8

MAHANAIM

Name given by Jacob to a sacred site,
 Gen 32:2
 Becomes Ishbosheth's capital, 2 Sam
 2:8-29
 David flees to, during Absalom's rebel-
 lion, 2 Sam 17:24, 27

MAHER-SHALAL-HASH-BAZ

Symbolic name of Isaiah's second son;
 prophetic of the fall of Damascus and
 Samaria, Is 8:1-4

MAHLON

Husband of Ruth; without child, Ruth
 1:2-5

MAIDENS

Both young men and *m* ... Ps 148:12
 She has sent out her *m* ... Prov 9:3

MAIDSERVANT

"I am Ruth, your *m* ... Ruth 3:9
 save the son of Your *m* ... Ps 86:16

"Behold the *m* ... Luke 1:38
 lowly state of His *m* ... Luke 1:48

MAIDSERVANTS

m shall lead her as ... Nah 2:7
m I will pour out My ... Acts 2:18

MAIMED

to enter into life *m* ... Mark 9:43
 the poor and the *m* ... Luke 14:21

MAINTAIN

and *m* their cause ... 1 Kin 8:45
 careful to *m* good works ... Titus 3:8

MAINTAINED

For You have *m* my ... Ps 9:4

MAJESTIC

thunders with His *m* voice ... Job 37:4
 which are *m* in pace ... Prov 30:29
 But there the *m* LORD will ... Is 33:21

MAJESTY

Honor and *m* are before ... 1 Chr 16:27
 the victory and the *m* ... 1 Chr 29:11
 with God is awesome *m* ... Job 37:22
 of the LORD is full of *m* ... Ps 29:4
 He is clothed with *m* ... Ps 93:1
 Honor and *m* are before ... Ps 96:6
 splendor of Your *m* ... Ps 145:5
 LORD and the glory of His *m* ... Is 20:10
 in the *m* of the name of the ... Mic 5:4
 right hand of the *m* ... Heb 1:3
 eyewitnesses of His *m* ... 2 Pet 1:16
 wise, be glory and *m* ... Jude 25

MAKE

"Let Us *m* man in Our ... Gen 1:26
 desirable to *m* one wise ... Gen 3:6
 let us *m* a name for ... Gen 11:4
m you a great nation ... Gen 12:2
m My covenant between ... Gen 17:2
 "You shall not *m* ... Ex 20:4
 I will *m* of you a great ... Ex 32:10
 you ... Ps 135:22
 LORD *m* His face shine ... Num 6:25
m a fiery serpent, and ... Num 21:8
 husband may *m* it void ... Num 30:13
m yourself an ark of ... Deut 10:1
 Now *m* us a king to judge ... 1 Sam 8:5
m me a small cake from ... 1 Kin 17:13
m confession to the ... Ezra 10:11
 I *m* my bed in the ... Job 17:13
 LORD, *m* me dwell in safety ... Ps 4:8
m Your face shine upon ... Ps 31:16
 My soul shall *m* its boast in ... Ps 34:2
 shall *m* glad the city of God ... Ps 46:4
 wings I will *m* my refuge ... Ps 57:1
m His praise glorious ... Ps 66:2
 my mouth will I *m* known ... Ps 89:1
m a joyful shout to the ... Ps 100:1
 I *m* my bed in hell, behold ... Ps 139:8
m haste, my beloved, and ... Song 8:14
m mention that His name ... Is 12:4
m the crooked places ... Is 45:2
 I will *m* an everlasting ... Jer 32:40
 writing and *m* known to ... Dan 5:15
m it plain on tablets, that ... Hab 2:2
m me walk on my high ... Hab 3:19
 no one shall *m* them ... Zeph 3:13
m you fishers of men ... Matt 4:19
 till I *m* Your enemies ... Matt 22:44
 let us *m* three tabernacles ... Mark 9:5
 there *m* ready for us ... Mark 14:15
m them sit down in ... Luke 9:14
m me like one of your ... Luke 15:19
m haste and come down, ... Luke 19:5
 not *m* My Father's house ... John 2:16
 the truth shall *m* you free ... John 8:32
m Our home with him ... John 14:23
 we then *m* void the law ... Rom 3:31
m no provision for the ... Rom 13:14
m my brother stumble ... 1 Cor 8:13
m the way of escape ... 1 Cor 10:13
 God is able to *m* all grace ... 2 Cor 9:8
 to *m* known the mystery ... Eph 6:19

Lord *m* you increase ... 1 Thess 3:12
 till I *m* Your enemies Your ... Heb 1:13
m you complete in every ... Heb 13:21
 diligent to *m* your call ... 2 Pet 1:10
 we *m* Him a liar, and ... 1 John 1:10
 will *m* your stomach bitter ... Rev 10:9
 Behold, I *m* all things new ... Rev 21:5

MAKER

where is God my *M* ... Job 35:10
 before the LORD our *M* ... Ps 95:6
 the LORD is the *m* of them ... Prov 22:2
 man will look to his *M* ... Is 17:7
 who strives with his *M* ... Is 45:9
M is your husband ... Is 54:5
 has forgotten his *M* ... Hos 8:14
 builder and *m* is God ... Heb 11:10

MAKES

He *m* nations great, and ... Job 12:23
 He *m* my feet like the feet ... Ps 18:33
 He *m* me to lie down in ... Ps 23:2
 He *m* wars cease to the end ... Ps 46:9
 Who *m* His angels spirits, ... Ps 104:4
 son *m* a glad father, ... Prov 10:1
 Hope deferred *m* the ... Prov 13:12
 he *m* even his enemies to ... Prov 16:7
 He *m* lightnings for the ... Jer 51:16
 for He *m* His sun rise on ... Matt 5:45
m both the deaf to hear ... Mark 7:37
 He *m* intercession ... Rom 8:27
m himself an enemy of ... James 4:4

MAKING

is sure, *m* wise the simple ... Ps 19:7
m the word of God of no ... Mark 7:13
m mention of you in my ... Eph 1:16
m melody in your heart to ... Eph 5:19

MAKKEDAH

Canaanite town assigned to Judah,
 Josh 15:20, 41

MALACHI

Prophet and writer, Mal 1:1

MALCHISHUA

Son of King Saul, 1 Sam 14:49
 Killed at Gilboa, 1 Sam 31:2

MALCHUS

Servant of the high priest, John 18:10

MALE

He created them *m* and ... Gen 5:2
 into the ark to Noah, ... Gen 7:9
 every *m* child in your ... Gen 17:12
 who has borne a *m* or a ... Lev 12:7
 lie with a *m* as with a ... Lev 18:22
 utterly destroy every *m* ... Judg 21:11
 came, she delivered a *m* ... Is 66:7
 beginning 'made them *m* ... Matt 19:4
 is neither *m* nor female ... Gal 3:28
 gave birth to the *m* Child ... Rev 12:13

MALICE

in *m* be babes ... 1 Cor 14:20
 away from you, with all *m* ... Eph 4:31
 wrath, *m*, blasphemy, ... Col 3:1
 pleasures, living in *m* ... Titus 3:3
 laying aside all *m* ... 1 Pet 2:1

MALICIOUSNESS

covetousness, *m* ... Rom 1:29

MALIGN

m a servant to his ... Prov 30:10

MALTA

Site of Paul's shipwreck, Acts 28:1-8

MAMMON

cannot serve God and *m* ... Matt 6:24
 by unrighteous *m* ... Luke 16:9

MAMRE

Town or district near Hebron, Gen
 23:19

Abram dwells by the oaks of, Gen 13:18

MAN

See NEW MAN; OLD MAN; RIGHTEOUS
 MAN; SON OF MAN; WISE MAN

"Let Us make *m* Gen 1:26
 she was taken out of *M* Gen 2:23
 Therefore a *m* shall leave Gen 2:24
 were both naked, the *m* Gen 2:25
 I will destroy *m* whom I Gen 6:7
M wrestled with him Gen 32:24
 God is not a *m*, that He Num 23:19
 but *m* lives by every word Deut 8:3
 No *m* shall be able to Deut 11:25
m looks at the outward 1 Sam 16:7
 "You are the *m* 2 Sam 12:7
 and prove yourself a *m* 1 Kin 2:2
 "What is *m* Job 7:17
 For an empty-headed *m* Job 11:12
 "Are you the first *m* Job 15:7
 Blessed is the *m* who Ps 1:1
m that You are mindful Ps 8:4
 The steps of a good *m* are Ps 37:23
 Blessed is that *m* who Ps 40:4
 What can *m* do to me Ps 118:6
 Happy is the *m* who finds Prov 3:13
 rebuke a wise *m*, and he Prov 9:8
 A good *m* obtains favor Prov 12:2
 that seems right to a *m* Prov 16:25
 The spirit of a *m* is the Prov 20:27
 Let another *m* praise you Prov 27:2
 shall take hold of one *m* Is 4:1
 Because I am a *m* of unclean Is 6:5
 marred more than any *m* Is 52:14
M of sorrows and Is 53:3
 mighty *m* glory in his Jer 9:23
 Blessed is the *m* who trusts Jer 17:7
 Son of *m*, can these Ezek 37:3
 He has shown you, O *m*, Mic 6:8
 Will a *m* rob God Mal 3:8
M shall not live by bread Matt 4:4
 A good *m* out of the Matt 12:35
 the mouth defiles a *m* Matt 15:11
 For this reason a *m* shall Matt 19:5
 coming of the Son of *M* Matt 24:27
 first binds the strong *m* Mark 3:27
 within and defile a *m* Mark 7:23
 what will it profit a *m* Mark 8:36
m had two sons Luke 15:11
 a certain rich *m* Luke 16:19
 a *m* named Zacchaeus Luke 19:2
 can a *m* be born when he John 3:4
 blind *m* with the clay John 9:6
m should die for the John 11:50
 "Behold the *M* John 19:5
 name, has made this *m* Acts 3:16
 a *m* full of faith and the Acts 6:5
 you are inexcusable, O *m*, Rom 2:1
 blessed is the *m* to whom Rom 4:8
m is not from woman 1 Cor 11:8
 I became a *m*, I put 1 Cor 13:11
 since by *m* came death 1 Cor 15:21
 though our outward *m* 2 Cor 4:16
 for whatever a *m* sows, that Gal 6:7
 in Himself one new *m* Eph 2:15
 that the *m* of God may 2 Tim 3:17
m can tame the tongue James 3:8
 a righteous *m* avails James 5:16
 is the number of a *m* Rev 13:18

MAN OF GOD

Moses the *m* blessed Deut 33:1
 "A *m* came to me, and Judg 13:6
 a *m* came to Eli and said 1 Sam 2:27
 there is in this city a *m* 1 Sam 9:6
 to Shemaiah the *m* 1 Kin 12:22
 a *m* went from Judah to 1 Kin 13:1
m who was disobedient 1 Kin 13:26
 I to do with you, O *m* 1 Kin 17:18
 a *m* came and spoke to 1 Kin 20:28
 "M. the king has said 2 Kin 1:9
 this a holy *m* 2 Kin 4:9
M, there is death 2 Kin 4:40
m sent to the king 2 Kin 6:9
 he died, just as the *m* 2 Kin 7:17
 the *m* was angry with 2 Kin 13:19
 "It is the tomb of the *m* 2 Kin 23:17

for so David the *m* 2 Chr 8:14
 But a *m* came to him 2 Chr 25:7
 Law of Moses the *m* Ezra 3:2
 command of David the *m* Neh 12:24
 son of Igdaliah, a *m* Jer 35:4
 But you, O *m*, flee these 1 Tim 6:11
m may be complete 2 Tim 3:17

MAN'S

curse the ground for *m* Gen 8:21
 every *m* hand against Gen 16:12
 We are all one *m* sons Gen 42:11
 each *m* money was in the Gen 43:21
 The rich *m* wealth is his Prov 10:15
 When a *m* ways please Prov 16:7
 A *m* heart plans his way Prov 16:9
 The rich *m* wealth is his Prov 18:11
 A *m* gift makes room for Prov 18:16
m steps are of the LORD Prov 20:24
 A *m* pride will bring him Prov 29:23
 a righteous *m* reward Matt 10:41
 enter a strong *m* house Mark 3:27
 from the rich *m* table Luke 16:21
 one *m* offense many died Rom 5:15
 on another *m* foundation Rom 15:20

MANASSEH

Joseph's firstborn son, Gen 41:50, 51
 Adopted by Jacob, Gen 48:5, 6
 Loses his birthright to Ephraim, Gen
 48:13-20
 ——— Tribe of:
 Numbered, Num 1:34, 35
 Half-tribe of, settle east of Jordan, Num
 32:33-42; Deut 3:12-15
 Help Joshua against Canaanites, Josh
 1:12-18
 Land assigned to western half-tribe,
 Josh 17:1-13
 Eastern half-tribe builds altar, Josh
 22:9-34

Some of, help David, 1 Chr 12:19-31
 ——— Wicked king of Judah; son of
 Hezekiah, 2 Kin 21:1-18; 2 Chr
 33:1-9
 Captured and taken to Babylon;
 repents and is restored, 2 Chr
 33:10-13
 Removes idols and altars, 2 Chr
 33:14-20

MANGER

Will he bed by your *m* Job 39:9
 and laid Him in a *m* Luke 2:7
 the Babe lying in a *m* Luke 2:16

MANIFEST

m Myself to him John 14:21
 is it that You will *m* John 14:22
 be known of God is *m* in Rom 1:19
 but now made *m*, and Rom 16:26
 that I may make it *m*, as I Col 4:4
 was *m* in these last times 1 Pet 1:20

MANIFESTATION

But the *m* of the 1 Cor 12:7
 deceitfully, but by *m* 2 Cor 4:2

MANIFESTED

Galilee, and *m* His glory John 2:11
 "I have *m* Your name John 17:6
 God was *m* in the flesh 1 Tim 3:16
 the life was *m* John 1:2
 the Son of God was *m* 1 John 3:8
 the love of God was *m* 1 John 4:9

MANIFOLD

m are Your works Ps 104:24
 the *m* wisdom of God Eph 3:10
 good stewards of the *m* 1 Pet 4:10

MANKIND

called them *M* in the day Gen 5:2
 of *m* may seek the LORD Acts 15:17
 to kill a third of *m* Rev 9:15
 But the rest of *m*, who Rev 9:20

MANNA

of Israel ate *m* Ex 16:35

the *m* was like coriander Num 11:7
 the *m* ceased on the day Josh 5:12
 Your *m* from their mouth Neh 9:20
 had rained down *m* Ps 78:24
 Our fathers ate the *m* John 6:31
 golden pot that had the *m* Heb 9:4
 of the hidden *m* Rev 2:17

MANNER

in all *m* of workmanship, Ex 31:3
 Is this the *m* of man 2 Sam 7:19
 In this *m*, therefore, pray Matt 6:9
m of life from my youth, Acts 26:4
 same *m* He also took 1 Cor 11:25
 in an unworthy *m* 1 Cor 11:27
 sorrowed in a godly *m* 2 Cor 7:11
m of life, purpose, faith, 2 Tim 3:10
 as is the *m* of some Heb 10:25
 what *m* of persons 2 Pet 3:11
 Behold what *m* of love 1 John 3:1
m worthy of God 3 John 6

MANOAH

Danite; father of Samson, Judg
 13:1-25

MANSIONS

house are many *m* John 14:2

MANTLE

Then he took the *m* 2 Kin 2:14

MAON

Village in Judah, Josh 15:55
 David stays at, 1 Sam 23:24, 25
 Nabal's house here, 1 Sam 25:2

MARA

Name chosen by Naomi, Ruth 1:20

MARAH

First Israelite camp after passing
 through the Red Sea, Num 33:8, 9

MARCHED

people, when You *m* Ps 68:7

MARK (John)

Son of Mary of Jerusalem; travels with
 Barnabas and Saul, Acts 12:12, 25
 Leaves Paul at Perga, Acts 13:13
 Barnabas and Paul separate because
 of him, Acts 15:37-40
 Later approved by Paul, Col 4:10; 2 Tim
 4:11

Companion of Peter, 1 Pet 5:13

Author of the second Gospel, Mark 1:1

MARK

And the LORD set a *m* Gen 4:15
M the blameless man Ps 37:37
 slave, to receive a *m* Rev 13:16
 whoever receives the *m* Rev 14:11

MARKET

is sold in the meat *m* 1 Cor 10:25

MARRED

so His visage was *m* Is 52:14
 he made of clay was *m* Jer 18:4

MARRIAGE

join in *m* with the people Ezra 9:14
 were not given in *m* Ps 78:63
 nor are given in *m* Matt 22:30
 they were given in *m* Luke 17:27
 her in *m* does well 1 Cor 7:38
M is honorable among Heb 13:4
 the *m* of the Lamb has Rev 19:7

MARRIED

and *m* Pharaoh's daughter 1 Kin 3:1
 woman when she is *m* Prov 30:23
 "for I am *m* to you Jer 3:14
 first died after he had *m* Matt 22:25
 said, 'I have *m* a wife Luke 14:20
m wives, they were Luke 17:27
 But he who is *m* 1 Cor 7:33
 But she who is *m* 1 Cor 7:34

MARRIES

If a man *m* a woman and Lev 20:14

as a young man *m* a virgin . . . Is 62:5
m another, commits . . . Matt 19:9
 she *m* another man, she . . . Rom 7:3
 if a virgin *m*, she has not . . . 1 Cor 7:28

MARROW

and of joints and *m* . . . Heb 4:12

MARRY

m her, and raise up an . . . Gen 38:8
 battle and another man *m* . . . Deut 20:7
 it is better not to *m* . . . Matt 19:10
 they neither *m* nor are . . . Matt 22:30
 The sons of this age *m* . . . Luke 20:34
 let them *m* . . . 1 Cor 7:9
 forbidding to *m* . . . 1 Tim 4:3
 the younger widows *m* . . . 1 Tim 5:14

MARRYING

and drinking, *m* . . . Matt 24:38

MARTHA

Sister of Mary and Lazarus; loved by
 Jesus, John 11:1-5
 Affirms her faith, John 11:19-28
 Offers hospitality to Jesus, Luke 10:38;
 John 12:1, 2
 Gently rebuked by Christ, Luke
 10:39-42

MARTYR

m Stephen was shed . . . Acts 22:20
 was My faithful *m* . . . Rev 2:13

MARTYRS

the blood of the *m* . . . Rev 17:6

MARVEL

do not *m* at the matter . . . Eccl 5:8
 Do not *m* that I said to you, John 3:7
 Do not *m* at this . . . John 5:28
 Israel, why do you *m* at . . . Acts 3:12
 I *m* that you are turning . . . Gal 1:6
 Do not *m*, my brethren . . . 1 John 3:13

MARVELED

Jesus heard it, He *m* . . . Matt 8:10
 And the multitudes *m* . . . Matt 9:33
 these words, they *m* . . . Matt 22:22
 the governor *m* greatly . . . Matt 27:14
 He *m* because of their . . . Mark 6:6
 so that Pilate *m* . . . Mark 15:5
 His mother *m* at those . . . Luke 2:33
 believe for joy, and *m* . . . Luke 24:41
 were all amazed and *m* . . . Acts 2:7
 And all the world *m* . . . Rev 13:3
 when I saw her, I *m* . . . Rev 17:6

MARVELOUS

Remember His *m* works . . . 1 Chr 16:12
m things without number . . . Job 5:9
 will tell of all Your *m* works . . . Ps 9:1
m things He did . . . Ps 78:12
 For He has done *m* things . . . Ps 98:1
 It is *m* in our eyes . . . Ps 118:23
 I are Your works . . . Ps 139:14
 I will again do a *m* work . . . Is 29:14
 LORD has done *m* things . . . Joel 2:21
 If it is *m* in the eyes of . . . Zech 8:6
 Why, this is a *m* thing . . . John 9:30
 of darkness into His *m* . . . 1 Pet 2:9
m are Your works, Lord . . . Rev 15:3

MARVELS

people I will do *m* . . . Ex 34:10

MARY

Mother of Christ, Matt 1:16
 Visited by angel, Luke 1:26-38
 Visits Elizabeth and offers praise, Luke
 1:39-56
 Gives birth to Jesus, Luke 2:6-20
 Flees to Egypt, Matt 2:13-18
 Visits Jerusalem with Jesus, Luke
 2:41-52
 Entrusted to John's care, John
 19:25-27
 — Mother of James and Josès; pres-
 ent at crucifixion and burial, Matt
 27:55-61

Sees the risen Lord; informs disciples,
 Matt 28:1-10

— Magdalene; delivered from seven
 demons; supports Christ's ministry,
 Luke 8:2, 3

Present at crucifixion and burial, Matt
 27:55-61

First to see the risen Lord, Mark
 16:1-10; John 20:1-18

— Sister of Martha and Lazarus;
 loved by Jesus, John 11:1-5

Grieves for Lazarus, John 11:19, 20,
 28-33

Anoints Jesus, Matt 26:6-13; John
 12:1-8

Commended by Jesus, Luke 10:38-42
 — Mark's mother, Acts 12:12-17

MASSAH AND MERIBAH

First, at Rephidim, Israel just out of
 Egypt, Ex 17:1-7

Second, at Kadesh Barnea, 40 years
 later, Num 20:1-13

MASTER

of Abraham his *m* . . . Gen 24:9
 If she does not please her *m* . . . Ex 21:8
 for your *m* Saul is dead . . . 2 Sam 2:7
 If only my *m* were with . . . 2 Kin 5:3
m! For it was borrowed . . . 2 Kin 6:5
 no longer call Me 'My *M*' . . . Hos 2:16
 a servant like his *m* . . . Matt 10:25
 before him, saying, 'M' . . . Matt 18:26
 servant whom his *m* . . . Matt 24:46
 M, M, we are perishing . . . Luke 8:24
 M, it is good for us to be . . . Luke 9:33
 M of that servant will . . . Luke 12:46
 So the *m* commended the . . . Luke 16:8
 Jesus, M, have mercy . . . Luke 17:13
 the *m* of the feast called . . . John 2:9
 is not greater than his *m* . . . John 13:16
 greater than his *m* . . . John 15:20
m builder I have laid . . . 1 Cor 3:10
 own M also is in heaven . . . Eph 6:9
 and useful for the M . . . 2 Tim 2:21

MASTERS

look to the hand of their *m* . . . Ps 123:2
 the soul of his *m* . . . Prov 25:13
m besides You have . . . Is 26:13
 can serve two *m* . . . Luke 16:13
 her *m* much profit . . . Acts 16:16
 And you, *m*, do the same . . . Eph 6:9
 M, give your bondservants . . . Col 4:1
 who have believing *m* . . . 1 Tim 6:2
 be obedient to their own *m* . . . Titus 2:9

MATTANIAH

King Zedekiah's original name, 2 Kin
 24:17

MATTER

m is found in me . . . Job 19:28
 He who answers a *m* . . . Prov 18:13

MATTERS

the weightier *m* . . . Matt 23:23
 judge the smallest *m* . . . 1 Cor 6:2

MATTHEW

Becomes Christ's follower, Matt 9:9
 Chosen as one of the Twelve, Matt
 10:2, 3

Called Levi, the son of Alphaeus, Mark
 2:14

Author of the first Gospel, Matt (title)

MATTHIAS

Chosen by lot to replace Judas, Acts
 1:15-26

MATURE

among those who are *m* . . . 1 Cor 2:6
 understanding be *m* . . . 1 Cor 14:20
 us, as many as are *m* . . . Phil 3:15

MEAN

What do you *m* . . . Ex 12:26

What does this parable *m* . . . Luke 8:9
 what these things *m* . . . Acts 17:20
 I do not *m* that others . . . 2 Cor 8:13

MEANING

'What is the *m* . . . Deut 6:20
 if I do not know the *m* . . . 1 Cor 14:11

MEANS

or one tittle will by no *m* . . . Matt 5:18
 you will by no *m* enter . . . Matt 5:20
 he shall by no *m* lose his . . . Matt 10:42
 you will by no *m* enter . . . Matt 18:3
 words will by no *m* pass . . . Matt 24:35
 will by no *m* hurt them . . . Mark 16:18
 shall by any *m* hurt you . . . Luke 10:19
 to Me I will by no *m* cast . . . John 6:37
 I must by all *m* keep this . . . Acts 18:21
 I might by all *m* save . . . 1 Cor 9:22
 if, by any *m*, I may attain . . . Phil 3:11
 godliness is a *m* of gain . . . 1 Tim 6:5
 by no *m* be put to shame . . . 1 Pet 2:6

MEANT

but God *m* it for good . . . Gen 50:20

MEASURE

a perfect and just *m* . . . Deut 25:15
 give us a *m* of revival in . . . Ezra 9:8
 apportion the waters by *m* . . . Job 28:25
 what is the *m* of my days . . . Ps 39:4
 and the short *m* . . . Mic 6:10
 and with the *m* you use, it . . . Matt 7:2
 good *m*, pressed down, . . . Luke 6:38
 give the Spirit by *m* . . . John 3:34
 to each one a *m* . . . Rom 12:3
 lest I be exalted above *m* . . . 2 Cor 12:7
 to the *m* of the stature of . . . Eph 4:13
m the temple of God . . . Rev 11:1

MEASURED

m heaven with a span . . . Is 40:12
 If heaven above can be *m* . . . Jer 31:37
 nor the sand of the sea *m* . . . Jer 33:22
 cannot be *m* or numbered . . . Hos 1:10
 you use, it will be *m* . . . Matt 7:2
 it will be *m* back to you . . . Luke 6:38
 Then he *m* its wall . . . Rev 21:17

MEASURES

your house differing *m* . . . Deut 25:14
 weights and diverse *m* . . . Prov 20:10

MEASURING

will make justice the *m* line . . . Is 28:17
 the man's hand was a *m* . . . Ezek 40:5
 behold, a man with a *m* . . . Zech 2:1
m themselves by . . . 2 Cor 10:12
 given a reed like a *m* . . . Rev 11:1

MEAT

you *m* to eat in the evening . . . Ex 16:8
 But while the *m* was still . . . Num 11:33
 Can He provide *m* . . . Ps 78:20
 He also rained *m* . . . Ps 78:27
 good never to eat *m* . . . Rom 14:21
 will never again eat *m* . . . 1 Cor 8:13
 is sold in the *m* . . . 1 Cor 10:25

MEDDLE

why should you *m* . . . 2 Kin 14:10

MEDEBA

Moabite town assigned to Judah, Num
 21:29, 30; Josh 13:9, 16

MEDES, MEDIA

Part of Medo-Persian Empire, Esth 1:19
 Israel deported to, 2 Kin 17:6
 Babylon falls to, Dan 5:30, 31
 Daniel rises high in kingdom of, Dan
 6:1-28

Cyrus, king of, allows Jews to return,
 2 Chr 36:22, 23

Agents in Babylon's fall, Is 13:17-19

MEDIATE

a mediator does not *m* . . . Gal 3:20

MEDIATOR

Nor is there any *m* . . . Job 9:33

by the hand of a *m* Gal 3:19
is one God and one *M* 1 Tim 2:5
as He is also *M* Heb 8:6
to Jesus the *M* of the Heb 12:24

MEDICINE

does good, like *m* Prov 17:22

MEDICINES

you will use many *m* Jer 46:11

MEDITATE

Isaac went out to *m* Gen 24:63
but you shall *m* Josh 1:8
M within your heart on Ps 4:4
I m within my heart Ps 77:6
I will m on Your Ps 119:15
Your heart will *m* Is 33:18
m beforehand on what Luke 21:14
m on these things Phil 4:8

MEDITATES

in His law he *m* Ps 1:2

MEDITATION

O LORD, consider my *m* Ps 5:1
of my mouth and the *m* Ps 19:14
the *m* of my heart shall Ps 49:3
m be sweet to Him Ps 104:34
It is my *m* all the day Ps 119:97

MEDITERRANEAN SEA

Described as:

Sea, Gen 49:13
Great Sea, Josh 1:4; 9:1
Sea of the Philistines, Ex 23:31
Western Sea, Deut 11:24; Joel 2:20;
Zech 14:8

MEDIUM

a woman who is a *m* Lev 20:27
a woman who is a *m* 1 Sam 28:7

MEDIUM'S

shall be like a *m* Is 29:4

MEDIUMS

"Seek those who are *m* Is 8:19

MEEK

But the *m* shall inherit the Ps 37:11
with equity for the *m* Is 11:4
all you *m* of the earth Zeph 2:3
Blessed are the *m* Matt 5:5

MEEKNESS

with you by the *m* 2 Cor 10:1
are done in the *m* James 3:13
that is in you, with *m* 1 Pet 3:15

MEET

from the tent door to *m* Gen 18:2
For You *m* him with the Ps 21:3
mercies come speedily to *m* Ps 79:8
prepare to *m* your God Amos 4:12
out to *m* the bridegroom Matt 25:1
go out to *m* him Matt 25:6
a man will *m* you Luke 22:10
m the Lord in the air 1 Thess 4:17

MEETING

In the tabernacle of *m* Ex 27:21
burned up all the *m* Ps 74:8

MEGIDDO

City of Canaan; scene of battles, Judg
5:19-21; 2 Kin 23:29, 30
Fortified by Solomon, 1 Kin 9:15
Possible site of Armageddon, Rev 16:16

MELCHIZEDEK

Priest and king of Salem, Gen
14:18-20

Type of Christ's eternal priesthood,
Heb 7:1-22

MELODY

make sweet *m* Is 23:16
singing and making *m* Eph 5:19

MELT

You make his beauty *m* Ps 39:11
The mountains *m* like wax Ps 97:5

man's heart will *m* Is 13:7
mountains will *m* under Mic 1:4
the elements will *m* 2 Pet 3:10

MEMBER

body is not one *m* 1 Cor 12:14
if they were all one *m* 1 Cor 12:19
if one *m* suffers, all the 1 Cor 12:26
tongue is a little *m* James 3:5

MEMBERS

you that one of your *m* Matt 5:29
do not present your *m* Rom 6:13
have many *m* in one body Rom 12:4
that your bodies are *m* 1 Cor 6:15
there are many *m* 1 Cor 12:20
neighbor, for we are *m* Eph 4:25
m that it defiles the James 3:6

MEMORIAL

and this is My *m* Ex 3:15
day shall be to you a *m* Ex 12:14
as a *m* before your eyes, Ex 13:9
also be told as a *m* Matt 26:13
be told of as a *m* Mark 14:9
come up for a *m* before Acts 10:4

MEMORY

The *m* of him perishes Job 18:17
He may cut off the *m* Ps 109:15
The *m* of the righteous Prov 10:7

MEMPHIS (or Noph)

Ancient capital of Egypt, Hos 9:6
Propheied against by Isaiah, Is 19:13
Jews flee to, Jer 44:1
Denounced by the prophets, Jer 46:19

MEN

See WISE MEN

m began to call on the Gen 4:26
saw the daughters of *m* Gen 6:2
But the *m* of Sodom were Gen 13:13
Hebrew *m* were fighting Ex 2:13
Send *m* to spy out the Num 13:2
So Gideon took ten *m* Judg 6:27
with the LORD and *m* 1 Sam 2:26
reproach of *m*, and despised Ps 22:6
All *m* shall fear, and shall Ps 64:9
received gifts among *m* Ps 68:18
you shall die like *m* Ps 82:7
with wise *m* will be wise Prov 13:20
are the crown of old *m* Prov 17:6
not be envious of evil *m* Prov 24:1
m should fear before Him Eccl 3:14
the Egyptians are *m* Is 31:3
despised and rejected by *m* Is 53:3
I see four *m* loose Dan 3:25
make you fishers of *m* Matt 4:19
light so shine before *m* Matt 5:16
forgive *m* their trespasses Matt 6:14
confesses Me before *m* Matt 10:32
will not be forgiven *m* Matt 12:31
every idle word *m* may Matt 12:36
was carried by four *m* Mark 2:3
Who do *m* say that I am Mark 8:27
With *m* it is impossible Mark 10:27
goodwill toward *m* Luke 2:14
when all *m* speak well of Luke 6:26
m always ought to pray Luke 18:1
from heaven or from *m* Luke 20:4
the life was the light of *m* John 1:4
loved the praise of *m* John 12:43
old *m* shall dream dreams Acts 2:17
have not lied to *m* but to Acts 5:4
m everywhere to repent Acts 17:30
Likewise also the *m* Rom 1:27
in the sight of all *m* Rom 12:17
let no one boast in *m* 1 Cor 3:21
all things to all *m* 1 Cor 9:22
with the tongues of *m* 1 Cor 13:1
speak to *m* but to God 1 Cor 14:2
the Lord, and not to *m* Eph 6:7
to the tradition of *m* Col 2:8
between God and *m* 1 Tim 2:5
rejected indeed by *m* 1 Pet 2:4

In those days *m* will seek Rev 9:6
to scorch *m* with fire Rev 16:8

MENAHAM

Cruel king of Israel, 2 Kin 15:14-18

MENSERVANTS

And also on My *m* Joel 2:29
And on My *m* and on My Acts 2:18

MENTION

I will make *m* of Your Ps 71:16
make *m* that His name is Is 12:4
by You only we make *m* Is 26:13
He has made *m* of My name Is 49:1
You who make *m* of the Is 62:6
will *m* the lovingkindnesses Is 63:7
Make *m* to the nations, Jer 4:16
m of you always in Rom 1:9
He was dying, made *m* Heb 11:22

MEPHIBOSHETH

Son of King Saul, 2 Sam 21:8

—— Grandson of King Saul; crippled

son of Jonathan, 2 Sam 4:4-6

Sought out and honored by David,
2 Sam 9:1-13

Accused by Ziba, 2 Sam 16:1-4

Later explains himself to David, 2 Sam
19:24-30

Spared by David, 2 Sam 21:7

MERAB

King Saul's eldest daughter, 1 Sam
14:49

Saul promises her to David, but gives
her to Adriel, 1 Sam 18:17-19

MERARI

Third son of Levi, Gen 46:11

—— Descendants of, called Merarites:

Duties in the tabernacle, Num 3:35-37

Cities assigned to, Josh 21:7, 34-40

Duties in the temple, 1 Chr 26:10-19

Assist Ezra after Exile, Ezra 8:18, 19

MERCHANDISE

perceives that her *m* Prov 31:18
house a house of *m* John 2:16

MERCHANTS

set it in a city of *m* Ezek 17:4
have multiplied your *m* Nah 3:16
m were the great men Rev 18:23

MERCIES

for His *m* are great 2 Sam 24:14
in Your manifold *m* You Neh 9:19
multitude of Your tender *m* Ps 51:1
I will sing of the *m* of the Ps 89:1
and His tender *m* Ps 145:9
give you the sure *m* Acts 13:34
brethren, by the *m* of God Rom 12:1
the Father of *m* 2 Cor 1:3
beloved, put on tender *m* Col 3:12

MERCIFUL

LORD, the LORD God, *m* Ex 34:6
your God is a *m* God Deut 4:31
With the *m* You will show Ps 18:25
He is ever *m* Ps 37:26
God be *m* to us and Ps 67:1
for He is gracious and *m* Joel 2:13
Blessed are the *m* Matt 5:7
Therefore be *m*, just as Luke 6:36
saying, 'God be *m* Luke 18:13
For *I* will be *m* Heb 8:12
compassionate and *m* James 5:11

MERCY

See HAVE MERCY; HIS MERCY ENDURES
FOREVER

but showing *m* to Ex 20:6

You shall put the *m* seat Ex 26:34

and abundant in *m* Num 14:18

m endures forever 1 Chr 16:34

I have trusted in Your *m* Ps 13:5

to Your *m* remember me Ps 25:7

I trust in the *m* Ps 52:8

shall send forth His *m* Ps 57:3
 You, O Lord, belongs *m* Ps 62:12
m ceased forever Ps 77:8
M and truth have met Ps 85:10
M shall be built Ps 89:2
m and truth go before Ps 89:14
m is everlasting Ps 100:5
 I will sing of *m* Ps 101:1
 For Your *m* is great Ps 108:4
 is full of Your *m* Ps 119:64
 the LORD there is *m* Ps 130:7
 to anger and great in *m* Ps 145:8
 Let not *m* and truth Prov 3:3
 who honors Him has *m* Prov 14:31
 cruel and have no *m* Jer 6:23
 Lord our God belong *m* Dan 9:9
 For I desire *m* and not Hos 6:6
 do justly, to love *m* Mic 6:8
 'I desire *m* and not Matt 9:13
 And His *m* is on those Luke 1:50
 "I will have *m* Rom 9:15
 of God who shows *m* Rom 9:16
 that He might have *m* Rom 11:32
m has made trustworthy 1 Cor 7:25
 as we have received *m* 2 Cor 4:1
 God, who is rich in *m* Eph 2:4
 but I obtained *m* 1 Tim 1:13
 that he may find *m* 2 Tim 1:18
 to His *m* He saved us Titus 3:5
 that we may obtain *m* Heb 4:16
 judgment is without *m* James 2:13
 God, looking for the *m* Jude 21

MERCY SEAT

make a *m* Ex 25:17
 put the *m* on top of the Ex 40:20
 the veil, before the *m* Lev 16:2
 incense may cover the *m* Lev 16:13
 to him from above the *m* Num 7:89
 and the place of the *m* 1 Chr 28:11
 glory overshadowing the *m* Heb 9:5

MERIB-BAAL

Another name for Mephibosheth, 1 Chr 8:34

MERODACH

Supreme deity of the Babylonians, Jer 50:2
 Otherwise called Bel, Is 46:1

MERODACH-BALADAN

Sends ambassadors to Hezekiah, Is 39:1-8
 Also called Berodach-Baladan, 2 Kin 20:12

MEROM

Lake on Jordan, Josh 11:5, 7

MEROZ

Town cursed for failing to help the Lord, Judg 5:23

MERRY

m heart makes a Prov 15:13
A *m* heart does good Prov 17:22
 eat, drink, and be *m* Eccl 8:15
 eat, drink, and be *m* Luke 12:19
 we should make *m* Luke 15:32

MESHACH

Babylonian name given to Mishaël, Dan 1:7
 Advanced to high position, Dan 2:49
 Remains faithful in testing, Dan 3:13-30

MESHECH

Son of Japheth, Gen 10:2
 His descendants, mentioned in prophecy, Ezek 27:13; 32:26; 38:2, 3

MESOPOTAMIA

Home of Abraham's relatives, Gen 24:4, 10, 15
 Called Padan Aram and Syria, Gen 25:20; 31:20, 24

Israel enslaved to, Judg 3:8-10
 Jews from, present at Pentecost, Acts 2:9

MESSAGE

He who sends a *m* by the Prov 26:6
 I have heard a *m* Jer 49:14
m was revealed to Daniel Dan 10:1
 to it the *m* that I tell you Jon 3:2
 For the *m* of the cross 1 Cor 1:18
 is the *m* which we have 1 John 1:5

MESSENGER

Jezebel sent a *m* to Elijah 1 Kin 19:2
a *m* came to Job and said, Job 1:14
 is a faithful *m* Prov 25:13
 "Behold, I send My *m* Mal 3:1
 "Behold, I send My *m* Matt 11:10
a *m* of Satan to buffet me 2 Cor 12:7

MESSIAH

until *M* the Prince Dan 9:25
 "We have found the *M* John 1:41

MET

the angels of God *m* him Gen 32:1
 and truth have *m* together Ps 85:10
 there *m* Him ten men Luke 17:12
m Him, but Mary was John 11:20
 coming in, Cornelius *m* Acts 10:25
 spirit of divination *m* us Acts 16:16
 who *m* Abraham returning Heb 7:1

METHUSELAH

Oldest man on record, Gen 5:27

MICAH

Prophet, contemporary of Isaiah, Is 1:1;
 Mic 1:1

MICAHIAH (or Michaiah)

Prophet who predicts Ahab's death, 1 Kin 22:8-28
 ——— Contemporary of Jeremiah, Jer 36:11-13

MICHAEL

Chief prophet, Dan 10:13, 21
 Disputes with Satan, Jude 9
 Fights the dragon, Rev 12:7-9

MICHAL

Daughter of King Saul, 1 Sam 14:49
 Loves and marries David, 1 Sam 18:20-28
 Saves David from Saul, 1 Sam 19:9-17
 Given to Palti, 1 Sam 25:44
 David demands her from Abner, 2 Sam 3:13-16
 Ridicules David; becomes barren, 2 Sam 6:16-23

MICHMASH

Site of battle with Philistines, 1 Sam 13:5, 11, 16, 23
 Scene of Jonathan's victory, 1 Sam 14:1-16

MIDDLE

in the *m* of a wheel Ezek 10:10
 boat was in the *m* of the Mark 6:47
 about the *m* of the feast John 7:14
 broken down the *m* wall Eph 2:14

MIDIAN

Son of Abraham by Keturah, Gen 25:1-4
 ——— Region in the Arabian desert occupied by the Midianites, Gen 25:6; Ex 2:15

MIDIANITES

Descendants of Abraham by Keturah, Gen 25:1, 2
 Moses flees to, Ex 2:15
 Join Moab in cursing Israel, Num 22:4-7
 Intermarriage with incurs God's wrath, Num 25:1-18
 Defeated by Israel, Num 31:1-10

Oppress Israel; defeated by Gideon, Judg 6:7

MIDST

God is in the *m* Ps 46:5
 that I am in the *m* Joel 2:27
 I am there in the *m* Matt 18:20

MIGDOL

Israelite encampment, Ex 14:2
 Place Jews flee to in Egypt, Jer 44:1

MIGHT

"My power and the *m* Deut 8:17
 hand is power and *m* 1 Chr 29:12
 shall speak of the *m* Ps 145:6
 to do, do it with your *m* Eccl 9:10
 the Spirit of counsel and *m* Is 11:2
 the greatness of His *m* Is 40:26
 man glory in his *m* Jer 9:23
 their *m* has failed Jer 51:30
 "Not by *m* nor by Zech 4:6
 and power and *m* Eph 1:21
 in the power of His *m* Eph 6:10
 greater in power and *m* 2 Pet 2:11
 honor and power and *m* Rev 7:12

MIGHTIER

The LORD on high is *m* Ps 93:4
 coming after me is *m* Matt 3:11

MIGHTILY

to shake the earth *m* Is 2:19
 sackcloth, and cry *m* to God Jon 3:8
 word of the Lord grew *m* Acts 19:20
 which works in me *m* Col 1:29
 cried *m* with a loud voice, Rev 18:2

MIGHTY

Those were the *m* men who Gen 6:4
 He was a *m* hunter Gen 10:9
 and grew exceedingly *m* Ex 1:7
 son's of the *m* things I Ex 10:2
 for they are too *m* Num 22:6
 with His *m* power Deut 4:37
 How the *m* have fallen 2 Sam 1:19
 is wise in heart and *m* Job 9:4
 The LORD *m* in battle Ps 24:8
m man is not delivered by Ps 33:16
 The *M* One, God the LORD, Ps 50:1
 the *m* acts of the LORD Ps 106:2
 Praise Him for His *m* acts Ps 150:2
 their Redeemer is *m* Prov 23:11
 Woe to men *m* at Is 5:22
M God, Everlasting Father, Is 9:6
 Redeemer, the *M* One of Is 49:26
 in righteousness, *m* to save Is 63:1
 great in counsel and *m* Jer 32:19
 righteousness like a *m* Amos 5:24
m men are made red Nah 2:3
 For if the *m* works Matt 11:21
 not do many *m* works Matt 13:58
m has done great Luke 1:49
 He has put down the *m* Luke 1:52
 as of a rushing *m* wind Acts 2:2
 the flesh, not many *m* 1 Cor 1:26
m in God for pulling 2 Cor 10:4
 the working of His *m* Eph 1:19
 from heaven with His *m* 2 Thess 1:7
 city Babylon, that *m* city Rev 18:10

MILCOM

Ammonite god worshiped by Solomon, 1 Kin 11:5
 Altar of, destroyed by Josiah, 2 Kin 23:12, 13

MILETUS

Paul meets Ephesian elders here, Acts 20:15-38
 Paul leaves Trophimus here, 2 Tim 4:20

MILK

to a land flowing with *m* Ex 3:8
 for water, she gave *m* Judg 5:25
 not pour me out like *m* Job 10:10
 honey and *m* are under Song 4:11

come, buy wine and *m* Is 55:1
and whiter than *m* Lam 4:7
shall flow with *m* Joel 3:18
have come to need *m* Heb 5:12
m is unskilled in the Heb 5:13
desire the pure *m* 1 Pet 2:2

MILK AND HONEY

to a land flowing with *m* Ex 3:8
It truly flows with *m* Num 13:27
land flowing with *m* Deut 6:3
land flowing with *m* Josh 5:6
land flowing with *m* Jer 11:5
m, the glory of all Ezek 20:6

MILL

be grinding at the *m* Matt 24:41

MILLO

Fort at Jerusalem, 2 Sam 5:9
Prepared by Solomon, 1 Kin 9:15
Strengthened by Hezekiah, 2 Chr 32:5
Scene of Joash's death, 2 Kin 12:20, 21

MILLSTONE

m were hung around his Matt 18:6
a stone like a great *m* Rev 18:21

MIND

the people had a *m* to work Neh 4:6
put wisdom in the *m* Job 38:36
perfect peace, whose *m* Is 26:3
and with all your *m* Matt 22:37
and in his right *m* Mark 5:15
nor have an anxious *m* Luke 12:29
m I myself serve the Rom 7:25
Because the carnal *m* is Rom 8:7
the *m* of the Spirit is Rom 8:27
who has known the *m* Rom 11:34
renewing of your *m* Rom 12:2
Be of the same *m* Rom 12:16
convinced in his own *m* Rom 14:5
have the *m* of Christ 1 Cor 2:16
you are out of your *m* 1 Cor 14:23
Let this *m* be in you Phil 2:5
Set your *m* on things above, Col 3:2
to *m* your own 1 Thess 4:11
love and of a sound *m* 2 Tim 1:7
put My laws in their *m* Heb 8:10
the loins of your *m* 1 Pet 1:13

MINDFUL

is man that You are *m* Ps 8:4
The LORD has been *m* Ps 115:12
for you are not *m* Matt 16:23
is man that You are *m* Heb 2:6

MINDS

people change their *m* Ex 13:17
put My law in their *m* Jer 31:33
I stir up your pure *m* 2 Pet 3:1
He who searches the *m* Rev 2:23

MINISTER

to make you a *m* Acts 26:16
for he is God's *m* Rom 13:4
you will be a good *m* 1 Tim 4:6
spirits sent forth to *m* for Heb 1:14
a *M* of the sanctuary Heb 8:2

MINISTERED

But the child *m* 1 Sam 2:11
a thousand thousands *m* Dan 7:10
angels came and *m* to Matt 4:11
As they *m* to the Lord Acts 13:2

MINISTERS

angels spirits, His *m* Ps 104:4
for they are God's *m* Rom 13:6
commend ourselves as *m* 2 Cor 6:4
Are they *m* of Christ 2 Cor 11:23
If anyone *m* 1 Pet 4:11

MINISTRIES

are differences of *m* 1 Cor 12:5

MINISTRY

I magnify my *m* Rom 11:13
But if the *m* of death 2 Cor 3:7

since we have this *m* 2 Cor 4:1
and has given us the *m* 2 Cor 5:18
for the work of *m* Eph 4:12
m which you have Col 4:17
fulfill your *m* 2 Tim 4:5
a more excellent *m* Heb 8:6

MINT

For you pay tithe of *m* Matt 23:23

MIRACLE

saying, 'Show a *m* Ex 7:9
no one who works a *m* Mark 9:39
see some *m* done by Him Luke 23:8
that a notable *m* Acts 4:16

MIRACLES

God worked unusual *m* Acts 19:11
the working of *m* 1 Cor 12:10
Are all workers of *m* 1 Cor 12:29
with various *m* Heb 2:4

MIRIAM

Sister of Aaron and Moses, Num 26:59
Chosen by God; called a prophetess,
Ex 15:20
Punished for rebellion, Num 12:1–16
Buried at Kadesh, Num 20:1

MIRTH

I will test you with *m* Eccl 2:1
is in the house of *m* Eccl 7:4
joy is darkened, the *m* Is 24:11

MISER

eat the bread of a *m* Prov 23:6

MISERIES

m that are coming James 5:1

MISERY

would forget your *m* Job 11:16
and remember his *m* Prov 31:7

MISTREATED

But the Egyptians *m* Deut 26:6
those who are *m* Heb 13:3

MISTREATS

m his father and Prov 19:26

MITES

widow putting in two *m* Luke 21:2

MITYLENE

Visited by Paul, Acts 20:13–15

MIZPAH

Site of covenant between Jacob and
Laban, Gen 31:44–53
—— Town of Benjamin; outraged Isra-
elites gather here, Josh 18:21, 26;
Judg 20:1, 3
Samuel gathers Israel, 1 Sam 7:5–16;
10:17–25
Residence of Gedaliah, 2 Kin 25:23, 25

MOAB

Son of Lot, Gen 19:33–37
—— Country of the Moabites, Deut 1:5

MOABITES

Descendants of Lot, Gen 19:36, 37
Join Midian in cursing Israel, Num 22:4
Excluded from Israel, Deut 23:3–6
Kindred of Ruth, Ruth 1:4
Subdued by Israel, 1 Sam 14:47; 2 Sam
8:2; 2 Kin 3:4–27
Women of, lead Solomon astray, 1 Kin
11:1–8
Prophecies concerning, Is 11:14;
15:1–9; Jer 48:1–47; Amos 2:1–3

MOAN

m sadly like doves Is 59:11

MOCK

I will *m* when you Prov 1:26
Fools *m* at sin Prov 14:9
to the Gentiles to *m* Matt 20:19

MOCKED

at noon, that Elijah *m* 1 Kin 18:27

"I am one *m* by his Job 12:4
knee before Him and *m* Matt 27:29
deceived, God is not *m* Gal 6:7

MOCKER

Wine is a *m* Prov 20:1

MOCKERS

that there would be *m* Jude 18

MOCKINGS

others had trial of *m* Heb 11:36

MOCKS

He who *m* the poor Prov 17:5

MODERATION

with propriety and *m* 1 Tim 2:9

MOLECH

God of the Ammonites; worshiped by
Solomon, 1 Kin 11:7
Human sacrifice made to, Lev 18:21;
2 Kin 23:10

MOMENT

consume them in a *m* Num 16:21
In a *m* they die Job 34:20
For His anger is but for a *m* Ps 30:5
face from you for a *m* Is 54:8
of the world in a *m* of time Luke 4:5
m, in the twinkling 1 Cor 15:52
which is but for a *m* 2 Cor 4:17

MONEY

man's *m* to his sack Gen 42:25
does not put out his *m* Ps 15:5
m answers every Eccl 10:19
be redeemed without *m* Is 52:3
and you who have no *m* Is 55:1
of the *m* changers Matt 21:12
and hid his lord's *m* Matt 25:18
put *m* into the treasury Mark 12:41
promised to give him *m* Mark 14:11
Carry neither *m* Luke 10:4
I sent you without *m* Luke 22:35
the *m* changers doing John 2:14
a thief, and had the *m* John 12:6
be purchased with *m* Acts 8:20
not greedy for *m* 1 Tim 3:3
m is a root of all 1 Tim 6:10
not greedy for *m* Titus 1:7

MONSTER

me up like a *m* Jer 51:34
of Egypt, O great *m* Ezek 29:3

MONTH

ark rested in the seventh *m* Gen 8:4
first *m* of the year to you Ex 12:2
will bear fruit every *m* Ezek 47:12
latter rain in the first *m* Joel 2:23
in the sixth *m* the angel Luke 1:26
this is now the sixth *m* Luke 1:36
yielding its fruit every *m* Rev 22:2

MONTHS

child, she hid him three *m* Ex 2:2
with her about three *m* Luke 1:56
up three years and six *m* Luke 4:25
You observe days and *m* Gal 4:10
to torment them for five *m* Rev 9:5
continue for forty-two *m* Rev 13:5

MOON

this time, the sun, the *m* Gen 37:9
and the *m* stopped, till Josh 10:13
of Your fingers, the *m* Ps 8:3
until the *m* is no more Ps 72:7
the *m* for seasons Ps 104:19
by day, nor the *m* by night Ps 121:6
morning, fair as the *m* Song 6:10
sun and *m* grow dark Joel 2:10
the *m* into blood, before Joel 2:31
and *m* will grow dark, and Joel 3:15
sun and *m* stood still in Hab 3:11
m will not give its Mark 13:24
in the sun, in the *m* Luke 21:25
or a new *m* or sabbaths, Col 2:16

the *m* became like blood Rev 6:12
or of the *m* to shine in it Rev 21:23

MORDECAI

Esther's guardian; advises her, Esth
2:5–20
Reveals plot to kill the king, Esth
2:21–23
Refuses homage to Haman, Esth
3:1–6
Honored by the king, Esth 6:1–12
Exalted highly, Esth 8:15; 9:4
Institutes feast of Purim, Esth 9:20–31

MORESHETH GATH

Birthplace of Micah the prophet, Mic
1:14

MORIAH

See MOUNT MORIAH

MORNING

the *m* were the first day Gen 1:5
none of it remain until *m* Ex 12:10
they gathered it every *m* Ex 16:21
up in the *m* to Mount Sinai Ex 34:2
she lay at his feet until *m* Ruth 3:14
the eyelids of the *m* Job 41:18
You shall hear in the *m* Ps 5:3
but joy comes in the *m* Ps 30:5
Evening and *m* and at Ps 55:17
in the *m* my prayer comes Ps 88:13
lovingkindness in the *m* Ps 92:2
the wings of the *m* Ps 139:9
looks forth as the *m* Song 6:10
Lucifer, son of the *m* Is 14:12
shall break forth like the *m* Is 58:8
They are new every *m* Lam 3:23
established as the *m* Hos 6:3
in the *m*, 'It will be foul Matt 16:3
rooster, or in the *m* Mark 13:35
very early in the *m* Luke 24:1
the *m* star rises in your 2 Pet 1:19
the Bright and *M* Star Rev 22:16

MORSEL

or eaten my *m* by Job 31:17
Better is a dry *m* Prov 17:1
Esau, who for one *m* Heb 12:16

MORTAL

m sin reign in your *m* Rom 6:12
m bodies through His Rom 8:11
and this *m* must put 1 Cor 15:53
Here *m* men receive tithes, Heb 7:8

MORTALITY

m may be swallowed 2 Cor 5:4

MORTALS

with idolatrous *m* Ps 26:4

MOSES

See LAW OF MOSES
Born; hidden by mother; adopted by
Pharaoh's daughter, Ex 2:1–10
Kills Egyptian and flees to Midian, Ex
2:11–22
Receives call from God, Ex 3:1–4:17
Returns to Israelites in Egypt, Ex
4:18–31
Wins Israel's deliverance with plagues,
Ex 5:1–6:13; 6:28–11:10; 12:29–42
Leads Israel out of Egypt and through
the Red Sea, Ex 13:17–14:31
His song of praise, Ex 15:1–18
Provides miraculously for the people,
Ex 15:22–17:7
Appoints judges, Ex 18
Receives the law on Mount Sinai, Ex
19–23
Receives instructions for tabernacle,
Ex 25–31
Intercedes for Israel's sin, Ex 32
Recommissioned and encouraged, Ex
33; 34
Further instructions and building of the
tabernacle, Ex 35–40

Consecrates Aaron, Lev 8:1–36
Takes census, Num 1:1–54
Resumes journey to Canaan, Num
10:11–36
Complains; 70 elders appointed, Num
11:1–35
Intercedes for people when they refuse
to enter Canaan, Num 14:11–25
Puts down Korah's rebellion, Num 16
Sins in anger, Num 20:1–13
Makes bronze serpent, Num 21:4–9
Travels toward Canaan, Num 21:10–20
Takes second census, Num 26
Commissions Joshua as his successor,
Num 27:12–23
Receives further laws, Num 28–30
Commands conquest of Midian, Num
31
Final instructions, Num 32–36
Forbidden to enter Promised Land,
Deut 3:23–28
Gives farewell messages, Deut 32; 33
Sees Promised Land; dies, Deut
34:1–7
Is mourned and extolled, Deut 34:8–12
Appears with Christ at transfiguration,
Matt 17:1–3

MOST

His mouth is *m* sweet Song 5:16
on your *m* holy faith Jude 20

MOST HIGH

be Abram of God *M* Gen 14:19
the knowledge of the *M* Num 24:16
the *M* uttered His voice 2 Sam 22:14
praise to Your name, O *M* Ps 9:2
through the mercy of the *M* Ps 21:7
the Lord *M* is awesome Ps 47:2
I will cry out to God *M* Ps 57:2
M God their Redeemer Ps 78:35
you are children of the *M* Ps 82:6
secret place of the *M* Ps 91:1
the counsel of the *M* Ps 107:11
I will be like the *M* Is 14:14
from the mouth of the *M* Lam 3:38
servants of the *M* God Dan 4:17
M rules in the kingdom of Dan 4:17
But the saints of the *M* Dan 7:18
Though they call to the *M* Hos 11:7
Jesus, Son of the *M* Mark 5:7
M does not dwell in Acts 7:48
are the servants of the *M* Acts 16:17
Salem, priest of the *M* Heb 7:1

MOST HOLY PLACE

m you shall eat it Num 18:10
sanctuary, as the *M* 1 Kin 6:16
And he made the *M* 2 Chr 3:8
to me, "This is the *M* Ezek 41:4
blood He entered the *M* Heb 9:12
high priest enters the *M* Heb 9:25

MOTH

m will eat them Is 50:9
where *m* and rust Matt 6:19

MOTHER

because she was the *m* Gen 3:20
your father and your *m* Ex 20:12
your father and your *m* Deut 5:16
like a joyful *m* Ps 113:9
son is the grief of his *m* Prov 10:1
the only one of her *m* Song 6:9
m might have been my Jer 20:17
Like *m*, like daughter Ezek 16:44
Child with Mary His *m* Matt 2:11
who loves father or *m* Matt 10:37
leave his father and *m* Matt 19:5
Who is My *m*, or My Mark 3:33
His *m* marveled at those Luke 2:33
but His *m* kept all these Luke 2:51
wife's *m* was sick Luke 4:38
out, the only son of his *m* Luke 7:12
m against daughter Luke 12:53

hate his father and *m* Luke 14:26
"Behold your *m* John 19:27
free, which is the *m* Gal 4:26
without father, without *m* Heb 7:3
The *M* of Harlots Rev 17:5

MOTHER'S

return each to her *m* house Ruth 1:8
Naked I came from my *m* Job 1:21
while on My *m* breasts Ps 22:9
who took me out of my *m* Ps 71:6
Spirit, even from his *m* Luke 1:15
his *m* womb was carried Acts 3:2

MOUNT

the *M* of the LORD it shall Gen 22:14
come up to *M* Sinai Ex 19:23
came down from *M* Sinai Ex 34:29
M Zion on the sides of the Ps 48:2
Let *M* Zion rejoice, let the Ps 48:11
the LORD are like *M* Zion Ps 125:1
you like *M* Carmel Song 7:5
they shall *m* up with Is 40:31
stand on the *M* of Olives Zech 14:4
He sat on the *M* of Olives Matt 24:3
to the *M* of Olives Mark 14:26
for this Hagar is *M* Gal 4:25

MOUNT CARMEL

Prophets gather at, 1 Kin 18:19, 20
Elisha journeys to, 2 Kin 2:25
Shunammite woman comes to Elisha
at, 2 Kin 4:25

MOUNT EBAL

Cursed by God, Deut 11:29
Joshua builds an altar on, Josh 8:30

MOUNT GERIZIM

Mount of blessing, Deut 11:29; 27:12
Jotham speaks to people of Shechem
here, Judg 9:7
Samaritans' sacred mountain, John
4:20, 21

MOUNT GILBOA

Men of Israel slain at, 1 Sam 31:1
Saul and his sons slain at, 1 Sam 31:8

MOUNT GILEAD

Gideon divides the people for battle at,
Judg 7:3

MOUNT HOR

Lord speaks to Moses and Aaron on,
Num 20:23
Aaron dies on, Num 20:25–28

MOUNT HOREB

Sons of Israel stripped of ornaments
at, Ex 33:6
The same as Sinai, Ex 3:1

MOUNT MORIAH

Place where Abraham offered Isaac,
Gen 22:2
Elevation where Solomon built the tem-
ple, 1 Chr 3:1

MOUNT NEBO

Place where Moses viewed the
Promised Land, Deut 32:49

MOUNT OF OLIVES

See OLIVES, MOUNT OF

MOUNT SINAI

Lord descends upon, in fire, Ex 19:18
Lord calls Moses to the top of, Ex 19:20
The glory of the Lord rests on, for six
days, Ex 24:16

MOUNT TABOR

Deborah sends Barak there to defeat
Canaanites, Judg 4:6–14

MOUNT ZION

Survivors shall go out from, 2 Kin 19:31

MOUNTAIN

to Horeb, the *m* Ex 3:1
Whoever touches the *m* Ex 19:12

and a thick cloud on the *m* ... Ex 19:16
 Moses was on the *m* forty ... Ex 24:18
 "But as a *m* falls ... Job 14:18
 You have made my *m* ... Ps 30:7
 of many peaks is the *m* ... Ps 68:15
 let us go up to the *m* ... Is 2:3
 be exalted, and every *m* ... Is 40:4
 image became a great *m* ... Dan 2:35
 an alarm in My holy *m* ... Joel 2:1
 Who are you, O great *m* ... Zech 4:7
 on an exceedingly high *m* ... Matt 4:8
 He went up on a *m* ... Matt 5:1
 you will say to this *m* ... Matt 17:20
 came down from the *m* ... Mark 9:9
 whoever says to this *m* ... Mark 11:23
 shall be filled and every *m* ... Luke 3:5
 feeding there on the *m* ... Luke 8:32
 worshipped on this *m* ... John 4:20
 with Him on the holy *m* ... 2 Pet 1:18
 it is rolled up, and every *m* ... Rev 6:14
 to a great and high *m* ... Rev 21:10

MOUNTAINS

tops of the *m* were seen ... Gen 8:5
 He removes the *m* ... Job 9:5
 Surely the *m* yield ... Job 40:20
 though the *m* be carried ... Ps 46:2
m will bring peace ... Ps 72:3
 excellent than the *m* ... Ps 76:4
m were brought forth ... Ps 90:2
m melt like wax at the ... Ps 97:5
m skipped like rams ... Ps 114:4
m surround Jerusalem ... Ps 125:2
 forth into singing, you *m* ... Is 44:23
 How beautiful upon the *m* ... Is 52:7
m shall depart and the ... Is 54:10
m shook at Your presence ... Is 64:3
m shall be thrown down ... Ezek 38:20
 in Judea flee to the *m* ... Matt 24:16
 and day, he was in the *m* ... Mark 5:5
 begin 'to say to the *m* ... Luke 23:30
 that I could remove *m* ... 1 Cor 13:2
 in deserts and *m* ... Heb 11:38
m were not found ... Rev 16:20

MOURN

and you *m* at last ... Prov 5:11
 a time to *m* ... Eccl 3:4
 to comfort all who *m* ... Is 61:2
 will *m* for Him as one ... Zech 12:10
 are those who *m* ... Matt 5:4
m as long as the ... Matt 9:15
 Lament and *m* and weep ... James 4:9
 of the earth will *m* ... Rev 1:7

MOURNED

we *m* to you ... Matt 11:17
 and have not rather *m* ... 1 Cor 5:2

MOURNING

This is a deep *m* ... Gen 50:11
 for me my *m* into dancing ... Ps 30:11
m all the day long ... Ps 38:6
m shall be ended ... Is 60:20
 ashes, the oil of joy for *m* ... Is 61:3
 men break bread in *m* ... Jer 16:7
 I will turn their *m* ... Jer 31:13
 shall be a great *m* ... Zech 12:11
 be turned to *m* and ... James 4:9

MOURNS

heavily, as one who *m* ... Ps 35:14
 The earth *m* and fades ... Is 24:4
 for Him as one *m* ... Zech 12:10

MOUTH

"Who has made man's *m* ... Ex 4:11
 and put the words in his *m* ... Ex 4:15
 the earth opened its *m* ... Num 16:32
 the *m* of the donkey ... Num 22:28
 from the *m* of the LORD ... Deut 8:3
 near you, in your *m* ... Deut 30:14
 not depart from your *m* ... Josh 1:8
 Out of the *m* of babes ... Ps 8:2
 Let the words of my *m* and ... Ps 19:14
 shall continually be in my *m* ... Ps 34:1

The *m* of the righteous ... Ps 37:30
m shall speak wisdom ... Ps 49:3
 my *m* shall show forth ... Ps 51:15
 with my *m* will I make ... Ps 89:1
 iniquity stops its *m* ... Ps 107:42
 Then our *m* was filled with ... Ps 126:2
 by the words of your *m* ... Prov 6:2
 knowledge, but the *m* ... Prov 10:14
 by the fruit of his *m* ... Prov 12:14
m preserves his life ... Prov 13:3
 The *m* of an immoral ... Prov 22:14
 and a flattering *m* ... Prov 26:28
 her *m* with wisdom ... Prov 31:26
 And he touched my *m* with ... Is 6:7
 yet He opened not His *m* ... Is 53:7
 not depart from your *m* ... Is 59:21
 put My words in your *m* ... Jer 1:9
 it was in my *m* like honey ... Ezek 3:3
m speaking pompous ... Dan 7:8
 the doors of your *m* ... Mic 7:5
 from the *m* of God ... Matt 4:4
 near to Me with their *m* ... Matt 15:8
m defiles a man ... Matt 15:11
 that 'by the *m* of two or ... Matt 18:16
 'Out of the *m* of babes ... Matt 21:16
m I will judge you ... Luke 19:22
 I will give you a *m* ... Luke 21:15
 so He opened not His *m* ... Acts 8:32
 is near you, in your *m* ... Rom 10:8
 with your *m* the Lord ... Rom 10:9
m confession is made ... Rom 10:10
 proceed out of your *m*, but ... Eph 4:29
 the same *m* proceed ... James 3:10
m great swelling words ... Jude 16
 vomit you out of My *m* ... Rev 3:16
 sweet as honey in your *m* ... Rev 10:9
m was found no deceit ... Rev 14:5

MOUTHS

gape at Me with their *m* ... Ps 22:13
 food was still in their *m* ... Ps 78:30
 have *m*, but they do not ... Ps 115:5
 near to Me with their *m* ... Is 29:13
 and shut the lions' *m* ... Dan 6:22

MOVE

and the earth will *m* ... Is 13:13
 the mountain shall *m* ... Zech 14:4
 M from here to there ... Matt 17:20
m them with one of their ... Matt 23:4
 in Him we live and *m* ... Acts 17:28

MOVED

shall never be *m* ... Ps 15:5
 right hand I shall not be *m* ... Ps 16:8
 she shall not be *m* ... Ps 46:5
 I shall not be greatly *m* ... Ps 62:2
m Him to jealousy with ... Ps 78:58
m with compassion ... Matt 14:14
 all the city was *m* ... Matt 21:10
 spoke as they were *m* ... 2 Pet 1:21

MUCH

m study is wearisome ... Eccl 12:12
m better than wine is ... Song 4:10
 to whom *m* is given ... Luke 12:48
M more than ... Rom 5:9

MULTIPLIED

the more they *m* and grew ... Ex 1:12
 sorrows shall be *m* ... Ps 16:4
 your days will be *m* ... Prov 9:11
 When the wicked are *m* ... Prov 29:16
m before You, and our sins ... Is 59:12
 of the disciples *m* ... Acts 6:7
 Holy Spirit, they were *m* ... Acts 9:31
 word of God grew and *m* ... Acts 12:24
 peace, and love be *m* to you ... Jude 2

MULTIPLY

See BE FRUITFUL AND MULTIPLY
 "Be fruitful and *m* ... Gen 1:22
 will greatly *m* your sorrow ... Gen 3:16
m your descendants ... Gen 16:10
 multiplying I will *m* your ... Gen 22:17
m my days as the ... Job 29:18

m the descendants ... Jer 33:22
m the seed you have ... 2 Cor 9:10

MULTITUDE

stars of heaven in *m* ... Deut 1:10
m of years should teach ... Job 32:7
 Your house in the *m* ... Ps 5:7
m that kept a pilgrim ... Ps 42:4
 in the *m* of Your mercy ... Ps 69:13
 In the *m* of words sin ... Prov 10:19
 In a *m* of people is a ... Prov 14:28
 bury Gog and all his *m* ... Ezek 39:11
 to the *m* in parables ... Matt 13:34
 compassion on the *m* ... Matt 15:32
 commanded the *m* to sit ... Matt 15:35
 a great *m* followed Him ... Matt 20:29
 with the angel a *m* ... Luke 2:13
 whole *m* sought to touch ... Luke 6:19
 because of the *m* of fish ... John 21:6
 stars of the sky in *m* ... Heb 11:12
 "love will cover a *m* ... 1 Pet 4:8
 and behold, a great *m* ... Rev 7:9
 voice of a great *m* in ... Rev 19:1

MULTITUDES

M, *m* in the valley of ... Joel 3:14
 when the *m* saw it, they ... Matt 9:8
 all the *m* were amazed ... Matt 12:23
 He commanded the *m* to ... Matt 14:19
 taught the *m* from the ... Luke 5:3
m throng and press You ... Luke 8:45
m from sacrificing to ... Acts 14:18

MURDER

"You shall not *m* ... Ex 20:13
 Will you steal, *m* commit ... Jer 7:9
 'You shall not *m* ... Matt 5:21
 they had committed *m* in ... Mark 15:7
 threats and *m* against ... Acts 9:1
 full of envy, *m* strife ... Rom 1:29
 You *m* and covet and ... James 4:2

MURDERED

sons of those who *m* ... Matt 23:31
 Jesus whom you *m* ... Acts 5:30
 one and *m* his brother ... 1 John 3:12

MURDERER

He was a *m* from the ... John 8:44
 and asked for a *m* ... Acts 3:14
 of you suffer as a *m* ... 1 Pet 4:15
 his brother is a *m* ... 1 John 3:15

MURDERERS

in it, but now *m* ... Is 1:21
 and profane, for *m* ... 1 Tim 1:9
 abominable, *m* ... Rev 21:8

MURDERS

whoever *m* will be in ... Matt 5:21
 evil thoughts, *m* ... Matt 15:19
 envy, *m*, drunkenness ... Gal 5:21
 did not repent of their *m* ... Rev 9:21

MUSIC

So David played *m* ... 1 Sam 18:10
 I will play *m* before the ... 2 Sam 6:21
 Israel played *m* before ... 1 Chr 13:8
 whirling and playing *m* ... 1 Chr 15:29
 but Asaph made *m* with ... 1 Chr 16:5
 the *m* of the LORD, which ... 2 Chr 7:6
m are brought low ... Eccl 12:4
 the house, he heard *m* ... Luke 15:25

MUSING

while I was *m*, the fire ... Ps 39:3

MUST

touches the altar *m* be ... Ex 29:37
 I *m* be regarded as holy ... Lev 10:3
m be careful to observe ... Deut 8:1
 is sleeping and *m* be ... 1 Kin 18:27
 Him, and you *m* wait for ... Job 35:14
 He *m* restore sevenfold ... Prov 6:31
 precept *m* be upon precept ... Is 28:10
 that Elijah *m* come first ... Matt 17:10
 offenses *m* come, but woe ... Matt 18:7
 Man *m* suffer many ... Mark 8:31

such things *m* happen Mark 13:7
 And the gospel *m* first Mark 13:10
m be about My Father's Luke 2:49
 you, 'You *m* be born again' John 3:7
 He *m* increase, but I John 3:30
 Him *m* worship in spirit John 4:24
 I *m* work the works of John 9:4
 that He *m* rise again from John 20:9
 by which *m* *m* be saved Acts 4:12
m suffer for My name's Acts 9:16
 you *m* not call common Acts 10:15
m put on incorruption, 1 Cor 15:53
 If I *m* boast, I will 2 Cor 11:30
 bishop then *m* be 1 Tim 3:2
 deacons *m* be reverent 1 Tim 3:8
 servant of the Lord *m* 2 Tim 2:24
 to God *m* believe that He Heb 11:6
m love his brother also 1 John 4:21
 things which *m* shortly Rev 1:1
m be released for a little Rev 20:3
m shortly take place Rev 22:6

MUSTARD

heaven is like a *m* seed Matt 13:31
 have faith as a *m* seed Matt 17:20

MUTE

Or who makes the *m* Ex 4:11
m who does not open Ps 38:13
 I was *m* with silence Ps 39:2
 was cast out, the *m* spoke Matt 9:33
 who has a *m* spirit Mark 9:17
 But behold, you will be *m* Luke 1:20
 demon, and it was *m* Luke 11:14

MUTILATION

beware of the *m* Phil 3:2

MUTUAL

by the *m* faith both Rom 1:12

MUZZLE

"You shall not *m* Deut 25:4
 "You shall not *m* 1 Tim 5:18

MY RIGHT HAND

Because He is at *m* Ps 16:8
 You hold me by *m* Ps 73:23
 my Lord, "Sit at *M* Ps 110:1
 let *m* forget its skill Ps 137:5
 Look on *m* and see Ps 142:4
 and *M* has stretched out Is 48:13
 but to sit on *M* Matt 20:23
 to my Lord, "Sit at *M* Matt 22:44
 for He is at *m* Acts 2:25
 Sit at *M*, till I make Heb 1:13
 stars which you saw in *M* Rev 1:20

MYRA

Paul changes ships here, Acts 27:5, 6

MYRRH

perfumed my bed with *m* Prov 7:17
 my hands dripped with *m* Song 5:5
 gold, frankincense, and *m* Matt 2:11
 wine mingled with *m* to Mark 15:23

MYSIA

Paul and Silas pass through here, Acts 16:7, 8

MYSTERIES

to you to know the *m* Matt 13:11
 and understand all *m* 1 Cor 13:2
 the spirit he speaks *m* 1 Cor 14:2

MYSTERIOUS

today is not too *m* Deut 30:11

MYSTERY

given to know the *m* Mark 4:11
 wisdom of God in a *m* 1 Cor 2:7
 Behold, I tell you a *m* 1 Cor 15:51
 made known to us the *m* Eph 1:9
 This is a great *m* Eph 5:32
m which has been Col 1:26
 the *m* of godliness 1 Tim 3:16

NAAMAN

Captain in the Syrian army, 2 Kin 5:1-11
 Healed of his leprosy, 2 Kin 5:14-17
 Referred to by Christ, Luke 4:27

NABAL

Refuses David's request, 1 Sam 25:2-12
 Escapes David's wrath but dies of a stroke, 1 Sam 25:13-39

NABOTH

Murdered for his vineyard by King Ahab, 1 Kin 21:1-16
 His murder avenged, 1 Kin 21:17-25

NADAB

Eldest of Aaron's four sons, Ex 6:23
 Takes part in affirming covenant, Ex 24:1, 9-12
 Becomes priest, Ex 28:1
 Consumed by fire, Lev 10:1-7

— King of Israel, 1 Kin 14:20
 Killed by Baasha, 1 Kin 15:25-31

NAHASH

King of Ammon; makes impossible demands, 1 Sam 11:1-15

NAHOR

Grandfather of Abraham, Gen 11:24-26
 — Son of Terah, brother of Abraham, Gen 11:17

NAHUM

Prophet to Judah concerning Nineveh, Nah 1:1

NAILED

n it to the cross Col 2:14

NAIN

Village south of Nazareth; Jesus raises widow's son here, Luke 7:11-17

NAIOTH

Prophets' school in Ramah, 1 Sam 19:18, 19, 22, 23

NAKED

And they were both *n* Gen 2:25
 knew that they were *n* Gen 3:7
 told you that you were *n* Gen 3:11
 "N I came from my Job 1:21
 Sheol is *n* before Him, and Job 26:6
 Isaiah has walked *n* Is 20:3
 I was *n* and you Matt 25:36
 and fled from them *n* Mark 14:52
 shall not be found *n* 2 Cor 5:3
 but all things are *n* Heb 4:13
 brother or sister is *n* James 2:15
 poor, blind, and *n* Rev 3:17

NAKEDNESS

of Canaan, saw the *n* Gen 9:22
 The *n* of your father's wife Lev 18:8
 in hunger, in thirst, in *n* Deut 28:48
 or famine, or *n* Rom 8:35
 often, in cold and *n* 2 Cor 11:27
n may not be revealed Rev 3:18

NAME

See CALLED BY MY NAME; HOLY NAME;
 IN MY NAME
 creature, that was its *n* Gen 2:19
 called his wife's *n* Eve Gen 3:20
 and make your *n* great Gen 12:2
 Abram called on the *n* Gen 13:4
 your *n* shall be Abraham Gen 17:5
 but Sarah shall be her *n* Gen 17:15
 Israel shall be your *n* Gen 35:10
 So she called his *n* Moses Ex 2:10
 This is My *n* forever Ex 3:15
 My *n* may be declared in Ex 9:16
 the LORD is His *n* Ex 15:3
 Israel called its *n* Manna Ex 16:31
 shall not take the *n* Ex 20:7

whose *n* is Jealous, is a Ex 34:14
 are called by the *n* Deut 28:10
 glorious and awesome *n* Deut 28:58
 by My *n* will humble 2 Chr 7:14
 and he has no *n* Job 18:17
 excellent is Your *n* Ps 8:1
n will put their trust Ps 9:10
 LORD the glory due to His *n* Ps 29:2
 let us exalt His *n* together Ps 34:3
 lift up my hands in Your *n* Ps 63:4
 the clouds, by His *n* YAH Ps 68:4
 be His glorious *n* Ps 72:19
n is great in Israel Ps 76:1
 do not call on Your *n* Ps 79:6
 whose *n* alone is the LORD Ps 83:18
 to Him, and bless His *n* Ps 100:4
 to Your *n* give glory Ps 115:1
 above all Your *n* Ps 138:2
 He calls them all by *n* Ps 147:4
 The *n* of the LORD is a Prov 18:10
 it shall be to Me a *n* Prov 22:1
 what is His Son's *n* Prov 30:4
 And His *n* will be called Is 9:6
 mention that His *n* is exalted Is 12:4
 make mention of Your *n* Is 26:13
 the LORD, that is My *n* Is 42:8
 be to the LORD for a *n* Is 55:13
 be called by a new *n* Is 62:2
 Everlasting is Your *n* Is 63:16
 who calls on Your *n* Is 64:7
 it shall be to Me a *n* Jer 33:9
 and made Yourself a *n* Dan 9:15
 we will walk in the *n* Mic 4:5
 They will call on My *n* Zech 13:9
n shall be great Mal 1:11
 to you who fear My *n* Mal 4:2
 you shall call His *n* Matt 1:21
 hallowed be Your *n* Matt 6:9
 prophesied in Your *n* Matt 7:22
 righteous man in the *n* Matt 10:41
n Gentiles will trust Matt 12:21
 together in My *n* Matt 18:20
 will come in My *n* Matt 24:5
 "My *n* is Legion Mark 5:9
 children in My *n* receives Mark 9:37
 In My *n* they will cast Mark 16:17
 The virgin's *n* was Luke 1:27
 for me, and holy is His *n* Luke 1:49
 "His *n* is John Luke 1:63
 and cast out your *n* Luke 6:22
 who believe in His *n* John 1:12
 comes in his own *n* John 5:43
 his own sheep by *n* John 10:30
 you ask in My *n* John 14:13
 Father will send in My *n* John 14:26
 keep through Your *n* John 17:11
 whoever calls on the *n* Acts 2:21
 through faith in His *n* Acts 3:16
 there is no other *n* Acts 4:12
 suffer shame for His *n* Acts 5:41
 baptized in the *n* of Acts 10:48
 whoever calls on the *n* Rom 10:13
 every *n* that is named, not Eph 1:21
 which is above every *n* Phil 2:9
 at the *n* of Jesus every Phil 2:10
 deed, do all in the *n* Col 3:17
 a more excellent *n* Heb 1:4
 giving thanks to His *n* Heb 13:15
 blaspheme that noble *n* James 2:7
 with oil in the *n* of the James 5:14
 reproached for the *n* 1 Pet 4:14
n of the Son of God 1 John 5:13
 you hold fast to My *n* Rev 2:13
n that you are alive Rev 3:1
 and have not denied My *n* Rev 3:8
 or the *n* of the beast Rev 13:17
 having His Father's *n* Rev 14:1
 and glorify Your *n* Rev 15:4
n written that no one Rev 19:12

NAME'S

by all for My *n* sake Matt 10:22

or lands, for My *n* sake, . . . Matt 19:29
 saved them for His *n* . . . Ps 106:8
 forgiven you for His *n* . . . 1 John 2:12

NAMED

let my name be *n* . . . Gen 48:16
 I have *n* you . . . Is 45:4
 of a young man *n* Saul . . . Acts 7:58
 not even *n* among the . . . 1 Cor 5:1
 and every name that is *n* . . . Eph 1:21

NAMES

So Adam gave *n* to all . . . Gen 2:20
 lands after their own *n* . . . Ps 49:11
 Now the *n* of the twelve . . . Matt 10:2
n are written in heaven . . . Luke 10:20
 whose *n* are in the Book of . . . Phil 4:3
 Let everyone who *n* the . . . 2 Tim 2:19
 whose *n* are not written in . . . Rev 17:8
 the *n* of the twelve . . . Rev 21:12
 on them were the *n* of the . . . Rev 21:14

NAOMI

Widow of Elimelech, Ruth 1:1–3
 Returns to Bethlehem with Ruth, Ruth
 1:14–19
 Arranges Ruth's marriage to Boaz,
 Ruth 3; 4

NAPHTALI

Son of Jacob by Bilhah, Gen 30:1–8
 Receives Jacob's blessing, Gen 49:21,
 28

— Tribe of:

Numbered, Num 1:42, 43
 Territory assigned to, Josh 19:32–39
 Joins Gideon's army, Judg 7:23
 Attacked by Ben-Hadad and Tiglath-
 Pileser, 1 Kin 15:20; 2 Kin 15:29
 Prophecy of great light in; fulfilled in
 Christ's ministry, Is 9:1–7; Matt
 4:12–16

NARROW

"Enter by the *n* gate . . . Matt 7:13
n is the gate and . . . Matt 7:14

NATHAN

Son of David, 2 Sam 5:14
 Mary's lineage traced through, Zech
 12:12
 — Prophet under David and Sol-
 omon, 1 Chr 29:29
 Reveals God's plan to David, 2 Sam
 7:2–29
 Rebukes David's sin, 2 Sam 12:1–15
 Reveals Adonijah's plot, 1 Kin 1:10–46

NATHANAE

One of Christ's disciples, John 1:45–51

NATION

make you a great *n* . . . Gen 12:2
 You slay a righteous *n* . . . Gen 20:4
 priests and a holy *n* . . . Ex 19:6
 Blessed is the *n* whose . . . Ps 33:12
 dealt thus with any *n* . . . Ps 147:20
 Righteousness exalts a *n* . . . Prov 14:34
 lift up sword against *n* . . . Is 2:4
 that the righteous *n* . . . Is 26:2
 call a *n* you do not know . . . Is 55:5
 a small one a strong *n* . . . Is 60:22
n that was not called . . . Is 65:1
 Or shall a *n* be born at once . . . Is 66:8
n changed its gods . . . Jer 2:11
 I will make them one *n* . . . Ezek 37:22
 since there was a *n* . . . Dan 12:1
 I shall not lift up sword . . . Mic 4:3
 Me, even this whole *n* . . . Mal 3:9
n will rise against . . . Matt 24:7
 for he loves our *n* . . . Luke 7:5
N will rise against *n* . . . Luke 21:10
 whole *n* should perish . . . John 11:50
 those who are not a *n* . . . Rom 10:19
 royal priesthood, a holy *n* . . . 1 Pet 2:9
 tribe, tongue, and *n* . . . Rev 13:7

NATIONS

Two *n* are in your womb . . . Gen 25:23

itself among the *n* . . . Num 23:9
 shall lend to many *n* . . . Deut 28:12
 Why do the *n* rage . . . Ps 2:1
 I will give You the *n* . . . Ps 2:8
 be exalted among the *n* . . . Ps 46:10
n shall serve Him . . . Ps 72:11
n shall call Him . . . Ps 72:17
n shall fear the name . . . Ps 102:15
 is high above all *n* . . . Ps 113:4
 All *n* before Him are . . . Is 40:17
n who do not know . . . Is 55:5
 a house of prayer for all *n* . . . Is 56:7
 the wise men of the *n* . . . Jer 10:7
 a reproach to the *n* . . . Ezek 22:4
 come to the Desire of All *N* . . . Hag 2:7
n shall be joined . . . Zech 2:11
 speak peace to the *n* . . . Zech 9:10
 For I will gather all the *n* . . . Zech 14:2
 disciples of all the *n* . . . Matt 28:19
 in His name to all *n* . . . Luke 24:47
 the father of many *n* . . . Rom 4:18
 In you all the *n* shall be . . . Gal 3:8
 who was to rule all *n* . . . Rev 12:5
 For all the *n* have drunk of . . . Rev 18:3
 the healing of the *n* . . . Rev 22:2

NATURAL

nor his *n* vigor abated . . . Deut 34:7
 women exchanged the *n* . . . Rom 1:26
 the men, leaving the *n* . . . Rom 1:27
 did not spare the *n* . . . Rom 11:21
n man does not receive . . . 1 Cor 2:14
 It is sown a *n* body . . . 1 Cor 15:44
 not first, but the *n* . . . 1 Cor 15:46
 his *n* face in a mirror . . . James 1:23

NATURE

men with the same *n* . . . Acts 14:15
 that the Divine *N* is . . . Acts 17:29
 for what is against *n* . . . Rom 1:26
 by *n* do the things in . . . Rom 2:14
n itself teach you . . . 1 Cor 11:14
 We who are Jews by *n* . . . Gal 2:15
 by *n* children of wrath . . . Eph 2:3
 on fire the course of *n* . . . James 3:6
 man with a *n* like ours . . . James 5:17
 of the divine *n* . . . 2 Pet 1:4

NAZARENE

Jesus to be called, Matt 2:23
 Descriptive of Jesus' followers, Acts
 24:5

NAZARETH

Town in Galilee; considered obscure,
 John 1:46
 City of Jesus' parents, Matt 2:23
 Early home of Jesus, Luke 2:39–51
 Jesus rejected by, Luke 4:16–30

NEAPOLIS

Seaport of Philippi, Acts 16:11

NEAR

that has God so *n* to it . . . Deut 4:7
 But the word is very *n* . . . Deut 30:14
 The *Lord* is *n* to all . . . Ps 145:18
 upon Him while He is *n* . . . Is 55:6
 know that it is *n* . . . Matt 24:33
 kingdom of God is *n* . . . Luke 21:31
 "The word is *n* . . . Rom 10:8
 to those who were *n* . . . Eph 2:17
 for the time is *n* . . . Rev 1:3

NEARER

now our salvation is *n* . . . Rom 13:11

NEBO

Babylonian god, Is 46:1
 — Summit of Pisgah; Moses dies
 here, Deut 32:49; 34:1, 5

NEBUCHADNEZZAR

Monarch of the Neo-Babylonian Em-
 pire (605–562 B.C.); carries Jews cap-
 tive to Babylon, Dan 1:1–3
 Crushes Jehoiachin's revolt, 2 Kin
 24:10–17

Destroys Jerusalem; captures Zede-
 kiah, Jer 39:5–8
 Prophecies concerning, Is 14:4–27; Jer
 21:7–10; 25:8, 9; 27:4–11; 32:28–36;
 43:10–13; Ezek 26:7–12

NEBUZARADAN

Nebuchadnezzar's captain at siege of
 Jerusalem, 2 Kin 25:8–20
 Protects Jeremiah, Jer 39:11–14

NECESSARY

mouth more than my *n* . . . Job 23:12
 and thus it was *n* . . . Luke 24:46
n that the word of God . . . Acts 13:46
 It is *n* to circumcise them, . . . Acts 15:5
 burden than these *n* . . . Acts 15:28
 to be weaker are *n* . . . 1 Cor 12:22
 Therefore it is *n* that this . . . Heb 8:3
 Therefore it was *n* that the . . . Heb 9:23
 I found it *n* to write . . . Jude 3

NECESSITIES

have provided for my *n* . . . Acts 20:34
 and again for my *n* . . . Phil 4:16

NECESSITY

n is laid upon me . . . 1 Cor 9:16
 not grudgingly or of *n* . . . 2 Cor 9:7
 there must also of *n* be the . . . Heb 9:16

NECK

smooth part of his *n* . . . Gen 27:16
 wept on his *n* a good . . . Gen 46:29
 bind them around your *n* . . . Prov 3:3
 and grace to your *n* . . . Prov 3:22
 and hardens his *n* . . . Prov 29:1
 Your *n* is like an ivory . . . Song 7:4
 and his yoke from your *n* . . . Is 10:27
n was an iron sinew . . . Is 48:4
 were hung around his *n* . . . Matt 18:6
 ran and fell on his *n* . . . Luke 15:20

NECKS

stiffened their *n* . . . Neh 9:29
 with outstretched *n* . . . Is 3:16
 who risked their own *n* . . . Rom 16:4

NEED

in nakedness, and in *n* . . . Deut 28:48
 a prowler, and your *n* . . . Prov 24:34
 the things you have *n* . . . Matt 6:8
 no *n* of a physician . . . Matt 9:12
 "The *Lord* has *n* . . . Matt 21:3
 did when he was in *n* . . . Mark 2:25
 say, "The *Lord* has *n* of it . . . Mark 11:3
 testimony do we *n* . . . Luke 22:71
 all, as anyone had *n* . . . Acts 2:45
 each as anyone had *n* . . . Acts 4:35
 hand, "I have no *n* . . . 1 Cor 12:21
 who ministered to my *n* . . . Phil 2:25
 to abound and to suffer *n* . . . Phil 4:12
 supply all your *n* . . . Phil 4:19
 not *n* to be ashamed . . . 2 Tim 2:15
 to help in time of *n* . . . Heb 4:16
 you *n* someone to teach . . . Heb 5:12
 do not *n* that anyone . . . 1 John 2:27
 sees his brother in *n* . . . 1 John 3:17
 The city had no *n* . . . Rev 21:23

NEEDY

your poor and your *n* . . . Deut 15:11
 They push the *n* . . . Job 24:4
n shall not always be . . . Ps 9:18
 He will deliver the *n* . . . Ps 72:12
 and lifts the *n* . . . Ps 113:7
 Him has mercy on the *n* . . . Prov 14:31
 out her hands to the *n* . . . Prov 31:20
 to rob the *n* of . . . Is 10:2
n will lie down in . . . Is 14:30
 a strength to the *n* . . . Is 25:4

NEGLECT

n the gift that is . . . 1 Tim 4:14
 if we *n* so great a . . . Heb 2:3

NEGLECTED

n the weightier . . . Matt 23:23
 their widows were *n* . . . Acts 6:1

NEHEMIAH

Jewish cupbearer to King Artaxerxes; prays for restoration of Jerusalem. Neh 1:4–11
King commissions him to rebuild walls. Neh 2:1–8
Overcomes opposition and accomplishes rebuilding. Neh 4–6
Appointed governor. Neh 5:14
Participates with Ezra in restored worship. Neh 8–10
Registers the people and the priests and Levites. Neh 11:1–12:26
Dedicates the wall. Neh 12:27–43
Returns to Jerusalem after absence and institutes reforms. Neh 13:4–31

NEIGHBOR

See LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR
every man ask from his *n* Ex 11:2
witness against your *n* Ex 20:16
you shall love your *n* Lev 19:18
witness against your *n* Deut 5:20
secretly slanders his *n* Ps 101:5
Do not say to your *n* "Go Prov 3:28
He who despises his *n* Prov 14:21
against your *n* without Prov 24:28
for better is a *n* Prov 27:10
every man teach his *n* Jer 31:34
gives drink to his *n* Hab 2:15
man the truth to his *n* Zech 8:16
"You shall love your *n* Matt 5:43
love your *n* as yourself Matt 22:39
"And who is my *n* Luke 10:29
do you think was *n* Luke 10:36
"You shall love your *n* Rom 13:9
love your *n* as yourself Gal 5:14
of them shall teach his *n* Heb 8:11

NEIGHBOR'S

shall not covet your *n* wife Ex 20:17
n garment as a pledge Ex 22:26
or anything that is your *n* Deut 5:21
remove your *n* landmark Deut 19:14
goes in to his *n* wife Prov 6:29

NEIGHBORS

from all your *n* 2 Kin 4:3
Who speak peace to their *n* Ps 28:3
a reproach to our *n* Ps 44:13
return to our *n* sevenfold Ps 79:12
nor your rich *n* Luke 14:12
Therefore the *n* and those John 9:8

NEST

As an eagle stirs up its *n* Deut 32:11
and make its *n* Job 39:27
n is a man who wanders Prov 27:8
though you set your *n* Obad 4
that he may set his *n* Hab 2:9
and *n* in its branches Matt 13:32

NET

me with His *n* Job 19:6
pluck my feet out of the *n* Ps 25:15
have hidden their *n* Ps 35:7
They have prepared a *n* Ps 57:6
an antelope in a *n* Is 51:20
catch in their *n* Hab 1:15
casting a *n* into the sea Matt 4:18
I will let down the *n* Luke 5:5
to them. "Cast the *n* John 21:6
so many, the *n* was not John 21:11

NETHINIM

Servants of the Levites, Ezra 8:20
Possible origins of:
Gibeonites, Josh 9:23–27
Solomon's forced laborers, 1 Kin 9:20, 21
Mentioned, 1 Chr 9:2; Ezra 2:43–54; 7:24; 8:17; Neh 3:31; 7:46–60, 73; 10:28, 29; 11:21

NETS

fall into their own *n* Ps 141:10

immediately left their *n* Matt 4:20
down your *n* for a catch Luke 5:4

NEVER

in Me shall *n* thirst John 6:35
in Me shall *n* die John 11:26
Love *n* fails 1 Cor 13:8
n take away sins Heb 10:11
"I will *n* leave you Heb 13:5
prophecy *n* came by 2 Pet 1:21

NEW

Now there arose a *n* Ex 1:8
the LORD creates a *n* Num 16:30
man has taken a *n* wife Deut 24:5
They chose *n* gods Judg 5:8
him with two *n* ropes Judg 15:13
ark of God on a *n* cart 2 Sam 6:3
He has put a *n* song in my Ps 40:3
sing to the LORD a *n* song Ps 96:1
will overflow with *n* wine Prov 3:10
and there is nothing *n* Eccl 1:9
Behold, I will do a *n* Is 43:19
shall be called by a *n* name Is 62:2
For behold, I create *n* Is 65:17
when I will make a *n* Jer 31:31
n every morning Lam 3:23
I will give you a *n* heart Ezek 36:26
shall overflow with *n* wine Joel 2:24
wine into *n* wineskins Matt 9:17
of the *n* covenant Matt 26:28
laid it in his *n* tomb Matt 27:60
speak with *n* tongues Mark 16:17
n commandment I give John 13:34
tell or to hear some *n* Acts 17:21
he is a *n* creation 2 Cor 5:17
n man who is renewed Col 3:10
when I will make a *n* Heb 8:8
Mediator of the *n* covenant Heb 9:15
n heavens and a *n* 2 Pet 3:13
n commandment I write 1 John 2:8
n name written which Rev 2:17
the *n* Jerusalem, which Rev 3:12
And they sang a *n* Rev 5:9
And I saw a *n* heaven Rev 21:1
I make all things *n* Rev 21:5

NEW COVENANT

I will make a *n* with Jer 31:31
this is My blood of the *n* Matt 26:28
"This cup is the *n* in Luke 22:20
"This cup is the *n* 1 Cor 11:25
as ministers of the *n* 2 Cor 3:6
"when I will make a *n* Heb 8:8
Mediator of the *n* Heb 9:15
the Mediator of the *n* Heb 12:24

NEW MAN

create in Himself one *n* Eph 2:15
that you put on the *n* Eph 4:24
and have put on the *n* Col 3:10

NEWNESS

also should walk in *n* Rom 6:4
should serve in the *n* Rom 7:6

NEWS

heard this bad *n* Ex 33:4
Proclaim the good *n* of His Ps 96:2
soul, so is good *n* Prov 25:25
him who brings good *n* Is 52:7
n of Him went out Luke 4:14
good *n* of your faith 1 Thess 3:6

NICANOR

One of the first seven deacons, Acts 6:1–5

NICODEMUS

Pharisee; converses with Jesus, John 3:1–12
Protests unfairness of Christ's trial, John 7:50–52
Brings gifts to anoint Christ's body, John 19:39, 40

NICOLAITANS

Group teaching moral laxity, Rev 2:6–15

NICOLAS

One of the first seven deacons, Acts 6:5

NIGHT

darkness He called *N* Gen 1:5
day and *n* shall not cease Gen 8:22
father drink wine that *n* Gen 19:33
It is a *n* of solemn Ex 12:42
pillar of fire by *n* Ex 13:22
strong east wind all that *n* Ex 14:21
came to Balaam at *n* Num 22:20
meditate in it day and *n* Josh 1:8
and the *n* be ended Job 7:4
gives songs in the *n* Job 35:10
law he meditates day and *n* Ps 1:2
instructs me in the *n* seasons Ps 16:7
n reveals knowledge Ps 19:2
Weeping may endure for a *n* Ps 30:5
be afraid of the terror by *n* Ps 91:5
Your faithfulness every *n* Ps 92:2
awake through the *n* Ps 119:148
and stars to rule by *n* Ps 136:9
the *n* shines as the day Ps 139:12
rises while it is yet *n* Prov 31:15
Watchman, what of the *n* Is 21:11
desired You in the *n* Is 26:9
and perished in a *n* Jon 4:10
Child and His mother by *n* Matt 2:14
His disciples come by *n* Matt 27:64
over their flock by *n* Luke 2:8
and continued all *n* Luke 6:12
man came to Jesus by *n* John 3:2
n is coming when no John 9:4
came to Jesus by *n* John 19:39
that *n* Peter was sleeping, Acts 12:6
stood by me this *n* Acts 27:23
The *n* is far spent Rom 13:12
as a thief in the *n* 1 Thess 5:2
We are not of the *n* 1 Thess 5:5
they do not rest day or *n* Rev 4:8
before our God day and *n* Rev 12:10
there shall be no *n* Rev 21:25
there shall be no *n* Rev 22:5

NIGHTS

earth forty days and forty *n* Gen 7:4
forty days and forty *n* Ex 24:18
forty days and forty *n* Matt 4:2
three *n* in the belly of Matt 12:40

NILE

Hebrew children drowned in, Ex 1:22
Moses hidden in, Ex 2:3–10
Water of, turned to blood, Ex 7:14–21
Mentioned in prophecies, Is 19:5–8; 23:3; 27:12; Jer 46:7–9; Amos 9:5

NIMROD

Ham's grandson, Gen 10:6–12

NINE

Adam lived were *n* hundred Gen 5:5
of Methuselah were *n* Gen 5:27
where are the *n* Luke 17:17

NINETY-NINE

he not leave the *n* Matt 18:12
n just persons Luke 15:7

NINEVEH

Capital of Assyria, 2 Kin 19:36
Jonah preaches to; people repent, Jon 3:1–10; Matt 12:41
Prophecy against, Nah 2:13–3:19; Zeph 2:13–15

NOAH

Son of Lamech, Gen 5:28–32
Finds favor with God; commissioned to build the ark, Gen 6:8–22
Fills ark and survives flood, Gen 7
Leaves ark; builds altar; receives God's promise, Gen 8
God's covenant with, Gen 9:1–17
Blesses and curses his sons; dies, Gen 9:18–29

NO AMON (or Thebes)

Nineveh compared to, Nah 3:8

NOB

City of priests; David flees to, 1 Sam

21:1-9

Priests of, killed by Saul, 1 Sam

22:9-23

NOBLE

of the king's most *n* princes . . . Esth 6:9

I had planted you a *n* vine . . . Jer 2:21

heard the word with a *n* . . . Luke 8:15

most *n* Festus, but speak . . . Acts 26:25

mighty, not many *n* . . . 1 Cor 1:26

whatever things are *n* . . . Phil 4:8

not blaspheme that *n* . . . James 2:7

NOBLES

voice of *n* was hushed . . . Job 29:10

king is the son of *n* . . . Eccl 10:17

n have sent their lads . . . Jer 14:3

your *n* rest in the . . . Nah 3:18

NOD

Place (east of Eden) of Cain's exile, Gen

4:16, 17

NOISE

There is a *n* of war in the . . . Ex 32:17

any *n* with your voice . . . Josh 6:10

the *n* of a great army . . . 2 Kin 7:6

Than the *n* of many waters . . . Ps 93:4

The *n* of a multitude . . . Is 13:4

people who make a *n* . . . Is 17:12

of Egypt, is but a *n* . . . Jer 46:17

They have made a *n* . . . Lam 2:7

the *n* of many waters . . . Ezek 1:24

the *n* of the wheels beside . . . Ezek 3:13

the *n* of your songs . . . Amos 5:23

n of the day of the . . . Zeph 1:14

away with a great *n* . . . 2 Pet 3:10

NORTH

Zion on the sides of the *n* . . . Ps 48:2

O *n* wind, and come . . . Song 4:16

I will say to the *n*, 'Give . . . Is 43:6

Israel from the land of . . . Jer 16:15

Togarmah from the far *n* . . . Ezek 38:6

place out of the far *n* . . . Ezek 38:15

the west, from the *n* . . . Luke 13:29

NOSTRILS

n the breath of life . . . Gen 2:7

breath of God in my *n* . . . Job 27:3

breath is in his *n* . . . Is 2:22

NOTE

urge you, brethren, *n* . . . Rom 16:17

n those who so walk . . . Phil 3:17

NOTHING

For now you are *n* . . . Job 6:21

rich, yet has *n* . . . Prov 13:7

'It is good for *n* . . . Prov 20:14

before Him are as *n* . . . Is 40:17

their works are *n* . . . Is 41:29

I can of Myself do *n* . . . John 5:30

Me you can do *n* . . . John 15:5

men, it will come to *n* . . . Acts 5:38

bring to *n* the things . . . 1 Cor 1:28

For I know of *n* against . . . 1 Cor 4:4

have not love, I am *n* . . . 1 Cor 13:2

love, it profits me *n* . . . 1 Cor 13:3

Be anxious for *n* . . . Phil 4:6

For we brought *n* . . . 1 Tim 6:7

complete, lacking *n* . . . James 1:4

name's sake, taking *n* . . . 3 John 7

NOTORIOUS

n prisoner called . . . Matt 27:16

NOURISHED

'I have *n* and . . . Is 1:2

n and knit together . . . Col 2:19

n in the words of . . . 1 Tim 4:6

NOURISHES

n and cherishes it . . . Eph 5:29

NOVICE

not a *n*, lest being . . . 1 Tim 3:6

NUMBER

if a man could *n* . . . Gen 13:16

fulfill the *n* of your days . . . Ex 23:26

that I may know the *n* . . . 2 Sam 24:2

and moved David to *n* . . . 1 Chr 21:1

things without *n* . . . Job 5:9

For now You *n* my steps . . . Job 14:16

n the clouds by wisdom . . . Job 38:37

teach us to *n* our days . . . Ps 90:12

He counts the *n* . . . Ps 147:4

Me days without *n* . . . Jer 2:32

in *n* about five thousand . . . John 6:10

a great *n* believed and . . . Acts 11:21

and increased in *n* daily . . . Acts 16:5

which no one could *n* . . . Rev 7:9

His *n* is 666 . . . Rev 13:18

NUMBERED

David *n* the people . . . 2 Sam 18:1

he had *n* the people . . . 2 Sam 24:10

are more than can be *n* . . . Ps 40:5

death, and He was *n* with . . . Is 53:12

God has *n* your kingdom . . . Dan 5:26

of your head are all *n* . . . Matt 10:30

n among the twelve . . . Luke 22:3

'And He was *n* with . . . Luke 22:37

was *n* with the eleven . . . Acts 1:26

OAKS

Wail, O *o* of Bashan . . . Zech 11:2

OARSMEN

o brought you into . . . Ezek 27:26

OATH

two of them swore an *o* . . . Gen 21:31

the *o* which He swore to . . . Deut 7:8

people feared the *o* . . . 1 Sam 14:26

Judah rejoiced at the *o* . . . 2 Chr 15:15

o to walk in God's Law . . . Neh 10:29

for the sake of your *o* . . . Eccl 8:2

I may establish the *o* . . . Jer 11:5

And you shall be an *o* . . . Jer 42:18

raised My hand in an *o* . . . Ezek 20:5

the *o* written in the Law . . . Dan 9:11

he denied with an *o* . . . Matt 26:72

o which He swore . . . Luke 1:73

themselves under an *o* . . . Acts 23:12

made priest without an *o* . . . Heb 7:20

or with any other *o* . . . James 5:12

OATHS

shall perform your *o* . . . Matt 5:33

because of the *o* . . . Matt 14:9

OBADIAH

King Ahab's steward, 1 Kin 18:3-16

— Prophet of Judah, Obad 1

OBED

Son of Boaz and Ruth, Ruth 4:17-22

OBED-EDOM

Philistine from Gath; ark of the Lord

left in his house, 2 Sam 6:10-12; 1 Chr

13:13, 14

OBEDIENCE

scorns *o* to his mother . . . Prov 30:17

and apostleship for *o* . . . Rom 1:5

o many will be made . . . Rom 5:19

For your *o* has become . . . Rom 16:19

glorify God for the *o* of . . . 2 Cor 9:13

captivity to the *o* . . . 2 Cor 10:5

confidence in your *o* . . . Philem 21

yet He learned *o* . . . Heb 5:8

for *o* and sprinkling . . . 1 Pet 1:2

OBEDIENT

said we will do, and be *o* . . . Ex 24:7

you are willing and *o* . . . Is 1:19

of the priests were *o* . . . Acts 6:7

make the Gentiles *o* . . . Rom 15:18

bondservants, be *o* to . . . Eph 6:5

Himself and became *o* . . . Phil 2:8

homemakers, good, *o* . . . Titus 2:5

as *o* children . . . 1 Pet 1:14

OBEY

LORD, that I should *o* . . . Ex 5:2

God and *o* His voice . . . Deut 4:30

o the commandments . . . Deut 11:27

if you diligently *o* the . . . Deut 28:1

if you do not *o* the voice . . . Deut 28:15

His voice we will *o* . . . Josh 24:24

o is better than . . . 1 Sam 15:22

they hear of me they *o* . . . Ps 18:44

O My voice, and I will be . . . Jer 7:23

O My voice, and do . . . Jer 11:4

we will *o* the voice of the . . . Jer 42:6

shall serve and *o* Him . . . Dan 7:27

if you diligently *o* . . . Zech 6:15

winds and the sea *o* Him . . . Matt 8:27

spirits, and they *o* Him . . . Mark 1:27

o God rather than men . . . Acts 5:29

and do not *o* the truth . . . Rom 2:8

yourselves slaves to *o* . . . Rom 6:16

o your parents in all . . . Col 3:20

Bondservants, *o* in all . . . Col 3:22

on those who do not *o* . . . 2 Thess 1:8

salvation to all who *o* Him . . . Heb 5:9

O those who rule . . . Heb 13:17

mouths that they may *o* . . . James 3:3

if some do not *o* . . . 1 Pet 3:1

OBEYED

Abraham *o* My voice . . . Gen 26:5

you have not *o* My voice . . . Judg 2:2

bondage anymore, they *o* . . . Jer 34:10

of sin, yet you *o* . . . Rom 6:17

they have not all *o* . . . Rom 10:16

By faith Abraham *o* . . . Heb 11:8

as Sarah *o* Abraham . . . 1 Pet 3:6

OBEYING

o the truth through . . . 1 Pet 1:22

OBSCURITY

shall see out of *o* . . . Is 29:18

OBSERVANCE

the LORD, a solemn *o* . . . Ex 12:42

OBSERVATION

does not come with *o* . . . Luke 17:20

OBSERVE

So you shall *o* the Feast of . . . Ex 12:17

to *o* the Sabbath . . . Ex 31:16

which I teach you to *o* . . . Deut 4:1

night, that you may *o* to do . . . Josh 1:8

man, and *o* the upright . . . Ps 37:37

is wise will *o* these things . . . Ps 107:43

and let your eyes *o* . . . Prov 23:26

o mercy and justice . . . Hos 12:6

teaching them to *o* all . . . Matt 28:20

who does not *o* the day . . . Rom 14:6

o days and months and . . . Gal 4:10

o your chaste conduct . . . 1 Pet 3:2

OBSERVES

o the wind will not . . . Eccl 11:4

He who *o* the day . . . Rom 14:6

OBSERVING

o his natural face . . . James 1:23

OBSESSED

nothing, but is *o* . . . 1 Tim 6:4

OBSOLETE

Now what is becoming *o* . . . Heb 8:13

OBSTINATE

and made his heart *o* . . . Deut 2:30

I knew that you were *o* . . . Is 48:4

OBTAIN

They shall *o* joy and . . . Is 35:10

for they shall *o* mercy . . . Matt 5:7

they also may *o* mercy . . . Rom 11:31

way that you may *o* it . . . 1 Cor 9:24

o salvation through . . . 1 Thess 5:9

o for themselves a good ... 1 Tim 3:13
that they might o a better ... Heb 11:35
and covet and cannot o ... James 4:2

OBTAINED

Esther o favor in the sight ... Esth 2:15
o a part in this ... Acts 1:17
yet have now o mercy ... Rom 11:30
have o an inheritance ... Eph 1:11
He has by inheritance o ... Heb 1:4
endured, he o the ... Heb 6:15
o eternal redemption ... Heb 9:12
o promises, stopped the ... Heb 11:33
To those who have o ... 2 Pet 1:1

OBTAINS

o favor from the LORD ... Prov 8:35

ODED

Prophet of Samaria, 2 Chr 28:9–15

OF THE WORLD

men o who have ... Ps 17:14
their words to the end o ... Ps 19:4
the ends o shall remember ... Ps 22:27
all inhabitants o ... Ps 49:1
All inhabitants o ... Is 18:3
proclaimed to the end o ... Is 62:11
all the kingdoms o ... Matt 4:8
You are the light o ... Matt 5:14
from the foundation o ... Matt 13:35
since the beginning o ... Matt 24:21
nations o seek after ... Luke 12:30
takes away the sin o ... John 1:29
The Christ, the Savior o ... John 4:42
give for the life o ... John 6:51
"I am the light o ... John 8:12
If you were o ... John 15:19
have given Me out o ... John 17:6
he would be the heir o ... Rom 4:13
is the reconciling o ... Rom 11:15
foolish things o to put ... 1 Cor 1:27
not the spirit o ... 1 Cor 2:12
made as the filth o ... 1 Cor 4:13
cares about the things o ... 1 Cor 7:33
sorrow o produces death ... 2 Cor 7:10
under the elements o ... Gal 4:3
before the foundation o ... Eph 1:4
basic principles o ... Col 2:8
wants to be a friend o ... James 4:4
escaped the pollutions o ... 2 Pet 2:20
of the Father but is o ... 1 John 2:16
sent the Son as Savior o ... 1 John 4:14
from the foundation o ... Rev 17:8

OF THIS WORLD

word, and the cares o ... Matt 13:22
o, the deceitfulness ... Mark 4:19
sons o are more shrewd ... Luke 16:8
You are o; I am not o ... John 8:23
he sees the light o ... John 11:9
Now is the judgment o ... John 12:31
for the ruler o is coming ... John 14:30
the ruler o is judged ... John 16:11
"My kingdom is not o ... John 18:36
foolish the wisdom o ... 1 Cor 1:20
wisdom o is foolishness ... 1 Cor 3:19
immoral people o ... 1 Cor 5:10
form o is passing away ... 1 Cor 7:31
according to the course o ... Eph 2:2
not chosen the poor o ... James 2:5
kingdoms o have become ... Rev 11:15

OFFEND

I will o no more ... Job 34:31
that devour him will o ... Jer 2:3
lest we o them ... Matt 17:27
than that he should o ... Luke 17:2
them, "Does this o ... John 6:61

OFFENDED

How have I o you, that ... Gen 20:9
A brother o is harder ... Prov 18:19
is not o because of Me ... Matt 11:6
So they were o at Him ... Matt 13:57
And then many will be o ... Matt 24:10

have I o in anything at all ... Acts 25:8
stumbles or is o ... Rom 14:21

OFFENDER

who make a man an o ... Is 29:21
For if I am an o ... Acts 25:11

OFFENSE

and a rock of o ... Is 8:14
You are an o to Me ... Matt 16:23
by whom the o comes ... Matt 18:7
one man's o many died ... Rom 5:15
by the one man's o ... Rom 5:17
stone and rock of o ... Rom 9:33
Give no o, either to ... 1 Cor 10:32
the o of the cross ... Gal 5:11
sincere and without o ... Phil 1:10
and a rock of o ... 1 Pet 2:8

OFFENSES

For o must come ... Matt 18:7
impossible that no o ... Luke 17:1
up because of our o ... Rom 4:25

OFFER

and o him there as a burnt ... Gen 22:2
You shall not o strange ... Ex 30:9
o for a sweet aroma to the ... Lev 6:21
o o willingly to You ... 1 Chr 29:17
o up for yourselves a burnt ... Job 42:8
Therefore I will o sacrifices ... Ps 27:6
o to You the sacrifice ... Ps 116:17
o the blind as a ... Mal 1:8
come and o your gift ... Matt 5:24
one cheek, o the other ... Luke 6:29
egg, will he o him a ... Luke 11:12
to o up sacrifices, first for ... Heb 7:27
which they o continually ... Heb 10:1
let us continually o ... Heb 13:15
to o up spiritual sacrifices ... 1 Pet 2:5

OFFERED

Jacob o a sacrifice on ... Gen 31:54
eaten the same day it is o ... Lev 7:15
o profane fire before the ... Lev 10:1
Solomon o a thousand ... 1 Kin 3:4
who willingly o a ... Ezra 3:5
he o them money ... Acts 8:18
from things o to idols ... Acts 15:29
to eat those things o ... 1 Cor 8:10
"This was o to idols," ... 1 Cor 10:28
when He o up Himself ... Heb 7:27
the eternal Spirit o ... Heb 9:14
so Christ was o ... Heb 9:28
in them" (which are o ... Heb 10:8
o one sacrifice ... Heb 10:12
By faith Abel o ... Heb 11:4

OFFERING

not respect Cain and his o ... Gen 4:5
poured a drink o on it ... Gen 35:14
a freewill o to the LORD, all ... Ex 35:29
you shall bring your o ... Lev 1:2
This is the law of the sin o ... Lev 6:25
Do not respect their o ... Num 16:15
fifty men who were o ... Num 16:35
he offered the burnt o ... 1 Sam 13:9
at the time of the o of ... 1 Kin 18:36
the o for the house of our ... Ezra 8:25
of God, with the grain o ... Neh 13:9
o You did not require ... Ps 40:6
You make His soul an o ... Is 53:10
they should present an o ... Dan 2:46
drink o have been cut off ... Joel 1:9
I accept an o from your ... Mal 1:10
to the LORD an o ... Mal 3:3
an o for your cleansing, ... Luke 5:14
Himself for us, an o ... Eph 5:2
out as a drink o ... Phil 2:17
o You did not ... Heb 10:5
o of the body of Jesus ... Heb 10:10
o He has perfected ... Heb 10:14
is no longer an o ... Heb 10:18

OFFERINGS

and offered burnt o ... Gen 8:20
It is most holy of the o ... Lev 2:3

My food for My o made ... Num 28:2
on it burnt o to the LORD ... Josh 8:31
delight in burnt o ... 1 Sam 15:22
burnt o and peace o ... 2 Sam 24:25
heart brought burnt o ... 2 Chr 29:31
He remember all your o ... Ps 20:3
freewill o of my mouth ... Ps 119:108
enough of burnt o of rams ... Is 1:11
In burnt o and ... Heb 10:6

OFFERS

Whoever o praise glorifies ... Ps 50:23
o sacrifices in the high ... Jer 48:35
that he o God service ... John 16:2

OFFICE

He restored me to my o ... Gen 41:13
let another take his o ... Ps 109:8
sitting at the tax o ... Matt 9:9
Levi, sitting at the tax o ... Luke 5:27
'Let another take his o ... Acts 1:20

OFFICERS

appoint o over the land ... Gen 41:34
also make your o ... Is 60:17
the o struck Him with ... Mark 14:65
o answered, "No man ... John 7:46
o saw Him, they cried ... John 19:6

OFFSCOURING

You have made us an o ... Lam 3:45
the o of all things ... 1 Cor 4:13

OFFSPRING

You have given me no o ... Gen 15:3
also shown me your o ... Gen 48:11
because of the o which ... Ruth 4:12
your o like the grass of the ... Job 5:25
My blessing on your o ... Is 44:3
He seeks godly o ... Mal 2:15
wife and raise up o ... Matt 22:24
had her and left no o ... Mark 12:22
For we are also His o ... Acts 17:28
we are the o of God ... Acts 17:29
am the Root and the O ... Rev 22:16

OFTEN

o I wanted to gather ... Luke 13:34
as o as you eat this ... 1 Cor 11:26
in sleeplessness o ... 2 Cor 11:27
should offer Himself o ... Heb 9:25

OG

Amorite king of Bashan, Deut 3:1–13
Defeated and killed by Israel, Num
21:32–35

OHOLAH

Symbolic name of Samaria, Ezek 23:4,
5, 36

OIL

for the anointing o ... Ex 25:6
o to Me throughout your ... Ex 30:31
shall take the anointing o ... Ex 40:9
anointing o on Aaron's ... Lev 8:12
land of olive o and honey ... Deut 8:8
I cease giving my o ... Judg 9:9
a bin, and a little o ... 1 Kin 17:12
the jar of o run dry ... 1 Kin 17:16
So the o ceased ... 2 Kin 4:6
o to the storehouse ... Neh 13:12
poured out rivers of o ... Job 29:6
You anoint my head with o ... Ps 23:5
anointed with fresh o ... Ps 92:10
the heart of man, o ... Ps 104:15
like the precious o ... Ps 133:2
be as excellent o ... Ps 141:5
the o of joy for mourning, ... Is 61:3
and I anointed you with o ... Ezek 16:9
with new wine and o ... Joel 2:24
thousand rivers of o ... Mic 6:7
and took no o with them ... Matt 25:3
the wise took o in their ... Matt 25:4
'Give us some of your o ... Matt 25:8
very costly fragrant o ... Matt 26:7
o might have been sold ... Matt 26:9

costly o of spikenard Mark 14:3
anoint My head with o Luke 7:46
wounds, pouring on o Luke 10:34
Why was this fragrant o John 12:5
anointing him with o James 5:14
and do not harm the o Rev 6:6

OINTMENT

O and perfume delight Prov 27:9
your name is o Song 1:3

OLD

was five hundred years o Gen 5:32
was ninety-nine years o Gen 17:1
who is ninety years o Gen 17:17
Remember the days of o Deut 32:7
o lion perishes for lack Job 4:11
So Job died, o and full of Job 42:17
young, and now am o Ps 37:25
me off in the time of o age Ps 71:9
will utter dark sayings of o Ps 78:2
still bear fruit in o age Ps 92:14
are the crown of o men Prov 17:6
and when he is o he will Prov 22:6
all manner, new and o Song 7:13
die one hundred years o Is 65:20
o men shall dream dreams Joel 2:28
was said to those of o Matt 5:21
wine into o wineskins Matt 9:17
He was twelve years o Luke 2:42
man be born when he is o John 3:4
yet fifty years o John 8:57
but when you are o John 21:18
Your o men shall dream Acts 2:17
o man was crucified Rom 6:6
of the O Testament 2 Cor 3:14
o things have passed 2 Cor 5:17
have put off the o man Col 3:9
o wives' fables, and 1 Tim 4:7
obsolete and growing o Heb 8:13
that serpent of o Rev 20:2

OLD MAN

the presence of an o Lev 19:32
there will not be an o 1 Sam 2:31
nor an o who has not Is 65:20
I am an o, and my wife Luke 1:18
our o was crucified Rom 6:6
the o which grows corrupt Eph 4:22
put off the o with his Col 3:9

OLDER

o shall serve the Gen 25:23
o than your father Job 15:10
"Now his o son was Luke 15:25
not rebuke an o man 1 Tim 5:1
o women as mothers 1 Tim 5:2
that the o men be sober, Titus 2:2
the o women likewise, that Titus 2:3

OLDEST

beginning with the o John 8:9

OLIVE

a freshly plucked o Gen 8:11
o trees which you did not Deut 6:11
a land of o groves 2 Kin 18:32
I am like a green o Ps 52:8
Your children like o plants Ps 128:3
of the o may fail Hab 3:17
the o tree have not yielded Hag 2:19
and you, being a wild o Rom 11:17
o tree which is wild Rom 11:24
These are the two o trees Rev 11:4

OLIVES, MOUNT OF

David flees to, 2 Sam 15:30
Prophecy concerning, Zech 14:4
Christ's triumphal entry from, Matt 21:1
Prophetic discourse delivered from, Matt 24:3
Christ's ascension from, Acts 1:9-12

OMNIPOTENT

For the Lord God O Rev 19:6

OMRI

Made king of Israel by army, 1 Kin 16:16, 21, 22
Builds Samaria; reigns wickedly, 1 Kin 16:23-27

ON

City of Lower Egypt; center of sun worship, Gen 41:45, 50
Called Beth Shemesh, Jer 43:13

ONAN

Second son of Judah; slain for failure to give his brother an heir, Gen 38:8-10

ONCE

please come at o Num 22:6
marched around the city o Josh 6:14
o more with the fleece Judg 6:39
God has spoken o, twice I Ps 62:11
shall a nation be born at o Is 66:8
died, He died to sin o Rom 6:10
alive o without the law Rom 7:9
o I was stoned 2 Cor 11:25
o were far off have been Eph 2:13
who o was unprofitable Phil 1:11
for this He did o for all Heb 7:27
Most Holy Place o for all Heb 9:12
for men to die o Heb 9:27
so Christ was offered o to Heb 9:28
who o were not a people 1 Pet 2:10
also suffered o 1 Pet 3:18

ONE

See EVIL ONE; HOLY ONE OF ISRAEL;
LOVE ONE ANOTHER; WITH ONE
ACCORD

He took o of his ribs, and Gen 2:21
they shall become o flesh Gen 2:24
desirable to make o wise Gen 3:6
o language and o speech Gen 11:1
our God, the LORD is o Deut 6:4
Blessed be the o who Ruth 2:19
on a mountain on o side 1 Sam 17:3
kissed o another 1 Sam 20:41
in two, and give half to o 1 Kin 3:25
failed o word of all His 1 Kin 8:56
I told no o what my God Neh 2:12
no o could withstand them, Esth 9:2
o who feared God and Job 1:1
o mocked by his friends, Job 12:4
find o wise man among Job 17:10
God may speak in o way Job 33:14
who does good, no, not o Ps 53:3
limited the Holy O of Israel Ps 78:41
Blessed is every o who Ps 128:1
there is o who withholds Prov 11:24
flee when no o pursues Prov 28:1
Two are better than o Eccl 4:9
up, my love, my fair o Song 2:10
I will seek the o I love Song 3:2
shall take hold of o man, Is 4:1
open, and no o shall shut Is 22:22
you will be gathered o Is 27:12
Return now every o from Jer 18:11
wings touched o another Ezek 1:9
Each o had four faces Ezek 10:21
o who is found written Dan 12:1
Holy O who is faithful Hos 11:12
Has not o God created us Mal 2:10
deliver us from the evil o Matt 6:13
whoever causes o of Matt 18:6
two shall become o flesh Matt 19:5
and hour no o knows Matt 24:36
watch with Me o hour Matt 26:40
receives o of these Mark 9:37
"O thing you lack Mark 10:21
o on Your right hand Mark 10:37
Surely you are o of Mark 14:70
The voice of o crying in Luke 3:4
No o, when he has lit a Luke 8:16
o thing is needed Luke 10:42
o sinner who repents Luke 15:10

You still lack o thing Luke 18:22
O sows and another John 4:37
Has no o condemned you John 8:10
I and My Father are o John 10:30
you love o another John 13:34
Me, that they may be o John 17:11
Not o of His bones John 19:36
Holy O to see corruption Acts 2:27
o accord in the temple Acts 2:46
none righteous, no, not o Rom 3:10
each o a measure of faith Rom 12:3
Repay no o evil for evil Rom 12:17
Owe no o anything except Rom 13:8
that o be found faithful 1 Cor 4:2
to o is given the word 1 Cor 12:8
body is not o member 1 Cor 12:14
if o strikes you on the 2 Cor 11:20
for you are all o Gal 3:28
love serve o another Gal 5:13
Bear o another's burdens, Gal 6:2
to create in Himself o Eph 2:15
o body and o Spirit Eph 4:4
o Lord, o faith, o Eph 4:5
o God and Father of Eph 4:6
but o thing I do, forgetting Phil 3:13
o Mediator between God 1 Tim 2:5
the husband of o wife 1 Tim 3:2
Let no o despise your 1 Tim 4:12
But each o is tempted James 1:14
love o another fervently 1 Pet 1:22
Be hospitable to o another 1 Pet 4:9
a thousand years as o 2 Pet 3:8
and these three are o 1 John 5:7
I will give to each o of you Rev 2:23
Lamb opened o of the seals Rev 6:1
on the cloud sat O like Rev 14:14

ONESIMUS

Slave of Philemon converted by Paul in Rome, Philemon 10-17
With Tychicus, carries Paul's letters to Colosse and to Philemon, Col 4:7-9

ONESIPHORUS

Ephesian Christian commended for his service, 2 Tim 1:16-18

ONLY BEGOTTEN SON

The o, who is in John 1:18
world that He gave His o John 3:16
offered up his o Heb 11:17
God has sent His o 1 John 4:9

OPEN

o his eyes that he may 2 Kin 6:17
o the eyes of these men 2 Kin 6:20
o His lips against you Job 11:5
His ears are o to their cry Ps 34:15
You o Your hand Ps 104:28
O my eyes, that I may see Ps 119:18
O rebuke is better than Prov 27:5
O your mouth for the Prov 31:8
and no one shall o Is 22:22
I will o your mouth to Ezek 29:21
o toward Jerusalem Dan 6:10
a lamb in o country Hos 4:16
o My mouth in parables Matt 13:35
Can a demon o the eyes John 10:21
she did not o the gate Acts 12:14
our heart is wide o 2 Cor 6:11
things are naked and o Heb 4:13
set before you an o door Rev 3:8
o the scroll and to Rev 5:2

OPENED

eat of it your eyes will be o Gen 3:5
the earth o its mouth Num 16:32
the LORD o the mouth Num 22:28
the LORD o the eyes 2 Kin 6:17
Ezra o the book in the sight Neh 8:5
o not His mouth Is 53:7
that the heavens were o Ezek 1:1
knock, and it will be o to Matt 7:7
our eyes may be o Matt 20:33
his ears were o Mark 7:35

when He had o the book ... Luke 4:17
Then their eyes were o ... Luke 24:31
o the Scriptures ... Luke 24:32
o their understanding ... Luke 24:45
clay and o his eyes ... John 9:14
Lord o the prison doors ... Acts 5:19
I see the heavens o and ... Acts 7:56
effective door has o ... 1 Cor 16:9
when the Lamb o ... Rev 6:1
he o the bottomless pit, and ... Rev 9:2
Now I saw heaven o ... Rev 19:11
God, and books were o ... Rev 20:12

OPENLY

will Himself reward you o ... Matt 6:4
to the feast, not o ... John 7:10
o among the Jews, ... John 11:54
and showed Him o ... Acts 10:40
They have beaten us o, ... Acts 16:37

OPENS

o the ears of men ... Job 33:16
The LORD o the eyes of ... Ps 146:8
him the doorkeeper o ... John 10:3
and shuts and no one o ... Rev 3:7
o the door, I will come in ... Rev 3:20

OPHEL

Hill, southeast of Jerusalem, Neh
3:15-27
Fortified by Manasseh, 2 Chr 27:3
Residence of Nethinim, Neh 3:26

OPHIR

Famous for gold, 1 Chr 29:4

OPHRAH

Town in Manasseh; home of Gideon,
Judg 6:11, 15
Site of Gideon's burial, Judg 8:32

OPINION

dared not declare my o ... Job 32:6
be wise in your own o ... Rom 11:25

OPINIONS

falter between two o ... 1 Kin 18:21

OPPORTUNITY

sought o to betray Him ... Matt 26:16
o to answer for himself ... Acts 25:16
But sin, taking o ... Rom 7:8
but give you o to boast ... 2 Cor 5:12
that I may cut off the o ... 2 Cor 11:12
liberty as an o for the flesh ... Gal 5:13
as we have o ... Gal 6:10
but you lacked o ... Phil 4:10
no o to the adversary ... 1 Tim 5:14
they would have had o ... Heb 11:15

OPPOSES

who o and exalts ... 2 Thess 2:4

OPPOSITE

wrote o the lampstand on ... Dan 5:5
Go into the village o you ... Matt 21:2
Mary, sitting o the tomb ... Matt 27:61
Jesus sat o the treasury ... Mark 12:41
Gadarenes, which is o ... Luke 8:26

OPPRESS

mistreat a stranger nor o ... Ex 22:21
you shall not o ... Lev 25:17
You that You should o ... Job 10:3
He does not o ... Job 37:23
no more o My people ... Ezek 45:8
he loves to o ... Hos 12:7
they o a man and his house, ... Mic 2:2
o the widow or the ... Zech 7:10
o them four hundred years ... Acts 7:6
Do not the rich o ... James 2:6

OPPRESSED

Whom have I o ... 1 Sam 12:3
For he has o and ... Job 20:19
fatherless and the o ... Ps 10:18
for all who are o ... Ps 103:6
The tears of the o ... Eccl 4:1
He was o and He was ... Is 53:7

her midst, and the o ... Amos 3:9
at liberty those who are o ... Luke 4:18
healing all who were o ... Acts 10:38
Lot, who was o by ... 2 Pet 2:7

OPPRESSES

o the poor reproaches ... Prov 14:31
o the poor to increase ... Prov 22:16
A poor man who o ... Prov 28:3

OPPRESSION

have surely seen the o ... Ex 3:7
"For the o of the ... Ps 12:5
Do not trust in o ... Ps 62:10
their life from o ... Ps 72:14
brought low through o ... Ps 107:39
Redeem me from the o ... Ps 119:134
considered all the o ... Eccl 4:1
o destroys a wise ... Eccl 7:7
justice, but behold, o ... Is 5:7
surely seen the o ... Acts 7:34

OPPRESSIONS

of o they cry out ... Job 35:9

OPPRESSOR

the voice of the o ... Job 3:18
Do not envy the o ... Prov 3:31
is a great o ... Prov 28:16
of the fury of the o ... Is 51:13
No more shall an o ... Zech 9:8

OPPRESSORS

me from the hand of o ... Job 6:23
not leave me to my o ... Ps 119:121
o there is power ... Eccl 4:1
LORD because of the o ... Is 19:20

ORACLES

received the living o ... Acts 7:38
were committed the o ... Rom 3:2
principles of the o ... Heb 5:12
let him speak as the o ... 1 Pet 4:11

ORDAINED

infants You have o ... Ps 8:2
the stars, which You have o ... Ps 8:3
o you a prophet ... Jer 1:5
the Man whom He has o ... Acts 17:31
God o before the ages ... 1 Cor 2:7

ORDER

in o that you may know ... Ex 8:22
"Set your house in o ... 2 Kin 20:1
of the LORD was set in o ... 2 Chr 29:35
in o to seek the LORD ... Ezra 6:21
set your words in o ... Job 33:5
you, and set them in o ... Ps 50:21
to the o of Melchizedek ... Ps 110:4
in o to cleanse the land ... Ezek 39:12
swept, and put in o ... Matt 12:44
it swept and put in o ... Luke 11:25
done decently and in o ... 1 Cor 14:40
each one in his own o ... 1 Cor 15:23
to see your good o ... Col 2:5
according to the o ... Heb 5:6
in o to stir up love ... Heb 10:24

ORDERED

man did as Joseph o ... Gen 43:17
for so the LORD has o ... 2 Sam 16:11
for so the king had o all ... Esth 1:8
a good man are o by the ... Ps 37:23

ORDERS

o his conduct aright I ... Ps 50:23
as I have given o to the ... 1 Cor 16:1

ORDINANCE

the o of the Passover ... Ex 12:43
you shall keep My o ... Lev 18:30
an o forever throughout ... Num 10:8
o for Israel to this day ... 1 Sam 30:25
required by o for each day ... Ezra 3:4
forsake the o of their God ... Is 58:2
that we have kept His o ... Mal 3:14
resists the o of God ... Rom 13:2
yourselves to every o ... 1 Pet 2:13

ORDINANCES

shall you walk in their o ... Lev 18:3

o by the hand of Moses ... 2 Chr 33:8
and gave them just o ... Neh 9:13
Do you know the o ... Job 38:33
according to Your o ... Ps 119:91
"If those o depart ... Jer 31:36
not appointed the o ... Jer 33:25
gone away from My o ... Mal 3:7
contained in o ... Eph 2:15
and fleshly o imposed ... Heb 9:10

ORION

Brilliant constellation, Job 9:9

ORNAMENT

will be a graceful o ... Prov 1:9
of gold and an o ... Prov 25:12
with them all as an o ... Is 49:18

ORNAMENTS

cheeks are lovely with o ... Song 1:10
a virgin forget her o ... Jer 2:32
I adorned you with o, put ... Ezek 16:11

ORPAH

Ruth's sister-in-law, Ruth 1:4, 14

ORPHANS

We have become o ... Lam 5:3
I will not leave you o ... John 14:18
to visit o and widows ... James 1:27

OSNAPPER

Called "the great and noble," Ezra 4:10

OSTRICHES

o will dwell there ... Is 13:21
is cruel, like o ... Lam 4:3
a mourning like the o ... Mic 1:8

OTHNIEL

Son of Kenaz, Caleb's youngest
brother, Judg 1:13
Captures Kirjath Sepher; receives
Caleb's daughter as wife, Josh
15:15-17
First judge of Israel, Judg 3:9-11

OUGHT

what Israel o to do ... 1 Chr 12:32
These you o to have ... Matt 23:23
pray for as we o ... Rom 8:26
how you o to conduct ... 1 Tim 3:15
which they o to conduct ... 1 Tim 5:13
persons o you to be ... 2 Pet 3:11

OUTCAST

they called you an o ... Jer 30:17
the lame, I will gather the o ... Mic 4:6
and the o a strong nation ... Mic 4:7

OUTCASTS

gathers together the o ... Ps 147:2
will assemble the o ... Is 11:12
hide the o, do not betray ... Is 16:3
Let My o dwell with ... Is 16:4

OUTCRY

because the o against ... Gen 19:13
that there be no o ... Ps 144:14
Then there arose a loud o ... Acts 23:9

OUTGOINGS

You make the o of the ... Ps 65:8

OUTRAGE

lewdness and o in ... Judg 20:6

OUTRAN

the other disciple o ... John 20:4

OUTSIDE

and dish, that the o ... Matt 23:26
Pharisees make the o ... Luke 11:39
toward those who are o ... Col 4:5
to Him, o the camp ... Heb 13:13
But o are dogs and ... Rev 22:15

OUTSTRETCHED

power and by Your o arm ... Deut 9:29
and with an o arm ... Deut 26:8
an o arm, Him you shall ... 2 Kin 17:36
against you with an o ... Jer 21:5

OUTWARD

at the o appearance 1 Sam 16:7
 Even though our o man 2 Cor 4:16
 to the o appearance 2 Cor 10:7
 adornment be merely o 1 Pet 3:3

OUTWARDLY

appear beautiful o Matt 23:27
 not a Jew who is one o Rom 2:28

OUTWIT

The enemy shall not o Ps 89:22

OVEN

make them as a fiery o Ps 21:9
 burning like an o Mal 4:1
 is thrown into the o Matt 6:30

OVERCAME

My throne, as I also o Rev 3:21
 And they o him by Rev 12:11

OVERCOME

we are well able to o it Num 13:30
 for they have o me Song 6:5
 to those who are o with wine Is 28:1
 good cheer, I have o John 16:33
 o when You are judged Rom 3:4
 o evil with good Rom 12:21
 entangled in them and o 2 Pet 2:20
 because you have o 1 John 2:13
 and have o them, 1 John 4:4
 that has o the world 1 John 5:4
 and the Lamb will o Rev 17:14

OVERCOMES

of God o the world 1 John 5:4
 he who o the world 1 John 5:5
 o I will give to eat Rev 2:7
 o shall not be hurt Rev 2:11
 To him who o I will give Rev 2:17
 He who o shall be clothed Rev 3:5
 To him who o I will grant Rev 3:21
 o shall inherit all Rev 21:7

OVERFLOW

Let not the floodwater o Ps 69:15
 vats will o with new wine Prov 3:10
 shall o with righteousness Is 10:22
 rivers, they shall not o you Is 43:2
 vats shall o with new wine Joel 2:24

OVERFLOWING

My heart is o with a Ps 45:1
 a flood of mighty waters o Is 28:2
 and shall be an o flood Jer 47:2
 But with an o flood He will Nah 1:8

OVERSEER

Then he made him o Gen 39:4
 having no captain, o Prov 6:7
 to the Shepherd and O 1 Pet 2:25

OVERSEERS

Spirit has made you o Acts 20:28
 you, serving as o 1 Pet 5:2

OVERSHADOW

of the Highest will o Luke 1:35

OVERTAKE

some evil o me and I die Gen 19:19
 o you, because you obey Deut 28:2
 upon you and o you Deut 28:15
 and o you, until you are Deut 28:45
 lest he o us suddenly 2 Sam 15:14
 does righteousness o Is 59:9
 you feared shall o Jer 42:16
 lest darkness o you John 12:35
 and o this chariot Acts 8:29
 that this Day should o 1 Thess 5:4

OVERTAKEN

and anguish have o me Ps 119:143
 No temptation has o 1 Cor 10:13
 if a man is o in any Gal 6:1

OVERTHREW

So He o those cities Gen 19:25
 will be as when God o Is 13:19

As God o Sodom and Jer 50:40
 "I o some of you Amos 4:11

OVERTHROW

you shall utterly o Ex 23:24
 o them in the wilderness Ps 106:26
 o their descendants Ps 106:27
 o the righteous in Prov 18:5
 As in the o of Sodom and Jer 49:18
 o the throne of Hag 2:22
 of God, you cannot o it Acts 5:39
 o the faith of some 2 Tim 2:18

OVERTHROWN

Their judges are o Ps 141:6
 but it is o by the mouth Prov 11:11
 The wicked are o and are Prov 12:7
 desolate, as o by strangers Is 1:7
 of Sodom, which was o Lam 4:6
 I will make it o Ezek 21:27
 and Nineveh shall be o Jon 3:4

OVERTHROWS

and o the mighty Job 12:19
 o them in the night Job 34:25
 o the words of the Prov 22:12

OVERTURNED

my heart is o within Lam 1:20
 o the tables of the Matt 21:12
 money and o the tables John 2:15

OVERWHELM

o the fatherless Job 6:27
 sends them out, they o Job 12:15

OVERWHELMED

when my heart is o Ps 61:2
 and my spirit was o Ps 77:3
 o their enemies Ps 78:53
 waters would have o Ps 124:4
 my spirit is o within Ps 143:4

OVERWORK

Do not o to be rich Prov 23:4

OWE

Pay me what you o Matt 18:28
 "How much do you o Luke 16:5
 O no one anything Rom 13:8
 o me even your own Phil 19

OWED

o him ten thousand Matt 18:24
 fellow servants who o Matt 18:28
 o five hundred denarii Luke 7:41

OWN

created man in His o Gen 1:27
 interpretation of his o Gen 41:11
 of his o people as wife Lev 21:14
 grasshoppers in our o Num 13:33
 is right in his o eyes Deut 12:8
 each to his o inheritance Josh 24:28
 a man after His o heart 1 Sam 13:14
 loved him as his o soul 1 Sam 18:1
 Your very o people 2 Sam 7:24
 Your o we have given 1 Chr 29:14
 everyone to his o city Ezra 2:1
 reproach on their o heads Neh 4:4
 wise in their o craftiness Job 5:13
 He who swears to his o hurt Ps 15:4
 Even my o familiar friend in Ps 41:9
 on your o understanding Prov 3:5
 not be wise in your o eyes Prov 3:7
 troubles his o house Prov 11:29
 a fool is right in his o Prov 12:15
 a man are pure in his o Prov 16:2
 wisdom loves his o soul Prov 19:8
 no rule over his o spirit Prov 25:28
 forsake your o friend Prov 27:10
 her o works praise her Prov 31:31
 over another to his o hurt Eccl 8:9
 the work of their o hands Is 2:8
 every one from his o fig Is 36:16
 dictates of their o heart Jer 9:14
 return upon your o head Obad 15
 idols forsake their o Mercy Jon 2:8
 men of his o household Mic 7:6

the plank in your o eye Matt 7:3
 dead bury their o dead Matt 8:22
 and loses his o soul Matt 16:26
 honor except in his o Mark 6:4
 is known by its o fruit Luke 6:44
 He came to His o John 1:11
 not to do My o will John 6:38
 I do not seek My o glory John 8:50
 and am known by My o John 10:14
 having loved His o John 13:1
 world would love its o John 15:19
 took her to his o home John 19:27
 speak in his o language Acts 2:6
 by our o power or Acts 3:12
 His o love toward us Rom 5:8
 did not spare His o Son Rom 8:32
 and you are not your o 1 Cor 6:19
 But each one has his o 1 Cor 7:7
 ask their o husbands at 1 Cor 14:35
 plucked out your o eyes Gal 4:15
 submit to your o husbands Eph 5:22
 ought to love their o wives Eph 5:28
 work out your o salvation Phil 2:12
 For all seek their o Phil 2:21
 who rules his o house 1 Tim 3:4
 but with His o blood He Heb 9:12
 in His o body on the tree 1 Pet 2:24
 but left their o abode Jude 6
 from our sins in His o Rev 1:5

OX

shall not muzzle an o Deut 25:4
 "Will the wild o Job 39:9
 you bind the wild o Job 39:10
 like a young wild o Ps 29:6
 exalted like a wild o Ps 92:10
 o knows its owner Is 1:3
 had the face of an o Ezek 1:10
 Sabbath loose his o Luke 13:15
 shall not muzzle an o 1 Cor 9:9

PACE

are majestic in p Prov 30:29

PACIFIES

A gift in secret p Prov 21:14
 for conciliation p Eccl 10:4

PADAN ARAM

Same as Mesopotamia, Gen 24:10; see
 MESOPOTAMIA
 Home of Isaac's wife, Gen 25:20
 Jacob flees to, Gen 28:2-7
 Jacob returns from, Gen 31:17, 18
 People of, called Syrians, Gen 31:24
 Language of, called Aramaic, 2 Kin
 18:26

PAGAN

have taken p wives from Ezra 10:2
 by marrying p women Neh 13:27
 have begotten p children Hos 5:7
 priests with the p priests Zeph 1:4

PAID

today I have p my vows Prov 7:14
 p the very last mite Luke 12:59
 p tithes through Abraham Heb 7:9

PAILS

p are full of milk Job 21:24

PAIN

p you shall bring Gen 3:16
 Because I bore him in p 1 Chr 4:9
 on my affliction and my p Ps 25:18
 p as a woman in Is 13:8
 are filled with p Is 21:3
 before her p came Is 66:7
 Why is my p perpetual Jer 15:18
 labor and in p to give birth Rev 12:2
 shall be no more p Rev 21:4

PAINED

My heart is severely p Ps 55:4
 I am p in my very Jer 4:19

PAINFUL

this, it was too *p* Ps 73:16
for the present, but *p* Heb 12:11

PAINS

The *p* of death Ps 116:3
having loosed the *p* Acts 2:24
upon them, as labor *p* 1 Thess 5:3

PAINT

and she put *p* on her 2 Kin 9:30
your eyes with *p* Jer 4:30

PAINTING

it with cedar and *p* Jer 22:14

PALACE

support from the *p* Ezra 4:14
was taken to the king's *p* Esth 2:8
was great in the king's *p* Esth 9:4
enter the King's *p* Ps 45:15
a *p* of foreigners Is 25:2
to serve in the king's *p* Dan 1:4
the king went to his *p* Dan 6:18
at the *p* of the high priest Matt 26:3
guards his own *p* Luke 11:21
evident to the whole *p* Phil 1:13

PALACES

out of the ivory *p* Ps 45:8
God is in her *p* Ps 48:3
has entered our *p* Jer 9:21
has swallowed up all her *p* Lam 2:5
in the *p* at Ashdod Amos 3:9

PALANQUIN

the King made himself a *p* Song 3:9

PALE

his face now grow *p* Is 29:22
and all faces turned *p* Jer 30:6
behold, a *p* horse Rev 6:8

PALM

of water and seventy *p* Ex 15:27
p trees, and open flowers 1 Kin 6:29
of yours is like a *p* tree Song 7:7
p branch and bulrush in Is 9:14
p branch or bulrush, may Is 19:15
and *p* trees were carved Ezek 41:20
p trees and went out John 12:13
p branches in their Rev 7:9

PALMS

you on the *p* of My hands Is 49:16
struck Him with the *p* Matt 26:67

PALTI (or Paltiel)

Man to whom Saul gives Michal, David's wife, in marriage, 1 Sam 25:44; 2 Sam 3:15

PAMPERS

p his servant from Prov 29:21

PAMPHYLIA

People from, at Pentecost, Acts 2:10
Paul visits; John Mark returns home from, Acts 13:13; 15:38
Paul preaches in cities of, Acts 14:24, 25

PANGS

The *p* of death Ps 18:4
P and sorrows will Is 13:8
labors with birth *p* Rom 8:22

PANICKED

the men of Benjamin *p* Judg 20:41

PANT

They *p* after the dust Amos 2:7

PANTS

As the deer *p* for the Ps 42:1

PAPHOS

Paul blinds Elymas at, Acts 13:6-13

PAPYRUS

"Can the *p* grow up Job 8:11

PARABLE

open my mouth in a *p* Ps 78:2

speak a *p* to the house of Ezek 17:2
utter a *p* to the rebellious Ezek 24:3
p He did not speak Matt 13:34
learn this *p* from the fig Matt 24:32
spoken the *p* against Mark 12:12
do You speak this *p* Luke 12:41

PARABLES

'Does he not speak *p* Ezek 20:49
understand all the *p* Mark 4:13
rest it is given in *p* Luke 8:10

PARADE

love does not *p* 1 Cor 13:4

PARADISE

will be with Me in *P* Luke 23:43
was caught up into *P* 2 Cor 12:4
in the midst of the *P* Rev 2:7

PARALYTIC

then He said to the *p* Matt 9:6
on which the *p* was lying Mark 2:4

PARALYZED

servant is lying at home *p* Matt 8:6
sick people, blind, lame, *p* John 5:3
who were *p* and lame Acts 8:7

PARAN

Residence of exiled Ishmael, Gen 21:21
Israelites camp in, Num 10:12
Headquarters of spies, Num 13:3, 26
Site of David's refuge, 1 Sam 25:1

PARCHMENTS

especially the *p* 2 Tim 4:13

PARDON

p your transgressions Ex 23:21
You are God, ready to *p* Neh 9:17
not *p* my transgression Job 7:21
O LORD, *p* my iniquity Ps 25:11
He will abundantly *p* Is 55:7
p all their iniquities Jer 33:8

PARDONED

ended, that her iniquity is *p* Is 40:2

PARDONING

is a God like You, *p* Mic 7:18

PARENTS

will rise up against *p* Matt 10:21
His *p* went to Jerusalem Luke 2:41
has left house or *p* Luke 18:29
sinned, this man or his *p* John 9:2
disobedient to *p* Rom 1:30
to lay up for the *p* 2 Cor 12:14
obey your *p* in all things, Col 3:20
disobedient to *p* 2 Tim 3:2

PARMENAS

One of the first seven deacons, Acts 6:5

PART

You have no *p* in the Josh 22:25
has chosen that good *p* Luke 10:42
you, you have no *p* John 13:8
And he kept back *p* of the Acts 5:2
that blindness in *p* has Rom 11:25
to that *p* which lacks it, 1 Cor 12:24
For we know in *p* 1 Cor 13:9
p has a believer 2 Cor 6:15
Abraham gave a tenth *p* Heb 7:2
shall take away his *p* Rev 22:19

PARTAKE

for we all *p* of that 1 Cor 10:17
you cannot *p* of the 1 Cor 10:21

PARTAKER

and have been a *p* Ps 50:18
in hope should be *p* 1 Cor 9:10
Christ, and also a *p* 1 Pet 5:1

PARTAKERS

Gentiles have been *p* Rom 15:27
of the sacrifices *p* 1 Cor 10:18
know that as you are *p* 2 Cor 1:7
gospel, you all are *p* Phil 1:7

qualified us to be *p* Col 1:12
For we have become *p* Heb 3:14

PARTED

them, that He was *p* Luke 24:51
so sharp that they *p* Acts 15:39

PARTIAL

You shall not be *p* Lev 19:15

PARTIALITY

You shall not show *p* Deut 1:17
unjustly, and show *p* Ps 82:2
is not good to show *p* Prov 18:5
but have shown *p* Mal 2:9
that God shows no *p* Acts 10:34
For there is no *p* Rom 2:11
doing nothing with *p* 1 Tim 5:21
but if you show *p* James 2:9
good fruits, without *p* James 3:17

PARTIES

revelries, drinking *p* 1 Pet 4:3

PARTING

at the *p* of the road Ezek 21:21

PARTITION

the Testimony, and *p* Ex 40:3

PARTNER

Whoever is a *p* with a Prov 29:24
you count me as a *p* Philem 17

PARTRIDGE

when one hunts a *p* 1 Sam 26:20

PARTS

anything but death *p* Ruth 1:17
in the inward *p* Ps 51:6
utmost *p* of the sea Ps 139:9
Shout, you lower *p* Is 44:23
and made four *p* John 19:23
but our presentable *p* 1 Cor 12:24
into the lower *p* Eph 4:9

PASHHUR

Official opposing Jeremiah, Jer 21:1; 38:1-13
—— Priest who puts Jeremiah in jail, Jer 20:1-6

PASS

I will *p* over you Ex 12:13
of the sea that *p* Ps 8:8
When you *p* through the Is 43:2
"I will make you *p* Ezek 20:37
seven times shall *p* over Dan 4:32
I will not *p* by them Amos 7:8
and earth will *p* Matt 24:35
let this cup *p* from Me Matt 26:39
will by no means *p* Mark 13:31
p away with a great noise 2 Pet 3:10

PASSED

And behold, the LORD *p* 1 Kin 19:11
and Your waves *p* over me Jon 2:3
p by on the other side Luke 10:31
forbearance God had *p* Rom 3:25
all *p* through the sea 1 Cor 10:1
old things have *p* away 2 Cor 5:17
High Priest who has *p* Heb 4:14
By faith they *p* through Heb 11:29
know that we have *p* 1 John 3:14
former things have *p* away Rev 21:4

PASSES

For the wind *p* over it Ps 103:16
of Christ which *p* Eph 3:19

PASSING

days are like a *p* shadow Ps 144:4
and *p* by, to bear His Mark 15:21
Jesus of Nazareth was *p* Luke 18:37
which glory was *p* away, 2 Cor 3:7
the *p* pleasures of sin Heb 11:25
the darkness is *p* away 1 John 2:8

PASSION

than to burn with *p* 1 Cor 7:9
uncleanness, *p*, evil Col 3:5

PASSIONS

gave them up to vile *p* Rom 1:26

PASSOVER

It is the LORD's *P* Ex 12:11
of the Feast of the *P* be left Ex 34:25
at twilight is the LORD's *P* Lev 23:5
the *P* at its appointed time Num 9:2
to the rite of the *P* and Num 9:14
sacrifice the *P* at twilight Deut 16:6
the *P* on the fourteenth Josh 5:10
of King Josiah this *P* 2 Kin 23:23
P in the second month 2 Chr 30:2
of the slaughter of the *P* 2 Chr 30:17
Now Josiah kept a *P* to 2 Chr 35:1
the *P* lambs for all the Ezra 6:20
you shall observe the *P* Ezek 45:21
I will keep the *P* Matt 26:18
P with My disciples Mark 14:14
the *P* must be killed Luke 22:7
Now the *P* of the Jews John 2:13
Now the *P*, a feast of the John 6:4
P of the Jews was near John 11:55
six days before the *P* John 12:1
that they might eat the *P* John 18:28
Preparation Day of the *P* John 19:14
indeed Christ, our *P* 1 Cor 5:7
By faith he kept the *P* Heb 11:28

PAST

My days are *p* Job 17:11
lo, the winter is *p* Song 2:11
harvest is *p*, the summer Jer 8:20
and His ways *p* finding Rom 11:33
resurrection is already *p* 2 Tim 2:18
ways spoke in time *p* Heb 1:1
p lifetime in doing 1 Pet 4:3

PASTORS

and some *p* and Eph 4:11

PASTURE

the sheep of Your *p* Ps 74:1
the people of His *p* Ps 95:7
feed them in good *p* Ezek 34:14
in and out and find *p* John 10:9

PASTURES

to lie down in green *p* Ps 23:2

PATARA

Port of Lycia where Paul changes ships,
Acts 21:1, 2

PATH

You enlarged my *p* 2 Sam 22:37
p no bird knows Job 28:7
You will show me the *p* Ps 16:11
lead me in a smooth *p* Ps 27:11
comprehend my *p* and my Ps 139:3
But the *p* of the just Prov 4:18
You weigh the *p* of the just Is 26:7
Him in the *p* of justice Is 40:14
way in the sea and a *p* Is 43:16

PATHROS

Described as a lowly kingdom, Ezek
29:14-16
Refuge for dispersed Jews, Jer
44:1-15

Jews to be regathered from, Is 11:11

PATHS

He leads me in the *p* Ps 23:3
Teach me Your *p* Ps 25:4
and all her *p* are Prov 3:17
p they have not Is 42:16
themselves crooked *p* Is 59:8
Make His *p* straight Matt 3:3
and make straight *p* Heb 12:13

PATIENCE

'Master, have *p* Matt 18:26
and bear fruit with *p* Luke 8:15
p possess your souls Luke 21:19
Now may the God of *p* Rom 15:5
labor of love, and *p* 1 Thess 1:3
faith, love, *p* 1 Tim 6:11

and *p* inherit the promises Heb 6:12
your faith produces *p* James 1:3
p have its perfect James 1:4
of suffering and *p* James 5:10
in the kingdom and *p* Rev 1:9
Here is the *p* and the Rev 13:10

PATIENT

rejoicing in hope, *p* Rom 12:12
uphold the weak, be *p* 1 Thess 5:14

PATIENTLY

the LORD, and wait *p* Ps 37:7
if you take it *p* 1 Pet 2:20

PATMOS

John, banished here, receives the Reve-
lation, Rev 1:9

PATRIARCHS

begot the twelve *p* Acts 7:8

PATTERN

p which you were Ex 26:30
as you have us for a *p* Phil 3:17
Hold fast the *p* 2 Tim 1:13
p shown you on the Heb 8:5

PAUL

Roman citizen from Tarsus; studied under
Gamaliel, Acts 22:3, 25-28
Originally called Saul; persecutes the
church, Acts 7:58; 8:1, 3; 9:1, 2
Converted on road to Damascus, Acts
9:3-19
Preaches in Damascus; escapes to Jeru-
salem and then to Tarsus, Acts
9:20-30
Ministers in Antioch; sent to Jerusa-
lem, Acts 11:25-30
First missionary journey, Acts 13; 14
Speaks for Gentiles at Jerusalem Coun-
cil, Acts 15:1-5, 12
Second missionary journey, Acts
15:36-18:22
Third missionary journey, Acts
18:23-21:14
Arrested in Jerusalem; defense before
Roman authorities, Acts 21:15-
26:32
Sent to Rome, Acts 27:1-28:31
His epistles, Rom; 1 and 2 Cor; Gal;
Eph; Phil; Col; 1 and 2 Thess; 1 and
2 Tim; Titus; Philem

PAULUS, SERGIUS

Roman proconsul of Cyprus, Acts
13:4, 7

PAVED

a *p* work of sapphire stone Ex 24:10

PAVEMENT

that is called The *P* John 19:13

PAVILION

shall hide me in His *p* Ps 27:5
them secretly in a *p* Ps 31:20

PAW

from the *p* of the lion 1 Sam 17:37

PAWS

He *p* in the valley Job 39:21

PAY

sell the oil and *p* your debt 2 Kin 4:7
p attention to my wisdom Prov 5:1
with which to *p* Prov 22:27
priests teach for *p* Mic 3:11
with me, and I will *p* Matt 18:26
p taxes to Caesar Matt 22:17
For you *p* tithe of Matt 23:23
to *p* taxes to Caesar Mark 12:14

PEACE

"These men are at *p* Gen 34:21
sacrifice of the *p* offering Lev 3:9
I will give *p* in the Lev 26:6
you, and give you *p* Num 6:26
Joshua made *p* with them Josh 9:15

had made *p* with Israel Josh 10:1
'Make *p* with me by a 2 Kin 18:31
If you ever return in *p* 2 Chr 18:27
field shall be at *p* Job 5:23
both lie down in *p* Ps 4:8
seek *p* and pursue it Ps 34:14
for He will speak *p* Ps 85:8
p have those who Ps 119:165
I am for *p* Ps 120:7
for the *p* of Jerusalem Ps 122:6
P be within your walls Ps 122:7
P be upon Israel Ps 125:5
war, and a time of *p* Eccl 3:8
Father, Prince of *P* Is 9:6
keep him in perfect *p* Is 26:3
p they have not Is 59:8
slightly, saying, '*P* Jer 6:14
'We looked for *p* Jer 8:15
give you assured *p* Jer 14:13
they will seek *p* Ezek 7:25
My people, saying, '*P* Ezek 13:10
P be multiplied Dan 4:1
this One shall be *p* Mic 5:5
place I will give *p* Hag 2:9
speak *p* to the nations Zech 9:10
is worthy, let your *p* Matt 10:13
that I came to bring *p* Matt 10:34
and on earth *p* Luke 2:14
if a son of *p* is there Luke 10:6
that make for your *p* Luke 19:42
I leave with you, My *p* John 14:27
In Me you may have *p* John 16:33
Grace to you and *p* Rom 1:7
by faith, we have *p* Rom 5:1
minded is life and *p* Rom 8:6
of *p* will crush Satan Rom 16:20
God has called us to *p* 1 Cor 7:15
p will be with you 2 Cor 13:11
Spirit is love, joy, *p* Gal 5:22
He Himself is our *p* Eph 2:14
the Spirit in the bond of *p* Eph 4:3
of the gospel of *p* Eph 6:15
and the *p* of God Phil 4:7
heaven, having made *p* Col 1:20
And let the *p* of God Col 3:15
Be at *p* among 1 Thess 5:13
faith, love, *p* 2 Tim 2:22
meaning "king of *p*," Heb 7:2
Pursue *p* with all people Heb 12:14
is sown in *p* by those James 3:18
p be multiplied 2 Pet 1:2
it to take *p* from the earth Rev 6:4

PEACEABLE

and *p* life in all 1 Tim 2:2
is first pure, then *p* James 3:17

PEACEABLY

Do you come *p* 1 Sam 16:4
p?" And he said, "*P*," 1 Kin 2:13
speaks *p* to his neighbor Jer 9:8
He shall enter *p*, even Dan 11:24
on you, live *p* Rom 12:18

PEACEFUL

in a *p* habitation Is 32:18

PEACEMAKERS

Blessed are the *p* Matt 5:9

PEARL

had found one *p* Matt 13:46
gate was of one *p* Rev 21:21

PEARLS

nor cast your *p* Matt 7:6
hair or gold or *p* 1 Tim 2:9
gates were twelve *p* Rev 21:21

PEG

wife, took a tent *p* Judg 4:21
will fasten him as a *p* Is 22:23

PEKAH

Son of Remaliah; usurps Israel's
throne, 2 Kin 15:25-28
Forms alliance with Rezin of Syria
against Ahaz, Is 7:1-9

Alliance defeated; captives returned, 2 Kin 16:5-9
 Territory of, overrun by Tiglath-Pileser, 2 Kin 15:29
 Assassinated by Hoshea, 2 Kin 15:30

PEKAHIAH

Son of Menahem; king of Israel, 2 Kin 15:22-26
 Assassinated by Pekah, 2 Kin 15:23-25

PEN

My tongue is the *p* Ps 45:1
 on it with a man's *p* Is 8:1
 to write to you with *p* 3 John 13

PENNY

have paid the last *p* Matt 5:26

PENTECOST

P had fully come Acts 2:1
 on the Day of *P* Acts 20:16
 tarry in Ephesus until *P* 1 Cor 16:8

PENUUEL

Place east of Jordan; site of Jacob's wrestling with angel, Gen 32:24-31
 Inhabitants of, slain by Gideon, Judg 8:8, 9, 17

PEOPLE

will take you as My *p* Ex 6:7
 Who is like you, a *p* Deut 33:29
p shall be my *p* Ruth 1:16
p who know the joyful Ps 89:15
 We are His *p* and the Ps 100:3
 Happy are the *p* Ps 144:15
 "Blessed is Egypt My *p* Is 19:25
 this is a rebellious *p* Is 30:9
p who provoke Me Is 65:3
 and they shall be My *p* Jer 24:7
 Then they shall be My *p* Ezek 37:23
 for you are not My *p* Hos 1:9
 like *p*, like priest Hos 4:9
 to make ready a *p* Luke 1:17
 taught the *p* in the Luke 20:1
 Unless you *p* see signs John 4:48
 a great multitude of sick *p* John 5:3
 all the *p* came to Him John 8:2
 man should die for the *p* John 11:50
 favor with all the *p* Acts 2:47
 were done among the *p* Acts 5:12
 for they feared the *p*, lest Acts 5:26
 and signs among the *p* Acts 6:8
 the *p* grew and multiplied Acts 7:17
 of My *p* who are in Egypt Acts 7:34
 astonished the *p* of Acts 8:9
 a great many *p* were Acts 11:24
 take out of them a *p* Acts 15:14
 his defense to the *p* Acts 19:33
 of this *p* has grown dull Acts 28:27
 who were not My *p* Acts 9:25
 and contrary *p* Rom 10:21
 His *p* whom He foreknew Rom 11:2
 and they shall be My *p* 2 Cor 6:16
 His own special *p* Titus 2:14
 and they shall be My *p* Heb 8:10
 LORD will judge His *p* Heb 10:30
 His own special *p* 1 Pet 2:9
 but are now the *p* 1 Pet 2:10
 tribe and tongue and *p* Rev 5:9
 tribe, tongue, and *p* Rev 14:6
 they shall be His *p* Rev 21:3

PEOPLE OF GOD

in the assembly of the *p* Judg 20:2
 a thing against the *p* 2 Sam 14:13
 a rest for the *p* Heb 4:9
 affliction with the *p* Heb 11:25
 people but are now the *p* 1 Pet 2:10

PEOPLES

Let *p* serve you Gen 27:29
 separated you from the *p* Lev 20:26
 scatter you among all *p* Deut 28:64
 His deeds among the *p* 1 Chr 16:8
 The LORD shall judge the *p* Ps 7:8

clap your hands, all you *p* Ps 47:1
 Let all the *p* praise You Ps 67:5
 of the earth and all *p* Ps 148:11
 lift up a banner for the *p* Is 62:10
 customs of the *p* are futile Jer 10:3
 to the *p* a pure language, Zeph 3:9
 sow them among the *p* Zech 10:9
 heavy stone for all *p* Zech 12:3
 will draw all *p* to Myself John 12:32

PEOR

Mountain of Moab opposite Jericho, Num 23:28
 Israel's camp seen from, Num 24:2
 ——— Moabite god called Baal of Peor, Num 25:3, 5, 18
 Israelites punished for worship of, Num 31:16

PERCEIVE

given you a heart to *p* Deut 29:4
 but I cannot *p* Job 23:8
 seeing, but do not *p* Is 6:9
 may see and not *p* Mark 4:12
 not yet *p* nor understand Mark 8:17
 In truth I *p* that God Acts 10:34

PERCEIVED

not heard nor *p* by the ear Is 64:4
 Jesus *p* their wickedness Matt 22:18
 when Jesus *p* in His spirit Mark 2:8
 Jesus *p* their thoughts Luke 5:22
 for I *p* power going out Luke 8:46
p the grace that had been Gal 2:9

PERDITION

except the son of *p* John 17:12
 to them a proof of *p* Phil 1:28
 revealed, the son of *p* 2 Thess 2:3
 who draw back to *p* Heb 10:39
 day of judgment and *p* 2 Pet 3:7

PEREZ

One of Judah's twin sons by Tamar, Gen 38:24-30

PERFECT

Noah was a just man, *p* Gen 6:9
 His work is *p* Deut 32:4
 Give a *p* lot 1 Sam 14:41
 one who is *p* in Job 36:4
 for God, His way is *p* Ps 18:30
 The law of the LORD is *p* Ps 19:7
 I hate them with *p* hatred Ps 139:22
 will keep him in *p* peace Is 26:3
 You were *p* in your Ezek 28:15
 Father in heaven is *p* Matt 5:48
 "If you want to be *p* Matt 19:21
 they may be made *p* John 17:23
 and *p* will of God Rom 12:2
 when that which is *p* 1 Cor 13:10
 is made *p* in weakness 2 Cor 12:9
 present every man *p* Col 1:28
 the law made nothing *p* Heb 7:19
 more *p* tabernacle Heb 9:11
 of just men made *p* Heb 12:23
 patience have its *p* work James 1:4
 good gift and every *p* James 1:17
 in word, he is a *p* James 3:2
p love casts out fear 1 John 4:18

PERFECTED

third day I shall be *p* Luke 13:32
 or am already *p* Phil 3:12
 the Son who has been *p* Heb 7:28
 the love of God is *p* 1 John 2:5

PERFECTION

the *p* of beauty Ps 50:2
 consummation of all *p* Ps 119:96
 You were the seal of *p* Ezek 28:12
 let us go on to *p* Heb 6:1

PERFORM

p the duty Ruth 3:13
p Your statutes Ps 119:112
 am ready to *p* My word Jer 1:12
 he is obliged to *p* it Matt 23:16

What sign will You *p* John 6:30
 how to *p* what is good Rom 7:18

PERFORMED

They *p* His signs Ps 105:27
 works are *p* by His hands Mark 6:2
 John *p* no sign John 10:41
 who *p* the service perfect in Heb 9:9

PERFUMER'S

putrefy the *p* ointment Eccl 10:1

PERGA

Visited by Paul, Acts 13:13, 14; 14:25

PERGAMOS

Site of one of the seven churches, Rev 1:11
 Special message to, Rev 2:12-17

PERIL

or nakedness, or *p* Rom 8:35

PERILOUS

from the *p* pestilence Ps 91:3
 in the last days *p* 2 Tim 3:1

PERILS

journeys often, in *p* 2 Cor 11:26

PERISH

"Surely we die, we *p* Num 17:12
 until you *p* from this Josh 23:13
 and if I *p*, I *p* Esth 4:16
 Why did I not *p* Job 3:11
 All flesh would *p* Job 34:15
 way of the ungodly shall *p* Ps 1:6
 He is like the beasts that *p* Ps 49:12
 they *p* at the rebuke Ps 80:16
 very day his plans *p* Ps 146:4
 he who speaks lies shall *p* Prov 19:9
 But those riches *p* through Eccl 5:14
 they all will *p* together Is 31:3
 the remnant in Judah *p* Jer 40:15
 so that we may not *p* Jon 1:6
 one of your members *p* Matt 5:29
 little ones should *p* Matt 18:14
 will *p* by the sword Matt 26:52
 will all likewise *p* Luke 13:3
 in Him should not *p* John 3:16
 they shall never *p* John 10:28
 whole nation should *p* John 11:50
 Your money *p* with you, Acts 8:20
 will also *p* without law Rom 2:12
 shall the weak brother *p* 1 Cor 8:11
 concern things which *p* Col 2:22
 among those who *p* 2 Thess 2:10
 They will *p* Heb 1:11
 that any should *p* 2 Pet 3:9

PERISHABLE

do it to obtain a *p* 1 Cor 9:25

PERISHED

p being innocent Job 4:7
 Truth has *p* and has Jer 7:28
 The faithful man has *p* Mic 7:2

PERISHES

The old lion *p* for lack of Job 4:11
 The righteous *p* Is 57:1
 for the food which *p* John 6:27
 precious than gold that *p* 1 Pet 1:7

PERISHING

We are *p* Matt 8:25
 to those who are *p* 2 Cor 4:3

PERIZZITES

One of seven Canaanite nations, Deut 7:1
 Possessed Palestine in Abraham's time, Gen 13:7
 Jacob's fear of, Gen 34:30
 Many of, slain by Judah, Judg 1:4, 5

PERJURER

p shall be expelled Zech 5:3

PERMIT

the Spirit did not *p* Acts 16:7
 I do not *p* a woman 1 Tim 2:12

PERMITS

you, if the Lord *p* 1 Cor 16:7
 we will do if God *p* Heb 6:3

PERMITTED

p no one to do them Ps 105:14

PERPETUAL

p incense before the LORD Ex 30:8
 It shall be a *p* statute for Num 19:21
 Why is my pain *p* Jer 15:18
 make it a *p* desolation Jer 25:12
 saltpits, and a *p* desolation Zeph 2:9

PERPETUATED

Your name shall be *p* Nah 1:14

PERPLEXED

at one another, *p* John 13:22
 we are *p* 2 Cor 4:8

PERSECUTE

p me as God does Job 19:22
p me wrongfully Ps 119:86
 when they revile and *p* Matt 5:11
 Bless those who *p* Rom 12:14

PERSECUTED

p the poor and needy Ps 109:16
p the prophets who Matt 5:12
 If they *p* Me John 15:20
p the church of God 1 Cor 15:9
p, but not forsaken 2 Cor 4:9
p us now preaches the Gal 1:23

PERSECUTES

wicked in his pride *p* Ps 10:2

PERSECUTION

p arises because of Matt 13:21
 At that time a great *p* Acts 8:1
 do I still suffer *p* Gal 5:11

PERSECUTIONS

and lands, with *p* Mark 10:30
 in needs, in *p* 2 Cor 12:10
p, afflictions, which 2 Tim 3:11

PERSECUTOR

a blasphemer, a *p* 1 Tim 1:13

PERSECUTORS

Deliver me from my *p*, for Ps 142:6
 vengeance for me on my *p* Jer 15:15
 all her *p* overtake her in Lam 1:3

PERSEVERANCE

tribulation produces *p* Rom 5:3
 to this end will all *p* Eph 6:18
 longsuffering, love, *p* 2 Tim 3:10
 heard of the *p* of Job James 5:11
 to self-control *p* 2 Pet 1:6

PERSEVERE

kept My command to *p* Rev 3:10

PERSISTENCE

p he will rise and Luke 11:8

PERSON

In whose eyes a vile *p* Ps 15:4
p will suffer hunger Prov 19:15
 do not regard the *p* Matt 22:16
 One *p* esteems one day Rom 14:5
 to eat with such a *p* 1 Cor 5:11
 no fornicator, unclean *p* Eph 5:5
 that such a *p* is warped Titus 3:11
 express image of His *p* Heb 1:3
 let it be the hidden *p* 1 Pet 3:4
 by whom a *p* is overcome 2 Pet 2:19

PERSUADE

Who will *p* Ahab to 1 Kin 22:20
 "You almost *p* me Acts 26:28
 the Lord, we *p* men 2 Cor 5:11
 For do I now *p* men Gal 1:10

PERSUADED

a ruler is *p* Prov 25:15
 neither will they be *p* Luke 16:31
p that He is able 2 Tim 1:12

PERSUASIVE

p words of human 1 Cor 2:4
 you with *p* words Col 2:4

PERTAING

Priest in things *p* Heb 2:17
 for men in things *p* Heb 5:1

PERTURBED

things the earth is *p* Prov 30:21

PERVERSE

your way is *p* Num 22:32
 for the *p* person is an Prov 3:32
p lips far from you Prov 4:24
p heart will be Prov 12:8
p man sows strife Prov 16:28
 but he who is *p* Prov 28:18
 from this *p* generation Acts 2:40

PERVERSITY

in oppression and *p* Is 30:12

PERVERT

You shall not *p* Deut 16:19
 and *p* all equity Mic 3:9
p the gospel of Christ Gal 1:7

PERVERTING

We found this fellow *p* Luke 23:2
 will you not cease *p* Acts 13:10

PERVERTS

p the words of the Ex 23:8
p his ways will become Prov 10:9

PESTILENCE

from the perilous *p* Ps 91:3
p that walks in Ps 91:6
 Before Him went *p* Hab 3:5

PESTILENCES

will be famines, *p* Matt 24:7

PETER

Fisherman; called to discipleship, Matt
 4:18-20; John 1:40-42
 Called as apostle, Matt 10:2-4
 Walks on water, Matt 14:28-33
 Confesses Christ's deity, Matt
 16:13-19
 Rebuked by Christ, Matt 16:21-23
 Witnesses transfiguration, Matt
 17:1-8; 2 Pet 1:16-18
 Denies Christ three times, Matt
 26:69-75
 Commissioned to feed Christ's sheep,
 John 21:15-17
 Leads disciples, Acts 1:15-26
 Preaches at Pentecost, Acts 2:1-41
 Performs miracles, Acts 3:1-11;
 5:14-16; 9:32-43
 Called to minister to Gentiles, Acts 10
 Defends his visit to Gentiles, Acts
 11:1-18
 Imprisoned and delivered, Acts
 12:3-19
 Speaks at Jerusalem Council, Acts
 15:7-14
 Writes epistles, 1 Pet 1:1; 2 Pet 1:1

PETITION

of Israel grant your *p* 1 Sam 1:17
 What is your *p* Esth 5:6
 present your *p* before Him Jer 42:9
 makes his *p* three times Dan 6:13

PETITIONS

fulfill all your *p* Ps 20:5
p that we have asked 1 John 5:15

PHARAOH

Kings of Egypt, contemporaries of:
 Abraham, Gen 12:15-20
 Joseph, Gen 40; 41
 Moses in youth, Ex 1:8-11
 the Exodus, Ex 5-14
 Solomon, 1 Kin 3:1; 11:17-20
 Other Pharaohs, 1 Kin 14:25, 26; 2 Kin
 17:4; 18:21; 19:9; 23:29; Jer 44:30

PHARISEE

"Blind *P*, first cleanse Matt 23:26
P who had invited Him Luke 7:39
P asked Him to dine Luke 11:37
 temple to pray, one a *P* Luke 18:10
P named Gamaliel Acts 5:34
 I am a *P*, the son of a *P* Acts 23:6
 our religion I lived a *P* Acts 26:5
 concerning the law, a *P* Phil 3:5

PHARISEES

See SCRIBES AND PHARISEES
 when he saw many of the *P* Matt 3:7
 when the *P* saw it, they Matt 9:11
 we and the *P* fast often Matt 9:14
P said, "He casts out Matt 9:34
P saw it, they said to Matt 12:2
P were offended when Matt 15:12
 of the leaven of the *P* Matt 16:6
P also came to Him Matt 19:3
P heard His parables Matt 21:45
P went and plotted how Matt 22:15
P heard that He had Matt 22:34
P gathered together to Matt 27:62
P came out and began to Mark 8:11
P and teachers of the law Luke 5:17
P and lawyers rejected Luke 7:30
 you *P* make the outside Luke 11:39
 "But woe to you *P*! For Luke 11:42
 of the leaven of the *P* Luke 12:1
P came, saying to Him Luke 13:31
 to the lawyers and *P* Luke 14:3
P and scribes murmured Luke 15:2
P, who were lovers of Luke 16:14
P when the kingdom of Luke 17:20
 of the *P* named Nicodemus John 3:1
P heard the crowd John 7:32
P therefore said to Him John 8:13
P also asked him again John 9:15
 went away to the *P* John 11:46
P had given a command John 11:57
 because of the *P* they John 12:42
 of the *P* who believed Acts 15:5
 Sadducees and the other *P* Acts 23:6

PHILADELPHIA

City of Lydia in Asia Minor; church
 established here, Rev 1:11

PHILEMON

Christian at Colosse to whom Paul
 writes, Philem 1
 Paul appeals to him to receive Onesimus, Philem 9-21

PHILETUS

False teacher, 2 Tim 2:17, 18

PHILIP

Son of Herod the Great, Matt 14:3
 — One of the twelve apostles, Matt
 10:3
 Brings Nathanael to Christ, John
 1:43-48
 Tested by Christ, John 6:5-7
 Introduces Greeks to Christ, John
 12:20-22
 Gently rebuked by Christ, John
 14:8-12
 — One of the first seven deacons,
 Acts 6:5
 Called an evangelist, Acts 21:8
 Preaches in Samaria, Acts 8:5-13
 Leads the Ethiopian eunuch to Christ,
 Acts 8:26-40

PHILIPPI

City of Macedonia (named after Philip
 of Macedon); visited by Paul, Acts
 16:12; 20:6
 Paul writes letter to church of, Phil 1:1

PHILISTIA

The land of the Philistines, Gen 21:32,
 34; Josh 13:2; Ps 60:8

PHILISTINES

Not attacked by Joshua, Josh 13:1-3

Left to test Israel, Judg 3:1-4
 God delivers Israel to, as punishment,
 Judg 10:6, 7
 Israel delivered from, by Samson, Judg
 13-16
 Capture, then return the ark of the
 Lord, 1 Sam 4-6
 Wars and dealings with Saul and Da-
 vid, 1 Sam 13:15-14:23; 17:1-52;
 18:25-27; 21:10-15; 27:1-28:6;
 29:1-11; 31:1-13; 2 Sam 5:17-25
 Originally on the island of Caphtor, Jer
 47:4
 Prophecies concerning, Is 9:11, 12; Jer
 25:15-20; 47:1-7; Ezek 25:15-17;
 Zeph 2:4-6

PHILOSOPHERS

p encountered him Acts 17:18

PHILOSOPHY

cheat you through *p* Col 2:8

PHINEHAS

Aaron's grandson; executes God's
 judgment, Num 25:1-18; Ps 106:30,
 31

Settles dispute over memorial altar,
 Josh 22:11-32

— Younger son of Eli; abuses his of-
 fice, 1 Sam 1:3; 2:12-17, 22-36

Killed by Philistines, 1 Sam 4:11, 17

PHOENICIA

Mediterranean coastal region includ-
 ing the cities of Ptolemais, Tyre,
 Zarephath and Sidon; evangelized
 by early Christians, Acts 11:19
 Jesus preaches here, Matt 15:21

PHRYGIA

Jews from, at Pentecost, Acts 2:1, 10
 Visited twice by Paul, Acts 16:6

PHYLAETERIES

They make their *p* Matt 23:5

PHYSICIAN

Gilead, is there no *p* Jer 8:22
 have no need of a *p* Matt 9:12
 Luke the beloved *p* Col 4:14

PHYSICIANS

are all worthless *p* Job 13:4
 her livelihood on *p* Luke 8:43

PI HAHIROTH

Israel camps there before crossing the
 Red Sea, Ex 14:2, 9; Num 33:7, 8

PICTURE

what parable shall we *p* Mark 4:30

PIECE

placed each *p* opposite Gen 15:10
 hammered *p* of pure gold Ex 25:36
 one *p* with the mercy seat Ex 37:8
 two legs or a *p* of an ear Amos 3:12
 No one puts a *p* Matt 9:16
 bought a *p* of broiled fish Luke 14:18
 Him a *p* of a broiled fish Luke 24:42
 from the top in one *p* John 19:23

PIECES

for my wages thirty *p* Zech 11:12
 they took the thirty *p* Matt 27:9
 shall be dashed to *p* Rev 2:27

PIERCE

and his master shall *p* Ex 21:6
 a sword will *p* Luke 2:35

PIERCED

p My hands and My feet Ps 22:16
 Me whom they have *p* Zech 12:10
 of the soldiers *p* John 19:34
p themselves through 1 Tim 6:10
 and they also who *p* Rev 1:7

PIERCING

p even to the division Heb 4:12

PIETY

first learn to show *p* 1 Tim 5:4

PILATE, PONTIUS

Governor of Judea (A.D. 26-36), Luke
 3:1
 Questions Jesus and delivers Him to
 Jews, Matt 27:2, 11-26; John
 18:28-19:16

PILGRIMAGE

heart is set on *p* Ps 84:5
 In the house of my *p* Ps 119:54

PILGRIMS

we are aliens and *p* 1 Chr 29:15
 were strangers and *p* Heb 11:13

PILLAR

and she became a *p* Gen 19:26
 where you anointed the *p* Gen 31:13
 and by night in a *p* Ex 13:21
 standing by a *p* 2 Kin 11:14
 a *p* to the LORD Is 19:19
 the living God, the *p* 1 Tim 3:15
 I will make him a *p* in the Rev 3:12

PILLARS

break their sacred *p* Ex 34:13
 between the *p* Judg 16:25
 And he cast two *p* 1 Kin 7:15
 bronze *p* that were in 2 Kin 25:13
 I set up its *p* firmly Ps 75:3
 out her seven *p* Prov 9:1
 blood and fire and *p* Joel 2:30
 who seemed to be *p* Gal 2:9
 and his feet like *p* Rev 10:1

PILOT

rudder wherever the *p* James 3:4

PIM

p for the plowshares 1 Sam 13:21

PINE

cypress tree and the *p* Is 41:19
 for these *p* away Lam 4:9

PINNACLE

set Him on the *p* Luke 4:9

PISGAH

Mountain in Moab where Balaam of-
 fers sacrifice, Num 23:14
 Moses views Promised Land from,
 Deut 3:27
 Site of Moses' death, Deut 34:1-7

PISHON

One of Eden's four rivers, Gen 2:10,
 11

PISIDIA

Twice visited by Paul, Acts 13:13, 14;
 14:24

PIT

See BOTTOMLESS PIT
 cast him into some *p* Gen 37:20
 soul draws near the *P* Job 33:22
 who go down to the *p* Ps 28:1
 woman is a deep *p* Prov 22:14
 a harlot is a deep *p* Prov 23:27
 fall into his own *p* Prov 28:10
 my life in the *p* Lam 3:53
 who descend into the *P* Ezek 31:16
 up my life from the *p* Jon 2:6
 from the waterless *p* Zech 9:11
 if it falls into a *p* Matt 12:11
 ox that has fallen into a *p* Luke 14:5
 the key to the bottomless *p* Rev 9:1
 into the bottomless *p* Rev 20:3

PITCH

inside and outside with *p* Gen 6:14
 Israel would *p* their tents Num 9:17

PITCHER

her *p* on her shoulder Gen 24:15
 or the *p* shattered at the Eccl 12:6
 carrying a *p* of water Luke 22:10

PITCHERS

and torches inside the *p* Judg 7:16
 the *p* of pure gold 1 Chr 28:17
 the washing of cups, *p* Mark 7:4

PITHOM

Egyptian city built by Hebrew slaves,
 Ex 1:11

PITITABLE

of all men the most *p* 1 Cor 15:19

PITS

The proud have dug *p* Ps 119:85

PITY

eye shall have no *p* Deut 7:16
 "Have *p* on me Job 19:21
 for someone to take *p* Ps 69:20
 He who has *p* on the Prov 19:17
p He redeemed them Is 63:9
 land, and *p* His people Joel 2:18
 And should I not *p* Jon 4:11
 just as I had *p* Matt 18:33

PLACE

See HIGH PLACE; HOLY PLACE;

MOST HOLY PLACE

p know him anymore Job 7:10
 All go to one *p* Eccl 3:20
 return again to My *p* Hos 5:15
 Come, see the *p* Matt 28:6
 My word has no *p* John 8:37
 I go to prepare a *p* John 14:2
 might go to his own *p* Acts 1:25

PLACES

See HIGH PLACES

set them in slippery *p* Ps 73:18
 dark *p* of the earth Ps 74:20
 and the rough *p* Is 40:4
 They love the best *p* Matt 23:6
 in the heavenly *p* Eph 1:3

PLAGUE

bring yet one more *p* Ex 11:1
 with a very great *p* Num 11:33
 those who died in the *p* Num 25:9
 three days' *p* in your 2 Sam 24:13
p come near your Ps 91:10
 and the *p* was stopped Ps 106:30
 And this shall be the *p* Zech 14:12
 because of the *p* of the Rev 16:21

PLAGUES

I will send all My *p* Ex 9:14
 I will be your *p* Hos 13:14
p that are written Rev 22:18

PLAINLY

the Christ, tell us *p* John 10:24
 now You are speaking *p* John 16:29
 such things declare *p* Heb 11:14

PLAN

p evil things in their Ps 140:2
 Let none of you *p* Zech 7:10
p according to the flesh 2 Cor 1:17

PLANK

First remove the *p* Matt 7:5

PLANS

He makes the *p* of the Ps 33:10
 in that very day his *p* Ps 146:4
 that devises wicked *p* Prov 6:18
 A man's heart *p* Prov 16:9
P are established Prov 20:18

PLANT

A time to *p* Eccl 3:2
 Him as a tender *p* Is 53:2
 they shall *p* vineyards Is 65:21
p of an alien vine Jer 2:21
 the LORD God prepared a *p* Jon 4:6
p which My heavenly Matt 15:13

PLANTED

The LORD God *p* a garden Gen 2:8
 and he *p* a vineyard Gen 9:20
 Abraham *p* a tamarisk Gen 21:33

shall be like a tree *p* Ps 1:3
 Your right hand has *p* Ps 80:15
p it with the choicest vine Is 5:2
 shall they be *p* Is 40:24
 like a tree *p* by the waters Jer 17:8
 by the roots and be *p* Luke 17:6
 I *p*, Apollos watered 1 Cor 3:6

PLANTS

our sons may be as *p* Ps 144:12
 down its choice *p* Is 16:8
 neither he who *p* 1 Cor 3:7

PLASTERED

p with untempered Ezek 13:14
 Her prophets *p* them Ezek 22:28

PLATFORM

scribe stood on a *p* Neh 8:4

PLATTER

head here on a *p* Matt 14:8

PLAY

and rose up to *p* Ex 32:6
p skillfully with a Ps 33:3
 nursing child shall *p* Is 11:8
 and rose up to *p* 1 Cor 10:7

PLAYED

So David *p* music with 1 Sam 18:10
 We *p* the flute for you Matt 11:17

PLEAD

the one who would *p* Judg 6:31
 Oh, that one might *p* Job 16:21
p my cause against an Ps 43:1
p with your friend Prov 6:3
 Behold, I will *p* Jer 2:35
p His case with all Jer 25:31

PLEADED

Then Moses *p* with the Ex 32:11
 this thing I *p* with 2 Cor 12:8

PLEADING

though God were *p* 2 Cor 5:20

PLEASANT

food, that it was *p* Gen 3:6
 fallen to me in *p* places Ps 16:6
 they despised the *p* Ps 106:24
 how good and how *p* Ps 133:1
 and knowledge is *p* Prov 2:10
 words of the pure are *p* Prov 15:26
P words are like a Prov 16:24
p places of the Jer 23:10
 Is he a *p* child Jer 31:20
 I ate no *p* food Dan 10:3

PLEASANTNESS

Her ways are ways of *p* Prov 3:17

PLEASE

P say you are my sister, Gen 12:13
P, go in to my maid Gen 16:2
p let me escape there Gen 19:20
P come near, Gen 27:21
P hear this dream which I Gen 37:6
 Now, *p*, forgive the Gen 50:17
P, let us go three days' Ex 5:3
P inquire of God, Judg 18:5
p pardon my sin, 1 Sam 15:25
 yet honor me now, *p*, 1 Sam 15:30
P bring the ephod here 1 Sam 30:7
P let my sister Tamar 2 Sam 13:5
p let my brother 2 Sam 13:26
 When a man's ways *p* Prov 16:7
 do those things that John 8:29
 in the flesh cannot *p* Rom 8:8
p his neighbor for his Rom 15:2
 how he may *p* the Lord 1 Cor 7:32
 how he may *p* his wife 1 Cor 7:33
 may *p* her husband 1 Cor 7:34
 Or do I seek to *p* men Gal 1:10
 is impossible to *p* Him Heb 11:6

PLEASED

and she *p* Samson well Judg 14:7
 Then You shall be *p* Ps 51:19

The LORD is well *p*, Is 42:21
 Yet it *p* the LORD to bruise Is 53:10
 Would he be *p* with you Mal 1:8
 in whom I am well *p*, Matt 3:17
 danced before them and *p*, Matt 14:6
 God was not well *p*, 1 Cor 10:5
 But when it *p* God, who Gal 1:15
 testimony, that he *p*, Heb 11:5
 in whom I am well *p*, 2 Pet 1:17

PLEASES

dwell where it *p* you Gen 20:15
 He does whatever He *p*, Ps 115:3
 Whatever the LORD *p*, Ps 135:6
 who *p* God shall escape Eccl 7:26
 nor awaken love until it *p*, Song 2:7

PLEASING

sacrifice, well *p* Phil 4:18
 for this is well *p* Col 3:20
 in you what is well *p* Heb 13:21

PLEASURE

grown old, shall I have *p*, Gen 18:12
 not a God who takes *p* Ps 5:4
 has *p* in the prosperity Ps 35:27
 Do good in Your good *p*, Ps 51:18
 Your servants take *p*, Ps 102:14
 The LORD takes *p* in those, Ps 147:11
p will be a poor man Prov 21:17
 for He has no *p* Eccl 5:4
 shall perform all My *p*, Is 44:28
 your fast you find *p*, Is 58:3
 nor finding your own *p*, Is 58:13
 Do I have any *p*, Ezek 18:23
 I have no *p* in you Mal 1:10
 your Father's good *p*, Luke 12:32
 to the good *p* of His Eph 1:5
 to do for His good *p*, Phil 2:13
 fulfill all the good *p*, 2 Thess 1:11
p is dead while 1 Tim 5:6
 for sin You had no *p*, Heb 10:6
 back, My soul has no *p*, Heb 10:38
p that war in your James 4:1
 on the earth in *p*, James 5:5

PLEASURES

Your right hand are *p*, Ps 16:11
 cares, riches, and *p*, Luke 8:14
 to enjoy the passing *p*, Heb 11:25
 may spend it on your *p*, James 4:3

PLEDGE

give me a *p* till you send Gen 38:17
 hands in *p* for a stranger Prov 6:1
 shakes hands in a *p*, and Prov 17:18
 who shakes hands in a *p*, Prov 22:26

PLEIADES

Part of God's creation, Job 9:9; Amos 5:8

PLENTIFUL

You, O God, sent a *p* Ps 68:9
 The harvest truly is *p* Matt 9:37

PLENTIFULLY

rich man yielded *p* Luke 12:16

PLENTY

p which were in the Gen 41:53
 LORD will grant you *p*, Deut 28:11
 barns will be filled with *p*, Prov 3:10
 diligent lead surely to *p*, Prov 21:5
 his land will have *p*, Prov 28:19

PLIGHT

He laughs at the *p* Job 9:23

PLOT

in the *p* at Jezreel, so that 2 Kin 9:37
 and the people *p*, Ps 2:1
 near the *p* of ground that John 4:5
p became known to Saul Acts 9:24

PLOTS

The wicked *p* against Ps 37:12

PLOTTED

and *p* to take Jesus by Matt 26:4
 chief priests *p* John 12:10

PLOW

lazy man will not *p* Prov 20:4
 Does one *p* there with Amos 6:12
 put his hand to the *p*, Luke 9:62
 he who plows should *p*, 1 Cor 9:10

PLOWED

"Zion shall be *p*, Jer 26:18
 You have *p* wickedness Hos 10:13
 of you Zion shall be *p*, Mic 3:12

PLOWMAN

p shall overtake the Amos 9:13

PLOWSHARES

beat their swords into *p*, Is 2:4
 Beat your *p* into swords Joel 3:10
 beat their swords into *p*, Mic 4:3

PLUCK

grain, you may *p* Deut 23:25
 who pass by the way *p*, Ps 80:12
 obey, I will utterly *p*, Jer 12:17
p the heads of grain Mark 2:23

PLUCKED

p the victim from his Job 29:17
 cheeks to those who *p*, Is 50:6
 And His disciples *p*, Luke 6:1
 you would have *p*, Gal 4:15

PLUMB

a *p* line, with a *p*, Amos 7:7
 rejoice to see the *p*, Zech 4:10

PLUNDER

p the Egyptians Ex 3:22
 who pass by the way *p*, Ps 89:41
 The *p* of the poor is Is 3:14
p you shall become Jer 30:16
 house and *p* his goods Matt 12:29

PLUNDERED

stouthearted were *p*, Ps 76:5
 a people robbed and *p*, Is 42:22
 "And when you are *p*, Jer 4:30
 Because you have *p*, Hab 2:8

PLUNDERING

me because of the *p*, Is 22:4
 accepted the *p* of your Heb 10:34

POETS

some of your own *p*, Acts 17:28

POINT

obedient to the *p* of death Phil 2:8
 even to the *p* of chains 2 Tim 2:9
 Now this is the main *p*, Heb 8:1
 yet stumble in one *p*, James 2:10

POINTS

but was in all *p* tempted Heb 4:15

POISON

the *p* of asps is under Ps 140:3
 "The *p* of asps is Rom 3:13
 evil, full of deadly *p*, James 3:8

POISONED

p by bitterness Acts 8:23
p their minds against Acts 14:2

POLLUTIONS

have escaped the *p*, 2 Pet 2:20

POMEGRANATE

a golden bell and a *p*, a Ex 28:34
p tree, the palm tree Joel 1:12

POMEGRANATES

you shall make *p* of blue Ex 28:33
 brought some of the *p*, Num 13:23
 grain or figs or vines or *p*, Num 20:5
 of vines and fig trees and *p*, Deut 8:8

POMP

multitude and their *p*, Is 5:14
p is brought down to Is 14:11
 had come with great *p*, Acts 25:23

POMPOUS

and a mouth speaking *p*, Dan 7:8

PONDER

P the path of your Prov 4:26

PONDERED

p them in her heart Luke 2:19

PONDERS

p all his paths Prov 5:21

PONTUS

Jews from, at Pentecost, Acts 2:5, 9
Home of Aquila, Acts 18:2
Christians of, addressed by Peter, 1 Pet 1:1

POOL

the rock into a *p* of water Ps 114:8
the wilderness a *p* Is 41:18
by the Sheep Gate a *p* John 5:2
at a certain time into the *p* John 5:4
wash in the *p* of Siloam John 9:7
"Go to the *p* of Siloam John 9:11

POOLS

also covers it with *p* Ps 84:6
a wilderness into *p* Ps 107:35
your eyes like the *p* Song 7:4

POOR

p shall not give less Ex 30:15
be partial to the *p* Lev 19:15
p will never cease Deut 15:11
whether *p* or rich Ruth 3:10
raises the *p* from the dust 1 Sam 2:8
seeing I am a *p* 1 Sam 18:23
one rich and the other *p* 2 Sam 12:1
left some of the *p* 2 Kin 25:12
and gifts to the *p* Esth 9:22
So the *p* have hope Job 5:16
and forsaken the *p* Job 20:19
I delivered the *p* Job 29:12
soul grieved for the *p* Job 30:25
The expectation of the *p* Ps 9:18
p shall eat and be Ps 22:26
p man cried out Ps 34:6
delivering the *p* from him Ps 35:10
to cast down the *p* Ps 37:14
But I am *p* and needy Ps 40:17
is he who considers the *p* Ps 41:1
goodness for the *p* Ps 68:10
For the LORD hears the *p* Ps 69:33
and Your *p* with justice Ps 72:2
Let the *p* and needy Ps 74:21
Defend the *p* and fatherless Ps 82:3
yet He sets the *p* Ps 107:41
at the right hand of the *p* Ps 109:31
He has given to the *p* Ps 112:9
He raises the *p* Ps 113:7
satisfy her *p* with bread Ps 132:15
and justice for the *p* Ps 140:12
a slack hand becomes *p* Prov 10:4
one who makes himself *p* Prov 13:7
p man is hated even Prov 14:20
p reproaches his Maker Prov 17:5
p man uses entreaties Prov 18:23
Better is the *p* who Prov 19:1
p will also cry himself Prov 21:13
p have this in common Prov 22:2
p man who oppresses Prov 28:3
Better is the *p* who Prov 28:6
the cause of the *p* Prov 29:7
Or lest I be *p* and steal Prov 30:9
to devour the *p* from Prov 30:14
plead the cause of the *p* Prov 31:9
her hand to the *p* Prov 31:20
remembered that same *p* Eccl 9:15
He shall judge the *p*, and Is 11:4
the *p* of His people shall Is 14:32
a strength to the *p* Is 25:4
The *p* and needy seek Is 41:17
preach good tidings to the *p* Is 61:1
on him who is *p* and of a Is 66:2
delivered the life of the *p* Jer 20:13
land of Judah the *p* people Jer 39:10
the hand of the *p* Ezek 16:49

and mistreated the *p* Ezek 22:29
by showing mercy to the *p* Dan 4:27
for silver, and the *p* Amos 2:6
you tread down the *p* Amos 5:11
the alien or the *p* Zech 7:10
in particular the *p* Zech 11:7
"Blessed are the *p* Matt 5:3
p have the gospel Matt 11:5
have and give to the *p* Matt 19:21
For you have the *p* Matt 26:11
one *p* widow came Mark 12:42
the gospel to the *p* Luke 4:18
Blessed are you *p* Luke 6:20
the *p* have the gospel Luke 7:22
give a feast, invite the *p* Luke 14:13
half of my goods to the *p* Luke 19:8
contribution for the *p* Rom 15:26
my goods to feed the *p* 1 Cor 13:3
as *p*, yet making many 2 Cor 6:10
your sakes He became *p* 2 Cor 8:9
He has given to the *p* 2 Cor 9:9
should remember the *p* Gal 2:10
and say to the *p* man James 2:3
God not chosen the *p* James 2:5
wretched, miserable, *p* Rev 3:17
and great, rich and *p* Rev 13:16

POORLY

we are *p* clothed, 1 Cor 4:11

POPLAR

himself rods of green *p* Gen 30:37

POPULATED

the whole earth was *p* Gen 9:19

POPULOUS

great, mighty, and *p* Deut 26:5

PORCH

p which is called Acts 3:11

PORCHES

Bethesda, having five *p* John 5:2

PORCIUS FESTUS

Paul stands trial before, Acts 25:1-22

PORCUPINE

the *p* shall possess it, also Is 34:11

PORTION

For the LORD's *p* Deut 32:9
This is the *p* from God Job 20:29
O LORD, You are the *p* Ps 16:5
heart and my *p* forever Ps 73:26
You are my *p* Ps 119:57
p for her maidservants Prov 31:15
I will divide Him a *p* Is 53:12
rejoice in their *p* Is 61:7
The *P* of Jacob is not Jer 10:16
they have trodden My *p* Jer 12:10
"The LORD is my *p* Lam 3:24
p of the king's delicacies Dan 1:8
and appoint him his *p* Matt 24:51
to give them their *p* Luke 12:42
give me the *p* Luke 15:12
part nor *p* in this matter Acts 8:21

PORTRAYED

Christ was clearly *p* Gal 3:1

POSITION

If a man desires the *p* 1 Tim 3:1

POSSESS

descendants shall *p* Gen 22:17
which you are going to *p* Deut 28:21
land which you go to *p* Deut 28:63
p the land which Josh 1:11
told them to go in to *p* the Neh 9:15
fathers to go in and *p* Neh 9:23
may dwell there and *p* it Ps 69:35
tithes of all that I *p* Luke 18:12
By your patience *p* Luke 21:19
as though they did not *p* 1 Cor 7:30
p his own vessel 1 Thess 4:4

POSSESSED

much land yet to be *p* Josh 13:1

"The LORD *p* me at Prov 8:22
of the things he *p* Acts 4:32
that a certain slave girl *p* Acts 16:16

POSSESSING

p knowledge and quick to Dan 1:4
and yet *p* all things 2 Cor 6:10

POSSESSION

as an everlasting *p* Gen 17:8
ends of the earth for Your *p* Ps 2:8
the rest of their *p* Ps 17:14
they did not gain *p* Ps 44:3
is man's precious *p* Prov 12:27
Sapphira his wife, sold a *p* Acts 5:1
to give it to him for a *p* Acts 7:5
of the purchased *p* Eph 1:14
and an enduring *p* Heb 10:34

POSSESSIONS

is full of Your *p* Ps 104:24
kinds of precious *p* Prov 1:13
the LORD with your *p* Prov 3:9
Yes, I had greater *p* Eccl 2:7
for he had great *p* Mark 10:22
and there wasted his *p* Luke 15:13
and sold their *p* Acts 2:45

POSSESSOR

P of heaven and earth Gen 14:19

POSSESSORS

all who were *p* of lands Acts 4:34

POSSIBLE

God all things are *p* Matt 19:26
O My Father, if it is *p* Matt 26:39
all things are *p* to him Mark 9:23
God all things are *p* Mark 10:27
men are *p* with God Luke 18:27
If it is *p*, as much as Rom 12:18
bear you witness that, if *p* Gal 4:15
p that the blood Heb 10:4

POSTERITY

to preserve a *p* Gen 45:7
p shall serve Him Ps 22:30
p who approve their Ps 49:13
the *p* of the righteous Prov 11:21

POSTPONED

it will no more be *p* Ezek 12:25

POT

to Aaron, "Take a *p* Ex 16:33
from a boiling *p* Job 41:20
The refining *p* is for Prov 17:3
p that had the manna Heb 9:4

POTENTATE

the blessed and only *P* 1 Tim 6:15

POTI-PHERAH

Egyptian priest of On (Heliopolis), Gen 41:45-50
Father of Asenath, Joseph's wife, Gen 46:20

POTIPHAR

High Egyptian officer, Gen 39:1
Puts Joseph in jail, Gen 39:20

POTS

when we sat by the *p* Ex 16:3
also took away the *p* Jer 52:18
are regarded as clay *p* Lam 4:2

POTSHERD

for himself a *p* Job 2:8
is dried up like a *p* Ps 22:15
Let the *p* strive with Is 45:9

POTTER

Shall the *p* be esteemed as Is 29:16
the clay, and You our *p* Is 64:8
seemed good to the *p* Jer 18:4
Does not the *p* have Rom 9:21

POTTER'S FIELD

Judas's money used for purchase of, Matt 27:7, 8

POUND

Mary took a *p* of very John 12:3

POUNDS

about a hundred *p* John 19:39

POUR

p out your heart Ps 62:8
P out Your wrath Ps 79:6
p My Spirit on your Is 44:3
 and let the skies *p* Is 45:8
P out Your fury Jer 10:25
 that I will *p* out My Joel 2:28
 "And I will *p* Zech 12:10
p out for you such blessing Mal 3:10
 that I will *p* out of My Acts 2:17
 My maidservants I will *p* Acts 2:18
 angels, "Go and *p* Rev 16:1

POURED

And now my soul is *p* Job 30:16
 I am *p* out like water Ps 22:14
 grace is *p* upon Your Ps 45:2
 name is ointment *p* Song 1:3
 visited You, they *p* Is 26:16
 strong, because He *p* Is 53:12
 and My fury will be *p* Jer 7:20
 His fury is *p* out like Nah 1:6
 broke the flask and *p* Mark 14:3
 of God has been *p* Rom 5:5
 if I am being *p* Phil 2:17
 I am already being *p* 2 Tim 4:6
 whom He *p* out on us Titus 3:6

POVERTY

of the poor is their *p* Prov 10:15
 but it leads to *p* Prov 11:24
P and shame will come Prov 13:18
 leads only to *p* Prov 14:23
 lest you come to *p* Prov 20:13
 give me neither *p* Prov 30:8
p put in all the Luke 21:4
 and their deep *p* 2 Cor 8:2
p might become rich 2 Cor 8:9
 tribulation, and *p* Rev 2:9

POWER

that I may show My *p* Ex 9:16
 become glorious in *p* Ex 15:6
 for God has *p* to help 2 Chr 25:8
 him who is without *p* Job 26:2
p who can understand Job 26:14
p belongs to God Ps 62:11
p Your enemies shall Ps 66:3
 gives strength and *p* Ps 68:35
 when it is in the *p* of your Prov 3:27
 in the *p* of the tongue Prov 18:21
 a king is, there is *p* Eccl 8:2
 No one has *p* over the Eccl 8:8
 the strength of His *p* Is 40:26
 bodies the fire had no *p* Dan 3:27
 truly I am full of *p* Mic 3:8
 anger and great in *p* Nah 1:3
 'Not by might nor by *p* Zech 4:6
 the kingdom and the *p* Matt 6:13
 the Son of Man has *p* Matt 9:6
 who had given such Matt 9:8
 gave them *p* over unclean Matt 10:1
 Scriptures nor the *p* Matt 22:29
 the Son of Man has *p* Mark 2:10
p to heal sicknesses Mark 3:15
 that *p* had gone out Mark 5:30
 Scriptures nor the *p* of Mark 12:24
p of the Spirit to Galilee Luke 4:14
 And the *p* of the Lord Luke 5:17
 the Son of Man has *p* Luke 5:24
p went out from Him Luke 6:19
 I perceived *p* going out Luke 8:46
 and gave them *p* Luke 9:1
 all the *p* of the enemy Luke 10:19
 and the *p* of darkness Luke 22:53
 you are endued with *p* Luke 24:49
 I have *p* to lay it John 10:18
 not know that I have *p* John 19:10
 "You could have no *p* John 19:11
 you shall receive *p* Acts 1:8
 as though by our own *p* Acts 3:12

Stephen, full of faith and *p* Acts 6:8
 man is the great *p* Acts 8:10
 "Give me this *p* Acts 8:19
 Holy Spirit and with *p* Acts 10:38
 the *p* of Satan to God, Acts 26:18
 the Son of God with *p* Rom 1:4
 for it is the *p* Rom 1:16
 even His eternal *p* Rom 1:20
 My *p* in you Rom 9:17
 potter have *p* over the Rom 9:21
 the *p* of the Holy Spirit Rom 15:13
 by the *p* of the Spirit of Rom 15:19
 saved it is the *p* 1 Cor 1:18
 Greeks, Christ the *p* 1 Cor 1:24
 of the Spirit and of *p*, 1 Cor 2:4
 men but in the *p* of God 1 Cor 2:5
 is not in word but in *p* 1 Cor 4:20
 be brought under the *p* 1 Cor 6:12
 and all authority and *p* 1 Cor 15:24
 it is raised in *p* 1 Cor 15:43
 of the *p* may be of God 2 Cor 4:7
 of truth, by the *p* of God 2 Cor 6:7
 that the *p* of Christ 2 Cor 12:9
 He lives by the *p* of God 2 Cor 13:4
 greatness of His *p* Eph 1:19
 all principality and *p* Eph 1:21
 prince of the *p* of the air Eph 2:2
 working of His *p* Eph 3:7
 to the *p* that works in us Eph 3:20
 the Lord and in the *p* Eph 6:10
 the *p* of His resurrection Phil 3:10
 to His glorious *p* Col 1:11
 us from the *p* of darkness Col 1:13
 of all principality and *p* Col 2:10
 only, but also in *p* 1 Thess 1:5
 the glory of His *p* 2 Thess 1:9
 work of faith with *p* 2 Thess 1:11
 of Satan, with all *p* 2 Thess 2:9
 of fear, but of *p* 2 Tim 1:7
 according to the *p* of God 2 Tim 1:8
 godliness but denying its *p* 2 Tim 3:5
 by the word of His *p* Heb 1:3
p of death, that Heb 2:14
 but according to the *p* Heb 7:16
 since it has no *p* at all Heb 9:17
 are kept by the *p* of God 1 Pet 1:5
 as His divine *p* 2 Pet 1:3
 made known to you the *p* 2 Pet 1:16
 who are greater in *p* 2 Pet 2:11
 dominion and *p* Jude 25
 to him I will give *p* Rev 2:26
 glory and honor and *p* Rev 4:11
 honor and glory and *p* Rev 5:13
 and honor and *p* Rev 7:12
 and *p* belong to the Lord Rev 19:1
 the second death has no *p* Rev 20:6

POWER OF GOD

the Scriptures nor the *p* Matt 22:29
 the right hand of the *p* Luke 22:69
 "This man is the great *p* Acts 8:10
 it is the *p* to salvation Rom 1:16
 being saved it is the *p* 1 Cor 1:18
 Christ the *p* and the 1 Cor 1:24
 word of truth, by the *p* 2 Cor 6:7
 yet He lives by the *p* 2 Cor 13:4
 gospel according to the *p* 2 Tim 1:8
 who are kept by the *p* 1 Pet 1:5

POWERFUL

of the LORD is *p* Ps 29:4
 of God is living and *p* Heb 4:12

POWERS

the *p* of the heavens Matt 24:29
 nor principalities nor *p* Rom 8:38
p in the heavenly places, Eph 3:10
 principalities, against *p* Eph 6:12
 or principalities or *p* Col 1:16
 principalities and *p* Col 2:15
 word of God and the *p* Heb 6:5
p having been made 1 Pet 3:22

PRACTICE

to do, that I do not *p* Rom 7:15

I will not to do, that I *p* Rom 7:19
 those who *p* such things Gal 5:21
 and do not *p* the truth 1 John 1:6
 Whoever does not *p* 1 John 3:10

PRACTICED

p witchcraft and 2 Kin 17:17
 previously *p* sorcery in Acts 8:9
 those who had *p* magic Acts 19:19
 they have *p* deceit Rom 3:13
 which they have *p* 2 Cor 12:21

PRACTICES

wrath on him who *p* evil Rom 13:4
 trained in covetous *p* 2 Pet 2:14
p righteousness is born 1 John 2:29
 whoever loves and *p* a lie Rev 22:15

PRACTICING

For everyone *p* evil hates John 3:20
 judge those *p* such things Rom 2:3

PRAETORIUM

Pilate's palace in Jerusalem, Mark
 15:16; John 18:28; Matt 27:27
 — Herod's palace at Caesarea, Acts
 23:35

PRAISE

Now I will *p* the LORD Gen 29:35
 your brothers shall *p* Gen 49:8
 He is my God, and I will *p* Ex 15:2
 He is your *p* Deut 10:21
 which He has made, in *p* Deut 26:19
 I will sing *p* to the Judg 5:3
 to *p* the LORD God of 1 Chr 16:4
 to triumph in Your *p* 1 Chr 16:35
 David, "for giving *p*." 1 Chr 23:5
p the LORD, and 1 Chr 23:30
 and to *p* the LORD 1 Chr 25:3
p Your glorious name 1 Chr 29:13
 offered *p* by their ministry 2 Chr 7:6
 for their duties to *p* and 2 Chr 8:14
 "P the LORD, for His 2 Chr 20:21
 began to sing and to *p* 2 Chr 20:22
 the Levites to sing *p* 2 Chr 29:30
 to *p* in the gates of the 2 Chr 31:2
 to *p* the LORD, according Ezra 3:10
 above all blessing and *p* Neh 9:5
 singers, and songs of *p* Neh 12:46
 I will *p* You, O LORD Ps 9:1
p shall be of You in Ps 22:25
 For *p* from the upright Ps 33:1
p shall continually be Ps 34:1
 of Your *p* all the day long Ps 35:28
 the people shall *p* Ps 45:17
 Whoever offers *p* Ps 50:23
P is awaiting You Ps 65:1
 make His *p* glorious Ps 66:2
 let all the peoples *p* Ps 67:3
 Let heaven and earth *p* Ps 69:34
p shall be continually Ps 71:6
 And the heavens will *p* Ps 89:5
 and into His courts with *p* Ps 100:4
 silent, O God of my *p* Ps 109:1
 Seven times a day I *p* Ps 119:164
 All Your works shall *p* Ps 145:10
 shall speak the *p* Ps 145:21
P the LORD Ps 148:1
P Him with high sounding Ps 150:5
 that has breath *p* Ps 150:6
 Let another man *p* Prov 27:2
 let her own works *p* Prov 31:31
 And your gates *P* Is 60:18
 the garment of *p* for the Is 61:3
 He makes Jerusalem a *p* Is 62:7
 For You are my *p* Jer 17:14
 Me a name of joy, a *p* Jer 33:9
p You, O God of my Dan 2:23
 Nebuchadnezzar, *p* and Dan 4:37
p the name of the LORD Joel 2:26
 give you fame and *p* Zeph 3:20
 You have perfected *p* Matt 21:16
 saw it, gave *p* to God Luke 18:43
p God with a loud voice Luke 19:37

of men more than the *p* John 12:43
p is not from men but Rom 2:29
 will have *p* from the same Rom 13:3
 "P the LORD, Rom 15:11
 Then each one's *p* 1 Cor 4:5
 Now I *p* you, brethren 1 Cor 11:2
 I do not *p* you 1 Cor 11:22
 the brother whose *p* 2 Cor 8:18
 to the *p* of the glory of His Eph 1:6
 should be to the *p* Eph 1:12
 to the *p* of His glory Eph 1:14
 to the glory and *p* Phil 1:11
 I will sing *p* to You Heb 2:12
 the sacrifice of *p* Heb 13:15
 and for the *p* of those 1 Pet 2:14
 saying, "P our God Rev 19:5

PRAISE THE LORD

and said, "Now I will *p* Gen 29:35
 to thank, and to *p* 1 Chr 16:4
 King David had made to *p* 2 Chr 7:6
 "P, for His mercy 2 Chr 20:21
 with cymbals, to *p* Ezra 3:10
 Those who seek Him will *p* Ps 22:26
 P with the harp Ps 33:2
 yet to be created may *p* Ps 102:18
 the Lord, O my soul! P Ps 104:35
 P! Oh, give thanks Ps 106:1
 The dead do not *p* Ps 115:17
 p, all you Gentiles Ps 117:1
 while I live I will *p* Ps 146:2
 P! P from the heavens Ps 148:1
 that has breath *p* Ps 150:6
 P, call upon His name Is 12:4
 shall eat it, and *p* Is 62:9
 P! For He has delivered Jer 20:13
 P, all you Gentiles Rom 15:11

PRaised

who is worthy to be *p* 2 Sam 22:4
 and greatly to be *p* 1 Chr 16:25
 and *p* the LORD 1 Chr 16:36
 thousand *p* the LORD 1 Chr 23:5
 music, and *p* the LORD, 2 Chr 5:13
 and *p* the LORD, saying 2 Chr 7:3
 the priests *p* the LORD 2 Chr 30:21
 when they *p* the LORD Ezra 3:11
 and *p* the LORD Neh 5:13
 daily He shall be *p* Ps 72:15
 LORD's name is to be *p* Ps 113:3
 and greatly to be *p* Ps 145:3
 the LORD, she shall be *p* Prov 31:30
 where our fathers *p* Is 64:11
 the Most High and *p* Dan 4:34

PRAISES

in holiness, fearful in *p* Ex 15:11
 sang *p* with gladness 2 Chr 29:30
 enthroned in the *p* Ps 22:3
 O LORD, I will sing *p* Ps 101:1
 it is good to sing *p* Ps 147:1
 and he *p* her Prov 31:28
 shall proclaim the *p* Is 60:6
 you may proclaim the *p* 1 Pet 2:9

PRAISEWORTHY

if there is anything *p* Phil 4:8

PRAISING

they sang responsively, *p* Ezra 3:11
 they will still be *p* Ps 84:4
 of the heavenly host *p* Luke 2:13
p God for all the things Luke 2:20
 in the temple *p* Luke 24:53
p God and having favor Acts 2:47
 leaping, and *p* God Acts 3:8

PRATING

p fool will fall Prov 10:8
p against us with 3 John 10

PRAY

heal her, O God, I *p* Num 12:13
 of this people, I *p* Num 14:19
p to the LORD that He Num 21:7
 Strengthen me, I *p* Judg 16:28

LORD in ceasing to *p* 1 Sam 12:23
 my God, for to You I will *p* Ps 5:2
p to You in a time when Ps 32:6
 at noon I will *p* Ps 55:17
 I *p*, send now prosperity Ps 118:25
 who hate you, and *p* Matt 5:44
 "And when you *p* Matt 6:5
 But you, when you *p* Matt 6:6
 when you *p*, do not use Matt 6:7
 manner, therefore, *p* Matt 6:9
 Therefore *p* the LORD of Matt 9:38
 by Himself to *p* Matt 14:23
 hands on them and *p* Matt 19:13
 while I go and *p* over Matt 26:36
 Watch and *p* Matt 26:41
 I cannot now *p* Matt 26:53
 to the mountain to *p* Mark 6:46
 you ask when you *p* Mark 11:24
 Take heed, watch and *p* Mark 13:33
 Sit here while I *p* Mark 14:32
 "Watch and *p*, lest you Mark 14:38
 out to the mountain to *p* Luke 6:12
p for those who spitefully Luke 6:28
 up on the mountain to Luke 9:28
 "Lord, teach us to *p* Luke 11:1
 men always ought to *p* Luke 18:1
 up to the temple to *p* Luke 18:10
 P that you may not Luke 22:40
 Rise and *p*, lest you Luke 22:46
 And I will *p* John 14:16
 I shall *p* the Father for John 16:26
 I do not *p* for the John 17:9
 I do not *p* that You John 17:15
 "I do not *p* for John 17:20
p God if perhaps the Acts 8:22
 P to the Lord for me, that Acts 8:24
 up on the housetop to *p* Acts 10:9
 know what we should *p* Rom 8:26
 to *p* to God with her 1 Cor 11:13
p that he may interpret 1 Cor 14:13
 For if I *p* in a tongue 1 Cor 14:14
 I will *p* with the 1 Cor 14:15
 Now I *p* to God 2 Cor 13:7
 And this also we *p* 2 Cor 13:9
 And this I *p*, that your love Phil 1:9
 do not cease to *p* for you Col 1:9
p without ceasing 1 Thess 5:17
 Brethren, *p* for us 1 Thess 5:25
 we also *p* always 2 Thess 1:11
p for us, that the word 2 Thess 3:1
 therefore that the men *p* 1 Tim 2:8
 P for us, for we are Heb 13:18
 Let him *p* James 5:13
 to one another, and *p* James 5:16
 say that he should *p* 1 John 5:16
p that you may prosper 3 John 2

PRAYED

So Abraham *p* to God Gen 20:17
 So Moses *p* for the people Num 21:7
 Manoaah *p* to the LORD Judg 13:8
 For this child I *p*, and 1 Sam 1:27
 Then Hezekiah *p* before 2 Kin 19:15
 times that day, and *p* Dan 6:10
 Then Jonah *p* to the LORD Jon 2:1
 So he *p* to the LORD Jon 4:2
 into the wilderness and *p* Luke 5:16
 Pharisee stood and *p* Luke 18:11
p more earnestly Luke 22:44
p earnestly that it James 5:17

PRAYER

God heeded the *p* 2 Sam 21:14
 in heaven their *p* 1 Kin 8:45
p made in this place 2 Chr 7:15
 the thanksgiving with *p* Neh 11:17
 fear, and restrain *p* Job 15:4
 And my *p* is pure Job 16:17
p would return to my Ps 35:13
 A *p* to the God of my Ps 42:8
 P also will be made Ps 72:15
 Let my *p* come before Ps 88:2
 He shall regard the *p* Ps 102:17

but I give myself to *p* Ps 109:4
 to the LORD, but the *p* Prov 15:8
 hears the *p* of the Prov 15:29
 hear the *p* of Your servant Dan 9:17
 while I was speaking in *p* Dan 9:21
 not go out except by *p* Matt 17:21
 things you ask in *p* Matt 21:22
 out by nothing but *p* Mark 9:29
 a house of *p* for all Mark 11:17
 all night in *p* to God Luke 6:12
 My house is a house of *p* Luke 19:46
 with one accord in *p* and Acts 1:14
 the temple at the hour of *p* Acts 3:1
 continually to *p* Acts 6:4
 your *p* has been heard Acts 10:31
 where *p* was Acts 16:13
 as we went up to *p* Acts 16:16
p to God for Israel is that Rom 10:1
 steadfastly in *p* Rom 12:12
 to fasting and *p* 1 Cor 7:5
 always with all *p* Eph 6:18
 always in every *p* of mine Phil 1:4
 deliverance through your *p* Phil 1:19
 but in everything by *p* Phil 4:6
 Continue earnestly in *p* Col 4:2
 the word of God and *p* 1 Tim 4:5
 And the *p* of faith James 5:15

PRAYERS

though you make many *p* Is 1:15
 pretense make long *p* Matt 23:14
 fastings and *p* night and Luke 2:37
 pretense make long *p* Luke 20:47
 of bread, and in *p* Acts 2:42
 Your *p* and your alms Acts 10:4
 always in my *p* Rom 1:9
 me in *p* to God for me Rom 15:30
 fervently for you in *p* Col 4:12
 that supplications, *p* 1 Tim 2:1
 and *p* night and day 1 Tim 5:5
 always in my *p* Philem 4
 when He had offered up *p* Heb 5:7
p may not be hindered 1 Pet 3:7
 are open to their *p* 1 Pet 3:12
 and watchful in your *p* 1 Pet 4:7
 which are the *p* Rev 5:8

PRAYING

and found Daniel *p* Dan 6:11
 whenever you stand *p* Mark 11:25
 Paul and Silas were *p* Acts 16:25
p always with all prayer Eph 6:18
 faith, *p* in the Holy Spirit, Jude 20

PRAYS

every woman who *p* or 1 Cor 11:5
 tongue, my spirit *p* 1 Cor 14:14

PREACH

to *p* good tidings Is 61:1
 that great city, and *p* Jon 3:2
 time Jesus began to *p* Matt 4:17
 you hear in the ear, *p* Matt 10:27
p the gospel to every Mark 16:15
 P the gospel to the Luke 4:18
p the kingdom of God Luke 9:60
 to *p* the word in Asia Acts 16:6
 ready to *p* the gospel Rom 1:15
 word of faith which we *p* Rom 10:8
 And how shall they *p* Rom 10:15
 it my aim to *p* the gospel Rom 15:20
p Christ crucified 1 Cor 1:23
 is me if I do not *p* 1 Cor 9:16
 I or they, so we *p* 1 Cor 15:11
 For we do not *p* 2 Cor 4:5
p any other gospel to you Gal 1:8
 that I might *p* Him among Gal 1:16
 gospel which I *p* Gal 2:2
p Christ even from Phil 1:15
 The former *p* Christ from Phil 1:16
 P the word 2 Tim 4:2

PREACH THE GOSPEL

into all the world and *p* Mark 16:15
 He has anointed Me to *p* Luke 4:18

Lord had called us to *p* Acts 16:10
 I am ready to *p* Rom 1:15
 the feet of those who *p* Rom 10:15
 made it my aim to *p* Rom 15:20
 to baptize, but to *p* 1 Cor 1:17
 who *p* should live from 1 Cor 9:14
 to *p* in the regions 2 Cor 10:16

PREACHED

have the gospel *p* to them Matt 11:5
p that people Mark 6:12
p to all the nations Mark 13:10
 wherever this gospel is *p* Mark 14:9
 out and *p* everywhere Mark 16:20
 have the gospel *p* to them Luke 7:22
 of sins should be *p* Luke 24:47
p in Jesus the resurrection Acts 4:2
p Christ to them Acts 8:5
p the word of the Lord Acts 8:25
 baptism which John *p* Acts 10:37
 through this Man is *p* Acts 13:38
 of God was *p* by Paul Acts 17:13
 he *p* to them Jesus Acts 17:18
 lest, when I have *p* 1 Cor 9:27
 whom we have not *p* 2 Cor 11:4
 than what we have *p* Gal 1:8
 in truth, Christ is *p* Phil 1:18
 was *p* to every creature Col 1:23
 might be *p* fully through 2 Tim 4:17
 the gospel was *p* Heb 4:2
 also He went and *p* 1 Pet 3:19

PREACHER

The words of the *P* Eccl 1:1
 they hear without a *p* Rom 10:14
 I was appointed a *p* 1 Tim 2:7
 I was appointed a *p* 2 Tim 1:11
 of eight people, a *p* 2 Pet 2:5

PREACHES

the Jesus whom Paul *p* Acts 19:13
p another Jesus whom 2 Cor 11:4
p any other gospel Gal 1:9
p the faith which he Gal 1:23

PREACHING

at the *p* of Jonah Matt 12:41
p a baptism of repentance Mark 1:4
 every city and village, *p* Luke 8:1
p the gospel and healing Luke 9:6
p Jesus as the Acts 5:42
 went everywhere *p* Acts 8:4
 to my gospel and the *p* Rom 16:25
p were not with 1 Cor 2:4
 not risen, then our *p* 1 Cor 15:14
 His word through *p* Titus 1:3

PRECEDE

p those who are asleep 1 Thess 4:15

PRECEDING

p them to judgment, 1 Tim 5:24

PRECEPT

p must be upon Is 28:10
P upon *p*, *p* upon *p* Is 28:13
 walked by human *p* Hos 5:11
 heart he wrote you this *p* Mark 10:5
p to all the people Heb 9:19

PRECEPTS

and commanded them *p* Neh 9:14
 all His *p* are sure Ps 111:7
 us to keep Your *p* Ps 119:4
 Behold, I long for Your *p* Ps 119:40
 will meditate on Your *p* Ps 119:78
 because I keep Your *p* Ps 119:100
 how I love Your *p* Ps 119:159
 and kept all his *p* Jer 35:18
 by departing from Your *p* Dan 9:5

PRECIOUS

gave *p* things to her Gen 24:53
 because my life was *p* 1 Sam 26:21
 with *p* stones 2 Sam 12:30
P in the sight of the Ps 116:15
 How *p* also are Your Ps 139:17

She is more *p* than Prov 3:15
 rooms are filled with all *p* Prov 24:4
 a *p* cornerstone, a sure Is 28:16
 Since you were *p* Is 43:4
p things shall not Is 44:9
 if you take out the *p* Jer 15:19
 The *p* sons of Zion Lam 4:2
p stones, wood, hay 1 Cor 3:12
 farmer waits for the *p* James 5:7
 more *p* than gold 1 Pet 1:7
 but with the *p* blood of 1 Pet 1:19
 but chosen by God and *p* 1 Pet 2:4
 chief cornerstone, elect, *p* 1 Pet 2:6
 who believe, He is *p* 1 Pet 2:7
p in the sight of 1 Pet 3:4
 like *p* faith with us by the 2 Pet 1:1
 and *p* promises, 2 Pet 1:4

PREDESTINED

He foreknew, He also *p* Rom 8:29
 having *p* us to Eph 1:5
 inheritance, being *p* Eph 1:11

PREEMINENCE

He may have the *p* Col 1:18
 loves to have the *p* 3 John 9

PREFERENCE

in honor giving *p* Rom 12:10

PREFERRED

comes after me is *p* John 1:15

PREGNANCY

no birth, no *p*, and no Hos 9:11

PREGNANT

woe to those who are *p* Matt 24:19
 pains upon a *p* woman 1 Thess 5:3

PREJUDICE

these things without *p* 1 Tim 5:21

PREMEDITATE

p what you will Mark 13:11

PREPARATION

Now it was the *P* John 19:14
 your feet with the *p* Eph 6:15

PREPARATIONS

p of the heart belong Prov 16:1

PREPARE

P provisions for Josh 1:11
 'Let us now *p* to build Josh 22:26
p your hearts for the 1 Sam 7:3
p it for myself and my 1 Kin 17:12
 which I will *p* for them Esth 5:8
p a table before me in Ps 23:5
p mercy and truth Ps 61:7
P your outside work, Prov 24:27
 yet they *p* their food in Prov 30:25
P the way of the LORD Is 40:3
P the way for the Is 62:10
p the ambushes Jer 51:12
P the way of the LORD, Matt 3:3
 do You want us to *p* Matt 26:17
P the way of the LORD Mark 1:3
 to *p* for Him Luke 9:52
 will, and did not *p* Luke 12:47
p the Passover for us Luke 22:8
p a place for you John 14:2

PREPARED

place which I have *p* Ex 23:20
 You *p* room for it Ps 80:9
 When He *p* the heavens Prov 8:27
 for the LORD has *p* Zeph 1:7
 for whom it is *p* Matt 20:23
 fire *p* for the devil and Matt 25:41
 which You have *p* Luke 2:31
 mercy, which He had *p* Rom 9:23
 things which God has *p* 1 Cor 2:9
 Now He who has *p* 2 Cor 5:5
p beforehand that we Eph 2:10
p for every good work 2 Tim 2:21
 God, for He has *p* Heb 11:16
p as a bride adorned for Rev 21:2

PRESENCE

themselves from the *p* Gen 3:8
 went out from the *p* Gen 4:16
 the *p* of my mistress Sarai Gen 16:8
 we die in your *p* Gen 47:15
P will go with you Ex 33:14
 and honor the *p* Lev 19:32
 afraid in any man's *p* Deut 1:17
 am terrified at His *p* Job 23:15
p is fullness of joy Ps 16:11
 shall dwell in Your *p* Ps 140:13
 not tremble at My *p* Jer 5:22
 shall shake at My *p* Ezek 38:20
 fled from the *p* of the LORD Jer 1:10
 Be silent in the *p* Zeph 1:7
 stands in the *p* of God Luke 1:19
 and drank in Your *p* Luke 13:26
 in the *p* of the people Luke 20:26
 full of joy in Your *p* Acts 2:28
 to God in the *p* of them Acts 27:35
 the *p* of Him whom he Rom 4:17
 should glory in His *p* 1 Cor 1:29
 in the *p* of Christ 2 Cor 2:10
 who in *p* am lowly 2 Cor 10:1
 but his bodily *p* 2 Cor 10:10
 obeyed, not as in my *p* Phil 2:12
p of many witnesses 1 Tim 6:12
 the *P* behind the veil Heb 6:19
 appear in the *p* of God Heb 9:24

PRESENT

a very *p* help in trouble Ps 46:1
 we are all *p* before Acts 10:33
 not *p* your members Rom 6:13
 for to will is *p* with me Rom 7:18
 evil is *p* with me Rom 7:21
p time are not worthy to Rom 8:18
 nor things *p* nor things to Rom 8:38
p your bodies a living Rom 12:1
 or death, or things *p* 1 Cor 3:22
 absent in body but *p* 1 Cor 5:3
 because of the *p* distress 1 Cor 7:26
p the gospel of Christ 1 Cor 9:18
 to be *p* with the Lord 2 Cor 5:8
 may *p* you as a chaste 2 Cor 11:2
 not only when I am *p* Gal 4:18
 that He might *p* Eph 5:27
 to *p* you holy, Col 1:22
 to *p* yourself 2 Tim 2:15
 and godly in the *p* age, Titus 2:12
 established in the *p* truth 2 Pet 1:12
p you faultless Jude 24

PRESENTED

p them to Pharaoh Gen 47:2
p themselves before God Josh 24:1
 treasures, they *p* Matt 2:11
 And He *p* him to his Luke 7:15
 to whom He also *p* Himself Acts 1:3
 they also *p* Paul to him Acts 23:33
 For just as you *p* Rom 6:19

PRESENTING

p my supplication before Dan 9:20

PRESENTS

kings will bring *p* Ps 68:29

PRESERVE

before you to *p* life Gen 45:5
 You shall *p* me from Ps 32:7
 O LORD, You *p* man and Ps 36:6
 He shall *p* your soul Ps 121:7
 The LORD shall *p* Ps 121:8
 discretion will *p* you Prov 2:11
 lips of the wise will *p* Prov 14:3
 the LORD *p* knowledge Prov 22:12
 children, I will *p* Jer 49:11
 pardon those whom I *p* Jer 50:20
 loses his life will *p* Luke 17:33
 every evil work and *p* 2 Tim 4:18

PRESERVED

and my life is *p* Gen 32:30
p us in all the way that Josh 24:17

the LORD *p* David 2 Sam 8:6
Your care has *p* my spirit Job 10:12
soul, and body be *p* 1 Thess 5:23

PRESERVES

For the LORD *p* the Ps 31:23
p the souls of His Ps 97:10
The LORD *p* the simple Ps 116:6
p the way of His saints Prov 2:8
who guards his mouth *p* Prov 13:3
he who keeps his way *p* Prov 16:17

PRESS

but I *p* on, that I may lay Phil 3:12
I *p* toward the goal Phil 3:14

PRESSED

p her virgin bosom Ezek 23:8
p about Him to touch Mark 3:10
the multitude *p* about Him Luke 5:1
p down, shaken together, Luke 6:38
We are hard *p* on every 2 Cor 4:8
For I am hard *p* Phil 1:23

PRESUMPTUOUS

servant also from *p* Ps 19:13
They are *p*, self-willed 2 Pet 2:10

PRETENDED

them, *p* madness 1 Sam 21:13

PRETENSE

whole heart, but in *p* Jer 3:10
p make long prayers Matt 23:14

PREVAIL

He did not *p* against him Gen 32:25
no man shall *p* 1 Sam 2:9
do not let man *p* 2 Chr 14:11
our tongue we will *p* Ps 12:4
He shall *p* against His Is 42:13
but they shall not *p* Jer 1:19
but he will not *p* Dan 11:12
of Hades shall not *p* Matt 16:18
but they did not *p* Rev 12:8

PREVAILED

The waters *p* and greatly Gen 7:18
hand, that Israel *p* Ex 17:11
Judah *p* over his brothers 1 Chr 5:2
with the Angel and *p* Hos 12:4
grew mightily and *p* Acts 19:20
has *p* to open the scroll and Rev 5:5

PREVIOUSLY

who *p* practiced sorcery in Acts 8:9

PREY

the mountains of *p* Ps 76:4
has not given us as *p* Ps 124:6
Shall the *p* be taken Is 49:24
evil makes himself a *p* Is 59:15
shall no longer be a *p* Ezek 34:22
when he has no *p* Amos 3:4

PRICE

be weighed for its *p* Job 28:15
a fool the purchase *p* Prov 17:16
one pearl of great *p* Matt 13:46
back part of the *p* Acts 5:3
you were bought at a *p* 1 Cor 6:20
You were bought at a *p* 1 Cor 7:23

PRIDE

p come against me Ps 36:11
p serves as their necklace Ps 73:6
p and arrogance and Prov 8:13
By *p* comes nothing Prov 13:10
P goes before Prov 16:18
p will bring him low Prov 29:23
and her daughter had *p* Ezek 16:49
p He is able to put down Dan 4:37
was hardened in *p* Dan 5:20
has sworn by the *p* Amos 8:7
For the *p* of the Zech 11:3
evil eye, blasphemy, *p* Mark 7:22
p he fall into the 1 Tim 3:6
eyes, and the *p* of life 1 John 2:16

PRIEST

See HIGH PRIEST

he was the *p* of God Gen 14:18
That son who becomes *p* Ex 29:30
The sons of Aaron the *p* Lev 1:7
the *p* shall burn all on the Lev 1:9
p shall lay them in order Lev 1:12
p shall make atonement Lev 19:22
for the *p* is holy to his God Lev 21:7
Eleazar the *p* spoke Num 26:3
and Eleazar the *p* Num 26:63
Eleazar the *p*, Joshua Josh 19:51
when Phinehas the *p* Josh 22:30
The *p* stood at the Judg 18:17
Eli the *p* was sitting 1 Sam 1:9
Myself a faithful *p* 1 Sam 2:35
Eli, the LORD's *p* in 1 Sam 14:3
Saul talked to the *p* 1 Sam 14:19
to Ahimelech the *p* 1 Sam 21:2
p gave him holy bread 1 Sam 21:6
Urijah the *p* built an 2 Kin 16:11
Jehoiada the *p* brought 2 Chr 23:14
the *p* found the Book 2 Chr 34:14
gave Ezra the *p* Ezra 7:11
p could consult Neh 7:65
p forever according Ps 110:4
the *p* and the prophet Is 28:7
So He shall be a *p* Zech 6:13
of a *p* should keep Mal 2:7
show yourself to the *p* Matt 8:4
to Caiaphas the high *p* Matt 26:57
And the high *p* arose Matt 26:62
away to the high *p* Mark 14:53
well as Annas the high *p* Acts 4:6
and faithful High *P* Heb 2:17
High *P* of our confession, Heb 3:1
we have a great High *P* Heb 4:14
we do not have a High *P* Heb 4:15
p forever according Heb 5:6
We have such a High *P*, Heb 8:1
high *p* went alone Heb 9:7
Christ came as High *P* Heb 9:11

PRIEST'S

the high *p* servant John 18:10

PRIESTHOOD

be an everlasting *p* Ex 40:15
have defiled the *p* Neh 13:29
p being changed Heb 7:12
has an unchangeable *p* Heb 7:24
house, a holy *p* 1 Pet 2:5
generation, a royal *p* 1 Pet 2:9

PRIESTS

to Me a kingdom of *p* Ex 19:6
may minister to Me as *p* Ex 28:41
and the *p*, Aaron's sons, Lev 1:5
"Command the *p* Josh 4:16
and let seven *p* bear seven Josh 6:6
the *p* blew the trumpets Josh 6:20
had killed the LORD's *p* 1 Sam 22:21
removed the idolatrous *p* 2 Kin 23:5
Jahaziel the *p* 1 Chr 16:6
and Benjamin, and the *p* Ezra 1:5
yet told the Jews, the *p* Neh 2:16
Their *p* fell by the sword, Ps 78:64
Aaron were among His *p* Ps 99:6
Let Your *p* be clothed with Ps 132:9
her *p* with salvation Ps 132:16
named the *p* of the LORD Is 61:6
which the *p* ministered Jer 52:18
and the iniquities of her *p* Lam 4:13
p have violated My law Ezek 22:26
the *p* shall throw salt on Ezek 43:24
"Hear this, O *p*! Hos 5:1
the *p* mourn, who minister Joel 1:9
her *p* teach for pay Mic 3:11
p in the temple profane Matt 12:5
But when the chief *p* Matt 21:15
went to the chief *p* Matt 26:14
of silver to the chief *p* and Matt 27:3
the chief *p* stirred up Mark 15:11
Caiaphas being high *p* Luke 3:2
show yourselves to the *p* Luke 17:14
Jesus said to the chief *p* Luke 22:52

Pilate said to the chief *p* Luke 23:4
But the chief *p* plotted John 12:10
become *p* without an oath Heb 7:21
need daily, as those high *p* Heb 7:27
high *p* men who have, Heb 7:28
since there are *p* who offer Heb 8:4
made us kings and *p* Rev 1:6
but they shall be *p* Rev 20:6

PRIESTS'

where the *p* feet stood firm Josh 4:3
and the soles of the *p* feet Josh 4:18

PRINCE

"Who made you a *p* Ex 2:14
is the house of the *p* Job 21:28
is the downfall of a *p* Prov 14:28
Everlasting Father, *P* Is 9:6
against the *P* of princes Dan 8:25
until Messiah the *P* Dan 9:25
with the *p* of Persia Dan 10:20
except Michael your *p* Dan 10:21
days without king or *p* Hos 3:4
p asks for gifts Mic 7:3
and killed the *P* Acts 3:15
His right hand to be *P* Acts 5:31
the *p* of the power Eph 2:2

PRINCES

He is not partial to *p* Job 34:19
to bind his *p* at his Ps 105:22
He may seat him with *p* Ps 113:8
to put confidence in *p* Ps 118:9
P also sit and speak Ps 119:23
p and all judges of Ps 148:11
good, nor to strike *p* Prov 17:26
is a child, and your *p* Eccl 10:16
of nobles, and your *p* Eccl 10:17
children to be their *p* Is 3:4
p will rule with Is 32:1
He brings the *p* Is 40:23

PRINCIPAL

Wisdom is the *p* Prov 4:7

PRINCIPALITIES

nor *p* nor powers Rom 8:38
and blood, but against *p* Eph 6:12
dominions or *p* or powers Col 1:16
disarmed *p* and powers, Col 2:15

PRINCIPALITY

far above all *p* Eph 1:21
is the head of all *p* Col 2:10

PRINCIPLES

from the basic *p* Col 2:20
again the first *p* Heb 5:12

PRINT

hands the *p* of the nails John 20:25

PRISCILLA (or Prisca)

Wife of Aquila, Acts 18:1-3
With Aquila, instructs Apollos, Acts 18:26
Mentioned by Paul, Rom 16:3; 1 Cor 16:19; 2 Tim 4:19

PRISON

and put him into the *p* Gen 39:20
Bring my soul out of *p* Ps 142:7
in darkness from the *p* Is 42:7
the opening of the *p* Is 61:1
should put him in *p* Jer 29:26
John had been put in *p* Matt 4:12
John had heard in *p* Matt 11:2
had John beheld in *p* Matt 14:10
I was in *p* and you Matt 25:36
we see You sick, or in *p* Matt 25:39
or naked or sick or in *p* Matt 25:44
after John was put in *p* Mark 1:14
put them in the common *p* Acts 5:18
Lord opened the *p* doors Acts 5:19
did not find them in the *p* Acts 5:22
was therefore kept in *p* Acts 12:5
of the *p* were shaken Acts 16:26
seeing the *p* doors open Acts 16:27

So the keeper of the *p* Acts 16:36
to the spirits in *p* 1 Pet 3:19
a *p* for every foul spirit, Rev 18:2
will be released from his *p* Rev 20:7

PRISONER

the groaning of the *p* Ps 79:11
p called Barabbas Matt 27:16
releasing one *p* to them Mark 15:6
reason I, Paul, the *p* Eph 3:1
the *p* of the Lord, beseech Eph 4:1
Lord, nor of me His *p* 2 Tim 1:8
Paul, a *p* of Christ Jesus, Phil 1

PRISONERS

p rest together Job 3:18
does not despise His *p* Ps 69:33
gives freedom to the *p* Ps 146:7
the stronghold, you *p* Zech 9:12
the *p* were listening to Acts 16:25
and my fellow *p* Rom 16:7
Remember the *p* as if Heb 13:3

PRISONS

the synagogues and *p* Luke 21:12
p more frequently 2 Cor 11:23

PRIVATE

is of any *p* interpretation 2 Pet 1:20

PRIVATELY

disciples came to Jesus *p* Matt 17:19
Andrew asked Him *p* Mark 13:3
aside *p* into a deserted Luke 9:10

PRIZE

life shall be as a *p* Jer 21:9
but one receives the *p* 1 Cor 9:24
the goal for the *p* Phil 3:14

PROCEED

For they *p* from evil Jer 9:3
heart *p* evil thoughts Matt 15:19
p evil thoughts, adulteries Mark 7:21
not permitting us to *p* Acts 27:7
p out of your mouth, Eph 4:29
of the same mouth *p* James 3:10

PROCEEDED

for I *p* forth John 8:42
p from the mouth of Him Rev 19:21

PROCEEDINGS

he adjourned the *p* Acts 24:22

PROCEEDS

by every word that *p* Deut 8:3
by every word that *p* Matt 4:4
Spirit of truth who *p* John 15:26
back part of the *p* Acts 5:2

PROCESS

in the *p* of time 1 Sam 1:20

PROCESSION

They have seen Your *p* Ps 68:24

PROCHORUS

One of the first seven deacons, Acts
6:5

PROCLAIM

you, and I will *p* Ex 33:19
p the name of the LORD Deut 32:3
p it not in the 2 Sam 1:20
and they shall *p* Is 60:6
to *p* liberty to the captives, Is 61:1
to *p* the acceptable year of Is 61:2
began to *p* it freely Mark 1:45
knowing, Him I *p* Acts 17:23
drink this cup, you *p* 1 Cor 11:26
that you may *p* the praises 1 Pet 2:9

PROCLAIMED

p the good news Ps 40:9
company of those who *p* Ps 68:11
p a fast, and put on Jon 3:5
he went his way and *p* Luke 8:39
inner rooms will be *p* Luke 12:3

PROCLAIMER

"He seems to be a *p* Acts 17:18

PROCLAIMS

good news, who *p* Is 52:7

PROCONSUL

seeking to turn the *p* Acts 13:8
When Gallio was *p* Acts 18:12

PRODIGAL

with *p* living Luke 15:13

PRODUCE

land shall yield its *p* Lev 26:4
all kinds of *p* Ps 144:13
p the righteousness of James 1:20

PRODUCED

p in me all manner of evil Rom 7:8
What diligence it *p* in 2 Cor 7:11

PRODUCES

forcing of wrath *p* strife Prov 30:33
indeed bears fruit and *p* Matt 13:23
if it dies, it *p* much grain John 12:24
tribulation *p* perseverance Rom 5:3
sorrow *p* repentance 2 Cor 7:10
of your faith *p* patience James 1:3

PRODUCING

p death in me through Rom 7:13

PROFANE

and offered *p* fire Lev 10:1
and priest are *p* Jer 23:11
"But you *p* it Mal 1:12
tried to *p* the temple Acts 24:6
But reject *p* and old 1 Tim 4:7
p person like Esau Heb 12:16

PROFANED

p his crown by casting Ps 89:39
and *p* My Sabbaths Ezek 22:8
p the LORD's holy Mal 2:11

PROFANENESS

of Jerusalem *p* has Jer 23:15

PROFANING

p the covenant of the Mal 2:10

PROFESS

They *p* to know God Titus 1:16

PROFESSING

P to be wise Rom 1:22
is proper for women *p* 1 Tim 2:10

PROFIT

p is there in my blood Ps 30:9
p has a man from all Eccl 1:3
There was no *p* under Eccl 2:11
for they will not *p* Is 57:12
words that cannot *p* Jer 7:8
p which you have made Ezek 22:13
p is it that we have Mal 3:14
For what *p* is it to Matt 16:26
For what will it *p* Mark 8:36
For what *p* is it to Luke 9:25
her masters much *p* Acts 16:16
hope of *p* was gone Acts 16:19
brought no small *p* Acts 19:24
what is the *p* of Rom 3:1
not seeking my own *p* 1 Cor 10:33
Christ will *p* you Gal 5:2
about words to no *p* 2 Tim 2:14
them, but He for our *p* Heb 12:10
What does it *p* James 2:14
and sell, and make a *p* James 4:13

PROFITABLE

"Can a man be *p* Job 22:2
It is doubtless not *p* 2 Cor 12:1
godliness is *p* for all 1 Tim 4:8
of God, and is *p* 2 Tim 3:16
things are good and *p* Titus 3:8
to you, but now is *p* Phil 1:11

PROFITS

p a man nothing that Job 34:9
from her *p* she plants a Prov 31:16
the flesh *p* nothing John 6:63
have not love, it *p* 1 Cor 13:3
exercise *p* a little 1 Tim 4:8

PROFOUND

with things too *p* Ps 131:1

PROGRESS

your *p* may be evident 1 Tim 4:15

PROLONG

you will not *p* your Deut 4:26
p Your anger to all Ps 85:5
nor will he *p* his days Eccl 8:13

PROLONGED

and his days are *p* Eccl 8:12

PROLONGS

The fear of the LORD *p* Prov 10:27

PROMISE

of all His good *p* 1 Kin 8:56
Has His *p* failed Ps 77:8
remembered His holy *p* Ps 105:42
Behold, I send the *P* Luke 24:49
but to wait for the *P* Acts 1:4
p of the Holy Spirit, He Acts 2:33
For the *p* is to you Acts 2:39
p drew near which God Acts 7:17
for the hope of the *p* Acts 26:6
is made void and the *p* Rom 4:14
p might be sure Rom 4:16
p of God through unbelief Rom 4:20
For this is the word of *p* Rom 9:9
make the *p* of no effect Gal 3:17
it is no longer of *p* Gal 3:18
heirs according to the *p* Gal 3:29
Isaac was, are children of *p* Gal 4:28
first commandment with *p* Eph 6:2
having *p* of the life that 1 Tim 4:8
Therefore, since a *p* Heb 4:1
endured, he obtained the *p* Heb 6:15
to the heirs of *p* Heb 6:17
did not receive the *p* Heb 11:39
they *p* them liberty 2 Pet 2:19
not slack concerning His *p* 2 Pet 3:9
p that He has promised 1 John 2:25

PROMISED

bless you as He has *p* Deut 1:11
that what He had *p* Rom 4:21
Him faithful who had *p* Heb 11:11

PROMISES

For all the *p* of God 2 Cor 1:20
his Seed were the *p* Gal 3:16
patience inherit the *p* Heb 6:12
having received the *p* Heb 11:13
great and precious *p* 2 Pet 1:4

PROMOTE

Exalt her, and she will *p* Prov 4:8

PROMOTED

Then the king *p* Daniel Dan 2:48
Then the king *p* Shadrach, Dan 3:30

PROMOTES

tongue of the wise *p* Prov 12:18

PROMPTLY

him disciplines him *p* Prov 13:24

PRONOUNCE

for he could not *p* it right Judg 12:6
P them guilty, O God Ps 5:10

PROOF

which is to them a *p* Phil 1:28

PROOFS

by many infallible *p* Acts 1:3

PROPER

you, but for what is *p* 1 Cor 7:35
Is it *p* for a woman to 1 Cor 11:13
but, which is *p* 1 Tim 2:10
are *p* for sound doctrine Titus 2:1

PROPERLY

Let us walk *p* Rom 13:13
that you may walk *p* 1 Thess 4:12

PROPHECIES

Do not despise *p* 1 Thess 5:20

PROPHECY

if *p*, let us prophesy in Rom 12:6
 miracles, to another *p* 1 Cor 12:10
 I have the gift of *p* 1 Cor 13:2
p with the laying on of 1 Tim 4:14
 for *p* never came by 2 Pet 1:21
 is the spirit of *p* Rev 19:10
 of the book of this *p* Rev 22:19

PROPHESED

upon them, that they *p* Num 11:25
 to them, yet they *p* Jer 23:21
 Lord, have we not *p* Matt 7:22
 prophets and the law *p* Matt 11:13
 virgin daughters who *p* Acts 21:9
 even more that you *p* 1 Cor 14:5

PROPHESIES

for the prophet who *p* Jer 28:9
 woman who prays or *p* 1 Cor 11:5
p edifies the church 1 Cor 14:4

PROPHESY

prophets, "Do not *p* Is 30:10
 The prophets *p* falsely Jer 5:31
 your daughters shall *p* Joel 2:28
 Who can but *p* Amos 3:8
 saying, "P to us Matt 26:68
 and to say to Him, "P!" Mark 14:65
 your daughters shall *p* Acts 2:17
 if prophecy, let us *p* Rom 12:6
 know in part and we *p* 1 Cor 13:9
 that you may *p* 1 Cor 14:1
 For you can all *p* one 1 Cor 14:31
 desire earnestly to *p* 1 Cor 14:39

PROPHESYING

he had finished *p* 1 Sam 10:13
 Every man praying or *p* 1 Cor 11:4
p is not for unbelievers 1 Cor 14:22

PROPHET

shall be your *p* Ex 7:1
 raise up for you a *P* Deut 18:15
 arisen in Israel a *p* Deut 34:10
 "I alone am left a *p* 1 Kin 18:22
 is no longer any *p* Ps 74:9
 I ordained you a *p* Jer 1:5
p is induced to speak Ezek 14:9
 The *p* is a fool Hos 9:7
 nor was I a son of a *p* Amos 7:14
 send you Elijah the *p* Mal 4:5
p shall receive a Matt 10:41
 the sign of the *p* Jonah Matt 12:39
p is not without honor Matt 13:57
 by Daniel the *p* Mark 13:14
 no *p* is accepted in his Luke 4:24
 is not a greater *p* Luke 7:28
 it cannot be that a *p* Luke 13:33
 Nazareth, who was a *P* Luke 24:19
 "Are you the *P* John 1:21
 "This is truly the *P* John 6:14
 for no *p* has arisen out of John 7:52
p named Agabus Acts 21:10
 with him the false *p* Rev 19:20

PROPHET'S

shall receive a *p* reward Matt 10:41

PROPHETESS

Then Miriam the *p* Ex 15:20
 Now Deborah, a *p* Judg 4:4
 there was one, Anna, a *p* Luke 2:36

PROPHETIC

by the *p* Scriptures Rom 16:26
p word confirmed 2 Pet 1:19

PROPHETS

See FALSE PROPHETS; LAW AND THE
 PROPHETS
 LORD's people were *p* Num 11:29
 Saul also among the *p* 1 Sam 10:12
 the mouth of all his *p* 1 Kin 22:22
 Where now are your *p* Jer 37:19
 prophecy against the *p* Ezek 13:2
 Her *p* are insolent Zeph 3:4

the Law or the *P* Matt 5:17
 is the Law and the *P* Matt 7:12
 or one of the *p* Matt 16:14
 the tombs of the *p* Matt 23:29
 indeed, I send you *p* Matt 23:34
 one who kills the *p* Matt 23:37
 Then many false *p* Matt 24:11
 have Moses and the *p* Luke 16:29
 You are sons of the *p* Acts 3:25
p did your fathers not Acts 7:52
 To Him all the *p* Acts 10:43
 do you believe the *p* Acts 26:27
 before through His *p* Rom 1:2
 by the Law and the *P* Rom 3:21
 have killed Your *p* Rom 11:3
p are subject to the 1 Cor 14:32
 to be apostles, some *p* Eph 4:11
 brethren, take the *p* James 5:10
 this salvation the *p* 1 Pet 1:10
 were also false *p* 2 Pet 2:1
 because many false *p* 1 John 4:1
 blood of saints and *p* Rev 16:6
 found the blood of *p* Rev 18:24
 of your brethren the *p* Rev 22:9

PROPIITIATION

set forth as a *p* Rom 3:25
 to God, to make *p* Heb 2:17
 He Himself is the *p* 1 John 2:2
 His Son to be the *p* 1 John 4:10

PROPORTION

let us prophesy in *p* Rom 12:6

PROPOSED

And they *p* two Acts 1:23

PROPRIETY

modest apparel, with *p* 1 Tim 2:9

PROSECUTOR

answer me, that my *P* Job 31:35

PROSELYTE

and sea to win one *p* Matt 23:15
 Nicolas, a *p* from Antioch, Acts 6:5

PROSELYTES

Rome, both Jews and *p* Acts 2:10

PROSPER

made all he did to *p* Gen 39:3
 you shall not Deut 28:29
 LORD, God made him *p* 2 Chr 26:5
 they *p* who love you Ps 122:6
 his sins will not *p* Prov 28:13
 of the LORD shall *p* Is 53:10
 against you shall *p* Is 54:17
 please, and it shall *p* Is 55:11
 of the wicked *p* Jer 12:1
 King shall reign and *p* Jer 23:5
 storing up as he may *p* 1 Cor 16:2
 I pray that you may *p* 3 John 2

PROSPERED

since the LORD has *p* Gen 24:56
 he *p* wherever he went 2 Kin 18:7
 David his father, and *p* 1 Chr 29:23
 all his heart. So he *p* 2 Chr 31:21
 Hezekiah *p* in all his 2 Chr 32:30
 and they *p* through the Ezra 6:14
 in the LORD will be *p* Prov 28:25
 Daniel *p* in the reign Dan 6:28
 He did all this and *p* Dan 8:12

PROSPERING

His ways are always *p* Ps 10:5

PROSPERITY

p all your days Deut 23:6
p exceed the fame 1 Kin 10:7
p the destroyer Job 15:21
 spend their days in *p* Job 36:11
 Now in my *p* I said Ps 30:6
 has pleasure in the *p* Ps 35:27
 When I saw the *p* Ps 73:3
 I pray, send now *p* Ps 118:25
 the day of *p* be joyful Eccl 7:14
 that we have our *p* Acts 19:25

PROSPEROUS

had made his journey *p* Gen 24:21
 will make your way *p* Josh 1:8

PROSPERS

he turns, he *p* Prov 17:8
 just as your soul *p* 3 John 2

PROSTRATE

of the proud lie *p* Job 9:13

PROTECTED

holy man, and he *p* him Mark 6:20

PROUD

p waves must stop Job 38:11
 tongue that speaks *p* Ps 12:3
 and fully repays the *p* Ps 31:23
 does not respect the *p* Ps 40:4
 a haughty look and a *p* Ps 101:5
p He knows from afar Ps 138:6
 the house of the *p* Prov 15:25
 Everyone *p* in heart Prov 16:5
p heart stirs up Prov 28:25
 is better than the *p* Eccl 7:8
 by wine, he is a *p* Hab 2:5
 He has scattered the *p* Luke 1:51
 boasters, *p* 2 Tim 3:2
 "God resists the *p*, but James 4:6
 "God resists the *p* 1 Pet 5:5

PROVE

p yourself a man 1 Kin 2:2
 does your arguing *p* Job 6:25
 mind, that you may *p* Rom 12:2

PROVERB

an astonishment, a *p* Deut 28:37
 incline my ear to a *p* Ps 49:4
 that hang limp is a *p* Prov 26:7
 of a drunkard is a *p* Prov 26:9
 one shall take up a *p* Mic 2:4
 to the true *p* 2 Pet 2:22

PROVERBS

spoke three thousand *p* 1 Kin 4:32
 The *p* of Solomon the Prov 1:1
 are *p* of Solomon Prov 25:1
 in order many *p* Eccl 12:9

PROVIDE

"My son, God will *p* Gen 22:8
 Can He *p* meat for His Ps 78:20
 lambs will *p* your Prov 27:26
 prosperity that I *p* Jer 33:9
P neither gold nor Matt 10:9
 if anyone does not *p* 1 Tim 5:8

PROVIDED

I have *p* Myself a king 1 Sam 16:1
p for her from the king's Esth 2:9
p from Your godness Ps 68:10
 atonement is *p* for iniquity Prov 16:6
 these hands have *p* Acts 20:34
p something better Heb 11:40

PROVIDES

p food for the raven Job 38:41
p her supplies in the Prov 6:8
p food for her household Prov 31:15

PROVIDING

p honorable things, 2 Cor 8:21

PROVISION

bread of their *p* was dry Josh 9:5
 Now Solomon's *p* 1 Kin 4:22
 abundantly bless her *p* Ps 132:15
p of the king's delicacies Dan 1:5
 no *p* for the flesh Rom 13:14

PROVOKE

do not *p* Him Ex 23:21
p God are secure Job 12:6
 Do they *p* Me to Jer 7:19
p them to jealousy Rom 11:11
 you, fathers, do not *p* Eph 6:4
 do not *p* your children, lest Col 3:21

PROVOKED

How often they *p* Ps 78:40

p the Most High Ps 78:56
 Thus they *p* Him to Ps 106:29
 his spirit was *p* Acts 17:16
 seek its own, is not *p* 1 Cor 13:5

PROVOKING

p one another, envying one .. Gal 5:26

PROWLER

poverty come like a *p* Prov 24:34

PRUDENCE

son, endowed with *p* 2 Chr 2:12
 To give *p* to the Prov 1:4
 wisdom, dwell with *p* Prov 8:12
 us in all wisdom and *p* Eph 1:8

PRUDENT

p man covers shame Prov 12:16
 A *p* man conceals Prov 12:23
 The wisdom of the *p* Prov 14:8
p considers well Prov 14:15
 receives correction is *p* Prov 15:5
 heart will be called *p* Prov 16:21
p acquires knowledge Prov 18:15
p wife is from the Prov 19:14
p man foresees evil Prov 22:3
 perished from the *p* Jer 49:7
 Therefore the *p* Amos 5:13
 from the wise and *p* Matt 11:25

PRUDENTLY

Servant shall deal *p* Is 52:13

PRUNES

that bears fruit He *p* John 15:2

PSALM

and the sound of a *p* Ps 98:5
 in the second *P* Acts 13:33
 each of you has a *p* 1 Cor 14:26

PSALMIST

And the sweet *p* 2 Sam 23:1

PSALMS

Sing to Him, sing *p* 1 Chr 16:9
 to one another in *p* Eph 5:19
 one another in *p* Col 3:16
 Let him sing *p* James 5:13

PSALTERY

harp, lyre, and *p* Dan 3:10

PTOLEMAIS

Seaport city south of Tyre; Paul lands
 at, Acts 21:7

PUBLIC

to make her a *p* example ... Matt 1:19

PUBLISHED

to be proclaimed and *p* Jon 3:7

PUBLIUS

Roman official; entertains Paul, Acts
 28:7, 8

PUFFED

Now some are *p* up 1 Cor 4:18
 itself, is not *p* 1 Cor 13:4
 a novice, lest being *p* 1 Tim 3:6

PUFFS

Knowledge *p* up 1 Cor 8:1

PUL

King of Assyria; same as Tiglath-
 Pileser, 2 Kin 15:19
 — Country and people in Africa,
 Is 66:19

PULL

P me out of the net Ps 31:4
 I will *p* down my barns ... Luke 12:18

PULLING

for *p* down strongholds ... 2 Cor 10:4

PUNISH

take that man and *p* Deut 22:18
p the righteous is Prov 17:26
 "I will *p* the world" Is 13:11
 Shall I not *p* them for Jer 5:9
p all who oppress them Jer 30:20

p your iniquity Lam 4:22
 So I will *p* them for Hos 4:9

PUNISHED

You our God have *p* Ezra 9:13
 because He has not *p* Job 35:15
p them often in every Acts 26:11
 These shall be *p* 2 Thess 1:9

PUNISHES

will you say when He *p* Jer 13:21

PUNISHMENT

p is greater than I Gen 4:13
 you do in the day of *p* Is 10:3
p they shall be cast Jer 8:12
p they shall perish Jer 10:15
 a man for the *p* Lam 3:39
 The *p* of the iniquity Lam 4:6
 days of *p* have come Hos 9:7
 not turn away its *p* Amos 1:3
 into everlasting *p* Matt 25:46
p which was inflicted 2 Cor 2:6
 Of how much worse *p* Heb 10:29
 sent by him for the *p* 1 Pet 2:14
 the unjust under *p* 2 Pet 2:9

PUNON

Israelite camp, Num 33:42, 43

PURCHASED

(Now this man *p* a field Acts 1:18
 of God could be *p* Acts 8:20
 of the *p* possession Eph 1:14

PURE

a mercy seat of *p* gold Ex 25:17
 Can a man be more *p* Job 4:17
 if you were *p* and Job 8:6
 'My doctrine is *p* Job 11:4
 that he could be *p* Job 15:14
 the heavens are not *p* Job 15:15
 the stars are not *p* Job 25:5
 of the LORD are *p* Ps 12:6
 will show Yourself *p* Ps 18:26
 To such as are *p* Ps 73:1
 of the *p* are pleasant Prov 15:26
 ways of a man are *p* Prov 16:2
 my heart clean, I am *p* Prov 20:9
 but as for the *p* Prov 21:8
 a generation that is *p* Prov 30:12
 Shall I count *p* Mic 6:11
 Blessed are the *p* in heart Matt 5:8
 things indeed are *p* Rom 14:20
 whatever things are *p* Phil 4:8
 with a *p* conscience 1 Tim 3:9
 keep yourself *p* 1 Tim 5:22
 serve with a *p* conscience 2 Tim 1:3
p all things are *p* Titus 1:15
 bodies washed with *p* Heb 10:22
P and undefiled religion James 1:27
 above is first *p* James 3:17
 babes, desire the *p* 1 Pet 2:2
 just as He is *p* 1 John 3:3

PURER

p eyes than to behold Hab 1:13

PURGE

P me with hyssop Ps 51:7
p them as gold and Mal 3:3

PURGED

away, and your sin *p* Is 6:7
 He had by Himself *p* Heb 1:3

PURIFICATION

for the water of *p* Num 19:9
 with the water of *p* Num 31:23

PURIFIED

earth, *p* seven times Ps 12:6
 all things are *p* Heb 9:22
 Since you have *p* 1 Pet 1:22

PURIFIES

hope in Him *p* himself 1 John 3:3

PURIFY

p the sons of Levi Mal 3:3
 and *p* your hearts James 4:8

PURIFYING

thus *p* all foods Mark 7:19
p their hearts by Acts 15:9
 sanctifies for the *p* Heb 9:13

PURIM

called these days *P* Esth 9:26

PURITY

be delivered by the *p* Job 22:30
 He who loves *p* of Prov 22:11
 by *p*, by knowledge 2 Cor 6:6
 spirit, in faith, in *p* 1 Tim 4:12

PURPLE

who was clothed in *p* Luke 16:19
 they put on Him a *p* John 19:2
 She was a seller of *p* Acts 16:14

PURPOSE

and fulfill all your *p* Ps 20:4
 A time for every *p* Eccl 3:1
p that is purposed Is 14:26
 But for this *p* I came John 12:27
 by the determined *p* Acts 2:23
 them all that with *p* Acts 11:23
 called according to His *p* Rom 8:28
 to the eternal *p* Eph 3:11
 sent to you for this very *p* Eph 6:22
 Now the *p* of the 1 Tim 1:5
 manner of life, *p* 2 Tim 3:10
 For this *p* the Son of God 1 John 3:8
 to fulfill His *p* Rev 17:17

PURPOSED

For the LORD had *p* 2 Sam 17:14
 LORD of hosts has *p* Is 23:9
 But Daniel *p* in his Dan 1:8
 Paul *p* in the Spirit Acts 19:21
 pleasure which He *p* Eph 1:9

PURPOSELY

the bundles fall *p* for her .. Ruth 2:16

PURPOSES

each one give as he *p* 2 Cor 9:7

PURSE

let us all have one *p* Prov 1:14

PURSES

p his lips and brings Prov 16:30

PURSUE

And will You *p* dry Job 13:25
p my honor as the wind Job 30:15
 The sword shall *p* Jer 48:2
 but their hearts *p* Ezek 33:31
 Let us know, let us *p* Hos 6:3
p righteousness Rom 9:30
P love, and desire 1 Cor 14:1
p what is good 1 Thess 5:15
p righteousness 1 Tim 6:11
p righteousness, faith 2 Tim 2:22
P peace with all people Heb 12:14
 him seek peace and *p* 1 Pet 3:11

PURSUES

Evil *p* sinners Prov 13:21
 flee when no one *p* Prov 28:1

PURSUING

but Israel, *p* the law Rom 9:31

PUT

Also He has *p* eternity Eccl 3:11
 pride He is able to *p* down ... Dan 4:37
 what you will *p* on Matt 6:25
p my hand into His John 20:25
 But *p* on the Lord Rom 13:14

PUT OFF

I will *p* my sad face Job 9:27
 You have *p* my sackcloth ... Ps 30:11
 you *p*, concerning you Eph 4:22
 you yourselves are to *p* all Col 3:8
 shortly I must *p* my tent ... 2 Pet 1:14

PUT ON

I *p* righteousness Job 29:14

awake, *p* strength, O arm Is 51:9
 For He *p* righteousness Is 59:17
 body, what you will *p* Matt 6:25
 they *p* Him a purple robe John 19:2
p the armor of light Rom 13:12
p the Lord Jesus Christ Rom 13:14
 must *p* incorruption 1 Cor 15:53
 into Christ have *p* Christ Gal 3:27
 you *p* the new man Eph 4:24
P the whole armor of God Eph 6:11
 having *p* the breastplate Eph 6:14
 have *p* the new man Col 3:10
p tender mercies Col 3:12
 all these things *p* love Col 3:14
 I will *p* you no other Rev 2:24

PUTEOLI

Seaport of Italy, Acts 28:13

PUTREFYING

bruises and *p* sores Is 1:6

QUAIL

and it brought *q* Num 11:31
 and He brought *q* Ps 105:40

QUAKED

the whole mountain *q* Ex 19:18
 and the earth *q* Matt 27:51

QUAKES

The earth *q* before Joel 2:10

QUALIFIED

the Father who has *q* Col 1:12

QUARREL

see how he seeks a *q* 2 Kin 5:7
 any fool can start a *q* Prov 20:3
 He will not *q* nor cry Matt 12:19
 of the Lord must not *q* 2 Tim 2:24

QUARRELSOME

but gentle, not *q* 1 Tim 3:3

QUARTER

in the Second *Q* 2 Kin 22:14
 from the Second *Q* Zeph 1:10

QUARTZ

be made of coral or *q* Job 28:18

QUEEN

Q Vashiti also made a Esth 1:9
 stands the *q* in gold Ps 45:9
 burn incense to the *q* Jer 44:17
 The *q* of the South Matt 12:42
 under Candace the *q* Acts 8:27
 heart, 'I sit as *q* Rev 18:7

QUEENS

There are sixty *q* Song 6:8
q your nursing mothers Is 49:23

QUENCH

Many waters cannot *q* Song 8:7
 so that no one can *q* Jer 4:4
 flax He will not *q* Matt 12:20
q all the fiery Eph 6:16
 Do not *q* the Spirit 1 Thess 5:19

QUENCHED

LORD, the fire was *q* Num 11:2
 they were *q* like a Ps 118:12
 their fire is not *q* Is 66:24
 that shall never be *q* Mark 9:43
 and the fire is not *q* Mark 9:44
q the violence of fire Heb 11:34

QUESTIONS

test him with hard *q* 1 Kin 10:1
 and asking them *q* Luke 2:46
 market, asking no *q* 1 Cor 10:25

QUICK-TEMPERED

q man acts foolishly Prov 14:17
 not self-willed, not *q* Titus 1:7

QUICKLY

have turned aside *q* Ex 32:8

with your adversary *q* Matt 5:25
 "What you do, do *q* John 13:27
 Behold, I am coming *q* Rev 3:11
 "Surely I am coming *q* Rev 22:20

QUIET

lain still and been *q* Job 3:13
 "Take heed, and be *q* Is 7:4
 earth is at rest and *q* Is 14:7
 gladness, He will *q* Zeph 3:17
 warned him to be *q* Mark 10:48
 aspire to lead a *q* 1 Thess 4:11
 we may lead a *q* and 1 Tim 2:2
 a gentle and *q* spirit 1 Pet 3:4

QUIETED

calmed and *q* my soul Ps 131:2
 the city clerk had *q* Acts 19:35

QUIETNESS

will give peace and *q* 1 Chr 22:9
 When He gives *q* Job 34:29
 a handful with *q* Eccl 4:6
 in *q* and confidence Is 30:15
 of righteousness, *q* Is 32:17
 that they work in *q* 2 Thess 3:12

QUIETS

q the earth by the Job 37:17

QUIVER

q rattles against him Job 39:23
 the man who has his *q* Ps 127:5
q He has hidden Me Is 49:2
 Their *q* is like an Jer 5:16

RAAMSESE

Treasure city built by Hebrew slaves.
 Ex 1:11

RABBAH

Capital of Ammon, Amos 1:14
 Besieged by Joab; defeated and en-
 slaved by David, 2 Sam 12:26-31
 Destruction of, foretold, Jer 49:2, 3

RABBI

be called by men, 'R' Matt 23:7
 do not be called 'R' Matt 23:8

RABBONI

Mary addresses Christ as, John 20:16

RABMAG

Title applied to Babylonian prince, Jer
 39:3, 13

RABSARIS

Title applied to:
 Assyrian officials sent by Sen-
 nacherib, 2 Kin 18:17
 Babylonian prince, Jer 39:3, 13

RABSHAKEH

Sent by king of Assyria to threaten
 Hezekiah, 2 Kin 18:17-37; Is 36:2-22
 The Lord sends rumor to take him
 away, 2 Kin 19:6-8; Is 37:6-8

RACA

to his brother, 'R' Matt 5:22

RACE

man to run its Ps 19:5
r is not to the swift Eccl 9:11
 who run in a *r* all run 1 Cor 9:24
 I have finished the *r* 2 Tim 4:7
 with endurance the *r* Heb 12:1

RACHEL

Laban's younger daughter; Jacob's
 favorite wife, Gen 29:28-30
 Supports her husband's position, Gen
 31:14-16
 Mother of Joseph and Benjamin, Gen
 30:22-25
 Prophecy concerning; quoted, Jer
 31:15; Matt 2:18

RADIANT

to Him and were *r* Ps 34:5

RAGE

Disperse the *r* of your Job 40:11
 Why do the nations *r* Ps 2:1
 "Why did the nations *r* Acts 4:25

RAGES

he *r* against all wise Prov 18:1

RAGS

clothe a man with *r* Prov 23:21
 are like filthy *r* Is 64:6

RAHAB

Prostitute in Jericho; helps Joshua's
 spies, Josh 2:1-21
 Spared in battle, Josh 6:17-25
 Mentioned in the N.T., Matt 1:5; Heb
 11:31; James 2:25
 —Used figuratively of Egypt, Ps 87:4

RAIN

had not caused it to *r* Gen 2:5
 And the *r* was on the Gen 7:12
 I will *r* bread from heaven Ex 16:4
 early *r* and the latter *r* Deut 11:14
 my teaching drop as the *r* Deut 32:2
 be dew nor *r* these years 1 Kin 17:1
 sound of abundance of *r* 1 Kin 18:41
 He gives *r* on the Job 5:10
 to the gentle *r* Job 37:6
 sent a plentiful *r* Ps 68:9
 clouds, who prepares *r* Ps 147:8
 snow in summer and *r* Prov 26:1
r which leaves no food Prov 28:3
 not return after the *r* Eccl 12:2
 the *r* is over and gone Song 2:11
 our God, who gives *r* Jer 5:24
 I will *r* down on him Ezek 38:22
 given you the former *r* Joel 2:23
 there will be no *r* Zech 14:17
 the good, and sends *r* Matt 5:45
 and the *r* descended Matt 7:25
 He did good, gave us *r* Acts 14:17
r that often comes Heb 6:7
 the early and latter *r* James 5:7
 that it would not *r* James 5:17
 and the heaven gave *r* James 5:18

RAINBOW

I set My *r* in the Gen 9:13
 the appearance of a *r* Ezek 1:28
 and there was a *r* Rev 4:3

RAINED

had *r* down manna on Ps 78:24
r fire and brimstone Luke 17:29

RAINS

r righteousness Hos 10:12

RAISE

shall *r* up the tabernacle Ex 26:30
 that I will *r* up David a Jer 23:5
 third day He will *r* Hos 6:2
 that God is able to *r* Matt 3:9
 in three days I will *r* John 2:19
 and I will *r* him up at John 6:40
 Lord and will also *r* 1 Cor 6:14
 will also *r* us up with 2 Cor 4:14
 and the Lord will *r* James 5:15

RAISED

this purpose I have *r* Ex 9:16
 the LORD *r* up judges Judg 2:16
 LORD has *r* up prophets Jer 29:15
 be killed, and be *r* Matt 16:21
 whom God *r* up Acts 2:24
 just as Christ was *r* Rom 6:4
 Spirit of Him who *r* Rom 8:11
 And God both *r* up the 1 Cor 6:14
 "How are the dead *r* 1 Cor 15:35
 and the dead will be *r* 1 Cor 15:52
 and *r* us up together Eph 2:6
 then you were *r* Col 3:1

RAISED FROM THE DEAD

beheaded; he has been *r* Mark 6:16

whom He had *r* John 12:1
 disciples after He was *r* John 21:14
 Prince of life, whom God *r* Acts 3:15
 Christ was *r* by the glory Rom 6:4
 been *r*, dies no more Rom 6:9
 that He has been *r* 1 Cor 15:12
 heaven, whom He *r* 1 Thess 1:10
r according to my gospel 2 Tim 2:8

RAISED HIM FROM THE DEAD
 out of his tomb and *r* John 12:17
 But God *r* Acts 13:30
 your heart that God has *r* Rom 10:9
 God the Father who *r* Gal 1:1
 in Christ when He *r* Eph 1:20
 the working of God, who *r* Col 2:12
 believe in God, who *r* 1 Pet 1:21

RAISES
r the poor out of the Ps 113:7
r those who are bowed Ps 146:8
 For as the Father *r* John 5:21
 but in God who *r* 2 Cor 1:9

RAM
r which had two horns Dan 8:3

RAMAH
 Fortress built, 1 Kin 15:17-22
 Samuel's headquarters, 1 Sam 7:15, 17
 David flees to, 1 Sam 19:18-23

RAMOTH GILEAD
 City of refuge east of Jordan, Deut 4:43;
 Josh 20:8; 1 Chr 6:80
 Site of Ahab's fatal conflict with Syrians, 1 Kin 22:1-39

RAMPART
 and it stood by the *r* 2 Sam 20:15
 whose *r* was like the sea, Nah 3:8
 and set myself on the *r* Hab 2:1

RAMS
 the sweet aroma of *r* Ps 66:15
r of Nebaioth shall Is 60:7

RAN
 they both *r* together John 20:4
 You *r* well Gal 5:7

RANKS
r out of the land of Egypt Ex 13:18
 war, who could keep *r* 1 Chr 12:38
 and they do not break *r* Joel 2:7

RANSOM
r would not help you Job 36:18
 nor give to God a *r* Ps 49:7
 The *r* of a man's life Prov 13:8
 "I will *r* them from Hos 13:14
 to give His life a *r* Mark 10:45
 who gave Himself a *r* 1 Tim 2:6

RANSOMED
 and the *r* of the LORD Is 35:10
 redeemed Jacob, and *r* Jer 31:11

RARE
 of the LORD was *r* 1 Sam 3:1
 make a mortal more *r* Is 13:12

RASH
 Do not be *r* with your Eccl 5:2

RASHLY
 so that he spoke *r* Ps 106:33
 and do nothing *r* Acts 19:36

RATS
 tumors and five golden *r* 1 Sam 6:4

RAVEN
 Then he sent out a *r*, Gen 8:7
 food for the *r* Job 38:41
 and black as a *r* Song 5:11
 and the *r* shall dwell in it Is 34:11

RAVENOUS
 inwardly they are *r* Matt 7:15

RAVENS
 and to the young *r* Ps 147:9
 Consider the *r* Luke 12:24

RAVISHED
 You have *r* my heart Song 4:9
r the women in Zion Lam 5:11

RAYS
 He had *r* flashing from His Hab 3:4

RAZOR
 no *r* shall come upon his Num 6:5
 no *r* shall come upon his Judg 13:5
r has ever come upon Judg 16:17
 like a sharp *r* Ps 52:2
 will shave with a hired *r* Is 7:20

REACHED
 earth, and its top *r* Gen 28:12
 For her sins have *r* Rev 18:5

REACHING
r forward to those Phil 3:13

READ
 saying, "R this, please" Is 29:11
 if you can *r* the writing Dan 5:16
 "Have you never *r* Matt 21:42
 day, and stood up to *r* Luke 4:16
 hearts, known and *r* 2 Cor 3:2
 when Moses is *r* 2 Cor 3:15
 when this epistle is *r* Col 4:16
r the scroll, or to look at Rev 5:4

READER
 let the *r* understand Mark 13:14

READINESS
 the word with all *r* Acts 17:11
 that as there was a *r* 2 Cor 8:11

READING
r the prophet Isaiah Acts 8:30
 give attention to *r* 1 Tim 4:13

READS
 that he may run who *r* Hab 2:2
 Blessed is he who *r* Rev 1:3

READY
 "THE LORD was *r* Is 38:20
 and those who were *r* Matt 25:10
 "Lord, I am *r* Luke 22:33
 and being *r* to punish 2 Cor 10:6
 Be *r* in season and out 2 Tim 4:2
 and always be *r* 1 Pet 3:15

REAFFIRM
r your love to him 2 Cor 2:8

REAP
 in tears shall *r* Ps 126:5
 the clouds will not *r* Eccl 11:4
r the whirlwind Hos 8:7
r in mercy Hos 10:12
 You shall sow, but not *r* Mic 6:15
 they neither sow nor *r* Matt 6:26
 you knew that I *r* Matt 25:26
 if we *r* your material 1 Cor 9:11
 that he will also *r* Gal 6:7
 due season we shall *r* Gal 6:9
 in Your sickle and *r* Rev 14:15

REAPED
 wheat but *r* thorns Jer 12:13
 you have *r* iniquity Hos 10:13
 earth, and the earth was *r* Rev 14:16

REAPER
r does not fill his Ps 129:7
 shall overtake the *r* Amos 9:13

REAPERS
 I will say to the *r* Matt 13:30
r are the angels Matt 13:39

REAPING
r what I did not Luke 19:22

REAPS
 One sows and another *r* John 4:37

REASON
 out wisdom and the *r* Eccl 7:25
 Come now, and let us *r* Is 1:18

faith, why do you *r* Matt 16:8
 words of truth and *r* Acts 26:25
 who asks you a *r* 1 Pet 3:15

REASONED
 for three Sabbaths *r* Acts 17:2
r about righteousness Acts 24:25

REBEKAH
 Great-niece of Abraham, Gen 22:20-23
 Becomes Isaac's wife, Gen 24:15-67
 Mother of Esau and Jacob, Gen 25:21-28
 Encourages Jacob to receive Isaac, then to flee, Gen 27:1-29, 42-46

REBEL
 Only do not *r* Num 14:9
 Will you *r* against the Neh 2:19
 There are those who *r* Job 24:13
 and they did not *r* Ps 105:28
 if you refuse and *r* Is 1:20

REBELLED
r against You, cast Your Neh 9:26
 for they have *r* against You Ps 5:10
 and they have *r* against Me Is 1:2
 nation that has *r* against Ezek 2:3
 have done wickedly and *r* Dan 9:5
 For who, having heard, *r* Heb 3:16

REBELLING
 more against Him by *r* Ps 78:17

REBELLION
r is as the sin 1 Sam 15:23
 For he adds *r* to his Job 34:37
 evil man seeks only *r* Prov 17:11
 you have taught *r* Jer 28:16
 hearts as in the *r* Heb 3:8
 and perished in the *r* Jude 11

REBELLIOUS
r exalt themselves Ps 66:7
 but the *r* dwell in a Ps 68:6
 day long to a *r* people Is 65:2
 a defiant and *r* heart Jer 5:23
 their princes are *r* Hos 9:15

REBELS
 are all stubborn *r* Jer 6:28

REBUILD
 God, to *r* its ruins Ezra 9:9
 tombs, that I may *r* Neh 2:5
 they shall *r* the old ruins Is 61:4
r it as in the days of Amos 9:11
 will *r* the tabernacle of Acts 15:16

REBUILDING
 we are *r* the temple that Ezra 5:11
 heard that we were *r* the Neh 4:1

REBUILT
 be *r* on its former site Ezra 5:15
 heard that I had *r* the wall Neh 6:1
 and the ruins shall be *r* Ezek 36:33

REBUKE
 He will surely *r* Job 13:10
 astonished at His *r* Job 26:11
 they perish at the *r* Ps 80:16
 At Your *r* they fled Ps 104:7
 And let him *r* me Ps 141:5
 Turn at my *r* Prov 1:23
r a wise man Prov 9:8
R is more effective Prov 17:10
r is better than love Prov 27:5
 better to hear the *r* Eccl 7:5
r the oppressor Is 1:17
 sake I have suffered *r* Jer 15:15
r strong nations Mic 4:3
 sins against you, *r* Luke 17:3
r Your disciples Luke 19:39
 Do not *r* an older man 1 Tim 5:1
 who are sinning *r* 1 Tim 5:20
r them sharply Titus 1:13
 "The Lord *r* you Jude 9
 As many as I love, I *r* Rev 3:19

REBUKED

r the winds and the Matt 8:26
r their unbelief Mark 16:14
 when you are *r* by Him Heb 12:5
 but he was *r* for his 2 Pet 2:16

REBUKES

with *r* You correct Ps 39:11
r a wicked man Prov 9:7
 ear that hears the *r* Prov 15:31
r a man will find more Prov 28:23

RECALL

r the former days Heb 10:32

RECEDED

waters *r* continually from Gen 8:3
 Then the sky *r* as a scroll Rev 6:14

RECEIVE

He shall *r* blessing Ps 24:5
r us graciously Hos 14:2
 you are willing to *r* Matt 11:14
 believing, you will *r* Matt 21:22
 and His own did not *r* John 1:11
 "I do not *r* honor John 5:41
 will come again and *r* John 14:3
 the world cannot *r* John 14:17
 Ask, and you will *r* John 16:24
 "R the Holy Spirit John 20:22
 "Lord Jesus, *r* Acts 7:59
r the Holy Spirit Acts 19:2
R one who is weak Rom 14:1
 that each one may *r* 2 Cor 5:10
r the grace of God in 2 Cor 6:1
r the Spirit by the Gal 3:2
R him therefore in the Phil 2:29
 suppose that he will *r* James 1:7
 whatever we ask we *r* 1 John 3:22

RECEIVED

Freely you have *r*, freely Matt 10:8
r your consolation Luke 6:24
 in your lifetime you *r* Luke 16:25
 But as many as *r* John 1:12
 and ankle bones *r* strength Acts 3:7
 for God has *r* him Rom 14:3
 For I *r* from the Lord 1 Cor 11:23
 I *r* forty stripes minus 2 Cor 11:24
 but you *r* me as an angel Gal 4:14
 have *r* Christ Jesus Col 2:6
 tradition which he *r* 2 Thess 3:6
r up in glory 1 Tim 3:16
r the knowledge of the Heb 10:26
r strength to conceive Heb 11:11
 who had *r* the promises Heb 11:17
 Women *r* their dead Heb 11:35
 As each one has *r* a gift, 1 Pet 4:10
 For He *r* from God the 2 Pet 1:17
r the mark of the beast Rev 19:20

RECEIVES

r correction is prudent Prov 15:5
r you *r* Me Matt 10:40
 immediately *r* it with joy Matt 13:20
r one little child Matt 18:5
 and whoever *r* Me Mark 9:37
 For everyone who asks *r* Luke 11:10
 This man *r* sinners and Luke 15:2
 run, but one *r* the prize 1 Cor 9:24
 who *r* tithes, paid tithes Heb 7:9
 every son whom He *r* Heb 12:6

RECEIVING

r a kingdom which Heb 12:28

RECHAB

Assassin of Ishbosheth, 2 Sam 4:2, 6
 — Father of Jehonadab, founder of
 the Rechabites, 2 Kin 10:15–23
 Related to the Kenites, 1 Chr 2:55

RECHABITES

Kenite clan fathered by Rechab, com-
 mitted to nomadic life, Jer 35:1–19

RECOMPENSE

Vengeance is Mine, and *r*, Deut 32:35

He will accept no *r* Prov 6:35
 not say, "I will *r* Prov 20:22
 the LORD is the God of *r* Jer 51:56
 days of *r* have come Hos 9:7

RECOMPENSED

of my hands He has *r* 2 Sam 22:21
 the LORD has *r* me 2 Sam 22:25

RECONCILE

and that He might *r* Eph 2:16
r all things to Col 1:20

RECONCILED

First be *r* to your Matt 5:24
 were enemies we were *r* Rom 5:10
 Christ's behalf, be *r* 2 Cor 5:20

RECONCILIATION

now receive the *r* Rom 5:11
 to us the word of *r* 2 Cor 5:19

RECONCILING

cast away is the *r* Rom 11:15
 God was in Christ *r* 2 Cor 5:19

RECORD

r My name I will come Ex 20:24

RECOVER

Shall I *r* from this disease 2 Kin 8:8
 So Jeroboam did not *r* 2 Chr 13:20
 sick, and they will *r* Mark 16:18

RED

the first came out *r* Gen 25:25
 though they are *r* Is 1:18
 Why is Your apparel *r* Is 63:2
 for the sky is *r* Matt 16:2
 fiery *r* dragon having Rev 12:3

RED SEA

Divided for Israelites, Ex 14:15–31
 Boundary of Promised Land, Ex 23:31

REDEEM

man you shall surely *r* Num 18:15
 in our power to *r* them Neh 5:5
 In famine He shall *r* Job 5:20
R me from the hand of Job 6:23
 can by any means *r* Ps 49:7
 But God will *r* my soul Ps 49:15
r their life from Ps 72:14
 And He shall *r* Israel Ps 130:8
 all that it cannot *r* Is 50:2
 I will *r* them from Hos 13:14
 was going to *r* Israel Luke 24:21
r those who were Gal 4:5
 us, that He might *r* Titus 2:14

REDEEMED

people whom You have *r* Ex 15:13
r them from the hand Ps 106:10
 Let the *r* of the LORD Ps 107:2
r shall walk there Is 35:9
 sea a road for the *r* Is 51:10
 and you shall be *r* Is 52:3
 and *r* His people Luke 1:68
 Christ has *r* us from Gal 3:13
 that you were not *r* 1 Pet 1:18
 were slain, and have *r* Rev 5:9
 These were *r* from Rev 14:4

REDEEMER

For I know that my *R* Job 19:25
 Most High God their *R* Ps 78:35
 for their *R* is mighty Prov 23:11
 the LORD and your *R* Is 41:14
R will come to Zion Is 59:20
 our *R* from Everlasting Is 63:16
 Their *R* is strong Jer 50:34

REDEEMING

r the time Eph 5:16

REDEMPTION

For the *r* of their Ps 49:8
 with Him is abundant *r* Ps 130:7
r is yours to buy it Jer 32:7
 those who looked for *r* Luke 2:38
 your *r* draws near Luke 21:28

grace through the *r* Rom 3:24
 the adoption, the *r* Rom 8:23
 sanctification and *r* 1 Cor 1:30
 In Him we have *r* Eph 1:7
 for the day of *r* Eph 4:30
 obtained eternal *r* Heb 9:12

REED

r He will not break Is 42:3
r shaken by the wind Matt 11:7
 A bruised *r* He will not Matt 12:20
 on the head with a *r* Mark 15:19
 sour wine, put it on a *r* Mark 15:36
 Then I was given a *r* like a Rev 11:1
 the city with the *r* Rev 21:16

REEDS

r flourish without Job 8:11
 the beasts of the *r* Ps 68:30

REFINED

where gold is *r* Job 28:1
 us as silver is *r* Ps 66:10
 Behold, I have *r* you, but Is 48:10
 refine them as silver is *r* Zech 13:9
 from Me gold *r* in the fire Rev 3:18

REFINER

He will sit as a *r* Mal 3:3

REFINER'S

For He is like a *r* fire Mal 3:2

REFORMATION

until the time of *r* Heb 9:10

REFRAIN

R from meddling with 2 Chr 35:21
 who have no right to *r* 1 Cor 9:6
 good days, let him *r* 1 Pet 3:10

REFRESH

bread, that you may *r* Gen 18:5
r my heart in the Lord Phil 20

REFRESHED

of God, and may be *r* Rom 15:32
r my spirit and yours 1 Cor 16:18
 his spirit has been *r* 2 Cor 7:13
 for he often *r* 2 Tim 1:16

REFRESHES

r the soul of his Prov 25:13

REFRESHING

r may come from the Acts 3:19

REFUGE

six cities of *r* Num 35:6
 eternal God is your *r* Deut 33:27
 you have come for *r* Ruth 2:12
 but the LORD is his *r* Ps 14:6
 God is our *r* Ps 46:1
 wings I will make my *r* Ps 57:1
 God is a *r* for us Ps 62:8
 You are my strong *r* Ps 71:7
 His wings you shall take *r* Ps 91:4
 You are my *r*, my Ps 142:5
 the heat, for a place of *r* Is 4:6
 a *r* from the storm, a shade Is 25:4
 who have fled for *r* Heb 6:18

REFUSE

you *r* to let My people go Ex 10:4
 let my head not *r* it Ps 141:5
 but if you *r* and rebel, you Is 1:20
r the evil and choose Is 7:15
 through deceit they *r* Jer 9:6
 who *r* to hear My words, Jer 13:10
 hear or whether they *r* Ezek 2:5
r the younger widows 1 Tim 5:11
 See that you do not *r* Heb 12:25

REFUSED

They *r* to obey Neh 9:17
 Queen Vashti *r* to come at Esth 1:12
 my soul *r* to be comforted Ps 77:2
 Inasmuch as these people *r* Is 8:6
 because they *r* to repent Hos 11:5
 nothing is to be *r* if it is 1 Tim 4:4

REFUSES

My soul *r* to touch Job 6:7
 he who *r* correction goes Prov 10:17
r he who *r*, let him refuse Ezek 3:27
 And if he *r* to hear Matt 18:17

REGARD

Yet *r* the prayer of Your 1 Kin 8:28
r the rich more than Job 34:19
r iniquity in my heart Ps 66:18
r the prayer of the Ps 102:17
 You do not *r* the person Matt 22:16
 did not fear God nor *r* Luke 18:2
 we *r* no one according to 2 Cor 5:16

REGARDED

I must be *r* as holy Lev 10:3
 my hand and no one *r* Prov 1:24
r the lowly state Luke 1:48

REGARDS

on high, yet He *r* the lowly Ps 138:6
r a rebuke will be Prov 13:18
 He no longer *r* them Lam 4:16

REGENERATION

to you, that in the *r* Matt 19:28
 the washing of *r* Titus 3:5

REGISTERED

So all went to be *r* Luke 2:3
 firstborn who are *r* Heb 12:23

REGRETTED

but afterward he *r* Matt 21:29

REGULATIONS

yourselves to *r* Col 2:20

REHOBOAM

Son and successor of Solomon; refuses
 reform, 1 Kin 11:43—12:15
 Ten tribes revolt against, 1 Kin
 12:16—24
 Reigns over Judah 17 years, 1 Kin
 14:21—31; 2 Chr 11:5—23
 Apostasizes, then repents, 2 Chr
 12:1—16

REHOBOTH

Name of a well dug by Isaac, Gen 26:22

REIGN

The LORD shall *r* forever Ex 15:18
 but a king shall *r* 1 Sam 12:12
 hypocrite should not *r* Job 34:30
 so the LORD will *r* Mic 4:7
 And He will *r* Luke 1:33
 not have this man to *r* Luke 19:14
 righteousness will *r* Rom 5:17
 so grace might *r* Rom 5:21
 do not let sin *r* Rom 6:12
 to *r* over the Gentiles Rom 15:12
 For He must *r* till He 1 Cor 15:25
 and we shall *r* on the Rev 5:10
 and He shall *r* forever Rev 11:15
 of Christ, and shall *r* Rev 20:6

REIGNED

death *r* from Adam to Rom 5:14
 so that as sin *r* Rom 5:12
 You have *r* as kings 1 Cor 4:8
 And they lived and *r* Rev 20:4

REIGNS

God *r* over the nations Ps 47:8
 The LORD *r* Ps 93:1
 to Zion, "Your God *r* Is 52:7
 Lord God Omnipotent *r* Rev 19:6

REJECT

will these people *r* Num 14:11
r all those who stray Ps 119:118
 "All too well you *r* Mark 7:9
R a divisive man Titus 3:10

REJECTED

r has become the chief Ps 118:22
 He is despised and *r* Is 53:3
 Israel has *r* the Hos 8:3
r has become the chief Matt 21:42

many things and be *r* Luke 17:25
 This Moses whom they *r* Acts 7:35
 to a living stone, *r* 1 Pet 2:4
r has become the chief 1 Pet 2:7

REJECTION

you shall know My *r* Num 14:34

REJECTS

he who *r* Me *r* Luke 10:16
r this does not reject 1 Thess 4:8

REJOICE

See BE GLAD AND REJOICE
 so the LORD will *r* Deut 28:63
 let the field *r* 1 Chr 16:32
 and let Your saints *r* 2 Chr 6:41
r who put their trust Ps 5:11
 people, let Jacob *r* Ps 14:7
R in the LORD Ps 33:1
 mutual confusion who *r* Ps 35:26
 The righteous shall *r* Ps 58:10
 of Your wings I will *r* Ps 63:7
 But the king shall *r* Ps 63:11
 Let them *r* before God Ps 68:3
 In Your name they *r* Ps 89:16
 Let the heavens *r* Ps 96:11
 Let the earth *r* Ps 97:1
 righteous see it and *r* Ps 107:42
 we will *r* and be glad Ps 118:24
 who *r* in doing evil Prov 2:14
 be blessed, and *r* Prov 5:18
 she shall *r* in time to Prov 31:25
R, O young man Eccl 11:9
 We will be glad and *r* Song 1:4
 among men shall *r* Is 29:19
 I will greatly *r* Is 61:10
 My servants shall *r* Is 65:13
 your heart shall *r* Is 66:14
 Yes, I will *r* Jer 32:41
 Do not *r* over me Mic 7:8
 He will *r* over you Zeph 3:17
 do not *r* in this Luke 10:20
 loved Me, you would *r* John 14:28
 but the world will *r* John 16:20
 and your heart will *r* John 16:22
R with those who Rom 12:15
 and in this *r* Phil 1:18
 faith, I am glad and *r* Phil 2:17
R in the Lord always Phil 4:4
R always 1 Thess 5:16
 yet believing, you *r* 1 Pet 1:8

REJOICE IN THE LORD

R, O you righteous Ps 33:1
R, you righteous Ps 97:12
 you shall *r*, and glory in Is 41:16
 I will greatly *r* Is 61:10
 you children of Zion and *r* Joel 2:23
 Yet I will *r*, I will joy Hab 3:18
 their heart shall *r* Zech 10:7
 Finally, my brethren, *r* Phil 3:1
R always. Again I will say Phil 4:4

REJOICED

for good as He *r* Deut 30:9
 for my heart *r* Eccl 2:10
 and my spirit has *r* Luke 1:47
 In that hour Jesus *r* Luke 10:21
 Your father Abraham *r* John 8:56
 But I *r* in the Lord Phil 4:10

REJOICES

My heart *r* in the LORD 1 Sam 2:1
 glad, and my glory *r* Ps 16:9
 bridegroom *r* over the bride Is 62:5
r more over than sheep Matt 18:13
 but *r* in the truth 1 Cor 13:6

REJOICING

His works with *r* Ps 107:22
 The voice of *r* and Ps 118:15
 for they are the *r* Ps 119:111
 come again with *r* Ps 126:6
r in His inhabited Prov 8:31
 he went on his way *r* Acts 8:39

yet always *r* 2 Cor 6:10
 or joy, or crown of *r* 1 Thess 2:19
 confidence and the *r* Heb 3:6

RELATIVES

r stand afar off Ps 38:11

RELEASE

shall grant a *r* of debts Deut 15:1
 time in the year of *r*, at Deut 31:10
 do you want me to *r* Matt 27:17
 and power to *r* You John 19:10
 "R the four angels Rev 9:14

RELEASED

r him, and forgave him Matt 18:27
 he *r* Barabbas to them Matt 27:26
 she is *r* from the law of Rom 7:2
 Satan will be *r* from his Rev 20:7

RELEASING

of strife is like *r* water Prov 17:14
 to *r* one prisoner to them Mark 15:6

RELENT

sworn and will not *r* Ps 110:4
 and will not *r* Jer 4:28
 then the LORD will *r* Jer 26:13
 if He will turn and *r* Joel 2:14
 sworn and will not *r* Heb 7:21

RELENTED

So the LORD *r* from the Ex 32:14
 the LORD looked and *r* 1 Chr 21:15
 and God *r* from the Jon 3:10

RELENTING

I am weary of *r* Jer 15:6

RELIEF

saw that there was *r* Ex 8:15
 that I may find *r* Job 32:20

RELIEVE

of my lips would *r* Job 16:5
r those who are really 1 Tim 5:16

RELIEVED

You have *r* me when I Ps 4:1

RELIEVES

r the fatherless Ps 146:9

RELIGION

about their own *r* Acts 25:19
r Col 2:23
 heart, this one's *r* James 1:26
 and undefiled *r* James 1:27

RELIGIOUS

things you are very *r* Acts 17:22
 you thinks he is *r* James 1:26

RELY

name of the LORD and *r* Is 50:10
 You *r* on your sword Ezek 33:26

REMAIN

shall let none of it *r* Ex 12:10
r angry forever Jer 3:5
 and this city shall *r* Jer 17:25
 that if ten men *r* Amos 6:9
 you, that My joy may *r* John 15:11
 your fruit should *r* John 15:16
 "If I will that he *r* John 21:22
 the greater part *r* 1 Cor 15:6
 Nevertheless to *r* Phil 1:24
 we who are alive and *r* 1 Thess 4:15
 the things which *r* Rev 3:2

REMAINDER

with the *r* of wrath Ps 76:10
 I am deprived of the *r* Is 38:10

REMAINED

Also my wisdom *r* Eccl 2:9
 And Mary *r* with her Luke 1:56
 like a dove, and He *r* John 1:32

REMAINS

"While the earth *r* Gen 8:22
 Therefore your sin *r* John 9:41

There *r* therefore a Heb 4:9
sin, for His seed *r* 1 John 3:9

REMEMBER

But *r* me when it is Gen 40:14
R the Sabbath day Ex 20:8
r that you were a Deut 15:15
R His marvelous works 1 Chr 16:12
but we will *r* the name Ps 20:7
r the sins of my youth Ps 25:7
r Your name in the Ps 119:55
R now your Creator Eccl 12:1
r your love more than Song 1:4
r the former things Is 43:18
"I *r* you, the kindness Jer 2:2
and their sin I will *r* Jer 31:34
r the covenant of Amos 1:9
in wrath *r* mercy Hab 3:2
or *r* the five loaves of the Matt 16:9
and to *r* His holy Luke 1:72
R Lot's wife Luke 17:32
r me when You come Luke 23:42
r the words of the Acts 20:35
that we should *r* the poor Gal 2:10
R my chains Col 4:18
R that Jesus Christ 2 Tim 2:8
deeds I will *r* no more Heb 8:12
R those who rule Heb 13:7
R therefore from where you Rev 2:5

REMEMBERED

Then God *r* Noah Gen 8:1
r His covenant with Ex 2:24
I *r* God, and was Ps 77:3
r Your judgments Ps 119:52
Who *r* us in our lowly Ps 136:23
yea, we wept when we *r* Ps 137:1
r that same poor man Eccl 9:15
r the days of old Is 63:11
And Peter *r* the word Matt 26:75
r the word of the Lord Acts 11:16

REMEMBERS

r His covenant forever Ps 105:8
My soul still *r* Lam 3:20

REMEMBRANCE

in death there is no *r* Ps 6:5
I call to *r* my song Ps 77:6
There is no *r* of Eccl 1:11
Put Me in *r* Is 43:26
do this in *r* of Me Luke 22:19
do this in *r* of Me 1 Cor 11:24

REMIND

r you always of these 2 Pet 1:12
But I want to *r* you Jude 5

REMINDER

there is a *r* of sins Heb 10:3
you always have a *r* 2 Pet 1:15
pure minds by way of *r* 2 Pet 3:1

REMISSION

repentance for the *r* Mark 1:4
Jesus Christ for the *r* Acts 2:38
where there is *r* Heb 10:18

REMNANT

Jerusalem shall go a *r* 2 Kin 19:31
r of you who have 2 Chr 30:6
would be no *r* or survivor Ezra 9:14
to us a very small *r* Is 1:9
The *r* will return Is 10:21
be well with your *r* Jer 15:11
I will gather the *r* Jer 23:3
and all the *r* of Judah Jer 44:28
Yet I will leave a *r* Ezek 6:8
r whom the LORD calls Joel 2:32
I will not treat the *r* Zech 8:11
time there is a *r* Rom 11:5

REMEMORSEFUL

been condemned, was *r* Matt 27:3

REMOVE

I will also *r* Judah from 2 Kin 23:27
R Your plague from me Ps 39:10
R Your gaze from me Ps 39:13

r your foot from evil Prov 4:27
r falsehood and lies Prov 30:8
Therefore *r* sorrow Eccl 11:10
R violence and Ezek 45:9
I will *r* the iniquity of that Zech 3:9
let me *r* the speck that Luke 6:42
r your lampstand Rev 2:5

REMOVED

Though the earth be *r* Ps 46:2
r our transgressions Ps 103:12
will never be *r* Prov 10:30
and the hills be *r* Is 54:10
this mountain, 'Be *r* Matt 21:21

REMOVES

r the mountains Job 9:5

REND

So *r* your heart Joel 2:13

RENDER

What shall I *r* to the Ps 116:12
who will *r* to him the Matt 21:41
"R therefore to Caesar Matt 22:21
r to each one according Rom 2:6
R to her just as she Rev 18:6

RENDERS

See that no one *r* evil 1 Thess 5:15

RENEW

r a steadfast spirit Ps 51:10
r the face of the Ps 104:30
on the LORD shall *r* Is 40:31

RENEWED

that your youth is *r* Ps 103:5
inward man is being *r* 2 Cor 4:16
and be *r* in the spirit Eph 4:23
the new man who is *r* Col 3:10

RENEWING

transformed by the *r* Rom 12:2
of regeneration and *r* Titus 3:5

RENOUNCE

Why do the wicked *r* Ps 10:13

RENOUNCED

r the covenant of Your Ps 89:39
r the hidden things 2 Cor 4:2

RENOUNCES

greedy and *r* the LORD Ps 10:3

RENOWN

were of old, men of *r* Gen 6:4

RENTED

years in his own *r* house Acts 28:30

REPAID

done, so God has *r* Judg 1:7
And he has *r* me evil 1 Sam 25:21
good shall be *r* Prov 13:21
Shall evil be *r* Jer 18:20

REPAIR

r the house of your 2 Chr 24:5
r the ruined cities Is 61:4

REPAY

He will *r* him to his Deut 7:10
silence, but will *r* Is 65:6
He will surely *r* Jer 51:56
again, I will *r* Luke 10:35
because they cannot *r* Luke 14:14
R no one evil for evil Rom 12:17
is Mine, I will *r* Rom 12:19
r their parents 1 Tim 5:4
I will *r* Philem 19

REPAYS

and who *r* him for what Job 21:31
r the proud person Ps 31:23
shall he be who *r* Ps 137:8
the LORD, who fully *r* Is 66:6

REPEATS

r a matter separates Prov 17:9

REPENT

of man, that He should *r* Num 23:19

I abhor myself, and *r* Job 42:6
R now everyone of his evil Jer 25:5
R, turn away from your Ezek 14:6
because they refused to *r* Hos 11:5
"R, for the kingdom Matt 3:2
R, and believe in the Mark 1:15
you *r* you will all Luke 13:3
said to them, "R Acts 2:38
R therefore and be Acts 3:19
men everywhere to *r* Acts 17:30
and do the first works, or Rev 2:5
be zealous and *r* Rev 3:19

REPENTANCE

bear fruits worthy of *r* Matt 3:8
you with water unto *r* Matt 3:11
a baptism of *r* for the Mark 1:4
but sinners, to *r* Mark 2:17
persons who need no *r* Luke 15:7
to the Gentiles *r* to life Acts 11:18
of God leads you to *r* Rom 2:4
sorrow produces *r* 2 Cor 7:10
will grant them *r* 2 Tim 2:25
of *r* from dead works and Heb 6:1
renew them again to *r* Heb 6:6
found no place for *r* Heb 12:17
all should come to *r* 2 Pet 3:9

REPENTED

No man *r* of his Jer 8:6
after my turning, I *r* Jer 31:19
it, because they *r* Matt 12:41

REPETITIONS

r as the heathen do Matt 6:7

REPHAIM

Valley near Jerusalem, 2 Sam 23:13, 14
Scene of Philistine defeats, 2 Sam
5:18-22

REPHIDIM

Israelite camp, Num 33:12-15
Moses strikes rock at, Ex 17:1-7
Amalek defeated at, Ex 17:8-16

REPORT

circulate a false *r* Ex 23:1
For it is not a good *r* 1 Sam 2:24
r makes the bones Prov 15:30
Who has believed our *r* Is 53:1
who has believed our *r* Rom 10:16
things are of good *r* Phil 4:8

REPRIMANDED

And they *r* him sharply Judg 8:1

REPROACH

has taken away my *r* Gen 30:23
away the *r* of Egypt from Josh 5:9
and bring *r* on all Israel 1 Sam 11:2
we may no longer be a *r* Neh 2:17
r me as long as I live Job 27:6
does he take up a *r* Ps 15:3
You make us a *r* Ps 44:13
sake I have borne *r* Ps 69:7
R has broken my heart Ps 69:20
Remove from me *r* and Ps 119:22
nation, but sin is a *r* Prov 14:34
with dishonor comes *r* Prov 18:3
do not fear the *r* Is 51:7
not remember the *r* Is 54:4
bring an everlasting *r* Jer 23:40
because I bore the *r* Jer 31:19
become a desolation, a *r* Jer 49:13
you shall bear the *r* Mic 6:16
to take away my *r* among Luke 1:25
these things You *r* Luke 11:45
lest he fall into *r* 1 Tim 3:7
esteeming the *r* Heb 11:26
the camp, bearing His *r* Heb 13:13
and without *r* James 1:5

REPROACHED

of those who *r* You fell Rom 15:3
If you are *r* for the 1 Pet 4:14

REPROACHES

is not an enemy who *r* Ps 55:12

oppresses the poor *r* Prov 14:31
 curse, and Israel to *r* Is 43:28
 in infirmities, in *r* 2 Cor 12:10

REPROACHFULLY

they strike me *r* Job 16:10

REPROOF

for doctrine, for *r* 2 Tim 3:16

REPROOFS

R of instruction are Prov 6:23

REPUTATION

seven men of good *r* Acts 6:3
 to those who were of *r* Gal 2:2
 made Himself of no *r* Phil 2:7

REQUEST

not withheld the *r* Ps 21:2
 He gave them their *r* Ps 106:15
 the Lord God to make *r* Dan 9:3
 For Jews *r* a sign 1 Cor 1:22
 of mine making *r* Phil 1:4

REQUESTS

r be made known Phil 4:6

REQUIRE

the LORD your God *r* Deut 10:12
 a foreigner you may *r* Deut 15:3
 "You will not *r* Ps 10:13
 offering You did not *r* Ps 40:6
 what does the LORD *r* Mic 6:8

REQUIRED

of the world may be *r* Luke 11:50
 your soul will be *r* Luke 12:20
 him much will be *r* Luke 12:48
 Moreover it is *r* 1 Cor 4:2

REQUIREMENTS

keeps the righteous *r* Rom 2:26
r that was against us Col 2:14

RESCUE

R me from their Ps 35:17
 and no one shall *r* Hos 5:14

RESERVE

r the unjust under 2 Pet 2:9

RESERVED

Have you not *r* a blessing Gen 27:36
 I have *r* seven thousand 1 Kin 19:18
 which I have *r* for the Job 38:23
 "I have *r* for Myself Rom 11:4
r in heaven for you 1 Pet 1:4
 of darkness, to be *r* 2 Pet 2:4
 habitation, He has *r* Jude 6

RESERVES

He *r* wrath for His enemies Nah 1:2

RESIDUE

The *r* of My people Zeph 2:9

RESIST

r an evil person Matt 5:39
 not able to *r* the wisdom Acts 6:10
r the Holy Spirit Acts 7:51
 these also *r* the truth 2 Tim 3:8
R the devil and he James 4:7
R him, steadfast in the 1 Pet 5:9

RESISTED

For who has *r* His will Rom 9:19
 Jannes and Jambres *r* 2 Tim 3:8
 for he has greatly *r* 2 Tim 4:15
 You have not yet *r* Heb 12:4

RESISTS

"God *r* the proud James 4:6
 for "God *r* the proud 1 Pet 5:5

RESOLVED

I have *r* what to do Luke 16:4

RESORT

to which I may *r* Ps 71:3

RESOUND

my heart shall *r* Is 16:11

RESPECT

Have *r* to the covenant Ps 74:20

his eyes will have *r* Is 17:7
 saying, "They will *r* Matt 21:37
 of the law held in *r* Acts 5:34
 and we paid them *r* Heb 12:9

RESPECTED

And the LORD *r* Abel Gen 4:4
 little folly to one *r* Eccl 10:1

RESPONSE

in whose mouth is no *r* Ps 38:14

REST

is the Sabbath of *r* Ex 31:15
 you shall find no *r* Deut 28:65
 to build a house of *r* 1 Chr 28:2
 I would have been at *r* Job 3:13
 the weary are at *r* Job 3:17
 My flesh also will *r* in hope Ps 16:9
R in the LORD Ps 37:7
 fly away and be at *r* Ps 55:6
 of the LORD shall *r* Is 11:2
 whole earth is at *r* Is 14:7
 "This is the *r* Is 28:12
 sake I will not *r* Is 62:1
 is the place of My *r* Is 66:1
 then you will find *r* Jer 6:16
 and I will give you *r* Matt 11:28
 and you will find *r* Matt 11:29
 you who are troubled *r* 2 Thess 1:7
 shall not enter My *r* Heb 3:11
 remains therefore a *r* Heb 4:9
 to enter that *r* Heb 4:11
 And they do not *r* Rev 4:8
 that they should *r* Rev 6:11
 "that they may *r* Rev 14:13
 But the *r* of the dead Rev 20:5

RESTED

He had done, and He *r* Gen 2:2
 glory of the LORD *r* Ex 24:16
 when the Spirit *r* Num 11:25
 "And God *r* on the Heb 4:4

RESTING

the dove found no *r* place Gen 8:9
 foot have a *r* place Deut 28:65
 do not plunder his *r* Prov 24:15
r place shall be Is 11:10
 all the earth is *r* Zech 1:11
 still sleeping and *r* Matt 26:45

RESTLESS

I am *r* in my complaint Ps 55:2

RESTORATION

until the times of *r* Acts 3:21

RESTORE

R to me the joy Ps 51:12
 I still must *r* Ps 69:4
r your judges as Is 1:26
r them to this place Jer 27:22
 For I will *r* health to Jer 30:17
 "So I will *r* to you Joel 2:25
 declare that I will *r* Zech 9:12
 and will *r* all things Matt 17:11
 I *r* fourfold Luke 19:8
 You at this time *r* Acts 1:6
 who are spiritual *r* Gal 6:1

RESTORED

it was *r* like his other flesh Ex 4:7
 whose son he had *r* to life 2 Kin 8:1
 LORD *r* Job's losses when Job 42:10
 hand was *r* as whole as Mark 3:5
 that I may be *r* to you the Heb 13:19

RESTORER

may he be to you a *r* Ruth 4:15

RESTORES

with joy, for He *r* Job 33:26
 He *r* my soul Ps 23:3

RESTRAIN

now *r* Your hand 2 Sam 24:16
 Therefore I will not *r* Job 7:11
 Will You *r* Yourself Is 64:12
 no one can *r* His hand Dan 4:35

RESTRAINED

r my feet from every Ps 119:101
 Are they *r* Is 63:15

RESTRAINS

For nothing *r* the LORD 1 Sam 14:6
r his lips is wise Prov 10:19
 only He who now *r* 2 Thess 2:7

RESTRAINT

they have cast off *r* Job 30:11
 they break all *r* Hos 4:2

RESTS

r quietly in the heart Prov 14:33

RESURRECTION

who say there is no *r* Matt 22:23
 Therefore, in the *r* Matt 22:28
 of the graves after His *r* Matt 27:53
 Therefore, in the *r* Mark 12:23
 repaid at the *r* of the Luke 14:14
 being sons of the *r* Luke 20:36
 done good, to the *r* John 5:29
 to her, "I am the *r* John 11:25
 a witness with us of His *r* Acts 1:22
 them Jesus and the *r* Acts 17:18
 heard of the *r* of the Acts 17:32
 that there will be a *r* Acts 24:15
 the likeness of His *r* Rom 6:5
 say that there is no *r* 1 Cor 15:12
 and the power of His *r* Phil 3:10
 that the *r* is already 2 Tim 2:18
 obtain a better *r* Heb 11:35
 the *r* of Jesus Christ 1 Pet 3:21
 This is the first *r* Rev 20:5

RETAIN

happy are all who *r* Prov 3:18
 spirit to *r* the spirit Eccl 8:8
r the sins of any John 20:23
 like to *r* God in their Rom 1:28

RETURN

So the LORD will *r* 1 Kin 2:32
 and *r* to our neighbors Ps 79:12
R, O LORD Ps 90:13
 none who go to her *r* Prov 2:19
 womb, naked shall he *r* Eccl 5:15
 the clouds do not *r* Eccl 12:2
 let him *r* to the LORD Is 55:7
 it shall not *r* to Me Is 55:11
 "If you will *r* Jer 4:1
 for they shall *r* Jer 24:7
 me, and I will *r* Jer 31:18
 say, "I will go and *r* Hos 2:7
 help of your God, *r* Hos 12:6
 "R to Me," says the LORD Zech 1:3
R to Me, and I will *r* to Mal 3:7
 he says, "I will *r* Matt 12:44
 if not, it will *r* to you Luke 10:6
 reviled, did not revile in *r* 1 Pet 2:23

RETURNED

and they *r* and sought Ps 78:34
 yet you have not *r* Amos 4:6
 astray, but have now *r* 1 Pet 2:25

RETURNING

"I am *r* to Jerusalem Zech 1:16
r evil for evil or 1 Pet 3:9

RETURNS

spirit departs, he *r* Ps 146:4
 As a dog *r* to his own Prov 26:11
 "A dog *r* to his own 2 Pet 2:22

REUBEN

Jacob's eldest son, Gen 29:31, 32
 Lies with Bilhah; loses preeminence,
 Gen 35:22; 49:3, 4
 Plots to save Joseph, Gen 37:21-30
 Offers sons as pledge for Benjamin,
 Gen 42:37
 ——— Tribe of:
 Numbered, Num 1:20, 21; 26:5-11
 Settle east of Jordan, Num 32:1-42

Join in war against Canaanites, Josh
1:12-18

Erect memorial altar, Josh 22:10-34

REVEAL

The heavens will *r* Job 20:27
I will heal them and *r* Jer 33:6
the Son wills to *r* Him Matt 11:27
r His Son in me Gal 1:16
otherwise, God will *r* Phil 3:15

REVEALED

things which are *r* Deut 29:29
of the LORD shall be *r* Is 40:5
righteousness to be *r* Is 56:1
Then the secret was *r* Dan 2:19
blood has not *r* this to Matt 16:17
which will not be *r* Mark 4:22
covered that will not be *r* Luke 12:2
the Son of Man is *r* Luke 17:30
the wrath of God is *r* Rom 1:18
glory which shall be *r* Rom 8:18
But God has *r* them to 1 Cor 2:10
secrets of his heart are *r* 1 Cor 14:25
as it has now been *r* Eph 3:5
but now has been *r* Col 1:26
the Lord Jesus is *r* 2 Thess 1:7
lawless one will be *r* 2 Thess 2:8
ready to be *r* in the 1 Pet 1:5
when His glory is *r* 1 Pet 4:13
r what we shall be 1 John 3:2

REVEALER

Lord of kings, and a *r* Dan 2:47

REVEALING

waits for the *r* Rom 8:19

REVEALS

as a talebearer *r* Prov 20:19
r deep and secret Dan 2:22
r secrets has made Dan 2:29
r His secret to His Amos 3:7

REVELATION

was no widespread *r* 1 Sam 3:1
Where there is no *r* Prov 29:18
to bring *r* to the Gentiles Luke 2:32
the day of wrath and *r* Rom 2:5
eagerly waiting for the *r* 1 Cor 1:7
has a tongue, has a *r* 1 Cor 14:26
it came through the *r* Gal 1:12
And I went up by *r*, and Gal 2:2
spirit of wisdom and *r* Eph 1:17
r He made known to Eph 3:3
and glory at the *r* 1 Pet 1:7
The *R* of Jesus Christ Rev 1:1

REVELATIONS

come to visions and *r* 2 Cor 12:1

REVELRIES

drunkenness, *r* Gal 5:21
lusts, drunkenness, *r* 1 Pet 4:3

REVENGE

and we will take our *r* Jer 20:10

REVENUES

than vast *r* without Prov 16:8

REVERENCE

and *r* My sanctuary Lev 19:30
and to be held in *r* Ps 89:7
Master, where is My *r* Mal 1:6
submission with all *r* 1 Tim 3:4
God acceptably with *r* Heb 12:28

REVERENT

man who is always *r* Prov 28:14
their wives must be *r* 1 Tim 3:11
older men be sober, *r* Titus 2:2

REVILE

are you when they *r* Matt 5:11
r God's high priest Acts 23:4
evildoers, those who *r* 1 Pet 3:16

REVILED

crucified with Him *r* Mark 15:32
who, when He was *r* 1 Pet 2:23

REVILER

or an idolater, or a *r* 1 Cor 5:11

REVILERS

nor drunkards, nor *r* 1 Cor 6:10

REVILING

come envy, strife, *r* 1 Tim 6:4

REVIVAL

give us a measure of *r* Ezra 9:8

REVIVE

troubles, shall *r* Ps 71:20
Will You not *r* us Ps 85:6
r me according to Your Ps 119:25
r the spirit of the Is 57:15
two days He will *r* Hos 6:2
r Your work in the Hab 3:2

REVIVED

they shall be *r* Hos 14:7
came, sin *r* and I died Rom 7:9

REVOLT

You will *r* more and Is 1:5

REVOLTED

Israel have deeply *r* Is 31:6
they have *r* and Jer 5:23

REVOLTERS

r are deeply involved Hos 5:2

REWARD

exceedingly great *r* Gen 15:1
them there is great *r* Ps 19:11
r me evil for good Ps 35:12
"Surely there is a *r* Ps 58:11
look, and see the *r* Ps 91:8
will a sure *r* Prov 11:18
and the LORD will *r* Prov 25:22
and this was my *r* Eccl 2:10
behold, His *r* is with Is 40:10
r them for their deeds Hos 4:9
for great is your *r* Matt 5:12
you have no *r* from Matt 6:1
you, they have their *r* Matt 6:2
receive a prophet's *r* Matt 10:41
by no means lose his *r* Matt 10:42
r will be great Luke 6:35
we receive the due *r* Luke 23:41
will receive his own *r* 1 Cor 3:8
cheat you of your *r* Col 2:18
for he looked to the *r* Heb 11:26
may receive a full *r* 2 John 8
quickly, and My *r* Rev 22:12

REWARDED

Thus they have *r* Ps 109:5

REWARDER

and that He is a *r* Heb 11:6

REWARDS

Whoever *r* evil for Prov 17:13
and follows after *r* Is 1:23
and give your *r* Dan 5:17

REZIN

King of Damascus; joins Pekah against
Ahaz, 2 Kin 15:37
Confederacy of, inspires Isaiah's great
messianic prophecy, Is 7:1—9:12

REZON

Son of Eliadah; establishes Syrian
kingdom, 1 Kin 11:23-25

RHEGIUM

City in Italy where Paul visits, Acts
28:13

RHODA

Servant girl, Acts 12:13-16

RHODES

Island off coast of Asia Minor which
Paul passes, Acts 21:1

RIBLAH

Headquarters of:
Pharaoh Necho, 2 Kin 23:31-35

Nebuchadnezzar, 2 Kin 25:6, 20, 21
Zedekiah blinded here, Jer 39:5-7

RICH

Abram was very *r* Gen 13:2
makes poor and makes *r* 1 Sam 2:7
r man will lie down Job 27:19
the *r* among the people Ps 45:12
when one becomes *r* Ps 49:16
soul will be made *r* Prov 11:25
who makes himself *r* Prov 13:7
r has many friends Prov 14:20
The *r* and the poor Prov 22:2
r rules over the poor Prov 22:7
r man is wise in his Prov 28:11
do not curse the *r* Eccl 10:20
it is hard for a *r* Matt 19:23
to you who are a *r* Luke 6:24
from the *r* man's table Luke 16:21
for he was very *r* Luke 18:23
Lord over all is *r* Rom 10:12
You are already *r* 1 Cor 4:8
though He was *r* 2 Cor 8:9
who desire to be *r* 1 Tim 6:9
but the *r* in his James 1:10
So the *r* man also will James 1:11
of this world to be *r* James 2:5
you say, "I am *r* Rev 3:17

RICHES

Both *r* and honor come 1 Chr 29:12
He swallows down *r* Job 20:15
he heaps up *r* Ps 39:6
the abundance of his *r* Ps 52:7
if *r* increase Ps 62:10
r will be in his house Ps 112:3
in her left hand *r* Prov 3:16
R and honor are Prov 8:18
R do not profit Prov 11:4
in his *r* will fall Prov 11:28
yet has great *r* Prov 13:7
of the wise is their *r* Prov 14:24
Houses and *r* are an Prov 19:14
of the LORD are *r* Prov 22:4
r are not forever Prov 27:24
r kept for their owner Eccl 5:13
darkness and hidden *r* Is 45:3
you shall eat the *r* Is 61:6
so is he who gets *r* Jer 17:11
have increased your *r* Ezek 28:5
for those who have *r* Mark 10:23
do you despise the *r* Rom 2:4
might make known the *r* Rom 9:23
what are the *r* Eph 1:18
show the exceeding *r* Eph 3:7
the unsearchable *r* Eph 3:8
trust in uncertain *r* 1 Tim 6:17
r than the treasures Heb 11:26
r are corrupted James 5:2
to receive power and *r* Rev 5:12

RICHLY

Christ dwell in you *r* Col 3:16
God, who gives us *r* 1 Tim 6:17

RIDDLE

"Let me pose a *r* Judg 14:12

RIDDLES

the wise and their *r* Prov 1:6

RIDE

wind and cause me to *r* Job 30:22
in Your majesty *r* Ps 45:4
have caused men to *r* Ps 66:12

RIDER

r He has thrown Ex 15:1
the horse and its *r* Job 39:18

RIDES

Behold, the LORD *r* Is 19:1

RIDGES

You water its *r* Ps 65:10

RIDICULE

those who see Me *r* Me Ps 22:7
Whom do you *r* Is 57:4

RIDICULED

they *r* Him Matt 9:24

RIGHT

See AT THE RIGHT HAND; HIS RIGHT

HAND; MY RIGHT HAND

then I will go to the *r* Gen 13:9
 of all the earth do *r* Gen 18:25
 tip of the *r* ear of Aaron Ex 29:20
 on the thumb of his *r* hand Lev 8:23
 you shall do what is *r* Deut 6:18
 the *r* of the firstborn Deut 21:17
 did what was *r* in his Judg 21:25
 my *r* of redemption Ruth 4:6
 "Is your heart *r* 2 Kin 10:15
 them forth by the *r* Ps 107:7
 Lord. "Sit at My *r* Ps 110:1
 is a way which seems *r* Prov 14:12
 way of a man is *r* Prov 21:2
 things that are *r* Is 45:19
 until He comes whose *r* Ezek 21:27
 of the LORD are *r* Hos 14:9
 do not know to do *r* Amos 3:10
 If your *r* eye causes you Matt 5:29
 slaps you on your *r* cheek Matt 5:39
 and whatever is *r* Matt 20:4
 Sit at My *r* hand, till I Matt 22:44
 sheep on His *r* hand Matt 25:33
 clothed and in his *r* Mark 5:15
r hand of the Power Mark 14:62
 clothed and in his *r* mind Luke 8:35
 not judge what is *r* Luke 12:57
 to them He gave the *r* John 1:12
 standing at the *r* hand of Acts 7:55
 your heart is not *r* Acts 8:21
 Do we have no *r* 1 Cor 9:4
 in the Lord, for this *r* Eph 6:1
 sat down at the *r* hand of Heb 10:12
 tabernacle have no *r* to Heb 13:10
 seven stars in His *r* Rev 2:1
 I saw in the *r* hand of Him Rev 5:1
r hand or on their Rev 13:16
 the *r* to the tree of life Rev 22:14

RIGHTEOUS

also destroy the *r* Gen 18:23
 Sodom fifty *r* within the Gen 18:26
 has been more *r* than I Gen 38:26
 not kill the innocent and Ex 23:7
 me die the death of the *r* Num 23:10
 and they justify the *r* Deut 25:1
 "You are more *r* 1 Sam 24:17
 down two men more *r* 1 Kin 2:32
 that he could be more Job 15:14
r will hold to his way Job 17:9
 "The *r* see it and Job 22:19
 knows the way of the *r* Ps 1:6
 LORD, will bless the Ps 5:12
r God tests the hearts Ps 7:9
 what can the *r* Ps 11:3
 The *r* cry out Ps 34:17
 the LORD upholds the *r* Ps 37:17
r shows mercy and Ps 37:21
 I have not seen the *r* Ps 37:25
 the *r* will be in Ps 112:6
 The LORD is *r* in all Ps 145:17
 the LORD loves the *r* Ps 146:8
 will not allow the *r* Prov 10:3
r is a well of life Prov 10:11
 The labor of the *r* Prov 10:16
r will be gladness Prov 10:28
r is delivered from Prov 11:8
r will be delivered Prov 11:21
r will flourish Prov 11:28
r will be recompensed Prov 11:31
r man regards the life Prov 12:10
r should choose his Prov 12:26
r there is much Prov 15:6
 the prayer of the *r* Prov 15:29
 the *r* run to it and Prov 18:10
r are bold as a lion Prov 28:1
 When the *r* are in Prov 29:2
r considers the cause Prov 29:7

Do not be overly *r* Eccl 7:16
 event happens to the *r* Eccl 9:2
r that it shall be Is 3:10
 the gates, that the *r* Is 26:2
 with My *r* right hand Is 41:10
 By His knowledge My *r* Is 53:11
 The *r* perishes Is 57:1
 people shall all be *r* Is 60:21
R are You Jer 12:1
 your sins by being *r* Dan 4:27
 they sell the *r* Amos 2:6
 not come to call the *r* Matt 9:13
 receive a *r* man's reward Matt 10:41
r men desired to see Matt 13:17
r will shine forth as Matt 13:43
 the blood of *r* Abel to Matt 23:35
 And they were both *r* Luke 1:6
 that they were *r* Luke 18:9
 "Certainly this was a *r* Luke 23:47
 "There is none *r* Rom 3:10
r man will one die Rom 5:7
 witness that he was *r* Heb 11:4
 prayer of a *r* man avails James 5:16
 If the *r* one is scarcely 1 Pet 4:18
 Jesus Christ the *r* 1 John 2:1
 just as He is *r* 1 John 3:7
r are Your judgments Rev 16:7
 fine linen is the *r* Rev 19:8
 who is *r*, let him be *r* still Rev 22:11

RIGHTEOUS MAN

A little that a *r* Ps 37:16
r walks in his integrity Prov 20:7
 away justice from the *r* Is 5:23
 if you warn the *r* Ezek 3:21
 when a *r* turns away Ezek 18:24
 And he who receives a *r* Matt 10:41
 "Certainly this was a *r* Luke 23:47
 For scarcely for a *r* Rom 5:7
 fervent prayer of a *r* James 5:16
r, dwelling among them 2 Pet 2:8

RIGHTEOUSLY

judge the people *r* Ps 67:4
 He who walks *r* and Is 33:15
 should live soberly, *r* Titus 2:12
 to Him who judges *r* 1 Pet 2:23

RIGHTEOUSNESS

it to him for *r* Gen 15:6
 In *r* you shall judge your Lev 19:15
 Because of my *r* the LORD Deut 9:4
 every man for his *r* 1 Sam 26:23
 me according to my *r* 2 Sam 22:21
 My *r* I hold fast Job 27:6
 I put on *r* Job 29:14
 I will ascribe *r* Job 36:3
 I call, O God of my *r* Ps 4:1
 righteous, He loves *r* Ps 11:7
 from the LORD, and *r* Ps 24:5
 shall speak of Your *r* Ps 35:28
 the good news of *r* Ps 40:9
 You love *r* and hate Ps 45:7
 heavens declare His *r* Ps 50:6
 sing aloud of Your *r* Ps 51:14
r and peace have Ps 85:10
R will go before Him Ps 85:13
r they are exalted Ps 89:16
 will return to *r* Ps 94:15
r and justice are the Ps 97:2
 and he who does *r* Ps 106:3
r endures forever Ps 111:3
r is an everlasting Ps 119:142
r delivers from death Prov 10:2
 The *r* of the blameless Prov 11:5
 The *r* of the upright Prov 11:6
r leads to life Prov 11:19
 the way of *r* is life Prov 12:28
R guards him whose way Prov 13:6
R exalts a nation Prov 14:34
 found in the way of *r* Prov 16:31
 He who follows *r* Prov 21:21
r lodged in it Is 1:21
r He shall judge Is 11:4

R shall be the belt Is 11:5
 he will not learn *r* Is 26:10
 and *r* the plummet Is 28:17
r will be peace Is 32:17
 in the LORD I have *r* Is 45:24
 who are far from *r* Is 46:12
r will be forever Is 51:8
 I will declare your *r* Is 57:12
 and His own *r* Is 59:16
r as a breastplate Is 59:17
 be called trees of *r* Is 61:3
r goes forth as Is 62:1
 The LORD Our *r* Jer 23:6
 to David a Branch of *r* Jer 33:15
 The LORD Our *r* Jer 33:16
 has revealed our *r* Jer 51:10
 The *r* of the righteous Ezek 18:20
 O LORD, *r* belongs Dan 9:7
 in everlasting *r* Dan 9:24
 who turn many to *r* Dan 12:3
 for yourselves *r* Hos 10:12
 Seek *r*, seek humility Zeph 2:3
 to fulfill all *r* Matt 3:15
 exceeds the *r* of the Matt 5:20
 to you in the way of *r* Matt 21:32
 in holiness and *r* Luke 1:75
 For in it the *r* Rom 1:17
 even the *r* of God Rom 3:22
 a seal of the *r* Rom 4:11
 accounted to him for *r* Rom 4:22
r will reign in life Rom 5:17
 might reign through *r* Rom 5:21
 is life because of *r* Rom 8:10
 who did not pursue *r* Rom 9:30
 pursuing the law of *r* Rom 9:31
 ignorant of God's *r* Rom 10:3
 we might become the *r* 2 Cor 5:21
 the fruits of your *r* 2 Cor 9:10
r comes through the Gal 2:21
 was accounted to him for *r* Gal 3:6
 the breastplate of *r* Eph 6:14
 not having my own *r* Phil 3:9
 things and pursue *r* 1 Tim 6:11
r which we have Titus 3:5
r which is according Heb 11:7
 does not produce the *r* James 1:20
 Now the fruit of *r* is James 3:18
 should suffer for *r* 1 Pet 3:14
 a preacher of *r* 2 Pet 2:5
 a new earth in which *r* 2 Pet 3:13
 who practices *r* 1 John 2:29
 He who practices *r* 1 John 3:7
 does not practice *r* 1 John 3:10

RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD

r is revealed from faith Rom 1:17
 demonstrates the *r* Rom 3:5
r through faith Rom 3:22
 not submitted to the *r* Rom 10:3
 we might become the *r* 2 Cor 5:21
 does not produce the *r* James 1:20

RIGHTEOUSNESS'

are persecuted for *r* sake Matt 5:10
 should suffer for *r* sake 1 Pet 3:14

RIGHTEOUSNESSES

all our *r* are like filthy Is 64:6

RIGHTLY

wise uses knowledge *r* Prov 15:2
R do they love you Song 1:4
 "You have answered *r* Luke 10:28
r dividing the word 2 Tim 2:15

RIGHTS

and her marriage *r* Ex 21:10

RING

his signet *r* from his hand Esth 3:10
 a *r* of gold in a swine's Prov 11:22
 it with his own signet *r* Dan 6:17
 and put a *r* on his hand Luke 15:22

RINGLEADER

the world, and a *r* Acts 24:5

RINGS

a man with gold *r* James 2:2

RIPE

figs that are first *r* Jer 24:2

RISE

is vain for you to *r* Ps 127:2
 "Now I will *r* Is 33:10
 for He makes His sun *r* Matt 5:45
 of Nineveh will *r* Matt 12:41
 third day He will *r* Matt 20:19
 false prophets will *r* Matt 24:24
 persuaded though one *r* Luke 16:31
 third day He will *r* Luke 18:33
 had to suffer and *r* Acts 17:3
 be the first to *r* Acts 26:23
 fact the dead do not *r* 1 Cor 15:15
 in Christ will *r* 1 Thess 4:16

RISEN

of the LORD is *r* Is 60:1
 women there has not *r* Matt 11:11
 disciples that He is *r* Matt 28:7
 "The Lord is *r* Luke 24:34
 furthermore is also *r* Rom 8:34
 then Christ is not *r* 1 Cor 15:13
 if Christ is not *r* 1 Cor 15:17
 But now Christ is *r* 1 Cor 15:20

RISES

shall I do when God *r* Job 31:14
 every tongue which *r* Is 54:17

RISING

may know from the *r* Is 45:6
 questioning what the *r* Mark 9:10
 for the fall and *r* Luke 2:34

RIVER

Indeed the *r* may rage Job 40:23
 them drink from the *r* Ps 36:8
r whose streams shall Ps 46:4
 the *r* of God is full Ps 65:9
 went through the *r* Ps 66:6
 peace to her like a *r* Is 66:12
 in the Jordan *R* Mark 1:5
 he showed me a pure *r* Rev 22:1

RIVERS

He turns *r* into a Ps 107:33
R of water run down Ps 119:136
 By the *r* of Babylon Ps 137:1
 All the *r* run into the Eccl 1:7
 us a place of broad *r* Is 33:21
 the wilderness and *r* Is 43:19
 the sea, I make the *r* Is 50:2
 his heart will flow *r* John 7:38

RIZPAH

Saul's concubine taken by Abner,
 2 Sam 3:6-8
 Sons of, killed, 2 Sam 21:8, 9
 Grief-stricken, cares for corpses, 2 Sam
 21:10-14

ROAD

I will even make a *r* Is 43:19
 depths of the sea a *r* Is 51:10
 seen the Lord on the *r* Acts 9:27

ROAR

Let the sea *r* 1 Chr 16:32
 though its waters *r* Ps 46:3
 The young lions *r* Ps 104:21
 "The LORD will *r* Jer 25:30
 He will *r* like a lion Hos 11:10
 The LORD also will *r* Joel 3:16
 Will a lion *r* in the Amos 3:4

ROARING

wrath is like the *r* Prov 19:12
 Like a *r* lion and a Prov 28:15
 and the waves *r* Luke 21:25
 walks about like a *r* 1 Pet 5:8

ROARS

their voice *r* like the Jer 6:23

"The LORD *r* from Amos 1:2
 as when a lion *r* Rev 10:3

ROB

r the poor because he Prov 22:22
 the needy of justice Is 10:2
 "Will a man *r* God Mal 3:8
 do you *r* temples Rom 2:22

ROBBED

r their treasures Is 10:13
 But this is a people *r* Is 42:22
 Yet you have *r* Me Mal 3:8
r other churches 2 Cor 11:8

ROBBER

a son who is a *r* Ezek 18:10
 is a thief and a *r* John 10:1
 Barabbas was a *r* John 18:40

ROBBERS

and Israel to the *r* Is 42:24
 also crucified two *r* Mark 15:27
 Me are thieves and *r* John 10:8
 here who are neither *r* Acts 19:37
 waters, in perils of *r* 2 Cor 11:26

ROBBERY

nor vainly hope in *r* Ps 62:10
 I hate *r* for burnt Is 61:8
 did not consider it *r* Phil 2:6

ROBE

r of the ephod, the ephod Ex 29:5
 off a corner of Saul's *r* 1 Sam 24:4
 her *r* of many colors 2 Sam 13:19
 with a *r* of fine linen, 1 Chr 15:27
 let a royal *r* be brought Esth 6:8
 justice was like a *r* Job 29:14
 instead of a rich *r* Is 3:24
 covered me with the *r* Is 61:10
 His *r* became white and Luke 9:29
 'Bring out the best *r* Luke 15:22
 on Him a purple *r* John 19:2
 Then a white *r* was Rev 6:11
 with a *r* dipped in blood, Rev 19:13

ROBES

to the King in *r* Ps 45:14
 have stained all My *r* Is 63:3
 clothe you with rich *r* Zech 3:4
 go around in long *r* Luke 20:46
 clothed with white *r* Rev 7:9

ROCK

you shall strike the *r* Ex 17:6
 put you in the cleft of the *r* Ex 33:22
 and struck the *r* Num 20:11
R who begot you Deut 32:18
 For their *r* is not Deut 32:31
 and fire rose out of the *r* Judg 6:21
 nor is there any *r* 1 Sam 2:2
 "The LORD is my *r* 2 Sam 22:2
 And who is a *r* 2 Sam 22:32
 Blessed be my *R* 2 Sam 22:47
 away, and as a *r* Job 14:18
 set me high upon a *r* Ps 27:5
 For You are my *r* Ps 31:3
r that is higher than Ps 61:2
 and my God the *r* Ps 94:22
 who turned the *r* Ps 114:8
 been mindful of the *R* Is 17:10
 shadow of a great *r* Is 32:2
 look to the *r* from which Is 51:1
 that breaks the *r* in pieces Jer 23:29
 dwell in the clefts of the *r* Obad 3
 his house on the *r* Matt 7:24
r I will build My Matt 16:18
 Some fell on *r* Luke 8:6
 stumbling stone and *r* Rom 9:33
R that followed them 1 Cor 10:4
 and a *r* of offense 1 Pet 2:8

ROCKS

and the *r* were split Matt 27:51
 to the mountains and *r* Rev 6:16

ROD

And Moses took the *r* Ex 4:20

man threw down his *r* Ex 7:12
 passes under the *r* Lev 27:32
 the rock twice with his *r* Num 20:11
 chasten him with the *r* 2 Sam 7:14
 break them with a *r* of iron Ps 2:9
 Your *r* and Your staff Ps 23:4
 The *r* and rebuke give Prov 29:15
 shall come forth a *R* Is 11:1
 you pass under the *r* Ezek 20:37
 measuring *r* six cubits Ezek 40:5
 I come to you with a *r* 1 Cor 4:21
 Aaron's *r* that budded, Heb 9:4
 rule them with a *r* Rev 2:27
 rule them with a *r* of iron Rev 19:15

ROLL

ruinous storm they *r* Job 30:14
r away the stone Mark 16:3

ROLLED

the heavens shall be *r* Is 34:4
 the stone had been *r* Mark 16:4

ROMAN

Tell me, are you a *R* Acts 22:27
 learned that he was a *R* Acts 23:27

ROME

Jews expelled from, Acts 18:2
 Paul:
 writes to Christians of, Rom 1:7
 desires to go to, Acts 19:21
 comes to, Acts 28:14
 imprisoned in, Acts 28:16

ROOF

the *r* he saw a woman 2 Sam 11:2
 stuck the the *r* of their Job 29:10
 cling to the *r* of my mouth Ps 137:6
 uncovered the *r* where He Mark 2:4

ROOM

See UPPER ROOM
 You prepared *r* for it Ps 80:9
 until no more *r* Zech 10:10
 you a large upper *r* Mark 14:15
 no *r* for them in the Luke 2:7
 still there is *r* Luke 14:22
 into the upper *r* Acts 1:13

ROOMS

make *r* in the ark Gen 6:14
 He is in the inner *r* Matt 24:26

ROOSTER

him, "Before the *r* Matt 26:75

ROOT

r bearing bitterness Deut 29:18
 the foolish taking *r* Job 5:3
r may grow old in the Job 14:8
 day there shall be a *R* Is 11:10
 shall again take *r* Is 37:31
 because they had no *r* Matt 13:6
 and if the *r* is holy Rom 11:16
 of money is a *r* 1 Tim 6:10
 lest any *r* of Heb 12:15
 I am the *R* and the Rev 22:16

ROOTED

that you, being *r* Eph 3:17
r and built up in Him Col 2:7

ROOTS

because its *r* reached Ezek 31:7
 and lengthen his *r* Hos 14:5
 dried up from the *r* Mark 11:20
 pulled up by the *r* Jude 12

ROSE

I am the *r* of Sharon Song 2:1
 and blossom as the *r* Is 35:1
 end Christ died and *r* Rom 14:9
 buried, and that He *r* 1 Cor 15:4
 that Jesus died and *r* 1 Thess 4:14

ROTTENNESS

is like *r* in his bones Prov 12:4

ROUGH

and the *r* places smooth Is 40:4
 and the *r* ways smooth Luke 3:5

ROUGHLY

answered the people *r* . . . 1 Kin 12:13

ROYAL

dwelt in the *r* city with . . . 1 Sam 27:5
son was over the *r* house . . . 2 Kin 15:5
and a *r* house for himself . . . 2 Chr 2:1
destroyed all the *r* heirs . . . 2 Chr 22:10
so he set the *r* crown . . . Esth 2:17
a *r* diadem in the hand of . . . Is 62:3
to establish a *r* statute and . . . Dan 6:7
the *r* law according to the . . . James 2:8
r priesthood, a holy nation . . . 1 Pet 2:9

RUBBISH

things, and count them as *r* . . . Phil 3:8

RUBIES

of wisdom is above *r* . . . Job 28:18
more precious than *r* . . . Prov 3:15
is better than *r* . . . Prov 8:11
worth is far above *r* . . . Prov 31:10
your pinnacles of *r* . . . Is 54:12
ruddy in body than *r* . . . Lam 4:7

RUDDY

Now he was *r* . . . 1 Sam 16:12
beloved is white and *r* . . . Song 5:10

RUIN

r those two can bring . . . Prov 24:22
flattering mouth works *r* . . . Prov 26:28
have made a city a *r* . . . Is 25:2
I will *r* the pride of Judah . . . Jer 13:9
will not be your *r* . . . Ezek 18:30
And the *r* of that . . . Luke 6:49
to no profit, to the *r* . . . 2 Tim 2:14

RUINED

shall be utterly *r* . . . Is 60:12
the mighty trees are *r* . . . Zech 11:2
wineskins will be *r* . . . Luke 5:37

RUINS

rebuild the old *r* . . . Is 61:4
of My house that is in *r* . . . Hag 1:9
I will rebuild its *r*, and I . . . Acts 15:16

RULE

greater light to *r* the day . . . Gen 1:16
and he shall *r* . . . Gen 3:16
r the raging of the . . . Ps 89:9
R in the midst of Your . . . Ps 110:2
A wise servant will *r* . . . Prov 17:2
Whoever has no *r* over . . . Prov 25:28
Yet he will *r* over all . . . Eccl 2:19
sit and *r* on His throne . . . Zech 6:13
puts an end to all *r* . . . 1 Cor 15:24
us walk by the same *r* . . . Phil 3:16
let the peace of God *r* . . . Col 3:15
Let the elders who *r* . . . 1 Tim 5:17
Remember those who *r* . . . Heb 13:7
He shall *r* them with a rod . . . Rev 2:27
He Himself will *r* them . . . Rev 19:15

RULER

the sheep, to be *r* . . . 2 Sam 7:8
down to eat with a *r* . . . Prov 23:1
bear is a wicked *r* . . . Prov 28:15
r pays attention . . . Prov 29:12
to Me the One to be *r* . . . Mic 5:2
by Beelzebub, the *r* . . . Matt 12:24
I will make you *r* . . . Matt 25:21
the *r* of this world . . . John 12:31
because the *r* of this . . . John 16:11
"Who made you a *r* . . . Acts 7:27
speak evil of a *r* . . . Acts 23:5

RULER OF THE SYNAGOGUE

He said to the *r* . . . Mark 5:36
Jairus, and he was a *r* . . . Luke 8:41
r answered with . . . Luke 13:14
r, believed on the Lord . . . Acts 18:8
took Sosthenes, the *r* . . . Acts 18:17

RULERS

and the *r* take counsel . . . Ps 2:2

r decree justice . . . Prov 8:15
"You know that the *r* . . . Matt 20:25
Have any of the *r* . . . John 7:48
r are not a terror . . . Rom 13:3
which none of the *r* . . . 1 Cor 2:8
powers, against the *r* . . . Eph 6:12
to be subject to *r* . . . Titus 3:1

RULES

"He who *r* over men . . . 2 Sam 23:3
them know that God *r* . . . Ps 59:13
He *r* by His power . . . Ps 66:7
r his spirit than he . . . Prov 16:32
that the Most High *r* . . . Dan 4:17
that the Most High *r* . . . Dan 4:32
r his own house well . . . 1 Tim 3:4
according to the *r* . . . 2 Tim 2:5

RULING

r their children . . . 1 Tim 3:12

RUMOR

r will be upon *r* . . . Ezek 7:26

RUMORS

hear of wars and *r* . . . Matt 24:6
you hear of wars and *r* . . . Mark 13:7

RUN

I will *r* the course of . . . Ps 119:32
r and not be weary . . . Is 40:31
many shall *r* to and . . . Dan 12:4
Therefore I *r* thus . . . 1 Cor 9:26
I might *r*, or had *r* . . . Gal 2:2
that I have not *r* . . . Phil 2:16
us, and let us *r* . . . Heb 12:1
that you do not *r* . . . 1 Pet 4:4

RUNNER

are swifter than a *r* . . . Job 9:25
r will run to meet . . . Jer 51:31

RUNS

word *r* very swiftly . . . Ps 147:15
nor of him who *r* . . . Rom 9:16

RUSH

The nations will *r* . . . Is 17:13

RUSHING

like the *r* of the seas . . . Is 17:12
as of a *r* mighty wind, and . . . Acts 2:2

RUST

r destroy and where . . . Matt 6:19

RUTH

Moabitess, Ruth 1:4
Follows Naomi, Ruth 1:6-18
Marries Boaz, Ruth 4:9-13
Ancestress of Christ, Ruth 4:13, 21, 22

SABAOOTH

S had left us a . . . Rom 9:29
ears of the Lord of *S* . . . James 5:4

SABBATH

"Tomorrow is a *S* . . . Ex 16:23
"Remember the *S* . . . Ex 20:8
You shall keep the *S* . . . Ex 31:14
a *S* of rest to the LORD . . . Ex 35:2
day is a *S* of solemn rest . . . Lev 23:3
shall keep a *s* to the LORD . . . Lev 25:2
Observe the *S* day, to . . . Deut 5:12
bear no burden on the *S* . . . Jer 17:21
the grainfields on the *S* . . . Matt 12:1
S was made for man . . . Mark 2:27
is also Lord of the *S* . . . Mark 2:28
"Is it lawful on the *S* to do . . . Mark 3:4
Is it lawful on the *S* to do . . . Luke 6:9
It is the *S*; it is not lawful . . . John 5:10
not only broke the *S* . . . John 5:18
circumcise a man on the *S* . . . John 7:22
the synagogues every *S* . . . Acts 15:21

SABBATHS

S you shall keep . . . Ex 31:13
You shall keep My *S* . . . Lev 26:2

The New Moons, the *S* . . . Is 1:13
also gave them My *S* . . . Ezek 20:12
for three *S* reasoned with . . . Acts 17:2
festival or a new moon or *s* . . . Col 2:16

SACKCLOTH

I have sewn *s* over my . . . Job 16:15
You have put off my *s* . . . Ps 30:11
and remove the *s* . . . Is 20:2
with fasting, *s*, and ashes . . . Dan 9:3
a fast, and put on *s* . . . Jon 3:5
repented long ago in *s* . . . Matt 11:21

SACRED

have a *s* assembly . . . Num 29:35
iniquity and the *s* . . . Is 1:13
call a *s* assembly . . . Joel 1:14

SACRIFICE

I *s* to the LORD all males . . . Ex 13:15
is a burnt *s* of the herd . . . Lev 1:3
is a *s* of peace offering . . . Lev 3:1
the law of the *s* of peace . . . Lev 7:11
a *s* of a peace offering to . . . Num 6:17
you shall *s* the Passover . . . Deut 16:2
s to the LORD of hosts . . . 1 Sam 1:3
do you kick at My *s* . . . 1 Sam 2:29
to *s* to the LORD your . . . 1 Sam 15:15
S and offering You did . . . Ps 40:6
offer to You the *s* . . . Ps 116:17
to the LORD than *s* . . . Prov 21:3
The *s* of the wicked is . . . Prov 21:27
than to give the *s* of fools . . . Eccl 5:1
in that day, and will make *s* . . . Is 19:21
For the LORD has a *s* . . . Is 34:6
who will bring the *s* . . . Jer 33:11
I desire mercy and not *s* . . . Hos 6:6
of My offerings they *s* . . . Hos 8:13
But I will *s* to You . . . Jon 2:9
LORD has prepared a *s* . . . Zeph 1:7
offer the blind as a *s* . . . Mal 1:8
desire mercy and not *s* . . . Matt 9:13
"I desire mercy and not *s* . . . Matt 12:7
s will be seasoned . . . Mark 9:49
your bodies a living *s* . . . Rom 12:1
an offering and a *s* . . . Eph 5:2
aroma, an acceptable *s* . . . Phil 4:18
put away sin by the *s* . . . Heb 9:26
He had offered one *s* . . . Heb 10:12
no longer remains a *s* . . . Heb 10:26
God a more excellent *s* . . . Heb 11:4
offer the *s* of praise . . . Heb 13:15

SACRIFICED

s their sons and their . . . Ps 106:37
They *s* to the Baals . . . Hos 11:2
our Passover, was *s* for us . . . 1 Cor 5:7
to eat things *s* . . . Rev 2:14

SACRIFICES

He who *s* to any god . . . Ex 22:20
burnt offerings, your *s* . . . Deut 12:6
The *s* of God are a . . . Ps 51:17
the *s* of thanksgiving . . . Ps 107:22
multitude of your *s* . . . Is 1:11
Bring no more futile *s* . . . Is 1:13
he who *s* a lamb . . . Is 66:3
acceptable, nor your *s* . . . Jer 6:20
bringing *s* of praise to the . . . Jer 17:26
by him the daily *s* . . . Dan 8:11
burnt offerings and *s* . . . Mark 12:33
priests, to offer up *s* . . . Heb 7:27
with better *s* than these . . . Heb 9:23
s for sin you had no . . . Heb 10:6
s God is well pleased . . . Heb 13:16
offer up spiritual *s* . . . 1 Pet 2:5

SAD

"Why is your face *s* . . . Neh 2:2
s countenance the . . . Eccl 7:3
whom I have not made *s* . . . Ezek 13:22
as you walk and are *s* . . . Luke 24:17

SADDUCEES

Rejected by John, Matt 3:7
Test Jesus, Matt 16:1-12

Silenced by Jesus, Matt 22:23-34
 Disturbed by teaching of resurrection,
 Acts 4:1, 2
 Oppose apostles, Acts 5:17-40

SAFE

and I shall be s Ps 119:117
 in the LORD shall be s Prov 29:25
 he has received him s Luke 15:27

SAFELY

And He led them on s Ps 78:53
 make them lie down s Hos 2:18

SAFETY

sons are far from s Job 5:4
 take your rest in s Job 11:18
 will set him in the s Ps 12:5
 the needy will lie down in s Is 14:30
 say, "Peace and s 1 Thess 5:3

SAFETY'S

by you for s sake Prov 3:29

SAINTS

See ALL THE SAINTS

ten thousands of s Deut 33:2
 the feet of His s 1 Sam 2:9
 puts no trust in His s Job 15:15
 s who are on the earth Ps 16:3
 does not forsake His s Ps 37:28
 "Gather My s Ps 50:5
 the souls of His s Ps 97:10
 is the death of His s Ps 116:15
 the way of His s Prov 2:8
 war against the s Dan 7:21
 shall persecute the s Dan 7:25
 Jesus, called to be s 1 Cor 1:2
 the least of all the s Eph 3:8
 Christ with all His s 1 Thess 3:13
 be glorified in His s 2 Thess 1:10
 all delivered to the s Jude 3
 ways, O King of the s Rev 15:3
 shed the blood of s Rev 16:6
 the camp of the s Rev 20:9

SAKE

My servant Abraham's s Gen 26:24
 has blessed me for your s Gen 30:27
 the Egyptians for Israel's s Ex 18:8
 for His great name's s 1 Sam 12:22
 kindness for Jonathan's s 2 Sam 9:1
 for the s of your father 1 Kin 11:12
 the s of Your great name 2 Chr 6:32
 save me for Your mercies' s Ps 6:4
 For His name's s Ps 23:3
 Your name's s, O LORD Ps 25:11
 for Your name's s Ps 31:3
 sins, for Your name's s Ps 79:9
 for His name's s Ps 106:8
 me for Your name's s Ps 109:21
 LORD, for Your name's s Ps 143:11
 for Your s I have Jer 15:15
 for righteousness' s Matt 5:10
 you falsely for My s Matt 5:11
 and kings for My s Matt 10:18
 by all for My name's s Matt 10:22
 life for My s will find it Matt 10:39
 life for My s will find it Matt 16:25
 kingdom of heaven's s Matt 19:12
 lands, for My name's s Matt 19:29
 nations for My name's s Matt 24:9
 elect's s those days will Matt 24:22
 loses his life for My s Mark 8:35
 rulers and kings for My s Mark 13:9
 men for My name's s Mark 13:13
 but for the elect's s Mark 13:20
 life for My s will save it Luke 9:24
 s of the kingdom of Luke 18:29
 rulers for My name's s Luke 21:12
 by all for My name's s Luke 21:17
 my life for Your s John 13:37
 down your life for My s John 13:38
 to you for My name's s John 15:21
 suffer for My name's s Acts 9:16
 are fools for Christ's s 1 Cor 4:10

I do for the gospel's s 1 Cor 9:23
 s of him who had done 2 Cor 7:12
 for your stomach's s 1 Tim 5:23
 suffer for righteousness' s 1 Pet 3:14
 for His name's s 1 John 2:12
 labored for My name's s Rev 2:3

SAKES

for their s I sanctify John 17:19
 your s He became poor 2 Cor 8:9

SALAMIS

Paul preaches here, Acts 13:4, 5

SALEM

Jerusalem's original name, Gen 14:18
 Used poetically, Ps 76:2

SALIM

Place near Aenon, John 3:23

SALOME

One of the ministering women, Mark
 15:40, 41

Visits empty tomb, Mark 16:1

— Herodias' daughter (not named in
 the Bible), Matt 14:6-11

SALT

she became a pillar of s Gen 19:26
 shall season with s Lev 2:13
 covenant of s forever Num 18:19
 city and sowed it with s Judg 9:45
 s nor wrapped in Ezek 16:4
 "You are the s Matt 5:13
 s loses its flavor Mark 9:50
 with grace, seasoned with s Col 4:6

SALT SEA

O.T. name for the Dead Sea, Gen 14:3;
 Num 34:3, 12

SAVATION

still, and see the s Ex 14:13
 the Rock of my s 2 Sam 22:47
 For this is all my s 2 Sam 23:5
 the good news of His s 1 Chr 16:23
 S belongs to the LORD Ps 3:8
 I will rejoice in Your s Ps 9:14
 shield and the horn of my s Ps 18:2
 We will rejoice in your s Ps 20:5
 You are the God of my s Ps 25:5
 is my light and my s Ps 27:1
 to me the joy of Your s Ps 51:12
 From Him comes my s Ps 62:1
 on earth, Your s Ps 67:2
 God is the God of s Ps 68:20
 and Your s all the day Ps 71:15
 Restore us, O God of our s Ps 85:4
 Surely His s is near Ps 85:9
 and He has become my s Ps 118:14
 S is far from the Ps 119:155
 LORD, I hope for Your s Ps 119:166
 forgotten the God of your s Is 17:10
 God will appoint s Is 26:1
 with an everlasting s Is 45:17
 for My s is about to Is 56:1
 call your walls S Is 60:18
 s as a lamp that burns Is 62:1
 LORD our God is the s Jer 3:23
 joy in the God of my s Hab 3:18
 is just and having s Zech 9:9
 raised up a horn of s Luke 1:69
 eyes have seen Your s Luke 2:30
 to him, "Today s Luke 19:9
 what we worship, for s John 4:22
 Nor is there s in any Acts 4:12
 you should be for s Acts 13:47
 the power of God to s Rom 1:16
 is made unto s Rom 10:10
 s has come to the Rom 11:11
 s is nearer than Rom 13:11
 now is the day of s 2 Cor 6:2
 And take the helmet of s Eph 6:17
 work out your own s Phil 2:12
 wrath, but to obtain s 1 Thess 5:9
 chose you for s 2 Thess 2:13

also may obtain the s 2 Tim 2:10
 of God that brings s Titus 2:11
 neglect so great a s Heb 2:3
 s perfect through Heb 2:10
 s the prophets have 1 Pet 1:10
 "S belongs to our God Rev 7:10
 S and glory and honor Rev 19:1

SAMARIA

Capital of Israel, 1 Kin 16:24-29
 Besieged by Ben-Hadad, 1 Kin 20:1-21
 Besieged again; miraculously deliv-
 ered, 2 Kin 6:24-7:20
 Inhabitants deported by Assyria; re-
 populated with foreigners, 2 Kin
 17:5, 6, 24-41
 — District of Palestine in Christ's
 time, Luke 17:11-19
 Disciples forbidden to preach in, Matt
 10:5
 Gospel preached there after the ascen-
 sion, Acts 1:8, 9:31; 15:3

SAMARITAN

But a certain S Luke 10:33
 a drink from me, a S John 4:9

SAMARITANS

People of mixed heredity, 2 Kin
 17:24-41
 Christ preaches to, John 4:5-42
 Story of "the good Samaritan," Luke
 10:30-37
 Converts among, Acts 8:5-25

SAMOS

Paul visits, Acts 20:15

SAMSON

Birth predicted and accomplished,
 Judg 13:2-25
 Marries Philistine; avenges betrayal,
 Judg 14
 Defeats Philistines singlehandedly,
 Judg 15
 Betrayed by Delilah; loses strength,
 Judg 16:4-22
 Destroys many in his death, Judg
 16:23-31

SAMUEL

Born in answer to prayer; dedicated
 to God, 1 Sam 1:1-28
 Receives revelation; recognized as
 prophet, 1 Sam 3:1-21
 Judges Israel, 1 Sam 7:15-17
 Warns Israel against a king, 1 Sam
 8:10-18
 Anoints Saul, 1 Sam 9:15-10:1
 Rebukes Saul, 1 Sam 15:10-35
 Anoints David, 1 Sam 16:1-13
 Death of, 1 Sam 25:1

SANBALLAT

Influential Samaritan; attempts to
 thwart Nehemiah's plans, Neh 2:10;
 4:7, 8; 6:1-14

SANCTIFICATION

righteousness and s 1 Cor 1:30
 will of God, your s 1 Thess 4:3
 salvation through s 2 Thess 2:13

SANCTIFIED

s it, because in it He rested Gen 2:3
 s the people, and they Ex 19:14
 I s to Myself all the Num 3:13
 s this house, that My 2 Chr 7:16
 I have commanded My s Is 13:3
 you were born I s Jer 1:5
 Him whom the Father s John 10:36
 they also may be s John 17:19
 might be acceptable, s Rom 15:16
 to those who are s 1 Cor 1:2
 washed, but you were s 1 Cor 6:11
 husband is s by the 1 Cor 7:14
 for it is s by the 1 Tim 4:5
 those who are being s Heb 2:11

will we have been s Heb 10:10
who are called, s Jude 1

SANCTIFIES

or the temple that s Matt 23:17
For both He who s Heb 2:11

SANCTIFY

"S yourselves Josh 3:5
would send and s them Job 1:5
s My great name Ezek 36:23
that I, the LORD, s Ezek 37:28
Myself and s Myself Ezek 38:23
S them by Your John 17:17
for their sakes I s John 17:19
that He might s Eph 5:26
s you completely 1 Thess 5:23

SANCTUARY

let them make Me a s Ex 25:8
I went into the s Ps 73:17
set fire to Your s Ps 74:7
O God, is in the s Ps 77:13
He will be as a s Is 8:14
He has abandoned His s Lam 2:7
I shall be a little s Ezek 11:16
to shine on Your s Dan 9:17
and the earthly s Heb 9:1
is brought into the s Heb 13:11

SAND

descendants as the s Gen 32:12
be heavier than the s Job 6:3
in number than the s Ps 139:18
O Israel, be as the s Is 10:22
innumerable as the s Heb 11:12

SANDAL

remove his s from his Deut 25:9
So he took off his s Ruth 4:8
s strap I am not worthy Mark 1:7

SANDALS

Take your s off your feet Ex 3:5
beautiful are your feet in s Song 7:1
whose s I am not worthy Matt 3:11
bag, knapsack, nor s Luke 10:4
tie on your s Acts 12:8

SANG

s this song to the LORD Ex 15:1
worshiped, the singers s 2 Chr 29:28
The singers s loudly Neh 12:42
morning stars s together Job 38:7
They s His praise Ps 106:12
they s a new song, saying Rev 5:9
s as it were a new song Rev 14:3

SAPPHIRA

Wife of Ananias; struck dead for lying,
Acts 5:1-11

SAPPHIRE

shall be a turquoise, a s Ex 28:18
was jasper, the second s Rev 21:19

SAPPHIRES

are the source of s Job 28:6

SARAH (or Sarai)

Barren wife of Abram, Gen 11:29-31
Represented as Abram's sister, Gen
12:10-20
Gives Abram her maid, Gen 16:1-3
Receives promise of a son, Gen
17:15-21
Gives birth to Isaac, Gen 21:1-8

SARDIS

Site of one of the seven churches, Rev
1:11

SARDONYX

the fifth s, the sixth Rev 21:20

SASH

tunic, a turban, and a s Ex 28:4
get yourself a linen s Jer 13:1

SASHES

girded them with s Lev 8:13
s for the merchants Prov 31:24

SAT

of Babylon, there we s Ps 137:1
I s down in his shade Song 2:3
s alone because of Jer 15:17
people who s in darkness Matt 4:16
Now Peter s outside in Matt 26:69
into heaven, and s Mark 16:19
s down again, He said John 13:12
s down at the right hand Heb 1:3
And He who s there was Rev 4:3
Him who s on the horse Rev 19:19

SATAN

See DEVIL

S stood up against 1 Chr 21:1
before the LORD, and S Job 1:6
And the LORD said to S Zech 3:2
"Away with you, S Matt 4:10
"Get behind Me, S Matt 16:23
forty days, tempted by S Mark 1:13
"How can S cast out Mark 3:23
to them, "I saw S Luke 10:18
Then S entered Judas Luke 22:3
S has asked for you Luke 22:31
S filled your heart Acts 5:3
S under your feet shortly Rom 16:20
such a one to S 1 Cor 5:5
For S himself 2 Cor 11:14
messenger of S to buffet 2 Cor 12:7
to the working of S 2 Thess 2:9
whom I delivered to S 1 Tim 1:20
are a synagogue of S Rev 2:9
you, where S dwells Rev 2:13
known the depths of S Rev 2:24
called the Devil and S Rev 12:9
years have expired, S Rev 20:7

SATIATED

s the weary soul Jer 31:25
It shall be s and made Jer 46:10

SATISFIED

I shall be s when I Ps 17:15
his land will be s Prov 12:11
a good man will be s Prov 14:14
s soul loathes the Prov 27:7
that are never s Prov 30:15
silver will not be s Eccl 5:10
left hand and not be s Is 9:20
of His soul, and be s Is 53:11
My people shall be s Jer 31:14
still were not s Ezek 16:28
but they were not s Amos 4:8
and cannot be s Hab 2:5

SATISFIES

s your mouth with good Ps 103:5
s the longing soul Ps 107:9

SATISFY

s us early with Your Ps 90:14
long life I will s Ps 91:16
s her poor with bread Ps 132:15
for what does not s Is 55:2

SATISFYING

eats to the s of his Prov 13:25

SAUL

Becomes first king of Israel, 1 Sam
9-11
Sacrifices unlawfully, 1 Sam 13:1-14
Wars with Philistines, 1 Sam
13:15-14:52
Disregards the Lord's command;
rejected by God, 1 Sam 15
Suffers from distressing spirits, 1 Sam
16:14-23
Becomes jealous of David; attempts to
kill him, 1 Sam 18:5-19:22
Pursues David; twice spared by him,
1 Sam 22-24; 26
Consults medium, 1 Sam 28:7-25
Defeated, commits suicide; buried,
1 Sam 31

—— of Tarsus, apostle to the Gentiles:

see PAUL

SAVE

will s Israel by my hand Judg 6:37
the LORD does not s 1 Sam 17:47
there was none to s 2 Sam 22:42
s the humble person Job 22:29
Oh, s me for Your Ps 6:4
s me from all those who Ps 7:1
S Your people, and bless Ps 28:9
send from heaven and s Ps 57:3
Your ear to me, and s me Ps 71:2
s the children of the Ps 72:4
s the souls of the Ps 72:13
s me, and I will keep Ps 119:146
LORD, and He will s Prov 20:22
He will come and s Is 35:4
LORD was ready to s Is 38:20
s your children Is 49:25
that it cannot s Is 59:1
mighty to s Is 63:1
one who cannot s Jer 14:9
s you and deliver you Jer 15:20
s me, and I shall be Jer 17:14
O LORD, s Your people Jer 31:7
other, That he may s Hos 13:3
Assyria shall not s Hos 14:3
the Mighty One, will s Zeph 3:17
JESUS, for He will s Matt 1:21
Him, saying, "Lord, s us Matt 8:25
s his life will lose it Matt 16:25
s that which was Matt 18:11
three days, s Yourself Matt 27:40
s life or to kill Mark 3:4
to s his life will lose it Mark 8:35
s Yourself, and come Mark 15:30
to s life or to destroy Luke 6:9
life for My sake will s it Luke 9:24
seeks to s his life Luke 17:33
let Him s Himself if Luke 23:35
You are the Christ, s Luke 23:39
"Father, s Me from John 12:27
but to s the world John 12:47
and s some of them Rom 11:14
to s those who believe 1 Cor 1:21
by all means s some 1 Cor 9:22
the world to s sinners 1 Tim 1:15
doing this you will s 1 Tim 4:16
able to s Him from death Heb 5:7
able to s your souls James 1:21
Can faith s him James 2:14
who is able to s James 4:12
will s a soul from death James 5:20

SAVED

See WILL BE SAVED

the LORD s Israel that day Ex 14:30
you will be s from your Num 10:9
like you, a people s Deut 33:29
But You have s us from Ps 44:7
blamelessly will be s Prov 28:18
Look to Me, and be s Is 45:22
and we are not s Jer 8:20
"Who then can be s Matt 19:25
to the end shall be s Matt 24:13
"He s others Matt 27:42
"Who then can be s Mark 10:26
to the end shall be s Mark 13:13
no flesh would be s Mark 13:20
"He s others Mark 15:31
and is baptized will be s Mark 16:16
That we should be s Luke 1:71
"Your faith has s Luke 7:50
through Him might be s John 3:17
enters by Me, He will be s John 10:9
of the LORD shall be s Acts 2:21
them, saying, "Be s Acts 2:40
of Moses, you cannot be s Acts 15:1
what must I do to be s Acts 16:30
For we were s in this Rom 8:24
is that they may be s Rom 10:1
all Israel will be s Rom 11:26

his spirit may be s 1 Cor 5:5
 that they may be s 1 Cor 10:33
 which also you are s 1 Cor 15:2
 those who are being s 2 Cor 2:15
 grace you have been s Eph 2:8
 that they might be s 2 Thess 2:10
 all men to be s 1 Tim 2:4
 she will be s in 1 Tim 2:15
 to His mercy He s Titus 3:5
 eight souls, were s 1 Pet 3:20
 of those who are s Rev 21:24

SAVES

s the needy from the Job 5:15
 s such as have a Ps 34:18
 antitype which now s 1 Pet 3:21

SAVIOR

forgot God their S Ps 106:21
 He will send them a S Is 19:20
 of Israel, your S Is 43:3
 Me, a just God and a S Is 45:21
 I, the LORD, am your S Is 60:16
 So He became their S Is 63:8
 his S in time of trouble Jer 14:8
 for there is no s Hos 13:4
 rejoiced in God my S Luke 1:47
 the city of David a S Luke 2:11
 the Christ, the S John 4:42
 to be Prince and S Acts 5:31
 up for Israel a S Acts 13:23
 and He is the S Eph 5:23
 of God our S and the 1 Tim 1:1
 God, who is the S 1 Tim 4:10
 of our S Jesus Christ 2 Tim 1:10
 God and S Jesus Christ Titus 2:13
 God our S toward man Titus 3:4
 Son as S of the world 1 John 4:14
 to God our S, who alone is Jude 25

SAVIORS

s shall come to Mount Obad 21

SAVOR

days, and I do not s Amos 5:21

SAWN

stoned, they were s Heb 11:37

SAY

But I s to you that Matt 5:22
 "But who do you s Matt 16:15
 s that we have no sin 1 John 1:8

SAYING

disclose my dark s Ps 49:4
 cannot accept this s Matt 19:11
 "This is a hard s John 6:60
 This is a faithful s 1 Tim 1:15

SAYINGS

I will utter dark s Ps 78:2
 whoever hears these s Matt 7:24

SCALES

You shall have honest s Lev 19:36
 be weighed on honest s Job 31:6
 deceitful s are in his Hos 12:7
 his eyes something like s Acts 9:18
 on it had a pair of s Rev 6:5

SCARLET

midwife took a s thread Gen 38:28
 s thread, fine linen Ex 25:4
 s cord in the window Josh 2:18
 is clothed with s Prov 31:21
 are like a strand of s Song 4:3
 your sins are like s Is 1:18
 and put a s robe on Him Matt 27:28
 s beast which was full Rev 17:3

SCATTER

I will s you among the Lev 26:33
 S the peoples who Ps 68:30
 s the sheep of My Jer 23:1
 I will s to all winds Jer 49:32
 s seed on the ground Mark 4:26

SCATTERED

lest we be s abroad Gen 11:4

let His enemies be s Ps 68:1
 of iniquity shall be s Ps 92:9
 "You have s My flock Jer 23:2
 s Israel will gather Jer 31:10
 "Israel is like s sheep Jer 50:17
 they were weary and s Matt 9:36
 where I have not s seed Matt 25:26
 of the flock will be s Matt 26:31
 the sheep will be s Mark 14:27
 that you will be s John 16:32
 tribes which are s abroad James 1:1

SCATTERS

s the frost like ashes Ps 147:16
 There is one who s Prov 11:24
 throne of judgment s Prov 20:8
 not gather with Me s Matt 12:30

SCEPTER

s shall not depart Gen 49:10
 S shall rise out of Num 24:17
 holds out the golden s Esth 4:11
 a s of righteousness Ps 45:6
 a s of righteousness Heb 1:8

SCHEME

perfected a shrewd s Ps 64:6

SCHEMER

will be called a s Prov 24:8

SCHEMES

who brings wicked s Ps 37:7
 sought out many s Eccl 7:29

SCHISM

there should be no s 1 Cor 12:25

SCHOOL

daily in the s of Acts 19:9

SCOFF

They s and speak Ps 73:8
 They s at kings Hab 1:10

SCOFFER

"He who corrects a s Prov 9:7
 s does not listen Prov 13:1
 s seeks wisdom and Prov 14:6
 s is an abomination Prov 24:9

SCOFFERS

S ensnare a city Prov 29:8
 s will come in the 2 Pet 3:3

SCORCHED

sun was up they were s Matt 13:6
 And men were s with Rev 16:9

SCORN

My friends s me Job 16:20
 to our neighbors, a s Ps 44:13
 laughed you to s Is 37:22

SCORNE

consider, for I am s Lam 1:11
 and princes are s Hab 1:10

SCORNFUL

nor sits in the seat of the s Ps 1:1
 the s one is consumed Is 29:20

SCORNS

He s the scornful Prov 3:34
 s obedience to his Prov 30:17

SCORPION

will he offer him a s Luke 11:12

SCORPIONS

and you dwell among s Ezek 2:6
 on serpents and s Luke 10:19
 They had tails like s Rev 9:10

SCOURGE

from the s of the tongue Job 5:21
 hosts will stir up a s Is 10:26
 up to councils and s Matt 10:17
 will mock Him, and s Mark 10:34
 s a man who is a Roman Acts 22:25

SCOURGES

will chastise you with s 1 Kin 12:11
 s every son whom Heb 12:6

SCRIBE

a skilled s in the Law Ezra 7:6
 "Where is the s Is 33:18
 the false pen of the s Jer 8:8
 gave it to Baruch the s Jer 36:32
 a certain s came and said Matt 8:19
 s said to Him, "Well Mark 12:32
 Where is the s? 1 Cor 1:20

SCRIBES

and not as the s Matt 7:29
 "Beware of the s Mark 12:38
 s sought how they might Mark 14:1

SCRIBES AND PHARISEES

righteousness of the s Matt 5:20
 s answered, saying Matt 12:38
 s who were from Matt 15:1
 But woe to you, s Matt 23:13
 the s saw him eating Mark 2:16
 s watched Him closely Luke 6:7
 Woe to you, s Luke 11:44
 s brought to him a woman John 8:3

SCRIPTURE

what is noted in the S Dan 10:21
 S was fulfilled which Mark 15:28
 "Today this S Luke 4:21
 S cannot be broken John 10:35
 that the S might be John 19:24
 place in the S which he Acts 8:32
 For what does the S Rom 4:3
 S has confined all Gal 3:22
 All S is given by 2 Tim 3:16
 that the S says in vain James 4:5
 that no prophecy of S 2 Pet 1:20

SCRIPTURES

not knowing the S Matt 22:29
 S must be fulfilled Mark 14:49
 and mighty in the S Acts 18:24
 have known the Holy S 2 Tim 3:15
 also the rest of the S 2 Pet 3:16

SCROLL

in the s of the book Ps 40:7
 and note it on a s Is 30:8
 Baruch wrote on a s Jer 36:4
 the king had burned the s Jer 36:27
 eat this s, and go Ezek 3:1
 saw there a flying s Zech 5:1
 on the throne a s Rev 5:1
 was able to open the s Rev 5:3
 the sky receded as a s Rev 6:14

SEA

drowned in the Red S Ex 15:4
 this great and wide s Ps 104:25
 who go down to the s Ps 107:23
 to the s its limit Prov 8:29
 rebuke I dry up the s Is 50:2
 the waters cover the s Hab 2:14
 and the s obey Him Matt 8:27
 Him walking on the s Matt 14:26
 throne there was a s Rev 4:6
 standing on the s Rev 15:2
 there was no more s Rev 21:1

SEAL

Set me as a s upon Song 8:6
 the s of perfection Ezek 28:12
 therefore s up the vision Dan 8:26
 has set His s on Him John 6:27
 of circumcision, a s Rom 4:11
 the s of my apostleship 1 Cor 9:2
 stands, having this s 2 Tim 2:19
 He opened the second s Rev 6:3
 He opened the seventh s Rev 8:1
 Do not s the words of the Rev 22:10

SEALED

My transgression is s Job 14:17
 s till the time of the end Dan 12:9
 who also has s us and 2 Cor 1:22
 by whom you were s Eph 4:30
 of those who were s Rev 7:4

SEALS

sealed with seven s Rev 5:1

SEAM

tunic was without s John 19:23

SEANCE

"Please conduct a s 1 Sam 28:8

SEARCH

"Can you s out the Job 11:7
would not God s Ps 44:21
glory of kings is to s Prov 25:2
found it by secret s Jer 2:34
I, the LORD, s the Jer 17:10
s the Scriptures John 5:39
S and look, for no John 7:52

SEARCHED

O LORD, You have s Ps 139:1
s the Scriptures Acts 17:11
and s carefully 1 Pet 1:10

SEARCHES

for the LORD s all 1 Chr 28:9
s the hearts knows Rom 8:27
For the Spirit s 1 Cor 2:10
that I am He who s Rev 2:23

SEASON

I will give you rain in its s Lev 26:4
bring forth its fruit in its s Ps 1:3
their food in due s Ps 104:27
a word spoken in due s Prov 15:23
To everything there is a s Eccl 3:1
word in s to him who is Is 50:4
give them food in due s Matt 24:45
flavor, how will you s it Mark 9:50
for in due s we shall reap Gal 6:9
Be ready in s and out 2 Tim 4:2

SEASONED

how shall it be s Matt 5:13
"For everyone will be s Mark 9:49

SEASONS

let them be for signs and s Gen 1:14
appointed the moon for s Ps 104:19
the times and the s Dan 2:21
for you to know times or s Acts 1:7
days and months and s Gal 4:10
the times and the s 1 Thess 5:1

SEAT

See MERCY SEAT
shall make a mercy s Ex 25:17
I might come to His s Job 23:3
that He may s him with Ps 113:8
sit in Moses' s Matt 23:2
before the judgment s 2 Cor 5:10
the mercy s Heb 9:5

SEATED

the Ancient of Days was s Dan 7:9
s Him at His right hand Eph 1:20
who is s at the right hand Heb 8:1

SEATS

at feasts, the best s Matt 23:6
you love the best s Luke 11:43

SECOND

morning were the s day Gen 1:8
And the s is like it Matt 22:39
Can he enter a s time into John 3:4
the s Man is the Lord 1 Cor 15:47
and behind the s veil, the Heb 9:3
He will appear a s time Heb 9:28
the s living creature like a Rev 4:7
Then the angel sounded Rev 8:8

SECOND DEATH

not be hurt by the s Rev 2:11
Over such the s has no Rev 20:6
of fire. This is the s Rev 20:14
brimstone, which is the s Rev 21:8

SECRET

s things belong Deut 29:29
The s of the LORD is Ps 25:14
in the s place of His Ps 27:5
when I was made in s Ps 139:15
do not disclose the s Prov 25:9

I have not spoken in s Is 45:19
Father who is in the s Matt 6:6
s from the foundation of Matt 13:35
For nothing is s that will Luke 8:17
in s I have said nothing John 18:20
s since the world began Rom 16:25
are done by them in s Eph 5:12

SECRETLY

"Now a word was s Job 4:12
He lies in wait s Ps 10:9
minded to put her away s Matt 1:19
a disciple of Jesus, but s John 19:38

SECRETS

would show you the s Job 11:6
For He knows the s Ps 44:21
A talebearer reveals s Prov 11:13
heaven who reveals s Dan 2:28
God will judge the s Rom 2:16
And thus the s of his 1 Cor 14:25

SECT

him (which is the s Acts 5:17
to the strictest s Acts 26:5

SECURE

while the camp felt s Judg 8:11
dwell safely, and will be s Prov 1:33
him as a peg in a s place Is 22:23
made s until the third Matt 27:64

SECURELY

pleasures, who dwell s Is 47:8
nation that dwells s Jer 49:31

SECURES

he s it for himself among Is 44:14

SECURITY

gives them s, and they Job 24:23

SEDUCED

flattering lips she s Prov 7:21
because they have s Ezek 13:10

SEE

for no man shall s Ex 33:20
the LORD does not s 1 Sam 16:7
in my flesh I shall s Job 19:26
s the works of God Ps 66:5
lest they s with their Is 6:10
for sin, He shall s Is 53:10
for they shall s God Matt 5:8
seeing they do not s Matt 13:13
s greater things than John 1:50
rejoiced to s My day John 8:56
we wish to s Jesus John 12:21
and the world will s John 14:19
Him, for we shall s 1 John 3:2
They shall s His face Rev 22:4

SEED

s shall be called Gen 21:12
s shall be its stump Is 6:13
He shall see His s Is 53:10
you a noble vine, a s Jer 2:21
s is the word of God Luke 8:11
had left us a s Rom 9:29
to each s its own body 1 Cor 15:38
S were the promises Gal 3:16
you are Abraham's s Gal 3:29
of corruptible s 1 Pet 1:23
not sin, for His s 1 John 3:9

SEED OF DAVID

Christ comes from the s John 7:42
who was born of the s Rom 1:3
Jesus Christ, of the s 2 Tim 2:8

SEEDS

the good s are the Matt 13:38
not say, "And to s Gal 3:16

SEEK

will find Him if you s Deut 4:29
pray and s My face 2 Chr 7:14
your heart to s God 2 Chr 19:3
s your God as you do Ezra 4:2
may God above not s Job 3:4

countenance does not s Ps 10:4
LORD, that will I s Ps 27:4
You said, "S My face Ps 27:8
early will I s You Ps 63:1
s me diligently will Prov 8:17
s one's own glory Prov 25:27
s justice, rebuke Is 1:17
Should they s the dead Is 8:19
the Gentiles shall s Is 11:10
Jacob, 'S Me in vain Is 45:19
Yet they s Me daily Is 58:2
s great things for Jer 45:5
s what was lost Ezek 34:16
'S Me and live Amos 5:4
and people should s Mai 2:7
things the Gentiles s Matt 6:32
s, and you will find Matt 7:7
of Man has come to s Luke 19:10
because I do not s John 5:30
You will s Me and John 7:34
in doing good s Rom 2:7
Because they did not s Rom 9:32
Let no one s his own 1 Cor 10:24
for I do not s yours 2 Cor 12:14
For all s their own Phil 2:21
s those things which Col 3:1
s the one to come Heb 13:14

SEEK THE LORD

from there you s Deut 4:29
of those rejoice who s 1 Chr 16:10
heart and your soul to s 1 Chr 22:19
set their heart to s 2 Chr 11:16
disease he did not s 2 Chr 16:12
set himself to s 2 Chr 20:3
of the land in order to s Ezra 6:21
who s shall not lack Ps 34:10
S and His strength Ps 105:4
those who s understand Prov 28:5
righteousness, you who s Is 51:1
S while He may be found Is 55:6
Israel shall return and s Hos 3:5
S and live, lest He Amos 5:6
S, all you meek Zeph 2:3
nations shall come to s Zech 8:22
rest of mankind may s Acts 15:17
so that they should s Acts 17:27

SEEKING

run to and fro, s Amos 8:12
and he came s fruit Luke 13:6
for the Father is s John 4:23
like a roaring lion, s 1 Pet 5:8

SEEKS

Zion; no one s her Jer 30:17
receives, and he who s Matt 7:8
There is none who s Rom 3:11

SEEMS

There is a way which s Prov 14:12
have, even what he s Luke 8:18
If anyone among you s 1 Cor 3:18

SEEN

s God face to face Gen 32:30
All this I have s Eccl 8:9
s the one I love Song 3:3
Who has s such things Is 66:8
s strange things today Luke 5:26
No one has s God at John 1:18
time, nor s His form John 5:37
I speak what I have s John 8:38
s Me has s the John 14:9
things which we have s Acts 4:20
s Jesus Christ our 1 Cor 9:1
things which are not s 2 Cor 4:18
whom no man has s 1 Tim 6:16
heard, which we have s 1 John 1:1

SEES

here seen Him who s Eccl 16:13
s all the sons of men Ps 33:13
s his brother in need 1 John 3:17
s his brother sinning 1 John 5:16

SEIR

Home of Esau, Gen 32:3
 Horites of, dispossessed by Esau's
 descendants, Deut 2:12
 Desolation of, Ezek 35:15

SEIZE

s the city, for the LORD Josh 8:7
 Will not pangs s you, like Jer 13:21
 also houses, and s them Mic 2:2
 s his inheritance Matt 21:38
 you did not s Me Matt 26:55
 further to s Peter also Acts 12:3

SEIZED

pangs have s you like a Mic 4:9
 For it had often s him Luke 8:29
 profit was gone, they s Acts 16:19
 Jews s me in the temple Acts 26:21

SELF-CONFIDENT

a fool rages and is s Prov 14:16

SELF-CONTROL

about righteousness, s Acts 24:25
 because of your lack of s 1 Cor 7:5
 they cannot exercise s 1 Cor 7:9
 gentleness, s Gal 5:23
 love, and holiness, with s 1 Tim 2:15
 slanderers, without s 2 Tim 3:3
 to knowledge s 2 Pet 1:6

SELF-CONTROLLED

just, holy, s Titus 1:8

SELF-SEEKING

envy and s exist James 3:16

SELFISH

s ambitions, backbitings 2 Cor 12:20
 s ambitions, dissensions Gal 5:20
 preach Christ from s Phil 1:16
 s ambition or conceit Phil 2:3

SELL

said, "S me your Gen 25:31
 S your people for Ps 44:12
 s the righteous Amos 2:6
 s whatever you have Mark 10:21
 no sword, let him s Luke 22:36
 no one may buy or s Rev 13:17

SEND

He shall s from heaven Ps 57:3
 "Whom shall I s Is 6:8
 s them a Savior Is 19:20
 "Behold, I s you out Matt 10:16
 The Son of Man will s Matt 13:41
 S the multitudes away Matt 14:15
 He will s His angels Matt 24:31
 "S us to the swine, that Mark 5:12
 s them out two by two Mark 6:7
 S them away, that they Mark 6:36
 I s you out as lambs Luke 10:3
 I will s them prophets Luke 11:49
 s Lazarus that he Luke 16:24
 s the Promise of My Luke 24:49
 God did not s His Son John 3:17
 whom the Father will s John 14:26
 has sent Me, I also s John 20:21

SENDING

I am s you to Jesse 1 Sam 16:1
 God did by s His own Son Rom 8:3

SENDS

s rain on the just and Matt 5:45
 till He s forth justice to Matt 12:20

SENNACHERIB

Assyrian king (705-681 B.C.); son and
 successor of Sargon II, 2 Kin 18:13
 Death of, by assassination, 2 Kin 19:36,
 37

SENSELESS

Understand, you s Ps 94:8

SENSES

of use have their s Heb 5:14

SENSIBLY

who can answer s Prov 26:16

SENSUAL

but is earthly, s James 3:15
 These are s persons Jude 19

SENT

s out the dove Gen 8:12
 'I AM has s me to you Ex 3:14
 s to spy out the land Num 13:16
 LORD s me to anoint you 1 Sam 15:1
 and His Spirit have s Is 48:16
 s these prophets Jer 23:21
 s this commandment Mal 2:4
 receives Him who s Me Matt 10:40
 not Me but Him who s Mark 9:37
 he s a servant to the Mark 12:2
 He has s Me to heal the Luke 4:18
 Baptist has s us to You Luke 7:20
 receives Him who s Me Luke 9:48
 rejects Him who s Me Luke 10:16
 a man s from God John 1:6
 the will of Him who s Me John 6:38
 Father who s Me bears John 8:18
 is he who is s greater John 13:16
 You s Me into the world John 17:18
 As the Father has s John 20:21
 unless they are s Rom 10:15
 Spirit s from heaven 1 Pet 1:12
 s His Son to be the 1 John 4:10
 s His Angel to show His Rev 22:6

SEPARATE

he shall s himself Num 6:3
 s yourselves from the Ezra 10:11
 let not man s Matt 19:6
 Who shall s us from Rom 8:35
 harmless, undefiled, s Heb 7:26

SEPARATED

but the poor is s Prov 19:4
 "The LORD has utterly s Is 56:3
 to be an apostle, s Rom 1:1
 it pleased God, who s Gal 1:15

SEPARATES

who repeats a matter s Prov 17:9

SEPARATION

the middle wall of s Eph 2:14

SERAPHIM

Above it stood s Is 6:2

SERGIUS PAULUS

Roman proconsul of Cyprus, converted
 by Paul, Acts 13:7-12

SERIOUS

therefore be s and 1 Pet 4:7

SERPENT

s was more cunning Gen 3:1
 "The s deceived me Gen 3:13
 "Make a fiery s Num 21:8
 like the poison of a s Ps 58:4
 s you shall trample Ps 91:13
 their tongues like a s Ps 140:3
 air, the way of a s Prov 30:19
 s may bite when it is Eccl 10:11
 be a fiery flying s Is 14:29
 and wounded the s Is 51:9
 will he give him a s Matt 7:10
 Moses lifted up the s John 3:14
 was cast out, that s Rev 12:9

SERPENTS

is the poison of s Deut 32:33
 be wise as s Matt 10:16
 to trample on s Luke 10:19

SERVANT

a s of servants he Gen 9:25
 take a gift from your s 2 Kin 5:15
 the s of the man of God 2 Kin 8:4
 s who earnestly Job 7:2
 bountifully with Your s Ps 119:17
 and the fool will be s Prov 11:29

s will rule over a son Prov 17:2
 A s will not be Prov 29:19
 Who is blind but My s Is 42:19
 "Is Israel a s Jer 2:14
 and a s his master Mal 1:6
 nor a s above his master Matt 10:24
 My S whom I have Matt 12:18
 you, let him be your s Matt 20:26
 good and faithful s Matt 25:21
 'You wicked and lazy s Matt 25:26
 the unprofitable s Matt 25:30
 be last of all and s of all Mark 9:35
 you shall be your s Mark 10:43
 a s to the vinedressers Mark 12:2
 to my s, 'Do this,' Luke 7:8
 that s who knew his Luke 12:47
 I am, there My s will be John 12:26
 s does not know what John 15:15
 'A s is not greater than John 15:20
 struck the high priest's s John 18:10
 against Your holy S Acts 4:27
 Christ has become a s Rom 15:8

SERVANTS

puts no trust in His s Job 4:18
 for all your s Ps 119:91
 on the ground like s Eccl 10:7
 shall call you the s Is 61:6
 S rule over us Lam 5:8
 Again he sent other s Matt 21:36
 the king said to the s Matt 22:13
 s whom the master Luke 12:37
 are unprofitable s Luke 17:10
 longer do I call you s John 15:15
 My s would fight, so John 18:36
 so consider us, as s 1 Cor 4:1

SERVE

people go, that they may s Ex 8:1
 s you until the Year of Lev 25:40
 LORD your God and s Deut 6:13
 S the LORD Josh 24:14
 land, so you shall s aliens Jer 5:19
 s Him with one accord Zeph 3:9
 You cannot s God and Matt 6:24
 to be served, but to s Matt 20:28
 to be served, but to s Mark 10:45
 the mind I myself s Rom 7:25
 but through love s Gal 5:13
 s the living God Heb 9:14
 s Him day and night in Rev 7:15

SERVE THE LORD

men go, that they may s Ex 10:3
 go, s as you have said Ex 12:31
 So you shall s Ex 23:25
 to s your God with all Deut 10:12
 Because you did not s Deut 28:47
 and my house, we will s Josh 24:15
 s with all your heart 1 Sam 12:20
 commanded Judah to s 2 Chr 33:16
 S with fear, and rejoice Ps 2:11
 S with gladness Ps 100:2
 the kingdoms, to s Ps 102:22
 But they shall s their God Jer 30:9
 s without distraction 1 Cor 7:35
 inheritance, for you s Col 3:24

SERVED

did not come to be s Matt 20:28
 did not come to be s Mark 10:45
 s the creature rather than Rom 1:25

SERVES

If anyone s Me John 12:26

SERVICE

do you mean by this s Ex 12:26
 that he offers God s John 16:2
 is your reasonable s Rom 12:1
 with goodwill doing s Eph 6:7
 your works, love, s Rev 2:19

SERVING

years I have been s Luke 15:29
 s the Lord with all Acts 20:19

fervent in spirit, s Rom 12:11
you, s as overseers 1 Pet 5:2

SET

"See, I have s Deut 30:15
s the LORD always Ps 16:8
I will s him on high Ps 91:14
s aside the grace Gal 2:21

SET APART

will s the land of Goshen Ex 8:22
s to the Lord all that Ex 13:12
she shall be s seven days Lev 15:19
Then Moses s three cities Deut 4:41
as a dog laps, you shall s Judg 7:5
It was s for you 1 Sam 9:24
Aaron was s, he and his 1 Chr 23:13
the Lord has s for Himself Ps 4:3
s a district for the Lord Ezek 45:1

SETH

Third son of Adam, Gen 4:25
In Christ's ancestry, Luke 3:38

SETTLE

Therefore s it in Luke 21:14

SETTLED

and my speech s Job 29:22
O LORD, Your word is s Ps 119:89
the mountains were s Prov 8:25
s accounts with them Matt 25:19

SEVEN

Then s priests bearing Josh 6:13
he had s hundred wives 1 Kin 11:3
the child sneezed s times 2 Kin 4:35
Joash was s years old 2 Chr 24:1
S times a day I praise Ps 119:164
may fall s times and rise Prov 24:16
there are s abominations Prov 26:25
in that day s women shall Is 4:1
Passover, a feast of s Ezek 45:21
s times more than it was Dan 3:19
let s times pass over him Dan 4:16
there shall be s weeks and Dan 9:25
He took the s loaves Matt 15:36
forgive him? Up to s Matt 18:31
wife of the s will she be Matt 22:28
had come s demons Luke 8:2
s other spirits more Luke 11:26
s times in a day Luke 17:4
out from among you s Acts 6:3
s churches which are Rev 1:4
I saw s golden lampstands Rev 1:12
The mystery of the s stars Rev 1:20
He who holds the s stars Rev 2:1
has the s Spirits of God Rev 3:1
S lamps of fire were Rev 4:5
sealed with s seals Rev 5:1
saw the s angels who stand Rev 8:2
s thunders uttered their Rev 10:3
earthquake s thousand Rev 11:13
red dragon having s heads Rev 12:3
of the sea, having s heads Rev 13:1
s angels having the s last Rev 15:1
who had the s bowls Rev 17:1
s last plagues came to me Rev 21:9

SEVENFOLD

light of the sun will be s Is 30:26

SEVENTH

the s day God ended His Gen 2:2
ark rested in the s month Gen 8:4
on the s day there shall Ex 12:16
gather it, but on the s day Ex 16:26
When He opened the s seal Rev 8:1
the sounding of the s angel Rev 10:7
Then the s angel sounded Rev 11:15
the s angel poured out Rev 16:17
s chrysolite, the eighth Rev 21:20

SEVENTY

S weeks are Dan 9:24
up to s times seven Matt 18:22
Then the s returned Luke 10:17

SEVERE

My wound is s Jer 10:19
not to be too 2 Cor 2:5

SEVERITY

the goodness and s Rom 11:22

SEWS

s a piece of unshrunk Mark 2:21

SEXUAL

s immorality causes her Matt 5:32
except for s immorality Matt 19:9
from s immorality, from Acts 15:20
s immorality, wickedness Rom 1:29
s immorality among you 1 Cor 5:1
the body is not for s 1 Cor 6:13
Flee s immorality 1 Cor 6:18
commit s immorality 1 Cor 10:8
abstain from s 1 Thess 4:3
to commit s immorality Rev 2:14
repent of her s immorality Rev 2:21

SEXUALLY

company with s immoral 1 Cor 5:9
s immoral, sorcerers Rev 21:8

SHADE

I sat down in his s Song 2:3
be a tabernacle for s Is 4:6
may nest under its s Mark 4:32

SHADOW

May darkness and the s Job 3:5
He flees like a s Job 14:2
hide me under the s Ps 17:8
walks about like a s Ps 39:6
like a passing s Ps 144:4
he passes like a s Eccl 6:12
and to trust in the s Is 30:2
In the s of His hand Is 49:2
which are a s of Col 2:17
the law, having a s Heb 10:1
is no variation or s James 1:17

SHADOW OF DEATH

of darkness and the s Job 10:21
my eyelids is the s Job 16:16
seen the doors of the s Job 38:17
the valley of the s Ps 23:4
out of darkness and the s Ps 107:14
s, upon them a light Is 9:2
turns the s into morning Amos 5:8
s light has dawned Matt 4:16
in darkness and the s Luke 1:79

SHADOWS

my members are like s Job 17:7
and the s flee away Song 2:17

SHADRACH

Hananiah's Babylonian name, Dan
1:3, 7
Cast into the fiery furnace, Dan
3:1-28

SHAKE

Who is he who will s Job 17:3
their loins s continually Ps 69:23
s the earth Is 2:19
S yourself from the Is 52:2
you s your head in scorn Jer 48:27
s their heads at the Lam 2:15
that the thresholds may s Amos 9:1
and the knees s Nah 2:10
hiss and s his fist Zeph 2:15
little while) I will s heaven Hag 2:6
I will s all nations Hag 2:7
s off the dust from your Matt 10:14
s off the dust under your Mark 6:11
house, and could not s it Luke 6:48
s not only the earth Heb 12:26

SHAKEN

reed is s in the water 1 Kin 14:15
quaked and were s Ps 18:7
he will never be s Ps 112:6
A reed s by the wind Matt 11:7
of the heavens will be s Matt 24:29

the heavens will be s Mark 13:25
s together, and running Luke 6:38
together was s Acts 4:31
of the prison were s Acts 16:26
not to be soon s 2 Thess 2:2
which cannot be s Heb 12:28

SHAKES

s the earth out of its Job 9:6
s the Wilderness Ps 29:8
The earth s at the noise Jer 49:21

SHALLUM

King of Israel, 2 Kin 15:10-15

SHALMANESER

Assyrian king, 2 Kin 17:3

SHAME

you turn my glory to s Ps 4:2
let them be put to s Ps 83:17
s who serve carved Ps 97:7
hate Zion be put to s Ps 129:5
s shall be the Prov 3:35
is a son who causes s Prov 10:5
hide My face from s Is 50:6
S has covered our Jer 51:51
their glory into s Hos 4:7
never be put to s Joel 2:26
Pass by in naked s, you Mic 1:11
the unjust knows no s Zeph 3:5
worthy to suffer s Acts 5:41
will not be put to s Rom 9:33
to put to s the wise 1 Cor 1:27
I say this to your s 1 Cor 6:5
glory is in their s Phil 3:19
put Him to an open s Heb 6:6
the cross, despising the s Heb 12:2

SHAMEFUL

committing what is s Rom 1:27
for it is s for women 1 Cor 14:35
For it is s even to Eph 5:12

SHAMGAR

Judge of Israel; strikes down 600 Philistines, Judg 3:31

SHAMMAH

Son of Jesse, 1 Sam 16:9
Called Shimea, 1 Chr 2:13
—One of David's mighty men, 2 Sam
23:11

Also called Shammoth the Harorite,
1 Chr 11:27

SHAPHAN

Scribe under Josiah, 2 Kin 22:3-14

SHARE

a stranger does not s Prov 14:10
s in anything done under Eccl 9:6
s your bread with the Is 58:7
is taught the word s Gal 6:6
to give, willing to s 1 Tim 6:18
to do good and to s Heb 13:16
lest you s in her sins, and Rev 18:4

SHARING

for your liberal s 2 Cor 9:13

SHARON

Coastal plain between Joppa and Mt.
Carmel, 1 Chr 27:29
Famed for roses, Song 2:1
Inhabitants of, turn to the Lord, Acts
9:35

SHARP

destruction, like a s razor Ps 52:2
S as a two-edged sword Prov 5:4
sledge with s teeth Is 41:15
My mouth like a s sword Is 49:2
son of man, take a s sword Ezek 5:1
went a s two-edged sword Rev 1:16
who has the s two-edged Rev 2:12
and in His hand a s sickle Rev 14:14

SHARPEN

s their tongue like a Ps 64:3
and one does not s Eccl 10:10

SHARPENS

My adversary *s* His Job 16:9

SHARPNESS

I should use *s* 2 Cor 13:10

SHATTERED

at ease, but He has *s* Job 16:12

SHAVE

Then the Nazirite shall *s* Num 6:18
s off the seven locks Judg 16:19
 will *s* with a hired razor Is 7:20
 they may *s* their heads Acts 21:24

SHAVED

s off half of their beards 2 Sam 10:4
 as if her head were *s* 1 Cor 11:5

SHEALTIEL

Son of King Jeconiah and father of
 Zerubbabel, 1 Chr 3:17

SHEAR-JASHUB

Symbolic name given to Isaiah's son,
 Is 7:3

SHEATH

'Return it to its *s* Ezek 21:30
 your sword into the *s* John 18:11

SHEAVES

bringing his *s* Ps 126:6
 nor he who binds *s* Ps 129:7
 gather them like *s* Mic 4:12

SHEBA

Land of, occupied by Sabaeans, famous
 traders, Job 1:15; Ps 72:10
 Queen of, visits Solomon: marvels at
 his wisdom, 1 Kin 10:1-13
 Mentioned by Christ, Matt 12:42

SHEBAH

Name given to a well and town
 (Beersheba), Gen 26:31-33

SHEBNA

Treasurer under Hezekiah, Is 22:15
 Demoted to position of scribe, 2 Kin
 19:2
 Man of pride and luxury, replaced by
 Eliakim, Is 22:19-21

SHECHEM

Son of Hamor; rapes Dinah, Jacob's
 daughter, Gen 34:1-31
 — Ancient city of Ephraim, Gen 33:18
 Joshua's farewell address delivered at,
 Josh 24:1-25
 Supports Abimelech; destroyed,
 Judg 9
 Rebuilt by Jeroboam I, 1 Kin 12:25

SHED

s blood without cause 1 Sam 25:31
s innocent blood Ps 106:38
 which is *s* for many Matt 26:28
 which is *s* for many Mark 14:24
s from the foundation of Luke 11:50
 blood, which is *s* for Luke 22:20
 martyr Stephen was *s* Acts 22:20
 feet are swift to *s* blood Rom 3:15
 they have *s* the blood of Rev 16:6
 of His servants *s* by her Rev 19:2

SHEDDING

blood, and without *s* Heb 9:22

SHEEP

spared the best of the *s* 1 Sam 15:15
 as *s* that have no 2 Chr 18:16
 like *s* intended for food Ps 44:11
 as *s* for the slaughter Ps 44:22
s of Your pasture Ps 79:13
 and the *s* of His hand Ps 95:7
 and the *s* of His pasture Ps 100:3
 astray like *s* a lost Ps 119:176
 All we like *s* have gone Is 53:6
 slaughter, and as *s* Is 53:7

Pull them out like *s* Jer 12:3
 scatter the *s* of My pasture Jer 23:1
 have been lost Jer 50:6
 My *s* having through Ezek 34:6
 will search for My *s* Ezek 34:11
 shall judge between *s* Ezek 34:17
 lion among flocks of *s* Mic 5:8
s will be scattered Zech 13:7
 like *s* having no shepherd Matt 9:36
 rather to the lost *s* Matt 10:6
 I send you out as *s* Matt 10:16
 lost *s* of the house of Matt 15:24
 If a man has a hundred *s* Matt 18:12
 his *s* from the goats Matt 25:32
 And He will set the *s* Matt 25:33
s not having a shepherd Mark 6:34
s will be scattered Mark 14:27
 having a hundred *s* Luke 15:4
 plowing or tending *s* Luke 17:7
 the shepherd of the *s* John 10:2
 and he calls his own *s* John 10:3
 and I know My *s* John 10:14
s I have which are not John 10:16
 you are not of My *s* John 10:26
 said to him, "Tend My *s* John 21:16
 said to him, "Feed My *s* John 21:17
 "He was led as a *s* Acts 8:32
 as *s* for the slaughter Rom 8:36
 great Shepherd of the *s* Heb 13:20
 like *s* going astray 1 Pet 2:25

SHEEPFOLDS

lie down among the *s* Ps 68:13

SHEET

object like a great *s* Acts 10:11

SHELTER

I will trust in the *s* Ps 61:4
 in You I take *s* Ps 143:9
 the LORD will be a *s* Joel 3:16

SHELTERS

s him all the day long Deut 33:12
 be pastures, with *s* Zeph 2:6

SHEM

Oldest son of Noah, Gen 5:32
 Escapes the flood, Gen 7:13
 Receives a blessing, Gen 9:23, 26
 Ancestor of Semitic people, Gen
 10:22-32

SHEMAIAH

Prophet of Judah, 1 Kin 12:22-24
 Explains Shishak's invasion as divine
 punishment, 2 Chr 12:5-8
 Records Rehoboam's reign, 2 Chr 12:15

SHEMER

Sells Omri the hill on which Samaria
 is built, 1 Kin 16:23, 24

SHEOL

down to the gates of *S* Job 17:16
 not leave my soul in *S* Ps 16:10
S laid hold of me Ps 116:3
S cannot thank Is 38:18
 the belly of *S* I cried Jon 2:2

SHEPHERD

s is an abomination Gen 46:34
s My people Israel 2 Sam 5:2
 The LORD is my *s* Ps 23:1
s Jacob His people Ps 78:71
 His flock like a *s* Is 40:11
 of Cyrus, 'He is My *s* Is 44:28
s who follows You Jer 17:16
 because there was no *s* Ezek 34:5
 I will establish one *s* Ezek 34:23
 "As a *s* takes from Amos 3:12
 to the worthless *s* Zech 11:17
 'I will strike the *S* Matt 26:31
 "I am the good *s* John 10:11
s the church of God Acts 20:28
 the dead, that great *S* Heb 13:20
S the flock of God 1 Pet 5:2

when the Chief *S* 1 Pet 5:4
 of the throne will *s* Rev 7:17

SHEPHERDS

your sons shall be *s* Num 14:33
 And they are *s* who Is 56:11
 And I will give you *s* Jer 3:15
s who destroy and Jer 23:1
s who feed My people Jer 23:2
s have led them astray Jer 50:6
s fed themselves Ezek 34:8
 in the same country *s* Luke 2:8

SHESHACH

Symbolic of Babylon, Jer 25:26

SHESHAZZAR

Prince of Judah, Ezra 1:8, 11

SHETHAR-BOZNAI

Official of Persia, Ezra 5:3, 6

SIELD

I am your *s* Gen 15:1
 the *s* of your help and Deut 33:29
s of Saul, not anointed 2 Sam 1:21
 whom I will trust: my *s* 2 Sam 22:3
 He is a *s* to all who 2 Sam 22:31
 gold went into each *s* 2 Chr 9:15
 are a *s* for me, my glory Ps 3:3
 surround him as with a *s* Ps 5:12
 my *s* and the horn of Ps 18:2
 He is a *s* to all who trust in Ps 18:30
 me the *s* of Your salvation Ps 18:35
 my strength and my *s* Ps 28:7
 He is our help and our *s* Ps 33:20
 God is a sun and *s* Ps 84:11
 truth shall be your *s* Ps 91:4
 He is their help and their *s* Ps 115:9
 hiding place and my *s* Ps 119:114
 all, taking the *s* Eph 6:16

SHIHOR

Name given to the Nile, Is 23:3
 Israel's southwestern border, Josh 13:3

SHILOH

Center of worship, Judg 18:31
 Headquarters for division of Promised
 Land, Josh 18:1, 10
 Benjamites seize women of, Judg
 21:19-23
 Ark of the covenant taken from, 1 Sam
 4:3-11
 Punishment given to, Jer 7:12-15
 — Messianic title, Gen 49:10

SHIMEI

Benjamite; insults David, 2 Sam
 16:5-13
 Pardoned, but confined, 2 Sam
 19:16-23
 Breaks agreement; executed by Sol-
 omon, 1 Kin 2:39-46

SHIMSHAI

Scribe opposing the Jews, Ezra 4:8-24

SHINAR

Tower built at, Gen 11:2-9

SHINE

LORD make His face *s* Num 6:25
 even the moon does not *s* Job 25:5
 Make Your face *s* upon Ps 31:16
 cause His face to *s* Ps 67:1
 the cherubim, *s* Ps 80:1
 Make Your face *s* Ps 119:135
 will not cause its light to *s* Is 13:10
 Arise, *s*; for your light Is 60:1
 who are wise shall *s* Dan 12:3
 your light so *s* before men Matt 5:16
 the righteous will *s* Matt 13:43
 among whom you *s* Phil 2:15
 a third of the day did not *s* Rev 8:12
 sun or of the moon to *s* Rev 21:23

SHINED

them a light has *s* Is 9:2

SHINES

But the night s as the day ... Ps 139:12
that s ever brighter unto ... Prov 4:18
And the light s ... John 1:5
light that s in a dark ... 2 Pet 1:19

SHINING

the earth, by clear s ... 2 Sam 23:4
the just is like the s sun ... Prov 4:18
His clothes became s ... Mark 9:3
by them in s garments ... Luke 24:4
light is already s ... 1 John 2:8
was like the sun s ... Rev 1:16

SHIP

the way of a s in the ... Prov 30:19
found a s going to Tarshish ... Jon 1:3
finding a s sailing over to ... Acts 21:2
some on parts of the s ... Acts 27:44

SHIPRAH

Hebrew midwife, Ex 1:15

SHIPS

pass by like swift s ... Job 9:26
down to the sea in s ... Ps 107:23
like the merchant s ... Prov 31:14
Look also at s ... James 3:4

SHIPWRECK

faith have suffered s ... 1 Tim 1:19

SHONE

the skin of Moses' face s ... Ex 34:35
His face s like the sun ... Matt 17:2
of the Lord s around them ... Luke 2:9
a light s around him ... Acts 9:3
and a light s in the prison ... Acts 12:7

SHOOK

so loudly that the earth s ... 1 Sam 4:5
the earth s and trembled ... 2 Sam 22:8
earth s; the heavens also ... Ps 68:8
The earth trembled and s ... Ps 77:18
guards s for fear of him ... Matt 28:4
they s off the dust from ... Acts 13:51

SHOOT

they s out the lip ... Ps 22:7
But God shall s ... Ps 64:7

SHORT

of the wicked is s ... Job 20:5
Remember how s my time ... Ps 89:47
for he was of s stature ... Luke 19:3
have sinned and fall s ... Rom 3:23
the work and cut it s ... Rom 9:28
fall s of the grace of God ... Heb 12:15
knows that he has a s ... Rev 12:12

SHORTENED

his youth You have s ... Ps 89:45
the wicked will be s ... Prov 10:27
those days were s ... Matt 24:22
Lord had s those days ... Mark 13:20

SHORTLY

which must s take place ... Rev 1:1
which must s take place ... Rev 22:6

SHOT

shall be stoned or s ... Heb 12:20

SHOULDER

will be upon His s ... Is 9:6

SHOUT

shall s with a great s ... Josh 6:5
s for joy, all you upright in ... Ps 32:11
skillfully with a s of joy ... Ps 33:3
s for joy and be glad ... Ps 35:27
S to God with the voice of ... Ps 47:1
Make a joyful s to God, all ... Ps 66:1
Make a joyful s to the God ... Ps 81:1
s joyfully to the Rock ... Ps 95:1
S joyfully to the LORD ... Ps 98:4
Make a joyful s ... Ps 100:1
from heaven with a s ... 1 Thess 4:16

SHOUTED

So the people s when the ... Josh 6:20
they s, saying, "Crucify ... Luke 23:21

SHOW

a land that I will s ... Gen 12:1
will s Yourself merciful ... 2 Sam 22:26
And s Yourself merciful ... Ps 18:25
S me Your ways ... Ps 25:4
I will s the salvation of ... Ps 50:23
mouth shall s forth Your ... Ps 51:15
S us Your mercy, LORD ... Ps 85:7
and s us what will happen ... Is 41:22
s yourselves men ... Is 46:8
s mercy and compassion ... Zech 7:9
s them a sign from ... Matt 16:1
S Me the tax money ... Matt 22:19
s great signs and ... Matt 24:24
s signs and wonders to ... Mark 13:22
s Him greater works ... John 5:20
s Yourself to the world ... John 7:4
s us the Father ... John 14:8
you say, 'S us the Father ... John 14:9
I s you a more excellent ... 1 Cor 12:31
S me your faith without ... James 2:18
I will s you things which ... Rev 4:1

SHOWBREAD

you shall set the s ... Ex 25:30
s which had been taken ... 1 Sam 21:6
s which was not lawful ... Matt 12:4

SHOWED

s him mercy, and He ... Gen 39:21
and the LORD s him a tree ... Ex 15:25
s Him all the kingdoms ... Matt 4:8
s Him all the kingdoms ... Luke 4:5
But even Moses s in the ... Luke 20:37
s them His hands and ... Luke 24:40
s them His hands and ... John 20:20
Jesus s Himself again to ... John 21:1
third day, and s Him ... Acts 10:40
s me the great city, the ... Rev 21:10

SHOWERS

make it soft with s ... Ps 65:10
s have been withheld ... Jer 3:3
can the heavens give s ... Jer 14:22
from the LORD, like s ... Mic 5:7

SHOWN

You have s Your servant ... Gen 32:10
have s more kindness ... Ruth 3:10
grace be s to the wicked ... Is 26:10
s you from My Father ... John 10:32

SHOWS

firmament s His handiwork ... Ps 19:1
that God s no partiality ... Acts 10:34
God s personal favoritism ... Gal 2:6

SHREWDLY

because he had dealt s ... Luke 16:8

SHRINES

who made silver s ... Acts 19:24

SHRIVELED

You have s me up ... Job 16:8

SHUFFLES

with his eyes, he s ... Prov 6:13

SHULAMITE

Beloved of the bridegroom king, Song
6:13

SHUNAMMITE

Abishag, David's nurse, 1 Kin 1:3, 15
— Woman who cared for Elisha,
2 Kin 4:8-12

SHUNEM

Town of Issachar, Josh 19:18

SHUNNED

feared God and s evil ... Job 1:1

SHUR

Wilderness in south Palestine, Gen 16:7
Israel went from Red Sea to, Ex 15:22
Hagar fled here, Gen 16:7

SHUSHAN

Residence of Persian monarchs, Esth
1:2

SHUT

s the door behind him ... Gen 19:6
Let her be s out of the ... Num 12:14
"Or who s in the sea ... Job 38:8
Has He in anger s ... Ps 77:9
For you s up the ... Matt 23:13
came, the doors being s ... John 20:26
door, and no one can s it ... Rev 3:8
have power to s heaven ... Rev 11:6

SHUTS

s his ears to the cry ... Prov 21:13
s his eyes from seeing ... Is 33:15
brother in need, and s ... 1 John 3:17
who opens and no one s ... Rev 3:7

SICK

have made him s ... Hos 7:5
I was s and you ... Matt 25:36
he whom You love is s ... John 11:3
many are weak and s ... 1 Cor 11:30
have left in Miletus s ... 2 Tim 4:20
faith will save the s ... James 5:15

SICKLE

Put in the s ... Joel 3:13
"Thrust in Your s ... Rev 14:15

SICKNESS

will sustain him in s ... Prov 18:14
"This s is not unto ... John 11:4

SICKNESSES

And bore our s ... Matt 8:17

SIDE

two rings shall be on one s ... Ex 25:12
And a cubit on one s ... Ex 26:13
For the south s there shall ... Ex 27:9
this s of the Jordan in the ... Deut 1:1
on this s of the Jordan ... Josh 1:14
me down on every s ... Job 19:10
wicked prowl on every s ... Ps 12:8
Fear is on every s ... Ps 31:13
hills rejoice on every s ... Ps 65:12
comfort me on every s ... Ps 71:21
The LORD is on my s ... Ps 118:6
Lie also on your left s ... Ezek 4:4
gate chambers on one s ... Ezek 40:10
robe sitting on the right s ... Mark 16:5
pierced His s with a ... John 19:34
His hands and His s ... John 20:20
put my hand into His s ... John 20:25
the net on the right s ... John 21:6

SIDON

See TYRE AND SIDON
Canaanite city; inhabitants not ex-
pelled, Judg 1:31
Hostile relations with Israel, Judg
10:12; Is 23:12; Joel 3:4-6
Jesus preaches to, Matt 15:21; Luke
6:17

SIFT

s the nations with the ... Is 30:28
s the house of Israel ... Amos 9:9
for you, that he may s ... Luke 22:31

SIFTS

A wise king s out the ... Prov 20:26

SIGH

our years like a s ... Ps 90:9
the merry-hearted s ... Is 24:7
of the men who s ... Ezek 9:4

SIGHING

For my s comes before ... Job 3:24
s is not hidden ... Ps 38:9

SIGHT

and see this great s ... Ex 3:3
evil in the s of the LORD ... Judg 2:11
as stupid in your s ... Job 18:3
of human waste in their s ... Ezek 4:12
seemed good in Your s ... Matt 11:26
he received his s ... Mark 10:52
abomination in the s of ... Luke 16:15

washed, and I received s . . . John 9:11
he marveled at the s . . . Acts 7:31
three days without s . . . Acts 9:9
are just in the s of God . . . Rom 2:13
will be justified in His s . . . Rom 3:20
by faith, not by s . . . 2 Cor 5:7
precious in the s of God . . . 1 Pet 3:4

SIGN

Show me a s for good . . . Ps 86:17
will give you a s . . . Is 7:14
for an everlasting s . . . Is 55:13
we want to see a s . . . Matt 12:38
seeks after a s . . . Matt 12:39
And what will be the s . . . Matt 24:3
s which will be spoken . . . Luke 2:34
again is the second s . . . John 4:44
For Jews request a s . . . 1 Cor 1:22
Now a great s appeared . . . Rev 12:1

SIGNS

and let them be for s . . . Gen 1:14
you not know their s . . . Job 21:29
They performed His s . . . Ps 105:27
We are for s and . . . Is 8:18
How great are His s . . . Dan 4:3
cannot discern the s . . . Matt 16:3
the accompanying s . . . Mark 16:20
s Jesus did in Cana of . . . John 2:11
no one can do these s . . . John 3:2
because you saw the s . . . John 6:26
is a sinner do such s . . . John 9:16
this Man works many s . . . John 11:47
Jesus did many other s . . . John 20:30
demons, performing s . . . Rev 16:14

SIGNS AND WONDERS

Lord showed s . . . Deut 6:22
great terror and with s . . . Deut 26:8
s against Pharaoh . . . Neh 9:10
He sent s . . . Ps 135:9
We are for s in Israel . . . Is 8:18
good to declare the s . . . Dan 4:2
He works s in heaven . . . Dan 6:27
rise and show great s . . . Matt 24:24
"Unless you people see s . . . John 4:48
s may be done through . . . Acts 4:30
of the apostles many s . . . Acts 5:12
His grace, granting s . . . Acts 14:3
mighty s, by the power . . . Rom 15:19
in s and mighty deeds . . . 2 Cor 12:12
bearing witness both with s . . . Heb 2:4

SIHON

Amorite king; defeated by Israel, Num
21:21-32
Territory of, assigned to Reuben and
Gad, Num 32:1-38

SILAS (or Silvanus)

Leader in Jerusalem church; sent to
Antioch, Acts 15:22-35
Travels with Paul, Acts 15:40, 41
Jailed and released, Acts 16:25-40
Mentioned in epistles, 2 Cor 1:19;
1 Thess 1:1; 2 Thess 1:1; 1 Pet 5:12

SILENCE

that You may s . . . Ps 8:2
I was mute with s . . . Ps 39:2
soon have settled in s . . . Ps 94:17
"Sit in s . . . Is 47:5
I will not keep s, but will . . . Is 65:6
in s with all submission . . . 1 Tim 2:11
s the ignorance of foolish . . . 1 Pet 2:15
seal, there was s . . . Rev 8:1

SILENT

the wicked shall be s . . . 1 Sam 2:9
Oh, that you would be s . . . Job 13:5
season, and am not s . . . Ps 22:2
Do not be s to me . . . Ps 28:1
praise to You and not be s . . . Ps 30:12
Let them be s in the . . . Ps 31:17
come, and shall not keep s . . . Ps 50:3
before its shearers is s . . . Is 53:7

Be s in the presence . . . Zeph 1:7
But Jesus kept s . . . Matt 26:63
His answer and kept s . . . Luke 20:26
before its shearer is s . . . Acts 8:32
Let your women keep s . . . 1 Cor 14:34

SILK

and covered you with s . . . Ezek 16:10

SILLY

They are s children . . . Jer 4:22

SILOAM

Tower of, falls and kills 18 people,
Luke 13:4
Blind man washes in pool of, John
9:1-11

SILVER

and your precious s . . . Job 22:25
Though he heaps up s . . . Job 27:16
s tried in a furnace . . . Ps 12:6
have refined us as s . . . Ps 66:10
than the profits of s . . . Prov 3:14
chosen rather than s . . . Prov 16:16
refining pot is for s . . . Prov 17:3
He who loves s will . . . Eccl 5:10
s has become dross . . . Is 1:22
call them rejected s . . . Jer 6:30
may buy the poor for s . . . Amos 8:6
him thirty pieces of s . . . Matt 26:15

SIMEON

Son of Jacob by Leah, Gen 29:32, 33
Avenges his sister's dishonor, Gen
34:25-31
Held hostage by Joseph, Gen 42:18-20,
24
Rebuked by Jacob, Gen 49:5-7
— Tribe of:
Numbered, Num 1:23; 26:12-14
Receive inheritance, Josh 19:1-9
Fight Canaanites with Judah, Judg
1:1-3, 17-20
— Just man; blesses infant Jesus,
Luke 2:25-35

SIMILITUDE

been made in the s . . . James 3:9

SIMON

Simon Peter; see PETER
— One of the Twelve; called "the
Cananite," Matt 10:4
— One of Jesus' half brothers, Matt
13:55
— Pharisee, Luke 7:36-40
— Man of Cyrene, bears Jesus' cross,
Matt 27:32
— Sorcerer, Acts 8:9-24
— Tanner in Joppa, Acts 9:43

SIMPLE

making wise the s . . . Ps 19:7
LORD preserves the s . . . Ps 116:6
understanding to the s . . . Ps 119:130
s believes every word . . . Prov 14:15
the hearts of the s . . . Rom 16:18

SIMPLICITY

ones, will you love s . . . Prov 1:12
in the world in s . . . 2 Cor 1:12
corrupted from the s . . . 2 Cor 11:3

SIN

not well, s lies at the door . . . Gen 4:7
because their s is very . . . Gen 18:20
brothers and their s . . . Gen 50:17
It is a s offering . . . Ex 29:14
committed a great s . . . Ex 32:30
offer to the LORD for his s . . . Lev 4:3
the s which they have . . . Lev 4:14
a lamb as his s offering . . . Lev 4:32
of the goats as a s offering . . . Lev 5:6
is the law of the s offering . . . Lev 6:25
They shall bear their s . . . Lev 20:20
his God shall bear his s . . . Lev 24:15
any s that men commit in . . . Num 5:6

If you s unintentionally . . . Num 15:22
flesh, shall one man s . . . Num 16:22
he died in his own s . . . Num 27:3
goats as a s offering . . . Num 29:5
and be sure your s . . . Num 32:23
because of all your s . . . Deut 9:18
it become s among you . . . Deut 15:9
or any s that he commits . . . Deut 19:15
you s against the LORD . . . Deut 20:18
a s deserving of death . . . Deut 21:22
no s deserving of death . . . Deut 22:26
to death for his own s . . . Deut 24:16
forgive the s of Your . . . 1 Kin 8:34
When they s against You . . . 1 Kin 8:46
this thing became a s . . . 1 Kin 12:30
in his s by which . . . 1 Kin 15:26
and made Israel s . . . 1 Kin 21:22
to death for his own s . . . 2 Kin 14:6
made Judah s with his . . . 2 Kin 21:11
forgive the s of Your . . . 2 Chr 6:25
and will forgive their s . . . 2 Chr 7:14
shall die for his own s . . . 2 Chr 25:4
do not let their s be blotted . . . Neh 4:5
In all this Job did not s nor . . . Job 1:22
all this Job did not s . . . Job 2:10
and search out my s . . . Job 10:6
he adds rebellion to his s . . . Job 34:37
Be angry, and do not s . . . Ps 4:4
whose s is covered . . . Ps 32:1
I acknowledged my s . . . Ps 32:5
my bones because of my s . . . Ps 38:3
my ways, lest I s . . . Ps 39:1
And cleanse me from my s . . . Ps 51:2
s is always before me . . . Ps 51:3
in s my mother . . . Ps 51:5
the s of their mouth . . . Ps 59:12
I might not s against You . . . Ps 119:11
of the wicked to s . . . Prov 10:16
Fools mock at s . . . Prov 14:9
s is a reproach . . . Prov 14:34
I am pure from my s . . . Prov 20:9
mouth cause your flesh to s . . . Eccl 5:6
good and does not s . . . Eccl 7:20
away, and your s purged . . . Is 6:7
soul an offering for s . . . Is 53:10
And He bore the s . . . Is 53:12
what is our s that we have . . . Jer 16:10
your high places of s . . . Jer 17:3
s I will remember no . . . Jer 31:34
he shall die in his s . . . Ezek 3:20
and confessing my s . . . Dan 9:20
They eat up the s . . . Hos 4:8
Now they s more and . . . Hos 13:2
right eye causes you to s . . . Matt 5:29
I say to you, every s and . . . Matt 12:31
who believe in Me to s . . . Matt 18:6
hand causes you to s . . . Mark 9:43
who takes away the s . . . John 1:29
S no more . . . John 5:14
"He who is without s . . . John 8:7
go and s no more . . . John 8:11
Me, and will die in your s . . . John 8:21
commits s is a slave of s . . . John 8:34
of you convicts Me of s . . . John 8:46
you would have no s . . . John 9:41
convict the world of s . . . John 16:8
they are all under s . . . Rom 3:9
law is the knowledge of s . . . Rom 3:20
LORD shall not impute s . . . Rom 4:8
s entered the world . . . Rom 5:12
s is not imputed . . . Rom 5:13
where s abounded, grace . . . Rom 5:20
s that grace may . . . Rom 6:1
that the body of s might be . . . Rom 6:6
died to s once for all . . . Rom 6:10
s shall not have . . . Rom 6:14
Shall we s because we . . . Rom 6:15
you were slaves of s . . . Rom 6:17
been set free from s . . . Rom 6:22
the wages of s is death . . . Rom 6:23
Is the law s? . . . Rom 7:7
s revived and I died . . . Rom 7:9

s that dwells in me Rom 7:17
 me free from the law of s Rom 8:2
 body is dead because of s Rom 8:10
 Every s that a man does 1 Cor 6:18
 you s against Christ 1 Cor 8:12
 The sting of death is s 1 Cor 15:56
 Him who knew no s 2 Cor 5:21
 man of s is revealed 2 Thess 2:3
 we are, yet without s Heb 4:15
 appeared to put away s Heb 9:26
 longer an offering for s Heb 10:18
 s willfully after we Heb 10:26
 it gives birth to s James 1:15
 partiality, you commit s James 2:9
 do it, to him it is s James 4:17
 "Who committed no s 1 Pet 2:22
 the flesh has ceased from s 1 Pet 4:1
 that cannot cease from s 2 Pet 2:14
 cleanses us from all s 1 John 1:7
 say that we have no s 1 John 1:8
 that you may not s 1 John 2:1
 s is lawlessness 1 John 3:4
 in Him there is no s 1 John 3:5
 and he cannot s 1 John 3:9
 s which does not lead 1 John 5:16
 there is s not leading to 1 John 5:17

SINAI

Mountain (same as Horeb) where the
 law was given, Ex 19:1-25
 Used allegorically by Paul, Gal 4:24,
 25

SINCERE

Holy Spirit, by s love 2 Cor 6:6
 that you may be s Phil 1:10
 and from s faith 1 Tim 1:5
 s love of the brethren 1 Pet 1:22

SINCERITY

LORD, serve Him in s Josh 24:14
 unleavened bread of s 1 Cor 5:8
 simplicity and godly s 2 Cor 1:12
 as of s, but as from God, 2 Cor 2:17
 testing the s of your love 2 Cor 8:8
 in s of heart, as to Christ Eph 6:5
 our Lord Jesus Christ in s Eph 6:24
 men-pleasers, but in s Col 3:22

SINFUL

place, a brood of s men Num 32:14
 Alas, s nation Is 1:4
 and s generation Mark 8:38
 from me, for I am a s Luke 5:8
 the hands of s men Luke 24:7
 become exceedingly s Rom 7:13
 likeness of s flesh Rom 8:3

SING

"S to the LORD Ex 15:21
 Awake, awake, s a song Judg 5:12
 s praises to Your name 2 Sam 22:50
 S to the LORD, all the 1 Chr 16:23
 when they began to s 2 Chr 20:22
 the widow's heart to s Job 29:13
 S praises to the LORD, who Ps 9:11
 I will s to the LORD Ps 13:6
 S to Him a new song Ps 33:3
 my tongue shall s aloud of Ps 51:14
 shout for joy, they also s Ps 65:13
 S out the honor Ps 66:2
 nations be glad and s for Ps 67:4
 You I will s with the harp Ps 71:22
 I will s of the mercies of Ps 89:1
 s to the LORD a new song Ps 98:1
 I will s of mercy and Ps 101:1
 I will s to the LORD as Ps 104:33
 S praises to His name Ps 135:3
 "S us one of the songs Ps 137:3
 they shall s of the ways of Ps 138:5
 S to the LORD a new song Ps 149:1
 S to the LORD, for He has Is 12:5
 up their voice, they shall s Is 24:14
 S to the LORD a new song Is 42:10
 My servants shall s Is 65:14

she shall s there, as in the Hos 2:15
 S and rejoice, O daughter Zech 2:10
 I will s with the 1 Cor 14:15
 assembly I will s Heb 2:12
 Let him s psalms James 5:13
 They s the song of Moses Rev 15:3

SINGERS

instruments for s 1 Kin 10:12
 who bore the ark, the s 1 Chr 15:27
 instruments for s 2 Chr 9:11
 s with musical 2 Chr 23:13
 s sang, and the 2 Chr 29:28
 The s sang loudly with Neh 12:42
 The s went before Ps 68:25
 male and female s Eccl 2:8

SINGING

rejoicing and with s 2 Chr 23:18
 s to the LORD 2 Chr 30:21
 with thanksgivings and s Neh 12:27
 His presence with s Ps 100:2
 and our tongue with s Ps 126:2
 the time of s has come Song 2:12
 break forth into s Is 14:7
 even with joy and s Is 35:2
 come to Zion with s Is 35:10
 With a voice of s, declare Is 48:20
 and come to Zion with s Is 51:11
 and s hymns to God Acts 16:25
 and spiritual songs, s Eph 5:19
 s with grace in your hearts Col 3:16

SINGLENESS

them s of heart to obey 2 Chr 30:12

SINISTER

who understands s Dan 8:23

SINK

I s in deep mire Ps 69:2
 to s he cried out Matt 14:30

SINNED

had ceased, he s yet more Ex 9:34
 has s a young bull without Lev 4:3
 promised, for we have s Num 14:40
 s against their own souls Num 16:38
 to the LORD, "We have s Judg 10:15
 Saul said, "I have s 1 Sam 26:21
 may be that my sons have s Job 1:5
 Have I s? What have I Job 7:20
 those who have s Job 24:19
 for I have s against You Ps 41:4
 You only, have I s Ps 51:4
 you say, "I have not s Jer 2:35
 Jerusalem has s Lam 1:8
 Our fathers s and are Lam 5:7
 we have s and committed Dan 9:5
 the more they s against Me Hos 4:7
 you have s from the days Hos 10:9
 "Father, I have s Matt 27:4
 "Have s by betraying Luke 15:18
 "Rabbi, who s John 9:2
 For as many as have s Rom 2:12
 for all have s and Rom 3:23
 marries, she has not s 1 Cor 7:28
 not spare the angels who s 2 Pet 2:4
 say that we have not s 1 John 1:10
 for the devil has s 1 John 3:8

SINNED AGAINST THE LORD

"I have s your God Ex 10:16
 s your God—had made Deut 9:16
 "Indeed I have s Josh 7:20
 said there, "We have s 1 Sam 7:6
 to Nathan, "I have s 2 Sam 12:13
 For we have s Jer 3:25
 because we have s Jer 8:14
 because you have s Jer 44:23
 because they have s Zeph 1:17

SINNED AGAINST YOU

saying, "We have s Judg 10:10
 I have not s, but you Judg 11:27
 I have not s 1 Sam 24:11
 because they have s 1 Kin 8:33

Your people who have s 2 Chr 6:39
 Israel which we have s Neh 1:6
 heal my soul, for I have s Ps 41:4
 many, we have s Jer 14:7
 fathers, because we have s Dan 9:8

SINNER

the ungodly and the s Prov 11:31
 overthrows the s Prov 13:6
 of the s is stored up for Prov 13:22
 s He gives the work Eccl 2:26
 s shall be trapped by her Eccl 7:26
 s does evil a hundred Eccl 8:12
 As is the good, so is the s Eccl 9:2
 s destroys much good Eccl 9:18
 the city who was a s Luke 7:37
 s who repents than Luke 15:7
 be merciful to me a s Luke 18:13
 can a man who is a s John 9:16
 know that this Man is a s John 9:24
 the ungodly and the s 1 Pet 4:18

SINNERS

See TAX COLLECTORS AND SINNERS
 utterly destroy the s 1 Sam 15:18
 in the path of s Ps 1:1
 nor s in the congregation Ps 1:5
 therefore He teaches s Ps 25:8
 soul with s Ps 26:9
 s be consumed from the Ps 104:35
 son, if s entice you Prov 1:10
 Evil pursues s, but to the Prov 13:21
 not let your heart envy s Prov 23:17
 The s in Zion are Is 33:14
 All the s of My people Amos 9:10
 s came and sat down with Matt 9:10
 the righteous, but s Matt 9:13
 tax collectors and s Matt 11:19
 into the hands of s Matt 26:45
 and s also sat together Mark 2:15
 into the hands of s Mark 14:41
 call the righteous, but s Luke 5:32
 s love those who love Luke 6:32
 of tax collectors and s Luke 7:34
 Galileans were worse s Luke 13:2
 man receives s and eats Luke 15:2
 God does not hear s John 9:31
 while we were still s Rom 5:8
 many were made s Rom 5:19
 the ungodly and for s 1 Tim 1:9
 the world to save s 1 Tim 1:15
 separate from s Heb 7:26
 such hostility from s Heb 12:3
 things which ungodly s Jude 15

SINS

"If a person s Lev 4:2
 s unintentionally in regard Lev 5:15
 of the s of Jeroboam 1 Kin 14:16
 my iniquities and s Job 13:23
 from presumptuous s Ps 19:13
 the s of my youth Ps 25:7
 pain, and forgive all my s Ps 25:18
 Hide Your face from my s Ps 51:9
 s are not hidden from You Ps 69:5
 atonement for our s Ps 79:9
 You, our secret s Ps 90:8
 but he who s against Prov 8:36
 but love covers all s Prov 10:12
 despises his neighbor s Prov 14:21
 s against his own life Prov 20:2
 s have hidden His face Is 59:2
 your s have withheld good Jer 5:25
 He will uncover your s Lam 4:22
 the soul who s shall Ezek 18:4
 to make an end of s Dan 9:24
 His people from their s Matt 1:21
 Jordan, confessing their s Matt 3:6
 power on earth to forgive s Matt 9:6
 if your brother s Matt 18:15
 for the remission of s Matt 26:28
 for the remission of s Mark 1:4
 forgive s but God alone Mark 2:7
 for the remission of s Luke 3:3

on earth to forgive s Luke 5:24
 brother s against you Luke 17:3
 that you will die in your s John 8:24
 I take away their s Rom 11:27
 s according to the 1 Cor 15:3
 are still in your s 1 Cor 15:17
 who gave Himself for our s Gal 1:4
 the forgiveness of s Eph 1:7
 blood, the forgiveness of s Col 1:14
 s are clearly evident 1 Tim 5:24
 by Himself purged our s Heb 1:3
 once to bear the s Heb 9:28
 one sacrifice for s forever Heb 10:12
 cover a multitude of s James 5:20
 that we, having died to s 1 Pet 2:24
 If we confess our s 1 John 1:9
 propitiation for our s 1 John 2:2
 s are forgiven you 1 John 2:12
 Whoever s has neither 1 John 3:6
 He who s is of the devil 1 John 3:8
 propitiation for our s 1 John 4:10
 you share in her s Rev 18:4

SION

See ZION

Name given to all or part of Mt. Hermon, Deut 4:48

SISERA

Canaanite commander of Jabin's army; slain by Jael, Judg 4:2-22

SISTER

Please say you are my s Gen 12:13
 And he said, "She is my s Gen 26:7
 of David had a lovely s 2 Sam 13:1
 are my mother and my s Job 17:14
 fair is your love, my s Song 4:10
 We have a little s Song 8:8
 treacherous s Judah saw it Jer 3:7
 Your elder s is Samaria Ezek 16:46
 is My brother and s Matt 12:50
 You not care that my s Luke 10:40
 loved Martha and her s John 11:5
 to you Phoebe our s Rom 16:1
 s is not under bondage 1 Cor 7:15

SIT

he shall s on my throne 1 Kin 1:13
 Those who s in the Ps 69:12
 "Come down and s Is 47:1
 "Why do we s still Jer 8:14
 but to s on My right Matt 20:23
 and the Pharisees s Matt 23:2
 Grant us that we may s Mark 10:37
 "S at My right hand Mark 12:36
 those who s in darkness Luke 1:79
 s down in the lowest Luke 14:10
 "S at My right hand Heb 1:13
 say to him, "You s James 2:3
 I will grant to s Rev 3:21
 heart, "I s as queen Rev 18:7

SITS

God s on His holy Ps 47:8
 It is He who s above Is 40:22
 so that he s as God 2 Thess 2:4
 Him who s on the throne Rev 4:9
 harlot who s on many Rev 17:1
 where the harlot s Rev 17:15

SITTING

Eli the priest was s on 1 Sam 1:9
 LORD s on His throne 1 Kin 22:19
 LORD s on His throne 2 Chr 18:18
 You know my s down and Ps 139:2
 s on a donkey, a colt, the Matt 21:5
 see the Son of Man s Mark 14:62
 s on a donkey's colt John 12:15
 two angels in white s John 20:12
 where Christ is, s Col 3:1
 I saw twenty-four elders s Rev 4:4
 a woman s on a scarlet Rev 17:3

SIX

S days you shall gather it, Ex 16:26
 S days you shall labor Ex 20:9

SKIES

thick clouds of the s 2 Sam 22:12
 have you spread out the s Job 37:18
 the s sent out a sound Ps 77:17
 and is lifted up to the s Jer 51:9

SKILL

hand forget its s Ps 137:5
 nor favor to men of s Eccl 9:11
 them knowledge and s Dan 1:17
 forth to give you s Dan 9:22

SKILLFUL

Esau was a s hunter, a Gen 25:27
 a s player on the harp 1 Sam 16:16
 all types of s men for 1 Chr 22:15
 s work a man is envied Eccl 4:4
 the hands of a s workman Song 7:1
 send for s walling women Jer 9:17
 who are s to destroy Ezek 21:31

SKILLFULNESS

guided them by the s Ps 78:72

SKIN

God made tunics of s Gen 3:21
 s of his face shone while Ex 34:29
 LORD and said, "S Job 20:4
 sewn sackcloth over my s Job 16:15
 have escaped by the s Job 19:20
 My bones cling to my s Ps 102:5
 nation tall and smooth of s Is 18:2
 Ethiopian change his s Jer 13:23
 s is hot as an oven Lam 5:10
 who strip the s from My Mic 3:2

SKINS

she put the s of the kids Gen 27:16

SKIP

He makes them also s Ps 29:6

SKIPPING

upon the mountains, s Song 2:8

SKULL

to say, Place of a S Matt 27:33

SKY

the faithful witness in the s Ps 89:37
 weather, for the s is red Matt 16:2
 stars of the s in multitude Heb 11:12
 s receded as a scroll Rev 6:14

SLACK

He will not be s Deut 7:10
 s hand becomes poor Prov 10:4
 The Lord is not s 2 Pet 3:9

SLAIN

s his thousands 1 Sam 18:7
 beauty of Israel is s 2 Sam 1:19
 the dead, like the s Ps 88:5
 and all who were s Prov 7:26
 I shall be s in the Prov 22:13
 s men are not s Is 22:2
 no more cover her s Is 26:21
 and the s of the LORD Is 66:16
 and night for the s Jer 9:1
 Those s by the sword Lam 4:9
 the prophets, I have s Hos 6:5
 is the Lamb who was s Rev 5:12

SLANDER

s your own mother's Ps 50:20
 and whoever spreads s Prov 10:18

SLANDERERS

be reverent, not s 1 Tim 3:11
 unforgiving, s 2 Tim 3:3
 in behavior, not s Titus 2:3

SLANDEROUSLY

as we are s reported Rom 3:8

SLAUGHTER

as sheep for the s Ps 44:22
 led as a lamb to the s Is 53:7
 but the Valley of S Jer 7:32
 lamb brought to the s Jer 11:19

"Feed the flock for s Zech 11:4
 led as a sheep to the s Acts 8:32
 as sheep for the s Rom 8:36

SLAVE

that you were a s Deut 15:15
 first shall be s of all Mark 10:44
 commits sin is a s John 8:34
 you called while a s 1 Cor 7:21
 there is neither s nor free Gal 3:28
 you are no longer a s Gal 4:7
 s nor free, but Christ is all Col 3:11

SLAVES

here we are, my lord's s Gen 44:16
 they shall not be sold as s Lev 25:42
 free his male and female s Jer 34:10
 should no longer be s Rom 6:6
 though you were s Rom 6:17
 your members as s Rom 6:19
 having become s of God Rom 6:22
 do not become s 1 Cor 7:23
 whether s or free 1 Cor 12:13
 are s of corruption 2 Pet 2:19

SLAY

s the righteous Gen 18:25
 s a righteous nation Gen 20:4
 Evil shall s the Ps 34:21
 Oh, that You would s Ps 139:19
 s them before me Luke 19:27

SLEEP

God caused a deep s Gen 2:21
 Jacob awoke from his s Gen 28:16
 him to s on her knees Judg 16:19
 the night, when deep s Job 4:13
 my eyes, lest I s Ps 13:3
 Why do You s Ps 44:23
 have sunk into their s Ps 76:5
 they are like a s Ps 90:5
 neither slumber nor s Ps 121:4
 He gives His beloved s Ps 127:2
 I will not give s Ps 132:4
 s will be sweet Prov 3:24
 For they do not s Prov 4:16
 A little s Prov 6:10
 Do not love s Prov 20:13
 a little s, a little slumber Prov 24:33
 The s of a laboring Eccl 5:12
 I s, but my heart is awake Song 5:2
 the spirit of deep s Is 29:10
 Also his s went from Dan 6:18
 I was in a deep s Dan 8:18
 him were heavy with s Luke 9:32
 them, "Why do you s Luke 22:46
 He was overcome by s Acts 20:9
 time to awake out of s Rom 13:11
 among you, and many s 1 Cor 11:30
 We shall not all s 1 Cor 15:51
 "Awake, you who s Eph 5:14
 with Him those who s 1 Thess 4:14
 Therefore let us not s 1 Thess 5:6

SLEEPERS

gently the lips of s Song 7:9

SLEEPING

or perhaps he is s 1 Kin 18:27
 is not dead, but s Matt 9:24
 "Are you still s Matt 26:45
 suddenly, he find you s Mark 13:36
 that night Peter was s Acts 12:6

SLEEPLESSNESS

in labors, in s 2 Cor 6:5
 and toil, in s often 2 Cor 11:27

SLEEPS

wise son; he who s Prov 10:5
 "Our friend Lazarus s John 11:11

SLEPT

I lay down and s Ps 3:5
 but while men s Matt 13:25

SLIGHTED

is the one who is s Prov 12:9

SLING

he had, and his s 1 Sam 17:40
a stone in a s is he Prov 26:8

SLIP

their foot shall s Deut 32:35
my footsteps may not s Ps 17:5

SLIPPERY

way be dark and s Ps 35:6
set them in s places Ps 73:18
be to them like s Jer 23:12

SLOOPS

all the beautiful s Is 2:16

SLOW

but I am s of speech Ex 4:10
S to anger, and abounding Ps 103:8
He who is s to wrath Prov 14:29
the LORD is s to anger Nah 1:3
s of heart to believe in Luke 24:25
hear, s to speak, s James 1:19

SLOW TO ANGER

s, abundant in kindness Neh 9:17
merciful and gracious, s Ps 103:8
full of compassion, s Ps 145:8
but he who is s allays Prov 15:18
gracious and merciful, s Joel 2:13
merciful God, s Jon 4:2
the Lord is s and great Nah 1:3

SLUGGARD

will you slumber, O s Prov 6:9

SLUMBER

who keeps you will not s Ps 121:3
lying down, loving to s Is 56:10
destruction does not s 2 Pet 2:3

SLUMBERED

delayed, they all s Matt 25:5

SLUMBERING

upon men, while s Job 33:15

SMALL

'The place is too s Is 49:20
I will make you s Jer 49:15
may stand, for he is s Amos 7:2
I will make you s Obad 2
the day of s things Zech 4:10
And I saw the dead, s Rev 20:12

SMELL

and he smelled the s Gen 27:27
s there will be a Is 3:24

SMELLS

s the battle from afar Job 39:25

SMITTEN

Him stricken, s Is 53:4

SMOKE

went up like the s Gen 19:28
s is driven away Ps 68:2
are consumed like s Ps 102:3
like a wineskin in s Ps 119:83
like pillars of s Song 3:6
s shall ascend forever Is 34:10
vanish away like s Is 51:6
fire and vapor of s Acts 2:19
s arose out of the pit Rev 9:2
was filled with s Rev 15:8
Her s rises up Rev 19:3

SMOKING

two stubs of s firebrands Is 7:4
s flax He will not quench Is 42:3
s flax He will not quench Matt 12:20

SMOOTH

speak to us s things Is 30:10
And the rough places s Is 40:4
though they speak s Jer 12:6
the rough ways s Luke 3:5

SMOOTH-SKINNED

man, and I am a s Gen 27:11

SMYRNA

Site of one of the seven churches, Rev 1:11

SNAIL

s which melts away as Ps 58:8

SNARE

it will surely be a s Ex 23:33
It became a s to Judg 8:27
that she may be a s 1 Sam 18:21
s snatches their Job 5:5
and he walks into a s Job 18:8
their table become a s Ps 69:22
as a bird from the s Ps 124:7
birds caught in a s Eccl 9:12
and the pit and the s Is 24:17
I have laid a s Jer 50:23
s have come upon us Lam 3:47
is a fowler's s Hos 9:8
a bird fall into a s Amos 3:5
it will come as a s Luke 21:35
temptation and a s 1 Tim 6:9
and escape the s 2 Tim 2:26

SNARED

The wicked is s Ps 9:16
and be broken, be s Is 8:15
all of them are s Is 42:22

SNARES

the s of death Ps 18:5
who seek my life lay s Ps 38:12
and built great s Eccl 9:14
wait as one who sets s Jer 5:26

SNATCH

s the fatherless Job 24:9
neither shall anyone s John 10:28

SNATCHES

s away what was Matt 13:19

SNEER

and you s at it Mal 1:13

SNIFFED

they s at the wind Jer 14:6

SNORTING

s strikes terror Job 39:20

SNOW

See WHITE AS SNOW
and heat consume the s Job 24:19
For He says to the s Job 37:6
the treasury of s Job 38:22
shall be whiter than s Ps 51:7
He gives s like wool Ps 147:16
As s in summer and Prov 26:1
She is not afraid of s Prov 31:21
shall be as white as s Is 1:18
garment was white as s Dan 7:9
clothing as white as s Matt 28:3
wool, as white as s Rev 1:14

SOAKED

their land shall be s Is 34:7

SOAP

lye, and use much s Jer 2:22

SOBER

of the day be s 1 Thess 5:8
the older men be s Titus 2:2

SOBERLY

think, but to think s Rom 12:3
we should live s Titus 2:12

SOCHOH

Town in Judah where David kills Goliath, Josh 15:1, 35; 1 Sam 17:1, 49

SOCKET

touched the s of his hip Gen 32:25
arm be torn from the s Job 31:22

SODA

and like vinegar on s Prov 25:20

SODOM

Lot chooses to live there, Gen 13:10–13
Plundered by Chedorlaomer, Gen 14:8–24
Abraham intercedes for, Gen 18:16–33

Destroyed by God, Gen 19:1–29

Cited as example of sin and destruction, Deut 29:23; 32:32; Is 1:9, 10; 3:9; Jer 23:14; 49:18; Lam 4:6; Ezek 16:46–63; Matt 11:23, 24; 2 Pet 2:6; Jude 7

SODOM AND GOMORRAH

and the kings of S Gen 14:10
the outcry against S Gen 18:20
brimstone and fire on S Gen 19:24
like the overthrow of S Deut 29:23
As God overthrew S Jer 50:40
as God overthrew S Amos 4:11
for the land of S Matt 10:15
more tolerable for S Mark 6:11
turning the cities of S 2 Pet 2:6
as S, and the cities Jude 7

SODOMITES

nor homosexuals, nor s 1 Cor 6:9
for fornicators, for s 1 Tim 1:10

SOFT

s answer turns away Prov 15:1
clothed in s garments Matt 11:8

SOFTER

his words were s Ps 55:21

SOJOURNER

But no s had to lodge Job 31:32

SOJOURNERS

are strangers and s Lev 25:23
I beg you as s 1 Pet 2:11

SOLD

s his birthright Gen 25:33
the house that was s Lev 25:33
their Rock had s Deut 32:30
and He s them into the Judg 2:14
s themselves to do 2 Kin 17:17
Had we been s as male Esth 7:4
who was s as a slave Ps 105:17
s all that he had Matt 13:46
they bought, they s Luke 17:28
s their possessions Acts 2:45
but I am carnal, s Rom 7:14
Eat whatever is s 1 Cor 10:25

SOLDIER

hardship as a good s 2 Tim 2:3
enlisted him as a s 2 Tim 2:4

SOLDIERS

sum of money to the s Matt 28:12
The s also mocked Luke 23:36
s twisted a crown John 19:2

SOLEMN

and very s lamentation Gen 50:10
a s observance for all the Ex 12:42
a sabbath of s rest for Lev 16:31
"Proclaim a s assembly 2 Kin 10:20
the refuse of your s feasts Mal 2:3

SOLEMNLY

saying, "The man s Gen 43:3
s testified of the Acts 28:23

SOLID

milk and not with s food 1 Cor 3:2
the s foundation 2 Tim 2:19
need milk and not s food Heb 5:12

SOLITARILY

heritage, who dwell s Mic 7:14

SOLITARY

God sets the s in Ps 68:6

SOLOMON

David's son by Bathsheba, 2 Sam 12:24
Becomes king, 1 Kin 1:5–53
Receives and carries out David's instructions, 1 Kin 2
Prays for and demonstrates wisdom, 1 Kin 3:3–28; 4:29–34
Builds and dedicates temple; builds palace, 1 Kin 5–8

Lord appears to. 1 Kin 9:1-9
His fame and glory. 1 Kin 9:10-10:29
Falls into idolatry: warned by God.
1 Kin 11:1-13
Adversaries arise. 1 Kin 11:14-40
Death of. 1 Kin 11:41-43
Writings credited to him. Ps 72: 127;
Prov 1:1; 10:1; 25:1; Eccl 1:1; Song
1:1

SOMEBODY

up, claiming to be s Acts 5:36

SOMETHING

"Simon, I have s Luke 7:40
thinks himself to be s Gal 6:3

SON

See BELOVED SON; ONLY BEGOTTEN
SON

wife shall bear you a s Gen 17:19
Abraham a s in his old Gen 21:2
your s, your only s Isaac Gen 22:2
the knife to slay his s Gen 22:10
he called Esau his older s Gen 27:1
"I am your s, your Gen 27:32
conceived and bore a s Gen 29:32
Joseph my s is still alive Gen 45:28
And she bore him a s Ex 2:22
a s born to Naomi Ruth 4:17
"Send me your s David 1 Sam 16:19
she bore a s, and he 2 Sam 12:24
king is grieved for his s 2 Sam 19:2
he charged Solomon his s 1 Kin 2:1
"My s, as for me, it was 1 Chr 22:7
gave his s Solomon 1 Chr 28:11
Me. "You are My S Ps 2:7
Upon the s of man whom Ps 80:17
I was my father's s Prov 4:3
s makes a glad father Prov 10:1
s is a grief to his Prov 17:25
Correct your s, and he Prov 29:17
And what, s of my womb Prov 31:2
shall conceive and bear a S Is 7:14
is born, unto us a S Is 9:6
heaven, O Lucifer, s Is 14:12
out of Egypt I called My s Hos 11:1
He is an unwise s Hos 13:13
prophet, nor was I a s Amos 7:14
s honors his father Mal 1:6
will bring forth a S Matt 1:21
"This is My beloved S Matt 3:17
no one knows the S Matt 11:27
not the carpenter's s Matt 13:55
are the Christ, the S Matt 16:16
For the S of Man will Matt 16:27
of all he sent his s Matt 21:37
Whose S is He Matt 22:42
'Lord,' how is He his S Matt 22:45
as much a s of hell Matt 23:15
of the S of Man Matt 24:37
'I am the S of God Matt 27:43
of Jesus Christ, the S Mark 1:1
S of Man has power Mark 2:10
"This is My beloved S Mark 9:7
'They will respect my s Mark 12:6
this Man was the S Mark 15:39
called the S of the Luke 1:32
"You are My beloved S Luke 3:22
the Christ, the S of God Luke 4:41
S of Man has power Luke 5:24
S of Man is also Lord Luke 6:5
out, the only s Luke 7:12
S of Man has come Luke 7:34
And if a s of peace Luke 10:6
will be divided against s Luke 12:53
to be called your s Luke 15:19
because he also is a s Luke 19:9
I will send my beloved s Luke 20:13
You then the S of God Luke 22:70
The only begotten S John 1:18
gave His only begotten S John 3:16
God did not send His S John 3:17
the Father loves the S John 3:35

S can do nothing John 5:19
For the Father loves the S John 5:20
everyone who sees the S John 6:40
s abides forever John 8:35
if the S makes you free John 8:36
S of Man must be lifted John 12:34
"Woman, behold your s John 19:26
S of Encouragement Acts 4:36
Jesus Christ is the S Acts 8:37
in the gospel of His S Rom 1:9
by sending His own S Rom 8:3
not spare His own S Rom 8:32
S Himself will also be 1 Cor 15:28
God sent forth His S Gal 4:4
longer a slave but a s Gal 4:7
you for my s Onesimus Philem 10
"You are My S Heb 1:5
but Christ as a S over His Heb 3:6
though He was a S Heb 5:8
to be called the s Heb 11:24
"This is My beloved S 2 Pet 1:17
S cleanses us from all sin 1 John 1:7
Whoever denies the S 1 John 2:23
sent His S to be the 1 John 4:10
Jesus is the S of God 1 John 4:15
God has given of His S 1 John 5:10
who has the S has life 1 John 5:12

SON OF DAVID

the s had a lovely 2 Sam 13:1
Solomon the s king 1 Chr 29:22
proverbs of Solomon the s Prov 1:1
of the Preacher, the s Eccl 1:1
Jesus Christ, the S Matt 1:1
"Joseph, s, do not be Matt 1:20
S, have mercy on us Matt 9:27
"Could this be the S Matt 12:23
on me, O Lord, the S Matt 15:22
Hosanna to the S Matt 21:9
said to Him, "The S Matt 22:42
"Jesus, S, have mercy Mark 10:47
that the Christ is the S Mark 12:35
son of Nathan, the s Luke 3:31
"Jesus, S, have mercy Luke 18:38

SON OF GOD

the fourth is like the S Dan 3:25
"If you are the S Matt 4:3
with You, Jesus, You S Matt 8:29
"Truly You are the S Matt 14:33
You are the Christ, the S Matt 26:63
If You are the S Matt 27:40
"Truly this was the S Matt 27:54
born will be called the S Luke 1:35
of Adam, the s Luke 3:38
testified that this is the S John 1:34
"Rabbi, You are the S John 1:49
the only begotten S John 3:18
hear the voice of the S John 5:25
"Do you believe in the S John 9:35
I said, 'I am the S John 10:36
the S may be glorified John 11:4
You are the Christ, the S John 11:27
He made Himself the S John 19:7
is the Christ, the S John 20:31
declared to be the S Rom 1:4
I live by faith in the S Gal 2:20
of the knowledge of the S Eph 4:13
heavens, Jesus the S Heb 4:14
again for themselves the S Heb 6:6
but made like the S Heb 7:3
trampled the S underfoot Heb 10:29
For this purpose the S 1 John 3:8
that Jesus is the S 1 John 5:5
"These things says the S Rev 2:18

SON OF MAN

s that You visit him Ps 8:4
s that You are mindful Ps 144:3
in princes, nor in a s Ps 146:3
"S, stand on your feet Ezek 2:1
"S, eat what you find Ezek 3:1
behold One like the S Dan 7:13
the S has nowhere to Matt 8:20

S has power on earth Matt 9:6
Israel before the S Matt 10:23
The S came eating and Matt 11:19
the S is Lord even Matt 12:8
a word against the S Matt 12:32
will the S be three days Matt 12:40
the good seed is the S Matt 13:37
men say that I, the S Matt 16:13
S coming in His Matt 16:28
until the S is risen Matt 17:9
S is about to be betrayed Matt 17:22
S has come to save Matt 18:11
S sits on the throne Matt 19:28
S will be betrayed Matt 20:18
S did not come to be Matt 20:28
will the coming of the S Matt 24:27
S will be delivered up Matt 26:2
S indeed goes as it is Matt 26:24
S must suffer many Mark 8:31
S also will be ashamed Mark 8:38
the S also will confess Luke 12:8
one of the days of the S Luke 17:22
S has come to seek Luke 19:10
to stand before the S Luke 21:36
betraying the S with a Luke 22:48
descending upon the S John 1:51
heaven, that is the S John 3:13
because He is the S John 5:27
which the S will give you John 6:27
eat the flesh of the S John 6:53
"When you lift up the S John 8:28
S should be glorified John 12:23
"Now the S is glorified John 13:31
heavens opened and the S Acts 7:56
S that You take care Heb 2:6
One like the S Rev 1:13
cloud sat One like the S Rev 14:14

SONG

is my strength and s Ex 15:2
Then Israel sang this s Num 21:17
Sing to Him a new s Ps 33:3
He has put a new s Ps 40:3
in the night His s Ps 42:8
me, and I am the s Ps 69:12
sing to the LORD a new s Ps 96:1
LORD is my strength and s Ps 118:14
asked of us a s Ps 137:3
I will sing a new s Ps 144:9
Sing to the LORD a new s Ps 149:1
The s of songs, which is Song 1:1
to my Well-beloved a s Is 5:1
my strength and my s Is 12:2
Sing to the LORD a new s Is 42:10
their taunting s Lam 3:14
I am their taunting s Lam 3:63
as a very lovely s Ezek 33:32
They sang a new s Rev 5:9
a new s before the throne Rev 14:3
And they sing the s Rev 15:3

SONGS

my Maker, who gives s Job 35:10
surround me with s Ps 32:7
have been my s in the Ps 119:54
Sing us one of the s Ps 137:3
is one who sings s Prov 25:20
the noise of your s Amos 5:23
and spiritual s Eph 5:19

SONS

s of Jacob were twelve Gen 35:22
circumcise the s of Israel Josh 5:2
the s of Eli were corrupt 1 Sam 2:12
the s of the prophets who 2 Kin 2:3
s of the prophets cried out 2 Kin 4:1
the s of the prophets 2 Kin 4:38
these were the s of David 1 Chr 3:1
s come to honor Job 14:21
exalted among the s of Ps 12:8
shall be Your s Ps 45:16
s of men to do under Eccl 2:3
my beloved among the s Song 2:3
Your s shall make haste Is 49:17

s shall come from afar Is 60:4
 "Has Israel no s Jer 49:1
 The precious s of Zion Lam 4:2
 eat their s in your midst Ezek 5:10
 "You are the s Hos 1:10
 He will purify the s Mal 3:3
 to him, "Then the s Matt 17:26
 A man had two s, and Matt 21:28
 be forgiven the s of men Mark 3:28
 and you will be s Luke 6:35
 that you may become s John 12:36
 You are s of the Acts 3:25
 called s of the living God Rom 9:26
 and you shall be My s 2 Cor 6:18
 who are of faith are s Gal 3:7
 the adoption as s Gal 4:5
 because you are s Gal 4:6
 us to adoption as s by Jesus Eph 1:5
 You are all s of light 1 Thess 5:5
 in bringing many s Heb 2:10
 speaks to you as to s Heb 12:5
 illegitimate and not s Heb 12:8

SONS OF GOD

s saw the daughters of men Gen 6:2
 s came to present Job 1:6
 all the s shouted for Job 38:7
 for they shall be called s Matt 5:9
 to the angels and are s Luke 20:36
 Spirit of God, these are s Rom 8:14
 for the revealing of the s Rom 8:19
 For you are all s Gal 3:26

SOON

for it is s cut off Ps 90:10
 s forgot His works Ps 106:13

SOOTHED

or bound up, or s Is 1:6

SOOTHSAYERS

your dreamers, your s, or Jer 27:9
 A sword is against the s Jer 50:36
 the s cannot declare to the Dan 2:27

SORCERER

omens, or a s Deut 18:10
 But Elymas the s Acts 13:8

SORCERERS

soothsayers, or your s Jer 27:9
 outside are dogs and s Rev 22:15

SORCERESS

shall not permit a s Ex 22:18

SORCERY

For there is no s Num 23:23
 idolatry, s Gal 5:20

SORES

and putrefying s Is 1:6
 Lazarus, full of s Luke 16:20

SORROW

multiply your s Gen 3:16
 s dances before him Job 41:22
 in my soul, having s Ps 13:2
 s is continually Ps 38:17
 I found trouble and s Ps 116:3
 And He adds no s Prov 10:22
 the heart may s Prov 14:13
 S is better than Eccl 7:3
 Therefore remove s Eccl 11:10
 and desperate s Is 17:11
 you shall cry for s Is 65:14
 to see labor and s Jer 20:18
 Your s is incurable Jer 30:15
 added grief to my s Jer 45:3
 gather those who s Zeph 3:18
 them sleeping from s Luke 22:45
 s has filled your John 16:6
 s will be turned John 16:20
 that I have great s Rom 9:2
 s produces repentance 2 Cor 7:10
 lest I should have s Phil 2:27
 s as others who have 1 Thess 4:13
 no more death, nor s Rev 21:4

SORROWFUL

am a woman of s spirit 1 Sam 1:15
 But I am poor and s Ps 69:29
 For all his days are s Eccl 2:23
 replenished every s Jer 31:25
 were exceedingly s Matt 17:23
 saying, he went away s Matt 19:22
 soul is exceedingly s Matt 26:38
 and went away s Mark 10:22
 and you will be s John 16:20
 if I make you s 2 Cor 2:2
 and I may be less s Phil 2:28

SORROWS

the s of Sheol 2 Sam 22:6
 s God distributes Job 21:17
 s shall be multiplied Ps 16:4
 by men, a Man of s Is 53:3
 are the beginning of s Matt 24:8
 through with many s 1 Tim 6:10

SORRY

s that He had made man Gen 6:6
 who will be s for you Is 51:19
 And the king was s Matt 14:9
 For you were made s 2 Cor 7:9

SOSTHENES

Ruler of the synagogue at Corinth,
 Acts 18:17
 ——— Paul's Christian brother, 1 Cor 1:1

SOUGHT

I s the LORD Ps 34:4
 whole heart I have s Ps 119:10
 s the one I love Song 3:1
 shall be called S Out Is 62:12
 So I s for a man Ezek 22:30
 s what was lost Ezek 34:4
 s favor from Him Hos 12:4
 LORD, and have not s Zeph 1:6
 s it diligently Heb 12:17

SOUL

s enter their council Gen 49:6
 with all your s Deut 6:5
 was knit to the s 1 Sam 18:1
 your heart and your s 1 Chr 22:19
 "My s loathes my life Job 10:1
 as you do, if your s Job 16:4
 s draws near the Pit Job 33:22
 will not leave my s Ps 16:10
 converting the s Ps 19:7
 He restores my s Ps 23:3
 s shall make its boast Ps 34:2
 s shall be joyful Ps 35:9
 you cast down, O my s Ps 42:5
 s silently waits Ps 62:1
 He has done for my s Ps 66:16
 Let my s live Ps 119:175
 s knows very well Ps 139:14
 No one cares for my s Ps 142:4
 so destroys his own s Prov 6:32
 me wrongs his own s Prov 8:36
 it is not good for a s Prov 19:2
 A satisfied s loathes Prov 27:7
 When You make His s Is 53:10
 s delight itself Is 55:2
 and your s shall live Is 55:3
 you have heard, O my s Jer 4:19
 the s of the father as Ezek 18:4
 the proud, his s Hab 2:4
 able to destroy both s Matt 10:28
 and loses his own s Matt 16:26
 with all your s Matt 22:37
 "My s magnifies the Lord Luke 1:46
 through your own s also Luke 2:35
 And I will say to my s Luke 12:19
 Now My s is troubled John 12:27
 not leave my s in Hades Acts 2:27
 of one heart and one s Acts 4:32
 your whole spirit, s 1 Thess 5:23
 to the saving of the s Heb 10:39
 his way will save a s James 5:20
 which war against the s 1 Pet 2:11

his righteous s 2 Pet 2:8
 health, just as your s 3 John 2

SOULS

See AFFLICT YOUR SOULS
 and will save the s Ps 72:13
 and he who wins s Prov 11:30
 s shall be like a Jer 31:12
 who made our very s Jer 38:16
 will find rest for your s Matt 11:29
 patience possess your s Luke 21:19
 unsettling your s Acts 15:24
 is able to save your s James 1:21
 the salvation of your s 1 Pet 1:9
 and bodies and s of men Rev 18:13
 I saw the s of those who Rev 20:4

SOUND

He stores up s wisdom Prov 2:7
 s heart is life Prov 14:30
 one rises up at the s Eccl 12:4
 to you at the s of your cry Is 30:19
 voice was like the s Ezek 43:2
 s an alarm in My holy Joel 2:1
 do not s a trumpet Matt 6:2
 For the trumpet will s 1 Cor 15:52
 is contrary to s doctrine 1 Tim 1:10
 s words which you 2 Tim 1:13
 that they may be s Titus 1:13
 as the s of many waters Rev 1:15
 s of their wings was like Rev 9:9

SOUNDED

The first angel s Rev 8:7

SOUNDNESS

There is no s in my Ps 38:3
 him this perfect s Acts 3:16

SOUNDS

Dreadful s are in his Job 15:21
 a distinction in the s 1 Cor 14:7

SOUTH

s comes the whirlwind Job 37:9
 as the streams in the S Ps 126:4
 And to the s, "Do not keep Is 43:6
 the S shall become strong Dan 11:5
 The queen of the S will Matt 12:42

SOW

s trouble reap Job 4:8
 then let me s Job 31:8
 s fields and plant Ps 107:37
 Those who s in tears Ps 126:5
 the wind will not s Eccl 11:4
 Blessed are you who s Is 32:20
 ground, and do not s Jer 4:3
 "They s the wind Hos 8:7
 S for yourselves Hos 10:12
 You shall s, but not reap Mic 6:15
 s is not made alive 1 Cor 15:36
 they neither s nor reap Luke 12:24

SOWED

s tares among the wheat Matt 13:25

SOWER

may give seed to the s Is 55:10
 "Behold, a s went Matt 13:3
 a s went out to sow Mark 4:3
 The s sows the word Mark 4:14
 A s went out to sow Luke 8:5

SOWN

shall they be s Is 40:24
 a land not s Jer 2:2
 "You have s much Hag 1:6
 where you have not s Matt 25:24
 that was s in their hearts Mark 4:15
 s spiritual things 1 Cor 9:11
 It is s in weakness 1 Cor 15:43
 of righteousness is s James 3:18

SOWS

s righteousness will Prov 11:18
 s the good seed is the Matt 13:37
 "One s and another John 4:37

s sparingly will 2 Cor 9:6
for whatever a man s Gal 6:7

SPAN

My life s is gone, taken Is 38:12
measured heaven with a s Is 40:12

SPARE

The LORD would not s Deut 29:20
hand, but s his life Job 2:6
S the poor and needy Ps 72:13
I will not pity nor s Jer 13:14
say, "S Your people Joel 2:17
s them as a man spares Mal 3:17
He who did not s Rom 8:32
s the natural branches Rom 11:21
flesh, but I would s 1 Cor 7:28
if God did not s 2 Pet 2:4

SPARES

s his rod hates his Prov 13:24

SPARK

the work of it as a s Is 1:31

SPARKLES

it is red, when it s Prov 23:31

SPARKS

to trouble, as the s Job 5:7
s you have kindled Is 50:11

SPARROW

s has found a home Ps 84:3
awake, and am like a s Ps 102:7

SPARROWS

more value than many s Matt 10:31

SPAT

Then they s on Him Matt 27:30
in his ears, and He s Mark 7:33

SPEAK

only the word that I s Num 22:35
s just once more Judg 6:39
s good words to them 1 Kin 12:7
oh, that God would s Job 11:5
Will you s wickedly Job 13:7
For God may s in one Job 33:14
Will he s softly to Job 41:3
Do not s in the Prov 23:9
and a time to s Eccl 3:7
If they do not s Is 8:20
tongue He will s Is 28:11
s anymore in His name Jer 20:9
and s comfort to her Hos 2:14
at the end it will s Hab 2:3
s each man the truth Zech 8:16
But only s a word, and my Matt 8:8
or what you should s Matt 10:19
it is not you who s Matt 10:20
to you when all men s Luke 6:26
s what We know and John 3:11
"I who s to you am He John 4:26
s what I have seen John 8:38
The words that I s to John 14:10
He hears He will s John 16:13
Spirit and began to s Acts 2:4
Do all s with tongues 1 Cor 12:30
I s with the tongues 1 Cor 13:1
I would rather s 1 Cor 14:19
So s and so do as James 2:12

SPEAKING

s your own words Is 58:13
while they are still s Is 65:24
a proof of Christ s 2 Cor 13:3
envy, and all evil s 1 Pet 2:1

SPEAKS

to face, as a man s Ex 33:11
this day that God s Deut 5:24
day that I am He who s Is 52:6
the one who s uprightly Amos 5:10
He whom God has sent s John 3:34
When he s a lie John 8:44
he who s with tongues 1 Cor 14:5
If anyone s in a tongue 1 Cor 14:27
he being dead still s Heb 11:4

of sprinkling that s Heb 12:24
s evil of a brother James 4:11

SPEAR

lay hold on bow and s Jer 6:23
His side with a s John 19:34

SPEARS

whose teeth are s Ps 57:4
and their s into Is 2:4
pruning hooks into s Joel 3:10

SPECIAL

you shall be a s treasure Ex 19:5
you to be His s people Deut 26:18
Israel for His s treasure Ps 135:4
His own s people Titus 2:14
nation, His own s people 1 Pet 2:9

SPECK

do you look at the s Matt 7:3

SPECTACLE

and make you a s Nah 3:6
we have been made a s 1 Cor 4:9
He made a public s Col 2:15
you were made a s Heb 10:33

SPEECH

one language and one s Gen 11:1
drop as the rain, my s Deut 32:2
s settled on them as Job 29:22
There is no s nor Ps 19:3
s is not becoming Prov 17:7
your s shall be low Is 29:4
a people of obscure s Is 33:19
not understand My s John 8:43
s deceive the hearts Rom 16:18
and his s contemptible 2 Cor 10:10
I am untrained in s 2 Cor 11:6
s always be with grace Col 4:6

SPEECHLESS

your mouth for the s Prov 31:8
And he was s Matt 22:12

SPEED

they shall come with s Is 5:26

SPEEDILY

judgment be executed s Ezra 7:26
to me, deliver me s Ps 31:2
I call, answer me s Ps 102:2

SPEND

Why do you s money for Is 55:2
whatever more you s Luke 10:35
I will very gladly s 2 Cor 12:15
amiss, that you may s James 4:3

SPENT

strength shall be s Lev 26:20
For my life is s Ps 31:10
in vain, I have s Is 49:4
"But when he had s Luke 15:14

SPICES

s for the anointing oil Ex 25:6
s in great quantity 1 Kin 10:10
that its s may flow out Song 4:16
and Salome bought s Mark 16:1
s which they had Luke 24:1
strips of linen with the s John 19:40

SPIDER

s skillfully grasps Prov 30:28

SPIES

to them, "You are s Gen 42:9
men who had been s Josh 6:23
s who pretended Luke 20:20

SPIKENARD

fragrant henna with s Song 4:13
of very costly oil of s Mark 14:3

SPIN

neither toil nor s Matt 6:28

SPINDLE

her hand holds the s Prov 31:19

SPIRIT

See HOLY SPIRIT; FILLED WITH THE
HOLY SPIRIT; UNCLEAN SPIRIT

S shall not strive Gen 6:3
the breath of the s of life Gen 7:22
filled with the s of wisdom Ex 28:3
and everyone whose s Ex 35:21
S that is upon you Num 11:17
And the S rested upon Num 11:26
LORD would put His S Num 11:29
he has a different s Num 14:24
in whom is the S Num 27:18
God sent a s of ill will Judg 9:23
portion of your s 2 Kin 2:9
I will send a s upon him 2 Kin 19:7
there was no more s 2 Chr 9:4
s came forward and 2 Chr 18:20
also gave Your good S Neh 9:20
against them by Your S Neh 9:30
Then a s passed before Job 4:15
care has preserved my s Job 10:12
And whose s came from Job 26:4
hand I commit my s Ps 31:5
Your Holy S from me Ps 51:11
s was not faithful Ps 78:6
You send forth Your S Ps 104:30
Your S is good Ps 143:10
I will pour out my s on Prov 1:23
The s of a man is the Prov 20:27
Who knows the s Eccl 3:21
s will return to God Eccl 12:7
night, yes, by my s Is 26:9
out on you the s Is 29:10
are flesh, and not s Is 31:3
S has gathered them Is 34:16
is the life of my s Is 38:16
I have put My S Is 42:1
and His S have sent Me Is 48:16
s would fall before Me Is 57:16
S entered me when He Ezek 2:2
the S lifted me up Ezek 3:12
who follow their own s Ezek 13:3
new heart and a new s Ezek 18:31
be feeble, every s Ezek 21:7
I will put My S Ezek 36:27
in him is the S Dan 4:8
as an excellent s Dan 5:12
walk in a false s Mic 2:11
and forms the s Zech 12:1
with child of the Holy S Matt 1:18
"Blessed are the poor in s Matt 5:3
I will put My S Matt 12:18
S descending upon Him Mark 1:10
Immediately the S Mark 1:12
s indeed is willing Mark 14:38
go before Him in the s Luke 1:17
in the power of the S Luke 4:14
manner of s you are of Luke 9:55
When an unclean s goes Luke 11:24
against the Holy S Luke 12:10
hands I commit My s Luke 23:46
they had seen a s Luke 24:37
s does not have flesh Luke 24:39
I saw the S descending John 1:32
born of water and the S John 3:5
God is S John 4:24
I speak to you are s John 6:63
He groaned in the s John 11:33
He was troubled in s John 13:21
all filled with the Holy S Acts 2:4
but if a s or an angel Acts 23:9
to the S of holiness, by the Rom 1:4
whom I serve with my s Rom 1:9
but according to the S Rom 8:1
according to the S Rom 8:5
the flesh but in the S Rom 8:9
s that we are children Rom 8:16
what the mind of the S Rom 8:27
to us through His S 1 Cor 2:10
gifts, but the same S 1 Cor 12:4
in a tongue, my s 1 Cor 14:14
but the S gives life 2 Cor 3:6
Now the Lord is the S 2 Cor 3:17
we have the same s 2 Cor 4:13
Having begun in the S Gal 3:3

has sent forth the S Gal 4:6
 Walk in the S, and you Gal 5:16
 But if you are led by the S Gal 5:18
 the fruit of the S is love Gal 5:22
 If we live in the S, let us Gal 5:25
 he who sows to the S Gal 6:8
 with the Holy S Eph 1:13
 may give to you the s Eph 1:17
 the unity of the S Eph 4:3
 is one body and one S Eph 4:4
 stand fast in one s Phil 1:27
 yet I am with you in s Col 2:5
 Do not quench the S 1 Thess 5:19
 and may your whole s 1 Thess 5:23
 sanctification by the S 2 Thess 2:13
 flesh, justified in the S 1 Tim 3:16
 S expressly says that 1 Tim 4:1
 not given us a s of fear 2 Tim 1:7
 division of soul and s Heb 4:12
 through the eternal S Heb 9:14
 body without the s is James 2:26
 S who dwells in us James 4:5
 S of Christ who was in 1 Pet 1:11
 made alive by the S 1 Pet 3:18
 S whom He has given 1 John 3:24
 do not believe every s 1 John 4:1
 has given us of His S 1 John 4:13
 S who bears witness 1 John 5:6
 not having the S Jude 19
 I was in the S on the Rev 1:10
 him hear what the S Rev 2:7
 Immediately I was in the S Rev 4:2
 And the S and the Rev 22:17

SPIRIT OF GOD

S was hovering over the Gen 1:2
 a man in whom is the S Gen 41:38
 filled him with the S Ex 31:3
 the S came upon him Num 24:2
 S came upon him 1 Sam 10:10
 the S came upon Saul 1 Sam 11:6
 S came upon the 1 Sam 19:20
 The S has made me Job 33:4
 in a vision by the S Ezek 11:24
 that the S is in you Dan 5:14
 S descending like a dove Matt 3:16
 out demons by the S Matt 12:28
 indeed the S dwells in you Rom 8:9
 by the power of the S Rom 15:19
 the things of the S 1 Cor 2:14
 the S dwells in you 1 Cor 3:16
 I think I also have the S 1 Cor 7:40
 no one speaking by the S 1 Cor 12:3
 By this you know the S 1 John 4:2

SPIRIT OF THE LORD

The S came upon him Judg 3:10
 the S came upon Gideon Judg 6:34
 S came mightily upon Judg 14:6
 S will come upon you 1 Sam 10:6
 S came upon David 1 Sam 16:13
 S departed from Saul 1 Sam 16:14
 S will carry you 1 Kin 18:12
 S has taken him up 2 Kin 2:16
 The S shall rest upon Him Is 11:2
 The S GOD is upon Me Is 61:1
 Then the S fell upon me Ezek 11:5
 Is the S restricted Mic 2:7
 am full of power by the S Mic 3:8
 The S is upon Me Luke 4:18
 together to test the S Acts 5:9
 S caught Philip away Acts 8:39

SPIRIT OF TRUTH

S, whom the world John 14:17
 S who proceeds from John 15:26
 He, the S has come John 16:13
 By this we know the s 1 John 4:6

SPIRITS

See UNCLEAN SPIRITS
 God, the God of the s Num 16:22
 who makes His angels s Ps 104:4
 the LORD weighs the s Prov 16:2

power over unclean s Matt 10:1
 discerning of s 1 Cor 12:10
 heed to deceiving s 1 Tim 4:1
 not all ministering s Heb 1:14
 to the Father of s Heb 12:9
 and preached to the s 1 Pet 3:19
 spirit, but test the s 1 John 4:1

SPIRITUAL

the s man is insane Hos 9:7
 we know that the law is s Rom 7:14
 s judges all things 1 Cor 2:15
 s people but as to 1 Cor 3:1
 Now concerning s gifts 1 Cor 12:1
 to be a prophet or s 1 Cor 14:37
 However, the s is not 1 Cor 15:46
 s restore such a one Gal 6:1
 being built up a s house 1 Pet 2:5

SPIRITUALLY

s minded is life Rom 8:6
 because they are s 1 Cor 2:14

SPIT

He had s on his eyes Mark 8:23
 s on Him, and kill Him Mark 10:34
 some began to s on Him Mark 14:65
 insulted and s upon Luke 18:32

SPITEFULLY

for those who s Matt 5:44

SPITTING

face from shame and s Is 50:6

SPLENDOR

with majesty and s Job 40:10
 Like the s of the meadows Ps 37:20
 on the glorious s Ps 145:5
 the s of old men is their Prov 20:29
 of Zion all her s Lam 1:6
 wisdom, and defile your s Ezek 28:7

SPLIT

ground s apart under Num 16:31
 pierced his head, she s Judg 5:26
 the altar shall s apart 1 Kin 13:3
 of Olives shall be s in two Zech 14:4
 and the rocks were s Matt 27:51

SPOIL

hate us have taken s Ps 44:10
 when they divide the s Is 9:3
 He shall divide the s Is 53:12
 Take s of silver Nah 2:9
 s will be divided Zech 14:1

SPOILER

I have created the s Is 54:16

SPOKE

God s to Moses and said Ex 6:2
 s they did not hear Is 66:4
 who feared the LORD s Mal 3:16
 "No man ever s John 7:46
 We know that God s John 9:29
 I was a child, I s 1 Cor 13:11
 in various ways s Heb 1:1
 s as they were moved 2 Pet 1:21

SPOKEN

See LORD HAS SPOKEN
 just as you have s Num 14:28
 God has s once Ps 62:11
 I have not s in secret Is 45:19
 LORD has s against you Amos 3:1
 "What have we s Mal 3:13
 s this parable against Luke 20:19
 the prophets have s Luke 24:25
 why am I evil s 1 Cor 10:30

SPOKESMAN

So he shall be your s Ex 4:16

SPONGE

them ran and took a s Matt 27:48

SPOT

and there is no s Song 4:7
 church, not having s Eph 5:27
 commandment without s 1 Tim 6:14

Himself without s Heb 9:14
 blemish and without s 1 Pet 1:19

SPOTS

They are s and 2 Pet 2:13
 These are s in your Jude 12

SPOUSE

your love, my sister, my s Song 4:10
 Israel served for a s Hos 12:12

SPREAD

fell on my knees and s Ezra 9:5
 they have s a net by Ps 140:5
 Then He s it before me Ezek 2:10
 Then the word of God s Acts 6:7
 the Lord was being s Acts 13:49
 their message will s 2 Tim 2:17

SPREADS

He alone s out the Job 9:8
 s them out like a tent Is 40:22
 Zion s out her hands Lam 1:17

SPRING

Truth shall s out of Ps 85:11
 is like a murky s Prov 25:26
 sister, my spouse, a s Song 4:12
 s forth I tell you Is 42:9
 of Israel to s forth Ezek 29:21
 s shall become dry Hos 13:15
 s send forth fresh James 3:11

SPRINGING

a fountain of water s John 4:14
 of bitterness s Heb 12:15

SPRINGS

"Have you entered the s Job 38:16
 He sends the s into Ps 104:10
 and the thirsty land s Is 35:7
 and the dry land s Is 41:18

SPRINKLE

He s many nations Is 52:15
 Then I will s Ezek 36:25

SPRINKLED

s dust on his head Job 2:12
 and hyssop, and s Heb 9:19
 having our hearts s Heb 10:22

SPRINKLING

s that speaks Heb 12:24
 for obedience and s 1 Pet 1:2

SPOUT

down, that it will s Job 14:7
 and the seed should s Mark 4:27

SPY

men to s out the land Num 13:2
 sent to s out Jericho Josh 6:25
 to s out the land and Judg 18:2
 to s out our liberty Gal 2:4

SQUARE

the night in the open s Gen 19:2
 in the open s of the city Judg 19:15
 took my seat in the open s Job 29:7
 the city is laid out as a s Rev 21:16

SQUARES

voice in the open s Prov 1:20
 s I will seek the one Song 3:2

STABILITY

will be the s of your Is 33:6

STAFF

this Jordan with my s Gen 32:10
 your feet, and your s Ex 12:11
 the donkey with his s Num 22:27
 Your rod and Your s Ps 23:4
 LORD has broken the s Is 14:5
 "How the strong s Jer 48:17
 they have been a s Ezek 29:6
 And I took my s, Beauty Zech 11:10
 for the journey except a s Mark 6:8
 on the top of his s Heb 11:21

STAG

like a gazelle or a young s Song 2:9

STAGGER

and He makes them s Job 12:25
they will drink and s Jer 25:16

STAGGERS

as a drunken man s Is 19:14

STAKES

s will ever be removed Is 33:20

STALLS

be no herd in the s Hab 3:17

STAMMERERS

s will be ready Is 32:4

STAMMERING

For with s lips and Is 28:11
s tongue that you Is 33:19

STAMPING

At the noise of the s Jer 47:3

STAND

where you s is holy ground Ex 3:5
S still, and see the Ex 14:13
One shall be able to s Deut 7:24
"Who is able to s 1 Sam 6:20
took a s for the covenant 2 Kin 23:3
are not able to s Ezra 10:13
but it does not s Job 8:15
lives, and He shall s Job 19:25
ungodly shall not s Ps 1:5
Why do You s afar off Ps 10:1
Or who may s in His Ps 24:3
the world s in awe of Him Ps 33:8
Who will s up for me Ps 94:16
and let an accuser s Ps 109:6
They s fast forever Ps 111:8
he will not s before Prov 22:29
Do not take your s Eccl 8:3
"It shall not s Is 7:7
"S in the ways and Jer 6:16
not lack a man to s Jer 35:19
whose words will s Jer 44:28
s in the gap before Me Ezek 22:30
and it shall s Dan 2:44
but she shall not s Dan 11:17
Who can s before His Nah 1:6
s on the Mount of Olives Zech 14:4
And who can s when He Mal 3:2
against itself will not s Matt 12:25
that kingdom cannot s Mark 3:24
how will his kingdom s Luke 11:18
why do you s gazing up Acts 1:11
you s is holy ground Acts 7:33
this grace in which we s Rom 5:2
he will be made to s Rom 14:4
Watch, s fast in the 1 Cor 16:13
for by faith you s 2 Cor 1:24
S fast therefore in the Gal 5:1
having done all, to s Eph 6:13
S therefore Eph 6:14
s fast in the Lord Phil 4:1
now we live, if you s 1 Thess 3:8
of God in which you s 1 Pet 5:12
Behold, I s at the Rev 3:20

STANDARD

LORD will lift up a s Is 59:19
Set up the s toward Jer 4:6

STANDING

the LORD s by the altar Amos 9:1
the LORD, and Satan s Zech 3:1
they love to pray s Matt 6:5
and saw others s idle Matt 20:3
s here who will not taste Mark 9:1
the woman s in the midst John 8:9
and the Son of Man s Acts 7:56
the Judge is s at the door James 5:9
Then I saw an angel s Rev 19:17

STANDS

Nor s in the path of sinners Ps 1:1
counsel of the LORD s Ps 33:11
my heart s in awe of Ps 119:161
The LORD s up to plead Is 3:13

there s One among you John 1:26
him who thinks he s 1 Cor 10:12
foundation of God s 2 Tim 2:19

STAR

S shall come out of Num 24:17
For we have seen His s Matt 2:2
for one s differs from 1 Cor 15:41
give him the morning s Rev 2:28
And a great s fell Rev 8:10
Bright and Morning S Rev 22:16

STARS

He made the s also Gen 1:16
as the s of the heaven Gen 22:17
s bowed down to me Gen 37:9
s are not pure in His Job 25:5
when the morning s Job 38:7
the moon and the s Ps 8:3
s to rule by night, for His Ps 136:9
praise Him, all you s Ps 148:3
the s will diminish their Joel 3:15
the s of heaven will fall Mark 13:25
born as many as the s Heb 11:12
wandering s for whom Jude 13
in His right hand seven s Rev 1:16
a garland of twelve s Rev 12:1

STARVED

His strength is s Job 18:12

STATE

man at his best s Ps 39:5
us in our lowly s Ps 136:23
and the last s of that Matt 12:45
learned in whatever s Phil 4:11

STATUERE

add one cubit to his s Matt 6:27
in wisdom and s Luke 2:52
add one cubit to his s Luke 12:25
for he was of short s Luke 19:3
the measure of the s Eph 4:13

STATUTE

It shall be a s forever to Ex 27:21
be theirs for a perpetual s Ex 29:9
shall be a perpetual s Lev 3:17
it shall be a s forever Lev 23:14
For this is a s for Israel Ps 81:4
to establish a royal s Dan 6:7

STATUTES

shall therefore keep My s Lev 18:5
My ways, to keep My s 1 Kin 3:14
not put away His s from Ps 18:22
the s of the LORD are Ps 19:8
Teach me Your s Ps 119:12
s have been my songs Ps 119:54
observe Your s Ps 119:117
not walked in My s Ezek 5:6
did not walk in My s Ezek 20:21

STAY

her feet would not s Prov 7:11
S here and watch with Matt 26:38
for today I must s Luke 19:5
the time of your s 1 Pet 1:17

STEADFAST

yes, you could be s Job 11:15
O God, my heart is s Ps 57:7
their heart was not s Ps 78:37
his heart is s Ps 112:7
God, and s forever Dan 6:26
brethren, be s 1 Cor 15:58
faith, grounded and s Col 1:23
angels proved s Heb 2:2
of our confidence s Heb 3:14
soul, both sure and s Heb 6:19
Resist him, s in the 1 Pet 5:9

STEADFASTLY

s set His face to go Luke 9:51
And they continued s Acts 2:42
continuing s in Rom 12:12

STEADFASTNESS

good order and the s Col 2:5
from your own s 2 Pet 3:17

STEADILY

could not look s 2 Cor 3:13

STEADY

and his hands were s Ex 17:12

STEAL

"You shall not s Ex 20:15
Will you s Jer 7:9
s My words every one Jer 23:30
thieves break in and s Matt 6:19
night and s Him away Matt 27:64
murder, 'Do not s Mark 10:19
not come except to s John 10:10
a man should not s Rom 2:21
Let him who stole s Eph 4:28

STEEP

s places shall fall Ezek 38:20
waters poured down a s Mic 1:4
violently down the s Matt 8:32

STEM

forth a Rod from the s Is 11:1

STENCH

there will be a s Is 3:24
this time there is a s John 11:39

STEP

there is but a s 1 Sam 20:3
s has turned from the Job 31:7

STEPHEN

One of the first seven deacons, Acts
6:1-8
Falsely accused by Jews; gives defense,
Acts 6:9-7:53
Becomes first Christian martyr, Acts
7:54-60

STEPS

has held fast to His s Job 23:11
and count all my s Job 31:4
and He sees all his s Job 34:21
Uphold my s in Your Ps 17:5
The s of a good man Ps 37:23
of his s shall slide Ps 37:31
and established my s Ps 40:2
hide, they mark my s Ps 56:6
s had nearly slipped Ps 73:2
Direct my s by Your Ps 119:133
s will not be hindered Prov 4:12
the LORD directs his s Prov 16:9
A man's s are of the Prov 20:24
to direct his own s Jer 10:23
should follow His s 1 Pet 2:21

STEWARD

faithful and wise s Luke 12:42
you can no longer be s Luke 16:2
commended the unjust s Luke 16:8
be blameless, as a s Titus 1:7

STEWARDS

of Christ and s 1 Cor 4:1
one another, as good s 1 Pet 4:10

STEWARDSHIP

entrusted with a s 1 Cor 9:17

STICK

and his bones s Job 33:21
and s out the tongue Is 57:4
'For Joseph, the s Ezek 37:16

STICKS

a man gathering s Num 15:32
was there gathering s 1 Kin 17:10
And the s on which Ezek 37:20

STIFF

rebellion and your s Deut 31:27
do not speak with a s Ps 75:5

STIFF-NECKED

Now do not be s 2 Chr 30:8
"You s and uncircumcised Acts 7:51

STILL

on your bed, and be s Ps 4:4

s the noise of the Ps 65:7
 earth feared and was s Ps 76:8
 that its waves are s Ps 107:29
 When I awake, I am s Ps 139:18
 time, I have been s Is 42:14
 rest and be s Jer 47:6
 sea, "Peace, be s Mark 4:39
 let him be holy s Rev 22:11

STILLBORN

hidden like a s child Job 3:16
 as it goes, like a s Ps 58:8
 burial, I say that a s Eccl 6:3

STINGS

like a serpent, and s Prov 23:32

STIR

that he would dare s Job 41:10
 S up Yourself Ps 35:23
 I remind you to s 2 Tim 1:6
 another in order to s Heb 10:24

STIRRED

fulfilled, the LORD s 2 Chr 36:22
 and my sorrow was s Ps 39:2
 So the LORD s up the Hag 1:14

STIRS

and the innocent s Job 17:8
 it s up the dead for Is 14:9
 on Your name, who s Is 64:7

STOCKS

put my feet in the s Job 13:27
 s that were in the Jer 20:2

STOIC

and S philosophers Acts 17:18

STOLE

Absalom s the hearts of 2 Sam 15:6
 s Him away while we Matt 28:13
 Let him who s steal no Eph 4:28

STOLEN

Rachel had s the Gen 31:19
 indeed I was s away Gen 40:15
 shall restore what he has s Lev 6:4
 S water is sweet Prov 9:17

STOMACH

mouth goes into the s Matt 15:17
 his heart but his s Mark 7:19
 Foods for the s 1 Cor 6:13

STOMACH'S

little wine for your s 1 Tim 5:23

STONE

him, a pillar of s Gen 35:14
 to the bottom like a s Ex 15:5
 s shall be a witness Josh 24:27
 heart is as hard as s Job 41:24
 s which the builders Ps 118:22
 s is heavy and sand is Prov 27:3
 I lay in Zion a s Is 28:16
 take the heart of s Ezek 36:26
 You watched while a s Dan 2:34
 s will cry out from Hab 2:11
 that s Hab 2:19
 will give him a s Matt 7:9
 s will be broken Matt 21:44
 secure, sealing the s Matt 27:66
 s which the builders Luke 20:17
 you, let him throw a s John 8:7
 those works do you s John 10:32
 Jews sought to s You John 11:8
 not on tablets of s 2 Cor 3:3
 Him as to a living s 1 Pet 2:4
 give him a white s Rev 2:17
 angel took up a s Rev 18:21
 like a jasper s Rev 21:11

STONED

s Stephen as he was Acts 7:59
 once I was s 2 Cor 11:25
 They were s Heb 11:37

STONES

five smooth s from the 1 Sam 17:40

I will lay your s Is 54:11
 Among the smooth s Is 57:6
 Abraham from these s Matt 3:9
 command that these s Matt 4:3
 see what manner of s Mark 13:1
 also, as living s 1 Pet 2:5
 kinds of precious s Rev 21:19

STONY

them, and take the s Ezek 11:19
 Some fell on s ground Mark 4:5

STOOPEO

And again He s down John 8:8

STOP

Please, let us s this usury Neh 5:10
 s those who pursue me Ps 35:3

STOPEO

of heaven were also s Gen 8:2
 still, and the moon s Josh 10:13
 speak lies shall be s Ps 63:11
 her flow of blood s Luke 8:44
 every mouth may be s Rom 3:19
 s the mouths of lions Heb 11:33

STORE

people s up knowledge Prov 10:14
 no room to s my crops Luke 12:17

STORED

is s up for the righteous Prov 13:22
 his sin is s up Hos 13:12

STORES

He s up sound wisdom Prov 2:7

STORING

s up as he may prosper 1 Cor 16:2
 s up for themselves 1 Tim 6:19

STORK

s has her home in the Ps 104:17
 "Even the s in the Jer 8:7

STORM

from the windy s Ps 55:8
 He calms the s Ps 107:29
 terror comes like a s Prov 1:27
 for a shelter from s Is 4:6
 a refuge from the s Is 25:4
 and a destroying s Is 28:2
 coming like a s Ezek 38:9
 whirlwind and in the s Nah 1:3

STOUTHEARTED

s were plundered Ps 76:5

STRAIGHT

make Your way s Ps 5:8
 for who can make s Eccl 7:13
 make s in the desert a Is 40:3
 Their legs were s Ezek 1:7
 make His paths s Mark 1:3
 LORD: make His paths s Luke 3:4
 s the way of the LORD John 1:23
 to the street called S Acts 9:11
 and make s paths for Heb 12:13

STRAIGHTFORWARD

that they were not s Gal 2:14

STRAIN

Blind guides, who s Matt 23:24

STRAITS

and desperate s Deut 28:53

STRANGE

were considered a s Hos 8:12
 "We have seen s Luke 5:26
 are bringing some s Acts 17:20
 these, they think it s 1 Pet 4:4
 s thing happened 1 Pet 4:12

STRANGER

but he acted as a s Gen 42:7
 "I have been a s Ex 22:22
 neither mistreat a s Ex 22:21
 and loves the s Deut 10:18
 I have become a s Ps 69:8
 s will suffer for it Prov 11:15

s does not share its Prov 14:10
 should You be like a s Jer 14:8
 I was a s and you took Matt 25:35
 "Are You the only s Luke 24:18

STRANGERS

descendants will be s Gen 15:13
 s plunder his labor Ps 109:11
 watches over the s Ps 146:9
 s devour your land Is 1:7
 S shall stand and feed Is 61:5
 know the voice of s John 10:5
 of Israel and s Eph 2:12
 you are no longer s Eph 2:19
 if she has lodged s 1 Tim 5:10
 that they were s Heb 11:13
 forget to entertain s Heb 13:2
 the brethren and for s 3 John 5

STRANGLING

that my soul chooses s Job 7:15

STRAP

than I, whose sandal s Mark 1:7

STRAW

s to make brick as before Ex 5:7
 They are like s Job 21:18
 lion shall eat s like the ox Is 11:7
 stones, wood, hay, s 1 Cor 3:12

STRAY

the cursed, who s Ps 119:21
 who make my people s Mic 3:5

STRAYED

yet I have not s Ps 119:110
 for which some have s 1 Tim 6:10
 who have s concerning 2 Tim 2:18

STREAM

like an overflowing s Is 30:28
 of the LORD, like a s Is 30:33
 like a flowing s Is 66:12

STREAMS

He dams up the s Job 28:11
 He also brought s Ps 78:16
 O LORD, as the s Ps 126:4

STREET

to be heard in the s Is 42:2
 s called Straight Acts 9:11
 And the s of the city Rev 21:21
 In the middle of its s Rev 22:2

STREETS

the corners of the s Matt 6:5
 You taught in our s Luke 13:26
 out quickly into the s Luke 14:21

STRENGTH

for by s of hand the Ex 13:3
 just as my s was then Josh 14:11
 my soul, march on in s Judg 5:21
 a man is, so is his s Judg 8:21
 s no man shall 1 Sam 2:9
 the God of my s 2 Sam 22:3
 have armed me with s 2 Sam 22:40
 the LORD glory and s 1 Chr 16:28
 Is my s the s Job 6:12
 Him are wisdom and s Job 12:13
 him because his s Job 39:11
 You have ordained s Ps 8:2
 love You, O LORD, my s Ps 18:1
 The LORD is the s Ps 27:1
 The LORD is their s Ps 28:8
 The LORD will give s Ps 29:11
 delivered by great s Ps 33:16
 He is their s in the Ps 37:39
 are the God of my s Ps 43:2
 is our refuge and s Ps 46:1
 is He who gives s Ps 68:35
 I will go in the s Ps 71:16
 but God is the s Ps 73:26
 They go from s to Ps 84:7
 the glory of their s Ps 89:17
 s and beauty are in Ps 96:6
 made me bold with s Ps 138:3

of the LORD is s Prov 10:29
 knowledge increases s Prov 24:5
 S and honor are her Prov 31:25
 is better than s Eccl 9:16
 for s and not for Eccl 10:17
 For You have been a s Is 25:4
 him take hold of My s Is 27:5
 of His might and the s Is 40:26
 might He increases s Is 40:29
 works it with the s Is 44:12
 righteousness and s Is 45:24
 Put on your s Is 52:1
 O LORD, my s and my Jer 16:19
 I will destroy the s Hag 2:22
 He has shown s with Luke 1:51
 were still without s Rom 5:6
 s is made perfect 2 Cor 12:9
 you have a little s Rev 3:8

STRENGTHEN

and He shall s Ps 27:14
 S the weak hands Is 35:3
 "So I will s them in Zech 10:12
 s your brethren Luke 22:32
 s the hands Heb 12:12
 s the things Rev 3:2

STRENGTHENED

weak you have not s Ezek 34:4
 unbelief, but was s Rom 4:20
 of His glory, to be s Eph 3:16
 stood with me and s 2 Tim 4:17

STRENGTHENING

s the souls of the Acts 14:22

STRENGTHENS

s the wise more than Eccl 7:19
 through Christ who s Phil 4:13

STRETCH

will quickly s out her Ps 68:31
 said to the man, "S Matt 12:13
 are old, you will s John 21:18

STRETCH OUT MY HAND

I will s and strike Egypt Ex 3:20
 when I s on Egypt Ex 7:5
 LORD's anointed, to s 1 Sam 24:6
 forbid that I should s 1 Sam 26:11
 s against the inhabitants Jer 6:12
 And I will s against you Jer 51:25
 I will s against them Ezek 6:14
 I will s against you Ezek 25:7
 I will s against Judah Zeph 1:4

STRETCHED

s himself out on the 1 Kin 17:21
 s himself out on him 2 Kin 4:35
 I have s out my hands Ps 88:9
 but His hand is s out still Is 5:25
 Who s out the heavens Is 51:13
 His wisdom, and has s Jer 10:12
 "All day long I have s Rom 10:21

STRETCHED OUT HIS HAND

Abraham s and took the Gen 22:10
 Aaron s over the waters Ex 8:6
 Aaron s with his rod Ex 8:17
 Moses s toward heaven Ex 10:22
 Moses s over the sea Ex 14:21
 as soon as he had s Josh 8:19
 And when the angel s 2 Sam 24:16
 he has s against them Is 5:25
 He s over the sea Is 23:11
 And the cherub s Ezek 10:7
 Jesus s and caught him Matt 14:31
 Herod the king s to Acts 12:1

STRETCHES

For he s out his hand Job 15:25

STRICKEN

My heart is s and Ps 102:4
 yet we esteemed Him s Is 53:4
 of My people He was s Is 53:8
 You have s them Jer 5:3
 He has s, but He will Hos 6:1

STRIFE

let there be no s Gen 13:8
 You have made us a s Ps 80:6
 at the waters of s Ps 106:32
 Hatred stirs up s Prov 10:12
 comes nothing but s Prov 13:10
 man stirs up s Prov 15:18
 transgression loves s Prov 17:19
 borne me, a man of s Jer 15:10
 and lust, not in s Rom 13:13
 even from envy and s Phil 1:15
 which come envy, s 1 Tim 6:4

STRIKE

said, "S this people 2 Kin 6:18
 The sun shall not s Ps 121:6
 Let the righteous s Ps 141:5
 S a scoffer Prov 19:25
 s your hands Ezek 21:14
 s the waves of the sea Zech 10:11
 "S the Shepherd Zech 13:7
 s the earth with a Mal 4:6
 'I will s the Shepherd Matt 26:31
 'I will s the Shepherd Mark 14:27
 if well, why do you s John 18:23
 the sun shall not s Rev 7:16
 s the earth with all Rev 11:6

STRIKES

To him who s you on the Luke 6:29
 if one s you on the face 2 Cor 11:20
 a scorpion when it s Rev 9:5

STRINGED

of your s instruments Is 14:11
 of your s instruments Amos 5:23

STRIP

S yourselves Is 32:11
 s her naked and expose Hos 2:3

STRIPES

their iniquity with s Ps 89:32
 s we are healed Is 53:5
 be beaten with many s Luke 12:47
 I received forty s 2 Cor 11:24
 s you were healed 1 Pet 2:24

STRIVE

"My Spirit shall not s Gen 6:3
 He will not always s Ps 103:9
 Do not s with a man Prov 3:30
 Let the potsherd s Is 45:9
 "S to enter through Luke 13:24
 the LORD not to s 2 Tim 2:14

STRIVING

for a man to stop s Prov 20:3

STROKE

with a mighty s Jer 14:17

STRONG

with a s hand he will let Ex 6:1
 Be s and of good courage Deut 31:6
 be s and very courageous Josh 1:7
 Be s and conduct 1 Sam 4:9
 indeed He is s Job 9:19
 The LORD s and mighty Ps 24:8
 bring me to the s Ps 60:9
 a s tower from the enemy Ps 61:3
 s is Your hand Ps 89:13
 there is s confidence Prov 14:26
 the LORD is a s tower Prov 18:10
 A wise man is s Prov 24:5
 s shall be as tinder Is 1:31
 "We have a s city Is 26:1
 She had s branches for Ezek 19:11
 shall be as s as iron Dan 2:40
 the weak say, 'I am s Joel 3:10
 enter a s man's house Matt 12:29
 one can enter a s man's Mark 3:27
 When a s man Luke 11:21
 We then who are s Rom 15:1
 weak, but you are s 1 Cor 4:10
 I am weak, then I am s 2 Cor 12:10
 are weak and you are s 2 Cor 13:9

my brethren, be s Eph 6:10
 weakness were made s Heb 11:34
 men, because you are s 1 John 2:14
 s is the Lord God Rev 18:8

STRONGER

weakness of God is s 1 Cor 1:25

STRONGHOLD

crag of the rock and the s Job 39:28
 of my salvation, my s Ps 18:2
 down the trusted s Prov 21:22

STRUCK

s the rock twice Num 20:11
 the hand of God has s Job 19:21
 s all my enemies Ps 3:7
 Behold, He s the rock Ps 78:20
 I was angry and s Is 57:17
 in My wrath I s Is 60:10
 s the head from the Hab 3:13
 I s you with blight Hag 2:17
 took the reed and s Matt 27:30
 the officers s Him with Mark 14:65
 they s Him on the head Mark 15:19
 Him, they s Him on the Luke 22:64
 s Him with their hands John 19:3
 and s down the Egyptian Acts 7:24

STUBBLE

shall bring forth s Is 33:11
 his sword, as driven s Is 41:2
 they shall be as s Is 47:14
 s that passes Jer 13:24
 do wickedly will be s Mal 4:1

STUBBORN

when Pharaoh was s about Ex 13:15
 If a man has a s Deut 21:18
 and s children Ezek 2:4

STUBBORN-HEARTED

"Listen to Me, you s Is 46:12

STUBBORNNESS

do not look on the s Deut 9:27

STUDENT

the teacher with the s 1 Chr 25:8

STUDIED

having never s John 7:15

STUMBLE

causes them to s Ps 119:165
 to make my steps s Ps 140:4
 your foot will not s Prov 3:23
 know what makes them s Prov 4:19
 one will be weary or s Is 5:27
 among them shall s Is 8:15
 we s at noonday as at Is 59:10
 that they might not s Is 63:13
 before your feet s Jer 13:16
 they will s and fall Jer 46:6
 have caused many to s Mal 2:8
 you will be made to s Matt 26:31
 if all are made to s Matt 26:33
 immediately they s Mark 4:17
 who believe in Me to s Mark 9:42
 s because of Me this Mark 14:27
 the day, he does not s John 11:9
 Who is made to s 2 Cor 11:29
 whole law, and yet s James 2:10
 For we all s in many James 3:2

STUMBLED

and those who s 1 Sam 2:4
 God, for you have s Hos 14:1
 s that they should Rom 11:11

STUMBLES

word, immediately he s Matt 13:21

STUMBLING

the deaf, nor put a s Lev 19:14
 but a stone of s Is 8:14
 Behold, I will lay s Jer 6:21
 watched for my s Jer 20:10
 it became their s Ezek 7:19
 stumbled at that s Rom 9:32

I lay in Zion a s Rom 9:33
 this, not to put a s Rom 14:13
 to the Jews a s 1 Cor 1:23
 of yours become a s 1 Cor 8:9
 and "A stone of s 1 Pet 2:8
 is no cause for s 1 John 2:10
 to keep you from s Jude 24

STUMBLING BLOCK

s out of the way Is 57:14
 I lay a s before him Ezek 3:20
 it became their s Ezek 7:19
 s and a recompense Rom 11:9
 not to put a s Rom 14:13
 to the Jews a s 1 Cor 1:23
 of yours become a s 1 Cor 8:9
 taught Balak to put a s Rev 2:14

STUMP

whose s remains when it is Is 6:13
 leave the s and roots Dan 4:15

STUPID

and regarded as s Job 18:3
 who hates correction is s Prov 12:1
 Surely I am more s Prov 30:2

SUBDUE

s the peoples under us Ps 47:3
 shall s three kings Dan 7:24
 so our iniquities Mic 7:19
 s all things to Phil 3:21

SUBDUED

land was s before them Josh 18:1
 So the Philistines were s 1 Sam 7:13
 You have s under me those Ps 18:39
 through faith s kingdoms Heb 11:33

SUBJECT

for it is not s Rom 8:7
 Let every soul be s Rom 13:1
 all things are made s 1 Cor 15:28
 Remind them to be s Titus 3:1
 all their lifetime s Heb 2:15
 having been made s 1 Pet 3:22

SUBJECTED

because of Him who s Rom 8:20

SUBJECTION

put all things in s Heb 2:8
 more readily be in s Heb 12:9

SUBMISSION

in silence with all s 1 Tim 2:11
 his children in s 1 Tim 3:4

SUBMISSIVE

Wives, likewise, be s 1 Pet 3:1
 Yes, all of you be s 1 Pet 5:5

SUBMIT

s yourself under her hand Gen 16:9
 Your enemies shall s Ps 66:3
 Wives, s to your own Eph 5:22
 s to your own husbands Col 3:18
 Therefore s to God James 4:7
 s yourselves to every 1 Pet 2:13
 you younger people, s 1 Pet 5:5

SUBSIDED

and the waters s Gen 8:1
 the king's wrath s Esth 7:10

SUBSTANCE

Bless his s Deut 33:11
 Your eyes saw my s Ps 139:16
 up all the s of his house Prov 6:31
 the LORD, and their s Mic 4:13
 Now faith is the s of Heb 11:1

SUCCEED

For this will not s Num 14:41
 you shall not s Jer 32:5

SUCCESS

please give me s Gen 24:12
 You spoil my s Job 30:22
 but wisdom brings s Eccl 10:10

SUCCESSFUL

Joseph, and he was a s Gen 39:2

SUCCOTH

Place east of the Jordan, Judg 8:4, 5
 Jacob's residence here, Gen 33:17
 — Israel's first camp, Ex 12:37

SUDDENLY

whom you seek, will s Mal 3:1
 s there was with the Luke 2:13

SUE

s you and take away Matt 5:40

SUFFER

for a stranger will s Prov 11:15
 Son of Man must s many Mark 8:31
 He must s many things Mark 9:12
 Son of Man must s many Luke 9:22
 He must s many things Luke 17:25
 for the Christ to s Luke 24:46
 that the Christ would s Acts 3:18
 to s shame for His name Acts 5:41
 s for My name's sake Acts 9:16
 that the Christ had to s Acts 17:3
 that the Christ would s Acts 26:23
 Christ, if indeed we s Rom 8:17
 all the members s 1 Cor 12:26
 sufferings which we also s 2 Cor 1:6
 that they may not s Gal 6:12
 in Him, but also to s Phil 1:29
 we would s tribulation 1 Thess 3:4
 s trouble as an 2 Tim 2:9
 Jesus will s persecution 2 Tim 3:12
 choosing rather to s Heb 11:25
 when you do good and s 1 Pet 2:20
 even if you should s for 1 Pet 3:14
 the will of God, to s 1 Pet 3:17
 s as a murderer 1 Pet 4:15
 Therefore let those who s 1 Pet 4:19
 you are about to s Rev 2:10

SUFFERED

I have s many things Matt 27:19
 s many things from Mark 5:26
 s these things and to Luke 24:26
 Have you s so many Gal 3:4
 for whom I have s Phil 3:8
 in that He Himself has s Heb 2:18
 by the things which He s Heb 5:8
 with His own blood, s Heb 13:12
 because Christ also s 1 Pet 2:21
 when He s, He did not 1 Pet 2:23
 For Christ also s 1 Pet 3:18
 since Christ s 1 Pet 4:1
 after you have s 1 Pet 5:10

SUFFERING

My eyes bring s Lam 3:51
 Himself alive after His s by Acts 1:3
 for the s of death crowned Heb 2:9
 as an example of s James 5:10
 Is anyone among you s James 5:13
 forth as an example, s Jude 7

SUFFERINGS

I consider that the s Rom 8:18
 share with me in the s 2 Tim 1:8
 perfect through s Heb 2:10
 great struggle with s Heb 10:32
 beforehand the s 1 Pet 1:11

SUFFERS

Love s long and is 1 Cor 13:4

SUFFICIENCY

but our s is from God 2 Cor 3:5
 always having all s 2 Cor 9:8

SUFFICIENT

S for the day is its Matt 6:34
 by the majority is s 2 Cor 2:6
 Not that we are s 2 Cor 3:5

SUITABLE

by the hand of a s Lev 16:21

SUM

How great is the s Ps 139:17
 s I obtained this Acts 22:28

SUMMED

commandment, are all s Rom 13:9

SUMMER

and heat, winter and s Gen 8:22
 into the drought of s Ps 32:4
 You have made s Ps 74:17
 you know that s Matt 24:32

SUMPTUOUSLY

fine linen and fared s Luke 16:19

SUN

So the s stood still Josh 10:13
 love Him be like the s Judg 5:31
 grows green in the s Job 8:16
 a tabernacle for the s Ps 19:4
 the LORD God is a s Ps 84:11
 s shall not strike you Ps 121:6
 the s to rule by day Ps 136:8
 to behold the s Eccl 11:7
 while the s and the Eccl 12:2
 moon, clear as the s Song 6:10
 s will be sevenfold Is 30:26
 s returned ten degrees Is 38:8
 s shall no longer be Is 60:19
 s has gone down while Jer 15:9
 LORD, who gives the s Jer 31:35
 the s and moon grow Joel 2:10
 s shall be turned Joel 2:31
 s shall go down on the Mic 3:6
 The s and moon stood Hab 3:11
 for He makes His s Matt 5:45
 the s was darkened Luke 23:45
 is one glory of the s 1 Cor 15:41
 do not let the s Eph 4:26
 s became black as Rev 6:12
 s shall not strike Rev 7:16
 had no need of the s Rev 21:23

SUPPER

man gave a great s Luke 14:16
 to eat the Lord's S 1 Cor 11:20
 took the cup after s 1 Cor 11:25
 together for the s Rev 19:17

SUPPLICATION

s that you have made 1 Kin 9:3
 and make your s Job 8:5
 LORD has heard my s Ps 6:9
 to the LORD I made s Ps 30:8
 Yourself from my s Ps 55:1
 Let my s come before Ps 119:170
 They will make s Is 45:14
 with all prayer and s Eph 6:18
 by prayer and s Phil 4:6

SUPPLICATIONS

Will he make many s to Job 41:3
 of my s when I cry to You Ps 28:2
 To the voice of my s Ps 130:2
 request by prayer and s Dan 9:3
 and continues in s and 1 Tim 5:5
 offered up prayers and s Heb 5:7

SUPPLIES

Now may He who s 2 Cor 9:10
 Therefore He who s Gal 3:5
 by what every joint s Eph 4:16

SUPPLY

s what was lacking Phil 2:30
 And my God shall s Phil 4:19

SUPPORT

but the LORD was my s 2 Sam 22:19
 this, that you must s Acts 20:35

SUPPOSE

S there were fifty Gen 18:24
 "But s they will not believe Ex 4:1
 s that I came to give Luke 12:51
 not drunk, as you s Acts 2:15
 who s that godliness is a 1 Tim 6:5
 man s that he will receive James 1:7

SUPREME

to the king as s 1 Pet 2:13

SURE

s your sin will find Num 32:23
 build him a s house 1 Sam 2:35
 but no man is s Job 24:22
 testimony of the LORD is s Ps 19:7
 all His precepts are s Ps 111:7
 call and election s 2 Pet 1:10

SURETY

Be s for Your servant Ps 119:122
 one who hates being s Prov 11:15
 Jesus has become a s Heb 7:22

SURROUND

But you shall s 2 Kin 11:8
 LORD, mercy shall s Ps 32:10

SURROUNDED

the waves of death s 2 Sam 22:5
 The pangs of death s Ps 18:4
 The pains of death s Ps 116:3
 All nations s me Ps 118:10
 their own deeds have s Hos 7:2
 and the floods s Jon 2:3
 also, since we are s Heb 12:1

SURVIVOR

was no refugee or s Lam 2:22

SUSANNA

Believing woman ministering to Christ,
 Luke 8:2, 3

SUSPICIONS

reviling, evil s 1 Tim 6:4

SUSTAIN

You will s him on his Ps 41:3
 of a man will s Prov 18:14
 S me with cakes of Song 2:5

SUSTAINED

Forty years You s them Neh 9:21
 I awoke, for the LORD s me Ps 3:5
 and My own fury, it s Me Is 63:5

SWADDLING

thick darkness its s Job 38:9
 Him in s cloths Luke 2:7

SWALLOW

like a flying s Prov 26:2
 Like a crane or a s Is 38:14
 s observe the time Jer 8:7
 great fish to s Jonah Jon 1:17
 a gnat and s a camel Matt 23:24

SWALLOWED

Aaron's rod s up their rods Ex 7:12
 the earth s them Ex 15:12
 s me up like a monster Jer 51:34
 He has s up Israel Lam 2:5
 "Death is s up in victory, 1 Cor 15:54
 s up with too much sorrow, 2 Cor 2:7

SWEAR

shall I make you s 1 Kin 22:16
 in the earth shall s Is 65:16
 s oaths by the LORD Zeph 1:5
 "You shall not s Matt 5:33
 began to curse and s Matt 26:74
 because He could s Heb 6:13
 my brethren, do not s James 5:12

SWEARING

By s and lying Hos 4:2

SWEARS

he who s to his own Ps 15:4
 everyone who s by Him Ps 63:11
 but whoever s by the Matt 23:18

SWEAT

In the s of your face Gen 3:19
 Then His s became like Luke 22:44

SWEET

it is a s aroma, an offering Ex 29:18
 a s aroma to the LORD Lev 1:9
 by fire as a s aroma to Num 28:2
 Though evil is s Job 20:12
 valley shall be s to him Job 21:33

s are Your words Ps 119:103
 my words, for they are s Ps 141:6
 his fruit was s to my taste Song 2:3
 for your voice is s Song 2:14
 His mouth is most s Song 5:16
 shall drip with s wine Amos 9:13
 but it will be as s Rev 10:9

SWEETER

"What is s than honey Judg 14:18
 S also than honey and the Ps 19:10
 s than honey to my Ps 119:103

SWEETNESS

"Should I cease my s Judg 9:11
 called prudent, and s Prov 16:21
 s of a man's friend gives Prov 27:9
 mouth like honey in s Ezek 3:3

SWELL

thigh rot and your belly s Num 5:21
 their feet did not s Neh 9:21
 your heart shall s with joy Is 60:5

SWELLING

they speak great s 2 Pet 2:18

SWEPT

his army shall be s away Dan 11:26
 he finds it empty, s Matt 12:44

SWIFT

s as the eagle flies Deut 28:49
 pass by like s ships Job 9:26
 handles the bow, the s Amos 2:15
 let every man be s James 1:19

SWIFTLY

His word runs very s Ps 147:15

SWIM

night I make my bed s Ps 6:6

SWINE

the s, though it divides Lev 11:7
 cast your pearls before s Matt 7:6
 went into the herd of s Matt 8:32
 the pods that the s ate Luke 15:16

SWINE'S

ring of gold in a s snout Prov 11:22
 in the midst, eating s flesh Is 66:17

SWOON

as they s like the Lam 2:12

SWORD

See TWO-EDGED SWORD
 s which turned every Gen 3:24
 but not with your s Josh 24:12
 the wicked with Your s Ps 17:13
 land by their own s Ps 44:3
 my bow, nor shall my s Ps 44:6
 their tongue a sharp s Ps 57:4
 shall not lift up s Is 2:4
 But he shall flee from the s Is 31:8
 s shall be bathed Is 34:5
 The s of the LORD is Is 34:6
 And I will send a s Jer 9:16
 will die by the s Ezek 7:15
 'A s, a s is sharpened Ezek 21:9
 'A s, a s is drawn Ezek 21:28
 Bow and s of battle I Hos 2:18
 people shall die by the s Amos 9:10
 not lift up s against nation Mic 4:3
 "Awake, O s Zech 13:7
 to bring peace but a s Matt 10:34
 for all who take the s Matt 26:52
 s will pierce through Luke 2:35
 he does not bear the s Rom 13:4
 the s of the Spirit Eph 6:17
 than any two-edged s Heb 4:12
 a sharp two-edged s Rev 1:16
 mouth goes a sharp s Rev 19:15

SWORDS

yet they were drawn s Ps 55:21
 shall beat their s Is 2:4
 beat their s into plowshares Mic 4:3
 look, here are two s Luke 22:38

SWORE

So I s in My wrath Ps 95:11
 So I s in My wrath Heb 3:11
 and s by Him who lives Rev 10:6

SWORN

"By Myself I have s Gen 22:16
 The LORD has s in Ps 132:11
 I have s by Myself Is 45:23
 "The LORD has s Heb 7:21

SYCAMORE

into a s tree to see Him Luke 19:4

SYCHAR

Town of Samaria; Jesus talks to
 woman at well here, John 4:5-39

SYMBOLIC

which things are s Gal 4:24
 It was s for the Heb 9:9

SYMBOLS

I have given s through Hos 12:10

SYMPATHIZE

Priest who cannot s Heb 4:15

SYMPATHY

My s is stirred Hos 11:8

SYNAGOGUE

See RULER OF THE SYNAGOGUE
 He went into the s Luke 4:16
 he was a ruler of the s Luke 8:41
 in the s every Sabbath Acts 18:4
 but are a s of Satan Rev 2:9

SYRACUSE

City visited by Paul, Acts 28:12

SYRIANS

Abraham's kindred, Gen 22:20-23;
 25:20
 Hostile to Israel, 2 Sam 8:11-13;
 10:6-19; 1 Kin 20:1-34; 22:1-38;
 2 Kin 6:8-7:7
 Defeated by Assyria, 2 Kin 16:9
 Destruction of, foretold, Is 17:1-3
 Gospel preached to, Acts 15:23, 41

SYRO-PHOENICIAN

Daughter of, freed of demon, Mark
 7:25-31

TABERAH

Israelite camp; fire destroys many
 there, Num 11:1-3

TABERNACLE

that is, the pattern of the t Ex 25:9
 you shall make the t Ex 26:1
 called it the t of meeting Ex 33:7
 did not depart from the t Ex 33:11
 covered the t of meeting, Ex 40:34
 t He shall hide me Ps 27:5
 I will abide in Your t Ps 61:4
 In Salem also is His t Ps 76:2
 How lovely is Your t Ps 84:1
 Let us go into His t Ps 132:7
 quiet home, a t Is 33:20
 has done violence to His t Lam 2:6
 My t also shall be with Ezek 37:27
 You also took up the t Acts 7:43
 and will rebuild the t Acts 15:16
 the true t which the Lord Heb 8:2
 and more perfect t Heb 9:11
 the temple of the t of the Rev 15:5
 Behold, the t Rev 21:3

TABERNACLES

See FEAST OF TABERNACLES
 T for seven days to the Lev 23:34
 Feast of T seven days Deut 16:13
 us make here three t Matt 17:4
 Feast of T was at hand John 7:2

TABITHA

See DORCAS

TABLE

shall also make a *t* Ex 25:23
 prepare a *t* before me Ps 23:5
t become a snare Ps 69:22
 a *t* in the wilderness Ps 78:19
 head as He sat at the *t* Matt 26:7
 dogs under the *t* Mark 7:28
t in the Pharisee's house Luke 7:37
t become a snare Rom 11:9
 of the Lord's *t* 1 Cor 10:21

TABLES

t are full of vomit Is 28:8
 and overturned the *t* Matt 21:12
 of God and serve *t* Acts 6:2

TABLET

write them on the *t* Prov 3:3
 is engraved on the *t* Jer 17:1

TABLETS

I will give you *t* of stone Ex 24:12
 Cut two *t* of stone like the Ex 34:1
 wrote on the *t* the words Ex 34:28
 the two *t* of the Testimony Ex 34:29
 wrote them on two *t* of Deut 4:13
 God, not on *t* of stone 2 Cor 3:3
 and the *t* of the covenant Heb 9:4

TABOR

Scene of rally against Sisera, Judg 4:6,
 12, 14

TADMOR

Trading center near Damascus, 2 Chr
 8:4

TAHPANHES (or Tehaphnehes)

City of Egypt: refuge of fleeing Jews,
 Jer 2:16; 44:1; Ezek 30:18

TAIL

hand and take it by the *t*" Ex 4:4
 the head and not the *t* Deut 28:13
 turned the foxes *t* to *t* Judg 15:4
 He moves his *t* like a Job 40:17
t drew a third of the Rev 12:4

TAILS

They had *t* like scorpions, Rev 9:10
 for their *t* are like serpents Rev 9:19

TAKE

You shall *t* with you seven Gen 7:2
T now your son, your only Gen 22:2
 I will *t* you as My people, Ex 6:7
 You shall not *t* the name of Ex 20:7
 I will *t* sickness away Ex 23:25
t off your ornaments, that Ex 33:5
 I will *t* away My hand Ex 33:23
t us as Your Inheritance Ex 34:9
T heed to yourself, lest Ex 34:12
 shall not *t* vengeance Lev 19:18
 to *t* the vow of a Nazirite Num 6:2
T heed to yourselves, lest Deut 4:23
 You shall not *t* the name Deut 5:11
 shall *t* oaths in His name Deut 6:13
 add to it nor *t* away Deut 12:32
T your scandal off your Josh 5:15
 God does not *t* away 2 Sam 14:14
 How long shall I *t* counsel Ps 13:2
t Your Holy Spirit Ps 51:11
 I will not utterly *t* from Ps 89:33
 His wings you shall *t* refuge Ps 91:4
 I will *t* up the cup of Ps 116:13
t not the word of Ps 119:43
 In You I *t* refuge Ps 141:8
 In You I *t* shelter Ps 143:9
T firm hold of instruction, Prov 4:13
 and *t* away all your alloy Is 1:25
 will *t* the heart of stone Ezek 36:26
t words with you Hos 14:2
t away your tunic, let him Matt 5:40
 does not *t* his cross Matt 10:38
T My yoke upon Matt 11:29
t up his cross, and Matt 16:24
T what is yours and Matt 20:14

t You in, or naked and Matt 25:38
 and you did not *t* Me in Matt 25:43
T, eat; this is My body Matt 26:26
 and *t* up his cross Mark 8:34
t up the cross, and Mark 10:21
T, eat; this is My body Mark 14:22
T this cup away Mark 14:36
t up his cross daily, and Luke 9:23
 My life that I may *t* John 10:17
 I urge you to *t* heart Acts 27:22
T, eat; this is My body 1 Cor 11:24
 Therefore *t* up the whole Eph 6:13

TAKE HEED

T to yourself and see Ex 10:28
T to yourselves that Ex 19:12
T to yourself, lest you Ex 34:12
t to speak what the Lord Num 23:12
t, lest you lift your eyes Deut 4:19
 your sons *t* to their way 1 Kin 2:4
T, do not turn to iniquity Job 36:21
T, and be quiet Is 7:4
t, you peoples from afar Is 49:1
 Everyone *t* to his neighbor Jer 9:4
t to your spirit Mal 2:15
T that you do not do Matt 6:1
T and beware of the Matt 16:6
T that you do not Matt 18:10
T that no one deceives Matt 24:4
T what you hear Mark 4:24
t; see, I have told you Mark 13:23
T, watch and pray Mark 13:33
t that the light Luke 11:35
T and beware Luke 12:15
t to yourselves, lest Luke 21:34
t how he builds on it 1 Cor 3:10
 stands *t* lest he fall 1 Cor 10:12
T to the ministry Col 4:17
T to yourself and to 1 Tim 4:16

TAKEN

t from man He made into Gen 2:22
 because she was *t* out of Gen 2:23
 for out of it you were *t* Gen 3:19
 have you *t* us away to die Ex 14:11
 But the LORD has *t* you Deut 4:20
t the wife of Uriah 2 Sam 12:10
 and the LORD has *t* away Job 1:21
 God has *t* away my justice Job 34:5
 you are *t* by the words Prov 6:2
 He was *t* from prison Is 53:8
 righteous is *t* away from Is 57:1
 of God will be *t* from Matt 21:43
 one will be *t* and the Matt 24:40
 what he has will be *t* Mark 4:25
 He was *t* up Acts 1:9
 veil is *t* away in Christ 2 Cor 3:14
 until He is *t* out of 2 Thess 2:7
 By faith Enoch was *t* Heb 11:5

TAKES

who *t* His name in vain Ex 20:7
 LORD *t* pleasure in those Ps 147:11
 For the LORD *t* pleasure in Ps 149:4
 than he who *t* a city Prov 16:32
 does not bear fruit He *t* John 15:2

TAKING

the fruit of *t* away his sin Is 27:9
t Him up on a high Luke 4:5
t the shield of faith with Eph 6:16
t the form of a bondservant Phil 2:7

TALEBEARER

not go about as a *t* Lev 19:16
t reveals secrets Prov 11:13

TALENT

went and hid your *t* Matt 25:25

TALENTS

owed him ten thousand *t* Matt 18:24
 to one he gave five *t* Matt 25:15

TALITHA

T, cumi," which is Mark 5:41

TALK

shall *t* of them when Deut 6:7

t be vindicated Job 11:2
 with unprofitable *t* Job 15:3
 My tongue also shall *t* Ps 71:24
 entangle Him in His *t* Matt 22:15
 I will no longer *t* John 14:30
 turned aside to idle *t* 1 Tim 1:6

TALKED

within us while He *t* Luke 24:32

TALKERS

both idle *t* and Titus 1:10

TALL

and *t* as the Anakim Deut 2:10
 to a nation *t* and Is 18:2

TAMAR

Wife of Er and mother of Perez and
 Zerah, Gen 38:6-30
 — Absalom's sister, 2 Sam 13:1-32

TAMBOURINE

They sing to the *t* Job 21:12
 The mirth of the *t* Is 24:8

TAME

no man can *t* the tongue James 3:8

TANNER

in Joppa with Simon, a *t* Acts 9:43

TAPESTRY

She makes *t* for herself Prov 31:22

TARES

the *t* also appeared Matt 13:26

TARGET

You set me as Your *t* Job 7:20
 and set me up as a *t* Lam 3:12

TARRY

who turns aside to *t* Jer 14:8
 come and will not *t* Heb 10:37

TARSHISH

City at a great distance from Palestine,
 Jon 1:3
 Ships of, noted in commerce, Ps 48:7

TARSUS

Paul's birthplace, Acts 21:39
 Saul sent to, Acts 9:30
 Visited by Barnabas, Acts 11:25

TARTAN

Sent to fight against Jerusalem, 2 Kin
 18:17

TASK

your *t* in making brick both Ex 5:14
 this burdensome *t* Eccl 1:13

TASKMASTERS

Therefore they set *t* over Ex 1:11

TASSELS

Tell them to make *t* on Num 15:38
 shall make *t* on the four Deut 22:12

TASTE

the *t* of it was like wafers Ex 16:31
 and its *t* was like the Num 11:8
 Oh, *t* and see that the Ps 34:8
 are Your words to my *t* Ps 119:103
 was sweet to my *t* Song 2:3
 not *t* death till they see Mark 9:1
 shall *t* my supper Luke 14:24
 Do not touch, do not *t* Col 2:21
 might *t* death for Heb 2:9

TASTED

But when He had *t* Matt 27:34
t the heavenly gift Heb 6:4
t the good word Heb 6:5
t that the Lord is 1 Pet 2:3

TATTENAI

Persian governor opposing the Jews,
 Ezra 5:3, 6

TAUGHT

O God, You have *t* Ps 71:17
 as His counselor has *t* Is 40:13

the synagogue and *t* Mark 1:21
 He *t* them many things by Mark 4:2
 presence, and You *t* Luke 13:26
 they shall all be *t* John 6:45
 but as My Father *t* John 8:28
 that they *t* the people and Acts 4:2
t accurately the things of Acts 18:25
 from man, nor was I *t* Gal 1:12
 and have been *t* by Him Eph 4:4
 the faith, as you have been *t* Col 2:7
 which you were *t* 2 Thess 2:15

TAUNT

and a byword, a *t* Jer 24:9

TAX

t collectors do the Matt 5:46
 received the temple *t* Matt 17:24
 I say to you that Matt 21:31
 Show Me the *t* Matt 22:19

TAX COLLECTOR

Matthew the *t* Matt 10:3
 like heathen and a *t* Matt 18:17
 a *t* named Levi Luke 5:27
 and the other a *t* Luke 18:10
 who was a chief *t* Luke 19:2

TAX COLLECTORS AND SINNERS

your Teacher eat with *t* Matt 9:11
 He eats and drinks with *t* Mark 2:16
 winebibber, a friend of *t* Luke 7:34

TAXES

take customs or *t* Matt 17:25
 Is it lawful to pay *t* Matt 22:17
 forbidding to pay *t* Luke 23:2
t to whom *t* Rom 13:7

TEACH

t them to your children Deut 4:9
t them diligently Deut 6:7
t Jacob Your judgments Deut 33:10
t you the good and the 1 Sam 12:23
 "Can anyone *t* Job 21:22
 "I will *t* you about Job 27:11
t me what I do not see Job 34:32
t me Your paths Ps 25:4
T me Your way Ps 27:11
t you the fear of the Ps 34:11
t You awesome things Ps 45:4
t transgressors Your Ps 51:13
 So *t* us to number our Ps 90:12
T me Your statutes Ps 119:12
 He will *t* us His ways Is 2:3
 "Whom will he *t* Is 28:9
 every man *t* his neighbor Jer 31:34
 a bribe, her priests *t* Mic 3:11
t the way of God in Matt 22:16
 He began to *t* them Mark 6:34
t us to pray, as John also Luke 11:1
 the Holy Spirit will *t* Luke 12:12
 in My name. He will *t* John 14:26
 you not to *t* in this name Acts 5:28
 therefore, who *t* another Rom 2:21
 even nature itself *t* 1 Cor 11:14
 permit a woman to *t* 1 Tim 2:12
 things command and *t* 1 Tim 4:11
T and exhort these 1 Tim 6:2
t you again the first Heb 5:12
 not need that anyone *t* 1 John 2:27

TEACHER

for One is your *T* Matt 23:8
T. Do you not care that Mark 4:38
 asked Him, "Good *T* Mark 10:17
 know that You are a *t* John 3:2
T, this woman was caught John 8:4
T has come and is John 11:28
 You call Me *T* John 13:13
 named Gamaliel, a *t* Acts 5:34
 a *t* of babes, having Rom 2:20
 a *t* of the Gentiles in 1 Tim 2:7

TEACHERS

than all my *t* Ps 119:99

t will not be moved Is 30:20
 prophets, third *t* 1 Cor 12:28
 and some pastors and *t* Eph 4:11
 desiring to be *t* 1 Tim 1:7
 time you ought to be *t* Heb 5:12
 of you become *t* James 3:1
 there will be false *t* 2 Pet 2:1

TEACHES

therefore He *t* sinners Ps 25:8
 He who *t* man knowledge Ps 94:10
t men so, shall be called Matt 5:19
 the Holy Spirit *t* 1 Cor 2:13
 If anyone *t* otherwise 1 Tim 6:3
 the same anointing *t* 1 John 2:27

TEACHING

t them to observe all Matt 28:20
 were astonished at His *t* Mark 1:22
 Me, *t* as doctrines the Mark 7:7
 they did not cease *t* Acts 5:42
 he who teaches, in *t* Rom 12:7
 by prophesying, or by *t* 1 Cor 14:6
t every man in all Col 1:28
t things which they Titus 1:11
t us that Titus 2:12

TEAR

t yourself in anger Job 18:4
 lest they *t* me like a Ps 7:2
 I, even I, will *t* Hos 5:14
 feet, and turn and *t* Matt 7:6
 will wipe away every *t* Rev 21:4

TEARS

I have seen your *t* 2 Kin 20:5
 my couch with my *t* Ps 6:6
t have been my food Ps 42:3
 with the bread of *t* Ps 80:5
 drench you with my *t* Is 16:9
 God will wipe away *t* Is 25:8
 eyes may run with *t* Jer 9:18
 My eyes fail with *t* Lam 2:11
 His feet with her *t* Luke 7:38
 night and day with *t* Acts 20:31
 mindful of your *t* 2 Tim 1:4
 vehement cries and *t* Heb 5:7
 it diligently with *t* Heb 12:17

TEETH

t whiter than milk Gen 49:12
 by the skin of my *t* Job 19:20
 You have broken the *t* Ps 3:7
 As vinegar to the *t* Prov 10:26
 you cleanness of *t* Amos 4:6
 and gnashing of *t* Matt 8:12

TEKOA

Home of a wise woman, 2 Sam 14:2,
 4, 9
 Home of Amos, Amos 1:1

TELL

that you may *t* it to Ps 48:13
 the message that I *t* Jon 3:2
 Who can *t* if God Jon 3:9
t him his fault Matt 18:15
 whatever they *t* Matt 23:3
 He comes, He will *t* John 4:25

TEMAN

Tribe in northeast Edom, Gen 36:34
 Judgment pronounced against, Amos
 1:12
 God appears from, Hab 3:3

TEMPERATE

for the prize is *t* in all 1 Cor 9:25
 husband of one wife, *t* 1 Tim 3:2

TEMPEST

the windy storm and *t* Ps 55:8
 one, tossed with *t* Is 54:11
 And suddenly a great *t* Matt 8:24

TEMPLE

So Solomon built the *t* 1 Kin 6:14
 build a *t* for the LORD 2 Chr 2:12
t for the name of the LORD 2 Chr 6:7

of the LORD filled the *t* 2 Chr 7:1
 LORD is in His holy *t* Ps 11:4
 to inquire in His *t* Ps 27:4
 The *t* of the LORD Jer 7:4
 suddenly come to His *t* Mal 3:1
 One greater than the *t* Matt 12:6
 murdered between the *t* Matt 23:35
 veil of the *t* was torn Matt 27:51
 found Him in the *t* Luke 2:46
 "Destroy this *t* John 2:19
 was speaking of the *t* John 2:21
 one accord in the *t* Acts 2:46
 the Beautiful Gate of the *t* Acts 3:10
 that you are the *t* 1 Cor 3:16
 your body is the *t* 1 Cor 6:19
 grows into a holy *t* Eph 2:21
 sits as God in the *t* 2 Thess 2:4
 Then the *t* of God was Rev 11:19
 But I saw no *t* in it Rev 21:22
 and the Lamb are its *t* Rev 21:22

TEMPLES

t made with hands Acts 7:48

TEMPORARY

which are seen are *t* 2 Cor 4:18

TEMPT

Why do you *t* the LORD Ex 17:2
 You shall not *t* the LORD Deut 6:16
 they even *t* God Mal 3:15
t the LORD your God Matt 4:7
 that Satan does not *t* 1 Cor 7:5
 nor let us *t* Christ 1 Cor 10:9
 nor does He Himself *t* James 1:13

TEMPTATION

do not lead us into *t* Matt 6:13
 lest you enter into *t* Matt 26:41
 in time of *t* fall away Luke 8:13
 And do not lead us into *t* Luke 11:4
t has overtaken you 1 Cor 10:13
 to be rich fall into *t* 1 Tim 6:9
 the man who endures *t* James 1:12

TEMPTED

because they *t* the LORD Ex 17:7
 again and again they *t* God Ps 78:41
 forty days, *t* by Satan Mark 1:13
 being *t* for forty days by Luke 4:2
 not allow you to be *t* 1 Cor 10:13
 lest you also be *t* Gal 6:1
 has suffered, being *t* Heb 2:18
 in all points *t* Heb 4:15
 he is *t*, "I am *t* by God" James 1:13
 But each one is *t* James 1:14

TEMPTER

Now when the *t* came Matt 4:3

TEN

t should be found Gen 18:32
 the *T* Commandments Ex 34:28
 David his *t* thousands 1 Sam 18:7
 or go backward *t* 2 Kin 20:9
 an instrument of *t* strings Ps 92:3
 test your servants for *t* Dan 1:12
 before it, and it had *t* horns Dan 7:7
 The *t* horns are *t* kings Dan 7:24
 owed him *t* thousand Matt 18:24
 him who has *t* talents Matt 25:28
 there met Him *t* men Luke 17:12
t horns, and seven Rev 12:3
 seven heads and *t* horns Rev 13:1
 The *t* horns which you Rev 17:12

TEND

to him, "T My sheep John 21:16

TENDER

your heart was *t* 2 Kin 22:19
t shoots will not Job 14:7
 Let Your *t* mercies come Ps 79:8
 Your *t* mercies come to Ps 119:77
 no more be called *t* Is 47:1
 through the *t* mercy of Luke 1:78
 put on *t* mercies Col 3:12

TENDERHEARTED

to one another, *t* Eph 4:32
love as brothers, be *t* 1 Pet 3:8

TENDS

t a flock and does not 1 Cor 9:7

TENT

pitched his *t* in the Gen 26:17
it was, hidden in his *t* Josh 7:22
Israel, every man to his *t* Judg 7:8
shall know that your *t* Job 5:24
like a shepherd's *t* Is 38:12
the place of your *t* Is 54:2
My *t* is plundered Jer 10:20
earthly house, this *t* 2 Cor 5:1
long as I am in this *t* 2 Pet 1:13
I must put off my *t* 2 Pet 1:14

TENTH

I will surely give a *t* to Gen 28:22
the *t* one shall be holy to Lev 27:32
to the LORD, a *t* of the Num 18:26
shall bring up a *t* of Neh 10:38
Abraham gave a *t* part of Heb 7:2

TENTMAKERS

occupation they were *t* Acts 18:3

TENTS

those who dwell in *t* Gen 4:20
"How lovely are your *t* Num 24:5
The *t* of robbers Job 12:6
than dwell in the *t* Ps 84:10
is in the *t* of the righteous Ps 118:15
I dwell among the *t* Ps 120:5
LORD will save the *t* Zech 12:7

TERAH

Father of Abram, Gen 11:26
Idolater, Josh 24:2
Dies in Haran, Gen 11:25-32

TEREBINTH

far as the *t* tree of Moreh Gen 12:6
dwelt by the *t* trees of Gen 13:18
sat under the *t* tree which Judg 6:11
as a *t* tree or as an oak, Is 6:13

TERRESTRIAL

bodies and *t* bodies 1 Cor 15:40

TERRIBLE

t wilderness Deut 1:19
haughtiness of the *t* Is 13:11
is great and very *t* Joel 2:11

TERRIFIED

to you, "Do not be *t* Deut 1:29
Therefore I am *t* at His Job 23:15
by Your wrath we are *t* Ps 90:7
But they were *t* Luke 24:37
and not in any way *t* Phil 1:28

TERRIFIES

and the Almighty *t* Job 23:16

TERRIFY

me with dreams and *t* Job 7:14
not let dread of Him *t* Job 9:34
are coming to *t* them Zech 1:21

TERRIFYING

t was the sight Heb 12:21

TERRITORY

smite all your *t* with frogs Ex 8:2
bring locusts into your *t* Ex 10:4
the *t* of their inheritance Josh 19:41
all the *t* of Israel Judg 19:29
He restored the *t* of 2 Kin 14:25

TERROR

the *t* of God was upon the Gen 35:5
there shall be *t* Deut 32:25
are nothing, you see *t* Job 6:21
from God is a *t* Job 31:23
not be afraid of the *t* Ps 91:5
from the *t* of the LORD and Is 2:10
t to fall on them suddenly Jer 15:8
I will make you a *t* Jer 20:4

but a great *t* fell Dan 10:7
the *t* of the Lord, we 2 Cor 5:11

TERRORS

the *t* of God are Job 6:4
T frighten him on Job 18:11
before the king of *t* Job 18:14
T overtake him like a Job 27:20
consumed with *t* Ps 73:19

TERTULLUS

Orator who accuses Paul, Acts 24:1-8

TEST

God has come to *t* you Ex 20:20
that He might *t* Israel by Judg 3:1
t him with hard 1 Kin 10:1
behold, His eyelids *t* Ps 11:4
ask, nor will I *t* the LORD Is 7:12
You who *t* the righteous, Jer 20:12
t them as gold is Zech 13:9
said, "Why do you *t* Matt 22:18
But this He said to *t* him John 6:6
t the Spirit of the Acts 5:9
why do you *t* God by Acts 15:10
and the fire will *t* 1 Cor 3:13
T yourselves 2 Cor 13:5
T all things 1 Thess 5:21
but *t* the spirits 1 John 4:1
to *t* those who dwell on Rev 3:10

TESTAMENT

where there is a *t* Heb 9:16
For a *t* is in force Heb 9:17

TESTATOR

be the death of the *t* Heb 9:16

TESTED

that God *t* Abraham Gen 22:1
You have *t* my heart Ps 17:3
And they *t* God in Ps 78:18
t you at the waters of Ps 81:7
When your fathers *t* Ps 95:9
t them ten days Dan 1:14
also first be *t* 1 Tim 3:10
Where your fathers *t* Heb 3:9
though it is *t* by fire 1 Pet 1:7
t those who say they Rev 2:2

TESTIFIED

Yet the LORD *t* against 2 Kin 17:13
who sent Me, has *t* of Me John 5:37
he who has seen has *t* John 19:35
for as you have *t* Acts 23:11
t beforehand the 1 Pet 1:11
of God which He has *t* 1 John 5:9
t of the truth that is in you 3 John 3

TESTIFIES

and heard, that He *t* John 3:32
that the Holy Spirit *t* Acts 20:23

TESTIFY

yes, your own lips *t* Job 15:6
You, and our sins *t* Is 59:12
T against Me Mic 6:3
t what We have John 3:11
these are they which *t* John 5:39
to *t* to the gospel of the Acts 20:24
t that the Father 1 John 4:14
sent My angel to *t* Rev 22:16

TESTIFYING

was righteous, God *t* Heb 11:4
t that this is 1 Pet 5:12

TESTIMONIES

those who keep His *t* Ps 119:2
for I have kept Your *t* Ps 119:22
t are my meditation Ps 119:99
I love Your *t* Ps 119:119
t are wonderful Ps 119:129

TESTIMONY

two tablets of the *T* Ex 31:18
be put to death on the *t* Deut 17:6
For He established a *t* Ps 78:5
that I may keep the *t* Ps 119:88

Bind up the *t* Is 8:16
under your feet as a *t* Mark 6:11
Now this is the *t* John 1:19
no one receives His *t* John 3:32
who has received His *t* John 3:33
in your law that the *t* John 8:17
and we know that his *t* John 21:24
declaring to you the *t* 1 Cor 2:1
obtained a good *t* Heb 11:2
he had this *t* Heb 11:5
not believed the *t* 1 John 5:10
And this is the *t* 1 John 5:11
for the *t* which they held Rev 6:9
and by the word of their *t* Rev 12:11
For the *t* of Jesus is Rev 19:10

TESTING

is *t* you to know whether Deut 13:3
t the mind and the heart, Jer 11:20
came to Him, *t* Him Matt 19:3
knowing that the *t* James 1:3

TESTS

the righteous God *t* Ps 7:9
The LORD *t* the righteous Ps 11:5
gold, but the LORD *t* Prov 17:3
men, but God who *t* 1 Thess 2:4

TETRARCH

Herod being *t* of Galilee Luke 3:1
Now Herod the *t* heard of Luke 9:7
with Herod the *t* Acts 13:1

THADDAEUS

One of the Twelve, Mark 3:18

THANK

t offerings into the 2 Chr 29:31
"I *t* You and praise Dan 2:23
"I *t* You, Father Matt 11:25
t that servant because Luke 17:9
t You that I am not Luke 18:11
First, I *t* my God Rom 1:8
t God without ceasing 1 Thess 2:13
t Christ Jesus our 1 Tim 1:12

THANKFUL

Be *t* to Him Ps 100:4
Him as God, nor were *t* Rom 1:21

THANKFULNESS

Felix, with all *t* Acts 24:3

THANKS

give *t* to the LORD, for 1 Chr 16:34
and giving *t* to the LORD, Ezra 3:11
grave who will give You *t* Ps 6:5
give *t*! For Your wondrous Ps 75:1
is good to give *t* to the LORD, Ps 92:1
give *t* to the LORD, for He Ps 107:1
give *t* to the LORD, for He Ps 136:1
the cup, and gave *t* Matt 26:27
she gave *t* to the Lord Luke 2:38
at His feet, giving Him *t* Luke 17:16
t He distributed them John 6:11
for he gives God *t* Rom 14:6
when He had given *t* 1 Cor 11:24
But *t* be to God, who 1 Cor 15:57
T be to God for His 2 Cor 9:15
giving *t* always for Eph 5:20
t can we render 1 Thess 3:9
in everything give *t* 1 Thess 5:18
We give You *t*, O Lord Rev 11:17

THANKSGIVING

with the voice of *t* Ps 26:7
Offer to God *t* Ps 50:14
His presence with *t* Ps 95:2
into His gates with *t* Ps 100:4
the sacrifices of *t* Ps 107:22
supplication, with *t* Phil 4:6
vigilant in it with *t* Col 4:2
to be received with *t* 1 Tim 4:3
glory and wisdom, *t* and Rev 7:12

THE-LORD-IS-MY-BANNER

and called its name, *T* Ex 17:15

THE-LORD-IS-PEACE

the LORD, and called it *T* Judg 6:24

THE-LORD-WILL-PROVIDE

the name of the place, *T* . . . Gen 22:14

THEATER

and rushed into the *t* . . . Acts 19:29

THEOPHILUS

Luke addresses his writings to, Luke 1:3; Acts 1:1

THESSALONICA

Paul preaches in, Acts 17:1–13
Paul writes letters to churches of, 1 Thess 1:1

THICK

T swarms of flies came into . . . Ex 8:24
there was *t* darkness in all . . . Ex 10:22
I come to you in the *t* cloud . . . Ex 19:9
cloud, and *t* darkness . . . Deut 4:11
T clouds cover Him, so . . . Job 22:14
t darkness its swaddling . . . Job 38:9
and *t* clouds of the skies . . . Ps 18:11
t darkness, like the . . . Joel 2:2
of clouds and *t* darkness, . . . Zeph 1:15

THIEF

When you saw a *t* . . . Ps 50:18
do not despise a *t* . . . Prov 6:30
t hates his own life . . . Prov 29:24
t is ashamed when he . . . Jer 2:26
the windows like a *t* . . . Joel 2:9
t shall be expelled . . . Zech 5:3
known what hour the *t* . . . Matt 24:43
t approaches nor moth . . . Luke 12:33
way, the same is a *t* . . . John 10:1
because he was a *t* . . . John 12:6
Lord will come as a *t* . . . 2 Pet 3:10
upon you as a *t* . . . Rev 3:3
I am coming as a *t* . . . Rev 16:15

THIEVES

And companions of *t* . . . Is 1:23
a den of *t* in your eyes . . . Jer 7:11
destroy and where *t* . . . Matt 6:19
have made it a den of *t* . . . Matt 21:13
and fell among *t* . . . Luke 10:30
before Me and *t* . . . John 10:8

THIGH

put your hand under my *t* . . . Gen 24:2
Also the right *t* you shall . . . Lev 7:32
LORD makes your *t* rot . . . Num 5:21
them hip and *t* with a . . . Judg 15:8
Your sword upon Your *t* . . . Ps 45:3
good piece, the *t* . . . Ezek 24:4

THINGS

in heaven give good *t* . . . Matt 7:11
evil, speak good *t* . . . Matt 12:34
kept all these *t* . . . Luke 2:51
Lazarus evil *t* . . . Luke 16:25
the Scriptures the *t* . . . Luke 24:27
share in all good *t* . . . Gal 6:6

THINGS OF GOD

search out the deep *t* . . . Job 11:7
not mindful of the *t* . . . Matt 16:23
not mindful of the *t* . . . Mark 8:33
things, yes, the deep *t* . . . 1 Cor 2:10

THINK

nor does his heart *t* . . . Is 10:7
let none of you *t* evil in . . . Zech 8:17
Do not *t* that I came to . . . Matt 5:17
t that they will be . . . Matt 6:7
t you have eternal . . . John 5:39
not to *t* of himself . . . Rom 12:3
I t I also have the Spirit . . . 1 Cor 7:40
of ourselves to *t* . . . 2 Cor 3:5
let no one *t* me a fool . . . 2 Cor 11:16
all that we ask or *t* . . . Eph 3:20

THINKS

yet the LORD *t* upon me . . . Ps 40:17
for as he *t* in his . . . Prov 23:7
t that he knows . . . 1 Cor 8:2
t he stands take heed . . . 1 Cor 10:12

For if anyone *t* . . . Gal 6:3
t he is religious . . . James 1:26

THIRD

morning were the *t* day . . . Gen 1:13
the end of every *t* year . . . Deut 14:28
the *t* face of a lion . . . Ezek 10:14
a *t* kingdom of bronze, . . . Dan 2:39
on the *t* day He will raise . . . Hos 6:2
and be raised the *t* day . . . Matt 16:21
went out about the *t* hour . . . Matt 20:3
again, and prayed the *t* . . . Matt 26:44
He will rise the *t* day . . . Mark 9:31
the *t* day He will rise . . . Mark 10:34
He came the *t* time . . . Mark 14:41
Now it was the *t* hour . . . Mark 15:25
and be raised the *t* day . . . Luke 9:22
the *t* day He will rise . . . Luke 18:33
and the *t* day rise again . . . Luke 24:7
rise from the dead the *t* . . . Luke 24:46
He said to him the *t* . . . John 21:17
caught up to the *t* heaven . . . 2 Cor 12:2
the *t* living creature had a . . . Rev 4:7
When He opened the *t* seal . . . Rev 6:5
t of the trees were burned . . . Rev 8:7
the *t* woe is coming . . . Rev 11:14
Then the *t* angel poured . . . Rev 16:4

THIRD DAY

the morning were the *t* . . . Gen 1:13
t the Lord will come down . . . Ex 19:11
t must be burned . . . Lev 7:17
any remains until the *t* . . . Lev 19:6
the unclean on the *t* . . . Num 19:19
t you shall go up . . . 2 Kin 20:5
t He will raise us up . . . Hos 6:2
be raised again the *t* . . . Matt 16:21
t He will be raised up . . . Matt 17:23
t He will rise again . . . Matt 20:19
made secure until the *t* . . . Matt 27:64
He will rise the *t* . . . Mark 9:31
t He will rise again . . . Mark 10:34
and be raised the *t* . . . Luke 9:22
t I shall be perfected . . . Luke 13:32
t He will rise again . . . Luke 18:33
and the *t* rise again . . . Luke 24:7
today is the *t* since . . . Luke 24:21
rise from the dead the *t* . . . Luke 24:46
God raised up on the *t* . . . Acts 10:40
He rose again the *t* . . . 1 Cor 15:4

THIRST

out of the rock for their *t* . . . Neh 9:15
tongues fail for *t* . . . Is 41:17
those who hunger and *t* . . . Matt 5:6
give him will never *t* . . . John 4:14
in Me shall never *t* . . . John 6:35
said, "I *t*!" . . . John 19:28
we both hunger and *t* . . . 1 Cor 4:11
anymore nor *t* anymore . . . Rev 7:16

THIRSTS

My soul *t* for God . . . Ps 42:2
saying, "If anyone *t* . . . John 7:37
freely to him who *t* . . . Rev 21:6
And let him who *t* . . . Rev 22:17

THIRSTY

and *t* land where there is . . . Ps 63:1
longs for You like a *t* land . . . Ps 143:6
and if he is *t* . . . Prov 25:21
as when a *t* man dreams . . . Is 29:8
the drink of the *t* . . . Is 32:6
t land springs of . . . Is 35:7
on him who is *t* . . . Is 44:3
but you shall be *t* . . . Is 65:13
in a dry and *t* land . . . Ezek 19:13
I was *t* and you gave . . . Matt 25:35
we see You hungry or *t* . . . Matt 25:44
if he is *t* . . . Rom 12:20

THIRTY

Joseph was *t* years old . . . Gen 41:46
t years old and above . . . Num 4:3
t pieces of silver . . . Matt 26:15
at about *t* years of age, . . . Luke 3:23

THIS GENERATION

righteous before me in *t* . . . Gen 7:1
preserve them from *t* . . . Ps 12:7
what shall I liken *t* . . . Matt 11:16
in the judgment with *t* . . . Matt 12:41
things will come upon *t* . . . Matt 23:36
t will by no means pass . . . Matt 24:34
"Why does *t* seek a sign . . . Mark 8:12
Son of Man will be to *t* . . . Luke 11:30
it shall be required of *t* . . . Luke 11:51
and be rejected by *t* . . . Luke 17:25
t will by no means . . . Luke 21:32

THISTLES

t grow instead of . . . Job 31:40
or figs from *t* . . . Matt 7:16

THOMAS

Apostle of Christ, Matt 10:3
Ready to die with Christ, John 11:16
Doubts Christ's resurrection, John 20:24–29

THORN

t that goes into the . . . Prov 26:9
t shall come up the . . . Is 55:13
a *t* in the flesh was . . . 2 Cor 12:7

THORNBUSHES

gather grapes from *t* . . . Matt 7:16

THORNS

Both *t* and thistles it . . . Gen 3:18
T and snares are . . . Prov 22:5
all overgrown with *t* . . . Prov 24:31
the crackling of *t* . . . Eccl 7:6
Like a lily among *t* . . . Song 2:2
and do not sow among *t* . . . Jer 4:3
wheat but reaped *t* . . . Jer 12:13
And some fell among *t* . . . Matt 13:7
twisted a crown of *t* . . . Matt 27:29
the ones sown among *t* . . . Mark 4:18
wearing the crown of *t* . . . John 19:5

THOUGHT

t is that their houses . . . Ps 49:11
You *t* that I was . . . Ps 50:21
Both the inward *t* . . . Ps 64:6
I t about my ways . . . Ps 119:59
You understand my *t* . . . Ps 139:2
"Surely, as I have *t* . . . Is 14:24
to man what his *t* . . . Amos 4:13
perceiving the *t* . . . Luke 9:47
And he *t* within . . . Luke 12:17
because you *t* that the gift . . . Acts 8:20
t he was seeing a vision . . . Acts 12:9
I t as a child . . . 1 Cor 13:11
God, bringing every *t* . . . 2 Cor 10:5
will he be *t* worthy who . . . Heb 10:29

THOUGHTS

the intent of the *t* . . . 1 Chr 28:9
is in none of his *t* . . . Ps 10:4
t toward us . . . Ps 40:5
t are very deep . . . Ps 92:5
The LORD knows the *t* . . . Ps 94:11
t will be established . . . Prov 16:3
unrighteous man his *t* . . . Is 55:7
For My *t* are not your . . . Is 55:8
long shall your evil *t* . . . Jer 4:14
they do not know the *t* . . . Mic 4:12
Jesus, knowing their *t* . . . Matt 9:4
heart proceed evil *t* . . . Matt 15:19
futile in their *t* . . . Rom 1:21
The LORD knows the *t* . . . 1 Cor 3:20
and is a discernor of the *t* . . . Heb 4:12

THOUSAND

one *t* from each tribe . . . Num 31:5
two *t* three hundred days . . . Dan 8:14
one *t* two hundred . . . Dan 12:11
eaten were about five *t* . . . Matt 14:21
who ate were four *t* men . . . Matt 15:38
loaves were about five *t* . . . Mark 6:44
eaten were about four *t* . . . Mark 8:9
were about five *t* men . . . Luke 9:14
one day is as a *t* years . . . 2 Pet 3:8

hundred and forty-four *t* Rev 14:1
bound him for a *t* years Rev 20:2

THREAT

shall flee at the *t* Is 30:17

THREATEN

suffered, He did not *t* 1 Pet 2:23

THREATENING

to them, giving up *t* Eph 6:9

THREATS

Lord, look on their *t* Acts 4:29
still breathing *t* Acts 9:1

THREE

the vine were *t* branches Gen 40:10
were *t* white baskets Gen 40:16
child, she hid him *t* months Ex 2:2
T times you shall keep a Ex 23:14
T times in the year all Ex 34:23
T times a year all your Deut 16:16
t hundred concubines 1 Kin 11:3
on the child *t* times, and 1 Kin 17:21
so he struck *t* times 2 Kin 13:18
either *t* years of famine 1 Chr 21:12
Now when Job's *t* friends Job 2:11
There are *t* things that Prov 30:15
Did we not cast *t* men Dan 3:24
his petition *t* times a day Dan 6:10
came up, before which *t* Dan 7:23
t more kings will arise in Dan 11:2
For *t* transgressions of Amos 1:3
Son of Man be *t* days Matt 12:40
make here *t* tabernacles Matt 17:4
For where two or *t* are Matt 18:20
you will deny Me *t* Matt 26:34
temple and build it in *t* Matt 27:40
After *t* days I will rise Matt 27:63
after *t* days rise again Mark 8:31
will deny Me *t* times Mark 14:30
and build it in *t* days Mark 15:29
will deny Me *t* times Luke 22:61
that day about *t* thousand Acts 2:41
was *t* days without sight Acts 9:9
This was done *t* times Acts 10:16
spoke boldly for *t* months Acts 19:8
hope, love, these *t* 1 Cor 13:13
and these *t* are one 1 John 5:7
By these *t* plagues a third Rev 9:18
I saw *t* unclean spirits Rev 16:13

THRESH

he does not *t* it Is 28:28
t the mountains Is 41:15
it is time to *t* her Jer 51:33
"Arise and *t* Mic 4:13

THRESHING

t shall last till the Lev 26:5
fleece of wool on the *t* Judg 6:37
went down to the *t* floor Ruth 3:6
David bought the *t* floor 2 Sam 24:24
like the dust at *t* 2 Kin 13:7
t floor of Ornan the 1 Chr 21:18
Oh, my *t* and the grain Is 21:10
clean out His *t* floor Matt 3:12

THRESHOLD

with her hands on the *t* Judg 19:27
were broken off on the *t* 1 Sam 5:4
been, to the *t* of the temple Ezek 9:3

THREW

every man *t* down his rod Ex 7:12
he *t* stones at David 2 Sam 16:6
t him into the sea, and the Jon 1:15
t him into prison till he Matt 18:30
he *t* down the pieces Matt 27:5
t their own clothes on Luke 19:35
they *t* them into prison Acts 16:23
t it into the great Rev 14:19
t it into the sea, saying, Rev 18:21

THROAT

t is an open tomb Ps 5:9
put a knife to your *t* Prov 23:2

unshod, and your *t* Jer 2:25
t is an open tomb Rom 3:13

THRONE

LORD sitting on His *t* 1 Kin 22:19
He has prepared His *t* Ps 9:7
temple, the LORD's *t* Ps 11:4
Your *t*, O God, is Ps 45:6
has established His *t* Ps 103:19
he upholds his *t* Prov 20:28
Lord sitting on a *t* Is 6:1
"Heaven is My *t* Is 66:1
shall be called The *T* Jer 3:17
do not disgrace the *t* Jer 14:21
A glorious high *t* Jer 17:12
t was a fiery flame Dan 7:9
sit and rule on His *t* Zech 6:13
for it is God's *t* Matt 5:34
will give Him the *t* Luke 1:32
"Your *t*, O God, is Heb 1:8
come boldly to the *t* Heb 4:16
where Satan's *t* Rev 2:13
My Father on His *t* Rev 3:21
I saw a great white *t* Rev 20:11

THRONE OF DAVID

set up the *t* over Israel 2 Sam 3:10
and set me on the *t* 1 Kin 2:24
t shall be established 1 Kin 2:45
t and over His kingdom Is 9:7
princes sitting on the *t* Jer 17:25
you who sit on the *t* Jer 22:2
king who sits on the *t* Jer 29:16
no one to sit on the *t* Jer 36:30

THRONE OF GOD

swears by the *t* Matt 23:22
right hand of the *t* Heb 12:2
they are before the *t* Rev 7:15
without fault before the *t* Rev 14:5
proceeding from the *t* Rev 22:1

THRONES

t are set there Ps 122:5
also sit on twelve *t* Matt 19:28
mightily from their *t* Luke 1:52
invisible, whether *t* Col 1:16
t I saw twenty-four Rev 4:4

THRONG

house of God in the *t* Ps 55:14

THROW

he said, "T her down 2 Kin 9:33
keep, and a time to *t* away Eccl 3:6
the LORD will *t* you away Is 22:17
of your land and *t* Mic 5:11
me, "T it to the potter" Zech 11:13
may build, but I will *t* down Mal 1:4
t Yourself down Matt 4:6
children's bread and *t* Matt 15:26
let him *t* a stone at her John 8:7
t them into the fire, and John 15:6

THROWN

rider He has *t* into the sea Ex 15:1
their slain shall be *t* Is 34:3
mountains shall be *t* Ezek 38:20
down and *t* into the fire Matt 3:10
neck, and he were *t* Mark 9:42
down and *t* into the fire Luke 3:9

THRUST

and rose up and *t* Luke 4:29
T in Your sickle and reap Rev 14:15

THUMMIM

the Urim and the *T* Ex 28:30
Your *T* and Your Urim Deut 33:8
with the Urim and *T* Ezra 2:63
with the Urim and *T* Neh 7:65

THUNDER

But the *t* of His power Job 26:14
The voice of Your *t* Ps 77:18
the secret place of *t* Ps 81:7
t they hastened away Ps 104:7

that is, "Sons of *T*" Mark 3:17
the voice of loud *t* Rev 14:2

THUNDERED

"The LORD *t* from 2 Sam 22:14
The LORD *t* Ps 18:13

THUNDERINGS

people witnessed the *t* Ex 20:18
the sound of mighty *t* Rev 19:6

THUNDERS

t marvelously with His Job 37:5
The God of glory *t* Ps 29:3

THYATIRA

Residence of Lydia, Acts 16:14
Site of one of the seven churches, Rev
2:18-24

TIBERIA

Sea of Galilee called, John 6:1, 23

TIDINGS

be afraid of evil *t* Ps 112:7
you who bring good *t*, lift Is 40:9
brings glad *t* of good things Is 52:7
preach good *t* to the poor Is 61:1
of him who brings good *t* Nah 1:15
I bring you good *t* Luke 2:10
who bring glad *t* Rom 10:15

TIGLATH-PILESER

Powerful Assyrian king who invades
Samaria, 2 Kin 15:29

TILL

no man to *t* the ground Gen 2:5

TILLER

but Cain was a *t* Gen 4:2

TILLS

t his land will be Prov 12:11
t his land will have Prov 28:19

TIMBREL

took the *t* in her hand Ex 15:20
Praise Him with the *t* and Ps 150:4

TIMBRELS

out to meet him with *t* Judg 11:34

TIME

See APPOINTED TIME
in the appointed *t* of the Ex 34:18
LORD at its appointed *t* Num 9:13
children ask in *t* to come Josh 4:6
t I shall be blameless Judg 15:3
For in the *t* of trouble He Ps 27:5
pray to You in a *t* Ps 32:6
ashamed in the evil *t* Ps 37:19
strength in the *t* of trouble Ps 37:39
how short my *t* is Ps 89:47
t for every purpose under Eccl 3:1
A *t* to be born Eccl 3:2
but *t* and chance Eccl 9:11
LORD, will hasten it in its *t* Is 60:22
But in the *t* of their trouble Jer 2:27
the *t* of their punishment Jer 8:12
you in the *t* of adversity Jer 15:11
in the *t* of Your anger Jer 18:23
your *t* was the *t* Ezek 16:8
a *t* and times and half a *t* Dan 7:25
at that *t* your people shall Dan 12:1
The *t* has not come Hag 1:2
says, "My *t* is at hand Matt 26:18
A second *t* the rooster Mark 14:72
t of temptation fall away Luke 8:13
you did not know the *t* Luke 19:44
has seen God at any *t* John 1:18
Can he enter a second *t* John 3:4
t has not yet come John 7:6
the *t* is coming when I John 16:25
to him again a second *t* John 21:16
I have a convenient *t* Acts 24:25
be revealed in his own *t* 2 Thess 2:6
Jesus before *t* began 2 Tim 1:9
for the *t* is near Rev 1:3
that he has a short *t* Rev 12:12
a *t* and times and half a *t* Rev 12:14

TIME OF TROUBLE

I have reserved for the t Job 38:23
in the t He shall hide me Ps 27:5
their strength in the t Ps 37:39
Lord will deliver him in t Ps 41:1
unfaithful man in t Prov 25:19
salvation also in the t Is 33:2
his Savior in t Jer 14:8
And there shall be a t Dan 12:1

TIMES

Three t you shall keep a Ex 23:14
seven t in the same Josh 6:15
in the Jordan seven t 2 Kin 5:10
understanding of the t 1 Chr 12:32
t are not hidden Job 24:1
t are in Your hand Ps 31:15
will bless the LORD at all t Ps 34:1
Trust in Him at all t, you Ps 62:8
Seven t a day I praise Ps 119:164
A friend loves at all t Prov 17:17
may fall seven t and rise Prov 24:16
does evil a hundred t Eccl 8:12
he found them ten t better Dan 1:20
let seven t pass over him Dan 4:6
in those t many shall rise Dan 11:14
the signs of the t Matt 16:3
up to seventy t seven Matt 18:22
Gentiles until the t Luke 21:24
not for you to know t Acts 1:7
their preappointed t Acts 17:26
last days perilous t 2 Tim 3:1
God, who at various t Heb 1:1

TIMON

One of the first seven deacons, Acts
6:1-5

TIMOTHY

Paul's companion, Acts 16:1-3; 18:5;
20:4, 5; 2 Cor 1:19; Phil 1:1; 2 Tim 4:9,
21
Ministers independently, Acts 17:14,
15; 19:22; 1 Cor 4:17; Phil 2:19, 23;
1 Thess 3:1-6; 1 Tim 1:1-3; 4:14

TINGLE

who hears it will t 1 Sam 3:11
hears of it, his ears will t Jer 19:13

TIP

on the t of the right ear of Ex 29:20
the t of his finger in Luke 16:24

TIRZAH

Seat of Jeroboam's rule, 1 Kin 14:17
Capital of Israel until Omri's reign,
1 Kin 16:6-23

TITHE

And he gave him a t Gen 14:20
LORD, a tenth of the t Num 18:26
t of your grain or your Deut 12:17
"You shall truly t Deut 14:22
shall bring out the t Deut 14:28
laying aside all the t Deut 26:12
in abundantly the t 2 Chr 31:5
Judah brought the t Neh 13:12
For you pay t of mint Matt 23:23

TITHES

to redeem any of his t Lev 27:31
t which you receive Num 18:28
and to bring the t Neh 10:37
firstfruits, and the t Neh 12:44
the articles, the t Neh 13:5
Bring all the t Mal 3:10
I give t of all that I Luke 18:12
to receive t from the Heb 7:5
mortal men receive t Heb 7:8
Levi, who receives t Heb 7:9

TITHING

the year of t Deut 26:12

TITLE

Now Pilate wrote a t John 19:19

TITTLE

away, one jot or one t Matt 5:18

TITUS

Ministers in Crete, Titus 1:4, 5
Paul's representative in Corinth, 2 Cor
7:6, 7, 13, 14; 8:6-23

TOBIAH

Ammonite servant; ridicules the Jews,
Neh 2:10

TODAY

Bake what you will bake t Ex 16:23
yourselves t to the LORD, Ex 32:29
for t the LORD will appear Lev 9:4
t shall be in your heart Deut 6:6
God makes with you t Deut 29:12
have departed from me t 1 Sam 10:2
you have t rejected 1 Sam 10:19
this day, for t the LORD 1 Sam 11:13
t I have begotten You Ps 2:7
of the field, which t Matt 6:30
work t in my vineyard Matt 21:28
T this Scripture is Luke 4:21
the grass, which t Luke 12:28
T salvation has come to Luke 19:9
t you will be with Me Luke 23:43
t I have begotten You Heb 1:5
"T, if you will hear Heb 3:7
the same yesterday, t Heb 13:8

TOGARMAH

Northern country inhabited by descen-
dants of Gomer, Gen 10:3

Supplied horses to Tyrians and soldiers
to the army of Gog, Ezek 27:14; 38:6

TOIL

t you shall eat of Gen 3:17
whom do I t and deprive Eccl 4:8
they neither t nor Matt 6:28
our labor and t 1 Thess 2:9

TOILED

I had t under the sun Eccl 2:18
"Master, we have t Luke 5:5

TOLD

Behold, I have t Matt 28:7
things which were t Luke 2:18
t me all things that I John 4:29
t you the truth which John 8:40
so, I would have t John 14:2
"And now I have t John 14:29

TOLERABLE

you, it will be more t Matt 10:15

TOMB

throat is an open t Ps 5:9
sitting opposite the t Matt 27:61
corpse and laid it in a t Mark 6:29
laid Him in a t which Mark 15:46
rolled away from the t Luke 24:2
been in the t four days John 11:17
Lazarus out of his t John 12:17
in the garden a new t John 19:41
Magdalene went to the t John 20:1
throat is an open t Rom 3:13

TOMBS

like whitewashed t Matt 23:27
you build the t Matt 23:29
For you build the t Luke 11:47

TOMORROW

yourselves for t Num 11:18
Sanctify yourselves for t Josh 7:13
Do not boast about t, for Prov 27:1
drink, for t we die Is 22:13
t will be as today Is 56:12
t is thrown into the Matt 6:30
do not worry about t Matt 6:34
I must journey today, t Luke 13:33
drink, for t we die 1 Cor 15:32
what will happen t James 4:14

TONGUE

of speech and slow of t Ex 4:10
the scourge of the t Job 5:21
me, and I will hold my t Job 6:24
hides it under his t Job 20:12

the t that speaks proud Ps 12:3
Keep your t from evil Ps 34:13
t shall speak of Your Ps 35:28
lest t sin with my t Ps 39:1
t shall sing aloud of Your Ps 51:14
and their t a sharp sword Ps 57:4
to you, you false t Ps 120:3
laughter, and our t Ps 126:2
remember you, let my t Ps 137:6
is not a word on my t Ps 139:4
The t of the righteous is Prov 10:20
but the perverse t Prov 10:31
forever, but a lying t Prov 12:19
The t of the wise uses Prov 15:2
A wholesome t is a Prov 15:4
perverse t falls into evil Prov 17:20
t keeps his soul Prov 21:23
t breaks a bone Prov 25:15
who flatters with the t Prov 28:23
and on her t is the law Prov 31:26
another t He will speak to Is 28:11
t shall take an oath Is 45:23
God has given Me the t Is 50:4
of his t was loosed Mark 7:35
his t loosed, and he Luke 1:64
in water and cool my t Luke 16:24
t shall confess to God Rom 14:11
he who speaks in a t 1 Cor 14:2
t should confess that Phil 2:11
does not bridle his t James 1:26
t is a little member James 3:5
And the t is a fire James 3:6
no man can tame the t James 3:8
love in word or in t 1 John 3:18
every nation, tribe, t Rev 14:6

TONGUES

From the strife of t Ps 31:20
speak with new t Mark 16:17
to them divided t, as of fire Acts 2:3
speaking in our own t Acts 2:11
and they spoke with t Acts 19:6
I speak with the t 1 Cor 13:1
Therefore t are for a 1 Cor 14:22
many peoples, nations, t Rev 10:11

TOOK

He t one of his ribs, and Gen 2:21
t of every clean animal Gen 8:20
Abram t Sarai his wife Gen 12:5
they t stones and made a Gen 31:46
Then Joseph t an oath Gen 50:25
Then Moses t his wife and Ex 4:20
Moses t the rod of God in Ex 4:20
Then they t ashes from the Ex 9:10
t the bones of Joseph Ex 13:19
t outside the camp him Lev 24:23
Moses t the redemption Num 3:49
t of the Spirit that was Num 11:25
Israel t all these cities Num 21:25
they t all the spoil and Num 31:11
Then I t the two tablets Deut 9:17
Then I t your sin, the calf Deut 9:21
t up twelve stones from the Josh 4:8
Samson t hold of the Judg 16:29
Tamar t the cakes 2 Sam 13:10
he t hold of her and 2 Sam 13:11
Jehu t no need to walk 2 Kin 10:31
Then David t more wives 1 Chr 14:3
He t away the foreign 2 Chr 33:15
You are He who t me out of Ps 71:6
t all the remnant of Judah Jer 43:5
Then the Spirit t me up Ezek 11:24
he t the young Child and Matt 2:14
Then the devil t Him up Matt 4:5
Himself t our infirmities Matt 8:17
He t the five loaves and Matt 14:19
they t up twelve baskets Matt 14:20
He t the seven loaves Matt 15:36
t up seven large baskets Matt 15:37
Then Peter t Him aside Matt 16:22
virgins who t their lamps Matt 25:1
a stranger and you t Me Matt 25:35

Then He *t* the cup, and Matt 26:27
 Peter *t* Him aside and Mark 8:32
 Then He *t* a little child Mark 9:36
 He *t* the cup, and gave Luke 22:17

TOOTH

eye for eye, *t* Ex 21:24
 eye for eye, *t* for *t* Lev 24:20
t for *t*, hand for hand, Deut 19:21
 is like a bad *t* Prov 25:19
 eye for an eye and a *t* Matt 5:38

TOP

a tower whose *t* is in the Gen 11:4
 consuming fire on the *t* of Ex 24:17
 mercy seat on *t* of the ark Ex 25:21
 in two from *t* to bottom Matt 27:51
 torn in two from *t* to Mark 15:38

TOPHET

See HINNOM, VALLEY OF THE SON OF
T was established Is 30:33
 the high places of *T* Jer 7:31
 make this city like *T* Jer 19:12
 like the place of *T* Jer 19:13

TORCH

and a burning *t* that Gen 15:17
 and like a fiery *t* Zech 12:6

TORCHES

When he had set the *t* Judg 15:5
 his eyes like *t* Dan 10:6
 come with flaming *t* Nah 2:3

TORE

that he *t* his clothes, and Judg 11:35
t his garments and lay 2 Sam 13:31
t it into twelve pieces 1 Kin 11:30
t down the temple of 2 Kin 10:27
 temple of Baal, and *t* it 2 Chr 23:17
t his robe, and shaved his Job 1:20
 and each one *t* his robe Job 2:12

TORE HIS CLOTHES

in the pit, and he *t* Gen 37:29
 Then Jacob *t*, put Gen 37:34
 Then Joshua *t*, and fell Josh 7:6
 he *t* and put sackcloth 1 Kin 21:27
 the letter, that he *t* 2 Kin 5:7
 of the Law, that he *t* 2 Kin 22:11
 of the Law, that he *t* 2 Chr 34:19
 he *t* and put on sackcloth Esth 4:1
 heard it, that he *t* Is 37:1
 Then the high priest *t* Matt 26:65
 Then the high priest *t* Mark 14:63

TORMENT

"How long will you *t* Job 19:2
 shall lie down in *t* Is 50:11
 You come here to *t* Matt 8:29
 to this place of *t* Luke 16:28
 fear involves *t* 1 John 4:18
 to *t* them for five months Rev 9:5
t ascends forever Rev 14:11

TORMENTED

t with unclean spirits Luke 6:18
 for I am *t* in this Luke 16:24
 He shall be *t* with fire Rev 14:10
 And they will be *t* Rev 20:10

TORMENTS

And being in *t* Luke 16:23

TORN

Joseph is *t* to pieces Gen 37:33
 the altar of Baal, *t* down Judg 6:28
 has *t* the kingdom 1 Sam 15:28
 lion, which has *t* him 1 Kin 13:26
 aside my ways and *t* Lam 3:11
 for He has *t* Hos 6:1
 of the temple was *t* Matt 27:51
t in two from top to Mark 15:38

TORTURED

Others were *t* Heb 11:35

TOSSED

t with tempest Is 54:11
t to and fro and Eph 4:14

TOTTER

drunkard, and shall *t* Is 24:20

TOUCH

eat it, nor shall you *t* it Gen 3:3
 the mountain or *t* its base Ex 19:12
 carcasses you shall not *t* Lev 11:8
 seven no evil shall *t* Job 5:19
t no unclean thing Is 52:11
 "If only I may *t* Matt 9:21
 that they might only *t* Matt 14:36
 If only I may *t* His Mark 5:28
 and begged Him to *t* him Mark 8:22
 that He might *t* them Luke 18:15
 a man not to *t* a woman 1 Cor 7:1
 Do not *t* what is unclean, 2 Cor 6:17
 wicked one does not *t* 1 John 5:18

TOUCHED

whoever has *t* any slain Num 31:19
 whose hearts God had *t* 1 Sam 10:26
t my mouth with it Is 6:7
 hand and *t* my mouth Jer 1:9
 but he *t* me, and stood me Dan 8:18
 said, "Who *t* My clothes Mark 5:30
t the open coffin, and Luke 7:14
 Jesus said, "Who *t* Me? Luke 8:45
 mountain that may be *t* Heb 12:18

TOUCHES

if a person *t* any unclean Lev 5:2
 whoever *t* the carcass of Lev 11:24
 Whoever *t* those things Lev 15:27
 whoever *t* anything made Lev 22:4
 He *t* the hills Ps 104:32
t you *t* the Zech 2:8

TOWEL

His garments, took a *t* John 13:4

TOWER

t whose top is in the Gen 11:4
t which the sons of men Gen 11:5
 the *t* of salvation to 2 Sam 22:51
 for me, a strong *t* Ps 61:3
 my fortress, my high *t* Ps 144:2
 like an ivory *t* Song 7:4
 a watchman in the *t* Is 21:5
 in it and built a *t* Matt 21:33
 whom the *t* in Siloam fell Luke 13:4
 intending to build a *t* Luke 14:28

TOWN

Neither go into the *t* Mark 8:26
 from the *t* of Bethlehem, John 7:42

TOWNS

of Megiddo and its *t* Josh 17:11
 as *t* without walls Zech 2:4

TRACE

no *t* of them was found Dan 2:35

TRACKED

t our steps so that we Lam 4:18

TRADERS

Then Midianite *t* passed Gen 37:28
 are princes, whose *t* Is 23:8

TRADITION

transgress the *t* Matt 15:2
 of no effect by your *t* Matt 15:6
 holding the *t* of the elders Mark 7:3
 according to the *t* Col 2:8
t which he received 2 Thess 3:6
 conduct received by *t* 1 Pet 1:18

TRADITIONS

zealous for the *t* Gal 1:14
t which you were 2 Thess 2:15

TRAIN

T up a child in the Prov 22:6
t of His robe filled Is 6:1

TRAINED

who is perfectly *t* Luke 6:40
 those who have been *t* Heb 12:11

TRAINING

bring them up in the *t* Eph 6:4

TRAITOR

also became a *t* Luke 6:16

TRAITORS

t, headstrong 2 Tim 3:4

TRAMPLE

Your name we will *t* Ps 44:5
 serpent you shall *t* Ps 91:13
 hand, to *t* My courts Is 1:12
 You shall *t* the wicked Mal 4:3
 swine, lest they *t* Matt 7:6
 you the authority to *t* Lk 10:19

TRAMPLED

wall, and it shall be *t* down Is 5:5
 as straw is *t* down for the Is 25:10
t them in My fury Is 63:3
 The Lord has *t* underfoot Lam 1:15
 now she will be *t* Mic 7:10
t the nations in anger Hab 3:12
 Jerusalem will be *t* Luke 21:24
t the Son of God Heb 10:29
 the winepress was *t* Rev 14:20

TRANCE

he fell into a *t* Acts 10:10
t I saw a vision Acts 11:5

TRANSFIGURED

and was *t* before them Matt 17:2

TRANSFORMED

this world, but be *t* Rom 12:2
 the Lord, are being *t* 2 Cor 3:18

TRANSFORMING

t themselves into 2 Cor 11:13

TRANSFORMS

Satan himself *t* himself 2 Cor 11:14

TRANSGRESS

t the command of the Num 14:41
 the LORD's people *t* 1 Sam 2:24
 my mouth shall not *t* Ps 17:3
 his mouth must not *t* Prov 16:10
 of bread a man will *t* Prov 28:21
 those who *t* against Me Ezek 20:38
 in which you *t* against Zeph 3:11
 do Your disciples *t* Matt 15:2

TRANSGRESSED

t My covenant Josh 7:11
 they had *t* against the 2 Chr 12:2
 your mediators have *t* Is 43:27
 the rulers also *t* Jer 2:8
 who have *t* My covenant Jer 34:18
 their fathers have *t* Ezek 2:3
 Yes, all Israel has *t* Dan 9:11
t your commandment Luke 15:29

TRANSGRESSES

"Indeed, because he *t* Hab 2:5
 Whoever *t* and does not 2 John 9

TRANSGRESSING

God, in *t* His covenant, Deut 17:2
t against our God by Neh 13:27

TRANSGRESSION

iniquity and *t* and sin Ex 34:7
 Make me know my *t* Job 13:23
t is sealed up in a Job 14:17
 I am pure, without *t* Job 33:9
 though I am without *t* Job 34:6
 be innocent of great *t* Ps 19:13
 is he whose *t* is forgiven Ps 32:1
 their *t* with the rod Ps 89:32
 because of their *t* Ps 107:17
 He who covers a *t* Prov 17:9
 He who loves *t* loves Prov 17:19
 By *t* an evil man is Prov 29:6
 man abounds in *t* Prov 29:22
 tell My people their *t* Is 58:1
 and the *t* of desolation Dan 8:13
 at Gilgal multiply *t* Amos 4:4
 my firstborn for my *t* Mic 6:7

and passing over the *t* Mic 7:18
no law there is no *t* Rom 4:15
deceived, fell into *t* 1 Tim 2:14
steadfast, and every *t* Heb 2:2

TRANSGRESSIONS

He will not pardon your *t* Ex 23:21
forgive your *t* nor your Josh 24:19
if I have covered my *t* Job 31:33
"I will confess my *t* Ps 32:5
me from all my *t* Ps 39:8
mercies, blot out my *t* Ps 51:1
For I acknowledge my *t* Ps 51:3
has He removed our *t* Ps 103:12
who blots out your *t* Is 43:25
was wounded for our *t* Is 53:5
for the *t* of My people Is 53:8
for our *t* are with us, and Is 59:12
yoke of my *t* was bound Lam 1:14
from you all the *t* Ezek 18:31
I punish Israel for their *t* Amos 3:14
was added because of *t* Gal 3:19
redemption of the *t* Heb 9:15

TRANSGRESSOR

and were called a *t* Is 48:8
are a *t* of the law Rom 2:27
I make myself a *t* Gal 2:18
become a *t* of the law James 2:11

TRANSGRESSORS

the *t* shall be destroyed Ps 37:38
Then I will teach *t* Ps 51:13
to any wicked *t* Ps 59:5
The destruction of *t* and of Is 1:28
numbered with the *t* Is 53:12
when the *t* have reached Dan 8:23
numbered with the *t* Mark 15:28
numbered with the *t* Luke 22:37
convicted by the law as *t* James 2:9

TRANSLATED

Immanuel," which is *t* Matt 1:23
cumi," which is *t* Mark 5:41
Golgotha, which is *t* Mark 15:22
which is *t*, "My God" Mark 15:34
the Messiah" (which is *t* John 1:41
Cephas" (which is *t* John 1:42

TRAP

of Israel, as a *t* Is 8:14
where there is no *t* Amos 3:5
become a snare and a *t* Rom 11:9

TRAPS

they have set *t* Ps 140:5
for me, and from the *t* Ps 141:9

TRAVEL

For you *t* land and sea Matt 23:15
Paul's *t* companions Acts 19:29

TRAVELER

t who turns aside Jer 14:8

TRAVELING

lodge, O you *t* companies Is 21:13
lie waste, the *t* Is 33:8
t in the greatness of His Is 63:1
a man *t* to a far country Matt 25:14
two of them were *t* that Luke 24:13

TRAVERSE

the way of Prov 8:20

TREACHEROUS

the *t* dealer deals Is 21:2
The *t* dealers have dealt Is 24:16
yet her *t* sister Judah did Jer 3:8
an assembly of *t* men Jer 9:2
are insolent, *t* Zeph 3:4

TREACHEROUSLY

and you who deal *t* Is 33:1
have you dealt *t* with Me Jer 3:20
happy who deal so *t* Jer 12:1
even they have dealt *t* Jer 12:6
They have dealt *t* Hos 5:7
Why do we deal *t* Mal 2:10

that you do not deal *t* Mal 2:16
This man dealt *t* Acts 7:19

TREAD

t down the wicked in Job 40:12
it is He who shall *t* Ps 60:12
You shall *t* upon the Ps 91:13
shout, as those who *t* Jer 25:30
because you *t* down the Amos 5:11
will come down and *t* Mic 1:3
And they will *t* Rev 11:2

TREADS

like one who *t* in the Is 63:2
t the high places Amos 4:13
an ox while it *t* 1 Tim 5:18
t the winepress Rev 19:15

TREASURE

a special *t* above all the Deut 7:6
to you His good *t* Deut 28:12
one who finds great *t* Ps 119:162
for His special *t* Ps 135:4
t my commands within Prov 2:1
there is much *t* Prov 15:6
There is desirable *t* Prov 21:20
of the LORD is His *t* Is 33:6
For where your *t* Matt 6:21
t brings forth evil Matt 12:35
is like *t* hidden in a field Matt 13:44
t things new and old Matt 13:52
and you will have *t* Matt 19:21
will have *t* in heaven Mark 10:21
So is he who lays up *t* Luke 12:21
t in the heavens that Luke 12:33
For where your *t* is Luke 12:34
will have *t* in heaven Luke 18:22
But we have this *t* 2 Cor 4:7
You have heaped up *t* James 5:3

TREASURED

t the words of His Job 23:12

TREASURER

Erastus, the *t* of the Rom 16:23

TREASURES

sealed up among My *t* Deut 32:34
t hidden in the sand Deut 33:19
it more than hidden *t* Job 3:21
her as for hidden *t* Prov 2:4
t of wickedness profit Prov 10:2
Getting *t* by a lying Prov 21:6
is no end to their *t* Is 2:7
I will give you the *t* Is 45:3
in your works and your *t* Jer 48:7
Are there yet the *t* Mic 6:10
for yourselves *t* Matt 6:19
are hidden all the *t* Col 2:3
riches than the *t* Heb 11:26

TREASURIES

that I may fill their *t* Prov 8:21

TREASURING

t up for yourself wrath in Rom 2:5

TREASURY

you entered the *t* of snow Job 38:22
who have given to the *t* Mark 12:43
their gifts into the *t* Luke 21:1

TREAT

Should he *t* our sister Gen 34:31
not *t* her brutally Deut 21:14

TREATED

He *t* Abram well for her Gen 12:16
t them spitefully, and Matt 22:6
and be *t* with contempt Mark 9:12
were spitefully *t* at 1 Thess 2:2

TREATS

Cursed is the one who *t* Deut 27:16

TREATY

Now Solomon made a *t* 1 Kin 3:1
Let there be a *t* between 1 Kin 15:19
So he made a *t* with 1 Kin 20:34
Let there be a *t* between 2 Chr 16:3

TREE

LORD God made every *t* Gen 2:9
but of the *t* Gen 2:17
you eaten from the *t* Gen 3:11
tamarisk *t* in Beersheba Gen 21:33
for the *t* of the field is Deut 20:19
they said to the olive *t* Judg 9:8
the Diviners' Terebinth *T* Judg 9:37
the cedar *t* of Lebanon 1 Kin 4:33
down under a broom *t* 1 Kin 19:4
there is hope for a *t* Job 14:7
t planted by the Ps 1:3
like a native green *t* Ps 37:35
shall flourish like a palm *t* Ps 92:12
t falls to the south Eccl 11:3
Like an apple *t* Song 2:3
the cedar and the acacia *t* Is 41:19
for as the days of a *t* Is 65:22
are upright, like a palm *t* Jer 10:5
your name, Green Olive *T* Jer 11:16
t planted by the Jer 17:8
and set it like a willow *t* Ezek 17:5
brought down the high *t* Ezek 17:24
The *t* that you saw, which Dan 4:20
and the fig *t* has withered Joel 1:12
t bears good fruit Matt 7:17
t is known by its fruit Matt 12:33
And seeing a fig *t* by the Matt 21:19
fig *t* which You cursed Mark 11:21
For every *t* is known by Luke 6:44
a sycamore *t* to see Him Luke 19:4
everyone who hangs on a *t* Gal 3:13
His own body on the *t* 1 Pet 2:24
as a fig *t* drops its late Rev 6:13

TREE OF LIFE

The *t* was also in the midst Gen 2:9
and take also of the *t* Gen 3:22
guard the way to the *t* Gen 3:24
She is a *t* to those Prov 3:18
of the righteous is a *t* Prov 11:30
desire comes, it is a *t* Prov 13:12
wholesome tongue is a *t* Prov 15:4
to eat from the *t* Rev 2:7
t, which bore twelve fruits Rev 22:2
have the right to the *t* Rev 22:14

TREES

and the *t* of the field shall Lev 26:4
t once went forth Judg 9:8
Then all the *t* said to the Judg 9:14
Also he spoke of *t* 1 Kin 4:33
Then all the *t* of the Ps 96:12
The *t* of the LORD are Ps 104:16
all kinds of fruit *t* Eccl 2:5
all the *t* of the field shall Is 55:12
they may be called *t* Is 61:3
and on beast, on the *t* Jer 7:20
all the *t* of the field shall Ezek 17:24
so that all the *t* Ezek 31:9
"I see men like *t* Mark 8:24
took branches of palm *t* John 12:13
late autumn *t* without Jude 12
the sea, or the *t* Rev 7:3
third of the *t* were burned Rev 8:7

TREMBLE

T before Him 1 Chr 16:30
The dead *t*, those under Job 26:5
have made the earth *t* Ps 60:2
T before Him, all the earth Ps 96:9
let the peoples *t* Ps 99:1
T, O earth, at the presence Ps 114:7
who made the earth *t* Is 14:16
That the nations may *t* Is 64:2
LORD, you who *t* at His Is 66:5
'Will you not *t* Jer 5:22
wrath the earth will *t* Jer 10:10
they shall fear and *t* Jer 33:9
my kingdom men must *t* Dan 6:26
the inhabitants of the land *t* Joel 2:1
before them, the heavens *t* Joel 2:10
demons believe—and *t* James 2:19

TREMBLED

the people saw it, they *t* Ex 20:18
 of Edom, the earth *t* Judg 5:4
 for his heart *t* 1 Sam 4:13
 Then everyone who *t* Ezra 9:4
 the earth shook and *t* Ps 18:7
 and indeed they *t* Jer 4:24
 whole land *t* at the sound Jer 8:16
 mountains saw You and *t* Hab 3:10
 When I heard, my body *t* Hab 3:16

TREMBLES

the earth sees and *t* Ps 97:4
 flesh *t* for fear of You Ps 119:120

TREMBLING

t will take hold of them Ex 15:15
 will give you a *t* heart Deut 28:65
 it was a very great *t* 1 Sam 14:15
 your water with *t* Ezek 12:18
 in fear, and in much *t* 1 Cor 2:3
t you received 2 Cor 7:15
 flesh, with fear and *t* Eph 6:5
 with fear and *t* Phil 2:12

TRENCH

and he made a *t* 1 Kin 18:32

TRESPASS

he shall bring his *t* offering Lev 5:6
 If a person commits a *t* Lev 5:15
 commits a *t* against the Lev 6:2
 this is the law of the *t* Lev 7:1
 and offer it as a *t* offering Lev 14:12
 bring his *t* offering Lev 19:21
t against the LORD in Num 31:16
 forgive the *t* of your 1 Sam 25:28
 a man is overtaken in any *t* Gal 6:1

TRESPASSED

t against the LORD God 2 Chr 30:7
 We have *t* against our Ezra 10:2

TRESPASSES

still goes on in his *t* Ps 68:21
 forgive men their *t* Matt 6:14
 forgive his brother his *t* Matt 18:35
 forgive you your *t* Mark 11:25
 not imputing their *t* 2 Cor 5:19
 who were dead in *t* Eph 2:1
 forgiven you all *t* Col 2:13
 Confess your *t* to one James 5:16

TRIAL

as in the day of *t* Ps 95:8
 in the day of *t* Heb 3:8
 concerning the fiery *t* 1 Pet 4:12
t which shall come Rev 3:10

TRIALS

with Me in My *t* Luke 22:28
 fall into various *t* James 1:2

TRIBE

a man from every *t* Num 1:4
 Only the *t* of Levi you Num 1:49
 Do not cut off the *t* of the Num 4:18
 one thousand from each *t* Num 31:6
 one leader of every *t* Num 34:18
 One *t* is cut off from Judg 21:6
 of old, the *t* of Your Ps 74:2
 belongs to another *t* Heb 7:13
 the Lion of the *t* Rev 5:5
 blood out of every *t* Rev 5:9
 given him over every *t* Rev 13:7

TRIBES

See TWELVE TRIBES

are the twelve *t* of Israel Gen 49:28
 where the *t* go up Ps 122:4
 to raise up the *t* Is 49:6
 the *t* of Your inheritance Is 63:17
 promise our twelve *t* Acts 26:7
t which are scattered James 1:1

TRIBULATION

when *t* or persecution Matt 13:21
 there will be great *t* Matt 24:21
t or persecution arises Mark 4:17

world you will have *t* John 16:33
 Shall *t*, or distress, or Rom 8:35
 in hope, patient in *t* Rom 12:12
 comforts us in all our *t* 2 Cor 1:4
 joyful in all our *t* 2 Cor 7:4
 that we would suffer *t* 1 Thess 3:4
t those who 2 Thess 1:6
 and you will have *t* Rev 2:10
 with her into great *t* Rev 2:22
 out of the great *t* Rev 7:14

TRIBULATIONS

t enter the kingdom Acts 14:22
 but we also glory in *t* Rom 5:3
 in much patience, in *t*, in 2 Cor 6:4
 not lose heart at my *t* Eph 3:13
t that you endure 2 Thess 1:4

TRICKERY

plotted to take Jesus by *t* Matt 26:4
 they might take Him by *t* Mark 14:1
 doctrine, by the *t* of men Eph 4:14

TRIED

like silver *t* in a furnace of Ps 12:6
 You have *t* me and have Ps 17:3
 a *t* stone, a precious Is 28:16

TRIMMED

and *t* their lamps Matt 25:7

TRIUMPH

Let not my enemies *t* Ps 25:2
 I will *t* in the works Ps 92:4
 how long will the wicked *t* Ps 94:3
 always leads us in *t* 2 Cor 2:14

TRIUMPHED

the LORD, for He has *t* Ex 15:1

TRIUMPHING

that the *t* of the wicked is Job 20:5
 of them, *t* over them in it Col 2:15

TRIUMPHS

Mercy *t* over judgment James 2:13

TROAS

Paul receives vision at, Acts 16:8-11

TRODDEN

t the winepress alone Is 63:3

TROOP

Then Leah said, "A *t* Gen 30:11
 a *t* shall tramp upon him, Gen 49:19
 I can run against a *t* 2 Sam 22:30

TROUBLE

See TIME OF TROUBLE

that they were in *t* Ex 5:19
 The LORD will *t* you this Josh 7:25
 This day is a day of *t* 2 Kin 19:3
 no rest, for *t* comes Job 3:26
 yet man is born to *t*, as the Job 5:7
 few days and full of *t* Job 14:1
 for the time of *t* Job 38:23
 have increased who *t* Ps 3:1
 a refuge in times of *t* Ps 9:9
 under his tongue is *t* Ps 10:7
 from Me, for *t* is near Ps 22:11
t He shall hide me Ps 27:5
 You have considered my *t* Ps 31:7
 O LORD, for I am in *t* Ps 31:9
 shall preserve me from *t* Ps 32:7
 strength in the time of *t* Ps 37:39
 Your servant, for I am in *t* Ps 69:17
 not in *t* as other men Ps 73:5
 will be with him in *t* Ps 91:15
 walk in the midst of *t* Ps 138:7
 is delivered from *t* Prov 11:8
 but *t* will come to him Prov 11:27
 of the wicked is *t* Prov 15:6
t is like a bad tooth Prov 25:19
 they are a *t* to Me, I am Is 1:14
t they have Is 26:16
 also in the time of *t* Is 33:2
 and there was *t* Jer 8:15
 Savior in time of *t* Jer 14:8

I will hand them over to *t* Jer 15:4
 I will deliver them to *t* Jer 29:18
 there shall be a time of Dan 12:1
 for the day is its own *t* Matt 6:34
 do not *t* Yourself, for I am Luke 7:6
 such will have *t* 1 Cor 7:28
 there are some who *t* Gal 1:7
 and widows in their *t* James 1:27

TROUBLED

Your face, and I was *t* Ps 30:7
 God, and was *t* Ps 77:3
 Your face, they are *t* Ps 104:29
 wicked are like the *t* Is 57:20
 in distress; my soul is *t* Lam 1:20
 with tears, my heart is *t* Lam 2:11
 heard this, he was *t* Matt 2:3
 on the sea, they were *t* Matt 14:26
 You are worried and *t* Luke 10:41
 to give you who are *t* 2 Thess 1:7
 shaken in mind or *t* 2 Thess 2:2

TROUBLES

t shall befall them, so Deut 31:17
 "What *t* the people 1 Sam 11:5
 deliver you in six *t* Job 5:19
 The *t* of my heart have Ps 25:17
 out of all their *t* Ps 25:22
 my soul is full of *t* Ps 88:3
 He who *t* his own house Prov 11:29
 for gain *t* his own house Prov 15:27
 keeps his soul from *t* Prov 21:23
 because the former *t* Is 65:16
 will be famines and *t* Mark 13:8
 him out of all his *t* Acts 7:10
 but he who *t* you shall Gal 5:10

TROUBLING

spirit from God is *t* 1 Sam 16:15
 wicked cease from *t* Job 3:17

TRUE

and Your words are *t* 2 Sam 7:28
 let Your word come *t* 1 Kin 8:26
 been without the *t* God 2 Chr 15:3
t before the LORD his 2 Chr 31:2
 and *t* laws, good statutes Neh 9:13
 it is *t*. Hear it, and know Job 5:27
 judgments of the LORD are *t* Ps 19:9
 A *t* witness delivers Prov 14:25
 But the LORD is the *t* Jer 10:10
 "Let the LORD be a *t* Jer 42:5
 executed *t* judgment Ezek 18:8
 Execute *t* justice, show Zech 7:9
 we know that You are *t* Matt 22:16
 That was the *t* Light John 1:9
 He witnesses of Me is *t* John 5:32
 the *t* bread from heaven John 6:32
 One who sent Him is *t* John 7:18
 He who sent Me is *t* John 7:28
 judge, My judgment is *t* John 8:16
 testimony of two men is *t* John 8:17
 about this Man were *t* John 10:41
 I am the *t* vine, and My John 15:1
 You, the only *t* God John 17:3
 Indeed, let God be *t* Rom 3:4
 whatever things are *t* Phil 4:8
 which are copies of the *t* Heb 9:24
 let us draw near with a *t* Heb 10:22
 which thing is *t* in Him 1 John 2:8
 may know Him who is *t* 1 John 5:20
 is holy, He who is *t* Rev 3:7
t are Your ways, O King Rev 15:3
 For *t* and righteous are Rev 19:2
 "These are the *t* Rev 19:9
 was called Faithful and *t* Rev 19:11
 for these words are *t* Rev 21:5

TRULY

It *t* flows with milk and Num 13:27
 You shall *t* tithe all the Deut 14:22
t my words are not false Job 36:4
T God is good to Israel, to Ps 73:1
 LORD, *t* I am Your servant Ps 116:16
T You are God, who hide Is 45:15

T You are the Son of Matt 14:33
 T this was the Son of Matt 27:54
 T this Man was the Son Mark 15:39
 T I say to you that he Luke 12:44
 t the Son of Man goes Luke 22:22
 that this is t the Christ John 7:26
 "T this is the Prophet John 7:40
 that God is t among you 1 Cor 14:25
 T the signs of an 2 Cor 12:12
 t righteousness would have Gal 3:21
 t the love of God is 1 John 2:5

TRUMPET

When the t sounds long, Ex 19:13
 you hear the sound of the t Josh 6:5
 LORD with the sound of a t Ps 47:5
 Blow the t at the time Ps 81:3
 and when he blows a t, you Is 18:3
 "Blow the t in the Jer 4:5
 LORD God will blow the t Zech 9:14
 deed, do not sound a t Matt 6:2
 t makes an uncertain 1 Cor 14:8
 For the t will sound 1 Cor 15:52
 and with the t of God 1 Thess 4:16
 loud voice, as of a t Rev 1:10
 t of the three angels who Rev 8:13
 sixth angel who had the t Rev 9:14

TRUMPETS

the priests shall blow the t Josh 6:4
 and their t in their hands Judg 7:8
 With t and the sound of a Ps 98:6
 to them were given seven t Rev 8:2

TRUST

in whom I will t 2 Sam 22:3
 a shield to all who t in 2 Sam 22:31
 We t in the LORD our 2 Kin 18:22
 they put their t in Him 1 Chr 5:20
 t is a spider's web Job 8:14
 He slay me, yet will I t Job 13:15
 If God puts no t Job 15:15
 and put your t in the LORD Ps 4:5
 who put their t in You Ps 5:11
 strength, in whom I will t Ps 18:2
 shield to all who t in Him Ps 18:30
 you made Me t Ps 22:9
 as for me, I t in You, O Ps 31:14
 T in the LORD Ps 37:3
 t also in Him, and He shall Ps 37:5
 I t in the mercy of God Ps 52:8
 In You, O LORD, I put my t Ps 71:1
 You are my t from my Ps 71:5
 my God, in Him I will t Ps 91:2
 It is better to t in the LORD Ps 118:8
 T in the LORD with all Prov 3:5
 that your t may be in Prov 22:19
 who put their t in Him Prov 30:5
 my salvation, I will t Is 12:2
 T in the LORD forever, for in Is 26:4
 We t in the LORD our God, Is 36:7
 Let him t in the name Is 50:10
 But he who puts his t in Me Is 57:13
 Do not t in these Jer 7:4
 My name, in which you t Jer 7:14
 you have put your t in Me Jer 39:18
 Do not t in a friend Mic 7:5
 He knows those who t in Nah 1:7
 name Gentiles will t Matt 12:21
 those who t in riches Mark 10:24
 such t through Christ 2 Cor 3:4
 committed to your t 1 Tim 6:20
 I will put My t in Him Heb 2:13

TRUSTED

He t in the LORD God of 2 Kin 18:5
 "He t in the LORD Ps 22:8
 Because we have t in His Ps 33:21
 t in the abundance of his Ps 52:7
 He t in God Matt 27:43
 that we who first t Eph 1:12
 the holy women who t 1 Pet 3:5

TRUSTS

But he who t in the Ps 32:10

is the man who t in Him Ps 34:8
 whoever t in the LORD Prov 16:20
 he who t in the LORD Prov 28:25
 He who t in his own Prov 28:26
 whoever t in the LORD Prov 29:25
 the man who t in the LORD Jer 17:7

TRUTH

See SPIRIT OF TRUTH; WORD OF TRUTH
 led me in the way of t Gen 24:48
 justice, a God of t Deut 32:4
 Him in sincerity and in t Josh 24:14
 serve Him in t with all 1 Sam 12:24
 the t in the name of the 2 Chr 18:15
 and speaks the t Ps 15:2
 me in Your t and teach me Ps 25:5
 all His work is done in t Ps 33:4
 t continually preserve Ps 40:11
 Behold, You desire t Ps 51:6
 T shall spring out of Ps 85:11
 t shall be your shield Ps 91:4
 And His t endures to all Ps 100:5
 t of the LORD endures Ps 117:2
 t utterly out of my Ps 119:43
 and Your law is t Ps 119:142
 commandments are t Ps 119:151
 of Your word is t Ps 119:160
 who speaks t declares Prov 12:17
 t belong to those who Prov 14:22
 t atonement is provided Prov 16:6
 walked before You in t Is 38:3
 t is fallen in the Is 59:14
 not valiant for the t Jer 9:3
 cast t down to the ground Dan 8:12
 in the Scripture of T Dan 10:21
 "There is no t Hos 4:1
 called the City of T Zech 8:3
 speak each man the t Zech 8:16
 love t and peace Zech 8:19
 t was in his mouth Mal 2:6
 t came through Jesus John 1:17
 worship in spirit and t John 4:24
 you shall know the t John 8:32
 "I am the way, the t John 14:6
 He, the Spirit of t John 16:13
 Your word is t John 17:17
 be sanctified by the t John 17:19
 to Him, "What is t John 18:38
 speak the words of t Acts 26:25
 who suppress the t Rom 1:18
 of sincerity and t 1 Cor 5:8
 but rejoices in the t 1 Cor 13:6
 but, speaking the t Eph 4:15
 each one speak t with his Eph 4:25
 your waist with t Eph 6:14
 in the word of the t Col 1:5
 the love of the t 2 Thess 2:10
 I am speaking the t 1 Tim 2:7
 they may know the t 2 Tim 2:25
 the knowledge of the t 2 Tim 3:7
 in the present t 2 Pet 1:12
 way of t will be 2 Pet 2:2
 but in deed and in t 1 John 3:18
 that we are of the t 1 John 3:19
 we know the spirit of t 1 John 4:6
 the Spirit is t 1 John 5:6
 t that is in you 3 John 3

TRUTHFUL

The t lip shall be Prov 12:19

TRUTHFULLY

deal t as His delight Prov 12:22

TRY

t my mind and my heart Ps 26:2
 t me, and know my Ps 139:23
 refine them and t them Jer 9:7
 t Me now in this Mal 3:10
 which is to t you 1 Pet 4:12

TUBAL

Son of Japheth, Gen 10:2

— Tribe associated with Javan and
 Meshech, Is 66:19

In Gog's army, Ezek 38:2, 3
 Punishment of, Ezek 32:26, 27

TUBAL-CAIN

Son of Lamech, Gen 4:19-22

TUMORS

the boils of Egypt, with t Deut 28:27
 and struck them with t 1 Sam 5:6
 Five golden t and five 1 Sam 6:4

TUMULT

their waves, and the t Ps 65:7
 Your enemies make a t Ps 83:2

TUNIC

Also he made him a t Gen 37:3
 and take away your t Matt 5:40
 not withhold your t Luke 6:29
 the t was without seam, John 19:23

TUNICS

the LORD God made t Gen 3:21
 not to put on two t Mark 6:9
 He who has two t, let him Luke 3:11
 weeping, showing the t Acts 9:39

TURBAN

like a robe and a t Job 29:14
 "Remove the t Ezek 21:26

TURN

T From Your fierce wrath, Ex 32:12
 Do not t to idols, nor make Lev 19:4
 you shall not t Deut 17:11
 LORD may t away from Num 25:4
 do not t from it to the right Josh 1:7
 t from their sin because 1 Kin 8:35
 T from your evil ways, 2 Kin 17:13
 do not t to iniquity, for Job 36:21
 t to the LORD, and all the Ps 22:27
 T Yourself to me, and have Ps 25:16
 do not t Your servant away Ps 27:9
 Then we will not t Ps 80:18
 but let them not t Ps 85:8
 t to me, and have mercy Ps 86:16
 yet I do not t Ps 119:51
 T at my rebuke Prov 1:23
 Do not t to the right or Prov 4:27
 not let your heart t Prov 7:25
 I will t My hand against you, Is 1:25
 every man will t to his own Is 13:14
 "T now everyone from Jer 35:15
 T us back to You, O Lam 5:21
 "Repent, t away from Ezek 14:6
 Repent, and t from all Ezek 18:30
 T, t from your evil ways Ezek 33:11
 T to me with all your Joel 2:12
 yes, let every one t Jon 3:8
 "T now from your evil Zech 1:4
 those who t away an alien Mal 3:5
 he will t the hearts of the Mal 4:6
 on your right cheek, t Matt 5:39
 t the hearts of the Luke 1:17
 you that you should t Acts 14:15
 t them from darkness Acts 26:18
 repent, t to God, and do Acts 26:20
 Let him t away from 1 Pet 3:11
 waters to t them to blood Rev 11:6

TURN ASIDE

t and see this great Ex 3:3
 t after many to pervert Ex 23:2
 t and serve other gods Deut 11:16
 So you shall not t Deut 28:14
 Law of Moses, lest you t Josh 23:6
 they went, and did not t 1 Sam 6:12
 t from following the 1 Sam 12:20
 He did not t from them 1 Kin 22:43
 did not t from it 2 Chr 20:32
 The paths of their way t Job 6:18
 nor such as t to lies Ps 40:4
 I do not t from Your law Ps 119:51
 such as t to their crooked Ps 125:5
 Do not let your heart t Prov 7:25
 to t the justice due Lam 3:35

did not *t* when they went . . . Ezek 1:17
 did not *t* when they . . . Ezek 10:11

TURNED

in the river were *t* to blood . . . Ex 7:20
 who *t* to the LORD with . . . 2 Kin 23:25
t to the LORD God of . . . 2 Chr 15:4
 and *t* their backs on . . . 2 Chr 29:6
t me over to the hands of . . . Job 16:11
 I love have *t* against . . . Job 19:19
 kept His way and not *t* . . . Job 23:11
 The wicked shall be *t* . . . Ps 9:17
 let them be *t* back and . . . Ps 70:2
t my feet to Your . . . Ps 119:59
 of Israel, they have *t* . . . Is 1:4
 LORD has not *t* back from . . . Jer 4:8
 shall be *t* into darkness . . . Joel 2:31
 that they *t* from their evil . . . Jon 3:10
 Then He *t* to the woman . . . Luke 7:44
 sorrow will be *t* into joy . . . John 16:20
 sun shall be *t* into . . . Acts 2:20
 saw him and *t* to the Lord . . . Acts 9:35
 number believed and *t* . . . Acts 11:21
 and how you *t* to God . . . 1 Thess 1:9

TURNING

Gentiles who are *t* to . . . Acts 15:19
 marvel that you are *t* . . . Gal 1:6
 or shadow of *t* . . . James 1:17
 and *t* the cities of Sodom . . . 2 Pet 2:6

TURNS

of the wicked He *t* . . . Ps 146:9
 A soft answer *t* . . . Prov 15:1
 he *t*, he prospers . . . Prov 17:8
 One who *t* away his ear . . . Prov 28:9
 when a righteous man *t* . . . Ezek 3:20
 But if a wicked man *t* . . . Ezek 18:21
 a wicked man *t* away . . . Ezek 18:27
 he *t* from his sin and . . . Ezek 33:14
t from his wickedness . . . Ezek 33:19
 but no one *t* back . . . Nah 2:8
 that he who *t* . . . James 5:20

TURTLEDOVE

the life of Your *t* . . . Ps 74:19
t is heard in our land . . . Song 2:12

TURTLEDOVES

of *t* or young pigeons . . . Lev 1:14
 A pair of *t* or two young . . . Luke 2:24

TUTOR

the law was our *t* . . . Gal 3:24
 no longer under a *t* . . . Gal 3:25

TWELVE

the sons of Jacob were *t* . . . Gen 35:22
 are the *t* tribes of Israel . . . Gen 49:28
 were *t* stones according . . . Ex 39:14
t men, each one . . . Num 1:44
 Joshua set up *t* stones . . . Josh 4:9
 Solomon had *t* governors . . . 1 Kin 4:7
 Elijah took *t* stones, . . . 1 Kin 18:31
 Manasseh was *t* years . . . 2 Kin 21:1
 called His *t* disciples to . . . Matt 10:1
 These *t* Jesus sent out . . . Matt 10:5
 they took up *t* baskets . . . Matt 14:20
 more than *t* legions of . . . Matt 26:53
 Then He appointed *t* . . . Mark 3:14
 of blood for *t* years . . . Mark 5:25
 took up *t* baskets full . . . Mark 6:43
 when He was *t* years old . . . Luke 2:42
 He chose *t* whom He . . . Luke 6:13
 a flow of blood for *t* . . . Luke 8:43
t baskets of the leftover . . . Luke 9:17
 filled *t* baskets with the . . . John 6:13
 I not choose you, the *t* . . . John 6:70
 head a garland of *t* stars . . . Rev 12:1
t gates were *t* pearls . . . Rev 21:21

TWELVE APOSTLES

Now the names of the *t* . . . Matt 10:2
 and the *t* with Him . . . Luke 22:14
 the names of the *t* . . . Rev 21:14

TWELVE DISCIPLES

when He had called His *t* . . . Matt 10:1

commanding His *t* . . . Matt 11:1
 took the *t* aside on the . . . Matt 20:17
 Then He called His *t* . . . Luke 9:1

TWELVE TRIBES

these are the *t* of Israel . . . Gen 49:28
 pillars according to the *t* . . . Ex 24:4
 name according to the *t* . . . Ex 39:14
 inheritance among the *t* . . . Ezek 47:13
 judging the *t* . . . Matt 19:28
 To this promise our *t* . . . Acts 26:7
 the *t* which are scattered . . . James 1:1
 the names of the *t* . . . Rev 21:12

TWENTY-FOUR ELDERS

on the thrones I saw *t* . . . Rev 4:4
t fall down before Him . . . Rev 4:10
t fell down before the . . . Rev 5:8
t fell down and worshiped . . . Rev 5:14
t who sat before God . . . Rev 11:16
t and the four living . . . Rev 19:4

TWICE

the rock *t* with his rod . . . Num 20:11
t as much as he had . . . Job 42:10
 the rooster crows *t* . . . Mark 14:30
 the rooster crows *t* . . . Mark 14:72

TWILIGHT

at *t* is the LORD's Passover . . . Lev 23:5
 sacrifice the Passover at *t* . . . Deut 16:6

TWIN

figurehead was the *T* . . . Acts 28:11

TWINS

there were *t* in her womb . . . Gen 25:24
 behold, *t* were in her . . . Gen 38:27
 two fawns, *t* of a gazelle . . . Song 7:3

TWIST

All day they *t* my . . . Ps 56:5
 unstable people *t* to . . . 2 Pet 3:16

TWO

God made *t* great lights . . . Gen 1:16
t each of animals that are . . . Gen 7:2
 he ark to Noah, *t* . . . Gen 7:15
T nations are in your . . . Gen 25:23
t rams without blemish, . . . Ex 29:1
 He gave Moses *t* tablets of . . . Ex 31:18
 shall be unclean *t* weeks . . . Lev 12:5
t young pigeons . . . Lev 12:8
t tablets of the covenant . . . Deut 9:15
 hewed *t* tablets of stone . . . Deut 10:3
 by the mouth of *t* or . . . Deut 19:15
 the *t* middle pillars . . . Judg 16:29
 divided the Red Sea in *t* . . . Ps 136:13
T are better than one . . . Eccl 4:9
t he covered his . . . Is 6:2
 a ram which had *t* horns . . . Dan 8:3
 saw, having the *t* horns . . . Dan 8:20
 there stood *t* others, one . . . Dan 12:5
 one mile, go with him *t* . . . Matt 5:41
 five loaves and *t* fish . . . Matt 14:17
 'by the mouth of *t* or . . . Matt 18:16
 For where *t* or three are . . . Matt 18:20
t shall become one . . . Matt 19:5
 A man had *t* sons, and . . . Matt 21:28
 five talents, to another *t* . . . Matt 25:15
t robbers were crucified . . . Matt 27:38
 in *t* from top to bottom . . . Matt 27:51
 said, "Five, and *t* fish . . . Mark 6:38
t shall become one flesh" . . . Mark 10:8
 and threw in *t* mites, . . . Mark 12:42
 also crucified *t* robbers . . . Mark 15:27
 in *t* from top to bottom . . . Mark 15:38
t young pigeons . . . Luke 2:24
t fish, unless we go and . . . Luke 9:13
 certain man had *t* sons . . . Luke 15:11
 servant can serve *t* . . . Luke 16:13
 widow putting in *t* mites . . . Luke 21:2
 were also *t* others, . . . Luke 23:32
 temple was torn in *t* . . . Luke 23:45
t of them were traveling . . . Luke 24:13
T hundred denarii worth . . . John 6:7
t small fish, but what are . . . John 6:9

these are the *t* covenants . . . Gal 4:24
 new man from the *t* . . . Eph 2:15
t shall become one flesh . . . Eph 5:31
 from *t* or three witnesses . . . 1 Tim 5:19
 was *t* hundred million; I . . . Rev 9:16
 power to my *t* witnesses . . . Rev 11:3
 had *t* horns like a lamb . . . Rev 13:11

TWO-EDGED SWORD

and a *t* in their hand . . . Ps 149:6
 as wormwood, sharp as a *t* . . . Prov 5:4
 sharper than any *t* . . . Heb 4:12
 His mouth went a sharp *t* . . . Rev 1:16
 He who has the sharp *t* . . . Rev 2:12

TYCHICUS

Paul's companion, Acts 20:1, 4
 Paul's messenger, Eph 6:21, 22; Col
 4:7-9; 2 Tim 4:12

TYPE

of Adam, who is a *t* . . . Rom 5:14

TYRE

City of Phoenicia noted for its com-
 merce, Josh 19:29; 2 Sam 5:11; Jer
 25:22

TYRE AND SIDON

cut off from *T* every helper . . . Jer 47:4
 you to do with Me, O *T* . . . Joel 3:4
 had been done in *T* . . . Matt 11:21
 to the region of *T* . . . Matt 15:21
 more tolerable for *T* at . . . Luke 10:14
 with the people of *T* . . . Acts 12:20

UGLY

And the *u* and gaunt cows . . . Gen 41:4

ULAI

Scene of Daniel's visions, Dan 8:2-16

UNAFRAID

Do you want to be *u* . . . Rom 13:3

UNAWARE

I do not want you to be *u* . . . Rom 1:13
 not want you to be *u* . . . 1 Cor 10:11

UNBELIEF

because of their *u* . . . Matt 13:58
 Because of your *u* . . . Matt 17:20
 help my *u* . . . Mark 9:24
 and He rebuked their *u* . . . Mark 16:14
 promise of God through *u* . . . Rom 4:20
 did it ignorantly in *u* . . . 1 Tim 1:13
 you an evil heart of *u* . . . Heb 3:12
 enter in because of *u* . . . Heb 3:19

UNBELIEVER

But if the *u* departs, let . . . 1 Cor 7:15
 has a believer with an *u* . . . 2 Cor 6:15
 and is worse than an *u* . . . 1 Tim 5:8

UNBELIEVERS

his portion with the *u* . . . Luke 12:46
 who believe but to *u* . . . 1 Cor 14:22
 are uninformed or *u* . . . 1 Cor 14:23
 yoked together with *u* . . . 2 Cor 6:14

UNBELIEVING

Do not be *u* . . . John 20:27
u Jews stirred up the . . . Acts 14:2
 For the *u* husband is . . . 1 Cor 7:14
u nothing is pure . . . Titus 1:15
 But the cowardly, *u* . . . Rev 21:8

UNCIRCUMCISED

heed me, for I am of *u* lips . . . Ex 6:12
 Behold, I am of *u* lips, and . . . Ex 6:30
 For no *u* person shall eat it . . . Ex 12:48
u hearts are humbled . . . Lev 26:41
 is this *u* Philistine . . . 1 Sam 17:26
 of Israel are *u* in the heart . . . Jer 9:26
u in heart and *u* in flesh . . . Ezek 44:7
 You stiff-necked and *u* . . . Acts 7:51
 not the physically *u* . . . Rom 2:27
 by faith and the *u* . . . Rom 3:30
 only, or upon the *u* also . . . Rom 4:9

u had been committed Gal 2:7
 nor Jew, circumcised nor *u* ... Col 3:11

UNCIRCUMCISION

has become *u* Rom 2:25
u is nothing, but keeping ... 1 Cor 7:19
 who are called *U* by Eph 2:11

UNCLEAN

of animals that are *u* Gen 7:2
 person touches any *u* thing ... Lev 5:2
u thing shall not be eaten ... Lev 7:19
 to the LORD, while he is *u* ... Lev 7:20
 who touches any *u* Lev 7:21
 They are *u* to you Lev 11:8
 these you shall become *u* ... Lev 11:24
 I am a man of *u* lips Is 6:5
u shall no longer come Is 52:1
 we are all like an *u* thing ... Is 64:6
 I pronounced them *u* Ezek 20:26
 He commands even the *u* ... Mark 1:27
 commands the *u* spirits ... Luke 4:36
 any man common or *u* ... Acts 10:28
 there is nothing *u* Rom 14:14
 your children would be *u* ... 1 Cor 7:14
 Do not touch what is *u* ... 2 Cor 6:17
 that no fornicator, *u* Eph 5:5

UNCLEAN SPIRIT

u to depart from the land ... Zech 13:2
u goes out of a man Matt 12:43
 synagogue with an *u* Mark 1:23
u had convulsed him Mark 1:26
 "He has an *u* Mark 3:30
 a man with an *u* Mark 5:2
 daughter had an *u* Mark 7:25
 He rebuked the *u* Mark 9:25
 He had commanded the *u* ... Luke 8:29
 Jesus rebuked the *u* Luke 9:42
u goes out of a man Luke 11:24

UNCLEAN SPIRITS

them power over *u* Matt 10:1
 He commands even the *u* ... Mark 1:27
u, whenever they saw ... Mark 3:11
u went out and entered ... Mark 5:13
 tormented with *u* Luke 6:18
 who were tormented by *u* ... Acts 5:16
u, crying with a loud ... Acts 8:7
 three *u* like frogs Rev 16:13

UNCLEANNESS

of Israel from their *u*, lest ... Lev 15:31
 for sin and for *u* Zech 13:1
 men's bones and all *u* Matt 23:27
 also gave them up to *u* Rom 1:24
 members as slaves of *u* Rom 6:19
 adultery, fornication, *u* ... Gal 5:19
 fornication, *u*, passion, evil ... Col 3:5
 did not call us to *u* 1 Thess 4:7
 flesh in the lust of *u* 2 Pet 2:10

UNCLEANNESSES

from all your *u* Ezek 36:29

UNCLOTHED

we want to be *u* 2 Cor 5:4

UNCOVER

Do not *u* your heads nor ... Lev 10:6
 shall not *u* her nakedness ... Lev 18:7
u the woman's head, and ... Num 5:18
 the LORD will *u* their secret ... Is 3:17
 skirt, *u* the thigh Is 47:2
 he will *u* your sins Lam 4:22

UNCOVERED

and became *u* in his tent ... Gen 9:21
 of the world were *u* 2 Sam 22:16
 I have *u* his secret places, ... Jer 49:10
 its foundation will be *u* ... Ezek 13:14
 transgressions are *u* Ezek 21:24
 they *u* the roof where He ... Mark 2:4
 head *u* dishonors her 1 Cor 11:5
 to God with her head *u* ... 1 Cor 11:13

UNCOVERS

u her nakedness, he has ... Lev 20:18
u deep things out of ... Job 12:22

UNDEFILED

Blessed are the *u* Ps 119:1
 all, and the bed *u* Heb 13:4
u religion before God James 1:27
 incorruptible and *u* 1 Pet 1:4

UNDER HIS FEET

And there was *u* Ex 24:10
 down with darkness *u* ... 2 Sam 22:10
 You have put all things *u* ... Ps 8:6
 has put all enemies *u* ... 1 Cor 15:25
 And He put all things *u* ... Eph 1:22
 things in subjection *u* ... Heb 2:8

UNDER THE LAW

to those who are *u* Rom 3:19
 to those who are *u* 1 Cor 9:20
 of a woman, born *u* Gal 4:4
 you who desire to be *u* ... Gal 4:21
 Spirit, you are not *u* Gal 5:18

UNDERFOOT

Lord has trampled *u* all ... Lam 1:15
 the Son of God *u* Heb 10:29

UNDERMINE

And you *u* your friend Job 6:27

UNDERSTAND

u one another's speech ... Gen 11:7
 cause me to *u* wherein I ... Job 6:24
 of His power who can *u* ... Job 26:14
 can anyone *u* the Job 36:29
 uttered what I did not *u* ... Job 42:3
 if there are any who *u* ... Ps 14:2
 Who can *u* his errors ... Ps 19:12
 in Egypt did not *u* Ps 106:7
 Make me *u* the way of ... Ps 119:27
 then you will *u* the fear of ... Prov 2:5
 you will *u* righteousness ... Prov 2:9
 is to *u* his way Prov 14:8
 Evil men do not *u* Prov 28:5
 hearing, but do not *u* ... Is 6:9
 so that they cannot *u* ... Is 44:18
 and quick to *u* Dan 1:4
 set your heart to *u* Dan 10:12
u shall instruct many ... Dan 11:33
 of the wicked shall *u* ... Dan 12:10
 people who do not *u* ... Hos 4:14
 Let him *u* these things ... Hos 14:9
 nor do they *u* His counsel ... Mic 4:12
 will hear and shall not *u* ... Matt 13:14
 should *u* with their heart ... Matt 13:15
 they may hear and not *u* ... Mark 4:12
 hearing they may not *u* ... Luke 8:10
 Why do you not *u* John 8:43
u with their hearts and ... John 12:40
 I am doing you do not *u* ... John 13:7
u what you are reading ... Acts 8:30
 lest they should *u* Acts 28:27
 I am doing, I do not *u* ... Rom 7:15
 have not heard shall *u* ... Rom 15:21
u all mysteries 1 Cor 13:2
 some things hard to *u* ... 2 Pet 3:16

UNDERSTANDING

of God, in wisdom, in *u*, in ... Ex 31:3
 a woman of good *u* 1 Sam 25:3
 asked for yourself *u* 1 Kin 3:11
 and exceedingly great *u* ... 1 Kin 4:29
 filled with wisdom and *u* ... 1 Kin 7:14
 He has counsel and *u* ... Job 12:13
 He takes away the *u* of ... Job 12:24
 by His *u* He breaks up ... Job 26:12
 is the place of *u* Job 28:12
 depart from evil is *u* Job 28:28
 Almighty gives him *u* Job 32:8
 If you have *u*, hear this ... Job 34:16
 has given *u* to the heart ... Job 38:36
 not endow her with *u* ... Job 39:17
 my heart shall give *u* Ps 49:3
 a good *u* have all those ... Ps 111:10
 Give me *u* Ps 119:34
 give me *u*, that I may ... Ps 119:73
 Your precepts I get *u* ... Ps 119:104

give me *u*, that I may ... Ps 119:125
 give me *u*, and I shall ... Ps 119:144
 give me *u* according to ... Ps 119:169
 His *u* is infinite Ps 147:5
 a man of *u* will attain wise ... Prov 1:5
 apply your heart to *u* ... Prov 2:2
u will keep you Prov 2:11
 lean not on your own *u* ... Prov 3:5
u He established Prov 3:19
 with a woman lacks *u* ... Prov 6:32
 As for him who lacks *u* ... Prov 9:4
 and go in the way of *u* ... Prov 9:6
 of the Holy One is *u* ... Prov 9:10
 a man of *u* has wisdom ... Prov 10:23
 but a man of *u* holds his ... Prov 11:12
 frivolity is devoid of *u* ... Prov 12:11
 Good *u* gains favor, but ... Prov 13:15
 to wrath has great *u* ... Prov 14:29
 him who has *u* seeks ... Prov 15:14
 but a man of *u* walks ... Prov 15:21
 who heeds rebuke gets *u* ... Prov 15:32
 And to get *u* is to be ... Prov 16:16
U is a wellspring Prov 16:22
 A man devoid of *u* Prov 17:18
 A fool has no delight in *u* ... Prov 18:2
u will find good Prov 19:8
 the way of *u* will rest in ... Prov 21:16
 and instruction and *u* ... Prov 23:23
 but the poor who has *u* ... Prov 28:11
 A ruler who lacks *u* is a ... Prov 28:16
 Spirit of wisdom and *u* ... Is 11:2
 For it is a people of no *u* ... Is 27:11
 His *u* is unsearchable ... Is 40:28
 the heaven by His *u* ... Jer 51:15
 also still without *u* Matt 15:16
 heart, with all the *u* ... Mark 12:33
 And He opened their *u* ... Luke 24:45
 also pray with the *u* ... 1 Cor 14:15
 five words with my *u* ... 1 Cor 14:19
 but in *u* be mature ... 1 Cor 14:20
 having their *u* darkened, ... Eph 4:18
 God, which surpasses all *u* ... Phil 4:7
 and spiritual *u* Col 1:9
 the Lord give you *u* 2 Tim 2:7
 Who is wise and *u* James 3:13
 and has given us an *u* ... 1 John 5:20
 him who has *u* calculate ... Rev 13:18

UNDERSTANDS

God *u* its way, and He ... Job 28:23
 all plain to him who *u* ... Prov 8:9
 is easy to him who *u* ... Prov 14:6
 there is none who *u* Rom 3:11

UNDERSTOOD

all Israel *u* that day ... 2 Sam 3:37
 my ear has heard and *u* it ... Job 13:1
 Then I *u* their end Ps 73:17
 My heart has *u* great ... Eccl 1:16
 Have you not *u* from ... Is 40:21
u all these things Matt 13:51
 clearly seen, being *u* ... Rom 1:20
 I *u* as a child, I thought ... 1 Cor 13:11

UNDESIRABLE

gather together, O *u* Zeph 2:1

UNDIGNIFIED

I will be even more *u* ... 2 Sam 6:22

UNDISCERNING

u, untrustworthy Rom 1:31

UNDONE

He left nothing *u* of all ... Josh 11:15
 "Woe is me, for I am *u* ... Is 6:5
 leaving the others *u* Matt 23:23

UNEDUCATED

that they were *u* Acts 4:13

UNEQUALLY

Do not be *u* yoked 2 Cor 6:14

UNEXPECTEDLY

that Day come on you *u* ... Luke 21:34

UNFAITHFUL

they were *u* to the God 1 Chr 5:25
u will be uprooted Prov 2:22
 but the *u* will be taken by Prov 11:6
 way of the *u* is hard Prov 13:15
 they were *u* to Me Ezek 39:23

UNFAITHFULLY

back and acted *u* Ps 78:57

UNFAITHFULNESS

because of their *u* 1 Chr 9:1
 So Saul died for his *u* 1 Chr 10:13
 they have persisted in *u* Ezek 15:8

UNFAMILIAR

to a people of *u* speech Ezek 3:5

UNFORGIVING

unloving, *u* Rom 1:31
 unloving, *u*, slanderers, 2 Tim 3:3

UNFORMED

substance, being yet *u* Ps 139:16

UNFRUITFUL

and it becomes *u* Mark 4:19
 my understanding is *u* 1 Cor 14:14
 the *u* works of darkness Eph 5:11
 that they may not be *u* Titus 3:14

UNGODLINESS

u made me afraid Ps 18:4
 heaven against all *u* Rom 1:18
 He will turn away *u* Rom 11:26

UNGODLY

delivered me to the *u* Job 16:11
u shall not stand Ps 1:5
 of the *u* shall perish Ps 1:6
 my cause against an *u* Ps 43:1
u man digs up evil Prov 16:27
 who justifies the *u* Rom 4:5
 Christ died for the *u* Rom 5:6
 and perdition of *u* men 2 Pet 3:7
 convict all who are *u* Jude 15

UNHOLY

the holy and *u* Ezek 22:26
 for sinners, for the *u* 1 Tim 1:9

UNINFORMED

the place of the *u* 1 Cor 14:16

UNINHABITED

shall be *u* forty years Ezek 29:11
 and your cities shall be *u* Ezek 35:9

UNINTENDED

the LORD, for their *u* sin Num 15:25

UNINTENTIONAL

them, for it was *u* Num 15:25

UNINTENTIONALLY

If a person sins *u* against Lev 4:2
 If you sin *u*, and do not Num 15:22
 kills his neighbor *u* Deut 4:42
 sinned *u* or in ignorance Ezek 45:20

UNITE

U my heart to fear Ps 86:11

UNITY

to dwell together in *u* Ps 133:1
 to keep the *u* of the Eph 4:3
 we all come to the *u* Eph 4:13

UNJUST

hope of the *u* perishes Prov 11:7
u knows no shame Zeph 3:5
 on the just and on the *u* Matt 5:45
 commended the *u* Luke 16:8
 he who is *u* in what is Luke 16:10
 extortioners, *u* Luke 18:11
 of the just and the *u* Acts 24:15
u who inflicts wrath Rom 3:5
 For God is not *u* Heb 6:10
 the just for the *u* 1 Pet 3:18
 let him be *u* still Rev 22:11

UNJUSTLY

long will you judge *u* Ps 82:2
 he will deal *u* Is 26:10

UNKNOWN

not stand before *u* Prov 22:29
 To The *U* God Acts 17:23
 And I was *u* by face to Gal 1:22

UNLAWFUL

You know how *u* it is Acts 10:28

UNLEAVENED

See FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD
 the Feast of *U* Bread Mark 14:1
 since you truly are *u* 1 Cor 5:7

UNLEAVENED BREAD

feast, and baked *u* Gen 19:3
 roasted in fire, with *u* Ex 12:8
 observe the Feast of *U* Ex 12:17
u and parched grain Josh 5:11
 the meat and the *u* Judg 6:20
u among their brethren 2 Kin 23:9
 to keep the Feast of *U* 2 Chr 30:13
 they kept the Feast of *U* Ezra 6:22
 day of the Feast of the *U* Matt 26:17
 Feast of *U* Luke 22:1
 during the Days of *U* Acts 12:3
u of sincerity and truth 1 Cor 5:8

UNLOVED

saw that Leah was *u* Gen 29:31
 both the loved and the *u* Deut 21:15

UNLOVING

untrustworthy, *u* Rom 1:31

UNMARRIED

But I say to the *u* and 1 Cor 7:8

UNMERCIFUL

unforgiving, *u* Rom 1:31

UNPREPARED

with me and find you *u* 2 Cor 9:4

UNPRESENTABLE

u parts have greater 1 Cor 12:23

UNPROFITABLE

And cast the *u* Matt 25:30
 'We are *u* servants Luke 17:10
 have together become *u* Rom 3:12
 who once was *u* to you Philm 11
 for that would be *u* Heb 13:17

UNPROFITABLENESS

of its weakness and *u* Heb 7:18

UNPUNISHED

wicked will not go *u* Prov 11:21
 witness will not go *u* Prov 19:9
 be rich will not go *u* Prov 28:20
 You shall not go *u*, but Jer 49:12

UNQUENCHABLE

up the chaff with *u* Matt 3:12
 He will burn with *u* Luke 3:17

UNRESTRAINED

that the people were *u* Ex 32:25

UNRIGHTEOUS

u man his thoughts Is 55:7
 been faithful in the *u* Luke 16:11
u will not inherit the 1 Cor 6:9

UNRIGHTEOUSNESS

and there is no *u* Ps 92:15
 builds his house by *u* Jer 22:13
 Him is true, and no *u* John 7:18
 all ungodliness and *u* Rom 1:18
 the truth, but obey *u* Rom 2:8
 as instruments of *u* to sin Rom 6:13
 Is there *u* with God Rom 9:14
 but had pleasure in *u* 2 Thess 2:12
 will be merciful to their *u* Heb 8:12
 receive the wages of *u* 2 Pet 2:13
 cleanse us from all *u* 1 John 1:9
 All *u* is sin 1 John 5:17

UNRULY

those who are *u* 1 Thess 5:14
 It is an *u* evil James 3:8

UNSEARCHABLE

does great things, and *u* Job 5:9
 heart of kings is *u* Prov 25:3
u are His judgments Rom 11:33

UNSHRUNK

No one puts a piece of *u* Matt 9:16

UNSKILLED

only of milk is *u* Heb 5:13

UNSPOTTED

to keep oneself *u* James 1:27

UNSTABLE

U as water Gen 49:4
 man, *u* in all his ways James 1:8
 from sin, enticing *u* souls 2 Pet 2:14

UNSTOPPED

of the deaf shall be *u* Is 35:5

UNTAUGHT

which *u* and unstable 2 Pet 3:16

UNTHANKFUL

disobedient to parents, *u* 2 Tim 3:2

UNTRAINED

and *u* men, they marveled Acts 4:13
 Even though I am *u* in 2 Cor 11:6

UNTRUSTWORTHY

undiscerning, *u* Rom 1:31

UNUSUAL

to pass His act, His *u* act Is 28:21
 God worked *u* miracles Acts 19:11

UNVEILED

But we all, with *u* face, 2 Cor 3:18

UNWASHED

but to eat with *u* hands Matt 15:20
 eat bread with *u* hands Mark 7:5

UNWISE

He is an *u* son Hos 13:13
 both to wise and to *u* Rom 1:14
 Therefore do not be *u* Eph 5:17

UNWITTINGLY

have *u* entertained angels Heb 13:2

UNWORTHY

and judge yourselves *u* Acts 13:46
u manner will be 1 Cor 11:27

UPHOLD

u the evildoers Job 8:20
u me with Your generous Ps 51:12
U me according to Ps 119:116
 you, I will *u* you with My Is 41:10
 My Servant whom I *u* Is 42:1
 there was no one to *u* Is 63:5
u the weak, be patient 1 Thess 5:14

UPHOLDING

u all things by the Heb 1:3

UPHOLDS

the LORD *u* the righteous Ps 37:17
 Your right hand *u* Ps 63:8
 LORD *u* all who fall Ps 145:14

UPPER ROOM

shut the doors of the *u* Judg 3:23
 carried him to the *u* 1 Kin 17:19
 the lattice of his *u* 2 Kin 1:2
 let us make a small *u* 2 Kin 4:10
 And in his *u* Dan 6:10
 show you a large *u* Mark 14:15
 they went up into the *u* Acts 1:13
 they laid her in an *u* Acts 9:37
 many lamps in the *u* Acts 20:8

UPRIGHT

righteous and *u* is He Deut 32:4
 man was blameless and *u* Job 1:1
u man, one who fears God Job 1:8
 where were the *u* Job 4:7
 Good and *u* is the LORD Ps 25:8
u shall have dominion Ps 49:14
 declare that the LORD is *u* Ps 92:15

u will be blessed Ps 112:2
u there arises light Ps 112:4
 For the *u* will dwell in the Prov 2:21
 is strength for the *u* Prov 10:29
u will guide them Prov 11:3
u will deliver them Prov 11:6
u will flourish Prov 14:11
u is His delight Prov 15:8
 of the *u* is a highway Prov 15:19
 Whoever causes the *u* to Prov 28:10
 that God made man *u* Eccl 7:29
 and there is no one *u* Mic 7:2
 his soul is not *u* Hab 2:4

UPRIGHT IN HEART

God, Who saves the *u* Ps 7:10
 shoot secretly at the *u* Ps 11:2
 shout for joy, all you *u* Ps 32:11
 righteousness to the *u* Ps 36:10
 all the *u* shall glory Ps 64:10
 all the *u* will follow it Ps 94:15
 gladness for the *u* Ps 97:11

UPRIGHTLY

He who walks *u*, and works Ps 15:2
 from those who walk *u* Ps 84:11
 shield to those who walk *u* Prov 2:7
 understanding walks *u* Prov 15:21
 good to him who walks *u* Mic 2:7

UPRIGHTNESS

to show man His *u* Job 33:23
 praise You with *u* of heart Ps 119:7
 me in the land of *u* Ps 143:10
 of *u* to walk in the ways Prov 2:13
 walks in his *u* fears the Prov 14:2
 princes for their *u* Prov 17:26
 of the just is *u* Is 26:7
 land of *u* he will deal Is 26:10

UPROAR

so that the city is in an *u* 1 Kin 1:45
 be an *u* of the people Mark 14:2
 After the *u* had ceased, Acts 20:1

UPROOT

He will *u* Israel from 1 Kin 14:15
 then I will *u* 2 Chr 7:20
u you from the land Ps 52:5
u the wheat with Matt 13:29

UPROOTED

LORD *u* them from their Deut 29:28
 my hope He has *u* like a Job 19:10
 unfaithful will be *u* from Prov 2:22

UPWARD

prevailed fifteen cubits *u* Gen 7:20
 trouble, as the sparks fly *u* Job 5:7
 winds *u* for the wise Prov 15:24
 downward, and bear fruit *u* Is 37:31
 my eyes fail from looking *u* Is 38:14

UR OF THE CHALDEANS

City of Abram's early life, Gen
 11:28-31; 15:7
 Located in Mesopotamia by Stephen,
 Acts 7:2, 4

URGE

I *u* you to take heart, Acts 27:22
 I *u* you, imitate 1 Cor 4:16
 Therefore I *u* you to 2 Cor 2:8
 I *u* you to become like me Gal 4:12
 I *u* you in the sight of 1 Tim 6:13

URGED

the angels *u* Lot to hurry, Gen 19:15
 His disciples *u* Him John 4:31
 I strongly *u* him to 1 Cor 16:12

URIAH

Hittite; one of David's warriors, 2 Sam
 23:39
 Husband of Bathsheba; condemned to
 death by David, 2 Sam 11:1-27

URIAH

High priest in Ahaz's time, 2 Kin
 16:10-16

—— Prophet in Jeremiah's time, Jer
 26:20-23

URIM

of judgment of *U* Ex 28:30
 the judgment of the *U* Num 27:21
 Thummim and Your *U* Deut 33:8
 could consult with the *U* Ezra 2:63
 could consult with the *U* Neh 7:65

US

"God with *u* Matt 1:23
 who is not against *u* Mark 9:40
 If God is for *u* Rom 8:31
 They went out from *u* 1 John 2:19

USE

who spitefully *u* you Matt 5:44
 leaving the natural *u* Rom 1:27
u this world as not 1 Cor 7:31
u liberty as an Gal 5:13
u a little wine 1 Tim 5:23
 reason of *u* have their Heb 5:14

USEFUL

Is it *u* for any work Ezek 15:4
u for the Master 2 Tim 2:21
 you, for he is *u* to me for 2 Tim 4:11

USELESS

all of them are *u* Is 44:9
 are unprofitable and *u* Titus 3:9
 one's religion is *u* James 1:26

USES

if one *u* it lawfully 1 Tim 1:8

USING

u no figure of speech John 16:29
 perish with the *u* Col 2:22
u liberty as a 1 Pet 2:16

USURY

Take no *u* or Lev 25:36
 exacting *u* from his brother Neh 5:7
 put out his money at *u* Ps 15:5

UTTER

u words from their heart Job 8:10
 nor my tongue *u* deceit Job 27:4
u pure knowledge Job 33:3
u dark sayings of old Ps 78:2
 My lips shall *u* praise Ps 119:171
 a false witness will *u* lies Prov 14:5
 heart will *u* perverse Prov 23:33
 let not your heart *u* Eccl 5:2
 I will *u* My judgments Jer 1:16
 lawful for a man to *u* 2 Cor 12:4

UTTERANCE

the Spirit gave them *u* Acts 2:4
u may be given to me Eph 6:19

UTTERED

The deep *u* its voice Hab 3:10
 which cannot be *u* Rom 8:26
 the seven thunders *u* Rev 10:4

UTTERLY

that I will *u* blot out the Ex 17:14
 they *u* destroyed all that Josh 6:21
 lands by *u* destroying 2 Kin 19:11
 he shall not be *u* cast down Ps 37:24
 Oh, do not forsake me *u* Ps 119:8
 it would be *u* despised Song 8:7
 You have *u* rejected Lam 5:22
u destroyed from among Acts 3:23
 she will be *u* burned with Rev 18:8

UTTERMOST

upon them to the *u* 1 Thess 2:16
u those who come Heb 7:25

UTTERS

Day unto day *u* speech Ps 19:2
u His voice from Amos 1:2
 and the great man *u* Mic 7:3

UZZAH

Son of Abinadab, struck down for
 touching the ark of the covenant,
 2 Sam 6:3-11

UZZIAH

King of Judah, called Azariah, 2 Kin
 14:21; 15:1-7
 Reigns righteously, 2 Chr 26:1-15
 Usurps priestly function; stricken with
 leprosy, 2 Chr 26:16-21
 Life of, written by Isaiah, 2 Chr 26:22,
 23

VAGABOND

v you shall be on the Gen 4:12

VAIN

of the LORD your God in *v* Ex 20:7
 of the LORD your God in *v* Deut 5:11
 the people plot a *v* Ps 2:1
 they labor in *v* who build it Ps 127:1
v life which he passes Eccl 6:12
 'I have labored in *v* Is 49:4
 And in *v* they worship Me Matt 15:9
 And in *v* they worship Me Mark 7:7
 you believed in *v* 1 Cor 15:2
 labor is not in *v* in the 1 Cor 15:58
 law, then Christ died in *v* Gal 2:21
 run in *v* or labored in *v* Phil 2:16

VALIANT

Only be *v* for me 1 Sam 18:17
 They are not *v* for the Jer 9:3
v men swept away Jer 46:15

VALIANTLY

while Israel does *v* Num 24:18
 God we will do *v* Ps 60:12
 of the LORD does *v* Ps 118:15

VALLEY

in the V of Megiddo 2 Chr 35:22
 I walk through the *v* Ps 23:4
 pass through the V Ps 84:6
 the verdure of the *v* Song 6:11
v shall be exalted Is 40:4
 in the midst of the *v* Ezek 37:1
 in the *v* of decision Joel 3:14
v shall be filled Luke 3:5

VALEYS

He is not God of the *v* 1 Kin 20:28
 and the lily of the *v* Song 2:1
 the *v* will split like wax Mic 1:4

VALOR

a mighty man of *v* 1 Sam 16:18

VALUE

does not know its *v* Job 28:13
 of more *v* than they Matt 6:26
 you are of more *v* than Matt 10:31
 Of how much more *v* Matt 12:12
 you are of more *v* than Luke 12:7
 Of how much more *v* Luke 12:24
 they counted up the *v* Acts 19:19
 but are of no *v* against the Col 2:23

VALUED

It cannot be *v* in the Job 28:16
 is *v* by what others say Prov 27:21

VANISH

when it is hot, they *v* Job 6:17
 For the heavens will *v* Is 51:6
 knowledge, it will *v* 1 Cor 13:8
 old is ready to *v* away Heb 8:13

VANISHED

Has their wisdom *v* Jer 49:7
 and He *v* from their Luke 24:31

VANITY

of vanities, all is *v* Eccl 1:2
 This also is *v* and grasping Eccl 6:9
 iniquity with cords of *v* Is 5:18

VANQUISH

God will *v* him, not man Job 32:13

VAPOR

best state is but *v* Ps 39:5

surely every man is v Ps 39:11
It is even a v that James 4:14

VARIATION

whom there is no v James 1:17

VARIETIES

v of tongues 1 Cor 12:28

VARIOUS

glistening stones of v 1 Chr 29:2
earthquakes in v places Matt 24:7
were sick with v diseases Mark 1:34
sins, led away by v lusts 2 Tim 3:6
God, who at v times and in Heb 1:1
when you fall into v trials James 1:2

VASHTI

Queen of Ahasuerus, deposed and divorced, Esth 1:9-22

VEGETABLES

and let them give us v Dan 1:12
is weak eats only v Rom 14:2

VEHEMENT

of fire, a most v Song 8:6

VEIL

she took a v and covered Gen 24:65
The v shall be a divider for Ex 26:33
he put a v on his face Ex 34:33
temples behind your v Song 6:7
v of the temple was Matt 27:51
Moses, who put a v 2 Cor 3:13
because the v is taken 2 Cor 3:14
the v is taken away 2 Cor 3:16
Presence behind the v Heb 6:19

VEILED

Give them a v heart Lam 3:65
it is v to those who are 2 Cor 4:3

VEILS

v herself by the flocks of Song 1:7
I will also tear off your v Ezek 13:21

VENGEANCE

You shall not take v Lev 19:18
V is Mine Deut 32:35
spare in the day of v Prov 6:34
it is the day of the LORD's v Is 34:8
God will come with v Is 35:4
on the garments of v Is 59:17
and the day of v of our God Is 61:2
let me see Your v Jer 11:20
for it is the v of the LORD Jer 50:15
are the days of v Luke 21:22
written, "V is Mine Rom 12:19
flaming fire taking v 2 Thess 1:8
who said, "V is Mine Heb 10:30
suffering the v Jude 7

VENOM

It becomes cobra v Job 20:14

VESSEL

like a potter's v Ps 2:9
v that he made of clay Jer 18:4
like a precious v Jer 25:34
been emptied from v Jer 48:11
for he is a chosen v Acts 9:15
lump to make one v Rom 9:21
to possess his own v 1 Thess 4:4
to the weaker v 1 Pet 3:7

VESSELS

longsuffering the v Rom 9:22
treasure in earthen v 2 Cor 4:7
like the potter's v Rev 2:27

VEXED

grieved, and I was v Ps 73:21

VICE

as a cloak for v 1 Pet 2:16

VICTIM

and plucked the v Job 29:17

VICTORY

brought about a great v 2 Sam 23:12
is swallowed up in v 1 Cor 15:54

Hades, where is your v 1 Cor 15:55
who gives us the v 1 Cor 15:57
v that has overcome 1 John 5:4
have the v over the beast Rev 15:2

VIEW

"Go, v the land Josh 2:1

VIGILANT

in prayer, being v Col 4:2
Be sober, be v 1 Pet 5:8

VIGOR

nor his natural v Deut 34:7

VILE

sons made themselves v 1 Sam 3:13
"Behold, I am v Job 40:4
them up to v passions Rom 1:26

VILLAGES

of Megiddo and its v Judg 1:27
they may go into the v Matt 14:15
many v of the Samaritans Acts 8:25

VINDICATE

V me, O LORD, for I have Ps 26:1
V me, O LORD my God, Ps 35:24
V me, O God, And plead Ps 43:1
And v me by Your strength Ps 54:1

VINDICATED

know that I shall be v Job 13:18

VINDICATES

indeed this v you before Gen 20:16

VINDICATION

Let my v come from Ps 17:2

VINE

in my dream a v was Gen 40:9
to the choice v Gen 49:11
their v is of the v Deut 32:32
You have brought a v Ps 80:8
planted you a noble v Jer 2:21
as a v the remnant of Israel Jer 6:9
grapes shall be on the v Jer 8:13
Israel empties his v Hos 10:1
shall sit under his v Mic 4:4
the v shall give its fruit, Zech 8:12
of this fruit of the v Matt 26:29
of the fruit of the v Mark 14:25
"I am the true v John 15:1
unless it abides in the v John 15:4
I am the v, you are the John 15:5

VINEDRESSER

and My Father is the v John 15:1

VINEDRESSERS

he leased it to v and Matt 21:33
leased it to v and went Mark 12:1
a vineyard, leased it to v Luke 20:9

VINEGAR

they gave me v to drink Ps 69:21
As v to the teeth and Prov 10:26
weather, and like v Prov 25:20

VINES

foxes that spoil the v Song 2:15
nor fruit be on the v Hab 3:17

VINEYARD

and the best of his own v Ex 22:5
shall not glean your v Lev 19:10
field nor prune your v Lev 25:4
v which Your right Ps 80:15
for the v of the LORD of Is 5:7
laborers for his v Matt 20:1
go, work today in my v Matt 21:28
owner of the v comes Matt 21:40
A man planted a v and Mark 12:1
certain man planted a v Luke 20:9
Who plants a v and 1 Cor 9:7

VINEYARDS

which you did not dig, v Deut 6:11
in the v there will be no Is 16:10
wine, a land of bread and v Is 36:17

nothing, and gave them v Jer 39:10
they shall plant v and Amos 9:14

VIOLENCE

was filled with v Gen 6:11
You save me from v 2 Sam 22:3
the one who loves v Ps 11:5
such as breathe out v Ps 27:12
from oppression and v Ps 72:14
v covers the Prov 10:6
The v of the wicked will Prov 21:7
He had done no v Is 53:9
and v in the land Jer 51:46
filled the land with v Ezek 8:17
LORD, "Who store up v Amos 3:10
cause the seat of v Amos 6:3
For v against your Obad 10
way and from the v Jon 3:8
rich men are full of v Mic 6:12
For plundering and v Hab 1:3
have done v to the law Zeph 3:4
one's garment with v Mal 2:16
of heaven suffers v Matt 11:12

VIOLENT

me from the v man Ps 18:48
let evil hunt the v Ps 140:11
A v man entices his Prov 16:29
violence, and the v Matt 11:12
haters of God, v Rom 1:30
given to wine, not v 1 Tim 3:3

VIOLENTLY

The earth is v broken, the Is 24:19
It will fall v on the head of Jer 23:19
herd ran v down the Mark 5:13

VIPER

and stings like a v Prov 23:32
will come forth a v Is 14:29
which is crushed a v Is 59:5

VIPERS

See BROOD OF VIPERS

VIRGIN

v shall conceive Is 7:14
O you oppressed v Is 23:12
v daughter of my Jer 14:17
the v daughter of Judah Lam 1:15
you, O v daughter of Zion Lam 2:13
The v of Israel has Amos 5:2
"Behold, the v shall Matt 1:23
if a v marries, she has 1 Cor 7:28
between a wife and a v 1 Cor 7:34
you as a chaste v 2 Cor 11:2

VIRGINITY

take a wife in her v Lev 21:13
and bewail my v Judg 11:37

VIRGINS

v who took their lamps Matt 25:1
Now concerning v: I 1 Cor 7:25
women, for they are v Rev 14:4

VIRTUE

if there is any v Phil 4:8
us by glory and v 2 Pet 1:3
to your faith v 2 Pet 1:5

VIRTUOUS

that you are a v woman Ruth 3:11
Who can find a v wife Prov 31:10

VISAGE

v was marred more than Is 52:14

VISIBLE

that are on earth, v Col 1:16
of things which are v Heb 11:3

VISION

came to Abram in a v Gen 15:1
chased away like a v Job 20:8
Then You spoke in a v Ps 89:19
the Valley of V Is 22:1
a dream of a night v Is 29:7
her prophets find no v Lam 2:9
the fulfillment of every v Ezek 12:23
v which I saw by the Ezek 43:3

have night without v Mic 3:6
 they had also seen a v Luke 24:23
 in a v he has seen a man Acts 9:12
 in a trance I saw a v Acts 11:5
 v appeared to Paul in Acts 16:9
 to the heavenly v Acts 26:19

VISIONS

thoughts from the v Job 4:13
 opened and I saw v of God Ezek 1:1
 These were the v of my Dan 4:10
 young men shall see v Joel 2:28
 young men shall see v Acts 2:17
 I will come to v 2 Cor 12:1

VISIT

but God will surely v Gen 50:24
 in the day when I v Ex 32:34
 v the earth and water Ps 65:9
 Oh, v me with Your Ps 106:4
 and you did not v Me Matt 25:43
 v orphans and widows James 1:27

VISITATION

the time of your v Luke 19:44
 God in the day of v 1 Pet 2:12

VISITED

he will not be v Prov 19:23
 many days you will be v Ezek 38:8
 I was sick and you v Me Matt 25:36
 Israel, for He has v Luke 1:68
 "God has v His people Luke 7:16
 how God at the first v Acts 15:14

VISITING

v the iniquity of the fathers Ex 20:5

VISITOR

am a foreigner and a v Gen 23:4

VITALITY

v was turned into the Ps 32:4

VOICE

"I heard Your v Gen 3:10
 God heard the v of the Gen 21:17
 you have obeyed My v Gen 22:18
 only obey my v, and go, Gen 27:13
 v is Jacob's v Gen 27:22
 I should obey His v Ex 5:2
 God answered him by v Ex 19:19
 your God and obey His v Deut 4:30
 obey the v of the LORD Deut 30:10
 wept with a loud v 2 Sam 15:23
 heard the v of Elijah 1 Kin 17:22
 fire a still small v 1 Kin 19:12
 and my flute to the v Job 30:31
 you thunder with a v Job 40:9
 cried to the LORD with my v Ps 3:4
 with the v of thanksgiving Ps 26:7
 the v of my supplications Ps 28:6
 He uttered His v Ps 46:6
 Hear my v, O God, in my Ps 64:1
 He sends out His v Ps 68:33
 cried out to God with my v Ps 77:1
 have lifted up their v Ps 93:3
 if you will hear His v Ps 95:7
 word, heeding the v Ps 103:20
 for your v is sweet Song 2:14
 their v shall be heard as far Is 15:4
 The v of one crying in Is 40:3
 the v of weeping shall Is 65:19
 A v from the temple Is 66:6
 the v of the LORD our God Jer 3:25
 that does not obey the v of Jer 7:28
 v was heard in Ramah Jer 31:15
 the v of joy and Jer 33:11
 I heard a v of One Ezek 1:28
 who has a pleasant v Ezek 33:32
 like the v of a multitude Dan 10:6
 with the v of thanksgiving Jon 2:9
 v was heard in Ramah Matt 2:18
 "The v of one crying Matt 3:17
 And suddenly a v Matt 3:17
 will anyone hear His v Matt 12:19
 and suddenly a v Matt 17:5

cried out with a loud v Matt 27:46
 a loud v glorified God, Luke 17:15
 hear the v of the Son of John 5:25
 for they know his v John 10:4
 v did not come because John 12:30
 the truth hears My v John 18:37
 the v of an archangel 1 Thess 4:16
 whose v then shook the Heb 12:26
 glory when such a v 2 Pet 1:17
 If anyone hears My v Rev 3:20
 I heard a v from heaven, Rev 14:2

VOICE OF THE LORD

diligently heed the v Ex 15:26
 if we hear the v Deut 5:25
 they did not obey the v Josh 5:6
 as in obeying the v 1 Sam 15:22
 you did not obey the v 1 Sam 28:18
 v is over the waters Ps 29:3
 did not heed the v Ps 106:25
 Also I heard the v Is 6:8
 v, who fully repays Is 66:6
 they did not obey the v Jer 43:7
 We have not obeyed the v Dan 9:10
 people, obeyed the v Hag 1:12
 diligently obey the v Zech 6:15
 the v came to him Acts 7:31

VOICES

God of Israel with v 2 Chr 20:19
 shall lift up their v Is 52:8
 demanding with loud v Luke 23:23
 And there were loud v Rev 11:15

VOID

was without form, and v Gen 1:2
 they are a nation v Deut 32:28
 the LORD had made a v Judg 21:15
 regarded Your law as v Ps 119:126
 it shall not return to Me v Is 55:11
 Do we then make v Rom 3:31
 heirs, faith is made v Rom 4:14
 make my boasting v 1 Cor 9:15

VOLUME

in the v of the book Heb 10:7

VOLUNTEERS

Your people shall be v Ps 110:3

VOMIT

lest the land v Lev 18:28
 dog returns to his own v Prov 26:11
 man staggers in his v Is 19:14
 returns to his own v 2 Pet 2:22
 cold nor hot, I will v Rev 3:16

VOW

Then Jacob made a v Gen 28:20
 to take the v of a Nazirite Num 6:2
 he carried out his v Judg 11:39
 v shall be performed Ps 65:1
 When you make a v Eccl 5:4
 not to v than to v Eccl 5:5
 for he had taken a v Acts 18:18
 men who have taken a v Acts 21:23

VOW TO THE LORD

So Israel made a v Num 21:2
 Or if a woman makes a v Num 30:3
 When you make a v Deut 23:21
 And Jephthah made a v Judg 11:30
 yes, they will make a v Is 19:21

VOWED

If she v in her husband's Num 30:10
 v to the Mighty One of Ps 132:2
 Pay what you have v Eccl 5:4
 I will pay what I have v Jon 2:9

VOWS

v to the LORD the offering Num 6:21
 you will pay your v Job 22:27
 I will pay My v Ps 22:25
 V made to You are Ps 56:12
 Make v to the LORD Ps 76:11
 today I have paid my v Prov 7:14
 to reconsider his v Prov 20:25

And what, son of my v Prov 31:2
 to the LORD and took v Jon 1:16

WAFERS

like w made with honey Ex 16:31

WAGE

those who exploit w Mal 3:5
 w the good warfare 1 Tim 1:18

WAGES

I will give you your w Ex 2:9
 the w of the wicked Prov 10:16
 the transgressor his w Prov 26:10
 w will be troubled Is 19:10
 and he who earns w Hag 1:6
 to you, give me my w Zech 11:12
 and give them their w Matt 20:8
 be content with your w Luke 3:14
 is worthy of his w Luke 10:7
 him who works, the w Rom 4:4
 For the w of sin is Rom 6:23
 is worthy of his w 1 Tim 5:18
 Indeed the w of the James 5:4
 and will receive the w of 2 Pet 2:13

WAIL

streets everyone will w Is 15:3
 everyone shall w Is 16:7
 My heart shall w Jer 48:38
 "Son of man, w Ezek 32:18

WAILING

w is heard from Zion Jer 9:19
 shall be w in all streets Amos 5:16
 of heart and bitter w Ezek 27:31
 There will be w Matt 13:42
 cried out, weeping and w Rev 18:19

WAIST

than my father's w 1 Kin 12:10
 Your w is a heap of wheat Song 7:2
 put it around your w Jer 13:1
 the appearance of His w Ezek 1:27
 w was girded with gold Dan 10:5
 Let your w be girded Luke 12:35
 girded your w with truth Eph 6:14

WAIT

if he did not lie in w Ex 21:13
 would you w for them till Ruth 1:13
 w until you have 1 Sam 1:23
 hard service I will w Job 1:14
 If I w for the grave Job 17:13
 w patiently for Him Ps 37:7
 my eyes fail while I w Ps 69:3
 These all w for You Ps 104:27
 let us lie in w to shed Prov 1:11
 And I will w on the Is 8:17
 the LORD will w Is 30:18
 not be ashamed who w Is 49:23
 w quietly for the Lam 3:26
 I will w for the God Mic 7:7
 Though it tarries, w for it Hab 2:3
 be like men who w Luke 12:36
 but to w for the Promise Acts 1:4
 see, we eagerly w Rom 8:25
 w for one another 1 Cor 11:33
 the Spirit eagerly w Gal 5:5
 we also eagerly w Phil 3:20
 and to w for His Son 1 Thess 1:10
 To those who eagerly w Heb 9:28

WAIT ON THE LORD

W, be of good courage Ps 27:14
 But those who w Ps 37:9
 W, and keep His way Ps 37:34
 And I will w Is 8:17
 w shall renew their Is 40:31

WAITED

w for your salvation Gen 49:18
 and when I w for light Job 30:26
 w patiently for the Ps 40:1
 we have w for Him Is 25:9

And the people w Luke 1:21
day you have w and Acts 27:33
for he w for the city Heb 11:10
Divine long suffering w 1 Pet 3:20

WAITING

w at the posts of my Prov 8:34
who was himself w for Mark 15:43
w for the Consolation Luke 2:25
who himself was also w Luke 23:51
ourselves, eagerly w Rom 8:23
w for the revelation 1 Cor 1:7
from that time w Heb 10:13

WAITS

of the adulterer w Job 24:15
my soul silently w Ps 62:1
My soul w for the Lord Ps 130:6
for the one who w Ps 64:4
the creation eagerly w Rom 8:19

WAKE

us, that whether we w 1 Thess 5:10

WALK

w before Me and be Gen 17:1
in which they must w Ex 18:20
You shall w in all Deut 5:33
Yea, though I w Ps 23:4
W about Zion Ps 48:12
that Israel would w Ps 81:13
I will w within my Ps 101:2
I will w before the Ps 116:9
Though I w in the Ps 138:7
W prudently when you Eccl 5:1
w in the ways of your Eccl 11:9
come and let us w Is 2:5
"This is the way, w Is 30:21
be weary, they shall w Is 40:31
w in the light of your Is 50:11
people, who w in a way Is 65:2
commit adultery and w Jer 23:14
the righteous w Hos 14:9
w humbly with your God Mic 6:8
take up your bed and w John 5:8
W while you have the John 12:35
so we also should w Rom 6:4
Let us w properly Rom 13:13
For we w by faith 2 Cor 5:7
W in the Spirit Gal 5:16
that we should w Eph 2:10
And w in love Eph 5:2
W as children of light Eph 5:8
attained, let us w Phil 3:16
note those who so w Phil 3:17
that you may w worthy Col 1:10
Jesus the Lord, so w Col 2:6
us how you ought to w 1 Thess 4:1
w just as He 1 John 2:6
and they shall w Rev 3:4

WALKED

Enoch w with God Gen 5:22
by His light I w Job 29:3
The people who w Is 9:2
He w with Me in peace Mal 2:6
Jesus no longer w John 11:54
w according to the 2 Cor 10:2
in which you once w Eph 2:2
to walk just as He w 1 John 2:6

WALKING

of the LORD God w Gen 3:8
see four men loose, w Dan 3:25
before God, w in all Luke 1:6
they saw Jesus w John 6:19
And w in the fear of Acts 9:31
you are no longer w Rom 14:15
not w in craftiness 2 Cor 4:2
of your children w 2 John 4

WALKS

the LORD your God w Deut 23:14
is the man who w Ps 1:1
He who w uprightly Ps 15:2
He who w with Prov 10:9

He who w with wise Prov 13:20
w blamelessly will be Prov 28:18
w wisely will be Prov 28:26
Whoever w the road Is 35:8
Who w in darkness and Is 50:10
it is not in man who w Jer 10:23
do good to him who w Mic 2:7
If anyone w in the day John 11:9
he who w in darkness John 12:35
adversary the devil w 1 Pet 5:8
is in darkness and w 1 John 2:11

WALL

then the w of the city Josh 6:5
his face toward the w 2 Kin 20:2
like a leaning w Ps 62:3
and like a high w Prov 18:11
If she is a w Song 8:9
We grope for the w Is 59:10
you, you whitewashed w Acts 23:3
a window in the w 2 Cor 11:33
down the middle w Eph 2:14
Now the w of the city Rev 21:14

WALLS

broken down, without w Prov 25:28
salvation for w Is 26:1
you shall call your w Is 60:18
By faith the w of Heb 11:30

WANDER

and makes them w Job 12:24
ones cry to God, and w Job 38:41
Indeed, I would w Ps 55:7
Oh, let me not w Ps 119:10
they have loved to w Jer 14:10

WANDERED

w blind in the streets Lam 4:14
My sheep w through Ezek 34:6
They w in deserts and Heb 11:38

WANDERERS

And they shall be w Hos 9:17

WANDERING

learn to be idle, w 1 Tim 5:13
w stars for whom is Jude 13

WANDERS

He w about for bread Job 15:23
Like a bird that w Prov 27:8
if anyone among you w James 5:19

WANT

I shall not w Ps 23:1
he began to be in w Luke 15:14

WANTING

balances, and found w Dan 5:27

WANTON

necks and w eyes Is 3:16
have begun to grow w 1 Tim 5:11

WAR

"There is a noise of w Ex 32:17
the LORD for the w Num 32:20
my hands to make w 2 Sam 22:35
day of battle and w Job 38:23
w may rise against Ps 27:3
speak, they are for w Ps 120:7
by wise counsel wage w Prov 20:18
will wage your own w Prov 24:6
shall they learn w Is 2:4
from the distress of w Is 21:15
we shall see no w Jer 42:14
same horn was making w Dan 7:21
men returned from w Mic 2:8
king, going to make w Luke 14:31
Who ever goes to w 1 Cor 9:7
for pleasure that w James 4:1
You fight and w James 4:2
fleshly lusts which w 1 Pet 2:11
w broke out in heaven Rev 12:7
He judges and makes w Rev 19:11

WARFARE

to her, that her w Is 40:2

w are not carnal 2 Cor 10:4
may wage the good w 1 Tim 1:18
w entangles 2 Tim 2:4

WARM

but he could not get w 1 Kin 1:1
of the child became w 2 Kin 4:34
they will keep w Eccl 4:11
but no one is w Hag 1:6

WARMED

w himself at the fire Mark 14:54
Depart in peace, be w James 2:16

WARMING

when she saw Peter w Mark 14:67

WARMS

w them in the dust Job 39:14
He even w himself and Is 44:16

WARN

w the people, lest they Ex 19:21
w the wicked from his Ezek 3:18
w everyone night Acts 20:31
beloved children I w 1 Cor 4:14
w those who are 1 Thess 5:14

WARNED

"The man solemnly w Gen 43:3
them Your servant is w Ps 19:11
Then, being divinely w Matt 2:12
Who w you to flee Matt 3:7
Noah, being divinely w Heb 11:7

WARNING

he who takes w will save Ezek 33:5
w every man and Col 1:28

WARPED

such a person is w Titus 3:11

WARRING

w against the law of Rom 7:23

WARRIOR

He runs at me like a w Job 16:14

WARS

He makes w cease to Ps 46:9
And you will hear of w Matt 24:6
Where do w and fights James 4:1

WASH

w myself with snow Job 9:30
I will w my hands in Ps 26:6
W me thoroughly Ps 51:2
he shall w his feet in Ps 58:10
"W yourselves Is 1:16
O Jerusalem, w your Jer 4:14
head and w your face Matt 6:17
For they do not w Matt 15:2
not eat unless they w Mark 7:3
w His feet with her Luke 7:38
said to him, "Go, w John 9:7
w the disciples' John 13:5
"You shall never w John 13:8
w one another's John 13:14
w away your sins Acts 22:16

WASHED

and w my hands in Ps 73:13
When the Lord has w Is 4:4
cut, nor were you w Ezek 16:4
w his hands before the Matt 27:24
My feet, but she has w Luke 7:44
So when He had w John 13:12
w their stripes Acts 16:33
But you were w 1 Cor 6:11
if she has w the 1 Tim 5:10
Him who loved us and w Rev 1:5
w their robes and made Rev 7:14

WASHING

have come up from the w Song 4:2
hold, like the w of cups Mark 7:4
cleanse her with the w Eph 5:26
us, through the w Titus 3:5

WASHINGS

and drinks, various w Heb 9:10

WASTE

who are left shall w Lev 26:39
the cities are laid w Is 6:11
empty and makes it w Is 24:1
w the mountains Is 42:15
"Why this w Matt 26:8

WASTED

The field is w Joel 1:10
this fragrant oil w Mark 14:4
w his possessions Luke 15:13

WASTELAND

w shall be glad Is 35:1

WASTES

His flesh w away from Job 33:21
My eye w away because of Ps 6:7
cities shall be perpetual w Jer 49:13

WASTING

w and destruction are Is 59:7
that this man was w Luke 16:1

WATCH

Therefore w yourselves Deut 2:4
of them we set a w Neh 4:9
my steps, but do not w Job 14:16
is past, and like a w Ps 90:4
keep w over the door Ps 141:3
and all who w for Is 29:20
W the road Nah 2:1
W therefore, for you Matt 24:42
"What! Could you not w Matt 26:40
W and pray, lest you Matt 26:41
W therefore, for you do Mark 13:35
Could you not w one Mark 14:37
W and pray, lest you Mark 14:38
keeping w over their flock Luke 2:8
W therefore, and pray Luke 21:36
W, stand fast in the 1 Cor 16:13
submissive, for they w Heb 13:17

WATCHED

in the days when God w Job 29:2
w while a stone was cut Dan 2:34
come, he would have w Matt 24:43
Pharisees w Him closely Luke 6:7

WATCHER

I done to You, O w of men Job 7:20

WATCHES

w the righteous Ps 37:32
LORD w over the strangers Ps 146:9
She w over the ways of Prov 31:27
Blessed is he who w Rev 16:15

WATCHFUL

But you be w in all 2 Tim 4:5
be serious and w 1 Pet 4:7
Be w, and strengthen the Rev 3:2

WATCHING

who listens to me, w Prov 8:34
the flock, who were w Zech 11:11
he comes, will find w Luke 12:37

WATCHMAN

guards the city, the w Ps 127:1
W, what of the night Is 21:11
I have made you a w Ezek 3:17
the day of your w Mic 7:4

WATCHMEN

w who go about the Song 3:3
w shall lift up their Is 52:8
His w are blind Is 56:10
I have set w on your Is 62:6
Also, I set w over you Jer 6:17
strong, set up the w Jer 51:12

WATER

Eden to w the garden Gen 2:10
Unstable as w Gen 49:4
your bread and your w Ex 23:25
of affliction and w 1 Kin 22:27
w disappears from the Job 14:11
w wears away stones Job 14:19
drinks iniquity like w Job 15:16

not given the weary w Job 22:7
He binds up the w Job 26:8
I am poured out like w Ps 22:14
where there is no w Ps 63:1
they have shed like w Ps 79:3
Drink w from your own Prov 5:15
"Stolen w is sweet Prov 9:17
the whole supply of w Is 3:1
and needy seek w Is 41:17
For I will pour w Is 44:3
silence and given us w Jer 8:14
eye overflows with w Lam 1:16
will be as weak as w Ezek 7:17
w the land with the Ezek 32:6
you gave Me no w Luke 7:44
there was much w John 3:23
given you living w John 4:10
rivers of living w John 7:38
blood and w came out John 19:34
"Can anyone forbid w Acts 10:47
with the washing of w Eph 5:26
can yield both salt w James 3:12
were saved through w 1 Pet 3:20
is He who came by w 1 John 5:6
the Spirit, the w 1 John 5:8
are clouds without w Jude 12

WATER OF LIFE

w freely to him who Rev 21:6
a pure river of w Rev 22:1
let him take the w Rev 22:17

WATERED

w the whole face Gen 2:6
that it was well w Gen 13:10
I planted, Apollos w 1 Cor 3:6

WATERPOTS

"Fill four w with water 1 Kin 18:33
"Fill the w with water John 2:7

WATERS

and struck the w Ex 7:20
If He withholds the w Job 12:15
me beside the still w Ps 23:2
though its w roar and Ps 46:3
w have come up to my Ps 69:1
then the w would have Ps 124:4
rich, and he who w Prov 11:25
Who has bound the w Prov 30:4
your bread upon the w Eccl 11:1
a well of living w Song 4:15
w cannot quench love Song 8:7
of the LORD as the w Is 11:9
w will fail from the Is 19:5
because I give w Is 43:20
have sworn that the w Is 54:9
thirsts, come to the w Is 55:1
fountain of living w Jer 2:13
w flowed over my head Lam 3:54
the sound of many w Ezek 43:2
w surrounded me Jon 2:5
shall be that living w Zech 14:8
often, in perils of w 2 Cor 11:26
living fountains of w Rev 7:17
w became wormwood Rev 8:11

WAVE

you shall w them as a w Ex 29:24
w offering before the LORD Lev 7:30
the priest shall w them Num 6:20
Its fruit shall w Ps 72:16
is like a w of the sea James 1:6

WAVER

He did not w at the Rom 4:20

WAVERING

of our hope without w Heb 10:23

WAVES

and here your proud w Job 38:11
all Your w and billows Ps 42:7
the noise of their w Ps 65:7
the multitude of its w Jer 51:42
was covered with the w Matt 8:24

sea, tossed by the w Matt 14:24
raging w of the sea Jude 13

WAX

My heart is like w Ps 22:14
w melts before the Ps 68:2
mountains melt like w Ps 97:5

WAY

and show them the w Ex 18:20
day I am going the w Josh 23:14
and the right w 1 Sam 12:23
As for God, His w 2 Sam 22:31
to a man whose w Job 3:23
But He knows the w Job 23:10
"Where is the w Job 38:19
the LORD knows the w Ps 1:6
you perish in the w Ps 2:12
Teach me Your w Ps 27:11
This is the w of those Ps 49:13
w may be known on Ps 67:2
Your w was in the sea Ps 77:19
where there is no w Ps 107:40
I have chosen the w Ps 119:30
I hate every false w Ps 119:104
in the w everlasting Ps 139:24
and preserves the w Prov 2:8
The w of the wicked is Prov 4:19
instruction are the w Prov 6:23
w that seems right Prov 14:12
not know what is the w Eccl 11:5
of terrors in the w Eccl 12:5
The w of the just is Is 26:7
"This is the w Is 30:21
LORD, who makes a w Is 43:16
wicked forsake his w Is 55:7
O LORD, I know the w Jer 10:23
one heart and one w Jer 32:39
Israel, is it not My w Ezek 18:25
w which is not fair Ezek 33:17
and pervert the w Amos 2:7
the LORD has His w Nah 1:3
he will prepare the w Mal 3:1
and broad is the w Matt 7:13
and difficult is the w Matt 7:14
will prepare Your w Matt 11:10
and teach the w Matt 22:16
and the w you know John 14:4
to him, "I am the w John 14:6
proclaim to us the w Acts 16:17
explained to him the w Acts 18:26
you a more excellent w 1 Cor 12:31
w which He consecrated Heb 10:20
forsaken the right w 2 Pet 2:15
to have known the w 2 Pet 2:21
have gone in the w Jude 11

WAY OF THE LORD

that they keep the w Gen 18:19
did not walk in the w 2 Kin 21:22
w is strength for the Prov 10:29
Prepare the w, make Is 40:3
for they do not know the w Jer 5:4
"The w is not fair Ezek 18:25
Prepare the w, make His Matt 3:3
Prepare the w, make His Mark 1:3
Prepare the w, make His Luke 3:4
Make straight the w John 1:23
instructed in the w Acts 18:25

WAYS

for all His w are Deut 32:4
they do not know its w Job 24:13
is the first of the w Job 40:19
Show me Your w Ps 25:4
transgressors Your w Ps 51:13
would walk in My w Ps 81:13
w were directed Ps 119:5
I thought about my w Ps 119:59
righteous in all His w Ps 145:17
For the w of man are Prov 5:21
w please the LORD Prov 16:7
He will teach us His w Is 2:3
nor are your w Is 55:8
"Stand in the w Jer 6:16

"Amend your w Jer 7:3
and examine our w Lam 3:40
and owns all your w Dan 5:23
w are everlasting Hab 3:6
misery are in their w Rom 3:16
judgments and His w Rom 11:33
unstable in all his w James 1:8
their destructive w 2 Pet 2:2
and true are Your w Rev 15:3

WEAK

then I shall become w Judg 16:7
And I am w today 2 Sam 3:39
me, O LORD, for I am w Ps 6:2
gives power to the w Is 40:29
knee will be as w Ezek 7:17
let the w say Joel 3:10
not your hands be w Zeph 3:16
but the flesh is w Matt 26:41
And not being w Rom 4:19
Receive one who is w Rom 14:1
God has chosen the w 1 Cor 1:27
We are w, but you are 1 Cor 4:10
to the w I became as w 1 Cor 9:22
this reason many are w 1 Cor 11:30
For when I am w 2 Cor 12:10

WEAKENED

w my strength in the Ps 102:23
the ground, you who w Is 14:12

WEAKENS

w the hands of the men Jer 38:4

WEAKER

house of Saul grew w 2 Sam 3:1
the wife, as to the w 1 Pet 3:7

WEAKNESS

than men, and the w 1 Cor 1:25
I was with you in w 1 Cor 2:3
It is sown in w 1 Cor 15:43
is also subject to w Heb 5:2
w were made strong Heb 11:34

WEAKNESSES

also helps in our w Rom 8:26
sympathize with our w Heb 4:15

WEALTH

have gained me this w Deut 8:17
a man of great w Ruth 2:1
not asked riches or w 2 Chr 1:11
who trust in their w Ps 49:6
W and riches will be in his Ps 112:3
w is his strong city Prov 10:15
W gained by dishonesty Prov 13:11
but the w of the sinner is Prov 13:22
The rich man's w is his Prov 18:11
W makes many friends Prov 19:4
love all the w of his house Song 8:7
may bring to you the w Is 60:11
shall take away her w Ezek 29:19
sea became rich by her w Rev 18:19

WEALTHY

w nation that dwells Jer 49:31
rich, have become w Rev 3:17

WEANED

wait until you have w 1 Sam 1:23
w child shall put his Is 11:8
Those just w from milk Is 28:9

WEAPON

w formed against you Is 54:17
with a deadly w Ezek 9:1

WEAPONS

is better than w Eccl 9:18
the LORD and His w Is 13:5
For the w of our 2 Cor 10:4

WEAR

garments did not w out Deut 8:4
A woman shall not w Deut 22:5
w an ephod before Me 1 Sam 2:28
but the just will w Job 27:17
they will not w a robe of Zech 13:4

'What shall we w Matt 6:31
those who w soft clothing Matt 11:8

WEARIED

you have w Me with Is 43:24
You are w in the Is 57:10
and they have w Jer 12:5
You have w the LORD Mal 2:17
therefore, being w John 4:6

WEARINESS

say, 'Oh, what a w Mal 1:13
in w and toil 2 Cor 11:27

WEARING

child, w a linen ephod 1 Sam 2:18
David was w a linen 2 Sam 6:14
w the crown of thorns John 19:5
w gold, or putting on 1 Pet 3:3

WEARISOME

and much study is w Eccl 12:12

WEARS

As water w away stones Job 14:19

WEARY

to Isaac, "I am w Gen 27:46
lest he become w Prov 25:17
As cold water to a w Prov 25:25
No one will be w Is 5:27
you may cause the w Is 28:12
shall run and not be w Is 40:31
to him who is w Is 50:4
I am w of holding it Jer 6:11
w themselves to commit Jer 9:5
I was w of holding it Jer 20:9
continual coming she w Luke 18:5
And let us not grow w Gal 6:9
do not grow w in 2 Thess 3:13
lest you become w Heb 12:3

WEATHER

a garment in cold w Prov 25:20
'It will be fair w Matt 16:2

WEAVE

You shall skillfully w the Ex 28:39
w the seven locks Judg 16:13

WEAVER'S

spear was like a w 1 Sam 17:7
are swifter than a w shuttle Job 7:6

WEDDING

were invited to the w Matt 22:3
Come to the w Matt 22:4
find, invite to the w Matt 22:9
in with him to the w Matt 25:10
day there was a w John 2:1

WEEK

Fulfill her w, and we Gen 29:27
with many for one w Dan 9:27
the first day of the w Matt 28:1
I fast twice a w Luke 18:12
the first day of the w Acts 20:7
the first day of the w 1 Cor 16:2

WEEKS

See FEAST OF WEEKS
observe the Feast of W Ex 34:22
w are determined Dan 9:24
w Messiah shall be cut Dan 9:26

WEEP

"Hannah, why do you w 1 Sam 1:8
a time to w Eccl 3:4
you shall w no more Is 30:19
it, my soul will w Jer 13:17
W not for the dead Jer 22:10
to the LORD, w between Joel 2:17
this commotion and w Mark 5:39
Blessed are you who w Luke 6:21
to her, "Do not w Luke 7:13
and you did not w Luke 7:32
of Jerusalem, do not w Luke 23:28
to the tomb to w there John 11:31
w with those who w Rom 12:15
those who w as though 1 Cor 7:30

WEEPING

of Israel, who were w Num 25:6
w as they went up 2 Sam 15:30
the noise of the w Ezra 3:13
face is flushed from w Job 16:16
the voice of my w Ps 6:8
my drink with w Ps 102:9
of hosts called for w Is 22:12
w shall no longer Is 65:19
They shall come with w Jer 31:9
w they shall come Jer 50:4
were sitting there w Ezek 8:14
with fasting, with w Joel 2:12
with tears, with w Mal 2:13
There will be w Matt 8:12
outside by the tomb w John 20:11
why are you w John 20:13
do you mean by w Acts 21:13

WEIGH

You w out the violence Ps 58:2
O Most Upright, You w Is 26:7

WEIGHED

nor can silver be w Job 28:15
W the mountains Is 40:12
You have been w Dan 5:27
lest your hearts be w Luke 21:34

WEIGHS

eyes, but the LORD w Prov 16:2
Where is he who w Is 33:18

WEIGHT

a perfect and just w Deut 25:15
a just w is His delight Prov 11:1
and eternal w of glory 2 Cor 4:17
us lay aside every w Heb 12:1

WEIGHTIER

have neglected the w Matt 23:23

WELFARE

does not seek the w Jer 38:4

WELL

If you do w Gen 4:7
that it may go w Deut 4:40
you when you do w Ps 49:18
daughters have done w Prov 31:29
know that it will be w Eccl 8:12
wheel broken at the w Eccl 12:6
that it shall be w Is 3:10
"Those who are w Matt 9:12
said to him, 'W done Matt 25:21
faith has made you w Mark 5:34
Now Jacob's w was John 4:6
the elders who rule w 1 Tim 5:17

WELL-BEING

them, and their w Ps 69:22
each one the other's w 1 Cor 10:24

WELL-BELOVED

sing to my W a song Is 5:1

WELL KNOWN

w are w to God, and I 2 Cor 5:11
as unknown, and yet w 2 Cor 6:9

WELLS

draw water from the w Is 12:3
These are w without 2 Pet 2:17

WELLSPRING

w of wisdom is a flowing Prov 18:4

WENT

They w out from us 1 John 2:19

WEPT

away from them and w Gen 42:24
Joseph w when they Gen 50:17
and behold, the baby w Ex 2:6
voices and w bitterly Judg 21:2
she w and did not 1 Sam 1:7
w together, but David 1 Sam 20:41
w for the child while 2 Sam 12:21
and the man of God w 2 Kin 8:11
And Hezekiah w bitterly 2 Kin 20:3
for the people w Ezra 10:1

that I sat down and w Neh 1:4
 Have I not w for him Job 30:25
 I w and chastened my soul Ps 69:10
 down, yea, we w Ps 137:1
 out and w bitterly Matt 26:75
 He saw the city and w Luke 19:41
 Jesus w John 11:35
 as she w she stooped John 20:11
 So I w much Rev 5:4

WEST

in the w are astonished Job 18:20
 as the east is from the w Ps 103:12
 of the LORD from the w Is 59:19
 male goat came from the w Dan 8:5
 in two, from east to w Zech 14:4
 east and flashes to the w Matt 24:27
 rising out of the w Luke 12:54

WET

They are w with the Job 24:8
 his body was w with Dan 4:33

WHEAT

with the finest of w Ps 81:16
 we may trade w Amos 8:5
 even sell the bad w Amos 8:6
 but gather the w Matt 13:30
 w falls into the John 12:24
 perhaps w or some 1 Cor 15:37
 oil, fine flour and w Rev 18:13

WHEEL

brings the threshing w Prov 20:26
 the fountain, or the w Ecc 12:6
 in the middle of a w Ezek 1:16

WHEELS

off their chariot w Ex 14:25
 the rumbling of his w Jer 47:3
 appearance of the w Ezek 1:16
 noise of rattling w Nah 3:2

WHERE

not knowing w he was Heb 11:8

WHIP

A w for the horse Prov 26:3
 The noise of a w Nah 3:2

WHIPS

chastised you with w 1 Kin 12:11

WHIRLING

saw King David w 1 Chr 15:29

WHIRLWIND

Elijah went up by a w 2 Kin 2:11
 Job out of the w Job 38:1
 them away as with a w Ps 58:9
 w will take them away Is 40:24
 w shall scatter them Is 41:16
 w shall be raised Jer 25:32
 has His way in the w Nah 1:3

WHISPER

my ear received a w Job 4:12
 and wizards, who w Is 8:19

WHISPERER

w separates the best Prov 16:28

WHISPERERS

they are w Rom 1:29

WHISPERINGS

backbitings, w 2 Cor 12:20

WHISTLE

w for the fly that is in the Is 7:18

WHITE

like w coriander seed Ex 16:31
 leprous, as w as snow Num 12:10
 My beloved is w Song 5:10
 they shall be as w as snow Is 1:18
 and make them w Dan 11:35
 be purified, made w Dan 12:10
 red, sorrel, and w Zech 1:8
 make one hair w or black Matt 5:36
 his clothing as w as snow Matt 28:3
 shining, exceedingly w Mark 9:3

for they are already w John 4:35
 saw two angels in w John 20:12
 by them in w apparel Acts 1:10
 and hair were w like wool Rev 1:14
 walk with Me in w Rev 3:4
 clothed in w garments Rev 3:5
 behold, a w horse Rev 6:2
 and made them w Rev 7:14
 Then I saw a great w Rev 20:11

WHITE AS SNOW

became leprous, as w Num 12:10
 presence leprous, as w 2 Kin 5:27
 they shall be as w Is 1:18
 His garment was w Dan 7:9
 his clothing as w Matt 28:3
 white like wool, as w Rev 1:14

WHITEN

launderer on earth can w Mark 9:3

WHITER

and I shall be w than snow Ps 51:7

WHITEWASHED

you are like w tombs Matt 23:27
 strike you, you w wall Acts 23:3

WHOLE

the face of the w earth Gen 11:4
 Is not the w land before Gen 13:9
 w house of Israel, bewail Lev 10:6
 shall build with w stones Deut 27:6
 down for about a w day Josh 10:13
 let the w earth be filled Ps 72:19
 Who seek Him with the w Ps 119:2
 my w heart I have sought Ps 119:10
 observe it with my w Ps 119:34
 You with my w heart Ps 138:1
 the w earth is full of His Is 6:3
 to Me with her w heart Jer 3:10
 The w earth will rejoice Ezek 35:14
 on the w house of Israel Ezek 39:25
 than for your w body to Matt 5:29
 your w body will be full Matt 6:22
 if he gains the w world Matt 16:26
 if he gains the w world Mark 8:36
 if he gains the w world Luke 9:25
 the w body will be full Luke 11:36
 the w creation groans Rom 8:22
 w body were an eye 1 Cor 12:17
 a debtor to keep the w law Gal 5:11
 on the w armor of God Eph 6:11
 may your w spirit, soul 1 Thess 5:23
 also to bridle the w body James 3:2
 that it defiles the w body James 3:6
 who deceives the w world Rev 12:9

WHOLESOME

w tongue is a tree Prov 15:4
 not consent to w words 1 Tim 6:3

WHOLLY

w followed the LORD Deut 1:36
 I will not leave you w Jer 46:28

WICKED

were exceedingly w Gen 13:13
 the righteous with the w Gen 18:25
 For I will not justify the w Ex 23:7
 a w thought in your heart Deut 15:9
 from every w thing Deut 23:9
 and condemn the w Deut 25:1
 w shall be silent 1 Sam 2:9
 proceeds from the w 1 Sam 24:13
 was w in the sight of the 1 Chr 2:3
 turn from their w ways 2 Chr 7:14
 Should you help the w 2 Chr 19:2
 turn from their w works Neh 9:35
 on the counsel of the w Job 10:3
 You know that I am not w Job 10:7
 w man writhes with pain Job 15:20
 triumphing of the w is Job 20:5
 Why do the w live and Job 21:7
 w are reserved for the Job 21:30
 to nobles, 'You are w Job 34:18
 of the w come to an end Ps 7:9

with the w every day Ps 7:11
 You have destroyed the w Ps 9:5
 w is snared in the Ps 9:16
 w shall be turned Ps 9:17
 do the w renounce God Ps 10:13
 w bend their bow Ps 11:2
 w He will rain coals Ps 11:6
 the w who oppress me Ps 17:9
 Evil shall slay the w Ps 34:21
 w shall be no more Ps 37:10
 The w watches the Ps 37:32
 But to the w God says Ps 50:16
 So let the w perish at the Ps 68:2
 of the w I will also cut off Ps 75:10
 how long will the w Ps 94:3
 nothing w before my eyes Ps 101:3
 and the w be no more Ps 104:35
 of the w shall perish Ps 112:10
 is far from the w Ps 119:155
 if there is any w Ps 139:24
 the way of the w He turns Ps 146:9
 w will be cut off from Prov 2:22
 The way of the w is like Prov 4:19
 heart that devises w plans Prov 6:18
 he who rebukes a w man Prov 9:7
 the wages of the w to sin Prov 10:16
 of the w will perish Prov 10:28
 w will fail by his own Prov 11:5
 w man does deceptive Prov 11:18
 w will not go Prov 11:21
 expectation of the w is Prov 11:23
 words of the w are, 'Lie Prov 12:6
 mercies of the w are Prov 12:10
 w covet the catch of evil Prov 12:12
 The way of the w is an Prov 15:9
 thoughts of the w are an Prov 15:26
 LORD is far from the w Prov 15:29
 He who says to the w Prov 24:24
 w flee when no one Prov 28:1
 the righteous and the w Ecc 3:17
 Do not be overly w Ecc 7:17
 not be well with the w Ecc 8:13
 Woe to the w! It shall be ill Is 3:11
 w forsake his way Is 55:7
 But the w are like the Is 57:20
 the way of the w prosper Jer 12:1
 from the hand of the w Jer 15:21
 and desperately w Jer 17:9
 if a w man turns from Ezek 18:21
 a w man turns away Ezek 18:27
 if you warn the w to turn Ezek 33:9
 when the w turns from Ezek 33:19
 w shall do wickedly Dan 12:10
 at all acquit the w Nah 1:3
 the righteous and the w Mal 3:18
 You shall trample the w Mal 4:3
 with this w generation Matt 12:45
 separate the w from Matt 13:49
 A w and adulterous Matt 16:4
 fiery darts of the w one Eph 6:16
 have overcome the w 1 John 2:14
 w one does not touch 1 John 5:18
 the sway of the w 1 John 5:19

WICKEDLY

brethren, do not do so w Gen 19:7
 beg you, do not act so w Judg 19:23
 and I have done w 2 Sam 24:17
 Will you speak w Job 13:7
 God will never do w Job 34:12
 iniquity, we have done w Ps 106:6
 Those who do w Dan 11:32
 yes, all who do w Mal 4:1

WICKEDNESS

LORD saw that the w Gen 6:5
 can I do this great w Gen 39:9
 the land become full of w Lev 19:29
 may be no w among Lev 20:14
 'W' proceeds from the 1 Sam 24:13
 w oppress them 2 Sam 7:10
 if w is found in him, he 1 Kin 1:52
 do w in the sight of the 1 Kin 21:25

He sees w also Job 11:11
 Is not your w great Job 22:5
 be it from God to do w Job 34:10
 Oh, let the w of the Ps 7:9
 righteousness and hate w Ps 45:7
 alive into hell, for w Ps 55:15
 in the tents of w Ps 84:10
 I will not know w Ps 101:4
 eat the bread of w Prov 4:17
 w is an abomination Prov 8:7
 w overthrows the sinner Prov 13:6
 w will not deliver Eccl 8:8
 w burns as the Is 9:18
 have trusted in your w Is 47:10
 w will correct you Jer 2:19
 wash your heart from w Jer 4:14
 wells up with her w Jer 6:7
 man repented of his w Jer 8:6
 the w of your fathers Jer 44:9
 not turn from his w Ezek 3:19
 You have plowed w Hos 10:13
 because of your great w Hos 10:15
 and cannot look on w Hab 1:13
 for those who do w Mal 3:15
 thefts, covetousness, w Mark 7:22
 is full of greed and w Luke 11:39
 sexual immorality, w Rom 1:29
 spiritual hosts of w Eph 6:12
 and overflow of w James 1:21

WIDE

shall open your hand w Deut 15:8
 opened their mouth w Job 29:23
 w his lips shall have Prov 13:3
 will build myself a w Jer 22:14
 w is the gate and Matt 7:13
 to you, our heart is w 2 Cor 6:11

WIDOW

A w or a divorced woman Lev 21:14
 w who are among you Deut 16:11
 does no good for the w Job 24:21
 They slay the w Ps 94:6
 and his wife a w Ps 109:9
 the fatherless and w Ps 146:9
 plead for the w Is 1:17
 How like a w is she Lam 1:1
 Then one poor w Mark 12:42
 w putting in two mites Luke 21:2
 w has children or 1 Tim 5:4
 Do not let a w under 1 Tim 5:9
 sit as queen, and am no w Rev 18:7

WIDOW'S

and I caused the w Job 29:13

WIDOWS

a defender of w Ps 68:5
 and let your w trust Jer 49:11
 w were neglected Acts 6:1
 Honor w who are really w 1 Tim 5:3
 that the younger w 1 Tim 5:14
 to visit orphans and w James 1:27

WIDOWS'

you devour w houses Matt 23:14

WIDTH

all the saints what is the w Eph 3:18

WIFE

and be joined to his w Gen 2:24
 his w looked back Gen 19:26
 covet your neighbor's w Ex 20:17
 becomes jealous of his w Num 5:14
 Manoaah and his w Judg 13:19
 gives a w to Benjamin Judg 21:18
 w of Uriah the Hittite 2 Sam 11:3
 his w said to him, "Do Job 2:9
 Your w shall be like a Ps 128:3
 an excellent w is the Prov 12:4
 w finds a good thing Prov 18:22
 but a prudent w Prov 19:14
 can find a virtuous w Prov 31:10
 w whom you love all Eccl 9:9
 like a youthful w Is 54:6

"Go, take yourself a w Hos 1:2
 for a w he tended sheep Hos 12:12
 with the w of his Mal 2:15
 take to you Mary your w Matt 1:20
 or w or children or lands Matt 19:29
 divorces his w Mark 10:11
 my w is well advanced in Luke 1:18
 I have married a w Luke 14:20
 Remember Lot's w Luke 17:32
 all seven had her as w Luke 20:33
 w the affection due her 1 Cor 7:3
 so love his own w Eph 5:33
 the husband of one w 1 Tim 3:2
 the husband of one w Titus 1:6
 giving honor to the w 1 Pet 3:7
 bride, the Lamb's w Rev 21:9

WILD

He shall be a w man Gen 16:12
 w donkeys quench their Ps 104:11
 it brought forth w grapes Is 5:2
 locusts and w honey Matt 3:4
 olive tree which is w Rom 11:24

WILDERNESS

wasteland, a howling w Deut 32:10
 w yields food for them Job 24:5
 coming out of the w Song 3:6
 made the world as a w Is 14:17
 I will make the w Is 41:18
 Let the w and its Is 42:11
 Have I been a w Jer 2:31
 of one crying in the w Matt 3:3
 the serpent in the w John 3:14
 congregation in the w Acts 7:38

WILES

to stand against the w Eph 6:11

WILL

It of your own free w Lev 22:29
 I delight to do Your w Ps 40:8
 Teach me to do Your w Ps 143:10
 w be done on earth as Matt 6:10
 but he who does the w Matt 7:21
 whoever does the w of Matt 12:50
 of the two did the w Matt 21:31
 I drink it, Your w be Matt 26:42
 Your w be done on earth Luke 11:2
 or do according to his w Luke 12:47
 nevertheless not My w Luke 22:42
 flesh, nor of the w John 1:13
 w of Him who sent Me John 4:34
 I do not seek My own w John 5:30
 not to do My own w John 6:38
 This is the w John 6:39
 wills to do His w John 7:17
 you should know His w Acts 22:14
 w is present with me Rom 7:18
 good pleasure of His w Eph 1:5
 what the w of the Lord is Eph 5:17
 works in you both to w Phil 2:13
 the knowledge of His w Col 1:9
 according to His own w Heb 2:4
 come to do Your w Heb 10:9
 good work to do His w Heb 13:21

WILL BE SAVED

you w from your enemies Num 10:9
 walks blamelessly w Prov 28:18
 In those days Judah w Jer 33:16
 endures to the end w Matt 10:22
 and is baptized w Mark 16:16
 enters by Me, he w John 10:9
 all your household w Acts 11:14
 Jesus Christ, and you w Acts 16:31
 the sea, the remnant w Rom 9:27
 from the dead, you w Rom 10:9
 And so all Israel w Rom 11:26
 but he himself w 1 Cor 3:15
 she w in childbearing 1 Tim 2:15

WILL OF GOD

For whoever does the w Mark 3:35
 saints according to the w Rom 8:27
 acceptable and perfect w Rom 12:2

with joy by the w Rom 15:32
 doing the w from the heart Eph 6:6
 complete in all the w Col 4:12
 For this is the w 1 Thess 4:13
 w in Christ Jesus for 1 Thess 5:18
 you have done the w Heb 10:36
 w, that by doing good 1 Pet 2:15
 w, to suffer for doing 1 Pet 3:17
 of men, but for the w 1 Pet 4:2
 suffer according to the w 1 Pet 4:19
 but he who does the w 1 John 2:17

WILLFULLY

For if we sin w Heb 10:26
 For this they w 2 Pet 3:5

WILLING

is of a w heart Ex 35:5
 then is w to consecrate 1 Chr 29:5
 If you are w and Is 1:19
 him, saying, "I am w Matt 8:3
 The spirit indeed is w Matt 26:41
 "If You are w, You can Mark 1:40
 The spirit indeed is w Mark 14:38
 "Lord, if You are w Luke 5:12
 she is w to live with him 1 Cor 7:12
 if there is first a w 2 Cor 8:12
 w that any should 2 Pet 3:9

WILLINGLY

gives it w with his heart Ex 25:2
 when the people w offer Judg 5:2
 w offered himself to the 2 Chr 17:16
 blessed all the men who w Neh 11:2
 to fulfill, not w Rom 8:20
 For if I do this w 1 Cor 9:17
 by compulsion but w 1 Pet 5:2

WILLINGNESS

for I know your w 2 Cor 9:2

WILLOWS

our harps upon the w Ps 137:2

WILLS

to whom the Son w Matt 11:27
 it is not of him who w Rom 9:16
 say, "If the Lord w James 4:15

WIN

w one proselyte Matt 23:15
 to all, that I might w 1 Cor 9:19

WIND

LORD was not in the w 1 Kin 19:11
 w carries him away Job 27:21
 the chaff which the w Ps 1:4
 He causes His w Ps 147:18
 will inherit the w Prov 11:29
 He who observes the w Eccl 11:4
 is the way of the w Eccl 11:5
 Awake, O north w Song 4:16
 the prophets become w Jer 5:13
 He brings the w Jer 51:16
 Ephraim feeds on the w Hos 12:1
 and creates the w Amos 4:13
 A reed shaken by the w Matt 11:7
 And the w ceased and Mark 4:39
 and rebuked the w Luke 8:24
 The w blows where John 3:8
 of a rushing mighty w Acts 2:2
 about with every w Eph 4:14

WINDOW

Noah opened the w Gen 8:6
 by a rope through the w Josh 2:15
 the scarlet cord in the w Josh 2:21
 down through a w 1 Sam 19:12
 in a w sat a certain young Acts 20:9
 through a w in the wall 2 Cor 11:33

WINDOWS

looking through the w Song 2:9
 has come through our w Jer 9:21
 upper room, with his w Dan 6:10
 not open for you the w Mal 3:10

WINDS

from the four w Ezek 37:9

be, that even the w Matt 8:27
holding the four w Rev 7:1

WINDSTORM

And a great w arose Mark 4:37

WINE

Noah awoke from his w Gen 9:24
Do not drink w or Lev 10:9
Nazirite may drink w Num 6:20
drink w or similar drink Judg 13:4
I have drunk neither w 1 Sam 1:15
w for those who are 2 Sam 16:2
king was merry with w Esth 1:10
drinking w in their oldest Job 1:13
drink the w of confusion Ps 60:3
w that makes glad Ps 104:15
W is a mocker Prov 20:1
Do not look on the w Prov 23:31
w makes merry Eccl 10:19
love is better than w Song 1:2
w goes down smoothly Song 7:9
w inflames them Is 5:11
are drunk, but not with w Is 29:9
Yes, come, buy w Is 55:1
Take this w cup of fury Jer 25:15
We will drink no w, for Jer 35:6
new w into old wineskins Matt 9:17
they gave Him sour w Matt 27:34
w nor strong drink Luke 1:15
pouring on oil and w Luke 10:34
when they ran out of w John 2:3
"They are full of new w Acts 2:13
do not be drunk with w Eph 5:18
given to w, nor violent 1 Tim 3:3
but use a little w 1 Tim 5:23
not given to much w Titus 2:3
not harm the oil and the w Rev 6:6
the w of the wrath of her Rev 14:8
her the cup of the w Rev 16:19

WINEBIBBER

"Look, a glutton and a w Luke 7:34

WINEBIBBERS

Do not mix with w Prov 23:20

WINEPRESS

"I have trodden the w Is 63:3
for the w is full Joel 3:13
into the great w Lue 14:19
Himself treads the w Rev 19:15

WINESKIN

I have become like a w Ps 119:83

WINESKINS

new wine into old w Matt 9:17

WING

maidservant under your w Ruth 3:9
One w of the cherub 1 Kin 6:24
so I spread My w Ezek 16:8

WINGS

I bore you on eagles' w Ex 19:4
w you have come Ruth 2:12
the shadow of Your w Ps 17:8
He flew upon the w Ps 18:10
the shadow of Your w Ps 36:7
w I will make my refuge Ps 57:1
If I take the w Ps 139:9
each one had six w Is 6:2
up with w like eagles Is 40:31
a lion, and had eagle's w Dan 7:4
with healing in His w Mal 4:2
her chicks under her w Matt 23:37
each having six w Rev 4:8
woman was given two w Rev 12:14

WINNOW

You shall w them Is 41:16

WINNOWING

His w fan is in His hand Luke 3:17

WINS

w souls is wise Prov 11:30

WINTER

have made summer and w Ps 74:17

For lo, the w is past Song 2:11
w it shall occur Zech 14:8
flight may not be in w Matt 24:20

WIPE

the Lord GOD will w Is 25:8
w them with the towel John 13:5
w away every tear Rev 21:4

WIPED

reproach will not be w Prov 6:33
w them with the hair of Luke 7:38
w out the handwriting Col 2:14

WIPES

eats and w her mouth Prov 30:20

WISDOM

for this is your w Deut 4:6
God gave Solomon w 1 Kin 4:29
w will die with you Job 12:2
where can w be found Job 28:12
fear of the Lord, that is w Job 28:28
Who has put w in the Job 38:36
of the righteous speaks w Ps 37:30
will make me to know w Ps 51:6
is the beginning of w Ps 111:10
but fools despise w and Prov 1:7
For the LORD gives w Prov 2:6
is the man who finds w Prov 3:13
Get w! Get understanding! Prov 4:5
W is the principal Prov 4:7
is the beginning of w Prov 9:10
W rests in the heart Prov 14:33
to get w than gold Prov 16:16
W is in the sight of him Prov 17:24
w loves his own soul Prov 19:8
W is too lofty for a Prov 24:7
w is much grief Eccl 1:18
gives w and knowledge Eccl 2:26
W is better than Eccl 9:16
W is better than weapons Eccl 9:18
He gives w to the wise Dan 2:21
w is justified by her Matt 11:19
Jesus increased in w Luke 2:52
the w of God also Luke 11:49
riches both of the w Rom 11:33
the gospel, not with w 1 Cor 1:17
Greeks seek after w 1 Cor 1:22
For the w of this world 1 Cor 3:19
not with fleshly w 2 Cor 1:12
now the manifold w Eph 3:10
all the treasures of w Col 2:3
Walk in w toward those Col 4:5
If any of you lacks w James 1:5
power and riches and w Rev 5:12
and glory and w Rev 7:12

WISE

great nation is a w Deut 4:6
He catches the w Job 5:13
God is w in heart and Job 9:4
not find one w man Job 17:10
men are not always w Job 32:9
when will you be w Ps 94:8
w will observe these Ps 107:43
Do not be w in your Prov 3:7
The w in heart will Prov 10:8
W people store up Prov 10:14
he who wins souls is w Prov 11:30
w son heeds his father's Prov 13:1
The w woman builds her Prov 14:1
w man fears and departs Prov 14:16
The w in heart will be Prov 16:21
folly, lest he be w Prov 26:5
w men turn away wrath Prov 29:8
they are exceedingly w Prov 30:24
The words of the w Eccl 12:11
They are w to do evil Jer 4:22
is w? Let him understand Hos 14:9
Therefore be w as Matt 10:16
five of them were w Matt 25:2
barbarians, both to w Rom 1:14
to God, alone w Rom 16:27
Where is the w 1 Cor 1:20

sake, but you are w 1 Cor 4:10
not as fools but as w Eph 5:15
to God who alone is w 1 Tim 1:17
are able to make you w 2 Tim 3:15

WISE MAN

select a discerning and w Gen 41:33
w answer with empty Job 15:2
I shall not find one w Job 17:10
A w will hear and Prov 1:5
rebuke a w, and he will Prov 9:8
w fears and departs Prov 14:16
w will appease it Prov 16:14
w holds them back Prov 29:11
what more has the w Eccl 6:8
found in it a poor w Eccl 9:15
Let not the w glory Jer 9:23
w who built his house Matt 7:24
that there is not a w 1 Cor 6:5

WISE MEN

Egypt and all its w Gen 41:8
Pharaoh also called the w Ex 7:11
the king said to the w Esth 1:13
For he sees w die Ps 49:10
Where are your w Is 19:12
the wisdom of their w Is 29:14
all the w of the nations Jer 10:7
to destroy all the w Dan 2:12
all the w of Babylon Dan 2:48
Now all the king's w Dan 5:8
w from the East came Matt 2:1
secretly called the w Matt 2:7
he was deceived by the w Matt 2:16
prophets, w, and scribes Matt 23:34
I speak as to w 1 Cor 10:15

WISELY

I will behave w Ps 101:2
who heeds the word w Prov 16:20
you do not inquire w Eccl 7:10
saw that he answered w Mark 12:34

WISER

he was w than all men 1 Kin 4:31
w than the birds Job 35:11
w than my enemies Ps 119:98
of God is w than men 1 Cor 1:25

WISH

for me to do what I w Matt 20:15
w it were already Luke 12:49
where you do not w John 21:18
For I w that all men were 1 Cor 7:7
I could w you were cold or Rev 3:15

WISHED

Then he w death for Jon 4:8
him whatever they w Mark 9:13

WISHES

turns it wherever He w Prov 21:1
wind blows where it w John 3:8

WITCHCRAFT

is as the sin of w 1 Sam 15:23

WITH ALL YOUR HEART

if you seek Him w Deut 4:29
love the Lord your God w Deut 6:5
the Lord your God w Deut 10:12
and to serve Him w Josh 22:5
but serve the Lord w 1 Sam 12:20
Trust in the Lord w Prov 3:5
you search for Me w Jer 29:13
Lord, "Turn to me w Joel 2:12
Be glad and rejoice w Zeph 3:14
the Lord your God w Matt 22:37
the Lord your God w Mark 12:30
the Lord your God w Luke 10:27
"If you believe w Acts 8:37

WITH CHILD

you are w, and you shall Gen 16:11
daughters of Lot were w Gen 19:36
she is w by harlotry." So Gen 38:24
fight, and hurt a woman w Ex 21:22
David, and said, "I am w 2 Sam 11:5

womb of her who is w Eccl 11:5
 As a woman w is in pain Is 26:17
 who have not travelled w! Is 54:1
 a man is ever in labor w Jer 30:6
 women w ripped open Hos 13:16
 found w of the Holy Spirit Matt 1:18
 a virgin shall be w Matt 1:23
 betrothed wife, who was w Luke 2:5
 being w, she cried out Rev 12:2

WITH ONE ACCORD

words of the prophets w 1 Kin 22:13
 the Lord, to serve Him w Zeph 3:9
 w began to make Luke 14:18
 continued w in prayer Acts 1:14
 with w in one place Acts 2:1
 So continuing daily w Acts 2:46
 their voice to God w Acts 4:24
 w in Solomon's Porch Acts 5:12
 multitudes w heeded Acts 8:6
 being assembled w Acts 15:25

WITHDRAW

God will not w His Job 9:13
 He does not w His eyes Job 36:7
 From such w yourself 1 Tim 6:5

WITHER

also shall not w Ps 1:3
 w as the green Ps 37:2
 leaves will not w Ezek 47:12
 How did the fig tree w Matt 21:20

WITHERED

behold, seven heads, w Gen 41:23
 stricken and w like grass Ps 102:4
 surely joy has w away Joel 1:12
 the plant that it w Jon 4:7
 man who had a w hand Matt 12:10
 had no root they w away Matt 13:6
 the fig tree w away Matt 21:19
 out as a branch and is w John 15:6

WITHERS

The grass w Is 40:7
 burning heat than it w James 1:11
 The grass w 1 Pet 1:24

WITHHELD

and your sins have w Jer 5:25

WITHHOLD

w Your tender mercies Ps 40:11
 good thing will He w Ps 84:11
 Do not w good from Prov 3:27
 your cloak, do not w Luke 6:29

WITHOUT

having no hope and w Eph 2:12
 pray w ceasing 1 Thess 5:17
 w controversy 1 Tim 3:16
 w works is dead James 2:26

WITHSTAND

no one is able to w You 2 Chr 20:6
 no animal could w him Dan 8:4
 was I that I could w Acts 11:17
 you may be able to w Eph 6:13

WITHSTOOD

Persia w me twenty-one Dan 10:13
 I w him to his face Gal 2:11

WITNESS

See BEAR WITNESS; FALSE WITNESS
 see, God is w between Gen 31:50
 Surely even now my w Job 16:19
 like the faithful w Ps 89:37
 w does not lie Prov 14:5
 have given him as a w Is 55:4
 a true and faithful w Jer 42:5
 I will be a swift w Mal 3:5
 all the world as a w Matt 24:14
 This man came for a w John 1:7
 do not receive Our w John 3:11
 "If I bear w of John 5:31
 is another who bears w John 5:32
 But I have a greater w John 5:36
 who was bearing w Acts 14:3

For you will be His w Acts 22:15
 For God is my w Phil 1:8
 are three who bear w 1 John 5:7
 If we receive the w 1 John 5:9
 who bore w to the world Rev 1:2
 Christ, the faithful w Rev 1:5
 beheaded for their w Rev 20:4

WITNESSED

is revealed, being w Rom 3:21
 w the good confession 1 Tim 6:13

WITNESSES

of two or three w Deut 17:6
 for Myself faithful w Is 8:2
 "You are My w Is 43:10
 the presence of many w 1 Tim 6:12
 the Holy Spirit also w Heb 10:15
 so great a cloud of w Heb 12:1
 give power to my two w Rev 11:3

WIVES

two w, one loved Deut 21:15
 he had seven hundred w 1 Kin 11:3
 daughters as w for Ezra 9:2
 you to divorce your w Matt 19:8
 W, submit to your own Eph 5:22
 Husbands, love your w Eph 5:25
 Husbands, love your w Col 3:19
 w must be reverent 1 Tim 3:11
 by the conduct of their w 1 Pet 3:1

WIZARDS

who are mediums and w Is 8:19

WOE

W is me, that I dwell in Ps 120:5
 Who has w? Prov 23:29
 W to the wicked Is 3:11
 W to those who call evil Is 5:20
 W to you, O Jerusalem Jer 13:27
 "W to the bloody city Ezek 24:9
 "W to him who increases Hab 2:6
 "W to you, Chorazin Matt 11:21
 w to that man by whom Matt 18:7
 But w to you, scribes Matt 23:13
 But w to those who are Mark 13:17
 W to you who are full Luke 6:25
 w is me if I do not 1 Cor 9:16
 W, w, w to the inhabitants Rev 8:13
 One w is past Rev 9:12

WOLF

The w and the lamb Is 65:25
 the sheep, sees the w John 10:12

WOLVES

they are ravenous w Matt 7:15
 out as lambs among w Luke 10:3
 savage w will come in Acts 20:29

WOMAN

she shall be called W Gen 2:23
 every w shall ask of her Ex 3:22
 A widow or a divorced w Lev 21:14
 stand the w before the Num 5:18
 w shall not wear anything Deut 22:5
 the w took the two men Josh 2:4
 that you are a virtuous w Ruth 3:11
 keep you from the evil w Prov 6:24
 adultery with a w lacks Prov 6:32
 A foolish w is clamorous Prov 9:13
 A gracious w retains Prov 11:16
 w builds her house Prov 14:1
 w who fears the LORD Prov 31:30
 Can a w forget her nursing Is 49:15
 w shall encompass a Jer 31:22
 whoever looks at a w Matt 5:28
 a w of Canaan came Matt 15:22
 "O w, great is your faith Matt 15:28
 if a w divorces Mark 10:12
 w came having an Mark 14:3
 "Do you see this w Luke 7:44
 Then the w of Samaria John 4:9
 brought to Him a w John 8:3
 "W, behold your John 19:26
 w was full of good Acts 9:36

Jewish w who believed Acts 16:1
 natural use of the w Rom 1:27
 a man not to touch a w 1 Cor 7:1
 the head of w is man 1 Cor 11:3
 For if a w is not covered 1 Cor 11:6
 w is the glory of man 1 Cor 11:7
 but w from man 1 Cor 11:8
 but w for the man 1 Cor 11:9
 this reason the w ought 1 Cor 11:10
 His Son, born of a w Gal 4:4
 Let a w learn in 1 Tim 2:11
 I do not permit a w 1 Tim 2:12
 w being deceived 1 Tim 2:14
 you allow that w Jezebel Rev 2:20
 w clothed with the sun Rev 12:1
 the earth helped the w Rev 12:16
 And I saw a w sitting on a Rev 17:3
 the w whom you saw is Rev 17:18

WOMB

nations are in your w Gen 25:23
 LORD had closed her w 1 Sam 1:5
 took Me out of the w Ps 22:9
 formed you from the w Is 44:2
 called Me from the w Is 49:1
 in the w I knew you Jer 1:5
 is the fruit of your w Luke 1:42
 "Blessed is the w Luke 11:27

WOMEN

the Hebrew w are not Ex 1:19
 All the w who were gifted Ex 35:25
 ten w shall bake your Lev 26:26
 blessed is she among w Judg 5:24
 loved many foreign w 1 Kin 11:1
 pagan w caused Neh 13:26
 among Your honorable w Ps 45:9
 O fairest among w Song 1:8
 w rule over them Is 3:12
 new wine the young w Zech 9:17
 thousand men, besides w Matt 14:21
 thousand men, besides w Matt 15:38
 w will be grinding Matt 24:41
 w who followed Jesus Matt 27:55
 are you among w Luke 1:28
 it just as the w had said Luke 24:24
 devout and prominent w Acts 13:50
 not a few of the leading w Acts 17:4
 w keep silent in the 1 Cor 14:34
 the w adorn themselves 1 Tim 2:9
 which is proper for w 1 Tim 2:10
 admonish the young w Titus 2:4
 times, the holy w 1 Pet 3:5
 not defiled with w Rev 14:4

WONDER

gives you a sign or a w Deut 13:1
 I have become as a w Ps 71:7
 marvelous work and a w Is 29:14
 they were filled with w Acts 3:10

WONDERFUL

name, seeing it is w Judg 13:18
 Your love to me was w 2 Sam 1:26
 things too w for me Job 42:3
 Your w works Which You Ps 40:5
 He has made His w works Ps 111:4
 Your testimonies are w Ps 119:129
 things which are too w Prov 30:18
 name will be called W Is 9:6
 of hosts, who is w Is 28:29
 all His w works Jer 21:2
 and scribes saw the w Matt 21:15
 our own tongues the w Acts 2:11

WONDERFULLY

fearfully and w made Ps 139:14

WONDERS

See SIGNS AND WONDERS
 w which I will do Ex 3:20
 LORD will do w among you Josh 3:5
 are the God who does w Ps 77:14
 Shall Your w be known Ps 88:12
 heavens will praise Your w Ps 89:5
 who alone does great w Ps 136:4

Egypt with signs and w Jer 32:21
and how mighty His w Dan 4:3
He works signs and w Dan 6:27
"And I will show w Joel 2:30
and done many w Matt 7:22
w were done among Acts 5:12
w God had worked Acts 15:12
signs, and lying w 2 Thess 2:9
both with signs and w Heb 2:4

WONDROUS

the w works of God Job 37:14
and tell of all Your w Ps 26:7
I declare Your w works Ps 71:17
w works declare that Ps 75:1
w works in the land of Ps 106:22
for they are a w Zech 3:8

WONDROUSLY

God, who has dealt w Joel 2:26

WOOD

precious stones, w 1 Cor 3:12

WOODCUTTERS

but let them be w Josh 9:21

WOODEN IMAGE

any tree, as a w Deut 16:21
cut down the w Judg 6:25
And Ahab made a w 1 Kin 16:33
a w and worshiped 2 Kin 17:16
cut down the w 2 Kin 18:4
and burned the w 2 Kin 23:15

WOODEN IMAGES

cut down their w Ex 34:13
burn their w with fire Deut 12:3
they have made their w 1 Kin 14:15
w on every high hill 2 Kin 17:10
you have removed the w 2 Chr 19:3
served w and idols 2 Chr 24:18
the altars and the w 2 Chr 34:7
w nor the incense altars Is 17:8
w and incense altars Is 27:9
w by the green trees Jer 17:2
I will pluck your w Mic 5:14

WOOL

She seeks w and flax Prov 31:13
they shall be as w Is 1:18
head was like pure w Dan 7:9
hair were white like w Rev 1:14

WORD

See ACCORDING TO THE WORD OF THE
LORD

w that proceeds Deut 8:3
w is very near you Deut 30:14
For the LORD is proven Ps 18:30
For the w of the LORD is Ps 33:4
w I have hidden Ps 119:11
w has given me life Ps 119:50
w is a lamp to my feet Ps 119:105
w makes it glad Prov 12:25
a harsh w stirs up anger Prov 15:1
w spoken in due season Prov 15:23
He who heeds the w Prov 16:20
w fitly spoken is Prov 25:11
The LORD sent a w Is 9:8
the w of our God Is 40:8
w has gone out of My Is 45:23
w be that goes forth Is 55:11
But His w was in my Jer 20:9
w will be his oracle Jer 23:36
w which I speak will Ezek 12:28
But only speak a w Matt 8:8
for every idle w Matt 12:36
mighty in deed and w Luke 24:19
beginning was the W John 1:1
W became flesh and John 1:14
if anyone keeps My w John 8:51
w which you hear is John 14:24
Your w is truth John 17:17
and glorified the w Acts 13:48
to one is given the w 1 Cor 12:8
of water by the w Eph 5:26

holding fast the w Phil 2:16
Let the w of Christ Col 3:16
come to you in w only 1 Thess 1:5
in every good w 2 Thess 2:17
by the w of His power Heb 1:3
w which they heard did Heb 4:2
the implanted w James 1:21
does not stumble in w James 3:2
that by the w of God 2 Pet 3:5
whoever keeps His w 1 John 2:5
let us not love in w 1 John 3:18
the Father, the W 1 John 5:7

WORD OF GOD

announce to you the w 1 Sam 9:27
w came to Nathan 1 Chr 17:3
Every w is pure Prov 30:5
the w of no effect Mark 7:13
the w came to John Luke 3:2
alone, but by every w Luke 4:4
about Him to hear the w Luke 5:1
The seed is the w Luke 8:11
who hear the w and do it Luke 8:21
spoke the w with boldness Acts 4:31
leave the w and serve Acts 6:2
then the w spread Acts 6:7
had also received the w Acts 11:1
necessary that the w Acts 13:46
that the w has taken no Rom 9:6
and hearing by the w Rom 10:17
w come originally 1 Cor 14:36
peddling the w 2 Cor 2:17
the w deceitfully 2 Cor 4:2
Spirit, which is the w Eph 6:17
sanctified by the w 1 Tim 4:5
w is not chained 2 Tim 2:9
w is living and powerful Heb 4:12
were framed by the w Heb 11:3
through the w 1 Pet 1:23
w abides in you 1 John 2:14
who bore witness to the w Rev 1:2
had been slain for the w Rev 6:9
His name is called The W Rev 19:13
to Jesus and for the w Rev 20:4

WORD OF TRUTH

And take not the w Ps 119:43
by the w, by the power 2 Cor 6:7
after you heard the w Eph 1:13
rightly dividing the w 2 Tim 2:15
us forth by the w James 1:18

WORDS

I waited for your w Job 32:11
his w are without wisdom Job 34:35
Give ear to my w Ps 5:1
Let the w of my mouth Ps 19:14
How sweet are Your w Ps 119:103
I will make my w known Prov 1:23
pay attention to the w Prov 7:24
hear the w of the wise Prov 22:17
The w of the wise are Eccl 12:11
And I have put My w Is 51:16
Take w with you Hos 14:2
Do not My w do good to Mic 2:7
pass away, but My w Matt 24:35
at the gracious w Luke 4:22
w that I speak to you John 6:63
You have the w of John 6:68
My w abide in you, you John 15:7
And remember the w Acts 20:35
not with wisdom of w 1 Cor 1:17
those who hear the w Rev 1:3
is he who keeps the w Rev 22:7
keep the w of this book Rev 22:9

WORK

day God ended His w Gen 2:2
Moses finished the w Ex 40:33
people had a mind to w Neh 4:6
You shall desire the w Job 14:15
for they are all the w Job 34:19
the w of Your fingers Ps 8:3
I hate the w of those Ps 101:3

the heavens are the w Ps 102:25
Man goes out to his w Ps 104:23
w is honorable and Ps 111:3
man does deceptive w Prov 11:18
then I saw all the w Eccl 8:17
for there is no w Eccl 9:10
God will bring every w Eccl 12:14
that He may do His w Is 28:21
and all we are the w Is 64:8
him nothing for his w Jer 22:13
and mighty in w Jer 32:19
For I will w a w Hab 1:5
and said, 'Son, go, w Matt 21:28
could do no mighty w Mark 6:5
we do, that we may w John 6:28
"This is the w of God John 6:29
I must w the works John 9:4
w which You have given John 17:4
know that all things w Rom 8:28
He will finish the w Rom 9:28
w is no longer w Rom 11:6
Do not destroy the w Rom 14:20
w will become manifest 1 Cor 3:13
Are you not my w 1 Cor 9:1
abounding in the w 1 Cor 15:58
without ceasing your w 1 Thess 1:3
good word and w 2 Thess 2:17
If anyone will not w 2 Thess 3:10
but a doer of the w James 1:25

WORKED

with one hand they w Neh 4:17
and wonders God had w Acts 15:12
which He w in Christ Eph 1:20

WORKER

w is worthy of his Matt 10:10
Timothy, my fellow w Rom 16:21
w who does not need 2 Tim 2:15

WORKERS

You hate all w of Ps 5:5
we are God's fellow w 1 Cor 9:9
dogs, beware of evil w Phil 3:2

WORKERS OF INIQUITY

in company with the w Job 34:8
You hate all w Ps 5:5
Depart from me, all you w Ps 6:8
nor be envious of the w Ps 37:1
Deliver me from the w Ps 59:2
when all the w flourish Ps 92:7
from the traps of the w Ps 141:9
will come to the w Prov 10:29
from Me, all you w Luke 13:27

WORKING

everywhere, the Lord w Mark 16:20
My Father has been w John 5:17
according to the w Eph 1:19
through faith in the w Col 2:12
manner, not w at all 2 Thess 3:11

WORKMANSHIP

For we are His w Eph 2:10

WORKS

See GOOD WORKS

the wondrous w of God Job 37:14
are Your wonderful w Ps 40:5
Come and see the w Ps 66:5
how great are Your w Ps 92:5
manifold are Your w Ps 104:24
The w of the LORD are Ps 111:2
w shall praise You Ps 145:10
and let her own w Prov 31:31
"For I know their w Is 66:18
of whose w are truth Dan 4:37
show Him greater w John 5:20
w that I do in My John 10:25
w that I do he will do John 14:12
w righteousness Acts 10:35
might stand, not of w Rom 9:11
let us cast off the w Rom 13:12
is the same God who w 1 Cor 12:6
Now the w of the flesh Gal 5:19

the spirit who now w Eph 2:2
 not of w, lest anyone Eph 2:9
 with the unfruitful w Eph 5:11
 for it is God who w Phil 2:13
 w they deny Him Titus 1:16
 zealous for good w Titus 2:14
 repentance from dead w Heb 6:1
 but does not have w James 2:14
 also justified by w James 2:25
 He might destroy the w 1 John 3:8
 "I know your w Rev 2:2
 their w follow them Rev 14:13
 according to their w Rev 20:12

WORKS OF THE LAW

as it were, by the w Rom 9:32
 not justified by the w Gal 2:16
 the Spirit by the w Gal 3:2
 does He do it by the w Gal 3:5
 w are under the curse Gal 3:10

WORLD

See IN THE WORLD; OF THE WORLD; OF
 THIS WORLD

He shall judge the w Ps 9:8
 For the w is Mine Ps 50:12
 w is established Ps 93:1
 The field is the w Matt 13:38
 w are more shrewd Luke 16:8
 He was in the w John 1:10
 For God so loved the w John 3:16
 His Son into the w John 3:17
 the Savior of the w John 4:42
 w cannot hate you John 7:7
 You are of this w John 8:23
 Look, the w has gone John 12:19
 w will see Me no more John 14:19
 "If the w hates you John 15:18
 If you were of the w John 15:19
 I have overcome the w John 16:33
 do not pray for the w John 17:9
 w has not known You John 17:25
 w may become guilty Rom 3:19
 be conformed to this w Rom 12:2
 things of the w 1 Cor 1:27
 w is foolishness 1 Cor 3:19
 w has been crucified Gal 6:14
 without God in the w Eph 2:12
 loved this present w 2 Tim 4:10
 He has not put the w Heb 2:5
 unspotted from the w James 1:27
 w is enmity with God James 4:4
 Do not love the w 1 John 2:15
 all that is in the w 1 John 2:16
 w is passing away 1 John 2:17
 w does not know us 1 John 3:1
 They are of the w 1 John 4:5
 so are we in this w 1 John 4:17
 And all the w marveled Rev 13:3

WORLDS

also He made the w Heb 1:2

WORM

w should feed sweetly Job 24:20
 But I am a w Ps 22:6
 "Fear not, you w Is 41:14
 their w does not die Is 66:24
 w does not die and the Mark 9:44

WORMS

flesh is caked with w Job 7:5
 you, and w cover you Is 14:11
 And he was eaten by w Acts 12:23

WORMWOOD

end she is bitter as w Prov 5:4
 who turn justice to w Amos 5:7
 of the star is W Rev 8:11

WORRIED

Martha, you are w Luke 10:41

WORRY

to you, do not w Matt 6:25
 Therefore do not w Matt 6:31

WORRYING

by w can add one cubit Matt 6:27

WORSE

w than their fathers Jer 7:26

WORSHIP

I will go yonder and w Gen 22:5
 shall not w the LORD Deut 12:31
 w the LORD in the 1 Chr 16:29
 He is your Lord, w Ps 45:11
 Oh come, let us w Ps 95:6
 and have come to w Him Matt 2:2
 will fall down and w Matt 4:9
 "You shall w the LORD Matt 4:10
 And in vain they w Matt 15:9
 w what you do not know John 4:22
 true worshippers will w John 4:23
 The One whom you w Acts 17:23
 w the God of my Acts 24:14
 false humility and w Col 2:18
 the angels of God w Heb 1:6
 make them come and w Rev 3:9
 w Him who lives Rev 4:10
 w Him who made Rev 14:7

WORSHIPED

w the LORD, and blessed Gen 24:48
 w it and sacrificed to it Ex 32:8
 w the LORD their God Neh 9:3
 fell to the ground and w Job 1:20
 w the works of their own Jer 1:16
 leper came and w Him Matt 8:2
 she came and w Him Matt 15:25
 they saw Him, they w Matt 28:17
 w Him, and returned Luke 24:52
 Our fathers w John 4:20
 down at his feet and w Acts 10:25
 of God for the lie, and w Rom 1:25
 w Him who lives Rev 5:14
 on their faces and w Rev 11:16
 w God who sat on the Rev 19:4

WORSHIPER

if anyone is a w John 9:31

WORSHIPERS

destroying the w of Baal 2 Kin 10:19
 the true w will worship John 4:23
 with the Gentile w Acts 17:17

WORTH

and make my speech w Job 24:25
 of the wicked is w Prov 10:20
 her w is far above rubies Prov 31:10

WORTHLESS

looking at w things Ps 119:37
 A w person, a wicked Prov 6:12
 Indeed they are all w Is 41:29
 wooden idol is a w doctrine Jer 10:8

WORTHLESSNESS

long will you love w Ps 4:2

WORTHY

I am not w of the Gen 32:10
 LORD, who is w to be 2 Sam 22:4
 who is w to be praised Ps 18:3
 sandals I am not w Matt 3:11
 inquire who in it is w Matt 10:11
 more than Me is not w Matt 10:37
 invited were not w Matt 22:8
 I am not w to stoop down Mark 1:7
 and I am no longer w Luke 15:19
 strap I am not w to loose John 1:27
 feet I am not w to loose Acts 13:25
 present time are not w Rom 8:18
 apostles, who am not w 1 Cor 15:9
 to walk w of the calling Eph 4:1
 w of the gospel of Christ Phil 1:27
 may walk w of the Lord Col 1:10
 w of God who calls 1 Thess 2:12
 w of the kingdom of 2 Thess 1:5
 count you w of this 2 Thess 1:11
 "The laborer is w 1 Tim 5:18
 the world was not w Heb 11:38
 in a manner w of God 3 John 6
 white, for they are w Rev 3:4

"You are w, O Lord Rev 4:11
 Who is w to open the scroll Rev 5:2
 "W is the Lamb who Rev 5:12

WOUND

I w and I heal Deut 32:39
 My w is incurable Job 34:6
 But God will w the Ps 68:21
 and my w incurable Jer 15:18
 and w their weak 1 Cor 8:12
 and his deadly w Rev 13:3

WOUNDED

and my heart is w Ps 109:22
 They struck me, they w Song 5:7
 and w the serpent Is 51:9
 But He was w for our Is 53:5
 there remained only w Jer 37:10
 with which I was w Zech 13:6
 w him, and departed Luke 10:30
 house naked and w Acts 19:16
 to the beast who was w Rev 13:14

WOUNDING

killed a man for w Gen 4:23

WOUNDS

He w, but His hands make Job 5:18
 and binds up their w Ps 147:3
 Faithful are the w Prov 27:6
 For her w are incurable Mic 1:9
 and bandaged his w Luke 10:34

WOVEN

Her clothing is w with gold Ps 45:13
 w from the top in one John 19:23

WRANGLINGS

useless w of men of 1 Tim 6:5

WRAPPED

weeds were w around my Jon 2:5
 he w it in a clean linen Matt 27:59
 w Him in swaddling cloths Luke 2:7
 his face was w with a John 11:44

WRATH

w has gone out from Num 16:46
 provoked the LORD to w Deut 9:22
 Had I not feared the w Deut 32:27
 w kills a foolish Job 5:2
 speak to them in His w Ps 2:5
 living and burning w Ps 58:9
 Surely the w of man Ps 76:10
 Your fierce w has gone Ps 88:16
 Will Your w burn like Ps 89:46
 w we are terrified Ps 90:7
 So I swore in My w Ps 95:11
 in the day of His w Ps 110:5
 death is the king's w Prov 16:14
 The king's w is like Prov 19:12
 of great w will suffer Prov 19:19
 w is crueler than Prov 27:3
 W is harsh and anger a Prov 27:4
 w I will give him Is 10:6
 With a little w Is 54:8
 in My w I struck you Is 60:10
 I will pour out my w Hos 5:10
 w remember mercy Hab 3:2
 you to flee from the w Matt 3:7
 see life, but the w John 3:36
 For the w of God is Rom 1:18
 up for yourself w Rom 2:5
 the law brings about w Rom 4:15
 wanting to show His w Rom 9:22
 rather give place to w Rom 12:19
 not only because of w Rom 13:5
 outbursts of w 2 Cor 12:20
 nature children of w Eph 2:3
 sun go down on your w Eph 4:26
 Let all bitterness, w Eph 4:31
 delivers us from the w 1 Thess 1:10
 w has come upon them 1 Thess 2:16
 holy hands, without w 1 Tim 2:8
 So I swore in My w Heb 3:11
 not fearing the w Heb 11:27

for the w of man does James 1:20
 throne and from the w Rev 6:16
 to you, having great w Rev 12:12
 of the wine of the w Rev 14:8
 winepress of the w Rev 14:19
 for in them the w Rev 15:1
 fierceness of His w Rev 16:19

WRATH OF GOD

w abides on him John 3:36
 w is revealed from Rom 1:18
 w comes upon the sons of Eph 5:6
 of the wine of the w Rev 14:10
 great winepress of the w Rev 14:19
 the w is complete Rev 15:1
 the bowls of the w Rev 16:1

WRATH OF THE LORD

w was aroused against Num 11:33
 for great is the w 2 Kin 22:13
 w turned from him 2 Chr 12:12
 fierce w is upon you 2 Chr 28:11
 w fell upon Judah 2 Chr 29:8
 w did not come upon 2 Chr 32:26
 w arose against His 2 Chr 36:16
 w was kindled against Ps 106:40
 w of hosts the land Is 9:19
 w of hosts and in the day Is 13:13
 in the day of the w Ezek 7:19

WRATHFUL

w man stirs up strife Prov 15:18

WRESTLE

For we do not w Eph 6:12

WRESTLED

I have w with my sister Gen 30:8
 A Man w with him until Gen 32:24

WRETCHED

w man that I am Rom 7:24
 know that you are w Rev 3:17

WRETCHEDNESS

do not let me see my w Num 11:15

WRINGING

w the nose produces Prov 30:33

WRINKLE

not having spot or w Eph 5:27

WRITE

I will w on these tablets Ex 34:1
 "W these words Ex 34:27
 w bitter things Job 13:26
 w them on the tablet of Prov 3:3
 w them on the tablet Prov 7:3
 "W this man down as Jer 22:30
 and w it on their hearts Jer 31:33
 w them on their hearts Heb 8:10
 their minds I will w Heb 10:16
 w no new commandment 1 John 2:7
 a new commandment I w 1 John 2:8
 I had many things to w 3 John 13
 W the things which you Rev 1:19
 w on him My new name Rev 3:12

WRITER

is the pen of a ready w Ps 45:1

WRITING

the w was the w Ex 32:16
 read the w to the king Dan 5:17
 And the w was: Jesus John 19:19

WRITINGS

do not believe his w John 5:47

WRITTEN

See AS IT IS WRITTEN; IT IS WRITTEN
 which I have w Ex 24:12
 tablets of stone, w Ex 31:18
 tablets were w on both Ex 32:15
 book which You have w Ex 32:32
 w with the finger of God Deut 9:10
 law that are w in this Deut 28:58
 w in this Book of the Deut 29:21
 as it is w in the Book of Josh 8:31

w in the Law of the 1 Chr 16:40
 scroll of the Book it is w Ps 40:7
 be w with the righteous Ps 69:28
 book they all were w Ps 139:16
 Have I not w to you Prov 22:20
 is found w in the book Dan 12:1
 thus it is w by the prophet Matt 2:5
 your names are w Luke 10:20
 are w may be fulfilled Luke 21:22
 "What I have w John 19:22
 as it is w, "The just shall Rom 1:17
 law w in their hearts Rom 2:15
 it is w, "Vengeance is Rom 12:19
 our epistle w in our hearts 2 Cor 3:2
 ministered by us, w 2 Cor 3:3
 for it is w, "Cursed is Gal 3:10
 because it is w, "Be holy 1 Pet 1:16
 the stone a new name w Rev 2:17
 names have not been w Rev 13:8
 name w on their foreheads Rev 14:1
 forehead a name was w Rev 17:5
 the plagues that are w Rev 22:18

WRONG

sinned, we have done w 2 Chr 6:37
 sin nor charge God with w Job 1:22
 I cry out concerning w Job 19:7
 not charge them with w Job 24:12
 no one to do them w Ps 105:14
 Do no w and do no Jer 22:3
 I am doing you no w Matt 20:13
 has done nothing w Luke 23:41
 of them suffer w Acts 7:24
 Jews I have done no w Acts 25:10
 Forgive me this w 2 Cor 12:13
 But he who does w Col 3:25

WRONGDOING

say if they found any w Acts 24:20

WRONGED

give it to the one he has w Num 5:7
 have seen how I am w Lam 3:59
 then that God has w Job 19:6
 We have w no one 2 Cor 7:2
 But if he has w Philem 18

WRONGFULLY

hate me w have multiplied Ps 38:19
 endures grief, suffering w 1 Pet 2:19

WRONGS

me w his own soul Prov 8:36

WROTE

w on the tablets the words Ex 34:28
 of the hand that w Dan 5:5
 stooped down and w John 8:6

WROUGHT

And skillfully w Ps 139:15

YEAR

first month of the y Ex 12:2
 That fiftieth y shall be a Lev 25:11
 In this Y of Jubilee, each Lev 25:13
 we eat in the seventh y Lev 25:20
 In the Y of Jubilee Lev 27:24
 crown the y with Your Ps 65:11
 the acceptable y Is 61:2
 be his until the y Ezek 46:17
 to Jerusalem every y Luke 2:41
 went alone once a y Heb 9:7
 of sins every y Heb 10:3

YEARS

and for days and y Gen 1:14
 Are Your y like the Job 10:5
 y should teach Job 32:7
 I will remember the y Ps 77:10
 For a thousand y Ps 90:4
 lives are seventy y Ps 90:10
 Your y are throughout Ps 102:24
 y will have no end Ps 102:27

when He was twelve y Luke 2:42
 are not yet fifty y John 8:57
 y will not fall Heb 1:12
 for a thousand y Rev 20:2
 with Him a thousand y Rev 20:6

YES

let your 'Y' be 'Y,' Matt 5:37
 No, but in Him was Y 2 Cor 1:19

YESTERDAY

For we were born y Job 8:9
 Are like y when it is past Ps 90:4
 Jesus Christ is the same y Heb 13:8

YIELD

the land will y its fruit Lev 25:19
 y yourselves to the LORD 2 Chr 30:8
 That they may y a fruitful Ps 107:37
 shall y her increase Ezek 34:27
 But do not y to them Acts 23:21
 gentle, willing to y, full James 3:17

YIELDED

y to intense craving Num 11:4
 y their bodies, that they Dan 3:28
 good ground and y a crop Matt 13:8
 voice, y up His spirit Matt 27:50
 rich man y plentifully Luke 12:16

YIELDS

the herb that y seed Gen 1:11
 of the righteous y fruit Prov 12:12
 it y the peaceable Heb 12:11

YOKE

you shall break his y Gen 27:40
 and He will put a y Deut 28:48
 Your father made our y 1 Kin 12:4
 You have broken the y Is 9:4
 a man to bear the y Lam 3:27
 Take My y upon you Matt 11:29
 as are under the y 1 Tim 6:1

YOKED

Do not be unequally y 2 Cor 6:14

YOU ARE THE CHRIST

answered and said, "Y Matt 16:16
 God: Tell us if Y Matt 26:63
 and said to Him, "Y Mark 8:29
 crying out and saying, "Y Luke 4:41
 If Y, tell us Luke 22:67
 "If Y, save Yourself Luke 23:39
 believe and know that Y John 6:69
 If Y, tell us plainly John 10:24
 Lord I believe that Y John 11:27

YOUNG

His flesh shall be y Job 33:25
 I have been y Ps 37:25
 she may lay her y Ps 84:3
 How can a y man cleanse Ps 119:9
 The glory of y men is Prov 20:29
 y ones shall lie Is 11:7
 dream dreams, your y Joel 2:28
 y man followed Him Mark 14:51
 they admonish the y Titus 2:4
 I write to you, y 1 John 2:13

YOUNGER

they mock at me, men y Job 30:1
 y son gathered all Luke 15:13
 let him be as the y Luke 22:26
 y women as sisters 1 Tim 5:2
 Likewise you y people 1 Pet 5:5

YOURS

all that I have are y 1 Kin 20:4
 the battle is not y 2 Chr 20:15
 I am Y, save me Ps 119:94
 Y is the kingdom Matt 6:13
 Take what is y Matt 20:14
 y is the kingdom Luke 6:20
 And all Mine are Y John 17:10
 For all things are y 1 Cor 3:21
 for I do not seek y 2 Cor 12:14

YOUTH

for he was only a y 1 Sam 17:42
 the LORD from my y 1 Kin 18:12
 the sins of my y Ps 25:7
 the companion of her y Prov 2:17
 with the wife of your y Prov 5:18
 in the days of your y Eccl 11:9
 and y are vanity Eccl 11:10
 in the days of your y Eccl 12:1
 the shame of your y Is 54:4
 speak, for I am a y Jer 1:6
 Do not say, 'I am a y,' for Jer 1:7
 the kindness of your y Jer 2:2
 the days of your y Ezek 16:22
 with the wife of his y Mal 2:15
 I have kept from my y Matt 19:20
 I have kept from my y Mark 10:20
 I have kept from my y Luke 18:21
 the flower of her y 1 Cor 7:36
 no one despise your y 1 Tim 4:12

YOUTHFUL

Flee also y lusts 2 Tim 2:22

YOUTHS

perceived among the y Prov 7:7
 y shall faint and be Is 40:30

ZACCHAEUS

Wealthy tax collector converted to
 Christ, Luke 19:1-10

ZACHARIAS

Father of John the Baptist, Luke
 1:5-17

ZADOK

Co-priest with Abiathar; remains
 loyal to David, 2 Sam 15:24-29;
 20:25
 Rebuked by David, 2 Sam 19:11, 12
 Does not follow Adonijah; anoints
 Solomon, 1 Kin 1:8-45
 Takes Abiathar's place, 1 Kin 2:35

ZALMUNNA

Midianite king, Judg 8:4-21

ZAREPHATH

Town of Sidon where Elijah revives
 widow's son, 1 Kin 17:8-24; Luke
 4:26

ZEAL

The z of the LORD of 2 Kin 19:31
 z has consumed me Ps 119:139
 He shall stir up His z Is 42:13
 have spoken it in My z Ezek 5:13
 for Zion with great z Zech 8:2
 "Z for Your house has John 2:17
 that they have a z Rom 10:2
 z has stirred up the 2 Cor 9:2

ZEALOUS

he was z for his God Num 25:13
 "I have been very z 1 Kin 19:10
 'I am z for Zion with Zech 8:2
 they are all z for the law Acts 21:20
 since you are z 1 Cor 14:12
 But it is good to be z Gal 4:18

z for good works Titus 2:14
 Therefore be z and repent Rev 3:19

ZEBAH

King of Midian killed by Gideon, Judg
 8:4-28

ZEBEDEE

Galilean fisherman; father of James
 and John, Matt 4:21, 22

ZEBULUN

Sixth son of Jacob and Leah, Gen 30:19,
 20

Prophecy concerning, Gen 49:13

Tribe of:

Numbered, Num 1:30, 31; 26:27
 Territory assigned to, Josh 19:10-16
 Joins Gideon in battle, Judg 6:34, 35
 Some respond to Hezekiah's reforms,
 2 Chr 30:10-18
 Christ visits territory of, Matt 4:13-16

ZECHARIAH

King of Israel; last ruler of Jehu's dy-
 nasty, 2 Kin 15:8-12

Postexilic prophet and priest, Ezra
 5:1; Zech 1:1, 7

ZEDEKIAH

Last king of Judah; uncle and successor
 of Jehoiachin; reigns wickedly, 2 Kin
 24:17-19; 2 Chr 36:10

Rebels against Nebuchadnezzar, 2 Chr
 36:11-13

Denounced by Jeremiah, Jer 34:1-22

Consults Jeremiah, Jer 37; 38

Captured and taken to Babylon, 2 Kin
 25:1-7; Jer 39:1-7

ZELOPHEHAD

Manassite whose five daughters secure
 female rights, Num 27:1-7

ZEPHANIAH

Author of Zephaniah, Zeph 1:1

Priest and friend of Jeremiah
 during Zedekiah's reign,
 Jer 21:1

ZERUBBABEL

Descendant of David, 1 Chr 3:1-19

Leader of Jewish exiles, Neh 7:6, 7; Hag
 2:21-23

Rebuilds the temple, Ezra 3:1-10; Zech
 4:1-14

ZIBA

Saul's servant, 2 Sam 9:9

Befriends David, 2 Sam 16:1-4

Accused of deception by Mephibo-
 sheth, 2 Sam 19:17-30

ZIKLAG

City on the border of Judah, Josh 15:1,
 31

Held by David, 1 Sam 27:6

Overthrown by Amalekites, 1 Sam
 30:1-31

ZILPAH

Leah's maid, Gen 29:24

Mother of Gad and Asher, Gen
 30:9-13

ZIMRI

Simeonite prince slain by Phinehas,
 Num 25:6-14

King of Israel for seven days, 1 Kin
 16:8-20

ZION

Wilderness through which the Israel-
 ites passed, Num 20:1

Border between Judah and Edom, Josh
 15:1-3

ZION

Literally, an area in Jerusalem; called
 the City of David, 2 Sam 5:6-9; 2 Chr
 5:2

Used figuratively of God's kingdom, Ps
 125:1; Heb 12:22; Rev 14:1

City of David, which is Z 1 Kin 8:1

City of David, which is Z 2 Chr 5:2

the LORD, who dwells in Z Ps 9:11

Is Mount Z on the sides of Ps 48:2

in Your good pleasure to Z Ps 51:18

God will save Z and build Ps 69:35

And of Z it will be said Ps 87:5

the LORD shall build up Z Ps 102:16

the name of the LORD in Z Ps 102:21

back the captivity of Z Ps 126:1

the LORD has chosen Z Ps 132:13

when we remembered Z Ps 137:1

Z shall be redeemed with Is 1:27

For out of Z shall go forth Is 2:3

My people, who dwell in Z Is 10:24

shout, O Inhabitant of Z Is 12:6

hosts will reign on Mount Z Is 24:23

I lay in Z a stone for a Is 28:16

down to fight for Mount Z Is 31:4

come to Z with singing Is 35:10

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I will place salvation in Z Is 46:13

the LORD will comfort Z Is 51:3

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Z of the Holy One of Israel Is 60:14

Arise, and let us go up to Z Jer 31:6

to be forgotten in Z Lam 2:6

Blow the trumpet in Z Joel 2:1

for the LORD dwells in Z Joel 3:21

on Mount Z there shall be Obad 17

For out of Z the law shall Mic 4:2

Sing, O daughter of Z Zeph 3:14

LORD will gain comfort for Z Zech 1:17

rejoice, O daughter of Z Zech 2:10

Fear not, daughter of Z John 12:15

in Z a stumbling stone Rom 9:33

will come out of Z Rom 11:26

Behold, I lay in Z a chief 1 Pet 2:6

ZIPPORAH

Daughter of Jethro; wife of Moses, Ex
 18:1, 2

ZOAR

Ancient city of Canaan originally

named Bela, Gen 14:2, 8

Spared destruction at Lot's request,

Gen 19:20-23

ZOPHAR

Naamathite; friend of Job, Job 2:11

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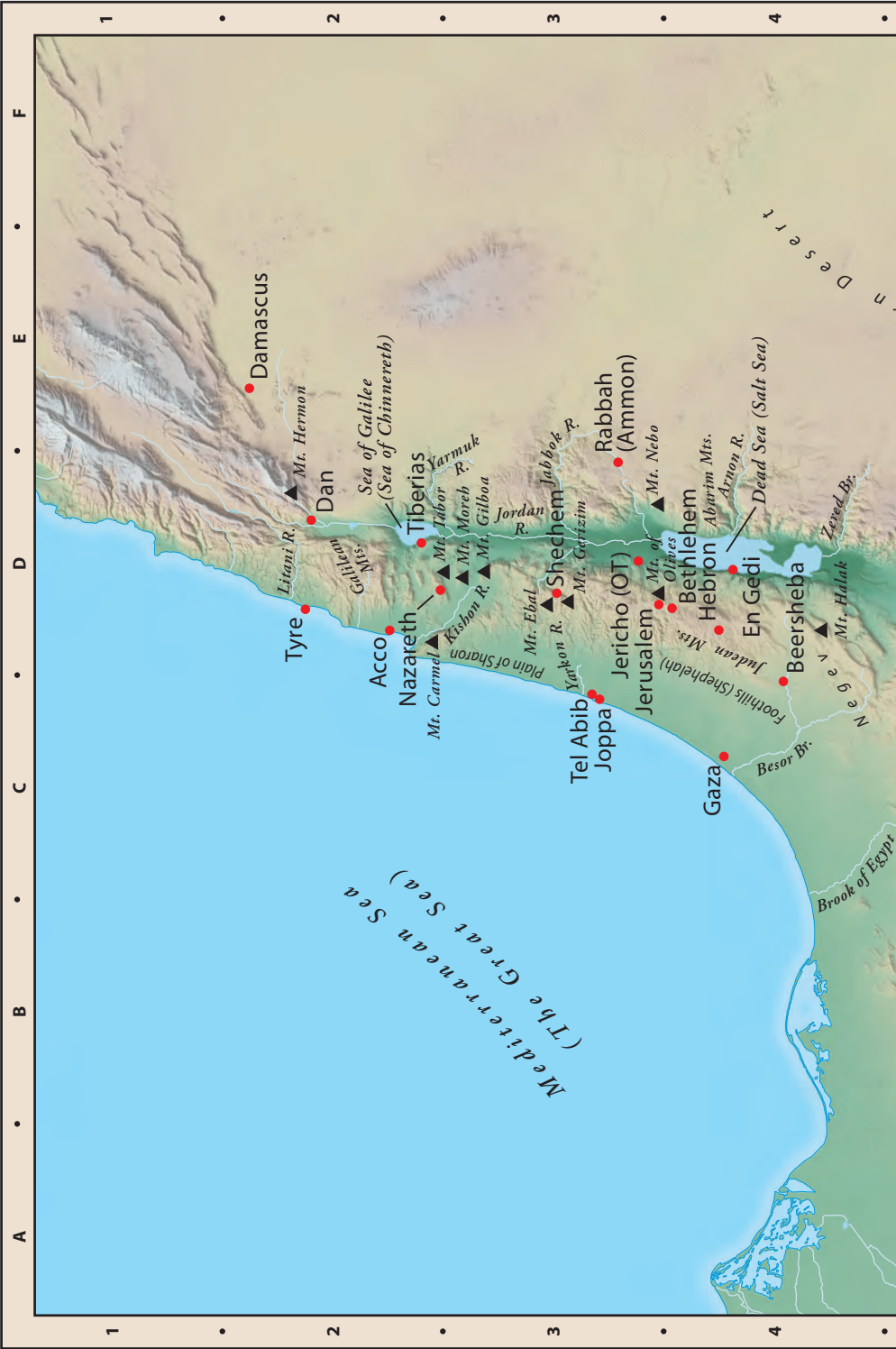
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Map 4: LAND OF THE TWELVE TRIBES



Map 5: KINGDOM OF DAVID AND SOLOMON



Map 6: KINGDOMS OF ISRAEL AND JUDAH



Map 7: **PROPHETS IN ISRAEL AND JUDAH**



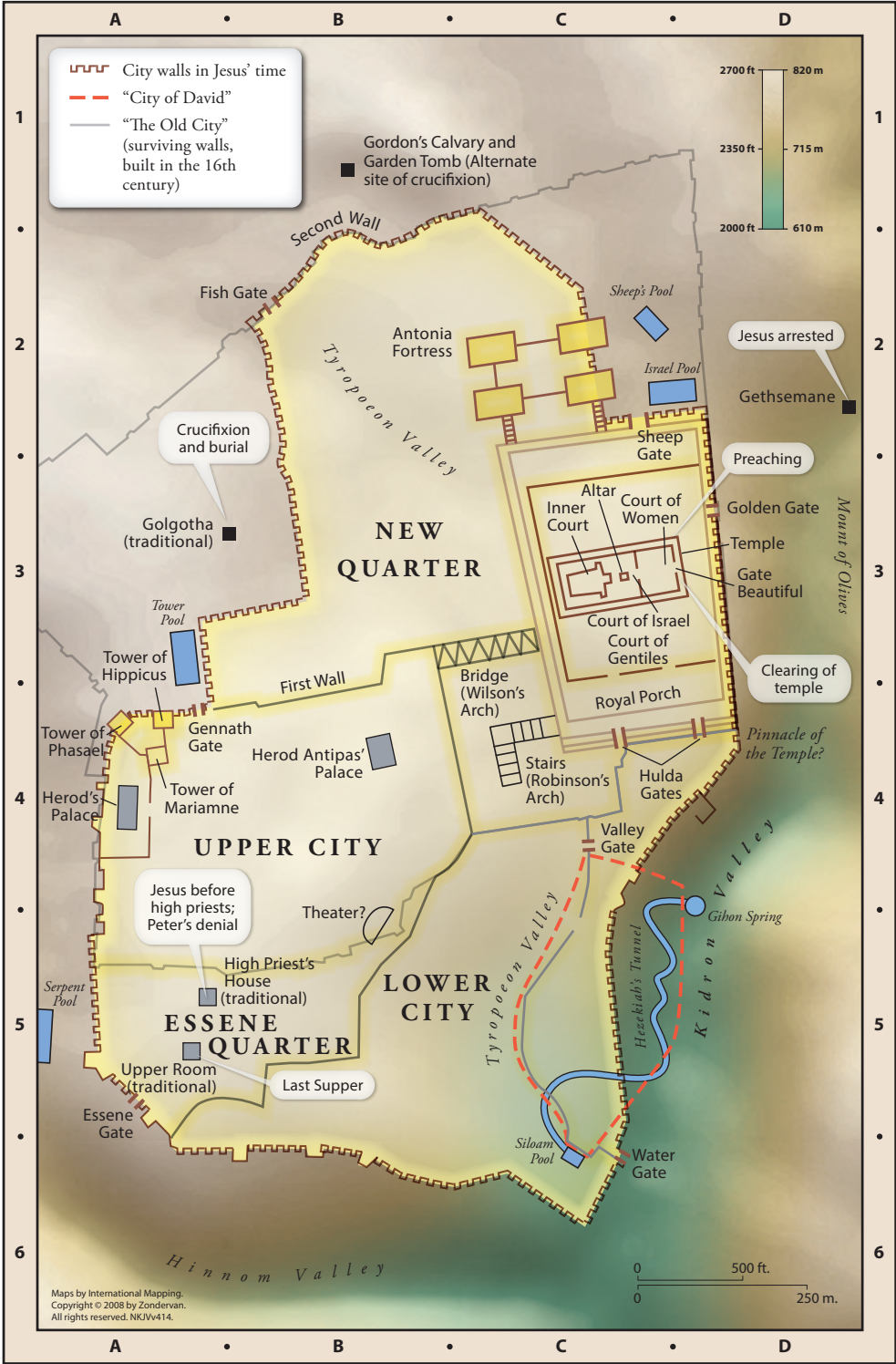
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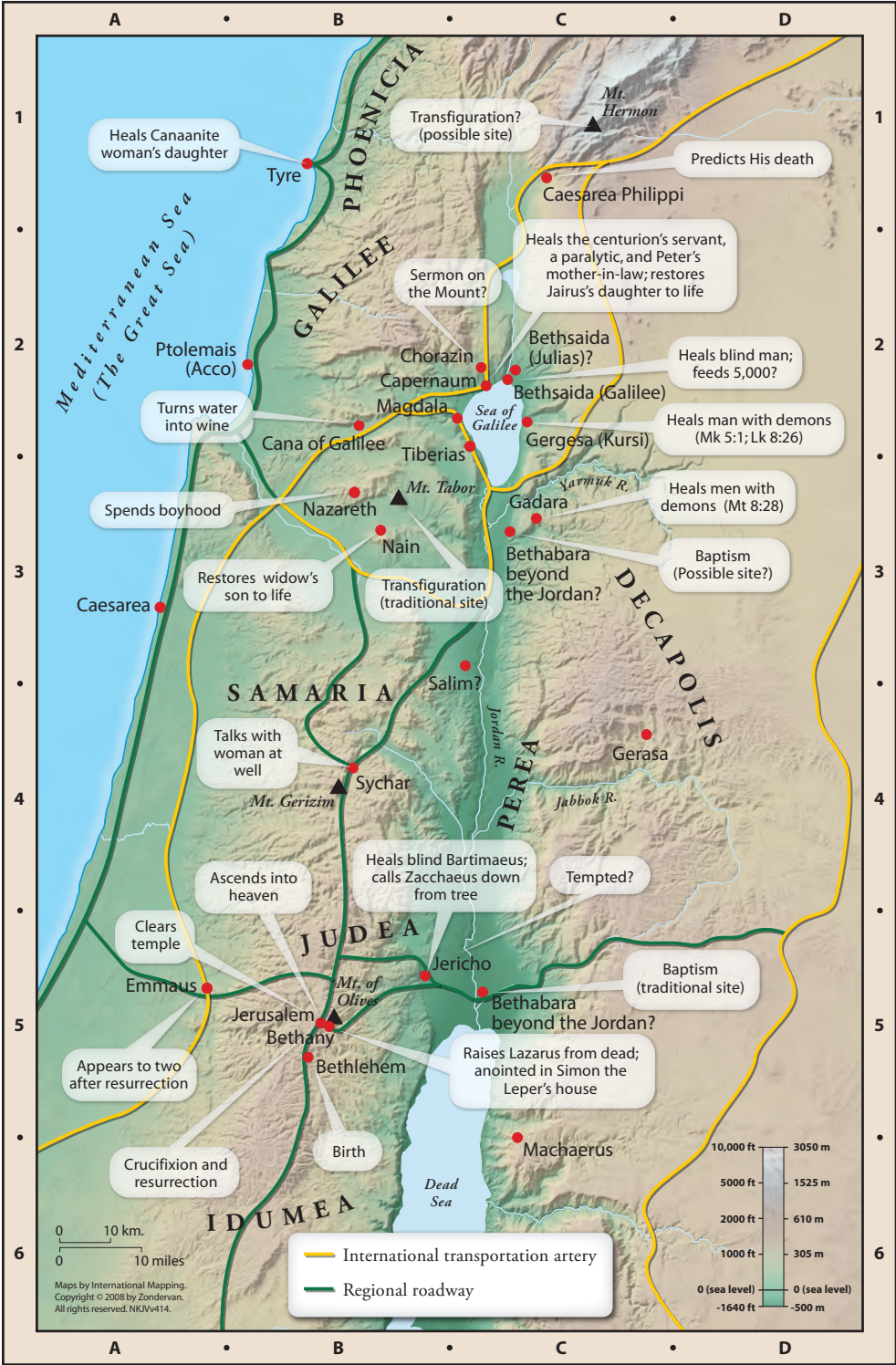
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